

Re - Connect / Ce
ntre / Converge
ArtsFest 2023
16.09 - 30.09
PARKLANE Mall
Lv1 8 Carpark
35 Selegie Rd
11 am - 08 pm

TheSubstation

John Z.W. Tung

Amidst the bewildering multitude of formats that art festivals (and biennales, triennales, and what nots) have embraced in contemporary times, nothing perplexes me further than the compulsion towards “de-centralisation”. The maddening dispersal of artworks across far-flung places perhaps spurred on by the fancy of seeing art in a different environ? Can a painting win a mountain? A soundscape challenge the tumult of the sea? It is with certainty though, that bus fares and boat fares contribute to GDPs.

In this respect, a format that is dated and passé seemingly becomes bold and audacious again. A re-convergence of disparate in a central location is an opportunity to reconnect wandering souls. It checks the box for perhaps the most fundamental criterion in terms of accessibility – just one day, and one bus ticket there and back; you may probably even walk if you choose to.

The introduction of art to the everyday is a fallacy brewed from the comfort of ivory towers. This everyday of blood, sweat, and grime, and now even more of that in those few escapes that could be sacred and sanctified. If the venue still bears the dirt of the mundane, it is only because we are forsaking the forest for the trees. If I were to hazard a proposition, it would be that placemaking has hardly got anything to do with places or making.

You give me some people; I will give you a new world.

PROGRAMMES *

[Sama-sama: Comfort is on the menu](#)

by Adeline Kueh

16 & 23 September (Sat), 6.45 pm

[sometimes you make me feel that it is better if i am not here](#): a site specific installation with live performance presentation by Ezzam Rahman

16 Sep (Sat) 7.30 pm

Universe in a Teacup:

Tea ceremony with Kim Whye Kee (ticketed)
17 Sep (Sun), 23 Sep (Sat), 24 Sep (Sun),
30 Sep (Sat), various timings

In Between: A mini sculpture workshop
conducted by Bridget Tay (ticketed)
20 Sep (Wed), 2 pm & 4 pm

Artist's Sharing by Hong Shu-Ying (ticketed)
21 Sep (Thu), 7 pm

Seed Bomb: a workshop by Joshua Kon
22 Sep (Fri), 6 pm

SLOW MACHINE DREAMING:
An evening of poetry reading by Ang Kia Yee
22 Sep (Fri), 7.30 pm

The Roads in the Wind:
Poetry recital by Marc Nair
23 Sep (Sat), 7.30 pm

Artist + Collaborator sharing
by Hong Shu-Ying and Wei Xuan (ticketed)
24 Sep (Sun), 4 pm

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Curator-led Tour by festival director John Z.W. Tung
24 Sep (Sun) 4 pm & 29 Sep (Fri) 6.30 pm

In Conversation: Dennis Tan and John Tung (ticketed)
27 Sep (Wed), 7 pm

Artists' Dialogue
with Dylan Chan and Marvin Tang (ticketed)
28 Sep (Thu), 7.30 pm

Name Your Problem:
Poetry recital by Susie Lingham (ticketed)
29 Sep (Fri), 7.30 pm

* for more details, visit substation.org/whats-on

A Rough Majesty, 2023

Marc Nair

Photographic prints, 297 × 420mm (each), unframed

In Singapore's meticulously planned landscape, entropy subtly unfolds in the city's liminal spaces. In A Rough Majesty, Nair doesn't seek blatant transgressions but observes the quotidian negotiation of space. With each photograph and haiku pairing, the text and image challenges us to understand our connection to the city, revealing moments of slippage – questioning, affirming and complicating our inherent right to inhabit and interpret the spaces around us.

Marc Nair (b.1981) has directed his practice towards developing multidisciplinary approaches to writing and performance over the past two decades. To date, he has published 11 poetry collections, collaborated with various artists across disciplines, and released three spoken word albums. Holding a D. Phil from RMIT University, he is also an experienced educator teaching at SOTA. In the corporate world, he has worked as a scriptwriter, VO talent, and director on numerous shoots. His collaborations with mrbrown have spanned 15 years.

Center Piss, 2023

Bridget Tay

Chandelier, microphones, speakers, ladder
Dimensions variable

Centre Piss reflects on the convergence of spaces within institutions and outside of it while questioning the role art has to play in challenging traditional notions of luxury and elitism. The chandelier is employed here has a status symbol, dislocated from its typical domicile, it beckons considerations of the support structures holding up opulence. With microphones within the structure that captures the carpark's ambient sounds that are distorted and reverberated to viewers, the satirical and grotesque visual symbol literally speaks to viewers of its out-of-placeness.

Bridget Tay (b. 1989) is an artist, curator, and educator

with a Master of Fine Arts from Goldsmiths, University of London and a recipient of The Lasalle Scholarship (2013). Tay employs clichés and art terminology to critique Singapore's political, social, and art scenes, focusing on the duality of artwork reality and tangible existence, with special attention to spatial concepts in painting. She has curated and participated in exhibitions regionally, including EPILOGUE for Singapore Art Week 2022, and serves as the president of The Artists Village.

尘惦 (chén diàn) found on paper, made in minds, 2023
Hong Shu-ying

Installation comprising lightboxes and stereo audio
29.7 x 21 x 9 cm (lightbox), approximately 18 minutes
audio loop (4 tracks)

尘惦 (chén diàn) found on paper, made in minds delves into the narrative potential of music. The artist drew inspiration from Chinese orchestra scores, notably Liu Tianhua's 空山鸟语 (Birdsongs in the Vacant Valley). The visual elements of the installation give prominence to the notations marked by prior performers and dissonance from repeated photocopying of the scores - indicative of how often they'd been replicated for sharing. Aurally, the work echoes music's desire to mimic nature, and the human desire for connection and communication.

The audio component is made in collaboration with musician Ng Wei Xuan.

Hong Shu-ying 方舒颖 (b. 1997) is an artist who channels familiar sights, sounds, and spaces into her work. Drawing from her Singaporean upbringing, her process-oriented approach results in books, prints, and videos. She explores informal archives, blending found images to spotlight patterns. Shu earned her BFA in Media Art (Photography) from Nanyang Technological University. Her work has been exhibited in multiple countries, and she received the Kwek Leng Joo Prize and was featured in Objectifs' 7th Women in Film showcase.

Ng Wei Xuan 黄炜轩 (b. 1996) is currently the Dizi musician of Singapore Chinese Orchestra. Pushing the boundaries of the Dizi, he hopes to uncover untapped avenues of musical expression. With a unique approach, the traditional instrument transforms into a poetic body that seeks for a story in sound. In 2023, Wei Xuan received

the Best Graduate Award upon completing his Bachelor of Music (Honours) from the Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts, in partnership with the Royal College of Music, under the tutelage of Yin Zhiyang.

From Mine to Yours, 2021

Dylan Chan

Digital image on cotton pulp paper, wood, wood lacquer
Dimensions variable

From Mine to Yours delves into the body's relationship with domesticity, intertwining personal and collective innate reactions to familiar materials that surround us. The melding of image and object alludes to narratives embodied in both printed surface and flooring panels. Chan's emphasis on flooring isn't merely for the sake of tactility; it prompts introspection on our groundedness, navigating the fine line between orientation and disorientation, alignment and misalignment.

Dylan Chan (b. 1997) blurs the line between image and object creation, delving into the body's relationship with domestic settings and its response to objects. His work - inspired by everyday moments, personal memories, and intimacy - highlights the politics of agency and self-reflection, shedding light on how we inhabit and interact with spaces. He holds a BA (Hon) Fine Arts from LASALLE where he graduated with First Class Honours. His accolades include the Winston Oh (Practice) Award (2018) and was a nominee for the prestigious Takifuji Art Award (2021).

Having a Great Thyme!, 2023

Joshua Kon

Video installation comprising CRT television
and soil, 4:01

After a brush with municipal authorities over a stint of guerrilla gardening, the rehabilitated artist created this video guide in the style of an early instructional tape, to help navigate eager gardeners through the "cant's" and "don'ts" of creating their very own green spaces, the intricate processes of starting a community patch for themselves, and contending with the unfortunate realities around gardening in a land-scarce land. The tongue-in-cheek video keeps in theme with the artist's practice of

continually questioning established powers.

Kon Fu Shan Joshua (b. 1997) enjoys exploring how established systems of power can shape the world at an intimate level. His approach includes satire and humour to expose flaws and limitations, and to reveal to audiences that nothing is truly unquestionable. A Nanyang Technological University, School of Art, Design and Media with a BA Fine Arts in Media Art (Photography), he has participated in numerous local exhibitions. He is also the recipient of the Kwek Leng Joo Excellence in Photography Prize (2022).

Ideal States, 2023

Marvin Tang

Installation comprising hoarding with digital print vinyl on zinc sheet with video

Dimensions variable, video runtime of 9:32

Building from the artist's prior explorations of hoardings as construction camouflage, Tang's intervention of introducing a hoarding to the carpark space uses a multi-layered collage of Tengah forest to speculate on the forest's biography and agency. Its constituent video, a montage of stock footage of Singapore collected by the artist since 2022, highlights the emphasis that the Garden City places on the urban green and people amidst "nature". Replaying as a never-ending loop, it alludes to the idyllic trance of paradisaical impressions of Singapore.

Marvin Tang (b. 1989) uses images to question historical narratives and collective identities, focusing on Singapore's history and global connections. He holds a Bachelor of Fine Arts from NTU and a Masters in Photography from the University of the Arts London. His accolades include the Photoworks Prize (2018) and the CAPA Asia Portfolio Review Prize (2016), among others. His work has been showcased globally, including in Singapore, Greece, and China. Tang is also a Producer at Superhero Me and lectures at NAFA and ADM.

Rearrange the World, 2023

Lai Yu Tong

30 paper collages on custom-made table

Dimensions variable

Rearrange The World is a suite of thirty papercut collages showcasing a game between two hands, one injured. A cup, can, and bottle, form ever-changing configurations within each frame – with each object accompanied by a word drawn from a child’s vocabulary, or one that the artist hopes to introduce to children. The work embodies the spirit of artistic agency, and reflects on the possibility of changing the world by rearranging it.

A version of Rearrange the World has been adapted into a book by Thumb Books, the artist’s 2022-founded press that makes children’s books for both children and adults.

Lai Yu Tong (b. 1996) is a visual artist whose works span across image-making, painting, drawing and installation. He makes works about the things he sees, eats, buys, throws away, and other things; examining habits of consumption in the modern world. He is a graduate of the School of the Arts Singapore, and furthered his studies with a NAC Scholarship at LASALLE where he graduated with a BA(Hon) Fine Art, the Winston Oh Travel Award, and the LASALLE Award for Academic Excellence.

∞ Sama-sama: Comfort is on the Menu, 2023
Adeline Kueh

Site-specific installation with activations employing rice, ikan bilis, vegetables, and aromatics
Dimensions and durations variable

Sama-sama, a Malay term signifying unity and togetherness, serves as the inspiration behind the work. In a world altered by the pandemic, the artist invites communities to a table, sharing simple meals reminiscent of frugal familial traditions. In creating opportunities for conversation over the course of a meal, the work intertwines food, memories, and the transmission of generational knowledge through the sharing of participants’ stories. In highlighting the role of food in connection and understanding, the work also alludes to the socio-cultural and economic circumstances in our periphery.

Adeline Kueh (b. 1971) crafts installations that rethink our connection with rituals and objects. She utilizes drawing, cartographies, craft, and oral traditions to connect historical paths using found items and new creations. A co-founder of the Critical Craft Collective and Serumpun Collective, she emphasizes craft’s

contemporary role and care politics. Currently, a Senior Lecturer at LASALLE College of the Arts, Kueh's work has been globally showcased, including presentations at the World Architecture Festival (2016-7), Venice Biennale (2019), Singapore Tyler Print Institute (2021).

sometimes you make me feel that it is better
if i am not here, 2023
Ezzam Rahman

Site-specific installation utilising remnants of
performance activation featuring old dining table and
252 small loaves of bread
Dimension variable

Ezzam Rahman reflects on absence, presence, and the repercussions of ended relationships. Drawing from his previous body of works, he delves into autobiographical experiences utilising symbolic gestures; yet rather than his iconic use of talcum powder in this instance, 252 small loaves of bread takes its place. Whilst his performance reiterates his unceasing interest in the body's relation to space, in its aftermath, remnants become preserved artifacts, questioning memory, decay, and the extent of the notion of permanence.

Ezzam Rahman (b. 1981) is a multi-disciplinary artist, focusing on the body using unconventional media. He crafts autobiographical, ephemeral works in sculpture, installation, and performance, exploring body politics, impermanence, and abjection. Ezzam is an adjunct lecturer at LASALLE and Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts. A prolific performer, Ezzam has showcased his talent globally. His accolades include the President's Young Talents Grand Prize (2015), the National Arts Council Young Artist Award (2016), and the Most Promising Award in photography at the PULSE Awards (2021).

Szygy, 2023
Masuri Mazlan

Mixed Media
Various dimensions

Szygy was produced over the course of Masuri's PietrArts Residency where he sought to revisit and reiterations from his Softstrong series of works in 2019. Employing materials

such as plaster, silicon, and polyurethane, his reworking of typically industrial materials into visually delectable treats evokes a paradox of associations - a dissonance compounded by the artist's employment of pastel colours. By problematising archetypal associations in such a manner, the artist also questions the typicality of mainstream queer iconography, opening up avenues for more fluid interpretations of gender and sexuality.

Masuri Mazlan (b. 1990) explores the connections between painterly objects, photographic structures, and installations. He harnesses materiality's affective power, transforming everyday objects into art, challenging the art/domestic divide. Utilizing industrial materials, his sculptural works explore identity politics and queer aesthetics, drawing inspiration from domestic spaces as sites of resistance and subversion. Masuri has exhibited his works internationally and is a recipient of the Goh Chok Tong Youth Promise Scholarship (2016) and the Japan Traffic Culture Association's 38th International TAKIFUJI Art Award (2017).

The Trees that Felled, 2023

Amelia Lim

Salvaged tree trunks, metal fittings, mirror
Dimensions variable

The installation reassembles a series of felled tree logs from the former Lentor Forest into two reconstituted trunks reaching from floor to ceiling. The mirrors on both ends extends an infinity effect that re-glimpses the larger-than-life tree that they once were. Previously segmented into portions defined by a person's strength limit, their reconstitution calls to mind an unlikely rebirth within a carpark. Standing together in solidarity they evoke feelings of kinship, and perhaps even the possibilities of reunion in an afterlife.

Amelia Lim (b.1997) is a keen forager, ceramicist, and architectural designer with a deep love for nature. She views the world, including spaces, objects, and nature itself, through a sculptural perspective that animates everything. Driven by personal sensitivities and a relationship of the self, home, and the environment, her work encompasses a wide range of scales, from sculptural maquettes to architectural installations, and utilises a diverse array of materials, spanning the natural to industrial.

tarps as planes and ropes lines to bind, 2023

Dennis Tan

Site-specific installation comprising ropes
and blue tarpaulins
Dimensions variable

Echoing Dotjari (1999), an artwork Tan presented in Seoul, tarps as planes and ropes lines to bind employs similar strategies, allowing audiences to co-author spaces, and consequently, transforming them. The artist invites audiences to utilise the blue tarps that constitute part of the installation as they deem fit – as seating, shading, or covering. The pinching system employed in hanging them offers an alternative to conventional clothes pegs. It draws inspiration from traditional laundry-hanging practices, especially pertinent to the historical significance of Dhoby Ghaut.

Dennis Tan (b. 1975) is an interdisciplinary artist with expertise in Painting, Environmental Design, and Architecture. As a bricoleur, Tan's method involves repurposing everyday items and found objects, blurring the lines between art and daily life. His work, ranging from durational performances to installations, leaves behind sculptural remnants and fleeting gestures. Notable presentations include: There are too many episodes of people coming here... at the NUS Museum (2016), the Singapore Biennale 2019, and the 2020 Yokohama Triennale.

Universe in a Teacup, 2023

Kim Whye Kee

Site-specific installation comprising table, tea ware, paper, and ink, with artist-led tea ceremony experiences
Dimensions and durations variable

Reflecting on the desire for escapisms, Kim's Universe in a Teacup offers up mindfulness as an alternative remedy to the urban fatigue. Amidst the urban haste, the tea ceremonies he conducts utilising handmade tea ware creates a moment of meaningful pause from the everyday. Post-brew, attendees pen a word or Chinese character on calligraphy paper that is subsequently displayed on a clothesline. With each passing session these writings progressively frame the site of the tea sessions with an encapsulation of the

values that are held dear and precious.

Kim Whye Kee (b. 1979) transitioned from a decade in prison to becoming a pottery craftsman with a BA (Hons) in Fine Arts from the LASALLE. Following studentship under master potter Chua Soo Khim, he founded Qi Pottery in 2016, specialising in crafting tea ware. Over the years, through countless conversations with tea friends and masters, he acquired the nuances of what constitutes a quality brew. With his gathered experience, he crafts tea ware purposefully with a hope that everyone can enjoy a good pour.

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