

Thursday, March 3rd, 2016

## Exercycles and Sweethearts: Firewall Internet Café

by David Brody

### Firewall: Pop-Up Internet Café

February 9 to March 6, 2016

16B Orchard Street, between Hester and Canal streets

New York City, 917-533-5375, [info@firewallcafe.com](mailto:info@firewallcafe.com)



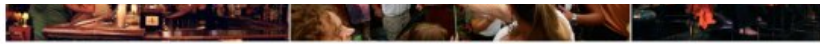
Firewall: Pop Up Internet Café, Orchard Street, New York, 2016

*Firewall Internet Café* is a fascinating pop-up exhibition that allows visitors to simultaneously search images on Google and the Chinese search engine, Baidu. Americans will not be surprised to find that Baidu's results are "filtered" but preconceived ideas of censorship, one discovers, are complicated by nuances of language and translation. "Mao," for example, has come to mean pornography; "firewall" conjures mythological imagery; and "Ai Weiwei" results in images of Exercycles and sweethearts. (As for censorship, Google has withdrawn from the Chinese market, but Bing remains.) The Chinese-American artist Joyce Yu-Jean Lee, whose informative installation this is, has collaborated with technologist Dan Phiffer (mastermind of the "dark net" used onsite by Occupy), along with a worldwide conspiracy of proxy hosts to bring off this seemingly simple exercise. (Simple or not, it seems to have struck a nerve in China: a Chinese citizen studying here was forbidden to participate on a panel connected with the show.) Google users, theoretically unrestricted, would do well to get to know the Party-approved Baidu, now in full export mode with notable market penetration into Brazil, Indonesia, Egypt and India. Indeed, Lower East side gallery goers, whose acknowledgement of Chinatown is usually restricted to cheap food, can get a guided tour of a future cultural, economic, and political reckoning.

Comparable Google/Baidu searches:

Google: **new york lesbian bar**





Baidu: 纽约女同志酒吧

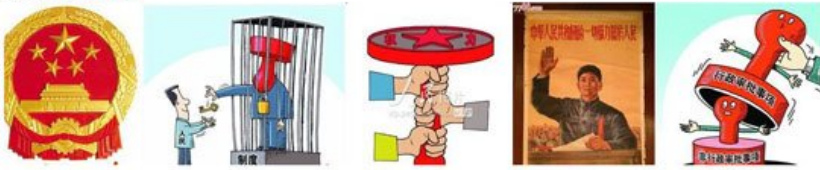


Search by Stone on Feb, 19 2016, 10:33pm

Google: power to the people



Baidu: 权力属于人民



Search by ruby on Feb, 16 2016, 11:27pm