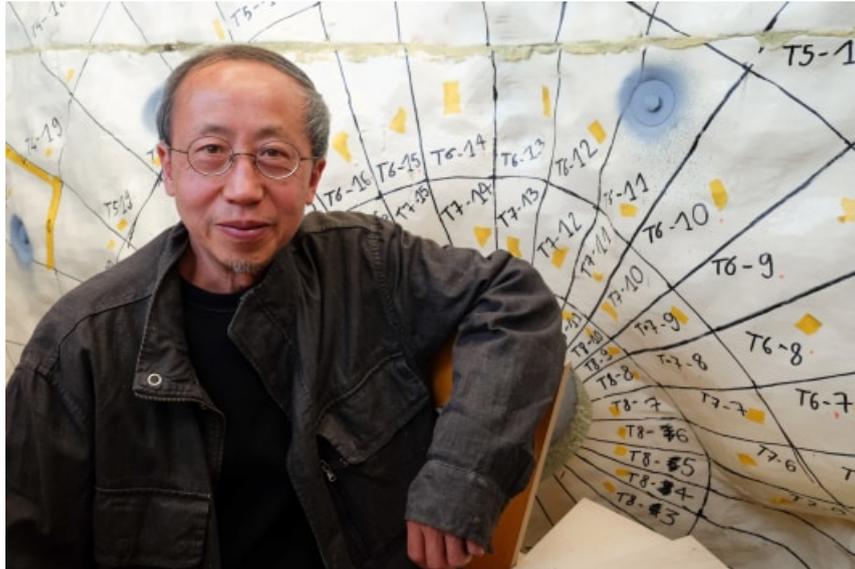


The Hague, The Netherlands, 20 August 2020

## Iconic artwork Huang Yong Ping unveiled in The Hague



photographer Wineke van Muiswinkel, courtesy Stroom Den Haag

On Sunday 4 October 2020, alderman Robert van Asten of The Hague will unveil the artwork *Ling Zhi Helicopters*. This will give The Netherlands a unique work of art by the internationally renowned artist Huang Yong Ping, who died unexpectedly late last year.

With this work of art the city of The Hague realizes an ambitious project and adds an iconic work of art to its impressive collection of art in public space, which also includes the *Celestial Vault* by James Turrell. The new monumental work of art is located on the site of the former Ypenburg airport and marks the creation of the city district Leidschenveen-Ypenburg. The unveiling is also a tribute to Huang Yong Ping and will take place in the presence of his widow and daughter.

### A historic location

In 2016 the city of The Hague commissioned a work of art in public space in order to celebrate the completion of the newly developed city district Leidschenveen-Ypenburg. During the selection procedure, the city was advised by a committee of local inhabitants and art experts, under the guidance of art center Stroom Den Haag. They chose the design of Huang Yong Ping, because *Ling Zhi Helicopters* connects the history of the location and the creation of the new city district in a highly poetic way. The artist chose the location of the top of the Rijswijkse Landingslaan (the former landing strip of the local airport), for an intriguing and gigantic group of three 'mushroom helicopters'. On the lawn three huge Ling Zhi mushrooms of respectively 5.5 m., 6.8 m. and 6.3 m. high will be erected. When the wind is blowing the 'hats' will gently turn the rotor blades, making it look as if the work has just landed there. From 1936 until 1987 this location was the site of airport Ypenburg. Today it is a lively neighborhood on a historic site that is still very much alive in the memory of many local residents. The monumental work of art thus represents the powerful synthesis of retrospection and progress.

## Ling Zhi

Ling Zhi is the name of a small mushroom that grows in China on old trees and in the mountains. In traditional Chinese medicine and according to the Taoist belief, the Ling Zhi mushroom is a medicine to ensure a very long life. Huang Yong Ping decided to enlarge three specimens of this type of mushroom. Unfortunately he himself died prematurely and unexpectedly, but as a legacy he left the city of The Hague a beautiful work of art that depicts a long (and enriched) life.

### A unique production process

The monumental scale of *Ling Zhi Helicopters* called for a completely new production process, combining innovative and manual techniques, from 3d scans and foam processing to hammering copper and bonding. The artwork was produced and initiated in the Netherlands. The company Anything is Possible in Abcoude is responsible for the production and technical advice.

Shortly before his death Huang Yong Ping visited Abcoude and was full of praise for the way his work was produced. In consultation with his widow, Shen Yuan (herself a sculptor), the artwork was completed according to the exact specifications of Huang Yong Ping.

### A tribute

Huang Yong Ping (1954-2019) was a French-Chinese artist who moved to Europe in the late 1980s. He lived and worked in Paris, where he died unexpectedly in the fall of last year. *Ling Zhi Helicopters*, which was already nearing completion, is one of his last designs.

Huang Yong Ping is considered one of the foremost artists of the Chinese avant-garde. Internationally acclaimed for his inventiveness and boundless imagination, he succeeded in connecting Eastern and Western art traditions in his work. His monumental installations are impressive not only as works of art, but also because of their astute view of today's world and our place in the history.

Until the mid-1980s he was a member of the Xiamen Dada movement, which organized happenings, modeled after those of Joseph Beuys, Marcel Duchamp and John Cage. In 1989 he was invited to take part in *Magiciens de la Terre*, the legendary exhibition dedicated to non-western art in the Centre Georges Pompidou in Paris. After the massacre in Tiananmen Square in Beijing, he decided to stay in France. In 1996 his work was part of the European art event *Manifesta* in Rotterdam and in 1997 he participated in *Skulptur Projekte* in Münster. He officially became a French citizen in 1999.

In that same year and in 2009 he represented France at the *Venice Biennale*. His work was part of a.o. the exhibitions *Monumenta* (Grand Palais, Paris, 2016), and *Art and China after 1989: The Theater of the world* (Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, 2017), and is included in many leading, international art collections. In the Netherlands his work *The Overturned Tomb* (1994) is part of the sculpture park of the Kröller-Müller Museum in Otterlo.

In The Hague, *Ling Zhi Helicopters* will become part of the city's impressive collection of art in the public space, which includes the *Celestial Vault* by James Turrell, *The Sculpture Gallery* by P. Struycken and *Park in the Water* by Vito Acconci.

*The artwork Ling Zhi Helicopters was created in collaboration with Project Bureau Ypenburg, the Leidschenveen Development Agency, the municipality of The Hague and Stroom Den Haag. With special thanks to: Anything is Possible, Shen Yuan and Huang Yan.*

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### **Note to the editor, not for publication:**

Detailed information about the program surrounding the unveiling will be forthcoming. The work of art is scheduled to be installed in early September. We would like to invite members of the press to attend the **press preview on location on Friday afternoon**

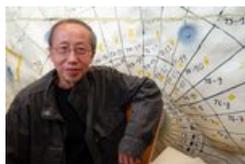
11 September 2020 (13-17 hours). Project leader Wineke van Muiswinkel will be present and will give detailed information. Please register in advance via [pers@stroom.nl](mailto:pers@stroom.nl).

For questions please contact Hildegard Blom, press and communications Stroom Den Haag, [pers@stroom.nl](mailto:pers@stroom.nl), tel nr (+31-(0)70-3658985 or +31-(0)6-24255772 or the project leader: Wineke van Muiswinkel, [wmuiswinkel@stroom.nl](mailto:wmuiswinkel@stroom.nl).

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Stroom Den Haag is a center for visual arts with a wide range of activities. The program is based on the conviction that art offers new insights and makes an important contribution to the discussion about the city, culture and society.

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