

## Media Release

For Immediate Release

### **Singapore Art Museum explores boundaries, differences, and Otherness with *Time of Others***

*In collaboration with Museum of Contemporary Art, Tokyo, National Museum of Art, Osaka,  
Queensland Art Gallery | Gallery of Modern Art and the Japan Foundation Asia Center*

**Singapore, 11 November** – From 21 November 2015 to 28 February 2016, Singapore Art Museum presents *Time of Others – Contemporary Art from Four Museums across the Asia Pacific*, a co-curatorial collaboration with Museum of Contemporary Art, Tokyo (MOT), National Museum of Art, Osaka (NMAO), Queensland Art Gallery | Gallery of Modern Art (QAGOMA) and the Japan Foundation Asia Center. A survey of contemporary art from the Asia Pacific region, *Time of Others* features works of artists responding to social, historical and geopolitical concerns at this present juncture of living in a more interconnected world today, where the notions of boundary, difference and Otherness have become more complex. The exhibition was shown at NMAO and MOT earlier this year, and will travel to QAGOMA in 2016.

The Singapore leg of the exhibition presents over 25 artworks by 17 artists from around the globe, drawn from the participating museums' collections, artist loans and commissions. SAM welcomes the works of Chen Chieh-Jen (Taiwan), Heman Chong (Singapore), Kiri Dalena (The Philippines), Graham Fletcher (New Zealand/Samoa), Saleh Husein (Indonesia), Jonathan Jones (Australia), On Kawara (Japan), An-My Lê (Vietnam), Lim Minouk (South Korea), Basir Mahmood (Pakistan), Miyagi Futoshi (Japan), Pratchaya Pinthong (Thailand), Shitamichi Motoyuki (Japan), Vandy Rattana (Cambodia) and Dahn Vo (Denmark/Vietnam). For the first time, the Singapore iteration of *Time of Others* will also feature the works by Hong Kong artist Tozer Pak and Filipino artist Ringo Bunoan.

These artists tackle the question of how we can authentically and meaningfully conceive, understand and engage with other cultural contexts of society, while residing within our own localities, and being part of a globalised world today. Their diverse works reflect on individual and shared histories, cultural specificities, colonial legacies, as well as subjectivities that shape our understanding of culture and identity today.

Such elements are reflected in works such as Saleh Husein's *Arabian Party*, which explores the relatively unknown history of Arab-Indonesians. Despite having been part of Indonesia's history for a long time, Arab-Indonesians were still classified as foreigners and their rights restricted under Dutch colonial rule. Through the act of converting historical photographs into paintings, *Arabian Party* is a personal response to and reflection on issues of nationhood, nationalism, and identification.

*Realm of Reverberations* by Taiwanese artist Chen Chieh-jen is based on the Loshen Sanitorium, a hospital for lepers in Taipei. Chen's work explores the state of Losheng today, having undergone rapid deterioration following the Taiwanese authorities' decision to build a train depot on the site. As long-term stigmatization and isolation of Losheng's inhabitants has made reintegration into society difficult, *Realm of Reverberations* reflects upon the lives of individuals who find themselves part of a marginalised community, and a kind of forgotten generation.

Presenting *Calendars (2020–2096)* is Singaporean artist, Heman Chong. Comprising of 1001 photographs of spaces that anyone can access, such as shops, restaurants and communal plazas, but completely devoid of human activity or trace, *Calendars (2020–2096)* presents a vast and vacant urban landscape of Singapore that is both familiar and uncanny at the same time. Further to being the artist's representation of time, embedded in the work are conceptual gestures and narrative possibilities that suggest ambiguous prospects of the notions of home and of history. Intriguingly, these are calendars for a future yet-to-come and will persist into a time long after we have left this mortal plane, prompting us to reflect on time as an abstract concept, and our personal relationship with it, and perhaps what we do, or can do, with the time that we have.

"*Time of Others* offers us the opportunity to explore ideas of personal identity, individual memories, as well as cultural and historical narratives through the perspectives of these artists. This collaboration between SAM and the various art institutions in the Asia Pacific is in line with our commitment to presenting thought-provoking contemporary art from around the world and highlights just how interconnected the world is, as can be experienced in the exhibition." says Dr Susie Lingham, Director, Singapore Art Museum.

*Time of Others* will show at the Singapore Art Museum from **21 November 2015 to 28 February 2016**. *Time of Others* will also include exhibition-related public and educational programmes, such as artist and curator talks, workshops, and curatorial tours.

-  
www.singaporeartmuseum.sg  
www.facebook.com/singaporeartmuseum  
www.twitter.com/sg\_artmuseum  
www.instagram.com/sg\_artmuseum  
www.youtube.com/samtelly  
-

### **About the Singapore Art Museum**

The Singapore Art Museum (SAM) is a contemporary art museum which focuses on art-making and art-thinking in Singapore, Southeast Asia and Asia, encompassing a worldwide perspective on contemporary art practice. SAM advocates and makes accessible interdisciplinary contemporary art through research-led and evolving curatorial practice. Since it opened in January 1996, SAM has built up one of the most important collections of contemporary art from the region. It seeks to seed and nourish a stimulating and creative space in Singapore through exhibitions and public programmes, and to deepen every visitor's experience. These include outreach and education, research and publications, as well as cross-disciplinary residencies and exchanges.

SAM occupies two buildings: the old St Joseph's Institution on Bras Basah Road, built in 1855 and now a National Monument; and SAM at 8Q, a conservation building across the road on Queen Street that was the old Catholic High School.

In 2011, SAM was the venue organiser of the Singapore Biennale, becoming the main organiser in 2013. SAM was incorporated as a Company Limited by Guarantee on 13 November 2013, operating under the Ministry of Culture, Community and Youth. To find out more, visit [www.singaporeartmuseum.sg](http://www.singaporeartmuseum.sg)

### **For more information, please contact:**

#### **Shirlene Noordin**

Phish Communications

DID: +65 6344 2953

Email: [shirlene@phish-comms.com](mailto:shirlene@phish-comms.com)

#### **Lynn Sim**

Singapore Art Museum

DID: +65 6697 9762

Email: [lynn.sim@singaporeartmuseum.sg](mailto:lynn.sim@singaporeartmuseum.sg)

**Annex A: *Time of Others: Contemporary Art from Four Museums across the Asia Pacific* – Synopsis**

A survey of contemporary art from the Asia Pacific region, *Time of Others* features works of artists responding to social, historical and geopolitical concerns at this present juncture of living in a more interconnected world today, where notions of boundary, difference and Otherness have also become more complex.

*Time of Others* poses the paradoxical question of how we can authentically and meaningfully conceive, understand and engage with other cultural contexts of society, while residing within our own localities, and being part of a globalised world today. The exhibition presents contemporary artists from diverse regions whose works reflect on both individual and shared histories, cultural specificities, colonial legacies, as well as their subjectivities that shape our understanding of culture and identity today.

*Time of Others* is a co-curatorial collaboration between Singapore Art Museum, Museum of Contemporary Art, Tokyo, National Museum of Art, Osaka, Queensland Art Gallery | Gallery of Modern Art and the Japan Foundation Asia Center. With more than 20 artworks drawn from the participating museums' collections, artist loans and commissions, the exhibition will travel to the four museums from 2015 to 2016.

## **Annex B: *Time of Others* – Artists and Artworks**

### **Ringo Bunoan**

#### ***Endings***

2013

Framed book pages

Dimensions variable

Singapore Art Museum Collection

#### ***No Endings***

2013

Book Installation

Dimensions variable

Singapore Art Museum Collection

If literary narratives can be said to be a proposition of passing time that have a beginning and an end, Filipino artist Ringo Bunoan suspends time into a standstill with her works that focus on story endings. In *Endings* and *No Endings*, the last pages of more than 100 novels symbolising the finality of a story are gathered to form a philosophical statement marking the conclusion of time. Such is the nature of Bunoan's artistic practice, which seeks to establish readings through works that explore the possible relationships between material, meaning and metaphor.

In *Endings* and *No Endings*, devoid of preceding chapters, visitors can only encounter anticipated outcomes without context and premise. Each story is made anonymous through the column of books with the missing end pages against the wall that intentionally conceal their titles. While conclusions are privileged over beginnings in these works, Bunoan also raises the question of the arbitrary nature of conclusions, asking, "What is closure without context?"

**Chen Chieh-jen**

***The Realm of Reverberations***

2014

Video installation with four blue-ray films and documentation

Durations 23:56, 26:07, 23:33 and 26:56 mins

Collection of the Artist

Known for dealing with the themes and consequences of capitalism, colonisation, and globalisation, much of Taiwanese artist Chen Chieh-jen's photography and video works are intimate explorations into the psyche of exploited and marginalised communities in Taiwan and beyond. Chen's works are frequently sited in places of social or historical symbolism, revealing how Taiwan has radically transformed in the past 30 years. *The Realm of Reverberations* is based on the Losheng Sanatorium, a hospital for lepers located in the Xinzhuang District of Taipei. The sanatorium was established by the Japanese colonial government in 1930 to quarantine people afflicted with Hansen's disease where they were forced to undergo sterilisation, and bore the brunt of the government's policies of marriage prohibition. Chen's work explores the state of Losheng today, having undergone rapid deterioration following the Taiwanese authorities' decision to build a train depot on the site.

Comprising four narratives, *Keeping Company*, *Tree Planters*, *The Suspended Room* and *Tracing Forward*, the work interweaves the stories of four individuals whose lives have been influenced by Losheng: a volunteer working with sanatorium residents, old residents, a Mainland Chinese hospice nurse, and a fictional political prisoner. For many of Losheng's remaining inhabitants, whose long-term stigmatisation and isolation has made reintegration into society difficult, Losheng has become a sanctuary and their only home. As parts of the sanatorium continue to be demolished to make way for needs of the Taipei Department of Rapid Transit Systems, *The Realm of Reverberations* questions the price of progress – one that is at the expense of a forgotten generation.

**Heman Chong**

***Calendars (2020 – 2096)***

2004 – 2010

1001 offset prints with matte lamination

30 × 30 cm (each), installation dimensions variable

Singapore Art Museum Collection

One-thousand-and-one picture calendars are installed in a grid covering the walls of an entire room. The photographs in the calendars show spaces that anybody can access, like shops, restaurants, and halls, which are in that sense not private, but the inexplicable lack of figures in them gives them an uncanny atmosphere.

If a space were capable of establishing a public character, then what kind of people would be assumed to go there? And how would the space itself represent that? Moreover, when dates from the near future like 2020 and 2096 – indicated in brusque calendar numerals – are visualised as calendars that appear before one's eyes completely covering the walls in orderly rows, it becomes apparent that the concept of "time" represented here is an extremely abstract and impersonal thing (the calendars will continue even after we die). To whom do these calendars and the "time" manifested here belong?

Starting in 2004, Heman Chong has spent the past seven years photographing chance moments of absence he has encountered in Singapore, a city-state with a high population density. Chong is conscious that in this city-state, where urban development proceeds rapidly and systematically, it is impossible to independently determine individual identity, which fluctuates in and is influenced by the surrounding environment. And when the exhibition space filled with this work is recognised as yet another public space, this question is in turn directed at the viewer.

**Kiri Dalena**

***Erased Slogans***

2008

Video projection on desk

62 × 92 × 78 cm (table), 41 × 41 × 61 cm (stool)

Singapore Art Museum Collection

***Red Book of Slogans***

2008

Hardcover book with wood armrest

9 x 6 x 8 cm (book), 56 x 23 x 2 cm (wood armrest)

Singapore Art Museum Collection

Kiri Dalena studied documentary film and produces works that cast light on the people of the Philippines and their everyday lives, whilst they confront socio-political issues in the country. However, Dalena's works are not strictly documentary as such. Her works incorporate varied media and expressive languages, and elicit an imaginative power that disrupts the "reality" viewers maintain in their consciousness and the frames structuring her work's significance.

*Erased Slogans* departs from Dalena's research, at the Lopez Museum in Manila, into an archive of photographic materials related to the period under the dictatorship of Ferdinand Marcos. Still unorganised at the time of Dalena's research, the archive contained documentation of popular demonstrations that took place from the 1950s – prior to the Marcos regime – until the 1972 declaration of martial law. Fascinated by these materials, Dalena selected about 100 photographs from this massive archive and erased all the slogans on the placards captured in the images. The accumulation of these images, completely devoid of words, further accentuates the power structures between an assembly of citizens stridently calling for change and the authorities who suppress them. At the same time, the blank placards carried by the people – alluding to an enforced silence – hint at the many voices that will never reach us, and the existence of forgotten hopes and ideals. In *Erased Slogans*, Dalena – thorough the act of expunging and 'censoring' slogans in the photographs – has also consciously replicated the actions of government authorities. These slogans were then compiled into the adjoining work, the *Red Book of Slogans*. With one slogan per page, the 700-page book is dense with 'protest', its form reminiscent to an expanded communist red book or a bible.



**Graham Fletcher**

***Untitled***

from the series '***Lounge Room Tribalism***'

2010

Oil on canvas

162 × 130 cm

Purchased 2010 with funds from the Estate of Lawrence F King in memory of the late Mr and Mrs SW King through the Queensland Art Gallery Foundation

Queensland Art Gallery Collection

***Untitled***

from the series '***Lounge Room Tribalism***'

2010

Oil on canvas

150 × 120 cm

Purchased 2010 with funds from the Estate of Lawrence F King in memory of the late Mr and Mrs SW King through the Queensland Art Gallery Foundation

Queensland Art Gallery Collection

***Untitled***

from the series '***Lounge Room Tribalism***'

2010

Oil on canvas

150 × 120 cm

Purchased 2010 with funds from the Estate of Lawrence F King in memory of the late Mr and Mrs SW King through the Queensland Art Gallery Foundation

Queensland Art Gallery Collection

Graham Fletcher's practice spans from painting to sculpture and often explores formal visual languages associated with specific periods of time and ways of viewing the world. Of particular interest are those periods and perspectives that continue to shape our understandings and reception of Pacific ethnographic objects. *Lounge Room Tribalism* is a serial representation of the fashionable interiors of the 1950s and 1960s in which Pacific ethnographic objects are artfully displayed according to ideas of chic modernism. Working from periodicals, design books, and online resources, Fletcher draws from a modernist aesthetic creating fictitious spaces for these objects. "For me," he writes, "these objects no longer emanate the power of the Old World, but are historically aestheticised as objects of the New, thereby raising questions of context, assimilation, ownership, and authenticity." While the artist works with a thin layer of paint, it is applied with chisel edged brushes in rich earthy

colours enabling the carefully crafted and realised masks and clubs to resonate with latent magical qualities.

For Fletcher, the series creates a space in which “we can consider the realities and the affects of colonialism... and how many indigenous artists today are subject to influence and transformation in the advent of globalism.”

### **Saleh Husein**

#### ***Arabian Party***

2013

Acrylic on canvases, drawings and archival materials

Dimensions variable

Collection of the Artist

Centred on painting but incorporating diverse media, the recent work of Saleh Husein explores the relatively unknown history of Arab-Indonesians. Even though many of these people had long ago settled in Indonesia as part of the Arab diaspora, they were classified as foreigners and their rights restricted under Dutch colonial rule. In making this work, Husein researched the historical figure of Abdurrahman Baswedan – who, during the 1930s Indonesian National Awakening period, led the Arab-Indonesian nationalist movement and advanced the principle that one’s birthplace is one’s motherland – as well as the political party that was formed as a repercussion of Baswedan’s activities. The work is mainly comprised of 100 paintings Husein made based on photographic materials he discovered through his research process. The act of converting photographs into paintings represents the artist’s critical investigation of what photographs record and narrate as historical documents. It also represents a process for thinking about issues of nationhood, nationalism, and identification. The results presented to the viewer hint at the complex vicissitudes in identity and culture experienced by the Arab-Indonesians, while also evoking fragments of narrative that have fallen away from the grand narrative of history shaped at a national level.

**Jonathan Jones**

***lumination fall wall weave***

2006/2015

Electrical cable, light fittings, bulbs

363 × 720 × 25 cm

Dimensions variable

The Xstrata Coal Emerging Indigenous Art Award 2006 (winning entry)

Purchased 2006 with funds from Xstrata Coal through the Queensland Art Gallery Foundation

Queensland Art Gallery Collection

Inspired by his mother's sewing practice and the communal activity of Aboriginal net-making, Jonathan Jones creates dazzling electric light installations that draw equally on the aesthetic strategies of non-objective art and traditional cultural designs. Though resembling American minimalism, the canonical fluorescent light works of Dan Flavin in particular, Jones' work draws its configurations from the artist's research into his Aboriginal heritage, with particular reference to ceremonial pattern-making, as well as encounters between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australian communities. The question of community is central to the installation, *Illumination fall wall weave*, in which electrical cords are literally woven through a wall in repeated loops modeled on the shape of the canoes used by the Cadigal people of Sydney Harbour and surrounds. Domestic light bulbs hang from their ends in a long row hovering just above the gallery floor, a reference to the campfires reflected on the water that were described by the first Europeans to arrive there. This sensory field created by the light and the electricity pulsing through the woven cords suggest a single entity, operating as a metaphor for community and encounters with otherness; from "first contact" to the experience of sharing a space with another person.

**On Kawara**

**APR. 8, 1981**

From the series '**TODAY**', (1966–)

1981

Acrylic on canvas, newspaper and paper box

25.7 × 33.4 cm

Museum of Contemporary Art Tokyo Collection

**Nov. 21, 1985**

From the series '**TODAY**', (1966–)

1985

Acrylic on canvas, newspaper and paper box

25.7 × 33.4 cm

Museum of Contemporary Art Tokyo Collection

On Kawara began his *Today* series on January 4, 1966, and continued the project until his recent passing in June 2014. The *Today* series involved the artist skillfully hand-painting the date of the work's execution onto a solid, monochromatic ground. If a painting could not be painted in a single day, it was abandoned. As the series developed, it went through shifts in base colour, while the date format and language were determined by the location of a given work's creation. These paintings operate with a fascinating duality in that, while being part of an ongoing project that records the passage of time, as individual objects, they fix a point in time. This is emphasised by the work's iconic character. Their bold, simple design is such that each date is afforded a special significance within the space of a single canvas, while the consistency of this design, spanning across nearly five decades of Kawara's practice, allows one date to be more or less interchangeable with any other. It is a paradox that extends into the viewer's identification with the dates themselves: a date may be shared in that both the artist and the viewer lived through it, but the exact experience of that day remains opaque.

**An-My Lê**

***US Marine Expeditionary Unit, Shoalwater Bay, Australia***

from the series '**Events Ashore**'

2005

Archival pigment inkjet print

101.6 × 143.5 cm

The Kenneth and Yasuko Myer Collection of Contemporary Asian Art

Purchased 2011 with funds from Michael Sidney Myer through the Queensland Art Gallery Foundation

Queensland Art Gallery Collection

***Damage Control Training, USS Nashville, Senegal***

from the series '*Events Ashore*'

2009

Archival pigment inkjet print

101.6 × 143.5 cm

The Kenneth and Yasuko Myer Collection of Contemporary Asian Art

Purchased 2011 with funds from Michael Sidney Myer through the Queensland Art Gallery Foundation

Queensland Art Gallery Collection

***Patient Admission, US Naval Hospital Ship Mercy, Vietnam***

from the series '*Events Ashore*'

2010

Archival pigment inkjet print

101.6 × 143.5 cm

The Kenneth and Yasuko Myer Collection of Contemporary Asian Art

Purchased 2011 with funds from Michael Sidney Myer through the Queensland Art Gallery Foundation

Queensland Art Gallery Collection

***Ship Security, US Naval Hospital Ship Comfort, Haiti***

from the series '*Events Ashore*'

2010

Archival pigment inkjet print

101.6 × 143.5 cm

The Kenneth and Yasuko Myer Collection of Contemporary Asian Art

Purchased 2011 with funds from Michael Sidney Myer through the Queensland Art Gallery Foundation

Queensland Art Gallery Collection

Against a backdrop of mythologising and polarising images of military force and war, An-My Lê's fantastically detailed photographs of the prosaic activity of military personnel suggest both a myriad of untold stories and the disquieting spread of US military deployments in the post-Cold War era. Taken between 2005 and 2010, when Lê traveled as an embedded photographer with the American armed forces as they moved between non-combat operational sites, the *Events Ashore* series was made in Australia, Indonesia, Vietnam, Haiti, the North Arabian Gulf, and Senegal, as well as the Antarctica, Japan, Kuwait, Iraq, and the United States. Shot on a large-format, five-by-seven Deardorff view camera, more commonly

associated with nineteenth-century landscape photography and studio portraiture, these images demonstrate Lê's interest in what occurs at the margins of the US military service, while also revealing an awareness of photographic, cinematic, and artistic conventions. Shifting her focus to the centrality of the landscape within which the physical and psychological preparations leading up to battle are enacted, Lê meticulously recalibrates the aesthetic tropes of war.

**Lim Minouk**

***International Calling Frequency***

2011

Video documentation

Duration 11:02 mins

Collection of the Artist

Lim Minouk's *International Calling Frequency* is an attempt to develop a street song appropriate to the new forms of popular organisation established by the Arab Spring and Occupy movements of 2011. Although rooted in highly specific contingencies – created as a means of evading certain legal restrictions placed on public protest in Korea – it is nevertheless universal in scope and ambition. Or, more accurately, it seeks to be and to express what is held in common among the mass: it is an attempt to compose an “Internationale” (left-wing anthem) for the precariat (the working-poor, unemployed), free of copyright and other legally enforceable claims to authorship.

The concept is simple: a melody, with no set lyric or rhythm, which can be adapted freely to any context, culture or cause. Composed in collaboration with singer and activist Lee Minwhae, *International Calling Frequency* is lilting, pretty, and given to occasional melancholic inflection, in contrast to the muscular, masculine anthems of struggles past. Sung together, as in Lim's engaging video documentation of a campaign to save one of the last independently run corners of Seoul's bustling Myeongdong district, the song is a non-threatening, non-eulogising, endearingly ramshackle musical thread temporarily binding together a handful of like-minded people in what remains of public space.

**Basir Mahmood**

***Manmade***

2010

Single-channel video, silent, colour

Duration 13:27 mins

Collection of the Artist

Presented as poetic and abstracted narratives that employ a minimalist, filmic language, Basir Mahmood's videos capture people's everyday behaviour and gestures and examine the psychological and socio-political contexts they reveal, as well as the artist's own subjective viewpoint towards the material. Mahmood's first video work, *Manmade*, is a split-screen montage. In one frame, a man changes from everyday clothing into a suit in front of the camera. From the way he fumblingly takes off his clothes and puts on a shirt, trousers, and necktie in response to directions from an off-screen voice, it is apparent he is not used to wearing a suit. As he glances at and addresses the off-screen director, the man seems to be confirming whether or not he is wearing the suit properly, but his actions also suggest an attempt to relieve the discomfort of the situation in which he finds himself. In the other frame, the same man – now wearing the suit – sits on a chair and stares fixedly into the camera with an impassive expression.

Mahmood himself does not define the significance of juxtaposing, on the one hand, an image of a man wearing what for many is a symbol of normalised "Western" culture, and on the other hand an image of a bewildered man upon whom an unfamiliar culture has been imposed. Yet the work does, for example, seem to hint at the gaps between a constantly fluctuating individual subjectivity and a fixed, superficial identity, while also referencing a symbolic narrative about our forced negotiations with hegemonic culture.

**Miyagi Futoshi**

***The Ocean View Resort***

2013

Single channel video, sound, colour

Duration 19:25 mins

Collection of the Artist

Centred upon a blog-format website, Miyagi Futoshi's project, *American Boyfriend*, develops in the form of photographs, videos, objects, texts, and installations comprising such materials, as well as talks and performances. Taking Miyagi's personal experiences and memories of Okinawa, Tokyo, and the United States as their underlying theme, the songs, writings, and artworks that occasionally emerge from this project resonate strikingly with each other. With each fragment holding a kind of poetic completeness, the world that emerges from their interaction is filled with ephemeral beauty. The video work *The Ocean View Resort* can be considered the core of *American Boyfriend*, which continues even now as an open-ended project. The story begins with the protagonist, who evokes Miyagi, returning from the United States to his home island in Okinawa, where he re-encounters his childhood friend Y. With the recounting of an unknown history of the island, the relationship between Y's grandfather and the US military, divided by a fence, is reiterated in the relationship between the protagonist and Y across a lace curtain. As the Beethoven string quartet that is the story's key solemnly echoes across a darkening, cloudy sea, even the steadily burning red flame of a cigarette evokes the transience of their relationship. Beyond the gaze of the artist, who examines his own identity as a sexual minority, lies the complexity of the historical and political relations of Japan, the United States, and Okinawa. This is not a call for political correctness, but rather a quiet soliloquy on the relations between others who are close yet far at the same time, hinted at in parallel to private overlaps and missed connections.



**Tozer Pak (Pak Sheung Chuen)**

***A Travel Without Visual Experience: Malaysia***

2008

Room installation with travel photographs

Dimensions variable

William Lim Collection

Many of Hong Kong conceptual artist Tozer Pak's works consist of the performance and documentation of investigative premises that the artist prescribes for himself as a way of illuminating the myriad realities and absurdities of a globalised world today. *A Travel Without Visual Experience: Malaysia* is part of a series of works where the artist experiments with different methodologies of encountering his travel terrains. Whether Pak navigates cartographic maps in actual places or gives himself an intentional brief to get lost in the city, each journey can be seen as the artist's way of assessing the contrasting realities of site and space as known in mass media and in real life. The work begins with a five-day tour to Malaysia during the course of which the artist had his eyes closed, only taking pictures by the intuition of his other senses, and viewing them only after his return. This performative gesture is meant to seek out travel perspectives through the nonvisual senses, and delay the experience of the holiday (at least its visual aspects), until it is over. In this installation, visitors can only encounter the artist's images of Malaysia by activating the flash function of their cameras to light up the room. A reflection on whether sight is entirely an objective human sense function, the work also presents a caricature of consumption habits in tourism today, revealing the habitual compulsion to document rather than to wholly experience.

**Pratchaya Phinthong**

***Give More Than You Take***

2010 – ongoing

Diverse arranged objects, video

Dimensions variable

Enea Righi Collection

Much of Thai artist Pratchaya Phinthong's conceptually driven practice is premised on collaborative processes, modes of exchange and the transference of artistic agency that redefine the value and significance of art. *Give More Than You Take* is an ongoing project that began in 2010 when the artist travelled to Sweden to work with Thai workers hired to pick wild berries, and paid in accordance with the amount of produce they collected. Each day, Pratchaya informed the curator of the French gallery, where he was to present his work, the weight of the berries he picked with instructions to gather materials of an equivalent weight to

be his artwork. In this exchange, the value of artistic and menial labour is conflated. Pratchaya's artwork both challenges and determines the form, legitimacy, and meaningfulness of art, and is one that is underpinned by other economic realities at large. The project culminated in the form of a 549kg artwork equivalent to the total weight of berries picked in Sweden throughout the course of two months. A second component of *Give More Than You Take* involved the exhibition curator reassembling the wood pieces that came from a shooting tower that Pratchaya and the berry pickers took down. This project continues in *Time of Others*, where the exhibition curators improvise new ways of displaying the work as a way of negotiating with notions of value in art-making.

**Shitamichi Motoyuki**

***Taichung, Taiwan***

from the series '*torii*'

2006 – 2012

C-type print

100 × 150 cm

National Museum of Art, Osaka Collection

***Saipan, USA***

from the series '*torii*'

2006 – 2012

C-type print

100 × 150 cm

National Museum of Art, Osaka Collection

***Saipan, USA***

from the series '*torii*'

2006 – 2012

C-type print

100 × 150 cm

National Museum of Art, Osaka Collection

***Geomundo Island, Korea***

from the series '*torii*'

2006 – 2012

C-type print

100 × 150 cm

National Museum of Art, Osaka Collection

***Sakhalinskaja, Russia***

from the series '*torii*'

2006 – 2012

C-type print

100 × 150 cm

National Museum of Art, Osaka Collection

Shitamichi Motoyuki takes journeys. Yet, more than a frontier spirit or adventurer mentality seeking out unvisited lands, what drives him is perhaps an interest in the not-so-distant past, and the relatively close others who lived through it. For example, in his representative series, *torii*, Shitamichi tracked down Shinto shrine gates (*torii*) in places that are outside Japan's borders, and captured them in photographs. Built under Japanese occupation, these gates have now lost their original symbolic function, variously changing in significance and character. Having been steeped in and transformed over time by local cultures and lifestyles, these gates are also proof of the quiet subversion, in the extremely recent past, of the values of their builders, who were more or less praying for eternity. Shitamichi is infatuated precisely with the discovery of things and landscapes in which we can see these fluctuations in meaning and shifts in borders that silently progress in everyday life.

**Vandy Rattana**

***MONOLOGUE***

2014

Single channel HD video, colour, sound

Duration 18:00 mins

Collection of the Artist

At the beginning of his artistic practice, Vandy Rattana taught himself how to use photography and video to document the rapidly changing urban and natural environments of Cambodia, as well as the lives of the people buffeted by those changes. Since then, his focus has gradually shifted from observing the social situation to questioning Cambodia's history and its voids, as well as people's indifference to the past. In his recent works, Vandy traces people's memories and stories in an attempt to examine a past that he himself has not experienced, and a history that is missing from public narratives. Differing from his creative practice to date, with its basis on documentation, the new work, *MONOLOGUE*, presents reflections rooted in Vandy's own experiences as an address to a "you." The person he is addressing is buried beneath the two mango trees in "the place" he found using the map his father drew. The wretched farmers are tilling the paddies where he seeks out the traces of the forgotten existence of "you." Some 5,000 victims continue to sleep in this place. The monologue continues. It speaks of a people who were driven to lose sight of their own dignity – as well as that of the dead – in order to

survive. And of a world that even now does not mind making new victims in order to bring about a “better age.”

**Danh Vo**

**2.2.1861**

2009 – ongoing

Ink on paper

29.6 × 21.0 cm

The Kenneth and Yasuko Myer Collection of Contemporary Asian Art

Purchased 2013 with funds from Michael Sidney Myer through the Queensland Art Gallery | Gallery of Modern Art Foundation

Queensland Art Gallery Collection

Danh Vo's conceptually driven work entwines personal history with wider social movements and political events through the use of found, purchased, and reproduced objects that question systems of value. A particular focus of his work is the symbolism and distribution of power. This work, hand traced by the artist's father, Phung Vo, is a letter originally written in 1861 by the French Catholic missionary Jean-Théopane Vénard (1829-61) to his own father just before his execution by decapitation. Vénard was based at a mission in West Tonkin (northern Vietnam) and was captured and imprisoned due to an edict from the Nguyen Emperor banning proselytising. The French at the time were in the process of strengthening their presence in Vietnam, partly in response to the treatment of French missionaries, and undertook a series of invasions from 1858-61 before formally signing the Treaty of Saigon in 1862, granting them control of Saigon and the surrounding provinces. Phung Vo is unable to read French, but his elegant handwriting creates a beautiful transcription of this emotional letter from son to father. Through this process, the work also makes links to the artist's own father-son relationship, which is restaged over and over again as Phung Vo copies the letters for whoever wants to acquire one.

**Annex C: *Time of Others* – Public Programmes**

**Afternoon Tea With...**

**Date:** Saturday, 21 November 2015

**Time:** 3:30pm

**Venue:** Singapore Art Museum

Join artists and curators of *Time of Others* in a cosy tea session at SAM where they will discuss the concept behind the exhibition, as well as the curatorial process leading to the selection and presentation of the artworks. Speakers include National Museum of Art Osaka curator Azusa Hashimoto and *Time of Others* artists Motoyuki Shitamichi, Ringo Bunoan, and Tozer Pak.

*\$15. Tickets available at SAM and SISTIC. [www.singaporeartmuseum.sg](http://www.singaporeartmuseum.sg)*