

For immediate release

## Ernest Chang

### ***TEAR AND CONSUME: An Art experiment\*<sup>TM</sup>***

*\*please make sure you read the complete terms and conditions*



*Image caption to be completed ...*

#### **@ Kong Art Space**

Opening Night – Friday 16<sup>th</sup> November 2018. 19:30-23:00 – **Tear time 21:00-21:30**

The Aftermath - Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> November – 10:00 – 22:00  
Kong Art Space – G/F, 3 Staunton Street, Central.

#### **@ The Stallery**

Public exhibition: 18<sup>th</sup> November – 18<sup>th</sup> December 2018 (Monday-Tuesday; Friday-Sunday – 11:00-18:00).

The Stallery - G/F 82A Stone Nullah Lane, Wan Chai.

Hong Kong – The Stallery, in conjunction with Kong Art Space, is delighted to present an art experiment by Wan Chai based artist Ernest Chang, featuring a collection of 10 new works.

This series of acrylic, glue and printed paper works referencing pop-culture including Anime and Pokemon Go, subcultures which are now ubiquitous in Hong Kong, takes aim at the heart of modern day consumerism and our rapidly escalating obsession with validation and reward through our need to accumulate 'things.' The 'experiment,' pushes this further, with Chang willing to sacrifice these works by offering them up to the mercy of the general public, who will be granted 30 minutes during the opening night in which to tear the works in whichever way they see fit, all whilst fully documenting their experience on social media. Attendees will be required to sign a 'Terms and Conditions' document in order to participate, enforcing the requirement to record and disseminate the process on social media in order to ensure it generates new artistic expression.

Chang sets out to create works and an event which reflect the often voracious and cannibalistic experience in which Hong Kongers find themselves - one pressured by a society where consumerism and social endorsement are revered, despite the inherent undertone of addiction. One in which the unobtainable-to-most real estate market is overwhelming and fragmenting communities much like the artists Wan Chai home, whilst pushing the young and creative to the margins of society. And one which is rapidly fostering a disposable culture where more significance is attributed to the lifestyle to which you aspire, rather than serious investigation of the inalienable rights to which you are made to cede in which to achieve this end. The real estate flyers, the grubby detritus of a relentless pursuit of material improvement, which litter the streets outside his gallery are manifested in the works, which feature 7 layers of terms and conditions paper from such modern leviathans as Google, iCloud, WhatsApp, WeChat, PornHub, Instagram and Facebook. These sit unseen beneath the bold and delineated figures, which are intended to represent the sanitised yet vanilla perfectness of modern generated printing, but on closer inspection show themselves to be imperfect, human and impressionist in style. This intentional appearance seeks to cast doubt in the mind of the tearers, to interrogate whether they are both comfortable and happy to 'destroy' and consume a creative process 6 months in the making. Will the transitory significance of their social media successes negate any moral rectitude they may face in 'consuming' another's work so completely?

In allowing anyone to tear and consume the essence of the artwork, Chang also seeks to make a representation of the current state of the art, in his industry. Relentless conglomerates 'align' themselves with artists like brands, and global art events fetishise art for its monetary value rather than its artistic currency. Not long ago, the contemporary artist du jour Banksy made a similar statement, when one of his most famous works was 'destroyed' just moments after it had sold at auction. It could be argued that he has the luxury of a reputation and bank balance which could only be enhanced by such a potentially self-sabotaging act - Is he the treatment or in fact the disease?

With this experiment though, Chang seeks to challenge us and ask, what does contemporary art mean today? Does the work exist in a vacuum once the artist steps from the easel, or is the experiment an extension of the art, the continuation of the process or in fact the creation of new works? The visceral experience planned for the opening night is his sacrifice in the name of artistic endeavour. The question which intrigues him, is in regard to those

who present themselves to participate - Will they know their reaction and decision to the acts they are about to partake, when faced with the opportunity to create or destroy, what will they do? What would you do?

As with all of Ernest Chang's works, Wan Chai, with its dissociated architecture and the jarring juxtaposition of history and modernity is his inspiration. In a statement that can be attributed to much of Hong Kong, the artist states,

'Wan Chai creates and destroys itself at the same time. My art strives to capture this process and to unravel the beauty behind its chaos.'

Chang himself is red-green colour blind, which is in part the reason for his favouring of such bold and dramatic colour choices, seen clearly in the 'Tear and Consume' series. The artist takes inspiration from the Red/Yellow/Blue colour mixes and clean lines epitomised by Piet Mondrian, who saw the world as 'TRUTHS' - binary compositions, and whose influence can be seen in the execution and composition of Chang's T&C works.

On the conclusion of the opening weekend, the exhibition will transfer to Chang's own studio/exhibition space, The Stallery on Stone Nullah Lane, Wan Chai where the original works will be displayed in their post-tear form. There will also be a limited edition run of 30 prints of each painting available for purchase following the opening weekend.

*For more information or to schedule an interview with the artist contact The Stallery directly via Célestine Wong - [celest@thestallery.com](mailto:celest@thestallery.com) / call 6775 2533.*

*Press release written by Christopher Babb. Please contact [chris@babbservations.com](mailto:chris@babbservations.com) for more information and services.*

## **Notes to editors**

### **About Ernest Chang**

Born in the US but raised in Hong Kong, artist and photographer Ernest Chang now works and resides in Wan Chai; this celebrated urban district providing the metaphorical muse for all of his works. A former student of both Ringling College of Art and Design, Florida, and Savannah College of Art and Design (SCAD), Hong Kong, Chang ceased his formal education in favour of the growth through experience derived from the application of his artistic endeavour in Hong Kong, an urban environment which amplifies so many of his perceptions. He seeks to question the audience regarding their relationship with technology, for better or for worse - a relationship for which the artist himself is conflicted.

Chang is the artistic director of The Stallery, a Studio cum Gallery based on Stone Nullah Lane which collaborates with and exhibits emerging Hong Kong artists and where he creates.

His works are highly technical, incorporating futuristic composition whilst employing advanced digital media techniques. Previous works can be seen at <http://www.thestallery.com/art-photography/> and include the 'Post Human Dimension' series which marries his characteristic realist aesthetic with surrealist compositions, 'Falsely Implied' – a series which imposes new dimensions and spatial symmetry onto street scenes, exemplifying the atmosphere and vibrancy familiar to Hong Kong's neon-tinged history, and 'Frozen Fusion,' created in collaboration with artist, **Justin Y**, which shows the capacity for photography to manipulate and distort the physical world.

He was also granted permission to capture photographically Wan Chai's iconic 'Blue House,' before its reincarnation, and seeks to cherish and celebrate the districts history and to 'Keep Wan Chai weird'.