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NTU CENTRE FOR
CONTEMPORARY
ART SINGAPORE



A

EDUCATION RESOURCE GUIDE

Exhibition
1 September –
19 November 2017

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**Ghosts and Spectres
– Shadows of History**

Apichatpong Weerasethakul
Ho Tzu Nyen
Nguyen Trinh Thi
Park Chan-kyong

NANYANG TECHNOLOGICAL UNIVERSITY

ABOUT NTU CCA SINGAPORE

Located in Gillman Barracks, the NTU CCA Singapore is the first national research centre for the Arts in Singapore and part of Nanyang Technological University, supported by a grant from the Economic Development Board. The Centre is unique in its threefold constellation of research & academic programmes, international exhibitions and residencies, positioning itself as a space for critical discourse and diverse forms of knowledge production. The Centre focuses on *Spaces of the Curatorial* in Singapore, Southeast Asia, and beyond, as well as engages in multi-layered research topics.

Since its inauguration in October 2013, the NTU CCA Singapore has developed into an influential platform encompassing research-based artistic practices of international scope, curatorial education, and public programmes to delve into the complexities of the contemporary art field.

NOTES TO TEACHERS & EDUCATORS

This Resource Guide is developed to supplement the Workshop for Teachers and Educators with a focus on the exhibitions at NTU CCA Singapore. It provides an opportunity for educators to learn how contemporary artists address issues and concerns of our times, as well as to explore new teaching strategies.

Here, in the guide, you will find resources specifically designed for teachers and students. The proposed activities are conceived to be used in a flexible manner, allowing educators to select suitable activities and combine them to meet the needs of their students.

Before bringing your class to the NTU CCA Singapore, it is recommended that you visit the exhibition, consult the exhibition brochure and the Resource Guide, and decide which aspects of the exhibition are most relevant to your students. Customised guided tours for student groups led by NTU CCA Singapore curators are also available upon request.

For more information and requests, email: NTUCCAEducation@ntu.edu.sg

Magdalena Magiera
Curator Outreach & Education
NTU CCA Singapore

Kelly Reedy
Educator, Art Therapist, Artist

ABOUT THE OUTREACH & EDUCATION PROGRAMMES

The education programmes promote contemporary art as a form of creative learning through exhibition tours, talks, and workshops developed by the centre's education team. Our accessible and inclusive learning experiences connect students and teachers with contemporary art and artists to encourage new ways of looking, thinking, and creating.

Crucial to our programme is the approach "bring your own story," which encourages students to connect the exhibitions with their personal experiences generating new meanings through playful strategies, peer collaborations, and group discussions.

Who would benefit from working with/consulting the Education Resource Guide?

Conceived for teachers and educators working in primary, secondary, and tertiary educational settings, this guide also serves as a useful resource for interested exhibition visitors, as a tool to understand and enjoy contemporary art. Following the guided questions and activities, visitors are encouraged to enter the world of the artist(s) and reflect on what they experience in the gallery space.

How can the Education Resource Guide be used by educators and general visitors?

These educational activities can be used for pre-gallery, in-gallery, or post-gallery lessons. Teachers can choose which activities are valuable for their educational objectives, and are free to add on other related materials of their own. Visitors can also decide which ideas and content inspire them to further learn from and enhance their exhibition experience.

What is the goal of the Resource Guide?

We want to encourage people to discover and trust their own responses to contemporary art. We think contemporary art can be meaningful and relevant for everyone, but we also acknowledge that an exhibition can sometimes be perceived as intimidating and confusing. Hence the resources we produce are developed to help viewers build confidence in individual thinking and engage creatively with contemporary art.

ABOUT THE EXHIBITION

The complex histories of the pre-modern, the colonial, the post-colonial, and the modern are not easily dissected; they are interwoven and layered. To understand the contemporary, one has to delve into the past. The exhibited artists' research into their own cultural and historical backgrounds gain shape through allegories that review and reevaluate the social and political reforms in post-war Asia.

As shadows of history, ghosts and spectres are themselves situated between fiction and reality, just as the medium of film is, itself, mere projection. Through the cinematic, the featured works combine the factual with the fictional, alluding not only to rarely discussed subject-matters but also raise crucial questions about power and authority, construction of narratives, repression of identities, and collective trauma.

Obliquely referencing topics that are rarely openly discussed, the works explore what is withheld of historical legacies and which still has a grip on society today, in terms of power structures, corruption, and repression of social freedom: Ho Tzu Nyen's two works question the construction of historical narratives and shared identities through referencing the ambivalent role of communist ideologies in Malaya; both the artistic practice of Nguyen Trinh Thi and Park Chan-kyong uncover the repressed, the obscured, and the traumatised, through personal and shared memories (in Park's case, also evoking folkloric rites); while Apichatpong Weerasethakul's filmic experimentation with light and shadows attempts to present shifting memories, tapping into the unconscious to recollect experiences of violence, turmoil, and suppression.

Through presenting these artistic positions, each employing their own system of metaphorical references, *Ghosts and Spectres – Shadows of History* proposes a renewed understanding of the past to situate the present through vignettes of collective memory and personal experiences.

YOUR PERSONAL THOUGHTS ON THE EXHIBITION

Write down your first impressions while you walk through the show.

ABOUT THE ARTISTS
APICHA TPONG WEERASETHAKUL



Apichatpong Weerasethakul (b. 1970, Thailand) is an award-winning filmmaker and artist based in Chiang Mai, Thailand. He earned his bachelor degree in architecture from Khon Kaen University Thailand, and his Master's degree in filmmaking from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. In 1999, Apichatpong co-founded the production company Kick the Machine which has produced many of his own as well as other experimental Thai films. Recognised as one of the most original voices in contemporary cinema, his films have won him widespread international recognition and numerous awards, including the Cannes Palme d'Or for *Uncle Boonmee Who Can Recall His Past Lives* (2010); Cannes Competition Jury Prize for *Tropical Malady* (2004); and the Cannes Un Certain Regard for *Blissfully Yours* (2002). *The Serenity of Madness* (2016), an exhibition curated by Gridthiya Gaweewong, has been shown at MAIIAM in Chiang Mai, Para Site in Hong Kong, and MCAD in Manila, soon touring to the United States. Other exhibitions include *Mirages*, Tate Modern, London (2016); *Fireworks*, SCAI Bathouse, Tokyo (2014); *Photophobia*, Stenersen Museet, Oslo (2013); *For Tomorrow For Tonight*, UCCA, Beijing (2012); *Apichatpong Weerasethakul: PRIMITIVE*, The New Museum, New York (2011); *For Tomorrow For Tonight*, The Irish Museum of Modern Art, Dublin (2011). He participated in numerous biennials, including the Sharjah Biennial, (receiving the Sharjah Biennial Prize, 2013); documenta(13), Kassel (2012); Singapore Biennale (2008); and Guangzhou Triennial (2008).

HO TZU NYEN



Ho Tzu Nyen (b. 1976, Singapore) works primarily in film, video, and (theatre) performance, and develops immersive multimedia installations. He earned a BA in Creative Arts from Victorian College of the Arts, University of Melbourne (2001), and an MA in Southeast Asian Studies from the National University of Singapore (2007). Drawing from historical and philosophical texts and artefacts, he appropriates the structures of epic myths, invoking their grandeur while revealing that these are not merely stories, but discursive tools. In 2015 he was awarded the prestigious DAAD Scholarship and in 2011 he represented Singapore at the 54th Venice Biennale. His works have been shown at the Guggenheim Museum Bilbao (2015); Guggenheim Museum, New York (2013); Mori Art Museum, Tokyo (2012); Witte de With, Rotterdam (2012); Artspace, Sydney (2011); Tate Modern, London (2010); the 6th Asia-Pacific Triennial, Queensland Art Gallery, Brisbane (2009); the 1st Singapore Biennale (2006); and the 26th São Paulo Biennale (2004). His films have premiered at the Sundance Film Festival in Park City, Utah (2012); Cannes Film Festival (2009); and the 66th Venice International Film Festival (2009). He has presented theatrical works at the Asian Arts Theatre, Gwangju (2015); Wiener Festwochen, Vienna (2014); Theater der Welt, Essen and Mühlheim (2010); the Kunstenfestivaldesarts, Brussels (2008, 2006); and the Singapore Arts Festival (2008, 2006). He has also written extensively on art as a critic.

NGUYEN TRINH THI



Nguyen Trinh Thi (b. 1973, Vietnam), is a Hanoi-based independent filmmaker and video/media artist. She studied journalism and photography at the University of Iowa, and International Relations and Ethnographic Film at the University of California, San Diego. She is the founding and acting director of DOCLAB, a centre founded in 2009 for documentary filmmaking and video art in Hanoi. Her diverse practice has consistently investigated the role of memory in the necessary unveiling of hidden, displaced or misinterpreted histories, and examined the position of artists in the Vietnamese society. Her films and video art works have been shown at festivals and art exhibitions, including Prudential Eye 2016, ArtScience Museum, Singapore; Rotterdam International Film Festival (2016); *Satellite 8*, Jeu de Paume, Paris, and CAPC Bordeaux (2015); the Lyon Biennale (2015); Asian Art Biennial, Taiwan (2015); 5th Fukuoka Triennale, Fukuoka Asian Art Museum (2014); *If The World Changed*, 4th Singapore Biennale (2013); 15th Jakarta Biennale (2013); Bangkok Experimental Film Festival (2012); Artists' Films International (2012); Oberhausen International Film Festival (2011); Summer Exhibition, DEN FRIE Centre of Contemporary Art, Copenhagen (2011); and Kuandu Biennale, Taipei (2010); and DMZ International Documentary Film Festival, South Korea (2011).

PARK CHAN-KYONG



Park Chan-kyong (b. 1965, South Korea) is a media artist, film director, and writer. He graduated from Seoul National University with a BFA in Painting in 1988, and the California Institute of the Arts with a MFA in Photography in 1995. Park served as the Artistic Director of the SeMA Biennale Mediacity Seoul in 2014. His major works include *Manshin: Ten Thousand Spirits* (2013), *Night Fishing* (2011, co-directed with Park Chan-wook), *Sindoan* (2008), *Power Passage* (2004), and *Sets* (2000). Park's work has been exhibited internationally in numerous solo and group exhibitions including Haus der Kulturen der Welt, Berlin (2017); Taipei Biennial (2016); Anyang Public Art Project (2016); Iniva, London (2015); Art Sonje Center, Seoul (2013); and Atelier Hermès, Seoul (2012, 2008). Park was awarded the Hermès Korea Art Award in 2004, and the Golden Bear for best short film at the Berlin International Film Festival in 2011 for *Night Fishing*. His works are included in the collection of major art institutions, such as the National Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art, Korea; KADIST, Paris and San Francisco; Musée des Beaux-Arts de Nantes; Leeum, Samsung Museum of Art, Seoul; Seoul Museum of Art; Gyeonggi Museum of Modern Art, Ansan; and Art Sonje Center, Seoul.

**USING THE GALLERY AS SITE FOR RESEARCH:
A FIELD TRIP TO NTU CENTRE FOR CONTEMPORARY ART SINGAPORE**

Theme:
METAPHOR.FICTION.MEMORY.HISTORY

Cross-disciplinary subjects:
history, religion, social studies, storytelling

Advisory Disclaimer: This exhibition explores sensitive issues of political history, social justice, and gender identification. Teachers are advised to view the works before taking student groups and to identify which subjects suit their curriculum's objectives. The Education Resource Guide will provide ideas on how to approach the topics introduced in the exhibition.

INTRODUCTION TO THE ACTIVITIES

Read the background information and discuss your answers to the questions in this section with your classmates.

This exhibition brings together four Asian artists who use filmmaking to express their deep interests in the cultural and historical contexts of their respective countries. Drawn from 1950s and 60s Malayan history, Ho Tzu Nyen (b. 1976, Singapore) pieces together in *The Nameless* (2015), the obscure story of the infamous triple agent Lai Teck, and in *The Name* (2015) a mysterious author of historical narratives. Nguyen Trinh Thi (b. 1973, Vietnam) documents issues of social and ethnographic importance in *Love Man Love Woman* (2007) and *Letters From Panduranga* (2015). In *Citizen's Forest* (2016), Park Chan-kyong (b. 1965, South Korea) explores multilayered experiences of the Korean Peninsula's history and religious traditions as they pertain to the present-day socio-political reality. Apichatpong Weerasethakul (b. 1970, Thailand) creates dreamlike imagery in *Fireworks (Archives)* (2014) to illuminate the history of his home region of Isan, located in northeastern Thailand. All mix fact with fiction, making for narratives that at once mesmerize and perturb the viewer's mind.

Artists have long worked with metaphors as a means to communicate their thoughts and opinions concerning culturally and politically sensitive topics of importance to them. The creation of art lends itself to the use of symbols that allows for the subtle discussion of the complex issues of memory as related to political histories, the comparisons of old traditions to new, and personal identity. Each of the artists in this exhibition grapples with shadows of controversial events in the history of their own places of origin. For example, Ho Tzu Nyen in *The Nameless* revisits the different narratives of an important period in Malayan history, when following World War II and the withdrawal of Britain as the ruling colonial power, an armed struggle took place between communist and democratic ideologies which influenced the direction of the future political system. In *Letters from Panduranga*, Nguyen Trinh Thi portrays the story of the current threat to the cultural survival of the indigenous Cham people in present day Vietnam. By playing with the concept of shadows of history, as well as innovative filmmaking techniques, the artists are able to create a safe distance concerning these often unspoken subjects, allowing for the start of an open, as well as critical discussion of important issues.

PRE-GALLERY VISIT ACTIVITIES

1. Discuss the definitions and concepts expressed in the vocabulary list below prior to the gallery visit.
 - Ethnographic –
 - Evoke –
 - Fact –
 - Fiction –
 - History –
 - Illuminate –
 - Mesmerise –
 - Memory –
 - Metaphor –
 - Obscure –
 - Perturb –
 - Shadow –
 - Story –
2. Do you like to read history?
3. What is the difference between reading history and reading a story?
4. What stories do you know related to the history of Singapore? (e.g. life of founder Sang Nila Utama or of traditional Bugis sea traders, etc.)
5. Do any of these stories contain unclear or shadowy passages?
6. How can we tell if a story is made up of fact or fiction?
7. Draw a sketch of an event or part of a story from Singapore's history.
8. How many factual details can you remember?

NTU CCA SINGAPORE ACTIVITIES: GHOSTS AND SPECTRES – SHADOWS OF HISTORY

ILLUMINATING SHADOWS AND EXPRESSING THE INEXPRESSIBLE

There are six films and videos featured in this exhibition, Apichatpong Weerasethakul's *Fireworks (Archives)* (2014); Ho Tzu Nyen's *The Nameless* (2015) and *The Name* (2015); Nguyen Trinh Thi's *Love Man Love Woman* (2007) and *Letters From Panduranga* (2015); and Park Chan-Kyong's *Citizen's Forest* (2016). They each convey a message through visual codes and symbols, evoking forgotten events or shadows of history. They encourage the viewer to think about their societies' history and current state. The artists tell their stories through the subtle illumination of facts through fiction. The medium of film and video allows them to express the inexpressible and create space for dialogue and debate.

ACTIVITY #1: ILLUMINATING SHADOWS

[Required materials: notebook, pencil, camera or a smart phone.]

* An important note: The activity sheets will not be graded, nor is there only one correct answer. They are to provide a platform for creative dialogue, debate and continued research into the suggested topics.

In Activity #1 explore the exhibition individually, spending time watching a part of each video. Use your booklet to note down any imagery or themes that you think may represent important visual metaphors or symbols in the artist's work.

Ho Tzu Nyen

The Nameless, 2015

21 min 51 sec

Ho Tzu Nyen

The Name, 2015

16 min 51 sec, with 16 books
by the author Gene Z. Hanrahan

Apichatpong Weerasethakul

Fireworks (Archives), 2014

6 min 40 sec

Nguyen Trinh Thi*Love Man Love Woman, 2007*

52 min

Nguyen Trinh Thi*Letters From Panduranga, 2015*

35 min

Park Chan-kyong*Citizen's Forest, 2016*

26 min 6 sec

Next break into small groups of 3 or 4 to answer the additional questions.

1. Share and discuss within your group the visual metaphors or symbols you discovered.
2. Can you guess what they each represent?
3. Are the symbols clear and easy to grasp?
4. Which film interests you the most? Explain why.
5. How has the idea of shadows of history been incorporated into your favourite video in the exhibition?
6. Try to find out more information about each artist's work, theme and country's history.

**ACTIVITY #2:
GALLERY WORK:
VISUALISING SHADOWS**

Go back to your favorite work and watch it in its entirety.
Draw the symbols and images that you feel best represent
the shadows of history, as related to the controversial debate
as illustrated by the artist.

**ACTIVITY #3:
STUDIO WORK:
EXPRESSING THE INEXPRESSIBLE**

[Required materials: Cyanotype process paper, coloured paper, transparent paper, photocopied transparencies, thumbtacks, string, Styrofoam backing, charcoal sticks, drawing paper]

Sometimes we are unable to talk about how we feel or something that happened to us. Making an artwork is an important non-verbal way through which people can tell their stories to each other. The use of filmmaking and photographic techniques allows artists to combine layers of imagery to create a personal narrative. Cyanotypes are an early form of photographic reproduction using the sun as a developing agent. In the past, copies of blueprint drawings or botanical illustrations were created with this technique, but today artists use it as well.

Students may work with a theme from one of the videos in the exhibition or they may choose an historical event from their own country or their own personal story to depict. They will use a special cyanotype paper to create an image to act as a metaphor for their ideas. By simply making a collage with cut papers, drawings on transparent sheets, and other mixed media materials, the students will be able to create blue and white shadow images, aiding them in expressing the inexpressible.

POST-VISIT IDEAS!

Each teacher must decide how to best continue to use the enriching and thought-provoking gallery visits to enhance their students' cross-disciplinary learning experience. The following are a few ideas that could be developed by the students in post-visit lessons or projects.

- Students could do historical research into the topics presented in the videos.
- Students could research periods in Singapore's history with which they are unfamiliar.
- Students could choose a historical event or personal experience and write a story by mixing fact and fiction, subtly exposing their point of view, while protecting the identity of those involved.
- Individual students could compile old family photographs or new documentation of family events and have them scanned on transparencies in order to create their own personal mixed media cyanotypes.
- Students could attend a Human Library event and hear the personal stories of total strangers. <https://www.facebook.com/humanlibrarysg/> <https://www.humanlibrarysg.org>

Vocabulary

Suggested definitions from www.freedictionary.com

Archive – a repository for stored memories or information.

Ethnographic – of or relating to ethnography, the branch of anthropology that deals with the description of specific human cultures, using methods such as close observation and interviews

Evoke – a.) to call to mind, as by suggestion, association, or reference b.) to call or summon up (a memory, feeling etc) especially from the past

Fact – a.) knowledge or information based on real occurrences; b.) something believed to be true or real

Fiction – the category of literature, drama, film, or other creative work whose content is imagined and is not necessarily based on fact

History – a chronological record of events, as of the life or development of a people or institution, often including an explanation of or commentary on those events

Ghost – a.) the disembodied soul; a spirit appearing after death b.) a returning or haunting memory or image

Illuminate – to make understandable; clarify

Medium – a specific kind of artistic technique or means of expression as determined by the materials used or the creative methods involved.

Mesmerize – a.) to spellbind, enthrall; b.) to hypnotize

Memory – a particular recollection of an event, person, etc

Metaphor – one thing conceived as representing another; a symbol

Obscure – hidden, secret, or remote

Penchant – a strong inclination, taste or liking for something.

Perturb – to disturb or confuse; make uneasy or anxious

Spectre – a. an apparition b.) a mental image of something unpleasant or menacing

Taboo – a ban or inhibition resulting from social custom or emotional aversion

Shadow – a.) a dark area or shape made by an object blocking rays of light b.) a faint indication

Story – an account or recital of an event or a series of events, either true or fictitious

Story-telling – The act or practice of telling stories.

Resource

www.freedictionary.com
www.dorisea.de
www.iseas.edu.sg

Apichatpong Weerasethakul
www.kickthemachine.com

Ho Tzu Nyen
www.cdosea.org
 (Ho's critical dictionary of Southeast Asia)

Nguyen Trinh Thi
www.nguyentrinthi.wordpress.com

Park Chan-kyong
www.parkchankyong.com

PROGRAMMES

Free admission to all programmes unless otherwise stated. All programmes take place at NTU CCA Singapore, Block 43 Malan Road, Gillman Barracks.

For enquiries and registration, email: NTUCCAEducation@ntu.edu.sg

Saturday, 9 September 2017

10.00am – 1.00pm

Workshop for Teachers and Educators by educator and artist **Kelly Reedy**

This workshop focuses on the artists and the works included in the exhibition *Ghosts and Spectres – Shadows of History*. It provides the opportunity for educators to explore contested historical narratives and its layered constructions situated between fiction and reality, while referencing local myths, ghosts, and traditional figures. The workshop engages with artistic practices and prepares educators for visits with students by providing educational tools as entry points to the exhibition, and assisting in identifying aspects of the exhibition that might be relevant to their classes. It suggests techniques for exploring both the visual arts and other areas of daily encounters.

Kelly Reedy (United States/Singapore) has worked in Singapore for over 18 years as an artist and educator. She holds a BFA in Fine Art (University of Wisconsin, 1985), MA in Education (Hunter College, 1991), and MA in Art Therapy (LASALLE College of the Arts, 2017). She has exhibited her artworks internationally in Paris, Chicago, and Berlin, as well as locally at the Jendela Visual Arts Space, Esplanade, the Singapore Tyler Print Institute, and Alliance Française. Reedy has developed educational resources for the National Gallery Singapore and trained teachers at the National Institute of Education, specialising in visual arts education in museums and galleries.

Saturday, 21 October 2017

1.30 – 3.45pm

Workshop for Children: **Inner Warriors!** by artist **anGie seah**

Admission Fee: S\$20

Beliefs and superstitious concepts are often manifested through a rich visual imagery that attempts to represent otherworldly presences. Our imagination and instincts give form to that what is invisible, which can also be imagined to exist within ourselves. This artist-run workshop developed for children aged 7 to 12 explores the invisible force within us that can be seen as the ‘fighting spirit,’ the strength that keeps us going. Participants will be introduced to stencil techniques, as well as the dripping and sponging techniques of action painting.

anGie seah (Singapore) (Singapore) is a multidisciplinary artist traversing drawing, installation, performance, and sound to respond to human condition in relation to the social environment. She received an education bursary from National Arts Council (NAC), Singapore, and the culture scholarship from the Goethe Institute, Berlin. Since 1997, she has participated in art festivals and residencies, exhibited in Les Halles de Schaerbeek, Belgium; ZKM Center for Art and Media Karlsruhe, Germany; Nippon International Performance Art Festival, Japan; Southeast Asia Art Exchange, Myanmar; Singapore Biennale 2013; Uppsala Art Museum, Sweden; and the Bangkok Art and Culture Centre, Thailand, and initiated art projects and participatory workshops in Singapore, supported by the NAC, Esplanade – Theatres by the Bay, and People’s Association.

School / Group Tours

NTU CCA Singapore’s guided school tours offer engaging discussions on art, provide opportunities to hone observation skills, and develop interpretative thinking for both students and teachers alike. These specially designed school tours are led by NTU CCA Singapore’s curators and will give insight into the exhibiting artists, their works, and personal anecdotes, while at the same time, introduce and elaborate on the key themes of each exhibition.

Gillman Barracks Art & History Tours

These free docent-led tours by Friends of the Museum will uncover Gillman Barracks’ rich history and introduce its galleries, including a visit to NTU CCA Singapore. Please register in advance at www.gillmanbarracks.com/tours.

