

## Taiwanese Art Today

Tate Modern, Members' Room, Level 6

18 September 2006, 18:30-20:00

Free admission.

Drinks served afterwards in Café2, Level 2.

Supported by the [Taipei Representative Office in the U.K.](#)

Three artists and one of the curators of this year's Liverpool Biennial are from Taiwan. Chen Chieh-jen, Lee Mingwei and Tsui Kuang-yu will introduce their site-specific work for the International 06 section of the Liverpool Biennial and discuss Taiwanese Art Today with curator Manray Hsu and guests at Tate Modern.



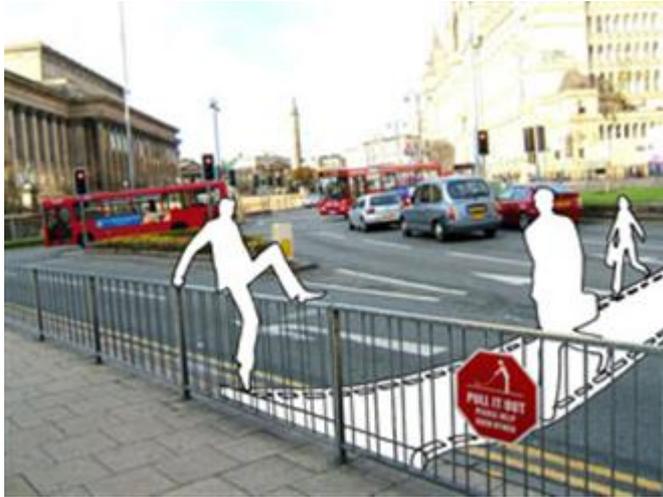
**Chen Chieh-jen's** *Neptune Jade* 2006 (working title) is a film about the ship and the experiences, past and present of Liverpool dock workers seen through the eyes of a former docker who is now homeless. In September 1995, after being sacked by Mersey Docks and Harbour Company, hundreds of Liverpool dockers called on the dockworkers from all over the

world to join the fight against the company. In September 1997, a cargo boat named *Neptune Jade* arrived at the port of Oakland in San Francisco bay. The ship was tied up at the terminal yet none of the containers could be discharged because the dockworkers in Oakland joined the solidarity campaign. Dockworkers in Vancouver, Kobe and Yokohama also resisted unloading the cargo. One month later, after failing to find a port that would accept its cargo, *Neptune Jade* sailed to Kaohsiung in Taiwan, where the ship was sold, renamed, and its cargo discharged. This solidarity campaign against the ship owners, organised by labourers around the world, started from Liverpool and ended in Taiwan.

Many of **Lee Mingwei's** works exist as situations in which participants explore issues of trust, intimacy and self-awareness. *Fabric of Memory* reveals how objects can capture personal histories. Lee will invite local residents to lend handmade textiles, typically items of clothing made by and received from a family member during childhood. Both maker and receiver will be asked to provide a history of the item, what memories they have of giving or wearing it and what feelings it now evokes. Placed in individual boxes,



each object is accompanied by its two documented histories. The viewer is invited to open each box, share in its memories and recall their own.



**Tsui Kuang-yu's** films evaluate the function of mundane elements of the city that we use daily but would never otherwise contemplate. The sites he selects are peculiar examples of urban design and infrastructure that unwittingly become cultural signifiers. Each has a specific purpose, typically to stop us doing something 'wrong' – parking in the wrong place, driving into the wrong lane or crossing the road at a busy

intersection. *Liverpool Top Ten!* 2006 (working title) is presented as breaking news stories. The film clips show residents of Liverpool running amuck as they follow instructions given by road signs that subvert the intended function of the spaces they control. Bollards erected to stop us parking in a private area become a handy dog training facility; a central reservation constructed to stop us driving into oncoming traffic becomes a rest point for pedestrians crossing a dual carriageway; a cobbled section of street becomes a relaxing place to massage one's feet. The films question how we use, navigate and relate to our immediate urban environment. Amidst the radically changing landscape of present-day Liverpool, to take stock of how urban design controls and influences behaviour seems particularly pertinent.

**Manray Hsu** is an independent curator, writer and critic based in Berlin and Taipei. He was co-curator (with Jerome Sans) of the 2000 Taipei Biennial: The Sky Is the Limit, was a jury member for the 49<sup>th</sup> Venice Biennale, and a jury member of the Unesco Prize for the 7th Istanbul Biennial.

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