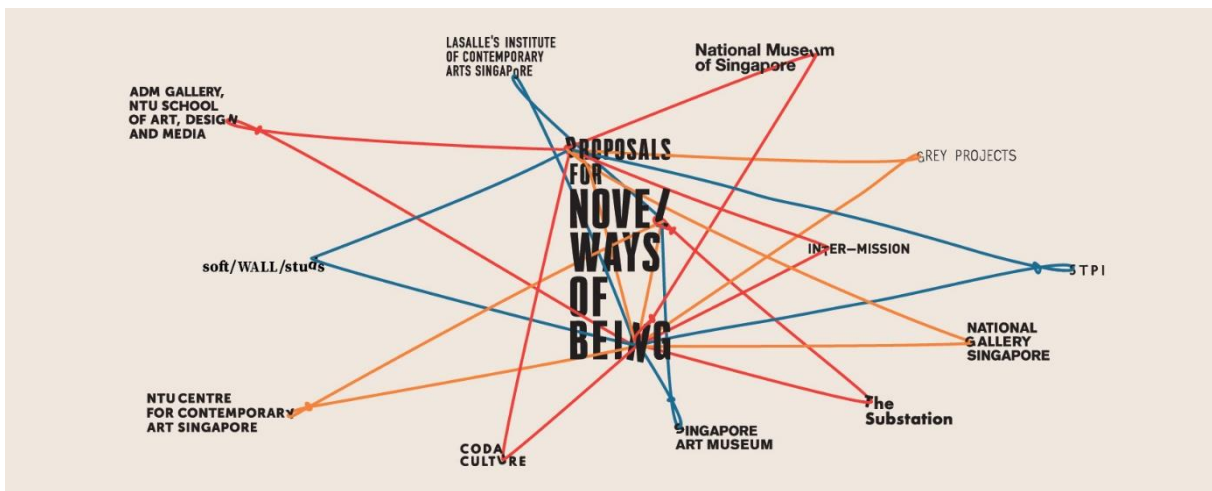


## MEDIA RELEASE

### ART SPACES ACROSS SINGAPORE COME TOGETHER FOR A NEW ART INITIATIVE TO SUPPORT THE LOCAL ART COMMUNITY

*12 local art institutions, independent art spaces and collectives will join forces with over 170 local artists and cultural workers in an unprecedented collective response to present exhibitions and programmes that imagine new ways of living in a world changed by the COVID-19 pandemic*



**Singapore, 27 July 2020** – National Gallery Singapore and Singapore Art Museum have come together to launch a new local initiative of unprecedented scale and scope, titled *Proposals for Novel Ways of Being*. The project will see the museums join forces with 10 other local art institutions and independent art spaces and collectives to present a series of exhibitions and programmes, both physical and online, that feature the works of over 170 local artists and cultural workers. A united response by the visual arts community to the changes brought about by COVID-19, these exhibitions and programmes will open between August 2020 and February 2021. Audiences can look forward to a wide range of art experiences that explore new ways of living in a world irrevocably changed by this pandemic, and imagine new possibilities for the future.

*Proposals for Novel Ways of Being* references an earlier name of the virus, “2019 Novel Coronavirus”. The title serves as a sombre yet hopeful reminder that COVID-19 is not the first pandemic or crisis the world has encountered, nor will it be the last. It is a reminder that we need new ways of being.

Elaborating on the compelling reasons behind the development of the *Proposals for Novel Ways of Being* initiative, Dr Eugene Tan, Director, National Gallery Singapore and Singapore Art Museum says, “As we grapple with the “new normal”, we consider how art can respond to the global pandemic and propose new possibilities for our changed world, as well as how it can inspire hope in these times. As national art institutions, we ask ourselves how we can show solidarity with the local network of independent art spaces, institutions and collectives to engage and support members of the art community, and how we can highlight the role that art can play in times of crises such as the current pandemic.”

The Programme Partners of *Proposals for Novel Ways of Being* include seven institutions: ADM Gallery, NTU School of Art, Design and Media; LASALLE’s Institute of Contemporary Arts Singapore; National Gallery Singapore; National Museum of Singapore; NTU Centre for Contemporary Art Singapore (NTU CCA Singapore); Singapore Art Museum; STPI, and five independent art spaces and collectives: Coda Culture; Grey Projects; INTER-MISSION; soft/WALL/studs; and The Substation.

To support the wider network of art professionals and practitioners, Programme Partners have invited independent guest curators to each propose projects that involve up to 15 artists based in Singapore. The projects presented can include new commissions or existing works, and may take the form of physical or digital exhibitions, and include programmes such as talks, performances and community engagement events.

Audiences can look forward to Coda Culture’s exhibition, which brings together artists who produce works using found objects; National Gallery Singapore’s range of works by a diverse group of emerging contemporary artists, which embody poetic contemplation; National Museum of Singapore’s series of digital works created in collaboration with artists and creatives, which respond to the pandemic; NTU CCA Singapore’s showcase of experimental works by artists who engage with sound, bodily movements and performances; Singapore Art Museum’s presentation of contemporary artworks that reflect on the passage of time and various acts of care-taking; and soft/WALL/studs’ suite of interconnected activities and projects that navigate the themes of (dis)repair, maintenance, and cultivation by artists and curators, presented on digital platforms and at their physical site.

Exhibitions and programmes for *Proposals for Novel Ways of Being* will open between August 2020 and February 2021. More information about the Programme Partners and their respective projects will be made available soon.

Image available for download at: <https://bit.ly/Image-NovelWaysofBeing>

For more information, please visit [novelwaysofbeing.sg](http://novelwaysofbeing.sg) and refer to the following annexes:

**Annex A: Quotes from Programme Partners**

**Annex B: List of Programme Partners, Curators and Biographies**

**Annex C: Note on Key Visual Design for *Proposals for Novel Ways of Being***

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**About National Gallery Singapore**

National Gallery Singapore is a leading visual arts institution which oversees the world's largest public collection of Singapore and Southeast Asian modern art. Situated at the birthplace of modern Singapore, in the heart of the Civic District, the Gallery is housed in two national monuments - City Hall and former Supreme Court - that have been beautifully restored and transformed into this exciting 64,000 square metre venue. Reflecting Singapore's unique heritage and geographical location, the Gallery aims to be a progressive museum that creates dialogues between the art of Singapore, Southeast Asia and the world to foster and inspire a

creative and inclusive society. This is reflected in our collaborative research, education, long-term and special exhibitions, and innovative programming. The Gallery also works with international museums such as Centre Pompidou, Musée d'Orsay, Tate Britain, National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo (MOMAT) and National Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art, Korea (MMCA), to jointly present Southeast Asian art in the global context, positioning Singapore as a key node in the global visual arts scene.

In 2019, the Gallery was the only museum in Southeast Asia that received a ranking in The Art Newspaper's annual global survey of attendance at art museums, taking 32nd place. It was the first museum in Asia to receive the Children in Museums Award by the European Museum Academy and Hands On! International Association of Children in Museums in 2018. The Gallery also won the awards for "Best Theme Attraction" at TTG Travel Awards 2017, "Best Attraction Experience", "Breakthrough Contribution to Tourism" and "Best Customer Service (Attractions)" at the prestigious Singapore Tourism Awards in 2016 for its role in adding to the vibrancy of Singapore's tourism landscape.

### **About the Singapore Art Museum**

Singapore Art Museum is a contemporary art museum which focuses on art-making and art-thinking in Singapore, Southeast Asia and Asia, encompassing a worldwide perspective on contemporary art practice. SAM advocates and makes accessible interdisciplinary contemporary art through research-led and evolving curatorial practice. Since it opened in January 1996, SAM has built up one of the most important collections of contemporary art from the region. It seeks to seed and nourish a stimulating and creative space in Singapore through exhibitions and public programmes, and to deepen every visitor's experience. These include outreach and education, research and publications, as well as cross-disciplinary residencies and exchanges.

SAM occupies two buildings: the old St Joseph's Institution on Bras Basah Road, built in 1855 and now a National Monument; and SAM at 8Q, a conservation building across the road on Queen Street that was the old Catholic High School. The museum buildings are currently closed for a major building redevelopment, with museum programming continuing at partner venues until the buildings re-open.

SAM was the organiser of the Singapore Biennale in 2011, 2013, 2016 and 2019. SAM was incorporated as a Company Limited by Guarantee on 13 November 2013, operating under the Ministry of Culture, Community and Youth. To find out more, visit [www.singaporeartmuseum.sg](http://www.singaporeartmuseum.sg)

## **Annex A: Quotes from Programme Partners**

*“STPI Gallery is immensely proud to be a part of Proposals for Novel Ways of Being. Living in unprecedented times, it is crucial for institutions in Singapore to unite and provide meaningful opportunities for those whose livelihoods are deeply intertwined with the arts.*

*Not only does this initiative allow STPI Gallery to collaborate closely with and show our support towards the local arts community, it also highlights how contemporary art empowers us in this time of flux and provides the opportunity for us to recognise, celebrate and critically position the diverse talents of artists, curators and other cultural workers in Singapore.” – STPI Gallery Director, Rita Targui*

*“s/W/s is appreciative of the support and hopes that artistic work and organisations remain sensitive towards ongoing lived conditions, not just of artists and the cultural sphere, but of life all around.” – soft/WALL/studs*

*“Proposal for Novel Ways of Being presents an opportunity for us at Grey Projects to think about how artists and art spaces can provide concrete and even urgent assistance to other artists and other art spaces in Singapore.” – Grey Projects*

*“Proposals for Novel Ways of Being is an opportunity in exploring forms to resist data entropy – by rethinking digital art praxis and constructing novel artistic platforms.” – INTER-MISSION*

*“Proposals for Novel Ways of Being offers the chance to see a broad range of thoughtful artistic responses to the pandemic and the shared experiences we have all been living through these past few months – crisis, isolation, and re-negotiating social interactions, to name a few. It is also an opportunity for curators and artists to consider different ways of engaging with audiences under new conditions, such as limiting capacity, situating a show outdoors, or going online. At NTU CCA Singapore, we are very pleased to work with independent curator Cheong Kah Kit and have been especially inspired by his choice of collaborating with artists whose practices relate to the body, dance, and theatre to create new performative works that will be translated into the medium of video. This act of translation mirrors so much of what the events of 2020 have set in motion, including a re-thinking of our physical presence, as well as our relationship to technology, each other, and society.”*

**– Dr Karin Oen, Deputy Director, Curatorial Programmes, NTU CCA Singapore**

**Annex B: List of Programme Partners, Curators and Biographies**

	Programme Partners	Curators and bios
1.	<a href="#">ADM Gallery, NTU School of Art, Design and Media</a>	<p><b><u>Kathleen Ditzig</u></b></p> <p>Kathleen Ditzig is a curator and researcher based in Singapore. Her work unpacks the enduring legacies of the Cold War. It examines art as an exceptional site and system of speaking to power. She is a fellow of the research platform Modern Art Histories in and across Africa, South and Southeast Asia (MAHASSA), convened by the Getty Foundation’s Connecting Art Histories project and a co-founder of <a href="#">offshoreart.co</a>, a curatorial and research collective that examines contemporary flows of capital and art.</p> <p>Her art historical research has been published in Southeast of Now (NUS Press, 2017) and presented at international academic conferences and platforms. Other than being featured in artist catalogues, her writing has been published by Artforum, OSMOS magazine, Art Agenda, Art Review Asia and Flash Art, and in books such as <i>Perhaps it is high Time for a Xeno-Architecture to Match</i> (Sternberg, 2018).</p> <p>She recently curated <i>As The West Slept</i> (World Trade Center, 2019) as part of Performa 2019.</p> <p><b><u>Carlos Quijon, Jr.</u></b></p> <p>Carlos Quijon, Jr. is an art historian, critic, and curator based in Manila. He is a fellow of the research platform Modern Art Histories in and across Africa, South and Southeast Asia (MAHASSA), convened by the Getty Foundation’s Connecting Art Histories project. He writes exhibition reviews for <i>Artforum</i> and his research is part of the book <i>From a History of Exhibitions Towards a Future of Exhibition-Making</i> (Sternberg Press, 2019). He has published in <i>ArtReview Asia</i> (Singapore), <i>Art Monthly</i> (UK), <i>Asia Art Archive's Ideas</i> (HK), and <i>Trans Asia Photography Review</i> (US), among others. He is an alumnus of the Ateneo National Writers Workshop in Manila and the inaugural Para Site Workshops for Emerging Professionals in Hong Kong in 2015 and was a scholar participant of the symposium “How Institutions Think” hosted by LUMA Foundation in Arles in 2016. In 2017, he was a research resident in MMCA Seoul and a fellow of the Transcuratorial Academy both in Berlin and Mumbai. He curated <i>Courses of Action</i> in Hong Kong and <i>a knowing intimacy or a life</i> in Manila in 2019, <i>A will for prolific disclosures</i> in Manila and co-curated <i>Minor Infelicities</i> in Seoul in 2020.</p>

2.	<a href="#">Coda Culture</a>	<p><b><u>Seelan Palay</u></b></p> <p>Seelan Palay (b. 1984) is a visual artist from Singapore. In 2018, he founded the independent art space Coda Culture, in which he has curated and presented over 30 exhibitions and art events to date. Seelan is currently also a Programme Manager at The Substation.</p>
3.	<a href="#">Grey Projects</a>	<p><b><u>Jason Wee</u></b></p> <p>Jason Wee (b. 1979, Singapore) is an artist and a writer working between contemporary art, architecture, poetry and photography. His art practice contends with sources of singular authority in favour of polyphony and difference. He transforms these histories and spaces into various visual and written materials. Wee is the founder and director of Grey Projects, an art library and residency space that focuses on curatorship, new writing, design propositions and art.</p> <p>Wee has exhibited at the MOCA Taipei, Casino Luxembourg, Villa Vissalievff Paris, Institut für Auslandsbeziehungen (Germany), 1st and 6th Singapore Biennale, ArtScience Museum Singapore, amongst others. Artist-in-residencies include Artspace Sydney, ISEA 2008, Tokyo Wonder Site, Contemporary Art Japan, NTU Centre for Contemporary Art Singapore and Gyeonggi Creation Center, Korea. He is a graduate of The New School, Whitney Museum Independent Study Program and Harvard GSD.</p>
4.	<a href="#">INTER-MISSION</a>	<p>Co-Curators:</p> <p><b><u>INTER-MISSION</u></b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Urich Lau</li> <li>2. Teoh Yue Han</li> </ol> <p>INTER—MISSION is an art collective dedicated to discourses of technology in art initiated in 2016 by Urich LAU and TEOH Yue Han. Focusing on interdisciplinary and collaborative works in video art, audiovisual, performance, installation and interactive art. The collective aims to inhabit the gap between technologically engaged artworks, artists and audiences.</p> <p>INTER—MISSION builds transnational networks to promote sustained dialogue and engagement with media practices. It creates a space that encourages collaboration, reflection and participation in our ever-changing technological environment through interactive performances, installation, video screenings, international and interdisciplinary dialogues, and knowledge sharing.</p> <p><b><u>formAxioms</u></b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3. Eva Maria Castro</li> <li>4. Federico Ruberto</li> </ol>



		<p>formAxioms was established in 2018 by Eva Castro and Federico Ruberto as a research framework, agency and teaching cluster part of SUTD — ASD (Singapore University of Technology and Design — Architecture and Sustainable Design). formAxioms’s agency is promoted by a research based on speculative narratives that engages de-sign focusing on two scales: territorial and architectural assemblages. At both the laboratory research is computationally driven and it integrates VR/AR in its pipeline: at territorial scales as means to edit-alter-display structural information and to create participatory practices, at architectural scales as means to problematize narrative-sequences-experiences by questioning/hybridizing the space-time of the subject by way of challenging its frame, by altering the dyad “digital/physical”. The studio’s interest in the redeveloping of the relation real/ideal, post post-modern thought, is carried forward through first a critical engagement with fiction and by adhering to an ontology of modelling: two pathways for creating syntaxes that allow for both, the constitution of (a shared) structure and the divergence from it.</p>
5.	<p><a href="#">LASALLE’s Institute of Contemporary Arts Singapore</a></p>	<p><b><u>Luke Heng</u></b></p> <p>Born in 1987, Singaporean artist Luke Heng works primarily within the confines of painting by deconstructing information drawn from the painters process. He is interested in the dialectics between painting, object, and picture making, while assimilating and externalising recurring thoughts of liminality and the speed of modern living through the mode of image and objects. Heng graduated with a BA (Hons) in Fine Arts in 2013, and did his MFA in 2019 - 20. Both from LASALLE College of the Arts in partnership with Goldsmiths University of London, which he attended on a scholarship. He has since been actively practicing art both locally and internationally. Apart from practicing, Heng is also lecturing in LASALLE College of the Arts, teaching painting and contemporary arts. Heng’s first solo exhibition, The Waiting Room, was held at FOST Gallery, Singapore in 2015. His second solo exhibition was at Galerie Isabelle Gounod, Paris, France in 2016. Major group exhibitions that Heng has participated in include Constituent Concreteness at Mizuma Gallery (2016, Singapore), Peculiar Textures at Galerie Steph (2015, Singapore), Primavera 3 at Galerie Frédéric Lacroix (2014, Paris, France), and Departure at iPreciation (2014, Singapore). In 2014, he was selected to participate in the Dena Foundation Artist Residency Program in Paris, France, supported by the National Arts Council, Singapore. In 2017, Heng presented After Asphodel, a solo exhibition with Pearl Lam Galleries, Singapore. Recent engagements took place in Malaysia with A+ Works of Art where Heng presented ‘Al/linum’ and ‘Non-Place: Peripherals’ with Yavuz Gallery during the S.E.A Focus 2020.</p>

6.	<a href="#">National Gallery Singapore</a>	<p><b><u>Syaheedah Iskandar</u></b></p> <p>Syaheedah Iskandar (b.1990) works with vernacular ideas of visuality within Southeast Asia, drawing on contemporary discourses on hyper-visuality and its opposite, the unseen. Her projects aim to unpack knowledge(s) that inform and counter hegemonic systems of seeing. Syaheedah was the inaugural Emerging Writers' Fellow for the academic journal Southeast of Now: Directions in Contemporary and Modern Art in Asia and the recipient of the IMPART Awards 2020 (Singapore) in recognition of her emerging curatorial practice. She holds an MA in History of Art and Archaeology at the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), University of London. Syaheedah was previously Curatorial Assistant at the NTU Centre for Contemporary Art Singapore (2014–18) where she worked on numerous exhibitions and developed outreach strategies for art education.</p>
7.	<a href="#">National Museum of Singapore</a>	<p><b><u>Yang Derong</u></b></p> <p>Yang Derong (b.1965) spent seven years in Paris as Directeur de Style with fashion designer Jean Charles de Castelbajac, and as Global Image Director of Esprit International from 1994 to 2006.</p> <p>He has since returned to Singapore, where he has been involved in many high profile international and government projects, including being the National Day Parade art director and costume designer for Singapore's Golden Jubilee celebrations.</p> <p>In addition to a career in fashion design, image and branding, as well as creative direction, Yang has designed costumes for Singapore theatre – including Beauty World, Hotpants and Forbidden City – Portrait of an Empress, which won him an M1–The Straits Times Life! Theatre Award in 2003. He reprised this role in the 2017 run of Forbidden City. Yang was also featured as one of six artists in the 2019 DigiMuse Presents exhibition in NMS for his engaging and quirky digital artwork Face of the Day.</p> <p>The same series of work was presented in Paris for a group exhibition entitled C(hope) as part of the Urban Art Singapore Exhibition, organised by the Singapore Embassy in Paris and Urban Art Fair.</p>
8.	<a href="#">NTU CCA Singapore</a>	<p><b><u>Cheong Kah Kit</u></b></p> <p>Cheong Kah Kit is a visual artist based in Singapore. In 2016, he co-founded Peninsular, an artist studio / experimental project space in Singapore. In 2018, Kah Kit co-developed the Oral History Project, an online platform dedicated to preserving stories of significant individuals who have shaped Singapore art history and discourses. He was co-curator of State Of Motion 2020: Rushes of Time, commissioned by</p>

		the Asian Film Archive (Singapore). Kah Kit was artist-in-residence at Para Site, Hong Kong, 2015.
9.	<a href="#">Singapore Art Museum</a>	<p><b>Samantha Yap</b></p> <p>Samantha Yap (b. 1993) shuffles between writing, curation, and project management. She is interested in forms of reciprocity such as the ethics of care, love, and vulnerability as well as the exploration of feminist perspectives across writing and visual culture. Her recent exhibitions include <i>What is the current that presents a behaved waist</i>, Yeo Workshop (2020) and <i>at second sight</i>, Coda Culture (2019). Her writing is featured in the poetry anthology <i>My Lot Is a Sky</i> (2018) alongside other exhibition catalogues. She graduated with a BA (Hons) in English Literature and Art History from the Nanyang Technological University of Singapore.</p>
10.	<a href="#">soft/WALL/studs</a>	<p><b>s/W/s</b> is a collaborative project in Singapore composed of several layers, involving several artists, writers, film makers, art workers, and researchers. Its projects include libraries, acts of amplification, hosting, exhibitions, fugitivity, counter-rhythm generation, support, resource gathering, research, writing, detournement, game-making, teaching, collaboration, and maintenance.</p>
11.	<a href="#">STPI</a>	<p><b>Tan Guo-Liang</b></p> <p>Guo-Liang Tan (b. 1980, Singapore) is a visual artist working primarily in the field of painting, from which works in other mediums such as text, collage and video sometimes emerge. In his work, surfaces, painterly or otherwise, becomes a space for performing gestures of affect and conjuring a haunting that converses with the ghosts of abstraction. Tan completed his MFA at Glasgow School of Art and was also a guest student at The Städelschule, Frankfurt am Main, Germany and an artist-in-residence at NTU CCA Singapore. Recent exhibitions include 'Ghost Screen' (2017) at OTA Fine Arts, 'Depths: Others, Land, Selves' as part of Elevation Laos (2018) and 'Reformations' (2019) at NTU ADM Gallery. Alongside his own work, Tan also writes and collaborates with other artists on various publications and curatorial projects. Most recently, he co-curated 'State Of Motion 2020: Rushes Of Time' for Asian Film Archive.</p>
12.	<a href="#">The Substation</a>	<p>Founded in 1990 by the late Kuo Pao Kun, <b>The Substation</b> is known for its pioneering and experimental arts programming. Over the years, The Substation has worked with some of Singapore's most critically acclaimed artists, writers and intellectuals including Alvin Tan, Goh Boon Teck, Amanda Heng, Lee Wen and Kok Heng Leun.</p> <p>Every year, The Substation presents an overarching artistic theme that informs the exhibitions, programmes and initiatives for the year. Each of these programmes explores in greater detail the questions posed by the artistic theme and the societal issues surrounding these questions. Through</p>

		<p>these annual artistic themes, The Substation expands, leads and supports cultural conversations in Singapore, engaging the general public and exposing them to the full possibilities of contemporary art in shaping public discourse.</p> <p>The Substation is a recipient of the National Arts Council's Major Grant for the period April 2020 to March 2023.</p>
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### **Annex C: Note on Key Visual Design for *Proposals for Novel Ways of Being***

Taking inspiration from the humble rubber band, the spirit of flexibility, adaptability and its binding qualities are depicted metaphorically in the outcome of the key visual.

The rubber bands are anchored at the letters “P”, “L” and “N” from the title *Proposals for Novel Ways of Being*, and are stretched and intertwined with the names of each partner—as though holding them together.

This key visual reflects the aspiration and most meaningful intention of the exhibition—which is to rally our community in bringing the arts back to local audiences whilst at the same time, signify the collaborative spirit across all partners for this show.