

FALL INTO THE SEA TO BECOME AN ISLAND

7/8/14 - 31/8/14

@ Run Amok Gallery, curated by Hoo Fan Chon.

The title of the exhibition is adapted from a Malay maxim 'Jika benih yang baik, jatuh ke dalam laut menjadi pulau' (Good seed, even if fell into the sea, would become an island). One explanation of this maxim gives the idea of how one would uphold one's virtue and integrity regardless of the environment or societal pressure. However, this proverb is appropriated to provide a local context to our imagination on the notion of 'island' and is engaged in a more literal sense to further problematize its assumed meanings. The first part of the title suggests the act of falling which generally connotes a sense of an uncontrolled situation, an unintended downward descent into the unknown yet the second part alludes to the transformation of such movement into the physical appearance of an island.

Island here, is used as a metaphor to signify the culmination of perseverance and endurance of a long journey through the ebb and flow of the sea. The coconut sprout floats over the sea for a long period of time due to its resilient and self-sufficient nature until it drifts ashore to its newfound home. The physical appearance of a floating coconut sprout resembles a miniature version of an archetypal representation of an exotic island - elongated vegetation on isolated outcrop. Island in this context is physical, palpable yet allegorical. Being an island is not necessarily being isolated: it is also about being resilient, fluid and buoyant.

A group of nine artists are invited to respond to this curatorial brief and fabricate work based on their personal association with island, socio-historical readings, critique of island politics or the archetypal image of an 'tropical island' through video, painting, sculpture, photography and installation work. This group exhibition is sponsored by George Town Festival under the visual arts programme.

ANDREW REWALD

'Converging boundaries - Everyone and nobody'

An interactive performance which resembles a pseudo hybrid ritual event that references the edible legacy of Penang's ethnic diversity, and the universal effects of modern consumer lifestyles.

Andrew Rewald is a Melbourne based visual artist. His

performance / installation practice explores the centrality of food and ritual in daily life through cookery and food sharing. Andrew is recipient of a 2014 Asialink Residency based at Cherrycake Studios, and until September is exploring the mutable and mobile eating habits of Penangites as a marker of the evolving nature of hybrid identity. Andrew's work has been exhibited throughout Australia and internationally, most recently with a series of community engagement/residency projects at Nes Artist Residency Iceland 2013, the 2012 Echigo Tsumari Triennial Japan, and the 2012 Queenstown Heritage and Arts Festival, Tasmania.

andrewrewald.com

ANTHONY PELCHEN

'Deep Blue Sea (Code Maroon) - I' Australian regulation body bag, inserted with hi-vis and velvet fabric; 92x240x1cm; 2014

'Deep Blue Sea (Code Maroon) - II' 27:41 min video, looped with sound; 2013

'Deep Blue Sea (Code Maroon) - III' dream 26/5/2014: insitu charcoal wall drawing

Lying in bed on dark nights next to the river, I listen to the reassuring call of the owls - from one to another, gestures of separation but also of connection. Passenger jets fly over in the clouds - a droning sound of travel and people on the move. I wake to the radio on a glorious morning; we're told another leaky boat has overturned and all are in the water, drowning off Christmas Island. Deep Blue Sea (Code Maroon) is a Hi-Vis call to the Gods, and the owls, for some sort of reconciliation of the beauty and lunacy attached to living. As a homemade, fabric based and possibly fanciful state, Code Maroon pairs up Hi-Vis regulation orange with divine maroon double-velvet, escalating the utilitarian into the heavenly. As the owls dependably maintain their pulse-like call, we restlessly stay on the run, rising and falling ...and rising ...and falling again.

Based on the Wimmera River in NW Victoria, Australia, Pelchen graduated from the Victorian College of the Arts in 1991 and for a decade lived and worked in Melbourne - exhibiting widely in artist-run, institutional and alternative spaces. Common to all his work is an overriding interest in the fine lines and shifts between physical and psychological states and how a dominance of one inevitably points to the absence and potential of another. He has been the recipient of International Cultural Exchange grants (Japan, Denmark), residencies including Rimbun Dahan Malaysia and Bundanon Trust - Australia, and has been represented in various surveys of painting and drawing. From 2009-12 he annually presented work at the Melaka Art & Performance

Festival, also initiating and curating its new visual arts program. In 2013, Kuang Road Prayer - a body of work begun in Malaysia in 2010 - was developed and shown at the Horsham Regional Art Gallery and the Malaysia Australia Raft Project (MARP) was formed - bringing together a Malaysian and five Australian artists. His work is held by the National Gallery of Victoria and included in other public and private collections in Australia and abroad.

* This project is supported by the Victorian Government through Arts Victoria.

anthonypelchen.com

AZHARR RUDIN

'Rock Sugar' | 'Mati semut kerana gula (And so the ants die because of sugar)' - A planet of sugar, covered in transparent coat of sugar hangs on a vertical string with vegetation at the bottom/floor/string. The vegetation may deter some insects from crawling to the planet. These are the organic pieces The sugar is edible. Viewers are dared to have a lick.

Azharr Rudin lives in Malaysia and works primarily but not exclusively through cinema/films. Some of his works include Majidee, Punggok Rindukan Bulan (This Longing), Tukang Perahu Pulau Duyong (The Boatbuilders of Mermaid Island) and rumah/tok (house/grandparent) and Baca sebelum minum. Recurring themes explored in his films span across people and places in transition and marginal stories and perspectives. Azharr observes that things that happen in between film takes are just as interesting if not more substantial than what happen during the actual takes. And often times, his work incorporate these unscripted, candid moments and (re)discoveries into the final output of the work taking hold the always in existence but frequently elusive beauties and horrors in life. A biologist friend relates this observation, pre-occupation and predilection to Interphase, the phase of the cell cycle in which the cell spends the majority of its time and performs the majority of its purposes including preparation for cell division. The time we spend doing 'small' things may actually mean a lot more than the time we spend doing 'bigger' things if not as equally important.

azharudin.com

chi too

'68 Love Lane' - Pigment Ink on Hahnemuhle Photo Luster (a set of 26 pieces); approx. 110 x 358 cm; 2014.

As my relatives were evicted from their shop lot in Love Lane, I had my late grandfather's goldsmithing tables shipped to me in Kuala Lumpur. As I cleaned these tables up, I found many artefacts left behind by my aunts and uncles. Since my grandfather passed away more than 20 years ago, nothing belonged to him except for these 2 glass caps used to cover his chemical bottles. Although the drawers appear empty, I find things under drawer liners, and then I find things under the drawers themselves. It was like a gift that doesn't stop giving, although the things given were mainly useless. I found lottery tickets, envelopes, ang paws (sans money), food packaging, name cards, and more lottery tickets. '68 Love Lane' is a project aimed at documenting all of this. It is a snapshot into the banality of island life, a life so highly romanticised by mainland folks like me. I would like to individually photograph and document each item, to give it a place in memory, before my mother finds these items and tells me 'Keep for what?'

chi too broke up with film making to pursue a fine art practice using humour, satire and visual poetics, creating a diverse system of objects that include videos, installations, performances, sculptures, and photography to reveal his own never ending emotional struggles and personal reflections. His experimental music, performances and playful self-organised public art projects such as Main Dengan Rakyat, Everything's Gonna Be Alright and Lepark display a genuine need to engage with space and audiences that form part of his complex multifaceted approach to practice. Since then, as a self-taught artist outsider, he has been developing his fine art practice and has participated in various exhibitions and performance events in Malaysia and abroad.

chitoo.net

LIEW KWAI FEI

Kisah Ajaib di Pulau G-Syokrony ke lima kosong lima: Burung Pinang, Dr G, Datuk J dan sebagainya | 不老的传奇之一零一回 '感觉像座孤岛' | The true story of George, the ever last chapter: 'Who gave birth to the G-spot one' - Acrylic on canvas (2.7 x 2.1m), cutout plywood photo booth, multiple drawings in various dimensions,

This is a project by Kwai Fei to examine the possibilities of developing the notion of 'Pulau' from the domestic to global realm through a series visual imagination, idea, expression etc.

Liew Kwai Fei (b. 1979), graduated with a diploma in Chinese ink painting from Institute of Art (MIA). His solo exhibitions include: **மிருகம் ஏன் நண்பன்** / Kami Bukan Hantu / Ah Pult and Ah Door / 我们家不是人, Run Amok Gallery, 2013;

Painted Words and Written Paintings / For the Refined and For the Masses, Valentine Willie Fine Art Kuala Lumpur, 2012. Kwai fei was brought up in a working class Chinese family and graduated with a diploma in Chinese ink painting. Kwai Fei speaks well in broken Mandarin, broken Cantonese, broken Malay and broken English. He likes cold joke and hot coffee.

MINSTREL KUIK

'Flying Exercise'

Installation with artist book, photographs & drawings.

'Karen and The Lighthouse, Stromboli, 1950' - (charcoal on paper; 420 x 594 cm)

'Karen and The Volcano, Stromboli, 1950' - (charcoal on paper; 420 x 594 cm)

The little bulbul bird at the balcony is gone. I like to think it has flown to Taiwan where spring is awaiting its return. In a half-dream state, I have thought of an old photograph that I used to call Bird, although I believe Flying Exercise is a more appropriate title for the time being. Bird has a horizontal composition, tilting slightly at both ends. Instead of facing the window, the person in the photograph that imitates the flight has chosen to position her body toward the interior, thus, leaving the sun behind. Somehow, I can neither tell which season's sunshine has lit up the room, nor when the photograph was taken.

A bird hovers in the air by flapping constantly its wings, or else it will fall. Flying Exercise is such process of exercising the memory and expanding its horizon from one island to another. While trying to summon up images of Penang Island, old faces emerge from the subconscious, making their return from a shipwreck.

Nothing is lost, at least not now.

Chinese Malaysian Minstrel Kuik was born in Pantai Remis in 1976. She has a bachelor degree in painting from Taiwan and a master degree in photography from France. As a social actor, Kuik continues to experience tension coming from different social bounds, identities and interests. These experiences are foregrounded in Kuik's photographic work, whereas photography serves as the medium for her to explore social distances and attachments for its documentary and narrative quality.

minstrelkuik.blogspot.com

MUNKAO

'From PJ to PG' - Terrarium (H:31 W: 14 L 14 inches)

"Responding to the idea of Islands, I will be working with

plants and terrariums."

Munkao (b. 1982, Kuala Lumpur) is a visual artist and game maker. His interest stems from how we create narratives within cultural knowledge systems. Some of his most sustained engagements include his on-going collaboration with Feng Shui expert Master Chang. He has also made Politiko, a card game where players try to outmaneuver each other in the vagaries of Malaysian politics. Munkao is the co founder of Centre for Artful and Useful Recreation (Centaur), a research initiative that that develops educational apparatus based on ludic principles.

munkao.com

VINCENT LEONG & MARTIN CONSTABLE

Pictures of You (after 'View from the Cascade') - 24" tv
One Hundred Years* (after 'View from Convalescent Bungalow') - 32" tv

"A collaboration between Martin Constable (SIN) and Vincent Leong (KL); this project aims to rework two historical paintings by Captain Robert Smith, from the collection of the Penang State Museum. These paintings depict the landscapes of Penang Island a century ago. Using the paintings as departure points, we set out to revisit the locations in the paintings; and eventually recreate the paintings in the form of videos. These videos will be presented in LED televisions and hung on the wall to appear as paintings in exhibition 'Fall Into The Sea To Become An Island' by Run Amok Gallery for the coming Georgetown Festival 2014."

Vincent Leong

A 2004, graduate of Goldsmiths' College, London, Vincent Leong (b. Malaysia, 1979) is an iconoclast and saboteur whose works in video, assemblage and site-specific installation often pare down experience to sets of structures and systems. By selecting aspects of the ordinary and the popular, Leong investigates social misconceptions within a larger cultural context.

Martin Constable

Martin Constable teaches digital art and visual effects at the School of Art Design and Media, Singapore. Prior to that he taught at Goldsmiths College, London for ten years. As a practicing artist he is associated with the Singapore based Grieve Perspective collaborative and has shown widely in Singapore and S. E. Asia.