

January 27– 29 • Turf Wars

the tropics and cinema in Southeast Asia

Conceived as a postscript to the NUS Museum exhibition *tropics, a many (con)sequence*, *Turf Wars* is a three-part screening series co-programmed with Phoebe Pua about the tropics in Southeast Asian cinema. It explores the meanings and tensions of territory by bringing into conversation feature films, historical videos, experimental works, and roundtable discussions with artists, curators, and filmmakers.

The moving image works shown in this series, both online and on-site, are self-portraits of Southeast Asia's enduring tug-of-war where ownership must be wrested from the control of someone else. When land oscillates between being a space of amusement and serenity, and a place of anxiety and separation, the right to roam is uncomfortably divided among the inhabitant, the state, and the tourist—all of whom are, to one another, trespassers.

Exhibitions

[tropics, a many \(con\)sequence](#)

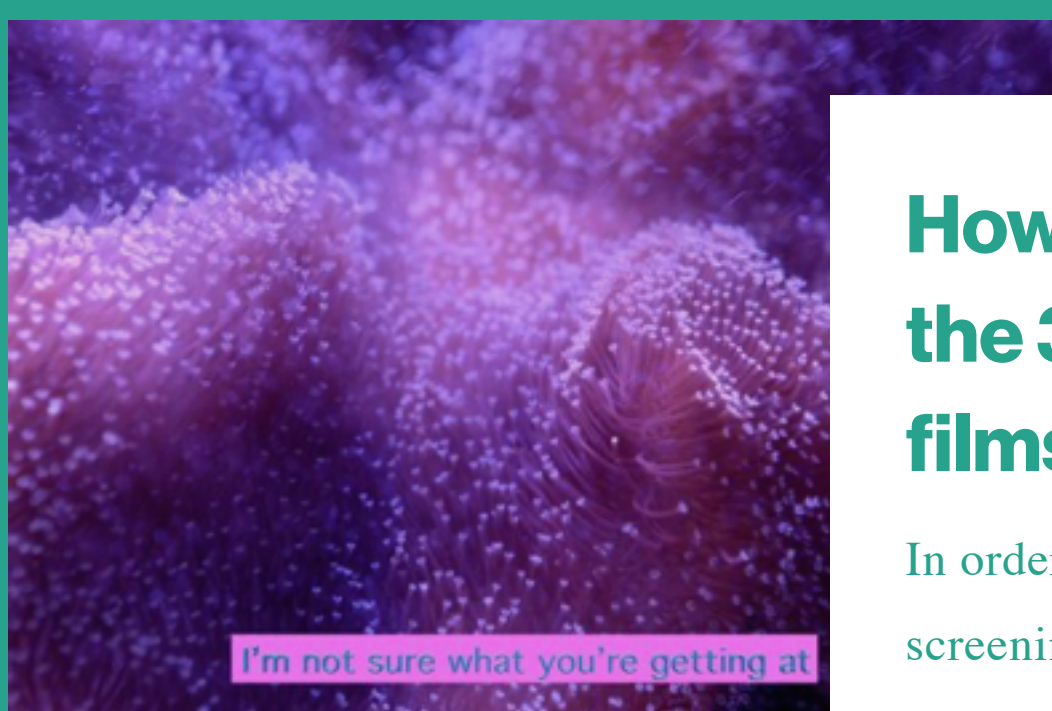
Films

[Men Who Save the World \(Lelaki Harapan Dunia\)](#)

[Whispering Sands \(Pasir Berbisik\)](#)

[A Room with a Coconut View](#)

[Short Film Screenings @ NUS Museum](#)

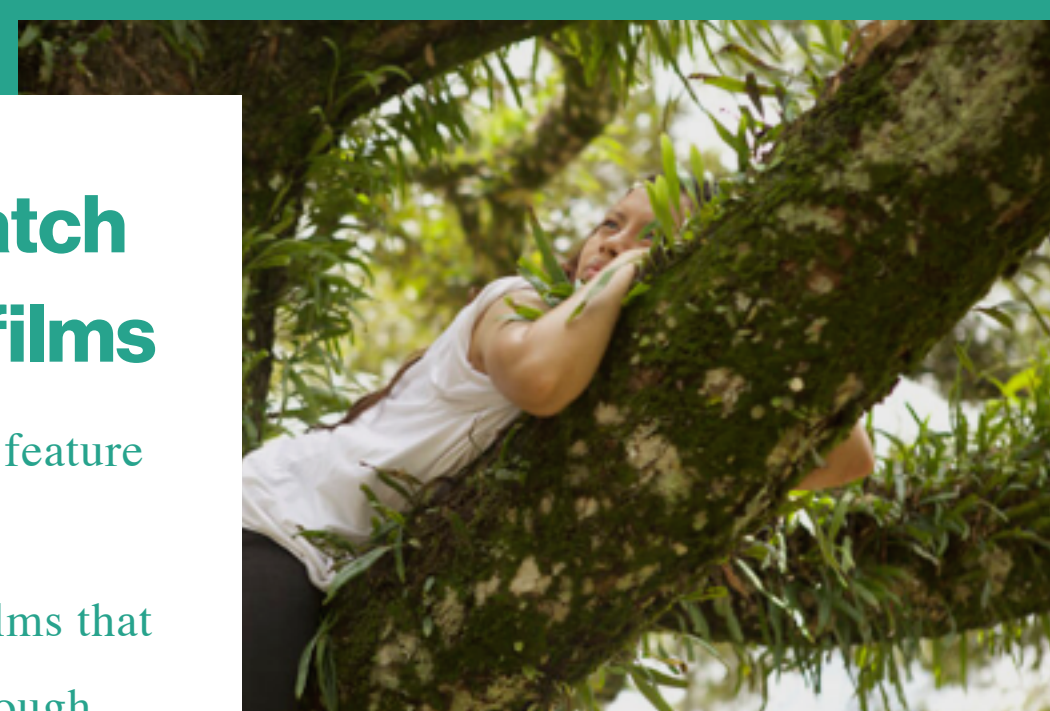


How to watch the 3 feature films

In order to access the film screenings, you will need to register at the link below. A password will be sent in the confirmation email. You can access the other components of the website without registration.

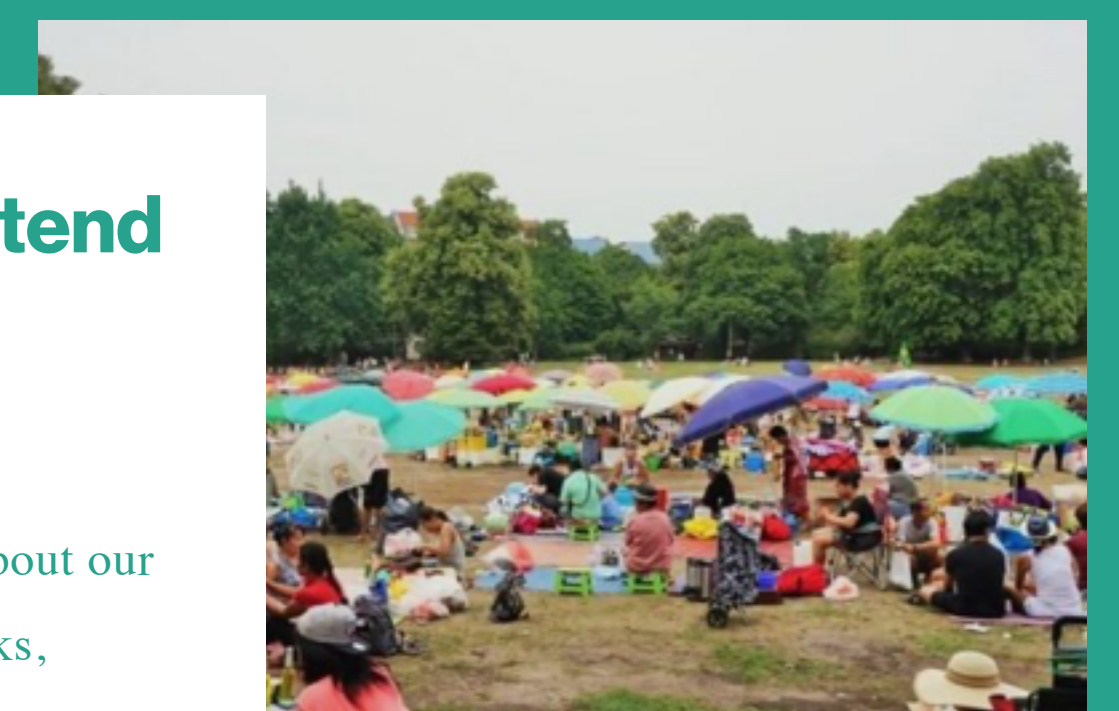
How to watch the short films

In addition to the feature films, we will be screening short films that are accessible through our Screening Room at the NX3 Gallery of the NUS Museum. Please refer to [this page](#) for more details.



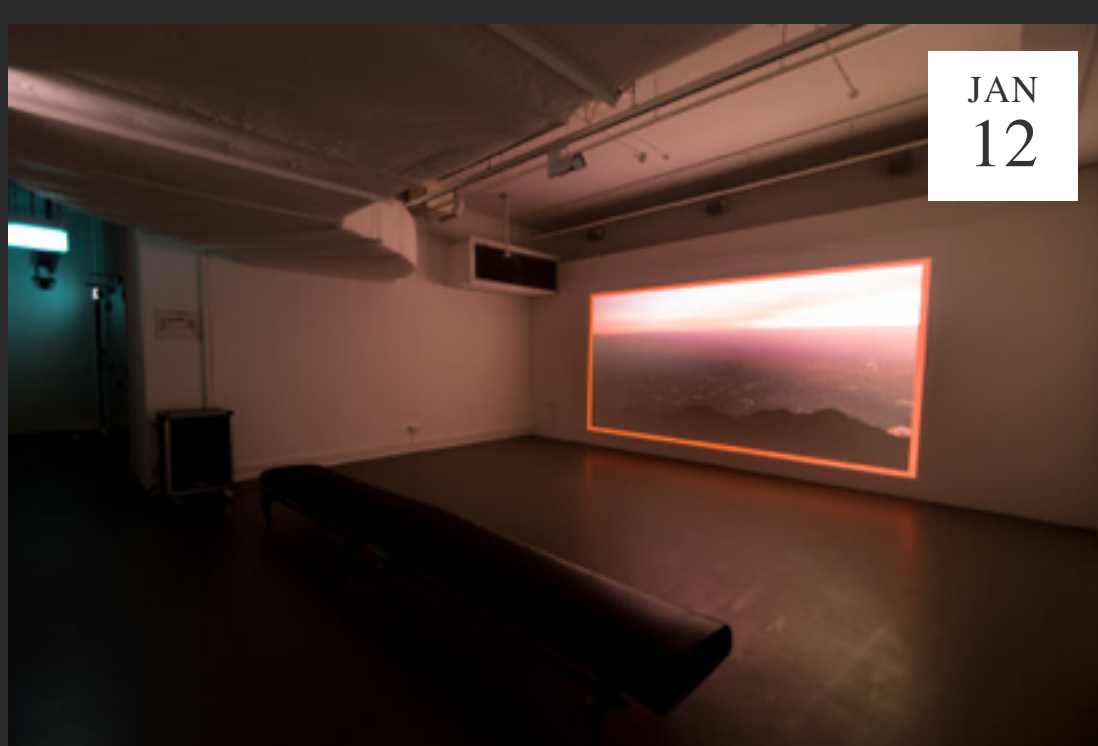
How to attend the daily events

Find out more about our daily events (talks, director Q&A, and Film Club) [here](#). The director Q&A and Film Club will be held as an online meeting and require registration to attend. You can click the link below to register.



Register Here

Upcoming Events



Screening Room @ NUS Museum

Jan 12, 2021 – Mar 6, 2021

[A film programme by NUS Museum](#)

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[Register](#)



Men Who Save the World (Lelaki Harapan Dunia) (2014)

dir. Liew Seng Tat



27 Jan

Available for 24 hours from Jan 27, 10AM (SGT) to Jan 28, 10AM (SGT)

PG13 | 94min In a rural village, a group of comical villagers spring into action after the owner of an abandoned house decides to restore it as a wedding present for his daughter. In a series of unfortunate events, the group encounters what they believe to be a spirit, and band together in an effort to protect their village.

Content Warning: scene of animal death (implied), racist imagery, homophobic and transphobic remarks used for comedy

[Register here to receive the password to view the film](#)

Blog

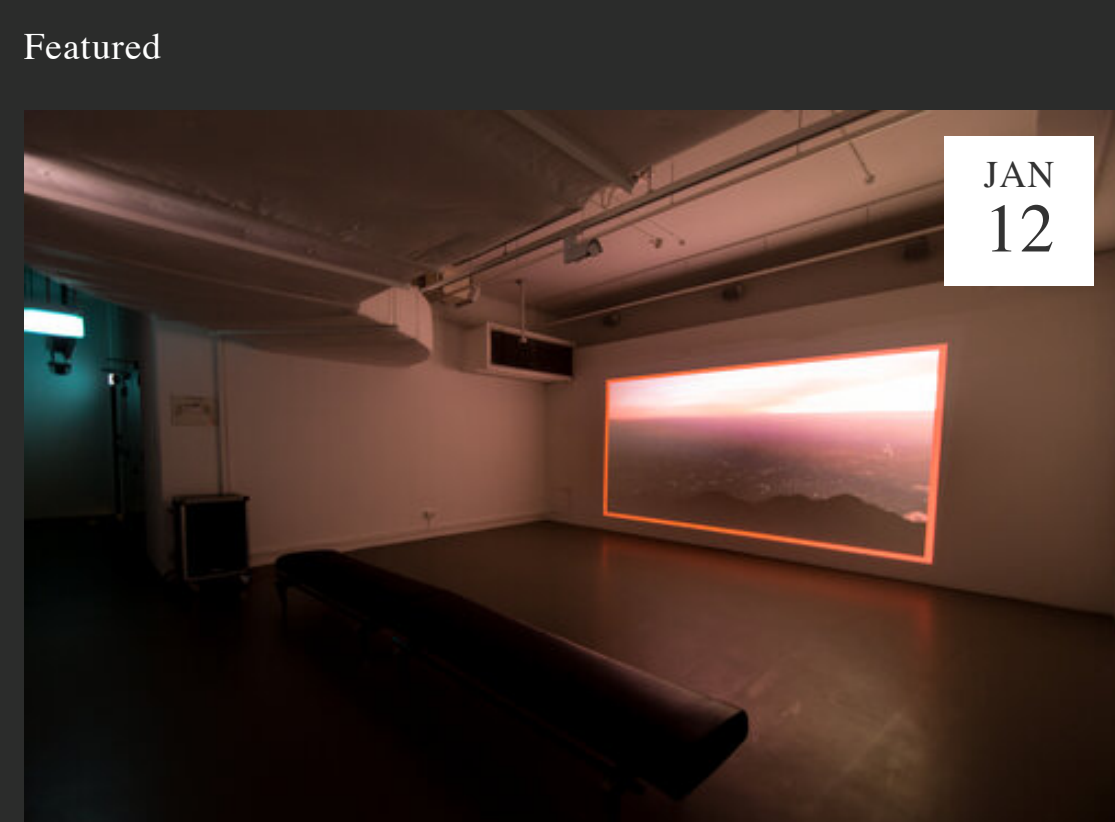


Faith, the Supernatural, and the Tropics in Singapore
Jan 7, 2021



Talking the Tropics: A Conversation with Kent Chan
Jan 7, 2021

Up Next



Screening Room @ NUS Museum
Jan 12, 2021 – Mar 6, 2021

[View the full schedule](#)

[A film programme by NUS Museum](#)

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Whispering Sands (Pasir Berbisik) (2001)

dir. Nan Achnas

28 Jan

Available for 24 hours from Jan 28, 10AM (SGT) to Jan 29, 10AM (SGT)

PG | 106min Berlian and her teenage daughter Daya are on the run from political violence. Forced to move inland from their seaside home to a desert of constantly shifting sands, the pair's journey is marked by their familiar dynamic of antagonism. Finally, Daya sees a vaguely familiar face shuffle in from across the wasteland.

On the 20th year anniversary of *Whispering Sands*' premiere, join us for a live Q&A with director Nan Achnas on 28 January, 7PM. Please click the button below to register, or [check our schedule](#) for more details.

Content Warning: Sexual Violence

[Register here to receive the password to view the film](#)

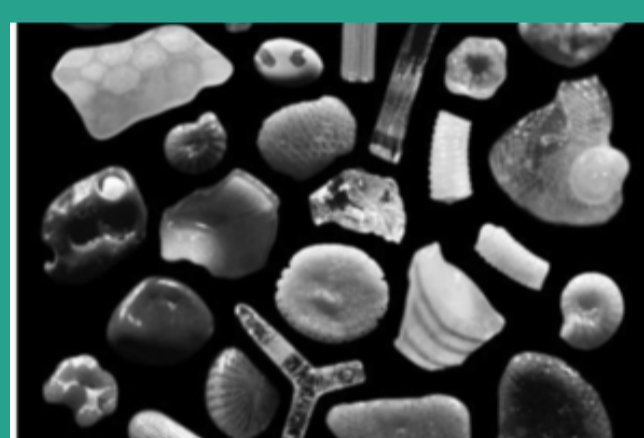
Blog



Sim Chi Yin's "Shifting Sands"

Sim Chi Yin is a Singaporean photographer interested in history, memory, and migration and its consequences. "Shifting Sands" is a project Sim has been working on since 2017 about the global depletion of sand.

Jan 27, 2021



To Build A City-State and Erode History: Sand and the Construction of Singapore

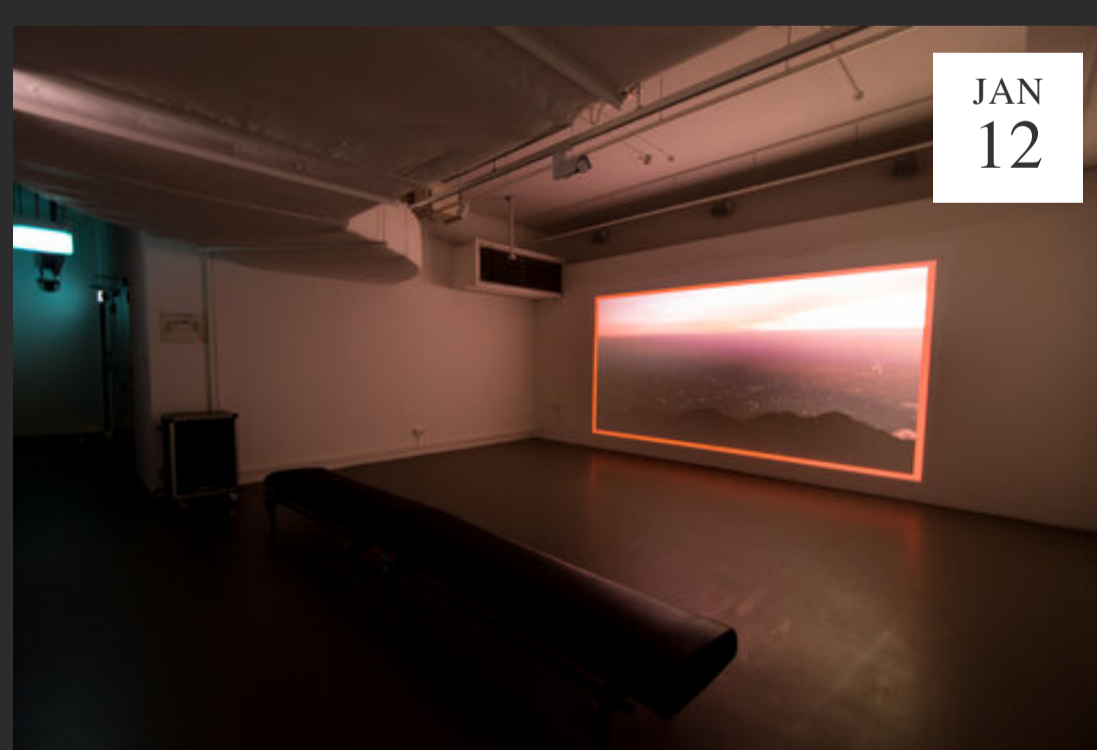
Jan 8, 2021



Talking the Tropics: A Conversation with Kent Chan

Jan 7, 2021

Up next



Screening Room @ NUS Museum

Jan 12, 2021 – Mar 6, 2021

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In Conversation with Director Nan Achnas

Thursday, January 28, 2021

7:00 PM – 8:00 PM

[Google Calendar](#) · [ICS](#)

On the 20th year anniversary of *Whispering Sands*' premiere, join us for a live Q&A with director Nan Achnas held in conjunction with the screening of *Whispering Sands (Pasir Berbisik)* on our website. This conversation holds space for open discussion into the film's encounters with gender, landscape, and identity. The Q&A session will be moderated by Phoebe Pua.

Participation in the Q&A will be via registration in the link below, and will be held over an online meeting. The link will be sent out after registration. Please note that the session will be recorded and uploaded after the event on the film programme website and other NUS Museum platforms for publicity purposes. You are encouraged to watch the film before attending this event as the conversation will be opened up to all participants on the online meeting. You can register to get access to the film in the same button below as well.

Bio

Nan Triveni Achnas was born in 1963 in Singapore. She holds a masters degree in Film Studies from the University of East Anglia, UK. She directed a great number of documentaries. In 1996, she directs *Kudelsak*, followed by *Whispering Sands* (2001), *The Flag* (2002) and *The Photograph* (2007), which claimed the *Grand Prize* at Karlovy Vary Film Festival. She also coproduced *Pesantren: 3 Wishes 3 Loves* and *Khalifah*, both rewarded by Vesoul's Audience Award at FICA Vesoul. She currently teaches cinema and new medias at Jakarta Arts Institute.

(Image credit: Asia Pacific Screen Awards, 2017)

[Register Here](#)

Tagged: talk, Whispering Sands, Nan Achnas, Pasir Berbisik

January 28

January 29

< **Whispering Sands (Pasir Berbisik) (2001)**

A Room with a Coconut View (2018) >

[A film programme by NUS Museum](#)

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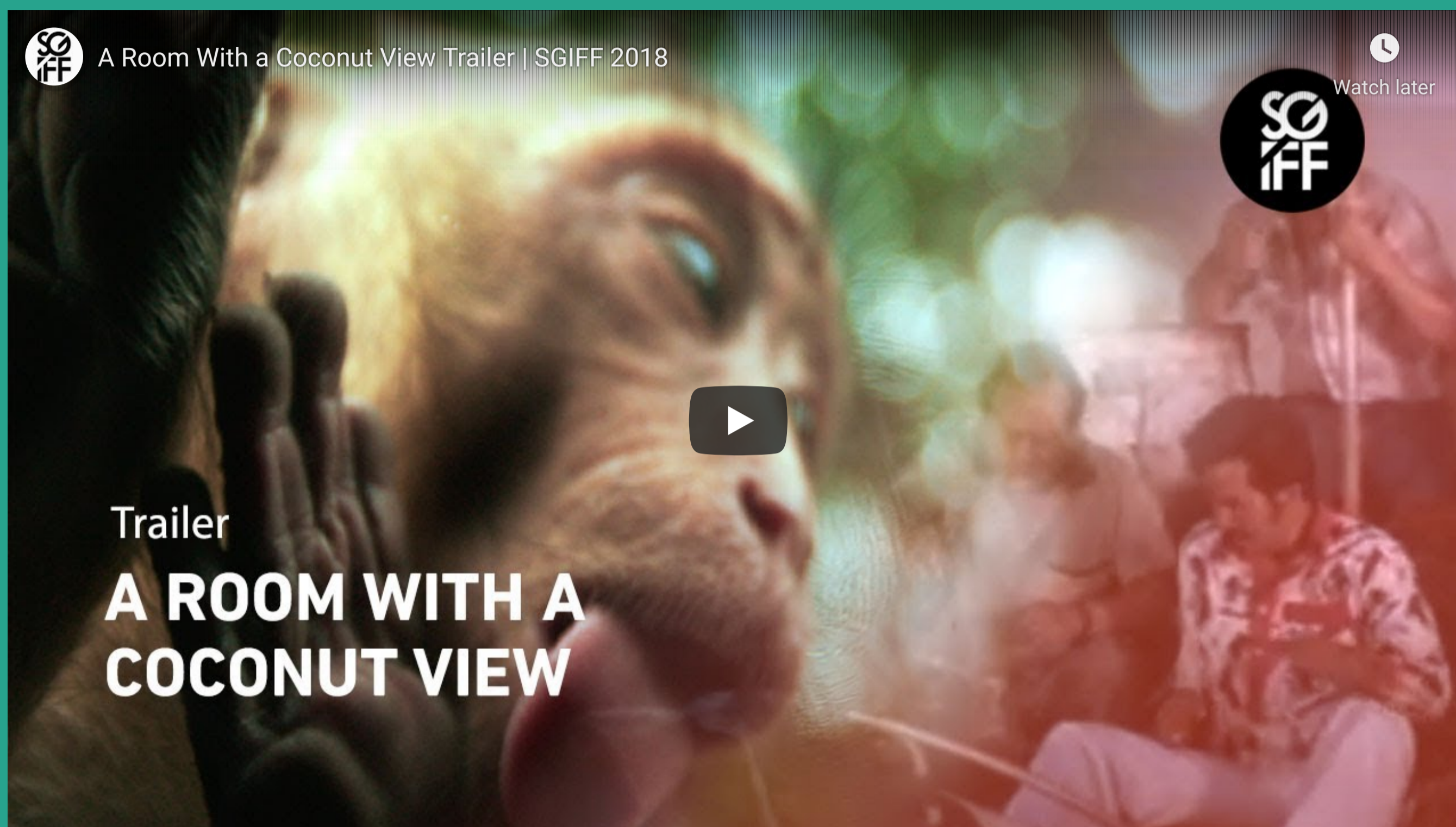
[Schedule](#)

[Register](#)



A Room with a Coconut View (2018)

dir. Tulapop Saenjaroen



29 Jan

Available for 24 hours from Jan 29, 10AM (SGT) to Jan 30, 10AM (SGT)

PG | 29min Through a fictionalised account of the bodiless voices hovering over commercially made presentation and historical strata, *A Room with a Coconut View* is an essayistic investigation of the politico-aesthetic relation through imagery surface and its netlike-technology apparatuses with a capitalistic-dictatorial-touristy regime as a backdrop.

[Register here to receive the password to view the film](#)

Blog



Technology, Biophilia, and Our Diminishing Desire to Affiliate with the Natural

Quartz speaks to psychology professor Peter Kahn about the increasing prevalence of technological nature and why humans are unable to invent an alternative to fostering meaningful connections with our environment.

Jan 7, 2021



Talking the Tropics: A Conversation with Kent Chan

Jan 7, 2021



Interview with Tulapop Saenjaroen on "A Room with a Coconut View"

SINDIE speaks to Tulapop about *A Room with a Coconut View*.

Jan 7, 2021



Botanic Gardens

Ng Wei Kai reflects on the history of Singapore through its history with orchids, examining the garden from without.

Jan 7, 2021



They Look But They Don't See

Image credit: Apononi Blog

This essay by Rosalia Namsai Engchuan, social anthropologist and filmmaker, is written in reference to disputes of space relating to Thai Park, an informal weekend market in Berlin that was in operation for 20 years but has recently been shut down by the city.

Jan 7, 2021

Up Next

Featured



Screening Room @ NUS Museum

Jan 12, 2021 – Mar 6, 2021

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Film Club – The Tourist and The Migrant

Friday, January 29, 2021

7:00 PM – 8:00 PM

[Google Calendar](#) · [ICS](#)

This film club is a roundtable discussion with Rosalia Engchuan and Sarnt Utamachote from Berlin-based Thai collective un.thai.tled. With presentations from speakers, the film club will tackle the cinematic grammar of “othering”, particularly in how it pertains to the intersection between Southeast Asian diasporic communities, culture, and space. Roundtable participants will engage in active conversation to unpack the emergence of transnational identity, public opinion, and cultural territory in the politics of assimilation. The Film Club session will be moderated by Phoebe Pua.

Participation in the film club will be via registration in the link below, and will be held over an online meeting. The link and more details will be sent out after registration. Please note that the session will be recorded and uploaded after the event on the film programme website and other NUS Museum platforms for publicity purposes.

Please also note that the film club session is constructed to facilitate active discussion from participants. There will be materials including discussion prompts and readings, that will be sent out prior to the film club session. Participants are highly encouraged to also bring their own perspectives and points of inquiry and research to the session.

Bio

Rosalia Namsai Engchuan is a social anthropologist and filmmaker based between Berlin and Southeast Asia. Her PhD research at the Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology in Halle, Germany, looks at practices of community filmmaking in Indonesia, investigating how cinematic epistemologies produce and socialise knowledges. Her latest video work *Complicated Happiness* is a speculative research, pivoting around the Thai Park in Berlin, that aims to undo the underlying structures of colonialism, race, gender and class that shape the production of our worlds. Rosalia curates screenings and dialogical encounters with a focus on independent and experimental works from locales of the ‘epistemological’ South, often in collaboration with the Berlin based collective un.thai.tled. She is currently the 2021 Goethe-Institut fellow at Hamburger Bahnhof – Museum für Gegenwart – Berlin with the Nation, Narration, Narcosis: Collecting Entanglements and Embodied Histories project.

Sarnt Utamachote is a queer filmmaker, photographer and curator. He is interested in deconstructing “surfaces” and in what renders “humans” invisible, by highlighting and curating fragments of human subtleties often overlooked in everyday life, through possible sources of social dignity and subject positions. He studied Industrial Design (BA) at Chulalongkorn University, and Cinema Studies and Literature Studies (BA) at the Freie Universität of Berlin. He co-founded the collective un.thai.tled, where he has curated critical cultural exhibitions such as *Beyond the kitchen: Stories from the Thai Park* (2020) as well as film screenings such as the un.thai.tled Film Festival Berlin (2019-annual).

Please head [here](#) to find out more about artist collective un.thai.tled.

[Register Here](#)

Tagged: roundtable discussion, live event, A Room with a Coconut View, Complicated Happiness, Rosalia Engchuan

January 29

A Room with a Coconut View (2018)

[A film programme by NUS Museum](#)

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Short Films

These three short films can be accessed through the Screening Room at the NX3 Gallery, NUS Museum and are played continuously on loop. You can plan your visit to the NUS Museum by clicking [here](#).



It's Easier to Raise Cattle (Lagi Senang Jaga Sekandang Lembu) (2017)

Dir. Amanda Nell Eu

PG13 | 17min In a remote Malaysian village, two teenage girls become unlikely friends. As their friendship develops, the two journey through moments of tenderness and tension. Suddenly, a harrowing event precipitates changes in one of them.

[Watch trailer](#)

Invalid Throne (2018)

Dir. Jakrawal Nilthamrong

G | 9:05min Shot on location in northern Thailand and a miniature landscape in the studio, this 35mm film is about land and its people. It calls into question historical narratives of place, who is allowed to enter, and what kind of relationships we build with the natural environment.

[Read more](#)

Body Double (Platoon) (2007)

Dir. Stephanie Syjuco

G | 28:40min "Body Double" is a moving sequence of a tropical landscape. In this piece, the American war movie, *Platoon*, is edited to exclude scenes of battle and dialogue, cropping the frame to focus in on the peripheral landscapes (if any) in an attempt to "search for the Philippines." This short film was screened in its unending loop iteration as part of a 2016 NUS Museum film exhibition *Double Vision*.

[Read more](#)

[A film programme by NUS Museum](#)

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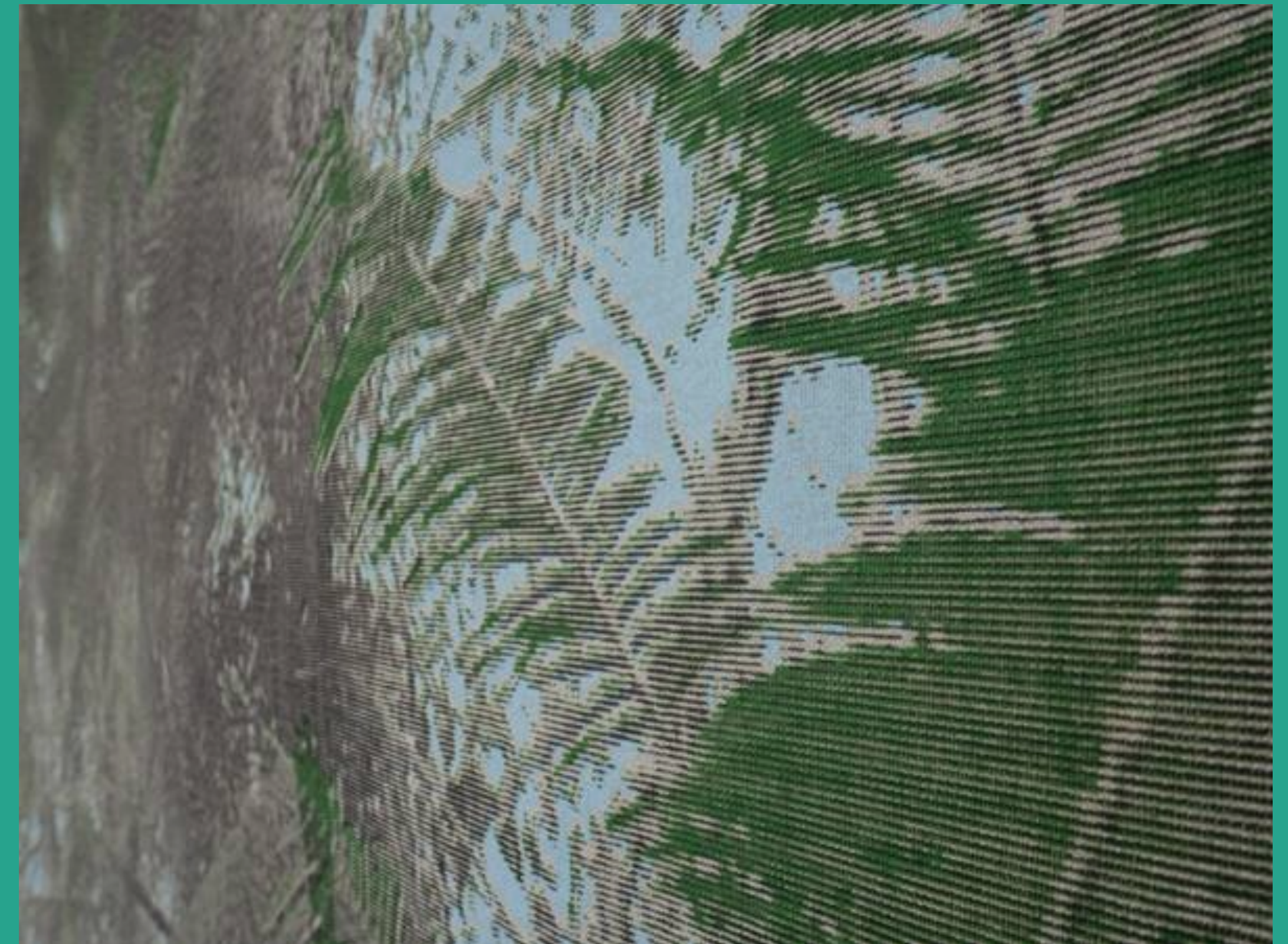
museum@nus.edu.sg

(+65) 6516 8817

[Facebook](#)

[Instagram](#)

Turf Wars is organised by co-programmer Phoebe Pua, alongside NUS Museum programmers Mary Ann Lim, and Simone Tam with marketing and editorial help from Tan Wei Xin.



About Phoebe Pua

Phoebe Pua is a doctoral candidate at the Department of English Language and Literature at the National University of Singapore. Her project is concerned with images of Third World womanhood in Southeast Asian cinemas and considers their aesthetic and political implications for feminist theorizing. She also writes on topics relating to gender, sexuality, and race in popular culture and has a special interest in the James Bond film series. Her work can be found in *Feminist Media Studies*, *Discourse, Context, and Media*, the online film magazine *fourbythree*, and in the Asian Film Archive's *Reframe* series.

[A film programme by NUS Museum](#)

[Contact](#)

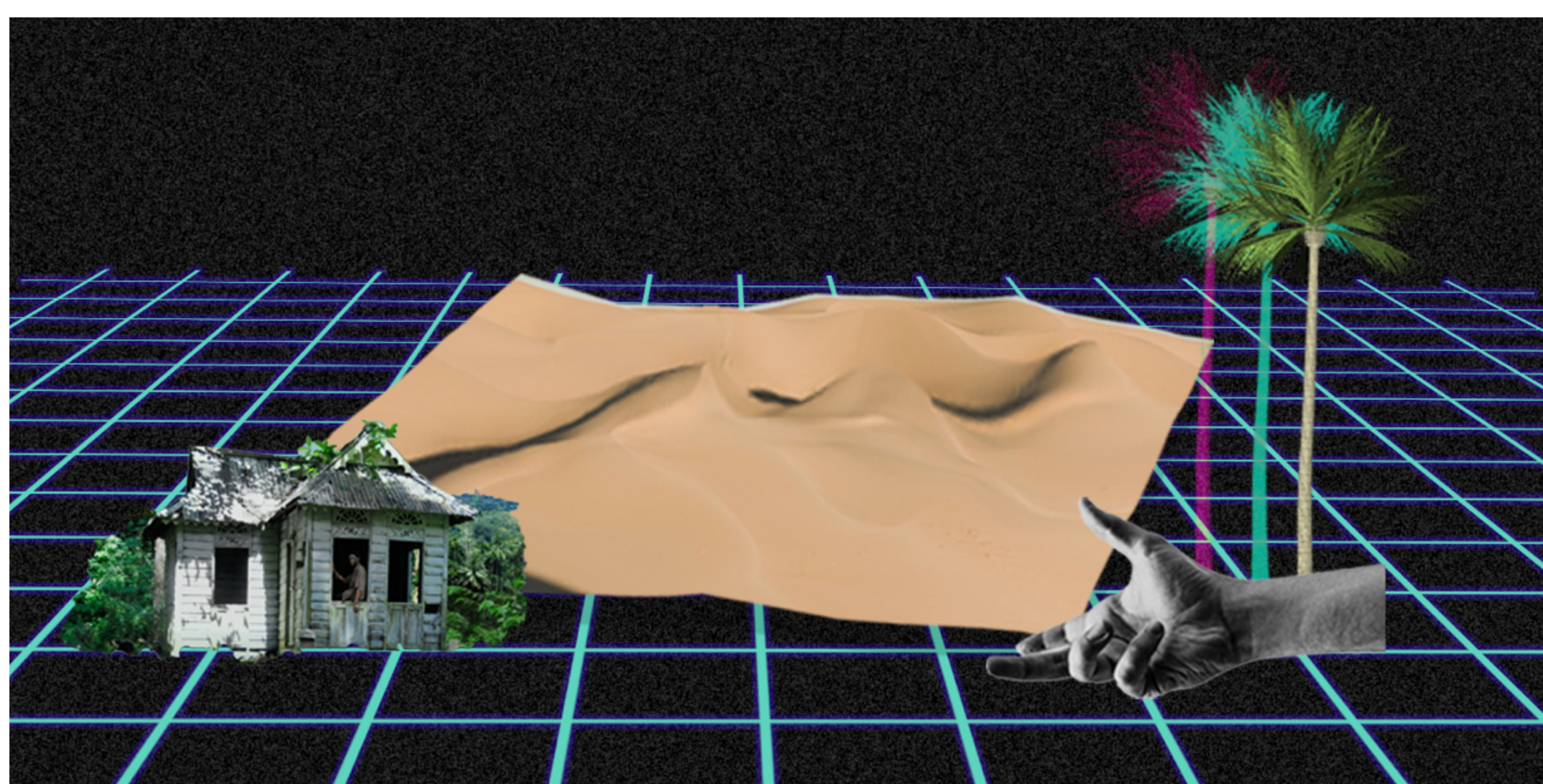
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[Film Series] Turf Wars: The Tropics and Cinema in Southeast Asia

[Film](#) [Free](#) [Heritage](#)


From 27 Jan 2021

Until 29 Jan 2021

Free with Registration

[Register Here](#)
[Turf Wars Website](#)

About the series

Conceived as a postscript to the NUS Museum exhibition [tropics, a many \(con\)sequence](#), *Turf Wars* is a three-part screening series co-programmed with Phoebe Pua about the tropics in Southeast Asian cinema. It explores the meanings and tensions of territory by bringing into conversation feature films, historical videos, experimental works, and roundtable discussions with artists, curators, and filmmakers.

The moving image works shown in this series, both online and on-site, are self-portraits of Southeast Asia's enduring tug-of-war where ownership must be wrested from the control of someone else. When land oscillates between being a space of amusement and serenity, and a place of anxiety and separation, the right to roam is uncomfortably divided among the inhabitant, the state, and the tourist—all of whom are, to one another, trespassers.

Film Screenings

Please note that registration is required to watch the films, which will be available on the *Turf Wars* website on their respective screening dates. The password to view the films will be sent out after registration.

Men Who Save the World (Lelaki Harapan Dunia)

(dir. Liew Seng Tat, Malaysia, 2014, 94min)

Rating: PG

Available for 24 hours from Jan 27, 10AM (SGT) to Jan 28, 10AM (SGT)

In a rural village, a group of comical villagers spring into action after the owner of an abandoned house decides to restore it as a wedding present for his daughter. In a series of unfortunate events, the group encounters what they believe to be a spirit, and band together in an effort to protect their village.

Whispering Sands (Pasir Berbisik)

(dir. Nan Achnas, Indonesia, 2001, 106min)

Rating: PG

Available for 24 hours from Jan 28, 10AM (SGT) to Jan 20, 10AM (SGT)

Berlian and her teenage daughter Daya are on the run from political violence. Forced to move inland from their seaside home to a desert of constantly shifting sands, the pair's journey is marked by their familiar dynamic of antagonism. Finally, Daya sees a vaguely familiar face shuffle in from across the wasteland.

A Room with a Coconut View

(dir. Tulapop Saenjaroen, Thailand, 2018, 28min)

Rating: PG

Available for 24 hours from Jan 29, 10AM (SGT) to Jan 30, 10AM (SGT)

Through a fictionalised account of the bodiless voices hovering over commercially made presentation and historical strata, *A Room with a Coconut View* is an essayistic investigation of the politico-aesthetic relation through imagery surface and its netlike-technology apparatuses with a capitalistic-dictatorial-touristy regime as a backdrop.

Turf Wars Opening Conversation

27 January, 7PM

To introduce the film programme *Turf Wars* and its antecedent exhibition *tropics, a many (con)sequence*, this conversation will bring in co-programmer Phoebe Pua and NUS Museum programmer Mary Ann to discuss the film programmes' contexts through visual cultures and tropes of the tropics in its circulation and consumption. The event will be held via [Facebook Live](#).

In Conversation with Director Nan Achnas

28 January, 7PM

This live Q&A with director Nan Achnas is a conversation held in conjunction with the screening of *Whispering Sands (Pasir Berbisik)*, and holds space for open discussion into the film's encounters with gender, landscape, and identity.

Participation in the Q&A will be via registration, and will be held over Zoom meeting. The link will be sent out after registration.

Please note that the session will be recorded and uploaded after the event on the film programme website and other NUS Museum platforms for publicity purposes.

You are encouraged to watch the film before attending this event as the conversation will be opened up to all participants on the Zoom meeting.

Film Club: The Tourist and The Migrant

29 January, 7PM

This film club is a roundtable discussion with Rosalia Engchuan and Samt Utamachote from Berlin-based Thai collective un.thai.tied. With presentations from speakers, the film club will tackle the cinematic grammar of "othering", particularly in how it pertains to the intersection between Southeast Asian diasporic communities, culture, and space. Roundtable participants will engage in active conversation to unpack the emergence of transnational identity, public opinion, and cultural territory in the politics of assimilation.

Participation in the film club will be via registration, and will be held over Zoom meeting. The link and more details will be sent out after registration.

Please note that the session will be recorded and uploaded after the event on the film programme website and other NUS Museum platforms for publicity purposes.

Please note that the film club session is constructed to facilitate active discussion from participants. There will be materials including discussion prompts and readings, that will be sent out prior to the film club session. Participants are highly encouraged to also bring their own perspectives and points of inquiry and research to the session.

Screening Room

12 January – 6 March

In NX3 Gallery NUS Museum, on loop (27min)

The screening room is an attendant site to the film programme, supporting three short films played on loop, appendices of resources or archives, as well as other modes of soliciting community responses. *Turf Wars* is co-programmed with Phoebe Pua. The screening room will be available based on the NUS Museum opening hours, and will run until 6 March 2021.

Short films

Invalid Throne (Thailand, 2018, 9.5min)

It's Easier to Raise Cattle (Malaysia, 2017, 17min)

Body Double (Philippines, 2014, on loop or 1min)

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