

## The War That Never Was—Solo Exhibition of Chang Chien-Chi

10 March – 29 April, 2018



*The War That Never Was*, single-channel video, 15'40", 2017  
(courtesy of the artist, Magnum Photos and Chi-Wen Gallery)

TheCube Project Space is pleased to present *The War That Never Was—Solo Exhibition of Chang Chien-Chi* from March 10<sup>th</sup> to April 29<sup>th</sup>. As the debut of the third phase of the curatorial project *Towards Mysterious Realities*, this exhibition features not only Chang's new video and photographic works based on his research into the Cold War and the interview with his mother, but also a set of sound installations that he created by appropriating George Orwell's article *You and the Atomic Bomb* written in 1945. In addition, Chang's another solo exhibition *AZMA and Burma: The Promise Betrayed* is on view at the Chi-Wen Gallery in Taipei during the same period of time.

### **About *The War That Never Was***

Single-channel video, 15'40", 2017

Chang Chien-Chi was invited to produce a video concerning Taiwan and the Cold War for an exhibition. Out of curiosity, he asked his mother whether she knows what the Cold War was, only to receive her simple reply: "who was that?"

Chang's mother, born in 1938 in a poverty-stricken mountainous region in central Taiwan, received little education and worked her entire life before and after she was married to his father. Taiwan's longest martial law (1949 - 1987) in history had little effect on her. Her whole life was merely to work for a meager survival. She told Chang that there was no electricity in the village back then, and she, after

working the whole day on the rice paddy, used to ride an old bicycle to the nearest town to charge a battery for the household electricity. She lost track and ran into the turbid creek many times on her way home in the dark, with a charged battery and Chang Chien-Chi in the backseat.

This interview-based video centered on his mother. Chang was the interviewer and his mother the interviewee. All the questions revolved around her life as to how a rural, poor and uneducated girl became a wife and a mother of five children, working out in the rice field under the scorching sun, and later a washer-woman and a domestic cleaner till the mid-2000s.

The questions about her life were juxtaposed with the timeline of the historical events unfolded during the Cold War. The latter takes on the form of historical images derived from the Iron Curtain Museum in Hungary and the Magnum Photos archives, interlaced with the interview with Chang's mother who has never heard of the Cold War.

**Artist Talk** | Chang Chien-Chi, Wang Pai-Chang (curator, producer of Taiwan Public Television(PTS) )  
April 29 ,2018 (Sun.) 6-8pm

### **About artist**

#### **Chang Chien-Chi**

Born in Taiwan, works and lives in Graz, Austria. Chang Chien-Chi was a photojournalist for *the Seattle Times* and later *the Baltimore Sun* between 1991-1994. In 1995, Chang was elected to join Magnum Photos. His work has been published by *New Yorker*, *National Geographic Magazine*, *TIME*, *Newsweek*, *The New York Times Magazine*, *GEO* (France and Germany) and many other leading international publications.

In his work, Chang makes manifest the abstract concepts of alienation and connection. Chang's investigation of the ties that bind one person to another was drawn on his own deeply divided immigrant experience first in the United States and later in Austria. For 24 years, Chang has photographed the bifurcated lives of the Chinese immigrants in New York's Chinatown, along with those of their wives and families back home in Fujian, China. Still a work in progress, *China Town* was hung at the National Museum of Singapore in 2008 as part of a mid-career survey and at La Biennale di Venezia, 2009 as well as at International Center of Photography, New York. 2012.

Chang has had steady solo and group exhibitions including *The Chain*, La Biennale di Venezia, 2001, Museum der Kulturen Basel, 2011 and recently, *Home*, at National Art School Gallery/Sherman Contemporary Foundation, Sydney, 2014, Busan Biennale 2014, Chang has received numerous awards from National Press Photographers Association, Picture of Year (1998 & 1999, USA), World Press Photo (the Netherlands, 1998 & 1999), Visa d'Or at Visa Pour L'image (1999, France) and was the recipient of the W. Eugene Smith Memorial Fund on Humanistic Photography in 1999.

Organizer | TheCube Project Space ([thecubespace.com](http://thecubespace.com))  
Exhibition Sponsor | National Culture and Arts Foundation

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