

CCSCA Overseas Study Trip to Singapore 2019 Report

The CCSCA Overseas Study Trip to Singapore took place from 21- 26 November 2019. It was led by Dr Francis Maravillas (Assistant Professor, CCSCA) and included 10 participating students from the CCSCA. All the students who participated in the study trip were enrolled in at least one of the following CCSCA subjects: *Global Biennale*, *Contemporary Art Theory*, *Contexts and Practice*, and *Art Writing and Criticism*.

A central aim and objective of the study trip is to introduce students to the artistic practices, institutions and contexts of Singapore and to help them develop a deeper understanding of contemporary art and exhibitions in the region. The study trip comprised an extensive program of visits to the Singapore Biennale across multiple locations, visits to other significant exhibitions in Singapore coinciding with the biennale, as well as visits to independent art spaces in Singapore. These sites include: National Gallery Singapore, Grey Projects, Gillman Barracks, Institute of Contemporary Art at Lasalle College of the Arts, Deck Gallery, NTU Centre for Contemporary Art, Gajah Gallery Singapore.

A number of key curators were invited to provide curatorial talks and tours of the exhibition and gallery to the students. This includes: Jason Wee (Grey Projects), Dr Yu Jin Seng (National Gallery Singapore), Dr Fangtze Hsu (National University of Singapore Museum) and Dr Michelle Antoinette and Dr Wulan Dirgantoro (Gajah Gallery).



Day 1

On the first day of our study trip we visited Grey Projects Singapore where its founder and curator Jason Wee welcomed CCSCA students to the space and introduced them to its diverse program of exhibitions, workshops and publications. The students had the opportunity to discuss issues relating to role and significance of independent art spaces, as well as the different kinds of program development that a space like Grey Projects have undertaken over the past few years.

The students were then introduced to the current artists-in-residence at Grey Projects - The Rice Brewing Sisters club – who spoke to them about their art practice, including their various rice fermentation and soil projects.



Day 2

On the second day of our study trip we visited the National Gallery Singapore one of the main venue of the *Singapore Biennale*. At the National Gallery Singapore, the students spent a few hours viewing the various art works that were part of the *Singapore Biennale*. They also explore the permanent collections of the National Gallery including its collection of modern and contemporary art from Southeast Asia.

The students also visited Gillman Barracks to view works that were part of the *Singapore Biennale* as well as view the exhibition *The Posthuman City* *Climates. Habitats. Environments* exhibition at NTU Centre for Contemporary Art.

We also visited the National University of Singapore (NUS) Museum. At the NUS Museum, we were welcomed by curator Dr Fang Tze Hsu and she provided a tour of the museum and introduced students to the museum's history, public programs and collection.







Day 3

On the third day of the study trip, we visited Gajah Gallery Singapore to view the Shaping Geographies: Women, Art, Southeast Asia exhibition. The curators of the exhibition – Dr Michelle Antoinette and Wulan Dirgantoro – gave a tour of the exhibition to the students and spoke about the various works in the show, their curatorial ideas and research. The tour was followed by a panel discussion featuring the curators as well as a number of the artists included in the show. After the panel discussion, CCSCA students asked the curators and artists a number of questions relating to their practice and research.

Afterwards we returned to the National Gallery Singapore to view the Suddenly Turning Visible: Art and Architecture in Southeast Asia (1969-1989) exhibition. The senior curator of the National Gallery Singapore provided the students with a tour of this exhibition, and introduced students to the various works on display.





Day 4

On the fourth day of the study trip, we visited a number of museums and galleries that were venues for the Singapore Biennale. This includes the Asian Civilisation Museum, and Institute of Contemporary Art at Lasalle College of the Arts.

We also visited the smaller independent art spaces in Singapore including Deck Galleries and Deck Galleries: Centre for Photography and Film.



Day 5

On the fifth and final day of the study trip, students had the opportunity to rest and visit the STPI Creative Workshop and Gallery to view the works of renowned Indonesian artist, Melati Suryodarm.

I had a meeting with Dr Clare Veal and Jeffrey Say, the program director and Faculty member of the Masters of Asian Art Histories at Lasalle College of the Arts. We discussed possible collaboration between their program and the CCSCA.



Student survey

Attached to this report are the results of the student survey of the overseas study trip. The results indicate that the student benefitted immensely from the trip – which enabled them to enhance and deepen their understanding of contemporary art practices and institutions in Singapore.