



MEDIA RELEASE

A PAUSE

Amanda Heng Liang Ngim,
in collaboration with curator Selene Yap
Pavilion of Singapore at the 61st International Art Exhibition –
La Biennale di Venezia

**Pavilion of Singapore Announces *A Pause*
at the 61st International Art Exhibition of La Biennale di Venezia
Amanda Heng Liang Ngim Turns to the Body, Rest, and the Rhythms of Daily Life**



Amanda Heng Liang Ngim, *A Pause* (2025-26). Image courtesy of the artist.

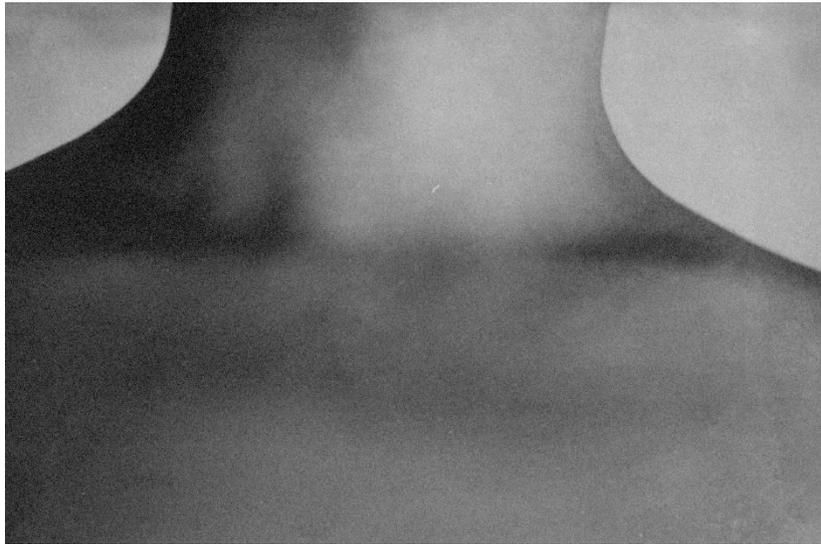
Singapore Art Museum (SAM) announces the title and theme of the exhibition by pioneering interdisciplinary artist Amanda Heng Liang Ngim, presented in collaboration with curator Selene Yap, for the Singapore Pavilion at the 61st International Art Exhibition of La Biennale di Venezia.

Singapore, 30 March 2026 – For the Singapore Pavilion at the Biennale Arte 2026, Amanda Heng Liang Ngim presents *A Pause*, an exhibition that extends her decades-long practice of working with the body and the everyday. The exhibition transforms the pavilion into a space for rest and observation, centred on ordinary actions such as sitting, waiting, and watching.

Commissioned by the National Arts Council (NAC), supported by the Ministry of Culture, Community and Youth and organised by SAM, Singapore's 12th presentation at the International Art Exhibition of La Biennale di Venezia underscores the nation's continued support for artists whose practices engage critically with the world through experimentation, participation and sustained practice. It is also a commitment to supporting Singapore artists such as Heng on international platforms, creating opportunities for them to showcase their work to a wider audience and strengthening Singapore's presence in the international visual arts landscape.

A pioneering figure in Singapore's contemporary art scene, Heng's practice began in the late 1980s as a response to the social and artistic conditions of a rapidly modernising city-state. Spanning performance, installation, photography and participatory acts, her work has consistently focused on the body as both subject and medium. This focus is grounded in close attention to the everyday, treated as both method and material.

Heng's practice does not follow a linear development but creates a web where core gestures and inquiries reappear across decades. In her early works, such as *Let's Chat* (1996) and *Walk with Amanda* (2000), she established a method of unscripted, social encounter. These live performances used simple acts like household tasks or leading an audience through a hawker food centre to examine how public and domestic spaces are shaped, gendered and negotiated. The body in these works is a social body, negotiating its presence within the architecture of the everyday.



Amanda Heng Liang Ngim, *Parts of My Body* (1990). Image courtesy of the artist.

This foundational interest is also evident in the pivotal photographic series *Parts of My Body* (1990). Using direct, unadorned close-ups of her own limbs and joints, she presented the body as a matter of fact: a site of personal attention rather than public display. This early investigation into the body's materiality and agency prefigured a lifelong exploration of how identity and history are carried physically.

A Pause therefore brings together these moments at a scale and intensity shaped by the context of Biennale Arte 2026, inviting visitors to think about how endurance and renewal are cultivated not through grand gestures, but through the quiet, persistent rhythms of daily life—through the body's instinctual capacity for rest, resilience, and self-determination.

Artist **Amanda Heng Liang Ngim** says, “My work comes from ordinary experience. *A Pause* looks at rest as something necessary and familiar to all of us. Moving beyond the physical forms, our bodies look inward to find the inner strength and stillness for resilience and renewal. I would like to extend this invitation for reflection to visitors of the Biennale Arte 2026 when the site-specific installation opens in the Pavilion.”

Curator **Selene Yap** explains: “Amanda Heng’s method of building work from unscripted social encounters positions the body as a site of continuous negotiation. *A Pause* advances this practice, creating a space where rest becomes a collective act. The pavilion proposes the everyday as a primary material for artistic and social inquiry.”

Eugene Tan, Co-Chair of the Commissioning Panel and Chief Executive Officer and Director of SAM, says: “Amanda Heng is a foundational figure in Singapore’s contemporary art history. Her practice is a rigorous and relatable close reading of her local conditions, bringing a stringent curiosity to bear on the textures of daily life. Through a body of work that is both thoughtful and grounded, she demonstrates a sharp insight into the forces, both intimate and societal, that shape our lives. In *A Pause*, this acute awareness extends to the subtle, overlooked rhythms of everyday life, inviting a closer attention to our own presence and surroundings.”

Elaine Ng, Chief Executive Officer of NAC, Singapore, adds: “As the commissioner of the Singapore Pavilion, NAC is proud to present Singapore’s most significant artistic voices to the world stage. Through *A Pause* by Amanda Heng at the 61st International Art Exhibition – La Biennale di Venezia, audiences are invited to rediscover a shared humanity through the familiar gestures of daily life.”

The official opening of the Singapore Pavilion will be on 6 May 2026 at the Arsenale’s Sale d’Armi. The exhibition will be on display on the second floor of the building from 9 May to 22 November 2026.

For the latest information, follow updates on Facebook, Instagram and TikTok (@singaporeartmuseum), or visit bit.ly/SingaporePavilion-BA2026.

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

• [Annex A: About the Artistic Team](#)

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Commissioner: Elaine Ng, National Arts Council;

Curator: Selene Yap;

Exhibitor: Amanda Heng Liang Ngim

Organiser: Singapore Art Museum (SAM)

Press preview: Wednesday, 6 May 2026

Pre-opening: 6 to 8 May 2026

Exhibition: 9 May to 22 November 2026

Venue: Pavilion of Singapore, Arsenale’s Sale d’Armi, Venice

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About the Singapore Pavilion at the International Art and Architecture Exhibitions of La Biennale di Venezia

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 Liang Ngim, Artist



Amanda Heng Liang Ngim (王良吟) (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* (1999–2000), and *Let’s Chat* (1996–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 responds 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 one of the four curators for the 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.