



# FIELD MEETING Take 4: *Thinking Practice*

## Asia Contemporary Art Week's (ACAW) Signature Forum

**Friday Nov 11, 10 am-6 pm**, hosted at **Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum** (Peter B. Lewis Theater) & **Saturday, Nov 12, 10 am-6 pm** at **Asia Society** (Lila Acheson Wallace Auditorium)

**Over 400 New York and US based arts professionals gather for the 4th iteration of FIELD MEETING**, dedicated to the dismantling of one of the most commonly used terms in the art world today: *practice*

**Curated by ACAW Director Leeza Ahmady**

**Space is limited, registration required at [field-meeting-thinking-practice.eventbrite.com](http://field-meeting-thinking-practice.eventbrite.com)**

Introduced in 2014, FIELD MEETING appropriates the format of an art forum to rethink exhibition making, from an act of displaying objects to one that stages compelling creative minds— to showcase the *living energy* of people: their ideas, research, processes, and significant activities.

Now an annual signature event of the curatorial and educational platform, **Asia Contemporary Art Week**, each edition of FIELD MEETING invites **over 30 outstanding artists, curators, writers and scholars based in Asia and beyond** to embody their work through their own presence by presenting **newly conceived performances, lecture-performances, and lively discussions** to an equally select audience of **New York and US based arts professionals**.

Inspired by artist and philosopher Rasheed Aareen's famous declaration that to create art is to advance the *"journey of an idea"*,

this year's FIELD MEETING is dedicated to comprehending artistic practice in all its nuances and predications, in an effort to yield an experimental realm whereby new materials, concepts, and projects are tested out and reflected upon collectively. In doing so, the forum emulates the experience of a studio visit on a communal scale, transcending standard educational symposia to facilitate meaningful exchanges, while sparking lasting relationships for future collaborations.

*"We must consider practice in and of itself, in isolation from art, which has mistakenly become synonymous with "an end product," states **ACAW Director and FIELD MEETING Curator Leeza Ahmady**, asking, "What is practice as an idea? What is practice as action? What does it look like? How does it sound? How does it feel? In what ways does it matter? What is its process? Who does it belong to? What is its timeline? What is its history? How does it fail? How does it succeed? Is it an individual or a collective endeavor? How does it relate to society? And ultimately, what is its purpose? "*

Set on the heels of one of the most discordant, highly manipulative, and alarming United States presidential elections, **FIELD MEETING: Thinking Practice** must also address the multiple strategies applied by artists to maintain sovereignty over their own voices as world citizens and commentators, amidst the pervasively hostile political climate and stifling forces of conservatism, socio-economic constraints, neoliberalism, immigration crises, nationalism, and border policing. Beyond resisting such socio-political mediations and enclosures, how do artists and arts professionals working within the sphere of Asia also contend with art world prescriptions and specificities including institutional representation, established academic trajectories, aesthetic and cultural impositions, and shifting market demands?



Shezad Dawood, *Nature Interpretation Center, Kalimpong Hill Station*. Image source: [toumyindia.com](http://toumyindia.com), as part of the artist's research for his lecture-performance, "A Virtual Tour of Kalimpong"

Over the course of the two-days, presenting **artists, scholars, and curators** based in Asia and beyond deliberate on these very questions and share their work and perspectives in relationship to *practice* in the following ways:

**Basel Abbas & Ruanne Abou-Rahme** (Ramallah & New York) premier their latest film, *Only the Beloved Keeps Our Secrets* and discuss their mostly fluid but at times unhinged process of working together;

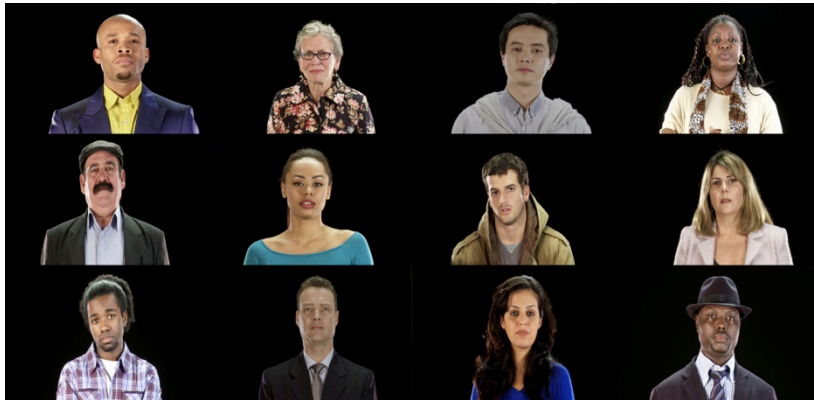
**Amina Ahmed** (Tehran, London & New York) describes remembrance, prayer and invocation as ways of finding her center; **Heba Y. Amin** (Cairo & Berlin) contends with suspicion and the politics of surveillance; **Stephanie Bailey** (London, Athens & Hong Kong) will provide the closing remarks for the two days and her thoughts on challenging global politics from within the highly privileged and contentious space of culture.

**Wafaa Bilal** (Najaf & New York) reflects the current political map of the Arab region through an auditory experience; **T-Yong Chung** (Tae-Gu, Milan & Venice) contemplates the introspective process of 'creating' and 'erasing' himself in his sculptures.

**Mary Ellen Carroll** (Houston & New York) unfurls her use of physical and esoteric matter to expand the meaning of performance as practice; **Shezad Dawood** (London) takes his audience through an espionage thriller in Kalimpong, a small town at the foothills of the Himalayas.



Jennifer Wen Ma, *Paradise Interrupted: An Inside Look*. Courtesy of the artist.



Joana Hadjithomas & Khalil Joreige, *The Rumor of the World*, 2015. Composition made of video stills, 38 HD video installation. Courtesy of artists.

**Erin Gleeson** (Phnom Penh & London) claims that today's curatorial methods call for "territorial altars & time travel"; **Joana Hadjithomas and Khalil Joreige** (Beirut) give face to the ambiguous and hidden voices found in scam-messages traversing the planet through the Internet. **Ho Rui An** (Singapore) asks, "What are the stories we allow to tell ourselves? And what are the stories that still remain to be told?" **Ho Tzu Nyen** (Singapore & Berlin) traces Malayan cosmological beliefs about tigers embodying ancestral spirits, and other layers of intersecting histories.

**Michael Joo** (New York) examines how sculptural intervention can make inaccessible histories and simultaneous pluralistic viewpoints visible; **Anthony Lee** (New York) describes his pursuit for equilibrium by looking solely outside of himself. **Loo Zihan** (Singapore) engages in an intimate conversation with the exhumed remains of queer performances; **Jennifer Wen Ma** (Beijing & New York) performs a tribute to the often chaotic, mysterious, funny, heartwarming, and masochistic drive that is integral to creative practice.

**Umashankar Manthravadi** (Bangalore) shares his 20-year quest to decode the acoustic properties of an elaborate man-made structure in the Khandagiri Mountains of India;



Mithu Sen, *Mis(s)Guide*, 2016. Live performance, documentation. Peabody Essex Museum (PEM). Courtesy of artist.



**Yasmin Jahan Nupur** (Dhaka) creates a site-specific performance-survey to consider “personal” vs. “political” modes of existing; **Sarah Rifky** (Cairo & Boston) narrates the story of *Qalqalah and the Curious Case of the Sphere within a Sphere*. **Mithu Sen** (New Delhi) embraces “nonsense” as resistance to comb out utterances from one’s subconscious.

**Mami Kataoka** (Tokyo) reveals her method of “Total Curating” at Mori Art Museum; **Raha Raissnia** (Tehran & New York) declares her aesthetic intentions as that of seeking subtlety, beauty and innocence; **Rashid Rana** (Lahore) subverts linear ideas of time and space progressions to offer fractured views of chronology and geography; **Nora Razian** (Beirut) adopts the ongoing citywide garbage crisis in Beirut as a case study on curating.

**Jonas Staal** (Amsterdam) conjures the political history of art, while contemplating the artistic history of politics; **Ye Funa** (Beijing) appropriates a popular platform for self-expression, traditionally reserved as feminine, to claim it as a viable venue for curatorial work; **Xyza Cruz Bacani** (Hong Kong & Bambang) and **Chia-En Jao** (Taipei) converse about their strategies in documenting migrant workers’ everyday reality with curator **Xiaoyu Weng** (New York).

FIELD MEETING is an exercise in prioritizing the **practice** of an artist as the foremost ingredient for contemplation and development; a curatorial engagement with ongoing artistic processes, rather than finished art works, to confront issues that affect the contemporary art field at-large, while aiming to broadly present Asia as a conceptual space that transcends geography.

Considering contemporary art in its present tense and highlighting current as well as historically significant initiatives, the forum exposes compelling creative practices in a timelier, less mediated fashion to spark lasting relationships between artists, art professionals and organizations in the United States and Asia to transcend established institutional representation and discourse with greater nuance, while addressing the gaps in the ratio of Asia-based artists represented in the US. FIELD MEETING program therefore unearths the recent past, acknowledges the present moment we are in, and envisions an optimistic future for this ever-evolving field.

**For FIELD MEETING speaker profiles & other details,** [http://www.acaw.info/?page\\_id=25226](http://www.acaw.info/?page_id=25226)

**A full schedule will be available on** <http://www.acaw.info>



Ye Funa, *Curated Nail Residency*, 2015. MoCA Pavilion, Museum of Contemporary Art, Shanghai. Courtesy of artist.

### **Consortium Partners & Participating Institutions:**

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