

**The Singapore Show:
Future Proof
14 Jan – 15 Apr 2012**

> Exhibition Synopsis

The Singapore Show:

Future Proof

14 January – 15 April 2012

SAM at 8Q, 222 Queen Street, SAM Front Lawn & The Substation

Since the birth of contemporary practice in Singapore, signalled by the formation of The Artists Village, 5th Passage and the landmark exhibition, *Trimurti*, artists here have been exploring various genres of creative work—from sculpture and paintings to performance art, site-specific installations to graphic design and interactive media.

The Singapore Show: Future Proof presents artworks from young artists whose innovative and unique practices have generated attention and accolades in various art circles. Their artistic ventures take place from streets to galleries; their concerns local to geopolitical; their material both found and acquired. With strong, consistent and resilient presence in the local as well as international contemporary art scenes, these motivated youth have enlivened Singapore's art landscape and can be considered to be amongst those to look out for today.

The Singapore Show: Future Proof is a parallel event of *Art Stage Singapore 2012*.

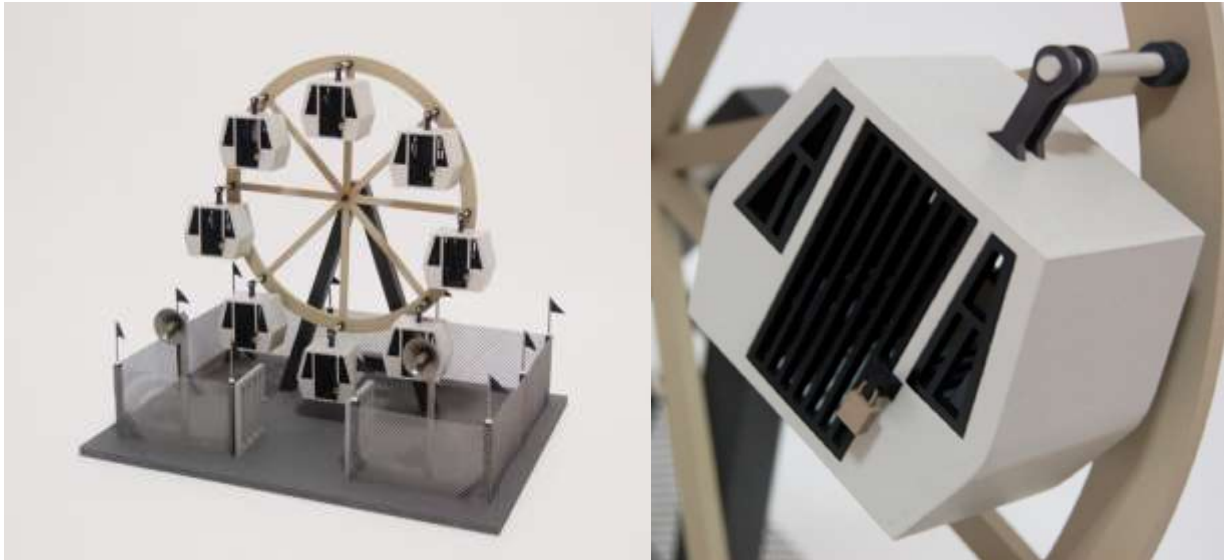
Presented at SAM at 8Q with SAM-commissioned installations at 222 Queen Street, SAM Front Lawn and The Substation. The public installations are supported by the National Heritage Board's Precinct Development Unit.



:phunk Studio (in collaboration with Keiichi Tanaami)
Eccentric City: Rise and Fall
2010
Tatebanko paper box structures with video installation
Variable dimensions
SAM Collection

The installation¹ consists of *Rise*, a floating city, which has over 160 Tatebanko with pyramid structure and *Fall*, a scattered ruins of the city, which made of countless pieces of crashed Tatebanko. The perception of the city was separated into the Tanaami side (with the colourful, manic designs) and the :phunk side (with the black and white designs). Strange-looking creatures wriggling around on the surfaces of the Tatebanko are glued back-to-back like the double-faced mythical god Janus and float precariously in the viewer's line of sight, ultimately depicting the tragic disintegration of the future as a result of the disunity of the two factions. *Eccentric City* draws on many aspects of popular and youth culture, ranging from Japanese manga and anime to British indie music.

¹ Installation – A type of art that is site-specific and three-dimensional, designed to transform how people look at a space.



Chun Kaifeng

The Ride of a Lifetime!

2008

Wood, perspex, weatherproof emulsion paint and acrylic airbrush paint

84 x 66 x 52cm

Private Collection

Chun's delicately crafted structures and miniatures are very much involved with the concept of territory and what it is that distinguishes a private space from a public one and our anxieties towards them. They have powerful metaphorical associations with the dire need for freedom and individuality in a contemporary society where people are getting pulled into the vortex of the corporate world and growing increasingly dispassionate. Should there be less of a distinction between private and public spaces? The grays and blacks of *The Ride of a Lifetime!* add a sense of melancholy to the structure which stands devoid of life or human presence. Instead of exuding thrill and joy like Ferris wheels normally do, Chun's Ferris wheel almost resembles a prison. Are the current regulations we have set in place keeping us safe or pushing us further and further onto the brink of social alienation?



Chun Kaifeng

¥ € \$ (Edition 1/2)

2010

Wood, perspex, weatherproof emulsion paint and acrylic airbrush paint

62 x 64 x 42cm

SAM Collection

Chun's replica of the Marina Bay Sands is by no means intended to be a straightforward tribute to the latest addition to Singapore's skyline. It is a sharp reminder of the social repercussions of the introduction of casinos to Singapore, an issue which occupied the front pages of the national newspapers for a long time before those casinos were constructed. Much of this active debate and discussion over the consequences the casino would have on Singapore's social fabric has been silenced by the shiny, awe-inspiring buildings.

Chun revives these issues with his gleaming stains that mark the cold and colourless models of Marina Bay Sands. As each of the three iconic sloped structures of the building is crowned with a different currency sign that together spells out an emphatic ¥ € \$!, a chorus of commercial and capitalist interests chimes in anticipation of all the money to be earned. The backs of these pristine buildings, however, have been vandalised with large splotches of paint; a literal stain on what would otherwise be an impressive and iconic cityscape. The paint blotches are similar to the signature splotches of paint that loansharks leave on the doors of their debtors' homes.



Donna Ong

Crystal City

2009

Glassware

Variable Dimensions

Artist Collection

For Donna Ong, our eye is the one ticket into a realm of suspended belief. Favouring miniature installations over 'life-sized' ones, she believes that the eye alone, rather than our whole body, is more likely to be able to bring us into an alternate psychological reality. The use of glass bottles in *Crystal City* does more than just bring out the beauty of everyday objects—it deals with early 20th century notions of representation while at the same time paying tribute to child-like imagination. Rather than disguising the bottles to hide them from what they are, Ong focuses on their arrangement and thus creates two conflicting images. What we look at is an assortment of bottles, but what we see is the breathtaking skyline of a glass city. Who is to say the imagined is not real? Truth and meaning are contingent. Things are not necessarily only as they are; they are also what they seem.



Robert Zhao

If A Tree Falls in the Forest

2008-2009

Series of photo prints and installations in 5 sections

Variable dimensions

SAM Collection

Zhao holds a strong fascination to the natural world, feeding this sense of wonder with the use of his camera. His photographs explore the concept of control and what happens when Man tries to control nature. Claiming that he makes sense of the world through photography, Zhao is acutely aware of photographic discourse. Photography appears truthful. We know for a fact that the subject we see in a photograph was at some point positioned in front of a shutter. However, in the digital age, truth and fiction no longer sit on opposite ends and the line distinguishing the two has almost vanished. Thus, Zhao also questions the nature and authenticity of documentary photography. Do photographs lie?



Genevieve Chua

After the Flood #10, #11, #12

2010

Hand-coloured photographs

52 x 231cm

SAM Collection

Genevieve Chua's works explore the fear of the unknown and often involves the appropriation of Southeast Asian horror towards new narratives. *After The Flood* is hypothesized as a large expanse of space that has settled after the 50th flood. It is an ecosystem that consists of the most resistant of plants in the secondary and tropical rainforest in Singapore. These scenes are found at the margins of *Adinandra Belukar* (a secondary forest) found in Singapore. The monochromatic photographs are painstakingly painted with multiple layers of watercolour by the artist, creating a haunting and unreal atmosphere in an otherwise mundane everyday scene that one commonly encounters at the margins of forested areas in Singapore.



Charles Lim

Inside Outside

2005

Photographs & ship radio connection

Variable dimension

Artist Collection

Being a small island state, Singapore has always had to deal with issues regarding her lack of land. Unlike many other countries, it does not have the luxury of large green pastures stretching far and wide. To deal with this shortage of space, it constructs its living and working spaces high above ground and more recently, even below ground. Because these spatial constraints are so much a part of their lives, Singaporeans have become very conscious of boundaries and distinctions; perhaps too much so. The constant need to always be able to define a space—cultural, social, or otherwise—could have immense ramifications on the way Singaporeans view themselves as individuals and as a nation. While the boundaries of a country are often taken to be its shoreline, the truth is that this border is in fact an imaginary line that lies far out at sea; an imaginary line that we materialise with sea markers. The sea markers lie still while the water moves freely beneath it. There the artist suggests that perhaps these borders we have drawn for ourselves over the years are not as static and unyielding as we make them out to be.



Speakcryptic

Ka-Khe

Site specific work

The word *Ka-Khe* is Baweanese for 'naughty' or 'stubborn'. The artist remembers hearing that word very often as he was growing up and felt it was the only real link he had to his ancestry. Speakcryptic's interest in his Baweanese heritage only resurfaced after a recent conversation he had with his mother where he learnt a lot about his late grandfather's life. Speakcryptic was heavily involved with street art in the earlier part of his career and his works often lamented the human condition in the way they employed the repetition of certain motifs like skulls. This piece of work, featuring a variety of symbols and characters from his research, is the result of his study of Baweanese culture and in remembrance of his initial struggle with identity. He unfolds his narrative through the use of architecture, drawing inspiration from ancient Roman columns that depicted military victories.



Mojoko and Eric Foender

No One Can Save Us
(SJI Front Lawn)

Steve Lawler, aka Mojoko, is an Iranian-born Hong-Konger now based in Singapore. Lawler enjoys employing social commentary of mankind's excessive dependence on gadgets and technology in his art practice. Using refreshing and unconventional mediums, he expresses himself through sculpture, fashion, publications and guerilla exhibitions. This work is inspired by the term "Future Proof" and what we are doing as a race to prepare for the future. In an age where the manufacturing industry works in constant overdrive to cater to society's excessive material desires, environmental conservation is often an issue pushed to the sidelines. Resources are depleting, forests disappearing and glaciers melting. The image of the superhero, which epitomizes power and hope for the people, gives way to the effects of global warming. The pictorial sculpture which transcends all language barriers admonishes an outright crucial message—the death of the superhero, humanity and the world—using popular culture to draw attention to environmental issues.



Grace Tan and Randy Chan
Building as a Body (Substation)

The idea for *Building as a Body* was born out of a conversation between an architect and an inter-disciplinary practitioner and their desire to look into the history and heritage of The Substation. Using the delicate translucency of a veil as a starting point, The Substation is represented metaphorically as a body that flickers in and out of view of a veil. This veil comprises a matrix of dots and lines that interacts with the building and its surroundings, inviting the viewer to go in and have a closer and more contemplative look at an old and established institution whose history we must not let slip away.