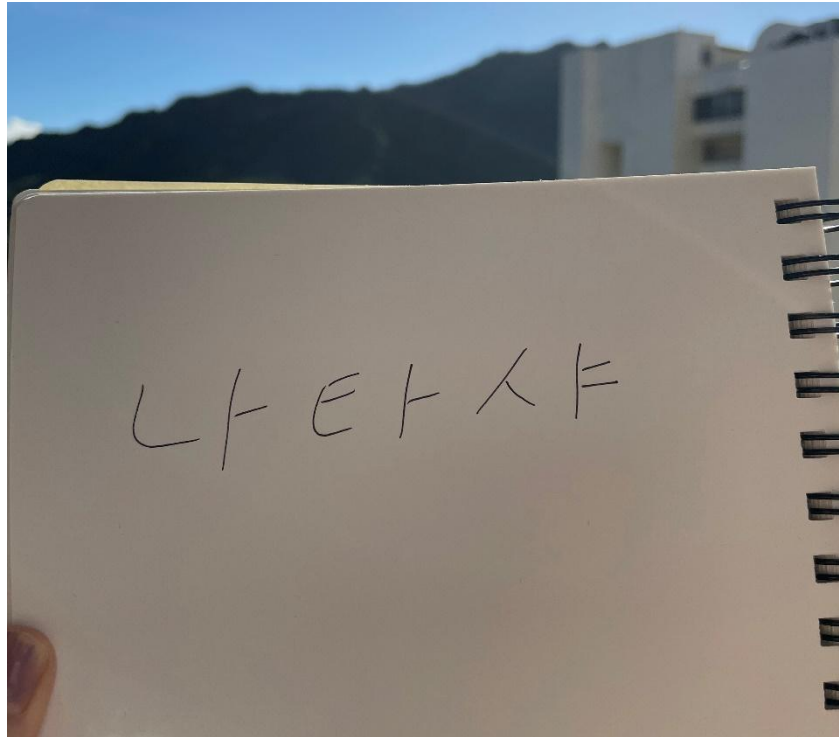


Media Release

SINGAPORE BIENNALE 2022 IS NAMED NATASHA

*Through the biennale as a process, Natasha is to be found, formed or shaped
by fellow artists, audiences and researchers.*



Natasha is handwritten in Hangul on paper held in the air
against the crater Lē'ahi on O'ahu island on 21 February 2022

Singapore, 31 March 2022 – Singapore Art Museum (SAM) announces the naming of the seventh edition of the Singapore Biennale (SB2022) as Natasha. Through this act of naming, SB2022 moves away from the perception of a biennale as a mega-thematic exhibition and towards an engagement with the ways that art, and that which is considered other to art, may be deeply connected to the subject and matter of life. Visiting Natasha draws forth a journey, along which one might encounter the meaning of being from multiple perspectives.

Through the biennale as a process, Natasha is to be found, formed or shaped by fellow travellers and dwellers – artists, audiences and researchers. The process includes encounters, durational infrastructure, reading performances, music, publications and study groups stretched over time and space. The main exhibition will take place in Singapore from 16 October 2022 to 19 March 2023 serving as a point of convergence.

The Singapore Biennale is organised by SAM and commissioned by the National Arts Council, Singapore. SB2022 will feature several site-specific and commissioned contemporary works never seen before on the biennale circuit.

A Biennale Named Natasha

Please refer to Annex A: Singapore Biennale 2022 – Some opening thoughts on naming by the Co-Artistic Directors.

Singapore Biennale will return for its seventh edition from 16 October 2022 to 19 March 2023 with a programme of activities starting in May 2022. A schedule of the activities and the comprehensive list of participating artists will be released later in 2022.

More information can be found in the Annexes.

Images may be downloaded at <https://bit.ly/SB2022mediakit>

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About the Singapore Biennale

The Singapore Biennale was established in 2006 as the country's pre-eminent platform for international dialogue in contemporary art. It presents and reflects the vigour of artistic practices in Singapore and the region within a global context, and fosters productive collaborations and deep engagement with artists, arts organisations, and the international arts community.

The Singapore Biennale cultivates public engagement with contemporary art through a period of concerted activities including exhibitions, public engagement and education programmes that feature artist and curator talks and tours, school visits and workshops, and community days. It complements achievements in other areas of arts and culture, collectively enhancing Singapore's international profile as a vibrant city in which to live, work and play.

The 2006 and 2008 editions of the Biennale were organised by the National Arts Council (NAC). NAC has commissioned SAM to organise the Biennale since 2011.

About the Singapore Art Museum

Singapore Art Museum opened in 1996 as the first art museum in Singapore located in the cultural district of Singapore. Known as SAM, the museum presents contemporary art from a Southeast Asian perspective for artists, art lovers and the art curious in multiple venues across the island, including a new venue in the historic port area of Tanjong Pagar.

The museum is building one of the world's most important public collections of Southeast Asian contemporary art, with the aim of connecting the art and the artists to the public and future generations through exhibitions and programmes. SAM is working towards a humane and sustainable future by committing to responsible practices within its processes.

To find out more, visit www.singaporeartmuseum.sg.

About the National Arts Council

The National Arts Council champions the arts in Singapore. By nurturing creative excellence and supporting broad audience engagement, our diverse and distinctive arts inspire our people, connect communities and profile Singapore internationally. We preserve our rich, cultural traditions as we cultivate accomplished artists and vibrant companies for the future. Our support for the arts is comprehensive – from grants and partnerships to industry facilitation and arts housing. The Council welcomes greater private and corporate giving to and through the arts so that together we can make the arts an integral part of everyone's lives.

For more information on the Council's mission and plans, visit www.nac.gov.sg.

Annex A: Singapore Biennale 2022 – Some opening thoughts on naming by the Co-Artistic Directors

Natasha. A given name. A first name. A forename. Giving a name – especially a proper name – signals a subject. Through this act of naming – whether human or non-human – an entity takes shape.

From the dawn of history, proper names have been given to natural formations and forces: from mountains and rivers, to hurricanes and heatwaves. Even contemporary interactive technologies – such as Siri and Alexa – are granted first-name familiarity. In these instances, naming seems to produce intimacy, a relation of kinship and care, a way of engaging and living with other beings. But naming has also been the means through which possession and control have been gained, for example in colonial conquest. Indeed, the practice of naming involves and invokes a complex inheritance.

A biennale – by virtue of its scale and scope, its cyclical rhythm and momentum – is a force of its own. It is also a technology of our making that absorbs and responds to the aesthetic and discursive conditions of its time. As such, this act of naming is a deliberate attempt to shift the biennale from the convention of a large-format exhibition-event of presentation to something a little more ‘human.’ That is to say, it transforms what it means to visit and encounter the biennale, calling into question our understanding and assumptions of the exhibitionary experience, as much as of humaneness itself.

At the same time, as a framework for acknowledging and exploring the plural nature of being, Natasha is not posited as a stable unitary subject, but as a changing constellation of affects and energies. After all, at a cellular or molecular level, all beings are an entangled network of various moments and states.

Through this act of naming, the artistic directors thus wish to draw attention to and to discuss the facets of: being and non-being, human and non-human, knowing and unknowing, visible and invisible, local and cosmic; and how these connect or intersect with creating, writing, encoding, and navigating each other and the world.

Conceived as a shared commitment to the functions and potentials of a biennale of contemporary art in and after pandemic time, Natasha is a presence through which we can

engage the ways that art, as well as that which is considered other to art, may be deeply connected to life.

Annex B: About the Co-Artistic Directors of Singapore Biennale 2022

Helmed by a team of four Co-Artistic Directors, the 2022 edition of the Singapore Biennale (SB2022) brings together four curators from around the world – Binna Choi from South Korea/the Netherlands, Nida Ghouse from India, living in Germany, June Yap from Singapore and Ala Younis from Jordan. Please see their full bios below.



Binna Choi is the director at Casco Art Institute: Working for the Commons, Utrecht since 2008, where she engages with both its artistic programming and the organisational cultural practice as part of the curatorial. This practice follows the path marked by mostly long-term, trans-disciplinary, and collaborative projects like *Composing the Commons* (2013–16) with the extended team of Casco consisting project-exhibitions such as *Site for Unlearning (Art Organization)* (2014–18) with Annette Krauss, *We Are the Time Machines: Time and Tools for Commoning* (2016), and *New Habits* (2014) with commissions for new works, research groups, publishing and networks like Arts Collaboratory and Cluster, and *The Grand Domestic Revolution* (2010–12) with Maiko Tanaka, Yolande van der Heide and many others. The latest programmes under her directorship and co-curatorship include *Parasite Lottery* by Wok the Rock, *The Library of Unread Books* by Heman Chong and Rene Staal, *Army of Love* by Ingo Niermann and Dora Garcia, four solo exhibitions in one (Babi Badalov, Ansuya Blom, Ama Josephine Budge, Miree Lee), *Het is of de stenen spreken* (silence is a commons). Long-term, collective projects such as *Travelling Farm Museum of Forgotten Skills* with the Outsiders, *Unmapping Eurasia* with You Mi, and the annual Assembly for commoning art institutions, and the infrastructural project under development *Commons.art* with Yin Aiwen, are amongst the ways to de/re instituting at Casco in light of the commons.

Choi also works for Dutch Art Institute and Islands Culture Diversity Network. As a member of Akademie der Künste der Welt, Köln, she curated *Gwangju Lessons* over the 18 May Democratic Uprising with Christian Nyampeta and took it to Asia Culture Center as part of the *MaytoDay* by the Gwangju Biennale Foundation (2020). Choi was a curator for the 11th Gwangju Biennale: *The Eighth Climate (What Does Art*

Do?) in 2016. Choi also serves as an advisor to the AFIELD network and *MARCH* journal and is a board member for Green Art Lab Alliance Support (galas), MyVillages and the Office for Postartistic Services.



Nida Ghouse is a writer and curator. She is Visiting Lecturer at the Interdisciplinary Doctoral Program in the Humanities at Princeton University for Spring 2022. With Vic Brooks, she received the 2021 Andy Warhol Foundation curatorial fellowship for the exhibition *Shifting Center* at EMPAC, upcoming in 2023. She curated *A Slightly Curving Place* at Haus der Kulturen der Welt (2020), in the framework of *An Archaeology of Sound*, a collaborative project responding to the acoustic archaeologist Umashankar Manthravadi. The project travels to Alserkal Arts Foundation (2021-22) and encompasses 'Coming to Know,' a discursive programme with Brooke Holmes; 'A Supplementary Country Called Cinema,' a film programme with Surabhi Sharma; and *An Archaeology of Listening*, a publication series with Archive Books. She previously co-curated *La presencia del sonido* at Botín Foundation (2012), was part of the exhibition *Anarchéologie* at Centre Pompidou (2017) and has a collection of writing on listening.

Ghouse has co-curated *Parapolitics: Cultural Freedom and the Cold War* (2017) at Haus der Kulturen der Welt and co-edited its accompanying publication (Sternberg Press, 2021). Her work 'Lotus Notes' which started with Mada Masr has since appeared in multiple text and talk formats. Her engagement with Hassan Khan's practice has taken shape in a two-week event '14 Proper Nouns,' as well as artist seminars, writing workshops, conversations and essays like 'The Loss of Tokyo.' Ghouse's collaborative projects include *Emotional Architecture* with Malak Helmy, and *Take to the Sea* with Lina Attalah and Laura Cugusi, first presented at Manifesta 8 (2010) and later nominated by Bassam El Baroni for the Vera List Center Prize (2014).

The question of what an exhibition can be is a preoccupation manifest in her curatorial projects, such as *Untitled Exhibition #1* with Padmini Chettur, *Desert of Images* with Melik Ohanian, *Bartered Collections* with CONA Foundation, and *Rehearsing the Witness* with Zuleikha Chaudhari. She began her practice through a curatorial programme at Townhouse Gallery in Cairo,

and once served as director of an experimental exhibition space Mumbai Art Room. Her writing has been featured in numerous periodicals, as well as in the publications of MuKHA, New Museum, Palazzo Grassi, the 56th and 58th Venice Biennale, Van Abbemuseum, among others. Her text 'From the Resistance to the Clouds: on panning to the sky' is forthcoming with Ashkal Alwan's publishing platform Perpetual Postponement.



June Yap is Director of Curatorial & Collections at Singapore Art Museum, where she oversees the museum's exhibitions and curatorial programmes. Her prior roles include Guggenheim UBS MAP Curator (South and Southeast Asia), Deputy Director and Curator at the Institute of Contemporary Arts Singapore, LASALLE, and curator at the Singapore Art Museum.

Amongst exhibitions she has curated are: *The Gift* for Singapore Art Museum presented at National Gallery Singapore (2021) as part of the transregional curatorial collaboration, *Collecting Entanglements and Embodied Histories; They Do Not Understand Each Other* co-curated with Yuka Uematsu from National Museum of Art, Osaka, at Tai Kwun Contemporary, Hong Kong (2020); *No Country: Contemporary Art for South and Southeast Asia* as part of the Guggenheim UBS MAP Global Art Initiative at the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York (2013), Asia Society, Hong Kong (2013) and NTU Centre for Contemporary Art Singapore (2014); *The Cloud of Unknowing* for the Singapore Pavilion, 54th Venice Biennale with artist Ho Tzu Nyen (2011); *The Future of Exhibition: It Feels Like I've Been Here Before* at the Institute of Contemporary Arts Singapore, LASALLE (2010); *Paradise is Elsewhere* at Institut für Auslandsbeziehungen, Stuttgart and Berlin (2009); media art exhibitions *Twilight Tomorrow* and *Interrupt* at the Singapore Art Museum (2004 and 2003, respectively). Yap is the author of *Retrospective: A Historiographical Aesthetic in Contemporary Singapore and Malaysia* (SIRD, 2016).



Ala Younis is an artist with research, curatorial, film, and publishing projects. She is co-Head of Berlinale's Forum Expanded, member of the Akademie der Künste der Welt, Cologne, and co-founder of the independent publishing initiative, Kayfa ta. She co-initiated and co-directed a national group for researching and developing cultural policy in Jordan (2012–18). Younis seeks instances where historical and political events collapse into personal ones. Her artworks were featured in major exhibitions, including solo shows in New York, Seville, London, Prague, Cairo, Amman, Sharjah, and Dubai, and in the Istanbul, Gwangju, Orléans and Ural biennales. Her project *Plan for Greater Baghdad* (2015) premiered at *All the World's Futures*, 56th Venice Biennale.

In 2013, Younis curated Kuwait's first pavilion at the Venice Biennale. She curated *Museum of Manufactured Response to Absence*, collection and interventions in Kuwait, Algiers and Ramallah (2012–14). She also curated *How to find meaning in dead time* in Berlin and *Hands* in Cologne (both 2021); *How to Reappear: Through the quivering leaves of independent publishing* in Beirut and Amman and *How to Maneuver: Shapeshifting texts and other publishing tactics* in Abu Dhabi (both 2019–20); and *Out of Place* at Tate Modern and Darat al Funun (2011). Younis edited an extensive monograph on late Palestinian artist Abdul Hay Mosallam and co-edited *The Time Is Out Of Joint* published by Sharjah Art Foundation in 2020 and 2016 respectively. She co-edited and published over 18 publications through Kayfa ta initiative.