

**MEDIA RELEASE**

**Pavilion of Singapore  
at the 61<sup>st</sup> International Art Exhibition of La Biennale di Venezia**

***A PAUSE***

Commissioner: Elaine Ng, National Arts Council

Curator: Selene Yap

Exhibitor: Amanda Heng Liang Ngim

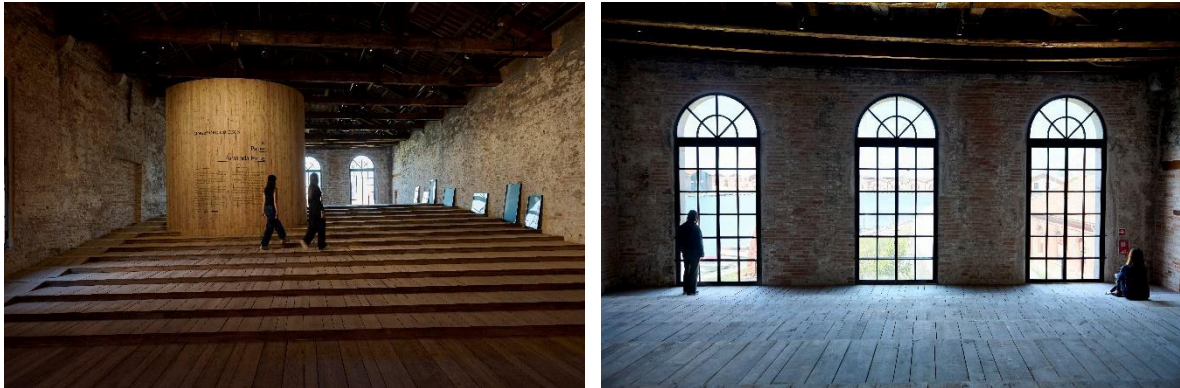
Organised by Singapore Art Museum



Singapore Pavilion artist Amanda Heng Liang Ngim and curator Selene Yap.  
Image courtesy of Singapore Art Museum.

**Venice, 6 May 2026** – For the Singapore Pavilion at the 61<sup>st</sup> International Art Exhibition - La Biennale di Venezia, Amanda Heng Liang Ngim transforms the historic Sale d'Armi into a space for rest and observation. ***A Pause*** brings together photographs, video and an architectural intervention centred on ordinary actions such as sitting, waiting, and watching.

The work is a culmination of Heng's four-decade practice, drawing on her sustained attention to the body, everyday gestures, and unscripted social encounter. The presentation reflects a shift from the charged immediacy of her early public performances to a quieter, more interior mode of attention.



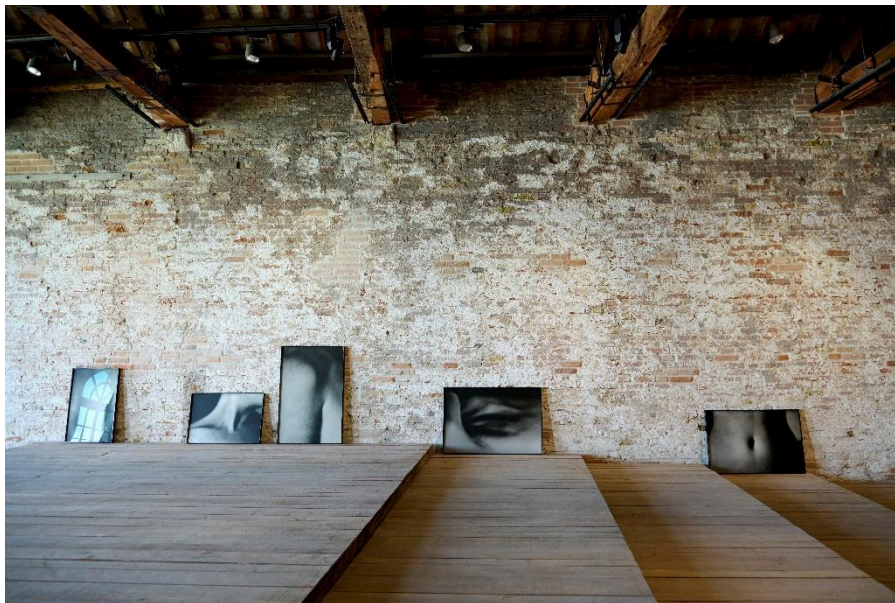
Installation views of *A Pause*, Singapore Pavilion, Biennale Arte 2026.  
Images courtesy of Singapore Art Museum.

The Singapore Pavilion has been reconfigured with larch wood – the same timber historically used for the Arsenale's floorboards and Venice's foundations, allowing the intervention to assimilate into the architecture. Stepped platforms ranging in width are angled to follow the building's walls, rising through the space and ending at the windowsills, transforming windows into doorways. The dimensions invite viewers to assume varied postures of rest. The work extends Heng's longstanding approach of creating conditions for encounter. Visitors can lean, sit, or lie down, deciding where to pause and how long to stay.



Installation view of *A Pause (2025-26)*, Singapore Pavilion, Biennale Arte 2026.  
Image courtesy of Singapore Art Museum.

**A Pause** (2025-26) is a new dual-channel video developed through filming in both Venice and Singapore. The work follows people in moments of everyday activity: watering plants, preparing breakfast, walking or looking up at the sky. The video observes Heng herself in Singapore and Venetian residents in their homes and neighbourhoods. Filmed in real time with long, static shots and available light, the work observes how daily tasks themselves become forms of pause and renewal, acts through which people draw life and negotiate stillness within dense urban environments. The camera holds and follows the participants' pace, allowing time to unfold. Rather than presenting recognisable cityscapes, the work attends to quiet corners and subtle gestures, finding commonality across both cities through the rhythms of ordinary existence.



Installation view of *Parts of My Body* (1990, reprinted 2026), Singapore Pavilion, Biennale Arte 2026. Image courtesy of Singapore Art Museum.

**Parts of My Body** (1990, reprinted 2026) presents close-up photographs of Heng's body: an elbow, the curve of a shoulder, the deep of a back, the hollow of a clavicle. Direct and unadorned, the images isolate fragments, transforming the body into landscape. First made in 1990 when the artist was in her thirties, the photographs have been reprinted at a larger scale for this presentation and lean against the pavilion walls. The series reflects Heng's long-standing investigation into how the body carries identity, memory, and time—a thread that runs through her work from the late 1980s to the present.

Alongside this exhibition is a publication titled **Amanda Heng: On and On**, the first comprehensive monograph on Amanda Heng Liang Ngim's art and practice. It reveals the full range of her visual experiments over nearly forty years: from early drawings and performance documentation to photographic studies and video work. Conceived and

produced by Sydney based publisher Stolon Press and pavilion curator Selene Yap, and co-published with the Singapore Art Museum, the book holds the complexity of a practice built from small actions and sustained attention, offering a counterpoint and a backdrop to a pavilion of quietness and lightly held intervention. Essays by architectural theorist Lilian Chee, writer and critic Lee Weng Choy, curator Anca Rujoiu, anthropologist Souchou Yao, and Yap each open different aspects of Heng's practice of living and working in Singapore.

Artist **Amanda Heng Liang Ngim** said, “*A Pause* transforms the Pavilion into a quiet and open space for a rest, inviting visitors to find their own way of slowing down, to spend time and be present. There are no rules or instructions. Each person moves freely through the space differently. And you may notice how the body carries itself feeling at ease and at peace, wondering what it means to pause.”

The Pavilion’s curator, **Selene Yap**, said, “Amanda Heng's work grounds itself in the everyday—how we move, pause, and sustain ourselves through small gestures. This presentation shows that practice at full scale, transforming the pavilion into a space where visitors complete the work simply by being present.”

**Eugene Tan**, Co-Chair of the Commissioning Panel and Chief Executive Officer and Director of SAM, said: “Amanda Heng has been foundational to Singapore's contemporary art landscape for nearly four decades. Presenting her work at Venice affirms our commitment to artists whose practices are built through sustained inquiry and deep engagement with local conditions. Her work, grounded in the gestures and rhythms of everyday life, has reshaped how we understand the relationship between art and the everyday, and it is meaningful to see this resonate on an international stage.”

**Elaine Ng**, Chief Executive Officer of the National Arts Council (NAC), Singapore, said: “*A Pause* resonates profoundly in today’s world, offering a reflective space amid increasing complexities. Amanda Heng’s work exemplifies the important role of the arts in fostering dialogue, empathy, and understanding within society. This presentation in Venice reflects NAC’s continued commitment to supporting our artists at international platforms for them to showcase their craft to a wider audience. Come January 2027, Singaporeans can also look forward to the return show and experience the work first hand.”

Commissioned by NAC, supported by the Ministry of Culture, Community and Youth, and organised by SAM, this year marks Singapore's 12th participation at the International Art Exhibition of La Biennale di Venezia. The official inauguration is on Wednesday, 6 May 2026, at 11.30am, on the first floor (above ground floor) of the Arsenale's Sale d'Armi building.

*A Pause* will be presented from 9 May to 22 November 2026. The exhibition will move to Singapore in January 2027, where it will be reimagined for a second iteration at SAM at Tanjong Pagar Distripark.

For the latest information, follow updates via Facebook and Instagram (@singaporeartmuseum), or visit [bit.ly/SingaporePavilion-BA2026](https://bit.ly/SingaporePavilion-BA2026).

Press images may be downloaded [here](#).

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- Annex B: About the Artworks
- Annex C: About the Artistic Team

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### **About the Singapore Pavilion at the International Art and Architecture Exhibitions of La Biennale di Venezia**

The Singapore Pavilion is a 250 sqm space in a complex of buildings called the Sale d'Armi, which is centrally located and easily accessible within the Arsenale, a key site in Venice. The Sale d'Armi complex is a cluster of four 16th-century barracks built with brick and stone, each with a wooden roof. It lies opposite the intersection between the long Corderie and Artiglierie buildings, where the main central square of the Arsenale is situated.

### **About Singapore Art Museum**

Singapore Art Museum opened in 1996 as the first art museum in Singapore. Also known as SAM, we present 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.

SAM 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](http://www.singaporeartmuseum.sg).

### **About National Arts Council, Singapore**

The National Arts Council (NAC) is a statutory board under the Ministry of Culture, Community, and Youth that champions the arts in Singapore. The Council promotes artistic excellence by providing diverse opportunities for artists and arts organisations while expanding access for audiences to appreciate the impact of the arts in enriching lives. By working closely with the arts community and partners, the Council seeks to build a connected society, creative economy and distinctive city through the arts.

## **Annex A: Exhibition Overview**

Amanda Heng Liang Ngim's work begins with the body. Her practice attends to daily gestures—walking, waiting, shared tasks—that accumulate meaning through repetition. For the Singapore Pavilion, Heng presents an environment where visitors' presence shapes the work.




*Parts of My Body* presents close-up photographs of Heng's body, first made in 1990 and reprinted at larger scale in 2026. The images isolate fragments—an elbow, the curve of a shoulder, the creases of a hand. Direct and unadorned, the photographs register the body as a site of attention, locating a life in continuity across decades.

The pavilion has been reconfigured with larch wood, the same timber used for the Arsenale's floors and Venice's foundations. Stepped platforms, angled to follow the building's walls, rise through the space and end at the windowsills, transforming windows into doorways. Broad treads modulate pace and rhythm, slowing movement into moments of sitting, leaning, pausing. Visitors complete the work by inhabiting it.

*A Pause (2025–26)*, developed across Venice and Singapore, follows people in moments of everyday activity: watering plants, preparing breakfast, walking. Filmed in real time, the work observes how bodies negotiate stillness and reclaim their own rhythms within dense urban environments.

By attending to the body across time, the works shift focus from the physical body to the interior self, the sources through which we sustain ourselves, adapt, and continue.

## Annex B: About the Artworks

	<p><i>Parts of My Body</i> (1990, reprinted 2026) 9 gelatin silver prints 2026 version printed by Sandra Barnard, Sydney</p>
	<p><i>A Pause</i>, 2025–26 Synchronised double-channel HD video (on loop), 16:9 format, two-channel sound, 29:40 min</p> <p>Participants in film: Alberto Cancian, Samantha Chia, Francesco Cipollini, Francesca Fassioli, Bogdan Koshevoy</p> <p>Film director: Amanda Heng Liang Ngim</p> <p>Cinematographer and video editor: Russell Morton</p> <p>Film production unit: Gaia Campesato, Marco del Fabbro, Francesca Fialdini, Clyde Kam, Nikki Koh, Looi Wan Ping, Christian Rapisarda, Giovanni Sambo</p>
	<p>Architectural design by Irin Siriwattanagul and Nathaphon Phantounarakul of SP/N, Bangkok</p> <p>Fabricated in larch wood by eiletz ortigas   architects, Ljubljana and Rebiennale, Venice</p> <p>Lighting design by Phanumas Siriwattanagul, Bangkok</p> <p>Exhibition identity and graphic design by Currency, Singapore</p>

## Annex C: About the Artistic Team

### Amanda Heng Liang Ngim, Artist



Amanda Heng Liang Ngim (王良吟) (born 1951, Singapore) is a pioneering contemporary artist whose interdisciplinary practice spans performance, installation, photography, and participatory art. Emerging in the late 1980s during a pivotal shift in Singapore's art scene, Heng is known for her body-centric works that interrogate gender roles, societal expectations, and lived memory through everyday gestures.

Heng's long-running performance works, such as *Let's Walk* (1999–ongoing), *Walking the Stool* (1999–2000), and *Let's Chat* (1996–ongoing), mobilise the body as a site of social encounter—using simple, quotidian acts to provoke reflection on care, connection, and resilience. Her photographic series *Another Woman* (1996, 2014, 2023) delicately traces intergenerational intimacy through repeated portraits with her mother.

A founding member of The Artists Village (1988) and Women in the Arts (1999), Heng has been pivotal in shaping Singapore's contemporary and feminist discourse. Her work has been featured in major biennales and performance art festivals, including Bangkok Art Biennale (2024), Singapore Biennale (2006, 2019), and the inaugural Women's Performance Art Festival in Osaka (2001).

Heng received Singapore's Cultural Medallion (2010) and the Benesse Prize (2020) and was inducted into the Singapore Women's Hall of Fame (2023).

## Selene Yap, Curator



Selene Yap (born 1988, Singapore) is a curator at Singapore Art Museum (SAM). Her curatorial practice follows a situational approach, developing research and exhibitions through close dialogue with artists whose work responds to the contingencies and particularities of place, process and memory. At SAM, she has curated solo and joint presentations of artists including Pratchaya Phinthong (2024), Simryn Gill & Charles Lim Yi Yong (2024), Ho Tzu Nyen (2023), and Joo Choon Lin (2023). Yap was most recently co-curator for the Singapore Biennale 2025.

She has held research positions at the Future Cities Laboratory and the Singapore University of Technology and Design. From 2016 to 2018, she was the Visual Art Programme Manager at The Substation, Singapore's first independent contemporary arts centre.