



**SINGAPORE
BIENNALE
2011
OPEN HOUSE**

MEDIA RELEASE

8 April, 2010

LIGHTS, CAMERA, ACTION!

6. MARCH – 8. MAY. 2011
VERNISSAGE 4 – 5. MARCH

The Singapore Biennale 2011 presents first artists and major commissions

The curatorial team of Singapore Biennale 2011 (SB2011), the country's largest international contemporary visual arts exhibition, today announced the first artists to be presented in next year's event.

Enhancing Singapore's growing reputation as a significant centre of contemporary art regionally and internationally, the Singapore Biennale is a critical platform for collaborations and dialogues about the state of contemporary art today, involving a diverse range of artists living and working across the world. The initial group of artists to be announced for SB2011 are: *Elmgreen and Dragset* (born Denmark and Norway; lives and work in London and Berlin), *Ceal Floyer* (born Pakistan, lives and works in Berlin), *Rafael Lozano-Hemmer* (born Mexico, lives and works in Montreal), *Tatzu Nishi* (born Japan, lives and works in Berlin), *Arin Rungjang* (born Thailand, lives and works in Bangkok), *Charles Sandison* (born Scotland, lives and works in Tampere), *Shooshie Sulaiman* (born Malaysia, lives and works in Kuala Lumpur), *Tan Pin Pin* (born Singapore, lives and works in Singapore), *Ming Wong* (born Singapore, lives and works in Berlin) and *Goto Design* (born Japan and Taiwan, live and work in New York). All ten will be developing new works for Singapore. (For more information about the participating artists please refer to Annex 1).

Rafael Lozano-Hemmer develops large-scale interactive installations that are at the intersection of architecture and performance art. Using temporary architecture *Tatzu Nishi* transforms our relationship to public sculpture. *Ceal Floyer* uses double-takes and shifting points of view to invite the viewer to renegotiate their sense of perception. *Ming Wong's* video works refashion classic cinema from around the world to explore the shifting nature of identity and belonging; and filmmaker *Tan Pin Pin*, is best known for her incisive Singapore-focused documentaries. *Elmgreen and Dragset* are internationally renowned for their witty and evocative sculptures and installations that critique power structures in public and private life. *Charles Sandison* projects digitally animated words onto architecture illuminating qualities of the particular site, its use or

history. Both *Arin Rungjang* and *Shooshie Sulaiman* in different ways create site-specific works that invite reflection upon the intersection between personal experience and larger social forces. *Goto Design* are best known for their creative partnerships with artists. For SB2011 they have been invited to work as collaborators with the curatorial team. Their first contribution has been the development of a visual identity for the Biennale responding to the idea of “Open House”.

Based on the conceptual framework provided by the title ‘Open House’, the Curatorial Team – led by Artistic Director Matthew Ngui, working with curators Russell Storer and Trevor Smith – have invited this dynamic selection of artists to explore the sites and culture of Singapore. ‘Open House’ will offer a broad spectrum of experiences for the visitor, from intimate encounters to monumental installations.

Artistic Director of SB2011, Mr. Matthew Ngui, says: “We are working to present an eclectic mix of artists and works that we hope will engage the public on a number of levels. The process of selecting artists involves looking at their practice, from the artists’ initial seeds of idiosyncratic thought through their creative development of this, given the time, space, collaborators, materials and resources.”

Mr. Ngui adds, “Each person in the curatorial team has his own take on ways we observe and analyze artistic process. I am interested in the often small but core ideas that drive an artist’s practice. In ‘Open House’ we are creating situations where these ideas can find intersections with spaces and communities in Singapore, towards the making of art. Russell contextualizes praxis as a dialogue between the private and public, where the personal and intimate reside in the centre of the final artwork. Trevor’s focus is on the relationship between the artist’s thought process and their ambient environment and how that interaction offers unexpected revelations for the viewer. With this focus, we are researching and exposing specific but varied methods of practice, from its inception to its exhibited completion.”

Director of the Singapore Art Museum (SAM), Mr. Tan Boon Hui, says, “As a museum focused on the contemporary visual arts and presenter of the Biennale, a key focus for SAM and the Biennale’s curatorial team, is to showcase the latest developments in international contemporary art, while engaging with people from all segments of our society to raise greater awareness and appreciation for contemporary art. The Biennale enables Singapore to plug into the latest developments in contemporary visual culture around the world. One of the most distinctive aspects of the next Biennale is the incorporation of art projects that will transform our experiences of familiar places and landmarks in Singapore. This capacity of contemporary art to help us see the world in a different way is one of the most important reasons why contemporary art development through platforms like the Biennale is important if Singapore aspires to be a global city of culture. By featuring Singapore artists

alongside the leading lights of the international scene, the Biennale also affirms the artistic achievements of our local contemporary artists.”

SB2011 will present around 50 artists from across the world, with a significant representation of Singaporean and South East Asian artists. Approximately a third of the artists will be invited to present newly commissioned works or projects that are specifically configured for the Biennale’s unique array of exhibition sites. This represents a major increase from the second edition. ‘Open House’ will reach out to the growing audience for contemporary art in Singapore, with visitorship expected to reach over half a million people.

Organised by the Singapore Art Museum of the National Heritage Board and supported by the National Arts Council, the third Singapore Biennale will be held from 6 March to 8 May 2011.

Please refer to Annex A for information on the participating artists, Annex B for information on the new identity for SB2011 and Annex C for the Fact Sheet on SB2011.

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Notes to Editor

About the Singapore Biennale

The Singapore Biennale was established in 2006 as the country's pre-eminent platform for international dialogue in contemporary art. It places Singapore's artists within a global context, and fosters productive collaborations with the international arts community. In this way, the Biennale provides new opportunities for local visual artists, arts organisations and businesses, and cultivates deeper public engagement with the arts. It complements achievements in other areas of arts and culture, collectively enhancing Singapore's international profile as a vibrant city in which to live, work and play. Singapore Biennale 2011 is organised by the Singapore Art Museum of the National Heritage Board, and supported by the National Arts Council, which first inaugurated the Biennale in 2006.

About Singapore Art Museum

Opened in January 1996, the mission of the Singapore Art Museum (SAM) is to preserve and present the art histories and contemporary art practices of Singapore and the Southeast Asian region. To date, SAM has amassed one of the world's largest public collection of modern and contemporary Southeast Asian artworks with a growing component in international contemporary art. The museum has presented shows covering both local and international art practices, traditional and cutting edge art expressions. Through strategic alliances with international arts and cultural institutions, SAM has been facilitating visual arts education, exchange, research and development within the region and internationally.

About the National Arts Council

The National Arts Council was established in September 1991 to spearhead the development of the arts in Singapore. To realise its vision of developing Singapore into a distinctive global city for the arts, NAC provides total support to nurture artistic talent, promotes the practice and appreciation of the arts among Singaporeans, builds up capabilities and resources, facilitates internationalisation and advocates the value of the arts. Through its holistic range of programmes and initiatives to develop the entire arts value chain, the Council champions the growth of a vibrant arts sector where the arts are accessible to all, and the community of artists, arts groups and arts businesses can innovate, excel and achieve sustainability in the long term.

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PARTICIPATING ARTISTS

ELMGREEN AND DRAGSET

Michael Elmgreen, b.1961, Denmark

Ingar Dragset, b.1969, Norway

Live and work in London and Berlin



Catch Me Should I Fall 2008

Mixed media. Pool: diameter 550cm, height 45cm; Tower: height 900cm, width: 110cm, depth: 72cm; Board: 350cm x 50 cm<; Base: 340cm x 281cm

Courtesy and © the artists

Photo: Sakurai

Short Cut 2003

Mixed media. 250 x 850 x 300 cm

Courtesy: Galleria Massimo de Carlo

© the artists

Photo: Jens Ziehe



Elmgreen and Dragset have worked collaboratively since 1995. They have become internationally renowned for their witty and evocative sculptures and installations that critique power structures in architecture, institutions and public space. A recurrent subject of their work is the art system itself – with the supposedly neutral white cube of the gallery a regular motif for investigating economic, social and representational forces. They have exhibited widely throughout the world, and recently won wide acclaim for their curatorial project 'The Collectors' in the Nordic and Danish Pavilions at the 2009 Venice Biennale.

CEAL FLOYER

b. 1968, Pakistan

Lives and works in Berlin



***Overhead Projection* 2006**

Light bulb, overhead projector. Dimensions variable

Courtesy 303 Gallery, New York, Esther Schipper Gallery, Berlin, Lisson Gallery, London

© the artist



***Today's Special* 2009**

2-sided sign. 81 x 54.5 x 56.5cm

Courtesy 303 Gallery, New York, Esther Schipper Gallery, Berlin, Lisson Gallery, London

© the artist

Ceal Floyer's clarity of thought and the elegantly concise presentation of her ideas resonate through all areas of her practice. The deceptive simplicity of the work is informed by Floyer's particular sense of humour and an awareness of the absurd; her use of double-takes and shifting points of view forces the viewer to renegotiate his perception of the world. Floyer often uses everyday or readymade objects, exploring the dialectical tension between the literal and the mundane, and an imaginative construction of meaning.

RAFAEL LOZANO-HEMMER

b. 1967, Mexico

Lives and works in Montréal and [Madrid](#)



Vectorial Elevation 2010

English Bay, Vancouver

Commissioned by [2010 Cultural Olympiad](#)
and the [City of Vancouver](#)

© the artist



Pulse Park 2008

Madison Square Park, New York

© the artist

Rafael Lozano-Hemmer is a Mexican-Canadian electronic artist who develops large-scale interactive installations that are at the intersection of architecture and performance art. His main interest is in creating platforms for public participation. His work in kinetic sculpture, responsive environments, video installation and photography has been shown in museums in four dozen countries and Biennials. Lozano-Hemmer was the first artist to officially represent Mexico at the Venice Biennale, in 2007, with a solo exhibition entitled “Some things happen more often than all of the time.”

TATZU NISHI

b. 1960, Japan

Lives and works in Berlin



Engel 2002
Installation
views, The
Cathedral of
Basel
Courtesy and
© the artist

Tatzu Nishi cunningly uses scale and distance in his installations to provide the audience with fresh perspectives to what might be taken for granted or otherwise seem ordinary. In one of his most important series of works, he builds rooms (often hotel rooms) around public monuments or a part of architecture. The result is two-fold. On one hand, an “instant sculpture” appears in a private space and on the other, that same piece disappears from the public sphere. Within the room, this dramatic shift from “public to private” view creates an encounter between the audience and the piece of sculpture that is simultaneously fascinating and uncanny, forcing the viewer to experience the object in a very different way. There is egalitarianism in the artist’s desire to expose art to all. Born in Nagoya and working out of Berlin, Nishi has exhibited extensively in Europe and Japan and in more recent years, in South America and Australia.

ARIN RUNGJANG

b. 1975, Thailand

Lives and works in Bangkok



***Never Congregate, Never Disregard* 2007**

Earth, water, video

Installation view, Bangkok University Gallery

Courtesy and © the artist



***Big Moon and Waterfall* 2006**

Outdoor light installation, bamboo

Passage de Retz, Paris

Courtesy and © the artist

Arin Rungjang reconfigures everyday objects and materials to explore human relationships to space and to each other. Often deeply personal, his installations and video works draw upon memory, family history, and lived experience, with a romanticism that 'dwells on the minor harmonies between individuals'. Arin studied at Silpakorn University, Bangkok and the École Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts in Paris. He has exhibited in Europe and Asia, and is a member of the Bangkok-based artist collective As Yet Unnamed.

CHARLES SANDISON

b. 1969, Scotland (UK)

Lives and works in Tampere, Finland



China Family 2006

Computer-generated data projection

dimensions variable

Courtesy of the artist and Yvon Lambert, Paris and New York

© Charles Sandison



Proclamacion Solemne, Grand Palais, Paris 2008

Courtesy of the artist and Yvon Lambert, Paris and New York

© Charles Sandison

Photo: Didier Barroso

Charles Sandison is an artist renowned internationally for his digital video animation of words and texts onto architecture – whether buildings or monuments. Over the last fifteen years he has held over forty solo exhibitions worldwide along with a host of group exhibitions and public installations for such renowned institutions as the Grand Palais, the Musée d’Orsay, and the Musée Quai Branly in Paris, and the Palace of Communication in Madrid among many others. In each case he works with simple words or longer texts that illuminate qualities of the particular site, its use or history.

SHOOSHIE SULAIMAN

b. 1973, Malaysia

Lives and works in Kuala Lumpur



***Darkroom* 2009**

Installation view, The 6th Asia Pacific Triennial,
Queensland Art Gallery, Brisbane
Courtesy the artist and Queensland Art Gallery



***Aminah Baba* 2009**

Found photograph,
hibiscus petals
Courtesy and © the artist

Susyilawati (Shooshie) Sulaiman's works explore the complex nature of identity and institutions, particularly in her home country of Malaysia. Using found photographs, books, objects and architecture, she reflects upon history and society through a personal lens, be it her own responses and experiences or those of the gallery audience, who are often invited to become involved in her works. Her installation for documenta 12 in Kassel, Germany, for example, comprised a performance in which private diaries were read by the artist with a gallery visitor, offering a one-to-one dialogue. Sulaiman has exhibited widely in the region, including the recent Asia Pacific Triennial in Brisbane, and is director of 12, an art space she established in Kuala Lumpur.

TAN PIN PIN

b. 1969, Singapore

Lives & works in Singapore



Invisible City (film still) 2008
Guo Ren Huey witnesses the war
Courtesy and © the artist

Tan Pin Pin is a film director. Her work as an artist literally draws upon not only her personal perspectives, but also private memories and moments shared by personalities she is documenting. Her significant work, *Invisible City* (2008) conveys how deeply personal her subjects' searches and how fragile histories are, hanging on only through their memories and artefacts. Interwoven with the interviews is never seen before footage and photos of Singapore culled from their personal archives. Her sharp focus locates these lived experiences in space and time, thereby providing a deep sense of place in her work.

A winner of over 20 international awards, her films, explorations of Singapore, have screened in Berlin, Pusan Oberhausen and Rotterdam.

MING WONG

b. 1971, Singapore

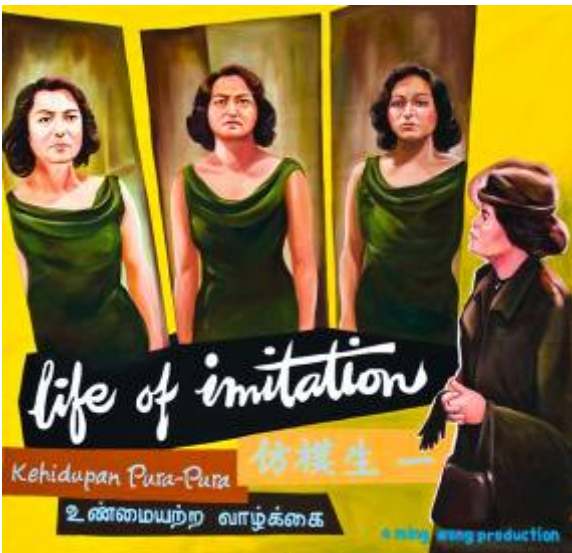
Lives & works in Berlin & Singapore



***In Love For The Mood* 2009**

3 channel video installation, shot on HD, 16:9, in colour with audio 4 mins looped

Courtesy and © the artist



***Life of Imitation* 2009**

Designed by Ming Wong and hand-painted by Mr Neo Chon Teck

Billboard painting, acrylic emulsion on canvas
222 x 229cm

Courtesy and © the artist

Ming Wong's video works refashion classic cinema from around the world to explore the shifting nature of identity and belonging. Enacting key scenes from films as diverse as those by Malay director P. Ramlee, German auteur Rainer Werner Fassbinder, Hong Kong's Wong Kar Wai and the Hollywood master of melodrama Douglas Sirk, Wong uses actors of varied ethnic backgrounds, including himself, to play the parts. Race and gender become performances – roles available to anyone with a wardrobe and makeup kit – and language becomes a process of translation and repetition, highlighting the assumptions and misunderstandings, as well as the fluid potential for connection between cultures.

Ming Wong recently represented Singapore at the 53rd Venice Biennale in 2009, where he was awarded a Special Mention and received wide international acclaim.

GOTO DESIGN

Founded 2003, New York

Lesley Chi (born in Taiwan)

Takaya Goto (born in Japan)



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Goto Design was founded in New York by Takaya Goto and Lesley Chi in 2003. They combine original design concepts and branding with an intelligent and perceptive aesthetic, and are particularly renowned for their creative collaborations with artists. Their diverse list of commissions include those for the Center for Curatorial Studies Hessel Museum of Art at Bard College, Susan Cianciolo, Creative Time, Keith Edmier, Tom Friedman, Gagosian Gallery, Japan Society, Kaikai Kiki, Takashi Murakami, Public Art Fund, Rockefeller Center, Royal-T, Swarovski, UBS and Francesco Vezzoli.

Singapore Biennale 2011 Identity



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The Singapore Biennale 2011 (SB2011) identity was inspired by the Biennale title 'Open House'. The global reference for house was taken as an initial reference and then transformed. Placing the symbol on an angle creates multiple layers of meaning and possibility. The outline was then used as a framing tool throughout the identity, which is turned on its side to point to something outside of itself, referencing new ways of seeing and participating. The open area of the logo refers to a rupture to conformity, a peephole.

The choice of typeface – a 21st century standard – is classic sans serif with a twist on the contemporary, relating closely to the international contemporary art that will be showing at SB2011. The typeface will also be easily readable on web pages and signage through one typography that can be maintained across various media.

The choice of colour 'safety orange' represents the state of flux in the creation of curatorial ideas and artworks.

Fact Sheet on Singapore Biennale 2011

- Dates** : 6th March 2011 – 8th May 2011
Vernissage (Exhibition Preview) on 4th and 5th March
Biennale opens to the public on 6th March
- No. of artists** : approximately 50 artists, both local and international
- Venues** : Singapore Art Museum (SAM)
National Museum of Singapore
Old Kallang Airport
Marina Bay (in discussion)
- Event components** : Community Outreach programmes and talks- '*Potluck*'
Kids Biennale 2011
(held in tandem with Singapore Biennale 2011)
Volunteer programmes for public
- Estimated attendance** : 650,000+
- Target audience** : Singaporean community from all walks of life
Students
Working professionals/white collar
Senior citizens
Children
International and local artists and art professionals
International and local media and tourists