

PRESS RELEASE/EDITORIAL

## Cai Guo-Qiang to Donate Award Monies to Asian Cultural Council

*1995 ACC grantee receives world recognition and gives back*

NEW YORK, New York, April 15, 2013— Cai Guo-Qiang, whose gunpowder paintings have been performed and exhibited around the globe, has given half of his award earnings from the prestigious Praemium Imperiale Award—informally known as the Nobel Prize of the Arts, to the Asian Cultural Council (ACC). **Mr. Cai will donate the other half of his award earnings to support the building of SMOCA, the Snake Museum of Contemporary Art, a new museum and project to assist in the rebuilding efforts in Iwaki, Fukushima Prefecture after the devastation following the Great East Earthquake on March 11, 2011.** The gift to ACC will support ACC's Japan-United States Arts Program (JUSAP) endowment, a fund set up by business magnate Seiji Tsutsumi in 1983. Mr. Cai is himself a beneficiary of this endowment – having received a grant in 1995 to participate in the International Studio Program at the Institute of Contemporary Art, P.S.1 (now MoMA PS1), in New York.

The donation to the Asian Cultural Council is Mr. Cai's second this year. In October, his painting, *Marx's Moustache*, sold for 1.5 million HKD (approx \$192,000) at auction (Sotheby's Hong Kong). The proceeds were given to ACC to establish a fund in Mr. Cai's name that will support the fellowships of two Chinese artists each year in the United States. The grantees will receive tailored support from the ACC's programming staff and experts with input and direction from Mr. Cai himself.

Mr. Cai hopes that his contributions will provide opportunities for talented young artists to broaden their experiences and develop their skills by working and studying abroad, directly supporting the ACC's mission of enabling transformative cultural exchange...between the United States and the countries of Asia. He also hopes his giving as an alumnus will inspire other former ACC grant recipients to give back and to simultaneously increase public awareness of ACC's mission.

"ACC has sponsored approximately 6,000 artists and cultural workers of all kinds to participate in exchange programs between the U.S. and Asia," explains Mr. Cai. "Historically speaking, ACC's funding for these exchanges mainly came from the Rockefeller Family Foundations and other sources in the U.S. As socio-economic conditions change(d)... it actually became more challenging for ACC to find sponsorship in the U.S. Although I am not a person of great means, I feel that this ought to be done. We should all support ACC and help them accomplish their mission. People aren't aware of their mission and that they have so many accomplishments. I am hoping this sale will raise ACC's public profile."

ACC Chairman Wendy O'Neill is thrilled with Mr. Cai's contributions. "Mr. Cai's gifts come at a crucial moment for ACC, as we celebrate our 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2013. His giving represents the fulfillment, in many ways, of John D Rockefeller 3<sup>rd</sup>'s vision of long-term artistic and cultural exchange with Asia. Charitable gifts like Mr. Cai's are essential to ACC's goal of continuing JDR 3<sup>rd</sup>'s legacy far into the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Mr. Cai's extraordinary career and innovative artwork, accompanied by his willingness to give

back, stand out as supreme examples of the impact our alumni network can have on global arts and culture. We look forward to seeing the fruits of Mr. Cai's ACC endowment, as young artists follow in his footsteps as ACC Fellows in the years to come."

**More about Praemium Imperiale:**

Given by Japan's Imperial Household in honor of Prince Takamatsu, the Praemium Imperiale Award recognizes artists who have "contributed significantly to the development of international arts and culture." The cash component of the award totals 15 million yen (\$192,600). The five laureates selected in 2012 also include composer Philip Glass, architect Henning Larsen, prima ballerina Yoko Morishita, and sculpture artist Cecco Bonanotte. Mr. Cai is the first Chinese national to receive the award.

**More about ACC:**

The vision of the Asian Cultural Council is to support transformative cultural exchange by awarding grants to artists, scholars, and arts and humanities professionals, as well as organizations and educational institutions from the United States and Asia for research, study, and creative work in the United States and Asia and within the countries of Asia. To achieve this goal, the ACC develops programs specifically tailored to the needs and interests of each of its grant recipients and fosters ongoing dialogue between and among its grantees and artists, scholars, and specialists, through a robust network of contacts across disciplines and across the globe. The ACC supports its efforts by seeking funding from individuals, foundations, and corporations with an interest in and dedication to strengthening ties between the United States and the countries of Asia. Headquartered in New York City, ACC maintains offices in Tokyo, Taipei, Manila, and Hong Kong.