



Education Folio  
Arin Rungjang  
Thailand

**How to use this folio**

This education folio contains information about the featured artists in the Asia Pacific Breweries Foundation Signature Art Prize 2014, their artworks as well as artistic processes, giving visitors a better understanding and appreciation of the artworks displayed.

Questions and activities found at the back of the folio are meant for visitors to have a deeper engagement with each of the finalist artworks. The questions can be used for discussions when looking at the particular artwork, while the suggested activities are designed for educators or parents to explore with their students or children for further engagement beyond the museum visit.

The suggested reading and viewing lists also provide more information about the artist's practice, artwork themes and related ideas or issues, which are aimed at helping educators and readers make interesting and relevant connections to matters in their daily life.

## Introduction

The Asia Pacific Breweries (APB) Foundation Signature Art Prize is a premier juried prize inaugurated by the Asia Pacific Breweries Foundation and the Singapore Art Museum in 2008. It is a hallmark of distinction awarded to artists whose artworks represent a significant development in contemporary visual art in the Asia Pacific region.

A triennial competition, the APB Foundation Signature Art Prize seeks to highlight new developments in the visual arts, stimulate lively public discussion and critical debate, and provide a cross-cultural exhibition platform for established practitioners and significant emerging artists alike. Aimed at recognising the single most outstanding contemporary visual artwork produced in the preceding three years, the competition is open to all visual artworks, regardless of medium, subject matter and size.

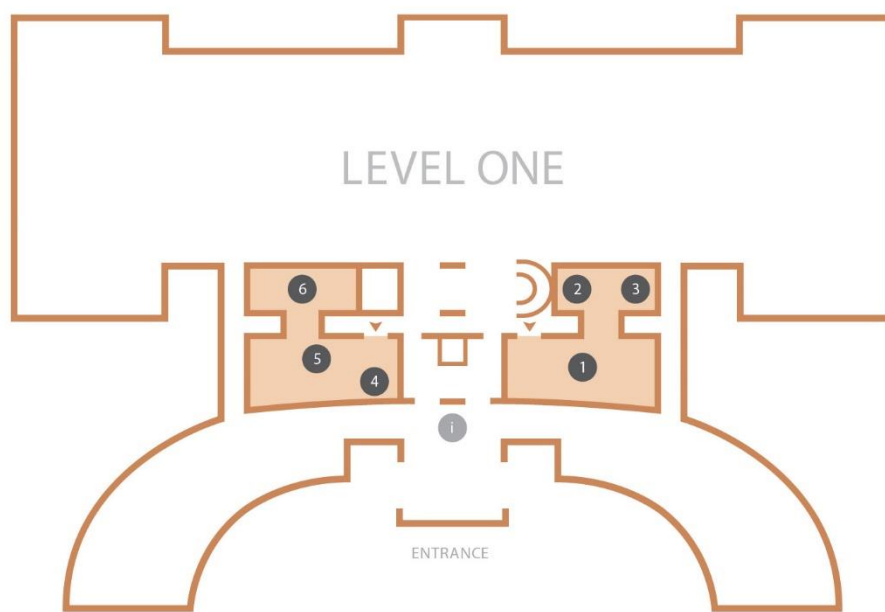
The inaugural edition in 2008 focused only on 12 countries: Cambodia, China, India, Laos, Malaysia, Mongolia, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Vietnam, and received a total of 34 nominations. The APB Foundation Signature Art Prize soon expanded its focus in 2011 to reach the entire Asia Pacific region, including 130 artworks from 23 Asia Pacific countries and territories. Nominations were received from new countries and territories including Indonesia, Philippines, Myanmar, Brunei, Korea, Japan, Taiwan, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Nepal, Australia and other Oceania and Pacific islands. The 2014 edition includes nominations from all previous countries and territories, including a nomination from new entrant, Hong Kong.

Nominators from across the region with a wide range of specialties and backgrounds are specially invited to nominate specific artworks – instead of artists – that had been aesthetically, culturally and socially significant in their particular art scenes in the past three years. A diverse panel of distinguished judges, who mostly hail from the Asia-Pacific region, are also selected specially to evaluate the nominations, shortlist the finalists, and decide on the key award-winning works in the APB Foundation Signature Art Prize exhibition

All nominated works are assessed on a set of criteria: the strength of the idea and concept; creative and interesting use of medium and material; technique, expression and form; artistic insight and interpretation, and imagination and originality. The Grand Prize and two Juror's Choice Awards are chosen by the international jury of art experts, critics and curators, while the People's Choice Award will go to the artist whose work garners the most number of public votes.

The APB Foundation Signature Art Prize is a recognition of distinction and significance in artistic practice, presenting the best of contemporary art in the Asia-Pacific region.

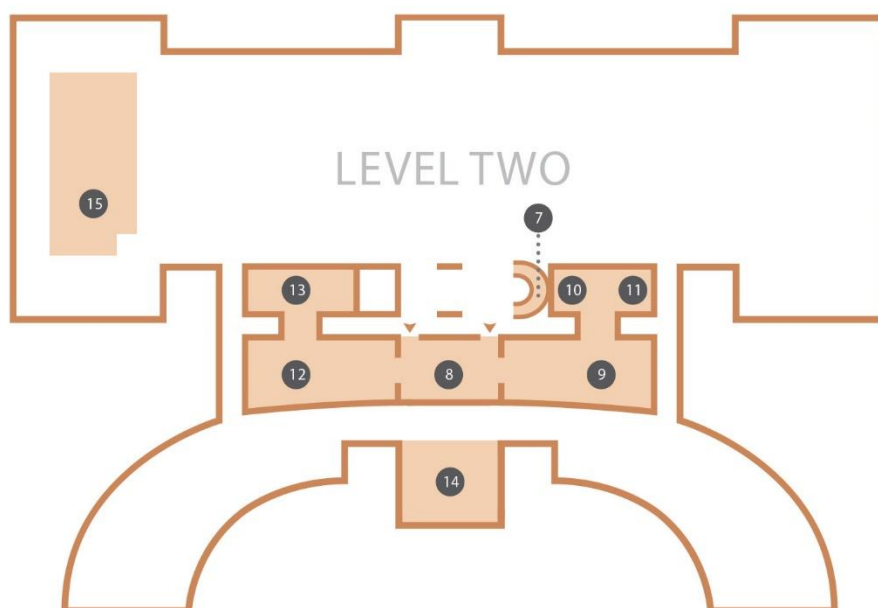
## Exhibition map



### LEVEL ONE

- 1 Nguyen Trinh Thi
- 2 Robert Zhao Renhui
- 3 Owen Leong
- 4 Farida Batool
- 5 Peng Wei
- 6 Yao Jui-Chung  
+ Lost Society  
Document (LSD)

## Exhibition map

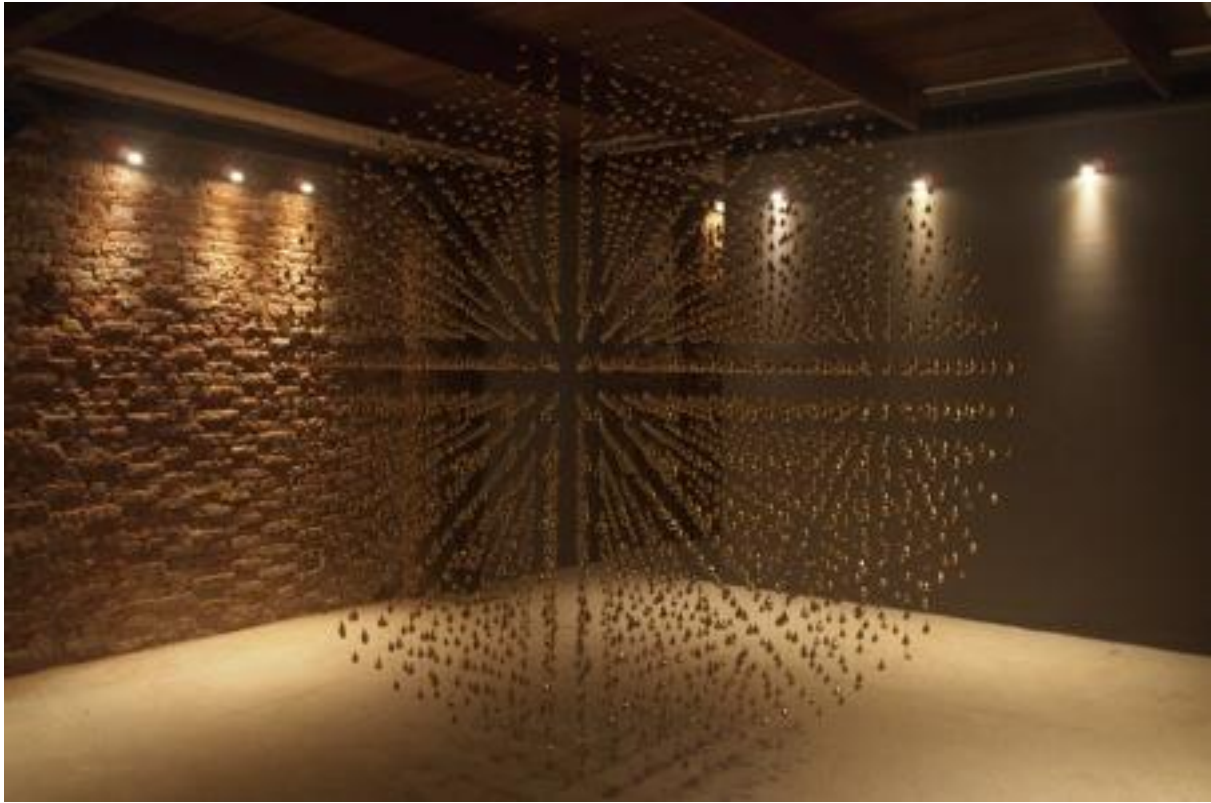


### LEVEL TWO

- 7 Liu Jianhua
- 8 Choe U-Ram
- 9 Go Watanabe
- 10 Lisa Reihana
- 11 Naeem Mohaiemen
- 12 Arin Rungjang
- 13 Ranbir Kaleka
- 14 Melati Suryodarmo
- 15 Ho Tzu Nven

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**Artwork*****Golden Teardrop***

Arin Rungjang

2013

Sculpture and video installation

Sculpture: 320 x 500 x 400cm, video duration 30:00 mins

Collection of the Singapore Art Museum

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### About the artwork and artistic process

*Golden Teardrop* is a sculpture and video **installation** created by Thai artist Arin Rungjang. It consists of 6,000 brass teardrops suspended on a timber frame salvaged from a traditional **Siamese** house, and steel beams from a post-war factory. This is accompanied by a 30-minute documentary video detailing the making of *thong yod*, the **titular** 'golden teardrop'.

*Thong yod* is a Thai dessert made with egg yolks and is found commonly throughout the country. The recipe originated from the Portuguese nuns in the 15<sup>th</sup> century. This **delicacy** was introduced to the Siamese court during the **Ayutthaya** Period in the 17<sup>th</sup> century by Maria Guyomar de Pinha, a woman of Portuguese, Japanese and Bengali descent who was the wife of Constantine Phaulkon, the Greek counsellor to Siam's King Narai. King Narai is often regarded as the first king of the Ayutthaya Dynasty who embraced foreign influences. The video component of Rungjang's work weaves together this global **narrative** with the oral history of Hisako Kubo Saringkan, a Japanese immigrant to Thailand, as she busies herself with the preparation of *thong yod*. These scenes are **interspersed** with those of the **fabrication** of the brass teardrops at a **foundry** in Samut Prakan, Thailand.

Through the use of two different mediums and the depiction of political, cultural and individual narratives, Rungjang engages the audience and urges them to gain a better understanding of the history and significance of Ayutthaya, the former capital of Siam. Many parts of Thai history have not been recorded, nor have formal connections and associations been made. Many Thais have thus assumed that *thong yod* came from the native Thais themselves. By exploring and presenting the origins of this traditional delicacy, Rungjang effectively revisits and remaps his country's history and memory in relation to current and existing realities.

### **About the artist**

Based in Bangkok, Arin Rungjang (b. 1974, Bangkok, Thailand) is a contemporary artist who has been recognised as a pioneer of installation practice here. He graduated with a Bachelor of Fine Arts from Silpakorn University, Thailand in 2002, and has exhibited abroad extensively since 2006.

In 2011, Rungjang produced an interactive installation for the Singapore Biennale, setting up an informal trading post where Thai migrant workers living in Singapore could meet and exchange their furniture for brand new items from IKEA. He often creates works that incorporate his personal experience and his country's complex political and cultural history. Some examples include those presented at the 18th Biennale of Sydney (2012), the Bandung City Pavilion at the Shanghai Biennale (2012) and the Asia Triennial in Manchester, United Kingdom (2011)

*Golden Teardrop* was Rungjang's entry for Thailand in the 55th Venice Biennale (2013). More of his works will be shown at the upcoming 4th Asian Art Biennale in Taichung, Taiwan and *Space Gravity Rebound*, a solo exhibition which will be presented at VER Gallery in Bangkok, Thailand.



## Discussion and suggested activities

### Questions for discussion

- This installation is made up of a few parts. How many parts are there and what material are they made of? [*2. Video – sound and images, Sculpture – brass, timber, steel beams*]
- Look at the hanging sculpture and describe what you see – what is the larger form that is made up with the smaller objects? What do the objects remind you of? [*spherical teardrop, eye of the peacock, egg yolk, candle light, necklace*]
- Walk around the artwork and look at it from different angles. What do you notice?
- Watch the video documentary and take note of the ingredients used to make the golden teardrop dessert. What are the ingredients used? What do you think the golden teardrop dessert would taste like? [*Ingredients: egg yolks, flour, syrup, water*]
- The golden teardrop dessert is considered 1 of the 9 auspicious traditional Thai desserts and is usually served at Thai weddings as a symbol of wealth. What are some of the auspicious traditional fare served at Singapore weddings? What do these food items symbolize?
- Why do you think the artist hung the golden teardrops in a spherical sculpture? How does it convey the artist's message?
- [FOOD FOR THOUGHT] For the accompanying video, why do you think the artist has chosen to tell the story of a Japanese woman living in Thailand? What parallels can you draw between the Japanese woman's personal story and the history behind the golden teardrop dessert in Siam?

### Suggested activities

- Find the recipe for the *thong yod*, the golden teardrop dessert and try making it at home. Share your homemade golden teardrops with your friends and family and ask them what they think!
- Singapore is widely regarded as a 'food paradise' in Southeast Asia. What is your favourite local cuisine and how much do you know about its history? Find out more about its origins and share them with your friends and family.

## **Glossary**

### **Installation**

An art exhibit that works with a given space as a whole, rather than focusing on a discrete object. Sometimes, video is part of the overall presentation. The relation of the parts to the whole is important to the interpretation of the piece.

### **Siamese**

Of or concerning Siam, its people, or language. The former name of Thailand.

### **Titular**

Having an important or impressive title but not possessing the power or duties associated with it.

### **Delicacy**

Something delightful or pleasing, especially a choice food considered with regard to its rarity, costliness, or the like.

### **Ayutthaya**

A city in Thailand, on the Chao Phraya River: capital of the country until 1767; noted for its canals and ruins.

### **Narrative**

A spoken or written account of connected events; a story.

### **Interspersed**

Scattered amongst or between other things; places here and there.

### **Fabrication**

The action or process of manufacturing or inventing something.

### **Foundry**

A workshop or factory for casting metal.

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## Further reading and viewing

### Artist's Website

<http://arinrungjang.tumblr.com/>

### Interview with Arin Rungjang on ART-IT online magazine, Japan

Available [here](#).

### Book of recipes for Thai cakes and desserts

*Thai cakes and desserts* by Chat Mingkwan. Available [here](#).

### Video introducing *thong yod*

*Sweet Secret EP5 Kanom Tong Yip, Tong Yod, Foi Tong*. Available [here](#).