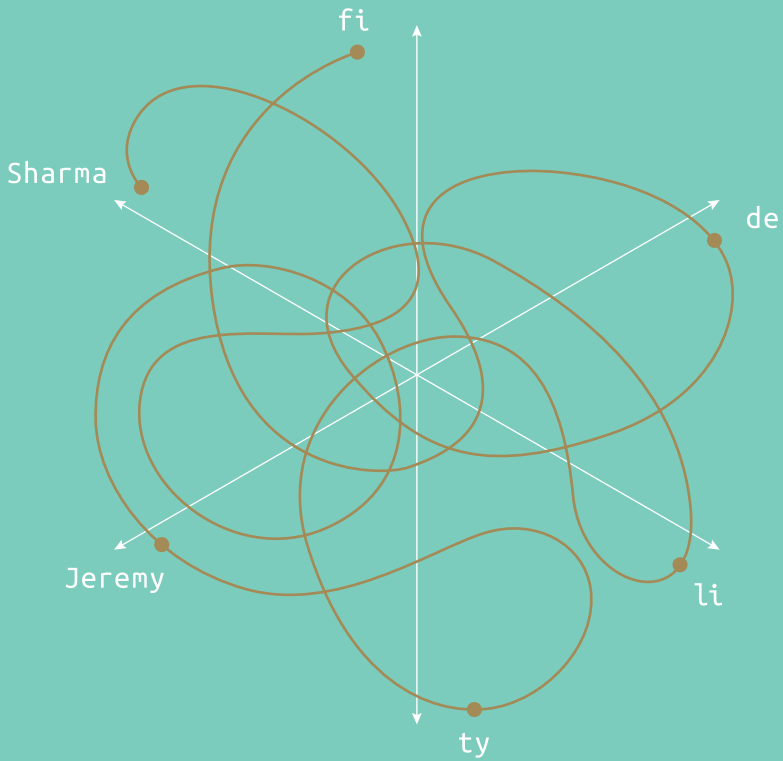


ALOFT
AT
HERMÈS



FONDATION
D'ENTREPRISE
HERMÈS

The Fondation d'entreprise Hermès presents

• fidelity • Jeremy Sharma

• Exhibition from 17 May 2018 to 19 August 2018

10.30am – 8pm daily

Admission Free

• Aloft at Hermès 541 Orchard Road, Liat Towers

#aloftathermes #fondationhermes
www.fondationentreprisehermes.org

•
Emi Eu

Programme Director

•
I've often thought about how it would be like working with **Jeremy** because my understanding of his work was always tied to his creative interpretation of the pulse of dying stars, translated into sculptural form. Here we are. Jeremy has brought **sound**, together with **voice and language**, to the foreground, using them as **raw material to transport us to another part of the world** for us to explore and rediscover our own.

I feel that this is a very apt and important moment to present Jeremy's work. Today, these parts of the world are rapidly becoming largely forgotten and left out, or being viewed from a different perspective. I am filled with anticipation and truly hope that visitors would appreciate and fully embrace this meaningful project, taking time to immerse themselves in his work and listen to the richly diverse heritage that we have at our fingertips.

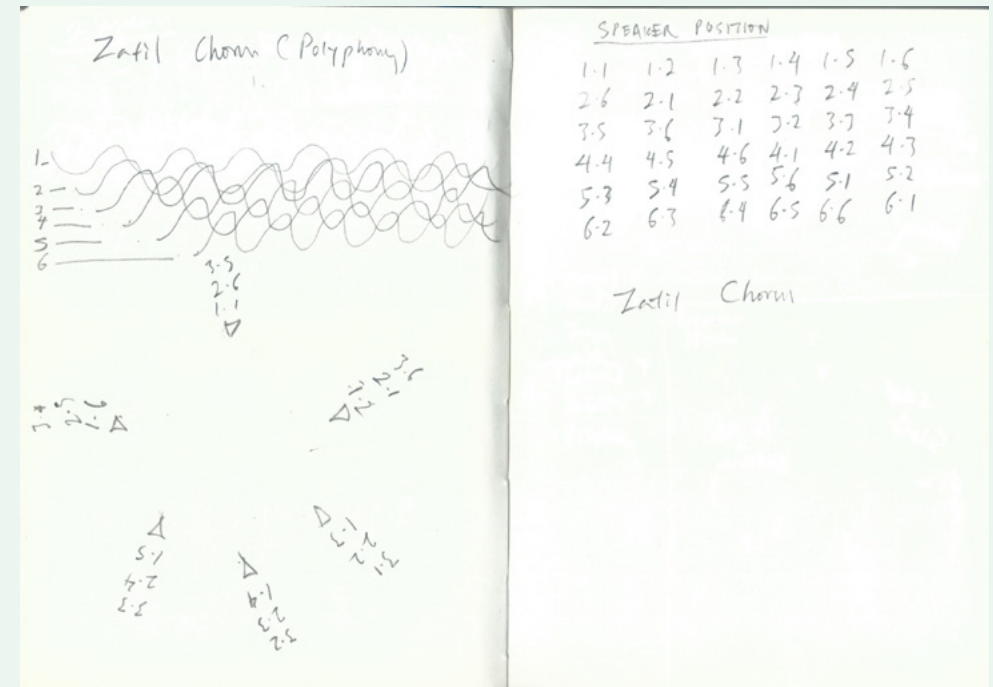
First reflections

- Jeremy Sharma

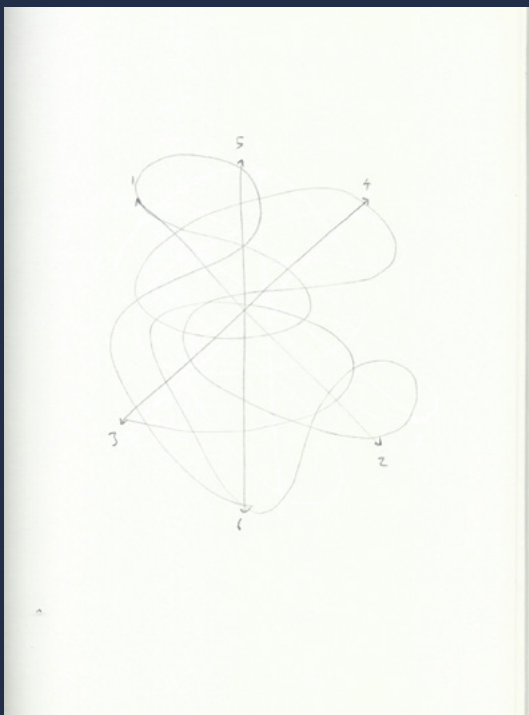
Artist

- As if not to be misled by the title, this is by no means an account to accurately document and depict a community. It is not a statement of fact or loyalty but an amplified field of ambiguity, a de-stabilisation of artist and world and yet—a pushing through of a final form with faith. These are points of reflection from a point in time where the work is still being produced.

- Fidelity could be prescribed as a question of representation and authenticity and the organising forces between them. It does not speak for any people in the recordings but speak of the entanglement between me the artist-subject-producer, the production (my imagination and encounter with place and materials) and the artwork.



- Sound propagates in a sphere, and in finding a room's optimal acoustic condition, sound engineers put panels in place to absorb the first reflection points between speakers and listeners. Listeners then create their own world from these speakers through their subjectivity. This world—a network of associations, and multitude of possibilities and places—offers one to find authenticity in being.



- I originally intended to record songs from around the region from different communities, songs you may not have heard of, sung by communities that might exist amongst us. I think songs occupy both types of representation—they describe or portray events, feelings and life and yet they also take the place of people, with the artist as proxy. I timed my research trips to my circumstances, my restlessness and my travels.

- My trips to Yogyakarta, Kuala Lumpur and Bangkok were extensions of trips that I undertook for other projects or for the college that I teach in. Where times they are fruitful, some trips needed more time to come back to and sometimes



I came back with nothing. The trip to the Danga Bay region in Johor to meet the Orang Seletar I drove twice from the northern part of Singapore where I now reside. After all we were only separated narrowly by the Johor Strait and the Seletar River (before they dammed it into a reservoir, a view that I face everyday), a former place with no boundary where these people used to live but have since been displaced.

- Some events just came out of my curiosity in news and crises that are happening around us through what I read in the media. But knowing through the media and appropriating from it first of all was not a strategy I was interested in, nor is it the same as having firsthand experiences through people and place which are subjected to different exchanges, time and conversations that might erase preconceived notions and apathy without having to forsake the social and political conditions of the work.



- My focus was on collecting the songs and giving form to them. All the songs were a form of an oral account to remember their place, culture and history. With the **Rohingya** material, I felt I needed extra protection and care with them for obvious reasons and that they

04

Songs Recorded by Artist

- ZATIL TARANA
- KAMI KOUN LAUT
- DHANDANG GULA DEDHEP TIDHEM
- O LIMAU

Relief Agency
ged for me
nic scholar
I realised
I imagined
ssed down
d devotion.
ation with
cobbling a

Some events that are hard to capture in media. But from its first performance, it was the same and place and converted and apathy conditions

ZATIL TARANA

Written by Ustaz Hamidullah and performed with 5 piece ensemble from the Rohingya Community School in Kuala Lumpur.

Zatil Tarana describes the Rohingya's rightful place in their homeland called Arakan and the historic events of 3rd June 2012, and 9th October 2016. It describes both the persecution and the triumph of their people.

OTHER MATERIAL USED

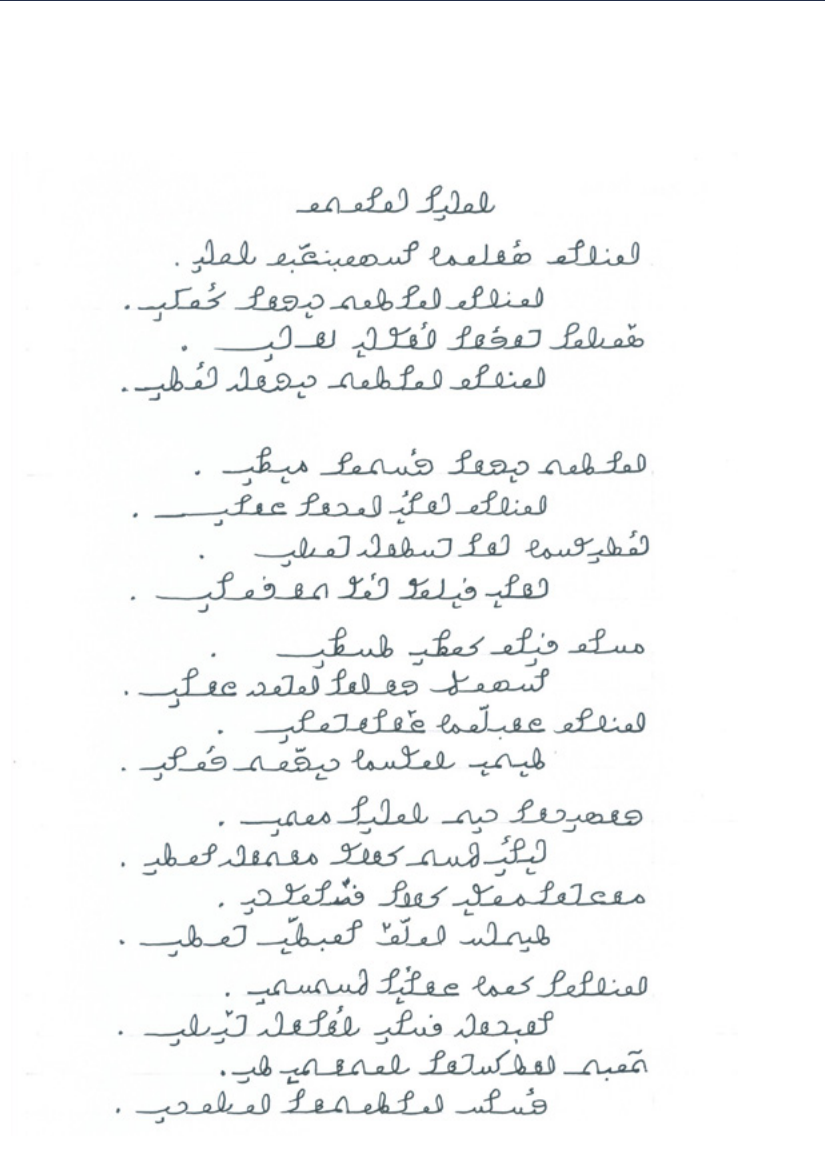
ZATIL KAHANI

A slightly more anthemic song recounting the tales of descendants before them who have lived on Arakan soil.

ROHINGYA LULLABY (Untitled)

What a mother sings to her child to sleep.

My focus was on collecting the songs and giving form to them. All the songs were a form of an oral account to remember their place, culture and history. With the Rohingya material, I felt I needed extra protection and care with them for obvious reasons that they



and that they

Relief Agency

ged for me

mic scholar

I realised

I imagined

ssed down

d devotion.

ation with

cobbling a

Some events that are highlighted in media. But from it first it the same and place v and conver and apathy conditions



KAMI KOUN LAUT

This song depicts the Orang Seletar as the original people of the sea who were driven to the mangroves only to find fish and crabs that could not fill them up.

OTHER MATERIAL USED

LAGU NTUAK MUIN

This song uses double imagery and metaphoric associations of both light and darkness rowing in the tumultuous sea during a storm and the song itself as a quest for identity.



Dhandang Gula Dedhep Tidhem

A poem about the night and the moon's irresistible beauty.

OTHER MATERIAL USED

SERAT NITISASTRA DHANDANGGULA PUPUH

– CHAPTERS 12-13-85



My focus was on collecting the songs and giving form to them. All the songs were a form of an oral account to remember their place, culture and history. With the **Rohingya** material, I felt I needed extra protection and care with them for obvious

and that they

This literature describes the Ethics of Java in 95 chapters, a body of text adapted from the Vedas describing how one should conduct oneself in love, living, in times of war and in civil society. Thomas Stamford Raffles re-adapted this and translated this for his book 'The History of Java'.



O LIMAU

O Limau is an old Portuguese ditty that describes the green lime fruit used in cooking and drinking, walking and following in a wheel, and the carefree dalliances of a young woman.

OTHER MATERIAL USED

Minha Mae

An ode to one's mother.

OLD PORTUGUESE PRAYER HYMN (untitled)

Relief Agency
ged for me
nic scholar
t I realised
I imagined
ssed down
d devotion.
ation with
cobbling a

Some events that are hard to find in media. But from it first it the same and place v and conver and apathy conditions

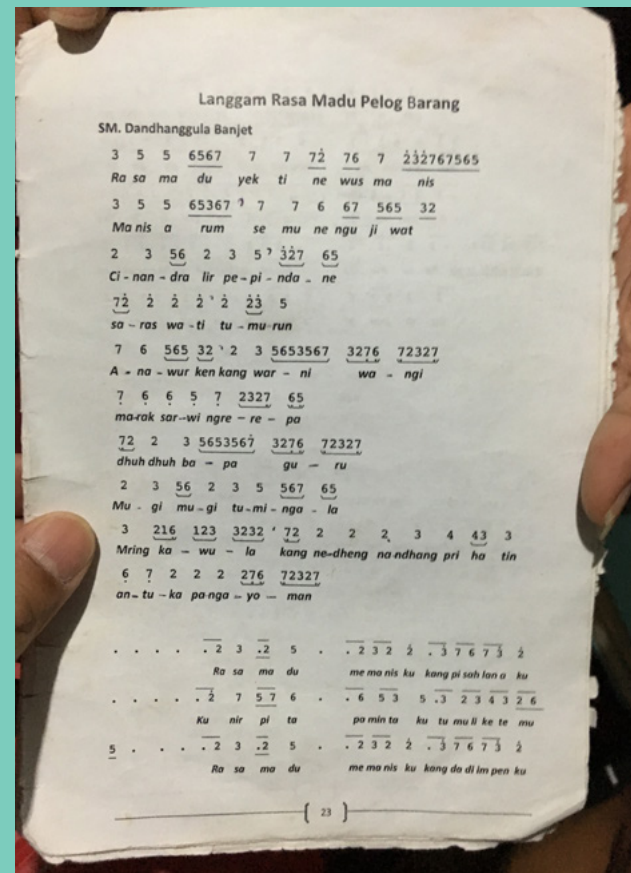
Some notes on song and language structures

ROHINGYA LANGUAGE The Rohingya people used mainly English and Urdu for written communication under British rule from 1826–1948, and Burmese after independence in 1948 in all official communications. Since the early 1960s, Rohingya scholars have developed a writing system suited to their own language, by using a modified form of the Arabic alphabet.

TARANAS is a type of compositional vocal music in which certain words and syllables based on Persian and Arabic phonemes, is sang as a main melody, usually short, repeated many times, with variation and elaboration at the performer's discretion.

KRISTANG is a creole language. It is spoken by the Kristang, a community of people of mixed Portuguese and Asian ancestry, chiefly in Malacca and Singapore. The name comes from the Portuguese creole which means 'Christian'. Many of the songs are lively and are derived from Portuguese folk dance and Malay Joget music. Lesser known melancholic songs talk about the sea or about missing a loved one.

My focus was on collecting the songs and giving form to them. All the songs were a form of an oral account to remember their place, culture and history. With the Rohingya material, I felt I needed extra protection and care with them for obvious reasons and that they



Relief Agency engaged for me as a music scholar. I realised I imagined I missed down devotion. I was cobbling a

Some events
that are ha
media. But
from it first
it the same
and place v
and conver
and apathy
conditions

JAVANESE SONGS or the Macapat has a structure that can be divided into 11 song forms (stanza form) and each song form has a certain name, structure and characteristic. Each song form denotes a number of lines and syllables and usually ends with a different vowel. The Macapat is a poetic form used to record events, stories, feelings and teachings, a method for recording and telling in Java.

ORANG SELETAR LANGUAGE or Slitar is very close to the Malay language and may be considered a Malay dialect. The language is considered severely endangered by UNESCO. Spoken by the Orang Seletar (or the Sea Gypsies) which use to exist in the North of Singapore and Johor, it has no writing system. The Portuguese used to call them Celates, which was derived from the Malay word selat (strait). The Orang Seletar were said to be Parameswara's main source of support when he fled from Palembang, Sumatra to Singapura. Almost all of the Orang Seletar songs revolve around the sea.

My focus was on collecting the songs and giving form to them. All the songs were a form of an oral account to remember their place, culture and history. With the **Rohingya** material, I felt I needed extra protection and care with them for obvious reasons. Not least of all because of their status and that they



were children; I worked with the Malaysian Relief Agency in KL who were very cooperative and who arranged for me to work with these boys and their *Ustaz* (an Islamic scholar or teacher). It was only upon my third visit that I realised these are not the songs that I hoped to collect; I imagined an ancient strain of the Rohingya language passed down through generations in a folk song about love and devotion. It was in fact a full on contemporary collaboration with *Ustaz* the songwriter writing their own history and cobbling a makeshift choir of six boys using the Tarana form.



- My interest in **Javanese songs** was both musical and cultural and developed from my last two trips to Yogyakarta, having studied gamelan as an art student and also collecting several albums on it. The **Kristang songs** from Malacca are a little closer to my heritage as my grandmother was of Portuguese descent; I recalled her speaking the language when I was a kid and learning some of the vocabulary. But the language and songs would be lost after my father's generation. In working with these songs, I wanted to work with untrained and unrehearsed voices and chance, recording the accidents and overlaying lines to create auditory complexity and textures and masses, the things that create them are what you cannot actually hear and that are hidden.

Acknowledgements

- **KUALA LUMPUR**
Malaysian Relief Agency
 Mohd Rezaidi bin Mohd Ishak
 Fauziah binti Tahar
 Wan Nur Alia binti Wan Ahmad Hifni
 Abdul Fattah bin Mohamad

Performers
 Ustadz Hamidullah bin Dudumiya
 and the boys:
 Razik
 Zubair
 Kamal
 Faydullah
 Sharifuddin
 Anamuddin

- **MALACCA**
Performers
 Papa Joe Lazaroo
 Jerry Alcantra

- **JOHOR**
 Jefree bin Salim

Performer
 Jahan bin Tom

- **YOGYAKARTA**
 Jimmy Ong
 Erson Padapiran

Performer
 Wahyuningsih

- **ARTIST ASSISTANTS**
 Ahmad Anwar
 Joyce Tan
 Christabel Ngoi

Jeremy Sharma

- Born 1977, Singapore

- Lives and works in Singapore



- **Jeremy Sharma** often conflates different mediums and disciplines together to form ambiguous forms and unstable statuses of objects. His work often deals with the ontology of things and the capacity for voids—between knowledge, perception, memory, data and formats to be made, occupied, heard or visualized. He does this through the translation and displacement of objects, images and sounds. He develops relationships and narratives between technology, materiality and media, unraveling underlying mechanisms of the self and other. His more recent forays and experiments look into scenes and places through the effects of modernity while working with elements of the voice, light, atmosphere, film, music, movement and architecture.

- Over the past decade, he has had a number of solo presentations that includes **Orbiter and Sonata** with Michael Janssen Gallery Berlin/Singapore, **Terra Sensa** at the Singapore Biennale (2013), **Exposition** (2013) at Grey Projects and **Apropos** (2012) at the Institute of Contemporary Arts Singapore. He has also done projects with the NTU Centre of Contemporary Arts Singapore, ifa Gallery Berlin (2015), Fundación Sebastián Mexico (2015), Busan Biennale (2014), Osage Art Foundation and City University Hong Kong (2014), Tokyo Art Book Fair (2011), 14th Asian Art Biennale Bangladesh (2010), Bangkok Experimental Film Festival (2008) and the ICA London (2005). His work has also been shown in numerous group exhibitions in Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia, Thailand, Hong Kong, Italy, Switzerland, Germany, France, England, Mexico and the United States.

- His work has been the subject of critical discussion in various print and online publications including Art Radar Journal, Asian Art News, Asia Art Pacific and Wall Street International and is part of a number of public and private collections.

He also teaches with the Faculty of Fine Arts at the LASALLE College of the Arts.

EDUCATION

- 2006 Master of Art (Fine Art)
LASALLE College of The Arts
- 2003 Bachelor of Art (Fine Art) with High Distinction
LASALLE College of The Arts (RMIT)

SELECTED SOLO EXHIBITIONS

- 2017 *Spectrum Version 2.2*
Sullivan+Strumpf Gallery, Singapore
- Jeremy Sharma - First Seven Years*
Art Forum Gallery, Singapore
- The Art of Contamination*
Primae Noctis Gallery, Lugano, Switzerland
- 2016 *Orbiter and Sonata*
Michael Janssen Gallery, Berlin
- 2014 *Factum*
Primae Noctis Gallery, Lugano, Switzerland
- Mode Change*
Michael Janssen Gallery, Singapore
- 2013 *Exposition*, curated by Jason Wee
Grey Projects, Singapore
- 2012 *Apropos*, curated by Charles Merewether
ICA Gallery 2, Institute of Contemporary Arts Singapore

SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS

- 2018 *Still like a Humming Bird*
Indonesia Contemporary Art Network (ICAN), Exhibitions
Yogyakarta, Indonesia
- 2017 *8th Kuala Lumpur Experimental Film, Video and Music Festival*
RAW Art Space and Checkmate Creative, KL, Malaysia
- Cinerama: Art and the Moving Image in Southeast Asia*
Singapore Art Museum
- That was Then, This is Now*
Sullivan+Strumpf Gallery, Singapore
- 'Athlete', Covets of An Outsider*
Hongkong International Film Festival, Hong Kong
- The Making of an Institution*, curated by Ute Meta Bauer, Anna Lovecchio
and Anca Rujoiu
NTU Centre for Contemporary Art, Singapore
- Slow Fury - State of Motion (Through Stranger Eyes)*, curated by Kent
Chan with the Asian Film Archives
Labrador Park, Singapore
- 2016 *Athlete 'live', with Toh Hunping and Dharma, as part of 'Covets of an
Outsider'- Showcase of works by Toh Hun Ping for the SGIFF*
Objectifs, Singapore
- White Surfaces*
Primae Noctis Gallery, Switzerland
- Turn Loose The Mermaids*
Ipreciation Gallery, Singapore
- Wayang Malam*
Lasalle College of The Arts, Winstedt Campus
- The Great Lubricator*
SOCIÉTÉ GÉNÉRALE Gallery Alliance Française de Singapour

- 2015 *Dear Painter*, curated by June Yap
Sundaram Tagore Gallery Singapore
- NTU CCA Residencies: Art Day Out!*
NTU CCA Studio, Singapore
- NTU CCA Residencies: Art After Dark - Longitudes, Endgames & Screensavers*
NTU CCA Studio, Singapore
- The Measure of Your Dwelling- Singapore as Unhomed*
ifa Gallery Berlin/Stuttgart, Germany
- Art Paris*
Grand Palais, Paris, France
- Singapore-Mexico Cross Cultural Exchange: A post-residency exhibition*
Fundacion Sebastian, Mexico City
- Donato Piccolo, Voldermars Johansons, Jeremy Sharma*
Primo Marella Gallery, Milan, Italy
- Prudential Singapore Eye - Contemporary Singapore Art*
Art Science Museum Singapore
- Outliers by Jeremy Sharma - Geo|Graphic: Celebrating maps and their
stories*, curated by Joanna Lee
National Library of Singapore
- 2014 *Modern Love*, curated by Bala Starr and Khairuddin Hori
Institute of Contemporary Arts Singapore
- Bright S'pore(s)*
Primo Marella Gallery, Milan, Italy
- Countershadows (tactics in evasion)*, curated by Melanie Pocock
Institute of Contemporary Arts Singapore
- Busan Biennale, Going, going, until I meet the tide*, Asian Curatorial,
curated by Joleen Loh, Juno Seo, Lisa Liu Chunfeng and Shinichi Hanada
Busan Metropolitan City, Kiswire Factory, South Korea
- Anthropos*, curated by Loredana Pazzini-Paracciani
Sundaram Tagore Gallery, New York
- Departure*, curated by Milenko Prvacki
iPrecciation gallery, Singapore
- MARKET FORCES - Erasure: From Conceptualism To Abstraction*, curated by
Charles Merewether
Osage Gallery and City University, Hong Kong
- Materialised Time*, curated by Chun Kaifeng
LATENT SPACES @ Haw Par Villa, Singapore
- Do you believe in Angels?*, curated by Tony Godfrey
Mo Space, Manila
- Art Stage Singapore*, SEA Platform (Michael Janssen Gallery)
Marina Bay Sands Convention Centre
- 2013 *Singapore Biennale - If The World Changed*, co-curated by David Chew
The Singapore Art Museum
- Painting in Singapore*, curated by Tony Godfrey
Equator Art Projects, Singapore
- Theory and Practice of The Small Painting*, curated by Tony Godfrey
Equator Art Projects, Singapore
- Side-Glance*, curated by Charles Merewether
Praxis Space, Institute of Contemporary Arts Singapore
- A History of Curating in Singapore / Curating Lab: Phase 3*
Goodman Art Centre, Singapore
- New Black City / Art Stage Singapore Platform*, curated by Jason Wee
Marina Bay Sands Convention Centre, Singapore

ALOFT AT HERMÈS

One of the Fondation d'entreprise Hermès' five art spaces around the world, Aloft is a platform for contemporary artists to explore new expressive forms and to bring their creative dreams to life through original works created in situ. Each year, two artists are invited to interpret an annual exhibition theme that engages the public in an ongoing dialogue exploring key issues and new perspectives. Additionally, in keeping with the Fondation's overarching commitment for its worldwide exhibition spaces, Aloft will continually showcase and support French artists internationally.

Inhabiting the upper floor of the Hermès flagship store, Aloft takes over the baton from Third Floor - Hermès. This new chapter reaffirms our vision of offering the community a unique space at the heart of Orchard Road to encounter and fall in love with art.

PROGRAMME DIRECTOR EMI EU

"The theme of Materiality gives artists the freedom to explore, experiment with and create works in mediums that are both familiar and unfamiliar. On a more profound level, we would like to steer Aloft towards being socially engaging, significant and relevant, becoming a vehicle which will assume the role of a conduit and connector, and a unique space where people will come together to encounter and discover creative expression."

Emi Eu is the Director of STPI, an internationally renowned space in Singapore for conceptual development in contemporary art practice in print and paper.

FONDATION D'ENTREPRISE HERMÈS

The Fondation d'entreprise Hermès supports men and women seeking to learn, perfect, transmit and celebrate the creative skills that shape our lives today and into the future.

The Fondation operates eight major programmes with a combined focus on skills, creativity and transmission: **New Settings** for the performing arts, **Exhibitions** and **Artists' Residencies** for the visual arts, **Immersion**, a **French-American Photography Commission** for photography, **Manufacto – the Skills Factory** and our **Skills Academy** for the discovery and perfection of artisan trades. **H³ – Heart, Head, Hand** is the Fondation's worldwide programme of support for organisations whose work reflects these central aims. Our **Biodiversity & Ecosystems** programme enacts a core commitment to protect fragile ecosystems for future generations.

The Fondation's diverse activities are governed by a single, over-arching belief: *our gestures define us.*

fidelity

Jeremy Sharma

