

MEDIA RELEASE

PIONEERING INTERDISCIPLINARY ARTIST AMANDA HENG AND CURATOR SELENE YAP ARE SINGAPORE'S ARTISTIC TEAM FOR BIENNALE ARTE 2026

*They will represent Singapore in its 12th participation
at the world's most prestigious visual art exhibition, La Biennale di Venezia.*



Photo of curator Selene Yap (L) and artist Amanda Heng (R), 2025. Image courtesy of Singapore Art Museum.

Singapore, 14 July 2025 – Singapore Art Museum (SAM) is pleased to announce the appointment of pioneering interdisciplinary artist Amanda Heng to represent Singapore at the 61st International Art Exhibition – La Biennale di Venezia (Biennale Arte) in 2026. She will collaborate with curator Selene Yap to realise the presentation. The pairing marks the 12th presentation of the Singapore Pavilion, which is commissioned by the National Arts Council (NAC), supported by the Ministry of Culture, Community and Youth (MCCY) and organised by SAM. Biennale Arte is widely regarded as one of the most prestigious global platforms for contemporary art and will run from 9 May to 22 November 2026.

The Commissioning Panel, comprising leaders of the arts community, selected Amanda Heng for the strength and continued relevance of her decades-long practice, which reflects an ongoing

dialogue between art and life, and presents new views on real-world issues with openness and introspection. Heng invited Selene Yap to curate her presentation at the Pavilion, recognising how Yap's practice of situated, dialogic curation offers a meaningful and sensitive complement to Heng's performative explorations of the body as a site where rituals, memory, and lived experience converge. Yap and Heng have most recently partnered to exhibit works by Heng for *Presentation of Works by Benesse Prize Artists* at the Benesse House Museum in Naoshima, Japan in 2024.

Eugene Tan, Co-Chair of the Commissioning Panel, Chief Executive Officer and Director of SAM, said, "Over four decades, Amanda Heng's artistic career and contributions have critically shaped Singapore's art history and development. Her sustained and evolving practice offers compelling ways of engaging the world through the body, performance, and lived experience. Her work resonates with the urgencies of our time while being grounded in personal truth and poetic clarity. Heng's selection of Selene Yap as curator reflects a collaborative relationship that brings together distinct artistic and curatorial sensibilities, promising a thoughtful and resonant presentation that will shed fresh light on contemporary global concerns pertinent to today's international art world."

Low Eng Teong, Co-Chair of the Commissioning Panel and Chief Executive Officer of NAC, added, "Amanda Heng is a pioneering force in performance art, whose interdisciplinary practice uses the body and its movement as a universal language to create new pathways for international audiences to engage with Singapore art. As part of our continued efforts to nurture artistic excellence and support our artists on the international stage, the Singapore Pavilion at Biennale Arte serves as a vital platform for our artists to build meaningful global networks and foster cross-cultural dialogue. Together with the Commissioning Panel, we are proud to support this artistic team as they represent Singapore on the world stage in Venice next year."

Amanda Heng is a contemporary artist whose practice spans live performance, installation, photography, and participatory art. Emerging in the late 1980s during a transformative period in Singapore's art scene, she helped shape new modes of expression grounded in participatory works and critical reflections on modernity. Heng's work during the late 1980s and '90s was concerned with live performance art that centres the body and its movement as a way of exploring identity, memory, and everyday human relations. Through her works, she engages spontaneity, vulnerability, and the subtleties of human interaction as conduits for collective reflection. This

nexus between art and life continues to drive her artistic vision today and her exemplary contributions to Singapore's art scene are recognised through the Cultural Medallion, Singapore's highest arts accolade, which she was conferred in 2010.

Heng co-founded The Artists Village in 1988, Singapore's first artist-run space for experimental art. She later established Women in the Arts (WITA), the country's first women artists' collective, questioning societal norms, creating a platform for feminist discourse and giving voice to underrepresented groups. Her significant contributions have earned her other prestigious honours, including the 12th Benesse Prize (2020) and induction into the Singapore Women's Hall of Fame (2023).

Heng has exhibited internationally at events such as the Bangkok Art Biennale (2024), Singapore Biennale (2006, 2019), and Werkleitz Biennale, Germany (2000). She has also presented at performance art festivals including the inaugural Women's Performance Art Festival in Osaka (2001), Tachikawa International Art Festival (2000), and the Rand Festival (1999).

Selene Yap is a curator at SAM whose practice is grounded in sustained collaborations with artists and close attention to the conditions that inform artistic production. Her curatorial approach is shaped by discursive research and long-term engagement, with a focus on artists whose works respond to the complexities of place, process, and memory. She has recently curated exhibitions on Pratchaya Phinthong (2024), Simryn Gill & Charles Lim Yi Yong (2024), Ho Tzu Nyen (2023), and Joo Choon Lin (2023).

Singapore has participated in the Biennale Arte since 2001. Since 2015, the Singapore Pavilion has been in the Arsenale, one of the Biennale's main exhibition venues. Past presentations have featured some of Singapore's most significant contemporary artists, including Robert Zhao Renhui (2024), Shubigi Rao (2022), and Song-Ming Ang (2019)—each bringing critical, thought-provoking works that contribute to global dialogues in art and society.

Further details on the curatorial concept behind the Singapore Pavilion will be revealed in due course. Follow the latest updates via Facebook, Instagram and TikTok (@singaporeartmuseum), or visit bit.ly/SingaporePavilion-BA2026.

Press images may be downloaded [here](#).

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About the Singapore Pavilion in Venice

The Singapore Pavilion is a 250 sqm space in a complex of buildings called the Sale d'Armi, which is centrally located and easily accessible within the Arsenale, a key site in Venice. The Sale d'Armi complex is a cluster of four 16th-century barracks built with brick and stone, each with a wooden roof. It lies opposite the intersection between the long Corderie and Artiglierie buildings, where the main central square of the Arsenale is situated.

About Singapore Art Museum

Singapore Art Museum opened in 1996 as the first art museum in Singapore. Also known as SAM, we present contemporary art from a Southeast Asian perspective for artists, art lovers and the art curious in multiple venues across the island, including a new venue in the historic port area of Tanjong Pagar.

SAM is building one of the world's most important public collections of Southeast Asian contemporary art, with the aim of connecting the art and the artists to the public and future

generations through exhibitions and programmes. SAM is working towards a humane and sustainable future by committing to responsible practices within its processes.

To find out more, visit www.singaporeartmuseum.sg.

About National Arts Council, Singapore

The National Arts Council (NAC) is a statutory board under the Ministry of Culture, Community, and Youth that champions the arts in Singapore. The Council promotes artistic excellence by providing diverse opportunities for artists and arts organisations while expanding access for audiences to appreciate the impact of the arts in enriching lives. By working closely with the arts community and partners, the Council seeks to build a connected society, creative economy and distinctive city through the arts.

Annex A: About the Artistic Team

Amanda Heng, Artist



Amanda Heng (born 1951, Singapore) is a pioneering contemporary artist whose interdisciplinary practice spans performance, installation, photography, and participatory art. Emerging in the late 1980s during a pivotal shift in Singapore's art scene, Heng is known for her body-centric works that interrogate gender roles, societal expectations, and lived memory through everyday gestures.

Heng's long-running performance works, such as *Let's Walk* (1999–ongoing), *Walking the Stool* (2000), and *Let's Chat* (1999–ongoing), mobilise the body as a site of social encounter—using simple, quotidian acts to provoke reflection on care, connection, and resilience. Her photographic series *Another Woman* (1996, 2014, 2023) delicately traces intergenerational intimacy through repeated portraits with her mother.

A founding member of The Artists Village (1988) and Women in the Arts (1999), Heng has been pivotal in shaping Singapore's contemporary and feminist discourse. Her work has been featured in major biennales and performance art festivals, including Bangkok Art Biennale (2024), Singapore Biennale (2006, 2019), and the inaugural Women's Performance Art Festival in Osaka (2001).

Heng received Singapore's Cultural Medallion (2010) and the Benesse Prize (2020) and was inducted into the Singapore Women's Hall of Fame (2023).

Selene Yap, Curator



Selene Yap (born 1988, Singapore) is a Curator at Singapore Art Museum (SAM). Her curatorial practice follows a situational approach, developing research and exhibitions in close dialogue with artists whose work respond to the contingencies and particularities of place, process and memory. Yap has curated significant solo and joint presentations of artists Pratchaya Phinthong (*No Patents on Ideas*, 2024), Simryn Gill & Charles Lim Yi Yong (*The Sea is a Field*, 2024), Ho Tzu Nyen (*Time & the Tiger*, 2023), and Joo Choon Lin (*Dance in the Destruction Dance*, 2023)—projects marked by critical engagement and conceptual depth. She was recently appointed as one of the four curators for Singapore Biennale 2025.

Before joining SAM, Yap held research roles at the Future Cities Laboratory and the Singapore University of Technology and Design. She also served as Programme Manager for Visual Arts at The Substation, supporting exhibitions and initiatives that sought to defy conventional use of the arts space. As an independent curator, she co-curated *State of Motion: Rushes of Time* (2020) with the Asian Film Archive, exploring temporality and the moving image through film and installation.

Annex B: The Commissioning Panel

Co-Chairs

- Mr Low Eng Teong, Chief Executive Officer, National Arts Council, Singapore
- Mr Eugene Tan, Chief Executive Officer and Director, Singapore Art Museum

Members

- Ms Mae Anderson, Chairperson, Art Outreach Singapore
- Mr Patrick Flores, Chief Curator, National Gallery Singapore
- Ms Honor Harger, Vice President, ArtScience Museum and Attractions, Marina Bay Sands
- Mr Ho Tzu Nyen, Artist (Represented Singapore at the 54th International Art Exhibition – La Biennale di Venezia in 2011)
- Mr Low Sze Wee, Group Director (Museums), National Heritage Board
- Mr David Teh, Associate Professor, National University of Singapore