

GOEDHUIS CONTEMPORARY

Presents

In Pursuit of Purity: The Calligraphy of

CHEN GUANGWU

23RD June – 16TH July 2006

Private View: Thursday, 22ND June 2006, 6-8pm
42 East 76TH Street (between Park and Madison Avenues)
New York, NY 10021

Chen Guangwu was born in 1967 in Guangxi Province. A masterful calligrapher, he employs the traditional instruments of brush, ink and paper to produce paintings of seemingly simple but in fact meticulously abstracted visual patterns. Each work is comprised of a small range of characters, built up in layers of meticulously repeated strokes. His deliberate, precise application reflects the subtlety and skill required by the traditional Chinese art of writing, yet his calligraphy is singular and modern, foregrounding not poetry or complete phrases but rather the process of producing the stroke itself.

Calligraphy is in essence a performance art, and the images that Chen Guangwu leaves on the paper—each line, curve and tone of the characters—are the tangible manifestations of his performance. Balanced with the active practice of calligraphy is the contemplative philosophy behind it. Chen Guangwu's own approach towards calligraphy, in which each work develops from his choice of a single radical, identifies him as a purist and a minimalist.

He does not try to achieve any kind of synthesis between the aesthetic traditions of China and the West in his work, and eschews any description of his works as 'abstract' in the academic sense. On the contrary, he is pursuing an art form that, in his mind, is not only exceptional but also derives solely from the classical traditions of Chinese art.

Chen Guangwu sees his calligraphy as a means by which people are provoked into thinking more deeply about Chinese culture, and he hopes that through a true grasp of the values and aims of calligraphy they can gain insight into the complex enigma that is China.

Chen Guangwu's work has been exhibited widely, most notably in the Dr. Uli Sigg Collection exhibited at the Kunstmuseum Bern in Switzerland in 2005. He currently lives and works in Beijing, China.

**For further information and images, please contact Michael Goedhuis,
Christine Barberi or Jeannie Kenmotsu at 212.535.6954 or
newyork@goedhuiscontemporary.com.**
