



ART WORLD DIGNITARIES GATHERS AT 2016 AISA SOCIETY'S ASIA ARTS AWARDS GALA EVENT RECOGNIZING ASIA ARTIST GAME CHANGERS AND RAISE FUNDS FOR WORLDWIDE INITIATIVES

(HONG KONG, March 20, 2016) The international cultural and education organization, Asia Society, tonight honored three leading contemporary Asian artists with the Asia Arts Awards at Asia Society Hong Kong Center and Conrad Hotel Hong Kong.

The Gala, which recognized the artistic excellence and contributions to Asian art of the three Asia Arts Game Changers, **Cai Guo-Qiang**, **Nalini Malani**, and **Yoshitomo Nara**, also included a benefit dinner and auction. It also marked the opening of Art Basel Hong Kong and gathered notable collectors, artists, gallerists around the art world, as well as Asia Society trustees and patrons. The celebratory evening included a cocktail reception and benefit auction, synchronized online and offline, of works by world-renowned artists.

Highlights from the benefit auction included unique works by world-renowned artists Cao Fei, Mariko Mori, Shahzia Sikander, and Zhan Wang.

Cai commented on receiving the award, "I had a solo exhibition at the Asia Society Museum in 2003, and had a site visit when the current Asia Society Hong Kong Center was still under construction... I have long been associated with Asia Society, Asia, and the arts! I am honored to receive the Asia Arts Award today. It gives me more faith in what I do, knowing that I can continue to 'mess around' boundlessly!"

Nalini Malani requested everyone at the dinner to observe a minute's silence for refugees all around the world. She said: "You can't Keep Acid in a Paper Bag."*

"My purpose was not to receive any award. I didn't think I will be excited by receiving an award. But when I was about to receive one, I find myself being pleased," said Yoshitomo Nara.

Proceeds of the benefit auction will go toward the on-going development and programming of Asia Society. To enable global access the rapidly changing landscape of Asia through arts, education, business and international policy programs. The following cultural program aims to represent the diverse cultures of Asia. Working with leading artists, musicians, writers, and filmmakers offering contemporary connections to the identity of the region.

This afternoon saw the discussion "In Conversation with 2016 Asia Society Arts Game Changers" featuring Cai Guo-Qiang and Yoshitomo Nara from 1:00pm to 3:30pm at Loke Yew Hall, 1/F, Main Building, the University of Hong Kong. The program is open to the public for free. For details and registration, please go to:

asiasociety.org/hong-kong/events/conversation-2016-asia-society-arts-game-changers.

*Note to the Editor:

The capitalization of the words came from the artist. It is the title of her retrospective exhibition at the Kiran Nadar Museum of Art in New Delhi in 2014, "You Can't Keep Acid in a Paper Bag." It was



a three-part retrospective of Nalini Malani, happening for the first time in India that looks at her issue-based practice of the last five decades and attempts to bring to the audience a range of her use of mediums. A lot of the projects shown in the exhibition had never been shown in India before.

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For more information of Asia Arts Award, please visit:
<http://asiasociety.org/2016AsiaArtsAwards>

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About Asia Society

Founded in 1956 by John D. Rockefeller 3rd in New York, Asia Society is a leading educational and cultural organization dedicated to promoting mutual understanding and strengthening partnerships among peoples, leaders and institutions of Asia and the United States in a global context. Across the fields of arts, business, culture, education, and policy, Asia Society provides insight, generates ideas, and promotes collaboration to address present challenges and create a shared future. Asia Society is an international organization with twelve centers in the United States, Asia, and Europe: Hong Kong, Houston, Los Angeles, Manila, Mumbai, New York, San Francisco, Seoul, Shanghai, Sydney, Washington, D.C., and Zürich.

About Asia Society Hong Kong Center

As an affiliate of the Asia Society global network of twelve centers, Asia Society Hong Kong Center was established in 1990 by a group of Hong Kong community leaders, led by the late Sir Q.W. Lee, the honorary chairman of Hang Seng Bank. In February 2012, the Hong Kong Center established its permanent home in Admiralty, Hong Kong at the former explosives magazine compound of the old Victoria Barracks. The site is steeped in history, cultural significance, and natural beauty, and offers a broad range of programs in the form of lectures, performances, film screenings, and exhibitions to the community.

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2016 HONOREES BIOS

Cai Guo-Qiang



Cai Guo-Qiang, one of the most iconic artists working today, is best known for his signature explosion events. Cai's multidisciplinary practice draws upon eastern philosophies and socio-political issues to facilitate an exchange between the viewer and the larger universe around them. The artist was born in Quanzhou, China, and studied stage design at the Shanghai Theatre Academy. Cai has been the subject of numerous international solo exhibitions, including: "Cai Guo-Qiang—An Explosion Event: Light Cycle Over Central Park" (2003) at Asia Society Museum, as well as a part of such seminal group exhibitions as Asia Society's "Inside Out: New Chinese Art" (1998). He has been the recipient of many honors including the Barnett Newman Grant Award (2015), U.S. Department of State Medal of Arts (2012), the Praemium Imperiale (2012), the

Fukuoka Arts & Culture Prize (2009), and the Golden Lion at the 48th Venice Biennale (1999). The artist served as Director of Visual and Special Effects for the Opening and Closing ceremonies of the 2008 Summer Olympics in Beijing.

Nalini Malani



Nalini Malani is considered one of the foremost artists from India today. She has created a unique visual language through her drawings, videos, and most notably her video/shadow play installations. In the 1980s the artist became known for her attention to feminist issues and her multimedia projects feature recurring themes around the subject of gender, memory, race, and transnational politics, especially in reference to India's postcolonial history after independence and partition. Her recent works are included in major collections such as those of The Museum of Modern Art, New York, and the Georges Pompidou National Art and Cultural Centre in Paris. She has received several international honors, including the Fukuoka Arts and Culture Prize (2013) and has been the subject of numerous international solo and group exhibitions

including, in 2014, her solo exhibition, "Transgressions," organized by Asia Society Museum. In 2017, the Centre Georges Pompidou will present the artist's retrospective solo exhibition.

Yoshitomo Nara



Yoshitomo Nara was born in Hirosaki, Aomori, Japan in 1959. He completed his master's degree at Aichi Prefectural University of Fine Arts and Music in 1987. The following year, Nara studied with A. R. Penck at Kunstakademie Düsseldorf in Germany and earned the title of Meisterschüler. He lived and worked in Cologne from 1994 to 2000, and was a guest professor at the University of California, Los Angeles in 1998. The artist lived and worked in Tokyo after returning to Japan in 2000, and later relocated to Tochigi in 2005. Through his expressive depictions of children and animals ranging from paintings and drawings, to three-dimensional works employing FRP, ceramic, bronze, and large-scale installations, Nara continues to attract audiences internationally and is one of Japan's most iconic artists of our time. In 2010, Asia Society Museum

presented the first major New York exhibition of his work, "Yoshitomo Nara: Nobody's Fool," and in 2015, Asia Society Hong Kong Center held his first major solo exhibition in Hong Kong, "Life is Only One."