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Announcement

Pristine L. de Leon, Hera

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[ANNOUNCEMENT]

Recipients of the Emerging Writers Fellowship 2020

Thanks to the generosity of our anonymous donors who recognised the profound impact of the production of art historical knowledge alongside growing our scholarly community as we continue to weather this difficult period, we are able to increase the award of the *Southeast of Now: Directions in Contemporary and Modern Art in Asia* Emerging Writers Fellowship to two fellows this year.

Our fellows will receive a grant of up to USD1,000, to facilitate in-depth research and writing for a period of six months; undergo a mentorship process; receive editing and advice from the *Southeast of Now* editorial collective; and finally, have their essays (of between 3,000 and 5,000 words in English) published in *Southeast of Now*, in a special Emerging Writers Fellowship section, to appear both in print and online.

We are pleased to announce the award of Emerging Writers Fellowship to Hera, for her proposal “Gaze and Experience in Junghuhn’s *Java Album*”, and also to Pristine L. de Leon, for her proposal “Fluxes of Making: Understanding Assemblage through the Province of Waste”.

Below are the abstracts and biographies of our two fellows.

Gaze and Experience in Junghuhn's *Java Album*

Hera

Explorer Franz Wilhelm Junghuhn's *Java Album* is a visually stunning folio of lithographs depicting the volcanoes of Java; it was produced as part of the Dutch colonial government's survey of the Javanese landscape and natural resources. Junghuhn's *Java Album* was not initially produced as a work of art on its own, but as documentation and illustration accompanying his four-volume geological study of Java. Nevertheless, *Java Album* as an object of art historical study possesses immense value in its unique visual articulation and its complex context of production. His publications led the way for further geological surveys with greater accuracy and increased mining, which resulted in rapid geomorphic transformations. I propose a study of Junghuhn's *Java Album* through the exploration of gaze and experience.

In this research, gaze includes the concept of the picturesque and *mooi indie* as an ordering and depiction of nature. In lieu of Junghuhn's advocacy towards pandeism, I will explore the status of the mountain as a culturally charged entity. Experience in this research can be considered alongside Michael Baxandall's concept of the period eye; some threads of inquiry include the experience of the Javanese landscapes in the late 18th century, including the notion of tourism or the exploration of Java, which had been championed by Stamford Raffles earlier, between 1811–16 and is currently still defining the way mountains are interfaced for consumers. The folio as a presentation format also defines the viewing experience of these wondrous landscape prints.

BIOGRAPHY

Hera is a multidisciplinary practitioner working in the expanded field of art and design. She recently graduated with a MA (Research) from the School of Art, Design and Media, Spaces of the Curatorial, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore, where she received the NTU-NHB grant from the National Heritage Board Singapore for her research on the history of art exhibitions in Singapore. Currently, she works as a design researcher in Humankind Design, where she endeavours to develop a knowledge base on cultural study in design, to encourage positive change within the design ecosystem.

Fluxes of Making: Understanding Assemblage through the Province of Waste

Pristine L. de Leon

Found objects have drawn currency as a conceptual device in Philippine art since the 1970s. Filipino artist and curator Raymundo Albano put forward the term ‘developmental art’ to understand, among others, the prevalence of junk iron, plywood, lumber and rocks, and their capacity to challenge the valuation of objects. The research reflects on this continuing fascination with discards and approaches assemblage as a mode of making that transforms waste—industrial scrap, consumer surplus, junk, debris—through processes routinely enacted at the province of material. Aspiring to a discourse that looks beyond assemblage as a technique assimilated from the West, it interprets it as a practice of making that attends to the flux of place, process and material.

Taking as case studies the practices of Filipino contemporary artists Oscar Villamiel and Pete Jimenez, the research considers the province of material as the artists’ place of encounter. With objects acquired from landfills and junkyards, the artists encounter spaces conditioned by industry and the traffic of daily life. The research relates making assemblages to the utilitarian process of *pangangalakal*, a Filipino term that corresponds to trade while its colloquial use hints at a vernacular process of valuation, involving the acts of scavenging, cannibalizing, hauling and selling. The research then looks at the materiality of waste, its veneer of use, malleability and fragility, and investigates the ways in which assemblages release them from the mould of objecthood and into a fluid space commanded by material.

BIOGRAPHY

Pristine L. de Leon is a graduate student pursuing her MA in Art Studies: Art Theory and Criticism at the University of the Philippines. She teaches at the Fine Arts Department of the Ateneo de Manila University and writes art reviews for the *Philippine Star*. In 2016, she received the Purita Kalaw-Ledesma Prize for Art Criticism at the Ateneo Art Awards. In 2018, she took part in the Curatorial Development Workshop organized by the Philippine Contemporary Art Network, the Japan Foundation and the Vargas Museum, from which she received a grant to curate her first exhibition, *Built on Sand*.