

Immediate Release

**K11 Art Foundation Presents in Partnership with the Royal Academy of Arts  
Travelling Exhibition *Zhang Jian-Jun: Human Traces*  
The Culmination of the Artist-in-Residence Programme in London  
to Hong Kong, Final Stop in Asia**

**30 September – 14 November 2021**



"I hope to explore the possibility of connections beyond cultural and religious differences." — Zhang Jian-Jun

K11 Art Foundation (KAF) is delighted to collaborate with London's Royal Academy of Arts (RA) to present *Zhang Jian-Jun: Human Traces*, the inaugural touring exhibition of renowned artist Zhang Jian-Jun now arriving at its final stop in Hong Kong. Presenting a new body of works culminating from the artist's earlier participation in the Artist-in-Residence Programme co-presented by KAF and RA, the exhibition was on tour previously in Shanghai and Shenyang where it drew more than 10,000 visitors and received wide public acclaim. The finale exhibition in Hong Kong, held at K11 HACC from 30 September to 14 November, will feature a series of new works created specifically for the city.

Curated by renowned Chinese scholar Wu Hung, the exhibition *Zhang Jian-Jun: Human Traces* reflects the artist's latest musings on the eternal themes of human beings, nature, and time. The exhibition includes three interconnected and interactive parts, all of which revolve around these three topics and how they evolve around the concept of past, present, and future.

Zhang Jian-Jun is the fourth artist to participate in the ongoing artist-in-residence programme co-presented by KAF and RA. During his residency in 2019, Zhang transformed RA School's Smirke 2 Studio into an "archaeological" site, culminating in the creation of *Human Traces*—a new mixed-media installation that manifests Zhang's ongoing artistic enquiry into humankind.

As a pioneer of Chinese abstract art and figuration, Zhang has been expanding the artistic explorations in his oeuvre by consistently combining the three core concepts in art history—the interaction between nature and humans; the traces people leave behind over the course of time; and the relationship between historic and modern-day living.

Divided into three parts, the exhibition begins by responding to, and renewing, Zhang's 2019 *Human Traces* exhibition in London. Works created over Zhang's two months spent in London at the RA Schools—including beautifully moving ink and charcoal portraits of people he met during his visit—are presented in fresh light alongside new works. These contemporary figures portraying the diversity of ethnicities and identities are presented in contrast to his sculptures of images from various cultures, inspiring viewers to ponder the connections among people from different eras and cultural backgrounds.

Surrounded and confronted by one's own reflections, the second part comprises a corridor of mirrors offering an immersive experience and encouraging visitors to reflect on their identities while seeing themselves at every conceivable angle.

This illusionistic path will then lead viewers to the epilogue which consists of an interactive space provoking further self-exploration. Zhang guides the audience to participate in the artistic creation with three stimulating questions, allowing them to leave their own "traces" in the exhibition. Meanwhile, they can also explore the existing human traces left by audiences in Shanghai and Shenyang.

*Human Traces* is conceived as a dynamic process. From Shanghai to Shenyang, and finally to Hong Kong, the vanishing of portraits, and subsequent addition of new ones, together with the subtle changes of the exhibition space, reflect the interaction between the artist, and the past and present of each location. As the last stop of this process, the Hong Kong exhibition will bring together the dynamics of this ever-evolving, ever-adapting project, leaving behind the richest embodiment of *Human Traces*.

"Time" is one of the major sources of Zhang's works. From his point of view, "human traces" is a mark of development and evolution. As he says, "The significance of the future is embodied in the past. I hope to bring different perspectives to the audience, providing them with a new way of thinking towards the unknown."

### **Artist for the Next K11 Art Foundation x Royal Academy of Arts Artist-in-Residence Programme**

The residency programme is aimed at providing artists with opportunities to engage with new and international audiences. To continue the collaboration, we are pleased to announce that Hong Kong artist **Chris Huen Sin Kan** will be the next candidate to participate in the next edition of the residency programme, extending the exploration and response to the human traces through his artistic practice; stay tuned for more information.

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### **Zhang Jian-Jun: Human Traces Exhibition**

Date 30 September – 14 November 2021  
Time Weekday 12pm – 8pm  
Weekend and Public Holidays 11am – 7pm  
Venue K11 HACC  
L2, K11 ATELIER King's Road, 728 King's Road, Quarry Bay  
Website <https://www.k11artfoundation.org/>  
Free Admission

### **Social Media**

Please join the conversation on Instagram (@k11artfoundation), and Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/K11ArtFoundation/>), with hashtags #K11ArtFoundation #RoyalAcademyofArts #ZhangJianJun #HumanTraces

Download high resolution images: [https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1Hrf-cWc8wrOkc1Oj7xd\\_dAGH-ps7yvVF?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1Hrf-cWc8wrOkc1Oj7xd_dAGH-ps7yvVF?usp=sharing)

**Caption and credit line: Courtesy to K11 Art Foundation and the artist.**

To accompany the exhibition, K11 Art Foundation will present a series of events, including workshops, and online and offline guided tours.



**Public Art Tour**

An immersive journey led by K11 Art Foundation’s docents is offered for visitors to step into the world of ‘Past, Present, Future’ depicted by Zhang Jian-Jun. Together with the exclusive tailor-made learning tool TÖÖF, they will definitely have a brand new experience in exploring the themes with us.

- Date: 30 September – 14 November 2021
- Venue: K11 HACC
- Duration: 45 mins
- Language: English / Cantonese
- Free of charge
- Registration: <https://www.k11artfoundation.org/en/article/zhang-jian-jun-human-traces-guided-tour>



**A Portable Art Exhibition Companion – TÖÖF**

Evolving around the ideas ‘think’ and ‘feel’, TÖÖF is designed to be an art exhibition guiding tool that stimulates audiences’ thinking with questions from various perspectives.

- E-version: <https://www.k11artfoundation.org/en/art-exhibition-companion-toof>

A brand-new special edition for this exhibition is now available for experiencing and taking photos!



**Resin Art Clock Making Workshop**

Visitors are welcome to join a customised workshop to explore the perpetual themes conveyed in the exhibition *Zhang Jian-Jun: Human Traces*.

Each can take home not just a functional clock that keeps time, but a delicate ‘time capsule’ which connects the dots in their life and leaves eternal traces.

- Date: 9/10/16/17 October 2021 (Saturdays and Sundays)
- Venue: K11 HACC
- Time: 2:45pm – 4:15pm
- Language: Cantonese
- Fee: HK\$350
- Registration: <https://www.k11artfoundation.org/en/article/resin-art-clock-making-workshop>



### **Create Your Own Portraits**

To experience the portrait creation process of the artist, K11 Art Foundation has specially designed a set of stickers with various expressions for visitors to record their traces.

- Free of charge. First-come-first served



### **Online Learning Resources**

This kit is designed to provide context for the exhibition, through a range of potential focus areas and curriculum links. It includes various materials about the artistic practice of Zhang Jian-Jun and the curatorial practice of Wu Hung. Audiences can draw from the resources to open up discussion and responses to explore and exchange their thoughts, and interpretations towards the works and the exhibition.

Link: <https://www.k11artfoundation.org/en/resources/zhang-jian-jun-human-traces-online-resources/>

### **About K11 Art Foundation**

Founded by Adrian Cheng in 2010, K11 Art Foundation (KAF) is a non-profit organisation in Hong Kong SAR dedicated to fostering the development of Chinese contemporary art. In pursuing our mission, we are committed to supporting artists through KAF's exhibitions, artist residencies, and educational programmes. We also actively establish partnerships with leading art and cultural institutions around the world, collaborating with curators and other industry specialists to create impactful cross-cultural exchange and contribute to the expanding global contemporary art discourse.

Over the years, KAF has collaborated with the Royal Academy of Arts, Serpentine Galleries, and the Institute of Contemporary Arts, London; Centre Pompidou, Palais de Tokyo, and Musée Marmottan Monet, Paris; Fundació Gala-Salvador Dalí, Figueres; the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the New Museum, The Museum of Modern Art, and MoMA PS1, New York; Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles; UCCA Center for Contemporary Art, Beijing; and Asia Art Archive, British Council Hong Kong, Design Trust, and Videotage, Hong Kong, among others.

[www.k11artfoundation.org](http://www.k11artfoundation.org)

### **About the Royal Academy of Arts**

The Royal Academy of Arts was founded by King George III in 1768. It has a unique position in being an independent, privately funded institution led by eminent artists and architects whose purpose is to be a clear, strong voice for art and artists. Its public programme promotes the creation, enjoyment and appreciation of the visual arts through exhibitions, education and debate.

The Royal Academy is an independent charity. It does not receive revenue funding from the government so it is reliant upon the support of its visitors, donors, sponsors, patrons and loyal Friends.

[www.royalacademy.org.uk/](http://www.royalacademy.org.uk/)

### **About RA/KAF Artist-in-Residence Programme**

Zhang Jian-Jun is the fourth artist to participate in the ongoing artist-in-residence programme co-presented by the KAF and RA. The partnership facilitates an exchange of artistic practice with Chinese artists invited to work in London to highlight the diversity and dynamism of Chinese contemporary art and for RA Schools graduates to take up residency in China at K11 art village. Both artists have an opportunity to engage with new and international audiences.

### **About Zhang Jian-Jun**

Zhang Jian-Jun was born in 1955 in Shanghai. He currently lives and works in Shanghai and New York.

Graduating from the Shanghai Theatre Academy's Department of Fine Arts in 1978, Zhang became Shanghai Art Museum's Assistant Director and the head of the Art Research Department of the Museum in 1986 before moving to the United States in 1989. His work spans an array of media, from interactive installation, through performance, photography, to sculpture and painting. Zhang expresses his personal perspective on humankind and the universe through the integrity of language and constantly explores the existence of the ontological status. His *oeuvre* displays a profound understanding of Chinese philosophy and culture.

Zhang is currently an Associate Professor at New York University in Shanghai. *Zhang Jian-Jun: Human Traces*, a survey of the artist's work, was presented at Royal Academy of Art, London (2019), chi K11 art museum, Shanghai (2021), and chi K11 art space, Shenyang (2021). He has also exhibited extensively, important solo exhibitions were held at OCAT Xi'An (2017); Yuz Museum, Shanghai (2015); Asian American Art Centre, New York (2005); Guangdong Museum of Art, Guangzhou (2002); and Shanghai Art Museum, Shanghai (1987). His work was also widely featured in other joint exhibitions, more recent ones include Power Station of Art, Shanghai (2020, 2013); Brooklyn Museum, New York (2019); Cantor Center for Visual Arts at Stanford University (2018); Kunstmuseum Bern (2016, 2010); The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York (2013); Anacostia Art Museum, Smithsonian Institute, Washington DC (2012); Contemporary Art Museum, Rome (2011); and Kunstmuseum, Lucern (2011).

### **About Wu Hung**

Wu Hung, a permanent member of the American Academy of Art and Science and the recipient of a Harvard University honorary degree, is a famous art historian, critic, and curator. Currently he holds the Harrie A. Vanderstappen Distinguished Service Professorship at the Department of Art History and the Department of

East Asian Languages and Civilizations at the University of Chicago, and is also the director of the Center for the Art of East Asia and the Consulting Curator at the Smart Museum at the same university. He sits on many international committees including Guggenheim Museum's Asian Art Council, and chairs the Academic Committees of OCT Contemporary Art Terminal and Yuz Museum. Wu Hung's research interests include both traditional and contemporary art. Regarding contemporary art, he has curated many exhibitions since the 1980s, including individual artists' one-person shows, thematic group exhibitions, and biennales and triennials. In addition to the catalogues that he compiled for these exhibitions, he has published many influential books and anthologies, including *Making History: Wu Hung on Contemporary Art* (2008), *Wu Hung on Contemporary Chinese Artists* (2009), *Contemporary Chinese Art: Primary Documents* (2010), *A Story of Ruins: Presence and Absence in Chinese Art and Visual Culture* (2012), *Contemporary Chinese Art: A History* (2014), and *Zooming In: Histories of Photography in China* (2017).

### **About Chris Huen Sin Kan**

Chris Huen Sin Kan (b.1991, Hong Kong) obtained his BA in Fine Arts at The Chinese University of Hong Kong in 2013. With an emphasis in oil painting, HUEN's practice explores the minute and exquisite experiences of daily life. The artist believes that the essence of existence should not be constructed nor constricted by conventions that are the result of a collective cognition, every work is a composition of clear strokes purely driven by spontaneity. Participated exhibitions include *Tall Trees – and the things I might have forgotten* (Gallery EXIT, Hong Kong, 2019), *The Illuminated Mandane* (OTA Fine Arts, Tokyo, 2019), *Chris Huen Sin Kan* (Simon Lee Gallery, New York, 2018), *Or Humdrum Moments* (Pilar Corrias, London, 2017), Art Los Angeles Contemporary Art Fair (2017), group exhibition *Performing Time* (Leo Xu Projects, Shanghai, 2016), *Imagine There's No Country, Above Us Only Our Cities* (Para Site Art Space, Hong Kong, 2015). *Absolute Collection Guideline* (Sifang Art Museum, Nanjing, 2015).

### **For media enquiries**

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