

# NTU Singapore and the European Union announce artists and partner institutions for the first cycle of SEA AiR, a new studio residential program in the EU for Southeast Asian artists

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**Nanyang Technological University, Singapore (NTU Singapore)** and the **European Union Delegation to Singapore** today announced the partner institutions and artists selected for the inaugural cycle of *SEA AiR – Studio Residencies for Southeast Asian Artists in the EU (SEA AiR)*.



Credit: NTU Singapore

**Nanyang Technological University, Singapore (NTU Singapore)** and the **European Union Delegation to Singapore** today announced the partner institutions and artists selected for the inaugural cycle of ***SEA AiR – Studio Residencies for Southeast Asian Artists in the EU (SEA AiR)***.

SEA AiR is a new programme that positions Singapore as a hub for artistic exchange between the European Union and the vibrant Southeast Asian region. This happens in a landmark year as the EU and ASEAN commemorate the 45th anniversary of their dialogue relations.

Developed by **NTU Centre for Contemporary Art Singapore (NTU CCA Singapore)**, the project is funded by the European Union's Foreign Policy Instruments. It offers selected artists a long-term engagement comprising a three-month residency in an EU country and the opportunity to create new works, inspired by the residency experience. These works will be presented to the public in Singapore in a group exhibition curated by NTU CCA Singapore.

Dedicated to artists who have not yet had a significant professional experience in Europe, SEA AiR pivots the creative and cultural exchange between Singapore and the European Union on emerging visual art practitioners by providing a significant platform for professional and personal growth through the format of artistic residencies in Europe and a

curated group exhibition in Singapore. The residencies will be hosted by established contemporary art institutions that have been engaged as project partners.

For this inaugural cycle of the programme, the three institutional partners are: **WIELS**, Brussels (Belgium); **HIAP – Helsinki International Artist Programme** (Finland); and **Villa Arson**, Nice (France). With a strong commitment to artists and a long history of running residency programmes, these institutions provide a nurturing environment wherein artistic practices can develop through curatorial mentorship, peer-to-peer dialogues, and engagements with the public.

Selected from a pool of 24 candidates nominated from curators and artists from across Southeast Asia, the three participants in the first cycle of SEA AiR are: **HOO Fan Chon** (Malaysia); **Citra SASMITA** (Indonesia); and **VUTH Lyno** (Cambodia).

They were selected based on the quality of their work and relevance of their proposals by a committee comprising of **Ute Meta Bauer**, Founding Director, NTU CCA Singapore; Professor, School of Art, Design and Media, NTU; **Sylvie Christophe**, Head of International Relations, Villa Arson; **Juha Huuskonen**, Director, Helsinki International Artist Programme; **Siddharta Perez**, Curator, NUS Museum, Singapore; **Deepika Shetty**, Press Officer, European Union in Singapore; and **Dirk Snauwaert**, Director, WIELS Centre d'Art Contemporain.

**Iwona Piórko, European Union Ambassador to Singapore** says: “The SEA AiR programme is a collaborative platform facilitated by the European Union Delegation to Singapore and NTU CCA, bringing together the EU, Singapore and Southeast Asia through the arts. 2022 marks the 45th anniversary of EU-ASEAN dialogue relations and the SEA AiR programme is a fitting start to this milestone year. With Singapore playing a pivotal role as the engine driving the development of the region’s contemporary art, the EU Delegation to Singapore together with NTU CCA Singapore, look forward to the visionary and creative outputs that will be born out of this pioneering project.

“Through our partnership with three prestigious European arts institutions: WIELS in Brussels (Belgium); HIAP – Helsinki International Artist Programme (Finland); and Villa Arson in Nice (France), and our connections with artists from around Southeast Asia, SEA Air embodies the spirit of dialogue and exchange that are hallmarks of the relationship between our two regions. My congratulations to artists Hoo Fan Chon, Citra Sasmita and Vuth Lyno selected for the inaugural round.”

**Professor Joseph Liow, Dean of College of Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences, Nanyang Technological University** says: “In line with NTU’s continual effort as a catalyst for global connectivity, we are proud to announce the three Southeast Asian artists who have been selected for Cycle 1 of the SEA AiR programme: Hoo Fan Chon, Citra Sasmita, and Vuth Lyno.

These three artists from different cultural backgrounds were chosen by an international panel convened and spearheaded by our NTU Centre for Contemporary Art Singapore in partnership with the European Union Delegation to Singapore.

“We congratulate the artists on this achievement and look forward to seeing their practice develop. The SEA AiR programme is an excellent platform for artists to cultivate global connections and work with prestigious European institutions such as WIELS, HIAP – Helsinki International Artist Programme, and Villa Arson. These partnerships confirm NTU CCA Singapore’s role as a synergetic centre that brings forth innovative and dynamic collaborations between Southeast Asia and the European Union.”

The three-month residencies will unfold simultaneously between March and June 2022. Hoo Fan Chon will work with HIAP, Citra Sasmita with WIELS, and Vuth Lyno with Villa Arson. Singapore will welcome the artists back and host the exhibition presenting their work towards the end of 2022. This exhibition will give the Singaporean public the opportunity to immerse themselves in a cross-regional artistic project and spark discourse among the wider artistic community.

The selection committee was impressed with the overall quality and diversity reflected by the applicant pool and shortlisted artists **Thuy Anh DANG** (Vietnam), **Priyageetha DIA** (Singapore), **Tada HENGSAKUL** (Thailand), **Rita KHIN** (Myanmar), **Kat MEDINA** (Philippines), **Nor (Dyan Hidayat Bin Ismawi)** (Singapore) in recognition of the merit and remarkable promise of their artistic practice.

Forged around shared beliefs in the importance of cultural encounters and exchanges for a more open and inclusive society, SEA AiR enhances the EU-ASEAN dialogue through contemporary art practices. It provides the artists with a meaningful opportunity for growth and international exposure.

Likewise, the partner institutions will benefit from expanding their network through NTU CCA Singapore as a base to the wider Southeast Asia, a region that has been historically under-represented in most artistic residency programmes in Europe. This is especially meaningful as we enter 45 years of dialogue partnership between the EU and ASEAN.

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## **ANNEX A – Statements from Selected Artists and Partner Institutions**