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PANEL CONVENERS
Louise Liwanag (Co-Convener)
Independent Scholar, Manila, Philippines
louiseliwanag@gmail.com

Pearlie Rose S. Baluyut, Ph.D. (Co-Convener)
Professor, Imperial Valley College, California, United States
baluyut@gmail.com

PANEL SOLICITING CONTRIBUTIONS TITLE (90 minutes)
Joining or Making Worlds of Art?: Knowledge and Creativity in Southeast Asia

PANEL ABSTRACT (372 words)

Places that have benefitted the most economically from globalisation are those that have been able to localise the global diffusion of knowledge and creativity. Interchangeably referred to as human capital, it is inexhaustible and with increasing returns to scale it is a driver of growth. In Southeast Asia, links have been made among countries occupying varying stages of developmental trajectory, with how much and how early their governments invested in human capital development. Providing incentives for local education and workforce training alongside attracting foreign highly-skilled individuals and multinational corporations (for their R&D) set up the conditions for thriving economies.

The art world, when considered as a global network of goods, individuals, and institutions, is a treasure trove of knowledge and creativity. Aided by technological developments in mass media which have reduced frictions in viewing and communication, the network’s reach extends beyond established art capitals. New places that participate in its exchange indicate a level of prosperity or, at the very least, aspirations to a certain model of growth. Not only have regions in the Global South found increased artist representation in core biennials, if not record sales in the art market, the countries themselves boast homegrown large-scale international events. It can be argued that art’s core-periphery model is shifting; however, its transnational nodes of art institutions continue to concentrate in the Global North. In case they do elsewhere, for example in Southeast Asia, they touch down temporarily as branches or events and in cities that already attract creative persons seeking the market and buzz. Within the context of a global system that allows for slippery flows of capital, information, goods, and people regardless of distance.
and location, the absorptive capacities of a place to intellectual and creative capital can spell the difference in its fate to retain positive effects and to catch up to the rest of its neighbours.

This panel invites papers that analyse the extent to which the production, exhibition or reception of art in Southeast Asia position any one or community to the benefits of globalization; or, conversely, some areas are locked out due to existing institutional arrangements. It is also open to other cultural and creative industries, as well as historical accounts that cover previous waves of globalisation.