

SINGAPORE BIENNALE 2019

22 Nov 2019 –
22 Mar 2020

EVERY
STEP
IN THE
RIGHT
DIRECTION

EDUCATION KIT

ARTIST FOLIOS

PART OF
THE BALIK
BARRACKS
TRAIL!

ZAI TANG

ESCAPE VELOCITY III & IV

2019

SINGAPORE

ORGANISED BY



COMMISSIONED BY



SUPPORTED BY





THE ARTIST
ZAI TANG

- Zai Tang (b. 1984, United Kingdom) is an artist, composer and sound designer based in Singapore. He graduated with a BA in Creative Music Technology from Bath Spa University in 2006.
- He experiments with different ways to translate sounds recorded from natural environments to express his concern for the mass extinction of various species in said environments. He also experiments with drawing to create “visual scores” in response to his soundscapes.
- Recent exhibitions and collaborations include: *Escape Velocity I*, 2nd Yinchuan Biennale, China (2018); *Bits & Pieces*, Danspace Project, New York (2018) with Emmanuèle Phuong; *The Ground: From the Land to the Sea*, NTU CCA Singapore (2018) for *Tarek Atoui*; *Railtrack Songmaps Roosting Post 1*, Singapore (2018) with Migrant Ecologies.



DID YOU KNOW?

The “dub” in dubplates refers to the dubplates being used in “dubbing” or “doubling”/“copying” the original version of a sound or music track.

THE ARTWORK

***ESCAPE VELOCITY III* 2019**

Graphite, charcoal, ink on paper, 10” dubplate, turntables, MaxMSP and computer | Dimensions variable

Collection of the Artist | Singapore Biennale 2019 commission

In collaboration with Simon Ball

***ESCAPE VELOCITY IV* 2019**

Digital animation, projection and stereo sound

Duration: 7:30 mins

Singapore Biennale 2019 commission

- **MEDIUM:** Sound recordings and digital animations.
- **TECHNIQUES / PROCESSES:** *Escape Velocity III & IV* build upon an earlier work which Zai created during his artist’s residency at the NTU Centre for Contemporary Art. *Escape Velocity III & IV* incorporates new sound recordings from Mandai, a wildlife habitat in Singapore. *Escape Velocity III* is a composition of voices from Mandai arranged in three movements that is accompanied by a triptych visual score. Each movement in the piece is recorded onto a dubplate record, each resting on a turntable in front of the associated score. The audience is invited to listen to the dubplate records which will gradually degrade over the course of the exhibition. *Escape Velocity IV* is an animated version of the triptych visual score.
- **IDEAS / INSPIRATIONS / CONTEXT:** *Escape Velocity III & IV* – and the artist’s practice – begins with the question, “What does it mean to listen and connect to the sounds of Nature in a time of ecological crisis?” Mandai is currently being transformed into an ‘eco-resort’ and will stand to lose two of its secondary forests. The artist hopes that audiences will find ways of living in harmony with the non-humans in our environment through listening.

STEP BY STEP

SECONDARY:

ART / MUSIC

STEP 1 :: PRE-VISIT

THINK-PAIR-SHARE:

- What are some ways in which music can be made without using musical instruments?
- Find a partner and share your thoughts with one another.



STEP 2 :: AT THE ARTWORK

DISCOVER:

- Form groups of 4-5.
- Listen to the sounds in the artwork.
- What do you hear?
- Where can this sound be heard in Singapore? Suggest a place.

DESCRIBE:

Describe the sounds you just heard:

- Are they loud, soft, gradually getting louder (crescendo) or gradually getting softer (decrescendo)?
- What about the tempo of the sounds? Are they fast (allegro) or slow (adagio)?
- What about the pitch of the sounds? Are they high or low?
- Do they form a melody?
- How about the timber (tone) of the sounds? Are they piercing, dark, metallic, bright, mellow etc?

DISCUSS:

Listening carefully to the sounds you have heard, which sounds are iconic to the natural landscape in Singapore? Why do you think so?

STEP 3 :: POST-VISIT

EXPAND:

Create your own soundscapes by exploring and recreating sounds that are unique to Singapore using your own vocals, body percussion and daily objects as instruments*.

EXPLORE:

Find out how to use body percussion to create rain sounds:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5pkSQqPpNAY>

*Teachers may wish to organise a performance during assembly for selected soundscapes to be performed in school.





FIND OUT MORE

THE ARTIST

- <http://www.zaitang.com/category/news/>
- <https://www.facebook.com/zai.tang/>
- <https://vimeo.com/315444411>
- <https://soundcloud.com/zaitang>
- <https://open.spotify.com/artist/0lwhD87Z10efQzqxFiM6fW>

THE ARTWORK

- <https://www.singaporeartmuseum.sg/art-events/events/sb19-teaser-experimental-performances>
- <https://artsrepublic.sg/events/2019/01/live-music-set-zai-tang-singapore-and-arnont-nongyao-thailand>

OTHERS

- <http://ntu.ccasingapore.org/residencies/zai-tang/>
- <http://cmtalumni.com/zai-tang.html>