

**WAR ART IN ASIA
AND THE REPRESENTATION OF WAR
WORKSHOP PROGRAMME
FRIDAY 28 AUGUST 2009
MILLS LECTURE THEATRE, R.C. MILLS BUILDING
UNIVERSITY OF SYDNEY**

0900 Registration

0915 Greetings and opening remarks

Adrian VICKERS, Professor of South East Asian Studies University of Sydney
John CLARK, ARC Professorial Fellow, Dept of Art History, University of Sydney,

0930-1010

KIM Youngna

Seoul National University

War Art of the Korean War

The Korean War, which lasted from 1950-1953, involved not only South and North Korea but also the United Nation's army and China, and was best remembered through photographs taken by foreign photographers who flooded to Korea. Although the Ministry of Defense in Korea also hastily gathered war photographers and war artists to document the war, while some of these recruits were actual witnesses to real battle, they did not, on the whole, generate many works and even those works were mostly lost due to ill management. There were several reasons for this low performance. Maybe it was difficult to acquire painting materials and films due to the fighting, or the artists, who themselves were refugees, were more occupied with their own struggle to survive and keep their families safe. There were, however, some noteworthy war art by individual artists. Interestingly, in their effort not to appear like the Socialist Realistic style, artists chose to express their art in either a Cubistic style or with abstract art which were both introduced at the time.

Of the many scenes of war art, few images of actual military confrontation were depicted. In fact, refugees were the most frequently captured subject in both paintings and photographs. For Koreans, the Korean War was not a fight against the hated enemy; it was more of a nation's painful experience of a divided Korea, the separation of families, the flight to refugee camps, and the fear of reprisal.

In this paper, I will first discuss the activities of war photographers and war artists and works by individual artists. Then the war memorials and monuments in the 1950s that were promoted as national projects, as well as several works which dealt with the Korean War theme in the 1980s by Minjung artists will be examined.

Professor **Kim Youngna** is a Professor of Art History at the Seoul National University where she has also serves as Director of the Seoul National University Museum. She is the author of many books and articles on 20th century Korean art and Western modern art, the most recent being *Tradition, Modernity and Identity: Modern and Contemporary Art in Korea* (2005) and *Twentieth-Century Korean Art* (2006).



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1010-1040

Deborah EDWARDS

Art Gallery of NSW

Race, death, gender: the Anzac Memorial, Sydney

The Anzac Memorial, constructed over 1932-34, assumed the dimensions of a monument of national significance for those who directed its creation, who were, at every major stage of its development, artistic, political and religious elites. It constructed a series of propositions concerning a modern Australian nationhood, as this nationhood was seen to have been forged in war. Meaning was organised in the Anzac Memorial through a spectacular synthesis of the archaic and modern, the gendered body and sexual metaphor in ways which make this structure unique in the history of Australian public monuments. This paper will interrogate those meanings.

Deborah Edwards graduated with First class honours from Sydney University; worked as a curator at the Queensland Art Gallery, and has been the Senior Curator of Australian Art at the Art Gallery of NSW for a decade. She specialises in 20th century Australian art and has published and lectured on artists including Rosalie Gascoigne, Margaret Preston, Robert Klippel and Bertram Mackennal. The subject of her Master of Philosophy degree was the work of Rayner Hoff and his school, with particular focus on Hoff's major commission, the Anzac Memorial, Hyde Park, Sydney.

1040-1050

Coffee Break

1050-1130

KAWATA Akishi

Chiba Technological University

War and Objects of Consumption

Taking Japan as an example of a period of the Asia-Pacific War, I shall consider the aspect of images of war as "consumption materials". In a society under war conditions, war is reported and commemorated; sometimes it becomes a commodity design or materials for pleasure being vigorously consumed. With regard to the repress of war from a viewpoint which goes beyond the binaries of "art or propaganda" or "a spontaneous expression of cooperation under duress, this presentation would like to put some light on "the pleasures of collaboration in war" centred on the composition of exhibitions with war as their theme seen in the show windows of department stores and in exposition displays.

Professor Kawata completed his PhD in Art History at Waseda University and after lecturing there has recently joined Chiba Technological University as an Associate Professor. He has co-authored three books on war art in Japan.

1130-1210

Bert WINTHER-TAMAKI

University of California, Irvine

Maximum Disembodiment in Yôga Painting During and After the Pacific War

Yôga, or "Western Painting," one of the most prominent movements of modern Japanese art, emerged in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century through the transfer to Japanese agency of European technologies for representing the human body in oil-on-canvas. While the genres of still life and landscape were also important, Yôga was paradigmatically a medium of producing vivid human images; Yôga paintings in the genres of history painting, the nude, portraiture, and self-portraiture magnified the human body with erotic appeal, heroic stature, Japanese nativity, a sense of genius, etc. But as the Yôga movement continued its development during the middle decades of the century, this strong sense of



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embodiment was eroded by historical experience: military expansionism, fascism, war defeat, and loss of sovereignty. Increasingly in this late transwar phase of Yôga development, painted bodies suffered a range of travails at the hands of their makers. Together with historical experience, modernist styles and techniques also contributed to pressing the figure toward a condition of maximum disembodiment. This paper will examine a varied imagery of disembodiment through a range of transwar Japanese Yôga, including the war paintings (*sensôga*) of Fujita Tsuguharu and Mukai Junkichi, the surrealist paintings of Fukuzawa Ichirô and Furusawa Iwami, and the shocking fragmentations and inert renderings of the body by early postwar painters such as Ishii Shigeo and Kawara On.

Bert Winther-Tamaki is Associate Professor in the Art History Department and Visual Studies Ph.D. Program at the University of California, Irvine. He is author of *Art in the Encounter of Nations: Japanese and American Artists in the Early Postwar Years* (2000), co-author of *Isamu Noguchi and Modern Japanese Ceramics: A Close Embrace of the Earth* (2003), and contributor to *The Third Mind: American Artists Contemplate Asia, 1860-1989* (2009). Winther-Tamaki's current book project, titled *Maximum Embodiment*, is a study of images of bodies in the *yôga* movement of modern Japanese painting.

1210-1250

Caroline TURNER

Australian National University

Reflections of War as a theme in contemporary Asian art

This paper will examine reflections on war by Asian artists at the end of the twentieth century and the beginning of the twenty-first century. Much contemporary art by Asian artists, as elsewhere, is art against war – the subject of a research project I am currently undertaking. My focus in the paper will be on three artists: Nakahashi Katsushige, Nalini Malani and Cai Guo Qiang. Nakahashi's *Zero Project* explores painful memories of the Pacific war still haunting the present, while Malani's powerful, multilayered, complex and often monumental treatments of violence have long included specific allusions to the horrors of war. It may seem incongruous to include Cai Guo Qiang in this category. However, I will argue that much of Cai's work has a serious underlying connection to themes of conflict, past or apprehended, with direct references to historical and contemporary events and potential global catastrophes.

Caroline Turner is a Senior Research Fellow at the Research School of Humanities, Australian National University and was Deputy Director of the Humanities Research Centre from 2000-2006. Prior to this, she spent 20 years as a senior art museum professional and, as Deputy Director of the Queensland Art Gallery, was co-founder and Project Director for nearly ten years for the Asia-Pacific Triennial Project. Her book of essays, *Art and Social Change: Contemporary Art of Asia and the Pacific* (Pandanus Press 2005) is a comprehensive survey of the dramatic developments in Asian and Pacific contemporary art in the last decade.

1250-1400

Self serve lunch break, to be held simultaneously with open *conversazione* between Australian war artists around theme of 'The Experience of War and the Visualization of War'.

Ian HOWARD (Chair), Charles GREEN and Lyndell BROWN, Wendy SHARPE



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1400-1440

Enin SUPRYANTO

Curse or Blessing? The Legacy of Heroism, Nationalism and Activism in Indonesian Modern and Contemporary Art

Indonesian modern art history can be perceived as a set of ideas and practices born in unpleasant and destructive situations such as war. Conflict situations somehow construct a fertile ground to plant the roots of identity. In the case of Indonesian modern art, this issue of identity is prevalent in the process of formulating definition and re-definition of what is “Indonesia” and what is “modern art” simultaneously. From the late of 1930s, Indonesian modern visual arts attained such confirmation on the content of “Indonesia” through the thought and paintings of Sudjojono as well as his generation. The legacy of “heroism” and “nationalism” seems to be larger and deeper than that if we open the map of Indonesian modern and contemporary art: “heroism” and “nationalism” are only the initial starting point which then develops into much more complex discourses that try to define “Indonesia” and “art” as an ongoing process within the development and formation of Indonesian contemporary art practice. We can trace this discourse, again, in the manifesto of the Indonesia New Art Movement (1975). We witnessed it again in the “socially engaged” works of the late 1980’s and 1990’s such as works by Heri Dono, Dadang Christanto, Agus Suwage, etc. Until the era of democracy came, Reformasi (1997-1999), with the fall of Suharto, until nowadays, where we are witnessing a new generation of artists come up in the art scene with so much diverse subject matter and artistic approach, we once again face the same old question: “Is it Indonesian Art”?

Muhamad ‘Enin’ Supriyanto, independent curator and writer focusing on Indonesian contemporary art, studied at the Fine Art and Design Department, Bandung Institute of Technology (ITB, 1984-1989). He has curated various contemporary art shows and projects in Indonesia, and participated in many regional and international art forums. He initiated and established *Indonesian Printmaking Triennale*, which is organised by Bentara Budaya; *i-Curate*—a curatorial workshop programme for art students and young curators—organised by Galeri Soemardja, ITB, Bandung. He is a member of the Academic Advisory Board of Asia Art Archive, Hong Kong, and also a guest editor of *C-Arts Magazine*, Jakarta. His essays and writings are published in local and international publications, including books such as: Marc Bollandsee & Enin Supriyanto (ed.): *Indonesian Contemporary Art Now* (2007), Enin Supriyanto (ed.) *The Journey of Indonesian Painting, Bentara Budaya Collection* (2006, 2008); Carla Bianpoen (et.al.): *Indonesian Women Artists, The Curtain Opens* (2007). He lives and works in Jakarta, Indonesia.

1440-1510

Alison CARROLL

Asialink, University of Melbourne

Martyrs to a cause

The paper traces four responses of artists to the period of conflict in the 1940s in the Asia Pacific region: art made to support victory; art as an overt political but idealised response to war; art as a personal response, and, most intriguingly, where and why there is no response.

Alison Carroll has two degrees in Art History from the University of Melbourne. She initiated and is director of Asialink Arts, the main program in Australia for cultural engagement between Australia and the countries of Asia, for which she was the 2006 Australia Council Emeritus Medal awardee. Recent focuses have been Indonesia and Japan. Her book *A Revolutionary Century; Art in Asia 1900-2000* will be published by Macmillan in 2010.



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1510-1550

YIN Shuangxi

Central Academy of Fine Arts, Beijing [to be translated or paper read]

Peoples War: War in Chinese 20th Century Art

For China the 20th century was an historical era of turbulence, of rise and fall. From the decline with each passing day of the last years of the Qing dynasty and the beginning of the Chinese Republic, China faced the entry of foreign political, military, economic and cultural forces. Many Western powers pursued the establishment in China of spheres of influence, and agent groups who facilitated their interests. By armed force they implemented separatist rule so that in the first fifty years of the twentieth century war was frequent on Chinese lands, added to which were natural disasters and the extreme hardship of people's lives. Because of this the people organized and from 1st August 1927 established armed strength under the leadership of the Chinese communist party, unceasingly carrying out a most arduous war with domestic and foreign military forces whose most distinguishing characteristic was what Mao Zedong called 'People's War'. In this war the broadest number of the people took part. Moreover it was a war carried out for the liberation of the people themselves, clearly different from other wars between states. In response to this, art concerned with war became a major genre in the historical development of twentieth century Chinese fine art. In analysing this, we are helped by doing so from the viewpoints of art history and cultural history, to comprehend the special characteristics of twentieth century Chinese art such as the utilitarianism and pragmatism in the 'moral truth-telling' of art, in the worship for the historical subject of the people, and in the confirmation of value judgements regarding the heroes and the people in Chinese war art. In addition, art concerned with war in the developing situation in the different historical period around the founding of New China in 1949, and in particular after the reforms since 1978, along with the importance in the process of Chinese modernization of economic development, the transformation in war art linked to an age of peace, also comprises the historical reference in the transformation of ideological value judgements and ethnic culture.

Professor **Yin Shuangxi** has a PhD in Art History from the Central Academy of Fine Arts in Beijing where he is a researcher and editor of *Meishu yanjiu* (Art Research), and specializes in Chinese contemporary art

1550-1600

self-serve coffee break

1600-1630

Phoebe SCOTT

University of Sydney

Art and the Viet Minh 'Base Area': Cultural Debates in Vietnam during the First Indochina War (1946-1954)

At the outbreak of the First Indochina War, many prominent Vietnamese artists moved to the Viet Minh base areas in the North of the country, alongside thousands of other intellectuals committed to creating a new culture for an independent Vietnam. As the war was both anti-colonial and revolutionary in nature, these artists faced a sudden demand for a new type of art, suitable for the political circumstances and divorced from the style and subject matter of the art of the French colonial period. Artists agonised over this transition, prompting a series of debates amongst artists and between artists and cadres, over the future direction of Vietnamese art and the nature of art itself. This paper will discuss these cultural debates, particularly in the years 1948, 1949 and 1951, with a view to analysing the role of the wartime 'base area' in transforming the conceptual foundations of Vietnamese art.



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Phoebe Scott is a PhD candidate in the Department of Art History, the University of Sydney. She has recently returned from nine months as a visiting researcher at the National University of Fine Arts, Hanoi. She holds a Masters degree in art history from the School of Oriental and African Studies, London.

1630-1700

Open Discussion, chair, John Clark

1700-1730

Judith KEENE

University of Sydney

War on the Visual Front: Robert Capa and Gerda Taro, Photographers in the Spanish Civil War

In twentieth century wars, the visual has come to occupy a central place and in the forms of representation, photography is the pre-eminent medium. In a great many cases photography has provided the clinching image that encapsulates the conflict and later is laid down in popular memory as the hallmark of that war. The Spanish civil war was the first to be extensively covered by newsreels and photography. Both Republicans and Nationalists, aware of the power of news reporting and photojournalism, attempted to exert control over the news and the images that were produced for distribution within Spain and internationally. This paper examines the work of Robert Capa and Gerda Taro whose startling and poignant photographs have become the iconic images of the civil war as it was experienced by Spaniards on the home front and in the line of combat. The photographs and their production raise interesting questions about war photography and authenticity; about the role of the photographer in perceptions of violence; and about gender and authorial attribution. Capa and Taro's pictures also constitute a benchmark for the state of war photography between the rarely photographed conflict of the Ethiopian war and the boom in pictorial recording that was World War Two.

Judith Keene is an Associate Professor in History at The University of Sydney. A main strand of her research is war and culture. She has written extensively on the Spanish civil war and on the European Right in that conflict (*Fighting For Franco*, 2001) and has published a study on traitors in World War Two (*Treason on the Airwaves: Three Allied Broadcasters on Axis Radio During World War Two*, 2009). She has recently begun a research project on the Korean War; "Bodily Matters Above and below Ground: The Treatment of American remains from the Korean War" is forthcoming in *The Public*

1730-1830

Film Screening of excerpts including:

The Spanish Earth

1937. Photographed by Joris Ivens, narration by Ernest Hemmingway

1900 invited dinner



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