

EDUCATION RESOURCE GUIDE



PRESIDENT'S YOUNG TALENTS 2018

4 OCT 2018 – 27 JAN 2019
SAM AT 8Q

Upper Primary & Lower Secondary

INTRODUCTION

This Education Resource Guide has been produced by Singapore Art Museum (SAM) in collaboration with artist-educator Adrian Tan to support the exhibition *President's Young Talents* for 2018. This is an exhibition in which promising young artist from Singapore are selected and commissioned to create and present a new work in SAM.

Inaugurated by SAM in 2011, the *President's Young Talents* stand out from other art awards as the only mentoring and commissioning exhibition programme in Singapore. An independent committee nominates a group of local artists below 35 years for the award and members of this committee are also mentors for each finalist artists.

This guide is intended to assist school students and teachers of the upper primary and lower secondary levels. We also encourage parents, community groups or gallery staff to use the information, guiding questions and activities in this resource.

This guide offers:

- Insights into the artists and the ideas behind their work of art.
- Images and information on the artworks.
- Guiding Questions for the viewing and discussion on the art works (adapted from *Let's Talk About Art* by Singapore Teachers' Academy for the aRTs).
- Suggested Activities for further exploration.

The guide is also available online at:

<https://www.singaporeartmuseum.sg/learn/resource-center> with images that can be downloaded or projected in class. The images are to be used for educational purposes only.

HOW TO USE THIS EDUCATION RESOURCE GUIDE

For Teachers and Students

The guide is designed to provide enrichment and promote deeper understanding of key learning areas in the Visual Arts as well as other cross-disciplinary subjects. There is scope for teachers to build this resource into their existing programmes or develop it as a stand-alone enrichment or elective module.

Pre-viewing planning

Before visiting *President's Young Talents*, it is recommended that your students explore and discuss some of the themes and ideas in the exhibition. As part of the guide, we have included selected images from the exhibition and relevant information on [THE ARTIST], [THE IDEA], and [THE ARTWORK] together with some [KEY WORDS] that you may use before, during or after the museum visit.

We also strongly encourage educators to visit the show, read the guide and explore artists or artworks that are most relevant to your learners. For more information on the exhibition and scheduling a visit for your learners, please visit <http://www.singaporeartmuseum.sg/education>

For Parents, Community Groups or Gallery Staff

This guide can be used to assist or accompany self-directed visits to *President's Young Talents*. You can explore the guiding questions or carry out the suggested activities in the gallery. Further to this, you can build on your experiences of the exhibition by carrying out the activities back in your home, community or gallery setting.

ZARINA MUHAMMAD

CHEN YANYUN

DEBBIE DING

CHONG WEIXIN

HILMI JOHANDI

Teachers' Tip: What is interesting about the exhibition title? Did the title spark your learners' curiosity? Talk about why you chose the exhibition as a learning journey to enable your learners to understand more about contemporary art.

Zarina Muhammad

[THE ARTIST]

Zarina Muhammad (b. 1982, Singapore) is an artist, educator and writer whose practice is deeply entwined with her decade-long multidisciplinary research on the shapeshifting forms and cultural translations pertaining to Southeast Asian ritual magic and its mythological roots. In the various incarnations of her work, she is particularly interested in the broader contexts of myth-making, gender-based archetypes, and the region's tenuous and tentative relationship to mysticism and the immaterial against the dynamics of global modernity.

She has presented her work in Australia, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Japan, Singapore and Thailand. She lives and works in Singapore.



[THE IDEA]

Before stepping into the exhibition space on the first floor gallery, your gaze is met by a curious figure. This figure watches as you enter the art installation. This figure is a *penunggu*: a guardian of the gate or a watchman; he is said to be the protector of this space. The work, *Pragmatic Prayers for the Kala at the Threshold* takes this being, and its role as protector and charts out a space that traverses beyond the physical.

Inspired by the idea of the cosmos and three domains of Heaven, Earth and the Underworld, the art installation is laid out as three distinct divisions. Bukit Larangan, Bras Basah, as well as Kallang and the coastal areas of Singapore are referred to by the hills, land, and sea respectively. Within each designation is a selection of material objects and items for example spirit houses, offering jars, videos and 40 effigies – that reflect and respond to the history, culture and memory of the zones they are housed in. These objects act as coordinates to map the histories and paths that the spirits of these realms may have resided and roamed in.

Alongside the physical components in the gallery are a series of talks, performances and performance-lectures by the artist and academics, musicians and arts practitioners, that activate and intervene into the space and narratives of the work. These interventions provide different perspectives and readings to encounter the artwork.

Historic and mythic, *Pragmatic Prayers for the Kala at the Threshold* draws from archives, interviews, poetry, and texts to create room for conversations about the narratives that remain forgotten, untold, unheard, un-sensed. It proposes, in the artist's words, "to de/re-narrate entangled speculative histories, invite counterpoints, and extend potentialities and possible antidotes to our culture of forgetting [...] by moving beyond the single narrative of place".

Key Words: Installation Art, Performance Art, Cultural History, Memory, Southeast Asia, Imagination

[THE ARTWORK]

*Pragmatic Prayers for the
Kala at the Threshold*

2018

Bamboo, sandalwood, clay,
stone, turmeric powder,
sandalwood powder,
saffron, nine grains and
spices, rose water, incense,
glass jars and paper
Dimensions variable

Collection of the Artist
Singapore Art Museum
commission



[FOR UPPER PRIMARY]

Guiding Questions

SEE, THINK, WONDER

- *What do you see?*
Can you identify the materials in the art installation?
Describe what you observe in the space in five different words, considering your senses. [*sight, smell, and sound*].
What colors/ forms/ textures do you see?
- *What do you **think** is going on?*
Take a closer look at the individually crafted object. What is/are your favourite object or object(s) from the art installation?
- *What does it make you **wonder**?*
Where is the material from?
Why does the artist choose to use this material? If you are the artist, what will you do?

ALBER'S 5 QUESTIONS

- **What do you think?**
What do you think the artist is trying to show?
- **Why do you think that?**
Why do you think the artist wants to show that?
- **How do you know this?**
What are the signs or clues that shows you that is what the artist wants to show?
- **Can you tell me more?**
- **What questions do you still have?**

IN CLASS ACTIVITY: DESIGN

Design your own space. Think about the emotion you want to reflect in your space.

Create this space using 2D materials like newspaper or magazine cut-outs, photographs or drawings.

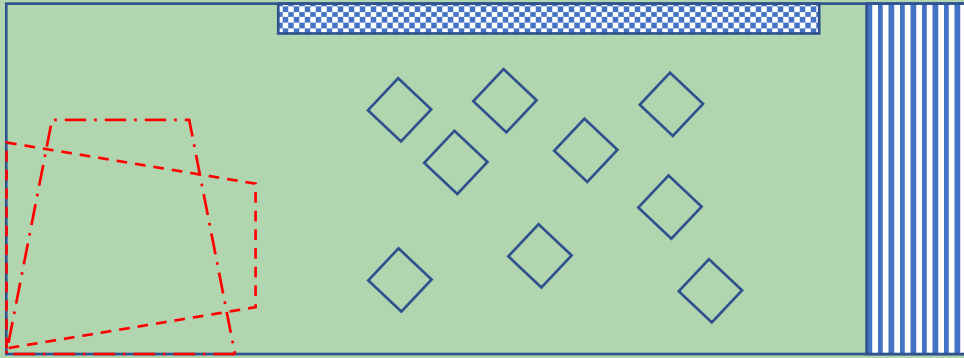
- Collect any materials and images you may need. Create your background, then add in the objects, details and decide on the sound or atmosphere you wish to create.
- Think about how the images are placed next to one another, considering how this creates a distinct or unique atmosphere.

[FOR UPPER PRIMARY]

Worksheet

Observe

The gallery space is divided into three divisions: hills, land and sea. Draw 2 lines to divide the space into these three parts.



Consider, do you have a favourite space/corner in the gallery? Why do you like it? *[Is it the material used or the use of a specific art media?]*

Think about how you would like your favourite space to be like. What objects would be in the space?

Write down two questions you would like to ask the artist about her artwork.

Draw the object/object(s) that intrigues you the most in the space provided.

[FOR LOWER SECONDARY]

Guiding Questions

Discuss/describe what you see.

Can you identify the materials used in the art installation?

Describe what you observe in the space in five words, considering your senses. [*sight, smell, and sound*].

SEE, THINK, WONDER

- *What do you see?*
Can you identify the materials in the art installation?
Describe what you observe in the space in five different words, considering your senses. [*sight, smell, and sound*].
What colors/ forms/ textures do you see?
- *What do you think is going on?*
Take a closer look at the individually crafted object. What is/are your favourite object or object(s) from the art installation?
- *What does it make you wonder?*
Where is the material from?
Why does the artist choose to use this material? If you are the artist, what will you do?

CONNECT, EXTEND, CHALLENGE

- *Think about what you see in the artwork.*
Figurines – effigies.
Incense sticks
Statue of a man.
- *How are the ideas and information in the artwork connected to what you already knew?*
Incense sticks → prayers
Guardian with weapon.
- *What new ideas did you get that extended or broadened your thinking about the artwork?*
Figurines with nails, incense sticks...
Guardian is protecting us.
- *After encountering the artwork, what do you find challenging or confusing for you to get your mind around? What questions, wonderings or puzzles do you now have?*
Why do people pray?
Why do they pray?

[FOR LOWER SECONDARY]

Worksheet

Write down your reactions and responses to the artwork.

Think about the title of *Pragmatic Prayers for the Kala at the Threshold* which contains the word “prayers”.

1. What do people pray about?

2. Why do they pray?

3. What does “prayer” mean to you?

Create

With the artist’s work as inspiration, think about the artist’s installation as the setting for a movie or a story. Write an introduction for the movie and story.

1. Who are the characters?
2. What is happening now?
3. What happens next?

Further Exploration

THE ARTIST

<https://www.lasalle.edu.sg/about/academics/zarina-muhammad>

THE ARTWORK

<https://www.brasbasahbugis.sg/whats-on/programmes/a-performance-lecture-by-zarina-muhammad>

INTERVIEWS

<https://www.aware.org.sg/2012/02/sugar-spice-women-talk-about-girlhood/>

NOTABLE EXHIBITION/EVENT

<http://ntu.ccasingapore.org/events/exhibition-detour-flowers-bloodlines-lecture-performance-artist-zarina-muhammad-collaboration-choreographer-stefania-rossetti/>

Pragmatic Prayers for the Kala at the Threshold

2018

Bamboo, sandalwood, clay, stone, turmeric powder,
sandalwood powder, saffron, nine grains and spices,
rose water, incense, glass jars and paper

Dimensions variable



Chen Yanyun

[THE ARTIST]

Yanyun Chen (b. 1986, Singapore) is a visual artist and lecturer at Yale-NUS College. Her drawing practice deconstructs our role as witness-of-decay – depicting wilting flowers as an analogy of time passing; investigating the fictions and operations of etymology; and reading scars on skin. Grounded in stories and philosophical readings, her works incorporate a blend of classical Eastern and Western drawing techniques.

Chen is a PhD candidate at The European Graduate School in Switzerland/Malta, where she obtained her Masters in Communications. She has trained in the Czech Republic, Denmark, Singapore and Sweden, and was awarded the Special Jury Prize at the 15th Japan Media Arts Festival (2012). Her published works include *50 Drawing Exercises*, *Tracing Etymology: Origin and Time*; *Monsters and Demons* and *It's Fiction*. She manages illustration and animation studio *Piplatchka*, and co-founded *Delere Press*. She lives and works in Singapore.



[THE IDEA]

Keloid is a scar forms as a result of an overgrowth of tissue at the site of a healed skin injury. Unlike most scars that lighten or minimise over time, keloids may continue to darken and grow. *The scars that write us* adopts the keloid as its reference and offers a narrative on wounds and scars, and those that bear them.

Entering into a dark, quietened space – a visitor's first encounter with *The scars that write us* by Yanyun Chen is perceived rather than seen, evoking a sense of anticipation, curiosity, and uncertainty for what lies ahead.

The work unfolds in three types of spatial experiences: near, far, and wide. The installation endeavours to provide a space of contemplation for those who live with the ordeal of scars – the physical, and otherwise.

In this intimate installation, the visitor encounters a row of metal plates. Welded onto the metal surfaces are worm-like swells, akin to the form keloids usually take. Beneath these metal plates lie hand-written reflections of the scar owners. Moving on, we see life-sized sheets drawings of the artist's body before coming to the final section of the installation where a series of writings by Chen, in collaboration with writer Jeremy Fernando is written on the wall.

Of marks and scars, illness and injuries, mind and body, *The scars that write us* is an installation that speaks of the most personal of experiences that every individual holds.

Key Words: Drawing, Portraiture, Family, Memory, Body, Identity

[THE ARTWORK]

The scars that write us

2018

Charcoal, chalk, gold leaf, steel plates (set of 10) and steel sheets (set of 6)

Steel plates 30 × 30 cm each; steel sheets 180 × 80 cm each

Collection of the Artist
Singapore Art Museum
Commission



[FOR UPPER PRIMARY]

Guiding Questions

SEE, THINK, WONDER

- *What do you see?*
Can you identify the materials in the art installation?
Describe what you observe in the space in five different words, considering your senses.
What shapes/ forms/ textures do you see?
- *What do you think is going on?*
Take a closer look at the separate parts of the installation. What is/are your favourite part(s) or or section(s) of the art installation? Why do you like it?
- *What does it make you wonder?*
Where is the material from?
Why does the artist choose to use this material? If you are the artist, what will you do?

THINK-PAIR-SHARE

Observe the way the gallery space requires you to walk through three sections from a dark corridor to the sections with charcoal drawings and the wall with handwritten texts.

- Describe the feeling of this experience.
- Why are the spaces planned this way?
- What is the artist trying to get you to experience in her work?

Think about the different emotions that you experienced when in the space of *The scars that write us*. [You may also consider how the artist used her own handwritten text in the work]

Share with your partner using:

ALBER'S 5 QUESTIONS

- **What do you think?**
What do you think the artist is trying to show?
- **Why do you think that?**
Why do you think the artist wants to show that?
- **How do you know this?**
What are the signs that shows you that is what the artist wants to show?
- **Can you tell me more?**
- **What questions do you still have?**

[FOR UPPER PRIMARY]

Worksheet

Create

In groups of threes, write a short story inspired by *The scars that write us*. This will take the form of three acts.

Act 1: Write a beginning (about the past) on one piece of paper.

Act 2: Write a present (about the now) on another.

Act 3: Write an end (of the future) on a third piece of paper.

Teachers, to:

1. jumble up the story by shuffling the pieces of paper.
2. This jumbled up story will be used as a script for a group performance.
3. The improvised performance will form funny or unique narratives that are open-ended, with no clear beginning, end or middle.

Act 1

Act 2

Act 3

[FOR LOWER SECONDARY]

Guiding Questions

Discuss/describe what you see.

Can you identify the materials used in the art installation?

Describe what you observe in the space, look closely at the elements that make up the installation.

SEE, THINK, WONDER

- *What do you see?*
Can you identify the materials in the art installation?
Describe what you observe in the space in five different words, considering your senses.
What shapes/ forms/ textures do you see?
- *What do you **think** is going on?*
Take a closer look at the separate parts of the installation. What is/are your favourite part(s) or section(s) from the art installation?
- *What does it make you **wonder**?*
Where is the material from?
Why does the artist choose to use this material? If you are the artist, what will you do?

CONNECT, EXTEND, CHALLENGE

- *Think about what you see in the artwork.*
What materials and art media are used and employed in the artwork?
- *How are the ideas and information in the artwork connected to what you already knew?*
Scars → memories
Body as a personal space.
- *What new ideas did you get that extended or broadened your thinking about the artwork?*
Use of handwritten text...
Writing as a form of remembering or forgetting.
- *After encountering the artwork, what do you find challenging or confusing for you to get your mind around? What questions, wonderings or puzzles do you now have?*
How do people live with scars?
What do scars represent?

[FOR LOWER SECONDARY]

Worksheet

Write down your reactions and responses to the artwork.

Think about the title of *The scars that write us* which contains the word “scars”.

1. Aside from “scars” being a result from the biological process of wound repair in the skin, What other forms of scarring are there?
2. Brainstorm in groups on what “scars” mean to you. Share your ideas.
3. In our everyday life, **discuss** what have you been wounded by and been scarred by, what forms do these “scars” take.

IN CLASS ACTIVITY : THINK-PAIR-SHARE

The scars that write us is an installation that “concerns marks and scars; illness and injury; mind and body; you and everyone”.

In pairs, **describe** how the format of an art installation enables you to walk through different spaces to experience this. Why are the spaces planned this way? What is the artist trying to get you to experience through her work?

Write down both your experiences in the boxes provided.

Experience 1 [Person A]

Experience 2 [Person B]

[FOR LOWER SECONDARY]

BONUS ACTIVITY

Create

In groups of threes, write a short story inspired by *The scars that write us*.

This will take the form of three acts.

- **Act 1:** Write a beginning (about something in the past that scarred or wounded you) on one piece of paper.
- **Act 2:** Write a present (about the now of something that is still scarring or injuring you) on another.
- **Act 3:** Write an end (of the future of how you will overcome this injury, scar or mark) on a third piece of paper.

Teachers, to:

1. jumble up the story by shuffling the pieces of paper.
2. This jumbled up story will be used as a script for a group performance.
3. The improvised performance will form funny or unique narratives that are open-ended, with no clear beginning, end or middle.

Teachers' Tip: For the group performances, you can make it into a competition and get students to evaluate their peer's creativity and spontaneity. The various interpretations can be recorded archived for future lessons.

Act 1

Act 2

Act 3

Further Exploration

THE ARTIST

<https://www.yanyunchendrawings.com/>

THE ARTWORK

<https://www.yanyunchendrawings.com/drawings/>

INTERVIEWS

<https://www.femalemag.com.sg/lifestyle/singapore-artist-yanyun-chens-still-life-drawings-are-hauntingly-beautiful/>

NOTABLE EXHIBITION/EVENT

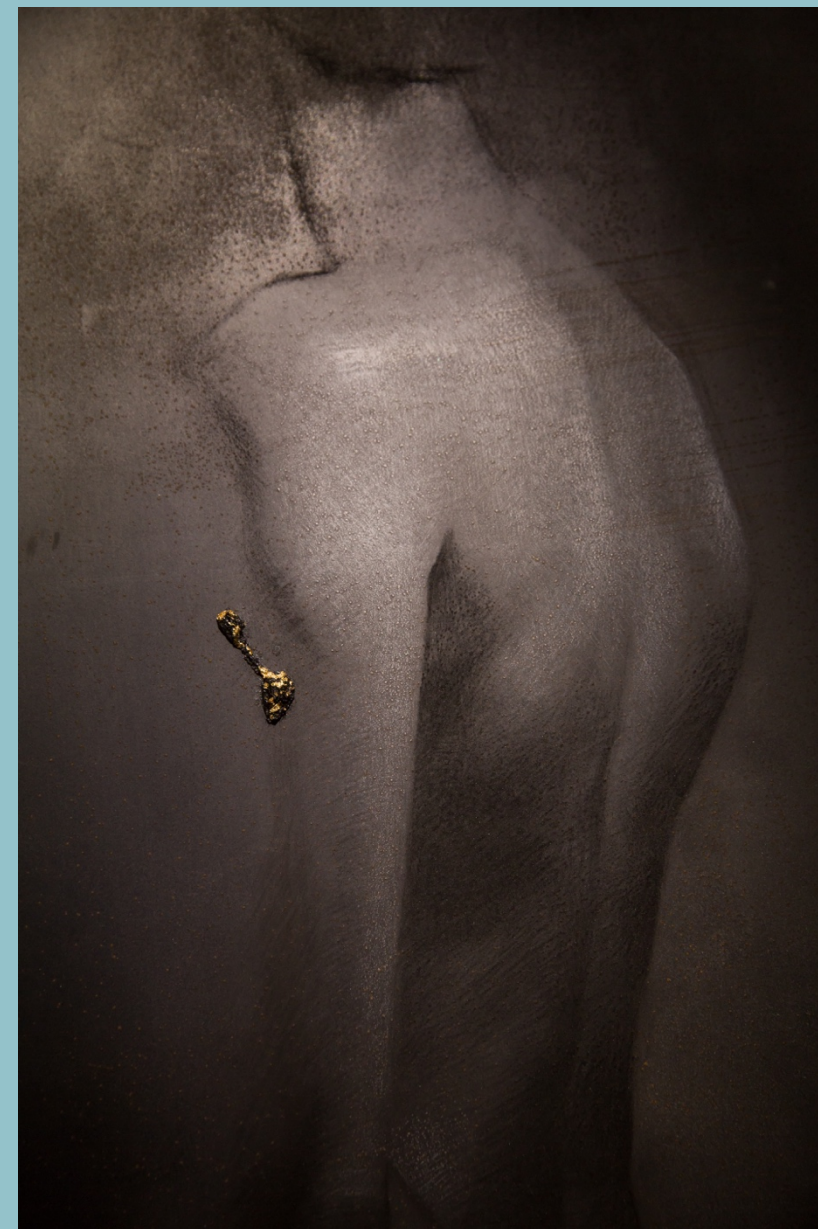
<https://www.straitstimes.com/lifestyle/arts/soil-and-scars-on-display-as-part-of-the-presidents-young-talents-2018-exhibition>



The scars that write us

2018

Charcoal, chalk, gold leaf, steel plates
(set of 10) and steel sheets (set of 6)
Steel plates 30 × 30 cm each; steel sheets
180 × 80 cm each



Debbie Ding

[THE ARTIST]

Debbie Ding (DBBD.SG) (b. 1984, Singapore) is a visual artist and technologist who researches and explores technologies of perception through personal investigations and experimentation. She uses prototyping as a strategy for artistic production, and to explore potential dead-ends, in the pursuit of knowledge. This has led to a series of archive and map-based works under the moniker ‘Singapore Psychogeographical Society’, as well as computer-aided investigations into archaeological and historical finds.

Ding received a BA in English Literature from the National University of Singapore, and as a recipient of the NAC Arts Scholarship (Postgraduate), an MA in Design Interactions from the Royal College of Art, London. She has presented in Singapore at The Substation (2010, 2012, 2015, 2017), NUS Museum (2016), the Singapore Biennale (2016) and National Museum of Singapore (2017). She has exhibited her work internationally in France, Germany and the UK. She lives and works in Singapore.



[THE IDEA]

According to the Encyclopedia Britannica, soil is a ‘biologically active, porous medium, that has developed in the uppermost layer of Earth’s crust’. Yet what is soil? In *Soil Works*, Debbie Ding unearths and isolates units of the composite excavated from concealed areas under expressways, overhead bridges, road triangles, carparks – public spaces which are usually overlooked as one travels through Singapore – and proposes, in her words, “a series of artistic investigations into soil in Singapore and its visibility and invisibility”.

Soil Works, is presented in five parts: “Red Landscape”, “Home without a Shelter”, “Topsoil”, “Sand Weight”, and “Soil Column”. Each ‘station’ beckons the visitor to observe soil through a range of investigative approaches. “Red Landscape” comprises of a photo studio backdrop with a digitally rendered montage of the public housing imagery – featured on the Singapore 10 dollar note. In “Home without a Shelter”, Ding has fashioned a fabric design similar to a poncho, her own set of camouflage suits.

“Topsoil” is a fine layer of soil that has been scattered across a bed under infrared lights that are invisible to the human eye and can only be detected via a smart device. For “Sand Weight”, Ding has engineered an automated rotating device that will turn when it detects that sand has fallen through. Finally, “Soil Column” is a series of Winogradsky columns that serve as a means of studying the biogeochemical cycles of ecosystems. In all of the five stations, Ding has used soil from largely unnoticed areas around Singapore.

Through *Soil Works*, Ding considers the strategies of researching the physicality of soil in Singapore by highlighting both its perceptible and less perceivable qualities. In doing so, she destabilises the concept of the scientific laboratory by staging her own multi-station ‘testing’ gallery.

Key Words: Mapping, Installation Art, Land Art, Photography, Typography, National Identity

[THE ARTWORK]

Soil Works

2018

Mixed media installation

Residual granite soil, water, PTFE sealant, cellulose acetate film, Dura-Lar film (mylar and acetate mix), laser-cut acrylic, laser-cut MDF, acrylic paint, textile paint, waterproof nylon ripstop, PTFE tape, PVC vinyl print, aluminium alloy light stands, aluminium alloy tripods, heavy duty nylon sandbags, T5 LED light battens, colour film gels, IR LED strips, LED strips, LED drivers, Stepper motors, aluminium profiles, micro-controllers, mini breadboard, miscellaneous electronic components, CCTV cameras with varifocal lens, cork mannequin head, mannequin head mounts, field monitor, double articulating arm, aluminium alloy extension rods, wide angle LED light panels and glass columns
Dimensions variable

Collection of the Artist
Singapore Art Museum commission



[FOR UPPER PRIMARY]

Guiding Questions

SEE, THINK, WONDER

- *What do you see?*
Can you identify the materials in the art installation?
Describe what you observe in the space in five different words, considering your senses. [*sight, smell, and sound*].
What colors/ forms/ textures and **types of technology** do you see?
- *What do you **think** is going on?*
Take a closer look at how soil is depicted in the artwork. What is/are your favourite part(s) or sections(s) from the art installation?
- *What does it make you **wonder**?*
Where is the material from and how is it processed, made or grown?
Why does the artist choose to use this material? If you are the artist, what will you do?

ALBER'S 5 QUESTIONS

- **What do you think?**
What do you think the artist is trying to show?
- **Why do you think that?**
Why do you think the artist wants to show that?
- **How do you know this?**
What are the signs that shows you that is what the artist wants to show?
- **Can you tell me more?**
- **What questions do you still have?**

Draw out the five sections of *Soil Works* on a blank piece of paper.



[FOR UPPER PRIMARY]

Worksheet

Interview elders from your family and ask them about their experiences of what made up their everyday spaces, e.g. walks in parks, playing chess in the void deck of their HDB and draw it in on the left (then).

Do a [COMPARE & CONTRAST] between the elders' experience of "then" against your experience of everyday spaces "now" in the space provided.

Then



Now



Think about the possible occupations related to *Soil Works*.

- Choose a character from the gallery and create their social media profile.
- What would the profile description be like?
- Write a short 25 word tweet, snap or facebook profile below.

Have the class guess which part from "*Red Landscape*", "*Home without a Shelter*", "*Topsoil*", "*Sand Weight*", or "*Soil Column*" he/she could be from.

[FOR LOWER SECONDARY]

Guiding Questions

Discuss/describe what you see.

Can you identify the materials used in the art installation?

Describe what you observe in the space in five words, considering your senses. [*sight, smell, and sound*].

SEE, THINK, WONDER

- *What do you see?*
Can you identify the materials in the art installation?
Describe what you observe in the space in five different words, considering your senses. [*sight, smell, and sound*].
What colors/ forms/ textures and **types of technology** do you see?
- *What do you think is going on?*
Take a closer look at how soil is depicted in the artwork. What is/are your favourite part(s) or sections(s) from the art installation?
- *What does it make you wonder?*
Where is the material from and how is it processed, made or grown?
Why does the artist choose to use this material? If you are the artist, what will you do?

CONNECT, EXTEND, CHALLENGE

- *Think about what you see in the artwork.*
Laboratory – technology.
Use of movement
Machines and Nature.
- *How are the ideas and information in the artwork connected to what you already knew?*
Soil → overlooked and often invisible
Research into the physicality of soil.
- *What new ideas did you get that extended or broadened your thinking about the artwork?*
Use infrared lights to detect “Topsoil”...
Automated rotating device that will turn when it detects sand.
- *After encountering the artwork, what do you find challenging or confusing for you to get your mind around? What questions, wonderings or puzzles do you now have?*
Why do scientists conduct experiments?
What is the importance of soil?

[FOR LOWER SECONDARY]

Worksheet

Write down your reactions and responses to the artwork.

Think about *Soil Works*.

1. What do you think about the artwork?

2. Why do you think that the artist created this work of art?

3. What questions do you still have about the artwork?

Soil Works contains the work “soil”.

Where do people normally find “soil” and what uses do they have?

Brainstorm in groups on what “soil” means to you and their physical qualities. Share your ideas.

In our everyday life, discuss how important soil is to our existence in relation to the “visible” and “invisible” importance it is to Singapore.

[For example, without soil, some plants are unable to grow.]

Further Exploration

THE ARTIST

<http://dbbd.sg/>

THE ARTWORK

<http://dbbd.sg/works.php>

<http://openurbanism.blogspot.com/>

INTERVIEWS

<https://www.zku-berlin.org/people/debbie-ding/>

NOTABLE EXHIBITION/EVENT

<https://www.singaporebiennale.org/sb2016/debbie-ding.php>

https://www.singaporebiennale.org/sb2016/pdf/artist-folios-pdf/Zone9_DebbieDing.pdf

Soil Works

2018

Mixed media installation

Residual granite soil, water, PTFE sealant, cellulose acetate film, Dura-Lar film (mylar and acetate mix), laser-cut acrylic, laser-cut MDF, acrylic paint, textile paint, waterproof nylon ripstop, PTFE tape, PVC vinyl print, aluminium alloy light stands, aluminium alloy tripods, heavy duty nylon sandbags, T5 LED light battens, colour film gels, IR LED strips, LED strips, LED drivers, Stepper motors, aluminium profiles, micro-controllers, mini breadboard, miscellaneous electronic components, CCTV cameras with varifocal lens, cork mannequin head, mannequin head mounts, field monitor, double articulating arm, aluminium alloy extension rods, wide angle LED light panels and glass columns

Dimensions variable



Weixin Quek Chong

[THE ARTIST]

Weixin Quek Chong (b. 1988, Singapore) is a visual artist whose practice explores the materiality of human experience and existence, and the relationships between the digital, organic and aesthetic. The effects and methods of manipulating images across materials are core to her practice.

She received her MFA from the Royal College of Art in London with a specialisation in printmaking, and was a recipient of the NAC Overseas Arts Scholarship (Postgraduate) (2012) and the Tan Ean Kiam Postgraduate Scholarship. Previously an artist-in-residence at the NTU Centre of Contemporary Art in Singapore, her works have been exhibited in Carrara, Istanbul, London, Paris, Santiago, Seoul, Taipei, Vienna and Yogyakarta. She lives and works in Singapore, the UK and Spain.



[THE IDEA]

Shaped by the concept of the contingency plan, *sft crsh ctrl* by Weixin Quek Chong invites visitors to encounter a series of curious materials and range of objects that seem to evade straightforward understanding.

Inside the space of *sft crsh ctrl*, a softness and delicacy in colour and texture appears to bathe over the visitor; an assortment of pinks – from dusty rose to magenta – overlay silk, paper, latex, faux fur and other materials, suggesting a feeling of interiority and domesticity. Visitors will find themselves navigating through an assemblage of unusual tactile and sensorial objects such as flesh-toned latex folding screens that reveal as much as they conceal.

Other items include lengths of draped silk that carry the magnified details of scanned images of trapped dust, snakeskin and liquid silicon; whilst another set of objects are a series of compact single-board computer touch screens on which a series of looped videos feature the action of crumbling.

sft crsh ctrl thus unfolds, unfurls, suspends, and drapes in ways that challenges conventional understanding and expectation of materials. Its components signal tensions of resistance, and notions of non-occurrence. It is an installation of 'surfaces' as developed and explored through material form and transformation, and challenges the viewer to disengage from their instinct to rationalise. *sft crsh ctrl* guides the visitor towards feelings of unease and uncertainty, and in doing so reveals the complexity of being dependent on logic.

Key Words: Mapping, Installation Art, Land Art, Photography, Typography, National Identity

[THE ARTWORK]

sft crsh ctrl

2018

Silk twill, latex, wood,
silicone, vinyl, faux fur,
paper, screens, aluminium
and stainless steel
Dimensions variable

Collection of the Artist
Singapore Art Museum
commission



[FOR UPPER PRIMARY]

Guiding Questions

SEE, THINK, WONDER

- *What do you see?*
Can you identify the materials and use of technology in the art installation?
Describe what you observe in the space in five different words.
What colors/ forms/ textures do you see?
- *What do you **think** is going on?*
Take a closer look at the various object. What is/are your favourite object or object(s) from the art installation?
- *What does it make you **wonder**?*
Where is the material from?
Why does the artist choose to use this material and/or technology? If you are the artist, what will you do?

ALBER'S 5 QUESTIONS

- **What do you think?**
What do you think the artist is trying to show?
- **Why do you think that?**
Why do you think the artist wants to show that?
- **How do you know this?**
What are the signs that shows you that is what the artist wants to show?
- **Can you tell me more?**
- **What questions do you still have?**

IN CLASS ACTIVITY : DESIGN

Design your own space. Think about the emotion you want to reflect in your space.

- Create this space using 2D materials like newspaper or magazine cut-outs, photographs or fabric
- Collect any materials and images you may need. Create your background, then add in the objects, details and decide on the sound or atmosphere you wish to create.
- Think about how the forms are placed next to one another, considering how this creates a distinct or unique atmosphere.

[FOR UPPER PRIMARY]

Worksheet

Think about how you would like your favourite spot on earth to be like. What objects would be in the space? Would you have a colour scheme for the place? What soundtrack or atmosphere would you want to create? What would you call this spot and where would it be located in your home or school?

Consider, do you have a favourite space/corner in the gallery? Why do you like it? *[Is it the material used or the use of a specific art media?]*

Think about how you would like your favourite space to be like. What objects would be in the space? Would you have a theme in the space? What soundtrack or atmosphere would you want to create? What would you call your space?

Write down two questions you would like to ask the artists about her artwork.

Draw the object/object(s) that intrigues you the most in the space provided.



[FOR UPPER PRIMARY]

BONUS ACTIVITY

Create

Choose a theme for your favourite spot on earth and create a mood-board.

Think about the different emotions related to your chosen theme and what the space might look like.

Write these down and present it to the class.

Create this space using soft and delicate 2D materials like cloth or cotton wool and describe it in this mood-board and present to the class.

My Mood-board:

Teachers Tip: Tell students to collect any materials and images they may need to form a mood-board. Create your background first. Then you can add in the objects, details and annotate the atmosphere you wish to create. Think about how the images are placed next to one another, considering how this creates a “mood”.

[FOR LOWER SECONDARY]

Guiding Questions

Discuss/describe what you see.

Can you identify the materials used in the art installation?

Describe what you observe in the space in five words, considering your senses. [*sight, smell, and sound*].

SEE, THINK, WONDER

- *What do you see?*
Can you identify the materials in the art installation?
Describe what you observe in the space in five different words, considering your senses. [*sight, smell, and sound*].
What colors/ forms/ textures and **types of technology** do you see?
- *What do you **think** is going on?*
Take a closer look at how soil is depicted in the artwork. What is/are your favourite part(s) or sections(s) from the art installation?
- *What does it make you **wonder**?*
Where is the material from and how is it processed, made or grown?
Why does the artist choose to use this material? If you are the artist, what will you do?

CONNECT, EXTEND, CHALLENGE

- *Think about what you see in the artwork.*
Curious materials – softness and delicacy in colour and texture.
An assortment of pinks
silk, paper, latex, fur and other materials.
- *How are the ideas and information in the artwork connected to what you already knew?*
Flesh-toned latex folding screen → reveal as much as conceal
Looped videos feature the action of crumbling.
- *What new ideas did you get that extended or broadened your thinking about the artwork?*
Scanned images of trapped dust, snakeskin and plastics...
Assemblage of unusual tactile and sensorial objects.
- *After encountering the artwork, what do you find challenging or confusing for you to get your mind around? What questions, wonderings or puzzles do you now have?*
Why are the materials and objects placed together in the installation?
What is the artist trying to express?

[FOR LOWER SECONDARY]

Worksheet

Write down your reactions and responses to the artwork.

Installation art like *sft crsh ctrl* are examples of new forms of art. What are three questions that you would ask the artist about her practice if you are given a chance to interview her?

The artist observes sensations created by materials and colours, just as how our sense of taste, touch and perceptions of our surrounding has changed over centuries. **Can you remember any objects or “sensations” that you recall from your past? Why is this sensation special to you?**

IN CLASS ACTIVITY: DEBATE

Generate a list of art making materials & mediums. For example, oil paint, water colour, photography, sculpture, film and installation, etc.

1. Divide into smaller groups of three for a debate.
2. Each group to debate why their material and medium can be considered art.
3. Have them think about what the artists in this exhibition did, what their ideas and processes were, and what the viewer’s responses might be.
4. Have one group advocating for their material and medium as art, while the other group challenge this idea.
5. Importantly, have each group come up with at least three “examples” from the artist’s installation.

Teachers’ Tip: Present and discuss each group’s case. They can choose to perform, film or narrate it out. Are there similarities and differences? Were they common or recurring reasons chosen for why their material or medium can be considered art?

Further Exploration

THE ARTIST

<https://www.tropicalghosts.net/>

THE ARTWORK

<https://www.tropicalghosts.net/sft-crsh-ctrl>

INTERVIEWS

<https://fadmagazine.com/2015/09/09/interview-artist-weixin-chong/>

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dUYfcqH_eTk

NOTABLE EXHIBITION/EVENT

<http://ntu.ccasingapore.org/residencies/weixin-chong/>

<http://ntu.ccasingapore.org/events/residencies-insights-dictation-with-weixin-chong/>



sft crsh ctrl
2018

Silk twill, latex, wood, silicone, vinyl,
faux fur, paper, screens, aluminium
and stainless steel
Dimensions variable

Hilmi Johandi

[THE ARTIST]

Hilmi Johandi (b. 1987, Singapore) primarily works with painting and explores interventions with different mediums that are associated within the domain of framing, fragmentation (deconstruction) and compression (reconstruction). His explorations set in the context of Singapore, range from the familiar to symbolic motifs. He composes and synthesises images from film, archival footages and photographs into a fragmented montage that hints at the social effects of rapid development, and the personal desires and contempt of those who embrace modernisation.

Hilmi has been involved in exhibitions in Japan, London, New York, Paris, Singapore and Thailand. He was a recipient of the NAC Arts Scholarship (Postgraduate) (2017), LASALLE Scholarship (2017) and the Goh Chok Tong Youth Promise Award. He lives and works in Singapore.



[THE IDEA]

An Exposition tells the story of the defunct ‘World(s)’ – New World, Great World and Gay World (formerly Happy World) – through fragments of material and memory. In the art installation, Hilmi Johandi uses the idea of amusement parks to introduce audiences to an assemblage of fragmentary elements. In doing so, he attempts to establish a speculative dialogue that traces the systems of production, consumption, pleasures and entertainment of these ‘World(s)’.

An Exposition tells the story of these defunct ‘World(s)’ through fragments of material and memory. Visitors are welcomed into a space marked out by components that together appears to resemble a deconstructed theatrical set. These range from wooden sculptures constructed to resemble iconic structures in the ‘World(s)’ – such as the architectural elements of an entry facade and carnival ride – to silent animated videos that demonstrates the real-life function of these wooden props, and standees and mounted printed vinyls featuring images and scenes captured at the ‘World(s)’. The installation is immersive whilst reminding the viewer of the void that exists in the theatricality of set designs and amusement parks.

To the far end of the gallery is an elevated platform to view the installation. From a raised height, the visitor is able to regard the installation as the artist does conceptually and visually – like a canvas on which to strategically place and compose objects and forms. In a presentation of decontextualised signs and symbols, *An Exposition* engages with the local history and collective memory of Singapore.

Key Words: Collective Memory, Installation Art, Appropriation, The Archive, re-imagined spaces, National Identity

[THE ARTWORK]

An Exposition (Seeing the Void)
2018

Oil on canvas, three-channel
video, digital print on vinyl
sticker mounted on wood,
synthetic polymer paint,
plywood and mild steel
Installation: dimensions
variable; video: 16:9, colour,
silent

Collection of the Artist
Singapore Art Museum
Commission



[FOR UPPER PRIMARY]

Guiding Questions

SEE, THINK, WONDER

- *What do you see?*
Can you identify the materials in the art installation?
Describe what you observe in the space in five different words, considering your senses. [*sight, smell, and sound*].
What colors/ forms/ textures and **types of technology** do you see?
- *What do you **think** is going on?*
Take a closer look at how soil is depicted in the artwork. What is/are your favourite part(s) or sections(s) from the art installation?
- *What does it make you **wonder**?*
Where is the material from and how is it processed, made or grown?
Why does the artist choose to use this material? If you are the artist, what will you do?

ALBER'S 5 QUESTIONS

- **What do you think?**
What do you think the artist is trying to show?
- **Why do you think that?**
Why do you think the artist wants to show that?
- **How do you know this?**
What are the signs that shows you that is what the artist wants to show?
- **Can you tell me more?**
- **What questions do you still have?**

[FOR UPPER PRIMARY]

Worksheet

Observe the way the gallery space is planned by the artist. Describe how the space gives you a difference experience as you walk through it from right to left, ending off at the top of the elevated platform

In what ways are the spaces similar and in what ways are they different? *What did you feel when you were in each space?*

Think about how to create the best place to hangout on Earth. What objects would be in the space? What soundtrack or atmosphere would you want to create? How will you name the space?

Create

Choose a **theme** for your favourite fun or play space. Think about the different emotions related to your chosen theme and what the space might look like. Create this space using 2D materials like newspaper or magazine cut-outs, photographs or simply draw!

Collect any materials and images you may need. Create your background first. Then you can add in the objects, details and annotate the sound or atmosphere you wish to create. Think about how the images are placed next to one another, considering how this creates a fun or playful atmosphere (use the box below).



[FOR LOWER SECONDARY]

Guiding Questions

Discuss/describe what you see.

Can you identify the materials used in the art installation?

Describe what you observe in the space in five words, considering your senses. [*sight and sound*].

SEE, THINK, WONDER

- *What do you see?*
Can you identify the materials in the art installation?
Describe what you observe in the space in five different words, considering your senses. [*sight, smell, and sound*].
What colors/ forms/ textures and **types of technology** do you see?
- *What do you **think** is going on?*
Take a closer look at how soil is depicted in the artwork. What is/are your favourite part(s) or sections(s) from the art installation?
- *What does it make you **wonder**?*
Where is the material from and how is it processed, made or grown?
Why does the artist choose to use this material? If you are the artist, what will you do?

CONNECT, EXTEND, CHALLENGE

- *Think about what you see in the artwork.*
Materials – props and images
Wooden Sculptures, Paintings
Silent animated videos.
- *How are the ideas and information in the artwork connected to what you already knew?*
Amusement parks → Entertainment, consumption and production.
Set designs and architectural elements.
- *What new ideas did you get that extended or broadened your thinking about the artwork?*
Void that exists in the experiences in amusement parks...
Dialogue between audience and immersive space.
- *After encountering the artwork, what do you find challenging or confusing for you to get your mind around? What questions, wonderings or puzzles do you now have?*
Why are the materials and objects placed together in the installation?
What is the artist trying to express?

[FOR LOWER SECONDARY]

Worksheet

Write down your reactions and responses to the artwork.

An Exposition (Seeing the Void) centres around the construction of amusement parks as places of “spectacle”, illusions and fun and play. **Why do you think people patronise such places and what effect do they have on people?**

Brainstorm in groups on what Universal Studios Singapore and Resorts World Sentosa mean to you. *What do you see there? What do you think is going on in such a place? What does it make you wonder about how people view entertainment or consumption?*

In our “everyday” life, Singapore’s history is changing and our architectural spaces are continually being erased and replaced with something new.

In pairs, **discuss** what one location or place means to you and how you would feel if it is suddenly erased or demolished? *For example, your favourite playground or your favourite relative’s place.*

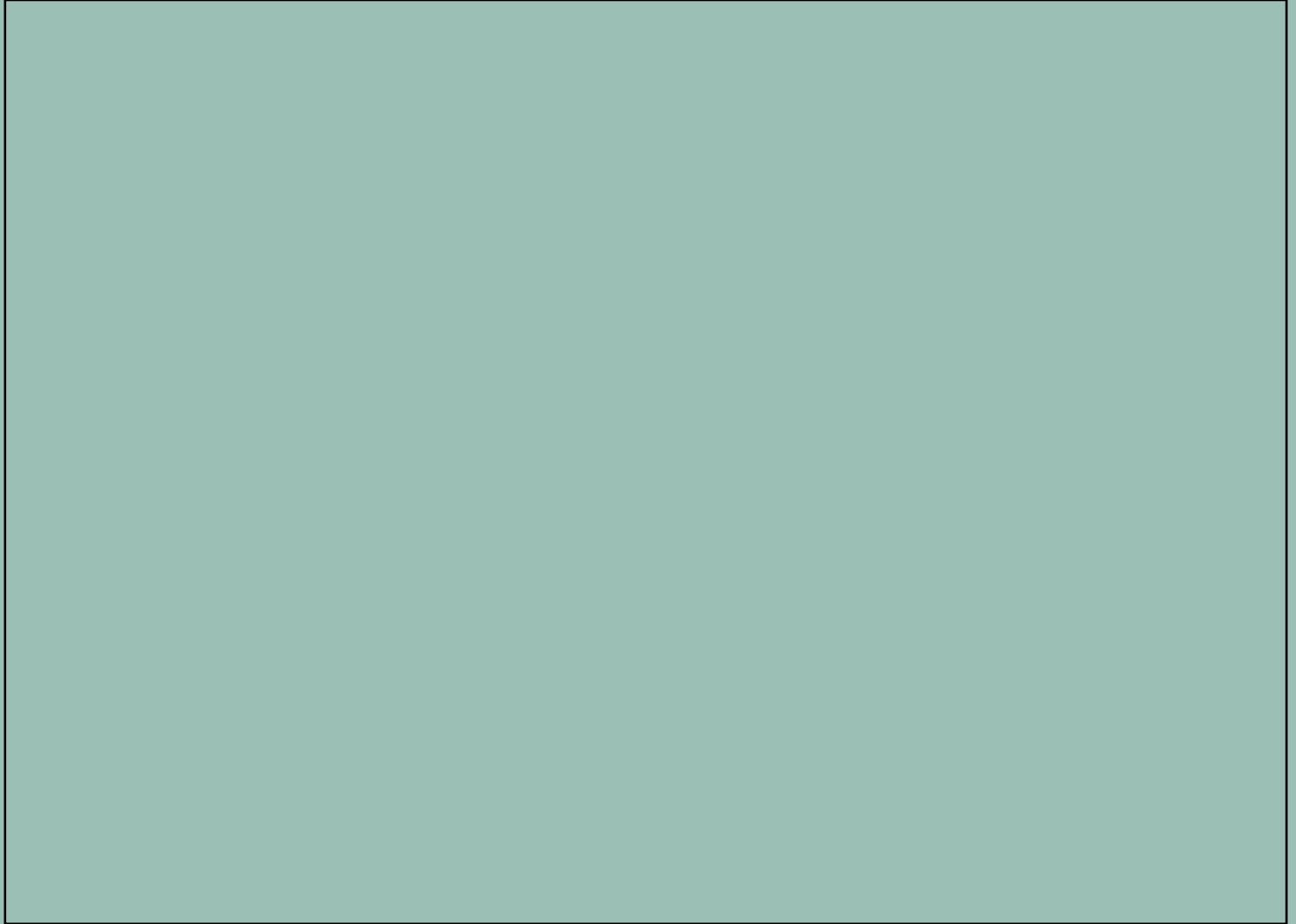
[FOR LOWER SECONDARY]

BONUS ACTIVITY

Consider how the internet has taken over theme parks as forms of entertainment and changed the way you experience the world.

Create a simple story-board with a narrative relating to the theme of *Seeing the Revolution* using a series of images from the internet (use the box on the left).

1. Each group or pair can curate a selection of ten images from the internet that reflects the idea of revolution.
2. The group is to explain why these images were chosen and the images can be from documentaries, news clips, films or bands or artworks etc.
3. Develop a narrative or argument using these ten images and arrange them in a creative or logical order to reflect the idea of revolution.
4. **Discuss** how they felt about the process of searching, selecting and curating the order of the story-board. Did it alter your perception of what a revolution is when it is done through the internet?



Teachers' Tip: Present and discuss each group/pair's curated story-board. Were there similarities and differences? Were they common or recurring images chosen? What does this show about the internet and our usage of it?

Further Exploration

THE ARTIST

<http://www.hilmijohandi.com/>

THE ARTWORK

<http://www.hilmijohandi.com/great-world-city.html>

INTERVIEWS

<https://theartling.com/en/artzine/2014/6/18/interview-helm-johandi/>

<https://intersection.sg/interview-hilmi-johandi/>

NOTABLE EXHIBITION/EVENT

<http://www.hilmijohandi.com/news/figment-of-film-adm-gallery-nanyang-technological-university-singapore>

An Exposition (Seeing the Void)

2018

Oil on canvas, three-channel video,
digital print on vinyl sticker mounted
on wood, synthetic polymer paint,
plywood and mild steel

Installation: dimensions variable;
video: 16:9, colour, silent



[SEE, THINK, WONDER]

What do you see?

What do you think is going on?

What does it make you wonder?

[ALBER'S 5 QUESTIONS]

What do you think?

Why do you think that?

How do you know this?

Can you tell me more?

What questions do you still have?

[BEGINNING, MIDDLE, END]

If this artwork were the **BEGINNING** of a story, what might happen next?

If this artwork were the **MIDDLE** of a story, what might have happened before?

If this artwork is the **END** of a story, what might the story be about?

[COMPARE & CONTRAST]

Are there any similarities between these artworks? How are they similar?

Are there any differences between these artworks? How are they different?

[I USED TO THINK...BUT NOW I THINK...]

Is there something you used to think about the artwork that has changed now?

What is it? What made you change your mind?

[WHAT MAKES YOU SAY THAT?]

What's going on in the artwork?

What do you see that makes you say that?

What other information is there that supports what you say?

[CONNECT, EXTEND, CHALLENGE]

Think about what you see in the artwork.

How are the ideas and information in the artwork *connected* to what you already knew?

What new ideas did you get that *extended* or broadened your thinking about the artwork?

After encountering the artwork, what do you find challenging or confusing for you to get your mind around? What questions, wonderings or puzzles do you now have?