

## **List of Moderators**

### **BRIEF BIOGRAPHIES OF MODERATORS** [updated 4 July 2011]

#### **PANEL I: What Makes a “Great” Art Museum in Singapore?**

**ARUN Mahizhnan** is Deputy Director at the Institute of Policy Studies. Mr Arun's responsibilities include assistance in setting the strategic direction of IPS, overseeing its research output and the management of the Institute. In addition, he leads the research work in the areas of Arts & Culture and Media at the Institute. His past research interests included business issues such as regionalisation of the Singapore economy, and development of entrepreneurship.

Mr Arun is concurrently an Adjunct Professor at the Wee Kim Wee School of Communication & Information at the Nanyang Technological University. Before joining IPS in 1991, he had worked in both the public and private sectors for 20 years, mostly in public communication fields.

#### **PANEL II: Whither Modernity in Southeast Asian Art**

**Charles MEREWETHER** is Director of the Institute of Contemporary Arts, LASALLE College of the Arts, Singapore. Born in Scotland, he received his doctorate in Art History at the University of Sydney. An art historian and Curator he was between 2007-8 he was Deputy Director of the Cultural District, Saadiyat Island, Abu Dhabi for the Tourism Development & Investment Co. and in 2007 served as the Arts and Culture Consultant for the Emirates Foundation in the UAE and Visiting Professor of Contemporary Art in Suleimania, Kurdistan (2007). He was Chairman of the Advisory Board of the Hong Kong International Art Fair (2007-2009), Artistic Director & Curator of the Biennale of Sydney (2004-2006), Collections Curator at the Getty Center, Los Angeles (1994-2004) and Inaugural Curator of the Museo Arte Contemporaneo de Monterrey, Mexico, (1991-1994).

Merewether has taught at the University of Sydney, Universidad Autonoma in Barcelona, the Universidad Ibero-Americana (Mexico City), and University of Southern California and been recipient of various Fellowships including Research Fellow at both the Institute of Advanced Studies at Jawaharlal Nehru University and ZKM, Karlsruhe as well as Senior Research Fellow at the Centre for Cross Cultural Research, Australian National University (2004-2007), Japan Foundation Research Fellow (2000) and Research Fellow at both Yale University and University of Texas. He has curated numerous exhibitions internationally and published widely on modernism and contemporary art in Europe, East Asia, Australia and both North America and the Americas. His recent book publications include a co-edited volume of essays After the Event, (Manchester University Press, 2010); Under Construction: Ai Weiwei (2008), Art, Anti-Art, Non-Art: Experimentations in the Public Sphere in Postwar Japan 1950-1970, (2007); General and Commissioning Editor, Zones of Contact (2006) and Editor, The Archive (2006).

### **PANEL III: Building and Belonging to an Art Ecology**

**Eugene TAN** is Programme Director (Special Projects), Singapore Economic Development Board. His previous appointments include Director of Exhibitions, Osage Gallery (Hong Kong, Singapore, Beijing, Shanghai), Programme Director for Contemporary Art at Sotheby's Institute of Art – Singapore and Director of the Institute of Contemporary Arts Singapore. He was also co-curator of the inaugural Singapore Biennale in 2006 and curator for the Singapore Pavilion at the 2005 Venice Biennale. Recent thematic exhibitions he has curated include “The Burden of Representation: Abstraction in Asia Today” (2010), “Coffee, Cigarettes and Pad Thai: Contemporary Art in Southeast Asia” (2008) and “Always Here but Never Present: Art in a Senseless World” (2008), as well as solo exhibitions by Lee Mingwei (2010), Jompet (2010), Charwei Tsai (2009), Nipan Oranniwesna (2009) and Wilson Shieh (2009). He is co-author of the publication “Contemporary Art in Singapore” (2007) and has written for exhibition catalogues and publications, including art journals such as Art Asia Pacific, Art Review, Broadsheet, C-Arts, Contemporary, Flash Art, Metropolis M and Modern Painters. In his current role with the Economic Development Board, he is working to develop the visual arts industry in Singapore.

### **PANEL IV: “If I were the Museum Director...”**

**C. J. WEE Wan-ling** is an Associate Professor of English in the Nanyang Technological University. He has held Visiting Fellowships at the Humanities Research Centre, Australian National University; the Society for the Humanities, Cornell University; and the Centre for Research in the Arts, Social Sciences and the Humanities, Cambridge University. Wee is the author of *Culture, Empire, and the Question of Being Modern* (2003) and *The Asian Modern: Culture, Capitalist Development, Singapore* (2007); he is also the editor of *Local Cultures and the ‘New Asia’: The State, Culture, and Capitalism in Southeast Asia* (2002). Most recently, he co-edited the anthology *Contesting Performance: Global Sites of Research* (2010). His present research interest is in the relationship between questions of the postcolonial, modernity, modernism and the contemporary arts and culture.

### **PLENARY DIALOGUE**

**KWOK Kian Chow**, Director of the National Art Gallery Singapore, was previously the founding Director of the Singapore Art Museum. An influential voice in the art museum sector in Asia, he helped initiate the Asian Art Museum Directors’ Forum (AAMDF). As a Board Member of ICOM International Committee of Modern Art Museums and Collections, he played a key role in organising the CIMAM Annual Conference, ‘Common Grounds for Museums in Global Society’ in Shanghai in 2010. Kwok worked for ten years in community development before joining the National Museum Singapore as a Senior Curator. An active member of many public art and academic boards and committees including the Sculpture Square, UOB Group Art Committee, Kolkata Museum of Modern Art (India), China Art Foundation (London), Singapore Press Holdings Chinese Newspapers and also chairing the Art Advisory Panel of the Land Transport Authority, Kwok’s publications in Chinese and English include two monographs and numerous essays on museology and art history of Southeast Asia, China

and Singapore. Kwok was awarded the Public Administration Silver Medal by Singapore in 2003, and conferred the Chevalier de l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres (2002) and Officier of the Order (2009) by France. His research interest is the continual evolvement of the category 'art' informed by the correlation of multiple modernisms with community cultural engagements, through strategic museum activism in the context of the broader global intellectual environment.