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Major Mel Chin Survey Travels to Four Houston Museums on January 17

Houston, Texas, December 22, 2014 — HOUSTON— Asia Society Texas Center, Blaffer Art Museum, the Contemporary Arts Museum Houston, and the Station Museum of Contemporary Art are proud to collaborate on the Houston presentation of *Mel Chin: Rematch*, the most expansive survey of Chin's work to date and a homecoming for one of the city's most renowned artists.

Organized by the New Orleans Museum of Art, the traveling retrospective will launch its Houston run on Saturday, January 17, 2015 *Mel Chin: Rematch* continues through April 19 at Asia Society Texas Center. The website RematchHouston.com will serve as an online portal to the Houston presentation's four components.

Working across media including sculpture, video, drawing, painting, collage, land art, and performance art, the Houston-born Chin has adopted mutability as his operating premise over his four-decade career, with works ranging from intimate sculptures and drawings steeped in the legacy of Dada and Surrealism to ambitious site-specific, research-driven, collaborative projects involving scientists, fellow artists, and community members.

"Operating in the legacy of Marcel Duchamp, Chin allows his ideas to dictate the form of his art, yet he looks toward biological and evolutionary models as the underlying framework for his practice," writes exhibition curator Miranda Lash, curator of contemporary art at the Speed Art Museum in Louisville, Kentucky. "Chin describes his willingness to change as a survival strategy, no different from that of a cell, or a virus, which, upon encountering danger or an obstacle, adapts in order to continue reproducing."

While some of Chin's best-known works reflect his concern for social justice, the exhibition corrects a common misunderstanding of his mission—that he is out to save the world or make people behave a certain way. On the contrary, he has said that he views art as "a catalytic force" that fosters the availability of options in order "to allow things to happen."

Avoiding a chronological presentation, the retrospective's 60 artworks highlight thematic strands that underscore Chin's broad range of subject matter, materials, and formal approaches. Chin describes the survey as an opportunity to revisit, reframe, and battle his previous conceptions. "Points of view established in the past are no longer up to date," he says. "It's time for a rematch."

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Rematch at Asia Society Texas Center

Each of the six Mel Chin works on view at Asia Society Texas Center extends the artist's connection to the culture, history, and aesthetics of Asia.

KNOWMAD (1999) is an installation with interactive experiences centered on mapping, borders, nomadism and the encroachment of technology. The complicated political histories across both western and eastern Asia, and America's role in them, frame *Geometry of Wrath* (2005) and *Our Strange Flower of Democracy* (2005). *Scholar's Nightmare* (2001) and *Wheel of Death* (2002) draw on Confucian and Buddhist philosophies, and their ability to both order and blur reality, while *Magnolias in the Moonlight* (1976) draws out the yin and yang principles in nature, and its ongoing influence on artists. The exhibition is accompanied by a fully illustrated catalogue including essays, an extensive illustrated chronology of Chin's career, numerous entries on specific artworks, and a comprehensive biography.

The presentation at Asia Society Texas Center is made possible through major support from Chinhui Juhn and Eddie Allen, Mary Lawrence Porter, the City of Houston through Houston Arts Alliance, Nancy C. Allen, Nancy and Robert J. Carney, and The Clayton Fund. Lead funding also provided by Leslie and Brad Bucher, Holland and Jereann Chaney, Anne and Albert Chao, The Favrot Fund, Kathy and Glen Gondo, the Vivian L. Smith Foundation, and Dorothy Carsey Sumner. Additional support given by Marilyn Oshman, the Oshman Foundation, and Abrahams Oriental Rugs. Funding is also provided through contributions by Friends of Exhibitions at Asia Society Texas Center.

About Mel Chin

Mel Chin was born in Houston in 1951 and received a Bachelor of Arts from Peabody College in Nashville, Tennessee. He has had solo exhibitions at the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden (1989), Walker Art Center (1990), The Menil Collection (1991), and Station Museum of Contemporary Art, Houston (2006). Chin has received numerous awards and grants from organizations such as the National Endowment for the Arts, New York State Council for the Arts, Art Matters, Creative Capital, the Penny McCall Foundation, the Pollock/Krasner Foundation, the Joan Mitchell Foundation, the Rockefeller Foundation, and the Louis Comfort Tiffany Foundation, among others.

About Asia Society Texas Center

With 11 locations throughout the world, Asia Society is the leading educational organization promoting mutual understanding and strengthening partnerships among the peoples, leaders, and institutions of Asia and the United States. Asia Society Texas Center executes the global mission with a local focus, enriching and engaging the vast diversity of Houston through innovative, relevant programs in arts and culture, business and policy, education, and community outreach.

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