Artists from Mainland China, Hong Kong, and Taiwan Commissioned to Create New Works for Guggenheim Collection and Fall 2016 Exhibition

Five individual artists, an artists’ group, and a collaborative duo selected through The Robert H. N. Ho Family Foundation Chinese Art Initiative at the Guggenheim

(NEW YORK, NY—March 21, 2016)—Today, the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum announced the artists who have been commissioned to create works that will enter its collection as part of The Robert H. N. Ho Family Foundation Chinese Art Initiative. Hailing from mainland China, Hong Kong, and Taiwan, Chia-En Jao, Kan Xuan, Sun Xun, Sun Yuan & Peng Yu, Tsang Kin-Wah, Yangjiang Group, and Zhou Tao will produce works for a group exhibition opening on November 4, 2016 at the Guggenheim Museum. Working in a range of mediums, including video, sculpture, installation, mixed media on paper, and participatory intervention, these artists are unified by their distinctive and independent practices that poetically balance politics and aesthetics. Featuring the new commissioned works, the Guggenheim presentation will offer a heterogeneous view of contemporary art from China and explore tensions between individual narratives and the constructions of mainstream history. The exhibition, the second of the initiative, will be accompanied by a catalogue and a robust offering of educational programs and public events with artists.

The exhibition is organized by Hou Hanru, Consulting Curator, The Robert H. N. Ho Family Foundation Chinese Art Initiative, and Xiaoyu Weng, The Robert H. N. Ho Family Foundation Associate Curator of Chinese Art. The Robert H. N. Ho Family Foundation Chinese Art Initiative is part of the Guggenheim Museum’s Asian Art Initiative, directed by Dr. Alexandra Munroe, Samsung Senior Curator, Asian Art and Senior Advisor, Global Arts.

Launched in 2013, The Robert H. N. Ho Family Foundation Chinese Art Initiative is the most recent of the Guggenheim’s initiatives to work with artists, scholars, and curators from around the world to bring intersecting regional and global histories of modernism and contemporary practices to the fore. Made possible by a major grant from The Robert H. N. Ho Family Foundation, this international curatorial program focuses on commissioning major works for the Guggenheim’s collection by artists born in mainland China, Taiwan, Hong Kong, or Macao. All works created through the initiative will become part of the Guggenheim’s collection, forming The Robert H. N. Ho Family Foundation Collection. Through the selection of key artists, practices, and issues arising from across Greater China, The Robert
H. N. Ho Family Foundation Chinese Art Initiative seeks to strengthen the Guggenheim’s collegial network among the Chinese art community, advance the study and appreciation of post-1979 Chinese art, and expand the discourse and investigation of contemporary art today. The first of the initiative’s three exhibitions, *Wang Jianwei: Time Temple*, was on view at the Guggenheim from October 2014 to February 2015 and featured a sculptural installation, paintings, a film, and a performance by Wang Jianwei, one of China’s leading conceptual artists.

The second exhibition will continue the Guggenheim’s history of site-specific works developed in collaboration between artists and curators. The artists—who were selected after extensive curatorial research and studio visits—share a socially aware perspective, actively repositioning and challenging current dialogues about art from Greater China in an international context. The commissioned artists are:

**Chia-En Jao (b. 1976, Taipei)**
Chia-En Jao’s project-based practice stretches across different mediums, including drawing, performance, site-specific installation, and multichannel video installation. After studying, working, and exhibiting in Europe, Jao returned to Taipei where he currently lives and works. This international experience informs his perspective on the particular conditions of Taiwan’s political, economical, and social situation. His practice—deeply rooted in his local surroundings—has more recently delved into colonial histories and the cross-cultural tensions in the Asia Pacific region. His anthropological and collaborative approach has led him to work with civilian protestors, taxi drivers, and immigrant workers from Southeast Asian countries. For Jao, these personal encounters have generated intriguing and valuable interpretations of history that subtly subvert and question the established, official versions produced by the nation-state and media.

**Kan Xuan (b. 1972, Xuancheng, Anhui Province)**
Kan Xuan uses video as her primary medium, and also experiments with photography, installation, and performance. Kan moved to Hangzhou to study at the China Academy of Art and subsequently attended the prestigious residency program at Rijksakademie van Beeldende Kunsten in Amsterdam. Through visual manipulations, Kan reveals the eerie details of the trivial and mundane objects, gestures, and emotions captured by her camera. Recently, Kan has explored more historical subject matters, embarking on extensive travel and research to create such video installations as *Millet Mounds* (2012), which surveys over one hundred extant imperial tombs across mainland China. She has participated in numerous international exhibitions—including the Guangzhou Triennial (2005 and 2012), Havana Biennial (2006), Chinese Pavilion at the Venice Biennale (2007), Istanbul Biennial (2007), Moscow Biennial (2009), Gwangju Biennial (2010)—making her one of the most important global artists of her generation. Kan splits her time between Beijing and Amsterdam.

**Sun Xun (b. 1980, Fuxin, Liaoning Province)**
Born in an industrial mining town in northeast China, Sun Xun studied printmaking at the China Academy of Art in Hangzhou. His interest in traditional modes of representation, such as ink painting and woodcut printing, is reflected in the deft craftsmanship of his animated films. Energetic and hand-drawn, his films are composed of up to five thousand single frames. Large-scale viewing environments are an integral experiential component of his work, replete with props and hand-painted walls. The artist often constructs these environments over several days. Layered with metaphors and references, Sun’s work unravels concepts such as time, history, revolution, myth, and humanity through surreal imageries.
and fantastical episodes. In addition to being featured in art exhibitions, his films have been screened at numerous film festivals, including the Torino Film Festival, Italy (2007), and several iterations of the International Short Film Festival Oberhausen, Germany. Sun runs Pi, an animation studio he founded in Hangzhou in 2006. He lives and works in Beijing.

Sun Yuan (b. 1972, Beijing) & Peng Yu (b. 1974, Jiamusi, Heilongjiang Province)
Sun Yuan and Peng Yu both studied oil painting at the Central Academy of Fine Arts, Beijing. They came to prominence independently in the late 1990s, partaking in landmark exhibitions of experimental art, including Post-Sense Sensibility: Alien Bodies & Delusion, Beijing (1999), and Fuck Off!, Donglang Gallery, Shanghai (2000). Collaborators since 2000, the duo have incorporated unconventional and organic materials, such as live animals and human fat, into their powerful art practice that challenges the order and control imposed by political and social systems. Sun & Peng draw inspiration not only from major international social and political events, but also from local news, close friends, and neighbors. Their practice is rebellious and whimsical, addressing provocative topics with a touch of humor and a very individual brand of realism. The duo also curates occasionally; they co-organized the exhibition Unlived by What is Seen (2014–15), which spanned three venues in Beijing and focused on socially engaged art in China since 2008. In 2005, Sun & Peng were invited to be part of the inaugural exhibition in the Chinese Pavilion at the Venice Biennale. They live and work in Beijing.

Tsang Kin-Wah (b. 1976, Shantou, Guangdong Province)
Tsang Kin-Wah migrated to Hong Kong at the age of six. After completing his undergraduate degree in fine art the Chinese University of Hong Kong, he moved to London for a master’s degree in book arts at the Camberwell College of Arts, the London Institute. This sojourn in the United Kingdom and his subsequent return to Hong Kong—where Tsang has since resided—propelled him to ruminate on questions of identity and existence, especially the interplay between appearance and truth. Tsang has participated in major international group exhibitions and biennials, for which he has created installations that respond specifically to each space. Tsang’s immersive multimedia installations incorporate found footage, sound, and light to create complex, visceral interplays of text and image. As the Hong Kong representative at the Venice Biennale in 2015, he presented The Infinite Nothing, a four-part video and sound installation.

Yangjiang Group (est. 2002, Yangjiang, Guangdong Province)
Yangjiang Group was formed by Zheng Guogu (b. 1970, Yangjiang), Chen Zaiyan (b. 1971, Yangchun) and Sun Qinglin (b. 1974, Yangjiang), and takes its name from the southern coastal city where they are based. Positioning themselves away from the better-known cultural, economic, and political centers, they work in a self-designed studio building that resembles an iceberg. Such critical distance allows them to create an autonomous zone, cultivating an independent spirit and approach in pursuit of political and social freedom through art practice. Known for playfully attacking traditional Chinese calligraphy and subverting socio-cultural conventions and values, the group produces works in many mediums, such as painting, multimedia installation, performance, and social gatherings. Ordinary events and activities, such as eating, gambling, soccer playing, and tea drinking, are vital to their convivial working process and community-based exhibition experience. By framing aspects of everyday life as art, Yangjiang Group poetically and subtly resists established assumptions and hierarchies of power.

Zhou Tao (b. 1976, Changsha, Hunan Province)
Zhou Tao studied at the Guangzhou Academy of Fine Arts. Places and communities in massive flux provide the visual and narrative materials for his arresting video works, which are often presented in exhibitions alongside his sketches, drawings, and photographs. His practice includes transforming ordinary surroundings into theaters, where he superimposes and interchanges background and stage, viewer and actor, fact and storyline, documentation and representation. The intricate relationship of time and space unfolds organically in Zhou’s videos. His camera is not simply a recording device but an extension of his existence, through which, he has documented Guangzhou, where he lives and works, as well as New York, Paris, Bangkok, and Barcelona. Zhou’s acclaimed short film Blue and Red (2014)—which was produced by the Han Nefkens Foundation, Barcelona, and Bangkok Art and Culture Centre—premiered in 2015 at New Directors/New Films, a festival presented by the Film Society of Lincoln Center and the Museum of Modern Art, New York. Blue and Red recently won the First Prize of the Jury at the International Short Film Festival Oberhausen, Germany (2015).

The Robert H. N. Ho Family Foundation
Established in Hong Kong in 2005 by Robert Hung Ngai Ho as a private philanthropic organization, The Robert H. N. Ho Family Foundation works to foster and support Chinese arts and culture and to promote a deeper understanding of Buddhist teachings and their application in everyday life. The Foundation supports efforts that make traditional Chinese arts accessible and relevant to audiences worldwide. The Foundation also supports the creation of new works that bring innovative perspectives to the history of Chinese art, and that improve the quality and accessibility of scholarship on Chinese art. Guided by a belief that the insights of Buddhism have a vital role to play in approaching the challenges facing contemporary society, The Robert H. N. Ho Family Foundation has committed substantial resources to expanding the understanding, interpretation, and application of Buddhist philosophy.

About the Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation
Founded in 1937, the Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation is dedicated to promoting the understanding and appreciation of art, primarily of the modern and contemporary periods, through exhibitions, education programs, research initiatives, and publications. The Guggenheim network that began in the 1970s when the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, was joined by the Peggy Guggenheim Collection, Venice, has since expanded to include the Guggenheim Museum Bilbao (opened 1997), and the Guggenheim Abu Dhabi (currently in development). Looking to the future, the Guggenheim Foundation continues to forge international collaborations that take contemporary art, architecture, and design beyond the walls of the museum, including with the Guggenheim UBS MAP Global Art Initiative and The Robert H. N. Ho Family Foundation Chinese Art Initiative. More information about the Foundation can be found at guggenheim.org.

VISITOR INFORMATION
Admission: Adults $25, students/seniors (65+) $18, members and children under 12 free. The Guggenheim’s free app, available with admission or by download to personal devices, offers an enhanced visitor experience. The app features content on special exhibitions as well as access to more than 1,500 works in the Guggenheim’s permanent collection. Additionally, information about the museum’s landmark building is available in English, French, German, Italian, and Spanish. Verbal Description guides for select exhibitions are also included for visitors who are blind or have low vision.
The Guggenheim app is supported by Bloomberg Philanthropies.

Museum Hours: Sun–Wed, 10 am–5:45 pm; Fri, 10 am–5:45 pm; Sat, 10 am–7:45 pm; closed Thurs. On Saturdays, beginning at 5:45 pm, the museum hosts Pay What You Wish. For general information, call 212 423 3500 or visit the museum online at: guggenheim.org

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PRESS IMAGES

The Robert H. N. Ho Family Foundation Chinese Art Initiative Second Commission and Exhibition
November 4, 2016–March 10, 2017
Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum

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Hou Hanru, Consulting Curator, The Robert H. N. Ho Family Foundation Chinese Art Initiative
Photo: Courtesy Hou Hanru

Xiaoyu Weng, The Robert H. N. Ho Family Foundation Associate Curator of Chinese Art
Photo: Wenxin Zhang
Sun Xun
*Magician Party and Dead Crow*, 2013
Ink, light, paint, paper, and color three-dimensional animated film, 9 min., 43 sec.
Courtesy the artist © Sun Xun

Sun Yuan and Peng Yu
*Dear*, 2013
Air pump, hose, sofa, and storage tank, dimensions variable
Installation view: *Dear, Why Freedom*, Platform China Contemporary Art Institute, Hong Kong, March 14–May 10, 2015
Courtesy of the artists and Platform China Contemporary Art Institute, Hong Kong © Sun Yuan & Peng Yu

Chia-En Jao
*REM Sleep*, 2011.
Three-channel color high-definition video projection, with sound, 63 min., 42 sec.
Installation view: 10th Taishin Arts Award Exhibition, Museum of Contemporary Art, Taipei, April 28–June 17, 2012
Courtesy the artist © Chia-En Jao

Kan Xuan
*Millet Mounds*, 2012
Multi-channel color video installation, silent, continuous loop, dimensions variable.
Courtesy the artist © Kan Xuan

Sun Yuan and Peng Yu
*Dear*, 2013
Air pump, hose, sofa, and storage tank, dimensions variable
Installation view: *Dear, Why Freedom*, Platform China Contemporary Art Institute, Hong Kong, March 14–May 10, 2015
Courtesy of the artists and Platform China Contemporary Art Institute, Hong Kong © Sun Yuan & Peng Yu
Tsang Kin-Wah
The Sixth Seal—HE Is Something That Should Be Overcome. You Are Something That Should Be Overcome, 2014
Color digital video installation, with sound, 6 min., 36 sec., dimensions variable
Installation view: Landscape: The Virtual, the Actual, the Possible?, Guangdong Times Museum, Guangzhou, China, May 27–July 27, 2014.
Courtesy the artist and Guangdong Times Museum © Tsang Kin-Wah
Photo: Tsang Kin-Wah

Yangjian Group
Social Participation and Everyday Experiment with Calligraphy: A Project for Rome, 2015
Participatory installation with calligraphy, food, and tea, dimensions variable
Installation view: MAXXI, Rome, July 16–18, 2015
Courtesy the artists and MAXXI, Rome © Yangjiang Group

Zhou Tao
Blue and Red, 2014
Color high-definition video projection, with sound, 16 min., 9 sec.
Courtesy the artist and Han Nefkens Foundation © Zhou Tao