

Using technology to spotlight pollution



In the immersive virtual reality game *Water Bodies*, visitors are transported into a virtual human stomach and have one minute to shoot as many pollutants as possible. PHOTO: THE MESHMINDS FOUNDATION

BOOK IT / MESHMINDS 2.0: ARTXTECHFORGOOD

WHERE: ArtScience Museum, 6 Bayfront Avenue

WHEN: Thursday to March 17, 10am to 7pm
(last admission at 6pm)

ADMISSION: Free

INFO: Go to www.meshminds.com

Art exhibition at ArtScience Museum features immersive artworks focusing on environmental sustainability

Desiree Loh

At the ArtScience Museum, visitors can use artificial intelligence to transform animals made up of

plastic blocks into animated characters.

The animals include endangered South-east Asian wildlife such as orangutans and Javan rhinoceroses.

Illustrator Andre Wee, 29, designed the digital versions of these creatures for this year's MeshMinds 2.0: ArtxTechforGood art exhibition, which opens on Thursday.

He says: "I hope that by having a hand in the creation of this artwork, visitors can gain a sense of ownership of these animals."

Organised by The MeshMinds Foundation, the second edition of the technology-driven art exhibi-

tion will feature about 20 immersive artworks and experiences by more than 25 artists, with a focus on environmental sustainability.

Ms Kay Vasey, founder of not-for-profit arts outfit The MeshMinds Foundation, says: "We want to tackle global challenges from an Asian perspective. If we always talk about it from the perspective of the West, where are the Asian voices?"

For Lasalle College of the Arts undergraduate Yashini Renganathan, 29, the exhibition is a chance for her to zoom in on light pollution with her 3D printed artwork, *Sabaism*.

Light pollution refers to the excessive brightening of the night sky by artificial lighting.

Singapore had the highest rate of light pollution in the world in 2016, but the issue is rarely discussed, she says.

She used a light meter to record luminosity levels at the brightly lit Helix Bridge and the darker Punggol Park, then transformed the data into two 3D printed figures.

She says: "People can't touch or feel light pollution, so I wanted to show them what it could look like by making physical representations of the data."

Likewise, illustrator Adeline Tan, 35, aims to make the issue of responsible consumption and production more tangible through the immersive virtual reality game *Water Bodies*.

Visitors will be transported into a virtual human stomach populated by tiny marine creatures and microplastics. They will have one minute to shoot as many of the pollutants to find out their origins, which range from plastic bags to cigarette buds.

A scoreboard at the end will reveal the largest plastic offender, along with tips to reduce their

usage.

Tan was drawn to the issue of plastic pollution after reading a BBC article last year which reported that microplastics were in 93 per cent of bottled water in countries such as the United States.

"Plastic pollution is not just in the sea or landfills and it's not just choking seagulls.

"I wanted to show that this is not a distant problem and our trash could even already be in us in the form of microplastics," she said.

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