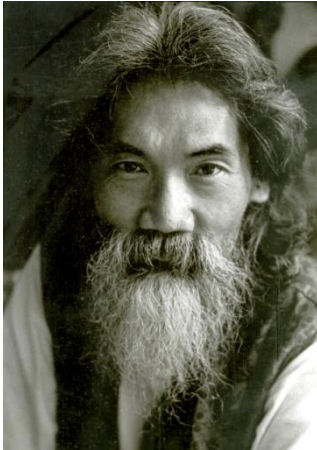


Artist Information
Venus in Vietnam

Vu Dan Tan // Nguyen Nghia Cuong // Iola Lenzi

Vu Dan Tan



Vu Dan Tan (1946 -2009), born and died in Hanoi, was the son of the famous playwright Vu Dinh Long, a founder of the publishing house "Tan Dan". A self-taught artist, during the 1970s Vu Dan Tan worked as an animator at the cartoon film studio of Vietnam national television, as well as for Cuban television (1973). In 1981 he established a private studio which became a meeting place for the Hanoi intelligentsia. In 1990 this became Salon Natasha, Hanoi's first private gallery and artist-run space specializing in contemporary and experimental art.

Vu Dan Tan's artistic career progressed in stages. In the late 1970's - early 1980s he focused predominantly on mask-making, after which he spent several years working on two dimensional art. Then, intrigued by Swiss sculptor Jean Tinguely's fantastic kinetic art, he began to create three-dimensional, changing-changeable objects using discarded materials.

His best-known works include the series Suitcases of a pilgrim, Cadillac-Icarus, the installation Beauty will save the world, Fashion and Amazons.

The work of Vu Dan Tan has been the focus of 15 solo exhibitions and has featured in more than 50 group exhibitions. Major exhibitions include: The 2nd Asia-Pacific Triennial of Contemporary Art, Queensland Art Gallery, Brisbane, Australia (1996); River: New Asian Art - A Dialogue in Taipei, Taipei, Taiwan (1997); Inside, International Art Exhibition accompanying Documenta X, Kassel, Germany (1997); Being minorities - Contemporary Asian Art. Hong Kong Art Center, Hong Kong (1977); Gap Vietnam, House of World Cultures, Berlin, Germany (1999); RienCarNation (with Le Hong Thai), Pacific Bridge Gallery, Oakland, CA, USA (1999); Vu Dan Tan and Nguyen Quang Huy, Atelier Frank & Lee, Singapore (2001); Osaka Triennale, 10th International Contemporary Art Competition, Osaka Contemporary Art Center, Osaka, Japan (2001); 8th Sculpture Triennial (Triennale Kleinplastik), Fellbach, Germany (2001); Subverted Boundaries, Sculpture Square, Singapore (2003); Out of context, Huntington Beach Art Centre, CA, USA (2005); Post Doi Moi. Vietnamese Art after 1990. Singapore Art Museum, Singapore (2008); Intersection Vietnam: new Works

from North & South, Valentine Willie Fine Art, Kuala Lumpur - Singapore (2009); Money for all times, Salon Natasha, Hanoi, Vietnam (2010); Graphic works by Vu Dan Tan and a concert of his music, the State Gallery of Fine Arts, Astrakhan, Russia (2010); Ascending Dragon: Contemporary Vietnamese Artists, Armory Center for the Arts, Pasadena (LA), USA (2010); Negotiating Home, History and Nation. Two decades of contemporary art in Southeast Asia 1991-2011. Singapore Art Museum, Singapore (2011).

Public Collections:

Mariposa Museum, Peterborough, NH, USA
Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa, Wellington, New Zealand
National Gallery of Australia, Canberra, Australia
Singapore Art Museum, Singapore
The Australian Embassy, Hanoi, Vietnam
The State Gallery of Fine Arts, Astrakhan, Russia
The State Gallery of Fine Art, Penza, Russia
Queensland Art Gallery, Brisbane, Australia
World Bank, Washington, USA

Vu Dan Tan's artistic legacy is currently being collated and documented in the Vu Dan Tan Foundation, Hanoi.

Nguyen Nghia Cuong

Nguyen Nghia Cuong was born in 1973 in Bac Ninh province, Vietnam. In 1996 he graduated from Vietnam Fine Arts University, Hanoi. Nguyen Nghia Cuong currently lives and works in Bac Ninh province.

In his works of the last decade, Cuong explores issues relating to the intersection between universal spiritual values and the reality of contemporary Vietnam's materialistically-driven society. He has developed an ironic approach to the impact of consumerism and elaborated a specific artistic vocabulary to articulate his views on the commodification of people and human relations. As a means of supporting concept with form, the artist incorporates commercial packaging and printed brand logos into his painted art. If this methodology is in some ways reminiscent of early Western Pop Art, in the Vietnamese context it has a distinctly local flavour.



Nghuyen Nghia Cuong has had five solo exhibitions and participated in more than a dozen group shows. His major exhibitions include: Philips Morris Asean Art Awards - Vietnam (1999); Two men, Tu Do Gallery, Ho Chi Minh city, Vietnam (2002); Information-Advertisement, Salon Natasha, Hanoi, Vietnam (2002); Melbourneconnectionsasia, Urban Art project, Melbourne, Australia (2003); Asian Art Fair, Ansan, South Korea (2006); Asian Contemporary Art Fair, New York, USA (2007); Post - Doi Moi - Vietnamese art after 1990, Singapore Art Museum, Singapore (2008); The National Fine Arts exhibition (organized by the Ministry of Culture - Sports and Tourism of Vietnam every five years), Hanoi, Vietnam (2010); The color of Cuong's smile, Art Vietnam gallery, Hanoi, Vietnam (2010).

His works are in the collection of Singapore Art Museum, Singapore.

Natalia Kraevskaia and Vu Dan Tan Foundation

Natalia Kraevskaia (Natasha) is an independent curator and art writer specializing in Vietnamese contemporary art. In 1990, with artist Vu Dan Tan, she established the first private art space in Hanoi, Salon Natasha. Since then she has organized and curated numerous exhibitions of Vietnamese art in Vietnam, Australia, Canada, Germany, Finland, Macao and Russia. She is the author of *Nostalgia towards Exploration. Essays on Contemporary Art in Vietnam* (2005), as well as a contributor to exhibition catalogues and international art magazines. She is also an associate professor of cultural anthropology at The Russian State University for the Humanities, Moscow (Institute of Oriental and Classical Studies).

In 2012 Natalia Kraevskaia initiated the Vu Dan Tan Foundation. Based in Hanoi, the non-profit foundation aims to conserve, research and document the creative legacy of Vu Dan Tan.

Iola Lenzi



Iola Lenzi is a Singapore researcher, curator and critic of Southeast Asian contemporary art. She lectures in the Asian Art Histories MA programme of Singapore's Lasalle-Goldsmiths College of the Arts, is an advisor/contributor of the 'Journal of Fine Arts', Silpakorn University, Bangkok, and the author/editor of regional visual art research essays and catalogues. She has conceptualised numerous exhibitions of Southeast Asian art in the region and China, major projects including *Stitching the Wound Arahmainai in Bangkok*, James W. Thompson Foundation, Bangkok (2006); *Making History*, Esplanade Singapore (2010); *Negotiating Home History and Nation:*

two decades of contemporary art in Southeast Asia 1991-2011, Singapore Art Museum (2011); *Concept Context Contestation: art and the collective in Southeast Asia*, Bangkok Art and Culture Centre (2013); and *Masterpieces- digital art in Southeast Asia*, Samsung art projects (ongoing). She is the author of *Museums of Southeast Asia* (2005), and writes for *Asian Art Newspaper*, London, among other specialist publications.