

Estrangement and Reconciliation: A Talk with Suzann Victor

Suzann Victor & Sean Tobin (Australia | Singapore)

BIOGRAPHY OF ARTIST

Suzann Victor is best known for compelling public artworks and installations that investigate, present and challenge ideas of disembodiment, the post-colonial and the environmental in response to space, context and architecture. Shown widely on the international circuit, her works have gained critical attention at events such as the 6th Havana Biennale (Cuba), 49th Venice Biennale (Italy), 2nd Asia-Pacific Triennial (Australia), 6th Gwangju Biennale (Korea), 5th Seoul International Media Art Biennale (Korea), ZKM's Thermocone of Art 2007 (Germany) and OÖ Kulturquartier's Hohenrausch 2014 (Austria).

As the pioneering artistic director of 5th Passage (1991-1994), she began a line of inquiry to pierce the continuum of capitalist consumerism in Singapore by embedding an artist-run space & initiative in its midst—a radical deviation from existing models then—which diverted art (and artists) away from officially sanctioned spaces (and the rural) to flow instead into places of commerce (shopping centres) where people readily converge, thus engendering publics from two readymade resources—a readymade public within a readymade public space. For Singapore Biennale 2013, Victor adapted the latest green technology to induce the meteorological phenomenon of double rainbows to appear within the National Museum's colonial architecture using a heliostat. The only artist chosen from the Sunshower Exhibition (presented by Mori Art Museum, National Art Center Tokyo and Japan Foundation), Victor was honoured by the Fukuoka Asian Art Museum with a special residency to create a Southeast Asian artist's cultural response to the city in 2017. In 2016, the National Museum of Singapore in partnership with Swarovski commissioned her iconic kinetic & interactive public artwork *Wings of a Rich Manoeuvre*. She took up the coveted Singapore Tyler Print Institute residency that culminated in her ground-breaking solo exhibition in 2015, while her signature series *Contours of a Rich Manoeuvre* was voted No. 1 in *Forbes Magazine's* Top Ten Must-See Artworks for Art Stage Singapore in the same year. Most recently, Gajah Gallery presented Victor's new crushed glass series in a solo show *See Like a Heretic: On Vision and Belief 2018*. Her other public artworks can be seen at high-profile locations at World Square, Sydney and Meritus Mandarin Hotel, Singapore. Victor was nominated for the prestigious New York-based Civitella Ranieri Foundation Fellowship in 2009 and received her doctorate in 2008 supported by the Australian Postgraduate Award and UWS Top-Up Award.