



Can we question our identity?

ID-ENTITIES

Mixed Media Art Exhibition and Talks

Tor Vutha

Erick Gonzalez

Robit Pen

Vannak Khun

Tytaart

Carlo Santoro

in memory of Luigi

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AMERICAN UNIVERSITY
OF PHNOM PENH
STUDY LOCALLY. LIVE GLOBALLY.

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Mixed Media Art Exhibition and Talks

19 November – 14 December 2022

Cambodian-German Cultural Center, “Meta House Goethe-Center” Phnom Penh

WORKS BY: Tor Vutha, Erick Gonzalez, Robit Pen, Vannak Khun, Tytaart, Carlo Santoro

AUTHOR: Carlo Santoro

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ENTITIES

Does talking about identity always mean identifying one or more consistent characteristics that distinguish a person or a group of people?

Can we talk about identity in terms of inconsistency? Can we talk about identity by questioning every connotation that tends to identify us? Can we be consistently inconsistent?

If contemporary art has a role today, perhaps it is precisely to let us ask these questions. Art can redefine our own assumptions, sometimes proposing new meanings, sometimes overturning them, sometimes creating new syntheses.

Thus, the invitation is to talk about our identities as an opportunity to explore the expressive dimensions of a single entity.

We aim to take you on a journey through our aesthetic proposals by challenging those who simplistically think to include us or conclude us, in other words to identify us.

We intend here to conduct a personal reflection on our own works, offering you the possibility of coexisting with a permanent condition of simultaneous ID-Entities as perspective on each other's identity.

The troubling scream painted by Tor Vutha will jolt our multivoiced and collective work. We will be actors of ourselves in the empty frames and mirrors set up for Vannak Khun's performance. We will be captured by the metamorphoses created in Tytaart's shots. We will drift in the otherness of Erick Gonzalez's ethereal constructions. We will eventually dissolve into the compositional processes conceived by Carlo Santoro with Robit Pen and the Institute of Khmer Traditional Textiles.

November 19, 2022

WORKS

TOR VUTHA
Prisoner, 2013
The Scream, 2022

Acrylic paint on canvas, 150x150cm

Renamed "The Scream", this work is part of a series of three paintings originally titled "Prisoner". Tor Vutha reintroduces us to a close-up of a face that screams pain and anger built up over years of injustice. Today, however, after nearly a decade, the face intends to scream beyond the screams of the past, moving beyond the status of a permanent allegory of its own experiences and projecting itself beyond its own shadow.



dis-entire

ERICK GONZALEZ
 "otherness I", "otherness II"
 Rubik's cube, 2017

2 Inkjet printings on foam board. 80x80cm/each

Otherness is defined as the principle of "interchanging" the subjective perspective with that of "others." It is meant to take into consideration the viewpoint of others without necessarily assuming only the personal one. Based on this assumption, we can realize how empathizing means understanding that my point of view is only one among an infinity of other points of view and that my person is only a small part of the whole human diversity.

The cube represents this diversity as well as the multiple possibilities that each person can contemplate in the construction of their identity (by opposition or similarities) interacting with the "other". Concepts such as miscegenation and inculturation are present in this work.
 (Erick Gonzalez, 2022)



other-entity

ERICK GONZALEZ
 "Roots and waves", 2022

Mixed Media Installation. Variable dimensions



other-entity

The boat, as an object, is a source of inspiration for its values, not only practical but also symbolic and aesthetic. Its main function is to move, transport, carry anything from one point to another. Therefore, the image of the boat perhaps makes us think of traveling, adventuring or even venturing on an inner journey.. On the other hand, however, it also makes us think about migrating and seeking... about departing and inevitably being exiled.

I used the drifting boat as a metaphor for my voluntary migration. This journey without a definite direction shapes my identity, although I don't know exactly who I am at this very moment because my identity is always under construction. Just as a drifting ship changes its course with the slightest movement of the waves or wind, my identity also evolves with each new place, each experience and each encounter. I don't try to build my identity; I just want to discover it. The principle of voluntary drifting originates from this precise realization.

Migrating, however, does not mean uprooting my roots: "as I travel, they are my luggage".
 (Erick Gonzalez, 2022)

VANNAK KHUN

Is It Me?, 2022

Installation & Performance

2 old wooden frames 80x60cm, old mirror 105x60cm, old mirror 55x35cm

Reflection and reflexion. I am a child and I am an adult. I am a teenager and I am a young man. I am Khmer and I am part of this world. I am a student and I am an artist, I am an accountant and I am a magician because I am a photographer. I am human but also a little cat. I am a Christian and I am a bad boy. I am gay, I am lonely and I am everybody else. I am beautiful and I am ugly, it depends on the mirrors, on the look of the others, on mine when there is only one frame, when the reflection goes away and the reflexion come, when I find myself without even knowing that I had lost myself. I laugh, I cry, I get angry. I love, I hate, I come back on the reality, between dreams and nightmare. I am my family and I am its opposite. I'm alone and multiple. I reflect and I ask myself when I look at me, objective and subjective, I am questions often unanswered, in a world of doubts. I am... my identity. (Vannak Khun, 2022)

*Performance during exhibition opening 19 November 2022 at 18:45-19:00



TYTAART

Larvae, Metamorphosis In Love, 2022

Photograph printed on HP Matte-Litho Realistic Paper, Hand-made wooden frame painted black, 80x120cm

Metamorphosis In Love is a love story of two lovers who through the mist of time found themselves becoming one. A visual story of how two souls found one another on earth and morphed into a co-soul. Through their embraces and connection, not only have their hearts and their minds fused but their bodies connects and manifest into one another. A love so intense that even life itself has grown from this powerful energy. The energy of love. (Tytaart, 2022)



TYTAART

Pupa, Metamorphosis In Love, 2022

Photograph printed on HP Matte-Litho Realistic Paper, Hand-made wooden frame painted black, 80x120cm



meta-entity

TYTAART

Amare, Metamorphosis In Love, 2022

Photograph printed on HP Matte-Litho Realistic Paper, Hand-made wooden frame painted black, 80x120cm



CARLO SANTORO
Red/Lac Map by metaestetica, 2022

Mixed Media Installation, 156x101cm,
with:

Robit Pen, The Red Background, 2022, Acrylic on canvas, 76x101cm;

Institute of Khmer Traditional Textiles, Lac Map, Lac natural dye on Cambodian natural silk,
woven by Rouern Lon, 2022, 76x101cm.

Talking about Red implies recognizing the strong symbolic value associated with it. Blood Red, Love Red, Communism Red, Coca Cola Red, are they just conventions or stereotypes? R. Falcinetti reminds us, the semiotics of Red has taken on meaning over time within "culturally defined worlds" and continues to take on value in relation to the context of use. It is not always possible, however, to rationalize the semiotic, symbolic, and functional deduction that led to the mental association. Very often the association depends on the background of the person who creates it, very often it depends on our personal history, our memories, our encounters, our surroundings, or what we are working on, ultimately it depends on our beliefs, our personal convictions, our morals, and very often it depends on our truths. Color exists as a "psychological category" of the perceiver, as part of a social system at a particular historical moment. At a given time, at a given place, we may even decide to change the way we have always thought about it. It is left to us to figure out our own reasons, because it is from "very small facts" that critical thinking can begin. (Quotes from Riccardo Falcinelli, Chromorama, How Color Changed Our Way of Seeing, (It ver.) Einaudi 2017)

The Red Background was conceived during a visit to "The Ontology of Form and Color" exhibition in May 2022 at Rosewood Gallery in Phnom Penh. Carlo Santoro proposed to the author of the paintings in the exhibition, Robit Pen, to remove the Krama -the foreground subject- from one of the paintings and make a new one using only its distinctive red background. Benedict Ravel participated in the conversation, Robit Pen agreed and decided to call it The Red Background.



The Lac Map was conceived during a conversation with Suos Sodavy in March 2022 at Chhan Dina Gallery. Carlo Santoro expressed his intention to produce a monochrome using a fabric dyed with a natural red pigment of animal origin. Through Ramy Muchrami, who witnessed the conversation, Carlo Santoro contacted IKTT, which agrees to produce the fabric. The Cambodian silk fabric is thus finally produced with the thread obtained from silkworm cocoons after killing them by boiling water immersion and dyed with red pigment obtained by crushing the nests of lac larvae. As noted on the IKTT website: "Until the 1970's Cambodia was also a major center for lac production., War and deforestation severely damaged the production of natural dyes. There is a lot of superstition surrounding why certain dyes work, and in many rural villages, they do not ... understand why certain dyes have become extinct, often attributing their disappearance to folk tales." IKTT informed Carlo Santoro that: "Lac nests are imported from Surin Thailand. We tried in 2019 at IKTT Village and many Lac insects died. It is very difficult for us." There aren't any more Lac insects alive in the Village.



CARLO SANTORO
My Indigo Blue Jeans, 2022

Mixed Media Foldable Installation
designed for auction at starting price 1\$

Second-hand OVS 72D denim bluejeans sz33 tg48 straight fit, spring 2017 collection, owned and worn by Carlo Santoro 2017-2019, part of Carlo Santoro, Adonis and Venus of Blue Jeans, a Fuorimostra Installation by metaestetica, 2019 + 6 pictures 2.13"x3.39" inkjet printings on paper + brown ribbon 3m.

This My Indigo Blue Jeans was part of a pile of second-hand jeans used in a larger metaestetica participatory installation, "The Venus and Adonis of Blue Jeans," which is being shown fuorimostra at Factory Phnom Penh in 2019. The installation consisted of 49 other jeans, purchased that same year at the market for \$1 each. My Indigo Blue Jeans was bought instead in Italy in 2017, worn by me until the day before the event. During the exhibition, visitors were left free to observe the installation without any explanation other than the title of the work. With my surprise, they decided to use it. They took selfies on it and decided to wear the jeans and take selfies with them. After the installation, all of them but one - My Indigo Blue Jeans - were donated to 49 poor people in need. Are these 49 poor people now wearing them? How much is My Indigo Blue Jeans worth now that it has been folded back? Is it still worth one dollar? Are those poor people wearing a work of art? Will the sale value of My Indigo Blue Jeans determine whether it is a work of art? Will the sale of My Indigo Blue Jeans determine that there are actually 49 poor people out there wearing 49 works of art?



EXHIBITION OPENING

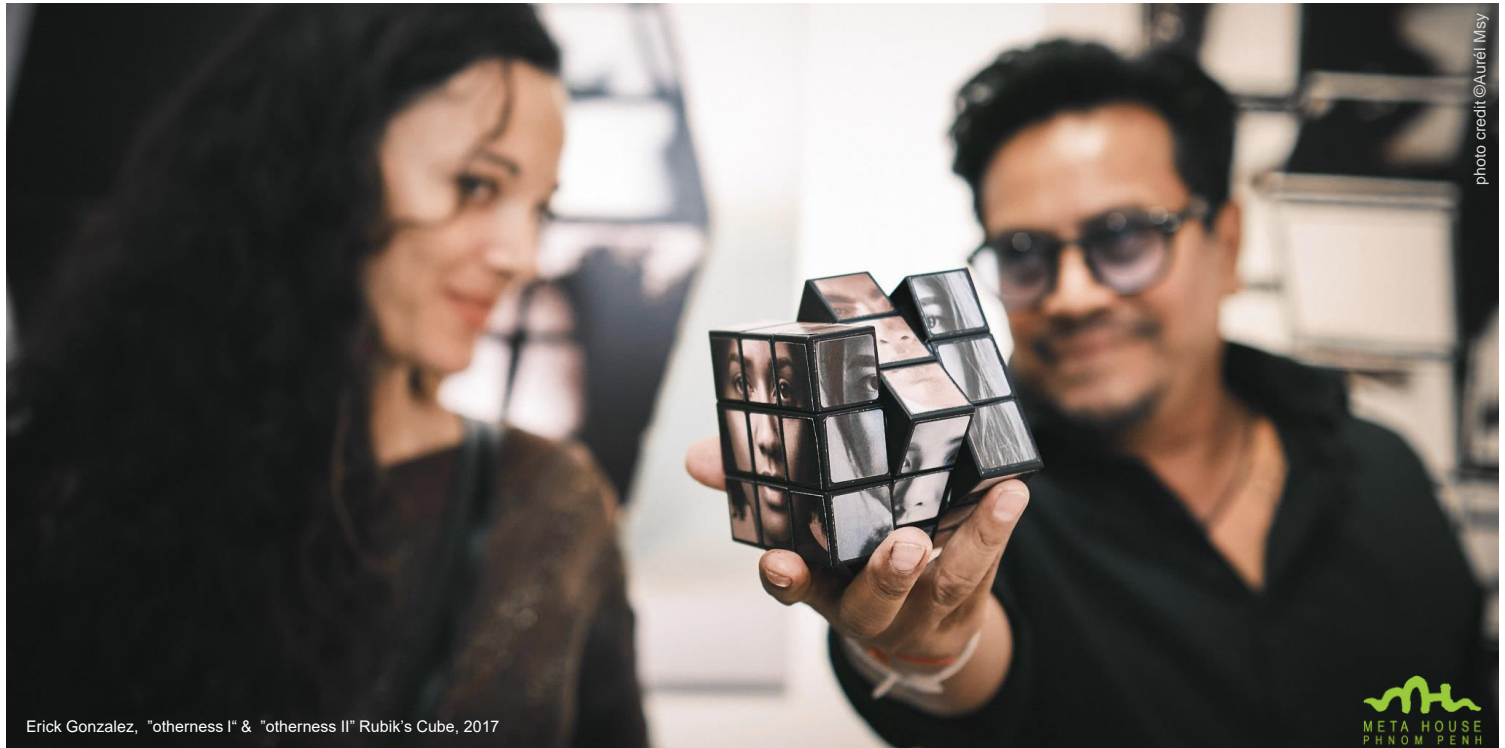


photo credit ©Auréli Misy

Erick Gonzalez, "otherness I" & "otherness II" Rubik's Cube, 2017



photo credit ©Auréli Misy

Erick Gonzalez, "otherness I" & "otherness II" Rubik's Cube, 2017





Erick Gonzalez, "otherness I" & "otherness II" Rubik's Cube, 2017

photo credit ©Auréli Misy



photo credit ©Auréli Misy

Erick Gonzalez, "otherness I" & "otherness II" Rubik's Cube, 2017



Erick Gonzalez, "Roots and waves", 2022

photo credit ©Auréli Msy



Erick Gonzalez, "Roots and waves", 2022

photo credit ©Auréli Misy



Erick Gonzalez, "Roots and waves", 2022

photo credit ©Auréli Misy



Erick Gonzalez, "Roots and waves", 2022

photo credit ©Auréli Misy



Vannak Khun, Is It Me?, Performance, 2022
Tor Vutha, Prisoner, 2013 / The Scream, 2022



photo credit ©Auréli Misy



Vannak Khun, Is It Me?, Performance, 2022



photo credit ©Auréli Misy



Vannak Khun, Is It Me?, Performance, 2022



photo credit ©Auréli Misy



Tytaart, Metamorphosis In Love, 2022

photo credit ©Auréli Misy



Tytaart, Metamorphosis In Love, 2022

photo credit ©Auréli Misy



Tytaart, Metamorphosis In Love, 2022

photo credit ©Auréli Misy





Tytaart, Metamorphosis In Love, 2022

photo credit ©Auréli Mey



Carlo Santoro, Red/Lac Map by metaestetica, 2022
with:
Robit Pen, The Red Background, 2022
Rouern Lon, Lac Fabric, 2022

photo credit ©Aurél Misy



Carlo Santoro, My Indigo Blue Jeans, 2022

photo credit ©Carlo Santoro

TALK #1

IN CONVERSATION WITH TYTAART AND CARLO SANTORO
3 December 2022

The event "IN CONVERSATION WITH TYTAART AND CARLO SANTORO" was part of the exhibition, and about 20 guests participated in the conversation. Special thanks for their contributions go to: Eriq Henri Madsen, Gabriele Faja, Stan Loubières, Vannak Khun, Erick Gonzalez, Jonathan Garrett, and Marcel.

I report here some passages that I captured from the conversation in the form of a dialogue with myself. They do not necessarily reflect what was said, however the narrative was constructed following the logic implied in each of the individual contributions, even though it may appear incoherent.

A-DIALOGUE

Since I grew up, it has not been easy for me. I felt enormous shame when I told my story. I've been asleep and now I'm suddenly awake.

Wait a minute, is it me? Did I wake up in such a colorful realm?

I started to love myself, because after all it's about myself, even though I don't really understand what love is.

I am exploring myself.

I realized that I can truly find myself through love and self-actualization. I can try to survive by finding meaning. Is there any value in adversity, is there any value that I can grasp? Has adversity informed who I am? What I went through allowed me to be who I am now, but I still don't fully understand myself to the point where I would like to be understood. Certainly, the hardships allow me to be comfortable with who I am now.





arthecitycredit ©Luka Mark van Opstal

Does this make sense to you?

Am I filtering my projected image in a utilitarian way to conform to what you - consciously or unconsciously - expect of me? Do I have control of this filter? Can I really detach myself from myself, or from my background?

Do I control this narrative or is this story ultimately the result of your interpretation?

Perhaps I have been diluted in a story in which it is possible to be understood.

Can I now be really grasped in a conceivable understanding? Or is there someone other than me who is playing the most important role in this story?

Do I have enough tools to create an endless story of myself? A story in which I will surprise myself and reconsider what I find as a new standpoint? Can I try to turn off my intellect and just play with intuition? Would it be a more powerful tool since in the end I can only play with what I am?

Do I have to justify always what I'm saying to you? I might not propose any conclusion for this story, considering the possibility of changing it, twisting it, and finally imagining different conclusions for it.

Am I just avoiding a conclusion and only proposing here a circular thought in which self-referential considerations produce awareness of who I am? Can I just scream at the proposal to engage? Or should I just conclude that any proposal will result in the assumption of a defined position that will finally identify me?



arthe@credit ©Luka Mark van Opstal

Or will I be stuck in the past carrying with me forever the place from which I came. I would then try to show myself naked to your eyes and ask you not to look at my organs, I will put myself in a cage and ask you not to see me as a prisoner, I will drift from life to life, and I ask you not to consider me lost. I will construct images of myself and ask you to look further and find myself instead in images that I have not constructed from myself.

What are you asking then? Are you looking at me or are you looking at yourself?

What will matter: the way you look at me, the way I look at myself, or the way you think about me? Can we really choose it?

I worry that I am becoming someone else's project, regarded as an infant capable of carrying only the legacy of my ancestors, naked when projected into the present.

Rest assured, I do not need a patriarch, although you might think so. I'm worried, am I your project? I feel lost. Am I disappointing your expectations?

I am assuring you, I am really telling you my story, even though it is not really mine. You seem to be here to listen to my history, while I am just telling my story. Are you assuming that the history and the stories must somehow coincide, or that the history must be told in my story, since it seems to be part of who you think I am? do you think I look like what I am, or should I be what I look like anyway?

We can certainly switch our chairs and leave you in charge of telling the story, do you think this story would be different in any way? Would you dress me differently or change the style of my hair to fit your story? Would I fit then?

I feel guilty, I can't. But would it ever be possible? Could our stories ever coincide?



photo credit @Luka Mark van Opstal

Can't we just keep telling our stories, regardless of whether it's yours or mine? No matter who owns the story, if we are willing to take it on as our story, then it will probably one day be told as our story as well.

Perhaps the real question to ask is whether we need to tell our stories, or even whether we need to listen to our stories, regardless of who is telling and listening to them.

We are just focused on the realization of our desire to express our creative toxicity, despite our suffocating coma condition, after all we are right here, right now. Can we really remain silent? Our stories would be told whether we want to or not. Can we then really be unexpressive?

Why then do we talk? Why then do we listen? Can't we simply be? Would we consider it an interpretation of our untold and unheard story? So, are we assuming that the way we interpret our stories represents what we hear? Can we really transcend this, or will we be doomed to coincide with our own interpretations? Who are we beyond our interpretation of ourselves?

Do we are interpreting ourselves or interpreting our interpretation of ourselves? Or do we act simply to please ourselves? We should probably answer very simply, but we can't, can we?

I don't know the answer. It is possible that I am trying to interpret the story of who I will be by merging myself into your story, assuming your past for my future. Am I idealizing you? Although you seem uncomfortable as long as you let me, maybe I will keep doing it. What can I really risk? Of course, you can reject me, so I will try to make you accept me, hoping you will be open to my gift, but would you go beyond my gift? Would you make it your own? Would my story of your story really be your story? Would you take it with you as a memory so that we can treasure it for our future?

After all, I chose you because you showed me the possibility of being us. I understand that you will not subscribe to it, and even if you do not, I will take the risk of telling our story. Are you there reading it? Then I keep writing hoping you keep reading it.

Yes, I can fail. We may no longer be together in either my story or your story. Maybe the idea of being together was not true either for me or for you. Nevertheless, the story is true. It is as true as my story is true, as one of my novels is true, as my dreams are true. Are not these rare moments of truth indeed? Moments when we truly express ourselves, unafraid to be together and share our experiences as a possibility of Being!

Carlo Santoro
Phnom Penh, 18 January 2023



AUCTION



CARLO SANTORO

Our Indigo Blue Jeans on Canvas, 2022

Mixed Media Installation

"My Indigo Blue Jeans"™ on white coated stretched indigo cotton canvas on wood frame
150x150 cm

Yesterday, December 8, 2022, My Indigo Blue Jeans was auctioned off. The event, Color in Motion, was organized by the Community of Artists on the charming terrace of Phnom Penh's well-known Waterside restaurant, in support of the Epic Arts association, to promote artistic performances that include people of all abilities.

At the request of the organizers, My Indigo Blue Jeans was installed on a large canvas, following the format of all the masterpieces exhibited at the event.

My Indigo Blue Jeans has never been on canvas, so will it really make a difference now that, as requested, it is on canvas? Will it be recognized as a masterpiece? Will it be different from others? Or will it be folded and stored or even worn as one of the other 49?

With or without canvas then? Is it a masterpiece or not?

The auctioneers decided on the starting price, \$1, and the buyers, one by one, decided everything else... There were only a few seconds to think about it 2\$...5\$...11\$...15\$...50\$...100\$...200\$...250\$...Sold! I donated it all to Epic Arts.

But once again, to my surprise, events took an unexpected direction.

Now that My Indigo Blue Jeans is no longer mine, Greet J. Leeman, the lucky buyer, has decided to keep it on canvas and announced: "It's OURS!"

Then we decided to call it: OUR INDIGO BLUE JEANS ON CANVAS

Now once again Our Indigo Blue Jeans On Canvas is here displayed, and it is for sell!

Would you also make it YOUR own?

Greet and I have a new goal now. We are aiming, through sales, to raise \$1 million for Epic Arts!

The questions are always there though....

How much is Our Indigo Blue Jeans worth now that it is On Canvas?

Will it be worth more than 250 dollars?

Are those poor people wearing a work of art?

The sales value of My Indigo Blue Jeans determined whether Our Indigo Blue Jeans On Canvas is now a work of art?

Will the resale of Our Indigo Blue Jeans On Canvas determine that there are actually 49 poor people wearing 49 works of art?

There was no time to answer during the few minutes of the auction!

TALK #2

IN CONVERSATION WITH ERICK GONZALEZ AND VANNAK KHUN
10 December 2022

The event "IN CONVERSATION WITH ERICK GONZALEZ AND VANNAK KHUN" was part of the exhibition, and about 10 guests participated in the conversation.





photo credit © Carlo Santoro



BIOGRAPHY



Tor Vutha is a Cambodian multi-media Artist, co-founder and Deputy Director of Pedagogy at the Visual and Applied Art School of Phare Ponleu Selpak(PPSA) in Battambang. As a survivor of the Khmer Rouge, he spent his childhood in a refugee camp on the Cambodian-Thai border during the Cambodian Civil War. In his words of Tor Vutha "fought boredom by learning to paint" right in the field. He went on to study art at the Pivaut Applied High School in France and had an art residency program in France, Reunion Island, Thailand, USA. Today he is a teacher in Phare where he helps the young Cambodian generation find ways to express themselves, communicate and understand the world.



Erick Gonzalez is a French-Guatemalan visual artist. He begins his artistic career in Guatemala at the end of the 90's but develops it mainly in France where he settles around 2004. As of those years, his exhibitions multiply and his techniques diversify remarkably. Versatile artist, he creates installations, objects, photos, videos, and paintings. The reason for this diversity lies in his constant search for harmony between the formal and conceptual aspects of the artwork. There is in his works a visible influence of the Pop art, Conceptualist, and Arte Povera movements of the 1960s. Erick Gonzalez is an art teacher, social communicator, and cultural agent. He is the founder and first curator of PENH ART, the first contemporary art fair in Cambodia (where he has lived since 2015). Erick Gonzalez has exhibited in several venues, including JUANNIO and Paiz Art Biennials in Guatemala City, at Boris Georgiev Art Gallery during the Print Trienal de Varna, Bulgaria, at The Modern Art Museum "Carlos Mérida" in Guatemala and at Bophana Audiovisual Resource Center in Phnom Penh, Cambodia



Khun Vannak is a Cambodian artist, born during the Khmer Rouge genocide, who spent his childhood and adolescence struggling to build a life of his own. Graduated with a degree in Finance and Banking and worked in various NGOs and communications agencies before making a sudden turn in his career devoting himself exclusively to his professional art practice. His investigation is directed toward the constant and rapid evolution of Cambodia today. His work is rooted in his identity, constantly questioning his own personality. He uses his body by playing on various communicative registers, with photography, performance, and art installations. He aims to engage with aspects at once Cambodian and Universal in a poetic critique of society. Proposes in-depth analysis capable of penetrating simplistic interpretations of reality. His works have been exhibited at Musée de l'Hospice Comtesse, Lille, France, French Institute, Phnom Penh, Sa Sa Art Projects, Phnom Penh, and numerous galleries such as 72 gallery, Tokyo, Japan, Sra'Art gallery Phnom Penh and Batia Sarem gallery, Siem Reap. He took part at the Wonder Photo Festival, Tapie, Tawain and several editions of the Phnom Penh Photo Festival.



Carlo Santoro is an Italian associate professor of Art, Architecture and Urban Design at the American University in Phnom Penh, with a Ph.D. from the University of Rome "TorVergata". He is a fellow researcher of the Chinese Academy of Sciences in Beijing (Cultural Heritage Preservation) and member of "Jartrakor", International Association on Psychology of Art in Rome. He is currently vice-president of the Italian-Cambodian Business Association (ICBA) and founding member of the ICBA Arts Committee. As founder of Metaestetica Multidisciplinary Research Lab, he has taken part in numerous exhibitions, events, and seminars on digital and participatory art such as those organized at the Museum of Contemporary Art of Rome, New Samnitic Provincial Museum, National Museum of Cambodia, European Film Festival in Cambodia, Angkor International Festival of the Arts, Chumnor Art Festival in Battambang, Factory Phnom Penh, Ullens Center for Contemporary Art and Sarus Art Center in Beijing 798 Art Zone..



Pen Robit is a Cambodian visual artist. He graduated from Phare Ponleu Selpak in 2010. His art practice primarily employs painting including occasional live painting and performance. His painting draws on various techniques, shuttling between figurative and abstraction, and often comments on social realities. He participated the Memory Workshop with Vann Nath and Séra Ing at Bophana Center, Phnom Penh and did an exchange study at Pivaut Applied School of Art, Nantes, France. He was an artist-in-residence with Peninsula To Australia International Art and Culture Exchange, Taiwan and at OzAsia Festival, Adelaide, Australia. He exhibited his work has been exhibited in Phnom Penh at Sa Sa Art Project and in several galleries such as YK Gallery and Rosewood Gallery.



Tytaart is a Khmer photographer of artistic portraits. She initially studied Global Business & Design Management at Regent's University London and Strategic Design Management at Parsons School of Design, The New School, in New York. Her soft and fluid work embodies a vivid construction of her reality made of dreams. Falling in love with shadows and light, she explores the natural emotions formed only by immersing herself in the stillness of time. Rooted in Phnom Penh, she has delved into the beauty of humanity trying to understand the happiness and pain of life. Her visual voice captures and blends the external environment with her soul. She exhibited her work at National Museum of Cambodia, Khmer Kite Museum, and several galleries in Phnom Penh such as FT Gallery, Rosewood Gallery and Sra'Art gallery

METAESTETICA MANIFESTO

In the space of a century, Art has been driven from a representation of reality to reality itself. Thus, it has abandoned the idea of reality produced by a single genius to follow subjective and self-referential interpretations or rather social consensus. It soon ended up with empty Images and conventions.

Aesthetics has since long abandoned canonical beauty to engage with everyday life, although it is no longer sufficient to pursue a simplistic semiotic thinking on the Sensible (aisthesis).

The need for researches in Aesthetics is more urgent than ever. This challenge requires a new Aesthetics of "Interpretation-Action". The new Aesthetics will act and emerge simultaneously in and from Reality, redefining itself each time, as in a circle. It will only be completed when Reality takes on a new and deeper meaning. Today Aesthetics becomes metaestetica.

It becomes...

...a multidisciplinary study that re-examines reality itself;

...a scientific investigation that re-discusses its axioms and lays the foundations for a new debate on the Ontology of Reality;

...a structured analysis that re-formulates the limits of Phenomenology and re-structure the origins of Reality on perceptions-projections-predictions in accordance with personal experiences and interactions between individuals-phenomena-contexts;

...an extensive examination of the study of emotional effects, behavioral responses and cognitive constructs;

...a rigorous discussion that explores the creative abilities of a system of individuals representing a cultural group, or more ambitiously the whole society;

...a systematic formulation to analyze meanings, goals and habits;

...eventually...

...it becomes an open vision capable of intentionally restructuring socially shared assumptions and evolving towards a more sophisticated level of collective consciousness...

...it becomes a metaestetica vision.

Carlo Santoro – Beijing, 27 March 2012
(translated from Italian Version)

META HOUSE PHNOM PENH

The Cambodian-German Cultural Center "Meta House Goethe-Center" was established in January 2007 in the capital Phnom Penh as a creative platform for the nascent Cambodian arts and media scene. What once started as a small community center in a private house has grown into an award-winning cultural center. In the course of the last decade, Meta House has won several accolades, from "Best Cambodian Art Space" to "South-East-Asia's Top Arts NGO". In a world that is increasingly interconnected, we provide programs and services for individuals and organizations to promote effective for intercultural communication, cross-cultural intelligence, diversity and inclusion.

In the course of the last decade, our center has cooperated with a large number of organizations in and outside of Cambodia, such as United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS), United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), European Union (EU) / European Commission, Institute for Foreign Relations (IFA); Rosa-Luxemburg-Foundation (RLS), Heinrich-Boell-Foundation (HBF), Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FNS); Friedrich-Naumann-Stiftung (FNS); Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ), Freie Universität Berlin (FU), Asia Pacific International Spirits and Wines Alliance (APISWA), Development Alternatives, Inc. (DAI); Handicap International (HI), Save Cambodia's Wildlife (SCW), Khmer Art Action (KAA), Youth for Peace (YfP).

We'd like to thank the Goethe-Institut and the German Embassy for their on-going support. Our German head office receives consultation from the media group Krossover/International Academy Berlin. Meta House/KDKG is a member of the German Business Group (ADW) and the European Chamber of Commerce.

Location:

Meta House Phnom Penh, #48, 12207 Street 228, Phnom Penh, Cambodia

ICBA ARTS COMMITTEE

ICBA ARTS COMMITTEE is an Italian project would exist within ICBA (Italy-Cambodia Business Association, part of The European Chamber of Commerce) however, our rich cultural heritage provides intellectual legitimacy to curate projects within the arts as Italy influenced Europe and the world well beyond its national boundaries. Institutional legitimacy is important to ICBA ARTS COMMITTEE, as this inclusion enables synergy between Italy's cultural values - finally represented in Cambodia - and Eurocham's ever growing business agenda. Highlighting and discussing those influences not only provides ample artistic and educational material but grants the possibility to explore further influences in Cambodia and in the region. The aim of the project is to engage in different art forms and collaborate with a wide range of artists in producing events, reviews, articles, and a running commentary on the flourishing art scene in Cambodia. We should aim to preserve the artistic integrity of the Committee's publications, communication, events, and collaborations, to ensure the longevity of the project.

/ Core Activities

Events Series

Articles, interviews and publications

Artistic oversight and collaborations

Educational activities.

/ Advisory & Honorary Member

Aurelio Flacco, President of the Italian Chamber of Commerce (ICBA)

/ Founding & Executive Members

Gabriele Faja (Director of Soundskool Music, The Piano Shop)

Alessandro Mangano (Architect)

Carlo Santoro (Associate Professor at American University of Phnom Penh)

ADDITIONAL IMAGE CREDITS

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p.25 - Carlo Santoro, My Indigo Blue Jeans, 2022

p.77 - Carlo Santoro, Our Indigo Blue Jeans on Canvas, 2022

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