

21 YEARS OF GALERIE QUYNH

a group exhibition curated by Thái Hà

Nghĩa Đặng
Đỗ Thanh Lãng
Cian Duggan
Hà Mạnh Thắng
Sue Hajdu

Hoàng Dương Cầm
Ngô Đình Bảo Châu
Nguyễn Huy An

Nguyễn Phương Linh
Trọng Gia Nguyễn
Tuấn Andrew Nguyễn
Phạm Minh Hiếu
Trần Văn Thảo

Vy Trịnh
Liên Trương
Trương Công Tùng

GO 1

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ABOUT GALERIE QUYNH

FOREWORD

from the Founders

A quick search on the internet for the definition of “Commercial Art Gallery” brought up this question and observation:

What’s the difference between an art gallery and a museum?

An art gallery is a private and commercial enterprise curating exhibitions with its portfolio of artists while selling the exhibited artworks. In contrast, a museum is a public and non-commercial institution curating an exhibition program for cultural and educational purposes.

Galerie Quynh finds itself straddling both these definitions.

The gallery was founded in the year 2000 as an online platform by Vietnamese American art historian Quynh Pham and British artist Robert Cianchi with the initial idea of creating a non-profit educational resource that would document and archive the Vietnamese contemporary art scene; however, it quickly became apparent that something more was needed. There were very few active spaces for contemporary art; lack of public institutions for engendering dialogue with the greater public; lack of support – financial, legal and career-wise – for artists trying to find their footing in the art world; lack of professional framing; lack of professional art handling and conservation practices; lack of art critics and writers; the list seemingly endless.

What was not lacking was the large pool of talented and driven artists who were emerging from the pre-Đổi Mới era, where artists’ talents were put to use for the collective benefit of the country but who were now starting to find their individual voices and developing practices that highlighted each artist’s unique views and interests.

From this realisation the gallery began to grow organically to try to fill some of these gaps. Starting with a series of pop-up exhibitions at the Ho Chi Minh City government exhibition house downtown on Lê Thánh Tôn in late 2000, the

gallery opened its first physical space in December 2003 – a small 40-square-meter exhibition room whose impact on the community belied its small size.

Programming was never dictated by the market but rather by a belief in the practices of the artists showcased with the knowledge that, long-term, the best art would endure even if it was not fully understood or commercially viable in the short term. Some of Vietnam’s most established and critically acclaimed artists were given their first gallery show with Galerie Quynh when there was not yet a market for their work.

Today the gallery isn’t just a physical space for the display and sales of art but a living history and testament to the dedication and passion of all the incredible people who were part of the team over 21 years (with brilliant interns and staff who have gone on to become accomplished academics, curators, gallery directors, musicians and more); the hundreds of local and international artists with diverse practices; the curious public who have been surprised, inspired and sometimes bemused by what they have seen at the gallery; and the collectors and patrons from all corners of the globe who have supported the gallery and provided the means to allow us to continue our fight and growth from that tiny 40m² exhibition space at 23 Lý Tự Trọng through to the 600m² space (and 5th forced relocation) we occupy today.

For its 21st anniversary, Galerie Quynh has invited Thái Hà, one of Vietnam’s most dynamic young curators and a gallery alumna, to curate a special exhibition that reflects on the past but more importantly, looks toward the future.

We are so grateful to everyone who has contributed to this journey helping to build an ecosystem and community for art in Vietnam and we thank you for your continued belief in the work we do. It’s been 21 years of meaningful connections, lively and contentious conversations and inspiring and ambitious projects. Every 7 years is a renewal and in our 21st year, we feel like we are just getting started.

INTRODUCTION

Galerie Quynh invites you to celebrate **21 YEARS OF GALERIE QUYNH**, an anniversary exhibition curated by Thái Hà. Featuring 16 artists from the gallery's current roster as well as past collaborations, the exhibition explores the last two decades of Vietnam as captured in the practices of artists showcased through the gallery's platform. The ambition and scope of the works on display attest to the gallery's achievements at this milestone.

From its earliest days of supporting painters working in abstraction, then considered a pioneering genre, throughout the next 20 years, the gallery would support artists who now work at the forefront of contemporary art. At the same time, the gallery helped to expand definitions of Vietnamese art, generating dialogues between artists working locally and in the diaspora. Beyond its exhibitions and commercial activities, it also initiated a range of artist-run community projects in response to the lack of arts education platforms. **21 YEARS OF GALERIE QUYNH** is an exhibition that travels through the last 21 years to look forward. It not only marks an anniversary but also

presents a slice of history, as told through the relentless work of the gallery and the artists in a paradoxical context that is restricting and yet impossibly dynamic.

Certain chronological moments set the scene. In 2003 – the year the gallery founded its physical space – it would have been just over a decade since the trailblazing, Ho Chi Minh City-based Group of 10 organised the first ever exhibition of Vietnamese abstract art, a genre hitherto not recognised by the state (many of the group's artists would later feature in the gallery's earliest programming). A year before that seminal 1992 exhibition, the Soviet Union had collapsed, losing Vietnam a key ally and source of economic aid, prompting it to pursue reforms and re-evaluate its international relations; two years later, the US trade embargo on Vietnam was lifted. As the country opened to the market economy with the introduction of the Đổi Mới policy in 1986, in the decades leading up to 2003, its economic performance would boom yet contrast starkly with its political and social developments.

In such a context, with limited infrastructure that mostly exists to serve a distinct purpose, the work of a gallery extends far beyond that of conventional galleries elsewhere. Alongside artists, the gallery cultivated relationships with audiences and integrated the languages of contemporary art into their visual vernacular. If in 2003, the genre was considered more for those already in the know, two decades later, it has been well and truly cemented into the mainstream, with the constant rise in visitor numbers to the gallery attesting to this transition.

Crucially, earning popularity with viewers holds a different meaning in Vietnam. According to the Institutional Theory of Art proposed by Arthur Danto and George Dickie, galleries, like other institutions in the artworld, hold the power to confer the status of “art” onto an object. While this is true in the Western conception of the artworld, the reality is far more complicated in Vietnam, where the power to define art lies officially with the state and its own cultural institutions. Organisations that fall outside of the state’s framework, but that still operate as an institution in Danto and Dickie’s definition, find themselves in between. The case could thus be made that non-state institutions in Vietnam are, by definition, “alternative spaces”. They embody the work of grassroots organisations, community spaces, and museums, as and when such work is needed.

It is within this context that Galerie Quynh leverages its grey zone status to offer different definitions of art. With its support, artists are uncompromising in turning to satire, critique, humour, and lightness. The gallery is essential in providing greater financial stability, allowing artists to expand their production methods and repertoire of media. Artists could commit to experimentation because the commercial arm of the gallery was never dictated by market demands. To a significant extent, Galerie Quynh’s programming informed the collectorship of Vietnamese contemporary art by supporting artists unafraid to challenge what constitutes “Vietnamese-ness”, “art”, or “Vietnamese art”. In championing artists who work within and outside of *approved* methodologies and subject matters, the gallery entrenches these alternative practices in the public imagination. That viewers come in their numbers speaks to the growing appetite for modes of expression beyond what is sanctioned by the official canon.

21 YEARS OF GALERIE QUYNH, in keeping with the gallery ethos, captures Vietnam through the work of artists, though not in the simplistic sense that their work is “about” Vietnam. In turn, the exhibition also highlights how artists impact the conditions under which they live. Through new and archive works, as well as a seminal performance re-staged especially for the anniversary, **21 YEARS OF GALERIE QUYNH** offers a rare overview of how artistic practices have developed in Vietnam, in spite *and* because of its socio-political landscape.

Exhibiting artists:

Nghĩa Đặng
Đỗ Thanh Lãng
Cian Duggan
Hà Mạnh Thắng
Sue Hajdu
Hoàng Dương Cầm
Ngô Đình Bảo Châu
Nguyễn Huy An
Nguyễn Phương Linh

Trọng Gia Nguyễn
Tuấn Andrew Nguyễn
Phạm Minh Hiếu
Trần Văn Thảo
Vy Trịnh
Liên Trương
Trương Công Tùng

Curator: Thái Hà

FAÇADE & GROUND FLOOR



It is a rare thing to do anything and make it to 21 years. It is rarer still that that thing flourishes, even in a context defined by its lacks. In 21 years, Galerie Quynh has worked within such restricting conditions and managed to make opportunities out of limitations. Leveraging its grey zone status as an institution that nevertheless exists outside of the state's framework, its programming foregrounds the work of artists who consistently challenge approved definitions of art. **21 YEARS OF GALERIE QUYNH** took up the impossible task of covering the last two decades of artists' practices as shown through the gallery's platform, and how they have developed in spite and because of Vietnam's socio-political landscape. The exhibition does not provide a comprehensive overview, not least in recognising that the story of Vietnamese arts cannot and should not be told through the work of the gallery alone. Rather, it offers key moments that anchor viewers in the material realities of living in a socialist-oriented market economy, post-Đổi Mới, post-embargo, but not quite post-socialist.

The exhibition begins even before viewers enter the gallery. On the building's façade, Cian Duggan paints his signature forms. Whether rocks, limbs, or portals, his ambiguous shapes are found on various walls across the city – where he paints is as important as what he paints. That he tags the Galerie Quynh building situates the gallery in the larger city and community out of which it operates. Like the works that follow on the ground floor, the streets are brought into the gallery just as the gallery is brought out. Duggan's forms seem to hover just in front of the gallery's balcony and walls, like a digital simulation grafted onto the surfaces of the physical world. Entering the space, two smaller works UV printed on plexiglass are hung up high and act as connecting portals to the forms on the façade.



Cian Duggan

BLINDING BONE LIGHT

2025

acrylic and wall paint

site-specific mural



Cian Duggan

CENTAUR GARDENER

2025

acrylic and wall paint

site-specific mural



Cian Duggan

LOVELY LEATHER LAKE

2025

acrylic and wall paint

site-specific mural



Cian Duggan

THIS CRAWLING CURE

2025

acrylic and wall paint

site-specific mural

*I desire your romance, your body, these jewels,
put them on me, this lipstick, paint my lips,
make me glamorous, seduce me with perfection,
in arab perfume houses, perverted in opera houses,
with your parades and slogans,
put me to sleep, make me comatose,
I am willing, I am mute*



*Tôi khao khát ái tình của người, thân thể của người,
những món trang sức này, hãy đeo chúng lên tôi,
thời son nầy, hãy tô lên môi, biến tôi thành một
áo ảnh lòng lay, quên đi tôi bằng sự hoàn mỹ,
trong những căn phòng ngập dầu thơm Ả Rập,
tuyệt hoan giữa nơi nhà hát opera, giữa những cuộc
diễn hành và biểu ngữ của người, hãy ru tôi ngủ,
lìm vào cơn mê, tôi cam lòng, vạt vào thính lạng*

Of course, viewers may only notice Duggan's smaller works when looking out from the mezzanine. His elusive figures hide from view, but the imposing presence of the red glow below pique their interest enough to take a peek. Originally installed and performed in 2006, Sue Hajdu's *MAGMA | we're not counting sheep* is especially restaged for **21 YEARS OF GALERIE QUYNH**. The room, entirely covered in mathematically precise pleats of red velvet, is only broken up by a mattress that literally sinks into the floor. On the ceiling are neat rows of artificial red roses adorned with sequined pendants and mirror balls. This perhaps festive, surely voyeuristic, definitely seductive display would be striking enough in itself if it weren't for the two sleepers on the mattress, eyes closed, dead to the world. But the world is not at all dead to this mythical installation. Performed every night for 21 nights from 7 PM - midnight, the work opens the gallery to the outside world, inviting in the usual art crowd as well as the nightcrawlers that pass by Nguyễn Văn Thủ. Young generations of artists and art workers vividly remember this work, if only through the images in its 2006 exhibition catalogue. At the time of its original staging, the work, at least in part, questioned whether the "advent of markets and consumerism in Vietnam [and the modern] social project of defining the self through consumption"^[1] is any less ideological than the centrally planned socialism that existed prior.

19 years later, as Hajdu's work is once again performed at Galerie Quynh, it anchors the exhibition in the socio-political landscape of Vietnam at the time of the gallery's founding in the 2000s. Yet now, with enough time for hindsight, it also presents how the socialist-oriented market economy has evolved and

embedded itself in the lives of the general populace. A survey of Vietnam in 2003 – the year the gallery opened its first physical space – highlights the stark contrasts between the country's economic developments compared to its social and political developments^[2]. With a growing middle class benefiting from an open market, the survey voices concern over the increasing differentiation between the social classes. Further still, it questions whether the ruling party, with a fast-eroding political foundation plagued by its inability to implement policy, is on a road towards ungovernability^[3]. It is difficult to imagine now, even with the recent shifts in power at the time of writing, that governance over the last two decades has been anything but airtight. With economic successes that improve year on year, the pull of the red room seems more magnetising than ever. Viewers are no longer just seduced but willing to be seduced, and the pleasures of such a seduction derive precisely from its artifice. The question no longer asks whether markets and consumerism are more or less ideological; the question assumes that it is, and asks whether knowing this, acknowledging this, makes a modicum of difference.

[1] *MAGMA | we're not counting sheep* (HCMC: Galerie Quynh and a little blah blah, 2006), 13.

[2] Adam Fforde, "Vietnam in 2003: The Road to Ungovernability?" *Asian Survey* 44, no. 1 (2004):121. <https://doi.org/10.1525/as.2004.44.1.121>.

[3] Adam Fforde, "Vietnam in 2003", 129.





Nghĩa Đặng
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Vy Trịnh
Liên Trương
Trương Công Tùng

curated by Thái Hà

GET 1



Cian Duggan

THIS OLD, OLD WEATHER

2025

enamel on UV printed plexiglass

40 × 60 cm



Cian Duggan

THE WET NEST

2024

enamel on UV printed plexiglass

40 × 50 cm



Sue Hajdu

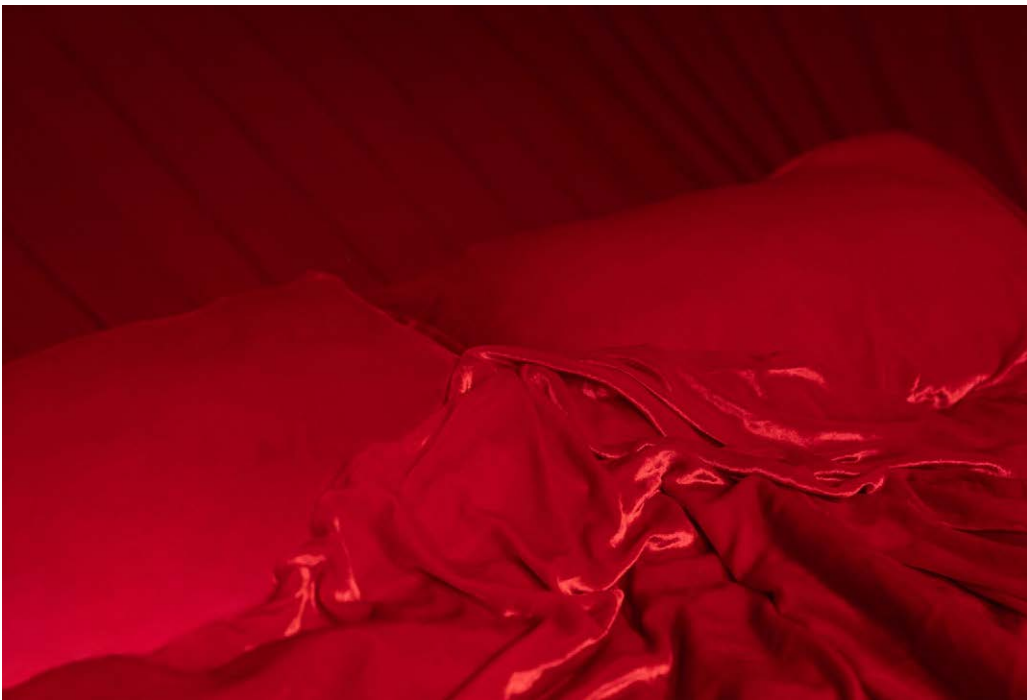
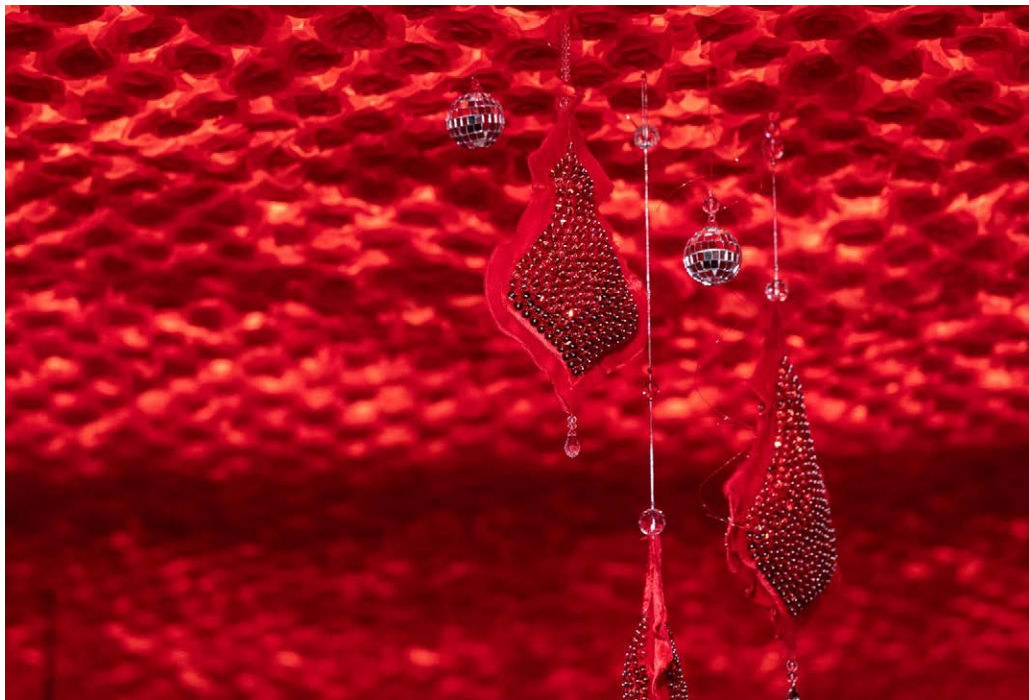
MAGMA | we're not counting sheep

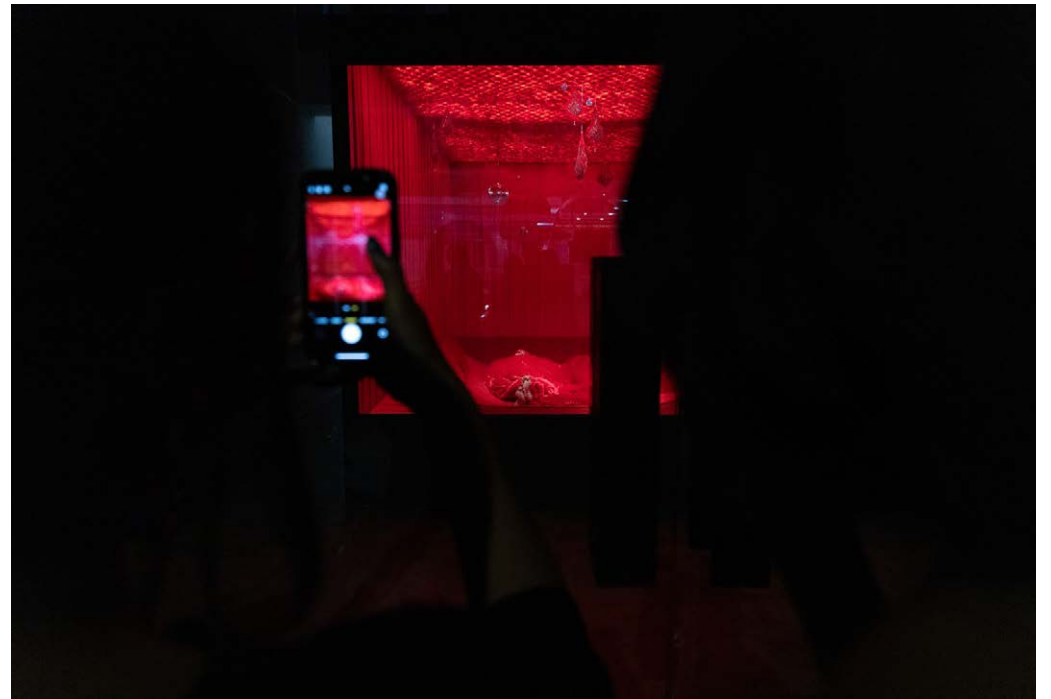
2006/2025

dimensions variable, room: 295 × 250 × 500 cm

site-specific installation and performance

room structure; glass; LED light; pleated velvet fabric; customized mattress, pillow, blanket, and clothing; fabric roses; customized pendants; sequins; dressmaker's pins; plastic beads; disco balls; chicken wire; zinc wire; fishing wire; two sleepers each night for 21 consecutive nights





MEZZANINE

In 2003, at least according to the official canon of Vietnamese art and the genres it considers legitimate, abstract art was just over ten years old. The reality is of course much more complex: artists based in the South have been exploring the grammars of abstraction since the 1950s, and up until 1975 were freely playing with the gestural. Following the reunification, expressionist art all but disappeared^[4]. What followed was a 15-year period in which Southern artists were subjected to the “regulations set forth by the Arts Association established in the North”^[5].

Although the 1986 Đổi Mới economic reforms brought forth a greater openness in the country more generally and is often referred to as a milestone in Vietnam’s shift towards contemporary art, art historians have complicated Đổi Mới as a shorthand for instituting change in artists’ practices. In the case of abstract art in the South, the perception of openness and the ability to look outwards to the rest of the world led artists to rearticulate what they were already expressing during the postcolonial era. Shifts in artists’ practices were not triggered by nor dependent on decisions by the state^[6]. Even accounting for the fact that artistic reforms were only later issued in a 1987 resolution, it was not until 1992, after the subsidy system finally collapsed^[7], that the Ho Chi Minh City-based Group of 10 organised an exhibition of abstract art for the first time at the HCMC Fine Arts Association. Shortly after, the state itself hosted an official exhibition of abstract painting, signifying that artistic expression was authorised to move away from the socialist realism directive that “governed artmaking in the public realm after 1975”^[8]. Both in the case of Southern abstraction and in surveys of artistic practices in the North, it is clear that artists themselves were the impetus for change. Đổi Mới enabled “expanded mobilities and opportunities for exchange”^[9], but artists’ experimentations have far and away exceeded the scope of any reforms.

The mezzanine pays homage to the work of painters, and specifically the abstract painters who featured in Galerie Quynh’s earliest programming. Trần Văn Thảo, one of the original members of the Group of 10, continues to create depth and dimension from an otherwise flat surface. He moulds papier-mâché and even canvas itself onto canvas, his gestural markings at times turning into

decipherable numbers, at others spilling out of straight lines as if decrying grids. In dialogue, Hoàng Dương Cầm’s rhythmic brushstrokes bring musicality to his ruminations on the spaces in between, rendering them as shapes that seem to dance. Hà Mạnh Thắng’s studies of a lotus pedestal, meanwhile, lift the curtain on the process of abstraction. More than a study of antique objects (of which the artist is an avid collector), the couplet lets us in on the blurring effects of close observation. Hà Mạnh Thắng paints the pedestal, carved in wood during the Lê Dynasty as a support for a statue of Buddha, not from memory but from sight. The heavy application of ink overtakes the pedestal’s outline and crumples the paper beneath, turning the physical to a cloud of dense smoke. Thắng explores abstraction not as a verb – to “abstract” a fixed image – but as a way to capture the shifting nature of sight itself. Finally, as a meta-commentary, an homage to an homage, Phạm Minh Hiếu’s created a lacquer work especially for this display on the mezzanine. The artist commissioned a contemporary lacquer painter, Nguyễn Tuấn Cường, to paint the mixing bowls of Nguyễn Gia Trí as they appear in a cabinet, along with his personal items and painting tools, at the HCMC Fine Arts Museum. An ode to the generations of artists who are absolutely radical and not only for their time, Phạm Minh Hiếu’s subtle gesture, complete with an “artwork label” also rendered in lacquer, reiterates the importance of painting in Vietnam’s history of experimental and contemporary practices.

[4] Samantha Libby, “The Art of Censorship in Vietnam”, *Journal of International Affairs* 65, no. 1 (2011): 212, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/24388192>.

[5] Nora A. Taylor, “Continuity and Change: Vietnamese Art in the Age of Đổi Mới”, in *Charting Thoughts: Essays on Art in Southeast Asia*, eds. Low Sze Wee and Patrick D. Flores (Singapore: National Gallery Singapore, 2017), 270.

[6] Nora A. Taylor and Pamela N. Corey, “Đổi Mới and the Globalization of Vietnamese Art”, *Journal of Vietnamese Studies* 14, no. 1 (2019): 9, <https://doi.org/10.1525/vs.2019.14.1.1>.

[7] Taylor and Corey, “Đổi Mới”, 5.

[8] Taylor and Corey, “Đổi Mới”, 18.

[9] Taylor and Corey, “Đổi Mới”, 24.













Phạm Minh Hiếu

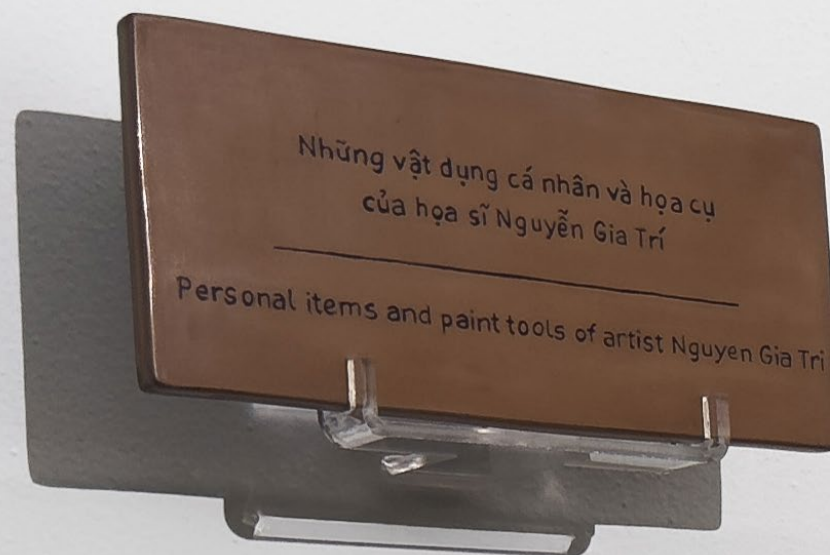
Personal items and paint tools of artist Nguyễn Gia Trí

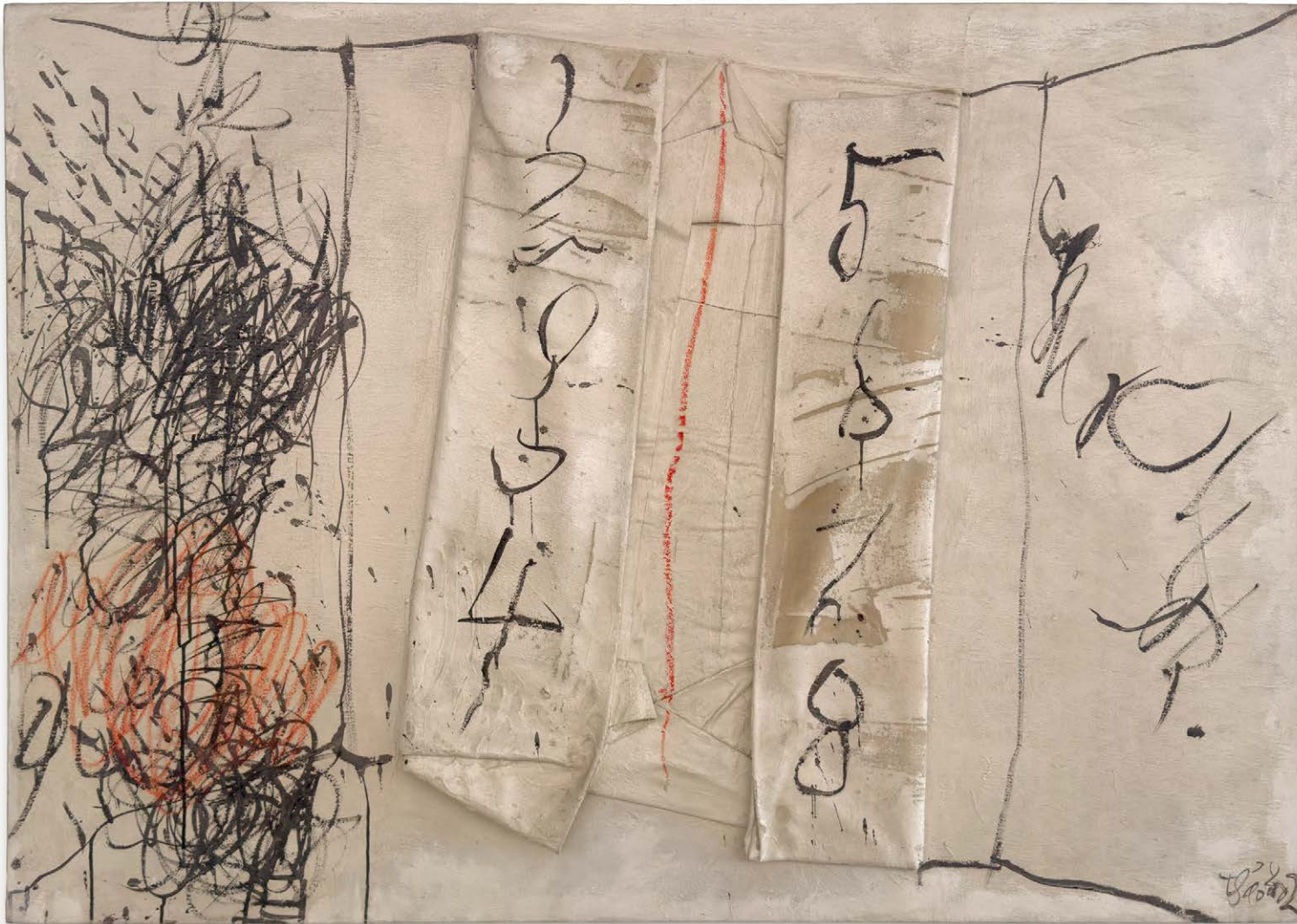
2025

lacquer on wooden panel, lacquer on wooden artwork label,
acrylic hanging mechanism

lacquer painting: 110 × 60 × 5 cm, lacquer label: 25.5 × 11.3 cm







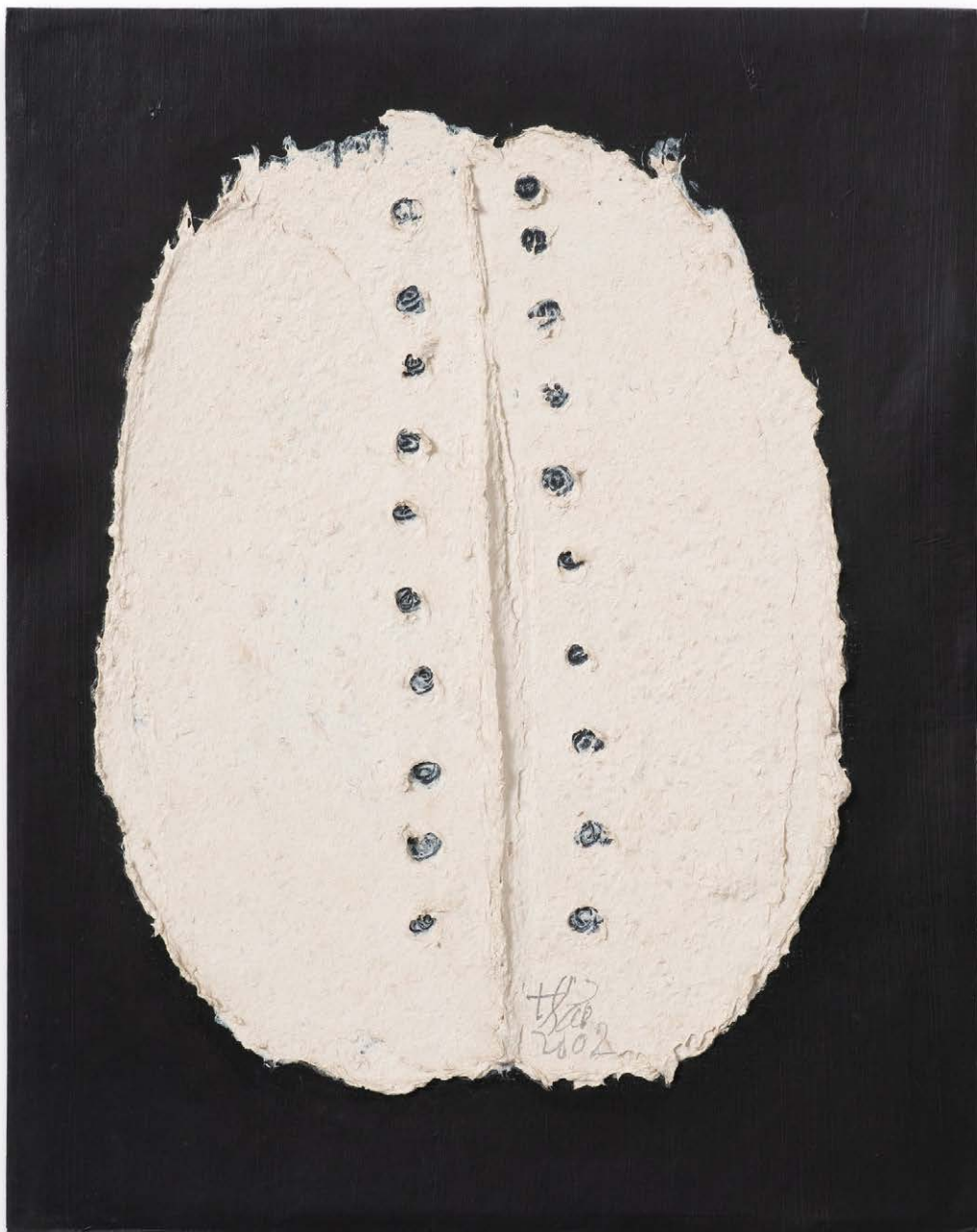
Trần Văn Thảo

Untitled II

2003

acrylic, canvas and oil stick on canvas

100 × 140 cm



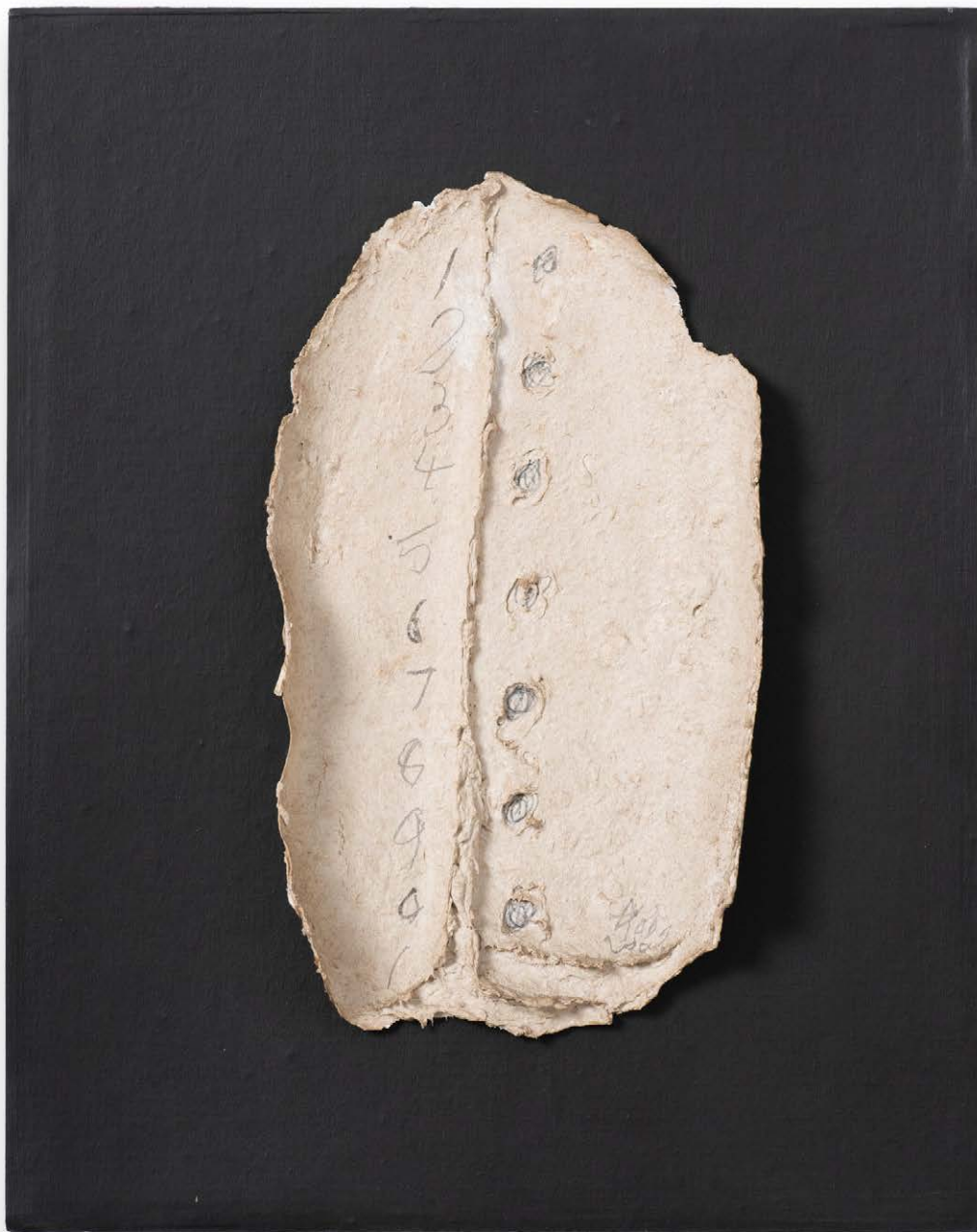
Trần Văn Thảo

Mailbox II

2002

papier-mâché, acrylic on cut-out
mailbox mounted on board

39 × 30 × 8 cm



Trần Văn Thảo

Mailbox III

2002

papier-mâché, acrylic on cut-out
mailbox mounted on board

39 x 31 x 11 cm



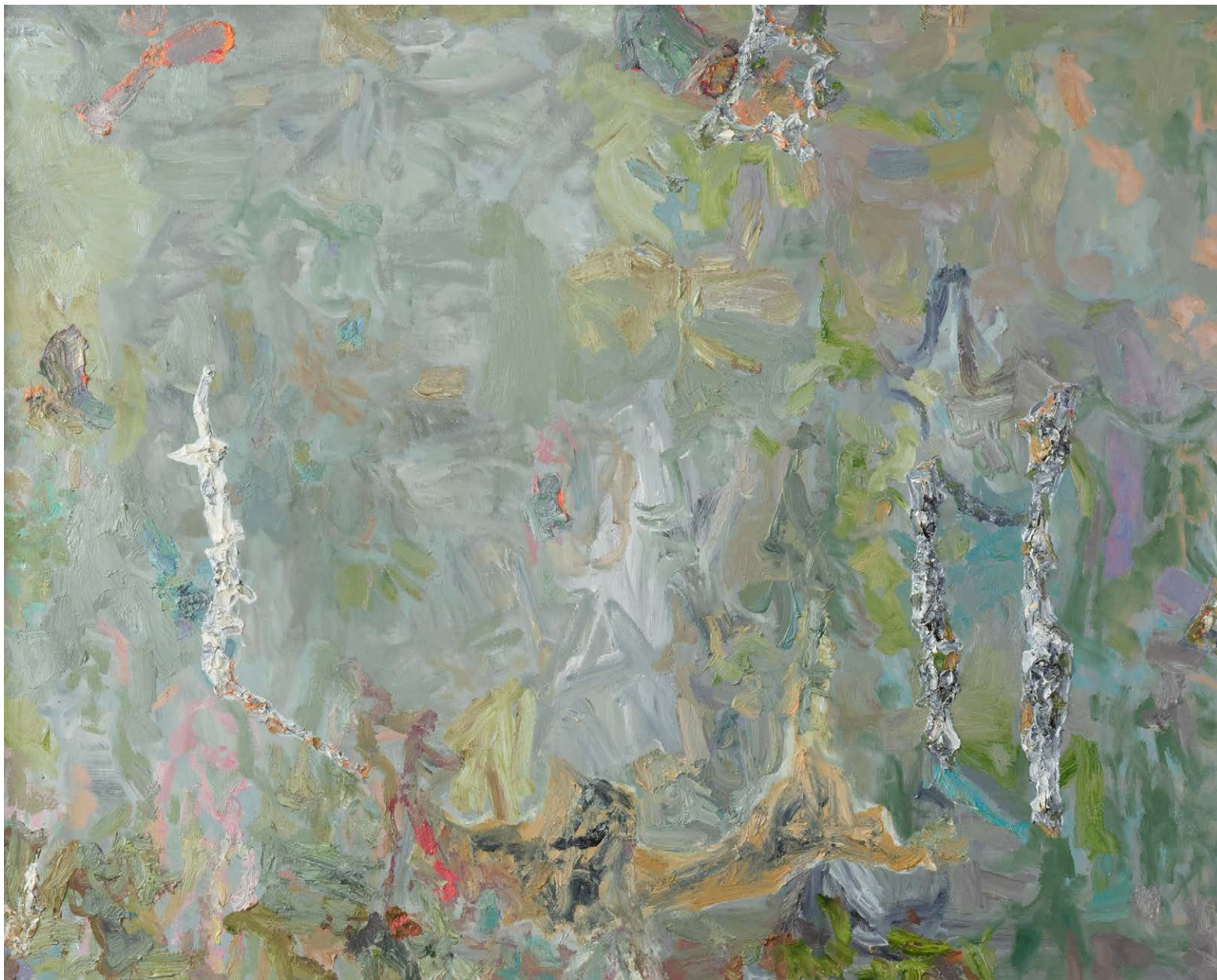
Trần Văn Thảo

Immersion, no. 10

2013

oil, acrylic and oil stick on canvas

120 × 90 cm



Hoàng Dương Cầm

Lachrimae

2021

oil on canvas

120 × 150 cm



Hà Mạnh Thắng

Lotus Pedestal Study #2

2019

charcoal and ink on paper

41.5 × 60 cm



Hà Mạnh Thắng

Lotus Pedestal Study #6

2019

charcoal, lacquer and ink on paper

60 × 84 cm

SECOND FLOOR: BACK ROOM



Amid the celebratory mood, the light dims. If the works on the ground floor and mezzanine unspool the politico-historical threads of Vietnamese art from the late 1980s, the back room on the second floor seems much more interior. Focusing on the affective and psychological, the works on display contemplate Vietnam as a place to live in, leave, and come back to. If 1990s Vietnam saw a shift towards experimental practices, in the 2000s, there was greater integration between artists practicing locally and diasporic artists who decided to return.

Parallel to exhibitions abroad profiling southern Vietnamese diasporic artists, the international art world also began to situate Vietnam "on the map of 'global contemporary art'"^[10]. Rather than drawing simplistic delineations between "local" and "diasporic" art, the works on display instead explore the different versions and localities of Vietnam that co-exist via its geology, tastes, generational frictions, and inherited memories.

Centring the room, Nguyễn Phương Linh's durational installation borrows materials from the earth to play with transformation as a process both cathartic and corrosive. Titled *Melting*, the work formed part of her first solo exhibition – the culmination of her research on the salt villages along the long coast of Vietnam – which was held at Galerie Quynh in 2009. Pressing coarse salt crystals into a pyramid, the artist rests her salt mound on a tray of parched earth. Directly above hangs a globe half-filled with water. Barely perceptible, the water drips onto the pyramid and runs through its core. The salt dissolves, pooling at the bottom and, over time, recrystallises as translucent flecks on the surface of the soil. As single drops of water melt single grains of salt, the work also reflects on Vietnam's S-shaped coastline as a site of expansion and invasion. Similarly, in the work of Liên Trương, tiny white grains carry the unbearable weight of bloody history. In *Butternut Squash, Black Walnut and Spelt Cake*, the artist delves into the history of sugar cultivation in the New World, which relied not only on enslaved labour, but also the very bodies of the enslaved – the charred bones of deceased enslaved people were used to supplement animal bones in the process of whitening sugar. Layered onto this history are the hierarchies of taste that erase native cultures from the formulation of an American food identity, instead establishing European food as inherently "American". To the left are ghostly portraits of the women in Trương's family, painted from photographs taken at the time of her family's immigration to the US. Together, the works situate her family's history within the wider entanglements of US history, shedding light on the gendered and racialised forms of labour that made and make up the foundations of the US. On the wall opposite, in the works of Nghĩa Đặng, family history plays out in real time. From his near-obsessive storyboarding of the father-son relationship in *Father's Adagio*, where the muddled character of the artist-protagonist navigates masculinity in the complete absence of a father figure who nevertheless dominates the scenery – perhaps in the shadow of a tree that falls on rocks – the character now wrestles with his role in an intimate relationship. The various objects depicted in *Trespass*, on opposite ends of the spectrum between comfort and anxiety, vie for dominance. A seemingly button-up shirt is threatened by a pair of scissors; an arm like a shadow-dog pokes through a quilted blanket. In

Homely, the first two works in an ongoing series, the artist reworks the still life, with red curtains strung across the top to resemble a stage. The performance of a romantic relationship is played out through ambiguous, sensual objects that invite intimacy, and yet can be easily used as weapons. Over on a slanted pedestal, one of the many works titled *Untitled* by Đỗ Thanh Lãng takes a beat from Nghĩa Đặng's psychological tennis. Human figures dive off into a plane without perspective. The artist creates depth not through the three dimensions but through the layers of paint fighting to come up to surface underneath shiny epoxy. Through loose references from found images on the internet, human actions and interactions in Lãng's deceptively freeing scenarios are dictated by the logics of the virtual to then impact the physical world. Looping back to the entrance of the room, a vinyl spins a familiar tune after "Sài Gòn" by Y Vân. Upon closer listening, though, the song's lyrics and iconic refrain seem to have changed, not only because of the words themselves but the sound of the words, too. Trọng Gia Nguyễn's "*Hà Nội*" (*Music for "The Leavers"*) is the first release in an album, itself part of a larger project – a full-length play currently in production that departs from his series of paintings also titled *The Leavers*. The artist still incorporates vernacular photography to dwell on the act of leaving, by choice and by force, but this time turns them into LP sleeves and plexiglass etchings. The song's auditory "uncanny valley" effect stems from it being recorded by a singer who does not speak Vietnamese. Pronouncing lyrics off the cuff, the singer joins in on the Vietnamese's favourite pastime, karaoke, and adds warmth to an intimate, though not wholly cosy, exhibition room. Together, the works grapple with Vietnam not through the limiting tropes of "homeland", "exile", "local", or "diaspora", but rather treats it as an open question – an ongoing process of working out that in turn changes the question.

[10] Nora A. Taylor and Pamela N. Corey, "Đổi Mới and the Globalization of Vietnamese Art", *Journal of Vietnamese Studies* 14, no. 1 (2019): 19, <https://doi.org/10.1525/vs.2019.14.1.1>.











Liên Trương

Jaune Noir, Portrait Six

2023

acrylic on silk, oil on laser-cut birch panel and MDF frame

70 × 55 cm



Liên Trương

Jaune Noir, Portrait Sept

2023

acrylic on silk, oil on laser-cut birch panel and MDF frame

70 × 55 cm



Liên Trương

Butternut Squash, Black Walnut and Spelt Cake

2023

oil, acrylic, copper pigment on wood panel and silk

74 × 40.5 cm



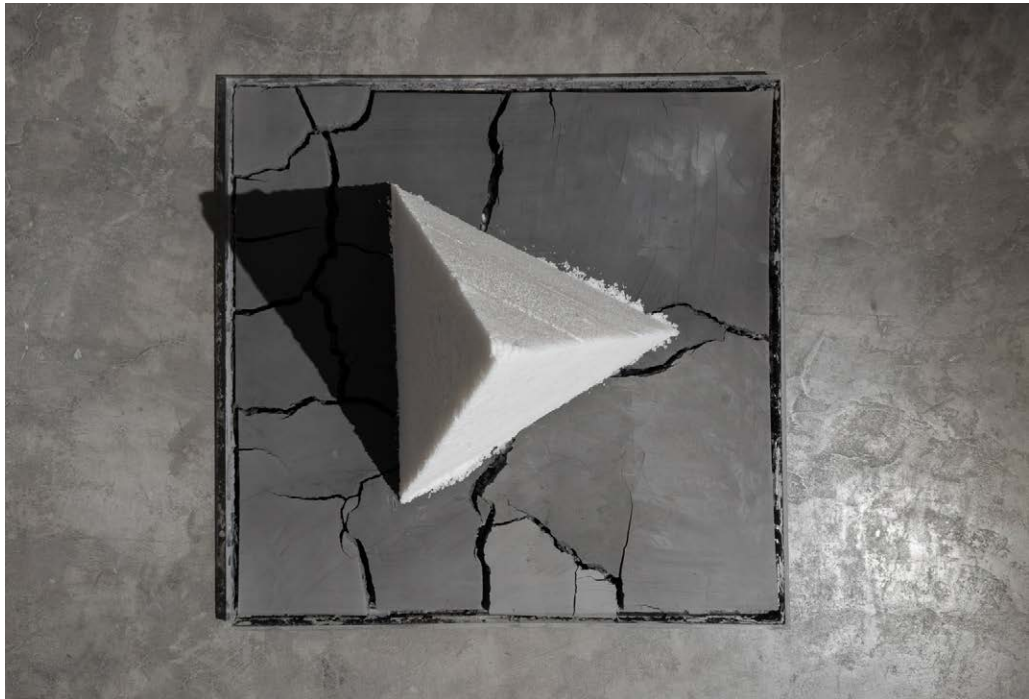
Nguyễn Phương Linh

Melting

2009

unrefined salt, clay, soil, acrylic tray,
water, acrylic globe, fishing wire

dimensions variable





Đỗ Thanh Lãng

Untitled

2024

acrylic, oil, epoxy resin on canvas

150 × 150 cm



Nghĩa Đặng

Homely #1

2025

embroidery threads, linen
and oil pastel

57 × 67 × 4 cm



Nghĩa Đặng

Homely #2

2025

embroidery threads, linen
and oil pastel

57 × 67 × 4 cm



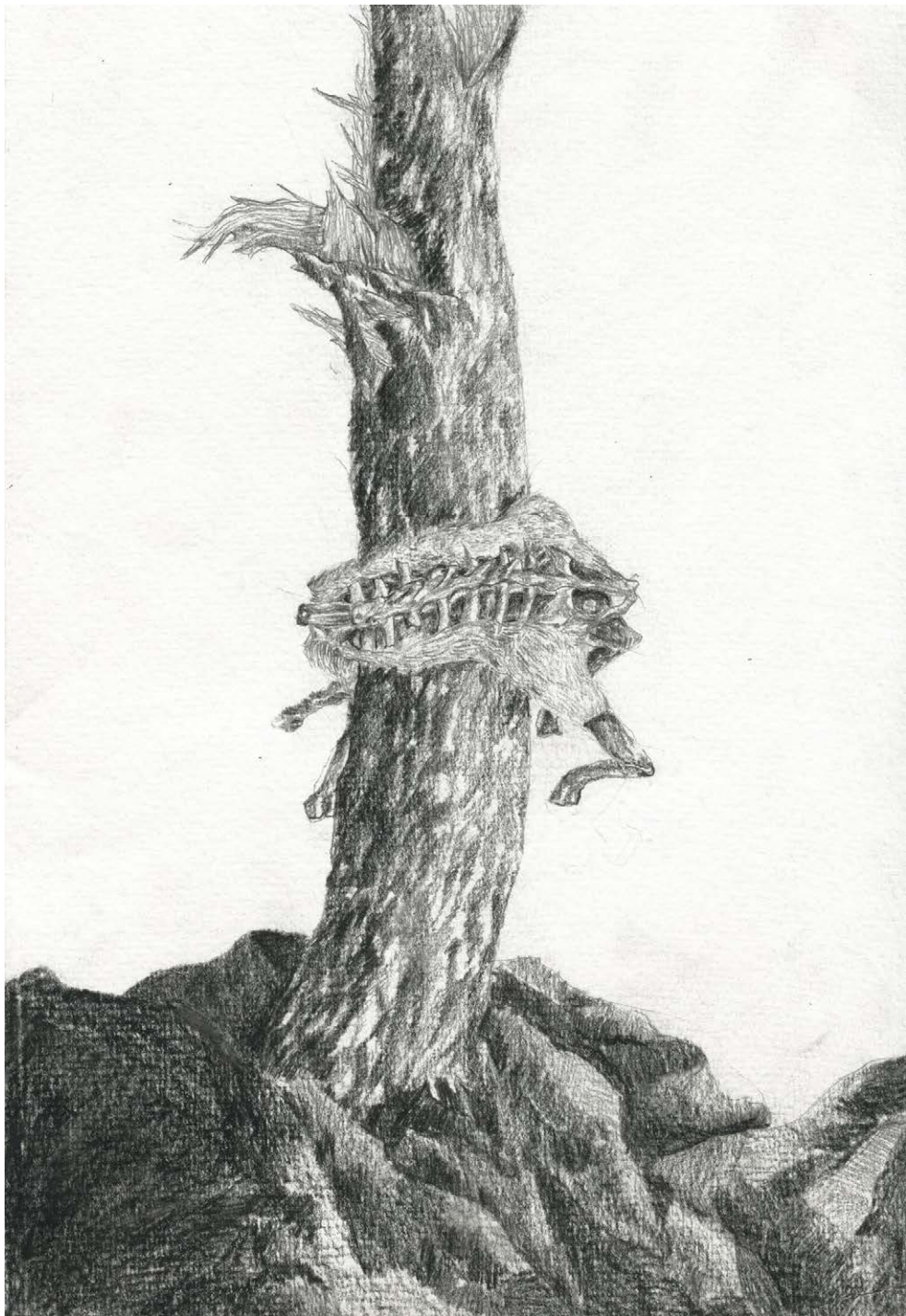
Nghĩa Đặng

Trespass

2025

embroidery threads, linen, appliques, and oil pastel

127 × 87 × 5.5 cm



Nghĩa Đặng

Father's Adagio #8

2019-2020

graphite on paper

29.5 × 20 cm

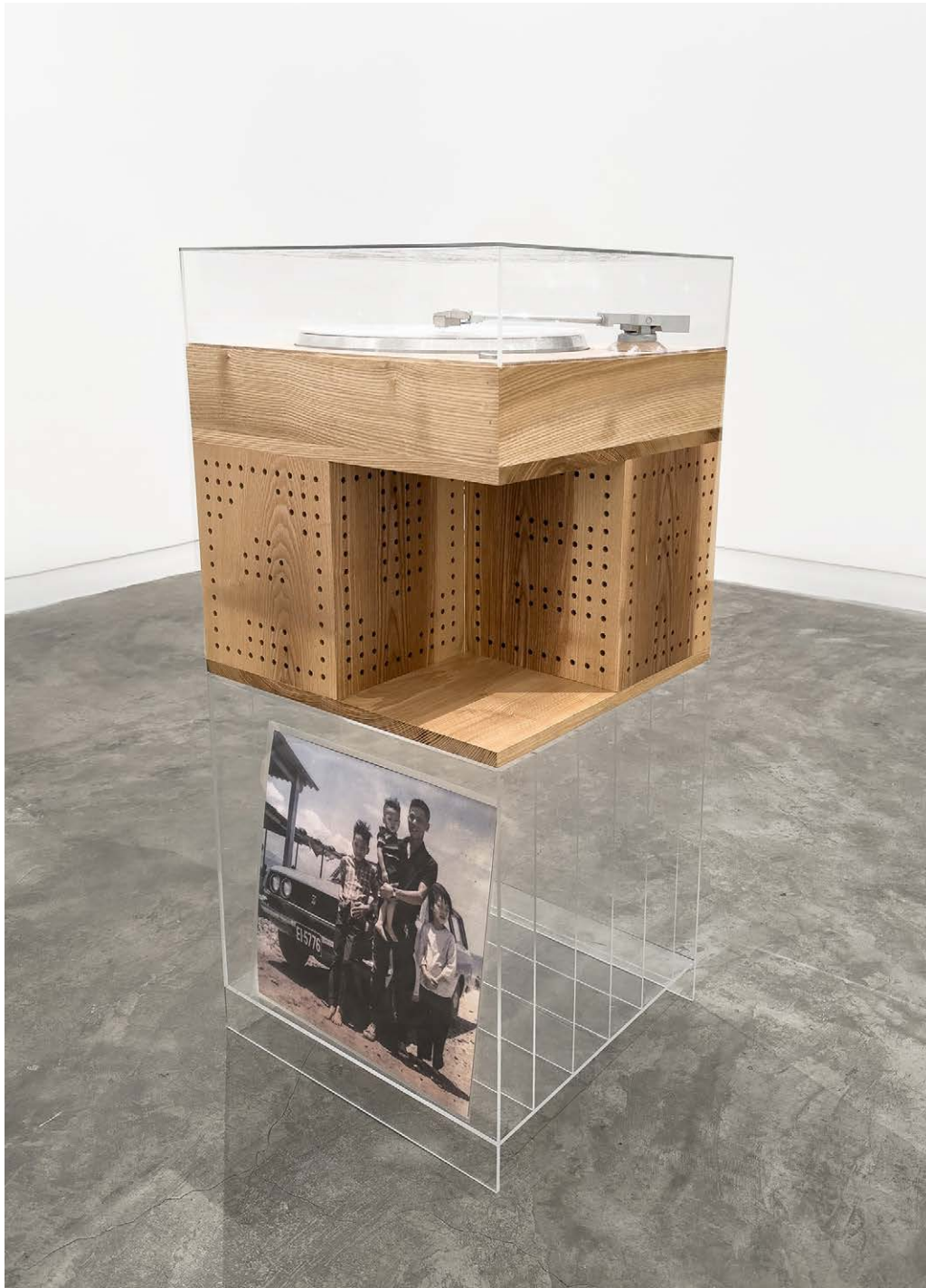


Trọng Gia Nguyễn

"Hà Nội" (Music for "The Leavers")

2025

modified record player, wood, acrylic, 12-inch vinyl single recorded by Saturday Looks Good to Me (Fred Thomas, Valerie Salerno), after the song "Sài Gòn" (Y Vân, 1965), paper sleeve with original drawing in ink
88.3 × 40 × 40 cm



SECOND FLOOR: FRONT ROOM

Finally, the second-floor front room catches up with us in the present day. The works on display offer a glimpse into the fabric of contemporary life in Vietnam, deconstructing its everyday objects, gestures, and beliefs. Ngô Đình Bảo Châu's *Uniform - Wallpaper*, busy with flowers, fires, and saluting children, isolates these politically-laden motifs and turns them into home decoration. Detailing how doctrines filter into the private sphere from the public through repetitive visual motifs – the flag salute, the podium flowers that adorn political speeches, the camouflage of military uniforms abstracted as unassuming polka dots – the work foregrounds how banality can be a measure of political success. In Trương Công Tùng's *Land of Dreams*, abstract and figurative beings escape the artist's subconscious and materialise through glaze on ceramic tiles. Inspired by the myths and rumours that he grew up hearing in the Central Highlands, Trương Công Tùng does not capture fixed images from these stories, but rather co-creates with his materials. Originally trained in lacquer painting, here, the artist approaches glaze in a similar manner, letting images take form through a transformative process, whether by sanding, as in lacquer, or firing, as in ceramic. In doing so, he resists the archetypal depictions of a contested land, first as full of poisoned water and malevolent spirits, and now as a profitable plantation to the many settlers to the area. Opposite to Trương Công Tùng's work, a neat, black line runs the length of the wall. Titled *Data set of shadows at the Mường Museum*, the row of prints forms part of Nguyễn Huy An's continued examination of shadows. Working with a mathematician, the artist follows a prescribed formula to capture the shadows of objects. If, in his work titled *Study of a Fluctuation of a Shadow*, better-known due to its (in)famous subject matter – for *Study*, the artist determines the shadow of the Statue of Lenin in Hanoi – in *Data set*, he shifts his focus to the objects on display at the Mường Museum. Founded by artist Vũ Đức Hiếu and located in Hoà Bình, the museum reflects a “young artist's desire to completely recreate the Mường people's way of living”, as per the introduction on its website. Without delving into a critique of identity politics that would render the work too simplistic – the museum's founder is a “lover” of, but is not from, the Mường ethnic group native to northern Vietnam – much can still be said of the museum's tokenistic and extractive representations of Mường culture. Studiously, Huy An maps the

individual shadows of the objects on display, some easily discernible as tools, others resembling constellations of stars. In capturing another manner of their presence as dictated by light, the artist lends them a factual form that never claims truth. As end notes that ask more questions, the circular forms of Vy Trinh and Tuấn Andrew Nguyễn's sculptures aren't loop-backs but endless, forward revolutions. Vy Trinh's *VISION* follows the flow of mass-produced commodities that flood the Vietnamese market. Sourcing a motorbike chassis from scrap metal shops that sell impounded bikes for parts, Trinh embellishes the frame with twisted metal, strings of beads, even a repurposed wheel. Embedded in Ho Chi Minh city's material environment, her work also reflects a makeshift ethos that foregrounds the transformative power of the ordinary. Also sculpted from reused metal, though pounded from brass artillery shells, Tuấn Andrew Nguyễn's *Interplanetary Revolutions* blooms planets from fishbone. “Revolutions”, here, refers to shifts in the social order, but also to cycles, orbits, continuous motion. As is evident throughout the exhibition, the works in **21 YEARS OF GALERIE QUYNH** are not mere artistic responses to Vietnam's complex realities, but instead actively shape its cultural discourse. What Galerie Quynh has cultivated over the last two decades is a space where artistic practices can exist in productive tension with their surroundings – neither fully apart from nor wholly defined by the social, political, and economic conditions of their creation. In doing so, the gallery asserts that art in Vietnam is not simply a reflection of its time and place, but a vital force that expands our understanding of what is possible within that time and place.















Ngô Đình Bảo Châu

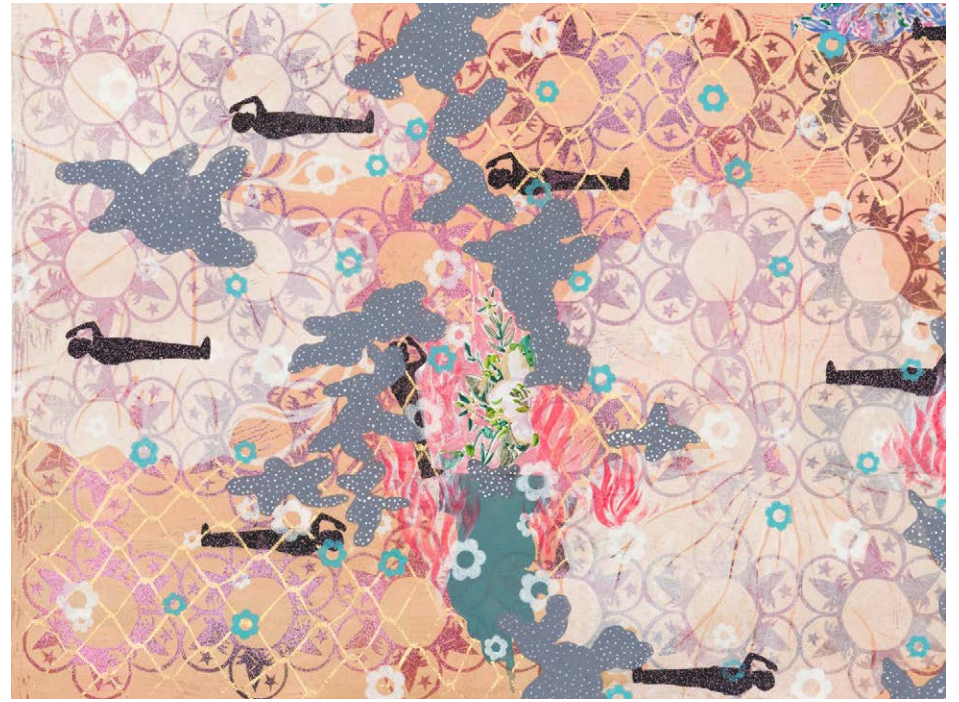
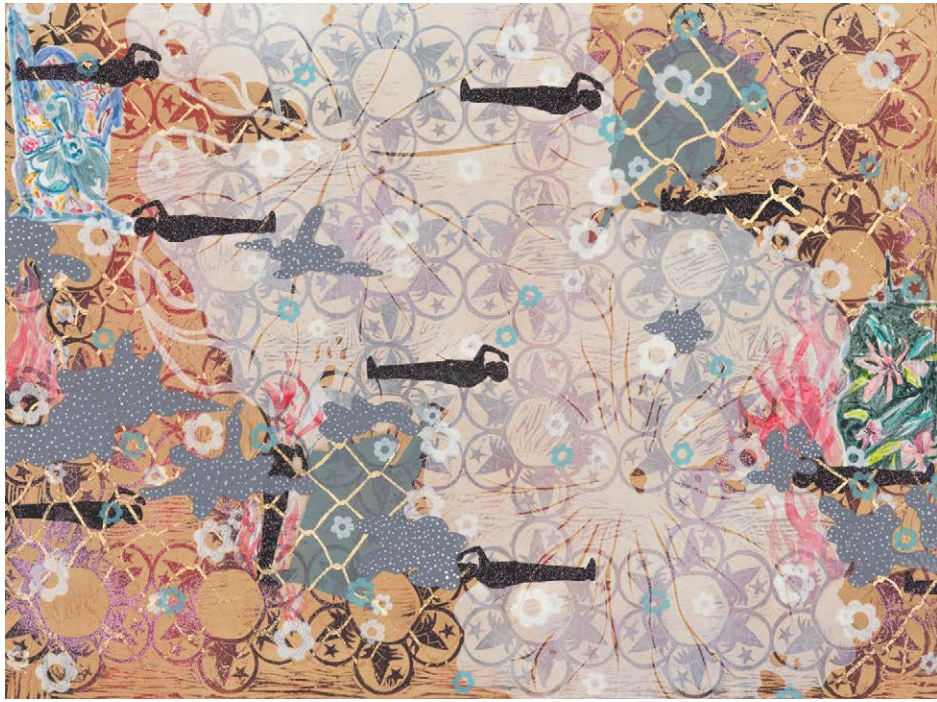
Uniform - Wallpaper

2019

woodblock print, monoprint,
stamping, stencil, acrylic, glitter,
imitation gold leaf on cardboard

15 of 40 unique artworks

60 × 80 cm each





Trương Công Tùng
Land of dreams #1
 2014
 glaze on ceramic tile
 30 × 60 cm



Trương Công Tùng
Land of dreams #5
 2014
 glaze on ceramic tile
 25 × 25 cm



Trương Công Tùng
 Land of dreams #3
 2014
 glaze on ceramic tile
 25 × 40 cm



Trương Công Tùng
 Land of dreams #18
 2014
 glaze on ceramic tile
 25 × 40 cm



Trương Công Tùng
Land of dreams #19
 2014
 glaze on ceramic tile
 25 x 40 cm



Trương Công Tùng
Land of dreams #20
 2014
 glaze on ceramic tile
 25 x 40 cm



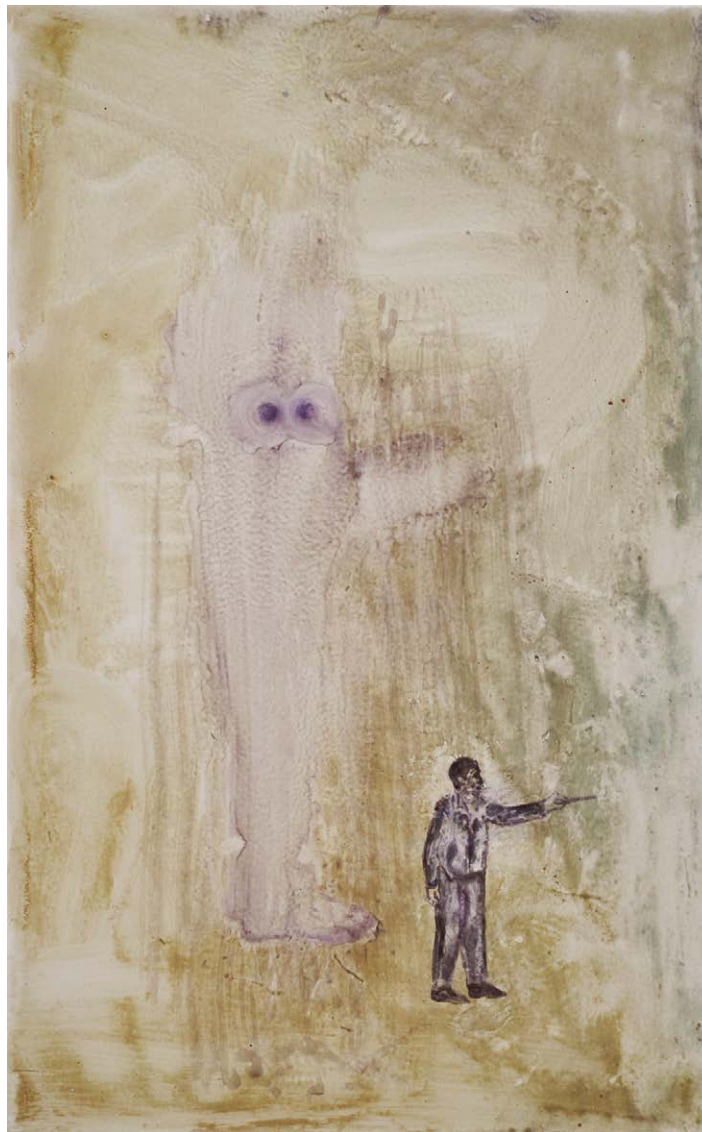
Trương Công Tùng
Land of dreams #6
 2014
 glaze on ceramic tile
 20 x 20 cm



Trương Công Tùng
Land of dreams #16
 2014
 glaze on ceramic tile
 20 x 20 cm



Trương Công Tùng
Land of dreams #22
 2014
 glaze on ceramic tile
 20 x 20 cm



Trương Công Tùng

Land of dreams #8 & #9

2014

glaze on ceramic tile

40 × 25 cm each



Trương Công Tùng

Land of dreams #11 & #14

2014

glaze on ceramic tile

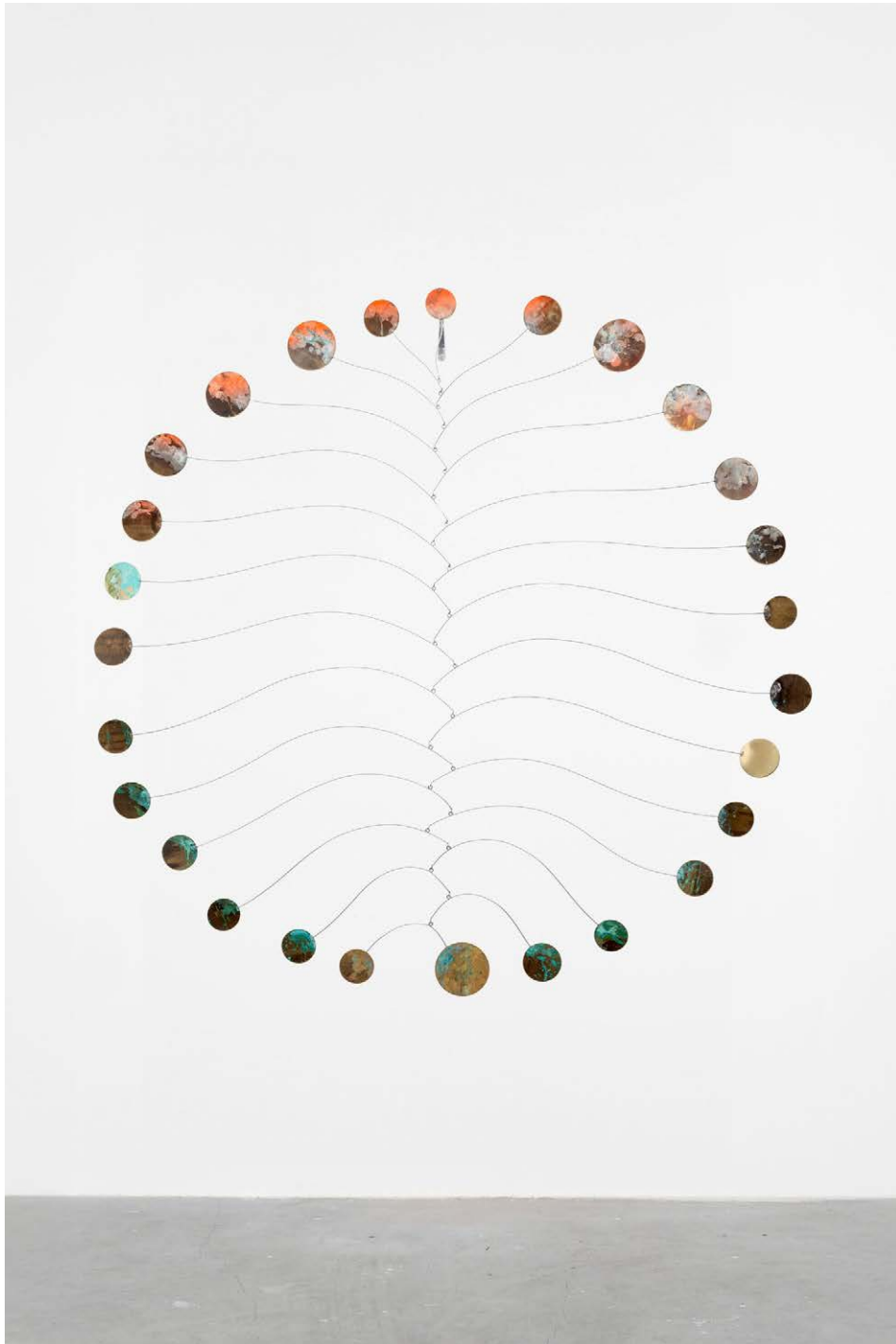
40 × 25 cm each



Trương Công Tùng
 Land of dreams #15
 2014
 glaze on ceramic tile
 40 x 40 cm



Trương Công Tùng
 Land of dreams #21
 2014
 glaze on ceramic tile
 40 x 40 cm



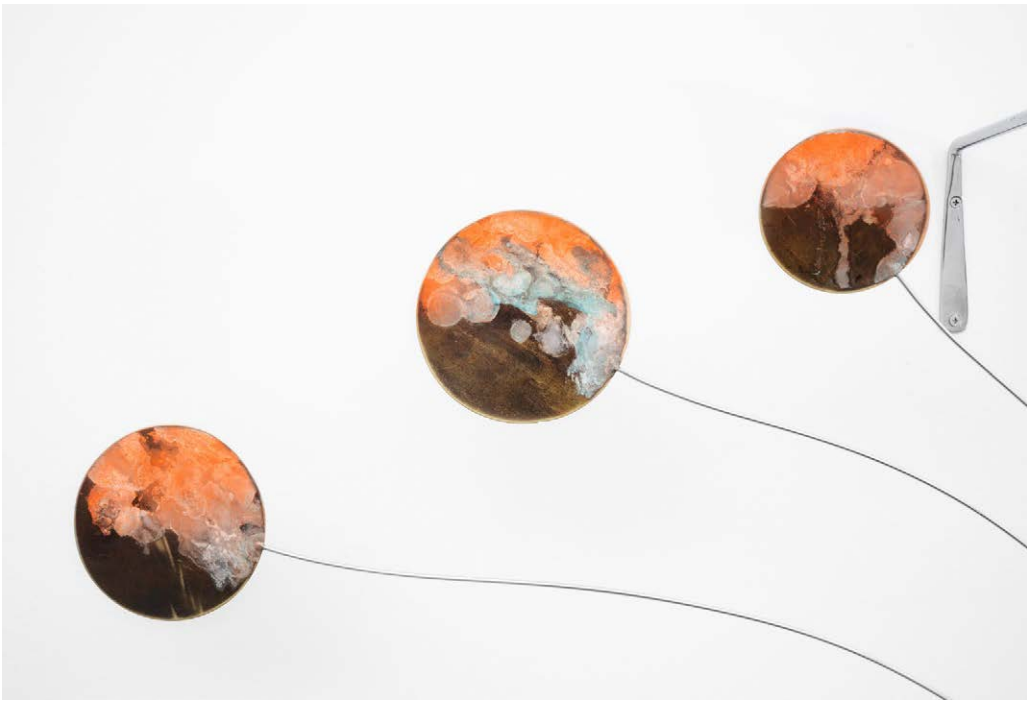
Tuấn Andrew Nguyễn

Interplanetary Revolutions

2024

pounded brass artillery shells, stainless steel
rods, and powder coating

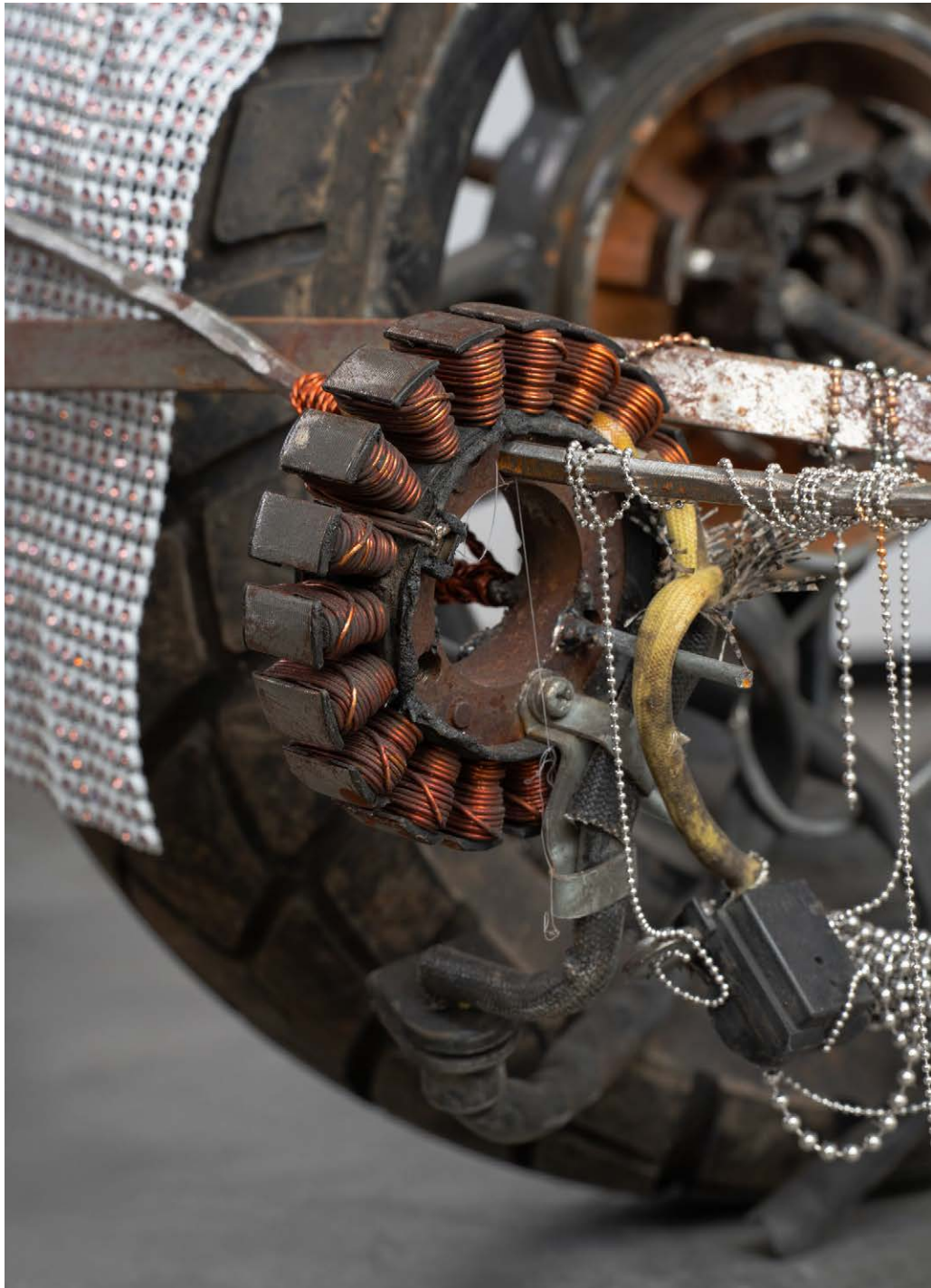
diameter 180 cm

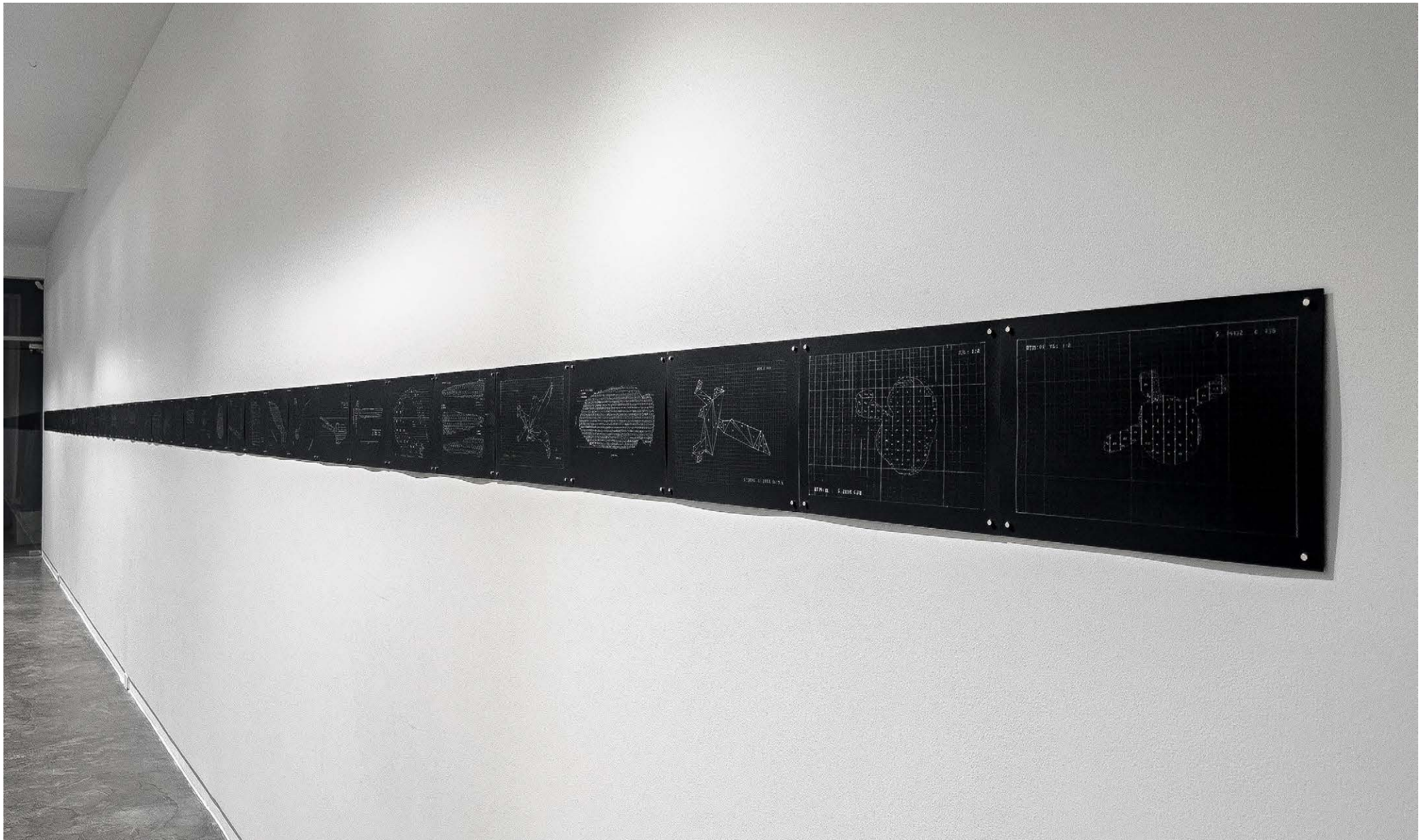




Vy Trinh
VISION
2024

Honda Vision moped chassis, flat steel bar, steel rod, organza ribbon, satin ribbon, plastic beads, nickel-plated steel ball chain, rhinestone chain, wheel, rebar, hex nut, stators, copper wire, brass, flux and rhinestone mesh
approximate dimensions: 166 × 230 × 175 cm





Nguyễn Huy An

Data set of shadows at the Mường Museum

2013

digital print on paper

46 unique artworks, 21 × 29.7 cm each



ABOUT THÁI HÀ

Thái Hà is a curator, writer and translator based in Saigon, Vietnam. Her practice looks to the liberating potential of language, freely borrowing from different literary genres to give textual and verbal form to artists' work. She designs her curatorial texts as objects that invite alternative modes of exhibition viewing. Her latest projects explore how adventure and fantasy genres were used as literary loopholes to circulate revolutionary thought in colonial Vietnam.

In 2022, Hà joined Nguyen Art Foundation as part of a new management team leading its acquisition strategies, exhibitions curation, and building local and international networks of artists and collaborators. Her work has been covered by Frieze, Artforum, and Al Jazeera, and her translations appear in publications from the Tate St Ives, Carnegie Museum of Art, and Asian Art Biennial, among others. Hà was selected as a resident at UNIDEE, Cittadellarte-Fondazione Pistoletto and for the 12th Berlin Biennale Curator's Workshop. She holds an MA in Contemporary Art and Art Theory of Asia and Africa from the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS) and a BSc in Psychology and Language Sciences from University College London (UCL).

ABOUT GALERIE QUYNH

Galerie Quynh was founded in 2000 by Quynh Pham and Robert Cianchi as a non-profit online educational resource that documented and archived the Vietnamese contemporary art scene. A physical space dedicated to a dynamic rotating program of exhibitions opened in December 2003. For over two decades, Galerie Quynh has operated as a hybrid space: a contemporary art gallery and an institution that serves its community through public and educational programs. Collaborating locally and internationally with artists, curators and cultural organizations with diverse creative voices, the gallery has also initiated a number of not-for-profit artist-run community projects such as Sao La led by Nguyễn Kim Tố Lan and Tùng Mai, and CáRô spearheaded by curators Thái Hà and Linh Lê.

Artists

Nghĩa Đặng
Đỗ Thanh Lãng
Cian Duggan
Hà Mạnh Thắng
Sue Hajdu
Hoàng Dương Cầm
Ngô Đình Bảo Châu
Nguyễn Huy An
Nguyễn Phương Linh
Trọng Gia Nguyễn
Tuấn Andrew Nguyễn
Phạm Minh Hiếu
Trần Văn Thảo
Vy Trịnh
Liên Trương
Trương Công Tùng

Curator

Thái Hà

Quỳnh Phạm, Robert Cianchi & Galerie Quynh team

Phạm Ánh Ngọc
Hoàng Anh Thư
Đan Thanh
Bích Trâm
Gia Kỳ
Phạm Thế Vũ
Tiến Vũ
Tilly Winter-Shipkov
Lou Anmella-de Montalembert

Installation

Lê Quốc Trường & Co. (metal.leetruong)
Nguyễn Văn Khải

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1st photographer: Tum Tum
2nd photographer: Tony Toàn

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Ngọc Ngân
Vic Vu
Phi Tuấn

Special thanks to

Motoko Uda Judge
Ngoan Ngô
Dương Phạm
Kelly Martin
Jiwon Kim
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