

SINGAPORE BIENNALE 2011: OPEN HOUSE

13 MARCH – 15 MAY 2011

The third Singapore Biennale, entitled *Open House*, features 63 artists from 30 countries, with over half creating new commissions or premiering new works. *Open House* is presented across three main exhibition venues, each with its own particular character, that draw upon representative spaces in Singapore: Housing Development Board flats (Singapore Art Museum and 8Q), shopping centres and night markets (National Museum of Singapore), and international air and sea ports (Old Kallang Airport).

In Singapore, during Hari Raya, Deepavali and Chinese New Year, people open their homes to others, inviting them to visit, eat and talk. This is not only a gesture of hospitality and goodwill but also an opportunity to reflect, negotiate and exchange.

In the same way, Singapore Biennale has thrown open its doors to invite artists to Singapore to visit, create art and offer their own perspectives and creative approaches on ideas like culture, points of views, connections with others and moving across borders.

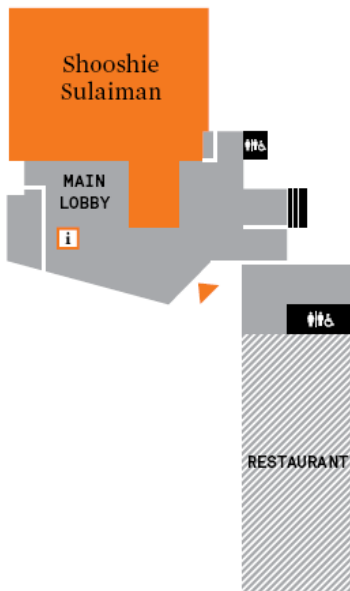
Come explore these ideas with the artists at our *Open House* today!



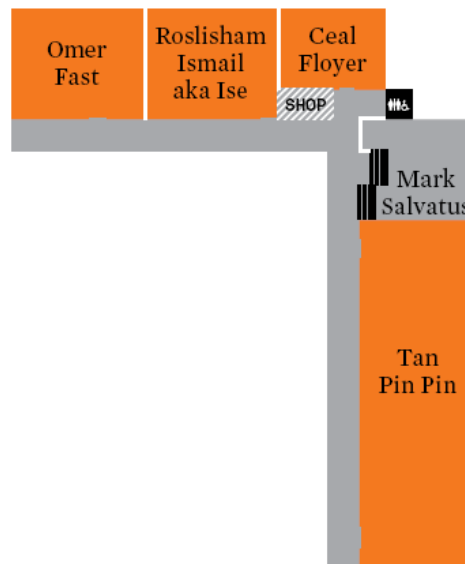
SAM at 8Q

SAM at 8Q used to be the campus of the Catholic High Primary School. The building reminded the curators (curators are people who organise exhibitions and choose artists and artworks) of the Singapore Biennale of disconnected apartment rooms. The artworks in this venue thus invite visitors to enter these private spaces, opening the door into another person’s or community’s world.

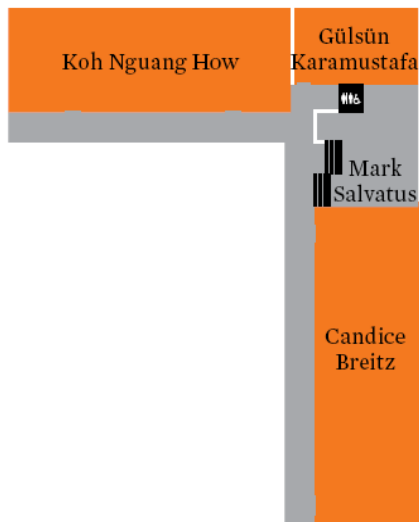
1 LEVEL ONE



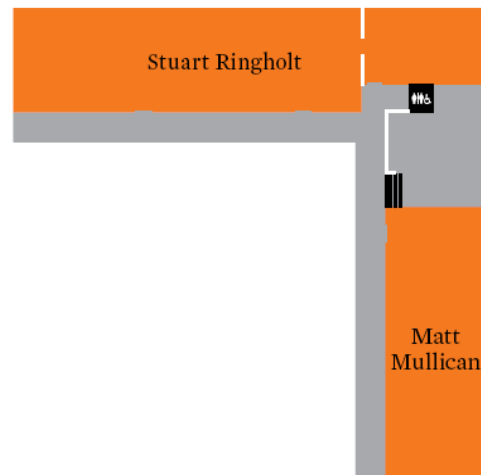
2 LEVEL TWO



3 LEVEL THREE



4 LEVEL FOUR



Let's explore the artworks!



Go to Rumah Sulaiman Belakang Kedai Ah Guat, Shooshie Sulaiman, Level 1

Shooshie is an artist from Malaysia who has chosen to remember and record two buildings that are very special to her: one was a studio space where she created her artworks, which has since been torn down, the other was an old shophouse that she used to run as a shop that was visited very often by her friend Ah Guat, who is an 87 year old woman.

1. Do you have a favourite building in Singapore? What can you remember about this building and why is it your favourite?

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2. Do you have a building that you dislike in Singapore? What is your memory associated with this building? Why do you dislike it?

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3. The artist chose to remember her favourite buildings by creating an artwork. Think about the favourite building that you have mentioned above. How would you choose to remember it? Write it down in the space below.

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Go to *Wrapped Traces*, Mark Salvatus, Level 2

Go up the stairs towards the second floor. Do you notice some drawings on the stairwell?

The artist, Mark Salvatus, is a young artist from Philippines who has created his work on the stairwells on 2 levels of 8Q.

Look carefully at the objects that have been drawn on the walls. The artist has traced objects that people around him have lent him on the wall. He is trying to preserve a moment in time by drawing these things that belong to other people, onto the wall.

4. Can you identify 5 objects on the wall? Write them down in the space below.

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This artist's work has been displayed at an unusual space – it has not been displayed in a gallery or room, but instead on an 'in-between' space at the stairwells.

5. Can you think of another artwork at the Singapore Biennale that has been displayed at an unusual or unlikely space? Write down the name of that artist and title of the artwork in the space below, as well as why the space used to display it is unusual.

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Go to Secret Affair, Roslisham Ismail aka Ise, Level 2

Roslisham Ismail, (also known as Ise) is an artist who likes to make friends in the different countries he creates artworks in. In Singapore, he has befriended 6 local families to get to know them and to explore their refrigerators!

Ise believes that you can tell a lot about a person from they keep in their fridge. For example, you can know about their diet (what they like to eat every day), whether they are a small family or a big family, and whether they can afford to buy expensive food items or not.

6. Look inside at least 3 of the fridges on display. Can you find any food items that are in common across the 3 fridges? What are they? List them down below.

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7. Are these common items from the same brand? Or are they from different brands? Why do you think these families have bought these ingredients from different brands?

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8. Watch the videos that are attached to each fridge. Do the individual families shop very differently? What are the different kinds of supermarkets and shops that they buy their food from?

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9. The artist has also collected a list of recipes from the 6 different families. Does your family have any family recipes that have been passed down from generation to generation? What significance do these dishes have to your family? Ask your parents or grandparents!

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Go to Artists in the News, Koh Nguang How, Level 3

After watching Gülsün’s video, visit the room next door.

In this room, local artist Koh Nguang How has recreated his apartment where all these newspapers used to be stored!

13. Walk around this room. Do you notice that all the newspapers have something in common? What is it? Write it down in the space below.

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The artist has been collecting these newspapers for 30 years, ever since he was a student in Junior College. He has a special interest in following the news about artists in local English and Chinese newspapers, and his collection of articles about artists in the news is an important record for the history of contemporary art in Singapore.

14. Do you think you would ever collect news articles about certain subjects you are very interested in? What articles would you collect? Why?

I would collect newspaper articles about...

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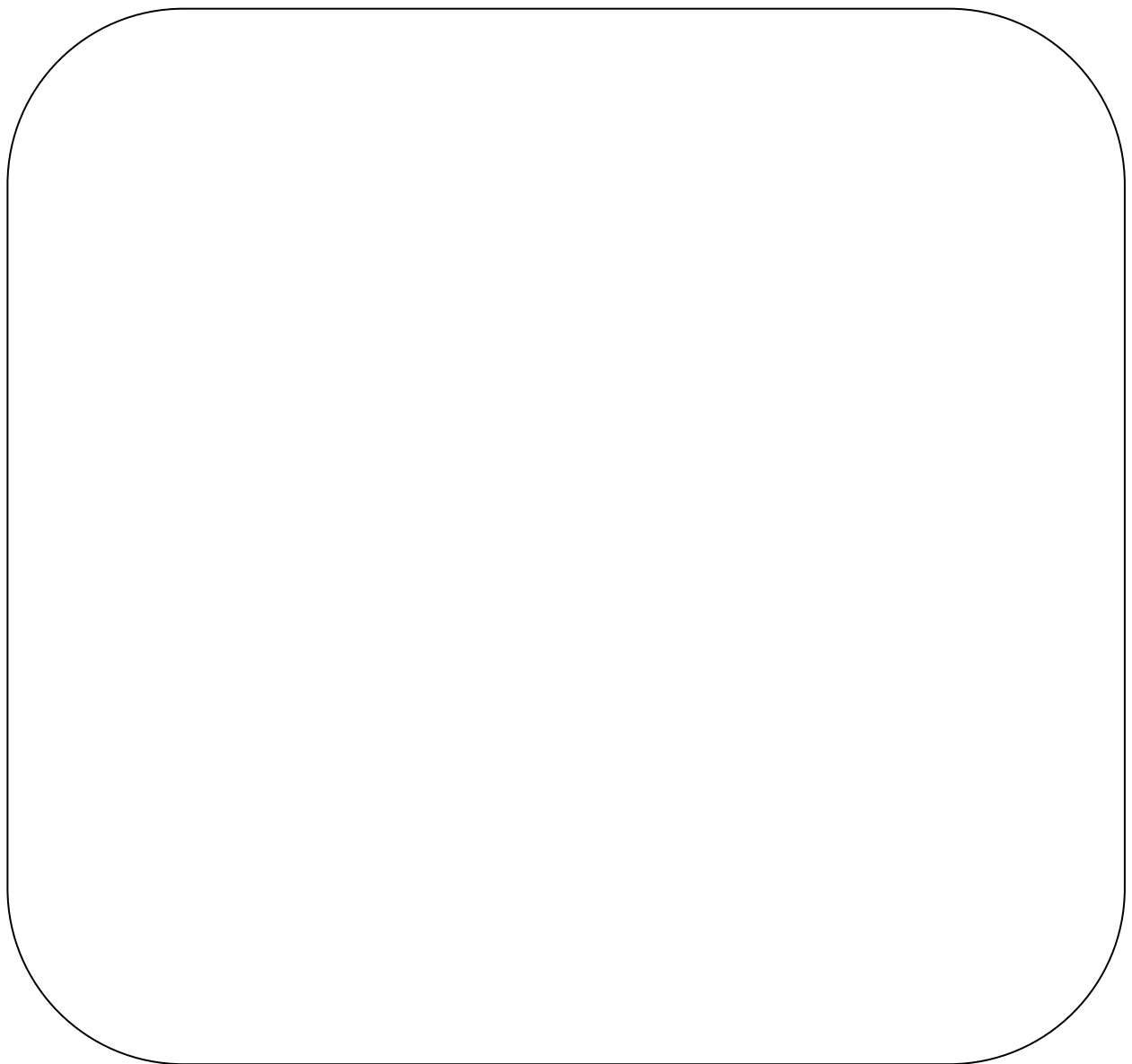
15. Think about the artworks by Koh Nguang How, Mark Salvatus and Shooshie Sulaiman. How are these artworks similar in terms of the issues or ideas they address?

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 **Think about it!**

After visiting the Singapore Biennale at 8Q...

What was your favourite artwork here? What did you like about it? Write down the artist's name and title of the artwork below. Try sketching it out!



SAM at 8Q – Suggested answers

1. Students' own response.
2. Students' own response.
3. Students' own response. Suggestion: by writing a story about it, by taking photographs or drawing this particular building, etc.
4. Tie, belt, charger, keys, headphones, water bottle, watch, etc.
5. Students' own response. Suggestion: Martha Rosler's garden artwork at the Old Kallang Airport. The garden space is unusual because artworks are usually placed in a gallery space.
6. Eggs, milk, instant noodles, pasta etc.
7. They are from different brands because the families who have bought these items come from varying economic backgrounds. For example, the family that is not as well off has bought 'brand-less' eggs.
8. Yes, they shop very differently. For example, the families shop at different supermarkets which have different price points – for example, one family goes to JB to do their shopping, another shops at Cold Storage, and one shops at Dempsey Hill, which is very expensive comparatively.
9. Students' own response.
10. I think they feel nervous, secretive, repressed. They are behaving like they have a secret, are nervous, etc. They are dressed conservatively, without bright colours, and are not drawing attention to themselves through their dressing.
11. I think they feel happy, free, unrestrained. They are behaving like they are comfortable with themselves and each other. They are dressed like they are having fun with fashion, with the panther print clothing
12. Students' own response. For example, I feel safe in my room at home because I can be alone there.
13. All these newspaper articles are about art or artists in the news.
14. Students' own response. For example: I would collect newspaper articles about video games, global warming, favourite type of books etc.
15. These three artists address issues related to memory, be it objects (Mark Salvatus), places (Shooshie Sulaiman) or certain subjects like artists in the news (Koh Nguang How). The artists address these issues differently, be it through a drawing installation, or through recreating the spaces associated with these memories (Koh and Shooshie).