

# Hara Museum of Contemporary Art

Press Release 2012/8/20

## ***Home Again – 10 Artists Who Have Experienced Japan***

**August 28 (Tuesday) – November 18 (Sunday), 2012**

***Indonesia, Singapore, India, Afghanistan, Brazil, Argentina and the United States – Various homes to various artists who return to Japan to create a place for co-existence at the Hara Museum.***



Syagini Ratnawulan L.S. 2011 photograph 57.2 x 150.3 cm

The Hara Museum is proud to present *Home Again – 10 Artists Who Have Experienced Japan*.

In our globalized world today, active international exchange is occurring in all areas of life, including the world of contemporary art, and the Artist in Residence (AIR) (note 1) is one concrete way in which it is occurring. Thanks to AIR programs, many artists from different countries have come to Japan to experience the culture and society and to use that experience as inspiration for creative activity.

This exhibition showcases 10 artists from various countries in Asia and the Americas, all former Artists In Residence (AIR) who came to Japan under the sponsorship of the Backers Foundation (note 2) and the NPO Arts Initiative Tokyo [AIT] (note 3) between the years 2007 and 2011. During their three-month residencies, they discovered new motifs related to the country, exhibited work that they made in Tokyo and then returned home. For this exhibition, they have been invited to come back to Japan to show us the changes and developments that have occurred in their expression during their time away. Furthermore, by presenting the results at a museum, we are able to look into the present state of a cutting-edge AIR program.

Since its founding in 1979, the Hara Museum has placed great weight on international exchange in contemporary art. This exhibition, which continues that tradition, will present selected works created by these artists during their residencies or after their return to their home countries. As the state of international affairs undergo major changes, more and more artists from non-Western, developing or newly developed nations are making an appearance in the international art scene. This fact is underscored by the prominent place given to artists from Middle Eastern countries at *dOCUMENTA 13*, the large-scale art fair currently being held in Germany. In light of these trends, this exhibition featuring artists from Asia and Central and South America takes on a deep significance.

What was the experience of Japan for these artists, each from a different cultural sphere, with different language, religion and customs? Of particular interest is whether traces of their experience can be discerned in the work that they have done afterwards. Though marked by differences in background, work pattern, style of art, and choice of medium - ranging from painting, drawing and installation to photography and sculpture - these artists, as a group, represent the great variety of expression that is special to the world of contemporary art today.

For them, Japan was not "home," but a chance to reconfirm the meaning of "home," an opportunity to go beyond cultural boundaries, to reach for something approaching co-existence. As a former private residence and the venue of this exhibition, the Hara Museum provides a virtual home for that co-existence.

Notes:

### 1. What does "Artist in Residence" mean?

According to the AIR\_J online database of Artist-In-Residence programs (<http://air-j.info/>): "Artist in Residence (AIR) is a program to support the creative activities of artists in Japan and overseas by providing opportunities for them to stay and work outside their countries or regions for a certain period of time. With growing interest in AIR in Japan in the early 1990s, an increasing number of local governments and art-related NPOs have been working on AIR programs."

### 2. What is the Backers Foundation?

The Backers Foundation is a private group of patrons from the business world who first joined together in 1994 to provide support for the Japan Animal Welfare Society. Since then, the 55 members have funded a variety of organizations. They also participate in self-organized committees set up for projects to which they volunteer their personal time under the motto "cheerfully and happily." One of these efforts is a *terakoya*, or after-hours school for children, that the foundation has operated since 2005. Through the BAR (Backers and AIT Residence Program) series, 10 artists and 5 curators have been invited from countries that so far include the US, the Netherlands, Afghanistan, Brazil, Singapore, South Korea, Sri Lanka, Argentina, India, Morocco and Indonesia.

### 3. What is Arts Initiative Tokyo [AIT]?

AIT (pronounced "eight") is an NPO that was founded in 2002 in Tokyo by 6 art curators and organizers with the goal of providing opportunities to think, learn and discuss about contemporary art and visual culture. AIT collaborates with individuals, corporations, foundations and the government to teach people about the complexity, diversity, surprise and fun of contemporary art. At the same time, it promotes the exchange of cultural ideas through the independent contemporary art school MAD that it operates, AIR programs for international artists and curators, and exhibitions and lectures by artists. [www.a-i-t.net](http://www.a-i-t.net)

#### [Exhibition Information]

**Exhibition title:** *Home Again – 10 Artists Who Have Experienced Japan*

**Dates:** August 28 (Tuesday) – November 18 (Sunday), 2012

**Place:** Hara Museum of Contemporary Art, 4-7-25, Kitashinagawa, Shinagawa-ku, Tokyo 140-0001

Tel: 03-3445-0651 Fax: 03-3473-0104 E-mail: [info@haramuseum.or.jp](mailto:info@haramuseum.or.jp)

Museum website: <http://www.haramuseum.or.jp> Mobile site: <http://mobile.haramuseum.or.jp>

<http://www.art-it.asia/u/HaraMuseum/> (blog)

Twitter: <http://twitter.com/haramuseum> (in Japanese only/ Account name: @haramuseum)

**Organized by:** Hara Museum of Contemporary Art and Arts Initiative Tokyo [AIT]

**Co-organized by:** The Backers Foundation

**Sponsored by:** Daikin Industries, Ltd, UBS, Louis Vuitton Japan

**Supported by:** Asahi Beer Arts Foundation, Asian Cultural Council, The Kao Foundation for Arts and Sciences

**Hours:** 11:00 am-5:00 pm, Wednesdays until 8:00 pm (last entry 30 minutes before closing)

**Closed:** Mondays (except September 17 and October 8), September 18 and October 9

**Admission:** Regular 1,000 yen; Students 700 yen (high school & university) or 500 yen (elementary & junior high); Free for Hara Museum members, students through high school every Saturday during the school terms. 100 yen discount per person for groups of 20 or more.

**Directions:** 5 minutes by taxi or 15 minutes on foot from JR Shinagawa Station (Takanawa exit); or from the same station take the No.96 bus, get off at the first stop (Gotenyama), and walk 3 minutes.



LOUIS VUITTON

公益財団法人 アサヒビール芸術文化財団

公益財団法人 花王 芸術・科学財団

H A R A  
MUSEUM

asian  
cultural  
council



Backers  
FOUNDATION

## [Participating artists]

### **Khadim Ali** (Afganistan, b. 1978)

Based in Quetta, Pakistan and born to parents of an Afghan minority group, Ali studied miniature painting at the National College of Arts in Lahore. He uses those traditional techniques to portray contemporary society in his art. During his residency in 2007, he made an acquaintance with a woman from Europe who had left her daughter behind to work in Japan. This led to a video piece in which the woman is asked to sing lullabies in her native language, as well as miniature paintings based on that encounter. Ali had come to Japan before through the AIR program of the Fukuoka Asian Museum. He has shown work at such venues as the *Asia Pacific Triennale* (2006) and *DOCUMENTA 13* (2012). For this exhibition, he presents new miniature paintings related to the work at *DOCUMENTA 13*.



Khadim Ali *The Haunted Lotus* 2011-2012  
goauche and gold leaf on paper 70 x 54 cm

### **Minam Apang** (India, b. 1980)

Based in Goa, India, Apang graduated with a Master's degree from the Sir J.J. School of Art in Mumbai. In small, yet highly detailed drawings, she uses paper and thread to create a fantastical world guided by her unconscious mind and chance. Her drawings are based on stories passed down orally by her tribe in northeastern India where she was born. In them, meaning and emotion are expressed in different ways through the weaving together of letters, signs and silhouettes. While in Tokyo, she made meticulous drawings that she folded and placed vertically to create three-dimensional works. For this exhibition, she plans to show new drawings.



Minam Apang *Hillside Stories: Neli and Yomi* 2009  
cotton thread, synthetic glue, 400 gsm fabriano cold press archival paper, ash wood table  
26 x 56 x 8.5cm (paper work); 35 x 70 x 35cm (table)  
Photo by Keizo Kioku

**Florencia Rodriguez Giles** (Argentina, b. 1978)

Based in Buenos Aires, Argentina, Giles studied at the National University of the Arts in Buenos Aires. She makes drawings or installations using stage sets, props and costumes, creating scenes that appear to be taken from a play. She incorporates mythical imagery and narratives from sources that include Japanese Noh and Greek plays to create a whimsical world uniquely her own. In her drawings made during her residency in 2009, she combined mythical imagery with her impressions of Japan. For this exhibition, she will present a new installation consisting of a theater set and costumes.



Photo by: Rosana Schoijett



Florencia Rodriguez Giles *Fictional Islands* 2009  
pencil, marker-pen, watercolor, paper, photograph prints  
100 x 100 cm (Installation size) (partial view, reference image)  
Photo by Keizo Kioku

**Duto Hardono** (Indonesia, b. 1985)

Based in Bandung, Indonesia, Hardono graduated from the Fine Art & Design Faculty of Bandung Institute of Technology (ITB). He creates installations, drawings and collages that are full of humor and wit, often using actual sounds or images that lead the viewer to imagine sound. After his residency in 2007, he created a sound installation using random noises and voices that he recorded in Tokyo. Another work is a collage made up of things collected during his stay. For this exhibition, Hardono contributes a conceptual piece consisting of postcards that he sent from his home to Tokyo everyday for a month.



Duto Hardono *Untitled (You Chose the Wrong Side)* 2011  
framed hand stamped cassette tape  
36.0 x 21.2 cm (reference image)  
Photo by Keizo Kioku



**Pradeep Mishra** (India, b. 1977)

Based in Mumbai, India, Mishra received an MFA from the Sir J.J. School of Art in Mumbai. During his residency in 2010, his motifs included animals at the zoo or embalmed animals at museums. He creates vibrantly colored figurative paintings that depict plants, animals and people who serve or sacrifice their lives for the sake of others. As embodiments of “life” in various forms, these works, when displayed, are often accompanied by a living plant or soil. For the exhibition, Mishra has created an outdoor installation in the shape of a flag.



Pradeep Mishra *warmthoftogetherness* 2010  
oil paint, paper 138 x 209 cm  
Photo by Keizo Kioku

**Donna Ong** (Singapore, b. 1978)

Based in Singapore, Ong studied at Goldsmith's College in London. She draws on various narrative sources for her installations and video art, ranging from mythology to the Bible. During her residency in 2008, Ong created an installation consisting of dollhouse tableware and furniture painted black, gray and silver. Her work has appeared at the Singapore Biennale (2006) and Moscow Biennale (2007). This exhibition features a video work inspired by the friendship dolls that were exchanged between Japan and America in 1927 as symbols of friendship between the two nations. In the video, innocent-looking dolls exude an eeriness as vessels inhabited by spirits.



Donna Ong *In the Secret, in the Quiet Place (v)* 2008  
enamel paint, miniature plastic toys, miscellaneous plastic items  
44 x 37 cm Photo by Keizo Kioku

**Thiago Rocha Pitta** (Brazil, b. 1980)

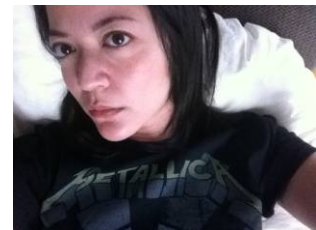
Pitta, who lives in São Paulo, Brazil, participated in the Singapore Biennale (2006) and São Paulo Biennale (2012). During his residence in Tokyo, Pitta was attracted to the simple forms that he encountered in the city's architecture. His drawings and installations combine the inorganic aspect of architecture and the organic aspect of salt crystals. He makes contemplative works based on a close observation of natural processes such as weathering, sedimentation and the flow of water, often using salt crystal as a symbol of change in nature. For this exhibition, Pitta will create an installation using cloth and cement.



Thiago Rocha Pitta *Monument to the Continental Drift* 2012  
cement on canvas 170 x 250 x 100 cm (reference image)

**Syagini Ratnawulan** (Indonesia, b. 1979)

Ratnawulan, who lives in Bandung, Indonesia, studied at Goldsmith's College in London. She participated in the exhibition *Under Construction* at Tokyo Opera City Gallery and in the Japan Foundation Forum (2002). Old furniture, typewriters and cushions found during her 2011 residency appear in her installations, photographs and drawings, which are quiet in nature, but highly thought provoking. In her photographic work *L.S.*, which is based on *The Last Supper* of Leonardo da Vinci, Ratnawulan's positions her subjects in the same order as Leonardo, covering them with a white veil as an expression of hidden history and time. She will present new drawings for the current exhibition.



Syagini Ratnawulan *L.S.* 2011 photograph 57.2 x 150.3 cm  
(image shown on Page 1)

**Erika Verzutti** (Brazil, b. 1971)

Verzutti resides in São Paulo, Brazil. She studied at Goldsmith College in London and participated in the *Neo Tropicália* exhibition (2008) at the Museum of Contemporary Art Tokyo. In her sculptures and paintings, Verzutti uses a variety of materials—from clay, cement and paper to real or fake vegetables and fruits, and ready-mades—to create imagery of a free and organic nature. During her residency, she made drawings using felt-tip pens and concrete sculptures. She will present new sculptural works for this exhibition.



Erika Verzutti *Carbonada* 2010  
concrete, glass beads 32 x 13 x 13 cm  
Photo by Keizo Kioku

**Mary Elizabeth Yarbrough** (U.S.A., b. 1974)

Based in San Francisco, U.S.A., Yarbrough received a Master's degree from the California College of Arts in San Francisco. She creates 2D art using pop culture images from the TV and the Internet and colored tape which she tears and assembles on the canvas. During her residency in 2007, she was attracted to aspects of popular culture such as karaoke and *enka*, noting the difference between non-Japanese, who sing karaoke in front of strangers, and the Japanese, who sing in small rooms with acquaintances. She was particularly interested in Misora Hibari, her fashion and her singing style. Some of the work inspired by these sources will appear in public for the first time in this exhibition.



Mary Elizabeth Yarbrough  
*Oh-me nee kakatte ureh-shee des! (I am glad that I meet you!)* 2007  
duct tape and contact paper on contact paper 63 x 56 cm

**【For interviews and press images】**

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