

4<sup>th</sup> ED. CREATIVE ENCOUNTERS

# CURATING IN DEPTH

Ljubljana, Slovenia, 3-16/5/2015

Zagreb, Croatia, 13/5/2015

Manila, Philippines, 27/7– 8/8/2015

## **CURATING IN DEPTH**

### **CONTENT**

- 1. INTRODUCTION**
- 2. CONTEXT AND CONTENT**
  - 2.1. ANACHRONISM OF SOUTHEAST ASIAN MODERNISM: RADEN SALEH - Lian Ladia**
  - 2.2. BEING SUBTRACTED FROM – Renan G. Laru-An**
  - 2.3. ON CRITICISM – TRANSFORMATIONS AND PERSPECTIVE - Antonija Letinić**
  - 2.4. THE SAME WORD DIFFERENT MEANING – Dušan Dovč**
  - 2.5. PERSPECTIVES IN COLLABORATION – Narawan Kyo Pathomwat**
  - 2.6. THE WORLD OF ART, SCHOOL FOR CURATORS AND CRITICS OF CONTEMPORARY ART – Simona Žvanut**
  - 2.7. DIVA STATION AND ARCHIVING PRACTICES IN VIDEO – Barbara Borčič**
  - 2.8. MARKETS OF RESISTANCE – Angel Velasco Shaw**
  - 2.9. CURATION AS CULTURAL WORK - Antares Gomez Bartolome**
  - 2.10. FRAMES OF CONCEPTUALISM FROM SOUTHEAST ASIA - Isabel Ching**
  - 2.11. A SHORT INTRODUCTION OF MYANMAR PERFORMANCE ART - Moe Satt**
  - 2.12. PROMPTS: CURATORIAL STRATEGIES IN FACILITATING AND SUSTAINING KNOWLEDGE RESOURCES - Sidd Perez**
  - 2.13. THE KALAMPAG TRACKING AGENCY EXPERIMENTAL VIDEO PROGRAM, CURATORIAL NOTES - Shireen Seno**
- 3. LANDSCAPES FOR THE CONTEXT AND CONTENT**
  - 3.1. LJUBLJANA**
  - 3.2. MANILA**
- 4. CONCLUSION**
- 5. ABOUT THE ORGANIZATIONS**
- 6. IMPRESSUM**

- 1. INTRODUCTION**

Curating-In-Depth is an incubation project initially brainstormed by SCCA - Ljubljana production manager Dušan Dovč (Ljubljana) and Planting Rice co-founder, Sidd Perez (Manila) out of On-The-Move.org's cultural mobility meeting in Luxembourg last June 2014. In the introduction of both platforms, both were struck with the shared attention towards nurturing curatorial practices, alongside an agenda of providing alternative knowledge resources. DIVA (Digital Video Archive) is an ongoing material and web archive that researches on, documents and accounts for local video and media art, while Planting Rice recovers texts and documents on art practices in and through the Philippines. Both non-government institutions also focus on developing curatorial discourse and education – SCCA with "World of Art" and Planting Rice with its offsite workshops and other collaborations.

The project attempts to address a form of parachuting curating that persists within cross-pollination and opportunities for cultural exchanges in the dominant global system. Whether it is for diplomacy's sake urged by bigger infrastructures, like international surveys or topical alignments that would require a degree of representation of a community, this model has raised criticism in many local communities. Perhaps it is also due to various pragmatic variables that prevent deeper research from the curator's part. After all, while transnational careers are necessary in current years, it has also provided logistic setbacks that restrict ideal engagements. Curators too have fundamentally fashioned themselves to be self-reliant in their pursuit for research and immersion. Perhaps their affects are not limited to marketable outcomes, hence the lack of opportunities for these kinds of residencies that are otherwise accessible to artists. So, the two partners decided to unpick these conjectures

with an exchange and educational program called "Curating-In-Depth."

The team of SCCA - Ljubljana and Kurziv in Zagreb as well as curators from Southeast Asia (Manila, Myanmar, Singapore, Kuala Lumpur and Thailand) went through two weeks of curatorial mapping in Slovenia, Croatia and Manila through collaborative curatorial practices and self-organization. It was aimed towards finding out the breadth of the institution's networks and in drawing-out the ecosystem of infrastructures and support in both contexts.

The itinerary was tailored to allow curators to speak about their institutions or general practice in conjunction with particular visions (individually or in the organizational sense.) The Ljubljana cultural and artistic tour gave a perspective of the country's historical, political and cultural contexts and on how contemporary practices are borne out of adapting to the consequences of social crises, specifically through the formation of guerrilla spaces, residency spaces, and exhibition programs. While in Manila, the curatorial mapping program called #ArtHopManila, involved museum visits, special appointments with curators and directors, and curatorial walk-throughs in museums, alternative galleries and commercial spaces to provide a sense of the artistic pulse of the city. Studio visits were also arranged with contemporary artists within the intimacy of their studio spaces.

In Ljubljana, introductions of curatorial and artistic practices of the Slovenian and Southeast Asian curators and its culminating program "From Elsewhere 2", were both held at the Project Room SCCA.

In Manila, there was a 3-day symposium titled "Curating-In-

depth” with topics such as: 1) Rehistoricization: Criticality in linear art histories; 2) Alternative Organizational Infrastructures; and 3) Problematizing experimental and archival practices in video and film. Auxiliary programs in collaboration with museums, artist-run spaces were also programmed: 1) “Contesting the Contemporary, A Southeast Asian Reading group” at the Lopez Museum & Library; 2) “If Art is a hammer”, a roundtable discussion by the Concerned Artists of the Philippines at Artery Art Space; and 3) A film retrospective of experimental filmmaker, John Torres, at the School of Design and Art, College of St. Benilde, De La Salle University, Manila.

It was in this first phase that brought both groups to terms on how to tailor their engagement with practitioners and communities operating outside of each others contexts in order to make it efficient and worthwhile. Similarities and connections were initially identified, but it was in the differences pushed both contexts to be reflexive about their practices and eventually establish a broader and critical understanding of the situation. With an exchange of each other’s cultures and world views, the curatorial has moved towards creating opportunities to change both inherited pasts (post-colonial/ post-socialist) and to bridge other modes of understanding that is disparate yet connected to an inward/outward perspective of the contemporary art ecosystem.

\*\*\*

This Toolkit gathers materials produced throughout the programmes, following the exchanges from both study visits, and attempts at creating a certain overview of topics, discussions and insights given throughout the collaboration. It puts together the lectures and discussions, which aim at presenting themes that were dealt with in our encounters, and collects impressions

and programme schemes as a map of contexts that each of us was immersed in as we aimed to create bridges between distant worlds of almost simultaneous histories, cultures and futures. These histories, cultures and futures somehow intertwine and offer us an opportunity to look closely and see what we can learn from them and each other.

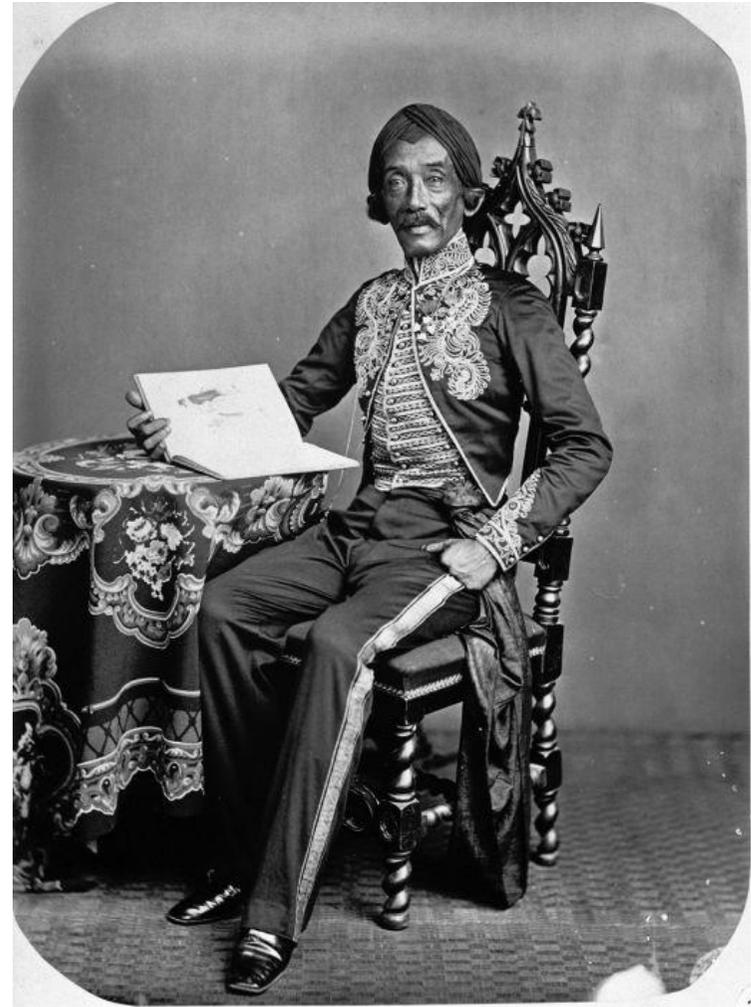
It doesn’t aim at creating a manual of instructions, but rather submit a collaborative diary of impressions, insights, opinions and memories of what we have seen and learned, in view of directing us in our future encounters.

## 2. CONTEXT AND CONTENT

How do we create content? Can we separate it from the context? How do we initiate a conversation, a debate, a discussion? These are the basic questions that shape the concept of this Toolkit. In order to understand each other, we need at least have a rough overview of our preoccupations, insights, frameworks and concepts in which we operate. For this reason, the section «Content and Context» gathers materials representing different topics and insights into the context and content we work in, operate by and with which influences our work. Materials produced during the project and gathered here differ in their languages, perspectives and approaches. We decided to keep them as is to highlight the diversity of voices, styles and languages which perfectly represents the diversity of our encounters and experiences.

### 2.1. ANACHRONISM OF SOUTHEAST ASIAN MODERNISM: RADEN SALEH

Lian Ladia



I am not disregarding previous research on the Southeast Asian modern, but am merely continuing the "rehistoricization process"<sup>1</sup> of my colleagues in Southeast Asia, in deconstructing frameworks of understanding linear histories, and presenting shifts or trajectories for a parallel discussion.

So I will begin by telling the story of romantic painter and artist Raden Saleh, born 200 years ago, shortly after the end of the Dutch East Indies. Over the last 100 years he built up a huge work which is now within the care of the Rijksmuseum, the Tropen Museum in the Netherlands, and paintings in the houses of private collectors in the Netherlands, Germany and Indonesia, some auctioned in big auction houses in Borobodur, Sothebys and Christie's Southeast Asia. Very recently, German art historian and curator Werner Kraus wrote his biography and mounted an exhibition instituting Raden Saleh as the Beginning of Modern Indonesian Painting<sup>2</sup>.

The show, which was held in Indonesia in 2012 was the first time that the Indonesian public saw his oeuvre. The exhibition featured some 40 paintings from public and private collections in Indonesia. It attracted over 10,000 visitors, making it one of the most popular art exhibitions in the country. Indonesian art historian Farah Wardani adds that it has become a status symbol for private collectors to own a painting by Saleh. One example of his popularity was evident when the painting, "Last Resort," depicting a hunting scene that he painted in Dresden in 1842, was sold off at an auction to an Indonesian buyer last year for 1.6 million euros.

---

<sup>1</sup> Largely referencing to the historical curatorial inquiry of Asian-American artist Carlos Villa when he organized Rehistoricizing Abstract Expressionism in the Bay Area Symposium in June 2010 at the San Francisco Art Institute.

<sup>2</sup> Kraus, Werner. Raden Saleh: The Beginning of Modern Indonesian Painting (Indonesia: Goethe Institut, 2012).

Saleh was born into a Javanese family of Arab descent in 1811 and went to Europe to study art at the age of 18. He spent more than 20 years in Europe, living in Amsterdam, Paris and Dresden. His paintings corresponded with nineteenth-century romanticism which was popular in Europe at the time. Raden Saleh teachers included Belgian artist AJ Payen, Cornelius Kruseman and Andreas Schilfhout in Holland and the Romantic school at Hague. In Paris, Saleh met Horace Vernet and was inspired by Eugene Delacroix. While in Germany he studied under painters of the Romantic School in Dresden.<sup>3</sup>

He was poor and unrespected in Netherlands but became a "prince from the east" in Dresden, Germany living in palace circles meeting monarchies connected to King Leopold of Belgium and meeting Queen Victoria herself. He presented himself as a young gentleman with manners of a young cosmopolite, within the petty bourgeois being inducted in freemasonry and fraternizing with Franz List, Baudeliere, Hans Christian Anderson.<sup>4</sup>

He felt most comfortable in Germany, where he was welcomed with open arms. "He was received at the royal court and invited to all the salons," explains Werner Kraus. "In the area around Dresden he was known as the 'black prince'. He was very popular and his works of art sold at very high prices."<sup>5</sup> Australian Historian John Clarke described his reputation not based on artistic exhibition in Indonesia but based on his social reputation through his European contemporaries. Southeast Asian Art

---

<sup>3</sup> Description of Raden Saleh's biography at the Christie's Catalog sale in Hong Kong, Southeast Asian Pictures, 2002.

<sup>4</sup> Monika, Griebeler, "Indonesian artist is finally honored in his homeland" Deutsche Welle, June 2012, <http://www.dw.com/en/indonesian-artist-is-finally-honored-in-his-homeland/a-16038975>.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

Historian Patrick Flores mentioned that Saleh invoked the post colonial privilege which alters a colonial scheme and therefore re-inscribed the end of colonialism itself - belonging within the vexed project of enlightenment.<sup>6</sup>

He was also presented by John Clarke in a symposium in ZKM Germany, negating the claims of Jean Hubert Martens Magicien de La Terre's claims of globalizing the contemporary landscape in 1989-because as early as 1834, he was presented in the Dutch Salon (exhibition of living Masters and in the Paris Salon in 1847). Japanese artists also participated in the French salon in 1880's, and Filipino Artist Juan Luna and Felix Resurreccion Hidalgo also received a medals of honor in the Madrid exposition of 1884.<sup>7</sup>

In the mid-nineteenth century, Raden Saleh returned to Indonesia because he was homesick. "He had a great project when he came back," Kraus explains. "He wanted to be respected in colonial Indonesia just as he had been in Europe." However, his trans-cultural lifestyle were rejected by the colonial masters in Indonesia. In 1869, he was even arrested and accused of leading a farmers' rebellion. Although he was quickly vindicated, he was unable to cope with the shame and the lack of acceptance. In his twilight years he felt torn, tormented and alienated because the untranslatability of modernity had dispirited his ideals. Saleh, who came back to his homeland in 1850, felt he was lost between Europe and Indonesia and "died an almost petrified and embittered man, who had not found his place neither within the native Javanese nor within the Dutch colonial society. He was Javanese when he came to Europe and German when he

returned to Indonesia. In the end, the "two poles" became a big detriment.<sup>8</sup>

Bringing this discussion to the present, I consulted a curator from Ruangrupa, Jakarta who counters this claim of modernity. Asep Topan one of the collective members mentions that indeed Raden Saleh may be the first artist from Dutch East Indies to make paintings in the Western method with the romanticism style, and have strong connection with European artists in his era. But he cannot articulate an Indonesian Modern art discourse because he did not strongly speak about the Indonesian context. He mentions an example of Indonesian modern art which is the 1930's revolt from colonialism and rise of the nationalist issue in the 1940's. Exemplified by Sudjojono and Persagi group.

Philippine art historian and University professor Flaudette Datuin defines modernity in southeast asia as emancipation, expansion - with the knowledge of external world, perfecting that language and poignant in reflexivity. In the Philippine context of modernity, it is not a derivative but focus on dialectics, paradox, tensions, intricate historical, social and cultural moments.<sup>9</sup>

It seems parallel modernity in Southeast Asia within the realm of instituting, results in not so much as a continuation of the linear narrative, but a transfer of its definition, resulting to a trajectory.

Australian historian John Clarke talks about multivocal modernities - which are neither extensions nor reactions, but parallel practices. The postcolony, the disruption of empire, works which embody revolutions, liberations, movements, and

---

<sup>6</sup> Patrick Flores, *Colonial Posterities: Portraiture and the Face of the Modern* (Philippines, Kasarinlan, Philippine Journal of Third World Studies, 2007)

<sup>7</sup> John Clark, "Canon-making and curating in recent Asian Art" (presentation, Curating in Asia, ZKM, Karlsruhe, Germany, October 12, 2011).

---

<sup>8</sup> Monika, Griebeler, "Indonesian artist is finally honored in his homeland" Deutsche Welle, June 2012, <http://www.dw.com/en/indonesian-artist-is-finally-honored-in-his-homeland/a-16038975>.

<sup>9</sup> Flaudette May Datuin, *Imaging/Restaging Modernity: Philippine Modernism in An/Other Light*, (Philippines, U.P. Jorge Vargas Museum, 1998).

crossroads.

Yet paradoxically, Clarke also identified the museum of modern art in New York an important node in the dissemination of knowledge and master narrative. The MoMA collection with its inherent suppositions about what modern and contemporary art might be, has been built up since the late 1920's. (quote) Undeniably canons require exclusion as a necessary condition, whatever interests of collectors which drive them. (end quote)<sup>10</sup>

What can be substitutes for institutions and states that are organized from the top down?

Globalization has introduced a kind of accessible contemporaneity to us, and placed us within it, which is not taken away but rendered obsolete the established ways of knowing the historical.

Spivak mentions that we cannot undo 500 years of cognitive damage in 50 years, as we are trained to agree with the ruling class - knowledge has changed since the pre-socratics. As we are thinking and valorizing, we have to remember that languages make meanings for people.<sup>11</sup>

As an example in Southeast Asia, anarchist & activist, Bas Umali mentions that meanings and valorization in the Philippines is very distorted, he mentions (quote) most of our meanings are imported from the west due to propaganda and media. One of the challenges in the archipelago and local community is to revalorize our culture. (end quote). In a sense when the contact & experience from nature is lost - contemporary society alienates and the global capital manages the world and creates

psychological construction, resulting to a strong loss of nature for any kind of real, local and autonomous life.

Rehistorization projects in postcolonial cosmopolitans are currently emerging and being presented like spurts in the archipelago. One example is the project called Southeast of Now: Contemporary and Modern art by the the Cultural center, University of Malaysia, with the main topic revolving around "Discomfort."

As well as Rehistorizing Modernity in Colombia at the recent ArtBo art fair through the special exhibition titled Referense. The mission of La Vision in Bogota, the Galleon Trade research initiative of Residencias Artisticas por Intercambio in Acapulco, the generative criticism project Articles of Disagreement in Manila, and research based projects and grant initiatives of Asia Art Archive in Hong Kong, Imperfect Chronology at Whitechapel in London, America is hard to see at Whitney, New York.

There is a Brechtian "stage" of instituting and defined the politicized image of Raden Saleh within the framework of so called modernisms. Perhaps it is not enough that this language is contained within the structure of footnotes of scholars and academes. More than the history of art, there is this framework which contains it, and what does this framework represent actually.

I myself ask as an agent, to question the political interest served by the art historical text of instituting or any art historical text for that matter.

I will end this presentation with a quote from Gayatri Spivak when she says:

"The academe can be used as great weapons. Yet, when something is institutionalized, it's the old laws of institutionalization and disciplinarization that take over rather

---

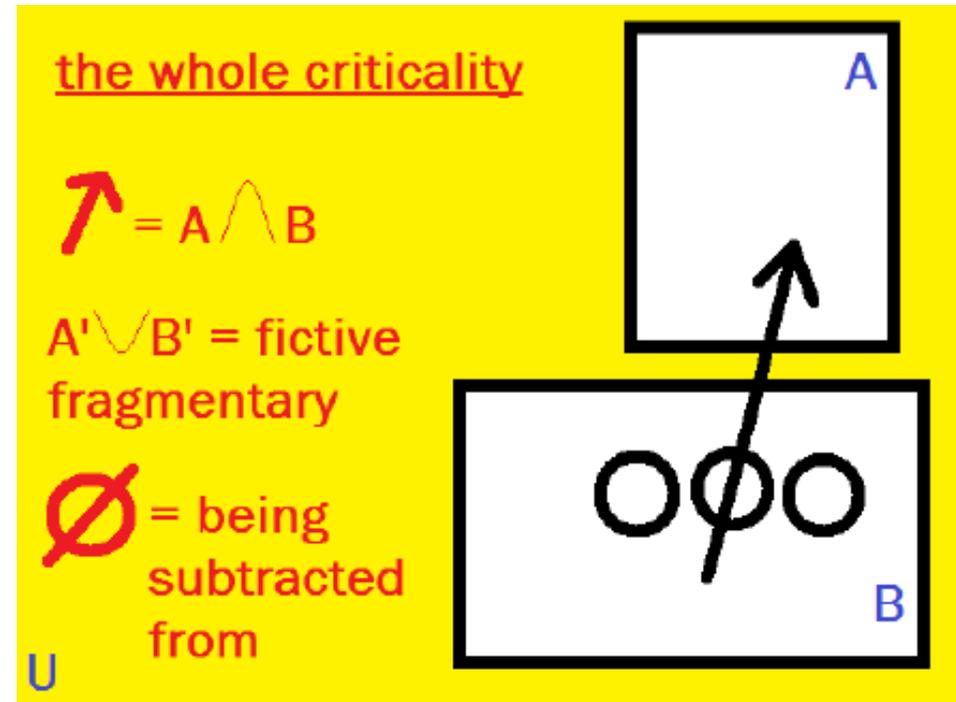
<sup>10</sup> John Clark, "Canon-making and curating in recent Asian Art" (presentation, Curating in Asia, ZKM, Karlsruhe, Germany, October 12, 2011).

<sup>11</sup> Gayatri Spivak, "Humanities and Development" (presentation, Castle lecture series, Durham University, U.K., 2013).

than the power of the material itself...to an extent, the beginning of a so-called, "success" is actually the beginning of problems."

## 2.2. BEING SUBTRACTED FROM<sup>12</sup>

Renan G. Laru-An



I open this lecture-presentation with a fragment of fiction. The boy named Menos fell in love with a princess, the daughter of the Wealthy (a king, a sultan, or a chieftain). Menos didn't know how

<sup>12</sup> The presentation is a fraction of a larger and long-term project titled *Working with Naivete, Before Criticality*. The first phase is focused on a critical writing of histories of collaboration and complicity through development and integration projects to be realized in production of knowledge scenes and new speculative routes. *Being Subtracted From* was enriched by the author's forthcoming essay *Potential-performance: Short Histories of Foreclosure* to be published by Green Lantern Press. The script of the presentation is not for citation. For the paper's detailed text and references, please contact the author at [renanlaruan\[at\]gmail.com](mailto:renanlaruan[at]gmail.com)

to express his love. He feared that his actions would be dismissed because he was poor. One night, he had an idea: What if I turned into a firefly? I could reach the princess because I have wings. I could appear before her without asking permission from her father. My love could glow in the dark! So, Menos, the poor who was eager to show his love, bathed in sap and ran into a monsoon of fireflies.

### *I. The Whole Criticality*

Between 1950 and 1960, a massive rodent infestation in Mindanao undermined the country's food security. At the same time, the imminent threat of Communism's reach in the island was popularized by demonizing the —vermin as carriers of Communism and bubonic plague from Communist China and North Korea. Rats (and therefore Mindanao) officially entered the national discourse and political imagination of postwar Philippines as —the problem to be solved. The exchange between Cebu representative Ramon Durano and Lanao representative Ahmad Domocao Alonto showcased the relationship of the state with the rat problem, posing man's rationality as the critical attitude towards rat's irruption in the expansion of agricultural lands in Mindanao and other regions of the country.

*Durano: There are no rats in Cebu, gentleman from Lanao.*

*Alonto: Is the gentleman sure of that?*

*Alonto: . . . I think that the people in the Bureau of Plant Industry know what they are talking about and when they say that there are rats in Cebu, there must be rats in Cebu. If there are no four-legged ones, maybe there are two-legged ones.*

*Durano: I do not know of any two-legged rats in Cebu, but four-legged rats there are none in Cebu. I am going to explain that to the gentleman of Lanao. Does not the gentleman agree with me that the rats belong to the rabbit specie?*

*Alonto: Yes.*

*Durano: And that the rabbits are very palatable food especially in New York?*

*Alonto: That is right.*

*Durano: And inasmuch as the rats are of the same species as the rabbit, does not the gentleman think that it is a nice idea to teach our people to eat rats instead of dogs?*

*Alonto: Mr. Speaker, I do not know about the people from Cebu.*

*Durano: One thing again that I am going to inform the gentleman from Lanao is that during the Japanese occupation there was a scarcity of meat [in Cebu], so the Chinese panciterias [noodle shops] caught all the rats and they cooked them with pancit [noodle] and the people found out that pancit with cooked rats are better than any of those cooked with other meats. Formerly, we abhor eating the meat of the dog, but it has been found out that the dog's meat is better than the meat of hogs or other meat. So, it is a question, Mr. Speaker and gentleman from Lanao, of adapting ourselves to such a situation indicative of an educated people. So instead of eliminating the rats totally—Is that the gentleman's proposition, total elimination of the rats which is very dangerous?—it should be made gradually. I wish to inform the gentleman that in Johns Hopkins Hospital there is now a research being conducted whereby they extract a certain substance from rats and inject it to sterile people. I understand it could restore an individual's vitality, Mr. Speaker, so if we exterminate the rats, the sterile people of the Philippines will have no more recourse in order to produce more people for further development. Therefore, my question, Mr. Speaker, is, is the gentleman from Lanao for an all-out eradication of rats? I understand that it is very dangerous move to eliminate the rats totally.*

### *II. Fictive Fragmentary*

The 1977 Annual Report of the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI) highlighted the term *potential-performance gap*. The term refers to the difference between rice's biological potential and actual yield in tropical region. Consistent with its goal to alleviate hunger and poverty in developing countries, IRRI coordinated its commitments around a central objective: "to determine reasons for the gap and to provide ways to reduce it". The research organization, founded by Ford Foundation and Rockefeller Foundation in close collaboration with the Government of the Philippines in 1959, identified its major research objective as production of —basis for improved technologies and public policies that will remove [physical-

environmental, physical and biological, and socio-economic] constraints. In the same document, IRRI drafted an administrative/managerial and political solution to the problem, divided into two research premises:

1. *Because most production-constraint problems tend to go beyond political boundaries, they can best be solved through international cooperation and collaboration. No single institution – international or national – can solve such problems alone.*
2. *Within a given international or national institute, interdisciplinary inputs are essential to solve production-constraint problems. No single discipline can, by itself, solve such problems.*

The long-term project of removing constraints finds its dialectical presence in the discovery/creation of a new Philippine lily, *Tricyrtis imeldae*, in 1972. Named after the late dictator Ferdinand Marcos' wife, Imelda, the —discovery of the new species served as an intricate yet molecular image production of abundance in both ecological and cultural sense. Through ethnobotanical terms during the crucial development of the elaborate anthropological Tasaday hoax, the discovery of the new plant species reinforced Panamin's characterization of Tasaday's hunter-gatherer system as —leisure-intensivel with —abundant food supply. Tricyrtis imeldae had been described as —attractive with possibilities as an ornamental plant, and as useful among Tasadays in catching frog at the stream, in which they use the juice from the flowers or leaves —to attract the quarry and render it less slippery. The specificities and particularities of knowledge production through images contingent to the animation of science and technology were the strongest elements in the large-scale and highly choreographed staging of Tasaday as the lost tribe from the Stone Age period.

### *III. Planes of Insufficiency*

Protruding above a grid of rice paddies, a temple rises at the foot of Mount Arayat, an extinct volcano 60 miles off the capital Manila. It is modest in size, stripped off of intricacies. In early 2014, the temple Bale Batu became a hit story on social media. It was known as the pyramid-shaped structure built by a local artist for four decades based on his imagination, or what the article referred to as a "sketch of the plan". According to the wife, it was made entirely of cement and pulverized mountain rocks, constructed with her husband's bare hands without specialized engineering techniques and architectural romanticisms. Bale Batu was a project that started and completed out of determination.

\*

Within the grid of Lucban, a colonial and agrarian town at the foot of Mount Banahaw in Quezon Province, two items were forced to connect with each other in a community museum. Printed on tarpaulin, the first item is a blown-up photograph of men and women holding the national flag. The second item is the actual flag captured in the photograph. A line was drawn from the negligible image of the national flag in the photograph to reach the tattered flag hanging above the tarpaulin. The terminus of the line marks the arrival and final encounter of the obscured image with the original item. The line runs across the face of a woman, dissecting it into two, then vandalizes an item recognized in museum and heritage context as national artifact.

### *IV. Being Subtracted From/Resisting Extraction*

The collection of images presented in the reading of various texts assembles multiple and overlapping scenes and performances of complicity and criticality. The rehearsal might be easily reduced as a general structure of lack, an activity of the specter of criticality and the lover of the esoteric. But these

images and fictions conjure a struggle to be relocated, to be displaced, or to be apprehended in order to show a movement. We know that movement is associated with the nutritive faculty of life. We find them in the myths of development and integration. But this movement is a movement of decay; it is the progress of corruption and degradation, in which a series of extractions is necessary to live. The moment of resistance hardly appear along its channels: the dream of rupture, the distance of critical engagement, the withdrawal from infrastructures, and/or sleeping with the enemy. A degree of promiscuity along the edges of foreclosures can show the bareness of life. This showing is relating. This relationship is not between the whole and the fragment. These relationships can only look into each other when they are insufficient. These notes, belabored earlier, are histories of foreclosure. But they are also histories of slow openings and imperceptible criticality. The procedure of slow and imperceptible criticality risks the appearance of a bare life, in order to visibilize the possibility of becoming beings subtracted from and beings resisting closure.

\*

Closing this lecture, I return to the translucent Menos. He climbed a tree and showed himself to the princess. He recited a chant: *Ako si Menos, isa ako ka Anghel. Ginsugo ako sing Diyos. Kung indi niyo ako pagbatunon, patyon ta kamo tanan.* (I am Menos, the messenger of God. If you will not accept me, I will kill all of you.)

### 2.3. ON CRITICISM – TRANSFORMATIONS AND PERSPECTIVES

Antonija Letinić



In this presentation, I will focus on the theme of art criticism, what is happening in the current landscapes of media and arts, which dictate its transformation. This seems important as art criticism has multiple roles in society – interpreting, analysing, valorising artistic production, and mediating it to different audiences. But before we delve the questions we are dealing with, I would like to briefly sketch the framework in which we operate and how we even came to dealing with this.

Conceiving, running and developing specialized, non-profit media dedicated to contemporary, mostly new-emerging, critical, engaged, marginalized practices imposes numerous challenges and necessity to closely observe the environment and react on it. Online portal Kulturpunkt.hr was launched in 2005 with the aim to create space, which will offer on one side

platform for information on programmes and projects of organisations and actors in contemporary culture and arts, while on the other hand it aimed to offer comprehensive, analytical and critical reflection of their work. Next to these two basic approaches, the media was conceived as a platform which will allow new, young voices in the media landscape to be heard and recognized, and also, paid work which we continuously consider as important policy aspect since the process of devaluation of written word is in constant progress. So the criticism as a form of valorisation and reflection on cultural and artistic production was always there, from the very beginning. But, to provide it, there were some prior steps necessary to be undertaken which would provide space for it. So, first we had to organise a sustainable, stable, diversified, reliable and capacitated framework from which the criticism will grow out as an organic and logical next step in the development of the media.

The first opportunity for something like that opened in 2010 when we designed, with our partners from Croatia, Serbia and Montenegro, a project *Criticize This!* which was focused on criticism and was dedicated to educating young critics and provided them with the space to present their work. Based on the focuses of our media, we chose to deal with visual arts, performing arts and literature. The second aim of the project was to bridge anew cultural space that was at one point in the history unique cultural space – that of Yugoslavia, and encourage dialog among cultural actors from the region. Soon, after the project started, we encountered some discrepancies and points of discussion that we didn't have in mind previously. And one of them is criticism itself which gave us impulse to dedicate special attention to. While conceiving the structure of mentoring, we were confronted with different approaches to what criticism is today, what should it offer, what are it's approaches, what is legitimate and alike. So these questions somehow directed our

future dealing with the criticism and and shaped it as practice on several levels so that it became one of our permanent focuses.

The slogan of the project *Criticis This!* was sort of a 'Criticism is dead! Long live criticism!', which implied that criticism has vanished. But, this statement was and still is if not false, than at least unprecise. Of course, the criticism is not dead nor will it die any time soon. Detected problem behind the slogan lies in the transformation of the media sphere, namely mainstream media. So yes, the criticism is disappearing in some forme and appearing in another. It is losing its' ground in the mainstream media. For sure, that can be said for local and regional context of small markets and "small languages", created in the past 20 to 30 years, which is the framework we are regarding the process closely, but the similar can be stated for even bigger markets. And the criticism is not the onle one as many things, or more precisely many forms are disappearing from mainstream media. Investigative journalism is an endemic species, reportages too. The whole industry is going through the transformation since late '1970ies on. Internet is often blamed for the devolution of the media and the standards of the profession, but as Leopoldina Fortunati and Mark Deuze claim in their study *Journalism without Journalists*, the profession started the process of commodification much before internet took over the dance floor. Internet actually only catalysed the process of turning media and journalism into the typical goods produced through the factory system. The more there was PR in newspapers, less there was journalism. The old system of newsrooms, editorial policies, gradation of content – from news over reportage, interview to comment, is now reduced to two forms dominating the landscape – new and expert analyses. Everything else is highly suppressed from the landscape, journalists are professionals are less and less specialized in certain fields and more and more directed towards general practice. So the similar

fate was destined to criticism, which had to find new frameworks for appearance, and these frameworks dictated different approach. But, it didn't disappear. We could even argue that there is more criticism than ever. It can be found all over the print issues as well as on the internet. We can find it in the specialized magazines, periodicals, it's published in books and author's collections. On the internet, it is lively present in specialized magazines, online portals and platforms, blogs, and not to be forgotten or excluded - social networks. It could be said, on the other hand, that it is even more present than it used to be, more available than it ever was and that everyone can be critiq today. But these new appearances, new frameworks and different, fragmented and dispersed audiences are demanding and provoking changes in its structure.

But, before we tackle the new structures of art criticism, we have to touch upon another determining space of changes. The whole new world of contemporary arts growing, changing and diversifying in the past hundred years, also demanded change in how criticism approaches them. Are traditional canons still functional and adequate to evaluate relational and process based practices, or participative ones, or the ones researching intersections of arts and technology, arts and science? How do we valorise critical and engaged practices? How do we valorise community art practices? What components of these works are more important? Their final product, or the process behind it? Is aesthetic product of the work more important for an art work than its impact in the field it is delving into? Why and how? And, even, is it possible to separate aesthetics from politics? How does the production of arts work? What are the policies shaping and dictating the field and how do they influence conditions and landscape of contemporary world of arts? Is it possible to evaluate art products without regarding the conditions of art

production? So, all these questions demand and induce changes in how we talk about arts.

In our discussions on criticism, these questions often brought us to the question of the art institutions and how the system is still enclosed in traditional divisions and disciplines, with political, ideolocigal and social attributions, polarisations and discrepancies between art production and institutional framework. The institutional framework is equally important as, for example, language. The art world today is highly dependent on the global market and market dictation. As Croatian artist Mladen Stilinović nicely put it in one of his works: "Artist who cannot speak English it no artist." So, discussion on the changes in the art field and how it influences criticism, has to be led on several fields that could give us a comprehensive insight into many puzzles composing it.

All of these dynamics shape the art criticism and put it between two rapidly changing systems with the pressure to adjust itself to the new demands. And these two demands are pretty opposed. On one hand, journalism demands efficiency, fast reactions, short and comprehensive forms and comprehensible language. The other one demands time, reflection, research, contemplation and observation. So, how is the form responding to these opposed and conflictive demands? What forms is it taking, where is it appearing and in which shapes, extents and what are its audiences? Those are some of the questions we are trying to keep on the table through the programme *Criticism – past, present, future*.

Since the time is limited, I will get back on the structure of our dealing with the criticism and approaches we are trying to maintain and broaden. The project is structured in three streams: the first one is focused on providing continuous space and infrastructure for the production of critical valorisation of

contemporary arts in our context. The second one is dedicated to encouraging debate among critics and media focused on critical valorisation of contemporary art production with the aim of reflecting upon changes, positions and exchange. The third stream is based on organising public events such as lectures and symposiums with theorists who research and practice the form and through this stream, we also publish theoretical essays and books. In the past years we organised symposium *The Art of Criticism* which intended to give a historic overview on the form – it's birth, roots and evolution, structure, development and changes; and series of lectures by theorists, philosophers, cultural critics; colloquium with critics discussing among themselves their experiences and perspectives on the criticism and their position in the context of their changes; publishing of theoretical works. Do we have any answers on the above outlined questions? Well, not yet, and most probably we will not have them. But the idea is not to get the answers, but to encourage discussion, reflection and open even more new ones. As the critical thinking is the base of the criticism – encouraging debate, encounters and reflection are the first steps to new questions and contesting old solutions.

## 2.4. THE SAME WORD DIFFERENT MEANING

Dušan Dovč



### *A brief introduction to the cultural production in Slovenia*

Slovenia encompasses an area of 20.273 km<sup>2</sup>, while Philippines comprehend 300.000 km<sup>2</sup>. Our coast is 46,6 km long and we have no islands, while on the other hand Philippines consist only of islands with an archipelago of 7107 of them. Why am I stating this? What I would like to track in my presentation is the question what is the impact of geographical background on art. The Domestic Research Institute (1996-1998) as an art project

produced in 1997 a study proposing introduction of new measuring unit - The Slovene Mediterranean Metre (SMM). This unit of measurement is based on the length of the Slovene coastline in which 1 SMM equals to 46,6 cm which would double Slovene coast. As you have already presumed, this is of course an ironic approach to the political dynamics and polemics in our country.

But, after these short digressions, let us get back to political and social background and its impact on art. In Philippines 90 % of people declare themselves as Christians, while in Slovenia 53 % are declared Roman Catholics, 2.2 % Orthodox, 0.9 % Protestants, Evangelical, 2,6 % Muslims, 0.1 % Jewish, 30.2 % Atheist, and 3.7 % define themselves as religious. The capital city of Ljubljana has 260.000 inhabitants, Metro Manila 12 million. How can we make any kind of comparison between these numbers, and of course contexts they create? Since the whole city of Ljubljana could fit into one building block of Manila. But still, we have culture and arts, and our system works in a completely different framework than the one we find ourselves currently. So, I will make an overview of the cultural policies and conditions in which we operate.

The main legislative and financing institutions in Slovenia are Ministry of Culture and local communities / municipalities. Ministry is in charge of funding – Slovenian National Cultural Programme and creating and implementing legislative framework, while local communities – municipalities are in charge of funding local cultural programs. In the whole ex-Yugoslavian countries culture was defined as public interest and countries mostly retained this framework and defining current cultural policies.

Our state budget in 2015 is cca 9.800.000.000,00 EUR, and it's share for culture is cca 1.5 % or 155.590.000,00 EUR. All Slovene

cultural milieu is at this point engaged to raise the percentage up to 2 % for years 2016 in 2017.

The system is divided into public and private institutions. Public cultural institutions in Slovenia are the ones founded and established by the state or municipality and have permanent and stable funding for employees and cultural activities/programs. Their programming is authorized by the founders eg National Gallery, Slovene National Theatre, National Opera and alike.

On the other hand, private cultural institutions are the ones established by individuals or other legal entities such as NGO's and commercial subjects and they don't have permanent and stable funding, but operate by funding themselves from different sources. Usually they don't have employees and in the greatest percent they are not-for-profit organisations. Their programming is independent from the state or municipality influences and demands. These actors fund themselves from state and/or municipality budget through the open calls, EU open calls (Creative Europe), with the help of different private foundations, sponsorships, volunteering and own resources. Funding of the Ministry of Culture is divided in 80% for public institutions (previously mentioned stable funding system) and only 7,40 is dedicated to private entities (based on annual open calls and thus unstable on the long term).

In recent years, important funding comes from European Union and its' main programme for culture – Creative Europe. For example Slovenian cultural organisations in the cultural cooperation projects in 2014 & 15 participated in 38 links established by Slovenian project leaders.

This brings us to the art scene and how cultural and art workers operate in this context and framework? Since ex-Yugoslavia times, we established a status of free-lance artist (independent

artist) who is given the possibility to obtain the social and pension funds by the state. Such state supported status is defined as self-employment and can be attained by curators, critics, painters, actors, artists, musicians, writers and so on. It is ambiguous position – since they are given certain kind of base, but on the other hand it produces highly unstable positions with huge number of precarious workers who work mostly on a project based levels and are dependent on open calls, private funding and adjusting to demands of the funding trends. On the other hand, this kind of framework offers them a certain kind of independence and autonomy. Currently status of independent artists have 2377 persons, and 1619 of them have the right to payment of social security.

This brings us to another important question – and that one is can we talk about the private market in the field of contemporary visual arts, or any art in Slovenia? Well, no. Private galleries or exhibition spaces in Slovenia are funded mostly through public funds and are mostly registered as non-governmental organisations. Private art collectors are rare and they are mostly inclined towards traditional arts, while we have only few profit/sales oriented galleries dealing with antiquities.

So, this is the landscape in which SCCA operates and forms an important segment of support system for contemporary arts & culture and civil society. We are a non-governmental and non-profit organisation established in 2000, as a spin-off of Soros Centre for Contemporary Arts-Ljubljana (1993–1999). We generate innovative programmes and cherish interdisciplinary approach. We have two streams through which we contribute substantially to the maintenance and development of the art system. One is archiving practice dedicated to collecting, storing and preserving video practices (DIVA Station, a physical and web archive of video art), and the second one is dedicated to

educating young curators and critics (World of Art School for Curators and Critics of Contemporary Art). Both of these programmes compensate lacks in the institutional system and represent important pillars of the cultural system in Slovenia.

But, current trends in Europe keep us with the rather unclear perspective. We are more and more encouraged to re-orient ourselves to the market-based operating mode, while essential preconditions are not established yet. This is bringing us into uneasy and uncertain situation where planning and developing our structures is highly precarious and existence put in question. And this point is where our comparison from the beginning intertwines. So, yes, we have disparate capacities, histories, geographies and cultures, but it seems our futures look pretty similar.

## 2.5. PERSPECTIVES IN COLLABORATION

Narawan Kyo Pathomwat



When I was invited to this symposium I wasn't quite sure what my presentation should be on and fluctuated between talking about an overview of independent spaces in Thailand and only talking about the reading room. But, then I realized that by talking through the reading room and the many problems and obstacles that it has encountered over the years, I can demonstrate and possibly magnify these issues in more concrete and comprehensive ways.

I'll start by explaining the reading room: what it is and what it does. It is basically a contemporary art library, activity space and project platform. The library holds around a few thousands items consisting of books, catalogues, brochures, postcards, and

everything in-between. These materials are focused on contemporary art in Thailand and other countries.. It's an operating library open to the public free of charge, so you can borrow books and videos and attend events for free.

As for events and activities, the emphasis is on issues that are relevant to contemporary situations both locally and internationally, so most of the events are socio-political in nature. I'm trying to bring people from different disciplines together to discuss relevant issues so as to offer not only information but also discourse. We also collaborate with many organizations, collectives, and individuals, locally and internationally especially with those whose concerns are on education, accessibility and dissemination of knowledge.

I opened the reading room around six years ago in 2009, since I've come to realize that Bangkok in particular and Thailand in general have no resource for contemporary art. Many libraries only hold books on ancient until modern times, while completely lacking in contemporary materials.. It's a history that is being constructed as we speak and it's probably harder to define and collect since it hasn't been polished and judged by time. Also, most contemporary materials are catalogues, journals and even leaflets, which are quite ephemeral and tend to be overlooked. So I decided to rent a space, haul my books over, and share them with whoever is interested.

After opening the space, a friend suggested that we organize a film screening at the reading room. So, we started working on a film program together. After a while, other people knew of the activity and started to propose and/or request more diverse events, which coincided with the tightening grip of government censorship, forat that time, the country was under military

control. So we also started providing space for events that were banned or censored from other spaces, which sadly included educational institutions and art centres. By then, I started to realize the many dimensions and purposes that one small physical space could serve. I have also certainly learned along the way that running a space is an ongoing process, that it should be flexible enough to allow itself to serve the need of the community and society. These are some examples of the activities that we've done over the years:

- one-off events responding to the socio-political climate
- space for rejected / censored events
- long-term annual series (night school, re:reading, book club, blind date, etc)
- off-site project (book map, free text, popup)

We're also running on different platforms especially online, which includes our youtube channel that provides recordings of most talks/lectures organized at the space.

I've also come to be aware of another issue which is the audience, since there was and still are a few artists coming to the space whether to read or to participate in the activities. Most of our visitors are from other disciplines, from social and political science, film, literature and other fields. Majority of artists in Thailand are not only uninterested in non-art issues, but are quite conservative as well. This is something that many of my non-Thai or non-art friends/colleagues find quite baffling. It is a general assumption that contemporary artists are inclined to be politically and socially active or at least politically and socially conscious, to the point that most of them are left-leaning and have a strong anti-establishment approach. These assumptions, however, are proven invalid in Thailand. Due to a myriad of matters in this country, contemporary art in Thailand is a paradoxical, enigmatic, and almost incomprehensible realm.

Every time a conversation with non-Thai and/or non-art friends and colleagues turns to the topic of the state of contemporary art and the artists in Thailand, I have found that the most surprising aspect for them is when they realize that majority of the artists are either conservative or non-political. It must seem counter-intuitive, especially since the country has been smothered in political turmoil for almost a decade and other states under similar circumstances are normally populated with progressive activist-artists whose works strongly reflect discontent with the military or totalitarian regime.

Meanwhile in Thailand, direct and inexplicit dissenting political art works are conspicuously scarce. When political matters appear in the art, they are usually those that propagate the country's three main institutions: the Nation, Buddhism, and the King. A great number of artists produce works in support of the military and in condemnation of democracy and equal rights. So, what is going on here?

Of course, there is no absolute answer to this complex and abiding issue. One relevant aspect in this matter is the country's socio-cultural hegemony that is revealed through class hierarchy, where culture and norms are manipulated by a dominant class to create an ideology that supports status quo and averts opposing views. When our so-called prime minister came into power through a military coup last year, the army called for activists, journalists and academics who they perceived as dissents into the military camp and threatened them. It was very old school. The atmosphere in the country was like a throwback to the cold war period. Every TV channel played patriotic songs, while every evening, there was an announcement of dissents who needed to report themselves to the army the next day. The list of names

would appear on TV one after another slowly rolling up the screen. It was an absurd time. And everything that happened after that would make Kafka or Kundera proud. The prime minister, our "dear uncle," would have all kinds of ridiculous campaigns, like the campaign of bringing "happiness" back to the people, a la North Korea. Then, the crackdown of intellectuals and dissents started getting more and more absurd. At certain points, people were arrested for eating a sandwich in public, reading "1984" in public, and doing the Hunger Game's three-finger salute in public; some foreigner even got into trouble for buying a t-shirt with the message "peace please" on it.

Images of the king are ubiquitous. They're everywhere. Education is exploited as a propaganda machine. There is only one official narrative of history, only one version of the truth that promotes the three icons of the nation. There is a lack of general sentiment in accepting differences in opinion both in school and in society. Questioning these values would bring about accusations of being unpatriotic, immoral, or anti-royal. In these unusual settings, democracy and equal rights have somehow been twisted and distorted by right-wings and royalists as anti-monarchy or opposition to anything good in this world.

So art and artists come into this context as producers of spectacular images representing moral goodness. For example just last year, there was a right-wing/royalist group of protesters rallying against the general elections and the support the military. A Number of important artists enthusiastically came out to support this cause, producing works to help raise funds and all. I would even go further to say that most of these so-called "political artists" in Thailand are moralists at heart, who only align with high moral authorities and create works to publicly

shame politicians and other individuals that are perceived as corrupt and in opposition to the virtuous king. Therefore, they do not have ideological convictions or intellectual understandings, but only a spiritual and religious approach to the political situation. But of course, they overlook and are unable to acknowledge the fact that institutions that are most corrupted are the ones that are most revered: the monarchy, Buddhist council, and the military. The monarchy in particular are protected by a harmful lese majeste law (law punishes anyone doing/ saying anything offensive about the king, queen, crown prince, and also past kings). This law has put countless people away for years from mere accusations.

Anyway, I'm not entirely pessimistic about the situation. There is definitely some hope in the art community: there are more collaborations between people from different disciplines; there is more writing, translating, research projects; and there is also more collaborative projects among Southeast Asian art scholars/ art historians.

## 2.6. WORLD OF ART, SCHOOL FOR CURATORS AND CRITICS OF CONTEMPORARY ART

Simona Žvanut



The World of Art School is the sole programme in Slovenia and one of the rare comprehensive programmes in the broader region aimed towards practical and theoretical education in the field of contemporary art. Today it covers a 2-year study programme as well as a research, exhibition and production platform for analysing and reflecting on artistic, curatorial and critical practices.

### *History/Establishment*

As an educational programme it was introduced in 1997. It was developed out of a need for theoretical and practical education in the field of

contemporary visual art and which no university programme in Slovenia offers. It came out of a premise that future experts need and should be taught the skills and methods, along with gaining knowledge and insight into the critical and theoretical apparatus, as all this should eventually help them when tackling the complex matter of the contemporary world of art. Namely, in the nineties, art production in Slovenia formed an important agent in cultural and social processes and was also integrated into international scene, while the theoretical and curatorial apparatuses lagged behind.

In response, the educational programme *World of Art* brought a series of public lectures, with international experts, which shed some light upon the artistic practices and art theories significant for the understanding of contemporary arts. As a unique programme in this field, it also offered a course for curators of contemporary art, enabling participants to gain knowledge necessary to perform the work of a contemporary art curator.

### *Development*

As the years went by, the programme was becoming increasingly complex and was also logically placed within the conceptually rounded up operation of the SCCA–Ljubljana. For first three years *WoA* comprised a course for curators and a series of public lectures; in 2000, it was upgraded with workshops on art theory and practice, which in 2003 further developed into a seminar on writing and marked the transition from an educational programme to a school for contemporary art. In this moment school consisted of course for curators with final exhibition, seminar in writing, series of lectures and a yearly anthology. That same year, we intensified our research into similar programmes abroad, inspired by our search for interesting ideas, as well as a chance to reflect on our own work by talking to other people, and our aspirations for improvement.

2006/07 our course for curators was transformed into the Laboratorium of curatorial practices. The Laboratory team consisted of seven curators, critics, theoreticians and artists who took part in previous courses and seminars and were chosen through the internal call for participation. Through one year they were preparing a series of public events, debates and actions dealing with the field of contemporary art and curatorial practices but discussing School's achievements. The theoretical framework was tested also in practice as they've prepared an exhibition of contemporary art hosting in Škuc Gallery in Ljubljana and in the City Gallery of Labin in Croatia.

Thus, up to 2009, we worked on reflection on the programme's structure and content. We constantly developed collaborations with similar international programmes and institutions, testing various formats, re-thinking, discussing and generating numerous ideas within a wider circle of selected experts. Our great concern has always been an evaluation of the past programme and consideration of effective models of education in the field of contemporary art.

All this contributed to the pilot format of the school's 13<sup>th</sup> year, when individual school segments – the course for curators, the seminar in writing – as well as its various formats – writing workshops, a close-reading workshop, exhibitions, modules, lecturers – were extended and divided into two years programme.



### *Today*

Today it covers a 2-year study programme as well as a research, exhibition and production platform for analysing and reflecting on artistic, curatorial and critical practices and ends up with final exhibition designed collectively by the students. The 1<sup>st</sup> season is dedicated to the acquisition of art-historical, theoretical and methodological knowledge and skills and the 2<sup>nd</sup> is dedicated to critical and curatorial studies and practice.

Programme of the 1<sup>st</sup> season includes: A series of lectures on XX. century art (Overview of artistic practices, trends, socio-political contexts and key shifts in the understanding, thematising, analysis and historical positioning of visual arts / Thematic overview of video production in Slovenia.), seminar on theory, seminar on writing about contemporary art, study excursions, studio visits, meetings with curators, artists, theorists, and writers.

2<sup>nd</sup> year includes: a series of modules on practical curatorial work: e.g. fundraising, public relations for contemporary art exhibition, editorial work on a catalogue of the exhibition, design of the exhibition, design of the catalogue, documentation; and Curatorial course: participants conceptualise and prepare an exhibition of contemporary art under the tutor's leadership.



### *Public Program*

Series of public lectures  
Critical reflection of curatorial practices and the complex relationship between theory and practice in the field of contemporary art are the constant problem fields of public lectures.

We invite various international and local artists, curators, theorists and critics to lecture on individual and collective strategies and tactics, presenting their view on the individual topic relevant for understanding of the complex world of contemporary arts, and their curatorial, theoretical and artistic practice, which introduced unique models of reflective and responsible operation.

Each year we define a topic: e.g. in 2014 and 2015 we turned our focus on the condition and status of contemporary critical writing in the field of art and culture.

Public lectures are often accompanied with public workshops – It depends on the lecturer invited or the chosen topic – workshops are obligatory of School's participants but we open few places for interested public also. In general the aim of these workshops is to foster and enhance writing in various methods and genres, from historization and critical texts to longer essays and short catalogue presentations.

### *Other Segments*

#### *Production of Study Material*

Anthologies are a comprehensive documentation of the annual School's programmes (lectures, interviews, reviews, reflections, final exhibitions ...). They offer theoretical reading and study material on the current topics from the world of contemporary art and its position in society.

#### *Web Portal [www.worldofart.org](http://www.worldofart.org)*

Online portal that presents the educational process, a selection of students' texts (exhibition reviews, reviews of art scenes from study excursions, reflections on lectures and workshops), as well as on-line manuals and publications on the curatorial and critical practices.

### *Library*

Literature specialised in contemporary arts and theory, focused on curatorial practices, video and new media combined with Central and East European catalogues; study archive with over 1.000 video works by local and international artists, documents of events, TV shows and works from European media archives.

### *Collaborations*

The fundamental characteristic of the World of Art has always been its increasingly intensive involvement in the international art world.

The school has of course been internationally oriented from the very start, having included numerous international lecturers and workshop mentors, and often also students from neighbouring countries.

However, since 2010, we have managed to deepen previously sporadic or short-term collaborations, and through several years of co-operation, connect with similar and complementary European programmes. We have already collaborated with many of these – from university programs to non-institutionalised initiatives – both on various group projects, as well as through presentations and exchanges.

We have thus established several parallel and intersecting platforms, enabling an in-depth exchange of knowledge on theoretical and practical education within the field of contemporary art. We have shared useful experience, co-influenced programme development, and most importantly, connected different protagonists from the art world.

Equally important results of this co-operation are the connections and knowledge gained by School's participants (future curators and critics) who

participated in our carefully prepared study excursions, where they were introduced to the art scene of individual cities.

We helped them learn about good artistic practices, aroused their critical and analytical awareness with questionable approaches and connected them with their future colleagues – the curators and critics of upcoming generations.

### *Exhibition and Research Projects*

In collaboration with different curators or institution the world of art team develops various one- or more- years long exhibition and research projects. This segment of the school is flexibly adapting to school's programme, other SCCA–Ljubljana's projects and collaborations. In a way it is a segment open for experimentations and testing of new ideas and models of working and of education in contemporary art world. E. g. in 2015 Saša Nabergoj and myself curated an exhibition which we included in the school's programme as a practical example of curatorial work. As part of this process which lasted for 8 months and was guided by us as mentors, the participants wrote the accompanying text to the exhibition and equipped the gallery with short descriptions about the works. They also took part in the promotion of the show, its production and technical execution, as well as the concept and implementation of accompanying events (guided tour and education programme for secondary schools).

The final stage of this exhibition was an evaluation of the process and exhibition set-up and it was part of the Curating-In-Depth project also. We took an advantage of that rare opportunity to have in Ljubljana the group of artists and curators from Philippines, Myanmar and Singapore who shared their observations and comments with us and with our students. As the artist – it was a solo show – is from Turkey – we could really discuss about

different curatorial approaches and strategies in the context of the cultural background worldwide – but having in mind that this exhibition was part of the school's process and therefore has its own *differentia specifica*.

### *The Impact*

We think that only such a systematic and complex program could bring about necessary structural changes, which has already been proven with evidence in practice after 15 years of operation. Development of such an ambitious and complex educational program within an NGO has many advantages but downsides also. The major one are finances, which are modest and unstable since we depend on changeable current politics and several open calls of our Ministry for Culture and Municipality of Ljubljana. But what is a downside is, ironically, also a preference as being independent from rigorous, old fashion bureaucratic university system in which it usually takes ages to change anything within the curriculum. We can easily and quickly respond to all the time changing situation in the contemporary art system, work more one on one with our participants and adapt the programme flexibly to specific needs and interests of each generation.

That the World of Art is a success is proven by the very number of successful students. So far, more than 100 students have completed the course and many have found relevant jobs – some almost immediately after the course, while others have remained active as independent curators, including internationally. This is a clear sign that the pioneering school for the curators of contemporary art, the only one in Slovenia and the wider region to offer both theoretical knowledge and practical experience in training for the increasingly popular and demanding profession, provides opportunities to experts and enables them to begin serious work in the area of contemporary art.

Former participants can be found in galleries and museums, as well as in smaller organisations. More and more of them are deciding to work as freelancers and are thus present at many important international events and exhibitions. And it is in these very students and their projects that we can see the school's positive influences and promise for the future.

## 2.7. DIVA STATION: ARCHIVING PRACTICES IN VIDEO ART

Barbara Borčič



DIVA Station is a physical and web archive of video art which has been developed in 2005 at SCCA-Ljubljana with the intent to research, document, present and archive video/media art.

By now, it contains more than 1000 items of varying materials. Apart from artistic works, it also contains documentations, television shows about video and new media, and documentation of events and individual artists. Various sources are of utter importance for research and understanding of video/media art. It contributes greatly to the possibility of interpretation of art works, as well as the context in which they were produced. DIVA Station constantly adds newly acquired works to the archive and promotes an overall understanding of artistic oeuvre by organising discussions and presentations.

Materials from the physical archive are available for public viewing at Project Room SCCA at Metelkova 6, Ljubljana, where we also organise discussions with artists that are directly involved with archiving contemporary video art.

Collecting material for DIVA Station is based on a documentary, archival and research project on video art in Slovenia "Videodokument: Video Art in Slovenia 1969-1998", which was developed at SCCA-Ljubljana between 1994 and 1999.

"Videodokument" was the first systematic research of video art in Slovenia, and was important in framing terminology and setting theoretic basis for further research.

Based on a comprehensive research of video and media art practices DIVA Station encompasses a number of programmes: "Archiving Practices" (research, study exhibitions and educational seminars that thematise the importance of AV archives, their creation, integration and accessibility), "Videospotting" (a series of video programs of relevant Slovene production and its presentation abroad), "Artservis Collection" (a thematic project on production conditions in culture), "Internet Portfolio" (presentations of the selected artists on the Internet) and a collection of Slovene and international books, catalogues and periodicals on contemporary video and new media art and its theory.

DIVA station is a partner archive of GAMA (Gateway to Archives of Media Art), an international platform that connects similar European media art archives and enables them better visibility and wider accessibility.

DIVA Station: study video archive of contemporary arts collects different genres and materials such as (video and new media arts, documents, and international archive projects):

- Art video and documents (actions, projects, performances, lectures, installations, interviews): over 1000 units (VHS, S-VHS, Beta SP, mini DV, CD-ROM, DVD, CD, mini disk, audio cassettes)
- ŠKUC-Forum video production (1982-2000)
- Documentary archive of SCCA-Ljubljana (since 1993: programs, projects, actions, lectures, panels, seminars, workshops)
- Art projects: installations, actions, performances, exhibition projects, net art, TV projects (produced by SCCA-Ljubljana)
- Art videos included in "Videospotting" program (since 1994)
- International archive projects

Apart from a comprehensive archive of local video works, we also keep archival projects by various international research organisations and individual video works given by the artists. Most of these works have been presented in several public events. All these materials represent an important reference point and additional incentive for our professional work, and likewise offer a possibility for international exchange.



DIVA Station currently keeps "40 Years of Video in Germany", a documentation and archival project that includes English and German version of the book and 10 DVD compilations with a selection of referential works from different decades, such as "Video Edition Austria - Release 01," a documentation and archival project, and compilation edition of Austrian video art published by independent distribution house Medienwerkstatt from Vienna. We are also proud to present a compilation "Rewind + Play. An Anthology of Early British Video Art", a compilation of alternative Paper Tiger TV, compiled by SCCA-Sarajevo and many others.

A series of projects with the "Archiving Practices" are discussing the issue of the production and dissemination of video (& new media) archives on a practical and theoretical level. To emphasize the meaning of audio-visual archives and their accessibility, we conducted researches, curate exhibitions and organized educational seminars on the topic of "Practices of archiving video and media art" in order to present the local circumstances, compare them to successful international practices, and establish long-term collaborations. At the same time, we have also examined our own archival projects and international platforms.

We work on the premises that present day documentation and archiving are necessary for the understanding of contemporary visual and media art praxis. Establishing archives, promoting their use, accessibility, dissemination and defining their ownership are important questions that are still not sufficiently exposed in the Slovenian cultural environment. We have set ourselves the task to present significant archival models (experimental, systematic and partial) that are already in use, to address and promote their functionalities and mutual interconnections.

Furthermore, we wish to support and promote the praxis of open and constructive exchange and emancipated works by the artists in the system of contemporary art. We believe that post-production processes (documentation, archiving, dissemination) and independent production of individual archives that include availability and visibility of their presentation materials are important parts of this system.

Within the theoretical and practical engagement with archives we strive:

- to establish a platform for preservation, presentation and dissemination of audio-visual contents (contextual level).

- to trigger the institutional change, i.e. to make possible the inclusion of the audio-visual/video archives under the sector of the national cultural heritage (political level).
- to present models and means of preservation, presentational strategies and possibilities of dissemination (theoretical level).
- to educate artists in the production of digital archives and to inform them about the models of archiving for the purposes of storage, presentation and dissemination which also includes the maintenance of website of DIVA Station: <http://www.e-arhiv.org/diva>

## 2.8. **MARKETS OF RESISTANCE**

Angel Velasco Shaw

January 15, 2015

Dear Planting Rice,

Sitting in Hill Station Restaurant in Baguio City as I wait for a TV glimpse of Pope Francis' momentous visit, I scroll through roughly one-eighth of the Markets of Resistance (MoR ) project images on my iPhone, out of hundreds. I search for a way of taking me back to my recent past as the project's originator, co-curator, and participant. I wonder out loud— "What do I need to search for?!" I am still possessed by the whole experience. Like all of my other be-careful-of-what-you-wish-for projects, I suppose I will forever be processing this one too. They are all part of my life's continuum—connecting the backwards to the forwards over and over again. The backstitch was always my favorite in Home Economics. After November 9th, when the Ax(iS) Art team dismantled the market stalls, I fully admitted to myself that I can no longer say it's not me who's ambitious, my projects are...

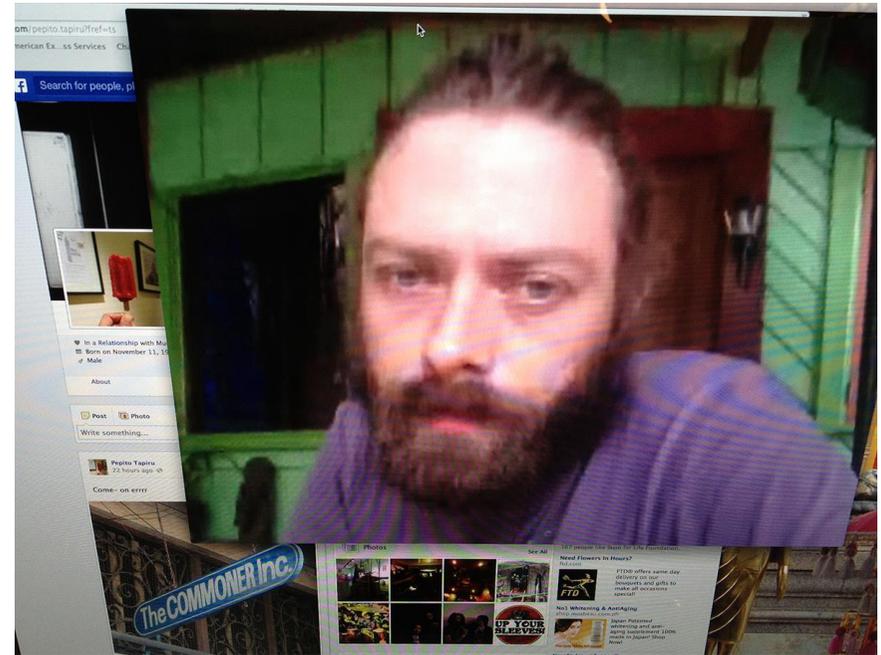
June 23, 2015

Talk about writer's block and being crazy busy too boot! I have sat down to write this article on countless occasions. Mea Culpa. As I write this final version, I am gearing up to produce a scaled down incarnation of Markets of Resistance at Philippine Women's University (PWU), July 11-19 with the MoR students and some of the Baguio arts community of artists and poets. The activities are meant to showcase aspects of the Baguio project, not to replicate it. That would be impossible. The conceptualization and implementation of MoR would change greatly, since it was site, theme and topic specific.

I found my May 3, 2013 LinkedIn email to you about Planting Rice coming on board as a potential collaborator. I was still living in New York. Moving to the Philippines indefinitely was a pipe dream. I'm not exactly sure why I copied and pasted it into a Word document. Perhaps it has something to do with my obsession to document and archive everything that I deem important.



August 2013: Mines View Park Standee Tourist Attraction. One of my early inspirations.



February 2013: Skyping with Kawayan de Guia about the Markets of Resistance project.

May 3, 2013—Email Excerpt:

Dear Lian and Sidd,

Here is a copy of a proposal that I submitted to apexart Gallery, to their Franchise Program. "CONVENIENT CONSUMPTION? MARKETS OF CULTURAL RESISTANCE" will be a part of this ongoing series of cross-cultural exchange projects that I have been developing and working on since 2006.

OBJECTIVES:

To decentralize Manila as the Philippine "hub" for contemporary art; to demystify ethnic indigenous and non-indigenous

perceptions of each other; and to demonstrate how art and cultural convergences can generate multiple forms of intervention necessary for social change.

#### PROPOSAL:

The Philippine highland city of Baguio, a former colonial hill station, developed from the U.S. government's obsession to build a "Little America" in the midst of the Philippine-American War. Confiscating thousands of hectares of tribal lands and displacing rightful owners over a thirty-year period, the Americans built Baguio into a flourishing city housing a crucial military outpost and serving as a lush U.S. playground, in the process securing Baguio's place as a major tourist destination.

Examining the Philippines' Spanish and American colonial legacies and the ways in which Baguio's people continue to repel western domination through creative repurposing and resistance, this exhibition explores the representation of Baguio's ethnic indigenous people and how their rich culture is commercialized, and highlights ethnic indigenous, non-indigenous, and immigrant Baguio artists creating vibrant contemporary art that inspires cultural exchanges and collaborations.

Baguio's markets are the mainstay of various communities. The stalls comprising each market are not merely filled with staple foods, goods, or tourist souvenirs that reduce indigenous culture to culturally bankrupt objects. They are also spaces where locals congregate, gossip, and keep oral traditions alive; buy the latest trends, and trade black market and relief goods. They represent a waning cultural tradition signifying resistance to greedy mega supermarket chains and mall developers.

Artists of all genres will be invited to create market stall-specific original works highlighting the ebb and flow of Baguio's unique

hybrid identity. Issues include: colonial resistance and subjugation, appropriation of western practices, the impact of tourism and how markets may or may not represent convenient consumption.

The exhibition will be presented in three strategic markets throughout Baguio. A total of six stalls will be rented, two stalls per market—1) City Market, where locals go, preferring to buy goods sold mostly by indigenous people; 2) Mines View Park, frequented by foreign and Filipino tourists interested in buying "authentic" cultural artifacts and/or posing with indigenous people in tribal costumes; 3) Burnham Park Muslim Market, where pearls, batiks and other products are sold by migrant Muslims.

Together with a local coordinator, the curator will organize two artists' brainstorming sessions to explore the project's theme, topics, objectives, and discuss the artists' works. The curator will then select the artists and discuss exhibition materials, locations, and individual and collaborative pieces. Additionally, performance artists will be invited to participate and filmmakers will be invited to document the entire project process.

Several things changed since I originally sent this email to you.

1. I did not receive any of the three grants that I applied for.
2. I moved to the Philippines, got a job at Philippine Women's University in the School of Fine Arts and Design teaching in their graduate program and became the founding director of the Institute for Heritage, Culture and the Arts. A modified version of the original proposal for Markets of Resistance became the inaugural project which was produced collaboratively with Ax(iS) Art under the leadership of Kawayan de Guia, eight PWU-SFAD and Communication Arts undergraduate students and two faculty members.

3. Project components in Manila on the PWU campus consisted of two trimester-formal and informal classroom sessions; four classroom interactions with visiting University of Washington students in which students gave presentations of their art practices, artists talks with filmmaker, Kidlat Tahimik and painter/installation artist, Kawayan de Guia, three cultural immersion trips to Baguio City, Bontoc and Sagada in the Cordillera region; and students' studio art time to produce artworks for the Baguio market exhibition. Baguio activities included art students' presentations; artists talks and studio visits with Tommy Hafalla, Willie Magtibay, Leonard Aguinaldo, and Nona Garcia; a trip to the BenCab museum and interaction with the national artist, BenCab; three alternative "tourist" walking tours conducted by local artists—Willie Magtibay, Carlo Villafuerte, and Rocky Cajigan; film screenings with Kidlat Tahimik, Ferdie Balanag and Lester Valle and Carla Ocampo; performances/spoken word events with Baguio poets; and the making of a student documentary film. The over all project culminated in a series of events that included: a three-week exhibition in three market stalls named after indigenous women placed on display in the 1904 St. Louis World's Fair in Baguio City where people bartered for artworks; two site-specific art installations, film screenings about current social issues in the Cordilleras; an outdoor poetry reading and performance art in Hilltop Market.
4. It's interesting to note, that I didn't mention in this grant proposal that the artworks were available for barter-trade, not for monetary sale, one of the crucial innovative aspects of the entire project. (Maybe that's why I didn't get the grant. I only had a 500 word count). Instead, an interested buyer had to negotiate with the artist about what she/he deemed to be the equivalent value in terms of goods—the artist needs

in daily life (e.g. sack/s of rice, poultry, meat, coffee, vegetables, pre-paid phone cards, house ware, children's necessities, clothing, etc.), which the customer had to purchase themselves and then give it to the artist in exchange for her/his artwork.

Opportunities to fulfill a dream are an addiction. Twenty-seven years ago, I met people in the Baguio arts community that I became life-long friends with. Never did I imagine the impact that these kindred spirits would have on the totality of my life—Rene Aquitania Santiago Bose, Ben Cabrera, Tommy Hafalla, Willie Magtibay, Perry Mamaril, Sting Romawac, Kidlat Tahimik and Roberto Villanueva. The Baguio art scene was thriving in the late 80s thru the 90s. Sadly, after Roberto and then later, Santiago died, I didn't go up to Baguio that much anymore. Fast forward to August 2013, the City of the Pines or I used to fondly say, Sin City became my home a way from home again. This time, the off-spring of my former tribe had quite literally grown up and new friendships also formed.

So much of my life's work as a media artist/filmmaker, cultural worker, and educator has been about wanting to share with others the profound impact of experiences that I have had everywhere in the world that I'd been to, but most of all, the desire to share the multitude of humanity that my adopted family in Baguio bestowed upon me.

Markets of Resistance is my humble way of saying "thank you." I am finally in a position in my life where I have more of the means and the confidence to give something genuine back to a community that was and remains my soul food. Santi and Robert were lighting my way when I found myself wading through a flood of darkness during those moments when I felt out of sorts in a city that no longer looked or felt familiar to me anymore.

And on an even more personal level, the project is a homage to my great-grandmother and grandmother, who I was told, walked from village to village with an oxen full of goods to sell or trade until mother and daughter settled in Libertad Market and set up shop. Throughout my nomadic life, I reveled in every market I could find because it is the place where culture thrives.

Markets of Resistance is not about nostalgia though. It is a tribute to those who continue to nurture a wholistic, organic vision for coexistence, have the perseverance to connect the past to the present through their daily inter/actions. They maintain community any way possible and continue to celebrate the importance of traditional and contemporary Cordillera arts and culture to all who will stop to look, listen, interact, absorb and pass these treasures on to share with others.

The Baguio arts and literary art scene has grown tremendously since my introduction to it in 1988. It is a sight to behold—thriving and diversified, one that the lowlands must reckon with in ways that deserve its own article. Suffice it to say, the torch continues to be passed on generation to generation, what each one does with whatever constitutes and contains its flames remains to be seen. For me, who is in-between the generations of Santi, Robert, Kidlat Tahimik, and Tommy— and Kawayan, Padma, and Kidlat Sr., and then after them—Rocky Cajigan and Dumay Solinggay, I am honored to have created with and alongside each of them. There is no greater feeling that I know of than to use one’s creative and intellectual gifts to collaborate, inspire creativity, provoke critical thinking, and resist the norms of societies that do not celebrate and support the value of heritage, art and cultural practices.

## ONWARDS



July 24, 2014: MoR PWU-SFAD students learning to play the drums: Abbey Batocabe, Emen Batocabe, Joyce Reyes, Christian Sta. Ines, Sarj Casuyon, Mae Tuaño, Lance Valenzula, and Jovesh, their teacher.



July 25, 2014: MoR students' presentations in Kawayan de Guia's studio with Kidlat Tahimik, Rocky Cajigan, Santos Bayucca, Willie Magtibay, Carlo

*Villafuerte, Rei Chan, Josephine Turalba, Kawayan de Guia, Nona Garcia, and Abbey Batocabe.*



*July 25, 2014: MoR students: Mia Dominguez, Abbey Batocabe, Joyce Reyes, Christian Sta. Ines listening to photographer, Tommy Hafalla's artist's talk.*



*July 26, 2014: MoR students listening to presentations given by anthropologist and poet, Padmapani Perez, comparative literature scholar and Kalinga poet,*

*Scott Saboy and Kalinga poet and performance artist, Dumay Solingay at VOCAS.*



*Celestina Arvisu bartered art supplies for an Emen Batocabe painting.*

## **2.6. CURATION AS CULTURAL WORK**

**Antares Gomez Bartolome**



Jaucian's *Fork Bomb* at 1335 Mabini, the *HLMX Wall Project* at the Hacienda Luisita Massacre Commemoration, Alwin Reamillo's *Tinubuang Lupa* at the National Commission for Culture and the Arts, Cian Dayrit's *Bla-bla Archeological Complex* at the Vargas Museum, and *Blindspots 01: The President's Office* also at the Vargas Museum. He is a cultural activist and is a member of organizations such as Concerned Artists of the Philippines and Luisita Watch, as well as a spokesperson for Artista Kontra Korupsyon (AKKSYON). He is a convenor and consultant of Graffiesta, a street art and graffiti initiative run by Kabataan para sa Tunay na Kalayaan (KARATULA, Youth for Genuine Freedom) and has also taught courses at Philippine Women's University and Kalayaan College. He was a participant in the Young Curators Workshop of the 8th Berlin Biennale in 2014. He also most recently served as Festival Director for Project Bakawan, a collaborative art festival that sought to raise critical awareness and build networks to address the environmental crisis.

The presentation explores the relationship of curatorial work and political struggle within the context of the Philippines. It briefly tracks the development of art practices and discourses alongside the National Democratic movement in the Philippines from the 1970's onward, and explores how curatorial practice figures in, and is perhaps challenged and refigured by, the varied approaches to artistic production, presentation, and distribution involved in the broader frame of cultural work undertaken by the National Democratic movement in the present.

Antares Gomez Bartolome is a Manila-based independent writer and curator, and practicing artist. He is an Art History graduate from the College of Fine Arts in the University of the Philippines, Diliman, whose recent curatorial projects include *Hold Everything Dear* at the University of the Philippines Film Institute, Ian Carlo

## 2.7. FRAMES OF CONCEPTUALISM FROM SOUTHEAST ASIA

Isabel Ching



While considered as an important vector leading to the plurality of artistic practices globally, “conceptualism” could appear to have only registered frail trails in Southeast Asia. How do we understand, discuss and frame the conceptualisms of specific localities in the region? Looking at a case study from Myanmar, the Philippines and Singapore, we try to speculate about the fraught, sometimes contested, meanings of conceptualism(s) in history and the efforts made today to reclaim or reanimate their legacies.

Isabel Ching is a curator and writer who holds a Masters of Arts in Art History from the University of Sydney, Australia. She is currently a Ph. D. candidate at the University of Heidelberg, Germany, and member of its Cluster of Asia and Europe in a Global Context’s Graduate Program for Transcultural Studies. Her doctoral research project investigates conceptualism in Myanmar, The Philippines, and Singapore from the 1960’s to 1990’s. She is the co-curator of *To Be Continued, and Complete & Unabridged parts 1 and 2*, an exhibition on Filipino conceptual artist Roberto Chabet (2011), and *‘plAy’*, a major showcase of installation and video art from Myanmar (2010). She has also curated exhibitions of artists from China, Hong Kong, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore and Thailand, and was recently guest curator of the 9th BrandNew Art Project in 2014 hosted by Bangkok University, Thailand.

## 2.8. A SHORT INTRODUCTION OF MYANMAR PERFORMANCE ART

Moe Satt



This overview covers the history of Myanmar performance art that started in the mid-90's, particularly identifying who they were and what kind of issues they dealt with. The presentation also locates differences and parallelism between the first and second generation of performance artists. Likewise, it goes into what the context is of indoor performances as contrasted from gallery sites and other outdoor/ more public venues.

Moe Satt lives and works as an artist and curator in Yangon, Myanmar. He started creating art after graduating with a degree in Zoology in 2005. Moe Satt is part of a new generation of Myanmar artists to emerge after the year 2000, with a different

approach to making, from conception to embodiment. He was invited to be the resident artist for Rimbun Dahan (Malaysia, 2008), Hooyong Performing Art Center (S-Korea, 2008), 3331 Arts Chiyoda (Japan, 2011), and De Deelstaat Nijmegen, (Netherlands, 2013). He has also actively participated in live arts festivals in Asia, and occasionally in the West. He was part of several major exhibitions, including the Busan Biennale (2012), CAFA biennale (Beijing, 2013), *Concept Context Contestation: Collective-Driven Art in Southeast Asia* (Bangkok, 2013), and *The Journal of the Plague Year* (South Korea, 2014). Moe Satt also works regularly as a curator. Some of his selected curatorial projects are: *On/Off: Myanmar Contemporary Art Event*, The Almaz Collective (Vietnam, 2010), *Forward/Backward: 8 Myanmar Second-Wave Contemporary Artists*, H Gallery (Thailand, 2011). Beyond Pressure Festival of Contemporary Art, Yangon (Myanmar, 2012). *General / Tiger / Gun: Group exhibition by Myanmar artists*, Rebel Art Space (Bangkok, 2014), and *The Mirror\_reflect the society*, TS1 Gallery, Yangon (Myanmar, 2008). He founded Beyond Pressure, an international festival of performance art in Myanmar. He writes regularly on art in Myanmar and contributes to magazines across the region. He is currently artist in residency at Recollets in Paris.

## 2.9. PROMPTS: CURATORIAL STRATEGIES IN FACILITATING AND SUSTAINING KNOWLEDGE RESOURCES

Sidd Perez



The presentation looks into process-based strategies in exhibition-making as a way of dealing with the lack of infrastructure support in knowledge production in the Philippines. Case studies will include how curatorial modes of exhibition accommodate activating the audience's accountability to also contribute, how we negotiate with different sites of power represented by stakeholders of an exhibition and other modes of extending the life of an exhibition.

Sidd Perez is a curator and art writer from the Philippines. Since 2012, she shuttles between Manila and Singapore in programming The Drawing Room while actively pursuing the activities of Planting Rice, a curatorial and resource platform focused on Philippine practices and its cross-pollinations that she founded with curator Lian Ladia. Graduating from Ateneo De Manila University in 2008, she has then been affiliated with

Ateneo Art Gallery and Valentine Willie Fine Art, and has ran an artist-space LOSTprojects.

## 2.10. THE KALAMPAG TRACKING AGENCY FILM PROGRAM, CURATORIAL NOTES

Shireen Seno



They say it always starts with a bang. Or a series of bangs. Like the tiny explosions in your brain that rattle you to take action. It could be something simple and small, not necessarily earth-shattering. The act of capturing the fleeting moments, ideas and visions and the act of tracking them down both entail a certain slippage of forms and time. It is something that tends to elude us but cannot be ignored; something which we liken to *kalampag*, a Tagalog word that roughly translates to a 'bang'; something of an alert, a warning that something may worsen or interrupt the journey, versus the stable engine hum of a giant system, a well-oiled machine; like the rattling of loose parts that collide while in

motion. This is a collection of loose parts in motion, a series of bangs, assembled by individual strengths, and how they might play off each other in the context of a screening program. Featuring works from the Philippines and its diaspora, it is here that we present some of the most singular, fragile, and striking moving image works by Filipinos over the past thirty, forty years, or more. But we are limited by time and resources, and what we have current access to. This is by no means a representative program. This selection is personal, and subjective. Like the works assembled here, the act of assembling this program is itself informed by a certain agency, by an independent capability to act on one's will. With no small amount of detective work to address the institutional and personal gaps of proper cataloging, archiving and storage, we tracked down individual people and individual works, from the nooks and crannies of several libraries and collections, to tiny islands in the Visayas, to the Los Angeles sprawl. With a variety of formats, techniques and textures, from 8mm and 16mm to HD and cellphone video, from optical print experiments, ethnographic documents and video installations, this is a collection of works assembled not by theme, history, medium or other arbitrary concerns: this is a confluence of uncanny juxtapositions and pleasant contradictions; an experience not unlike revisiting a familiar place in a new light. But before you get to where you're going, you hit a speed bump or a pothole and you hear a loud rattling coming from your car. Sometimes you think something's amiss; sometimes it's the sound of it that comforts you.

### 3. LANDSCAPES FOR THE CONTEXT AND CONTENT

The following chapter will detail the travels and exchanges of Southeast Asian Curators who went to Ljubljana and Zagreb, as well as the Slovenian and Croatian Curators/Critics who surveyed and participated in the events and activities in Manila. Through personal logs and photos, a first-person view and perspective will be relived in detailing the experiences, learnings and curiosities while immersing in both regions.

#### 3.1. LJUBLJANA

*Sidd Perez*

Report from Ljubljana (excerpt)



In order to realize this, peers of Planting Rice (selected curators with Southeast Asian footing) spent two weeks in Slovenia while

the SCCA team along with the director of Kurziv Croatia were to experience a similar program in Manila.

I would break up the two weeks of curatorial mapping in Slovenia and Croatia into collaboration and self-organization. With the professional and efficient management of SCCA, the programme was constructed in a seamless itinerary of meetings with major activators and movers of Ljubljana, Celje, Maribor and Zagreb. It best represented the breadth of the institution's network and also depicted the ecosystem of support and relationship they have with one another that has sustained the infrastructure despite the cut on cultural funding in Europe. The itinerary was tailored to allow curators to speak about their institutions or general practice in synergizing to particular visions – individually or in the organizational sense. Historical context – political and cultural – were often gestured at to give a sense of how contemporary practices are borne out of adapting to the consequences of social crises. Previous models of self-enclosed guerilla occupancy of spaces made way to modes of working in which a larger community may benefit from. As times changed societies, educational system on cultural making and critique necessarily did not: hence it was necessary to build alternative models of knowledge production outside the academia. While a cartography of collaborations can be traced amongst the infrastructure, it could be said that many individuals have carried the torch and pioneered this and it is in their self-organization that institutions build and adapt themselves. Collaboration, then, takes a fluid turn to accommodate more activators in the discourse. In the case of the curatorial mapping in Slovenia: the itinerary, while it was efficient, still provided room for impromptu discussions or get-togethers. SCCA World of Art tied in Borja Kanturk's residency and exhibition in Skuc Gallery with the students' firsthand experience of assisting the curators of the

show; it also accommodated the visiting curators' perspectives on its process.

Self-organization is seen through the persistence of the stakeholders who maintain these institutions and perhaps keeps the wheels of the Slovene art system turning. It could be said that the cultural outcomes from the the division of former Yugoslavia empowered critical thinking through art practices – modes of recall were present in most discussions in the community alongside research on then-marginalised sectors such as the avant-gardist strains through 1920's ("20<sup>th</sup> Century. Continuities and Raptures"), OHO group and the seminal Neue Slowenische Kunst exhibition. The history of Metelkova also moved along this current and presently upholds the spirit of invigorating youth and artistic cooperation. In this sense, the art community in Slovenia continues to mold itself with the times and through cross-pollination with other communities accordingly.

It is also important to note the opportunity of immersive encounter within the Southeast Asian "delegation". Six of us from the Philippines, Singapore and Myanmar shared an apartment for two weeks: which is considered to be uncommon in our transnational condition that only usually affords us an online correspondence. In between the activities assigned by the program, we found it natural to organize ourselves in discussing the state of curating as we cross-reference academic or independent initiatives and cultural variables that condition our practices. Reading lists were shared and texts/links were exchanged in support of one another's particular interest and research. Likewise, we were able to flesh out degrees of freedom "programmed" by society and how artistic practices in our particular art communities either subvert or subscribe to that. While we got introduced to the Slovene art system, we were also

getting to know more about the region of Southeast Asia. With gratitude to the coordination and promotion of SCCA, we also managed to articulate these informal but necessary discussions publicly in radio and TV interviews. Consequently, that provided a critical cornerstone in forming our individual presentations in two events of the program: the introduction of curatorial and artistic practices and the culminating "From Elsewhere 2", both held in the SCCA project room.

### Ljubljana Programme



The programme in Ljubljana between 3<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> May 2015 hosted curators and artists from the Philippines, Singapore and Myanmar, the representative of the organisation Kurziv from Zagreb and Turkish artist Borga Kantürk. The programme was tailored for the international guests as well as the participants of the World of Art, School for Curators and Critics of

Contemporary Art. This was executed in venues such as the Project Room, SCCA – Ljubljana, Škuc Gallery and other art venues in Ljubljana and Zagreb.

### *5–11 May 2015, Visit to art venues in Ljubljana, Artists' studios and curatorial mapping*

The programme was a five-day guided tour around Ljubljana with visits to the Museum of Contemporary Art, Museum of Modern Art, Škuc Gallery, International Centre of Graphic Arts, ACC Metelkova City (artists' studio visits), Alkatraz Gallery, City Art Gallery, P74 Gallery, Photon Gallery and many more. Programme included visits to Gallery of Contemporary Art Celje, Maribor Art Gallery and non-governmental organisation GT22.

### *13<sup>th</sup> May 2015*

The Zagreb programme was designed as a visiting itinerary of main contemporary art institutions, museums and galleries. Antonija Letinić, member of the organisation presented Kurziv - Platform for Matters of Culture, Media and Society, and their programmes portal Kulturpunkt.hr, Kulturpunkt's Journalistic School 'World of Art' and Criticism – Past, Present, Future. This allowed an insight into the vision and current trends in Croatia and acted as a networking opportunity. The programme encompassed visits to Museum of Contemporary Arts (where exhibitions such as Bauhaus – Networking Ideas and Practice (BAUNET), and COLLECTION IN MOTION were showing) and Gallery Nova to view the exhibition Arte Útil curated by WHW and accumulated to attending the lecture by Richard Seymour: Neoliberal State in the framework of Subversive Film Festival.

## Ljubljana Diaries



### *Moe Satt*

On 5th of May, we visited SCCA and listened to the talk by Saša Nabergoj. It's really good to know how they started SCCA and so on. For me, I always compare my country's art scene. For instance: why doesn't Myanmar have such kind of school? We really need that kind of infrastructure. In Myanmar, you can say that there is zero infrastructure. I got the idea to fill up that infrastructure.

In the Museum of Modern Art it was good to see the sequence of art evolution in modern era: from Impressionism to

Constructivism and Avantgarde movement in former Yugoslavia. It was my first time to encounter the OHO movement, for I have always admired performance from the past.

### *John Kenneth Paranada*



My experience in Slovenia served as a Mobius strip - continuous and one sided, all ends joined feverishly commenting on the notion of human experiences and curating boiling down to all questions of how. How do we curate? How do we teach it? How do we learn it? And how, instead of surrendering to institutions, our idea of making amends and progress is breaking out of it. Accessing the artistic intelligence in the region was quite refreshing - it feeds a certain fantasy that alterity is actually a value like a warm, airy, clever and unpretentious pop record on a twitchy summer night.

Harald Szeeman once said, 'works, concepts, processes, situations, information (we consciously avoided the expressions "object" and "experiment") are the "forms" through which these artistic expressions are expressed'. True enough, we may be trapped in the worst of times to be a curator after all - a world where exhibition making has become the art form in itself and where attitude doesn't really become form anymore but instead it becomes a network of collaborations and communities of senses.



### *Isabel Ching*

One of the most enduring images in my mind of our time in Ljubljana is sitting in the balcony of the girls' room of the rented apartment for the visiting curators, working on our laptops and drinking coffee together. Over answering email, writing presentations, checking Facebook and Googling to check on facts and references, we discussed each other's practices and art contexts, and collated our perceptions of the experiences and interactions during our stay in Ljubljana. While we had to continue maintaining commitments, relationships and passions that lie elsewhere, and that we sometimes shared with each other, we also had in common the pressing conundrum of trying to find our gearing in this new location. In other words, imaginatively speaking and also in other more substantive ways, Southeast Asia, Ljubljana and various parts of the world were in

that 2<sup>nd</sup> floor balcony, and the global and local intertwined in multifarious ways. It raised a microcosm of subjectivities that did not constantly find affinity with each other, but were always interesting enough for casual dialogue and speculations to happen. There was enough of a sense of familiarity and ease, perhaps arising from the density of historical ties and contemporary flows between the localities we originated from. It was also through cooking, cleaning, sharing food and beer, errand running and waiting for each other to get ready that we made our friendships. Some of us there did not know each other more than in passing (or at all) before the time together in Ljubljana, but there was desire and curiosity to dig deeper, which led to some rather creative exchanges and an embrace of the prospect of expanding friendships, collaboration and other possibilities that connection can bring.

It is also in this balcony where we mooted ideas for engaging with our hosts, debated and discussed our opinions on the one hand of the exchange in Ljubljana and on the other, of the curatorial functions<sup>13</sup> in the art ecologies of Southeast Asia, and sometimes even attacked each other's politics, practices and

---

<sup>13</sup> Thanks to Lian, the other half of Planting Rice, who unfortunately couldn't join us because of her residency at De Appel, Amsterdam. She sent us concerned email messages and questions for us to consider throughout our stay in Ljubljana, to which I owe the particular knowledge of this turn of phrase 'curatorial function': "7. In a recent conference, David Teh mentioned this, can you comment: David Teh also suggests privileging the "curatorial function" over the persona of the Curator as understood through an art history inscribed in "The West." Through the function and faceless functionary then: the role of artist curators, independent organizations and studio archives facilitate the transmission of exhibition histories and 'live' pedagogies that are cast under a wider umbrella. Aesthetic modernity is thereby to be opened up beyond the nation-building project and parochial regionalism in South East Asia." I use the term here to reflect a difference in the quality of our discussions from understandings of more professionalized and auteurship curating without necessarily sticking closely to Teh's suggestion.

disciplines. Texts and artistic references were exchanged in the flurry to find ways to connect with each other, and as the days progressed, these increasingly became replaced by interesting texts that we found during our stay about art in Slovenia, the area of the former Yugoslavia, or Eastern Europe. Back and forth, we were checking our accruing experiences there against what we already knew from our practices. I believe we were sincerely trying to make connections between two unlikely regions and also with each other's knowledges and contexts of practice. The scale we were negotiating with was, mainly, a particular local situation of students, managers and curators at the SCCA World of Art, School for Curators. The levels of analysis were several, dipping into and slipping between the institutional, discursive and the self as we progressed in the 'immersion' program.





In general terms, this two-week program consisted of presentation sessions, lectures, a critique session of the solo show of Borga Kantürk meticulously put up by curators and students of the SCCA World of Art at the iconic Škuc gallery; visiting museums and non-governmental/alternative spaces, and art openings in Ljubljana, Celje, Maribor and Zagreb (Croatia); peppered with structured as well as informal interactions with curators, students, artists and art workers, where we were able to share about infrastructure, funding, experiences and attitudes towards curation as well as working and market conditions. And it was often these interactive sessions that were significant for catalyzing a desire for reconnecting even after our stay. It was eye-opening to see the influence of the education of SCCA World of Art in Slovenian art as graduates fill up many curatorial and managerial positions in the landscape. Our visit to Ljubljana was also timed opportunely as we got to witness the international

cultural clout Slovenia commands through its celebratory exhibition of the NSK art collective that was active from the 1980s. This was after a museum tour of the collection exhibition that was not only supremely interesting for its content on the failed (and later resuscitated) constructivist avant-gardism and the complex trajectory of abstraction in the socialist world of the former Yugoslavia that the exhibition elaborated, but also for the tensions in the collection and display restricted to nationalist constructs of Slovenia. What also impressive was the liveliness of ideas from the left in Ljubljana and Zagreb, in which the 'failure' of socialism has become productive for new critiques of capitalism, and the reaffirmation of a 'tradition' of mining the political dimensions of art that invests retrospective value in the "conceptual". Coming into contact with a highly-collaborative and socially-engaged curatorial grouping like WHW in Zagreb was also inspiring. In the rather gigantic Museum of Contemporary Art Zagreb, one sensed the strains in operating within a limited budget while trying to build an international narrative of contemporary art relevant to its location and its publics. Based on a collection process that already began in the 1950s, one could view not just the art of the former Yugoslavia, but also how it is imagined to connect to 'international' art. This seems symptomatic of the approach by contemporary (as opposed to the modern) museums, exhibitions and publications we have come across in the region that try to go beyond the confines of the rather young national constructs by encompassing one's historical kin, ideological comrades and geographical neighbours, and then placing this in a network of international art. More specifically, the direction of movement is to enumerate and elaborate on the East (here, Eastern Europe), and place it in relation to certain reference points of and from the West (Western Europe and America).

As an art writer, researcher and part-time educator, a pre-existing concern about how we could reimagine our relations to each other whether in Southeast Asia or with other 'Southern' or 'Eastern' parts of the world increasingly reverberated in my mind throughout my stay. Can we reach a stage of making meaningful references and comparisons with each other and tap on the critical writing and intellectual resources from these localities more easily and naturally, rather than necessarily defining local phenomena against those in the 'West' and the frameworks that have been developed there, even if the point is to stress the creative agency of the local actors? How can we adapt our frameworks, find a common language and generate suitable terminology for speaking with each other? This perhaps requires some of us to break the habits of a dialectical relationship with the monolithically-defined developed 'West', and of addressing only either 'ourselves' or this desirable and oppressive international 'West'. We need to continue to attend to the economy that produces our habits and desires, going beyond the sources and platforms for artistic and academic legitimation centred in the West to attempt horizontal alliances and exchanges with each other less reliant on mediation through the global centres of discourse production and their agendas. There must also be regular exchanges in well-considered configurations so that the artistic, cultural and theoretical discourses are nourished with material and experiences that can feed them differently.

In my mind, I went with the idea of building friendships and learning how to re-imagine ourselves and each other, if not in one interpretative universe, at least as regionalities that touch and brush against each other in terms that would matter. This is in the spirit of the broader, emancipatory movement towards creating knowledges and alignments of interest beyond the 'Western' world, with the opportunity to find bypasses to what

are conventional centres of knowledge production in our respective worldviews. One of the greatest affinities I felt were with the words of Saša Nabergoj, who heads the SCCA World of Art, that intimated to me a common ethics and method of working that could herald more, when she defines the World of Art's 'modest' ambitions in an interview in contrast to another curatorial programme in the 'West':

"The difference is in the ambitions, the purpose of training. De Appel trains students to work in the international "mainstream" art system. This has never been our intention. I believe that far more interesting things happen on the fringes, which are not necessarily limited to a geographic location. The vantage of the World of Art is that it allows for a strategy of small steps and modest proposals, which is also discussed by Charles Esche. I wish that the World of Art would educate individuals to work responsively in the world of art, but not necessarily to work in the limelight. We introduce our students to the system in a similar way as De Appel, but rather than finding possibilities for employment, I believe that it is necessary to show them different ways of working, to open their mind to understanding artistic production, to help them find their own place within the system and an appropriate way of cooperating with artists."<sup>14</sup>

---

<sup>14</sup> Petja Grafenauer: interview with Saša Nabergoj, "We are Interested in Ways of Working Based on Local Needs", In *V precepu kuratorskih praks. Dilemmas of Curatorial Practices*, ed. Saša Nabergoj and Barbara Borčič. Ljubljana: SCCA – Centre for Contemporary Arts – Ljubljana. 2012



Being a curator from Southeast Asia, I felt there was in common the idea of a responsive curatorial function that arises from proximity to artistic processes and problem-solving within particular ecologies of actors, art infrastructure, historical narrative and collection – one that the Slovenians seem to characterize by resorting to a terminology of smallness, lacks, gaps, bureaucratic ignorance and ill-fitting frameworks. Or it could be that these were the ones that I took especial cognizance of as I am myself mindful of these characteristics in my practice. For our first presentation to the curators, students and guests of the World of Art, we introduced our curatorial modes of practice and being. I brought up the idea of incidental curating in my presentation – in which I realized only through being an arts worker or participating in various art scenes in Asia how curating and historical investigation are mutually imbricated ways for me to learn how to acquire appropriate languages and present new knowledge and new working methods to address problems in the stories that we tell ourselves today and how we have come to tell them.

In the second presentation, I undertook a preliminary address of some of the anomalies that may be found in conceptualism in Southeast Asia in an attempt to address the differences in the politicization of art, and how to locate transgressions and subversions in order to find points of connection and disconnection with the Slovenian art context. Admittedly, much more study, work and communication need to happen in order to focus and deepen the discussion to points that matter. In this regard, the preparation for the talk, as well as the interesting conversations that followed between audience and speakers, were edifying processes. As a contemporary art historian equipped with perspectives from Southeast Asia, there were aspects of art in Eastern Europe in the second half of the twentieth century which piqued my curiosity to investigate deeper into, to find out how the ways in which art phenomenon in this part of the world is being framed and discussed could present solutions for my work and thinking on Southeast Asia. I would take pleasure in quoting at length from publications garnered and shared during our stay in Ljubljana, which continue to support and mediate memories of my experiences, if not for the need to bring this report to a conclusion. The ideas that interested me included the absence of legitimate art systems to archive, interpret and distribute more radical artistic practices, the internal isolation of artists such that “the critique of the institutions went hand in hand with the struggle for artistic visibility and its legitimacy”,<sup>15</sup> the constructive rather than critical approach of artists in a situation of lack, the domestic amnesia of conceptual art, “the absence of canons as a basis for writing

---

<sup>15</sup> Nataša Petresin, “Self-historicisation and Self-institutionalisation as Strategies of the Institutional Critique in Eastern Europe,” in *Conceptual Artists and the Power of their Art Works for the Present*, ed. Marina Gržinić and Alenka Domljan. Celje: Center for Contemporary Arts, 2007).

recent art history”,<sup>16</sup> the “narrative self-historicization”<sup>17</sup> of artists who sought their own suitable historical and interpretative contexts outside of collective history, and how censorship and limited freedoms have paradoxically generated fringe artistic phenomena.

Efforts to move from contact to curiosity and to creative exchange are not new, but artistically connecting parts of the former Yugoslavia and Southeast Asia even at the level of the small group has to negotiate with the specificities of our regionalities and subjectivities. This presented both group and individual dynamics that spur questions about the kinds of psychological identifications, relational modalities, structures of desire and conscious political commitments required to gravitate towards each other despite our differences, and the mutual interests that needed to be identified, to continue such sometimes discomfiting and defamiliarising exchanges. Understanding our common stakes in the scenario of globalization and constructing our relationality in ways that could be productive of alternatives to the current epistemological and economic frameworks need to be supported by establishing honest and open lines of communication in order to align expectations and build mutual trust, respect, consensus and concern. Not an overnight task in any earthly situation, facilitating horizontal interactions from the micro to the meta-levels should be carefully attended to, so that power structures and hierarchical patterns are not simply produced or reproduced.

---

<sup>16</sup> Bartomeu Mari, “Writing History Without a Prior Canon”, in *Post-War Avant-Gardes Between 1957 and 1986*, Christian Höller ed., Zurich: JRP/Ringer, 2012.

<sup>17</sup> Zdenka Badovinac, “*Museum of Parallel Narratives*, Museu d’Art Contemporani de Barcelona (MACBA), Barcelona (2011)”, in *Post-War Avant-Gardes Between 1957 and 1986*, Christian Höller ed., Zurich: JRP/Ringer, 2012.

Shireen Seno



My experience of Curating-In-Depth in Ljubljana was striking on several levels. I was invited by Planting Rice to present a moving image program of thirty years’ experimental film & video from the Philippines which I co-curated last year and which had been invited to screen in a few places prior to this. But to present this program in Ljubljana was particularly poignant for me. My first encounter with Slovenia was back in Manila in 2007, when I received a copy of the Slovenian film journal *Ekran* from a young Filipino film critic by the name of Alexis Tioseco. Alexis was a tireless supporter of Philippine cinema, and he met his match in Nika Bohinc, herself a passionate film critic from Slovenia, through their shared love of film. Alexis and Nika were killed abruptly in 2009 in their home in Manila. It was labeled a robbery, but the case is still unsolved. We screened “The Kalampag Tracking Agency” at SCCA Ljubljana in an intimate wooden room full of books on art and film, much like Alexis’ and Nika’s house, and with like-minded people whom they would have loved to converse with: the curators and team behind

SCCA, a painter, a filmmaker, an artist, arts administrators, an architect now studying curation at SCCA World of Art, my fellow participants from Southeast Asia, among others.



At times, the art scene in Ljubljana reminded me of Manila, with our shared colonial pasts and histories of resistance. The Metelkova compound where SCCA itself is situated was curiously reminiscent of the Philippine jeepney and the continued practice of salvaging existing objects and structures and reclaiming them for new or alternative purposes. It was especially insightful to visit a few of the artist studios in Metelkova and meet painters like Miha Perne whose practice extends into zine-making under the collective White Ice Cream. By night, Metelkova was somewhat similar to Cubao in Manila, as spaces for meeting and drinking, (but here mostly standing up.)

Another highlight of the program was our day trip to Maribor, where we visited the Transnational Guerrilla Art School, run by

spirited artist Miha Horvat. It was a large residence converted into a multi-level space with an impressive share of surprises in every nook and cranny: a mini indoor skate park, a former basement bar/club converted into a rehearsal space for musicians, a well-lit mini museum of cameras and photography, a tiny but dedicated Black Box for film/video screenings, a modern, fully-functioning darkroom, and plenty of tables and sitting spaces for both local youths and other guests to conspire.

What stood out most to me during our curatorial mapping in Slovenia was the apparent omnipresence of government funding in art spaces as well as the energy and attention directed towards the discourse, documentation, and archiving of art as much as art practice itself. In the field of the moving image in particular, the DIVA Digital Video Archive, documenting video and new media practice in Slovenia from the 1970s onwards, is an incredibly important SCCA initiative made accessible through an extensive, bilingual online website.

### 3.2 MANILA

Planting Rice and SCCA Center for Contemporary Art Ljubljana, with generous support of De La Salle College of Saint Benilde and Asia Europe Foundation presented the second part of CURATING-IN-DEPTH in Manila from 28 July-7 August 2015.

Participants from Slovenia/Croatia, Southeast Asia come together to discuss and present artistic and curatorial practices that contests the contemporary in critical non-linear art histories, alternative organizational infrastructures through a series of events and discussions. There will also be a talk on the issue of archiving in video and experimental cinema. An experimental video and film screening from the archives of SCCA Ljubljana and Mowelfund Film Institute will also be presented.

Museum visits with special appointments with curators or directors for a curatorial walk-through of the institution. Venues: Metropolitan Museum Manila, The Cultural Center of the Philippines, The Lopez Museum & Library, Museum of Contemporary Art and Design (MCAD), Ayala Museum, U.P. Jorge Vargas Museum.

#### *Gallery hop*

Venues: Galleria Duemila, 1335 Mabini, Post, Artery Art Space, Silverlense, Mo\_space

#### *Studio Visit*

Ling Quisumbing Ramilo, Poklong Anading, Vic Balanon, Manny Migrino

## *Manila Program*

### *CURATING-IN-DEPTH*

Symposium and discussions on curatorial and critical practices in Slovenia/Croatia & Southeast Asia (Philippines, Malaysia and Thailand.) It was held at School of Design and Arts, De La Salle College of Saint Benilde, Malate, Manila.

### *SYMPOSIUM DAY I Rehistoricization: Criticality in linear art histories*

1PM Antonija Letinić (Croatia), What is The Future of Criticism?  
1.30PM Renan Laru-an (Philippines), Being Subtracted From  
2.30PM Lian Ladia (Philippines), Anachronism of Southeast Asian Modernism: Raden Saleh.  
3PM Simon Soon (Malaysia), Bodies that Matter – Art and the Cultural Left  
3.30PM Q&A

### *SYMPOSIUM DAY II Alternative organizational infrastructures*

1PM Dušan Dovč (Slovenia), The same word different meaning: a brief introduction to the cultural art production in Slovenia.  
1.30PM Angel Velasco Shaw (Philippines/USA), Markets of Resistance: Baguio/Manila.  
2PM Miha Kelemina (Slovenia), The Liminale. Modes of working, production and networking.  
3PM Narawan Kyo Pathomvat (Thailand), Perspectives in Collaboration  
3.30PM Simona Žvanut (Slovenia), World of Arts, School for Critics and Curators of Contemporary Art.  
4PM Q&A

### *SYMPOSIUM DAY III Problematizing experimental and archival practices in video and film*

1PM Barbara Borčić (Slovenia), Video as a Tool and Strategy of Artistic Expression. Selected Examples From DIVA Station Archival Practices in Video.  
3PM Ricky Orellana (Philippines), The Mowelfund Audio-Visual Archive. Talk and Selected Examples from the Archive.

### *Auxillary Programs and Satellite Events*

31 July, Sunday, 10-11:30AM, The Lopez Museum & Library Southeast Asian Reading group, reference of critical text, moderated by Sidd Perez, Lian Ladia (Planting Rice, Manila) with Renan Laru-An (Disclab, Manila), Simon Soon (Researcher/Historian, Kuala Lumpur) and Narawan Kyo Pathomvat (The Reading Room, Bangkok.)

1 August, Saturday, 3-7PM, Artery Art Space, Cubao Roundtable, *If Art is a Hammer*, organized by Concerned Artists of the Philippines, moderated by Renan Ortiz, and Antares Bartolome (Concerned Artists of the Philippines), Eileen Legaspi-Ramirez (Pananaw Sining Bayan, Back to Square 1), Mark Justiniani (Visual Artist), Duffie Osental (Art+), Leo Abaya (U.P. Fine Arts), Randy Nobleza (Marindukanon Studies Center and Info Shop.)

6 – 7 August | *Benilde SDA Cinema, Benilde SDA Cinema, Manila Film Retrospective of John Torres (Philippines)*

## Manila photo diary

### Day 1

#### Galleria Duemila



Galleria Duemila, initiated and run by Silvana Diaz, is one of the first commercial galleries in Manila. For the past thirty years her work is dedicated to supporting, producing and promoting artworks by artists of mid and older generation. She focuses a lot on researching islands and discovering new artists from hidden parts of the country, and is dedicated to composing an archive of their work.



## Cultural Center of Phillippins

CCP, an impressive building in Manila urban context, consists of 6 gallery spaces, and most of their programming is focused on historic exhibitions and retrospectives. The center, conceived by Imelda Marcos, was opened in 1969 and was envisaged as a part of a bigger cultural complex. The current exhibition centre was originally planned as a performance art space, but gradually it changed its purpose. Currently, it is a home for different artistic and cultural practices such as ethnographic museum, philharmonic orchestra, ballet scene, library, and documentation centre and film section.



## Metropolitan Museum of Manila



Metropolitan Museum had a textile exhibition on display at the moment of our visit in the temporary section. Their permanent display however contained the works of Victorio Edades, father of the Filipino modernism, Romano Estella and Hernando R. Ocampo who we encountered once more at the end of our journey in the Vargas Museum.

## 1335 Mabini

This gallery space with huge residential, production and studio spaces is located in the centre of Malate. It is one of the rare comprehensive spaces for artists that offers both residential and studio space that are attached to a gallery. It is focused on young artists experimenting with new technologies and exploring interdisciplinary approaches.



## Day 2

Museum of Contemporary Art and Design



MCAD presents local and international artists and organises residential programmes. As part of the University, its focus is on the graphic design, architecture, industrial and applied design. The institution's programming dedicates a lot of attention to different paradigms and affirmation of other types of practices.



## Silverlens

Silverlens gallery was originally dedicated to photography. From 2007 it has broadened its focus to a variety of forms and media such as films and installations. It offers two spaces and present two to three exhibitions a month. Also part of their work is dedicated to publishing catalogues and publications and selling artworks.

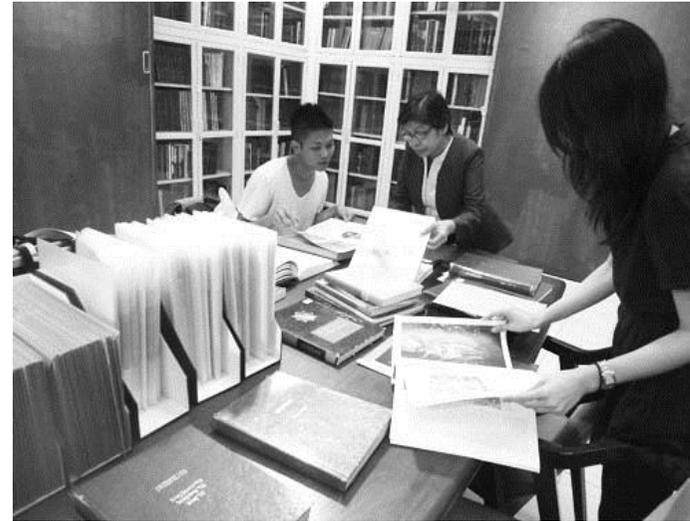


## Mo space

Mo space is focused on artists experimenting with different forms and media,. Its owners also owns and runs the interior design store with upscale furniture and accessories brands.



documentation. Their collection of books encompasses works from the 17th century on. The museum owns comprehensive newspapers archive as well as expert conservation department.



## Ayala Museum

Ayala Museum is one of the private museums that houses the pre-colonial gold collection, historical dioramas, and modernist Philippine paintings.

## Day 3

### Lopez museum

Lopez Museum opened to public in 1960. It collects, preserves and presents written historiography and documentation with an attempt to paint and extract Filipino identity through written





## Post Gallery

A commercial gallery that is artist-run, Post gallery hosts exhibitions featuring emerging artists and innovative curatorial and experimental concepts. The gallery is co-owned by internationally known, exhibiting artist, Manuel Ocampo.



## Artist Studio Visits

The group was able to engage with Poklong Anading, Vic Balanon and Manny Migrino's shared studio space in an artist compound in Cubao, Quezon City.

Poklong Anading's studio is based inside the complex of an abandoned print factory and is inhabited by artists mostly focused on contemporary practice. Manny Migrino shares a space dedicated to discussions on video and experimental cinema. In the same compound, visual artist Vic Balanon and Manny Migrino also shared their work processes practice.



## Artist, Ling Quisumbing's Studio's in Quezon City

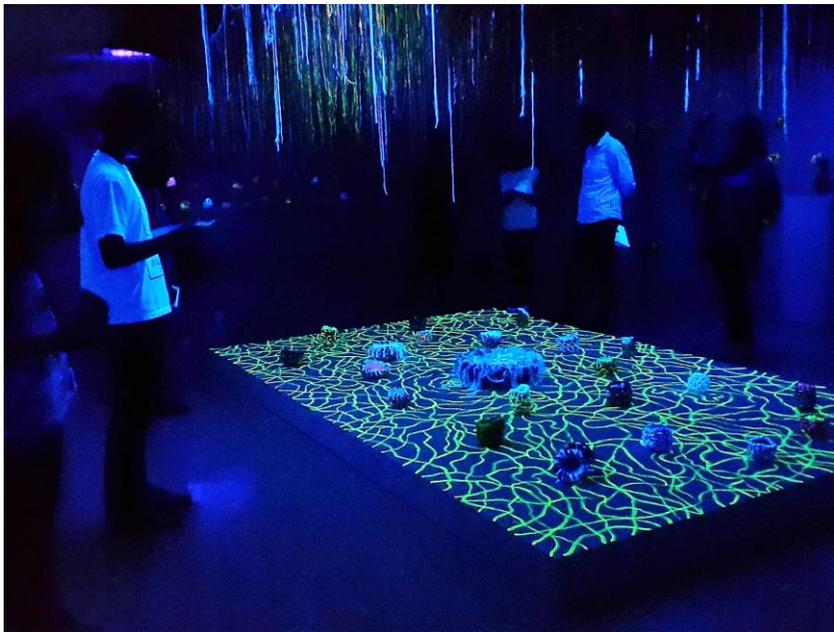
Ling Quisumbing made her house an art studio filled with work-in-progress pieces and materials creating almost a gallery-like art work of the space. So every item used and encountered in every-day life seems like an art piece.



## Day 4

### Ateneo Art Gallery

Ateneo Art Gallery, part of the Ateneo de Manila University, presents modernist art both from collection and through temporary exhibitions of new works. It was established in 1960 through Fernando Zóbel's bequest to the University of his collection of works by key post-war Filipino artists. The collection now surveys every Philippine art movement in the post-war era: from neo-realism and abstract expressionism to today's post-modern hybrid tendencies.



## University of the Philippines Jorge Vargas Museum

The U.P. Jorge Vargas Museum is situated in the biggest public University in the Philippines and it is headed by international curator and historian Patrick Flores. The exhibition mostly comprises rotating exhibitions by emerging and mid-career artists, curated exhibitions and a permanent collection of modernist paintings from the Japanese era (as was the legacy of political and collector, Jorge Vargas).



#### 4. CONCLUSION

The program Curating-in-Depth largely provided the opportunity for Southeast Asian practicing curators, artists and organizers with the same thread of research and rigor within the region to meet one another, engage and compare contexts of curation in their specific locale. Apart from activities such as presentations, workshops, idea-building, the intimate dialogue extended towards peers in Europe with the same context of urgency and action. SCCA - Ljubljana and Kurziv bear tangents of practice which evoked the same level of simplicity, seriousness and centeredness, unburdened by institutional demands yet more focused on community building, artist-relationship, critical practice and continuous self-development. These similar attributes made the meeting, symposium and tours unique. Albeit the points of axis come from tangent angles in Southeast Asia and Central Europe, these intersections created kinship of similarities in dealing with integral issues about the locale, and problematizing the professionalization of a sincere cultural work force, within porous relationships with major and minor histories, as well as the dislocation to its "post" societies of "isms" (social, colonial). Both contexts and varying differences provided very interesting tensions, and problems that when bridged – heals fractures within the context of a more wholistic discussion of a sense of rebuilding, from the sense of its «former». The main premise was to allow for discussions to be more than just about, «art» or commodified art and the gloss from the laborious economy of art fairs and biennials.

Art as a cultural, social, workable and educational agency was deeply valued in this economy of kinship and affinities. The interpretations of the programs were not philological and definitive, it was open for play, miscalculations, spontaneity, and

flexibility of form and resource. This kind of valuation of adjusting towards means, of resources, time, space, temporality, outside of restrictions, allows the participants to contest, what is possible, or what can be pushed further. A sense of inclusion was prioritized, where there are no declarative statements – hoping for something more open-ended, counteracting the fetishization of contemporary practice. Can art be separated from the social force? What is its' potential in consideration of locality, or a post-history, with urgent cultural provocations, and the necessity to create dialogs and platforms inspite or/ despite of?

Lian Ladia

## 5. ABOUT THE ORGANIZATIONS

*SCCA, Center for Contemporary Arts - Ljubljana  
(SCCA-Ljubljana)*

Established in 2000, SCCA, Center for Contemporary Arts – Ljubljana (a successor to the Soros Centre for Contemporary Arts – Ljubljana, 1993–1999) is a model of a small, flexible and internationally active organisation for layering and comprehensively connecting programs and activities in the field of contemporary visual arts. In recent years, we have managed to establish a referential space for research and exhibition work, dialogue, teaching and service activities, not to mention the care and models our DIVA Station archive has provided for audio-video culture heritage and historical memory.

This interdisciplinary and multimedia nature has also been realised in physical space, under the name SCCA Project Room, which comprises a reference library, an audio-video archive and a digital editing and projection unit. But most importantly, the SCCA Project Room has become a common venue for meetings, workshops, conversation, presentations, exhibitions and performances. It hosts the World of Art School, as well as a series of events and installations, which encourage the thirst for research-related knowledge and constructive dialogue.

Our diverse activities address artists, curators, theorists, and critics in the fields of visual and new media arts. They trigger artistic, discursive and social practices and are rooted in the interdisciplinary approach and intense international cooperation. SCCA-Ljubljana divides its programme into four complementary areas: video/archive, school, projects and services.

### Video/Archive

DIVA Station (from 2005, [www.e-arhiv.org/diva](http://www.e-arhiv.org/diva)) is a physical and web archive of video art which is being developed with the intent to research, document, present and archive video/media art.

### School

World of Art (from 1997, [www.worldofart.org](http://www.worldofart.org)) is a two-year study programme as well as a research, exhibition and production platform for analysing and reflecting on artistic, curatorial and critical practices.

### Projects

Studio 6 (from 2004), No Nails, No Pedestals (from 2005), PlatformaSCCA (from 2000, [www.scca-ljubljana.si/platforma.htm](http://www.scca-ljubljana.si/platforma.htm)), Žepna Pocket Edition (from 1999, in cooperation with Založba /\*cf. publishing house), Exhibitions (from 1994, [www.scca-ljubljana.si/razstave.htm](http://www.scca-ljubljana.si/razstave.htm)), Researches (from 1997, [www.scca-ljubljana.si/raziskave.htm](http://www.scca-ljubljana.si/raziskave.htm).)

### Service

Artservis (from 2001, [www.artservis.org](http://www.artservis.org)), Evrokultura (from 2005, [www.evrokultura.org](http://www.evrokultura.org)), ArtsLink (from 1993.)

### Team

Dušan Dovč (director)

Barbara Borčič (consultant, head of video program and video archive DIVA station)

Simona Žvanut (head of World of Art, School for Curators and Critics of Contemporary Art, and Studio 6)

Miha Kelemina (coordinator of World of Art, Studio 6 DIVA Station)

Vesna Bukovec (webmaster, DIVA Station)

### *Planting Rice*

*(Manila, Phillipines)*

Planting Rice is contemporary art platform aimed at fostering the rise of cross-pollination among artistic communities. It distributes information on vital exhibitions, events, places and influences by art professionals in Southeast Asia, Australia, the United States and Europe who maintain networks and crossovers in the Philippines.

Aside from Planting Rice's curatorial programming in repotentializing physical spaces, it has an online and social network site which generates a resource of events, opportunities, and writings on current discussions and collaborations that are developing beyond available publications or mainstream spaces. Additionally it recovers an archive relevant to the present climate of cultural interchanges in contemporary art.

Planting Rice is the curatorial banner of Lian Ladia and Sidd Perez.

Curating-In-Depth in Manila, Philippines is a partnership between Asia-Europe Foundation and the Center for Campus Art of De Lasalle College of St. Benilde, Manila with the support of The Lopez Museum & Library, Tin-Aw Gallery, diskurso, Artery Art Space and Concerned Artists of the Philippines. With special thanks to the voluntary mediation and contribution of artist Jenifer Wofford and curatorial associate Iris Ferrer.

### *Associate partner*

*Kurziv – Platform for Matters of Culture, Media and Society (Zagreb, Croatia)*

Kurziv – Platform for Matters of Culture, Media and Society through the development of critical and analytical discourse promotes culture and media as key factors in strengthening the position of independent media and independent cultural scene in order to enhance an egalitarian society. Our mission is realized through a non-profit web portal Kulturpunkt.hr, educational programmes in the field of contemporary culture, art and media and through documenting the activities of the independent cultural scene and other forms of public activity.

Kurziv is a non-profit organisation whose activities are dedicated to media, culture and education. Its activities, realized both in online and offline space, are aimed at changing, reshaping and deepening public discussion on the topics and issues of contemporary cultural and artistic practices, civil society and media.

The main project of the organisation is the internet portal Kulturpunkt.hr that was founded in 2005. Its goal is to intervene

in Croatian media landscape presenting, analysing and contextualising contemporary artistic and cultural production and theory in a wider sense and follow civil society and activities of civil society organisations, everyday life, politics, cultural and media policies. Through active involvement with cultural and artistic production, Kulturpunkt.hr has become the only media which gives the most comprehensive and continuous insight into the activities and development of independent culture in Croatia, and its importance is simultaneously spreading in the regional context.

Starting from this core project, Kurziv has developed several strategic goals and activities. With opening the public debates it is enhancing the position of culture in the Croatian media landscape in general with a specific focus on independent cultural production. Furthermore it is one of the main actors in the advocacy activities towards strengthening of the position of non profit media in the field of culture and civil society in Croatia. Kurziv has also recognized the importance of historicizing the development of the independent cultural scene in the last twenty years and thus initiated project dedicated to archiving, documenting and analysing this important segment of the cultural scene in Croatia. The aim of the project is to create online and offline base of documentation available to everyone and free for further use which will contribute to future analyses and understanding of the period. Finally, because of the general lack of serious and critical writing in the field of culture, but also due to changes in the educational system, Kurziv organizes an educational program for young journalists, Kulturpunkt's Journalistic School, consisting of journalism skills training courses and lectures on theoretical and historical approaches to contemporary culture, arts and theory.



## IMPRESSUM

Published by:  
SCCA – Ljubljana & Planting Rice, Manila

Funded by:  
Asia–Europe Foundation (ASEF)

Arts Network Asia (ANA)

Trans Europe Halles (TEH)

Embassy of the Philippines in Vienna

Ljubljana Municipality, Department for Culture

Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Slovenia

Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Slovenia

De La Salle College of Saint Benilde

Lopez Museum & Library

Title:  
Curating-In-Depth

Contributors:  
Lian Ladia, Renan Laru-An, Antonija Letinić, Dušan Dovč, Narawan Kyo Pathomwat, Simona Žvanut, Barbara Borčić, Angel Velasco Shaw, Antares Gomez Bartolome, Isabel Ching, Moe Satt, Shireen Seno, Sidd Perez

Editors:  
Lian Ladia & Antonija Letinić

Design:

CC Licence:  
Creative Commons Attribution-Share-Alike 3.0.

Published in pdf-form, December 2015