

Echo of Tropical Lab: Peter Hill in Conversation with Milenko Prvački

Peter Hill When did Tropical Lab come into existence, and what were its founding ambitions?

Milenko Prvački As an artist and active citizen, I have always tried to create a special environment, a platform, a stage for artists to extend their own practice out of the comfort zones, in their studios—a communal experience linked to politics. Much of this relates back to my own experience, and memories of my former, native Yugoslavia, and its history.

From 1970 to 1991 I participated annually in one of the most important art symposiums in Yugoslavia. I found it appropriate for that historical moment—a place where artists could create, communicate, share experience, and debate in a friendly environment without judgement of politics and control by politicians.

As such, Tropical Lab grew into a creative Paradise Island with shared commonalities.

After arriving in Singapore 30 years ago, and teaching at LASALLE for the last 27 years, and being totally involved in the twin activities of education and creating art, I began to be continuously preoccupied by the question—how do we create a different space from a traditional art school studio. How do we subvert the traditional curriculum with different activities, and invite outsiders into our Tropical Lab?

Peter Hill I sense, like me, you like to break down academic hierarchies and also value learning from mistakes. I think playwright Samuel Beckett summed it up best when he said, “Try again, fail again, fail better.”

Milenko Prvački I can probably best extend these thoughts, contrarily, by first listing what I don’t want Tropical Lab to be: a comfort zone with traditional teaching and a curriculum; a place where assessment is graded; with traditional classrooms and studio classes; a place where the creative process is not valued highly enough.

And here is a list of what I do want Tropical Lab to be:

- An intentionally displaced situation
- An experimental space
- Condensed and stimulating activities
- A sophisticated playground



Participants gathering at Prvački's studio, 2019

- A learning environment
- A dialogue
- A collaboration
- A place where innovation is foregrounded
- A group of collectivists that brings individuals together
- A networking hive
- A research hub for knowledge surrounding Asia and Singapore
- A focus on teamwork-driven research
- An annual, peer-reviewed journal of art and ideas that became *ISSUE*
- Constant Exploration
- A place where 'mistakes' are viewed positively

Peter Hill

I guess Tropical Lab then becomes a launch pad for the candidates' future, creative careers, rather than an end-point in their education.

Milenko Prvački

Yes, as a practising artist and educator, I was thinking more about the independent Masters and PhD students, graduating and leaving school forever and starting independent practices without curriculum, teachers, roles, grades, and assessments. It is a great beginning.

I wanted to create a platform for exceptional students who needed more than the ordinary art curriculum that is all too often offered to them, in art schools around the world.

Peter Hill

So how has Tropical Lab, from your initial vision, evolved and expanded over the years?

Milenko Prvački

With the same enthusiasm. I agree with the use of the word 'evolving', and I'd add to that: 'developing' and 'extending'. I had to learn from my own mistakes too. And I have learned so much from the participants over the years.

After the exhibition we always do a review, a survey with the participants, collecting information and data about their experience during the art camp. This is valuable information that we will apply and practise in subsequent years as Tropical Lab continues to grow.

I find advice from participants to be very important and it is very welcome. We have to pay attention to source not only good students but students with good communication and collaborative skills.

Connections with government organisations have been crucial too, including the Singapore Tourism Board, Land Transport Authority, Maritime and Port Authority of Singapore and others. They gave us access to visit and explore interesting and relevant sites in Singapore. Because of that relationship, we have been able to explore underground train tunnels—100 metres below street level—that were still under construction; container terminals; and the undeveloped island (Pulau Ubin). We have also been to the astonishing Haw Par Villa, which I know you regard as a wonderful Southeast Asian Superfiction.

Peter Hill What are your hopes for the forthcoming edition of Tropical Lab?

Milenko Prvački First, that Covid-19 will end! It is the first requisite to allow us to continue. I am very sad about this current situation. We are doing our best to extend the life of Tropical Lab art camp, and we are missing the participants very much.

Peter Hill Have you developed any strategies to deal with this?

Milenko Prvački At the moment, we are creating a web archive which is historically very important. We are doing a retrospective exhibition at the Institute of Contemporary Arts Singapore (ICAS), curated by Anca Rujoiu (and this is being presented in this edition of *ISSUE*). We are interviewing relevant people, curators, artists, and seminar speakers. The current slowdown has become our period of retrospective thinking and reflection. But I do hope we will do it again next year physically, on campus. That will be of benefit to all, and will lift everybody's spirits.

Peter Hill I have a particular research interest in new models of Art Education and alternative forms of knowledge transfer—usually with creativity as its central core. This is why your vision of Tropical Lab has always excited me so much. I especially like those situations where hierarchies are broken down and new models of running, funding, and administrating art schools are explored. I'm thinking of Bruce High Quality Foundation University (BHQFU), a free art school in Brooklyn, and Turps Art School in an old, brutalist housing estate near Elephant and Castle, in South London. They also produce the excellent painting magazine *Turps Banana*. This art school focuses on the expanded field of painting and is co-directed by Peter Ashton Jones and Marcus Harvey, whose portrait of moors murderer Myra Hindley caused such a sensation at the Royal Academy in 1997. BHQFU also have a winter school in Miami and often drive across America in a bus, a bit like Ken Kesey and his Merry Pranksters, stopping along the way to work with children and young adults on spontaneous art projects. What these two revolutionary art schools have in common is that each evolves its own philosophy. How has your philosophy of both Tropical Lab's theory and practice influenced its evolution over the years, and this edition of it in particular?



Peter Hill at seminar presentation during Tropical Lab 2019

Milenko Prvački

The only fixed criteria relates to its functioning structure, and the number of invited universities and participants. Everything else is flexible and ever-changing. Firstly, there is the topic and the team. There are two components related to the Tropical Lab art camp: Tropical Lab and our in-house journal *ISSUE*. We started *ISSUE* art journal as a research tool that serves as an introduction to the next Tropical Lab, *before* all participants arrive in Singapore. We invite important and relevant writers, artists, curators, historians, architects, theorists to tackle particular themes. Theory and practice are part of this, not in an educational way but in the professional development of the creative art practice. We do not prescribe any preferred proportion between theory and practice, but we offer options.

Peter Hill

I very much like the non-proscriptive nature of the word “options”. We should always offer options, and the flexibility for change that goes with it. So tell me, how would a particular edition of Tropical Lab unfold?

Milenko Prvački

The first day of the Tropical Lab schedule offers seminars, where we invite local and international speakers to present around a set theme. Ongoing dialogue is a very important introduction to the programme as much as is *ISSUE*. The second day is allocated for participants’ presentations about their own practices, ideas and concerns. It is also the first opportunity to better know each other. On the third day, participants go on field trips around Singapore—journeys which are organised around and relevant to the set theme of that year. At the same time, they get to know Singapore better. The days follow on with studiowork that culminates in an exhibition at the ICAS, located at LASALLE.

We do not set any restrictions with regards to the ideas, medium, or chosen working methods.

This project fills up a great gap that the educational system does not address. We do not sharpen artists’ ideas but encourage them to be independent and create their own work without educational restrictions and conditions. There may be failed projects, but there are no victims. This leaves plenty of opportunities for self-discovery and learning.



Studio time at the very first Tropical Lab in 2005

Peter Hill

The publication, *ISSUE*, like the conference, is always based on a theme. Can you sketch in briefly some of the topics you have covered over the years?

Milenko Prvački

Having only two weeks, we have to be very focused. Do not forget that all participants are coming here from different universities, different cultural and educational backgrounds, as well as from different continents. Most of them have never been in Asia; some may have passed through. We create topics based on actuality, relevance and interest. We try to avoid conformism, banality and trend. We are very careful.

Peter Hill

Who else works with you on the programme?

Milenko Prvački

Usually, it is a process that evolves between Dr. Venka Purushothaman and myself. This involves a long preparation and an analytical effort to define and hone the research topic. It must be related to the original idea. It must honour the concept and its universality. It must be relevant to all racial and geographical territories, and of course, to Singapore.

It will contribute to the conceptual core of each Tropical Lab edition, although we do not reject nor try to steer artists' responses—they are not restricted in any way. Here are the themes we have engaged with since 2005:

Year	Theme
2005	Urban – Non Urban
2008	City
2009	Local – Global
2010	Urban Mythologies
2011	Masak Masak



Cruise and learning journey to neighbouring islands of Singapore during Tropical Lab, 2019

2012	Land
2013	Echo: The Poetics of Translation
2014	Port of Call
2015	Island
2016	Fictive Dreams
2017	Citation: Déjà vu
2018	Sense
2019	Erase
2020	Mobilities

As you can see there is a great diversity of topics, and plenty of room for improvisation, like a good music set. Every theme was relevant to the year in which it happened. We also invite relevant writers, researchers, artists, and curators to write for *ISSUE*, which as I have said before, is a very important part of Tropical Lab's research profile. Importantly, it serves as an introduction and stimulus to every camp's specific theme.

Peter Hill

Tropical Lab brings many critical thinkers and creators to LASALLE in Singapore. Does Tropical Lab also go out into the world, and if so, how does this manifest itself?

Milenko Prvački

Each participant carries away Tropical Lab's values after returning to their own space, their own country and their own art community—which of course includes the social media spaces. Collectively, they are the best communicators for what we do. After 14 years, the Tropical Lab echo is still resonating in many countries, universities, art schools and languages. We are connected with over 30 of the most important art schools in the world, from America, United Kingdom, Europe, Asia, Australia, New Zealand, and Africa.

We are also connected to some of the world's most significant art events, including *documenta* at Kassel, the Venice Biennale, the Istanbul Biennale, and REAL PRESENCE, Belgrade. Participants get the opportunity to meet and work with great artists, writers, curators and educators in different capacities. These have included Rirkrit Tiravanija, David Thomas, Peter Elis, Sam Durant, Biljana Tomić, Tony Godfrey, Charles Lim, Dobrila Denegri, Dr. Charles Merewether, Robert Zhao, Bjørn Melhus, Dr. Rhett D'Costa, Anca Rujoiu, Vera Mey, Prof. Chua Beng Huat, and yourself.

We have collaborated on similar projects with universities at Kassel, Belgrade, Beijing, as well as at the Istanbul Biennale and the Venice Biennale.

Peter Hill

I'm keen to hear about your own research interests—both solo works and in collaboration.

Milenko Prvački

This needs a separate chapter (haha). It had been a full 45 years of intensive practice and research. In brief, I started as a figurative, socio-politically engaged painter after graduation in the mid-seventies. However, I realised very soon that I couldn't compete with much faster, speedier working methods like photography, video, film, and new media. I couldn't compete in unfolding narratives and in storytelling. My native tongue is Serbian and my second language is German. I studied in Romania, even though I did not speak the Romanian language when I enrolled at their art University. When I arrived in Singapore, I did not speak English; the dictionary was my best friend for years.

I wanted to create works with that structure, the structure of the dictionary. I wanted it to be like a book where the most important notions are in one place—but without stories, without a narrative. It offered me an opportunity and freedom to manipulate visual elements in my own way with my own language. This decision was crucial for me.

In conclusion, I do not have limitations around topics or issues with which I would like to engage. I have no restrictions with regards to the media and the working methods. I am free. I apply this system to my drawings, paintings, prints, collages, sculptures, and installations. The approach to artwork of this nature is very easy to be adapted to collaborative projects. I do these occasionally with my wife Delia, and with musicians and theatre practitioners. But even a two-person exhibition in a gallery is a collaboration, which I might do with a great artist-friend like Ian Woo.

Peter Hill

Can you tell me some of the more memorable times from past Tropical Labs?

Milenko Prvački

Every year is different: different participants, different universities, different interests, different characters, and finally a different look. It is not predictable. So every year is different. *Land, Masak Masak, Echo...* or showing different sites to participants. I have learned about the geography and history of Singapore from this: Bukit Brown, Pulau Ubin, Container terminals, underground infrastructure—each of these phrases brings back rich memories.

But this should be a question to the artists involved. It was not all smooth sailing; there were a lot of managerial issues that we had to troubleshoot.

Peter Hill

What are your future plans for Tropical Lab?

Milenko Prvački

Primarily, to resume it as soon as possible. Covid-19 stopped any activity for two years.

Tropical Lab is a space that offers an extensive two weeks' camp of experimentation, exploration, communication, dialogue and after that—it is about growing the network. It never stops with the final exhibition or after they fly back to their own country. After two years of void, I am even more passionate and excited to resume, and can't wait to encounter again the expectant and happy faces of the participants.

Peter Hill

Finally, I would like to learn a little more about your own history, you have already touched on some of it—from your very un-tropical Serbian beginnings in Eastern Europe, through your journey to Singapore with your talented wife Delia, and the years you have dedicated to energising and inspiring the Singapore art scene.

Milenko Prvački

I was born in a country that does not exist anymore, the very un-tropical Yugoslavia in the time of Tito. I did my Masters in Art in Bucharest, Romania, in the time of Ceausescu in Eastern Europe. Delia and I moved to Singapore in 1991. In this time of transition, my country disappeared in a bloody civil war, and I was left holding a passport to a country that no longer existed. Brother McNally, who founded LASALLE College of the Arts in 1984, invited me to teach there in 1994.

So for the past 27 years, I had stayed in the field of education, and still continue to practise intensively, as I had been doing, along with Delia, my wife who is also an artist, for the last 45 years. As I did in former Yugoslavia (now Serbia) I continue to create projects and platforms for students and artists to develop their talent, to collaborate, as well as to network.

I have been a fortunate witness to the speedy art development in Singapore, and very happy to see the sort of growth that is not usual in the world. As a teacher, nothing makes me more satisfied than to see *dependent* students coming to LASALLE, then graduating and becoming *independent* practising artists. They do not need me anymore. Bravo!

I still get excited looking at other artists *creating* exceptional and valuable artworks. I am there for them to help *recognise* their potential and quality. That is of great cultural value. Finally, we are here to also highlight and preserve those values.

All images courtesy of LASALLE College of the Arts.

Tim Bailey (UK) is an abstract artist whose process-driven paintings hover ambitiously between image, narrative and object. He completed his MA Fine Art at the University of Plymouth in 2018 and went on to hold a solo show at White Moose Gallery and was further selected for the Wells Contemporary Art Awards. Tim's recent group exhibitions include the Pacific Design Centre, Los Angeles, and Holly Hunt Showroom, London. He is now represented by Richeldis Fine Art London.

Kay Mei Ling Beadman (UK) is a multidisciplinary artist whose practice uses her Chinese and white English mixed race as an autoethnographic springboard to explore aspects of complex dual identity formation, drawing on embodied aspects of lived experience amid socio-politically and culturally-constructed assumptions. She has exhibited in Australia, China (*1st Shenzhen Biennale*, 2015; *Silk Road: Portal to World Imagination*, 2017), Hong Kong, Serbia, Singapore, South Korea and Sri Lanka. Kay has lived and worked permanently in Hong Kong since 1999. She co-founded Hidden Space, an independent artist-run space in 2017, and is currently pursuing a practice-based PhD at City University, Hong Kong.

Danielle Dean (USA/UK) is an interdisciplinary artist whose work explores the geopolitical and material processes that colonise the mind and body. Drawing from the aesthetics and history of advertising, and from her multinational background—born to a Nigerian father and an English mother in Alabama, and brought up in a suburb of London—her work explores the ideological function of technology, architecture, marketing and media as tools of subjection, oppression and resistance. Danielle received her MFA from California Institute of the Arts. Her recent solo exhibitions include *Trigger Torque* at The Ludwig (Germany), *True Red Ruin* at

the Museum of Contemporary Art (Detroit), *Landed* at Cubitt Gallery (London), and *Focus: Danielle Dean* at the Studio Museum in Harlem (New York).

Ben Dunn (USA) lives in Macon, Georgia, where he directs The McEachern Art Center at Mercer University and lectures in the department of fine arts. He holds a degree in Philosophy and Great Books from Mercer, and an MFA in Painting and Drawing from the University of Washington, Seattle. Between these degrees, Ben co-founded Lucky Prints, a commercial screen printing company in Chicago. Ben has exhibited in Chicago, Atlanta, Seattle and Singapore amongst other cities. He has undertaken residencies at the Vermont Studio Center; LASALLE College of the Arts; the Hambidge Center; and Ossabaw Island.

Anne-Laure Franchette (Switzerland) studied Fine Arts at the Zurich University of the Arts, stage design at the University of the Arts London and Art History at the University of Paris 10. She is particularly interested in urban nature, industrial materials, the question of transience and the in-between. Since 2018, she has been part of the interdisciplinary research group TETI which explores textures and experiences of trans-industriality. She is co-founder and artistic director of VOLUMES, a non-profit organisation dedicated to art publishing, and also initiated the Zurich Art Space Guide and the BadLab collective.

Hariyo Seno Agus Subagyo (Hariyo SAS) (Yogyakarta, Indonesia) actively participates in and initiates art exhibitions in Yogyakarta. Besides being an artist, he is also active in teaching at an art polytechnic in Yogyakarta. In addition to new media art, he produces paintings and graphic designs.

Duy Hoàng (Vietnam/USA) is an interdisciplinary artist born in Vietnam and is currently residing in New York City after receiving his MFA at Columbia University. His practice focuses on our relationship to the minutia around us, in connection to the much larger environment we are inherently part of, while searching for our placement within that spectrum. Some of his notable exhibitions include Kleine Humboldt Galerie in Berlin, Festival Images Vevey and Thomas Erben Gallery in New York. Duy is currently working towards solo exhibitions at the Atlantic Center for the Arts and South Dakota State University, happening this fall and early next year respectively.

Laura Hopes (UK) is a multidisciplinary artist whose Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC)-funded PhD, *Being Vulnerable: Distances of the Sublime Anthropocene*, develops from a methodology built around the idea of the 'vulnerable practitioner' who is open to failure, seeking collaboration and acceptance of unknowns. Her practice has become, through extensive collaboration within the collective Still/Moving and with academics and experts in diverse fields, a process where assumptions are constantly challenged. Her expanded practice encompasses writing, conversations, film, performance and installation.

j.p.mot Jean-Pierre Abdelrohman Mot Chen-Hadi Yakop (USA) is a conceptual artist born in Montreal and living in Brooklyn. His eclectic body of work incorporates but is not limited to in-site creations, found objects, kinetic sculptures, performances, hacking, interactive art, digital media and prints. He completed a BFA in Visual and New Media Art in 2009 at the University of Quebec in Montreal and received an MFA in Visual Art in 2015 from Columbia University in New York. He has been supported by the Quebec Art and Letter Council, the Canada Art Council, the NARS Foundation, the New York Foundation for the Art, the Foundation for Contemporary Art in New York and the Asian Art Archive in the US. His work has been shown in Quebec, New York, California, Mexico, Reykjavik, Chiang Mai, Beijing and Singapore.

James Jack (USA/Singapore) is an artist who engages layered histories tied to place as a way to concentrate on instances of positive change achieved through community-led initiatives. His work is devoted to reflecting upon the impact we can have on our environments while decentralising authority and human-centric consciousness. He has developed socially engaged art works for exhibitions at Setouchi International Art Festival, Busan Biennale Sea Art Festival, Echigo-Tsumari Triennial, Tokyo

Metropolitan Museum of Art, Honolulu Museum of Art, Centre for Contemporary Art Singapore and Fukuoka Prefectural Museum of Art. He completed a PhD at Tokyo University of the Arts and was a Crown Prince Akihito Scholar in Japan, Georgette Chen Fellow in Singapore and is currently a Senior Lecturer at Yale-NUS College.

Waret Khunacharoensap (Thailand) graduated with a Bachelor's degree from the Faculty of Painting Sculpture and Graphic Arts, Silpakorn University. Majoring in sculpture, Waret is interested in how power structures work and have focused his practice into investigating how power cultivates and accumulates in systems such as schools, religion, public monuments, media and literature.

Pheng Guan Lee (Singapore) is a visual artist with a Masters in Fine Arts from LASALLE College of the Arts and a degree in Fine Arts from Goldsmiths University of London. Practising primarily in the media of video, sculpture and installation, Lee also includes performances in his work as he examines the ephemeral nature of human existence coupled with personal and collective memories. He has exhibited locally and internationally and had his first solo show *Weight/less* in 2015 at the Institute for Contemporary Arts Singapore. More recently, he participated in the Asia Culture Centre Arts Space Network Residency 2019 at the ACC ASIAPLEX Studio in Gwangju and held his second solo *GRAVITAS* at Supernormal, Singapore.

Liu Di (China) is a new media and surrealist artist whose work gives people a strong sense of visual impact, while at the same time encouraging them to think about the current situation. He believes that "by violating the rules of common sense, we can break the hypnotic trance induced by familiar reality." He graduated with a Master's degree majoring in photography from the Central Academy of Fine Arts, Beijing, in 2019 and a year later, he won the Lacoste Elysee Award from the Elysee Museum in Switzerland for his Animal Regulation series. He is represented by Pékin Fine Arts.

B. Neimeth (USA) is a Los Angeles-based visual artist and educator whose work locates the home, family and body as both physical and psychological. Through the archive, photographs, writing and sound, she explores the flexibility of memory and its connection to space. She has shown internationally and domestically at the Institute of Contemporary Arts (Singapore), the Center for Sex and Culture in San Francisco, as well as the American Jewish University and ROSEGALLERY in Los Angeles. Her works have been published in the

Los Angeles Review of Books Quarterly Journal and her books are part of the collections in the California Institute of the Arts and Yale University Libraries.

Christine Rebet (France/USA) is an artist whose work is based on drawing and develops into forms ranging from animation, installations and performance art. At the heart of her practice is the elaboration of historical traumas in the context of a personal reinterpretation and a consequent reanimation. Christine received her MFA from Columbia University and her BA(Hons) from Central Saint Martins School of Art and Design. She has exhibited and held performances in various international contexts including Human Resources (Los Angeles), Kunsthal KAdE, (Netherlands), Grieder Contemporary (Zurich), AlbumArte (Rome), Unge Kunstneres Samfund (Oslo), the Cartier Foundation (Paris), Parasol Unit (London) and Taka Ishii Gallery (Tokyo). Her films have also been screened at various events and festivals such as the Berlinale Short Film Competition, Hong Kong International Film Festival, Kassel Documentary Film and Video Festival, Kochi-Muziris Biennale and London Film festival. She is represented by Bureau.

Rattana Salee's (Bangkok, Thailand) debut solo *Shell(Shocked)* at Thavibu Gallery in 2010 consisted of an atmospheric sculptural installation comprising metal and plaster architectural structures. She graduated with an MFA in Sculpture from Silpakorn University and participated in many international group shows such as the Taehwa River Eco Art Festival 2019 in South Korea and Memorial Sculpture Project *Reviving Humanity* in 2018 in Egypt. She was also selected by House of Dior to participate in the *Lady Dior As Seen By* exhibition in 2018. Rattana held her next solo *Suspended Memory* at People's Gallery, Bangkok Art and Cultural Centre in 2018, and in June 2021, unveiled a new exhibition, *Unreal Monument*, at La Lanta Fine Art.

Homa Shojaie (Iran) is an artist whose practice is concerned with space, image and their intersection with materiality and perception. She received a Bachelor of Architecture from the Cooper Union and a Masters in Fine Arts from LASALLE College of the Arts. She has taught at Pratt Institute, Illinois Institute of Technology, School of the Art Institute of Chicago and was a visiting artist at Arts Letters and Numbers. She has exhibited in Chicago, New York, Detroit, Izmir, Kashan, and Singapore.

Shuo Yin (Beijing, China) received his MFA degree from the School of Art + Art History + Design at the University of Washington, where he also received his BFA in Painting and Drawing. Working with both

historical references and contemporary influences, Shuo Yin examines the issues of identity from a combined perspective of a Chinese immigrant and Asian minority in American society today. His practice focuses on the struggles of an individual's adaptation to a new social environment in order to address cultural indifference.

Brooke Stamp is an Australian-based performer, choreographer and researcher. Her career spans two decades of inquiry in dance bridging visual art, sound performance, writing and dramaturgy, exploring the creation of conceptual spaces for shared meaning and social engagement. Brooke has a MFA from the UNSW Faculty of Art and Design, and is a PhD candidate at the University of Melbourne, Faculty of Fine Arts and Music. She has performed throughout Australia and internationally with artists including Adam Linder, Agatha Gothe-Snape, Sally Smart and Phillip Adams Balletlab.

Marko Stankovic (Serbia/USA) is a Serbian artist based in Los Angeles, California. He mainly works in the media of sculpture, focusing on the variability of the art object with the aim of discovering new relationships between space and object, and their implications. He earned his MA degree and PhD from the University of Arts in Belgrade, Faculty of Applied Arts.

James Tapsell-Kururangi (New Zealand) is a Maori artist who graduated from Massey University with a Bachelor of Design in 2017, and a Master of Fine Arts in 2019. He is the inaugural 2020–21 Curatorial Intern at Te Tuhi Centre for the Arts in Tāmaki Makaurau Auckland, where he is responsible for the programme at Papatūnga, an independent art space operating from the platform of the Parnell Station. His work was included in the group show *How to live together* at ST PAUL St Gallery, Auckland in 2019, and his first solo exhibition, *He waiata aroha*, was recently staged at Enjoy Contemporary Art Space, Wellington in 2021. His writing has been published in *Lieu Journal*, *Pantograph Punch* and in *As Needed, As Possible*.

Tromarama (Indonesia) was founded in 2006 in Bandung. The trio engages with notions of hyperreality in the digital age, exploring the interrelationship between the virtual and physical world. Their works often combine video, installations, computer programming and public participation to depict the influence digital media has on society. Channelling language, text, wit, sequence as well as interaction through their varied practice, Tromarama reflects on the cornerstones of Indonesia's political and cultural environment, a form of perceptive engagement that applies globally.

Ali Van (Minnesota, USA/Hong Kong) practices axiology. In motions of love, she finds absolute through living architecture, gastronomic ancestry, silent geography, and manner song. To promulgate admixture, she archives homonyms of a visual field to incubate cognitive time, purposing tactile exegesis for essential variance and open interaction. She has presented in Italy, Germany, Switzerland, Austria, Slovenia, USA, Japan, Thailand, Singapore, Taiwan, China, and Hong Kong. In a wilderness she settles, eclipses, and dreams.

Sarah Walker is an artist, writer and photographer based in Geelong, Australia. Her art practice uses comedy, narrative and speculative fiction to create surprising encounters with tensions around death, disaster and catastrophe. She works particularly with immersive binaural sound works, video and text-based installation. Graduating with an MA Fine Arts from RMIT (Melbourne), she was a finalist in the international MTV RE:DEFINE 2019 award and the 45downstairs Emerging Artist Award 2019. She has taken part in residencies across Australia and Asia, and is currently working as a lead artist with The Unconformity, Chamber Made and Geelong Gallery. Her first book, a collection of essays about bodies and control titled *The first time I thought I was dying*, will be published by the University of Queensland Press in August 2021.

James Yakimicki (USA) is a visual artist who earned a BFA from the University of Colorado at Boulder (2007) and an MFA from Columbia University in the City of New York (2012). Inquisitively expressive and resistance to academic structure from an early age, painting and drawing have always been essential elements for James to process auditory information. His improvised approach is rooted in the erasure of lecture notes, rearranged into aerial map-like mazes, and blending pages of math and cursive font handwriting exercises into multi-levelled landscapes. He currently maintains studios in Colorado, Indiana and New York City.