After Hope: Videos of Resistance

Asian Art Museum Debuts Exciting, Emotional Short Works from West to East Asia — and Beyond

San Francisco, December 9, 2020 — Hope is an emotion that drives us to imagine, represent, and create different worlds. After Hope: Videos of Resistance invites audiences to immerse themselves in a new kind of multimedia experience from the Asian Art Museum: a series of 54 short videos, from over 60 artists, that explore the role of hope in contemporary art and activism.

Debuting this winter in the museum’s Lee Gallery, and with selections available online for all audiences, After Hope is organized by Abby Chen, head of contemporary art at the Asian Art Museum; Padma Maitland, assistant professor of architectural history and theory at California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo; and Viv Liu, research assistant for
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contemporary art at the Asian Art Museum. Part of a three-part project, After Hope: Videos of Resistance showcases how relevant and accessible video artworks convey the power and potential of global solidarity.

“We are living in the golden age of digital communication with tools and platforms that let anyone film, edit, and share important stories,” says Chen. “I wondered why I wasn’t seeing artworks that used these populist tools to express the urgency of what’s happening in the world right now — but maybe with the same joy, pleasure, and bravado of a music video or YouTube confessional.”

Chen, Maitland, and Liu began by reaching out to artists and curators across the globe, focusing on regions that are not typically represented in museums outside Asia. The result is a revelatory six-and-a-half hours spanning the continent, and beyond, including Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Kazakhstan, Malaysia, Mongolia, Myanmar, Pakistan, Palestine, Taiwan, Thailand, and Turkey.

“After Hope is expansive,” says Maitland. “It touches on environmental degradation and ecofeminism, queer ecologies, art and activism, transgressive histories and speculative futures, censorship, the power of song and music, narratives of exile and diaspora, the loss of identity in the rush to embrace globalized capitalism, but also uprising, sexual liberation, resilience, and the possibility of escape — as well as return.”

In its gallery setting, After Hope: Videos of Resistance plays on a loop 24 hours a day, even while the museum is closed. This means the same videos will never be on view at the same time. Eclectic in nature, each work is very short, many only a few minutes long, encouraging audiences to stay for multiple videos at a time, and to keep coming back for more. Viewers are not expected to absorb the entire six-and-a-half hours in one sitting, but to keep returning, dropping in to experience different parts of the program.

“Every visit will reward audiences with something new to see,” says Liu. “We wanted to offer uniquely personal and ever-evolving experiences. As each visitor creates connections between the videos they happen to encounter, they consider what these artists say about ‘hope,’ and their own ideas of ‘hope’ may change as they keep watching and returning.”

“After Hope ropes in all these fragmented issues and causes and reveals common themes — refuge, renewal, revolution — almost like a chain letter or an exquisite corpse,” explains Chen, referring to the Surrealist game whereby members of a group sequentially contribute a word, or sketch to a composition, with the completed work unveiled only at the end. “It’s a surprisingly emotional experience and people who spend even a little bit of time with these videos, whether in our gallery, or online at home, will come away with a broader, richer, more timely connection to Asia.”

After Hope: Videos of Resistance is one of three parts of an interrelated program produced in collaboration with outside curators and institutions that aims to foster artistic pollination across communities, practices, and perspectives. The other components include a series of
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convenings, including an International Working Group, and a digital platform, AfterHope.com. Maitland is guest curator for all three components.

“The Asian Art Museum’s core collection is filled with amazing traditional art — it’s what we’re best known for, and it gives our audiences a chance to see how the past influences the present,” says Jay Xu, Barbara Bass Bakar Director and CEO of the Asian Art Museum. “After Hope, though, is a critical reminder that Asia has never been one place, that masterpieces that illuminate our essential humanity — as well as the profound shifts of our own century — are still being made today, and that in the digital age, great art is as likely to appear on our phones as it is in a magnificent gallery setting.”

Learn more about the artists, videos, and upcoming programs featured in the exhibition by visiting AfterHope.com and the Asian Art Museum website.

Featured artists:

Agil Abdullayev
Alison Nguyen
Angela Su
Arahmaiani
Ariuntugs
Tserenpil
Araya
Rasdjarmrearnsok
Ashley Yang
Thompson
Basel Abbas and Ruanne Abou-Rahme
Bolortuvshin
Jargalsaikhan
Bonam Kim
Chaw Ei Thein
Chitra Ganesh
Choi Sai-ho
Chulayarnnon
Srirphol
Connie Zheng
Elena Artemenko
Emin Azizbayli
Evgeny
Granilshchikov

Fang Lu
Gazelle Samizay
Guinara Kasimalieva and Muratbek Djumaliev
Htein Lin
Isa Ho
J Triangular
Jane Jin Kaisen
Jeamin Cha
Kia LaBeija
Labkhand Olfatmanesh
Lam Tung Pang
Lausan Collective
Le Mediator
Lo Lai-lai Natalie
Mehregan Pezeshki
Minoosh Zomorodinia
Nguyen Tan Hoang
Nyein Chan Su
Ohm Phanphiroj

Oliver Herring
Orkhan Huseynov
Özgür Atlagan
Reena Saini Kallat
Shoaib Daniyal
Shun Wint Aung
Suthirat Supaparinya
Thukral and Tagra
Tiffany Chung
Tina Takemoto
Tong Wenmin
Tsui Kuang-Yu
Tuguldur Yondonjams
Xiaoze Xie
Yasmin Jahan Nupur
Yelena and Viktor Vorobyev
Yuan Goang-Ming
Zamir Suleymanov
Zeina Barakeh
Zeynep Kayan
Zulfikar Ali Bhutto
Exhibition Organization

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About the Asian Art Museum

Located in the heart of San Francisco, the museum is home to one of the world’s finest collections of Asian art, with more than 18,000 awe-inspiring artworks ranging from ancient jades and ceramics to contemporary video installations. Dynamic special exhibitions, cultural celebrations and public programs for all ages provide rich art experiences that unlock the past and spark questions about the future.

**Information:** 415.581.3500 or [www.asianart.org](http://www.asianart.org)

**Location:** 200 Larkin Street, San Francisco, CA 94102

**Hours:** Thursdays, 1 p.m.–8 p.m. Fridays–Mondays: 10 a.m.–5 p.m. Tuesdays and Wednesdays: Closed

**Admission:** Free for essential workers, SFUSD students, children 12 and under, active duty military. General Admission: $15; Seniors (65+) and Students (13–17): $10. *There are no special exhibition surcharges.*

**Access:** The Asian Art Museum is wheelchair accessible. For more information regarding access: 415.581.3598; TDD: 415.861.2035.

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