

Education Resource Guide



Signature

Art Prize 2018

Asia Pacific Breweries Foundation

25 May - 2 September 2018

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Education Resource Guide

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Introduction

The Education Resource Guide focuses on the fifteen artists whose works are included in the Asia Pacific Breweries (APB) Foundation Signature Art Prize 2018, a triennial celebration of the most outstanding contemporary artworks from across the Asia Pacific region and Central Asia. This edition's finalists represent an array of engaging and compelling works by artists from Australia, Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, Japan, Kazakhstan, Malaysia, New Zealand, Singapore, South Korea, Taiwan, Thailand and Vietnam.

The artworks exhibited display an innovative use of materials and involve the use of a broad range of media ranging from painting, sculpture to video and mixed-media installation. *APB Foundation Signature Art Prize 2018* provides an opportunity for learners to explore how contemporary artists address issues and concerns of our time, where the exhibited works critically examine issues of the personal and socio-historical dimensions.

The Education Resource Guide suggests techniques of inquiry-based learning for exploring contemporary art. Inquiry-based learning refers to a pedagogical mindset to teaching and learning where the learners' question, ideation and observations are central to their learning experience. This guide builds on learners' existing knowledge of art and helps them to reflect on the processes of responding to art and creating of art. The guide is also available online at **www.singaporeartmuseum.sg/education** with images that can be downloaded or projected in class. The images are to be used for educational purposes only.

Before bringing learners to the *APB Foundation Signature Art Prize 2018* exhibition, we invite educators to visit the show, read the guide and explore artists or artworks that are most relevant to your learners. For more information on the exhibition and scheduling a visit for your learners, please visit **www.singaporeartmuseum.sg/education**

Understanding the Guide

The Education Resource Guide places the learner in the centre of the learning to be experienced at the *APB Foundation Signature Art Prize 2018* exhibition. Over the duration of exploring the exhibition, learners will gain a broad understanding of how contemporary artists work and investigate their subject matters, materials and contexts.

The guide to the *APB Foundation Signature Art Prize 2018* exhibition follows a chronological structure, where it is suggested that educators prepare content or activities

Before Viewing. These pre-visit activities before visiting the exhibition enables learners to remember, understand and apply their (existing) art knowledge to the analysis and evaluation of the works when they **View and Discuss**. It is during the visit to the exhibition that students are given the opportunity to explore the works and note down their responses in their sketchbooks or a printed copy of the Education Resource Guide.

It is during **View and Discuss** that the art discussion, critique and art writing takes place. Educators can engage in inquiry-based learning to analyse the different artworks and distinguish the different ideas and concepts presented during their discussion. Educators are encouraged to use the questions provided in the Education Resource Guide to open dialogue and conversations with learners during the exhibition visit.

Further to this, learners can use the guide to evaluate the artworks in justifying their stand in appraising the ideas behind the works. As a result, educators can assemble these ideas from the exhibition and engage in **Further Explorations** with their learners in designing lessons for them, where an investigation of similar concepts or materials can take place.

1. Introduction to the Education Resource Guide

1. About the Artwork

Title of work, medium used and collection that the work is from

2a. Description

A description of the work referenced from the curator's artwork text

2b. Keywords

Useful words that relate to the artwork and its contexts

3. Quotations

What the artists, art writers or curators said about the work

4a. Before Viewing

Activities or questions that enable learners to recall or remember past knowledge or information

4b. View and Discuss

Questions for Art Discussion, Critique and Art Writing through an inquiry-based approach

5. Further Explorations

Assemble ideas from exhibition in an investigation of materials and concepts

6. About the Artist(s)

Information about the artists taken from *APB Foundation Signature Art Prize 2018* exhibition guide

1.1.

Bae Young- whan (South Korea)

*Abstract Verb - Can
you remember?*

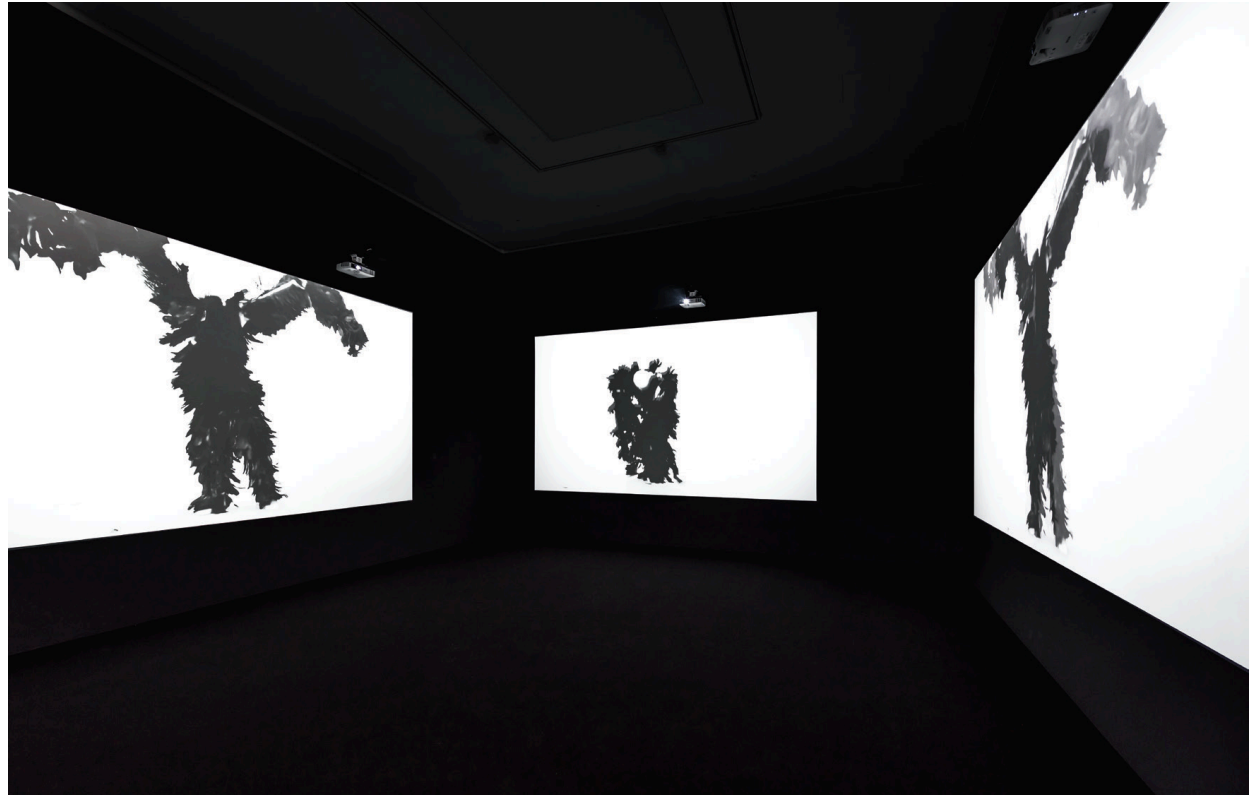
2016

4-channel video

Duration 6:37

Collection of the artist

Nominated by Jiyoung Lee



Installation view at PKM Gallery, Seoul, 2016; image courtesy of the artist and PKM Gallery

Description

Abstract Verb – Can you remember? is a 4-channel video projected on four walls of the installation space. The work of Young-whan revolves around the motion of the human body, where the viewer observes a dancing and gyrating figure that according to the artist represents a contemporary take on traditional rituals where elements of street dance is combined with folk and primitive dance movements.

While the central figure is gyrating to the percussion beats, the backdrop is one that is white and pristine, offering contrast and emphasis to the solitary performer's shape and colour (which alternates between orange and black). The figure clad in a featured costume moves energetically and vigorously within the white space, exuding a powerful presence but also, according to the artist, embodies a 'spiritual excitement' with the power of the dance.

Keywords

dance, movement, choreography, human figure as performer, worship of animals, tension between old and new, performance, costume design, video art



Video Still

Useful Quotations

“The dance [is] ... based on my own interpretation of different shamanistic dance moves from around the world ... of people that used to worship black birds such as ravens and eagles, a culture that existed not only in Korea but also in other parts of the world, including Siberia and Mongolia.”

Bae Young-whan



Installation View

Before Viewing

View and Discuss

Show & Tell: Still images (from this guide) of *Abstract Verb*—
Can you remember?

Introduce students to examples of performance art, performance art video and music video:

1. Performance Art
Unlock Art: Frank Skinner on Performance Art [goo.gl/jJRNQO](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jJRNQO) (By Tate: [youtube.com/tate](https://www.youtube.com/tate))
2. Performance Art Video
Björk - Mutual Core - Official Music Video [goo.gl/r4zvH4](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r4zvH4)
(By MOCA: [youtube.com/MOCATV](https://www.youtube.com/MOCATV))
3. Music Video
Pharrell Williams - Happy - Official Music Video <https://bit.ly/ISjjGV>

Ask learners the following questions:

- A. What are these videos made for?
- B. Who is the audience of these videos?
- C. What makes Young-whan's work an artwork and Pharrell William's video a 'commercial' music video?

Show in exhibition: *Abstract Verb* – *Can you remember?*

- Look carefully at the still images taken from the video work, although Young-whan has created these videos using digital technology where the dancer is moving freely and seemingly uninhibited, what **characteristic of the dance** suggest that the artist is referring to a significantly earlier period?
- Why has the artist chosen to focus on a performer dressed in a feathered costume- what is the **significance of this decision**?

Educator: Young-whan's work references the ubiquity of modern day music videos where music is combined with various styles of video-making: for more information, see en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Music_video.

Review Questions Upon viewing:

- Comparing Young-whan's work with that of commercial music videos, what similarities do you see? What differences? How does this understanding of music videos and its modern day use affect your reading of Young-whan's work?

Further Explorations

Music videos are predominantly used to market the sale of music recordings, in addition these music videos can serve an artistic purpose in itself due to its high production value and high aesthetic value. These videos use a wide range of styles and video-making techniques in approaching the combined use of sound and imagery.

Techniques like **stop-motion animation, live-action filming and documentary style film-making** are used to attract the contemporary audience in viewing these moving images.

In the case of the artist Young-whan, his video work is an expression of his interpretation of the fundamental issues with human beings and society. His use of an 'avian motif' is a reinforcement of the tension between modern and older (pre-modern) value systems as suggested in the performance. The artist observes that: **"Today, people and birds live in an uncomfortable place to fly. Modern people are degraded as the subjects of scrutiny and regulation, we are like birds that [have] lost their ability to fly."**

Further Explorations

Make or Plan a Music Video

- A. Research online on how music videos are typically composed, filmed and structured.
- B. Ask the class to collaborate on creating this unique music video.
- C. Brainstorm on a list of possible animals you could use as a central figure in the music video.

Learners can also ask these following questions in their planning or making:

- What type of music can be used?
- What movement or poses can the animal take on or make?
- What setting or backdrop can be chosen and why?
- What angles or point of views can be taken to best reflect the idea of the music video?
- What props can be used?

A Fun Example

- Select a short dance sequence from a Korean Popular Music Video (K-POP), and as a group, dance to the tune of classical/traditional music for five mins.
- The groups can create an interesting group name/identity for themselves.
- Present as a 'Dance Performance' to the class.
- Educator and learners can vote for the *Best Performance Group* and the *Best Idea from a Group*.
- This example marries the new with the old, drawing inspiration from the video artwork by the Korean artist Bae Young-whan, *and it encourages team work as well!*



Film Still

Bae Young-whan (b. 1969, Seoul, South Korea) portrays social realities of Korean society through various mediums such as sculpture, painting, photography, video and installation. He holds a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Oriental Painting from Hongik University, Seoul. Over the course of his career, Bae has staged multiple solo exhibitions in Seoul, at venues such as Shinsegae Gallery (2017), Platform-L Contemporary Art Center (2016), PLATEAU, Samsung Museum of Art (2012) and Art Sonje Center (2009). His work has also been featured in the SeMA Biennale Mediacity Seoul (2014), Sharjah Biennial 11 (2013), at the Korean Pavilion in the 51st Venice Biennale (2005) and in the 3rd to 5th Gwangju Biennale (2000, 2002, 2004), as well as in group exhibitions worldwide.

Yerbossyn Meldibekov (Kazakhstan)

Brand

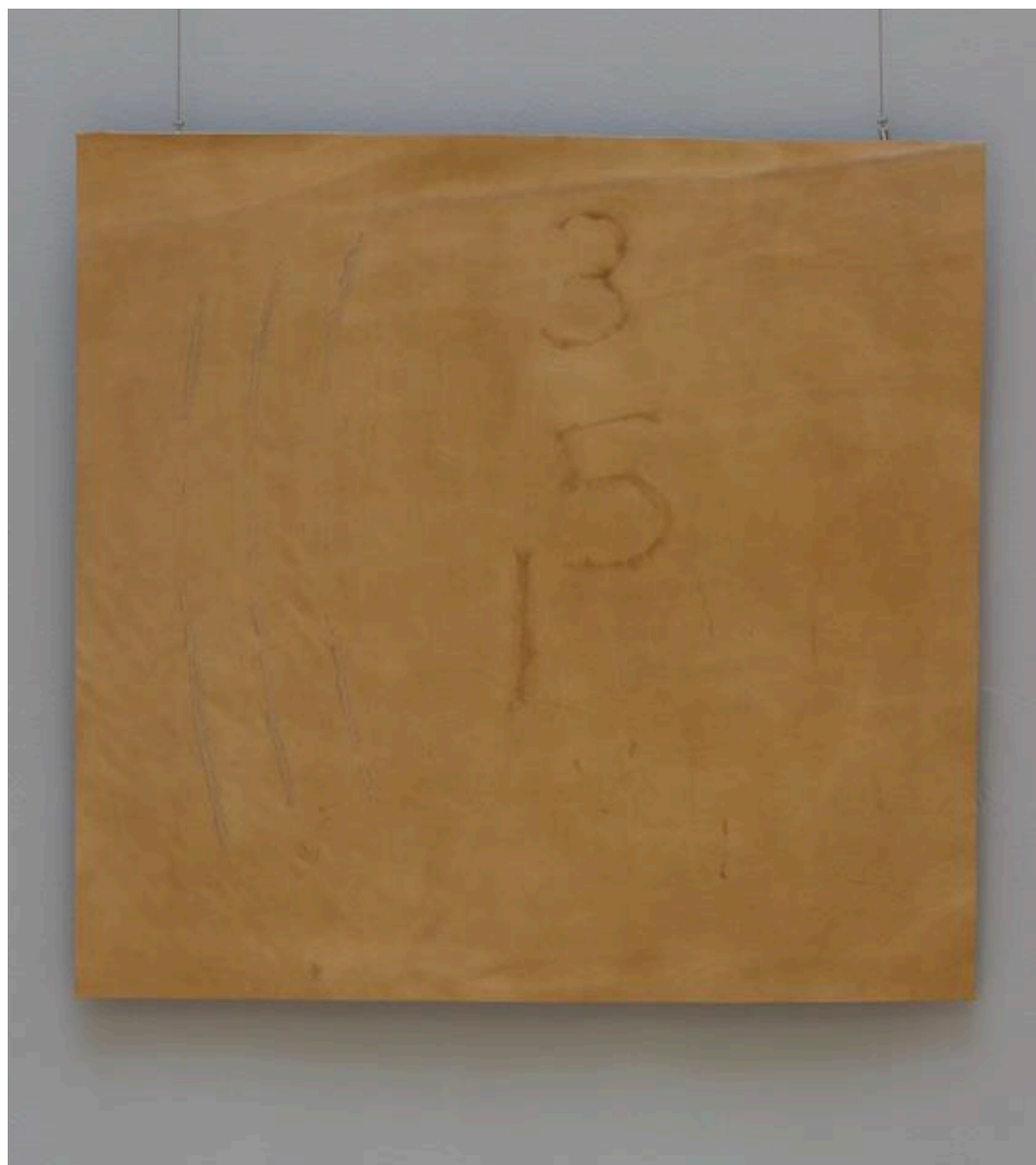
2014–2015

Hide (set of 8 pieces)

Various dimensions

Collection of the artist

Nominated by Valeria Ibraeva



Description

Brand is a series of 2D artworks by Meldibekov presented as panels made from leather. The origin of the leather is important to the work and forms his critical examination of art production in the newly established free market society of Central Asia.

Further to this, the work uses natural material from the region where numbers are used as markings to brand and differentiate cattle. Meldibekov's *Brand* is a work that explores the iconography of numbers and symbols in our everyday life and consumerist culture.

The work also contains a darker connotations about bearing scars from past events, traditions and historical moments.

Keywords

Natural material as art, iconography, free market society, branding, history, traditional

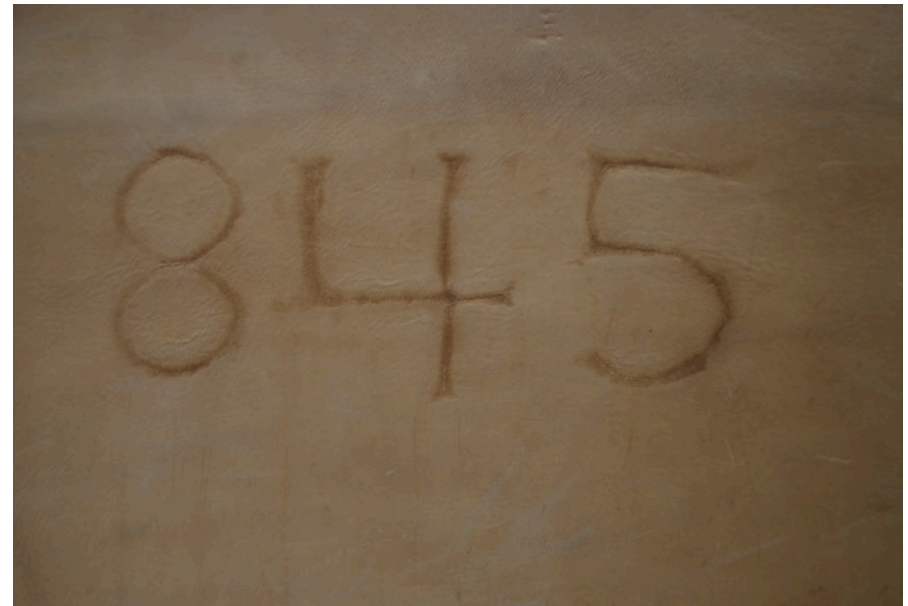


Installation view at A. Kasteyev State Museum of Arts, Almaty, 2015; image courtesy of the artist

Useful Quotations

“Ten years ago, I met an old man in Berlin. His hands were covered with deformed scars, consisting of digits. It struck me that the numbers were tattooed by the Nazis when he was much younger. When I saw these large deformed scars on the hides ... I instantly recalled that old man.”

Yerbossyn Meldibekov



Details; Image courtesy of the artist

Before Viewing

Show & Tell: Installation view and details view of *Brand*

Introduce students to a few examples of artworks that uses the iconography of numeric symbols:

1. On Kawara's *Today* series
(Information at: guggenheim.org/arts-curriculum/topic/paintings-today-seriesdate-paintings)
2. Jasper John's *o Through 9* (Information at: tate.org.uk/art/artworks/johns-o-through-9-to0454)
3. Tetsuo Miyajima's *Connect With Everything* exhibition at MOCA Sydney, Australia (Information at: archive.mca.com.au/miyajima/)

Introduce students to artists who use natural materials in place of traditional art materials:

1. Joseph Beuy's concept of "Social Sculpture" in 7000 Oaks (1982) (Information at: tate.org.uk/art/artists/joseph-beuys-747)
2. Andy Goldsworthy's use of natural materials from bark, rock, leave, and twigs to create works of art.
(Information at: galerieelong.com/artists/andy-goldsworthy)

View and Discuss

Show in Exhibition: *Brand*

Without revealing the artist's ideas and concept, tell learners the title of the work and ask them to discuss what they see. What **questions** do they have in response to the work?

In groups, get learners to brainstorm and generate a list of questions to ask one another. Some possible questions can be:

- The artist has chosen to use an unconventional art material, why did he choose to do so?
- What is the objective of using such a material?
- How different is the use of this unusual material from a painted image?

As Meldibekov uses natural materials in place of a more traditional art medium like paint or clay, get students to think about the **material used and its implication**.

Share the '**Useful Quotation**' by the artist and his motivations behind making this piece of work and ask learners:

- How did knowing the artist's encounter with the old man change your perception of the work?
- Why did the 'large deformed scars on the hides' remind the artist of the old man in his story?
- What meaning(s) and emotional responses do you think Meldibekov is hoping to elicit in his work? Do you think he is successful?

Further Explorations

Metaphors are defined as figures of speech in which one word is used in place of another word to suggest a likeness between them. Metaphors form a connection between objects and historical events that appear to be disparate and unconnected to produce a poetic effect. For example, in Meldibekov’s work, he uses the branding of numbers on animals as a metaphor for scars left behind by historical or catastrophic events like war and natural disaster.

Think and Create

When you think of a person, can you associate some numbers with him/her?

Write down the number(s) on a piece of paper and stick it to a board.

When the learners have put up their sheets, select some to share what their artwork means.

E.g. When I think about my grandma, I would inevitably think of the number 108. Because that was the block number of her home.

The board with the sheets of numbers are in themselves, the artwork.

Educator’s possible response:

Since Meldibekov was trained as a sculptor during the Soviet regime, *Brand* is presented as a two-dimensional installation and not a series of paintings. He critically examines “the legacy of Soviet visual language and traditional Kazakh culture in the free market era” by presenting the numeric symbols on cow hide as art.

Further Explorations

Make and Create

Think about an **issue that is important to you**. For example, Joseph Beuys saw power in ‘universal human creativity’ and held a belief in the potential for art to bring about revolutionary change. This inspired him to embark on his concept of “Social Sculpture”. You may be passionate about recycling or environmental issues, consider one or more socio-political issues and in your groups find ways to call attention to this issue.

You may choose to collaboratively produce the following works of art:

1. Make a **Poster** about your issue and produce a piece of writing (article) about the issue.
2. Plan and Create a **Video** about the issue. For example, you may choose to interview people in creating a documentary component to the video or;
3. Consider other ways to call attention to the issue metaphorically. Is there a way you can create a **Performance Art** piece, make a **Sculpture** or a **Photography** work that expresses your concerns through the metaphor?

To get a better understanding of Meldibekov’s artistic practice and view other images and write-ups about his works, go to:

www.jozsagallery.com/meldibekov

aspangallery.com/en/artist/meldibekov



Installation view

Yerbossyn Meldibekov (b. 1964, Tyulkubas, Kazakhstan) graduated in 1992 from the Department of Monumental Sculpture, at the Almaty State Theatre and Art Institute in Kazakhstan. Having witnessed the fall of the Soviet Union and the ensuing social and political disarray, Meldibekov makes ironic and politically loaded works that examine post-Soviet Kazakhstan and Central Asia. Meldibekov has participated in major group exhibitions at the Garage Museum of Contemporary Art, Moscow (2015); Musée d'Art Moderne et Contemporain, Strasbourg (2014); Asia Art Archive, Hong Kong (2014); the Asia Pacific Triennial, Brisbane (2012); and the Central Asian Pavilion at the 51st Venice Biennale (2005). He has staged solo exhibitions in London, Germany and Hong Kong, with his most recent at Jozsa Gallery, Brussels (2017). Meldibekov lives and works in Almaty, Kazakhstan.

3.1

Gede Mahendra Yasa (Indonesia)

After Paradise Lost #1

2014

Acrylic on canvas

190 x 250 cm

Private collection

Nominated by Agung Hujatnikajennong



Description

After Paradise Lost #1 is part of a series of large-scale paintings that forms the artist's exploration of different styles of painting ranging from photorealism to Balinese traditional painting.

The work is rendered in the **Batuan** style of painting and composed of fragments of canonical paintings in Indonesian modern art history. Yasa has not only juxtaposed the bustle of everyday life on the island- Hindu temples, masked Barong dancers, tourists, surfers and women dressed in traditional costume – but also included his own versions of famous paintings from Western and Indonesian art history.

Together with family photographs and other touristic imagery like surfers, Yasa has created an 'epic painting' with its own logic and complexity, and questions the relation of Balinese painting (commonly viewed as paintings produced for tourists and not considered as canonical Indonesian art) to the development of modern art in Indonesia.

Keywords

Photorealism, Balinese Painting, Batuan School, everyday life, Indonesian art history, juxtaposition, traditional costume, touristic imagery



Details

Useful Quotations

“As an artist, Gede Mahendra Yasa’s primary object of investigation is the practice and discourse of painting, his medium of choice. The ‘After Paradise Lost’ series represents the artist’s engagement with Balinese painting, a chief thematic concern being the relation of Balinese painting to the history and development of modern art in Indonesia, and particularly in Java.”



Details

Before Viewing

Show & Tell: Project an image of *After Paradise Lost #1*.

Introduce learners to Photorealism, **Balinese Art** and video interviews with Yasa to gain an idea of his artistic practice and motivations behind his paintings.

Information of photorealism at:

- www.guggenheim.org/artwork/movement/photorealism
- www.tate.org.uk/art/art-terms/p/photorealism

Information on Gede Mahendra Yasa at:

- INDOARTNOW (Information at: <https://bit.ly/2jYAT17>)
- DestinAsian (Information at: **An Interview with Gede Mahendra Yasa**)

View and Discuss

Show in Exhibition: *After Paradise Lost #1*

This large and complex painting is almost three metres large. Examine it closely and carefully, and create a list of all the:

1. things or objects/forms you notice
2. colours deployed in depicting these forms
3. famous paintings that the artist has re-constructed/appropriated

In the discussion, learners can be prompted by asking these questions to them:

1. He uses very bright and saturated colours, why do you think he has chosen to do so?
2. His compositions are strikingly complex and detailed, why has he chosen to do so?
3. How do you feel when you look at *After Paradise Lost #1*? What does the painting remind you of?

After Paradise Lost #1 includes icons of Balinese imagery such as Balinese women, Barong (masked dancers), temples and also events from the artist's own family photographs and juxtapositions from iconic paintings. For example:

1. Theodore Gericault's *The Raft of the Medusa* (1818)
2. Raden Saleh's *The Arrest of Prince Diponegoro* (1857)

Further Questions:

- A. Yasa has titled his work *After Paradise Lost #1*. How might this title relate to his primary objective of investigating the practice and discourse of painting? What can we learn from studying Yasa's motivation behind his paintings and artistic practice?
- B. For this work, Yasa chose an approach of experimenting with different styles of painting. Search online for examples of these styles and list the attributes that *After Paradise Lost #1* has in common with them. Are there other commonalities between his experimental style of painting and other art forms?

Further Explorations

From the interviews and information in the exhibition guide, we learn that Yasa researched into modern Balinese painting styles, a style that he is somewhat unfamiliar with due to his training in western painting. He shares in these interviews that his works are a critique of issues like excesses of tourism, politics and capitalism re-imagined in his large-scale paintings.

Create your own “Paradise” collage through the inclusion of:

- Family photographs from the past and the recent/current day.
- Images or photographs of places that are important to you and your family
- Enact or stage photographs with your family and friends’ casts as members of a famous painting or carrying out a group activity.

Interview an older family member to find out more about your family history. Learners may choose to do an audio recording or a video recording of this interview using these questions as guidelines:

- What have you learned from them that you previously did not know about?
- How did you feel when you were interviewing your relatives?

Educators: *Do remind learners to draft out a list of questions before embarking on the interview.*

Create your own “Paradise” collage through the:

- Preparation of old newspapers, cartridge paper, scissors and glue.
- Process of selecting and cutting out figures or scenes from newspapers that catch your attention, and putting them together to form a collage.
- Drawing of inspiration from Gede Mahendra Yasa's works, referencing the dense and lively manner in which the images are placed together.

Educators: *Allow learners to be creative when juxtaposing their images and composing their ‘epic’ artwork*



Details

Gede Mahendra Yasa (b. 1967, Bali, Indonesia) studied painting at the Indonesian Institute of the Arts, Denpasar, and works in a variety of paints and materials on canvas. He was one of the founders of the currently defunct artist collective and art space, Klinik Seni TAXU (TAXU Art Clinic), which was formed in response to the production of 'traditional' Balinese paintings for tourists. Comprising ethnically Balinese artists, TAXU held exhibitions and released publications from 2002 to 2006. In 2014, Yasa also founded Neo-Pitamaha, a collective that researches the genealogy of Balinese visual tradition and issues of cultural politics. Besides having exhibited with both collectives from 2002 to the present, Yasa has presented his work in numerous solo and group exhibitions in Indonesia and abroad.

The Propeller Group (Vietnam)

AK-47 vs M16

2015

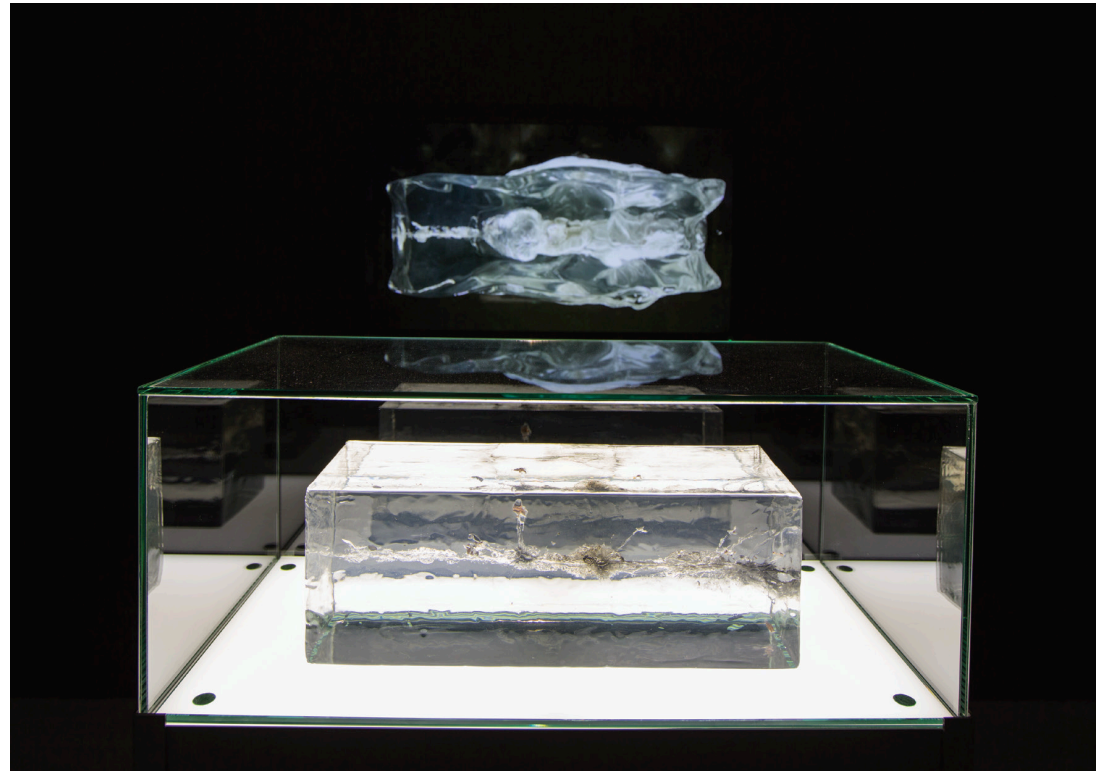
Ballistic gel block, bullet fragments and video
(1 of a set of 21)

18.1 x 42.9 x 18.4 cm (gel block);

video duration 2:48 mins

Collection of Singapore Art Museum

Nominated by Arlette Quynh-Anh Tran



Description

AK-47 vs. M16 is an installation consisting of 21 sets of gel blocks and their respective videos, of which one set is displayed here. The work is a spectacular visual effect where two bullets collide within a block of special gel which is made to mimic our flesh and is used in ballistics tests.

AK-47 vs. M16 is a profound epitome of ‘confrontation’ between two bullets, referencing the two armies that used two different guns during the Vietnam War. The video captures the sublime moment when the two fire lines slowed down, whereby the gel block forever freezes the horrifying scale of wartime and violence throughout 20th-century history.

The installation is an iconic memorial that reminds future generations of human’s endless conflicts and collisions.

Keywords

sublime, beauty, violence, freeze time, installation, gel block medium, memorial, human conflict



Installation detail

Useful Quotations

“The work is a profound epitome of ‘confrontation’: between two bullets, between the two armies escalating the Cold War, between the two front lines using these two different guns during the Vietnam War ... this lightning moment of two single fire lines slowed down and frozen forever realises the horrifying scale of wartime and political violence throughout 20th-century history.”

The Propeller Group



Installation Details

Before Viewing

Show & Tell: Images of warfare and the weaponry used

Before showing *AK-47 vs M16* to the learners, ask each learner to create a list of five to ten words that they associate with war. Once their individual lists are complete, create a collaborative list of all the words that were generated.

Highlight the words that appear most frequently. The learners are to discuss what could have caused warfare, violence and clashes between countries. Create a classroom discussion on history and its relevance to art.

Or

Using these key words, encourage learners to think of ways to **create an artwork** using the words as subject matter. (e.g. make a gestural painting, produce a video art piece or a series of collages or photography on the theme of 'poverty'.

View and Discuss

Show in Exhibition: *AK-47 vs M16*

Have learners create another list of words that describes their response to The Propeller Group's *AK-47 vs. M16* installation:

- Compare the two lists.
- Discuss why both list of words differed.

In viewing the work, discuss the methods employed by The Propeller Group in creating a work that challenges our usual associations with the weapons.

The Propeller Group uses video and unconventional materials and mediums in the construction of their installations, visit the group's website **www.the-propeller-group.com** to view more of their other works.

Further Lesson Idea

Just as how time has been slowed down in *AK-47 vs. M16*, learners can explore selecting a series of actions and objects to produce a hyper-realistic video on their own using time-lapse techniques. (Read more at: **<https://timelapsenetwork.com/tutorial/how-to-create-a-time-lapse-video-step-by-step/>**)

Further Explorations

The Propeller Group's homeland of Vietnam has seen a series of economic and political reforms in their path towards integrating into the world economy. Divide learners into groups and ask each group to research into the country's culture, economy, geography and history. Each group will do a short presentation in class. A key question to ask learners is:

How does learning more about Vietnam inform student's understanding and response to The Propeller Group's work?

In The Propeller Group's *Television Commercial for Communism (TVCC)* (2011–12), the collective explored a video project that imagines a rebranding of communism in the post-Cold War era. In their attempts to producing TVCC (and broadcast it on television), the group explores historical and contemporary relationships between communism and capitalism, appropriating contemporary strategies of advertising and marketing.

You can encourage learners to plan an advertising campaign that improves the lives of citizens (in Singapore), and provide time and space for students to read up on national campaigns of the past. You can find information on:

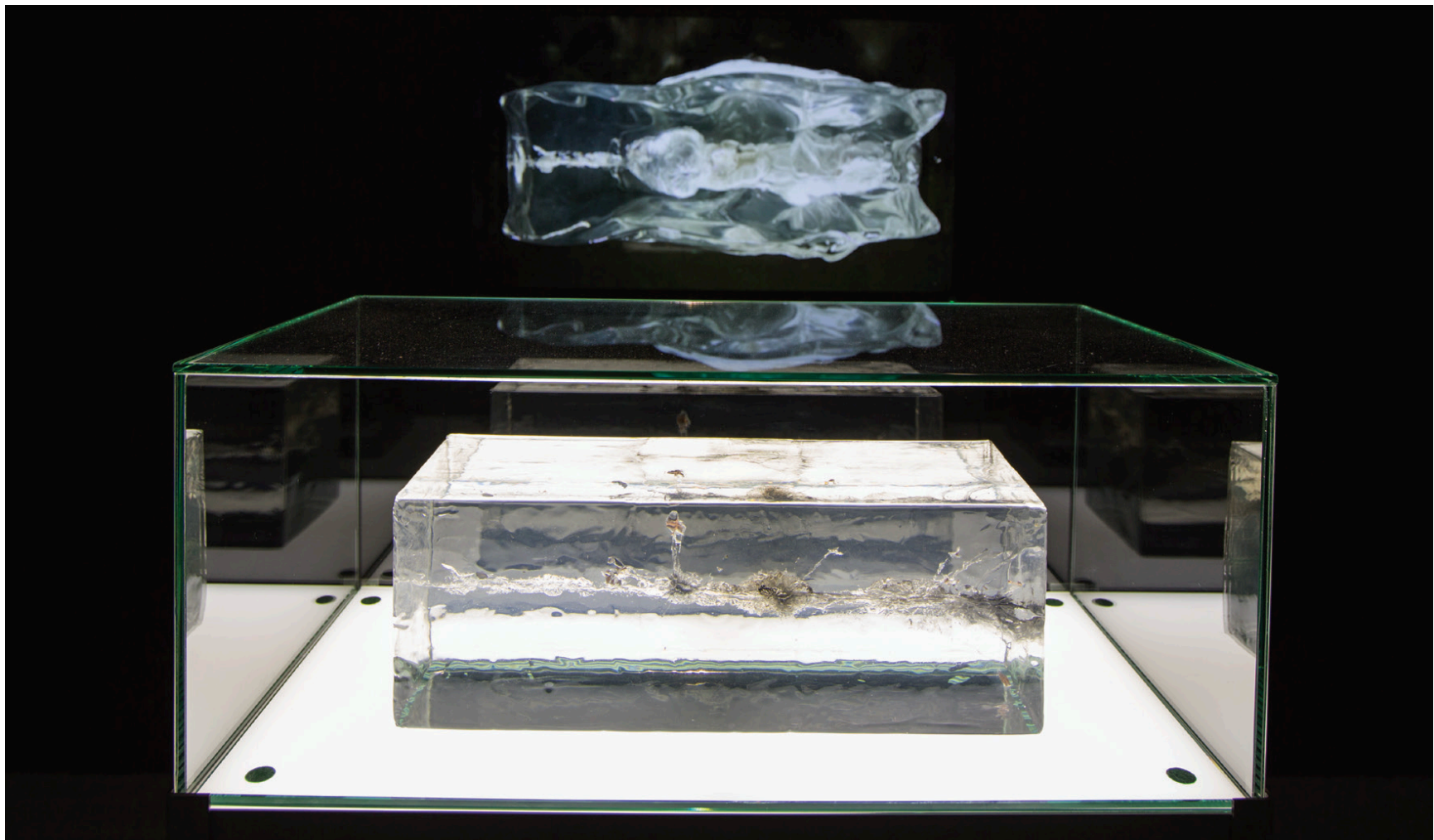
<https://remembersingapore.org/2013/01/18/singapore-campaigns-of-the-past/>

The advertising campaign can include the following collaterals:

- Poster
- Television Video Commercial
- Flyer (B5 size or smaller)
- Collar Pins or any related item

You can watch The Propeller Group on their concept for TVCC at:

<https://www.guggenheim.org/video/the-propeller-group-on-the-concept-for-tvcc>



Installation

The Propeller Group (est. 2006, Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam) is an artist collective originally founded by Tuan Andrew Nguyen and Phu Nam, and later joined by Matt Lucero. It currently has revolving membership, and appropriates various structures of collaboration into a platform for collectivity. The collective's multimedia works use the languages of advertising and politics to initiate conversations about power, propaganda, and manipulation. It recently staged solo exhibitions at the Blaffer Art Museum, Houston (2017) and Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago (2016), and has participated in major exhibitions including the Yokohama Triennale (2017), Venice Biennale (2015) and 7th Asia Pacific Triennial of Contemporary Art, Brisbane (2012). Its work can be found in the collections of the Guggenheim Museum and Museum of Modern Art, New York, Queensland Art Gallery | Gallery of Modern Art, and Singapore Art Museum, among others. The artists live and work in Ho Chi Minh City.

Mata Aho Collective (New Zealand)

Kaokao #1

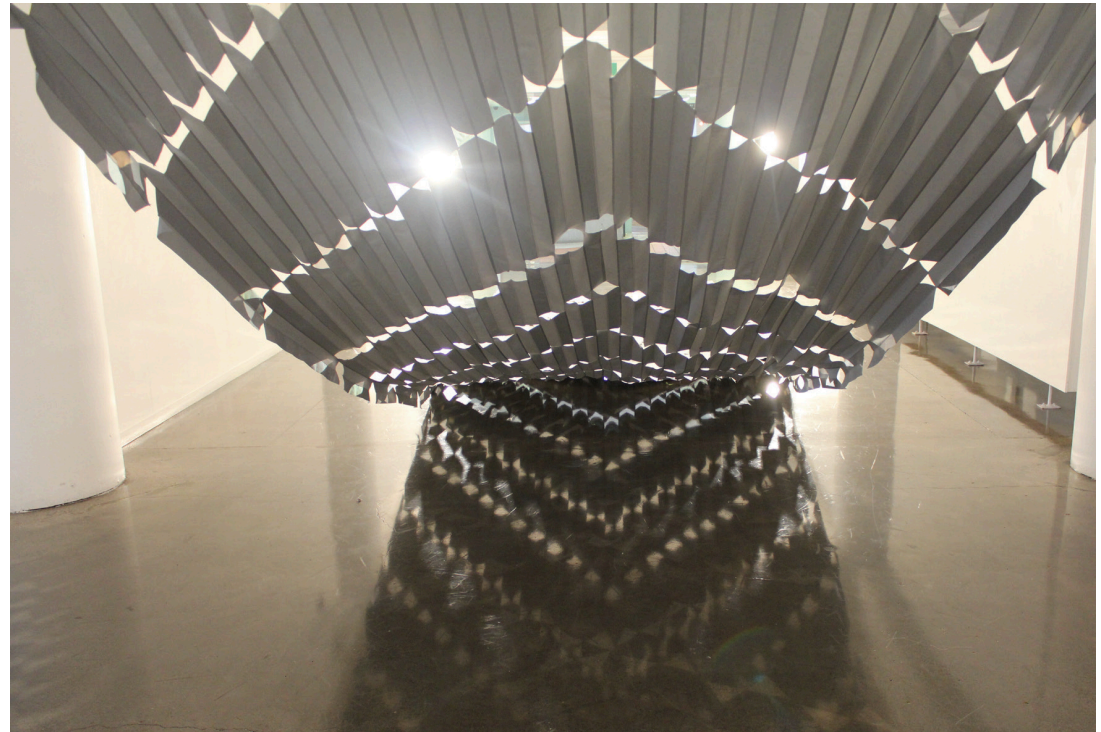
2014

Hi-vis reflective cloth tape and cotton

1200 x 220 cm

Collection of the artists

Nominated by Emma Bugden



Description

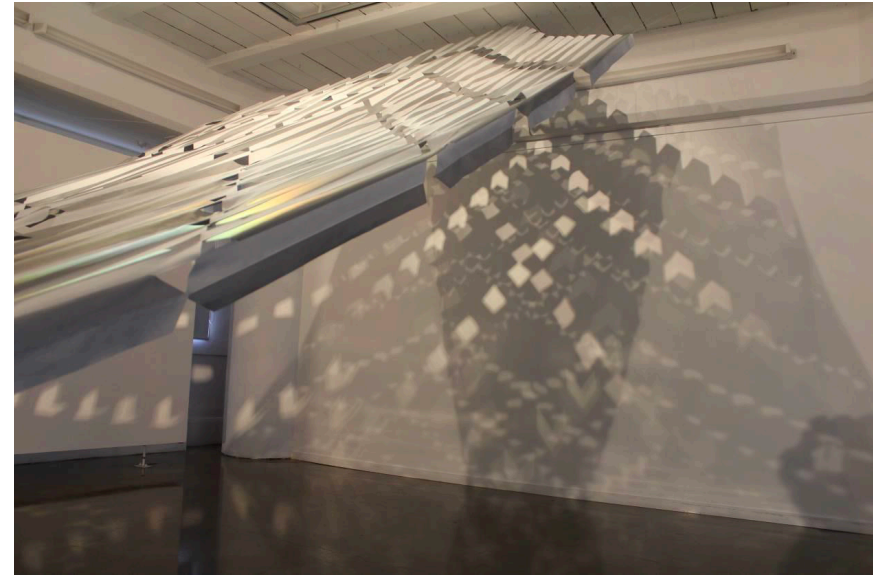
Kaokao #1 is a large-scale installation that is constructed from 200 metres of high-visibility tape by members of the Mata Aho Collective. The work is executed in a traditional tukutuku lattice pattern which is synonymous with strength. Customarily, although not specifically portrayed as a female art form, tukutuku are made by two people working together.

With these ideas in mind, the Mata Aho Collective has chosen *Kaokao #1* as the literal and conceptual idea to explore the portrayal of women within Māori and non-Māori histories. Furthermore, the high-visibility tape is also familiar in being used in building and manufacturing industries in New Zealand.

In its usage for the installation, Mata Aho Collective has re-contextualised an everyday material typically used in a male-dominated industry into a “female-centric aesthetics to evoke the invisible labour of women”.

Keywords

Collective, traditional, portrayal of women, everyday material, installation, re-contextualisation

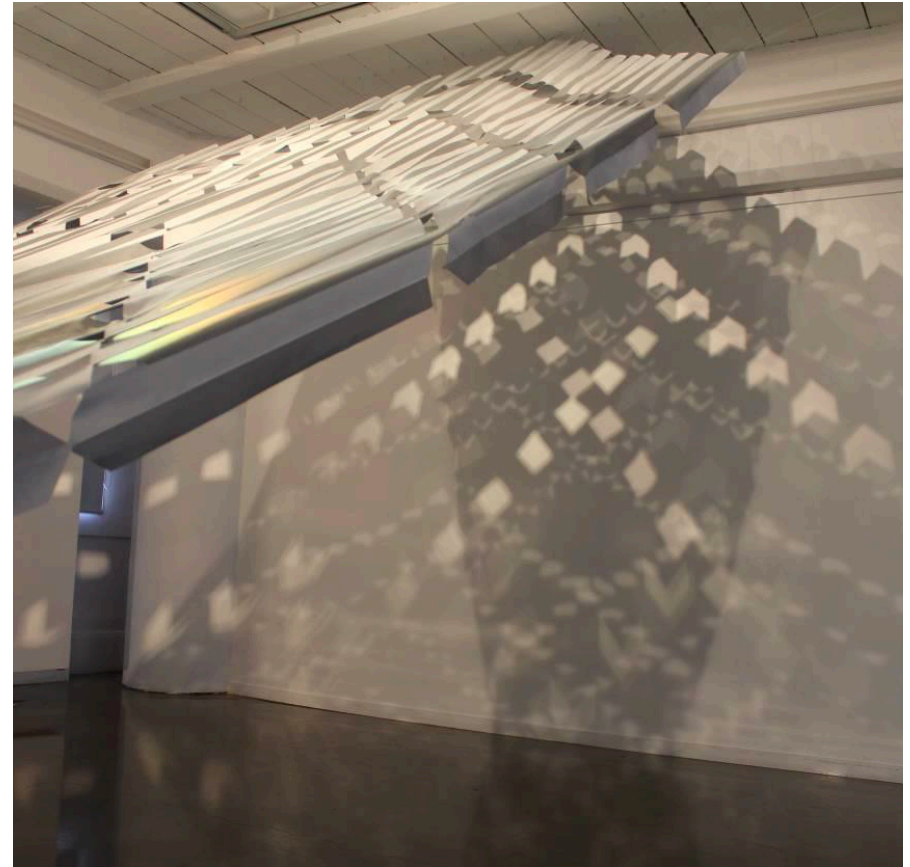


Details; image courtesy of the artists

Useful Quotations

The conflation of a military icon and traditional motif associated with birth is intended, according to the artists, “to represent the unlimited strength and warrior-like endurance of women to create and bring new life.”

Mata Aho Collective
from *APB Foundation Signature Art Prize 2018 Exhibition Guide*



Details; image courtesy of the artists

Before Viewing

View and Discuss

Show & Tell: Installation view & detail view of *Kaokao #1*

Before showing *Kaokao #1*, ask learners to create a list of five to ten words that they associate with tape.

Once the individual lists are complete, group learners to collaboratively list the words associated with tape and produce a string of their functions in everyday life. Highlight the words that appear most frequently.

Create or Make Art: Prepare industrial materials like wire, nails or cable ties found in local hardware shops together with binding tools like tape, adhesives or super glue (and other necessary tools). Students to work collaboratively to make sculptural forms using the *Exquisite Corpse method*.

Note: While *Kaokao #1* by Mata Aho Collective is about making art collaboratively and re-contextualised an everyday material into a contemporary artwork, educators are encouraged to explore the use of industrial materials in their art lessons.

Show in Exhibition: *Kaokao #1*

Have students create another list of words that describe their responses to Mata Aho Collective's *Kaokao #1*. Compare the earlier list with the later list from the exhibition.

Discuss the methods by which Mata Aho Collective has created a work that challenges our usual associations with this everyday object (tape).

For the collective, tape has multiple associations and is linked to conceptual idea that explores the portrayal of women within the Māori histories. Have learners select an everyday material as an art medium. Ask them to create their own list of words that they associate with this object.

Educator's possible response:

Mata Aho Collective has produced many large-scale fibre-based works as commentary on Māori life, ranging from embroidery to tarpaulin. They have produced works with “a single collective authorship that is bigger than their individual capabilities”.

Visit their website www.mataahocollective.com to view their other works.

Further Explorations

The work *Kaokao #1* highlights how the artist's choice of medium can impact the meaning of and response to a work of art. Try imagining creating the installation from other materials like bamboo, wire mesh or silk. How might that alter the impact and meaning of the work?

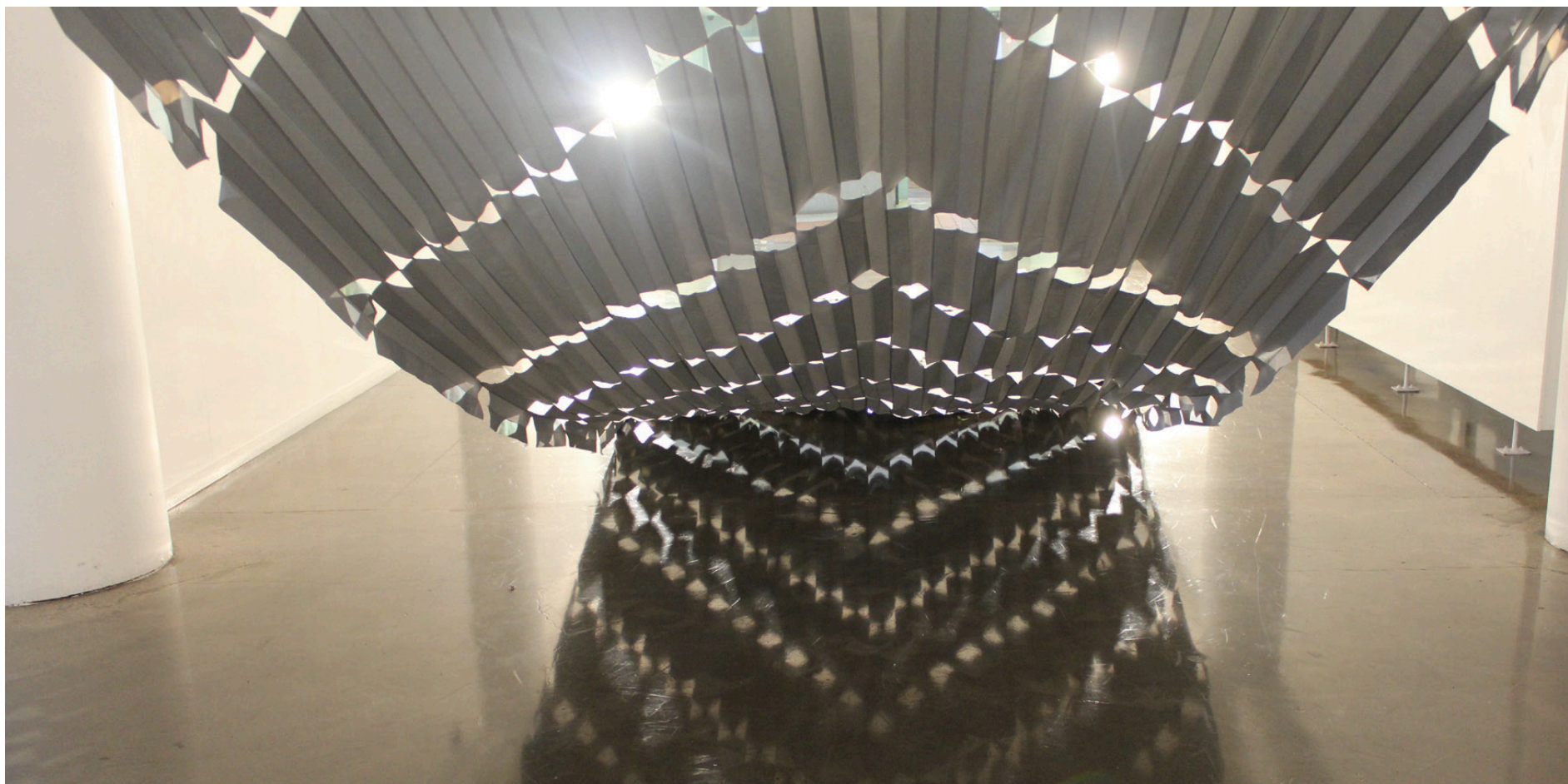
Instructions for learners: Make your own sculpture from a unique and atypical material that has personal or multiple meanings for you.

Artists have used unusual materials to create art including fat, chocolate or leaves, how does the choice of material add to the meaning of your work? Most people view *Kaokao #1* as a sweeping and dramatic installation that is breath-taking as it enacts a play of light and shadow. How much does the virtuosity of craft and beauty of the form add to the experience of the artwork? Create a list of all the possible reasons why. For example, an intricate sculptural form reveals more details upon closer inspection and can create a more interesting play of light and shadow when viewed from various angles.

Mata Aho Collective's homeland of New Zealand is a city undergoing change and facing up to realities of the clash between tradition and contemporary living. Divide learners into groups and ask each group to research into New Zealand's culture, geography, economy and history. Each group should prepare a presentation to the rest of the class. **How does learning more about New Zealand inform learner's appreciation and response to Mata Aho Collective's work?**

Additional Information and video interviews can be found at:

- Documenta 14 (2017) to feature contemporary Māori art (Information at: <https://www.maoritelevision.com/news/latest-news/documenta-feature-contemporary-maori-art>)
- Documenta 14 curator Hendrik Folkerts said: "We have selected these artists to show ground-breaking and radical forms of art. They have not only shaped, and continue to shape, New Zealand art history, but also make a significant contribution to the international discourse on contemporary art."



Installation view

Mata Aho Collective (est. 2012, Wellington, New Zealand) is a collaboration between four Māori women who produce large-scale fibre-based works as commentary on Māori life. Their conceptual framework is built upon the realities and complexities of mātauranga Māori, or traditional Māori wisdom, in the contemporary context. The collective consists of Erena Baker (Te Atiawa ki Whakarongotai, Ngāti Toa Rangātira), Sarah Hudson (Ngāti Awa, Ngāi Tūhoe), Bridget Reweti (Ngāti Ranginui, Ngāi Te Rangi), and Terri Te Tau (Rangitāne ki Wairarapa), who came together for their first exhibition during the Enjoy Public Art Gallery Summer Residency, in Wellington, 2012. They have since exhibited regularly throughout New Zealand, facilitated workshops and presented at tertiary and art institutions.

Jitish Kallat (India)

The Infinite Episode

2016

Dental plaster sculptures (set of 20) and low plinth

Various dimensions

Collection of the artist

Nominated by Gitanjali Dang



Description

The Infinite Episode is made up of twenty sculpted animals cast from dental plaster. These twenty species of fauna, depicted in a state of dreaming sleep include a giraffe, swan, rhinoceros, elephant, kangaroo, ostrich, penguin and camel, among others.

In Jitish Kallat's work, the various species have been brought together in an extended cosmic dormitory where the twenty animals retreat into a state of rest seemingly in a surrender of scale. *Would the sleeping lion share the same scale of body as a sleeping mouse? Do they co-habit a shared universal plinth in the state of sleep, and how does the awakening of one potentially upset the existence of the others?*

Through an ordering of form, the meditative work deploys 'elemental geometry' and scale to provoke the viewer's response on coexistence, notions of hierarchy and ideas of inequity together with deeper philosophical reflections on ideas of time, consciousness and infinity.

Keywords

Scale, elemental geometry, meditative, equity, utopia, hierarchy, co-existence

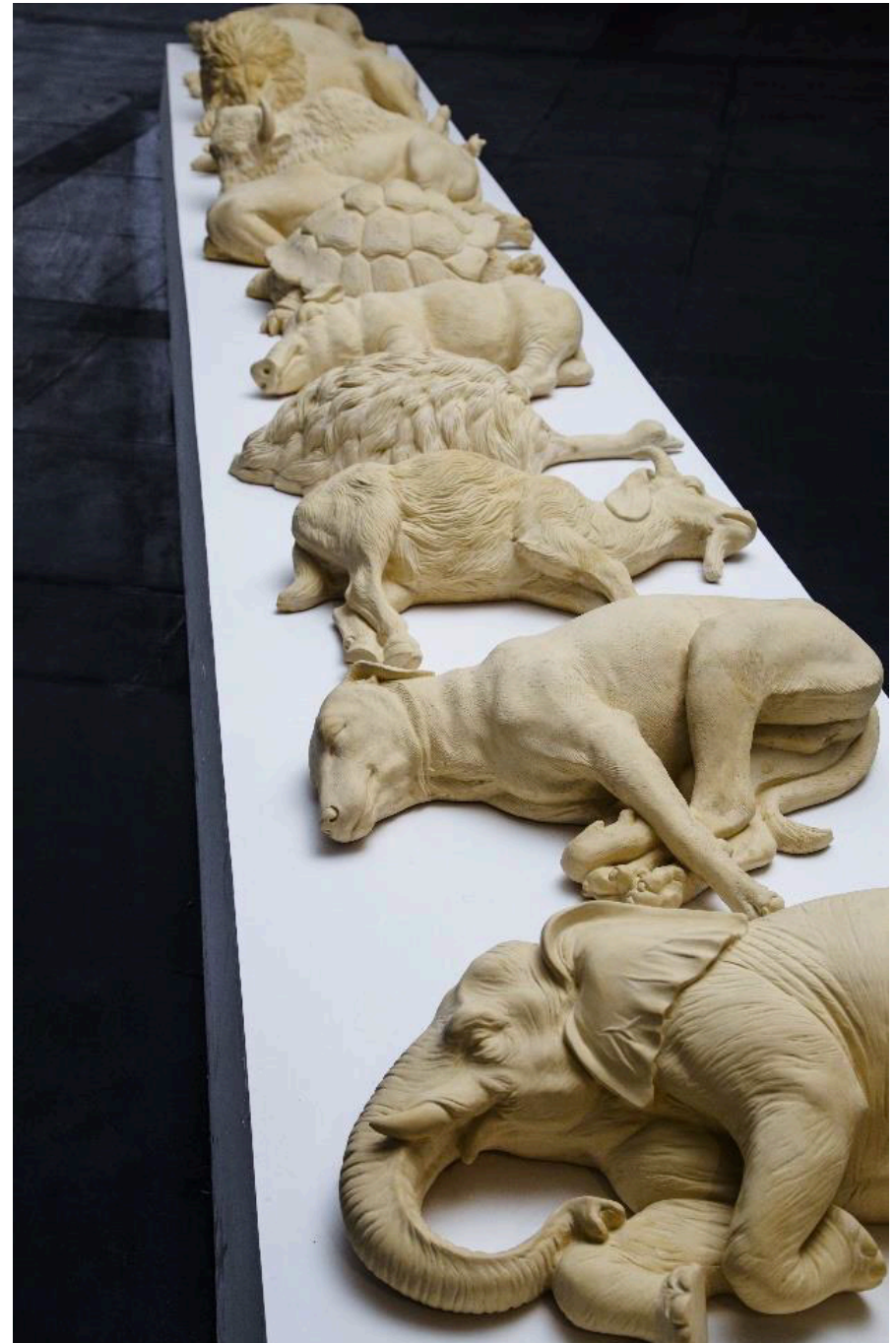


Detail; photograph by Randir Singh, image courtesy of the artist

Useful Quotations

“In other words, what the work portrays is an animalian utopia: the creatures, despite real-life divergences, are here represented approximately equal in size. They share not simply a physical space, but a state of being – sleep – wherein corporeal scale has been made irrelevant.”

from *APB Foundation Signature Art Prize 2018 Exhibition Guide*



Details

Before Viewing

Show & Tell: Images of installation view and details view of *The Infinite Episode*.

Before projecting images of *The Infinite Episode*, have your class brainstorm a list of qualities that they usually associate with sculpture.

You may want to print, pin up or project images of well-known sculptures as examples. When the list is complete, show *The Infinite Episode* and figure out how many of the words on the list can be applied to Kallat's *The Infinite Episode*.

From observing the images of the work, two commonalities between the sculptures appear to be the uniformity in the size of the animal forms and that they are all observed to be in a state of being asleep.

Discuss with learners:

- In what other forms can the artist's idea be presented?
- Can another common feature of the animals be highlighted in an alternative way? An example can be: *how aggressive animals are grouped together and the works are in natural plaster colours, toning down their perceived and known nature of aggressiveness.*

Have learners discuss in groups and present their artwork ideas with a title of their choice.

View and Discuss

Show in Exhibition: *The Infinite Episode*

Jitish Kallat titled his work *The Infinite Episode*, ask students what the work reminded them of, and what title would they give the artwork? Ask students to imagine if the artist is in the exhibition, where Jitish Kallat visits *The Infinite Episode* in an artist dialogue.

Brainstorm a list of questions that your learners will ask him:

- What more would you like to know about the work?
- What's the significance of rendering animals of equal scale?
- How is it that all the animals are sleeping? What is the meaning of this?

Have students gather closer to some of the sculptures, have them observe closely the shape, form and details on the sculptural form.

- How realistic are the sculptures?
- What feeling do you get when you go up close to animal and spend a moment with them?
- What issues did the deceptive likeness and close proximity between animals from different eco-systems and habitat raise for you as a viewer?

Educator's possible response: The artist is attempting to provoke the viewer to think about human issues of inequity, hierarchy and co-existence.

Further Explorations

“In the *Infinite Episode*, it is a sculpture where the species are asleep and the only thing that happens in the state of sleep is when the animals are ‘equalised’ in their scale.” Kallat mentions in an interview where he also asks “where were all of us last night when we were asleep and where do we go when we are asleep?”. The work highlights how the artist’s choice of medium can impact the meaning of and response to a work of art. Try imagining creating the animals from other materials like cement, cloth or ice. How might that alter the impact and meaning of the work?

Make your own sculpture from a unique and atypical material that has personal or multiple meanings for you. Artists have used unusual medium to create art including fat, chocolate or leaves, how does the choice of material add to the meaning of your work? Most people view the animals asleep as intricate sculptures, how much does the realism and beauty of the form add to the experience of the artwork? Create a list of all the possible reasons why. For example, an intricate sculptural form reveals more details and the tenderness of the animal form.

Jitish’s homeland of Mumbai is a city undergoing globalisation, caste and communal tension. In the city, there is a high number of displaced inhabitants and homeless people due to issues of overcrowding and poverty. Divide learners into groups and ask each group to research into India’s culture, geography, economy and history. Each group to prepare a presentation to the rest of the class.

How does learning more about India inform learner’s appreciation and response to Kallat’s work?

Additional Video interviews can be found at:

- MAC Australia at: <https://bit.ly/2wIuwYH>
- BLOUIN ARTINFO at: <https://bit.ly/2ILL1eF>



Installation view

Jitish Kallat (b. 1974, Mumbai, India) is a widely exhibited artist whose practice spans a variety of media, including painting, sculpture, photography and installation. His recent solo exhibitions include a mid-career survey at the National Gallery of Modern Art, New Delhi (2017), as well as presentations at the Philadelphia Museum of Art (2016) and Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney (2015). He has also shown in numerous group shows and major institutions, including the Centre Pompidou, Paris (2018); Setouchi Triennale (2016); Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney (2016); Queens Museum of Art, New York (2015); Busan Biennale (2014); Tate Britain (2011); Musée d'Art Contemporain, Lyon (2011); MOCA Taipei (2010); the 6th Gwangju Biennale (2006) and 5th Asia Pacific Triennial of Contemporary Art (2006). Jitish Kallat was curator and artistic director of the Kochi-Muziris Biennale in Kerala, 2014.

Leung Chi Wo + Sara Wong (Hong Kong)

*He was lost yesterday
and we found him today
and Museum of the Lost*

2015

Archival inkjet prints (13 of a set of 28);
vintage prints on paper and mixed media
150 x 100 cm (archival inkjet prints; each);
dimensions variable

Collection of the artists and Blindspot Gallery

Nominated by Christina Li



Description

He was lost yesterday and we found him today and *Museum of the Lost* are two of Leung Chi Wo and Sara Wong's collaborative works. They portrayed unidentifiable figures as staged photographic images based on selections from their collection of newspapers, magazines and other printed material that form a companion body of work, *Museum of the Lost*.

The husband and wife duo re-enact anonymous individuals in contemplating on the presence of unidentified minor figures who happen to fall within the camera's gaze. In *He was lost yesterday and we found him today*, the artists have isolated individuals with their backs turned or face obscured and restaged the scenes into large life-size photographs.

By posing as individuals who incidentally appear in the photographs, the artists ironically present a peripheral figure onto the grand narratives portrayed in the images. Put together, the collective work prompts the audience to question how official narratives are represented and circulated within a hyper-mediatised world.

Keywords

Collaborative, anonymous, staged photography, archival impulses, grand narrative, hyper-mediatised world



Museum of the Lost (detail); image courtesy of the artists and Blindspot Gallery, Hong Kong

Quotations

“In his analysis of photography and its elusive noeme or essence, Roland Barthes determined a simple definition of photography’s truth: anyone who has been photographed, no matter how minor, is irrefutably proved to have been there. Although we might never know these persons in any appreciable way, they have occupied a place in the past.”

Leung Chi Wo + Sara Wong



He was lost yesterday and we found him today (detail); image courtesy of the artists and Blindspot Gallery, Hong Kong

Before Viewing

Show & Tell: Images of *He was lost yesterday and we found him today* and *Museum of the Lost*.

Ask each student to create a list of at least ten words that come to mind when looking at these two works. Create a full list of all the listed words and determined which ones were mentioned most often. Students can choose to create alternative titles to the artwork based on the words they have chosen.

Although Leung Chi Wo + Sara Wong stage photographs using themselves as subjects, the figures are facing away and obscuring their faces. What is the message that you think they are trying to convey? *Educators can keep this question open-ended and return to them during the exhibition visit.*

Make and Create:

Learners to take photographs of a scene in school or on the streets. In so doing, they apply (existing) art knowledge in composing photographs. *Or* cut out street scenes or interesting compositions of spaces from the newspapers or magazines.

Educators can relate the exhibition visit to learners' study of photography and/or study or creation of collages.

Show in Exhibition: *He was lost yesterday and we found him today* and *Museum of the Lost*

What is your initial impression of this work?
What might the work be about?

What is the concept and rationale behind the choice of the titles:

1. *He was lost yesterday and we found him today*
2. *Museum of the Lost*

Look at the life-size photographs and attempt to find clues of the staged photography elements from within the seemingly vintage photographs. How often do these elements recur and what impact do they have on your perception and appreciation of the artworks?

Have a discussion in the exhibition about the setup of the installation:

- How does the *Museum of the Lost* inform your reading of the life-size photographs?
- What is the relevance and value of the newspapers and printed material in the installation setup?
- Can the photographic artworks exist on its own, without the *Museum of the Lost*? *Yes/No, Why?*

Further Explorations

Make and Create by re-staging your own version of *He was lost yesterday and we found him today*
From an earlier lesson, learners have composed and created a series of photographs of either:

- A scene in school or
- A scene on the streets of their choice

Learners to work collaboratively or individually in producing a series of photographic images that combine ‘cut-outs’ of small persons or objects that are blended into the chosen scene to create:

- A digital Montage using digital photographic techniques (*digital cameras, mobile phones and image-editing software*) or
- A paper Collage using cut-and-paste of printed and images from either newspapers or magazines (*print & cut out figures*)

Educator’s possible response:

In recreating *He was lost yesterday and we found him today* in a series of images using cut out images of persons or objects that blend into the chosen scenes, learners reiterate the concept and meaning behind Leung Chi Wo and Sara Wong’s works. *They are able to learn that no matter how minor, each person/object contributes to the image and is therefore important and not forgotten.*



Photograph

Leung Chi Wo + Sara Wong are visual artists based in Hong Kong. They began collaborating in 1992, and both are co-founders of Hong Kong contemporary art space Para Site. Leung's (b. 1968, Hong Kong) practice ranges from photography and video to text, performance and installation. He holds a Master of Fine Arts and Post-Diploma (Culture of Photography), and his numerous solo exhibitions include presentations at OCT Contemporary Art Terminal, Shenzhen (2015) and Run Run Shaw Creative Media Centre, Hong Kong (2014). He is an Associate Professor at the School of Creative Media, City University of Hong Kong. Wong (b. 1968, Hong Kong) was trained in fine art and landscape architecture. She has staged solo exhibitions in Canada and Hong Kong, and her recent group exhibitions were held at Hong Kong's M+ (2013) and Germany's Edith Russ Site for Media Art (2010). Wong is also a practicing landscape designer who teaches at the Hong Kong Design Institute.

8.1

Au Sow Yee (Malaysia)

The Kris Project

2016

Mixed media installation with video, objects,
documents, photographs and lightbox

Dimensions variable

Collection of the artist

Nominated by Ong Jo-Lene



Installation View at Fotoaura Institute of Photography, Tainan, 2017; Image courtesy of the artist

Description

The Kris Project is a mixed-media installation derived from the film industry in the 1950s and 60s across Southeast Asia, Hong Kong and Taiwan. Based on archival and field research, the work reimagines history by blurring the divide between fact and fiction. Found footage from Cathay-Keris movies to documentaries of wartime Malaya are combined to form juxtaposed narratives that open up dialogues about the reimagined past.

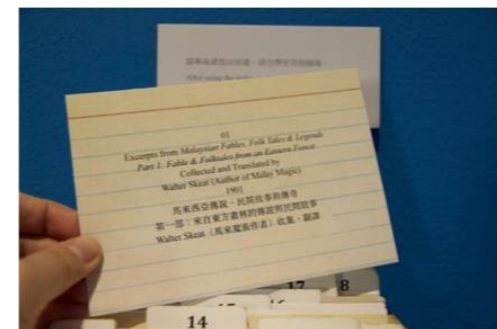
The video includes three phases:

- *The Kris Project I*- fictional filmmaker Ravi's 'pseudo-film' of found documents and images.
- *The Kris Project II: If the Party Goes On* - an alternate history in which Loke Wan Tho, founder of the Cathay movie empire survived the plane crash that killed him.
- The third phase draws on the Cathay studio's first overseas film, *A Night in Tokyo*.

Through these fragmented narratives, the viewer is presented with a mixed-media installation that combines historical speculation with faithful representations of history. Au Sow Yee has focused on film and fiction to suggest possibilities for investigating Southeast Asia's history within a broader interpretative framework through her artistic practice.

Keywords:

Installation, historical narrative, Cathay-Keris, fragments, found documents and images, film industry, found footage, Loke Wan Tho, mixed media, juxtaposition, reimagined past



Installation View

Useful Quotations

“The Kris Project attempts to look at the film industry, as well as the Southeast Asia Film Festival, in the region during the 1950s and 1960s, which is the cold war period, and their hidden politics, power structure, remnants, resonances, as well as relation with my personal memories.”

Au Sow Yee

from the *APB Foundation Signature Art Prize 2018* finalist artworks video



Installation View

Before Viewing

Show & Tell: Learners are flooded with images on a daily basis, yet the impact that these images make on them is often dissolved or not spoken of.

This lesson idea is a guided activity on enabling students to be creative. The intent is to enable learners to create a mind map through indexing with key words. This process reveals clues to finding out each student's interests and opens up possibilities for their creative use of text, materials and found objects and images.

Mind map creator **Tony Buzan** coined the term 'mind map' to refer to a diagram that has a branch or root radiating from a central image on the page. Learners can use lines and colour to show relationships, groupings and connections between words, ideas and images. Do refer to **student art guide** for an example of how to make a mind map.

Ask learners the following questions:

- A. What do you think is the purpose of the mind map?
- B. What are the key words in your mind map?
- C. What images, photographs, drawings or materials did you include in your mind map and why?

View and Discuss

Show in exhibition: *The Kris Project*

- Watch the video carefully and observe the arrangement of objects and video presentation in the installation space- ask learners how they think the objects relate to the film being projected?
- Why has the artist chosen to focus on the period of 1950s to 1960s film industry in the region- what is the **significance of this decision**? How does the employment of 'found footage' alongside the artist's filmed footage relate to history, one's personal history and a reimagined past?

Review Questions Upon Viewing:

- Comparing Au Sow Yee work with that of movies that learners are exposed to, what similarities do you see? What differences?
- How does your understanding of mind maps affect your reading of the installation *The Kris Project*?
- What is the installation trying to express? What is it attempting to examine? Has it been successful?

Educator: *The Kris Project* examines how history was written using the filmic language. The artist has created an immersive installation space that researches, re-examines and re-questions constructed ideologies and boundaries through the use of video, found objects and documents.

Further Explorations

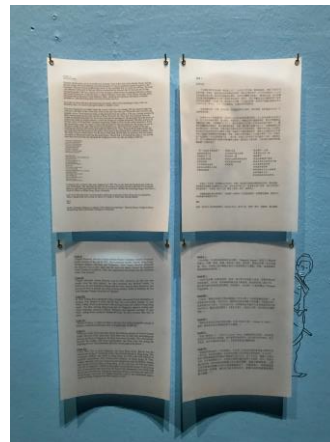
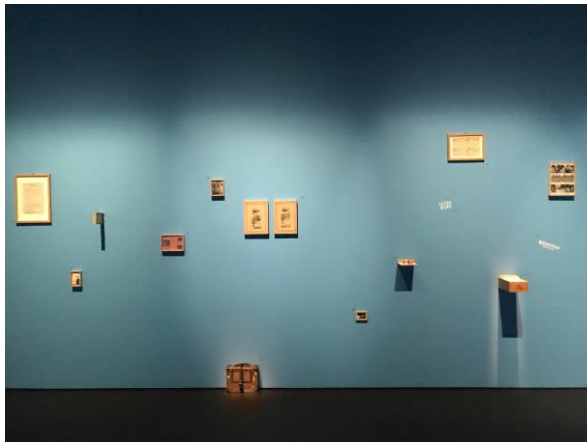
Using *The Kris Project* as an example of a project that juxtaposes fact with fiction in presenting a reimagination of the artist's idea, learners are encouraged to explore ideas of fragmentation and juxtaposition to create:

1. A visual mind map using text and images (refer to earlier reference)
2. A piece of creative non-fiction or creative writing
3. A wall installation of found and made objects (see below)

This *Further Exploration* phase is intended as a foray to guiding learners to regard their personal memory, found footage and history as materials to create a series of “remapping” projects.

Check out the artist's website for more information:

<https://ausowyee.wordpress.com/>



Installation View



Installation View

Au Sow Yee (b. 1978, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia) is based in Taipei and Kuala Lumpur, and works in video installation and other mediums. She holds a Master and Bachelor of Fine Arts, majoring respectively in filmmaking and theatre arts. Her work has been featured in various international exhibitions and screenings, most recent of which include group exhibitions at Mori Art Museum, Tokyo (2017); Haus der Kulturen der Welt, Berlin (2017); Bangkok Art & Culture Centre (2017) and Rockbund Art Museum, Shanghai (2016). Au is a co-founder of Rumah Attap Library & Collective in Kuala Lumpur, co-founder and co-curator of the Kuala Lumpur Experimental Film and Video Festival (KLEX; 2010, 2011, 2016), as well as a guest writer for numerous online and print magazines.

9.1

Phan Thao Nguyen (Vietnam)

Tropical Siesta

2015–2017

2-channel video and oil painting on x-ray film
backing (set of 6)

Various dimensions; video duration 14:00 mins

Collection of the artist, private collections

Nominated by Le Thuan Uyen



Installation View; Image courtesy of the artist

Description

Tropical Siesta consists of a two-channel video installation and a series of oil paintings on x-ray film backing. Part of the artist's larger project, 'Poetic Amnesia', the work tells an imaginary tale of rural Vietnam. This half-real and half fictional visual experience is based on French Jesuit missionary, Alexandre de Rhodes' colourful observations as he travelled through Vietnam in the 17th century.

The universe created by Phan Thao Nguyen is populated only by children who form the agricultural community. They engage not only in farming work, but also in games of make-believe – recreating, for instance, de Rhodes' accounts of various barbaric methods of punishment, as well as a folktale of the worship of a Chinese princess as a water goddess.

In Phan's filmic world, an environment is created with no historical sense of time, a reimagined narrative set within a tranquil landscape of rice paddies. The artist's imagined landscape speaks of an era of Vietnamese history where the country was economically and ideologically struggling, epitomised by the optimism and innocence of the children protagonists.

Keywords:

Surrealism, installation, community, myths, imagination, humanity, questioning truth, cultural landscape, observation, through children's eyes, manipulation, perception, common good



Detail of oil painting on x-ray film; Image courtesy of the artist

Useful Quotations

“I’m concerned with criticizing the educational system in Vietnam, where history is erased and there is a big amnesia.”

Phan Thao Nguyen

from <https://www.rolexmentorprotege.com/mentors-proteges/joan-jonas-and-thao-nguyen-phan>

“Vietnam is turbulent yet optimistic. I hope my work, which used the story of Vietnam to reflect contemporary and universal issues today, can relate to the stories of other people in other places.”

Phan Thao Nguyen

from <https://www.tsingapore.com/article/history-vietnam-reimagined-thao-nguyen-phan-joan-jonas-rolex>



Detail of painting on x-ray film; Image courtesy of artist

Before Viewing

Show & Tell: Details (from this guide) of oil paintings on x-ray film backing as part of *Tropical Siesta* installation.

Introduce students to examples of portraits and landscapes painted in oil:

- J.M.W Turner's *Rain, Steam and Speed – The great Western Railway (1844)*
- Lee Boon Wan's *Potong Pasir Dairy Farmer (1958)*

Ask learners the following questions:

- A. What do you think are the artists' intention behind the two oil paintings? How do they differ?
- B. What are the key qualities of an oil painting?
- C. Compare and contrast the style, composition and use of colours of J.M.W. Turner and Lee Boon Wan. How are they similar or different from Phan Thao Nguyen's?

Educator: Develop learner's understanding of why paintings are created. This understanding enables students to speculate on the paintings' possible role in Phan's installation.

View and Discuss

Show in exhibition: *Tropical Siesta* installation

- Watch the video carefully and observe the scenes in the film and its characters- ask learners how they think the oil paintings relate to the videos?
- Why has the artist chosen to include the oil paintings in the installation- what is the **significance of this decision**?

Review Questions Upon viewing:

- Comparing Phan Thao Nguyen's work with that of movies that learners are exposed to, what similarities do you see? What differences?
- How do both films (left and right) relate to one another, and consequently, how do they relate to the scenes in the oil paintings?
- What is the video installation trying to express? What is it attempting to examine? Has it been successful?

Educator: *Tropical Siesta* is an experimentation in creating a half-real and half-fictional visual experience. Highlight to learners the nature of an immersive installation space, where the boundaries between real time and fictional time, real space and imaginary space, have been intentionally distorted.

Further Explorations

The two-channel video installation *Tropical Siesta* begins with a peaceful landscape of a rice paddy field, where children carry farming tools and engage in a series of daily activities. As the narrative unfolds, the children's make-believe world relates to the portraits and scenes painted in oil on x-ray film backing. These paintings appear to be film stills or possible scripts (or storyboards) of the videos but can also be read as independent images on their own. The landscapes in *Tropical Siesta* speaks of the era in Vietnam's history where the country was economically struggling and depended heavily on the agricultural trade.

In the artist's videos, the protagonists are children who are optimistic of their future and as mentioned by Phan Thao Nguyen: ***“Vietnam is turbulent yet optimistic. I hope my work, which used the story of Vietnam to reflect contemporary and universal issues today, can relate to the stories of other people in other places.”***

Research Task

Divide learners into groups and ask each group to research on Vietnam. The research is to include the country's culture, economy, geography and history. Each group will do a short presentation in class. A key question to ask learners is:

How does learning more about Vietnam inform students' understanding and response to Phan's work?

You can encourage learners to plan an advertising campaign to showcase the joys and optimism of our youths (in Singapore). Provide time and space for students to research on national campaigns of the past (refer to The Propeller Group's example).

The advertising campaign can include the following collaterals:

- A painted poster
- Short television commercial
- Flyer (B5 size or smaller)

Check out the artist's website for more information on *Tropical Siesta*:

<http://www.thaonguyenphan.com/#/tropicalsiesta/>



Installation View

Phan Thao Nguyen (b. 1987, Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam) holds a Master of Fine Arts in Painting and Drawing from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. In addition to her work as a multimedia artist, she is a co-founder of the collective, Art Labor, which explores cross-disciplinary practices and develops art projects that benefit the Vietnamese community. Phan has exhibited widely in Vietnam and abroad, including recent solo exhibition *Poetic Amnesia* at The Factory Contemporary Arts Centre, Ho Chi Minh City (2017); group show *Anywhere But Here* in Bétonsalon, Paris (2016); as well as travelling exhibition *Concept Context Contestation: Art and the Collective in Southeast Asia*, which showed at the Bangkok Art & Culture Centre and Goethe Institut, Hanoi (2015). She is the 2016–2017 Rolex Protégée.

10.1

Shubigi Rao (Singapore)

Pulp: A Short Biography of the Banished Book. Vol I: Written in the Margins (2014–2016)

2014–2016

Mixed media installation with video clips,
giclée prints with text, ink drawings,
books and table with 3 texts

Dimensions variable

Collection of the artist

Nominated by Jason Wee



Installation View at Künstlerhaus Bethanien, Berlin, 2017; Image courtesy of the artist

Description

Written in the Margins is an interactive installation from Shubigi Rao's ten-year film, book and art project *Pulp: A Short Biography of the Banished Book*. On one side of the installation space, a series of video interviews are shown on monitors and indexed by a handmade card catalogue, where viewers are able to choose which videos to watch by selecting the blue buttons of their choice.

These video interviews depict people whose narratives relate to Rao's investigation of issues surrounding the destruction of books and libraries. On the other side of the installation space, Rao's photographs and texts (including the published book from the project) are displayed with maps and ink drawings for viewers to explore and experience.

Rao's interactive installation enables viewers to create their own interpretation of the work as they explore and burrow into the interconnecting components. The installation comprises of still images, moving images, drawn images and documents that act as invitations for the audience to explore and interpret.

Keywords:

Destruction of books, libraries, narratives, cataloguing, archiving, research, interviews, preservation, protest, saving heritage, mapping, conceptual art, interpretation, installation



Installation View

Useful Quotations

“The footage features a range of testimonies, from those of firefighters who tried to save the burning national library in Sarajevo during Yugoslavian troubles of the 1990s, to that of a lector employed to preserve the purity of the Croatian language by expunging all Serbian and Russian words from Croatian national television.”

from *APB Foundation Signature Art Prize 2018 Exhibition Guide*



Detail; Image courtesy of Maria Clare Khoo

View and Discuss

Before Viewing

Show & Tell:

Show learners the school library and let them wander around, allowing them the freedom to read the books they want and explore the reading spaces in the library environment.

Ask learners the following questions:

- A. What do you think of the library? Do you like it? Yes/No, and Why?
- B. What does one do in a library? Is it conducive for reading?
- C. What are some of the rules and regulations in a library environment?

Further questions in the classroom:

- D. Can you imagine a school or city without any libraries? What does one lose when libraries are destroyed?
- E. How important is the library to you or to your people living in a city? If you were to lose all your books or your private library one day, how would you feel?

Educator: The visit to the library is an entry point into understanding Shubigi Rao's investigation of issues surrounding the destruction of books and libraries.

Show in exhibition: *Written in the Margins*

Without revealing the artist's ideas and concept, tell learners the title of Shubigi's ongoing project *Pulp: A Short Biography of the Banished Book* and ask them to discuss what they experienced in the installation *Written in the Margins*. What **questions** do they have in response to the work?

In groups, get learners to brainstorm and generate a list of questions to ask one another. Some possible questions can be:

- The artist has chosen to dedicate years to investigate issues surrounding the destruction of books and libraries, why did she choose to do so?
- What is the objective of creating the film archive, ink drawings, and documents set within an installation space?
- How different is this installation art from a painted image or another art medium (e.g. photography or sculpture)?

Educator: Rao's installation is interactive and contemplative. Do encourage learners to browse the books, observe the photographs, and select and experience the various video footages. The work is aesthetically layered, and time spent in the space can enable learners to create their own interpretation of the interconnecting issues raised.

Further Explorations

The work *Written in the Margins (2014 – 2016)* highlights an artist's choice of combining different mediums in creating an immersive experience for the viewer. Artists have used unusual materials to create art, including natural materials like leaves and fat, to address or draw attention to issues like environmental problems.

Make and Create

Think of an issue that is important to you. For example, Shubigi Rao has combined videos, photographs, books, texts, ink drawings into an interactive art installation. Rao has chosen to do this to examine issues surrounding the destruction of books and libraries.

You may be passionate about environmental issues or social issues; consider one issue and find ways to call attention to this issue.

1. You may choose to collaboratively make and create a work of art that examines the issue
2. Plan out an interactive installation where the various fragments can be pieced together to enable the viewer to understand the idea behind the work
3. Share this idea with the class and include illustrations, mind maps or images to better explain your installation.

Check out the artist's website for more information about her artistic practice:

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



Installation View

Shubigi Rao (b. 1975, Mumbai, India) is a Singaporean artist and writer. She works in decade-long stretches on linked ideas, and made her books and artwork from 2003 to 2013 under her male pseudonym, S. Raoul. Her current ten-year project, *Pulp: A Short Biography of the Banished Book* (2014–2024), has in the works, a film, five books and ink-and-paper works about the history of book destruction and the book as activism and resistance. She recently held a solo exhibition in Künstlerhaus Bethanien, Berlin (2017), and has participated in notable group shows worldwide, including the 3rd Pune Biennale, India (2017), 10th Taipei Biennale (2016), Singapore Writers Festival (2013, 2016) and 2nd Singapore Biennale (2008). She has been awarded residencies in India (2017), Berlin (2016) and Singapore (2015), and is a part-time lecturer at LASALLE College of the Arts, Singapore.

Club Ate (Bhenji Ra + Justin Shoulder) (Australia)

*Ex Nilalang (Balud,
Dyesebel, Lola ex Machina)*

2015

Single-channel video

Duration 18:53 mins

Collection of the artists

Developed for APT8

Nominated by Kyla McFarlane



Video still; Image courtesy of the artists

Description

Ex Nilalang, which means both ‘to create’ and ‘creature’, is a series of three interconnected videos that expresses the artists’ personal experiences as Filipino-Australians seen through reimagined mythological tales.

The first chapter features Filipino performer Jai Jai dressed as an extravagantly dressed *Mananangaal*, a female demon of Filipino folklore. The second, *Dyesebel*, is based on a character of a popular Philippine television series, which tells the story of a mermaid’s (played by Ra and performers from Manila’s transgender community) adventures. The last chapter sees one of the artists, Shoulder dressed as an “ancestral jeepney spirit”, a fantastical hybrid creature whose form is derived from the jeepney, a form of public transportation commonly seen in the Philippines.

The artists have employed video as a means to tell stories that forge connections between the migrant spirit and intercultural experiences that they have faced. *Ex Nilalang* is a series of creative portrayals of the artists’ cultural and gender identity seen through reimagined mythological tales as celebratory narratives.



Video still; Image courtesy of the artists

Keywords:

Video installation, mythology, identity, Filipino diaspora, portraits, folklore, migration, migrant, intercultural experiences, collaboration, performative, cinematic experience, hybridity

Useful Quotations

“*Ex Nilalang* was a way to start reclaiming mythologies, to try to create new mythologies that were more celebratory... The work looked at the way we have survived and continue to survive, in club and entertainment lands, and as sex workers; what are these crafts and tools that we use to navigate and keep our power?”

Bhenji Ra (Club Ate)



Video still; Image courtesy of the artists

View and Discuss

Before Viewing

Show & Tell: Learners are shown the video still (refer to *page 11.1*), where the artist is dressed as an “ancestral jeepney spirit” and stands next to a jeepney, a form of public transportation commonly seen in the Philippines.

Ask learners the following questions:

- A. What do you see in the image?
- B. How do you feel about the whole scene?
- C. What form of transportation is that? Which country did it originate from? What is the significance of this mode of transportation to the Philippines?

Educator: As *Ex Nilalang* by Club Ate is a body of video work that uses myth as a form to explore the intersections of queer identities of the Filipino diaspora, there are some moments of the video that may be unsuitable for young learners’ viewing.

Show in exhibition: *Ex Nilalang (Balud, Dyesebel, Lola ex Machina)*

- Watch the video *Lola ex Machina* and observe the “ancestral jeepney spirit”; what do you think the spirit is feeling?
- Why has the artist chosen to focus on the jeepney - what is the **significance of this decision**? How do you feel about the whole scene?
- What is your emotional response to the ‘lonely’ jeepney spirit wandering around the spaces? What is the artist trying to express?

Review Questions Upon viewing:

- Comparing Club Ate’s work with that of movies that learners are exposed to, what similarities do you see? What differences?
- How does sound and music influence the video? Can you specify instances where the impact is most noticeable?
- What is the video installation trying to express? What is it attempting to examine? Is it successful in doing so?

Further Explorations

Formed by Sydney-based multi-disciplinary artists Justin Shoulder and Bhenji Ra, Club Ate is a collaboration inspired by their shared Filipino heritage. Using this as a starting point, research into one's personal heritage.

Task

Interview an older family member to find out more about your family history. With this interview, plan out or create a storyboard that explores your personal heritage in an imaginative and creative manner.

Learners may choose to do an audio recording or a video recording of this interview using these questions as guidelines:

- A. What have you learned from them that you previously did not know about?
- B. How did you feel when you interviewed your relatives?
- C. Were you able to gather photographs or documents that chronicle your family history?

Educator: *Do remind learners to draft out a list of questions before embarking on the interview.*



Video still; Image courtesy of the artists

Club Ate is a Sydney-based collective founded by artists Bhenji Ra (b. 1990, Sydney, Australia) and Justin Shoulder (b. 1985, Sydney, Australia), whose artistic and performative practices are rooted in Sydney's underground music and club scene. Both artists draw from their own experiences and personal relationships as queer, bi-cultural Filipino-Australians in their art making. Bhenji Ra reframes performance through a combination of dance, choreography, video and installation, and her work is often concerned with the dissection of cultural theory and identity. Justin Shoulder works in performance, sculpture and video, with his main body of work – entitled 'Fantastic Creatures' – comprising of invented beings and alter-personas based on interpretations of mythology, folktale and fantasy.

12.1

Fang Wei-wen (Taiwan)

Republic of Rubber Tape

2016

Site-specific installation with wood, bamboo, paper,
rubber tape and found objects

Dimensions variable

Collection of the artist

Nominated by Hsu Yuan-Ta



Installation view at Tainan Cultural Center, 2016; Image courtesy of Hsieh Hung-ming

Description

Republic of Rubber Tape is a sculptural installation based on the artist's childhood home: Kampong Ayer, or water village, in Bandar Sri Begawan, Brunei. The long structure is constructed from wood and bamboo, resembling a scaffolding. The form of the sculpture is created using plastic containers, raffia string and white tape and features a miniature wooden house.

The use of tape is intentional in demarcating an outline that is akin to the shapes and silhouettes of countries depicted in maps. What is different from lines on maps is that the length of tape moves off the surface of the floor to the wall and even intersects with the wooden sculptures. The placement of the rolls of tape disrupts the structural order of the space as it is left dangling on the wall or floor.

While trained as a painter, his recent works use everyday objects as a way of presenting his personal memories and expressing his sense of cultural dislocation brought about by his family situation. Fang Wei-wen was born and raised in Bandar Seri Begawan, the capital of Brunei, and moved to Taiwan at age 18.

Keywords:

Sculpture, everyday objects, maps, tape, personal memories, cultural dislocation, packing materials, childhood, borderlines, demarcated space



Installation View

Useful Quotations

“Here, the borderline created by the length of the rubber tape refers to a realm that only exists when it is recognised by others. The wooden structure is an evocation of my childhood, spent in a land far away from my present home. The *Republic of Rubber Tape* is a mythical kingdom conjured out of my imagination, memories and personal experiences.”

Fang Wei-wen



Detail; Image courtesy of Hsieh Hung-ming

Before Viewing

Show & Tell:

Refer to the '*Useful Quotation*' by Fang Wei-wen and the installation views of *Republic of Rubber Tape* and additional images of the installation from the *Ministry of Culture, Taiwan*.

Ask learners the following questions:

- A. The artist has said that "*the wooden structure is an evocation of his childhood*". What images of your childhood come to mind when you view these wooden structures?
- B. What are the other materials employed in the construction of the sculptural installation?
- C. What are the words that come to mind when you view the images of the installation?

Educator: Introduce students to the term 'installation art' through the following reference from **Tate UK**. Before the end of the **Show & Tell**, set learners a task to find out the differing characteristics of installation artwork and sculpture.

- *The characteristics of installation art will be useful in the discussion in the exhibition.*

View and Discuss

Show in exhibition: *Republic of Rubber Tape*

This large and site-specific sculptural installation is made up of numerous materials and packing tools. Examine it closely and carefully, and create a list of all the:

1. Things or objects/forms you notice
2. Packing material or tools deployed to hold up the structure

In the discussion, learners can be prompted by asking them these questions:

- Why has the artist chosen to use packing materials - what is the **significance of this decision**? How does the employment of wood, bamboo, paper banded with rubber tape relate to Brunei's history as well as the artist's personal history?

Review Questions Upon viewing:

- Fang Wei-wen has titled his work *Republic of Rubber Tape*. What is the significance of this title to his sense of cultural dislocation?
- What can we learn from studying Fang's background and understanding his motivation behind his installation and artistic practice?
- What meaning(s) could be read from the installation setup? Do you think the installation artwork is successful? If so, why is it considered an installation art and not a sculpture?

Further Explorations

Fang Wei-wen's *Republic of Rubber Tape* highlights how the artist's choice of medium can impact the meaning of and response to a work of art. Try imagining creating the installation from other materials like cloth or cardboard. How might that alter the impact and meaning of the work?

Create your own sculpture: Using any material that is an evocation of your childhood, create a sculpture that represents a building, a structure or a space that held significant meaning for you while growing up (e.g. using Lego bricks to create a playground that you used to frequent as a child). There is an on-going exhibition at the National Museum that invites visitors to relive memories and think about future playgrounds from the iconic dragon playground to modern playgrounds; check out ***The More We Get Together*** website for more information on the exhibition.

Create your own tape art: Using duct tape of varying colours, divide students into groups and collaboratively create a sculpture or installation (if space permits). In the process, learners are to brainstorm and develop the idea for the piece from their personal perspectives (stated above). The sculpture/installation can be:

1. Site-specific and related/relevant to its location, similar to a public artwork
2. A wall mural in the art room or classroom
3. On a plywood backing or large sheet of acrylic

The objective of this extended lesson is for learners to work collaboratively and develop strategies to creatively apply the tape on various surfaces, across walls and express themselves through tape art.

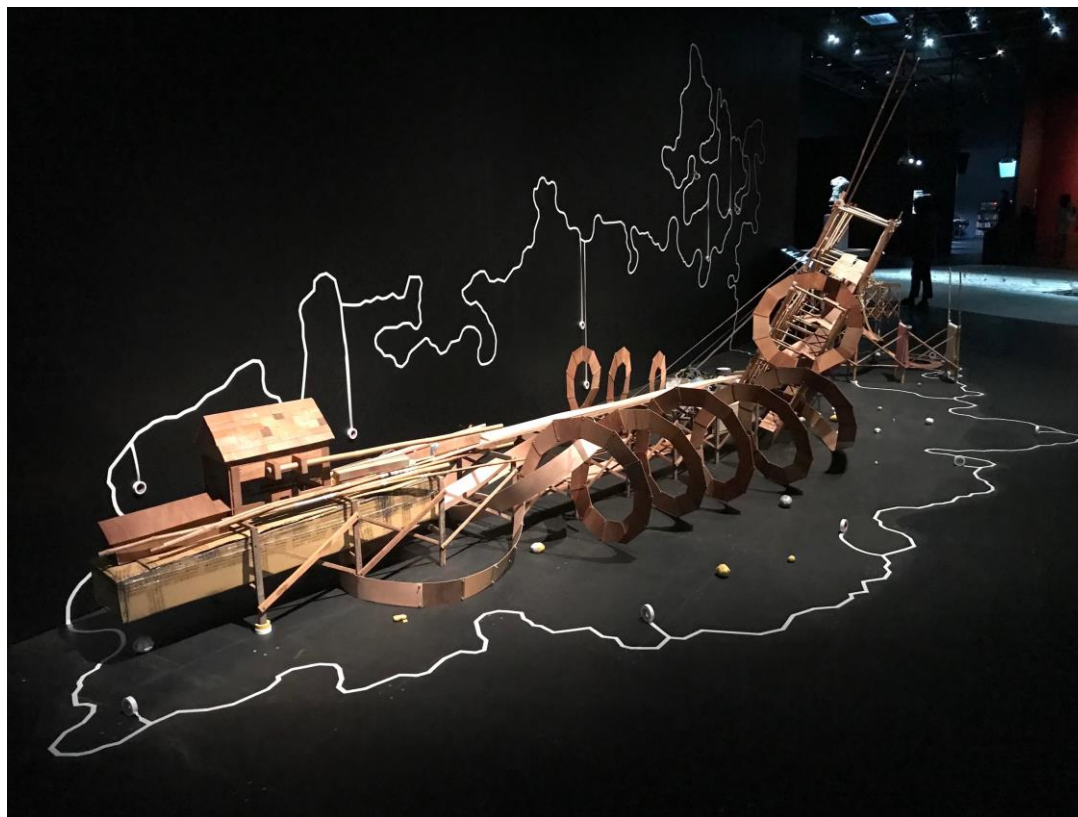
Check out the following websites for more information on tape art:

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

<http://tapeartsociety.com/en/what-is-tapeart/>

<https://web.archive.org/web/20160308024705/>

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



Installation View

Fang Wei-wen (b. 1970, Bandar Seri Begawan, Brunei) is of Kinmenese descent, and lives and works in Tainan, Taiwan. He received his early education in Bandar Seri Begawan, before moving to Taiwan to obtain his Bachelor and Master of Fine Arts. He has held solo shows all over Taiwan, such as at Licence Art Gallery, Tainan (2016); Zspace, Taichung (2015) and KYU Art Center, Kaohsiung (2013). Group exhibitions that he participated in include *Utopia* at Mizuiri Workshop in Tainan (2017), *Inside/Outside: Contemporary Tainan Art* at Tainan Cultural Center (2016), and *The Pioneers of Taiwanese Artists, 1961–1970* at the National Taiwan Museum of Fine Arts (2014).

13.1

Yuichiro Tamura (Japan)

Milky Bay / 裏切りの海

2016

Mixed media installation with videos,
concrete sculptures, silkscreened billiard tables
and found objects

Dimensions variable; various video durations

Collection of the artist

Nominated by Naoki Yoneda



Installation View at the Yokohama Museum of Art, 2016; Image courtesy of the artist

Description

Milky Bay is a mixed media installation comprising of videos, concrete sculptures, silkscreened billiard tables and found objects. The work explores Japanese post-war history and the body through the history of bodybuilding in Yokohama. Bodybuilding spread from America to Japan during the post-World War II occupation of Yokohama.

The work by Yuichiro Tamura is an alternate vision of post-war Yokohama through the narrative of a fictional storyteller, reminiscent of the late Japanese writer Mishima Yukio, who was a bodybuilding enthusiast. *Milky Bay* presents an immersive environment that recreates the interior of the seamen's club in Yokohama, from which Mishima set sail for his world tour on Christmas Day in 1951.

The artist's assemblage of fragments (from the concrete sculptures to the silkscreened billiard table depicting a bombardment map of Yokohama) are all interconnected visuals that form an aggregate of the artist's idea behind the work.

Keywords:

History, found objects, post-war Japan, bodybuilding, milk, narrative, Mishima Yukio, fragments, mixed-media, installation, aggregation of parts, human body

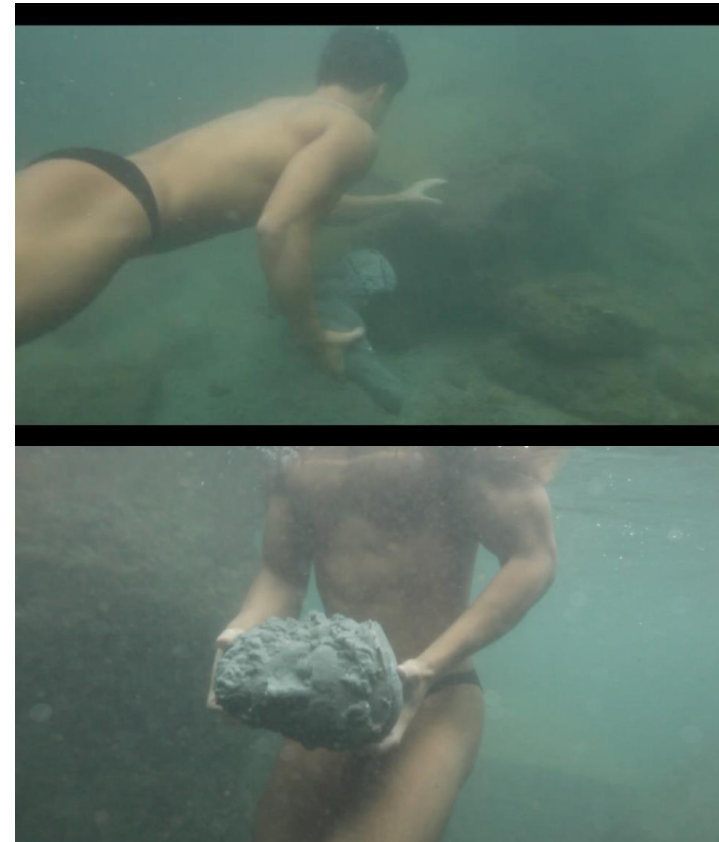


Detail; Installation View

Useful Quotations

“The image and the idea of the body is central to Yuichiro Tamura’s installation, *Milky Bay*. Enfolded within the work are subtle references to various episodes of post-war history in which bodies and the male physique feature prominently.”

from *APB Foundation Signature Art Prize 2018* Exhibition Guide



Installation View

View and Discuss

Before Viewing

Show & Tell:

Refer to the '*Useful Quotation*' (from p.13.3), the *Installation View* and *Details of Milky Bay* images.

Ask learners the following questions:

- A. What do you see silkscreened on the surface of the billiard table? Describe these images in detail.
- B. What do you think is the significance of these images?
- C. What other objects or materials did you see in the installation setup?

Educator: Yuichiro Tamura's assemblage of fragments, ranging from the title of the work (referring to America's influence in introducing dairy products to Japan) to the concrete sculptures and the silkscreened billiard table depicting a bombardment map of Yokohama, are all interconnected visuals that form an aggregate of the artist's idea behind the work.

Additional Information on silkscreen printing can be found [here](#).

Show in exhibition: *Milky Bay*

- Watch the videos in the installation carefully and observe the setup and artefacts in the installation space. Ask learners how they think the objects relate to the film being projected.
- Why has the artist chosen to focus on bodybuilding and Yokohama - what is the **significance of this decision**? How does the employment of a silkscreened billiards table with videos depicting various fragmented scenes relate to history as well as the artist's personal interpretation?

Review Questions Upon viewing:

- Consider the videos without the installation setup, would they be able to convey the idea of the artist?
- What is the installation trying to express in presenting various ideas in fragments? What is *Milky Bay* attempting to examine?
- In your view, do you think the mixed media installation is successful?

Further Explorations

Yuichiro Tamura's *Milky Bay* delves into the memory and history of Yokohama. He makes work that investigates the contemporary significance of past historical events. Comprising of a video installation and found objects, the work focuses on the history of bodybuilding in Yokohama to bring to attention Japanese post-war history and the portrayal of the body in sculptural, filmic and drawn forms.

Divide learners into groups and ask each group to research on Japan's culture, economy, geography and history. Each group will do a short presentation in class. A key question to ask learners is:

How does learning more about Japan inform their understanding and response to Yuichiro Tamura's *Milky Bay*?

In the work, Yokohama is seen through the narrative of a fictional storyteller. You can encourage learners to plan a series of promotional videos for Singapore. You can check out the Visit Singapore YouTube page for a reference video:

<https://www.youtube.com/user/YourSingapore?gl=SG&hl=en-GB>

The promotional video can include the following:

- Multi-culturalism of the country
- Multi-dimensional aspect of the country (e.g. inter-generational programmes between children and the elderly)
- Vibrancy of the arts in Singapore

Check out the artist's website for more information:

<http://www.damianoyurkiewich.com/en/cv/index.html>



Detail; Installation View

Yuichiro Tamura (b. 1977, Toyama, Japan) holds a doctoral degree from the Graduate School of Film and New Media, Tokyo University of the Arts, and works primarily in video and installation. He was a guest researcher for the Institut für Raumexperimente at the Berlin University of the Arts, as part of Japan's Agency for Cultural Affairs' Programme of Overseas Study for Upcoming Artists. His film *NIGHTLESS* won an Excellence Prize in the Art Division at the 14th Japan Media Arts Festival (2011). He was also a finalist for the Nissan Art Award 2017. Tamura has participated in group shows in Japan and overseas, including the Yokohama Triennale (2017); at the Haus der Kulturen der Welt, Berlin (2017); Hamburger Bahnhof – Museum for Contemporary Art – Berlin (2017); Queens Museum, New York (2015) and SeMA Biennale Mediacity Seoul (2014). He lives and works in Atami, Japan.

Thasnai Sethaseree (Thailand)

Untitled (Hua Lamphong)

2016

Paper collage on Buddhist monk robes

400 × 800 × 5 cm

Collection of the artist

Nominated by Gregory Galligan



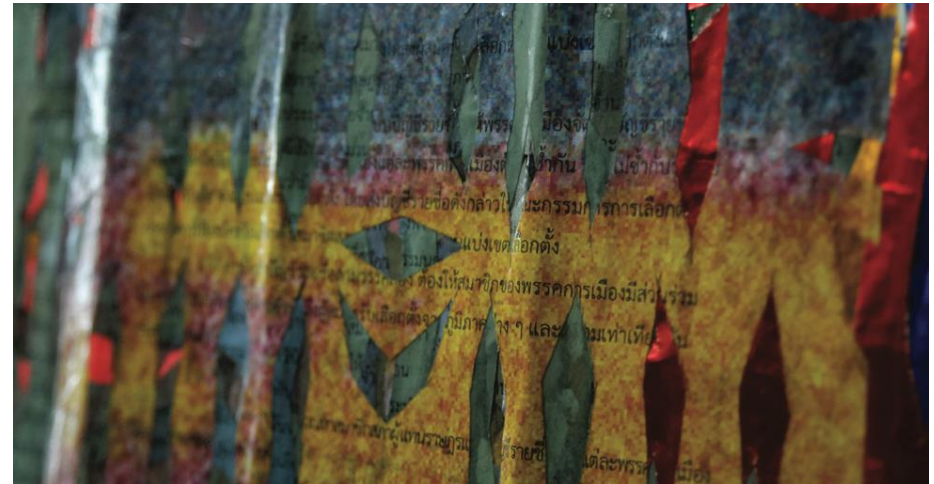
Details; Image courtesy of Gallery VER

Description

Untitled (Hua Lamphong) is an eight-metre-long abstract collage made up of layers of Thai Buddhist monks' robes in place of a traditional canvas. The artist has included multiple layers of cut paper juxtaposed onto the monk robes in presenting a sense of celebration in a canvas saturated with colours and layers of paper.

The top layer of material is strands of brightly coloured paper streamers rendered in traditional Lanna paper cutting technique, a form of streamer commonly seen in festivals in northern Thailand. What lies beneath are sheets of newspapers, images of modern architecture as well as printed texts of the new Thai Constitution, images of political violence and the 17th century poem, "Prophetic Lament for Sri Ayutthaya".

Underneath the celebratory hues are subtle references to the socio-political turmoil that Thailand has experienced in recent years. The references to the culture of the north also suggest the broad political division between the north and the south. Likewise, the title of the piece points to the historic Hua Lamphong station in Bangkok, alluding to regional tensions as observed by the artist. Overall, the massive collage presents an all-over effect made up of abstract shapes, lines and text.



Details; Image courtesy of Gallery VER

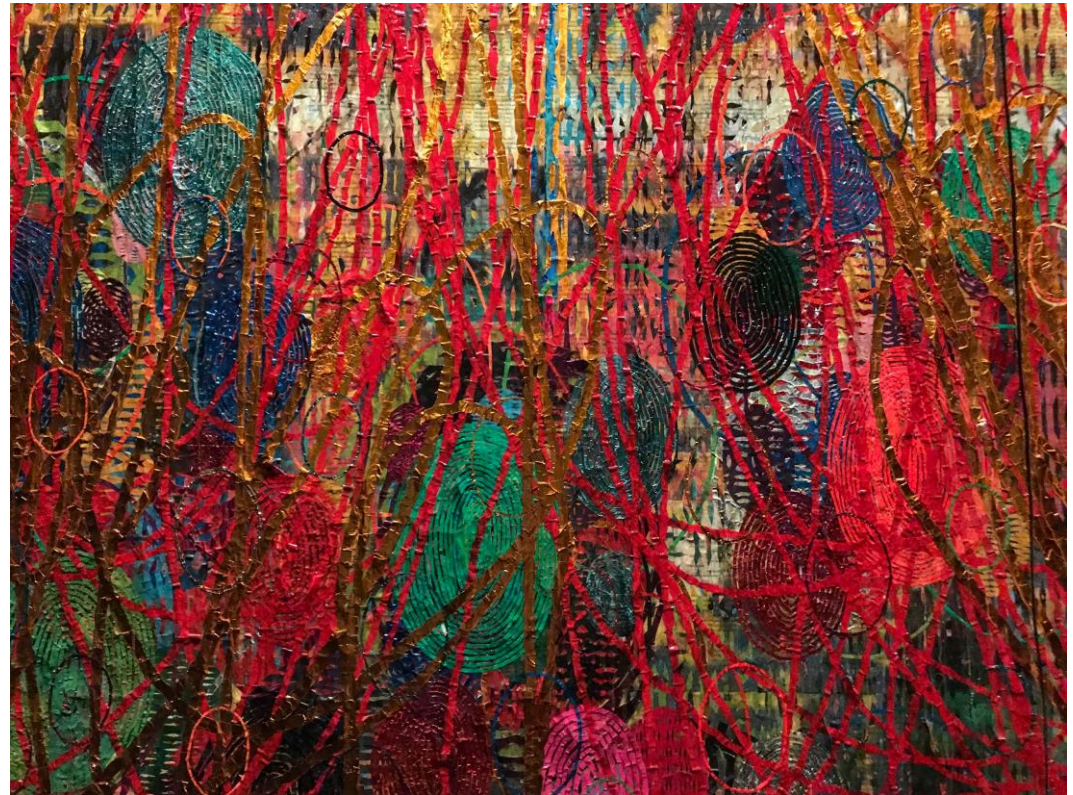
Keywords:

Abstraction, collage, metaphor, national heritage, northern Thailand, socio-politics, juxtaposition, politics, all-over effect, regional tensions

Useful Quotations

The artist refers to his aesthetic here as “magical realism”, one that is strongly evocative of everyday life in the kingdom. The luminous hues contribute, he remarks, “an electric frisson across the painting’s foreground akin to the psychedelic neon tube lighting of a Thai temple fair.”

from *APB Foundation Signature Art Prize 2018 Exhibition Guide*



Details

Before Viewing

Show & Tell: Images of *Untitled (Hua Lamphong)* from this resource guide.

Ask learners to create a list of at least ten words that come to mind when looking at this work. Once the individual lists are complete, group learners together to collaboratively list all the words and determine which ones were mentioned most often.

Ask learners the following questions:

- D. How do you feel when looking at the images?
- E. What material do you think the painting is made of?
- F. Where do you think is the focal point of this painting?

Introduce learners to Abstract Expressionism through information from:

- <http://www.tate.org.uk/art/art-terms/a/abstract-expressionism>
- https://www.moma.org/learn/moma_learning/themes/abstract-expressionism

View and Discuss

Show in exhibition: *Untitled (Hua Lamphong)*

- What is your initial impression of this work when viewed from afar?
- How do you feel when you go up close? Does your impression of the work change and why?
- Go up close to observe the painting. Create a list of materials that have been included in the making of this painting.

Review Questions Upon viewing:

- Comparing *Untitled (Hua Lamphong)* with *After Paradise Lost #1*, what similarities do you see? What differences?
- The artist has used bright and luminous hues in his painting; why do you think he has chosen to do this?
- He has included layers of materials under the brightly coloured paper streamers; can you figure out what the layers underneath is made of?
- What is the artist's intention in utilizing these found materials in his large-scale painting? Is it successful and why?

Educator: Drawing on your earlier introduction to Abstract Expressionism, address the painterly quality observed in Thasnai Sethaseree's work in relation to the characteristics mentioned in those references.

Further Explorations

From the information in the exhibition guide and education resource guide, we learn that *Untitled (Hua Lamphong)* is more than just a large-scale painting to beautify one's wall. Underneath the vibrant colours lie a subtle reference to the socio-political situation in Thailand. This is achieved through the sheets of newspapers, images of political strife in Thailand and printed texts of the new Thai Constitution. The overlaying of these politically charged documents and images reinforces the notion that beneath the ordinary day-to-day life in Thailand lies a fragile political situation.

In this further exploration after the exhibition visit, learners can produce their own artwork or plan to create one using layers of found images or objects.

Create your own “Untitled (artwork)” through the inclusion of:

- Photographs from their past or recent/current day
- Images or photographs of places that are memorable or important to them
- Any other documents that bear significance to their school or personal life

Educator: Do show references of other artworks from Thasnai Sethaseree, or other relevant abstract expressionist artists from the region or from the earlier references provided.

Check out the following websites for more information about the works of Thasnai Sethaseree:

<http://yavuzgallery.com/artists/thasnai-sethaseree/>

<http://art4d.com/2016/10/dont-see-will-hurt-2>



Details; Image courtesy of Gallery VER

Thasnai Sethaseree (b. 1968, Bangkok, Thailand) is best known for conceptual and relational works that are usually ephemeral, although his practice has recently turned to sculpture and painting. Recurrent themes include issues of memory, migration and the nature of knowing. Sethaseree was trained in fine art, and holds a Ph.D. in Social Sciences from Chiang Mai University. His work has been featured in group exhibitions in notable institutions abroad, such as Reva and David Logan Center for the Arts, Chicago (2016); Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, San Francisco (2015); Museum of Contemporary Art and Design, Manila (2013) and Seoul Museum of Art (2011), as well as in solo exhibitions in various art spaces in Thailand. He lives and works in Chiang Mai, Thailand.

Chikako Yamashiro (Japan)

Mud Man

2016

3-channel video installation
with textual components

Dimensions variable; video duration 24:21 mins

Collection of the artist

In cooperation with the Aichi Triennale (2016)

Nominated by Hiroyuki Hattori



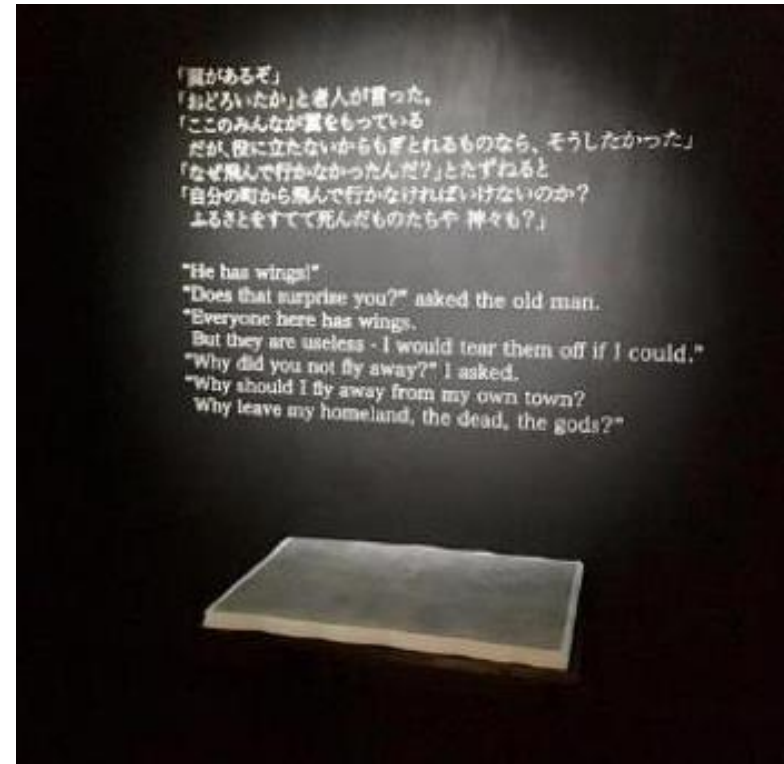
Installation view at the Aichi Triennale, 2016; ©Chikako Yamashiro, image courtesy of Yumiko Chiba Associates

Description

Mud Man is a three-channel video installation that explores ideas of identity, geography, and historical memory, especially that of the artist's hometown of Okinawa. Her video depicts an alternate reality, where the story begins with a community visited by bird droppings that resembles mud falling from the sky. These droppings awaken the people who pick them up to listen to voices reciting poems, who then begin to recite these poems about the history and nature of their communities, and an enigmatic narrative unfolds.

The present-day Okinawa community is made up of islands located at the edge of the East China Sea. Historically, Okinawa existed as the independent kingdom of Ryukyu until its formal annexation by the Japanese Meiji government in 1879. An important context for the video installation is its witnessing of one of World War II's deadliest battles, and the fact that Okinawa continues to be an American military base until today – a point of contention raised in the narrative of the video.

Chikako Yamashiro experimented with different filmmaking techniques in the three-channel video, where found footage is set within her lyrical narrative, drawing attention to memories and history of the past. What results is a work that generates multiple meanings for the audience, where the medium of video has enabled the artist to fuse reality with imagination.



Installation View

Keywords:

Historical memory, socio-historical, fiction, documentary, community, surreal, found footage, performative, symbolism, enigmatic narratives, video

Useful Quotations

“One day when I was collecting materials at their cultural protest [Okinawans protesting the construction of a new military base], I saw people lying on the ground, smiling as they sang and clapped ... it appeared as if their hands had sprung up from the earth. The people there used their bodies to express their will to protect the sea, the sky and the island.”

Chikako Yamashiro



Installation View

View and Discuss

Before Viewing

Show & Tell: Before bringing learners to the exhibition, ask them to create a list of five to ten words that they associate with the history of Singapore from 1942 to 1962. Create a collaborative list of words that relate to Singapore's history during that period.

Highlight the words that appear most frequently. The learners are to discuss what could have caused warfare, violence or clashes between countries. Create a classroom discussion on Singapore's history during that period.

Ask learners the following questions:

- A. What is your understanding of Singapore's history during that period?
- B. What are the key moments in Singapore's history?
- C. What images, photographs, or video footage did you gather in your research?

Discussion can include group work in presenting archival or found footage, images or documents about Singapore during the period. The research materials could be developed into a group project on creating a visual representation on the protection of one's homeland.

Show in exhibition: *Mud Man*

Have learners create another list of words in response to the three-channel video installation.

- Instruct learners to jot down their response in key words on a sheet of paper, or in their mobile phones if lighting conditions are poor
- Inform learners to pay attention to the found footage used in the video
- Observe how the moving images are presented on the three screens and the impact it creates for the audience

Educator: Yamashiro's work addresses complex ideas of geopolitics, historical memory and identity, particularly those of her hometown Okinawa. You may give learners an introduction to the context of the region:

Okinawa was the independent kingdom of Ryukyu until it was integrated into Japan in 1879. During World War II, it was the site of one of the war's bloodiest battles, seeing the deaths of more than two hundred thousand people. After the war, it was administered by the US military government until 1972. Today, the US military occupies a third of Okinawa's land because it is close to China.

View and Discuss

Review Questions Upon viewing:

- Comparing *Mud Man* with that of movies that learners are exposed to, what similarities do you see? What differences?
- How does the viewing of *Mud Man* present you with an impression of a place? What is your impression of Okinawa now?
- How do you feel after watching the video? Describe your emotions using the key words that you jotted down earlier.
- What is the video installation trying to express? What is it attempting to examine? How successful do you think it is?

Educator: In exposing learners to contemporary art, it is important to draw their attention to contemporary artists' use of non-traditional art mediums like installation, video, film and alternative materials. This contrasts with modern artists, who may confine their medium of choice to traditional mediums, like painting or sculpture.

Further Explorations

The work *Mud Man* highlights the artist's approach of utilizing video or film as a medium to express her ideas. The medium of video has enabled Yamashiro to fuse reality and imagination in the use of found footage and original staged scenes to create her imagined narrative. She adopts video as an art medium to question the historical past of her homeland and draw the audience's attention to the present-day city, and uses the moving image to question where the city and its people are headed next.

Make and Create by working collaboratively to research on a period of time in Singapore's history, and create a series of storyboards on a re-imagined historical narrative. Learners are to share these storyboards with the rest of the class.

Learners can refer to the following online resources:

- **HISTORYSG** - online resource guide for more information
- **ARCHIVESONLINE** for archival footages and reference images

The objective of this extended lesson is to enable learners to consider the potential and performability of the moving image in combining documentary with fiction, to present an alternate reality collaboratively imagined and articulated by the group. *The educator could extend this lesson further to include an actualisation of the video making process if resources and expertise permits.*

Check out the following websites for more information on *Mud Man* and Chikako Yamashiro's other works:

<http://suijonohito.com/chikako-yamashiro/>

<https://www.mori.art.museum/english/contents/mamproject/project018/index.html>



Installation View

Chikako Yamashiro (b. 1976, Okinawa, Japan) is a contemporary video artist. She holds a Master of Arts, majoring in Environmental Design, from the Graduate School of Formative Arts, Okinawa Prefectural University of Arts, where she also currently teaches. Her recent exhibitions include solo presentations at White Rainbow, London (2018); RENEMIA, Okinawa (2017); Yumiko Chiba Associates Viewing Room Shinjuku, Tokyo (2016) and Mori Art Museum, Tokyo (2012); as well as group shows at the Jeju Museum of Art (2018), Contemporary Jewish Museum, San Francisco (2016) and Seoul Museum of Art (2015). She has exhibited on major international platforms such as the Aichi Triennale (2016); Artists' Film Biennial, London (2016); 30th Image Forum Festival, Tokyo (2016); and the 8th Asia Pacific Triennial of Contemporary Art, Brisbane (2015).

