

Time



Ho Tzu Nyen

the cloud

호추니엔:
시간과
클라우드

2024.
6.4.
– 8.4.

Co-Organized by

Art Sonje Center,
Singapore Art Museum

Exhibition Supported by

Arts Council Korea

Production Supported by

Korean Foundation for International
Cultural Exchange



A

SJ

C

Art Sonje Center is delighted to present *Ho Tzu Nyen: Time & the Cloud*, a comprehensive solo exhibition showcasing the artistic journey of Singaporean artist Ho Tzu Nyen. Spanning two decades of his practice, this expansive exhibition explores complex layers of modernity in the postcolonial contemporary Asia. Ho's exploration transcends geographical boundaries, delving into social, cultural, political, and economic realms across Southeast Asia and beyond.

Ho Tzu Nyen: Time & the Cloud also highlights how Ho's persistent exploration of modernity expands to the exploration of everyday life in the complex operation of politics, culture, and time. Ho explores the present of Asia as a newborn space shaped by the encounters and clashes between West and Asia, Asia and Asia, empire and colony, and colony and colony. Yet, the artist's exploration goes beyond simple binary oppositions; it seeks to articulate the present of Asia as a site where many different modernities collide and shatter, where we understand and misunderstand, and where new possibilities are generated and expanded.

In this exhibition, the term “cloud” takes on multiple meanings. It can refer to the cloud as a natural phenomenon floating in the sky, or as a mythological, spiritual, and religious symbol. It can also refer to servers that can be accessed online, and the software and databases that operate on those servers. These multiple meanings of the cloud run through Ho Tzu Nyen's oeuvre and play a critical role in conceptually, physically, and aesthetically activating his worldview.

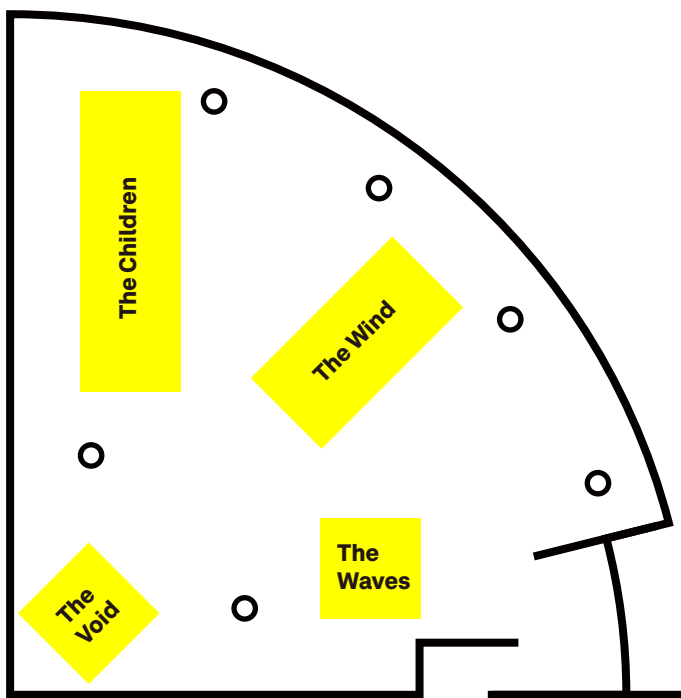
Ho Tzu Nyen: Time & the Cloud unveils the lingering awe, fantasies, fears, and frustrations entwined with the experience of modernity

in Asia, casting them as spectral presences hovering over contemporary societies and cultures. Through the exhibition, visitors encounter the echoes of imperialism, the legacies of colonialism, and the paradoxical situations faced by those who navigated these turbulent times. Designed to immerse audiences in the vast stream of cosmic time, the exhibition paints a picture of the present shaped by the collisions, misunderstandings, appropriations, and reconciliations of multiple modernities.

In 2022, Art Sonje Center and Singapore Art Museum collaborated to explore Ho Tzu Nyen's artistic world and co-produce *T for Time*, in collaboration with M+, with support from Museum of Contemporary Art Tokyo and Sharjah Art Foundation, and KOFICE (Korean Foundation for International Cultural Exchange). This joint effort led to two versions of the exhibition: *Ho Tzu Nyen: Time & the Tiger* at Singapore Art Museum from November 24, 2023 to March 3, 2024, and *Ho Tzu Nyen: Time & the Cloud* at Art Sonje Center from June 4 to August 4, 2024.

Ho Tzu Nyen

Ho Tzu Nyen (b. 1976) is a Singaporean media artist and filmmaker whose works involve film, video, performance, and immersive multimedia installations. His works explore the complexities of the Southeast Asian region, challenging its homogenization within the Western dialectical historical framework. His major solo exhibitions include *Ho Tzu Nyen: A for Agents* (Museum of Contemporary Art Tokyo, 2024), *Ho Tzu Nyen: Time & Tiger* (Singapore Art Museum, 2023), *Voice of Void* (Yamaguchi Center for Arts and Media, 2021), and *The Cloud of Unknowing* (Spain Guggenheim Bilbao, 2015). His major group exhibitions include *Shéhérazade, at night* (Palais de Tokyo, 2022), *Imagined Borders* (Gwangju Biennale, 2018), *Mapping Asia* (Asia Art Archive, 2014). He represented the Singapore Pavilion at the 54th Venice Biennale. Together with Taiwanese artist Hsu Chiawei, he co-curated the 7th Asian Art Biennial entitled *The Strangers from beyond the Mountain and the Sea*. He was selected as a resident of the DAAD Artist-in-Berlin Program from 2014 to 2015, won the APB Foundation Signature Art Prize in 2015, and was awarded the Chanel Next Prize 2024.



Hotel Aporia, 2019

6-channel video projections (4:3 format, color, and 24-channel sound), automated fan, lights, transducers and show control system, 84 min 1 sec (The Waves: 12 min; The Wind: 24 min; The Void 24 min 1 sec; The Children: 24 min).

Singapore Art Museum Collection

Hotel Aporia, a commissioned work of the Aichi Triennale 2019, was created and presented as a site-specific video installation at Kiraku-Tei, a traditional Japanese inn (ryokan) built in Toyota City, Aichi Prefecture, during Japan's Taisho period. Kiraku-Tei also served as the last banquet venue for one of the Nagoya Navy Air Corps' Special Attack "kamikaze" Units, called the Kusanagi Unit. The soldiers celebrated their last day there before departing for Okinawa to fulfil their mission in World War II (known as the Pacific War in Japan). Ho Tzu Nyen, who was researching and preparing a work about the Kyoto School and Japanese imperialism at the time, was invited by curator Yoko Nose to present a work at the Kiraku-Tei. The artist discovered that this space was not only a traditional

Japanese inn, but also a place deeply intertwined with the history of World War II. Together with the curator, dramaturg, and translator, he researched and discussed the historical relationship between this space and Japanese imperialism, through which he completed the work.

The work consists of a six-channel video installation in four chapters - "The Waves," "The Wind," "The Void," and "The Children," and a giant fan that slowly generates wind. The scripts for the video work consist of correspondences among the artist, the curator, the dramaturg, and the translator, intermingled with texts by historical figures selected by the artist. These figures include the landlady of Kiraku-Tei, two members of a kamikaze unit, scholars from the Kyoto School, filmmakers Yasujiro Ozu (who was drafted into the Imperial Japanese Army to make propaganda films in Singapore) and animator Ryuichi Yokoyama (who was sent to Indonesia as part of a propaganda group). The videos selected and edited by the artist include documentary films from World War II as well as Yasujiro Ozu's films such as his classic film, *Late Spring* (1949) and Ryuichi Yokoyama's propaganda film, *Fuku-chan's Submarine* (1944). The artist created a site-specific installation by juxtaposing video images with text excerpts from people associated with the work, including himself.

Through *Hotel Aporia*, the artist reveals narcissism and rupture of Japanese imperialism and its aftermath in a non-linear format. In addition, the artist chooses to erase the faces of the characters from the original footage and generates an artificial wind that passes through the images, sounds, and the physical space of the installation. If the videos can be seen as memorial remnants of Japanese imperialism, the erased faces of the characters in these

videos do not anonymize the residues and catastrophic consequences of that imperialism, nor do they leave the past in the past, but rather imply that these repercussions exist in the transparent time of the present and can therefore always be reactivated today. The time of the present flows with the wind that fills the exhibition space, revealing the emptiness, that is, the existence of the void.

Hotel Aporia, 2019

6-channel video projections (4:3 format, color, and 24-channel sound), automated fan, lights, transducers and show control system, 84 min 1 sec (The Waves: 12 min; The Wind: 24 min; The Void 24 min 1 sec; The Children: 24 min).

Direction, script, edit: Ho Tzu Nyen

Research, script contributor: Yoko Nose

Dramaturgy, script, research, translator: Tomoyuki Arai

Project Manager, translator, script contributor: Kazue Suzuki

Rotoscoping: Vividthree

Technical management & lighting: Andy Lim

Technician: Shinji Tanaka

Producer (Sound): NOEL-KIT

Sound design: Phasma

Voices: Agito, Kawamoto Tomoe, Shibuya Tomoko, Tsurumai Yuma, Yabuki, Yamashita Keiko

Project originally commissioned for Taming Y/Our Passion, Aichi Triennale, 2019, co-curated by Yoko Nose.

General Information

Art Sonje Center

Opening hours

Tuesday-Sunday, noon-7pm

Closed on Mondays

Admission (Combination ticket for all exhibitions)

10,000 KRW (25-64 years)

7,000 KRW (19-24 years, over 65 years, Art Pass cardholders)

5,000 KRW (9-18 years)

Free: 8 and under, visitors with disabilities, ICOM · CIMAM · SCM cardholders

Ticket reservations can be made through the Art Sonje Center website.

Inquiry 02-733-8949 | artsonje.press@gmail.com

Webpage www.artsonje.org

Address 87 Yulgok-ro 3-gil, Jongno-gu, Seoul 03062 Republic of Korea

© 2024. Art Sonje Center all rights reserved.

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced in any form or by any means without prior permission in writing from the copyright holders and publishers.