

# YAVUZ GALLERY | PRESS RELEASE | 16 NOV 2023

## *the order of nature*

**Exhibition dates:** 18 November – 23 December 2023  
**Location:** Gillman Barracks, 9 Lock Road, #02-23, Singapore 108937

Yavuz Gallery is pleased to present *the order of nature*, a group exhibition in Singapore featuring internationally acclaimed artists: Brook Andrew, Clive van den Berg, Skyler Chen, Sunil Gupta, Alvin Ong and Jason Wee. The exhibition extends on this single legal reprieve, exploring the ambiguities that continue to persist for queer communities across artists that work in countries colonised by the British.

The exhibition takes the recent repeal of Section 377A in the Singapore Constitution as its starting point, a law introduced to the country in 1871 under British colonial rule that criminalised sex between two men. The genesis of Section 377 can be traced to 1862, first codified in the Indian Penal Code and drawn up by Thomas Babington Macaulay, exported and applied to the basis of criminal law codes in over 39 British colonies across Asia, the Pacific and Africa, leaving a damaging legacy in its wake. It has often been used to justify discrimination and violence against the queer community and other ancestral sexual and gender diverse identities. The women/men binary enshrined in many societies reflects an understanding of gender and sexuality by colonial legacies that unfortunately disregards and discourages public discourses on homosexual conducts across cultures in all regions of the world.

“Cruising’ was sly, illicit, shifty, clandestine. Now that queers are no longer criminals, what does it mean to look at queerness and for it to look back at you? What glances can now be exchanged—glances that were once marked by fear, desire, and the delicious recognition of belonging to the same depraved caste, the same perverted tribe? How much of the transgressiveness of queer art depended on its status as a form of legal transgression? Is it still cruising, if in broad daylight?” questions Singaporean playwright and activist Alfian Sa’at.

*the order of nature* explores the emotional everyday of queer identities and how this collides with our current inheritances of colonial rule. It seeks to celebrate the sexuality and poetry of queer bodies while acknowledging the underlying sets of laws, customs and technologies that contain them. It encompasses diverse relationships and intimacies beyond those between two men, illuminating private and often provisional places for queer love, longing and self-acceptance.

### ABOUT THE ARTISTS

**Brook Andrew** (b. 1970, Australia) is one of the most renowned artists of the Australia and Pacific Asia contemporary art scene. Over the last two decades, Andrew has explored the legacies of colonial history and its hegemonic imperialistic ideologies with a research-focused practice drawing upon archives, vernacular objects and image reproduction. He has presented his work extensively, with research-based museum and public space interventions, and Wiradjuri language being central to his practice. Andrew has exhibited in numerous biennales and institutions worldwide. Recent inclusions include: *The National 4: Australian Art Now*, Australia (2023); Sharjah Biennial 15, UAE (2023); *QUEER*, National Gallery of Victoria, Australia (2022); *care, repair and healing*, Gropius Bau, Germany (2022); 경로를 재탐색합니다 *UN/LEARNING AUSTRALIA*, Seoul Museum of Art, South Korea (2022). His works are collected by National Museum of Contemporary Art, Seoul (South Korea), Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney (Australia), Art Gallery of New South Wales (Australia), the National Gallery of Victoria (Australia), the National Portrait Gallery (Australia), National Gallery of Australia, Queensland Art Gallery (Australia), Art Gallery of South Australia, amongst others. In 2020, Andrew was the Artistic Director of the 22<sup>nd</sup> Biennial of Sydney, Australia. Andrew lives and works in Naarm (Melbourne), Australia and Medellin, Colombia.

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**Clive van den Berg** (b. 1956, Zambia) is a Johannesburg-based artist, curator and designer. Working across various mediums throughout the course of his prolific career, which has focused on pioneering the insertion of queer perspectives into the larger rewrite of South African history, van den Berg has produced a range of works unified by his enduring focus on five interrelated themes: memory, light, landscape, desire and body. Van den Berg has exhibited extensively throughout South Africa, Brazil, UK, USA, France; at institutions such as Sao Paulo Museum of Art (Brazil), Smithsonian National Museum of African Art (USA), Contemporary Art Museum Honolulu (USA), Museum for African Art New York (USA), and Haus der Kulturen der Welt (Germany). Van den Berg is presented in collaboration with Goodman Gallery, and *the order of nature* marks his first showing in Singapore.

**Skyler Chen** (b. 1982, Taiwan) is a multi-disciplinary artist working across painting, sculpture and video installations. Now based in Rotterdam, Netherlands, Chen has exhibited in Hong Kong, Paris, London, Beijing, New York amongst others. His work is currently part of *Bordercrossing: Possibilities and Interactions*, a group exhibition at Yuz Museum, Shanghai, China. Presented in partnership with Forbes China, the exhibition is advised by Wu Hung, selecting artists born between the 1980s-1990s. Other recent exhibitions include a solo in Beijing (2022), and in Paris (2022).

Over a career spanning more than four decades, **Sunil Gupta** (b. 1953, India) has exhibited extensively internationally. Gupta's work is in many major public collections, including the Museum of Modern Art, New York (USA); Tate Britain (UK); The Victoria and Albert Museum (UK); Museum of London (UK); the Metropolitan Museum of Art (USA); Philadelphia Museum of Art (USA); Tokyo Metropolitan Museum of Photography (Japan); the Royal Ontario Museum (Canada); George Eastman Museum (USA); Baltimore Museum of Art (USA); Kiran Nadar Museum of Art (India); amongst many others.

**Alvin Ong** (b. 1988, Singapore) is one of Asia's leading painters based between Singapore and London, capturing intimate, introspective moments of the everyday to explore how we inhabit our bodies in a hyperconnected world. He completed his BA at the Ruskin School of Fine Arts, University of Oxford (2016) and MFA at the Royal College of Art in London (2018). He has exhibited all over the world, including a recent solo exhibition in Brussels. His work can be found in private and public collections internationally, including ILHAM Gallery, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia; Ingram Collection, London, UK; Victoria and Albert Museum, Print Collection, London, UK; X Museum, Beijing, China and Fosun Art Foundation, Shanghai, China. Ong is based between Singapore and London, UK.

**Jason Wee** (b. 1979, Singapore) is an artist and a writer working between contemporary art, architecture, poetry and photography. His art practice contends with sources of singular authority in favour of polyphony and difference. He transforms these histories and spaces into various visual and written materials, and is keenly interested in their secrets and their futures, their idealisms and their conundrums. Wee is the founder and director of Grey Projects, an artists' space, library and residency that focuses on curatorship, new writing, design propositions and art. Wee has exhibited at Seoul Museum of Art (2022); Para Site, Hong Kong (2021); Asia Society Museum, New York, USA (2020), ArtScience Museum, Singapore (2019), Institut für Auslandsbeziehungen, Berlin, Germany (2015, 2009), Singapore Art Museum, Singapore (2015); Casino Luxembourg, Luxembourg (2009), and the Chelsea Art Museum (2006); amongst others. Artist-in-residencies include Artspace, Sydney; ISEA 2008, Tokyo Wonder Site, Contemporary Art Japan; NTU Centre for Contemporary Art Singapore; and Gyeonggi Creation Center, Korea. He was a 2005-2006 Studio Fellow at the Whitney Museum Independent Study Program, and was awarded the Young Artist Award for visual arts in Singapore in 2008 and the Voters' Prize from the Singapore Art Museum in 2009. Wee was also a residency fellow at ZK/U Berlin.

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## Selected Works



Clive van den Berg, *Memorial: Lovers*, 2023, wood, gold leaf over oil paint, 23 x 30 x 20 cm



Skyler Chen, *you, are my home*, 2023, oil on linen, 140 x 140 cm

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Sunil Gupta, *Munna, Qutb Minar*, 2012, archival inkjet print, 106.7 x 91.4 cm (print); 111.8 x 96.5 cm (paper),  
edition of 5 + 2AP

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**For further information on the artist and the works, please contact:**

Dharshini Kannan, [dharshini@yavuzgallery.com](mailto:धारशनी@yavuzgallery.com)

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