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# Activism on wheels: the political art of Ai Weiwei and Shepard Fairey takes on a new avatar

*Chinese artist and activist Ai Weiwei and LA-based political street artist Shepard Fairey released their limited edition collections for The Skateroom at the Art Market San Francisco.*

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Avantika Shankar | May 8, 2017



This month, skateboard manufacturers The Skateroom has collaborated with Ai Weiwei (featured image, Primordial Bench) and fellow artist and activist Shepard Fairey, to produce a deck of politically charged skateboards to mark

the first 100 days of US President Donald Trump.

Ai Weiwei's piece is an extension of his "Study in Perspective" series, in which he photographs himself "flipping the bird", so to speak, at landmarks around the world, specifically those of political regimes he opposes.

Shepard Fairey's work is an appropriation of his work "No Future", which denounces US President Donald Trump's hate speech and fear-mongering propaganda, especially as it is aimed at a largely misinformed public. The term "Manifest Density" takes a jab at President Trump's own oratorical reputation, while also playing on the phrase "Manifest Destiny"—one that was proclaimed by rich, white men in the belief that it was "god's will" for them to colonise the land that would later become the United States of America.

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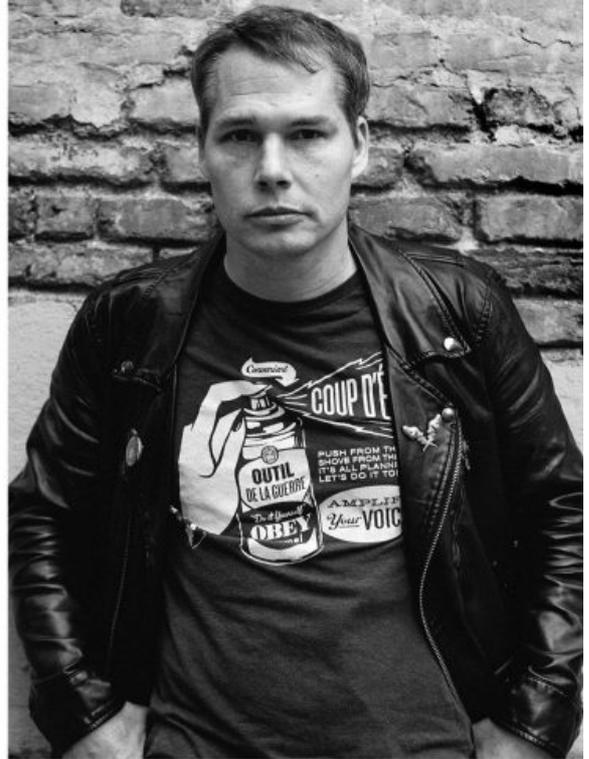
Both artworks will be printed on 7-ply Canadian maple skateboards, and though they're meant to be viewed as artwork, they can certainly also be used for skating.

No Future Decks by Shepard Fairey for The Skateroom

*No Future Decks by Shepard Fairey for The Skateroom.*

The Skateroom is a social entrepreneurship that collaborates with leading artists from around the world to create limited edition skateboard deck collections. The proceeds go toward non-profit institutions that seek to empower children through skateboarding and art. The Skateroom directly supports the NGO Skateistan, which uses skateboarding as a tool to engage with at-risk youth through their schools—the charity works in Afghanistan, Cambodia and now in Johannesburg.

For his part, Ai Weiwei has selected two other charities to which 20% of the proceeds from his skateboards will be directed: B'Tselem, or, the Israeli Information Centre for Human Rights in the Occupied Territories, and the Turkish non-profit and solidarity association Bridging Peoples, which works towards eliminating all forms of “otherism” in society.



*Ai Weiwei and Shepard Fairey collaborate with social entrepreneurship The Skateroom to create politically charged skateboard art; proceeds from the limited edition skate decks will go toward charity.*

Both the Ai Weiwei and Shepard Fairey editions comprise a set of three decks. The Ai Weiwei edition is priced at \$666; hand-signed sets are priced at \$3,000. The Shepard Fairey edition will be available for \$450 each.

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