

Crossing boundaries: Art Libraries, Museums and Archives in a Global Context

Date: Wed 21 Aug 2013

Time: 9.00 am – 12.30 pm

Venue: Ngee Ann Auditorium, Asian Civilisations Museum

Speakers:

Dr Yeo Wei Wei, National Art Gallery, Singapore

Ms Cristina Cramerotti, Musee National Des Arts Asiatiques Guimet, France

Mr Cheong Kah Kit, National Library Board, Singapore

Mr Jeffrey Say, LASALLE College of the Arts, Singapore

Ms Sim Soek Cheng Carol, Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts (NAFA), Singapore

No.	Item	Speaker
1	The Value of an Archive in the Digital Age	Dr Yeo Wei Wei, <i>National Art Gallery, Singapore</i>
	<p>Dr Yeo shared on the upcoming visual arts museum (The National Art Gallery, Singapore) and resource centre (RC) scheduled to open in 2015.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • She oversees both the resource centre and publications for the museum • She shared the concept and the realisation of the RC • The RC will be housed in the new Supreme court building • The collection for the RC was started since 2010 • Their featured artists include: Liu Kang, Georgette Chen and Chen Chong Swee • She highlighted the special touch of being able to have direct contact with artefacts 	
2	Museum Library and Intercultural Networking: Library of the Musée national des arts asiatiques Guimet (National Museum of Asian Arts, Paris, France)	Cristina Cramerotti, <i>Musee National Des Arts Asiatiques Guimet</i>
	<p>Ms Cramerotti shared the history and collection focus of the museum and its library.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The library was founded in 1889 • Its founder was an entrepreneur whose trade influenced the visual aspect of the library and museum with its blue hue • As a result of a stint in Japan in 1886, its founder brought back artefacts from Japan and the museum has since been collecting artefacts from different parts of Asia • The museum has a large section on Asia with its focus on China, Japan and Korea • Its photographic archive contains more than 300,000 pictures • She shared several of their databases and the importance of networking and exchanges of resources • The museum's partners include Persee (French Ministry of Education & Research) and Gallica – Bibliotheque nationale de France (National Library of France) • The library is also buying books on contemporary Asian art as they foresee the value it will have in the future as classic references • The challenge for the museum is in curating its exhibitions to cater to both the layperson and expert ie. Exhibition of Buddha statues 	

3	Campaign City: Life in Posters	Cheong Kah Kit, <i>National Library Board, Singapore</i>
	<p>Mr Cheong shared on the Campaign City exhibition.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The idea for the exhibition came from an original exhibition done by local artist, Alan Oei, in 2010 • For this exhibition, the team worked with about 50 artists which include graphic designers, tertiary students and poets • Resources for them include about 5,000 national campaign posters that were available online • The exhibition included an educational component such as workshops and guided tours • A mentorship programme was also offered to the tertiary students who participated in the exhibition • The resources offered to the students include the National Archives of Singapore's (NAS) Access to Archives Online Singapore (a2o), NewspaperSG and the Singapore and Southeast Asian collection from the Lee Kong Chian Reference Library • He also shared interesting details on campaigns such the "Frozen Pork" and "Male with Long Hair" • The team also conducted interviews with Singaporeans to get their thoughts on the exhibition 	
4	Panel Discussion	
4.1	<p>Mr Arthur Tennoe (National Library of Norway) wanted to know the level of copyright clearance given for the posters that are available online.</p> <p>Mr Cheong</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • He clarified that the posters that are available online belonged to the NAS and these were used as reference • Posters used for the exhibitions are not available online • Clearance had to be sought from the respective ministries and statutory board who owned it for each campaign poster that the artist worked on 	Cheong Kah Kit, <i>National Library Board, Singapore</i>
4.2	<p>Mr Jonathan Franklin (National Gallery of Canada Library and Archives) wanted to know if the National Art Gallery, Singapore has any issues with providing free and paid publications.</p> <p>Dr Yeo replied that they have yet to start so they are unable to comment on this.</p>	Dr Yeo Wei Wei, <i>National Art Gallery, Singapore</i>
4.3	<p>Ms Kong Leng Foong (National Library Board, Singapore) wanted to know on the selection of artists to highlight and how much time was taken to collect the works.</p> <p>Dr Yeo</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The museum's objective is to share works from Singapore and Southeast Asia • The curators provided inputs on which artists were selected for the museum to feature • A lot of effort and time were also taken to persuade the artists' family on sharing of the works 	Dr Yeo Wei Wei, <i>National Art Gallery, Singapore</i>
4.4	<p>Ms Martha McPhail (San Diego State University Library and Information Access San Diego, California USA) agreed with Ms Cramerotti. She found it interesting that art travels around the world such as Asian art being available</p>	Cristina Cramerotti, <i>Musee National Des Arts Asiatiques Guimet</i>

	in Europe (France).	
4.5	<p>Ms Kitty But (Hong Kong Maritime Museum) asked Mr Cheong on his role as a librarian and curator.</p> <p>Mr Cheong</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • His training was in visual arts • Besides offering books, the current trend for libraries is curating exhibitions • He finds this challenging but exciting as the library space is now becoming more social 	Cheong Kah Kit, <i>National Library Board, Singapore</i>
4.6	<p>Ms Jennylyn Cabbuag (Philippines) highlighted the issue of the custodian role between a librarian and archivist and how to strike a balance of the responsibilities.</p> <p>Dr Yeo</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • She can look into factors such as budget and space constraints • There must be mutual trust and respect • She also shared that she was lucky as her colleagues had good attitudes and were understanding • She suggested providing good management 	Dr Yeo Wei Wei, <i>National Art Gallery, Singapore</i>
	<i>Tea Break</i>	
5	A Journey Through the Visual Arts of Singapore	Jeffrey Say, <i>LASALLE College of the Arts, Singapore</i>
	<p>Mr Jeffrey shared on some interesting and prominent art works in Singapore.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It was a little known fact that the bronze statue of Sir Stamford Raffles was done by a British artist • He highlighted how the statue was a subtle show of the relationship between the colony and its ruler • The sculptures of Dora Gordine represented an idealistic representation of the different racial groups • The artwork, <i>Pine Tree</i> by Wu Tsai Yen, represented the curriculum for NAFA in how it showcased both Asian and Western techniques • The oil painting, <i>National Language Class</i> by Chua Mia Tee, explored issues of personal and national identity • This was a representation of the political climate during that period • Other highlighted works include <i>Counsellor I</i> by Brother Joseph McNally, Tang Da Wu's performance for the local film <i>Tiger's Whip</i> (1991) • He also shared how the Singapore Biennale gave more visibility to Singapore artists • During the Biennale, a few of these artists were talent-spotted and had their works showcased abroad • Ming Wong was the first Singaporean to win an award in the Venice Biennale 	
6	TFCSEA@NAFA (Tanoto Foundation Centre for Southeast Asian Arts@NAFA) : a bilingual database on Southeast Asian arts	Sim Soek Cheng Carol, <i>Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts (NAFA), Singapore</i>
	<p>Ms Sim shared the new database available at NAFA.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is available for free to students and at a nominal charge to members of public 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The database enables a keyword search and searches can be done in English or Chinese • She shared the objective, mission and vision of the TFCSEA • She also shared on the effort put in for the digitisation ie. Meticulous check to ensure that the digitised items are in an acceptable and readable form 	
7	Panel Discussion	
7.1	<p>Mr Peter Schoppert (National University of Singapore Press) wanted to know how NAFA handles issues arising from providing both free and chargeable access.</p> <p>Ms Sim</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The institution is able to provide both as they had a good funding support from the Tanoto Foundation for the digitised items • In future, they may have to increase the fees for access if less funding is received for the digitisation efforts 	<p>Sim Soek Cheng Carol, <i>Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts (NAFA), Singapore</i></p>
7.2	<p>Sharmini Chellapandi (National Library Board, Singapore) wanted to know what about artworks by the other racial groups in Singapore ie. Malay, Indian as the ones highlighted was mainly by Chinese artists.</p> <p>Mr Say</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • He agreed that works especially by the Malay and Indian artists are not as prominently featured as their Chinese counterparts • He felt that this was due to less research done on artists by these two racial groups • He hopes that this will create awareness on this area and that future researchers can fill in the gap 	<p>Jeffrey Say, <i>LASALLE College of the Arts, Singapore</i></p>
	<i>Lunch</i>	