

# Art Garden

Children's Season  
at the Singapore Art Museum  
Interactive contemporary art fun for 4 to 12 year olds

**14 May to 18 July**  
**SAM at 8Q**

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

For Immediate Release

### **Singapore Art Museum launches inaugural Children's Season**

*One of many educational platforms aimed at inspiring and stimulating young minds through contemporary art*

5 May 2010 – To usher in the mid-year school holidays, the Singapore Art Museum (SAM) will launch *Art Garden: Children's Season at the Singapore Art Museum*, an interactive contemporary art exhibition to engage and entertain the young, and the young at heart. The exhibition, which will see SAM at 8Q transform into a magical 'art garden' filled with artworks inspired by nature, is a clear demonstration of the museum's commitment to use contemporary art as a way for children to explore and appreciate the world in new and different ways.

Targeted at children aged four to 12, *Art Garden: Children's Season at the Singapore Art Museum* features imaginative and interactive works created by both local and international artists. In this whimsical world, children will befriend Walter the rabbit, a giant floating sculpture in the courtyard (Dawn Ng); watch mechanical flowers 'grow' and 'bloom' (Geoffrey Drake-Brockman); walk into a beautifully illustrated enchanted forest (Sandra Lee), observe everyday objects come to life in stop-motion films (Joo Choon Lin); and 'grow' trees and 'divert'

streams with the help of interactive new media (Theodore Watson and Emily Gobeille).

With *Art Garden: Children's Season at the Singapore Art Museum*, SAM demonstrates the relevance of art in our daily lives, showing how contemporary art in particular, is an ideal resource tool for learning and for exploring current issue. By offering fresh twists on reality, the exhibition is designed to stimulate your children's curiosity about the world around them, see things from alternative points of view, while exposing them to diverse topics such as geometry, ecology and science. Relevant activity corners in the galleries and an activity book have been designed to accompany the works and enhance the learning experience.

Mr. Tan Boon Hui, Director of SAM, says, "SAM's contemporary art programming is experiencing increasing visits from a younger audience and it brings us great joy to be able to dedicate such a large-scale exhibition to our next generation of museum-goers, who are growing up with the visual language of contemporary art. Besides growing a young audience for the contemporary arts in Singapore, fun and accessible programmes like *the Art Garden* show how contemporary art can be a powerful tool for learning and discovery. We hope to inspire new ways of thinking among our young visitors and encourage them to see the world around us in a different light."

*Art Garden: Children's Season* is just one of SAM's many efforts to increase the impact and capacity of its education programmes with contemporary art. Also opening this month is The Learning Gallery, an interactive learning playhouse showcasing contemporary artworks for younger visitors from SAM's collection, as well as the Programme Space, a new workshop space at SAM at 8Q where young participants can encounter the process of art-making and present their own works.

*Art Garden: Children's Season at the Singapore Art Museum* is sponsored by Sing Lun Holdings and Standard Chartered Bank, with Okto as the Supporting TV Channel. It runs from 14 May to 18 July 2010 at SAM at 8Q and is part of the National Heritage Board's (NHB) International Museum Day 2010 (I Love Museums – Kids' edition). To cater to parents and minders accompanying their children to the exhibit, pram parking and benches for chaperones are available at the museum. Activity Guides and adorable merchandise inspired by Walter, and specially created by Dawn Ng, in the form of inflatable toys, tote bags and t-shirts will also be on sale during the exhibition.

-END-

**For more information, please read on:**

**Annex A** – About Art Garden: Children's Season at the Singapore Art Museum

**Annex B** – About the Artists & Their Works

**Annex C** – Complementary Programmes

#### **About Singapore Art Museum**

Opened in January 1996, the mission of the Singapore Art Museum (SAM) is to preserve and present the art histories and contemporary art practices of Singapore and the Southeast Asian region. To date, SAM has amassed one of the world's largest public collection of modern and contemporary Southeast Asian artworks with a growing component in international contemporary art. The museum has presented shows covering both local and international art practices, traditional and cutting edge art expressions. Through strategic alliances with international arts and cultural institutions, SAM has been facilitating visual arts education, exchange, research and development within the region and internationally.

#### **About International Museum Day (IMD) 2010**

NHB's annual museum awareness campaign, *IMD*, is back for its fifth year from 14 to 23 May 2010 at museums island-wide. *IMD 2010* revolves around the theme *I Love Museums – Kids' edition* with the young ones and the young-at-heart taking centre stage and aims to showcase the diversity of museums and cultivate a museum-going culture among the young. *IMD 2010* is held jointly with the Museum Roundtable, a grouping of over 50 museums around Singapore, and features over 40 engaging activities created for kids and families.

The campaign will kickstart with the well-loved *Children's Season* as one of the highlights. This year, *Children's Season* returns on a larger scale with the Singapore Art Museum hosting its inaugural showcase in addition to National Museum of Singapore's third instalment. *Children's Season* is part of the museums' efforts to inspire children through early engagement and learning with museums. For more information, visit [www.museums.com.sg](http://www.museums.com.sg).

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## **Annex A – About Art Garden Children’s Season at the Singapore Art Museum**

**14 May to 18 July 2010**

The Singapore Art Museum will host its inaugural Children’s Season in May. Young people will be introduced to contemporary art in an interactive, supportive and fun family environment. The entire SAM at 8 Queen Street building will be transformed into magical art gardens showcasing artist projects and artworks inspired by nature. Selected for their imagination and interactivity, these displays will be accompanied with captions to engage young visitors with the art works. Activity sheets inspired by the art works will enhance the children’s learning experience. Young visitors can also participate in a series of artists’ workshops and enjoy short film screenings.

Usual exhibition admission charges apply. Free admission for children aged 6 and below. Each child must be accompanied by an adult holding a valid exhibition admission ticket.

### ***Exhibition Venue***

Singapore Art Museum at 8Q, 8 Queen Street, Singapore 188535, (65) 6332 3200, [www.singaporeartmuseum.sg](http://www.singaporeartmuseum.sg)

### ***Opening Hours***

Daily: 10am – 7pm (extended hours on Friday till 9pm). Free admission after 6pm on Fridays; for children under 6 years; Senior Citizens above 60 years (Singaporeans and PR only); NHB member schools and on Open House days.

### ***Admission Fees (Combined SAM and SAM at 8Q)***

Adults: S\$10; Students (with valid student card): S\$5; Senior Citizens (Foreign): S\$5; 20% discount on admission fees for group of 20 pax or more and Family Packages (3 adults + 2 children) S\$30 (up to 5 pax a family)

## Annex B: About the Artists & Their Works

### Walter



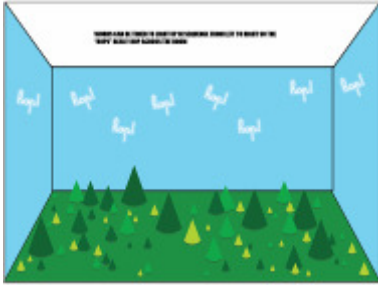
**Dawn Ng**  
**Walter**  
2009  
PVC helium float  
4 x 6 m  
Private Collection

Note: The Walter that is commissioned by SAM will measure 6.7m tall and 10m long. It will be filled with helium and floating in the air.

### Artist Statement

It is unexplainable why and how rabbits have hopped all over pop culture throughout the centuries — while you may not know that most children in Japan believe rabbits live on the moon where they make *mochi*, you probably are familiar with the Easter bunny, the White Rabbit that led Alice to Wonderland or le Parisienne Fifi Lapin. Bunnies pop up repeatedly in our world to tell us stories. We invent and reinvent them as magicians, accomplices, runaways and nymphs. They conspire with us, lure us, fool us, tease us but one thing for certain is that in the brief moment of their existence, they make us see the world a little differently. My guerrilla style pop-up installation, *Walter*, is a curious colossal bunny who pops up in common spaces across Singapore. *Walter's* incongruence to his environment forces us to re evaluate oftentimes overlooked and over familiar places by invoking a sense of surprise and wonder among those who chance upon him. By inserting a surreal and naive object within the “invisible ordinary,” I want to enable others to discover the extraordinary in their everyday.

## Walter's Garden



### **Dawn Ng** **Walter's Garden**

2010

Artificial luxury grass, LED hand scrawled signs, Custom designed grass cushion pieces

5 x 7 m

Singapore Art Museum collection

### **Artist Statement**

I wanted to create a play space made from basic shapes, textures and colours. In this digital age, I think children risk losing their imaginations as they live and play in such over-designed realms of computer games and movies which are non-tactile. The deconstructed simplicity of this garden allows children to exercise their imagination through touch instead of dictating how and what they should imagine. What is absent in this space encourages kids to imagine just as much as what is present in it. Walter, for one, is missing. Yet the words "hop!" magically light up on the walls. Where did he go? Where is he hiding? Has he shrunk into such a tiny bunny that we can no longer see him? Other curious objects enable them to create their own stories - a field of grass that grows indoors and over 200 grass cushions which they can squeeze, gather, move, scatter or most likely start a pillow fight with.

### **About the Artist**

**Dawn Ng** is a promising young artist whose debut solo collage exhibition, *Singapore Cuts* was held at Know It Nothing in 2009. Her paper plane installation, *I fly like paper I get high like planes* at Black Out received much press across Channel News Asia and the Business Times, who coined her new art Tour De Force of the Singapore art scene. She was also commissioned by Loof and White Rabbit to produce light installations. Most recently, she was shortlisted for her mixed media work, *Massive Attack*, for the Singapore Art Exhibition 2009 at SAM.

## **Floribots**



**Geoffrey Drake-Brockman**

### ***Floribots***

2005

Paper, textile, stainless steel, lacquered  
MDF, electric motors, electronics,  
microcontroller installed  
140 x 770 x 370 cm  
Artist Collection

The Artist acknowledges assistance by Onesteel,  
ArtsWA and ArtSource.

Click to view video: [Floribots](#)

## **Artist Statement**

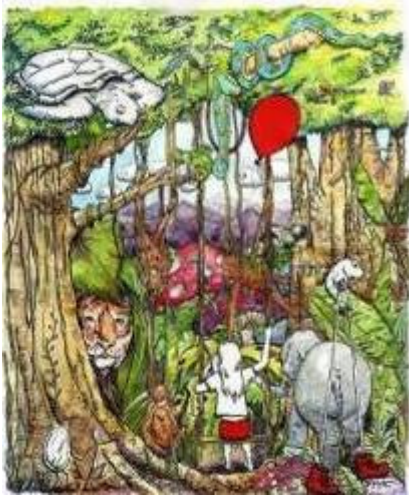
The beauty of a flower is simple, pure, and joyful. The majesty of the annual - blooming for one short moment, before withering away - plays out the tragedy of life in a single act: "we grow, we are beautiful, we die"; while the solitary flower domesticated in a pot is emblematic of a perfect suburban Summer's day. The robot flowers of *Floribots* overlay familiar notions of flowers growing in pots with an uneasy shifted reality of technological autonomy and virtual agency.

Children will step into a field of mechanised flowers which can sense audience movement. Featuring 128 of flowers in total, each individual flower starts as a green bud - which can then grow to its full height and suddenly bloom pink and yellow. Soon afterwards, the bloom will wither back to its flowerpot and return to a bud state. Younger children can create their own flowers by learning to fold origami flowers. Geometric shape puzzles will enable children to learn about mathematics. Story boards on the plant cycle will expose children to elementary science through hands on activities in the interactive corner. For older children, they will get a peek into the world of mechanics in learning how *Floribots* flowers operate.

## **About the Artist**

**Geoffrey Drake-Brockman** is an established artist who has been exhibiting since 1986 with a major solo exhibition *The Identity Appliance* at Goddard de Fiddes in 1997. He was awarded the Sir Charles Gardiner Annual Art Award in 1993, and the 1997 AIIA Telstra AFR National Award for Excellence in Information Technology. In collaboration with Richie Kuhaupt he installed the work *Geoffrey* at The Verge, Perth and the work *Chromeskin* at the National Gallery of Australia, the latter work winning the 'highly commended award' in the 2001 National Sculpture Prize at the National Gallery of Australia. In 2005, his robotic work *Floribots* won the People's Choice at the National Sculpture Prize.

## **The Enchanted Forest**



**Sandra Lee**  
***The Enchanted Forest***  
2010  
Mixed media  
Dimensions variable  
Singapore Art Museum Collection



Artist impression of *The Enchanted Forest*, Sandra Lee, 2010, Singapore

## **Artist Statement**

I am a storyteller, thus, my work is characterized by a strong narrative sense. I use traditional/classic Western children's literature (fairytales and nursery rhymes which I still enjoy reading as an adult) as a platform, infuse the tales with my own thoughts and feelings, which inspires me to create and develop my own characters and stories. With my mixed heritage, some works have a distinctively Asian flavour.

My favourite medium is oil on canvas. However, following a near-fatal sailing accident in 2004, I began to explore with pen & ink as I could lie on my tummy and continue drawing. Initially the drawings were meant to be sketches for future paintings but they started to take on a life of their own, and became more resolved. The following year, I discovered quite by fluke that I could do crosshatching on a very large scale. I had submitted some of these sketches when the New Majestic Hotel called for proposals for wall murals in their rooms. They loved it and wanted it reproduced as-is, but 50 times larger. Thus I started exploring doing the same on large canvases.

My work reflects my interest in things that might or might not be, things that are not solved for us. The solutions to these mysteries lie in a place that is close to us yet far away – our imagination. Each piece of my work represents a chapter in a story that is still unfolding - not necessarily in sequence, nor may it be the same story. There appear to be a different things going on, yet it is all linked somehow. When you eventually look at the collection as a whole, the connections are visible. Generally it's all about different things that affect me personally, even more so now than before - my encounters with life and love; hopes, fears, trials and tribulations. Perhaps it is the hope that in the reality of this sometimes harsh world that we live in that I hang on to that Fairy Tale ending - the happily Ever After, that everything's going to be ok.

### **About the Artist**

**Sandra Lee Mei Yan** is a talented artist whose debut solo exhibition, *Did You Ever See Such A Thing In Your Life* was held at Esplanade in 2004. Since then she has participated in many exhibitions and was chosen by the National Arts Council and LASALLE-SIA College of the Arts to be the first artist- in- residence at the Marina Mandarin Hotel. Her second solo exhibition, *The Plight of The Ever After* was held at the Marina Mandarin in 2007 following the completion of her residency. Prior to this, Lee was awarded an Honourable Mention in the Philip Morris Singaporean-Asean 2003 competition.

**STOP in here and get into the MOTION!**



**Joo Choon Lin**  
***From Green to Brown to***  
***Black to Brown to Green***  
2009  
Production still  
Artist Collection



**Joo Choon Lin**  
***Come Out And Play! 1***  
2008  
Tiles, Cement, Basin, Silk-screen on Varnish  
120 x 50 x 40 cm  
Artist Collection

Click to see video: [Come Out And Play! 1](#)

Click to see video: [Come Out And Play! 2](#)

### **About the work**

Joo Choon Lin's stop-motion animation is made from multiple and meticulously executed drawings. Her work incorporates live action and localised context to create narratives that blur fact and fiction. For her, the sketches also take the form of sculptural marquette. Joo's drawings are spontaneous, as she nurtures her story each day with make-belief and with surreal consequences. In flux, every 'new' drawing (new frame in this case) contains a residual memory of the previous drawing—haunting and scar-like. Every subsequent frame escapes, and dissipates from the previous: One event leads to the next without a script. While not deliberate, there is a concurrent mood of escapism and introspection in Joo's work, reflecting the artist's nonchalant attitude to the hype of new media, preferring something more material and craftlike.

The artist has created three rooms for her animations and this is born of the artist's intention to develop her work in a way that it can be experienced in an environment rather than being confined to a screen alone. In this way, she includes the audience in her installation so that they can experience being part of her work as well.

She has included sculptural works as extensions of her animation, for example, wash-basins with fixated water and still images, this static quality creates an experience as if you have wandered into one of her animation frames. She has also reinvented a SAM at 8Q washroom where one of the animation was filmed, taking the audience into her vision and imagination of everyday spaces.

### **About the Artist**

**Joo Choon Lin** is an up-and-coming artist whose debut solo exhibition *Come Out And Play at 8Q!*, was held in the Singapore Art Museum at 8Q in 2009. She has also participated extensively in several group exhibitions both locally such as *Lost in the City* at the National Museum of Singapore and internationally such as the 4<sup>th</sup> Fukuoka Asian Art Triennale (2009), Roppongi Art Night at the Mori Art Museum, Japan, the 17<sup>th</sup> Stuttgart Festival of Animated Film in Stuttgart, Germany and the *The Artists Village: B.E.A.U.T.Y* Show at ASTRONOMICAL FRONTIERS, BKS Garage in Copenhagen, Denmark. She was also nominated for Best Animation at the 1<sup>st</sup> Singapore Short Film Awards held at the Substation, Singapore.

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## **Funky Forest**



**Theodore Watson and Emily Gobeille**

***Funky Forest***

2007

Interactive video installation

Artist collection

Click to see video: [Funky Forest, 2007](#)

### **Artist Statement**

*Funky Forest* is an immersive interactive ecosystem where children can manage the resources to influence the environment around them. Streams of water flowing on the floor can be diverted with rocks and logs to make the different parts of the forest grow. If a tree does not receive enough water it withers away but by pressing their body into the forest children can create new trees based on their shape and character. As they explore the forest they discover that it is inhabited by sonic life forms that depend on a thriving ecosystem to survive.

## **Daisies**



**Theodore Watson**

***Daisies***

2005

Interactive video installation

Artist collection

Click to see video: [Daisies, 2005](#)

### **Artist Statement**

*Daisies* is an interactive field of flowers that reacts to the movement of children's bodies. When the children walk over the flowers or cast their shadow on them the flowers wilt.

away and retract only to grow back anew a few seconds later. This simple, responsive interaction allows the children to interpret it and play with it in their own way.

## **About the Artists**

### **Theodore Watson**

Theodore Watson is an artist, designer and experimenter whose work is born out of the curiosity and excitement of designing experiences that come alive and invite people to play. Theodore's work ranges from creating new tools for artistic expression, experimental musical systems, to immersive, interactive environments with full-body interaction. His recent work includes the *Eyewriter*, an eye controlled drawing tool, Graffiti Research Lab's *Laser Tag, laser graffiti system* and *Funky Forest*, an immersive interactive ecosystem for young children. Theodore works together with Zachary Lieberman on openFrameworks, which is an open source library for writing creative code in C++.

Theodore Watson's work has been shown at MoMA, Tate Modern, Ars Electronica, The Sundance Film Festival, Res Fest, REMF, Cinekid, Montevideo, OFFF, SHIFT, ICHIM, The Creators Series, Deitch Projects, Eyebeam, Pixel Gallery, Museum N8 Amsterdam. In 2010 the *Eyewriter* project won the Future Everything award and the Design of The Year award for the interactive category.

### **Emily Gobeille**

Emily Gobeille is an artist and award-winning designer who is intrigued by the way that children think and play and enjoys their energy and spontaneity. The ability to think like a children shows in her work. It is always playful, imaginative and teeters on the line between reality and fantasy. Emily had an affinity for telling stories and is interested in every bit of design in nature.

In 2000 Emily received her BFA in design from Massachusetts College of Art and Design in Boston and began her professional career as a print and interactive designer working with companies including Razorfish and Big Blue Dot, a studio specializing in design for children. After working for three years she moved to New York to attend the Design and Technology program at Parson's School of Design.

During her studies she focused on interactive and educational media for young children, including projects for the Cooper-Hewitt National Design Museum in NY and her Master's thesis project, *The Best Fort Ever*, an interactive DVD fable for children which she created a story, puppets and animation and developed a new interaction experience by extending the interactivity of the DVD platform for young children's development.

Since completing her Masters degree in 2005, she has been working in the motion graphics industry as an art director and designer - including work for Nickelodeon, MTV, Food Network and the Smithsonian channel. She also continues to work on her own projects, designs and creations. A recent project is *Funky Forest*, an interactive ecosystem that allows children to experience an immersive environment, where they manage a virtual forest by creating trees with their bodies, and then diverting water flowing for the digital waterfall to feed the forest. The types of sounds and creatures that inhabit the forest depend on the amount of water the forest receives.

## **Annex C: More Art Garden activities**

### ***Meet the Artists***

**Sat, 15 May**  
**2pm – 2.30pm**

Sandra Lee, artist of *The Enchanted Forest* offers a peek into her creative process and invites you into a world of quirky characters. Drawing from diverse influences such as fairytales and nursery rhymes, Sandra has created a life sized diorama from watercolour paintings for the *Art Garden* exhibition where every child can take on the role of an explorer and embark on their own adventure.

**Sun, 16 May**  
**2pm – 2.30pm**

Joo Choon Lin, artist of *STOP in here and get into the MOTION!* will share anecdotes about her creation of *Come Out And Play at 8Q!* Working with just basic equipment: a camera, and charcoal, chalk and pastels, the public spaces of SAM at 8Q were transformed into a lively animation about the battle between the Ringmaster and the chocolate monsters. Based on a simple storyline and by allowing the space to shape the narrative, Choon Lin's animation is both playful and imaginative.

### ***Stencil Fun with artist Choon Lin***

**Sun, 16 May**  
**3pm – 5pm**

Explore the dimensions of drawing using stencils to create an original design of your own in this hands-on workshop with artist Joo Choon Lin.