



For Immediate Release

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The Beacon Institute to Showcase the Work of Artist Leigh Wen
March 8 – July 8, 2008

(Beacon, NY) – On March 8, 2008, The Beacon Institute for Rivers and Estuaries will open a new exhibit by artist Leigh Wen in its gallery at 199 Main Street in Beacon. Ms. Wen’s work portrays the powerful forces of water and nature on a grand scale.

“My paintings express my personal and cultural histories. Having grown up on the island of Taiwan, I have a deep affinity for the elemental power of water and the forces of nature,” says Ms. Wen. “As a Chinese now living in America, I feel the ebb and flow of competing cultures. The ancient philosophies of my homeland, which teach self-discipline and selflessness, collide and mingle with Western notions of ego, alienation, and desire.”

Born and raised in a small country village outside of Taipei, Taiwan, Leigh Wen grew up close to nature and spent her formative years exploring art and ceramics among the artisans of her village. Following studies at the National Taiwan University of Art, Ms. Wen immigrated to the United States and earned a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree from Washington State University. She later earned both her Master of Arts and Master of Fine Arts degrees from the State University of New York at Albany. Ms. Wen has been exhibiting nationally and internationally for over 20 years. Her work is featured in a significant number of corporate and private collections and she is involved with the Art in Embassies program which exhibits her work in American embassies in Hong Kong, Botswana, Jordan, Barbados, Manila and Singapore, among others. She has been a recipient of fellowships from the New York Foundation for the Arts and Helena Rubenstein Foundation, as well as a highly coveted grant from the Pollock-Krasner Foundation.

In describing her artistic process, Ms. Wen says, “My working method is a process of subtraction from darkness to light. I carved into the paint with a stylus to bring forth the individual lines that are the central motif of my work. These lines flow across the canvas in rhythms and frequencies that create depths and swells on the painted surface... Color is used to expand the work's emotional range; my palette is drawn not from appearances but from the lyric and psychic necessities of my art. The uniformity of line, from edge to edge and painting to painting, implies a suppression of the artist's hand in favor of an objectivity learned from nature. In spite of this, the work remains deeply autobiographical.” She notes that her inclination toward creating large scale works of art stems from Taoist concepts of how humans relate to nature.

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The exhibit, generously sponsored by **Sedore & Company**, certified public accountants, will be opened with a public reception on Saturday, March 8, from 5:00–7:00 p.m. in the Institute’s gallery at 199 Main Street in downtown Beacon. The gallery opening coincides with Beacon’s “Second Saturday” art events.

Ms. Wen, whose work is currently on display at the American Embassy in Botswana (in Southern Africa), will be traveling to Botswana in April to conduct workshops for local artists and children, at the request of the U.S. Department of State’s Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs. Upon her return, she will give a public talk at The Beacon Institute on Saturday, April 26 at 2:00 p.m. about her experiences in Botswana. On Saturday, June 7, also at 2:00 p.m., she will give another public talk about her artistic process. Both events are free and open to the public, thanks to an educational grant from **Hudson Valley Federal Credit Union**.

The Beacon Institute’s gallery hours are weekdays 9 a.m.–5 p.m.; Saturdays 11 a.m.–5 p.m. (second Saturdays until 8 p.m.); and Sundays 12 p.m.–5 p.m. For more information call 845-838-1600.

About The Beacon Institute:

The Beacon Institute for Rivers and Estuaries, headquartered in the City of Beacon in Dutchess County, New York, is a not-for-profit environmental research organization engaging scientists, engineers, educators and policy experts in collaborative work focusing on real-time monitoring of river ecosystems. It aims to make the Hudson Valley a global center for scientific and technological innovation that advances research, education and public policy regarding rivers and estuaries.

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