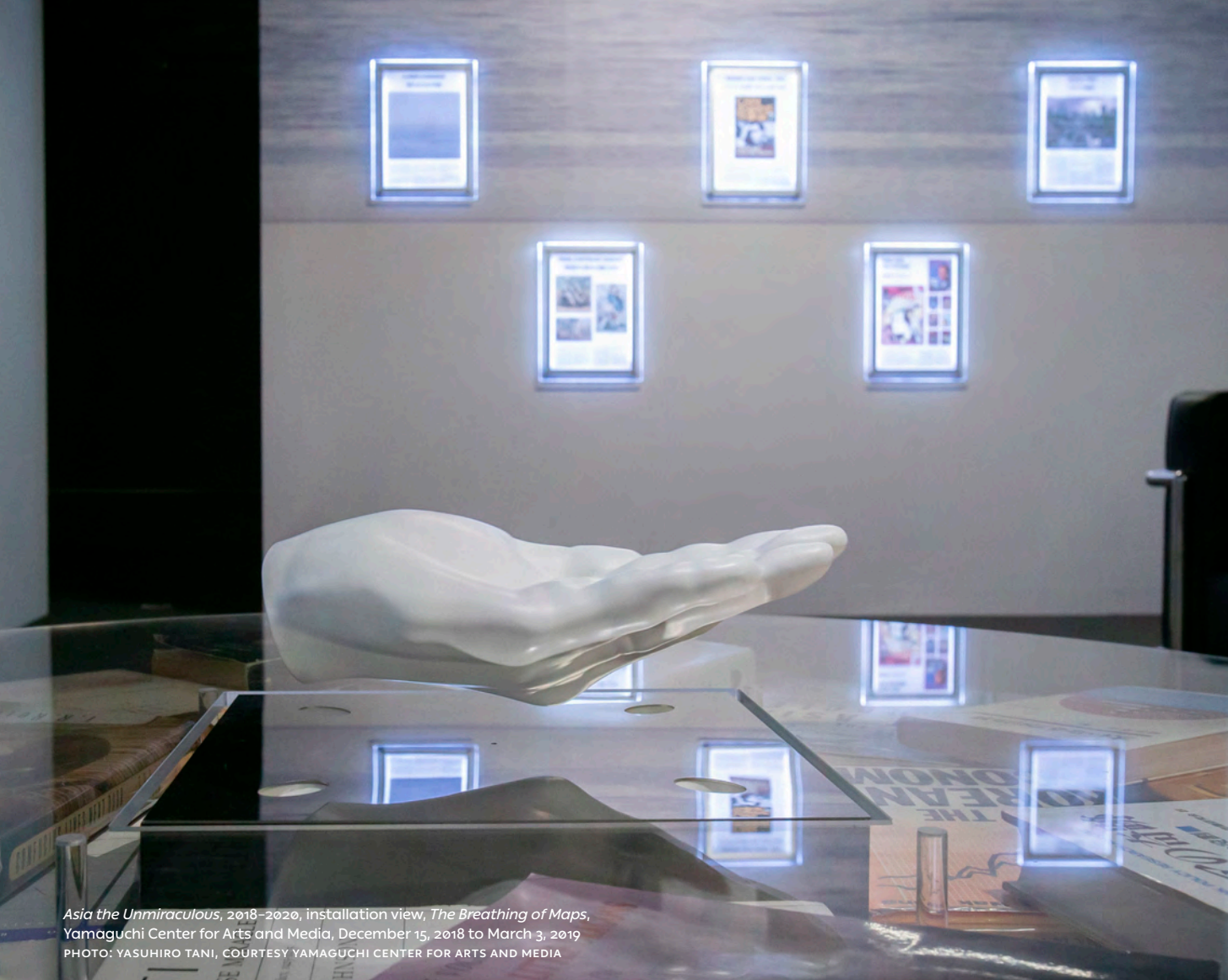


kunsthalle wien

The  
**Ends**  
of a **Long**  
**Boom**

Ho Rui An



*Asia the Unmiraculous*, 2018–2020, installation view, *The Breathing of Maps*, Yamaguchi Center for Arts and Media, December 15, 2018 to March 3, 2019  
PHOTO: YASUHIRO TANI, COURTESY YAMAGUCHI CENTER FOR ARTS AND MEDIA

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APRIL 17

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to study in UK

# introduction



*Asia the Unmiraculous*, 2018–2020, performance documentation,  
*The Breathing of Maps*, Yamaguchi Center for Arts and Media,  
 December 15, 2018 to March 3, 2019  
 PHOTO: YASUHIRO TANI. COURTESY YAMAGUCHI CENTER FOR ARTS AND MEDIA

A common thread in Ho Rui An's essayistic practice is its analysis of the insidious pervasion of neoliberalism into all regions of the earth and all realms of life, from the political economy, to our social imaginary, and even to our sense of time. In *The Ends of a Long Boom*, the first solo exhibition of Singapore-based artist Ho Rui An in Europe, Ho further investigates the complex ramifications of late-capitalist ideology in the media and in cultural production. Editing together fragments of films, documentary images, and discourses, the artist creates a polyphonic narrative that reframes certain historical events and the Western-monitored writing of history. More specifically, he traces the racialized and complex relations between the “East” and the “West”, as well as among East Asian nation-states, while emphasizing the persistence of imperialist legacies. The exhibition presents video installations from the artist's most recent bodies of works, alongside new artworks created for this occasion.

In July 1997, just before the outbreak of the so-called Asian financial crisis, American futurists Peter Schwartz and Peter Leyden published the essay “The Long Boom: A History of the Future, 1980–2020” in *Wired* magazine, outlining a “radically optimistic” scenario of sustained economic growth and increased global integration from the 1980s up to 2020—a scenario that never came true. Now here we are in 2021, one year after the end of the golden

era Schwartz and Leyden falsely predicted, and one year after the outbreak of a global pandemic. The disastrous current context imbues the title of the exhibition, *The Ends of a Long Boom*, with a certain irony, especially because the response to the pandemic around the globe has continued to hold up the fantasy of a renewed and more equitable capitalism against the ongoing backlash against neoliberalism. The situation sadly confirms political writer Naomi Klein's “shock doctrine”: in late capitalism, a crisis always seems to be followed by a deepening of the existing system rather than its disintegration. The overall expansion of the free market in the last decades, as Ho shows, has not been paired with all-encompassing freedom, openness, and noninterference, but rather with multifarious ways to convince or constrain the people. Amidst the ideological contestation between different models of capitalism, pioneering economist Adam Smith's “invisible hand” has, since the Cold War, given way to other figurations within the new political economy, such as the “visible hand” of the developmental state or the student body.

Against this backdrop, *The Ends of a Long Boom* does not try to predict the future or identify with any post-truth statements. Rather, it goes back and forth between past and present, sometimes lingering in “the past of the future” to tell the polyphonic stories hidden behind the official ones. In his precisely staged lecture-performances

1866—1870

1866

1867

1868

JANUARY 3  
 Meiji Restoration

JULY 28  
 Burlingame Treaty lifts restrictions  
 on Chinese immigration to US

1869

MAY 10  
 First Transcontinental Railroad opens

1870



and installations, **Ho** navigates between storytelling, iconographic inquiries, economic analyses, and journalistic investigations, sometimes following a relentless logic and sometimes jumping or drifting—but always employing a subtle wit. Mixing economics literature and newspapers' front pages with Hollywood film productions and museum displays, the artist simultaneously addresses diverse layers of human understanding and imaginaries, and shows how fiction and ideology work together—or even condition each other.

How do we read ideological narratives in media representations and cultural production? How do they inform (or should we say, outperform) the reality we live in? And which mechanisms of domination do they legitimate and which alternative stories do they obscure?

In *The Ends of a Long Boom*, **Ho Rui An** tackles these complex issues across six artworks. *Asia the Unmiraculous* (2018–2020) speaks about the Western conception of Asia and the so-called East Asian miracle—the rapid economic growth of the Four Asian Tigers between the 1960s and 1990s, which ended with the crisis of 1997. *Student Bodies* (2019) begins with the students of Satsuma and Chōshū who were sent to England to learn the ways of Western liberalism in the 1860s and who later returned to Japan to take up key positions in the newly centralized Meiji government. *2027* (2021) restages and

endlessly stretches short sequences from the Hollywood sci-fi film *Children of Men* (2006) to examine the differential representations of apocalyptic futures. *The Long Boom* (2021), on the contrary, literally pins down **Schwartz** and **Leyden's** ideological mirage by printing their words on the floor. Positioned right in front of the exhibition's entrance, *ULTIMATE COIN TEST CHINA HIGH-SPEED RAIL* (2018) appropriates an internet meme in which a standing euro coin is balanced on the ledge of a window in a Chinese high-speed train, to test the train's stability; **Ho** transforms this video footage into a loop where the coin never falls, commenting on the illusion of capitalist (and technology-driven) stability. Finally, the performance *The Economy Enters the People* (2021), which will take place in September 2021, takes a closer look at the relations between Singapore and China following the attempt of the latter to assimilate a market economy into its party-state apparatus. ●

— **Anne Faucheret**  
CURATOR



*Asia the Unmiraculous*, 2018–2020, installation view, *Look East Gone West*, A+ Works of Art, Kuala Lumpur, September 26 to November 15, 2020, PHOTO: DAMIEN KHOO

## 1871—1875

### 1871

SEPTEMBER 13

Sino-Japanese Friendship and Trade Treaty signed

DECEMBER 23

Iwakura Mission leaves for US

### 1872

Chinese Educational Mission sends first batch of Chinese to study in US

### 1873

SEPTEMBER 13

Iwakura Mission returns to Japan

### 1874

### 1875

SEPTEMBER 20

Japanese gunboat *Un'yō* dispatched to Western coast of Korea in show of force



*Asia the Unmiraculous, 2018–2020, installation view, Look East Gone West, A+ Works of Art, Kuala Lumpur, September 26 to November 15, 2020, PHOTO: DAMIEN KHOO*

1876—1880

1876

FEBRUARY 26

Treaty of Ganghwa Island opens Korea to foreign trade and grants Japan extraterritorial rights

1877

APRIL 12

Founding of University of Tokyo (Todai)

1878

1879

Japan annexes Ryukyu Kingdom to form Okinawa Prefecture

1880



Student Bodies

2019  
HD video • 26 min 30 sec

*Student Bodies* is a work of pedagogical horror that approaches the fraught history of capitalist modernity and radical culture in East and Southeast Asia through the figure of the student body. Beginning with the students of Satsuma and Chōshū from Bakumatsu-era Japan, who in the 1860s were the first students from the country to study in the West, the work considers the student body as both collective and singular, both metaphor and flesh, standing in for the body politic of the region across the successive periods of “miraculous” economic development, crisis, and recovery through to the present day.

In Ho’s work, the “star capitalist pupil” of the United States—as political scientist **Chalmers Johnson** described Japan in the post-World War II period—becomes, later on in the film, the dead student protester on the streets, with each reincarnation breaking established analytical frameworks based on class, culture, and the nation-state. In the work, these monstrous transformations undergone by the student body throughout history are given voice by unseen “ghosts” whose utterances are only comprehensible through reading the subtitles. This is combined with contemporary footage and



*Student Bodies* (film still), 2019

archival material that together draw out the complex interplay of historical forces that has produced the student as both the embodiment of the education system and its contradiction. ●

1881-1885

1881  
Chinese Educational Mission ends

1882  
MAY 6  
Chinese Exclusion Act prohibits immigration of Chinese laborers into US

1883

1884

1885  
APRIL 18  
Tianjin Convention establishes Korea as co-protectorate of China and Japan





*Student Bodies* (film still), 2019

## 1886—1890

1886

1887

OCTOBER 17

French Indochina established

DECEMBER 1

Sino-Portuguese Treaty of Beijing  
affirms Portugal's perpetual  
occupation and government of Macau

1888

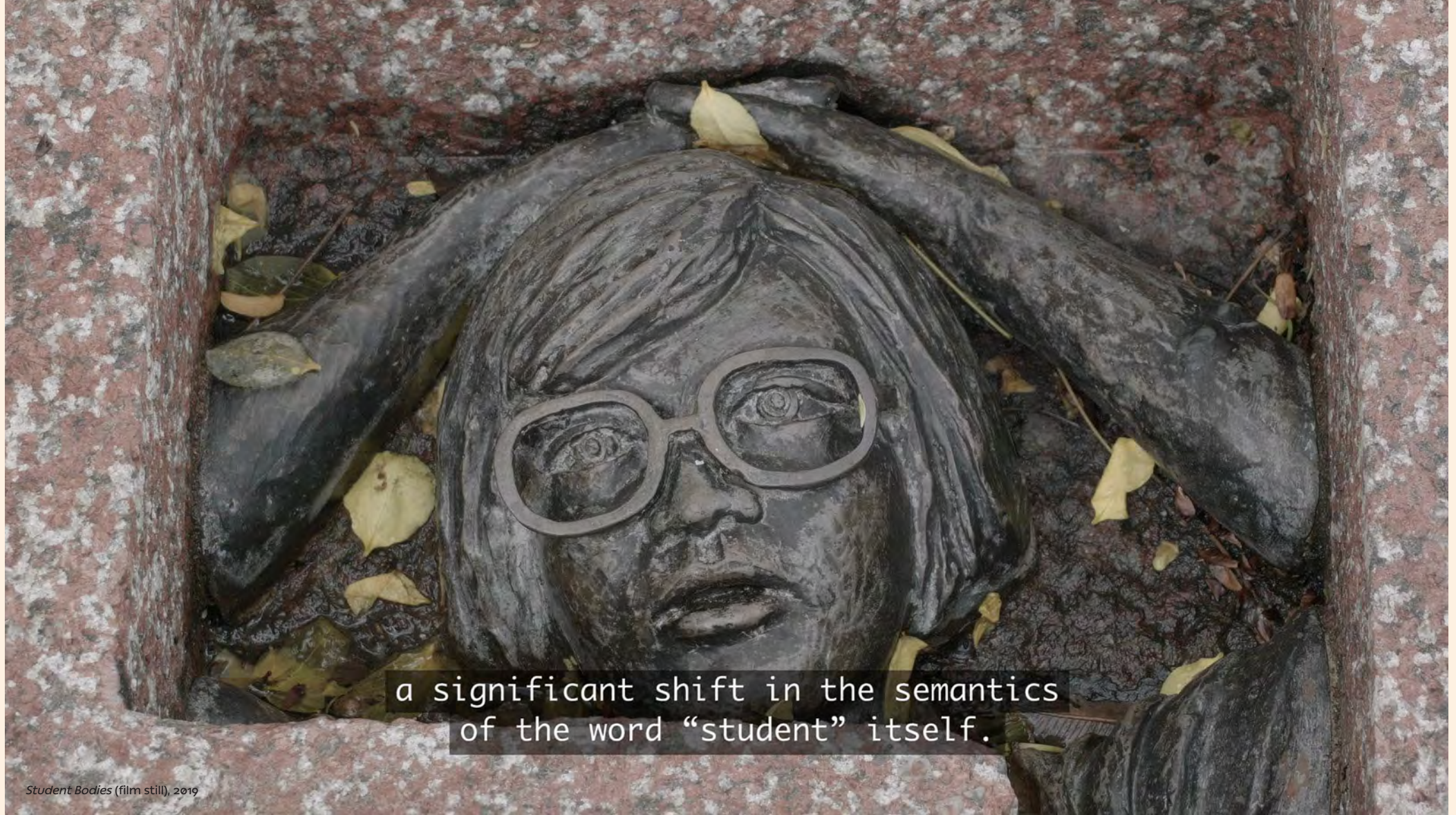
SEPTEMBER 22

*National Geographic* first published

1889

1890





a significant shift in the semantics  
of the word “student” itself.

*Student Bodies* (film still), 2019

**1891—1895**

1891

1892

**1893**

Franco-Siamese War ends with Siam  
ceding Laos to France

**1894**

JULY 25

First Sino-Japanese War breaks out  
over control of Korea

**1895**

APRIL 17

Treaty of Shimonoseki ends First  
Sino-Japanese War with China ceding  
Liaodong, Taiwan, and Penghu to Japan



## Asia the Unmiraculous

2018–2020

Lecture and video installation with digital prints on backlit film mounted on LED-illuminated acrylic, wallpaper, books and magnetically levitated model of a hand

Considering the 1997 Asian financial crisis in relation to the economic “miracle” that preceded it, *Asia the Unmiraculous* is a lecture and video installation that seeks to diffuse the aura of a “miraculous Asia” by examining the entirely profane conditions—shot through with financial capitalism—that set the stage for one of the first large-scale crises of globalization. Focusing on the relationship between race and financial capitalism, the project considers the conditions that made possible the “Asianization” of this miracle and the crisis that followed it. A key line of inquiry examines the ideological contestations between neoliberalism and the developmental state model that unfolded amid the miracle, during which the invisible hand of the market was pitted against the interventionist hand of the state.

Drawing on research undertaken over two years across Thailand, South Korea, Japan, Singapore, and Malaysia, the project extends to the renewed Asian futurisms of

today. In this “return” of Asia to the future, the state reasserts itself through infrastructural and technological power, seen especially in the proliferation of “smart” cities across Asia and the construction of high-speed rail networks as part of China’s ongoing Belt and Road Initiative.

Alongside video, the installation features fourteen posters, designed in the style of real estate listings, that critically re-examine the Asian “miracle”, as well as wallpaper featuring an inverted photograph of the horizon captured from the Port of Piraeus in Greece. This important node of transcontinental trade has been operated by the state-owned Chinese shipping company COSCO since August 2016, when the Chinese government acquired a majority stake in it. ●



*Asia the Unmiraculous*, 2018–2020, performance documentation, *The Breathing of Maps*, Yamaguchi Center for Arts and Media, December 15, 2018 to March 3, 2019  
PHOTO: YASUHIRO TANI. COURTESY YAMAGUCHI CENTER FOR ARTS AND MEDIA

## 1896—1900

1896

1897

OCTOBER 1

Japanese yen made convertible to gold

1898

JUNE 9

China leases New Territories in Hong Kong to UK for 99 years

1899

1900

JUNE

Boxers and Qing imperial forces besiege International Legations in Beijing during Boxer Rebellion





*Asia the Unmiraculous, 2018–2020,*  
installation view, *Look East Gone West*,  
A+ Works of Art, Kuala Lumpur,  
September 26 to November 15, 2020  
PHOTO: DAMIEN KHOO

## 1901—1905

1901

SEPTEMBER 7

Boxer Protocol signed between Qing  
Empire and Eight-Nation Alliance

1902

1903

1904

FEBRUARY 8

Japan attacks Russian fleet at Port  
Arthur; start of Russo-Japanese War

1905

SEPTEMBER 5

Russo-Japanese War ends in military  
victory for Japan—first by Asian  
country over Western power in  
modern era





ULTIMATE COIN TEST CHINA HIGH-SPEED RAIL (film still), 2018

## ULTIMATE COIN TEST CHINA HIGH-SPEED RAIL

2018  
HD video, loop

The “Coin Test China High-Speed Rail” is an internet video phenomenon that started in 2015 in response to China’s ongoing investment in high-speed rail infrastructure across Asia and Europe as part of its Belt and Road Initiative. In each of these videos, often captured by a foreign traveler using one of the many high-speed rail networks built by Chinese state-owned companies, a standing coin is balanced on the ledge of a train window to test the train’s stability. Due to its thickness, the coin of choice is often the 2 euro coin—resulting in an image that appears to confirm the stabilizing presence of the (Chinese) state on the volatility of (European) financial capitalism.

*ULTIMATE COIN TEST CHINA HIGH-SPEED RAIL* reproduces one of these viral videos as a looping 3D simulation in which the coin never falls. Invoking the new fetish for stability amid the ongoing crisis of capitalism, Ho’s video further alludes to the technological fantasy of the “perpetual motion machine” and the utopian imaginary that holds up technology as the ultimate solution to any intractable contemporary problem. ●

### 1906—1910

1906

1907

1908

Boxer Indemnity Scholarship Program launched for Chinese students to study in US

1909

JULY 9  
Anglo-Siamese Treaty transfers Kedah, Kelantan, Perlis, and Terengganu from Siam to British control

1910

AUGUST 22  
Japan annexes Korea





Set in 2027, the science fiction film *Children of Men* (2006) depicts a dystopian future where almost two decades of mass infertility among the human population have brought societies all over the world to the brink of collapse. In a scene that takes place on a train in the United Kingdom, which is among the few nations in the world where the government still stands, an overhead monitor plays an advertisement featuring a rapid montage of global cities that have descended into chaos, before ending with a triumphant declaration of the UK's resilience. For the video installation 2027, Ho extracted footage of selected cities from within that montage, lasting no more than a few frames for each, and re-edited it into a looped video, turning a split-second recognition of a city's collapse into an extended encounter with the apocalyptic vision the images present. While some depictions appear to reinforce stereotypes of particular societies, others appear completely arbitrary, thus compelling the viewer to reconcile their impressions of the real-world city with its representation in the Hollywood film. In drawing attention to this geopolitical frame, Ho's work invites reflection on why certain futures are more imaginable in some places than others. ●

2027, (film still), 2021

## 1911—1915

### 1911

OCTOBER 10  
Chinese Revolution ends  
2,000-year imperial rule

### 1912

JANUARY 1  
Founding of Republic of China (ROC)

### 1913

### 1914

JULY 28  
Austria-Hungary declares war on  
Serbia; start of WWI

### 1915

# The Long Boom: A History o

We're facing 25 years of p  
world. You got a problem w

A BAD MEME—A contagious id  
America is in decline, the  
worse than our own. The p  
working people are falling  
control. The post-Cold War  
the planet. The environme  
we'll all either die of car  
educational system is prod  
who can't read.

## The Long Boom

2021

Digital print on paper

mounted on board

Dimensions variable

In July 1997, *Wired* magazine published “The Long Boom: A History of the Future, 1980–2020”, an essay by the American futurists **Peter Schwartz** and **Peter Leyden** that projects a “radically optimistic” scenario of sustained economic growth and increased global integration from the 1980s through to 2020. The piece was, coincidentally, published at virtually the same time that the Thai baht was unpegged from the US dollar, destabilizing financial markets in East Asia and marking the start of the Asian financial crisis. “The Long Boom” was thus immediately attacked for its unwarranted hopefulness, especially regarding its arguments of an ascendant Asia. The quick recovery of the region after the crisis seemed, for a moment, to vindicate the authors, only for the world to confront further economic malaise and social upheaval in the following decade that began in the aftermath of the 2008 global financial crisis and ended with a devastating global pandemic. For *The Long Boom*, Ho reproduces the original *Wired* essay as a floor installation, which displays the text across a set of long scrolls, lending a physical presence to the unrealized future of the long boom while literally bringing Schwartz and Leyden’s lofty visions back down to the ground. ●

*The Long Boom* (sketch),  
2021

1916—1920

1916

1917

FEBRUARY 5

US bans immigration from Asiatic  
Barred Zone

NOVEMBER 7

Bolsheviks seize power during  
October Revolution

1918

NOVEMBER 11

End of WWI

1919

OCTOBER 10

Founding of Kuomintang

1920

JANUARY 10

Founding of League of Nations



## The Economy Enters the People

2021

Performance

September 18, 2021 • 7 pm • Halle G,  
Museumsquartier Vienna

CO-COMMISSIONED BY

Asia Culture Center, Gwangju  
Singapore Art Museum

CO-PRODUCED BY

Bangkok CityCity Gallery  
Haus der Kulturen der Welt, Berlin  
Kunsthalle Wien

Since the late 1970s, the Chinese government has dispatched thousands of officials to Singapore to study its economic and social policies. The city-state was crucial in reshaping the political imagination of an entire generation of Chinese leadership in a time when “the economy” had replaced class struggle as the primary subject of governance. In *The Economy Enters the People*, this history of encounters between the two countries—one set into motion by the post-socialist turn toward the market economy—is re-examined against the present-day crisis of late capitalism, within which both China and Singapore have emerged as key points of reference for study.

The performance examines the extent to which the revolutionaries-turned-technocrats within the Communist Party drew



*The Economy Enters the People* (film still), 2021

upon Singapore’s experiences in governance, as the former struggled to define the relationship between the party-state and the market economy, especially when it came to resolving the intractable problem of corruption. This endeavor has gained renewed urgency of late, with the return of corruption as a subject of political discourse following the 2008 global financial crisis and China’s economic rise. While on the side of global capital, corruption is invoked to distinguish so-called Chinese capitalism from free-market capitalism as

practiced in the West, on the side of “the people”—the collective subject that has emerged to take the place once occupied by the worker—it serves to characterize the current dysfunctional capitalist system in its entirety.

However, both instances contain the prospect of a capitalism that “works” by being free of corruption. Has class politics been so utterly foreclosed that the people can,

at best, replace governments and disgrace corporations but never abolish capitalism itself? Without pretending to have the answer, *The Economy Enters the People* makes clear that this question is too important to be left to the technocrats. ●

### 1921—1925

1921

JULY 23

Founding of Chinese Communist  
Party (CCP)

1922

DECEMBER 30

Founding of Soviet Union

1923

MARCH 3

*TIME* first published

1924

1925

Creation of Ministry of Commerce and  
Industry marks rise of industrial policy  
in Japan

## Ho Rui An in conversation with Anne Faucheret

*Asia the Unmiraculous, 2018–2020, performance documentation, The Breathing of Maps, Yamaguchi Center for Arts and Media, December 15, 2018 to March 3, 2019*  
PHOTO: YASUHIRO TANI. COURTESY YAMAGUCHI CENTER FOR ARTS AND MEDIA

- *The Ends of a Long Boom* is the title of the exhibition, which is your first solo show in Europe. Can you explain the title in relation to the artworks but also to a general economic discourse polarized around expansion or recession—specifically against the backdrop of the so-called Asian financial crisis of 1997, the global financial crisis of 2008, and the current socioeconomic crisis due to the Covid-19 pandemic?

The title draws upon “The Long Boom: A History of the Future, 1980–2020”, an essay written by futurists Peter Schwartz and Peter Leyden and published in *Wired* on July 1, 1997. Written after the collapse of the Eastern bloc and amid the experience of prosperity that global economic integration was appearing to deliver, the polemic projected a “radically optimistic” vision of a further 25 years of continuous growth that would complete the so-called long boom of 1980 to 2020. Of course, the text reads today almost like a bad joke, seeing that we are still in the midst of a devastating pandemic, to say nothing of the economic malaise, social divisions, and geopolitical tensions of the past decade.

But it appears that the long boom had already imploded in the very moment of its coming into recognition. On July 2, 1997, the Thai government floated the baht, destabilizing financial markets across East Asia and marking the start of the so-called Asian financial crisis. Taking into account the difference in time zones, the publishing of “The Long Boom” and the floating of the baht happened at virtually

the same time. From the outset, it appears as if continuity has been interrupted by crisis, which is typically experienced as rupture; but if you were to approach “The Long Boom” as an interpretation of history that seeks to project and, in effect, produce more of the same, it is really rather the *desire* for continuity that is disrupted. That same desire is also what leads us to construe crisis as an interruption, as something that crops up and that we have to quickly get over, finally deferring the actual political task that each crisis demands of us: a renarrativization of history that allows us to understand not only what led to the crisis but also how it is the foreclosure of particular historical continuities that has given crisis its appearance as rupture.

Much has already been said about the vast inequalities of the contagion-era economy as a mere symptom of the global capitalist system that is typically understood to have taken a dysfunctional turn since the 2008 global financial crisis. But this periodization is inadequate when you consider how many of the conditions leading up to 2008 were already present in the years before the Asian financial crisis, which was really the first large-scale crisis of the global era. Unfortunately, the Asianization of the crisis, as Korean American scholar Laura Kang puts it, resulted not only in the crisis being rendered discrete but also in its racialization, which made it seem like a problem of localized “crony capitalism” rather than of global financial capitalism.

1926—1930

1926

1927

AUGUST 1  
Nanchang Uprising marks first major conflict of Chinese Civil War

1928

OCTOBER 1  
Soviet Union announces first Five-Year Plan

1929

SEPTEMBER 4  
US stock prices plummet; start of Great Depression

1930



Moreover, in researching the crisis, I realized that it was impossible not to also examine its dialectical relation to the “miraculous” economic growth that preceded it. So that extended my timeline back to the postwar economic boom in the region and eventually all the way back to pre-Meiji Japan during the 1860s. I would have gone even further if not for the need to preserve my sanity! Indeed, it’s really only when you break apart the discreteness of each crisis that you start to unravel the many lines and lives that are constitutive of the crisis as such. This is a task that is so necessary today, not just for us to understand why the long boom ended so prematurely, but, more importantly, to question what was so valorized by the discourse of the boom in the first place to make its cessation such a troubling event. Before we even talk about a “return” to boom times, shouldn’t we ask what ends are served by capitalist growth to begin with?

- Your practice aims at deconstructing normative and racialized ways to see and to explain the world—namely the Western-centered view on things. Vienna is not far away from Switzerland, from where the World Trade Organization is trying to monitor the endless expansion of neoliberalism across the world. But here, in Vienna, you are in a city entangled between its desire to assert itself as a Western European capital and its history as a multicultural capital at the intersection between West and East. What does it change for you to show your works in

the Central European context, especially in Vienna? What role did that play in the selection of existing and the development of new works to be featured in the show?

It’s funny that you mention Switzerland, because Singapore was due to host the World Economic Forum this August, until it was canceled due to a spike in Covid-19 cases. Given that an entire generation of Singaporeans growing up in the ’80s was told to aspire toward the Swiss standard of living, the relocation of Davos to Singapore was especially ironic. The Conservative leadership in the UK has also been so charmed by its former colony’s low-taxation economic model that it has called its vision for the post-Brexit economy “Singapore-on-Thames”. Clearly, geography is now out of joint. The “East” and “West” have collapsed into each other. For this reason, I was really delighted to have been invited by **What, How & for Whom** to present this exhibition at **Kunsthalle Wien**, knowing how they have leveraged their positionality as a curatorial collective from the post-socialist “East” to reorient a city that, as you’ve suggested, is seeking to pull itself more into the orbit of Western Europe. I see the current exhibition as part of this reorientation that further expands the parameters of the “East” while complicating its very designation.

Having lived and worked intermittently in Europe for the last ten years, I’ve learned so much from colleagues whose work has been critical in situating the resurgent reactionary



*Asia the Unmiraculous*, 2018–2020,  
performance documentation,  
*As the West Slept*, Silver Art Projects,  
New York, November 15 to December 15, 2019  
PHOTO: CHARISSE FOO

## 1931—1935

### 1931

NOVEMBER 7

Founding of Chinese Soviet Republic

### 1932

JUNE 24

Siamese Revolution overthrows  
absolute monarchy

### 1933

### 1934

OCTOBER 16

CCP begins Long March

JUNE 27

Founding of Thammasat University in  
Bangkok

### 1935



*Asia the Unmiraculous*, 2018–2020,  
installation view, *Look East Gone West*, A+ Works of Art,  
Kuala Lumpur, September 26 to November 15, 2020  
PHOTO: DAMIEN KHOO

and ethnonationalist tendencies on the continent against the neoliberalization of the Eastern bloc in the '90s and the austerity policies of the past decade. But I'm also often struck by the glaring omission of Asia in some of these discussions. For example, when it comes to the issue of privatization, the discourse sometimes curiously does not exceed the power relations between the European troika and individual EU states. But what happens to these devalued assets after they have been privatized? Too often, they are bought up by wealthy investors from Asia, the Middle East, and increasingly Africa (as with Angola in Portugal), sometimes from countries that were previously subjugated by European colonial capital.

There is understandably some trepidation, in the cultural sphere at least, in addressing this phenomenon, given that so many cultural institutions have only just begun to reckon with their own colonial inheritances, not to mention the reparative and redistributive work that remains to be done. But this leaves a gap in the public discourse that is then filled by the extremely lazy and sometimes demagogic characterizations of “reverse colonization”, which is utterly inadequate for the task of understanding how capital circulates in the world today. Although I wouldn't say that the ongoing influx of capital from Asia into Europe is a key subject of the exhibition, I do hope that it can help expand the conversation on the subject through its very interrogation of “Asian” capitalism.

That said, the narrative of *Asia the Unmiraculous* (2018–2020) actually begins with the Chinese state-owned company COSCO's acquisition of a majority stake in the Port of Piraeus in Greece and ends with the image of the 2 euro coin standing on the ledge of a Chinese high-speed train. So Europe is already very present in the exhibited works, all of which were actually produced or conceived in some form before we started working on this exhibition. But perhaps there's really nothing very remarkable about this given that the very concept of Asia has been haunted by the specter of Europe from its inception. As some sources suggest, the word “Asia” first appeared in ancient Greece to describe the vast tract of land lying to its East.

- The display you have chosen makes the most out of the transparency or porosity offered by the architecture of the glass pavilion where the show takes place. Can you speak about the overall display you created in the space and how it was conceived in relation to the two main media through which your practice is articulated, namely performance and video?

Most of my work takes a durational form, as narrativization makes up the key part of my artistic process. Naturally, this presents a challenge when I have to present multiple works within a single space, though for me what it really does is turn the exhibition-making process into something more dramaturgical. It becomes about the arrangement of different temporalities and modes of attention in space.

## 1936—1940

### 1936

FEBRUARY

*The General Theory of Employment, Interest and Money* published

### 1937

JULY 7

Marco Polo Bridge Incident; start of Second Sino-Japanese War

### 1938

JULY 16

Japan forfeits hosting Olympics

### 1939

SEPTEMBER 1

Invasion of Poland by Nazi Germany; start of WWII

### 1940

AUGUST 1

Japan announces Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere



The videos for *Asia the Unmiraculous* and *Student Bodies* (2019) are both ideally experienced from start to finish. The listings on LED-illuminated acrylic that are part of the installation for *Asia the Unmiraculous* lend themselves to an experience of reading that can be quite selective, since you can pick and choose which ones you want to read more closely, given that each listing is quite self-contained. In contrast, *The Long Boom* (2021) contains an onerous amount of text that’s meant to convey more of a physical presence and is not exactly intended for reading—though you can certainly do so if you want to! Then there’s *ULTIMATE COIN TEST CHINA HIGH-SPEED RAIL* (2018), which is a seamless loop from which time has seemingly been evacuated. While also looped, the series of videos in *2027* (2021) are more like GIFs with no more than a few frames that don’t loop seamlessly, so you get the sense of something hypercompressed being forcibly extended in time through repetition. For me, the openness of the space is really important to this experience, for it gives audience members the latitude to shape their own itineraries in the exhibition.

- Your works are research based and you usually develop them over several years, traveling to the places relevant to the pieces you are working on, in order to research in situ. But you also read and watch a lot of films. How do you go about collecting all these different materials and putting them together? I would like to know, for instance, if you mainly work

alone or if you interview people and involve experts.

There are different processes that are part of the research. The reading and absorption of visual culture is more of an ongoing process than formal research. I wouldn’t say that these processes are necessarily undertaken alone, because I’m always moving through different social worlds as I gather material, and often the most fascinating references come from people I’ve interacted with. The process is much more structured with fieldwork and interviews, and with that comes the affordance of time to stay with and think with the different kinds of knowledges I encounter. What distinguishes *Asia the Unmiraculous* and *Student Bodies* from my previous works is the amount of on-site research they involved. But even as the logistics of travel and filming made it necessary to plan in advance, it was also important for me that the process remained quite organic, as you don’t know what you will find when you arrive at a location.

Besides, how I usually work is that research and production takes place as a single process. It’s not typical for me to first do a site visit and then later return to film after having figured out exactly what I need from the location. The filming often takes place while I’m researching and working out the narrative, and it’s only later in the editorial process that I finally have a full sense of the narrative, and sometimes that means going back and doing more filming to fill in the gaps that have now become apparent.

The entire process is like a gradual accumulation that actually ends up requiring a lot of resources. While I managed to do most of the filming myself for *Asia the Unmiraculous* and *Student Bodies*, both works would not have been made without the support of various institutions and people across the different localities, from commissions to residencies to introducing me to local networks. I also spent a significant amount of time doing workshops or work-in-progress presentations in the different localities where I did site research, because I wanted to be sure that the work is able to speak to these contexts and offer some new understanding of the material I had collected on-site, often through the generosity of local interlocutors.

- You are interested in different modes of being, modes of affecting, modes of relating to the environment that have been transformed or instrumentalized by capitalism. To make us grasp these abstract and complex phenomena, in your works you implement existing figurations and metaphors and also devise new ones. What inspired you to work with such topics, and what do some of these figures that you use to explain these subjects stand for? I’m thinking especially of the (in)visible hand and the student.

You are right that in my work I’m often trying to grasp rather abstract and quite expansive, sometimes totalizing, phenomena, which

requires working across different geographies and time scales. Part of the impetus for doing so might have come from my experience growing up in a small city-state where we are constantly told that our survival is contingent upon our ability to adapt to external forces over which we have no control. To some extent, this is a position that lends you some form of agency, but over time I’ve come to see this in completely cynical terms, in that you are only interested in what happens in the world insofar as it relates to your narrow self-interests. There’s no curiosity in why the world is the way it is to begin with, how it relegates each of us to particular positionalities and only that amount of agency.

For me, contemporary art is one of the best sites for producing that curiosity, because its public sphere is articulated around sensuous experience. It is a space to produce knowledge and make arguments that returns them to the body. With *Asia the Unmiraculous*, I was really trying to think about how we can approach financial capitalism as something that does not just happen in this non-locus that we call “the market” but that is performed by some bodies upon other bodies. It is on this basis that the hand becomes a key motif around which the narrative is constructed. In a photograph that I present during the performance, this is the hand of **Michel Camdessus**, the managing director of the **International Monetary Fund (IMF)** during the height of the Asian financial crisis. In it, he is seen standing with his arms folded and looking rather sternly at Indonesian

1941—1945

1941	1942
DECEMBER 7	FEBRUARY 15
Japan attacks Pearl Harbor	Japan captures British colony of Singapore
DECEMBER 21	DECEMBER 1
Japan and Thailand sign military alliance treaty	Founding of Communist Party of Siam

1943	1944
NOVEMBER 5	JULY 22
Greater East Asia Conference opens in Tokyo	Bretton Woods agreement establishes international monetary order based on gold standard

1945
AUGUST 7
Indonesia declares independence
AUGUST 15
Japan's surrender ends WWII
AUGUST 28
US occupation of Japan begins
OCTOBER 24
Founding of UN

president **Suharto** signing a bailout agreement with the **IMF**. The image attracted much public outrage over what appeared to be the arrogant placement of **Camdessus's** hands. Suddenly, the most visible hands were those of a man advocating for—and indeed in that very moment, enforcing—the “invisible hand” of the so-called free market.

In *Student Bodies*, it is the student around which the complex interplay of historical forces in East and Southeast Asia is narrativized, beginning with the students of Satsuma and Chōshū in Bakumatsu-era Japan. The student body here is both metaphor and flesh. It refers both to actual historical figures who shaped the developmental trajectories of the region and to the figuration of the student that comes to be projected onto an entire country or region. I was especially struck by American political scientist **Chalmers Johnson's** description of Japan as the “star capitalist pupil” of the US. What does it mean for an entire nation to be under the tutelage of another? Throughout the period of the economic miracle, countries in the region would, one after another, assume the role of student nation in relation to the West and to each other: Japan learning from the US, the Four Asian Tigers learning from Japan, the so-called Tiger Cubs learning from the Asian Tigers, and so on. But the history of the region as produced by actual student bodies also speaks to the untenability of this figuration, for these students would, time and again, turn against the system they had been brought up to embody.

● You are based in Singapore, and this is also the country where you were socialized. In your new work, *The Economy Enters the People* (2021), which you will perform in September at Halle G at Vienna's Museumsquartier, you are for the first time focusing on the relations between China and Singapore. China is a bit like a ghost in your earlier works: present and absent at the same time, sometimes named, sometimes evoked indirectly. Can you tell us a bit more about this new work and how it approaches the subject of China's political economy?

In a way, the sporadic appearance of China in these earlier works almost mirrors how it figured within the prevailing economic discourses of the region in the 1980s and '90s. If you read *The East Asian Miracle* published by the World Bank in 1993, China makes an appearance here and there, but clearly the authors didn't really know how to talk about it. So this latest work, *The Economy Enters the People*, can be seen as the moment in my practice when China emerges from the background, so to speak. But I don't think I could have reached this point if I hadn't first studied the economic development of Japan and the Four Asian Tigers, which had clearly influenced the reformist leadership in China when it decided to open up the market economy. It's almost uncanny when you revisit the kind of things that were being said on both sides during the Japan-US trade war of the late '80s and realize how much of it is

reflected in the present-day confrontation between China and the US.

However, it would be a mistake to simply map what happened in these East Asian economies onto China after the reforms, because with China, you have to contend with the legacy of communism and the persistence of the socialist party-state apparatus. Accordingly, this is also the first work in which I grapple with the question of post-socialism, which I would argue is concurrent to neoliberalism but irreducible to it, as is clearly observable in how China managed to avoid the shock therapy that was imposed upon much of Eastern Europe. Post-socialism, in this sense, has to be understood not as a break from the socialist past but as a continuation of specific political imaginaries of the Communist Party into the present day of China's economic dominance. There's a tendency to read this continuation purely in terms of political authoritarianism, but I think that obscures the most decisive factor in China's turn to the market economy, which is the relationship between the state and capital.

In *The Economy Enters the People*, I examine this relationship by looking specifically at the influence of the so-called Singapore model upon the Chinese leadership ever since **Deng Xiaoping** instructed party cadres to learn from Singapore during his landmark Southern Tour in 1992. Curiously, for all the speculation that China has been learning from Singapore how to suppress demands for political reform, it is actually the one feature of the city-state that

is the very antithesis of arbitrary state power that the leadership has been most interested in: the rule of law.

The opening sequence of the performance features photographs of massive boardroom tables, around which former guerrilla-style revolutionaries reinvented themselves as sedentary, self-possessed technocrats. The table goes on to become a key motif that articulates the often fraught investment in the law by these technocrats, especially when it came to tackling the intractable problem of corruption. We eventually find ourselves at the table formerly used by the chief justices of Singapore, which, in 2018, ironically played host to **Donald Trump** and **Kim Jong-un** when they signed an agreement during their historic meeting in the city-state, at which point the dissonances between these appearances at the table, as well as what is revealed to be beneath it, render untenable the distinction between the rule of law and corruption that is often upheld by the liberal imaginary. In effect, I'm asking whether in obsessing over “corrupt” Chinese capitalism—much like the discourse of “Asian” crony capitalism during the Asian financial crisis—we are obfuscating the relations of force that underwrite “good” capitalism.

● To close the loop, I would like to come back to the title of the exhibition, derived from the above-mentioned article predicting an eponymous “long boom” from 1980 until 2020. After its conquest of Earth and

## 1946—1950

### 1946

FEBRUARY 22

George Kennan's “Long Telegram” introduces US containment policy

APRIL 20

League of Nations dissolves

### 1947

MARCH 12

US Truman Doctrine established with pledge of aid to Greece and Turkey

### 1948

APRIL 3

Marshall Plan grants billions in US aid to Europe

### 1949

OCTOBER 1

Founding of People's Republic of China (PRC)

DECEMBER 7

ROC relocates capital to Taipei

### 1950

FEBRUARY 14

Sino-Soviet Treaty of Friendship and Alliance signed

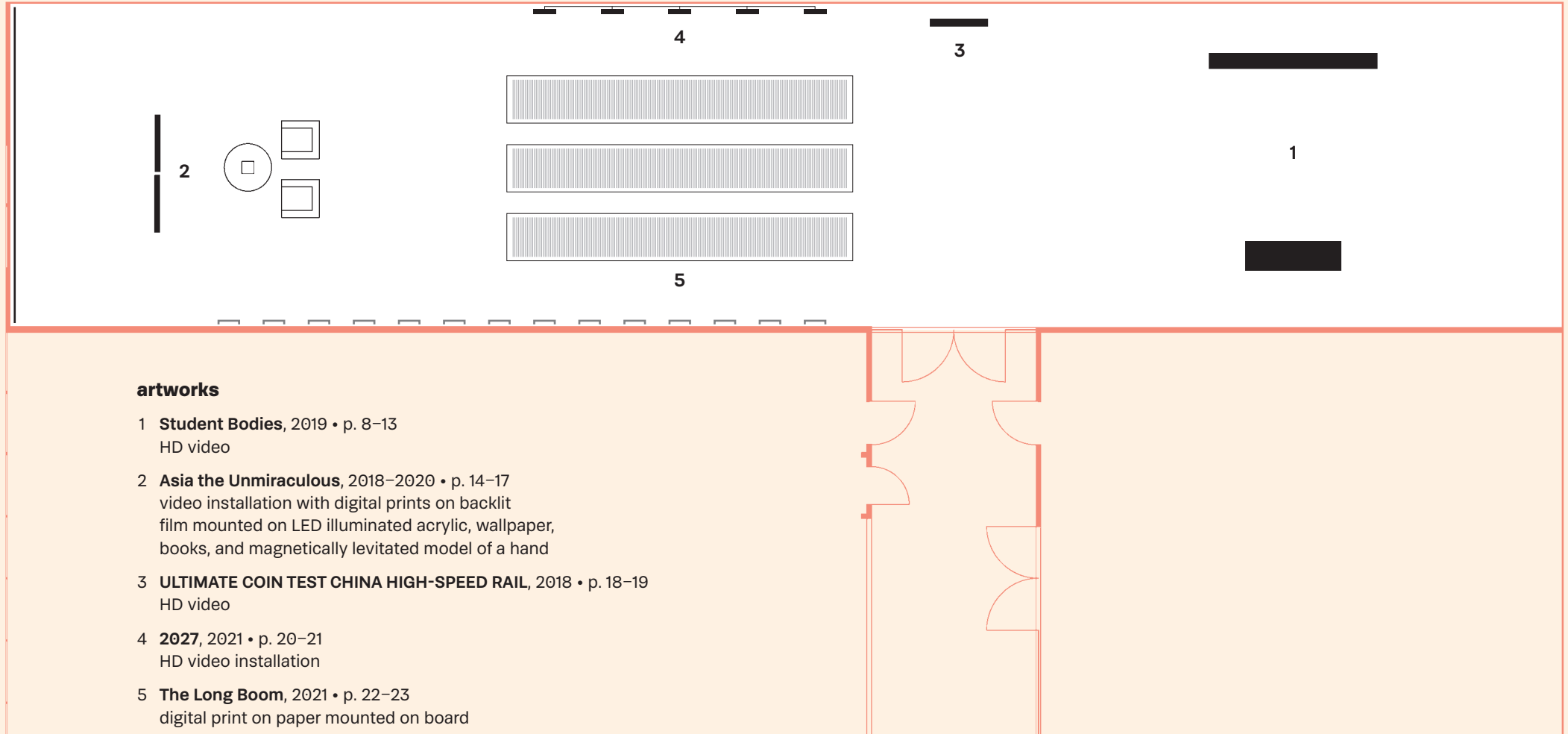
JUNE 25

North Korean forces cross border into South Korea; start of Korean War



# Ho Rui An. The Ends of a Long Boom.

kunsthalle wien karlsplatz



## 1951—1955

### 1951

SEPTEMBER 8

Security Treaty grants US right to  
establish military bases in Japan

### 1952

JUNE 30

Marshall Plan ends

### 1953

OCTOBER 1

China announces first Five-Year Plan

JULY 27

Korean Armistice signed

### 1954

DECEMBER 2

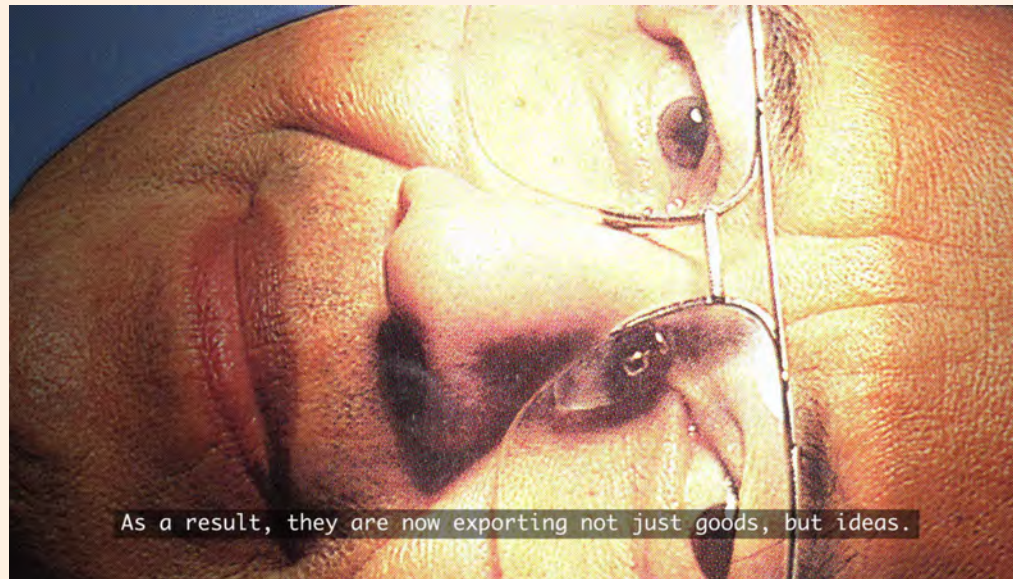
Sino-American Mutual Defense Treaty  
signed

### 1955

Japan begins 20-year streak of growth,  
averaging almost 10 percent each year

APRIL 24

Bandung Conference opens in  
Indonesia



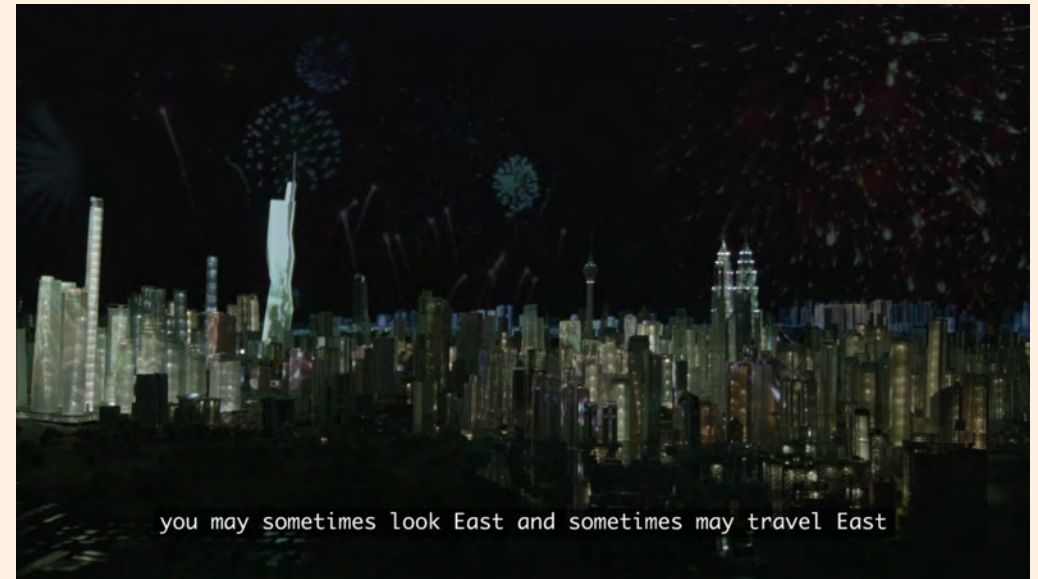
As a result, they are now exporting not just goods, but ideas.

*Student Bodies* (film stills), 2019

space, capitalism seeks to master time by increasing productivity and blurring work and leisure, making time a never-ending present. Your works distort any progressive linear timeline—they are made of the sedimentation of time, of prospects, flashbacks, and back and forths. Time seems to always escape. Is time the only space in which some resistance can be performed against the commodification of all that lives?

The question of time and space reminds me of a quote by Margaret Thatcher that appears

in *Student Bodies*. During a speech delivered during her visit to Malaysia in 1985, she made a cheeky retort about Prime Minister **Mahathir Mohamad**'s Look East policy (which came quickly after his infamous Buy British Last policy) by suggesting that "if you look far enough East and travel far enough East, you always come to the West!" For me this idea of moving East only to end up in the West is nothing less than topographical horror. It is as much a colonization of space as it is a complete spatialization of time, because there is no prospect of progress however far you move from your origin.



you may sometimes look East and sometimes may travel East

This is also an imaginary that comes out of a specific figuration of the planet as a "globe" within discourses of globalization. That is, of the planet as a perfect sphere within which things can freely circulate without running into rough corners. But, of course, the reality is that in both geographical and developmental terms, the planet's terrain is extremely uneven, and as long as globalism does not face up to this profane condition, it will find its fantasies of fluid circulation increasingly running aground. But as we've seen time and again, capitalism capitalizes on crisis, including crises of its own making. This is why we simply cannot wait for

the next crisis for something to be done. There is never a "right" time that will not be usurped by the reproductive power of capital. There is never enough time, but time is also all that we've got. What we can do in the present, right now, is to give time to projects that enlarge our understanding of the world and our horizons of what is imaginable as our collective future. ●

## 1956—1960

### 1956

Nikita Khrushchev denounces Joseph Stalin; start of Sino-Soviet split

### 1957

Ford Foundation begins sponsoring programs to train technocrats from Chile and Indonesia in US  
*The Face of Thai Feudalism* published

### 1958

MAY 16  
Great Leap Forward launched in China

### 1959

MAY 30  
People's Action Party (PAP) wins election in Singapore  
SEPTEMBER 16  
First office-ready photocopier, Xerox 914, introduced

### 1960

MAY–JUNE  
Revised Security Treaty with US sparks massive demonstrations in Japan  
JULY 31  
Malayan Emergency declared over















# MAHATHIR LOOKS AT THE ECONOMY



During the Asian financial crisis, Malaysia stood out for refusing any assistance from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and, against the latter's advice, went on to impose capital controls and renege the peg of the ringgit to the US dollar. In the long run, the measures proved to be effective, as the IMF itself conceded many years later: though in the immediate period following the crisis, it responded only with denials, heaving much of its critique for the prime minister Mahatir Mohamad and turning him into the de facto face of the Asian authoritarian state.

With this came an entire genre of images of Mahatir that circulated at the time, best named "Mahatir looks at the Economy". Recurring across all these images is the big-headed dictator literally towering over the economy, on the verge of toppling onto it. To a certain degree, this was not an inaccurate representation of the strongman who consolidated his power domestically in those years. But as it turned out, based at least on the coverage of Mahatir by the Western media, between imprisoning political opponents and shutting down newspapers, somehow the most outrageous thing the Asian dictator could do was to close capital markets to foreign investors.



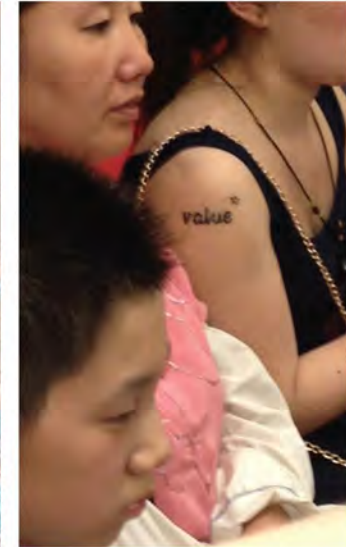
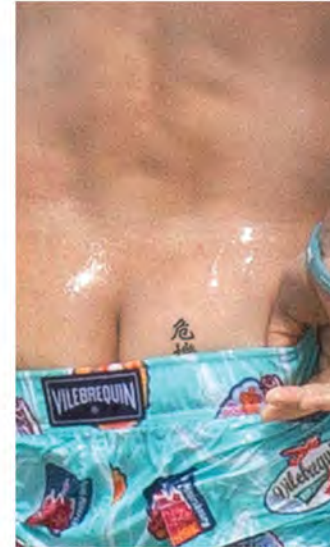
## 経済を見る マハティール



アジア通貨危機の真っ只中、マハティールは国際通貨基金（IMF）からの支援を全面拒否し、さらには動向にも反した。その結果、資本市場を閉鎖し、ドルとリンギットの固定を止めた。この結果、通貨の暴落は避けられず、数年も後のことだ。当時の危機管理の反応は驚異的だ。またその後の多くは、アジアに於ける独裁政権の事実上の顔となったマハティール・モハマドに於けることだ。

これは単に、当時のメディアに流通した首長の多くが「経済を見るマハティール」というジャンルで描かれた、絶頂に達した独裁者のイメージだ。彼らはみな経済が倒壊するのを防ぐために、自らも倒壊してしまおうと賭けていた。ある意味、この事実は、国内で権力をもち、外に資本市場を閉鎖して、他人の経済を倒壊させているという言い換えが、彼ら自身に於けるマハティール・モハマドのイメージだ。アジア通貨危機として、世界経済が倒壊し、崩壊を覚悟していた人々への警告である。外国人民衆を資本市場から閉鎖するこの行為が、アジアに於ける独裁者の顔として描かれていたのである。

# FROM CRISIS TO VALUE\* 危機から価値\*へ



Rumour has it that so enamoured was the former chief economist of the World Bank, Larry Summers, with the Chinese characters for the word "crisis" that he had them tattooed on his right bottom. Summers, who commissioned the study on the East Asian "miracle", went on to work for the Clinton administration, eventually becoming Treasury Secretary, and directed the American response to the Asian financial crisis. Throughout his speeches during the period, Summers repeatedly pointed out that one of the two characters that made up the Chinese word for "crisis" meant "opportunity". And the crisis was truly an opportunity, though less so for the workers of East Asia than the international investors waiting to re-enter the market for an even larger share of the economy than what they had before.

As capital markets were forced wide open and ceilings lifted to allow full foreign ownership of firms and banks, the free sale that ensued subjected the economies to even more volatility, further crippling the ability of the local governments to respond to the crisis. Suffice to say that no one in East Asia was rushing to have "crisis" tattooed on their bottoms. It would take almost two decades for the region to finally turn the joke around on the West through its own reemergence of the foreign. In 2013, a photograph of a Chinese person with a random English word as a tattoo went viral—except that the word was not random at all. Proudly marked on the shoulder of a woman was the word "value".

ある噂によると、世界銀行の元チーフ・エコノミスト、ラリー・サマーズの右臀部には「危機」という漢字の刺青が入っているという。サマーズはアジアの経済の成長を研究し、その結果、アジアの経済は「危機」から「価値」へと変化するという考えを提唱した。サマーズは、アジアの経済の成長を研究し、その結果、アジアの経済は「危機」から「価値」へと変化するという考えを提唱した。サマーズは、アジアの経済の成長を研究し、その結果、アジアの経済は「危機」から「価値」へと変化するという考えを提唱した。

資本市場が強制的に開放され、融資限度がはずれたことにより、外国は資本市場の参入が可能となった。駆け参りしてきた外国投資家は、世界経済の自由化の波に乗りかかったという感覚を抱いた。またとあるほど、東アジアの経済は、この時期に、その価値を、それらに与えられたものよりも高かった。この時期に、外国資本は、東アジアの経済の価値を、それらに与えられたものよりも高かった。この時期に、外国資本は、東アジアの経済の価値を、それらに与えられたものよりも高かった。

2013年、インターネット上でアジア人の写真が話題となった。その写真に写っていたアジア人の肩に、偶然にも刺青されていたのは「value（価値）」の文字であったのである。

## 1981—1985

### 1981

OCTOBER

Malaysia announces Buy British Last policy

### 1982

FEBRUARY

Malaysia launches Look East policy

### 1983

DECEMBER

The Second Line, barbed-wire fence along boundaries of Shenzhen SEZ, completed

### 1984

MARCH 6

UK miners' strike begins

### 1985

FEBRUARY

Goh Keng Swee appointed as special advisor to China's SEZs

APRIL 5

Margaret Thatcher arrives in Malaysia for official visit

SEPTEMBER 22

Plaza Accord pushes up value of yen







# a long boom?

“The Long Boom: A History of the Future, 1980–2020” is an essay by the American futurists **Peter Schwartz** and **Peter Leyden** that was published by *Wired* magazine on July 1, 1997. It projected that the sustained economic growth and increased global integration of the ’80s and ’90s would continue into the next two decades, making up a “long boom” from 1980 to 2020. This section reproduces key predictions within this “radically optimistic” scenario. The text is entirely composed of excerpts from the original essay that have been minimally edited for flow and consistency. ●

JULY 1, 1997  
“The Long Boom” published

## 1998

- The Iridium global phone network is completed.
- Electronic cash gains acceptance.

## 2000

- Alan Greenspan retires, the Fed lifts its foot off the brake, and the US economy really begins to take off.
- The US economy is growing at sustained rates of around 4 percent—rates not seen since the 1960s. No one talks about reverting to big government, but there’s plenty of room for innovative approaches to applying the pooled resources of the entire society to benefit the public at large. And the government, in good conscience, can finally afford tax cuts.
- Japan radically liberalizes many of its previously protected domestic markets—a big stimulus for the world economy.

### 1996—2000

#### 1996

Net capital inflow into South Korea, Thailand, Indonesia, Malaysia, and Philippines hits US\$ 93 billion

#### 1997

JULY 1  
Handover of Hong Kong to PRC  
JULY 2  
Thai baht collapses  
JULY 12  
*Princess Mononoke* released in Japan  
AUGUST 20  
IMF approves bailout for Thailand

#### 1998

JANUARY 15  
Indonesia signs IMF bailout  
MAY 21  
Suharto resigns  
SEPTEMBER 1  
Malaysia reinstates USD peg and implements capital controls

#### 1999

FEBRUARY 12  
Japan adopts zero interest rates  
APRIL 29  
*Entrapment* released in Malaysia

#### 2000

JANUARY 1  
Y2K bug causes minor disruptions to computer systems



2001

- The Human Genome Project, the effort to map out all human genes, is completed.
- Project Gutenberg completes its task of putting 10,000 books online.

2002

- Teledesic's global internet network is operational, allowing seamless connection to the information infrastructure anywhere on the planet.
- All American Free Trade Agreement is signed, integrating the entire hemisphere into one unified market.
- The more advanced Eastern European countries—Poland, Hungary, Czech Republic—join the European Union.

2005

- High-bandwidth connections that can easily move video have become common in developed countries, and videophones finally catch on.
- 20 percent of Americans teleshop for groceries.
- Animals are used for developing organs that can be donated to humans. Superproductive animals and ultrahardy, high-yielding plants bring another veritable green revolution to countries sustaining large populations.
- Technology previously confined to aircraft's onboard electric systems successfully migrates to automobiles. These cars use natural gas to power the onboard generators, which then drive the electric motors at the wheels. They also make use of new superstrong, ultralight materials that take the place of steel and allow big savings on mileage.
- Taiwan is absorbed into China proper.

2001—2005

2001

JANUARY 1  
Greece joins Eurozone  
SEPTEMBER 11  
US attacked by Al-Qaeda  
DECEMBER 11  
China joins WTO

2002

Thaksinomics returns GDP growth in Thailand to pre-crisis level

2003

MARCH 19  
US troops invade Iraq  
JULY 31  
Thailand repays IMF loan ahead of schedule

2004

Construction begins on Songdo International Business District in South Korea

2005

*Mission: Impossible III* filmed in Shanghai and Zhejiang

2007

- Most US produce and livestock is being genetically engineered by new, precise breeding techniques.

2008

- With the auto industry in a mad dash to convert to hydropower, the bottom falls out of the oil market. The Middle Eastern crisis comes to a head. Some of the old monarchies and religious regimes begin to topple.
- Americans can vote electronically from home.

2010

- Intel builds a chip with a billion transistors—100 times the complexity of the most advanced integrated circuits being designed in the late 1990s.
- Hydrogen is being processed in refinery-like plants and loaded onto cars that can go thousands of miles—and many months—before refueling. The technology is vastly cheaper and safer than in the 1960s and well on its way to widespread use.
- All new books come out in electronic form.

2006—2010

**2006**  
JANUARY 31  
Alan Greenspan retires as chair of US Federal Reserve

**2007**  
FEBRUARY 7  
HSBC discloses losses from subprime loan defaults

**2008**  
AUGUST 8  
Beijing Olympics opens  
SEPTEMBER 15  
Lehman Brothers files for bankruptcy  
NOVEMBER 9  
China announces US\$ 586 billion stimulus

**2009**  
MARCH 24  
China calls for new global reserve currency to replace USD

**2010**  
MAY 1  
Shanghai Expo opens  
MAY 2  
Greece signs EU-IMF bailout  
AUGUST 16  
China overtakes Japan as world's No. 2 economy



2012

- A gene therapy for cancer is perfected.

2015

- Reliable simultaneous language translation has been cracked—with immediate consequences for the multilingual world.
- Online sales hit US\$10 billion, still small by overall retail standards.
- Scientists and engineers figure out reliable methods to construct objects one atom at a time using nanotechnology. Among the first commercially viable products are tiny sensors that can enter a person's bloodstream and bring back information about its composition.
- Nanotech techniques begin to be applied to the development of computing at the atomic level. Quantum computing, rather than DNA computing, proves to be the heir to microprocessors in the short run.
- In Central Africa, the introduction of biological weapons in an ethnic conflict, combined with the outbreak of a terrifying new natural disease, brings the death count to unimagined levels: an estimated 5 million people die in the space of six months—this on top of a cumulative death toll of roughly 100 million who perished prematurely over the previous two decades.
- Relatively complete virtual libraries are up and running.

2011—2015

2011  
SEPTEMBER 17  
Occupy Wall Street begins occupying Zuccotti Park in New York

2012  
DECEMBER  
Xi Jinping launches anti-corruption campaign

2013  
SEPTEMBER  
Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) announced

2014  
MARCH 18  
Sunflower Student Movement occupies Legislative Yuan in Taiwan  
MAY 22  
Thailand returns to military rule after coup

2015  
JUNE 30  
Greece fails to repay IMF loan

2017

- Almost one-third of the 4,000 known genetic diseases can be avoided through genetic manipulation.
- The biotech revolution profoundly affects another economic sector: agriculture. The same deeper understanding of genetics leads to much more precise breeding of plants.

2018

- Micromachines are able to do basic cell repair.

2020

- Real advances begin to be made in the field of biological computation, where billions of relatively slow computations, done at the level of DNA, can be run simultaneously and brought together in the aggregate to create the ultimate in parallel processing.
- Almost all new cars are hybrid vehicles, mostly using hydrogen power. The world may be able to support quite a few additional automobile drivers—including nearly 2 billion Chinese.
- The Chinese economy has grown to be the largest in the world. Though the US economy is more technologically sophisticated, and its population more affluent, China and the United States are basically on par.
- Humans arrive on Mars. The four astronauts touch down and beam their images back to the 11 billion people sharing in the moment. The expedition is a joint effort supported by virtually all nations on the planet, the culmination of a decade and a half of intense focus on a common goal.
- World population has largely stabilized. Just as important, the world economy has evolved to a point roughly in balance with nature. The regeneration of the global environment is in sight.

2016—2020

**2016**  
JANUARY 29  
Japan adopts negative interest rates  
JUNE 23  
UK votes to leave EU  
AUGUST 10  
China's COSCO acquires majority stake in Port of Piraeus in Greece

**2017**  
JANUARY 23  
US withdraws from Trans-Pacific Partnership

**2018**  
MARCH 8  
CPTPP signed  
JUNE 12  
Trump-Kim Summit in Singapore  
AUGUST  
Malaysia cancels BRI projects after Mahathir Mohamad returns to power

**2019**  
MARCH 15  
Large-scale protests begin in Hong Kong against proposed extradition bill  
AUGUST 1  
Trump announces tariffs on US\$300 billion worth of Chinese goods

**2020**  
Covid-19 global pandemic  
Global temperatures reach record high



# biography

**Ho Rui An** is an artist and writer working in the intersections of contemporary art, cinema, performance, and theory. Working primarily across the mediums of lecture, essay, and film, he probes into the ways in which images are produced, circulate, and disappear within contexts of globalism and governance. Ho has presented projects at the *Bangkok Art Biennale*, 2020; *Asian Art Biennial*, Taichung, 2019; *Gwangju Biennale*, 2018; *Jakarta Biennale*, 2017; *Sharjah Biennial*, 2017; *Kochi-Muziris Biennale*, 2014; Musée du quai Branly – Jacques Chirac, Paris, 2020; Van Abbemuseum, Eindhoven, 2018; Haus der Kulturen der Welt, Berlin, 2017; NTU Centre for Contemporary Art Singapore, 2017; and Para Site, Hong Kong, 2015. In 2019, he was awarded the International Film Critics' (FIPRESCI) Prize at the International Short Film Festival Oberhausen. In 2018, Ho was a fellow of the DAAD Artists-in-Berlin Program. ●

*Asia the Unmiraculous*, 2018–2020, performance documentation, *The Breathing of Maps*, Yamaguchi Center for Arts and Media, December 15, 2018 to March 3, 2019  
PHOTO: YASUHIRO TANI. COURTESY YAMAGUCHI CENTER FOR ARTS AND MEDIA

2021—2025

2021

JULY 23

Tokyo Olympics opens

2022

2023

2024

2025

Sat 18/9 2021 • 7 PM  
Halle G, Museumsquartier Vienna

The artist Ho Rui An will present his new work, the performance *The Economy Enters the People* (2021).

Thurs 22/7, 9/9, 23/9 & 7/10 2021 • 6 PM  
**kunsthalle wien** karlsplatz

On four Thursdays, from 6 to 7 PM, members of kunsthalle wien's art education team will be present for a conversation on the works presented in the show and to answer your questions.

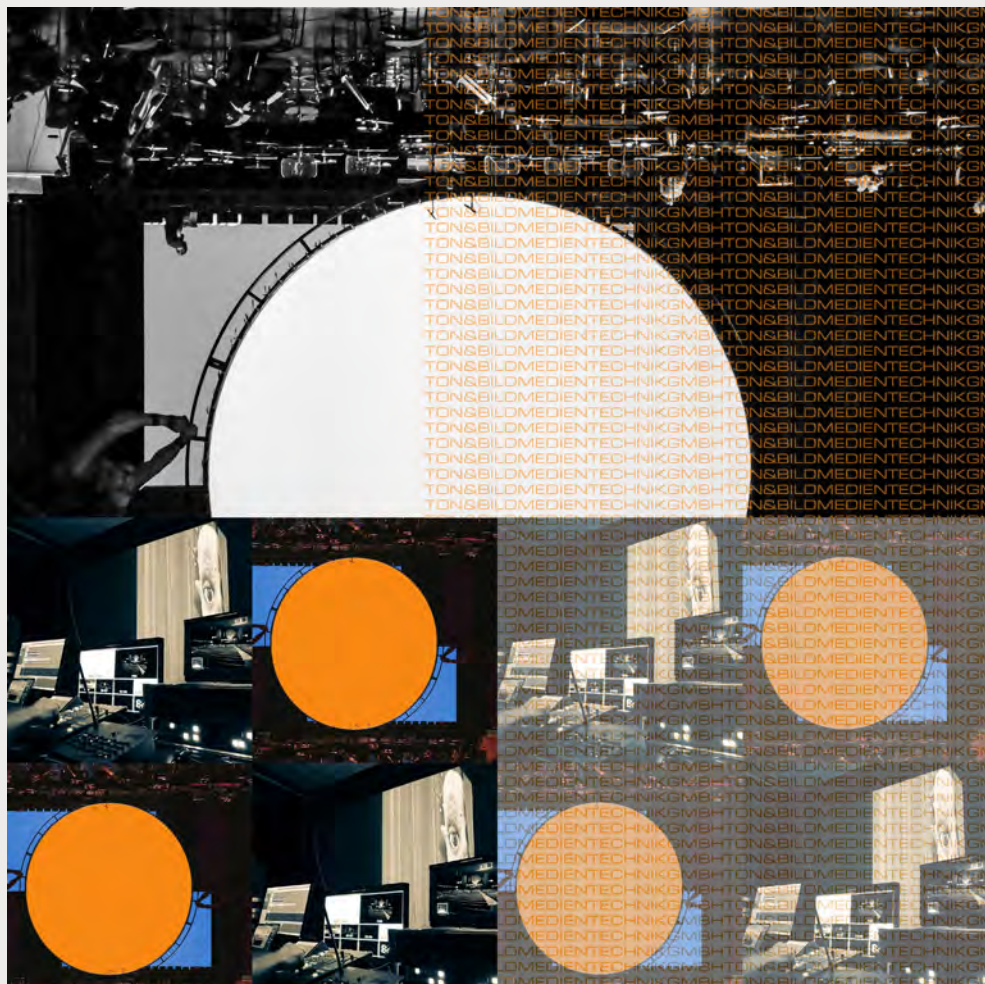
Free admission, no costs are incurred for the educational program.

We warmly invite you to visit  
[www.kunsthallewien.at](http://www.kunsthallewien.at),  
as well as our social media channels,  
to learn more about our public program for  
*Ho Rui An. The Ends of a Long Boom*. ●



2027 (film still), 2021





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## **The Ends of a Long Boom**

17/7—10/10 2021

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*Asia the Unmiraculous*, 2018–2020, installation view, *Look East Gone West*, A+ Works of Art, Kuala Lumpur, September 26 to November 15, 2020, PHOTO: DAMIEN KHOO



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DERSTANDARD

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**kunsthalle wien**  
karlsplatz  
treitlstraße 2  
1040 vienna  
+43 1 521 89 0



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#theendsofalongboom