

An Open Letter to Artists from Chinatown Community for Equitable Development (CCED)

Ai Hoa Market has served the majority asian, immigrant working class community of Chinatown for over 35 years. In the past few years, downtown developer Tom Gilmore has been buying up properties on the block where Ai Hoa and neighboring restaurants and stores sit. Through his property manager Coco Kristal, who brought in Red Altar to this space, he's raised rents and parking fees, causing Ai Hoa to operate at a loss of \$15,000 each month, pushing them out and leaving Chinatown residents without a grocery store for fresh produce.

As developers buy up land in Chinatown, we've seen low-income tenants fight [soaring rent increases](#), [unjust evictions](#) and [landlord harassment](#), while developers like Tom Gilmore displace longtime businesses that serve the low-income community.

Art events like Red Altar directly tie into this process through [artwashing](#) -- the act of holding art events and spaces in low-income neighborhoods which are then capitalized on by developers to raise rents and displace long standing working class residents.

We've seen this happen already in Boyle Heights and New York Chinatown. Once galleries and art spaces start coming into low-income areas, developers buy property to then sell and rent at a high rate. This practice displaces long time residents who have been living there, pricing them out of the community that sustains them.

Artists need to take a hard look at where they stand on this. We know, it's hard enough to be an artist and have space to show work, but we have to start considering the way art and working class communities can co-exist for mutual support rather than displacement. [Artists can and do play critical roles](#) in defending communities!

If you're interested in joining us in the fight against gentrification and displacement, we have a petition to sign and resources to learn more, get organized and get plugged in. We're also asking folks to comment on Tom Gilmore's company's instagram page (@gilmorchinagroup), demanding a full service, affordable grocery store to replace Ai Hoa.

Our Three Asks

[Link: Please sign this petition](#)

[Link: Learn more at our Artwashing Resource Page](#)

[Link: Demand a full-service, affordable grocery store replaces Ai Hoa on Tom Gilmore's Instagram](#)