

KONG YEN LIN

CURATOR & RESEARCHER

Email: hwengings56@gmail.com | Based in Singapore

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCES

NATIONAL ARTS COUNCIL SINGAPORE MANAGER, SECTOR DEVELOPMENT (VISUAL ARTS)

2018-present

Adopting a macro perspective of Singapore's visual arts sectoral development, I was heavily involved in driving growth for Singapore artists and major visual arts organisations, through diverse pathways such as grant support, capability development via establishing of key residency partnerships, and creation of presentation opportunities through artwork commissions.

Key contributions:

- **Led major curatorial and commission projects with NAC's Public Art Trust**-- one in commemoration of the Singapore Bicentennial involving two artists, and the other 'Rewritten: The World Ahead of us' during the Covid-19 pandemic presenting a series of new artworks by 14 Singapore artists across 8 park spaces in Singapore. Both were presented for durations of six months and garnered a total traffic count of 2.28 mil and 1.4mil respectively.
- **Spearheaded NAC's first ever international artist residency programmes in Southeast Asia** (i.e. in Indonesia and the Philippines). The residency partnerships were launched in 2018, and are still ongoing.
- **Contributed to creative placemaking and development of partnerships with supporting government agencies** for unlocking opportunities for having art in public spaces such as URA and NParks. I also managed the aspect of arts housing (visual arts) for spaces under NAC's arts housing frameworks (e.g. Goodman Arts Centre, Telok Kurau Studios and Aliwal Arts Centre).
- **Development of local arts ecosystem** through grant evaluation and administration.

ARTS HOUSE LIMITED PROGRAMME MANAGER (PHOTOGRAPHY, FILM & CHINESE LITERARY ARTS)

2016-2018

I have conceptualised and executed programmes for three main portfolios: photography, film and Chinese literary arts, and also managed collaborations between external partners. My responsibilities included budgeting for projects, creative production, managing workflows and timelines, formalising partnership agreements, liaising internally with various departments for aspects such as marketing, publicity as well as technical setup, and ensuring the smooth execution of the actual event.

Key contributions:

- Curated close to 8 exhibitions featuring the works of promising young Singaporean photographers such as Lavender Chang, Sean Lee and Liana Yang, as well as veteran artists like Cultural Medallion recipient Chua Soo Bin, in his first solo show of portraits in Singapore in 11 years titled 'Light within Ink: Portraiture of Wu Guanzhong by Chua Soo Bin'. I had also written the accompanying exhibition collaterals and publications for all shows.
 - Managed the Literary Pioneer exhibition as part of the Singapore Writers Festival in 2017 and 2018, featuring Lee Tzu Pheng and Yeng Pway Ngon respectively.
 - Executed a new commission “诗韵” for Chinese poetry and music, as part of The Arts House annual stable of signature programmes, which included poetry and music for all 4 ethnic languages. The commission involved Dingyi Music Company as the music director and partner, and theatre director/practitioner Zelda Tatiana-Ng interpreting the works of 10 modern
-

Singapore Chinese poets active between the 1950s to 80s.

- Part of the programming team for Textures, an annual literary arts festival held in conjunction with #BuySinglit.
- Worked with various programme partners such as the Hong Kong Economic and Trade Organisation, Singapore International Photography Festival, Singapore International Film Festival and Israeli Embassy.

DECK

2014-2015

EDUCATION AND RESOURCE MANAGER

I planned, publicised and executed photography-centric education programmes for the secondary and tertiary level students as well as the general public at DECK, an independent arts space. I also developed pedagogies for integrating photography into classroom learning and designed interactive workshops and activities that equipped students with both photography techniques and visual literacy.

Key contributions:

- Launched the inaugural student and public education programme for the biennial Singapore International Photography Festival (SIPF) in 2012.
- Conducted programmes for close to 500 students from 19 schools as part of DECK's annual year-long school education programme in 2014
- Published two photography education guides for students in 2012 and 2014, published as part of SIPF.
- Completed an Essentials of Teaching and Learning enrichment module organised by NIE and acquired certification in 2014.
- Maintained and ran the library collection at DECK, which houses Singapore's largest photography book collection accessible to the public.

THOMSON REUTERS

2010-2014

SUB-EDITOR, GLOBAL PICTURE DESK

Servicing a global client base, I edited and captioned news pictures real time filed by Reuters photographers across the world, by checking for factual accuracy and aesthetics. It was a fast-paced, competitive work environment where we constantly sought to pursue winning coverages for breaking news and other in-depth trend stories across print and multimedia platforms. Our daily work also feeds into major recognition platforms for photojournalism and reportage photography, such as the Pulitzer Prize and World Press Photo.

Key contributions:

- Designated processor for major global sporting events such as the Australian Open tennis tournament (2013) and Singapore Grand Prix (2012), as well as political conferences such as the ASEAN Summit.
-

SELECTED CURATORIAL PROJECTS

2023	Solo exhibition by John Clang “So this is what it feels like to be free”, as part of Singapore Art Week, FOST Gallery
2018	Reflections & Revelations: Literary Pioneer Yeng Pway Ngon, as part of the Singapore Writer’s Festival
	Solo exhibition by Wilfred Lim “Songs of a Beached Whale”, The Arts House
2017	Solo exhibition “Light Within Ink: Portraits of Wu Guanzhong by Chua Soo Bin, The Arts House
	An Artist in Words: Literary Pioneer Lee Tzu Pheng, as part of the Singapore Writer’s Festival
2017	I am a seed though a different one from you, by Lavender Chang at The Arts House, Singapore
	Solo exhibition by Sean Lee “Two People”, The Arts House
2017	Pet Me, Pet Me, Look at Me, Love Me, a photography exhibition on text and sub-text by Liana Yang and Lavender Chang at The Arts House, Singapore
2015	To Measure the Depth of the Ocean: Charting Singapore’s Modern Photography History from 1950s to 1980s at DECK
2013	Vignettes: Between Light and Dark, a contemporary black and white photography exhibition at 2902 Gallery
2013	To Remember: An Enigma of Memory, a two-day photo curatorial showcase on Arti:curate (http://articurate.net/)
2011	Guest curator for Brighton Photo Fringe Open 2011, Britain

INDEPENDENT RESEARCH AND ARTS EXPERIENCES

2023	Conference presenter at the International Association for Media and History Conference 2023 'FUTURE [of] ARCHIVES' at Université du Québec à Montréal, Canada
2022	Conference presenter at the Progress and Innovative Practices in the Digital Humanities in Singapore and Abroad workshop organised by the Asia Research Institute, Yale-NU
2022	Recipient of the National Museum of Singapore Research Fellowship
2022	Moderator, Asia Pacific Photo Forum, Singapore International Photography Festival
2019	Jury member for the Kuala Lumpur International Photo Awards
2015	Artist-in-Residence for Arquetopia Art Educator’s Residency for the month of June in Puebla, Mexico
2014	Artist-in-Residence for Mustarinda for the month of March in Paljakantie, Finland
2014	Event organizer for “Cantik Lah Singapore”, a grounds-up, independent series of talks and workshops bringing together environmental scientists and conceptual photographers, organised in partnership with NLB.
2014	Researcher for WE: Defining Stories, a news photography exhibition at the National Museum of Singapore, organised in collaboration with Singapore Press Holdings.
2011-2015	Museum Docent with Friends of Museum for the Singapore Art Museum
2007-2008	Participant of Shooting Home 2007, an annual photography mentoring workshop by Objectifs, a centre for local photography and film-making in Singapore

SELECTED PUBLICATIONS

2022	“Things we lost in a Shipwreck” , IMA 2022 Spring/Summer Vol.37
2020	“Everything burns if the fire is hot enough” , exhibition catalogue essay for solo exhibition by Hor Kwok Kin at Artcommune Gallery
2018	“Tomoko Sawada, Rinko Kawauchi & Yuki Onodera: The Heart is an Ocean” , DECK Journal Vol 1
2018	“Rise of Modernism in Singapore Photography, 1950s to 1980s: Aesthetic negotiation under an ethnic and national identity prism (Part 1)” , DECK Journal Vol 1
2017	“School of Thought: Iconography of the student in Asian contemporary photography” , M.A.tter Unbound, an online journal by LASALLE College of the Arts
2017	“In search for that fugitive one” , an essay for 9_9, a self-published photo book by Kristin Man
2016	“Grey, not red, is the colour of the Cultural Revolution: An interview with Li Zhensheng” , DECK Photography Journal Vol 0
2014	“Land of my Heart” , essay for John Clang’s twentyfifteen publication published by Objectifs
2013	“When I say you are dreaming, so am I” , essay for Singaporean artist John Clang’s showcase at Art Stage Singapore
2012	The Epiphany of States , Foreword and essay for a self-published photo book by Liana Yang
2012	Outside In: A Magnum Photo showcase , wall text for Magnum photo agency’s exhibition at Art Science Museum

EDUCATION

Formal Education

2015-2016	Masters in Asian Art Histories, Goldsmiths, University of London
2014	Certificate in Essentials of Teaching and Learning, National Institute of Education (NIE) –National Arts Council (NAC)
2006-2010	BA (Hons) Communication Studies with Double Major in Sociology, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore – First Class Honours.

-End-