

# SCULPTOR CHEN WEIMING AND HIS ARTWORKS

Friday, 04 June 2010

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\*\*\* Statement read in front of the New Zealand Consulate in Santa Monica, June 3, 2010\*\*\*

STATEMENT FROM VISUAL ARTISTS GUILD REGARDING SCULPTOR CHEN WEIMING AND HIS ARTWORKS  
June 3, 2010

The Visual Artists Guild joins with those organizations and individuals who are outraged that Hong Kong police confiscated sculptor, a New Zealand citizen, Chen Weiming's 21 ft by 10 ft relief depicting the Tiananmen Massacre and the 10 ft statue of the new interpretation of the Goddess of Democracy just days before the city's Annual Tiananmen Remembrance Vigil.

The Visual Artists Guild stands beside artists who use their works to express freedom and social justice. We stand beside artists, individuals and organizations to denounce Hong Kong's deportation of Chen Weiming, the creator of sculptures.

We demand that the 13 activists who were arrested during the confiscation of the art works and later released on bail to have the bogus charges against them be dismissed by Hong Kong officials and their bail money returned to them.

Although we are relieved that the art works have been returned to Hong Kong activists from Hong Kong's police and will be on display during June 4th's

candlelight  
vigil in Victoria Park, we share the distress of many who view Hong Kong's recent actions as participating in political censorship of an event for which Beijing refuses to apologize.

It  
is disturbing that 21 years after the Tiananmen Square massacre - a subject that is still taboo in every city of China except for Hong Kong and Macau - that Hong Kong officials would attempt to suppress political expression by the survivors."

When  
Mr Chen arrived in Hong Kong to inspect his sculptures to make sure that they have not been damaged while in Hong Kong police custody, the Hong Kong government summarily deported him.

We  
demand that the government of New Zealand stand up for her citizen. We ask that the New Zealand government demand that the Hong Kong government apologize to Mr. Chen Weiming and allow him to enter Hong Kong.

Ann  
Lau, Chair, Visual Artists Guild

Below  
is part of a declaration by art students who created the 1989 Goddess of Democracy:

"At  
this grim moment, what we need most is to remain calm and united in a single purpose. We need a powerful cementing force to strengthen our resolve:

That is  
the Goddess of Democracy. Democracy...You are the symbol of every student  
in the  
Square, of the hearts of millions of people. ...Today, here in the  
People's  
Square, the people's Goddess stands tall and announces to the whole  
world: A  
consciousness of democracy has awakened among the Chinese people! The  
new era  
has begun! ...The statue of the Goddess of Democracy is made of plaster,  
and of  
course cannot stand here forever. But as the symbol of the people's  
hearts, she  
is divine and inviolate. Let those who would sully her beware: the  
people will  
not permit this! ...On the day when real democracy and freedom come to  
China, we  
must erect another Goddess of Democracy here in the Square, monumental,  
towering, and permanent. We have strong faith that that day will come  
at last.  
We have still another hope: Chinese people, arise! Erect the statue of  
the  
Goddess of Democracy in your millions of hearts! Long live the people!  
Long  
live freedom! Long live democracy!"