



*Chinese Consulate in Houston Attempts to Interfere with Top-Award given to*  
**“Free China: The Courage to Believe”**

at the 45th WorldFest-Houston International Film Festival  
A Film by Michael Perlman (Award Winning Director of “Tibet: Beyond Fear”)  
Co-produced with New Tang Dynasty Television (NTD)

**”Free China” Receives “Special Jury Award” – the Equal Highest Award  
Given to the Documentary (under 60 minutes) Category in 2012**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: (NEW YORK, NY – April 23rd, 2012) The 45<sup>th</sup> WorldFest-Houston International Film Festival, the oldest independent film festival in the world and the 3<sup>rd</sup> oldest international film festival in North America, gave the “Special Jury Award” to the film “Free China: The Courage To Believe.”, which was the highest award given to its category this year. With more than 4,500 total entries in all categories from over 30 countries around the world, only one other film received the “Special Jury Award” and 9 other Bronze, Silver, Gold and Platinum awards were given for the documentary (under 60 minutes) category.

The film is a co-production between World2Be Productions and NTD, a non-for profit, predominantly Chinese language TV broadcaster headquartered in New York with correspondents in over 70 cities worldwide. The film examines widespread human rights violations in China through the remarkable stories of Jennifer Zeng, a mother and former Communist Party member and Dr. Charles Lee, a Chinese American businessman, who along with hundreds of thousands of peaceful citizens are tortured and subjected to slave labor for their spiritual beliefs in the Falun Gong meditation practice.

But the festival’s acknowledgement of the film was not without controversy with news that the “WorldFest” festival director Hunter Todd was contacted multiple times by the Chinese Consulate in Houston, in an attempt to discourage the festival to issue the award.

Mr. Hunter Todd commented on the night of the Awards Gala *”It was an excellent documentary [Free China] and the Jury liked it very much , thought it was technically excellent, told a good story and that’s our motto – a good story well told.”* He continued, *“ We have no real political agenda – we just like to speak to what is good.”*

The director of “Free China” Michael Perlman said *“I was shocked to hear that the Chinese Consulate in Houston had tried to put pressure on the festival director of WorldFest just as they had pressured the Palm Beach International Film Festival where they also wanted the world premiere of our film to be pulled from the program last week. This brazen attempt to silence free speech and expression of an American citizen in the United States by the Chinese government is dangerous and must be exposed so that these actions will not be repeated. I am grateful that both of these festivals have stood strong, citing the first amendment rights of all Americans and has refused to cave in to Chinese Communist government’s demands.”*

Kean Wong, the producer of “Free China” attended the Awards Gala and had this to say *“We’re very excited to receive this Special Jury Remi Award. The WorldFest organization have acknowledged ‘Free China’ as something that’s important and for that we’re very very grateful.”* He continues *“We really hope that in China people are given the right and the freedom to speak, to practice their peaceful beliefs and for all types of persecution to stop, whether its against the tens of millions of Falun Gong practitioners, Christians or Tibetans.”*

As political tensions rise in China with the latest corruption scandals surfacing along with more than one hundred thousand protests occurring each year inside China, this timely documentary film provides new information that connects China’s widespread human rights violations with systemic unfair trade practices and state-sanctioned organ harvesting for profit.



The film documents specific US companies that profit from enabling the Chinese leadership to suppress dissidents and sheds light on the recent lawsuit filed by the Human Rights Law Foundation against Cisco System for allegedly implementing an elaborate surveillance apparatus that has led to the detention and torture of many Chinese prisoners of conscience. The film also explores how Internet technologies are aiding human rights activists in China and around the world by allowing uncensored information into closed societies. In addition, the film highlights how a re-emergence of traditional Chinese culture and spirituality are helping bring about a new China.

**Interviewees in the film Include:**

**Dr. Charles Lee**, Chinese American Businessman and Falun Gong practitioner

**Jennifer Zeng**, Former Chinese Communist Party Member, Falun Gong practitioner and best selling author of “Witnessing History: One Chinese Woman’s Fight for Freedom”

**Hon. David Kilgour**, Former Canadian Secretary of State (Asia-Pacific)

**Rep. Chris Smith**, US Congressman, Senior Member of the Foreign Affairs Committee (Chairman of its Africa, Global Health and Human Rights Subcommittee)

**Ethan Gutmann**, Author of “Losing The New China” and Contributor for The Asian Wall Street Journal

For more information please visit: [FreeChinaMovie.com](http://FreeChinaMovie.com) & [www.WorldFest.org](http://www.WorldFest.org)

Newsclip from the Awards Gala (interviews with Festival Director and ‘Free China’ producer in English):

<http://www.ntdtv.com/xtr/b5/2012/04/22/a690621.html>

Or <http://tinyurl.com/6w7kbzs>

**Press Contacts:**

Michael Perlman (Director/Producer)  
World2Be Productions  
Tel: (212) 709-8056

Kean Wong (Producer/Executive Producer)  
NTD Television  
Tel: (347)-681-3987