

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Bat Cave: Treasures of the Day and Creatures of the Night
Opens at the Asia Society Hong Kong Center Chantal Miller Gallery
Running until Jan 3, 2016

(Hong Kong, Sept 15, 2015) Asia Society Hong Kong Center (ASHK) has co-organized an exhibition of traditional and contemporary Chinese objects featuring bat motifs - *Bat Cave: Treasures of the Day and Creatures of the Night* - with The Art Museum, Institute of Chinese Studies, The Chinese University of Hong Kong. On the evening of September 15, 2015, Mr. Ronnie Chan, Co-chairman of Asia Society and Chairman of Asia Society Hong Kong Center, and Ms. S. Alice Mong, Executive Director of Asia Society Hong Kong Center were joined by Dr. Josh Yiu, Acting Director of Art Museum of The Chinese University of Hong Kong, Dr. Xu Xiaodong, Associate Director of Art Museum of The Chinese University of Hong Kong, Dr. Raymond Tang Man-Leung, Curator (Chinese Antiquities) of Museum of Art and Mr. Alan Lo, Director of MK Lau Foundation Limited to officiate an opening ceremony of the exhibition. The exhibition will be on view from September 16, 2015 until January 03, 2016 at the Chantal Miller Gallery of ASHK.

All at the right time

When ASHK restored the former Explosives Magazine Compound as its new home, ASHK had to redesign a straight bridge into an elbow-shaped one, in order to protect the natural habitats of the resident fruit bats which can still be found at the Center. Ms. S. Alice Mong said, “The Asia Society Hong Kong Center is proud to present this creative exhibition providing visitors with a unique experience in which to appreciate Chinese arts. The three bat motifs which were lit up at the officiating ceremony reflect the special meaning of ‘Three’ in Chinese tradition – ‘*The Above, the Land and the Man*’, and reveal that the exhibition is a perfect match of location, timing and people. ” Expressing gratitude to sponsors and partners, “The exhibition would not happen if it wasn’t for the kind support of the Art Museum, The Chinese University of Hong Kong, the museum of Art, renowned collectors in town, sponsors and Sun Xun,” Alice added.

Acting Director of Art Museum of The Chinese University of Hong Kong Dr. Josh Yiu said “The Asia Society Hong Kong Center is a perfect venue for this exhibition, because it leverages its wildlife habitat to examine a popular and auspicious motif in Chinese art. Prior to this

exhibition, I would never have thought that bats live in this part of Hong Kong, even though I was born and raised here.”

Discover the hidden message of the Bat

To break the convention, the exhibition combines traditional and contemporary art through the theme of Bats. The bat motifs play an important role in the art in the Chinese history which hides several messages. Featuring over 70 exquisite traditional Chinese objects with bat motifs, including ceramics, jade carvings, paintings, and textiles, etc. In addition, Mr. Sun Xun, winner of Best Young Artist Award in 2010 Chinese Contemporary Art Awards, will take part in the exhibition by creating a wall mural inside the gallery and showing his digital art, continuing with the theme of bats. With projections of bat motifs, the gallery will be turned into a bat cave - providing visitors with a unique experience.

Unique wall mural by Sun Xun

During the exhibition period, the gallery will be transformed into bat caves by the projections of bat motifs. Mr. Sun Xun, a famous contemporary Chinese artists, spent 4 days at the gallery from September 7, 2015. He created a bat themed wall mural (53”W x 19”H) which was exclusively designed for the exhibition. “The wall mural is inspired by the Chinese philosophy and I applied the concept of five elements (metal, wood, water, fire, and earth) with the Japanese painting school - Kanō school, by using black color in Chinese style and gold color in Japanese style,” Mr. Sun said. Many people doubt about the matching of traditional and contemporary Chinese art, but Mr. Sun doesn’t. “I line them up by using the Bat, all the bats on the artworks remain alive. My duty is to bring them alive,” he added. *Beyond-ism*, a short film made using Chinese ink by Sun Xun will also be on display. The video re-interprets the fantastical legend about the court sorcerer Xu Fu who was sent by the first Chinese emperor Qin Shihuang to a mythical land in search of the elixir of life. With an emphasis on animal motifs including bats, this tale is about the longing for blessings and longevity and speaks to the bat embellished antiques in the other chambers. The bringing together of ancient and modern is the perfect way to spark visitors’ exploration of the implications and meanings of bats in different times and space.

Display in Hong Kong for the First Time

Bats are an auspicious symbol in China as the word for “bats” in Chinese is phonetically similar to the word for “blessings”. Bats were especially popular during the Ming and Qing dynasties, and appeared on many different handcrafts, and were treasured by all - from populace to

royals. 4 of the artworks are being exhibited for the first time in Hong Kong, these include: Peach-ground waxed paper with bats among clouds and Eight Auspicious Signs, Cinnabar lacquer box carved with bats and clouds, Large Vase with Spring scene in doucai enamels from the Qianlong period (1736-1795) and Embroidery with dragon-and-flaming-pearl design from the Jiaqing period (1796-1820). The exhibition is hoping to share blessings and luck with everyone in Hong Kong.

Reunion after Thirty Years

A highlight of the exhibition is the reunion of a pair of fine Yongzheng peach-and-bat plates that have been separated for more than 30 years. They have been in the collections of two local museums – the Art Museum, The Chinese University of Hong Kong and Hong Kong Museum of Art. The Peach-and-bat plates are a good illustration of how complex meanings are expressed through combining motifs. The combination of peach and bat motifs represents good fortune and longevity. Other masterpieces include Qianlong overlay glass bottle-vase, a semi-formal court robe of blue silk from the Guangxu period, and a painting of the Three Abundances by the founder of the Lingnan School, Gao Jianfu.

Public Lectures and Workshops Promoting a Better Understanding of the Bat

A series of public lectures and workshops will be held during the exhibition period. Speakers include Dr. Xu Xiaodong, Associate Director of Art Museum of The Chinese University of Hong Kong, Artist Sun Xun, Mr. Scott Hessels, Associate professor of Creative Media of City University of Hong Kong, Ceramic artist Takeshi Yasuda and Ornithologist Paul Leader. Lecture topics will cover skills of art admiration and creation, marrying science and visual art, ceramic making and the natural habitats at ASHK. Besides eco-tours there will be craft workshops including Chinese paper art workshop and Qipao Button workshop organized, aiming to enhance public interest in art as well as Chinese culture.

Searching for “blessings” in the City

ASHK join hands with the Design Competition and Workshop Partner of the exhibition, DFA AWARDS, to launch a Bat motif product Design Competition, providing design students a platform to turn their creativity into a product design that is inspired by bats. The winning entry will be made as an actual product to be sold at ASHK shop. Members of the public are also encouraged to contribute their creativity by joining a photo Instagram campaign **Bat@City**. Everyone can join this campaign by taking snap shots of “bats” or objects which have a resemblance to bats, and share the images with the social media.

Spreading Fortune from Bat through Joint Efforts

ASHK has Hang Lung Properties as an outreach partner. Kornhill Plaza will hold ceramic cup making workshops, while Fashion Walk will display information of the exhibition and bat images created by students from Hong Kong Art School and Hong Kong Institution of Education in October 2015. To enhance the awareness of the exhibition, ASHK will have a special campaign with restaurants in Food Street in Fashion Walk. Diners at Food Street who spend over HKD\$300 can receive 2 free tickets to the exhibition. In the meantime, ASHK will offer a free ticket to the exhibition to each visitor of SKY100, details will be announced in due course.

You may also connect with Asia Society Hong Kong Center on social media:

Facebook: www.facebook.com/Asiasocietyhongkong

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/AsiaSocietyHK>

Instagram: @AsiaSocietyHK

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Co-organizer:

Hong Kong Center

香港中文大學 · 中國文化研究所 · 文物館
Art Museum, Institute of Chinese Studies,
The Chinese University of Hong Kong

Exhibition Partner:

香 HONG 港 KONG 藝 MUSEUM 術 OF ART 館

Outreach Partner:



Design Competition and Workshops Partner:



About Asia Society

Founded in 1956 by John D. Rockefeller 3rd in New York, The Asia Society is a leading not-for-profit, non-government educational organization dedicated to promoting mutual understanding and strengthening partnerships among peoples, leaders, and institutions of Asia and the United States in a global context. Across the fields of arts, business, culture, education, and policy, The Asia Society provides insight, generates ideas, and promotes collaboration to address present challenges and create a shared future.

About Asia Society Hong Kong Center

As one of the eleven centers of The Asia Society, Asia Society Hong Kong Center (the “Hong Kong Center” or “ASHK”) was established in 1990 by a group of Hong Kong community leaders, led by the late Sir Q.W. Lee, the honorary chairman of Hang Seng Bank.

In February 2012, the Hong Kong Center established its new permanent home in Admiralty at the Old Victoria Barracks, Former Explosives Magazine site. Steeped in history, cultural significance and natural beauty, the site was originally built by the British Army in the mid-19th century for explosives and ammunition production and storage. Through careful conservation, restoration and adaptive re-use, this heritage site was successfully transformed into a cultural, artistic and intellectual hub. ASHK warmly welcomes the public to visit the Center, to join the programs and view the exhibitions organized by ASHK and its partners.

As the leading regional knowledge-based platform for furthering the understanding of the countries and cultures of Asia and global issues that impact the region, Asia Society Hong Kong Center boasts extensive regional and international networks of leaders and scholars, and offers a broad variety of programs in the form of lectures, performances, film screenings and exhibitions to the community.

Asia Society Hong Kong Center was established entirely with local funding and is supported through membership dues, fundraising events, and contributions from individuals, corporations and foundations that work together to support and advance its mission.

About Art Museum, The Chinese University of Hong Kong

Founded in 1971, the Art Museum serves the local community and beyond by collecting, preserving, researching and exhibiting a wide range of Chinese art and artefacts. It promotes the excellence of both its permanent and loan collections of Chinese art through scholarly endeavours and outreach efforts. As a university museum, it provides a direct and sustained access to original Chinese works of art. With different University faculties it also advocates interdisciplinary approaches to the study of Chinese art.

The collection of fifteen thousand works of art was developed over four decades. The acquisition of the late Jen Yu-wen collection in 1973 formed the core of the Art Museum's original collection, which consisted of over one thousand paintings and calligraphy from the Ming period to the mid-20th century. Since then, gifts from generous donors have continuously augmented the holdings, offering a comprehensive overview of China's artistic heritage from the Neolithic period to the 21st century. Rare rubbings from the Song period, calligraphy from the Song to Qing, Guangdong paintings, Yixing *Zisha* ware, export porcelain and private kiln ware, ancient seals, and the Sheng Xuanhuai Archive are among the highlights of the collection.

About Hang Lung Properties

Hang Lung Properties Limited, a constituent stock of the Hang Seng Index and Hang Seng Corporate Sustainability Indices in Hong Kong, is a leading real estate developer in Hong Kong and mainland China. Boasting a diversified portfolio of investment properties in Hong Kong, the Company has progressively branched out into the Mainland since the 1990s, building, owning and managing world-class commercial complexes in key cities, projects that have earned international acclaim for their exceptional quality of architectural design, services and sustainable features.

Riding on the immense success of its two landmark properties in Shanghai, Plaza 66 and Grand Gateway 66, the Company's footprint has expanded to Shenyang, Jinan, Wuxi, Tianjin, Dalian, Kunming and Wuhan, with all the Mainland projects carrying the "66" brand. Subsequent to the grand openings of Parc 66 in Jinan, Palace 66 and Forum 66 in Shenyang, as well as Center 66 in Wuxi over the past few years, Riverside 66, another world-class investment property in Tianjin, also came into operation in September 2014. As Hang Lung's business continues to grow, the Company is set to develop into the most admired mega national commercial property enterprise in the market.

About DFA Awards

Since 2003, the Hong Kong Design Centre has launched the DFA Awards to underpin the role of designers in society and to celebrate design leadership and exemplary design in Asia, as well as to recognise the rising force of emerging designers in Hong Kong. Hong Kong Young Design Talent Award (HKYDTA), one of the DFA Awards, aims to support and cultivate Hong Kong up-and-coming designers and design graduates aged 35 or below. Awardees may receive sponsorship to undergo overseas work attachment or study in renowned design companies or institutes to unleash their potential.

Media Enquiry

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