Courtesy of S.E.A Focus

LIFESTYLE

# Vogue's guide to the most exciting events and exhibitions at Singapore Art Week 2025

**BY AZRIN TAN AND TING SHING KOH**

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From an experiential music residency to a dedicated women-led showcase that challenges patriarchal narratives, here's where to head to this Singapore Art Week

The world of art is nebulous and subjective, eluding definition and drawing eyes from every corner of culture. Over the decades, international art fairs such as the Miami Art Basel, the Venice Biennale or the Frieze Art Fair in London have transformed into creative hubs, often breathing new life into these cities every time its circuit comes around. For those rooted in Singapore, the annual Singapore Art Week (SAW) has certainly come into its own—teeming with a myriad of experiences, spanning exhibitions and interactive installations that pose varying perspectives to the local audience.

Titled 'Art Takes Over', the Singapore Art Week 2025 line-up is a promising one, with over 160 events set to unfold over ten days. Stalwart SAW happenings such as ART SG and S.E.A. Focus will surely be pulling in individuals from all walks of life. While the

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Meet Tiffany Loy, the Singaporean textile artist who plays on the unconventional

BY BRYAN HO

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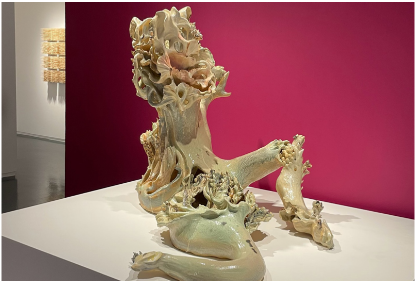
"We want to set an example of what love, resilience and strength can do": Gaurav Gupta on the power of renewal

BY MAYA MENON AND VOGUEFASHION

former will feature a slate of regional and global exhibitors, the latter puts the spotlight on Southeast Asian galleries and artists. This year's theme, *Disconnected Contemporaries,* will be an exploration of the boundaries between modern and contemporary art in the region.

Art lovers can also expect to look forward to the inaugural entrance of Sotheby's. The premier fine art auction house will not only be hosting an exhibition, but also an exciting auction with rare and impressive paintings and works from 19th century Indonesian nationalist artist Raden Saleh and renowned Japanese name Takashi Murakami. Meanwhile, in the spirit of a 'takeover', introspective installations like *Dancing Along (Don't Leave Me)* by local artist Susie Wong, will be an effort in engaging the general public, with its vignettes screened on large billboards in the city centre.

From women-led exhibitions that challenge patriarchal narratives to an experimental music residency, peruse our round up of the most exciting art events and happenings to check out during Singapore Art Week 2025.



Courtesy of Sundaram Tagore Gallery

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## Disobedient Bodies: Reclaiming Her

Women sit front and centre in *Disobedient Bodies: Reclaiming Her*. Spanning paintings, sculptures, installations and photography, the works examine the autonomy of women across countries such as Taiwan, Vietnam, Malaysia, Myanmar, Thailand and Singapore through the lens of gendered and racial social myths, while considering aspects of the female condition like the body's inherent power to birth life. A necessary instigator for reflection, this exhibition is for women, about women, and by women.

Disobedient Bodies: Reclaiming Her *runs in Sundaram Tagore Gallery from 11 January to 8 March.*

FASHION

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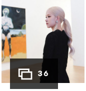
BY NICHOLAS SEE



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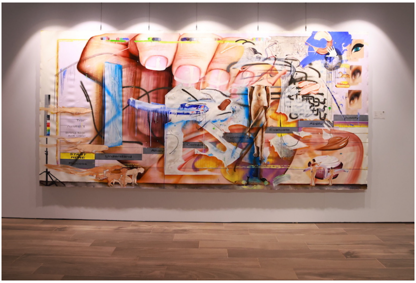

Courtesy of Sotheby's

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## Sotheby’s Modern & Contemporary Art Auction

Singapore Art Week welcomes Sotheby’s for the first time with a selection of works that explore the subject of landscape seen through the different lenses of culture, time, geography, history and stylistic movements. The exhibition is headlined by Marc Chagall’s *La danse autour de la corbeille*, one of the most influential artists of the twentieth century. The auction will also spotlight two rare, fresh-to-market paintings by Raden Saleh, 19th century nationalist artist of Indonesia. Other works draw from an impressive lineup of local and international talent, from Kim Lim to Takashi Murakami. Exhibited alongside the auction highlights, a seminal work on loan by Vincent van Gogh will also be unveiled for the first time in this region.

*Highlights will go on public view from 14 to 18 January ahead of the live action on the 18th. The full catalogue can be found here*.

Courtesy of Susie Wong

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## Dancing Alone (Don't Leave Me)

*No woman would dance alone when a man is looking at her*. Inspired by—and more importantly—subverting a scene from *The*

*King and I*, *Dancing Alone (Don't Leave Me)* presents a series of onscreen vignettes of solitary women dancing by themselves, for themselves. Created by Singaporean artist Susie Wong, the dancers move joyously in the centre of the screen, captivating viewers' complete attention. Carefree and indifferent, there is an underlying tension as the title suggests—the dancer's ability to escape the gaze of others is constrained by her own longing to be seen. Watching the dances unfold on a large billboard on a busy road, the simultaneous empowerment and subjugation is not lost on the audience.

Dancing Alone (Don't Leave Me) *runs from 14 to 26 January 2025.*

Courtesy of Capella Singapore

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## The Pineapple Room x TASCHEN pop-up bookstore

Behold a feast, for both the eyes and palatte. Capella Singapore's brand new bar, The Pineapple Room, unites with leading art book publisher TASCHEN to present a pop-up bookstore from 15 to 19 January. Featuring nearly seventy coveted TASCHEN titles spanning art, travel, fashion, and gastronomy, this five-day event bridges the worlds of luxury and literary excellence, guaranteeing a truly sensorial experience. With interiors curated to feature archival documents from Singapore, visitors will feel fully immersed as they sift through select TASCHEN volumes while enjoying a couple of artisanal bites.

*The pop-up bookstore is located in The Pineapple Room, Capella Singapore, 1 The Knolls, Sentosa Island.*

Courtesy of S.E.A. Focus

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## S.E.A. Focus

A showcase and art market hub all in one, S.E.A. Focus requires no introduction. Curated by John Tung, this year's theme of 'Disconnected Contemporaries' seeks to explore the complexities of contemporary art practices in the region, and how they navigate tensions with local traditions. With over 40 artists set to showcase their works, some highlights include emerging Malaysian artist Nurul Ain Binti Nor Halim, whose art questions the position and role of artists in decolonisation, and Vietnamese artist Tulip Duong, whose style is inflected by her country's transformation through the era of globalisation. Rising local artist Tiffany Loy will also be exhibiting a number of her works, and joining one of the program's SEAspotlight Talks about engaging with materials and their cultural contexts.

S.E.A. Focus *runs in Tanjong Pagar Distripark from 18 to 26 January*.

Courtesy of Singapore Art Museum

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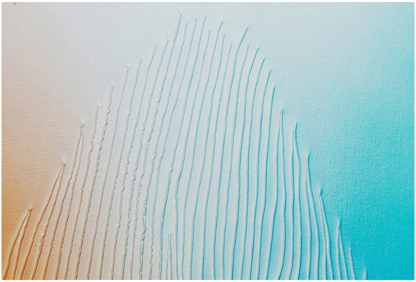
## Seeing Forest

From Bukit Panjang's forest to the Gillman woodlands, it's evident that secondary forests surround us in Singapore. But what do we really know of them? After its showcase at the La Biennale di Venezia 2024, Robert Zhao Renhui's introspective exhibition arrives at Singapore Art Museum. Its central structure, Trash Stratum, is a visual scape of what one might chance upon in a secondary forest, whilst an assemblage of videos will screen happenings from a secondary forest near the artist's own home. Think a deer grazing at the border of the forest, Japanese sparrowhawks pausing for a drink from an abandoned dustbin that has collected rainwater, a wild boar giving birth. A result of decade-long research, Zhao's work invites you to rethink your relationship with nature—from a space much closer to you than you would think.

Seeing Forest *runs at Singapore Art Museum from 15 January to 18 May.*



Courtesy of Whitestone Gallery

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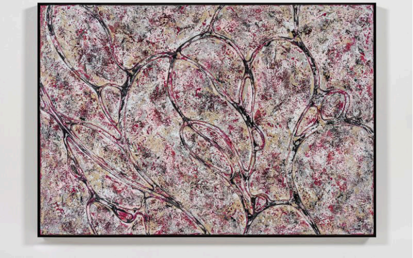
## Gutai: Beyond the Canvas

*Gutai* refers to a post-war Japanese art movement founded by Jiro Yoshihara, stemming from a society driven to break out from their shackles and express their need for freedom. An art form that utilises bodies as tools in the creative process—think actions like tearing of paper, masterful strokes invoked by grand gestures or throwing bottles of paint, it spurred a second generation of artists who revolutionised the process. With Whitestone Gallery Singapore's *Gutai: Beyond the Canvas*, these works will come to the fore. See work from artists like Tsuyoshi Maekawa, who used abnormal materials to craft experimental paintings, Shuji Mukai, who added a performative dimension to the form and Yuko Nasaka, who created immersive installations using everyday materials she saw around her.

*Visit* Gutai: Beyond the Canvas *at Whitestone Gallery Singapore from now till 2 March.*



Courtesy of The Culture Story

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## The Second Sex

Simone de Beauvoir's classic work of feminist philosophy inspires this collection of artwork featuring twenty-one local and international female artists. From renowned names to emerging talent, women artists have reasserted themselves in the zeitgeist of contemporary art, demonstrating the scope and complexity of their work across the board. Collected over the course of 10 years by Mr. Chong Huai Seng and Ms. Ning Chong, co-founders of The Culture Story, the exhibit hopes to encourage further conversations about female representation in the global art world.

The Second Sex *is on display until 30 May 2025.*

Courtesy of Porsche

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## The Red Thread: Past, Present, Future

Porsche, official automotive partner of ART SG, returns with a unique art piece by globally acclaimed artist Red Hong Yi, titled 'The Red Thread: Past, Present, Future.' Spanning nine meters and inspired by 60 shades of red from the Porsche Paint-to-Sample catalogue (just in time for Singapore's 60th birthday), the installation invites viewers to reflect on the interplay of time, identity, and legacy. Flanked by mirrors on both sides, visitors are drawn into a reflective space as the artwork becomes infinite, echoing life's continuity and unpredictability.

*The Red Thread: Past, Present, Future" is on display at the Marina Bay Sands Convention Centre from 17 to 19 January 2025.*

@shrub.0128

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## Shrub pop-up at Islands

There is no place better to immerse yourself in the local art scene than at the Shrub pop-up at Islands Peninsula, a former locksmith store at Golden Mile Tower. With a slew of independent artist products—think prints, curated zines and tshirts—consider the space your go-to spot for seeking out archival and current works from local graphic artists, and potentially even enjoy a screening of experimental video works by the likes of Tofu House films and @hahahause.

*Visit the Shrub pop-up at Islands Peninsula from 18 January to 1 February.*

Courtesy of National Gallery Singapore

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## Kim Lim: The Space Between. A Retrospective

Singapore-born sculptor and printmaker Kim Lim was a modern art pioneer. Drawing from diverse material cultures and architectural sites she encountered throughout her life, Lim's art reflected her transcultural experiences and sensibilities, which earned her local and global recognition. Presenting over 150 works, this retrospective marks Lim's most comprehensive major museum exhibition to date. The exhibition opens with Lim's early works, taking visitors through a journey of her career, from her bold shift to industrial materials to her later exploration of light and space. Visitors are led into an in-depth showcase featuring key sculptures and prints spanning four decades, unveiling new insights on Lim's prolific artistic journey, philosophy, and creative relationships.

Kim Lim: The Space Between. A Retrospective is *on display until 2 February 2025.*

Courtesy of Ruinart

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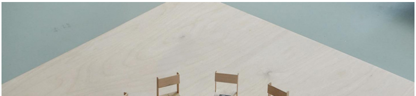
## Ruinart Art Lounge at ART SG

ART SG, the leading international art fair for Singapore and Southeast Asia, returns to Singapore for its third edition at Marina Bay Sands Expo and Convention Centre, featuring an exceptional lineup of regional and global talent. As the official champagne partner of ART SG 2025, Ruinart brings the whimsical *Nature Calendar* by London-based artist and ornithologist Marcus Coates to Singapore. Art lovers and enthusiasts alike are invited to immerse themselves in the installation on display at the Ruinart Art Lounge, all while indulging in the Maison's delectable Blanc de Blancs cuvée at the lounge's pop-up bar.

*Visit the Ruinart Art Lounge on Basement 2 at ART SG 2025 from January 17 to 19.*



@laiyutong_things

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## Residency: Lai Yu Tong at dblspce

What if you could compose the soundtrack to the end of the world? This is a question that visual artist Lai Yu Tong might be toying with in dblspce, an integrated space and incubator dedicated to artistic practice in Peninsula Shopping Centre. Running parallel to his visual arts practice, Lai's residency in dblspce takes his interest in experimental music one step further, as he builds a physical site for musicians to write the soundtrack tethered to his playful perspective on large subjects of existentialism and nihilism. At its core, a means to break out of standard rhythm and chance upon new ways of making sound and enacting performance.

*Visit Lai Yu Tong's residency at dblspce from now till 31 January.*

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BY AZRIN TAN

## The 'Resolution' Issue

A turn of the page. A clean slate. Embracing 2025 with open arms is Academy Award-nominated actress Stephanie Hsu, who graces the cover of *Vogue* Singapore’s January/February ‘Resolution’ issue. Fresh off headlining this year's edition of NEXT IN VOGUE in Singapore, where the star delved into film and fashion’s role in driving inclusivity, Hsu is psyched for the new year. “I’m excited to plug back into that wildness, gut feeling, pure creativity and impulse,” the actress tells *Vogue* Singapore.

Hsu shares more on breaking new ground, her latest rom com series 'Laid', as well her mantra for the new year.

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