



Dr. Adrian Tan

Assistant Professor, Visual Arts Education

National Institute of Education (NIE), Nanyang Technological University, Singapore

www.adriantan.sg | adriantanpc@gmail.com

Profile

Adrian Tan is an artist-curator and art historian whose practice operates at the intersection of archival research, exhibition-making, and artistic production. His work investigates social histories of contemporary art in Singapore and Southeast Asia, with particular attention to how archives, institutions, and artistic communities shape forms of publicness. Working across curatorship, writing, and artistic research, he approaches the exhibition as a methodological and pedagogical site where documents, images, and spatial interventions are brought into relation to foreground alternative forms of knowledge production.

Education

PhD in Research (Arts), School of Art, Design and Media (ADM), NTU

Postgraduate Diploma in Education, NIE, NTU

BA (Honours) Fine Art (Studio Practice and Contemporary Critical Studies), Goldsmiths College, University of London

Research and Practice Areas

Archival Practices and Art Histories in Southeast Asia

Curatorial Practice and Exhibition as Research

Public Engagement and Visual Arts Pedagogy

Digital Humanities and Archival Mapping

Oral History, Memory Studies, and Qualitative Methods

Academic Appointments

2026–Present

Assistant Professor, Visual Arts Education, NIE, Nanyang Technological University (NTU)

2025

Senior Lecturer, Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts, University of the Arts Singapore (UAS)

2017–2024

Adjunct Faculty, MA/PhD in Research (Arts), MA Museum Studies and Curatorial Practices, School of Art, Design and Media (ADM), NTU; Art History, College of Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences, NTU; MA Arts and Cultural Leadership, Faculty of Art & Design, UAS

Research and Fellowships

2024–2025

Research Fellow (Digital Humanities), National Library Board & National Archives of Singapore

Professional Memberships and Research Affiliations

Oral Histories commissioned interviewer, National Archives of Singapore

Researcher, The Substation Singapore

Education Facilitator, National Gallery Singapore, Singapore

Curatorial Projects (Selected)

2026

The Strange Archive, Tanjong Pagar Distripark, Singapore

Asia Pacific Now: Cleanse, Prestige Gallery, Tanjong Pagar Distripark, Singapore

2025

RUST: Echoes of Memory, Stamford House, Singapore

2024

OPEN END: Resonate, Re-Read and Re-Trace The Substation Archive, National Gallery Singapore

2018

Got Your Name Or Not?, Your Mother Gallery, Singapore

2016

1 × 1 Metre Space, Flaneur Gallery, Singapore

Awards and Grants

2025

Singapore Art Week Grant Open Call, National Arts Council

2024

Platform Projects Curatorial Award, NTU Centre for Contemporary Art Singapore

2017

Research Scholarship, School of Art, Design and Media, NTU

2018 / 2016

NAC Presentation & Participation Grants

2003

Overseas Specialist Award (Teaching), Ministry of Education, Singapore

Books and Publications

2026

Author, *Long Decay: Resonance as Archive* (Exhibition Catalogue, FOST Gallery)

Author, *Art & Everyday Life in Contemporary Singapore: Public Space & Memories* (Monograph, Routledge, Contemporary South Asian Studies Series)

2025

Curator, Author and Editor, *RUST: Echoes of Memory* (Exhibition Catalogue, Prestige Gallery)

2024

Curator, Author and Editor, *OPEN END: Resonate, Re-Read and Re-Trace The Substation Archive* (Exhibition Catalogue, National Gallery Singapore & NTU CCA Singapore)

2020

Curator, Author and Editor, *Gravitas* (Exhibition Catalogue, Lee Peng Guan & National Arts Council Singapore)

2019

Co-Author and Editor, *Questioning Museums: Art Institutions in Singapore* (Book, NTU ADM & NTU CCA Singapore)

Academic Papers, Book Chapters and Reviews

2025

Book Review of Ella Raidel's *Of Haunted Spaces: Cinema, Heterotopias, and China's Hyperurbanization*, *Wacana Seni Journal of Arts Discourse*, Universiti Sains Malaysia

The Artists Village in Singapore: Open Studios as Counter Cartography and Critical Spatial Practice, *ARTMargins*, MIT Press

Intersection of Publicness, Practice and Pedagogy: Five Days at NAFA and Five Days in Museum (1982), Four Days at the Museum (1987) and A Sculpture Seminar 1 (1991), *Southeast of Now*, NUS Press

2021

Performance Art: Journeying Through Public Spaces in the City of Singapore, *Platform 14*, Vol. 2: *Balancing Acts*, Royal Holloway University of London

2020

Notes on Performance and Action Art in Singapore, Art – Action 1998–2018, Les Presses du Réel

2019

The Artists Village: Openly Intervening in the Public Spaces of the City of Singapore, Open Philosophy, De Gruyter

Conferences and Presentations (Selected)

2026

The Strange Archive: Re-reading Singapore's Archival History through Contemporary Curating

Arts and Design Practice Research Exchange (ADPRex) × APARN: Asia Pacific Artistic Research Network Conference

Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts, University of the Arts Singapore

30 July – 1 August 2026

Resonance as Archive: Clay, Rupture, and the Politics of Form in Contemporary Singapore Art

Permanence / Impermanence: Collecting and Archiving Contemporary Clay Practices

Ceramics Research Centre-UK (CREAM), University of Westminster, in partnership with the Victoria and Albert Museum, London

24–26 June 2026

2025

Reframing Museum Studies in Singapore

Association of Southeast Asian Studies Conference

St John's College, University of Cambridge, United Kingdom

15–17 September 2025

OPEN END: Curating The Substation Archive as Research and Performance

Arts and Design Practice Research Exchange (ADPRex)

University of the Arts Singapore

6–7 August 2025

Decolonizing Narratives from the National Museum Art Gallery, Singapore

International Conference on Decolonizing Southeast Asia Studies

Chiang Mai University, Thailand

17–19 July 2025

Curating Archives: OPEN END: Resonate, Re-Read and Re-Trace The Substation Archive

APARN: Asia Pacific Artistic Research Network Conference

Chulalongkorn University, Bangkok, Thailand

1–3 July 2025

2024

Why Performance Art?

Arts and Design Practice Research Exchange (ADPRex)

University of the Arts Singapore

1–2 August 2024

Making Art Public in Singapore: Revisiting Five Days at NAFA and Five Days in Museum (1982), Four Days at the Museum (1987), and A Sculpture Seminar 1 (1991)

Imagining Asian Art in Transition: Symposium on Modern and Contemporary Asian Art 2024

Universiti Sains Malaysia, Penang

24–25 February 2024

2023

The Artists Village as an 'Experimental Colony' that 'Performed' the Museum in Southeast Asia

Association of Southeast Asian Studies Conference

Universitas Indonesia, Depok

27–30 November 2023

Life Boat

Understanding Displacement in Visual Art and Cultural History

University of Manchester, United Kingdom

24–25 October 2023

“Open-Ends” as Making Art Public in Singapore

International Cultural Management Conference: Cultural Management in the Post-Pandemic World

Chinese University of Hong Kong

12–14 October 2023

2022

Making Art Public: How Artists Perform the Museum

Representing Pasts–Visioning Futures: Past + Future

AMPS, Queen’s University Belfast × Cape Peninsula University of Technology × National University of Singapore

1–3 December 2022

Translating the Practice of the Everyday into the Museum: A Study of Artistic Work as Innovative Practice

Ecologies of the Arts: Sustainable Futures, New Creative Economies and the Management of Arts and Culture

Asia Pacific Network for Cultural Education and Research (ANCER) Conference, Singapore

2–4 December 2022

The Artists Village: An ‘Experimental Colony’ that ‘Performed’ the Museum

Artists’ Colonies in the World / The World in Artists’ Colonies

University of Melbourne, Australia

28–30 November 2022

Opening Contemporary Art to the Public in Singapore: Performativity and Performative Archiving in Tang Da Wu and Koh Nguang How’s Practice from 1979 to Now

The Makings of Arts from Southeast Asia and the Problems of Colonial Legacies

Institut Teknologi Bandung (ITB) and KITLV

8–10 November 2022

2018

Understanding “The Open Work” of The Artists Village

Aesthetics, Politics & Histories, Art Association Australia & New Zealand (AAANZ)

RMIT University, Melbourne, Australia

5–8 December 2018

An Analysis of The Artists Company (TAC)’s Participatory Art Project Got Your Name Or Not

Aesthetics, Politics & Histories, Art Association Australia & New Zealand (AAANZ)

RMIT University, Melbourne, Australia

5–8 December 2018

From the Rural to the Urban: A Place for The Artists Village in the City (Panel Convenor, Speaker)

Art and Action: Contemporary Art and Discourse in Southeast Asia

LASALLE College of the Arts, Singapore

3–5 December 2018

Research + Art Talks

Part of *Interruption: Scenes from the Crossroads of Art and Research*

A collaboration between NTU School of Art, Design and Media (Singapore), Royal College of Art (United Kingdom), and

University of Applied Arts Vienna (Austria)

Selegie Arts Centre, Singapore

17 November 2018