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## 'Holding Up a Mirror': Malaysia's first Venice Biennale



Anurendra Jegadeva, 'Yesterday, in a Padded Room', PVC cushions with printed and painted canvas, 2 painted thrones with perspex boxes, painted inserts and LED lights, printed floor covering on wood Variable dimensions, 2015. Courtesy: National Taiwan Museum of Fine Art.

### MUST SEE - Exhibitions

By Katherine Keener (<https://www.art-critique.com/en/author/katherinek/>)  
Published on 9 May 2019 at 11 h 45 min (<https://www.art-critique.com/en/2019/05/>)

For Malaysia's inaugural pavilion at the 58<sup>th</sup> International Art Exhibition at the Venice Biennale, the theme and title of the exhibition, 'May You Live in Interesting Times,' is particularly fitting. For their first ever pavilion, the Malaysian National Art Gallery will present an exhibition by the name 'Holding Up a Mirror.' It will feature four Malaysian artists: Anurendra Jegadeva, H.H. Lim, Ivan Lam, and Zulkifli Yusoff and is directed and curated by Lim Wei-Ling, a Kuala Lumpur-based gallery owner.

'May You Live in Interesting Times' is extra pertinent to Malaysia as their pavilion is not only their first but marks one year since their 2018 election. At that historic moment, the country was united the around the Pakatan Harapan coalition, which, according to the press release, 'ushered in a new era of Malaysian identity.' 'Holding Up a Mirror' is thus a dialogue concerning notions of identity, whether it be in the midst of political, economic, or social changes. ^

Likewise, the artists representing Malaysia reflect the multi-cultural history of the country – a history that is centuries in the making. Each artist is, in fact, Malaysian but they each have a different origin and ethnicity. Their installations work through their own concepts of self when compared to a larger body and they quite literally represent four individual takes on identity in the context of a singular country. Utilizing paint, video, installation, and sound, the artists ‘demonstrate that identity is heterogeneous and in constant flux; it is a weave of many personal narratives into a shared fabric of public consciousness that is at once diverse and unified.’

For Wei-Ling, the exhibition is a massive accomplishment in bringing Malaysia’s art to the world stage. Following the 2018 election, she wrote the new leader of Malaysia stating that the country should be represented at Venice as it fit in with their vote of national pride. Mahathir Bin Mohamad, Malaysia’s Prime Minister said (<https://news.artnet.com/exhibitions/small-countries-bootstrap-way-venice-biennale-1536712>) that if she could figure out the fundraising, then he would support the pavilion. Concerning her role, she said in a press release: ‘I have always questioned why the country has never been represented on this major international art platform, and it’s been my ambition to spearhead Malaysia’s first National Pavilion.’ Now, she, with the help of their sponsors and the artists she’s worked with, have made it happen. In her eyes, the artists ‘have already established stellar careers and carved solid reputations, both in Malaysia and abroad. Malaysia’s inaugural National Pavilion is a first step forward for the country and I hope it will mark the beginning of many more National Pavilions.’

*‘Holding Up a Mirror’ will run from May 11<sup>th</sup> through November 24<sup>th</sup> at the Palazzo Malipiero.*

([https://www.art-critique.com/en/2019/05/holding-up-a-mirror-malaysias-first-venice-biennale/zukifli-yusof\\_kebun-pak-awang\\_2010-2/](https://www.art-critique.com/en/2019/05/holding-up-a-mirror-malaysias-first-venice-biennale/zukifli-yusof_kebun-pak-awang_2010-2/))

Zulkifli Yusoff, ‘Kebun Pak Awang’, Wood, Resin, Aluminium, Acrylic, Variable dimensions, 2010. Courtesy: Zulkifli Yusoff.

([https://www.art-critique.com/en/2019/05/holding-up-a-mirror-malaysias-first-venice-biennale/zukifli-yusof\\_kebun-pak-awang\\_2010-1/](https://www.art-critique.com/en/2019/05/holding-up-a-mirror-malaysias-first-venice-biennale/zukifli-yusof_kebun-pak-awang_2010-1/))

Zulkifli Yusoff, ‘Kebun Pak Awang’, Wood, Resin, Aluminium, Acrylic, Variable dimensions, 2010. Courtesy: Zulkifli Yusoff.

([https://www.art-critique.com/en/2019/05/holding-up-a-mirror-malaysias-first-venice-biennale/h-h-lim\\_four-seasons\\_2019/](https://www.art-critique.com/en/2019/05/holding-up-a-mirror-malaysias-first-venice-biennale/h-h-lim_four-seasons_2019/))

H.H. Lim, ‘Four Seasons’, Mixed media, 220 x 360 cm (Triptych), 2019. Courtesy: Zoo Zone Art Forum.

([https://www.art-critique.com/en/2019/05/holding-up-a-mirror-malaysias-first-venice-biennale/h-h-lim\\_timeframes\\_2019/](https://www.art-critique.com/en/2019/05/holding-up-a-mirror-malaysias-first-venice-biennale/h-h-lim_timeframes_2019/))

H.H. Lim, ‘Timeframes’, Mixed media installation, Variable dimensions, 2019. Courtesy: Zoo Zone Art Forum.



([https://www.art-critique.com/en/2019/05/holding-up-a-mirror-malaysias-first-venice-biennale/ivan-lam\\_one-inch-sketch\\_2019-2/](https://www.art-critique.com/en/2019/05/holding-up-a-mirror-malaysias-first-venice-biennale/ivan-lam_one-inch-sketch_2019-2/))

Ivan Lam, sketch of 'One Inch', Multimedia installation, Variable dimensions, 2019. Courtesy: Ivan Lam

([https://www.art-critique.com/en/2019/05/holding-up-a-mirror-malaysias-first-venice-biennale/ivan-lam\\_one-inch-sketch\\_2019-1/](https://www.art-critique.com/en/2019/05/holding-up-a-mirror-malaysias-first-venice-biennale/ivan-lam_one-inch-sketch_2019-1/))

Ivan Lam, sketch of 'One Inch', Multimedia installation, Variable dimensions, 2019. Courtesy: Ivan Lam

(<https://www.art-critique.com/en/2019/05/holding-up-a-mirror-malaysias-first-venice-biennale/attachment/10490/>)

Anurendra Jegadeva, 'Yesterday, in a Padded Room', PVC cushions with printed and painted canvas, 2 painted thrones with perspex boxes, painted inserts and LED lights, printed floor covering on wood Variable dimensions, 2015. Courtesy: National Taiwan Museum of Fine Art.

([https://www.art-critique.com/en/2019/05/holding-up-a-mirror-malaysias-first-venice-biennale/anurendra-jegadeva\\_yesterday-in-a-padded-room\\_2015-2/](https://www.art-critique.com/en/2019/05/holding-up-a-mirror-malaysias-first-venice-biennale/anurendra-jegadeva_yesterday-in-a-padded-room_2015-2/))

Anurendra Jegadeva, 'Yesterday, in a Padded Room', PVC cushions with printed and painted canvas, 2 painted thrones with perspex boxes, painted inserts and LED lights, printed floor covering on wood Variable dimensions, 2015. Courtesy: National Taiwan Museum of Fine Art.

'Holding Up a Mirror' (<https://www.art-critique.com/en/tag/holding-up-a-mirror/>) 58th International Art Exhibition (<https://www.art-critique.com/en/tag/58th-international-art-exhibition/>) Anurendra Jegadeva (<https://www.art-critique.com/en/tag/anurendra-jegadeva/>) H.H. Lim (<https://www.art-critique.com/en/tag/h-h-lim/>) Ivan Lam (<https://www.art-critique.com/en/tag/ivan-lam/>) Lim Wei-Ling (<https://www.art-critique.com/en/tag/lim-wei-ling/>) Malaysia (<https://www.art-critique.com/en/tag/malaysia/>) Malaysia pavilion (<https://www.art-critique.com/en/tag/malaysia-pavilion/>) Venice Biennale (<https://www.art-critique.com/en/tag/venice-biennale/>) Zulkifli Yusoff (<https://www.art-critique.com/en/tag/zulkifli-yusoff/>)



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Art Gallery of Ontario's bold, new, and cheap membership campaign (<https://www.art-critique.com/en/2019/05/art-gallery-of-ontarios-bold-new-and-cheap-membership-campaign/>)

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Katherine Keener (<https://www.art-critique.com/en/author/katherinek/>) / 14 May 2019

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2019 Golden Lion winners announced at the Venice Biennale (<https://www.art-critique.com/en/2019/05/2019-golden-lion-winners-announced-at-the-venice-biennale/>)

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The Revival Of Psyche's Beauty: Wiseman's Interior, Richter's Transcendence, and... (<https://www.art-critique.com/en/2019/05/aesthetic-life/>)

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Five must-see London exhibitions (<https://www.art-critique.com/en/2019/05/five-must-see-london-exhibitions/>)

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## TRAFFICKING



(<https://www.art-critique.com/en/2019/05/french-court-sentences-art-dealers-with-prison-time-for-creating-fake-genuine-works-by-rodin/>)

French court sentences art dealers with prison time for creating... (<https://www.art-critique.com/en/2019/05/french-court-sentences-art-dealers-with-prison-time-for-creating-fake-genuine-works-by-rodin/>)

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Katherine Keener (<https://www.art-critique.com/en/author/katherine/>) / 2 May 2019

## Must see!

(<https://www.art-critique.com/en/2019/05/aesthetic-life/>)

**The Revival Of Psyche's Beauty: Wiseman's Interior, Richter's Transcendence, and The...** (<https://www.art-critique.com/en/2019/05/aesthetic-life/>)

*April, 27, New York City: Chelsea and the new construction in the Hudson Yards, a strange renaissance of contemporary culture and art is flourishing. This past April, the Paul...*

(<https://www.art-critique.com/en/2019/05/five-must-see-london-exhibitions/>)

**Five must-see London exhibitions** (<https://www.art-critique.com/en/2019/05/five-must-see-london-exhibitions/>)

*In London, as the days get warmer and the sun stays out longer, it's tempting to spend every possible moment outside in the parks or in a garden sipping a G&T. However, if...*

(<https://www.art-critique.com/en/2019/05/shades-of-hope-the-colour-purple-at-neptune-theatre/>)

**Shades of Hope- The Colour Purple at Neptune Theatre** (<https://www.art-critique.com/en/2019/05/shades-of-hope-the-colour-purple-at-neptune-theatre/>)

*Right now in Halifax, Nova Scotia, the Canadian major theatre premiere of The Colour Purple is taking audiences by storm at Neptune Theatre. I had heard as much from...*

(<https://www.art-critique.com/en/2019/05/shipwreck-that-killed-hundreds-shown-at-the-venice-biennale/>)

**Shipwreck that killed hundreds shown at the Venice Biennale** (<https://www.art-critique.com/en/2019/05/shipwreck-that-killed-hundreds-shown-at-the-venice-biennale/>)

*Venice is a city known for boats. Throughout history, it has been a navel superpower, and today, given its 150 canals, boats are still a main way to travel – and not just for...*

(<https://www.art-critique.com/en/2019/05/art-gallery-of-ontarios-bold-new-and-cheap-membership-campaign/>)



### LEADING LIGHTS

Art Gallery of Ontario's bold, new, and cheap membership campaign

(<https://www.art-critique.com/en/2019/05/2019-golden-lion-winners-announced-at-the-venice-biennale/>)

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(<https://www.art-critique.com/en/2019/05/art-gallery-of-ontarios-bold-new-and-cheap-membership-campaign/>)

Katherine Keener  
(<https://www.art-critique.com/en/author/katherinek/>)  
14 May 2019



2019 Golden Lion winners  
announced at the Venice

Biennale

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MUST SEE - Trade shows

The Revival Of Psyche's  
Beauty: Wiseman's Interior,

Richter's Transcendence...

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