



Artists:
Arabelle Zhuang
Ezzam Rahman
Genevieve Leong
Hu Rui
Huijun Lu

Curated by: Lenette Lua (The recipient of the Objectifs Curator Open Call 2024)

As part of Curator Open Call, Lenette was mentored by artist and writer Jason Wee.

Design: Studio Vanessa Ban

Curatorial Notes

In Singapore's relentless pursuit of economic growth and "world-class" recognition, productivity is touted as a pathway to a better life, while competitiveness fuels its success story. In the conversations with fellow artists in Singapore, we often end up asking each other: What's your next project? This pervasive pressure to produce, remain visible, and progress, haunts us like a shadow. How might we reimagine progress as something beyond linear milestones and a predestined endpoint? As cultural producers, caring for ourselves and journeying collectively requires a sustainable ethos—one that resists commodification of self-care and transcends its reduction to corporate and economic strategies. Rather than a reaction to the pandemic, our discussions about care demand a more profound reorientation.

Hope you are keeping well! reflects on the impact of Singapore's national productivity agenda on artistic labour, with a particular focus on the Smart Nation initiative (2014-ongoing) and the 1980s Productivity Movement. The project approaches curatorial work of care as a means of revealing and understanding the invisible labours of artistic production. Rather than responding to a curatorial brief, the participating artists—Genevieve Leong, Huijun Lu, Hu Rui, and Arabelle Zhuang—were encouraged to revisit past works or unrealised proposals, and to consider how this project might nourish their practices. This open approach fostered conversations on the conditions in which art is created, circulated, and interpreted, particularly in Singapore's context.

1. Audre Lorde, "A Burst of Light and Other Essays," in *A Burst of Light: Living with Cancer* (1988; repr., New York, United States of America: Dover Publications, 2017), 130.

While the fixation of self may seem individualistic, Audre Lorde's theory of care and philosophy of difference offer an insightful framework, positioning self-care as both "self-preservation" and "an act of political warfare." To care is to embed our experiences within specific times, places and communities. It allows us to examine the underlying values and structures that govern our society, and to gain strength

in acting. In this era of overproduction, where care is essential to sustain and thrive, we must reconnect with the motivations behind our actions and the intentions shaping our words in every expedition and deviation. It is to recognise—and even harness—our differences as sources of creativity and agents of change.²

2.Audre Lorde, "The Master's Tools Will Never Dismantle the Master's House," in *Sister Outsider* (1984; repr., Berkeley, United States of America: Crossing Press, 2007), 110–113.

In my discussions with the invited artists, they shared varied approaches to sustaining their practices, making time and space to create art between their full-time work and family commitments. Our conversations extended into illuminating issues, spanning consumerism, environmental degradation, slippage of language as well as Al bias. While the focuses of the featured artists differ, the discussions unravel a web of interconnected concerns. Hope you are keeping well! positions these differences and ambiguities as rich bodies of knowledge, and seeks to offer a generative space to deepen these discussions. Comprising an exhibition and a series of informal gatherings, the project reimagines Objectifs' Chapel Gallery as a shared, psychological studio for participating artists. Each proposition of care engages with distinct dimensions of our realities: Rui's new iteration of Matrix Model and Uberbau (2019-2023, 2025) and Huijun's assemblage Kludge (2025) probe the ethical and environmental implications of emergent technologies. Meanwhile, Genevieve's Portable Studio (2025) and Material Library (2025), alongside Arabelle's video installation Skinfolk, Kinfolk (2022-2025), reflect on care as a multidimensional ethos, embracing the material and relational intricacies of artistic processes.

Collectively, their choices of materials and presentations reveal the precarities of sustaining artistic practices in Singapore, where rising living costs, escalating rents, and limited space constrain artistic possibilities. These struggles foreground the intersection of materiality and survival, exposing how external pressures shape the scales, forms, and

trajectories of local artistic production, and how the material conditions of life inevitably permeate the processes of making.

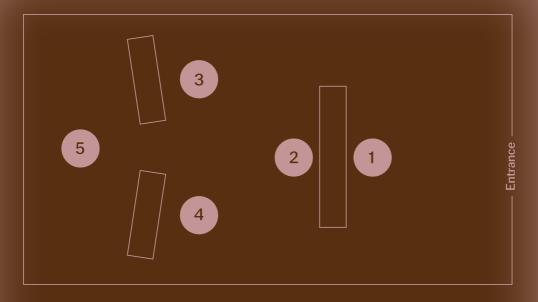
3.Elke Krasny, Sophie Lingg, and Lena Fritsch, "An Introduction," in Radicalizing Care: Feminist and Queer Activism in Curating, ed. Elke Krasny et al. (London, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland: Sternberg Press, 2021), 10–25.

Through programmes such as artist talks and open studios, these informal gatherings examine the wider structures of artistic production. In the field of curatorial study, there is a growing call to approach curating as a practice of care beyond the guardian of objects and acknowledge it as "a practice between art, life, activism and politics". Yet, most of such discussions remain predominantly in English, raising the question: what can non-English languages, with their distinct cultures and philosophies, contribute to this dialogue? When discussions about care risk becoming overly theoretical or detached, how can we embody care as an ethos and integrate it into practice?

Artist Ezzam Rahman is invited as an interlocutor, unpacking the ethos of care through the lens of his mother tongue, Malay. In an initial conversation, Ezzam shared that the English word "care" translates to *perhatian* in Malay, where *hati* means heart. Similarly, in Mandarin, care is translated as *guan xin* (关心), with xin (心) also meaning heart. To care, then, is to hold something or someone at the centre of one's heart. It is a gesture to uncover our true needs, empowering us to navigate the relentless demands of constant output with clarity and resilience.

Through these discussions and informal gatherings, *Hope you are keeping well!* seeks to create a space to explore how care is exercised, expressed, translated, and embodied across languages, cultures, and artistic forms. It invites us to imagine how we might journey together sustainably, thriving within—and beyond—Singapore's relentless pursuit of excellence.

Lenette Lua



- Hu Rui
 Matrix Model and Uberbau
 2019-2023, 2025
 Recorded video of live simulation, inkjet
 print, ChatGPT.
 Deep Learning and Data Analysis: Susan
 Yingshu Chen
- 2025
 Miscellaneous material/immaterial remnants of past works, custom structures from repurposed metal and wood, drop cloth plastered with inkjet printed sketches and video traces made between 2020 and 2024
 - Genevieve Leong

 Material Library

 2025

 Mixed media on wooden rack,
 list of materials

- Genevieve Leong
 Portable Studio
 2025
 Material studies, works in progress and finished works on wooden shelf
- Arabelle Zhuang
 Skinfolk, Kinfolk
 2022-2025
 Single-channel video, colour and sound,
 2 min 41 sec; archive prints, text on
 vellum paper and transparency

2

"Ultimately, Smart Nation is a call to all Singaporeans. ... Let us work together to build a better home for all – a Singapore brimming with exciting opportunities, where we can support one another in realising our dreams, and where each of us can become the best version of ourselves"

- PM Lawrence Wong at the launch of Smart Nation 2.0 on 1 October 2024.

In 2014, Singapore's former Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong introduced the island's first Smart Nation plan, aiming to elevate economic productivity through technology. This vision led to the first National Artificial Intelligence Strategy (NAIS) in 2019, followed by an updated strategy in 2023, framing AI as critical for workforce support and productivity growth.

In the fast-paced capitalism-driven Al development, might we ever predict and prevent financial crises? Hu Rui's video *Matrix Model and Uberbau* challenge this notion, probing the limitations of supposedly flawless predictive models. Using surreal imagery and satirical symbols—GPU drones and endless bubbles—the video underscores the unpredictability of human behaviour and random events that defy the rigid logic of mathematical models.

While Al facilitates policy design, infrastructure planning, and resource allocation, it simultaneously raises intricate ethical and environmental concerns. The narrative of Matrix Model and Uberbau was generated through collaborations with ChatGPT, with an Al-generated voice emulating philosopher Slavoj Žižek. In the new iteration, Rui reflects on the increasing adoption of generative Al into artistic practices and research through a dialogue with ChatGPT as an interlocutor. Addressing the porous boundaries between creativity and authorship, as well as the perception of originality in the age of Al, the nameless respondent, referring to themselves as "a narrator of every story", offers reflections on art and creation—"The boundaries

of creation blur, but technology always seems to move faster than ethical debates."

Globally, discussions increasingly call for prioritising the sustainable development of AI, a tool deeply entangled with capitalist structures. Yet some of these debates fall into the binary trap of framing AI as either good or bad. As such, some pressing questions are swallowed by the race for technological and economic pursuits: who decides the direction of AI development, and for what purpose? Who is excluded in the decision making process, and what sacrifices are being made? The new iteration of *Matrix Model and Uberbau*, as the narrator suggests, serves as a mirror, prompting reflections on the motivations behind our actions, as well as the brilliance and absurdity of humanity.

Huijun Lu shifts our attention to the environmental costs of emergent technologies. Titled *Kludge*, the artist's assemblage repurposes waste materials such as snapped wires, remnants and components from past works, highlighting the hidden materiality of technological systems. While waste reduction





Image (left): Screenshot of a media release detailing Singapore's national guidelines for waste management to drive sustainability at Meetings, Incentives, Conferences, and Exhibitions events. It was published by the Singapore Association of Convention & **Exhibition Organisers** & Suppliers and the Singapore Standards Council on 7 March 2023.

Image (right): "No Wastage" poster published by National Productivity Board in 1989. Image courtesy of National Archives of Singapore. is integral to Singapore's sustainable development agenda, it also aligns with productivity ideals that emphasise the minimisation of waste.

The assemblage unearths multiple guises of productivity, often rendered invisible yet omnipresent. Emerging from an acute awareness of environmental concerns, *Kludge* draws attention to the extensive labour and natural resources, such as electricity, water and materials that fuel contemporary technologies. In the fields of computing and engineering, a "kludge" refers to a hasty, often imperfect solution to a problem, a concept Huijun adopts to highlight the precariousness of both technological and artistic systems.

The piece also reflects the realities faced by many local artists. who, due to limited storage space and rising rental costs, are compelled to repurpose materials from past works. "How to be artistically ambitious when the works are ultimately dismantled and discarded?" asked artist Anthony Chin before moving to his new studio in Singapore. The used motors in Huijun's work evoke a sense of fading vitality, subtly urging us to confront the conditions of artistic production. More critically, Kludge probes the rupture between aesthetics and lived reality, between exhibition space as sites of consumption and artist studio as sites of production—where factors such as studio size inevitably influence the scale and form of artistic expression. Through this tension, the work calls attention to the broader, often unspoken challenges that influence the local artistic landscape, pushing us to reflect on how socioeconomic forces shape artistic possibilities.

"Never Let it Rest'

Good better best / Never let it rest /
Till your good is better / And your better best
... Through Productivity / A better safe / Happier life

 Lyrics from Productivity Song "Good Better Best" by National Productivity Board released in 1982

When Genevieve Leong shared a list of her unrealised or yet-to-be-realised proposals, I was reminded of the countless failed applications quietly sitting in my Google Drive. As young cultural producers, we are expected to be relevant, engage with contemporary concerns, experiment with different approaches, and, above all, continuously develop new works or projects. To practice is to embark on an unending voyage—one that sometimes feels directionless.

- 4.Trinh T. Minh-Ha,
 "Other Than My Self,
 My Other Self," in
 Elsewhere, Within
 Here: Immigration,
 Refugeeism and
 the Boundary Event
 (Routledge, 2011), 27.
- 5.Raymond Geuss,
 "Vix intellegitur," in A
 World Without Why
 (Princeton University
 Press, 2014), 43,
 https://doi. The writer
 would like to express
 her gratitude to Cissie
 Fu for introducing the
 concept during her
 lecture titled "A Science
 for Happiness: On Teo
 Eng Seng's Aesthetic
 Prospectus".

In the words of Trinh T. Minh-ha, "every voyage can be said to involve a re-siting of boundaries" requiring the travelling self to "constantly negotiate between a here, a there and an elsewhere". This elsewhere, fluid and shifting, embodies immeasurable possibilities and a "valuable obscurity"—"not something one could with any hope of success intentionally strive for, but something that will result only from a process of aiming at something else". The myth of the lone genius often elevates the artist as an isolated figure, ignoring their embeddedness within broader communities and networks. Inspiration, more often than not, arises unexpectedly—from a casual coffee chat, a passing observation, or the rhythms of everyday life.

Genevieve's new bodies of work offer a glimpse into the process of artistic production, emphasising its inherent versatility and relationality. After spending three years in Switzerland, the artist revisited her digital archive—her Google Drive—and chose to develop a collection of gestures [portable studio], an unrealised project proposed just before her return to Singapore in April 2023. Portable Studio emerges as a dynamic site

of possibility and fertility, constantly morphing between a sculpture, a studio, and an ever-evolving assemblage of workin-progress and completed pieces. In challenging the whitecube space, which is often reduced to a site of consumption, Genevieve will host monthly open studios during the exhibition. Visitors are invited to engage in conversations, observe the creative process, and participate in the making or presentation of artworks. Her Material Library, a long dishdrying rack that catalogues the materials and objects featured in previous works, expands this relational and experimental space into one of reflection. These materials, imbued with memories, histories, and intimate shifts in meaning, form an evolving dictionary—both personal and artistic. Through Portable Studio and Material Library, Genevieve foregrounds the expanded spheres in which artists exist relational, material, reflective, and experimental.

Behind Genevieve's working station is a living room, recreated by Arabelle Zhuang. This arrangement draws attention to the precarious conditions faced by artists in Singapore, many of whom transform parts of their homes into studio spaces. Rising rental costs have made dedicated studio spaces increasingly unattainable, compelling a reconfiguration of domestic environments into sites of artistic production. The spatial arrangement of the two works mirrors this reality, with each work accompanying and amplifying the other's narrative. Together, they underscore the challenges of sustaining a creative practice while inviting reflection on how labour, economy, and space shape the artist's lived experience.

6. Titled "Productivity: Who Benefits?", the speech was delivered by then Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew at the launch of Productivity Month at the Singapore Conference Hall on 1 November 1982. In the speech, he stated, "Productivity is a complex issue involving many factors. All Singaporeans must gradually grasp this concept and its full significance." The full transcript is available at the following link: https://www.nas.gov. sg/archivesonline/data/

pdfdoc/lky19821101.pdf.

The permeation of productivity into the everyday can be traced back to the 1980s. Spearheaded by the National Productivity Council, the Productivity Movement was launched in 1981 with the aim for all Singaporeans to understand the concept of productivity and its full significance. Accompanied by an annual campaign symbolised by a mascot named Teamy the Bee, the notion of productivity permeated corporate, educational and

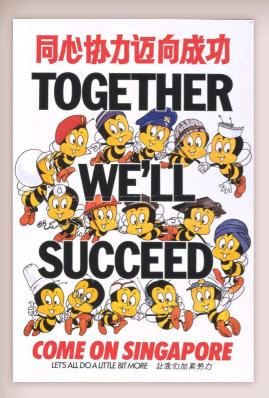


Image: Poster "Together we'll succeed. Come On Singapore. Let's Do a Little Bit More", featuring Teamy the Bees in different costumes, published by National Productivity Board in 1984. Image courtesy of National Archives of Singapore.

domestic spheres through training programmes, publications, and initiatives like "5S Good Housekeeping". Although the campaign was discontinued in 2002, productivity endured as both a national value and a social framework.⁷

Arabelle's new iteration of *Skinfolk*, *Kinfolk* explores her evolving understanding of love and care, focusing on her relationship with her mother, Sally Xu, who began working during the 1980s Productivity Movement. Accompanied by family photographs, the looping video presents the artist's and her mother's self-portraits in flux and a recorded conversation between Arabelle and her mother. Sally reflects on the time she couldn't spend with her children due to the demands of work. This intimate moment highlights the complexities of familial bonds shaped by external forces and critiques how labour conditions infiltrate personal spaces. Her mother's confession on her marriage—"our relationship is always work. Communication was always about work"—further reveals how

7. Kin Chung Woon and Ya Lee Loo, "Chapter 6-1980s: Decade of Intense Productivity Drive," in 50 Years of Singapore's Productivity Drive (New Jersey: World Scientific, 2017), 143–199. productivity permeated the domestic sphere and reshaped familial dynamics.

8. bell hooks, "Clarity: Give Love Words," in All About Love: New Visions (New York, United States of America: HarperCollins Publishers Inc, 2000), 14. To foster dialogue about care and love, Arabelle created a care manual for visitors to take home. Composed of open-ended questions, the manual invites reflections on relationships, memories, and traumas, encouraging meaningful conversations with loved ones. bell hooks' statement—"when we are loving we openly and honestly express care, affection, responsibility, respect, commitment, and trust"— frames love as a practice of cultivation, where we learn to extend ourselves and embrace the reciprocity of care.⁸

- 9. bell hooks,
 "Commitment: Let
 Love Be Love In Me,"
 in All About Love:
 New Visions (New
 York, United States of
 America: HarperCollins
 Publishers Inc, 2000),
 55-56.
- 10. Audre Lorde, "Poetry Is Not a Luxury," in *Sister Outsider* (1984; repr., Berkeley, United States of America: Crossing Press, 2007), 36-39.

In recent years, the world has faced escalating violence, division, and loss. How do we love a world that feels increasingly fractured? While we cannot always prevent harm, we can choose to "live consciously" by critically reflecting on the world around us and "take responsibility" for our immediate surroundings, no matter how small.⁹ In conversations with participating artists, all emphasised the importance of engaging with the public—as a way to connect, exchange ideas, and create spaces to care for the nameless and formless emotions and thoughts. To make art and curate is to shape our dreams and hopes collectively into ideas, tangible forms, and actions.¹⁰ Such position underpins care as an act of profound love for the multiple worlds we traverse and intersect. To care is to reclaim autonomy in an increasingly divided world. To care is to resist despair.

PROGRAMME INFORMATION

OPEN STUDIOS

CHAPEL GALLERY, OBJECTIFS | WALK-INS, NC REGISTRATION REQUIRED

Share your thoughts, ask questions, or simply connect as artists share their creative processes, and delve into the ideas shaping their works.

With Genevieve Leong and Huijun Lu Jan 18. 2 - 5 pm

With Genevieve Leong

Feb 15, 2 - 5pm Mar 1, 2 - 5 pm

EXHIBITION TOUR WITH ARABELLE ZHUANG AND LENETTE LUA

FEB 15, 1 - 2 PM | CHAPEL GALLERY, OBJECTIFS | FREE, REGISTRATION REQUIRED

Join us for a curator tour and a sharing with artist Arabelle Zhuang on her evolving understanding of love and care.

CURATOR TOUR

MAR 1, 4 - 5 PM | CHAPEL GALLERY, OBJECTIFS | FREE REGISTRATION REQUIRED

In this informal sharing, curator Lenette Lua will share her curatorial vision and uncover the stories and creative processes behind the exhibition.

HOPE YOU ARE KEEPING WELL! IN DIALOGUE WITH HURUI AND HUIJUN LU

MAR 6, 5 - 6 PM | ONLINE VIA ZOOM | FREE, REGISTRATION REQUIRED

In this online conversation, Hu Rui and Huijun Lu will discuss their creative processes, recent reflections, and explore the roles and responsibilities of artists in navigating the implications of emerging technologies.

LANGUAGE OF DIFFERENCE | EZZAM RAHMAN IN DIALOGUE WITH LENETTE LUA

MAR 8, 3 - 4 PM | CHAPEL GALLERY, OBJECTIFS | FREE, REGISTRATION REQUIRED

Join this dialogue between Ezzam Rahman and Lenette Lua to rethink how care is expressed, translated, and embodied across languages, cultures and artistic forms.

SCAN THIS QR CODE TO SIGN UP FOR THE PROGRAMMES



ABOUT THE CURATOR

Lenette Lua is a practice-led researcher and curator whose interests delve into reconciling the contested intersections of political, economic, and socio-cultural spheres through her curatorial work. While at the Royal College of Art in London, she initiated the long-term curatorial project 'Fungi Initiative,' exploring institutional collaborations via participatory artist-led workshops. She was the recipient of the Objectifs Curator Open Call 2024 Award.

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Arabelle Zhuang is an interdisciplinary artist working across photography, moving images and textiles. In her practice, Zhuang examines the interpersonal relationship, beauty in the peripheral and the cyclical nature of being. She is interested in developing narratives that search for the multiplicities of everyday life and the layers in between.

Ezzam Rahman is a multi-disciplinary artist known for his interest in the body and the use of common, easily accessible, yet unconventional media in his art practice. Working across sculpture, installation, digital media, and performance, he creates works that are often autobiographical, time-based, and ephemeral, aiming to pique viewers' thoughts on the themes of body politics, identity, impermanence, traces, and abjection. He was awarded a joint winner of the Grand Prize for the President's Young Talents 2015 and the People's Choice Award by the Singapore Art Museum. Ezzam won the Most Promising Award for photography at the PULSE Awards 2021. He served as artistic director for The Substation in 2021 and was involved in various prestigious programmes, including the NIE Visiting Artist Programme and NAC Our SG Arts Plan launch event.

Genevieve Leong's art practice attempts to visualise the intangible. Beginning with the immaterial, her work often combines text, image, found and made objects and the manipulation of space to create what she describes as "an almost physical image". The installations that she creates often embody an impermanence with possibilities for change, whether it be due to audience participation or natural environmental factors. Her work seeks to shed new light onto her emotions, sensations, and realisations.

Hu Rui works with videos, installations, and computer simulation. His practice engages with issues around temporality from a multitude of variables, including causality, prediction, choice, and language. He is the recipient of the Best Experimental Animation Award at the 60th Ann Arbor Film Festival and a Jury Special Mention at the 25FPS Festival Croatia. He is Assistant Professor in Computation and Design at Duke Kunshan University.

Huijun Lu works at the intersections of art, music, engineering and computing. Lu's practice culminates in kinetic installations, sculptures, moving images and soundscapes. Consistent in the works are mechanisms and circuits that examine the function of objects, observations about the unnoticed in our environments, and technology's role in mediating relationships with our surroundings.

About the designer

Vanessa Ban is a designer and educator with over a decade of experience working with cultural institutions and commercial clients. She is the founder of External Assessment Summer School, an interdisciplinary educational initiative that bridges art, critical theory, and design. Vanessa has served on jury panels including D&AD and The Crowbar Awards. As an adjunct faculty, she incorporates her professional expertise and critical design approach honed through experiences at Pentagram, Typography Summer School New York, and the London College of Communication.

About Curator Open Call

Curator Open Call is an annual programme that encourages innovative curatorial approaches to lens-based art. This is part of Objectifs' ongoing effort to broaden perspectives by supporting curatorial research and innovative ways of presenting image-based work. The recipient receives financial, administrative and marketing support to present an exhibition in the Chapel Gallery.

About Objectifs

Established in 2003, Objectifs is a visual arts space in Singapore that is dedicated to film and photography. Our goal is to cultivate original voices in visual storytelling, and to inspire and broaden perspectives through the power of images. We do this by presenting a year round programme of exhibitions, screenings, workshops, talks, mentorships and residencies, aimed at fostering dialogue about visual culture, and advancing the practice and appreciation of photography and film.

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