



## Sculpture Society (Singapore)

Raffles City Post Office, PO Box 651, S(911722)

<http://sculpturesociety.org.sg/>

[sculpturesocietysingapore@gmail.com](mailto:sculpturesocietysingapore@gmail.com)

# Sculpture Society (Singapore) 20th Anniversary Show "re-THINGing — Sculpture in Singapore 2021"

## **Curatorial Brief**

Sculpture Society Singapore's (SSS) 20th Anniversary Show, titled *ReTHINGing: Sculpture in Singapore 2021*, plans to be one of the society's most important shows in two decades. It will showcase a series of exhibitions at various venues and will feature the artworks of SSS members, non-members, and invited artists. With the grand theme *ReTHINGing*, a broad range of artworks will be presented at the different locations to explore the current state of sculptural and three-dimensional practice in Singapore.

## **The Grand Theme: reTHINGing — Sculpture in Singapore 2021**

Taking the 1991 "Sculpture in Singapore" curated by TK Sabapathy as a historical point for reflection, the exhibition aims to be a major showcase of current local sculptural and 3D works. As a way of establishing dialogue between then and now, the exhibition will feature mainly recent works by artists who took part in the 1991 show, key practitioners currently active in the field, and emerging artists, both from and outside of SSS. By asking participating artists to rethink or "reTHING" their work, the exhibition seeks to examine critical questions such as: is there still a clear demarcation between the "handmade thing" and the "conceptual thing" after 30 years? In an increasingly digitized world of social media, to what extent have sculptural objects "dematerialized" or "rematerialized"? In the contemporary context, what engenders, energizes, complicates, and necessitates ideas and questions surrounding sculpture and 3-dimensional practice? What changes or challenges does the pandemic bring?

## **Venues and Sub-themes**

The series of exhibitions will roll out within the third quarter of the year 2021 at four different locations with various sub-themes:

1. NAFA Lim Hak Tai Gallery - reTHINGing Materiality - Contemporary Sculpture 2021
2. Objectifs, Chapel Gallery - reTHINGing Materiality in Sculpture and Photographic Image
3. SCCC (Singapore Chinese Cultural Centre) - reTHINGing the Site - Sculpture and its Environment
4. Jendela Gallery, Esplanade - ReTHINGing Gesture in Contemporary Sculptural Practice

**Venue 1:****NAFA Lim Hak Tai Gallery: reTHiNGing Materiality — Contemporary Sculpture 2021**

Exhibition Date: 16 Jul - 22 Aug 2021

For more than half a century, the prevalence of conceptualism in the contemporary art world seems to have placed "sculpture" in an awkward position – while the practice of this art in the traditional sense is deemed obsolete, the embrace of objects made beyond formal concerns or the direct appropriation of the "ready-mades", however, have rendered anything 3-dimensional "sculpture", so that we may even say that "sculpture" is everywhere in the art world today. On top of this is a common denigration of the artist's hand – or the so-called craft element. In recent decades, however, there have been increasing discussions on the "material turn" and growing trend of craft making in contemporary practice.

Open for Submission

This exhibition is a collaboration with NAFA. Since NAFA is the venue sponsor, the exhibition is open to mainly but not exclusively NAFA alumnus and NAFA staff/students. Artists not affiliated with NAFA and SSS are also welcome to submit proposals. It will showcase sculptural or 3D artworks that are interested in the questions of materiality and examine the subject within the context of the local and regional (Southeast Asia) art scene.

Artworks from three NAFA artists will also be featured in the window spaces in the Ngee Ann Kongsi Gallery 1 & 2 alongside Bencoolen Street.

**Venue 2:****Chapel Gallery, Objectifs: reTHiNGing - Materiality in Sculpture and Photographic Image**

Exhibition Date: 31 Aug and 1 Sep 2021

This exhibition aims to explore the interesting relationship between sculpture and photography. Since the emergence of photography, sculpture was not only deeply impacted by it in terms of its design, reception, interpretation, and manner of display, but was also widely integrated with the 3 dimensional works of the Western avant garde artists. In recent years, photographers began to take interest in the notion of "materiality" - possibly spurred by the waning of analogue photography and the proliferation of digital image-making, against a backdrop where artists' tactile relationship to their material has either dwindled or altered in the digital age. On a different but important note, also important for SSS is that *Objectifs* is formerly the *Sculpture Square* where SSS was founded. It is also the venue for its inaugural exhibition *The Round Show* in 2002.

Open for Submission

The exhibition at the Objectifs will focus on artworks that investigates the status of the art object, sculptural materiality, relation of sculpture and photography, or the physicality of photography, etc, within the seemingly ephemeral, digitized world. It will include art forms that are sculptural, 3 dimensional, or is a photographic, video, or digital work that addresses the theme.

### **Venue 3:**

#### **SCCC: reTHiNGing the Site - Sculpture and its Environment 2021**

Exhibition Dates: 05 - 13 Aug 2021 (Creative Box), 05 Aug 2021 - 05 Aug 2022 (One-Year Project)

The quality most intrinsic to sculpture is probably its three-dimensionality. Unlike painting that projects a sort of a virtual space, “[sculpture] takes up space, moves and occupies a site, obtruding on it or changing it” (WJT Mitchell, 2007). While what is today known as “site-specific art” emerged in the 1960s as a reaction to modern art objects as transportable and bound to the museum and commodification, it could be said that sculpture has always had a site-specificity with its implementation in both private and public spaces. “reTHiNGing the Site” will explore how sculptures or 3D works intervene with their material form in the space that they occupy. It will feature public sculptures, indoor works, as well as site-specific installations that investigates the relation of material, form, and space.

#### Open for Submission

The SCCC exhibition has two components:

##### 1. Site-specific Installation and Indoor Sculptures @ Creative Box

The Site-Specific Installation at Creative Box will feature 8 new, original artworks coming from established as well as emerging young artists. Their works will respond to the unique space within the Creative Box, utilizing features such as the glass window panes, the shape of the column, the shadows coming from the sunlight, etc. There will also be sculptures of smaller sizes that will transform the inner corner of the Creative Box into a sculpture gallery space that features different themes of figurative, abstract, ceramics, and glass works.

##### 2. One-Year Public Sculpture @ SCCC with works from the TENG Collection

The one-Year Public Sculpture @ SCCC (Artspace @ SCCC) was an initiative by SCCC to provide spaces for local artists to showcase their artworks and SSS artists’ works have been featured at the SCCC premise since 2019. This will become part of the reTHiNGing show this year. In addition, as a tribute to key local sculptors in Singapore’s art history, the one-year show will also include a special selection of artworks from important pioneer sculptors such as the late Mr Ng Eng Teng, Ms Han Sai Por, and Mr Tang Dawu. These historically significant works are part of The Teng Collection and will be included in the show under a courtesy loan from local collectors Teng Jee Hum and June Ong.

**Venue 4:****Jendela Gallery, Esplanade: ReTHINGing Gesture in Contemporary Sculptural Practice**

Exhibition date: 10 Sep 2021 - 2 Jan 2022

As a co-curation project between SSS and the Esplanade curatorial team, this exhibition will present new and recent sculptural works by invited Singaporean artists which culminate from explorations of gesture—either in the process of creating or as subject matter. By including a variety of artworks of various mediums and techniques, the exhibition investigates the ways performative gestures could be embodied or manifested in material forms. The main interest is in exploring how the medium of sculpture, and its ever-evolving strategies, could express the body's capacity to communicate complex ideas and states of interiority.

This exhibition will feature 8 invited artists, including Ezzam Rahman, Sai Hua Kuan, Wang Ruobing, Lim Soo Ngee, Stephanie J Burt, Vincent Leow, Ivan David Ng, Michael Lee, and Grace Tan.

**Curatorial Team:**

Curator: Tan Yen peng

Supporting members: Yeo Chee Kiong, Xin Xiaochang, Joyce Loo, Cassandra Lim