

**Immediate Release**

**K11 Art Foundation Presents in Partnership with the Royal Academy of Arts  
Exhibition *Zhang Jian-Jun: Human Traces* Debut in Shanghai**



Installation view of *Zhang Jian-Jun: Human Traces* at K11 art museum, Shanghai, 2021.  
Courtesy of K11 Art Foundation and Zhang Jian-Jun

K11 Art Foundation (KAF) is thrilled to collaborate with Royal Academy of Arts to launch *Zhang Jian-Jun: Human Traces*, a return exhibition that shows the fruition of the Artist-in-Residence Programme, co-presented by KAF and London's Royal Academy of Arts (RA). It also marks the artist's inaugural travelling exhibition which will be on tour in Shanghai, to Shenyang and lastly to Hong Kong from March to November this year, allowing audiences to encounter important Chinese contemporary artistic practices and affirming its growing international presence in the world.

As a pioneer of Chinese abstract art and figuration, Zhang has been expanding his artistic explorations with his oeuvre 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 traditional and modern living.

In 2019, Zhang embarked on a two-month residency at RA Schools, the postgraduate school of art within the Royal Academy, as the fourth artist taking part in the three-year Artist-in-Residence Programme. The residency culminated in the creation of a new mixed-media installation—*Human Traces*—that manifests Zhang's ongoing artistic enquiry into humankind.

Curated by renowned Chinese scholar Wu Hung, the return 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 the three topics and how they evolve throughout the past, present, and future.

The first part responds to and renews Zhang's 2019 *Human Traces* exhibition in London. Works created over Zhang's two months spent in London with 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 of different ethnicities and identities are depicted in contrast with sculptures from diverse cultures, inspiring viewers to ponder the connections among people from different eras and/or various cultural backgrounds.

Surrounded and confronted by one's own reflections, the second part comprises a corridor of mirrors that offers an immersive experience and encourages all to reflect on their identities while seeing themselves at every conceivable angle. The illusionistic path will then lead the viewers to the epilogue which consists of an interactive space that provokes further self-exploration.

Since the 1980s, Zhang's work has been focusing on the balance between inner metaphysical thought and the outward survey of human society. Complementing *Human Traces*, four early artworks of Zhang from the *Existence-Noumenon* (「有」) series will also be featured, allowing the audience to revisit his artistic practice and continuity throughout the decades.

Zhang expressed, 'I am very grateful for the opportunity to present my work in Shanghai, Shenyang and Hong Kong. Situating the installations in different regions allows conversations and connections with the viewers. I hope the audience will be inspired to see how humanity might exist beyond cultural differences.'

Delivering KAF's mission in promoting Chinese contemporary art, the long-term collaborations between KAF and RA have fostered 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. *Zhang Jian-Jun: Human Traces* marks a poetic rite of passage that demonstrates the dedication of KAF in providing opportunity to artists to engage with new and international audiences.

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

#### **First Stop: Shanghai**

Period 18 March – 3 May 2021  
Time Open every day from 10am – 8pm  
Venue chi K11 art museum, Shanghai  
K11 Art Mall – B3, No. 300, Huaihai Middle Road, Huangpu District, Shanghai

#### **Second Stop: Shenyang**

Period Q2 – Q3, 2021  
Venue chi K11 art space, Shenyang  
K11 Art Mall – L4, 2A-1 EXPO Road, Heping District, Shenyang

#### **Last Stop: Hong Kong**

Period Q3 – Q4, 2021  
Venue K11 HACC, Hong Kong  
K11 HACC – L2, K11 ATELIER King's Road, 728 King's Road, Quarry Bay, Hong Kong

Please refer to KAF's website/ social media platforms for the most update information:

<https://www.k11artfoundation.org/>

<https://www.instagram.com/k11artfoundation/>

<https://www.facebook.com/K11ArtFoundation>

Download high resolution images: <https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1We57KN2DRz6F7G-6AuWoNxASRNBFL3?usp=sharing>

**Caption and credit line:** Installation views of *Zhang Jian-Jun: Human Traces* at chi K11 art museum, Shanghai, 2021. Courtesy of K11 Art Foundation and Zhang Jian-Jun

## **Social Media**

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

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

Zhang Jian-Jun is the fourth artist-in-residence participating in the long-term residency programme co-presented by the RA and KAF. 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 one of the KAF artist villages. Both artists have an opportunity to engage with new and international audiences.

## **About K11 Art Foundation**

Founded by Adrian Cheng in 2010, K11 Art Foundation (KAF) is a non-profit organisation in Hong Kong 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 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. He has exhibited extensively, important solo exhibitions were held at Royal Academy of Art, London (2019); OCAT Xi'An (2017); Yuz Museum, Shanghai (2015); Asian American Art Centre, New York (2005); and Guangdong Museum of Art, Guangzhou (2002). 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 Art Centre at Sanford 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**

As a University of Chicago-based curator and historian, Wu Hung is widely acknowledged as one of the foremost writers working on contemporary Chinese art. Wu Hung is Professor in Chinese Art History, Director of the Centre of Art of East Asia, and Consulting Curator of the Smart Museum of Art at the University of Chicago. He is an elected member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences and the American Philosophical Society, and sits on the boards and advisory committees of many research institutes and museums in the United States and China. Wu Hung has also published widely on both traditional and contemporary Chinese art.

### **For media enquiries**

#### **K11 Art Foundation**

Angus Li                +852 5999 6605

[angusli@k11artfoundation.org](mailto:angusli@k11artfoundation.org)

Claudia Chan        +852 6750 1606

[claudiachan@k11artfoundation.org](mailto:claudiachan@k11artfoundation.org)