

The Substation

# CONCERNED CITIZENS

# SHOWCASE

Exhibition Catalogue

# Content Page

About <i>Concerned Citizens Programme</i>	3
Exhibition Map	5
Class of 2017—2018:	
Aqilah Faizal	6
Chng Shao Kai	8
Chu Hao Pei	10
Faris Nakamura	12
Joy Ho	14
Kae Yuan	16
Nue	18
Rosanne Chong	20
Subhas	22
Vanessa Lim Shu Yi	24
Jevon Chandra	26
Wong Hui Yu	26
Mentors and Guest Speakers	28
Acknowledgements	30



## Concerned Citizens Programme

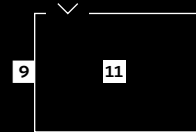
The *Concerned Citizens Showcase* is the culmination of a mentorship programme for young creatives aged 18–30. The programme encouraged these participants to look into the ways that urban space is used and produced, as well as how inhabitants of the city can take initiative in conceptualising and/or effecting interventions in our city. Under the guidance of artist-mentor, Tan Guo-Liang, 12 participants undertook a six-month process of knowledge-building and research before proposing their own project in relation to issues pertaining to urban form and social life.

The exhibition was showcased from 11.04.2018 —  
22.04.2018 at The Substation

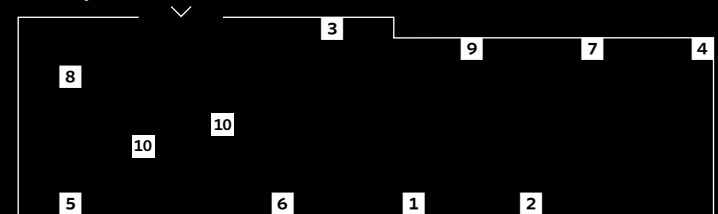


These twelve participants were shortlisted from an Open Call process that attracted close to 60 applications. They hail from a variety of backgrounds, from visual arts, to architecture, urban planning, political science and biology.

Box Office



Gallery



- 1** Aqilah Faizal
- 2** Chng Shao Kai
- 3** Chu Hao Pei
- 4** Faris Nakamura
- 11** Jevon Chandra
- 5** Joy Ho
- 6** Kae Yuan
- 7** Nue
- 8** Rosanne Chong
- 9** Subhas
- 10** Vanessa Lim Shu Yi
- 11** Wong Hui Yu

Performer:

# Aqilah Faizal

Biography:

Aqilah is curious about the essence of being. She seeks to uncover the potency of the body as a tool; that which can invoke & manifest fluid human sensibilities. Drawing inspiration from the quiet resilience embodied by refugee communities she works with, she is concerned about the strength of vulnerability within a manicured, concrete city.

Work  
Description:

*'A people tries to escape. Fleeing in spite of everything. Despite jail, the high sea, the rough wave, the pirates, starvation, rapture, to become the prey to sea-fish.'*  
— Vietnamese Boatpeople, 1979

40 years have passed, and yet these very words continue to be echoed by the refugee communities that I work with. Seeking out memories and traces from a time when Singapore accepted refugees, then threading them together, has been a personal journey at articulating the voices of forced migrants to a state that refuses refugees.



Work Title: *Nhân Chứng (Witness)*, 2018  
(Realised with Belle Lim. In memories of Qui Thien Nguyen, Michael Bui, Ha Van Ky, Truong Van Le & the Vietnamese refugees who sought sanctuary in Hawkins Road Refugee Camp.)

Photographer:

# Chng Shao Kai

Biography:

Shao Kai is a street and documentary photographer who enjoys taking photos of everyday life in Singapore. Through his work, he hopes to turn shutters into shudders and probe the minds of every concerned citizen. He currently majors in History at the National University of Singapore.

Work  
Description:

I am concerned about unbridled surveillance in Singapore, and its impact on privacy and anonymity. Surveillance systems are a necessary feature in cities for national security and personal protection. However, it comes at the expense of our privacy. As surveillance systems become increasingly commonplace, perhaps it is time for us to pay attention to the camera's gaze, the people behind the camera, and the system that holds it all together.



Work Title: *The All-Seeing City*, 2017-18  
Digital prints on fine art paper



Artist:

# Chu Hao Pei

Biography:

Hao Pei is a visual artist who works with various media. His practice is informed by the shifting ecological, social and urban landscapes. By interweaving documentation and intervention as a strategy, he explores conflicts and tensions arising from state's interventions on nature and culture.

Work  
Description:

*Beneath the Bodhi & Banyan* began from my observation of the emergence (and disappearance) of tree shrines over the years. These transient tree shrines usually consist of statues or images of deities, predominantly of Hinduism & Buddhism. As a child I was brought up not to interfere with any religious objects out of respect and taboo. Their forceful removal by the state seems to me a disrespectful gesture, suggesting that there is perhaps little place for personal spiritual practices outside of institutional entities.



Work Title:

*Beneath the Bodhi & Banyan*, 2018  
Expired film, fine art print on aluminium,  
UV print on acrylic, found frames  
(Photography by Lee Chang Ming)

Artist:

# Faris Nakamura

Biography:

Faris is a visual artist. Through his works, he investigates and explores the way people navigate and orientate themselves upon encountering space and desires to understand the attachment and/or detachment people have towards space, how they develop, and the impact they have on them.

Work  
Description:

*The Light Between Walls* is a contemplative look on the constant negotiation of public spaces by people who are disparate from what society deems as 'acceptable' and 'normal'. As someone who is a part of the LGBTQ community, I am concerned that such societal views may remain unchanged when exacerbated by existing state laws and regulations on public spaces, resulting in the continual lack of acceptance and accessibility. When does the public infringe on the private and can these spaces truly be for the public without discrimination?



Work Title: *The Light Between Walls*, 2018  
Mixed media installation



Illustrator:

Joy Ho

Biography:

Joy is an illustrator and cartoonist who believes that the visual mode of the masses is a strong tool, especially with the accelerating force of media and visual culture. She is curious about access and separation, and how art as communication can facilitate those dynamics.

Work  
Description:

*Love Your Ride* is a project revolving around The Thoughtful Bunch. As mascots of Singapore, surely these are also depictions of Singaporeans, albeit in the vanilla colored bodies they inhabit? Over time, I've endeared myself to the characters, and as loving things go, wound up trying to humanize them and delve deeper into their traits. I wanted to think of their Singaporean characteristics, from their desires and challenges, to their sense of morality and perhaps their societal blind spots.



Work Title: *Love Your Ride*, 2018  
Digital prints

Photographer:

Kae Yuan

Biography:

It is a Herculean task to reduce anyone's story into 50 words so Kae Yuan is not even gonna try. In fact, he will use the remaining space (and whatever attention you have to spare), to tell you an important message: never trust anything you read on the Internet. Never.

Work  
Description:

Most people have a specific idea when it comes to funeral portraits, but must it always be that serious? For me, a funeral is a celebration of a person's life, not an occasion for sad tears. A typical passport photo is inadequate to represent a person's life. I wanted to collaborate with the elderly to craft their story, and inject personal narratives into their staged funeral portrait. After all, isn't that how we want to be remembered? So here, meet Bilyy, my first collaborator.



Work Title: *In The Wake Of \_\_\_\_\_*, 2018  
Photographs on archival paper  
(featuring Bilyy Koh)

Writer:

Nue

Biography:

Nue is a writer. She is interested in the politics of language, signs and simulacra, and how narratives condition people's behaviour and perceptions of the environment. The work of educator Paulo Freire inspires her.

Work  
Description:

We are constantly surrounded by policy jargon and aspirational statements in Singapore — missions, schemes and programmes to get us ahead; structures of language and systems that rely on rhetoric and extrinsic rewards to motivate us in life. I began wondering if these top-down narratives repress a kind of secret unease, or condition us into formulaic patterns of behaviour. *National Kindness Act*, an interactive novella, is my speculative attempt at getting us to pay more attention to this 'KPIization' of our culture — and be better placed to resist the tide.



Work Title: *National Kindness Act*, 2018  
Digital interactive story  
(Graphics by Jayne Ong)  
[nationalkindnessact.com](http://nationalkindnessact.com)

Architectural  
Designer:

# Rosanne Chong

Biography:

Rosanne is an aspiring architect who dabbles in all things between art and architecture. She is interested in the politics of space, and how the built environment can censor, yet liberate the citizens.

Work  
Description:

Publicly staged performances, as well as any use of public space in Singapore are constantly kept on a tight leash. This results in our urban environment lacking spontaneity and social interaction. I wanted to create an urban performing space that provides artists a platform for public outreach, yet fulfils government duty to shield sensitive materials from the public. *SUPERSTAGE* is an experimentation, a mobile pop-up installation, a mini playground, and my attempt at creating this transient space.



Work Title: *SUPERSTAGE*, 2018  
Mixed media installation  
(Choreographed by Soh Yuan Jie. Performed by Shaun Lim and Stacie Leong)



Rapper:

# Subhas

Biography:

Subhas is an independent rapper who cares about urban planning and environmental policymaking. He wants to use music to change the world.

Work  
Description:

*Not A Public Assembly* is an 8-track rap album that addresses a range of socio-political issues, along with themes that I have personally experienced as a young adult. The album also lends my voice as a storyteller to ‘sing for the unsung’ and tell stories of people/places who cannot tell their own. I want this album to be something people can go to for hope, for perspective, but most importantly, as a conversation starter — because too often, socio-political commentary takes place in elitist spaces.



Work Title: *Not A Public Assembly*, 2018  
8-track album  
(Produced by F Δ U X E)  
[bit.ly/napaalbum](http://bit.ly/napaalbum)

Artist:

# Vanessa Lim Shu Yi

Biography:

Vanessa's practice mainly pertains to ideas of materiality with a particular focus on the spatial and emotional construction of water in its various forms (interior, exterior). Her recent sculptures, textile work and installations have drawn on architectural elements of the swimming pool and coastal management systems to play with conceptions of weight, space and tactile perception.

Work  
Description:

*Lightweight* is a clumsy machine that dreams of disciplined athleticism, friction, and grace. It is a sculptural work curious and concerned with our human-material relationships to the machines that condition, hurt, and heal us. What makes us subject ourselves to the spongy resistance of an exercise mat, and how do painted lines on the floor quietly command our bodies into carefully rehearsed choreographies and rules? How do we determine the conditions and constituents of a machine?



Work Title: *Lightweight*, 2018  
Wood, plaster, terazzo, agility bars, sweatbands, pulley, rope, metal hardware, fake grass



Artists:

# Jevon Chandra Wong Hui Yu

Jevon's  
Biography:

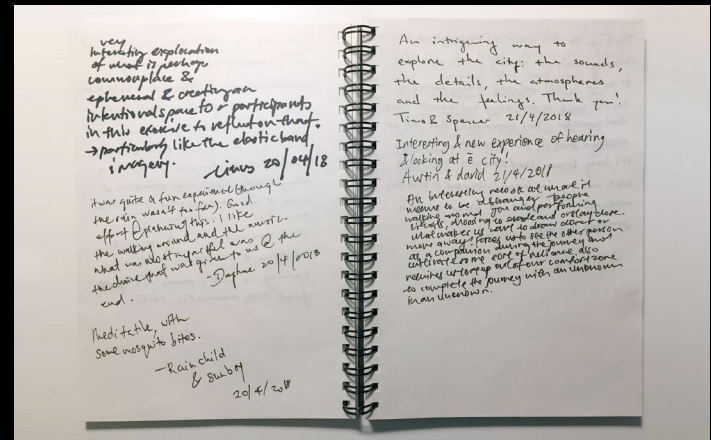
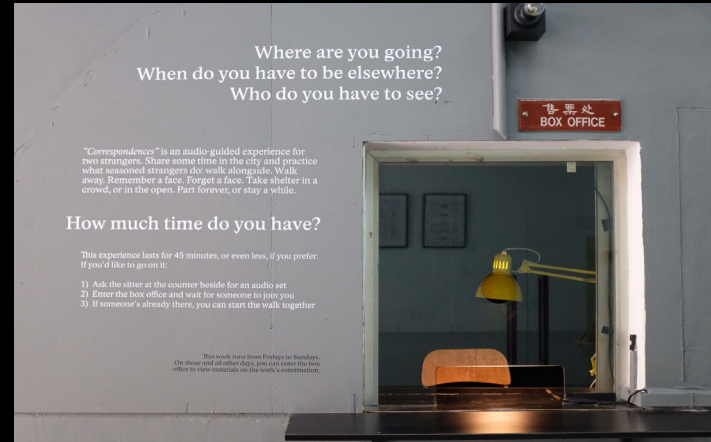
Jevon is drawn to psychogeography and theories of play. By extension, he is interested in provoking the ludic qualities of spaces, thereby using play for its dialogic potential. Conceptually, his practice hovers around ideas of enchantment, of thoughts that lie beyond logical positivism: of (temporal) imaginaries, projections, topophilia, and hoping.

Hui Yu's  
Biography:

Through writing, photography and sound, Hui Yu enjoys collecting moments of volatile intimacies in the city. She is interested in theories of stranger sociability, psychoanalytic listenings (to and within the urban environment), and the relational possibilities in addresses that go astray.

Work  
Description:

Where rituals of evasion have become survival strategies in the city, *Correspondences* is an invitation to slow down and dwell more attentively in the presence of unknown others. We think of it as an unrehearsed duet of communal listening and way-finding; an appeal to two people to make the irrational leap of offering time and attention to a stranger. What could come from such an offer? Perhaps, if nothing else, a recognition that our daily rituals can be ripened with feeling, and — so the gamble goes — with meaning worth seeking for.



Work Title: *Correspondences*, 2018  
Audio walk  
(Voice acting by Winifred Wong)

Artist  
Mentor:

## Tan Guo-Liang

Biography:

Tan Guo-Liang is a visual artist and writer based in Singapore. He completed his MFA at Glasgow School of Art and was a guest student at The Städelschule, Frankfurt am Main, Germany. His work has been exhibited and collected in Asia and Europe, including his first solo exhibition 'Dead Play' at Space Cottonseed and 'The Trouble With Painting Today' in Pump House Gallery, London. He is a recipient of the Singapore National Arts Council Scholarship for visual art and is a contributing writer on various art journals, catalogues and websites. More recently, he was an artist-in-residence at the NTU CCA residency and currently co-runs the project space Peninsular. He also teaches part-time at LASALLE College of the Arts.

Guest  
Mentor:

## Alecia Neo

Biography:

Alecia Neo is a visual artist based in Singapore. Alecia's artistic practice questions the kinds of individuals which are valued by contemporary society by exploring the relationships between people, their identities and contexts. Working primarily with photography, video, installation and participatory workshops, she develops long-term projects involving a variety of individuals and collaborators, overlooked communities and their spaces. Her art works have been exhibited in various international festivals and galleries such as Singapore Art Museum (Singapore), Valentine Willie Fine Art (Singapore), Singapore International Photography Festival, the International Orange Festival (China), University of Bangkok (Thailand), Cittadellarte (Italy) and Noordlicht International Photo Festival (Netherlands). She is also Artist Lead for Brack, an arts platform for socially-engaged artists and their projects.

Guest  
Mentor:

## Marc Nair

Biography:

Marc Nair is a poet and photographer from Singapore. He is a recipient of the 2016 Young Artist Award and has published seven volumes of poetry. His latest collection is *Intersection*, a poetic and visual architecture of space and memory created together with artist Nicola Anthony. Marc was the 2015 Writer-In-Residence at Gardens by the Bay and was the 2016-17 NTU-NAC National Writer in Residence. Marc is also a musician who sets his poems to music. To date, he has released two spoken word albums with his band, Neon and Wonder, and has collaborated with well-known Singapore musicians such as Bani Haykal, weish and Tim De Cotta. He is the co-founder and principal photographer of Mackerel, a culture magazine.

Guest  
Mentor:

## Mike HJ Chang

Biography:

Mike HJ Chang is a Taiwanese American artist and educator in fine arts. He received his Bachelor of Arts from the University of California, Los Angeles, and his Master of Fine Arts from the California Institute of the Arts, both in the USA. Chang currently resides and works in Singapore. Chang's process involves a curiosity towards conventions of seeing, resulting in shapes, forms and objects that claim a presence of their own. Chang has exhibited his works in prominent art spaces such as Chan Hampe Galleries in Gillman Barracks, Peninsular, Institute of Contemporary Art Singapore, Esplanade's Jendela, Post-Museum, Sculpture Square, Art Stage Singapore Shanghai West Bund Art Fair, and Yeo Workshop since 2011.

Guest  
Mentor:

## Pat Toh

Biography:

Pat Toh is a performer and performance maker with an interest in the lived experience of the body and the aesthetics of the everyday. A Shell-NAC Arts Scholarship recipient, she graduated with a Bachelor of Dramatic Arts (Acting) at the National Institute of Dramatic Arts (Australia). She has created *Homogenous* (Theatre Studio Raw Series), *Terra Incognita* (M1 Fringe Festival) and *Warpaint* (Substation Directors Lab). Her work *Pretty Things* (Substation) was nominated for Life Theatre Awards "Production of the Year", "Best Director" and "Best Ensemble" in 2013. Pat has worked extensively with local theatre companies as well as foreign artists. Internationally she has performed in Japan, Korea, Hong Kong, China and various parts of South East Asia.

Guest  
Speakers:

Cai Yinzhou (Geylang Adventures)

Chan Sze-Wei

Darren Ho (Citizen Farm)

Kent Chan &

Thong Kay Wee (State Of Motion)

Larry Yeung (Participate in Design)

U5 Artist Collective

*Concerned Citizen Programme* is part of The Substation's *Discipline The City* and is kindly supported by:

a.r.t.s-fund

The *Concerned Citizens Programme* participants and team would like to thank the leadership and staff at The Substation — Alan, Sam, Si Min, Val and Xiaohui — for the support, advice and guidance offered to the programme throughout this 9-month process. Special thanks to project manager Chin Ailin for being there from the beginning.

Special thanks also for assistance rendered during installation by Venue Manager Faisal bin Rahmat, and Substation Technicians Isyraf bin Sabtu and Aliff Osman.

Lastly, we would like to thank all the mentors and guest speakers for their generosity in sharing their time, knowledge and expertise in helping them shape and refine their works.

Design by Currency



#concernedcitizensprogramme

@the\_substation