

27  
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2016  
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2017

**SINGAPORE  
BIENNALE  
2016**

A  
FLOW  
OF  
IDENTITIES

AN  
ATLAS  
OF  
MIRRORS

**ADE DARMAWAN**  
INDONESIA

*Singapore Human  
Resources Institute, 2016*

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ARTIST FOLIOS

# ADE DARMAWAN

*Singapore Human Resources Institute, 2016*



## THE ARTIST

Ade Darmawan (b. 1974, Jakarta, Indonesia) is an artist, curator and the director of ruangrupa, an artist-initiated organisation in Jakarta which focuses on visual art and its sociocultural context, particularly in urban environments. His artistic practice includes installations, objects, digital prints, video and public art. As an individual artist and curator, he has participated in several projects and exhibitions in Indonesia and abroad. With ruangrupa as a collaborative platform, he has participated in the Gwangju Biennale (2002), Istanbul Biennale (2005) and Asia Pacific Triennial of Contemporary Art (Brisbane, 2012), and curated the 'Sonsbeek '16' exhibition in Arnhem, Netherlands. From 2006 to 2009, Darmawan was a member of the Jakarta Arts Council. He was appointed artistic director of the Jakarta Biennale in 2009 and, since 2013, has been its executive director. In 2015, he had a solo exhibition, 'Magic Centre', at Portikus contemporary art centre in Frankfurt, Germany. He lives and works in Jakarta.

## THE IDEA

Darmawan has long been interested in the history of capitalism in Indonesia, and much of his recent work incorporates second-hand or found objects which he sources at flea markets and thrift stores. Darmawan's commissioned work for the Singapore Biennale 2016 continues his interest in the history of capitalism and its relationship with contemporary life. The installation focuses on how Singapore built the skills and knowledge of its people in the context of the history of capitalism in the region, especially in the 1960s, when Southeast Asian countries experienced major socio-political changes. Through stories, objects, memories, and archives, the work seeks to explore the micro-histories of that era and their relation to the contemporary situation.

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# ADE DARMAWAN

*Singapore Human Resources Institute, 2016*



Image courtesy of Singapore Art Museum

## THE ARTWORK

Installation with paintings, prints, photographs,  
found objects and furniture

Dimensions variable

Collection of the Artist

Singapore Biennale 2016 commission

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# OBSERVE AND DISCOVER

## GUIDING QUESTIONS

1. Walk around the space. What are the items you can see that make up this installation? What things in the installation can be found in daily life? What do they remind you of?
2. Observe the various pieces of furniture within the artwork. The artist incorporates second-hand or found objects which he sources at flea markets and thrift stores. Have you ever been to a flea market or a thrift store? What do you think people hope to find there?
3. Observe the wallpaper in the room. Notice the collages. Describe them in detail. Why do you think the artist has chosen to include the collages onto the wallpaper? Is the artist referring to any specific events or persons?
4. Observe the wall banners. What are they about? How do you think the artist has gathered this information? Did anything surprise you? Discuss with a friend.
5. The history of the development of Singapore's human capital – the sum total of the skills and knowledge of its people – is expressed in this artwork. Find out more about capitalism and human capital. What are the pros and cons of a capitalist society? Why was the development of Singapore's human capital so important to Singapore and continues to be so? Are there any parts of the artwork that tell you so?

## SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES

- A. Find out about Singapore's Human Resource Institute (SHIR) from their website <http://www.shri.org.sg>. Are you able to make connections between the organisation and the artwork that artist Darmawan has created?

List down the things similar or different between the two.

- B. The artwork portrays the history of the development of Singapore's human capital. Based on what it is now, how do you think the artwork will evolve and change over the next 10 years?

Create a sketch of how the artwork will look like if it were to be re-exhibited 10 years from now.

- C. Darmawan's space serves as a memory-archive. Think about your own life, your family and your cultural history or background. What would your memory-archive look like? What events or objects are of importance to you? Sketch or write what the content of your memory-archive would consist of.

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## FIND OUT MORE

### UP CLOSE AND PERSONAL

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DAI. *Ade Darmawan*. Retrieved October 21, 2016, from <http://dutchartinstitute.eu/page/1149/ade-darmawan>

NEWS.net. *Ade Darmawan - Ruangrupa*. Retrieved October 21, 2016, from <http://northeastwestsouth.net/ade-darmawan-ruangrupa>

### ARTWORK

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contemporary art daily. *Ade Darmawan at Potikus*. Retrieved October 21, 2016, from <http://www.contemporaryartdaily.com/2015/11/ade-darmawan-at-portikus>

### INTERVIEW

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YouTube. *Ade Darmawan*. Retrieved October 21, 2016, from <https://youtu.be/Lw0pjh3sPE>

Vimeo. *Freedom Lecture #7 by Ade Darmawan, artist and activist from Indonesia - Vrijheidslezing*. Retrieved October 21, 2016, from <https://vimeo.com/109858418>

YouTube. *Interview with Ade Darmawan and Jeong-ok Jeon, Curator // Ordinary Negotiation*. Retrieved October 21, 2016, from <https://youtu.be/19FDI-cpOog>

### SBTV

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Ade Darmawan is featured in our SBTv series, created especially for Singapore Biennale 2016: *An Atlas of Mirrors*. Visit SAM's Facebook and YouTube pages to view the series. [www.youtube.com/samtelly](http://www.youtube.com/samtelly)

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# ABOUT SINGAPORE BIENNALE 2016

*AN ATLAS OF MIRRORS*  
AT ONCE, MANY WORLDS

FROM WHERE WE ARE,  
HOW DO WE PICTURE THE WORLD —  
AND OURSELVES?

Humankind has always devised ways of seeing beyond sight. Two such instruments are the map and the mirror, which make visible more than just physical terrains. While the atlas – a book of maps – locates where we are and charts where we want to go, the mirror shows us to ourselves, sometimes unreliably, and in curious ways.

Through an exploration of the literal and metaphorical characteristics of atlas and mirror, *An Atlas of Mirrors* reveals artistic perspectives that arise from our migratory, intertwining histories and cultures, particularly in Southeast, East and South Asia.

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SINGAPOREARTMUSEUM.SG/SINGAPOREBIENNALE



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# ABOUT THE ZONES

## NINE CONCEPTUAL ZONES

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The main title of the Biennale is woven through nine 'conceptual zones', or subthemes, which locate each artwork in particular curatorial contexts. These zones shape the flow of the Biennale experience, like chapters in a book or sections in a poem. Like the title - 'An Atlas of Mirrors' - which is built on the relationship between a collective noun ("an atlas" as the collective noun) and what is being thought of 'collectively' ("mirrors"), these zones are conceptually themed along specific collective nouns and what they hold together for contemplation and experience. Artworks located within each zone resonate on many levels, and at the same time, all nine zones coincide, intertwine and reflect each other along the conceptual continuum of 'An Atlas of Mirrors' as a whole.

Each zone represents concepts, ideas and ways of seeing as explored in the 58 artworks and projects.

## A FLOW OF IDENTITIES

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- NATIONAL & CULTURAL IDENTITIES
- CULTURAL & REGIONAL IMPRINTS
- MEMORY

How do cultures imprint upon each other? What divides society? Who do we identify with, and why does a sense of 'belonging' drive us? From the personal to the communal; from ethnicity to gender; and from the cultural to the national - 'identity' is a complex maze of coexistences. A family's history in Brunei is contextualised against the larger histories of the Japanese occupation of Southeast Asia, Japanese post-war woes and perspectives are evaluated, and Cambodian and Peranakan cultural motifs commingle in the art of printmaking.

Entangled in the contingencies of experience, the concepts and formation of national, regional, cultural and individual identities are recognised as mutable and ever in flux, wavering between being and becoming.

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## FOR MORE INFORMATION

### SINGAPORE ART MUSEUM

71 Bras Basah Road  
Singapore 189555

#### Opening Hours

Saturdays to Thursdays: 10am - 7pm  
Fridays: 10am - 9pm

#### Enquiries

Phone: +65 65899 580  
Email: [enquiries@singaporeartmuseum.sg](mailto:enquiries@singaporeartmuseum.sg)

### STAY UPDATED

[www.singaporeartmuseum.sg/  
SingaporeBiennale](http://www.singaporeartmuseum.sg/SingaporeBiennale)

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singaporeartmuseum](http://www.facebook.com/singaporeartmuseum)

[www.instagram.com/  
singaporeartmuseum](http://www.instagram.com/singaporeartmuseum)

[www.youtube.com/samtelly](http://www.youtube.com/samtelly)

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