

# CAI GUO-QIANG + KANON

## Cai Guo-Qiang and Kanon Announce an Unprecedented Blockchain Project, EET — an Interactive Oracle and the First Ever Onchain GIF

A Chat-and-Image-Based Blockchain Oracle for  
Communicating with the Unseen World through Art

20 DECEMBER 2022

Cai Guo-Qiang (b. 1957, Quanzhou, China), the acclaimed contemporary artist known internationally for his gunpowder paintings and outdoor explosion projects, announced his latest blockchain project in collaboration with Kanon, *EET*—an onchain chatroom with the unseen world, an interactive oracle system powered by smart contracts on the Ethereum blockchain. With *EET*, the artist delves deeper into his ongoing dialogue with the unseen world, furthering the creative potential of the blockchain by harnessing the constraints of smart contracts, with the goal of establishing a unique medium for connecting the seen and unseen worlds.

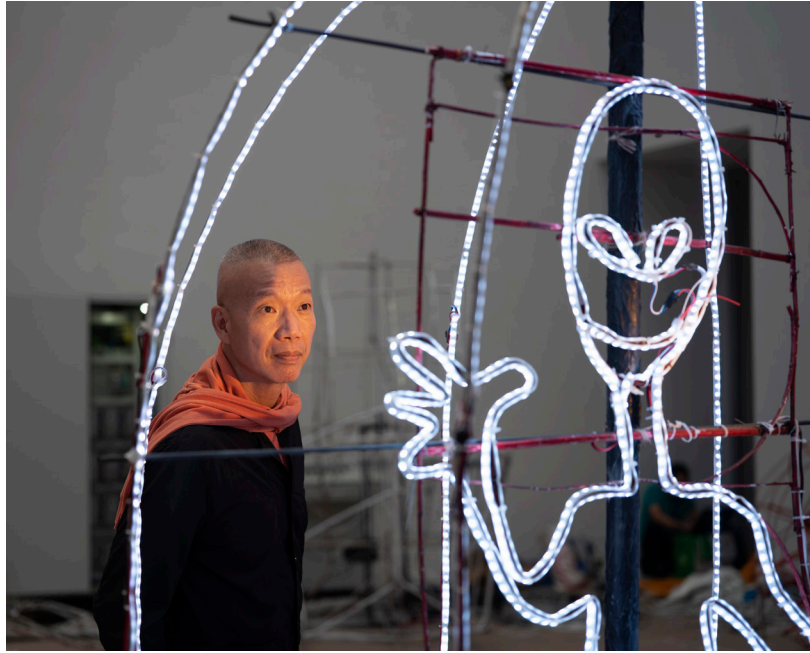
Cai Guo-Qiang, *Sky Ladder*, 2015.  
Explosion event realized off  
Huiyu Island, Quanzhou, June 15.  
100 seconds. Gunpowder, fuse  
and helium balloon, 500 x 5.5 m.  
Photo by Wen-You Cai, courtesy  
Cai Studio



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The name of the project, *EET*, can be interpreted as “Exchange with Extraterrestrials,” drawing upon Cai’s long standing body of work devoted to this concept. Users can submit questions to the unseen world through the chatroom-inspired interface on the project website <https://eet.et>, and receive answers through minting ERC721 tokens (often referred to as “NFTs”).

Cai Guo-Qiang and his installation *Encounter with the Unknown* at the Museum of Art Pudong, 2021. Photo by Mengjia Zhao, courtesy Cai Studio



In each transaction, two distinct ERC721 tokens will be minted: *Gua* and *EET Fortune*.

*Gua* is a mysterious diagram that the user receives after they have submitted their question to the unseen world via the interface hosted at <https://eet.et>. As they contemplate their question, a data package containing the question itself, real-time randomness captured from the user’s physical movements, and randomness obtained from the Ethereum blockchain will be processed and encoded by the *Gua* smart contract. The *Gua* token is the visual transmutation of that data package—an animated GIF that is generated on, and stored in, the blockchain.

*EET Fortune* is the primary token that will be minted after the user has submitted their question to the unseen world: a “reading” of the *Gua* from the unseen world by the onchain oracle. Each *EET Fortune* is an answer specific to the question being asked. *EET Fortunes* come in 64 ( $2^6$ ) base types further elaborated by 4,096 ( $4^6$ ) response combinations, with features generated onchain that ensure that no two *EET Fortunes* are exactly alike. Inspired by the divination culture from Cai’s hometown Quanzhou, the design of *EET Fortune* includes an onchain animated GIF and a six-part textual elaboration.

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INNOVATIVE  
EXPLORATION  
ALONG THE EDGE OF  
CRYPTO TECHNOLOGY

The animated images of each *Gua* and *EET Fortune* are completely rendered onchain and encoded as GIFs, making *EET* the first ever project to generate and store GIFs 100% on the blockchain. Developed more than three decades ago, GIFs have become the internet's favorite image format and lie at the heart of internet meme culture. By developing the technology to generate and store GIFs onchain, Cai and Kanon are hoping to make a lasting contribution to the growing body of open-source tools available for artistic expression on the blockchain.

In stark contrast to the majority of crypto projects that utilize NFTs as mere confirmations of assets or investment objects, *EET* utilizes blockchain as a generative tool in the project's creation process.

The *EET* oracle system will be constructed through a series of smart contract deployments which will occur in stages over the coming weeks. Once completed, the entire *EET* oracle system will be 100% onchain and decentralized, with no off-chain dependencies or centralized smart contract admin privileges. The first set of these smart contract deployments occurred on 8 December 2022, in celebration of Cai's 65th birthday.

BLOCKCHAIN  
FUSED WITH  
ANCIENT WISDOM

Smart contracts are a restrictive coding platform by contemporary standards. Under this framework, *EET* absorbs nutrients from cosmology and technology across East and West, ancient and modern. Pairing the mechanism from the world's oldest oracle, *I-Ching*, with the tools of blockchain technology, the *EET* smart contract combines question, context, and user-generated randomness into an *EET Fortune*.

The inspiration for the textual elaboration found in the *EET Fortunes* ranges from folklore fortune readings, classical Confucian quotes, 18th-century futures market analysis, and contemporary crypto meme culture, so that the oracle delivers its wisdom in the vernacular of blockchain-savvy seekers, yet is accessible to art lovers and mystics alike.

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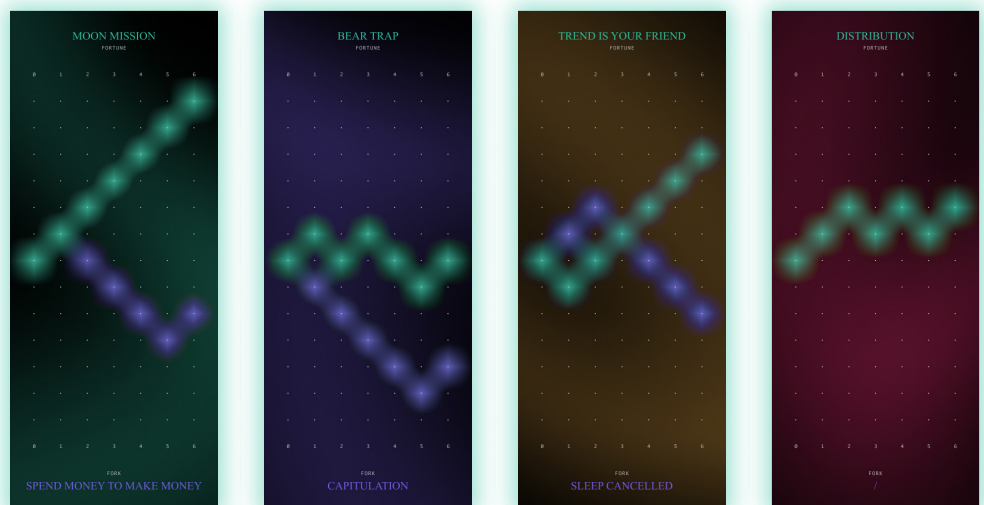
IN A CHAOTIC ERA,  
A DIALOGUE WITH  
THE UNSEEN WORLD

Across cultures and throughout history, humans have sought to establish an exchange with the beyond, seeking guidance for navigating uncertainty in the present and looking for insight into what the future might hold. Gradually, human creations and the true messages from the beyond have become increasingly entangled. *EET* reminds people of the existence of the unseen world, leveraging blockchain technology as a communication channel between the two realms.

As a decentralized application, *EET* is an attempt to birth a novel oracle for the World Computer chapter of the Information Age—to use the Ethereum blockchain to reconnect new and diverse audiences with a vast body of ancient and cross-cultural knowledge and practices that have helped guide humanity through chaos and uncertainty for millennia.

In this technology-driven era, humanity has been passionately pursuing mastery of fields like artificial intelligence, biomedicine, and space exploration. As an artwork, *EET* invites the audience to ponder: What might we stand to gain from rekindling our interest in honing creative strategies for conversing with the unseen world with the same zeal? Does art have the power to heal the world? If so, how?

EET Fortune Sneak Preview





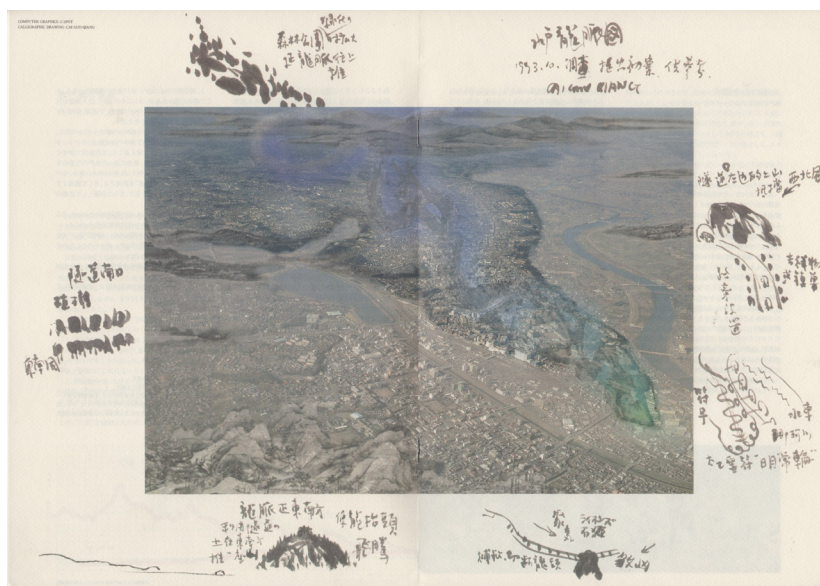
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Cai Guo-Qiang, *Crop Circles*, 2012. Reeds, plywood board, approximately 800 x 3600 cm. Photo by Wyatt Conlon, courtesy The Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles



**Cai Guo-Qiang** said: *"Since childhood, I have been under the influence of the culture from my hometown. My understanding of the various types of unseen energy flowing in nature and life instantiated in fengshui, divination, and qigong—both their concepts and practices—has accompanied me growing up. From gazing at the stars in childhood out of curiosity about the unknown world all the way to the late 1980s, when I initiated the series of explosion events, Projects for Extraterrestrials ...I have always believed that beyond the world known to humans, there exists an unseen world. Through gunpowder, Chinese medicine, and other materials in combination with various energies, I look for my artistic methodology between the seen and unseen world."*

Cai Guo-Qiang, *Proposal for Universal Design: Feng Shui Project for Mito: Chang Sheng*, 1993. Ink on printed digital rendering. Photo courtesy Cai Studio



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*“The project EET is a product of a special time amidst greater chaos and confusion; it is a human’s attempt at humble introspection facing this era. I hope through this project that people many years from now will be able to feel our reaction to our time, however insignificant it might be—the confusion, the struggle, the optimism and humor of healing the world, and the positive attitude behind the cry for help to the unknown world... If we can connect different time-spaces in a fleeting moment, positing the finite work against the infinity of history and nature, it will gain unparalleled power. The concept of EET goes beyond its technology and the crypto market. In the end, EET is not only about predicting the future, it’s about challenging users to think about the effort that would be required to change the future we are currently oriented towards.”*

**The Kanon team** said: “Working with Cai has been an extremely rewarding and challenging experience. The scale of Cai’s ambitions for EET have forced us to push the limits of smart contracts in a way that’s never been done before, resulting in a number of innovations, including the development of the world’s first onchain GIFS. Although Cai was not directly writing solidity code, as we developed EET, the questions Cai would pose to us and the direction he provided made us realize that he understood the potential depth of the medium much better than even we did. Time and again throughout the development process Cai continually showed us that the creative potential of smart contracts and the blockchain was far more powerful than we had ever imagined.”

Cai Studio and Kanon expect the *EET* interactive platform to go live at the beginning of 2023. Further details of the project, including instructions for interacting with the *EET* oracle as well as minting *EET Fortune* tokens will be released in the lead up to the public mint.

To learn more, please visit <https://eet.et>.

Cai Guo-Qiang, *Project for Heiankyō 1,200th Anniversary: Celebration from Chang’an*, 1994. Explosion event realized at Kyoto City Hall Square, Kyoto, March 13, 1994, approximately 60 minutes. Xifeng wine 1,200 kg. Area approximately 40 x 70 m. Commissioned by the City of Kyoto. Photo by Masanobu Moriyama, courtesy Cai Studio



# CAI GUO-QIANG + KANON

KANON ACQUIRES  
"FETUS MOVEMENT"  
FROM CAI GUO-QIANG  
FOR INCLUSION IN  
THE K21 COLLECTION

The *Gua* smart contract that prepares the *Gua* NFTs is represented by a unique NFT Artwork titled *Fetus Movement*, which Kanon has acquired from Cai for inclusion in the historic K21 Collection. The proceeds from the acquisition of *Fetus Movement* will be allocated to a philanthropic cause of Cai's choosing. More details about *Fetus Movement* will be released in the lead up to EET going live to the public.

Photo by Stefan Ruiz



ABOUT  
CAI GUO-QIANG

Cai Guo-Qiang was born in Quanzhou, Fujian in 1957. In the early 1980s, he was trained in stage design at the Shanghai Theatre Academy. From the end of 1986 to 1995, he resided in Japan. Grounded in the conceptual foundations of Eastern philosophy and contemporary social issues, his artworks span multiple artistic mediums, including painting, installation, video, and performance art. His often site-specific artworks adapt to local conditions, interpreting and responding to the local culture and history as well as establishing a dialogue between viewers and the larger universe around them. His famed explosion art and installations are imbued with a force that transcends the two-dimensional plane to oscillate freely between society and nature.



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Cai has received many important awards including the Golden Lion at the Venice Biennale in 1999 and the Hiroshima Art Prize in 2007. In 2012, he was honored as a Laureate for the prestigious Praemium Imperiale, known as the “Nobel Prize of the Art World,” in the painting category. That same year, he was awarded the first U.S. Department of State Medal of Arts. Cai also served as the Director of Visual Effects and Fireworks for the opening and closing ceremonies of the 2008 Beijing Summer Olympics and the 2022 Beijing Winter Olympic Games.

For the past three decades, Cai Guo-Qiang has held numerous solo exhibitions in major art museums around the world, including the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York in 2006 and his retrospective at the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum in New York in 2008. In 2015, Cai realized the explosion event *Sky Ladder* in his hometown of Quanzhou, Fujian. The artwork became the centerpiece of an eponymous documentary directed by Academy Award winner Kevin Macdonald and globally distributed on Netflix.

In recent years, he has embarked on his *Individual's Journey Through Western Art History*—a series of exhibitions held in world-renowned museums, including the Pushkin State Museum of Fine Arts, Moscow (2017); Museo del Prado, Madrid (2017); Uffizi Galleries, Florence (2018); National Archaeological Museum of Naples and Pompeii Archaeological Park (2019). From December 2020 to February 2021, Cai held his exhibition *Odyssey and Homecoming* at the Palace Museum in Beijing, marking the first solo exhibition of contemporary art in the museum's history. In July 2021, *Odyssey and Homecoming* traveled to the Museum of Art Pudong in Shanghai as one of its inaugural exhibitions, where it remained on display until April 5, 2022.

In July 2021, Cai was commissioned by the Rockbund Art Museum in Shanghai to create his first NFT, *Transient Eternity—101 Ignitions of Gunpowder Paintings*, to mark the 10th anniversary of the museum's establishment. The NFT was jointly launched with TR Lab, and its virtual charity auction set the record for the highest NFT sale from a non-crypto-native artist, realizing a total of 2.5 million USD. The proceeds were donated to support the Rockbund Art Museum in Shanghai and the Asian Cultural Council (ACC) Cai Fellowship Program. Cai's subsequent NFT Projects include *Exploding the Self*, *Your Daytime Fireworks*, and *Tiger Year Tiger Explosions*.

Cai has lived and worked in New York since 1995.

To learn more about the artist, please visit <http://caiguoqiang.com>, [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#), or [Facebook](#).





## ABOUT KANON

Kanon is a pseudonymous collective of art, design, and cryptonative technology professionals dedicated to pushing the boundaries of crypto-enabled artistic expression. Constantly innovating at all stages of the digital creative process, from visual to open-source protocol design, Kanon is supporting a novel model in which creative expression, structural experimentation, and financial return are mutually reinforcing.

In March 2021, Kanon launched the K21 Collection as its inaugural product. K21 is a closed-end art vault of 21 unique NFT artworks by a diverse roster of influential and pioneering contemporary, digital, and cryptonative artists. Including the latest work acquired from Cai Guo-Qiang, the K21 Collection has completed the acquisition of 20 artworks from artists such as Paul Chan, China Tracy (Cao Fei), David O'Reilly, Liam Gillick, Rirkrit Tiravanija and 15 others.

Later in 2021, Kanon brought magic to the blockchain with the NFT art project DAEMONICA, a visual and mathematical system of onchain occult operations, in collaboration with one of the artists of the K21 Collection who wishes to remain anonymous. Provenance for the artworks in the K21 Collection is secured through KSPEC, an open-source protocol developed by Kanon that provides fully decentralized, and fully onchain, institutional-grade provenance and preservation for digital artworks. In April 2022, Kanon released ERC721Q, a powerful new protocol for borrowing and lending NFTs that allows anyone to transfer an NFT to any wallet at any time, without the owner losing control of the NFT.

To learn more about Kanon and its projects, please visit <https://kanon.art>,  
Twitter, Instagram, or Medium.

For more information on EET, please contact Anja Kaehny  
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