Ai Weiwei and Shepard Fairey create critical artworks with The Skateroom in response to first 100 days of Donald Trump’s Presidency

27 April 2017, SAN FRANCISCO – Cutting edge contemporary art brand The Skateroom, is delighted to unveil two limited edition collections with internationally renowned artists Ai Weiwei and Shepard Fairey, in response to the first 100 days of Donald Trump as President of the United States.

The Skateroom invites contemporary artists to create limited edition artworks on skateboards. In doing so The Skateroom supports art institutions and non-profit projects that empower children through skateboarding and art.

Launching today, during Art Market in San Francisco (27 – 30 April 2017), The Skateroom has teamed up with contemporary Chinese artist and political activist Ai Weiwei for the second time, to launch a limited edition deck of his influential artwork Study of Perspective: The White House.

Study of Perspective: The White House is an iconic example of a larger body of work by Ai Weiwei that melds art and activism, and is an overt critical response to the current political climate in the United States.

Study of Perspective, a series of images shot between 1995 and 2003, shows the artist flipping the finger against different buildings across the globe, either landmarks or symbols of authority. The gesture, captured using a snapshot aesthetic, confronts its viewer with a universal and concise statement of Ai Weiwei’s political opposition.
In addition to the launch of Ai Weiwei’s *Study of Perspective: The White House*, The Skateroom has collaborated with LA-based street artist, graphic designer and activist Shepard Fairey to create a limited edition series of decks also responding to the first 100 days of Donald Trump as President.

For this collaboration, Shepard Fairey has adapted one of his existing artworks; ‘No Future’, which denounces the hate-speech and propaganda delivered to an often uninformed or misinformed public. Shepard Fairey has been active in denouncing the antagonising and fearmongering vision of the new presidency through a poster campaign entitled “We The People” launched with the Amplifier Foundation on Donald Trump’s inauguration day.

Both Ai Weiwei and Shepard Fairey have an ‘activist’ approach through their art and share the idea that Art can be a positive tool for social change, a value which The Skateroom is committed to.

Through these artworks, The Skateroom and the artists will be able to support a number of NGOs. Following his trip to Gaza, Ai Weiwei has selected B’Tselem, an organisation which promotes respect for human rights in Israel and the Occupied Territories through a variety of means. Alongside this, proceeds will also go to Halkların köprüsü (Bridging Peoples) a non-profit charity and solidarity association based in Turkey. Bridging Peoples purpose is to assist in fighting the struggle against all sorts of ‘otherism’, hate speech, discrimination, racism, nationalism, sexism and denominationalism.

On the collaboration, Ai Weiwei comments: "My favourite word is 'act'. I am partnering with the Skateroom for that very reason. During the filming of *Human Flow*, my documentary on the global refugee condition, I had the opportunity to speak with
individuals from both B’Tselem and the Bridging Peoples Association in Turkey. What these two organizations do is very valuable to society, both in fighting against injustice and in helping those that are unfortunate."

Whilst Shepard Fairey states that "The Skateroom collaboration is an evolution of the DIY silk screened skateboard I began making in the 90’s, as an art canvas that could go on four wheels or a wall. These new boards are more refined art pieces, but the spirit of skateboard culture is what drives this new collaboration. ‘No Future’ is a response to the election of Trump. My art is usually social and political regardless of who is in the White House, but my concerns and frustrations are amplified by the election of Donald Trump. I joked while Trump was campaigning that his slogan should be ‘Manifest Density’, a parody of ‘Manifest Destiny’, which was an embarrassingly egotistical pronouncement by rich white men that it was God's desire for them to conquer ocean to ocean in the territory that would become the United States. Trump appealed to an uninformed electorate who looked for scapegoats and were driven by most likely one or more of the dark impulses listed in the image. I’m pushing for a future where those impulses have no place and definitely no traction. Let’s move forward, not backward!"

Both collections will be available to buy exclusively from The Skateroom online store and during Art Market San Francisco.

Ai Weiwei edition is available in a limited edition run of 666 hand screen printed 7-ply Canadian maple skateboards. The first 66 will be hand signed by the artist.

Shepard Fairey edition is available in limited edition run of 450 hand screen printed 7-ply Canadian maple skateboards.

theskateroom.com

For further information or high res images please contact Camron PR:
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NOTES TO EDITORS

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The Skateroom Mission Statement

Founded in 2013 by the Belgian Charles-Antoine Bodson, The Skateroom is a social entrepreneurship with the purpose to create and support a new ethic and helping change world one skateboard at a time.

The Skateroom collaborates with major artists and Art foundations to produce collectable art editions on the medium of skateboard decks.
Ai Weiwei Biography

Ai Weiwei is an artist who resides and works in both Berlin and Beijing. His father, the poet Ai Qing, was denounced by China’s Communist Party in 1958 and his family was sent to labour camps, first near the North Korean border and then eventually in Xinjiang province. They returned to Beijing in 1976 after the end of the Cultural Revolution.

Ai studied animation at the Beijing Film Academy, then studied art in New York in the early eighties. Upon returning to China a decade later, Ai advocated for experimental artists by publishing underground books and curating avant-garde exhibitions.

He has worked in many mediums, including sculpture, installation, photography, architecture and film. He is an outspoken advocate of human rights and freedom of speech.

Ai was the recipient of the Václav Havel Prize in Creative Dissent in 2012 and the Amnesty International Ambassador of Conscience Award in 2015.

Shepard Fairey Biography

Shepard Fairey is an LA-based contemporary street artist, graphic designer, activist and illustrator.

Born in 1970 in Charleston (South Carolina), Shepard graduated from the Rhode Island School of Design in 1992, where he created the 'André the Giant Has a Posse' sticker campaign. This later evolved into the internationally renowned ‘Obey Giant’ campaign. Shepard’s work reached international recognition during the 2008 US presidential election, when he created a series of posters supporting Barack Obama, including the iconic ‘HOPE’ poster.

Shepard is known for his politically charged work and most recently collaborated with the non-profit organisation, Amplifier Foundation. Along with artists Jessica Sabogal and Ernesto Yerena, Shepard created a series of artworks titled ‘We the People’ in response to President Donald Trump’s inauguration on 20th January 2017. Shepard created three portrait posters for the campaign featuring Muslim, Latino, and African-American women to support traditionally marginalized groups and those specifically targeted during Trump’s presidential campaign.

Additional comments from Shepard Fairey:
“Skateboarding changed, and maybe even saved, my life. The culture of skateboarding provided a rebellious, creative outlet for me growing up and has shaped a lot of what continues to fuel my art practice today. Skateboarding has profoundly shaped who I am not only in my ‘lust for life’ but also my resilience, because it taught me to cope with pain and keep going. The culture of skateboarding introduced me to avenues of art, like t-shirts, stickers, and board graphics, that I still value and use in my art practice today.”
Art Market San Francisco

Art Market San Francisco will return to the Fort Mason Festival Pavilion this April for the celebrated art fair’s anticipated seventh edition. Following record breaking sales, city-wide partnerships, and attendance of over 25,000 visitors in 2016, the 2017 edition of Art Market San Francisco is pleased to present a significant selection of contemporary and modern artworks from returning Art Market exhibitors and exciting newcomers.
http://artmarketsf.com/

Through this new collaboration 20% of The Skateroom profits will be dedicated to the two NGO’s of Ai Weiwei’s choice.

Halkların köprüsü

"Bridging Peoples" is a non-profit charity and solidarity association based in Turkey. Their purpose is to struggle against all sorts of 'otherism', hate speech, discrimination, racism, nationalism, sexism and denominationalism; to stand in solidarity with the sufferers regardless of their language, religion, race, denomination, sex orientation or gender; but to also to organize solidarity events conducive to the establishment of peace and equality between peoples; and to stand side-by-side with each and every "other" against social exclusion.
www.halklarinkoprusu.org

B’Tselem

The Israeli Information Centre for Human rights in the Occupied Territories. B’Tselem promotes respect for human rights in Israel and the Occupied Territories through a variety of means. The association documents both specific incidents and systemic problems impacting human rights. They use creative public education and advocacy strategies to generate public discussion and foster positive change.
www.btselem.org

The Amplifier Foundation

The Amplifier Foundation is a visual media experiment dedicated to amplifying the voices of grassroots movements through art and community engagement. The foundation funds collaborations between those movements and contemporary artists, so that their message can reach a wider audience.
http://theamplifierfoundation.org/

A statement from Shepard about the Amplifier Foundation

"I’ve worked with Aaron Huey from the Amplifier Foundation over the years on art collaborations to help protect indigenous communities. Most recently Aaron’s Amplifier Foundation launched the 'We The People’ campaign, a nonpartisan campaign aimed at generating dialogue about the American identity and values through public art. I was honoured to take part with other artists to create art to send a message of equality and justice, and it’s been incredible to see the art catapult into the forefront of current events and activism. I’m very proud of the project and hope to see it grow.”