

## EXHIBITIONS

Wu Hao, *A Cheerful Banquet* (2010).

PHOTO COURTESY OF METAPHYSICAL ART GALLERY

Timed, perhaps, to coincide with the Taipei International Flora Expo, **Blooming** (心花朵朵開) presents vibrant and "superflat" flower paintings by Chinese-born, Taiwan-based artist Wu Hao (吳昊). If the curators are to be believed, Wu's work can be reinterpreted through the lens of contemporary artists such as Takashi Murakami who popularized the superflat genre.

■ Metaphysical Art Gallery (形而上畫廊), 7F, 219, Dunhua 5 Rd Sec 1, Taipei City (台北市敦化南路一段219號7樓). Open Tuesdays to Sundays from 11am to 6:30pm. Tel: (02) 2711-0055

■ Opening reception, including magic show and acrobatic performance on Saturday at 3pm. Until Oct. 3

The **Taipei Biennial (2010臺北雙年展)** program introduction begins with a question: "One can easily imagine an exhibition of political art, but what about an exhibition on the politics of art?" The "politics of art" will take center stage at the biennial by exploring the origin, function, size and scale of the biennial and, perhaps more interestingly, raise questions about the movers and shakers behind these events. The exhibition literature continues: "By turning an exhibition inward and, in fact, against its grain — dissolving the supposed boundaries between artistic and curatorial practices, discourses and reception — this exhibition unravels the conventionally discrete artistic presentation that is otherwise mystified." Curators Lin Hong-john (林宏璋) and Tirdad Zolghadr attempt to illustrate the multifarious elements that go into making a biennial by revealing the social circumstances upon which art is created and consumed. With so much focus on politics, one might be left wondering about aesthetics and beauty. But perhaps politics is the new beauty. As the program says: "The division between the social and the aesthetic is no longer distinguishable and thus, rendered obsolete."

Expect a lot of new media and performance art. On the Net: [www.taipeibiennial.org](http://www.taipeibiennial.org).

■ Taipei Fine Arts Museum (TFAM — 台北市立美術館), 181, Zhongshan N Rd Sec 3, Taipei City (台北市中山北路三段181號). Open daily from 9:30am to 5:30pm, closes at 8:30pm on Saturdays. Tel: (02) 2595-7656. Portions of the biennial are being staged at other locations throughout Taipei. For complete details (in English and Chinese) go to: [www.taipeibiennial.org](http://www.taipeibiennial.org)

■ Until Nov. 14

Mountains, hot springs and seascapes are among the places represented in **A Piece of Place** (地的片段), a three-person exhibition of new works by Huang Pin-ling (黃品玲), Bai Cian-yu (白倩予) and Shen Chao-liang (潘士豪). The artists are united in their use of earthy colors to represent their own ideas about Taiwan's unique locales and people.

■ A Gallery (一畫廊), 22, Alley 36, Ln 147, Xinyi Rd Sec 3, Taipei City (台北市信義路三段147巷36弄22號). Open Mondays to Saturdays from 1pm to 9pm. Tel: (02) 2702-3327

■ Until Sept. 25

**John Fung's** (馮建中) solo exhibit of photo collages at Taiwan International Visual Arts Center draws attention to the environmental and spatial problems of large cities. Fung points his camera upwards and through a process of multi-exposure and overlapping of scenes creates a sometimes dizzying, sometimes expansive perspective. The absence of any flora or fauna in Fung's photos suggests an unhealthy concrete environment.

■ Taiwan International Visual Arts Center (TIVAC — 台灣國際視覺藝術中心), 29, Ln 45, Liaoning St, Taipei City (台北市遼寧街45巷29號). Open Tuesdays to Sundays from noon to 6pm. Tel: (02) 2773-3347

■ Until Oct. 3

Arguably one of the most important modern interpreters of traditional ink brush painters, **Liu Kuo-sung** (劉國松) has received considerable attention over the past few years because of renewed interest in modern (i.e. Western) Chinese ink brush painting. Though this solo show at Capital Art offers little that is new in terms of themes, it is worth catching because it displays some of Liu's smaller and lesser-known works.

■ Capital Art Center (首都藝術中心), 2F, 343, Renai Rd Sec 4, Taipei City (台北市仁愛路四段343號2樓). Open Tuesdays to Sundays from 10am to 7pm. Tel: (02) 2775-5268

■ Until Sept. 25

China-born, US-based artist **Pan Qiliu** (潘其流) follows the tradition of the Hangzhou Academy of Fine Arts where he studied under Lin Fengmian (林風眠), who is considered by many scholars as the pioneer of modern Chinese oil painting. More commonly known as a sculptor, Pan shows that he is an accomplished interpreter of abstract expressionism in works that are notable for the application of low-relief, which gives the paintings greater depth.

■ Tina Keng Gallery (大未來畫廊), 15, Ln 548, Ruiguang Rd, Taipei City (台北市瑞光路548巷15號). Open Tuesdays to Sundays from 10am to 7pm. Tel: (02) 2659-0798

■ Until Sept. 26



Detail of Chen Sung-chih's untitled sculptural installation at Project Fulfill Art Space.

PHOTO: NOAH BUCHAN, TAIPEI TIMES

# Shattered mirrors

*Chen Sung-chih's on-site installation at Project Fulfill Art Space is one of the most interesting things to happen in a Taipei gallery in a long time*

BY **NOAH BUCHAN**  
STAFF REPORTER

When Chen Sung-chih (陳松志) opened the back door of the truck delivering his artwork for an exhibit called Polar Region (極地), his heart sank. Lying in a mound on the floor were the shattered remains of a large paper on mirror painting, one of the artworks to be displayed. Rather than breaking down, however, Chen immediately saw possibilities.

"As an artist, I should be able to turn the accident into a work of art," he said.

From the ruins emerged Polar Region: Part 2 (極地 — Part 2), an on-site sculptural installation currently on view at Project Fulfill Art Space. Chen spent three days spreading three tonnes of sand throughout a section of the gallery, then stabbed the resulting mass, which resembles a mountainous island, with the shards of glass from the destroyed painting. The finished work teems with the contradictions and contingencies of life and art, the formation and dissolution of natural and artificial phenomena, and is one of the most interesting things to happen in a Taipei gallery in a long time.

"At the end of the show, these materials will be recycled again," Chen said.

As the title makes clear, there was a Part 1, and several paintings and sculptures from that earlier show have been re-displayed for Part 2.

For Chen, Polar Regions serves as a metaphor for humanity's estrangement from its natural environment. "The Polar Regions are far away, but the issue of global warming is very close," he said.

In three untitled works from Part 1, Chen draws the viewer's attention to this disparity through small-sized Styrofoam sculptures in the shape of icebergs. They suggest that as the planet warms, these once-large mountains of ice will shrink to the size we see in the gallery



Chen Sung-chih stands over his untitled on-site sculptural installation at Project Fulfill Art Space.

PHOTO: NOAH BUCHAN, TAIPEI TIMES

space. The arrangement of these objects, on a platform and behind glass, implies that if global warming isn't addressed, they may become the museum pieces of the future.

With Part 2, this takes on a more ominous immediacy. As with the iceberg sculptures, viewers look down on the installation as if they were godlike beings. The sandy mass possesses a degree of fragility absent in the sculptures from Part 1: A person could reach out and destroy it quite easily. The shards of glass serve as the installation's protector, but also as the product of its destruction — sand being a necessary ingredient in the production of glass.

Interestingly, the gallery has chosen to water the sculpture four times daily so as to retain its form — a gesture that seems to contradict the theme of our alienation from the natural environment. But perhaps that's the point. For too long humanity has lived in ignorance of our destructive influence on the environment, and to alter this dangerous course will require active intervention.

Regardless, Project Fulfill Art Space should be applauded for devoting part of its exhibition space to an installation that doesn't possess any immediate commercial value. It restores art to its rightful place by presenting an aesthetically pleasing work that throws up compelling questions without overburdening the viewer with strident activism.

## EXHIBITION NOTES

**WHAT:** Polar Region — Part 2 (極地 — Part 2)

**WHERE:** Project Fulfill Art Space (就在藝術中心), 2, Alley 45, Ln 147, Xinyi Rd Sec 3, Taipei City (台北市信義路三段147巷45弄2號). Tel: (02) 2707-6942

**WHEN:** Until Sept. 19. Open Tuesdays to Sundays from 1pm to 6pm

**ON THE NET:** [www.pfarts.com](http://www.pfarts.com)