

Asia Contemporary Art Week 2017 Signature Forum
FIELD MEETING Take 5: *Thinking Projects*

Saturday, October 14, Hosted at Asia Society Museum
Sunday, October 15, Hosted at SVA Theatre



Simon Fujiwara, *The Personal Effects of Theo Grünberg*, 2010, Mixed media installation, performance.
Courtesy of Hamburger Kunsthalle, Photographs Yun Lee ©

When living at a pivotal moment in history where declining political, economic and environmental conditions mean that the planet could meet its demise more possibly through human mal-activities than extraterrestrial cosmic, or planetary shifts, it is no small occasion for hundreds of US and Asia based artists and arts professionals to gather to deliberate on art and the state of the world at the 5th iteration of **FIELD MEETING**, Asia Contemporary Art Week's (ACAW) annual signature forum in New York, hosted by ACAW Consortium Partners Asia Society and SVA MA Curatorial Practice (SVA Theatre).

This same planet contains an art world that is more globally connected than ever; with artists passionately pursuing an endless array of projects across localities and regions that ultimately define the parameters of their personal and professional biographies. Yet when the United States, self-entitled "leader of the free world," declares a travel ban against six majority Muslim countries while intimating entry-denials to dozens of other nationalities in the guise of a "project of national security," it urgently calls for a deciphering of the term "project" and its more soberly usage in the world today. Not only have such regulations directly impacted ACAW's mission as an organization and the work of all our collaborators worldwide, it is also impossible to ignore the surmounting effects of

the Trump administration's curtailing policies across all sectors of knowledge, humanities, philanthropy, and activism.



Nancy Adajania, *Pilla Gudi, Bastar*, collaborative project – ' $12+1=13$, hence it is not a circle', 2000

Conceived in 2014 as an exhibition and presented in the format of a forum that emulates the experience of a studio visit on a communal scale, **FIELD MEETING** explores art as a journey of ideas intrinsically connected to life beyond art for art's sake notions, through a timely staging of extraordinary people, their creative process, research and activities.

Each FIELD MEETING forum takes one quintessentially common term within the contemporary art-world lexicon as an entry point for thinking more consciously together as a collective in an effort to cut through the semantics of language and ideological entanglements for deeper understanding of such terms and their predications. Through the distinctive nuanced thinking of the invited artists, curators, and other arts professionals, new reflections and perspectives that are inclusive of the thinking of other disciplines and people are generated. It is an attempt towards an inclusive thinking; one that explicitly seeks to consider multiple contexts and a wide range of cultural, political, historical, psychological, spiritual, phenomenological and philosophical specificities.

FIELD MEETING 2015 delved into "performance," while in 2016 we contemplated the word "practice." In 2017, in an attempt to deconstruct the term "project" in the life of artists and arts professionals, FIELD MEETING presentations traverse between disciplines of visual arts, art history, science, social history, philosophy, architecture, mythology, film, folklore, subculture, medicine and self-development, to reflect on a variety of significant and timely topics including feminism as ecological consciousness; Lenin's rendezvous with Jesus; telepathic animal communication; links between Chinese ink painting and global warming; cosmic speculation; the transformation of ancient symbols in the digital age, and much more.



Brian Kuan Wood, *The Story of Peter Green Peter Chang*

The Culture of Status and The Status of Culture

Within the current climates of regional destabilizations, religious profiling, war-mongering, and escalating deterioration of our natural environments, how can artistic communities contribute positively to the world while keeping the integrity of their own humanity and work intact? The connection between cities, their inhabitants, culture, urban development, class, gender and education are examined in the first section of FIELD MEETING on day-one, with emerging curator **Hera Chan's** (Hong Kong) dramatic reading of a political theatre script referencing traditions of pageantry and street theatre in Hong Kong and factory plays in Mainland China. **Suhanya Raffel**, executive director of M+ museum (planned to open in 2019) in Hong Kong, asks how a city that has spawned a spectacular architectural skyline, renowned film, fashion and design industries, and the third largest global art market, could bring a unique and necessary voice to the international museum world, while editor of WTD Magazine **Meitha Al Mazrooei** (Dubai) traces the cultural and physical evolution of the United Arab Emirates to examine how specific languages of design, art and development manifest in the periphery. On that note, writer and founding editor of e-flux journal **Brian Kuan Wood** (New York) delivers a hypnotic narration of his latest fictional story: "The Story of Peter Green Peter Chang" which among many other things addresses the role of creative industries in manufacturing historical accountability—namely the revival of collective wounds for dissemination of new status and identity to groups of people previously considered disempowered.



Abdullah Syed, *Flesh & Blood*, Photography by Carrisa Tan
Image courtesy the artist and Aicon Gallery, New York

1984 in Disguise: The Project of Resistance

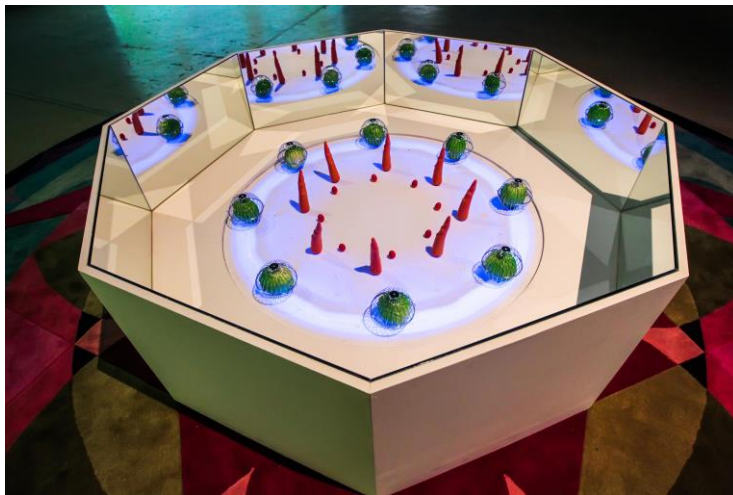
If works by creative individuals are interpreted as “projects,” what are their functions in society? Are they merely passive intellectual investigations, or do they actively contest the daunting multiplicity of paradoxes spawned by the prevailing right-winged and democratically masked authoritarian governments worldwide? Performances, lecture performances, and discussions tackling themes of repression, censorship, violence and social and environmental depletion in many sectors of Asia and the United States include artist **Dai Guangyu**’s (Beijing) seminal ink-based performance “The Failure of Defense—America 2017,” which shifts from its original focus on class and ideological divisions in China to forces that threaten the American nation. **Abdullah M.I. Syed**’s (Karachi & Sydney) performance “Flesh and Blood” uses the rose, an important element in celebratory and burial ceremonies in South Asian cultures, to directly reflect on the current state of demonization of Islam in America; while **Hu Weiyi**’s (Shanghai) uses the human body as a canvas for projecting dilemmas of facing a world that demands constant processing of information against our will. Artist **Nadiyah Bamadhaj** (Jogjakarta) attempts what many in her local community would consider a taboo, while **Philip Tinari** (Beijing), having freshly dealt with external pressures that caused the removal of select artworks out of a major China-focused exhibition he co-curated at the Guggenheim Museum, presents a series of cases to demonstrate how China has pioneered a type of censorship that works by stealth.

Evolution and The Fountain of Fulfillment

Can turning the finger inward towards our self as perceiver, creator, and narrator of our everyday experiences affect the larger mechanisms of events in the world and the universe? Presenters in this section consider aesthetics, science, medicine and physical dimensionality as the apparatus for awareness and communication with everything (living and non-living) on a stratus of consciousness that reaches far and wide beyond survival and gratification of

personalities towards true evolution of humanity's inner world that corresponds with the laws and physics of nature and the universe.

Joyce Ho's (Taipei) intimate performance is choreographed to regulate 'time' as a clue and magnifier of the subtle rituals often overlooked in our daily lives. In his lecture-performance **Kingsley Ng** (Hong Kong) considers concepts of traditional Chinese medicine, namely acupuncture, to ask if art can also weave through the meridians of our social and ecological fabrics. In his lecture-performance "Cosmic Physics" **Adrian Wong** (Los Angeles & Hong Kong) shares anecdotes from his forays with a small army of Feng Shui practitioners, geomancers, energy manipulators, sound healers, and telepathic animal communicators, while music producer **Junod Etienne** discusses how self-observation and seeing ourselves as the project can positively affect our energy, perception, and growth.



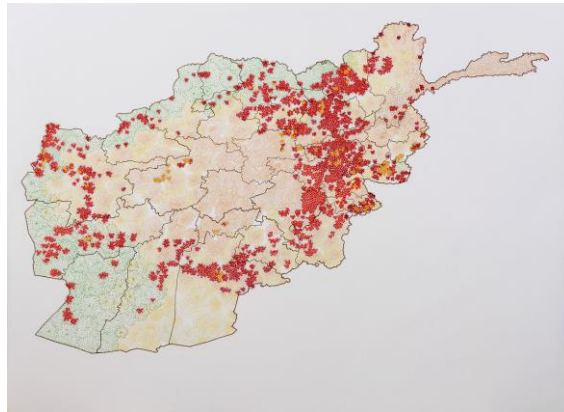
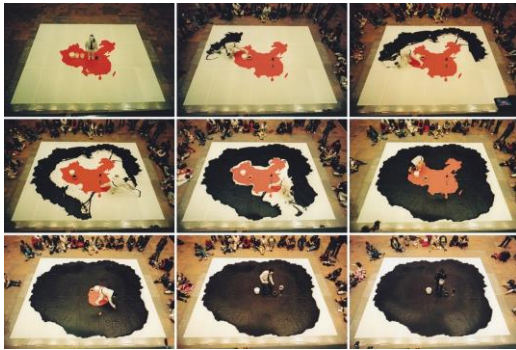
Adrian Wong, *Dream Cosmography*, 2015, wood, steel, glass, carpet, magnets, motors, plastic, foam, LEDs, digital video
image credit: OCT Contemporary Art Terminal

The Lived, Living, Speaking Story

Across art historical horizons, wide-ranging multidisciplinary research is increasingly instrumental in retrieving marginalized or forgotten narratives. Yet, do not such distributions of formerly hermetic knowledge painstakingly excavated by independent practitioners also play into the ever-capitalist consumerist fervor; paving way for quick a-la-mode institutional appropriations that ultimately feed the voracious appetites of the art market?

In his opening remarks, director of SVA MA Curatorial Practice **Steven Henry Madoff** shares the importance of reflecting the diversity of New York City's many art worlds in a program he established to engage and support curatorial and art historical work from a worldly perspective. **Nancy Adajania** (Bombay) in her keynote lecture provides a glimpse into the research process of her recent book on the Indian artist Navjot Altaf where she recalibrated the received histories of Marxism, feminism and collaborative art, in addition to producing regionally inflected vocabularies and histories that do not appear as mere footnotes to western art history. **Laura Barlow** (Doha) initiates a process of mapping the works of the trailblazing Lebanese artist Saloua Raouda Choucair (1916-2017) as an expanded sculptural, architectural, and design practice within the scope of international modernism. **Yuliya Sorokina** (Almaty) discusses the

triumphs and challenges of establishing and maintaining a digital archive dedicated to the legacy of Central Asian artists who have by now become internationally well-known yet remain unrecognized in their own countries and regions. **Tiffany Chung** (Ho Chi Minh City & Houston) revisits history to confront the slippages between past colonial rhetoric with the present moment's neo-liberal reforms in the traumatized continents of Asia, Africa as well as the Middle East.

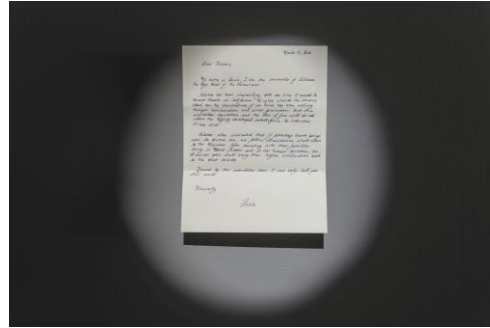


(Top Left) Dai Guangyu, *Guard Red*, 2007, performance, Denmark Image courtesy the artist and Ink Studio, Beijing. (Top Right) *Saloua Raouda Choucair, Bench*, 1969-71. Limestone, 570 x 115 x 105 cm. Courtesy of Mathaf: Arab Museum of Modern Art, Doha. (Bottom Left) Sergei Maslov, *Baykonyr – 2*, 2002, multi-media project, size variable, from the collection of Astral Nomads digital resource. (Bottom Right) Tiffany Chung, *Hazard Location Map of Afghanistan—active: 6452, transitional: 548*, 2012, micropigment ink, gel ink and oil marker on paper, 43 x 59 inches (110 x 150 cm)

The Good, The Bad, and The Desirable: The Myth of Truth and the Auxiliary of Perspective:

Delving into the nuances of multidisciplinary research taken by practitioners within their everyday individual practices embodied through their own voice and presence, this year's FIELD MEETING once again expresses the great flux of often-overlooked programmatic achievements and institutional efforts forwarded by the drive of individual artists and arts professionals' projects across many regions of the world. In this context, on the occasion of Asia Contemporary Art Week, we must also ask where is Asia today, if not everywhere, in all places all at once? How do those of us with geographical links to Asia living in other continents occupy it as a conceptual space beyond identity politics? Moreover, as

artists and arts professionals, how do we responsibly criticize institutional status quo without neglecting our own contributions towards the working mechanism of the state of such status quo?

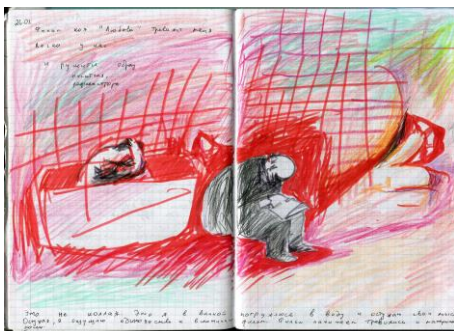


(Left) Hajra, *Artist in Studio*, 2016, Image Courtesy of the Artist, Photo Credit: Kaveh Nabatian

(Right) Yin-Ju Chen, *Video still from the multimedia installation Extrastellar Evaluations*, 2016. Courtesy to Yin-Ju Chen and Chi-Wen Gallery

Hajra Waheed (Montreal) translates elements of her collage practice into a shadow play that demonstrates the ever-growing need to hold everything dear, should it become collateral damage to the unforeseen events of the near future. **Marwa Arsanios** (Beirut) considers ideological theories and practices of different domestic labor organizations, eco-feminist, and autonomous women's movements in the Middle East and elsewhere. **Bruce Quek** (Singapore) examines light pollution and the limits of empathy imposed by informational overload. **Yin-Ju Chen** (Taipei) offers her extra-stellar evaluations deducted from an expedition to California's Mt. Shasta in search of the lost civilization of "Lemuria."

In his keynote lecture-performance artist **Simon Fujiwara** (Berlin) takes us on a tour of his most ambitious project to-date: a full-scale replica of Anne Frank's house as an investigation of ideologies that underpin the hyper-capitalist logic of the 21st century. **Marat Raiymkulov's** (Bishkek) innovative monologue play voices the artist's conjoined philosophical reactions living through multiple political revolutions, after the collapse of the Soviet era, and the space of time when Lenin's house of Culture became the church of Jesus Christ. **Taus Makhacheva** (Makhachkala & Moscow) provokes lively ruminations about menus derived from histories of starvation; puzzling cutlery accompanying dishes from two different sides of a war, hidden lollipop shapes in Lenin's head, and many other objects of desire to explore complex relationships between history, politics of memory, and contemporary life.



(Left) Marat Raiymkulov, *Untitled*, 2014, graphics, 50x50 mm

(Right) Taus Makhacheva, *Tightrope*, 2015, 4K video, 58'10", colour, sound. Tightrope walker Rasul Abakarov. The work is based on the collection of Dagestan Museum of Fine Arts named after P. S. Gamzatova.

FIELD MEETING prioritizes the practice of an artist as the foremost ingredient for contemplation and development. As an educational and curatorial program, it engages artistic processes rather than finished artworks to expose and reflect on issues that affect the world at large, while sparking meaningful and lasting relationships between artists, art professionals and organizations in the United States, Asia and beyond.

For **FIELD MEETING** speaker profiles & other details, http://www.acaw.info/?page_id=31631

The 12th edition of **Asia Contemporary Art Week** (Oct 5 - 26, 2017) stages two signature programs: **FIELD MEETING & THINKING PROJECTS Pop-Ups** exhibitions, in addition to connecting over 30 leading art institutions to present cutting-edge exhibitions, performances, discussions & festivities citywide.

A full **ACAW 2017** schedule is available on <http://www.acaw.info>

ACAW Consortium Partners & 2017 Participants

*Institutions supporting participation of select **FIELD MEETING** Presenters

Asia Society Museum / *ArteEast / Asia Art Archive in America / Japan Society / *Lower Manhattan Cultural Council (LMCC) / The Metropolitan Museum of Art / MoMA | Museum of Modern Art / Queens Museum / Reversible Destiny Foundation / Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum / Sylvia Wald & Po Kim Art Gallery / SVA MA Curatorial Practice / *Taipei Cultural Center / Twelve Gates Arts / +91 Foundation / *Aicon Gallery / C24 Gallery / Chambers Fine Art / Christie's / *DAG Modern / Doosan Gallery / Klein Sun Gallery / Mana Contemporary / Owen James Gallery / Ronin Gallery / *Roya Khadjavi Projects / Ryan Lee Gallery / Sundaram Tagore Gallery / *Tyler Rollins Fine Art / *Art Group 705 (Bishkek) / *Alserkal Avenue (Dubai) / Edouard Malingue Gallery (Hong Kong) / Exhibit320 (New Delhi) / *Ink Studio (Beijing) / Richard Koh Fine Art (Kuala Lumpur) / Space Station (Beijing) / Beijing Contemporary Art Foundation (Beijing) / *M+ (Hong Kong)