Press Release

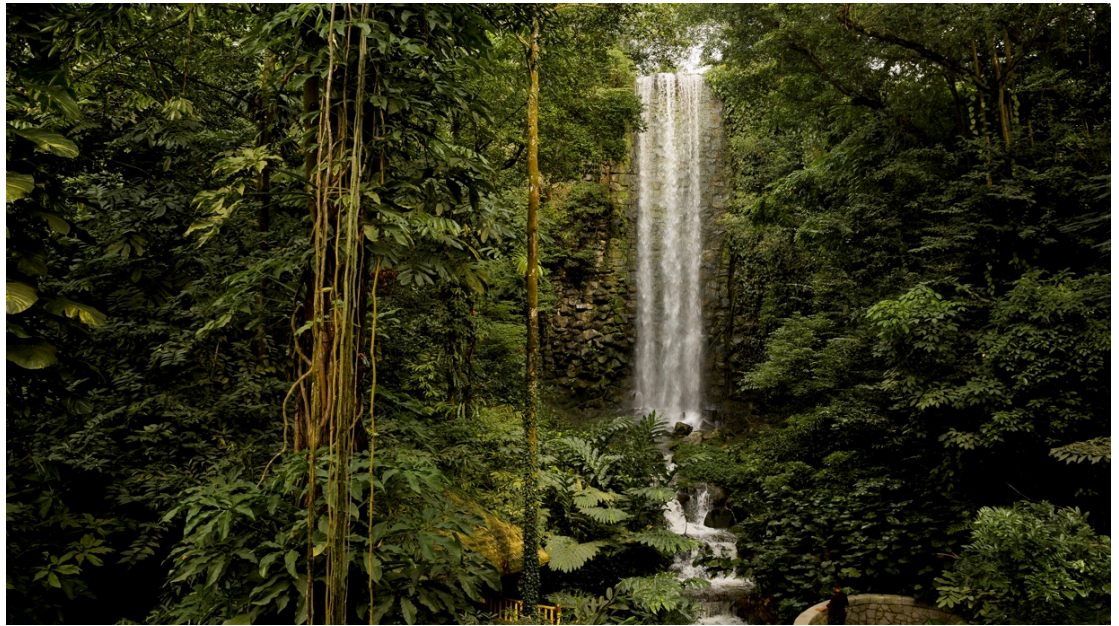## *Somewhere Else: The Forest Reimagined*
Donna Ong

Donna Ong, *The Forest Speaks Back (III)*, 2016, Video still

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Exhibition Period   12 January – 05 March 2022

**About the
Exhibition**

> *"Journeys, those magic caskets full of dreamlike promises, will never again
> yield up their treasures untarnished… So I can understand the mad passion
> for travel books and their deceptiveness. They create the illusion of
> something which no longer exists but still should exist."*

– Claude Levi-Strauss. *Tristes Tropiques*, 1955

The works in this exhibition explore the often problematic images of the tropical forest produced by the travel industry, from exotic 17ᵗ century lithographs to the seductive glossy photographs found within travel brochures and Instagram. These images have captured our imaginations, and spawned a myriad of books, films, products, architecture and even fads. They have influenced not just the way the tropics are represented visually, but also how others perceive and act towards tropical nature, culture and its people.

In her continuing research of this topic, multi-disciplinary artist Donna Ong employs the twin concepts of an alternative place and time in her transformative and layered use of found imagery; inviting us to question existing depictions and narratives of the tropical forest and to imagine alternative representations.
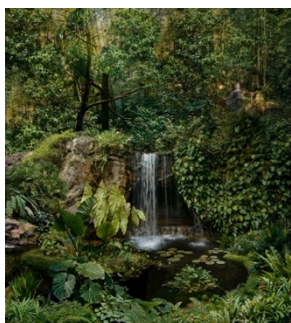
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About the Artist	**Donna ONG** (b. 1978, Singapore) is an installation artist from Singapore, best known for her evocative and thought-provoking environments made from furniture, found objects and original artwork. She has exhibited at the inaugural Singapore Biennale (2007), Jakarta Biennale (2009), Kwandu Biennale (2008), 2ⁿᵈ Moscow Biennale (2007), Moscow Biennale of Young Art (2014), Thailand Biennale (2018) and the Children's Biennale at the National Gallery Singapore (2019).

Her installations have appeared in museums and institutions worldwide, such as the Singapore Art Museum, National Museum of Singapore, Hara Museum (Japan) and the Djanogly Art Gallery in Nottingham University (UK). In 2009, she received the Singapore National Arts Council Young Artist Award. In the same year, she also won the People's Choice award for the President's Young Talent Competition. While pursuing her Bachelor's degrees in Fine Art and Architecture at Goldsmith's College (UK) and University College London (UCL) respectively, she was conferred several awards and prizes such as UCL's Singapore Undergraduate Scholarship, the Shell-NAC Undergraduate Scholarship and the Architectural Theory Prize. She completed a Masters degree in Fine Art at LASALLE College (Singapore) in 2012 where she graduated at the top of her cohort.

She has participated in several prestigious art residencies such as Arts Initiative Tokyo (Japan), Koganecho Bazaar (Yokohama, Japan), Singapore Tyler Print Institute (Singapore), Kunstlerhaus Bethanien (Berlin, Germany) and Krinzinger Projekte (Vienna, Austria). In 2018, she presented a major new work *My forest is not your garden* (2016-2018), in collaboration with Singapore-based artist Robert Zhao Renhui for the 9ᵗʰ Asia Pacific Triennial of Contemporary Art (Australia).

Ong lives and works in Singapore.

Selected Images

Donna ONG
My Paradise Lost
2020
Diasec print
H67 x W60 cm

Donna ONG
Four Colours Make a Forest (Taken from Singapore Military Camouflage, 1983-2008)
2017
Screenprinted and laminated acrylic tiles
Edition of 3 + 1 AP
H55.5 x W45.5 x D7.9 cm

NB: More images can be furnished upon request.

Location	FOST Gallery 1 Lock Road #01-02, Gillman Barracks Singapore 108932
MRT	Labrador Park
Bus	Opposite Alexandra Point: 51, 57, 61, 93, 97, 97e, 100, 166, 175, 963 or 963e
Gallery Hours	Tue–Sat: 11am–7pm Sun: 11am-6pm Mon/Pub Hol: Open by appointment
Admission	Free
Visitor Registration	www.fostgallery.as.me/schedule.php
Enquiries	Call +65 6694 3080 or e-mail info@fostgallery.com