

A
DM

IN PRAISE
OF SHADOWS

A STEPHEN LEUNG
JAMES JACK
WARREN KHONG



**A
DM** GALLERY

IN PRAISE
OF SHADOWS

LAVENDER CHANG

JOHN CLANG

ISHIDA TAKASHI

JAMES JACK

WARREN KHONG



EXHIBITION INTRODUCTION

Occupying a unique dimension between darkness and light, shadows accompany solid forms, asserting the presence of the self and tangible objects. Like a companion to all things physical, they suggest a parallel existence that mimics this reality, yet remains a realm that is enigmatic and transient. Shadows are constant and hence neutral, yet their shifting forms allude to the unknown, and sometimes the sinister. Paradoxically, while shadows can be created with very little light, no amount of light can erase shadows: The brighter the light, the more solid a shadow becomes.

The exhibition title is drawn from the 1933 essay of the Japanese novelist Junichiro Tanizaki by the same name that explores the aesthetics of shadows, celebrating the ambiguity and subtlety of colour, shade, texture and tone. *In Praise of Shadows*, the exhibition, features five artists Lavender Chang, John Clang, James Jack, Ishida Takashi and Warren Khong, whose works take these themes as an entry point to expand ongoing concerns in their respective practices.

In his presentation, John Clang engages with the notion of shadows as a metaphor for the Other within Self. The works of Lavender Chang and Ishida Takashi highlight the role of time in unveiling shades of layered realities in image-making. Responding to the conditions of the ADM galleries, the works of James Jack and Warren Khong bring to light new perspective and perception of site, space and materiality. Across the diverse mediums of animation, film, painting and photography, *In Praise of Shadows* reveals unexpected shades and traces of phenomena and creation that emerges in processes of contemporary art-making.

opening date / 27.10.2017

venue / ADM Gallery, School of Art, Design and Media

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Cover Image:
ADM Gallery 1 at 4:30pm
Image Courtesy of Factory 1611



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Natura Naturata: Light of Singapore
2017

Natural pigments and gum arabic
on window

Image Courtesy of Factory 1611

JAMES JACK



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Natura Naturata
2015
Natural pigments and gum arabic
on paper
38 x 28 cm each
Image Courtesy of the Artist
Works produced at NTU CCA Singapore

Since 2005, artist James Jack has been collecting dirt from various countries as part of his interest in exploring the materiality of landscapes, the symbolic meanings of earth elements and the potential of organic materials as painting material. This process culminated in his *Philosophies of Dirt* project, featuring his research into the soil of more than 46 regions in America and Japan which the artist has transformed into pigments for his works on paper.

Jack's pigment collections reveal another dimension of the earth that is seldom perceivable in their immediate physical forms. Taking on a resplendent spectrum of ochre, red and sepia hues, these traces of dirt also bear stains of their past, embedded from pre-historic geological formations to modern-day changes in land use. In his pigment drawings, shades of these histories have been reduced into a basic shape, which stand for the artist as testaments of the ever-changing essence of a place, amidst processes of location and dislocation.

Natura Naturata: Light of Singapore is a newly commissioned work which responds to the ADM Gallery space and is based on more than 20 dirt samples from locations in Singapore that the artist has documented. Drawing from historical sites islandwide, as well as locations along the western coast of Singapore and NTU in their diversity of shades, they suggest imprints of further unknown histories and migrations beyond the country's documented history."

Michelle Ho