

MEDIA RELEASE

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Remnants of war transformed into instruments of healing in *Temple*, National Gallery Singapore's first interactive sonic installation

Vietnamese-American artist Tuan Andrew Nguyen invites visitors to interact with and experience Temple's percussive elements of healing, as part of the Gallery's eighth Ng Teng Fong Roof Garden Commission Series.



Installation view, Temple by Tuan Andrew Nguyen, National Gallery Singapore, 2025.

SINGAPORE, 23 October 2025 – National Gallery Singapore presents *Temple* by Tuan Andrew Nguyen, a multi-sensorial installation which fuses personal memory and material histories of the Vietnam War. Featuring percussive instruments crafted from defused unexploded ordnance (UXO) carefully removed from the landscape of Quảng Trị in central Vietnam, the installation invites visitors to strike the suspended shells, gongs, and chimes to generate a meditative soundscape.

Temple is the Gallery's first rooftop installation to integrate participative motion and sound. When struck, the percussive elements produce carefully tuned frequencies designed to complement one another. The MK82 bell, for instance, has been tuned to 432Hz – a frequency believed to be a 'universal frequency' of healing. Between 1963 and 1975, intensive bombing in Vietnam left over 1.5 million tonnes of UXO buried across the country. As visitors engage with *Temple*, they are invited to reflect on land, history and conflict.



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While *Temple*'s "day-glo safety orange" saturation recalls the American sculptor Alexander Calder's modernist stabiles, it is also a colour commonly used to demarcate unsafe areas contaminated by UXO in Vietnam's landscape. The installation's sculptural form draws from the limestone hills surrounding Chùa Hương, known as the Perfume Pagoda, a historic Buddhist pilgrimage site between Hanoi and Huế where the artist's grandmother Đặng Thị Lạc, a poet and former newspaper editor, once sought shelter. This interplay of form and colour underscores how *Temple* transforms remnants of conflict into tools connected to the possibility of healing and recuperation.

Artist Tuan Andrew Nguyen says, "I am grateful for the opportunity to present *Temple* at National Gallery Singapore on the occasion of the 8th Ng Teng Fong Roof Garden Commission. With this

installation, I wanted to bring to light the effects and the surplus of UXO in Vietnam's central region, specifically Quảng Trị, and how they continue to affect the community today. The residual effects of war carry on for several generations after wars end and I hope that through their interactions with *Temple*, visitors will pause to reflect and contemplate the great of potential of generating compassion, how ideas of reincarnation could open up space for empathy, and the healing possibilities generated through material transformation."

Dr Seng Yu Jin, Project Director of *Temple* says, "As the leading institution for art in Southeast Asia, we are committed to presenting thoughtful experiences that invite audiences to reimagine the region and its art through new lenses in ways relevant to our contemporary socio-cultural and historical contexts. Working with contemporary artists like Tuan Andrew Nguyen enables our audiences to interact with the installation and engage with global issues, utilising art as a critical touchpoint for contemplation, reflection and the transformative power of art in envisioning a better future."

In addition to visitors' interactions with the percussive elements, water hyacinth mats are provided to encourage them to sit within the installation, complementing their experience with *Temple*'s meditative soundscape and creating space for moments of reflection.



Installation view, Temple by Tuan Andrew Nguyen, National Gallery Singapore, 2025

Temple by Tuan Andrew Nguyen will be on display at the Ng Teng Fong Roof Garden Gallery, Level 5, City Hall Wing at National Gallery Singapore from 25 October 2025 to 11 October 2026. Admission is free. More information can be found on the Gallery's website: <https://www.nationalgallery.sg/sg/en/exhibitions/TEMPLE-by-Tuan-Andrew-Nguyen-.html>.

Temple is also presented as part of Singapore Biennale 2025: *pure intention*, alongside artworks by four other Biennale artists, sited across the Gallery. Singapore Biennale 2025 is commissioned by National Arts Council, Singapore and organised by Singapore Art Museum, and takes place from 31 October 2025 to 29 March 2026. For more information about Singapore Biennale, visit singaporebiennale.org.

The Gallery's Ng Teng Fong Roof Garden Commission series invites one leading artist each year to present site-specific works at the Gallery, with *Temple* being the eighth edition. Previous commissioned artists include Lisa Reihana, Cao Fei, Sir Antony Gormley, Shilpa Gupta, Rirkrit Tiravanija and Danh Võ. The series is made possible through a generous gift from Far East Organization.

Media assets are available through this [link](#).

- [Annex A](#): Biography of Tuan Andrew Nguyen
- [Annex B](#): *Temple* Programmes

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About National Gallery Singapore

National Gallery Singapore is celebrating its 10th anniversary this year as a leading visual arts institution and the largest modern and contemporary art museum in Southeast Asia. Dedicated to making art accessible to all, the Gallery engages audiences of all ages through its exhibitions, educational programmes, and public festivals.

Home to the world's largest public collection of Singapore and Southeast Asian art, the Gallery is redefining the region's art history through pioneering research, strategic acquisitions, and thoughtfully curated exhibitions. By offering new perspectives, it recontextualises the region's artistic contributions within global narratives.

Located in the heart of the Civic District, the Gallery is housed in two national monuments – the City Hall and former Supreme Court – making it an iconic cultural landmark where architectural grandeur meets deep historical significance.

A vibrant cultural destination, the Gallery has been ranked among Asia's Top 10 most visited museums by The Art Newspaper since 2019. It has also received accolades at the Singapore Tourism Awards, including "Best Leisure Event" for Light to Night Festival 2020 and "Outstanding Leisure Event" for Gallery Children's Biennale 2021.

As a registered Charity and an Institute of Public Character, the Gallery relies on public support to expand its collection, advance research, and bring art to more people, shaping cultural discourse and inspiring creativity for generations to come.

About the Singapore Biennale

The Singapore Biennale was established in 2006 as the country's pre-eminent platform for international dialogue in contemporary art. It presents and reflects the vigour of artistic practices in Singapore and the region globally, fostering productive collaborations and deep engagement with artists, arts organisations, and the international arts community.

The Singapore Biennale cultivates public engagement with contemporary art through a period of concerted activities including exhibitions, public engagement and education programmes that feature artist and curator talks and tours, school visits and workshops, and community days. It complements achievements in other areas of arts and culture, collectively enhancing Singapore's international profile as a vibrant city in which to live, work and play.

The National Arts Council (NAC) organised the first two editions of the Biennale in 2006 and 2008. Since 2011, NAC has commissioned SAM to organise the Biennale.

Annex A: Biography of Tuan Andrew Nguyen



Artist Tuan Andrew Nguyen pictured with his artwork Temple, National Gallery Singapore, 2025.

Tuan Andrew Nguyen's work examines the quiet, persistent shifts that occur when bodies, histories and environments collide. His projects are based on extensive research and community engagement, tapping into inherited histories and counter-memory. Nguyen extracts and re-works dominant, oftentimes colonial, histories and supernaturalisms into imaginative vignettes. Fact and fiction are interwoven in poetic narratives that span time and place.

Nguyen was born in 1976 in Saigon and emigrated with his family as refugees to the United States in 1979. He graduated from the Fine Arts programme at the University of California, Irvine in 1999 and received his Master of Fine Arts from California Institute of the Arts in 2004. Nguyen has since held solo presentations at the New Museum, New York (2023); Fundació Joan Miró, Barcelona (2024); Zeitz MOCAA, Cape Town (2024); and the Smithsonian American Art Museum, Washington, D.C. (2024).

Nguyen has received numerous awards, including the 2023 Joan Miró Prize. His works are held in the permanent collections of institutions including Carré d'Art, Nîmes; Queensland Art Gallery, Brisbane; SFMoMA, San Francisco; Museum of Modern Art, New York; Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York; and the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, among others.

Annex B: *Temple* Programmes

Programmes	
The Unburied Sounds of a Troubled Horizon <i>Film Screening and Artist Sharing</i>	
Date and Time:	Sunday, 26 October 2025 2pm
Venue:	City Hall Wing, Level B1, The Ngee Ann Kongsi Auditorium
Admission Details:	Registration required: Standard \$10, Concession \$7 https://www.nationalgallery.sg/en/talks/The-Unburied-Sounds-of-a-Troubled-Horizon-Screening-and-Artist-Sharing.html
Description:	This special screening of <i>The Unburied Sounds of Troubled Horizons</i> by Tuan Andrew Nguyen presents narratives and trajectories deeply connected to <i>Temple</i> . The screening will be followed by a conversation by the artist and his collaborators.
Performance Response	
Date and Time:	Friday and Saturday, 30 and 31 January 2026 5.30pm
Venue:	City Hall Wing, Level 5, Ng Teng Fong Roof Garden Gallery
Admission Details:	Complimentary, no tickets required
Description:	An interactive performance that brings the installation to life, merging art and history through sound. Intuitively responding to elements within the space including engaging bells cast from disarmed bombshells and plate bells shaped from unexploded ordnance, experience how these resonant materials evoke remembrance while opening new artistic possibilities. Discover how atmospheric sounds, wind-activated chimes and spontaneous musical gestures can transform the sculpture into a dynamic, living instrument, inviting contemplation and healing.