



The Sovereign Art Foundation

Suites 1601-1603, Kinwick Centre, 32 Hollywood Road, Central, Hong Kong

T: +852 2542 1177 art@SovereignArtFoundation.com SovereignArtFoundation.com

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The 2021 Sovereign Asian Art Prize Winners Announced, Li Binyuan Named Grand Prize Winner



Image: *Tilted Portrait*, Li Binyuan (Grand Prize Winner, The 2021 Sovereign Asian Art Prize)
Courtesy of the artist and The Sovereign Art Foundation

Hong Kong – The Sovereign Art Foundation (SAF) today announces Chinese artist **Li Binyuan** as winner of The 2021 Sovereign Asian Art Prize and US\$30,000 for his work, *Tilted Portrait*, a photograph capturing a piece of performance art. The Prize is the 17th edition of Asia's longest established and most prestigious award for contemporary art.

Rithika Merchant, of India, and **Intiaj Rasel**, of Bangladesh, are awarded the Vogue Hong Kong Women's Art Prize of US\$5,000, and The Public Vote Prize of US\$1,000, respectively, for their works *Saudade*, a mixed-media painting of gouache, watercolour, and ink depicting mythological imagery, and *Journey by Bus*, a collage comprised of bus tickets portraying travellers painted in-situ.

Winner Li Binyuan is a performance artist primarily concerned with interventions into daily Chinese society: through actions, videos, and performances, he explores physical, material, conceptual and social values. Using physical interaction to occupy both urban and rural space, he questions and transcends norms and ideologies imposed on the environment. *Tilted Portrait* represents the artist's search for spiritual crutches that can support him for a better life. Stood tilted in an ancient tree, Li believes he has found an adequate prosthesis to replace his 'missing limb' - truly becoming a part of the growing trees.

Li was nominated into The Prize by curator, Zhenhua Li, founder of Laboratory Art Beijing.

Li said of his win:

"It is my great honour to be named as the winner of The 2021 Sovereign Asian Art Prize. I would love to express my sincere appreciation to The Sovereign Art Foundation for this wonderful opportunity; and I also want to give my biggest thanks to the judging panel for the



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recognition of my work 'Titled Portrait'. It's always delightful to see people devote their time, energy, and knowledge into promoting and supporting the growth of contemporary art. It is even more meaningful to witness the work The Sovereign Art Foundation is doing, in both supporting artists and providing therapeutic artistic benefits to disadvantaged children. I want to thank everyone who has contributed to this event, giving me so much hope and excitement to see what contemporary art has in store for the future."

A board of 83 independent art professionals nominated mid-career artists from 30 countries into The Prize, with a record-breaking of 744 entries received. The 30 finalists from 17 countries and territories were shortlisted by a judging panel including writer, curator, museum director **David Elliott**; **Georgina Adam**, journalist and author; abstract artist **Zhang Enli**; **John McDonald**, art critic; and Chairman of the Friends of Hong Kong Museum of Art, **Nancy Lee**.

The Finalists Exhibition was presented at 9 Queen's Road Central, Central, Hong Kong from 5 – 16 May 2021. The artworks were then presented at Art Central, Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre, from 19 – 23 May 2021. Visitors at both exhibitions were invited to cast a vote for their favourite artwork, and engage in educational programming, in collaboration with K11 Art Foundation.

All shortlisted artworks, except Li's, are being auctioned online at saapauction.com, closing 9:30pm on 27 May 2021. Proceeds are split evenly between the artists and SAF's charitable programmes.

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The 2021 Sovereign Asian Art Prize Finalists Exhibition

Presented by:	The Sovereign Art Foundation Click here for full list of participating artists.
Venue Partner:	9 Queen's Road Central Chelsfield Asia L Catterton
Education Partner:	K11 Art Foundation
Partner:	Art Central Hong Kong
Auction Partner:	Christie's Hong Kong
Media Partner:	VOGUE Hong Kong
Media Partner:	CoBo Social
Cultural Partner:	Sutton
Digital Partner:	Ocula

Press Enquiries

David Yu
davidy@suttoncomms.com
(+852) 2528 0792

Beth Corner
Beth@SovereignArtFoundation.com
(+852) 2542 1177

Press Kit

[Click here](#) to view and download a full press kit with videos of the prize presentation, high-resolution artwork images, bios, portraits and factsheet. *All images please credit the artist and The Sovereign Art Foundation.*

Facebook: SovereignAsianArtPrize

Instagram: @sovereignasianartprize

#SovereignArtFoundation #SAAP2021



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Editors Notes

The Sovereign Art Foundation

The Sovereign Art Foundation (SAF) is a charitable organisation that was founded in 2003 with a well-defined twin focus: to recognise the growing wealth of contemporary art talent in Asia and bring the proven benefits of expressive arts to disadvantaged children.

In the same year, SAF launched The Sovereign Asian Art Prize, now recognised as the most established and prestigious annual art award in Asia-Pacific. The Prize increases the international exposure of artists in the region, whilst raising funds by auctioning shortlisted artworks and sharing proceeds equally between the participating artists and SAF. SAF uses these proceeds to fund programmes that support disadvantaged children using expressive arts. This model has so far raised over US\$9 million for artists and charities worldwide.

In 2013, SAF launched Make It Better (MIB), an initiative that supports children from low-income backgrounds and with special educational needs in Hong Kong. MIB works in local schools and community centres to offer children a programme of expressive arts workshops designed to build self-esteem, confidence, self-awareness and interpersonal skills. SAF also supports teachers, social workers and caregivers of these children by introducing them to the therapeutic benefits of art.

SovereignArtFoundation.com