



STILL SOMEHOW, IT'S ILLUSIONS WE RECALL

Film programme curated by Jeremy Chua for SAM's exhibition *The Gift*

Presented by Singapore Art Museum, *Still Somehow, It's Illusions We Recall* is a film programme in conjunction with ongoing exhibition *The Gift*. Drawing on the exhibition's theme of affinities and entanglements, the programme features responses to our current state of unprecedented disruption and isolation. Running from 2 Oct to 4 Nov 2021, the series of films conjure and reconfigure familiar aspects of life in ways that are intimate, yet alienating. The intertwining themes found in these filmic narratives present an avenue for collective introspection, and open up possibilities for the reanimating of a new and future self. On-site screenings will be held at National Gallery Singapore, featuring Singapore premieres of feature-length and short films, as well as pre-screening introductions hosted by film curator, Jeremy Chua.

Feature films

City Hall Wing, Level B1, The Ngee Ann Kongsi Auditorium, National Gallery Singapore

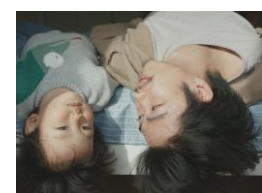


Image courtesy of Golden Village

The Year of the Everlasting Storm ***Asian Premiere***

Director: Jafar Panahi, Anthony Chen, Malik Vittal, Laura Poitras, Dominga Sotomayor, David Lowery, Apitchatpong Weerasethakul

Year: 2021

Runtime: 121 min

Country: USA

Language: English, Farsi, Chinese, Spanish, Thai (with English subtitles)

Rating: To be advised

[Get tickets here](#)

Jafar Panahi, Apichatpong Weerasethakul, Laura Poitras, Anthony Chen and other world cinema heavyweights reflect on 2020 in this sweeping auteur anthology film which premiered at Cannes Special Screenings.

Shot in secret during the pandemic, *The Year of the Everlasting Storm* comprises seven shorts. Billed as "a true love letter" to the storytelling power of the moving image, these deeply personal responses to life under lockdown weave together an extraordinary cinematic journal chronicling human existence during an unprecedented historical moment.

Watch trailer [here](#)

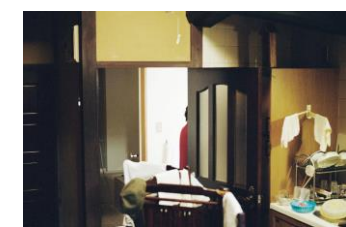


Image courtesy of C.W. Winter, Anders Edström, Wang Yue

The Works and Days (of Tayoko Shiojiri in the Shiotani Basin)

Southeast Asian Premiere

Director: C.W. Winter and Anders Edström

Year: 2020

Runtime: 202 min [PARTS 1 & 2]; 130 minutes [PART 3]; 149 minutes [PART 4]

Country: USA / Sweden / Japan/ UK

Language: Japanese, Swedish, English (with English subtitles)

Rating: To be advised

Get tickets here: [Parts 1 & 2](#); [Part 3](#); [Part 4](#)

The first rule in farming is that you are never to hope for an easy way. The land demands your effort. *The Works and Days (of Tayoko Shiojiri in the Shiotani Basin)* follows Tayoko Shiojiri and his family, who live in a valley in Kyoto Prefecture in Japan surrounded by fields and mountains. In a community where hard work bears fruit (as long as nothing diverts its course), their lives are strictly regulated by the requirements of the land and the particularities of the seasons. Filmed over 27 weeks, the film adheres to this same regimen, with the editors constantly re-weaving the narrative threads as diligently as farmers would till their land.

A geographic description of 14 months of the work and non-work of Tayoko in the mountains of Kyoto Prefecture, Japan, this documentary feature is a stunning ode to the pastoral in five books. The film won the Best Film of Berlinale Encounters Competition in 2020.

Watch trailer [here](#)



Image courtesy of Cercamon

What Do We See When We Look at the Sky? ***Southeast Asian Premiere***

Director: Alexandre Koberidze

Year: 2021

Runtime: 150 min

Country: Germany / Georgia

Language: Georgian (with English subtitles)

Rating: PG

[Get tickets here](#)

One summer afternoon, Lisa and Giorgi bump into each other in the street. It's love at first sight, but they quickly part ways—only to cross paths again almost immediately. When they run into each other for a third time, they decide to go on a date. Unfortunately the pair are cursed; on the morning of their big day, both wake up and find themselves transformed into someone else. But even with new faces and new lives, Lisa and Giorgi still yearn for one another.

This Berlinale FIPRESCI Prize winner is a romantic, Kafkaesque fable full of poignant quirkiness and playful imagery. As writer-director Alexandre Koberidze follows the couple's journey towards reunification, he also takes the audience on a leisurely and witty detour through daily life in the historic Georgian city of Kutaisi, where human, canine and inanimate-object populations are in the grip of World Cup fever. Saturated in colour thanks to Faraz Fesharaki's artful mix of 16mm and digital cinematography, *What Do We See When We Look at the Sky?* is an expansive, eloquent love letter to romance, to the mundane and the magical, and to the art of cinema itself.

Watch trailer [here](#)



Image courtesy of The Match Factory

Sundown

Southeast Asian Premiere

Director: Michel Franco

Year: 2021

Runtime: 83 min

Country: Mexico, France, Sweden

Language: English, Spanish (with English subtitles)

Rating: To be advised

[Get tickets here](#)

When a distant emergency disrupts the wealthy Bennett family's vacation on the Mexican coast in Acapulco and summons them back to the UK, simmering tensions rise to the fore. In the process, the delicate balance between siblings is irrevocably upset.

This film continues writer-director Michel Franco's explorations of individuals and societies under pressure, revealing the hidden heights and depths of a city and a family. *Sundown* unfolds in short, sharp bursts, playing out in the sleek hotel suites and scruffy tourist haunts of a seaside locale, and across the psychological battlefield of a family dynasty.

"*Sundown*' is a mystery, but it's also a Rorschach test. No two people will see the film the same way." – *Variety*

Watch trailer [here](#)



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Short films

Supreme Court Wing, Level 5, Theatrette in UOB Southeast Asia Gallery, National Gallery Singapore

The short film section consists of personal works made by multidisciplinary artists Elysa Wendi, Min-Wei Ting and Robert Zhao over the past two years. They explore sensations relating to the transience and fragility of living in the physical or natural world. Each of the films investigates a different aspect of the subconscious reality of life in Singapore, and reminds us of the invisible forces of change that threaten erasure both on and off screen.



If Forest Remembered

World Premiere

By Elysa Wendi, 36 min

Image courtesy of Elysa Wendi

While Elysa Wendi searched for a copy of her old dance solo performance from 1998, she found that her feelings resonated with the plight of the last Javan Rhino, which passed away in 2010 after walking in the forest alone for years. The film navigates her personal memories and broader questions of extinction from different perspectives.



And A Great Sign Appeared / Evidence of Things Not Seen / We Watch Them Disappear

World Premiere

By Robert Zhao Renhui, 31 min

Image courtesy of Robert Zhao

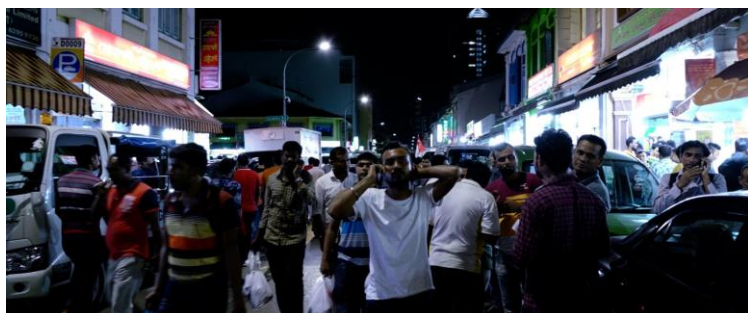
On Dec 22 2019, thousands of birds appeared in front of the Robert Zhao Renhui's home, darkening the sky and covering the open field next to a construction site. They were Asian openbill storks, birds foreign to Singapore and which had travelled a long way. Their appearance was a sign of something, but what of, Zhao was unsure.

Already one of the largest urbanised areas in the world, the Pearl River Delta continues to urbanise at an alarming rate. When Zhao first arrived in Shunde, Guangzhou, he was worried because he could not see or hear any birds for the first hour. Where had all the birds gone?

In recent years, birds have been used as indicators of possible changes in the environment. By looking closely at the types of birds and the number of birds, we can learn more about the current state of the environment.

The wetlands in Yalu River, Dan Dong, is an important bird migratory site for the godwit and great knot. These birds migrate between New Zealand, China, North Korea and Alaska every year. In fact, the godwit's migratory flight is the longest nonstop migration of any bird in the world. As more wetlands and coasts in South Korea and China become concretised, the wetlands in Yalu River remains one of the last sanctuaries for these birds.

Zhao visited the estuary in April 2019, during the time of the migrations, and spent time talking to a researcher who tracked the numbers of birds. Every year, their numbers dwindle. Yet, to see the birds in flight was a spectacular sight, and witnessed by huge crowds of onlookers.



If For Nothing Else Than For Sunday

Asian Premiere

By Min-Wei Ting, 40 min

Image courtesy of Min-Wei Ting

A sensorial journey of time and space, *If For Nothing Else Than For Sunday* presents a first-person walk through the Little India district of Singapore, punctuated by jumps in time. The camera looks, listens, and moves straight ahead, breaking the flow only to cut back and forth in time. It takes the viewer into streets and alleyways that are quiet and deserted one moment, before cutting to the same locations at a different time, bustling with migrant workers from Bangladesh and India who have gathered for relaxation, friendship and freedom on their day off. In doing so, for however brief and limited a time, they remake this space into a place of their own.

Showtimes

Feature films @ The Ngee Ann Kongsi Auditorium, National Gallery Singapore

13 October – 4 November, Wednesdays and Thursdays

Ticketed; \$11 – \$15

13 Oct, Wednesday, 7.30–9.30pm *THE YEAR OF THE EVERLASTING STORM*

14 Oct, Thursday, 7.30–10pm *WHAT DO WE SEE WHEN WE LOOK AT THE SKY?*

20 Oct, Wednesday, 7.30–9pm *SUNDOWN*

21 Oct, Thursday, 7–10.30pm *THE WORKS AND DAYS (OF TAYOKO SHIOJIRI IN THE SHIOTANI BASIN PART 1 & 2)*

27 Oct, Wednesday, 7.30–10pm *WHAT DO WE SEE WHEN WE LOOK AT THE SKY?*

28 Oct, Thursday, 7.30–10pm *THE WORKS AND DAYS (OF TAYOKO SHIOJIRI IN THE SHIOTANI BASIN PART 3)*

3 Nov, Wednesday, 7.30–9pm *SUNDOWN*

4 Nov, Thursday, 7.30–10pm *THE WORKS AND DAYS (OF TAYOKO SHIOJIRI IN THE SHIOTANI BASIN PART 4)*

Short films @ Theatrette in UOB Southeast Asia Gallery, National Gallery Singapore

2 – 31 October, Saturdays and Sundays

3–7pm, Free entry

3–3.35pm *IF FOREST REMEMBERED*

3.35–4.15pm *IF FOR NOTHING ELSE THAN FOR SUNDAY*

4.15–4.45pm *AND A GREAT SIGN APPEARED / EVIDENCE OF THINGS NOT SEEN / WE WATCH THEM DISAPPEAR*

(Intermission)

5–5.35pm *IF FOREST REMEMBERED*

5.35–6.15pm *IF FOR NOTHING ELSE THAN FOR SUNDAY*

6.15–6.45pm *AND A GREAT SIGN APPEARED / EVIDENCE OF THINGS NOT SEEN / WE WATCH THEM DISAPPEAR*