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For Immediate Release  
Two-Person Exhibition  
"Sister Cities-Dreaming Alike Oceans Apart"  
Artists Exhibited: Lynn Marie Kirby & Li Xiaofei  
Video, Photography and Installation  
May 6- June 5, 2010  
Opening Reception: Saturday, May 15, 2010, 5-7 p.m.

San Francisco, March 26, 2010 - Togonon Gallery is proud to present "Sister Cities-Dreaming Alike Oceans Apart", a two-person exhibition featuring San Francisco-based artist **Lynn Marie Kirby** and Shanghai-based artist **Li Xiaofei**. The exhibition is in partnership with the Shanghai Celebration, a year long festival hosted by over fifty San Francisco Bay Area Institutions spearheaded by Asian Art Museum's Shanghai Exhibition.

The highlight of the exhibition will be **Lynn Marie Kirby's** and **Li Xiaofei's** videos of children from San Francisco and Shanghai. Guest curator Justin Hoover says of the exhibition: "Sister Cities is a portrait of two urban centers, Shanghai and San Francisco, and an investigation into the hopes and dreams of the next generation. Although these two artists produced their work individually, they unknowingly and simultaneously created powerful portraits of each of their cultures, employing cinematographic techniques that recorded subtle emotive variances in the psyche that only the lens can capture".

In addition to their individual videos, Kirby and Li will also present collaborative work. Based on their communications via email using online Google translator, Mandarin to English and English to Mandarin, the videos probe poignantly comedic cultural exchanges and gaps in translation and contemporary technology.

Additional works in the exhibit include an installation by Lynn Marie Kirby for her "Listening Project" in Shanghai, where she and her collaborators recorded aural portraits of the sites they encountered together. **Li Xiaofei** will exhibit a selection of his abstract large-scale

color photographs.

#### About the Artists

**Lynn Marie Kirby** is recognized as a member of a leading group of West Coast film and video artists in the 1990s who experimented with a new approach to film and video. Cinema Scope's Michael Sicinski refers to Kirby's work as a "unique conjunction of conceptual rigour and investigative spirituality". She has been widely exhibited in the United States at the Whitney Museum of American Art; the Museum of Modern Art, New York; Portland Museum of Art; the Kennedy Center and the Corcoran Gallery in Washington DC; the Pacific Film Archive in Berkeley; the Oakland Museum; Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, the de Young Museum and the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art. Her work has been shown abroad in Sarajevo, Paris, Berlin, St. Petersburg, Athens, London and Toronto.

She has received awards from the Guggenheim Foundation, Djerassi Foundation, National Endowment for the Arts, Film Arts Foundation, Jerome Foundation and Kelsey Street Press. She is a Professor at the California College of the Arts. Lynn studied at l'Ecole des Beaux Arts de Paris, also attending University in France and Sweden before receiving her BFA and an MFA from the San Francisco Art Institute. She currently lives and works in San Francisco.

**Li Xiaofei** is an artist and Art Director of the Fei Contemporary Art Center. His work has been exhibited extensively in China, Japan and Korea. He has also participated in art shows in France, Switzerland and Germany. He is a graduate of the Guangzhou Academy of Fine arts. Li currently lives and works in Shanghai, China.

#### About the Curator

**Justin Hoover** works as an independent curator for video and performance art projects. He is the present director for SOMArts Cultural Center in San Francisco.

#### About Togonon Gallery

Established in 1994, Togonon Gallery exhibits artists that represent the dynamic culture of the West Coast as well as international artists. The gallery works with emerging and established artists with a distinguished scope of diversity that encourages a lively dialogue about contemporary life. Our passion is to present exhibitions that will keep the energy alive for the arts. Togonon Gallery is a member of the San Francisco Art Dealers Association (SFADA).

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### Curator's Statement

The exhibition aims to illuminate commonalities and cultural nuances of Shanghai and San Francisco through the fresh eyes of its younger generation. Specifically, Kirby created videos about young boys on the cusp of puberty, talking about what they thought it was to be men and their expectations of manhood, while they stood before the camera for portraits in time. Li turned the lens of his video camera on the boys and girls of Shanghai, asking them how they exist within their nexus of social relations and influences. The simplicity of the responses of the respective nations' school children is evocative and draws both children and viewers to question the basis of many beliefs and reconsider the cultural shaping of developing identities.

### Description of Additional Artist Work in the Exhibition

**Lynn Marie Kirby's** *Listening in Shanghai* project is a continuation of her ongoing "Listening" project, which she started in San Francisco the past year, a portion of which was shown as part of the Art in Store Fronts City Neighborhood revitalization project sponsored by the City of San Francisco, and commissioned by Triple Base Gallery. **Kirby** has been and is continuing to work with listening as a form. In *Listening on 24<sup>th</sup> Street* she was involved in détourning park signs, menus, church pamphlets and other public booklets and then redistributing these re-articulated documents back into their original sites.

**Kirby** continuously invents formal constraints that allow her to frame her content reflexively, for example using a common school exercise book in China to determine the duration of a listening event at a specific site. At present she is listening with people she meets either by accident or by introduction in Shanghai. Lynn and her fellow listener-collaborators write in the exercise book to record the sounds they hear, creating aural portraits of the people and sites they encounter. These materials will take final form in in "Sister Cities-Dreaming Alike Oceans Apart."

**Kirby** has been working with gaps in recording technology in her film and video work and has extended this practice into language as well. She is now expanding these investigations into the interstices between intention and reception, and into the realms of the commons. Her public

"listening" experiments observe and reconfigure the social, its continuous stream of language, to heighten our awareness of the poetics and politics underlying our quotidian exchanges and movements through the world. No recording device is precise at gathering information. The gaps not only reveal the constantly shifting technology through which we view things but also remind us of the impossibility of grasping the whole picture. Kirby highlights these gaps through the simple method of taking sound notes rather than sound recordings.

In addition to his video, **Li Xiaofei** will exhibit a selection of large-scale color photographs. These photographs abstract the everyday through photographic re-contextualization of public spaces and objects in multiplicity. By combining dozens of small images into one larger picture plane, Li successfully flattens objects such as skyscrapers and freeways into seductive color field patterns enlivened and vibrating with variation. The structural repetition of the four by three images into long horizontal images measuring up to 6'1/2" x 2'1/2", declares a uniformity to time and rhythmic nature to its passing while simultaneously presenting the flux of time as unending and constant, much like the suggested endlessness of the fields of color created in these picture planes.

Visit [shanghaicelebration.com](http://shanghaicelebration.com) for more information.