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NTU CENTRE FOR
CONTEMPORARY
ART SINGAPORE

JULY
AUGUST
SEPTEMBER
2019

A

ARTISTS-IN-RESIDENCE

Irene Agrivina
Ang Song Nian
Chang Wen-Hsuan
Anthony Nsofor
Bridget Reweti
Tan Kai Syng
Wei Leng Tay
Zarina Muhammad

SPECIAL PROJECT

Phyoe Kyi:
The Museum Project

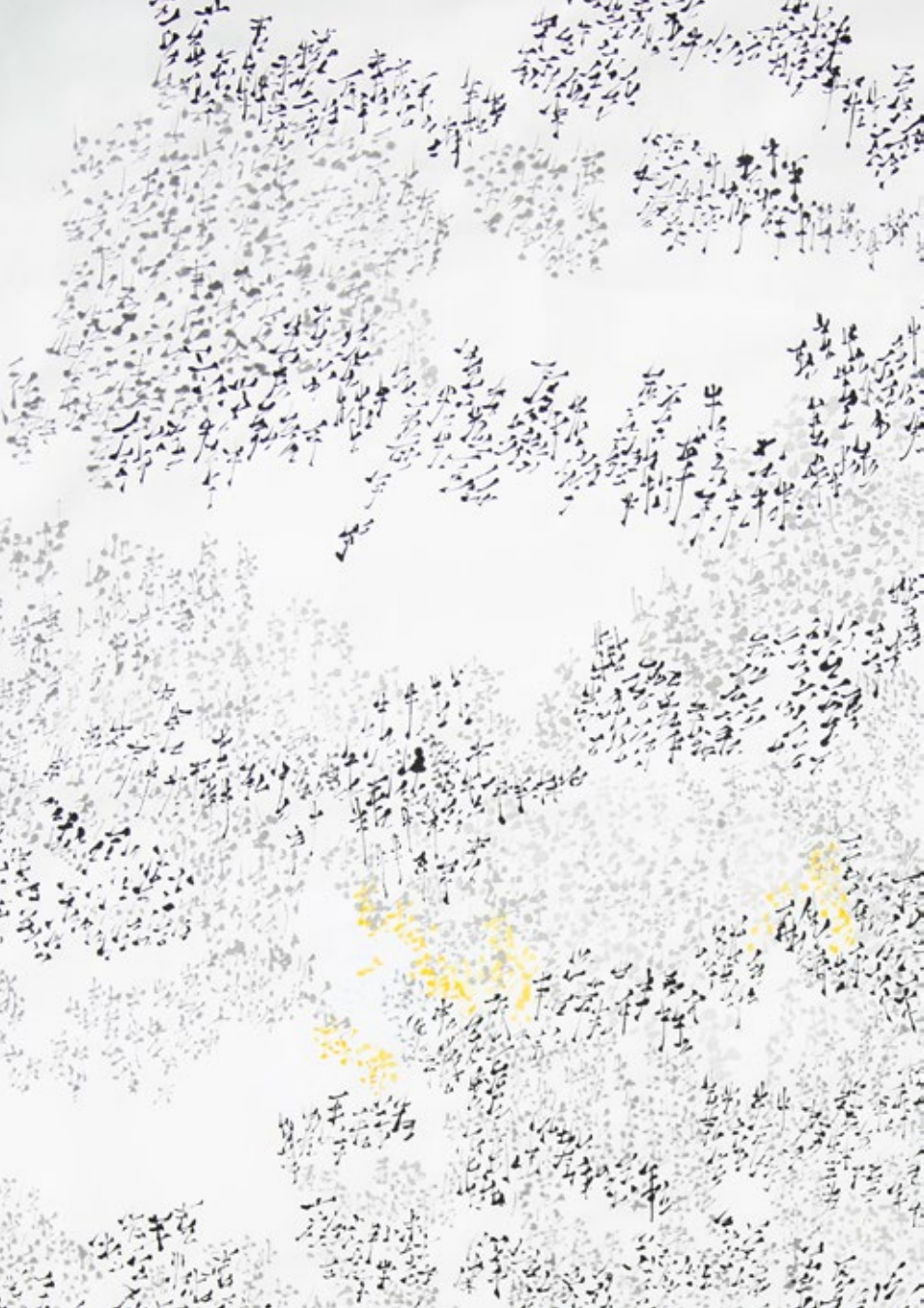
RESIDENCIES OPEN

Friday 20 September
7.00 – 11.00pm

RESIDENCIES PROGRAMME

C

NANYANG TECHNOLOGICAL UNIVERSITY



RESIDENCIES PROGRAMME

Committed to support artists, curators, and researchers by offering them time and space to pursue their research without the pressure of deadlines and production commitments, the Residencies Programme values the open-ended nature of artistic research and embraces multiform expressions of creative enquiry. Aiming to facilitate the production of knowledge, this studio-based programme is dedicated to established and emerging artists and serves as platform for critical exchange in Southeast Asia.

The Residencies Programme offers a wide spectrum of programmes aimed at sharing the process of artistic research with the public. Residencies OPEN provides a rare insight into the often introverted sphere of artist studios by profiling the diversity of contemporary art practices from around the globe and the divergent ways artists conceive an artwork with the studio as a space for experimentation and research. Residencies Studio Sessions and Residencies Insights are flexible formats that can range from artists' talks to conversations, performances, and screenings.

For updates on upcoming events, please visit ntu.ccasingapore.org

RESIDENCIES TEAM

Dr Anna Lovecchio, Curator
Seet Yun Teng, Curatorial Assistant
Lee Hon Choo, Temporary Project Assistant
1 Megan Lam, Young Professional Trainee

IRENE AGRIVINA

RESIDENCY PERIOD: JULY – SEPTEMBER 2019

BLOCK 38

#01-07



With an investment in creative research that combines art, science, and technology, Irene Agrivina's research project, *A Perfect Marriage*, investigates the symbiotic relationship between *Azolla*, an aquatic water fern, and *Anabaena*, a microscopic blue-green cyanobacterium. The two organisms have never been apart for 70 million years, co-evolving in complementary ways that allow them to be increasingly efficient. Besides ensuring their survival, other outcomes of this remarkably sustainable and mutually beneficial relationship involve the production of biofuel and textile dyes, the purification of water, and the reduction of global warming. During her residency, Agrivina aims to expand on her research and conduct experiments inspired by this unique symbiotic process using eco-friendly materials. *A Perfect Marriage* intends to emphasise the global importance of patterns of co-dependency and the potential of the photosynthesis process in connection with environmental issues.

Artist, technologist, and educator **Irene Agrivina** (b.1976, Indonesia) works at the intersection between art, science, and technology. A founding member and current co-director of House of Natural Fiber (HONF) in Yogyakarta, she is engaged in collaborative, cross-disciplinary, and multimedia actions responding to social, cultural, and environmental challenges. She also co-founded XXLab in 2013, an all-female collective focusing on arts, science, and free technology. Her projects have been presented internationally at IFVA New Media Art Festival, Hong Kong (2017); 5th Anyang Public Art Project, South Korea (2016); Ars Electronica Festival, Linz, Austria (2015) and Pixelache Festival, Helsinki, Finland (2013).

ANG SONG NIAN

RESIDENCY PERIOD: MAY – AUGUST 2019

BLOCK 37

#01-03

During the residency, Ang Song Nian continues his ongoing investigation into human interventions on the urban landscape by focusing on plant nurseries and the potted plants industry in Singapore. This research unfolds in the wake of a previous residency at Bangkok University Gallery that culminated with the work *As They Grow Older and Wiser* (2016). Ang was fascinated by the legal loopholes that allowed for a massive transplanting of rare and exotic trees from the region of Chiang Mai to the fast-changing city of Bangkok for decorative purposes. Framed against Singapore's nation-building narratives, the artist is interested in the manipulation of nature through state-driven initiatives and policies of environmental control, greening, and city-branding. Such endeavours include the Tree Planting campaign of 1963 and the government's subsequent initiatives directed to fabricate a new understanding of nature and obliterate the country's past of clearing forests to make way for plantation economy.

Through photography and installation, **Ang Song Nian** (b. 1983, Singapore) scrutinises traces of human presence in the landscape. Intrigued by the power of the photographic image to convey complex and layered narratives, he favours a "microscopic approach" that unleashes the imperceptible and ideological potential embedded in small details. His most recent solo exhibitions are *As They Grow Older and Wiser*, *Objectifs*, and *Hanging Heavy On My Eyes*, DECK, both Singapore (2017). He has participated in group exhibitions at Bangkok University Gallery, Thailand (2016) and Photo España Festival, Spain (2012) amongst others. Ang is currently lecturer in Photography at the School of Art, Design and Media at Nanyang Technological University, Singapore.



CHANG WEN-HSUAN

RESIDENCY PERIOD: JULY – SEPTEMBER 2019

BLOCK 37

#01-02



Intrigued by the power tensions embedded in historical narratives, during the residency Chang Wen-Hsuan will further her research on two different projects. Drawing comparisons between the conflicting relationship of the Taiwanese Communist Party, Japan, and China in Taiwan, and the Malayan Communist Party, Japan, and the United Kingdom in Singapore, the artist aims to excavate influences and discrepancies between different colonial legacies and forms of resistance. In parallel, she will also expand Writing FACTory, a roaming platform for writing and publishing that produces discourse, research, and printed matters as a space for artistic and political practice. This latter project, first launched in Taiwan in 2018, performs a critical examination of how writings are framed, shared, and circulated in today's digital age. Chang will further develop it in the context of Singapore through library research and interviews conducted with independent local publishers, artists, and artist book fair organisers.

The artistic practice of **Chang Wen-Hsuan** (b. 1991, Taiwan) questions the narrative structure of institutionalised history with re-readings, personal stories, and suggestions of fictional alternatives. Through versatile platforms including installations, videos, and lectures, she often navigates skewed documentations and first-person accounts to trigger reflections on how the understanding of history affects the purport of the present and thrust of the future. Her projects have been shown at Taipei Fine Arts Museum and Taiwan Biennial, Taichung, both Taiwan (2018); Inside-Out Art Museum, Beijing, China (2017); Musrara Mix Festival 17, Jerusalem, Israel (2017); inToAsia: Time-based Art Festival, Queens Museum, New York, United States (2015).

ANTHONY NSOFOR

RESIDENCY PERIOD: JULY – SEPTEMBER 2019

BLOCK 37

#01-01



In the past few years, Anthony Nsofor has been researching conflicts arising from land management, urban-rural migration, and population growth in his native Nigeria as well as in other African countries. This interest in how land ownership and land use policies affect ideas of citizenship within ethnically diverse countries inspired his *Citizens of Nowhere* painting series. During the residency, the artist will expand this line of inquiry by studying governance protocols and management solutions adopted in land-scarce Singapore to accommodate population growth and allow for the coexistence of a diversity of ethnic groups. Based on these observations, he will expand *Citizens of Nowhere* by creating a new body of work influenced by the specificity of Singapore's distinctly vertical landscape and multicultural population. Nsofor also plans to address the pressures of technological development and climate change testing possibilities for collaboration and public participation around key issues such as waste disposal.

The paintings of **Anthony Nsofor** (b.1973, Nigeria) harness and scrape the substance of the world, responding autobiographically to the stimuli of his surroundings. Tapping into the subconscious, he translates colours, patterns, and sounds in expressive works that displace conventional meanings and generate new associations. Nsofor graduated in Fine and Applied Arts from the University of Nigeria Nsukka in 1997. He has received solo shows at Pan-Atlantic University, Ajah (2012) and National Orthopaedic Hospital, Igbobi (2004), both in Lagos, Nigeria, and participated in several group exhibitions across Africa. In 2015, he relocated to Oguta where he currently runs The Clay Wall Studios.

BRIDGET REWETI

RESIDENCY PERIOD: JULY – SEPTEMBER 2019

BLOCK 38

#01-05



During the residency, Bridget Reweti intends to continue her long-term research on Ra'iatea navigator Tupaia. A leading *aroi* (high priest), skilled star navigator, and diplomat conversant in Māori, Tupaia joined Lieutenant James Cook's first voyage across the Pacific in 1769, on board of the research vessel *HMS Endeavour*, and aided the navigation to Aotearoa New Zealand. Tupaia died, whilst en route to Britain, in Batavia (today's Jakarta) in 1770 and was laid to rest in an unmarked grave on Pulau Damar Besar, an island off the coast of Java. Though relegated to a minor role in the *Endeavour's* log books, Tupaia is remembered differently by Pacific communities. Still today, oral histories shared by fishers and voyagers across the ocean frame him as a highly influential figure. By accessing archival records and oral histories, Reweti will attempt to shed light on the reasons why Pulau Damar Besar was chosen as Tupaia's final resting place.

Bridget Reweti (b. 1985, Aotearoa New Zealand) is an artist hailing from the Ngāti Ranginui and Ngāi Te Rangi groups in Tauranga Moana. Her artistic practice unfolds through lens-based works that engage with indigenous perspectives and posit landscape as a site of resistance against essentialist notions of ethnicities. She is a founding member of Kava Club, a collective of Māori and Pacific practitioners based in Wellington, and part of Mata Aho Collective, a group of four Māori women whose large scale fiber-based works have been featured in exhibitions such as Honolulu Biennial, Hawai'i, United States (2019), *Signature Art Prize*, Singapore Art Museum (2018), and *documenta14*, Kassel, Germany, (2017). She recently received solo shows at TSB Bank Wallace Arts Centre, Auckland (2019) and New Zealand Portrait Gallery, Wellington (2018).

TAN KAI SYNG

RESIDENCY PERIOD: SEPTEMBER 2019

BLOCK 37

#01-03



Tan Kai Syng's residency explores global issues through extended conversations with Singapore-based colleagues. In the first part of her residency, she developed the participatory project *PICTURING HAPPINESS?* with three other artists and two scientists from the School of Computer Science, Nanyang Technological University. Using commercially-available devices that read brain waves, the project explored the parameters that define our sense of well-being, critiquing the market-driven framing of happiness as a motionless, thought-free state of mind. This was the beginning of a cross-disciplinary investigation that the artist is currently pursuing together with several psychiatrists in London. For the second part of the residency, Tan will also examine notions of gender. Working together with pioneer feminist artist Amanda Heng and two other women arts professionals, they will convene a public programme to discuss how gender affects collaborative artistic practices in Singapore and beyond.

Tan Kai Syng (Singapore) is an artist and researcher based in London, United Kingdom. She uses art as a process of interrogation and intervention to energise existing discourses and instigate conversations across disciplinary, cultural, and geopolitical boundaries. Her work is in the collection of several museums and has been exhibited at South London Gallery and Southbank Centre, London (both 2018); Guangzhou Triennale, China (2008); Biennale of Sydney, Australia (2006); Singapore Art Museum (2008, 2003). In 2007, she received the National Arts Council Young Artist Award. She holds a PhD from the Slade School of Fine Art and is currently a Visiting Researcher at the Social, Genetic and Developmental Psychiatry Centre at King's College (both London).

WEI LENG TAY

RESIDENCY PERIOD: APRIL – SEPTEMBER 2019

BLOCK 38

#01-06



The practice of Wei Leng Tay probes the psychic, systemic, and geopolitical consequences of displacement through personal encounters and intimate conversations captured in photography, videos, and sound recordings. Having lived in Hong Kong for 15 years before moving back to Singapore in 2016, Tay plans to devote the time of the residency to re-rooting her artistic practice and transposing *Sightlines*—a collaborative project initiated with researcher Michelle Wong to explore the relationship of art, aesthetics, society, and politics in the aftermath of the 2014 Umbrella Movement in Hong Kong—in the context of her home country. Furthermore, she will initiate a long-term project which extends her preoccupations with forced movements and migrations by addressing notions of “return” through a series of interviews. The studio space will be used to experiment with materials, techniques, and installations to articulate new ways to present her work.

Informed by close interactions with people, the artistic projects of **Wei Leng Tay** (b. 1978, Singapore) address the significance of personal relationships, family histories, societal structures, national narratives, and patterns of migration questioning ingrained modes of perception and representation. Often using a mediated documentary approach to image-making, Tay’s intimate works explore intergenerational dialogues as well as the affective and political impact of displacement upon cultural identity. *Crossings*, her most recent solo exhibition articulated in four parts, took place at NUS Museum, Singapore (2018–19). She has participated in numerous international group exhibitions.

ZARINA MUHAMMAD

RESIDENCY PERIOD: APRIL – SEPTEMBER 2019

BLOCK 37

#01-04

For the past decade, Zarina Muhammad has embarked on a multidisciplinary research that explores magico-religious belief systems, ritual practices, and sacred sites. The various embodiments of her work, which engage broader contexts of myth-making, ritual magic, gender-based archetypes, and spirits of resistance, frame the cultural biographies of objects and the region’s provisional relationship to mysticism and the immaterial against the dynamics of global modernity. Her research project for the residency takes the trans-local figures of the *penunggu* (tutelary spirit) and the *tuan/puan tanah* (Lord of the Land) as points of departure to reconsider notions of territoriality and spectrality against the social production of rationality. During the residency, she will focus on mapping old and new ways to tell stories of unresolved memories, fragmented cosmologies, shapeshifting translations, and haunted histories.

Zarina Muhammad (b. 1982, Singapore) is an artist, educator, and writer whose practice is deeply entwined with a critical re-examination of ethnographic literature and historiographic accounts about Southeast Asia. Recent exhibitions include the President’s Young Talents 2018, Singapore Art Museum, and *Stories We Tell to Scare Ourselves With*, MOCA, Taipei, Taiwan (2019). Incarnations of her lecture performances have been presented at Indonesia Contemporary Art Network, Yogyakarta (2018); Objectifs, Singapore (2017); and LASALLE’s Institute of Contemporary Arts Singapore (2018, 2016).



PHYOE KYI: THE MUSEUM PROJECT

22 JUNE – 18 AUGUST 2019

THE LAB



Developed in ebbs and flows during the last five years of Phyo Kyi's life, *The Museum Project* stands out as one of the artist's most ambitious undertakings—the design of a museum for the display of his works—albeit it remained unfinished at the time of his sudden death in 2018. Bringing together the three main stages of development of the project, this presentation in The Lab features several mediums the artist experimented with: an interactive installation (2013), renderings and sketches of artworks and installations (2014–15), and an architectural model based on the artist's last architectural design (2018). The presentation also includes a timeline designed by artists and Phyo Kyi's friends Tun Win Aung and Wah Nu to illustrate the collaboration which originally sparked *The Museum Project*.

Phyo Kyi (b. 1977 – d. 2018, Myanmar) was a painter, graphic designer, and performance artist based in Taunggyi, Shan State, Myanmar. Working with a variety of mediums, his conceptual and experience-based practice explores existential issues and the complexities of human relationships and existing social systems. His works have been exhibited widely across Myanmar and were included in international exhibitions such as the 3rd Fukuoka Asian Art Triennial, Japan (2005) and the 11th Asian Art Biennale, Bangladesh (2004). His latest solo show, titled *The White Clothes*, took place at Myanmar/art Gallery, Yangon, Myanmar (2016). In 2015, he initiated and curated the 1st Mingun Biennale in Myanmar. Phyo Kyi was Artist-in-Residence at NTU CCA Singapore from April to June 2018.

NTU CENTRE FOR CONTEMPORARY ART SINGAPORE

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ABOUT NANYANG TECHNOLOGICAL UNIVERSITY, SINGAPORE

A research-intensive public university, NTU has 33,000 undergraduate and post-graduate students in the colleges of Engineering, Business, Science, and Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences, and its Graduate College. NTU's campus is frequently listed among the top 15 most beautiful university campuses in the world and has 57 Green Mark-certified (equivalent to LEED-certified) buildings. Besides its 200-ha lush green, residential campus in western Singapore, NTU has a second campus in the heart of Novena, Singapore's medical district.

Image captions:

Inside cover—Studio of John Low (detail), Residencies OPEN, 25 – 26 January 2019.
Page 2—Irene Agrivina, *GROW KITCHEN [Five Kingdom Of Life]*, installation view, Le Bel Ordinaire, Billère, 2013. Courtesy the artist. Photo: Tommy Surya.
Page 3—Ang Song Nian, *As They Grow Older and Wiser*, 2016, archival Piezographic Print. Courtesy the artist.
Page 4—Chang Wen-Hsuan, *___'s Diary*, installation view, Taipei Fine Arts Museum, 2016. Courtesy the artist.
Page 5—Anthony Nsofor, *Cattle at River Benue* (from the series *A Thousand Cattle, Two Hills*), 2019, acrylic on canvas, 137 x 258cm. Courtesy the artist.
Page 6—Bridget Reweti, *Aspiring of the North*, 2018, dual 35mm half-frame photograph, 27 x 20cm. Courtesy the artist.
Page 7—Studio of Tan Kai Syng, (detail), Residencies OPEN, 25 – 26 January 2019.
Page 8—Wei Leng Tay, video still from *And this is the lady and her pond*, 3-channel projection, 6-channel sound, found objects of varying dimensions, 15 min, 2015-2018. Courtesy the artist.
Page 9—Studio of Zarina Muhammad (detail), NTU CCA Singapore, June 2019
Page 10—Phyoe Kyi, *The Museum Project*, 2018, 3D rendering. Courtesy the artist's estate.

Unless otherwise stated, image courtesy of NTU CCA Singapore.

NTU CENTRE FOR CONTEMPORARY ART SINGAPORE

A leading international art institution, NTU CCA Singapore is a platform, host, and partner creating and driven by dynamic thinking in its three-fold constellation: **EXHIBITIONS**, **RESIDENCIES PROGRAMME**, **RESEARCH AND ACADEMIC EDUCATION**. A national research centre for contemporary art of Nanyang Technological University, the Centre focuses on *Spaces of the Curatorial*. It brings forth innovative and experimental forms of emergent artistic and curatorial practices that intersect the present and histories of contemporary art embedded in social-political spheres with other fields of knowledge.

NTU CENTRE FOR CONTEMPORARY ART SINGAPORE



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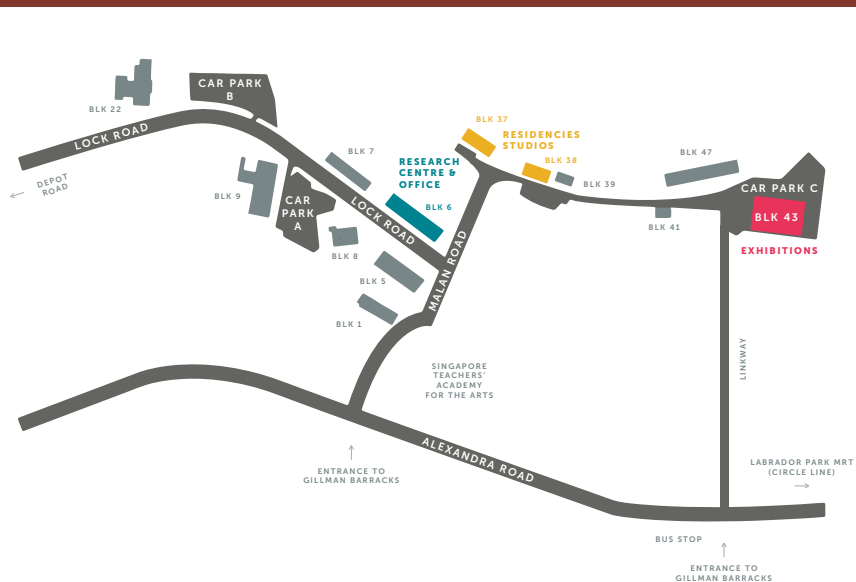
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