## **ArtHist** net

## Social Realism in Southeast Asia (online/Singapore, 2-10 Apr 22)

Various Locations, Apr 2–10, 2022 Deadline: Apr 10, 2022

**National Gallery Singapore** 

National Gallery Singapore invites you to join a series of programmes in relation to Social Realism in Southeast Asia and Singapore.

The Fifth Liu Kang Annual Lecture | Decoding Nanyang Feng

Sat 2 April | 3pm (GMT+8)

The Ngee Ann Kongsi Auditorium, Level B1, City Hall Wing, National Gallery Singapore Free, registration required

\*Note that this is a physical event, register here: https://bit.ly/TheFifthLiuKangAnnualLecture

This lecture will be in Mandarin with simultaneous English translation.

The 1950s were a period of social unrest in Singapore, with anti-colonial and anti-yellow culture sentiments at their peak. During this time, Lim Hak Tai—a pioneer in art education—advocated for a "Nanyang feng" (often referred to as the "Nanyang Style") that depicted the localities and realities of life in the region. Discussions of the "Nanyang feng" are often on its tropical flavour and how it fuses the East and West, but Lim's original vision also espoused a socially-engaged art that was relevant to its times. Formed in the mid-1950s, the Singapore Chinese High Schools' Graduates of 1953 Arts Research Group and the Equator Arts Society were inspired by Lim's conception of "Nanyang feng" and its possibilities. Both art societies firmly believed that art should play an educational function and reflect the everyday life of the people.

In this lecture, join scholar Yeo Mang Thong to explore the charged contexts of post-war Singapore, and trace the lesser-known connections between Nanyang Style and social realism.

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About the Speaker

Yeo Mang Thong is a Singaporean scholar and senior educator whose research focuses on prewar Singapore art and artists. He is known for his use of newspaper sources from the pre-war period as a means to study Singapore's art history, and his 1992 publication "Xinjiapo zhanqian huaren meishushi lunji" (Essays on the History of Pre-War Chinese Painting in Singapore) is one of the most cited references for scholars in the field. Other publications include MANDIN NAMED MANDING MANDING

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Solidarities: Realisms in Southeast Asia (1950s – 1980s)

Sat 9 Apr | 3pm (GMT+8)

Zoom Webinar | Free, registration required

\*Register here: https://bit.ly/NGS\_SocialRealism

In the post-war years, many Southeast Asian territories found themselves embroiled in the struggle for independence and freedom from colonial rule. Artists likewise took up the charge, with left-aligned art movements and collectives emerging across the region during this period. In this panel, hear from esteemed scholars of modern Southeast Asian art on the activities of left-aligned realist movements spanning the Philippines, Malaysia, Vietnam, Indonesia and Singapore.

The panel features Patrick Flores (Professor of Art History and Criticism, University of the Philippines), Simon Soon (Senior Lecturer, Visual Art Department, University of Malaya), Phoebe Scott (Curator of Research Publications, National Gallery Singapore) and Farah Wardani (Executive Director, Jakarta Biennale), and is moderated by Seng Yu Jin (Deputy Director, Curatorial & Research, National Gallery Singapore).

This panel discussion is organised in conjunction with "Chua Mia Tee: Directing the Real" at National Gallery Singapore.

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Lingual Nerves: An Afternoon of Poetry Readings

Sun 10 Apr | 3pm (GMT+8)

Free, registration required

City Hall Wing, Level 2, Singapore Courtyard, National Gallery Singapore

\*Please note that this is a physical event, register here: https://bit.ly/CMT\_LingualNerves

Join Singapore poets Isa Kamari, Koh Buck Song, Madeleine Lee, Lee Tzu Pheng and Edwin Thumboo as they read original poems written in response to works by Chua Mia Tee. The poets also delve into their expansive oeuvres to present existing socially-engaged poems that reflect on our ever-changing society. Following the readings, hear from the poets in a panel moderated by Yong Shu Hoong, as they unpack their works and trace the wider influences of social realism in poetry

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and literature.

Koh Buck Song is the Gallery's Poet-in-Residence 2021-22; following Edwin Thumboo in 2018-19 and Madeleine Lee 2017-18.

This programme is organised in association with "Chua Mia Tee: Directing the Real."

## Reference:

ANN: Social Realism in Southeast Asia (online/Singapore, 2-10 Apr 22). In: ArtHist.net, Mar 19, 2022 (accessed Aug 22, 2025), <a href="https://arthist.net/archive/36180">https://arthist.net/archive/36180</a>.