

Maria Taniguchi: Afterimage

24.7 – 22.11 2026

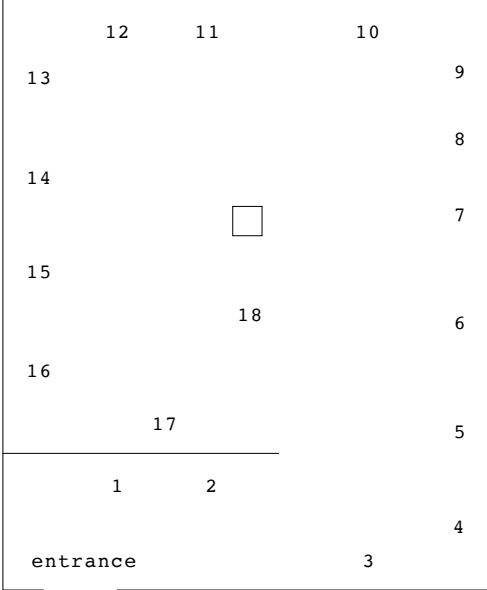
About the Artist

Born in 1981 in Dumaguete City, Philippines
Lives and works in Manila, Philippines

Maria Taniguchi works across a diverse range of media, including painting, video, sculpture, pottery, printmaking, drawing and writing. Central to her practice are questions of labour, repetition and temporality, which she explores through an ongoing engagement with materiality and process. Her works invite audiences to experience material culture sensorially, connecting it to broader notions of time, space, labour and technology.

Taniguchi is the recipient of the 2015 Hugo Boss Asia Art Award. Her work has been featured in major international exhibitions including the 60th Venice Biennale (2024), the Gwangju Biennale (2018), the Biennale of Sydney (2018) and the 8th Asia Pacific Triennial of Contemporary Art, Brisbane (2015). Her solo exhibitions include presentations at MCAD Manila (2024) and the Jorge B. Vargas Museum, Quezon City (2011), among others.

1	<i>Figure Study</i> 2012 Single-channel video (black and white, sound), 37:12 min Collection of the artist	10	<i>A painter, if black were a place</i> 2026 Single-channel video (colour, sound), 1:52 min Commissioned by Singapore Art Museum
2	<i>Figure Study</i> 2018 Single-channel video (colour, sound), 3:51 min Collection of the artist	11	<i>Untitled</i> 2025 Acrylic on canvas 228.5 × 114.5 cm Collection of Natasha Sidharta
3	<i>Mies 421</i> 2010 Single-channel video (black and white, sound), 4:06 min Collection of the artist	12	<i>Untitled</i> 2023 Acrylic on canvas 228.5 × 114.5 cm Collection of Vir Kotak
4	<i>Untitled</i> 2022 Acrylic on canvas 228.5 × 114.5 cm Collection of Margaret Wang	13	<i>Untitled</i> 2021 Acrylic on canvas 274 × 121 cm Collection of the artist
5	<i>Untitled</i> 2018 Acrylic on canvas 290 × 791.5 cm Collection of the artist	14	<i>Untitled</i> 2017 Acrylic on canvas 275 × 484.5 cm Collection of Singapore Art Museum
6	<i>Untitled</i> 2023 Acrylic on canvas 274 × 488 cm Collection of the artist	15	<i>Untitled</i> 2022 Acrylic on canvas 228.5 × 114.5 cm Monsoon Southeast Asia Collection
7	<i>Untitled</i> 2022 Acrylic on canvas 228.5 × 114.5 cm Collection of Bea Camacho	16	<i>Untitled</i> 2026 Acrylic on canvas 305 × 518 cm Private collection, courtesy of The Heller Group Japan GK
8	<i>Untitled</i> 2026 Acrylic on canvas 213 × 121 cm Collection of the artist	17	<i>Untitled</i> 2026 Acrylic on canvas 305 × 517 cm Collection of the artist
9	<i>Untitled</i> 2025 Acrylic on canvas 305 × 213.5 cm Tanoto Family Collection	18	<i>Runaways</i> 2026 Duhat wood Dimensions variable Commissioned by Singapore Art Museum



1 *Figure Study* (2012)
Figure Study (2012) reflects the organic elements and physical labour present throughout Maria Taniguchi's practice. The black-and-white film depicts two workers in a dense jungle digging a hole in the ground. From multiple angles the two figures are seen filling white bags with clay extracted from the hole. The continuous sound of their tools offers an irregular counterpoint to the ticking metronome that structures Taniguchi's *Mies 421*, while the bags of clay that they remove from the earth anticipate the clay sculpture central to *Figure Study* (2018).

2 *Figure Study* (2018)
Figure Study (2018) highlights aspects central to Taniguchi's filmmaking technique by focusing on the process of making rather than narrative. Deeply saturated red and blue images document the making of a clay object and its final form, while the tight framing of the images limits what the viewer sees. The carousel of still images seen in the first part of the film depicts the hands of the artist and the raw materiality of the clay as it is shaped, capturing the subtle traces of artistic labour exerted over time. These still images are juxtaposed with a single shot that traces the full length of a finished object, yet the narrow view of the camera prevents us from seeing how any part is connected to the object as a whole. These gestures recall the early object study exercises the artist undertook at the Philippine High School for the Arts, where students were tasked to experiment with various materials without having a predetermined outcome in mind.

3 *Mies 421*
Mies 421 captures the structural details of the 1929 Barcelona Pavilion designed by the influential German architects Ludwig Mies van der Rohe and Lilly Reich. Taniguchi's film uses black-and-white still photographs of the building that change in time with the accelerating tick of a metronome, creating an increasing sense of anxiety. The artist describes these still images in her videos as solid "objects" and the short gaps between them as "negative space," linking them to her paintings and sculptures. Taniguchi's attention to the minimal lines and the different surface textures throughout the Barcelona Pavilion underscores the architectural scale and surface variations of her familiar "brick paintings," while foregrounding a process in which repeated parts are depicted as fragments of the whole.

Taniguchi's "brick paintings" (2008-ongoing) are characterised by uniform rows of pencil-drawn rectangles, each individually painted over the course of days or weeks. On their surfaces, subtle shifts in colour accumulate over time, reflecting the artist's creative process, and encouraging introspection and extended viewing. Rather than a deliberate response to the art historical legacy of modernism, the brick-like geometric pattern that repeats across Taniguchi's canvases captures the time and effort required to make them. *Untitled* and unnumbered, Taniguchi's brick paintings are best understood as individual parts of a single artwork that continues to grow with each new painting. By leaning these large canvases against the gallery walls, Taniguchi blurs the boundaries between the flat surface of the painting, the canvas as a three-dimensional sculptural object and the architectural space it occupies.

10 ***A painter, if black were a place***

Taniguchi's newest film, *A painter, if black were a place*, mirrors the structure of *Mies 421*, using a series of still images that advance at a regular pace. The digital images, taken by an unknown photographer, depict closely cropped scenes of a garden populated by terracotta sculptures. The images are warm and intimate, yet their pixelation evokes a sense of nostalgia and suggests personal memories that become increasingly difficult to recall. Several paintings by the artist's mother, Cristina "Kitty" Taniguchi, are included in the sequence of images, returning focus to the intergenerational connection that informs the younger Taniguchi's use of material in her *Runaways* sculptures. The stream of images is disrupted by short sequences that first appear to present a black screen but, like Taniguchi's canvases, on closer inspection reveal themselves as hand-painted fields of colour containing subtle gradients and variations.

18 ***Runaways***

Taniguchi's *Runaways* distil sculpture to its most basic forms, using circles and straight lines "drawn" in three-dimensional space. These suspended objects introduce a simple visual language that, like the digits 1 and 0 of binary code, suggests infinite possibilities. Carved from the wood of Java plum trees (known in the Philippines as *duhat*), the sculptures carry deeply personal associations of the artist's mother who craved the fruit while pregnant. While the dark violet fruit of the Java plum evokes the deep colours of Taniguchi's canvases, the use of *duhat* wood in her sculptures rejects the supposed objectivity of Minimalist sculpture by incorporating personal biography and embracing craft rather than industrial production.

This room sheet is published in conjunction with *Maria Taniguchi: Afterimage*, an exhibition organised by the Singapore Art Museum (SAM) from 24 July to 22 November 2026 at Tanjong Pagar Distripark. Please contact us at enquiries@singaporeartmuseum.sg should you have any queries. All rights reserved. Published by SAM in July 2026. Materials in this publication may not be reproduced in part or in whole without written consent of SAM. Every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of information within this room sheet. However, changes are sometimes unavoidable and SAM reserves the right to make modifications to the exhibition, its programmes and ticketing policy without prior notice. Please visit singaporeartmuseum.sg for the most updated information. All information is correct at time of print.