

Promoting Freedom of Expression: Exhibit 'The Pillar of Shame' at the Entrance to Art Basel Hong Kong

Dear Art Basel Organizers,

I hope this letter finds you well. I am writing as a passionate supporter of the arts and a dedicated attendee of Art Basel Hong Kong to suggest a powerful and symbolic gesture for the upcoming Art Basel Hong Kong 2024. Given the evolving climate of art censorship and restrictions on freedom of expression in Hong Kong, I believe that Art Basel can play a pivotal role in advocating for artistic freedom and human rights.

I propose that Art Basel exhibit 'The Pillar of Shame' by Jens Galschiøt at the entrance to the art fair. This renowned artwork, which previously stood on the campus of Hong Kong University for over two decades before its removal in December 2021, commemorates the victims of the Tiananmen Square tragedy in 1989. It is a powerful symbol of the importance of art as a vehicle for social commentary and the preservation of collective memory.

By prominently displaying 'The Pillar of Shame' at the entrance to Art Basel Hong Kong, you would send a strong message to the international art community and the world at large. You would demonstrate your commitment to upholding the principles of freedom of expression and standing up against art censorship, particularly in an environment where such freedoms are increasingly under threat.

Art Basel has long been a beacon for artistic diversity, creativity, and innovation. It has celebrated artists from all corners of the globe, each with their unique perspectives and voices. By exhibiting 'The Pillar of Shame,' you would reaffirm your dedication to these core values and show solidarity with the artists, curators, and critics who are currently facing challenges to their creative expression in Hong Kong.

I understand that hosting such an exhibit may pose logistical and political challenges, but I firmly believe that the art world has a responsibility to engage with the pressing issues of our time. Art has the power to transcend boundaries, spark dialogue, and inspire change. By taking this bold step, Art Basel can be a catalyst for meaningful conversations about the importance of artistic freedom, not only within the confines of the fair but also within the broader global discourse.

I urge you to consider this proposal seriously and engage in a dialogue with artists, experts, and the international art community to explore the feasibility of exhibiting 'The Pillar of Shame' at the entrance to Art Basel Hong Kong 2024. Together, we can make a powerful statement about the enduring importance of art as a vehicle for free expression and the preservation of our shared history.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. I eagerly await your response and hope to see Art Basel continue to champion the values that make the art world a source of inspiration and transformation.

*Best Regards,
Loretta Lau*