



## PLANS UNVEILED FOR THE YELLOW RIVER ARTS CENTRE

### Set to be the largest and most important arts facility in Northwest China

Plans for The Yellow River Arts Centre, a 1.76billion RMB (US\$279million), 80 hectare new arts centre being developed in Northwest China were announced today, **Thursday 17 May 2012**, at ART HK 12. Situated along the banks of the Yellow River, within Yinchuan, the capital of the Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region and along the northern route of the historic Silk Road, the arts facility will open in 2014. The Yellow River Arts Centre will provide a meeting place for local and international audiences and arts communities to participate in the production, exhibition, discussion and research of contemporary culture in all its forms, and to reignite the rich cultural heritage of the region.

The Yellow River Arts Centre will include:

- **Yinchuan Art Museum:** A 15,000 m<sup>2</sup> museum with a dual focus on contemporary art and art history; a special highlight in the museum's collection will be late Qing period oil paintings.
- **Sculpture Grounds:** Presented in collaboration with Cass Sculpture Foundation, UK, the grounds will feature a changing exhibition of newly commissioned sculpture and will include an outdoor plaza for large-scale festivals and the performing arts.
- **Art History Park:** An extensive presentation of the history of sculpture in China, the park will be an important resource with 604 high quality reproductions of major sculptural works for education purposes from the early Qin Dynasty to Qing Dynasty, covering 2,000 years of art history
- **Artists Village:** A residency programme for artists, curators and art institutions, devised for the commissioning, creation and exhibition of new artwork.
- **The International Art and Culture Exhibition Programme:** Conceived to stimulate cultural exchange and discussion ranging from the latest developments in the contemporary art world to museological issues.
- **Programme for Cultural Industries:** A research and publishing programme devising new models for the creative industries and their potential economic and social impact.

Yinchuan Art Museum, the first project to be built within the new arts centre, opening Spring 2014, will display historic art alongside contemporary art, encouraging dialogue between the two. Central to the museum will be the collection of late-Qing oil paintings from the 18th to early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, including work by Giuseppe Castiglione, George Chinnery and, Shi Beilin (Spoilum), the first Chinese painter known to have painted in oil on canvas. The collection is of international significance for the study of trans-national art and illustrates cultural exchange between east and west and the development of Chinese oil painting. Curated by renowned Chinese art critic Professor Lv Peng, the inaugural exhibition will showcase 200 paintings alongside commissioned work by international contemporary artists to stimulate discursive engagement and international cultural exchange.

The museum building has been designed by WAA to rise out of the riverbank, its massing and textured façade inspired by the undulations and distortions of sedimentary layers of the eroded river bank. These effects have been realised through the use of glass reinforced concrete technologies on a scale never seen in China before. The layout will include 3 floors of exhibition space and education spaces including classrooms, a library-café and a lecture theatre.

## 黄河艺汇 Yellow River Arts Centre



The Yellow River Arts Centre is a core component for “River Origins”, a 30 billion RMB (US\$4.76billion) major infrastructure project with culture, tourism, ecology and sustainability at its centre. “River Origins” is a flagship project for “Golden Bank of the Yellow River”, an economic integration of 10 cities along 403 km of the Yellow River.

Ms Liu Wenjin, Founder of the Yellow River Arts Centre and Chairperson of the Board said: *“The Yellow River Arts Centre is an ambitious cultural organisation of global significance and strong local foundations. It will provide a dynamic cultural hub for the city and Ningxia and a place of culture, education, research and leisure to improve the well-being of residents of the city and Northwest China at large.”*

Kwok Kian Chow Deputy Chairman of the Board said: *“The Yellow River Arts Centre will be founded on the historical Silk Road. Throughout history, Yinchuan and Ningxia have been a meeting place for major civilisations. The project has great promise and ambition to generate new transnational nexuses and constellations for arts forum and practices.”*

The Yellow River Arts Centre is an international project with international collaborations and an international board including: **Liu Wenjin**, Founder, Chairperson, China; **Kwok Kian Chow**, Deputy Chairman, Senior Advisor, The National Art Gallery, Singapore; **Professor Lv Peng**, Deputy Director, China Art Academy, Director, Chengdu MOMA, China; **Wilfred Cass CBE**, Chairman, Cass Sculpture Foundation, UK; **Professor Akira Tatehata**, President, Kyoto University of the Arts, Japan; **Professor Iftikhar Dadi**, Chair, Associate Professor, Cornell University Ithaca, New York, US; **Budi Tek (Yu Deyao)**, Chairman, Yuz Foundation, Indonesia, Chairman, De Museum, Shanghai, China; **Sui Jianguo**, Sculptor, Beijing, China; and Professor **Ooi Can Seng**, Copenhagen School of Business.

The Yellow River Arts Centre is a not-for-profit arts organisation. It is already programming and following a curatorial conference held in Shanghai in 2012, more lectures, forums and publications will follow prior to the opening. The content and museology of The Yellow River Arts Centre will develop out of an office in Singapore. It will be situated within Gillman Barracks, a creative and intellectual centre for the production, discussion and exhibition of contemporary art in Asia, opening 2013. To commemorate the launch of the Centre, artist Boedi Widjaja has created the Centre's logo.

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### **Notes to Editors**

#### **Yinchuan and Ningxia**

Yinchuan the capital of the Ningxia HUI Autonomous Region in China and is one of China’s most famous historic and cultural cities. Over 25% of the population in the city are Muslim, the style of architecture, festivals and culture are distinct. The remnants of the Great Wall of the Qin Dynasty are located near the city and Western Xia tombs “the pyramids of the East”, outside Yinchuan are one of the famous attractions. There are two pagodas in Yinchuan: Haibao Ta, a 5<sup>th</sup> century pagoda and Chengtiansi Ta. The Yellow River lies at the heart of Ningxia Hui Autonomous region which has a population of 6.25 million over 664,000 square kilometres. Cultural sights include famous ancient rock carvings at the Helan Shan Mountains.

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