

Title: In the Making: Experimentation and Experiment in Southeast Asian Art

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Panel Abstract

This panel will address the issues around experimentation and experimental in Southeast Asian arts between the 1950s and early 1990s. This is an interdisciplinary panel addressing developments in visual, performance and sound art, and which underscore the impossibility of direct linguistic and conceptual reciprocity. Discursively and historically, the concepts and labels of experimentation and experimental have been deployed and employed to accommodate works and practices combining techniques, temporalities and cultural registers unfitting for established categories of artistic and cultural practices. Such developments also have been commonly accepted as precursors of contemporary art in Southeast Asia. This panel argues that experimentation and experimental unsettle mainstream understandings to provide a more nuanced and complicated narrative.

Some of the questions that the panel will address, but not limited to, are:

- What makes experimental art/s experimental in Southeast Asia?
- In what ways does experimental as a term fill a void in the discourse, the discomfort between discourses and traditions?
- What is experimental without an avant-garde movement in the cultural field?
- Is experimentation/experimental and artistic freedom connected?
- Is experimentation/experimental art gendered, in and across contexts in Southeast Asia?
- What are the political implications and social ramifications?

Single session panel