

"Islands
in the Stream"

alamak! for Venice Art Biennale 2017

“ISLANDS IN THE STREAM”

13 May - 24 September, 10 am - 6 pm (Closed on Mondays / Free Entry)

Press Days: 10th - 12th May, 10 am - 6 pm

Opening Cocktail: 3 - 5 pm on Thursday 11th May

Venue: Arsenale Docks, S. Pietro di Castello 40 (Canale di San Pietro) 30122 Venezia

Alamak! Project launches young Asian artists with multimedia exhibition “Islands in the Stream”, curated by Yoichi Nakamuta and Stefano Casciani, for the opening of the 57th Art Biennale in Venice.

The exhibition presents Asian artists who have, like others of their generation, decided to live on a "nomadic" base, working in different countries and matching their skills with different economical/social/cultural situations, globally. Their concentration on topics of representation/discussion of social, cultural, even scientific issues, makes them and their work a new point of reference for the art audience and general public.

The works shown at Alamak! Project in Venice can be considered as "terraferma" - solid ground in the stream of liquid society, where people can stop, stand and understand their condition by looking at the meaning/significance of the world.

Kawita Vatanajyankur investigates the condition and obligations of women in contemporary society, by videos with strong performances of female bodies engaged in difficult balancing acts. **Anon Pairot** looks deeper into the meaning of everyday objects, with the parody full size model Changrai Ferrari car, made out of rattan by skilled Thai craftsmen, or with the iconic rendering of rice sacks from his family memories. **Invisible Designs Lab.** plays with matter and sound creating an extraordinary living sculpture, **Kwangho Lee** matches materials and forms in unusual puzzling objects, and **Gabriel Lichaucó** creates an outdoor "Magazines Lounge" taking inspiration from street markets culture.

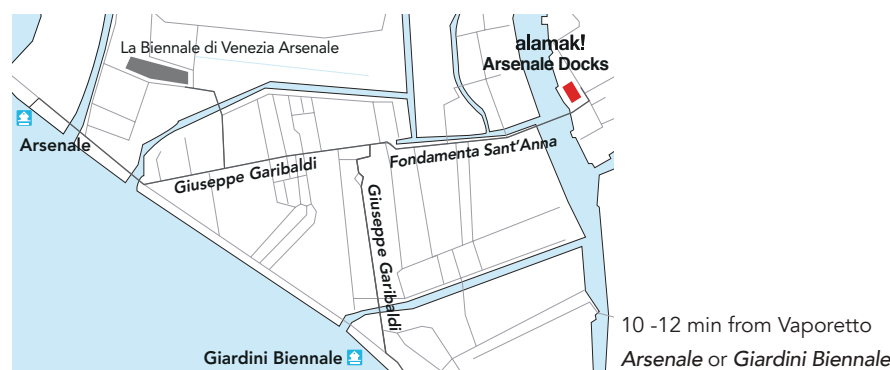
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Alamak! Project was established to give a platform to emerging creative talent in Asia and explore the work of Asian artists and designers as a driving force behind future art and design movements. Taking its name from the word alamak! – a common expression to exclaim surprise in daily conversation throughout South East Asia and Japan, the Project was created by Yoichi Nakamuta with the intention to provoke an appraisal of contemporary creativity in the region. The alamak!project aims to tour the World with a series of events and exhibitions to illustrate and give rise to these creative undercurrents driving art and design in Asia.

Press / Communication

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alamak! project

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"Islands in the Stream"

Featured Artists



Anon Pairot *Thailand*

Anon is an artist especially interested in mixing art and design by objects which express his cultural references to and his experience in the asian world and daily life. He sees even the processes of industrial manufacturing and marketing as stages of social action to improve people's quality and conscience of life. In his words, "Design is the art of changing people's valuation process." His witty and ironical art works deal with the excess of value that common taste gives to products as status symbols: cars, fashion accessories, weapons or simple devices are transformed by his art in mementoes of the impermanence of material things.

According to Pairot, design is about people's problems. In an interview with DPI magazine, Pairot said that he wanted to create and produce something that people would love to have and interact with for its practical use: "Design museums are not just to keep my design works in glass boxes but [to] use them in everyday life, too ... Things on Earth come from a kind of creation, either man-made or natural. And I see their value as equal in terms of one function only: to solve people's problems." As a Thai citizen, Pairot believes that design from his country was undervalued, therefore in his design and art works he often focuses on traditional Thai construction techniques and materials. Despite much overseas experience and success (his works have been exhibited in fairs and art shows in galleries, in Thailand, Singapore and Europe) Pairot is still drawn by the potential of Bangkok and Thailand. "Nobody knows what will happen next in Bangkok. It's a city filled with chaos and complexity. No other city is so stimulating. What we seek daily is to change invisible charm into a miraculous charm. "

Kawita Vatanajyankur *Thailand*

Kawita is a Thai-Australian video artist: she creates works that offer a powerful examination of the psychological, social and cultural ways of viewing and valuing the challenges of women's everyday labour. In her staged performances, Vatanajyankur undertakes physical experiments that playfully, often painfully, test women bodies' limits - a challenge that is both unavoidably compelling and uncomfortable to watch. The alluring, luminous colours in Vatanajyankur's work are distinctive of the artist's aesthetic and tap into a globalized and digitally networked visual language of consumption and instant gratification.

Since graduating with Distinction in 2011 from BA Fine Arts at RMIT University, Melbourne, Australia, Kawita has held numerous solo and group exhibitions at Australian's most significant public institutions and museums including Centre for Contemporary Photography (CCP), Australian Centre for Photography (ACP), Federation Square (Big Screen), Shepparton Art Museum (SAM), Campbelltown Arts Centre, and Royal Exhibition Building. Vatanajyankur is currently represented by Stills Gallery, Sydney, Australia who also presented her work at the Sydney Contemporary Art Fair (2015) and Melbourne Art Fair (2014). Vatanajyankur has also exposed her work in many countries around the world including 'PROXIMITY: An art exhibition of distance and relativity' at The National Museum, Szczecin, Poland, 'The Ice Shaver' at Sencus Luoghi per l'Arte Contemporanea, Florence, Italy, 'Thailand Eye' at Saatchi Gallery, London, United Kingdom, 'Thailand Eye' at the Bangkok Arts and Culture Centre, La Movida, Biblioteca Municipal de Barranco, Lima, Peru, and 'Art Normal' in collaboration with Duangrit Bunnag at Rachaburi, Thailand. Kawita Vatanajyankur's work is held in private collections in Australia and Asia.

Kawita's exhibit is kindly supported by Petch Osathanugrah



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Invisible Designs Lab. Japan

Invisible Designs Lab is an artist collective of composers, visual artists and other technicians.

The team leader Kenjiro Matsuo has a long career as a composer, working in the medium of art and experimenting with manipulating sounds in conjunction with various materials. Following a joint performance for a Issey Miyake show in Paris in 2010, the group embarked on an unstoppable journey to creating sound performances, crossing over the borders of art, performance and products. In 2013 the group created a band called Z-Machine, that manages the rarity of blending both analogue and electronic sounds. The music act already attracts a huge real life audience.

KO-TONE is a limited edition automatic playing device with no electricity but only with a power of nature. A ball triggers sound as it rolls down unsteadily, falling off sometimes. The movement seems reminiscent of life itself - going too far, making mistakes, living with challenges and sometimes failing.

The tones played by this work would suggest something to our daily lives. Like the title of this tune by Bach. Johann Sebastian Bach – Joy of Man's Desiring BWV147

The instrument is defined as "music" itself and symbolises a mixture of art, design and music that escapes the borders of categorization.

Much like the disparate mix of its creators - artist, composer and technician, the Ko-Tone is fluid in its interpretation as kinetic art or musical instrument.

Kwangho Lee South Korea

Kwangho is a South Korean artist. He began to find, look and approach things in the way his grandfather (a farmer who passed away in 2005) would have done; giving new meaning and function to everyday objects and materials. From industrial materials to traditional techniques, He uses various mediums for his works. The common factor to all of Kwangho's work is his knowledge and interpretation of the material he uses, and the confidence of the uniqueness he can portray through his works.

'The Obsession Series' started as an extended work of the 'knot-beyond the inevitable', initiated at 'Craft Punk' - a project by Fendi in 2009. The inspiration and methodology is identical and the shapes resemble the simplest forms possible. This allows Kwangho to concentrate on the material and weaving method. The reward of 'Obsession' is that the monotonous and repetitive labour of weaving, gives inspiration and motivation for the next piece, as well as the pursuit to discover infinite possibilities and proportions in every woven piece created.

'The Moment of Eclipse Series' started out in 2014 as an in depth discovery of the moment when materials meet, or join together. The title comes from a short science fiction story written by Brian Aldiss in 1969, which Kwangho thought expressed his new series dramatically. Up until then, he had worked with marble+marble, copper+enamel, steel+steel, and had been trying to describe the moment of instant union.

Ever since he has shown in various galleries world wide, also participating in group projects and major international exhibitions. His work is kept as a permanent collection at the Montreal museum of fine arts and San Francisco museum of modern art.



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Magazine Lounge designed by **Gabriel Lichauco** *The Philippines*



Gabriel Lichauco holds a Master's degree in Industrial Design from Scuola Politecnica di Design. He has been practicing design since 2005, the same year he established his design firm Openstudio.

Openstudio, is a multi-disciplinary design practice based in Manila, Philippines. It focuses on space design, installations and everyday objects by combining references and studies from art, architecture, interiors, industrial design and manufacturing.

To date, Gabriel has participated in several International trade shows and exhibitions, such as Messe Frankfurt Talents, Citem Manila FAME, Design Junction London, Singaplural IFFS (Asian Star in 2014 and as a curator of NEWFOLK, a platform of Filipino designers in 2015), and the Asia Talents of Bangkok's Industrial Echo exhibition.

Las year, Gabriel was invited to participate in an exhibition titled "Alamak!", which brought together artists and designers from Asia. The exhibition, curated by Yoichi Nakamuta, is a response to the theme "21st Century Design After Design" at the XXI Triennale International Exhibition 2016 in Milan.

His recent works are directed towards design/art objects where he collaborated with Czech glass masters, a project by Spektacularis. Participated in Singapore Art Stage, Art Fair Philippines and Fuorisalone at Milan, Italy.

Books selected by Pon Ding (Taiwan) www.pon-ding.com

Curators

Yoichi Nakamuta is a founder of Alamak! Project, an independent editor, producer and curator for art and design. He has been curating art and design exhibitions, including a retrospective of Sori Yanagi, in Singapore, Hong Kong, and Taipei. In 2015 he produced and co-curated with Stefano Casciani the exhibition 'The Alchemists' at Triennale di Milano, then at Singapore Art Museum. In 2016 he curated the exhibition 'alamak! Design in Asia' at the XXI Triennale International Exhibition and 'KISSA KURSI KA' by Gunjan Gupta at the Kochi Art Biennale 2016.

Stefano Casciani is a renowned italian writer, curator and designer: awarded with the Premio Compasso d'Oro ADI (Golden Compass Award) in 2000, he has been Managing Editor of domus magazine for 10 years, from 2001 to 2011. Since 2012 he is Editor in Chief and Publisher of the design review on paper disegno. la nuova cultura industriale (The New Industrial Culture), media partner both for "The Alchemists" and the "Islands in the Stream" exhibitions.

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