

**Projection Night**  
**Friday 16 April, 7.30pm**  
**Chapel Gallery, Objectifs**

**Dispatches from the Region**  
**Artist Profiles**

**Kaleb Sitompul – To Bless the Motherland (2025)**

**Project Statement**

The Natinggir Forest Indigenous Community, a Batak tribe in North Sumatra, has lived in harmony with their land for over 300 years. Facing threats from industrial eucalyptus plantations, they resist through land restoration and advocacy, striving to protect their ancestral forest, culture, and livelihoods for future generations.

**Artist Bio**

Kaleb Sitompul is a visual storyteller from Indonesia working in film and photography. He studied filmmaking at the Jakarta Institute of Arts and honed his narrative approach with Pannafoto Institute and VII Academy. Since 2021, his work has focused on stories and social issues beyond Java's urban centers. He received the Objectifs Documentary Award (Emerging) in 2023.

**Mai Nguyen Anh – The Patriot Playbook**

**Project Statement**

This project traces Ho Chi Minh monuments amid controversies and state investments. Driven by curiosity about rising nationalism versus grassroots sentiments, I travelled across the country to capture moments, blending propaganda with personal encounters. The work maps an evolving political/cultural identity, but also reveals love for a country beyond ideology.

**Artist Bio**

Mai Nguyen Anh is a Vietnamese artist whose work blends observational and poetic documentary approaches to explore personal and social paradoxes. As curator of PhotoHanoi and co-founder of Matca, he deepens his practice by creating spaces that invite reflection, spark creative dialogue, and contribute to the evolving landscape of contemporary photography in Vietnam. Mai received the Objectifs Documentary Award (Open) in 2018.

**Nhan Tran – Places in Between**

**Project Statement**

*Places in Between* confronts the stark reality of statelessness through the intimate portrait of a 60-year-old Vietnamese woman living on Cambodia's Tonle Sap Lake - the largest freshwater lake in Southeast Asia and a lasting link between the histories of Vietnam and Cambodia during the Khmer Rouge.

**Artist Bio**

Nhan Tran (Nhàn) is a Vietnamese documentary photographer & filmmaker based between Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City. Her works focus on long-term stories, drawing attention to social

issues and advocating for equitable and sustainable development in the country with a focus on minority groups. Nhan received the Objectifs Documentary Award (Emerging) in 2021.

### **Lê Nguyễn Phương - Giao Điểm**

#### Project Statement

*Giao Điểm* was made in eight days in 2024, during a trip to Siem Reap with my father. He spent four days with me before leaving back to Vietnam for his work. A day later, my lover came to visit me without him knowing. The work explores my father's story, and the secrets within.

#### Artist Bio

Lê Nguyễn Phương (or Phuong Nguyen Le in Western naming convention) (b. 2002, Ha Noi) is an emerging Vietnamese photographer, artist, and researcher. His works focus on themes of collective identity, community, and family in the aftermath of the American War in Vietnam. Phương received the Objectifs Documentary Award (Emerging) in 2023.

### **Sarah Isabelle Tan - *Do you remember the colour of the sky that day (II)***

#### Project Statement

*Do you remember the colour of the sky that day (II)* is an encounter with images composed of Super 8 footage and damaged negatives shot and collected over five years. Scratches, stains, and chemical traces reveal distortion rather than clarity, embracing fragments of memory suspended between visibility and loss. I narrate parts of imagined and real stories, mirroring my broader practice of exploring how presence delicately persists at thresholds of visibility, and is revealed in the act of holding, carrying, sustaining.

#### Artist Bio

Sarah Isabelle Tan is an artist and researcher based between London and Singapore. Her practice engages with writing and a post-medium framework that approaches the image not as representation, but through material sensitivity and embodied processes. She is currently undertaking a Masters of Research at the Royal College of Art, and was a recipient of the Objectifs Documentary Award in 2020 (Emerging).

### **Shwe Wutt Hmon - When The Curtain Falls**

#### Project Statement

*When The Curtain Falls* is about finding and building connections between myself, photo studio spaces that I love so much, and the people who protect these memorable places, as a way to counter my fear that these photo studios will soon vanish in a not-so-distant-future.

#### Artist Bio

Shwe Wutt Hmon is a photographer and mixed media artist from Myanmar, currently based in Chiang Mai, Thailand. Shwe's work focuses on collective histories, familial ties, relationships, and exploring the inner psyche through intimate storytelling about people and places dear to her heart. She received the Objectifs Documentary Award (Open) in 2020.

## **Vista - Philippine Perspectives**

### **Artist Profiles**

#### **George Gascon**

After the quell of Martial Law, Gascon worked for a succession of short-lived periodicals: The Observer, The Philippine Daily Globe, and Newsday. In 1992 he moved to Singapore to work as a news photographer for The Straits Times where he would win several awards within his first year. It was also in Singapore where he would organize an informal group of colleagues and young photographers called 759 after their 7:59 am call time. They would go out and take photographs around the streets of Singapore on Sundays with no apparent agenda. After 10 years of working for The Times he returned to the Philippines, gave up photography, and set up a farm in Mendez, Cavite. He has lived there since, growing produce and tending to poultry.

A native of Ilocos Sur, he worked as a farmhand in the local tobacco farms before moving to the city in search of a better life. He later returned to the farmlands—a reminder that the farm would always be a part of him, no matter where he went in life and in the world.

#### **Lilen Uy**

Lilen was taking a degree communication art in California when she chose photography as an elective. She was then pulled by the psychology and impressionistic aspect of the craft that it made her pursue a commercial and fine arts degree at Brooks Institute. She arrived in Singapore in the 90s and worked for the Straits Times fusing a fine-art and commercial approach to her assignments which gave her an edge as she would at times break photography rules that gave her images another dimension. While in Singapore, she also pursued a personal practice of photographing the streets and mundane objects and scenes as a meditative process that counters the fast-paced editorial work that she does. She's now retired and living with her cats in Manila while teaching yoga and Pilates.

#### **Jose Enrique Soriano**

Jose Enrique Soriano's work emphasizes the importance of capturing images that resonate with viewers on a personal level, avoiding sensationalism and focusing on the human element. His approach reflects a commitment to storytelling that is both respectful and impactful. Soriano worked for the Singapore Straits Times for a decade starting in 1994 and later served as the photo editor for Khaleej Times in the UAE. He's now retired and manages Fred's Revolution bar in Manila.

#### **Kathleen Lei Limayo**

Kathleen is a documentary filmmaker & photographer, multimedia journalist, video producer, and visual anthropologist based in the Philippines.

She focuses on visually documenting the impacts of the climate crisis and covers multimedia stories on the intersections of environmental issues with human rights, women's, and indigenous issues.

### **Juan Carlo De Vela**

Juan Carlo de Vela is a photojournalist and documentary photographer based in Cebu City, Philippines. He currently works as a chief photojournalist for SunStar Cebu, a prominent regional news outlet. He worked first as a Photojournalist in Abante and Manila bulletin for a decade and contributing photos to Associated Press and European Pressphoto Agency.

Beyond his fieldwork, de Vela is dedicated to nurturing the next generation of journalists. He actively participates in educational initiatives, including workshops and lectures, to promote media literacy and press freedom. Notably, he contributed to the "Reaching Out to Future Journalists" forum organized by SunStar Cebu during the 32nd Cebu Press Freedom Week.

De Vela is the chief photographer for Sunstar News, continuing his commitment to delivering engaging and informative visual stories. He's also the host of Pitik, a podcast that informs and inspires the community through conversations with photographers from different practices.

### **Kimberly Dela Cruz**

While studying Journalism, she became an activist and started carrying a camera in protests. She began her career as a photo correspondent for the Philippine Daily Inquirer in 2013 before transitioning to documentary photography and working for different publications. Dela Cruz started covering the war on drugs in the Philippines in 2016 and the following year co-produced *Si Kian*, a children's book on the murder of Kian Delos Santos that won a National Children's Book Award. In 2018, she became a fellow for the International Women's Media Foundation and was sent to cover migration and stories of gender in El Salvador.

Her project *Death of Nation* chronicling the crime scenes in Manila and the lives of the families affected by the killings was awarded the W. Eugene Smith Memorial Fund for Humanistic Photography in 2021 and won the World Press Photo Long Term Projects category in South East Asia and Oceania in 2023. Her work has appeared in various publications and exhibitions.

### **Lisa Marie David**

Lisa Marie David is a Filipina freelance photojournalist and documentary photographer with an interest in documenting issues concerning women, children, culture, and the environment. She is a regular contributor to Reuters and Bloomberg and had her work published on CNN, Libération, among others.

In 2021, she completed her post-graduate Diploma in Visual Journalism at the Asian Center for Journalism in Ateneo de Manila University with the support of the Konrad-Adenauer Stiftung

Media Programme Asia. She holds a degree in Bachelor of Arts in Journalism from the University of Santo Tomas and is an alumna of the 19th Angkor Photo Festival Workshop in Siem Reap, Cambodia.

### **Aram Lascano**

Aram Lascano is a Filipino photojournalist and multimedia journalist based in Quezon City, Manila. He covers a diverse range of topics, including conflict, environmental issues, music, culture, and the arts. He is currently a correspondent for The Daily Tribune. He began his journalism career as a music editor intern for PULP Magazine and continues to contribute to the media landscape with a focus on the intersection of culture and current events. At present, he's pursuing a Diploma in Visual Journalism course at the Asian Center for Journalism at the Ateneo de Manila University.

### **George Calvelo**

George Calvelo is a Canberra-based documentary photographer with 12 years of experience in photojournalism. His early work spans a wide range of subjects, including news, natural and human-made disasters, social issues, politics, sports, entertainment, and everyday life. His images have been published in major news outlets across Asia, America, Europe, Australia, and the UAE.

Over time, he has shifted his focus from photojournalism to long-form personal projects, producing in-depth visual narratives that examine complex social issues and personal reflections. His latest project, *An Satong Kawaran*, which explores themes of transition, memory, and identity through analog photography, will be exhibited at Photo Access in 2025. He is currently a stringer for Getty Images Australia, covering feature stories in Canberra and Sydney and is available for assignments worldwide.

### **Benjamin Rasmussen**

Ben is a freelance photographer based in Denver, Colorado. He spent his childhood with an indigenous people group on an island in the southern Philippines, his university years with evangelicals in a small town in northern Arkansas and a year with the descendants of Vikings in the Faroe Islands, a nation of 45,000 residents in the middle of the North Atlantic. Rasmussen was featured in PDN's 30 in 2014. His work has been selected for the American Photography 26, 28 and 30 Annuals, shortlisted for the Leica Oskar Barnack Award and awarded in the 2010 POYi awards. He has been chosen as one of Photolucida's 2010 Critical Mass Top 50 and included in the Magenta Foundation's Flash Forward – Emerging Photographers 2011 and 2012 lists.