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# EVENTS REALISED

## EXHIBITIONS



*Our Future*, 2005. Digital photography, 50 x 63 cm

### HOMEFRONT

Robert Go

November 21 - December 20, 2007

- Home** (hōm) *noun*: Any place of residence or refuge; a house, apartment, or shelter that is the usual residence of a person, family or household; a person's native place or own country.
- Front** (frünt) *noun*: (military) The foremost line or part of an army; a line of battle; the place where combat operations are carried out.
- Homefront** (hōm frünt) *noun*: The civilian population or the civilian activities of a country at war.



*Returning Home*, 2006. Digital photography, 50 x 63 cm

In November 2007, the gallery presented its first curated exhibition: *Homefront*, by New York artist Robert Go. This photographic exhibition, focusing on Sri Lanka and the three years that Robert spent living and working there, gives us a clear, non-sensationalist idea of the country's diversity and complexity.

Robert Go travels with an American passport, but is of Chinese/Indonesian origin. After ten years working as a journalist and photojournalist in the United States and Asia, where he covered major events including conflicts, natural disasters, and economic and political crises, he now works full-time as a photographer. In July 2007 he moved to Melbourne, Australia. In the last three years he has been immersed in a long-term documentary project exploring a new social trend of men who have chosen to give up their conventional careers and dedicate themselves exclusively to bringing up their children. ■



Wiz Kudowor. *Esoteric Planes V*, 2008. Acrylic on canvas, 120 x 140 cm

### VISIONS AND DREAMS

Ablade Glover / Wiz Kudowor

March 13 - May 31, 2008

In 2007 Tasneem Gallery began an association with the **Artists Alliance Gallery** in Accra, Ghana, that involved introducing the work of African artists to Barcelona. The history of the Artists Alliance Gallery goes back to the 1960's. Founded by the artist Ablade Glover, it has become a window into contemporary African art. Apart from its reputation of presenting high-quality art, the gallery is also known for the way it supports artists in developing their professional careers.





Ablade Glover. *Market Colour*, 2007. Oil on canvas, 101 x 76 cm

The first collaboration between Tasneem Gallery and the Artists Alliance Gallery resulted in the exhibition *Visions & Dreams*, showcasing 20 stunning paintings by Ablade Glover and Wiz Kudowor.

Ablade Glover is an established artist and acclaimed educator who has made an enormous contribution to art worldwide. Not only is he the founder of the Artists Alliance Gallery, but is also a distinguished alumnus of the American African Institute in New York and a member of the Royal Society of Arts in London. His paintings are shaped by brightly coloured oil paints that Ablade applies with a spatula,



Wiz Kudowor. *Paradox of Change*, 2007. Acrylic on canvas, 100 x 150 cm

which gives them a rich texture and a singular dynamic. Thus, his impressive urban landscapes attract viewers and almost invite them to step in and become part of the bustling scene. He has carried out myriad studies of the women of Ghana, which suggest a certain fascination and reverence. His palette sweetens when he paints women, producing canvases that are brimming with self-confidence, elegance and power, with a subtle touch of humour.

Wiz Kudowor studied at the College of Art at the University of Science and Technology in Kumasi, Ghana, and is a member of Artists Alliance Gallery. He is currently one of the most highly respected and acclaimed contemporary artists of West Africa. His work reflects the environment of modern Africa and the constant search for personal fulfilment and for identity. The artist uses African symbols as a point of reference in which to display a whole world of images. *Wiz Kudowor was commissioned to design and execute several public works in Ghana, including the relief mural at Kwame Nkrumah Memorial Park, a distinguished monument to some of the most important leaders of this nation. ■*



Rukun / Peaceful I, 2008. Acrylic on canvas, 100 x 100 cm

## BUNGKAM / SILENCE(D)

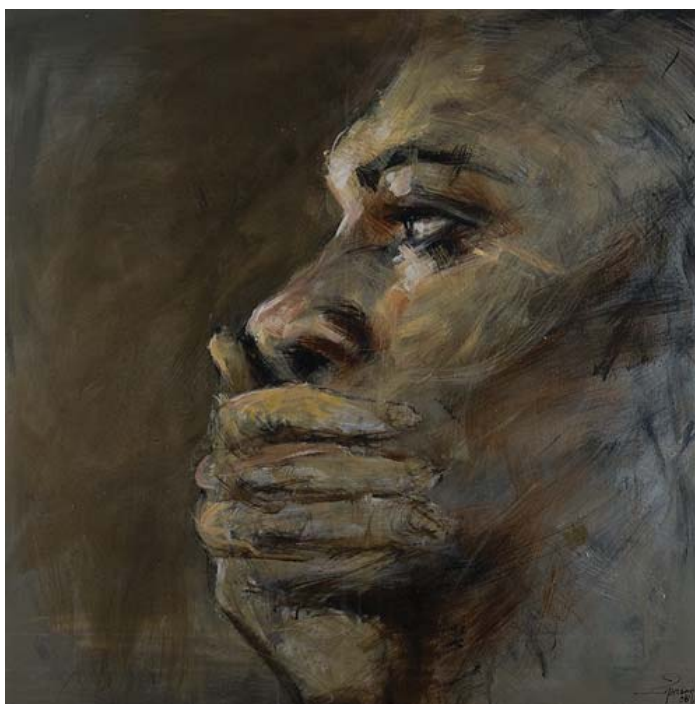
Jazz Pasay

November 18, 2008 – January 19, 2009

This solo exhibition by Jazz Pasay explored *Kejawen* (Javanese Mysticism). It is a theme that challenged Jazz to explore complex, hidden concepts, and the



painter soon became excited by the possibilities it offered him for presenting in Europe an esoteric and almost forgotten aspect of Indonesian culture. In 15 impressive canvases Jazz explores what it means to be Javanese, particularly in these turbulent times, and in the ideas that have come to influence his culture. To Tasneem Gallery's surprise, Jazz Pasay presented a single and provocative interpretation of *Kejawen*. He says "Indonesians as a people and as an amalgam of cultures, are evolving. Much of what we do now is either due to *Kejawen* or to a direct rejection of the ideas behind *Kejawen*". Working with acrylics on canvas, with the subtle use of colour, light and shade, Jazz's work challenges viewers and expresses the fundamental conflicts that have shaped Indonesian culture.



*Bungkam / Silence I*, 2008. Acrylic on canvas, 100 x 100 cm

Jazz Pasay was born in Indonesia in 1961. He is currently one of Indonesia's most famous artists. He started out in the field of medicine, working as a General Practitioner for ten years. In 1996 he went to San Diego, California to study a Masters in Administration and Business in the area of Public Health, and it was then that he started to paint. On his return to Indonesia, he strengthened his vocation to the art world. His eclectic style has found an expression in many different subjects, but it can be said of all his work that it is striking, confident and full of vitality. These characteristics have led his work to become popular in both East and West. ■



*Exude*, 2008. Gold leaf, oil, polyurethane on canvas, 90 x 90 x 2,8 cm

## EVIDENCE OF LIFE / EVIDENCIA DE VIDA

Chelsea Davine

February 24 – March 31, 2009

During 2009, the gallery decided to carry out an ambitious project consisting of three exhibitions that would show the work of foreign artists who have chosen to live and work in Catalonia.

The series kicked off in February, with *Evidence of Life*, by Chelsea Davine. Chelsea finds inspiration in objects that have been eroded by the elements and life itself, combining the intransigent quality of sculpture with the delicate touch of painting. Many of her works have an elemental beauty, as if they had been sculpted by nature, where they have their space. Others are more industrial or reminiscent of urban landscapes, but they all shine with a luminosity and vitality of their own.

Chelsea Davine was born in London, England in 1971. She began her art studies at the Chelsea School of Art in London, continued at Middlesex University, London and then at the University of Valencia through an Erasmus program. In 1996 she moved to Barcelona, where she currently lives with her family. She works as a designer and an artist. ■



*Reveal*, 2008. Gold leaf, oil, varnish on canvas, 120 x 120 x 2,8 cm





*Magnolia II*, 2008. Oil on Japanese paper canvas, 38 x 46 cm

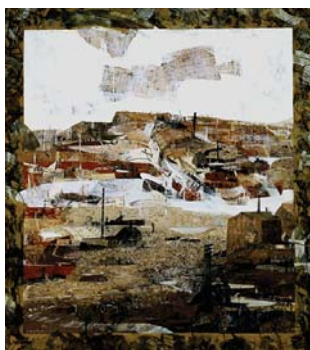
## MACHINES & MAGNOLIAS

Yoichi Tanabe

May 06 – June 30, 2009

In May we opened *Machines & Magnolias*, by Yoichi Tanabe. The Japanese artist exhibited in our gallery after participating in the 2007 Florence Biennale. This exhibition showed the energy and inspiration that Tanabe imbibes from natural and industrial landscapes. His paintings of abandoned factories are contrasted with his delicate flowers, but he also manages to show the connection that binds them: the effects of the passing of time. There is a quiet, controlled quality to his work and an atmosphere that is not exactly melancholic, but rather of something expecting to happen.

Yoichi Tanabe was born in Kumamoto, Japan, in 1949. He graduated from Waseda University with a degree in Political Science in 1972, and in 1974 he graduated with a Masters in Human Anatomy from the Tokyo University of Fine Arts. He is a well-known and respected international artist whose work has been exhibited in Japan, Spain, Italy and Belgium, among others. He currently lives and works in a small town just outside Barcelona. ■



*After the deluge I*, 2007. Oil on Japanese paper on canvas, 146 x 162 cm

## ART FAIR



### EUROP' ART, GENEVA PALEXPO, SWITZERLAND

22 to 26 of April, 2009

[www.europart.ch](http://www.europart.ch)

The 18th Europ' Art Fair in Geneva was held in April 2009 at Geneva Palexpo, a venue it shared with the International Book and Press Show and retrospective of the work of the three Giacometti brothers. This edition of the fair was a break from the past and developed in collaboration with an international team of experts, led by artistic director Christopher Bollman. At the fair, Tasneem Gallery presented the work of five of its artists: Chelsea Davine, Robert Go, Jazz Pasay, Wiz Kudowor and Ablade Glover. ■



# EXPERIENCE - ART

This space in the newsletter provides an opportunity for anyone who has visited our gallery to discuss how and why they connect with art and their experience in acquiring an original artwork. We start this first edition with an interview of Isabelle and Jacques.

## ISABELLE AND JACQUES SPEAK OF THEIR "COUP DE FOUDRE" IN TASNEEM GALLERY

Isabelle and Jacques along with their two sons Leopold and Marius, moved to Barcelona about the same time as Tasneem Gallery first opened. Originally from France, Isabelle and Jacques had lived for 10 years in New York before moving to Spain. From the beginning they have been clients, friends and supporters of Tasneem Gallery. We love it when they come to visit and particularly enjoy hearing the views of Leopold and Marius on the different artists and exhibitions.

### - When did you begin to collect art?

We bought our first piece of art in New York in 1994 in Chinatown. We fell in love with a tall sculpture: it was the first piece of art this artist sold and he really wanted to make sure it would be featured in a good place. We had to convince him a little bit, and we later invited him to our home to see his piece in context. We do not, however, see ourselves as collectors of art, rather as people who enjoy having real pieces of art in our home.

### - What kinds of art do you particularly like and why?

We have an eclectic taste. We buy when we have "a coup de foudre"

### - What was the impression that you had of Tasneem Gallery on your first visit?

It was by chance that Isabelle one day discovered the Gallery on a trip to the local post office and immediately liked the atmosphere and the choice of art she saw and invited me over. We both felt very at ease with our senses stimulated by the pieces of art, says Jacques.

### - What made you connect with the Gallery and become one of our clients?



Isabelle, Jacques, Leopold and Marius relaxing in their home in front of Totem to the Eclipse by Wiz Kudowor. Photograph taken by Gareth Lloyd-Evans.

We stopped regularly at the Gallery and decided to buy for our apartment in Barcelona, two large, powerful and bright paintings by Jazz Pasay. We simply became friends with Tas quite rapidly, as we stopped regularly to see the new exhibitions she presented. Tas and Michel always take time to explain the point of view of the artists and put the art in context. They are always so helpful: they delivered all the paintings to our home and helped us put them up. Moreover, we like the philosophy of the Gallery: presenting emerging artists from unusual countries.

### - What does it feel like to experience art in your everyday environment rather than in a gallery or museum? Does it add anything special to your life beyond the decorative

The fact that the pieces of art are right in our home is great. We have time to discover them, stare at the paintings and find details we had not seen before.



We often think about the artists also and the far away countries they come from. In a way, it all adds to our well being.

- Do you have any views about the role of gallery owners, art dealers and collectors in helping to promote the work of emerging artists?

We think this role is fundamental. It takes guts to travel, look for emerging artists, take the time to understand them and market them to a foreign audience. It takes passion. You have it or you don't and Tas has it more than anyone else we know. We believe her passion is not only about art but also about bringing about a greater understanding between developed and developing countries.

- You are both very international people and from Tasneem Gallery you have bought paintings from artists as far afield as Ghana and Indonesia. What role if any do you think art can play in bringing about cultural understanding?

A great role. We don't just buy a piece of art, but also like to learn about the artist and the context in which the piece was created. Sometimes we even end up becoming friends with the artist. We remember intensely buying that first sculpture in New York. The artist wanted to make sure his work was going to be in a great environment. So we invited him over to reassure him. Luckily, he liked the way we presented it! We bought that piece 16 years ago and it's still a centerpiece in our apartment, together with the paintings we bought at Tasneem Gallery. ■

## EVENTS FORTHCOMING

(September 2009 to February 2010)

### EXHIBITIONS



*The Daily Market*, 2007. Ink, watercolour, 31.5 x 40 cm

#### SKETCHES OF BELO - *Seven Weeks in an African Village*

Anthony Pilley

September the 16 - October the 17, 2009

Anthony Pilley is a British artist who lives and works in Barcelona. He first visited the city to work on the stage design for the Lindsay Kemp Dance Company. Inspired by the surroundings, he began to paint and create works in which he reflected the spirit and atmosphere of the city.

The exhibition at Tasneem Gallery will consist of watercolours that Anthony painted during his journey to a small town in Cameroon, in which he will offer us a vision of the traditions and the people who live there. It is an exhibition created in the same spirit as the marvellous images of Barcelona that Anthony



*Early Morning by The Motor Park*, 2007. Tempera, mud, 42 x 58 cm

painted during the eighties, and that still captivate visitors to this city. ■

## TARDOR DE L'ART, 2009

### ABSTRACCIONS

October 22 - November 14, 2009

As a part of the activities programmed in autumn for the principal associations of galleries in Catalonia (Gremi de Galeries d'Art de Catalunya, Art Catalunya, Asociación de Galeristas Independents d'Art de Catalunya y Art Barcelona), we find a new initiative entitled TARDOR DE L'ART, which proposes "to bring the galleries of art into greater connection with the public, by a varied program of exhibitions and cultural activities, free of entry charge". This project will be shaped by several events, managed and organised by the Gremi de Galeries D'Art de Catalunya (the Guild of Catalan galleries) including a cycle of five thematic exhibitions: *Realismes: Classicisme i Modernitat*, *El paper de l'Art*, *Avantguardes històriques*, *Abstraccions* y *Els volums de l'art*. Tasneem Gallery will join this new experience under the topic ABSTRACCIONS, presenting a collective exhibition of the artists of our gallery who work inside this profile. ■



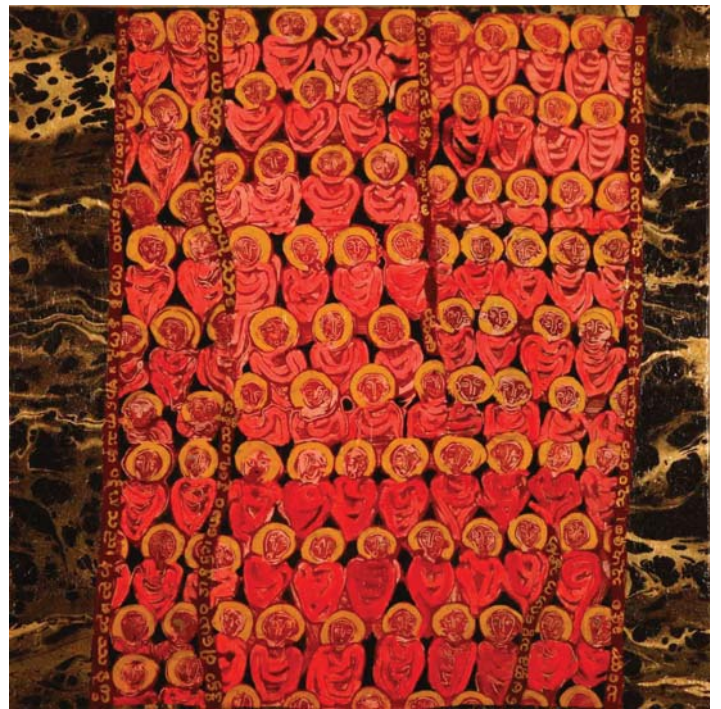
*How do you find Barcelona?*, 2009. Acrylic and mixed media on canvas, 100cm x 100 cm

## MISSING ASIA - OBSERVING EUROPE

Htein Lin

November 19, 2009 - January 16, 2010

In late November we will open an exhibition of works by Htein Lin. Born in Burma in 1966, Htein Lin studied law at University, became involved in Anyeint (Burmese Popular Theatre), and led the 1988 student protests in favour of democracy. Before being jailed in 1998, he was a pioneer of performance art in Burma. During the six years he spent



*Saffron revolution XII*, 2009. Acrylic and collage on canvas, 101 x 101 cm

in prison, he developed printing and painting techniques that allowed him to secretly create hundreds of works on prison uniforms, using smuggled materials and objects he had in his cell, like plates and lighters. After his release, he continued to paint using the techniques he had devised in jail and has also further developed his work as a performance artist.

Htein Lin's work is based on his extraordinary life experiences, political events in Burma, and his profound Buddhist faith. He currently lives in the United Kingdom, and his work has been exhibited in the UK, US, Australia, Hong Kong, Thailand and at major international fairs, like the 2007 Venice Biennale.

This exhibition at Tasneem Gallery shows his artistic development over the last few years and explores his perspective of Europe and Asia, as an Asian artist now living in Europe. ■



# PRESENTATIONS

## AN AFTERNOON OF POETRY WITH THE PERSIAN WRITER NAZANIN AMIRIAN

Date to announced, by invitation only

This will be the first in a series of poetry nights to be held at Tasneem Gallery. The importance of poetry in Persian culture is well known. We will start this series with Persian poetry because of the spirit of optimism that it brings to our world. We are fortunate that Nazanin Amirian will be at the event not only to read poetry but also to help us understand the history and different genres of Persian poetry.

*Human beings are members of a whole,  
In creation of one essence and soul.  
If one member is afflicted with pain,  
Other members uneasy will remain.  
If you have no sympathy for human pain,  
The name of human you cannot retain.*

Extract from a poem by Sa'di (1184-1291). This poem has been placed in the entrance to the Hall of Nations of the UN building in New York.

Nazanin Amirian is an Iranian sociologist, political commentator and writer who has lived in Spain since 1983. A graduate in Political Science, she is currently a tutor at the National University of Distance Education (UNED) and the University of Barcelona, and imparts courses and lectures at Casa Elizalde on her country, political Islam, the situation of women in the Muslim world and the complex circumstances in which the Kurdish people fight for their freedom. She is the author of several books, including *Antología de la poesía contemporánea persa*, *El cuentacuentos persa*, *Al gusto persa: tradiciones y ritos*, *Kurdistán: El país inexistente* and *Irak, Afganistán e Irán: 40 respuestas al conflicto de Oriente Próximo*. ■

# REVIEW - ART



In each edition of the Newsletter we will invite art professionals to speak to us about a topic of their choice. For the first issue we have invited Nana Cardona, author of the January 2008 Guidebook to Contemporary Art in Vietnam and the Philippines. Nana currently works as an assistant to the General Manager at the Vila Casas Foundation in Barcelona.

## CONTEMPORARY ART IN VIETNAM AND THE PHILIPPINES

Nana Cardona

I would like to thank Tasneem Gallery for the opportunity to contribute to their newsletter, as well as all the people who have supported me in my efforts to bring my study on contemporary art in Vietnam and the Philippines to a wider audience.

### Introduction

Twenty percent of artists invited to the 2009 Venice Biennale<sup>1</sup> are from Asia or Oceania. Of these, the most represented are those born in China (5 artists), India (4 artists), Australia and Korea (with two artists each). Forty percent of all artists at the Biennale are from European countries, notably Italy with 11 artists, Germany with 8, Russia with 4, and Spain and Poland with 3 each. The US is represented by 14% of artists, which is equivalent to 13 artists.

At Documenta 2007 (Kassel, Germany), the Asian representation is almost the same as that of a single country, the US. They are each represented by 12% of the total number of artists, with China and India (7 and

3 artists respectively) being the most highly represented Asian countries. These statistics from two benchmark events in the international contemporary art world give us some idea of the presence of Asian art in Europe and the US: There were no artists from Vietnam or the Philippines in either case.

In spite of its geographic location, a high number of European artists were invited to the 2008 Taipei biennale<sup>2</sup>, almost 60% of the total, while Asia only contributed 23%, and the US, 12%. This situation makes it clear that neither Vietnam nor the Philippines have a presence in the most representative international contemporary art scenes.

The Singapore 2008 biennale was an exception. In this case, Vietnam and Philippines were the two best-represented countries, together with the host country which was represented by 7 artists, followed by Vietnam with 5 ((Truong Tan, Pham Ngoc Duong, Nguyen Quan Huy, Rich Streitmatter-Tan and Din Q Le), and the Philippines with 4 (Alfredo and M<sup>a</sup> Isabel Aquilinan, Lena Cobanbang and Leeroy New), while China was represented by a single artist.

Perhaps the limited representation of the Philippines and Vietnam in the most significant contemporary art events may not be a question of the lack of quality, talent or creative ingenuity of their artists, but to the fact that the public and private institutions and individuals that support art in these countries are less active in promoting their work.

### **nakkan and the Guidebook to Contemporary art in Vietnam and the Philippines**

The fact that there is very little known about today's art in these two countries is what sparked my interest in carrying out a field study, which was made possible by a Casa Asia grant<sup>3</sup>.

The choice of the Philippines can be explained by the fact that it is the country in which my mother was born, and because the idea of helping to make its art better known in Spain also has something to do with my father's love of painting and the visual arts, which I've been following with interest since I was small. Meanwhile, a brief stay in Vietnam encouraged me to extend the study I was planning to carry out to that country too, because I was struck by its particular artistic sensibility.

My aim was to create a guidebook to contemporary artists and art spaces.

Starting from a base of possible contacts that I put together in Barcelona in 2008, I travelled to both countries. I spent five months there in total, two in

Vietnam and three in the Philippines, meeting artists and talking to them and also to Fine Arts lecturers, gallery owners and collectors, visiting studios, museums and art spaces and attending events and exhibitions.

Once I had developed a system and order to the information collected, the result was a guidebook containing 112 artist records (52 from Vietnam and 60 from the Philippines) from different disciplines, mainly painting, photography, sculpture, performances, installations and video art. The guidebook also contains information on 52 art venues (34 in Vietnam and 18 in the Philippines), such as galleries, museums and universities.

"nakkan" is the title I've given this field study, after the name of the blog that I used to communicate with my family and friends during my travels.

### **Vietnam**

In Vietnam there is a striking difference between two different scenes in terms of exhibitions and artworks<sup>4</sup>. On the main streets of the major cities, it is easy to come across galleries that look professional and elegant, usually in desirable locations. These galleries mainly sell paintings of landscapes or figures that represent the beauty and exoticism –from a foreigner's perspective- of the city. A group of artists, most of them born in the 40s and 60s, are very well positioned in this market and their work is successful with foreign collectors and visitors with a high level of purchasing power, including those from other Asian countries.

On reaching Vietnam without really knowing what is going on in the art world, it is easy to think that this work represents the country's entire art production. But this is only part of the reality.

There is another scene, with less opportunities to exhibit and sell than the one just mentioned, which is where younger artists move, along with older artists who share their way of seeing and making art- They express feelings of anguish or fear - remember that Vietnam was the scene of three long and bloody wars in the 20th century - and also new proposed ideals or rebellions, in the form of paintings, sculptures, performance and installations of very different kinds.

These two last modes, installations and performance, do not automatically have the blessing of the authorities in charge of official culture, and have to turn to small venues like *Ryllega Gallery* and *Nha San Duc* in order to exhibit their work, always with the danger that the bureaucracy's criteria will be used to decide whe-



ther the event is held or cancelled. The few contemporary art galleries and cultural centres that have been set up in Hanoi under the patronage of other countries such as France (*L'Espace*), the United Kingdom (*The British Council*) and the United States (*The Ford Foundation*) do not escape from this control. The only exception that proves the rule is the *Goethe Institute* (German cultural institution), which has more freedom to organise and hold exhibitions.

There are also contemporary art galleries run by foreigners, such as the *Vietnam Art Gallery*, or by young Vietnamese who are promoting artists from their country, such as *Suffusive Art Gallery*, both in Hanoi, or *Gallery Ouynh* in Ho Chi Minh City (Saigon), which are run by foreigners from a Vietnamese background.

Some young artists take advantage of new technologies and communicate to the outside world through the Internet, and they are slowly starting to reach the rest of the world with the help of grants from foreign institutions or the support of foreign patrons. They are seeking new trends, inspiration or a renewal of their artistic expressivity. This young generation of artists goes beyond the stereotypical beauty displayed in the galleries on the main streets, with more daring projects that are packed with feeling or with social messages of differing degrees of criticism or impact. They use new and traditional techniques, such as lacquer, and the whole range of formats and materials that today's material arts encompass.

Some of the artists who best represent this generation, many of them multidisciplinary, are Nguyen Manh Hung (painting), Pham Ngoc Duong (painting and installations), Tiffany Chung (mixed media painting, photography and installations), Rich Streitmatter-Tan (installations), Phi Phi Oanh (Lacquer), Nguyen Thi Chau Giang (painting), Hoang Duong Cam (painting and photography), Bui Cong Khanh (painting), Nguyen Nhu Huy (installations), Nguyen Quan Huy (pintura), Ly Hoay Ly (installations), Vuong Van Thao (painting), Jun Nguyen Hatshushiba (installations and performance), Le Quan Ha (painting), Truong Tan (installations), Tran Luong (performance), Dao Anh Khanh (performance), among others, along with artists' groups such as *Mogas Station*, *Hanoi Link*, *a little blah blah* and *Wonderful District*.

## Philippines

The scene here is altogether different. While the country has also lived through wars in the 20th century - the last one WWII - they are already a distant memory, and the country achieved its independence in 1946 under tutelage of the US. Through its Constitution the

Philippines is a parliamentary presidential democracy, although it has lived through periods of dictatorship and some of its presidents have been overthrown.

The fact that it is a democracy does not prevent a certain political instability, partly as a result of a pronounced social polarisation (2% of the population enjoy a high level of purchasing power, while the rest are relatively poor. A middle class has only started to emerge over the last couple of decades). The situation is worsened by unbridled demographic growth, which has led to the doubling of the population in the last three decades, from 40 to the current 85 million.

These factors affect artists, who nevertheless enjoy quite a lot of freedom of action. Official arts policy is more highly developed than in Vietnam, although the resources are limited. This shortage is offset by some of the wealthier families who play a commendable role in promotion and patronage, with the creation of spectacular museums like *Ayala Museum*, the *Lopez Museum*, the *Vargas Museum* and *Yuschenco Museum*, among others, and the implementation of several measures to support art. Freedom of movement and the fact that English is one of the most spoken languages make it easier for artists to communicate and set up contacts with other countries.

On the other hand, the Philippines has a broad range of contemporary art galleries, some run by Filipinos, others by foreigners. For example: *Galeria Duemilla*, *Avellana Art Gallery*, *Blanc*, *Hiraya Gallery*, *Boston Gallery*, *The Cubicle Art Space*, *Finalle Art File* and *Green Papaya*, in Metro Manila, along with others such as *Orange* and *Kapitana Gallery*, in Negros. In the Philippines, the acquisition of art is not so dependent on foreign collectors or investors. Rather, it is the country's own well-off class that tends to invest, promoting the market, exhibitions, and a love of art.

The ranks of Philippine artists can be divided into several groups. One of these would be the artists who are already famous, such as Fernando Amorsolo, Fernando Zóbel and Juan Luna, among others, who have contributed to the development of the history of Philippine art. Then there is another group of nationally and internationally acclaimed artists from the same generation, such as Ben Cabrera for example, who has been awarded the distinction of "national artist" by the Philippine government.

On the other hand, there is the generation of artists born in the 70s and 80s, such as Marina Cruz (1982), Annie Cabigting (1971), Alfredo Esquillo (1972), Nona Garcia (1978) and Ronald Ventura (1973), among others, whose works are represented in prestigious auction houses such as Sotheby's and Christies.

This has led to an increase of the value of contemporary Philippine art in Southeast Asia, and to a greater presence on the international scene, where it had been relatively absent up until a few decades ago. Some established galleries from Malaysia and Singapore such as *Taksu Gallery* are even including several Philippine artists in their portfolios.

There are also many other artists whose work is not present at these auction houses, but is represented in the most prestigious galleries in the country, or in the US and European countries, and is of a very high quality technically, compositionally and creatively. Some examples we could mention include Leo Abaya (painting), Alfredo Esquillo (painting), Jose J. Santos (painting), Charlie Co (painting), Jonathan Olazo (painting), Anna Varona (sculpture), Karen Ocampo Flores (painting), Manuel Ocampo (painting), Mario Valdes (painting), Cristina Quysumbing (sculpture), Gerardo Tan (painting), Soler Santos (painting), José Tence Ruiz (painting and installations), Wawi Navarroza (photography), Mark Salvatus (graffiti and installations), Bea Camacho (installations and performance), Constantito Zicarelli (painting), Ronald Caringal (painting) and Anading Poklong (photography and installations) among others, and artist groups like *Tutok* and *Sangviaje*.

My fondest wish and best recompense would be that these notes help to awaken the reader's interest in the contemporary art of both these countries. ■

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## OTHERS NEWS

### NIT DELS MUSEUS I GALERIES D'ART DE CATALUNYA / NIGHT OF THE MUSEUMS AND THE GALLERIES OF CATALONIA

May 16 is Catalonia's evening of museums and art galleries, *Nit dels Museus i Galeries d'Art de Catalunya*. This initiative was linked to the activities organised for International Museums Day, which was on May 18. In Barcelona, more than fifty exhibition centres – art galleries, museums and private foundations – took part in the project, which aimed to bring audiences closer to the city's extensive cultural scene. Participating organisations stayed open till past midnight and organised special events. Free admission was available to all museums. Tasneem Gallery participated in the event with a cocktail party to celebrate the exhibition *Machines & Magnolias* by Japanese artist Yoichi Tanabe.



### A LOOK AT THE ART OF SOUTHEAST ASIA

Southeast Asian art is gaining international interest and recognition. This talk dealt with the interest sparked in Europe, and particularly in Spain, by the ancient civilisations of some Southeast Asian countries. As Casia Asia had presented the first Contemporary Art Guidebook to Vietnam and the Philippines in January 2009, the talk focused mainly on these two countries. The way the art scene operates in some countries in the region was also discussed as well as how people in Europe perceive Asian art when it is shown in the galleries of their home country.

<sup>1</sup> The data referring to the Venice Biennale, Documenta 2007 and the Singapore and Taipei biennales was obtained through the web site of each of the events, and from [www.universes-in-universe.de](http://www.universes-in-universe.de)

<sup>2</sup> Data from the Shanghai were not included due to difficulties in accessing them.

<sup>3</sup> Casa Asia is a Spanish institution that aims to strengthen connections between Spain and Asia..

<sup>4</sup> Here I don't refer to the reproductions of paintings by nationally and internationally acclaimed artists, which are highly visible on the streets of major cities, nor to the art of political propaganda.



**Date:** Monday, June 8, 2009  
**Venue:** Col·legi de Farmacèutics.  
C/ Girona, 64 (entre Consell de Cent y Diputació)  
Organized for: Amics del Museu – Casa Asia

**Speakers:**

Sara Puig: Director of Godia Foundation  
Tasneem Salam: Director and owner of Tasneem Gallery  
Nana Cardona: Authoress of the Guide of Contemporary Art in Vietnam and the Philippines.

*If you want to read Tasneem Salam's presentation in this conference, please contact us.*

## DREAMS WORK: *Women Entrepreneurs*

In this event, sponsored by the Barcelona Chamber of Commerce, women entrepreneurs shared their story of what it takes to turn a business idea into reality in Barcelona, the lessons they learned along the way and what they would do differently if they were starting again.

**Date:** Wednesday, June 10, 2009

**Venue:** Gild International, Passatge Permanyer 5, 08009 Barcelona

Organised by Gild International and Barcelona Women's Network

**Speakers**

Carrie Frai: former broadcaster, newsreader and co-founder and owner an online social network.

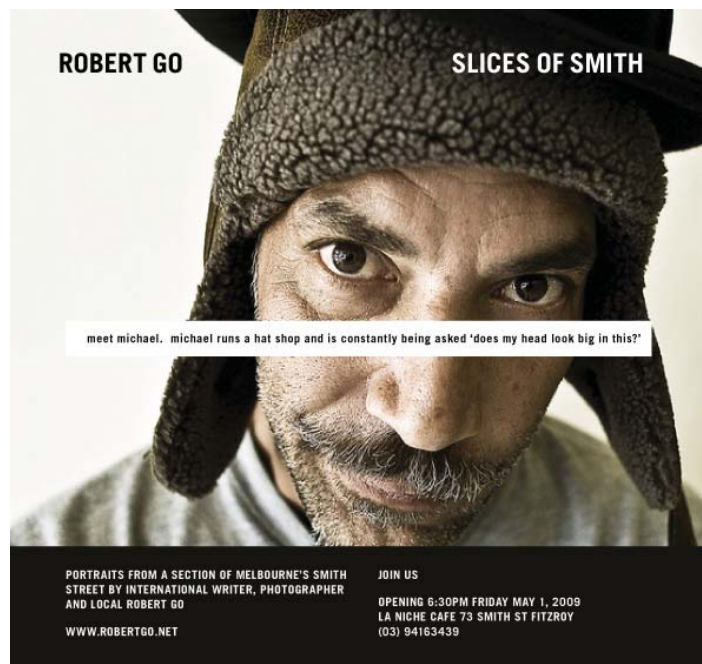
Karen Reith: founder and CEO of Gild International.

Maria Sipka: CEO and co-founder of Linqia, is an online community.

Tasneem Salam: owner and director of Tasneem Gallery in Barcelona.

Moderated by Sarah Barclay previously a broadcaster with the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC).

## NEWS ABOUT OUR ARTISTS



Robert Go

### *SLICES OF SMITH*

Portraits from a section of Melbourne's Smith street by the international writer, photographer and local Robert Go.

**Date:** May 1 – June 1, 2009

**Venue:** La Niche Café, 73 Smith St Fitzroy, Melbourne, Australia.

Yoichi Tanabe

### INTERNATIONAL BIENNIAL OF CONTEMPORARY ART OF FLORENCE

After his presentation in Tasneem Gallery, the artist will exhibit again in December in the Biennale of Florence. This seventh edition will take place from the 5 to 13 of December, 2009, in Fortezza da Basso - Florence, Italy.

<http://www.florencebiennale.org/>

Htein Lin

### OUTSIDE IN: ALTERNATIVE NARRATIVES IN CONTEMPORARY ART

Group show with six Asian artists

Date: June-July, 2009

Venue: The University of Hong Kong Museum and Art Gallery, Hong Kong, China.

## BURMA: BETWEEN THE LINES: ART AND SURVIVAL

An evening of poetry, performance and theatre including the premier of a performance piece by Htein Lin: 'Naturalisation', and the UK premier of 'Seven Years with Hard Labour', a theatrical monologue piece based on the experiences of a number of political prisoners including Htein Lin.

Date: 8 August, 2009

Venue: Free Word Centre, London, England.



Ablade Glover

### EXHIBITION OF RECENT OIL PAINTINGS. IN COMMEMORATION OF HIS 75TH BIRTHDAY

**Fecha:** 12 de Agosto, 2009

**Lugar:** La, Omanyee House, Home of the Artists Alliance Gallery, Accra, Ghana.