

While her work of large, multi-colored, soft hanging sculptures in Jawi script may seem daunting to the individual ignorant of the language, the words they speak 'I Love You' brings a warm message, one of passion and compassion. What appears as a bold gesture in effect, upon understanding its text, moderates fears that certain acts by fundamentalist and militant Muslims, and their portrayal in the media, have beset a larger population unfamiliar with Muslim culture, and blind to the principles it shares with other religions and doctrines.

Against intolerance and violence, her use of the adaptability of Jawi to other languages emphasizes an openness and generosity of attitude that a world of constant declarations of wars and defensiveness really needs. The installation was accompanied by a performance where audiences joined the artist in a parade of brightly colored flags with words such as 'family,' 'happiness,' 'wisdom,' 'freedom,' and 'time' stitched upon them, expressed in myriad languages, including Jawi, English, Malay, Tagalog, Chinese, and Japanese.

Referencing Joseph Beuys in her work, the artist highlights the potential of art beyond aesthetic pleasure, and the importance of the creative power of individuals actively shaping their society together and experimenting with new ways of thinking. Like Beuys her work champions a certain human, and humanistic, spirit, befitting a time of rethinking capitalism's recent economic letdown. 'Art can enable change' is what Beuys believed, and here, too, Arahmaiani appears to concur.

The novelty (and glee) of waving colored flags with wild abandon however gives way to another message in the installation here, that of love, that goes beyond the superficial and commercialized rendition of sweet valentines. As Arahmaiani says, "LOVE in its deeper meaning speaks of liberation from any kind of hold (including psychological holds) so it is actually a very radical and anarchic force, since love doesn't submit itself to any authority except LOVE itself!"

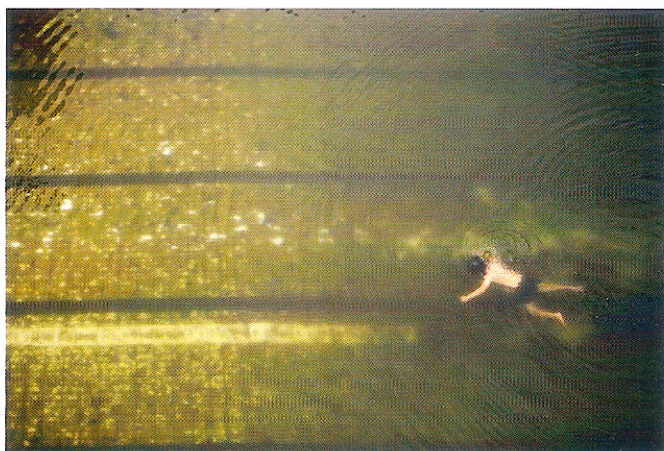
June Yap

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### Found and Lost at Osage Singapore

The starting point for *Found & Lost*, an exhibition exploring slippage in drawing and representation, is the drawing publication by artist Tan Guoliang, entitled *Aversions*. The publication stands as a separate entity that documents works by 10 artists in Singapore notably, Cheo Chai Hiang and Tang Da Wu, where the act of drawing is defined as a process of mark-making in its broadest sense. Drifting from one artwork to another, interspersed with texts by Tan, writing weaves with drawing, each with its own narrative, traced by the viewer and reader from page to page, illusive and elemental. As Tan writes, "Herein lies the secret: *to draw is already to forget*."

*Aversions* aptly describes the process of unpacking these 'drawings' in what appears as almost a resistance of the label and medium, and the limitations of implied graphite or ink put to paper. Chai's performance



Charles Lim, *It's not that I forgot but rather I chose not to mention*, 2008, video, 55 min.

in PICA (Perth, Australia) in 1989, *Gentleman in Suit and Tie*, of a 'drawing' of a figure in string upon the floor, is a case in point, the line that is a line and yet isn't.

The exhibition, curated by Tan, likewise displays a similar permeability of boundaries where some of the artists mentioned in *Aversions* cross-over to real space. The eight featured artists—Sookoon Ang, Cheong Kah Kit, Khiew Huey Chian, Charles Lim, Matthew Ngui, Shubigi Rao, Erika Tan, and Ian Woo—attempt to negotiate the act of marking in space. Tan's observations of drawing as language, performance, and instruction make for an interesting reading of these works.

Shubigi Rao's *Confetti* (2009) is described as "litter from a Fascist parade," and features, on the whitewashed wall in the gallery, near invisible text and drawings taken from a series of personal handmade books that the artist created with the original intention of them being private responses to attacks on culture and knowledge in media and in war. Their transformation from thought to book to gallery seems to repeat drawing's

position as preparation for the final work, yet with its imperceptibility in the gallery, the work displays a certain reflexive awareness as well of its exposure and vulnerability.

Another work with slippery readings in the context of the exhibition is Charles Lim's *It's not that I forgot but rather I chose not to mention* (2009), a video piece where a figure is seen languidly swimming across a pool. The work that was presented at the *Manifesta 7* exhibition is both performance where the swimmer's stroke scatters the green algae appearing to clear the pool, and as 'drawing' visually rendering the field of green clear. In a tropical country like Singapore verdant life springs forth with vigor that isn't easily averted. Here, the restless search to locate drawing beyond process and medium finds itself returning repeatedly through hints and suggestions, finally unable to forget.

June Yap

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### THAILAND

#### Bangkok

#### Never Ending Courage at Conference of Birds

Given Thailand's political reality it is surprising that there have been few politically motivated arts collectives. The now-dormant performance-inclined group U-Kabat (*Fireball*) was an exception. Another was *Artists*



Arahmaiani, *I LOVE YOU (Social Sculpture After Joseph Beuys)*, 2009, installation and performance.

