



#APARN2023

THE MATTER OF ART

Art results from and results in matter. As art comprehends and works its material, it can transform solid marble into soft and transparent silk, or a disturbance in the air into melodic streams of experience. In the age of artificial intelligence, there has been a tendency to obscure the value of matter and sometimes conceive it as a burden, even as technological culture has fostered interest in a “new materialism”; although as Sara Ahmed reminds, feminist analysis has always been concerned with materiality.

In the posthuman sphere, mastery of the human body and artistic medium give way to the seemingly autonomous techniques of the machine where matter as material figures and therefore is configured differently. However, by dwelling in and intimately wrestling with material when producing creative works, artists find a unique perspective on the nature of the world and the cultures of the self. In the Asia Pacific region specifically, many communities have not policed the distinction between nature and culture as tightly as in Europe, and the damage wrought by climate change and extractive industries is therefore not only a harm to the natural world but also to the social body.

In this sense, the arts also need to matter - if art has significance for our human world, it can open our senses to the state of the planet, how it changes and how we can bring change. Therefore, access to artistic pleasure, intrigue and awe genuinely matter. These experiences hold value regardless of external validation by economic or public institutions, or the immediate practicalities of the everyday.

About APARN

The Asia Pacific Artistic Research Network (APARN) is a new initiative from the Centre of Visual Art, University of Melbourne and the Indonesian Institute of the Arts Yogyakarta.

The purposes of the network are to:

- Map artistic research initiatives and activities in the Asia Pacific region
- Provide a regional framework for practical collaboration between individuals and institutions
- Develop an understanding of local cultural dynamics influencing artistic research activities in the Asia Pacific region

Our previous inaugural meeting was held in October 2019 in association with the International Conference on Asia Pacific Arts Studies in Yogyakarta. The participants were: Kurniawan Adi Saputro, Danny Butt, Alison Carroll, Pornrat Damrhung, Leúli Eshraghi, Michael Hornblow, Khalid Midam, Helly Minarti, and Gunalan Nadarajan (keynote).



SCHEDULE



Time	Name		Location
09.30		Arrival and Welcome	ISI
09.45	Gunalan, Kurniawan, Danny	Opening Remarks	ISI
10.00	Arahmaiani Feisal <i>arahmaianif@gmail.com</i>	Community Base Art Project	ISI
10.20	Roopesh Sitharan <i>rs@mmu.edu.my</i>	Reading My Practice: Reflecting on How Art Explore, Invent, Restage Humanities in Technology	ISI
10.40	Carolyn Mckenzie-Craig <i>Carolyn.Mckenzie-Craig@nas.edu.au</i>	Dispersal and Dust	ISI
11.00	Dyah Retno <i>dyahretno13@gmail.com</i>	No Waste : Artistic Research in Ceramic Waste as An Alternative Material	ISI
11.20	Arin Ardani <i>arin.ardani@gmail.com</i>	Touch Ability vs. Effect of After-Sensations: Exploration of Tactile Materials in Designing Inclusive Board Games for the Visually Impaired	ISI
11.40	Ika Yuliana <i>ika.yuliana@ui.ac.id</i>	Encounter Tanah: Unraveling Soil Materiality and Multispecies Collectivity on Ecological Art "New Rural Agenda"	ISI
12.00		Lunch	
13.00	Majid Sarnayzadeh <i>majidsarnay@gmail.com</i>	Dance and a Triple Network of the Two Bodies and an Interactive Physical Force	Zoom
13.20	Hilal Ahmad Khan <i>azha.khan.6@gmail.com</i>	The Changing Role of New Media Technologies in Indian Visual Arts	Zoom
13.40	Dominique Lämmli <i>mail@dominiquelaemli.ch</i>	Kaleidoscopic Dialectic, Grounded Methodology, and the Pluriverse	Zoom
14.00	Erika Matsunami <i>ematsunami645@gmail.com</i>	B.O.D.Y. - The Second Skin	Zoom
14.20	Eva von Reumont <i>evachristiane.vonreumont@aol.com</i>	Art as Materialization of Oral Heritage	Zoom
14.40	Xi Lei <i>xiju524954135@gmail.com</i>	Beyond Geo-Anthropocentrism and Land-Centrism	Zoom
15.00	Claudia Bosse <i>claudiabosse@gmail.com</i>	Translocal Performative Academy of Space Related Performative Practice / TPA	Zoom

SCHEDULE



Time	Name	Location
15.20		Break
16.00		APARN Network Meeting ISI/Zoom
18.00		Closing



ABSTRACTS



Arahmaiani Feisal

I started creating community-based art since 2006 in Yogyakarta – then it has been developing both in Indonesia (Bali) and abroad. Including parts of the Asia Pacific region such as: Thailand, Malaysia and Singapore. This community-based art activity is also not only limited to artistic expression, but also real work related to various social, political, cultural and environmental issues. And after the covid disaster hit – in addition to the threatening situation due to the war between Russia vs Ukraine. I try to connect the communities that have worked with me to collaborate in dealing with serious environmental and economic problems due to the impacts of the problems above.

The purpose and objective of this community empowerment is to find alternative and creative solutions to all the problems faced by the community. Because in my opinion, by using a “bottom-up strategy” like this, creativity can be explored and problems in life can be solved properly. And all members of society can be involved. And this is not only based on theory – because I and several communities that work together on an ongoing basis have been able to prove that by using an “interdisciplinary” approach (where art, science, philosophy are brought together), we can find solutions to various problems. And without having to sacrifice those involved.

Roopesh Sitharan

The phrase “practice” refers to a range of applications that converge creation and human labour. Such an outlook suggests practice as an act that essentializes labour with a peculiar understanding of purpose, thereby fixing value for any labour with a mode of commodification. Reflecting on this, I would like to make an attempt to manoeuvre such a restrictive understanding of labour to illustrate my conviction and doubt about technology through art practice. In doing so, I am not seeking to make explicit something new about practice, or technology per se. But rather a modest effort to share my ‘embodied experiences’ of labouring in the world; that are enclosed in aesthetic experiences, enacted in creative practices and tested through artistic strategies over the years.

Dr. Carolyn Mckenzie-Craig

My research practice uses strategies of dispersal and echo to contextualise the complex relationships between contemporary visual production and the social, political, and capital relations that form its materiality. I draw from readings of Johanna Drucker’s three modes of materialist engagement (Forensic, Distributed and Performative, 2010), and Karen Barad’s ideas of diffraction (2007) to isolate a particular perspective within new materialist theory, performative materialism. This will be contextualised in the paper through a discussion of the work of Kamilaroi artist Archie Moore and my own practice to consider materiality as thingness and cultural matter – where both are embedded osmotically. Using a feminist political lens, the inter-relational dependencies and systems of exchange between bodies – matter and institutions are activated into the matter of art making itself.

I will focus on Moore’s blackboard works that transform the institutional pedagogies of learning into objecthood whilst destabilising through the materiality of chalk - mined and dispersed through the material enclosures of language and people. My own studio work using dust and chalk is also discussed as a strategy to develop a counter practice of instability (both socially and materially) using bodily trace (carbon and dust) to represent indexical representations of self/ the Other. This performative mode of studio practice uses material as agentic and porous – to disperse the residues of bodies histories and culture to produce, leak, and replicate as spectrality, in order to ‘disturb identity, system, orde’ to engage with the ‘in-between, the ambiguous, the composite’ (Kristeva, 1982, p. 65). These strategies view the material as matrix – structurally holding things together and pushing things apart.

Dyah Retno

There are 5 types of waste that are most commonly encountered in the ceramics industry, namely soil waste, glaze waste, biscuit waste, glass wool waste, and highly burnt ceramic waste. The ceramics industry is an industry that is very prone to corruption practice green-washing, many sell ceramics with the concept of being environmentally friendly and durable but with a lot of impact behind such as the depletion of clay land/mountains and environmental pollution, both water, air, nor land due to waste dumped carelessly or gas leakage due to burning. In this 6th year, I restarted my research by processing glass wool waste to be used as a material for making energy-efficient alternative stoves and materials for forming ceramic bodies to replace kaolin. Glasswool waste is one of the B3 wastes found in the exhaust of motorized vehicles and is also a material for making furnaces. The furnace must have good glasswool, so there is a period of time for using glass wool. Artists and household scale entrepreneurs who want to replace the glass wool it is difficult to dispose of glass wool waste, so glasswool waste is usually just stored and stacked. In this research, I tried to reprocess glass wool waste by using it as an alternative furnace material. The first experiment was carried out using unprocessed glass wool waste to calculate the density and gas leaks that would occur, the effectiveness of the burning time and the use of fuel. The second experiment was carried out by treating glass wool waste in the following way of press and reduce its density and do experiments with variable then compared between experiments one and two. This furnace is still in the development stage to see and decide what kind of design and support material is good to use.

Arin Ardani

Sometimes in the middle, or when the game is over, a board game player shouts "Good game, well played!" to his/her opponents to express something good about the game. Unfortunately, this sentence is almost never uttered by players with visual impairment – even though they already played a special-made board game for visual impairment. What exactly is this well-played game? Many variables could affect. However, when we play well-played games, we play at our best, whether we can or can't see the physicality of the games with our eyes. We're fully engaged, totally present, yet at the same time, we're just playing – a free and voluntary activity. Then why don't the visually impaired players ever say, "Good game, well played"?

This research was a part of the ongoing author's dissertation research, which tries to reveal well-played game concept for visually impaired board game players. The author tried to explore touch ability, pictures and pattern perception, tactile materials, and their significance in building board game playing experience. The age of onset of blindness has implications for how well people use their sense of touch and long-term visual deprivation enhances tactile acuity. Their difficulty was not in being able to translate 3D information (from tactile materials) to a 2D display (interpretation of tangible pictures), but in naming the haptic counterparts and effects of after-sensations, where people continue to feel a stimulus after it has disappeared. Excessive stimulation of the fingers was thought to interfere with their way of thinking to solve problems or the production of their imagination in playing board game.

Ika Yuliana

In ecological art, the materiality of natural objects is involved as a representation of the relationship between humans and non-human multispecies. In contemporary participatory works of art, Jatiwangi art Factory reinterprets land as an essential element for the people of Jatiwangi, West Java, who have been known as tile producers since 1905. This research is set in Jatiwangi and Kassel, Germany, where researchers are involved in a work of ecological art entitled *New Rural Agenda*. This performative conference presents human and non-human representations to discuss the new rural agenda presented at Documenta Fifteen, a historical event for contemporary world art. This thesis research uses the autoethnography method, in which the researcher reflects and analyses the bodily experience of "experiencing Tanah" on situated and views it from the paradigm of materiality turn in Anthropology studies. This research aims to narrate and describe the process of forming new materiality and collective memory of "Tanah" and other multispecies from experiencing art performance from the artist's point of view.

Majid Sarnayzadeh

It cannot be denied that, in the large-scale and very small-scale world, there are three important elements including bodies, movements and forces; however, every movement occurs in a space and at a time period. For example in the cosmological world, bodies and things are moving constantly based on the force they exert on each other; in addition, in the quantum world there is the same model with the same elements. At glance, daily human life and making changes in the environment through human history have occurred based on the three network elements; however, today different machines are added to the system to help people with the exertion forces. According to the physics science, especially based on the Newton laws in daily life, In order for an object to move from rest, we must apply force to it. After applying the force, some kinetic energy is transferred to the object and the object continues to move with a new constant speed. The existence of at least two things, and the existence of the force, are necessary for changing in the motion mood of the things.

Dance as an old and systematic art, is a good example of the mechanism. By moving our body to apply the force on the earth, partner's body or our body, we transfer the energy and create a movement; therefore, we change the environment and produce aesthetic things as a movement and form. The idea is about the mechanism and I want to consider the kind of movements as a raw material for dance and choreography of things; however, we lose and forget the kind of dance and movement today, and our movement is limited to pressing buttons and switches, or giving digital commands to the machines.

Hilal Ahmad Khan

In India, new technologies are being implemented in visual arts in various ways. Traditional artists are incorporating multimedia tools into their work, while those with a technical background are exploring contemporary technologies. Additionally, national, and international institutions are exhibiting new technological progressions in visual representation. This paper examines the changing role of new media technologies in the current period and how they impact artists work. It explores how Indian new-media art is progressing in the background of information and artificial intelligence. Computation, robotics, automation, and artificial intelligence are crucial components of the digital, electronic, and machine learning age, and this paper examines how Indian artists and different art forms are incorporating these technologies in their work and contributing to the world stage of new media art.

The advent of advanced technologies presents different challenges, including the need to define the system, reflect on the adverse effects of advancement, and consider how the competition between human and machine intelligence is shaping new creativity beyond our thinking. It is important to note that the development and progression of advanced technologies are not the same in all countries.

This paper reflects on the background of visual arts in India from the 1990s and how new media was incorporated into this field. It examines how technological creativity is changing visual arts in contemporary times and how artists and different national and international institutions are providing a structure where the dimension of “new materiality” impacts the visual representation and configuration in India.



Dominique Lämmli

This presentation builds on my latest research which resulted in an alternative art practitioner research paradigm, the Art in Action Research (AiAR). I became aware of the necessity to reframe existing art practitioner research approaches when co-creating with/participating in projects by colleagues in BT-Thimphu, MW-Blantyre, IN-Bangalore, ID-Jatiwangi, and Hong Kong. AiAR considers the global turn and the pluriverse. The term global turn is used above all in global studies and means, according to Darian-Smith and McCarty (2017), the expansion of disciplinary perspectives towards contemporary and historical processes of globalization. The term pluriverse, used in post-development studies, highlights the various ways of being in the world and diverse knowledge forms.

Being strategic, the AiAR paradigm is not predetermined by theories and concepts of how to be in the world or how to see things. Rather, its disciplinary perspective is that of an artist (self-)reflectively grounding all parts of their research in the issue being researched—including the choice of theories, concepts, and methods. AiAR thus corresponds well to professional art practitioner procedures. AiAR supports grounded “methodology crafting,” that is, configuring and developing the project-fitting methodology through addressing issues emerging from the work environment. Such issues include settings in which the art practitioner researcher (or an art practitioner team) tackles a real-life challenge on and through art to co-create a liveable future.

Erika Matsunami

The focus of this presentation with regards to the artistic research B.O.D.Y. - Between auditory fiction and bodily reality is, that I address the topic of "correspondence" through artistic acts and art objects as a matter of art. The artistic medium here is photography and I deal with the artistic possibilities of representation through the corresponding. I mention that the quality of a photograph taken by a person "I" in relation to the object is an act of "corresponding" to the environment of the object. Thus, I present the art project B.O.D.Y. - the second skin (2000 – 2009 / 2023), which will be represented in the exhibition SKIN at Dark Gallery CPH, Copenhagen, Denmark (1 June – 20 August 2023). The theme in this art project is that I deal with "skin as a bodily organ". The information is transmitted to the brain via neurons. sensory neurons send information from the eyes, ears, nose, tongue, and skin to the brain. As an artistic representation, I mechanically explore it by analogizing this subtlety and structural complexity. Therefore, I explore the matter of art from the biological sense practically.

Eva von Reumont

Since the publication on ‘Agency and Art’ by Alfred Gell (1998) much has been said about the social impact artwork can have. Personally, I prefer theories that consciously learn from non-western societies: things are alive, not because they have ‘agency’, but because they ‘leak’ (Ingold, in: Harvey 2014: 218). Western science wrongly defines things as ‘objects’ and objects as of ‘dead, inert matter’. The anthropologist Tim Ingold raises the question: What if truth is not something that can be found objectively? What is it lies “in the unison of imagination and experience, in a world to which we are alive and that is alive to us?” (Ingold 2018: 21). Interpreting this artistically, it can mean that it is not written culture, but visual and oral interaction which educates truthfully. Ingold insists that an artist does “not reproduce a preconceived idea” but that he joins and follows “the forces and flows of material that bring the form of the work into being” (Ingold 2014: 222). I have been pursuing research on Javanese Wayang Kulit Figures since at least 2014, first as conservator-restorer, then as curator, now as social-anthropologist and all the while through the eyes of an artist: The art and aesthetics of Wayang Kulit figures not only portray individual subjects (in oppose to objects), but they also have the capacity to materially hold intangible information and meaning within themselves. The hypothesis I wish to share with APCARN is: Western ontology is mistaken when it defines oral heritage as something ‘intangible’. Wayang Kulit contradicts this assertion.

Xi Lei

Geo-anthropocentrism and land-centrism are intertwined with the relationship between water and land in China. Geo-anthropocentrism is a form of anthropocentrism based on geographical hierarchies. It gives rise to land-centrism, which imposes a terrestrial bias on non-terrestrial environments like water: in the land-centric perspective, waters, such as rivers, lakes, and oceans, are often regarded as an extension, appendages, or threats to the land. With this background, this artistic research project focuses on water-related media and mediators, including water management structures, aquaculture facilities, and even our bodies to examine what roles they play in the evolving relationship between land and water. In doing so, it seeks to explore the following questions: Can we address the limitations of geo-anthropocentrism and land-centrism by engaging with these media and mediators? How can artistic and creative practices contribute to such endeavours, and even thereby serve as the approach to move beyond these two positions? In this context, this project also seeks to expand the concept of amphibiousness beyond its biological and mechanical origins through a series of artistic practices. In doing so, it aims to develop a set of amphibious artistic methods as a way of creatively questioning the existing land-water hierarchies and imagining and bridging the gap between land and water in China and beyond, based on both background knowledge of and the non-representational on-site experiences at the interfaces of land and water.

Claudia Bosse

TPA is a format that takes place locally and nomadically. It gathers artists and experts from and at different places between Europe and Southeast Asia. It is about the exchange of different local, space-related performative methods. How can we learn from and support each other translocally? How can a translocal organism be built, such that it remains locally connected yet networks translocally? A four-year collaboration (2022-2025) between artists enables a sustained momentum of networking and exchange in different contexts, as well as their different methodologies of working with space in their respective performative practices. The academy uses a hybrid structure of monthly digital online meetings, as well as one analogue in-person meeting each year. 1st meeting happened in Vienna, 2nd in Jakarta, and the 3rd is going to be in November 2023 in Bruxelles, Belgium. I would like to present the methods and tools of translocal performative academy to the community of APARN2023, because I think it is not only measured by production and presentation results, but strives for an ongoing exchange process in digital and analogue spaces. The gained insights are applied to build new artistic ecologies as networked life cells of our society, embedded in artistic, cultural, resistant and interrelated structures with a special focus on space and artistic handling of space in the different local environments.

Please see the homepage for more information, or contact us.

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