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Asia Contemporary Art Week Expands to an Entire Season of Events in NYC Region

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Yasumasa Morimura, *Une modern Olympia*, 2018. Courtesy of the artist & Luhring Augustine, New York



"Maya Lin: A River Is a Drawing" opens Oct. 12 at the Hudson River Museum. Maya Lin, *Folding the Chesapeake*, 2015. Glass marbles, adhesive. Smithsonian American Art Museum Permanent Collection. Photo Credit: Ron Blunt, courtesy Smithsonian American Art Museum.

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As a remarkable testimony to the field's growing prominence in New York and the art scene at large, the 13th edition of **Asia Contemporary Art Week** (ACAW) expands to

a full season this fall to present 30+ cutting-edge exhibitions and public programs at leading ACAW Consortium Partner museums and galleries citywide.

The two-month long platform highlights 150+ acclaimed and emerging artists through timely exhibitions and retrospectives by individual artists and artist collectives from recent to modern history, along with ACAW's newly conceived studio visits program. Numerous public programs include symposiums, performances, lectures, film screenings and panel discussions contextualizing many of the significant solo and group exhibitions by artists with practices from or related to China, India, Japan, Korea, Mongolia, Thailand, Iran, Pakistan, Syria, and Kazakhstan among others.

Throughout ACAW 2018, a range of common inquiries and themes emerge and reflect on the world's troubling political, racial, and economic divisiveness. Artists and experts in the field juxtapose immigration, border conflicts, and social upheavals to humanity's relationship with nature in the age of the Anthropocene. A resurgence of identity politics, deriving from the 1990's, pervades alongside an exploration of materials and processes that is only furthered through ACAW's studio visits. Technology, history and the future role of multidisciplinary artists are also examined through the lens of art history, modernity, religion, philosophy, education, and pop culture.

Another Invitation to Think Together: ACAW Curated Signature Programs

Center stage to this year's edition is a constellation of ambitious Signature Programs that continue forwarding ACAW's steadfast process-oriented approach to curatorial and educational work. Conceptualized by ACAW's longstanding Director, Leeza Ahmady, Thinking Collections revolves around ideas of artistic and archival practices beyond the art market lens. Programs will progressively unfold during the fall months and culminate in the spring of 2019.

The edition kickoffs with ACAW's first signature program on Sunday, September 9th with the keynote lecture **Laboratories of Knowledge** by the acclaimed artist, activist, and 2018 Kochi Muziris Biennale curator Anita Dube. Celebrated for her inclusive and unconventional approach to art and exhibition-making, Dube discusses her vision for organizing the fourth artist-led edition of India's only international art biennale and her take on the state of the arts at large. The program is hosted at Christie's Auction House in conjunction with their annual South Asian Modern and Contemporary exhibition and auction viewing.

Reorienting New York City as a collection in its own right, ACAW introduces **Thinking Collections: Open Studios**, the platform's latest program dedicated to the creative process. The program weaves Ahmady's thesis of "seeing the artist as the first collector and artists' studios as primary collections" by inviting the public to connect with artists' research and artmaking processes in the context of their intimate studios across Manhattan, Brooklyn, Queens, and the Bronx. As an extension of this initiative, ACAW spotlights the Elizabeth Foundation for the Arts for an afternoon of studio visits with 14+ artists as part of their annual Open Studio Program. Held on Saturday, October 20th, audiences can encounter a variety of

artistic and philosophical inquiries directly or indirectly relating to Asia. Space is limited, and RSVP is required for most studio visits. Priority will be given to arts professionals.

On Sunday, October 14th, ACAW unveils its highly anticipated 2018 signature exhibition, **Thinking Collections: Telling Tales** — an unprecedented survey exhibition of Kazakhstan's most celebrated art collective, Kyzyl Tractor. Noted for their feverish experimentations in the mid-1990's and early 2000's, their work continues to chronicle Kazakhstan's seismic socioeconomic, ecological and political shifts in juxtaposition with their signature conceptual and aesthetic appropriations of the region's nomadic, Sufi, and Shamanistic philosophical traditions.

The exhibition will highlight founding member Moldakul Narymbetov, in addition to staging a monumental new work and live performances by collective members: Said Atabekov, Smail Bayaliyev, Vitaliy Simakov, and Arystanbek Shalbayev. Curated by Leeza Ahmady with the assistance of Vladislav Sludskiy. Hosted at Jersey City's bustling art hub, Mana Contemporary. This year ACAW's acclaimed annual forum, FIELD MEETING, skips New York to premier its sixth edition in collaboration with ACAW Consortium Partner Alserkal Avenue in Dubai. Designed to emulate the experience of a studio visit on a communal scale, the two-day forum will be held January 24th – 26th, 2019. Capping off an edition of dynamic programs, Thinking Collections culminates with a signature auction and fundraiser featuring works by select contemporary South Asian artists. Held in spring of 2019 at Christie's Auction House on behalf of ACAW.

Not-to-be-Missed ACAW Highlights at Consortium Partner & Participating Venues
Newcomer Ulterior Gallery presents two solo exhibitions during ACAW's 13th edition. Opening on Friday, September 8th, Takashi Kunitani's Spaceless Space is a series of immersive installations involving multiple neon-colored tubes which have been altered by the artist's breath. Followed by the opening of Minoru Yoshida: Performances in New York on Saturday, October 20th — video documentations featuring performances by the late Gutai artists in downtown New York circa the 1970's.

Asia Society's landmark exhibition *The Progressive Revolution: Modern Art for a New India* opens on Monday, September 17th. Alongside a series of lectures and symposiums throughout the fall, the exhibition sheds light on how the Progressive Artists' Group laid the foundation for modern art in post-independent India, later representing the most important segments of India's art history and art market today. See ACAW.info for the full agenda of Asia Society programs during ACAW 2018.

On Thursday, September 13th ACAW hosts its annual "Chelsea Night," highlighting six events at various galleries in the area. Of note, Tyler Rollins Gallery will host the opening reception for Manit Sriwanichpoom's twenty-year long series Pink Man, in which the artist employs ironic humor to unpack various aspects of Thai life, mutely lampooning the country's consumer culture. This will be the artist's first solo exhibition in the United States. In addition, Chitra Ganesh's solo exhibition Her Garden, a mirror premiers at The Kitchen.

Other Chelsea night features include **Tina Kim Gallery's** opening reception for the renowned artist, writer and filmmaker Park Chan-Kyong. His new solo exhibition, *Citizen's Forest*, examines Korean society by framing the rapid socio-economic developments of the past century. The works often comment on traditional Korean religions and the reckless pursuit of Western modernization and economic development through the Cold War. Additionally, **DOOSAN Gallery's** resident artist Yoon Hwan Bae will display a series of works as a conclusion to his three month collaboration with the gallery. His studio will be on view with fellow resident Seulki Ki whose exhibition opens later in October. The evening also includes an opening reception at Crossing Art for Indian-American artist Vandana Jain and Korean artist Taeim Ha who challenge their traditional cultures in the face of global capitalism.

Engaging in a conversation on the Indian art scene, eminent art historians and curators will meet on Saturday, September 15th for the panel discussion *Modern Art Geographies* preceding the opening of the exhibition **India's French Connection: Indian Artists in France at DAG**. Working to contextualize this historic exhibition, these scholars will map out the relationships between 27 Indian artists and Parisian art institutions, museums and movements from the 1920's onwards.

A little further uptown, on Friday, September 28th, an impressive array of artists, scholars, and musicians explore the dualistic tension between technology and history over a day-long symposium at the **Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum**. The symposium will be in connection with the *One Hand Clapping* exhibition on view—featuring five acclaimed Chinese artists Cao Fei, Duan Jianyu, Lin Yilin, Wong Ping, and Samson Young.

The following day, the **Sylvia Wald & Po Kim Foundation** will host a closing reception on Saturday, September 29th for the exhibition *A Time Before We Were Born: Visions of Arcadia in Contemporary Paintings*. A collection of epic-scale and intimate works examining how painters have drawn on existing and self-invented mythologies to envision lost paradises. Curated by Raphael Rubinstein.

As a special ACAW 2018 celebration, **Salon 94 Gallery** organizes a VIP walkthrough on Saturday, September 22nd with Pakistani-born, New York-based artist Huma Bhabha & Met curator Shanay Jhaveri to discuss the artist's breathtaking site-specific installation, *We come in Peace* at The Metropolitan Museum of Art's Cantor Roof Garden. The monumental sculptures on view address themes of colonialism, war, displacement, and memories of place.

On the upper East side, on Friday, October 12th, one of Japan's most prolific and versatile contemporary artists Yasumasa Morimura opens his first New York institutional solo exhibition, *Ego Obscura*, at **Japan Society**. The artist's most iconic and monumental photographic works from the 1980's to present day will be on view, they are best known for excavating the intermingled layers of Japan's historical past and deconstructing notions of "the self." In addition, the artist presents a one-night only performance on Saturday, October 13th metamorphizing himself into choice figures from modern times in front of a live audience.

Hudson River Museum presents a new site specific exhibition by artist, architect and environmental activist, **Maya Lin. Maya Lin: A River is a Drawing**, opens on Friday, October 12th. Maya Lin asserts the perpetual importance of environmental awareness, education, and public participation to reimagine our relationships with the natural world. Curated by **Miwako Tezuka**.

In the following days, twin sisters Bahareh and Farzaneh Safarani subtly enhance their sensual and glamorous paintings with video projections that yield playful and imaginative viewer participation. Curated by **Roya Khadjavi Projects**, the exhibition opens on Thursday, October 18th at the Elga Wimmer Gallery. *Queens International: Volumes* premieres at the **Queen's Museum** on Sunday, October 7th. In the eighth edition of this acclaimed program, 43 Queens-connected artists and collectives use analog and digital strategies in response to select Queens Library branches, as well as the museum itself, to expand on systems of knowledge production.

Later in the month on Thursday, October 25th, **Owen James Gallery** launches *The Thick Lines Between Here and There*, a bold view into Thailand's burgeoning and reinvigorated contemporary arts scene through the works of Thaiwijit Puengkasemsomboon, Mit Jai Inn, Somluk Pantiboon and Angkrit Ajchariyasophon. The exhibition marks the first time these abstract painters are shown together.

Concluding the season in New York, **Tyler Rollins Fine Arts** opens a solo exhibition centered on a monumental sculpture by renowned Cambodian artist Sopheap Pich. Inspired by seed pods from the ordeal tree, Pich explores the fluidity of line and the free expansion of volume. The following day, Twelve Gates Arts in Philadelphia opens *American Peril: Imagining the Foreign Threat* on Friday, November 2nd, encompassing 60+ works connecting four distinct time periods. The exhibition showcases the complex history of anti-Asian racism in the United States, including periods such as the Chinese Exclusion Era, WWII Anti-Japan Propaganda, the Auto Industry's Japan Bashing (1970-1980's), and Post 9/11 Islamophobia. For full schedule, venue addresses, and program/admission details visit ACAW.info