



Education Folio

Liu Jianhua

China

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.

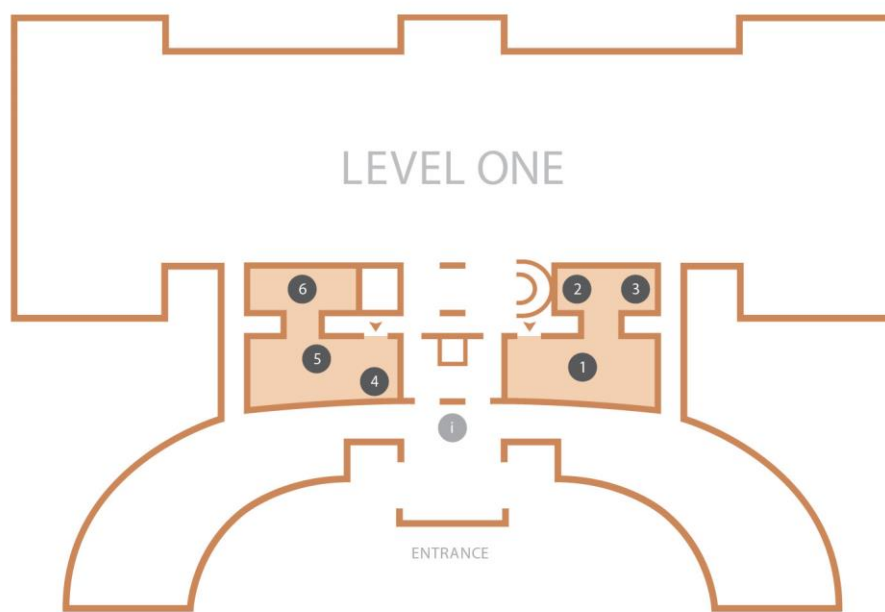
The inaugural edition in 2008 focused only on 12 countries: Cambodia, China, India, Laos, Malaysia, Mongolia, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Vietnam, and received a total of 34 nominations. The APB Foundation Signature Art Prize soon expanded its focus in 2011 to reach 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 background are specially invited to nominate artworks – instead of artists – that had been significant in its aesthetic, cultural and social merit in the past three years. A diverse panel of distinguished judges who are represented geographically are also selected specially sit on the APB Foundation Signature Art Prize panel to judge these nominated works.

All nominated works are assessed on 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 an 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 contemporary art, showcasing the best visual display of talent and skill in the region.

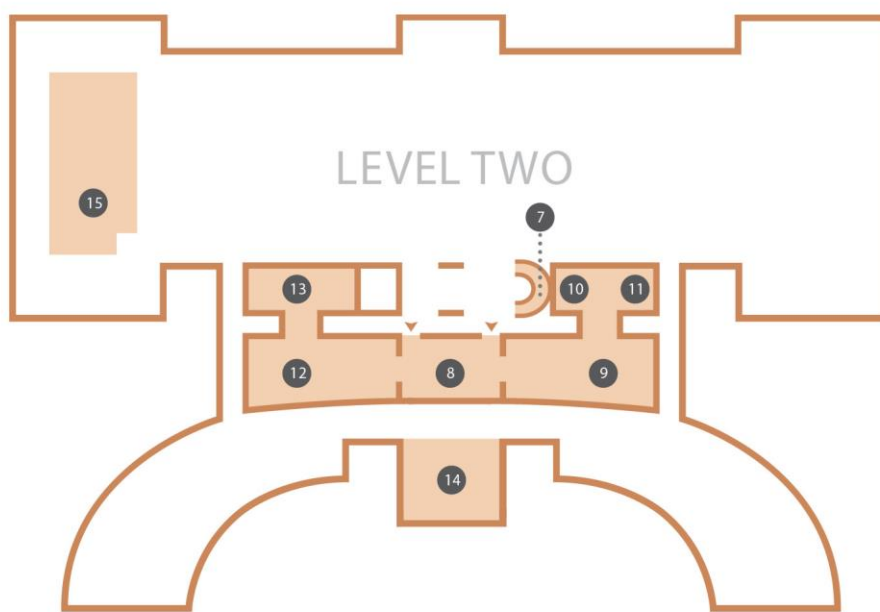
Exhibition map



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***Trace***

Liu Jianhua

2011

Porcelain

Dimensions variable

Collection of the Artist

Image courtesy of the Artist

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About the artwork and artistic process

Trace is a site-specific sculptural installation by Chinese artist Liu Jianhua. It consists of approximately 200 pieces of black porcelain of various sizes and shape, to give the appearance of black ink dripping down the walls. Installed along the central curved stairwell at the Singapore Art Museum, the black drips and marks appear to scale the two-storey walls and flow onto the landing, forming a distinctive contrast with the museum's colonial building. The use of porcelain as the sole material of the artwork is significant as it is a Chinese invention that introduced the art of porcelain to the rest of the world. The **aesthetics** of the artwork also references the traditional aesthetic concept of 屋漏痕 (wū lòu hén), loosely translated as "leaking water stains on a wall". This was a **benchmark** for a Chinese calligrapher's skill and workmanship established during the Tang Dynasty. Additionally, the black ink depicted is a powerful artistic and aesthetic symbol in traditional Chinese culture.

Trace is also a work which exemplifies the artist's change in artistic direction over the years. Here, the sculptural ink stains dripping down the gallery's white walls are a representation of the traces left behind by the human mind. These traces are presented in a quiet environment in an attempt to evoke **tranquillity** and soothe the viewers' chaotic subconscious.

About the artist

Based in Shanghai, China, Liu Jianhua (b. 1962, Ji'an, China) graduated in Fine Art of Sculpture at the Jingdezhen Ceramics Institute and has been teaching Fine Art of Sculpture at Shanghai University since 2004.

Liu is one of China's best known sculptural and installation artists whose primary materials are porcelain and mixed media. Having spent 14 years learning the ceramic and porcelain craft at a factory in Jingdezhen, a city known for its thriving porcelain industry, Liu's porcelain and mixed media works often reflect the economic and social changes China has undergone, as well as the problems that have surfaced as a result. Since 2008 Liu has taken a different artistic approach, creating works with “no meaning and no content”, a contrast to his previous work which critiqued social issues.

His works have been exhibited at the 1st Kiev Biennale of Contemporary Arts, Ukraine (2012); 14th International Sculpture Biennale of Carrara, Italy (2010); 17th Biennale of Sydney, Australia (2010); and the 1st Singapore Biennale (2006). Liu also represented China at the 50th Biennale di Venezia (2003) and was the recipient of the 71st Award of Art China – Artist of the Year for Sculptural Art.

Discussion and suggested activities

Questions for discussion

- Look at the artwork from different viewpoints. How do you feel about the artwork from these different positions? [1st floor, walking up the stairs, 2nd floor, walking down the stairs, etc.]
- The artwork consists of porcelain pieces that suggest black ink dripping down the gallery walls. Would the effect be different if actual black ink was used instead? What other materials can be used to create a similar effect? [acrylic paint, heavy gel, resin, etc.]
- What if the 3-D ink stains are in other colours? What feeling(s) would it evoke instead? [Consider colour schemes such as monochromatic, complementary, analogous, etc.]
- [FOOD FOR THOUGHT] Is the art of Chinese calligraphy losing its popularity in recent times? Yes, No or Maybe? Whatever your answer, why do you think so?

Suggested activities

- The artwork employs the imagery of black ink on white walls as a metaphor for the traces left behind in the human mind. Can you think of any other metaphors that suggest how we remember and are affected by experiences, and how memory works? Try drawing a visual representation of the metaphor you like and have fun colouring it in – use any medium you like!

Glossary

Aesthetic

A set of principles underlying the work of a particular artist or artistic movement that is recognisable in the way it appears.

Benchmark

A standard or point of reference against which things may be compared.

Tranquillity

A state of calm or quietude.

Further reading and viewing

Artist's Website

<http://www.liujianhua.net/>

Documentary about artist Liu Jianhua

DOCUMENTARY, CCTV 9 (English). Available [here](#).

Book introducing the art of Chinese calligraphy

The art of Chinese calligraphy by Stephen Addiss. Available [here](#).

Documentary on the history of Chinese painting

The Culture Show : The Art Of Chinese Painting. Available [here](#).