

MEDIA RELEASE

Singapore Art Museum Presents An Exploration of Contemporary Art Materials and Methods In Latest Exhibition - Medium at Large

Medium at Large explores how medium is used in imaginative ways to embody the weight of its concept, symbolism, as well as social and cultural significance

21 April 2014, Singapore – *Medium at Large*: Shapeshifting Material and Methods in Contemporary Art - the first Southeast Asian and Asian contemporary art exhibition curated by Singapore Art Museum (SAM) since its corporatization - focuses on art's fundamentals and how medium is used in a skilful, imaginative way. Examining art as concept, process, method and material, the year-long exhibition at SAM revels in the rich expanse of materials that contemporary artworks can be made of, and from, as well as the very 'slipperiness' of mediums, as categories and genres begin to slide into one another. ***Medium at Large*** marks SAM's continued commitment to spotlight contemporary art from Singapore and the region, with a presentation of 31 works, drawn mostly from SAM's permanent collection. Together with loans and new commissions, the exhibition will also unveil new acquisitions to the public for the first time.

The artwork media presented in the ***Medium at Large*** exhibition range from oil paint, rattan, and human hair, to honey, whitening soap and live bullet shells. Through this array of the more traditional and unexpected materials, viewers are able to examine the creation, experience and encounter of the artworks. Audiences are further invited to reflect on the fundamental question of what defines art, and how meaning and messaging is conveyed through the artist's choice of materials and the methods they employ.

Many of the works in the exhibition behave in genre-bending ways, which escape narrowly defined categories. For example, a painting may slide into video, a video may perform like a drawing, a drawing may be painterly, and the painting slips into a performance. As categories and genres begin to slide into one another, ***Medium at Large*** presents the complexities of contemporary art and aims to spark conversations about the nature of contemporary art practices.

The artists represented in ***Medium at Large*** come from Asian countries like Cambodia, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, South Korea, and Thailand, with artworks that

reference aesthetic and socio-political themes. On exhibit are Chen Sai Hua Kuan's *Space Drawing*, which is a witty reinterpretation of the function of a line, that is - to divide, subtract, and define a space; Ho Tzu Nyen's *Cloud of Unknowing*, which is the first showing of the full work since it represented Singapore in the 54th Venice Biennale in 2011; and Ranbir Kaleka's *He Was A Good Man*, which combines painting with video to create a lyrical narrative of one man, seemingly still, and his single-minded absorption in the mundane task of threading a needle. Demonstrating unconventional mediums in the exhibition, Alvin Zafra's *Pepe* and *Marcial Bonifacio* ground live bullets as drawing tools into sandpaper, turning an implement of death into an instrument of creation; while Mella Jaarsma's *Shaggy* uses real hair as a symbol of women and the conformity to trends.

Dr. Susie Lingham, Director of Singapore Art Museum, says, "Our on-going exhibition, **UNEARTHED**, demonstrates SAM's commitment to exploring interdisciplinary contemporary art and new partnerships to create interesting dialogue across different fields through contemporary art practice. **Medium at Large** explores the very medium itself, both the materiality and the non-materiality of it. As a museum that collects art for national posterity, contemporary art can be notoriously difficult as such works test the limits of collecting and preserving art. While some of the works exhibited in **Medium at Large** may appear unusual or unconventional, the work's specific medium in fact embodies the weight of its concept, symbolism, as well as social and cultural significance. The conceptual art movement also dematerialises the art object to encompass the ephemeral and non-physical, such as sound, language and text, and 'pure' idea. At SAM, we are keen to investigate how art goes from "effect" to "affect", and so we hope to deepen our visitors' experiences with these contemporary artworks at **Medium at Large**. **Medium at Large** also sets the stage for our upcoming exhibition in July, **Sensorium 360°**."

Medium at Large will run from 24 April 2014 to April 2015 at the SAM. In addition to the exhibition, the museum will be holding parallel programmes including curator-led tours, educators' tours, Crosstalk tours and workshops. For more details, please visit the Singapore Art Museum website at <http://www.singaporeartmuseum.sg/>.

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www.instagram.com/IAMASAMbody
www.youtube.com/samtelly
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For more information, please read on:

- **Annex A** – Exhibition synopsis
- **Annex B** – Medium at Large - Artists and Artworks

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: Exhibition synopsis and in-conjunction Events

Medium at Large: Shapeshifting Material and Methods in Contemporary Art 25 April 2014 to April 2015 | Singapore Art Museum

Medium at Large explores the idea of medium in contemporary art, examining some of the most fundamental and pressing questions of art – its making, and also our experience, encounter and understanding of it. The year-long exhibition at Singapore Art Museum (SAM) revels in the rich expanse of materials that contemporary artworks can be made of, and from, as well as the very ‘slipperiness’ of media, as categories and genres begin to slide into one another.

Art has long been classified by genres and disciplines, such as painting, sculpture, and photography, yet in resisting the confines of traditional definitions, contemporary works often behave in genre-bending ways, where a painting may slide into video or a video performs like drawing and a drawing is painterly.

In other instances, a work’s specific medium also embodies the weight of its concept, symbolism and significance, and artists have incorporated an astonishing breadth of material in producing these works. The artwork media here range from oil paint, to rattan, human hair, whitening soap, live bullet shells, as well as ‘dematerialised’ media like sound, language and text.

Medium draws ‘largely’ from SAM’s permanent collection, and also includes loans and commissions from artists, the latter gesturing to some of the dilemmas and challenges of collecting for posterity. Across some 30 artworks, the exhibition at SAM probes and ponders the fluid – if ever-elusive – nature of art: of art’s medium, **at large**.

Exhibition Venue

SAM is located at 71 Bras Basah Rd Singapore 189555
SAM at 8Q is located at 8 Queen Street Singapore 188535

Opening Hours

Mondays to Sundays | 10.00 am to 7.00 pm (Last admission at 6:15pm)
Fridays | 10.00 am to 9.00 pm

Admission Fees*

Inclusive SAM and SAM at 8Q

Adults	: S\$10
Students, Senior Citizens 60 years and above and Regulars (with valid 11B pass)	: S\$5

20% off admission tickets for 20 or more persons.

*Unless otherwise stated, admission is free for visitors 6 years and below, Singaporean and PR, students and senior citizens, NSFs and teachers from local schools.

Free admission to SAM every Friday from 6.00 pm to 9.00 pm and on Open House days.

SAM online

www.singaporeartmuseum.sg
www.facebook.com/singaporeartmuseum

www.twitter.com/singaporeart

www.youtube.com/samtelly

Enquiries

+65 6332 3222

feedback@singaporeartmuseum.sg

How to get to SAM

By Bus: SBS 7, 14, 16, 36, 111, 131, 162, 175, 508, 518
 SMRT 77, 167, 171, 700

By Train: 2-minute walk from Bras Basah MRT Station
 10-minute walk from Dhoby Ghaut, Bugis or City Hall MRT stations

By Car: Carpark spaces available at Waterloo Street, Queen Street, NTUC Income
 Centre, Plaza by the Park, Hotel Grand Pacific and Singapore Management University

Annex B: Medium at Large - Artists and Artworks

Legend:

(MH) – Michelle Ho | (RN) – Rachel Ng | (TSL) – Tan Siu Li | (JT) – Joyce Toh

Heman Chong

The Forer Effect

2008

Text on wall Dimensions variable

Collection of the Artist

Text-based works in Heman Chong's practice not only reveal subjectivities of meaning in the written word, but also question the domain of assumed knowledge, at times engaging with the very social encounter of art as a part of his art-making.

His work, **The Forer Effect**, is based on a personality test that Bertram R. Forer (1914-2000) conducted in 1948. In a bid to prove the tendency for people to rate vague statements as specifically accurate to them, the American psychologist presented a singular personality assessment with text from different horoscope forecasts to his test subjects. In this work, the visitor's response to the encounter of Chong's appropriation of Forer's text can be seen as a reevaluation of Forer's hypothesis that people are inclined to accept generic personality descriptions as exclusively befitting to them, not knowing that they could be readily applicable to other people. (MH)

Heman Chong (b. 1977, Malaysia) is an artist, curator and writer. He holds a Masters in Communication Art & Design from The Royal College of Art, London. His practice is driven by the concept of how people and communities envision their futures; these inquiries result in a variety of objects, situations, texts, images and installations. Chong has had recent solo exhibitions at New York's P! Gallery, FOST Gallery and Future Perfect in Singapore, and at Wilkinson Gallery in London. He has exhibited extensively in group exhibitions around the world, including at the Sharjah Art Foundation, the Fukuoka Asian Art Museum, the Kadist Art Foundation, and the Museu d'Art Contemporani de Barcelona. Chong has also participated in numerous biennales, such as the Gwangju Biennale (2014), the Asia Pacific Triennale (2012) and Performa 11 (2011). He is currently co-editor of 'Stationary', a new collection of short stories published by Spring Workshop.

Ye Shufang

Project: Honey Sticks (6,425)

2014

Installation with 6,425 honey sticks

16.7 cm (each); installation dimensions variable

Singapore Art Museum commission

Collection of the Artist

This installation comprises 6,425 honey sticks – the significance of the number lying in the fact that there were 6,425 registered births in 1941, the year that the artist's parents were born. With each birth and the beginning of new life is the attendant notion of the passage of time, and death, although these unpleasant and uncomfortable realities are seldom contemplated or acknowledged.

Project: Honey Sticks (6,425) extends artist Ye Shufang's use of ready-mades and her interest in the ephemeral through the use of perishable materials. Visitors are invited to take and consume the honey sticks from the dispenser, experiencing the viscosity and the intensity of flavour on their

tongue. With visitor participation over time, the level of honey sticks will gradually fall and the vibrant colour of the work slowly drains away, until all that is left is an empty container, standing solitarily like an epitaph. (TSL)

Ye Shufang (b. 1971, Singapore) is interested in issues of the ephemeral and the 'ready-made'. She has exhibited in solo exhibitions in Belgrade, Yogyakarta and Singapore, and in group exhibitions in Venice, Stockholm, Beijing, Oslo, Korea and Singapore. Ye was awarded the Singapore President's Young Talents Exhibition Award in 2001. In 2005, she was commissioned for an on-site installation for the Singapore Pavilion at the World Expo in Nagoya, Japan. Most recently, she held a solo exhibition of new drawings and agar-agar installations at The Private Museum in Singapore.

Ian Woo

Lot Sees Salt: First Heart

Lot Sees Salt: Head

Lot Sees Salt: Neck

Lot Sees Salt: Wing

2009

Graphite on paper

210 x 150 cm (each)

Singapore Art Museum collection

Artist Ian Woo has consistently investigated contemporary painting practice through a body of abstract works, and this enduring interest informs his approach to the suite of four 'drawings' in which the play between pencil and paintbrush come to the fore.

At the edges of **First Heart, Head, Neck and Wing**, precise pencil lines detail the fine structures that suggest an organism, landscape or otherworldly terrain. In comparison, the central portion sees the graphite being treated like paint, where Woo uses a brush to pull marks across the paper surface and create vigorous brushstrokes that erase and distort, rework and intensify, the more delicate marks of the original pencil line. At points, the 'paint' is so thin like a diluted watercolour that it drips down the surface in rivulets.

Although abstract in form, the works' formal treatment and charged expressions evoke the idea and feeling of radical change, alluding to the trauma of the subject matter: that of the Old Testament biblical story in which Lot was told by the angels to leave the debauched city of Sodom. As he fled with his family, his wife looked back at Sodom with longing and was transformed into a pillar of salt. (JT)

Ian Woo (b. 1967, Singapore) holds a Doctorate in Fine Art from the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology, a Masters of Art in European Fine Art and Painting from the Winchester School of Art, UK and Spain, and a Bachelors of Fine Art (Hons.) in Painting from the Kent Institute of Art and Design in the UK. He was awarded a category winner of the Abstract Medium in the 18th UOB (United Overseas Bank) Painting of the Year competition in 1999. He has held recent solo exhibitions at Tomio Koyama Gallery and the Institute of Contemporary Art, Lasalle College of the Arts, in Singapore, and has participated in numerous group shows in Hong Kong, Singapore and the UK. His works are in the collection of major institutions such as ABN AMRO, Singapore Art Museum, The Istana Singapore, The National Gallery Singapore, UBS and the Mint Museum of Craft & Design, USA.

Renato Orara

Bookwork: NIV Compact Thinline Bible (page 403)

2008

Ballpoint ink drawing on paper

23 x 12 x 3 cm (open size); 17 x 12 x 2 cm (closed size)

Singapore Art Museum collection

Rendered in slow and painstaking detail, Renato Orara's drawing of a lamb chop draws the viewer in with its compelling, visceral beauty. The initial focus is on the intensely fine gestural markings of Orara's ballpoint pen, yet the very surface on which they are inscribed carries special significance, transforming how the work is 'read' and interpreted. As its title indicates, the drawing is held within the pages of the holy book. Even as the thin paper imbues a delicate translucency to the drawing, its textual base imparts the lamb chop with the weight of symbolism and metaphor, alluding to Jesus Christ as the Lamb of God. Here, the rawness of the subject appears to reiterate the blood sacrifice made by Jesus, and by encouraging a contemplative kind of viewing, the drawing also evokes the religious art of the past.

Set in the Old Testament Book of Job, the first inclination is to construe it as heralding Christ's coming in the New Testament, but in actuality, the artist did not deliberately choose the image for any specific connotations in relation to its textual base. An outgrowth of Orara's monumental series, 'Ten Thousand Things That Breathe', the 'Bookworks' are his attempts to negotiate a space between the privacy of drawing and the need to exhibit as a visual artist.

By situating the drawing in a book, the artwork can be intensely private and hidden (when the book is closed), or publicly accessible (when the book is open and displayed). It thus hovers between tensions of many kinds: the sacred and profane, secrecy and openness, the symbolic and literal, and between word and image. (JT)

Renato Orara (b. 1961, Philippines), an artist and an educator, lives and works in New York. He has been actively participating in solo and group exhibitions in the United States, Europe and the Philippines. In 2005, he was a recipient of the Pollock-Krasner Foundation Fellowship Grant.

Nadiah Bamadhaj

Quiet Rooms

2009

Charcoal on paper

250 x 600 cm (installation size)

Singapore Art Museum collection

Quiet Rooms draws upon a technique that artist Nadiah Bamadhaj developed in the early 2000s that combined drawing and collage, a process that involves the painstaking layering of paper with varying charcoal tones and shades. Whether revealing the contours of a face or terrain, the resulting works are often akin to carefully constructed topographical landscapes – a process of building and structuring that mirrors Bamadhaj's abiding interest in the politics of mapping, architecture and space. Here, **Quiet Rooms** goes beyond the confines of a single sheet of paper and takes as its 'ground', an entire wall measuring six metres; going up close however, the viewer can also discern the tactile quality of the paper, accentuated by its irregular edges.

This unusual landscape enfolds the biographical, where the subject of the self and storytelling are equally potent mediums in unfolding the narrative of the work. **Quiet Rooms** tells the tale of a

married couple's difficulty in conceiving a child, an ordeal worsened by the relentless scrutiny and surveillance from neighbours in the kampung (small village). His head engulfed by a nest of Medusa-like snakes that also suggest the form of human sperm, the man is rendered impotent, even as the woman stares out defiantly at the pressures brought to bear by traditional society's expectations. The words "doa yaa" ("you should pray") refer to the platitude uttered by well-meaning neighbours or doctors who can offer no real solutions. (JT)

Nadiyah Bamadhaj (b. 1968, Malaysia) was trained as a sculptor at the University of Canterbury in New Zealand. She produces work in media ranging from drawings to video and digital images. She has worked in non-government organizations on HIV/AIDS prevention, human rights advocacy, and lectured in art in Kuala Lumpur. She is the author of 'Aksi Write' (1997), a work of non-fiction on Indonesia and Timor Leste, co-written with her late brother. In 2000, she began full-time art-practice, and was awarded the Nippon Foundation's Asian Public Intellectual Fellowship in 2002, electing to spend her fellowship period in Yogyakarta, Indonesia, where she produced an art-based research project on the social aftermath of Indonesia's 1965 political upheaval. Her recent artwork looks at architecture as historical and nationalist documents.

Alvin Zafra

Pepe

2006

Live bullet on sandpaper panel, set of 3 panels

122 x 180 cm

Singapore Art Museum

Marcial Bonifacio

2006

Live bullet on sandpaper panel, set of 3 panels

122 x 180 cm

Singapore Art Museum collection

Pepe and **Marcial Bonifacio** are both created using a drawing implement that is more ominous than the average pencil: an entire M16 bullet is used to execute each image. Part of Zafra's 'Headshot' series, every work comprises of one live bullet round and the image is drawn with – or more accurately, ground into – the sandpaper panel that forms the base.

Pepe – the childhood nickname of Jose Rizal – portrays the 19th Philippine patriot and national hero who was convicted of treason by the Spanish colonial government and executed by firing squad. In a similar vein, **Marcial Bonifacio** captures Benigno Aquino Jr. – the father of the current President of the Philippines – who was an opposition senator assassinated at Manila International Airport in 1983. Returning from exile aboard, Aquino used the alias of Marcial Bonifacio on his passport. In each of these portraits, an entire bullet shell is literally and metaphorically 'spent' in making the work – an implement of death is now the medium of creation, and the very instrument of their demise is the one that captures their images for perpetuity. In the process, the minimalist sculptural form of the bullet appears to dissolve but does not disappear, for it undergoes a transformation and re-emerges as 'image', translated into a recognisable portrait. Representation, abstraction and medium converge onto a single surface, and the sandpaper's subtly shimmering grains hold fast the haunting images of two men who died in their prime. (JT)

Multi-disciplinary artist **Alvin Zafra** (b. 1978, Philippines) is a painter, production designer, film director and a musician. A graduate of the University of the Philippines with a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in Painting, Zafra experiments widely with his choice of medium for his works, incorporating

unusual materials and employing innovative processes, such as using his fingernails and bullets as drawing tools.

Chen Sai Hua Kuan

Space Drawing 5

2009

Single-channel video, edition 2/5

Duration 1:02 mins

Singapore Art Museum collection

Part of artist Chen Sai Hua Kuan's 'Space Drawing' series of videos, **Space Drawing 5** was created at Kronprinz Tower in Kaliningrad, Russia, the construction site for the city's new contemporary art centre. Dramatic and compelling, this video captures the journey mapped by a line of rope across a space. Pulled taut, the rope springs into life once released, snapping, ricocheting, bouncing off brick walls, slithering along dusty floors, flying across rooms, and creating a hollow percussion as it weaves in and out between scaffolding and pillars. With high energy and increasing intensity, it defines the space it travels through, drawing our attention to the details of the derelict construction site where the artwork was made. At the same time, it is a witty reinterpretation of the function of a line (that is, to divide, subtract, and define a space), and the age-old art form of drawing, by extending the conventional two-dimensional practice of drawing (putting lines on paper or onto some other surface) into a three-dimensional spatial intervention, documented not on canvas or paper, but on video. (TSL)

Chen Sai Hua Kuan (b. 1976, Singapore) graduated from the Slade School of Fine Art, University College London in UK with a Masters in Fine Art. His work has been exhibited in the 'Singapore Art Exhibition' (2009) at the Singapore Art Museum, as well as at several international venues including the International Festival for Arts and Media Yokohama, Japan (2009), EV+A, Ireland (2010), Moscow International Biennale for Young Art, Russia (2010), the 14th Media Art Biennale WRO, Poland (2011) and the Luleå Art Biennale, Sweden (2011). While Chen is perhaps best known for his 'Space Line' series of videos documenting spatial interventions, he also creates installations and mixed-media works which explore interesting and unexpected juxtapositions of objects and interactions.

Tran Luong

Steam Rice Man

2001

Digital prints with video

Dimensions variable, video duration 5:05 mins

Collection of the Artist

"...How much rice will be eaten
in order to make
a piece of coal?
White and black
Soft, sticky and hard rough
Sow a coal seed, it will take
a thousand of years!"

Steam Rice Man was performed as part of the Mao Khe coal mine project in which Tran Luong and 11 other artists from Hanoi spent two weeks at the disaster-prone Mao Khe coal mine in Quang Ninh province. The experience of working in the deep, dark and dusty tunnels left a profound impact on the artists: it took roughly 40 minutes of showering to rid the body of the thick black dust, dust which can never be fully expelled from the lungs.

In Vietnam, the life of hardship was often associated with the farmer, especially since farmers were the most exposed to wartime bombings, but this project led the artist to realise that coal miners' lives were equally grueling, if not more so. Whether deep in tunnels or under scorching sun, the miners and farmers bore the onerous task of producing fuel for Vietnam. This prompted the poignant juxtaposition of rice and coal powder: soft and hard, sticky and dusty, white and black. The use of rice and coal on the artist's performing body produces a highly visceral and sensual encounter, for the materials are at once alluring and haunting. Here, these two disparate substances – dependent on yet indispensable to labour alike – underline the often-overlooked human expense vested into making the material. (RN)

Tran Luong (b. 1960, Vietnam) is an artist and curator who graduated from the Hanoi Fine Arts Institute in 1983. He gained recognition as a painter in the Hanoi "Gang of Five" but later moved towards video, new media, performance and conceptual art. Tran Luong co-founded Nha San Studio, Hanoi's foremost experimental art space and has had numerous solo and group exhibitions internationally, including at the Guggenheim Museum, New York; ifa Gallery, Berlin and Stuttgart; the Goethe Institute, Hanoi; and the Yokohama Museum of Art, Japan. His work is strongly informed by his experiences growing up in wartime Vietnam.

Melati Suryodarmo

Exergie – Butter Dance (Sao Paolo)

2000

Lambda prints, edition 1/5, 37 x 54.5 cm (each)

Single-channel video, edition 2/3, duration 6:23 mins

Singapore Art Museum collection

Photography and video have gained currency as ways of documenting and re-presenting performance art, preserving these ephemeral events for posterity as well as providing a tangible means for individuals and institutions to 'collect' performance art. Often these photographs and videos, which capture the essence of the performances, are regarded as artworks in their own right.

This series captures moments from Melati Suryodarmo's performance **Exergie – Butter Dance (Sao Paolo)**, in which the artist, dressed in a black dress and red shoes, dances on pieces of butter that cause her to slip and fall repeatedly. Besides serving as an unguent in her performance, butter holds personal and cross-cultural significance for the artist, who observed her own body changing when she moved to Germany, where the European diet is rich in butter – a food which is not common fare in her native Java. Throughout her performance, she continues to dance, slip, slide and fall unremittingly with increasing intensity. The futility of the artist's actions – which border on absurdity – contrasts with the sensuality of her movements, and the insistent percussive beat she dances to. Here, the artist's body becomes the canvas that captures the tragicomedy of our contemporary experiences and existence, offering some form of catharsis through its mingling of fragility, heroism and absurdity. (TSL)

Melati Suryodarmo (b. 1969, Indonesia) studied under renowned Butoh dancer, Anzu Furukawa, and acclaimed performance artist, Marina Abramovic. She is known for her highly physical, time-based performances, using her body as a theatrical canvas. She has performed widely all over the

world, in New York, Eastern Europe, Western Europe, Singapore, Sydney and Indonesia, with notable participation in the Venice Biennale Dance Festival (2007), eBent 07 Festival in Barcelona (2007), Accione 06 in Madrid (2006), and the 15th International Electronic Art Festival – Video Brasil, Sao Paulo, Brasil (2005). Since 2007, she has been the organiser of an annual Performance Art Laboratory Project for the Padepokan Lemah Putih Solo, Indonesia.

Chua Chye Teck

April 2008, Tokyo

2009

Colour prints (set of 12)

37.3 x 36.5 cm (each)

Singapore Art Museum collection

Blurring the boundaries between the mediums of painting and photography is Chua Chye Teck's April 2008, Tokyo, a series of photographic prints that the artist made of a single painting over a period of one month. Inspired by the myriad pink shades of sakura blooms in Japan, the artist embarked on the process of capturing variants of the colour in a methodological manner. Using acrylic paint, the artist made a painting in the darkest shade of pink he could perceive, gradually layering the same painting with lighter shades of the colour by adding increments of white paint that have been measured to accuracy on a weighing scale. This series of colour photographic prints can be seen as a documentation of Chua's exploration of the perception of colour and time, using photography as a means to replicate the process of painting, and vice versa. (MH)

Chua Chye Teck (b. 1974, Singapore) holds a Bachelor of Arts in Fine Art, focusing on Sculpture, from the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology in Singapore, and a Diploma in Fine Arts – Sculpture, from Lasalle College of the Arts, Singapore. He specialises in photography, and he has held residencies at the Künstlerhaus Bethanien International Studio programme in Berlin, Germany (2009-10), and the International Photographers and Researchers Network in Newcastle, UK (2007). His works have been exhibited extensively in Singapore, as well as in Germany, China, Denmark and Malaysia.

Osang Gwon

BluRay_B

2009

C-prints and mixed media

275 x 88 x 60 cm

Singapore Art Museum collection

As an index of reality, photography has tended to complicate the trust in the 'real', even as it concurrently works to reaffirm that same conviction. Osang Gwon's sculpture, BluRay_B, pushes this ambiguity to its limits by staging photography as the three-dimensional reality it has consistently strived to emulate. Part of the artist's 'Deodorant Type' series of figures, the work comprises of carved pink foam with hundreds of photographs collaged onto the surface. Up close, the veneer of hyperrealism is shattered as the shifting planes of photographs reveal how fragmented and unstable the photographic eye is. For Gwon, the series title 'Deodorant Type' is about "covering something up and changing its odour". Trained as a sculptor and insistent he is referred to as one, Gwon's deliberate emphasis on the sculptural medium exposes the misplaced expectations of realism and reality that are brought to bear on photography. (RN)

Osang Gwon (b. 1974, South Korea) has a Bachelor and Masters of Fine Art in Sculpture from Hongik University, Seoul. Since 2002, he has held numerous solo shows, most recently at Arario Gallery in Seoul, Beijing and New York, and at Aando Fine Arts in Berlin. Gwon's extensive international group exhibitions include shows at HADA Contemporary, London; SOMA Museum of Art, Seoul; The Arts House, Singapore; as well as the Center for Contemporary Culture Strozziina, in Florence, Italy. Collections with his work include the Samsung Museum of Art Leeum, the Gyeonggi Museum of Modern Art, the Embassy of Switzerland and the Burger Collection.

Sopheap Pich

Cycle

2004–2008

Rattan and wire

453 x 275 x 90 cm

Singapore Art Museum collection

Its form suggesting two conjoined stomachs, **Cycle** is a sculpture made from a traditional rattan weaving technique. For many Cambodians, the stomach is the site where the hardships of war and poverty were experienced most acutely, in the form of an all-permeating hunger that is underscored by the sculpture's spare, porous appearance. The use of rattan is significant: a common indigenous material, rattan has long provided rural communities with extra income and given form to traditional crafts. In choosing a material vital to the survival and preservation of Cambodian livelihood and heritage, one may see this work as an attempt to reconcile Cambodia's rich material culture with its turbulent history. The notion of kinship and partnership evoked by the conjoined 'stomachs' deepens this sense of resolution, one where local resources and their vested potentials can give rise to new hopes for the future. (RN)

Sopheap Pich (b. 1969, Cambodia) was first trained in painting at the University of Massachusetts, United States. Feeling that his paintings did not connect with the Cambodian people, he began experimenting with commonplace materials familiar in Cambodia, developing his distinctive style of rattan and wire sculptures. His practice is significantly underlined by memories of fleeing the Khmer Rouge and living in refugee camps in Thailand before immigrating to the United States. Pich has exhibited extensively internationally, particularly in Cambodia and the United States, where he recently had a solo show at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, in 2013. Selected group exhibitions include the 4th Fukuoka Asian Art Triennial (2009), and Documenta 13 (2012).

Mit Jai Inn

Untitled

2014

Mixed media installation

Dimensions variable

Collection of the Artist

Untitled comprises of a series of sculptural canvases by Mit Jai Inn, composed to defy the categories of mediums in art-making. Appearing as part-painting, and part-sculpture, such is the nature of Mit's highly lyrical and textured works, which seek to make indistinct the boundaries between high art and craft objects, and liberate the experience of artworks from what the artist perceives as the static convention and form of visual art. At times presented as hanging scrolls, and other times as wall

pieces, the versatile quality of the canvases are characteristic of the Thai artist's practice. In effect, the malleable nature of his work allows for the situating of art in multiple contexts, challenging abstract painting to perform or function as a rarefied piece of fine art, or merely as a common object. (MH)

Mit Jai Inn (b. 1960, Thailand) is one of Thailand's pioneering figures in contemporary art. He was the founder of the ground-breaking Chiang Mai Social Installation Project (CMSI) in the 1990s, which sought to present unconventional participatory art practices in a non-commercial setting, so as to free art from the gallery and integrate it into the city of Chiang Mai. He has exhibited extensively in Southeast Asia, with numerous solo exhibitions in Bangkok and Chiang Mai in Thailand. Internationally, he has participated in group exhibitions such as the 18th Sydney Biennale, Australia (2012), at REDCAT in Los Angeles, United States (2008), at Palais de Tokyo, Paris, France (2006), and at Galleria Continua, San Gimignano in Italy (2005).

Mella Jaarsma

Shaggy

2008

Hair, hair curlers

130 x 72 x 55 cm

Acquired with support from KMP Private Ltd.

Singapore Art Museum collection

Mella Jaarsma is best known for her costume installations which use materials such as animal skins, horns and clothing – items charged with metaphoric potencies of race, identity, human nature, sexuality, beliefs, politics and origins.

In her work **Shaggy**, Mella Jaarsma takes on hair as a symbol of womanhood, and all its attendant associations with eroticism, gender stereotypes and identity. The inspiration for this piece came from the artist's observation that during a certain period, impressionable young girls in rural Java went to the hair salon requesting the same style of haircut called the 'shaggy', which was considered trendy at that time. This piece originated as the artist's commentary on how contemporary obsession with image and conformity with fashion 'trends' results in a loss of individuality and a dehumanising same-ness. Concurrently, the work also makes a powerful statement about certain cultures' obsession with hair (and by extension, the universal vanity of women and their anxiety to preserve their beauty), transforming something conventionally 'feminine' and alluring into monstrous proportions. (TSL)

Mella Jaarsma (b. 1960, The Netherlands) is a co-founder of Cemeti Art House, one of Indonesia's foremost contemporary art institutions. Her artistic practice revolves around the body and its coverings, as potent signifiers of identity and its social and cultural politics. She is the recipient of the John D. Rockefeller Award (2006) and her work has been presented widely in exhibitions around the world, including the 3rd Asia Pacific Triennial of Contemporary Art, Brisbane, Australia (1999), the Gwangju Biennale, South Korea (2002) and the Yokohama Triennale, Japan (2005).

Titarubi

Shadow of Surrender

2013

Installation with wooden benches and chairs, books and framed charcoal drawings

Dimensions variable

Singapore Art Museum collection

Commissioned for the Indonesian Pavilion at the 2013 edition of the Venice Biennale, **Shadow of Surrender** is an evocation of the cycles of life and learning, and Indonesia's colonial legacy. The primary medium in this installation is wood in its various forms: from the pulp used to make the pages of the books; to the benches made from charred wood taken from railroad tracks that previously transported commodities such as sugar during the difficult years under foreign rule, and the charcoal drawings of shadowy trees in their truncated, gilded frames.

While **Shadow of Surrender** intimates at an environment or culture of learning, it is also a *tabula rasa*. To read, or to acquire knowledge, is one of Islam's main tenets; however the huge books on the tables are noticeably blank, suggesting a desire to re-write or to re-learn and re-assess the values and lessons that have been passed on through culture, religion and history. This installation positions the audience as active agents, constructing their personal 'lessons' and observations while referencing the cultural and colonial supports and constructs on which such learning has traditionally taken place. At the same time, the various forms of wood and its by-products included in this installation present a full circle, echoing the cycle of life and the turns of civilisations, through growth, death, and rebirth. (TSL)

Titarubi (b. 1968, Indonesia) graduated in ceramics from the Bandung Institute of Technology (ITB, Institut Teknologi Bandung). She is one of Indonesia's pioneering female contemporary artists, often dealing with issues of gender, culture, memory and colonialism in visually poetic ways. Her works integrate various mediums of sculpture, painting, installation and graphics. Titarubi has exhibited extensively in Indonesia and internationally, including at Galerie Michael Janssen, in Berlin, Germany; the Musuem Van Loon in Amsterdam, Netherlands; the Museo d'Arte Contemporanea in Rome, Italy, and at the Seoul Art Center in South Korea.

Wong Hoy Cheong

The Charity Lady (After Jean-Baptiste Greuze's La Dame de Charite, 1775)

2009

From 'Days of Our Lives' series

Digital print on archival coated canvas, edition 3/15 83 x 112 cm

Singapore Art Museum collection

In Wong Hoy Chong's work, Jean Baptiste Greuze's classical French painting has been situated within an Asian context through restaging the original scene with local characters; concurrently, the 18th century painting is given a contemporaneous update by 'reproducing' it via digital photographic print.

Such genre paintings often came with a moral message about charity or honesty, but in this instance, the pursuit of truth and fidelity is one that also parallels the dilemmas that have coursed through painting and photography. Reversing the narrative of Western art history, Wong's imitation of painting – via photography – probes at the fundamental questions of truth and form that have driven the development of art. The pointed appropriation of the title "Days of Our Lives" from the popular American soap opera further obfuscates the distinction between the genres of photography, painting, and television, all of which have in their own means sought to present a 'higher reality'. As such, the perceptible painterly quality of the print suggests a self-consciousness of the mediums, and that the zone of these realities is a contested one. (RN)

Wong Hoy Cheong (b. 1960, Malaysia) holds a Bachelor's degree in English Literature from Brandeis, Massachusetts, a Masters in Education from Harvard University, Cambridge, and a Masters of Fine

Arts from University of Massachusetts, Amherst, United States. In 2011, he was awarded the Rockefeller Foundation Bellagio Creative Fellowship. Wong has often represented Malaysia in international platforms including the 3rd Liverpool Biennial, United Kingdom (2004), and the 10th Lyon Biennale, France (2009).

Gerardo Tan

thisisthatisthis

2001

Collected dust from Juan Luna's "Tampuhan" (1895),

Picture light, gold paint, label

28.5 x 28.5 x 4.5 cm (painting) Installation dimensions variable

Gift of the Artist

Singapore Art Museum collection

thatisthisisthat

2001

Collected dust from painting attributed as Canaletto's "Entrance to the Grand Canal from the Molo, Venice" (c. 1740s) picture light, gold paint 3.5 x 6 x 6.5 cm (bowl) Installation dimensions variable

Gift of the Artist

Singapore Art Museum collection

The material of these two works by conceptualist artist Gerardo Tan are arguably the oldest in this exhibition and the Museum's collection of artworks: dust, dating well over a hundred years. Ironically, dust is usually anathema in any museum setting. For the artist however, these fine particles are a metaphor for the passage of time as well as literal accretions that hold accumulations history and memory – and are no less, infinitesimal reflections of the very work of a museum.

Moreover, the dust here – obtained from an art restorer friend – hail from exceptionally fine art historical provenance: the glass bowl of **thatisthisisthat** holds the grime of a painting attributed as the Entrance to the Grand Canal from the Molo, Venice, c. 1740s, by the virtuoso of the Venetian landscape, Canaletto. Similarly, the painting **thisisthatisthis** comprises of dirt cleaned from Tampuhan, a 1895 work by the Philippine master artist and national hero, Juan Luna. Even as it corporeally embodies the detritus of Luna's impressionist-style painting, **thisisthatisthis** references yet another work, but this time, a modern masterpiece executed in 1915: the abstract black square painting by Russian Suprematist artist, Kazimir Malevich.

With their palindromic titles, and coming replete with their own brass artwork labels and lights, the works playfully reflect upon their own ontological status as artworks, exploring questions about originality, the copy and authenticity; representation; art and metaphysical states. (JT)

Gerardo Tan (b. 1960, Philippines) was a Fulbright Fellow in the Masters of Fine Arts in Painting programme at the State University of New York at Buffalo, and holds a Bachelor of Fine Arts, also majoring in painting, from the University of the Philippines. In addition to his artistic practice, Tan is also an art academic, and has been lecturing at universities in the Philippines. The concept of photorealism and its logical ends drive the conceptual explorations in his work; the ontology of painting is consistently probed. He has enjoyed many solo and group exhibitions, in Spain, Austria, German, United States, Singapore, Malaysia, and numerous cities in the Philippines.

Natee Utarit

The Birth of Tragedy

2010

Oil on canvas

200 x 720 cm (triptych)

Singapore Art Museum collection

Natee Utarit is known for his paintings that investigate Western stylistic conventions, and re-examine genres such as Mythology, History, Portrait and Landscape paintings in a contemporary context. Since 2005, the artist has been painting assemblages of still life, symbolically using toys and common every day objects to signify coded meanings that make allegorical reference to the tumultuous Thai social and political situation in the past decade. **The Birth of Tragedy** is Utarit's largest masterpiece to-date, painted during a precarious juncture of politics in the Thai kingdom, and alluding to an uncertain future to come. (MH)

Natee Utarit (b. 1970, Thailand) graduated from Silpakorn University, Bangkok, Thailand, majoring in painting, sculpture and graphic art. He is known for interrogating the making and meaning of images through his highly metaphorical and allegorical paintings. Notable international exhibitions include the Asian Art Biennale 2012 in Taipei, Taiwan, the 54th Venice Biennale (2011), and the 3rd Asia Pacific Triennial of Contemporary Art in Brisbane, Australia (1999). He also held his solo exhibition 'Natee Utarit: After Painting' at the Singapore Art Museum in 2010. ARNDT Berlin, Germany (2012) and Art Seasons, Zurich, Switzerland (2011) have also presented solo exhibitions of his work. His works have been collected by Bangkok University, the Queensland Art Gallery, as well as by private collectors.

Annie Cabigting

On the Shelf, On the Shelf (After Michael Craig-Martin)

2010

Oil on canvas and painted bookshelf (wood and metal brackets)

20 x 30 cm (painting)

Singapore Art Museum collection

Measuring little more than an A4 size piece of paper, this minute work deftly condenses large ideas about medium and representation.

Rendered with the near exactitude of a photograph, the painting captures a tilted row of milk bottles that have been placed on a wooden shelf. In effect, Cabigting's painting is a representation of another artwork: a wall sculpture by the British conceptualist artist Michael Craig-Martin, called *On the Shelf* (1971). Probing the relationship between image and space, Cabigting placed the two-dimensional painting of the three-dimensional sculpture on a wooden shelf held up by metal brackets. In so doing, she transforms the painting into a sculpture in its own right, one that echoes the spatial dynamics of Craig-Martin's original work.

Cabigting also riffs off Craig-Martin's penchant for literal and wry descriptive titles. However, by repeating the phrase "on the shelf", the work enacts and goes beyond simple verbatim repetition: it makes obvious the 'objecthood' of the painting (by underscoring its need for structural support), but also obviates the identification of the artwork (since there are two artworks contained in the one). It is thus repetition and deviation at once, and the result is a sophisticated mind-bending triple mise-en-abyme: of image, of word and title, and of the artwork itself. (JT)

Annie Cabigting's (b. 1971, Philippines) conceptualist paintings may be seen as an attempt to grapple with some of the most fundamental questions in art: representation, originality, appropriation, art and reality, object and image. She majored in Painting at the University of the Philippines and was a recipient of the Ateneo Art Awards, Philippines, in 2005.

Alan Oei

The End of History

2008–2013

Mixed media installation: paintings, archival material, single-channel video Dimensions variable, video duration 1:40 mins

Collection of the Artist

In 2009, the local art public found, to its surprise, that a trove of 76 paintings by the artist Huang Wei had just been discovered. Moreover, that this artist – a Singaporean painter active in the 1940s and Nanyang period – had never been recognised in the history books was even more puzzling. 'Discovered' and 'unveiled' by Nora Samosir as part of a lecture-performance, the exhibition of Huang Wei's haunting paintings of dead children received notable attention.

It was soon revealed that Huang Wei never existed – at least not in real life – but was a fiction created by artist-curator Alan Oei, scripted in collaboration with theatre practitioner Kaylene Tan. Oei has an enduring fixation with history painting but is troubled that its moment has passed, possessing pale relevance to art-making in the present day. In the character of Huang Wei, Oei entwined fiction with fact and created a character who stands as a metaphor for a vital but missing part of Singapore's art history. As such, Huang Wei may be regarded as a performance on several levels, in which the enigmatic paintings have become its outcome and object, subject and sought prize.

In a performative play between creator and created, Huang Wei-Oei stands as a two-way mirror – and medium – of and for each other. On one side, the character of Huang Wei is a device, means and conduit for Oei to unravel his conundrum about time and history. Yet to 'use' Huang Wei entails Oei becoming a medium himself and 'channeling' his creation so that the meta-artist can step through time's portals – to enter a realm where history painting still reigns. Still, even liminal spaces offer fleeting refuge and the stop-motion video **Goliath** unfolds to reveal the artist's hand (Huang Wei's and/or Oei's?) in a relentless cycle of creating-destroying his painting, time and again. (JT)

Alan Oei (b. 1976, Singapore) is an artist-curator interested in the workings between art history, politics and community. He holds a Bachelor's degree in Art History from Columbia University and a Diploma in Fine Arts from Lasalle College of the Arts. Huang Wei – a fictional post-war painter of maimed children – is the alter-ego Oei uses to present his paintings. His work has been shown in Malaysia, Hong Kong, Melbourne and New York. In addition, Oei's curatorial projects include the 'OH! Open House', an annual art walkabout inside local neighbourhoods and residences. Currently, he is also Artistic Director of Sculpture Square, Singapore.

Ranbir Kaleka

He Was A Good Man

2007–2008

Oil on canvas on easel and single-channel video projection with sound Edition 3/3 115 x 153 cm, video duration 5:03 mins

Singapore Art Museum collection

One of the artist's best-known works, **He Was A Good Man** layers traditional easel painting with video projection in this narrative of one man and his life passing by, and his single-minded absorption in the seemingly mundane or trivial task of threading a needle. The protagonist's attempts to thread the needle parallel the practice of painting, another solitary pursuit which requires intense concentration and hand/eye co-ordination.

The interaction between two markedly different media – one traditional and static, one contemporary and dynamic – produces lyrical and often startling results, as viewers watch paintings literally 'come to life', animated by the light and motion of the flickering projection. At other times, the layering of the video on top of the painting calls attention to the very illusion of 'life-likeness' that both media have tried to create, by drawing attention to the fact that what we are viewing is in fact a flat surface, manipulated by light, shadow and movement. Kaleka's work extends the traditional limits of either medium, and by combining them, conjures up poetic and phantasmagorical narratives, while calling attention to our modes of seeing. (TSL)

Ranbir Kaleka (b. 1953, India) studied Art at the Punjab University and received a Masters of Fine Art in Painting from the Royal College of Art, London, UK. Kaleka's unique works combine easel painting with video projection. He has exhibited extensively in India and around the world, including Singapore, Sydney, Berlin, Tokyo, New York, Miami and Milan. Kaleka's solo and group exhibitions include the 4th Guangzhou Triennial (2011), MediaArtLab in Moscow (2011), at MOCA Taipei (2010), and at the Hong Kong Art Fair (2010).

Jane Lee

Status

2009

Mixed media

420 x 537 x 144 cm (installation size)

Acquired with the support of BinjaiTree Foundation in honour of Chia Yew Kay

Singapore Art Museum collection

Status is a compelling and contemporary take on the age-old medium of painting. Monumental in scale, this spectacular work problematizes simplistic categorisation of media, as it crosses the boundaries of painting, sculpture and installation. No longer just a representational medium in Lee's work, the red paint in **Status** has literally escaped from the conventional canvas to become its own frame, a physical entity in its own right, demanding the viewer to approach it from different angles and perspectives. It is at once sensuous in all its rich colour, viscosity and textural variations, as it is imposingly commanding in its scale. Resembling a doorway, **Status** heralds new ways of approaching and practising painting in this era of art-making. (TSL)

Jane Lee (b. 1963, Singapore) has a background in both fine arts and fashion. The recipient of the inaugural Singapore Art Exhibition Prize in 2007, Lee has participated in several notable exhibitions in the region and in Europe, including the Singapore Biennale 2008. In 2009, the artist had her first major solo exhibition at Osage Gallery, Singapore. In 2011, one of Lee's paintings was awarded the Celeste Art Prize, New York, in the Painting category.

Song-Ming Ang

You and I

2009–2012

Framed letters and music compilations in CD-R (set of 7)

Dimensions variable

Collection of the Artist

Music, and the relationship that people share with it, is a core theme in artist Song-Ming Ang's practice. This is exemplified in **You and I**, a three-year project in which Ang invited art audiences and visitors to his website to write him a letter, sharing with him what they might consider to be personal. In return, the artist compiled a personalised mix tape of songs from his collection of music, in the form of an audio CD, as a reply to the participants in this project. Here in this exchange, written thoughts and feelings were responded to via the language of music, presenting a unique correspondence based on revelation and reciprocation. This presentation at Singapore Art Museum is a selection of seven exchanges, out of 60 letters the artist had received from both friends and strangers from 2009–2012. (MH)

Song-Ming Ang (b. 1980, Singapore) often uses music as subject matter in his practice, connecting music and visual art. Ang's work is frequently rooted in the everyday, beginning from a simple idea and presented through various media. Based on processes like exchanges and transformations, his work finds meaning in the musical paraphernalia he refashions. Ang holds a Master's degree (Distinction) in Aural & Visual Cultures from London's Goldsmiths College. His works have been presented at the 3rd Singapore Biennale (2011), Künstlerhaus Bethanien (Berlin, 2012), Haus der Kulturen der Welt (Berlin, 2012), and curated sections of Art Basel Miami Beach (2013) and Art Stage Singapore (2013). Ang was conferred the Young Artist Award in 2011 by the National Arts Council of Singapore.

Zulkifle Mahmud

Sonic Encounter

2013

Plastic orbs and speakers (set of 28)

Dimensions variable

Collection of the Artist

Sonic Encounter is part of a series of Zulkifle Mahmud's exploration of living environments, engaging with sound as a medium for representing urban conditions in a globalised world today. Since 2008, the artist has been composing sound installations that characterise the fast-paced city-life of Asian cities, including Bangkok, Hong Kong and Singapore. This presentation was created in Suzhou, China, comprising of audio recordings the artist collected from the industrial city in Eastern China as well as from Singapore. The overlapping soundscapes conjure an ambience of societies in a constant state of construction, melded with tourist chatter and human traffic that effaces the traces of the diverse social and cultural contexts of each city. (MH)

Zulkifle Mahmud (b. 1975, Singapore) is a pioneer of sound-media art in Singapore. His practice is noted for assimilating 3-D forms with 'sound constructions' and 'sound-scapes', resulting in a highly cross-disciplinary and collaborative practice. He was the first Singaporean artist to exhibit a sound sculpture at the 52nd Venice Biennale in 2007. Zulkifle has had solo exhibitions at The Private Museum and The Substation Gallery in Singapore. Group exhibitions include the recent 'SOUND: Latitudes and Attitudes' at the Institute of Contemporary Arts Singapore, and he has exhibited in Bangkok, Suzhou, Valencia and extensively in Singapore in recent years.

Ho Tzu Nyen

The Cloud of Unknowing

2011

Installation with single-channel HD video projection, multi-channel audio, lighting, smoke machines and show control system

Dimensions variable, video duration 28:00 mins

Singapore Art Museum collection

Commissioned for the Singapore Pavilion at the 54th Venice Biennale in 2011, **The Cloud of Unknowing** enfolds artist Ho Tzu Nyen's wide-ranging interests which include art, art history, historiography and philosophy. This video installation takes as its central subject, the cloud, and explores its symbolic and aesthetic representation across cultures, history and geography. Comprising elaborate and evocative tableaus that refer back to canonical artworks, **The Cloud of Unknowing** condenses the artist's multiple, eclectic sources of research and reference. Shot within a block of public housing in Singapore, the narrative revolves around eight characters and their encounters with a cloud or cloud-like figure. **The Cloud of Unknowing** portrays the characters in a moment of revelation, and their experiences reference a medieval text of the same name – a meditative contemplation upon the divine, where the cloud paradoxically represents both the moment of uncertainty and connection with divinity. (TSL)

Ho Tzu Nyen's (b. 1976, Singapore) practice spans video, painting and theatre. His interest is in deconstructing the media he works in and refers to, and in exploiting its slipperiness to question its conventions and discursive tools. More recently, he has focused on immersive multimedia installations, a form that is an apt vehicle for combining his personal interests in film, text, image and music. Ho has exhibited widely in Singapore as well as internationally, including solo exhibitions at the Contemporary Art Centre of South Australia in Adelaide (2007 and 2010), and at the Mori Art Museum in Tokyo (2012). He also represented Singapore at the 54th Venice Biennale in 2011. Selected group exhibitions include the 26th Bienal de São Paulo in Brazil (2004), the 3rd Fukuoka Asian Art Triennale in Japan (2005), the 6th Asia Pacific Triennale in Brisbane, Australia (2009), 'No Soul for Sale' at London's Tate Modern, UK (2010), and 'No Country: Contemporary Art for South and Southeast Asia', a travelling exhibition by the Guggenheim Museum, New York (2013).

Gary-Ross Pastrana in collaboration with Zoe Dulay

Echolalia

2009

Mixed media objects: sawdust, glue, resin, ashfall, fake snow, whitening soap, text, Bulol figurines, musical box mechanism, wood, wood filler and others, and a collection of short stories by Zoe Dulay

Various dimensions

Singapore Art Museum collection

Each of the objects in **Echolalia** is a replica or facsimile of an object from real life, but also a 'relic' of a particular story and fiction.

Collaborating with writer Zoe Dulay, Gary-Ross Pastrana collected stories from varied sources and re-imagined these tales back into ordinary life. Corresponding with some of the titles of Dulay's stories, Pastrana's 'mundane' objects consist of items like a picture frame, book, a ladder rung, a book, a 33rpm record and cassette tape. Others are however a little odder, such as the corner of a mattress, a tiny pair of boots in a mound of snow and a replica of a thumb. These curios turn more curious upon scrutiny of their material: the cassette and record are made of sawdust and glue, the wooden rung is sculpted out from wood filler, and the picture frame is shaped from the 'lahar'

ashfall from the Mt. Pinatubo eruption. Others are made from similarly unlikely substances, such as a melted metal ruler, 'found' clay, the stuffing of baby diapers and whitening soap.

Many of these materials are common in daily life in the Philippines, though some are also deemed as discards, debris or just insignificant. However pointing to the sheer possibility of transmuting the most unlikely of material into art media, they have been re-fashioned and sculpted into not-so-common objects. Yet Pastrana's objects are ultimately more simulacrum than genuine: they replicate likeness to the 'real thing' but each is an ingenious counterfeit, a little fiction and a refracted copy of reality. (JT)

Gary-Ross Pastrana (b. 1977, Philippines) is an artist and a curator. He graduated with a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Painting from the University of the Philippines, where he was handed with the Dominador Castaneda Award for Best Thesis and was granted with residency programs in Japan and Bangkok. He exhibited in 'The Ungovernables', the New Museum Triennial, New York (2012), and also participated in the Busan Biennale, South Korea (2008). Gary-Ross Pastrana was also a co-founder of the independent and now-defunct art space, Future Prospects.

Torlap Larpjaroensook

Bookshelf

2011

Mixed media installation: acrylic on canvas, wood

Dimensions variable

Singapore Art Museum collection

Thai artist Torlap Larpjaroensook's **Bookshelf** traverses the domains of sculpture, installation and everyday objects in this series of popular international art publications, which the artist recreated. Rendered with thick, impasto-style acrylic paint, the books have been reproduced as physical art objects that can no longer be read, and in so doing, the artist has removed their original function as symbols of knowledge. Such a gesture also bears personal meaning for the artist whose primary language is Thai, and is unable to wholly gain access to the books, which are mostly written in English. Consequently, Larpjaroensook interprets international artistic practices from the limited number of pictures illustrated in the books. Through **Bookshelf**, he reverses the function of these books, where they are now consumed directly through their visual and tactile quality, instead of the mediums of word and language. (MH)

Torlap Larpjaroensook a.k.a Hern (b. 1977, Thailand) is an emerging Thai artist based in Chiang Mai, Thailand. At the age of 16, he embarked on a formal art education at the College of Fine Arts in Bangkok and later graduated from the Fine Arts Faculty at Chiang Mai University with a Bachelor's degree in Painting and Printmaking. Larpjaroensook's practice moves between art and design, and dwells between function and aesthetics. Function, utility value, and transformation are important concepts in his practice.

The Artists Village

Public Art Library

2003

Artist books on mixed media on paper (set of 18)

Various dimensions

Singapore Art Museum collection

An art project by Singapore artist collective The Artists Village, **Public Art Library** was conceived as a mobile library of artist books that functions like state libraries where the public can loan books through standard borrowing and return procedures. First presented at the Singapore Art Museum courtyard in 2003, the objectives of **Public Art Library** were to promote art by circulating artist books in the public realm, cultivating art appreciation through the audiences' care-taking of the artist books in the **Public Art Library** collection during their periods of loan. With audience participation as an integral aspect of the work, the project also raised the issues of artistic agency and modes of public engagement in contemporary art-making in Singapore during the early 2000s. The contributors to the **Public Art Library** collection include artists Jeremy Hiah, Kai Lam, Han Sai Por, Rizman Putra, Karl Kerridge, Juliana Yasin, Lina Adam, Benjamin Puah, Angie Seah, Wang Ruo Bing, Tamares Goh, Heng Woon Kiat, Collin Reaney, Karee Dahl, Jeremy Sharma, Aaron Kao, Leo Ong and Chen Sai Hua Kuan.

Public Art Library is now open at SAM for the duration of one year, where visitors are welcomed to sign up as members to loan the exhibition copies of the artist books by the above artists. (MH)

The Artists Village (TAV) is a contemporary art group in Singapore, and was the first artists' colony here. Founded by contemporary artist Tang Da Wu in 1988 at 61-B Lorong Gambas in Sembawang, it strove to bring like-minded contemporary artists together to critically re-look and examine existing assumptions, values and concepts of art-making in Singapore. At the height of TAV's history, The Artists Village housed 35 artists with 50 other artists participating in other avant-garde art activities organised by TAV. In 1990, it organised the seminal 24-hour collaborative, multimedia art event called 'The Time Show'. The Artists Village is dedicated to the promotion of experimental and alternative arts in Singapore. It endeavours to establish an open space for artists and to provide an environment conducive for the exchange of ideas and experiences.

Nipan Oranniwesna

Let Us Progress Towards...

2009

Hand-pierced paper (set of 4) 108 x 78 cm (each)

Singapore Art Museum collection

In this series of paper works, Thai artist Nipan Oranniwesna explores the concept of nationalism, and the roles that language and propaganda play in fostering national identity. Taking national anthems as a subject of scrutiny, Oranniwesna believes that they can be instrumental in creating a nation's collective memory, as generations of citizens – through the ritual of repeating the choruses of an anthem – produce a collective sentiment about nationhood. Made of delicate paper and pierced holes that form the lyrics of national anthems, the work can be seen as the artist's query on the idea of national identity as both a form of cultural conditioning as well as a constructed entity. (MH)

Nipan Oranniwesna (b. 1962, Thailand) holds a Bachelor of Fine Art from Silpakorn University, Thailand, and a Masters in Fine Art in Printmaking from the Tokyo National University of Fine Arts & Music. He has participated in international exhibitions such as the Busan Biennale, South Korea (2008), the 52nd Venice Biennale (2007), the Kuandu Biennale, Taiwan (2012) and the Sydney Biennale (2012). Currently, he is head of the visual arts department in the School of Fine & Applied Art at Bangkok University.