

THE CURIOS
COLLECTIVE

MA ART THERAPY
SCHOOL OF CREATIVE INDUSTRIES
FACULTY OF FINE ARTS, MEDIA AND CREATIVE INDUSTRIES
LASALLE COLLEGE OF THE ARTS

The MA Art Therapy Programme at LASALLE College of the Arts offers an internationally informed two-year, full-time art therapy training in a contemporary psychodynamic psychotherapy framework. Integrated into the curriculum are inter-subjective approaches, attachment and trauma theory with the ability to connect these concepts through the process of creativity and expression in treatment, in a Southeast Asian context.

This training programme achieved approval status in 2009 by the Australian, New Zealand and Asian Creative Arts Therapies Association (ANZACATA), an international professional arts therapy association. Upon graduation, our graduates can apply for the credential AThR (Registered Art Therapist) allowing them to practice as registered art therapists in Australia, New Zealand and Singapore.

The programme was validated by Goldsmiths, University of London in 2012.

The programme maintains significant sustaining partnerships, relationships, and collaboration with various industry and community partners, including the Art Therapists' Association Singapore, and officially became the Educational Partner with The Red Pencil Humanitarian Mission in 2012.

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THE CURIOUS



Aperçu

Artists from the Master of Arts (MA) Art Therapy graduating class of 2020 present *The CuriOs Collective*, an exhibition of artworks representing an inclusive harmony and strong individual identities. 'Curio', is defined as a rare or unusual object connected to the word 'curiosity', a quality which the artists embrace and hope to invoke in their audience.

The logotype contains words in various languages that relate to the concept of 'collective' — which embodies the various nationalities within the cohort:

团, (Chinese): a social gathering of people and talents

Samyukta, (Sanskrit): joined with, connected and attached

Toàn, (Vietnamese): perfect as a whole, integrated, full

Ubuntu, (South African, Zulu): humanity's universal bond of sharing

קולקטיב, (Hebrew): a group of entities with common interest, work together

كرباوان, (Jawi): a group of esteemed persons recognised by society for their creative talents

These collective meanings symbolise the ethos of the artists who have created these artworks in a nurturing and safe space, in parallel to their professional training and practice in art psychotherapy.

Ronald Paul-Michael Henry Lay

Doctorate in Education (candidate), MA, AThR, ATR-BC
Programme Leader, MA Art Therapy
School of Creative Industries

Foreword

Curiosity is that powerful and innate driving force that propels humanity into investigative and creative pursuits, at least from my perspective. Chancing upon a series of curious objects sunbathing in a seemingly mundane space, the intersections of an open-air wet market with provision shops and a HDB void deck within a local community, I was intrigued and photo-evidenced this peculiarity. In isolation and upon contemplative reflection, I titled this image: *Intriguing but not sure... Definitely contained*. My eye gravitated to the contrasts in textures and colour as well as to the random and corralled objects within the weather-beaten circular form. Given the current circumstances instigated by COVID-19 over the past several months, I full-heartedly acknowledge and appreciate the courage, the compassion and the continuity of care necessitated at this time across a range of contexts, close to home and abroad.

Postgraduate art psychotherapy training, in the best of times and in optimal conditions, is fraught with incredible challenges, exploration, discovery, transformation and of course, triumphs. *The CuriOs Collective*, aptly titled given the individual and collective investigations into the dynamics of art therapy, human experience, art materials and media, is a consolidation of the graduating cohort's intense training and a visual celebration of what they discovered, learned and applied in practice. I am very pleased to share this exhibition with you as it also serves to welcome the MA Art Therapy graduating cohort into the international circle of professional art therapists. We have 20 graduates this year... Just think of how many people will be impacted by their creativity, their research, their professional services, their dedication and their curiosity.

Intriguing but not sure... Definitely contained

Digital photograph (unmanipulated)

2015



Emylia Juita Md Safian

MA, AThR
Clinical Placement Coordinator, Lecturer, MA Art Therapy
School of Creative Industries

Foreword

"Space invites life."

A brief scribble in my journal.

Space. Invites. Life.

This peculiar space surrounding us today is a curious one. Our mechanically efficient lives are suddenly disrupted by the unknowns and uncertainties beyond our conventional latitude of rational understanding. We all feel, act and think differently in different physical surroundings, but yet as earth inhabitants responding to the times we live in today, there is a collective sense of what has been described as grief.

Our concern as art therapists is the health and well-being of others. However, the concept of health presupposes illness and there is no denying that our environment is currently sick. The healing influence this graduating class of 2020 will have on others will be shaped by their personal experiences in surmounting the needs of these unusual circumstances and the health-giving functions of their art therapy practices will be a reminder that we are all beings of spirit.

A photograph capturing a transient moment. An invite to pause. A wild poppy flower in quietude. Fragment of moments, preserved. Murmurs of a trodden path, revealed. Glimmer of light through the crevice, renewed. Endlessly.

Space invites life
Digital photograph
2020



Wong June Teck, Daniel

MA, AThR
Lecturer, MA Art Therapy
School of Creative Industries

Foreword

Being curious is about shifting our mindset, which together with wonder and attention, can lead us to uncover new territories and “what lies beyond our present understanding of the world,” said Brian Dillon, the UK editor of *Cabinet* magazine. By embracing curiosity, the cohort has to ask questions of themselves, eliciting it in their process, in their art practice and in art therapy interventions that continue to innovate the art therapy profession. They have pushed, challenged and made conscious decisions to explore both their inner and outer worlds around them, finding exciting possibilities, adventures, surprises and insights.

Moove is a very personal and intuitive digital work — a medium that I have experimented with lately. The objects and their juxtaposition that emerged from the composition signaled identity, reverie and pleasure. It is a meditative work reflecting my one-year supervisory relationship with the students and of our moments of meeting. I have been consistently impressed by their commitment to their individual and professional journeys of exploration and discovery.



Weixin Chong

MA

Artist, Lecturer (Studio), MA Art Therapy
School of Creative Industries

Foreword

a lil' shard depicts a mysterious material held carefully between the fingers of an acrylic-clawed hand. It has a translucent, icy texture, yet betrays hardness — a shard is always sharp even when fragile.

There is no rationale for an artwork, only desire and mystery that possibly increase with time. Just as there is no rationale for being: you stepped into it and all of a sudden, you were. There is no rationale for many important things, the idea being that Need and Desire are often suppressed through the frequent disconnections we have with ourselves. In the quiet after my thoughts have passed, only sensations — even the slightest — survive.

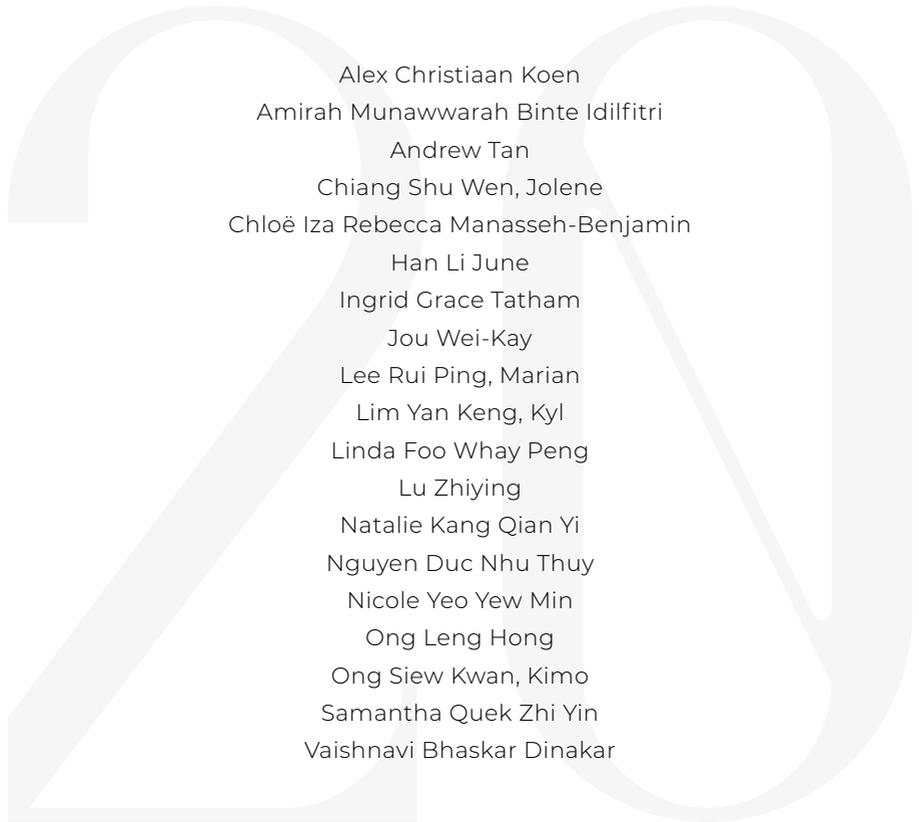
It has been a privilege to follow this year's class of 2020 through the final year of their course. Time has passed too quickly; more so with the onset of unexpected and challenging world events that will historically mark this period of time as an unprecedented time of pause, reflection, listening; perhaps change.

To the class of 2020: I wish each of you the best in your continued journey in art therapy, art-making and a deeply flourishing knowledge of self.





**THE GRADUATING
ART PSYCHOTHERAPISTS**



Alex Christiaan Koen
Amirah Munawwarah Binte Idilfitri
Andrew Tan
Chiang Shu Wen, Jolene
Chloë Iza Rebecca Manasseh-Benjamin
Han Li June
Ingrid Grace Tatham
Jou Wei-Kay
Lee Rui Ping, Marian
Lim Yan Keng, Kyl
Linda Foo Whay Peng
Lu Zhiying
Natalie Kang Qian Yi
Nguyen Duc Nhu Thuy
Nicole Yeo Yew Min
Ong Leng Hong
Ong Siew Kwan, Kimo
Samantha Quek Zhi Yin
Vaishnavi Bhaskar Dinakar



Alex Christiaan Koen

Symbols: A Young Therapeutic Encounter

Mixed media
64.5 x 4.1 x 8.9 cm
2020

*“Who looks outside, dreams; who looks inside, awakes.”
— Carl Gustav Jung*

Alex has worked within multicultural settings as a registered specialist wellness counsellor in private, hospital, community, group, school and individual settings since 2014. After completing his BA Psychology and BA(Hons) Counselling Psychology, he proceeded to complete a Certification in Counselling, Creative Counselling, Advanced Certification in Gestalt Play Therapy, in addition to sitting for his Board Certification as an autism technician. While practising privately, he found that through the use of creative expression, visual media and symbols, he not only connected to the world, but further found outlets and voices with clients and within his personal life.

Through self-exploration with others, his art explores and invites the viewer to witness a creative display of a therapeutic relationship — symbolism brought to life through a collection of symbols. The marks made over time capture our essence, culture and unique identities. Our symbols are individual, often precious and we choose what we reveal to others. Moreover, we choose which symbols to hide, filter and withhold – holding and binding to it a power, a presence, protection and guidance. His selected media and passion for wood stem from his heritage dating back to the Knysna forests in South Africa. Wood allows him to connect with the raw elements of himself and his culture, within the authenticity of nature that provides him nurturance. It also gives him opportunities to engage with the vulnerability of a blank slate, allowing symbols to emerge. His artwork is a personal process often filled with vibrant primary colours, reflecting his South African heritage. Influenced by symbolism, cultures, languages and nature, he often finds himself submerged within the intimacy of these processes.





Amirah Munawwarah Idilfitri

FeatheRihlah

Found feathers and jewels on steel wire

4 x 1 m

2020

*"A dancer dies twice - once when they stop dancing,
and this first death is the more painful."*

— Martha Graham

Amirah enjoys art-making as a personal hobby with her artistic practice reflecting daily life inspirations and personal tales. Merging this with her Bachelor of Human Sciences (Hons) in Psychology, volunteer experiences with special needs children at Riding for the Disabled Association (RDA) and work as a weekend educator with children and teenagers has led her to pursue the MA Art Therapy Programme.

As part of the training programme, Amirah had the opportunity to conduct weekly open art studio for staff in a local acute hospital. She also proposed and painted a mural for the counselling room in a local secondary school. As an aspiring art therapist in Singapore, she believes in the potential that art can provide for those with and without artistic backgrounds. Amirah is a recipient of the MENDAKI ABC Youth Promise Scholarship Award in 2019.

Working mainly with real found feathers and the concept of *rihlah*, which means journey in Arabic, Amirah's installation invites guests to walk through *FeatheRihlah* for an experience that will be individually unique. Her process of searching and collecting real feathers found in Singapore represents her knowledge, life lessons, opportunities and experiences that cannot be experienced elsewhere. Through this process, she reflected, learned and accepted how they played a huge role in developing her identity as an artist cum art therapist in Singapore. Exploring both her personal identity and journey through her found feathers' installation, she reflected on how it was a challenging yet meaningfully wondrous and imaginative journey she had taken.

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Chiang Shu Wen, Jolene

memoria
Mixed media
150 x 80 cm
2020

“There is only one moment for you to be alive, and that is the present moment.” — Thich Nhat Hanh

Since 2010, Jolene has worked in community development, volunteerism, and youth mentoring. She has engaged the non-profit sector by working with foundations, government agencies and social service agencies both locally and regionally. Jolene managed education and healthcare projects in Cambodia, Thailand, Vietnam and Malaysia. In Singapore, she has led multiple stakeholders and community causes ranging from families of the incarcerated, vulnerable children, mental health population, seniors, persons living with developmental disabilities and youths at risk.

Jolene is the founder of Our Heart Matters, a mental health practice that adopts a holistic approach to a person’s overall well-being. She hopes to bring together wellness practitioners to support an individual’s psychosocial, creative and spiritual needs and growth. In 2019, she was a speaker at the 9th International Together Against Stigma mental health conference on the topic of museum-based group art therapy for adults living with mental health conditions. Jolene is a recipient of the Tan Kah Kee Postgraduate Scholarship.

memoria was inspired by personal and professional encounters with memories and narratives experienced during her clinical placement. Her artwork explores how the meaning of memories changes in relationship to emotions and passage of time, reflected by creating the diorama with an art-mobile and the box of artworks. She hopes the viewer will contemplate the multiple layers of hand-painted clay pieces, the changing nature of memories as embodied in an art-mobile that suspends and spins, and the box of artworks that remain contained, rich with imagination and fantasy. The multi-dimensionality and textures of various art materials evoke thoughts about preservation, destruction and re-imagination.





Chloë I.R. Manasseh-Benjamin

Feet Planted: In Dreams I Run Wildly

Oil on linen (part of a larger
mixed media installation)

72" x 44"

2020

*"I am interested in the process by which imagination
can intrude on physical space, influencing how
people establish a connection to it."*

Chloë completed her Master of Fine Arts (MFA) from The Slade School of Fine Art in 2014, where she was the recipient of the Euan Uglow Memorial Scholarship. She received the LASALLE Scholarship for MA Studies for her Master of Arts (MA) Art Therapy at LASALLE College of the Arts.

Chloë's work has been exhibited internationally with exhibitions in the US, UK, Italy, Israel and Singapore. She has collaborated extensively with artists, musicians, clothing and interior designers on various projects around the world. Working with painting, print, video and installation, her work sits between experience and imagination and reflects on the limits of representation in relation to the wholeness of experience.

Working with observation and found imagery, her work evokes a sense of exotic escapism, whilst commenting on our inherent compulsion to bring nature indoors. Taking inspiration from intricate patterns, the natural landscape and the wilds of her imagination, her work reflects on how we inhabit space through visual identity. She is interested in the process by which imagination can intrude on physical space, influencing how people establish a connection to it. In unknown environments, spaces are re-negotiated, shaping our memories and identity in the landscape. Deconstructing memories and direct experience into simple forms, she explores the fragility of vision and ideas of remixing reality, reflecting on the relationship between individual and collective memory, her identity within space and forged identity within new spaces.

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Han Li June

Alchemy

Mixed media (acrylic on canvas, recycled fused glass sculpture, natural scents)
1 x 1.3 m installation
2020

"Art lends a voice to those without."

Li June's art practice is inspired by memories and experiences of people and places. Writing about the travails of her life and sharing her art connects her with people from all walks. Her artistic process involves being fully immersed in art materials, letting her intuition and happenstance do its magic.

She is the founder of A Little Blue Studio, where she works with other artists and mental health professionals to bring art to different communities, fostering creative expression, emotional growth and social diversity. She believes that art lends a voice to those without.

Li June has a background in psychology and visual art. She is a recipient of the LASALLE Postgraduate Scholarship for MA Studies.

Her artwork, *Alchemy*, is an immersive scented installation that invites the audience to withdraw into the enigmatic world of the forest for a time of indulgence, immersed in the irrationality of desires, senses, emotions and dreams. Listening in to hear the heart and soul.

A soulful bird awaits in solitude at twilight amidst scents of cedarwood, moss, wafting in the air, prompting memories and stories untold. The luminance of the kiln fired glass florae exudes a sense of transcendence in fragility. The peace of silence, the stillness and poignant scents act to whirr the soul, teasing our true authentic selves to awake. *Alchemy* can begin when we open the door to our soul. Though our inner self can be fragile, meeting it can catalyse an unexpected and remarkable transcendent journey.

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Ingrid Grace Tatham

Twenty Art Therapists

Watercolour paint

*180 x 60 cm

2020

"The eyes and gaze become the focus that lead her through their windows to the souls of her subjects."

Ingrid has lived and worked in Singapore for the past 16 years. She had a successful career in international consumer goods marketing, during which she explored her creative and caring side by designing and making quilts, playing the sax and trumpet, studying and practicing reflexology and finally finding her métier in painting watercolour portraits. She desired to refresh her life purpose and find the best way to contribute to the well-being and development of others, when the opportunity to pursue MA Art Therapy at the LASALLE College of the Arts arose.

Her artwork, *Twenty Art Therapists*, was inspired by the concept of the 'group'. Over the past two years, through stages of forming and storming, an integrated group has emerged that therapeutically contains and holds a diverse collective of people who have come to understand, support, trust and respect one another. The driving force behind Ingrid's portraits is an enduring interest in people, in the human spirit, its emotional resonance and the way it manifests in one's relationships with others over time. Her portraits go beyond the capture of a faithful likeness. The eyes and gaze become the focus that lead her through their windows to the souls of her subjects.

**The visual layout is specially arranged for catalogue use; it does not reflect actual dimensions of physical artwork.*

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Jou Wei-Kay

Serendipity in Intersubjective Mirroring

Ceramics

45 x 30 cm (6 pieces)

2020

“Every outcome is different just as every therapeutic encounter is unique, illustrating yet another similarity between art psychotherapy and ceramic art.”

Being passionate about art, Wei-Kay joined the MA Art Therapy Programme to deepen her art expertise to serve others, particularly in the area of enhancing mental and emotional well-being. Prior to the course, her professional training as an artist and art teacher had enabled her to experience a wide range of media and engage in different art forms. The art therapy course has furthered her exploration into the inherent therapeutic quality of the creative process. She looks forward to integrating her newfound purpose and skillset with art education and be an advocate for art therapy in academic settings.

Serendipity in Intersubjective Mirroring consists of three sets of ceramic containers to represent the unexpected, organic and beautiful interaction between two human minds in an art psychodynamic psychotherapeutic space. Similar to art psychotherapy, the study of ceramic glazes combines both science and art. The serendipitous outcome of glaze-on-glaze is used to parallel the intersubjective moments of meeting in a therapeutic encounter, specifically when mirror neurons in the human brain fire together to produce a deep connection. The containers were all coated with the same base glaze. Thereafter, a different glaze was applied onto the rim. During the firing process, the glazes interacted and flowed together towards the center of the container. Every outcome is different just as every therapeutic encounter is unique, illustrating yet another similarity between art psychotherapy and ceramic art. Even though the artist recognised that the outcome was not entirely within her control, she could take delight in discovering the beauty in those moments of meeting.

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Lee Rui Ping, Marian

Repeatedly, going within

Yarn, feathers and radiotherapy mask

80 x 80 x 45 cm

2020

"No man, for any considerable period, can wear one face to himself and another to the multitude, without finally getting bewildered as to which may be the true."

— Nathaniel Hawthorne

Marian completed her Bachelor of Social Sciences (Social Work) from National University of Singapore in 2014. She is employed as a medical social worker in an acute hospital and has worked mainly with adults with neurological injuries, degenerative disorders and mental health illnesses. As part of her Master of Arts (MA) Art Therapy training, she worked with older adults living within the community and young persons with cancer, conducting home, hospital, community-based individual art therapy sessions, group art therapy sessions and open studios.

Marian's personal art practice revolves mainly around repetitive processes, tactile media and three-dimensional art forms. Her art practice has proven to be an important self-care ritual in her clinical practice where she has often felt the need to make sense of her emotions and experiences. She finds comfort in the meditative state and flow brought about by the art-making process, personal growth in the reflections and insight gained via the associations evoked.

Repeatedly, going within is a sculptural portrait built by embroidering yarn and feathers on a radiotherapy mask. It highlights how we may choose or be forced to wear masks to conceal what is within and gradually lose sight of our true selves. Working with repetitive processes and tactile media are ways to slow down and spend time to reconnect and reconcile with our inner and outer selves.

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Lim Yan Keng, Kyl

Licht and Shadow
Graphic pens and acrylic paint
36" x 48"
2020

*"One is not half two. It is two are halves of one."
— E. E. Cummings*

Upon completing her BA(Hons) Design Communication in 2011, Kyl began her journey to acquire work experiences as an advertising designer and creative copywriter, all the while gaining invaluable life experiences and transferable skills before undertaking her Master of Arts (MA) Art Therapy studies at LASALLE College of the Arts in 2018. With her design background, Kyl's work straddles the realms of surrealism art, visual narratives and avant-garde editorial design. As part of her MA Art Therapy training, she had the privilege to work closely with migrant communities and adult cancer survivors where it further piqued her research interests in health psychology, eudaimonic well-being and management of psychosomatic ailments. She firmly believes in the practical benefits of a life spent contributing back to society, fully investing in the cultivation of compassion and humanity, to nurture and empower individuals to lead better lives holistically. She believes that art therapy is key to creative living and in managing neurodiversities without being bounded by any prescriptive intellectual shackles.

Licht and Shadow is a metaphoric portraiture awashed in a confluence of her spontaneous creative impulses and dialectical dynamics. Historically, the Crow typifies a duality on its own; signifying messengers of knowledge and death. Today, it represents a new phase in someone's life. Befriending the Shadow paralyses its ability to act autonomously and allows the rise of consciousness and self-awareness from within that forecloses our own destructiveness. Owning one's existence in all its darkness and light enables the potential for past ruptures to heal, ancient trauma to loosen its grip and to love from within — helping us to transform into better versions of ourselves, to lead a more fulfilling life with all its negativistic and positive equivalences more bearable, the *uncontainable* more containable.





Linda Foo Why Peng

When the World isn't your Oyster

Ceramics

45 x 28 x 18 cm

2020

"You use a glass mirror to see your face; you use works of art to see your soul." — George Bernard Shaw

Rekindling her love for the creative process in recent years, Linda embarked on a self-exploration journey which led her to take up the MA Art Therapy. Prior to this, she completed her BSc Psychology. The clinical placement has provided opportunities for Linda to work with the elderly in a nursing home setting and children assigned to a Child Protection Service Centre. Linda is particularly passionate about working with children who need help with emotional and behavioural regulation and mentalisation.

When the World Isn't your Oyster was inspired by Linda's clinical work with children who were exposed to abuse or neglect under the purview of a Child Protection Service Centre. In particular, she observed a need for parents to 'mend' themselves so that they could be a 'good enough mother' (Winnicott, 2005) for their child. While parents may be motivated to make the necessary changes, societal acceptance of their imperfection is quintessential in this healing process. The art of Kintsugi which portrays mending of imperfections as something beautiful to be celebrated, changes our perception of the repair of brokenness. In a wider context, this art piece speaks about our dreams and hopes even when things are not going the way we want them to be. Our struggles may look like fault lines and cracks, but when we overcome them, we will begin to view our scars as beautiful and something to be honoured. Despite being an artist dabbling in various paint media, making this art piece pushed Linda beyond her own comfort zone. The fluidity of the artwork reflects her wish to break through conventional norms and freely express herself. Linda thoroughly enjoyed the creative art process and how it brought about a deeper awareness of her humanity and dissolved the artificial boundaries created by societal expectations.

Winnicott, D. W. (2005). *Playing and reality*. New York, NY: Routledge.





Lu Zhiying

Dichotomies
Glass and glass paint
65 x 65 x 10 cm
2020

"Shadow is a colour as light is, but less brilliant; light and shadow are only the relation of two tones."
— Paul Cezanne

With a background in film and video production, Zhiying continues to pursue her creative endeavours while training to be an art psychotherapist. She believes that art, be it film, dance, literature, painting or sculpture, should be accessible by all and eschews the idea that art-making is only for those who have been labelled as talented. She has an interest in working with people from all walks of life and is a recipient of The Red Pencil Scholarship.

Light and shadow, good and evil. These are the dichotomies that we hear of every so often. Yet, two opposites may exist in the same material: glass is simultaneously rigid and fragile. In *Dichotomies*, the rigidity of the glass is interplayed with the fluidity of the glass paint that flow over its surface. In an art therapist's work, it is as important to be flexible as it is to have boundaries. Through the use of translucent glass paint, the shadows cast on the wall are also transformed into projections of colour, suggesting that dualities may support and complement, rather than contradict each other. *Dichotomies* also invites the viewer to contemplate the inherent strength that comes with vulnerability.





Natalie Kang Qian Yi

The Permanence of Impermanence

Mixed media

1 x 1m

2020

"You can't stop the waves, but you can learn to surf."

— Jon Kabat-Zinn

Natalie firmly believes in the power of the arts to heal and express what words cannot. Her personal art practice involves spontaneous experimentation with a variety of media and materials and is often a reflection of her inner world, process of self-discovery, insight, inspiration from the world around her, the clients she meets and the stories shared. As part of her MA Art Therapy training, Natalie has worked with children living with trauma, special needs and their caregivers, as well as within a residential home setting with female adolescents and their family. She also had the opportunity to co-develop and facilitate museum-based art workshops with various groups of community-dwelling seniors and volunteers. Beyond that, she founded a volunteering group, Art Psyched, that engages in arts-based activities with patients and clients at the Institute of Mental Health.

Natalie's educational background includes a Diploma in Child Psychology and Early Education and BA(Hons) Psychology. She is a recipient of the LASALLE Postgraduate Scholarship for MA Studies and The Red Pencil Scholarship.

Mandalas have been understood in psychology as a symbol of self, a tool used historically by various cultures and traditions for meditation and relaxation. *The Permanence of Impermanence* is a contemporary, impermanent mandala made with sand and discarded materials from the artist's personal art-making journey as well as art therapy sessions with girls living within a residential home setting. Through the process of scattering the materials and creating the circular gestures, the artist reconnects with her inner sense of purpose, resilience and self-compassion.





Nguyen Duc Nhu Thuy

Facework

Canvas, marbles, wires, LED light
10 x 40 x 40 cm installation
2020

“The deepest part of the human being is his or her surface.” — James Joyce

Thuy hails from Ho Chi Minh city, Vietnam. She completed her Bachelor of Social Sciences (Psychology) in 2012 and worked on different community projects with international NGOs. Her experiences include working with disadvantaged ethnic minority groups in remote areas of Vietnam as well as along the Mekong Delta. She is passionate about working with seniors, women and children from low income families, who face abuse and discrimination. As part of her MA Art Therapy training, she worked with Singaporean children and youths from low-income families. Some are living with disabilities, while others have experienced abuse and are staying in residential care. Thuy is a recipient of the LASALLE Scholarship for MA Studies.

Facework started as a way for the artist to contain feelings of turmoil as she experienced complex emotions developing the new identity of being one of the first art therapists in her home country of Vietnam. The artwork explores and negotiates the space between her new Self and old Self. The negotiating process was painful but also filled with the enjoyment of being on a new path. The artwork, *Facework*, reflects the holding spaces and boundaries among her individual, inter-relational and collective selves. Ultimately, it is not the seen face which determines who we are. We are defined by the intriguing and dynamic spaces where we constantly seek to understand, reflect and interact with our inner selves which we test in relation to others. *Facework* also reflects the process of coping and mirroring to regulate the self while it emerges to have contact with the outer world. From this artmaking process she learned to be compassionate with herself, to hold and to treasure her vulnerability and to embrace the new journey as part of becoming an emerging art therapist.





Nicole Yeo Yew Min

Water Works

Acrylic yarn and cotton string
36 x 120 cm
2020

“The descent into the depths always seems to precede the ascent.” — C. G. Jung

Nicole’s art practice involves a process of spontaneous play and experimentation of fibre arts and paper collage. She discovers that her dreams and daydreams are her main sources of inspiration when she creates art. Upon completing her Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in English Literature from Nanyang Technological University in 2018, she immediately embarked on her studies in Master of Arts (MA) Art Therapy at LASALLE College of the Arts. In between her study breaks, Nicole has worked with internally displaced individuals and refugees during her humanitarian trips to Lebanon and Northern Iraq. As part of her MA Art Therapy training, she has facilitated individual and group art therapy with adults living with mental health issues and with vulnerable children living in a low-income neighbourhood. Her research and clinical interests include working with children who have experienced complex trauma and how art therapy can foster resilience in spite of their challenges. She is a recipient of The Red Pencil Singapore Scholarship from 2018 – 2020.

Water Works takes reference from Freud’s interpretation of dreams and Jung’s archetypal idea of how large bodies of water such as oceans and lakes represent the unconscious. This theme has been depicted in this multicoloured woven tapestry of yarn that explores the relationship of the symbolic content juxtaposed against the medium of the work. This installation is arranged to have loose and wandering threads of yarn on the floor to create the distance from the frame of the tapestry. Viewers have to peer at the body of water from afar, compelling one to confront the unconsciousness before us and embrace the messy entanglement of what lies underneath our consciousness. At the same time, it speaks of how the soothing textures of the fibre and textile mediums caress and protect us, providing us safety to explore the unspoken, unknown and unpredictable unconsciousness.





Ong Leng Hong

Spontaneity
Yarns and beads
20.5 x 20.5 cm
2020

“Art is something that makes you breathe with a different kind of happiness.” — Anni Albers

Staying true to her inner calling to pursue her passion, Leng Hong relinquished an illustrious military career in 2018 to take up the MA Art Therapy Programme. She enjoyed the two-year self-discovery and learning journey. Her exposure working at a community hospital and counselling centre had provided her numerous opportunities to conduct individual, group, and community-based art therapy sessions with older adults to improve their well-being. She worked passionately with them to reawaken their innate creative abilities and foster their artistic interests. Having gone through the therapeutic benefits of art-making personally, she firmly believes in the healing power of art therapy.

Her artwork *Spontaneity* captures the essence of intuitive creation. Without an end in mind, she uses yarns and threads to sew the French knots spontaneously onto the canvas — a process which allows her to immerse herself in the therapeutic and creative flow. She believes it takes one's courage to surrender control and to embrace the unknown. This is akin to her art therapy sessions of letting go control and trusting the process. It enables her mind to be more open and attuned, hence allowing her clients to lead her into their inner worlds for healing work to begin. Being the container, like the canvas, she holds the space for them to explore within a safe boundary. The colourful yarns, associated with feminine energies, bring about empathy, connection and acceptance that she carries into her art therapy sessions. She enjoys spontaneous creativity to flow, indulge and experience the joy of creation. *That* is bliss for her.





Ong Siew Kwan, Kimo

Multiverse
Soot on canvas
48" x 36"
2020

*"Any interpretations that you set up and fix as the truth becomes meaningless phrases."
— Bankei Yōtaku*

Graduating with a BA Psychology, Kimo had worked in a nursing home for persons living with dementia as a program executive prior to entering the MA Art Therapy Programme. As part of the training programme, she worked with children and individuals in hospice care where she conducted group as well as individual art therapy sessions. Her belief in using art as a language for communication has enabled her to empathetically journey with individuals to convey emotions and thoughts through creative expressions that are otherwise difficult to express. Kimo's personal art practice revolves around playing with different mediums in abstract forms, each encounter providing new insights for her to reflect upon.

Created using soot, *Multiverse* symbolises the fragility, strength, beauty, interpersonal and intrapersonal aspects of human beings. Inspired by her work with persons nearing their end of life, the artist seeks to understand the relationships between and within individuals, and the silver lining of death. The thought of death and dying may evoke complex emotions that differs in intensity from person to person, which then prompts them to take actions that consciously or unconsciously define them as individuals.





Samantha Quek Zhi Yin

Sanctuary

Edible mediums, fresh flowers and foliage
3.2' x 3' x 5'
2020

"Often the hands will solve a mystery that the intellect has struggled with in vain." — Carl Jung

Samantha embarked on her creative career with cakes after graduating with a BA Business Management. Through the six years of her creative endeavor with cakes, she experimented with different ingredients to emulate structures of ornaments that are closely related to the local culture. Her experience inspired her to introduce edible mediums in her clinical placement when working with the vulnerable population and also pushed her to explore further with simple ingredients such as flour, dehydrated vegetables and edible charcoal to mimic textures of stones in her artwork.

The inspiration behind *Sanctuary* is very much influenced by her love for nature and the life it encapsulates. Through the two years of her MA Art Therapy studies, she experienced a string of synchronicity with her dreams and reality. The frequent encounter with butterflies sparked her curiosity in exploring her own sense-making. Soon after, the word metanoia was introduced to her. Metanoia is a Greek word for 'change of mind' in the Bible, and butterflies are denoted as metaphorical representations. The intention behind creating this artwork is to integrate her reconnection with nature and the phases of her personal transformation by combining life and edible medium together. The idea of living through the motion is captured in the still-life of the cake structure which will be surrounded with live blooms. Like metanoia, a shift in perspective of our own world is a rebirth of a new life where old beliefs are disintegrated back to earth in order for new beliefs to be reborn. The complex level of integration of our senses in *Sanctuary* is a symbolic execution of a personal emotional revelation during her transformative process, which had enabled her to draw strength from her creative exploration and at the same time, to stay rooted to her new sense of self.





Vaishnavi Bhaskar Dinakar

Self-liberation Through Emotional Purging

Video production (a digital screenshot
from the video compilation)
dimensions variable
2020

*"I can be changed by what happens to me. But I refuse
to be reduced by it." – Maya Angelou*

Vaishnavi is an emerging art therapist who has been pursuing her passion in Indian classical dance, Bharatanatyam, since the age of five. Her interest in mental health and the arts led her to pursue MA Art Therapy in Singapore right after she completed her BA Psychology. Vaishnavi has a strong interest in forensic art therapy and is extremely passionate about working with individuals in prison and mandated rehabilitative settings in a trauma-informed practice. Through her clinical internship, she evolved in her practice and focused on amplifying the voice of the client, promoting safety and empowerment. Her experience has been a humbling one where she feels very privileged to have journeyed with her clients.

"What does it mean to be born female? Why is there so much shame and oppression in one's experiences simply because she was born female?" These were core reflective points that guided the artist to this artistic expression. In her clinical practice, she experienced the impact of social injustice in the form of transference and countertransference and began to experience overwhelming levels of emotional pain. In order to achieve self-compassion, the artist found that she could no longer deny the intergenerational, gender specific trauma that she has experienced being a woman in a minority community. Once the source of pain was acknowledged, it was important for the artist to express her anger in an empowering and contained manner while defying society's derogatory expectations of women. No matter how men express their anger, it is considered 'manly' and acceptable. When women express anger, it is brushed off as an emotional outburst caused by the errant hormones during the menstruation cycle. Through a self-exploratory process, the artist found a sense of empowerment and containment in expressing anger in such an overt and loud manner.



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Photography Credits

Ronald Paul-Michael Henry Lay, pg. 9

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