

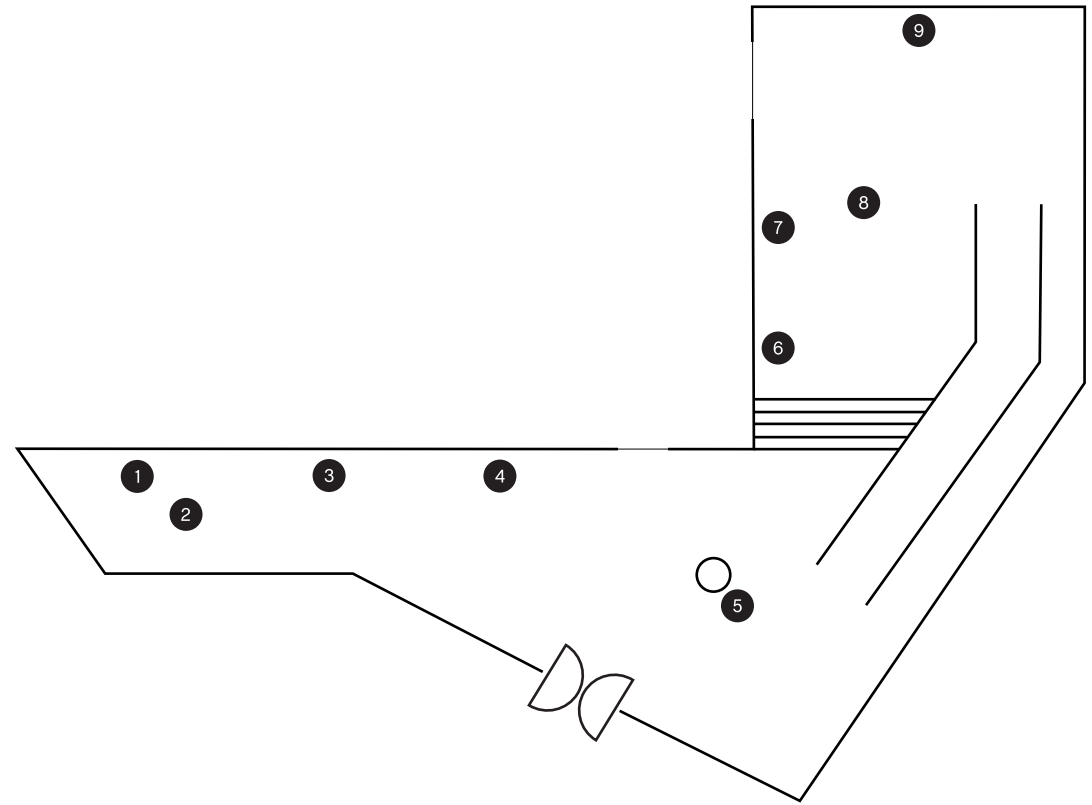
**JEREMY SHARMA:
CONVERSIONS**

Institute of Contemporary Arts Singapore
Brother Joseph McNally Gallery
LASALLE College of the Arts
23 June to 25 July 2018

Conversions is the first exhibition by artist and McNally School of Fine Arts lecturer Jeremy Sharma focusing on his film and video work. The earliest work, *At the airport* (2004), is a vignette of views filmed at Singapore's Changi Airport, and shows Sharma's foundational interest in threshold spaces and time. Recent works like *Vertical progression* (2016) capture interstitial spaces during the production and transportation of sculptures.

The theme of the exhibition draws inspiration from the event horizon, a phenomenon in the theory of general relativity where the force of gravity prevents outward movement. The isolation of space and time from outside influence forms the subject of several works, as well as Sharma's enquiries into the relationship between art, music, travel and contingency, and the dynamics of artwork production and family life.

Various transitions—from night to day, from inside to outside—and ambiguous relationships between cause and effect are captured in the works. Gradual progressions of time, subtly edited colours and tones, and multiple channels showing the same event recorded over different periods highlight these transformations and ambiguities.



List of works

1 Ephemera:

Athlete (interpretations) 2016
Saxophonist Billy Wong's handwritten score
29.7 x 21 cm

Agreement with Goodwood Pte Ltd for rental
of office space used for day-long
performance
29.7 x 21 cm

Receipt from Goodwood Pte Ltd for rental
payment
29.7 x 21 cm

2 *Athlete (interpretations)* 2016
high-definition digital video, 16:9 aspect
ratio, colour, sound
21:09 minutes

Sharma befriended Billy Wong, a busker saxophonist from Ang Mo Kio, and collaborated with him to interpret a sound piece titled 'Athlete', originally composed on guitar. Sharma filmed Wong, who once played with the Singapore Symphony Orchestra, in a disused office space, which he rented for a day. Soh plays for more than 20 minutes by a window as the sun sets.

3 *The workers* 2017
high-definition digital video projection,
16:9 aspect ratio, colour, sound
7:44 minutes

Sharma filmed an event in the life of a workshop and the changing relationships between the workers that help him produce his artwork. The film centres on an

experiment with a new two-dye resin being used to produce one of Sharma's distinctive foam reliefs.

***Independence* 2018**
high-definition digital video projection,
16:9 aspect ratio, colour, sound
9:10 minutes

Independence was filmed partly in London and Brighton when the decision in favour of Brexit was announced in June 2016. Scenes of protest, street life and museums are interspersed with scenes from Sharma's domestic life in Singapore with his two sons.

***Burden of light* 2017**
high-definition digital video projection,
16:9 aspect ratio, colour, sound
13:52 minutes

Sharma filmed a Thaipusam procession just as day breaks into night. Celebrated by the Tamil community, Thaipusam falls on the full moon in the Tamil month of Thai. The *kavadi attam* (burden dance) is the ceremonial sacrifice and offering performed by devotees during the worship of Lord Murugan, the Hindu god of war.



- 4 *At the airport* 2004
digital video projection, 4:3 aspect ratio,
colour, sound
30:23 minutes

At the airport, made during Sharma's undergraduate studies at LASALLE College of the Arts in the early 2000s, is the earliest film in the exhibition. Shot on MiniDV tape, it documents a night spent at Changi Airport during the period that Terminal 3 was undergoing construction. Sharma's interest in the passing of time and observation of his environment underpins all the works in this exhibition.

- 5 *Hypostasis* 2018
3-channel digital video, 4:3 and 16:9 aspect ratio, silent, black and white
14:45 minutes

Hypostasis is based on two sets of appropriated film footage that have stayed in the artist's cinematic memory. The first is taken from Carl Theodor Dreyer's *The passion of Joan of Arc* (1928) and features Renée Jeanne Falconetti as the protagonist, and avant-garde playwright Antonin Artaud as a priest. The second set of scenes features Pasolini's *The gospel according to Saint Matthew* (1964) at the point in the biblical story where the three wise men are led towards the baby Jesus. Both films depict cinematic representations of female Christian religious icons.

- 6 Ephemera:
Conversions 2004
4 digital colour photographs
each 25.4 x 38 cm

These photographs document the receipt for the service used to convert *At the airport* from MiniDV to digital format, as well as drawings and handwriting by the elder of Sharma's two sons, Jaden Sharma. The receipt is the source of this exhibition's title, *Conversions*.

- 7 Ephemera:
Drum exercise 2016
digital print of Jeremy Sharma's instructions to artist and musician Izzad Radzali Shah
29.7 x 21 cm

- 8 *Drum exercise* 2016
3-channel digital video, 16:9 aspect ratio, black and white, sound
20 minutes, with 20-minute intervals
This film features artist and musician Izzad Radzali Shah on drums. Sharma engaged Izzad to do a pre-gig routine or warm-up exercise and asked him to repeat the same action, from memory, on two subsequent occasions, each one week apart.

- 9 *Vertical progression* 2016
high-definition digital video projection, 16:9 aspect ratio, colour, sound
35:17 minutes

This film explores the various processes by which Sharma's foam reliefs are produced, and their transforming identity from idea through reflection, object, reality, subject and, finally, experience. Shot intermittently over three years, the film concerns a physical and virtual network of collaborators, scientists, fabricators, transporters and collectors. It addresses the economic cycle of art-making and the material conditions—data, matter, nature, labour and place—that produce art objects.

- Mahi mahi* 2017
high-definition digital video projection, 16:9 aspect ratio, colour, sound
60 minutes

Mahi mahi was inspired by Sharma's fishing trip to find the elusive, richly coloured deep-sea mahi mahi fish, whose colour changes across the spectrum when it dies. The footage from the trip, which took place over almost 24 hours from Singapore to Kuala Rompin in the Malaysian state of Pahang, was translated into a 12-channel lightbox installation for Sharma's solo exhibition *Spectrum version 2.2* at Sullivan+Strumpf (Gillman Barracks) in 2017.

- The slow fury* 2017
high-definition digital video projection, 16:9 aspect ratio, colour, sound
61:27 minutes

The slow fury is an interpretation, mediation, translation and transmission of an almost-forgotten kungfu film titled *Ring of fury* (1973) by Singapore director/producer Tony Yeow. Sharma's installation and performance was originally presented over two weekends in January 2017 as part of a site-specific installation made in collaboration with choreographer Nina Djekić at Labrador Nature Reserve for the 2017 edition of the Asian Film Archive's State of Motion. It addresses *Ring of fury* through images, surfaces, objects, voices, text, places, time and bodies. Sharma's editing process connects participants and activities from installation to pack-up of the Labrador Nature Reserve installation; the film features performers, inclement weather, Sharma and his production crew setting up and taking down equipment, and audience members.

All works courtesy the artist