

GUGGENHEIM UBS MAP GLOBAL ART INITIATIVE INAUGURATES INTERNATIONAL TOUR AT ASIA SOCIETY HONG KONG CENTER

***No Country: Contemporary Art for South and Southeast Asia* opens at Asia Society Hong Kong Center on Wednesday, October 30**

Exhibition Investigates Diversity of Contemporary Art Practice in the Region

EXHIBITION: No Country: Contemporary Art for South and Southeast Asia
VENUE: Asia Society Hong Kong Center, 9 Justice Drive, Admiralty, Hong Kong
DATES: October 30, 2013–February 16, 2014

(New York and Hong Kong, October 28, 2013) – The Asia Society Hong Kong Center presents *No Country: Contemporary Art for South and Southeast Asia*, the first touring exhibition of the Guggenheim UBS MAP Global Art Initiative, from October 30, 2013, to February 16, 2014. Featuring recent work by 13 artists from Bangladesh, Cambodia, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar, Pakistan, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam, *No Country* presents some of the most challenging and inventive voices in South and Southeast Asia today.

The exhibition was first seen in New York at the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum (February 22–May 22, 2013) as part of the Guggenheim UBS MAP Global Art Initiative, a multi-year collaboration charting contemporary art practice in three geographic regions—South and Southeast Asia, Latin America, and the Middle East and North Africa—and encompassing curatorial residencies, international touring exhibitions, audience-driven education programming, and acquisitions for the Guggenheim’s permanent collection. All works have been newly acquired for the Guggenheim’s collection under the auspices of the Guggenheim UBS MAP Purchase Fund. Following its presentation in Hong Kong, the exhibition will travel to Singapore.

Exhibition Overview

No Country: Contemporary Art for South and Southeast Asia is curated by June Yap, Guggenheim UBS MAP Curator, South and Southeast Asia, and Dominique Chan, Exhibition Curator, Asia Society Hong Kong Center. The exhibition includes 18 paintings, sculptures, photographs, videos, and mixed-media works by 13 artists.

According to Ms. Yap, “There is a tremendous diversity of artistic practice in South and Southeast Asia, and certainly more artists and artworks than any single project can accommodate. In this exhibition, the intention is to present the range of aesthetic developments and subjects of interest to contemporary artists, and to

challenge the privileging of nation and national narrative as a basis for understanding them. Accompanied by programs for engagement with different local audiences, *No Country* is more than an exhibition; it is a platform for discussion and exchange.”

The artists and artworks in the Hong Kong presentation are:

- Aung Myint (b. 1946, Yangon, Myanmar), *White Stupa Doesn't Need Gold*, 2010
- Bani Abidi (b. 1971, Karachi, Pakistan), *The Ghost of Mohammed Bin Qasim*, 2006; *This Video Is a Reenactment*, 2006; *The Boy Who Got Tired of Posing*, 2006
- Reza Afisina (b. 1977, Bandung, Indonesia), *What . . .*, 2001
- Khadim Ali (b. 1978, Quetta, Pakistan), *Untitled 1, Rustam Series*, 2011–12; *Untitled 2, Rustam Series*, 2010; *Untitled 3, Rustam Series*, 2011–12
- Shilpa Gupta (b. 1976, Mumbai, India), *1:14.9*, 2011–12
- Vincent Leong (b. 1979, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia), *Keeping Up with the Abdullahs 1* and *Keeping Up with the Abdullahs 2*, 2012
- Tayeba Begum Lipi (b. 1969, Gaibandha, Bangladesh), *Love Bed*, 2012
- Tuan Andrew Nguyen (b. 1976, Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam), *Enemy's Enemy: Monument to a Monument*, 2012
- Araya Rasdjarmrearnsook (b. 1957, Trad, Thailand), *The Treachery of the Moon*, 2012
- Vandy Rattana (b. 1980, Phnom Penh, Cambodia), *Bomb Ponds*, 2009
- Norberto Roldan (b. 1953, Roxas City, Philippines), *F-16*, 2012
- Tang Da Wu (b. 1943, Singapore), *Our Children*, 2012
- Truong Tan (b. 1963, Hanoi, Vietnam), *What Do We Want*, 1993–94

The exhibition—the title of which was drawn from the opening line of W.B. Yeats’s “Sailing to Byzantium” (1928), which was adopted by Cormac McCarthy for his novel *No Country for Old Men* (2005)—proposes an understanding of South and Southeast Asia that transcends physical and political borders. The historical narrative of South and Southeast Asia stretches from the era of its ancient kingdoms and empires to that of today’s nation-states. The region is marked by traces of colonization, division, and intervention, events and processes that are inscribed in cultural memory. South and Southeast Asia is also home to numerous influential faiths, religions, and ethical codes, including Buddhism, Hinduism, and Islam.

Adapted in collaboration with the Asia Society Hong Kong Center, and drawing on the New York exhibition’s central themes of cultural, historical, and political representation, the presentation in Hong Kong places

added emphasis on the impact of South and Southeast Asian spiritual and moral tenets on the shaping of the region's communities. *No Country* investigates the variety of contemporary artistic practice in this diverse region and demonstrates how the artists represented in the exhibition move beyond reductive representation to reflect on the manifestations and effects of belief.

S. Alice Mong, Executive Director, Asia Society Hong Kong Center, stated: "We are pleased to collaborate with the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum and Foundation and UBS in mounting *No Country: Contemporary Art for South and Southeast Asia* at the Asia Society Hong Kong Center. We share the vision of furthering the understanding of countries through arts and cultural exchange, and engaging Hong Kong and global audiences in our commitment. With the burgeoning arts scene and creative dynamism in the region, there is no better time than now to bring this world-class exhibition to Hong Kong."

Richard Armstrong, Director of the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum and Foundation, stated: "The Guggenheim UBS MAP Global Art Initiative and our work with the Asia Society Hong Kong Center on this special presentation of *No Country: Contemporary Art for South and Southeast Asia* build upon our existing Asian Art Program and provide local, regional, and global audiences a deeper, more rewarding, and we hope, more nuanced cultural exchange."

Chi-Won Yoon, CEO, UBS Asia Pacific, stated: "We are proud to present *No Country: Contemporary Art for South and Southeast Asia*, in Hong Kong. Following its success in New York, the opening of the exhibition here allows us to promote diverse contemporary cultural practice in the dynamic South and Southeast Asian regions, internationally. The multi-year Guggenheim UBS MAP Global Art Initiative aims to encourage and enable cultural exchange, connecting arts communities globally to new audiences and extend the reach of our arts education programming."

Exhibition Layout

No Country groups its artworks in four thematic segments, each of which reflects a different aspect of faith and morality. The first gallery chamber opens with the impact of religion on the birth of nation-states in the region with works such as Shilpa Gupta's sculpture *1:14.9* (2011–12) and Norberto Roldan's *F-16* (2012), in which the artists look at the partition of South Asia and the Philippine occupation respectively. The effects of cultural and political encounter are further emphasized in Vandy Rattana's installation of video and photography *Bomb Ponds* (2009) in the museum annex, which comments on the lasting topographical effects of the U.S. bombing of Cambodia during the Vietnam War. In the second gallery, there is a shift of emphasis toward the interplay between present-day global society and religious heritage, through works such as Tuan Andrew Nguyen's *Enemy's Enemy: Monument to a Monument* (2012), in which traditional wood-carving techniques have been used to transform an American baseball bat into a new tribute to an extant memorial to a Vietnamese Buddhist monk's protest against religious repression, and Araya Rasdjarmrearnsook's *The*

Treachery of the Moon (2012), in which images of recent political clashes in Thailand are juxtaposed with extracts from popular television dramas. Addressing the question of how religious precepts may unify disparate communities (whether more or less superficially) or keep them at odds, the exhibition continues with works such as Vincent Leong's photographs *Keeping Up with the Abdullahs* (2012), which show ethnic Chinese and Indian families dressed in the garb associated with Malaysia's official religion, Islam. The exhibition concludes with an exploration of the choices that are available to individuals and communities regardless of religious and cultural belief, as portrayed in works such as Tayeba Begum Lipi's appealing-yet-threatening *Love Bed* (2012), which evokes both political and gender-specific violence in Bangladesh.

June Yap curated *No Country: Contemporary Art for South and Southeast Asia* with assistance from Helen Hsu, former Assistant Curator, Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, and guidance from Alexandra Munroe, Samsung Senior Curator of Asian Art, Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum. Nancy Spector, Deputy Director and Jennifer and David Stockman Chief Curator at the Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation, New York, and Joan Young, Director of Curatorial Affairs, Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, are providing curatorial oversight for the entire multi-year initiative. Dominique Chan, Exhibition Curator, and Sharon Chan, Curatorial Officer, Asia Society Hong Kong Center, have collaborated closely with June Yap and the Guggenheim curatorial team in staging the exhibition in Hong Kong.

About Guggenheim UBS MAP Global Art Initiative

Conceived to engage a range of audiences, including artists, curators, and educators, the Guggenheim UBS MAP Global Art Initiative seeks to stimulate dialogue and creative interaction both regionally and globally, fostering lasting relationships among institutions, artists, scholars, museumgoers, and online communities. Launched in April 2012, the program builds upon and reflects the Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation's distinguished history of internationalism and significantly increases the Guggenheim's holdings of art from these dynamic communities.

Expanding the Dialogue, on the Ground and Online

As part of its mission to encourage cross-cultural dialogue about contemporary art and cultural practice, the Guggenheim has worked in close collaboration with educators at the Asia Society Hong Kong Center to develop an extensive and innovative series of customized programs, workshops, performances, and online initiatives. These will offer inclusive learning opportunities for a diverse constituency of young people, families, and adults. Through a dynamic process of cultural and professional exchange, the direct involvement of artists, the creative integration of technology, and an extensive range of programs in the visual arts, the education program will provide a vital international intellectual forum.

The exhibition is accompanied by a variety of educational programming at the Asia Society Hong Kong Center and online. Program highlights include:

- Teachers' training workshop and open house
- Family programs such as gallery tours and hands-on workshops
- Tours for visitors with visual impairments
- Symposium addressing cultural entanglements in contemporary art
- Daylong program exploring rice as agriculture, cuisine, and material
- A series of artist-led, exhibition-related programs with Tang Da Wu, Khadim Ali, and Tayeba Lipi—including workshops, performances, and public talks—presented during the artists' week-long residencies in Hong Kong
- Multimedia tour through a smartphone app will feature extended artwork information, artist commentary, and curatorial overview
- Printed and online Family Activity Guide and Teacher Resource Guide
- Interactive gallery tours for primary and secondary schools
- A half-day museum education conference on making art museums a part of everyday life
- Printed and online student activity sheets

Online programs will transcend geographic boundaries to reach hundreds of thousands of people worldwide throughout the duration of the project and beyond. The initiative's online environment features writing, audio, and video by curators, art historians, artists, and regional experts. Individual pages for each exhibition artist will provide further information on their practices, and on the acquisitions made through the Guggenheim UBS MAP Purchase Fund.

About Asia Society Hong Kong Center

As one of the eleven centers of The Asia Society, Asia Society Hong Kong Center (the "Center") was established in 1990 by a group of Hong Kong community leaders, led by Dr. the Hon. Lee Quo-Wei, the honorary chairman of Hang Seng Bank. As the leading regional knowledge-based platform for furthering the understanding of the countries and cultures of Asia and global issues that impact the region, Asia Society Hong Kong Center boasts extensive regional and international networks of leaders and scholars, and recognized expertise in business and policy, arts and culture, and educational programming for a wide range of audiences. In February 2012, the Hong Kong Center established its new permanent home in Admiralty, Hong Kong.

About the Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation

Founded in 1937, the Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation is dedicated to promoting the understanding and appreciation of art, primarily of the modern and contemporary periods, through exhibitions, education

programs, research initiatives, and publications. The Guggenheim network that began in the 1970s when the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, was joined by the Peggy Guggenheim Collection, Venice, has since expanded to include the Guggenheim Museum Bilbao (opened 1997), and the Guggenheim Abu Dhabi (currently in development). Looking to the future, the Guggenheim Foundation continues to forge international collaborations that take contemporary art, architecture, and design beyond the walls of the museum. More information about the Foundation can be found at guggenheim.org.

About UBS

UBS draws on its 150-year heritage to serve private, institutional, and corporate clients worldwide, as well as retail clients in Switzerland. Its business strategy is centered on its global wealth management businesses and its universal bank in Switzerland. Together with a client-focused Investment Bank and a Global Asset Management business, UBS will expand its wealth management franchise and drive further growth across the Group. UBS is present in all major financial centers worldwide. It has offices in more than 50 countries, with about 35% of its employees working in the Americas, 36% in Switzerland, 17% in the rest of Europe, the Middle East and Africa and 12% in Asia Pacific. UBS employs about 61,000 people around the world. Its shares are listed on the SIX Swiss Exchange and the New York Stock Exchange.

Asia Society Hong Kong Center

9 Justice Drive, Admiralty, Hong Kong

Tel: (852) 2103 9511

E-mail: enquiryhk@asiasociety.org

Exhibition admission:

Adults (non-members): HK\$30

Seniors (aged 60 or above) and individuals with disabilities: HK\$15

Asia Society members, full-time students, aged 18 or below, and last Thursday of the month: FREE

Hours: Tues–Sun, 11 am–5 pm; last Thursday of the month: 11 am –8 pm. Closed on Mondays and public holidays (Christmas Day, New Year’s Day, and the first two days of Chinese New Year)

Initiative Website guggenheim.org/MAP

Asia Society Hong Kong
Center Website asiasociety.org/hong-kong

Social Media

Guggenheim twitter.com/guggenheim
facebook.com/guggenheimmuseum

youtube.com/guggenheim
flickr.com/guggenheim_museum
foursquare.com/guggenheim

Asia Society facebook.com/asiasocietyhongkong
 Hong Kong Center twitter.com/asiasocietyhk

For updates on the Guggenheim UBS MAP Global Art Initiative, follow [#GuggUBSMAP](https://twitter.com/GuggUBSMAP) on Twitter.

For a complete press kit, go to guggenheim.org/presskits.

Translations of the media release Chinese (traditional and simplified) are available at guggenheim.org/pressreleases.

For publicity images visit guggenheim.org/pressimages.

User ID: photoservice

Password: presspass

Media Contacts:

Floria Wun / Peryl Tse
 Asia Society Hong Kong Center
 (852) 2103 9513/9570
fwun@asiasociety.org |
PTse@asiasociety.org

Betsy Ennis/Keri Murawski
 Guggenheim Museum
 (001) 212 423 3840
pressoffice@guggenheim.org

Amy Wentz
 Polskin A&CC
 (001) 212 715 1551
wentza@finnpartners.com

Lucie Sherwood / Charlotte Yip
 Sutton PR Asia
 (852) 2528 0792
lucie@suttonprasia.com | charlotte@suttonprasia.com

For inquiries about UBS:

UBS Asia Pacific
 Mark Panday
 (852) 2971 8221
mark.panday@ubs.com