

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

‘Open House’ Title for the 3rd Singapore Biennale

(12 December 2009) The title of the 3rd edition of Singapore’s premier international contemporary art event, the Singapore Biennale 2011, will be ‘Open House’.

Premiered in 2006, Singapore Biennale is the country’s largest international contemporary visual arts exhibition that has enhanced Singapore prominently as an international centre and regional thought-leader in the fields of contemporary visual arts. Following the success of the second edition in 2008, which drew in over 500,000 visitors, the National Arts Council (NAC) has appointed the Singapore Art Museum (SAM) to organise the third edition in 2011. Scheduled to be held from 6th March to 8th May 2011, Singapore Biennale 2011 will be curated by Artistic Director, Matthew Ngui, and members of the Curatorial Team, Russell Storer and Trevor Smith.

Says Artistic Director, Mathew Ngui, “Open House is not so much a theme as an attitude. I would like the focus for the third Singapore Biennale to be on the city as site and as home, where art engages audiences and re-presents realities through unique creative processes. These give fresh insights into the spaces we inhabit, and in Singapore, we hope to connect the public with artists, starting from the very process of art making.”

In Singapore, on specific days around Hari Raya, Deepavali and Chinese New Year, people open their homes to one another, an invitation to visit, engage in conversation and eat. This is not simply a festive act of hospitality, friendship and good will but also a time of critical reflection and discernment. Singapore Biennale 2011, ‘Open House’, offers opportunities not only for speculating on our current state but also imagining alternative futures. An ‘open house’ is a time for exploring different possibilities for living and working, where the boundaries between private and public, inside and outside are blurred. ‘Open House’ invites the visitor to peer behind the scenes – revealing spaces, knowledge and experiences normally closed or hidden from view.

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Through a series of projects by local and international artists, Singapore Biennale 2011 will create an 'open house' for Singapore. New works will be commissioned and several artists will spend significant periods of time in the city to enable close engagement with its particular character. A wide range of artistic methods and creative approaches to physical, social, and psychological landscapes will be invited.

At Old Kallang Airport, the Biennale will continue its tradition of using buildings and spaces that are in transition. The Singapore Art Museum and the National Museum of Singapore are other major exhibition venues. Other urban spaces are also being explored, such as Marina Bay. The differing characters of these sites will allow for diverse broad or intimate responses to the city as a living workspace continually in flux. As sites and communities in Singapore become involved in the making of contemporary art, the Biennale visitor is invited into the 'open house' of artistic process, and its intersection with Singapore's life and culture. Singapore Biennale 2011 will focus on the journey of making art, rather than defining its final destination.

Says the Curatorial Team, Russell Storer and Trevor Smith, "Singapore Biennale 2011 offers a wonderful opportunity for the working processes of artists to provide unique perspectives on the dynamic life of Singapore. It aims to reflect upon the conditions of contemporary culture through thoughtful, inspiring, challenging and compelling works of art.'

Says, Director, Singapore Art Museum, Tan Boon Hui, "As a Museum focusing on contemporary art, SAM brings a more permanent platform to the Singapore Biennale 2011, starting with a more synergized and sustained series of art education and outreach programmes to continually grow public appreciation and interest in contemporary art. This is critical as audience building is a long-term effort. With SAM as organiser, the developmental intention of the Singapore Biennale 2011 would be enhanced especially for Singapore artists featured in the Biennale as the Museum could continue to identify and offer new channels for creative development and dialogue, post Biennale. Resource wise, the Singapore Biennale 2011 is now assured of climate controlled exhibition spaces suitable for the

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For more information, visit www.singaporeartmuseum.sg

Opening hours Mondays to Sundays, 10am to 7pm

Free Admission on Fridays from 6pm to 9pm

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Annex A 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 (Confirmed) : Singapore Art Museum (SAM)
National Museum of Singapore

Venues (In discussion): Old Kallang Airport
Central Promontory Site (Raffles Boulevard)

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

Tourists

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Annex B Profile of Matthew Ngui, Artistic Director, Singapore Biennale



Matthew Ngui is a visual artist, trained in sculpture and now working in the areas of installation, video and performance. He lives and works in Australia and Singapore, and exhibits regularly in Asia, Europe and Australia. Major exhibitions include the Sao Paulo (1996), Venice (2001) and Gwangju Biennales (2002) and the tenth Documenta in 1997. The focus of Ngui's work has been to make installations and performances that engage the locality and people of the city/space in which the work is exhibited. Ngui has taught at the art schools of the Australian National University, Curtin University of Technology (Australia), Edith Cowan University (Australia), Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts (Singapore), Ecole cantonale d'Art du Valais (Switzerland) and run workshops or attended residencies in Austria, Japan, Holland, Switzerland, and Venezuela. He is past Chairman of the Artists Regional Exchange in Perth, and has served as a council member of the National Arts Council, Singapore, and on the Boards of the Singapore Art Museum and the Perth Institute of Contemporary Arts. He has also been involved in the Public Art Appraisal Committee of the National Heritage Board, Singapore. He is currently working on public art commissions for the New Performing Arts Venue in Perth, Midland Redevelopment Authority in Western Australia and the new Orchard Central building on Orchard Road, Singapore. 'Points of View', a major survey exhibition of Ngui's art practice over two decades, was shown at the Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney in 2007, travelling to the John Curtin Gallery for the Perth International Arts Festival and the National Museum of Singapore for the Singapore Arts Festival in 2008.

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Annex C Profile of Curatorial Team, Singapore Biennale 2011

Russell Storer (Australia)



Russell Storer is Curator, Contemporary Asian Art at the Queensland Art Gallery, Brisbane, Australia, and is part of the curatorial team for the 6th Asia Pacific Triennial of Contemporary Art (2009-10). He was formerly a curator at the Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney, where he organised the group exhibitions 'Video Logic', 'Interesting Times', and 'Situation', as well as exhibitions by artists including Simryn Gill, Matthew Ngui, Paddy Bedford, Juan Davila, Ugo Rondinone, and Simon Starling. He was a Visiting Curator at documenta 12 in 2007 and a Curatorial Comrade for the 2008 Biennale of Sydney. He studied art history at the College of Fine Arts, University of New South Wales and at the University of Sydney, and has written on contemporary art for a range of Australian and international publications.

Trevor Smith (Canada)



Trevor Smith is Curator of Contemporary Art at the Peabody Essex Museum in Salem, Massachusetts. Previously, Smith was Curator in Residence at the Centre for Curatorial Studies, Bard College where in 2006 he co-curated *Wrestle*, the inaugural exhibition at the Hessel Museum and in 2007 presented *Martin Creed: Feelings*, the first large-scale survey of this artist's work. From 2003-2006 he was Curator at the New Museum of Contemporary Art in New York City where, among other projects, he co-curated the widely acclaimed exhibition *Andrea Zittel: Critical Space* and presented a major survey of the work of Brian Jungen. Smith was born in Canada and studied Art History at the University of British Columbia. From 1992-2003 he was based in Australia where he held positions with the Biennale of Sydney, Canberra Contemporary Art Space, and the Art Gallery of Western Australia. A highlight among his exhibitions there include *The Divine Comedy: Francisco Goya, Buster Keaton, and William Kentridge* for the Art Gallery of Western Australia and the Perth International Arts Festival in 2002. He presented Robert MacPherson as the Australian representative to the 2002 Sao Paulo Bienal. Recent exhibitions include *1+1+1=3* (Robert MacPherson, Manfred Pernice, Katarina Seda) for Culturgest Lisbon, and *I Repeat Myself When Under Stress* (Ceal Floyer, Hans Schabus, and Tris Vonna-Michell) for the Museum of Contemporary Art Detroit (with Thomas Trummer). He has published widely in exhibition catalogues and journals in North America, Europe, Australia and Asia.

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Annex D About the Singapore Biennale, Singapore Art Museum, National Arts Council

About the Singapore Biennale

Inaugurated by the National Arts Council (NAC), the Singapore Biennale aims to position Singapore prominently as an international centre and regional thought leader in the field of visual art. It encourages Singapore artists and Singapore to engage with the international art world, through the invitation of regional and international artists to exhibit with Singapore artists, and for Singapore to join the international community of art biennales whose language is mainly conducted through the medium of contemporary art. As a platform for collaborations with the global arts community, the Biennale provides new opportunities for local visual artists and arts businesses, and is a significant opportunity to cultivate deeper public engagement with the arts. It complements the achievements of other areas of the arts and cultural scene, collectively enhancing Singapore's international image as a vibrant city to live, work, play.

Singapore Biennale 2011 is organised by the Singapore Art Museum, and supported by the National Arts Council.

About the 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 is 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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