

LEARNING GALLERY

EDUCATORS' RESOURCE

This resource is designed for educators with the aim of fostering meaningful discussions on contemporary art between them and their students.

MIGRANT ECOLOGIES PROJECT

HOW TO USE THIS RESOURCE

This educators' resource is designed for use with students before, during and after your visit to the Learning Gallery at Singapore Art Museum.

It shares key concepts and ideas associated with the exhibition to facilitate your visit and complements lessons conducted in school. This includes suggested guiding questions and activities that students may explore in the gallery, at home or in class, wherever relevant.

You may customise your visit by choosing your own preferred exhibition route.

For additional support, please refer to the additional notes for educators and facilitators when addressing the social and emotional learning aspects of the artworks during your discussion.

INTRODUCTION

LEARNING GALLERY

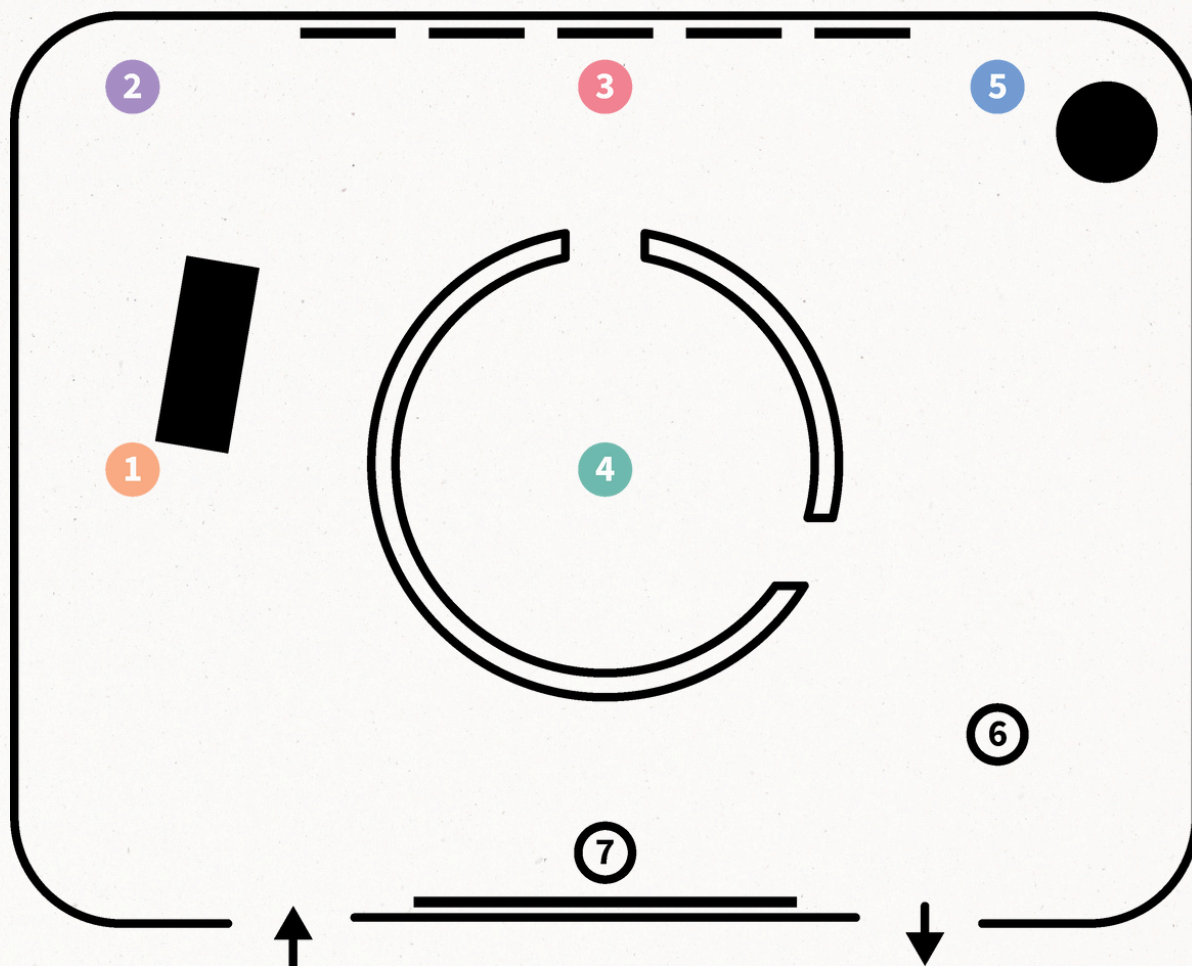
Childhood is a defining stage in all our lives. The foundations of our emotions, beliefs and memories take root during these formative years, with some receding within as we transit into adulthood.

The human impulse to create and appreciate art starts in childhood, and has transcended cultural and geographical boundaries from the moment humans first made their mark on the world. Both art and childhood are universal human experiences, which are characterised by freedom, curiosity and exploration.

The Learning Gallery invites you to embrace this spirit of exploration with a child-like lens. Allow yourself to approach the artworks curiously, unburdened and unafraid of the unknown. Learn about the artworks, artists and their attachments while engaging in both internal conversations and open dialogue.

Perhaps you may once again have an uninhibited relationship with the world: to look, feel and live fearlessly.

EXHIBITION LAYOUT



- | | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>1 HAN SAI POR
<i>Black Forest</i></p> <p>2 JULIAN ABRAHAM "TOGAR"
<i>A Gesture</i></p> <p>3 NGUAN
<i>Untitled, from the series Singapore</i></p> <p>4 MIGRANT ECOLOGIES PROJECT
Lucy Davis and collaborators, Zai Tang, Kee Ya Ting and Zachary Chan, with editing by Daniel Hui
<i>{if your bait can sing the wild ones will come} Like Shadows Through Leaves</i></p> | <p>5 TANG DA WU
深疤凰 SEMBAWANG</p> <p>6 ACTIVITY CORNER
<i>Cloud Library</i>
<i>Cloud Mailbox</i>
<i>RE-Material</i></p> <p>7 INTERACTIVE WALL</p> |
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ARTIST

MIGRANT ECOLOGIES PROJECT

Lucy Davis and collaborators, Zai Tang, Kee Ya Ting and Zachary Chan,
with editing by Daniel Hui

Est. 2009, Singapore

ABOUT THE COLLECTIVE

The **Migrant Ecologies Project** comprises an eclectic mix of individuals, from cinematographers to writers. They come together to co-create artworks. The collective was founded by Lucy Davis in 2009.

The Migrant Ecologies Project features an ever-changing list of collaborators for each artwork, with some mainstay collaborators such as artist, composer and sound designer Zai Tang. Learn more about their collaborators [here](#).

The Migrant Ecologies Project's works have featured in The Diriyah Biennale (2024), The Istanbul Biennale (2022), The Singapore Biennale (2022), SeedCultures Svalbard 2019, The Taipei Biennale (2018), Rockbund Shanghai/Fondazione Sandretto re Rebaudengo (2018), NTU Centre for Contemporary Art Singapore (2017) and more.

ABOUT THE FOUNDER

Lucy Davis is a visual artist, art writer, and founder of The Migrant Ecologies Project. Her transdisciplinary and often collaborative endeavours encircle ecologies, animal and plant studies, materiality, memory and storytelling — primarily but not exclusively in Southeast Asia. Davis was a founding faculty member of the School of Art, Design and Media at Nanyang Technological University, Singapore (2005–2016). Davis is currently an Associate Professor (Contemporary Art) in Visual Cultures, Curating and Contemporary Art (ViCCA) Department of Art & Media, Aalto University, Finland.

ARTWORK



Installation view of *{if your bait can sing the wild ones will come} Like Shadows Through Leaves*, 2021. Image courtesy of Singapore Art Museum.

{IF YOUR BAIT CAN SING THE WILD ONES WILL COME} LIKE SHADOWS THROUGH LEAVES

2021

Video, paper

Video: single channel, 16:9 aspect ratio, colour and sound (surround), 28 min

ABOUT THE ARTWORK

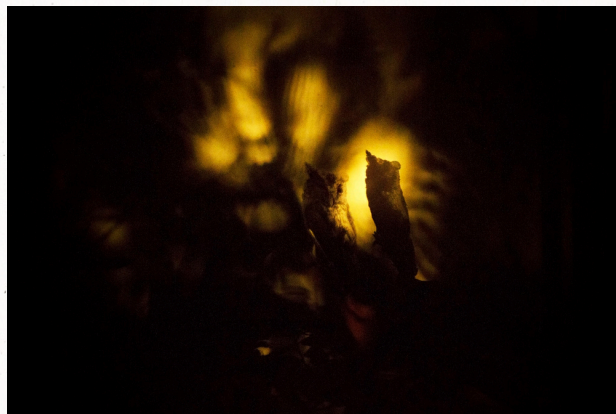
- This artwork invites previous residents to share their memories of the Tanglin Halt estate. Many ex-residents recall common sights and sounds from their time living in the estate.
- Apart from humans, ornithologists have observed more than 100 species of birds that were living in the area before the redevelopment.

NOTABLE SCENES

BIRDS AND SHADOWS



Stills from *(if your bait can sing the wild ones will come)* Like Shadows Through Leaves, 2021.
Image courtesy of artist collective.



Stills from *(if your bait can sing the wild ones will come)* Like Shadows Through Leaves, 2021.
Image courtesy of artist collective.

PEOPLE



Stills from *(if your bait can sing the wild ones will come)* Like Shadows Through Leaves, 2021.
Image courtesy of artist collective.

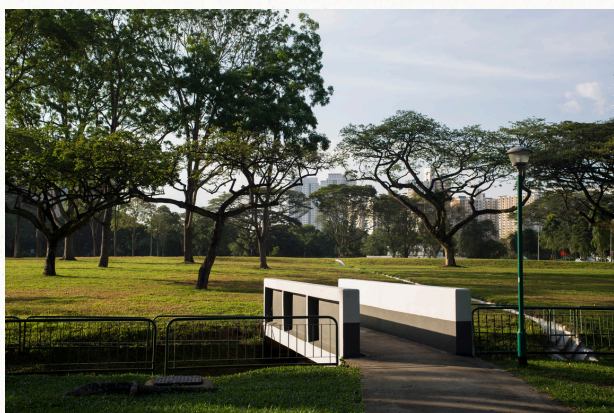
Karang Guni Mr Chua Thiam Seng and
Ornithologist David Tan.



Stills from *(if your bait can sing the wild ones will come)* Like Shadows Through Leaves, 2021.
Image courtesy of artist collective.

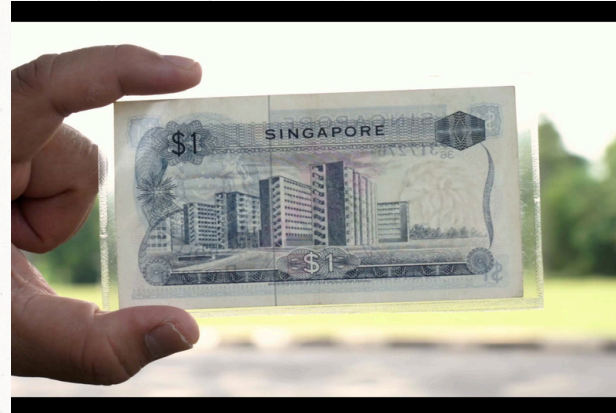
Security Guard Mr Amin Koh

LOST PLACES



Stills from *(if your bait can sing the wild ones will come)* Like Shadows Through Leaves, 2021.
Image courtesy of artist collective.

Space where the demolished blocks
used to be.



Stills from *(if your bait can sing the wild ones will come)* Like Shadows Through Leaves, 2021.
Image courtesy of artist collective.

The Public Housing estate featured on
Singapore's \$1 note in the Orchid series.



DID YOU KNOW?

- The public housing blocks 74 to 80 in Tanglin Halt were constructed in 1962. The architecture of those blocks was similar to the estate featured on Singapore's \$1 note in the Orchid series. The Orchid series was the first circulated currency note series in Singapore that were issued between 1967 and 1976.



Image Taken from Monetary Authority of Singapore website.

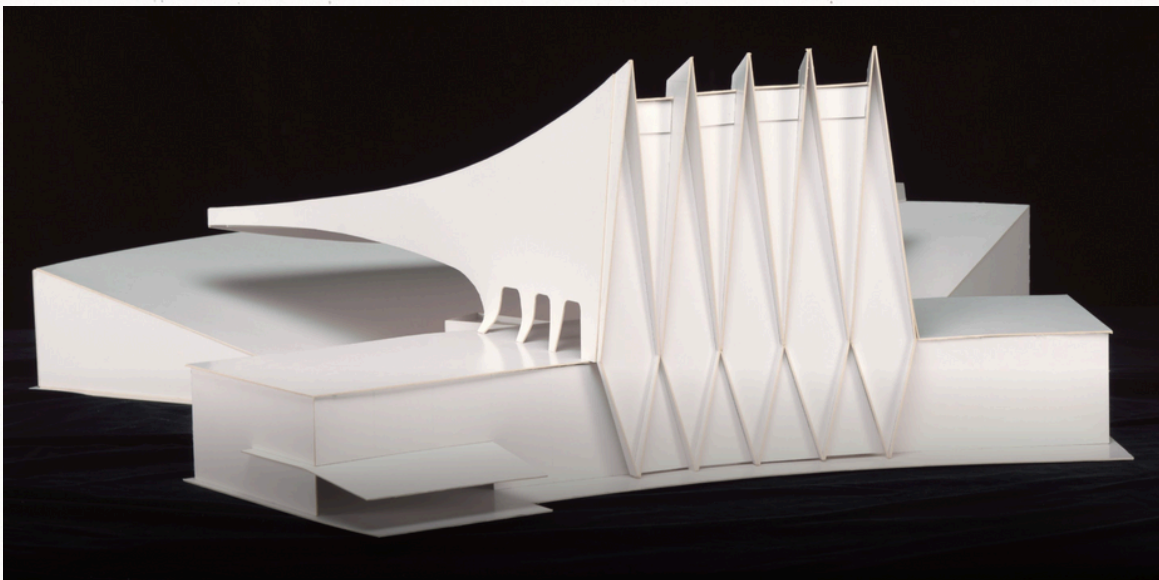
- The railway tracks in Tanglin Halt are all that is left from the old Keretapi Tanah Melayu (KTM) Railway line which ran between Malaysia and Tanjong Pagar. As the estate is located at the site of a former KTM station where the trains used to come to a halt, this led to the neighbourhood being named "Tanglin Halt."
- A "halt" is an unofficial stop for a train. There is usually no ticket counter or staff at the stop, and the train will only stop at the location upon request from a passenger.

PRE-VISIT QUESTIONS

Tanglin Halt is one of Singapore's oldest HDB estates and is due for redevelopment. It was known for its iconic HDB blocks, which are fondly called *chup lau chu*, which means "10-storey house" in Hokkien.

- How do city planners work around the limited spaces for development in Singapore?
 - Hint: Read up on En bloc and Selective En bloc Redevelopment (SERS).
- Find out more about other Singaporean artists who have created artworks that talk about the loss of other buildings.

MICHAEL LEE



Installation view of *Sparrow*, 2005-2006. Image courtesy of Singapore Art Museum.

Sparrow

(after National Theatre, 1963–1986, on Clemenceau Avenue) from the series "City Planned: Tracing Monuments"

2005–2006

White bristol board

34.5 × 100 × 90 cm

Collection of Singapore Art Museum

This work by artist Michael Lee is part of a larger series that seeks to explore issues of social memory and cultural heritage in Singapore, through the construction of architectural models of demolished or revamped buildings. Resembling spectral figures of buildings past, this model is based on the former National Theatre. The "City Planned: Tracing Monuments" series echoes a period of significant development in Singapore's history. It recalls the country's path towards its present and imagines what might have been lost or forgotten along the way.

PERCEPTION3



Installation view of *There are those who stay*, 2016.
Image courtesy of Singapore Art Museum.



Installation view of *There are those who go*, 2016.
Image courtesy of Singapore Art Museum.

There are those who stay/ There are those who go

2016

Installation with text on aluminium, composite panels (set of 2)

240 × 420 × 60 cm (each)

Collection of the Artists

Singapore Biennale 2016 commission

Perception3 is an interdisciplinary art duo founded in 2007 by artist and writer Regina De Rozario and design practitioner Seah Sze Yunn. Their work examines the idea of “staying” and “going” or “two perspectives of a single decisive moment.” The artwork is situated where the old National Library building once stood — a building that was demolished amidst public outcry in 2005 — and offers an open reflection on Singapore’s architectural heritage.

VIEW AND DISCUSS



STEP INSIDE

Imagine you are a resident of Tanglin Halt.

- You have spent your childhood and teenage years studying in schools located around Tanglin Halt. Most of your close friends are still living in the same area. The stall holders and owners have seen you grow up. Your favourite stall at the hawker centre remembers your usual order and gives you extra food free of charge.
 - How would you feel if you had to leave the estate?
 - What can you do to help yourself cope with these feelings?

Birds can map out places based on magnetic fields and “landmarks.”

Imagine you are a bird living in Tanglin Halt.

- What do you think will happen when the demolition starts in the estate?
- Will you return to this unfamiliar location?



REFLECTION

SOCIAL AWARENESS AND RELATIONSHIP MANAGEMENT

- How can we use art to connect with our community and share our experiences?
- How does the artwork make you feel about the people and communities who lived in Tanglin Halt? Can you relate to their experiences?
- What kind of art projects can we create together to celebrate our shared heritage?

SELF-AWARENESS AND SELF-MANAGEMENT

- How can we use art to express our feelings about change and loss?
- What other creative outlets can we explore to cope with these emotions?

RESPONSIBLE DECISION-MAKING

- If you were the city planner, how would you balance the need for new development with preserving the history and memories of a place like Tanglin Halt? What steps would you take to minimise the negative impact on the community and the environment?
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SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES



ACTIVITY 1 — BIRD ORCHESTRA!

Just like how we communicate with different languages, different species of birds have birdcalls that sound quite different!

- Listen to the recordings Migrant Ecologies Project Collaborator Zai Tang has collected:
<https://soundcloud.com/soundscapesing/sets/railtrack-songmap-recordings>
- Identify a bird call you would like to mimic.
- Practice your bird call.
- Mimic your chosen bird call when your teacher says, “Bird Orchestra!”
- You can listen to other bird calls your classmates have selected and try to identify the bird.

ACTIVITY 2 — LITTLE HISTORIAN

Encourage students to research about the history of their own estate.

- What are some interesting facts you have learnt about your estate?
- Share it with your classmates.

ACTIVITY 3 — BIRD WATCHING IN YOUR NEIGHBOURHOOD

Take a walk in your estate or neighbourhood park.

- Are you able to identify some species of birds? List down the species that you see and compare it with your classmate.

FIND OUT MORE!

ARTIST

- The Migrant Ecologies Project. (n.d.). <https://migrantecologies.org/>

INFORMATION ABOUT TANGLIN HALT

ONLINE NEWSPAPER ARTICLE

- Arunachalam, J. L. J. W. S. (2021, June 6). "Hard to say goodbye: A look at the options for affected Tanglin Halt residents." The Straits Times. <https://www.straitstimes.com/singapore/hard-to-say-goodbye-a-look-at-the-options-for-affected-tanglin-halt-residents>

WEBPAGE

- HDB | SERS. (n.d.). <https://www.hdb.gov.sg/residential/living-in-an-hdb-flat/sers-and-upgrading-programmes/sers>
- URA SPACE. (n.d.). <https://www.ura.gov.sg/maps/?service=conservation>
- Urban Redevelopment Authority. (n.d.). Urban Redevelopment Authority. <https://www.ura.gov.sg/Corporate/Guidelines/Conservation/Conservation-Guidelines>

VIDEOS

- Housing & Development Board. (2023, September 30). "Remaking Our Heartland: Queenstown–Remembering Tanglin Halt estate [Video]." YouTube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YWMKwK3IKUE>

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- Perception3. (n.d.). About / perception3. <https://www.perceptionthree.net/about.html>
 - Singapore Art Museum. (n.d.). Learning Gallery Lesson Resources–Michael Lee–Sparrow 2005–2006. <https://www.singaporeartmuseum.sg/-/media/sam/files/exhibitions/think-contemporary/lg2-michael-lee.pdf?la=en&hash=74E47BCDEB86B4CD21EA6956345904CFE020A98B>
 - Singapore Art Museum. (2016). Singapore Biennale 2016–An Atlas of Mirror. <https://www.singaporeartmuseum.sg/-/media/SAM/Files/Exhibitions/SB2016/SB2016-ShortGuide-Lowres.pdf?inline=1>
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ADDITIONAL NOTES FOR EDUCATOR / FACILITATOR

If a student is feeling uncomfortable when talking about their emotions, you may consider the following suggested approaches:

1. ACKNOWLEDGE AND VALIDATE THEIR EMOTIONS

Let the participant know that you are concerned about their wellbeing.

- Verbal: “I hear you're feeling overwhelmed. It's okay to feel this way.”
- Non-verbal: Make eye contact, nod empathetically, and show that you're listening attentively.

2. ASK OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS

Allow the participant to talk about their experiences (and beliefs) if they want to, but do not force them.

- Verbal: “What was that like for you?” or “Can you tell me more about...?”

3. PARAPHRASE TO CLARIFY

Restate what you believe they are saying in your own words to ensure you are understanding their experience correctly.

- Verbal: “It seems like you were frightened and worried.”

4. OFFER A BREAK

- Verbal: “Would you like to take a short break?”
- Non-verbal: Gesture towards a door or a quiet area.

5. CHECK-IN PRIVATELY

- Verbal: “If you'd like to talk about this further, we can have a private conversation later.”
- Non-verbal: Discreetly approach the participant after the session.

6. GROUNDING TECHNIQUES

- Verbal: “Can I offer you some grounding techniques? Perhaps focusing on your breath or the sensations in your body might help.”
- Non-verbal: Demonstrate deep breathing exercises or guide the participant through the technique.

7. ADJUST THE PACE

- Verbal: “Let's slow down for a moment. We can revisit this topic later if you're feeling more comfortable.”

8. SHIFT THE FOCUS

- Verbal: “Perhaps we could shift our focus to a different topic for now and come back to this later.”

9. GET HELP IF NEEDED.

If the participant is in distress, do not hesitate to get help from a fellow teacher or school counsellor.

- Verbal: “I'm concerned about your well-being. Would you like me to get help from another teacher or a counsellor?”

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