



Education Folio

Lisa Reihana

New Zealand

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.

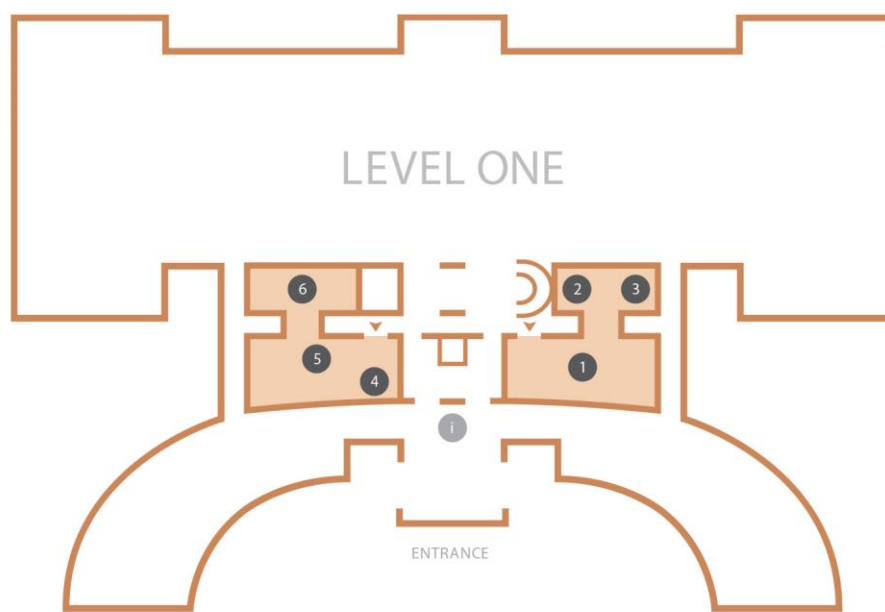
The inaugural edition in 2008 focused only on 12 countries: Cambodia, China, India, Laos, Malaysia, Mongolia, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Vietnam, and received a total of 34 nominations. The APB Foundation Signature Art Prize soon expanded its focus in 2011 to reach 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 artscenes 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

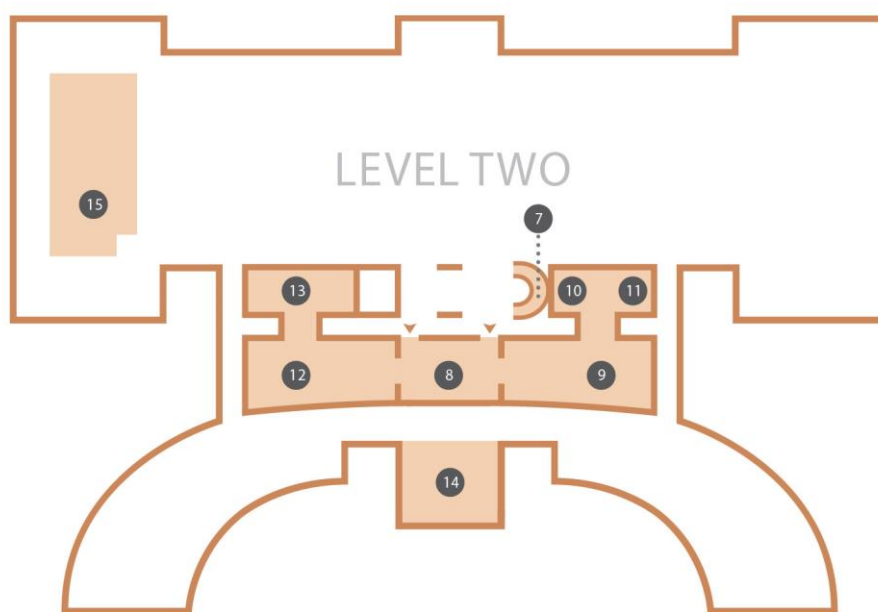
- 1 Nguyen Trinh Thi
- 2 Robert Zhao Renhui
- 3 Owen Leong
- 4 Farida Batool
- 5 Peng Wei
- 6 Yao Jui-Chung
+ Lost Society
Document (LSD)

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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***in Pursuit of Venus***

Lisa Reihana

2012

2-channel HD video with stereo sound on continuous loop

Duration 8:00 mins

Collection of the Artist

Image courtesy of the Artist

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About the artwork and artistic process

in Pursuit of Venus is a video work set against the **utopian** landscape of Tahiti. A homage to the artist's own cultural identity and heritage, the work was inspired by *Les Sauvages de la Mer Pacifique* (The Savages of the South Pacific), an early nineteenth century scenic wallpaper by French painter Jean-Gabriel Charvet. *The wallpaper* is a reflection of **Neoclassical** French society's fascination with the exotic cultures encountered on Captain James Cook's explorations of the Pacific. It also references the illustrations of what was then perceived as primitive cultures, exotic **botany** and natural history that were popular during the time. Produced by French **entrepreneur** Joseph Dufour with the latest printing techniques, it was the largest panoramic wallpaper of its time.

Just like the original wallpaper, *in Pursuit of Venus* depicts the **indigenous** cultures of the Pacific, but with the use of modern-day digital **animation**. The two-channel video work is a contemporary take on Charvet's wallpaper, and attempts to eradicate its predecessor's historical inaccuracies and inherent **exoticism**. This is achieved through featuring actual people of indigenous heritage dressed in their traditional garments and enacting the traditional dances, rituals and ceremonies of their respective cultures. With added elements of sound and movement, the wallpaper is enlivened as the video pans across the scenic **panorama**.

About the artist

Lisa Reihana (b. 1964, Henderson, New Zealand) is a multimedia artist of mixed Maori, English and Welsh heritage. Based in Aotearoa, New Zealand, Reihana graduated from the Elam School of Fine Arts at the Auckland University, Auckland with a Bachelors in Fine Arts. More recently in 2014, she attained a Master of Design from the Unitec Institute of Technology, Auckland.

Reihana's film and multimedia works often seek to address her indigenous roots, touching on issues related to Maori culture, history and philosophy and highlighting their relevance to contemporary lifestyles and experiences. With a keen interest in developing a new language to counter histories and create new ones, Reihana has participated in several exhibitions including *Close Encounters at Plug In*, Canada (2011); *Home on Native Land* at Tiff Lightbox, Toronto (2012); *in Pursuit of Venus* at A-Space Gallery, Toronto (2013); and *Suspended Histories* at Museum van Loon Amsterdam, the Netherlands (2013).

Discussion and suggested activities

Questions for discussion

- Observe the indigenous people featured in this video work. What activities are they engaging in? What do you think is the purpose of these activities?
- The soundscape of the video work involves the use of traditional songs and chants unique to the indigenous people. What do you think these traditional songs and chants are trying to express?
- The video work consists of moving human figures superimposed on a painted landscape. Why do you think the artist has chosen to retain the static dimension of the wallpaper instead of animating it along with the human characters?
- This video work was borne out of the artist's interest in addressing her Maori identity and culture. What are some factors which define one's unique identity and culture? Rank these factors according to how important they are to you, and discuss them with your friends and family. [Location, race, history, nationality, language, religious beliefs, aesthetics, food, etc.]
- [FOOD FOR THOUGHT] Indigenous cultures are often portrayed and perceived as exotica due to the history of colonialism. What are some other problems that colonialism has brought about for colonized nations? Conversely, what are some benefits brought about by colonialism? Discuss the positive and negative consequences of colonialism in relation to Singapore's history of British colonial rule.

Suggested activities

- Engage in some research on the different indigenous groups living in New Zealand and the Pacific Islands today. Find out more about the lifestyles, traditions, languages and religious beliefs of these unique cultures and share what you have learnt with your friends and family.
- Try tracing your family lineage to find out more about your own cultural and unique family heritage. Ask your family members and relatives about the previous generations of your family. Where were your ancestors from, and what do you know about their ethnic and personal backgrounds? Draw a family tree to collate your findings.

Glossary

Utopian

Modelled on or aiming for a state in which everything is perfect; idealistic.

Indigenous

Originating or occurring naturally in a particular place; native.

Animation

The technique of photographing successive drawings or positions of puppets or models, or using digital manipulation, to create an illusion of movement when the film is shown as a sequence.

Neoclassical

Of, relating to, or in the style of neoclassicism, which refers to a late 18th- and early 19th-century style in European architecture, decorative art, and fine art, based on the imitation of surviving classical models and types.

Botany

The study of plants, including their classification, structure, physiology, ecology, and economic importance.

Entrepreneur

A person who sets up a business or businesses, taking on financial risks in the hope of profit.

Exoticism

The quality of seeming unusual or interesting, usually because of associations with a distant country.

Panorama

An extensive unbroken view, as of a landscape, in all directions.

Further reading and viewing

Website for *in Pursuit of Venus*

<http://www.inpursuitofvenus.com/>

Book about the history and development of the Pacific Islands

A history of the Pacific Islands by Steven Roger Fischer. Available [here](#).

Book about Maori art and culture

Maori: art and culture by Janet Davidson, edited by D. C. Starzecka. Available [here](#).

Book about the navigation methods employed by explorers of the Pacific

The prehistoric exploration and colonisation of the Pacific by Geoffrey Irwin. Available [here](#).

Book about Western influence in the South Pacific

Paradise past: the transformation of the South Pacific, 1520-1920 by Robert W. Kirk. Available [here](#).