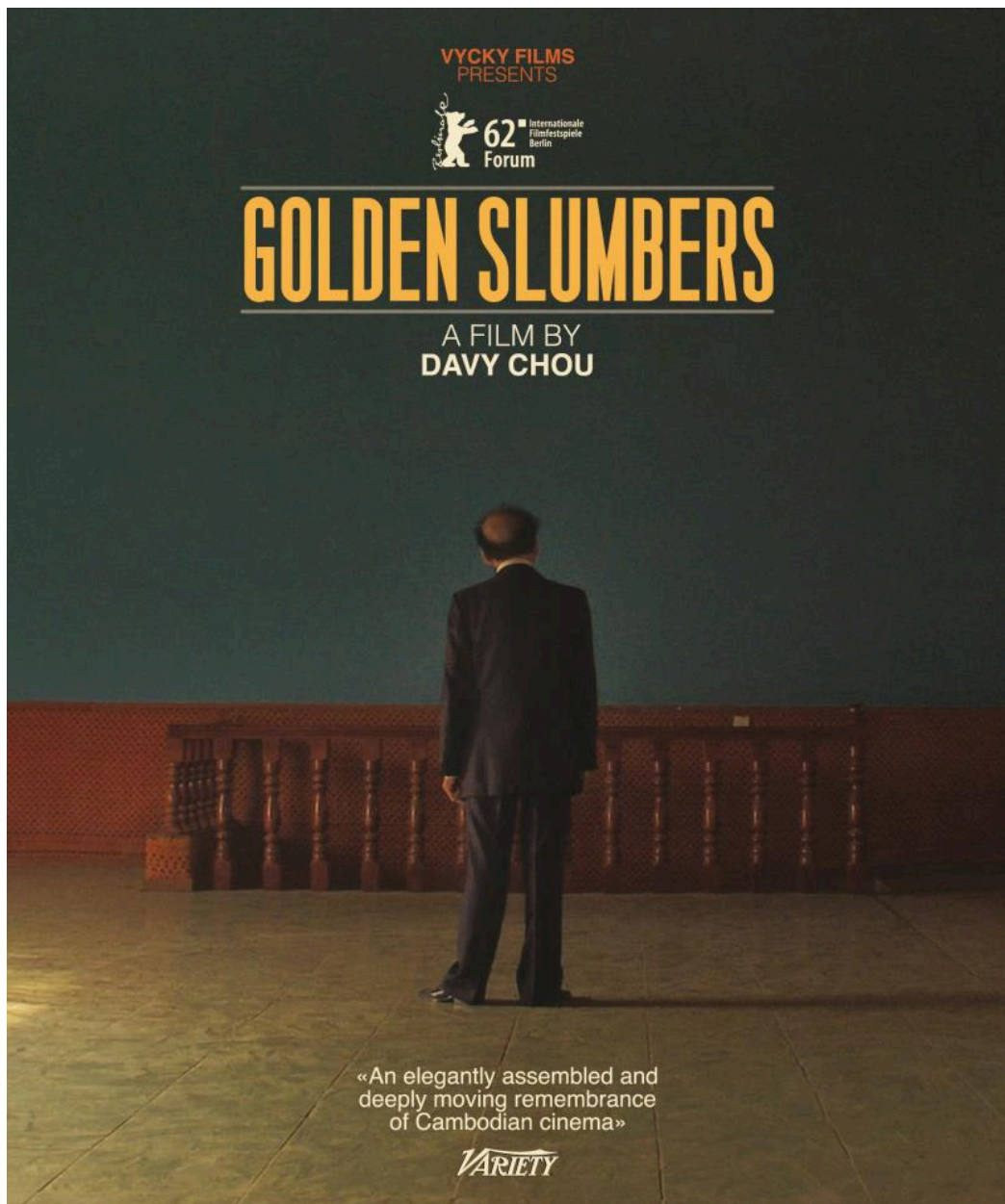


Reframing the Archive: The Reuse of Film and Photographic Images in Postcolonial Southeast Asia



In recent years, the decision to engage with colonial and postcolonial archives has become increasingly commonplace within Southeast Asian film, photography and visual culture. Whilst this renewed interest in archival materials has resulted in an increased awareness of the complexities of lens-based media, it has also allowed practitioners to challenge both the dominant narratives of colonialism and their neo- and postcolonial legacies. In the case of Cambodia and its diasporas, this archival impulse – and its accompanying modes of (re-) appropriation – is exemplified by films such as Rithy Panh's *La France est notre patrie* ['France is our Homeland'] and Davy Chou's *Golden Slumbers*. Whereas the former offers an insight into the hypocrisies of French colonial rule, the latter takes its lead from the development of twentieth century Cambodian cinema. Yet despite differing in their aims and emphases, these projects share a number of common characteristics – namely, a desire to foreground the importance of preserving and revisiting archival materials: two imperatives which have acquired a particular significance in the aftermath of the Khmer Rouge regime.

Taking its lead from these recent developments, this symposium will explore the ways in which colonial and postcolonial film and photographic archives have been rearticulated within a range of Southeast Asian political and aesthetic contexts. How have artists and filmmakers sought to subvert existing power relations through the use of colonial images? To what extent have archival materials and technologies allowed for an investigation into the emancipatory potential of the lens? How have these techniques been utilised by diasporic populations?

The conference and screening programme are organised by Joanna Wolfarth, Fiona Allen and Annie Jael Kwan. We would like to thank the SOAS Faculty of Arts and Humanities for generously funding this event.

Conference Schedule

Thursday 22 June

Location: Khalili Lecture Theatre

18.30 **Film Screening**
Golden Slumbers, dir. by Davy Chou (2011)
Followed by a Q&A with the director

20.30 **Wine Reception**

Friday 23 June

Location: B102, Brunei Gallery Building

09.00 **Registration**

09.30 **Welcome and Announcements**
Pamela Corey and Joanna Wolfarth

09:45 **Representation and Reception**
Chair: Ben Murtagh

Charmaine Toh (University of Melbourne)
The Photographic Archive as Strategy: Robert Zhao and *The Bizarre Honour*

Piers Masterson (Independent)
Vong Phaophanit's *Fragments* (1990) Reconsidered

Sandeep Ray (Rice University)
Dismantling the Picturesque: Non-Fiction Propaganda Film from the Netherlands
East Indies

11:00 **Coffee Break**

11:15 **Keynote Lecture**
Chair: Pamela Corey

Erika Tan (Central Saint Martins, University of the Arts London)
Misplaced Commas and Cannibalistic Tendencies: Necessary Contingencies in
Archival Practice

12:00 **Lunch**
Additional Screening: Nguyễn Trinh Thi, *Vietnam the Movie*, 47 mins, 2016.

13:15 **History, Memory, Amnesia**
Chair: Rachel Harrison

Cristina Juan (SOAS, University of London)
A Retelling of History: Exercises in Re-Narrativizing Forms

Loredana Pazzini-Paracciani (Independent)
Vietnam the Movie: Resituating Images in Postcolonial Mainstream and Art Cinema

Renato Loriga (Independent)
Filling the Void: The (An) Archive as a Postcolonial Resource in the Movies of Raya Martin and John Torres

Eric Galmard (University of Strasbourg)
Re-Appropriating History: Fiction and Real/False Archives in *Ebolusyon ng isang pamilyang Pilipino* by Lav Diaz (2004)

14:45 **Coffee Break**

15:15 **(Im)material Traces**
Chair: Ashley Thompson

Chairat Polmuk (Cornell University)
Transitory Splendour: Preambles on a Buddhist Archival Impulse in Post-Cold War Southeast Asia

Darcie DeAngelo (McGill University)
Non-Existent Photographs, Unanswerable Questions and Unspeakable Things: Depictions in Cambodia

Emiko Stock (Cornell University)
Moving Images: Archiving the 'Difficult to Picture'

16:30 **Keynote Lecture**
Chair: Annie Jael Kwan

May Adadol Ingawanij (University of Westminster)
Anocha Suwichakornpong's *By the Time It Gets Dark*

17:45 **Concluding Remarks**
Chair: Fiona Allen

18:00 **End of Conference**

Location: Khalili Lecture Theatre

18:30 **Film Screening**
By the Time it Gets Dark, dir. by Anocha Suwichakornpong (2016)
Introduction: Sonali Joshi

19:45 **End of Film**

Abstracts

Anocha Suwichakornpong's *By the Time It Gets Dark*

May Adadol Ingawanij (University of Westminster)

This presentation is based on my new research theorising the aesthetics, themes and conditions of emergence of the essay film as a contemporary mode of feminist filmmaking in Southeast Asia. It will take the form of spectatorial thinking indebted to Anocha Suwichakornpong's recent film *By the Time It Gets Dark* (2016). Anocha is one of the leading independent filmmakers in Thailand and Southeast Asia. Since the early 2000s she has been making single screen short and feature films characterised by discordant assemblage, rhythmic montage and metamorphosis. Her practice can be situated at the experimental edge of the film festival circuit of world cinema. I will speak to and with *By the Time It Gets Dark* in response to its filmic-thinking, setting off with the proposition that this is not a film about the unrepresentability of the massacre of leftists in Bangkok in 1976. To think or do something with Anocha's film, as its opaque aesthetics and its mise-en-abime form asks of spectators, is to entertain the following thought: this is a film whose starting point is the displacement of the contemporary convention for visualising and symbolising the event of 6 October 1976, by casting such work of iconographic reproduction as the creation of anaesthetising noise through proliferation of digital image clichés. In this sense, the film transgresses the convention of ethical and political dissent of Thailand's digitally networked 'post-1976' generation of liberals and leftists. And in doing so the *By the Time It Gets Dark* pushes toward an outside, an opening, juxtaposing the calcification of the iconography of dissent with the illegibility of female artistic creation in Thailand's art history. The film opens up a feminist enunciating position in the way that it places in constellation hyper-visible historical representation, the masculinist violence of such mode of historicisation, with the potential of cinema to recollect another history, or a virtual history, of female relationality and perception. The broader research contextualises the emergence of the essayistic feminist moving image in Southeast Asia in the light of digital shooting, editing and effects capacities, and in the context of the circulation of digitally transferred archival images.

Misplaced Commas and Cannibalistic Tendencies: Necessary Contingencies in Archival Practice

Erika Tan (Central Saint Martins, University of the Arts London)

Confronted with the slippery medium of film, in the form of inaccessible 16mm, Super 8 or fuzzy VHS tapes and the limitations of time, an index that supplies more questions than answers and an archivist whose methodology demands a ring-fencing of research to geographical or temporal articulation – What will the archive give up? What will I take away with me? What will this produce? To speak of archival practices is to acknowledge the role of contingency and indeterminacy within the structuring of archives and the meaning or value placed on the archival object. This presentation will focus on my personal encounters with the archival, both specific and in principle.

Non-Existent Photographs, Unanswerable Questions and Unspeakable Things: Depictions in Cambodia

Darcie DeAngelo (McGill University)

In Cambodia, legacies of colonialism, genocide, and war have left millions of undetonated landmines entangled in systems of state and spirit-world surveillance. Spirits and state are always watching, waiting to punish. While the government is suspected of replanting explosives to punish rebellious Cambodians, spirits are believed to trigger landmines to maim those who fail to respect them. Moreover, Cambodian stories are haunted by the 'shadow of the genocide' (Hinton 2004), meaning that guilt over being a survivor and horror over what has happened make direct speech about the

past impossible. These multiple surveillances and shadow stories represent ‘unspeakable things’ (Meut 2012) similar to what the scholar Mue Meut found in the entwined state and spirits of Thailand. The Cambodians I knew found indirect ways to express the ‘inexpressible’ (Thompson 2013).

During my fourteen months of ethnographic fieldwork among landmine detection workers in Cambodia, people depicted unspeakable things with historical and contemporary photographic archives. This paper will explore three case studies: a photograph from before the Khmer Rouge; a photograph of a soldier’s tattoo spell used during wartime and a photograph of a 2016 murder victim. It will examine how the creation, circulation and conversations surrounding these photos indirectly communicated fear and violence. It will show how new technologies allow contemporary photographs to be re-framed according to spiritual-political fears. For example, a personal mobile phone allowed my interlocutor to archive a family photograph from before the Khmer Rouge. This was a photograph, she said, ‘that didn’t exist’. The family photograph that ‘didn’t exist’ portrays a weird temporality. The photo only exists now, but it used to not. Its appearance allowed my interlocutor to know her past, but it also realized the political legacy of her family’s past in the present. On social media and during a meal, other interlocutors shared a photo of the corpse of a man whose penis had been removed and placed in his mouth. My interlocutors told me that the man was murdered in the same way by a local grandmother spirit, importantly, an ancestor involved in historical wars, murdered unfaithful husbands. Both story and photograph left open the possibility that this spirit had punished the man’s infidelity and that it would do so again, insinuating the worries of the storytellers who often joked about being unfaithful husbands themselves. Not only did the photographic representations depict unspeakable things, they also realized spirits, politics and a past full of atrocities. In these depictions, the photos became epistemic objects that showed a violent past emergent in Cambodia’s political and spiritual realities.

Re-Appropriating History: Fiction and Real/False Archives in *Ebolusyon ng isang pamilyang Pilipino* by Lav Diaz (2004)
Eric Galmard (University of Strasbourg)

Following independence, the Philippines was subject to the dictatorship of Ferdinand Marcos (1971-1986), a major strategic ally of the United States. In cultural terms, this led to an Americanization of urban lifestyles; a development that some Filipino intellectuals have described as a form of neo-colonialism that affects national identity. In social terms, it resulted in the maintenance of large-scale poverty due to ‘the treachery of the elites’. As a result, the country’s relationship to the past, both in terms of the grand narratives of its national history and the memories of the various ethnic/social/regional/linguistic groups that make up Philippine society, is a crucial issue for Filipinos as members of a political community.

In *Ebolusyon ng isang pamilyang Pilipino* (2004), Lav Diaz responds to the need for a memorial re-appropriation of the Philippines’s national past in all its complexity. Here, he depicts fifteen years in the life – or rather, the survival – of a poor peasant family under the Marcos dictatorship until the ‘people power’ revolution that ended it. This paper will explore the relationship which Diaz establishes between the film’s narrative and fictional characters, on the one hand, and the traumatic political events of both the Marcos era and the post-Marcos era on the other. In doing so, it will focus on the decision to intermingle documentary – or pseudo-documentary – images with fictional sequences: that is, news archives of the Marcos regime and the tormented return to democracy with sequences of radio melodrama being recorded in a studio and scenes from a false documentary dedicated to the great figure of Filipino cinema of the 1970s and 80s, Lino Brocka.

A Re-Telling of History: Exercises in Re-Narrativizing Forms

Cristina Juan (SOAS, University of London)

Veering away from the use of archival content as post-colonial tools for subversion, this paper will focus on two Philippine artists who have specifically re-positioned archival materials by using them in deliberately transgressive narrative forms. *Bontoc Eulogy* is a 1995 drama mockumentary directed by Marlon Fuentes and Bridget Yearen. It uses archival material from the St. Louis World's Fair in 1904 and weaves it into a personal story of a present-day immigrant Filipino trying to trace the whereabouts of his long-lost grandfather from the vestiges of what was once called the 'Philippine village', a 47-acre site that for seven months became home to more than 1,000 Filipinos who had been put on display. The film, produced by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, is not only a silent indictment of the American's new 'taste for empire', it also created a space for fictive manipulation within a subversive narrative form. *Terms of War*, by Jovi Juan, re-purposes archival photos and texts to give form to the debates surrounding the British Industrialist, Nicholas Loney. The interactive piece documents the far-reaching progress/destruction that resulted when he is said to have single-handedly introduced industrial sugar production into the economy of the Philippines during the 1850s. But rather than 'telling' the story with images and a 'narrator', the 'story' is presented in a 6 x 4-meter assemblage of every piece of archival material available. And the archive is borderless. The viewer interacts with the piece by floating the mouse over this enormous collage of historical bits, and in some sense, it becomes a near synaptic experience of associative responses, an event almost pushed beyond mediation. My paper will introduce these two works and seek to answer the following questions: What are the political and aesthetic implications of these re-narrativizing forms? How do they subvert existing power relations?

Filling the Void: The (An) Archive as a Postcolonial Resource in the Movies of Raya Martin and John Torres

Renato Loriga (Independent)

Despite being one of the biggest cinematic industries during the first half of the twentieth century, Filipino cinema never had a proper national film archive, thus leaning to the almost complete erasure of its earlier cinematic heritage. Does this lack of images influence in any way the possibility of gaining a proper look at the past by today's filmmakers? Is it possible to work beyond the archive, to fill the gaps left by an erased memory which still bears the scars of colonial rule? In this paper, my aim is to focus on the work of filmmakers such as Raya Martin and John Torres, as they approached the themes of memory and archive with their work. Martin has dealt with the cinematic memory of the Philippines on numerous occasions: first, with his feature *A Short Film About the Indio Nacional* (2005), in which he imagined and recreated short silent movies that could have been made during the first years of cinema; then, by inserting American propaganda movies – shot by Edison and Ackerman – at the end of *Autohystoria* (2006); and, finally, in his 5-hour long film *Now Showing* (2008), where he manipulates one of the few movies that survived to the present day (*Tunay na Ina*, Octavio Silos, 1936). Despite being initially recognized for his super low budget digital movies, Torres has recently directed two movies that heavily rely on film, by taking their starting point from the remnants of forgotten, destroyed or never finished movies. This is the case with *Lukas Nino* (2013) which was initially intended as an imaginary remake of *Scotch on the Rocks to Remember, Black Coffee to Forget* (1974), an unreleased film by the legendary director Ishmael Bernal which was probably never completed. Due to its unavailability, Torres used ruined fragments of another Bernal movie, *Mister Mo, Lover Boy Ko* (1975). In a similar way, his latest effort, *People Power Bombshell: The Diary of Vietnam Rose* (2016), is based on finding of the homonymous B-movie by Celso Ad Castillo. Since the found reels of the movie are incomplete, Torres tries to fill the gaps by dubbing over the existing scenes and shooting others, accompanied by the actress Liz Alindogan. Each movie uses past images to reflect on the Philippine's past, be it the Revolution of 1896, American colonialism or Marcos' Martial Law. However, the absence of a cinematic memory forces

the filmmakers to fill the void left by these images. Their re-use of film is always accompanied by a new production of meaning, of new images that trigger what is left as a memory device. There is a postcolonial task of unending questions about national identity, historic memory and cinematic meaning.

Vong Phaophanit's *Fragments* (1990) Reconsidered
Piers Masterson (Independent)

Writing in 1995, Eddie Chambers placed Vong Phaophanit (born 1961 in Laos), along with Mona Hatoum and Zarina Bhimji, as marking a shift in the perception of diaspora artists in the UK. This paper will focus on Phaophanit's 1990 sculpture/installation *Fragments* that includes the projection of 120 archive photographs from the artist's personal collection. The inclusion of *Fragments* in the 1990 British Art Show was pivotal for launching the career of Phaophanit and the work was acquired by the Arts Council Collection making it one of the first pieces by a contemporary artist from South East Asia to be purchased by a UK public collection. The paper will review the contemporary critical responses to the work's inclusion in the British Art Show to outline the institutional and curatorial framework within which Phaophanit as a Southeast Asian artist working in Britain operated. In the last decade, a greater variety of art historical and theoretical perspectives on contemporary Southeast Asian art have become available in English. *Fragments* has been infrequently exhibited since 1990 and since 2000 Phaophanit has focused on architectural and public realm projects with the result that there is little detailed critical writing on the work. This paper will revisit *Fragments* from a critical framework informed by recent work on Southeast Asian diaspora and returnee contemporary artists by Pamela Corey and others. In her article 'Beyond Yet Toward Representation: Diasporic Artists and Craft as Conceptualism in Contemporary Southeast Asia', Corey proposes that a foregrounding of certain signs of diaspora identities along with the conceptualisation of a local craft based aesthetic contributed to major US and European institutions embracing the work of Vietnamese and Cambodian contemporary artists since 2000. In this paper, I will explore that a similar merging of conceptual art tropes with a generalized notion of Southeast Asian identity influenced the initial reception of Phaophanit's work.

Vietnam the Movie: Re-situating Images in Postcolonial Mainstream and Art Cinema
Loredana Pazzini-Paracciani (Independent)

The Vietnam War's widespread mediatic representation and distribution – from books to blockbuster movies – has played a significant role in the discourse surrounding postcolonial Vietnam; a period which spans several decades from the end of French colonialism in 1954 to the reunification of North and South Vietnam on 30 April 1975 as the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, a name it retains today. However, the plethora of still and moving images based on both historical accounts and fictional recollections of Vietnam's recent history – especially that of the War – fail to produce a cohesive and unified narrative. With the aim of exploring the place of postcolonial Vietnam within visual culture, this paper analyses a work by filmmaker Nguyễn Trinh Thi, *Vietnam the Movie* (2016), and the cultural and aesthetic approaches which it adopts – namely, the process of collecting and preserving colonial and postcolonial archival images to reframe Vietnam's recent history. By compiling visual depictions of iconic and historically significant events – from the French film *Indochine* (1992) and European arthouse works by Fassbinder and Jean-Luc Godard to Asian cinema and Hollywood movies such as *Apocalypse Now* (1979), *Born on the Fourth of July* (1989) and *Forrest Gump* (1994) – *Vietnam the Movie* traces the country's history from the end of French rule to the conclusion of the Vietnam War. In highlighting the process of stitching together excerpts from each of these films whilst also preserving their integrity, this paper seeks to address a series of debates on the plurality of history and the ownership of memory. While the notion of 'one history' is often used to reinforce national agendas, memory or the act of recollecting is paramount to a community's

contemplation of its past; a notion which, this paper argues, is illustrated by *Vietnam the Movie*'s composite anatomy and aesthetic narrative. Also crucial to this paper is the exploration of how *Vietnam the Movie* re-situates historical images and significant events within the discourse surrounding postcolonial Vietnam, as well as the political and aesthetic implications of such a gesture.

Transitory Splendour: Preambles on a Buddhist Archival Impulse in Post-Cold War Southeast Asia

Chairat Polmuk (Cornell University)

This paper is an attempt to conceptualize media practices in post-Cold War Southeast Asia through the notion of the archive and a Buddhist conception of temporality. Particularly, I investigate how Buddhist philosophical reflections on impermanence and ephemerality shape the ways in which contemporary artists collect, document and remediate material remnants of the Cold War. Instead of inscribing the tenets of canonical Buddhism, my argument vitally rests on vernacular forms of cultural expression that mobilise the Buddhist-derived trope of ephemerality to articulate novel modes of aesthetic and political imaginings. Positioned as an alternative archive of the Cold War, such ephemeral media practices demonstrate a trenchant critique of political violence and offer a creative platform for affective and ethical engagements with the traumatic past. With a close analysis of Apichatpong Weerasethakul's 2014 video installation *Fireworks (Archives)* in comparison to Rithy Panh's feature film *The Missing Picture* (2013) and emergent Lao films on war debris, my presentation will address the question of a Buddhist archival desire through the cinematic dramatization of tensions and interplays between durability and transitoriness, materiality and immateriality, commemoration and destruction, melancholic attachment and letting go. To this end, my project will bring current theoretical debates on the phenomenology of the archive in media and film studies into conversation with Buddhist material and visual cultures.

Dismantling the Picturesque: Non-Fiction Propaganda Film from the Netherlands East Indies (1912-1930)

Sandeep Ray (Rice University)

In 1912, the Dutch colonial government began producing propaganda films about the East Indies. Hundreds of films were produced across the archipelago over the next two decades, primarily for screenings in the Netherlands. The films, by championing a Dutch presence in Southeast Asia, chronicle life in colonial Indonesia and provide some insight into a range of its manifestations: child labor, deforestation, mistreatment of labor and proselytization.

A common criticism of visuals produced during the colonial era in Indonesia is that they hinged on the picturesque, displaying an abstract, aestheticized world that never quite existed. The yearning for an exotic cultural and geographic otherness was frequently exploited. The reputation of this predominant style employed by Dutch painters – the *Mooi Indie* – may have impinged on the readings of these films from the early twentieth century. In this presentation, I contend that the aesthetic of these non-fiction, propaganda films shifted gradually from that *Mooi Indie* influenced style, to a more 'unpicturesque' view of the colony.

Landscapes presented within the single frame of a painting can be made to look unnaturally attractive rather easily. A derivative of this can be applied to the photographic tradition as well. But roving documentary footage is typically unable to maintain aesthetic abstraction for long. The complexities of framing 'picturesquely' for sixteen to twenty-four frames a second over several minutes, with a moving camera, is difficult – a more realistic sense of the surroundings invariably emerges. The Netherlands East Indies propaganda films were non-fiction in spirit and no effort was

ever made to create Potemkin-like backdrops. Those early Dutch filmmakers, entrusted by their government and other commissioning bodies, did create a significant body of work showcasing the positive aspects of colonial rule that strived to be aesthetically pleasing. But often, inadvertently, they also captured an unflattering vision of everyday life in the Indonesian archipelago. This lack of the picturesque in some of the filmed material bodes well for a more robust inquiry of the visual and spatial history of that time and place. While there have been many studies devoted to the aesthetics of colonial era paintings and photographs in the East Indies, these films have mostly yet to be formally reviewed by art historians. I argue that documentary film footage from this period can help create a heightened sense of that colonial environment. In this presentation, I shall screen clips of some of the footage filmed between 1912 and 1930 by different Dutch camera operators and discuss how, unlike the *Mooi Indie* paintings, they managed to record a relatively ‘unpicturesque’ view of the colony despite their propagandistic slant.

Moving Images: Archiving the ‘Difficult to Picture’
Emiko Stock (Cornell University)

Grandmothers suggesting princesses of other centuries, lost relatives re-inscribed in pictures of unknown provenance that have traveled through the wars, girlfriends exchanging portraits gesturing to new forms of relatedness within the family frames. This paper considers some Cham photo albums of the Cambodian pre-war(s) era (1950s–1960s) as sites of absences and reminiscences going beyond a long *durée* history ‘difficult’ to picture: something both painful and complicated. Chams step into the visual not to engage in history as an archiving of facts, but to practice history itself in its bundle of silences. If family pictures are often imagined in the same way as history (long gone for it has been burnt, buried, or lost) I ask how can the image of history move us when the picture has long moved away or moved on? Taking inspiration in photographs that have moved across spaces and have moved (their (re-newed) beholders) across time, I suggest looking with the image of history that is pictured by Chams within those photographs and beyond their very own frames. This presentation looks at pictures as pathways not to solve the silences of Cham history, but rather to trace the contradictions and uncertainties that both history and its image capture.

The Photographic Archive as Strategy: Robert Zhao and *The Bizarre Honour*
Charmaine Toh (University of Melbourne)

This paper will look at the appropriation of photographic archives as a strategy in contemporary art. Using the work of Singaporean artist, Robert Zhao Renhui, particularly his most recent project, *The Bizarre Honour*, it will consider the documentary status of the photographic archive, its relationship with power and its subsequent potential for writing historiography. The paper concludes by highlighting the difficulties of using such archival material, paying particular attention to the issues of aesthetics and nostalgia.

Early photographic history in Singapore has been largely determined by the colonial archive – that is, images produced and circulated for British consumption. From the late 19th century to early 20th century, studios such as G.R. Lambert & Co and Sachtler, and photographers like John Thomson, created an archive of ethnographic types and landscapes of Southeast Asia, providing the first impression of the region for the European viewers. This visual imagination persisted through the 20th century and laid out the conventions by which Southeast Asia has since been represented. In other words, it is not only an archive of colonial power and desires, but also a visual colonization of the landscapes of the region.

In his previous works, Zhao has typically engaged with fictional histories and narratives by creating his own digitally manipulated photographic work. However, *The Bizarre Honour* is the first time he

has chosen not to show a single image of his own, but to display historical photos of Singapore's natural history collected by the artist himself over the last fifteen years. Combining the photographs with found objects and text in a museological display, the artist seeks to chronicle 'the contentious relationship between this island and its human inhabitants, from colony to city-state'. A large and complex installation occupying a two-story house, the appropriated photos are inserted into every part of the display to create a heightened sense of the historical aspects of the artist's narrative. Large clusters of photos present images of extinct fauna, plant surveys, rubber plantations, snake charmers and tiger hunters, among others.

If photographic archives legitimize and normalize existing power relations, then how do we read Zhao's appropriation of the colonial archive? If we accept that the archive is not simply a repository of things, but an ordered system from which history is written, then is it possible to challenge the authority of the archive with fictions and counter-memory? The paper seeks to provide a close reading of *The Bizarre Honour* to consider how a challenge to the documentary status of the archive might be made. More generally, it reflects on the specific status of the photograph within the archive and its ability to translate territories and bolster 'the order of things'.

Speaker Biographies

May Adadol Ingawanij is a moving image theorist and curator based at the Centre for Research and Education in Arts and Media, University of Westminster. She is writing a book titled *Animistic Cinema: Moving Image Performance and Ritual in Thailand*. Recent English-language publications include *Glimpses of Freedom: Independent Cinema in Southeast Asia* (2012), 'Animism and the Performative Realist Cinema of Apichatpong Weerasethakul', in *Screening Nature* (2013) and 'Long Walk to Life: the Films of Lav Diaz', in *Afterall Journal* (2015). Recent curatorial projects include *Lav Diaz: Journeys* (London Gallery West, 2017), *Southern Collectives* (Buenos Aires, BIM, 2016), *On Attachments and Unknowns* (with Sa Sa Bassac, Phnom Penh, 2017).

Erika Tan is an artist whose work has evolved from an interest in received narratives, contested heritage, subjugated voices and the transnational movements of ideas, people and things. Her work arising out of processes of research and responses to the unravelling of facts, fictions and encounters related to events, locations, audiences and specifics that may already exist. Her work has been exhibited internationally including *Diaspora Pavilion*, Venice (2017); *On Attachments and Unknowns*, SA SA BASSAC, Phnom Pen, Cambodia (2017); *Artist and Empire*, National Gallery Singapore/Tate (2016-7); *Radio Malaya*, NUS Museum, Singapore (2017). She is currently working on a series of films, which takes the figure of a 'forgotten' Malay weaver in the 1924 Empire Exhibition (London) as its central motif. Erika teaches on the BA in Fine Art at Central Saint Martins, University of the Arts London.

Darcie DeAngelo is a PhD Candidate in the Department of Anthropology at McGill University. She specialises in the anthropology of medicine and sensory ethnography. Her doctoral thesis examines a Cambodian mine action pilot-project that uses giant African rats to detect landmines – of which millions remain buried in the post-conflict landscape. Given Cambodia's dense landmine contamination and recent histories of conflict, as well as the newly imported African rats, her research explores modes of relating on the minefield. Darcie has conducted participant observation, interviews and filming with the mine detection rats, their handlers and the NGO supervisors, as well as during other human-nonhuman interactions in Cambodia. Her analysis incorporates Science and Technology Studies, Cambodian Buddhist understandings about love and spirits, as well as histories of violence in Cambodia. Before attending McGill, she was awarded her MPhil in 2011 from the University of Tromsø, Norway in Visual Cultural Studies. For her Master's work, she completed a thesis and a film on landmine victims, media and the prosthesis industry in Battambang, Cambodia. She graduated from Harvard University with a BA (Honours) from the Department of Anthropology (2005). She uses documentary film in both her research and analysis and some of her work can be seen here: <https://vimeo.com/latitudereadjustment>.

After studying literature and film, **Eric Galmard** worked in several Asian countries (the Philippines, Japan, Cambodia) and the Pacific region (Fiji Islands), both in the university system and the French cultural network. Since 2009, he has taught film in the Faculty of Arts at the University of Strasbourg, focusing on documentary cinema and Asian cinema. He recently directed a documentary film about a Cambodian writer, *A Tomb for Khun Srun* (Dora Films, 2015), and contributed a chapter on Amir Muhammad's film *The Last Communist* to the edited volume *Les Cinemas d'Asie* (2016).

Cristina Juan was born and raised in the Philippines and has a PhD in Comparative Literature from the University of the Philippines, Diliman. She taught at U.P. for ten years, and in 1995, moved to New York where she raised a family, published poetry and taught Asian Pacific American Studies at NYU. She moved to London in 2013 and is currently a Research Associate in the South East Asian Department at SOAS and teaches its modules on Philippine Literature and Philippine Comparative Studies.

Renato Loriga graduated from Roma Tre's DAMS in 2015 in the subject of Postcolonial Theories and Practices of Cinema with a thesis on New Philippine Cinema. Since 2013, he has written for the website of the film magazine *Sentieri Selvaggi*. In 2016, he published the book *Autohystoria. Visioni postcoloniali del nuovo cinema filippino* (Aracne). He currently works as a researcher at MiBACT (Ministry of Cultural Heritage and Activities and Tourism) and for the production/distribution company Zomia.

Piers Masterson is a curator, lecturer, public art commissioner and writer based in London. He studied at Goldsmiths College and the Royal College of Art. As a regular contributor to *Art Asia Pacific*, he has recently focused on the experience of diaspora in contemporary art. His research interest in the legacy of the British Empire and its institutions through the work of contemporary artists has been the basis of catalogue essays and reviews in *Art Monthly*, *Creative Camera*, *Art Papers* and *Third Text*. He has curated and commissioned numerous exhibitions and projects by artists including Sinta Tantra, Silia Ka Tung, Suki Chan, Mona Hatoum, Faisal Abdu'Allah and Isaac Julien.

Loredana Pazzini-Paracciani is an independent art curator, writer and lecturer of Southeast Asian contemporary art. She is based in London and Bangkok, and works with art institutions and commercial spaces to address critical issues of social and political concern in Southeast Asian contemporary art. Her dialogues with artists and art professionals have resulted in a debut publication that addresses the impact of cosmopolitanism on contemporary art, *Interlaced Journeys: Diaspora and the Contemporary in Southeast Asian Art*, uniting the viewpoints of various thinkers from the region on one of the driving forces in present-day global society. She has also contributed to *The Artling* and *Art Republik*, academic journals for the Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF) and the Asia Research Institute (ARI) at the National University of Singapore and a range of symposia, such as New Asian Imaginations (2011) and the ASEASUK Conference (2016). In recent years, Loredana has also curated several exhibitions in collaboration with significant art institutions, including from *Faith and Fairy Tales: New Media Art for Thailand* with ADM Gallery, School of Art, Design and Media at Nanyang Technological University of Singapore (2014), *Architectural Landscapes: SEA in the Forefront* with the Queens Museum and inToAsia: Time-based Art Festival, New York (2015) and *The Game/Viet Nam by LE Brothers* with the Jim Thompson Art Center, Bangkok (2016).

Chairat Polmuk is currently a PhD candidate in Asian literature, religion, and culture at Cornell University and an exchange scholar in visual and environmental studies at Harvard University. His doctoral project focuses on the notions of Buddhist temporality and archival desire in relation to the mediations of material remnants and affective residues of the Cold War in Southeast Asia. Chairat received his MA in Southeast Asian studies from Cornell in 2013, writing a thesis on Lao literary modernity. Prior to his academic journey to Ithaca, Chairat taught the Thai language and poetry at the Department of Thai, Chulalongkorn University in Bangkok, where he obtained his BA (Hons) and MA in Thai literature. He has published book chapters on contemporary Thai cinema and Lao literature, including 'Labor of Love: Intimacy and Biopolitics in a Thai-Burmese Romance' (2016) and "Old Tales in a New World: Lao Literature and Cultural Movements during French Colonialism" (2015), both by Chiang Mai University. His articles on similar topics, 'Isan Bound: Haunting Fantasies and the Violence of the City in *I-San Special* and *Uncle Boonmee Who Can Recall His Past Lives*' (2016) and 'Life in a Time of Turmoil: Re-reading Colonialism and Nationalism in Autobiographies of Postwar Lao Intellectuals' (2014) appear in *Aksonsat: Journal of Letters* and *Journal of Thai Language & Literature* respectively.

Sandeep Ray is currently a Henry Luce postdoctoral fellow at the Chao Center for Asian Studies at Rice University. In 2013, whilst researching his dissertation on early Dutch colonial propaganda films titled, "Celluloid Colony: Occluded Histories of the Netherlands East Indies from Moving Images (1912-30)", Sandeep spent eight months at the exhaustive archives of *Beeld en Geluid* and the Eye

Film Institute in the Netherlands analyzing hundreds of films. In addition to reading and writing about film and history, Sandeep makes documentaries. His works have been screened at various festivals and forums including Pusan, Taiwan, Sydney, Delhi, Iran Cinema-Verite, RAI, the Margaret Mead Film Festival, the Jean Rouch Ethnographic Festival and the Flaherty Seminar. Sandeep has a BA in Film from Hampshire College, an MA in Southeast Asian Studies from the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor and received a PhD in History from the National University of Singapore in 2015. Sandeep reviews films and is a frequent panellist at the Festival Film Dokumenter in Yogyakarta, Indonesia.

Emiko Stock is a PhD candidate in Socio-Cultural Anthropology at Cornell University. Her work with Cham Sayyids responds to recent reformulations of Alid piety – a devotion to the Prophet's Family and Imam Ali – somewhere between Sunnism and Shi'ism. She follows those traces from Cambodia to Iran where she joins professional photographers and amateur 'selfiers' as a videographer. Taking this visual experience as a pathway into the silenced social memory underlying those trajectories of conversion, she looks at how history touches us and how we touch it every time we think in images. Originally an interpreter and researcher for the private and development sectors, Emiko took anthropology courses at The Royal University of Fine Arts (Phnom Penh) and Université de La Sorbonne (Paris) before she received Masters in Khmer (INALCO, Paris) and in Anthropology (Université Paris X Nanterre). Some of her research and teaching interests include Muslim diversity in the modern world, cinematic representations of otherness and alternative modes of story-telling inspired by visual anthropology, the writing of ethnography and surrealism.

Charmaine Toh is a curator at National Gallery Singapore. Recent exhibitions include *Danh Vo, Tang Da Wu: Earth Work 1979* and *Siapa Nama Kamu? Art in Singapore since the 19th Century*. Previously, she was the Programme Director at Objectifs Centre for Photography and Film where she played a pivotal role in revitalising the gallery programme and initiated plans for documentation and research of lens-based art practice. She was a co-curator for the 2013 Singapore Biennale. Charmaine is currently on a sabbatical from the gallery to undertake her PhD at the University of Melbourne where she is researching the circulation of photography from Singapore via salon exhibitions from the 1950s to 1970s.

Screening Notes

***By the Time it Gets Dark*, dir. by Anocha Suwichakornpong (Electric Eel Productions, 2016)**

Taking the Thammasat student massacre of 1976 as its starting point, *By the Time it Gets Dark* intricately weaves together the lives of various characters in this beguiling and dizzying second feature by Anocha Suwichakornpong. The lives of a documentary filmmaker and her subject, a former a student activist, a waitress who constantly drifts from one job to another, an actor and an actress are all loosely connected, hinging on a series of almost invisible threads, while the narrative doesn't fail to surprise as it unfolds, layer upon layer. The film intricately weaves together notions of memory, the political and cinematic, offering a bold exploration into film the possibilities of cinema itself.

** N.B. This film contains a sequence of flashing lights which might affect viewers who are susceptible to photosensitive epilepsy.

Anocha Suwichakornpong is a film director and producer from Thailand. Her first feature, *Mundane History*, won the Tiger Award at Rotterdam. Her second feature, *By the Time it Gets Dark*, won the Prince Claus Fund from CineMart and received financial support from Ministry of Culture (Thailand), as well as Hubert Bals Fund and Doha Film Institute. She has also produced *In April the Following Year, There Was a Fire* (IFFR 2012), *Concrete Clouds* (IFFR 2014) and *How to Win at Checkers (Every Time)* screened at Berlinale 2015.

***Golden Slumbers*, dir. Davy Chou (Vycky Films, 2011)**

Cambodian cinema flourished in the 1960s, drawing huge crowds to theatres around the country, until the industry was destroyed by the Khmers Rouges in 1975. Of the 400 films produced, only 30 remain today. Almost all the actors were killed during the reign of Pol Pot and only a few of the directors were able to flee the country. Most of the old movie theatres of Phnom Penh have become restaurants, karaoke clubs or squats. *Golden Slumbers* resurrects the myths and legends of this lost cinema. Through survivors' stories and the search for remnants of their era in modern Phnom Penh, the film reveals the vital importance movies had for an entire generation, as well as the complex legacy they leave today's youth to inherit.

Davy Chou is a French-Cambodian filmmaker born in 1983. His documentary *Golden Slumbers* (2011) was selected for the Berlin Film Festival Forum in 2012 and the Busan International Film Festival, as well as more than 40 other international festivals. His short film *Cambodia 2099* (2014), which takes place entirely on Diamond Island, in Phnom Penh, has been selected for the Cannes Film Festival Directors' Fortnight. In 2016, he returned to Cannes, where his feature *Diamond Island* was selected for the Semaine de la Critique.

Nguyễn Trinh Thi, *Vietnam the Movie*, 47 mins, 2016.

Vietnam the Movie uses a carefully structured montage of clips from drama and documentary films to give a chronological account of Vietnamese history from the mid-1950s to the late 1970s, encompassing the end of French colonialism and America's involvement in the Vietnam War. But this is no conventional history lesson. Rather, the excerpts chosen contrast a variety of external and often oppositional views, ranging from mainstream Hollywood drama to European art-house. Source material from the US includes *Apocalypse Now*, *Born on the Fourth of July* and *Forrest Gump*, whilst Europe is represented by the works of Harun Farocki, Rainer Werner Fassbinder, Werner Herzog

and Jean-Luc Godard. Director Nguyễn Trinh also splices extracts from the films of Nagisa Oshima, Satyajit Ray and Ann Hui into the mix. The result suggests that any ‘true’ picture of Vietnam has been lost to the multiplicity of symbolic purposes to which the country, its people and their tribulations have been put.

Nguyễn Trinh Thi is a Hanoi-based independent filmmaker and video/media artist. Her diverse practice has consistently investigated the role of memory in the necessary unveiling of hidden, displaced or misinterpreted histories; and examined the position of artists in the Vietnamese society. Nguyen studied journalism, photography, international relations and ethnographic film in the United States. Her films and video art works have been shown at festivals and art exhibitions, including Jeu de Paume, Paris; CAPC musée d’art contemporain de Bordeaux; the Lyon Biennale 2015; Asian Art Biennial 2015, Taiwan; Fukuoka Asian Art Triennial 2014; Singapore Biennale 2013; Jakarta Biennale 2013; Oberhausen International Film Festival; Bangkok Experimental Film Festival; Artist Films International; DEN FRIE Centre of Contemporary Art, Copenhagen and Kuandu Biennale, Taipei. Nguyen is founder and director of Hanoi DOCLAB, an independent centre for documentary film and the moving image art in Hanoi since 2009.