

MEDIA RELEASE: Wednesday, 19 July 2017

## Artistic Director of 21<sup>st</sup> Biennale of Sydney announces Title of the 2018 Exhibition and Additional Selection of Artists



Chen Shaoxiong *The Views*, 2016 (installation view) four-channel video installation. 2.5 x 3 m (approx.). Courtesy Pékin Fine Arts, Beijing. Collection of Luo Qingmin

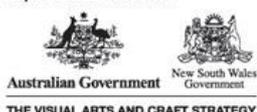
**19 July 2017: Artistic Director of the 21<sup>st</sup> Biennale of Sydney Mami Kataoka announced today the title of the 2018 Biennale of Sydney is *SUPERPOSITION: Art of Equilibrium and Engagement*. Speaking at the Australian Embassy in Tokyo, Ms Kataoka also shared the names of additional artists from Asia region selected to present their works in the multi-venue event. She elaborated on key themes in the forthcoming edition of Australasia's longest running and most respected contemporary art event.**

**Artistic Director, Mami Kataoka** noted that: 'the 21<sup>st</sup> edition of the Biennale of Sydney will draw on the concept of superposition in quantum mechanics as a metaphor to link the notions of equilibrium and engagement and provide us with insights into the world today. We are surrounded by conflicting ideas across all levels of humanity: different cultures; readings of nature and the universe; political ideologies and systems of government; interpretations of human history, including the history of art and definitions of contemporary art.'

Commenting on the selected artists, Ms Kataoka added: 'The participating artists in the 21<sup>st</sup> Biennale of Sydney drawn from around the globe, have been chosen to offer a panoramic view of how opposing understandings and interpretations can come together in a state of equilibrium. My hope is that their artworks will serve as a catalyst for thinking about these principles and concerns, and encourage each of us to consider our own position in society as a starting point.'

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The artists announced today who will participate in the 21<sup>st</sup> Biennale of Sydney are:

- **Julian Abraham 'Togar'** (Born 1987 in Indonesia, lives and works in Medan, Indonesia)
- **Chen Shaoxiong** (Born 1962 in China, died in 2016 in Beijing, China)
- **Geng Xue** (Born 1983 in China, lives and works in Beijing, China)
- **Tanya Goel** (Born 1985 in India, lives and works in New Delhi, India)
- **Chia-Wei Hsu** (Born 1983 in Taiwan, lives and works in Taipei, Taiwan)
- **Ami Inoue** (Born 1991 in Japan, lives and works in Kyoto, Japan)
- **Sosa Joseph** (Born 1971 in India, lives and works in Kochi, India)
- **Prabhavathi Meppayil** (Born 1965 in India, lives and works in Bangalore, India)
- **Tomie Ohtake** (Born 1913 in Japan, died in 2015 in São Paulo, Brazil)
- **Tawatthai Puntusawadi** (Born 1971 in Thailand, lives and works in Chiang Mai, Thailand)
- **Sa Sa Art Projects** (founded in 2010 in Phnom Penh, Cambodia)
- **Svay Sareth** (Born 1972 in Cambodia, lives and works in Siem Reap, Cambodia)
- **Akira Takayama** (Born 1969 in Japan, lives and works in Saitama, Japan)
- **Maria Taniguchi** (Born 1981 in Philippines, lives and works in Manila, Philippines)
- **Su-Mei Tse** (Born 1973 in Luxemburg, lives and works in Luxemburg)
- **Samson Young** (Born 1979 in Hong Kong, lives and works in Hong Kong)

In addition to these artists, Yukinori Yanagi, Koji Ryui and Noguchi Rika are participating Japanese artists.

**Jo-Anne Birnie-Danzker, Director and CEO** of the Biennale of Sydney, noted that 'Mami Kataoka is a distinguished curator whose vision for the 21<sup>st</sup> Biennale of Sydney is both timely and prescient. It encourages us to consider how all things of this world interact with each other. The 2018 Biennale of Sydney *SUPERPOSITION: Art of Equilibrium and Engagement* promises to be an inspiring and important means for us to contemplate our place in the world.

To commemorate the organisation's 45th anniversary, the exhibition will reflect on the Biennale's rich history through a close examination of its Archive, drawing on more than four decades of encounters with art from around the globe. We look forward to welcoming to Sydney the many thousands of visitors expected to attend the 21<sup>st</sup> Biennale who will experience this ambitious and exciting edition'.

The 21<sup>st</sup> Biennale of Sydney title adopts the quantum mechanical term 'superposition' which, in quantum theory, refers to the ability of electrons to occupy multiple states at once; to simultaneously take opposing paths and end up in different places. It is only with the application of measurement that matter is reduced to a single definition.

Correspondingly, according to the theory of 'Wuxing' in ancient Chinese natural philosophy, everything in this world is comprised of five main elements: wood, fire, earth, metal and water. Each element gives rise to the next – either through a process of symbiosis where one element encourages the formation of the others in a circulatory system, or; a situation of mutual conflict and antagonism, in which each element resists and suppresses the others. In reality, diverse elements come together in a state of repeated collision, collapse, and rebirth.

37 participating artists have now been announced for the 21<sup>st</sup> Biennale of Sydney with the complete list of participating artists to be announced in October this year.

**The 21<sup>st</sup> Biennale of Sydney will be presented over twelve weeks from Friday, 16 March until Monday, 11 June 2018 (Preview 13–15 March), at multiple locations throughout Sydney. For further information on the 21<sup>st</sup> Biennale of Sydney, please visit: [biennaleofsydney.com.au](http://biennaleofsydney.com.au)**

– Ends –

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Follow the link or contact our press team to access media images and captions:

<https://drive.google.com/open?id=0B-gOSRml5CS5OWxHc3UxbXVMa3M>

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## ARTISTS BIOGRAPHIES

### **Julian Abraham 'Togar'**

Born 1987 in Indonesia. Lives and works in Medan, Indonesia

Julian Abraham 'Togar' engages in extensive research resulting in analytically focused works, often combining installation, sound, music, programming and science. Abraham's projects foster social engagement through community participation in workshops and instructional programs. The artist is concerned with the relationships and connections between art, the environment, science and technology. Key outcomes of Abraham's projects are education and the dissemination of specialist scientific knowledge to the broader community.

### **Chen Shaoxiong**

Born 1962 in China. Died in 2016 in Beijing, China

Chen Shaoxiong's practice addressed the way information and images are controlled, manipulated and suppressed to maintain hegemonic structures and perpetuate ignorance. Originally trained in traditional Chinese ink painting techniques, Chen expanded his practice to include performance, video and participatory art. Growing up in an environment where access to information was highly regulated, Chen developed a heightened awareness of history as narrative and its capacity to be misused or misinterpreted. For Chen, history was neither a stable nor a static concept, but a construct easily susceptible to distortion.

### **Geng Xue**

Born 1983 in China. Lives and works in Beijing, China

Geng Xue works predominantly across sculpture and ceramics, with a focus on the material qualities of porcelain. Extending her practice beyond the conventional boundaries of sculpture, Geng Xue's short films and poetic video works explore a fascination with aestheticism and her love of traditional Chinese culture. The fictional narratives Geng Xue creates are imbued with romanticism and emotion; imaginary worlds where delicate porcelain figurines and realistic clay sculptures are brought to life.

### **Tanya Goel**

Born 1985 in India. Lives and works in New Delhi, India

Inspired by urban landscapes, Tanya Goel transforms the chaos of everyday life into orderly, precise paintings informed by her interest in the relationship between light, colour and material. Representing an archaeology of the metropolitan environment, Goel's canvases are records composed of pigments sourced from unexpected places; city streets, construction zones and building sites. The artist collects pieces of limestone, glass, cement and brick, crushing the samples to chemically analyse and examine their basic tonal elements before extracting the pigments to create her paintings; transposing her conclusions onto canvas.

### **Chia-Wei Hsu**

Born 1983 in Taiwan. Lives and works in Taipei, Taiwan

Chia-Wei Hsu applies narrative convention as a language through which to re-present history, myth and legend. In doing so, Hsu acknowledges the gulf between the past and the present, and the impossibility of completely accurate reinterpretation. Melding notions of objective and subjective reality, Hsu creates films that occupy a space somewhere between the two. Referencing geographical, historical and cultural regions in Asia, Hsu's works are localised attempts at dealing with forgotten or neglected stories from the distanced perspective of the present-day.

### **Ami Inoue**

Born 1991 in Japan, lives and works in Kyoto, Japan

Video and performance artist Ami Inoue draws on personal stories from an ethnographical perspective, producing works that reveal the gulf between modern life and a 'primitive' means of survival. Inoue learnt to hunt while still in graduate school and now documents her methods from the position of a hunter who lives in the city. Her videos often feature tranquil images of nature contrasted with clinical urban scenes, suggesting the contemporary disaffection between the natural and human-made worlds.

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## ARTISTS BIOGRAPHIES (continued)

### Sosa Joseph

Born 1971 in India. Lives and works in Kochi, India

Sosa Joseph's paintings exist in the indeterminate space between reality and fantasy, drawing inspiration from every day, commonplace activities and reproducing them in evocative ways. Joseph presents the real and the imagined as deeply related and ultimately indivisible, despite the two being commonly perceived as opposing forces. Whilst referring to the social and cultural context of her native Kerala, the allegorical quality of Joseph's works render them universally relevant through a broader appeal to our shared human experience.

### Prabhavathi Meppayil

Born 1965 in India. Lives and works in Bangalore

Prabhavathi Meppayil's process-oriented practice is motivated by traditional craft and an appreciation of the simplicity and purity of objects and materials. Influenced by her family's long history working as goldsmiths, the artist often reinterprets and repurposes artisanal techniques, tools and resources in her work. Displacing the intended use of certain materials or objects, Meppayil repositions the items to align with forms and ideas associated with post-war minimalist art, examining modernist notions of abstraction juxtaposed with artistry, craft and tradition.

### Tomie Ohtake

Born 1913 in Japan. Died 2015 in São Paulo, Brazil

Establishing her artistic career after relocating to São Paulo in 1936, Tomie Ohtake's painting practice focused on the fundamental elements of composition. Exploring colour, form, texture, tone and gesture, her works examined the visual potential of the basic components of painting. By means of careful selection and deliberate omission, Ohtake displayed a discerning capacity to recognise the force and potency of pictorial restraint.

### Tawatchai Puntusawasdi

Born 1971 in Thailand. Lives and works in Chiang Mai, Thailand

Working with hardwood, slate, organic fibre and metals, Puntusawasdi's three-dimensional architectural sculptures promote a heightened awareness of space, encouraging the viewer to acknowledge the spatial field surrounding an object as an intrinsic part of the work. His shelter-like sculptures also question concepts of reality, provoking considerations of subjectivity and alternative states of being, echoing a fundamentally Buddhist world-view.

### Sa Sa Art Projects

Founded in 2010 in Cambodia

Established in 2010 by the Cambodian art collective Stiev Selapak as a space for diverse and experimental art practices, Sa Sa Art Projects is the only not-for-profit artist-run space in Phnom Penh. The space is located in the White Building (originally known as the Municipal Apartments), a historic apartment complex designed to accommodate the tripling of Phnom Penh's population that occurred between 1953 and 1970. Sa Sa Art Projects is an experimental mechanism constantly evolving and adapting to the needs of the community while fostering opportunities for creativity and collaboration.

### Svay Sareth

Born 1972 in Cambodia. Lives and works in Siem Reap, Cambodia

Born in Cambodia during a time of hostility and political upheaval, Svay Sareth began making art as a teenager while living in a refugee camp located near the Thai-Cambodian border. Svay works across the mediums of sculpture, installation, and durational performance to examine the many facets of war: violence, power, fear, resistance, futility, loss and survival. After living through civil war and the aftermath of terrible conflict, making art became a way for Svay to document the violence of everyday life, and a means to escape reality and dream of a better world.

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## ARTISTS BIOGRAPHIES (continued)

### Akira Takayama

Born 1969 in Japan. Lives and works in Saitama, Japan

Akira Takayama creates and directs projects that challenge the conventions of traditional theatre, expanding the audience experience through participation and experimental and theoretical considerations. In 2002 Takayama founded Port B, a project-specific theatre collective aimed at fostering collaborative relationships and artistic interventions, including installations in urban spaces, tour-performances, experimental social projects, lecture performances and sight-seeing tours. Motifs of movement, migration, participatory theatre, and the use of a radio transistor and maps, are common tropes in Takayama's works, which explore both how theatre can be a touristic tool and how tourism might act as a medium for theatre.

### Maria Taniguchi

Born 1981 in the Philippines. Lives and works in Manila, Philippines

Maria Taniguchi's practice encompasses a diverse range of mediums including sculpture, painting, drawing, silkscreen, video and photography. Interested in exploring concepts of space and time, in 2008 Taniguchi initiated an ongoing series of paintings; large-format canvases composed of a seemingly endless number of hand-painted bricks. The artist has referred to these process-driven, meditative works as being the fundamental root of her artistic practice which, at its core, explores the systems and structures of making art and the materiality and architecture of painting itself.

### Su-Mei Tse

Born 1973 in Luxemburg. Lives and works in Luxemburg

Su-Mei Tse's practice combines photography, video, installation, and sculpture. A classically trained cellist, Tse grew up in a culturally diverse and musically rich environment as the daughter of a Chinese violinist father and a British pianist mother. Informed by her background, Tse creates humorous, conceptually rigorous works that employ musical associations, sound and rhythm as lyrical constructs through she investigates the way visual acuity and auditory sensitivity can influence our perception of the world around us.

### Samson Young

Born 1979 in Hong Kong. Lives and works in Hong Kong

Formally trained in philosophy and composition, Samson Young's artistic practice centres upon the re-presentation and re-interpretation of lost or overlooked events of socio-political and personal significance. Young's emotive multimedia works investigate the complex interplay between identity and conflict, without imposing solutions or halting productive dialogue. Young's process is deeply invested in meticulous research which often involves gathering 'sound sketches' and recordings that become the foundation of works that challenge accepted notions of time and place.

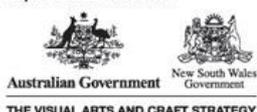
## ARTISTS PREVIOUSLY ANNOUNCED IN APRIL 2017

The artists already announced to participate in the 21<sup>st</sup> Biennale of Sydney, *SUPERPOSITION: Art of Equilibrium and Engagement* are:

- **Eija-Liisa Ahtila** (Born 1959 in Finland, lives and works in Helsinki)
- **Ai Weiwei** (Born 1957 in China, lives and works in Beijing)
- **Brook Andrew** (Born 1970 in Australia, lives and works in Melbourne, Berlin and Oxford)
- **Oliver Beer** (Born 1985 in England, lives and works in Paris and London)
- **Anya Gallaccio** (Born 1963 in Scotland, lives and works in San Diego and London)
- **Laurent Grasso** (Born 1972 in France, lives and works in Paris and New York)
- **N.S. Harsha** (Born 1969 in India, lives and works in Mysore)
- **Mit Jai Inn** (Born 1960 in Thailand, lives and works in Chiang Mai)
- **Kate Newby** (Born 1979 in New Zealand, lives and works in Auckland and New York)
- **Noguchi Rika** (Born 1971 in Japan, lives and works in Okinawa)

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- **Nguyen Trinh Thi** (Born 1973 in Vietnam, lives and works in Hanoi)
- **Ciara Phillips** (Born 1976 in Canada, lives and works in Glasgow)
- **Koji Ryui** (Born 1976 in Japan, lives and works in Sydney)
- **Semiconductor** (Ruth Jarman, born 1973 in England, and Joe Gerhardt, born 1972 in England, live and work in Brighton)
- **Yasmin Smith** (Born 1984 in Australia, lives and works in Sydney)
- **George Tjungurrayi** (Born c. 1943 in Australia, lives and works in Kintore)
- **Nicole Wong** (Born 1990 in Hong Kong, lives and works in Hong Kong)
- **Wong Hoy Cheong** (Born 1960 in Malaysia, lives and works in Kuala Lumpur)
- **Yukinori Yanagi** (Born 1959 in Japan, lives and works in Hiroshima)
- **Haegue Yang** (Born 1971 in South Korea, lives and works in Berlin and Seoul)
- **Jun Yang** (Born 1975 in China, lives and works in Vienna, Taipei and Yokohama)

**ABOUT THE BIENNALE OF SYDNEY:** Since its inception in 1973, the Biennale of Sydney has provided a platform for art and encounters, showcasing the work of nearly 1,800 artists from more than 100 countries. Today it is considered one of the leading international art events, recognised for commissioning and presenting innovative, thought provoking art from Australia and around the world. In 2016, the 20<sup>th</sup> Biennale of Sydney attracted more than 643,000 visits. With an average 40 per cent of visits made by people from outside of Sydney, the Biennale holds an important place on both the national and international stage. Entry to the Biennale of Sydney is free to the public.

## TRAVEL TO THE 21<sup>st</sup> BIENNALE OF SYDNEY

Planning on travelling to Sydney for the Biennale? It's a great time of year to experience one of the world's most spectacular cities. Sydney enjoys a mild climate between March and June. To gain the most from your visit we suggest planning to spend four to five days in Sydney. Sydney is also a gateway to visiting Australia and the Asia-Pacific Region. After visiting the Biennale take off and enjoy magnificent coastline, mountain and deserts, as well as some of the most significant arts and cultural precincts in the world.

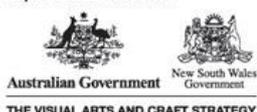
For information about getting here visit: [sydney.com](http://sydney.com)

For interstate and international travelers, we recommend staying with our Accommodation Partner, The Old Clare Hotel: [theoldclarehotel.com.au](http://theoldclarehotel.com.au).

**KEY DATES** Media Preview: 13 March 2018. Preview: 13–15 March 2018. Public dates: 16 March – 11 June 2018

**REGISTER TO ATTEND THE PROFESSIONAL PREVIEW** To register your interest in attending the 21<sup>st</sup> Biennale Professional Preview please visit [www.biennaleofsydney.com.au/preview](http://www.biennaleofsydney.com.au/preview)

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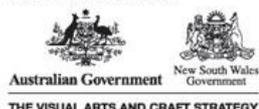
### STATEMENT OF SUPPORT AS PRINCIPAL PARTNER OF THE BIENNALE OF SYDNEY

TWT Property Group Pty Ltd is delighted to announce their support as Principal Partner of the Biennale of Sydney, the longest running and most respected contemporary art event in Australasia.

Stephen Fitzpatrick, General Manager of TWT Property Group noted that *“At TWT, we believe art enriches everyday lives and seek to embed it into the architecture of our buildings and the spaces that surround them. We look forward to experiencing the 21st Biennale of Sydney as it brings the work of artists from around the world to multiple Sydney venues in 2018. We are especially proud that our support helps provide free access to contemporary art for audiences of all ages, from Sydney, across Australia and all regions of the globe.”*

Biennale of Sydney Chairman, Kate Mills, said: *“The Biennale is pleased to welcome our new Principal Partner, TWT Property Group. Our partnership on the occasion of the 21st edition celebrates our shared value of enriching the diverse communities we serve through art. We are grateful for TWT Property Group's' generous support of the Biennale of Sydney and are delighted to partner with them.”*

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