

NTU Singapore and the European Union Delegation to Singapore launch inaugural exhibition by emerging regional artists from the first cycle of a joint program

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Credit: NTU Singapore

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SEA AiR is a joint programme funded by the European Union and developed by the NTU Centre for Contemporary Art Singapore (NTU CCA Singapore). *Hoo Fan Chon, Citra Sasmita, Vuth Lyno: New Works* marks the culmination of the first cycle of the programme.

As participating artists in the inaugural cycle of SEA AiR, **Hoo Fan Chon** (Malaysia), **Citra Sasmita** (Indonesia), and **Vuth Lyno** (Cambodia) were each awarded a three-month-long residency at an art institution in Europe as well as funding for the creation of artworks.

Stemming out of a year-long engagement, *Hoo Fan Chon, Citra Sasmita, Vuth Lyno: New Works*, is the outcome of a multifaceted process shaped by journeys and institutional collaborations, fieldwork and encounters, research and artmaking.

Located at NTU CCA Singapore's Residencies Studios at Gillman Barracks, the exhibition is curated by **Dr Anna Lovecchio, Assistant Director (Programmes)** at NTU CCA Singapore, and is part of **Singapore Art Week 2023**. It will run from 11 January to 5 February 2023.

In the first half of 2022, amidst Russia's invasion of Ukraine and the ongoing pandemic, the artists took off from their home countries to conduct their respective residencies: Hoo Fan Chon at **HIAP – Helsinki International Artist Programme** (Finland); Citra Sasmita at **WIELS** (Brussels, Belgium); and Vuth Lyno at **Villa Arson** (Nice, France).

These residency programmes share a long history in facilitating cultural mobility and a commitment to supporting emerging artists through curatorial mentorship, peer-to-peer dialogues, and public programmes.

The artworks featured in *Hoo Fan Chon, Citra Sasmita, Vuth Lyno: New Works* were created by the artists in the months following their residencies, a much-needed time for critical reflection and material experimentation that allowed them to develop their research findings and creative inspiration into full-fledged artworks.

Ranging from installation and video to sculpture and painting, some of these works also mark the artists' first attempts at embracing new mediums and materials: 3D animation techniques for Hoo Fan Chon, video for Citra Sasmita, and paper for Vuth Lyno.

Shaped by their respective residencies, the exhibition shows how the artists' interests in the cosmetics of food, cultural collaborations, the empowerment of women and the resilience of marginalised communities have evolved over the last year.

Iwona Piórko, Ambassador of the European Union to Singapore, said: "We have in SEA AiR a made-in-Singapore programme to drive the development of Southeast Asia's contemporary art and serve as a springboard for dialogue and mutual learning between European art institutions and Southeast Asian artists. SEA AiR celebrates diversity and people-to-people connectivity between the EU and ASEAN. We embarked on this pioneering project in a milestone year as the EU and ASEAN commemorated the 45th anniversary of their relations in 2022. This project embodies this rich spirit of dialogue and exchange that are hallmarks of the partnership between our two regions."

Professor Ute Meta Bauer from NTU's School of Art, Design and Media and Founding Director, NTU CCA Singapore, said: "As a Centre, we are enthusiastic to continue our support to emerging artists in the region through SEA AiR, a unique partnership between

NTU and the European Union Delegation to Singapore. By weaving together research and production, the unique structure of this programme foregrounds the tremendous importance of cultural mobility to nurture artistic practices and, on a broader level, more open and inclusive societies.”

“Thanks to three-month long residencies conducted in different European countries in the spring of 2022 with our partner institutions for the first cycle of SEA AiR, artists Hoo Fan Chon, Citra Sasmita, and Vuth Lyno had the opportunity to pursue their research interests and immerse themselves in different cultural contexts. *Hoo Fan Chon, Citra Sasmita, and Vuth Lyno: New Works* features the artworks inspired by the artists’ experiences in Europe and we are delighted to present this exhibition to the audiences in Singapore in our Centre’s Residencies Studios at Gillman Barracks during the Singapore Art Week 2023.”

Hoo Fan Chon, SEA AiR artist said: “I have limited experience with artistic residencies. I participated in a month-long research residency in Taiwan in 2017 and a two-week-long research and production residency in Sulawesi, Indonesia, for the Makassar Biennale in 2019. Both were organised by artist-run initiatives. SEA AiR is a well-supported residency that creates an environment that allows artists to focus purely on learning, reflecting, and producing. It is a privilege to take part in it.”

Citra Sasmita, SEA AiR artist said: “The SEA AiR residency for me was a stepping stone to regenerate existing thinking methods. Exposed to new situations and experiences, my artistic ideas and processes have been constantly tested through intense discussions and meetings with audiences from different cultures.”

Vuth Lyno, SEA AiR artist said: “Being an artist-in-residence in SEA AiR meant that I could immerse myself in a new environment and develop new research. This structure has been around for a very long time in the history of artistic residencies. However, SEA AiR also has the second component of supporting the materialisation of research ideas into new works for an exhibition. This model drives motivation. It is concrete and realistic because, in the end, as artists we make artworks. To be able to think, and to know from the

beginning that there are the material conditions to create an artwork out of the research was very helpful to bring my ideas to fruition.”