

MEDIA RELEASE

FINALISTS OF THE ASIA PACIFIC BREWERIES FOUNDATION SIGNATURE ART PRIZE 2014 REVEALED

*Works by two Singaporean artists Ho Tzu Nyen and Zhao Renhui
in the running for Grand Prize of SGD 60,000*

27 August 2014, Singapore – The Singapore Art Museum (SAM) and Asia Pacific Breweries (APB) Foundation today announced the 15 finalists of the APB Foundation Signature Art Prize 2014. Now in its third installment, the prize spotlights the most compelling contemporary artworks created by artists in the Asia Pacific region over the last three years.

Selected by a panel of five eminent judges from around the region, the finalists' works were chosen from 105 nominated artworks from 24 countries and territories. Innovative and exciting creations from recent years, the contemporary artworks represent the very best of the region and are intentionally not limited by genre. Spanning various mediums from painting to sculpture, photography, video works and performance art, they each address topical issues and collectively shed light not just on our region's contemporary art landscape but also on the topics and conversations relevant in our society today.

The 15 finalists represent 13 countries and territories including Thailand, South Korea, Pakistan, Japan, Singapore, New Zealand, China, Indonesia, Vietnam, Australia, India, Bangladesh and Taiwan. (For further information on the finalist artworks, please refer to Annex A)

Selecting this year's Finalists is a judging panel comprising Mr. Chris Saines, Director of Queensland Art Gallery | Gallery of Modern Art; Mr. Feng Boyi, eminent independent art curator and critic of Chinese contemporary art; Ms. Luckana Kunavichayanont, Director of Bangkok Art and Culture Center; Ms. Pooja Sood, Director of KHOJ International Artists' Association; and Dr. Susie Lingham, Director of Singapore Art Museum.

A statement from the jury panel stated, "We're excited to be presenting the finalists of the APB Foundation Signature Art Prize 2014. Narrowing the choice from over 100 works to the final 15 involved a rigorous selection process and intensive discussions – testament to the high caliber of entries that were refined, rich and diverse. Overall, the 15 works selected offer a glimpse of the future of our region's rich and constantly evolving contemporary art scene. The finalist works stood out for their strength of concept and execution and despite stemming from such diverse contexts, histories and cultural backgrounds, cleverly explored similar issues of identity, immigration, urban expansion,

depletion of natural resources, fading of old values, cultural diversity and more.” (For more information on the judging panel and their individual comments, please refer to Annex B).

The works by Singaporean artists shortlisted for the prestigious title include a complex and beautiful video installation *PYTHAGAROS* by Ho Tzu Nyen which creates an immersive experience for audiences to explore the concept of the unseen and the concealment of power, sound or the voice; as well as *Eskimo wolf trap often quoted in sermons*, a seemingly minimalist installation by Zhao Renhui that draws on his experience of traveling through the Arctic and being overwhelmed by its starkness.

Other finalists works include Melati Suryodarmo’s *I’m a Ghost in My Own House*, an intense and powerful 12-hour long performance that sees the artist grind and crush hundreds of kilograms of charcoal, a symbol of life’s energy while Australian Owen Leong’s *Infinite Love*, a visceral and poetic performance, explores the body as a physical site for social, cultural and political forces in relation to his Asian-Australian identity.

Employing the use of meditative visuals, Go Watanabe’s *One places / on “the room”* presents a technically challenging and deeply absorbing piece that changes the way we look at time and space; Ranbir Kaleka’s *House of Opaque Water* uses a narrative structure to present the idea of displacement and society’s response to these situations; and New Zealander Lisa Reihana’s work *In Pursuit of Venus* reflects the beauty of the Pacific Islands while offering a nuanced critique of its colonial legacies.

From China the works shortlisted include Liu Jianhua’s *Trace*, a striking piece inspired by the traditional art forms of calligraphy and porcelain to comment on societal ills and Peng Wei’s *Letters from a Distance*, which is steeped in traditional practices and utilizes Chinese aesthetic objects like scrolls and leaves melded together with texts from Western philosophers.

Choe U-Ram’s *Custos Cavum (Guardian of the hole)* takes the form of a mesmerizing and highly imaginative sculpture that depicts a mythical creature that is at once from the past yet also from an apocalyptic future and Arin Rungjang’s *Golden Teardrop*, revisits pivotal moments in Thai history and looks at the human movement and the exchange of cultures.

Exemplifying how art has the power to highlight a social issue for scrutiny and exact real change, Yao Jui-Chung & Lost Society Document (LSD)’s *Mirage – Disused Public Property in Taiwan* is an investigative political work on Taiwan’s ‘mosquito halls’ while Nguyen Trinh Thi *Unsubtitled* looks at freedom of expression through an installation about Nhan Van-Giai Pham – a suppressed literary movement of the 1950s.

Finally, exploring spaces and places, Pakistan’s Farida Batool’s *Kahani Eik Shehr Ki (story of a city)* brings viewers on a walk down a busy city street in Lahore, capturing the side of a city that people may not know of via 21 long lenticular prints while Naeem Mohaiemen of Bangladesh presents *Rankin Street, 1953*, an intimate work that reveals the artist’s memories of his family using his family home as the subject and uncovering the past through vintage photograph negatives.

The APB Foundation Signature Art Prize is worth \$100,000 with \$60,000 awarded to the Grand Prize winner and \$15,000 each for two Jurors' Choice Award winners. A People's Choice Award of \$10,000 will also be offered to the artwork that receives the highest number of public votes via on-site and online submissions (voting opens from 14 November 2014).

The APB Foundation Signature Art Prize Exhibition will take place at SAM from 14 November 2014 to 15 March 2015 with the winners announced at an awards ceremony on 22 January 2015. For more information, please visit the APB Foundation Signature Art Prize webpage at <http://www.singaporeartmuseum.sg/apbfSAP2014.html>.

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About the Asia Pacific Breweries (APB) Foundation

Instituted in June 1994, the APB Foundation seeks to ignite compassion and inspire through our philanthropic efforts. We set resources in motion to help people and organisations improve talents, enhanced educational and research endeavours as well as better living conditions. In turn, we fuel society and enable the communities, where we live and work, to flourish.

Committed to supporting Human Excellence, Creativity Development and Humanitarian Causes, the APB Foundation is involved in a variety of initiatives that range from arts funding and backing talent-building projects for human capital development, to engaging in meaningful partnerships with organisations or individuals who share our common goal to serve the society.

The APB Foundation is a registered charity managed and funded by Heineken Asia Pacific Pte. Ltd. (HEINEKEN Asia Pacific).

About the Singapore Art Museum

The Singapore Art Museum (SAM) focuses on contemporary art practice in Singapore, Southeast Asia and Asia within the global context. It advocates and makes accessible interdisciplinary contemporary art through research-led and evolving curatorial practice. 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. These encompass cross-disciplinary residencies and exchanges, research and publications, as well as outreach and education. SAM was the organiser of the Singapore Biennale in 2011 and 2013.

SAM was incorporated as a Company Limited by Guarantee on 13 November 2013 and has moved from the National Heritage Board to the Visual Arts Cluster (VAC) under the Ministry of Culture, Community and Youth (MCCY). The other institutions under the VAC are the National Art Gallery, Singapore (NAGS), and the Singapore Tyler Print Institute (STPI).

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Annex A: APB Foundation Signature Art Prize 2014 Finalists

No.	Country	Artwork	Details
1	Thailand		<p>Artist Name: Mr. Arin Rungjang Title: Golden Teardrop Year: 2013 Medium/ Material: Sculpture and video installation Size/Duration: Sculpture: 320 x 500 x 400 cm Video screen: 180 x 320 cm Nominator: Ms. Gridthiya Gaweewong</p>
2	South Korea	 <small>Artist: Choe U-Ram Title: Custos Cavum (Guardian of the hole) Year: 2011 Medium: metallic material, resin, motor, gear, custom CPU board, LED Size: 220 x 360 x 260 cm Nominator: Ms. Kim Sun-Hee</small>	<p>Artist Name: Mr. Choe U-Ram Title: Custos Cavum (Guardian of the hole) Year: 2011 Medium/ Material: Metallic material, resin, motor, gear, custom CPU board, LED Size/Duration: 220 x 360 x 260 cm Nominator: Ms. Kim Sun-Hee</p>
3	Pakistan		<p>Artist Name: Ms. Farida Batool Title: Kahani Eik Shehr Ki (story of a city) Year: 2012 Medium/ Material: Lenticular print Size/Duration: 20.3 x 2144 cm Nominator: Ms. Ambereen Karamat</p>
4	Japan	 <small>Artist: Go Watanabe Title: One places / on "the room" Year: 2013 Medium: Full HD 3D CG video installation Size: Duration 28:06 mins Nominator: Mr. Taro Amano</small>	<p>Artist Name: Mr. Go Watanabe Title: One places / on "the room" Year: 2013 Medium/ Material: Full HD 3D CG video installation Size/Duration: Duration 28:06 mins Nominator: Mr. Taro Amano</p>
5	Singapore		<p>Artist Name: Mr. Ho Tzu Nyen Title: PYTHAGORAS Year: 2013 Medium/ Material: Installation with 4-channel video HD Projection, 8-channel sound, automated curtains, lights, fans and show control system Size/Duration: Variable dimensions Nominator: Mr. Alan Oei</p>

6	New Zealand		<p>Artist Name: Ms. Lisa Reihana Title: In Pursuit of Venus Year: 2012 Medium/ Material: 2-stream HD video with stereo sound on continuous loop Size/Duration: Duration 8:00 mins Nominator: Mr. Giles Peterson</p>
7	China		<p>Artist Name: Mr. Liu Jianhua Title: Trace Year: 2011 Medium/ Material: Porcelain Size/Duration: Variable dimensions Nominator: Mr. Zhu Qiang</p>
8	Indonesia		<p>Artist Name: Ms. Melati Suryodarmo Title: I'm a Ghost in My Own House Year: 2012 Medium/ Material: Performance, mixed media installation and single-channel video Size/Duration: 700 x 1100 cm Nominator: Mr. Rifky Effendy</p>
9	Bangladesh		<p>Artist Name: Mr. Naeem Mohaiemen Title: Rankin Street, 1953 Year: 2013 Medium/ Material: Mixed media installation: video, vintage photographs, matching sandstone moulds, blueprints Size/Duration: Variable dimensions Duration 8:00 mins Nominator: Ms. Nadia Samdani</p>
10	Vietnam		<p>Artist Name: Ms. Nguyen Trinh Thi Title: Unsubtitled Year: 2013 Medium/ Material: Mixed media installation: video projection on 19 wooden cut-out screens Size/Duration: 180 x 70 x 60 cm (each) Nominator: Mr. Tran Luong</p>
11	Australia		<p>Artist Name: Mr. Owen Leong Title: Infinite Love Year: 2011 Medium/ Material: HD video Size/Duration: Duration 6:18 mins Nominator: Dr. Michelle Antoinette</p>

12	China		<p>Artist Name: Ms. Peng Wei Title: Letters From A Distance Year: 2012 – 2014 Medium/ Material: Mixed media installation: Handmade linen paper, wooden box, silk ribbon, jade pins and oxbone scrollbars Size/Duration: Variable dimensions Nominator: Mr. Zhu Qiang</p>
13	India		<p>Artist Name: Mr. Ranbir Kaleka Title: House of Opaque Water Year: 2013 Medium/ Material: HD video installation Size/Duration: 222 x 1097 cm Duration 10:33 mins Nominator: Ms. Nancy Adajania</p>
14	Taiwan		<p>Artist Name: Mr. Yao Jui-Chung + Lost Society Document (LSD) Title: Mirage – Disused Public Property in Taiwan Year: 2010 – 2013 Medium/ Material: Video, 200 photographs Size/Duration: 70 x 70 cm (each) Duration 41:20 mins Nominator: Dr. Manray Hsu</p>
15	Singapore		<p>Artist Name: Mr. Zhao Renhui Title: Eskimo wolf trap often quoted in sermons Year: 2013 Medium/ Material: Mixed media installation: knife, bicarbonate soda, vinyl text sticker Size/Duration: Variable dimensions Nominator: Mr. Alan Oei</p>

Detailed artist' statements and biographies can be found at
<http://www.singaporeartmuseum.sg/apbfSAP2014.html>

Annex B: APB Foundation Signature Art Prize Judges & comments

Feng Boyi (China)

Feng Boyi is an eminent independent art curator and critic of Chinese contemporary art. As a critic and editor, Feng has also edited and published numerous books, catalogues and papers on art and established the Artists' Alliance, a major online forum for contemporary art in China.

“An important factor when planning an art prize is to ensure the procedure is standardised and rigorous. The art prize has to possess authority and representation, so that the public knows for certain that the selection process is conducted well and the selected works are worthy of being in the top 15 or winning a prize. The choice of having only two Juror’s Choice Awards is a step towards this rigour and a prize that has a higher academic value and authority, while still being representative. I am happy with our choices, and the panel has chosen artists that use varied mediums including installation, performance, video and painting.”

Luckana Kunavichayanont (Thailand)

Luckana Kunavichayanont is the Director of the Bangkok Art and Culture Center (BACC), and was both initiator and curator of Tadu Contemporary Art in Bangkok. She co-curated Thailand’s contribution to the 2003 Venice Biennale, and is a member of the Board of Advisors for the 2008 More to Love project.

“As judges from different regions, we had a good debate over any uncertainty and in the end we managed to decide quite unanimously. We live in a globalised world, and face the same problems like identity, immigration, urban expansion, depletion of natural resources, old values that disappear and cultural diversity and all the issues that come with evolving human society. Yet, in different places these issues have their own cultural history and background, while going back to basic questions and issues common to humanity. It’s interesting to see how art can be a process that sheds light on understanding our own societies.”

Dr. Susie Lingham (Singapore)

Dr. Susie Lingham is the current director of Singapore Art Museum. She was an assistant professor with the visual and performing arts academic group at the National Institute of Education. She holds a Doctor of Philosophy in literature, religion and philosophy from the University of Sussex in the United Kingdom.

Contemporary art encompasses a myriad of forms and materials, as well as different innovative methodologies. Coupled with the fact that the Asia Pacific is a vast geographic and culturally diverse region, what this prize does is bring together the very best of contemporary art. As judges, we worked together, guided by exacting criteria, where the emphasis was on originality, depth and

significance of the aesthetic experience as intended by the artist. The finalists' works bring fresh perspectives into an evolving understanding of ourselves as complex cultural, emotional and intellectual beings. Definitely something to look forward to!

Chris Saines (Australia)

Chris Saines has over 30 years' experience leading public art institutions in Australia and New Zealand. Currently the Director of Queensland Art Gallery | Gallery of Modern Art, he previously led a major \$125 million building development for the Auckland Art Gallery where he established a Foundation that contributed \$52.5 million and managed the project from inception to completion.

"The 15 Finalists form a strong shortlist, and will be a very fine exhibition. There is a real diversity of medium, approach and conceptual investigation, which will be a rich and rewarding experience for visitors. Art prizes don't always deliver great experiences, but this is different. Prizes should also educate visitors about contemporary practice and the approach in the region. Both the Grand Prize and the Jurors' Choice Awards are generous, and that is good. Regardless, exhibiting at SAM will add to prominence to the Finalist artists. It's excellent that SAM has invited museum directors to the jury panel, as they understand the space considerations as well as the political dynamics of institutions."

Pooja Sood (India)

Pooja Sood is the Director of KHOJ International Artists' Association, an artist-led registered society aimed at promoting intercultural understanding through experimentation and exchange. It is possibly the only such public organization for experimental contemporary art in India. In New Delhi, she developed a radical space for alternative art practice at the KHOJ studios, which runs workshops, international residency programmes and diverse projects. She is also the Regional Coordinator of the international artists' network facilitated by the Triangle Arts Trust, UK.

"Any pool of nominations in general has the potential to be uneven because it covers so many countries, but overall the nominators did their job and proposed works of very high quality, so getting down to 40 and then to the 15 Finalists was tough. The video works in particular were very, very good. I think it is important that when you ask nominators for (works from) the last three years that the range has to be from senior to mid-career, cause I think the junior ones could just be doing a one-off work. This is an expensive prize and needs to be given that status."