

About the programme

Displaced Belongings presents six recent film and video works by Asian artists that explore the complex nature of identity. Artists respond to personal and global experiences, such as war and memory, ejection from home and expression of sexual identity to inform their filmmaking. Drawing a dialogue through themes such as gender, race, class and self-image, artists express their identities, uncovering and recovering memories to analyse daily life.

Films by artists Suneil Sanzgiri and Bella Riza explore the emotional diasporic memories of their families; from the colonial history of India to the ongoing dispute between Turkish and Greek Cypriots. Mao Haonan's film, *Action, Almost Unable to Think* tells the life story of a soldier from his personal perspective after death.

Matthis Zhang and Su Hui-Yu's work show the possibilities and beauty of queerness, and in contrast, the harshness of civic and social oppression. And in *A Private Collection* by Wu Chi-Yu, the artist reveals a migrant couple's passion for their pirate DVD collection, which reminds us that the impact of a film can go far beyond the screen, and provide a new understanding of the world.

Artists in this programme include: Mao Haonan (China), Bella Riza (UK), Suneil Sanzgiri (US), Su Hui-Yu (Taiwan), Wu Chi-Yu (Taiwan) and Mathis Zhang (China). *Action, Almost Unable to Think* by Mao Haonan (2018) and *At Home But Not at Home* by Suneil Sanzgiri (2019) have not been shown in the UK before.

Displaced Belongings is curated by Moritz Cheung for Platform Asia. Delivered in association with videoclub and supported by Arts Council England.

Programme:

घरी पण घरी नाही *At Home But Not at Home*, Suneil Sanzgiri (US), 2019,
10:43 mins (UK premiere)

In 1961, 14 years after India gained independence from Britain, the Indian Armed Forces defeated the last remaining Portuguese colonizers in the newly formed state of Goa. Sanzgiri's father was 18 at the time, and had just moved away from his small village of Curchorem to Bombay for school when news reached him about his home—now free from the oppression of a foreign hand after 450 years of colonial rule. After spending years thinking about questions of identity, liberation, and the movement of people across space and time, Sanzgiri finds himself returning to this period in search of moments of anti-colonial solidarity across continents. The research took him from the shores of Goa, to Indonesia, Mozambique, and Angola, finding brief links between nascent liberation movements and his father's biography.

Combining 16mm footage with drone videography, montages from the "Parallel cinema" movement in India, desktop screenshots, and Skype interviews with the artist's father, the resulting film utilizes various methods and modes of seeing at a distance to question the construction of artifice, memory, and identity through the moving image.

Salt House, Bella Riza (UK), 2017, 12:39 mins

Salt House offers an intimate glimpse of Riza's father Alper as he returns to his home and native Cyprus. Having left during the war in 1968, it is through revisiting the island and cooking the dishes from his childhood that he is able to reconnect to his past, and talk openly about memory, identity and migration.

The film fragments across domestic spaces and landscapes, meshing together Alper, his voice and the atmosphere of the island. A personal portrait emerges revealing the emotional effects from the war, with vivid memories, rich landscapes and Cypriot food.

***Action, Almost Unable to Think* 行動, 幾乎難以思考**, Mao Haonan 茅昊楠 (China), 2018, 11:20 mins (UK premiere)

Mao Haonan's film, *Action, Almost Unable to Think* tells a soldier's story from his perspective after being killed by a bomb while greeting a civilian. The film aims to portray this moment of contradiction and fragility from the soldier's inner world, through hypnotic imagery, fiery symbolism and reflections on reality.

The origin is the real story of a soldier being killed by a bomb while greeting a civilian. The film tries to recapture that moment of contradiction and vulnerability using the techniques of 3D video, computer rendering simulators, photos and graphics to express the filmmaker's personal understanding of the subjectivity of this reality.

Dreams, Butterfly Boy Dreams (Genesis), Mathis Zhang 張杭 (China), 2019, 7:13mins

Dreams, Butterfly Boy Dreams is a journey of self-identity exploration. It is a dream about gender fluidity and non-binary thinking. Mathis discover their gender identity throughout their culture backgrounds and cross-culture life experiences, using diverse resources, ancient stories, philosophy to develop their own God in their deep soul.

***The Glamorous Boys of Tang (1985, Qiu Gang-Jian)* 唐朝綺麗男 (1985, 邱剛健)**, Su Hui-Yu 蘇匯宇 (Taiwan), 2018, 15 mins

In 1985, two years before the end of Taiwan's martial law period, *Tang Chao Chi Li Nan* (trans: *The Glamorous Boys of Tang*) by the renowned poet and screenwriter Chui Kang-Chien's (邱剛健) was first screened in Taiwan. The film illustrated a homoerotic fantasy, and was unfortunately not well-received due to the conservative atmosphere at the time.

In Chui's film, it opens with a dancing scene in an inexplicable exorcism ceremony. Following with the appearance of two pretty boys, and when their eyes meet, the image is suffused with their mutual fascination. The plot also includes disturbing killings, death, and orgies accompanied by dissonant sound effects created with a synthesizer; bizarre and gaudy set design; ill considered costumes. Thus, an assortment of cult films.

By comparing the film with its original script at the Taiwan Film Institute archives, it is clear that Chui's film has been heavily edited, or sequences could not be depicted in detail. Perhaps filmmakers could not fully present the radicalism and passion of the screenplay due to budget cuts, censorships, or marketing concerns. More than thirty years later, Su re-created the film using differently gendered bodies, and demonstrated the diverse subcultures of Taiwan nowadays. It can be seen as a re-shooting, a re-narration of the original version created in 1985, or the next leg of its journey.

A Private Collection 自選片單, Wu Chi-Yu 吳其育 (Taiwan), 2016, 13:33 mins

The interviews in the video derive from a Myanmar migrant couple's introduction of their DVD collection. Working in a Taiwanese factory three hours from Bangkok and often having to work overtime, their limited pastime is spent mainly on watching movies. The film collection and the sequences being introduced in the video originate from their large pirate collection. As the host of the screening program, they described how the DVDs entered their lives when they bought them from the vendor next to the temple, and simultaneously how the television screen in their living room became their way of understanding the world.