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GLOBAL
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GUGGENHEIM
UBS
MAP

NO COUNTRY

CONTEMPORARY ART FOR
SOUTH AND SOUTHEAST ASIA



10 May–20 July 2014



NO COUNTRY

CONTEMPORARY ART FOR
SOUTH AND SOUTHEAST ASIA

JUNE YAP,
GUGGENHEIM UBS MAP CURATOR,
SOUTH AND SOUTHEAST ASIA

AMAR KANWAR
ARIN DWIHARTANTO SUNARYO
BANI ABIDI
NAVIN RAWANCHAIKUL
NORBERTO ROLDAN
POKLONG ANADING
REZA AFISINA
SHEELA GOWDA
SHILPA GUPTA
SOPHEAP PICH
TANG DA WU
TAYEBA BEGUM LIPI
THE OTOLITH GROUP
TRAN LUONG
TUAN ANDREW NGUYEN
VINCENT LEONG

That is no country for old men. The young
In one another's arms, birds in the trees
—Those dying generations—at their song,
The salmon-falls, the mackerel-crowded seas,
Fish, flesh, or fowl, commend all summer long
Whatever is begotten, born, and dies.
Caught in that sensual music all neglect
Monuments of unaging intellect.

— W. B. Yeats, "Sailing to Byzantium" (1928)¹

NO COUNTRY: CONTEMPORARY ART FOR SOUTH AND SOUTHEAST ASIA

by June Yap

The exhibition title *No Country* references William Butler Yeats's poem "Sailing to Byzantium", wherein, inspired by the "magnificence" of the culture and arts of the medieval empire with its ancient Greek origin, the Irish poet laments its neglect and ending. Within the poem, the universal passion of the human spirit, which aspires to immortal achievement, is contrasted with the subject of loss effected by inevitable fleshly dissolution and the diminution of cultural knowledge over time. Yet Yeats's reflections on the cusp of impermanence and vitality, and on the convergence of morality and consciousness, remain relevant to any examination of culture today.

The idea of *country* powerfully embodies notions of identity, belonging, community, and genealogy. Now synonymous with the nation-state, country is, at its simplest, defined with territory as the "crucial diacritic" of a nation's sovereignty.² However, the current ubiquity of this taxonomy of peoples overlooks the fact that the concept of nation is itself "fairly new," as a form distinguishable from earlier republics, kingdoms, empires, and other confederations,³

and thus the reality is that the identities and affiliations it prescribes are in fact historically specific rather than inevitable. Evinced within South and Southeast Asia are the histories of lands, communities, and peoples that have gone by many other names and been organised according to different constitutions and relationships. But as the lingua franca of global politics and economics, nation becomes the obligatory symbol of membership in the performance of global exchange and the ascription of political legitimacy. Internally, this "embryonic principle" of territorial sovereignty,⁴ experienced as an "imagined political community,"⁵ is characterised by an alluring and presumed shared present, that "(looms) out of an immemorial past, and . . . (glides) into a limitless future."⁶

Examining the formulation of nation within representation, *No Country's* title subverts the logic and assumptions of the nation-state in order to facilitate dialogue around it. This dialogue relies as much on the uniqueness of national, regional, and global constitutions as it does the inherent but contradictory assumption of finite identity and existence prescribed by

their boundaries. Exceeding the representation of nation through their critical considerations of culture, nation, region, and community, the exhibition's artworks reinstate art practice as political life and attempt to chart "the new hyperspaces wherein we have to survive."⁷ The exhibition thus focuses on culture as a constellation of life-worlds that are shaped as much by their pasts as they are reproduced by their sources—that is, their individuals and communities—and explores them under four leitmotifs.

The cultural histories of South and Southeast Asia are written in influence. They are determined by encounters (some more violent than others) that lead to reflection, resistance, adaptation, and assimilation. Passed down through the generations, influence is also marked by loss, itself registered as a trace of one kind or another. In Tang Da Wu's *Our Children*, the simultaneity of influence and loss, remembering and forgetting, is captured in the artist's retelling of a tale from Teochew opera in which an encounter with a nursing nanny goat proves to be a life-changing experience. In a sculpture that resembles a Chinese domestic ancestral altar, the tragedy of loss of culture is recouped in an act of adaptation, in which its spirit is retained, wrought in galvanised steel and glass. Culture's vitality is in its capacity for change, but its metamorphosis is both "an act of invention" and one of "self-subversion,"⁸ within which interpretation establishes cultural influence as much as it liberates. One demonstration of this is to be found in Arin Dwiartanto Sunaryo's sweeping tonal relief, a literal landscape that incorporates ash from the devastating eruption of Gunung Merapi in 2010. In *Volcanic Ash Series #4*, social practice reemerges unexpectedly in the form of abstraction.

The events of colonization, division and intervention characterize the nations of South and Southeast Asia, and are inscribed in the histories and memories of its communities. Transcending these pasts necessitates a suspension of familiar expectations to find alternative ways of understanding. Through the intersection of apparent dualities, Sopheap Pich's sculpture *Morning Glory* brings together the ordinary and the aestheticised in a minimal yet resplendently contoured form. Transforming the rigid stalks of rattan and bamboo—materials familiar to Khmer rural life and craft—into a representation of a commonplace plant, the artist presents a profound image of contradiction that, while visually arresting, harks back to adversities experienced under the Khmer Rouge. Similarly, in *Communists Like Us*, the Otolith Group weaves together images testifying to a half-forgotten intimate but extensive postwar socialist friendship within Asia, with a subtitled narrative excerpted from a generational debate on revolutionary method in Jean-Luc Godard's 1967 film *La Chinoise*. In both these artworks, the desire to discover a place "beyond social divisions and beyond subordination to technopolitical domination"⁹ suggests the possibilities inscribed in establishing new relationships unconstrained by history.

While the boundaries that circumscribe nation presuppose homogeneity, contemporary nations are often unstable, the ideal of nationhood a "coherent, bounded (and) contiguous" entity unsettled in actuality by translocalities, migration, and multiple "registers of affiliation."¹⁰ Amar Kanwar's *A Night of Prophecy* underscores the social and cultural differences that exist within any nation. Through a series of poems and songs recorded in eleven languages across

¹ William Butler Yeats, "Sailing to Byzantium," in *Collected Poems: Yeats* (New York: Picador, 2003), p. 193.

² Arjun Appadurai, "Sovereignty without Territoriality: Notes for a Postnational Geography," *The Anthropology of Space and Place: Locating Culture*, Setha M. Low and Denise Lawrence-Zúñiga, eds. (Malden: Blackwell Publishing, 2003), p. 341.

³ Ernest Renan, "Qu'est-ce qu'une nation?" [What is a nation?], lecture delivered at the Sorbonne, March 11, 1882, in Homi K. Bhabha, ed., *Nation and Narration* (New York: Routledge, 1990), p. 9.

⁴ Appadurai, *ibid.*, p. 337.

⁵ Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (first published 1983; 2nd edition,

⁷ Miwon Kwon, "The Wrong Place," *Art Journal*, Vol. 59, No. 1. (Spring 2000), pp. 39, 43.

⁸ Geeta Kapur, "Dismantling the Norm," *Contemporary Art in Asia: Traditions/Tensions*, exh. cat. (New York: Asia Society Galleries), 1996, p. 61.

⁹ Jean-Luc Nancy, "The Inoperative Community," in Claire Bishop, ed., *Participation* (London: Whitechapel Gallery; Massachusetts: MIT Press, 2006), p. 54.

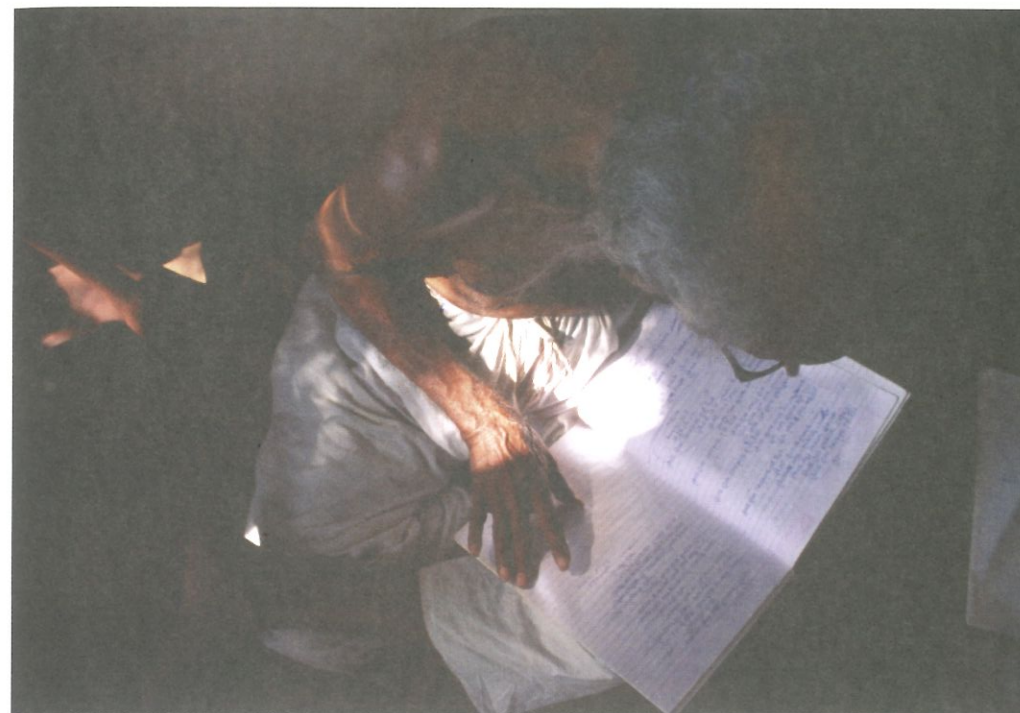
¹⁰ Appadurai, *ibid.*, pp. 341, 344.

Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh, Nagaland, and Kashmir, the work portrays a people caught in a struggle of caste, poverty, and disenfranchisement. Powerfully charged, Kanwar's artwork highlights the paradox of nation, of a desire for unity and community that seems unattainable. Bordered by India, Pakistan, China, and Afghanistan, the region of Kashmir that is the subject of Sheela Gowda's *Loss* appears to exemplify this impossibility. Since the partition of South Asia, the area has been fraught with violence and uncertainty as boundary disputes and armed encounters that appear to defy arbitration persist. Historically a centre of exchange and syncretism in which the religions of Buddhism, Hinduism, and Islam flourished, Kashmir, in Gowda's measured amplification, seems to retain a claim on the innocence and beauty captured in the Mughal epithet of the imagined Kashmir as "heaven on earth."

It is this belief in the possible redefinition of relations that underlies Navin Rawanchaikul's panoramic canvas. From two lineages on both sides of the South Asian partition but at home in Chiang Mai (Thailand), *Places of Rebirth* is a narrative of cross-border and cross-cultural negotiation in which the subjects of diaspora, migration, assimilation, and return converge. While observing the historical chronicle as the narrative that grounds the idea of nation, Rawanchaikul's painting, in its imaginative conflation of past and present and use of the populist aesthetic of Indian movie posters, goes further, speaking of a communion that requires a dismantling of borders between nations and between individuals. The finding of such common ground, however, entails an idea of this ground or space as that which "opens, reopens, changes, and modalizes" indefinitely,¹¹ and as

such, it is an act that can only be performed within the present.

Life-worlds as mapped by culture and its visual representation are often harnessed to reinforce the national ideology. In their representation beyond the habit of "territorial determinism,"¹² the artworks in *No Country* offer up the challenge of considering new and renewed affinities and negotiations for us in the present, and the possibility of transcending the contemporary boundaries and limits by which we may find ourselves defined. Appropriating part of Yeats's opening line for the title of his 2005 novel,¹³ Cormac McCarthy rendered the themes of the poem into contemporary context. In McCarthy's rework, at the start of the narrative, the character Llewelyn Moss is seen hiking "along the ridge with his thumb hooked in the shoulderstrap of the rifle, his hat pushed back on his head." There he observes rocks "etched with pictographs perhaps a thousand years old. The men who drew them hunters like himself. Of them there was no other trace."¹⁴ Certainly, there are many ways in which to define a region and its people; the narratives of nation and border offer but one. But as Jacques Rancière suggests, the "exceptionality" of art production is its transformation of the "community's self-presentation."¹⁵ In this opportunity for reflection provided by these artworks, the question that then follows is what sort of trace would we leave behind?



AMAR KANWAR

b. 1964, NEW DELHI

The Trilogy:

A Season Outside, 1997
Color video, with sound,
30 min., edition 5/6

A Night of Prophecy,
2002 (pictured)
Color video, with sound,
77 min., edition 3/6

To Remember, 2003
Color video, silent,
8 min., edition 2/6

Solomon R. Guggenheim
Museum, New York,
Guggenheim UBS
MAP Purchase Fund
2012.150.1-3

Courtesy Marian
Goodman Gallery,
New York

Amar Kanwar's contemplative trilogy explores the religious, social, and national politics that contributed to the postcolonial separation of India and Pakistan in 1947, a division that continues to have repercussions. In *To Remember*, Kanwar recalls Mahatma Gandhi's assassination at Birla House in Delhi in 1948 and the communal violence in his birthplace of Gujarat in 2002, relating both events to the violence that still haunts the nation. *A Season Outside* documents the daily ritualized displays of military bravado that mark the standoff between the two countries in

the border village of Wagah. Finally, in *A Night of Prophecy*, a chorus of poems, chants, and songs recorded in Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh, Nagaland, and Kashmir highlights issues of caste and associated problems of poverty and disenfranchisement, and appears to presage the need for change.

¹¹ Jean-Luc Nancy, "Communism, the Word (Notes for the Conference)," Costas Douzinas and Slavoj Žižek, eds. *The Idea of Communism* (New York: Verso, 2010), pp. 152-153.

¹² Appadurai, *ibid.*, p. 344.

¹³ Cormac McCarthy, *No Country for Old Men* (New York: Vintage, 2005), adapted for film by Joel and Ethan Coen. *No Country for Old Men*, 2007, dir. Joel and Ethan Coen, U.S.A. (color, 122 min.).

¹⁴ McCarthy, *ibid.*, p. 11.

¹⁵ Jacques Rancière, *The Politics of Aesthetics: The Distribution of the Sensible* (London: Gabriel Rockhill, 2004), p. 44.

ARIN DWIHARTANTO SUNARYO

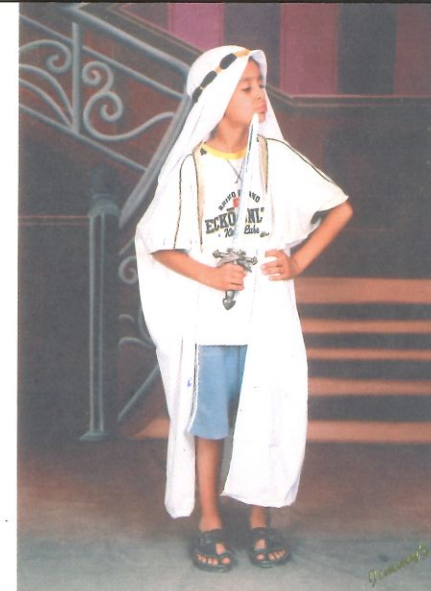
b. 1978, BANDUNG, INDONESIA

In this work, Arin Dwihartanto Sunaryo combines the fluid material of resin with ash gathered from the 2010 eruption of the most active volcano in Indonesia, Gunung Merapi, which lies between Central Java and Yogyakarta. Made by using resin in a gestural process familiar from Action painting, the work appears to lack the political charge that characterizes much contemporary Indonesian art. Yet in employing the potent materials of ash, the artist infuses an apparently formalistic project with an intensity that suggests upheaval, and invests the work with a painterly sensibility.

▼
Volcanic Ash Series #4,
2012

Volcanic ash and pigmented resin, mounted on panel, triptych, 4 feet, 9 1/2 inches x 17 feet, 11 3/8 inches (146 x 547 cm) Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, Guggenheim UBS MAP Purchase Fund 2012.161

© Arin Dwihartanto Sunaryo



The Boy Who Got Tired of Posing (from *The Boy Who Got Tired of Posing*) (details), 2006

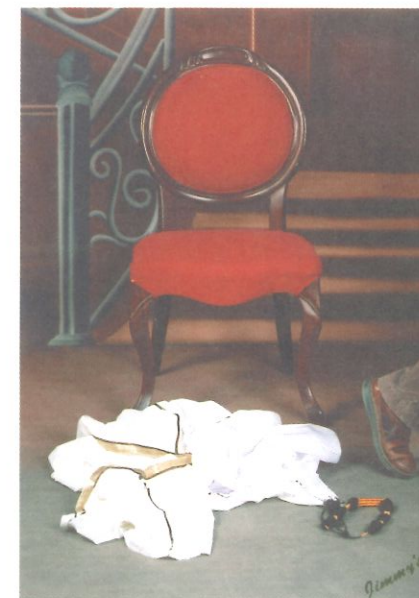
Three chromogenic prints: 40 3/4 x 30 3/4 inches (103.5 x 78.1 cm) each, and one inkjet print: 18 1/2 x 14 1/2 inches (47 x 36.8 cm), edition 3/5 Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, Guggenheim UBS MAP Purchase Fund 2012.139.3

© Bani Abidi

BANI ABIDI

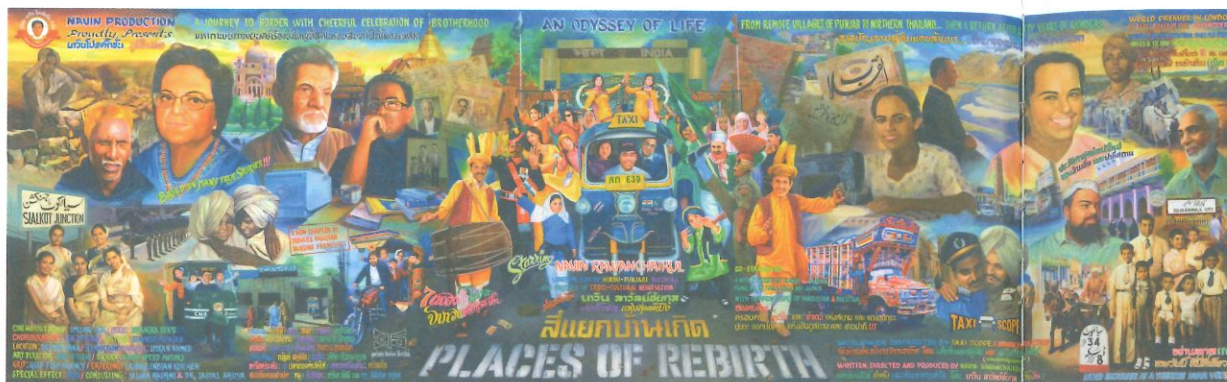
b. 1971, KARACHI, PAKISTAN

Bani Abidi's *The Boy Who Got Tired of Posing* is a trilogy comprised of two series of photographs and a video with accompanying texts. It takes a lighthearted look at representations of Muhammad Bin Qasim, a young general from the Umayyad Caliphate who led the invasion of the province of Sindh (now Pakistan) in 711 CE. The work explores depictions of this early colonial founder of Pakistan, a figure central to state history and to the historical narrative of the Pakistani nation in post-partition South Asia.



NAVIN RAWANCHAIKUL

b. 1971, CHIANG MAI, THAILAND



Inspired by his first visit to Pakistan, the birthplace of his ancestors, Navin Rawanchaikul's multifaceted work navigates the geopolitics that brought his family from South Asia to Thailand. In this work, painted in the style of typical Indian movie posters, a *tuk-tuk* (Thai taxi) is shown transporting the artist and his Japanese wife and daughter across the Wagah border between India and Pakistan. Spiced with humorous critique of the two nations' fractious relationship, the panoramic image presents a rereading of personal and regional history that raises questions of nation and identity.

▲ *Places of Rebirth*, 2009

Oil on canvas, triptych,
7 feet, 2 1/2 inches x 23
feet, 7 1/2 inches (219.7 x
720.1 cm)

Solomon R. Guggenheim
Museum, New York,
Guggenheim UBS MAP
Purchase Fund 2012.159

© Navin Rawanchaikul
and Navin Production
Co., Ltd

NORBERTO ROLDAN

b. 1953, ROXAS CITY, PHILIPPINES

Norberto Roldan's monochromatic juxtaposition of found text and image examines a dilemma that has persisted since colonial times. In *F-16*, the artist explores the subjects of power and encounter, negotiation and resistance in relation to the colonization of the Philippines. The words of William McKinley, the U.S. president from 1897–1901, in which he discussed the duty of the United States to undertake the "benevolent assimilation" of the Philippines, are juxtaposed with an image of an American fighter jet cruising over Afghanistan after 9/11.

▼ *F-16*, 2012

Oil and acrylic on canvas,
diptych, 6 x 12 feet (182.9 x
365.8 cm) overall
Solomon R. Guggenheim
Museum, New York,
Guggenheim UBS MAP
Purchase Fund 2012.160

© Norberto Roldan



We could not give them back to Spain, that would be cowardly and dishonorable; we could not turn them over to France and Germany, our commercial rivals in the Orient, that would be bad business and discreditable; we could not leave them to themselves, they are unfit for self-government and they would soon have anarchy and misrule over there worse than Spain's wars; and there was nothing left for us to do but to take them all; and to educate them and uplift and civilize and Christianize them, and by God's grace do the very best we could for them, as our fellowmen for whom Christ also died. Ame



REZA AFISINA

b. 1977, BANDUNG, INDONESIA

Reza Afisina's video *What...* is a video performance that features the artist's recitation of the biblical verses Luke 12:3–11, in which Luke relates Jesus's warnings against hypocrisy and stresses the importance of truth and confession. Slapping himself repeatedly, Afisina employs physical force as a means to contemplate the problem of human violence and the value of empathy, a quality that is emphasized across different religions.

▲ *Counter Acts*, 2004

Chromogenic transparency in lightbox, four parts, 90 x 48 x 5 inches (228.6 x 1219 x 12.7 cm) each
Edition 3/3
Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York,
Guggenheim UBS MAP
Purchase Fund 2012.146

© Poklong Anading

POKLONG ANADING

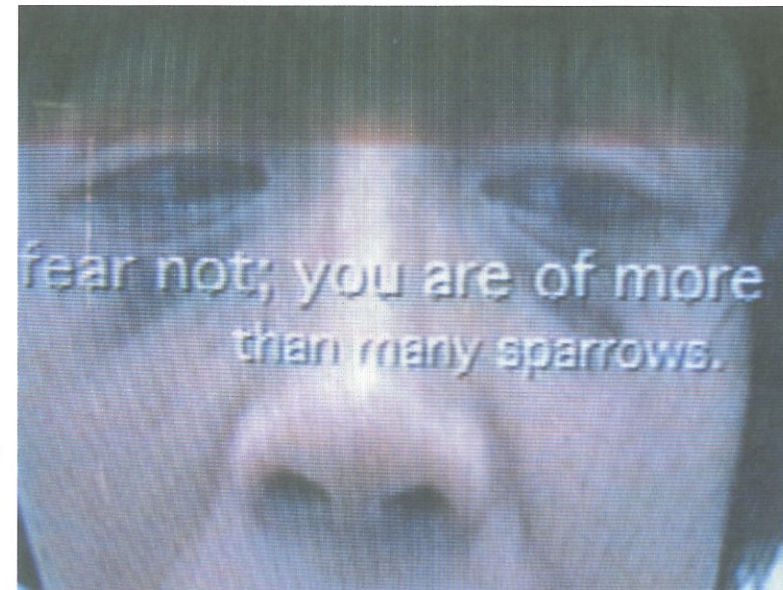
b. 1975, MANILA

Poklong Anading's *Counter Acts* subverts the photographic gesture as light and the act of looking are both doubled and foiled. The subjects of the work, photographed holding circular mirrors in front of their faces, are represented but rendered unidentifiable as the artist's gaze—and ours—is obscured, ironically by the natural illumination of sunlight. This work is the first in the artist's *Anonymity* series, and is characteristic of his measured aesthetic interventions.

▶ *What . . .*, 2001

Color video, with sound, 11 min., edition 3/3
Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York,
Guggenheim UBS MAP
Purchase Fund 2012.142

© Reza Afisina



PUBLIC PROGRAMMES AND GALLERY TOURS

The CCA public programme for *No Country* offers a close examination of regional cultural mappings and imaginings while seeking to raise questions for discussion. It features artists' and curators' talks, a forum and a performance. In addition to a number of artists from the Singapore exhibition—**Sheela Gowda**, **The Otolith Group**, **Navin Rawanchaikul**, **Norberto Roldan** and **Tang Da Wu**—the speakers include the following critics, curators, and scholars:

Ahmad Mashadi is Head of the National University of Singapore Museum. His recently curated exhibitions include *Camping and Tramping Through the Colonial Archive: the Museum in Malaya* (2011), which traced the museological imaginary of colonial Malaya, and *Heman Chong: Calendars 2020–2096* (2011), which featured a new series of the artist's photographs. In 2012, Ahmad initiated Curating Lab, a curatorial intensive and internship programme for Singapore students and recent graduates.

Zoe Butt is Executive Director and Curator of San Art, Ho Chi Minh City. From 2007 to 2009 she was Director, International Programs, Long March Project in Beijing, and from 2001 to 2007 she was Assistant Curator, Contemporary Asian Art, Queensland Art Gallery, Brisbane, where she assisted in the development of the Asia-Pacific Triennial of Contemporary Art. Butt is also presently working on her Ph.D. with the Centre for Contemporary Art and Politics, National Institute for Experimental Arts, College of Fine Arts, University of New South Wales, Sydney.

Ashish Rajadhyaksha is a Senior Fellow at the Centre for the Study of Culture and Society, Bangalore, India. He has published widely on Indian cinema, India's cultural policy, and on the visual arts, and has curated a number of film and art events, including *Bombay/Mumbai 1991–2001*. Rajadhyaksha is currently in Singapore as a Visiting Senior Research Fellow in the Cultural Studies in Asia Cluster at the Asia Research Institute, National University of Singapore. While at ARI, he is working on volume two of his *Indian Cinema in the Time of Celluloid* project; volume one, *Indian Cinema in the Time of Celluloid: From Bollywood to the Emergency*, was published in 2009.

Marian Pastor Roces is a cultural critic and independent curator whose research interests include cities, international contemporary art events, museums, 19th-century expositions and the politics of nature. With TAO Inc., a museum development corporation she founded in 1990, Pastor Roces has established and "re-curated" a number of major Philippine museums. She has been awarded a grant to convene an international conference on the politics of beauty by the Prince Claus Fund, was selected by the Japan Foundation to be part of the Asian Leaders Fellowship Programme, and was a member of an evaluation team sent to the Dakar Biennial by the Mondriaan Foundation. With Brain Trust Inc., a think tank in which she is a partner, Pastor Roces co-wrote the Mindanao Peace and Development Plan currently being implemented in the troubled south of the Philippines. Among her contributions to institutional criticism is the essay on biennials, "Crystal Palace Exhibitions".

T. K. Sabapathy is an eminent art historian, curator and critic. His body of writing includes important contributions to the art histories of Singapore, Malaysia and Southeast Asia, as well as artist monographs and art criticism. He has curated major exhibitions at venues such as the Singapore Art Museum and the ADM Gallery at Nanyang Technological University. Sabapathy is the first Research Fellow at the CCA, and an Adjunct Associate Professor at the National University of Singapore. He also lectures at Nanyang Technological University.

June Yap was selected as Guggenheim UBS MAP Curator, South and Southeast Asia, in April 2012. An independent curator since 2008, Yap has also organised exhibitions including Ho Tzu Nyen for the Singapore Pavilion at the Venice Biennale in 2011; *You and I, We've Never Been so Far Apart: Works From Asia* for the Center for Contemporary Art, Tel Aviv; *The Future of Exhibition: It Feels Like I've Been Here Before* at the Institute of Contemporary Arts Singapore; and *Bound for Glory* at the National University of Singapore Museum.

PUBLIC PROGRAMMES SCHEDULE

Sat 10 May 3:00–5:00 pm	ARTISTS' TALKS	Sheela Gowda Navin Rawanchaikul Norberto Roldan
Sat 14 June 3:00–5:00 pm	LECTURE A Tour of Indian Independent Documentary and Video	Ashish Rajadhyaksha
Sat 21 June 3:00–5:30 pm	FORUM The Attraction of Representation	The Otolith Group Marian Pastor Roces T.K. Sabapathy June Yap
Tue 24 June 6:30–9:00 pm	ARTISTS' PROGRAMME	The Otolith Group
Fri 11 July 7:30–9:00 pm	CURATORS' TALK	Zoe Butt June Yap
Fri 18 July 7:30–9:00 pm	TALK Reflection and Response	Ahmad Mashadi

Coming soon: *Our Children*, a performance by **Tang Da Wu**.
Visit gillmanbarracks.com/cca for confirmed schedule.

GALLERY TOURS

Join us for free, docent-led gallery tours, 17 May–20 July
Saturdays, 3–4 pm and 4:30–5:30 pm
Wednesdays–Fridays, 12–1 pm or 2:30–3:30 pm

GROUP AND SCHOOL TOURS

All groups larger than ten individuals and all school groups must make a reservation. For teachers, we offer docent-led school tours, or you can explore the exhibition on your own with your students, using our downloadable teacher resource guide. Both guided and self-guided teacher tours require reservations.

DOCENT LED SCHOOL TOURS

Wednesdays–Fridays, 12–1 pm or 2:30–3:30 pm
Saturdays, 12–1 pm

SELF-GUIDED TEACHER TOURS

Wednesdays–Fridays, 1–2:30 pm or 4–5:30 pm

Visit gillmanbarracks.com/cca to reserve a time.



SHEELA GOWDA

b. 1957, BHADRAVATI, KARNATAKA, INDIA

The subject of Sheela Gowda's *Loss* is Kashmir, a region bordered by India, Pakistan, China, and Afghanistan. Historically a locus of exchange and syncretism, where Buddhism, Hinduism, and Islam flourished in the wake of South Asia's partition, it is now fraught with violence and uncertainty as border disputes and armed encounters persist. Originally photographed by Kashmir

these six scenes show the path taken to a burial site by the bodies of youths from his village killed in the continuing conflict. Tentatively painted over with watercolour in a subtle accentuation of their subjects' plight, these prints express the tragic irony of deadly geopolitical struggle unfolding in a place described since the Mughal period as "heaven on earth."

Loss, 2008

Six inkjet prints, one with watercolor additions; four prints: 18 x 24 inches (45.7 x 61 cm) each, one print: 37 x 26 inches (94 x 66 cm), and one print: 24 x 45 1/2 inches (61 x 115.6 cm), overall dimensions vary with installation, unique

Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, Guggenheim UBS MAP Purchase Fund 2013.5.1-6

© Sheela Gowda

SHILPA GUPTA

b. 1976, MUMBAI

Shilpa Gupta's sculpture contrasts sterile numerical data on the fenced border between India and Pakistan—relayed by text inscribed on a small brass plaque—with a poetic interpretation of this information in the form of a hand-wound ball of thread. The length of the strand—more than 79 miles—represents the real distance at a scale of 1 to 14.9, hence the work's title. Its fragility reflects the tenuous nature of national boundaries, which demand constant restatement and surveillance.



1:14.9, 2011-2012

Polyester thread, wood, glass, and brass, 64 3/16 x 22 x 20 inches (163 x 55.9 x 50.8 cm), A.P. 1/2, edition of 3
Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, Guggenheim UBS MAP Purchase Fund 2012.148

Photo: Kristopher McKay © Solomon R.

SOPHEAP PICH

b. 1971, BATTAMBANG, CAMBODIA



Using rattan and bamboo, common materials in Khmer rural life, Sopheap Pich's *Morning Glory* elevates the ubiquitous flower of its title to abstract monumentality. Recognised for its distinctive bloom, the morning glory is also remembered by the artist as having been a critical source of nourishment for ordinary Cambodians during the difficult period of the Khmer Rouge's governance. The sculpture's transformation of the plant's lightweight yet rigid and durable stalk into a malleable sculptural medium suggests the possibility of renewal and the rediscovery of strength and life within the outwardly unexceptional.

▲
Morning Glory, 2011

Rattan, bamboo, wire, plywood, and steel, 17 feet, 6 inches x 103 inches x 74 inches (533.4 x 261.6 x 188 cm)

Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, Guggenheim UBS MAP Purchase Fund 2013.3

Courtesy Tyler Rollins Fine Art, New York

▶
Our Children, 2012

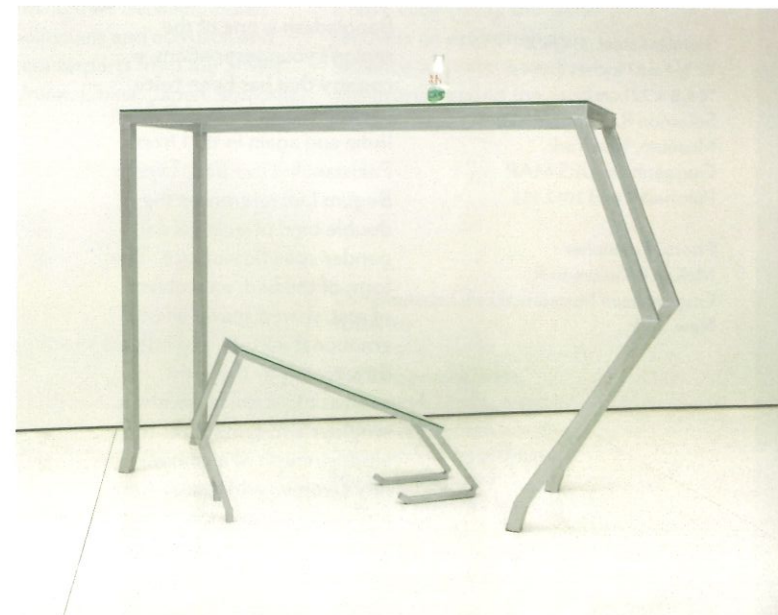
Galvanized steel, glass, and milk, three parts: 62 x 89 1/2 x 23 1/2, 26 1/4 x 44 1/2 x 12, and 8 1/2 x 3 1/8 inches (157.5 x 227.3 x 59.7 cm, 66.7 x 113 x 30.5 cm, and 21.6 x 7.9 x 7.9 cm), overall dimensions vary with installation
Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, Guggenheim UBS MAP Purchase Fund 2012.147

Photo: Kristopher McKay © Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York

Tang Da Wu's *Our Children* references a story from the traditional Teochew Opera (local to the South Chinese region from which the artist's family hails), in which a young boy experiences a humbling moment of enlightenment at the sight of a genuflecting baby goat suckling at its mother. Representing the timelessness of filial piety, the artist's stylized handmade tableau alludes to the transmission of cultural values and the nurturing of future generations. Alongside its deconstruction of historical narrative, Tang's practice also reveals a conviction in art as an agent of social transformation.

TANG DA WU

b. 1943, SINGAPORE





TAYEBA BEGUM LIPI

b. 1969, GAIBANDHA, BANGLADESH

▲
Love Bed, 2012

Stainless steel, 31 1/4 x
72 3/4 x 87 inches (79.4 x
184.8 x 221 cm)
Solomon R. Guggenheim
Museum, New York,
Guggenheim UBS MAP
Purchase Fund 2012.153

Photo: Kristopher
McKay © Solomon R.
Guggenheim Museum,
New York

Bangladesh is one of the region's youngest nations, a country that has been twice partitioned, once in 1947 from India and again in 1971 from Pakistan. In *Love Bed*, Tayeba Begum Lipi references the double bind of political and gender-specific violence. The form of the bed, an emblem of rest, shared space, and emotional warmth, is rendered threatening by the artist, even as the stainless steel she employs also symbolizes the inner strength of a community's women and reveals how individual experience becomes entwined with sociopolitical history.



Culture and engagement are old words.

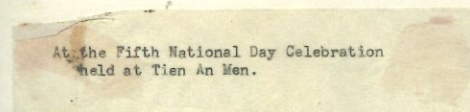
THE OTOLITH GROUP

est. 2002

ANJALIKA SAGAR
b. 1968, LONDON
and
KODWO ESHUN
b. 1966, LONDON

In *Communists Like Us*, the Otolith Group (Anjalika Sagar and Kodwo Eshun) interweaves a dialogue on the subject of political action taken from Jean-Luc Godard's 1967 film *La Chinoise* with images belonging to the photographic archive of Anasuya Gyan-Chand, Sagar's grandmother. These documentary images depict encounters between Indian politicians and activists, and counterparts from the Soviet Union, China, Japan, and other

countries in Asia during the mid-to-late 1950s and early '60s, and attest to the extensive nature of such relationships in postwar Asia. Accompanied by musical sequences from Cornelius Cardew and the Scratch Orchestra's *The Great Learning* (1969) and Ennio Morricone's soundtrack to Dario Argento's film *Il gatto a nove code* (1971), the work recovers an extraordinary instance of interconnection within and beyond the region.



I will start in two months time.
The experiment will last a year...
I want to see what is possible.

Communists Like Us,
2006-10

Black-and-white video,
with sound, 23 min., 5 sec.
Edition 2/5
Solomon R. Guggenheim
Museum, New York
Guggenheim UBS MAP
Purchase Fund 2012.163

Courtesy Project 88,
Mumbai

TRAN LUONG

b. 1960, HANOI

Tran Luong's *Lập Lòe* (*Blink*) emerged from a series of performances, begun in 2007, which travelled to eleven cities in China, Vietnam, Korea, Indonesia, and Singapore. Audiences were invited to snap a scarf against the artist's body in the playful manner of a children's game. The red scarf is loaded with historical and political significance, symbolizing the history of communism in Vietnam and the region. A commentary on Vietnam's past and present, in *Lập Lòe*, the meaning of the red scarf remains elusive but denotes transition, signaling change to come.

▼ *Lập Lòe*, 2012

Three-channel color video, with sound, 9 min., 47 sec.

Edition 1/5

Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, Guggenheim UBS MAP Purchase Fund 2012.154

© Tran Luong

In Tuan Andrew Nguyen's *Enemy's Enemy: A Monument to a Monument*, a classic American Louisville Slugger baseball bat is transformed into a sculptural relief portraying the figure of Thích Quảng Đức, a venerated Buddhist monk who, in 1963, performed self-immolation in protest against the earlier Diệm regime's repression of the Buddhist community. Referencing the Vietnamese tradition of religious woodcarving, the work binds together sport and religion as agents of social unification.

TUAN ANDREW NGUYEN

b. 1976, HO CHI MINH CITY, VIETNAM



▲ *Enemy's Enemy: Monument to a Monument*, 2012

Wood, 33 3/4 x 2 1/2 x 2 1/2 inches (85.7 x 6.4 x 6.4 cm), prototype 3/3, edition of 5
Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York
Guggenheim UBS MAP Purchase Fund 2012.156

© Tuan Andrew Nguyen

▶ *Keeping Up with the Abdullahs I*, 2012

Chromogenic print and plaque in artist's frame, 32 3/4 x 47 1/4 inches (83.2 x 120 cm), edition 2/8
Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York
Guggenheim UBS MAP Purchase Fund 2012.151

Photo: Kristopher McKay © Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York



VINCENT LEONG

b. 1979, KUALA LUMPUR

In Vincent Leong's *Keeping Up with the Abdullahs*, two photographs depict family members from minority ethnicities of Malaysia, the Chinese and the Indians. In both photographs, they wear Islamic clothing (the country claims Islam as its state religion while protecting freedom of worship), while

the compositions recall early nineteenth-century photographic portraits of the Malay sultanate. Referencing Malaysia's history of ethnic segregation and strife, the work alludes to pre-independent Malayan culture and the subject of cultural assimilation as a route to peaceful coexistence.

◀ *Keeping Up with the Abdullahs II*, 2012

Digital chromogenic print in artist's frame, 32 3/4 x 42 5/8 inches (83.2 x 108.3 cm), Edition 2/8
Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York
Guggenheim UBS MAP Purchase Fund 2012.152

Photo: Kristopher McKay © Solomon R.



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The Centre for Contemporary Art (CCA) is a research centre of Nanyang Technological University, developed with support from the Economic Development Board, Singapore. Located in Gillman Barracks, alongside a cluster of international galleries, the CCA takes a holistic approach towards art and culture, intertwining its various platforms: exhibitions, public programmes, residencies and research.

No Country: Contemporary Art for South and Southeast Asia has been organised by the Centre for Contemporary Art, Singapore, in collaboration with the Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation, New York, and is a cultural engagement of UBS.

Free Admission
Tue–Sun 12–7 pm
Fri 12–9 pm

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