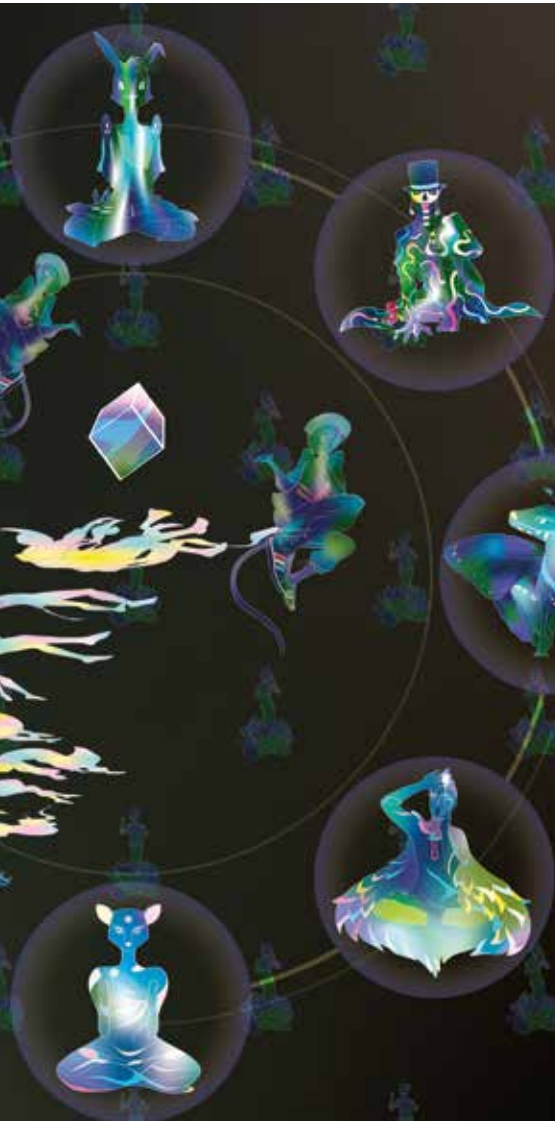
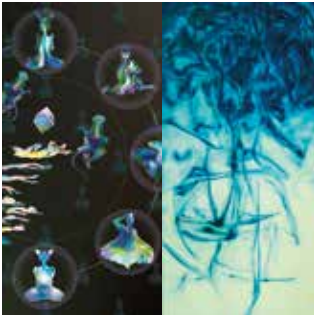


⇒ Δ ∅ ∫ ⊥ ∞ : INVISIBLE FREQUENCIES

26 OCTOBER – 13 NOVEMBER 2015

REN ZI AND YEN PHANG





ON FRONT COVER

REN ZI

*the years given & taken,*

UV-resistant ink on archival photopaper

Signed & numbered edition of 5 + 1 AP,

60 x 60 cm, 2015

YEN PHANG

*Insane In The Membrane*

Oil on canvas

46 x 91.5cm, 2014

∞ ∆ ∅ ∫ ⊥ ∞ : INVISIBLE FREQUENCIES  
AN EXHIBITION BY REN ZI AND YEN PHANG  
26 OCTOBER – 13 NOVEMBER 2015

Published by Galerie Sogan & Art 2015, Singapore

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This exhibition is presented by OCBC Arts Card, organised by Galerie Sogan & Art.

⇒  $\Delta \emptyset \int \perp \infty$  : INVISIBLE FREQUENCIES

26 OCTOBER – 13 NOVEMBER 2015

AN EXHIBITION BY **REN ZI AND YEN PHANG**

Creed. Nation. Homeland. Home. Tribe. Family. Motherfather. Selfness. Godheads that anchor our reality. Structures that explain the world, give meaning to our little lives. Given credence by the edifice of mythologies that inform our perceptual framework, our inner universe.

When its validity/morality becomes no longer tenable... When its hegemony stymies viable alternatives... When one needs to tear away from the haze of complacency... There are times when reality demands interrogating — & changing.

What if we could engender this by redrafting the mythic blueprints upon which it rests? Draw out new mythologies that better chart the dialectic of will, chance, fate. Which, by riding the agents of flux & upendings, offer a way of transcending our fixed stars.

**Ren Zi**

## CONTINUUM (AUTOMATIC ITINERARIES)

Developed over 6 months in Montréal, Canada, "Continuum (Automatic Itineraries)" investigates the body not merely as a vessel for existence and consciousness, but also as a destination and a site of tension between competing meanings.

"Continuum" is an attempt at "knowing thyself", or at least our physical selves, in a time when the rationalist quest for scientific understanding of the body becomes a substitute for actual bodily experience.

We have an idea about all of the parts, whether they are internal organs or visible parts, and this is shaped by our culture, which has bestowed symbolism and meaning on the parts of the body through long and intimate familiarity with them.

To rediscover these meanings, we need to touch and feel, look and listen to the body that we think is so familiar, and which we have preferred to consider in the abstract.

It is obvious that the body is a difficult subject. Perhaps we are too close to it. The human body is routinely described as a marvel of nature, but it is surely the marvel of nature we least stop to observe. When all is well, we simply ignore it. I suppose this is as it should be - no other animal spends time pondering its wellbeing, after all. But for us, ignorance is not bliss. We are frequently ashamed of our bodies and embarrassed by them.

We fear for the fragile workings and the ultimate disposability of the human body, of our own human body.

This series aims to pull back our understandings of body-concepts to a more visceral, phenomenological plane. It treads the borders of abstraction and surrealism (a constant theme that underlines Phang's work) to upend conventional representations of our physical being.

OCBC Bank's thriving appreciation and ties with the local arts scene goes back to almost 20 years. From our beginnings as an anchor sponsor of the Singapore Arts Festival in 1995, we have since proudly partnered and supported the local arts scene through our OCBC Arts Card, sponsoring performances and events by local groups like Wild Rice, Dream Academy, Singapore Lyric Opera and The Necessary Stage. Recognising our outstanding support, the National Arts Council awarded us the Distinguished Patron of the Arts Award in 2013 for the 15th time.

This has truly been a great year for the OCBC Arts Space programme, especially during the crucial SG50 milestone of Singapore's heritage. OCBC Arts Space allows us to engage with the community in a variety of ways. We are especially proud to commemorate this landmark year together with the rest of the nation, by providing this unique platform for the works of our promising young artists. Singapore's art scene is growing rapidly and we are delighted to be a part of it.

Since our first exhibition in 2012, OCBC Art Space seeks to showcase works that reflect contemporary conditions and consciousness, executed with refreshing approaches from the forefront of the visual art scene. For our customers and the public, we want to share the experience of a complete art exhibition – to tell them stories of our society, our world and worlds beyond. Hence, it is our pleasure to add Singaporean artists Ren Zi and Yen Phang to the fold of artist-partners and bring you their joint exhibition "∞∅∫∞: Invisible Frequencies" in collaboration with Galerie Sogan & Art.

Ren and Yen, both budding artists within the local art scene, present a new series of digital composites and paintings that showcase colourful, layered graphic paintings of mythical figures and abstraction. Through these works, Ren and Yen capture philosophical and theoretical discussion aimed to discover the meanings of self internally as well as externally.

Through complex symbolisms, ∞∅∫∞: Invisible Frequencies invites viewers to the world of Ren and Yen's mythical creations, and to ponder on the deeper meaning of abstract concepts such as creed, nation, homeland, tribe, family, mother, father, godheads, self and the body that serve to anchor our reality. Together, they form structures that explain the world, giving meaning to our little lives.

**Ching Wei Hong**  
Chief Operating Officer, OCBC Bank

Collaborating with OCBC Art Space for the second time is another one of the most exciting projects this year. Having organized a solo show for a young local artist last year, this year's exhibition features a collaborative 2 men show by two young local artists, Ren Zi and Yen Phang highlight OCBC's commitment to promoting local artists. When I first saw Ren Zi's collection from the Topographies of Loss series at Volvo Art Space, and Yen Phang's group show at ION Art Space last year, it was with a sense of excitement as it had been when I saw their works at a fair several years ago. I was very impressed by both artists' demonstration of imageries and abstract concepts. Both Ren and Yen are an insightful and intelligent artists who deeply express their voices through their crafts. Coupled with their other achievements, the artists' contribution to the Singapore is inspiring.

As mentioned by curator Amelia Abdullahsani the two men exhibition,  $\ni\Delta\emptyset f \perp \infty$ : Invisible Frequencies imparted truth and knowledge through the prism of these two artists' works. Culling from science and mythology – two areas of pedantry that are seen these days as mutually exclusive – Yen Phang and Ren Zi de-construct and attempt to reconstruct collective meaning.

In align with OCBC Art Space's art program, it is with great pleasure that Galerie Sogan & Art and OCBC Art Space present Ren Zi's and Yen Phang's first two men exhibition,  $\ni\Delta\emptyset f \perp \infty$ : Invisible Frequencies. We are grateful to the OCBC team for supporting our talents. Enjoy the show!

**Vera Wijaya**  
Managing Partner, Galerie Sogan & Art

⇒ Δ ∅ ∫ ⊥ ∞ ...

"The relation between what we see and what we know is never settled. Each evening we see the sun set. We know that the earth is turning away from it. Yet the knowledge, the explanation, never quite fits the sight."

— John Berger, *Ways of Seeing*.

It is through art that artists make sense of the world around us. Art offers an alternative means of viewing. The works of Yen Phang and Ren Zi offer us a different portal through which to view life and understand the relationship between what we see and what we know.

What is fact and what is truth? When I was a young student 25 years ago learning about the relationship between gravity and weight, I pondered on the philosophical aspect of truth. A person's mass stays the same whether on Earth or on Mars. However, a person who weighs 60kg on Earth would be lying if he says he weighs 60 kg on Mars. While the truth of his mass remains constant, his weight differs depending on one's place and perspective.

In this exhibition, the truth and knowledge imparted in these works are seen through the prism of these two artists. Culling from science and mythology – two areas of pedantry that are seen these days as mutually exclusive – Yen Phang and Ren Zi deconstruct and attempt to reconstruct collective meaning.

In *A Question for Tomorrow*, Ren Zi reconstructs his own mandala-labyrinth with seven interlocking circles, replicating a meditation path. Each circle made of a different colour, and along the path of the circles are figures crawling along the circumambulated path, interspersed by three figures with skulls as heads. In the centre of the circles – and of the painting – is the figure of Anubis (the Egyptian deity with the body of a human and the head of a canine), the God of the afterlife. This painting makes us question the meaning of life on this earth and also the afterlife. Even the title makes us think about how our actions today affect our fate tomorrow, or in this case, the afterlife. Ren Zi combines Buddhist, Hindu, Christian, Pagan, and Egyptian mythology and iconography into one painting. Likewise the medium he uses – UV-resistant ink on archival photopaper – is a reflection of this confluence

of knowledge. Rather than using only one medium for his work, he represents ancient iconography with contemporary material.

On the opposite end of the spectrum – in terms of both medium and inspiration – Phang uses oil on canvas in his *Terraform* paintings. With this wispy brushstrokes and blurred boundaries, his paintings look like thermal vision seen through heat goggles, or MRI scans. In an attempt to seek more knowledge and epistemological systems, Phang looks inwards into our minds and our bodies. While pining for the pastoral, our anthropocentric selves look within, teasing that the truth may be inside us all along.

What do we find when we look within ourselves? Do we seek answers, or does it generate more questions than when we first started? Two paintings attempt to investigate. Ren Zi's *Through The Dark Glass of Duplicity's Wonderland* (UV-resistant ink on archival bamboo paper, 80 x 80 cm) and Phang's *Even If It Were Poison – Breathe In, Breathe Out* (oil on canvas, 60 x 100 cm) are deliberately nebulous and almost monochromatic. Throughout the painting are multiple images of nude males figures, spaceships that look as if they flew straight out of Japanese manga, goldfish iconography, and foot soldiers primed for combat. Amidst this multiplicity, in the centre of the painting, is a lotus chakra. This helps remind us that even with all the external chaos, we can find peace within ourselves. *Even If It Were Poison – Breathe In, Breathe Out* reflects the tumultuous nature within us – the swirling paint suggests unrest. The beast within us needs to be tamed – to do so requires knowledge and rationality.

Knowledge is passed down through generations, and what prevails is seen as truth. What we think we know comes from reading energies that have reached us across eons; any knowledge that has last for centuries is rendered fact. Rationality is treasured over intuition. The questions of life and spirituality are viewed in a logical manner instead of pre-cognitive means. Yen Phang and Ren Zi are forcing us to question and consider the visceral, the subconscious, and the pre-cognitive aspects of knowledge. By opening ourselves to these vastly untapped bandwidths, we are able to view via various aspects and achieve a greater sense of truth.

**Amelia Abdullahsani**  
Curator & Writer





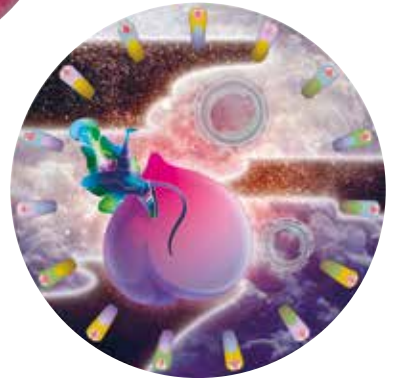
REN ZI  
*through the dark glass of  
duplicity's wonderland*  
UV-resistant ink on clear acrylic  
& archival photopaper  
80 x 80 cm, 2014

YEN PHANG  
*What Do You Mean Two Ships  
(I Am Not a Boat)*  
Oil on canvas  
122 x 91.5 cm, 2014





YEN PHANG  
*The Horizon Has Been Defeated*  
(Data Set #3, No. 1, No. 2, No. 3)  
Oil on canvas  
20.5 x 61 cm, 2014





REN ZI  
ANTI-CLOCKWISE, FROM TOP LEFT  
*sudden aurora,  
the hours, the fates,  
scarred trajectory of a stymied fury,  
against the wind & winding of time,  
heirs of a half-fired heaven,  
the density of darkness,  
if death were never to seek our twilight shore,  
a question for tomorrow,*

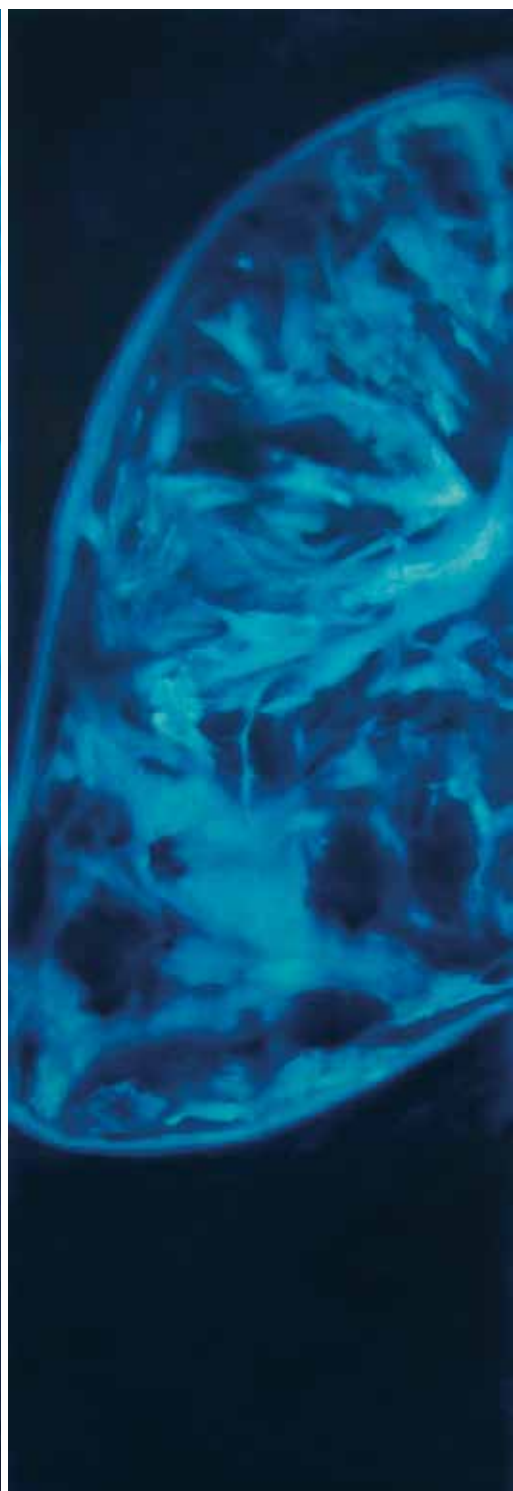
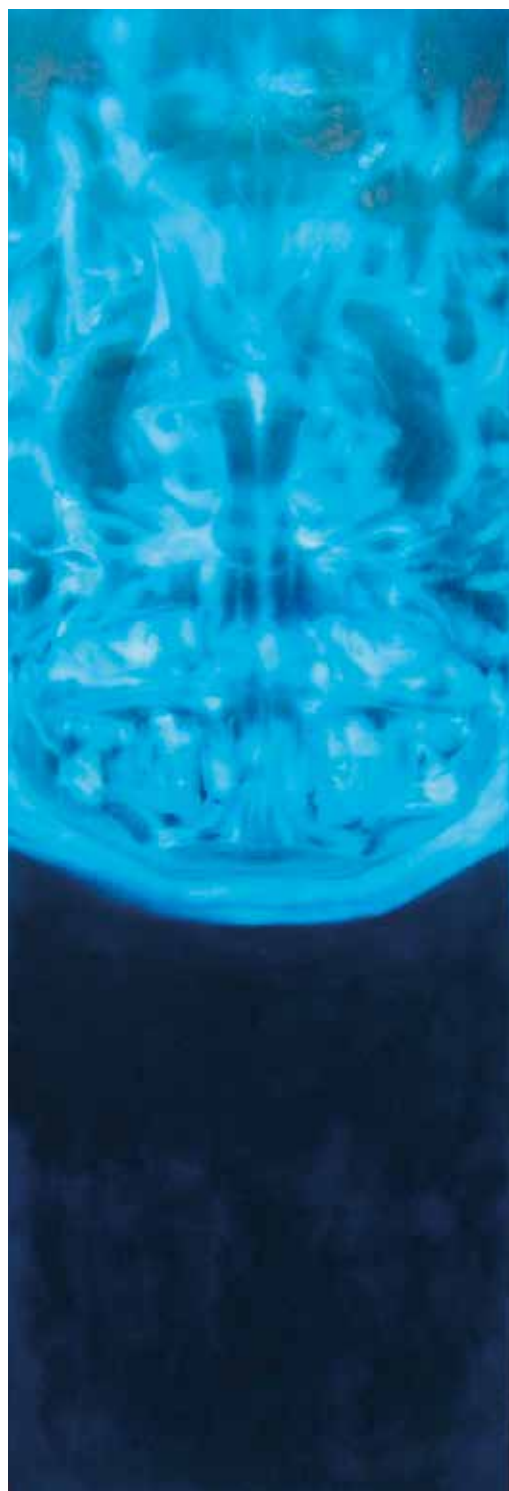
UV-resistant ink on archival photopaper  
signed & numbered edition of 5 + 1 AP,  
40 × 40 cm, 2015

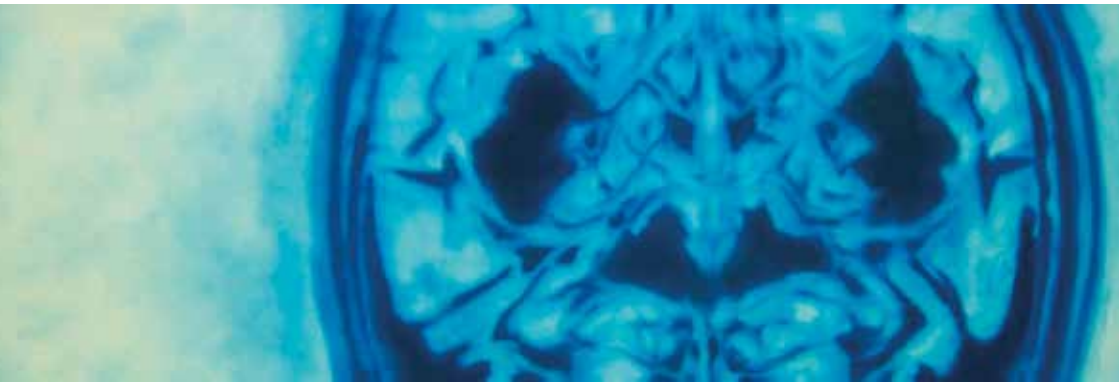




YEN PHANG  
*Terraform*  
(Data Set #2, Slide #1, #2, #3, #4)  
Oil on canvas  
23 x 30.5 cm, 2014

REN ZI  
*frozen on the tundra of fear & folly,*  
UV-resistant ink on clear acrylic  
& archival photopaper  
80 x 80 cm, 2014





YEN PHANG

LEFT

*Your Impossible Slice (Dataset #3, No. 4)*

*Your Impossible Slice (Dataset #3, No. 2)*

Oil on canvas

40.5 x 122 cm, 2014

RIGHT

*Your Impossible Slice (Dataset #3, No. 1)*

Oil on canvas

122 x 40.5 cm, 2014





REN ZI  
*awestruck within life's  
concatenated helices (triptych),*  
UV-resistant ink on clear acrylic  
& dichroic film,  
240 x 80 cm, 2015





REN ZI  
*the years given & taken*,  
UV-resistant ink on archival photopaper  
Signed & numbered edition of 5 + 1 AP,  
60 x 60 cm, 2015

YEN PHANG  
*Cherrybomb*,  
Oil on canvas,  
46 x 91.5 cm, 2014



**REN ZI**

**B. 2006**

Having read psychology at the national university of singapore, the artist spent half a lifetime in the "business of words" before returning to art-making in 2006.

Ren zi's digital & mixed-media works received their first public showing in 2013, funded through a kickstarter campaign.

With their leitmotif of flux & transformation, they interrogate the malleability of "reality" by re-scripting the mythic blueprints that underlie social & personal narratives.

Drawing on semiotic layering as well as mimetic & visual sampling & splicing, his works invite a multiplicity of readings – & misreadings – that, for the artist, serve as a rorschach probe into the inner universe of the viewers themselves.

Ren zi's practice is informed by buddhist-taoist philosophies, phenomenological psychology, fractal theory, mythology, comics & science fiction.

He is an autodidact who claims to have been schooled through youtube & "art for dummies".

**Exhibitions**

- 2015                      Naming the Bright & Dark Stars, Galerie Sogan/  
Jada Art, Singapore\*  
Reality Override, Charles B Wang Center,  
Stonybrook University, New York, USA\*  
Open Door Discourse, NARS Foundation,  
New York, USA

- 2014            Art Taipei 2014, Taiwan  
 Büffel Art Project, Ion Art Gallery, Singapore  
 Bring Your Own Beamer, Instinc Gallery,  
 Singapore  
 Our Elusive Here, Volvo Art Loft, Singapore
- 2013            The Affordable Art Fair 2013, Singapore  
 The Art of Shopping, Marina Bay Sands,  
 Singapore  
 between earth & void, The Factory, Singapore\*
- \* Solo Show

#### Residencies

- 2015            New York Art Residency & Studios (NARS)  
 Foundation, New York, USA

#### Media Mentions

- 9 June 2013    The New Paper  
 19 April 2013    The Business Times  
 4 April 2013    Imagine Network  
 15 March 2013    The Business Times

#### Grants

- 2015            Presentation & Participation Grant, National Arts  
 Council, Singapore  
 Singapore Internationale, Singapore  
 International Foundation
- 2014            Capability Development Grant, National Arts  
 Council, Singapore  
 Presentation & Participation Grant, National Arts  
 Council, Singapore

#### Gallery Partnerships

Galerie Sogan & Art: [www.soganart.com](http://www.soganart.com)  
 Jada Art: [jadaart.sg](http://jadaart.sg)  
 The Artling: [theartling.com](http://theartling.com)



## YEN PHANG

B. 1979

Yen Phang's paintings hover within the penumbra between abstraction and representation. His works investigate self-sustaining sign-systems and their signification – the repetition and ritualisation of visual signals that give rise to the slippage and emergence of meaning.

Phang's more recent projects and collaborations have embraced performance and installation. His current thematic explorations focus on biosemiotics and the abstraction of nature, heavily influenced by the scientific backgrounds of his parents who were agriculturalists and geneticists.

A continuing thread throughout his work tackles with our relationship with the human body and our anatomy, both as subjective experience and culturally coded symbols. Phang's works have been exhibited in Montréal, Singapore, and Sydney, and have been collected privately in Singapore, Hong Kong, Sydney, London, and Tokyo. Yen Phang held his first solo show in 2012 at Evil Empire, Singapore, and has since been featured in publications such as Esquire Magazine (Singapore) and The Business Times (Singapore).

His works have been collected by Connexions Hospital and Hotel (curated by Marjorie Chu), as well as British Airways for their Members' Lounge, Terminal 1, Changi Airport. Yen Phang is represented exclusively by The Art Fellas in Singapore.

#### Awards and Grants

- |      |  |
|------|--|
| 2015 | Cliftons Art Prize, Finalist, Asia Pacific<br>[Winner to be chosen in October]<br>ArtAscent Open Call, Distinguished Artist,<br>International  |
| 2013 | National Arts Council Grant<br>(Presentation & Promotion), For 'Displacements:<br>13 Wilkie Terrace, Singapore   |
| 2007 | UNSW Campus Art Prize, 1st Prize, Sydney, Australia<br>Dean's List for Academic Excellence for<br>the best performance in International Law,<br>University of New South Wales, Sydney, Australia |
| 2006 | Julius Stone Prize for best performance in<br>Legal Theory, University of New South Wales,<br>Sydney, Australia  |

#### Solo Exhibitions

- |      |   |
|------|---|
| 2015 | 'Lullaby For a Gardener Lost In the Woods',<br>Montréal Art Centre, Montréal, Canada<br>'Fantastic Voyage', The Art Fellas, Singapore |
| 2014 | 'Continuum (Automatic Itineraries)',<br>The ION Art Gallery, ION Orchard, Singapore   |
| 2013 | 'Conference of Strangers',<br>Evil Empire, Singapore  |
| 2012 | 'Catalysts & Collisions', Evil Empire, Singapore  |

### Selected Group Exhibitions

- |      |  |
|------|--|
| 2015 | Affordable Art Fair 2015, The Art Fellas, Singapore<br>'Artrasta', Galerie Mushalaga   Montréal, Canada<br>'23:59', The Art Fellas, Singapore<br>'Interstitium', Displacements, The Lorong 24A<br>Shophouse Series by Pocket Projects, Singapore |
| 2014 | 'Unboxing Petain'   Displacements, Singapore<br>Affordable Art Fair 2014, The Art Fellas, Singapore<br>'Just Beyond', ION Gallery, ION Orchard,<br>Singapore<br>Gallery Opening Launch, The Art Fellas,<br>Singapore                             |
| 2013 | 'DISPLACEMENTS: 13 Wilkie Terrace',<br>Displacements, Singapore  |
| 2012 | 'New Works', Artistry, Singapore<br>'REDRESS', The ION Art Gallery, ION Orchard,<br>Singapore<br>'MinimART 2.0', The Substation Gallery, Singapore   |
| 2005 | 'Scratch', Pine Street Gallery, Sydney, Australia<br>'Seven', Ground Floor Gallery, Sydney, Australia  |
| 2002 | 'Small is Big', First Draft Gallery, Sydney, Australia   |

#### Performance Collaborations

- 2014 'Chromadomain', Post-Museum Pop-up, Centre of Contemporary Arts, Singapore
- 2013 Performance collaboration under Elizabeth Lim's 'In Transit', Sculpture Square, Singapore  
Performance collaboration with Alan Oei for 'The End of History', Evil Empire, Singapore  
Performance collaboration with John Clang for the opening of 'Zoological', 2902 Gallery  
'The Trial', under Evil Empire, Marina Bay Open House
- 2004 Visual artist for 'Kick the Bucket', performed by Shagging Julie at Darlinghurst Theatre

#### Collections

One Farrer Hotel & Spa, Singapore,  
Curated by Marjorie Chu  
British Airways, Terminal One Lounge, Singapore

#### Gallery Partnerships

The Art Fellas, Singapore



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