

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Iconic artist Yoshitomo Nara opens first major solo exhibition in Hong Kong at Asia Society Hong Kong Center

(Hong Kong, February 17, 2015) The Asia Society Hong Kong Center (“ASHK”) is hosting the first major solo exhibition of renowned Japanese artist Yoshitomo Nara in Hong Kong from March 6 – July 26, 2015. With tremendous support from The Hong Kong Jockey Club Charities Trust, ***The Hong Kong Jockey Club Presents – Life is Only One: Yoshitomo Nara*** exhibition will be free for the public to enjoy, including a selection of Nara’s most evocative works, public lectures and educational programs to bring attendees closer to one of the world’s most celebrated contemporary artists.

The title of the exhibition comes from the Nara painting *Life is Only One!* and reflects an abiding theme of the artist’s work. The juxtaposition of the innocent-looking girl and the human skull on the canvas prompts us to contemplate on the big question about the fleeting nature of life. But what does this provocative subject mean to the artist and to us? Through a wide range of mediums from paintings, sketches, photographs, sculptures to mixed media installations, the artist unveils his open-ended interpretation of life. This exhibition showcases works from Nara’s extensive oeuvre in the past two decades – together with 3 new paintings, 17 new drawings, and some recent puppy sculptures created specifically for this show.

“The Asia Society Hong Kong Center is delighted to bring Yoshitomo Nara’s thought-provoking work to Hong Kong in this exhibition. Our collaboration with this most beloved and accessible artist helps us to further our educational aim of encouraging creative expression and nurturing an appreciation of the arts in our community,” said S. Alice Mong, Executive Director of Asia Society Hong Kong Center.

With the staunch support from The Hong Kong Jockey Club Charities Trust, the Asia Society Hong Kong Center can offer visitors free admission to this exhibition as well as a series of concurrent education programs. This contribution from the Trust follows the Former Explosive Magazine revitalization, a heritage preservation initiative which created a dynamic complex allowing ASHK to extend its educational programs to the larger community.

From drawings on envelopes and cardboards that reveal Yoshitomo Nara’s spontaneous mind, to the photographs from the Sakhalin series that capture the stories on the remote Russian island, the works displayed in the exhibition showcase the artist’s creativity in different, and sometimes unconventional, mediums. Another highlight of the exhibition is puppy sculptures to be installed in the outdoor area in the center while some will be placed near an eye-catching sculpture Fountain of Life, a large white teacup with stacked heads that seem to cry tears. The purity of the work’s glossy white finish and the surreal subject matter are at once sweet and eerie.

Educational programs for the community:

The donation by The Hong Kong Jockey Club has also made it possible for the Asia Society Hong Kong Center to craft a series of educational programs to complement the ***Life is Only One: Yoshitomo***

Nara exhibition. Running throughout the exhibition period, these programs include public lectures by Yoshitomo Nara and a range of scholars, as well as weekend tours and workshops, and an Illustration Master Class series hosted by local artists with classes for young people and the community across-the-board.

Exhibition visitors will also have the chance to create their own works of art at a drop-in studio set up every last Sunday of the month at Asia Society Hong Kong Center Landscape Terrace from noon, following the “Sunday with Nara” workshops. Art lovers of all ages are invited. Completed works can be entered into the “Life is Only One – Imagination of Life” Art Competition, with winning pieces exhibited at Asia Society Hong Kong Center’s Chantal Miller Gallery during the summer of 2015.

Outreach partner Hang Lung Properties Limited will join the Asia Society Hong Kong Center to ensure that as many people as possible can be inspired by Nara’s work. Through educational workshops and other events at the following locations of Hang Lung: Fashion Walk in Causeway Bay, The Peak Galleria and Kornhill Plaza in Quarry Bay, the educational mission of the exhibition will reach out even further to the local community.

Exhibition details:

Life is Only One: Yoshitomo Nara will be held at Chantal Miller Gallery, Asia Society Hong Kong Center, from March 6 – July 26, 2015, with **free admission**.

The gallery is located at the Asia Society Hong Kong Center, 9 Justice Drive, Admiralty. It is open from 11am – 6pm, Tuesday to Thursday, with an 8pm close on Friday, Saturday and Sunday. To accommodate an expected increase in visitors during Art Basel Hong Kong (March 16 – 19), the Gallery will be open from 11am – 8pm on those few days.

For more information, call the Asia Society Hong Kong Center hotline (+852 2103 9511) or visit the **Life is Only One: Yoshitomo Nara website at www.nara.asiasociety.org.hk** or the **exhibition facebook community page: Life is Only One: Yoshitomo Nara**.

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

Notes to editors: Media Preview of the exhibition will be held on March 5, 2015. More details will be provided closer to the time.

Link for Photos Dropbox: <http://goo.gl/eqosYW>



Hong Kong Center

Organizer:



Hong Kong Center

Exclusive Sponsor:



香港賽馬會慈善信託基金
The Hong Kong Jockey Club
Charities Trust

Outreach 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 The Hong Kong Jockey Club

Founded in 1884, The Hong Kong Jockey Club is a world-class horse racing operator and Hong Kong's largest community benefactor, as well as one of Asia's most prestigious membership clubs. Operating as a not-for-profit organisation, the Club allocates its surplus funds for charitable and community projects. In 2013/14, its donations reached a record \$3.6 billion, and in the last decade alone it supported over 1,275 projects. The Club is also Hong Kong's largest single taxpayer, contributing a record HK\$19.58 billion in 2013/14. With about 70% of its revenue given back to society every year through donations and tax contributions, The Hong Kong Jockey Club delivers a significantly higher return to the community than any other racing and/or sports betting organisation in the world. As a socially responsible organisation, the Club helps Government combat illegal betting and advocates responsible gambling. The Club is also one of Hong Kong's largest employers with over 24,800 full-time and part-time staff. Committed to global excellence and giving back to society, the Club is always "riding high together for a better future" with the people of Hong Kong. Please visit 130.hkjc.com.

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.

Media Enquiry

For more information, high res photo request or to arrange an interview, please contact:

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