

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE****ASIA SOCIETY HONG KONG CENTER AND METLIFE JOIN HANDS TOGETHER TO CELEBRATE ASIA SOCIETY'S 60<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY WITH ICONIC IMAGES BY FAMED PHOTOGRAPHERS BRIAN BRAKE AND STEVE McCURRY**

(Hong Kong, September 8, 2016) Asia Society Hong Kong Center (ASHK) is celebrating Asia Society's 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary with a diamond exhibition, *Picturing Asia: Double Take – The Photography of Brian Brake and Steve McCurry*, which brings us over 90 evocative images of Asia by the two internationally acclaimed Magnum photographers. The exhibition is supported by MetLife Foundation, and will run from September 10, 2016 to January 7, 2017 at ASHK's Chantal Miller Gallery.

"Asia Society's founder, John D. Rockefeller III, was a man with great vision. 60 years ago he saw the importance of fostering cultural interactions between Asia and the United States, and this foresight eventually led to the establishment of Asia Society Hong Kong Center, said S. Alice Mong, Executive Director of Asia Society Hong Kong Center. "Through their lenses, Brian Brake and Steve McCurry have brought Asia's cultural richness to the eyes of global audiences. Therefore, it is apt to celebrate Asia Society's 60<sup>th</sup> birthday with these iconic images, and we hope to build on their legacies and strengthen interactions between Asia and the rest of the world."

Chris Townsend, President, Asia, MetLife, Inc. and Board Director, MetLife Foundation said: "We are excited with the continuing evolution of our partnership with the Asia Society as they celebrate their 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary with this unique exhibition. MetLife is committed to supporting programs that highlight the cultural diversity of our world, as well as promoting educational themes and making art more accessible for our communities."

*Picturing Asia: Double Take* sheds light on Brake and McCurry's common passion in capturing the many facets of Asia. The "Picturing" in the title suggests a double meaning – of taking a picture and of imagining one, whereas "Double Take" refers to how Brake and McCurry interpreted the scenes they saw. Nearly 100 photos, as well as McCurry's old cameras and copies of selected magazines will be on view.

Brake was the only independent Western photographer invited to cover the 10th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China in 1959, and McCurry's *Afghan Girl* is one of the world's most recognizable photographs. Although Brake and McCurry belong to different generations, Asia's monsoon season provided a nexus between the two. Brake first published his Monsoon series of photographs in 1961, and an 11-year-old McCurry saw Brake's Monsoon images in the pages of *Life* magazine.

Twenty years later, inspired by Brake's photographs, McCurry traveled to Asia on assignment for *National Geographic* to capture the same weather phenomenon, resulting in his own Monsoon series based on his travels through China, India, Indonesia, Bangladesh, and Sri Lanka. "I was changed by my time covering the monsoon. Half the world's population is

affected by the whim of these winds. This is the reality, and it will stay with me forever,” McCurry stated.

Apart from the monsoon connection, both photographers also shared a deep passion for Asia and had special links to Hong Kong. Brake lived in the city in the 1960s and 70s, and founded a documentary film company. During this period, he captured many interesting things in the city, including a portrait of the late movie mogul Sir Run Run Shaw with Li Li-Hua, an actress from Hong Kong’s Shaw Brothers Studio. Although McCurry hasn’t lived in Hong Kong, he has captured many fascinating images of the Frangrant Harbor spanning a period from 1980s to 2014. For example, his behind-the-scene images of a Cantonese Opera highlighted a unique aspect of this particular form of national intangible cultural heritage.

The exhibition is curated by Ian Wedde, former Head of Art and Visual Culture at the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa (Te Papa), together with ASHK’s assistant curators Kristy Soo and Ashley Nga-sai Wu. Brake’s photographs are drawn from the collection of Te Papa, where they were gifted by Brake’s partner Wai-man Lau in 2001. Also, the partnership with Te Papa has enabled Asia Society to present this exhibition.

In conjunction with the exhibition, ASHK presented a sneak peek lecture by Athol McCredie, Curator of Photography at the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa and an expert on Brake’s works, in August. This will be followed by other lectures, including a discussion with McCurry and Wedde.

Aside from lectures, we are also organizing FotoFête, where members of the public are invited to submit their personal photographic creations for expert assessment by professional photographers Stanley Wong (anothermountainman), Charlotte Nunn of Bonhams, Bobby Lee, Marine Mérindol of Magnum Photos, Times Pang, and Edwin Lai. Among the participants, 10 members of the public and 10 students will be selected to join a three-day photography workshop where experts will help the selected participants to sharpen their skills. There will also be workshops for families across three generations, so that they can experience photography together.

To make art truly accessible, we are collaborating with the Arts with the Disabled Association Hong Kong (ADAHK), where invited visually-impaired photographers can enjoy the joy of photography alongside sighted photographers in a series of accessible workshops. ADAHK instructors and a group of professional photographers, including award-winning photographer Bobby Lee, will provide directions and guidance to the participants. The images created by them will be exhibited so that they can share their vision with the community.

The various educational programs are made possible with the generous partnership of the Education Development Foundation Association and in-kind support from Epson Hong Kong Limited and Phase One Asia.

On reaching out to the wider community, we have partnered with Hang Lung Properties to stage mini-exhibitions at Fashion Walk in Causeway Bay and Grand Plaza in Mong Kok, so that

a wider audience can appreciate the stories of Brake and McCurry. In addition, there will be special promotions where shoppers will have the opportunity to redeem admission tickets to the exhibition. More details can be found on the Fashion Walk, Grand Plaza, and ASHK websites.

About *Picturing Asia: Double Take – The Photography of Brian Brake and Steve McCurry*

Venue: Chantal Miller Gallery, Asia Society Hong Kong Center,  
9 Justice Drive, Admiralty, Hong Kong  
Date: September 10, 2016 – January 7, 2017  
Hours: Tuesday – Sunday: 11:00 – 18:00  
Last Thursday of each month: 11:00 – 20:00  
Closed on Mondays, Christmas Day, and New Year’s Day  
Admission fee: Adult: HK\$30  
Senior (aged 60 or above) and individuals with disabilities: HK\$15  
Asia Society members, full-time students, aged 18 or below, last Thursday  
of each month: Free

Organizer 主辦機構



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For more information, visit the ASHK website: [www.asiasociety.org/hong-kong](http://www.asiasociety.org/hong-kong)

Connect with ASHK on social media:

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### **About Asia Society Hong Kong Center**

Asia Society Hong Kong Center is a leading non-governmental organization and intellectual hub that fosters cross-cultural understanding and promotes dialogue and better understanding of Asia. The Center provides insight, generates ideas, and promotes collaboration to address present challenges and create a brighter shared future across the fields of arts and culture, business and policy, and education.

### **About Asia Society**

Founded in 1956 by John D. Rockefeller III in New York, and with a worldwide network of 12 centers, Asia Society is a key educational institution dedicated to promoting mutual understanding and strengthening partnerships among peoples, leaders, and institutions of Asia and the United States in a global context.

### **About MetLife Foundation**

MetLife Foundation was created in 1976 to continue MetLife's long tradition of corporate contributions and community involvement. Since its founding through the end of 2013, MetLife Foundation has provided more than US\$700 million in grants and US\$70 million in program-related investments to organizations addressing issues that have a positive impact in their communities. Today the Foundation is dedicated to advancing financial inclusion, committing US\$200 million over the next five years to help build a secure future for individuals and communities around the world. For more information, please visit [www.metlife.com/metlife-foundation/index.html](http://www.metlife.com/metlife-foundation/index.html)

### **About Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa**

Te Papa Tongarewa is New Zealand's national museum. Te Papa houses taonga (treasures) and the national art collection. The museum is renowned for being bicultural, scholarly, innovative, and fun. The Māori name Te Papa Tongarewa translates to 'container of treasures.' Located on the waterfront of New Zealand's capital city, Wellington, Te Papa opened its doors in 1998 though the institution has a rich history dating back to 1865.

### **About Hang Lung Properties**

Hang Lung Properties Limited, a constituent stock of the Hang Seng Index and Hang Seng Corporate Sustainability Indices in Hong Kong, is a leading real estate developer in Hong Kong and mainland China. Boasting a diversified portfolio of investment properties in Hong Kong, the Company has progressively branched out into the Mainland since the 1990s, building, owning and managing world-class commercial complexes in key cities, projects that have earned international acclaim for their exceptional quality of architectural design, services and sustainable features.

For media enquiries, please contact:

Ms. Christy Ko, Head of External Affairs, Asia Society Hong Kong Center

Tel: +852 2103 9513 Email: [mediahk@asiasociety.org](mailto:mediahk@asiasociety.org) / [cko@asiasociety.org](mailto:cko@asiasociety.org)

Mr. Jerome Yau, External Affairs Manager, Asia Society Hong Kong Center

Tel: +852 2103 9563 Email: [mediahk@asiasociety.org](mailto:mediahk@asiasociety.org) / [jyau@asiasociety.org](mailto:jyau@asiasociety.org)

Ms. May Tam, Assistant External Affairs Manager, Asia Society Hong Kong Center

Tel: +852 2103 9559 Email: [mediahk@asiasociety.org](mailto:mediahk@asiasociety.org) / [mtam@asiasociety.org](mailto:mtam@asiasociety.org)