

## PRESS RELEASE

**Goethe-Institut Initiates Dialogue between Collections of Galeri Nasional Indonesia, MAIAM Contemporary Art Museum, Nationalgalerie – Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, and Singapore Art Museum**



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**Goethe-Institut, Galeri Nasional Indonesia, MAIAM Contemporary Art Museum, Nationalgalerie – Staatliche Museen zu Berlin and Singapore Art Museum** launch **Collecting Entanglements and Embodied Histories**, a long-term project that mediates the dialogue between the collections of the museum partners. The dialogue will manifest in the form of four different exhibitions in Chiang Mai, Singapore, Berlin and Jakarta, curated by **Anna-Catharina Gebbers, Grace Samboh, Gridthiya Gawewong** and **June Yap**. The curatorial team jointly conceives the project, with each curator leading an exhibition that explores a distinctive narrative and displays works from the collections of the four institutions.

Collecting Entanglements and Embodied Histories aims to trace stories, counter-histories and absent histories whose spirits populate the present while seeking new narratives. The project explores the question of how these interwoven histories within nation-building processes, individual identity formation and their embodiment are reflected in artistic works and their exhibition history.

“The project was developed out of a series of conversations with and among the curators back in 2017. We facilitated this dialogue to continue since we believe it is important to look back at these interwoven histories that impact the nation-building processes, and to reflect their relevance to our realities today,” said **Dr. Stefan Dreyer, Regional Director of Goethe-Institut for Southeast Asia, Australia and New Zealand**.

Between now and March 2022, the audience can engage in monthly public programs hosted by the curators, broadcasted on YouTube and Facebook every last Thursday of the month at 5 p.m. Jakarta and Bangkok (UTC+7) / 6 p.m. Singapore (UTC+8) / 12 p.m. Berlin (UTC+2).



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### **ERRATA, Chiang Mai, MAIIAM Contemporary Art Museum (30 July – 1 November 2021)**

*ERRATA* is the first chapter of the exhibition series within *Collecting Entanglements and Embodied Histories*, encompassing close to 100 works from 38 artists and 4 archives. *Errata*, a term which is generally used to describe inserted sheets within print publications to indicate correction of errors, in this exhibition context serves as a metaphor for MAIIAM's collection as a manifestation of *errata* to Thai modern and contemporary art history. The exhibition is curated by Gridthiya Gaweewong, with Anna-Catharina Gebbers, Grace Samboh and June Yap.

Throughout the exhibition period, the audience can engage in online and onsite public programs. On 29 July 2021, curator Gridthiya Gaweewong hosted *The 'Body' is Not Just Flesh*, an online artist talk with Arahmaiani, Kawita Vatanajyankur and Sutthirat Supaparinya moderated by Zoe Butt. The program is available to stream online on Goethe-Institut Thailand [YouTube](#) and [Facebook](#), as well as the Facebook pages of [Galeri Nasional Indonesia](#), [Goethe-Institut Indonesien](#), [Goethe-Institut Singapore](#), [Hamburger Bahnhof – Museum für Gegenwart – Berlin](#), [MAIIAM Contemporary Art Museum](#) and [Singapore Art Museum](#).

Gridthiya Gaweewong, Artistic Director of Jim Thompson Art Center, Bangkok and Guest Curator of MAIIAM Contemporary Art Museum, Chiang Mai, said: "The exhibition unpacks the complexity of small narrative artistic practices from performance art, media-based works and multidisciplinary works especially from artists, particularly women, who use their bodies and cameras to encapsulate and embody the entangled histories."

### **The Gift, presented by Singapore Art Museum (20 August – 7 November 2021)**

The second chapter of the exhibition series explores the ideas of exchange, influence and trace through the subject of the gift. From social act to cultural performance and philosophical concept, the apparently ordinary act of gifting is in fact ambivalent and paradoxical, and consequently a source of fascination, vexation and debate. Unlike an economic transaction, the gift is more than the object of its exchange. It is an embodiment of an expansiveness of spirit by the giver that often obliges its receiver, and may even unintentionally become an onerous burden. The exhibition is curated by June Yap, with Anna-Catharina Gebbers, Grace Samboh and Gridthiya Gaweewong and held at the National Gallery Singapore.

June Yap, Director of Curatorial, Collections and Programmes, Singapore Art Museum, said: "Through the apparently simple concept of the gift, the exhibition is curated to expand in an examination of the tangible and intangible within and around objects, artworks and histories, as well as how these are entangled. Like the gift, our relations with objects, artworks and histories cannot be considered without their relationships among people. In the context of a pandemic, the paradox of the gift may also be seen as reflected in the paradox of contact that is desired in its absence, but also bearing with it great risk."

### **Nation, Narration, Narcosis, Hamburger Bahnhof – Museum für Gegenwart – Berlin (4 November 2021 – 3 July 2022)**

Curated by Anna-Catharina Gebbers with Grace Samboh, Gridthiya Gaweewong and June Yap, the exhibition in Berlin explores the relationship of critical art forms such as performance art, time-based media art and installation in particular, to political protests, historical traumas and social narratives. The myths and stories that accompany the usually brutal process of nation-building are subverted with other narratives in the works in the exhibition. The concept of nation contained in the name "National Gallery" encounters other ideas and forms of community, solidarity and belonging, starting from Beuys' concept of social sculpture.



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The exhibition brings together works by more than 50 artists, archives of various artist movements and interventions by producers of cultural collectives. In addition to the works by Joseph Beuys at Hamburger Bahnhof, the works and documents come from the collections of the National Museums in Berlin from the age of imperialism to the present as well as those on loan from the cooperating museums in Chiang Mai, Jakarta and Singapore and from artists.

Anna-Catharina Gebbers, Collection Curator for Contemporary Art at the Nationalgalerie im Hamburger Bahnhof – Museum für Gegenwart – Berlin, said: “The founding of the Nationalgalerie – Staatliche Museen zu Berlin in 1871 owes much to a donation made by the Berlin private collector and banker Joachim Heinrich Wilhelm Wagener to the Prussian king, which was conditional on a National Gallery being established in Berlin. The demand for the establishment of a National Gallery was closely related to the lack of a nation and national feeling. The museum as a place of representation of spiritual unity was linked to the hope of achieving the long hoped-for political unity as a nation. But the founding of this nation does not coincidentally date from the era of incipient imperialism, in which the possession of colonies was regarded as a matter of national prestige and was brutally fought for. Today, the Nationalgalerie in Berlin houses one of the largest collections of works by Joseph Beuys, whose concept of art includes that human action is directed towards structuring and shaping society. But what concept of society should we actually start from? How can the linear narratives associated with nation and state be supplemented by other forms of community, by plural narratives and by the simultaneity and equivalence of different ways of thinking? And what roles can the institution of the museum assume in a plural society of the future?”

### ***Para Sekutu yang Tidak Bisa Berkata Tidak, Jakarta, Galeri Nasional Indonesia (28 January – 28 February 2022 – date TBC)***

Around the time of the Asia-Africa Conference (Bandung, 1955), geopolitically-oriented exhibitions started brewing all over the world. Among these were the Sao Paulo Biennale (f.1951), Alexandria Biennale (f.1955), and Biennial of Graphic Arts (Ljubljana, f.1955). A decade later ASEAN was founded. By 1981, traveling exhibitions between ASEAN member countries began taking place. At this time there was also a surge of non-Western-leaning international exhibitions, such as the Fukuoka Asian Art Triennale (f.1979), Asian Art Biennale (Bangladesh, f.1981), Australia and the Regions Exchange (f.1983), and Havana Biennale (f.1984).

The scope of the Non-Aligned Movement (f.1961) was perhaps too big for such an effort, or one can assume that the Sao Paulo Biennale had accommodated this “region”, considering that their early approach to finding artists and shipping artworks was done as a G-to-G cooperation. What can we learn from these exchanges? Were they merely symbolic gestures of alliances? What was the relationship among the artists? Were there actual exchanges among artists? The exhibition is curated by Grace Samboh, with Anna-Catharina Gebbers, Gridthiya Gawewong and June Yap.

Grace Samboh, researcher and curator, said: “Galeri Nasional Indonesia is home to over 1500 modern and contemporary artworks. Most of the time, they host external exhibitions and execute programs initiated by the Arts and Cultural Directorate under the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research and Technology. Only in the last seven years have they started putting up their collection in the permanent gallery. My curatorial interest is simple. I want to tap into these existing infrastructures. I want to look at the state engaged with citizens and art practitioners in order to activate the collection with exhibitions, seminars, or collection display.”

For the latest updates on the exhibitions and public programs within Collecting Entanglements and Embodied Histories, please visit [collectingentanglements.net](https://collectingentanglements.net)



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## About Goethe-Institut

The Goethe-Institut is Germany's international cultural institute and promotes cultural collaboration worldwide. It encourages knowledge of the German language and conveys a comprehensive image of Germany by providing information about cultural, social, political life in the country. The cultural and educational programs of the institute encourage intercultural dialogue and enable cultural involvement. Focusing on shared artistic production, reception, and reflection, the Goethe-Institut initiates and organizes projects which foster worldwide mobility of people working in arts and culture and strengthen cross-cultural networks from a global perspective.

## About the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research and Technology and Galeri Nasional Indonesia

Galeri Nasional Indonesia is an Indonesian modern and contemporary art museum that manages state-collection artworks under the Directorate General of Culture, Ministry of Education, Culture, Research and Technology. Located at the heart of the capital city of Indonesia in Central Jakarta, Galeri Nasional Indonesia's exhibition spaces are classified as heritage buildings. Galeri Nasional Indonesia collects artworks from notable Indonesian and foreign artists, including Raden Saleh, S. Sudjojono, Affandi, Basoeki Abdullah, Hendra Gunawan, Henk Ngantung, Barli Sasmitawinata, Trubus, Popo Iskandar, Srihadi Soedarsono, Jim Supangkat, Nyoman Nuarta, Heri Dono, Wassily Kandinsky, Hans Hartung, Victor Vassarely, Sonia Delauney, and many more.

## About MAIIAM Contemporary Art Museum

MAIIAM Contemporary Art Museum is a private museum initiated by Eric Booth, stepson of Jean Michel Beurdeley and son of his late wife Patsri Bunnag, who started their collection of Thai contemporary artists who have actively engaged in the local and international art scene since the early 1990s. Built in 2016, MAIIAM's exhibitions have included not only their permanent collection but also the temporary exhibitions of artwork in the region while also organizing shows that tour the world. The museum became the new cultural destination of Chiangmai and reinforced an art and cultural landscape that became active three decades ago, thanks to strong alternative spaces and the vibrant activism of artists' collectives.

## About Hamburger Bahnhof – Museum für Gegenwart – Berlin

Hamburger Bahnhof – Museum für Gegenwart – Berlin presides over a comprehensive collection of contemporary art, which it presents in a variety of exhibitions. It is the largest among the buildings housing the Nationalgalerie's extensive holdings, the remainder of which are housed in the Alte Nationalgalerien, the Neue Nationalgalerien, the Museum Berggruen, and the Sammlung Scharf-Gerstenberg. The Nationalgalerie contains a veritable cosmos of art that spans from 1800 to recent works fresh from the studio. Whoever steps into its exhibition spaces immediately becomes more intimately acquainted with the city, for its works are housed and displayed at a variety of sites and in a variety of architectural landmarks spread across the city of Berlin.

## About Singapore Art Museum

Singapore Art Museum is a contemporary art museum which focuses on art-making and art-thinking in Singapore, Southeast Asia and Asia, encompassing a worldwide perspective of contemporary art practice. SAM advocates and makes accessible interdisciplinary contemporary art through evolving, research-led curatorial practice. Since it opened in January 1996, SAM has developed one of the most important collections of contemporary art in the region. It seeks to seed and nourish a stimulating and creative space in Singapore through exhibitions and public programs while deepening every visitor's experience. Outreach and education, research and publications, as well as cross-disciplinary residencies and exchanges are counted among SAM's wide range of programs.



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## About the Curators

### Anna-Catharina Gebbers

Anna-Catharina Gebbers is a Collection Curator for Contemporary Art at the Nationalgalerie im Hamburger Bahnhof – Museum für Gegenwart – Berlin.

### Grace Samboh

Grace Samboh is a researcher and curator. She co-founded the research group Hyphen (since 2011), the Project Director for RUBANAH Underground Hub, Jakarta (since 2019), a member of the curatorial team for “Jakarta Biennale 2021: ESOK”, and is undertaking a doctorate for Arts and Society Studies at Sanata Dharma University.

### Gridthiya Gaweewong

Gridthiya Gaweewong co-founded the arts organization Project 304 in 1996. She currently works as Artistic Director of the Jim Thompson Art Center, Bangkok, and is a guest curator of MAIIM Contemporary Art Museum, Chiang Mai.

### June Yap

June Yap is Director of Curatorial, Collections and Programmes at the Singapore Art Museum, where she oversees content creation and museum programing.

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Collecting Entanglements and Embodied Histories

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