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# Soul Cleansing

## A Group Exhibition

Opening Reception: 18th January 2013

Exhibition Duration: 18th January – 28th February 2013

Sin Sin Fine Art proudly presents a group exhibition to start the new year of 2013, featuring works by multi-cultural artists: **Alice Kok**, **Hiromi Miyakita**, **Lie Fhung**, **Maria Lobo**, **Sun Guangyi** and **Wong Wing Tong** - with sound and movement opening performance art by **Akio Suzuki** and **Hiromi Miyakita**.



clockwise from top left, works by Alice Kok, Hiromi Miyakita, Sun Guangyi, Lie Fhung, Wong Wing Tong and Maria Lobo

Since ancient times in Chinese tradition, the start of a new year has always been a very important event. To welcome the new year, families would clean their house to get rid of evil spirits and ceremonies are performed - usually involving sound and musical elements along with movements or dance. Sin Sin sees this time as 'soul cleansing' time, when we should take this opportunity to cleanse our mind, body and soul; to be introspective and look inward to our innermost souls, to reflect on our past to reach a brighter future. It is time to clean the slate and start afresh with new, life-affirming hopes. Sin Sin would like to share this belief through "Soul Cleansing".



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“Soul Cleansing” group exhibition will be opened with a duet of unique, fresh, vibrant and graceful performance by a master Japanese sound artist, Akio Suzuki and an emerging choreographer/dancer, Hiromi Miyakita. Akio Suzuki finds and makes music from just about anything he comes across, and the results always ignite sense of wonders in his audience. In dancing and choreographing, Hiromi Miyakita emphasizes not only the body but also the place surrounding the performance. On the basis of the most fundamental human movements related to space such as sitting, standing and walking, she creates delicate yet bold movements capturing sensitively the surrounding light, sound, air and landscape. Akio Suzuki and Hiromi Miyakita's presence is made possible by Around sound art festival and retreat 2013.

Visually very diversified - ranging from drawings to paintings, from ink to acrylic, from paper to canvas to wood, from porcelain to video and installation, all the artworks featured in the “Soul Cleansing” share an inner inter-connectedness at their core beings: each of the work reflects an introspective and meditative spirit. Together they offer a rich, inspiring selection to ponder upon.

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Akio Suzuki is well known as a pioneer of sound art, but the breadth of his activities and the form of his works far exceeds the normal boundaries of sound art. It is perhaps more as a "quester after sound and space" that he has received the most attention from artists in many fields. Suzuki's journey as an artist began in 1963 with a performance at Nagoya station, in which he threw a bucket full of junk down a staircase. The inspiration behind this performance - the idea that if one were to hurl an object down a well-balanced stairway, a pleasant rhythm might be the result - took the desire to "listen" as its subject. That desire to hear, to listen has remained the one constant in Suzuki's stance as an artist.

During the sixties, Suzuki's sense of playfulness led him to undertake a series of Self-Study Events, where he explored the processes of "throwing" and "following", taking the natural world as his collaborator. The experiences he gained in these events led him in the seventies to invent an echo instrument he named Analapos. The instrument's structure resembles that of two mirrors facing each other, reflecting into infinity. As an extension of the principles underlying Analapos, Suzuki constructed the Space in the Sun in 1988. This space consists of two huge parallel walls, in between which the artist can sit all day and purify his hearing by listening to the reflected sounds of nature. This space leads the artist to discover a new method of listening. Suzuki himself comments, "Sound, which had been conceptually imprisoned in various spaces, is freed to circle the world."

From the late seventies and through the eighties, Suzuki also developed a form of performance he refers to as Conceptual Soundwork. Applying a number of self-imposed, simple and austere rules, he uses objects close at hand in a mode of "intellectual play". While these events do on the one



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hand express a critique of meaningless improvised performance, at the same time Suzuki is constantly aware of the audience's process of listening and he attempts to create contemporaneous connections with the site of performance. It was around this time that Suzuki began to travel frequently to Europe, and his performances at leading music festivals, Festival d'Automne (Paris, 1978) and Documenta 8 (Kassel, 1987) were rapturously received.

As sound art enjoyed a period of prosperity in the nineties, Suzuki was given the chance to create many installations, particularly in Europe. Worthy of special note were his soundless installations, such as Otodate (since 1996) in Berlin, Paris, Strasbourg and Wakayama, Hana (since 1997) in Saarbrücken and Trino. These soundless pieces were not designed to critique the old perceptual theories of music, rather they questioned the very location of music.

To run simultaneously with these experiments, Suzuki has started the Mogari series since 2002. This series centres around unbelievably powerful performances on iwabue - ancient and naturally-sculpted stone flutes which have been handed down in Suzuki's family. Using these ancient instruments Suzuki sculpts time and place, and through their music he searches for his own end.

Suzuki's performances and installations have been presented by numerous top class festivals and museums in several continents since the seventies such as The National Museum of Modern Art (Kyoto, 2007), Resonant Space (various locations in Scotland, 2006), Musée Zadkine (Paris, 2004), British Museum (London, 2002), Donaueschingen Festival (Donaueschingen, 1998), Japan House (New York, 1983), and many others. He has awarded many grants and residencies including DAAD (Berlin, 1994) and Rockefeller (Asian Cultural Council) Grant (New York, 1981).



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“The Duet” (2009, 4 minutes video work in loop) by the Macanese artist Alice Kok comes from the meditation on the nature of the mind, informed by her Buddhism belief that the origin of our sufferings comes from our condition of being “without brightness” or “without understanding”, which means that our mind is clouded and we cannot see through the true nature of our being, which is composite and impermanent.



The Duet 4 minutes video in loop | Alice Kok | 2009

Born in Macau, Alice Kok left to France in 1998. She graduated with the National Master Degree of Fine Arts (DNSEP) in Ecole Supérieure des Beaux Arts de Toulouse in France in 2004. After her graduation she has lived and worked in Paris where she has obtained La Bourse Individuelle a la Creation granted by La DRAC Ile-de-France and has created the video work “Karabic OK” (2006). After travelling in India and Tibet in 2007 where she has finished the project “Yet in Exile – Family Script”, the film was selected in the Ten Finalists for Asian Award at the Hong Kong Independent Film and Video Award in 2009, and it was screened at the Cultural Centre of Hong Kong. “Family Script” was then selected in the Gwangju Biennale in Korea in 2010. In 2011, her work “Passing-Green Island” has been selected to represent the Macau Pavilion at the 54th Venice Biennale of Art in Italy.

Her œuvre are based on the idea of Multiculturalism at the post-colonial époque. In recent years, after her travel in India and Tibet, she started to incorporate Buddhist Philosophy and meditation practices into her artistic expressions. As her current project, she is also incorporating Tibetan painting and drawing techniques into her multimedia projects. She uses media such as video, photography, writings, drawings and installations.



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The Japanese choreographer and dancer Hiromi Miyakita draws with the same conviction as when she dances: "Once a line is drawn, it must be trusted. I am not able to watch myself dance. I trust my body, repeating my dialogue with it and disciplining it. For a dance only happens once. Once a line is drawn, I do not attempt to correct it. That is the way I draw. Life is also sometimes like that." In "Soul Cleansing", she is showing a series of her intriguing drawings done with pastel and ink pen on Japanese black paper, framed with a board.



SPK MS06 pastel, ink pen on japanese black paper with board frame | Hiromi Miyakita | 2011

Hiromi Miyakita is a dancer and choreographer from Itami city, Hyogo Prefecture. After graduating from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, Department of Dance, she started her dance career in Japan in the latter half of the 1990s. In dancing and choreographing, she emphasizes not only the body but also the place surrounding the performance. On the basis of the most fundamental human movements related to space such as sitting, standing and walking, she creates delicate yet bold movements capturing sensitively the surrounding light, sound, air and landscape.

She participated in Zan Yamashita dance piece 'it is written there', an inaugural performance of Art Theater dB Kobe, and Arkadi Zaides project. In 2010, she founded Hiromi Miyakita / Galapagos Band and presented the death of I.I.. In 2011, she started the Karappo Pong Poco Ring with sound artist Akio Suzuki to explore the place for both training and playing. This training activity led them to present their improvised performance Tabio X dance at the Japan Media Arts Festival in Kyoto, another improvisation for the exhibition tour at Kyoto Municipal Museum of Art, and further to Hiromi Miyakita first solo exhibition SPANK, thus extending the range of her dance expression.



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In addition, Miyakita often makes experimental attempts concerning the relationship between body / space and things / sounds, giving workshops for the audience to experience enjoyment of small discoveries: Portable Music Player and Dance is a talk session in which participants can exchange dozens of different views after having appreciated Miyakita dance without music while individually listening to their favorite music on earphones, and in Put on your head, participants walk along with some fruit on their heads and discover from this simple act how their bodies are in the inactive state.



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Through her art-making processes, Lie Fhung - a Hong Kong based Indonesian artist - investigates hidden layers within dreams, memories and human body (especially female's). The way they work and affect us, their mysteries and wonders are some of the things she has been exploring in her mixed-media works. She will be showing a couple of works from her "Dream Archives Series" and a brand new installation in "Soul Cleansing".



Portal #011 - Dream Archives glazed porcelain, vintage optical lenses, KOLO archival box, brass | Lie Fhung | 2009



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Fhung grew up in Jakarta and studied fine art at Institute of Technology Bandung, Indonesia. She received many prizes and recognition for her artwork as an artist from an early age. She has been involved in diverse fields, from graphic design to toy design, from various crafts to fine art. As an artist, she thrives in exploring new territories and crossing boundaries. For her, creating art is a way to introspect, investigate and explore things in and around her - and eventually, to share the results with the public.

She has had solo and group exhibitions in Bandung, Jakarta, Jogjakarta, Vermont, and Korea. In 2007, her work was added to the Permanent Collection of the World Ceramic Foundation, Icheon, South Korea. In 2008, she received a Freeman Fellowship Award for an 8-week artist residency at Vermont Studio Center. Her resulting work was exhibited at the Red Mill Gallery, Johnson, Vermont. One of her ceramic installation works has been featured in the book "Contemporary Ceramics" by Emmanuel Cooper, published by Thames and Hudson, October 2009. Her most recent solo show "Corporeal Dream" was held in Jakarta in 2009.

Fhung continues to expand her artistic vocabulary through her exploration of various media (ranging from clay and ceramics to paint and wire, and most recently, digital imaging) and presentations (two-dimensional objects, sculptural pieces, artist books and installations).





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Where do we fit in time and space? This is a constant theme in Maria Lobo's artwork and can be seen clearly in her Graphic Organic pieces shown in "Soul Cleansing": abstract ink brushwork, with balancing graphic forms.

Although Maria was trained in Western art methods and Western art history her work is definitely informed by her multicultural and Asian roots. Having been born and raised in Asia, and exposed to Asian traditional paintings most of her life, these visuals and techniques readily appear in Maria's work, whether it be Chinese symbols, references to mythology, the application of paint, use of materials, or creating dimension by layering of shapes and overlapping forms to create distance and depth on a flat surface.

Her search for balance within the painting's own depth, surface and vertical-horizontal orientation may come from her search for her own placement in this world: geographically, socially, ethnically, culturally, in space and time.



Zen Green ink and acrylic on paper | Maria Lobo | 2012

Born and raised in Hong Kong, of Eurasian heritage, Maria Lobo's art training took her to Italy, Spain and the USA. Studying at the University of Santa Clara and the San Francisco Art Institute, she gained degrees in Fine Art and Painting in 1985. Maria returned to Hong Kong in 1994, having



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been part of the San Francisco Hunters Point Artists' Community. A decade later, Maria returned to North America and currently resides in San Francisco. She exhibits internationally and has been showing her works at Sin Sin Fine Art since 2006.



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Sun Guangyi's enlightening paintings are influenced by his life experience, especially the landscape, the culture and the people in Yunnan. He also yearns to share the peacefulness, tranquility, mystery and the solemn of nature with art lovers. "... Where will life go? What is my relationship with this piece of land? Where is the source of my soul, which I have the passion and seek for?"



Shangrila – Heaven 15    chinese ink on paper | Sun Guangyi | 2010

Sun Guangyi was born in 1967 in Liaoning province, China. He studied Chinese ink painting and calligraphy at the Chenzhou Painting and Calligraphy Academy and graduated from the Liaoning University of Arts and Culture in 1992. A devoted Buddhist, Sun currently lives in Dali, Yunnan province. His works have been exhibited and collected throughout China and internationally.

About his Shangrila - Heaven series, he wrote:

"All day long I looked in vain for a sign of Spring  
My grass shoes raising clouds from the dust of all fields  
Returning home, smiling I pick a plum-blossom and sniff it  
And look Here on the Sprig is Spring in its fullness"

This is a poem written by a Bhikkhuni (a fully ordained female Buddhist monk) in the Song Dynasty when she achieved enlightenment, which also represents my present insight of art. For all these years I have sought after the "Shangri-La of the Heart", and to paint the ideal state of art I walked through all the Shangri-Las in geographical terms, was touched by their landscapes, humanities and religions. Still they were not the "Shangri-La" that I sought. Looking back, I become suddenly aware that "Shangri-La" is in fact everywhere: in the innocent smiles of children, in every white cloud upon the blue sky, in the blossoming branches of spring, in the winter snow. Shangri-La is in



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each and everyone's heart, in the present when we are enjoying life, in the present when we meditate over a pot of tea, in the present when we are strolling leisurely, in the present when we feel joyous and grateful.

There is no form beyond form. Choosing pure brush and ink, through the material world, I concentrate on the internal feeling of that particular moment. Sometimes outrageous, sometimes subtle, sometimes graceful, sometimes intense, they are all the effect the outside world has on the heart, and are also the reflection the heart casts upon the outside world.

We all have in our hearts our own "Shangri-La". It is possible that we can never attain it in this life, and yet it is the lighthouse of our lives, keeping us from hesitation and confusion in our journey of life. It is also our soul's homeland. Its existence frees our souls from ever wandering, provides our spirits with a home, and frees our lives from loneliness.

Be grateful to the gifts of life! Be grateful to every tree and every grass blade, the mountains and the earth for the nurture they give us!



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A graduate of Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology University (co-presented with Hong Kong Art School), Wong Wing Tong is a young Hong Kong artist working with oil and mural paintings.

For him, working on a painting often are a long process done indoors for months without much interactions with other people, which could felt lonely sometimes. Mural painting allows him opportunities to interact and communicate with the viewers, stimulating his creation within the process. He also enjoys doing art installation and curating, he believes that the using of space is also part of his creation process.



Water Observing oil on canvas | 160 x 30 cm |Wong Wing Tong | 2011

“Soul Cleansing” marks his debut at Sin Sin Fine Art, in which he is showing a series of interconnected works done with oil on canvas.

#### **In his own words:**

Squeezing oneself between Skyscrapers; dealing with work, life and consumption, this is how I describe lives in Hong Kong. We are cycling ourselves everyday without new stimulations. Only blank canvas allows me to start everything from zero, as a kind of meditation, searching for something spiritual. Brushes on canvas help me to think out of the box, leading me to find a way for my life. Brushes moving, eyes tracing, everything between dream and reality. This is Soul Cleansing.

Here is a memoir of my mind thought consciousness journey during creation:

The real essence of *tranquility* comes from the happiness of one self.

***“Where peaceful water flows, fill my heart with pleasure and joy. Pounding my crystal thoughts onto the canvas, like spring water flowing down the stream between clouds and pebbles. Water dances upon the rocks in shadows of fog, and create scenario of serenity, where time and space are frozen at the horizon. Calling birds from far away to bring along the messages of light for my divine soul.”***

The pleasure of creations come from the fountain of *tranquility*.



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