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NATIONAL GALLERY SINGAPORE AND SINGAPORE ART MUSEUM COME TOGETHER WITH LOCAL ARTISTS AND CURATORS IN TWO NEW SHOWS TO SUPPORT THE ART COMMUNITY

Exhibitions by National Gallery Singapore and Singapore Art Museum present a collective response by the art community on moving forward amid COVID-19



(Left to right) Key visual for An Exercise of Meaning in a Glitch Season. Image courtesy of National Gallery Singapore; Key visual for Time Passes. Image courtesy of Singapore Art Museum.

Singapore, 27 August 2020 – Two new shows opening at National Gallery Singapore on 4 September will see the local visual arts community come together in a show of solidarity with one another, and with the community at large. The two exhibitions, *An Exercise of Meaning in a Glitch Season* by National Gallery Singapore, and *Time Passes* by Singapore Art Museum, are helmed by independent curators, and spotlight established and emerging local contemporary artists and their work.

The exhibitions are part of *Proposals for Novel Ways of Being*, an unprecedented initiative by the two museums in partnership with 10 other local art institutions, independent art spaces and art collectives. The large-scale collaboration features the works of over 170 artists in response

to the COVID-19 pandemic, and they offer the public inspiration in moving forward in a changed world. Gallery visitors will experience diverse art works that draw them into poetic meditations on the present state of affairs in society and invite them to explore notions of caretaking and time in a world altered by the pandemic.

An Exercise of Meaning in a Glitch Season by guest curator Syaheedah Iskandar features the works of 10 young Singapore-based artists, while *Time Passes* is helmed by guest curator Samantha Yap and comprises works by 13 artists, 12 of whom are based locally. The two exhibitions mark significant firsts – many of the artists featured will be making their debut at the Gallery; the independent curators helming the exhibitions will also be presenting shows at the Gallery for the first time. These collaborations speak to the spirit of *Proposals for Novel Ways of Being*, which aims to support the local art community and provide artists and cultural workers with a prominent platform to showcase their work during a time of need.

CONTEMPLATING NOVEL WAYS OF BEING IN A GLITCH SEASON

An Exercise of Meaning in a Glitch Season offers immersive mixed-media installations, performances and site-specific artistic interventions that encourage visitors to collectively reflect on and imagine new ways of thinking and doing towards a more humane future.

Tini Aliman's *Pokoknya: Organic Cancellation*, an aural performance translated into sculpture, explores plant consciousness and interspecies communication, inviting visitors to contemplate our fraught relationship with nature; while Kin Chui's *Station 13010* engages visitors in discussions of spirituality through an installation where microscopic organisms such as fungi and algae are worshipped as deities in a dystopian future.

Visitors are encouraged to re-evaluate our habit of mass consumption in Clara Lim's *3 GHz*, a mixed-media installation that comments on society's worship of technological progress and its tendency to discard things instead of repairing or recycling them. Multi-disciplinary artist Ila's *There can be no touching here* is an ongoing project that reflects on how we consume and disseminate information on assault. It explores existing and new pathways for action, actively addressing and reducing instances of harm, especially in the face of structural inefficiencies and weaknesses during a time of crisis. This project is co-curated with Samantha Yap as part of both exhibitions.

The curator of *An Exercise of Meaning in a Glitch Season*, Syaheedah Iskandar, says, “For a long time, art has always been part of the process of introspection, acting as a medium to ask the harder questions about the present state of things. With the pandemic, the role of art has never been more crucial. From proposing new paths of action, to giving agency to other worlds to exist alongside ours, to subverting the everyday with humour; the works presented in *An Exercise of Meaning in a Glitch Season* mirror the many undercurrents that the world is grappling with. Following these exercises of contemplations, I hope visitors are inspired to propose new ways of thinking and doing – of *being* – in a changed world.”

NOVEL EXPERIENCES OF TIME AND CARE DURING A PANDEMIC

Time Passes is conceived as a corridor of time that reflects on the passage of our days as we navigate through the COVID-19 pandemic and its aftermath. The exhibition’s title is borrowed from the middle chapter of Virginia Woolf’s novel *To the Lighthouse*, which captures a movement in time that bridges the narrative’s past and future. The works presented in the exhibition, most of which are new commissions or adaptations of existing works, touch on modes of caring, living and relating, especially in a time that begets difficulties and uncertainties.

Featuring works across diverse media such as paper, rattan, assemblage, soil, paint, video and photography, visitors are invited to reflect on how our social bonds and acts of care have persisted through the pandemic. Victor Paul Brang Tun’s *Frame(works)* is a series of rattan sculptures made by deconstructing an unused rattan chair. His processes consider how care and compromise become mutually entwined in the creation of new forms and possibilities. In *#sgbyecentennial*, Fazleen Karlan draws on archaeological processes to explore the indeterminate passage of time and presents a visual record of our present through the unearthing of familiar everyday objects layered with soil and time.

Diana Rahim’s *Interventions* documents intimate ways of reimagining hostile architectural features in shared spaces across Singapore, while Divaagar’s immersive installation, *Render Tender*, takes the form of a fictional reiki studio, exploring how intimacy can continue to be performed at a time of limited physical contact.

“My hope for the exhibition is that it offers thought on the possibilities of caring and continuing. Specifically, to suggest ways of carrying *on* rather than just progressively going forward. I see this exhibition as a commitment towards the project of survival across our different communities that considers how we may bear difficulty and ‘yet prepare to live again’, to borrow poet Anna Akhmatova’s words,” says Samantha Yap, curator for *Time Passes*.

MOVING FORWARD TOGETHER IN DIFFICULT TIMES

Dr. Eugene Tan, Director, National Gallery Singapore and Singapore Art Museum says, “As we strive to move forward together as a community in the new normal, there are many learnings to be gleaned from the changes brought about by the pandemic. The exhibitions presented by National Gallery Singapore and Singapore Art Museum offer diverse perspectives and approaches in processing our experiences of the pandemic, be it a greater consciousness of long-standing social issues that are now thrown into stark relief as a result of the crisis, or committing to acts of caretaking, as we return to public life and shared spaces following the lifting of lockdown restrictions. We hope visitors are inspired to make meaning out of their own experiences of the pandemic, imagine new possibilities of the future and foster stronger relationships with one another through the exhibitions and programmes presented as part of the *Proposals for Novel Ways of Being* initiative.”

Other exhibitions and programmes for *Proposals for Novel Ways of Being* will open between August 2020 and February 2021.

General admission (free for Singaporeans and PRs) applies for both *An Exercise of Meaning in a Glitch Season* and *Time Passes* at National Gallery Singapore, from 4 September 2020 to 21 February 2021. Visual assets can be downloaded via this [link](#). For more information, please visit www.novelwaysofbeing.sg and refer to the following annexes:

Annex A: List of artists and curator for *An Exercise of Meaning in a Glitch Season*

Annex B: List of artists and curator for *Time Passes*

For further information, please contact:

National Gallery Singapore

Kelly Quek

9646 7926

kelly.quek@nationalgallery.sg

Singapore Art Museum

Gwyneth Liew

9826 1634

gwyneth.liew@singaporeartmuseum.sg

Ogilvy on behalf of National Gallery

Singapore

Liane Seow

9618 0893

liane.seow@ogilvy.com

Cathlin Anabella

9178 9160

cathlin.anabella@ogilvy.com

About National Gallery Singapore

National Gallery Singapore is a leading visual arts institution which oversees the world's largest public collection of Singapore and Southeast Asian modern art. Situated at the birthplace of modern Singapore, in the heart of the Civic District, the Gallery is housed in two national monuments - City Hall and former Supreme Court - that have been beautifully restored and transformed into this exciting 64,000 square metre venue. Reflecting Singapore's unique heritage and geographical location, the Gallery aims to be a progressive museum that creates dialogues between the art of Singapore, Southeast Asia and the world to foster and inspire a creative and inclusive society. This is reflected in our collaborative research, education, long-term and special exhibitions, and innovative programming. The Gallery also works with international museums such as Centre Pompidou, Musée d'Orsay, Tate Britain, National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo (MOMAT) and National Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art, Korea (MMCA), to jointly present Southeast Asian art in the global context, positioning Singapore as a key node in the global visual arts scene.

In 2019, the Gallery was the only museum in Southeast Asia that received a ranking in The Art Newspaper’s annual global survey of attendance at art museums, taking 32nd place. It was the first museum in Asia to receive the Children in Museums Award by the European Museum Academy and Hands On! International Association of Children in Museums in 2018. The Gallery also won the awards for “Best Theme Attraction” at TTG Travel Awards 2017, “Best Attraction Experience”, “Breakthrough Contribution to Tourism” and “Best Customer Service (Attractions)” at the prestigious Singapore Tourism Awards in 2016 for its role in adding to the vibrancy of Singapore’s tourism landscape.

About the Singapore Art Museum

Singapore Art Museum is a contemporary art museum which focuses on art-making and art-thinking in Singapore, Southeast Asia and Asia, encompassing a worldwide perspective on contemporary art practice. SAM advocates and makes accessible interdisciplinary contemporary art through research-led and evolving curatorial practice. Since it opened in January 1996, SAM has built up one of the most important collections of contemporary art from the region. It seeks to seed and nourish a stimulating and creative space in Singapore through exhibitions and public programmes, and to deepen every visitor’s experience. These include outreach and education, research and publications, as well as cross-disciplinary residencies and exchanges.

SAM occupies two buildings: the old St Joseph’s Institution on Bras Basah Road, built in 1855 and now a National Monument; and SAM at 8Q, a conservation building across the road on Queen Street that was the old Catholic High School. The museum buildings are currently closed for a major building redevelopment, with museum programming continuing at partner venues until the buildings re-open.

SAM was the organiser of the Singapore Biennale in 2011, 2013, 2016 and 2019. SAM was incorporated as a Company Limited by Guarantee on 13 November 2013, operating under the Ministry of Culture, Community and Youth. To find out more, visit www.singaporeartmuseum.sg

Annex A: Curator and list of artists for *An Exercise of Meaning in a Glitch Season*



Syaheedah Iskandar
Curator, *An Exercise of Meaning in a Glitch Season*

Syaheedah Iskandar (b.1990) works with vernacular ideas of visuality within Southeast Asia, drawing on contemporary discourses on hyper-visuality and its opposite, the unseen. Her projects aim to unpack knowledge(s) that inform and counter hegemonic systems of seeing. Syaheedah was the inaugural Emerging Writers' Fellow for the academic journal *Southeast of Now: Directions in Contemporary and Modern Art in Asia* and the recipient of the IMPART Awards 2020 (Singapore) in recognition of her emerging curatorial practice. She holds an MA in History of Art and Archaeology at the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), University of London. Syaheedah was previously Curatorial Assistant at the NTU Centre for Contemporary Art Singapore (2014–18) where she worked on numerous exhibitions and developed outreach strategies for art education.



Tini Aliman

Tini Aliman is a sound designer, field recordist and foley artist who works at the intersection of theatre and film sound design, live sound art performance, installation and collaborative projects. Her research interests include but are not limited to, forest networks, aural architecture, plant consciousness and the variables of data translations via biodata sonification. In 2018, she was nominated for the Best Sound Design category for Life! Theatre Awards for her work for *Angkat*, by Teater Ekamatra. She has been involved in projects and exhibitions across Asia Pacific and Europe. Her recent projects have been presented at NTU CCA, Biennale Urbana at Caserma Pepe, Venice and Museum of Contemporary Art Taipei.



Kin Chui

Originally trained in film, in his artistic practice Kin Chui (b. 1984, Singapore) inflects collaborative projects, and performative interventions with a sustained interest in emancipatory struggles. He was an artist in residence at NTU Centre for Contemporary Art, and a fellow of Eyebeam’s Rapid Response for a Better Digital Future with soft/WALL/studs. Kin has been involved in group exhibitions at Cemeti-Institute for Art and Society and had solo exhibitions at Grey Projects and The Substation. He periodically aspires to be a cat.



Priyageetha Dia

Priyageetha Dia (b.1992) is an interdisciplinary visual artist from Singapore. Her practice oscillates on the multifaceted narratives of how brownness morphs and embodies through identity politics, in-between spaces, and the other. To unpack the colloquial experience of how surveillance and oppression manifests from within and out, she simultaneously subverts and highlights the brown condition with her gold alter ego. She is known for her work ‘The Golden Staircase’ in 2017 and ‘Golden Flags’ in 2018. In 2019, she was presented with the IMPART Artist Award by Art Outreach, Singapore.



Aki Hassan

Aki Hassan (b. 1995) is a Malay-Singaporean artist, with interests in self-publishing and sculptural installation. They use drawing and self-publishing as a means to dissect their *nonbinaryhood* and the idea of self-care. This informs and develops into sculptural forms and installations of welded and casted objects. They are invested in how materials encounter one another in both concrete and metaphorical terms, and how personalities are revealed in the process, surfacing paradoxes and unexpected details. This feeds into a

	<p>curatorial interest in arranging these different objects and material in a space, in this way exploring their interrelations. They believe in playing with material and objects as a tool, to reflect on the support systems we find ourselves in, as a way to locate strength in the vulnerable.</p>
 <p>Ila</p> <p>*Project co-curated with Samantha Yap</p>	<p>The intimate works of visual and performance artist Ila incorporate objects, moving images and live performance. Through weaving imagined narratives into existing realities, she seeks to create alternative nodes of experience and entry points into the peripheries of the unspoken, the tacit and the silenced. Using her body as a space of tension, negotiation and confrontation, her works generate discussion about gender, history and identity in relation to pressing contemporary issues. Her work has been shown at The Substation; NTU Centre for Contemporary Art; National Design Centre, (2019); Coda Culture, and ArtScience Museum (2018)</p>
 <p>Clara Lim</p>	<p>Clara Lim (b. 1995, Singapore) is a moving image artist and visual designer. Working under the moniker clarrot_, her interest in generative art and experimental image making is the driving force of her interdisciplinary medium and digital-based art and thriving member of open source communities. Her work features visual commentary on social issues pertaining to the areas of redistribution of resources, consumerism and post capitalism.</p> <p>Most recently, her works have been awarded the NTU Global Digital Art Prize and showcased locally and internationally in The Gulbenkian, University of Kent's</p>

	<p>Arts Centre, ADM Gallery, NTU Museum, Kult Studio & Gallery.</p>
 <p>Norah Lea</p>	<p>Norah Lea's practice spans photography, film, video, performance, text and spoken word poetry. Rooted in self-portraiture, Norah engages with ideas of belonging and identity through frameworks such as gender performance, ethnographic portraits and the interweaving of transnational histories. She had her solo exhibition <i>In Love</i> at Coda Culture, Singapore (2018) and have also had her work shown at Ujeongguk (2020) and <i>The Reference</i> (2019) in Seoul, Korea; Kawanishi Gallery, Tokyo, Japan (2019) and Image Forum Festival, Tokyo, Japan (2019) among others. She has also exhibited in group exhibitions such as <i>Waning, Waxing</i>, ION Art Gallery, <i>Deciphering Clothes: The Troublemakers' Wardrobe</i>, Hatch Art Project; and <i>MAT</i>, Objectifs (Singapore, 2018-2019)</p>
 <p>Fajrina Razak</p>	<p>Fajrina Razak (b. 1989) is a visual artist and art educator whose practice concerns the notion of individuality and cultural identities while being driven by the aspects of emotions, traditions, spirituality - as methods of excavating personal experiences and histories through questioning and investigating own conservative background. Working primarily with batik, her works are also translated across mediums such as photography and text-based art. Her recent projects include curatorial and presentation of <i>Of Wax, Dyes and Labour</i> at Malay Heritage Centre and <i>Pneuma: Of Spirituality in Contemporary Age</i> at Stamford Arts Centre. Currently, she holds the position as the president of Angkatan Pelukis Aneka Daya (APAD, Association of Artists of Various Resources).</p>



Izzad Radzali

The Ballad of the Artist from the White Sands (2020), video work

Izzad Radzali Shah (b.1986) utilise painting, the mundane, “lonely” nature of found objects and media to address issues relating to identity, social injustice and the self. His art references history, culture and his environment, depicting words along with expressive figuration and pattern. Izzad’s practice is also heavily influenced by DIY ethos, pop culture and music. Izzad graduated in 2013 with a BA(Hons) Fine Arts from LASALLE College of the Arts. He has participated in group exhibitions at the Gillman Barracks (2018), Ace House Collective, Yogyakarta (2017), and at Singapore’s Mi Casa Su Casa (2014) and The Substation (2013). He was also commissioned by Facebook AIR Programme, Singapore Tourism Board for ARTWALK Little India and the Asian Film Archive for State of Motion in 2018. In 2017 he presented his first solo exhibition ‘Matlamat jangka panjang (Long-term goal)’; at LASALLE’s Institute of Contemporary Arts Singapore (both Project and Praxis Space) and recently, his sophomore solo showcase ‘SILA’ at Knuckles & Notch, Singapore in 2019.



Sufian Samsiyar

This is a city and a city is many things: Resort and Pre-Fall (2020), installation

Sufian Samsiyar (born 1987) is an artist who has an independence of mind, of which can only have stemmed from an undue fondness for humans, a deep fascination and keen appreciation for human nature. He prefers the ethical and moral principles suggested in any design fiction as compared to the resulting variants of artefactual by-products. The urban landscapes of urban centers are critical in his research, threading on themes of anticipation, participation, indeterminacy, and

	<p>happenstance. Instead of illustrating a heroic future, his work provides a stage to the figure of the artist.</p> <p>Working predominantly in situ with exhibitions, Sufian's interest often flirts with sociology, which aims to highlight the complexities and oddities between humans and cities. Works have been displayed at Institute of Contemporary Arts Singapore (ICA Singapore), NTU Centre for Contemporary Art Singapore, 98B Collaboratory's Pan Project Space in Manila and World Event Young Artists in Nottingham, UK. Experience from managing the behind-the-scenes at ICA Singapore facilitated short-term work exchanges with Palais de Tokyo and the Singapore pavilion of the 57th Venice Biennale.</p>
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Annex B: Curator and list of artists for *Time Passes*

 <p>Samantha Yap Curator, <i>Time Passes</i></p>	<p>Samantha Yap (b. 1993) shuffles between writing, curation, and project management. She is interested in forms of reciprocity such as the ethics of care, love, and vulnerability as well as the exploration of feminist perspectives across writing and visual culture. Her recent exhibitions include <i>What is the current that presents a behaved waist</i>, Yeo Workshop (2020) and at second sight, Coda Culture (2019). Her writing is featured in the poetry anthology <i>My Lot Is a Sky</i> (2018) alongside other exhibition catalogues. She graduated with a BA (Hons) in English Literature and Art History from the Nanyang Technological University of Singapore.</p>
 <p>Yeyoon Avis Ann</p>	<p>Yeyoon Avis Ann (b. South Korea) explores/researches about the possibility of re-contextualising the idea of production, to explore the possibility of breezier production with good ventilation. Via experimenting on the possible relations and hybridizations of heterogeneous elements. Such as virtual and reality, text and music, visual and music, subjective thoughts and non-subjective elements dissolve to meet in horizontal relations as an unexpected constellation. She is interested in looking at this musically or even composing a network for scattered fragments beyond localities.</p>



Victor Paul Brang Tun

Victor's work references, incorporates and questions the "Realities" of the world. He situates himself within the context of learning and presenting the different "Realities" of the world and in doing so, creates works that can become a conduit of these experiences. He draws his inspiration from the constant negotiations between identity, systems and realities.



Stephanie Jane Burt

Stephanie Jane Burt is an artist whose practice spans from sculptural installations to fictional prose. She completed her studies at Glasgow School of Art, where she received her Bachelor of Arts (Hons) Painting and her Master of Fine Arts. Her work invites the viewer to explore dialogues between her installations and their settings through a fictional narrative at times referencing film and literature. Her research looks across feminism, gender, an analysis of girl culture and the nouveau roman. She recently completed a residency at ISCP New York in 2019 and has started a research project, A Stubborn Bloom, which explores representations of femininity within fashion, film and material culture.



Jon Chan

Jon Chan (b.1982) is a Singapore-based artist. He graduated with a Bachelor of Arts (First Class Honours) in 2007, and a Masters of Fine Arts, from LASALLE College of the Arts, Singapore. Chan is the winner of the Japanese Chamber of Commerce and Industry Arts award of 2007. Other than having numerous exhibitions showcasing his paintings.



Christian Kingo

Christian Kingo (b. 1993) is a Danish filmmaker born and currently based in Copenhagen. Contemplating notions of belonging, his work investigates subjects of cosmopolitanism, nostalgia and the domestic. These concerns are reshaped by elements from science fiction and horror, rendering narratives within disorienting environments. Grounded by traditions of cinema whilst pushing to defy its genres and formats, Christian works primarily in video & sound installation, live sound performance and film.



Chong Lii

Chong Lii's work aims to explore the possibility of merging or levelling disparate spaces, objects, people, and images. Singaporean millennial fantasies, accidental occult tributes in digital media and imagined historical subcultures are among the subjects filtered through an idiosyncratic gaze that supports and undermines them in equal measure. Operating alongside strategies of complicity and dissent, his installations and films simultaneously counter and revel within the apparatus of the moving image.

Chong is the art editor for Mynah Magazine. He currently lives and works in Singapore.



Diana Rahim

Diana Rahim is a Singaporean writer, editor and visual artist. She currently serves as an editor of Beyond The Hijab, a platform sharing personal narratives of Singaporean-Muslim women. Her writing has been anthologised in 'Budi Kritik', 'Growing Up Perempuan' and 'In These Desert, There Were Seeds', amongst others. Her current visual work is concerned with the politics of public space in Singapore. Her last photographic project "Resting Places" was exhibited as part of the 9 Lives Show at Aliwal Arts Centre and Malay Heritage Centre.

 <p>Divaagar</p>	<p>Divaagar (b.1992) is a visual artist born and based in Singapore. He graduated with a Bachelor of Arts (1st Class Honours) in Fine Arts from LASALLE College of the Arts in 2018 and has exhibited both locally and internationally since 2010. His practice explores the relationships between desires and spaces through installation, performance and digital media. He works at the intersections of bodies, identities and environments, proposing alternative economies and ecologies through engaging with localities, methods of display and re-routing gazes.</p>
 <p>Fazleen Karlan</p>	<p>Fazleen's practice lies in the intersection of art-making and archaeological methods. She reassembles fragments of materials from different time frames, constructing personal and cultural realities. She is also interested in examining sites that have been redeveloped and mapping out patterns of erasure in landscapes. Growing up with the millennial generation, her works conflate a variety of influences including humor inspired from Internet culture. She has also participated in several group exhibitions in Singapore and is a recipient of the Winston Oh Travel Award in 2016 and the Anugerah Cemerlang Mendaki (University) in 2019.</p>
 <p>Ila</p> <p>*Project co-curated with Syaheedah Iskandar</p>	<p>The intimate works of visual and performance artist Ila incorporate objects, moving images and live performance. Through weaving imagined narratives into existing realities, she seeks to create alternative nodes of experience and entry points into the peripheries of the unspoken, the tacit and the silenced. Using her body as a space of tension, negotiation and confrontation, her works generate discussion about gender, history and identity in relation to pressing contemporary issues. Her work has been shown at</p>

	<p>The Substation; NTU Centre for Contemporary Art; National Design Centre, (2019); Coda Culture, and ArtScience Museum (2018).</p>
 <p>Khairullah Rahim</p>	<p>Khairullah Rahim (b. 1987, Singapore) is a multimedia artist working across painting, assemblage, video and photography. His practice is concerned with the stories and experiences of marginalised communities whose identities do not subscribe within societal normativity. Incorporating everyday and found objects from spaces in which these specific communities inhabit, his works allude to the veiled and lived experiences of his varied subjects.</p>
 <p>Mengju Lin</p>	<p>Mengju's artistic practice revolves around the agency of non-human things — especially images, sound, text and objects — and how they protest. Her current research involves punk ideology and guerilla metaphysics. She is a co-conspirator of radiatorotgrrrl, a riot grrrl chapter, and she plays in a band called Terrapin.</p> <p>Mengju was born in Taipei, Taiwan and is currently based in Singapore.</p>



Ashley Yeo

Ashley Yeo graduated with a Master's Degree in Fine Arts from the University of Arts London, Chelsea College of Arts, London, United Kingdom in 2012 and a B.A. in Fine Arts from the LASALLE College of the Arts, Singapore in 2011. She has participated in numerous exhibitions in Singapore, Japan, South Korea, United Kingdom, and United States. Yeo was the first Singaporean artist to be shortlisted for the LOEWE Craft Prize, London, United Kingdom (2018).