



Education Folio
Arin Rungjang
Thailand

How to use this folio

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

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Introduction

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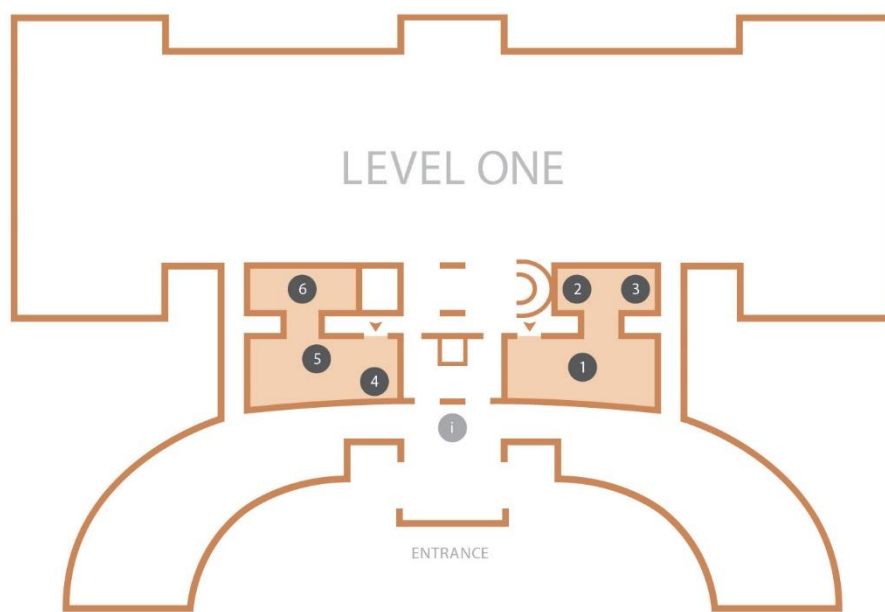
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Nominators from across the region with a wide range of specialties and backgrounds are specially invited to nominate specific artworks – instead of artists – that had been aesthetically, culturally and socially significant in their particular art scenes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

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Exhibition map



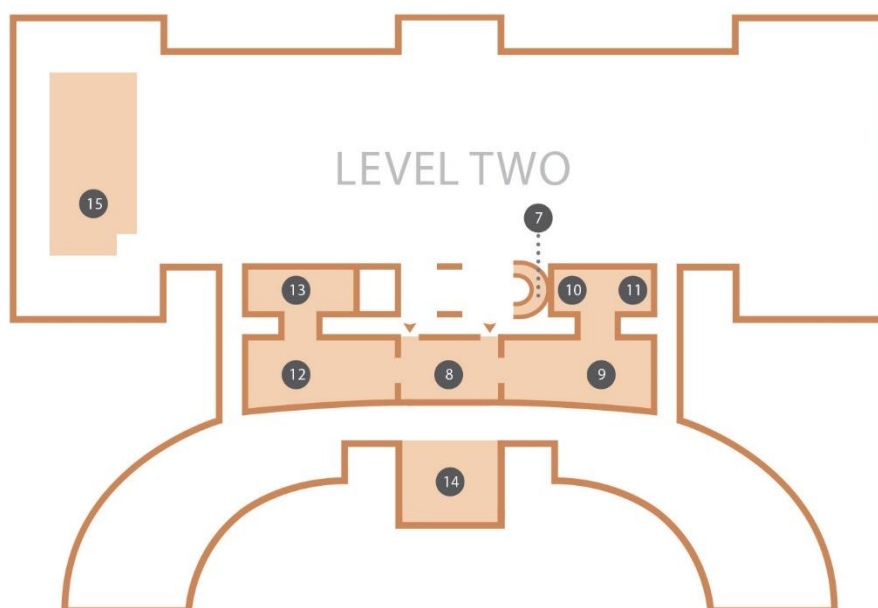
LEVEL ONE

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

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Exhibition map



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Artwork***Golden Teardrop***

Arin Rungjang

2013

Sculpture and video installation

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

Collection of the Singapore Art Museum

Image courtesy of the Artist and Future Perfect

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About the artwork and artistic process

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

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

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

About the artist

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

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

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

Discussion and suggested activities

Questions for discussion

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

Suggested activities

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

Glossary

Installation

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

Siamese

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

Titular

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

Delicacy

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

Ayutthaya

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

Narrative

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

Interspersed

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

Fabrication

The action or process of manufacturing or inventing something.

Foundry

A workshop or factory for casting metal.

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Further reading and viewing

Artist's Website

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

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

Available [here](#).

Book of recipes for Thai cakes and desserts

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

Video introducing *thong yod*

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



Education Folio

Choe U-Ram

South Korea

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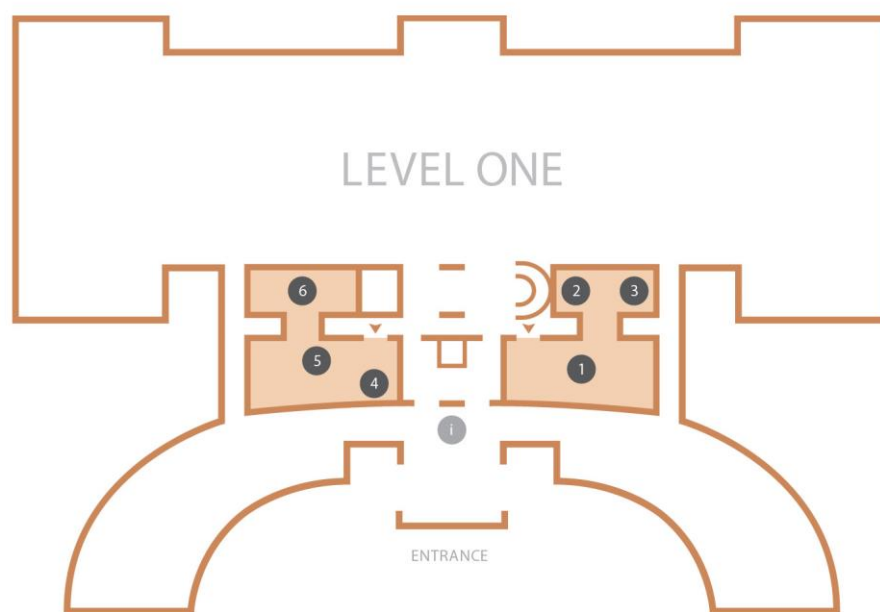
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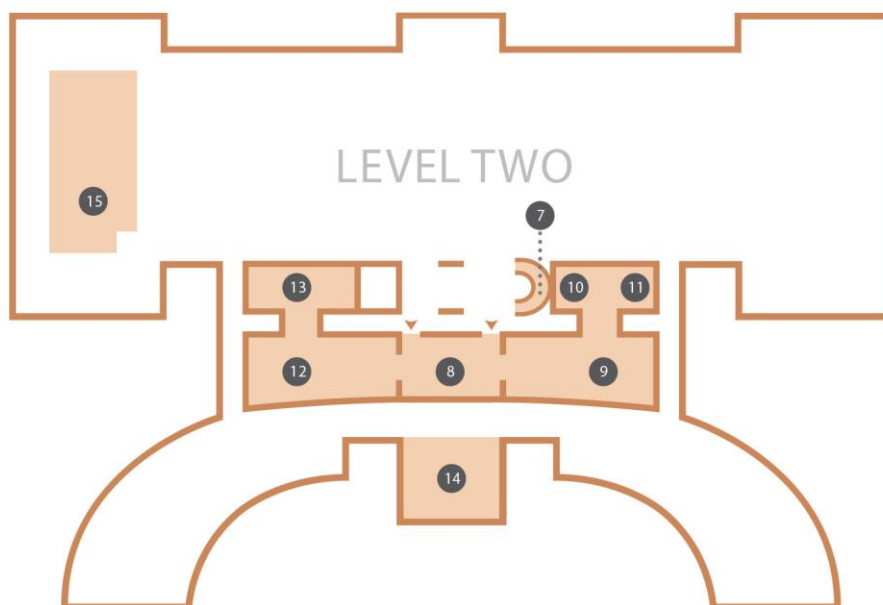
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Artwork***Custos Cavum (Guardian of the Hole)***

Choe U-Ram

2011

Metallic material, resin, motor, gear, custom CPU board, LED

220 x 360 x 260 cm

Collection of the Artist

Image courtesy of the Artist

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About the artwork and artistic process

Custos Cavum (Guardian of the Hole) is a **kinetic** sculpture by South Korean artist Choe U-Ram. A **biomorphic** form with skeleton-like metal ribs, it lies flat on a bed of sand, as if washed up on a forgotten shore. Delicate gold leaves wave gently above the form, and appear to be growing out of the metallic tendrils that emerge from its ribs. The mechanical body of the creature rises and falls, and seems to be breathing. These movements resemble those observable in nature, which contrasts sharply with the etched stainless steel and robotic sculptural form.

The **mythology** of the **otherworldly** creature is explained in an imaginary narrative created by the artist. *Custos Cavum* is a creature that inhabits an imagined universe where two parallel worlds exist. They serve as guardians of holes that connect these two worlds, gnawing at the holes faithfully to prevent them from closing up. *Unicuses* (winged **spores**) develop on the backs of the *Custos Cavum*; they eventually take flight and travel to a new hole where they give birth to a new creature.

Having brought to life an imaginary creature with its own mythology, the artist recognises his own **paradoxical** relationship with technology. Though an ardent fan of robotics and futuristic technology, Choe admits to having a **dystopian** paranoia of machinery and the science-fiction **genre**:

“A relationship that for a brief moment seemed mutually beneficial is now breaking apart, as machines have captured the edge in a 65,000-year evolutionary race... I shudder to think that all of us, not just me but everyone else, may be nothing more than their (the machines’) hosts. The sea of machinery that mankind has spawned is enough to form the **coacervate** that give birth to life on our early planet. It may be that at this very moment, somewhere, machines are arising for machines themselves.”

By making a statement about the **insatiable** human desire for technological advancement, Choe urges audiences to reflect on the human race’s obsession with scientific achievements and reconsider the ways in which humans can have more balanced relationships with technology.

About the artist

Choe U-Ram (b. 1970, Seoul, South Korea) obtained a Bachelors of Fine Art and Masters of Fine Art from Chung-Ang University Department of Sculpture in 1993 and 1999 respectively.

Born to parents who were art majors, Choe loved machinery as a child and worked at a robotics company before studying sculpture in college. His keen interest in biology, physics and science-fiction has resulted in the production of kinetic art which expresses a refined delicacy and intricate weightlessness through organic, life-like forms. Unexpected and fantastical, Choe's kinetic sculptures breathe with rhythmic movement, bringing to mind aquatic propulsion, flight and ritualistic courtship displays.

Choe has held solo exhibitions at the Mori Art Museum in Tokyo (2012), Asia Society Museum in New York (2011), and the John Curtin Gallery in Perth, Australia (2006). His work has also been shown at the inauguration exhibition of the Leeum Samsung Museum of Art in Seoul (2004), the Shanghai Biennale (2006) and the Liverpool Biennale (2008). He was also the recipient of several awards in South Korea, including the Kim Se Choong Sculpture Award, Young Artist Today Award and POSCO Steel Art Award.

Discussion and suggested activities

Questions for discussion

- What is your first impression of *Custos Cavum*? Does it remind you of any animal or plant? [Seal, dolphin, willow weed, wild plants, etc.]
- Walk around the artwork. Look up at the moving leaves and bend down to see the whirling gears. How do you feel? Do the different parts of the creature evoke a different feeling?
- Have you come across any mythological creatures from books, films or cartoons? Compare your favourite creature with *Custos Cavum*. What are the similarities and differences?
- *Custos Cavum* is the name of the creature in Latin. Botanists and zoologists use Latin for classificatory naming of flora and fauna. If you were a zoologist, what name would you give to this creature? [*Custos* = Guardian, *cavum* = hole]
- The artist expressed his concerns about technology taking over people's lives. Can you think of any instances when you might be over reliant on technology? Can you survive a day without your handphone?
- [FOOD FOR THOUGHT] Is rapid technological advancement beneficial to humankind? Yes, No or Maybe? Think hard – what examples relating to this matter spring to mind?

Suggested activities

- Create your own fictional creature by combining your favourite animal and plant. Sketch it and come up with a story about it. And of course – give it a Latin name! Share your creation with your friends and amaze them with your creativity!
- Sounds of whirring gears accompany the kinetic movements of *Custos cavum*. How can you enhance the experience of viewing this artwork by adding on to the soundscape? Select a list of sounds or music, come back with the sounds/music and listen to it on headphones while viewing the artwork. How does it affect your experience?

Glossary**Kinetic**

Relating to or resulting from motion.

Biomorphic

Having the form of a living organism.

Mythology

A collection of myths, especially one belonging to a particular religious or cultural tradition.

Otherworldly

Relating to an imaginary or spiritual world.

Spores

Typically a single unit of which can reproduce without sexual fusion, characteristic of fungi, etc.

Paradoxical

Seemingly absurd or self-contradictory.

Dystopian

A society or state of mind in which everything is imagined to be as bad as it can be.

Genre

A style or category of art, music, or literature.

Coacervate

(Physical chemistry) A reversible aggregation of liquid particles in an emulsion.

Insatiable

Not able to be satisfied or satiated; greedy or unappeasable.

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Further reading and viewing

Artist's Website

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

Feature on Choe U-Ram on The Creator's Project blog

Available [here](#).

Video introducing Choe U-Ram by The Creators Project

Kinetic Sculptor Puts Cyber Dreams In Motion. Available [here](#).

Audio recording of artist talk at John Curtin Gallery in Perth, Australia

U-Ram Choe Artist Talk at Curtin University. Available [here](#).

Video documentation of Choe U-Ram's artworks

Available [here](#).

Book on kinetic sculptures

Super sculpture; using science, technology, and natural phenomena in sculpture by Diane B. Chichura and Thelma K. Stevens. Available [here](#).



Education Folio

Farida Batool

Pakistan

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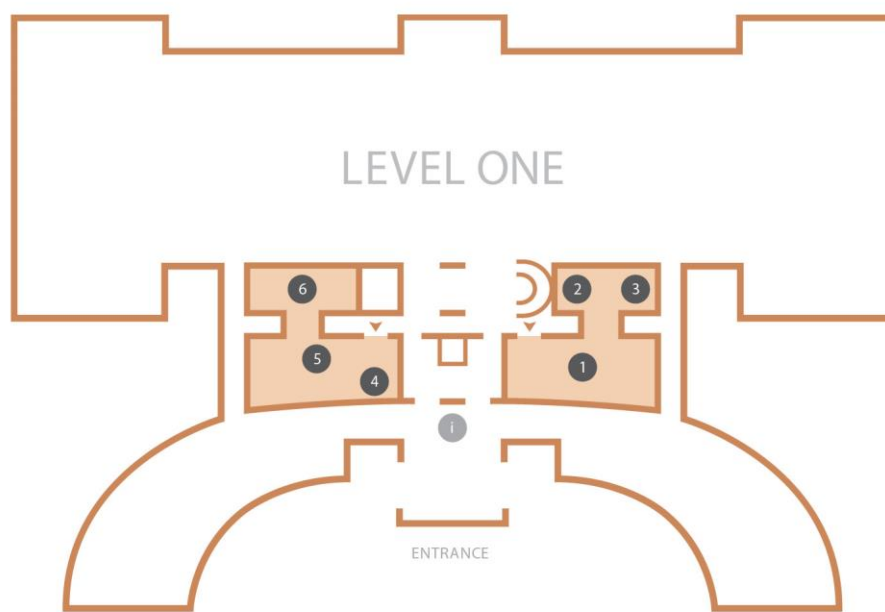
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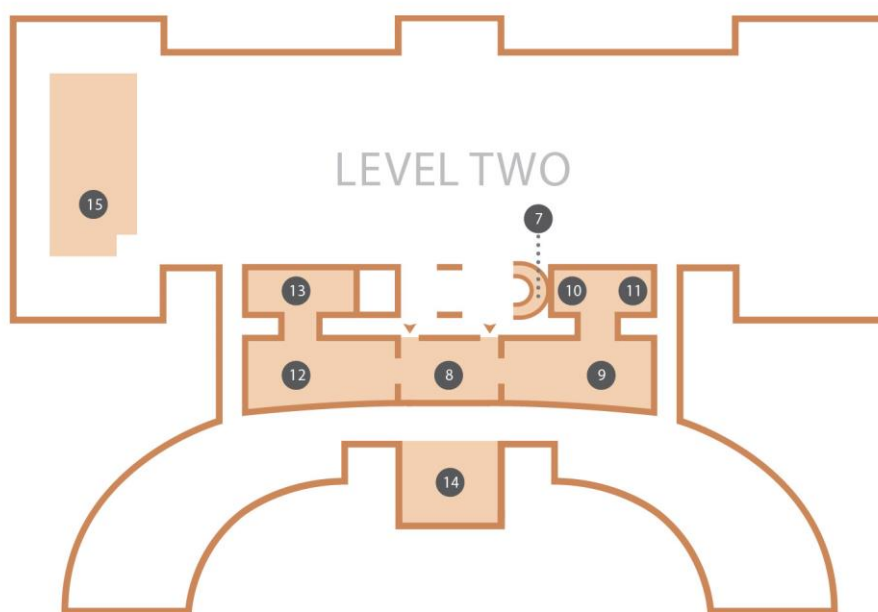
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Artwork***Kahani Eik Shehr Ki (Story of a City)***

Farida Batool

2012

Lenticular print

20.3 x 2144 cm

Collection of the Artist

Image courtesy of the Artist

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About the artwork and artistic process

Kahani Eik Shehr Ki (Story of a City) by Pakistani artist Farida Batool comprises of a series of lenticular prints depicting the artist walking along the streets of Lahore, the city she resides in. The lenticular print works on an optical illusion which allows several layers of images to change as the viewer moves along them. This technique effectively portrays the artist walking and moving on a two-dimensional photographic surface. Situating herself as both the narrator and the **protagonist** of the artwork, Batool explains her choice of medium, “Lenticular images best convey what I want to convey. It appears as if I’m meeting the people on the street”. This enables the viewer to go on a walk with the artist to explore the different parts of Lahore together, allowing for a more engaging and personal experience.

Stretching 21 metres in length, the images unfold to reveal different perspectives of the city. There are noisy rickshaws and cars, government institutions with high security and **surveillance**, and crowds of people staring at the artist and her camera. The **linguistic landscape** of Lahore is also telling – chalk writings left behind on walls after religious rallies, torn political posters, military recruitment advertisements, radical graffiti by **extremist** religious groups and even advertisements for male enhancement products.

Although still rich in history and culture, the vibrant city of Lahore has unfortunately become a victim of political corruption and terrorism. The urban decay evident in these images reflects the state of Pakistan’s socio-political climate today, giving the viewer a glimpse of the consequences of the country’s political upheavals and **tumultuous** history.

About the artist

Visual artist and art historian Farida Batool (b. 1970, Lahore, Pakistan) graduated from the National College of Arts, Lahore with a Bachelor of Fine Arts. She also holds a Masters in Art History and Theory (Research) from the College of Fine Arts, University of New South Wales, Australia.

Batool currently heads the Department of Communication and Cultural Studies at the National College of Arts, Lahore, where she also teaches art history. She has conducted several community-based projects in Pakistan, Bangladesh and India, and participated in a number of solo and group shows. Her recent exhibitions include a solo show entitled *Kahani eik shehr ki* at Rohtas 2, Lahore (2012) and *Where three dreams cross: 150 years of Photography* at Whitechapel Gallery, London (2010).

Discussion and suggested activities

Questions for discussion

- Walk along the length of the lenticular prints and imagine that you are walking along the streets of Lahore. Stop at different places and ponder: What are the smells and sounds you might experience?
- Compare the smells and sights to those of similar spaces in Singapore or another city. How might they differ?
- What were the feelings you felt when you 'walked' along the streets of Lahore? Are they different from when you walk along the streets of Singapore or another city?
- Walk alongside the work again. This time, focus on the recurring images of the artist. What do you notice? [She is dressed in both traditional and modern outfits. Why?]
- [FOOD FOR THOUGHT] Public spaces such as the streets of a city often reflect the ongoing political and social tensions experienced by the people who live there. Do you agree with this statement? What examples come to mind?

Suggested activities

- Revisit a familiar part of any city that you live in or used to frequent and take a moment to observe your surroundings. What sights, sounds, smells and emotions do you experience? Record your observations and experiences through a sketch or photograph.
- Choose a public space within your neighbourhood (market, park, bus stop, etc.) and take photographs from the same spot at different times of the day. Compare the photographs you have taken – you might be rather surprised at how the same place differs at different times of the day!

Glossary

Protagonist

The leading character or one of the major characters in a play, film, novel, etc.

Surveillance

Close observation or supervision maintained over a person, group, etc., especially one in custody or under suspicion.

Linguistic landscape

The language of public road signs, advertising billboards, street names, place names, commercial shop signs and public signs on government buildings in a given territory, region or urban agglomeration.

Extremist

Of, relating to, or characterized by immoderate or excessive actions, opinions, etc.

Tumultuous

Uproarious, riotous, or turbulent.

Further reading and viewing**Feature on Farida Batool on *The Express Tribune***

Available [here](#).

Tutorial for DIY lenticular printing

Creating a Basic Lenticular Image. Available [here](#).

Video introducing the process of lenticular printing

How to make lenticular images - Red Bull Illume. Available [here](#).



Education Folio

Go Watanabe

Japan

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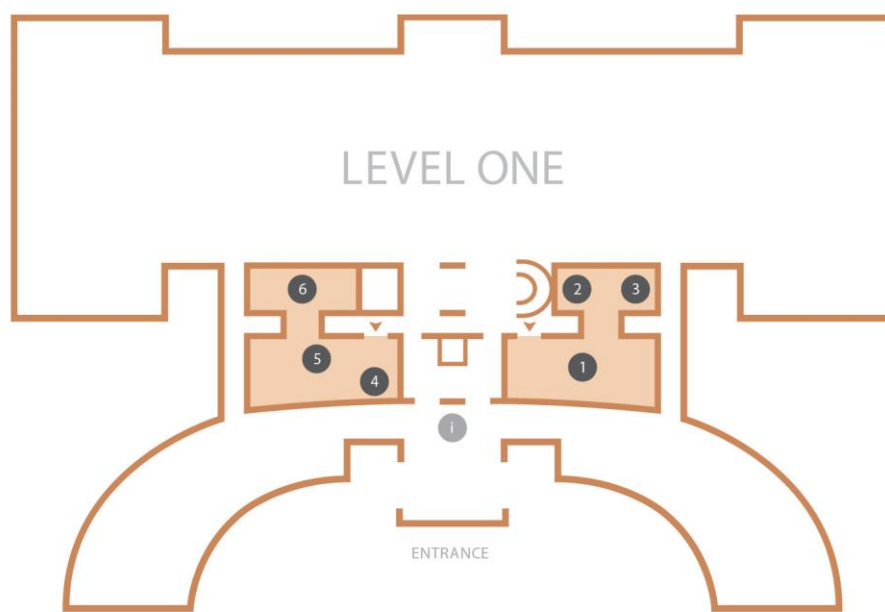
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Exhibition map



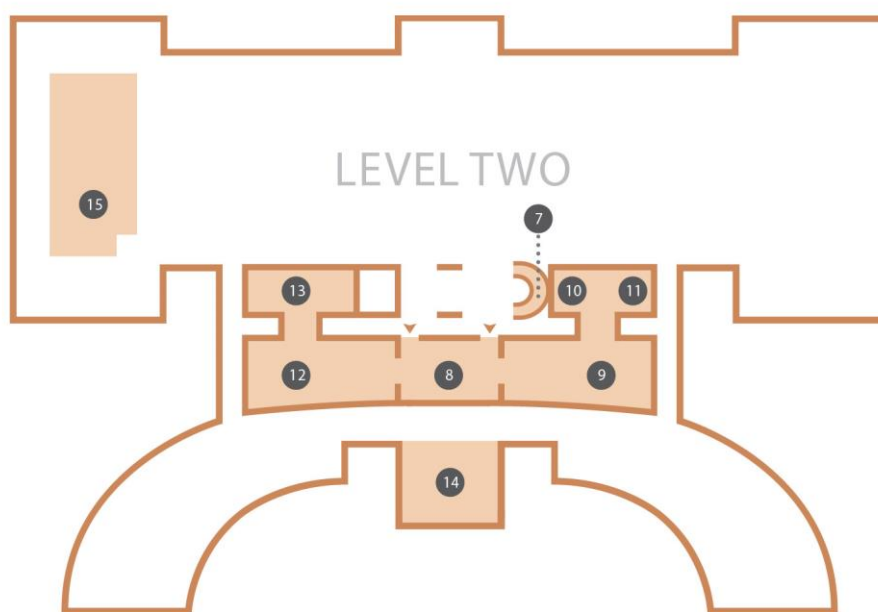
LEVEL ONE

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

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Exhibition map



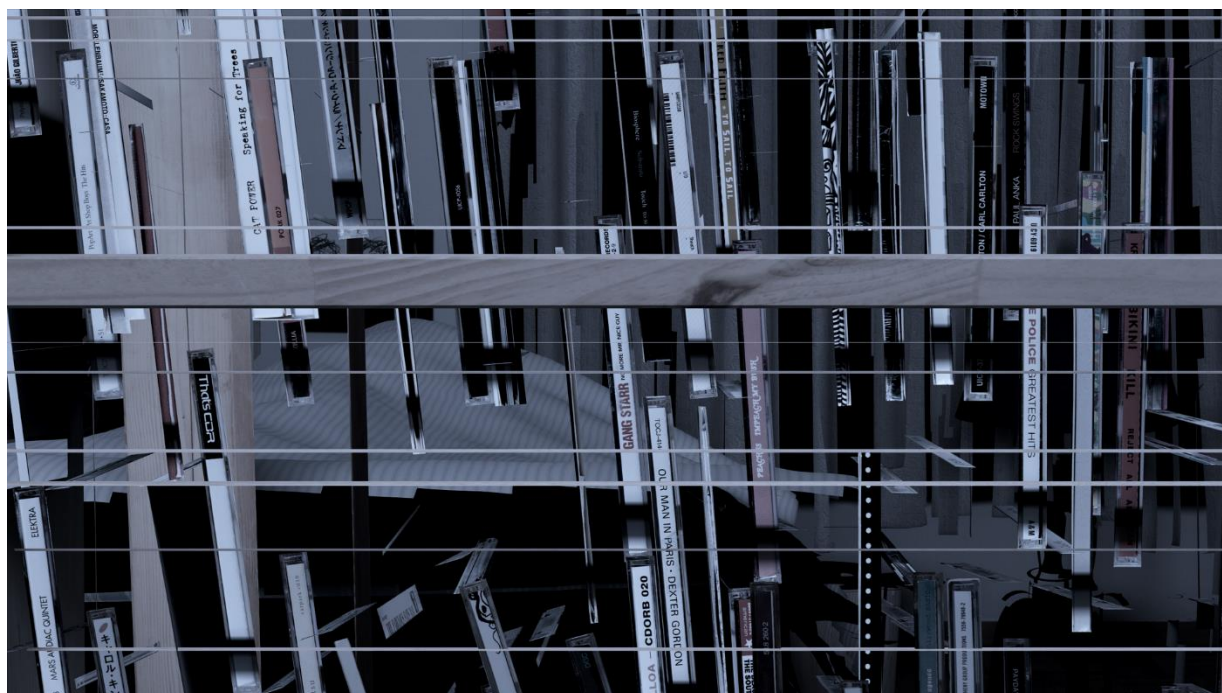
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- 15 Ho Tzu Nven

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Artwork



one places / on “the room”

Go Watanabe

2013

Full HD 3D CG video installation

Duration 28:06 mins

Collection of the Artist

Image courtesy of the Artist

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About the artwork and artistic process

one places / on "the room" is a digital media work by Japanese artist Go Watanabe. It consists of two different video **animations**, <side A> and <side B>, projected on two sides of a single screen such that only one perspective can be viewed at any point of time.

Reconstructed with 3D CGI software, the animations recreate a bedroom belonging to the artist's friend. <side A> begins in darkness, with the bedroom gradually getting lit by light streaming in from the window. <side B> shows the same room from another **perspective**, as if one were standing with his or her back toward the window and looking inward. The bedroom, everyday objects and furniture are given a textured appearance through the skilful use of 3D CGI software. The objects and furniture are taken out of their original contexts and given a surreal **autonomy** as they move around silently at different speeds, which seems to indicate the passing of time in different phases.

The use of the textured effect is typical of Go's artistic practice, as he frequently explores alternative visual possibilities and the manipulation of visual perception through the medium of digital media. His artworks often urge viewers to question and reflect upon the reality of their own visual experience.

About the artist

Go Watanabe (b. 1975, Okayama, Japan) graduated with a Bachelors of Fine Art and Masters of Fine Art from the Aichi University of the Arts.

Often regarded as one of the more prominent leading digital media artists in Japan, Watanabe was the recipient of the 24th Gotoh Memorial Culture Award (Most Promising Talent Award) presented by the Gotoh Memorial Foundation. He has held several solo exhibitions in art galleries in Tokyo, more recently at *Arataniurano* (2012) and *1223 Gendaikaiga – Contemporary Art Collection* (2012). Watanabe has also shown his works at the Toyota Municipal Museum of Art in Aichi, Japan (2012); Kuandu Biennale (2012); A4 Contemporary Arts Centre in Chengdu, China (2012); Seoul Olympic Museum of Art in Seoul, South Korea (2013); and the Aichi Triennale (2013).

Discussion and suggested activities

Questions for discussion

- What can you see in artwork? Identify the objects and describe their textures as you perceive them in the video projection..
- Observe the lights, colour and pace of the video. How do you feel? What effect do you think the artist is trying to achieve?
- The artwork has been installed such that only one perspective of the room can be viewed at any given point in time and space. Why do you think the artist has chosen this method of installation? What other ways do you think you can install this artwork and what effect might that evoke? [side by side, opposite sides of a wall in a room, etc]
- This artwork was entirely created by 3D CGI graphics. Imagine the video with real places and objects being featured. What kind of mood and feeling would it bring about? Will it be more effective at prompting the viewer to question what they see?
- Besides visual perception, how else do we experience the world around us? What makes up the reality of experience? [Consider other senses such as smell, sound, touch, taste, etc.]
[FOOD FOR THOUGHT] 'Putting oneself into another's shoes' is a metaphor that suggests how we might empathise with another person. Do a thought experiment: imagine how your life and world would feel like if you were someone entirely different from yourself for a day? And whose shoes did you choose to walk in?

Suggested activities

- Go Wantanabe uses digital media techniques to represent and challenge the boundaries between real and simulated worlds. Are dreams considered a simulated world? What is the art historical movement that deals with dreams and the subconscious workings of the mind? Find out more about art, literature or film that are inspired by dreams and share your findings with your friends and family. [Salvador Dali, William Blake, etc.]
- Choose a famous short story or fairy tale. Re-write the same story from another character's (not the protagonist) point of view. Try this with a group of friends and share your stories. [Wizard of Oz and Wicked, Sleeping Beauty and Maleficent]

Glossary

Animation

The manipulation of digital images by means of a computer and software programmes in order to create moving images.

Perspective

Point of view; the appearance of viewed objects with regard to their relative position, distance from the viewer, etc.

Autonomy

Freedom from external control or influence; independence.

Surreal

Having a dreamlike quality; unreal; fantastic; disorienting.

CGI graphics

Computer-generated imagery (CGI) is the application of computer graphics (or more specifically, 3D computer graphics) to create special effects

Further reading and viewing

Video on how to make a CGI movie.

Available [here](#).



Education Folio

Ho Tzu Nyen

Singapore

How to use this folio

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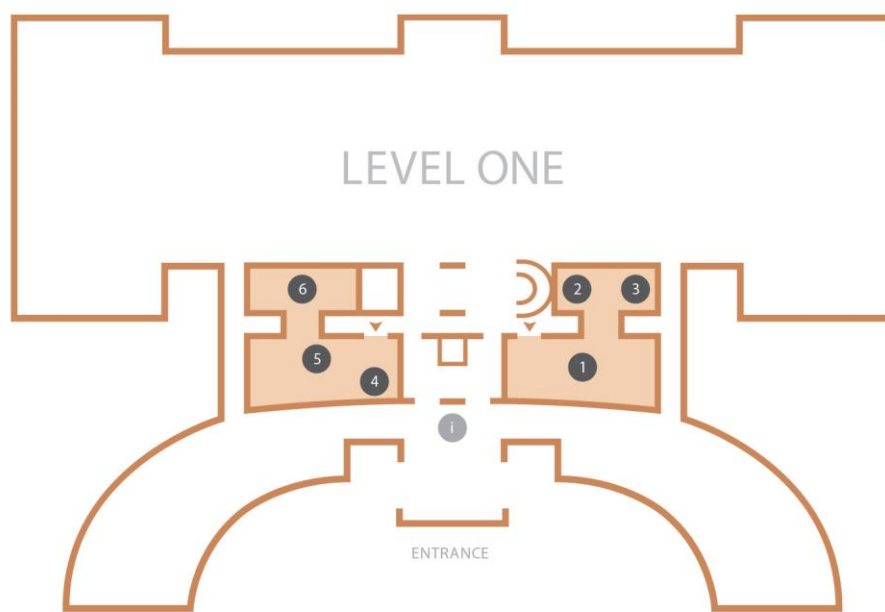
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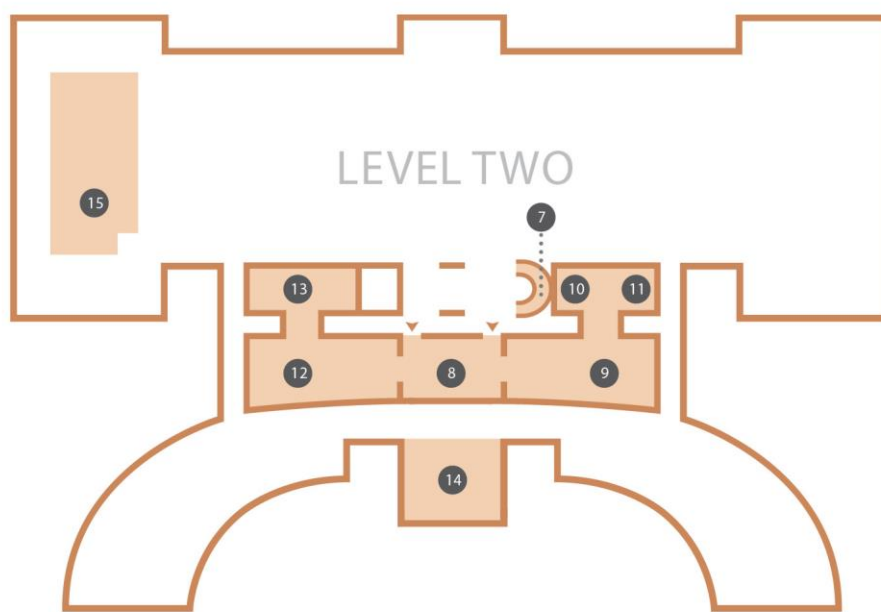
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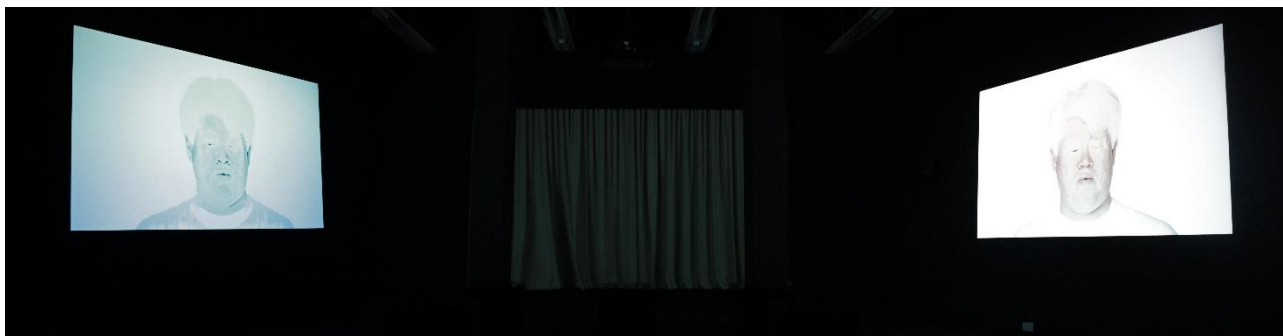


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Artwork***PYTHAGORAS***

Ho Tzu Nyen

2013

Installation with 4-channel HD video, 8-channel sound, automated curtain track, fans, lights, and show control mechanism

Dimensions variable

Collection of the Singapore Art Museum

Image courtesy of the Artist, photograph by Russell Adam Morton

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About the artwork and artistic process

PYTHAGORAS by Singaporean artist Ho Tzu Nyen is a video artwork built around four different works programmed to react to one another in a single space. These four works are *NEWTON*, *MILTON*, *GOULD* and *PYTHAGORAS*. *NEWTON* is a 2009 piece named after the scientist Isaac Newton, while *MILTON* was extracted from Ho's other work entitled *EARTH* and named after the poet of *Paradise Lost*. *GOULD* is a 2013 piece named after the pianist Glenn Gould and *PYTHAGORAS* is a new video work which involves the projection of closing and opening curtains onto a set of actual automated theatre curtains.

The title of the artwork is derived from Pythagoras of Samos, the Ionian Greek philosopher, mathematician and founder of Pythagoreanism. Pythagoreanism was a system of **esoteric** and **metaphysical** beliefs in which disciples were required to sit in absolute silence while listening to their master's voice from behind a veil. This practice was the starting point for Ho's work. The notion of the veil is exemplified in *PYTHAGORAS* through the use of curtains, both projected and actual. Ho describes his fascination with curtains, "They are screens that veil but are, at the same time, screens for the projection of desires. They make known the presence of wind, passing through openings and cracks. But I'm also obsessed with the voice – voices in the head, voices hidden behind veils, disembodied voices, voices of authority and trickery." *PYTHAGORAS* thus centres on the notion of the voice as a force that cannot be escaped, but has the power to seduce, animate or compel.

Featured in the videos are **personages** from film and literary history, such as the Wizard of Oz, Fritz Lang's Doctor Mabuse, Stanley Kubrick's Hal 9000 and Jean-Luc Godard's Alpha 60. Intercut with these are historical figures portrayed or evoked in Ho's earlier works. All these characters use the effect of 'voice' for their own purposes: the Wizard and Mabuse conceal their **visages** like Pythagoras to give their words more authority, while the artificial intelligence systems of Kubrick and Godard's sentient machines allow them to speak and be understood by humans. At the same time in this installation, we witness the portrayed musician, poet, and scientist each struggle with the various manifestations of what can be read to be the voice of genius, or inspiration. *PYTHAGORAS* is a multi-layered work that disconcerts the viewer through a spectrum of sounds, and ideas about the nature of voice, power and deception that resonate powerfully within the different aspects of the work.

About the artist

Ho Tzu Nyen (b. 1976, Singapore) earned a Bachelor of Arts in Creative Arts from Victorian College of the Arts, University of Melbourne (2001), and a Master of Arts in Southeast Asian Studies from the National University of Singapore (2007).

He has written extensively on art and his practice spans video, painting and theatre. His works are frequently related to historical and philosophical texts and artefacts. Recently, Ho has focused on immersive multimedia installations, an apt vehicle for combining his personal interests in film, text, image and music.

Ho has exhibited widely both locally and internationally in museums, galleries, film and performing arts festivals. He held solo exhibitions at the Contemporary Art Centre of South Australia in Adelaide (2007, 2010), the Mori Art Museum in Tokyo (2012), and represented Singapore at the 54th Venice Biennale (2011). Selected group exhibitions include the 26th Bienal de Sao Paulo in Brazil (2004); the 3rd Fukuoka Asian Art Triennale in Japan (2005); the 6th Asia Pacific Triennale in Brisbane, Australia (2009); *No Soul for Sale* at London's Tate Modern (2010), and *No Country: Contemporary Art for South and Southeast Asia*, a travelling exhibition by the Guggenheim Museum, New York (2013).

Discussion and suggested activities

Questions for discussion

- Watch the four-channel video. Do you recognise any of the scenes you see and can you identify them from the films they have been borrowed from?
- Watch the four-channel video again carefully. Do you notice a recurring motif across all four channels? What do you think this recurring motif represents, and why?
- Listen to the sounds employed by the artist in the artwork. How do these sounds make you feel? Why do you think the artist arranged these sounds in such a way?
- Observe the lighting effects that accompanied this video. How would it differ if another colour was used? What does the colour of this lighting remind you of?
- The video installation draws upon elements of theatre and film. Make a list of all these elements. [automated curtain tracks, elaborate stage lighting systems, 360-degree audio effects, etc]
- [FOOD FOR THOUGHT] Ho's work draws upon the notion of the voice in one's head that has the power to seduce, animate or compel. Do you think this happens in real life? Have you ever wondered about the idea of inspiration and how you, and other creative people get inspired?

Suggested activities

- The artwork is based on the idea of the "acousmatic sound", which refers to sound one hears without seeing its original cause. Can you think of any instances of "acousmatic sounds" in your everyday life? Use a voice recorder to record these sounds and ask your friends if they can guess where these sounds are from!

Glossary

Esoteric

Intended for or likely to be understood by only a small number of people with a specialised knowledge or interest.

Metaphysical

Pertaining to or of the nature of metaphysics, which is concerned with abstract thought or subjects, such as existence, causality, or truth.

Personages

Key characters in a play or other work.

Visages

Faces or facial expressions.

Further reading and viewing**Book on Pythagoras the Greek philosopher**

The cult of Pythagoras: math and myths. Available [here](#).

Video with samples of acousmatic music

FUJI acousmatic music festival 2013 富士電子音響芸術祭 2013. Available [here](#).



Education Folio

Lisa Reihana

New Zealand

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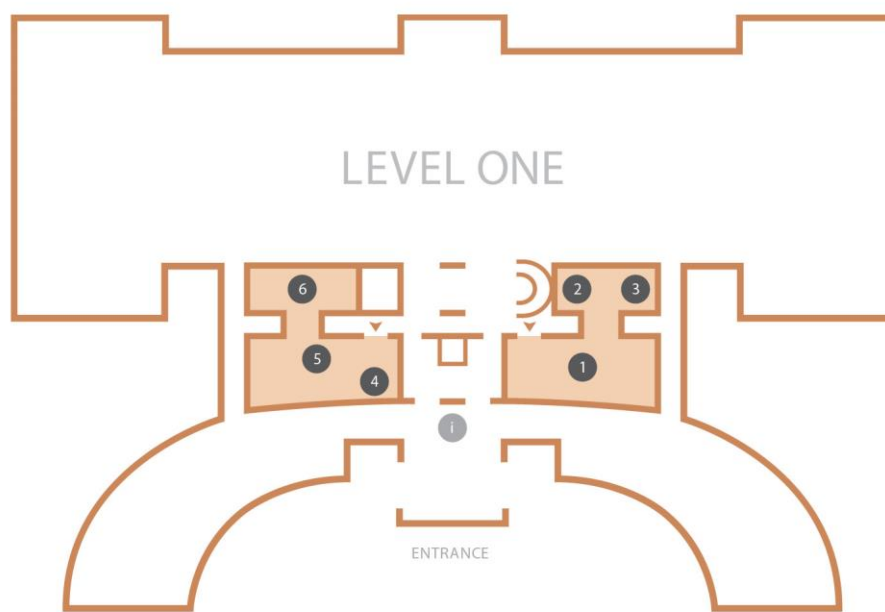
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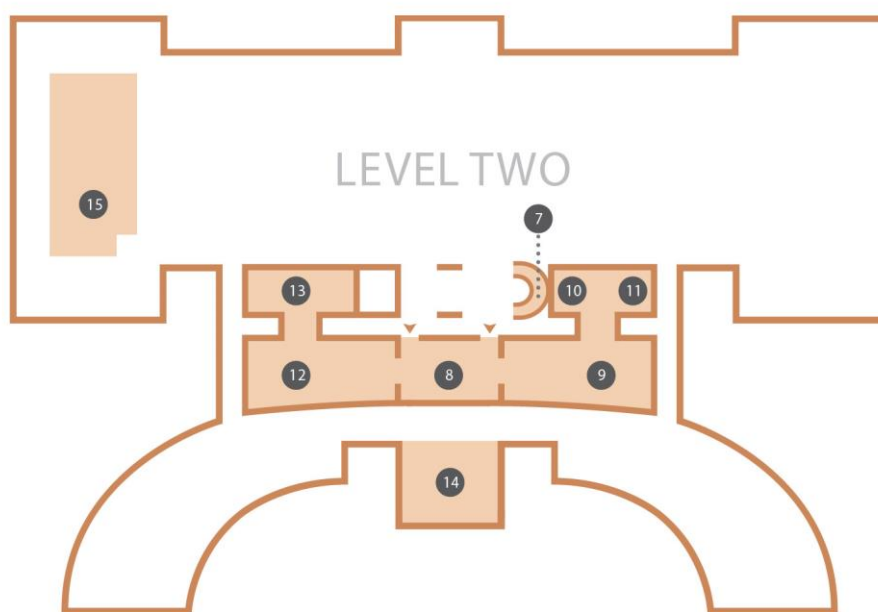
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Exhibition map



LEVEL TWO

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Artwork***in Pursuit of Venus***

Lisa Reihana

2012

2-channel HD video with stereo sound on continuous loop

Duration 8:00 mins

Collection of the Artist

Image courtesy of the Artist

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About the artwork and artistic process

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

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

About the artist

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

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

Discussion and suggested activities

Questions for discussion

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

Suggested activities

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

Glossary**Utopian**

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

Indigenous

Originating or occurring naturally in a particular place; native.

Animation

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

Neoclassical

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

Botany

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

Entrepreneur

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

Exoticism

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

Panorama

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

Further reading and viewing

Website for *in Pursuit of Venus*

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

Book about the history and development of the Pacific Islands

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

Book about Maori art and culture

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

Book about the navigation methods employed by explorers of the Pacific

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

Book about Western influence in the South Pacific

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



Education Folio

Liu Jianhua

China

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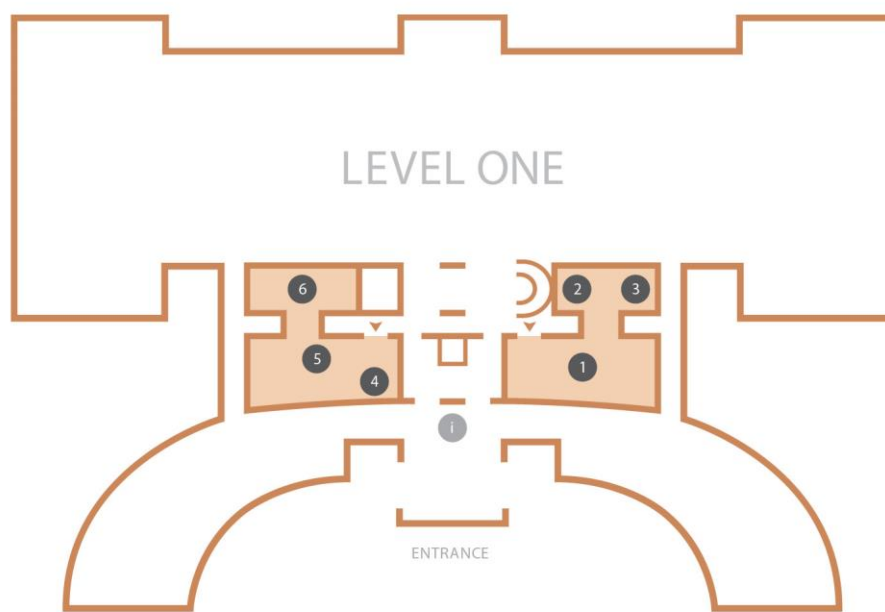
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Exhibition map



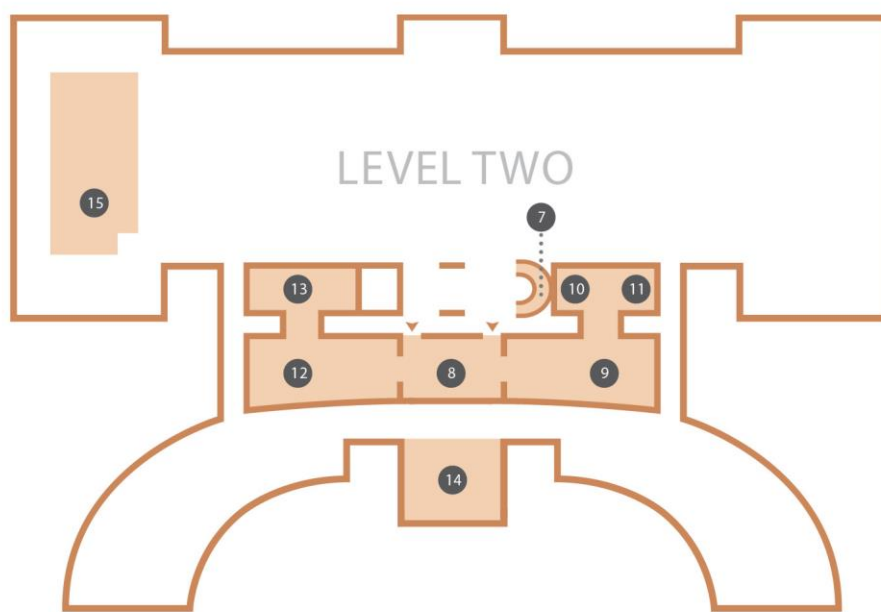
LEVEL ONE

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

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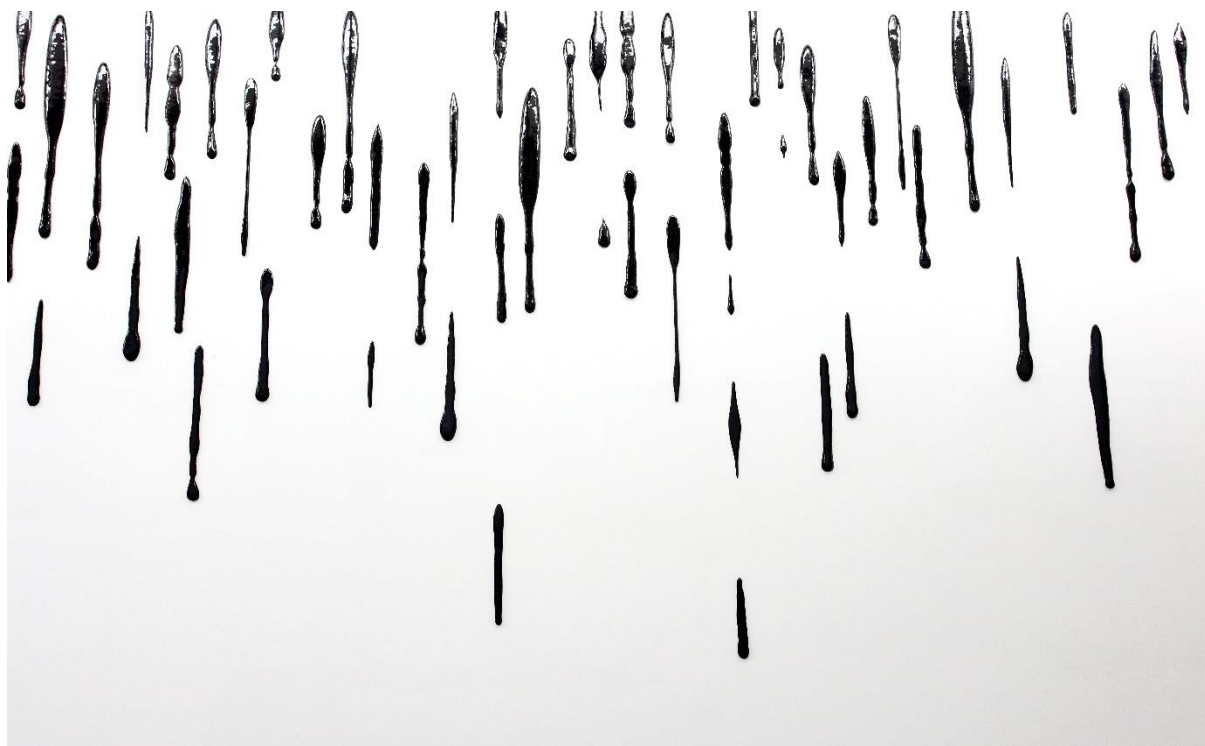


LEVEL TWO

- 7 Liu Jianhua
- 8 Choe U-Ram
- 9 Go Watanabe
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- 15 Ho Tzu Nven

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Artwork***Trace***

Liu Jianhua

2011

Porcelain

Dimensions variable

Collection of the Artist

Image courtesy of the Artist

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About the artwork and artistic process

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

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

About the artist

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

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

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

Discussion and suggested activities

Questions for discussion

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

Suggested activities

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

Glossary

Aesthetic

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

Benchmark

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

Tranquillity

A state of calm or quietude.

Further reading and viewing

Artist's Website

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

Documentary about artist Liu Jianhua

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

Book introducing the art of Chinese calligraphy

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

Documentary on the history of Chinese painting

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



Education Folio
Melati Suryodarmo
Indonesia

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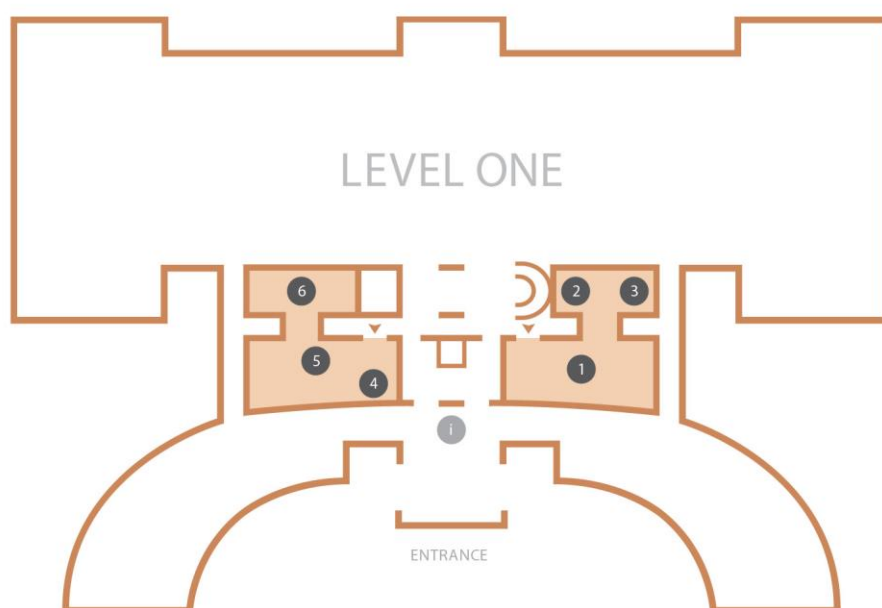
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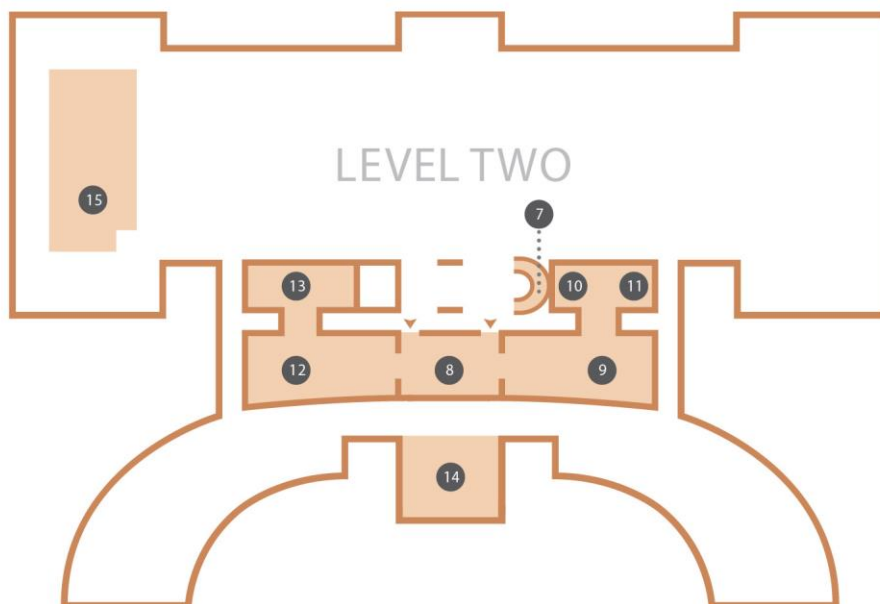
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Exhibition map



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Artwork***I'm a Ghost in My Own House***

Melati Suryodarmo

2012

Performance, video performance, charcoal, and stone grinding table

Variable dimensions

Collection of the Artist

Image courtesy of the Artist

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About the artwork and artistic process

I'm a Ghost in My Own House is a durational performance by Indonesian artist Melati Suryodarmo that is documented as a video work as well. Previously performed at the Lawangwangi Arts and Creative Space, Bandung, Indonesia in 2012, we are witness to the event through the video work, where we see Suryodarmo, in a white dress, crushing and grinding hundreds of kilograms of charcoal on a stone grinding table for a period of 12 hours. After the performance, the **implements** used, also called performance relics, are left behind as an installation.

The artwork was born from Suryodarmo's interest in the **philosophy** and physical processes involved in creating charcoal. Derived by burning the wood of a living tree, charcoal is itself a life-giving natural resource that is necessary for daily living in many parts of Asia. Conversely, fire is also able to burn things down to ashes. *I'm a Ghost in My Own House* is an exploration of the symbolism behind this cycle of life.

The relentless grinding of charcoal in the video performance also works to communicate a sense of loss. For 12 hours, charcoal is ground down to dust, reducing its potential to generate energy and at the same time, building up tension within the viewer, who witnesses and so experiences by proxy the sheer physicality of the performance. As Suryodarmo says, "The charcoal process can represent my thoughts and psychological state, **charred** by a system and of course by my personal events... My thoughts that have been charred by the system, if they pass through the processes of **liberation**, **catharsis**, or death, perhaps they will grow again into something new."

About the artist

Melati Suryodarmo (b. 1969, Surakarta, Indonesia) holds a Bachelor's degree in International Relations Studies from Universitas Padjadjaran Bandung, Indonesia. She completed a Bachelor of Fine Arts and the Postgraduate Program (Meisterschule) in Performance Art at the Hochschule fuer Bildende Kuenste, Braunschweig, Germany. Suryodarmo also studied under renowned Butoh dancer, Anzu Furukawa and acclaimed performance artist, Marina Abramovic.

Suryodarmo is known for her highly physical, time-based performances, using her body as a theatrical canvas. She has performed widely all over the world, in New York, Eastern Europe, Western Europe, Singapore, Sydney and Indonesia, with notable participation in the Venice Biennale Dance Festival (2007), eBent 07 festival in Barcelona (2007), Accione 06 in Madrid (2006), and the 15th International Electronic Art Festival – Video Brasil, Sao Paolo, Brasil (2005). Since 2007, she has been the organiser of an annual Performance Art Laboratory Project for the Padepokan Lemah Putih Solo, Indonesia.

Discussion and suggested activities

Questions for discussion

- What is the main material used in this artwork? What do you think it symbolizes? Can you identify other uses for this material in your daily life?
- Watch the video performance and observe the artist. What do her expressions and body language tell you about how she feels while grinding the charcoal? How does this make you feel as a viewer?
- The artist is dressed in a clean white dress at the beginning of the performance. As the performance progresses, the white dress becomes increasingly blackened by the charcoal dust. What might this be symbolic of?
- The performance lasts for a duration of 12 hours and involves a great deal of endurance from the artist. Why do you think the artist has chosen such a long duration for her performance piece? How might a shorter duration of 1 to 2 hours differ from this 12 hour performance?
- Consider the title of the artwork. What or who does the word “ghost” refer to? What are your reasons for making this deduction?
- The artwork consists of the actual 12-hour long live performance, the installation, and the video documentation of the performance itself. How might the use of different mediums influence the viewer’s understanding and experience of the overall work? Why are these different mediums necessary in this work?

Suggested activities

- *I’m a Ghost in My Own House* is an artwork that seeks to express the artist’s feeling of displacement and of losing the meaning of home. What is your definition of home and how important is this to you? Document the objects, actions or emotions that define your idea of home through photographs or videos and share them with your friends!
- Do some research on durational performance art. What is the longest and shortest performance art pieces ever performed? Why is time an important element for these performance art pieces?

Glossary

Implements

Tools, utensils, or other pieces of equipment that are used for particular purposes.

Philosophy

The rational investigation of the truths and principles of being, knowledge, or conduct. The direct translation from the Greek means 'the love of wisdom'.

Charred

To be burnt or be burned partially, especially so as to blacken the surface of any material.

Liberation

The act of setting someone free from imprisonment, slavery, or oppression; release.

Catharsis

The process of releasing, and thereby providing relief from, strong or repressed emotions.

Further reading and viewing

Artist's Website

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

Book on performance art

Performing the body/performing the text edited by Amelia Jones and Andrew Stephenson. Available [here](#).

Book on performance art

This is performance art by Mel Brimfield. Available [here](#).

Interview with Melati Suryodarmo by the National Portrait Gallery

Beyond the self by Hendro Wiyanto. Available [here](#).

Video introducing the History of Performance Art

Unlock art: Frank Skinner gives a lesson in performance art by The Guardian. Available [here](#).



Education Folio
Naeem Mohaiemen
Bangladesh

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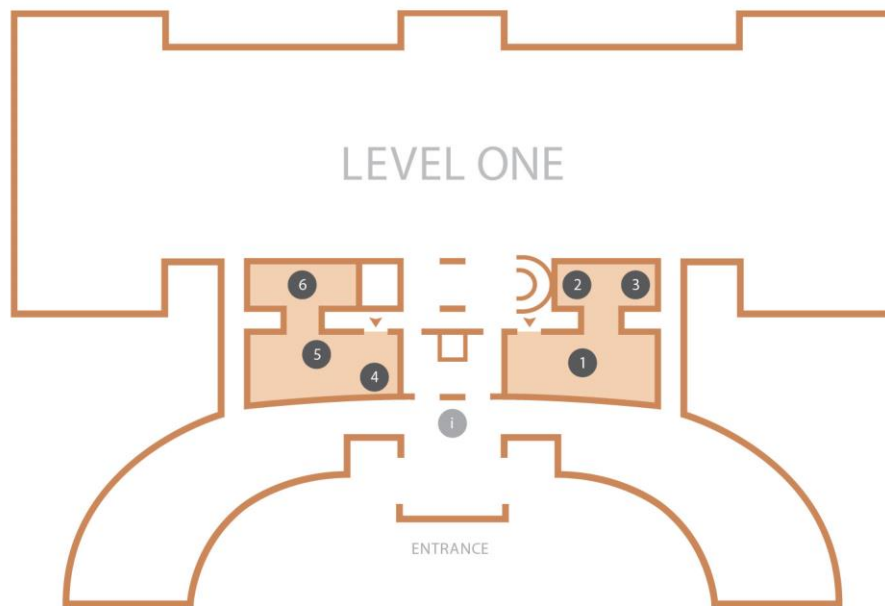
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Exhibition map



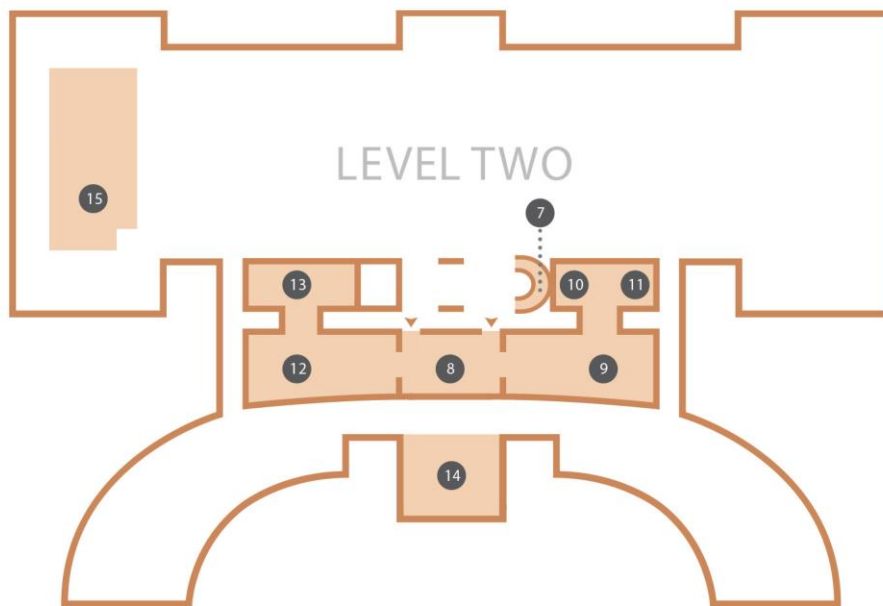
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LEVEL TWO

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Artwork



Rankin Street, 1953

Naeem Mohaiemen

2013

Mixed media installation with video, blueprint drawings, vintage photographs, and matching sandstone moulds

Dimensions variable, duration 8:00 mins

Edition 2 of 3 (Video and blueprint drawings)

Edition 3 of 3 (Vintage photographs and matching sandstone moulds)

Collection of Experimenter Gallery and Samdani Art Foundation

Image courtesy of the Artist and Experimenter Gallery

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About the artwork and artistic process

Naeem Mohaiemen's *Rankin Street, 1953* is a mixed media installation consisting of twelve old photographs, twelve **sandstone** moulds crafted according to the **negative spaces** in the photographs that resembles topographical maps, eight photographs overlain with **blueprints** of the Rankin Street residence, and an eight-minute long video explaining the background of the artwork.

The conceptualization of this work first came about when Mohaiemen uncovered a box of photography negatives by accident, each negative stored in a separate sleeve and in good condition. He had initially expected the photographs to be of the city of Dhaka where his family resided, but instead many of them turned out to be of the family cat and of his seven aunts in their younger years. It was discovered that the photographs were all taken by Mohaiemen's father in the old house on Rankin Street that the family formerly lived in. Mohaiemen's father was a professional surgeon who did not take photography seriously but regarded it as a hobby, this being the first camera he bought when he was still in medical school. This collection was also the first and only box of negatives found.

Subsequently, the old family house on Rankin Street was demolished in the 1970s due to the rapid urbanisation of the city of Dhaka that resulted in a tremendous increase in the demand for land. It was also a reflection of how the economic needs of a developing nation could alter the country's landscape and **supersede** the emotional bonds of an extended, multigenerational family.

About the artist

Naeem Mohaiemen (b. 1969, London, England) is an artist and writer from Dhaka, Bangladesh who currently works in both his home country and in New York. He graduated from the Oberlin College, Ohio in 1993 with a Bachelors in Economics and Concentration in History and is currently pursuing his postgraduate degree in Anthropology with a Certificate in Comparative Literature at Columbia University, New York.

Mohaiemen's artworks span a variety of mediums, and they frequently involve the use of photography, film, mixed media as well as critical writing to address historical events, migrant identities and political issues.

His work has been shown around the world, more recently at the Edinburgh Art Festival (2014); Kunsthalle Basel, Switzerland (2014); Museum of Modern Art, New York (2014); Kirin Nadar Museum, Delhi (2013); Dhaka Art Summit (2012); Sharjah Biennial, United Arab emirates (2011); and the Frieze Art Fair, London (2010).

Discussion and suggested activities

Questions for discussion

- Look at the twelve photographs. Who are these people and how might they be related to the artist? What do you think happened before or after the photograph was taken?
- The twelve photographs were taken indoors. What do you imagine happened before or after each photograph was taken?
- Look at each set of photographs and their corresponding sandstone moulds. Can you make out the images depicted by the sandstone moulds? What do you think is the meaning behind using sandstone moulds to rework the photographs?
- Look at the eight photographs that are overlaid with blueprint drawings of the old house. What similarities do you notice about the photographs? What is the symbolism of overlaying the two elements?
- In the artwork, the artist describes the old house where his father and relatives used to live as a place of history and nostalgia. Unfortunately, the old house succumbed to the country's rapid development plans and was eventually demolished. Do you think it is important to conserve old buildings and spaces? Why do you think so?
- [FOOD FOR THOUGHT] Like Dhaka, Singapore is also a city that has undergone rapid development over the last 50 years. How has urbanisation affected people in terms of their living conditions and lifestyles? Discuss some advantages and disadvantages brought about by urbanisation in the context of Singapore.

Suggested activities

- Look for old family photographs taken in a home environment and ask your parents, grandparents or relatives about these photographs. How much about their former homes and events can they remember? Document your family's history and heritage by recording down these anecdotes, stories and memories.
- Conduct research on the *kampongs* that used to exist in Singapore before they were demolished for land redevelopment plans. Obtain a current map of Singapore and plot down the former locations of these *kampongs*. Which areas were these *kampongs* situated? What modern buildings or facilities have been built on the former sites of these *kampongs*?

Glossary

Sandstone

Any of a group of common sedimentary rocks consisting of sand grains consolidated with such materials as quartz, haematite, and clay minerals: used widely in building.

Blueprints

A photographic print of plans, technical drawings, etc, consisting of white lines on a blue background.

Negative spaces

The space around and between the subject or subjects of an image or object.

Supersede

To take the place of (something old-fashioned or less appropriate); supplant.

Further reading and viewing

Artist's official website

<http://www.shobak.org/>

Book on the geography, history, government, economy, people, religion, language, arts, leisure, festivals, and food of Bangladesh

Bangladesh by Mariam Whyte. Available [here](#).

Book on the impact of foreign investment and industrialisation in Bangladesh

Discordant development: global capitalism and the struggle for connection in Bangladesh by Katy Gardner. Available [here](#).

Video about the rapid growth and urbanisation of Dhaka, Bangladesh

Megacities Reflect Growing Urbanization Trend by PBS NewsHour. Available [here](#).



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Nguyen Trinh Thi
Vietnam

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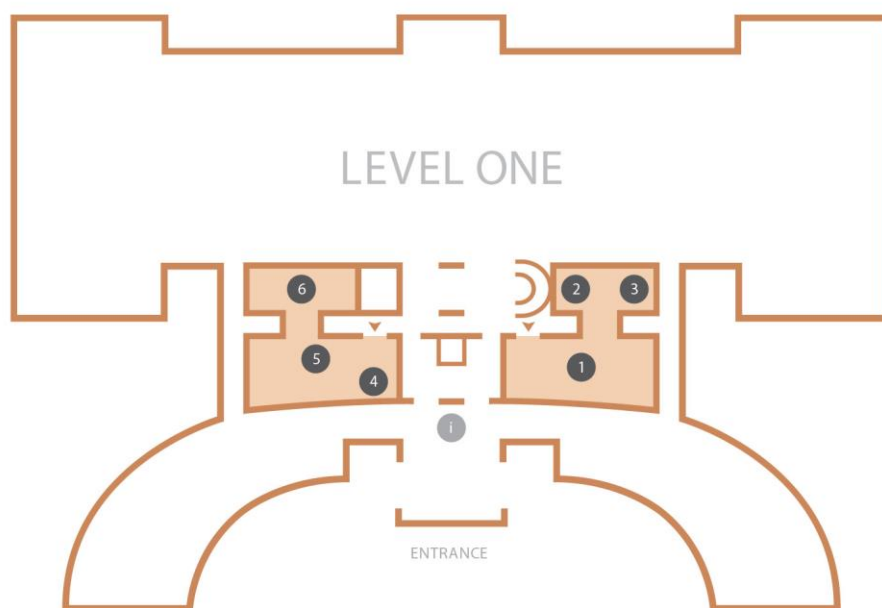
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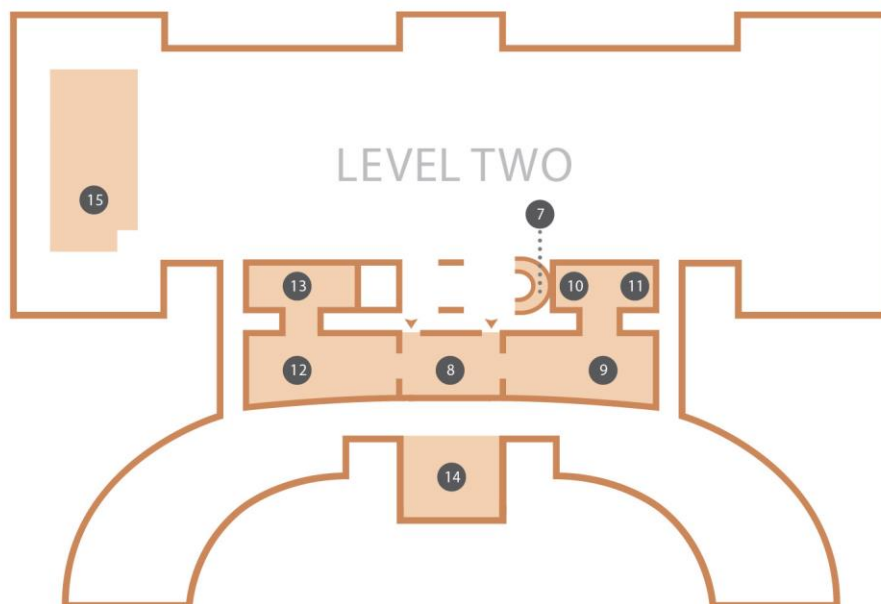
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Artwork***Unsubtitled***

Nguyen Trinh Thi

2013

Video projection on wood cut-outs

Dimensions variable

Collection of the Singapore Art Museum

Image courtesy of the Artist

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About the artwork and artistic process

In Nguyen Trinh Thi's work *Unsubtitled*, visitors enter a room filled with 19 large wooden cut-outs with standing figures projected upon them. The figures are all members of the local art scene in Hanoi, Vietnam. Viewers are greeted by the figures eating a variety of foods accompanied by sounds of chewing and swallowing. *Unsubtitled* offers a unique twist on this regular act of eating, as the figures state their name and identify what they had just eaten.

The figures' **ambiguous** facial expressions hints of their awareness of being watched, creating an **ominous** atmosphere. Such behaviour suggests that the basic human right of eating is being infringed upon, and speaks of a community under **surveillance**. Nguyen uses her work to communicate a message about the struggle between oppression and defiance. While the individuals are free to choose what they want to eat, the **terse** and **tentative** manner in the consumption of food here highlights the artificiality of the act. Here, the act of watching one eat serves as a metaphor to interrogate an artist's right to freedom of expression and peaceful existence.

Nguyen offers the simple and concise **artist statement** that "Eating needs no explanations". The artist rightfully and simply asserts that this primal human need does not require further elaboration. Yet, her statement also suggests that even simple basic rights cannot be taken for granted, and behind the seemingly simple **façades of the work**, a much deeper side of Vietnam is revealed.

The figures in *Unsubtitled* can be seen as acting in solidarity against the threats of **censorship**. In 2010, local artist La Thi Dieu Ha performed a work in the nude for Nha San Studio in Hanoi. The moment the cultural police saw photographic evidence of the performance, they ordered the art space to shut down temporarily for breaking the laws restricting the media and arts. *Unsubtitled* was the first work shown in the studio after its forced temporary shutdown.

About the artist

Nguyen Trinh Thi (B. 1973, Hanoi, Vietnam) is an independent filmmaker and video artist based in Hanoi, Vietnam. She earned a Bachelor of Arts in Russian and English from the Hanoi Foreign Studies College and a Master of Arts in Professional Journalism from the University of Iowa in the United States. She continued her studies at the University of California, San Diego where she graduated with a Master of Pacific International Affairs.

During her time at the University of California, San Diego, Nguyen was exposed to the study of ethnographic film and media methods. This is reflected in her works, which reveal the culture of her local Vietnamese community and highlight the current issues faced by Vietnam today. Nguyen also founded the Hanoi Centre for the Moving Image (Hanoi DOCLAB) in 2009, an independent space for documentary film and video art that remains an important centre for art and moving images in Vietnam.

In 2010, Nguyen exhibited her work at the Kuandu Biennale in Taipei and the Tate Modern in London. Her works have also been shown extensively in Japan, at the Fukuoka Asian Art Museum (2012), Okinawa Prefectural Museum & Art Museum (2012), Tochigi Prefecture Art Museum of Fine Arts (2012) and the Mie Prefectural Art Museum (2012).

Discussion and suggested activities

Questions for discussion

- The 19 individuals are eating a food item of their choice. Can you identify what they are eating? [traditional Vietnamese snacks, cucumbers, carrots, bread, sweet cakes, smoking cigarettes, etc.]
- Look at the facial expressions and body postures of the 19 individuals. What might they be thinking about? Could you guess?
- Pay attention to the sounds of the video work as you move among the 19 individuals. What do you hear? Where do you think the figures are at?
- How does the placement of the 19 individuals and use of sound in this installation affect your experience of this artwork? What if the individuals were all projections on a wall?
- The artist uses a deceptively simple statement to summarise her artwork, “Eating needs no explanations”. Can you think of any other way to phrase and succinctly depict the artwork? [FOOD FOR THOUGHT] What is surveillance? What is the common technology used to do this? [CCTV, etc.] Why would surveillance be necessary, and when would it be undesirable and an infringement on privacy? Consider the positive and negative impact of surveillance in a particular context.

Suggested activities

- How would you feel if someone were to stare at you while you were eating? Take turns to conduct this experiment with your friends or family. Share your feelings with them after the experiment.
- Use a projector as part of your art making. Collaborate with friends or family to develop an installation or performance using a projector. How does the projector enhance your artwork?
- Find out which cities in the world most widely use CCTVs and evaluate how it affects people’s behaviors and actions in these countries.

Glossary**Ambiguous**

Open to more than one interpretation; not having one obvious meaning.

Surveillance

Close observation or supervision maintained over a person, group, etc, esp one in custody or under suspicion.

Terse

Severely brief and concise.

Tentative

Not certain or fixed; provisional.

Artist statement

An artist's brief description of their work.

Façade

A front or outer appearance, especially a deceptive one.

Censorship

The practice of officially examining books, movies, etc., and suppressing unacceptable parts.

Further reading and viewing

Nguyen Trinh Thi's website

<http://nguyentrinhthi.wordpress.com/>

Information on Hanoi DOCLAB, founded by Nguyen Trinh Thi

Available [here](#).

Book introducing Vietnamese culture for children

Vietnam A to Z: Discover the colourful culture of Vietnam! (Volume 1) by Ms. Elka K. Ray. Available [here](#).

A photographic collection exploring what the world eats

What the World Eats by Peter Menzel and Faith D'Aluisio. Available [here](#).

Interview with artist Gabby Quynh-Anh Miller on art and censorship in Vietnam

Available [here](#).



Education Folio

Owen Leong

Australia

How to use this folio

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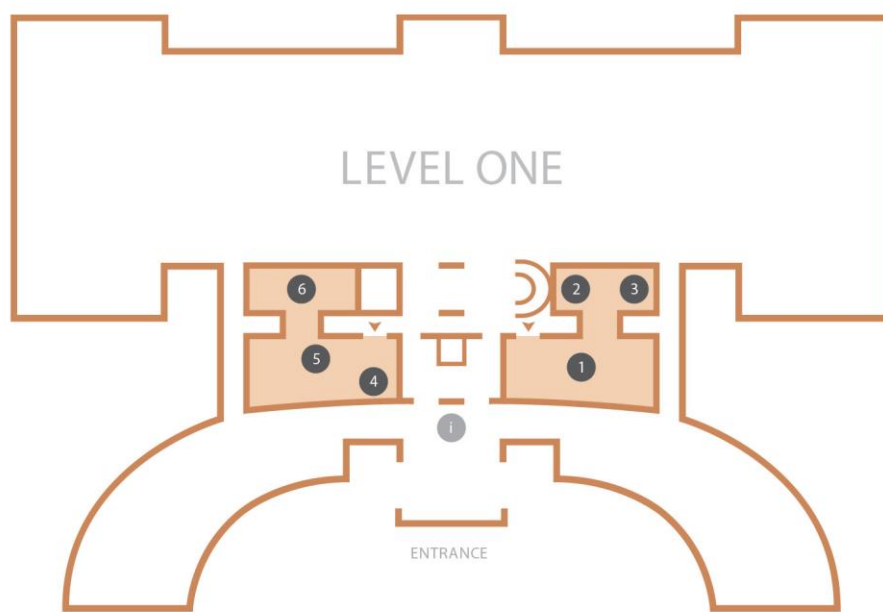
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Exhibition map



LEVEL ONE

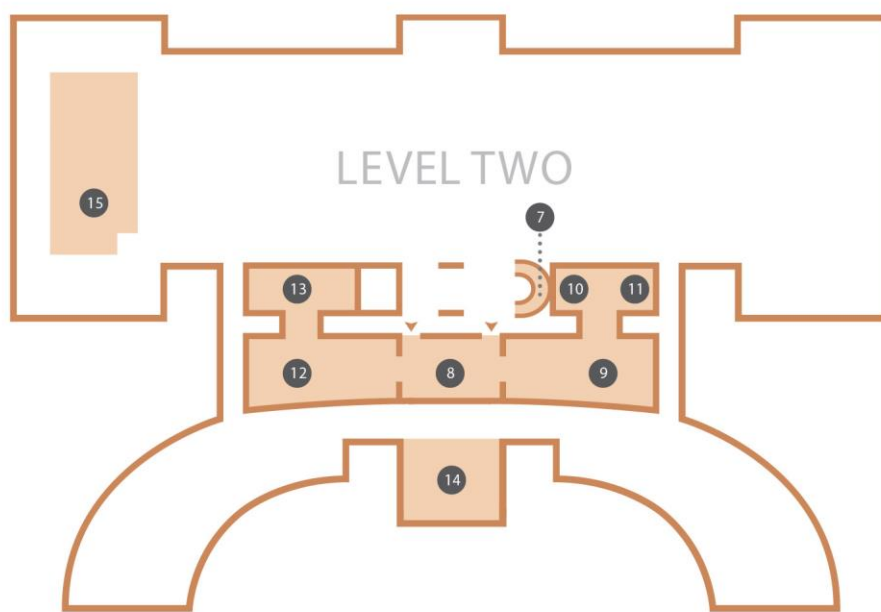
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- 3 Owen Leong
- 4 Farida Batool
- 5 Peng Wei
- 6 Yao Jui-Chung
+ Lost Society
Document (LSD)

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Exhibition map



LEVEL TWO

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

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Artwork***Infinite Love***

Owen Leong

2011

HD video

Duration 6:18 mins

Edition AP

Collection of the Artist

Image courtesy of the Artist

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About the artwork and artistic process

The video work *Infinite Love* is part of a larger installation series entitled *Infiltrator* (2011). It consists of two main images which alternate through the duration of the video. One image consists of a sculpture shaped like a human heart cast in frozen milk, while the other shows the artist's face with his eyes closed and mouth held open by a dental **retractor**. The heart starts to melt and drip into the artist's mouth, sometimes missing and splattering onto his face and collar. The artist's discomfort becomes increasingly evident as the frozen milk melts faster and faster, causing him to struggle as he tries to catch his breath and swallow the milk in his mouth. At some point in the video, the artist opens his eyes abruptly, adding another disconcerting dimension as the viewer is obliged to meet the artist's gaze.

Leong often employs the use of materials such as blood, honey and milk in his works. These **ephemeral** liquids are **integral** to the inherent symbolism behind his works. In an interview with online magazine *Lucida*, Leong explained his interest in the use of such liquids: "I see liquids passing into and out of the body as a metaphor for the **transference** of social, political and psychological forces." The milk is also suggestive of the 'White Man's Burden', the assumed responsibility of white people to 'nurture' and 'educate' non-white people with their culture which some consider to be superior to others.

In *Intimate Love*, the artist's body becomes a vessel to contain the dripping milk, and a conduit for transmitting social and cultural forces. The situation also suggests the **ingestion** of forced 'whiteness' faced by the artist as an individual of Asian heritage living in a predominantly white Australian society. Here, the dental retractor is representative of the struggle of minorities in a society where they are perceived as 'Other', while at the same time the dripping milk-heart could be seen to be, ironically, the milk of human kindness. . The ways in which an individual can define his or her identity is thrust into the spotlight, creating a socio-political space for the negotiation of more fluid identities within the spectrum of the 'Australian' cultural experience.

About the artist

Owen Leong (b. 1979, Sydney, Australia) is an Asian-Australian contemporary artist. His artistic practice spans photography, sculpture and installation and frequently involves the transformation of materiality across these mediums. Currently a PhD candidate at the Sydney College of the Arts, University of Sydney, Australia, Leong previously attained the Bachelor of Fine Arts at the College of Fine Arts, University of New South Wales, Sydney in 2002. In 2005, Leong received the prestigious Australian Postgraduate Award and completed a Master of Fine Arts in the same university.

His work was recently shown in exhibitions such as *Fables of Change* (2014) at the ROSIZO gallery in Moscow; *Tidal Skin* (2012) at La Trobe University Visual Arts Centre, Bendigo; and *Magic Spaces* (2011) at Today Art Museum, Beijing. Leong was awarded the Visual Arts Centre Façade Project Public Art Commission (2012) by La Trobe University and the City of Greater Bendigo and was also the recipient of the Bowness Photography Prize People's Choice Award (2009).

Discussion and suggested activities

Questions for discussion

- What is your first impression when watching the performance video?
- The artist keeps his eyes closed during the first half of the performance video but opens them abruptly during the second half. What might be the reason(s) behind his action? Does it change how you feel about the artwork? Why do you think this is so?
- Leong used his body as a medium in his artwork. Is it easy for you to relate to his situation? Why?
- [FOOD FOR THOUGHT] Racial discrimination is a prevalent issue faced by many cultures and societies in the world today. Is it crucial for people of different identities, cultures and backgrounds to co-exist peacefully and harmoniously? What do you think are some of the ways this can be achieved? What is the single most important factor in peaceful co-existence?

Suggested activities

- Food and drinks are an integral part of defining one's cultural identity. Milk, a quintessential product of Australia, is used to symbolise the predominant 'whiteness' of Australian society. What food and drinks would you use to symbolise Singapore? Why? Find out more about their origins and share them with your friends and family!
- Through *Infinite Love*, the artist seeks to express the inner turmoil he feels as an Asian-Australian living in a predominately white Australian society. What might be the problems faced by foreign migrants who have chosen to live in Singapore? Engage in heart-to-heart conversations about this with someone you know or encounter often to find out!

Glossary**Retractor**

An instrument for holding back the edges of a surgical incision or organ or part.

Ephemeral

Lasting for only a short time; transitory; short-lived.

Integral

Necessary to make a whole complete; essential or fundamental.

Transference

The action of transferring something or the process of being transferred.

Ingestion

To take food, drink, or other substances into the body by swallowing or absorbing.

Further reading and viewing

Artist's Website

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

Video on multiculturalism in Australia

Multiculturalism: a rich blend of cultures combine to make Australia's identity. Available [here](#).

Book on Asian culture in Australia

Australia's Asia: from yellow peril to Asian century edited by David Walker and Agnieszka Sobocinska. Available [here](#).

Book on art, politics and identity in Australia

Crossing cultures: art, politics and identity edited by Sylvia Kleinert and Steven Farram. Available [here](#).



Education Folio

Peng Wei

China

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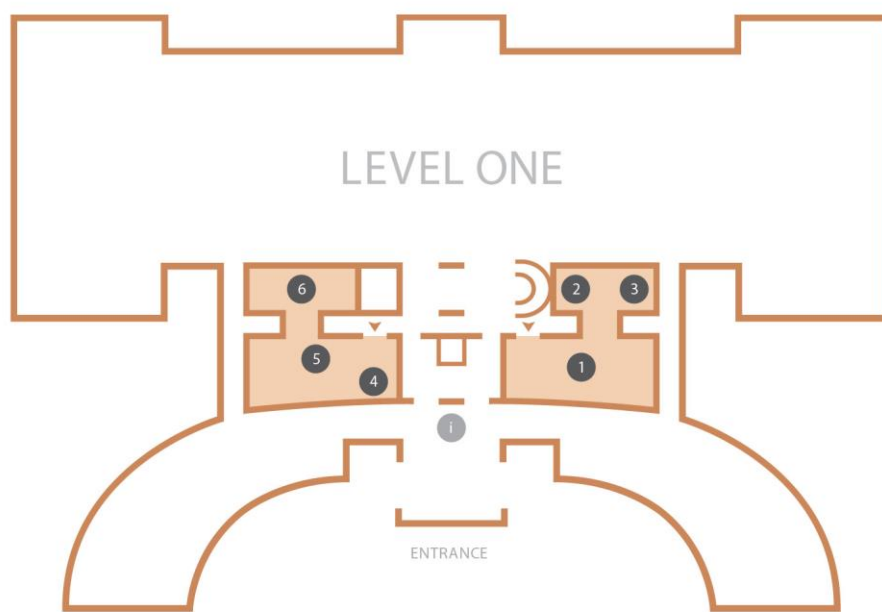
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Exhibition map



LEVEL ONE

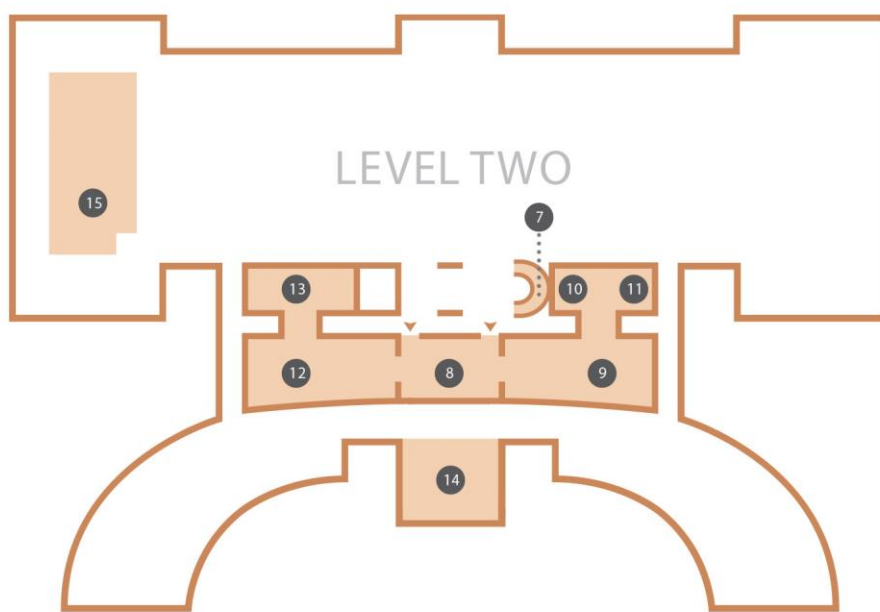
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Exhibition map



LEVEL TWO

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- 8 Choe U-Ram
- 9 Go Watanabe
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- 13 Ranbir Kaleka
- 14 Melati Suryodarmo
- 15 Ho Tzu Nven

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Artwork***Letters From A Distance***

Peng Wei

2012-2014

Mixed media and painting installation with handmade linen paper, rice paper, wooden box, silk ribbon, jade pins and oxbone scrollbars

Dimensions variable

Collection of the Artist and private collection

Image courtesy of the Artist and Tina Keng Gallery

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About the artwork and artistic process

Letters From A Distance is a mixed media installation which consists of album leaves, scrolls and wooden boxes. These **implements** of traditional Chinese paintings appear to be decorated with elaborate **brocade** fabric typical of traditional Chinese scrolls. However, they are either original works painted by the artist, or replicas of originals that the artist made with the help of modern digital printing technologies. This presentation of both original paintings and printed materials attempts to reflect the ambiguous visual relationship between the notions of **representation** and **replication**, at the same time offering a reinterpretation of traditional Chinese landscape paintings.

The Chinese inscriptions featured in the artwork were gleaned from the personal letters, essays and poems of European literary masters that the artist was inspired by. These literary texts were translated into Chinese and subsequently painted in the medium and style of traditional Chinese paintings. This effectively works to create a dialogue or exchange between the cultures of the East and the West; at the same time reviving the traditions of Chinese art and striking a balance between the old and the new. *Letters From A Distance*, as with Peng Wei's other recent works, transforms two-dimensional pieces into three-dimensional sculptures while maintaining the essence and quality of traditional Chinese art.

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About the artist

Peng Wei (b. 1974, Chengdu, China) received her Bachelor's degree and Master's degrees in Philosophy and Oriental Art from Nankai University, Tianjin, China. Based in Beijing, Peng served as the editor of ART Magazine from 2000 to 2006. Her works have been shown in solo exhibitions in Hong Kong, Beijing, Taipei and Shenzhen, and she has also participated in various international exhibitions such as *Real Life Stories – Chinese Contemporary Art* at the Bergen Art Museum, Norway (2013) and the 8th Shenzhen International Ink Painting Biennale (2013). Peng is currently a professional artist affiliated with the Beijing Fine Art Academy.

Discussion and suggested activities

Questions for discussion

- Look at the different components of the artwork. Can you identify any typical motifs of traditional Chinese art? Do you know what they symbolise? [chrysanthemum, peony, fish, hexagon, etc.]
- Try to read the Chinese inscriptions on the scrolls, can you identify the original writers of these inscriptions?
- The artwork consists of original works by the artist and duplicates of original works of the past. Can you tell which of the works are original paintings and which are the digitally printed copies? Why do you think the artist has chosen to include this aspect in her work?
- In this day and age, it is not uncommon that traditional artistic techniques are gradually being replaced by more modern or contemporary practices. What are some artistic techniques that seem to be becoming less popular in Singapore? [batik, woodblock printing, etc.]
- Conversely, are there any art forms that have enjoyed a resurgence in recent times? [ceramics, painting, etc.]
- The artwork addresses the interplay between two cultures and artistic forms, in particular Chinese art and European literature. Can you think of any examples of such a fusion or exchange between cultures in Singapore? Consider the fields of art, literature, history, gastronomy or popular culture.
- [FOOD FOR THOUGHT] This work expresses the artist's opinion with regards to how traditional practices can co-exist and be paired seamlessly with modern technology. In the rapid technology-driven world that we live in today, should we retain traditional art practices? Why do you think so?

Suggested activities

- While working on *Letters From A Distance*, Peng Wei imagines she is sending the letters and texts adapted from European writers to someone she will never have the opportunity to meet in person. Imagine that you are the artist. Select your favourite poem or song written in your mother tongue and translate it into English. Next, select a traditional art form found in Singapore. Draw/print out the design and combine the translated text with the image. Share your artwork with friends and family!

Glossary**Implements**

A piece of equipment that is use for a particular purpose.

Brocade

A rich fabric woven with a raised design, often using gold or silver threads.

Representation

The description or portrayal of someone or something in a particular way.

Replication

The action of copying or reproducing something.

Further reading and viewing

Artist's Website

<http://www.pengwei.info/>

Book on East-West cultures

Culture and modernity: East-West philosophic perspectives by Eliot Deutsch

Available [here](#).

Book on the Chinese culture

Chinapedia : the first authoritative reference to understanding China edited by Feng Jun et al. ;

translated by Jane Elliott, Vivian C.W. Hui

Available [here](#).

Book on cross-cultural texts

Between languages and cultures: translation and cross-cultural texts by Anuradha Dingwaney and

Carol Maier, editors

Available [here](#).

Documentary on the history of Chinese painting

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



Education Folio

Ranbir Kaleka

India

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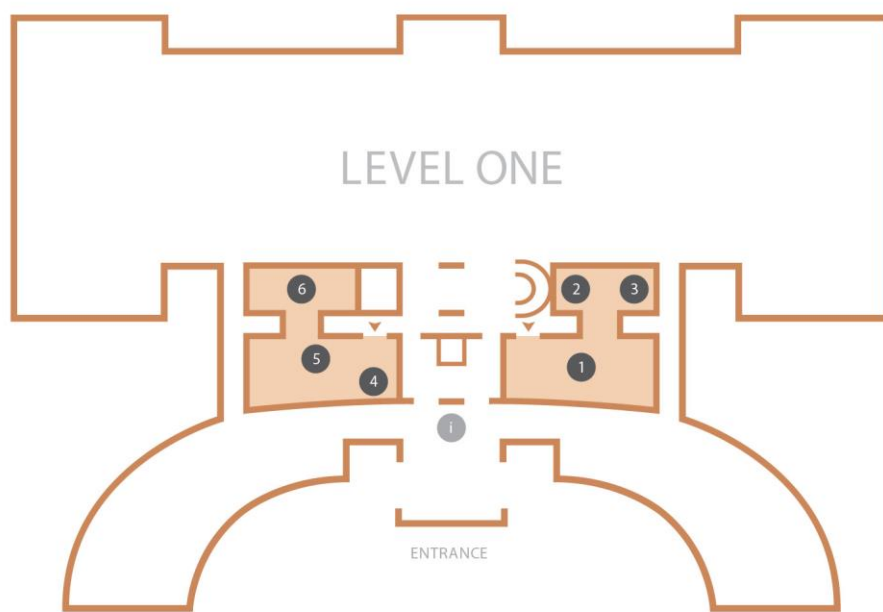
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Exhibition map



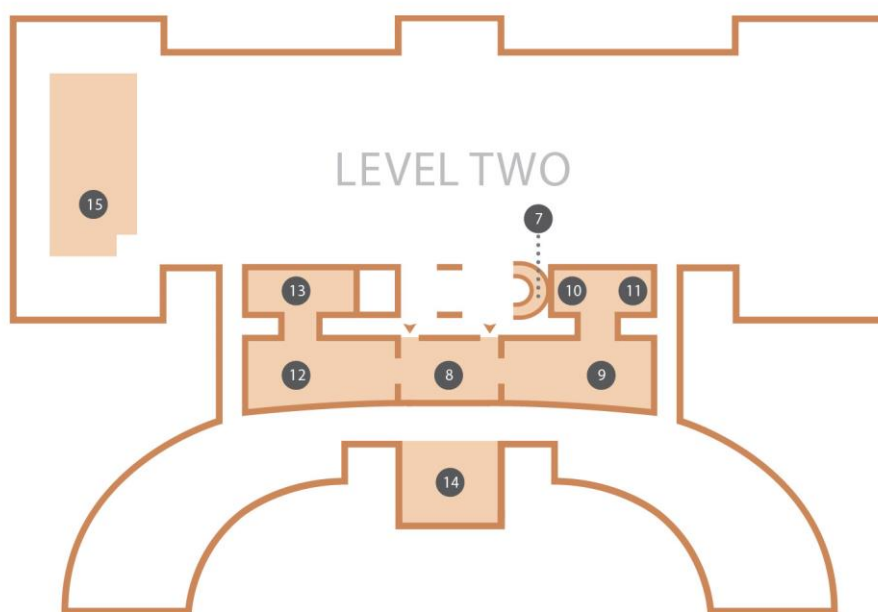
LEVEL ONE

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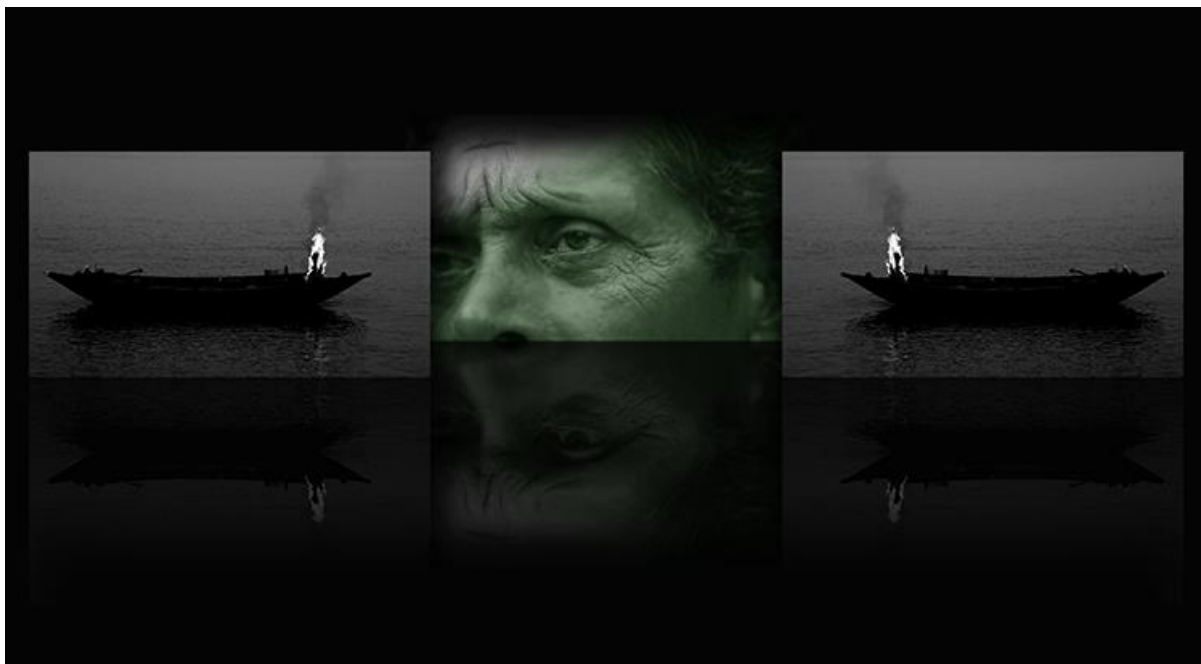


LEVEL TWO

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Artwork***House of Opaque Water***

Ranbir Kaleka

2012

HD video installation

222 x 1097 cm, Duration 10:33 mins

Collection of the Artist and Volte Gallery

Image courtesy of the Artist

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About the artwork and artistic process

Ranbir Kaleka's *House of Opaque Water* is an **immersive** video installation which consists of three separate video projections. The video work follows the story of Sheikh Lal Mohan, a man who lost his home when his village situated in the Sundarbans was submerged by rising sea levels. The Sundarbans, home to the largest mangrove forest in the world, has been experiencing rising water levels due to global warming and man's careless destruction of the environment. As a result, many local inhabitants of the region have been **displaced** from their homes, leaving behind their livelihood to build safer homes inland. Sheikh Lal Mohan now lives on another island, but in the video work he returns to where his former village is submerged, drawing a map of the village in the mud as he explains its layout in a rite of healing. The loss and displacement experienced by this man brings about a **catharsis** which gradually becomes apparent to the viewer. The video work also condenses the artist's conversations with Sheikh Lal Mohan through the use of subtitles, highlighting the identity of a man whose life revolved around the sea. The sea is thus a source of life as well as a powerful force that man is subjected to. The **phantasmagorical** elements evident in *House of Opaque Water* and Kaleka's other works are a result of his childhood, which was largely defined by the experience of living in a **haveli**. The enormous house with its many nooks and crannies was a playground for Kaleka during his growing up years and had been crucial in fuelling Kaleka's imagination of the world outside.

House of Opaque Water was first conceived when Kaleka saw *Mean Sea Level*, a film by Pradip Saha. Saha is an environmental **activist** who works with villagers affected by the rising sea levels in the Sundarbans region, and his work on the plight of these villagers was a starting point for Kaleka. *House of Opaque Water* employs the **documentary** format in its depiction of the subject, a largely different approach from Kaleka's other works which involve metaphorical representations through the projection of video on painting. Kaleka explains his choice of the video-documentary approach in this work, stating that "the medium of video is able to document the richness and meaning of cinematic time, and this cannot be matched by other mediums such as painting". He also feels that such a video-documentary approach is effective in its artistic representation of the lives and experiences of people.

About the artist

Ranbir Kaleka (b. 1953, Patiala, India) lives and works in New Delhi, India. He attained a Diploma in Painting from the College of Art at Punjab University, Chandigarh in 1975 and a Master in Painting from the Royal College of Art, London in 1987. He has taught fine art at the Fine Arts Department, College for Women, Punjabi University, Patiala, India and the Delhi College of Art, New Delhi.

Kaleka is known for combining the mediums of paint and videos by projecting video projections on easel paintings in a process known as superimposition. His works touch on current issues faced in India, such as poverty and migration, as well as scenes of everyday life, which are narrated and transformed visually into cinematic and surrealistic worlds.

Kaleka's works has been shown at the 4th International Contemporary Art Gwangju Vision Exhibition (2014), Gwangju, South Korea; The Peabody Essex Museum, *Midnight to the Boom* (2013), from the Museum's Herwitz Collection, Salem, Massachusetts; *Project 35* (2013), Independent Curators International (ICI), North Carolina Museum of Art, Raleigh, USA.

Discussion and suggested activities

Questions for discussion

- The sea is a prominent and central aspect of this video work. What is the significance of the sea to the inhabitants of the Sundarbans delta?
- What are the sounds you can recognize from the video work? What effect is created by the use of these sounds?
- What are some metaphorical images and actions used in the video work? How do these metaphors relate to the central character Sheikh Lal Mohan's experience and emotions? [drawing the map of a village in the mud, fire burning on the boat, etc]
- How is the video installation presented to the viewers and what emotions does it evoke? [3 separate projections, predominantly black and white colour scheme, reflection of videos on the floor, use of sounds and silence, etc.]
- [FOOD FOR THOUGHT] The artwork revolves around the theme of displacement and one's sense of belonging to a place. Do you think the constant demolition of buildings in Singapore contribute to a sense of displacement? Which is more important – one's sense of belonging or the renewal of infrastructure? What are your own thoughts and feelings on this?

Suggested activities

- In the video installation, the villagers are displaced from their homes due to rising sea levels. Find out the causes and what we can do to lessen the impact of rising sea levels. How would you share this message? Get your friends and family to join you on this campaign!
- Find out which regions or countries around the world are at risk of rising sea levels. What are some potential environmental problems these countries might face? What are some solutions planned and undertaken by the relevant authorities?
- The artwork highlights people's attachment to spaces they inhabit. Are there any public spaces you are attached to at different stages of your life? Revisit these familiar places and sketch out their unique features to share with your friends and family.

Glossary

Immersive

Providing information or stimulation for a number of senses, not only sight and sound.

Displaced

Being forced to leave one's home, typically because of war, persecution, or natural disaster. It can also refer to a sense of not belonging.

Catharsis

The process of releasing, and thereby providing relief from, strong or repressed emotions.

Phantasmagorical

Of a sequence of pictures, characterised by rapid changes in light intensity, colour and size.

Haveli

The Hindi word that refers to a mansion.

Activist

Someone who has a policy of taking direct and often militant action to achieve an end, especially a political or social one.

Documentary

A movie or television programme that is based on factual events, interviews, and often detailed research on a particular set of circumstances, narrative, or incident..

Further reading and viewing

Artist's Website

<http://www.rkaleka.com/index.html>

Book on real-world solutions to rising sea levels

Adapting to flooding and rising sea levels by Susan Meyer. Available [here](#).

Article on Pradip Saha's environmental documentary "Mean Sea Level".

The vanishing village by Jayanta Basu for The Telegraph India. Available [here](#).

Documentary on rising sea levels

Sea Level Rise: Facing the Issues by Sea Level Rise Education. Available [here](#).



Education Folio
Robert Zhao Renhui
Singapore

How to use this folio

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

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

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

Introduction

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

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

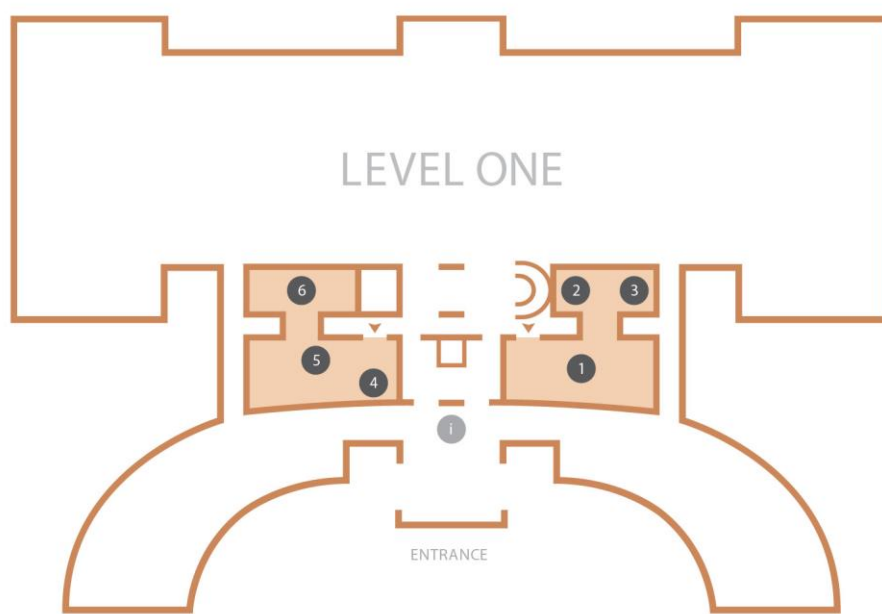
The inaugural edition in 2008 focused only on 12 countries: Cambodia, China, India, Laos, Malaysia, Mongolia, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Vietnam, and received a total of 34 nominations. The APB Foundation Signature Art Prize soon expanded its focus in 2011 to reach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

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

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

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

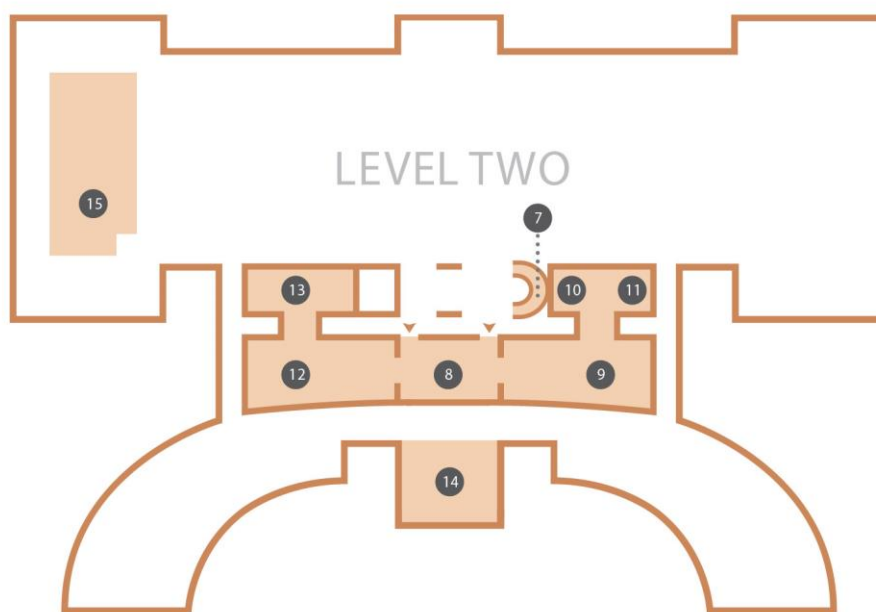
Exhibition map



LEVEL ONE

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

Exhibition map



LEVEL TWO

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

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Artwork***Eskimo wolf trap often quoted in Sermons***

Robert Zhao Renhui

2013

Mixed media installation with knife, bicarbonate soda, and diasec

Dimensions variable

Edition 2 of 3

Collection of the Artist

Image courtesy of the Artist

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About the artwork and artistic process

Eskimo wolf trap often quoted in Sermons is a mixed media installation which consists of a bloodied-looking knife in a field of snow and an accompanying text on the wall detailing the **narrative** behind the artwork. Part of a larger series of installation works entitled *The Glacier Study Group* which revolves around the investigation of glacial and polar activities in the Arctic Circle, the artwork features the concept of the animal trap, an object that fascinates Zhao.. The narrative behind the artwork tells the ironic and tragic tale of a wolf that begins to lick the frozen blood on a knife it encounters in the snow. As the wolf continues to lick the knife, the knife's blade is gradually uncovered and it begins to cut the wolf's tongue. The wolf, unaware of this due to the numbing cold, becomes increasingly excited upon tasting warm, fresh blood and eventually dies from the loss of its own blood.

The use of such fictional narratives is characteristic of Zhao's artistic practice, which also draws heavily from the observations and research of the natural world and the relationship between man and nature. Working under the **guise** of a fictitious research organization known as the Institute of Critical Zoologists, Zhao's works often reflect his keen interest in **anthropomorphism** and how humans frequently and subconsciously allow their human concerns to foreground the animals' when talking about them. The Institute of Critical Zoologists "aims to develop a critical approach to the zoological **gaze**, or how humans view animals" and is a platform through which Zhao attempts to find other non-anthropomorphic ways to address animals. Even though *Eskimo wolf trap often quoted in Sermons* is an exception to Zhao's usual practice of using photography in his works, it is an installation work which retains the photographic element of a moment 'frozen' in time in its exploration of the **representation** of truth and reality.

About the artist

Robert Zhao Renhui (b. 1983, Singapore) is a multi-disciplinary artist who received a Bachelor of Arts in Photography from the Camberwell College of Arts in London and a Master of Arts in Photography from the London College of Communication.

His work addresses man's relationship with nature and presents different modes of the human gaze on nature, frequently highlighting how truth is constructed through a false naturalization and manipulation of beliefs.

Zhao was the recipient of the United Overseas Bank Painting of the Year Award, Singapore (2009); the National Arts Council Singapore Young Artist Award (2010); and the Deutsche Bank Award in Photography (2011). He was selected to participate in the 2013 President's Young Talents exhibition at the Singapore Art Museum. His works have been shown widely in Singapore and abroad, including exhibitions at the Fukuoka Asian Art Museum, Japan; the Photo-Levallois Festival, Paris; the GoEun Museum of Photography, Korea; and most recently at the Singapore Biennale (2013).

Discussion and suggested activities

Questions for discussion

- What is your first impression upon encountering the artwork (before you read the accompanying text)?
- After reading the accompanying text on the wall what are your thoughts about the artwork now? Are they different from your first impression?
- The artist frequently employs convincing fictional narratives in his works, which often deceive the viewer.. What are the elements that makes his narration effective? [Based on facts, simple narrative, strong visuals, etc.]
- The wolf is an animal that is usually perceived as a cunning figure in fairy tales (Three Little Pigs, Little Red Riding Hood, etc.). Has this artwork changed the way you perceive the wolf?
- We often attach stereotypical traits not only to animals, but also to groups of people. Why do you think we have the tendency to do so?
[FOOD FOR THOUGHT] The nominator of the artwork expressed that the accompanying text on the wall is a crucial part of the work; without it, the audience would not be able to understand the work. Is the viewing of artworks more enjoyable without any explanation or better with the artist's statement? What are your thoughts on this?

Suggested activities

- This installation is accompanied by a short parable and title. Re-interpret the installation and come up with your own parable and title based on the bloodied knife in the snow. Share your story and ask your audience to choose the more convincing story!
- Have you heard of Aesop's fables? Aesop is the most famous of all fable writers, and he lived in ancient Greece. A fable is a short story that conveys a moral, typically with animals as characters. Try writing your own fable with your favourite animal character. Visualize an installation to illustrate the climax of the story, and create it somewhere. It can be on any scale – from room-sized to something on your table. Use everyday objects, and take a photograph of it – and don't forget to include a meaningful moral that you would like your audience to learn about.

Glossary**Narrative**

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

Guise

An external form, appearance, or manner of presentation, typically concealing the true nature of something.

Anthropomorphism

The attribution of human characteristics, motivation, or behaviour to an animal.

Gaze

In literary theory, a particular perspective considered as embodying certain aspects of the relationship between observer and observed.

Representation

The depiction of someone or something in a work of art.

Further reading and viewing

Artist's Website

<http://www.criticalzoologists.org/>

Book on Aesop's fables (for children)

Aesop's fables adapted by Jan Fields. Available [here](#).

Book on animals in mythology, history, art, science, philosophy, and literature

The mythical zoo: animals in myth, legend, and literature by Boria Sax. Available [here](#).

Book on the zoological gaze

Why look at animals? by John Berger. Available [here](#).

Video introducing anthropomorphism (for children)

Monkey See, Monkey Do? Let's Talk About Anthropomorphism by Kids Animal Channel. Available [here](#).



Education Folio

Yao Jui-chung + Lost Society Document

Taiwan

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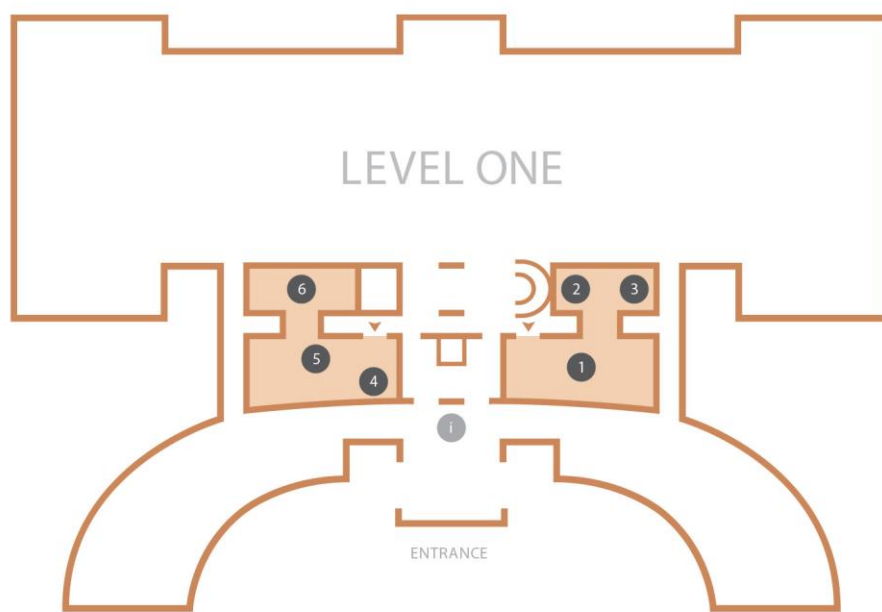
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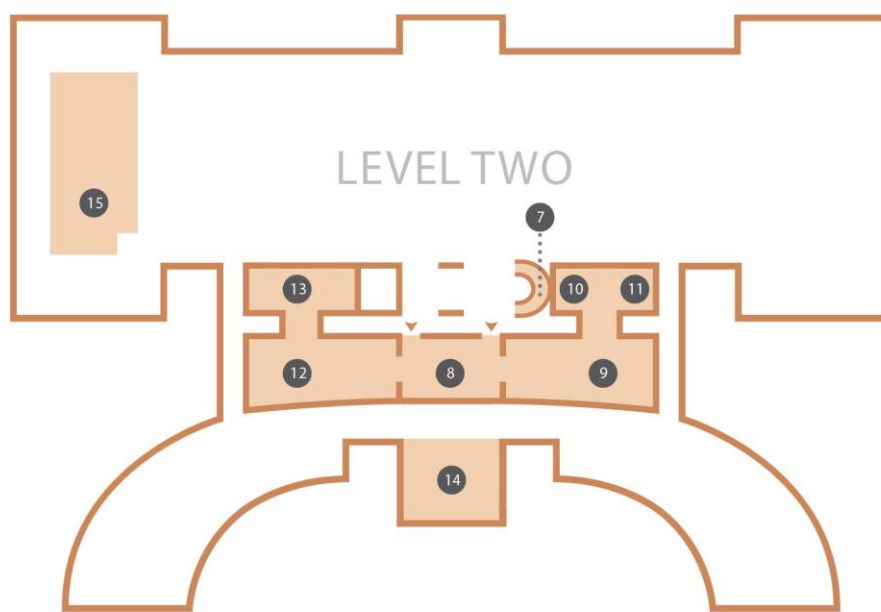
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+ Lost Society
Document (LSD)

Exhibition map



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Artwork



Mirage - Disused Public Property in Taiwan

Yao Jui-chung + Lost Society Document (LSD)

2010 – 2014

Video and 124 photographs

Photographs: 70 x 70 cm (each), video duration 25:00 mins

Collection of the Artist

Image courtesy of the Artist

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About the artwork and artistic process

Mirage – Disused Public Property in Taiwan is a series of 124 photographs and a video documentary of ‘蚊子館’, or ‘mosquito halls’ across Taiwan. The project initially started out as an assignment that artist-lecturer Yao Jui-chung gave his university students, and has since developed into an impressive Taiwan-wide exploration and **documentation** of over 300 ‘mosquito halls’. These halls refer to **obsolete** buildings constructed as a result of rapid economic growth, **rural** investments, or the strong political motivations of certain business corporations. **Dilapidated** and pest-ridden after long periods of disuse, these abandoned public properties include recreational and cultural centres, office buildings, marketplaces, car parks and even airports that lacked the funding needed for basic maintenance.

This collaboration between Yao and his students, who are referred to collectively as the ‘Lost Society Document’, garnered widespread attention from the Taiwanese media and government bodies. Most significantly, it resulted in a visit from the Premier of the Executive Yuan, who advised all relevant departments to inspect the disused facilities and either revive them within a year or demolish them.

By highlighting these ‘mosquito halls’ and raising awareness about their disuse through public domains, the artwork has effectively brought about change in Taiwanese society. This work is exemplary of Yao’s artistic focus over the last fifteen years, which employs the medium of photography in its exploration of the degradation of Taiwan’s architectural landscape due to the changes brought about by modernization.

About the artist

Yao Jui-chung (b. 1958, Taipei, Taiwan) graduated from The National Institute of The Arts (Taipei National University of the Arts) with a degree in Art Theory.

Yao specializes in photography, installation and painting. The themes of his works are varied, but they frequently involve an examination of the absurdity of the human condition. Apart from working in the fields of theatre and film, Yao teaches art history at the National Taiwan Normal University Department of Fine Arts, writes art criticisms and has curated several exhibitions.

Yao represented Taiwan in *Facing Faces-Taiwan* at the Venice Biennale (1997), and took part in the International Triennale of Contemporary Art Yokohama (2005), 6th Asia Pacific Triennial of Contemporary Art (2009) and Taipei Biennial (2010), amongst numerous other large international exhibitions.

Discussion and suggested activities

Questions for discussion

- What are some of words that come to mind as you walk into the space where the artwork is displayed? [clinical, minimalist, etc.]
- Why do you think the artist has decided to use black and white photography to portray the 'mosquito halls'? Would the effect be different if the photographs were in colour or sepia?
- Each 'mosquito hall' is presented in a series of photographs. Is it necessary to use more than one photograph to depict the place? Why?
- The investigation of 'mosquito halls' would not have been possible without the participation of the art students in universities. What do you think about universities including a course where students undertake a collective social project instead of a normal class or individual assignment?
- What is the role of art in bringing about social change in the world today? How do the methodologies and presentation of art raise awareness about social issues?
- [FOOD FOR THOUGHT] The artist adopts an investigative approach in the materialization of this work as seen by the way the work is presented and the accompanying video documentation. Is this investigative approach effective in bringing the social issues to light? Yes, No or Maybe? How else could this particular issue be presented?

Suggested activities

- In the rapidly developing world that we live in today, it is not uncommon that certain buildings are neglected and left in a state of disuse. Take a closer look at an abandoned building which you think can be revived, photograph it, and write a proposal on the possible uses of the building. Sketch your ideas out and share them with your friends and family!
- Competition for space and urban renewal are relevant issues that concern a land-scarce country like Singapore. Conduct some research on iconic buildings in Singapore that were demolished and find out the reasons for their demolition. What are some of the ways that these buildings are being remembered? [National theatre, Old National Library, Kallang National Stadium, etc.]

Glossary**Documentation**

Material that provides official information or evidence or that serves as a record.

Obsolete

No longer produced or used; out of date.

Rural

In, relating to, or characteristic of the countryside rather than the town.

Dilapidated

Falling to pieces or in a state of disrepair; shabby.

Further reading and viewing

Artist's Website

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

Video interview with the artist discussing his interest in derelict buildings

Simulating Dereliction in Taiwan: An Interview with artist Yao Jui-chung. Available [here](#).

Academic essay on the artwork

The Power of Action: Yao Jui-chung and the Mirage – Disused Public Property in Taiwan by Lu Pei-yi.

Available [here](#).

Book on demolished public playgrounds in Singapore

Mosaic memories: remembering the playgrounds Singapore grew up in by Justin Zhuang. Available

[here](#).