

FADE...

Tan Ngiap Heng (Singapore)

www.thepond.com.sg

14 – 25 January 2015, 10am – 10pm

The Platform, Level 2

National Museum of Singapore

Admission is free

(Fringe Commission • World Premiere)



Fade... is an installation of a thousand iPhone images, representing the intimate, personal memories of photographer Tan Ngiap Heng. The images are hung in space like a cloud, like the memories suspended in our heads. Audience members are encouraged to take away and keep images that they like for themselves. This process of the installation disappearing is a meditation on how we lose our memories as we age.

For Ngiap Heng, the images on his iPhone are like an aide memoir. So many unscripted, immediate moments are taken on the phone and are the closest thing to his actual memories.

In 2010, Ngiap Heng's father suffered a stroke and has become more forgetful. It is his father's situation that prompted him to create the installation *Fade...*

Although he holds a doctorate in Engineering, Tan Ngiap Heng has been a full time photographer since 1999. In his career, he has been a sought after wedding photographer and an award winning corporate photographer. However, it is his love of dance and the performing arts that started his journey into photography, and that is now his main area of focus.

Relationship to Art & Loss

The work represents my personal memories. The act of the audience taking away images from the installation is a representation of the loss of memory.

Biography of artist

Artist – Tan Ngiap Heng

Although he holds a doctorate in Engineering, Tan Ngiap Heng has been a full time photographer since 1999. In his career, he has been a sought after wedding photographer and an award winning corporate photographer. However, it is his love of dance and the performing arts that started his journey into photography, and that is now his main area of focus. He has won an International Photography Award in 2007, and has his works featured in Communication Arts 2008 and the PDN Photography Annual 2008. Aside from several group and solo exhibitions in Singapore, including the prestigious Month of Photography 2002 and 2004, he has also exhibited in Fotoseptiembre USA 2008 and the 2008 Artful Nude Photography Competition. He was also a nominee for the ICON de Martell Cordon Bleu Photography award in 2013. Ngiap Heng is also active in the teaching of photography in Singapore. He is currently focussing on personal projects in photography. He is a founding member of Photovoice SG, an organization that runs participatory photography workshops for fringe communities in Singapore.

More of Ngiap Heng's work can be found at www.thepond.com.sg.

WHERE THE HEART IS

Asha Bee Abraham (Australia | Singapore)

www.ashabeeabraham.com

14 – 25 January 2015, 10am – 6pm

The Concourse, Level 1

National Museum of Singapore

Admission is free

(Fringe Commission • World Premiere)

Home is where you lay your hat, the comfortable place we return to after a long day. Home is also a fantasy we carry in our hearts and minds. In our globalised and dispersed world, many choose to leave our homes for study, work, love, or simply for space. Some create a new home away from home, some remain homesick, nostalgic for another place and time.

Where the heart is explores this more abstract, imagined version of home. It examines the feelings evoked by returning to our hometowns and family homes, and experiencing the changes and the sameness in their place.

Where the heart is sees participatory artist and human ecologist, Asha Bee Abraham, revisiting Singapore in an attempt to understand something about her (dis)connection with her hometown.

You are invited to join Asha in unpacking and examining the concept of 'home'. For the duration of the festival, Asha will be making herself at home in a converted Fringe venue, inviting people to come in for a cup of tea and share their memories and imaginings of what the concept of 'home' means to them.

Where the heart is will unfold over the duration of the Festival as Fringe visitors – Singaporean residents, expats and tourists - contribute their thoughts and experiences. The ongoing conversation will involve interactive documentation of the dialogues in the venue space, as well as on an interactive website.

Asha Bee Abraham is a Melbourne-based Singaporean participatory artist and human ecologist. Her works focus on connections – connections to each other, connections to place and our wider ecologies, and connection to ourselves. Society, soil and soul.



Relationship to Art & Loss

Whether it's the concept of a family since broken up, a childhood home now demolished, or a particular taste that can't be replicated, the word 'home' evokes for many a place of comfort and a place of the past.

Where the heart is unpacks an issue very alive for artist, Asha Bee Abraham. Having left Singapore with her mother at the age of five, now, nearly 30 years later, Melbourne is well and truly 'home'. But while that implies connection and community in one place, it means disconnection, cultural barriers and confusion in another.

We choose our life's work for a purpose, often subconscious. Asha's work around connections, as described in her bio, can be thought of as an attempt to mend her disconnection from her original home and the losses that has triggered. *Where the heart is* takes this trajectory to the next level.

Asha will draw on her capacity to enable intimacy between strangers to unpack personal stories of homes lost and found. Together with Fringe visitors, Asha will trace the commonalities in the concepts of 'home' that we carry with us in our hearts and minds. Together they will explore the dissonances between this image, the reality of childhood homes, and the homes we return now to of an evening. Together, they will come to terms with the elements of loss and change connected to past homes.

Biography of artist

Artist - Asha Bee Abraham

Asha Bee Abraham is a Melbourne-based Singaporean participatory artist and human ecologist. Her works focus on connections – connections to each other, connections to place and our wider ecologies, and connection to ourselves. Society, soil and soul.

Asha's practice is informed by her background as a human ecologist and her research and work in the field of sustainable community development. With a passion for evoking questions about our culture and inspiring transitions within it, Asha contributes to dialogues on theory and practice occurring in the fields of socially-engaged participatory art and human ecology, exploring how each can inform the other.

Recent projects have included *Die Insel* (Berlin, 2014), *In Passing* (Melbourne, 2013), *The Australian Future Foods Lab* (Melbourne, 2013), *Merlynston Village Green* (Melbourne, 2011), and *D.I.O. Skillshares* (Totnes, UK, 2009). Her writing has appeared in publications such as *Assemble Papers*, *un Magazine*, *Chain Reaction* and *Agenda*. Asha completed her Human Ecology MSc in 2008 in Glasgow's Centre for Human Ecology.

THE WEDDING GUEST'S TALE

Shelly Quick (Canada | Singapore)

14 – 25 January 2015, 10am – 6pm
The Concourse, Level 1
National Museum of Singapore

Admission is free

(Asian Premiere)



The Wedding Guest's Tale is a multi-sensory, interactive installation that interrogates how we construct home, family and community. It consists of nests/imagined dwellings of various dimensions knitted out of found materials, mostly discarded and deemed no longer useful.

Alongside the nests will be assemblages of objects/ artefacts associated with marriage and domesticity throughout South East Asia. Whilst functional, necessary and useful for daily tasks, many common domestic tools also hold the potential of threat and violence, mirroring the ambiguity that sits at the heart of our constructs of home and community.

The Wedding Guest's Tale explores the duality of our desire to build and belong to community, and the fear of losing that belonging. As part of the experience of the installation, viewers or “guests” are invited to knit available materials, or materials they bring to the museum, into the installation.

A soundscape will also be developed around the nests, including stories by Singaporeans and their experience of family and community. As guests knit and listen to the stories, each day of *The Wedding Guest's Tale* becomes a unique opportunity for inclusion, the growing number of nests evidence of a new, if fleeting, kind of community.

Shelly is a Canadian artist who has been living in Singapore for over a decade. Much of her work is performance based and informed by her experiences of working and collaborating with artists from different cultures.

Relationship to Art & Loss

The idea for this work came from two completely different sources. The first was the act of knitting: its history in the domestic arts and textile industry, and the sense of community that arises naturally when people sit together to make something with their hands.

The second was the poem *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* by Samuel Taylor Coleridge. In the poem, there is this very odd construction of a story within a story, with no obvious link between the two. An ancient mariner shows up at a wedding reception, singles out one of the guests and tells him a terrible, supernatural tale. The mariner's tale takes place at sea, completely away from conventional society, and a similar kind of isolation envelopes the guest and the mariner as the story is told. Although the guest has no interest in hearing the tale, he is compelled to listen, and through it he is changed. He is removed from the fabric of family and friends celebrating a relative's nuptials, but becomes wiser for it. Story telling is framed as a transgressive, but ultimately redemptive act for both the guest and the mariner.

The Wedding Guest's Tale explores the duality of our desire to build and belong to community, and the fear of losing that belonging. In the act of selecting what we will weave into our social units, there is also a process of de-selection and rejection. Consequently, at the centre of our carefully constructed security there is an absence, or a binary world of what we are not. With that knowledge comes the continual threat that at any given moment, if we display or indeed are in some way part of the rejected world, we will lose our home and our security.

Biography of Artist

Artist – Shelly Quick

Shelly is a Canadian artist who has been living in Singapore for over a decade. Much of her work is performance based and informed by her experiences of working and collaborating with artists from different cultures.

Her influences are eclectic, but common threads run through them. In every case, context is important; there is careful attention and responsiveness to environment, whether it be of the artist's making or the conditions in which the piece is executed. There is a desire to push and cross boundaries, always with purpose and skill. And finally, there is vulnerability, and a willingness to be truthful and open in her work. Through this vulnerability, she hopes that truths the audience may not otherwise consider can be revealed.

She gleans a great deal of creative energy from studying traditions, myths and cultures and then navigating her own way through them. She often finds connections between the seemingly unconnected. Tensions and unexpected harmonies can be created by not putting like with like. Concepts of identity, culture, class and tradition shift, transform or reveal levels of construction through encounters with perceived otherness.

This otherness may be interpreted through performers' bodies, differing narratives, art and audience, or even the materials she works with. However, in all of her works, she endeavours to set up a dialogue between the disparate elements she puts together, as well as between the work itself and the viewer. In an overly stimulated and increasingly formulaic world, art is one of the last refuges for contemplation, imagination and connection. It is her hope that her art, whether performance-based or in fibres, will serve as a flashpoint for the viewer's imagination and provoke thoughts outside of the everyday.

MAMBO NIGHT FOR A KING

Jason Wee (Singapore)

www.jasonwee.com

Online exhibition at:

handsignsfortheking.com

(Fringe Commission . World Premiere)



Inspired by the Mambo Jambo nights at Zouk, *Mambo Night for a King* is a cheeky series of performances recorded on video and photographs of Singaporeans doing Mambo moves to texts drawn from Lee Kuan Yew's *From Third World to First: The Singapore Story*.

These individuals are non-actors and non-artists, and are drawn from a series of workshops that explores 'bad' dancing and the creativity possible in quotation and paraphrasing. After a period of rehearsal, these workshop participants create their own Mambo moves to their private selection of words from this landmark work in Singapore hagiography.

"playfully iconoclastic, combining experimental theatre with social issues."

- Ng Yi-Sheng, *Flying Inkpot*, on *Tongues*,

"an ambitious, gripping suite that masterfully combines childhood memories, pop culture and the political events of the late '80s."

- Mayo Martin, *TODAY*, on *The Monsters Between Us*

Jason is an artist and writer who lives in Singapore and New York. Jason founded and runs Grey Projects, an art space and residency that focuses on nascent practices and experimental curatorship.

Relationship to Art & Loss

It may seem counter-intuitive, given the expressiveness of Mambo dancing, but the work necessitates silence from the performers, who will not be using their voices, only the voice of our 'founding father'. The key idea in the work is to seek out the imaginative stances, movements and positions possible despite the loss of our voice, despite our familiarity with, and our mimicry of, the strong voice of our social and political authorities.

Biography of artist

Artist – Jason Wee

Jason is an artist and writer who lives in Singapore and New York.

Jason founded and runs Grey Projects, an art space and residency that focuses on nascent practices and experimental curatorship. He is an editor for Softblow.com and previously editor of Vehicle arts journal, published by artist-run space Plastique Kinetic Worms.

Jason was a 2005-2006 Studio Fellow at the Whitney Museum Independent Study Program. He won 2008 Young Artist Award for visual arts in Singapore. He has shown in the Chelsea Art Museum, Photo New York (New York), Casino Luxembourg (Luxembourg), ifa galerie (Stuttgart and Berlin), Singapore Art Museum, Singapore Biennale, Valentine Willie (Manila), and completed residencies at Gyeonggi Creation Center, Artspace Sydney, and Tokyo Wonder Site.

More recently, his performance script *Tongues*, co-written with Sean Tobin, was a commissioned work of the M1 Singapore Fringe Festival 2012. In 2011, Jason published *My Suit* (Math Paper Press). His latest book *The Monsters Between Us* was named by TODAY newspaper as one of the top art picks of 2013.