The K11 Art Foundation and the Serpentine Galleries unveil HACK SPACE in Hong Kong

Exploration of the hacking culture with the works of New Zealand artist Simon Denny and 11 artists from Greater China including aaajiao, Cao Fei, Cui Jie, Guo Xi, Hu Qingtai, Firenze Lai, Li Liao, Liang Shuo, Tao Hui, Xu Qu and Zhai Liang

Hong Kong – 25 March 2016 – The K11 Art Foundation (KAF) and the Serpentine Galleries celebrated the opening of HACK SPACE in Hong Kong on 21 March 2016. Presenting the works of 11 artists from Greater China including aaajiao, Cao Fei, Cui Jie, Guo Xi, Hu Qingtai, Firenze Lai, Li Liao, Liang Shuo, Tao Hui, Xu Qu and Zhai Liang, in dialogue with the work of New Zealand artist Simon Denny, the exhibition takes at its core the theme of hacking space – the idea that place, territory and infrastructure can be radically adapted in unorthodox ways to solve problems. Co-curated by Hans Ulrich Obrist and Amira Gad, the exhibition will be on view until the 24 April 2016.

“I am proud to launch this collaboration with the Serpentine Galleries, which revisits and reconsiders perceptions towards the hacking phenomenon. A process that engenders creativity, mutations, and the generation of new forms of ideas” said
Adrian Cheng, Founder and Honourary Chairman of KAF. “The exhibition extends our ongoing series of partnerships with international institutions, and continued to generate valuable opportunities for emerging Chinese artists to exchange with global art practitioners and cross-cultural audience.”

HACK SPACE sits adjacent to the phenomenon of Shan Zhai (山寨), a widespread term in China often associated with nearby “silicon valley of hardware” city Shenzhen. Originally used to refer to a bandit stronghold outside government control, it has today become shorthand for fake or pirated products, from mobile phones to digital cameras, among many other products. From New Year galas to medicine and movies, Chinese consumers encounter Shan Zhai in almost every aspect of their daily lives. The Shan Zhai phenomenon is no longer only restricted to low-cost fake products, it has become associated with how a certain type of Chinese company achieves success without following conventional wisdom and develops competitive advantage through innovative hacks.

A new iteration and expansion of Simon Denny’s exhibition Products for Organising previously held at the Serpentine Sackler Gallery, HACK SPACE redefines notions of innovation through an unconventional, organisational, social and spatial arrangement, the hacker-like Shan Zhai principle is an underlying link between the exhibited works. A comparison of hacking culture and innovation in different contexts, the show brings together practices that question, cheat, flip, redefine and short-cut notions of space, buildings and creative practices. Each artist’s work resonates and expands on notions of hacking culture, developing the exhibition in the space of financial systems, architecture, urbanisation and more.

To coincide with the opening, an Art Talk was held on the 21 March 2016. Participating artists including Cui Jie, Simon Denny, Li Liao, Zhai Liang, aaajiao joined co-curators Amira Gad and Hans Ulrich Obrist, to discuss the culture of hacking and how their works collectively create a dialogue in this context. Staged in KAF’s pop-up venue, a space previously used for commercial purposes that continues to change the urban landscape around Hong Kong. The layout of the exhibition has been designed as a “skyline” of sculptures, installations and video works. Many of the works sit on
pedestals that has had been refashioned from a real estate display occupying. A physical open-sourcing turned sculptural framework, these “distributed” pedestals suggest the alternative networks redefining innovation in Hong Kong, Shenzhen and beyond.
Images available for media use:

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<td><img src="left" alt="Image" /></td>
<td>(Left) Mr Hans Ulrich Obrist, Director of the Serpentine Galleries and co-curator of HACK SPACE</td>
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<td><img src="right" alt="Image" /></td>
<td>(Right) Mr Adrian Cheng, Founder and Honourary Chairman of the K11 Art Foundation</td>
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<td><img src="middle-left" alt="Image" /></td>
<td>Mr Adrian Cheng and the co-curators Mr Hans Ulrich Obrist and Ms Amira Gad at HACK SPACE’s exhibition opening</td>
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<td><img src="middle-right" alt="Image" /></td>
<td>Installation view of HACK SPACE at the K11 Art Foundation Pop-up Space, Hong Kong</td>
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<td><img src="bottom" alt="Image" /></td>
<td>The Art talk of HACK SPACE (From Left Mr Douglas Kotwall, artists Zhai Liang, aaajiao, Ms Amira Gad, Mr Hans Ulrich Obrist, artists Simon Denny, Cui Jie, and Li Liao)</td>
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More Information:

**Group Exhibition** with Simon Denny, aaajiao, Cao Fei, Cui Jie, Guo Xi, Hu Qingtai, Firenze Lai, Li Liao, Liang Shuo, Tao Hui, Xu Qu, and Zhai Liang

**Curators:** Hans Ulrich Obrist and Amira Gad

**Exhibition Period:** 22 March – 24 April 2016
**Opening Hour:** 10:00am – 6:00pm daily
**Venue:** K11 Art Foundation Pop-up Space
G/F, Cosco Tower, 33 Wing Lok Street, Sheung Wan, Hong Kong

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**Notes to Editors:**
About the K11 Art Foundation

Founded by Adrian Cheng in 2010, the K11 Art Foundation (KAF) is a registered not-for-profit organisation, that supports the development of Chinese contemporary art from Greater China by providing a creative platform that nurtures artistic talents and brings them to the international stage. The Foundation also serves as an incubator for young Chinese curators.

KAF has embarked on many international collaborations, including with the Fundació Gala-Salvador Dalí in Spain, Serpentine Galleries, Institute of Contemporary Arts (ICA) in London, Centre Pompidou, Palais de Tokyo and Musée Marmottan Monet in Paris, and the Metropolitan Museum of Art and The Armory Show in New York, showcasing Chinese talents and the voice of the young generation.

With eleven studios for its artist-in-residence programmes in the K11 art village in Wuhan, KAF serves as the unique incubating springboard for young and emerging contemporary Chinese artists to create new and meaningful works. Beyond traditional art spaces, K11 art village serves as innovative exchange platforms between local and international artists.

Through research, initiatives and partnerships, KAF offers the Chinese public a diverse range of programmes and exhibitions fostering the appreciation of arts and culture.

www.k11artfoundation.org

About Serpentine Galleries

The Serpentine comprises two contemporary art galleries situated on either side of the Serpentine lake in the heart of The Royal Park of Kensington Gardens in central London. The Serpentine Gallery and the newly opened Serpentine Sackler Gallery, designed by Zaha Hadid Architects, present world-renowned exhibitions of art, architecture and design throughout the year with free admission.

serpentinegalleries.org

About Artists

Simon Denny (b. 1982 in Auckland, New Zealand) is an artist working with installation, sculpture and video. He studied at the Elam School of Fine Arts at the University of Auckland, New Zealand, and at the Städelschule, Frankfurt. Selected solo exhibitions include MoMA PS1, New York (2015); Portikus, Frankfurt (2014); MuMOK, Vienna (2013); Kunstverein Munich, Munich (2013); and Aspen Art Museum, Aspen (2012). In 2012, Denny was awarded the Art Basel Statements Baloise Preis. Selected group
shows include Lyon Biennale 2015; After Babel, Moderna Museet, Stockholm (2015); Europe, Europe, Astrup Fearnley Museet, Oslo (2014); Art Post-Internet, Ullens Center for Contemporary Art, Beijing (2014); Speculations on Anonymous Materials, Fridericianum, Kassel (2013); Image into Sculpture, Centre Pompidou, Paris (2013); and Remote Control, ICA, London (2012). Denny represented New Zealand at the 56th Venice Biennale 2015 and was included in the central curated exhibition in 2013. He also participated in the Lyon Biennale (2015), Montreal Biennale (2014), as well as the Sydney Biennale and the Brussels Biennale (both in 2008).

**aaajiao** (b. 1984 in Xi’an, China) grew up in Xi’an, the ancient capital of the Qin and Han Dynasty known for the Terracotta Army. aaajiao’s year of birth, 1984, coincides with George Orwell’s dystopian masterpiece known for its vivid SciTech-driven imagination, an inspiration for aaajiao’s works, many of which tap into the most current trends of thoughts around the Internet sphere, with a focus on the emerging controversies and phenomenon related to data processing, blogosphere/wemedia and filtered information. In his most recent projects, the artist has adopted a more extended scope of practices, borrowing elements from architecture, electronic music, performance arts, product design, even medicine, to portray the younger generation’s harnessing of the power of cyber technology and the ever-present social media.

aaajiao has been featured in exhibitions internationally and throughout China. Highlights include *Global Control And Censorship — ZKM | Zentrum für Kunst und Medientechnologie Karlsruhe, Karlsruhe (2015); The 2nd “CAFAM Future” Exhibition: Observer-Creator • The Reality Representation of Chinese Young Art, CAFA Art Museum (2015); Cosmos - Limited and Limitless, Existence and Co-existence Shanghai, 21st Century Minsheng Art Museum, Shanghai (2014); Thingworld — International Triennial of New Media Art Beijing, The National Art Museum of China (2014); The West Bund Architecture and Contemporary Art Biennale, Shanghai (2013); “One World” Exposition — Chinese Art in the Age of the New Media, Videotage, Hong Kong (2011), TransLife: Media Art China 2011 —International Triennial of New Media Art, The National Art Museum of China, Beijing (2011); Transmediale, Berlin (2010). aaajiao is the winner of the Art Sanya Awards Jury Prize 2014; a nominee for the OCAT — Pierre Huber Art Prize, and most recently, for the Young Artist of the Year of 9th Award of Art China.

**Cao Fei** (b. 1978 in Guangzhou, China) mixes social commentary, popular aesthetics, references to Surrealism, and documentary conventions in her films and installations.
Her works reflect on the rapid and chaotic changes that are occurring in Chinese society today.

She has participated in a number of international biennales including *Shanghai Biennale, Moscow Biennale, Taipei Biennale, The 15th & 17th Biennale of Sydney, Istanbul Biennale, Yokohama Triennale*, and *The 50th, 52nd & 56th Venice Biennales*. She also presented her projects at the Serpentine Gallery, London; Tate Modern, London; the New Museum, New York; Guggenheim Museum, New York; MoMA, New York; Fondation Louis Vuitton, Paris; Palais de Tokyo, Paris; and Centre Pompidou, Paris. Cao Fei’s forthcoming projects in 2016 include her first retrospective at MoMA PS1 and BMW Art Car #18.

She was a nominee for the Future Generation Art Prize 2010 and the finalist of Hugo Boss Prize 2010. In 2006 she was named Best Young Artist Award by Chinese Contemporary Art Award (CCAA).

**Cui Jie** (b. 1983 in Shanghai, China) lives and works in Beijing, her painting practice incorporates an expressionist take on contemporary China and the country’s urbanism and personal aesthetics. Inspired by Orson Welles’ multi-perspective, she applies various layers of images – some realistic, some imaginary – on her canvases. Each layer is meticulously executed to represent the transformation of China’s urban-scape.

Painted with calculated and deadpan brushwork and a warm and affective palette, Cui’s landscapes and interiors make comparative studies of cities as distinctive models or laboratories of China’s open-and-reform attitude. This is depicted as a personal history that is informed by the aesthetic madness in one time and place: ranging from the architectural confusion of Bauhaus, to Chinese propaganda, and Soviet communist aesthetics. Inessence, Cui Jie’s painting is a time capsule that re-imagines the past and the present.

Cui Jie graduated from China Academy of Art. Her works have been included in exhibitions, including *MY GENERATION: YOUNG CHINESE ARTISTS*, Tampa Museum of Art, Museum of Fine Arts, St. Petersburg; Oklahoma City Museum of Art, U.S.A (both 2014); *1st CAFA FUTURE: Sub-Phenomena* (curated by Xu Bing and Alexandra Munroe), CAFA Art Museum, Central Academy of Fine Arts, Beijing (2012); *Face*, Minsheng Art Museum, Shanghai (2012); *[4th Prague Biennial]*, Czech Republic (2009), *Poetic Realism: An Reinterpretation of Jiangnan – Contemporary Art From South China*,
Guo Xi (b. 1988 in Yan Cheng, Jiangsu Province, China) graduated from the New Media Art Department at China Academy of Art in 2010 and then joined a two-year programme at the Rijksakademie in the Netherlands as an artist-in-residence. He later graduated from New York University with an MA in Studio Art in 2015.

Xi is interested in the ways in which people perceive and interpret their world – specifically, the tough-to-crack nut that grows out of the convergence of such ideologies. By means of a dramatised sense of humour, he attempts to soften, or even break open this nutshell, in such a way that a trace of absurdity and uneasiness can be introduced. He likens an artist’s work to an act of “piercing”, making little pores on the hard husk of ideologies, through which people will be given a chance to glimpse the truth hidden within. For Xi, the visual form is a medium for the transmission of a message, which elucidates his extensive use of a variety of artistic forms, such as installation, painting, performance and sculpture.

Hu Qingtai (b. 1985 in Heilongjiang Province, China) is currently based in Beijing, China. He received his BA from the New Media Department at China Hubei Academy of Fine Arts in 2008.

He works with a range of media, including performance, video, sculpture and painting. In his work, Hu focuses on the relationships between human beings and objects, as well as the relationship between humans. His practice emphasises a notion of creativity that often clouds people’s understanding of artists and artworks. His works have appeared in a number of exhibitions, including Copyleft: China Appropriation Art, Power Station of Art, Shanghai (2015); Inside Out, the K11 art village, Wuhan (2015); Polyphony II, the Art Museum of Nanjing University of the Arts, Nanjing (2014); The Sociology of Oneself at Eslite Gallery, Taipei (2014); The 8 of Paths at Uferhallen, Berlin (2014), among others.

Firenze Lai (b. 1984, Hong Kong) lives and works in Hong Kong. She graduated from Hong Kong Art School.

In her paintings, Lai is interested in how the mind and the body can be adapted in different situations, whether consciously or unconsciously. Her practice embodies such situations, the relationship between individuals. Solo exhibitions include
Turbulence at Mirrored Gardens, Guangzhou; Surround Audience: New Museum Triennial, New York (both 2015); Social Factory – 10th Shanghai Biennale, Shanghai (2014), among others.

Li Liao (b. 1982, Hubei, China) lives and works in Shenzhen, China. He graduated from the Fine Arts Department at Hubei Institute of Fine Arts, Hubei, China, with a BA in 2005.

In his multi-media installations and performances, Li aims to expose the social complexities of simple environments that appear mechanical and mundane by raising questions about expectations and reality. Consumption (2012) is an installation piece that scrutinises assembly-line labour in factories. It includes a lab coat, ID card and iPad that the artist used during a month-long period of employment at the notorious electronics manufacturer, Foxconn. The work was featured in the Ullens Centre for Contemporary Art, Beijing, the New Museum, New York and the Rock Bund Museum, Shanghai, where it was part of the Hugo Boss Asia Award show. Consumption was also featured in The New Yorker and The New York Times.


Tao Hui (b. 1987, Chongqing, China) lives and works in Beijing. He holds a Baccalaureate in Painting from the Sichuan Fine Arts Institute, Chongqing (2010). Tao works with graphic arts, painting, video, objects and installation, making use of technological procedures and elements from Chinese tradition, mostly harking back to his childhood in inland China, in order to question notions of globalisation, virtual relationships and hegemonic thinking. The coexistence of different time periods and cultures, urban settings and rural living – typical of the Chinese context, where tradition and progress expire and reinvent themselves – is a staple of his work. He has been featured in exhibitions such as Où vas-tu, Espace des Arts Sans Frontières, Paris (2014); Positive Space, Times Museum, Guangzhou, China (2014), Leap Video Project, Hong Kong, China (2013); The Worst Show, Gland, Beijing, China (2012); WuSi Youth Art Festivals, Beijing, China (2011).

Xu Qu (b. 1978, Nanjing, China) lives and works in Beijing, China. Xu Qu graduated with a Bachelor Degree in Fine Arts from Nanjing Art Institute in 2002, and continued his study at the Braunschweig University of Art, Germany, under Prof. John Armleder and Brigit Hein. In 2008, he was awarded the title of Meisterschüler, and returned to Beijing as an installation artist with a range of concerns. His work has been exhibited extensively in Beijing, China; Australia; Germany and Basel, Switzerland.

His works engage performative actions which attempt to reorganise and heighten spaces of artistic production. This reveals the inherently relational character of artistic exchange. Recently his work has utilised painting and lighting to reconfigure spatial and temporal experience.

Zhai Liang (b. 1983, Houma, Shanxi Province, China) received his BFA in Oil Painting at Sichun Academy of Fine Arts, Chongqing in 2006 and his MFA at the Central Academy of Fine Arts, Beijing in 2009. Recent exhibitions include Zhai Liang: Catalogue – Babel Library, White Space, Beijing (2013); Zhai Liang: The Garden of Forking Paths at 1000 Plateaus Space, Chengdu (2011 and 2013); and The Diary of Travelers at Hive Center for Contemporary Art, Beijing (2014). His works have been included in the public collections of the Long Museum, Shanghai; and He Xiangning Art Museum, Shenzhen.