

HISTORY IS NOT EVERYTHING | THE SUN TEACHES US THAT

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THE SUN 
teaches us that history is not everything

Raphael Fonseca, as the curator of the exhibition "The sun teaches us that history is not everything" wishes to dedicate this project to the memory of Raquel Schembri (1984-2016). Schembri was a Brazilian artist born in Belo Horizonte and was to be one of the artists of this exhibition. Fate prevented her collaboration but, in honor of her, we include in this publication one of her works on paper, made in collaboration with Shima in 2014.



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Raquel Schembri & Shima

Untitled

Painting on paper 2014

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Preface

Since its founding in 2005, Osage Art Foundation (OAF) has been promoting cross cultural understanding through art exhibitions, publications, workshops and symposia between Hong Kong, China, Japan, Korean, Singapore, Thailand, Myanmar and Indonesia, the Philippines and other countries, most recently expanding the dialogue to include Europe, South and Central America and Mexico.

Osage Art Foundation recognizes that more needs to be done to develop the cultural conversations happening within Asia and beyond. To better address this need, Osage Art Foundation has launched the platform, "Regional Perspectives", and initiated the platform with a major exhibition series. Each publication under this series offers objective analysis and interpretations of cultural expressions and artistic ideas of creative individuals and allows them to collectively present their views and opinions to a regional and global audience.

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Osage Art Foundation presented "The sun teaches us that history is not everything," guest curated by Raphael Fonseca. It gathered together 26 artists, 14 from South and Central America and Mexico, 8 from Southeast Asia and 4 artists from Hong Kong and Macau. The exhibition was tangent of the "South by Southeast" exhibition in 2015, curated by Patrick D. Flores and Anca Verona Mihuleț, which proposed not only to represent the existing geography and geopolitics of Southeast Asia but to remap the Southeast all together. It does this by locating a coordinate of the Southeast elsewhere such as Southeast Europe.

Osage Art Foundation's programs are distinguished by their focus on cultural exchange, educational outreach and the building of knowledge. The "Regional Perspectives" series will continue to encourage the building and sharing of knowledge across cultures.

The book is the final product related to the exhibition: “The sun teaches us that history is not everything” organized by the Osage Art Foundation. This curatorial project has developed since the end of 2015, opening to the public in March until May 2018. This publication includes essays about the project, photo documentation of the exhibition and the shown artworks.

More than that, it has always seemed important to have textual contributions written by the artists themselves. In this sense, I invited them to contribute small texts about their art practice and research always having in mind that they are not only visual artists but political individuals. I also contributed some words about the works presented in the exhibition and their ability to create the narratives we had in the space.

Besides the clear relation between the book and the exhibition itself, there are also six essays that highlight issues contained in the project and can be related to broader issues of art and contemporary cultures. Opening the book, the first essay by me discusses the process of this research between Latin America, Southeast Asia, Hong Kong and Macau – what perspectives related to the idea of the tropics appear when we look at artists that come from these regions? How different histories of colonialism create points of contact between areas in the world that are generally still not articulated in art projects? The article that brings some aspects of every step that made this project possible and reflects on the many ways that History can be folded until it becomes multiple stories.

After the documentation of the exhibition, the second essay was written by Patrick Flores, curator of the exhibition “South by Southeast” (with Anca Verona Mihuleț), the first and previous exhibition, that is part of the ongoing platform “Regional Perspectives”, developed by the Osage Art Foundation. The author creates parallels between the two exhibitions and looks at some aspects of the current idea of the global South. One of the artists present in the show, Linda Lai, discusses issues of identity, historical narrative and the landscape of Hong Kong. This text is very important to the panorama of this book because it makes evident the point of view of an artist-researcher and certainly stands out from the other essays, all written by curators and art historians. Caterina Riva’s essay dialogues with the formats of art critic and literary chronicler. She writes about the exhibition from the perspective of someone who works in the visual arts field and also had the possibility of discussing the show personally with

me. On the other hand, she is also able to look at the works and share some impressions that put her again in the role of the audience.

Meanwhile, Solange Farkas’ contribution is the only one that is not attached explicitly to the exhibition. Director of Videobrasil – one of the first art festivals in the world dedicated exclusively to the global South – she reflects on the history of her institution and the collaborations within the South. In recent years, with her efforts, the event was able to create not only collaborations across Latin America but also with institutions in Africa. It seems important now to think about new bridges with this universe named as Asia. Closing the book, Charles Merewether analyses not only the exhibition but also the essay I prepared for the catalogue. With extensive experience as a curator, having worked in the South region of the globe, he points out some aspects present in the exhibition and relates it to his own experiences as someone that deals with the complexities of the relations between visual arts and as an example, the geographical idea of “East Europe”.

I hope that this book is able not only to inform the reader about this exhibition but, can also be seen as the fruit of years of research, dialogue and will to elaborate other ways to look at images, the past and ways to write narratives. I wish that these essays inspire artists, curators and researchers in general to also step out of their comfort zone and to propose new dialogues between regions – as the Osage Art Foundation has been doing in the last few years, by encouraging and making projects like this possible.

Raphael Fonseca

Curator of “The sun teaches us that history is not everything”

The sun teaches us that history is not everything

Raphael Fonseca

An Introduction

The year was 2017.

The president of the United States of America, Donald Trump, declared that he wishes to build a wall that divides his country from Mexico.

The Singapore Biennale titled "An Atlas of Mirrors" gathered works essentially about borders and geography.

Hong Kong already had 20 years since it went back to the Chinese administration after its long period under the British power.

Documenta was titled "Universes in Universe" and had one research area dedicated to the "Global South" named "South: A State of Mind".

Part of the Brazilian population went on the streets in public manifestations against the left-wing party. People wore green and yellow – a clear reference to the nationalistic manifestations during the military dictatorship period.

The Getty Foundation, in Los Angeles, promoted the event "Pacific Standard Time", where institutions of the city received dozens of exhibitions that established dialogue between the USA and the art made in different places of Latin America.

The movie "The Act of Killing", a re-enactment with those who were responsible for the mass killings of communists in Indonesia during the dictatorial government of Suharto, had its fifth anniversary of release.

The Museum of the Chinese Colony (Museo de la Colonia China) in Guatemala opened in memory of the migration from China to Central America during the 20th century.

Rogerio Duterte, president of the Philippines, admitted the murder of hundreds of people, supposedly involved in drug dealing in the islands due to the maintenance of the national order.

The singer M.I.A., born in London with of Sri Lankan origin, asked herself in a song: "Borders (what's up with that?) / Politics (what's up with that?) / Police shots (what's up with that?) / Identities (what's up with that?)".



Jumaldi Alfi | Mooi Indie #02 | Acrylic on canvas | 215 x 315 cm | 2012

Tropicalities

These words above were written as an introduction to an advanced version of the exhibition project "The sun teaches us that history is not everything", supported by the Osage Art Foundation since 2016. These notes on facts and political perspectives of different places of the globe were written in the heat of their events during 2017. Due to the realisation of the exhibition in 2018 and the subsequent publication of a catalogue, I adapted the verbs of the sentences to reflect them having happened. Much has occurred in international politics subsequent to these events.

From the point of view of the country where I was born and live, Brazil, those street demonstrations with people wearing green-and-yellow shirts and praising our military dictatorship period (1964-1985) took to the presidential victory of Jair Bolsonaro, an extreme right-wing, military and partisan supporter of positions that go against democratically acquired human rights over the last three decades in the country. The motto of his political campaign was "Brazil above everything, God above all," which

represented – consciously or not – both a religious takeover contrary to the Brazilian secular state (in our constitution of 1988), and a ghost of the Nazi motto “Deutschland über alles” (“Germany above all”).

What drives this discourse, and all those contained in the introduction, is a strong nationalism anchored in political stances already seen in totalitarian political systems. It is difficult not to remember some publications in the field of historical studies that analyse other moments in which the semantic field of words like migration, borders, nation, invasion, escape, refuge and identity were discursively triggered for the same purpose. I refer to the book by Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities* (1983), a key text on the analysis of mechanisms for the creation of new nationalisms.

The relation between the present and the past was always articulated by different political strategies that wanted to forge new geographical identities. A specialist in Southeast Asia, Anderson demonstrates in his book how nationalistic fictions were essential to define borders, establish commercial agreements and justify the bad relationship between neighbours. More than mentally imagining a specific community, the agents of culture created images that aimed at the masses and that could freeze essential convictions to the idea of nation. It's nationalism, this notion of collective belonging that exists since Antiquity that, for example, makes Donald Trump willing to “make America great again” or that justifies the murder of masses in the Philippines recently. On the other side, the attempts to complexify this concept taken up in curatorial proposals like Pacific Standard Time and the poetry of an artist like M.I.A.

The starting point for this curatorial project comes precisely from another moment of Brazilian nationalism in the 19th century, as opposed to the immigration of non-Western peoples. In 1850, the Eusebio de Queiroz Law prohibited the international trade of enslaved black people who arrived in the country through the Atlantic Ocean. The whole history of the region was based on black slavery as a labour force – from plantations to the white family private sphere. Once the law was published, alternatives to the workers had to be drawn.

One alternative was the possibility of the arrival of Chinese workers, something already seen in the colonies of other European empires throughout the Caribbean. Cultural differences and the fear of otherness led to a Chamber of Deputies session, full of racist speeches based

on recurrent eugenic theories in the 19th century.¹ In June 1890, the Brazilian government created a law prohibiting the entry of Asians and free Africans into Brazil and expressing the understanding that only the European labour force would be able to whiten Brazilian society. Here is a bit of the history of racism in Brazil.²

Learning about these facts on the history of immigration in Brazil caught my attention during my doctoral studies. In a common sense, whenever we refer to the Asian presence in Brazilian culture, we remember the Japanese immigration that happened systematically since 1908, with official support from the Japanese government.³ Predatory narratives – and even the histories of the Japanese in the country – tend to be eclipsed by other Brazilian racial narratives that quote Karl von Martius's famous text on the “theory of the three races”.

The ethnic constitution in Brazil, according to the author, would have occurred from the encounter between indigenous peoples, enslaved black peoples and Europeans who colonised the territory, especially the Portuguese.⁴ It is an argument made by a 19th-century German scientist Karl Friedrich Philipp von Martius⁵ whose works also owe much to the notion of eugenics and sum up both racial diversity and violent conflicts from the idea of mixing. Certainly, we should not try to find in this argumentation – in an anachronic way – the critical gaze that the present allows us but it calls to my attention that the intellectual production in the country sometimes still uses his theories more than a century and a half later.

These readings led me to a question: what is the place of the Asian peoples in the narratives about the identity and history of Brazil? Later, due to a series of curatorial research trips that I conducted through Central America and the Caribbean,⁶ the questioning was extended from the Brazilian territory to this gigantic region, which we call Latin America. Japanese immigration waves were important not only in Brazil, but also in Peru and Mexico. Similarly, Chinese presence in Latin America was most felt in countries such as Panama, Peru, Cuba, Venezuela, and the Dominican Republic. These stories, however, are told in a supporting manner in the official narratives of these countries; they are generally absent from History classes in basic education and still suffer prejudices like those pronounced during the 19th century.

Gradually I met Latin American artists of Chinese and Japanese ancestry based in countries like Brazil, Costa Rica, Peru, Guatemala, Argentina and

Mexico.⁷ The search for these poetics made known to me other curatorial projects also interested in this intersection between Asian and Latin American cultures. It is curious to note, however, that many exhibitions brought together descendants of specific nations – such as projects on Japanese artists in Brazil – but do not dwell on those artists who effectively construct and deconstruct notions of history, identity, and nationalism in their poetic.⁸ I decided, therefore, to focus my attention on those artists who, in addition to their family heritage were interested in questioning those relations that led to a non-identity belonging to the hegemonic narratives of their own countries.

In dialogue with the Osage Art Foundation, I learnt about the “Regional Perspectives” program and the exhibition previously curated by Anca Verona Mihulet and Patrick Flores, “South by Southeast”. As the name suggests, the program supports curatorial projects that put the production of art in different geographies in a critical perspective, always having as one of them the Asian continent. Mihulet and Flores, for example, connected artists from Southeast Asia with others from Central and Eastern Europe and sought points of contact and dissimilarity. Having made such research in the development of Latin America, what connections could be made with artists based in this extensive region called Asia? The answer, again, came by looking at the past.

The histories of Latin America, Hong Kong, Macau and Southeast Asia have a key concept in common: colonialism.⁹ Just as South America and Central America were colonized by Spain and Portugal, Hong Kong was a British colony, Macau a Portuguese territory, and the only country in Southeast Asia that had not been colonised was Thailand. According to Milton Osborne,¹⁰ Southeast Asia is a region that is often only considered during and after its colonization, but each of its present countries already had millennial cultures that exceeded in population quantity, some other places generally seen as central in Western culture. Even historical studies, therefore, sometimes use an orientalism that reduces the region to common historical factors and doesn’t shed light on its specificities – just like the creation of the idea of “Southeast Asia”.

When I researched the Asian Latin American artists, I was looking for narratives of immigration and diaspora; and when I started to research artists from different places in Southeast Asia, I found narratives that looked into colonialism. In this way, I thought that this would create a peculiar curatorial point of contact between Latin America and Asia,

based not on the same starting point, but rather along an intersection of different groups of interest.

Looking for a deepness of the research to be based not only on reading, but on the experience in loco, it was essential to travel to some countries in the region. In January 2017, I made a trip for about a month that began from Hong Kong and Macau, and later Singapore, Indonesia (Jakarta, Bandung and Yogyakarta) and the Philippines (Manila). All my readings about the histories of these places, my contact with the artists and their poetics gained new meaning after experiencing cities as different as Manila (Philippines) and Singapore (city-state). It was essential to visit not only art museums, but also, the museums of national history - how do these nations narrate their own past? Which of these countries have contemporary art museums and fine art collections? What are the interests of these countries’ private collectors of art? The economic and urban differences in these countries and especially those in institutions and infrastructure for the visual arts, quickly call attention and allow us to easily doubt any discourse that aims to homogenise the artistic practices of Southeast Asia.

The same can be said about the history of territories as close and spatially small as Hong Kong and Macau. In the same way, its historical settlers operated in a different way, the way in which even though both territories are administered by China today, they are different in different spheres. Only until we refer to “China” can we pursue the same cultural, linguistic and political unity.

It was essential to conclude that the use of an expression like “Southeast Asian art” is closer to fiction than fact. In the same way, other expressions commonly used in the contemporary art field like “Latin American art”, “African art”, “Chinese art” and “Arab art” show how the subjection of the artistic phenomena to a geography can help with studies, but can quickly become a problem. How to put the production of art in places with very different histories like Vietnam, Indonesia and Malaysia in the same box? How to equate the Japanese communities in Brazil, Peru and Mexico? The answer is simple: it is not possible to do it fairly. We can create areas of dialogue, but words can never resume the complexity of art, image and culture.

Even though we are on different sides of the globe, we are both part of the area between the “Tropics of Cancer and Capricorn”, with most of the countries here mentioned being below the Equator. In addition to our climatic and colonial similarities, we are part of the so-called Global

South, an expression that is increasingly in vogue in contemporary cultural studies and, consequently, in the thinking of contemporary art. Cuatehmóc Medina, an experienced Mexican curator who has acted within its sphere, wrote about this question precisely:

*After two decades of irruption of the periphery art alliance, and after the geographical and historical recomposition of the narrative of the history of modern and contemporary art, what new centrifugal forms emerge from the culture below the Equator line? What promises are contained in the task of re-evaluating the cultural genealogies of the South: the memory of dictatorships at the same time as the possible tropicalisations of conceptualism? What new fissures open in the illusion of absolute closeness from what is still distance? To what extent can artistic practice, globalised or locally effective, still be attributed to the decolonization project?*¹¹

The South – or, as I prefer to say, the tropics – has much to learn from itself.¹² There are many notions of tropic and tropicality within this vast area which we call tropical. Brazilian tropicality is not the same as that of the tropicality of the Philippines - but the fact that it was the result of the Portuguese invasion and the second of the Spanish invasion, both Iberian nations, made me feel a certain sense of home in Manila that I could not feel in any other places I visited in Southeast Asia. Travelling is necessary and establishing crossings – as proposed by this curatorship – as well. What we should keep in mind, however, is that the “Global South” is only a starting point that will only be valuable if we continue to doubt its classificatory condition and realise that it is in the difference that we are constituted.

Albert Camus and the sun

The title for this project comes from a quote and adaptation of a paragraph originally published by Albert Camus. Born in 1913, in Algeria, Camus became one of the biggest voices in the French literature in the first half of the 20th century. Born in a time when Algeria still was a French colony, Camus lived in Paris and followed part of the process of the Algerian independence, finished in 1962, only two years after his death. This information contributes to comprehend his poetic insistence around the sensation of being a “foreigner” (title of his most famous book published in 1942). We could affirm then that the author was the fruit of the encounter of colonial and post-colonial reflections around his own time.

In 1937, only with 22 years, Camus published his second book in Algeria

Betwixt and Between. The book has five short stories about people in situations of travelling, strangeness and solitude. Twenty years later, in 1958, already in France, Camus republished the book and wrote a preface. This text has a strong autobiographical tone, where he reflects on his childhood in Algeria and points to the differences he found living later in France. Remembering his poverty and experience that was closer to the landscape than to material world, Camus writes the following periods: “To correct my natural indifference, I was put in the midway between the misery and the sun. The misery prohibited me to believe that everything goes well under the sun and in history; the sun taught me that history isn’t everything. To change the life, yes, but not the world in which I did my divinity”.¹³

Misery, the colonial condition of Camus’ poor childhood in Algeria, couldn’t be apprehended separated from the sun, the landscape condition of his geographical localisation. Between there and here, instead of looking for an official history to justify his human condition, Camus opted for the power of fiction and wrote episodic stories. In the quote, he learned that not everything goes well under the sun but, at the same time, the obsession with a literal discourse from a historian also wouldn’t make sense when confronted with the monumentality of the sun.

This text by Camus met the central interest of this curatorial project: gathering artists that have interest in the elements of the present that touches on the historical aspects of the formation of national identities. While some of the artists refer to the state of being an “Asian” in places where the nationalistic discourses push toward the affirmation of “Latinity”; others observe how, in the present, it is still possible to see elements that came from the colonisation desired by European imperialism. In other words, it is possible to affirm that the artists that take part in this exhibition – each in its own way – are “artists-historians”.¹⁴

However, just like Camus affirms that he is closer to stories than to one history, this exhibition gathers artworks that take the same proposition. We, me and the artists, were looking for a more poetic, less literal and more experimental look at facts and images. We understood that the word “History” as a series of elements that can be folded, forgotten, reconstituted and juxtaposed for an artist to reach a formal result capable to invite the public to think about the present and political conflicts we deal with.

It is because of this curatorial interest that the quote to Camus was adapted. Instead of reading “The sun taught me that history isn’t

everything”, I opted for “The sun teaches us that history is not everything”. We take off the verb in the past and put it in the present; we extract the verb from the first person of singular and write in the plural. The learning is made in the contemporaneity and it is not only about one person but about dialogues with the public. The sun is always present – the star that makes Latin America globally known by its tropical climate to the Eurocentric thought is the same that gives light to the Asian tropics and made orientalism possible. Even with such different narratives, we continue under the same sun.



Luciana Miyuki | Housing | Installation with salt and water | Dimensions variable | 2009

Ways to fold history

Twenty-five artists occupied the Osage Art Foundation exhibition space in “The sun teaches us that history is not everything”. The large size of the floor that the institution occupies in Kwun Tong resembles a very broad corridor and, for the exhibition design, we chose not to create any great artificial intervention. One area of the exhibition was more dedicated to installations, objects and wall works, in which the lighting became essential. The other, more dedicated to video works and needed a darker environment. Both balconies were also occupied with site specific interventions.

No geographical or thematic division was established between artists; the public was invited to go through the space and perceive the dialogue between works placed side by side. The encounter with both Asian and Latin American artists was thus suggested - without initial separation and without creating new boundaries between “we” and “them”. A watchful eye would see lines of force in the display that were beyond the geographical belongings. There are many ways of doubling historical narratives in contemporary times, and it seems to me that this was the greatest contribution made by the project: to bring this diversity to the public and to realize that daily, in our minor acts, we are always reliving or exorcising the past. As our title reads, “history is not everything”, that is, it is a starting point that invites us to observe elements that escape its desire to rationalise and organise the world.

I would like to point out some of these dialogic ways of acting in the field of visual arts looking at the past perceived through the approach of some artists of the exhibition.

* Archival images - many of the guest artists work directly with archives.¹⁵ Rather than altering the initially researched images, they quote integrally their sources and insert them into new narrative structures. This is particularly visible since they all work with technical images - photography and audio-visual. Their gaze seems more focused on the re-reading of great historical narratives. While André Terayama used a photograph of the great Japanese photographer Haruo Ohara, Yudi Rafael developed a work based on a survey of the visual culture developed in Brazil and the United States about the descendants of Asians. Nguyen Trinh Thi and Linda Lai built works made from excerpts of other films that said a lot about the collective imagination of Vietnam and Hong Kong. Archives, film libraries, art collections and libraries are some of the areas explored by this line of research.

* Tradition, appropriation and recoding – in a parallel but different way, some artists, presented in the project, did not only quote a specific image or formal element but subverted it through interventions that say a lot about political statements / politics and about the weight of updating the past in the present.¹⁶ A good example is the way Norberto Roldan juxtaposes three-dimensional sculptures with a religious flag on the side that refer to political conflicts in the Philippines. There are many layers of association there. Likewise, Kent Chan’s proposition, a video installation around the first exhibition of Singaporean art outside

Singapore, in London. The letters are on the table and the artist rewrites the past in the way that interests him. Similarly, focusing on sound and its absence, Mark Salvatus calls popular musical groups from the Philippines and Melati Suryodarmo uses the music of a famous singer from West Sulawesi, Indonesia. Finally, other artists use an image or precise material culture: Chang Chi Chai and her research on the kites of Chinese origin in Brazil; Eric Fok and the colonial maps of Macau; Esvin Alarcón Lam and the commemorative arch made by the Chinese colony in Guatemala; Tromarama and the disappearance of a Dutch colonial building; and on one of the balconies of Osage, Shinpei Takeda and the floorplans of ships that brought Japanese immigrants to Latin America. His drawings are composed of the immigrants' logbooks and, over time, they will disappear from the surface of the balcony floor, just like any image will disappear in the course of history.

* Microhistory – another series of artists seems more dedicated to the act of listening; their researches are aimed at a one-to-one exchange and, from there, they reconstitute the memory of a person or a small community.¹⁷ David Zink Yi films generations of Chinese who immigrated to Peru and talk about the spices brought back and forth. To cook is to remember. A good example of this culinary transit is the performance by Shima, held at the opening. As an Okinawan immigrant family and owner of restaurants in São Paulo, cooking something “typically Japanese” is putting together ingredients made in Brazil but catalogued so. Recipes go from generation to generation and the secrets need to be kept. Also, in the field of video, FX Harsono runs a documentary on Indonesian Christian schools and the multiple layers of otherness – a Dutch teaching supposedly Indonesian children, but whom, like himself, had Chinese ancestry. Miho Hagino and Taro Zorrilla have been conducting long researches with immigrants and Japanese descendants in Mexico. How to express the feeling of missing a place with words? How to relate to a place you have never visited, when you are Nisei or Sansei? The video installation of Nguyen Trinh Thi's – is also based on an interview with a Vietnamese who immigrated to Hong Kong and opened a vinyl record store – could also be at that intersection.

* Fictions of identity - notions of identity and history can always be fictions. Our bodies enter and leave geographical spaces exerting different forces of attraction and repulsion, belonging and estrangement.¹⁸ For some artists, therefore, more than affirming or recovering documental histories, it is important to follow in the field of fiction, confusion and lack of literality. Their works are more open to multiple readings and were essential in this

project because of the polysemic character. It is necessary, I think, to still believe in the mystery of images. The literary text is essential for Juliana Kase and Sandra Nakamura. The former makes a super 8 film in Japan and inserts on the image a haikai poetry, while the latter investigates the songs of the native peoples of the islands of Hong Kong and projects them in the space like shadows.

The exploration of three-dimensionality as a place of estrangement is important for the other artists seen in these keywords. Daniel Lie and João Ó operate with organic materials and which are seen as traditional — the bamboo is folded in the case of the second and becomes masts in the case of the first in his occupation of one of the balconies of the Osage. When using a collection of fossils from Madagascar already present in the foundation, Lie casts a glance over the passage of time. On the other hand, Mimian Hsu, Mella Jaarsma, Jonas Arrabal and Tang Kwok-Hin use more industrial objects. Each sleigh bell used by Hsu is a reference to a day of disappearance of her grandfather in Taiwan; each newspaper that fills the clothes made with plastic cassava bags from Jaarsma's work is a reminder of the articles that bombard us about migratory flows. To look at the Japanese side of his family who always dealt with salt production in Brazil, Arrabal proposed an installation with water gathered in Hong Kong and watched its daily evaporation. Tang preferred to perform an act within his video installation where the colours of the flags of China and Hong Kong are ghostly echoed. The carpet fixed to one of its bed structures reads “welcome”, but to what extent has this return to China been effectively welcomed by his generation?

These brief paragraphs and approximations of the various aspects of the exhibited works are patchworks — that is, they are a way of creating dialogues that are not inert. Several of the artists invited here can have their works read through these four lines of force. It is an interpretive exercise that encompasses both my curatorial, critical and art historical practice, and especially the formation of my gaze as a public. Images escape from our words; what would we become if they were not greater than our attempts to verbalise them? Just as I learnt from this project that history is not everything, I am more and more sure that words, fortunately, are not everything either.

It is in my iconophily —not only mine, but of many contemporary visual cultures—that I find the desire and strength to continue thinking of new ways to enable ephemeral encounters between artists and images that

unfold histories and stories towards the infinite. Because, as Chimamanda Adichie said in a conference, “every story must be told, and we need many stories about the same places”:

Stories matter. Many stories matter. Stories have been used to dispossess and to malign, but stories can also be used to empower and to humanise. Stories can break the dignity of a people, but stories can also repair that broken dignity. The American writer Alice Walker wrote this about her Southern relatives who had moved to the North. She introduced them to a book about the Southern life that they had left behind. ‘They sat around, reading the book themselves, listening to me read the book, and a kind of paradise was regained’. I would like to end with this thought: when we reject a single story, when we realize that there is never a single story about any place, we gain a kind of paradise.¹⁹

-
- 1 “Indeed, in the parliamentary debate of 1857, concerning Chinese immigration, there was a revealing discussion of the impact of cultural constraints on the new population and labour policy. In the lower house, a deputy stated: ‘When we sought to smash our civilization from African barbarism, [we are] going to colonize the Empire with the slothful Asian, a slave to routine and superstition.’ Responding to the deputy, the Minister of the Empire, Couto Ferraz, the future viscount of Bom Retiro, explains the reasons that, in his view, made the Chinese less compromising: ‘Chim does not leave his country, but with the purpose of acquiring some money, to form a small fortune, and always with the fixed idea and with the express condition of returning to their country after three, four or five years ... the government had never had the idea of wanting to increase the Brazilian population by similar way” in ALENCASTRO, Luiz Felipe de & RENAUX, Maria Luiza. “Caras e modos dos migrantes e imigrantes” in Luiz Felipe Alencastro, *História da vida privada no Brasil – Império: a corte e a modernidade nacional* (São Paulo: Companhia das Letras, 1999), p. 296.
 - 2 “First article: It is totally free the entry into the ports of the Republic of individuals who are valid and fit for work, who are not subject to the criminal action of their country, excepted the native of Asia or Africa, who may only be authorized by the admitted in accordance with the conditions then stipulated”. National Decree of June 28, 1890. The law was repealed two years later, in 1892.
 - 3 Jeffrey Lesser, *A Discontented Diaspora: Japanese Brazilians and the Meanings of Ethnic Militancy, 1960-1980* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2007).
 - 4 “Anyone who is in charge of writing the History of Brazil, a country that promises so much, should never lose sight of the elements that contributed to the development of man. But these elements are of a very diverse nature, and for the formation of man in particular there are three races, namely: the copper colour or American, the white or Caucasian, and finally the black or Ethiopian. From the encounter, the mixture, the mutual relations and changes of these three races, the present population was formed, whose history therefore has a very particular character. It may be said that each of the human races, according to its innate nature, competes according to the circumstances under which it lives and develops, a characteristic and historical movement. Therefore, seeing us a new people born and developing from the meeting and contact of so different human races, we can advance that its history should develop according to a particular law of the diagonal forces” in VON MARTIUS, Karl Friedrich Philipp. “Como se deve escrever a história do Brasil” in Lília Schwarcz and Adriano Pedrosa, *Histórias mestiças: antologia de textos* (Rio de Janeiro: Cobogó, 2014), p. 75.
 - 5 Karl Friedrich Philipp von Martius, *How one should write the history of Brazil* (1845).

- 6 Due to the research for the X Mercosul Biennial, I travelled in 2015 to Costa Rica, El Salvador and Guatemala (Central America); later I visited Puerto Rico, Cuba, Jamaica and Panama (Caribbean).
- 7 I would like to refer to some of the artists with whom I exchanged emails, visions and portfolios in preparation for this project. Unfortunately, their works could not be included in the exhibition due to scheduling, physical space or even dialogue with other works already selected. In any case, their works deserve reference and attention. Thanks to Lumi Kataoka and Maximiliano Matayoshi (Argentina); Ana Tomimori, Luciana Miyuki, Miguel Chikaoka and Yukie Horie (Brazil); Ignacio Wong (Chile); Erika Nakasone (Peru) and Yudi Yudoyoko (Uruguay).
- 8 I am thinking, for example, about the exhibition “Olhar InComum: Japão revisitado” [“UnCommon look: Japan revisited”] curated by Michiko Okano at the Oscar Niemeyer Museum, in Curitiba, Brazil. The show had 21 artists and all of them came from Japanese families. On the other hand, most of their works didn’t have relations with any reflection on “Japanese culture” so the only criteria were their genealogy. Pointing to the same direction, we could also highlight recent projects like “Transpacific Borderlands: the Art of Japanese Diaspora in Lima, Los Angeles, Mexico City and São Paulo” at the Japanese American National Museum (2017); “Circles and Circuits: History and the Art of the Chinese Caribbean Diaspora”, part 1 at California African American Museum and part 2 at the Chinese American Museum (2017); and “Relational Undercurrents: Contemporary Art of the Caribbean Archipelago” at the Museum of Latin American Art (2017). All these projects were funded by Getty Foundation and took part in the 2017’s edition of Pacific Standard Time.
- 9 I would like to thank Alfredo & Isabel Aquilizan, Alfredo Esquillo, Gaston Damag, Jigger Cruz, Jose Legaspi, Jose Tence Ruiz, Lani Maestro, Martha Atienza, Pow Martinez, Riel Hilario, Stephanie Syjuco, Tatong Torres, Yason Banal (Philippines); Sin Tung Ho (Hong Kong); Bagus Pandega, Eku Nugroho, Handi Wirman Saputra, Hestu Stu Legi, Irwan Ahmett, Jompert Kuswidananto, Jumaldi Alfi, Maharani Mancanagara, Reza Afisina (Indonesia); Alice Kok, Lai Sio Kit, Nick Tai, Peng Yun (Macau); Nge Lay (Myanmar); Lee Wen (Singapore); Tiffany Chung, Tran Luong (Vietnam).
- 10 Milton Osborne, *Southeast Asia: An Introductory History* (Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 2016).
- 11 Cuauhtemóç MEDINA, “Sul, sul, sul, sul...” in Alicha Imhoff and Kantura Quirós, *Géoesthétique* (Cleront Ferrand: ESCM, 2012), p. 120.
- 12 It is important to remember recent projects that are based in the same geopolitical concept. In Brazil, the biennial Videobrasil is the oldest one dedicated to the topic. Crated in 1983 as a festival, in 1991 it became an association and since then, biennially, it is one of the biggest world events dedicated only to artists from the Global South, receiving artists from all continents. I would like also to quote “South as a state of mind”, a Greek magazine that before the opening of the last documenta (2017), dedicated four editions to the art and culture related to the philosophical ideas of “South”.
- 13 Albert Camus, *O óbvio e o obtuso* (Rio de Janeiro: Record, 1995), p. 18.
- 14 Miguel A. Hernández-Navarro, *Materializar el pasado – el artista como historiador (benjaminiano)* (Murcia: Editorial Micromegas, 2012).
- 15 Hal Foster, “An Archival Impulse,” *October*, Vol. 110 (Autumn, 2004), pp. 3-22.
- 16 Hal Foster, *Recodings: Art, Spectacle, Cultural Politics*, New York: The New Press, 1998. Aby Warburg’s concept of pathosformel and its use related to classical Western art can be helpful in this field of interpretation.
- 17 The concept of “microhistory” was much developed by the Italian historian Carlo Ginzburg in books like *The Cheese and the Worms: the Cosmos of Sixteenth Century Miller* published for the first time in 1976.
- 18 Stuart Hall, *Representation: Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices* (Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, 1999).
- 19 Conference by Chimamanda Adichie proffered at the TED Global 2009. This quote comes from the final two minutes of her talk. Chimamanda Adichie, “The Danger of a Single Story”, filmed July 2009 at TEDGlobal 2009, https://www.ted.com/talks/chimamanda_adichie_the_danger_of_a_single_story.



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Jonas Arrabal

The most important elements in my research are issues related to the notions of time and the possibility of some things to disappear and others to emerge. In other words, I am interested in the notion of impermanence. To make the action of time visible is one of my poetic operations: to clean wastelands, to try to empty the ocean and to transform the water in salt – these are some of the images proposed to think about movements of transition, continuous disappearance, transformation of the reality, the creation of new spaces and the opening to the contact of many temporalities at the same time (present, past and future). Memory, displacement and instability are some of the research's keywords. Meanwhile, the acts of digging, ruining, turning and observing are some of its main verbs. To collapse is something inexorable.

Jonas Arrabal was born in Cabo Frio, one of the first places in Brazil to receive Japanese immigrants who worked in the salt ponds at the beginning of the 20th century. He is interested in the relations between fiction, writing and creating images, and in this installation, the artist uses sea water to fill two acrylic trays. The spotlights here serve as the sun, while the air conditioner represents the wind. Little by little, the water evaporates, and the public can see the drawing made by the action of the salt. Regularly, one of the trays is refilled with water. On a TV screen, a video produced at Lei Yue Mun in Hong Kong, shows the artist collecting water and establishing a link between the water shown in the installation and the ocean that surrounds the island.

Jonas Arrabal | If I could re-enact stories of my ancestors | Video installation with acrylic trays and salt from the Hong Kong sea | Dimensions variable | 2018



Chang Chi Chai



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My comprehension of the time, places, passages, exile and loneliness, in the crossing and contaminations of other cultures, find nothing but a lack of measurement. This lack or unmeasurement is an opening for something that escapes any delimitation. Having started my artistic career as a painter, I've been opening my investigations to other media like video, installations and urban interventions in the landscape. Almost always, I have continued to be very interested in incorporating different cultural signs (including Chinese ones) and natural elements. My recent works are based on the ideas of borders – physical, cultural, political and symbolic but, always to be transgressed or transcended by art. These are transgressions that do not promote the total and empty community of the global market yet they do make us reflect on the simple life and existence of many worlds in the world.

Born in Taiwan and being a daughter of Chinese parents, the artist migrated with her family to Rio de Janeiro when she was a child. As a researcher of the relations between landscape and image, this work is a video that documents an event in view of Rio de Janeiro's Sugar Loaf. She saw a group of people flying kites painted with the landscape of Hong Kong. Another event would happen later in Hong Kong when she saw kites flying, painted with the landscape of the Sugar Loaf. Kites were invented in China and have had many uses in their long history – from military use to their use as forms of simple leisure for children. Chang is interested in this transition between the origin territory of the kites and Brazil, just like her own biography. The similar topographies of Hong Kong and Rio de Janeiro also contribute to the relations between painted image and seen landscape.

Chang Chi Chai | Birds send you what my eyes see
| Video | 4mins 14secs | 2018

Kent Chan

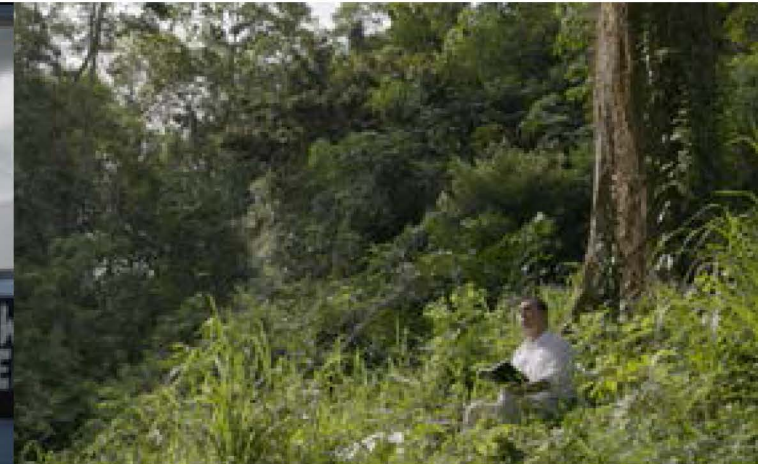
Addressing the relationship between moving images and the contemporary city, my work often results in films and installations that merge text and time-based media. Lately, my interest is focused on the symbolic and political aspects of the tropical imagination, regarding the equatorial vegetation as a site generative of alternative aesthetics and narratives.

Kent Chan works mainly with video and installations that also use digital images, text and photography. He is interested in episodes that constitute a Singaporean identity and the relation of the island with its colonial heritage. In this work, he fictionalises the stories of Ho Kok Hoe, chairman of the Singapore Art Society and was responsible for the first group exhibition of Singaporean artists in London in 1955. Ho travelled to England with more than a hundred of paintings that somehow depicted the tropicality of Southeast Asia. The artist is interested in this transit of images and stereotypes about Singapore and Asia both as an example of issues of self-representation and also as a first effort to create a narrative about art history in Singapore.



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Kent Chan | Seni, act II | Video installation with 3d printed objects | Dimensions variable | 2018

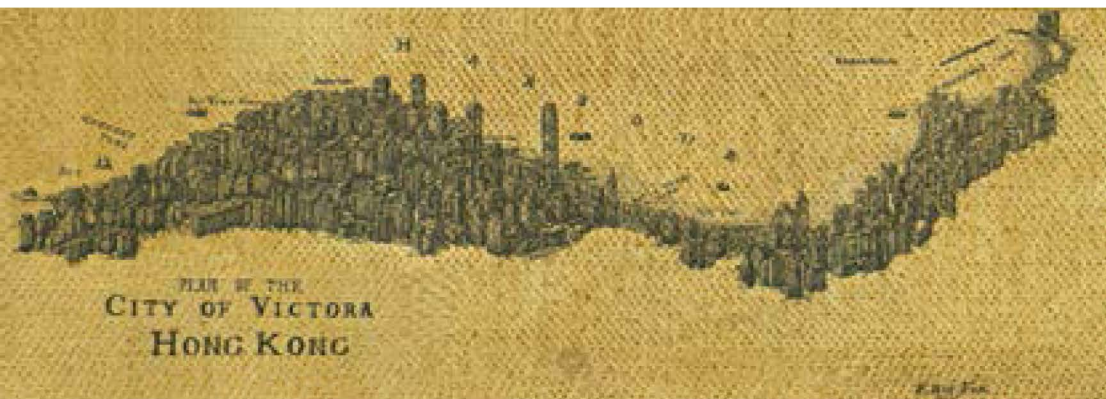


Eric Fok

A map is a result of human exploration in the world. One of my works about a map of the Far East, (Asia) was drawn according to the travel notes of the travellers, explorers and missionaries during the Great Voyages period. Drawing on the experience of predecessors, I tried to reconstruct an oriental world into the role of Westerners of that time and to go back to that period. Urban modernization and reclamation, among other kinds of human influences on the natural landscape, resulted in a constant reshaping of the topography. Nowadays, Hong Kong and Macau live in a post-colonial period. Each of the cities have different positions and points of view on the transfer of political power. Before the community has reached a consensus, discussions on these issues and even social movements among the people are inevitable. Regarding the social movements in recent years, I constantly think and search for the reasons behind. It seems that everyone's perception of right or wrong depends on his or her own values and dualistic thinking which is not applicable today. The present stage that we are living now will be just a transitional period in History. When we look at the artworks of the 1980s and 1990s in Hong Kong and Macau, it is not hard to find the elements regarding worries surrounding the transfer of political power and hints of a wave of mass migration. Everyone wants to search for his or her paradise in their own mind, and I also, depicted my very own Garden of Eden through the creation of my artworks.

Eric Fok's research takes cartography as a starting point. After years of study on how the maps were created during the Portuguese colonial period in the territory of Macau, Fok got to a point of precision in his drawing that emulates perfectly the techniques used by the cartographers during the Renaissance. He then started to create maps and compositions that somehow problematise the relation between Macau and capitalism from colonial times to the contemporary period. Past, present and future are all mixed in the same image and, viewers would notice the ferocious spread of capitalism seen in the casinos in Macau had been already noticed in a different way since the earliest arrival of the Portuguese.

Eric Fok | 1841, 2014 | Ink on tea-dyed watercolour paper | set of 2 16 x 44 cm each | 2016 | Private Collection
 Eric Fok | 1582.3 | Ink on tea-dyed watercolour paper | 39x49cm | 2016 | Karin Weber Gallery
 Eric Fok | Paradise No.15.20 | Ink on tea-dyed watercolour paper | 19.5x27cm | 2015 | Private Collection



Miho Hagino & Taro Zorrilla

Those who were rocked in a bi-national cradle experienced a split origin and, at the same time, the co-existence of two nations. Whereas both bloods combine to form only one, the spirit - forged astride different cultures and even civilisations - searches day to day for an identity that, perhaps, will be impossible to find. These people experience a profound solitude, withstanding a constant alternation in their guts, between the denial and confirmation of two cultures, which are, at the same time, familiar and strange. Despite everything, cultures are well rooted and their profound influences remain. Even when we deny a culture, it lies beneath, latent, while the other manifests itself in order to later be denied. Over the years, both nuclei begin to inexorably sprout and bloom through family histories and anecdotes, through readings and art. Then the person finds a way to travel, both physically and in the imagination, to the land of his or her dreams.

Miho's work delves into the human being as a subject among the masses, focusing on the individual who has become "alienated" geographically, historically, physically, or due to identity and social context. Taro's research explores community behaviour and conscience; gathering together the values, knowledge, and dreams of the members of a group, his work recreates and reflects on the community ideal. He has focused on multicultural and multinational communities, particularly in relation to human migration habits.

The works show in the exhibition relate to the artists' "Japan project". They interviewed hundreds of Japanese immigrants and their descendants who came to Mexico during the 20th century. Through these dialogues, the artists grew to know themselves better, since they're both part of these same groups. Eleven phrases recounted in the video were selected and printed for the public to take away. Out of the context of the video and without a face to say it in front of us, they become symbols of memory and hope.

Miho Hagino & Taro Zorrilla | A country in memories |
Video and printed texts | 51mins 20secs | 2010



FX Harsono

FX Harsono is a seminal figure in the Indonesian contemporary art scene. Since his student days he has been an active critic of Indonesian politics, society and culture, always updating his artistic language to the current new social and cultural contexts. Harsono's own biography and family history are often the basis of his art, pointing at the disconcerting situation of minorities, the socially underprivileged against the backdrop of Indonesia's own history and political development. This intersection of the personal and the political is particularly evident in his most recent works. Furthermore, his oeuvre is a constant questioning and reflection of his own position as an artist within society. He deconstructs the concept of the self-portrait, interrogating the conventions of portraiture by deliberately obscuring one of the major components of a portrait, the face.

Part of a Chinese family that migrated to Indonesia when he was a child, Harsono is very interested in how the Chinese identity struggled between the Indonesian histories and the Dutch presence in that territory. In this video, the public follows his research about the Dutch-Indonesian education system and how the first generation of Chinese migrants had to deal with different layers of issues as children in public schools. The overlapping of idioms, names, cultures and beliefs spread between the students and the teachers is remembered by people that studied and worked in these schools in Indonesia.

Fx Harsono | Testimony | Video | 25mins 21secs | 2009



Mimian Hsu

Mimian Hsu is also Hsu Fung, a descendant of the Taiwanese immigrants of the 70's, who arrived due to the political relations that the Island of Formosa and Costa Rica had for over 60 years. Her life and work are linked to this process of cultural hybridisation and acculturation of the Chinese immigrants in the American continent. They are forced to integrate racially and culturally, among other elements, but all cross-dressed in certain operative western modalities. The work of Mimian Hsu is distinctive in the Costa Rican cultural production for having incorporated this knowledge. The autobiographic quality of this body of work goes further, from intimism out into an appeal towards questioning what identity is, and the significance of her place in the world. The proposal that the artist makes is the contenance of her 'cultural body' as a metaphor of the different transformations and obligations of the Asian migrant in the West. This is charged with a visual poetry that plays with the boundaries of being hybrid. Representation is also a central axis in her work, where she explores portraits of herself and also her family in non-figurative expressions. In this exploration, she has made portraits of her aunt in performances and most recently installation pieces as portraits of her grandfather.

Mimian Hsu is interested in language and how writing in the Western and Eastern worlds is inextricably attached to patterns of identity and culture. Her performances generally deal with repetition and long extended actions using banal objects. In this installation, she uses 25,934 tiny bells. The number of bells represents the number of the days since her grandfather disappeared during the Taiwan protests in February of 1947. Because of this fact, her family went to Costa Rica, where she was born. The bells, in Taiwanese culture, are generally attached to a child's body so their parents can control her/his movements. In this installation, the subtle sound of the bells relates to the silence of the disappearance that cracked her family.

Mimian Hsu | Hsu Zheng (version 1) | Installation with nylon and sleigh bells | Dimensions variable | 2018



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Mella Jaarsma

Indonesia is probably the country with the most extreme spectrum of sartorial coverings or clothing in the world. In the westernmost provinces of Indonesia, like Banda Aceh, bodies must be almost totally covered, according to the Sharia law. In the easternmost province Papua, people use little covering as many tribal people still wear penis sheaths or grass skirts. I look at these extremes in clothing as a uniqueness and cultural richness, which is unfortunately in decline due to many reasons. During the last almost twenty years I have been examining habits of clothing-related social issues. Our clothes are like a facade in which we can hide or appear, inhabit or vacate. I am interested as well in the human compulsion of "showing oneself" and "how do we look at others", as well as questioning "where do we position ourselves". I am interested in the politics of clothing. Especially during the last century, people used clothing as a state of control and have pushed others to change their clothing habits, with the aim that clothing is part of a policy to bring change in mentality; to "civilise" or be chaste, to adopt a religion, to restrict, but also to free, revolt, etc.

Mella Jaarsma is known for creating sculptures and installations that have a strong relation with the human body. The limits between fashion, cloth design and visual arts are blurred. In the work shown here, she explores the act of collecting and how it brings diverse meanings. The bags here look like plastic but are made with cassava. Inside them, there are different newspapers that can refer symbolically to some ideas of travelling, collecting and migrating. To bring something with you and to discard it in a sequential moment.

Mella Jaarsma | In ravel out | Mixed media installation and performative act at the opening of the show | Dimensions variable | 2018



Juliana Kase

Kase was born in Curitiba, Brazil and has a Japanese background. Perhaps the most important formation experience that can be highlighted for the interests of her artistic research is the fact that her Asian physical appearance does not correspond entirely to her cultural hybrid identity. So, since very early age, she realised the existence of a world of appearances which rapidly influences other's expectations and a subjective world, which she conceives as the core of art. This acknowledgement is central to her art practice and studies which privilege the internal procedures and the genesis structures of the objects and images. Her art practice identifies strongly with the aesthetic principles that guide the Japanese Noh theatre for which the goal lies behind the physical world. Kase seeks through different expressions, emphasise in analogic image reproduction processes, to establish encounters and to provoke relations of otherness.

Juliana Kase works mainly with engraving, drawing and photography. She is known for creating powerful black and white images that suggest open narratives to the viewer. In the exhibition, she shows a new work filmed during her recent residency in Japan, the place where her family came from. The image captures a specific moment seen in Tokyo but it could have been taken in any big city. With the use of text, she reflects poetically about what is the "here" and "there" and how the previous mental images she had about Japan did or did not fit her experience. Text and image come from different projectors and creates two different layers of information – the text never fits on the same frame of the moving image, just like our efforts to verbalise the experience of travelling are always different.

Juliana Kase | Exile everywhere | Video | 3mins 21secs | 2018



Linda Lai

My work addresses the politics of language and narrativity, grounded in a feminist sensibility that questions hierarchies and boundaries in art and culture. My artistic creation explores the role of sight and sound in historiographic experiments that take on questions of micro- and meta-narrativity. I also like to use different artistic mediums to turn art-making into criticism, history-writing, gaming, and voyages of discovery. As a teacher, my interests cover critical theory, experimental videography, contemporary and media art history and media archaeology.

Linda Lai works as a filmmaker and crosses the limits between fiction and documents while, mixing her personal archive and biography with material from other collections. In this project, she creates a group of works that refer to different aspects of the daily life and histories of Hong Kong. Using photography, archive video and maps, she quotes the history of the island and points to different possibilities of fiction. The sea has an essential place in this group of works. A map, a slide projection, an archive of monster movies, fish-eye lenses with views to images of the sea and a collection of songs heard by the artist since her childhood are some of the elements that comprise the installation. The act of collecting appears in different ways just as the media she uses contrast with one another.

Linda Lai | Ruminations: on HK'S (post) coloniality
| Mixed media | Dimensions variable | 2018

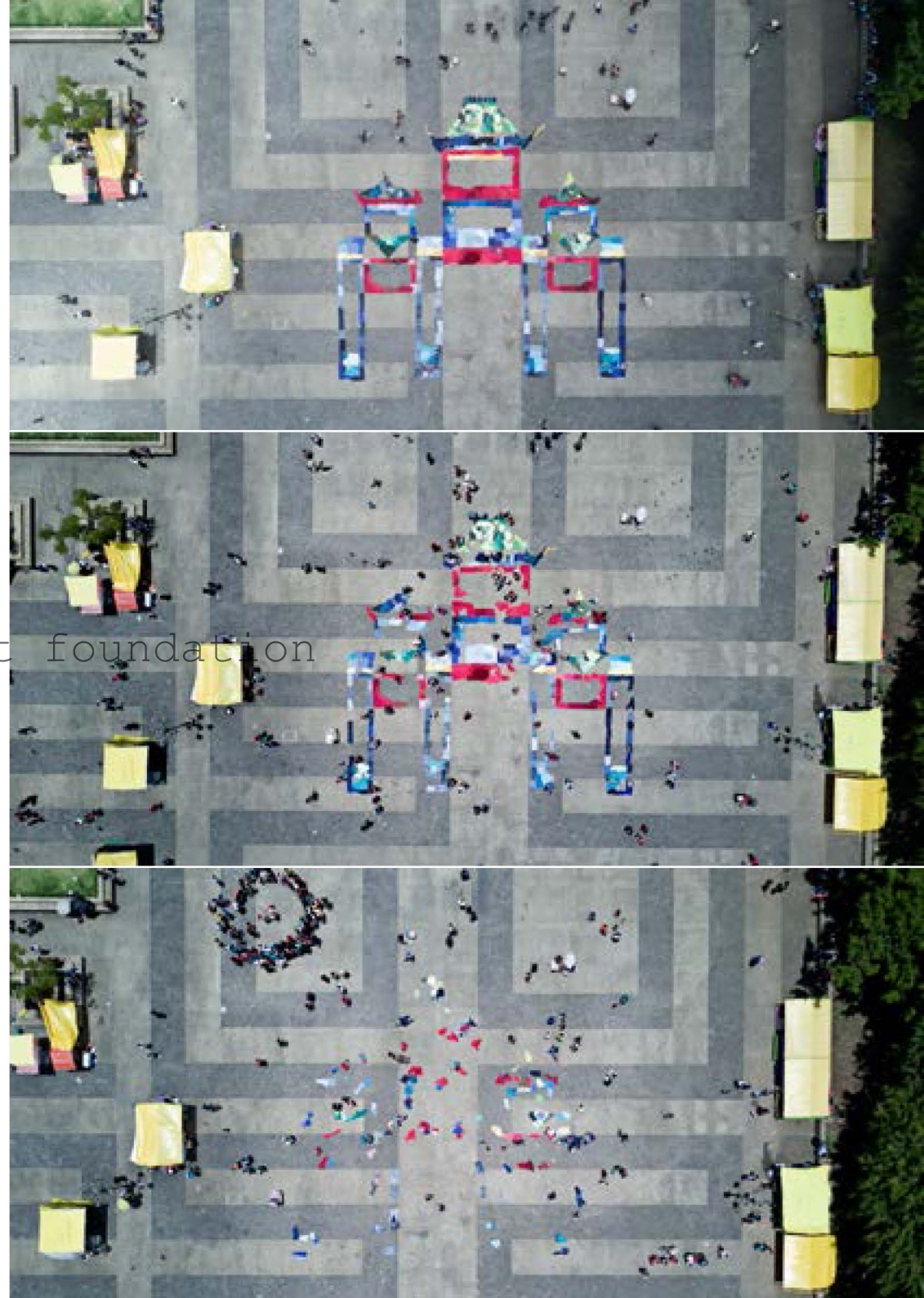


Esvin Alarcón Lam

Alarcón Lam works mostly between sculpture and installation but also, with video performance and public space intervention. He is interested in materiality in the context of global relationships, using such materials as residues from human displacements, social and political life while re-contextualizing them as assisted ready-mades. He explores the potential for contributing to rethink contemporary structures of space and time. He also works with identity related to his Chinese descent, tracking an almost lost history and using it as catalyst to link the personal and intimate life with the socio-cultural and public, and between certain historical moments with emotions. Examples include old and metallic barrels, rusted cots or parts from public transportation buses that were originally American Blue Bird School Buses, second-hand clothing that was produced in Asia — and even his own body — while swimming in a lagoon disguised as a dragon. His use of a dragon suggests we might be a sort of fantastic animals made of parts of others, imagined and vulnerable.

Lam is interested in how industrial objects suggest narratives between the past and the present. In this work, he shows the documentation of an event organised in the central square of the capital of Guatemala in 2017. In 1921, the Chinese colony built a Chinese arch to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the Independence of Central America. Destroyed in 1938, Lam quoted the monument on the ground of the square with clothes made in different parts of Asia. Passers-by could collect all the clothes they wanted, and the silhouette of the arch disappeared in minutes. During this act, many people asked about the history of the arch and made clear that the narratives of the Chinese migration to Guatemala need to be more studied and remembered in the country.

Esvin Alarcón Lam | The silk's route | Photograph |
3 panels 45 x 80 cm each | 2017



Daniel Lie

In my practice, time is the central pillar of reflection: from the oldest and affective memory – joining family and personal stories – until the time of things in the world, the period of a lifetime, and the duration of the states of the elements. Through installations and objects, using the things as they are, I base the work on concepts related to performance art - an art based on time, ephemerality and presence. To highlight these three instances, elements that have the time contained in themselves are set in the space as installations such as plants, rotting fruits and minerals. In my research, the gaze is facing tensions between science and religion, ancestry and present, death and life.

Daniel Lie's research is based in site specific projects. In this work, he uses rocks, crystals and petrified wood from Madagascar. He creates an ambiance with bamboo, bells and a strip of fabric that suggests different kinds of overlapping of cultures and temporalities in a non-literal way. He is particularly interested in researching the encounter between one part of his family that migrated from Indonesia to Brazil and the other side of his family that descends from the Dutch colonized Brazil in the 17th century. In this "love affair" that made possible his own life, the weight of history is seen in the weight of the materials used and their hundreds of million years old existence.

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Daniel Lie | Semarang and Garanhuns love affair | Mixed media installation | Dimensions variable | 2018

Sandra Nakamura

My practice has been influenced by artists whose work is deeply engaged with the most pressing issues of their respective generations, and who have taken activist roles by confronting uncomfortable situations with ideas, poetry and beauty. Among them are Yoko Ono's actions, objects and instructions; Felix Gonzalez-Torres's conceptual portraits; Gordon Matta Clark's absurd lots; and Lara Almarcegui's urban calculations. In this sense, I am interested in my work being read in relation to current issues and demonstrating that an artist's work is not only limited to an aesthetic and intellectual dimension but, that it also requires a social and political commitment.

For the past decade, my research has focused on the experience of the city and the observation of processes that imply the use of urban space as material and merchandise, as well as a repository of collective memory and public identity. Such processes have been contemplated from a poetic perspective to address the spatial, social and economic conditions that shape our environments. This results in works that, for example, deal with the acquisition of 1m2 of land in Spain, the sale of water lots in the San Francisco Bay during the Gold Rush, and the maritime conflict in Peru's southern border.

Sandra Nakamura's research deals with sculpture, installation and pieces thought for the public space. She frequently uses words in her works. In this project, she researched the so-called "salt water songs", the verses sang by the Tanka people that inhabited Hong Kong before the arrival of the British. These verses are recently an object of study and can still be found in the region of Tai-O, on Lantau Island. Two verses in Cantonese say: "You wouldn't be afraid of the sea if you persist in fishing / you wouldn't be afraid of the wind if you sail with the wind". Coming from an oral culture, the verses can be read more easily in their shadows projected on the wall of the gallery, avoiding the permanence of the words in a printed form.

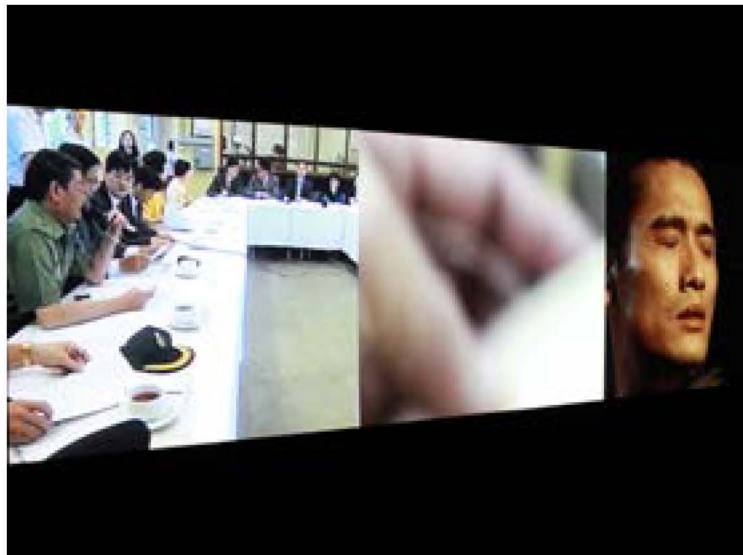
Sandra Nakamura | Don't be afraid of the wind | Laser cutted text on acrylic | 8 panels 25 x 25 cm each | 2018



Nguyen Trinh Thi

I think somehow I keep coming back to the issue of distance between myself and the subject/issues/realities/the world outside. I think to figure out the relationship between things important to me, ie. . the relationship between ourselves and the history/memories/the past; between the individual and the community; between objectivity and subjectivity etc. An important issue for me has been to figure out how to retain one's individuality while being part of a collective. As an artist, I also feel the tension of having seemingly contradictory desires – one is to engage/be engaged in the world/society and the other to disappear; to be able to be at once clear and decisive and, to be ambiguous, elusive, and indeterminate.

In making my works, I always feel like being at once an outsider and an insider. And my works coming out of Vietnam somehow always return to the issue of the suppressed voice and censorship. Power structures are a theme that I keep coming back to in my work. As an artist working with images, I also try to resist the power of the image.



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Nguyen Trinh Thi works mainly with cinema and documentaries. This work has Paul Au, owner of the record store Vinyl Hero in Hong Kong as a main character. The video installation has three channels of images: one of an interview the artist made, another of documentaries about Vietnam, and a third with Hong Kong movies with Tony Leung Ka-fai. A four-channel audio also follows each of the three tracks with an additional track of records played in Au's store. In a non-linear way, Thi's work deals with the process of migration from Vietnam to Hong Kong due to the military power and reflections on the Vietnam War. Even with all this violence around, music was always Au's biggest passion.

Nguyen Trinh Thi | Everyday | Video | 15mins 17secs | 2018



João Ó

As an architect and artist, I approach my installation and photographic practice from the angle of spatial composition and visual utility, negotiating personal identities in a post-colonial space through urbanism and environmental engineering. I like to refer to the creative side of my studio practice with the label "Buildings Are Not Enough," a dispassionate claim appearing to suggest that the nominally independent territory of art could in some way constitute a spatial supplement for the more utilitarian – albeit less necessary – field of construction-oriented architectural design. Adjacent to this rhetorical claim, which defines how one might productively situate art and architecture within my practice, there is a political claim relating to the status of Macau and the Pearl River Delta as sites for this discussion. As has been well established, the Pearl River Delta mega-city, stretching from the twin corners of Macau/ Zhuhai and Hong Kong/ Shenzhen through Foshan and Dongguan to the apex of Guangzhou, once provided a fertile ground for experimental discourses of future urbanism. For a variety of reasons, however, in the intervening years, this sense of energy in bridging art and architecture has dissipated, particularly in the mainland portions of the region. Macau and Hong Kong seem to represent the last enclaves of a once-thriving conversation.

Living in Macau for a decade, João Ó's work highlights points of contact between the East and the West, especially regarding the development of architecture. This piece made of bamboo depicts a "black tulip" – the same nickname given to the first map of Asia made by the Italian, Matteo Ricci in 1584). To depict this black tulip (a biologically non-existent flower), the artist gathered different Möbius strips and attached them to a rotating machine. The bamboo structure spins slowly in the space and invites the public's non-literal gaze. This blend of Western geometry and the local tradition of working with bamboo in a public space serves as a reflection about otherness and the possibilities of trans-geographical dialogue.

João Ó | Model for the impossible black tulip | Bamboo sculpture | 120 cm diameter | 2015



Yudi Rafael

My work engages with and interrogates archival material by appropriating images and texts of different sources, to be then rearranged. This then raises questions related to processes of racialisation and the subjects of representation, cultural identity and memory, within the perspective of Asian diasporas in Brazil. I am interested, amongst other things, in the articulation of counter-hegemonic narratives and the negotiation of meaning through culture. By working with the form of postcards, posters and other kinds of publication, I want my artwork to be able to circulate and to engage different publics in different ways and contexts, beyond the space of art exhibitions.

Besides being an artist, Yudi Rafael also works as a curator and writer interested in visual and cultural studies. His research deals mainly with the stereotyped place that the Asian Latin American and the Asian American communities occupied in Brazil and the United States. For this project, he created a new piece that comprises three separate vocabularies of images. Each of the three versions of poster is available for the public to take away and each suggests new networks of relations between images and demonstrates different kinds of prejudice around Asian people. One of the posters deals with images of Brazil and contemporary culture; the second deals with 19th century images; and the third deals more with the United States culture.

Yudi Rafael | Board #1 ; Board #2; Board #3 | Printed poster | 3 panels 84 x 59.4 cm each | 2018



Norberto Roldan

I make work that directly or indirectly, relates to religious belief systems, local and global wars, politics, history, contemporary culture and family history. I often problematise how our collective Christian memory and religious practices have come into play in the Filipino class struggle. The Philippines is beset with a very wide disparity between the rich and the poor, with 40% of our rural population living at a poverty level. Middle class families and the more affluent ones in the rural Province of Capiz, where I was born and raised, have always made use of their connection with the local church's hierarchy to gain additional trappings of "power", "invincibility", and "nobility". This illusion separates them from the herd of ordinary masses. These families take pride in having family members who become priests, nuns, and "knights" of some order, creating an impression of impregnable loyalty to the Catholic church. During my teenage years in Capiz, my brother kept a select company of friends called the Moonshadows. This elite group of boys grew up under the fantasised and imagined shadow of power, invincibility and nobility.

Norberto Roldan's research deals with appropriation of religious images and the creation of new altars and meaning to the Catholic iconography found in the histories of the Philippines. In this work, he refers to two important organisations that were essential to the beginning of the independence of the country: Katipunan, a secret revolutionary society, and La Liga Filipina, a progressive organisation. Both emerged in the end of the 19th century. In contrast to the textile piece, roots and religious images seem to suggest a juxtaposition of revolution and destruction, colonialism and the will of change.



Norberto Roldan |
Katipunan church of the
revolution | Mixed media
installation | Dimensions
variable | 2018



Mark Salvatus

Calling my overall artistic practice, "Salvage Projects" is based on the word "salvage" ("save" or "rescue") which is also the meaning of my surname. I deal with the debris of everyday politics living in the city, remnants of the blurred history of the nation and its complicated narratives and the fragments of the constant movements that I am confronting and experiencing. Working across various disciplines and media I try to build direct and indirect engagements using objects, photography, videos, installations and participatory projects presenting different outcomes of energies, meanings and experiences.

Mark Salvatus works with a variety of media like video, photography, installation, appropriation and street art. His work here relates to a group of drummers called Tamboleros de Tondo, a group of musicians from the district of Tondo, in Manila. They are known for playing in parties around the town. Tondo is an area that played an important part in the history of the Philippines since ancient times. In the 20th century, after the independence of the country, it was promised to become a new city, but this never happened. What is left there are the voices, the music and the energy of a group of people that struggles with political silence.



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Mark Salvatus | Silent empire | Video | 30mins 13secs | 2018



Shima

More and more, I believe in art as a pure form, that transits several areas of knowledge, bringing together disciplines and establishing different forms in time. Performance art is my main medium of research for the creation of works with action, experience and process analysis as the basis of my work in recent years. I deconstruct ordinary and everyday practices and study the traditional schemes of doing. I see myself as a hunter of contradictions: I identify in failure and error, the power to review the object of study and to find alternatives to amplify it, to remake it, to improve it and to understand it.

Being attentive to the processes allows me to travel through different medias: in gastronomy (as a chef), in cinema (direction, direction of art, photography, costumes, makeup and performance), and in visual arts (installation, photography, engraving, sculpture, video and performance).

I like to work with the goal of constructing sensory apparatuses to gauge/feel/ think/reflect on current times, which can materialise as actions, as objects, as consumables and instruments of art for consciousness.

Some of my recurring themes: factors of identity and belonging; imaginary and imaginary aspects of contemporary everyday life; (how) to be in the world; the permanent state of crisis.

The artist's family came from the Japanese island of Okinawa to Brazil in the mid-20th century. With them they brought a series of recipes that were passed down and taught from generation to generation. The relation of cooking with Shima's family with is close; they even have a restaurant where they cook supposedly traditional Japanese dishes. An interesting fact is that some of the ingredients used in the recipes – sold in Brazil as "traditional Japanese food" – are actually made with Brazilian goods. The relation between food and identity is blurred and the sense of belonging is more a matter of discourse and belief than something organic. At the opening of the exhibition, Shima cooked for the public a recipe of yakisoba, a way of preparing Japanese noodles that is very closely associated with Japanese cuisine in Brazil. Some of the ingredients – like the noodles and the soy sauce – were brought from Brazil. The public could taste the dish and talk to him and learn a little bit more about familiar traditions and nationalistic wills that keep us attached to how we look at food.

Shima | The time to come | Ephemeral Act (cooking) | Duration variable | 2018



Melati Suryodarmo

I am interested in the psychological and physical agitations that may be from the self or the world but somehow result in lasting change in an individual. This belief in change or growth through bodily action belies my early induction in meditation, which I continue to practise. The body is the home for memories and the self, rather than the individual itself, and the body's system. The way the body translates internal and external ideas enriches the attitude and thoughts of the self.

I draw inspiration from my real experiences in the world. The path of history informs my perception of the everyday and the now. My works often reflect the process that lead to current events, be it political, global or highly personal. In my abstracted gestures and poetical acts, the presence of each work is brought to a concentrated level of intensity. In abstracting these acts from their common context, they are made to correspond with new associations and sometimes identify radically with different meanings. The work's abstract narrative throws a spotlight on the audience's bodily response. This often results in a level of factual absurdity in the work, which is acknowledged and welcomed.

Melati Suryodarmo's research deals mainly with how the body can activate different objects to create narratives. She works as a performer and with photography and video. In the work shown here, we see a combination of a video and the vocal performance of Ma Cammana, a female maestro from West Sulawesi, Indonesia. She sings in Mandar, the language spoken by the Mandarase, an ethnic group found in this region that are courageous sailors. Historically, they sailed and reached Australia, Pacific Islands and Malay lands. Loving, sailing, singing and missing others all come together in this work.

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Melati Suryodarmo | Lovers across the sea | Video | 6mins 57secs | 2013



Shinpei Takeda

My work has always focused around memories and narratives as I am fascinated by countless stories behind an object, a site, a word, or even an idea. Using various mediums, I am always trying to find ways to reveal these stories in a way that our presence makes sensible, thus allowing ourselves to surrender to something more profound. Art, for me, has this potential to transport us beyond space and time, and thus it always enables me to experiment with connections of memories and ideas beyond time and space.

I make my work because I believe that art can be a gateway for a dialogue. With its potential to transform ourselves to a different outlook on life, it allows for a dialogue, whether it is within oneself or between different people. The self and collective negotiations between contradicting factors of our humanities are, ultimately, what I try to propose throughout my work.

Shinpei Takeda's biography is a mix of cosmopolitan elements: born in Japan, he has lived between Mexico and Germany since he was a child. He works mainly with installations and documentary videos. In recent years, he has researched the migration of people from Japan to Mexico due to the Second World War. In this site-specific work, he paints onto the ground a blueprint of the Argentina Maru, one of the main ships that were used to transport Japanese people to Latin America. The phrases written inside the silhouette of the image are taken from different diaries of the migrants that were leaving Japan. These recount different approaches to their native culture and their expectations about the place they were going to.

Shinpei Takeda | A blueprint for emigration/immigration | Text painting site specific installation | Site specific | 2018



Tang Kwok-Hin

To observe, to experience, to verify, I integrate myself with a dependent originating, arising and ending of all things, to demonstrate the rhythm of minds fading in and fading out.

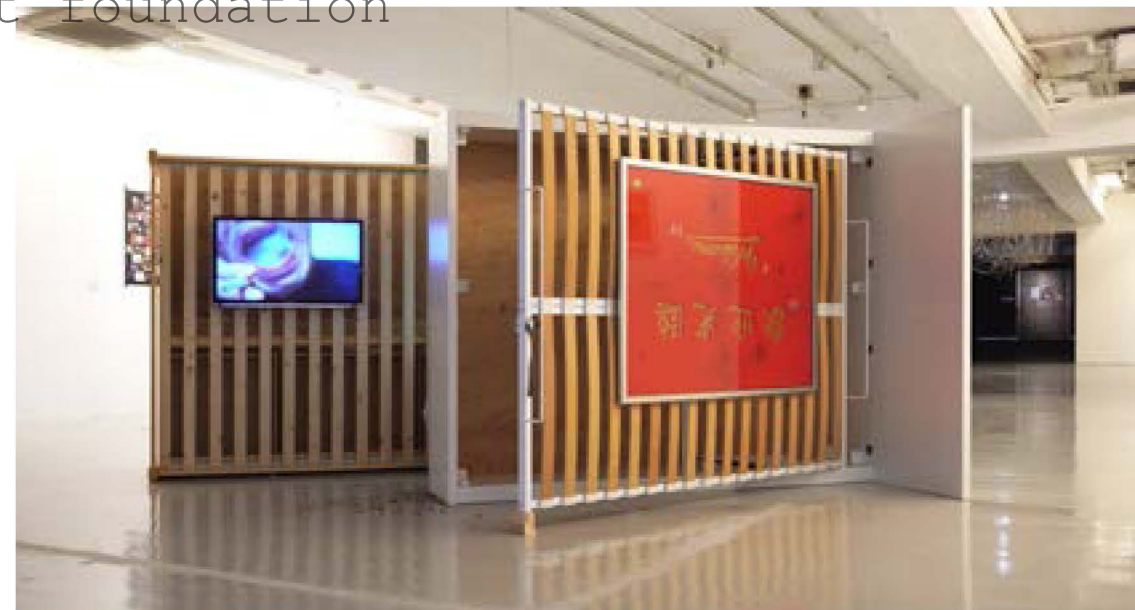
Human beings often try to put art into life. On the contrary, we rarely try to make life more artistic. One notion remains in my mind – if art and life originally come from a complete whole, these two words create irreparable distance in the middle. We tend to look down on the possibilities of life and extract artistic elements from it, presenting in separate situations. Such methodologies lead my art creation based on real experiences like applying my real life to experiment with different ways of living. It somehow helps search for awareness of spirits, values and extension of sentiments in the current bustling society. Then there is a discovery: that no object that can stay eternal. Every object changes at any moment. While consciousness is triggered, it determines how the state of objects can retain themselves.

Nothing can exist alone. Along with continuity of intensified globalisation and capitalism, modern lifestyles reflect more contradictory values. I name it “poisonous aesthetics” embracing all my emotions and desires, as well as blending with situations and the fate of Hong Kong. Believe in skepticism; skeptical about beliefs. Believe in beliefs; skeptical about skepticism. Among beliefs and skepticism, I still enjoy the feelings of existence, and breathing, much more than working. If you are willing to see it in this light, then my creation is life itself.

Tang Kwok-Hin works in a diverse range of materials from drawing and video to the appropriation of different objects. Independent of the media, he is very interested in the act of collecting and to create narrative with these fictional or historical collections. In the work in this exhibition, he suggests a tension between the flags of Hong Kong and China, but also between their historical relations. He uses two bed bases as structures for two video projections. On the left, we can see colours changing from red to white to yellow, moving from the colours of the Chinese flag to the colours of the flag of the Hong Kong SAR. On the right side, we have the impression of seeing a sequence of colours blinking. A closer look will show that he quotes a yellow star of the Chinese flag and a red star of the flag of the Hong Kong SAR. It is a mix of one and the other star. Taken together with a red carpet that says “welcome” in English and Cantonese and his performance at the opening when he smoked a brand of cigarettes named “Double Happiness”, Hin plays in a melancholy key with the present and the past.



Tang Kwok-hin | Draft | Mixed media installation | Dimensions variable | 2018



André Terayama

The production of art involves the artist as a trigger to a system that operates within limits of spatial and temporal constraint. This results in works that exist within a structural precariousness, the recorded actions and the sculptural balance. The placement of a living being becomes a generative principle of these propositions, initiating the scene formation and the creation of unstable constructions and objects. The main tools to generate this narrative are photography and video. The final product represents the memory of an event.

Haruo Ohara migrated with his family from Japan to Brazil in 1927. He worked as a farmer and started developing a photography practice. He was self-taught Ohara is now considered one of the most important early modern photographers in Brazil.

André Terayama establishes a dialogue with Ohara's images by quoting his photos and emulating the presence of the human body with his own body. Interested in ideas of copy and simulacrum in Japanese culture, he reflects on the possibilities of re-enacting images created by the first generations of the Japanese in Brazil.

Haruo Ohara | Hoe in the air | Photograph | 35 x 35cm | 1948
André Terayama | Hoe in the air (after Haruo Ohara) | Photograph | 35 x 35cm | 2016



Tromarama

Tromarama is an artist collective consisting Febie Babyrose, Herbert Hans and Ruddy Hatumena. Their relationship with screens started in early 1990's. That was the first time they saw dancing plates, a talking blue cat, a singing teapot, a flying carpet and various daily object come to life on screen. Besides, MTV (Music Television) has a special role in their memory. They started working together in 2006 making music videos. Since then, they work mostly using animation, music and daily objects. Currently their relationship with screens has shifted. It becomes much more intimate than before. It's a love/hate relationship. They are intrigued by how everyone tends to look at the screen as a producer of truth. They witness how the border between the real and the virtual collapses. It makes the world become an exciting place and undoubtedly bizarre at the same time.

Tromarama works mainly with video, animation and video installation. Their works mix humour with a powerful gaze on the banality of daily life. The work shown here is about the destruction of a monument built in colonial times by the Dutch in Bandung. Year after year, the architectural heritage of Indonesia is destroyed to construct new buildings and offices. Tromarama is interested in looking at these urban changes and tensioning the political discussion about them with a visual language that enters a dialogue with kitsch and mass culture.

Tromarama | Amsterdamse Poort Batavia | Video installation with t-shirts | Dimensions variable | 2014



David Zink Yi

David Zink Yi deals with different media like video, sound and sculpture. His pieces relate to different elements that create tensions in the limits between History and stories. He likes to collaborate with different agents and to show pieces that share with the public their own process of creation and openness.

Yi's family migrated from China to Peru in the 20th century. From the beginning of his career, the artist has developed works that explore this subject. In this video, the artist films his family cooking and mixes these images with their voices talking about their points of view about Peru when they arrived. Like a cooking book, it's a video about tradition, orality and how listening is an act of learning. More than that, it is also a work that brings to the public the diversity of cooking traditions in Latin America with procedures and foods that comes from Africa, Asia and the South American territories.



David Zink Yi | Dedicated to Yi Yen Wu | Video | 22mins 40secs | 2000





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As the South Turns

Patrick D. Flores

In the critical project to resist the legacies of an Eurocentric or Orientalist fantasy, the category of the South is cast as a figure or a trope of many guises. Whether on the margin or periphery, colonised or developing, failed state or sweat shop, the South has absorbed various valences. Always, however, it is charged by the tension arising from the distribution of asymmetrical power. Such distribution has been subjected to numerous ways of calibration, given that its movement may be capillary and alternating, and not solely direct or linear. That being said, the exercise of power results in both unimaginable suffering and sweeping opportunities for something incrementally radical to happen.

The South by Southeast project I initiated with Osage Art Foundation had sought to complicate the proposition of the South by implicating the East. At the outset, it drifted away from the binarism of North and South, and insinuated the unease that exists between East and West. Such a mixture of contradictions opened up the South to other coordinates and therefore to more options of reconstructing the order of the world, or the nature of things. The Southeast is an altogether different alchemy.

The articulation of the curator Raphael Fonseca in this exhibition finds a kindred spirit in South by Southeast. Fonseca responds to this prompt by constituting the South as a perspective that is construed as productively regional, as both a geo-poetic category and a method. It is geo-poetic because it evokes the ecology that shapes the work, which in turn reshapes the ecology. And it is a method enabling the curator to carve out conceptual space for certain aspects of the practice of artists in the exhibition and make them play out in very interesting juxtapositions around race and art history, for instance.

As a methodology, Fonseca steers clear of replicating the binary of the South as an inherent antithesis of the North. He rather looks at it as a kind of contingency through which the South emerges as a mediation, an unnerving one because it always has to struggle with complicity as a necessary moment of post-colonial survival. This is how I think the quotation from the existentialist philosopher Albert Camus that, in being used as the title, becomes salient. Camus would have enacted this

contingency and necessity as a Frenchman, born in Algeria and therefore a “foreigner” to both origin and source of citizenship. It is uncanny that the notion of the “betwixt and between,” that had informed the geopoetic situation of his stories, had also in the same vein enabled him to allegorise his locatedness in both nation and post-colony. It is through, though not verbatim, Camus that Fonseca intuits the title of the exhibition: “The sun teaches us that history is not everything”. It is a very telling line that offers an instance of instruction in which history is negated as the all-over episteme and that there is nothing outside of it. It also affirms the geopoetic imagination of Camus because it is *nature*, through the cipher of the sun, that frustrates the omnipresence of history. The plenitude of the solar foils the totality of the historical. In a paradoxical way, a heliocentric universe is restored in light of the precarity of the Anthropocene.

From this temper, Fonseca probes the self-consciousness of history that translates into the discourse of modernity and the status of history as an embodiment of time and space. Modernity is, therefore, restaged through the production of contemporary form, which comes into being through a particular annotation of the modern. History is dispersed across time and place, which makes it virtually co-incident in which time and place become, in the atmosphere of the geopoetic, so intertwined as if between and betwixt each other.

Within the South by Southeast matrix, Fonseca’s sympathy with the critique and reconstruction of the historical may find resonance with the self-historicisation of artists, curators, and art historians in the Balkans, a geography that significantly defined the rubric of Southeast Europe in relation to Southeast Asia in the first exhibition to flesh out the concept at Osage Art Foundation in 2015. Thinker and innovative curator Zdenka Badovinac defines self-historicisation as “any informal system of historicisation that is practiced by artists who because of the lack of a suitable collective history have had to search for their own historical or interpretive context. In many parts of the non-Western world, such as Eastern Europe during the socialist period and even later, the local institutions, that should have systematised neo-avant-garde art, either did not exist or took a dismissive attitude towards such art. Consequently, the artists themselves were often forced to archive documents relating to

their own art, the art of others, or broader art movements, as well as the conditions of production.”¹

At the hands of Fonseca, the South is made to undergo a process of self-historicisation through the coordinates of Southeast Asia and Latin or Ibero-America. In this attempt, he sketches out vehicles of thinking and doing that speak to this enterprise of self-historicisation through works from discrepant hemispheres and loci like Macau and Hong Kong. First is the *archive*, a gesture of piecing together narratives of the past and the everyday. It is viewed as a generative technology of ideas, speculations, interrogations, and experiences that is not meant to be merely a repository but a performative space of intersubjectivity. Second is *tradition*, this fraught body of habits and mythologies, that is at once irresistible because it grounds subjectivity to a usable past and impossible because it cannot fulfill the promise of an incessantly incipient subjectivity. This is why Fonseca implicates the interventions of appropriation and recoding to release tradition from orthodoxy and to render it livelier, more present. Third, *microhistory* that insists on the eccentricity of the local and its resistance to be reduced to the normative memory of “culture” itself. And lastly, *fictions of identity* that draw attention to the fabrication of the self, the weaving of strands of the personal with strands of the other. With these reflections brought to the fore, the exhibition takes up the all-important task of broadening the geography of contemporary art and widening the latitude of local or national art. Only a specific kind of sovereignty or secularity compels us to play within the parameters of the self and the other or, the individual and the collective. When this much-coveted dualism is reconfigured or realigned, or better to say, unhinged, new formations of the social life of persons and things reveal themselves in contemporary art. And the trajectory becomes more open to possible interactions across geographies.

This is what Fonseca’s curatorial provocation would like to instill and enhance. The intersection between Latin or Ibero-America and Southeast Asia is rooted in the history of colonialism, in racism and slavery, in trade and immigration, in spirituality and capitalism, in the various vicissitudes of the global and the crises of the national. These urgencies are as stark and searing as the sun. And it is the sun that teaches us to doubt how history hardens and to realise how art dissolves, or sweats it out. After all, the South here is argued as the tropics, a nature or character, a disposition of place that demands attentiveness to the precipitates of heat and water.

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¹ Badovinac, Zdenka, “Self-Historicization”, published on July 5, 2014, <http://glossary.mg-lj.si/referential-fields/historicization/self-historicization>).

Ruminations: critical miniatures & a montage of HK's (post)coloniality

Linda Lai

Coloniality has never been an easy issue for me. My initiation into coloniality as a rational subject matter has been eclectic and meandering. Art in this light is an anchoring practice: it is the very act of marking out a space on which contradictions could be juxtaposed to show isolated moments of the “self” performing and ruminations taking concrete forms.

From ancestral alignment to existential recognition: the place of art

Reflections on coloniality in my context seem always to be premised on national patriotism, resting on the fact that you/we are Chinese, and that Hong Kong was a part of China before 1842. The critique of coloniality begins with a voluntary alignment. It is a monumental story of inheritance. You have to assume that a big chunk of what previous (pre-colonial) regimes achieved informs and defines who you are. You assume that what your forefathers had is also what you should have; what they have lost is what you desire to reclaim. Coloniality is a problem posed specifically for the “descendants”. But whose descendant am I? Existentially, Hong Kong was no entity of its own until it was turned into an inflated chip of power bargain with a given name. When Hong Kong was “returned” or “handed over” to mainland China, what was it she returned to and, to what did her people return?

Postcolonial discussion, in my view, should differentiate between the existential and sovereignty. The unique reality of Hong Kong's colonial phase was marked by a unique state of “hybridity” (Frantz Fanon). It was neither total assimilation to a British white-supremacist mainstream nor a reactionary conceptualisation of Chinese superiority. As early as the 1930s, to institute Chinese Language to be part of the core school curriculum was among the key agenda of the British-Hong Kong government's pacification politics. Cantonese, not Mandarin, remained, or has been preserved to be, the vernacular. As for the Chinese population, the bondage with the other side of the Hong Kong-Chinese border has always been about familial association. Arrangements in the colony's postal services in the post-war decades of 1960s and 1970s, for instance, were targeted at preserving

life-line help to “homes” in need in the Mainland, during the Cultural Revolution.¹

Gayatri Spivak argues that the subaltern is not the equivalent of the oppressed, a position that substantiates promises in identity politics. In my view, identity politics is important insofar as it is rooted in the demand for “recognition”, that is, the authority's embracing individual subjects as we are, in full acknowledgement that we are autonomous agents with psychological integrity. (Hegel, Ricoeur)² The starting point is the recognition of “how we live” now, “how we have lived” and “how we lived through”. This applies to Hong Kong's British colonial past as well as our post-colonial Chinese milieu. This is the basis from which to make sense of counter-hegemonic opposition, which necessarily takes into account the realities of hybridity that Fanon pointed out.³ Hong Kong has a long hybridisation process, past and present continuous. Yet the everyday persons become the living but, silent “masses” the recognition of whom drains through governmentality. Art then is a valid response to the tactics of hybridisation (Homi Bhabha, Edward Said): artistic practices generate new cultural forms, assuming that neither colonialism nor (return to) sovereignty is a locked-up state. Artistic creation is premised on the belief that culture is dynamic. To engage with Hong Kong's colonial experience is not just about looking back onto the past, but more about the manifestation of contemporary doings.

A performative informer: the alien-insider and historiographic subversion

Whose descendant am I? I recall the docu-fiction by the world-acclaimed Shanghai-based female writer Wang Anyi 王安憶, titled *Jishi yu xugou* 《紀實與虛構》 [Documenting the real and fabrication], in which the odd-number chapters, her memoir of growing up in Shanghai in an immigrant family, alternate with the even-number chapters, which comprise her archival search tracing her ancestral genealogy.

In this epic saga, Wang deliberately picks the maternal side of her ancestral

past to construct the story of her own past – where she comes from, and the likely heroic figures in the long lineage from the ancient time. Wang thinks little of coloniality, and yet her genealogical account unfolds as a saga of counter exile, of how her foreparents travelled through centuries since 390 A.D. from China's marginal and exotic zones of non-Han blood, geographically and through multiple epochs, to arrive in the centre of contemporary China, Shanghai. Putting her deliberate feminist intervention via meta-narrativity aside, reading Wang's fabrication of her ancestor's story through the factual, has been a heuristic experience for me in contemplating my position as a colonial subject. Wang has forfeited the privilege of the native informant, which Gayatri Spivak problematises as well, asserting that native or not is a matter of discourse and purposeful assertion. Wang's turn to a performative search of who one could be is also my point of departure.

In this exhibition, I asserted a performative take of multiple realities suggesting a split and versatile self. I turn to volatile monumental sites of sovereignty, juxtaposing my own urban drifting as an adolescent, then diverge into material forms of affect and the cinematic imaginary to form a spatial montage sequence. The "native-I," I purport, must not be reduced to a matter of discourse: I am the embodiment and enacting agency of complex cultural processes of experiential dynamism.

My real initiation into (the critique of) coloniality, seriously speaking, took place in 1992, a year that is the quin-centennial commemoration of Columbus' first "conquest". That year, I took a 3-unit special colloquium at NYU's Cinema Studies Department titled "Rewriting 1492" in which I was, for the first time, exposed to the problem of historiography. My exposure to revisionist history-writing led me as well to the study of policies to "tidy up" and streamline minority tribes and cultural practices in new China in the early 1950s, and later on efforts to represent hybridity in Brazilian and other Latin American cinemas. Re-reading and re-writing as critical tactics have since then stayed in my historiographic as well as art practices, with specific attention to subaltern experiences, later on tuned to the history of everyday life⁴ and performative-experimental modes of historiography, especially how sight and sound functions as documents and mnemonic devices of the past.⁵ This is also an adapted response of mine to Gramsci's call for history to be told from below. Perhaps not everything is history, but many things have failed to be articulated as negotiable discourses of the past. The historian, and the artist as an experimental historian, is charged with the task of recovering voices, reclaiming looks, preserving

sentiments and so on, to move closer to a view of total history that is not totalitarian and will never be complete.

Along the above line of thoughts, auto-ethnography, the repeated observation of everyday life with the "I" as both the subject and object, comes in almost naturally. Auto-ethnography differs from autobiography. Auto-ethnography is by definition self-reflexive and inclines towards the phenomenological. The result of being there, just like diligent fieldwork in ethnography, is about relentless "collecting" in an extended period of time, leading to discovery through assemblage.

Art, a phenomenological reference

Art is a unique mode of experiencing the world (Parry) and of "describing" the specific. (FN Parry) Art is also free from the tyranny of being obliged to be wholesome and objective. As an artist, I am free to ask, "What are those colonial moments I found affective, obscure, and controversial? What are those concrete moments that are uniquely mine?" Curiously, I am also free to compare: "What are those unique moments I found others have had that are not mine?" With these questions, I shed the burden of having to be a cultural spokesperson, but without forfeiting lived realities that are necessarily rooted in governmentality and power regimes.

Some of the found moments "experienced by others" were proposed to curator Raphael Fonseca in the beginning of our email exchange. One proposed episode, which I did not include in the final work, is titled *The Chinese Life of a British Technician*, based on a photo album (1930s) deposited at the Hong Kong History Museum by a British engineer who worked at a Swire-owned shipyard, lived on the mid-levels of Tai Hang and spent his leisure time swimming and hiking, as his photos suggest. I also found individual contributions to a regular column in a Chinese-language daily, also from the 1930s, which articulate the voice of a young female student, active in swimming and basketball, in the form of personal diaries. There was also a serial written from the perspective of a young laundry girl describing her daily chores, which I suspect was actually written by a male writer as a class critique.

In the final treatment of my work, I kept the following four isolated "colonial moments" of mine:

- "**Borrowed Sentiments**" highlights *affect*. It is a 2-metre tall sonic-

sculptural monument playing 48 songs/music pieces recurrently, from several centuries B.C. to 2008, from folk and rock to religious, patriotic, modernist and experimental sounds to articulate schizophrenic sentiments acquired by the colonial subject “I” through my education.

- **“Psycho-geographies”** is about the production of space and spatial practice. It is a cartographic miniature on a table top (2.5m x 1.2m). It articulates my obsession with geography, my annual long bus journeys as the only way to stay away from home as an adolescent, harbour shore migration marking Hong Kong’s history as that of land reclamation, and the monumentalizing appropriation of the public space.
- **“Confined Spaces”** is about the containment of “the other” – a discourse of cinematic signification on conquest and transplant of the white culture. The prison-like miniature plays a video I edited, a montage-assemblage of 12 films shown in local cinemas in the 1930s, which local writers called “Beast Films”.⁶ The term describes a species of films from Europe and the United States that focused on life and activities in non-urban locations, often characterised by the lurking danger of untamed living animals constantly threatening human lives. If the films in concern were meant to enact the colonisers’ turning of the natives into the “others”, local Hong Kong writers’ coining of the term was a reverse-othering as much as a double-othering act.
- **“Trapped Oceans”** is the miniature of an ocean with 3 distorted views. It gives concrete forms to my childhood aspiration for a felt yet unknown future, articulating an obscure desire to overcome spatial thresholds and the limits of the oceans.

My work *Ruminations: a montage of Hong Kong’s (post)coloniality* (aka *Thoughts on a series of historical miniatures*) is the assemblage of four chronotopes, sitting side by side with each other, forming a spatial montage sequence of varied space and time.

Miniatures: history of everyday life

Ruminations is a series of machine-sculptures and miniatures of varied scaling, sizes and volumes, each presenting a particular perspectival moment of Hong Kong’s past from my perceptual horizons. The many media forms – my own videos, LED text boards, maps, hand-made objects, found physical objects and found media, such as newsreels and

print-outs from old newspaper and archived public records – construct a colonial timeframe between 1841-2017. Drawing from my many years of research, the miniatures together form an experimental chronology, which is a key focus of my recent research-creation. Artistic mediation generates historical knowledge, I assert.

Miniatures are episodes of depiction without the burden of having to be exhaustive. As Alf Luedtke puts it, “the ‘density’ of life situations and contexts of action can be made vivid and palpable in the form of the miniature”. Miniatures allow the “multiple-layered structure of historical processes” to become probable in terms of “refractions, secondary tones and undertones [and] hidden motifs”.⁷ By extension, miniatures can be imagined to be tableaux, dioramas, vignettes, TV sculptures or kinoscopes, fictional text-image collages of real-life fragments, all pointing to perceptual surfaces of the fragmentary. As episodic units of life situations, miniatures form a societal patchwork through the work of assemblage or, in my work, that of “montage,” highlighting sequential ordering and its impact. My use of montage in this work is the creation of a chronological structure formed by isolated dense moments of narrative potentials, and with significant gaps between points. While each miniature being a self-contained world, all miniatures together form a body of composite trajectories of contrasted perceptual textures, from abstraction to factual presentation, from aura to thickness of description, from realistic rendering to the surreal, from the documentary to fictional, from electronic-digital to physical material, from stillness to motion, from presence to vectoring motion, from microscopic views to macro synchronisation.

Montage and historiographic formations

Ruminations is an experiment with the principle of “montage” in the form of a series of four historical miniatures on Hong Kong’s colonial experience. “Montage” highlights the role of “graphicness” and perceptibility in producing knowledge of the past, through the assemblage of “large-scale constructions out of the smallest and most precisely cut components”.⁸ Montage, according to Benjamin, has an affinity with “miniatures,” which make vivid and palpable the density of life situations, allowing “multiple-layered structure of historical process” to appear in complex tonalities.⁹

Ruminations as a montage sequence of four chronotopes seeks to resolve a grand view of historical progression, advocated by both the British

and Chinese rulers, and, instead, emphasises the phenomenological descriptions and experiences at the quotidian level. It is my way to deconstruct totality and mock historical naturalism. The four components are at once isolated objects of perceptibility and structured commentary. The primary timeframe of 1841-1997, formed by the montage of selective miniatures, is stretchable and somewhat arbitrary, but it alludes too many moments in the remote past and reaches forward to the contemporary time when my artistic mediation of historical knowledge takes place.

Montage is Benjamin's metaphor for historical understanding, which is not only Marxian (in terms of its emphasis on dialectical materialism), but also a concrete critical method that writes the perceptible. As it is well understood as a language of cinema, in reference to Eisenstein, montage is itself an artistic method -- a re-invention of reality that highlights the power of gaps, which positively calls attention to visual/audio collision and absences.

On-line archive:

<http://lindalai-floating-site.com/content/installation/installation/Ruminations/index.html>

usage art foundation

The Savage Girl (1932, Commonwealth Pictures), *Bring 'Em Back Alive* (1933, RKO, adventure, documentary, jungle just north of Singapore), *Kongo* (1932, MGM), *The Most Dangerous Game* (1932, RKO), *King Kong* (1933, RKO), *King of the Jungle* (1933, Paramount), *Son of Kong* (1933, RKO), *The Beast of Borneo* (1934, Far East Inc.), and *The Lost World* (1925, First National Pictures). The closest match of "beast films" to Hollywood genres could be: Jungle pictures, adventure films, exotic travelogue features, ethnic films, poverty Row B films, and horror.

⁷ Alf Luedtke, *The History of Everyday Life* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995), p. 21.

⁸ Walter Benjamin, *The Arcade Project*, trans. Howard Eiland and Kevin McLaughlin (Cambridge, Massachusetts; London: Belknap Press, 2002), p. 461.

⁹ Luedtke, p.21.

Reference:

Joseph D. Parry, ed., *Art and Phenomenology*. London; New York: Routledge, 2011.

Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak. *A Critique of Postcolonial Reason: Toward a History of the Vanishing Present*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1999.

Sangeeta Ray. "Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, A Critique of Postcolo." *Politics and Culture*, Issue 3 (2000). <https://politicsandculture.org/2010/08/10/gayatri-chakravorty-spivak-a-critique-of-postcolo-2/>

¹ See large-scale installation by the author at the 9th Shanghai Biennale (2012-2013), *1906-1989-2012: Guangzhou-Hongkong-Shanghai-Anji* documented here: "1906-1989-2012: Guangzhou-Hongkong-Shanghai-Anji", Linda Lai: Floating Site, accessed June 1 2018, <http://lindalai-floating-site.com/content/installation/installation/1906-1989-2012/index.html>.

² The question of "recognition" is discussed in the context of "democracy" by which fighting against misrecognition is a main objective, which often materialises in identity politics. See: Iser, Mattias, "Recognition", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Fall 2013), <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/recognition/>.

³ In this exhibition "The Sun Teaches Us," the component "Borrowed Sentiments" in my work expresses hybridity and schizophrenia contained by standards of normality via the incommensurable tastes of music – felt, found and acquired – within my life time. For details of the list of 40+ sound pieces and songs, see: "Ruminations: a Montage of Hong Kong's (post)coloniality", Linda Lai: Floating Site, accessed June 1, 2018, <http://lindalai-floating-site.com/content/installation/installation/Ruminations/index.html>.

⁴ For three years (2010-2012), I was part of a historians' workshop series led by German professor Alf Luedtke at Hanyang University in Seoul. Prof. Luedtke is the core member of a scholarly movement on the history of everyday life.

⁵ A published example by this author is video essay *Voices Seen, Images Heard* (2009, 28 minutes), which has appeared in over 15 film festivals and cultural forums.

⁶ The 12 films, in order of appearance, are: *Tarzan the Ape Man* (1932, MGM), *Congorilla* (1932, Fox Film, aka. "Adventures among the Big Apes and Little People of Central Africa"), *Island of Lost Souls* (1932, Paramount),

Sunburnt

Caterina Riva

I come from Northern Italy, not too far from where Marco Polo started his journey to the East, more than seven hundred years ago, but I now live in Singapore. I travelled there by plane with one big piece of luggage and no immediate return ticket. In Europe, my skin is white but gets tanned in summer months. In Asia, when I stand in the sun, I get 'sunburnt' instead. Language reveals a lot of cultural and historical biases.

Raphael Fonseca travelled from Rio de Janeiro (Brazil) to Southeast Asia in 2017 on a research trip at the invitation of Osage Art Foundation, starting a process which led to the group exhibition "The sun teaches us that history is not everything" in 2018 at Osage Gallery in Hong Kong.

Working as a curator, like Raphael, I am curious about methods and asked him, when we met in Hong Kong and I visited the show, how he had prepared for the initial research travel. My understanding was that he had selected the 26 artists included in the exhibition during the journey that brought him to Singapore, Indonesia, Hong Kong, Macau, the Philippine. But there was a prologue I was unaware of: before embarking on his trip. Fonseca had compiled a long list of artists based in this region, consulting online and in print catalogues and reading about projects that had occurred in or around these geographies. The artists Fonseca ended up meeting on the journey, were those he had already been in touch with and considered the most suited for the project, even before leaving the shores of South America. After his visit, his dialogue and exchange with them, as well as with artists from Brazil and Central America, continued from a distance and grew into an exhibition with 20 new commissions, and a publication.

One of the curator's points of departure and arrival point is the admission that, to some degree, we all come from a non-linear, mixed background. Our geography of origin is subject to colonial, economic forces, as well as turns of fate. For most of the 26 artists in the exhibition, Central and South America, Southeast Asia and Hong Kong are temporary homes for movements of people who might have originated in different times from Japan or the Netherlands, Indonesia or Africa or elsewhere.

The exhibition carefully juxtaposes some of these stories expressed through video, installation, performance and ephemera, and presents entangled

journeys where different meanings might be ascribed to certain works in different parts of the world. The exhibition as a whole offers a complex picture of global movements and the personal consequences they might shadow. The project doesn't shy away from tackling the negative effects of colonialism such as racism, but it never defaults to thematic groupings of works, entrusting each artist to follow their own trajectory.

If you ask me, effective group exhibitions are hard to come by. Often the thesis they are based upon is reductive, the spatial decisions conservative, the artists mismatched. This is not the case for "The sun teaches us that history is not everything" which provided a respite from the chaotic days and visual overload provoked by Art Basel Hong Kong and the myriad events around it. The exhibition has the merit of presenting artworks of established artists (FX Harsono, Melati Suryodarmo, Nguyen Trinh Thi...) next to lesser known, younger ones, interweaving on equal ground their assorted materials which account for different inspirations, contexts and aesthetics. The exhibition, in my mind, functions as a theatre in which the works dialogue with one another and the bodies of the visitors move around them.

It starts with a silent *proscenium*, followed by a central part with visual and sonic cues as with Mimian Hsu's installation consisting of 25,934 tiny bells, activated by visitors when walking under or next to it. The artworks occupy the perimeter of walls as can be found in the central part of the room, like João Ó's mobile sculpture/heart/nest made with bamboo.

There are also two external wings to the gallery footprint: one is dark and hosts several screens of video works, the other is bright, thanks to blurred windows and four spotlights pointing to Jonas Arrabal's installation using seawater. This antechamber, with a video of Arrabal carrying buckets of water from the sea to a beach at daytime, looking at the Hong Kong skyline, leads outdoors, to a long balcony facing the new, shiny surfaces of the buildings across the street. There on a pre-existing collection of stones and crystals on pallets, Daniel Lie created his impermanent installation *Semarang and Garanhuns Love Affair*, assembling for a ritual with open interpretation a ghostly throne with fabric and a floating aerial perimeter punctuated by flowers and ribbons bound to decay over time.

Back to the central room, Mella Jaarsma, a Dutchwoman who has been based in Indonesia since the 1980s, has made *In Ravel Out*, a wall piece which connects three costumes that could fit the same number of bodies

(it was worn at the opening). There are holes for the head, hands and feet. A tie doubles as a protruding pink tongue, bags with newspaper balls inside make a cartoonish head of hair and a body that reminds me of fish scales, like that of a mermaid or a serpent. They speak of something that needs to be moved far and quickly, of migrant mobility, of dance and the suppression of binaries that exist in multilayered pre-colonial forms of expression. I am imagining conversations between the artist and the curator, possibly about traditional Indonesian costumes or the sculptures to wear of Brazilian artist Lygia Clark (1920-1988), and how those might have influenced what Jaarsma made for this project.

Three foldout posters, which can be taken away, contributed to the show by Yudi Rafael, connect text and images from films, public campaigns, magazines covers and cartoons gathered from different continents. Rather than considering events in isolation or for their national or regional relevance, Rafael alerts us to the long roots of racist stereotyping in different centuries and parts of the globe. In his constellation, there is, for example, a poster for a Brazilian TV show called *Negócio da China* (2008) where what I presume are the main characters are pulling the side of their eyes to make more evident the 'China Business' the title refers to. A 19th-century engraved advertisement for rat poison, made in the USA, portrays a man in Oriental clothing as the one to exterminate; or Mickey Rooney, the Hollywood actor, who was white, wears eyeliner and Japanese clothes to impersonate Mr Yunioshi, the eccentric neighbour of Ms Golightly in the film *Breakfast at Tiffany's* (1961).

Ho Kok Hoe, the subject of Kent Chan's film *Seni, Act 2*, is a member of the Singapore Chinese literati who, in 1955, went to London with a suitcase of drawings by local artists intending to find a place to exhibit them in the capital of the British Empire. The archive of this event is transposed through songs and an interview into film, borrowing from the genres of musical and documentary, re-staging, rather than re-purposing the historic material. Chan reflects on the encounter between Eastern and Western art: from ink painting to oil landscape, from the absence of a word for "art" in Malay to the concept of Modernity. In a scene of the film, a drone flies over the emerald tropical forest and the blue sea. Although the location exists in the body of water surrounding Singapore, the impression is akin to that of a green screen used to convey a space-time continuum.

To one side of the main room, Tang Kwok-Hin has installed sideways two bed frames, which become a fort. The bed function is subverted as the

head lends itself as a projection surface with conceals, unless you walk around it, the exposed slats holding a TV monitor and a framed doormat with 'Welcome' written in English and Cantonese. The artist seems to ponder on Hong Kong's identity as it orbits from the British to the Chinese political and economic area of influence. In *Draft*, everything functions as signifier: the video on the monitor is a close-up of the artist's mouth, inhaling and exhaling smoke from a cigarette. There are real cigarette butts overflowing from an ashtray positioned inside a perforated IKEA magazine holder, which becomes a cage. The cigarettes there and on the floor have been smoked at the opening of the show by the artist, who perched on top of the bed frame would lean and talk to the audience. The ashes which gathered on the floor were saved the following morning, when a hasty text message from the curator stopped the cleaners who were getting ready to sweep them away.

Norberto Roldan's *Katipunan Church of the Revolution* consists of an altar with Catholic and pagan artefacts placed in front of a richly embroidered map of the Philippines: the grouping conveys to the viewer a suspended time which mixes the influences of religion, politics and social movements inscribed in those islands' constellation.

Throughout the exhibition, sociality is conveyed with different rituals comprising: food (David Zink Yi's work and Shima's cooking performance at the opening), parades on the streets (Mark Salvatus' video), smoking (Tang Kwok-Hin) ... All these methods could be read as attempts of sharing time in a temporary convergence of private and public space.

In "The sun teaches us that history is not everything", the art object is first fragmented and then reconstituted through experience, study, contemplation or history, personal and otherwise.

April 2018

Afterword

I have recently returned to Singapore after two weeks in Italy catching up with family, friends and food. I was away from the city-state on 12 June 2018 when the Singapore summit to discuss nuclear renunciation took place between Trump (USA) and Kim Jong-un (North Korea). But I did witness – live from my motherland – the new Italian Minister of the Interior,

Salvini, deny permission to 630 migrants, coming from Africa and rescued in the Mediterranean Sea by the ship Aquarius, to disembark in any Italian port. Spanish authorities eventually accepted the ship in Valencia with its cargo of humans, but the Aquarius had remained stranded at sea for a number of days (12), not being equipped to host for that stretch of time so many people with serious physical and psychological conditions. With the shortage of food and of medical supplies, as well as basic hygiene, crew, medical and civil volunteers tried their best to attend to pregnant women, injured men and children, all weary and exhausted, captive to an inhumane exercise of power.

While I am writing this, only a week after the Singapore summit, Trump has signed an executive order to divide infants and children from their parents trying to cross over from Central America to the United States. Footage of babies crying – wallowing – and held in cages in Texas, moved to facilities in other parts of the United States are here to haunt our minds.

This has nothing to do with art, one might say, but this has everything to do with it, I would argue.

On 15 June I was in Palermo, Sicily, for the professional preview days of Manifesta, a nomadic European art biennial that, in its 12th edition, dealt with “The Planetary Garden. Cultivating Coexistence”. Inspired by the potential for co-habitation, Manifesta in Palermo embraced the metaphor of gardens, borrowing strategies from the interchange of multi species flora and fauna and their varied provenance. What can be learnt from the centuries and layers of historical contacts and colonial movements? Plants are one thing, but when it comes to humans the stakes are indefinitely more difficult to disentangle.

Thinking and talking of an exhibition against such an unstable reality is hard. Aesthetics seems to feel at a loss in the face of moral dilemmas in a world where prejudices and hate, discrimination and capital guide the worst instincts. Nation-states where borders once porous are reinforced blindly and without compassion, in particular when dealing with the poor rather than big corporations.

The implication of the other text I had written in closer response to the exhibition at Osage and nearer in time is that we all are refugees. I came to Singapore to search for better work and living conditions than those available to me in my home country.

In Singapore, consideration about ethnicity are very prevalent in the discussion. People refer to fellow Singaporeans often specifying whether of Chinese, Malay or Indian descent. HDB (House Development Board) flats are also granted following quotas with restricted percentages for each of these ethnic groups in order to maintain social control. In such grouping system, I am under “Others”: the category I ticked on the many bureaucratic forms that I had to fill since I have joined the workforce here.

25 June 2018

osage art foundation

Platform of resistance

Solange Farkas

A brief look at the international scene of art leaves no doubt: the South is everywhere. Faced with the inability of hegemonic thinking to elucidate the contemporary world, the new discourses produced by the regions of the colonial past - which the geopolitical bias approaches in a heterogeneous set of related accents - have become a platform of alterity and resistance. The recent prominence of this production in large international exhibitions is only one indication that the art world recognises the need to participate and amplify the dialogue with the South.

The recognition of the importance of this perspective in any global concert of voices, gives evidence the accuracy of the bet, which almost three decades ago, gave rise to the Festival of Contemporary Art Sesc_Videobrasil. Created in 1983 to foster the then-nascent Brazilian video production, the Festival would consolidate itself as the first and only of the country's to map, investigate and foster artistic practices that emerge from this geopolitical territory, generating articulations between the Brazilian production and its southern interlocutors and illuminating the uneasiness that emerges from the researches developed by his artists.

The concept that links nations with similar histories of violence, conflict, and both political and cultural subordination defines the scope of artistic production the Festival has given visibility to, since internationalisation in 1990. It was the intuition of this non-geographic territory that marked the Competitive Exhibition of Videobrasil to artists and directors from South America, Australia, Africa and Southeast Asia. Our primary objective was to create a place of speaking and listening for the production that happened outside the hegemonic international circuit of art and video, creating mechanisms of promotion and circulation directed towards its artistic manifestations.

Approaching productions from similar contexts in the Festival was also a way of guaranteeing exchanges and oxygen for all parties. This approach was instead of exposing a production that could only emerge in the competition of artists of the European and North American circuit, who had been using video for almost 20 years. In addition to the competitive and informative exhibitions, the emphasis on reflective programmes, focused on debate and the exchange of experiences, would help make Videobrasil a meeting and confluence for artists, curators and researchers from the South, strengthening

their role as a catalyst and aggregator.

Since 1991, with the creation of the Associação Cultural Videobrasil, and in 1992, when a lasting partnership with Sesc São Paulo began, it was possible to broaden and refine the scope of researches and actions surrounding the Festival, in addition to its own dimensions. Open calls, the basis of the biennial selections of their competitive show-- appropriately named *Panoramas do Sul*-- showed a mechanism of great strategic importance, since they allowed for locating unmapped areas of the production of regions little accessed, and revealing researches not yet recognised, absorbed or financed by the system of art. Through these calls, which is still today our curatorial starting point, the Festival can reveal an increasingly diversified and vigorous production, coming not only from Latin America, Africa and Australia, but also from the Middle East, the Caribbean, the Eastern Europe and Asia.

The continuous research and curatorial efforts that Videobrasil constructs have, as a byproduct, a deep knowledge and a close familiarity with the specificities of the artistic production of its target territory. Moreover, after being shared with the public, the works selected and awarded at the Festival will constitute a historical collection that, little by little, becomes a reference point for the video production of the geopolitical South. The collection, in turn, feeds a series of new actions, which reaffirm Videobrasil's expertise in this field. These include curators focused on the trajectory of artists and the production of specific regions, exhibited at festivals and international shows; the online publication *FFDossier*, with biographical and essayistic profiles of more than 40 artists from the South; and the *Videobrasil Authors Collection* series, with essayistic documentaries on production exponents from these regions, such as the South African William Kentridge, the Lebanese Akram Zaatari, the Brazilian Rafael França and the American of Cuban origin, Coco Fusco.

Since 2000, the curatorial research that underpins the Festival also unfolds in large exhibitions, which illuminate segments of production in the South little known to the Brazilian public. This year, the African Contemporary Art Show will take place in São Paulo that, in joint curation with Clive Kellner, brings together a sample of the new African artistic production, represented

by works by William Kentridge, Oladélé Ajiboyé Bamgboyé, Zwelethu Mthethwa and Kendell Geers, among others. Five years later, the Pan-African Contemporary Art Exhibition, held at the Bahia Museum of Modern Art in Salvador, proposed a dialogue between African artists and black diaspora countries, such as the Brazilian Mario Cravo Neto and the Cuban Maria Magdalena Campos Pons, around the image, loaded with history and symbolism, of the Atlantic Ocean, which separates Brazil and Africa.

Recognised already in the selection of the works submitted to the Festival, which grow exponentially with each new edition, the new and recurrent questions in the production of the artists of the global South begin to provide curatorial directions to the Festival. In 2011, it had as its theme the hybridisation of artistic languages; in 2003, it brought together works that discuss forced movements, divergent voices and the very idea of periphery, under the theme "Dislocations". In the same year, the special exhibition "Possible Narratives -- Artistic Practices of Lebanon" introduced the deeply political production of Lebanese artists such as Zaatari, Jalal Toufic and Ghassan Salhab. The first exhibition core of the Festival that transcends the sphere of video, brought together works that use different languages, foreshadowing what was to come in 2011: the opening of the Festival to all artistic manifestations in response to the urgencies of contemporary discourse, video to hybridisation and its growing presence in the visual arts.

In 2013, the year in which Videobrasil completed its 30 years, it inverted a programming principle that had always sought to complement the Southern Panoramas competitive show with parallel nuclei, made up of works by internationally renowned artists such as the British Peter Greenaway, the German Marcel Odenbach and the Icelandic Olafur Eliason. In addition to the exhibition, the Panoramas do Sul show gained prominence. The 18th edition put it in dialogue with axes that deal with Videobrasil's own history. The 19th Festival (2015) confronted emerging and high-profile artists, all from the South, to construct an intriguing sample of strategies, counter-narratives and inquiries that, often in subtle attunement, artists from the same symbolic region, but with more and more trajectories. Less consolidated, more mobilised to confront contemporary reality.

In the same year, the first of a series of reflective publications associated with the themes of the Festival drew a broad and complex panorama of the concept of geopolitical South in the context of the great exhibitions, manifestos and productions of the visual arts. Viewed from different perspectives and with different approaches, the visions that *Southern*

*Panoramas -- Readings -- Perspectives for other geographies of thought*¹ added and counter-attested to the emergence of an original thought. This advocated protagonism in face of what was still hegemonic and unveiled the mechanisms of power implied, even in the way we have become accustomed to map the world.

We arrived at the 20th Festival in 2017, reaffirming the idea of resistance and the political vocation that guided the artistic production of the symbolic territory of the geopolitical South. It was not surprising that this production flourished and was refined in the moment of installed crisis, retrocession, loss of conquests and absolute uncertainty that marked the end of the second decade of the 21st century. The need to tell stories was seen as smaller. This need had been obscured by an ever more voluminous discourse and omnipresent capital which gave the video a new narrative breadth. Being identified as the real registry, this medium was strengthened again. Through practices that cross the boundaries between art and science, new narratives claimed space and places of listening.

A mark of the art that emerges from the geopolitical South - the desire to elaborate a symbolic narrative that matches the issues inherited by our past - becomes more and more pressing. This can revise ideas of the future that have failed for not having drawn a perspective less gloomy than the one we have ahead. As happened throughout history in Videobrasil, the declared option of research that produces potent experiences of resistance, not binary, aimed at illuminating obscure corners and reversing simplistic logics. It translates our desire as an institution, to move in the opposite direction to what we perceive as a progressive emptying of the discourses that circulate and shape the field of art.

Our cultural context imposes successive defeats on the ambition of art to provide relevant or even desirable symbolic experiences for the benefit of other more palatable fields of culture. Contrary to progressive irrelevance, and in many different ways, Southern Panoramas oppose the progressive crushing of our horizons, in order to preserve some perspective on the future.

¹ Sabrina Moura, *Panoramas do Sul – Leituras – Perspectivas para outras geografias do pensamento* (São Paulo: Edições Sesc/Videobrasil, 2015).

Other Geographies

Charles Merewether

In the 1990s, the idea of contact zones began to take shape and greater prominence in cultural studies and art history. It was a refinement of the terms of recognition in the post-colonial encounter. Discussions were no longer framed in terms of relations of hegemony, domination and subjection that had defined colonial relations but, rather, the experience or effects of the encounter between peoples of different languages, races, and cultures. This opened the way for theories of translation in the cultural encounter that enabled the potential exchange and reciprocity between cultures. Such studies could reveal the correspondences and affinities between different cultures, allowing also, for differences and distinctions to be also recognised. This occurred across all fields within cultural studies as much as the social sciences and geography. At the same time, the idea of globalisation had also gained greater currency, especially in the economic field. However, applied to the cultural field, the concept seemed an overreach. Alternatives were offered that explored the transcultural, not in terms of the global but rather, through lateral connections, as between different localities or regions. To this we will return.

In 2015, the Osage Art Foundation presented the exhibition "South by Southeast" curated by Patrick Flores and Anca Verona Mihulet. Flores wrote later that "The South by Southeast project was conceived out of the anxiety to move beyond the burdened categories of nation and region. It was prompted by the desire to exceed the limits of how localities are almost by reflex and default integrated into nations, which in turn are integrated into regions".¹ Flores noted that "this South by Southeast option leads us to revisit how we reflect on the place of region in the contemporary".² As a consequence of this, their exhibition "gesture(d) towards a theory of the global, the worldly, the hemispheric through not only the south but through the southeast. Not the centre twice, the better for it to slide across the scales and registers of the geopoetic spheres of exciting mingling".³

Inspired by the direction proposed by Flores and Mihulet and their "South by Southeast" project, the Osage Art Foundation then presented a second exhibition in 2018: "The sun teaches us that history is not everything", curated by the Brazilian Raphael Fonseca. The title of the exhibition was based on Albert Camus's words from his book *Between and Between*, a collection of five short semi-autobiographical and philosophical pieces,

published in 1937. Recalling the difficulties of his early life in Algeria, Camus had written: "I was placed halfway between the misery and the sun. Misery kept me from believing that all was well under the sun, and the sun taught me that history isn't everything."⁴

The aim of Fonseca's exhibition was to find artists interested in raising questions about the historical past in the light of the present. In so doing, he asked two questions: (1) "How can the past affect the present and how can contemporary art practice transform historical documents in very different kinds of narratives? And, (2) "what are the relations between macro and micro history?"⁵ But, more than that, Fonseca wanted to establish a correspondence with the South by Southeast project of 2015, under the "Regional Perspectives" platform of Osage Art Foundation that placed the production of art in Asia into a critical perspective, that is, in relation to other geographies. Fonseca saw many points of artistic, environmental and historical points of dialogue between Asia and Latin America, resulting in a project that brought together 26 artists, 14 from South and Central America and Mexico, 8 from Southeast Asia and 4 from Hong Kong and Macau. Following this, Fonseca began to identify topics of interest. He notes "migration, diaspora, memory, oblivion and identity are all essential to each of the invited artists and to the historical narrative of their countries". In this respect, he identified 4 points or topics of correspondence:

- immigration and refuge,
- the relation between documents and historical truth,
- the borders between historical and fictional writings,
- the tension between national histories and familial anecdotes.

The breadth of these issues was an ambitious undertaking to cover in one exhibition and the work chosen by Fonseca explores some of these issues, seeking visual correspondences to the historically dense subjects as outlined. Furthermore, a number of these issues have been explored through a series of exhibition projects developed over the last 20 years. In 2003, the Walker Art Center in Minneapolis, presented the exhibition "How Latitudes Become Forms: Art in a Global Age". Curated by Philippe Vergne and colleagues Douglas Fogle and Olukemi Ilesanmi, the exhibition selected 28 emerging artists from Brazil, South Africa, China,

Japan, Turkey, India and the United States.⁶ The exhibition was one of many that followed, whereby the idea of globalism was challenged by the idea of horizontal lines of connectivity, across regions and continents.

In this regard, such exhibitions also reflected changes in the way the contemporary art had begun to be seen. A good example of this was Eastern Europe that, in the 1990s, was redefining itself in the context of a post-Soviet era. But, this process of redefinition was not by geographical or for social reasons but rather, first and foremost, was shaped by political and economic factors. This was critical in distinguishing features of post-Soviet countries that shared a Soviet past. National distinctions were understood as no longer the basis of comparison but, a point of reference. In his book, *Art in Eastern Europe*, Piotr Piotrowski wrote:

*Can this art be said to possess a distinct character? Is it possible to speak about Eastern European art as a cultural phenomenon that crosses the borders of individual national cultures and unifies, to a certain degree, the Eastern European cultural space—being at the same time distinctive from that of other regions. Indeed, the Eastern European cultural space is extremely heterogeneous... In fact, there is only one cultural experience that unites all Eastern European countries and at the same time differentiates them from the outer world—it is the experience of Communism of the Soviet type.*⁷

Reflecting on the “global turn” in the humanities, Piotrowski observed in 2008 that the type of locality related to the structure of nation states and the modernist form of nationalism “is now changing on account of the process of globalisation”, specifically with “the transformation of nation-states into more cosmopolitan organisations”.⁸ The concept of a universalism, and its underlying principle of modernism, had given rise to a vertical and revisionist history of art, oriented around the centre-periphery distinction. In its place, Piotrowski had proposed in 2008, a horizontal approach, raising issues of locality and difference, rather than a universal reading of contemporary art. Piotrowski’s concept of horizontality accommodated the concept of “contemporaneity”, providing a comparative means of evaluating contemporary practices. However, despite his enthusiasm at the time, Piotrowski was still hesitant to accept the loss of locality as an identity marker. On the one hand, the nation seen from a postmodern perspective, is deprived of its essential features. On the other, a post-colonial scholarly practice, relies on the essence of the nation in order to define its critical strategy and resistance to “the centre”. By using an international horizontal art history, Piotrowski argued, one could still use the notion of the local in defence of the (national) subject. In

this regard, the concept of geography becomes critical. But this required rethinking geography and, as Rogoff had written in *Terra Infirma*:

*Geography is at one and the same time a concept, a sign system and an order of knowledge established at the centres of power... Geography as an epistemic category is in turn grounded in issues of positionality, in questions of who has the power and authority to name, of who has the power and authority to subsume others into its hegemonic identity. Critical activity which locates geography as its field therefore pursues an active form of unnamings, renaming and the revising of such power structures in terms of the relations between subjects and places.*⁹

We can say that the suppressed unconsciousness of art history, namely, national art histories, was interfering with the idea of a horizontal art history. Ten years ago, the question of nation-building and nationalism seemed a distant and obsolete issue. But much has changed since with the rise of a populist and reactionary nationalism that has turned its back on refugees, immigrants and asylum seekers or, waged political, religious or ethnic repression against others. Germany, Poland, Hungary and the Netherlands have seen the rise of right-wing political parties, promoting xenophobia, hatred and racism within their country. In such a climate, the cause for any kind of regionalist, internationalist or universalist approach has been swiftly rejected as irrelevant, if not denounced as threatening to local interests and needs.

The changing political landscape of Europe has additionally altered the rhetoric, urgencies, alliances and agencies of academic discourse. The attempt to apply a regional perspective at a time of pervasive nationalism is also reflected in Piotrowski’s project of subverting the hierarchical position of different art histories by positioning them horizontally. Borders are being closed, but they continue to be crossed throughout the continent. It can be no longer simply the embrace of the national and with it, the sense of national self-definition but, rather the argument for and defence of some form of transnational values.

However, this position left Piotrowski with two issues. First, the key problem of horizontal art history is the problem of localisation: “We have the ‘history of modern art’ with no local specification while, on the other hand, (outside the centre) we have all kinds (of) adjectives specifying the regional!”¹⁰ Secondly, he was conscious of the paradox that equality might come at the price of losing local, and especially national histories, specificities, peculiarities, and subtle distinctions. He writes of the need to recognise

local canons and value systems which often contradict those of Western art centres. In so doing, one does not produce a single meta-narrative which would adhere to the West-centric, universal, vertical model of art history, but a horizontal, polyphonic, and dynamic paradigm of critical art-history analysis.¹¹

As Piotrowski argues, the key problem of a horizontal art history is one of localisation. Seeking to syncretize the two streams in his vision, he stated that "horizontal art history written from a micro perspective... has to make a critique of the essence of the national subject, has to deconstruct it, in order to defend the culture of the 'Other' against the national mainstream." He developed the solution of transnational, regional art history narratives which negotiate values and concepts along lines other than the opposition between national and international.¹² This changed orientation of the positioning, literally inverted the loci of the region's art history and challenged the centric position of the canon. Piotrowski offered a positive solution as to how to overcome the limitations of binary opposition, juxtaposing the diverse art histories of the centres and margins and placing them on the same level, removing any hierarchical or subordinate relations between them. According to this theory, the necessary act of levelling should be twofold; the manoeuvre of "localising" the centre should go hand-in-hand with an analogue process on the other side, namely, "The Other must also take a fresh look at itself, define its position and the place from which it speaks".¹³

We return to our beginning and the opportunity to explore lateral relations between local points of artistic and cultural production as the exhibition "The sun teaches us that history is not everything" seeks to do. But, unlike its predecessor "South by Southeast", issues, such as "immigration and refugees", appear as a contemporary issue to be addressed within a broader rubric. Once the character of the local in place, the positionality of subjects can then be distinguished in relation to its correspondences, affinities and distinctions with other localities. In this way, a mapping between localities exceeds the limits of the local, enabling broader issues and urgencies that impinge upon the daily character of everyday life to be addressed, regardless of national boundaries.

¹ Patrick Flores, "A Possible Coordinate" in *South x Southeast*, catalogue organized by Patrick D. Flores and Anca Verona Mihuleț (Hong Kong: Osage Art Foundation, 2016), pp. 6-14.
² Ibid.

³ Ibid.
⁴ Albert Camus, *O óbvio e o obtuso* (Rio de Janeiro: Record, 1995), p. 18.
⁵ Raphael Fonseca, "The sun teaches us that history is not everything", article present in this same catalogue.
⁶ The exhibition followed Harald Szeemann's seminal 1969 exhibition "When Attitudes Become Form".
⁷ Boris Groys, "Haunted by Communism" in *Contemporary Art in Eastern Europe*, ed. Phoebe Adler and Duncan McCorquodale (London, UK: Black Dog publishing, 2010), p. 18. See also my discussion of this subject in "The Specter of the Soviet Union" in *dí'van*, No.2 (2017), pp.28-41.
⁸ Piotr Piotrowski, "On the Spatial Turn, or Horizontal Art History", *Umeni/Art*, Vol. 56, Issue 5 (2008), pp. 378-383.
⁹ Irit Rogoff, *Terra Infirma: Geography's Visual Culture* (London; New York: Routledge 2000), p. 21.
¹⁰ Piotrowski, p. 381.
¹¹ Ibid., pp. 378-383.
¹² Ibid.
¹³ Edit Andras, "What Does East Central European Art History Want: Reflections on the History Discourse in the Region since 1989", *Extending the Dialogue* (Berlin; Vienna: Igor Zabel Association for Culture and Theory ERSTE Foundation/Archive Books, 2016), p. 60.

About Artist

Jonas Arrabal

(b. Cabo Frio, Brazil, 1984) Lives in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

Jonas Arrabal graduated in Performative Arts from the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro and received his master's degree in Visual Arts from the State University of Rio de Janeiro. His solo exhibitions include "Volume morto" (2015, Curitiba, Brazil); "Sinfonia tempo" (2014, Galeria IBEU, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil); "Fundação" (2014, CCJF, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil); and "Hipotética" (2013, Largo das Artes, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil). Among group shows, we highlight "Reply al" (2016, Grosvenor Gallery, Manchester, England), "Permanências e destruições" (2016, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil); 10th Mercosul Biennial (2015, Porto Alegre, Brazil); "Transição e queda" (2015, Porto Alegre and Rio de Janeiro, Brazil); "Frestas – Art Triennial" (2014, Sorocaba, Brazil); and "Deslize <surfe skate>" (2014, Museu de Arte do Rio, Brazil). He published Transição e queda (in co-authorship with Eduardo Montelli and Myara Martins Redin) in 2015 and Derivadores (in partnership with Luiza Baldan) in 2016.

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Chang Chi Chai

(b. Taiwan, 1963) Lives in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

Chang Chi Chai Chai graduated in Painting from the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro. She also studied Engraving and has a master's degree in Visual Arts from the same university. Among her recent solo shows, "Entreluz" (2018, Estudio Dezenove, Rio de Janeiro); "Devolver ao sonho" (2008, Galeria 90, Rio de Janeiro) and "Contradições" (2005, Centro Cultural São Paulo). She has participated in many group shows in Brazil, Spain, Germany and France. She has received important awards in the visual arts area in Brazil and her works are also part of the collections of many museums in Brazil.

Kent Chan

(b. Singapore, 1984) Lives in Singapore.

Kent Chan has participated in numerous group exhibitions and has held solo exhibitions at SCCA-Ljubljana (2017, Centre for Contemporary Arts, Slovenia); Grey Projects (2016, Singapore); Stedelijk Museum Bureau (2014,

Amsterdam, the Netherlands) and The Substation (2013, Singapore). His recent curatorial projects include "State of Motion 2017: Through Stranger Eyes and Superposition(s)" (2014, ICA, Singapore).

kentchan.info

Eric Fok

(b. Macau, 1990) Lives between Macau and Taiwan.

Eric Fok has a Bachelor of Visual Arts from the Macao Polytechnic Institute. His solo exhibitions include "Far East Chronicle" (2017, Karin Weber Gallery, Hong Kong); "Change of Times" (2016, Nam Van AnimArte, Macau); "Landfall" (2015, Art for All, Macau); and "Paraíso" (2014, Arte Periférica Gallery, Portugal). He has participated in many group shows in China, Taiwan, Singapore, Macau, Hong Kong, Portugal, Japan, Spain and the US. He was selected for Taiwan 2014 International Art Competition and also in China 2013 Art Nove. His work is part of the collection of the Museum of the Orient (Portugal), Macau Museum of Art, Oriente Foundation (Macau) and the University Museum and Art Gallery of Hong Kong.

Miho Hagino

(b. 1970, Hokkaido, Japan) Lives in Mexico City, Mexico.

Miho Hagino has resided in Mexico City since 1996. Her many individual shows include: "A Land in Memories", Mexico City International Airport (with Taro Zorrilla, 2010); "Blue Piano," Sala de Arte Público Siqueiros (with Aki Takahashi, 2005, Mexico City); "Flower Place. Already Made," Garash Galería (with Jason Rhoades, 2004, Mexico City). Hagino participates in a variety of ongoing group exhibitions in Mexico, Asia, the United States, and Europe. In 2009 she created the Fundación Paisaje Social A.C. (with Taro Zorrilla, 2009, Mexico City). Hagino curated the exhibition "Selenite Garden. Contemporary Art that Unites Mexico and Japan" (2017, Museo Franz Mayer).

Taro Zorrilla

(b. 1980, Mexico City, Mexico) Lives in Mexico City, Mexico.

Taro Zorrilla has degrees in Architecture from Waseda University in Japan and National Autonomous University of Mexico. He was included in the Mexican Pavilion of the first Lisbon Architecture Triennial in 2007, and he designed the cultural centre of the Japanese Embassy in Mexico in 2010. In 2011, he received a grant from the Pola Art Foundation. Recently, he has shown work at Mexico City International Airport (2010), at the Festival Internacional Cervantino in Mexico (2014) and at the Taro Okamoto Museum in Japan (2015) all with Miho Hagino. His work DREAM HOUSE, which focuses on the dwelling of Mexican migrants in the US, was included in "Transpacific Borderlands: The Art of Japanese Diaspora in Lima, Los Angeles, Mexico City, and São Paulo" as part of "Pacific Standard Time: LA/LA", Getty Foundation, at Japanese American National Museum in 2017-2018.

Fx Harsono

(b. Biltar, Indonesia, 1949) Lives in Jakarta, Indonesia.

Fx Harsono studied Painting at STSRI in Yogyakarta, Indonesia (1969-1974) and also studied at the Jakarta Art Institute (1987-1991). He worked as a lecturer in the Faculty of Art and Design of the Jakarta Art Institute (1985-1997) and later at the Pelita Harapan University, in Tangerang (2005-2013). With a career of almost five decades, the artist has a long list of solo and group exhibitions. Among the most recent solo shows, we highlight "Midnight Moment" (2018, Times Square, New York, the US); "The Chronicles of Resilience" (2017, Tyler Rollins, New York, the US); "Beyond Identity" (2015, Nexus Arts Gallery, Adelaide, Australia); "What we have here perceived as truth we shall some day encounter as beauty" (2013, Jogja National Museum, Yogyakarta) and "Fx Harsono: Testimonies" (2010, Singapore Art Museum, Singapore). He took part in curatorial group projects in Indonesia, the US, Taiwan, Japan, South Korea, Australia, the Netherlands, France, Thailand and many other places. He received the Prince Claus Fund Laureate award (2014) and the Joseph Balestier Award for the Freedom of Art (2015, from the US Embassy in Singapore). He is part of the collections of the Fukuoka Asian Art Museum (Japan), Singapore Art Museum, National Gallery of Australia and the National Gallery of Indonesia.

Mimian Hsu

(b. San José, Costa Rica, 1980) Lives in San José, Costa Rica.

Mimian Hsu studied Graphic Design in the Facultad de Bellas Artes of the University of Costa Rica. Her recent exhibitions include, "Soul Mining" (2017, ASU Art Museum in Phoenix, Arizona, the United States), curated by Julio César Morales (ASU Art Museum) and Xiao Yu Wen (Guggenheim New York); "Biomythography: Currency Exchange" (2017, Claremont Graduate University, California, the US), curated by Chris Christion and Jessica Wimbley; "Lo escrito, escrito está" (2016, Teor/ética, San José, Costa Rica), curated by María Paola Malavassi; "10,000 aguas, Versión 2", performance (Galería Des Pacio, San José, Costa Rica); "Retrato Familiar en Helvética" (2015, Teor/ética, San José, Costa Rica), curated by Inti Guerrero (Tate Modern); "Costa Rica el país más feliz del Mundo / La Suiza Centroamericana" (2012, MAdC, San José, Costa Rica), curated by María José Chavarria; "VII Central American Visual Arts Biennial", "Confines de Lucro I Project" (2010, Managua Nicaragua); "VI Visual Arts Biennial" (2009, Galería Nacional, San José, Costa Rica); "Sixth Visual Arts Biennial of Central America" (2008, Tegucigalpa, Honduras); "VI Visual Arts Biennial" (2007, Museo de Arte y Diseño Contemporáneo, San José, Costa Rica).

Mella Jaarsma

(b. Emmeloord, Netherlands, 1960) Lives in Yogyakarta, Indonesia.

Mella Jaarsma studied Visual Arts at Minerva Academy in Groningen (1978-1984), the Art Institute of Jakarta (1984) and at the Indonesian Institute of the Arts in Yogyakarta (1985-1986). She has lived and worked in Indonesia ever since. In 1988, she co-founded Cemeti Art House (with Nindityo Adipurnomo), a space for contemporary art in Indonesia, which recently changed its name to Cemeti Institute for Art & Society. Her works have been presented widely in exhibitions and art events in Indonesia and abroad, including: "Power and Other Things" (2017, Bozar, Brussels, Europalia); 20th Biennale of Sydney: "The future is already here – it's just not evenly distributed" (2016, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney, Australia); "The Roving Eye" (2014, Arter, Istanbul); Siasat - Jakarta Biennale (2013, Museum of Ceramics and Fine Arts, Jakarta, India); "Suspended Histories" (2013, Museum Van Loon, Amsterdam, the Netherlands); Singapore Biennale (2011, Singapore Art Museum); GSK Contemporary – "Aware: Art Fashion Identity" (2010, the Royal Academy of Arts, London, the United Kingdom); "RE-Addressing Identities" (2009, Katonah Museum, New York, the United States); "Accidentally Fashion" (2007, Museum of Contemporary Art, Taipei, Taiwan); Yokohama Triennial (2005), and many others. Her work is part of the

collection of the Queensland Art Gallery/ Gallery of Modern Art, Brisbane, Australia and the Singapore Art Museum, amongst others.

www.mellajaarsma.com

Juliana Kase

(b. Curitiba, Brazil, 1980) Lives in São Paulo, Brazil.

Juliana Kase is enrolled in the master's programme, research line Japanese Culture, Faculty of Philosophy, Letters and Human Science, São Paulo University. She has a bachelor's degree in Visual Arts, Santa Marcelina Faculty and in Graphic Design, Mackenzie University, both in São Paulo, Brazil. In addition to her academic research, she has always been concerned about multiple artistic fields, conceived normally as separated, and to comprehend different concepts of art in diverse cultures. In this sense, professional trips and art residencies have contributed to this interest. Among them are Frans Masereel Centrum, Kasterlee, Belgium; Vyrsopepeio, Athens, Greece; Condominio Cultural, São Paulo, and Merzbarn Environmental Engagement Residency, Cumbria, the United Kingdom. She has completed projects, beyond the visual arts, as her recent documentary, Editor por Editor (still untitled in English), about the poetic production of the nipo-Brazilian publisher Massao Ohno, supported by the grant Rumos 2016-17. Since 2004, she has exhibited her work in institutions such as Centro Cultural São Paulo; Funarte, Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo; Paco das Artes, São Paulo; Casa das Onze Janelas, Belem; Museu Nacional Honestino Guimarães, Brasília; Museu Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofia and Centrocentro Palacio de Cibeles, Madrid; Casa das Rosas; Galeria Pilar, São Paulo and in independent art spaces such as Estudio Dezenove, Rio de Janeiro; and Passagem da Consolacao, São Paulo.

Linda Lai

(b. Hong Kong) Lives in Hong Kong.

Linda Lai is an Associate Professor of Intermedia Arts at the at the School of Creative Media, City University, Hong Kong and a research-based interdisciplinary artist. Her teaching covers critical theory, experimental videography, contemporary and media art history and media archaeology.

She founded the Writing Machine Collective in 2004, a Hong Kong-based new media art group, and initiated the Floating Projects in 2015 to explore issues of sustainability and survival in art. Broadly known for her videography in international film/video festivals, she also uses different artistic mediums to turn art-making into criticism, history-writing, gaming, and voyages of discovery. Her works address the politics of language and narrativity, grounded in a feminist sensibility that questions hierarchies and boundaries in art and culture. A large-scale installation of hers is now a permanent collection at the Power Station (home for the Shanghai Biennale), and the Video Bureau (Beijing, Guangzhou) completed archiving 26 videos of hers (2000-2014). She just completed two site-specific versions of a moving-image installation, Mnemonic Archiving: a Dispersive Monument, at Pearl Lam Galleries, Singapore (2016) and Hong Kong (2017).

sweb.cityu.edu.hk/smllai/

Esvin Alarcón Lam

(b. Guatemala City, Guatemala, 1988) Lives in Guatemala City, Guatemala.

Esvin Alarcón Lam studied at the National School of Art "Rafael Rodríguez Padilla", and Universidad Rafael Landívar, Guatemala City. In 2014, he was finalist for the David Rockefeller Art Commission and exhibited at "Spatial Acts" (The Americas Society, New York City). Most recent solo shows include "Detrito Federal" (Casa Niemeyer, Brasília, Brazil) and "Displacements & Reconstructions" (2017, Henrique Faria New York, the US). In the same year, he was included in "Acts of Aggression" (Pollock Gallery, Dallas, TX) and received an honorary mention in "Ultracontaminados" where his work was featured in the Museo de Arte y Diseño Contemporáneo de Costa Rica (MADC) (San José, Costa Rica). In 2016, his work was included for the "XX Bienal de Arte Paiz" (Guatemala City) and in "Everyday Reflections in Abstraction" (SPACE, Irvin, California).

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Daniel Lie

(b. São Paulo, Brazil, 1989) Lives in São Paulo, Brazil.

Daniel Lie graduated in Visual Arts from the State University of São Paulo. He participated in residencies in France (2012, Saint Denis, Le 68); São Paulo (2014, Red Bull Station); Chile (2016, Santiago, Espacio Nave); Teresina (2017, Campo) and Indonesia (2018, Biennale Jogja XIV, Indonesia). His solo shows includes "Filhxs do fim" (2018, Casa Triângulo, São Paulo, Brazil); "Centro de morte para os vivos" (Vienna Festwochen, Austria); "Até onde você pode descer" (Change, Budapest, Hungary); "PODRERA" (Kampnagel, Hamburg, Germany) and "Pacto com o futuro" (2015, Centro Cultural São Paulo, Brazil). He was part of many group shows in Brazil and abroad, with special attention to his participation of the last edition of the Jogja Biennale, in Yogyakarta, in Indonesia (2017).

liedaniel.hotglue.me

Sandra Nakamura

(b. Lima, Peru, 1981) Lives in Lima, Peru.

Sandra Nakamura earned a BA from the University of California San Diego and an MFA from the Bauhaus Universität, Weimar. She has worked as an artist-in-residence at the Centro Cultural del Matadero (2006, Huesca, Spain); ARTIUM Basque Centre-Museum for Contemporary Art (2007, Vitoria-Gasteiz, Spain); Pilotprojekt Gropiusstadt (2007, Berlin, Germany); Hong Kong AiR / Community Museum Project (2008); Medialab Prado (2008, Madrid, Spain); Center for Contemporary Art Kitakyushu (2009); and developed site-specific installations for Centro Abierto, Lima (2009); Wattis Institute for Contemporary Art (2010, San Francisco, the US); I Biennial of the Americas (2010, Denver, the US); XI Bienal de Cuenca (2011, Ecuador); ARCO Madrid Solo Projects (2013); Galeria LEME (2014, São Paulo, Brazil); and MATE Asociación Mario Testino (2016, Lima, Peru); among others. In 2016, she received an award by the Cisneros Fontanals Art Foundation's Grants and Commissions Program.

Nguyen Trinh Thi

(b. Hanoi, Vietnam, 1973) Lives in Hanoi, Vietnam.

Nguyen Trinh Thi's video works have been shown at international festivals and exhibitions including 21st Biennale of Sydney; Jeu de Paume, Paris; CAPC

musée d'art contemporain de Bordeaux; the Lyon Biennale (2015); Asian Art Biennial (2015, Taiwan); Fukuoka Asian Art Triennial (2014, Japan); Singapore Biennale (2013); Jakarta Biennale (2013, Indonesia); and Oberhausen International Film Festival. In 2009, Nguyen founded Hanoi DOCLAB, an independent center for documentary film and the moving image in Hanoi.

nguyentrinthi.wordpress.com

João Ó

(b. Lisbon, Portugal, 1977) Lives in Macau.

João Ó has a diploma in Architecture from the Technical University of Lisbon (2001), and completed a master's degree with Distinction in Architecture and Urban Culture at the Metropolis Masters and Post Graduate Program, Universitat Politècnica de Catalunya (2010). He is a Macau-based Portuguese architect and artist, with prizes in both fields of activity, namely, a winner of the 40 under 40 award given by Perspective Magazine (2008, Hong Kong); represented Macau at the 53th Venice Art Biennale (2009), finalist at the Festival Temps D'Images - Film Award for Films on Art (2009, Lisbon, Portugal), awarded with the honourable mention in the Fundação Oriente Art Award (2012, Macau) and nominated for the Sovereign Asian Art Prize (2012, Hong Kong). In 2014, he represented Macau in the 14th International Architecture Exhibition of La Biennale di Venezia. Together with his partner Rita Machado, he founded Impromptu Projects Ltd, a multidisciplinary studio practice, focused on the design of ephemeral structures, as well as on the study of their social relevance. One of the studio's recent projects was awarded the A'Design Award (2016, Milan, Italy). Since 2016, he was appointed curator of the newly established Taipa Village Art Space, showcasing the "never-been-seen" artworks from local and international artists. Currently, he is a Visiting Professor at the Department of Architecture, Faculty of Creative Industries, University of Saint Joseph, Macau.

www.impromptuprojects.com
www.buildingsarenotenough.com

Yudi Rafael

(b. Curitiba, Brazil, 1984) Lives between New York, USA and São Paulo, Brazil.

Yudi Rafael is a researcher, artist and curator, currently pursuing a PhD in cultural studies at Columbia University in New York. His artworks have been exhibited, among others, at Centro Cultural São Paulo, Salão Cultural do Museu de Arte Brasileira – FAAP, SESC Pompéia, and at La Capella (Barcelona, Spain). He has curated several exhibitions in São Paulo, having worked at spaces such as Ateliê397, Oficina Cultural Oswald de Andrade and SESC Belenzinho; and was recently the co-curator of the Cambridge Artistic Residency (2016-17), a project dedicated to artistic and cultural collaborative proposals within an occupied building in São Paulo, for which he was a recipient of the São Paulo Association of Art Critics APCA 2016's "Urban Appropriation" award; and the assistant curator of the 2nd Frestas Art Triennial: "Between Post-Truth and Events" (2017, SESC Sorocaba). He has also organised and participated in several public programmes related to the Japanese diaspora and the themes of representation, memory and racialisation in Brazil.

Norberto Roldan

(b. Roxas City, Philippines, 1953) Lives in Manila, Philippines.

Norberto Roldan has a bachelor's degree in Philosophy from the St. Pius X Seminary, a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Visual Communications from the University of Santo Tomas, and a master's degree in Art Studies at the University of the Philippines Diliman. He has represented the Philippines in various international exhibitions in the Asia-Pacific, Europe, and the US, and in international symposia and conferences on independent art spaces and international cultural exchanges. He was represented in two landmark surveys of Southeast Asian contemporary art: "New Art from Southeast Asia" in 1992 by the Fukuoka Asian Art Museum, and "Negotiating Home, History and Nation: Two Decades of Contemporary Art in Southeast Asia 1991-2011" by the Singapore Art Museum. He was also represented in the recent acquisition exhibit "No Country: Contemporary Art From South and Southeast Asia" at the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum in New York, the Asia Society in Hong Kong, and the Center for Contemporary Art in Singapore. Roldan is currently the artistic director of Green Papaya Art Projects, an independent multidisciplinary platform founded in 2000, while practicing as a visual artist.

Mark Salvatus

(b. Lucban, Philippines, 1980) Lives in Manila.

Mark Salvatus graduated with a degree in Advertising from the University of Santo Tomas, Manila. His works have been presented in different exhibitions and venues including "SUNSHOWER: Contemporary Art from Southeast Asia 1980s to Now", (2017, Mori Art Museum); Philippine Pavilion (2016, Venice Architecture Biennale); SONSBECK International (2016, Arnhem, the Netherlands); 3rd Singapore Biennale (2011), 4th Guangzhou Triennale (2011), Jakarta Biennale (2011 & 2015), Koganecho Bazaar (2011, Yokohama, Japan), Hotel Inmigrantes (2012, Manifesta 9, Hasselt, Belgium), Roponggi Art Night (2013, Tokyo); Prologue Exhibition: Honolulu Biennale (2014), Survival Kit Festival (2014, Umea, Sweden); Asia Society (New York); Art Center Ongoing (Tokyo); La Trobe Art Institute (Bendigo, Australia); Cultural Center of the Philippines and Vargas Museum. Mark is a recipient of the 13 Artists Award from the Cultural Center of the Philippines (2012) and Ateneo Art Awards (2010). He had residencies in IASPIS Umea, Sweden; Art OMI, New York, Goyang Art Studio and Asia Culture Center both in South Korea. In 2006, he co-founded Pilipinas Street Plan, a community of street artists based in Manila and in 2012 he co-founded 98B COLLABoratory, a multi-disciplinary site for creative sharing, discussion and collaboration.

www.cargocollective.com/marksalvatus

Shima

(b. São Paulo, Brazil, 1978) Lives between Carrancas and São Paulo, Brazil.

Shima has a BA in Industrial Design (2001). His recent solo shows include "Profusion" (2016, Galeria Mezanino, São Paulo, Brazil); "(RE)" (with Rachel Schembri at SESC Palladium, Belo Horizonte, Brazil) and "You are here" (2015, Atelier Subterrânea, Porto Alegre, Brazil, 2009). He was part of group shows in Brazil, the US, Italy, Portugal, Poland, Austria, Chile and Japan. He received the Pipa Online Prize (2013, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil). He participated in residencies in many cities of Brazil, Belgium, Japan and the Netherlands.

www.shima.art.br

Melati Suryodarmo

(b. Solo, Indonesia, 1969) Lives between Gross Gleidingen, Germany and Solo, Indonesia.

Melati Suryodarmo has presented her work in various international festivals and exhibitions, including "Reenacting History: Collective Actions and Everyday Gestures" (2017, National Museum of Contemporary Art Korea, Gwacheon, South Korea); "SUNSHOWER: Contemporary Art from Southeast Asia 1980s to Now" (2017, National Art Centre Tokyo & Mori Art Museum, travelled to Fukuoka Art Museum, Japan); "AFTERWORK" (2016, Para Site, Hong Kong, travelled to 2017, Ilham Gallery, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia); "East Asia Feminism: FANTasia" (2015, Seoul Museum of Art, Seoul, South Korea); 8th Asia Pacific Triennale (2015, Queensland Art Gallery & Gallery of Modern Art, Queensland, Australia); 5th Guangzhou Triennale (2015, Guangzhou, China); "The Roving Eye: Contemporary Art from Southeast Asia" (2014, Arter, Istanbul, Turkey); "Medium at Large" (2014, Singapore Art Museum, Singapore); Luminato Festival (2012, Toronto, Canada); "Beyond the Self: Contemporary Portraiture from Asia" (2011, National Portrait Gallery, Canberra, Australia); "Marina Abramović Presents..." (2009, Manchester International Festival, Manchester, the UK); Incheon Women Artists' Biennale (2009, Incheon, South Korea); Manifesta 7 (2008, Bolzano, Italy); and "Wind from the East: Perspectives on Asian Contemporary Art" (2007, Kiasma, Helsinki, Finland).

www.melatisuryodarmo.com

Shinpei Takeda

(b. Osaka, Japan, 1978) Lives between Germany, Japan and Mexico.

Shinpei Takeda is the co-founder and artistic advisor of The AJA Project (<http://www.ajaproject.org/>), a San Diego-based nonprofit organisation working with refugees and marginalised youths using photography and storytelling. As a documentary filmmaker, he works on films with diverse topics including pre-WWII Japanese immigration to Tijuana, Mexico and the atomic bomb survivors living in the Americas (Atopus Studio). He is also a co-founder and member of Ghost Magnet Roach Motel (www.ghostmagnet.info), a noise punkformance unit in Tijuana, Mexico. His recent artistic projects include "Alpha Decay" (2010-2012), "Beta Decay" (2013-2017) and "Antimonument" (2015-). His works have been shown including National

Geographic Explorer's Hall (2003), United Nations Headquarter (2004), San Diego Museum of Art (2008), Centro Cultural Tijuana (2010), Kyoto Art Center (2012), Hiroshima Prefectural Art Museum (2015), Nagasaki Art Museum (2015) and Museo de Arte Queretaro (2017).

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Tang Kwok-hin

(b. Hong Kong, 1978) Lives in Hong Kong.

Tang Kwok-hin received his Master of Fine Arts from the Chinese University of Hong Kong in 2008 and Bachelor of Arts (major in Fine Arts) in 2006. He participated in la Biennale di Venezia: 15th International Architecture Exhibition at the Hong Kong Pavilion, 7th Bi-City Biennale of Urbanism/Architecture, 15th WRO Media Art Biennale, Hong Kong Contemporary Biennial Award in 2009. He has exhibited in Ice Palace (Miami, the United States); Osthaus Museum (Hagen, Germany); Centre for Chinese Contemporary Art (Manchester, in the United Kingdom); 4A Centre for Contemporary Asian Art (Sydney, Australia); Museum Bäregasse (Switzerland); Esplanade (Singapore); Singapore Art Museum; Guangdong Times Museum (China); Vargas Museum (Manila, the Philippines); Busan Cinema Center (South Korea); Hong Kong Museum of Art; Hong Kong Heritage Museum; Taipei Museum of Contemporary Art; Kuandu Museum (Taipei, Taiwan). He was awarded the first prize at Hong Kong Contemporary Art Biennial in 2009; selected by Sovereign Asian Art Prize in 2010, 2011 and 2014; awarded a Young Artist Award by Hong Kong Arts Development Awards 2010; granted by Asian Cultural Council in 2013. Collectors of his artworks include Hong Kong Museum of Art, Hong Kong Heritage Museum, Deutsche Bank, Amelia Johnson Contemporary and private collections in the US, the UK, Australia, Singapore, Austria, Taiwan and Hong Kong.

www.tangkwokhin.com

André Terayama

(b. São Paulo, Brazil, 1989) Lives in Munich, Germany

André Terayama obtained an MFA degree in Visual Arts from Institute of Arts of

Unesp (São Paulo/Brazil). Currently, he is a DAAD scholarship holder studying Fine Arts at the Academy of Fine Arts of Munich (Germany).

In 2012, he participated in 3rd EDP Prize in Arts at Tomie Ohtake Institute (São Paulo, Brazil); the 37th Salon of Art of Ribeirão Preto (São Paulo state, Brazil) and "Situações Brasília" at National Museum of the Republic (Brasília, Brazil), winning awards in all three contests. In 2015, he made the solo exhibitions "Stealth: Doppelgänger" at Paço das Artes (São Paulo, Brazil) and "Propositions" at Portas Vilaseca Galeria (Rio de Janeiro, Brazil). In 2016, he exhibited in the group shows "Vértice – Sérgio Carvalho Collection" at Centro Cultural dos Correios (São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro, Brazil), "Black & White", Collection of Contemporary Photography of the National Museum of the Republic (Brasília, Brazil) and "Duplo Olhar – Sérgio Carvalho Collection" at Paço das Artes (São Paulo, Brazil).

In 2017, he participated in the group exhibitions "In Memoriam" at Caixa Cultural (Rio de Janeiro, Brazil), "Jahresausstellung" at Academy of Fine Arts of Munich (Germany) and Vain Circularity at Espaço Z42 (Rio de Janeiro, Brazil).

www.andreterayama.com

Tromarama

(art collective created in Jakarta, Indonesia, 2006) Febie Babyrose, Herbert Hans and Ruddy Hatumena are the members and all of them live in Bandung, Indonesia.

Tromarama has had solo exhibition at the Stedelijk Museum (2015, Amsterdam, the Netherlands), National Gallery of Victoria (2015, Melbourne, Australia), Edouard Malingue Gallery (2015, Hong Kong) and Mori Art Museum (2010, Tokyo, Japan). Group exhibitions include the 4th Ural Industrial Biennial of Contemporary Art (2017, Ekaterinburg and cities of the Ural region, Russia), Gwangju Biennale (2016, Seoul, South Korea), Frankfurter Kunstverein (2015, Frankfurt, Germany), Samstag Museum of Art (2014, Adelaide, Australia), Singapore Art Museum (2012, Singapore), 7th Asia Pacific Triennial of Contemporary Art, QAGOMA (2012, Brisbane, Australia) and 3rd Asian Art Biennial (2011, Taichung, Taiwan).

www.tromarama.com

David Zink Yi

(b. Lima, Peru, 1973) Lives in Berlin, Germany.

David Zink Yi is a contemporary artist working primarily with video, photography and sculpture. He studied at the Universität der Künste from 1998–2002. Solo exhibitions include Williams College Museum of Art (2016) the Mistake Room, Los Angeles (2018), Charles H. Scott Gallery, Emily Carr University, Vancouver (2015); Kunstverein Braunschweig (2013); Neue Berliner Kunstverein, Museo de Arte de Lima and Kunstverein Hamburg (all 2012); Midway Contemporary Art, Minneapolis (2011); and MAK Museum, Vienna (2010). Group exhibitions include 8th Berlin Biennial (2014); Dublin Contemporary 2011; and 10th Havana Biennial (2009).

www.davidzinky.net

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About Contributors

Raphael Fonseca

Born in Rio de Janeiro, Raphael Fonseca is a researcher in the areas of curating, art history, art critic and education. He works as a curator at MAC Niterói (Contemporary Art Museum of Niterói) and is a professor at Colégio Pedro II. PhD in Critic and Art History (State University of Rio de Janeiro). He received the Marcantonio Vilaça Curatorial Award (2015) and the Centro Cultural São Paulo curatorial award (2017). He was a resident curator at ICA Singapore (January 2019) and Manchester School of Art (May-August 2016).

Among his recent shows, we call attention to “Lost and found: imagining new worlds” (2019, ICA Singapore); “Sonia Gomes – life is reborn, always” (2018, MAC Niterói, Brazil); “Sleepers – Pierre Verger” (2018, Caixa Cultural Rio de Janeiro); “Regina Vater – may the weather be good” (2017, MAC Niterói, Brazil); “Dura lex sed lex” (2017, CCPE, Rosario, Argentina); “Reply all” (2016, Grosvenor Gallery, Manchester, England); “Slide <surf skate>” (2014, Museu de Arte do Rio, Brazil); and “City as a process” (2012, Yekaterinburg, Russia). He was one of the authors invited to write for the catalogue of the 24th São Paulo Biennial (curated by Jochen Volz). Writes regularly to the ArtNexus magazine. He has given conferences at the Independent Curators International (2018, New York, the US); Centro de Arte Contemporâneo (2017, Quito, Ecuador); University of Hamburg (2016, Germany); Manchester School of Art (2016, England) and in many universities in Brazil. He was a member of the selection committee of the Pipa Prize (2018, Brazil) and of the Mariano Aquilera Award (2017, Ecuador).

Patrick Flores

Patrick D. Flores is Professor of Art Studies at the Department of Art Studies at the University of the Philippines, which he chaired from 1997 to 2003, and Curator of the Vargas Museum in Manila. He was one of the curators of “Under Construction: New Dimensions in Asian Art” in 2000 and the Gwangju Biennale (Position Papers) in 2008. He was a Visiting Fellow at the National Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C. in 1999 and an Asian Public Intellectuals Fellow in 2004. Among his publications are *Painting History: Revisions in Philippine Colonial Art* (1999); *Remarkable Collection: Art, History, and the National Museum* (2006); and *Past Peripheral: Curation in Southeast Asia* (2008). He co-edited the Southeast Asian issue with Joan Kee for *Third Text* (2011). He convened in 2013 on behalf of the Clark Institute and the

Department of Art Studies of the University of the Philippines the conference “Histories of Art History in Southeast Asia” in Manila. He was a Guest Scholar of the Getty Research Institute in Los Angeles in 2014. He curated an exhibition of contemporary art from Southeast Asia and Southeast Europe titled “South by Southeast” and the Philippine Pavilion at the Venice Biennale in 2015. He has been appointed the Artistic Director of Singapore Biennale 2019.

Linda Lai

Linda Lai is one of the artists participated in the exhibition. For her full biography, please refer to P. 108.

Caterina Riva

Caterina Riva is Curator at ICA Singapore, LASALLE College of the Arts. Riva graduated from the History of Art programme at Università degli studi di Parma, Italy (2002) and completed two Masters degrees, one from Accademia di Belle Arti di Brera, Milan (2004) and an MFA in Curating from Goldsmiths College, London (2008). She was one of the founders and co-director of the curatorial project space FormContent in London (2007-11) and the director of Artspace in Auckland, New Zealand (2011-14). Among the group exhibitions she organized are: *Big Towers* (2017); *Les Limbes* at La Galerie CAC; *Noisy-le-Sec/Paris* (2016); and *The Young People Visiting our Ruins See Nothing but a Style* at GAM/Galleria d'Arte Moderna, Turin (2009). Some of Riva's writings and accounts of her nomadic existence can be found on www.caterinariva.com

Solange Farkas

Solange Oliveira Farkas is a curator whose work has provided a platform for contemporary video art, with a particular focus on the global south. She has a strong interest in the influence of video as an art form and the relationship between video and other mediums.

Farkas is chief curator and general director of the Contemporary Art Festival SESC_Videobrasil, which she founded in 1983. She has also curated

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shows for FUSO - Video Art Annual International Exhibition, Lisbon (2011–2014 and 2017); Dak'Art - Biennial of Contemporary African Art, Senegal (2016); 6th Jakarta International Video Festival (2013); Sharjah Biennial 10 (2011); 16th Cerveira Biennial, Portugal (2011); Joseph Beuys: We Are the Revolution, Sesc Pompeia, São Paulo and Museu de Arte Moderna da Bahia, Salvador, Brazil (2010–2011); Roteiro Amarrado [Tied-up script], CCBB, Rio de Janeiro (2010); Sophie Calle – Cuide de você [Take care of yourself], Sesc Pompeia, São Paulo and Museu de Arte Moderna da Bahia, Salvador (2009) and Suspensão e Fluidez, ARCO, Madrid (2007). Farkas was the recipient of the Montblanc de la Culture Arts Patronage Award (2017), and is a member of the jury committee for the EYE Art & Film Prize, Amsterdam; the Prize committee for the Prince Claus Fund Award and consulting board of Pivô, an art space in São Paulo. She served as a guest juror at the 10th Rencontres de Bamako, African Photography Biennial, Mali (2015).

Charles Merewether

Born in Edinburgh, Charles Merewether received his BA (literature) and PhD in art history at the University of Sydney. He taught European modernism at University of Sydney (1981-84), Universidad Iberoamericana, Mexico City (1986-88), and Universidad Autonoma in Barcelona. He received a research fellowship from Yale University (1991), was Inaugural Curator for the Museo de Arte Contemporaneo de Monterrey, Mexico, (1991-1994), Curator at the Research Institute, Getty Center, Los Angeles (1994-2003) and taught at the University of Southern California. He was Artistic Director of the Sydney Biennale (2004-2006), Deputy Director of the Cultural District, Saadiyat Island, Abu Dhabi (2007), Director of the Institute of Contemporary Arts, Singapore, (2010-2013), Visiting Professor at Nanyang Technological University, Singapore (2014) and Hong Kong Baptist University (2015). He was Curator of Contemporary Art, National Art Museum in Tbilisi, Georgia (2016-2018). His books include *State of play* (2017), *After memory: the art of Milenko Prvacki and Under construction: Ai Weiwei* (2008), He was co-editor of *After the event* (2010), editor of both *Art, anti-art, non-art: experimentations in the public sphere in postwar Japan 1950-1970*, (2007) and *The archive* (2006). He is currently working on a book on contemporary East European art, and a book on the modern history of cultural looting to be published by Reaktion Books (London).

The Osage Art Foundation was established in 2005 with three main goals - Creative Communities, Cultural Cooperation and Creative Capacity and has since played an active role in developing education and training of young people, broadening cultural awareness and participation in artistic endeavors, nurturing creativity and critical thinking and fostering international cultural exchange.

As a consequence the Foundation has been developing two major platforms.

Regional Perspectives expands the cultural conversations happening within Asia and the rest of the world. This platform offers objective analysis and interpretations of cultural expressions and artistic ideas of creative individuals and allows them to collectively present their views and opinions to a regional and global audience.

HKACT! was developed since 2015 for the promotion of Art Culture and Technological Innovation in Hong Kong. HKACT! is a platform that celebrates art and ideas by bringing together visionary thinkers and innovators to help chart the future of a better society through a series of ground-breaking, cutting edge, innovative, technological art and cultural projects.

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