



JOINT MEDIA RELEASE

Singapore, 7 March 2023

DEEPENING EU-ASEAN TIES THROUGH ARTS AND CULTURE

NTU Singapore and the European Union announce artists and partner institutions for second cycle of SEA AiR

Nanyang Technological University, Singapore (NTU Singapore) and the European Union (EU) Delegation to Singapore today announced three artists selected for the second edition of the SEA AiR exchange programme and the European arts institutions that will host their artistic residencies.

The SEA AiR – Studio Residencies for Southeast Asian Artists in the EU (SEA AiR) programme is a pioneering project started in 2022 that positions Singapore as a hub for artistic exchange between the EU and Southeast Asia. This collaboration, facilitated by the NTU Centre for Contemporary Art Singapore (NTU CCA Singapore) and the EU Delegation to Singapore, brings together the EU, Singapore and Southeast Asia through the arts.

Selected from a pool of 21 candidates nominated from across the region, the three participants in the second cycle of SEA AiR are: **Priyageetha DIA** (Singapore); **NGOC Nau** (Vietnam); and **Saroot SUPASUTHIVECH** (Thailand).

For the current cycle, SEA AiR also expanded its collaborative network establishing new partnerships with arts institutions in Europe. The institutional partners that will welcome the artists in their residency programmes are: **Jan van Eyck Academie** (Maastricht, the Netherlands); **Künstlerhaus Bethanien** (Berlin, Germany); and **Rupert** (Vilnius, Lithuania).

These institutions excel in providing artists with a conducive environment for research and experimentation. Their residency programmes are renowned for nurturing dialogue among practitioners from various disciplines. They support artists in establishing connections with Europe as well as with fellow artists from other parts of Europe and the world, involve them in a wide range of public programmes, and promote their international visibility. **Iwona Piórko, European Union Ambassador to Singapore,** said: "Through the second cycle of SEA AiR – a made-in-Singapore programme – we further drive the development of Southeast Asia's contemporary art scene and serve as a springboard for dialogue between European art institutions and Southeast Asian artists. We started the project in 2022 when the EU and ASEAN commemorated the 45th anniversary of our partnership and we are continuing this close cooperation through the spirit of dialogue and people-to-people exchanges that are the hallmarks of the relationship between our two regions."

"My congratulations to the selected artists **Priyageetha Dia**, **Ngoc Nau and Saroot Supasuthivech**. The artists' new works will be inspired by their experiences, discoveries and interactions in Europe. Together with art lovers from the region and beyond, I am looking forward to experiencing how travels and cultural exchanges shape evolving art practices."

Professor Joseph Liow, Dean of the College of Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences, NTU, said: "After the successful completion of the inaugural cycle of the SEA AiR programme, NTU is proud to announce that the Southeast Asian artists selected for Cycle 2 are Priyageetha Dia, Ngoc Nau, and Saroot Supasuthivech. Hailing from Singapore, Vietnam, and Thailand respectively, these artists will have the opportunity to advance their research in the multidisciplinary environments provided by our distinguished institutional partners in Europe: Jan Van Eyck Academie, Künstlerhaus Bethanien and Rupert. We congratulate the artists on this remarkable accomplishment and we look forward to welcoming them in Singapore to exhibit their new artworks at NTU CCA Singapore later this year."

"Through this unique collaboration with the EU Delegation to Singapore, NTU hopes to contribute to efforts to foster connectivity on a global scale, support the development of Southeast Asian talents, and enhance the relations between our region and the EU."

With a distinct two-fold framework, SEA AiR interweaves artistic research and production by awarding three Southeast Asian artists with: 1) a three-month residency at an established arts institution in the EU; and 2) resources and curatorial guidance to create new artworks for an exhibition in Singapore.

Taking place in the first half of 2023, the residencies will enable the artists to pursue their research interests and immerse themselves in a new cultural context.

Priyageetha Dia will have her residency at Jan van Eyck Academie, Ngoc Nau at Rupert and Saroot Supasuthivech at Künstlerhaus Bethanien. When they return, the artists will dedicate themselves to the production of new artworks, inspired by their research and experience in Europe, with the curatorial guidance of NTU CCA Singapore. The artworks will premiere in an exhibition that will take place in Singapore later this year. Addressing the creative needs and professional aspirations of emerging visual art practitioners from Southeast Asia who have never had a professional experience in Europe, SEA AiR provides artists with the opportunity to develop their practice, test their ideas in a different context, expand their networks and gain international exposure. At the same time, it opens a significant entry point for its European partner institutions and their audiences to access the rich and diverse landscape of Southeast Asian contemporary art.

The selection committee for the second cycle of SEA AiR was composed of: **Ute Meta Bauer**, Founding Director, NTU CCA Singapore and Professor, School of Art, Design and Media, NTU; **Hicham Khalidi**, Director, Jan Van Eyck Academie; **Monika Lipšic**, Residency Curator, Rupert; **Dr Karin Oen**, Senior Lecturer and Head of Department, Art History, NTU School of Humanities; and **Christoph Tannert**, Artistic Director, Künstlerhaus Bethanien; and **Eszter Nemeth**, Deputy Head of Mission, EU Delegation to Singapore.

The following artists were also shortlisted in acknowledgment of their artistic promise: Lin Htet AUNG (Myanmar); Lena BUI (Vietnam); Ronyel COMPRA (Philippines); Pam QUINTO (Philippines); and Nat SETTHANA (Thailand).

Fuelled by a shared understanding that cultural mobility is an invaluable tool to advance artistic practices, multicultural societies and critical thinking, SEA AiR contributes to the vibrancy of contemporary creativity and further deepens ties between the EU and ASEAN in the fields of arts and culture.

Developed and curated by NTU CCA Singapore, the project is funded by the EU's Foreign Policy Instruments (FPI).

END

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ANNEX A – Statements from artists and partner institutions

<u>Artists</u>

Priyageetha DIA: "To be given this opportunity to further my research and artistic practice at Jan van Eyck Academie is an incredible one. Being part of the SEA AiR residency in the EU will allow me to explore the potential for a deeper and broader comprehension beyond the Southeast Asian landscape and into the corners and crossings that ties its relation to the Netherlands. To be able to witness, engage in and respond to an interdisciplinary environment with the possibility to gather with other peers and cultural workers, access resources and facilities, and share knowledge is what I am really looking forward to."

NGOC Nau: "I feel very grateful and proud to have been selected for the second edition of the SEAAiR programme and I am very excited about my upcoming residency in Vilnius. It will allow me to connect further with European culture and artists, and to find new inspirations and materials to feed my research and thinking. I am very curious to see which bridges I will be able to establish between Northern Europe and Southeast Asia to foster my creative process. I look forward to engaging in this opportunity and produce an innovative artwork for the exhibition in Singapore later this year."

Saroot SUPASUTHIVECH: "I am honoured to have been chosen for the SEA AiR programme and I am grateful to be part of the residency programme at Künstlerhaus Bethanien in Berlin. I am excited to explore different cultures and perspectives by researching and interviewing local people. During my stay in Berlin, I hope to learn more about the lives of Thai immigrants, their stories and beliefs, as well as to gain a deeper understanding of the cultural diversity, local histories and storytelling practices in Germany. I hope to contribute something meaningful through my artwork."

Partner institutions

Jan Van Eyck Academie: "It is our pleasure to welcome Priyageetha Dia for a threemonth residency at the Jan van Eyck Academie. Selected thanks to our collaboration with the NTU CCA Singapore within the framework of SEA AiR, Priyageetha will be able to further her research within an international, multidisciplinary environment from April until June 2023 and be part of the Jan van Eyck community of experts, advisers, fellow participants, guests and visitors. During her residency, the artist will be provided with the time, space, facilities and expertise needed to continue the development of her artistic practice."

Künstlerhaus Bethanien: "We are expecting Saroot Supasuthivech for three months between mid-March and mid-June 2023. As an artist of the "Discoveries Section", he has already participated in Art Basel Hong Kong in 2022. We appreciate the artist's exploratory interest and creative talent. Recently, he has tried to elucidate certain

historical events through artistic means, giving important impulses to reinterpret history. We were very impressed by his strategy of (re)constructing memory."

Viktorija Šiaulytė, Residency and Public Programme Curator, Rupert: "Rupert, the centre for art, residencies and education located in Vilnius is looking forward to taking part in SEA AiR - Studio Residencies for Southeast Asian Artists in the EU and hosting multimedia artist Ngoc Nau from April to June 2023. The way Ngoc Nau utilises new media to raise questions about religion, ritual, technology and geopolitics speaks to the range of themes explored by our other residents. Rupert is intrigued to see the artist's ambition to engage with "unreconciled memories as potential materials" unfold during the residency. With her work being rooted in Vietnam's development, we look forward to introducing Ngoc to the context of Vilnius and exploring the relevance of the seemingly distant, yet similarly transitionary context of Lithuania for the artist's work."



A project of





European Union Delegation to Singapore

Partner institutions





Rupert,

ANNEX B – Information about the selected artists

PRIYAGEETHA DIA

Born in Singapore, age 31 Lives and works in Singapore



BIO

Priyageetha Dia is an arts practitioner who experiments with time-based media, 3D animation and game engine software. Her practice addresses the transnational migration of ethnic communities and the intersections of the colonial production with land, labour and capital in Southeast Asia through speculative methods and counternarratives. She has been invited to participate in several exhibitions including the Kochi-Muziris Biennale, India (2022); Attention Seeker, La Trobe Art Institute, Bendigo, Australia (2022); An Exercise of Meaning in a Glitch Season, National Gallery Singapore (2020); 2219: Futures Imagined, ArtScience Museum Singapore (2019). She was a recipient of the IMPART Art Award in 2019.

RESEARCH FOCUS

The migratory movements of her ancestral lineage from Southern India to Malaysia, and later to Singapore, sparked Priyageetha's deep-seated engagement in South Asian diasporic histories, the labour relations that underlie plantation agriculture in Malaya and the vast terrain of colonial narratives. Interweaving these research threads in her multimedia practice, her works figure alternative histories that empower subaltern forms of existence.

During her residency at Jan Van Eyck Academie, the artist is interested in delving deeper into the emergence and expansion of agro-industrial plantation projects, the dispossession and displacement of lands and communities in Southeast Asia, and their relation to The Netherlands through archival research. Moreover, the residency will provide her with a supportive environment to articulate critical viewpoints and counter-narratives through her ongoing and self-led experiments with computer-generated imagery (CGI), animation technologies and game engine software while also allowing her to gain an understanding of issues related to contemporary transnational interactions within Southeast Asia and Europe.

NGOC NAU

Born in Vietnam, age 34 Lives and works in Hanoi



BIO

The multimedia practice of Ngoc Nau encompasses photography, holograms and augmented reality (AR). She is currently working with 3D software and other opensource technologies to create new possibilities for video installation. In Nau's work, different materials and techniques attempt to capture the subtle ways in which new media shape and dictate our views of reality. Blending traditional culture and spiritual beliefs with modern technologies and lifestyles, her work often responds to Vietnam's accelerated urban development. Her works have been featured in several exhibitions across Asia, including the Thailand Biennale, Korat (2021) and the Singapore Biennale (2019) among others. She also participated in documenta 15, Kassel, Germany (2022) with Sa Sa Art Projects.

RESEARCH FOCUS

During the residency, Nau intends to research the impact of urbanisation and modernisation on contemporary living conditions, collective memories, traditional practices and the natural landscape. Situating herself within the creative community of Rupert will allow her to explore Lithuanian cultural landscape and to access a new trove of materials, including oral traditions, historical archives and ritual ceremonies.

Through encounters with the local community, she intends to unearth the traditional values and ancient practices that have been lost to industrial and technological advancements to come to a better understanding of how different communities configure their values and identities within today's fast-changing landscape. Nau is particularly interested in the gaps created by modern development in the intergenerational transmission of knowledge and she plans to experiment with new media technologies to imagine modes of being that reconcile the past and the future.

SAROOT SUPASUTHIVECH

Born in Thailand, age 32 Lives and works in Bangkok



BIO

Drawing from oral histories and unwritten memories, the works of Saroot Supasuthivech unearth the multiplicity of narratives embedded in specific locations. His installations often combine moving image and sound to conjure the affective aura of a site and bring forth its intangible socio-historical stratifications. Using photogrammetry techniques, he turns 2D images into 3D models as a way of to blur the lines between the real and the mythical. His latest video installation, River Kwai: This Memorial Service Was Held in the Memory of the Deceased (2022), was featured in the Discoveries Section at Art Basel Hong Kong 2022.

RESEARCH FOCUS

For his residency at Künstlerhaus Bethanien, Saroot Supasuthivech will research the encounters of cultures, faiths and rituals among immigrant communities and local inhabitants. He is especially interested in the spiritual beliefs and ceremonial traditions by which humans ritualise the moment of death. With a focus on the historical impact of immigration on funerary practices across different regional and religious contexts, the artist will survey specific burial sites and rituals in Germany and Thailand looking at how foreign communities enact their funerary traditions abroad.

Major sites of interest for his research are the Protestant Cemetery in Bangkok and the Kurpark (Spa Park) in Bad Homburg, the only town outside of Thailand that features two Sala Thai (open pavilions). The Sala were gifted to the city of Bad Homburg by King Chulalongkorn of Siam (1853 to 1910) as a token of gratitude after the monarch's illness was healed in the spa town in 1907. From the materials gathered through field trips, interviews and archival research, the artist plans to develop a video installation that will convey the mystical structures of those sites as well as the spiritual intersections engendered by global migrations.

ANNEX C – Information about the partner institutions (SEA AiR – Cycle 2)

JAN VAN EYCK ACADEMIE

As a post-academic institute, the **Jan van Eyck Academie** in Maastricht, The Netherlands, offers residencies to artists, designers – ranging from graphic and fashion, to food and social design – writers, curators and architects from all over the globe. Next to this, the academy is committed to exploring the agency, roles and civic significance of art, design and other creative practices, in relation to the climate crisis, environmental breakdown and their manifold effects. This institutional focus opens a wide discourse and creates a framework that embraces a diversity of practices and allows for a multitude of voices.

KÜNSTLERHAUS BETHANIEN

The **Künstlerhaus Bethanien** is an international cultural centre in Berlin. An artist-inresidence programme with workspaces for professional artists and exhibition spaces, it is dedicated to the advancement of contemporary visual arts. As part of its residency scheme, it aims to establish a lively dialogue between artists from various backgrounds and disciplines, and the public at large.

To achieve these goals, the Künstlerhaus Bethanien organises a wide range of events ranging from monthly exhibition openings to private and public studio visits ("Open Studios"). The focus of its manifold missions is the International Studio Programme, where artists from around the world conceive and present new projects with the help of its team. The Künstlerhaus Bethanien continually strives to expand its international network by securing new partnerships.

The Künstlerhaus furthermore encourages critical reflection on subjects related to contemporary art and culture through its wide range of publications, among which artists' and exhibition catalogues as well as the Be Magazine, a yearly journal for art and criticism.

RUPERT

Rupert is an independent, publicly funded centre for art, residencies and education, located in Vilnius, Lithuania. Rupert has been operating since 2012.

Rupert's mission is to establish close cooperation between artists, thinkers, researchers and other cultural actors through transdisciplinary programmes and residencies. Rupert is committed to integrating with the social and cultural life of Vilnius and Lithuania, while also maintaining a strong international focus.

Rupert manifests this mission through three related programmes: the residency programme, the alternative education programme and the public programmes. They are all dedicated to creating platforms for conversation, research and learning. Through these programmes, Rupert supports local international thinkers in realising their projects and establishing their creative practice on an international scale.

ANNEX D – Selection process factsheet (SEA AiR - Cycle 2)

Overview of the SEA AiR selection process

- 7 Nominators
- 22 Nominated artists
- 21 Applications
- 6 Selection committee members
- 5 Shortlisted artists
- 3 Selected artists

Nomination process

Since artists from Cambodia, Indonesia and Malaysia participated in the inaugural cycle, the scouting process for the second cycle of SEA AiR focused on the remaining Southeast Asian countries to ensure the equitable distribution of the programme's resources. Seven artists and curators from those countries were invited to contribute to SEA AiR as nominators. They were asked to leverage their in-depth knowledge of emerging contemporary art practices within their respective countries and nominate outstanding practitioners who can benefit from this opportunity.

Nominators

- 1. Con Cabrera, independent curator, Philippines
- 2. Anna Koshcheeva, researcher and PhD candidate, Laos
- 3. Yasmin Jaidin, artist, Brunei
- 4. Ong Kian Peng, artist, Singapore
- 5. Mary Pansanga, independent curator, Thailand
- 6. Phoo Myat Thwe, independent curator, Myanmar
- 7. UuDam Tran-Nguyen, artist, Vietnam

Selection criteria

The Selection Committee carefully reviewed the 21 submitted applications based on their overall quality and evaluated:

- the quality, clarity and feasibility of the concept note articulated by the artist;
- the quality of the portfolio;
- whether the artist will, at this particular stage of his/her/their professional development, benefit from participating in the SEA AiR programme;
- the potential to create compelling artwork/s for the group exhibition in Singapore;
- whether the artist's practice is in line with SEA AiR's aspiration to cultivate public dialogue over human rights, freedom of expression and commitments to other issues of global concern; and
- the exhibition track record reflected in the CV.

SEA AiR Selection Committee

The SEA AiR Selection Committee for Cycle 2 comprised six members, including representatives from the three partner institutions from the first edition of SEA AiR.

1. **Prof Ute Meta Bauer** (Chair), Founding Director, NTU CCA Singapore and Professor, School of Art, Design and Media, NTU

2. Hicham Khalidi, Director, Jan Van Eyck Academie

3. Monika Lipšic, Residency Curator, Rupert

4. **Dr Karin Oen**, Senior Lecturer and Head of Department, Art History, NTU School of Humanities

- 5. Christoph Tannert, Artistic Director, Künstlerhaus Bethanien
- 6. Eszter Nemeth, Deputy Head of Mission, EU Delegation to Singapore

Selection outcome

Selected from a pool of 21 candidates nominated from curators and artists from across Southeast Asia, the three participants in the second cycle of SEA AiR are:

- 1. Priyageetha DIA (Singapore), nominated by NTU CCA Singapore
- 2. Nguyen Hong NGOC (Ngoc Nau) (Myanmar), nominated by Phoo Myat Thwe
- 3. Saroot SUPASUTHIVECH (Thailand), nominated by Mary Pansanga

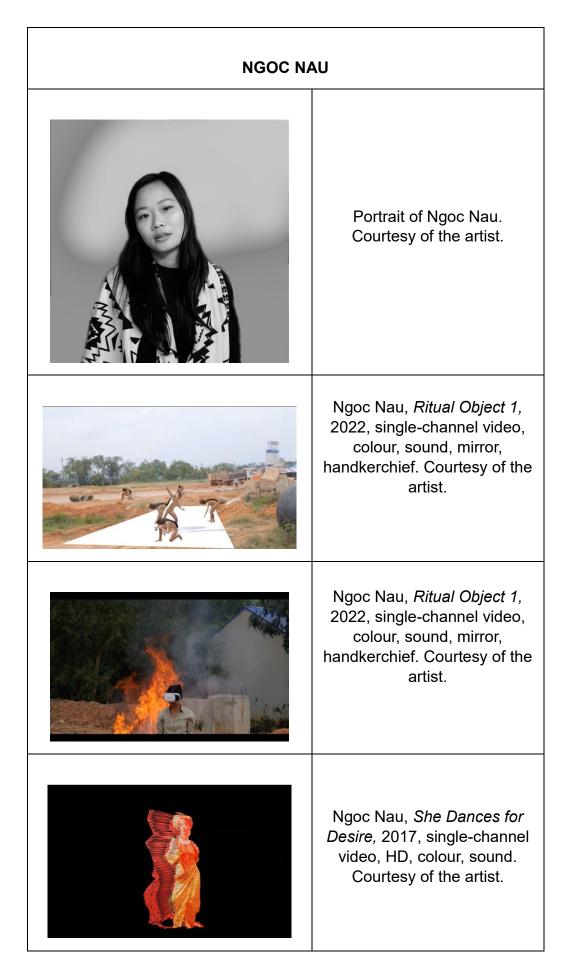
An additional five artists were shortlisted from the applicant pool in recognition of the merit and remarkable promise of their artistic practice. The five shortlisted artists for the second cycle of SEA AiR are:

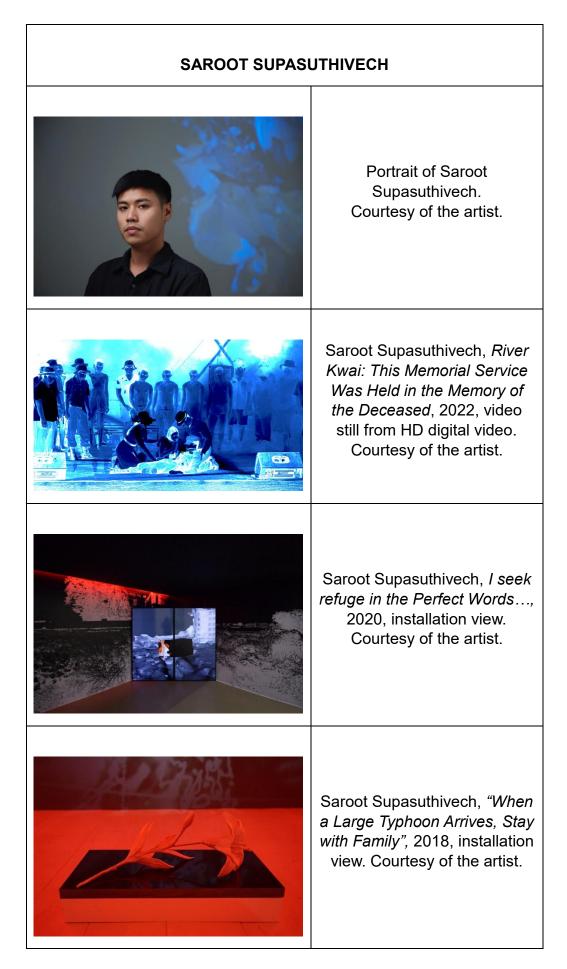
- 1. Lin Htet AUNG (b.1998, Myanmar)
- 2. Lena BUI (b.1985, Vietnam)
- 3. Ronyel COMPRA (b.1985, Philippines)
- 4. Pam QUINTO (b.1991, Philippines)
- 5. Nat SETTHANA (b.1995, Thailand)

ANNEX E – PRESS IMAGES

SELECTED ARTISTS

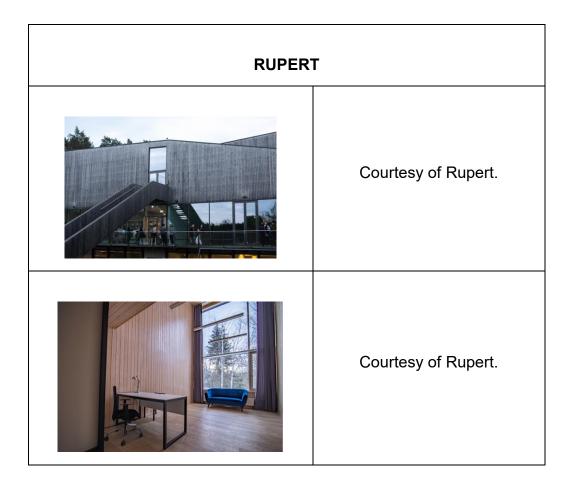
PRIYAGEETHA DIA	
	Portrait of Priyageetha Dia. Courtesy of the artist.
	Priyageetha Dia, we.remain.in.multiple.motions, 2022, installation view, CGI Animation, HD Video with stereo sound, colour. Courtesy of the artist. Photo: Ahmad Iskandar.
	Priyageetha Dia, <i>Rite of the Time Teller</i> , 2021, installation view. Courtesy of the artist. Photo: Ruey Loon.
Log her her ser Effekt	Priyageetha Dia, <i>Long live the new fles\$s\$sh</i> , 2020, HD video, colour, sound. Courtesy of the artist.





PARTNER INSTITUTIONS

JAN VAN EYCK ACADEMIE	
	Courtesy of Jan van Eyck Academie.
	Courtesy of Jan van Eyck Academie.
KÜNSTLERHAUS BETHANIEN	
Xunstlerhaus Besharien	Courtesy of Künstlerhaus Bethanien.
	Courtesy of Künstlerhaus Bethanien.





About Nanyang Technological University, Singapore

A research-intensive public university, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore (NTU Singapore) has 33,000 undergraduate and postgraduate students in the Engineering, Business, Science, Medicine, Humanities, Arts, & Social Sciences, and Graduate colleges. NTU is also home to world-renowned autonomous institutes – the National Institute of Education, S Rajaratnam School of International Studies, Earth Observatory of Singapore, and Singapore Centre for Environmental Life Sciences Engineering – and various leading research centres such as the Nanyang Environment & Water Research Institute (NEWRI) and Energy Research Institute @ NTU (ERI@N).

Under the NTU Smart Campus vision, the University harnesses the power of digital technology and tech-enabled solutions to support better learning and living experiences, the discovery of new knowledge, and the sustainability of resources. Ranked amongst the world's top universities, the University's main campus is also frequently listed among the world's most beautiful. Known for its sustainability, over 95% of its building projects are certified Green Mark Platinum. Apart from its main campus, NTU also has a medical campus in Novena, Singapore's healthcare district. For more information, visit <u>www.ntu.edu.sg</u>

About NTU Centre for Contemporary Art Singapore

A national research centre of Nanyang Technological University Singapore, with a focus on Spaces of the Curatorial, NTU Centre for Contemporary Art Singapore (NTU CCA Singapore) addresses the urgencies of our time such as the climate crisis and its impact on communities. A leading international art institution, driven by dynamic thinking in its three-fold constellation: Research and Academic Education; Residencies Programme; and Exhibitions. It brings forth innovative, multi-disciplinary, holistic and experimental forms of emergent artistic and curatorial practices that intersect the present and histories of contemporary art embedded in social, geopolitical, geo-cultural spheres with other fields of knowledge. NTU CCA Singapore's office and research centre is located at Gillman Barracks.

SPACES OF THE CURATORIAL

The Centre seeks to engage the potential of "curating" and its expanded field. What are the infrastructures and modes of presenting and discussing artistic and cultural production in diverse cultural settings and in particular throughout Southeast Asia's vastly changing societies?

Research Centre & Office

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Residencies Studios

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About The European Union

The European Union (EU) is an economic and political union of 27 Member States. Together, they have built a zone of stability, democracy and sustainable development whilst maintaining cultural diversity, tolerance and individual freedoms. With the help of over 140 diplomatic representations around the world, the EU cooperates closely with its Member States to promote the values and interests of the EU and establish networks and partnerships, promoting multilateral-based solutions to common challenges. The EU is the largest trade block in the world, as well as the world's main source and the top global destination of foreign direct investment.

In 2012, the EU was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for advancing the causes of peace, reconciliation, democracy and human rights.

The 27 EU Member States are: Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czechia, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, The Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain and Sweden.

About the European Union Delegation to Singapore

Set up in December 2002, the EU Delegation to Singapore formally opened on 30 June, 2004. Since then, the EU's diplomatic representation has worked to promote closer ties between the EU and Singapore. In close coordination with the diplomatic missions of the EU Member States, the Delegation ensures consistency and effectiveness of the EU's external action in Singapore.

With 27 countries, nearly 450 million people and the largest GDP in the world, the EU is of increasing importance to Singapore, especially since the entry into force of the EU-Singapore Free Trade Agreement (EUSFTA). The Delegation covers a range of issues such as trade, foreign policy, climate change, environment, transport, industrial

policy, research, science, technology as well as education projects such as the Study In Europe higher education fair and EU at Your School and on the cultural front presents SEA AiR (in partnership with NTU CCA Singapore) and the annual European Film Festival (EUFF).

On 1 February, 2023, the EU-Singapore Digital Partnership was signed in Brussels. This Partnership expands the robust EU-Singapore relationship into the digital realm, which has a transformative potential for the future of our economies. The Digital Partnership builds on long-standing cooperation between the EU and Singapore on trade, research and technology. It will also serve as a strategic pathfinder for closer region-to-region digital connectivity. On the same occasion, Digital Trade Principles, a key deliverable of the Digital Partnership, were signed as well. The Principles seek to facilitate the free flow of goods and services in the digital economy, while upholding privacy.

Connect

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