

NTU GCA IDEAS FEST 2016/17

CLUES FOR PEOPLE

NOVEMBER 2016

MONDAY, 14 NOVEMBER 2016, 6.30 – 8.30PM
THE URA CENTRE, URA FUNCTION HALL
LEVEL 5, 45 MAXWELL ROAD, SINGAPORE 069118

KEYNOTE LECTURE IN HONOUR OF WILLIAM S. W. LIM

CONTESTING MODERNITY IN ASIA: REACHING TOWARDS
A NON-WEST MODERNIST PAST; REFLECTIONS ON THE
THINKING OF WILLIAM LIM

PROFESSOR LEON VAN SCHAIK (SOUTH AFRICA/AUSTRALIA)

Chairperson: **Tan Dan Feng** (Singapore)
Respondent: **Dr Lilian Chee** (Singapore)

7.00pm
Welcome address
Larry Ng, Urban Redevelopment Authority, and **Khim Ong**, NTU CCA
Singapore

Introduction by Chairperson

Keynote Lecture
Response

NTU CENTRE FOR
CONTEMPORARY
ART SINGAPORE

14, 25-26 NOVEMBER 2016

THE IMPOSSIBILITY OF MAPING

CONFERENCE

(URBAN ASIA)

FRIDAY, 25 NOVEMBER 2016, 1.00 – 6.00PM
NTU CCA SINGAPORE, THE SINGLE SCREEN

BLOCK 43 MALAN ROAD, GILLMAN BARRACKS, SINGAPORE 109443

PANEL I

IMAGINING THE UNIMAGINABLE

CHAIRPERSONS: PROFESSOR WILLIAM S. W. LIM AND TAN DAN FENG (SINGAPORE)

This panel consists of two parts:

Panel presentations: "Spatial Imaginations" – Drawing from the themes in the exhibition *Incomplete Urbanism: Attempts of Critical Spatial Practice*, four scholars and researchers examine different aspects of urban life, responding to the theories and practice of renowned Singapore architect William S. W. Lim, whose works and ideas about indeterminacy and changeability inspired the exhibition.

Panel discussion: "Social and Cultural Imaginations" – Shifting from the spatial to the social and cultural aspects of urban living, four eminent Singapore artists and intellectuals discuss the different roles that William S. W. Lim has played as an "activator" of the city over a span of five decades. In particular, they look at the principles of "participation" and "agency" that have guided much of Lim's efforts in these spheres.

1.00pm	Registration	
2.00pm	Tour of exhibition <i>Incomplete Urbanism: Attempts of Critical Spatial Practice</i> by Shirley Surya (Indonesia/Hong Kong). This tour focuses on Surya's contribution to the exhibition which traces William S. W. Lim's role in the production, dissemination, and practice of ideals related to urban ethics and agency in the context of Singapore and Asia.	
2.30pm	Welcome address Professor Ute Meta Bauer (Germany/Singapore)	
	Introduction by Chairpersons	
2.30pm	Panel presentations: "Observing the Paradigm of Multiple Modernities", Jeremy Chia (Singapore) "Imaginarities of Sustainability, Critical Imagination, and Urban Spaces of Possibility", Dr Sacha Kagan (Germany) "Urban Textuality", Dr Eunice Seng (Singapore/Hong Kong) "Incomplete Urbanism: Local Intelligentsia, Global Planning Movements, and the State", Koon Wee (Singapore/Hong Kong)	
4.30pm	Tea Break	
5.30pm	Tour of exhibition <i>Incomplete Urbanism: Attempts of Critical Spatial Practice</i> by Magdalena Magiera (Germany/Singapore)	
	Panel discussion: "Social and Cultural Imaginations" Professor Kwok Kian Woon (Singapore) Dr Sharon Siddique (Singapore) Constance Singam (Singapore) Alvin Tan (Singapore)	

PANEL II

MID-CENTURY MODERN: FORMS AND SPACES IN CITIES

CHAIRPERSON: ROGER NELSON (AUSTRALIA/CAMBODIA)

This panel considers urban spaces and forms in Southeast Asia's modern mid-century: a historical moment defined by nation-building projects, generally in the aftermath of decolonisation. How were Southeast Asian cities formed at this time? And in what ways was modernity enacted in built forms and urban spaces within these cities? These questions will be considered from diverse disciplinary perspectives, in relation to case studies from Bangkok, Kuala Lumpur, and Phnom Penh. Grand, centrally planned projects will be compared with smaller-scale urban forms and spaces, facilitating plural views of the contested ideologies at play within mid-century modern cities.

9.30am	Registration	
10.00am	Welcome address Professor Ute Meta Bauer (Germany/Singapore)	
	Introduction by Chairperson	
10.30am	Panel presentations "Multiple Modernities in Thailand's Shophouses", Dr Chomchon Fusiapaiboon (Thailand) "Phnom Penh's Bassac Riverfront: A Modern Cosmopolitan Cultural Precinct", Pen Seraypagna (Cambodia) "Concrete & Simplicity: The People's Party's Modernist Architecture (1932–1947)", Dr Thanavi Chotpradit (Thailand) "Concrete Like a Nation is Ambitious", Dr Simon Soon (Malaysia)	
12.30pm	Panel discussion	
1.00pm	Lunch	
	Screening of <i>The Man Who Built Cambodia</i> , Christopher Rompré	

PANEL III

"THE FUTURE IS URBAN" — CITIES IN THE TIME OF KNOWN UNKNOWNNS

CHAIRPERSON: DR ETIENNE TURPIN (CANADA/INDONESIA)

According to the Pentagon's Joint Special Operations University, "the future is urban". While the Pentagon has characterised this urban future as an increasingly complex theatre of operations requiring a drastic redesign of military doctrine relating to urban conflict, what the military obscures through its image of urbanisation is the decidedly political context which frames their narrative as "unavoidable". How can this narrative be troubled, even coopted, by collective, alternative approaches to the entangled multiplicities which make up megacity life in urban Asia? How can the co-production of knowledge within these densely networked urban environments challenge the dominant view that legibility and addressability are the most effective tools for urban governance? What urban futures are being collectively composed as disruptions to the technocratic fantasies of control put forward by the Pentagon? This panel brings together practitioners to examine these questions and share stories about their current work, projects, and aspirations for the city as a laboratory.

2.30pm	Introduction lecture Dr Etienne Turpin (Canada/Indonesia)	
3.00pm	Panel presentations: "The Multiple Must Be Made" Giovanni Dessy Austringrum , (Indonesia) Hong Phuc Dang (Vietnam) Christina Leigh Geros (United States/Indonesia) Nashin Mahtani (Indonesia)	
5.00pm	Tea Break	
5.15pm	Roundtable discussion	

ABOUT THE CHAIRPERSONS

Professor Ute Meta Bauer (Germany/Singapore) is Founding Director, NTU CCA Singapore and Professor at the School of Art, Design and Media (ADM), Nanyang Technological University (NTU). As Associate Professor in the Department of Architecture at Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), Cambridge, United States (2005–2012), she served as Founding Director of the MIT Program in Art, Culture, and Technology (ACT). She was Dean of Fine Art at the Royal College of Art, London, United Kingdom (2012–2013). Professor Bauer was a co-curator of *Documenta11* (2001/2002); Artistic Director, 3rd Berlin Biennale for contemporary art, Germany (2004); and the Founding Director of the Office for Contemporary Art Norway, Oslo, Norway (2002–2005). In 2015, she co-curated with MIT List Center for Visual Art Director Paul Ha the US Pavilion, 56th Venice Biennale, Italy, presenting eminent artist Joan Jonas.

Professor William S. W. Lim (Singapore) is president of Architectural Association Asia (AA Asia) and chairman of Asian Urban Lab. He graduated from the Architectural Association, London, United Kingdom, and continued his graduate study at the Department of City and Regional Planning, Graduate School of Design, Harvard University, Cambridge, United States. Lim's professional work involves architecture, planning, and development economics. Lim was conferred a Doctor of Architecture *Honoris Causa* by Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology, Australia in 2002, and Honorary Professor of LASALLE College of the Arts, Singapore, in 2005. Currently, he writes and lectures on a wide range of subjects relating to architecture, urbanism, and culture in Asia as well as on current issues relating to the postmodern, glocality, and social justice.

Roger Nelson (Australia/Cambodia) is an art historian and independent curator based in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, and a PhD candidate at the University of Melbourne, Australia, researching modernity and contemporaneity in "Cambodian arts" from 1955–2015. He has contributed essays to scholarly journals including *Contemporaneity: Historical Presence in Visual Culture*, *Stedelijk Studies*, and *Udaya: Journal of Khmer Studies*; specialist art magazines including *ArtAsiaPacific*; as well as books and numerous exhibition catalogues. Nelson has curated exhibitions and other projects in Australia, Cambodia, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam. In 2015–2016, he participated in the research programme, *Ambitious Alignments: New Histories of Southeast Asian Art*, developed by the Power Institute Foundation for Art & Visual Culture, University of Sydney, Australia, and funded by the Connecting Art Histories initiative of the Getty Foundation, Los Angeles, United States. He is co-founder and co-editor of *SOUTHEAST OF NOW: Directions in Contemporary and Modern Art*, a peer-reviewed scholarly journal published by NUS Press, Singapore.

Tan Dan Feng (Singapore) is co-founder of The Select Centre, a not-for-profit organisation focused on intercultural engagement, and Director of the Asian Urban Lab, Singapore. He has been involved in university translation programmes as course coordinator, lecturer, and academic advisory board member. He was a member of the National Translation Committee, the Arts Advisory Panel, and the Television and Radio Advisory Committee Panel of Experts. Books he has edited or co-edited include *The Chinese in Indonesia* (2008), *Indonesia Rising: Islam, Democracy and the Rise of Indonesia as a Major Power* (2009), and *Singapore Shifting Boundaries: Social Change in the Early 21st Century* (2011).

Dr Etienne Turpin (Canada/Indonesia) is a philosopher and research scientist studying, designing, curating, and writing about complex urban systems, political economies of data and infrastructure, art and visual culture, and Southeast Asian colonial-scientific history. He is Associate Researcher, Urban Risk Lab, School of Architecture & Planning, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge, United States; Founding Director of an exact office in Jakarta, Indonesia; and Founding Coordinator of the Urban Lab Network Asia (labnet.asia). A member of the SYNAPSE International Curators' Network of the House of World Cultures in Berlin, Germany, he is also co-editor of the *intercalations: paginated* exhibition series, published as part of *Das Anthropozän-Projekt*. Dr Turpin has been awarded research fellowships at the SMART Infrastructure Facility and the Australian Center for Cultural Environmental Research, both at University of Wollongong, Australia, and the Center for Southeast Asian Studies, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, United States, and is currently Visiting Research Fellow at NTU CCA Singapore.

KEYNOTE LECTURE

CONTESTING MODERNITY IN ASIA: REACHING TOWARDS A NON-WEST MODERNIST PAST; REFLECTIONS ON THE THINKING OF WILLIAM LIM

Professor Leon van Schaik, Innovation Professor of Architecture, Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology (RMIT), Australia

"We are the creatures of our mental space, a space formed through our life experience." In this lecture, Professor Leon van Schaik argues, as he has in his book *Spatial Intelligence* (2008), that "we have a responsibility to uncover and analyse how our histories in space have formed the intellectual and experiential assumptions that are the frame of our lives as professionals and as citizens." Professor Van Schaik's keynote lecture addresses the influence of William S. W. Lim over his career and manifold collaborative practices.

Professor Leon van Schaik (South Africa/Australia) has promoted local and international architectural culture through an influential practice-based research programme and the commissioning of innovative architecture. His Architecture and Design Practice PhD programme at RMIT has become an important template for institutions worldwide. In 2012, the programme was awarded a grant by the EU Marie Curie Actions Fund to extend its activities internationally by partnering with institutions in Europe. At the 75th Anniversary Awards of the RAA, Professor Van Schaik was awarded the inaugural Neville Quarry Prize for Architectural Education. In 2006, he was made an Officer (AO) in the General Division of the Order of Australia for his services to architecture and education.

Respondent: Dr Lillian Chee, Assistant Professor, Department of Architecture, School of Design and Environment, National University of Singapore

Trained in architectural design, history, and theory, Dr Lillian Chee's (Singapore) research interests intersect architectural representation, domesticity, gender, and affect. She conceptualised and researched for the award-winning architectural essay film *03-FLATS* (NUS and 13 Little Pictures, 2014) which has been shown in 12 cities. She was also co-editor of *Asian Cinema and the Use of Space* (2015). Her current book project looks at affect and architectural discourse in Singapore.

OBSERVING THE PARADIGM OF MULTIPLE MODERNITIES

Jeremy Chia, Researcher, Asian Urban Lab and Architectural Association Asia,

Modernity has long been assumed to be a Eurocentric concept; correspondingly, Western modernity is often thought as universally applicable based on its economic, military, and political superiority. However, this belief about Western

PANEL DISCUSSION

SOCIAL AND CULTURAL IMAGINATIONS

In this panel, four eminent Singapore artists and intellectuals discuss the different roles that William S. W. Lim has played as an "activator" of the city over a span of five decades. In particular, they look at the principles of "participation" and "agency" that have guided much of Lim's efforts in these spheres.

DISCUSSANTS:

Professor Kwok Kian Woon, Associate Provost (Student Life), NTU, Singapore

Professor Kwok Kian Woon's (Singapore) research interests include the study of social memory, mental health, civil society, and heritage and the arts. As a sociologist and a citizen, Professor Kwok has been actively involved in public life. He has served on many key committees of the National Heritage Board, on the boards of the NTU CCA Singapore and the Intercultural Theatre Institute, and as external advisor to the Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts. From 1997–2001, Professor Kwok was President of the Singapore Heritage Society which has worked with many Singaporeans to shape the national agenda on heritage conservation.

Dr Sharon Siddique, Visiting Professorial Fellow, Lee Kuan Yew Centre for Innovative Cities, Singapore

aportated ori by many scholars since the beginning of the 21st century. It is against this Lab has decided to explore more comprehensively its application in the non-West parts of cultural traditions and journeys to modernity. In his presentation, Chia will discuss some ons relating to the paradigm of multiple modernities.

Asian Urban Lab (AUL) and Architectural Association Asia (AA Asia) focuses on issues relating to architecture, urbanism, society, pendent Studio Summa, engaging in architectural research and design production. Chia graduated with a Master of Architecture re. His research interests include the methods of production and potentialities in architecture, the morphology and use of public as organised several workshops and conferences for AUL and AA Asia, as well as edited publications which include *Incomplete Emerging Economies* (2012), *Public Space in Urban Asia* (2014), *Incubations: A Guidebook To Procuring Innovative Architecture ing Utopia* (2016).

ABILITY, CRITICAL IMAGINATION, AND URBAN SPACES OF POSSIBILITY

ssociate, Institute of Sociology and Cultural Organization, Leuphana y, Germany

-contradictions as opposed to clear-cut ideas and razor-sharp concepts, expressions like /, "critical imagination", or even the very expression "sustainable development" invite us to thical sensibility to qualitative complexity. Rooting the search process of sustainability in a exity allows stressing the value of "spaces of possibility" for sustainable urban development. al common key features with William S. W. Lim's *Incomplete Urbanism: A Critical Urban omies* (2012), such as complexity, (spaces of) indeterminacy, criticality, creativity, and ation; Dr Kagan will introduce these features and present some provisional "incomplete- ongoing research project in and with the city of Hanover, Germany ("The City as Space of d out by a team from three faculties at the Leuphana University Lüneburg).

arch and action areas are the transdisciplinary field of "arts and (un-) sustainability" and the cultural dimension of sustainable (urban) ect. "The City as Space of Possibility" explores the city of Hanover, Germany. Dr Kagan is also the Chair of Research Network 2 Sociological Association, and founding coordinator of the international level of Culturaz21 (cultural fieldworks for sustainability).

rofessor, Faculty of Architecture, University of Hong Kong

onologically the texts that the architect and urban thinker William S. W. Lim has written e decades. Collectively, they reveal the insistence of the urban as a fundamental condition and culture of the city and the region. Consistent throughout the texts is an ethical rces the voices of the diaspora and the subaltern over that of the institution. Navigating the ation, the region, and the vernacular, the texts, more akin to fragments than monographs, ing tenuous relationship with the practices of the discipline.

) is founding principal of SKEW Collaborative, Shanghai-Hong Kong. Her research interests include modern architecture, eories of the city, politics of power and post-colonialism, inter-disciplinary and comparative approaches to architecture, as well as resentations. Recent essays include "Common Ground: Reflections and Speculations on the Padang as Public Space" in Singapore pia: Diaspora as Creative Praxis" in Singapore Dreaming: Managing Utopia (2016). She is currently completing a book titled h: Architecture and Hong Kong (2016/2017); co-editing a Journal of Architecture issue on "Dwelling in Asia" (2017); and co-authoring a design pedagogy.

: LOCAL INTELLIGENTSIA, GLOBAL PLANNING MOVEMENTS, AND THE STATE

ssor, Faculty of Architecture, University of Hong Kong

Singapore was the site of multiple visions and plans. William S. W. Lim's and Design / DP Architects) Golden Mile Complex was part of the realisation of the District. This r these visions and plans were representative in the way they address the broader civic d other emerging post-war issues in independent and decolonised states. Urban renewal, rch for identity and good urban form constituted the historical backdrop of the challenging his period was marked by highly contradictory issues, and they include the building of the vate investments, construction of infrastructure, branding of the city, and so on. These

Constance Singam, author and civil society activist

Constance Singam (Singapore) has been called the "mother of Singapore civil society" for her work in leading women's organisations, co-founding civil society groups, writing in several national publications, speaking at countless forums and seminars, and contributing to and co-editing several books. Civil society groups she has been closely involved in include AWARE, SCWO, The Working Committee (TWC), and TWC2 which subsequently became Transient Workers Count Too. In 2014, she was the prime mover of TWC3, the group behind the annual Singapore Advocacy Awards, which recognises outstanding civil society organisations and individuals and celebrates their contributions to the community.

Alvin Tan, Founder and Artistic Director, The Necessary Stage, Singapore

Alvin Tan (Singapore) is a leading proponent of devising theatre in Singapore, having directed more than 60 plays that have been staged locally and at international festivals. In 2010, Tan was conferred the *Chevalier des Arts et des Lettres* by the French Ministry of Culture, in recognition of his significant contribution to the arts. He sits on the board of the National Arts Council, and was invited by the Ministry of Education to design a drama syllabus at O level for implementation in schools. In 2014, Tan was conferred the Cultural Medallion for his artistic excellence and contribution to Singapore's arts and cultural landscape.

INCOMPLETE URBANISM IS A DYNAMIC, HYBRID INTERACTIVE CONCEPT, WHICH DESTABILIZES THE CURRENT ARCHITECTURAL AND URBAN THEORIES AND PRACTICES

THE STATE OF INCOMPLETENESS MUST ALWAYS BE IN THE MAKING AND IS A VITAL EVOLVING ELEMENT THAT ALLOWS FOR CONTINUOUS UNFORESEEN CHANGES AND UNPLANNED GROWTH

NTU CENTRE FOR CONTEMPORARY ART SINGAPORE

- ALL QUOTES FROM WILLIAM S. W. LIM, *INCOMPLETE URBANISM: A CRITICAL URBAN STRATEGY FOR EMERGING ECONOMIES* (2012)

PANEL DISCUSSION

THE MULTIPLE MUST BE MADE

How are urban labs shaping the Asian city? What new conceptual, virtual, and physical maps do their work make possible? How is the multiplicity of the urban environment being explored, relayed, and represented through new forms of experimental urbanism? In this discussion, practitioners will share stories about their current work, projects, and aspirations for the city as a laboratory.

DISCUSSANTS:

MULTIPLE MODERNITIES IN THAILAND'S SHOPHOUSES

Dr Chomchon Fusinpaiboon, Lecturer, Department of Architecture, Chulalongkorn University, Bangkok, Thailand

This presentation explores multiple ideals and realities embedded in the design, construction, regulation, habitation, utilisation, and adaptation of shophouses in Thailand, particularly those built around the mid-20th century. Dr Chomchon will discuss how this particular building type was a tool of the Thai state, both pre- and post-1932 democratic revolution, used to insert certain kinds of modernity into both public and private realms of the country's population. He will also examine how the popular and vernacular use, and exploitation of, shophouses demonstrate other versions of modernities created and experienced by the people's, as well as the state's, inability to control the built environment. The presentation posts questions about the future of, and the possibilities for, shophouses as assets for critical spatial practice in the contemporary context.

Dr Chomchon Fusinpaiboon (Thailand) received a BArch (Hons) from Chulalongkorn University, MArch Urban Design from the Bartlett School of Architecture, University College London, United Kingdom, and PhD from the University of Sheffield, United Kingdom. His research interests include modern architecture of non-western cultures, especially from the mid-20th century onwards. His work on contemporary architecture includes lecturing and teaching, architectural design, writing for architecture magazines, and consultancy for projects related to historic buildings and sites, including the award-winning scheme for the new Thailand Creative & Design Center (TCDC) by Department of Architecture Co. Ltd and Shma.

Giovanni Dessy Austriningrum, Head of Content Writer Division, **Bandung City Watch**, Bandung, Indonesia

Bandung City Watch is a forum dedicated to the observation of the city as a means to accommodate the communities that focus on urban issues. This forum was first initiated on 4 July 2015 by Commune Rakapare, a research organisation and grassroots movement that is frustrated with some of the management policies and development of Bandung. Bandung City Watch attempts to tap into the potential for creative problem-solving and collective-action to empower the people of the city. Their work on the participation of urban communities, especially marginalised ones, led to a revival in the discourse from marginalised to more balanced. By doing so, they hope to return the city to the people. In its movement, Bandung City Watch seeks to capture the creative community as a driver of change. Through a published research report, they propose solutions and recommendations based on their studies to the authorities and communities.

PHNOM PENH'S BASSAC RIVERFRONT: A MODERN COSMOPOLITAN CULTURAL PRECINCT

Constructed between 1963 and 1968 and following a masterplan by Vann Molyvann, the Bassac Riverfront included numerous cultural and social projects, including a National Theatre, exhibition halls, performing arts conservatory, water sports complex, and three multi-level social housing apartment buildings—the first of its kind in Phnom Penh. All were set in landscaped gardens, and on reclaimed land along the Bassac river. The precinct was featured in films and photographs made by HRH Norodom Sihanouk to celebrate Cambodia's post-independence modernisation. Foreign state visitors were taken to visit the modern buildings, exhibitions, and performances gathered in the Bassac Riverfront. In this presentation, Sereyppagna suggests that the architecture and urban planning of this cultural precinct reflect the ideology of Sihanouk's post-independence regime, the Sangkum Reastr Niyum (People's Socialist Community, 1955–1970), and in particular, Sihanouk's policies on arts and culture.

Pen Sereyppagna (Cambodia) is founder of *Lumhor*, an online platform focused on architecture, urbanism, and design, in Cambodia, and *Phnom Penh Visions*, a multidisciplinary project for discussing new ideas for the city. He has also played leading roles in national and international urban organisations, including The Vann Molyvann Project, and Khmer Architecture Tours. His projects have been exhibited internationally, including at Phnom Penh's Sa Sa Bassac and at Art Stage Singapore (2015). Sereyppagna's ongoing project, *Genealogy of Bassac*, is a community-based participatory research exercise on urbanism in Phnom Penh. It was recently exhibited in the 10th Taipei Biennale (2016).

CONCRETE & SIMPLICITY: THE PEOPLE'S PARTY'S MODERNIST ARCHITECTURE (1932–1947)

Dr Thanavi Chotpradit, Lecturer, Department of Art History, Faculty of Archaeology, Silpakorn University, Bangkok, Thailand

"Foreign" and "tasteless" are typical descriptions, manifest or latent, one finds when encountering any text written on the art and architecture of the People's Party (Khana Ratsadon). The People's Party was a group led by European trained military officers and civilians who changed the political system of Thailand (formerly known as Siam) from an absolute to a constitutional monarchy in 1932. The regime was eventually toppled by the coup d'état of 1947. In this presentation, Dr Thanavi discusses modernist architecture as the new aesthetic language of the People's Party regime. She will also speak of how the revolutionary architecture—roughly characterised by the abandonment of traditional architectural forms, the glorification of humanitarianism, rationalism, and the idea of modernisation and progress, built from modern materials such as iron, concrete, and glass—became a signifier of the eradication of the social hierarchy.

Dr Thanavi Chotpradit (Thailand) lectures on modern and contemporary Thai art history. She is also editorial member of *SOUTH-EAST OF NOW: Directions in Contemporary and Modern Art*, a peer-reviewed scholarly journal published by NUS Press, Singapore. In 2015–2016, Dr Thanavi participated in the cross-regional research programme *Ambitious Alignment: New Histories of Southeast Asian Art*, developed by the Power Institute Foundation for Art & Visual Culture, University of Sydney, Australia, and funded by the Connecting Art Histories initiative of the Getty Foundation, Los Angeles, United States. Her areas of interest include modern and Thai contemporary art in relation to memory studies, war commemoration, and Thai politics.

CONCRETE LIKE A NATION IS AMBITIOUS

Dr Simon Soon, researcher and Senior Lecturer, Visual Art Department, Cultural Centre, University of Malaya, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

The design and construction of the Faculty of Economics and Administration building at the University of Malaya in the late 1960s was an occasion to reflect on the political and economic imperatives that underlie the will-to-form of Malaysia, as a newly constituted nation state in 1963. The building in a sense, inadvertently captured some of the paradoxes of a desire for a centralised economy that was aimed at eradicating poverty. This was known in its day as the Great Economics Debate. Research in post-war art history has often favoured a narrative of political resistance or a vaguely worded concept of nation-building. It seldom attends to the economic undercurrent that was also palpably shaping the plastic ambition behind the use of concrete in brutalist architecture. This presentation provokes questions about the intersection between concrete form and centralised economy, a desire for internationalism and the creation of a class of future technocrats, as well as the changing conception of the university and its post-colonial foibles.

Dr Simon Soon (Malaysia) completed a PhD in Art History at the University of Sydney, Australia under an Australian Postgraduate Award scholarship. From 2015–2016, he is a participant in *Ambitious Alignments: New Histories of Southeast Asian Art*, developed by the Power Institute Foundation for Art & Visual Culture, University of Sydney, Australia, and funded by the Connecting Art Histories initiative of the Getty Foundation, Los Angeles, United States. He is also an editorial member of *SOUTHEAST OF NOW: Directions in Contemporary and Modern Art*, a peer-reviewed scholarly journal published by NUS Press, Singapore, and a team member of Malaysia Design.

Hong Phuc Bang, Founder, **FOSSASIA**, Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam

FOSSASIA is an organisation supporting developers and makers of Open Technologies in Asia established since 2009. The organisation develops solutions for social change using a wide-range of technologies. Projects range from Free and Open Source software, to design, graphics, and hardware. FOSSASIA members organise and participate in conferences, meetings, and code camps around the globe. The annual FOSSASIA OpenTechSummit is one of the largest gatherings of developers in Asia and has taken place in Vietnam, Cambodia, and Singapore.

Christina Leigh Geros, Design Research Strategist, and
Mashin Mahtani, Designer, **PetaBencana.id**, Jakarta, Indonesia

PetaBencana.id is an applied research project based in Indonesia and led by the Humanitarian Infrastructures Group in the Urban Risk Lab at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), Cambridge, United States. The Urban Risk Lab at MIT develops methods and technologies to embed risk reduction and preparedness into the design of cities and regions to increase the resilience of local communities. The Lab engages in action research through extensive field work, institutional ethnography, and community workshops to focus on the needs of diverse cultures, contexts, and agencies. PetaBencana.id is the foundation of the Urban Risk Map, a project initiated with the explicit aim of further developing CognitionCity Open Source Software as a free, transparent, enterprise-level platform for emergency response and disaster management in megacities in South and Southeast Asia.

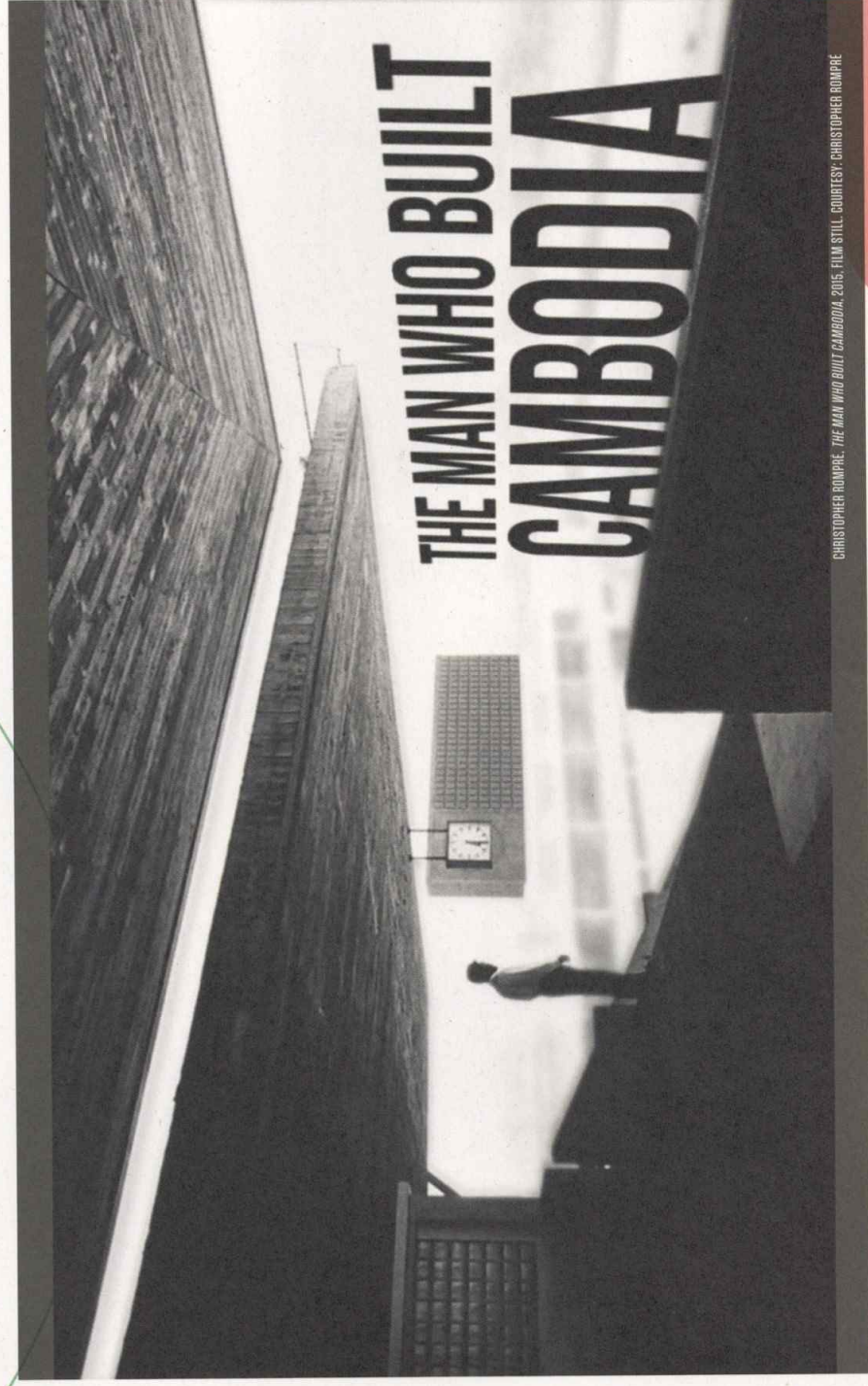
**TRADITIONS AND THE CREATIVE PRESENT
ARE NOT OPPOSED. BUT A VITAL PART OF
THE CULTURAL REGENERATIVE PROCESS AND
DYNAMIC CONTINUITY IN REMEMBERING
IS THROUGH A DEEP COMMITMENT IN
INTERDISCIPLINARY UNDERSTANDING TO
UNCOVER AND APPLY THE CULTURAL ESSENCE
AND ROOTEDNESS TOWARDS A NEW CREATIVE
CONTEMPORARINESS**

ABOUT IDEAS FEST

NTU CCA Singapore launches NTU CCA Ideas Fest 2016/17 titled *CITIES FOR PEOPLE*, a term borrowed from William S. W. Lim's 1990 book of the same title. This pilot edition will comprise of a conference, projects, workshops, and a summit that will bring to life some of the ideas examined through collaborative projects and experiences led by artists and architects. These projects consider issues of sustainability, food, biodiversity, energy and water resources, social relations within the built environment, the varied uses of public/informal spaces, and will activate the Gillman Barracks arts precinct where the Centre is located.



NTU CENTRE FOR CONTEMPORARY ART SINGAPORE. *ATTEMPTS OF CRITICAL SPATIAL PRACTICE*. 28 OCTOBER 2016 - 29 JANUARY 2017. EXHIBITION VIEW.



CHRISTOPHER ROMPRÉ. *THE MAN WHO BUILT CAMBODIA*. 2015. FILM STILL. COURTESY: CHRISTOPHER ROMPRÉ



NTU CENTRE FOR CONTEMPORARY ART SINGAPORE. *ATTEMPTS OF CRITICAL SPATIAL PRACTICE*. 28 OCTOBER 2016 - 29 JANUARY 2017. EXHIBITION VIEW.

SCREENING

The Man Who Built Cambodia, Christopher Rompré, Cambodia, 2015, 35 min

EXHIBITION TOURS

Magdalena Magiera, Curator, Outreach & Education, NTU CCA Singapore

Magdalena Magiera (Carmen/Sinnamoré) was previously an independent curator. Mananina Editor of frieze d/e

developing a distinctive architectural style, New Khmer Architecture, that completely changed the face of Cambodia. The film follows Molywann as he reflects on the country he has put so much of himself into.

NTU CENTRE FOR CONTEMPORARY ART SINGAPORE

Located in Gillman Barracks, the NTU Centre for Contemporary Art Singapore (NTU CCA Singapore) is a national research centre of Nanyang Technological University and is supported by a grant from the Economic Development Board, Singapore. The Centre is unique in its threefold constellation of exhibitions, residencies, research and academic education, engaging in knowledge production and dissemination. The NTU CCA Singapore positions itself as a space for critical discourse and encourages new ways of thinking about Spaces of the Curatorial in Southeast Asia and beyond. As a research centre, it aims to provide visiting researchers and curators a comprehensive study on the contemporary art ecosystem in Singapore and the region. The Centre's dynamic public programmes serve to engage with various audiences through lectures, workshops, open studios, film screenings, Exhibition (de)Tours and Stagings.

Since the Centre's inauguration in October 2013, the NTU CCA Singapore has presented several high-profile, first-to-launch exhibitions of leading artists, making it one of the first spaces in the region to present international exhibitions of such a scale. The Centre's residencies programme is dedicated to facilitate the production of knowledge and research, engaging and connecting artists, curators and researchers from Singapore, Southeast Asia and beyond, and across various disciplines. The Centre's seven studios support the artistic process in the most direct way – by giving the time and locale to be fully engaged, and the access to an interesting and immersive context to further the space for developing ideas.

public programs of *dOCUMENTA(13)* (2012) and *unitednationsplaza* (2006–2008) in Berlin. Prior to joining NTU CCA Singapore, she worked for e-flux exhibitions and public programs in New York, United States.

Shirley Surya, Associate Curator, Design and Architecture, M+, Hong Kong

Shirley Surya (Indonesia/Hong Kong) is a curator and design historian. At M+ museum in Hong Kong, she has researched and acquired works representing post-war design and architectural developments in greater China and Southeast Asia for the museum's collection. She has co-organised exhibitions including *Yung Ho Chang & FCZJ: Materialism* (2013), *Building M+*: *The Museum & Architecture Collection* (2014), and *Mobile M+*: *NEONSIGNS.HK* (2014). Her writing was included in publications such as *Yung Ho Chang Draws* (2015), *Encyclopedia of Asian Design* (upcoming), *A+U, Singapore Architect*, and *Design and Culture*. She received her BA in Media Studies at the University of California, Berkeley, United States and MA in History of Design at the Royal College of Art, London, United Kingdom.

INCOMPLETE URBANISM: ATTEMPTS OF CRITICAL SPATIAL PRACTICE 29 OCTOBER 2016 – 29 JANUARY 2017

Incomplete Urbanism: Attempts of Critical Spatial Practice is an open-ended exhibition that serves as a laboratory of ideas, exploring the indeterminacy and changeability of urban living. Borrowing its title from eminent Singaporean architect William S. W. Lim's book *Incomplete Urbanism: A Critical Urban Strategy for Emerging Economies* (2012), this multifaceted project takes his practice and the initiatives of the Asian Urban Lab that Lim started with colleagues in 2003, as a point of departure. It presents various researches into the spatial, cultural, and social aspects of city life.

Commissioned contributors include **Dr Marc Glöde** (Germany/Singapore), film curator and, Visiting Scholar, NTU ADM/CCA Singapore; **Laura Miotto** (Italy/Singapore), Associate Professor, NTU ADM, Singapore; **Shirley Surya** (Indonesia/Hong Kong), Associate Curator for Design and Architecture, M+, Hong Kong; and NTU CCA Singapore Visiting Research Fellows, **Dr Etienne Turpin** (Canada/Indonesia), Research Scientist, Urban Risk Lab, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge, United States, and **Sissel Tolaas** (Norway/Germany), smell researcher and artist.

Incomplete Urbanism seeks to present a dynamic space to engage urban issues, through discussions, debates, film programmes, workshops and other collective efforts.

TEAM

IDEAS FEST CONCEPT
Ute Meta Bauer

CITIES FOR PEOPLE NTU CCA IDEAS FEST 2016/17 CURATORS
Ute Meta Bauer and Khim Ong

PROJECT MANAGEMENT
Mok Cui Yin

PROJECT COORDINATION AND PRODUCTION
Chu Hao Pei
Samantha Leong
Sant Ruengjaruwatana
Stephanie Teo

ADMIN AND OPERATIONS
Lee Yan Yun
Louis Tan

VISITORS INFO

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LOCATED AT

GILLMAN BARRACKS

Exhibition Hours
Tuesday – Sunday 12.00 – 7.00 pm;
Friday, 12.00 – 9.00 pm.
Closed on Mondays.
Open on Public Holidays
(except on Mondays).

Public Programmes
Wednesday and Friday evenings.

Exhibition Tours
First Friday of the Month

Free admission to all programmes.

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