

JUSTIN LOKE

SELECTED ARTWORKS

Selected Artworks in
PRIVATE AND INSTITUTIONAL COLLECTION

ARMCHAIR PHILOSOPHY

2009 | *Collection of Tay Yu Jin Donated
to Singapore Art Museum in 2023*

The title for this series of work is taken from the term 'armchair philosopher'. According to urbancitionary.com, armchair philosopher refer to 'one who sits around and acts like they're an expert on something, yet they've had no involvement or factual research of it' and usually is 'the the old stereotype of old rich men in robes smoking pipes, sitting by the fire, pretending to know a thing about politics.' Since Plato's *The Republic*, we have encountered how the chair was used as simile or metaphor for his philosophical discourse. In this series, we would like to continue and appropriate this method of elucidation by highlighting the relation, tension or gap between knowledge and application – or simply, theory and practice – by looking at the structural relationship between scientists, thinkers, politicians and artists with their respective chairs.

Inspired by the ancient text, Sun Tzu's *Art of War* and an epic battle scene from Zhang Yimou's *Hero*, this is a sculpture armchair with sixty-four arrows pierced through the backrest, and a dagger stabbed through a copy of the book, and onto the cushion of the armchair. The number of arrows corresponds to the sixty-four possible permutations in *I-Ching*, symbolising the different strategies one could deploy against an opponent or enemy.



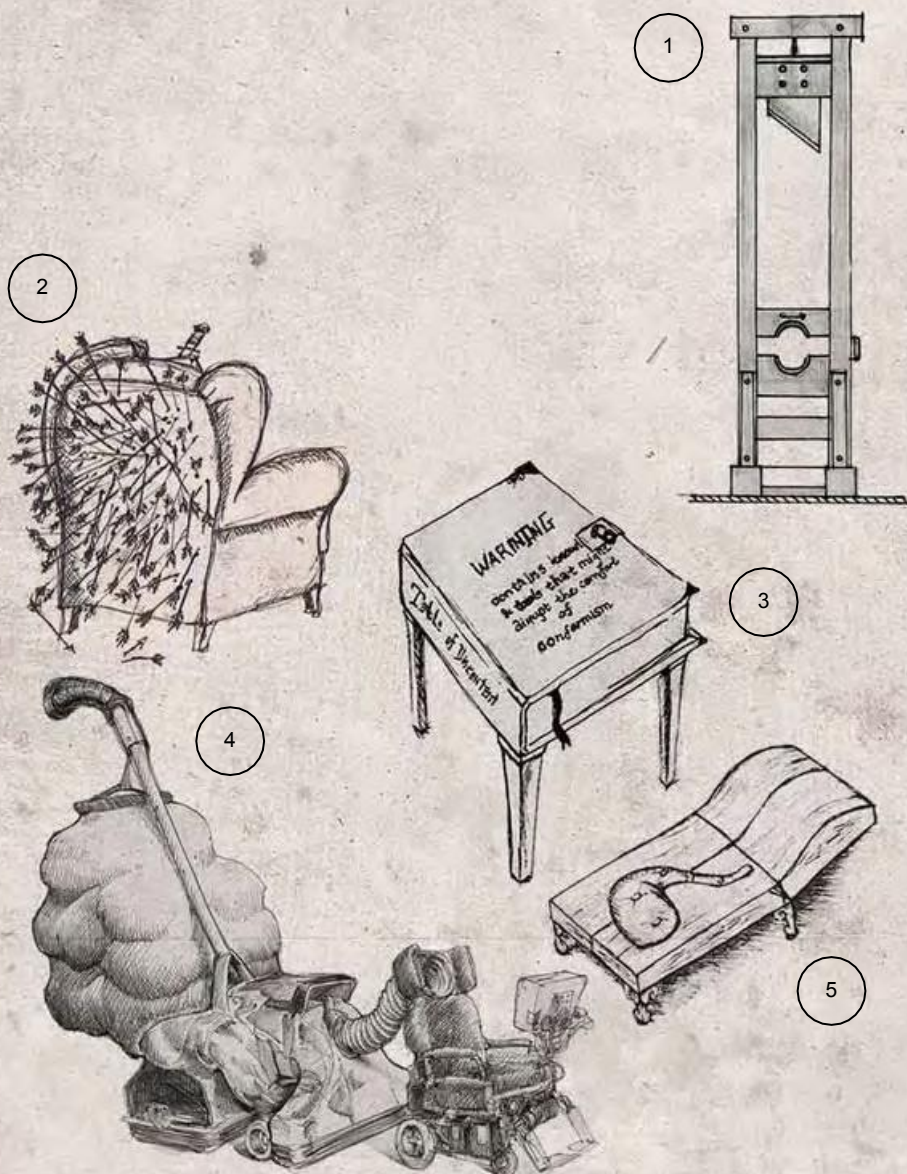
Sun Tzu's *Art of War* (Part of Armchair Philosophy)
Collection of Tay Yu Jin

2010 | 120 x 199 x 125 cm



Sun Tzu's Art of War (Part of Armchair Philosophy)
Collection of Tay Yu Jin

2010 | 120 x 199 x 125 cm



Armchair
Philosophy, 2010
 Sculpture
 Dimensions
 variable

Robespierre's Virtue & Terror
 (Designed by Samuel Chen)

2010
 Mixed media
 320 x 300 x 100 cm
 Edition of 3
Sun Tzu's Art of War

2010
 Mixed media
 120 x 199 x 125 cm
 Edition of 3
Table of

Discontents
 2010
 Mixed media
 95 x 120 x 84 cm
 Edition of 3

Stephen Hawking's My Brief Understanding of a Black Hole: From Big Butt to a Black Hole 2010

Mixed media
 130 x 120 x 190 cm
 Edition of 3

Sigmund Freud's Interpretation of Pipe Dreams 2010

Mixed media
 183 x 70 x 50 cm
 Edition of 3



This work features an inverted pipe sculpture which is of the shape and size of a psychiatrist's couch. The sculpture is a play on the visual similarity, and thus, ambiguity of the pipe and the psychiatrist couch. As a visual motif, one could relate the 'pipe' to Sigmund Freud, the father of psychoanalysis and excessive pipe smoker, or to the 'pipe' in the renowned painting *The Betrayal of Images* by Rene Magritte – a Surrealist painter who was very influenced by psychoanalysis.



Sigmund Freud's Interpretation of Pipe Dreams (Part of *Armchair Philosophy*)

2010 | 183 x 70 x 50 cm



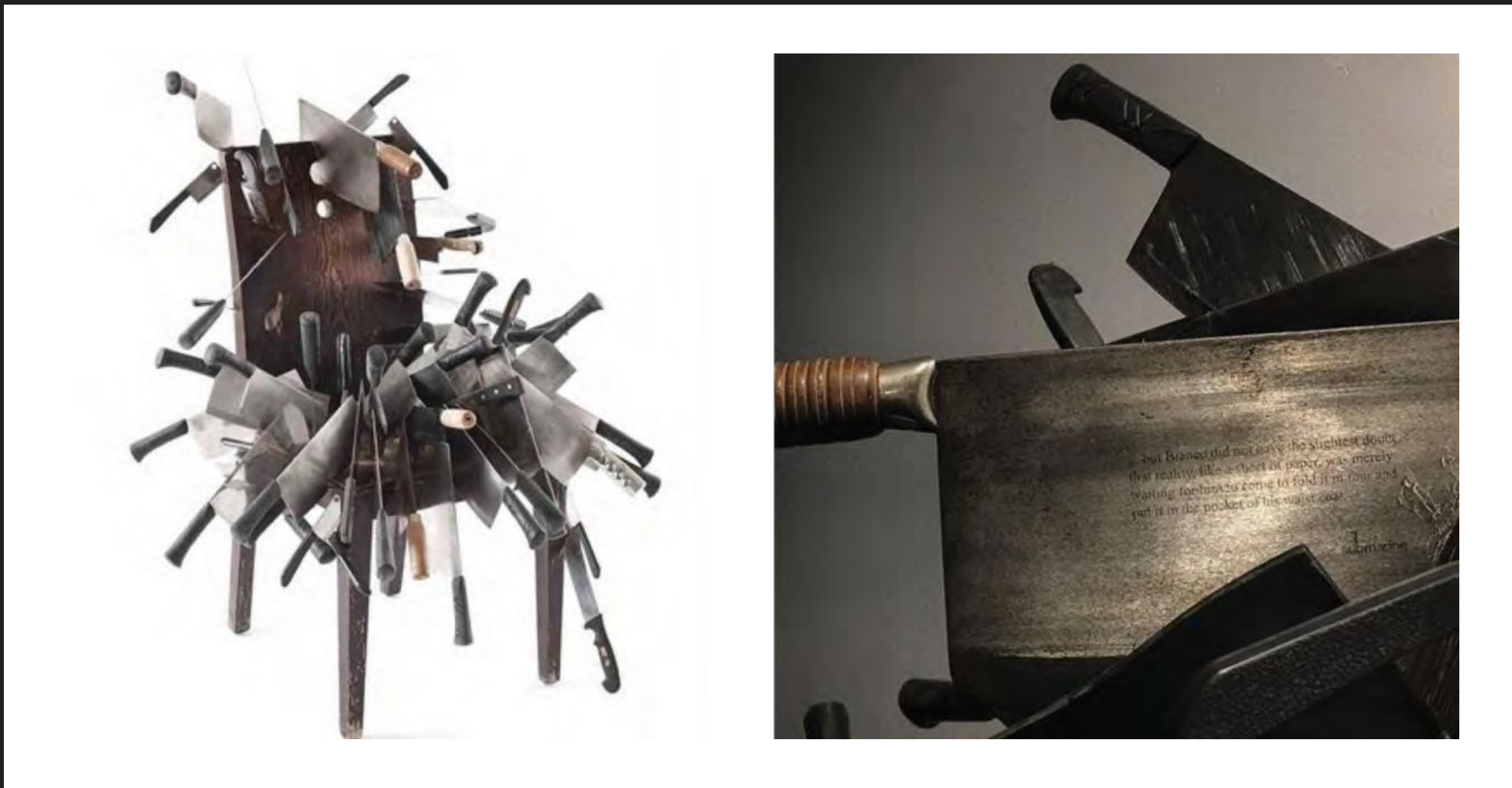
Table of Discontents (Part of *Armchair Philosophy*)

2010 | 95 x 120 x 84 cm



This sculpture is an open top table containing tools and books related to subversive ideologies. Influenced by Freud's *Civilisation and its Discontents* and the Sierra's art installation 300

Weapons, this table is designed like a giant book with legs, the table top (or book cover) is carved with the statement 'Warning: Contains knowledge and tools that cause discomfort to most conformists.' The items beneath the glass cover include books such as Selected Quotations of Mao ZeDong, Society of Spectacle by Guy Debord and Theory of Subject by Alain Badiou: and tools like homemade time mob, crowbar and brick

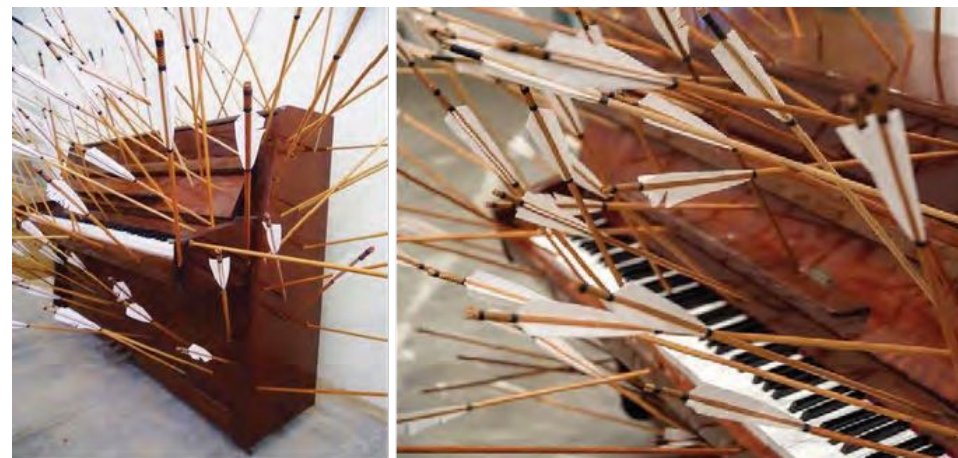


Domesticated Violence: 1000 Cuts | Chan Hampe Galleries, 2016
Auctioned in Christie's (Hongkong), Private Collection



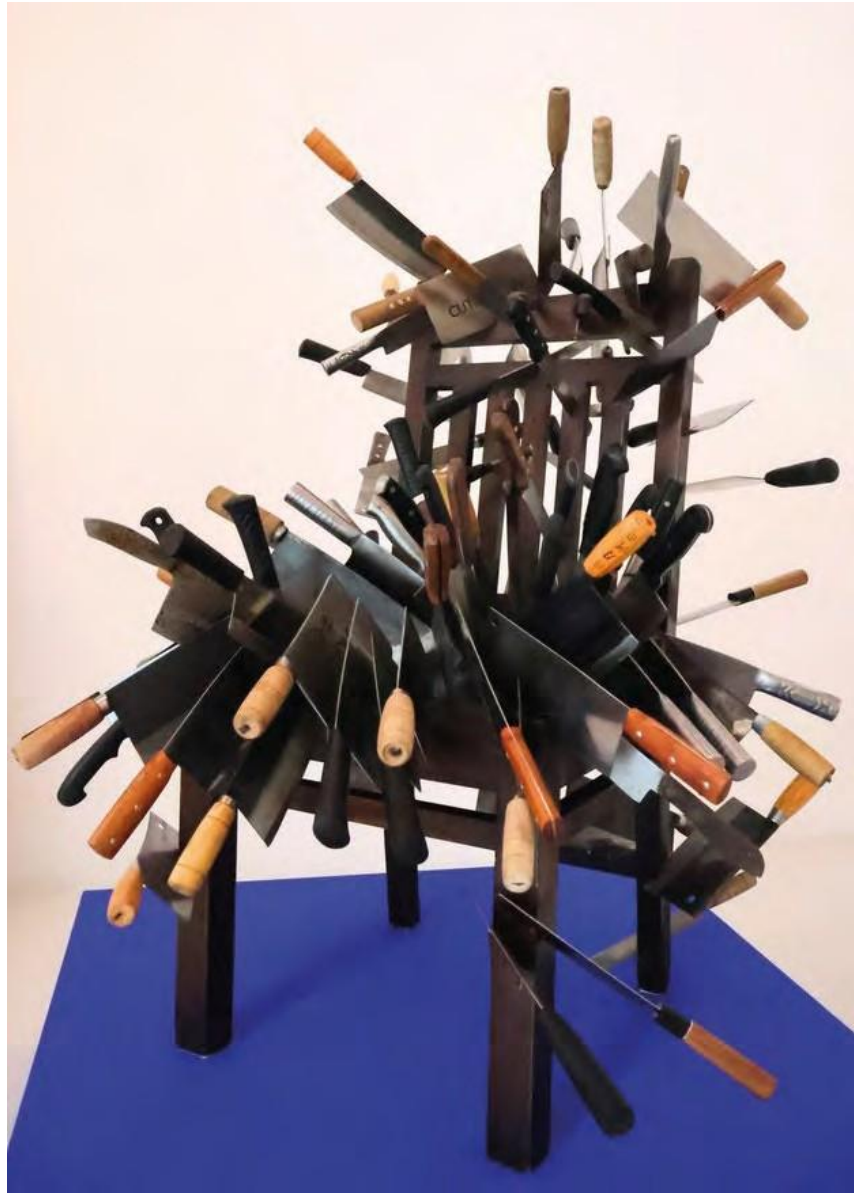
Sun Tzu's Art of War (Ink Painting)
Collection of Tay Yu Jin

2023 | 120 x 125 cm



Play The Piano Drunk Like A Percussion Instrument
Until The Middle Finger Begins To Bleed A Bit

2016 | Private
Collection



Unarmed Chair: Explaining the Broken English of Butcher Ding.
2025 Wooden chair, new and used choppers
95 x 90 x 128 cm, Chair Dimensions: 47 x 46 x 100 cm
Edition of 3

Unarmed Chair

2025 - present

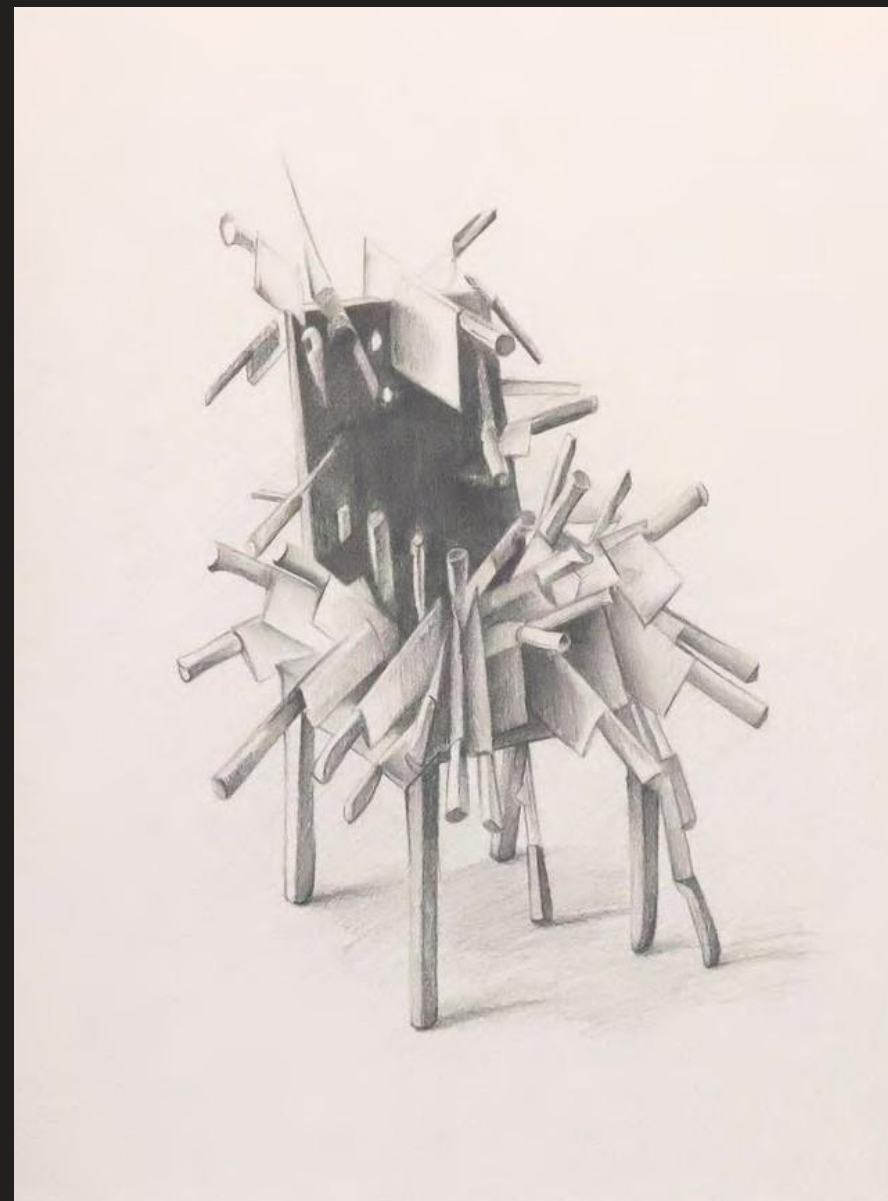
This sculpture is part of Justin Loke's ongoing *Unarmed Chair* series, which investigates what remains of an object once its utility is broken. By subjecting a comforting piece of furniture to abuse and damage, Loke pushes the chair beyond function and into another form of visibility. He references the economic theory Broken Window Fallacy, which notes that damage presented as improvement conceals underlying loss. In this work, apparent harm serves to expose the underlying structures and assumptions that previously remained concealed by the object's usefulness. In everyday life, a chair hides behind its purpose; we notice only what it does, not what it is. Here, once the chair can no longer serve its function, it finally presents itself as a thing: its meaning no longer concealed by usefulness. In an art show devoted to making and creating, Loke turns to unmaking as its necessary counterpart.



Unarmed Chair: Broken Window
Fallacy, 2026
Brass Plate, Acid, 12 Bore/ 12-gauge
shotgun, 00-buck cartridges, on Armchair
(Cow Leather) in Glass Display Cabinet (from
recycled Teakwood of old, broken windows
and doors)
120 x 110 x 160 cm Unique



Unarmed Chair I,
2025 pencil on paper
56 x 43 cm



Unarmed Chair V,
2025 pencil on paper
56 x 43 cm



MIRRORS AND COPULATION ARE ABOMINABLE SINCE THEY BOTH MULTIPLY THE NUMBER OF MEN

The Edge of Wonderland, Thailand Biennale (Krabi) 2018



The Classification of Bodies



Jack & Thomas in 'Harpard' act.

Jack & Thomas in 'Harpard' act. The photograph shows two men in a dimly lit room, possibly a stage or a performance space. One man is standing and the other is sitting. They are both looking towards the camera.

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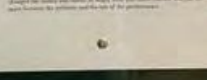
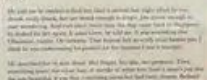


Acting in 'Harpard'.

Acting in 'Harpard'. The photograph shows a group of people in a dimly lit room, possibly a stage or a performance space. They are all looking towards the camera.



Acting in 'Harpard'.



The photograph shows a group of people in a dimly lit room, possibly a stage or a performance space.

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Acting in 'Harpard'.

Acting in 'Harpard'. The photograph shows a group of people in a dimly lit room, possibly a stage or a performance space. They are all looking towards the camera.

The Classification of Bodies

2025

The Classification of Bodies unfolds through the voice of a German expatriate living in 1970s Bugis Street, Singapore. Officially registered as a ship chandler, he operates quietly as a pimp, navigating the city's underbelly with the calculated eye of a former art student trained in human anatomy. Obsessed with categorisation, he applies the outdated sciences of physiognomy and forensic photography to the people he encounters. Across a backdrop of open drains, cabaret neon, and transient bodies, he meets a Dutch sailor in search of a performer. The sailor's memory, part desire, part obsession, unravels easy definitions of gender and identity.

The Classification of Bodies
2025
Misaligned notice board with print on archival paper
(Durevole Conservation cotton paper 400 gsm)
140 x 100 cm (framed); 120 x 80 cm (print)
Edition of 3

Shopping For A Personal Letter

2009 | Collection of Singapore Art Museum

A collaboration with Kooy Siew Yen and He Yue.





Shopping For A Personal Letter
 2009 | *Collection of Singapore Art Museum*
 Installation
 Dimensions variable



Fool's Gold - 此地无藏金 / No gold buried here

2008 | *Collection of Singapore Art Museum*

This Chinese idiom is about a fool who tried to hide his silver/ gold but ended up making it more conspicuous by putting a sign above the burial spot. This is simple story about the common irony we often encounter: where one ends up turning things or situations all the more obvious by trying too hard to make it oblivious, for instance, the drunk who says 'I'm not drunk!.'

The artwork would consist of a sign, that reads <此地无藏金> with English translation, 'No gold buried here', in yellow gold light or neon light (either planted in the sand or hanging from one the coconut trees). The sign would be pointing to a particular spot or area on the beach. A shovel, or several digging tools, painted gold will be placed alongside the 'burial spot' to encourage the viewers to dig for 'gold coins' buried underneath. But it is only for the participants to find out for themselves if the organizers, sponsors and artists are playing the fool by burying 'gold coins' there; or if they have been fooled to believe there were gold coins beneath because they follow the logic of the statement 'There's no gold' too rigidly and blindly.

Apart from, attempting to be preachy by using idiom like school teachers, and demonstrating the inherent logical complexity in a simple Chinese idiom, the project is also keeping to the tradition of Sentosa – which, to us, is an island that induces people to do foolish things, behaving like idiots. A fitting example could be taken from World War II history: Fort Siloso, where the British army defending Singapore with their waning sea power from the Japanese forces tragically pointed all their big guns in the wrong direction!

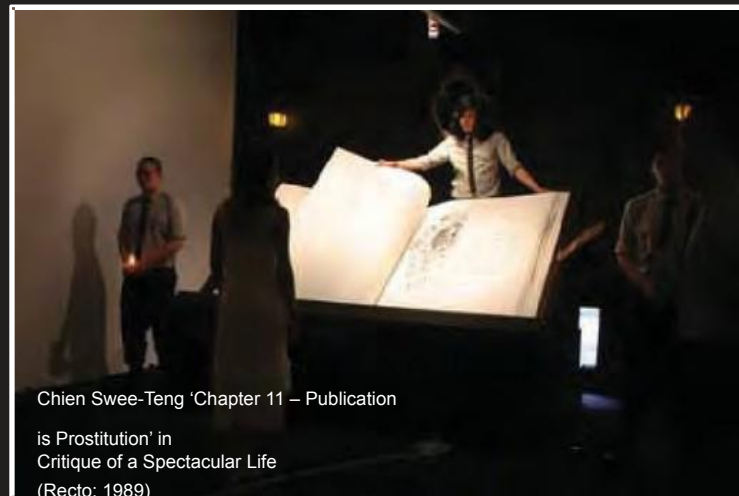
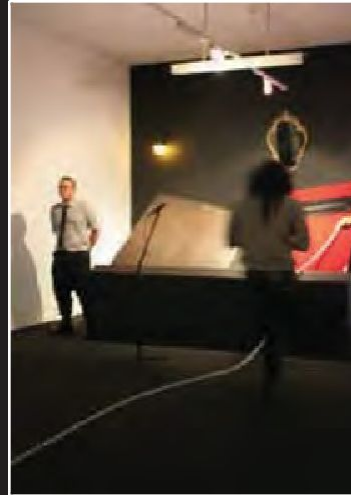
In conjunction with Art on Sands, ZoukOut 2008



DECOMPOSITION II

2008 | *Collection of Singapore Art Museum*

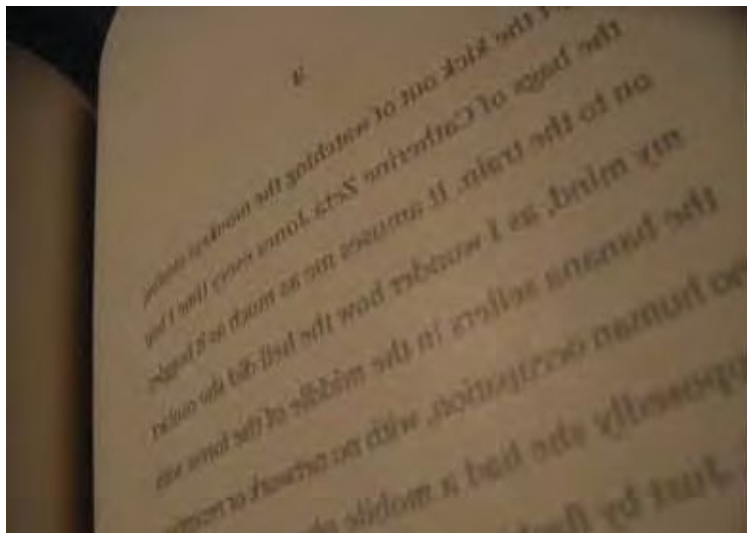
This installation-performance of a giant book was inspired by the form of medieval books which were handwritten and chained because of the value. It is also about how when the book refused the function of being read would be liberated to other possible forms.



Chien Swee-Teng 'Chapter 11 – Publication
is Prostitution' in
Critique of a Spectacular Life
(Recto: 1989)

DECOMPOSITION II: PUBLICATION IS PROSTITUTION

2008 | Collection of Singapore Art Museum



DECOMPOSITION I

Installation Dimensions Variable | Collection of Singapore Art Museum

This project comprises a series of books that do not carry the function of books. For example, the idea of a book that cannot be opened (sealed). Liberating the book from its function; from the servitude to an end, a purpose... decapitation of function which heads the meaning of a book... that releases other possible potentials of 'book' - which should not only be defined by it's function (or usual function). Somehow it is hard for it to be absolutely functionless but at least this time it carries a different function (the slave with a new master).

Presented in 4 stages: Stage 1: Mutilated sentences (disruption of the syntactical and lexical: words and

sentences) Cut out history

book, and [18] a communist manifesto with certain words scratched off with a 5 cent coin.

Stage 2: Calligraphic – reversed text that appears as both image and word.

Stage 3: Iconographic – the book that has only the picture of an unopened book when it is opened.

Stage 4: The abstraction of one essential feature of one form of book – the physical opening and closing of a book.



Decadent Teachers

2018 | Collection of Fondation La Roche Jacquelin'

Double sided, chalk on wood panel
161 x 87 cm

Decadent Teachers

2018 | Collection of Fondation La Roche Jacquelin'

This project continues themes from *Monkey Business* (2016) and *Chinese Illiterati* (2017), with a focus not on aesthetics but on history. This context, discussed with curator Iola Lenzi prior to the launch of *Chinese Illiterati*, responds to:

- 1) A young Chinese artist's contradictory stance: one must read and write Chinese to paint literati landscapes, yet he disagrees with Qian Zhongshu's claim that text is above image in literati art.
- 2) A Singaporean political dissident's calligraphy, *Banana Man* by Tang Liang Hong, whose form-content mismatch is more thought-provoking than any political association.

The project explores two key ideas: "Banana Man" and "Tang Ren" (how overseas Chinese identify themselves). It contrasts stereotypes in works like Lee Wen's *Yellow Man* with Straits Chinese Lim Boon Keng's "shame" over not reading Chinese. A copy of George Inness' *Home of the Heron* (1893), resembling Song Dynasty landscapes, is recreated in chalk dust, symbolizing how we lose the present but recover erased images from the past.



ANALOGIC

2009 | *Private Collector*

ANALOGIC presents a series of paintings inspired by the notion of analogy expounded in Umberto Eco's novel, Foucault's Pendulum. For the exhibition, the pictures are image sequences of related words, concepts and objects, for instance, Doughnut-Life Preserver-Bathing Suit-Sea-Ship-Shit. In the form of a diagram, Anti-Clockwise illustrates how traces of this ancient system of analogy, used in Greek Science and Mediaeval Thoughts, could be found in a nostalgic conversation. An evening conversation, between two unemployed middle-aged men and a housewife, about some abandoned buildings, forgotten words, neglected ideas, analog appliances, and obsolete machineries. In conjunction, a reading of The Grub, a short story from Roberto Bolaño's Last Evenings on Earth, was held at the gallery on the opening night of the exhibition.



PAPER ROOM

2003 | *Collection of Singapore Art Museum*

This project was a response to a Land Art workshop conducted at NAFA and this was the work which saw the beginnings of vertical submarine. The work itself was a recording of our discussions leading up to the work. Our discussions and questions of what was to be done for the final day of the workshop were recorded and typed out on the back of office correspondence and other discarded documents courtesy of Ivan from the Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts. The work was carried out almost in the mode of a production line; one of us would record our discussions, the other would play it back and type it out on the typewriter and the third would paste them on the wall.



FLIRTING POINT

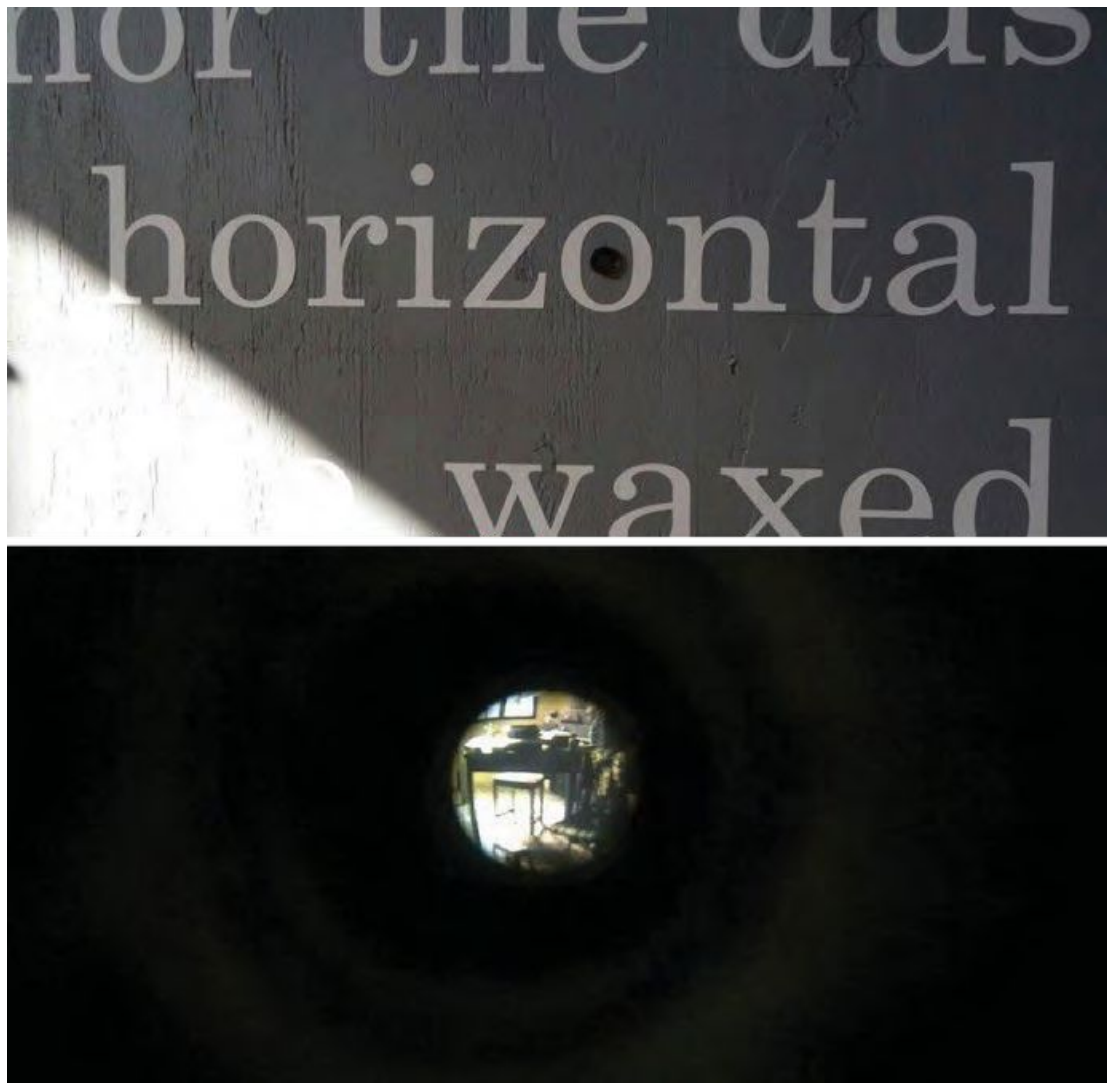
2009~2022 ZOUKOUT, SINGAPORE, 2009 | SINGAPORE ART MUSEUM, 2010

FESTIVAL INGRAVID, SPAIN, 2010 | PASAGUERO, MEXICO, 2010 THE SUBSTATIONS, 2020 | SINGAPORE ART MUSEUM, 2022

Collection of Singapore Art Museum Flirting Point acknowledges the basic inclination of most men, women, animals, and some insects: to flirt. Despite its noble aims for human civilisation, an art museum is not purely a place for art events or cultural activities. Besides looking at artworks on display, our vision, at times, would stray to hunks and babes in the galleries who are just as visually intriguing. This is especially the case during exhibition openings. According to a survey, conducted in 2009, flirting at the museum is one of the fundamental causes of marital disputes, decline in workplace efficiency and the general public's lack of interest in the arts. Hence, in order not to hinder the serious museum visitors; to help unburden the huge social and moral responsibilities of museum staff and artists; and for the future of Singapore's art, all flirtatious activities at SAM shall be restricted within a designated area.



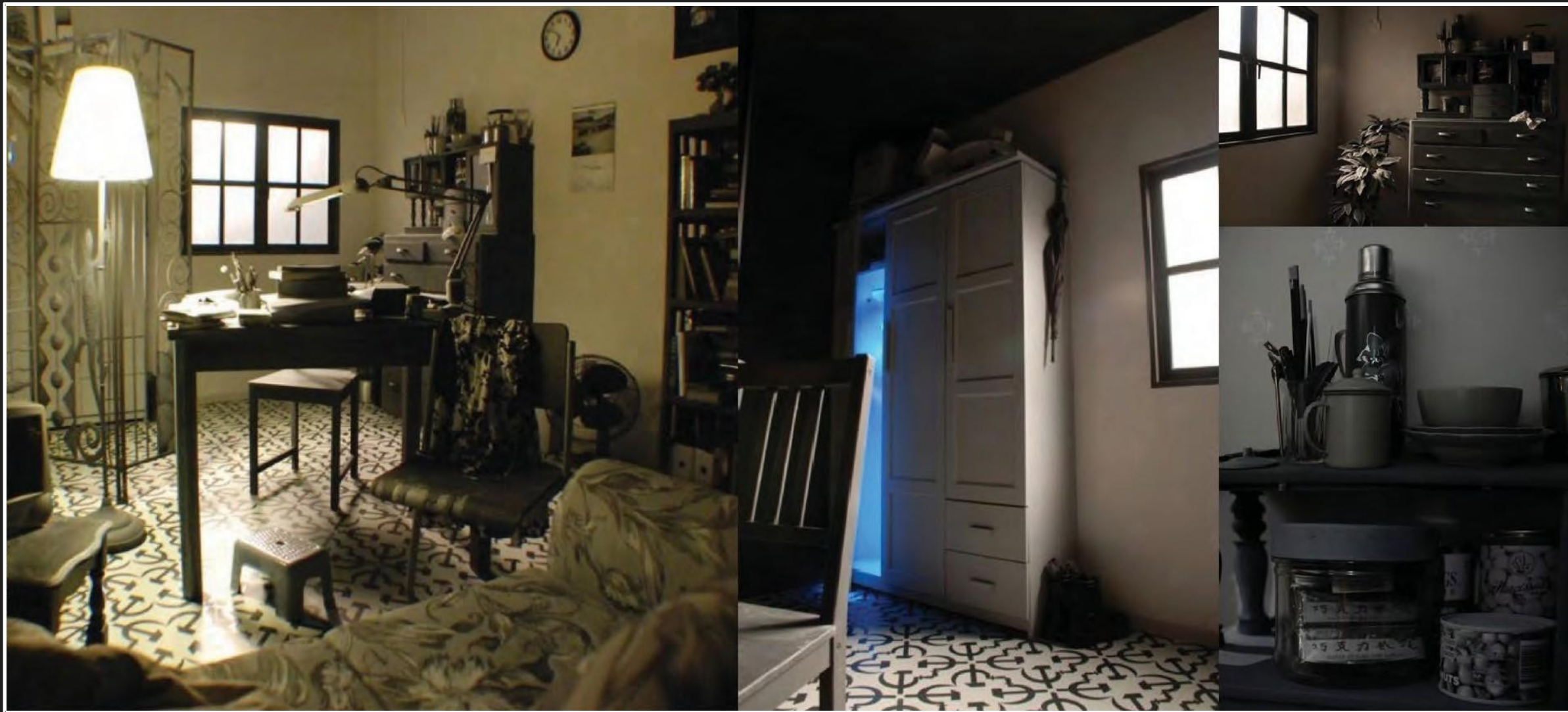
2009 | Collection of Singapore Art Museum



A VIEW WITH A ROOM

2009 | *Collection of Singapore Art
Museum*

This work is based on excerpts from the writings by Edgar Allan Poe, Alain Robbe-Grillet, and Georges Perec. These texts are detailed descriptions of interior spaces and this is a visual translation from local context. Between the lines of these texts on the gallery wall, the viewer will notice a peephole with a view of a room. Through a closed wardrobe situated at a corner, amongst other artworks in the gallery, viewers, who dare to venture beyond, would pass a long tunnel that leads to the concealed room. The room models itself after a black and white photograph. Like a black and white photo, every single object in the room is gray.



A VIEW WITH A ROOM

2009 | Collection of Singapore Art Museum



A VIEW WITH A ROOM
2009 | Collection of Singapore Art Museum



MIRRORS AND COPULATION

2017 | *Creative Pulses*, Singapore Chinese Cultural Centre, Singapore 2015 | *Singapore Inside Out*, Beijing, New York, London
 2014 | *The Roving Eye*, ARTER (VehbiKoc Foundation), Istanbul
 2012 | *Human Scale*, Hong Kong Art Centre, Hong Kong
 2012 | *Roundtable*, *The 9th Gwangju Biennale*, Gwangju, South Korea 2010 | *Memories & Beyond*, Kuandu Biennale, Kuandu Museum, Taipei 2010 | Grey Projects, Singapore

This installation is inspired by a short story, *The Garden of Forking Paths* by Jorge Luis Borges, whose works often blur the boundaries between fiction and reality, perception and memory.

At its core, the piece takes the form of a labyrinth—an architectural metaphor for the mind navigating through the entanglements of literature and history.

Each turn and passage in the labyrinth is not merely spatial, but also conceptual, referencing forgotten texts, apocryphal footnotes, and imagined libraries that Borges so often conjured.

The image above captures a key moment in the installation: what appears to be a mirror is, in fact, a meticulously crafted illusion. It is not a reflection, but a window. Rather than returning the viewer's gaze, it invites passage. Through this "mirror," one can cross into a different dimension—one shaped entirely by the written word. It is a portal into fiction's paradox: a space more real than reality itself.

This fake reflection serves as both a trap and a threshold. It evokes the Borges motif of the infinite regression of mirrors and texts that read other texts, realities that cite

other realities. The moment one steps through, they are immersed in a realm governed not by physical laws but by the logic of metaphor, intertextuality, and

recursive knowledge. Here, stories remember other stories; history folds upon itself; and the author, like the mirror, disappears—leaving only the labyrinth behind.





*The Garden of Forking
Path 2010 | Installation
Dimensions variable*



JOHN MARTIN

2015 2016 | *Zarch Collaboratives,*
Singapore

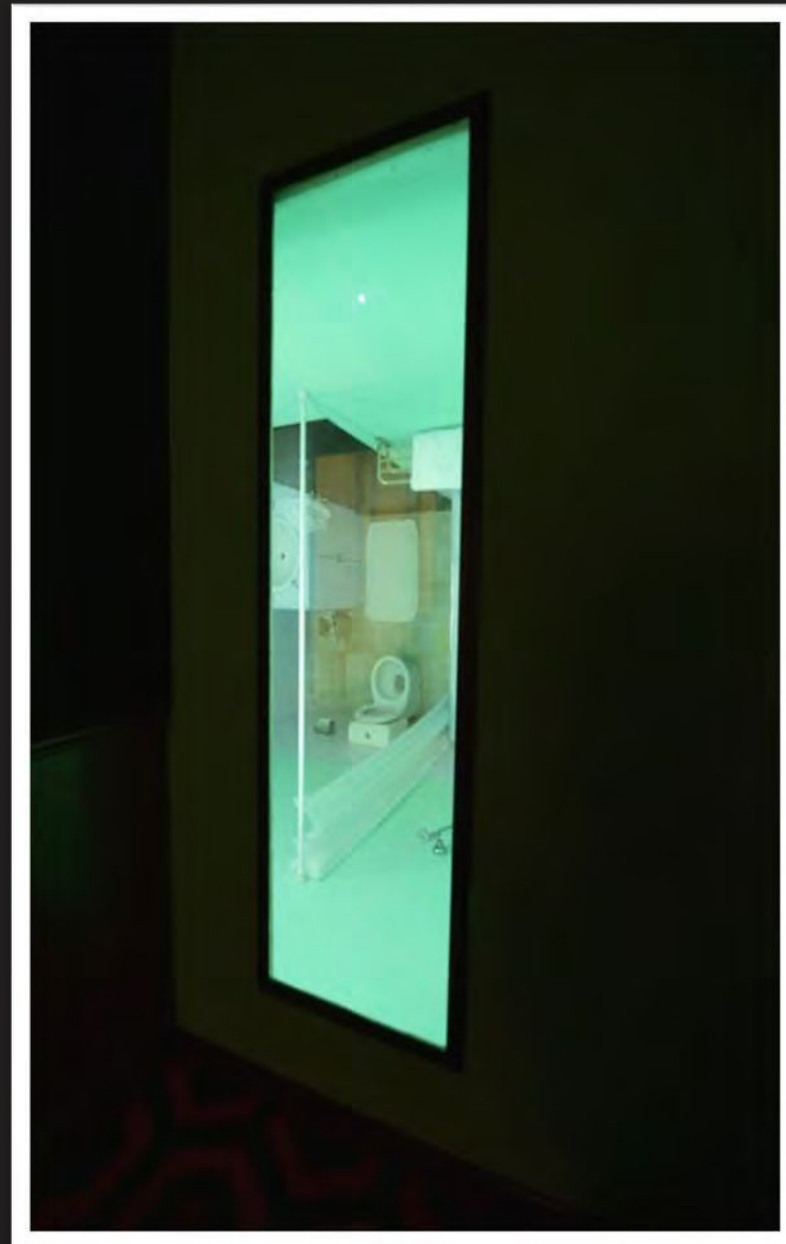
| *Nunu Fine Art, Taipei / New York*

This installation is partly inspired by the fiction *The Investigation* by Juan Jose Saer about a serial killer in Paris, and a true-story that happened in Singapore during the 90s documented in the book by Straits Times crime reporter Tan Ooi Boon titled *Body Parts: A British Serial Killer in Singapore*. By mixing fact with fiction, we imagine how the 'history' of hotel room, which is both a public and private space, is well-tidied and covered by the clean bedsheets and blankets. This is the work the past and present tense of a space coexist. The two-way mirror at certain time interval would turn into a window where see the plan view of toilet when the murder took place. When we peek through the reversed louver door of the wardrobe, we also see how the room that we are in *now* was like when John was there.



JOHN MARTIN

2015- 2016



JOHN MARTIN
2015- 2016



JOHN MARTIN

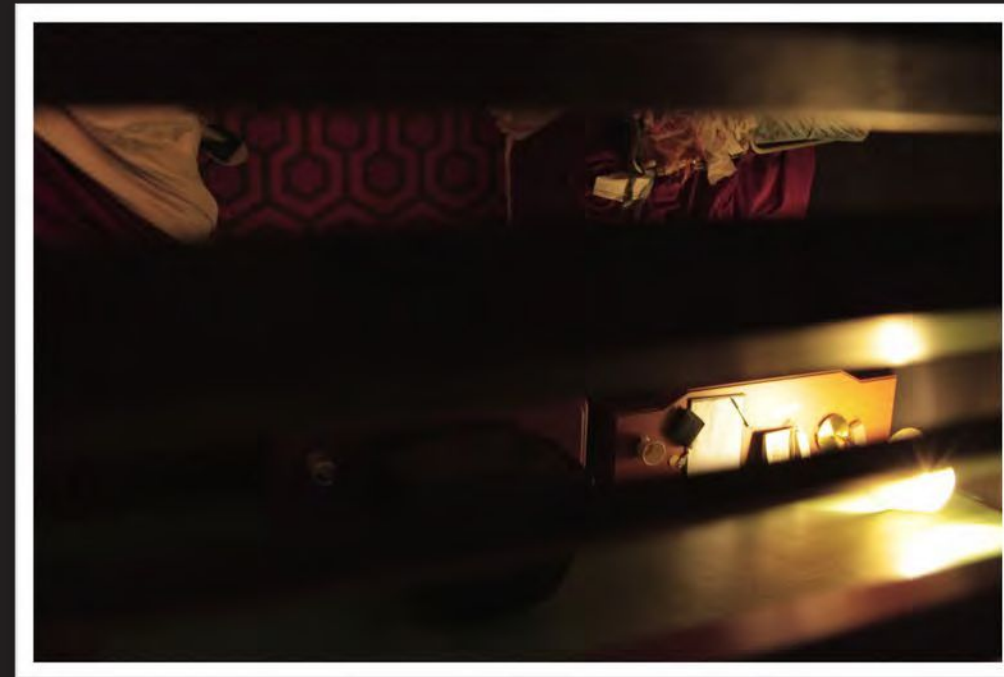
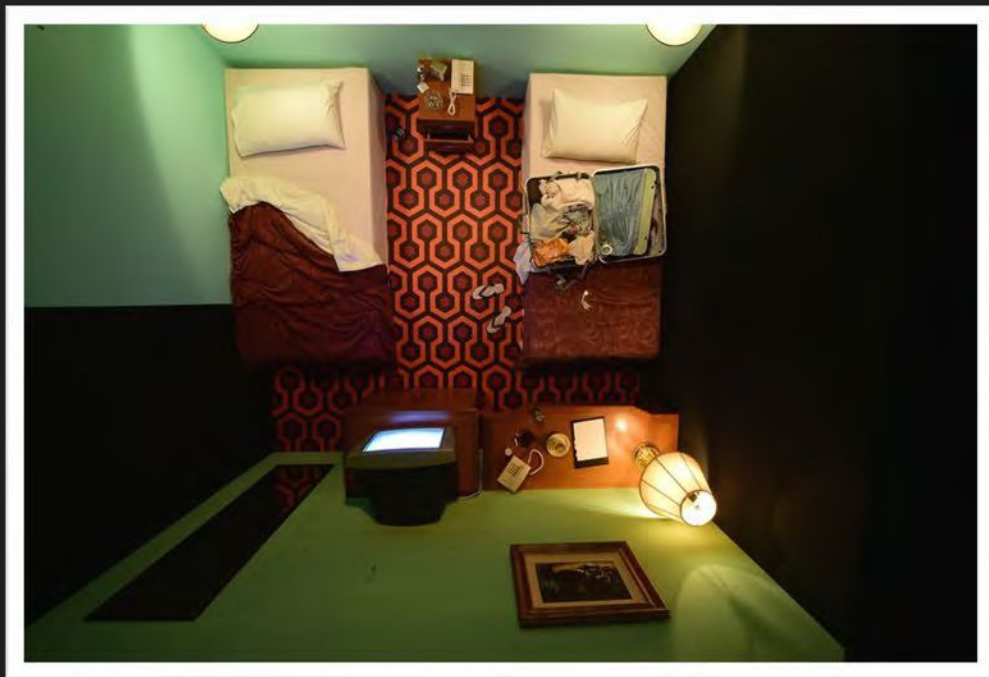
2015- 2016



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JOHN MARTIN
2015- 2016



JOHN MARTIN
2015- 2016



The Seven Scenes of Barry
 Lyndon Presented at Richard Koh
 Fine Art 2013



The Seven Scenes of Barry Lyndon

2013 | Objectifs Centre for Photography & Film (Singapore)
| Richard Koh Fine Art (Singapore)

2015 | Art Science Museum (Singapore)

| Saatchi London (United Kingdom)

The Seven Scenes of Barry Lyndon draws from Stanley Kubrick's *Barry Lyndon* (itself famously composed in reference to 18th-century European painting) where Loke re-translates selected film stills back into painting, creating a layered dialogue between cinema and art history.

Rather than presenting these works as isolated pictures, Loke installs them as a spatial sequence, turning the gallery into a constructed environment. This staging echoes the film's carefully controlled compositions and lighting, while also foregrounding the act of viewing: each painting becomes both an image and a frame within a larger system of images.

The exhibition was covered by numerous press, including Deepika Shetty for Straits Times Life (2013), TODAY (2013), Sonia Kolesnikow-Jessop for Blouin Art Info (2013), and The Art Incubator (2013).



The Seven Scenes of Barry Lyndon
Featured on Straits Times Life, written by Deepika Shetty
2013





The Seven Scenes of Barry Lyndon
Presented at Objectifs – Centre for Photography & Film (Singapore)
2013



The Seven Scenes of Barry Lyndon
Presented at Objectifs – Centre for Photography & Film (Singapore)
2013



Chinese illiterati 非文人

2017 | Presented at LASALLE's ICAS

Installation
Dimension varied

Chinese illiterati 非文人

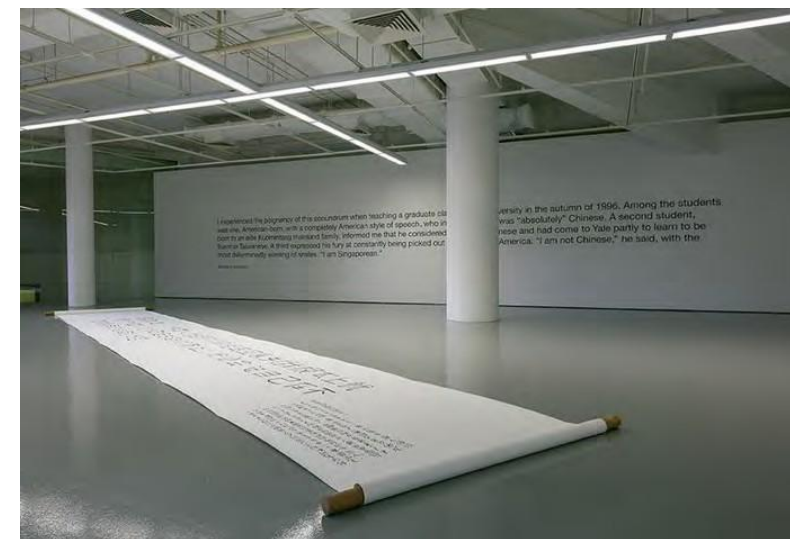
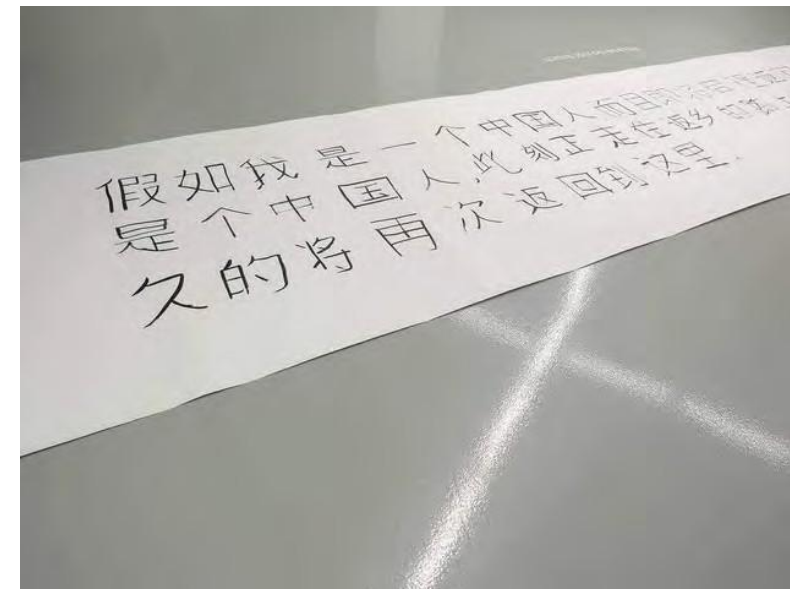
2017 | Presented at LASALLE's ICAS

Chinese Illiterati is a new installation by art collective Vertical Submarine (founded Singapore, 2003) that explores conflicting notions of Chinese identity in literature, and intellectual and cultural theory.

The installation takes the form of an enormous Chinese handscroll laid across the floor of the gallery. On the scroll are Chinese translations of extracts from two texts: an English translation of a letter written in German by writer Franz Kafka to his fiancée Felice Bauer, and a footnote from *The Spectre of Comparisons: Nationalism, Southeast Asia and The World* (1998) in English by historian and political scientist Benedict Anderson.

Written by a member of Vertical Submarine who is illiterate in Chinese, the handscroll raises issues of authenticity in relation to Chinese language and identity. It also explores concepts of "Chineseness," and their origins in geopolitical conflicts, migration and diasporic communities.

Chinese Illiterati is part of Vertical Submarine's ongoing research with curator Iola Lenzi on language, translation and identity, a project that began in 2014.



Chinese illiterati 非文人
2017 | Presented at LASALLE's ICAS
Installation
Dimension varied



Hotel Illiterati

2022 | Presented at Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts and
Chin Mee Chin Confectionery (Curated by Dr. Iola Lenzi)

How do diasporic Singaporeans and Southeast Asians juggle hybrid identity, national belonging, and their place in the world? How does culture evolve in places of global traffic? In a new, site-specific experiential work Hotel Illiterati, Singapore collective Vertical Submarine takes these questions as starting points to conceptualise a Katong-shop house space, transformed into a small hotel that audiences are invited to visit and explore. Through the trope of a vintage-style family-run inn, this playful work, full of mementos and pictures that audiences can handle, examine close-up, and literally use (photography welcome!) mobilises viewers to investigate the aesthetics and debates of cultural translation and the spaces between cultural-social belonging, re-invention, and transgression.

Various types of props provide a frame for the “narrative” of the work and the fictitious figure who owns and runs the hotel, a figure hinted at, but never fully presented. The narrative is loose, ambiguous, left to the viewer’s imagination, but the prompts (old postcards, pictures, paintings, books, other documents, a bed, furniture, décor etc., all “aged” to appear from another era) suggest a hybrid persona with unclear origins, a “typical” Singaporean or Southeast Asian who is of mixed ethnicity, mixed culture, and shifting outlook.

The piece is inspired by the complicated times we live in, in Singapore and far beyond, and the complicated nature of identity and direction, both which are constructed. The piece is designed to open a series of questions on perspectives and choice in a moving world. Beneath the veneer of vintage fun and fiction, the work suggests that agency is possible and can be seized. The piece is nurtured in the reality of life in Singapore, but is meaningful to wide audiences whose thoughts are triggered by the atmosphere of Hotel Illiterati.



Hotel

Illiterati

2022

Installation

Dimension varied

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Monkey Business

2016 | Presented at Chan Hampe Galleries

Monkey Business is an exhibition of ink paintings that pay homage to Chen Wen Hsi's (1906 – 1991) well-known Gibbon series, featuring human-like gibbons engaging in anthropomorphic activities such as gambling, drinking, fighting, and commuting to work. Apart from paying homage to one of Singapore's most prominent art historical figures, the exhibition at *Chan Hampe Galleries* questions the function of images as canonical icons in Singapore's art history.

In recent years, the increasing demand for Chen's works and the soaring market value of his paintings gave rise to skilful forgeries. The artists, Justin Loke and Samuel Chenin, in this exhibition prescribe to the view that the question of authenticity regarding Chen's works is moot, considered from an artistic point of view. Notwithstanding the commercial motivation behind many of the fakes, many of these works are, in the artists' opinion, excellent works of art in their own right and should be re-evaluated in the context of art history.

In *Monkey Business*, the playful gibbons are not just a copy of Chen's style and motif but a copy of the many counterfeiters who have produced the fakes circulating in the market. Therefore the exhibition is not just a project parodying or copying the original but a double negative act of copying the act of copying.



Bowling (part of Monkey Business)
2016
Ink on paper
67 x 34 cm (drawing)
46.5 x 120 cm (scroll)



Buying Lottery (part of Monkey Business)
2016
Ink on paper
67 x 34 cm (drawing)
46.5 x 120 cm (scroll)



Smoking (part of Monkey Business)
2016
Ink on paper
67 x 34 cm (drawing)
46.5 x 120 cm (scroll)



Anti-Landmarks: Sinking Tomb 沉墓

Jinxi, Kunshan (2023) |

Work-in-progress at Points Center for Contemporary Art, Troy Foundation
The Water Tomb of Concubine Chen (known as Chen Mu) from the Song Dynasty stands as one of the eight landmarks in Jinxi, Kunshan, Jiangsu. A popular tourist attraction, it drew visitors eager to view the tomb of Emperor Xiaozong's consort from various perspectives. Legends surrounded the tomb, the most notable being its mystical ability to float regardless of the tide's influence. Yet, one fateful morning, onlookers watched as it began to sink. By the next day, a once-familiar horizon was transformed. Visitors now found themselves gazing not at a landmark, but at its absence, recalling the tomb's image through the void it left behind.

Concept & photo: Justin Loke
Digital Imaging: Fang Xiang Gambol



Anti-Landmarks: Sinking Tomb 沉
墓
Jinxi, Kunshan (2023)



THE COLOUR OF MONEY:

OUR TWO DOLLAR

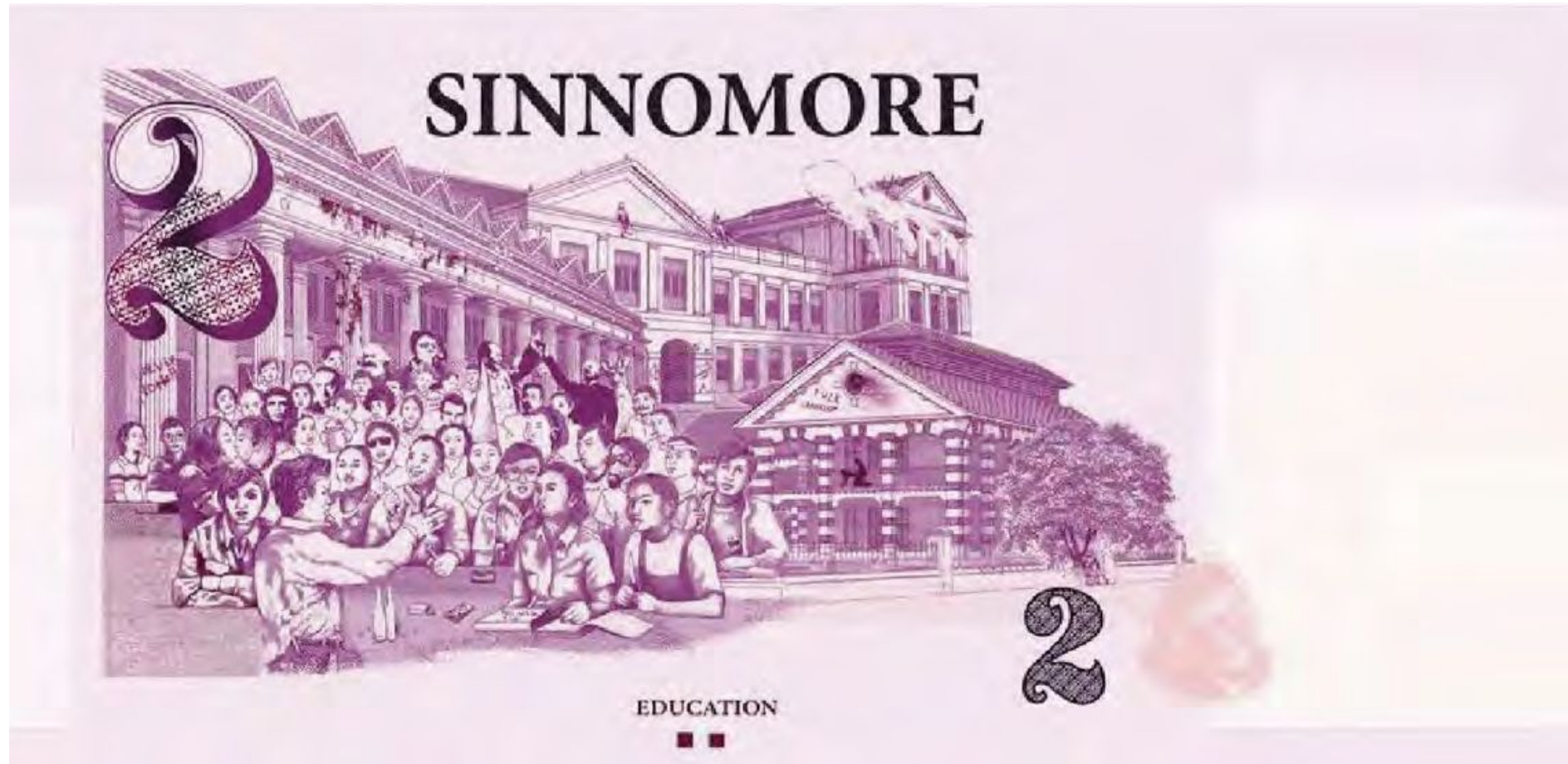
2010 | Various Private Collectors

EDUCATION

With reference to the visual composition on the verso of Singapore dollar notes, Colour of Money features a series of drawings vertical submarine would to propose to the Monetary Authority of Singapore. Without altering the core social messages, such Arts, Sports, Garden City and Education, or the denominations of dollar bills (\$ 2 S\$5 S\$10 S\$25 S\$50 S\$100 S\$500 S\$1000 S\$10000) the collective would like to highlight the flipside of each category, depicted in cold hard cash.

In this first installment, Our SGD \$2.00-Education, illustrates the perennial problem in our local education system. Instead of the nerdy-looking college students listening attentively to the lecturer (please refer to your 2 dollar note), we would like to depict the reality where students in school would include delinquents with bad haircuts, gathering outside old shopping malls with internet cafes and pool halls; smoking, making out, or staring blankly at the void deck. With this drawing we hope the Ministry of Education would seriously look into this issue, and reconsider corporal punishment - in fascist/medieval style - as the effective measure.

THE COLOUR OF MONEY: OUR TWO DOLLAR EDUCATION



2010 | Various Private
Collectors

HOKKIEN RHYMES

2015~2016 | Various Private
Collectors



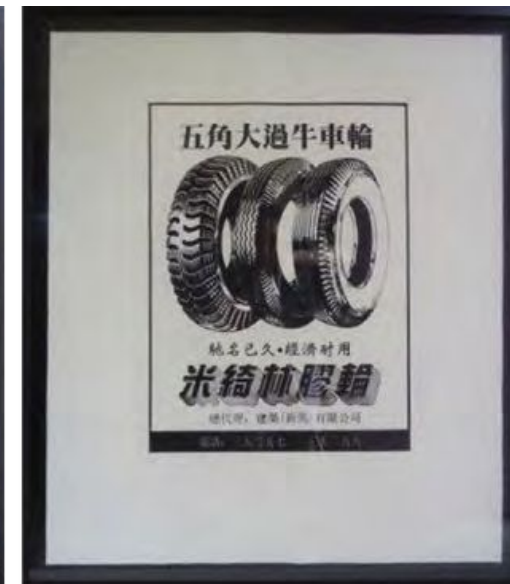
Hokkien Rhymes

2016 | Chan Hampe Galley | Various Private Collectors



Hokkien Rhymes

2015 | Chan Hampe Galley | Various Private Collectors



Hokkien Rhymes

2016 | Chan Hampe Galley | Various Private Collectors



Hokkien Rhymes

2016 | Chan Hampe Galley | Various Private Collectors



The Forest
2014
Experimental short film
Filmed in Barcelona
12 mins 55 secs
Video link: [here](#)



Film still of The Forest
2014
Experimental short film
Filmed in Barcelona 12 mins 55 secs **Video**
link: [here](#)



Vertical Submarine en el Gimnasio de Arte
(Mexico News Coverage for on Loke's arrival for an Art Residency)
2014
Experimental short film
12 mins 55 secs **Video**
link: [here](#)

Residencias Artísticas Pasagüero presenta:

VERTICAL SUBMARINE

Un colectivo de arte independiente con base en Singapur que cuenta con tres miembros: Joshua Yang, Justin Loke y Fiona Koh (en orden de antigüedad). Los cuales pintan un poco, escriben un poco, dibujan un poco, pero comen, beben y duermen mucho.

FECHAS EN MÉXICO

2 Dic 2010, 8pm
Simulacro Naturale @Ex Teresa Arte Actual.

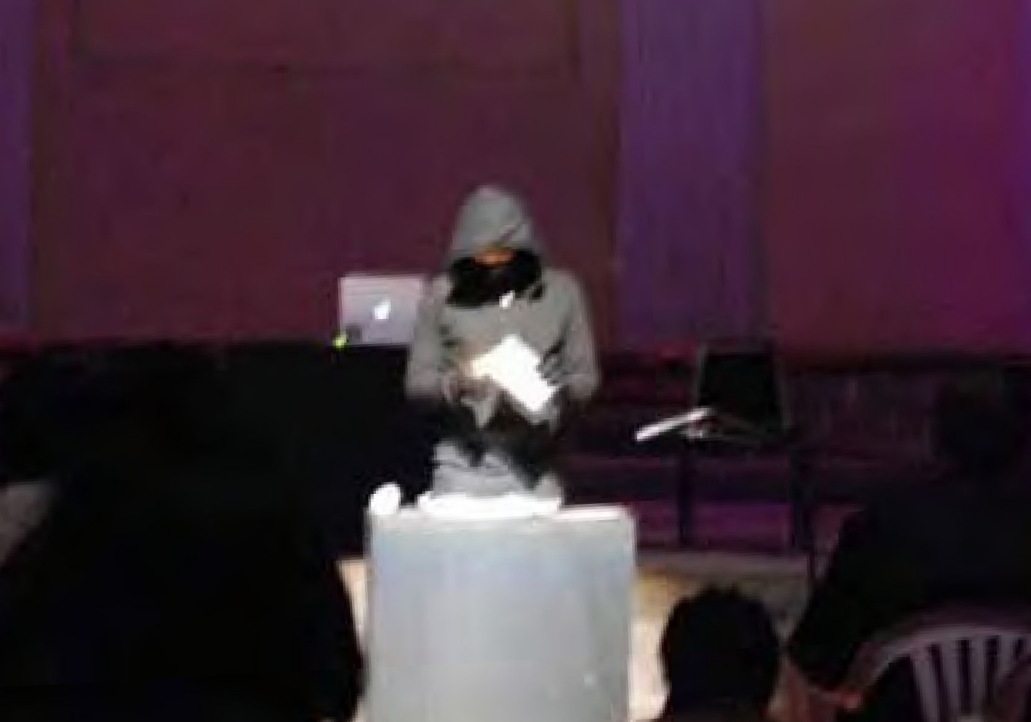
3 Dic, 10pm
"How We Learned to Stop Worrying and Love the Bomb"
@Pasaguero.

8 Dic 2010, 7pm
Presentación @Casa Refugio.

+ **información:**
verticalsubmarine.org

Motolinia 33, Centro Histórico, 5521.6112
twitter.com/pasaguero | myspace.com/pasaguero

PASAGÜERO
Residencias Artísticas



INCENDIARY TEXTS I

2010, Ex Teresa Arte Actual, Mexico D.F.

For Simulacros Naturales, curated by Erick Diego. The presentation began with the burning of Pablo Neruda's 'Confieso que he vivido: Memorias'. Beyond the pleasure or pain of seeing and hearing the book being burned, this act could either be one of dedication or condemnation, devotion or denunciation for the book concerned. Other books sacrificed for this session: 'Thus Spoke Zarathustra', 'Beyond Good and Evil', 'Nietzsche Anthology', Rilke's 'Letter to a Young Poet', Swift's 'Gulliver's Travels', Fromm's 'Art of Loving', Felosio's 'Alfanhui', Dante's 'Divine Comedy', Carroll's 'Alice in Wonderland', Orwell's '1984', Sade's 'Julietta', Ibsen's 'Casa de Munecas', 'One Hundred Years of Solitude' and more...

Justin Loke, Nancy Castro & Rodolfo de Matteis, Erick Diego, Fiona Koh





INCENDIARY TEXTS I
2010 | Performance (15:00)
Video link: [here](#)



Incendiary Texts II: Selected Anatomical Studies or Thirty-Six Eastern Vulgarities and One Incendiary Oath ... in Roman Letters

2012 | Mixed Media Dimensions Variable | Richard Koh Fine Art, ArtStage 2012, Art Hongkong 2012, Umahseni Gallery (Jakarta) 2012, Nunu Fine Art (Taipei) 2015 | Various Private Collectors

INCENDIARY TEXTS II:

SELECTED ANATOMICAL STUDIES OR THIRTY-SIX EASTERN VULGARITIES AND ONE INCENDIARY OATH...IN ROMAN LETTERS

The title of this project is appropriated from Pablo Neruda's *Veinte poemas de amor y una canción desesperada* (Twenty Love Poems and a Song of Despair). Featuring beautifully and elegantly illustrated swear words, of strong anatomical references, which are reactions to the quote 'Humanity won't be happy till the last capitalist is hung with the guts of the last bureaucrat!' – a slogan once popular amongst protesters in the West during the late 1960s. In this series of figurative illustration, the term 'Eastern' could be understood, in general, as referring to parts of the East Asia region. And specifically, the eastern part of Singapore, which other than being known for its highbrow estates, is also where the infamous Geylang is located. In this seediest part of the island nation, the tradition of using these words are continued and preserved – sometimes written in the public toilet walls in Roman letters.



Incendiary Texts II: Thirty-six Eastern Vulgarities...in Roman Letters | Kan Ni Na, Hor Lang Kan, Chee Hong, Lan Jiao Bin

2012 | Mixed Media Dimensions Variable | Richard Koh Fine Art, ArtStage 2012, Art Hongkong 2012, Umahseni Gallery (Jakarta) 2012,
Nunu Fine Art (Taipei) 2015 | Various Private Collectors



Incendiary Texts II: Thirty-six Eastern Vulgarities...in Roman Letters

2012 | Mixed Media Dimensions Variable | Richard Koh Fine Art, ArtStage 2012, Art Hongkong 2012, Umahseni Gallery (Jakarta) 2012, Nunu Fine Art (Taipei) 2015 | Various Private Collectors



Incendiary Texts II: Thirty-six Eastern Vulgarities...in Roman Letters

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Lambutan (Nephelium Lappaceum)

WILLIAM FARQUHAR'S REJECTED STRANGE FRUITS III

2016 | *Private Collector*



William Farquhar's Rejected Strange Fruits II

2016 | Private Collector

Mad Dogs and Englishmen

2022 - 2023

This series of paintings is based on an oil painting from the collection of National Museum of Singapore. Titled *Esplanade from Scandal Point* (1851) by J.T. Thomson, the picture is an apparent visual narrative about inhabitants of Singapore at the Padang, an area Raffles reserved for recreational use, during the colonial era. In Malay, the word 'Padang' means flat field. Despite the different races and cultures paraded in the picture, the social hierarchy, where some people are at an elevated position, is very obvious. Until today, Padang remains to be a place of great political significances. As a public square with many usage restrictions, this is also a venue for the National Day Parade.

The two paintings are responses to the song 'Mad Dogs and Englishmen' (1931) by Noel Coward. The expression 'Mad Dogs and Englishmen go out in the midday sun' refers to the perceived naivety of the English in their disregard for the power of the sun in hot climates. The self-deprecating humour of the line derives from the fact that few English had travelled abroad and those that did were entirely unprepared for the heat of the sun near the Equator. For the painting by Thomson, the crowd of multiethnicity gathering at midday is 'unrealistic'. It is an exhibition of the British empire's colonized people exhibited the mindset of 'Human Zoo' in the 19th century. According to the lyrics, it would be more logical that during noon, the people will be hiding from the sun having a siesta, and the field will be empty. And in the other pictures, perhaps only mad dogs or stray dogs will be there.





*Mad Dogs and
Englishmen*
2023
Oil on Canvas
Size 54 x 84 cm



*Padang During Siesta
Time*
2022
Oil on Canvas
Size 54 x 84 cm



LEAVING ROOM

LeavingRoom by Vertical Submarine presents a series of paintings about archetypal figures and the spaces they once occupied, with a particular focus on figures from the art world. The exhibition is set in an art booth converted into a prison cell, symbolizing the mental and circumstantial entrapment of the characters depicted. The title itself is a play on words, intertwining "leaving" and "living," suggesting both departure and the place where life unfolds—the living room. This linguistic ambiguity invites viewers to engage with objects or pictures within pictures, forming a silent yet captivating analogical narrative. The narrative revolves around a series of seemingly disconnected scenes, delving into the experiences of characters—or their absence—and the objects they left behind, revealing ineffable connections between them. Perhaps, the only room that consistently occupies the minds of those trapped, with the persistent thought of wanting to leave, is the prison cell. Characters and scenes referencing books, films, theatre, and paintings are woven together to explore how, in a state of confinement, the desire to leave often surpasses the act of leaving..



VERTICAL SUBMARINE

Between the Bars, Happy Hour, 2024

Steel

360 x 489.3 cm

*An Empty Scene from an
Ozu Film* 2024 208 x 118 cm
Oil and Acrylic on Canvas



*From a Documentary on
Sebald 2024*
65 x 30 cm (each)
Oil and Acrylic on Canvas





*The Gallerist awake in his
Hotel Room during an Art Fair
2024*

Oil and acrylic on canvas
80 x 80 cm

**JUSTIN
LOKE**

The Gallerist awake in his Hotel Room during an Art Fair plays on the enduring stereotype of the artist as adopts a plan view, placing both artist and viewer in the position of a voyeur. At first glance, it seems to satirise the gallerist as a figure associated with money, but the gaze soon folds back on itself. The voyeur is not only the viewer standing before the work but also the artist who imagines the gallerist's world as one of endless transactions. In doing so, the artist forgets that both are bound by the same logic of buying and selling, each anxious within the machinery of the market economy - nobody is spared from it. The painting's imagined suitcase of money becomes a hallucination, a symbol of projection and fear. The gallerist, rather than counting cash, lies awake, absorbed in private worries. It is a self -portrait by proxy, a meditation on complicity and fatigue within an art world that cannot escape its own economy.

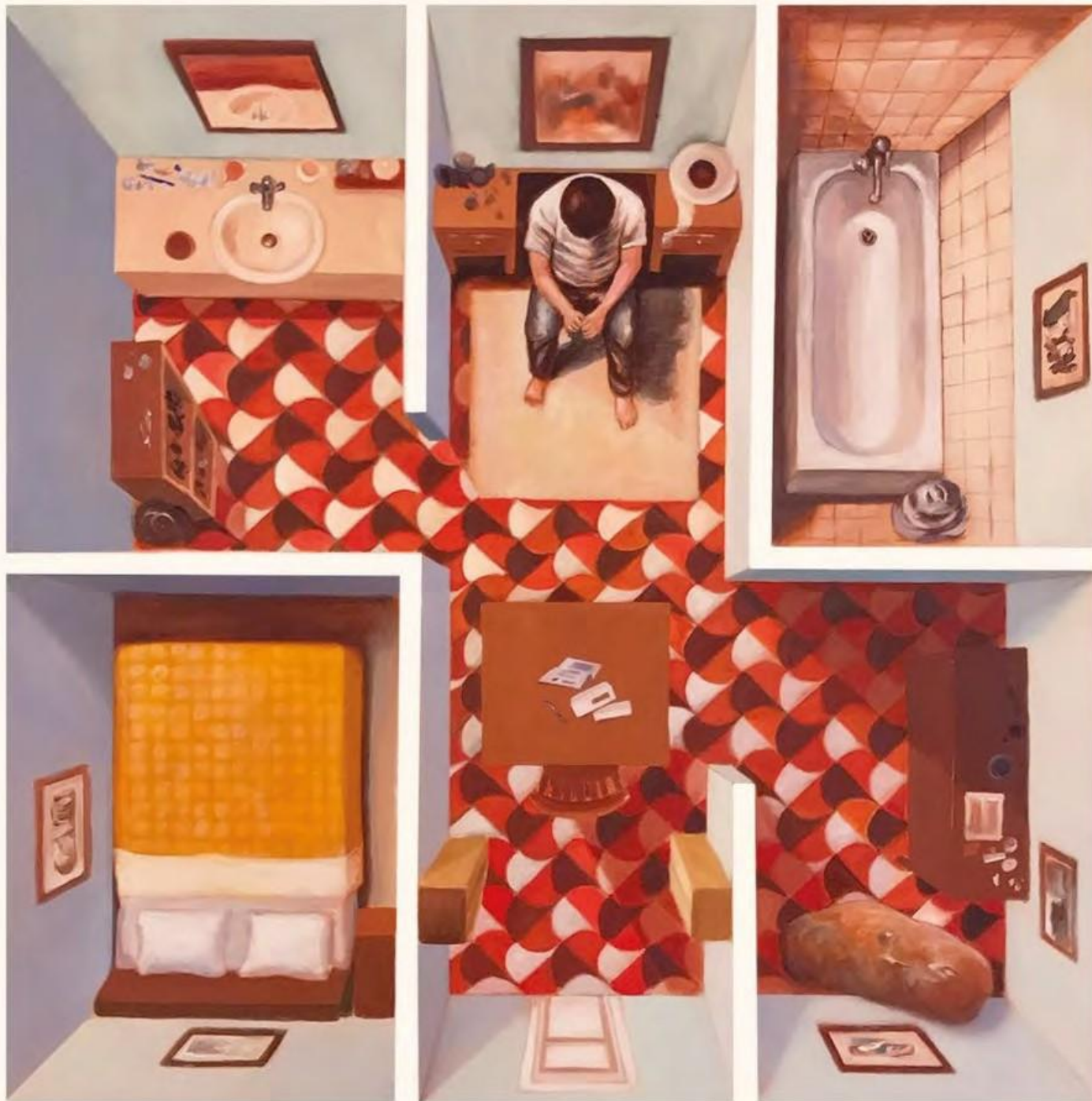




*An Artist Contemplating a Rash Act, the
Cleaner Enters the Room Thinking it is Empty*
2024
Oil and acrylic on canvas
80 x 80 cm

An Artist Contemplating a Rash Act, the Cleaner Enters the Room Thinking It is Empty plays on the enduring stereotype of the artist as a fragile, suffering being. The scene unfolds quietly: a cleaner enters, believing the room to be empty, while the artist contemplates a rash act. The Romantic image of the tormented artist, once a mark of authenticity, has become a marketable persona, a brand of emotional capital dressed in melancholy. The cleaner, absorbed in her routine, remains invisible to this spectacle of self-conscious despair. Her indifference is neither cruel nor careless, but an unconscious refusal to participate in another's performance of suffering. The painting turns this encounter into an allegory of perception and class, of who is seen and who is unseen. It is also a reflection on the everyday moment in which we all, at some point, enter a room thinking it is empty, only to realise it was never empty at all.





*At Home with a Potato after receiving
Feedback about his Artwork*
2024
Oil and acrylic on canvas
80 x 80 cm



*The Art Fair Director working
late while an Elephant Sleeps
in the Room*

2024
Oil and acrylic on canvas
80 x 80 cm

**JUSTIN
LOKE**



*The Body of an Art Dealer
Lying in the Room after a
Meeting 2024*
Oil and acrylic on canvas
80 x 80 cm



*An Art Collector Sleeping in
his Room*
2024
Oil and acrylic on canvas
80 x 80 cm



*A Curator giving the
Artist a Lesson on
Equality*
2024
Oil and acrylic on canvas
80 x 80 cm

**JUSTIN
LOKE**



*A Comedy that Nobody
Laughs at is Performance Art*
/
2024
Oil and acrylic on canvas
80 x 80 cm



*A Comedy that Nobody
Laughs at is Performance Art
II*
2024
Oil and acrylic on canvas
80 x 80 cm



Foreign Talents,

2007 | Collection of Kian Hoe Loke Kee Pte Ltd
Public Sculpture | Concrete, Plywood & Fibreglass
500 x 120 x 120 cm

It started off as a simple gesture to thank the migrant workers for building our houses, maintaining our roads, clearing our plates, cleaning our drains and sewers, instead of accusing them of all the rapes and robberies, for dirtying our garden city; using them as butt of our provincial jokes; or suspecting them of homosexuality – just because they hold hands while crossing the dangerous Serangoon Road. We believe the best way to express our gratitude would be to construct ‘monuments’ for them, like what is usually done for all the great historical figures and events. Two statues were in erected for about two months in the Raffles Landing Site, and Little India – a known gathering place for many migrant workers.

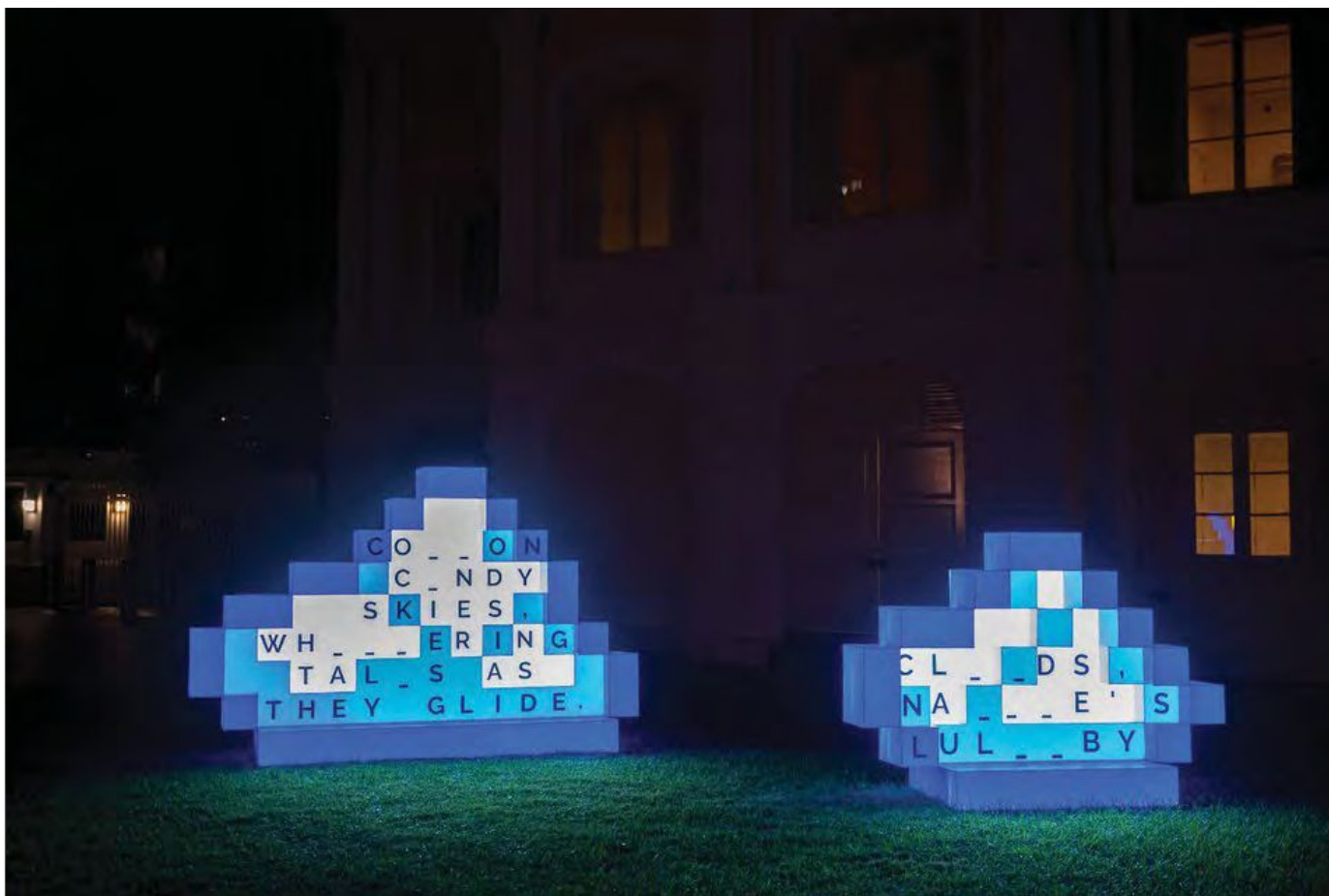
In the historical Raffles Landing Site, the heroic representation of Sir Thomas Stamford Raffles in the form of a polished statue was placed in contrast to the archetypal figure of a migrant worker represented in raw concrete with a rough finish – concrete, a construction material often associated with this marginalised group who concretized Singapore as a city. Although we hardly see them as equal – when one bears the title of expatriate-founder while the other is often labelled as foreign worker or labourer – with the two statues sharing ‘a common ground’, we attempted to eradicate the hierarchical distinction between a single ‘founder’ and the many ‘builders’, and instead, emphasizes their fundamental status as ‘foreign talents’ who contributed to the island.

Parodying the plaque on the Raffles statue – which reads: On this historical site Sir Thomas Stamford Raffles first landed in Singapore on 28th January 1819 and with genius and perception changed the destiny of Singapore from an obscure fishing village to a great seaport and modern metropolis – both pedestals of the migrant worker statues were fitted with plaques bearing the following words: [above] On this obscure site and many others we landed on Singapore soil since time immemorial with our labour and toil changed your genius and perception from a mere idea to a concrete reality.

*In conjunction with Raised, Curating lab, Singapore Art Show
2007*

**JUSTIN
LOKE**

PUBLIC ART, THEATRE, CURATORIAL AND OTHERS



8-BIT WORD CLOUD

2024 | Location: Front Lawn, The Arts House



BENCHMARKS

2023 | Location: *TheArtsHouse, Civic District Alliance*

TERRARIUM AS DIORAMA

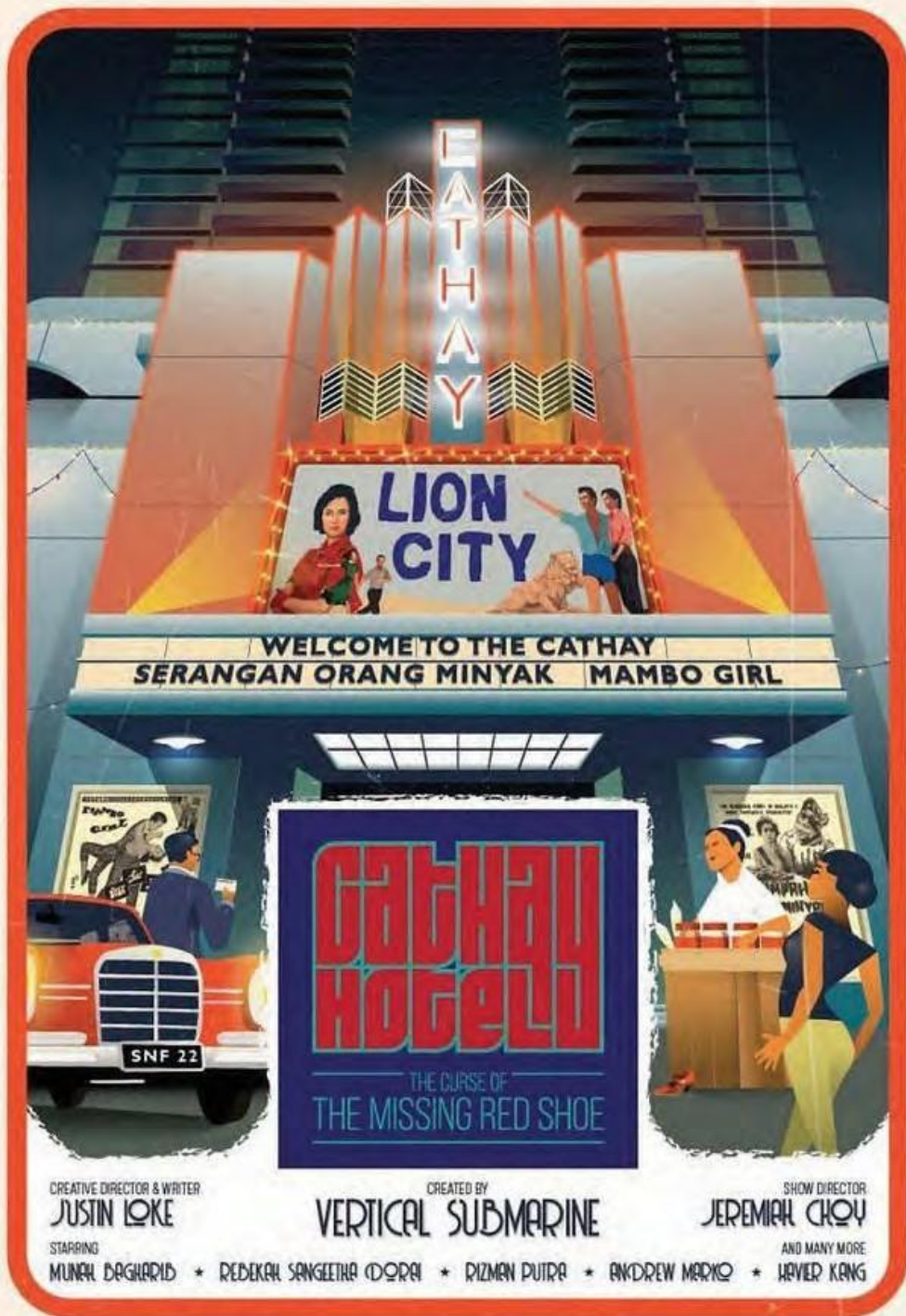
2023 | *Singapore Botanic gardens* | *Singapore Art Week*

Vertical Submarine, in collaboration with professional gardener and NParks' Community in Bloom ambassador Hamzah Osman, presents an installation that ignites new thought about how the concept of diorama and terrarium informs contemporary conditions of life. While rediscovering the gardens and landmarks found at the Singapore Botanic Gardens, the collective uses found objects and upcycled materials to present an installation of terrariums that was co-created with the Gardens' community. Inspired by the concept of the Wardian Case, an early type of terrarium used for protecting plants, this upcycled structure also reflects elements from iconic heritage landmarks around the Gardens such as the Swan Lake Gazebo and the Bandstand to signify the importance of protecting and conserving our nature and heritage.





TERRARIUM AS DIORAMA
2023 | Singapore Botanic Gardens | Singapore Art Week



CATHAY HOTEL

2022 | National Museum of Singapore: Singapore Night Festival



CATHAY HOTEL

2022 | National Museum of Singapore: Singapore Night Festival



CATHAY HOTEL

2022 | National Museum of Singapore: Singapore Night Festival

PLANTING SHADOWS

2023 | ArtInTransit, Land Transport Authority | TE22 Gardens by the Bay Station



This artwork is a further exploration in botany and linking it to visual language and history. Shadows of tropical plants are used as furtive images to echo the presence and absence of nature in our urban environment. 'Planting Shadows' was adapted from botanical drawings produced during the colonial era, to trace the past to present landmark of Gardens by the Bay, where we see the cultivation and celebration of nature. Relating to the colonial appropriation, with absence of the plants, what is left are their shadows overlapping.

FUNDERLAND: 2 OR 3 TIGERS

2022 | *Singapore Chinese Cultural Centre*





FUNDERLAND: 2 OR 3 TIGERS

2022 | Singapore Chinese Cultural Centre

UNDERWRITER'S

2011 Singapore Writers Festival, Singapore Art Museum

TABLE,
The sculpture consists a set of scaled-up table and chair - dwarfing any averaged-sized adult to the height of a two-year-old when next to it. At first glance, from the items on the table, the viewers would relate it to a writer's working desk. But upon closer inspection they would recognise the paper as a cheque, and notice the book on the table titled *How to Write a Blank Cheque*. Due to the scale of the furniture, viewers will only have a better view of these items from the second floor of Singapore Art Museum or when passing by Bras Basah when on top of a double decker bus. In the evening, the light shining underneath the table and chair would perhaps remind passersby and visitors of the light from an UFO, about to land. The item hidden under the table is a suitcase with the question mark motif of varying sizes printed allover - not unlike the Louis Vuitton's infamous design. It is unclear even to the artists and curators what is inside the suitcase. It could be almost anything imaginable: money, gold, bomb, weapons, tools, some old clothes, an unpublished manuscript or parts of a dismembered body.





WITH DUAL POSSIBILITIES

2021 | *National Art Council's Public Art Trust*

With Dual Possibilities, 2021 This installation draws reference to an extract from a poem by Singaporean writer Yong Shu Hoong. The line is imprinted onto a larger-than-life sculpture of an audio cassette, this time with key words redacted, inviting viewers to mentally fill in the blanks based on their imagination. On the B-side, the Chinese phrase “入旋扶乩” utilises the device of code-switching and alludes to how opportunity is often embedded in crisis — akin to the complex times we live in today. The artwork serves as a layered puzzle open to diverse permutations of decoding and interpretation, speaking volumes about the myriad of possibilities and uncertainties lying ahead. The work is commissioned by the National Art Council's Public Art Trust as part of “Rewritten: The World Ahead of Us”.



SHADOWS OF DUST AND CLOUD

*2020 | Asian Civilizations Museum,
National Gallery of Singapore, Light to Night
Festival*

This two-way mirror invites viewers to inspect the artwork and themselves. Its amorphous reflections blur the distinction between dreams and memories, and shadows and ink, gradually revealing hidden messages. This disintegration is a reminder of materiality, and draws our attention to how forms and interpretations change over time. The longer you look at the artwork, the more you will see. This installation is a response to Desmond Kon's poem "This Mirrored Dias of History and Signs" and Italo Calvino's novel "Invisible Cities" and is inspired by the quotes above. The mirror serves as a metaphor for the dialogue of the encounter between the East and West. In Chinese literati painting, the mirror is considered an illusionary picture. It presents a view of what is behind us, reflecting our past.



DUST

2011 | TheatreWorks, Singapore

(Nominated for Life! Theatre Awards 2011 Best Set Design)

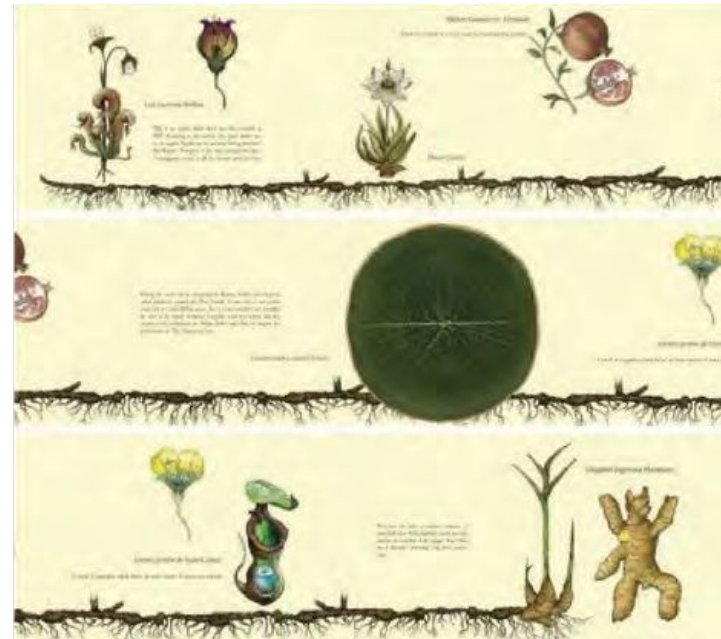
Based on a Hokkien short story in Chien Swee-Teng's *Bak Teng* (Diced Meat) written in 1979, this project explores an expanded definition of the term 'ghosts' to include not only other marginalized, neglected and forgotten spectral figures, like the old, unemployed and new immigrants; but also, spectral landscapes or spaces. The play is set within a vertical submarine installation of a 70s HDB flat where certain areas of the flat, such as the kitchen, are covered in dust since the demise of its first occupants. This story begins with a newlywed couple who occupies the brand-new flat. One morning, however, the man wakes up not next to his young bride but a wrinkly old woman...

JUSTIN
LOKE



FLOWERY LANGUAGE

Flowery Language examines the history of botanical illustrations in relation to the power and potential of representation. Drawing from their research on botanical illustrations created during the colonial era, vertical submarine has created 12 fictional plants that serve not only as witty reference of such illustrations but also to question the roles these illustrations played in advancing scientific knowledge and politico-economic goals. Through their playful subversion of a colonial image-making practice, vertical submarine suggests that the reading of scientific illustrations should not be separated from their histories or politics.





From Top to Left

1. *Benchmark Sat by Larry Peh Ten Stories Below by Adam Jay Robert*
2. *x Joshua Ip x Timothy Wong*

SINGAPORE INSIDE OUT SYDNEY 2017



From Top to Left

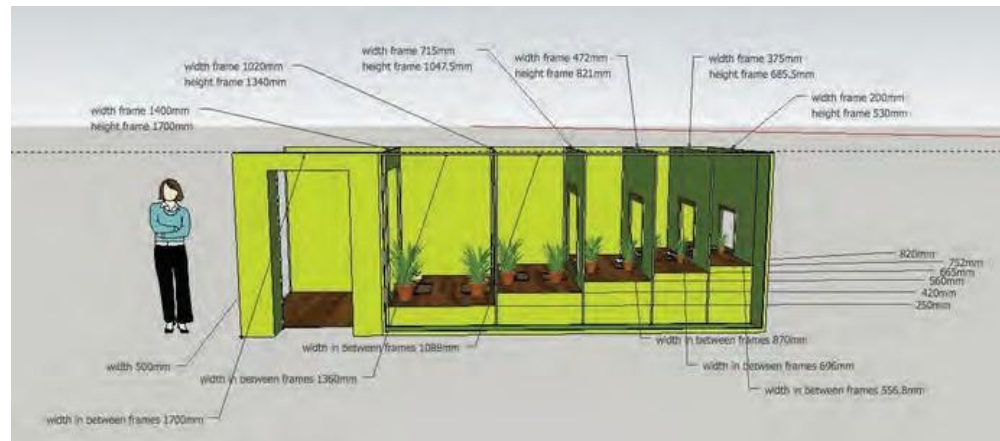
1. *I won't be me without you* by Ezzam Rahman
2. *At the Angle of Repose* by Grace Tan/ (In the background) *Out of Time* by Ang Song-ming
3. *The Forest Speaks Back III* by Donna Ong
4. *To you I dedicate my love* by Ezzam Rahman
5. *Sounding Bodies* by RAWMoves



TUA KANG

2019 | Singapore Art Museum

Tua Kang (Hyperbole) is a tongue-in-cheek reimagination of the world map. For this work, the artists have expanded the size of Singapore to many times its original size. Highlighted in red, the colour refers to the popular cartographical representation of Singapore as 'a little red dot', while the enlarged size alludes to the common perception that the country is able to punch above its own weight in the international arena. The title of the work is from a Hokkien expression used to describe an exaggerated story. In portraying Singapore as such, the artists take a humorous approach to open for discussion our successes in relation to our relatively small size.



SEEING THROUGH

2015 | National Youth Council (Shine Festival)

This installation occupies a 5 x 8m space along Orchard Road with a HDB-like installation spanning several rooms, with each room being a direct 'reflection' of the first room and thus creating a 'false' infinity mirror scenario using a common household setting with common household objects. It is one of those art installations that you have to see to believe.



ABUSEMENT PARK

2010 | Part of Singapore Night
Festival Singapore Art Museum

In this project for *Night Festival: New World 2010*, Singapore Art Museum (SAM) was under the siege of Black Baroque Interventionists (BBI) and vertical submarine. Parts of the occupied building, including the underground dungeon of SAM, was converted into an *Abusement Park*. This 'occupation' is driven by a collective nostalgia that extends to carnivalesque and grotesque phenomena in history such as the spectacle of public execution, and 'madwomen' at the funfair of the post war years. Investing in the common instincts between the applause when a king pronounces, 'off with their heads!' and the slapstick laughter when a man slips on a banana peel, this two-night event, will feature instruments of pain as entertainment, and tortured souls as amusement. For our consumerist society where it is an imperative to enjoy, this event is a remarriage of an old estranged couple: Mr Death Drive and Ms Pleasure Principle. But how could an act of abuse be entertaining? Well, this would not be a question for the inmates who are now running the prison, or the guards who were formerly amused by how they could abuse the inmates. We guarantee smiling faces of the 'victims' while waiting for the blackheads on their noses to be guillotined.

*Part of Night Festival: New World 2010 A
collaboration with Black Baroque
Interventionists*





ABUSEMENT PARK

2010 | *Part of Singapore Night Festival*

Singapore Art Museum

Part of Night Festival: New World 2010 A collaboration with Black Baroque Interventionists



JUSTIN
LOKE



ABUSEMENT PARK
2010 | Part of Singapore Night
Festival Singapore Art Museum

*Part of Night Festival: New World 2010 A
collaboration with Black Baroque
Interventionists*



EVILLE

2014 | Part of Singapore Night
Festival Singapore Kindness
Movement



Suspicious Article:

The Bag of Samuel Chen

2009 | Painting and Installation

Suspicious Article: The Bag of Samuel Chen is about an art student whose ideas and tastes in local contemporary art differs from what is 'regurgitated out there'. Chen vehemently disagrees with abstract paintings, especially Abstract Expressionism.

During the opening of the exhibition, Chen would set the timer for the bomb to go off at exactly the right moment when the Guest-of-Honor completes his speech and declares the show open. His bomb would then go off, spewing paint all around the gallery and 'vandalizing' the surrounding artworks. The irony of Chen's work is that he ends up creating a work which resembles very closely, the type of art work which he despises.

In this project, vertical submarine's response would be to create a similar situation by making an object that looks like a bomb, ticks like a bomb, but would not explode during the opening. Viewers would expect it to go off but it does not. It keeps on ticking and prolongs the suspense throughout the exhibition thereby raising the question of the validity of the bomb and indirectly questioning the validity of the art object.



JUSTIN LOKE

Justin Loke is a multidisciplinary artist and curator, known for his work in storytelling through art installation, painting, theatre, and curation. He is the director of Vertical Submarine, an acclaimed art collective recognized for its interdisciplinary projects.

Loke's accolades include the President's Young Talents Award (Singapore) and the Japan Foundation Arts Award in 2009. His works have been exhibited

internationally at major institutions, museums, and biennales, including National Gallery Singapore, Singapore Art Museum, Saatchi Gallery

(London), Arter (Istanbul), Arndt Gallery (Berlin), and Richard Koh Fine Art (Singapore-Bangkok). He also participated in the 2012 Gwangju Biennale.

As a creative director and writer, he spearheaded the Singapore Night Festival 2022 highlight act, *Cathay Hotel: The Curse of the Missing Red*

Shoe. In 2023, he curated Benchmarks, a placemaking initiative commissioned by the Civic District Alliance, and was selected for a residency

and exhibition at the Points Center for Contemporary Arts in Shanghai-Suzhou, organized by the Troy Foundation (London).

Currently, Loke is the curator of Tran-Slates: Cultural Heritage Craft x Contemporary Design for the National Heritage Board (Singapore) and a

participating artist in the 15th Bienal de La Habana –Shared Horizons 2024-25 (Havana).