

MoT + a contemporary project +
a nice place for experimentation
+ 1 museum by any other name

MoT + 1 projet contemporain + 1
endroit sympa pour l'expérimenta-
tion + 1 musée par tout autre nom

MoT + 1 dự án đương đại + 1 chỗ
thực nghiệm cũng được + 1 bảo
tàng với bất kể cái tên nào khác

MoT + 1 當代項目 + 1
個很好的實驗場所 + 1
博物館任何其他名稱

MoT + 1 現代プロジェクト
+ 1 実験のための素敵な場
所 + 1 博物館は他の名前で

mountains and rivers of the..

Bang Nhat Linh and Wu Chi-Tsung in conversation

December 14, 2018 - February 1, 2019

originating from Hanoi and Taipei respectively, Bang Nhat Linh and Wu Chi-Tsung's artworks sensitively respond to centuries of geopolitical tensions in the region, as well as the personal histories of each of the artists.

following a two month residency, Wu Chi-Tsung's studio at MoT+++ is opened to the public and placed in conversation with the installation work 'Summer Grasses' by Bang Nhat Linh. visitors are invited to MoT+++ to consider the interactions between works.

'Summer Grasses'

Bang Nhat Linh

Bang Nhat Linh's 'Summer Grasses' installation at MoT+++ is the result of his experiences in trying to realise another artwork 'Hero' between 2010 - 2012. the photographs and sketches leading to the installation document this experience in part. the artwork was based on a story of national pride: the victorious story of the Battle of Bạch Đằng, where Chinese boats impaled on large, wooden stakes hidden in the high-tide by Vietnamese soldiers. for two years Linh worked to obtain a permit for this artwork, but was continually rejected by the Ministry of Culture as the topic was considered too sensitive an issue by the government. the wooden stakes pictured subsequently never made it into the lighted carousel room the artist had initially imagined, with pictures of the battle projected as shadows on their surrounding walls. instead Linh left the stakes to the elements, erected in the marshland of the small town just outside Hanoi where he had visited to have them made.

following this the artist describes himself as feeling frustrated and disheartened by the experience. an artwork that was supposed to express his feelings of love for his country, was being rejected by the very country itself. it is from these feelings that Linh's 'Summer Grasses' installation was born.

two poems inform the new work. the first is 'Nam Quốc Sơn Hà' or 'Mountains and Rivers of the Southern Country', which appears in Chinese characters at the back of the cabinet, illuminated from behind. the 10th century poem is a call to war against the Chinese Song dynasty, and is considered the first declaration of Vietnam from a time before nation states had been founded.

it reads:

the mountains and rivers that carved the southern empire, dwelled by the Southern Emperor.

its sovereignty is of nature's will and is allotted in script from the heaven. what gives these invaders the right to trespass it. they shall, in doing that, see themselves be defeated and shamed!

the second is the 'Summer Grasses' haiku from the ancient Chinese poet Matsuo Bashō (1644-1694), from which the piece takes its title:

*summer grasses:
all that remains
of warrior dreams.*

a picture of the current site of the Battle of Bạch Đằng, the remains of the wooden stakes still visible in what is now swamp land, sits behind the rusted iron and metal cabinet. a ceramic vase painted with scenes of the victory rests on the cabinet's top, dried summer grasses sprouting from the vase's mouth. the work stands alone now in the backroom of MoT+++, there amidst the room's imperfections: a testimony to a forsaken project and the culmination of a nearly nine year process.

'Summer Grasses' by Bang Nhat Linh is a commissioned work from the Nguyen Art Foundation.

Cyano-Collage series Wu Chi-Tsung

from October to December 2018 the MoT+++ space has been converted into the working studio of visual artist Wu Chi-Tsung. during his residency, Chi-Tsung has developed new works in his experimental photography series of Cyano-Collages. this Open Studio approach has allowed the public an insight into the details of his working process, and the artist's usually private studio space. visitors to MoT+++ at this time can see the remnants of Chi-Tsung's production littering the floor, layered materials tangling together to create their own abstract works, and smell the ever-present scent of cooking rabbit skin glue that Chi-Tsung uses to fix his works.

from the artist:

in the early spring of 2015, Mr. Ni Tsai-Chin, a prestigious artist and art critic in Taiwan, died of disease. when learning the news, I recalled a summer vacation more than 10 years ago some friends and I served as assistants of Mr. Ni. We experienced a memorable summer in Mr. Ni's dormitory in Tunghai University. being indulged in calligraphy and ink art all day, we often chatted extensively from southern transition of Chinese landscape paintings in Song dynasty to the western art made in Taiwan. his expanded horizons, insightful arguments, integrated knowledge of traditional and contemporary arts, and persistence in defending cultural subjectivity have nourished my art development since my novice periods.

to commemorate Mr. Ni, I present Cyano-Collage in a form of ink painting collage, what is Mr. Ni's conventional method, combines with wrinkled-texture cyanotype. rice papers with photosensitive coating were wrinkled and exposed under sunlight to record the lighting and shading on the paper. a selection from dozens of pieces of cyanotype photographic paper was reorganized and edited before mounting on a canvas. the work is displayed in a style resembling Chinese Shan Shui and photomontage.

Still Life series
Wu Chi-Tsung

complementing the Cyano-Collage works are two video pieces from Chi-Tsung's Still Life series. *Still Life 008 - Daffodil* greets visitors to the space, whilst *Still Life 007 - Pearlbush* acts as an accompanying root to the start of Bang Nhat Linh's 'Summer Grasses'.

from the artist:

these works are inspired by a cherished memory of painting; however, the mourning over this lost memory might not be limited to painting only.

some nameless emotions and memories unconsciously and slowly dissipate until, to our surprise, they are far away and cloaked by a white mist, their appearances obscured.

during the process of creating these works, i felt a slight sense of guilt, as if creating paintings so pleasing to the eye would be a betrayal of Eastern aesthetic pursuits and an act of despair. after all, this is just art that seeks to please the eyes, while contemporary art seeks to emphasize the concepts of innovation and subversion... ..we find ourselves continuously severing nourishment and comfort from our memories and cultural roots because we feel inferior, we wish only to become someone else.

when we look back at those distant moods, they are still so moving; however their beauty have long become foreign.

about Bang Nhat Linh:

Bang Nhat Linh was born in 1983 in Hanoi. working primarily as a visual artist, Bang Nhat Linh is also known as a collector of war memorabilia—an interest that has formed the basis for earlier works such as *The Vacant Chair*, which showed previously at MoT+++ in 2015 as well as The Mori Art Museum, Tokyo as part of the 2017 ‘SUNSHOWER: Contemporary Art from Southeast Asia 1980s to Now’ show. Bang Nhat Linh cites human beings as a primary concern and inspiration for his artistic practice. his work carries themes of memory, history, submerged psychological spaces and oblivion.

about Wu Chi-Tsung:

Wu Chi-Tsung was born in 1981 in Taipei. he currently lives and works in Taipei, Taiwan and Berlin, Germany. his work, in which he devotes great attention to the methods used in producing and interpreting images, spans across different media, including photography, video, installation art, painting and set design. he combines traditions and contemporary art forms from the East and the West. daily objects and phenomena are great inspiration for his work, what he transforms into poetic imagery.

about MoT+++:

MoT+++ is an independent art space located in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam. it's aim is to create a dynamic space for experimentation that encourages artists to push the boundaries of their practice. it's programme is constructed of a series of +1 projects that playfully expand on what is expected from a contemporary art space. in 2018 it launched both its +1 museum by any other name, and international art residency A. Farm in collaboration with the Nguyen Art Foundation and Sàn Art.