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Taipei Fine Arts Museum Press Release

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Taipei Biennial 2020

“You and I don’t live on the same planet”— New Diplomatic Encounters

Date: 24 October 2020 – 28 February 2021

Venue: Taipei Fine Arts Museum

Curators Announce Title of Taipei Biennial 2020

17 September 2019 – Taipei: The curators of the Taipei Biennial 2020, Bruno Latour and Martin Guinard, took part in a media gathering today at Taipei Fine Arts Museum (TFAM). Having recently arrived in Taiwan to conduct a curatorial research trip, they officially shared their curatorial concept and research plan for the upcoming Taipei Biennial, to be titled: *“You and I don’t live on the same planet”— New Diplomatic Encounters*.

In their curatorial concept statement, the two curators elaborated:

“The expression ‘you and I don’t share the same vision of the world’ is a frequent figure of speech in political debates, whether in an official or informal setting. But the point is that today it is not merely a difference of ‘visions’ about a space that would be the same for everyone, but a question of ‘the material nature’ of the very world that we are talking about. Whereas in earlier times, geopolitics implied that there were different people with different interests fighting for territories that were parts of the same nature, today it is the composition of this very nature that is at stake.

It does not take much time to realize how divided the different people of the Earth are as to what is the exact nature of their planet. It is clear, for instance, that Donald Trump and Greta Thunberg don’t live on the same planet! In the world imagined by Donald Trump, CO2 emissions are not an existing threat to the environment, greenhouse emissions are a mere belief, and business as usual must go on with American interests at its center. Obviously, those who support such a view don’t live on the same land as those who are suffering from a deep ecological crisis.”

The curatorial concept emphasizes that there is no way to hide society’s deep divisions on questions of ecology. Thus it is fair to portray the present political situation not only as a clash of visions, but also as a clash about what the earth is really *made of*. What was a mere figure of speech is now literal. Of course, “You and I” indicates a form of confrontation and division, but hopefully a productive one. By holding an exhibition, workshops and research projects, the museum will serve as a venue for a new form of diplomacy between the various positions depicted by each planet.

Director of TFAM Ping Lin relates that the 2020 Biennial’s curatorial blueprint gives her high expectations. To support the curators in developing their research, the museum team has been actively helping them build local connections. Based on the 2018 edition of the Taipei

Biennial, *Post-Nature*, which tackled ecological issues, the 2020 edition, “*You and I don’t live on the same planet*”—*New Diplomatic Encounters* will engage in even deeper exploration of the interactions, dynamics and diplomatic tactics between human and non-human worlds. On this curatorial foundation of in-depth discourse on those matters of concern to contemporary society, the museum seeks to connect the curatorial team with the local community, to make the Biennial more three-dimensional and multilayered.

During the curators’ stay in Taiwan, Taipei Fine Arts Museum will host a public talk by curator Bruno Latour on Saturday, September 21 in the museum auditorium. The curator will speak on the topic “Towards the New Climatic Regime,” as the very first public event of the 2020 Taipei Biennial, sharing its interconnected philosophical, sociological and cultural approaches.

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About Bruno Latour

Born in 1947 in Beaune, France, Bruno Latour is now professor emeritus associated with the médialab and the program in political arts (SPEAP) of Sciences Po Paris. Since January 2018 he has been a fellow at the Zentrum für Kunst und Media (ZKM) and professor at the Karlsruhe University of Arts and Design (HfG), both in Karlsruhe, Germany. A member of several academies and recipient of six honorary doctorates, he received the Holberg Prize in 2013. He has written and edited more than twenty books and published more than 150 articles. The major international exhibitions he had curated are: *Iconoclash Beyond the Image Wars in Science, Religion and Art* with Peter Weibel in 2002, *Making Things Public: Atmospheres of Democracy* in 2005, and *Reset Modernity!* in 2016. The catalogs of all three exhibitions are published by MIT Press.

About Martin Guinard

Martin Guinard is an independent curator based in Paris, with a background in visual arts and art history. He has worked on several interdisciplinary projects dealing with the topic of ecological mutation. He has collaborated with Bruno Latour on four international projects over the last four years, including *Reset Modernity!* at ZKM in 2016 as well as a reiteration of the project through two workshop platforms in different geographical contexts: the first in China, *Reset Modernity! Shanghai Perspective* as part of the 2016 Shanghai Project; the second in Iran, *Reset Modernity! Tehran Perspective* curated with Reza Haeri at the Pejman Foundation and the Institute of History of Science of Tehran University. He is now a guest curator at ZKM working on *Critical Zones, Observatory for Earthly Politics*. Other projects include the co-curation of a 2000 sqm section of the Socle du Monde Biennial in Herning, Denmark.

About the Taipei Biennial

The Taipei Biennial is the most important exhibition held by Taipei Fine Arts Museum once every two years since 1998. Dedicated to the development of Taiwan’s contemporary art and international visibility, the Taipei Biennial employs diverse cultural perspectives to place Taipei within the network of Asian and global contemporary art, serving as a driving force for international dialogue. Responding to international art trends with both depth and breadth, it attempts to build direct connections between local and international art communities. Over the past two decades, it has grown rapidly and amassed great energy to become a major mechanism of dialogue between Taiwan and the world.