

## WRIGHTWOOD 659 ANNOUNCES SPRING EXHIBITIONS APRIL 14 – JULY 15, 2023

- ***Kongkee: Warring States Cyberpunk***
- ***Shahidul Alam: Singed But Not Burnt***
- ***Patric McCoy: Take My Picture***

### ***Kongkee: Warring States Cyberpunk***



*Kongkee: Warring States Cyberpunk* features the work of award-winning animation director and visual artist Kong Khong-chang, known as Kongkee. Part comic book, part motion picture, part meditation on history, the exhibition is presented through dazzling animated vignettes projected across walls and on screens. *Kongkee: Warring States Cyberpunk* traces the story of legendary Chinese poet Qu Yuan as his soul journeys from the ancient Chu Kingdom to an imagined 21<sup>st</sup> century Asia of cyborgs, electric rock, and romantic reunions. Ancient Chinese bronzes from the Warring States Period (c. 481-221 BCE) accompany Kongkee's graphic artworks, referencing a time when China emerged from myth into history with the founding of the Qin dynasty, the first of Imperial China. *Kongkee: Warring States Cyberpunk* intertwines legend with an allegorical future where immortal life can be attained through technology.

Born in Malaysia in 1977 and raised in Hong Kong, Kongkee lives and works in London.

*Kongkee: Warring States Cyberpunk* is organized by the Asian Art Museum of San Francisco, where it debuted in November 2022, and curated by its head of contemporary art, Abby Chen.

### ***Shahidul Alam: Singed But Not Burnt***

“As journalists, we need to feel the heat, stand close to the fire, and risk being burnt. Take one step back, you become ineffective. The trick, therefore, is to get singed but not burnt.” – *Shahidul Alam*

*Shahidul Alam: Singed But Not Burnt* surveys the four-decade career of the renowned Bangladeshi photographer, writer, activist, and former *Time* magazine Person of the Year, as he documents the consequences of catastrophic weather, repressive regimes, and political upheaval in his home country. Through select projects and more than 80 searing photographs, *Singed But Not Burnt* showcases art, education, and institution building as forms of resistance. Using the photographic image, Alam illuminates discrepancies in everyday life, from early attempts to oppose military rule to autocratic rulers. At a time of rising autocracy, and with freedom of expression under threat worldwide, this exhibition sheds light on the resilience of those who continue to resist.

*Singed But Not Burnt* draws on an exhibition currently touring in India which was first organized by curator and art writer Ina Puri. As an award-winning documentarian, she has chronicled the lives of India's most distinguished art practitioners.



### ***Patric McCoy: Take My Picture***

In the 1980s, Patric McCoy traveled around Chicago on his bike, always with his camera. From the lakefront to the Loop, McCoy found no shortage of Black men who wanted their picture taken. Over a ten-year period, he shot thousands of images at his subjects' request.

*Patric McCoy: Take My Picture* is a selection of some 50 black and white and color photographs from this rich document of 1980s Black gay Chicago. McCoy's subjects are neither posed nor directed; each has agency over how he is seen, elevating the subject's humanity, inverting and subverting the gaze.

HIV/AIDS hit Black men especially hard. Thousands would die before the end of the decade, including many of McCoy's friends, lovers—and subjects. *Take My Picture* can be seen as a marker of place, time, and memory. It is an altar to those lost.

The exhibition is curated by Juarez Hawkins, artist, educator, and curator, who noted, “McCoy and his camera fulfilled an unspoken need for Black men to be *seen*. Seen by someone who did not objectify them as ‘Other’, but an insider who allowed them, to paraphrase Langston Hughes, to be their ‘beautiful black selves’.”

**These exhibitions are presented by Alphawood Exhibitions at Wrightwood 659.**

### **About Wrightwood 659**

Founded in 2018, Wrightwood 659 is a private, non-collecting institution devoted to socially engaged art and architecture. Wrightwood 659 was designed by Pritzker Prize-winning architect Tadao Ando, who transformed a 1920s residential building with his signature concrete forms and poetic treatment of natural light. Located in Chicago's Lincoln Park neighborhood and acclaimed as "a hidden treasure," Wrightwood 659's soaring and light-filled galleries offer both intimate and monumental experiences as visitors engage with the pressing issues of our time. Exhibitions are presented by Alphawood Exhibitions at Wrightwood 659. For additional information: <https://wrightwood659.org>.

### **About Alphawood Exhibitions**

Alphawood Exhibitions is an affiliate of Alphawood Foundation, a Chicago-based, grant-making private foundation working for an equitable, just, and humane society.

#### National Media Contact

Ennis O'Brien

Betsy Ennis: [betsy@ennisobrien.com](mailto:betsy@ennisobrien.com) | +1 917.783.6553

Stephanie Markovic: [stephanie@ennisobrien.com](mailto:stephanie@ennisobrien.com) | +1 347.628.4688

#### Chicago Media Contact

The Silverman Group

Beth Silverman: [beth@silvermangroupchicago.com](mailto:beth@silvermangroupchicago.com) | +1 312.560.4783

Louise Yingduo Liu: [louise@silvermangroupchicago.com](mailto:louise@silvermangroupchicago.com) | +1 312.961.9290

#### **Images:**

Kongkee: *Warring States Cyberpunk*

*The Tears*, 2020, by Kongkee (Kong Khong-chang 江記; b. 1977, active Hong Kong and London). Courtesy of the artist and Penguin Lab. Copyright © 2020 the artist.

Shahidul Alam: *Singed But Not Burnt*

*Shipbreaking workers carrying metal sheet*, 2008, by Shahidul Alam, Courtesy of the artist.

Patric McCoy: *Take My Picture*

*Cream and Green*, 1985, by Patric McCoy, Courtesy of the artist.