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For immediate release

***Spring Workshop Art Basel Hong Kong 2016
Program Announcement***

***Wu Tsang's World Premiere of *Duilian* at Spring
Workshop, Hong Kong***
March 12 – May 22, 2016

HONG KONG - Spring Workshop is delighted to present the world premiere of *Duilian**, a film installation that is part of a decade-long research project by visual artist and filmmaker Wu Tsang. The multi-media exhibition centers on *Duilian*, a newly-commissioned experimental film that interprets the life and writings of the famous Chinese revolutionary Qiu Jin (秋瑾 1875–1907) through visual and martial arts.

Combining magical realism, documentary, and kung fu genre, the film portrays a side of Qiu Jin that is rarely seen in the mainstream, focusing on her private life and a community of strong women who surrounded her. *Duilian* decodes and deliberately “mistranslates” official narratives about Qiu Jin, as a way to question the role that language and storytelling play in the construction of history.

A legendary feminist, Qiu Jin was executed as a traitor during an uprising against the Qing dynasty, which ultimately led to the end of centuries of imperial rule and the founding of the Republic of China. Nowadays her portrait is displayed in the Communist Museum in Shanghai, a rare female hero amongst men. Her revolutionary life and poetry are widely celebrated in novels, films, and plays, yet the details of her personal life are less examined. In 1906, Qiu Jin left her husband and family to study abroad in Japan, where she joined the “Mutual Love Society” (共愛會), a secret group of radical sworn sisters (金蘭姊妹)—which in the film is embodied by a group of martial artists (“sword sisters”), who initiate Qiu Jin into their world of desire and revolution.

The film integrates choreographed performances with narrative scenes featuring the main characters Qiu Jin (played by performance artist boychild), and her intimate friend, the calligrapher Wu Zhiying (吳芝瑛 1868-1934, played by filmmaker Wu Tsang). The story takes as a starting point the fact that queer histories—particularly those of

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queer and trans people in Asia—are often invisible or coded, and must be “read between the lines” of official history. Tsang’s ongoing project explores the mythologies that queer people construct out of remarkable histories such as Qiu Jin’s and Wu Zhiying’s, and the desire to manifest alternative narratives through film.

Duilian is the result of Wu Tsang’s two three-month residencies at Spring Workshop in 2015 at the invitation of Mimi Brown, Founder and Defne Ayas, Curator-at-large. The project is developed with Christina Li, Director, and produced by Jessica Kong, Communications and Programs.

Duilian is commissioned and produced by Spring Workshop, with co-commissioners Centre d’Art Contemporain Genève for BIM 2016, Arthub Asia, and 9th Berlin Biennale for Contemporary Art, with support from Nottingham Contemporary, the Fonds d’Art Contemporain de la Ville et du Canton de Genève and In Between Art Film. Courtesy of the artist and Galerie Isabella Bortolozzi, Berlin.

**Duilian* refers to a form of couplet poetry (對聯), and it also refers to the wushu category of sword-fighting (對練). Both forms evoke dueling aspects: in poetry, the words are rhymed in tonal opposition to each other, and in wushu, a pair of martial artists engage in a dance of swords.

DUILIAN PROGRAM DATES

Saturday, March 12, 2016

Exhibition opening

12pm – 4pm

Thursday, March 24, 2016

Art Basel Opening and special event

12.00pm – 1:30pm*

Following two three-month residencies at Spring Workshop when Wu Tsang researched the life and writing of Chinese revolutionary feminist poet Qiu Jin (秋瑾 1875–1907), the Los Angeles-based multi-media artist and filmmaker will present a live event on the occasion of the premiere of her new film installation.

*Program dates and time are subject to change. Check our website www.springworkshop.org for updates.

Please RSVP at rsvp@springworkshop.org listing the event title in the subject line.

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Exhibition opening hours

March 13 – May 22, 2016

Tuesday to Sunday and Public Holidays

12pm – 6pm

Art Basel Hong Kong opening hours

March 22 – 26, 2016

10am – 7pm

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Wu Tsang, Mimi Brown (Founder, Spring Workshop), and Christina Li (Director, Spring Workshop) are available for interviews by request. Please contact us for more information.

ABOUT SPRING WORKSHOP

Spring Workshop is a cultural initiative that brings people together to experiment with the way we relate to art. Committed to an international cross-disciplinary program of artist and curatorial residencies, exhibitions, music, film and talks, Spring serves as a platform and laboratory for exchange between the vibrant artists, organizations and audiences that define Hong Kong's rich cultural landscape and the emerging and established artists, organizations and audiences around the world that seek to engage in far-reaching dialogue. Since opening its space in Wong Chuk Hang in 2011, Spring has welcomed over 8,000 audience members to its 184 programs and events featuring 160 artists, residents and collaborators.

ABOUT THE ARTIST

WU TSANG

Wu Tsang is a Los Angeles based artist, performer, and filmmaker. Her projects have been presented at the Tate Modern (London), Stedelijk Museum (Amsterdam), Migros Museum (Zurich), the Whitney Museum and the New Museum (New York), the MCA (Chicago), the Hammer Museum and MOCA (Los Angeles). In 2012 she participated in the Whitney Biennial, Liverpool Biennial, and Gwangju Biennial. Tsang's first feature film *Wildness* (2012) premiered at MoMA's Documentary Fortnight (New York) and won the Grand Jury Prize for Outstanding Documentary at Outfest

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(Los Angeles), and her recent short film *You're dead to me* premiered on PBS and won the 2014 Imagen Award for Best Short. She has received grants from Creative Capital, the Rockefeller Foundation, the Contemporary Art Foundation, the Center for Cultural Innovation, the Tiffany Foundation, the Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, Frameline, and Art Matters.

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