

NATIONAL GALLERY SINGAPORE

PAINTING WITH LIGHT

FESTIVAL OF INTERNATIONAL FILMS ON ART

1–24 JUL 2022

nationalgallery.sg/paintingwithlight

LET *Art* SURPRISE YOU



Film still from *The Mermaids or, Aiden in Wonderland* by Karrabing Film Collective

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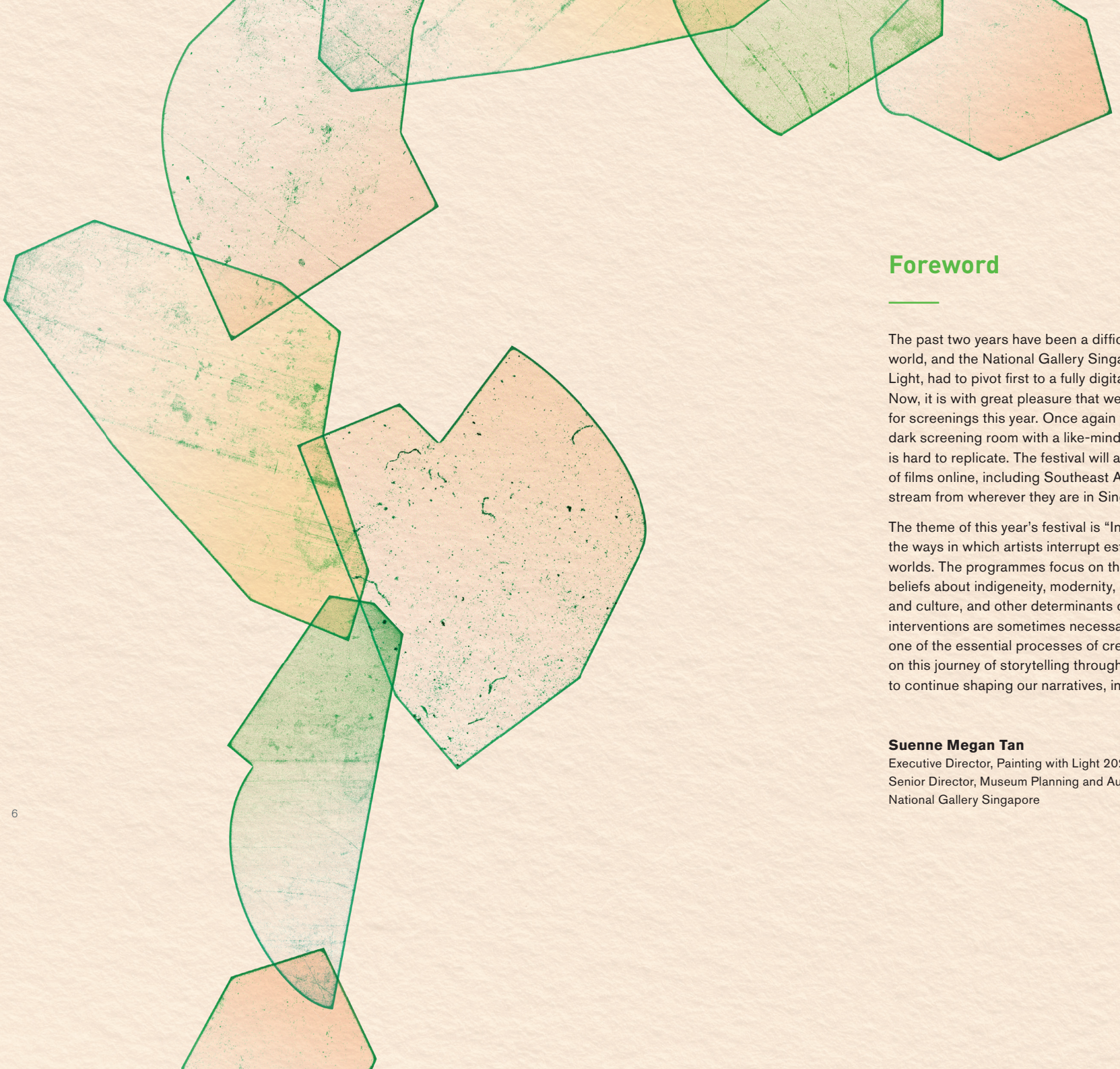


Foreword

The past two years have been a difficult time for people all over the world, and the National Gallery Singapore's film festival, Painting with Light, had to pivot first to a fully digital edition, and then to a hybrid one. Now, it is with great pleasure that we reopen our venues to full capacity for screenings this year. Once again we can enjoy watching films in a dark screening room with a like-minded audience, an experience that is hard to replicate. The festival will also continue to offer a selection of films online, including Southeast Asian Shorts that audiences can stream from wherever they are in Singapore.

The theme of this year's festival is "Interventions in Space," referring to the ways in which artists interrupt established patterns of being in their worlds. The programmes focus on the work of artists who engage with beliefs about indigeneity, modernity, class relations, government, art and culture, and other determinants of social structure. Just like how interventions are sometimes necessary in order to grow, disruption is one of the essential processes of creation, and we invite you to join us on this journey of storytelling through film. May it bind us, and spur us on to continue shaping our narratives, individually and together.

Suenne Megan Tan
Executive Director, Painting with Light 2022
Senior Director, Museum Planning and Audience Engagement
National Gallery Singapore

Artistic Statement

One of the installations in the Gallery's Children's Biennale this year is *Calling for Rain*, by the artist Khvay Samnang. It is a performance on film that takes inspiration from *Reamker*, the Cambodian version of the *Ramayana*. The film takes us on a journey through the landscapes of Cambodia as it follows the protagonist, The Monkey, on his quest to save the dying forest and its surrounding environment.

Artists and filmmakers have always played important roles, using their works to communicate messages about their environment. For this year's Painting with Light, the film curators have put together a programme that reflects what goes on around us and creates spaces for discussions about both global and local issues, from deforestation to demolition, globalisation to capitalism. How can we intervene when these issues come to the fore? What does it really mean to "intervene" in the first place?

Here are some highlights of Painting with Light 2022 that revolve around the theme of "Interventions in Space":

- Singaporean artist Robert Zhao Renhui captures scenes that are forgotten and invisible to most in his hometown. His film, *Singapore—A Growing Nation*, offers a chance to reflect on the neglected spaces of the country.
- Vietnamese artist Nguyen Trinh Thi's trilogy on Indigenous cultures explores the idea of the landscape as a witness to history, while also resisting the the narrative power of visual imagery that has been imposed by globalisation and westernised cultures.
- The films of Cambodian artist Khvay Samnang explore the importance of land, the impact of urbanisation, and the freedom of expression in pursuit of a free and prosperous life.
- Nyi Pu's *The Daughter of Japan* is a story about the power of intervention, sacrifice and pain that one has to go through in the quest to regain inner strength.
- Field Experiments consists of many hand-spun and textural works—Singaporean artist Chen Kunyi's award-winning short *Subida* acts as her personal diary of as she loses, and then finds herself while moving along to a sonic scape of nomadic rhythms.

I'd like to quote Khvay Samnang, "expression is important in the pursuit of a free and prosperous life of people." We hope these films will show you the value of artistic expression.

Tamares Goh
Artistic Director, Painting with Light 2022
Deputy Director, Audience Engagement
National Gallery Singapore

Schedule

		Page	Fri 1 Jul	Sat 2 Jul	Sun 3 Jul	Mon 4 Jul	Tue 5 Jul	Wed 6 Jul	Thu 7 Jul	Fri 8 Jul	Sat 9 Jul	Sun 10 Jul	Mon 11 Jul	Tue 12 Jul	Wed 13 Jul	Thu 14 Jul	Fri 15 Jul	Sat 16 Jul	Sun 17 Jul	Mon 18 Jul	Tue 19 Jul	Wed 20 Jul	Thu 21 Jul	Fri 22 Jul	Sat 23 Jul	Sun 24 Jul
Supreme Court Terrace (Supreme Court Wing, Level 4M)	**WAYS OF SEEING**																									
	Firestarter—The Story of Bangarra	14								7.30pm	7.30pm															
	Evenings with Khvay Samnang	24																						7.30pm	7.30pm	
	HOLDING SPACE																									
	Inside the Uffizi	28	7.30pm														7.30pm									
	INTO THE GALLERIES																									
	The Daughter of Japan	38		7.30pm																						
The Ngee Ann Kongsi Auditorium (City Hall Wing, Level B1)	**WAYS OF SEEING**																									
	Karrabing Film Collective—Day One	16									2pm															
	Karrabing Film Collective—Day Two	18										2pm														
	Nguyen Trinh Thi—Day One	20									4.30pm															
	Nguyen Trinh Thi—Day Two	22										7.30pm														
	HOLDING SPACE																									
	Scala	30		2pm																						
	INTO THE GALLERIES																									
	First Class	36		4.30pm																						
	Lights from the Underground	40			7.30pm																					
	Amrus Natalsya Who Recreates the Dispossessed in Twilight	44			2pm																					
	FIELD EXPERIMENTS																									
	In|sight—Programme One	48																2pm	2pm							
	Incite—Programme Two (Part 1)	52																4.30pm	4.30pm							
	SPECIAL FOCUS																									
	Social Realist Turns in Singapore Filmmaking (1950s–1980s)—Day One	72																							2pm	
	Social Realist Turns in Singapore Filmmaking (1950s–1980s)—Day Two	73																								2pm
The Ngee Ann Kongsi Auditorium Foyer	**FIELD EXPERIMENTS**																									
	Inside—Programme Three	56		11am to 7.30pm	11am to 7.30pm						11am to 7.30pm	11am to 7.30pm						11am to 7.30pm	11am to 7.30pm						11am to 7.30pm	11am to 7.30pm
UOB Southeast Asia Gallery 2 (Supreme Court Wing, Level 3)	**FIELD EXPERIMENTS**																									
	Incite—Programme Two (Part 2)	54																7.30pm	7.30pm							
Level 4 Gallery (City Hall Wing)	**SPECIAL FOCUS**																									
	Singapore—A Growing Nation	68																		10am to 7pm	10am to 7pm	10am to 7pm	10am to 7pm	10am to 7pm	10am to 7pm	10am to 7pm
	In conversation with Robert Zhao Renhui	68																							7.30pm	7.30pm
UOB Southeast Asia Gallery, Theatrette (Supreme Court Wing, Level 5)	**SOUTHEAST ASIAN SHORTS**																									
	Myth of Manila | New Abnormal	76	12pm	12pm	12pm	12pm	12pm	12pm	12pm	12pm	12pm	12pm	12pm	12pm	12pm	12pm	12pm	12pm	12pm	12pm	12pm	12pm	12pm	12pm	12pm	12pm
	Letter to San Zaw Htway	77	1pm	1pm	1pm	1pm	1pm	1pm	1pm	1pm	1pm	1pm	1pm	1pm	1pm	1pm	1pm	1pm	1pm	1pm	1pm	1pm	1pm	1pm	1pm	1pm
	The Sea Calls for Me | Dear Father	78	2pm	2pm	2pm	2pm	2pm	2pm	2pm	2pm	2pm	2pm	2pm	2pm	2pm	2pm	2pm	2pm	2pm	2pm	2pm	2pm	2pm	2pm	2pm	2pm
	Phnomkyo | Getting Lao'D	79	3pm	3pm	3pm	3pm	3pm	3pm	3pm	3pm	3pm	3pm	3pm	3pm	3pm	3pm	3pm	3pm	3pm	3pm	3pm	3pm	3pm	3pm	3pm	3pm	3pm
	A Million Threads | The Headhunter's Daughter	80	4pm	4pm	4pm	4pm	4pm	4pm	4pm	4pm	4pm	4pm	4pm	4pm	4pm	4pm	4pm	4pm	4pm	4pm	4pm	4pm	4pm	4pm	4pm	4pm	4pm
	Atrophy | Jodilerks Dela Cruz, Employee of the Month	81	5pm	5pm	5pm	5pm	5pm	5pm	5pm	5pm	5pm	5pm	5pm	5pm	5pm	5pm	5pm	5pm	5pm	5pm	5pm	5pm	5pm	5pm	5pm	5pm	5pm
	Age of Youth | Stay Awake, Be Ready	82	6pm	6pm	6pm	6pm	6pm	6pm	6pm	6pm	6pm	6pm	6pm	6pm	6pm	6pm	6pm	6pm	6pm	6pm	6pm	6pm	6pm	6pm	6pm	6pm	6pm



WAYS OF SEEING

Films on artists and their practices

FIRESTARTER—THE STORY OF BANGARRA

By Nel Minchin and Wayne Blair

Australia | In English | 2020 | 96 min | NC16 (Some Nudity and Coarse Language)

ASIAN PREMIERE

Fri 8 Jul | 7.30pm |
Sat 9 Jul | 7.30pm |
Supreme Court Terrace

Also online



Firestarter—The Story of Bangarra is a feature-length documentary on the beginnings and subsequent spectacular growth of Bangarra Dance Theatre, a company of professional Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander performers. The film acknowledges the company's founders and tells the story of how three Aboriginal brothers—Stephen, David and Russell Page—developed an amateur dance group into one of the most successful First Nations companies in the world today.

Bangarra, which means 'to make fire' in the Wiradjuri language, was formed in 1989 in Sydney. In *Firestarter*, interviews with founding artists are woven together with archival footage of landmark performances like the Sydney Olympics Opening Ceremony (2000). In tracing the history of the company, the documentary inevitably touches on political events in Australia that have profoundly affected Aboriginal ways of living, including the policy of assimilation that caused many First Nations children to be forcibly removed from their families. *Firestarter* explores this loss and reclaiming of culture, the burden of intergenerational trauma, and crucially, the extraordinary power of art as a messenger for social change and healing.

Firestarter had its world premiere at the Brisbane International Film Festival (2020), followed by screenings at film festivals across Australia.

DIRECTORS



Nel Minchin (b. 1985, Australia) is a director, producer and writer with a reputation for making smart, thought provoking and engaging documentaries. *Firestarter—The Story of Bangarra* was her debut feature documentary. Minchin's primetime television documentaries have reached a wide range of audiences. The AACTA nominated *Matilda & Me* and *Making Muriel* were listed in Screen Australia's most watched documentaries in their respective years of broadcast, while *Capturing Cricket: Steve Waugh in India* won its timeslot when it was broadcast.

Wayne Blair (b. 1971, Australia) of Batjala, Mununjail and Waka Waka descent, is an acclaimed film, television and theatre director, writer, actor and producer. Blair's debut hit feature film *The Sapphires* had its world premiere at the Cannes Film Festival in 2012. The film was screened at festivals including at Telluride, Toronto, Aspen, Zurich and Hamburg. He directed *Septembers of Shiraz*, which screened at the Toronto International Film Festival (2015) and featured an impressive award-winning cast including Salma Hayek and Adrien Brody.

This presentation belongs to a three-part film programme that explores prevailing narratives concerning Indigeneity in Australia and Vietnam. It is conceived in conjunction with the ongoing special exhibition, *Ever Present: First Peoples Art of Australia*, that runs from 27 May to 25 September 2022 at National Gallery Singapore.

The other presentations in this programme feature moving image works by the Karrabing Film Collective, an Indigenous media group based in Australia's Northern Territories, and Vietnamese artist Nguyen Trinh Thi.

As part of this programme, there will be free curator tours of the *Ever Present* exhibition on Sunday 10 July, 11am and 12pm. Registration is required. For more details, please refer to page 84.

KARRABING FILM COLLECTIVE

Day 1

Sat 9 Jul | 2pm | The Ngee Ann Kongsi Auditorium

What does it mean to be Indigenous in Australia today? This two-day programme presents the perspectives and work of the Karrabing Film Collective, an Indigenous media group based in Australia's Northern Territory, which uses filmmaking and installation as a form of grassroots resistance and self-organisation.

The programme on Day One will begin with a recorded talk by founding member of the Karrabing Film Collective Prof. Elizabeth Povinelli on the beginnings and workings of the collective, and the networks of power and politics that it encounters and reveals through its work. This talk will be followed by the screening of two early films by the Collective, *When the Dogs Talked* (2014) and *Windjarrameru, The Stealing C*nt$* (2015).

Elizabeth A. Povinelli (b. 1962, USA) is the Franz Boas Professor of Anthropology and Gender Studies at Columbia University and a founding member of the Karrabing Film Collective. Her books include *Geontologies: A Requiem to Late Liberalism* (2016), *Economies of Abandonment: Social Belonging and Endurance in Late Liberalism* (2011), and *The Cunning of Recognition: Indigenous Alterities and the Making of Australian Multiculturalism* (2002).

Karrabing Film Collective (est. 2007, Australia) comprises an intergenerational mix of approximately 30 Indigenous Australians, mostly from the rural Belyuen community, and anthropologist Elizabeth Povinelli, who has worked with them since 1984. The group was formed in response to the Australian government's aggressive Northern Territory National Emergency Response measures regarding welfare provision, law enforcement, and land tenure for Indigenous communities.

In the Emmiyengal language, "karrabing" means "low tide," foregrounding the connection between Indigenous peoples outside of divisions that the state puts in place based on clan and territory. Together, members have sought to generate their own model for Indigenous filmmaking and activism by creating art through communal thinking and experimentation.

Shot on handheld consumer-grade cameras and phones, most of Karrabing's films dramatise and satirise the everyday issues that members face, such as the bureaucracy of the nation-state, youth incarceration for minor offences, cuts in social welfare, and pressure on Indigenous communities to open up ancestral lands to mining corporations. These subjects are explored through an approach the group has termed "improvisational realism," which opens a space beyond binaries of the fictional and the documentary, the past and the present. Seamlessly blending fiction and documentary traditions, these films are a way for the group to retain connections to land and the ancestral Dreaming.

Its work has been presented at Institute of Modern Art, Brisbane; Van Abbemuseum, Eindhoven; Institut fur Auslandsbeziehungen, Berlin; Jakarta Biennale; Centre Pompidou; Tate Modern; documenta 14, Kassel; Melbourne International Film Festival; Berlinale; Asia Pacific Triennial, Brisbane; MoMA PS1, New York; and Biennale of Sydney; among others. In 2021, the Collective was awarded the Eye Art & Film Prize.



WHEN THE DOGS TALKED

Australia | In English with English subtitles | 2014 | 33 min 55 sec | PG13 (Some Coarse Language)

"Do you believe your mother's Dreaming?"

As a group of Indigenous adults argue about whether to save their government housing or their sacred lands, their children struggle to decide how the ancestral Dreaming makes sense in their contemporary lives. As they listen to music on their iPods, walk through the bush and go boating across the seas, they follow their parents on a journey to re-enact the travel of the Dog Dreaming. Along the way, the children press their parents and each other about why these stories matter, and what relevance it has with their modern worldview.

When the Dogs Talked premiered at the Gertrude Contemporary, Melbourne, and the Institute of Modern Art, Brisbane, and won the Cinema Nova Award for Best Short Fiction Film at the Melbourne International Film Festival (2015).



WINDJARRAMERU, THE STEALING C*NT$

Australia | In English with English subtitles | 2015 | 36 min 33 sec | PG13 (Some Coarse Language)

In the Australian bush, an Indigenous boy is at rest. This quiet scene is interrupted by a gang of four other boys who happen upon two cartons of beer nearby. A sharp exchange of words between them soon sets a series of events into motion that sees the group escaping into a radioactive marsh to hide from local police after being falsely accused of theft, while all around them miners continue to pollute their land.

Through this story of teenage boys who fall into a trap—presumably set to get them jailed for a minor offence—and have tricks played on them by ancestral spirits, *Windjarrameru, The Stealing C*nt$* blends Indigenous storytelling and modern concerns over environmental degradation and substance abuse.

The film premiered at the Melbourne International Film Festival (2015).

This presentation belongs to a three-part film programme that explores prevailing narratives concerning Indigeneity in Australia and Vietnam. It is conceived in conjunction with the ongoing special exhibition, *Ever Present: First Peoples Art of Australia*, that runs from 27 May to 25 September 2022 at National Gallery Singapore.

The other presentations in this programme feature the documentary *Firestarter—The Story of Bangarra* about the Bangarra Dance Theatre, a company of professional Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander performers, as well as moving image works by Vietnamese artist Nguyen Trinh Thi.

As part of this programme, there will be free curator tours of the *Ever Present* exhibition on Sunday 10 July, 11am and 12pm. Registration is required. For more details, please refer to page 84.

KARRABING FILM COLLECTIVE

Day 2

Sun 10 Jul | 2pm | The Ngee Ann Kongsi Auditorium

The programme on Day Two continues with a presentation of films produced by the Karrabing Film Collective. There will be screenings of their recent works, *Wutharr, Saltwater Dreams* (2016),The *Jealous One* (2017), *Night Time Go* (2017) and *The Mermaids or, Aiden in Wonderland* (2018).



WUTHARR, SALTWATER DREAMS

Australia | In English with English subtitles | 2016 | 28 min 53 sec | PG13 (Some Coarse Language)

In a series of surreal sequences, members of an Indigenous family offer varying accounts about what caused their boat's motor to break down and leave them stranded out in the bush. As they argue over what could have caused this—the ancestral presence, the regulatory state, or the Christian faith—they reveal the multiple tensions of contemporary Indigenous life

Based on real events, *Wutharr, Saltwater Dreams* explores how the Karrabing Film Collective's Indigenous filmmakers experience missionary Christian moral codes and settler rule-of-law, and how these layer, displace and are ultimately absorbed into ancestral territorial arrangements.

Wutharr, Saltwater Dreams received the 2015 Visible Award, and premiered at the Berlin International Film Festival (2017).



THE JEALOUS ONE

Australia | In English with English subtitles | 2017 | 29 min 17 sec | PG13 (Some Coarse Language)

While trying to attend a mortuary ceremony taking place on his ancestral land, an Indigenous man encounters a roadblock in the form of bureaucratic red tape. Meanwhile, a husband is consumed by jealousy over his wife's behaviour and gets into a fight with her brother. This action excludes him from the ceremony or *corroboree*, where they interact with the Dreamtime through music, costume, and dance. These two plot lines intersect in a dramatic finish as the characters are led to replay the ancestral story of the Dogs and Sea Monster.

The film premiered at Valkerij en Sigarenmakerij Museum with support of Frontiers Imaginary, Ed. 5, curated by Vivian Ziherl and the Aboriginal Areas Protection Authority.



NIGHT TIME GO

Australia | In English with English subtitles | 2017 | 31 min 10 sec | PG13 (Some Coarse Language)

Night Time Go is an exploration of the settler state's attempt to remove Indigenous people from their lands during World War II, and the refusal of the Karrabing ancestors to be detained.

On 19 September 1943, a group of Karrabing ancestors escaped from a war internment camp and walked over 300 kilometres back to their coastal homelands in Northern Australia. The film starts off as a historical retelling of the events of this ancestral journey, but soon shifts to tell an alternative history about an Indigenous insurrection driving out settlers from the Top End of Australia. Mixing drama and humour, history and satire, the film pushes subaltern history beyond the bounds of settler propriety.

Night Time Go was commissioned by Haus der Kulturen der Welt as part of the curatorial project *After The Wildly Improbable* (2017) by Adania Shibli.



THE MERMAIDS OR, AIDEN IN WONDERLAND

Australia | In English with English subtitles | 2018 | 26 min 29 sec | PG13 (Some Coarse Language)

In a not-so-distant future, Europeans can no longer survive for long periods outdoors in a land and seascape poisoned by capitalism, while Indigenous people seem to be unaffected by its effects. Aiden—a young Indigenous man who was taken away as a baby to be a part of a medical experiment to save the Caucasian race—is released into the world, and back to his family. As he travels with his father and brother across the landscape, he confronts two possible futures and pasts.

The Mermaids or, Aiden in Wonderland premiered at the Melbourne International Film Festival (2018).

This presentation belongs to a three-part film programme that explores prevailing narratives concerning Indigeneity in Australia and Vietnam. It is conceived in conjunction with the ongoing special exhibition, *Ever Present: First Peoples Art of Australia* that runs from 27 May to 25 September 2022 at National Gallery Singapore.

The other presentations in this programme feature the documentary *Firestarter—The Story of Bangarra* about the Bangarra Dance Theatre, a company of professional Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander performers, as well as moving image works by Vietnamese artist Nguyen Trinh Thi.

As part of this programme, there will be free curator tours of the *Ever Present* exhibition on Sunday 10 July, 11am and 12pm. Registration is required. For more details, please refer to page 84.

NGUYEN TRINH THI

Nguyen Trinh Thi's trilogy on Indigenous cultures in Vietnam—*Letters From Panduranga* (2015), *Fifth Cinema* (2018) and *How to Improve the World* (2021)—explores the idea of the landscape as a witness of history. These films employ non-linear forms of storytelling to interrogate representation in ways that point to, and ultimately subvert, dominant narratives.

Each screening will be followed by a dialogue with the filmmaker.

Day 1

FIFTH CINEMA / DIEN ANH THU NAM



Vietnam | In Vietnamese and English with English subtitles | 2018 | 56 min | M18 (Nudity)

Sat 9 Jul | 4.30pm | The Ngee Ann Kongsi Auditorium

Fifth Cinema is an essay film based on a 2003 lecture by Māori filmmaker Barry Barclay, "Celebrating Fourth Cinema," which proposes the need to identify an Indigenous cinema that is outside the traditional national narrative of modern nation states. He argues that it should also be distinct from First, Second, and Third Cinemas—Hollywood, European art house, and Third World cinemas, respectively.

Expanding on this proposition of a Fourth Cinema, *Fifth Cinema* is a deeply personal portrait of Vietnam, and what Indigenous cinema might be like from Nguyen's particular perspective as a citizen of Vietnam and the world, and as a filmmaker, an artist, a woman, and a mother.

In the film, the artist's own moving images are interwoven with found footage of popular movies, government films, newsreels, home movies, and YouTube videos, which reflects local, official histories and external viewpoints on Vietnam. In providing space for subjective and collective memories to co-exist, the film confronts issues in a Vietnamese context, but also in ways which are universal.

Fifth Cinema premiered at the 9th Asia Pacific Triennale of Contemporary Art (APT9), Queensland Art Gallery | Gallery of Modern Art, since then has been exhibited at many film festivals and arts spaces, including the Minneapolis Institute of Art (2019–2020).

DIRECTOR



Nguyen Trinh Thi (b.1973, Vietnam) is an experimental filmmaker and media artist whose practice has consistently engaged with the history of Vietnam. In particular, she is interested in connecting the moving image with sound practices, performance and alternative forms of storytelling. Her works have been exhibited at the Asia Pacific Triennale of Contemporary Art in Brisbane, Sydney Biennale, Jeu de Paume in Paris, Lyon Biennale, Asian Art Biennial in Taiwan, Fukuoka Asian Art Triennial, and the Singapore Biennale, and Rotterdam International Film Festival.

This presentation belongs to a three-part film programme that explores prevailing narratives concerning Indigeneity in Australia and Vietnam. It is conceived in conjunction with the ongoing special exhibition, *Ever Present: First Peoples Art of Australia* that runs from 27 May to 25 September 2022 at National Gallery Singapore.

The other presentations in this programme feature the documentary *Firestarter—The Story of Bangarra* about the Bangarra Dance Theatre, a company of professional Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander performers, as well as moving image works by the Karrabing Film Collective, an Indigenous media group based in Australia's Northern Territories.

As part of this programme, there will be free curator tours of the *Ever Present* exhibition on Sunday 10 July, 11am and 12pm. Registration is required. For more details, please refer to page 84.

NGUYEN TRINH THI

Day 2



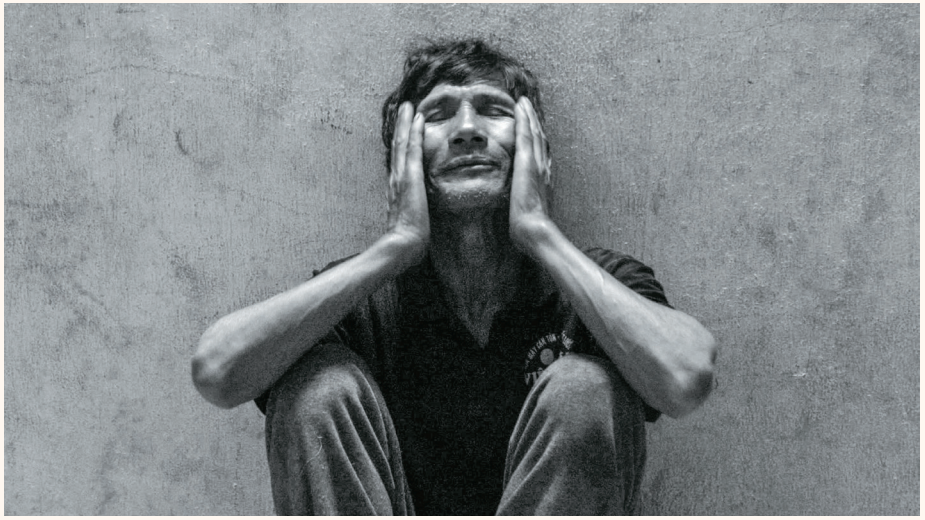
LETTERS FROM PANDURANGA / NHUNG LA THU PANDURANGA

Vietnam | In Vietnamese with English subtitles | 2015 | 35 min | PG

Sun 10 Jul | 7.30pm |
The Ngee Ann Kongsi Auditorium

Letters From Panduranga was made in response to a joint Vietnamese and Japanese proposal to build Vietnam's first two nuclear power plants in Ninh Thuan, formerly known as Panduranga. Situated in the last surviving territory of Champa and the spiritual heart of the Cham Indigenous people, this project threatens to erase this ancient matriarchal Hindu culture that dates back almost two thousand years.

The film takes the form of an exchange of letters between a woman and a man, who take turns to read. At one point, the woman remarks, "I'm trying to avoid speaking on behalf of the other." This desire to give voice to, while also taking care not to define another person's perspective, is reflected in the film as it veers between documentary and fiction. Through the layering of intimate portraits and distant landscapes, numerous traces of a historical and ongoing experience of colonisation unfold.



HOW TO IMPROVE THE WORLD

Vietnam | In Vietnamese and Jrai with English subtitles | 2021 | 47 min | PG

Set in the Central Highlands of Vietnam where Indigenous communities live, *How to Improve the World* is a film about listening. This film resists a Western reliance on visual imagery and looking as a dominant way of perceiving, and explores the aural culture of the Jarai people. The film centres on an elder musician named Ksor Sep, who testifies that sound or the action of listening, is essential for his vocation. It is also a process by which he makes sense of the world, expresses himself, and recalls memories. Echoing this worldview, the layered soundtrack— recorded and mixed by Nguyen herself—is an expressive and vivid one, delineating the complexities of both exterior and interior landscapes of Ksor Sep's people.

Ksor also quietly laments that singing, oral storytelling and the sounds of nature have declined over the years as modern development took over. Nevertheless, the core message of *How to Improve the World* is a hopeful one as the film mediates between an individual and their lineage, collapsing cultural and generational differences.

This presentation belongs to a three-part film programme that explores prevailing narratives concerning Indigeneity in Australia and Vietnam. It is conceived in conjunction with the ongoing special exhibition, *Ever Present: First Peoples Art of Australia* that runs from 27 May to 25 September 2022 at National Gallery Singapore.

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EVENINGS WITH KHVAY SAMNANG

Fri and Sat, 22–23 Jul | 7.30pm |
Supreme Court Terrace

This programme consists of a screening of multi-disciplinary artist Khvay Samnang's *Preah Kunlong* (2016–2017) and *Where is My Land?* (2014–2022), a live dance performance based on the films, and a dialogue with the artist and dancers moderated by Gallery curator Roger Nelson.



Khvay Samnang (b. 1982, Cambodia) graduated from the Painting Department at the Royal University of Fine Art in Phnom Penh, where he lives and works today. Khvay's multi-disciplinary practice uses humorous symbolic gestures to offer new views on historical and current events as well as traditional cultural rituals. His work focuses on the humanitarian and ecological impact of colonialism and globalisation. The development of each work is based on thorough research and investigation of local specificities, structures and conditions. Engaging directly and personally with local communities is an integral part of his work, which makes it highly relevant, critical and connected to contemporary discourses.

His most recent solo exhibitions include *Dancing the Land*, ifa Gallery Stuttgart, Germany (2022); *Calling for Rain*, Tramway, Glasgow, Scotland (2021); *A Forest of Spirit*, Nova Contemporary Art Gallery, Bangkok, Thailand; *Khvay Samnang "Preah Kunlong" & "Where is my land?"*, Batia Sarem Gallery, Siem Reap, Cambodia; *Capsule 10: Khvay Samnang*, Haus der Kunst, Munich, Germany (2019).

PREAH KUNLONG

Cambodia | No dialogue | 2016–2017 |
18 min 43 sec | PG

Commissioned by documenta 14, *Preah Kunlong* was made over 16 months. The film was the result of artist Khvay Samnang's engagement with the Indigenous Chong people in the Areng Valley in the southwestern province of Cambodia. Through observation and participation, he grew to understand their connection to their land, and how its spiritual terrain is mapped via ancestral and oral histories, and enacted through the body.

Using raw vines found in the valley that are normally used for making fish traps, Khvay worked with a small group of local weavers to construct sculptures of eleven animals that reference Chong totems. Chong totems are specific beings honoured in particular families for having once brought an ancestor to water in a time of need. These sculptures also served as intricate masks that Khvay's long-term collaborator



and acclaimed choreographer, Nget Rady, activates in performances across the Areng's waterfalls and forests. His performance is captured in this multi-channel video work.

As a form of intervention, Khvay's work is especially poignant as this film was made at a time when state and corporate interests were endangering the existence of the area—the largest remaining expanse of rainforest in Southeast Asia. The government had planned to build a hydroelectric dam on the Areng River, but eventually suspended the project.



WHERE IS MY LAND?

Cambodia | No dialogue | 2014–2022 | 23 min 03 sec | PG

In Cambodia, pumping sand from rivers for private development has been identified as a primary cause of erosion. It is also a serious source of environmental harm, resulting in forced eviction and even death. With few options for compensation, and little if any access to the luxury developments for which the sand is being mined, many are left wondering: where is my land?

Showing at Painting with Light for the first time is a single-channel version of *Where Is My Land?*, a mesmerising video work showing Nget Rady performing at three sites in Phnom Penh. These sites are: the remnants of a lake that has been filled in with sand by private property developers and with the exclusive Peng Huo housing estate visible in the background, the ruins of a destroyed house in a severely eroded section of a riverbank along the Mekong River, and the sand-pumping pipes in front of a Cham fishing village, with a luxury hotel looming.

While Rady is classically trained in the *Ikhon khol* tradition, there is hardly any trace of it in his performance here as he mostly improvises in response to these altered environments. Between close-ups of Rady's movements and wide-angle shots of the unnatural landscape, a displaced, disturbed, and desperate figure emerges.

Khvay Samnang's *Calling for Rain* (2021) is currently also playing as part of the Gallery Children's Biennale. This film is inspired by *Reamker*, the Cambodian version of the epic poem *Ramayana*. It takes viewers through the landscapes of Cambodia with Kiri the Monkey, KongKea the Fish and their friends who are on a quest to save the dying forest and its surrounding environment from the irresponsible behaviour of Aki the Fire Dragon.

Daily | 10am–7pm
The Ngee Ann Kongsi Auditorium Anteroom | Free



HOLDING SPACE

Films on institutions of art
and their communities

INSIDE THE UFFIZI

By Corinna Belz and Enrique Sanchez Lansch

Germany | In Italian, English and German with English subtitles | 2021 | 96 min | PG

SINGAPORE PREMIERE

Fri 1 Jul | 7.30pm (by invite only)
Fri 15 Jul | 7.30pm (Gallery Insiders only)
Supreme Court Terrace

Also online



Built in 1561, the renowned Uffizi Gallery in Florence, Italy, is one of the oldest museums in the world. *Inside the Uffizi* showcases its extraordinary collections, which includes masterpieces by Botticelli and other Renaissance artists. Here, the viewer is invited to gaze upon Leonardo da Vinci's *Adoration of the Magi*, examine Titian's *Venus of Urbino*, and be confronted by Andrea Commodi's *Fall of the Rebel Angels*.

The documentary is a rare opportunity to look at museum work from behind the scenes, like the painstaking restoration of a painting that was almost completely shredded in a mafia attack, the preservation of historical footage and photographs, and the design and set-up of exhibition spaces. What stands out is the passion and dedication of its director Eike Schmidt and his staff, as well as its audiences and supporters whose contributions collectively sustain the Uffizi's artworks for future generations.

This documentary also captures the making of British artist Antony Gormley's 2019 *Essere* exhibition in the Uffizi. In *Essere*, the artist's sculptures explore the body in space, and the body as space. Placed within the Uffizi, these works interact with its historic collection and architecture, as well as the city's rich cultural heritage. Through dialogues between Gormley and Schmidt, and between their teams, the viewer is introduced to the processes and challenges that go into successfully presenting contemporary works in a national monument.

Inside the Uffizi premiered at DOK.fest Munchen, DOK.panorama, Germany (2021), and screened at festivals including Shanghai International Film Festival (2021), Artecinema Italy (2021) and Beirut Art Film Festival (2021).

DIRECTOR



Corinna Belz (b. 1955, Germany) is a director, producer and lecturer, and is one of Germany's most renowned documentary filmmakers. She first worked as a radio writer and assistant director to Helga Reidemeister. Belz received the German Film Award for her film *Gerhard Richter Painting*.

DIRECTOR



Enrique Sanchez Lansch (b. 1963, Spain) is a Spanish-German director and a trained classical singer. He often deals with music in his films: *The Reichsorchester* focused on the Berlin Philharmonic in Nazi Germany, *Piano Encounters* talks about a childhood spent at the piano, and *Rhythm Is It!*, about 250 dancing teenagers. His most recent documentary is *A Symphony of Noise—Matthew Herbert's Revolution*.

As part of this programme, there will be free curator tours of the *Antony Gormley* exhibition at National Gallery Singapore on Sunday 3 July and 17 July, 11am. Participants will learn more about the process of exhibiting contemporary works like Gormley's in a national art institution and historical monument like the Gallery. Registration is required. For more details, please refer to page 84.



SCALA

By Ananta Thitanat

Thailand | In Thai with English subtitles | 2022 | 65 min | PG13 (Some Coarse Language)

ASIAN PREMIERE

Sat 2 Jul | 2pm | The Ngee Ann Kongsi Auditorium

The Scala Theatre was one of Bangkok's three great stand-alone cinema theatres built in the 1960s. Their construction was part of placemaking efforts to attract more visitors to the Siam Square shopping district. The success of the first two theatres, Siam and Lido, inspired the building of a third theatre with Art Deco-inspired architectural features that would make it the best in Thailand. Ironically, the project was so successful that land in the area became the most expensive in the country, and ticket revenues from screenings could no longer support the lease. Siam and Lido gradually closed their doors, leaving Scala as the last of the stand-alone theatres still operating in 2020. Despite surviving many industry shifts, including the advent of cable television and streaming service, public calls to gazette the building for conservation fell through, and the Scala was demolished in 2021.

This documentary chronicles the Scala's last days, amidst pro-democracy protests and the COVID-19 pandemic. Through the conversations of the workers dismantling building fixtures and the film director's commentary, we learn about the generations of employees and their families whose lives were inextricably connected with the spaces. By demolishing its iconic chandeliers, wall panelling and film projector, the glorious era of picture palaces in Thailand is irrevocably changed, and an important piece of collective memory has faded away.

Scala premiered at the Berlin International Film Festival (2022).

DIRECTOR



Ananta Thitanat (b. 1982, Thailand) grew up in the Siam Theatre, where her father worked as a film programmer. The military crackdown on the Red Shirts protests in 2010 inspired Ananta and Abhichon Rattanabhayon to start making their first short documentary together that year. Since then, she has always worked with Abhichon as assistant director and cinematographer, making documentaries *Ghost* (2020) and *Kembali* (2021). *Scala* is her first feature-length film.

INTO THE GALLERIES

Programmes on the art histories of Singapore and Southeast Asia

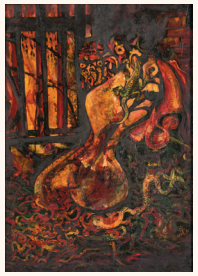


This programme is conceived by 3-ACT, a non-profit film community organisation in Myanmar that initiates projects to support new forms of storytelling. Examining past and present social commentary in Burmese cinema, this film selection consists of early classics by established directors—*First Class* by Tha Du and *The Daughter of Japan* by Nyi Pu—and an anthology of experimental short films by contemporary filmmakers like Moe Myat May Zarchi, Kaung Myat Thu Kyaw and Lin Htet Aung.

As part of this programme, there will be a free curator tour of the UOB Southeast Asia Gallery on Sunday 3 July, 11am. Participants will be brought on a tour of related artworks by celebrated Burmese artists like U Ba Nyan and San Minn. The tour will focus on modern art in Myanmar and the society to which it relates. Registration is required. For more details, please refer to page 84.



San Minn. *Age of Full Bloom.* 1979. Oil and metal chain on canvas, 89 × 59 cm. Collection of National Gallery Singapore. Image courtesy of San Minn.

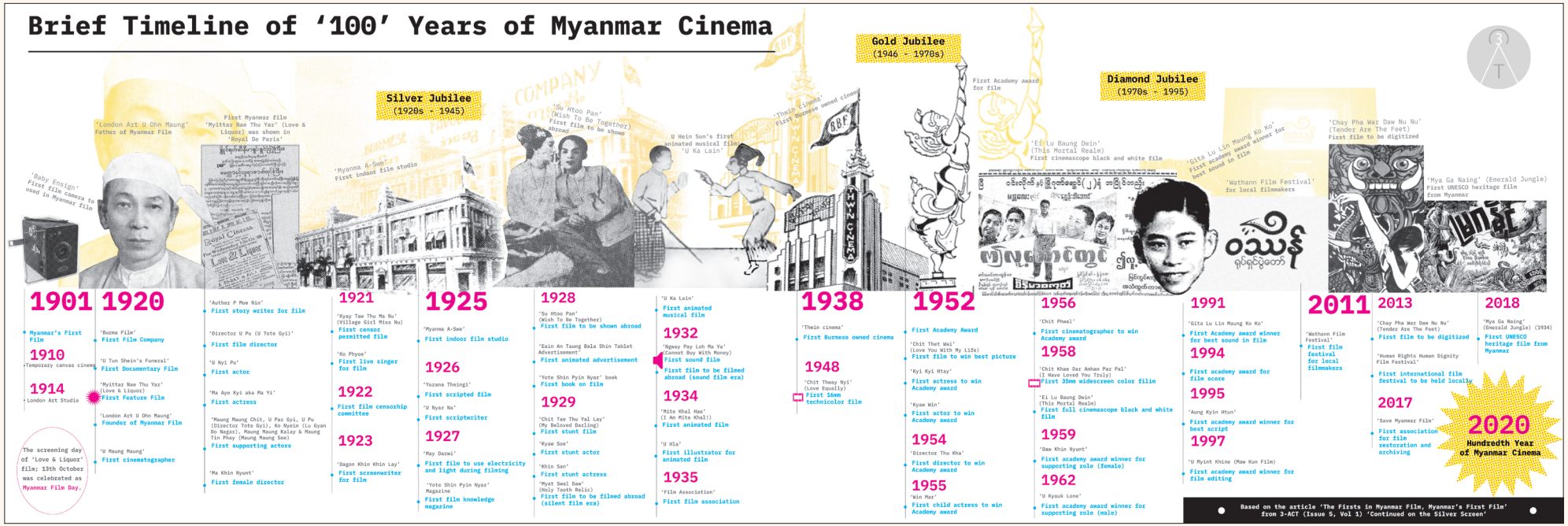


Bagyi Aung Soe. *Woman, Snakes, Lizards and Ogre.* c. 1972. Oil on Masonite board, 51 × 36 cm. Collection of National Gallery Singapore. Image courtesy of National Heritage Board, Singapore.



3-ACT was founded in 2018 by local filmmakers in Yangon. Although well-known in Myanmar, it is only now being discovered by cinephiles elsewhere, and has been featured in local and global media including *The Myanmar Times*, *NHK*, *Nikkei Asian Review* and famous French cinema magazine *Cahier Du Cinema*. 3-ACT has three main activities: publishing, programming and education. 3-ACT publishes a bilingual cinema magazine which is the only educational film publication in Myanmar which showcases new research. They also organise and curate film programmes, such as the MEMORY! International Film Festival, the Japanese Film Festival, Myanmar, and recently, the Ecological Futurism exhibition at Ambika P3, London, UK. 3-ACT's education initiatives include teaching Burmese cinema history at Yangon Film School, running workshops for experimental filmmakers, and organising panel discussions and talks at film festivals.

For more information on 3-ACT magazine, see: https://www.3-actfilm.com/3act-cinema-magazine.



This timeline was originally published in issue 5 of 3-ACT magazine. Reproduced with kind permission from 3-ACT.

MYANMAR CINEMA CLASSICS

Myanmar has a long history of filmmaking, but many early titles have been lost. New research by 3-ACT, as well as other organisations such as Save Myanmar Film and other archives across Asia, continue to uncover new and exciting cinematic discoveries. In this programme, two important Myanmar classic films—both never before screened in Singapore—reveal the rich and varied nature of Myanmar's cinema history, which continues to inspire filmmakers and cinephiles today.

FIRST CLASS

By Tha Du

Myanmar | In Burmese with English subtitles | 1966 | 119 min | PG

SNGAPORE PREMIERE

Sat 2 Jul | 4.30pm |
The Ngee Ann Kongsi Auditorium

In this humorous social commentary from the early years of one-party rule in Myanmar, a poor couple receives free first-class tickets to a film from a rich couple. In order to present themselves as "first-class," they end up spending more than the cost of a normal cinema ticket. The film is a satirical comedy about hypocrisy and arrogance.

This film was digitised in 2021 and newly subtitled in English with support from the Gallery in 2022.

There will be a post-screening dialogue which will discuss the significance of the films, as well as some behind-the-scenes insight into its recent rediscovery and restoration. The pre-recorded conversation will feature Aung Phyoe from 3-ACT, Maung Okkar from Save Myanmar Film, and Gallery curator Roger Nelson.

DIRECTOR



Tha Du (b. 1918, Myanmar; d. 1991, Myanmar) was an author, actor and director who also was a lieutenant marching in the 1300 Yaynanmyay Revolution. He has written about 20 novels such as *Chit Sannamu*, *Tet I Ka Myat Ko Ko*, and *Ah Tar*. *Tet I Ka Myat Ko Ko* won the Literacy Award in 1954 and was chosen to be a matriculation textbook. In 1959, Tha Du established a film production company and started making films. That same year, he won the Best Burmese Director Academy Award with his first feature film, *Ka Gyi Yay Ka*. In 1960, he won the award for a second time with *Ah Ngo Lwal Thee*.



THE DAUGHTER OF JAPAN

By Nyi Pu

Myanmar | In Burmese with English subtitles | 1935 | 84 min | Exempted from classification

SNGAPORE PREMIERE

Sat 2 Jul | 7.30pm | Supreme Court Terrace



Two young Burmese brothers and pilots visit Japan, hoping to fulfill their long-held dream of completing a nonstop flight from Tokyo to Rangoon (present day Yangon). Upon their arrival, the elder of the two falls in love with a Japanese woman named Emiko, casting a shadow over not only their flight plans but also the brothers' relationship.

Directed by and starring Nyi Pu, the "father of Myanmar film," the film was the first ever Japanese-Myanmar co-production. It was produced with the support of P.C.L. Film Productions and went on to be a big box-office hit in Myanmar.

DIRECTOR



Nyi Pu (b. 1900, Myanmar; d. 1996, Myanmar) is considered to be the first film actor in Myanmar cinema and was one of the accomplished film directors from A1 Films. He participated in the First University Strike against the British rulers. Later, Nyi Pu worked together with the photographer Maung Maung and attempted to make films. In 1920, he starred in the first Burmese feature film *Myitta Ne Athuyar (Love and Liquor)* as the protagonist. Later, he also became a filmmaker and made many films of different genres. Most of his films are silent and shot in black-and-white.

LIGHTS FROM THE UNDERGROUND

Sun 3 Jul | 7.30pm | The Ngee Ann Kongsi Auditorium

This programme features six recent experimental short films made by Burmese filmmakers. Most of the films were made during the pandemic, and some were made with the military coup in mind. At times quirky, spooky, funny and touching, the films mostly avoid dealing directly with these challenging circumstances, and showcase the creativity of a new generation of filmmakers in the country.

The films will be followed by a post-screening dialogue with 3-ACT members, moderated by Gallery curator Roger Nelson. This dialogue session is pre-recorded.



HER MIRRORS

By Moe Myat May Zarchi

Myanmar | In Burmese with English subtitles | 2019 | 15 min | PG

SINGAPORE PREMIERE

Her Mirrors is an impressionistic piece about the decay of a young woman due to her vanity. Enclosed in a dollhouse with no sense of time and space, she becomes increasingly trapped in her own world. Meanwhile, the mirrors in the dollhouse reflect just how polished or broken her own feelings are.

DIRECTOR



Moe Myat May Zarchi (b. 1994, Myanmar) is a filmmaker, a cultural practitioner and an audio-visual artist born and raised in Myanmar. Her films have won awards in festivals such as the Singapore International Film Festival, Vesoul International Film Festival and others. Her new media works have been exhibited at various venues in the UK, Germany, and Myanmar. She founded 3-ACT, and also co-founded MATTER audio-visual lab, the first interdisciplinary and experimental arts collective in Myanmar. She loves to explore identity, the metaphysical and the mythical aspects in storytelling through innovative use of visuals and sound.



TOMORROW I WILL GET BACK TO THE WORLD

By Collective (Moe Myat May Zarchi, Lin Htet Aung, Kaung Myat Thu Kyaw, Kyaw Linn Aung, Khin Thethtar Latt, Gabriel Htoo, Thiri May Thu, Griffin Neon, Chris Chan Nyein, Tharaphu Cho Thet)

Myanmar | In Burmese with English subtitles | 2020 | 20 min | PG (Some Disturbing Scenes)

SINGAPORE PREMIERE

During the COVID-19 pandemic, a filmmaker held a series of conversations with nine others in a day through video chats on Zoom. The result is a screen-recording representation of the collective consciousness and the emotional state during that period. *Tomorrow I Will Get Back To The World* is a film that experiments with the idea of making use of what is available during restrictive times. It is a visual diary that recounts a day in the life of ten individuals before they enter into a new normal.

DIRECTORS


Gabriel Htoo


Griffin Neon


Kaung Myat Thu Kyaw


Khin Thethtar Latt


Chris Chan Nyein


Kyaw Linn Aung


Lin Htet Aung


Moe Myat May Zarchi


Tharaphu Cho Thet


Thiri May Thu



SCRYERS

By Zune Htet (Thoughtform) and Miedo Total

Myanmar, UK | In Burmese and English with English subtitles | 2022 | 13 min | PG

ASIAN PREMIERE

Inspired by tarot imagery and concepts in alchemy, this video series features the figures of Death, Judgement and the World, and marks the transitional journey from a state of chaos to the birth of a new paradigm.

DIRECTOR



Zune Htet (b. 1992, Myanmar), also known as Thoughtform, is a multidisciplinary designer and visual artist. She graduated from LASALLE College of the Arts, Singapore with a BA (Hons) in Design Communication and has been working as a designer, art director and 3D artist ever since. Deeply inspired by nature, science fiction and mythology, she conjures fantastical landscapes of the unfamiliar and unknown through evocative visual narratives in the form of 3D art, motion graphics, and live projections.

DIRECTOR



Miedo Total (b. 1987, United Kingdom), also known as Alexander Comana, is a Welsh-Italian artist based in London, focusing on sound and performance to merge electronic and organic elements together with dramatic intention. He has created performance work for institutions such as the Wales Millennium Centre in Cardiff and God's House Tower in Southampton, and has exhibited in galleries throughout the UK. Comana also writes and performs original music under the moniker Miedo Total and has released a number of records on both European and US labels. He hosts a monthly radio show on Internet Public Radio, showcasing a wide variety of experimental music.



BURN BOYS

By Kaung Myat Thu Kyaw

Myanmar, UK | In Burmese and English with English subtitles | 2020 | 13 min | PG (Some Disturbing Scenes)

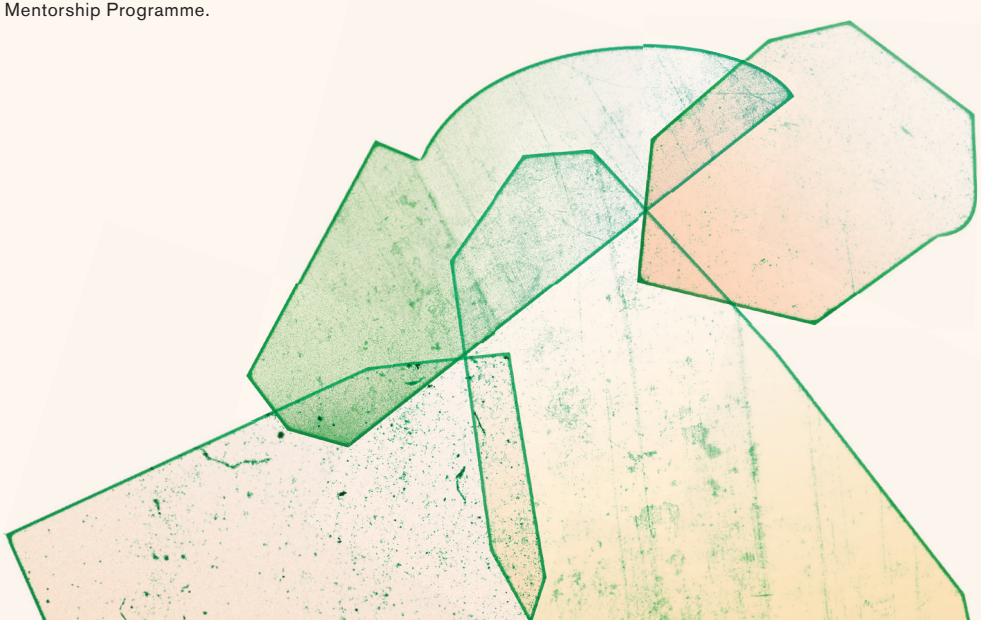
SINGAPORE PREMIERE

In this film, two sons of a Karen woman who was raped reunite with their father, a former Air Force officer.

DIRECTOR



Kaung Myat Thu Kyaw (b. 1987, Myanmar) is an independent filmmaker. In 2014, he studied filmmaking at Human Dignity Film Institute Myanmar, and joined the Myanmar Script Writing class two years later. He also studied at the local film festival's Master Class of filmmakers. In 2020, Kaung Myat joined 3-ACT's "Sculpting the Moving Image: Film Style/Film Form" Mentorship Programme.





ESTATE

By Lin Htet Aung

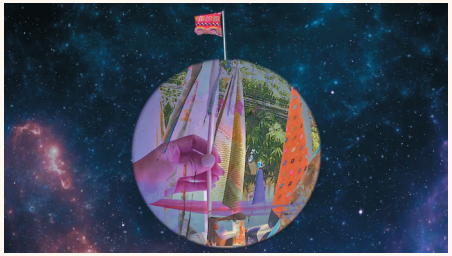
Myanmar | In Burmese with English subtitles | 2020 | 16 min | PG

A son looks after his dying father in their family home. Stuck there, they face old conflicts that resurface as death slowly approaches.

DIRECTOR



Lin Htet Aung (b. 1998, Myanmar) is a filmmaker and time-based artist based in Myanmar. He started making short films in 2017. In 2020, his short film *Estate* won the Silver Screen Award for Best Director at the Singapore International Film Festival. His latest short film has been selected for the Internationale Kurzfilmtage Oberhausen.



MOON LANDING (VERSION 2.0 LONGGYI)

By Moe Myat May Zarchi

Myanmar | In Burmese with English subtitles | 2022 | 6 min | PG

SINGAPORE PREMIERE

This audio-visual collage work juxtaposes two situations—the first time mankind landed and planted the US flag on the moon, and when Myanmar women first used their skirts (or *longgyis*) as flags during their revolt against the military coup of 2021. The two concepts are explored in the form of a glitched mashup, stimulating questions about revolution, freedom, claiming spaces, victory, colonisation and outdated patriotism. A malfunctioning version of the American national anthem, "Star Spangled Banner," and the revolutionary chants of Burmese women stand in contrast, while atmospheric sounds from the NASA moon landing play in the background.

DIRECTOR



Moe Myat May Zarchi (b. 1994, Myanmar) is a filmmaker, a cultural practitioner and an audio-visual artist born and raised in Myanmar. Her films have won awards in festivals such as the Singapore International Film Festival, Vesoul International Film Festival and others. Her new media works have been exhibited at various venues in the UK, Germany, and Myanmar. She founded 3-ACT, and also co-founded MATTER audio-visual lab, the first interdisciplinary and experimental arts collective in Myanmar. She loves to explore identity, the metaphysical and the mythical aspects in storytelling through innovative use of visuals and sound.

AMRUS NATALSYA WHO RECREATES THE DISPOSSESSED IN TWILIGHT

By Mahardika Yudha

Indonesia | In Indonesian with English subtitles | 2021 | 197 min | PG13 (Brief Nudity)

ASIAN PREMIERE

Sun 3 Jul | 2pm |
The Ngee Ann Kongsi Auditorium



Indonesian sculptor and painter Amrus Natalsya (b. 1933, Sumatra) was one of many who were detained without trial during the violent anti-communist purges in 1965–66. Natalsya was released in 1973.

After the 30th September Movement coup attempt was attributed to the Communist Party of Indonesia (PKI), cultural organisations which were deemed to be associated with the PKI had to disband. These include LEKRA (Institute of People's Culture) and their affiliated group, Sanggar Bumi Tarung (Fighting Grounds Art Association), which counted Natalsya among their members. The people's struggle was a concern that surfaced in their artistic work and brings to mind the social realist practices of artists like Sudjojono and Affandi.

This documentary traces Natalsya's personal journey and artistic development from the late 1950s to the present. It draws from extensive interviews with the artist, his contemporaries, art historians like Jim Supangkat, as well as Oey Hay Djoen, the leader of LEKRA. Director Mahardika Yudha also weaves in rare footage of artworks in situ—including the titular *The Dispossessed in Twilight*—as well as landmark exhibitions and events in Indonesian history. All of this offers a new perspective on Indonesian art history of this period. What also emerges is the enduring strength of a man's convictions about artmaking and humanism in the face of hardship.

Amrus Natalsya Who Recreates the Dispossessed in Twilight was part of the Press & Industry selection at the International Film Festival Rotterdam (2022).

DIRECTOR



Mahardika Yudha (b. 1981, Indonesia) lives and works in Tangerang, Indonesia. He is an artist, curator, art researcher and co-founder of Forum Lenteng. He also organised the OK. Video festivals in Indonesia from 2007 to 2017. With his interest in history, he traces, collects, and processes findings to inform artistic output. He has worked on projects like *Kultursinema*—an exhibition programme of Arkipel, Jakarta International Documentary and Experimental Film Festival—and created time-based media works ranging from video, documentary, and installation. His works have been exhibited in Videobrasil, Singapore Biennale, SeMA Mediacity Biennale Seoul, Yamagata International Documentary Film Festival, Kasseler Dokfest, Image Forum Festival Tokyo, and International Film Festival Rotterdam.

As part of this programme, there will be a free curator tour of the UOB Southeast Asia Gallery on Sunday 3 July, 12pm. Participants will be brought on a tour of artworks by LEKRA-affiliated artists, drawing particular attention to Natalsya's painting *Mereka Yang Terusir Dari Tanahnya* (*Those Chased Away From Their Land*). Registration is required. For more details, please refer to page 84.



Experimental film
and video from and
on Southeast Asia

FIELD EXPERIMENTS

IN|SIGHT—PROGRAMME ONE

Sat–Sun, 16–17 Jul | 2pm |
The Ngee Ann Kongsi Auditorium

This programme pairs a selection of experimental animations by pioneering Indonesian filmmaker Gotot Prakosa with the newly restored singular silent film, *Conversation in Space*, by the Philippine artist and art historian Rod. Paras-Perez. Prakosa was a trained painter, and painted directly onto 16 mm recycled film, while Paras-Perez extended his artistic practice and fascination with light through his student film from 1961. Together, these films are a direct crossover of film and the visual arts, utilising abstract and painterly forms with the moving image. The films also examine the relationship between visual and sound. For some of his painted films, Prakosa worked directly with musicians to develop their soundtracks. For *Conversation in Space*, the Gallery commissioned media artist Tad Ermitaño to present two different sonic responses.

This screening will be followed by a dialogue with Ermitaño and the curators.

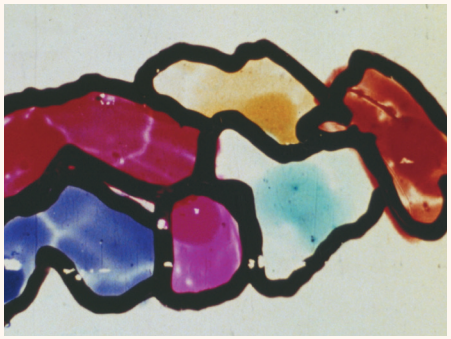


SELF-PORTRAIT / SELF-PORTRET

By Gotot Prakosa

Indonesia | No dialogue | 1982 | 3 min | Digital video file, original format unknown | PG

In this remarkable self-portrait, this animation film builds an intermittent close-up portrait of the filmmaker's face while integrating it with the processes involved both in painting and perception. At times it follows Picasso's maxim that a painting should incorporate—within the same image—its subject from different points of view.

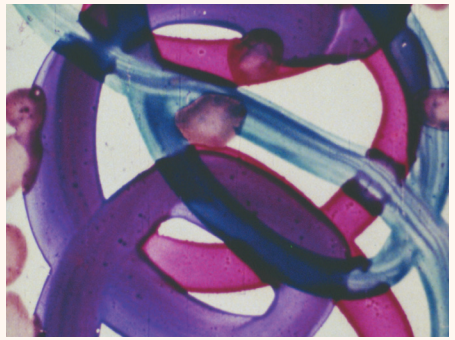


META-META

By Gotot Prakosa

Indonesia | No dialogue | 1978 | 3 min 34 sec | 16 mm transferred to digital file | Exempted from classification

In *Meta-Meta*, a child's dream comes to life as strange abstract ovoid forms merge and morph into each other against the erratic and arrhythmic soundscape by musician Slamet Abdul Sjukur. Drawing from his background in the visual arts, Gotot Prakosa painted directly onto recycled 16 mm film, illustrating a dream that he had when he was 12 years old.

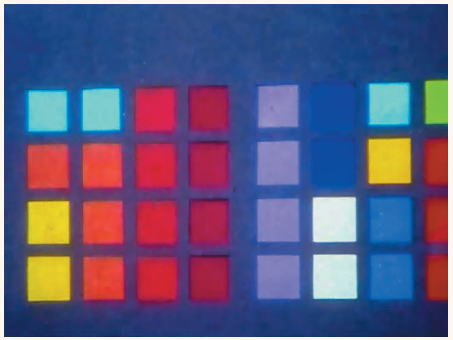


IMPULSE / IMPULS

By Gotot Prakosa

Indonesia | No dialogue | 1977 | 3 min 4 sec | 16 mm transferred to digital file | Exempted from classification

Created by painting directly onto recycled 16 mm celluloid film, this experimental short immerses us in an abstract world of flickering globules and flowing bands of colour. Abandoning objective representation, the filmmaker instead presents a kinetic array of visuals set against a rapid, drum-based soundtrack.



KUBIS

By Gotot Prakosa

Indonesia | No dialogue | 1978 | 4 min | Digital video file, original format unknown | Exempted from classification

Kubis alludes to modernism in art, particularly to its capacity for abstraction. In this film, contained within the two-dimensional frame, squares and rectangles of changing dimensions and colours create an abstract flow, set to the repetitive structures of the music of Philip Glass.

DIRECTOR



Gotot Prakosa (b. 1955, Indonesia; d. 2015, Indonesia) was a painter, filmmaker and author. For much of his adult life he was based in Jakarta, where from 2008 to 2012 he was Dean of the Faculty of Film and Television at the Jakarta Institute of the Arts. Gotot's work is noted for its sensitivity, light-heartedness, perceptiveness, and often irreverent humour, making him a completely original, yet unpretentious talent. In addition to his numerous minimalist short films and books on experimental filmmaking, Gotot worked on innovative projects with other Indonesian artists, such as performance artist Sardono W. Kusumo and writer-director, Eros Djarot.

CONVERSATION IN SPACE

By Rod. Paras-Perez

Philippines | Silent | 1961 | 2 min 48 sec | 16 mm transferred to digital file | Exempted from classification

WORLD PREMIERE

This film by the late artist and art historian Rod. Paras-Perez is one of the earliest experimental films of the Philippines. This vivid and captivating abstract animation was created with the use of collage and paint. The repetition and variation of an image in animation became a preoccupation for Paras-Perez in his artistic practice, which was expressed through printmaking, painting and sculpture.

The film was screened at the first ASEAN film festival held in Manila in 1971. The Gallery has commissioned this 4K digital restoration from its original 16 mm reversal film, which is premiering at Painting with Light. It will enter the Gallery's collection as its earliest moving image work.

Some of Paras-Perez's lightbox collage works are in the collection of the National Gallery Singapore and his woodcut print *Dolorosa III* is on display in UOB Southeast Asia Gallery 10 as part of the Gallery's long-term exhibition, *Between Declarations and Dreams: Art of Southeast Asia since the 19th Century*.



Rod. Paras-Perez. *Dolorosa III*. 1970. Woodcut on handmade paper, 76 × 49.5 cm. Collection of Rodolfo Perez, Jr.



For this programme, the Gallery commissioned two different sonic responses to this silent film by Tad Ermitaño, who is a key figure in media art in the Philippines and Southeast Asia, with a sphere of influence reaching as far back as the late 1980s. Considered to be one of the pioneers of sound art in the country as well as an explorer of experimental film, his artistic practice has since grown into a remarkable assertion of technology. His projects often involve the manipulation of aural and visual phenomena—something that the artist combines with an instinctive aesthetic understanding of how time-based elements interact with spatial structures.

DIRECTOR



Rodolfo "Rod" Paras-Perez (b. 1934, Philippines; d. 2011, Philippines) was a Philippine artist and art historian. As an artist, he was known for his work in printmaking, particularly in woodcuts. He studied BFA at the University of the Philippines, graduating cum laude in 1957. In 1961, he graduated from the University of Minnesota with an MFA in Art and a Minor in Philosophy, and a year later he graduated with a Master of Arts from the same university. After that, Paras-Perez took his Ph.D. in Art History from Harvard University in 1971. He received the first and second prize in Graphic Art at the Art Association of the Philippines (AAP) Semi-Annual Show in 1962 and won the AAP's First Prize in Painting in 1963. He was one of the earliest artists in the Philippines to experiment with using light as a medium.

INCITE—PROGRAMME TWO

This programme features Southeast Asian experimental animations which provoke, incite and address critical issues in society. The line-up includes films by renowned Indonesian filmmaker Gotot Prakosa, the legendary Philippine animator Roxlee, and *Tadhana*, the first full-length Philippine animated film directed by Nonoy Marcelo.

Part 1 and Part 2 of the programme are ticketed separately, with different screening times and venues.

Part 1: Short films of Gotot Prakosa and Rox Lee

Sat 16 Jul | 4.30pm | The Ngee Ann Kongsi Auditorium
There will be a post-screening dialogue with Indonesian artist and curator Rizki Lazuardi.

Sun 17 Jul | 4.30pm | The Ngee Ann Kongsi Auditorium



A = ABSOLUTE, Z = ZEN
By Gotot Prakosa

Indonesia | No dialogue | 1983 | 9 min 35 sec | 16 mm transferred to digital file | PG

In this film, Gotot Prakosa draws a connection between the values and visions of Buddhism as it is practised in Borobudur, Indonesia and the spirit of Zen Buddhism in Japan. He combines his original illustrations with images of other works of art and photography to reflect on society's consumerist habits.



THE GREAT SMOKE
By Rox Lee

Philippines | No dialogue | 1984 | 7 min | Super 8 mm transferred to digital file | NC16 (Some Sexual References and Disturbing Scenes)

Shot in his garage, Rox Lee's first solo film is a biting satire on nuclear destruction, comprising found footage, collage, and animated drawings. Violence, sickness, death and perversion are imaginatively conveyed through Lee's pen. The film was made during the Cold War, conveying the anxieties of nuclear power at a tense time in history.





GENESIS GENESIS
By Gotot Prakosa

Indonesia | No dialogue | 1981 | 11 min 7 sec | 16 mm transferred to digital file | Exempted from classification

Inspired by Indonesian mythology, Gotot Prakosa explores class differences with the use of stop-motion animation. He uses decorated eggs, apples and yams to stand in as characters in this two-part film.

BE AND IT IS / KOEN FAYA KOEN
By Gotot Prakosa

Indonesia | No dialogue | 1979 | 2 min 59 sec | 16 mm transferred to digital file | Rating TBA

In this irreverent take on the creation of the world, a tree and a mysterious couple are birthed with the wave of a magic wand. An apple presented by a serpent is eaten before the film reveals a stunning surprise.

DIRECTOR



Gotot Prakosa (b. 1955, Indonesia; d. 2015, Indonesia) was a painter, filmmaker and author. For much of his adult life he was based in Jakarta, where from 2008 to 2012 he was Dean of the Faculty of Film and Television at the Jakarta Institute of the Arts. Gotot's work is noted for its sensitivity, light-heartedness, perceptiveness, and often irreverent humour, making him a completely original, yet unpretentious talent. In addition to his numerous minimalist short films and books on experimental filmmaking, Gotot worked on innovative projects with other Indonesian artists, such as performance artist Sardono W. Kusumo and writer-director, Eros Djarot.



NON-KB (A FILM ABOUT FAMILY PLANNING)

By Gotot Prakosa

Indonesia | No dialogue | 1979 | 1 min 29 sec | 16 mm transferred to digital file | NC16 (Some Mature Content)

Painted hearts and penises flicker about in a frenetic dance of desire and sex, set to the frantic melodies of *Flight of the Bumblebee*. Responding to the Indonesian government's *Keluarga Berencana* (KB) films about family planning, Gotot Prakosa provides an alternate view to this issue.



ABCD

By Rox Lee

Philippines | No dialogue | 1985 | 5 min | Super 8 mm transferred to digital file | M18 (Some Sexual Scenes)

In *ABCD*, Rox Lee advocates for a new and personal take on the alphabet, utilising every letter to convey whimsy, humour and socio-political critique. This Super 8mm film was made quickly, and its distinctly unpolished appearance gives it a level of honesty and sincerity to the issues that Lee felt were plaguing society at the time.

DIRECTOR



Roque Federizon Lee, also known as **Rox Lee** (b. 1950, Philippines), is a Filipino animator, writer, cartoonist, painter, musician, and filmmaker. The co-creator of iconic Filipino comic character Cesar Asar, he is a pioneer of independent film animation in the Philippines. His early works shot on Super 8 film are now considered classics of the underground film movement of the 1980s, and his manifesto, "The 12 Commandments for Independent Filmmakers," continues to inspire Filipino filmmakers today. In 2010, he was awarded the Lifetime Achievement Award by the Animation Council of the Philippines Incorporated (ACPI), and in 2020 he was awarded the FAMAS (Filipino Academy of Movie Arts and Sciences) Lifetime Achievement Award for Alternative Cinema.

Part 2: Tadhana →

Sat 16 Jul | 7.30pm | UOB Southeast Asia Gallery 2
There will be a post-screening dialogue with Ricky Orellana, Director of the Mowelfund Film Institute of the Philippines and board member of the Animation Council of the Philippines.

Sun 17 Jul | 7.30pm | UOB Southeast Asia Gallery 2
There will be a post-screening dialogue with Ricky Orellana and DengCoy Miel, Filipino visual artist and veteran cartoonist of *The Straits Times* who worked closely with Marcelo in the 1980s.



DESTINY / TADHANA

By Nonoy Marcelo

Philippines | In Filipino and English with English subtitles | 1978 | 54 min | Digital file transferred from U-matic, copied from Betamax recording of TV broadcast of 35 mm film edited on U-matic | Rating TBA

INTERNATIONAL PREMIERE

Directed by the cartoonist Nonoy Marcelo, *Tadhana* is the first Philippine full-length animated film. It was commissioned to be based on the book of the same name on the history of the Filipino people. The book's author is credited as the authoritarian and then-President Ferdinand Marcos, but was actually ghostwritten by other historians. The film presents a satirical, humorous and poignant view of the Philippines' history of Spanish colonisation through highly original and surreal vignettes fusing art, mythology and music. Several artists collaborated, voiced characters and appear in the film. Noted printmaker Pandy Aviado served as the film's assistant director while Santiago Bose was one of the film's many animators.

Tadhana premiered on Philippine television during the anniversary of Martial Law in 1978 before the original 35mm film reel mysteriously disappeared. The only known copy of the film left is a recording on Betamax tape by film archivist Teddy Co, made during the film's live broadcast. The tape was transferred to U-matic, and this U-matic tape has been digitised, translated and subtitled by Mowelfund Film Institute for this programme. This is its first screening outside the Philippines.

DIRECTOR



Nonoy Marcelo (b. 1939, Philippines; d. 2002, Philippines) was a Filipino cartoonist and animator. He is most well-known for his irreverent cartoons, *Ikabod* and *Tisoy*, which provided commentary on various Philippine issues. Tasked with directing and animating propaganda for the Marcos administration, Marcelo nonetheless continued to critique the repressive regime, infusing his projects with his signature subversive humour. For his work, he was awarded the Catholic Mass Media Award in 1985, an accolade usually reserved for journalists. He was also awarded the Cultural Center of the Philippines' Centennial Artist Award in 1998, the only cartoonist to have received the distinction.

INSIDE—PROGRAMME THREE

Every Saturday and Sunday | At the top of the hour from 11am to 7.30pm | The Ngee Ann Kongsi Auditorium Foyer

There will be a post-screening dialogue with Indonesian artist and curator Rizki Lazuardi in the Auditorium Foyer on Sunday 17 July, 5.30 pm.

The third programme in this year's Field Experiments pays special attention to the ways in which animation can be a space for artists to work through new and tentative ideas. These artists often dabble in animation, and do not work exclusively with it. The Inside segment will be projected in a double void space to provoke thought about animation as a form through a porous space, moving such works consciously out of the "black box" of cinema.



SERIGALA MILITIA

By Tromarama

Indonesia | No dialogue | 2006 | 4 min 22 sec | PG

An early stop-motion animation work inspired by the music of Jakarta-based rock band Seringal, this film was made using 400 woodcut plywood boards.

DIRECTOR



Tromarama is an art collective founded in 2006 by Febie Babyrose, Herbert Hans and Ruddy Hatumena. Their projects explore the interrelationship between the virtual and the physical world, and engage with the notion of hyperreality in the digital age. Additionally, their works often combine video, installations, computer programming and public participation depicting the influence of digital media on society's perception of their surroundings. They live and work between Jakarta and Bandung.

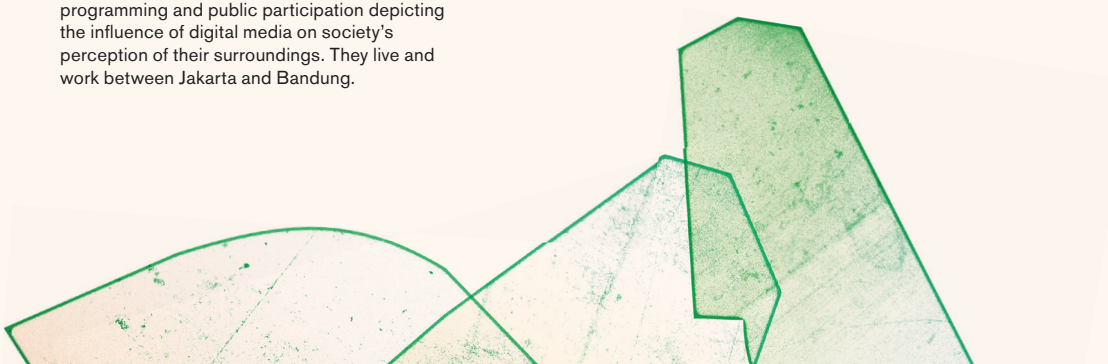


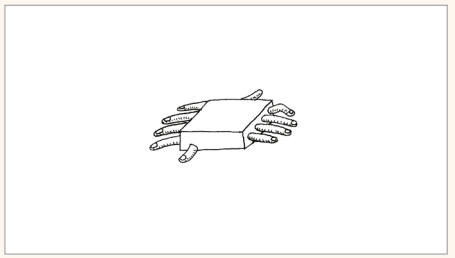
DISORDER IS BEAUTIFUL

By Nguyen Hoang Giang

Vietnam | No dialogue | 2013 | 2 min | Exempted from classification

The film starts with images of a block of apartments, which symbolise the monotony of Vietnamese architecture before the Đổi Mới (or Renovation) period in Vietnam. In apartment blocks, public living and individual identity exist side by side, and the differences between Soviet-era and capitalist architecture are most apparent. As Vietnam's economy boomed in the 1990s, people living in public apartments began to modify their rooms. The result is a mixture of apartments that are similar, but essentially different. Adding diversity and individuality to the city was a way for people to move on from the hardship of the pre-Đổi Mới era.





AN NHIÊN / LIGHT-BEING

By Nguyen Hoang Giang

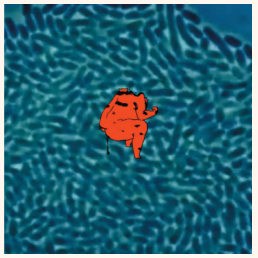
Vietnam | No dialogue | 2015 | 3 min 24 sec | Exempted from classification

Through a series of playful hand-drawn sequences, filmmaker Nguyen Hoang Giang explores the forms and functions of the human figure, immersing us in the essence of *An Nhien* or Light-Being—the sensation of natural calmness or tranquillity.

DIRECTOR



Nguyen Hoang Giang (b. 1989, Vietnam) lives and works in Ho Chi Minh City. His multimedia works address the social and cultural impact of new technologies. Nguyen's interests lie in exploring the failures in the relationship between humans and machines, specifically in the process of learning. His works have been shown internationally at various exhibitions, residencies, galleries, and museums such as Museo del '900 (Italy), Asian Culture Complex (South Korea), Galerie Nord/ Kunstverein Tiergarten (Denmark), ViaFarini (Italy), MartinGoya Business (China), Galerie Quynh (Vietnam), Nha San Collective (Vietnam). He also runs curatorial and educational projects such as *Net Fluxists* (2021) and *In_ur_scr!* (2016). He has been a lecturer in the Digital Media department at RMIT University Vietnam since 2020.



GRANDMADEAD'S MOLE COSMOS

By Xuan Ha

Vietnam | Silent | 2017 | 1 min | PG

In another universe, humanity grows from seeds, which multiply like microscopic bacteria.

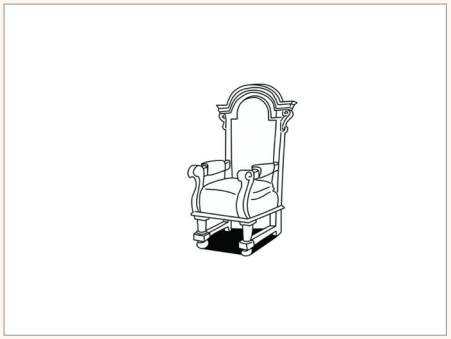
As lonely seeds, they then undergo a long process of living and growing up in order to understand what their selves are like amidst this crowded cosmos.

This is a microscopic world: a 'mole cosmos'.

DIRECTOR



Xuan Ha (b. 1993, Vietnam) is a visual and multimedia artist who lives and works in Danang, and whose practice focuses on the socio-cultural changes in her home region of Central Vietnam. The themes explored in her body of work stem from the oppositions between herself and the dizzying changes that occur in her surroundings. Through various experimentations with materials and space, Xuan Ha uses the fragments of everyday life and a wide range of artistic media—including painting, animation, video, sculpture and installation—to present unrealistic scenarios that gradually form their own narratives.



PRET

By Firman Widyasmara

Indonesia | No dialogue | 2014 | 3 min 43 sec | PG

"Pret" is a meaningless word or sound that can be either an impolite exclamation, a denial, or a sound that sounds like a fart. In this short film, all hell breaks loose when everyone fights for the right to sit in the noble chair.

DIRECTOR



Firman Widyasmara (b. 1977, Indonesia) is the founder of Lanting, a professional collective focusing on 2D and stop-motion animation, illustration, graphic design, creative consulting, and audio production. He started Lanting in 2007 after going through various transformations through the years. Before making films, he was a bank analyst, an illustrator, a musician, and a socio-political student.



THE SOMNAMBULIST

By Victor Balanon

Philippines | Silent | 2013 | 5 min | Exempted from classification

The Somnambulist is an animated video loop with a central figure that has been rotoscoped from a scene in Tarkovsky's *Zerkalo* and placed into an endless passageway, resulting in a repetitive and hypnotic scene. This video is part of a larger project titled *Losing the Plot on the Grand Scheme of Things*. In this project, images from films, historical photo journals, and found pictures from the Internet and mass media are archived based on their external appearance. The project is an extension of the artist's examination of the nature of image-making and image consumption, and how they relate to man's collective memory and representation of reality.

The Somnambulist has been presented at different galleries and art fairs in Singapore and the Philippines from 2013 to 2014.

DIRECTOR



Victor Balanon (b. 1972, Philippines) is a self-taught artist based in Quezon City. He intended to study dentistry, but left school in order to pursue his interest in art. He later studied film and animation at the Mowelfund Film Institute in Manila. Balanon has worked as an illustrator creating storyboards, album covers and posters for film, independent comics and alternative music labels and later as an animator for a major Japanese animation company. Keen on exploring alternative ways of artistic production, he has supported various local artist-run initiatives. He had his first solo exhibition in 2011 and has held more than 20 exhibitions to date. Currently, he co-organises a moving-image centered artist-run initiative called Lost Frames where programmes focus on providing platforms for screening video works, discussions and artist talks.



WHAT WAS LEFT BEHIND

By Ryan Ben Lee

Singapore | Silent | 2016 | 1 min | Exempted from classification

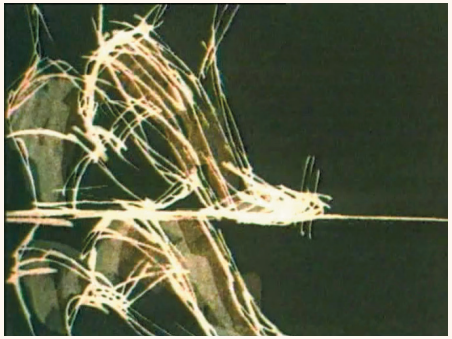
What Was Left Behind was a pop-up site-specific exhibition at Waterloo Centre in 2016. This series of GIFs—which were originally displayed as an installation of giant printed QR codes—have been adapted for a gallery setting with additional sound design. Discarded objects left behind by residents, vendors and shop owners are brought to life after hours through animated GIFs, re-engaging viewers with a space within the Singapore arts district that is often forgotten.

DIRECTOR



Ryan Ben Lee (b. 1997, Singapore) is a moving image artist and animator based in Singapore. He has presented his animated installations for local Singapore museums such as National Gallery Singapore, as well as independent galleries like Supernormal and DECK. He has screened his animated films in festivals, including Singapore Shorts 2018 (Singapore), KLEXFilmFest (Malaysia), Ottawa International Animation Festival 2019 (Canada) and Fest Anča 2021 (Slovazkia) and Fuse Festival 2022 (Croatia).

As an independent animator, he has been commissioned to create animated projects for Singapore design studios like Atelier HOKO for the Venice Design Biennale (2021), and Currency Design for Singapore Art Book Fair (2021).



SUBIDA

By Chen Kunyi

Singapore | No dialogue | 2000 | 4 min | Exempted from classification

stamp stamp stamp stamp stomp stamp stamp stamp stomp stamp stomp stamp stomp stamp stomp!

DIRECTOR



Chen Kunyi (b. 1970, Singapore) graduated from the Royal College of Art, UK in 2000 and worked on independent films, storyboarding, and television commercials in the UK until 2005. She is an artist who wears a few hats, but her preferred expression of her art is through animation films. She also teaches drawing and old-fashioned animation, does illustration and design work, and curates animation and video works.

IN|SIGHT, INCITE, INSIDE: IMPULSES ON EXPERIMENTAL ANIMATION IN SOUTHEAST ASIA

By Clarissa Chikiamco and Cheng Jia Yun

> **"I was about to study paintings at the IKJ [Institut Kesenian Jakarta] but then I met Mr. Gotot [Prakosa] and he said that I can also learn paintings in the film school. What do you mean, I asked. We are painting with light… he said."—Faozan Rizal** [1]

Animation in Southeast Asia only started proliferating in the 1990s,[2] but it is a subject which is worth exploring further. Some might even argue that animation is where the crossover between film and the visual arts happens in the most direct fashion. According to the eminent comic and animation historian John A. Lent, many animators in the region started out as print cartoonists.[3] Others started out as painters. Regardless of what medium they originally worked with, what is certain is that these artists extended their creative practice into the moving image to "paint with light."

Just like comics, animation suffers from the perception that it is too mainstream, too populist, and too childish. While we think animation as a whole could do with more in-depth scholarship and programming in the region, for Painting with Light's Field Experiments section, we decided to focus on a smaller subset of alternative, non-commercial, marginal or experimental films within this genre.[4] These films—like most of animation as a whole—are sidelined and under-researched, particularly from a regional perspective. Some films have also completely escaped animation history because they were shown in alternative spaces like pop-up cinemas and art galleries, as opposed to on television or in film venues. In particular, the art gallery has increasingly become the venue of choice for artists practicing in animation in the 21st century. This is part of a broader trend in which the art world has embraced creative practitioners of the moving image.[5]

This essay, titled after Gotot Prakosa's 1977 film of the same name, examines some of these impulses in experimental animation in the region and reflects on our three-part programme, *In|sight, Incite, Inside.*

1 Faozan Rizal in 2007 as quoted in Veronika Kusumaryati. "Experimental Filmmaking in New Order Indonesia," paper presented at the Conference on Critical Histories of Activism: Indonesia's New Order and its Legacies, University of California, Los Angeles, 14 April 2013, 3.
2 John A. Lent, "Animation in Southeast Asia," *Media Asia*, 26:4, 1999, 192, 194. DOI: 10.1080/01296612.1999.11726593
3 Lent, "Animation," 194.
4 We also note Miriam Harris, Lilly Husbands and Paul Taberham's attempt at defining experimental animation: "When discussed in largely aesthetic terms, experimental animation is often characterised by what it is not. 'Non-objective', 'non-narrative', 'non-linear','non-normative' and 'unconventional' are some of the words central to a vocabulary that is used to describe this multifarious art form. And although in some ways negation feels like a frustratingly indirect and imprecise way of defining it, avoiding a circumscriptive definition is a way of allowing for the wide range of aesthetic and conceptual approaches, styles, techniques, materials and media that have been identified as experimental animation since the beginning of the twentieth century." Miriam Harris, Lilly Husbands and Paul Taberham, "Introduction," in Miriam Harris, Lily Husbands and Paul Taberham, eds., *Experimental Animation: From Analogue to Digital* (Oxon and New York: Routledge, 2019), 1.
5 Erika Balsom, "Brakhage's sour grapes, or notes on experimental cinema in the art world," *Moving Image Review & Art Journal* 1, no. 1 (2012), 17; Lars Henrik Gass, *Film and Art After Cinema*, trans. Laura Walde (Zagreb: Multimedjalni institut, 2019), 85, 95.

IN|SIGHT

In the first part of the programme, four films of the Indonesian pioneer Prakosa—*Impulse, Meta-Meta, Kubis* and *Self-Portrait*—and the silent film of the artist and art historian Rod. Paras-Perez were chosen to highlight the visual and painterly side of animation. These animations were made between 1961 and 1982, and also showcase the interplay of visual and audio. Both Prakosa and Paras-Perez were trained as visual artists, and it is no surprise that the visuals form a strong component to these 16 mm films, nearly all of them abstract.

Prakosa studied painting in Sekolah Seni Rupa Indonesia (Indonesian School of Fine Art) in Yogyakarta before taking up cinematography at Institut Kesenian Jakarta (Jakarta Art Institute) in 1975.[6] Scholar Dylan Fagan wrote that Prakosa's training in painting and his limited access to film stock was what led him to work with the visual component of film first.[7] He did not intend to be an animator, but ultimately it was his background in painting and an interest in an experimental film practice which led him down this path.[8] Prakosa painted directly onto recycled 16 mm film, then worked on the sound with other musicians as he was not capable of making the music himself.[9] This led him to propose that "the concept of audio-visual should be turned around into visual-audio," a statement that stemmed from practical concerns rather than a theoretical one.[10]

The initial dissonance between visual and sound in production comes together in a complementary way. The result is not merely a sync in timing but one in which the cadence of the moving image finds harmony with its sonic counterpart, with each sense enhancing the other. This can be experienced in Prakosa's *Impulse* (1977), where streaks and dots in sheer blues and pinks race, scatter, bend and curl, amplified by a lively frenzied beat. Likewise, in *Meta-Meta* (1978), coloured shapes outlined in black conjoin, overlap, jiggle and morph while a constant chime plays, its sound offset by the spasmodic plucking of strings. This film is where Prakosa realises images from a dream he had during his childhood, and indeed, he pursues this lack of narrative plot and this reverie of colour and shapes with candour and childlike relish.

In opposition to *Meta-Meta's* embryonic forms is *Kubis* (1978), a film composed of brightly coloured lines, squares and rectangles. These shapes blink, flicker and shift in colour to the Philip Glass soundtrack, radiating energy in this abstract minimalist proposition. These angular shapes are a sharp contrast to *Self-Portrait* (1982), the only semi-figurative work in this set of films. Here, Prakosa's brush is heavily leveraged on as his self-representation is painted over and over and over—its ever-shifting image transforming alongside a warbling melody.

Unlike Prakosa who made many films, Paras-Perez made only one, *Conversation in Space* (1961). After studying fine arts at the University of the Philippines in 1957, Paras-Perez took up graduate studies at the University of Minnesota, where he studied film for three semesters under Allen Downs. His student film marked his early interest in light as a medium, followed by a series of abstract paper collage light boxes which were not dissimilar in appearance to his moving image experiment. In the film, circles and lines proliferate, dance and play before giving way to daubs of pigment and the steady stream of spray paint. The film anticipates his abstract work made with spray paint, *Ethereal Glow,* which won him the first prize in painting in the Art Association

6 Dylan M. Fagan, "The Excentric Film Project of Gotot Prakosa," *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde*, 2021, Vol. 177, No. 1 (2021), 97. jstor.org/stable/10.2307/26988874
7 Fagan, "Excentric," 97.
8 Rizki Lazuardi, "Margin with No Center: Gotot Prakosa Retrospective and Contemporary Animations from Indonesia," paper presented at Image Forum Festival 2016, Tokyo, Japan, 6 May 2016. newdeer.net/anime-asean/140 Accessed 19 May 2022.
9 Fagan, "Excentric," 97.
10 Fagan, "Excentric," 97.

of the Philippines' annual art competition in 1963. While he may have only dabbled in film once, the painstaking process of animation drew out Paras-Perez's artistic interest in the repetition and variation of an image, which he later explored in his printmaking practice, as well as in his modular paintings and sculptures. Art critic Leonidas Benesa remarked in 1971 that "Perez's obsession with the recurring, replicating or repeating image is partly traceable to his interest in film making, a medium in which the image is necessarily repeated in so many still frames per second to produce the illusion of motion. This would explain why he speaks of 'palpable yet ever fluid' possibilities."[11]

As *Conversation in Space* is silent, the Gallery has commissioned media artist Tad Ermitaño to converse with Paras-Perez's film with two different sonic responses. The variations not only account for different possibilities and interpretations, but also pays tribute to Paras-Perez and his own interest in exploring the nuances of artistic probabilities.

INCITE

In the next section of the Field Experiments programme, we examine how animation can be used as a form of social critique, as it makes viewers reflect and question established norms. Through their dexterity in concept and their skills in drawing, painting and visual composition, artists could directly provide commentary on social and political issues using the moving image but without the large budget and technical crew necessary when making more commercial films. What they may lack in technical polish, these films make up in candor, authenticity, wit and humour. Arguably, it is precisely this unrefined approach which conveys a sense of cogency and authenticity to the viewer.

This section includes four more films from Prakosa. His stop-motion animation, *Genesis Genesis* (1981), was inspired by local folklore[12] and uses common household fare to discuss social and class divisions. Here painted eggs, apples and yams gather and march through a makeshift mountainous terrain as they form cliques and treat others with suspicion. In *Non-KB (A Film on Family Planning)* (1979), the film responds to official advocacy—the Indonesian government's advertisements on the family planning programme, Keluarga Berencana (KB or Planned Family). In this film, Prakosa represents sexual instincts through the interactions of illustrated penises and hearts, all to the frantic and energetic music of *Flight of the Bumblebee.* The film's title and the question marks which appear at the end of the film suggest family formation is not as simple as the state designs and intends. Similarly, Prakosa also subverts established narratives in his film, *Koen Faya Koen* (Be and It Is) (1979), on the creation of the world.

Some filmmakers use basic concepts in a bid to capture the viewer's attention. For instance, the simplicity of letters of the alphabet is utilised both by Prakosa and Rox Lee. In Prakosa's *Absolute…? Zen…?* (1983), letters flash rapidly on the screen in sequence, bookended by the film's title. Prakosa uses hand-drawn illustrations, prints of Japanese art and photographs to express apprehension about war, nuclear power, and dominion the latter taking place through the consumption of everyday technological objects. Meanwhile in *ABCD* (1985), Lee, a legend in Philippine animation and independent filmmaking, uses the letters of the alphabet to spell out words and cleverly convey the tensions that simmer under an oppressive government. Innocuous examples such as "Beard," "Fart" and "Yoga" are interspersed with more sinister words and their illustrations, like "Dictator," "Gun" and "Militarization." Lee also responds to current affairs in his first solo film, *The Great Smoke* (1984).[13] Shot in his garage,[14] Lee captures the anxieties of a potential nuclear explosion, a fear which was all too real during the Cold War.

Like Prakosa, Lee was not initially trained in filmmaking. He was a writer, painter and illustrator who contributed to *Jingle,* a music magazine in the Philippines.[15] Together with his brother Mon Lee, he became well-known for his *Cesar Asar* comics which were published in *Manila Bulletin*, a national newspaper.[16] In the early 1980s, he embarked on his filmmaking journey through attending a workshop as part of the Ateneo-Mowelfund Program for Artists in Cinema and Television (AMPACT) and found new verve through the moving image and its multidisciplinary character.[17] With film, he could combine his abilities in art and writing to convey alternative stories in a new form. The serial quality of comics gave him the aptitude to transpose his art to filmmaking with its similarly sequential character.

Similar to Lee is Severino "Nonoy" Marcelo, who was a well-known cartoonist in the Philippines known for *Tisoy* and later *Ikabod*. It was Marcelo's dream to enter the animation industry, declaring that "[a]nimation is the ultimate end of all cartooning."[18] While the Philippines descended into Martial Law, he trained in animation in the U.S., and a report said he was blacklisted for his political cartoons.[19] After he was promised safety from arrest if he worked for the government's propaganda arm, the National Media Production Center, Marcelo returned in 1977 and subsequently directed a number of films, including *Tadhana* (Destiny) (1978), the first Philippine full-length animated film.[20] The film was commissioned by Imee Marcos to be based on the Philippine history books of the same name which were credited to her father, the authoritarian President Ferdinand Marcos. The reality was that the *Tadhana* books were ghostwritten by historians, and Marcos leveraged on their training and credibility to increase his own prestige.[21] The animated film was commissioned presumably to add to Marcos' distinction as "historian" through a mass medium, especially since the film was scheduled to debut on television on the sixth anniversary of Martial Law in 1978. Yet, while the film was ostensibly about the Spanish colonisation of the Philippines, Marcelo disregarded didactic content to offer his own surreal and eccentric interpretation. Through wacky sequences utilising mostly local contemporaneous songs, he irreverently tackles subjects such as Filipinos' resistance to colonisation and the abuses of the clergy. Heightening *Tadhana's* experimental nature is the variety of styles used—from traditional representation to painterly strokes to detailed renditions to prints and photography. There were dozens of animators who worked on the film, including artists such as Santiago Bose, Edd Aragon and Madz Castrillo.[22] The film's assistant director, Pandy Aviado,

11 Leonidas V. Benesa, "Modules and Multiples: In a Spirit of Experimentation," *The Manila Chronicle*, 31 October 1971, 12. Rod. Paras Perez digitised scrapbook, 138. Courtesy of Rodolfo Perez, Jr. and Annatha Gutierrez.
12 Gotot Prakosa, "Genesis, Genesis (1981)," Filmindonesia.Or.Id. catalogue.filmindonesia.or.id/movie/title/sf-g014-81-137804_genesis-genesis Accessed 22 May 2022.
13 Merv Espina, "Rox Lee," in *Misfits: Pages from a Loose-leaf Modernity* (Berlin: Haus der Kulturen der Welt, 2017) 23.
14 Merv Espina, "How to perform in front of a reptile: Impressions of Rox Lee, auteur, amateur, autodidact," in *Misfits: Pages from a Loose-leaf Modernity* (Berlin: Haus der Kulturen der Welt, 2017) 64.
15 Espina, "Rox Lee," 23. Jeans Cequina, "Jingle Magazine: Striking a Nostalgic Chord to Our Long-lost Childhood," *Inquirer*, 27 July 2020, pop.inquirer.net/97460/jingle-magazine-striking-a-nostalgic-chord-to-our-long-lost-childhood. Accessed 21 May 2022.
16 Espina, "Rox Lee," 23.
17 Espina, "Impressions," 64.
18 Quoted in "Nonoy Marcelo," in Cynthia Roxas and Joaquin Arevalo, Jr., *A History of Komiks of the Philippines and Other Countries*, edited by Ramon R. Marcelino (Islas Filipinas Publishing Co., Inc.,1985), 144.
19 Chong Ardivilla, "Laughter from the Lungga," in Pandy Aviado and Sylvia Mayuga, ed., *Huling Ptyk: Da Art of Nonoy Marcelo* (Pasig City: Anvil Publishing, 2005), 20. Abridged from the *Manila Standard*, 26 October 2002.
20 Severino Marcelo, interview by John A. Lent, 29 September 1988, interview notes courtesy of John A. Lent.
21 Rommel A. Curaming, *Power and Knowledge in Southeast Asia: State and Scholars in Indonesia and the Philippines* (Oxon and New York: Routledge, 2020), 49-52.
22 Marcelo as interviewed by Fidel Rillo, "Plain Nonoy Marcelo," in Pandy Aviado and Sylvia Mayuga, ed., *Huling Ptyk: Da Art of Nonoy Marcelo* (Pasig City: Anvil Publishing, 2005), 79. Marcelo mentioned 60 animators worked on the project. The film lists 26 animators in its credits.

an artist and well-known printmaker, was certainly influential. Aviado himself made experimental films—including animation —in the 1960s, although they are no longer extant.[23]

While Marcelo was criticised for working with the Marcos administration,[24] he capitalised on the opportunity to make a historic and highly original work in Philippine animation. He experimented with the moving image through its animated form, decried the Spanish colonisation of the Philippines through unique and surreal storylines, and subverted any intention to deify the dictatorship. Working with the administration also provided him with the protection to continue his cartooning work, and to critique social issues without censorship.[25]

INSIDE

The third section of this programme explores how contemporary artists have continued to take up animation as a way to test ideas, generate compact narratives and even explore non-narrativity through the now common exhibition format of looping. As animation scholar Suzanne Buchan writes, "[a]longside 'pure' pre-digital (celluloid) and digital animation shorts and features, artists increasingly incorporate animation in installations and exhibitions, and it has myriad applications across a wide band of creative, scientific and professional practice and industrial implementation."[26] In the 21st century, moving image technology became more affordable and accessible with the shift to digital video. This transference to digital happened not only in Southeast Asia, but globally. Moreover, high-definition video in recent years often mimics celluloid film in quality and in presentation through the projected image.[27].

Often, the two-dimensional image or drawing is brought into a durational field, and the horizon of possibility expands to accommodate speculative play and movement. Chen Kunyi's *Subida* (1999), Nguyen Hoang Giang's *Light Being* (2015) and the intimate work, *Grandmadead's Mole Cosmos* (2017) by Xuan Ha encapsulate how the drawn line enables and continues to enliven animation as a sketch form in time.

Sound is a central element in these animations as well. In Nguyen's *Disorder is Beautiful* (2013), the cacophony of ambient traffic informs each revolution of a Rubik's cube. A humorous colloquial "sound" underpins Firman Widyarsma's *Pret* (2014), and the appearance and multiplication of a single character effectively delivers wry commentary about the allure of power in any society. Originally exhibited as a series of GIFs at the Waterloo Centre, Singapore, the new rendition of Ryan Benjamin Lee's work *What Was Left Behind* (2016) brings discarded objects to life with the incorporation of sound effects that act as onomatopoeic devices.

Painstakingly carving woodblocks by hand for their frame-by-frame animation, Indonesian artist collective Tromorama's *Serigala Militia* (2006) riffs off the acoustic aesthetics and rhythm of rock music to generate a raucous tempo as the animation flows from panel to panel. This work marks

23 Pandy Aviado, "Isang Balik-tingin sa Pagsasa-animation ng Tadhana," (A Look-back on the Animation of Tadhana), in Pandy Aviado and Sylvia Mayuga, ed., *Huling Ptyk: Da Art of Nonoy Marcelo* (Pasig City: Anvil Publishing, 2005), 75. Pandy Aviado in "Speaking of Nonoy's Art," in Pandy Aviado and Sylvia Mayuga, ed., *Huling Ptyk: Da Art of Nonoy Marcelo* (Pasig City: Anvil Publishing, 2005), ix.

24 Elvis Zadia, "Be Brave, Little Mouse," in Pandy Aviado and Sylvia Mayuga, ed., *Huling Ptyk: Da Art of Nonoy Marcelo* (Pasig City: Anvil Publishing, 2005), 91. Abridged from the *WHO Magazine* cover story, 27 March 1981.

25 Nonoy Marcelo, interview with John A. Lent, 1988. Courtesy of John A. Lent.

26 Suzanne Buchan, "Introduction: Pervasive Animation," in Suzanne Buchan, ed., *Pervasive Animation* (New York: Routledge, 2013), 1.

27 Chrissie Iles, "Issues in the New Cinematic Aesthetic in Video," in *Saving the Image: Art after Film*, ed. Tanya Leighton and Pavel Büchler (Glasgow and Manchester: Centre for Contemporary Arts, Glasgow and Manchester Metropolitan University, 2003), 140.

the beginning of a decade-long exploration of animation by the collective, as they started to include various approaches ranging from embroidery to painted wood panels, to stop-motion of household objects. In many instances, the final animation was installed together with a multitude of completed frames, affording each frame a glimpse outside of its status within the composite moving image, and in so doing creating a spatial, flattened experience of time. Victor Balanon, whose work *The Somnambulist* (2013) shows a woman running through an infinite corridor, has also displayed his work in this manner, preferring the exhibition display of the visual arts over that of an auditorium or theatre.

While works like *Serigala Militia* and *The Somnambulist* have been exhibited within the context of art spaces, the exhibition histories of the works that are a part of "Inside" vary widely. Some have only been published online as part of a much wider repertoire of approaches to artmaking, demonstrating the porous nature of digital video as a medium. For this programme, this group of works has been deliberately sited at our auditorium foyer, an interstitial space within the museum. It eschews the black box habitat of the cinema and the white cube space associated with the display of artworks, and instead occupies a position in between.

A CONVERSATION TO BE CONTINUED

While this essay and the Field Experiments section do not aim to provide a comprehensive overview of the subject, we have traced some of the contours of experimental animation works in Southeast Asia for future study. We acknowledge the gaps in research, which are partly complicated by accessibility as several animation works are either lost or survive in less than ideal conditions.[28] Unfortunately this is not an uncommon situation for films produced in the region. Yet, while the fate of some of these historic works may be indeterminate, what is certain is that artists will continue to deploy animation as a means of creative expression, even as the format, model of distribution and the space of display may change. We owe it to this pluralistic field of experimentation to not only observe and support its present and future iterations, but to also trace its development throughout time.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The curators would like to thank the artists/filmmakers of *In/sight, Incite, Inside* as well as their curatorial intern Yu Ke Dong and the following individuals and institutions for assistance in their research and making this programme possible: Rodolfo Perez, Jr., Annatha Gutierrez, Ricky Orellana, David Hanan, John A. Lent, Amir Pohan, Rizki Lazuardi, Nguyen Trinh Thi, Ryan Benjamin Lee, Teddy Co, Pandy Aviado, Merv Espina, Kenenza Hasan, Roger Nelson, Zune Htet, Fernando and Eleanor Modesto, Saul Hofileña, Marcelo family, Mowelfund Film Institute, Asian Film Archive and L'Immagine Ritrovata.

28 We acknowledge that some of the films in our programme are not of the most ideal resolution, as they have survived only in DVDs or tape form, with the originals lost or no longer extant. We were also unable to find some early experimental animation work from other countries in the region, at least in time for this programme. Some artists approached also no longer had their animation films in their possession.

Please note that digital versions of films originally on celluloid are being used in these screenings. While efforts were made to show these films in the highest resolution possible, in some cases this is lower than ideal as the original films could not be located to scan them at a higher resolution. Nevertheless, we decided to retain these works in the programme to allow audiences to view them, and also to call attention to the need to archive films in the region particularly films which are short and experimental. The condition of the films in this programme attests to the fragility of the moving image and their unintended scarcity.



SPECIAL FOCUS

This year's Special Focus shines a spotlight on the *Chua Mia Tee: Directing the Real* exhibition at the Gallery. Chua was a social realist artist and often referred to filmmaking when describing his approach. Two Singapore artists were invited to, through the lens of film, respond to discourse about Chua's use of realism as an artistic style.

In this section, their responses are presented: a newly-commissioned short film entitled *Singapore–A Growing Nation* by artist Robert Zhao Renhui, and *Social Realist Turns in Singapore Filmmaking (1950s–1980s)*, a series of talks and screenings conceived by artist-filmmaker and independent researcher Toh Hun Ping.

SINGAPORE—A GROWING NATION

By Robert Zhao Renhui

Singapore | No dialogue | 2022 | 12 min 16 sec | G

WORLD PREMIERE

Mon 18 Jul to Sun 24 Jul, 10am–7pm | Free | Screened on a loop | Level 4 Gallery



Fog rises and churns over a disused quarry. In a cleared forest, a wild boar stands and stares. Mynas follow in the wake of grass mowers, opportunistic and hungry.

In the mostly urban city-state of Singapore, nature flourishes in pockets, but its growth is also curtailed in a process of continuous and conscientious human labour. As such, any natural growth here runs up against opposing forces of control, but also finds gaps for free expression. Against this reality, *Singapore—A Growing Nation* explores the complex and contradictory interplay between nature and urbanity, non-human and human, allowing for a sense of openness and radical mystery to be revealed in the everyday.

The film is a response to *Chua Mia Tee: Directing the Real*, Chua's solo exhibition that focuses on the works that he made between the 1950s and 1980s. The work addresses Chua's documentation of the industrialisation and urbanisation of modern, post-independence Singapore (especially its people and infrastructure), by providing a missing perspective on Singapore's development.

Artist Robert Zhao Renhui will be in conversation with exhibition curator Seng Yu Jin on Saturday 23 July and Sunday 24 July, at 7.30pm, in the exhibition space. Registration is required for these free sessions. For ticketing details, please refer to page 85.

As part of this programme, there will also be free curator tours of the *Chua Mia Tee: Directing the Real* exhibition on Sunday 24 July, at 11am and 12pm. Registration is required. For more details, please refer to page 84.

DIRECTOR



Robert Zhao Renhui (b. 1983, Singapore) is a multi-disciplinary artist and the founder of the Institute of Critical Zoologists (ICZ). His practice addresses humanity's relationship with nature, and is characterised by a longstanding interest in investigating sites defined by the conflation of wilderness and urbanisation. Zhao's research-oriented processes often culminate in publications, exhibitions and videos. His work has been exhibited in various Biennales, including Chengdu Biennale (2021), Busan Biennale (2020), Singapore Biennale (2019) and the Asia Pacific Triennial, Queensland, Australia (2018).

Artworks by Chua Mia Tee referenced in the film include *Benjamin Sheares Bridge—The Viaduct* (1981), *Road Construction Worker* (1955), and *Workers in a Canteen* (1974).



Chua Mia Tee. *Benjamin Sheares Bridge – The Viaduct*. 1981. Oil on canvas, 120.4 × 242.5 cm. Gift of the artist. Collection of National Gallery Singapore. Image courtesy of National Heritage Board, Singapore. © Chua Mia Tee and family.



Chua Mia Tee. *Road Construction Worker*. 1955. Oil on canvas, 86 × 66 cm. Collection of National Gallery Singapore. This work has been adopted by Seah and Siak. Image courtesy of National Heritage Board, Singapore. © Chua Mia Tee and family.



Chua Mia Tee. *Workers in a Canteen*. 1974. Oil on canvas, 88.5 × 126.5 cm. Gift of the artist. Collection of National Gallery Singapore. Image courtesy of National Heritage Board, Singapore. © Chua Mia Tee and family.

SOCIAL REALIST TURNS IN SINGAPORE FILMMAKING (1950s–1980s)

By Toh Hun Ping

Since the 1950s, Singaporean realist painter Chua Mia Tee has often referred to film throughout his practice to describe his artistic approach. In a 1982 interview with *The Straits Times*, he likened his style of realism to "the cinema—real horses, real soldiers." This description is not far-off from his appeal to fellow painters. In his essay for the Equator Art Society's first art exhibition in 1958, he implored them to take on the multiple roles of scriptwriter, director and actor to bring life to their scenes and express their ideas "in a more real, lucid and focused way than real-life subjects do."

Beyond the field of painting, Chua's call would have resonated with filmmakers who were active in Singapore during that period. In the mid-1950s, filmmakers working for local film studios began producing Malay-language melodrama films that reflected social reality and touched on issues such as poverty, unemployment, juvenile delinquency, racial pluralism and class differences. This marked a modest turn away from the fiction films that were produced prior, which tended to be escapist and spectacular in nature. Many of the director-scriptwriters of these socially-conscious films came from India and had a background in making social drama films, a genre which emerged in Calcutta and Bombay in the late 1930s. Two adherents of the melodramatic social-realist style were Phani Majumdar and K. M. Basker, who were employed under the Shaw Brothers-owned Malay Film Productions Ltd (MFP). Working alongside them as assistant directors and dialogue writers were former journalists and activists from the Malay Peninsula and Indonesia, who maintained close links to the vibrant Malay literary and intellectual circles in Singapore.

As a form of mass media that was growing increasingly popular, film was also used as a platform by activists such as Jamil Sulong and S. Roomai Noor to express contemporary socio-political issues, often focusing on the role of the Malay language and local cultures in decolonisation and the struggle for independence in Malaya and Singapore.

This turn towards a moderate form of social-realist filmmaking in Singapore-based studios MFP and Cathay-Keris continued into the 1960s, undertaken by local directors and scriptwriters such as Hussain Haniff and Omar Rojik. Many of their films straddled the boundary between fiction and documentary. They chose to shoot on location to capture real living environments, and tackled topics such as gangsterism, feudal elitism and the tensions between tradition and modernity. Many films portrayed stories of the working class—a common subject matter also found in Chua's paintings.

By 1973, after MFP and Cathay-Keris had closed, the Chong Gay Organisation—distributors and exhibitors of "left-wing" films from Hong Kong that espoused mild socialist agendas—sought to revive feature film production in Singapore by producing social-realist drama films reflecting local interests and themes. This was partly in response to what they deemed as overtly commercial films showing in cinemas at the time which featured a corrupt, subversive and degenerate culture. Most notable among the three Mandarin films produced by Chong Gay was *Two Sides of the Bridge* (1976). It contained underlying themes and values that seemed like projections of Chua's realist works and writings from the 1950s, a phase when he was active in the Arts Research Group and Equator Art Society.

By the mid-1960s, a number of independent filmmakers who were working outside of the studio system and the state propaganda film-television units also took up film production, shooting on 8mm or 16mm film. Some of them created short-form documentaries, often with an individual artistic vision or intent to relay certain social messages. The films by auteurs such as Rajendra Gour and Cheong Kok Seng combined documentary realism and diaristic, self-reflexive filmmaking, while also adopting experimental filmic approaches. Additionally, members of local "amateur" filmmaking clubs, such as the Singapore Cine Club (renamed the Singapore Cine and Video Club in the 1980s) also created their own works, including documentaries which were underpinned by social advocacy and journalistic reporting. Artist-filmmakers from overseas also worked in Singapore, often on a transient basis. These itinerant filmmakers took in local scenes and subjects with a curiosity and mode of address which were unlike local filmmakers or artists like Chua. A noteworthy example was Dutch artist and experimental filmmaker Edward Luyken, who made several films in 1980. One of Luyken's films was a non-expository but structured film which focused on a cemetery in Singapore and its workers. Works like Luyken's were experimental constructs of images which provide a rich point of comparison to Chua's paintings of manual labourers and their environments.

This film programme aims to present a broad and non-exhaustive survey of social realist and documentary filmmaking in Singapore from the 1950s to the 1980s. It will highlight, discuss and compare films from this period against the artworks and writings of Chua Mia Tee—which share similar, if not overlapping socio-cultural contexts—as featured in the exhibition *Chua Mia Tee: Directing the Real*.

Artworks by Chua Mia Tee referenced in the programme include *Malay Fisherman at Changi Beach* (1977), *Epic Poem of Malaya* (1955), and *National Language Class* (1959).



Chua Mia Tee. *Malay Fisherman at Changi Beach*. 1977. Oil on canvas, 76.7 × 78 cm. Gift of Times Publishing Limited. Collection of National Gallery Singapore. Image courtesy of National Heritage Board, Singapore. © Chua Mia Tee and family.



Chua Mia Tee. *Epic Poem of Malaya*. 1955. Oil on canvas, 105.5 × 125 cm. Collection of National Gallery Singapore. This work has been collectively adopted by [Adopt Now] supporters. Image courtesy of National Heritage Board, Singapore. © Chua Mia Tee and family.



Chua Mia Tee. *National Language Class*. 1959. Oil on canvas, 112 × 132 cm. Gift of Equator Art Society. Collection of National Gallery Singapore. Image courtesy of National Heritage Board, Singapore. © Chua Mia Tee and family.

DIRECTOR

Toh Hun Ping (b. 1978, Singapore) is an artist-filmmaker and independent researcher. His artworks and experimental films have been presented in exhibitions and film festivals internationally. As a film researcher, he investigates the history and cultural contexts of film production and distribution in 20th century Singapore. He has served as researcher-writer, programmer and video editor for projects organised by Asian Film Archive *(State of Motion)* and National Museum of Singapore (*The Foundation of Run Run Shaw's Cinema Empire*). He was principal researcher for the book *Xin Ke: The Story of Singapore and Malaya's First Feature Film*, authored by Yvonne Ng and Jan Uhde, Kucinta Books, 2019. He also started the Singapore Film Locations Archive, a private video collection of films made in and about Singapore, and runs a website about filming locations in Singapore of the past (sgfilmlocations.com).

With special thanks to the Asian Film Archive for their assistance in realising this programme.

SOCIAL REALIST TURNS IN SINGAPORE FILMMAKING (1950s–1980s) Day 1

Day One will begin with a talk discussing Malay-language melodrama films of the 1950s produced in Singapore, all with a social realist bent. The talk will centre on the works of filmmakers Phani Majumdar, K. M. Basker, Jamil Sulong, P. Ramlee and Chua Boon Hean, comparing them with the realist artworks of Chua Mia Tee.

This talk will be followed by the screening of Phani Majumdar's *Doctor* (1958).

DOCTOR

By Phani Majumdar

Singapore, Malaya | In Malay with English subtitles | 1958 | 121 min | PG

Sat 23 Jul | 2pm | The Ngee Ann Kongsi Auditorium



Doctor tells the story of a village carpenter and boat-builder Bakar, who loses his daughter to illness because he is unable to afford the exorbitant medical fees. As a result, he resolves to send his son Idris to medical college despite his neighbours' mocking, with the hope that he will become a doctor to serve the poor and the weak. Idris fulfils his father's wish and completes his medical studies at the University of Malaya (Singapore). Sympathetic to the poor, Idris initially refuses payment from his underprivileged patients, but he soon realises that he cannot sustain his medical practice without demanding a fee.

Doctor is a Malayan remake of director Phani Majumdar's earlier film *Dhobi Doctor* (1954), which had been produced in India. The film was made in a melodramatic social-realist style which was often utilised by film directors with a background in Indian social drama films, especially when making Malay-language films in Singapore in the 1950s.

This is the first time since its initial release in 1958 that *Doctor* is being shown with English subtitles (courtesy of the Asian Film Archive).

As part of this programme, there will be free curator tours of the *Chua Mia Tee: Directing the Real* exhibition on Sunday 24 July, at 11am and 12pm. Registration is required. For more details, please refer to page 84.

DIRECTOR



Phani Majumdar (b. 1911, East Bengal; d. 1994, India) was a pioneering Indian film director who began his career with the famous New Theatres Studio in Calcutta. He is most known for his debut film *Street Singer* (1938), which starred K.L. Saigal. He also worked in Bombay and Singapore, where he was instrumental in establishing a system of production at Shaw's Malay Film Productions Ltd. In Singapore, he completed eight feature films in Malay, Mandarin and English, most notably *Hang Tuah* (1956), which screened in competition at the Berlin International Film Festival (1957).

SOCIAL REALIST TURNS IN SINGAPORE FILMMAKING (1950s–1980s) Day 2

Day Two will focus on Singapore-made films with social realist approaches in Malay and Chinese languages up to the 1980s, and will refer to the works of Malay film auteur Hussain Haniff as well as the Mandarin feature films produced by Chong Gay Organisation. These films will also be discussed in relation to the artworks and writings of Chua Mia Tee. The talk will also discuss works by Rajendra Gour, Cheong Kok Seng, filmmakers in the Singapore Cine and Video Club, and Edward Luyken.

This talk will be followed by the screening of Hussain Haniff's *Jiran Sekampong* (1966).

JIRAN SEKAMPONG / VILLAGE NEIGHBOURS

By Hussain Haniff

Singapore | In Malay with English subtitles | 1966 | 103 min | PG

Sun 24 Jul | 2pm | The Ngee Ann Kongsi Auditorium



Jiran Sekampong is a social drama that presents a microcosm of contemporary Singaporean society. It is centred on a group of villagers from various social classes and follows overlapping narratives of multiple characters, each of them a critical reflection of a social figure. These include an earnest mechanic, a voyeuristic landlord, a compassionate doctor, and the daughter of a maid to a middle class family. Based on Hussain's observations of society, these depictions are sometimes factual, sometimes parodic.

Presented mainly in a realist mode with naturalistic portrayals and location shooting, the film addresses issues of materialism, feudal elitism, gender relations, and the tension between traditional values and modernity. Although it features an all-Malay cast, its themes cut across all segments of Singapore society in the 1960s.

Jiran Sekampong was last screened publicly in Singapore with English subtitles in 2005 as part of the Screen Singapore programme. In 2009, it was shown as part of the "Singapore, Malaysia: the cinema!" programme at the Centre Pompidou in Paris.

Courtesy of © Cathay-Keris Films Pte. Ltd.
Source: Asian Film Archive

As part of this programme, there will be free curator tours of the *Chua Mia Tee: Directing the Real* exhibition on Sunday 24 July, at 11am and 12pm. Registration is required. For more details, please refer to page 84.

DIRECTOR



Hussain Haniff (b. 1933, Pakistan; d. 1966, Singapore) first appeared in minor acting roles for Shaw's Malay Film Productions Ltd, where his father Mohd. Haniff had worked as an art director. He later moved to Cathay-Keris Productions to work as a film editor for several years before being invited to take on a directing role. He directed 12 Malay-language feature films in all for Cathay-Keris, among them classics like *Hang Jebat* and *Dang Anom*, and comedy hits *Masok Angin Keluar Asap* and *Gila Talak*.



SOUTHEAST ASIAN SHORTS

Short films on the stories of Southeast Asia

1–24 Jul | Daily
Free Admission
Theatrette & Online

DAILY: 12PM

Also online





MYTH OF MANILA / MITO NG MAYNILA

By Janus Victoria

Philippines, United Arab Emirates | In Tagalog with English subtitles | 2021 | 27 min | NC16 (Some Coarse Language)

SOUTHEAST ASIAN PREMIERE

Sandra, a middle-aged reporter, continues to search for stories across Manila even at the height of the COVID-19 pandemic. When she wakes up with symptoms one day, she turns the camera on herself for the first time in her career, documenting her condition and recording the sights and sounds of the afflicted city on her way to the hospital. Unfortunately, every place she reaches is full. With her remaining strength, she brings herself to Quiapo Church, the site frequented by many pilgrims in dire situations.

Myth of Manila received the 2021 Short Film Production Grant from Sharjah Art Foundation and the Best Narrative Short Award from Sharjah Film Platform.

DIRECTOR



Janus Victoria (b. 1982, Philippines) is a writer and director who is interested in telling stories where the location itself serves as a character. She attended the Asian Film Academy, TorinoFilmLab, Berlinale and Tokyo Talents, and received the Talent Project Award at Tokyo and the Audience Award at Torino. In 2016, she became a fellow of the Asia Center of The Japan Foundation.

NEW ABNORMAL / PID POKATI MAI

By Sorayos Prapapan

Thailand, South Korea, Singapore | In Thai with English subtitles | 2021 | 14 min 9 sec | NC16 (Some Mature Content)

Based on true events, *New Abnormal* is a reflection on life during the COVID-19 pandemic in Thailand. With wry humour, the film presents different scenarios with characters in the same predicament, addressing issues related to vaccination, employment, and emergency decrees.

New Abnormal was selected for the Orizzonti section in the Venice Film Festival (2021), and has since screened at many other film festivals including Vancouver International Film Festival (2021).

DIRECTOR



Sorayos Prapapan (b. 1986, Thailand) is an independent filmmaker. Several of his short films have been selected to screen in many international film festivals including Venice, Locarno, Rotterdam and Clermont-Ferrand. His first short film, *Boonrerm*, was selected at the International Film Festival Rotterdam (2014). His film *Death of the Sound Man* premiered at the Venice International Film Festival (2017), and in 2019, his film *Dossier of the Dossier* premiered at the Locarno Film Festival.

DAILY: 1PM

Also online



LETTER TO SAN ZAW HTWAY

By Petr Lom

Myanmar, Netherlands, Norway | In Burmese with English subtitles | 2021 | 25 min 54 sec | NC16 (Some Mature Content)

SINGAPORE PREMIERE

In the aftermath of the 2021 military coup in Myanmar, loved ones of deceased Burmese artist San Zaw Htway were invited to pen letters to him as an act of remembrance and to come to terms with their circumstances, as he had done while remaining full of light, happiness and joy under custody.

Composed from their letters, *Letter to San Zaw Htway* is filmed by Burmese cinematographer Bo Thet Htun and Petr Lom, who had worked together with San Zaw Htway over a period of four years.

Letter to San Zaw Htway had its world premiere at IDFA (2021).

DIRECTOR



Petr Lom (b. 1968, Czech Republic) is an independent filmmaker who lived and worked in Myanmar from 2013 to 2017 with his wife and film producer Corinne van Egeraat. His award-winning films have been broadcast in over 30 countries and screened at more than 300 film festivals around the world, including Sundance Film Festival, Berlin International Film Festival and International Documentary Film Festival Amsterdam.

DAILY: 2PM

Also online



THE SEA CALLS FOR ME / LAUT MEMANGGILKU

By Tumpal Tampubolon

Indonesia | In Indonesian with English subtitles | 2021 | 17 min 25 sec | PG13 (Brief Coarse Language)

SINGAPORE PREMIERE

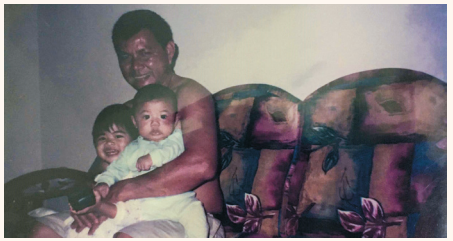
A young boy named Sura lives alone in a fishing village. He earns a meagre wage from selling fish while waiting for his father's return. One day, he finds a broken sex doll washed ashore and tries to fix it. *The Sea Calls for Me* tells a moving story about the universal human longing for connection.

The Sea Calls for Me won the Sonje Award for Best Asian Short Film at the Busan International Film Festival (2021).

DIRECTOR



Tumpal Tampubolon (b. 1978, Indonesia) wrote his first screenplay, *The Last Believer*, which won the Best Short Fiction award in the Script Development Competition at the Jakarta International Film Festival in 2005. Tumpal was selected for the Asian Young Filmmakers Forum in Jeonju in 2007, the Berlinale Talent Campus in 2009, and the Asian Film Academy in Busan in 2010. In 2014, he won a prestigious Citra Award for Best Original Screenplay for *Tabula Rasa*.



DEAR FATHER

By Pak Sun Man and Jonathan Lee

Malaysia | In Mandarin with English and Chinese subtitles | 2021 | 24 min 30 sec | PG

SINGAPORE PREMIERE

Dear Father explores a son's memories of his father through their phone calls, voicemails, unsent letters and photographs. In the film, sequences reflect the phenomenon of generation loss—the reduction in quality when making a copy of a copy—and as these materials accumulate onscreen, they become less vivid and more abstract. What eventually remains are mere traces and disappearances which reveal the deep tenderness in this father-son relationship, palpable even in everyday situations.

Dear Father has travelled to various film festivals, including the Jogja-Netpac Asian Film Festival (2021).

DIRECTOR



Pak Sun Man (b. 1995, Malaysia) has a deep interest in exploring Chinese identity in Southeast Asia through film. With his work, Pak hopes he can give a voice to the Chinese diaspora in this part of the world, synthesising social, cultural, and aesthetic aspects of its fragmented realities.

DIRECTOR



Jonathan Lee (b. 1998, Malaysia) is a filmmaker based in Selangor. Determined to become a producer and director after he completed his Diploma in TV and Broadcasting in 2018, he pursued a Bachelor in Cinematic Arts. He is currently a junior creative in a production house, Imagineers Film.

DAILY: 3PM

Also online



PHNOMKYO

By Douglas Seok

Cambodia, Japan | No dialogue | 2017 | 7 min 45 sec | G

SINGAPORE PREMIERE

A young artist who conserves ancient Khmer sculptures in modern-day Phnom Penh journeys to Tokyo with her own works.

The film was inspired by the collection at the National Museum of Cambodia, as well as the work of contemporary Cambodian artist Kanitha Tith during her artist residency in Japan. There, she makes hand-woven steel wire sculptures that resemble artefacts, which also resist easy classification as they are made from industrial material and forms that lie between the figurative and the abstract. In *Phnomkyo*, artistic renewal flows from the co-existence of tradition and modernity within the consciousness of the artist.

DIRECTOR



Douglas Seok (b. 1983, USA) has made numerous works in collaboration with Cambodian film production company Anti-Archive. He was Director of Photography on Danech San's *A Million Years* (2018), Sreylin Meas' *California Dreaming* (2019), Kavich Neang's *Three Wheels* (2015), *New Land Broken Road* (2018), and *White Building* (2021). His debut feature, *Turn Left Turn Right*, shot on location in Cambodia, also featured Kanitha Tith, and was in competition at the Torino Film Festival (2016).



GETTING LAO'D

By S. Steve Arounsack

Laos, USA | In English and Lao with English subtitles | 2018 | 27 min | PG

SINGAPORE PREMIERE

In the early 2000s, the modern music and film industries in Laos emerged, more than 20 years after the country became a communist state. Filmed over a period of 13 years, *Getting Lao'D* is the story of a generation of pioneering artists. In an environment where one has to straddle the line between traditional and international influences, these artists re-imagine new stories and a new Lao identity in their work.

This documentary features many of the country's most prominent musicians and filmmakers like Aluna Thavonsouk, Alexandra Bounxouei, Cells, Anysay Keola, and Mattie Do, and is perhaps the most comprehensive survey of those industries to date.

DIRECTOR



S. Steve Arounsack (b. 1977, Laos) grew up in California around a vibrant Lao community. He is currently a professor of cultural anthropology at California State University, Stanislaus, and serves as the director of the Keck Visual Anthropology Lab. Most recently, he served as the lead cultural advisor for *Raya and the Last Dragon*, Walt Disney Animation Studio's first feature film to highlight Southeast Asian cultures. The film was nominated for Best Feature Film at the Academy Awards and Golden Globe Awards.

DAILY: 4PM

Also online



A MILLION THREADS

By Thu Thu Shein

Myanmar | In Burmese with English subtitles | 2006 | 15 min 20 sec | PG

Every November, on the night of a full moon, thirty women gather at Shwe Phone Pwint Pagoda in the Pazundaung district of Yangon. There, they take part in a competition known as *Matho Thingan*, where they are tasked to weave the finest robes for the temple's Buddha images. Additionally, all robes must be finished by dawn.

Cheered on by crowds and an orchestra of pulsating drums and high-pitched oboes, the teams of dedicated competitors work their handlooms frenziedly back and forth. Through artistic labour, they celebrate Buddha's foster mother Gautami—who is said to have woven her son a robe in a single day—and remember their spiritual origins.

A Million Threads premiered at Visions du Réel (2008).

DIRECTOR



Thu Thu Shein (b. 1983, Myanmar) is a filmmaker and producer who graduated from the National University of Arts and Culture's Cinema and Drama Department. She has an MA in Cinema and Digital Media at FAMU in the Czech Republic. She participated in Locarno's Open Doors Lab in 2016, and also served as Jury for the Taiwan International Documentary Film Festival (2018).



THE HEADHUNTER'S DAUGHTER

By Don Josephus Raphael Eblahan

Philippines | In Ilokano with English subtitles | 2022 | 15 min | PG

SINGAPORE PREMIERE

The Philippines was occupied by the United States after the Spanish colonial period ended in the late 1800s. During that period, the Cordilleras became a region for country music, honky-tonk bars, and horse-riders. Director Eblahan was born into this culture, as were many generations of Indigenous Igorot children. The colonial presence is now gone, but its legacy still manifests in everyday life.

In this cinematic ode to her ancestry, Eblahan tells the story of a young Igorot woman who leaves her family behind. She traverses the harrowing roads of the Cordilleran highlands to the city in a bid to make it as a country singer in a talent competition.

The Headhunter's Daughter won the Short Film Grand Jury Prize at the Sundance Film Festival (2022).

DIRECTOR



Don Josephus Raphael Eblahan (b. 1996, Philippines) is an independent filmmaker of Ifugao and Visayan descent. Eblahan's works explore the themes of trauma, spirituality, and nature told through the cosmic lens of post-colonial spaces and Indigenous identities. In 2021, Eblahan's film *Hilum* won the Student Prize and received Special Mention from the International Jury at the Clermont-Ferrand International Short Film Festival.

DAILY: 5PM

Also online



ATROPHY

By Adib Emran

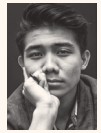
Brunei | In English | 2022 | 16 min 4 sec | PG

SINGAPORE PREMIERE

Every day, Ava goes out to work while her husband Ezra stays at home to write his next book. Deeply in love, their union seems to be a picture-perfect one, until a conflict over money starts to build. An unexpected plot twist reveals that there is more to this relationship than meets the eye.

For director Adib Emran, writing this short film was a way to channel his ideas for undeveloped stories based on real-life experiences, and also to contribute to the ongoing dialogue about mental illnesses like schizophrenia.

DIRECTOR



Adib Emran (b. 1999, Brunei) moved to the city from his hometown Lumut, Kuala Belait, to attend college. During his internship, he became a crew member on several productions, and found his calling as a director after completing *Atrophy*. In 2021, Adib founded Canvaes Co, a media company currently producing his directorial debut for a mini-series, *The Heist: Revival*.



JODILERKS DELA CRUZ, EMPLOYEE OF THE MONTH

By Carlo Francisco Manatad

Philippines, Singapore | In Tagalog with English subtitles | 2017 | 13 min | PG13 (Some Coarse Language)

Jodilerks is a pump attendant at her last day of work in a gas station that is due to close down. Previously a top employee, Jodilerks spends her last night carrying out some questionable acts, reflecting the increasingly anarchic nature of the society around her.

Jodilerks Dela Cruz, Employee of the Month was in competition at Semaine de la Critique, Cannes Film Festival in 2017. It was screened at numerous film festivals around the world in the same year, including the Toronto International Film Festival and the Busan International Film Festival.

DIRECTOR



Carlo Francisco Manatad (b. 1987, Philippines) is a filmmaker based in Manila. He is an alumnus of the Asian Film Academy, Berlinale Talents, Tokyo Talents and the Locarno Filmmakers Academy. His first short film, *Junilyn Has*, premiered at the Locarno Film Festival (2015). Another of his films, *The Imminent Immanent*, was in competition at the Toronto International Film Festival (2018). His first feature, *Whether the Weather is Fine*, won the Cinema E Gioventù Prize at the Locarno Film Festival (2021).

DAILY: 6PM

Also online



AGE OF YOUTH

By Myo Thar Khin

Myanmar | In Burmese with English subtitles | 2020 | 20 min 12 sec | PG13 (Some Coarse Language)

SINGAPORE PREMIERE

Sithu and Min Htet are friends who live hand to mouth. When they hatch a plan that will enable Sithu to elope with his pregnant girlfriend, the quiet drama in their everyday life unfolds as they try to scrape together enough money to repair Sithu's motorcycle.

Age of Youth was selected for the Locarno International Film Festival (2021).

DIRECTOR



Myo Thar Khin (b. 2000, Myanmar) moved from his hometown to Yangon in 2016 to study filmmaking at the National University of Arts and Culture, Yangon, as a Cinema and Drama major. In 2018, he joined a Film and Society workshop organised by the Film and TV School of Academy of Performing Arts in Prague (FAMU) and Wathann Film Festival. His first short film, *1/4 wasted*, won the New Vision Award at the Wathann Film Festival (2019).



STAY AWAKE, BE READY / HÃY TỈNH THỨC VÀ SẴN SÀNG

By Pham Thien An

Vietnam, South Korea, USA | In Vietnamese with English subtitles | 2019 | 14 min | PG13 (Some Coarse Language)

On a busy street corner, three young men have a conversation over food. Suddenly, a motorcycle crash occurs nearby. As the crowd clears, a young boy appears to perform street tricks, and a beer girl plies her trade.

Filmed over one unbroken long take, this work brings together these slice-of-life vignettes. In this tableau of humanity, the focus moves from specific characters and events, to the relationships between them. This prompts viewers to take a step back and reflect on their own significance in the grand scheme of things.

Stay Awake, Be Ready won the Illy Prize for Best Short Film in the Director's Fortnight section at Cannes Film Festival (2019).

DIRECTOR



Pham Thien An (b. 1989, Vietnam) is a film director, producer and screenwriter. In 2015, he moved to Houston, Texas, and continued to work as a freelance filmmaker. His short film, *The Mute* (2018), has travelled to several film festivals like Internationale Kurzfilmtage Winterthur, Palm Springs International ShortFest, and Uppsala International Short Film Festival. He is currently working on his first feature film, *Inside the Yellow Cocoon Shell*, based on *Stay Awake, Be Ready*.

EVENINGS ON THE TERRACE

A selection of films from the programme that will be screened at the Supreme Court Terrace



INSIDE THE UFFIZI

By Corinna Belz and Enrique Sanchez Lansch

Please refer to page 28.



THE DAUGHTER OF JAPAN

By Nyi Pu

Please refer to page 38.



FIRESTARTER— THE STORY OF BANGARRA

By Nel Minchin and Wayne Blair

Please refer to page 14.



EVENINGS WITH KHVAY SAMNANG

Please refer to page 24.

SPECIAL CURATOR TOURS

Antony Gormley
Sun 3 Jul & Sun 17 Jul | 11am

Declarations and Dreams: Art of Southeast Asia since the 19th Century exhibition (Art from Myanmar)
Sun 3 Jul | 11am

Declarations and Dreams: Art of Southeast Asia since the 19th Century exhibition (LEKRA Art)
Sun 3 Jul | 12pm

Ever Present: First Peoples Art of Australia
Sun 10 Jul | 11am & 12pm

Chua Mia Tee: Directing the Real
Sun 24 Jul | 11am & 12pm

These Sunday tours of the exhibitions are free. To book a ticket, please visit the corresponding film programme page at nationalgallery.sg/paintingwithlight

When registering for a tour, please add a General Admission Pass for entry into exhibitions. For more information about General Admission Passes, please visit: www.nationalgallery.sg/admissions.

Please arrive at the Information Counter at Level B1, located near Lift Lobby B, at least 10 minutes before the start of the tour to secure your booking.

Ticketing

Tickets are available at the Painting with Light website: nationalgallery.sg/paintingwithlight

ON-SITE PROGRAMMES

Programme	Venue	Standard Ticket	Concession Ticket
Festival Sections: **Ways of Seeing** **Holding Space** **Into the Galleries** **Field Experiments** **Special Focus**	**The Ngee Ann Kongsi Auditorium** (City Hall Wing, Level B1) **Supreme Court Terrace** (Supreme Court Wing, Level 4M) **UOB Southeast Asia Gallery 2** (Supreme Court Wing, Level 3)	**$10** Each film ticket also comes with a General Admission Pass.	**$8**
Festival Sections: **Field Experiments** Inside—Programme Three	**The Ngee Ann Kongsi Auditorium Foyer** (City Hall Wing, Level B1)	**Free**	–
Festival Sections: **Southeast Asian Shorts**	**UOB Southeast Asia Gallery, Theatrette** (Supreme Court Wing, Level 5)	**Free**, with General Admission Pass For more information about General Admission Passes, please visit www.nationalgallery.sg/admissions.	–
Special Focus *Singapore—A Growing Nation* by Robert Zhao Renhui	**Level 4 Gallery** (City Hall Wing)	**Free**, with General Admission Pass	–
Special Focus In conversation with Robert Zhao Renhui	**Level 4 Gallery** (City Hall Wing)	**Free** Please register for a ticket at the Painting with Light website.	–
Special Curator Tours	**Various exhibitions**	**Free** Please register for a ticket at the Painting with Light website.	–

Promotions

- Local and international students, Full-time National Servicemen (NSFs) excluding foreign personnel, seniors aged 60 and above, and children aged 12 and below are eligible for Concession Tickets.
- Gallery Insiders, staff, docents, and volunteers can enjoy 50% off the Standard Ticket price with promo code: PWL50%OFF.
- Singapore Film Society members can enjoy 20% off the Standard Ticket price with promo code: PWLXSFS20%
- To redeem the General Admission Pass that comes with your ticket, please scan the QR code found in your confirmation email at any of the Pass Dispensers located at the entrances of and around the Gallery. This General Admission Pass is valid 180 days from time of purchase. For more information about General Admission Passes, please visit www.nationalgallery.sg/admissions.

Terms and Conditions

- Please bring a valid ID for checks at the door. Concession Ticket holders unable to present proof of eligibility will be required to upgrade their Concession Tickets to Standard Tickets.
- Tickets are non-refundable, non-transferable, and not for resale.
- Film classification ratings will be updated on the Painting with Light website. Please check the website for the latest updates..

ONLINE PROGRAMMES

Programme	Standard Ticket
Ways of Seeing *Firestarter—The Story of Bangarra* by Nel Minchin and Wayne Blair **Holding Space** *Inside The Uffizi* by Corinna Belz and Enrique Sanchez Lansch	**$10** Ticket code is valid for 72 hours from time of purchase, only within the festival period 1 July to 24 July 2022. Please note that the film will not be available for viewing after 24 July 2022, regardless of when ticket is purchased.
Southeast Asian Shorts	**Free** Films are available for viewing within the festival period 1 to 24 July 2022.

Terms and Conditions

Please note that films can only be viewed within Singapore.

About National Gallery Singapore

National Gallery Singapore is a leading visual arts institution which oversees the world's largest public collection of Singapore and Southeast Asian modern art. Situated in the heart of the Civic District, the Gallery is housed in two national monuments—City Hall and former Supreme Court—that have been beautifully restored and transformed into this exciting venue.

GETTING TO THE GALLERY

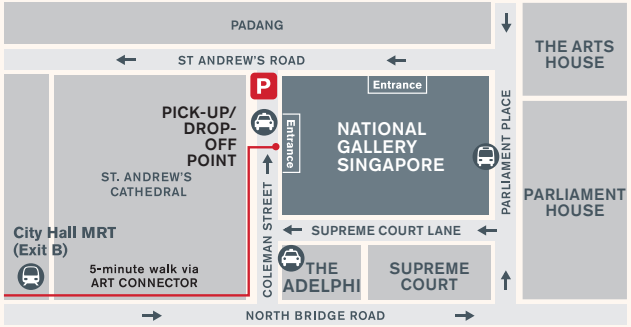
BY BUS
195, 961 stops at Parliament Place

BY MRT
5-min walk from City Hall MRT station
10-min walk from Clarke Quay and Raffles Place MRT stations

BY TAXI/CAR
Taxi stand and drop-off point is located at the Gallery's Coleman Street entrance

Entrance to the carpark is only accessible via St. Andrew's Road.

Gallery Parking Rates
Daily, including Public Holidays
7am–6pm: $1.30 per half hour
6pm–1am: $3.20 per entry
$1 per entry for motorcycles



ADVISORY ON COVID-19

The Gallery is open. We hope that you may find comfort and joy in being able to connect with art through a physical on-site experience. The safety and well-being of our visitors and staff continue to remain our top priority. All visitors entering the Gallery will be required to wear masks at all times. The Gallery, together with its F&B establishments, have been certified SG Clean.

Safe Venue

- Large floor area enabling comfortable and undisrupted enjoyment of art while adhering to the Safe Management Measures.
- Increased frequency of cleaning and disinfection services. Hand sanitisers are also available at various locations throughout the building.
- Revised capacity of exhibition galleries in accordance with government guidelines.
- The Gallery and all our F&B tenants were awarded the SG Clean certification on 13 April 2020.

We will continue to monitor the situation closely and take an informed approach to update our operations in line with the evolving advice from the relevant authorities.

Thank you for your continued support and understanding as we keep the Gallery safe and enjoyable for everyone.

For latest updates on the COVID-19 situation in Singapore, please refer to the Ministry of Health's website (www.moh.gov.sg).

SUPPORT THE GALLERY

The Gallery offers opportunities for you to enhance and cultivate your love for the arts. Your support helps us to build a world-class collection, pioneer original research, and develop our public programmes to bring art to a wider audience.

To find out more, please visit nationalgallery.sg/join-give/support-the-gallery or contribute to giving.sg/national-gallery-singapore

Acknowledgements

Executive Director	Suenne Megan Tan	
Artistic Director	Tamares Goh	
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	Lim Shujuan	Lim Qinyi
	Roger Nelson	Seng Yu Jin
	Phoebe Scott	
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	Tian Hui Shi	Angie Yong
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	Alicia Teng	Jasmine Wong

and all Best Friends of the Gallery volunteers

and the entire team at National Gallery Singapore



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