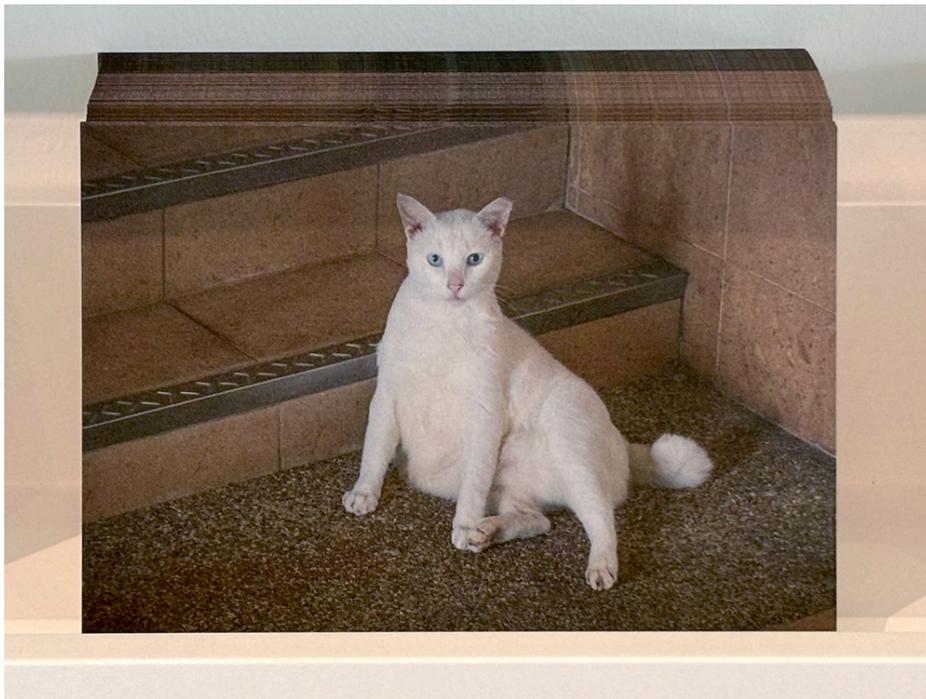


## MEDIA RELEASE

### **SAM PRESENTS HEMAN CHONG'S FIRST MAJOR SURVEY EXHIBITION QUESTIONING AND NAVIGATING MEANING IN OUR DATA-DRIVEN, NETWORKED WORLD**

*Featuring over 50 artworks from the early 2000s to the present, including six new commissions, the exhibition charts Chong's established oeuvre of conceptual art that interrogates and navigates the systems and technologies which structure our everyday lives.*



Heman Chong, *Perimeter Walk*, 2013-2024. 550 offset printed postcards of images captured along the perimeter of Singapore. 9.5 x 13.8 cm each. Commissioned by UCCA Center for Contemporary Art. Development of *Perimeter Walk* supported by M Art Foundation. Installation view: Sharjah Biennial 16 at Old Al Jubail Vegetable Market.

**Singapore, 6 May 2025** — Singapore Art Museum (SAM) is pleased to announce the first major survey exhibition of mid-career Singapore artist **Heman Chong**, titled ***This is a dynamic list and may never be able to satisfy particular standards for completeness***. From 10 May to 17 August 2025, explore 51 works from the early 2000s to the present, including six new commissions unveiled at the exhibition. The exhibition maps Chong's prolific conceptual practice while inviting fresh perspectives on its meaning and relevance today. Transforming the anxieties and absurdities of our information-saturated lives into witty visual, textural, and material

experiences, the exhibition sounds an evocative call to make sense of our everyday realities and the value of art in a digital age.

A key figure in Singapore's art history, Chong epitomises a generation of regional artists who found international acclaim as contemporary artists at the turn of the century and the dawn of our hyper-networked digital age. His multifaceted artistic practice defies easy categorisation and fluidly moves between photography, installation, performance, and painting. At the core of Chong's dynamic practice is an interest in dissecting the infrastructures that underpin our complex realities, which he teases by engaging with and aggregating information from the mundane experiences of daily contemporary life. This unique balance of conceptual rigour and relatable explorations has propelled Chong's reputation in the global art world.

The exhibition's title signals its intent, existing as both an artwork in the exhibition and a deliberate appropriation of Wikipedia's terms and conditions for the ever-changing nature of its online lists. Rather than attempting a definitive, exhaustive survey of Chong's extensive career, the exhibition reconsiders Chong's canonical works within the context of our hyper-mediated present. Self-referential in more ways than one, it points to a key strategy in Chong's practice to question the viability of appropriation in a time where information is constantly rewritten and adopting new meanings. The exhibition, developed by the artist, unfolds across nine thematic rooms, each organised around keywords: Words, Whispers, Ghosts, Journeys, Futures, Findings, Infrastructures, Surfaces, and Endings. Through these rooms, viewers are invited into Chong's critical and affective interrogation of objects, situations, logics, and affinities, which express the human condition in the 21st century.

June Yap, Director of Curatorial and Research at SAM and co-curator of the exhibition, says, "Heman Chong's relationship with SAM is remarkably long-standing, having been featured in early regional exhibitions by the museum such as *City/Community - Nokia Singapore Art* (1999), the Singapore Biennale, to recent commissions in 2020 and the present extensive survey in 2025. As such, this exhibition is as much a representation of his prolific body of work over time as it is a charting of the museum and Singapore's contemporary artistic developments. We look forward to sharing Chong's witty practice and serious humour with our audiences, and igniting meaningful conversations about art and how we live in this digital age."

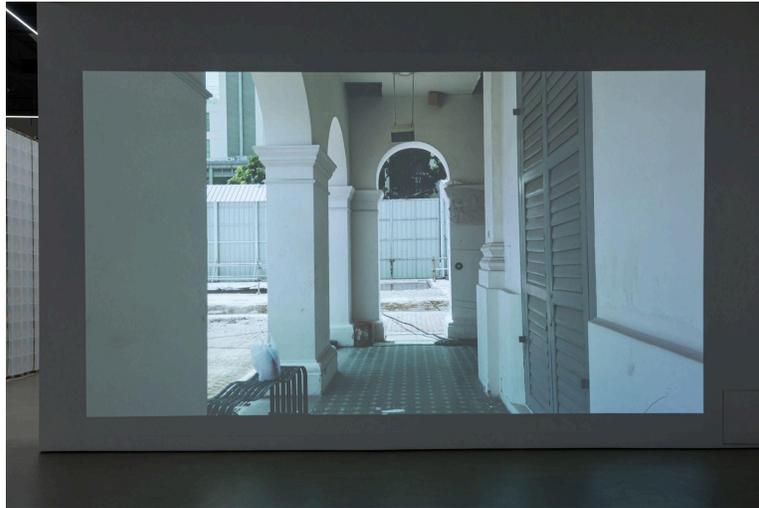
Expanding on Chong's practice, Kathleen Ditzig, co-curator of the exhibition and Curator at National Gallery Singapore, adds, "A critical characteristic of Heman Chong's conceptualism is its multifaceted and organically reconstituting process of relations as it adapts to forms of organisation, governance and networks—a logic that is definitive of Singapore Contemporary Art."

### Introducing six new commissioned works



Installation view of *Wanderlust / Rebecca Solnit* (2025), *Labyrinths (Libraries) #29* (2025) and *The Book of Equators #1* (2024). Image courtesy of Singapore Art Museum.

The exhibition survey unveils a series of six newly commissioned works, offering an insightful exploration of Chong's evolving artistic practice. Among them is ***Wanderlust / Rebecca Solnit* (2025)**, the latest addition to his *Cover (Versions)* series, where Chong paints book covers for books he has not yet read but intends to. He uses exaggerated brushstrokes and abstracted masses of colour to transform each book's essence into a visual experience. Building on this exploration of abstraction, ***Labyrinths (Libraries) #29* (2025)** delves into the logic of grids and the complex order found in libraries. These paintings' interplay of positive and negative space reflects shifting perspectives, evoking the dynamic relationship between time, ideas, and knowledge within a library's vast collection.



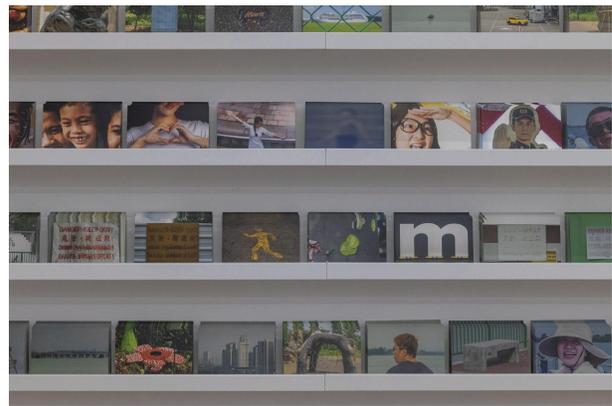
Installation view of *Modernity and Beyond* (2020). Image courtesy of Singapore Art Museum.

In *Modernity and Beyond* (2020), as part of his *Ambient Walking* YouTube channel, he documents SAM's former premises, reflecting upon the building's history as emblematic of the ongoing transformation of artistic and cultural infrastructure in Singapore. Expanding into broader historical observation, *The Book of Equators #1* (2024) interrogates imperial histories in its intervention on everyday polyester fabrics purchased in a local shop in Singapore. By imposing lines of latitudes over mass-produced tropical patterns, Chong critiques the legacy of colonial imposition and its entanglement with contemporary consumer culture in the tropics.

### Tracing Singapore's edges and mapping spaces



Installation view of *Calendars* (2020 - 2096) (2004-2010).  
Image courtesy of Singapore Art Museum.



Detail view of *Perimeter Walk* (2013-2024). Image  
courtesy of Singapore Art Museum.

Internationally acclaimed and circulated, Chong's art nevertheless possesses a distinctive Singaporean sensibility. Deeply rooted in his Singapore experience, Chong peels back the city's polished veneer to reveal its many layers, where personal memory and collective experience converge. In ***Calendars (2020 - 2096) (2004-2010)***, viewers encounter 1,001 images depicting paradoxically emptied public-accessible spaces around Singapore that Chong photographed over seven years. Presented as calendar pages set in a fictional future, Chong speculatively challenges conventional notions of time, inviting the viewer to imagine meaning in the memories of a future yet to come. Chong's expansive installation, ***Perimeter Walk (2013-2024)***, adopts a similar documentary style. Comprising 550 postcards of images taken as the artist traversed the borders of Singapore on foot, the work renounces a singular view of the city, weaving together a multifaceted narrative of life at its fringes. Functioning as a pop-up store where visitors can purchase the postcards, the exhibition facilitates the exchange and circulation of these images, extending their visual narratives beyond the gallery's walls.



Installation view of *106 Depot Road Singapore 102106 (2024)*. Image courtesy of Singapore Art Museum.

With ***106B Depot Road Singapore 102106 (2024)***, in collaboration with Jiehao Lau, Chong reconstructs the contours of his residential building that is distinctive as archetypal public housing design in Singapore seen as synonymous with the city-state's modernity; however, in its production through speech and memory rather than plans, the work lends a human touch to this pragmatic efficiency.

## Interrogating invisible infrastructures



Installation view of *Foreign Affairs #106* (2018/2025).  
Image courtesy of Singapore Art Museum.



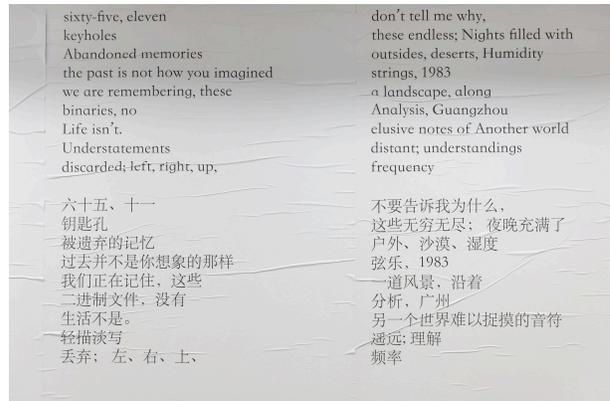
Installation view of *The Straits Times, Friday, September 27, 2013, Cover* (2018). Image courtesy of Singapore Art Museum.

Beyond Singapore, the exhibition confronts the pervasive systems and structures of power that govern our lives. ***Foreign Affairs #106 (2018/2025)*** features photographs of embassy backdoors, which Chong uses as recurring motifs. This systematic approach evokes both the cinematic frame and the omnipresence of the surveillance camera that watches nothing and everything. In a similar visual strategy, ***The Straits Times, Friday, September 27, 2013, Cover (2018)***, part of his series *Abstracts From The Straits Times*, uses repetition and overlap to "submerge" and "black out" journalistic headlines and photos from Singapore's primary daily newspaper. This process mirrors the glitch introduced during the work's creation, urging viewers to recognise hidden biases in editorial decisions and promoting critical consumption in today's mediated landscape.

## Reconstructing meaning through textural and material interventions

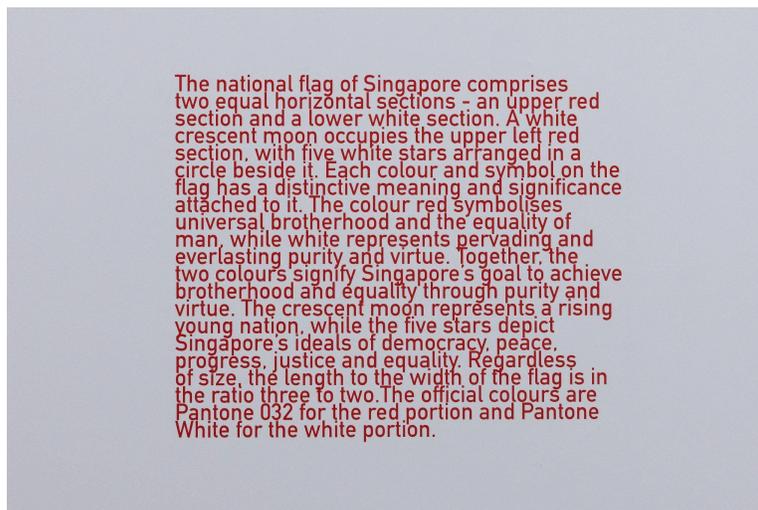


Detail view of *Secrets and Lies (The Impossibility of Reconstitutions)* (2012). Image courtesy of Singapore Art Museum.



Detail view of *Works on Paper #2: Prospectus* (2006/2024). Image courtesy of Singapore Art Museum.

The exhibition also showcases Chong's exploration of meaning through form with ***Secrets and Lies (The Impossibility of Reconstitutions)* (2012)** that features 326 spy and espionage novels shredded and thus transformed into out-of-context and incomplete statements and quotes. The irreversible act, reducing these narratives into the parts that once made them whole, results in an ironic "encryption" of their content. Similarly, ***Works on Paper #2: Prospectus* (2006/2024)** presents fragments of a forever-lost novel, now comprising only 239 legible words that were salvaged after a hasty deletion. With the text's original meaning only known to Chong, these traces perform a new function and serve as a textual and physical monument to this loss.



Detail view of *The Singapore Flag* (2015). Image courtesy of Singapore Art Museum.

In *The Singapore Flag (2015)*, Chong reimagines the iconic national symbol. Like other national flags, the Singapore flag represents the nation’s ideals, beliefs, and values. However, this artwork presents the flag as text, with an official description rendered in the same red hue as the state flag itself. This approach invites the viewer to imagine the flag rather than simply observe it.



Detail view of *Monument to the people we've conveniently forgotten (I hate you)* (2008). Image courtesy of Singapore Art Museum.



Installation view of *The Information, The Information, Breasts And Eggs, Metropolitan Stories* from the series “Stacks” (2024). Image courtesy of Singapore Art Museum.

Materiality is further explored in *Monument to the people we've conveniently forgotten (I hate you) (2008)*, which features a tactile sea of blacked-out name cards on which visitors are invited to walk upon. The accumulation of these blacked-out cards parodies the performance and perfunctory nature of its social exchange, disorienting visitors physically and prompting a reflection on human connections.

With his series *Stacks (2003-ongoing)*, Chong presents annual sculptural works, each conceived over the period of a year, thus reflecting the passage of time and the rhythm of this chronological threshold. Comprising books and glasses Chong read and used in the preceding year—familiar, everyday objects imbued with personal significance, each “stack” serves as both a punctuation and a record of time passed.

## Embracing the processes of performance



Installation view of *The Library of Unread Books* (2016-ongoing). Image courtesy of Singapore Art Museum.

Finally, the exhibition presents Chong's performances that revolve around the experience and circulation of texts. One of Chong's most iconic works, ***The Library of Unread Books* (2016-ongoing)**, developed with Renée Staal, is an itinerant reference library of unread books donated by the public, simultaneously addressing the distribution, access, and surplus of knowledge.

Two time-based performances are presented on Saturdays during the exhibition's run: ***Everything (Wikipedia)* (2016)** and ***A Short Story About Geometry* (2009)**. *A Short Story About Geometry*, from the series *Memories*, invites public participation and is encountered only in the transmission of its story between an instructor and a participant. The artist has promised to never publish the short story in print or on digital platforms — the contents of Chong's narrative are received in the form of memorisation and retelling, requiring an exchange of time and effort to experience the work.

## Connecting audiences to Chong's practice

A publication titled after the exhibition will be available from May 2025. It provides a companion index of Chong's concept-based artworks alongside essays that survey Chong's engagement with conceptualism over the 2000s, a period defined by the rise of social media and the Singapore state's investment in contemporary art.

In addition, SAM will host two special in-depth talks on Chong's practice, featuring Dr. Bill Sherman (from The Warburg Institute with his pioneering work on marginalia and the history of libraries) and Pauline J. Yao (Hong Kong-based independent curator and writer, previously Lead Curator (Visual Art) at M+ and with a long-standing familiarity with the artist's practice) on 14 June 2025 and 21 June 2025 respectively.

Visitors can also participate in a dynamic range of programmes throughout the exhibition period, such as guided exhibition tours, film screenings, and drop-in activities. These offer fresh perspectives and interactive ways to explore the exhibition. For additional details on the public programmes, please refer to Annex B.

The exhibition will be shown at Gallery 1 at SAM at Tanjong Pagar Distripark from 10 May to 17 August 2025. General Admission (free for Singaporeans and PRs) applies. More information about ***Heman Chong: This is a dynamic list and may never be able to satisfy particular standards for completeness*** can be found at <https://bit.ly/heman-chong>. Media assets can be accessed via <https://bit.ly/HemanChongatSAM>.

- [Annex A: Exhibition and Artwork Details](#)
- [Annex B: Programme Details](#)

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## **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](http://www.singaporeartmuseum.sg)

## **Annex A: Exhibition and Artwork Details for *Heman Chong: This is a dynamic list and may never be able to satisfy particular standards for completeness***

### ***Heman Chong: This is a dynamic list and may never be able to satisfy particular standards for completeness***

10 May to 17 August 2025 | Level 1, Gallery 1, SAM at Tanjong Pagar Distripark

*This is a dynamic list and may never be able to satisfy particular standards for completeness* reads as a survey of artworks by Heman Chong. The title of this exhibition is a readymade text-based artwork, appropriated from a disclaimer for lists on Wikipedia. An indemnity as much as a declaration of intention, its application caveats that this is not a comprehensive survey of the artist's practice.

Rather, the exhibition offers a lens into Chong's varied methods of making what he regards as cultural objects. From artworks first made in 2003—the year Chong first participated in the Venice Biennale, disavowed video art, and began to curate internationally—to recent works made specifically for this occasion, the exhibition charts trajectories of his conceptual practice across two decades marked by globalised art production and social media platforms.

Developed by the artist, the exhibition unfolds across different rooms and compositions of artworks, each organised around keywords: Words, Whispers, Ghosts, Journeys, Futures, Findings, Infrastructures, Surfaces and Endings. Much like metadata tags, these keywords suggest an ontology of the coordinated works, inviting the viewer into Chong's critical and affective interrogation of objects, situations, logics and affinities which express the human condition in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

### **About Heman Chong**

**Heman Chong** is an artist whose work is located at the intersection between image, performance, situations and writing. Characterised by acerbic wit, Chong's art addresses contemporary geopolitics and the infrastructural ironies of our data-driven and networked society. His practice can be read as an imagining, interrogation and sometimes intervention into infrastructure as an everyday medium of politics. His work has been the subject of institutional solo exhibitions at Singapore Art Museum, UCCA Dune, STPI, Het Nieuwe Instituut, Weserburg Museum, Jameel Arts Center, Swiss Institute New York, Art in General, Artsonje Center, Rockbund Art Museum, South London Gallery, NUS Museum, amongst many others. Chong is the co-director and founder (with Renée Staal) of The Library of Unread Books, a library made up of donated books previously unread by their owners. It was recently installed in the Serpentine Pavilion 2024, designed by Minsuk Cho and in 2025, installed for the summer at MOT, Museum of Contemporary Art Tokyo.

Artwork	Description
<p><b>Monument to the people we've conveniently forgotten (I hate you)</b> 2008 One million offset prints on 300-gsm paper  Commissioned by Singapore Biennale 2008  Collection of the artist</p>  <p>Detail view of <i>Monument to the people we've conveniently forgotten (I hate you)</i> (2008). Image courtesy of Singapore Art Museum.</p>	<p>An underfoot monument, blacked-out name cards multiply to engulf the floor, introducing both texture and instability, even as its title fills the viewer with an overpowering sense of finality and the existential weight of unrealised connections.</p>
<p><b>Calendars (2020 - 2096)</b> 2004-2010 1,001 offset prints with matt lamination  Commissioned by NUS Museum</p>	<p>Presenting 1,001 photographs captured in Singapore between 2004 and 2010, arranged across seven decades of calendar pages, the artwork projects these paradoxically emptied images of public spaces into the unknowable reaches of the future. This chronological order and design recall the strategies of 1960s conceptual art in the representation of sequential time through grid and repetition. Devoid of</p>

Collection of Singapore Art Museum



Installation view of *Calendars (2020 - 2096)* (2004-2010). Image courtesy of Singapore Art Museum.

human presence and activity, the work seems reminiscent of the lockdowns of the recent pandemic as much as it might portend an eerily dystopian future.

**Foreign Affairs #106**

2018/2025

UV print on fire-retardant polyester cloth made into a curtain

*Foreign Affairs* is a series of seemingly banal photographs of back doors to embassies encountered by the artist during his travels. These back doors mark the threshold of the exceptional space of the embassy, a physical manifestation and limit of the mutual recognition between states of their respective sovereignty and security.



Installation view of *Foreign Affairs #106* (2018/2025).  
Image courtesy of Singapore Art Museum.

## The Library of Unread Books

2016-ongoing

Books previously unread by their owners,  
tables, chairs

Collection of Singapore Art Museum



Installation view of *The Library of Unread Books*

A reference library amassed through a public call for donations of unread books. Described by Chong as a social sculpture, the library is also a commons, growing its inventory with each presentation. *The Library of Unread Books*, collected by the Singapore Art Museum, was previously presented at the Singapore Biennale 2022.

<p>(2016-ongoing). Image courtesy of Singapore Art Museum.</p>	
<p><b>106B Depot Road Singapore 102106</b> 2024</p> <p>Sculpture produced by verbally communicating memories of artist's residence in a HDB block to architect (Jiehao Lau) and 3D printed in Acrylonitrile Butadiene Styrene (ABS)</p> <p>Commissioned by UCCA Center for Contemporary Art</p> <p>Collection of the artist</p>  <p>Installation view of <i>106B Depot Road Singapore 102106</i> (2024). Image courtesy of Singapore Art Museum.</p>	<p><i>106B Depot Road</i> is the address of the artist's home and studio, where he has lived and worked for sixteen years. Public housing, the most common form of real estate available to Singapore's citizens, is regarded as a prized asset. Produced from the artist's memory and description rather than architectural plans, and further translated into a built model, this reconstruction may be said to be as accurate in its realisation as the potential and projected returns of actual property.</p>
<p><b>Perimeter Walk</b> 2013-2024</p>	<p>Consisting of 550 postcards that feature photographs taken by Chong as he walked the circumference of Singapore, <i>Perimeter Walk</i> captures the scenography of the</p>

<p>Offset print postcards, 550 pieces</p> <p>Commissioned by UCCA Center for Contemporary Art</p> <p>Development of Perimeter Walk supported by M Art Foundation</p> <p>Collection of the artist</p>  <p>Installation view of <i>Perimeter Walk</i> (2013-2024). Image courtesy of Singapore Art Museum.</p>	<p>island's edges. With images of sand walls, signs of border surveillance, tents, workers resting by the roadside and lush vegetation, the work contrasts with the slick and idealised branding of the city-state. Formatted as postcards, visitors are invited to partake in the circulation and consumption of these images by selecting and keeping them or sharing with others.</p>
<p><b>A Short Story About Geometry</b> From the series <i>Memories</i> 2009 Durational performance involving an instructor, a participant and an approximately 500-word short story written by the artist</p>	<p>An approximately 500-word short story written by Chong is taught by an instructor to an audience participant who agrees to commit it to memory, demonstrating this through an exact retelling within the session of instruction. Never published, the story exists only through oral transmission, requiring an exchange of time and effort to experience the work.</p> <p>To participate, please send an email with name and contact information to <a href="mailto:hemanhong.memories@singaporeartmuseum.sg">hemanhong.memories@singaporeartmuseum.sg</a></p>

Commissioned by Musée de la danse and  
T:>Works

Collection of Singapore Art Museum



Heman Chong *A Short Story About Geometry* (2009).  
Image courtesy of SeMA (Seoul Museum of Art)

**Secrets and Lies (The Impossibility of Reconstitutions)**

2012

326 novels within the espionage genre  
deconstructed via a paper shredder

Collection of MGSR Collection, recreated  
with permission in 2025

Comprising 326 spy and espionage novels shredded by the artist, the work's deconstructed form—reduced to individual lines of text—is not intended as an act of destruction but as a rearrangement of meaning that reflects the undercover and cryptic nature of their original narratives.



Detail view of *Secrets and Lies (The Impossibility of Reconstitutions)* (2012). Image courtesy of Singapore Art Museum.

**The Straits Times, Friday, September 27, 2013, Cover**  
2018  
UV print on unprimed canvas  
  
Collection of the artist

*Abstracts From The Straits Times* is a series based on journalistic headlines and accompanying photo documentation from The Straits Times, Singapore's daily newspaper. Through repetition and overlap, Chong effectively "submerges" and "blacks out" their messages, mirroring the glitch that enabled and was introduced during the making of the work.



Installation view of *The Straits Times*, Friday, September 27, 2013, Cover (2018). Image courtesy of Singapore Art Museum.

**Apple & Knife, The Lovely Bones, How to buy real estate overseas, Real Estate in Corporate Strategy from the series “Stacks”**

2019

4 books and 3 glasses

A sculptural project initiated in 2003, *Stacks* is an annual and ongoing series, with each iteration developed over the course of a year that also acknowledges the rhythm of this chronological threshold. Consisting of books and glasses Chong read and used in the previous year—familiar and ordinary domestic objects, yet personally meaningful—each “stack” acts as both punctuation and a record of time passed.



Detail view of *Apple & Knife, The Lovely Bones, How to buy real estate overseas, Real Estate in Corporate Strategy* from the series “Stacks” (2019). Image courtesy of Singapore Art Museum.

**The Singapore Flag**

2015

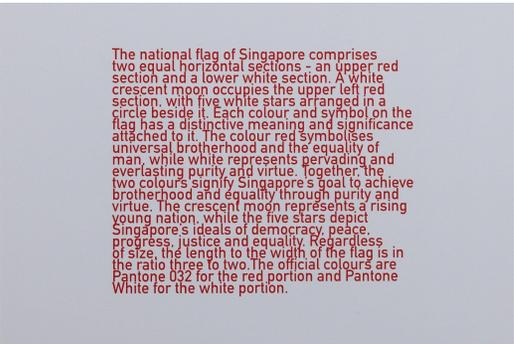
Site-specific wall installation, appropriated text

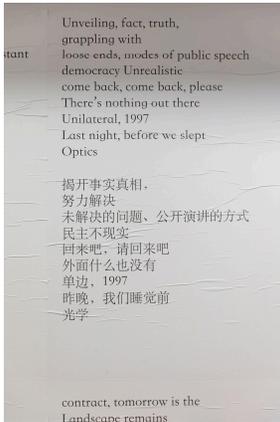
Materials and dimensions variable

Commissioned by Valentine Willie Fine Art

Collection of Singapore Art Museum

As with other national flags, the Singapore flag is a symbol of statehood that represents the ideals, beliefs and values of the nation. As text, the artwork reproduces an official description of the flag, rendered in the same shade of red as the state flag, allowing the flag to be imagined rather than seen.

 <p>The national flag of Singapore comprises two equal horizontal sections - an upper red section and a lower white section. A white crescent moon occupies the upper left red section, with five white stars arranged in a circle beside it. Each colour and symbol on the flag has a distinctive meaning and significance attached to it. The colour red symbolises universal brotherhood and the equality of man, while white represents pervading and everlasting purity and virtue. Together, the two colours signify Singapore's goal to achieve brotherhood and equality through purity and virtue. The crescent moon represents a rising young nation, while the five stars depict Singapore's ideals of democracy, peace, progress, justice and equality. Regardless of size, the length to the width of the flag is in the ratio three to two. The official colours are Pantone 032 for the red portion and Pantone White for the white portion.</p> <p>Detail view of <i>The Singapore Flag</i> (2015). Image courtesy of Singapore Art Museum.</p>	
<p><b>Works on Paper #2: Prospectus</b> 2006/2024</p> <p>Site-specific wall installation involving a deleted novel, a file retrieved containing 239 words, a translation made from English to Chinese via Google Translate, and printed posters</p> <p>Commissioned by UCCA Center for Contemporary Art</p> <p>Collection of the artist</p>	<p>On 8 July 2006, Chong began writing a 200-page novel, <i>Prospectus</i>. The story centres on a retrospective exhibition of an artist accused of plagiarising from a younger artist—the work in question being a novel also titled <i>Prospectus</i>, which is about a master plan for an imaginary art school. Frustrated during the editing process, Chong deleted the novel.</p> <p>In 2024, he engaged a data retrieval company in an attempt to recover the file, but it had been so badly corrupted that only 239 words could be salvaged.</p> <p>Fragments of this meta-novel are presented in both English and Mandarin as wallpaper, covering the entrance to Chong's survey exhibition in 2025 that recalls definitive works by the artist over the last twenty years.</p>



Detail view of *Works on Paper #2: Prospectus* (2006/2024). Image courtesy of Singapore Art Museum.

**Wanderlust / Rebecca Solnit**

From the series *Cover (Versions)*  
2025

Acrylic on canvas

Collection of the artist

*Wanderlust / Rebecca Solnit* is part of an ongoing series *Cover (Versions)* (2009-) that marks the beginning of Chong's painting practice and sees him paint book covers for books he has not yet read but intends to. Over time, while keeping the same method and parameters for each painting, the paintings in this series have become more painterly.

Throughout the series, Chong has consistently worked with the same canvas size and a system of exaggerated brushstrokes and abstracted masses of colour. He has maintained the same brand of acrylic paint. Both canvas and paint are off-the-shelf purchases from Art Friend, an art supply store at Bras Basah Complex.



Installation view of *Wanderlust* / Rebecca Solnit (2025). Image courtesy of Singapore Art Museum.

**Labyrinths (Libraries) #29**

2025

Acrylic on canvas

Collection of the artist



Installation view of *Labyrinths (Libraries) #29* (2025). Image courtesy of Singapore Art Museum.

*Labyrinths (Libraries)* utilises the logic of the grid that speaks to an inherent human need to organise complexity. Echoing the ordered multiplicity of libraries, these paintings, with their oscillations of positive and negative spaces, suggest shifting perspectives of ideas and timescapes that a library can hold.

**Emails From Strangers (kami coar)**

2025

Acrylic on canvas

Collection of the artist



Installation view of *Emails From Strangers (kami coar)* (2025). Image courtesy of Singapore Art Museum.

A spam email received by the artist, forwarded as a painting.

**[uneasy music playing] (After Gardar Eide Einarsson)**

2025

Acrylic on canvas

This work appropriates a caption from an episode of *Ozark*, painted in the style of the Norwegian artist Gardar Eide Einarsson who was Chong's neighbour in Berlin in the year 2003.



Installation view of *[uneasy music playing]* (After Gardar Eide Einarsson) (2025). Image courtesy of Singapore Art Museum.

## Modernity and Beyond

2020

Video, 4k high definition, two-channels, 16:9, colour and sound (stereo), 68 min

Collection of the artist



*Modernity and Beyond* began as videos created as part of Chong's ongoing *Ambient Walking* series, in which he records videos while walking, intended for upload to his YouTube channel. The two videos, each running for over an hour, were made in 2020 within the Singapore Art Museum's (SAM) former premises on Bras Basah Road—the St. Joseph's Institution and former Catholic High School buildings. At the time, Chong had been commissioned for the buildings' hoardings, erected due to SAM's renovation. Documenting the institution in preparation for its renovation, the videos present unembellished records of the historically significant aspects of artistic and cultural infrastructure. The title of the work also alludes to SAM's inaugural exhibition of the same name, *Modernity and Beyond: Themes in Southeast Asian Art* (1996).

<p>Installation view of <i>Modernity and Beyond</i> (2020). Image courtesy of Singapore Art Museum.</p>	
<p><b>The Book of Equators #1</b> 2024 Acrylic on polyester cotton</p> <p>Collection of the artist</p>  <p>Installation view of <i>The Book of Equators #1</i> (2025). Image courtesy of Singapore Art Museum.</p>	<p>Where <i>Labyrinths (Libraries)</i> mobilises the grid, <i>The Book of Equators</i> mobilises the line. The series appropriates everyday polyester fabrics used in the manufacture of curtains and bed sheets. Chong chooses fabrics featuring motifs of tropical flora and fauna mass-produced in former British colonies, including Singapore. Mimicking lines of latitude and longitude, Chong imposes these delineating lines over the patterns of the fabrics, critiquing their imperial imposition on the tropics, both in imagination and industry, as well as their role in middle-class consumption.</p>
<p><b>Paperwork</b> 2024 500 rusted iron sheets</p> <p>Commissioned by UCCA Center for Contemporary Art</p> <p>Collection of the artist</p>	<p>The sculpture consists of 500 sheets of iron cut to A4 size—the standard paper size used globally, except in the United States and Canada.</p>



Detail view of *Paperwork* (2024). Image courtesy of Singapore Art Museum.

**The Information, The Information, Breasts And Eggs, Metropolitan Stories 2024**

4 books and 3 glasses



Installation view of *The Information, The Information, Breasts And Eggs, Metropolitan Stories* (2024). Image courtesy of Singapore Art Museum.

A sculptural project initiated in 2003, *Stacks* is an annual and ongoing series, with each iteration developed over the course of a year that also acknowledges the rhythm of this chronological threshold. Consisting of books and glasses Chong read and used in the previous year—familiar and ordinary domestic objects, yet personally meaningful—each “stack” acts as both punctuation and a record of time passed.

**Oleanders**

2023-ongoing

An image archive that unfolds into videos, postcards and other objects

Dimensions variable

Commissioned by 3rd Lahore Biennale

Collection of Mara Coson



Detail view of *Oleanders* (2023-ongoing). Image courtesy of Singapore Art Museum.

Drawn to the presence of books, libraries and writings in paintings, *Oleanders* compiles the artist's finds while he wandered intensively through the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York over three days in March 2023. The title appropriates a still-life painting by Vincent van Gogh (1853–1890) from 1888, featuring pink oleanders in full bloom beside two books, one of which is Émile Zola's novel *La Joie de Vivre* (1884). Van Gogh included Zola's name and the title of the book in his painting—an appropriation that mirrors Chong's own appropriation from the Met.

## Annex B: Complementary Programmes

Programme Details	Description
<p><b>[DROP-IN ACTIVITY] Fragmented Narratives</b>            10 May – 17 August 2025            10am – 7pm            Level 1, The Engine Room            SAM at Tanjong Pagar Distripark            Free</p>	<p>Inspired by Heman Chong's <i>The Straits Times</i> series, <i>Fragmented Narratives</i> is a hands-on newspaper collage activity that encourages participants to critically explore how images and text shape meaning in the news.</p> <p>Be part of a collective experience as we experiment with newspaper clippings, challenging perspectives, and crafting entirely new fictional realities.</p>
<p><b>[TOUR] Singapore Sign Language Tour</b>            5 July 2025, Saturday            3pm – 4pm            Level 1, Gallery 1            SAM at Tanjong Pagar Distripark            Free</p>	<p>Join our Deaf co-facilitator and curator June Yap on a tour of Heman Chong's exhibition - <i>This is a dynamic list and may never be able to satisfy particular standards for completeness</i>.</p> <p>This tour will be delivered in Singapore Sign Language (SgSL) with interpretation by Equal Dreams. This tour is suitable for participants aged 6 and up; children must be accompanied by an adult.</p>
<p><b>[TOUR] Curator Tours: <i>This is a dynamic list and may never be able to satisfy particular standards for completeness</i></b>            5 July and 2 August 2025, Saturday            2 – 3pm            Level 1, Gallery 1            SAM at Tanjong Pagar Distripark            Free</p>	<p>Join us for special curator-led tours of Heman Chong's exhibition, <i>This is a dynamic list and may never be able to satisfy particular standards for completeness</i>.</p> <p>Through the curators' lens, explore the thematic threads that frame the exhibition: <i>Chance, Fictions, and Infrastructure</i>, and discover how Chong's artistic practice has evolved in response to an increasingly data-driven, media-saturated, and networked world.</p>

<p><b>[FILM SCREENING] Road Movie Screenings</b> 19 July and 26 July 2025, Saturday Ticketed</p>	<p>Inspired by Heman Chong’s <i>Works On Paper #1: Notes on Roads, Trips and other Slips and Falls</i>, this film programme explores narratives of the road through films delving into the experience of being in a foreign and unfamiliar setting—a theme significant to Chong’s artist formation in the late 90s/early 2000s.</p> <p>*Film titles and further details will be announced soon.</p>
<p><b>[STICKER] Stick with SAM</b> 10 May – 17 August 2025 10am – 7pm Level 1 SAM at Tanjong Pagar Distripark Free, while stocks last</p>	<p>Immerse yourself in Heman Chong’s artworks and bring home a memento from the exhibition.</p> <p>This set of customised stickers allows you to get creative! Make a new sentence or a poem!</p>
<p><b>[SEMINARS &amp; BOOK LAUNCH]</b> 14 June and 21 June 2025, Saturday 2 – 4pm Level 1, The Engine Room SAM at Tanjong Pagar Distripark Free</p>	<p>Join us for two in-depth talks on Heman Chong’s practice—focusing on areas like marginalia in archives and libraries, and themes and processes in Heman Chong’s work—along with a publication launch on 14 June. The publication provides a companion index of Chong’s concept-based artworks alongside essays that survey Chong’s engagement with conceptualism over the 2000s.</p>