

sign for that very important event. His work seeks to connect ancient wisdom with contemporary life and culture.

The Thai artist, Montien Boonma for the 1993 Triennial produced this Buddhist meditation piece, *Lotus Sound*, made of ceramic bells and golden lotus petals.

Malaysian Sulaiman Esa's work *Garden of Mystery I* reflects an equally profound belief in Islam.

Nalini Malani from India presented drawings from her *Mutant* series, *Body as Site*, which encompasses events such as nuclear tests in the Pacific and subsequent deformed babies born to Micronesian mothers. The cave-like setting of these works, which were drawn directly onto the walls, conjured up a long tradition of cave painting and Hindu mysticism in India.

Chen Yan Yin from China produced one of the most discussed installations at the 1996 Triennial titled, *Discrepancy Between One Idea*. Her work draws upon themes related to female experiences, both physical and psychological. It is a metaphor for the flow of life and love using fresh roses and a video projection.

Vasan Sitthiket from Thailand, showed *Buddha Returns to Bangkok '92* in 1993, which utilized violent imagery in an immediate reaction to the Coup of 1992. His work is an outpouring of grief showing the Lord Buddha in front of scenes of degradation and corruption.

Kamin Lertchaiprasert, based in Bangkok and New York, presented *Problem-Wisdom* in 1996 (fig. 7), a sculptural installation of 366 papier-mâché objects made of recycled Thai newspapers. The work is deeply informed by Buddhist beliefs.

Nguyen Xuan Tiep, in 1993, revealed a poetic, even sentimental return to a Vietnamese childhood of pagodas, and Buddhist symbols in *Song of the Buffalo Boys II*.

Vu Dan Tan, also from Vietnam, in the 1996 Triennial created three dimensional sculptural pieces using recycled cigarette packages in his work, *Monsters, Devils and Angels*. His imagery includes mythical creatures and is deeply informed by spiritual and metaphysical beliefs, which extend centuries beyond current events in Vietnam.

Roberto Villanueva in his performance *Ego's Grave* in 1993 reflected an aspect of Asian and Pacific art that defies rationalist interpretations. Our audience had difficulty coping with the work. Roberto drew inspiration from ancient animist beliefs and Shamanistic rituals to quiet spirits in the Philippines. In doing so, he enlarges the focus of his art to include all communities and their beliefs. However, his work created quite strong feelings at the time during the 1993 Triennial, which seems to have been an uncanny presentiment or prediction of Roberto's own death from leukemia, a disease which was diagnosed a few days after the performance.

Mark Justiniani's *Edukado*, in 1996, presented mixed media works from the series, *White Rain*. It is a sustained meditation on colonization. This is decoration from the *jeepney*, the jeeps left behind by American troops. It comments on the insensitivity of American education in the Philippines, where A was for apple, but apples did not then grow in the tropical Philippines. The *White Rain* refers to continuing first world cultural imperialism.

Wong Hoy Cheong from Malaysia in the 1996 Triennial. This

work, *In Search of Faraway Places* was shown in Tokyo recently. We bought it for our collection. This work treats the history of his own family in an attempt to better understand the history of his country and the aspirations of present day Malaysia.

Indonesian artist Nindityo Adipurnomo has studied in the Netherlands. His *Introversion*, consisting of 21 mirrors on which is superimposed the carved wooden *konde*, or traditional Javanese hairpieces, pays homage to the 19th-century noble woman Kartini, who advocated women's emancipation in Indonesia. Nindityo has written, "I constantly experience a terrifying confrontation of Western and Eastern values. But it is fascinating because in this confrontation, the flames of tradition, change and renewal are contained."

Dadang Christanto, in 1993, created a work called, *For those who are poor, suffering, oppressed, voiceless, powerless, victims of violence, victims of injustice* (fig. 8). His work expresses social concerns. He asked our audiences to leave flowers in memory of those who had suffered in anyway, in any country. By the end of the exhibition, the floor was heaped with flowers and poems, showing that visitors returned especially to leave these tributes. But interestingly enough, these tributes and poems were not really about the situation in Indonesia. They were deeply personal experiences of the visitors who came. They were about Ireland, about Bosnia, about personal family tragedies. Dadang's work and belief is that art should speak from the heart, and our audience responded from the heart. This work, which we purchased, continues to arouse very strong emotions whenever we show it.

The Indonesian artist Heri Dono whose extraordinary images are drawn from ancient *wayang* puppetry and modern television, combines humor with biting social comment in his performance *The Chair*. The idealism of these young Asian artists, and their courage and their connection to community life, had a profound effect on Australian audiences who saw our exhibitions.

I am showing you some of the Japanese works from the exhibition, Shigeo Toya's, *Woods III* from 1993, which was one of the 203 works subsequently purchased by the Queensland Art Gallery.

Takashi Murakami's work, whose painting Dr. Desai showed, was purchased for the Queensland Art Gallery collection. This is a large balloon, *The hellish madness of the game has come to an end, leaving you hanging*. It is based on a Japanese computer game. I think I'll perhaps leave the artist to talk about his own work.

Dr. Desai also showed Yukinori Yanagi's *Pacific Ant Farm* (fig. 9), and I think her slide was in fact the one at the Asia-Pacific Triennial. On the other screen is Yasumasa Morimura's *Blinded by the Light* based on the 16th-century Breughel painting. Yanagi's *Pacific Ant Farm* from 1996, reflecting the complex ideas about global society and dissolving borders, an inevitable historical change, served as an important symbol of the 1996 Triennial.

I would like to conclude my paper by making a few comments in response to the organizers suggestions for our conference. At the 1996 Asia-Pacific Triennial conference in Brisbane, David Elliott posed the significant question, "Who defines modernism, post-modernism, or post-colonial?" At an important conference

held in Australia in the early 90s, Dr. John Clark, who is also speaking at this conference, posed some very important questions for Australia about modernism and post-modernism in an Asian context. At the 1993 Triennial Conference, speakers had stressed the need to canvas new ideas which crossed national boundaries. Geeta Kapur from India talked about the necessity, nonetheless, of context. We have to keep coming back to the issue of context. Marian Pastor Roces from the Philippines outlined her unease at the possibility of forcing another mega narrative, and advocated new intellectual tools be developed for the discourse, and that I think is also going to be a critical issue.

We had hoped at our 1996 conference that some of these new tools would start to emerge. As Ms. Furuichi mentioned in her opening comments, it's a much more complex and more time consuming task than one thinks when one begins. And I believe it may take many years before these new tools, this new vocabulary, this new discourse emerges.

Apinan Poshyananda from Thailand pointed out the significance of cultural syncretism in Asia. Speakers emphasized issues such as overlapping territories, displacements, the need to expose difference, marginality and even tensions, rather than to impose sameness. And at the second conference in 1996 attended by 600 people, the largest art conference ever held in Australia, speakers again stressed the need for continued appreciation of complexity and diversity.

There are five points that I would make in conclusion.

One, understanding contemporary Asian art needs thorough research and scholarship, including a knowledge of the modern and pre-modern art of the cultures involved, and a long-term commitment. We have only just started this process in Australia. I hope we can see more collaborations between institutions worldwide, involved in studying and researching, as well as collecting, contemporary Asian art.

Two, our objectives should be artistic and scholarly, not political. Artists do have an important role in the complex cultural interactions of our world. This is not to give artists a political role, but to understand that art is fundamental to societies.

Three, a realistic assessment of practical difficulties must take into account, but not ruled by, current problems, such as between China and Taiwan. Nevertheless, political realities have to be negotiated by curators and museums.

Four, we need to be open to history as well as open to the future, to be inclusive rather than exclusive, to be willing to override national boundaries and other dividing lines as well as media divisions and hierarchies in art, and we need to recognize traditional and indigenous art. Certainly, the Pacific art in our exhibition has forced us to keep confronting the issue of traditional and indigenous art in a contemporary context.

Five, and lastly, the key to the Asia-Pacific Triennial exhibitions, and to future projects in contemporary Asian, or Asia-Pacific art in my own view, is an appreciation of context, complexity and diversity, and a commitment to genuine partnerships between curators based on mutual respect. To make artistic exchanges enriching, we need, as Edward Said wrote in another context, "to understand what we have in common, and respect

what is different."

MC (A. Poshyananda): You have indicated that Asia-Pacific Triennial involves in depth planning as well as enormous funding and staff. Over the years the Queensland Art Gallery has been collecting some of the best contemporary Asian artworks. I had the chance to visit your storage many times. Now could you explain the process of collection and purchase, and how has the acquisition affected artists in terms of fame and price, at home and abroad?

C. Turner: Well, in terms of collection and purchase, we make a decision at the gallery. Our curators and our director make a decision to purchase certain works from the Triennial. We do have an acquisition policy, of course. Our acquisition policy in contemporary Asian art is somewhat fluid. I think that it is an evolving acquisitions policy. We have purchased a variety of works from every country that has been represented so far in the Triennial. It is not possible for us to purchase everything. I hope that we will soon be able to announce a major financial contribution from private donors that will allow us to greatly expand our collection. I also hope to be able to announce, as you mentioned the store room, that we will be having an extension to the gallery which will allow us to display our works more fully, and to have a gallery of contemporary Asian art.

In terms of how the art affects artists, I have not noticed any major change in the prices. Obviously artists in different countries command different prices, so artists in Japan command very high prices. But interestingly, many artists in Southeast Asia, particularly the tiger economies, are also commanding very high prices. It is not to be assumed, and I am sure Mr. Ushiroshoji will also comment on this, that buying Southeast Asian art is a cheap exercise. We go through the same process that we go through for any purchase. We have to prove that the price is reasonable, and that the artist has achieved those prices previously. It is a tough competition.

Question (V.N. Desai): Do you find art has created some sense of tensions among artists when they are there for the Triennial? Do they know that their work is going to be bought then, or is it, in fact, much later?

C. Turner: It is later. So I don't know how it affects them. But this, I suppose, is normal for any museum. We can't buy everything. Many of the works are installations created on the spot, and it is actually impossible to purchase some of them. I am sure that there are some artists who are deeply offended that we have not purchased their work. But sometimes the work that is in the Triennial is not what we consider the most suitable work for our collection, and we have bought that artist separately, either previously, or after the Triennial. So it's not the only chance that artists have to have their work purchased for our collection.

I might say something about our funding, since Dr. Desai was so honest about her funding and its difficulties. I said that most of the funding for this exhibition has come from the Queensland and

Australian governments. We have also found some difficulty with private sponsors, although there have been some major donations and particularly the collection seems to be attracting the potential for very major donations. But nevertheless, this is not an easy exhibition and, in many senses, I have been very surprised and pleased that government sources and foundations have agreed to support this exhibition, because much of the art is very radical. I think that reflects a genuine desire for a learning experience to not just accept what is easy on the surface, but to look below the surface. Genuine engagement must be an understanding which is based on complexity and difficulty, and sometimes quite radical ideas. I do agree that the issue of funding these exhibitions is quite a complex one for museums, and we have accepted that we have to find most of the funding from within Australia, and within our own budget. This project has become very important to our institution and has the greatest support by our staff of any project we undertake. Sometimes we accept that other projects cannot go ahead because we have to divert funding to this project. There is a very strong sense of commitment.

Question (J. Clark): I think this issue of purchase and the effect of purchase on the artists must be handled with great frankness by the museums because I would really like to hear what you think about what your activities have resulted in.

It is absolutely demonstrable that if an artist's work appears in the Triennial, or is purchased by the Triennial's organizers, that the price of the artist's work goes up, or alternatively, that their level of exposure in the international circuit increases. This may not exactly result immediately in high prices, but down the road, results in furthering their career with a great advantage. This phenomenon has been clear from the establishment of modern art outside Japan since the 1970s. To note a specific example, Professor Nakahara might want to comment on this because he knows much more about the details, the work of Lee U-Fan was exhibited in Germany in 1970 and acquired a prominence in Germany, which then reflexively gave him an art market position which he had not had previously. If you talk to any of the artists who have had the opportunity, not only to exhibit at the Triennial or the "Traditions/Tensions" exhibition but others, too, this may be obvious. In a world where artistic exposure is governed by the appearance of these in situations, where there is a lot of non-market patronage obtained through institutions, in terms of visiting artist fellowships and so forth, the role of the decisions of the museums is very important. I would like to understand more clearly what you see in the results of your decisions.

C. Turner: Well, I think this is a very important topic. I think whenever we do any exhibition, whenever we choose an artist, to include in any exhibition, we naturally enhance that artist's reputation within Australia. For Australian artists, if we, or a major institution such as our own in Australia, shows that artists' work, or buys that artist's work the reputation is enhanced. It is a very complex subject. But I think forming a collection is a very important part of the process that we are involved with. Some works are not suitable for collecting, and so I don't believe that it neces-

sarily denigrates an artist if that particular work is not purchased. Obviously there may be disappointment.

I take your point about the fact that artists work sometimes goes up in value after major international exposure. I can only say that I think the process that we try to develop, where we use different Australian curators and different curators from each of the countries for each of the Triennials, tries to have different perspectives introduced. For example, there is usually one Australian curator and one curator from each country. Those two people would choose the art from that country. For the next Triennial, it would be a different Australian curator and a different curator from that country. We really have tried to bring different perspectives to bear in the choices.

This also opens up all sorts of curatorial questions. Dr. Desai talked of the great advantages of a single curatorial vision. I think our process is too large to be encompassed by one single curator's vision. I struck this problem at the conference in Italy where the directors of the major world biennales gathered. I think for one artistic director to go and choose work from perhaps 60 artists for an exhibition is an impossibility. All I can say is that the process we go through attempts to introduce new perspectives, to introduce different artists, to give other artists a different chance, and certainly we are very conscious of the potential to be seen as aligned with only one institution or one commercial gallery, or one type of art in each country. But then, curating is never perfect.

MC (A. Pohsyananda): We have seen the example of zone crossing, where the museum outside Asia is purchasing and confirming that contemporary Asian art is collectible, thereby changing the view of what might be seen as inauthentic artifacts to authentic masterpieces. Do you think that, in hindsight, there were too many curators and that for the next APT, you will have a lower number of curators working on this project?

C. Turner: Well, I am not sure if there are too many curators because there are usually only two for each country. The question is, do you have curators work across boundaries with several countries? For the next APT, we have established regional teams which makes it possible for the curators to choose from a number of countries. I think it is impossible, for example, to put the Pacific in with East Asia. I think there are some impossibilities. The other aspect is, that sometimes we have had more than one Australian involved in our teams to give younger curators an opportunity to learn. What is now happening is that, within some of the countries, the Asia-Pacific Triennial is being used as a training ground for young curators, for example, from Indonesia. Along with a more experienced curator, we have younger Australian curators assigned to the team. I would be very reluctant, in a situation where we are trying to develop curators and give them experiences, to take out that training aspect because one of the most important contributions that our Triennial has made to Australia has been to involve many young Australians as interns. Now we are starting to take interns from Southeast Asia as well. I think it is this training aspect that makes the teams larger. Of course, an

alternative is to consider a selection to be made by a committee. I think of it very differently. I see working in a team as a more profound intellectual engagement, because it is not easy. I am sure all of us realize that. But for the future, who knows? I would be very reluctant to see one curator attempt to select a hundred artists from Asia for our exhibition.

MC (A. Poshyananda) : Now we come to our third speaker. In the late 70s and early 80s when I lived in Edinburgh, Scotland for five years, The Fruitmarket Gallery was already active. But then foreign exhibits in Scotland were mainly works from England or Europe. Therefore I am glad to learn that recently there are so many exhibitions from Asia being exposed in Edinburgh, Scotland. The person who has made this possible is our third speaker, Mr. Graeme Murray. Mr. Murray is the director of The Fruitmarket Gallery since 1992. He has invited co-curators from Japan, Korea, China, to create exhibitions. Among the shows were "Liquid Crystal Futures : Contemporary Japanese Photograph," "Information and Reality : Korean Contemporary Art" and "Reckoning with the Past : Contemporary Chinese Painting." The title of Mr. Murray's talk today is "Cultural Encounters through Contemporary Art."

Graeme Murray : Culture is defined by Arthur J. Deikman in his lecture of 6 March 1987 as :

"Customs, ideas and attitudes shared by a group transmitted from generation to generation by learning processes rather than biological inheritance ; adherence to these customs and attitudes is regarded by a system of rewards and punishments peculiar to each culture."

From the late 80s I have made a number of visits to Japan, Korea, China and India. I desired to see, first hand, what work was being made in the field of contemporary art during a period of continuing rapid change and dynamism in the culture and economies of these countries. Previous study and research, commencing with the history of art, had given me some background. I was interested in seeing to what extent the contemporary art practice was "anchored in" the particular culture, its history and beliefs and to what extent international communications and the concomitant information from other cultures had been taken up.

I was looking, of course, for artists of perception, clear in their assessment of what is going on and capable of making work whose presentation could give rise to a greater awareness of the elements of the modern international problematique, and whose ethics enable them to transcend current Western notions of the artist as individualist, romantic, dissident—separated from society. They should also be above the coercion of economic and social gratification.

I was interested to see how much of Western and Central European legacies in thought were operational. Religious history includes Egyptian, Greek, Roman, Hindu Shamanist, Parsee, Christian, Mohammedan, Confucian, Taoist, and Shinto forms of worship and belief. Buddhism, for example, spread from India to the East—what was its current operation? What were the dynamics between the art of these countries and what I knew previously, in

the West, where the cult of the individual "great artist" has been in full swing? David Widdicombe writes in 'A Clash of Cultures—The Malaysian Experience' :

"It may be that cultural clash is a condition of the human race, at least in its present stage of development. If we are to get away from it we shall have to develop a better understanding of groups and living in groups."

Recently the West has focused on this geographical area with the end of the British lease of Hong Kong, and the celebration of 50 years of Indian independence from Britain—and of Korea from Japan. Such milestones encourage evaluations of available historic documents to see who really did what.

In London, recently, there have been major focuses on the art of other cultures—The Festival of Islam, for example, and the Japan Festival in 1991. An article in the *Sunday Times* of 27 July 1997, pointed out that following this 33% of people surveyed said they now have a more favorable view of Japan than before it. 71% said they now wished to visit Japan. Currently a focus on Korean culture is being presented in London. Such an international center encourages state and business partnership support to promote and present aspects of their culture for greater visibility and presence on the world stage—and no doubt, increase of sales of their business products, Hyundai cars, for example. Before long there will be more cars in Britain than people, if present trends continue. What would the Romans have thought of that?

At The Fruitmarket Gallery, our remit is to present exhibitions of the best national and international contemporary art (fig. 10). Internationally, over the last five years, we have presented major exhibitions from Australia ("Aboriginal Art, the collection of Donald Khan"), West Africa ("Photographs of Malick Sidibe and Seydou Keita"), Japan ("Liquid Crystal Futures"), Korea ("Information and Reality") and China ("Reckoning with the Past"). An exhibition of contemporary Indian art is currently in the planning stage. This interest in other cultures stems from the necessity to be aware of what is going on in other countries globally—to search for the bigger picture, so to speak. It is also a search for future partners working on the same wavelength. It is not an interest in the "exotic" or otherness of these cultures. The more I see of cultures outside the West, the more I see well intentioned people working through our common destiny within the trappings of different race, religion and cultural ideas. The contradiction in modern times is perhaps that, whilst at face value, all cultures and their histories are now available and apparently accessible by plane and television scanner, our ingress into these cultures is destroying these very traditions. Hopefully, however, we can work together to save what is essential, to achieve a harmonious balance in our common destiny. We are all born to live, to die. Cooperation for a good and meaningful future evolution should surely be our aim.

There are many historical contacts between Scotland and the Pacific Rim. 18th-century immigrants to Australia and New Zealand led to the development of many communities. Australia's relationship with the U.K. continues—their investment in the U.K. is ahead of Japan and Korea. The U.K. is the second biggest investor in Australia. There is a great awareness here of the recent

Asian-Pacific Triennial and forthcoming Sydney Biennial. In the U.K., and indeed throughout Europe, there is also the continuing participation in the major international arts events—Venice, São Paulo, Johannesburg, Kwangju and so on. With India there is the colonial heritage, but the great example of a country moving from feudalism and colonialism into secular modernism in fifty years. Today, the subcontinent life is changing rapidly through increased mobility. Artists are borrowing from traditions—their own traditions are being diffused. However, hopefully, sensitive interaction and good direction will lead to cultural rejuvenation. With Burma, Japan and Korea a substantial series of business partnerships continue to develop.

Although we are now dealing with information as a global village, we must not forget that cultural influence is as old as time. What seems to be a problem today is the volume of information to be dealt with—how do we deal with what is essential, weed out the rest and apply what is useful, where it is needed? Because I come from the West I do not find the remnants of Western style art practice very interesting when I encounter it in the East. Art colleges may have opened in India in 1857. Studio practice has led to the adoption of easel painting modes. What I am interested in is not one culture copying the indoctrination of another, but the essential genius of these cultures—and how that is useful for the future. To adopt this and that, to select from here and there may be pleasurable, but may be a self indulgent fantasy. Bankum Chandra Chatterji has written in 'General Principles in the Evolution of Cultures,' that :

"Certain societies become civilized by themselves and create a new culture : others take over from others. The first process takes a long time but the second is relatively quick. When a relatively uncivilized people come into contact with a people of a higher civilization, the natural law is for the less civilized to imitate the more civilized, even to the effect of total imitation. Imitation in itself is not harmful for it confers important benefits and after the preliminary phase of imitation, independent creation begins."

In Japan and Korea I found many fine citadels to contemporary art in India a developing situation where past bureaucratic practice is acknowledging the necessity for curatorial experience in mounting exhibitions, and in China a substantial development coming from the colleges of art since their re-opening in 1977.

Speedy material cultures—with electronic audio and visual reporting through satellite and cable technology—can forget that their communication is modified by the atmosphere and physics of place, the state of the recipient and the nature of time—its resonances. Are the quality and finer nuances of an event transmissible in their totality? Of course not! We receive a shortened version—a merely intellectual experience. What of the gentle cadence of poetry? The deep acoustics of the cathedral? Is that electronically reproducible? It certainly is not, mainly because it omits the complete participation of the human being.

Our increasing ingenuity in the creation of new technologies not only blinds us to other more complete possibilities and enjoyments but precludes these finer and subtler operations by the scale of these productions. The chatter from transmitters and the

noise of the internal combustion engine is everywhere. My son spoke to me recently of his continuing fascination/obsession with computer games and the newly developed virtual pets. Interaction includes feeding them. It has taken him longer to understand how to relate to a "real dog." But the beauty of that interaction and feedback where one plays with an animal and engages real qualities of loyalty, affection and love—operating a flexible intelligence—may win the day. Manufacturers of computer games can easily justify their trade; addiction creates a captive paying audience. One only need think of opium and tobacco. Computer games may improve the players' motor-interaction dexterity, but does it alienate them from the positive participation in human affairs?

How much of contemporary art is a similarly limited activity? Omar Michael Burke explains in 'Among the Dervishes' :

"My dear friend. Your art may be perfect in itself. We are not discussing that. I will return it to you if you like. But almost all artists are merely the forerunners of the mass-communications media. They may transmit, convey experience in one form, but this is not active but vicarious experience. To us, you see, art is not the ability to stimulate certain emotions. It is the ability to share feelings and also living, living. I show you a photograph of a cartoon and you smile. I show you a television program and you laugh or cry. Is that living life, is that contributing to life? You may feel, of course, that this has a function : it makes people happy or relaxed. It also dwarfs their intellect, robs them of volition."

In the years between 1994 and 1996 The Fruitmarket Gallery fulfilled part of its international remit by focusing on the contemporary visual art of Japan, Korea and China—an area containing a substantial proportion of the world's population, and currently a center of extraordinary industrial dynamism and cultural change. The exhibitions of works by artists from these countries offers an insight into their cultures for British audiences, allowing the development of further co-operation in the future.

I would like to speak about the "Liquid Crystal Futures : Contemporary Japanese Photography" exhibition (fig. 11). The "Liquid Crystal Futures" forum statement of 28 of May, 1994 states :

"In Japan there is not the same separation of inside and out—of personal space and what is around. There is a greater awareness of the environment and more of a shared experience with others. In the West it seems that the mind transcribes and differentiates the experience of the world into linguistic categories which can be transacted as commodity—a linear knowledge to be merchandised. Being and unified experience become communicated through the reporting mind. Yet why is there this separation? Why this obsession with individualism?"

"Liquid Crystal Futures : Contemporary Japanese Photography" showed at The Fruitmarket Gallery from 28 May-16 July 1996, and was an enriching and enjoyable experience for all the gallery staff. The exhibition was organized in association with the Japan Foundation, and was based on research carried out by myself in collaboration with two Japanese curators : Shinji Kohmoto of the National Museum of Modern Art, Kyoto and Yuko Hasegawa of Setagaya Art Museum, Tokyo.

"Liquid Crystal Futures" presented eleven of Japan's foremost photographic artists, and explored the common thread which runs between their diverse work within the context of contemporary Japanese culture. Artists included in the show were Nobuyoshi Araki, Akira Gomi, Naoya Hatakeyama, Norio Kobayashi, Taiji Matsue, Ryuji Miyamoto, Tsuyoshi Ozawa, Tokihiro Satoh, Toshio Shibata, Manabu Yamanaka and Tomohiko Yoshida. The exhibition demonstrated the richness of photography which, since its introduction to Japan, has had an extraordinary impact upon the Japanese imagination. Using the most up-to-date technology to produce images of impeccable quality, the artists chosen presented a particularly Japanese aesthetic within what was previously a "Western" photographic tradition. This aesthetic, apparent in all the artists' work, has been summed up as "a consciousness of the transformative nature of photography, of the almost immediate translation of multi-dimensional world into two-dimensional image" (*Portfolio Magazine*, Issue 20), and is what constitutes the fundamental link behind all the different works on show. It forms a background to the exhibition's other aims which were to "report on the state of Japanese society in the 1980s and 90s"—to provide a sharp critique of a society that appears (at least on the surface) to have exchanged its traditional values of frugality for the instant gratification of Western style consumerism—whilst at the same time reflecting environmental issues of international importance.

At the time of the opening of the exhibition the curators and many of the artists visited Edinburgh. There were a series of events to contextualize the exhibition, including a forum, a lecture series and film and photography workshops. Thus the general public were able to encounter at first hand this presentation from such a different culture.

The Fruitmarket Gallery also published a full-color catalog to accompany the exhibition. The catalog was a great success, and has now fully sold out. It has been vital to promoting the tour and providing the background for the public's understanding of the context of the work.

After its showing at The Fruitmarket Gallery, "Liquid Crystal Futures" embarked on a tour of Europe. The exhibition showed in six countries, including Denmark, Japan, Germany, Hungary and Sweden, and received enormous acclaim from both the public and press wherever it showed. It has now returned to Japan, having been seen by a grand total of 60,000 people all over Europe.

I have been asked to describe Western reaction to these exhibitions of contemporary art from the Pacific Rim. I have selected some relevant extracts from the press coverage of the exhibitions to amplify this. In *The Guardian*, Beatrice Colin wrote :

"("Liquid Crystal Futures" is) a group show which aims to comment on the social, cultural and political situation in Japan. Here, 11 Japanese photographers respond to the shock waves felt in a country seemingly locked in an identity crisis. Spoon fed on technology and consumerism but yearning for spirituality, it's a country where unemployment, homelessness and the destruction of the natural world by industry or short sighted development have all appeared in the wake of the boom years of the late 80s...It is in the series of images by Tokihiro Satoh that

contemporary Japan is imbued with spiritual optimism. Hundreds of small dots of light, made by the artist with a torch and a long exposure, inhabit deserted cities and swelling seas. Curved around the gallery walls, these large black and white photographs are mythical, magical illusions which capture the moment over and over again."

In *The Scotsman*, Murdo MacDonald described "Liquid Crystal Futures" as an "outstanding exhibition," going on to say that :
"("Liquid Crystal Futures" is) a show in which Western preconceptions about Japan must take second place. Often we represent Japan in the West as somewhere 'different,' and yet the difference we are acknowledging has a kind of stereotyped familiarity to it. In this exhibition the difference is real and, because of that reality, it is both more sharply perceived and, paradoxically, less separate. It is no longer the difference of stereotype but an illumination of cultural meaning...these photographers recognize that a culture is not some act of divine permanence, but is itself that most artificial of things, a construction of consensus and power. This notion is familiar enough in the West, where it tends to be treated most successfully on a theoretical level, but here every work seems to be imbued with a visual awareness of it."

In *Galleries Magazine*, Ralph Hughes described the exhibition as "the most ubiquitous means of representation directed at its material home," and goes on to describe it as :

"... a diverse show of eleven photographers depicting a country generally regarded as a paradigm of pluralism, consumerism and the post-modern. Sometimes explicit, but always a context, is the city of Tokyo and its incessant transformations. It is certainly a well chosen title, suggesting not only a conflation of past and present, fantasy and fact, divination and investment but also of traditional Japanese aesthetics and modern methods of visual display."

Next, I would like to speak about the "Information and Reality : Korean Contemporary Art" exhibition (fig. 12). Lim Young-Bang wrote in the introduction to the Kwangju Biennale catalog :
"Today, as we become more and more dependent on the comforts of modern science and technology, we should not neglect the cultivation of a moral value system and aesthetics through self-awareness."

In 1995 Korea celebrated 50 years of liberation from Japanese occupation. Designated "Year of Art" in Korea, 1995 also saw the launch of the first Kwangju Biennale with its theme "Beyond the Borders" and its self-proclaimed aim of contributing towards a "global artistic village." Co-curated by Lee Yongwoo and Graeme Murray, "Information and Reality" was the first major exhibition of contemporary installation and video art from Korea to show in the U.K., and represented a unique introduction for the British public to current developments in art from the Pacific Rim.

"Information and Reality" showed from 28 October to 2 December 1995 and featured the work of eleven Korean artists on the cutting edge of developments in contemporary art. The exhibition raised issues of Korea's history, present realities and problems, including the development of industrial society and infor-

mation technology, internationalism and regionalism, the destruction of the environment and, of course, the ongoing problems of a society which is still very much subject to male domination. Artists included in the show were feminist installation and performance artist An Pil-Yun, Buddhist nun turned installation artist Ahn Sung Keum, textile installation artist Kim Soo-Ja, award-winning independent film-maker Yunah Hong, installation artists Moon Beom and Oh Sang-Gyel, performance/installation artist and sculptor Park Sil, installation artists Cho, Duck-Hyun, feminist performance artist Bul Lee, social realist painter Lim Ok-Sang and Artist of the Year and Biennale exhibitor, Jheon Soo Cheon.

At The Fruitmarket Gallery, on 28 October 1995, Sil Park performed a shamanistic ritual around her installation describing "the meeting between plus and minus to create a life" and "the explanation of the balance between human and the holy land through the ritual."

The Fruitmarket Gallery also produced a publication, *Information and Reality: Korean Contemporary Art*, written by exhibition curator Lee Yongwoo. Featuring color and black and white reproductions of all the exhibiting artist's work, the publication played an important role in contextualizing the exhibition.

Once again, some extracts from the press coverage of the exhibition. Writing in *The List Magazine*, Ian Smith describes the exhibition as follows:

"Celebrating 50 years of liberation from Japanese occupation, Korea has also found a voice on the international art circuit. During Korean Year of Art, the traditional barriers between east and west are being challenged...Scotland is getting its own taste of Korean Art, with "Information and Reality," an exhibition at Edinburgh's Fruitmarket Gallery. Sparked by 50 years of liberation from Japanese rule, the show explores social, political and historical issues in Korean society, attempting to make the nation's art and culture accessible...Each of the contributing artists make original, highly expressive statements about Korea and art; information and reality. The subject is of great relevance in Korea, a nation that has in recent history experienced colonization, war, partition, military dictatorship and rapid industrialization. It is also highly pertinent to Western society, where information superhighways make us more aware than ever of the gap between what we are told and what is the truth."

For *The Scotsman*, Robin Baillie writes:

"The smooth passage from this Spartan spiritual aesthetic to the minimalism of Western modern art is apparent in the work of many of the artists in the show. This selection of Korean art sharpens our understanding of the differences between our cultures but also underlines the empathy that can be shared and expressed in art."

In 1996, The Fruitmarket Gallery continued its commitment to bringing new and exciting work from East Asia. Its exhibition of contemporary Chinese painting "Reckoning with the Past" showed during the Edinburgh International Festival, and attracted a record audience figure of 23,171 in its eight week showing (fig. 13). The fifteen contemporary artists selected for "Reckoning

with the Past" were drawn from China, Taiwan and Hong Kong, and are at the forefront of the contemporary Chinese art world. They are united by their use of painting as a means to interpret the past, whilst developing a contemporary Chinese visual language which expresses their current cultural situation. The exhibiting artists were, from China, Feng Mengbo, Yu Youhan, Zhang Xiaogong, Wei Dong, Liu Dahong, Yang Yiping, Wang Xingwei, He Douling and Mao Lizi; from Taiwan, Cheng Tsai-Tung, Yu Peng and Wu Tien-Chang and from Hong Kong, Lucia Cheung, Oscar Ho Hing-kai and Sze Yuen.

"Reckoning with the Past" was curated by Chang Tsong-zung, the highly regarded director of the Hanart TZ Gallery in Hong Kong, in collaboration with The Fruitmarket Gallery. The curator and some of the artists visited Scotland during the exhibition. After the showing in Edinburgh, the exhibition toured to three venues in Scotland before going on to show at the Cornerhouse Gallery in Manchester. In October 1997 it will go to Fundacio Oriente in Lisbon, Portugal, and further international venues are currently in development.

There is also a highly successful accompanying publication, with several critical essays which discuss issues of Chinese art and culture in more depth. Local, national and international press coverage for the exhibition has been highly complimentary. For example, Alan Riding, writing for both the *New York Times* and the *International Herald Tribune*, described "Reckoning with the Past" as "a show which provides a rare window for the West on contemporary Chinese art." He goes on to say:

"In a China that is rushing wildly toward its own idea of economic development, obliterating a good deal of its remaining cultural heritage in the process, some Chinese artists have found an unusual way of expressing dissent: They have begun looking backward, hoping that nostalgia can serve as a mirror, to remind the country that it has a past. Yet it is a measure of how quickly China is changing that this 'past' may be as recent as two decades ago. It is also a past that in some ways is being romanticized not to approve of what may have happened or to suggest that things were better then, but simply to recall that there is more to China than the current feverish drive for profits."

Writing for *The Times*, John Russell Taylor described the exhibition as "the most exciting Edinburgh Festival show," and goes on to observe that:

"The title refers more to the subject matter and the artists' attitudes than to the styles in which they paint. Two things are immediately remarkable: that without looking at the catalog one could not tell for certain which are from the mainland and which are from the islands; and that all the heterogeneous influences, which only five years ago were bumping up against one another, largely unabsorbed, in Chinese art have been taken on board, understood, and turned effortlessly to the individual purposes of a new generation of artists."

In *The Scotsman*, George Wyllie was surprised to find his "emotions stirred," and writes that:

"("Reckoning with the Past") radiates a glimpse of reckonings for the future. Fifteen artists from China, Taiwan and Hong

Kong, do this with wit and precision and knock askew our belief in the monotonous predictability of that unextended Chinese art so far delivered to us. Have no fear, the real stuff is still around and this exhibition is proof. Brimming with spirit and an obvious love for their country, there is never the less a sadness in the air over the frustration of broader aspirations—see the incisive bloodlines in Zhang Xiaogang's sharp portraits. There is the deep passion here, and I warm to the bravery and honesty of these artists...

The technique of many of them is based on traditional requirements for painting, and that discipline has ensured impeccable drawing skills which are put to effective use in gentle satire. The blatant blaze of the sort of color seen on calendars in Chinese restaurants is put to work by a pop and comic-book approach for kicking at absurdities. Official China, seemingly tolerant to a degree, says this art is not what Chinese art should be, but damn it there it is! We've heard that said about art before, and I hope that by now sagacity and good sense will prevail for a happier journey through an inevitable transition."

In all, our experience of presenting art from the Pacific Rim has been very positive, and all exhibitions have been received with great interest from both the press and public alike. "Reckoning with the Past" has already been seen by 61,000 people at four venues, and we are currently discussing a tour of New Zealand in 1998. We are now developing our exhibition of contemporary Indian art for 1998, which we hope will be a similar success. By curating and touring exhibitions of art from the Pacific Rim, The Fruitmarket Gallery hopes to promote public interest and understanding of the life and culture of these countries. We also hope that it may be possible to extend this cultural exchange by touring exhibitions of Scottish art in the countries of the Pacific Rim, thus introducing their audiences to the art and culture of Scotland.

Looking to the future, the problematic side is the continuing global political conflicts, both internal and external, which—through bad government and corruption—result in the overproduction of arms and lead to famine, destruction of people and their environments, industrial over-production, pollution and nuclear poisoning.

The optimistic side is that the melting pot of the ASEAN and Pacific countries continues to be dynamic, and to develop an improved culture, as happened in the previous melting pots, Europe and the U.S.A. Let us hope that they are careful not to repeat the mistakes of others. One has only to look at the many areas of vast ecological devastation in these countries, perhaps permanently damaged by primitive, uncultivated and impulsive industrial practice.

As to the artists, they surely have a responsibility to ensure the relevance of their practice, discipline and guardianship of what is essential in our cultures, so that our children grow up in a future of wonderful qualities. I would like to end by sharing with you a quote from 'Rafael Lefort' by the Teachers of Gurdjieff :

"Those who have the eyes to see, let them see the connection, those who have the ears to hear, let them hear the truth from midst the tangled streams of falsehood, but let them first de-

velop the facility to know the texture of truth, to feel the truth, to speak the truth and create a climate in which truth is the accepted norm and not something out of the ordinary."

MC (A. Poshyananda) : You say that the exhibitions you organize are not interested in the exotic or otherness, but I am interested to hear that. What is the local reaction, especially from the Edinburgh art scene, which is perhaps conservative, and academic? How do they react to these shows?

G. Murray : I think their reaction is, "Why are you not showing Scottish artists?" At the same time, there was a broad, intelligent audience which appreciated them and did look at the work very closely, and found it to be very good work.

< Interval >

MC (A. Poshyananda) : For our next speaker, it is my pleasure to introduce Mr. Kwok Kian Chow, the first director of the Singapore Art Museum. Mr. Kwok has curated several shows including "A Century of Art in Singapore." He has worked as the Singaporean commissioner of the São Paulo Biennale in 1996. His paper is entitled, "SAM is Not a Foreign Name."

Kwok Kian Chow : In the brief given to me by the organizers of this symposium, it is suggested that I introduce the Singapore Art Museum, its history, vision, exhibition and collection policies, as well as issues, problems and lessons learnt from the presenter's personal involvement and from a personal point of view. This is a wide scope, and involves moving through and forth institutional and personal view points, not to mention the clumsiness of having to mark the speaker at different points. Let me just say that I am not here to do a PR piece, and as a concerned museum administrator, and given that the Singapore Art Museum, or SAM, is a serious and sensitive institution firmly committed to the advancement of visual arts, I am here to share with you the experiences of SAM, and the museological issues that they point to.

When the name "Singapore Art Museum" was decided upon, one of the criticisms of this name was the discomfort with the acronym, S-A-M, or SAM. If SAM was known as the "National Art Gallery," the acronym could have been NAGA, the mythological serpent who was related to fertility and creation. This would have been an appropriate name, if one wanted to read into the semantics of it. Anyway, the acronym was not an important point in deciding the name of an institution, and the discussion of acronyms was really just a light-hearted one. Now that SAM has been in operation for about one and half years, SAM is widely recognized in Singapore as the museum SAM, and not any relative Sam. I mention this as the starting point of my presentation to highlight the distinct presence of an institution and its context. I will briefly go into the background of the development of SAM and hopefully the Singapore model could point to issues in Asian art museology. Naturally, the global context is significant and it interplays with a local context. My emphasis here is more on the latter.

The term "museum" was used, because it was felt that a gallery tended to be a neutral space for art display, while a museum was interpretative. To develop an art institution in the context of a community's own aesthetic tradition and social environment, and yet in the periphery of the international art system, given its historical disposition, required an institution of identity and character, with dynamic exhibition and collection programs, anchored in critical discourse, community support and educational vision. These, naturally, also exist in tension, and balances would have to be sought.

The SAM is both a continuation and a break from its predecessor, the National Museum Art Gallery, which was established, earlier on, in 1976. The National Museum Art Gallery represented a model fairly common in the development of art museology in Asia, which is a central visual arts exhibition venue created largely through the efforts of the artist community, and which allows fairly free access to art exhibitions with little or no curatorial effort. The space is maintained through public or corporate funding as well as through rental.

In Singapore, with the formation of the National Heritage Board in 1993, the curated exhibitions at the NMAG began to be billed as organized by the SAM to denote a new level of art exhibition programming, under the banner of "SAM," although SAM did not have its own building until 1996. This change in programming denoted a shift towards the museum model. The mission statement of the Singapore Art Museum, from the early 1996 onwards, has been "to preserve and present the art histories and contemporary art practices of Singapore and the Southeast Asian region, so as to facilitate visual arts education, exchange, research, and development."

When SAM had its own building (fig. 14), which is the renovated Saint Joseph's Institution, the new museum opened with the inaugural exhibition "Modernity and Beyond" which had two components—"A Century of Art in Singapore," and "Themes in Southeast Asian Art." The Singapore art exhibition was an attempt at a broad ranging historical survey of art in Singapore and was promptly criticized as an essentialization of art history in Singapore. This was perhaps the first marking of SAM taking on an institutional role and how it could stimulate discussion in art. The greater impact of the museum model as opposed to the earlier gallery model was instantaneously felt. The museum also plays the role of a specialist, taking the lead in shaping that cultural discourse known as art. The authority of this specialist however, is built upon many extra aesthetic factors which are highly institutionally specific.

"Themes in Southeast Asian Art" (fig. 15) utilized a thematic approach and the exhibition represented a very different kind of programming opportunity. While the works in the Singapore exhibition (fig. 16) could have been fairly easily put together in similar or different permutations, the Southeast Asian exhibition was historic in that the wide ranging grouping of the works drawn from Southeast Asia public and private collections, in addition to SAM's own collection, was unprecedented in any international exhibition program. The prerequisite of an art institution was imperative in the realization of such programming. SAM's acquisi-

tion activity has been on the increase since the transfer to the new building, but it has yet to develop a collection that could support an exhibition like "Themes in Southeast Asian Art," which may be said to be the goal of SAM's collection development in the foreseeable future.

The Singapore Art Museum being the national and only art museum of this scale in Singapore, its viability has to be sited in community participation and the interplay of its in-house curatorial vision and the social discourse of art which can be globally situated. A case in point is the "Masterpieces from the Guggenheim Museum" exhibition at the Singapore Art Museum which turned out to be the most popular visual arts show in Singapore ever. SAM sees it as important to present exhibitions from all over the world, even in the light of promoting the appreciation of Asian modern and contemporary art. An often heard criticism made on our international exhibition program is that we are buying into the brand names. I have no problems with that, as an institution has to optimize its historical possibility with a breadth of programs that could have the greatest developmental impact.

Sometimes, placing international and permanent collection exhibitions side by side offer special opportunities of dialogue and comparison. We have just put the "German Art: 30 Years of Contemporary Art in Germany" side by side with a permanent collection exhibition curated by SAM curator Joanna Lee, "Weight of Tradition." The traditional elements in German art and in Southeast Asian art are highlighted in the exhibitions. This offers a unique educational opportunity by the very juxtapositioning of the programs for the Singapore context.

So the Singapore Art Museum has to provide a platform to research, present and debate the aesthetic heritage of Singapore and of the larger Southeast Asian region while negotiating with that prevailing conceptual category known as "art" in the community. SAM may have just done enough, with trial and error we should more or less be heading in the right direction, as the schools are now seriously considering incorporating 20th-century Southeast Asian art as part of the art syllabus. "Modernity and Beyond" had about half of the visitorship of "Masterpieces from the Guggenheim Museum." In an analysis taking both the museum programming and the characteristics of art reception into consideration, "Modernity and Beyond" was a great success.

The Singapore Art Museum should also take a critical view of what is meant by curatorship in the light of the development of visual arts in Singapore. One result of the transition from the gallery to the museum model is the reduction of opportunities for artists to exhibit their works. That capability known as curatorship should produce results in ways that engender an expanded audience for the visual arts, a widened critical dimension of art appreciation, and a more stimulating environment for art production. The responsibility of an art museum as an institution is to ensure that it transcends sectarian interest in the art world so that its impacts are positive and dynamic. The institution should understand these constraints, optimize its opportunities, align with international associates for both conceptual and operational reasons.

In most countries in Asia, except perhaps for Japan, South Ko-

rea and Taiwan, the art infrastructure does not have the comprehensive range of artists, critics, historians, art schools, publications, museums, galleries, contemporary art spaces, auctions, collectors, events, and critical mass. Let us recognize that those Asian communities which do have the comprehensive range have modeled the development to a large extent to the international art system, namely the Western art world. Now assuming that all of the above components of the art system and the ways they are currently aligned, complete with their tensions and dynamics, form the necessary environment for visual arts development, Asian art museology will have to develop in rather different directions, depending on the range available in each environment. Hence, an art museum should be perceived as an institution in a specific context.

In the case of Singapore and SAM, one of the things we are involved in at the moment is the planning of another exhibition space which will somehow fill the gap left by the former National Museum Art Gallery. The plan to revamp the gallery model is in no way suggesting the bankruptcy of curatorship. We have to agree, on the one hand, that Asian modern and contemporary art scholarship is still relatively young, and most curatorial staff, being recent graduates of Western post-graduate schools, are trained in Western art historical methodology. An Asian art museum, as an institution in a specific context, must deal with the concrete history of a local modern art development and the curatorial frames available to handle this development may be limiting at the moment.

Given that one of the tendencies of contemporary art is to articulate identities, situations and ideas beyond the written language, reaching those areas of human expressions which other linguistic modes may not traverse, any form of curatorship which relies heavily on existing aesthetic and cultural frames may be ill equipped to handle the artworks. It would be completely ironic, if not irresponsible, if the development of curatorship actually results in reduced opportunity for aesthetic expressions.

There is, therefore, the need to balance the museum model and the gallery model in a given art developmental context. In creating an exhibition space beyond the museum curatorial program, an institution addresses the need for a space for experimental art as well as a space for entrenched local practices which the art critical scholarship is still trying to make sense of. In advancing an exhibition program in earlier 20th-century art, the Fukuoka Art Museum's "The Birth of Modern Art in Southeast Asia" is a fine example. I would like to end by mentioning the educational vision of the Singapore Art Museum.

In its educational program, SAM promotes the exhibits as a complex make-up of historical, cultural, ideological, emotional and creative elements. The objective of SAM's exhibition program, therefore, is to enrich a viewer by allowing him or her to discover the wealth of human creative and expressive potentials through art appreciation. Given this generic objective, which is not tied to specific periods of art, it may be said that SAM is not so concerned with the division between traditional, modern and contemporary art as much as the realistic educational potentials of these art works. As far as the educational role of the museum

is concerned, priority will be given to a large potential audience to promote visits to the art museum and art appreciation. In the words of SAM education officer, Belen Ponferrada :

"Learning is largely concerned with ensuring that opportunities exist for the largest number of individuals to find their level of intellectual and emotional engagement with the works of art and the ideas presented through its exhibitions."

This learning process applies to both the institution and its audience.

MC (A. Poshyananda) : SAM was established to function as the art center of the Southeast Asian region. The exhibition "Modernity and Beyond" was a very important effort in exhibiting contemporary Southeast Asian art in this region and, most importantly, it was arranged thematically. Can you elaborate on the planning and the process and the training of curators for that exhibition please?

K. Kwok : First of all, we never planned to be the art center of Southeast Asia. We have always said that we will do what we can to facilitate art development in the region and we do like to be a center in Southeast Asia in the way that we play the role of a facilitator. The "Modernity and Beyond" exhibition has two components, as I mentioned just now in the paper. One is the themes in Southeast Asian art, the other one is essentially the history of art in Singapore. The Southeast Asian component is arranged thematically, whereas the Singapore component was done chronologically. The main themes in the "Modernity and Beyond," the Southeast Asian component, included urban life, and popular culture, and then religion and mythology, nationalism and revolution and identity. It was planned in a way that we had a guest curator who was the chief curator for the Southeast Asian component, Mr. T.K. Sabapathy. All the curators in the museum participated by taking on one aspect of the exhibition, each person taking on one theme to look specifically at one of the Southeast Asian countries. It was a developmental project in the sense that everybody worked together and, at the same time, developed our collection. We all worked towards having this exhibition as the inaugural exhibition of the museum, but it was also a learning process to develop our collection as well as curatorship for the new institution.

Question (J.Clark) : Thank you for your presentation. You have opened up a very interesting difference, and I think it could be underlined. I have noticed it really for the first time here and it is very clear now. There seems to be a very important difference between your approach to your initial exhibitions and, indeed, how thematically we are at parallel with some of your approaches in Fukuoka, the parallel with "Asian Modernism" exhibition (1995) organized by the Japan Foundation Asia Center and arranged here by my friend sitting next to me, Mr. Mizusawa, Mr. Tatehata, and Mr. Shioda. All of the attempts to understand and exhibit Asian modernity in these three centers, Tokyo, Fukuoka and Singapore have included a very strong historical content. The New York exhibition and the Triennials in Brisbane have not in-