

2024 Asian Art Biennial Unveils Full Artist Lineup and Key Events, Reimagining Worlds Under the Theme “How to Hold Your Breath”

The Asian Art Biennial is pleased to announce the full list of participating artists for its 9th edition, taking place from 16 November 2024 to 2 March 2025 at the National Taiwan Museum of Fine Arts (NTMoFA). This year’s curatorial team, convened by Taiwanese independent curator **Fang Yen Hsiang**, includes four international curators: Armenian-born, Paris-based curator **Anne Davidian**; Filipino artist and researcher **Merv Espina**; Singapore-based South Korean curator **Haeju Kim**; and Istanbul- and Paris-based curator and writer **Asli Seven**.

Reflecting the cross-regional collaboration of its curators, this year’s Biennial brings together 35 artist groups from over 20 countries across East Asia, Central Asia, West Asia, and the Pacific. A total of 83 works will be exhibited, including 19 new commissions. The exhibition will feature a range of media, including sound, video, photography, painting, sculpture, and installation.

The title of the 2024 Asian Art Biennial, *How to Hold Your Breath*, evokes the tension of pausing a vital act and holding onto hope in the face of uncertainty. It flips the familiar phrase “don’t hold your breath,” suggesting that change, though slow, is possible. Taking a deep breath and holding it anchors us in the present moment, navigating the disarray of late capitalism and displacement. It is a movement of transformation, a space to listen to what is rendered inaudible and to reconnect with the somatic and circadian rhythms.

The works invite us to withdraw from systems of violence and visibility, making space for new forms of agency. Through diverse media, the artists disrupt linear time, revealing histories tied to people and places, while tracing colonial and imperial entanglements. By engaging with altered states—meditation, sleep, dreams—these works propose new ways of imagining futures rooted in relationality, reciprocity, and hope.

The screening program of the Biennial entitled *How Breath Moves* imagines breath as a collective cinematic device, a shared source of life and rhythm, moving across our bodies to techniques of light and projection, to explore the circulation of images, sounds, memory, and collective storytelling. The eight films engage with strategies of survival and creativity against the enduring legacies of colonialism. They celebrate the migration and translation of cultural forms through food and music; and reveal the uplifting powers of anger and love amid grief and loss.

The 2024 Asian Art Biennial opens with a two-day public program featuring artist talks, performances, and moments of reflection. Addressing themes of displacement, speculative futures, and reimagined rituals, artists invite audiences to explore layered realities and envision new forms of collective existence.

For more information, please follow NTMoFA and Asian Art Biennial on Facebook and Instagram.

Highlights include:

Andrius Arutiunian's new commission *Under the Cold Sun* plays with the idea of *possessed* instruments, as a synthetic pipe organ is hijacked by ancient pagan demons into a terrain of instability. Tuned with esoteric frequency ratios, this epitome of Western musical tradition mutates into a ghostly, hypnotic loop, suspending linear time. Two other sound works are also featured in the Biennial: *Delights n.2*, a specially created audioguide with a psychedelic effect, designed to alter the visitor's perceptual state, and *Armen*, a speculative investigation of diasporic imaginaries, published on audio cassettes and performed during car rides through Taichung.

Cetus Kuo Chin-Yun's new project *Because Watching Pacifics* explores the historical connections between Taiwan's mountainous areas and the Zomia Highlands, discussing how governance techniques of territory create similar landscapes in diverse corners of the world.

Sharon Chin's *Portal* is a newly commissioned installation and performance that reflects on the relationship between humans and land. Engaging with the community and addressing the ecological damage caused by oil refineries and coal power plants in Port Dickson, Malaysia, the work invokes the transformations required for us to collectively respond to these challenges.

Saadat Ismailova presents a new edit of her ongoing film project *A Seed Under a Tongue*. Titled *Arslanbob*, the work delves into the historical and hallucinative memory of a relict forest, depicted as both a mythical site and a reservoir of ancestral knowledge—a gateway to archetypes and non-human intelligences.

Nil Yalter's participation was conceived in response to the living conditions of migrant workers in Taichung and their creativity. A celebration of nomadism in all its forms, the video installation *I AM (Circular Rituals)* (1992) was augmented with an additional soundtrack by the Philippino migrant rappers Ar~Em Sicat, Angelito and TheThird to interpret Yalter's wall-text poem as a rap song. In addition, Yalter's fly-poster installation *Exile Is A Hard Job* (1977-ongoing) takes place inside the ASEAN building, extending the Biennial into spaces in Taichung where trade and labor routes converge.

Gary Zhexi Zang's new series, *Alignments (I-III)*, consists of three intricately printed pieces that materialize the artist's research into a shifting historical sensorium. Weaving complex stories across time and space in diagrammatic forms, the pieces engage with connections between sovereignty and immortality, selected geographical and historical coordinates as "poles of inaccessibility" and the uneasy marriage between Afrofuturism and Sinofuturism.

For the full artist list of the 9th Asian Art Biennial, please refer to Appendix 1 below.

APPENDIX 1

The full list of participating artists:

Noor Abed, Asian Feminist Studio for Art and Research (AFSAR), Marwa Arsanios, Andrius Arutiunian, Sharon Chin, Chu Hao Pei, Kiri Dalena, Fang Wei-Wen, Tao Leigh Goffe, Hit Man Gurung, Mashinka Firunts Hakopian, Emre Hüner, Saodat Ismailova, Maiko Jinushi, Cetus Kuo Chin-Yun, Woosung Lee, Milay Mavaliw, Nathalie Muchamad, Hwayeon Nam, Yoshinori Niwa, Pak Sheung Chuen, Nefeli Papadimouli, Natalia Papaeva, Ri, Julia Sarisetiati, Kirill Savchenkov, Aziza Shadenova, Yehwan Song, Trương Quế Chi & Nguyễn Phương Linh, Wang Yu-Song, Apichatpong Weerasethakul, Jasmin Werner, Cici Wu, Nil Yalter, Gary Zhexi Zang

Artists in the screening program:

Bani Abidi, Noor Abuarafeh, Chingiz Aidarov, Richard Fung, Rojda Tugrul, Pallavi Paul, Sanaz Sohrabi, Your Bros. Filmmaking Group (So Yo-Hen, Tien Zong-Yuan, Liao Hsiu-Hui)

About Asian Art Biennial

Being one of the most representative art biennials in Asia, the Asian Art Biennial is an important bi-annual exhibition hosted by the National Taiwan Museum of Fine Arts. Since its establishment in 2007, it has been committed to presenting the development of contemporary art with an emphasis on Asia. Asian Art Biennials in recent years have convened curators with cross-disciplinary backgrounds to help shape curatorial mechanism through collective dialogue. Invitations for the participation of Asian artists from diverse cultures and wide-ranging perspectives has enabled the creation of a platform for interaction.

About National Taiwan Museum of Fine Arts (NTMoFA)

Located in the West District of Taichung City, Taiwan, the National Taiwan Museum of Fine Arts (NTMoFA) was inaugurated in 1988. It covers a total area of about 10 hectares and is the largest public art museum in Taiwan. With visual art as its main focus, NTMoFA highlights the collection, research, exhibition and educational promotion of modern and contemporary art in Taiwan, and is dedicated to providing visitors with a diverse and professional space for appreciating art. www.ntmofa.gov.tw

How to Hold Your Breath – 2024 Asian Art Biennial

Exhibition Period | 16 November 2024 – 2 March 2025

Venue | National Taiwan Museum of Fine Arts (2, Sec. 1, Wuquan West Road, Taichung)

Curatorial Team | Fang Yen Hsiang, Asli Seven, Merv Espina, Anne Davidian, Haeju Kim

Facebook | www.facebook.com/aabntmofa

Instagram | www.instagram.com/asianartbiennial

Media Inquiry:

Alice Chien | Good Shot PR | htchien22@gmail.com

Shueh-ching Lu | Good Shot PR | sanllydon@gmail.com

Lawa Lu | Good Shot PR | lawalu1225@gmail.com

Hsiao-Yu Lin | Exhibition Division, NTMoFA | hylin@art.ntmofa.gov.tw

Yung-Chun Huang | Exhibition Division, NTMoFA | ychuang@art.ntmofa.gov.tw

May Yan | Public Relations, NTMoFA | may523@art.ntmofa.gov.tw