

## MEDIA RELEASE

For Immediate Release

### **Singapore Art Museum brings Southeast Asia contemporary art to international attention in Japan and France**

*Welcome to the Jungle: Contemporary art in Southeast Asia from the Collection of the Singapore Art Museum*

13 April to 16 June 2013 | Yokohama Museum of Art, Japan

4 October 2013 to 24 November 2013 | Contemporary Art Museum, Kumamoto, Japan

*File Not Found at Nouvelles Vagues Young Curators Season 2013*

21 June to 9 September 2013 | Palais de Tokyo, Paris, France

**15 April 2013, Singapore** – The Singapore Art Museum (SAM) cements its position as the premier institution dedicated to the contemporary art of Southeast Asia with the presentation of two exciting showcases of Singapore and Southeast Asian contemporary art to the wider international audience in Japan and France.

Opened on 13 April at the Yokohama Museum of Art (YMA) in Japan is ***Welcome to the Jungle: Contemporary art in Southeast Asia from the Collection of the Singapore Art Museum***. The exhibition, jointly organised by SAM, YMA and the Contemporary Art Museum, Kumamoto (CAMK), draws from the stellar collection of Southeast Asian contemporary art built up by the curatorial team of SAM since 2009 to offer audiences in Japan insight into contemporary life in Southeast Asia and the diverse art practices of artists in the region. Inspired by the distinct tropical rainforests of the region, *Welcome to the Jungle* features 28 artworks – many large scale and visually arresting – of different mediums by artists from Cambodia, Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam. It is guest curated by SAM senior curator Khairuddin Hori, and co-curated by Eriko Kimura of YMA and Aki Ashida of CAMK.

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*Welcome to the Jungle* coincides with high-profile events in Japan, including the 40<sup>th</sup> year of ASEAN-Japan Friendship and Cooperation and the Asian-Pacific Cities Summit in Kumamoto. The exhibition ends its run in YMA on 16 June and opens in CAMK from 4 October 2013 to 24 November 2013.

In June, SAM curators David Chew, Khairuddin Hori and Naomi Wang will present ***File Not Found***, a project featuring works by Singapore artists Randy Chan, Lee Wen, Zaki Razak and Joel Yuen at the Palais de Tokyo (PDT) in Paris, France. The project was selected among 700 proposals submitted for the PDT's Young Curators Season 2013 which aims to seek out new trends or developments in curating and will be presented part of a group exhibition *Nouvelles Vagues* at the PDT. Dubbing themselves *The Black Ninja Faction*, this is the first time the three curators are working together to present a work for the international audience. They have brought together four established and emerging Singaporean artists for *File Not Found* which will comprise an architectural installation inspired by a familiar local building feature, a 'live' performance element, texts and sculptures. *File Not Found* will be presented at *Nouvelles Vagues* at PDT from 21 June to 9 September 2013.

These two showcases reflect SAM's commitment to promote art by living artists from Singapore and Southeast Asian contemporary artists to wider audiences. These two projects also signal the museum's explicit aim to forge new international alliances with the most progressive and forward looking museums and art spaces around the world to promote greater curatorial development and knowledge exchange, artwork loans and cooperation in the organisation of exhibitions and programmes overseas.

Mr. Tan Boon Hui, Director of SAM, says, "There is growing worldwide interest in contemporary Southeast Asian art. As possibly the only institution in the region actively championing and exhibiting the art of Singapore and Southeast Asia as a region, our collection and commissions of new work mirror the creative possibilities pursued by artists in our time, reflecting how they respond to art and to the pressing social contexts of our time. We have been fortunate to have received strong support from individuals, corporations and artists over the last three years, which have helped build one of the best collections of regional contemporary art. I feel that we are now ready to aggressively circulate and promote our art to the world. With these two presentations in Japan and France, we hope to not only increase the visibility and exposure of Southeast Asian artists internationally, but through the works, introduce Singapore and Southeast Asia to visitors in these

museums. We also look forward to further collaborations with these partner museums and institutions in time to come.”

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For more information, please read on:

**Annex A** – About *Welcome to the Jungle: Contemporary art in Southeast Asia from the Collection of the Singapore Art Museum*

**Annex B** – About *File Not Found*

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

The Singapore Art Museum (SAM) focuses on the creation of art in the present moment. It advocates and presents the contemporary art practices of Singapore, Southeast Asia and Asia, situating them within the global context of art making today. SAM has built up one of the most important collections of contemporary art from the region, and its programming aims to introduce new artistic practices and styles to the public, as well as nurturing discerning audiences for contemporary art. SAM is also organiser of the Singapore Biennale 2013 and the past edition in 2011.

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## Annex A:

### Welcome to the Jungle: Contemporary art in Southeast Asia from the Collection of the Singapore Art Museum

13 April 2013 to 16 June 2013 | Yokohama Museum of Art

4 October 2013 to 24 November 2013 | Contemporary Art Museum, Kumamoto



*Welcome to the Jungle* introduces highlights of Southeast Asian contemporary art since the turn of the millennium, drawn from the collection of the Singapore Art Museum (SAM). Reflecting the development of Southeast Asian contemporary art and artists and inspired by the distinct ecology of tropical rainforests the region is known for, *Welcome to the Jungle* draws analogies from the 'jungle', a word derived from the Sanskrit 'jāngala' meaning 'wild, uncultivated ground', to practices of artists who continues to grapple with intimate issues such as those pertaining to personal and national histories and identities; rapid urban growth, economic successes and collisions; and the ethereal and devotional, while pushing the artistic envelope with innovative and unorthodox materials and strategies.

The exhibition features 28 works from Cambodia, Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam. This exhibition is also the first in a series of future curatorial collaborations with museums in Japan.

Jointly organised by the Singapore Art Museum and the respective host venues, *Welcome to the Jungle* is guest curated by SAM Senior Curator Khairuddin Hori and co-curated by Eriko Kimura and Aki Ashida from the Yokohama Museum of Art and Contemporary Art Museum, Kumamoto, respectively.

Featured artists:

Cambodia

Vandy Rattana

Indonesia

Arahmaiani

Muhammad UCUP Yusuf

Titarubi

Malaysia

Ahmad Fuad Osman

Chang Yoong Chia

Nadiah Bamadhaj

Phuan Thai Meng

Yee I-Lann

Myanmar

Nge Lay

Philippines

Frank Callaghan

Poklong Anading

Roberto Feleo

Steve Tirona

Singapore

Hong Sek Chern

Lee Wen

Shannon Lee Castleman

Charles Lim

Francis Ng

PHUNK

Zai Kuning

Thailand

Araya Rasdjarmrearnsook

Navin Rawanchaikul

Vietnam

Jun Nguyen-Hatsushiba

Tran Luong

## Annex B:

### File Not Found

21 June 2013 to 9 September 2013 | Palais de Tokyo

The title *File Not Found* alludes to the occurrence of system failures in technology and to a large extent, foreshadows the fallible nature of hegemonised systems that dominate the art world. As an example, the Singapore Art Museum's focus on its local region and the role of institution as sites of production, distribution, framing and the reception of art, can be perceived as means of self-critique, with the hope of arriving at new directions and expanded viewpoints regarding the engagement of art.

The traditional model of the canonical museum is an insular one, one that thrives on its very name and reputation, and how it sets itself apart from other institutions, with its most distinctive asset being its collection. This traditional model of the museum that presents and stages displays of art and culture as a form of reification, edification or representation, is now being challenged. In comparison, some of today's art institutions have evolved from this traditional model to focus on a more active form of cultural participation, for example one that utilises concepts and theories and methods of commissioning, in the ever growing need to continually engage with audiences in a relevant manner.

*The Black Ninja Faction*, of three curators situated within the Singapore Art Museum, proposes the creation of an autonomous space within Palais de Tokyo itself. This intervention proposed will serve as a form of critique and questioning of the forms and models of institutions today, through a manifestation of having two different hegemonies co-existing in the same time and place.

The work will consist of a live "surrogate performance", an object from the public collection, an architectural distillation of a colonised history, and an artist's written perspective and elucidation on the relation of art systems and hegemonies to humanity.