

NOT EVERYTHING  
HISTORY IS  
THE SUN  
TEACHES  
US THAT

osage art foundation

**THE SUN**

teaches us that history is not everything

# Contents

- 4** Preface
- 6** Introduction
- 8** The sun teaches us that history  
is not everything  
Raphael Fonseca
- 24** Jonas Arrabal  
Brazil
- 26** Chang Chi Chai  
Taiwan/ Brazil
- 28** Kent Chan  
Singapore
- 30** Eric Fok  
Macau
- 32** Miho Hagino & Taro Zorrilla  
Japan/ Mexico
- 34** Fx Harsono  
Indonesia
- 36** Mimian Hsu  
Costa Rica
- 38** Mella Jaarsma  
Indonesia
- 40** Juliana Kase  
Brazil
- 42** Linda Lai  
Hong Kong
- 44** Esvin Alarcón Lam  
Guatemala
- 46** Daniel Lie  
Brazil
- 48** Sandra Nakamura  
Peru
- 50** Nguyen Trinh Thi  
Vietnam
- 52** João Ó  
Macau
- 54** Yudi Rafael  
Brazil
- 56** Norberto Roldan  
Philippines
- 58** Mark Salvatus  
Philippines
- 60** Shima  
Brazil
- 62** Melati Suryodarmo  
Indonesia
- 64** Shinpei Takeda  
Japan/ Mexico
- 66** Tang Kwok-hin  
Hong Kong
- 68** André Terayama  
Brazil
- 70** Tromarama  
Indonesia
- 74** David Zink Yi  
Peru
- 78** As the South Turns  
Patrick D. Flores
- 86** Ruminations: critical miniatures  
& a montage of HK's (post)coloniality  
Linda Lai
- 92** Sunburnt  
Caterina Riva
- 96** Platform of resistance  
Solange Farkas
- 102** Towards a horizontality  
Charles Merewether
- 116** About Artists
- 119** About Contributors
- 121** About Osage

# Preface

Since its founding in 2005, Osage Art Foundation (OAF) has been promoting cross cultural understanding through art exhibitions, publications, workshops and symposia between Hong Kong, China, Japan, Korean, Singapore, Thailand, Myanmar and Indonesia, the Philippines and other countries, most recently expanding the dialogue to include Europe, South and Central America and Mexico.

Osage Art Foundation recognizes that more needs to be done to develop the cultural conversations happening within Asia and beyond. To better address this need, Osage Art Foundation has launched the platform, "Regional Perspectives", and initiated the platform with a major exhibition series. Each publication under this series offers objective analysis and interpretations of cultural expressions and artistic ideas of creative individuals and allows them to collectively present their views and opinions to a regional and global audience.

Osage Art Foundation presented "The sun teaches us that history is not everything," guest curated by Raphael Fonseca. It gathered together 26 artists, 14 from South and Central America and Mexico, 8 from Southeast Asia and 4 artists from Hong Kong and Macau. The exhibition was tangent of the "South by Southeast" exhibition in 2015, curated by Patrick D. Flores and Anca Verona Mihuleț, which proposed not only to represent the existing geography and geopolitics of Southeast Asia but to remap the Southeast all together. It does this by locating a coordinate of the Southeast elsewhere such as Southeast Europe.

Osage Art Foundation's programs are distinguished by their focus on cultural exchange, educational outreach and the building of knowledge. The "Regional Perspectives" series will continue to encourage the building and sharing of knowledge across cultures.

**T**he book is the final product related to the exhibition: "The sun teaches us that history is not everything" organized by the Osage Art Foundation. This curatorial project has developed since the end of 2015, opening to the public in March until May 2018. This publication includes essays about the project, photo documentation of the exhibition and the shown artworks.

More than that, it has always seemed important to have textual contributions written by the artists themselves. In this sense, I invited them to contribute small texts about their art practice and research always having in mind that they are not only visual artists but political individuals. I also contributed some words about the works presented in the exhibition and their ability to create the narratives we had in the space.

Besides the clear relation between the book and the exhibition itself, there are also six essays that highlight issues contained in the project and can be related to broader issues of art and contemporary cultures. Opening the book, the first essay by me discusses the process of this research between Latin America, Southeast Asia, Hong Kong and Macau – what perspectives related to the idea of the tropics appear when we look at artists that come from these regions? How different histories of colonialism create points of contact between areas in the world that are generally still not articulated in art projects? The article that brings some aspects of every step that made this project possible and reflects on the many ways that History can be folded until it becomes multiple stories.

After the documentation of the exhibition, the second essay was written by Patrick Flores, curator of the exhibition "South by Southeast" (with Anca Verona Mihulet), the first and previous exhibition, that is part of the ongoing platform "Regional Perspectives", developed by the Osage Art Foundation. The author creates parallels between the two exhibitions and looks at some aspects of the current idea of the global South. One of the artists present in the show, Linda Lai, discusses issues of identity, historical narrative and the landscape of Hong Kong. This text is very important to the panorama of this book because it makes evident the point of view of an artist-researcher and certainly stands out from the other essays, all written by curators and art historians. Caterina Riva's essay dialogues with the formats of art critic and literary chronicler. She writes about the exhibition from the perspective of someone who works in the visual arts field and also had the possibility of discussing the show personally with

me. On the other hand, she is also able to look at the works and share some impressions that put her again in the role of the audience.

Meanwhile, Solange Farkas' contribution is the only one that is not attached explicitly to the exhibition. Director of Videobrasil – one of the first art festivals in the world dedicated exclusively to the global South – she reflects on the history of her institution and the collaborations within the South. In recent years, with her efforts, the event was able to create not only collaborations across Latin America but also with institutions in Africa. It seems important now to think about new bridges with this universe named as Asia. Closing the book, Charles Merewether analyses not only the exhibition but also the essay I prepared for the catalogue. With extensive experience as a curator, having worked in the South region of the globe, he points out some aspects present in the exhibition and relates it to his own experiences as someone that deals with the complexities of the relations between visual arts and as an example, the geographical idea of "East Europe".

I hope that this book is able not only to inform the reader about this exhibition but, can also be seen as the fruit of years of research, dialogue and will to elaborate other ways to look at images, the past and ways to write narratives. I wish that these essays inspire artists, curators and researchers in general to also step out of their comfort zone and to propose new dialogues between regions – as the Osage Art Foundation has been doing in the last few years, by encouraging and making projects like this possible.

**Raphael Fonseca**

Curator of "The sun teaches us that history is not everything"

**R**aphael Fonseca, as the curator of the exhibition "The sun teaches us that history is not everything" wishes to dedicate this project to the memory of Raquel Schembri (1984-2016). Schembri was a Brazilian artist born in Belo Horizonte and was to be one of the artists of this exhibition. Fate prevented her collaboration but, in honor of her, we include in this publication one of her works on paper, made in collaboration with Shima in 2014.

# **The sun teaches us that history is not everything**

Raphael Fonseca

## **An Introduction**

The year was 2017.

The president of the United States of America, Donald Trump, declared that he wishes to build a wall that divides his country from Mexico.

The Singapore Biennale titled "An Atlas of Mirrors" gathered works essentially about borders and geography.

Hong Kong already had 20 years since it went back to the Chinese administration after its long period under the British power.

Documenta was titled "Universes in Universe" and had one research area dedicated to the "Global South" named "South: A State of Mind".

Part of the Brazilian population went on the streets in public manifestations against the left-wing party. People wore green and yellow – a clear reference to the nationalistic manifestations during the military dictatorship period.

The Getty Foundation, in Los Angeles, promoted the event "Pacific Standard Time", where institutions of the city received dozens of exhibitions that established dialogue between the USA and the art made in different places of Latin America.

The movie "The Act of Killing", a re-enactment with those who were responsible for the mass killings of communists in Indonesia during the dictatorial government of Suharto, had its fifth anniversary of release.

The Museum of the Chinese Colony (Museo de la Colonia China) in Guatemala opened in memory of the migration from China to Central America during the 20th century.

Rogerio Duterte, president of the Philippines, admitted the murder of hundreds of people, supposedly involved in drug dealing in the islands due to the maintenance of the national order.



The singer M.I.A., born in London with of Sri Lankan origin, asked herself in a song: "Borders (what's up with that?) / Politics (what's up with that?) / Police shots (what's up with that?) / Identities (what's up with that?)".



Jumaldi Alfi | Mooi Indie #02 | Acrylic on canvas | 215 x 315 cm | 2012

## Tropicalities

These words above were written as an introduction to an advanced version of the exhibition project "The sun teaches us that history is not everything", supported by the Osage Art Foundation since 2016. These notes on facts and political perspectives of different places of the globe were written in the heat of their events during 2017. Due to the realisation of the exhibition in 2018 and the subsequent publication of a catalogue, I adapted the verbs of the sentences to reflect them having happened. Much has occurred in international politics subsequent to these events.

From the point of view of the country where I was born and live, Brazil, those street demonstrations with people wearing green-and-yellow shirts and praising our military dictatorship period (1964-1985) took to the presidential victory of Jair Bolsonaro, an extreme right-wing, military and partisan supporter of positions that go against democratically acquired human rights over the last three decades in the country. The motto of his political campaign was "Brazil above everything, God above all," which

represented – consciously or not – both a religious takeover contrary to the Brazilian secular state (in our constitution of 1988), and a ghost of the Nazi motto “Deutschland über alles” (“Germany above all”).

What drives this discourse, and all those contained in the introduction, is a strong nationalism anchored in political stances already seen in totalitarian political systems. It is difficult not to remember some publications in the field of historical studies that analyse other moments in which the semantic field of words like migration, borders, nation, invasion, escape, refuge and identity were discursively triggered for the same purpose. I refer to the book by Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities* (1983), a key text on the analysis of mechanisms for the creation of new nationalisms.

The relation between the present and the past was always articulated by different political strategies that wanted to forge new geographical identities. A specialist in Southeast Asia, Anderson demonstrates in his book how nationalistic fictions were essential to define borders, establish commercial agreements and justify the bad relationship between neighbours. More than mentally imagining a specific community, the agents of culture created images that aimed at the masses and that could freeze essential convictions to the idea of nation. It's nationalism, this notion of collective belonging that exists since Antiquity that, for example, makes Donald Trump willing to “make America great again” or that justifies the murder of masses in the Philippines recently. On the other side, the attempts to complexify this concept taken up in curatorial proposals like Pacific Standard Time and the poetry of an artist like M.I.A.

The starting point for this curatorial project comes precisely from another moment of Brazilian nationalism in the 19th century, as opposed to the immigration of non-Western peoples. In 1850, the Eusebio de Queiroz Law prohibited the international trade of enslaved black people who arrived in the country through the Atlantic Ocean. The whole history of the region was based on black slavery as a labour force – from plantations to the white family private sphere. Once the law was published, alternatives to the workers had to be drawn.

One alternative was the possibility of the arrival of Chinese workers, something already seen in the colonies of other European empires throughout the Caribbean. Cultural differences and the fear of otherness led to a Chamber of Deputies session, full of racist speeches based

on recurrent eugenic theories in the 19th century.<sup>1</sup> In June 1890, the Brazilian government created a law prohibiting the entry of Asians and free Africans into Brazil and expressing the understanding that only the European labour force would be able to whiten Brazilian society. Here is a bit of the history of racism in Brazil.<sup>2</sup>

Learning about these facts on the history of immigration in Brazil caught my attention during my doctoral studies. In a common sense, whenever we refer to the Asian presence in Brazilian culture, we remember the Japanese immigration that happened systematically since 1908, with official support from the Japanese government.<sup>3</sup> Predatory narratives – and even the histories of the Japanese in the country – tend to be eclipsed by other Brazilian racial narratives that quote Karl von Martius's famous text on the "theory of the three races".

The ethnic constitution in Brazil, according to the author, would have occurred from the encounter between indigenous peoples, enslaved black peoples and Europeans who colonised the territory, especially the Portuguese.<sup>4</sup> It is an argument made by a 19th-century German scientist Karl Friedrich Philipp von Martius<sup>5</sup> whose works also owe much to the notion of eugenics and sum up both racial diversity and violent conflicts from the idea of mixing. Certainly, we should not try to find in this argumentation – in an anachronic way – the critical gaze that the present allows us but it calls to my attention that the intellectual production in the country sometimes still uses his theories more than a century and a half later.

These readings led me to a question: what is the place of the Asian peoples in the narratives about the identity and history of Brazil? Later, due to a series of curatorial research trips that I conducted through Central America and the Caribbean,<sup>6</sup> the questioning was extended from the Brazilian territory to this gigantic region, which we call Latin America. Japanese immigration waves were important not only in Brazil, but also in Peru and Mexico. Similarly, Chinese presence in Latin America was most felt in countries such as Panama, Peru, Cuba, Venezuela, and the Dominican Republic. These stories, however, are told in a supporting manner in the official narratives of these countries; they are generally absent from History classes in basic education and still suffer prejudices like those pronounced during the 19th century.

Gradually I met Latin American artists of Chinese and Japanese ancestry based in countries like Brazil, Costa Rica, Peru, Guatemala, Argentina and

South, an expression that is increasingly in vogue in contemporary cultural studies and, consequently, in the thinking of contemporary art. Cuatehmóc Medina, an experienced Mexican curator who has acted within its sphere, wrote about this question precisely:

*After two decades of irruption of the periphery art alliance, and after the geographical and historical recomposition of the narrative of the history of modern and contemporary art, what new centrifugal forms emerge from the culture below the Equator line? What promises are contained in the task of re-evaluating the cultural genealogies of the South: the memory of dictatorships at the same time as the possible tropicalisations of conceptualism? What new fissures open in the illusion of absolute closeness from what is still distance? To what extent can artistic practice, globalised or locally effective, still be attributed to the decolonization project?<sup>11</sup>*

The South – or, as I prefer to say, the tropics – has much to learn from itself.<sup>12</sup> There are many notions of tropic and tropicality within this vast area which we call tropical. Brazilian tropicality is not the same as that of the tropicality of the Philippines - but the fact that it was the result of the Portuguese invasion and the second of the Spanish invasion, both Iberian nations, made me feel a certain sense of home in Manila that I could not feel in any other places I visited in Southeast Asia. Travelling is necessary and establishing crossings – as proposed by this curatorship – as well. What we should keep in mind, however, is that the “Global South” is only a starting point that will only be valuable if we continue to doubt its classificatory condition and realise that it is in the difference that we are constituted.

### **Albert Camus and the sun**

The title for this project comes from a quote and adaptation of a paragraph originally published by Albert Camus. Born in 1913, in Algeria, Camus became one of the biggest voices in the French literature in the first half of the 20th century. Born in a time when Algeria still was a French colony, Camus lived in Paris and followed part of the process of the Algerian independence, finished in 1962, only two years after his death. This information contributes to comprehend his poetic insistence around the sensation of being a “foreigner” (title of his most famous book published in 1942). We could affirm then that the author was the fruit of the encounter of colonial and post-colonial reflections around his own time.

In 1937, only with 22 years, Camus published his second book in Algeria

*Betwixt and Between*. The book has five short stories about people in situations of travelling, strangeness and solitude. Twenty years later, in 1958, already in France, Camus republished the book and wrote a preface. This text has a strong autobiographical tone, where he reflects on his childhood in Algeria and points to the differences he found living later in France. Remembering his poverty and experience that was closer to the landscape than to material world, Camus writes the following periods: "To correct my natural indifference, I was put in the midway between the misery and the sun. The misery prohibited me to believe that everything goes well under the sun and in history; the sun taught me that history isn't everything. To change the life, yes, but not the world in which I did my divinity".<sup>13</sup>

Misery, the colonial condition of Camus' poor childhood in Algeria, couldn't be apprehended separated from the sun, the landscape condition of his geographical localisation. Between there and here, instead of looking for an official history to justify his human condition, Camus opted for the power of fiction and wrote episodic stories. In the quote, he learned that not everything goes well under the sun but, at the same time, the obsession with a literal discourse from a historian also wouldn't make sense when confronted with the monumentality of the sun.

This text by Camus met the central interest of this curatorial project: gathering artists that have interest in the elements of the present that touches on the historical aspects of the formation of national identities. While some of the artists refer to the state of being an "Asian" in places where the nationalistic discourses push toward the affirmation of "Latinity"; others observe how, in the present, it is still possible to see elements that came from the colonisation desired by European imperialism. In other words, it is possible to affirm that the artists that take part in this exhibition – each in its own way – are "artists-historians".<sup>14</sup>

However, just like Camus affirms that he is closer to stories than to one history, this exhibition gathers artworks that take the same proposition. We, me and the artists, were looking for a more poetic, less literal and more experimental look at facts and images. We understood that the word "History" as a series of elements that can be folded, forgotten, reconstituted and juxtaposed for an artist to reach a formal result capable to invite the public to think about the present and political conflicts we deal with.

It is because of this curatorial interest that the quote to Camus was adapted. Instead of reading "The sun taught me that history isn't

everything”, I opted for “The sun teaches us that history is not everything”. We take off the verb in the past and put it in the present; we extract the verb from the first person of singular and write in the plural. The learning is made in the contemporaneity and it is not only about one person but about dialogues with the public. The sun is always present – the star that makes Latin America globally known by its tropical climate to the Eurocentric thought is the same that gives light to the Asian tropics and made orientalism possible. Even with such different narratives, we continue under the same sun.



Luciana Miyuki | Housing | Installation with salt and water | Dimensions variable | 2009

### **Ways to fold history**

Twenty-five artists occupied the Osage Art Foundation exhibition space in “The sun teaches us that history is not everything”. The large size of the floor that the institution occupies in Kwun Tong resembles a very broad corridor and, for the exhibition design, we chose not to create any great artificial intervention. One area of the exhibition was more dedicated to installations, objects and wall works, in which the lighting became essential. The other, more dedicated to video works and needed a darker environment. Both balconies were also occupied with site specific interventions.

No geographical or thematic division was established between artists; the public was invited to go through the space and perceive the dialogue between works placed side by side. The encounter with both Asian and Latin American artists was thus suggested - without initial separation and without creating new boundaries between "we" and "them". A watchful eye would see lines of force in the display that were beyond the geographical belongings. There are many ways of doubling historical narratives in contemporary times, and it seems to me that this was the greatest contribution made by the project: to bring this diversity to the public and to realize that daily, in our minor acts, we are always reliving or exorcising the past. As our title reads, "history is not everything", that is, it is a starting point that invites us to observe elements that escape its desire to rationalise and organise the world.

I would like to point out some of these dialogic ways of acting in the field of visual arts looking at the past perceived through the approach of some artists of the exhibition.

\* Archival images - many of the guest artists work directly with archives.<sup>15</sup> Rather than altering the initially researched images, they quote integrally their sources and insert them into new narrative structures. This is particularly visible since they all work with technical images - photography and audio-visual. Their gaze seems more focused on the re-reading of great historical narratives. While André Terayama used a photograph of the great Japanese photographer Haruo Ohara, Yudi Rafael developed a work based on a survey of the visual culture developed in Brazil and the United States about the descendants of Asians. Nguyen Trinh Thi and Linda Lai built works made from excerpts of other films that said a lot about the collective imagination of Vietnam and Hong Kong. Archives, film libraries, art collections and libraries are some of the areas explored by this line of research.

\* Tradition, appropriation and recoding – in a parallel but different way, some artists, presented in the project, did not only quote a specific image or formal element but subverted it through interventions that say a lot about political statements / politics and about the weight of updating the past in the present.<sup>16</sup> A good example is the way Norberto Roldan juxtaposes three-dimensional sculptures with a religious flag on the side that refer to political conflicts in the Philippines. There are many layers of association there. Likewise, Kent Chan's proposition, a video installation around the first exhibition of Singaporean art outside

Singapore, in London. The letters are on the table and the artist rewrites the past in the way that interests him. Similarly, focusing on sound and its absence, Mark Salvatus calls popular musical groups from the Philippines and Melati Suryodarmo uses the music of a famous singer from West Sulawesi, Indonesia. Finally, other artists use an image or precise material culture: Chang Chi Chai and her research on the kites of Chinese origin in Brazil; Eric Fok and the colonial maps of Macau; Esvin Alarcón Lam and the commemorative arch made by the Chinese colony in Guatemala; Tromarama and the disappearance of a Dutch colonial building; and on one of the balconies of Osage, Shinpei Takeda and the floorplans of ships that brought Japanese immigrants to Latin America. His drawings are composed of the immigrants' logbooks and, over time, they will disappear from the surface of the balcony floor, just like any image will disappear in the course of history.

\* Microhistory – another series of artists seems more dedicated to the act of listening; their researches are aimed at a one-to-one exchange and, from there, they reconstitute the memory of a person or a small community.<sup>17</sup> David Zink Yi films generations of Chinese who immigrated to Peru and talk about the spices brought back and forth. To cook is to remember. A good example of this culinary transit is the performance by Shima, held at the opening. As an Okinawan immigrant family and owner of restaurants in São Paulo, cooking something “typically Japanese” is putting together ingredients made in Brazil but catalogued so. Recipes go from generation to generation and the secrets need to be kept. Also, in the field of video, FX Harsono runs a documentary on Indonesian Christian schools and the multiple layers of otherness – a Dutch teaching supposedly Indonesian children, but whom, like himself, had Chinese ancestry. Miho Hagino and Taro Zorrilla have been conducting long researches with immigrants and Japanese descendants in Mexico. How to express the feeling of missing a place with words? How to relate to a place you have never visited, when you are Nisei or Sansei? The video installation of Nguyen Trinh Thi's – is also based on an interview with a Vietnamese who immigrated to Hong Kong and opened a vinyl record store – could also be at that intersection.

\* Fictions of identity - notions of identity and history can always be fictions. Our bodies enter and leave geographical spaces exerting different forces of attraction and repulsion, belonging and estrangement.<sup>18</sup> For some artists, therefore, more than affirming or recovering documental histories, it is important to follow in the field of fiction, confusion and lack of literality. Their works are more open to multiple readings and were essential in this



project because of the polysemic character. It is necessary, I think, to still believe in the mystery of images. The literary text is essential for Juliana Kase and Sandra Nakamura. The former makes a super 8 film in Japan and inserts on the image a haikai poetry, while the latter investigates the songs of the native peoples of the islands of Hong Kong and projects them in the space like shadows.

The exploration of three-dimensionality as a place of estrangement is important for the other artists seen in these keywords. Daniel Lie and João Ó operate with organic materials and which are seen as traditional — the bamboo is folded in the case of the second and becomes masts in the case of the first in his occupation of one of the balconies of the Osage. When using a collection of fossils from Madagascar already present in the foundation, Lie casts a glance over the passage of time. On the other hand, Mimian Hsu, Mella Jaarsma, Jonas Arrabal and Tang Kwok-Hin use more industrial objects. Each sleigh bell used by Hsu is a reference to a day of disappearance of her grandfather in Taiwan; each newspaper that fills the clothes made with plastic cassava bags from Jaarsma's work is a reminder of the articles that bombard us about migratory flows. To look at the Japanese side of his family who always dealt with salt production in Brazil, Arrabal proposed an installation with water gathered in Hong Kong and watched its daily evaporation. Tang preferred to perform an act within his video installation where the colours of the flags of China and Hong Kong are ghostly echoed. The carpet fixed to one of its bed structures reads "welcome", but to what extent has this return to China been effectively welcomed by his generation?

These brief paragraphs and approximations of the various aspects of the exhibited works are patchworks — that is, they are a way of creating dialogues that are not inert. Several of the artists invited here can have their works read through these four lines of force. It is an interpretive exercise that encompasses both my curatorial, critical and art historical practice, and especially the formation of my gaze as a public. Images escape from our words; what would we become if they were not greater than our attempts to verbalise them? Just as I learnt from this project that history is not everything, I am more and more sure that words, fortunately, are not everything either.

It is in my iconophily —not only mine, but of many contemporary visual cultures—that I find the desire and strength to continue thinking of new ways to enable ephemeral encounters between artists and images that

unfold histories and stories towards the infinite. Because, as Chimamanda Adichie said in a conference, "every story must be told, and we need many stories about the same places":

*Stories matter. Many stories matter. Stories have been used to dispossess and to malign, but stories can also be used to empower and to humanise. Stories can break the dignity of a people, but stories can also repair that broken dignity. The American writer Alice Walker wrote this about her Southern relatives who had moved to the North. She introduced them to a book about the Southern life that they had left behind. 'They sat around, reading the book themselves, listening to me read the book, and a kind of paradise was regained'. I would like to end with this thought: when we reject a single story, when we realize that there is never a single story about any place, we regain a kind of paradise.<sup>19</sup>*

- 
- 1 "Indeed, in the parliamentary debate of 1857, concerning Chinese immigration, there was a revealing discussion of the impact of cultural constraints on the new population and labour policy. In the lower house, a deputy stated: 'When we sought to smash our civilization from African barbarism, [we are] going to colonize the Empire with the slothful Asian, a slave to routine and superstition.' Responding to the deputy, the Minister of the Empire, Couto Ferraz, the future viscount of Bom Retiro, explains the reasons that, in his view, made the Chinese less compromising: 'Chim does not leave his country, but with the purpose of acquiring some money, to form a small fortune, and always with the fixed idea and with the express condition of returning to their country after three, four or five years ... the government had never had the idea of wanting to increase the Brazilian population by similar way' in ALENCASTRO, Luiz Felipe de & RENAUX, Maria Luiza. "Caras e modos dos migrantes e imigrantes" in Luiz Felipe Alencastro, *História da vida privada no Brasil – Império: a corte e a modernidade nacional* (São Paulo: Companhia das Letras, 1999), p. 296.
  - 2 "First article: It is totally free the entry into the ports of the Republic of individuals who are valid and fit for work, who are not subject to the criminal action of their country, excepted the native of Asia or Africa, who may only be authorized by the admitted in accordance with the conditions then stipulated". National Decree of June 28, 1890. The law was repealed two years later, in 1892.
  - 3 Jeffrey Lesser, *A Discontented Diaspora: Japanese Brazilians and the Meanings of Ethnic Militancy, 1960-1980* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2007).
  - 4 "Anyone who is in charge of writing the History of Brazil, a country that promises so much, should never lose sight of the elements that contributed to the development of man. But these elements are of a very diverse nature, and for the formation of man in particular there are three races, namely: the copper colour or American, the white or Caucasian, and finally the black or Ethiopian. From the encounter, the mixture, the mutual relations and changes of these three races, the present population was formed, whose history therefore has a very particular character. It may be said that each of the human races, according to its innate nature, competes according to the circumstances under which it lives and develops, a characteristic and historical movement. Therefore, seeing us a new people born and developing from the meeting and contact of so different human races, we can advance that its history should develop according to a particular law of the diagonal forces" in VON MARTIUS, Karl Friedrich Philipp. "Como se deve escrever a história do Brasil" in Lília Schwarcz and Adriano Pedrosa, *Histórias mestiças: antologia de textos* (Rio de Janeiro: Cobogó, 2014), p. 75.
  - 5 Karl Friedrich Philipp von Martius, *How one should write the history of Brazil* (1845).

- 6 Due to the research for the X Mercosul Biennial, I travelled in 2015 to Costa Rica, El Salvador and Guatemala (Central America); later I visited Puerto Rico, Cuba, Jamaica and Panama (Caribbean).
- 7 I would like to refer to some of the artists with whom I exchanged emails, visions and portfolios in preparation for this project. Unfortunately, their works could not be included in the exhibition due to scheduling, physical space or even dialogue with other works already selected. In any case, their works deserves reference and attention. Thanks to lumi Kataoka and Maximiliano Matayoshi (Argentina); Ana Tomimori, Luciana Miyuki, Miguel Chikaoka and Yukie Horie (Brazil); Ignacio Wong (Chile); Erika Nakasone (Peru) and Yudi Yudoyoko (Uruguay).
- 8 I am thinking, for example, about the exhibition "Olhar InComum: Japão revisitado" ["UnCommon look: Japan revisited"] curated by Michiko Okano at the Oscar Niemeyer Museum, in Curitiba, Brazil. The show had 21 artists and all of them came from Japanese families. On the other hand, most of their works didn't have relations with any reflection on "Japanese culture" so the only criteria were their genealogy. Pointing to the same direction, we could also highlight recent projects like "Transpacific Borderlands: the Art of Japanese Diaspora in Lima, Los Angeles, Mexico City and São Paulo" at the Japanese American National Museum (2017); "Circles and Circuits: History and the Art of the Chinese Caribbean Diaspora"; part 1 at California African American Museum and part 2 at the Chinese American Museum (2017); and "Relational Undercurrents: Contemporary Art of the Caribbean Archipelago" at the Museum of Latin American Art (2017). All these projects were funded by Getty Foundation and took part in the 2017's edition of Pacific Standard Time.
- 9 I would like to thank Alfredo & Isabel Aquilizan, Alfredo Esquillo, Gaston Damag, Jigger Cruz, Jose Legaspi, Jose Tence Ruiz, Lani Maestro, Martha Atienza, Pow Martinez, Riel Hilario, Stephanie Syjuco, Tatong Torres, Yason Banal (Philippines); Sin Tung Ho (Hong Kong); Bagus Pandega, Eku Nugroho, Handi Wirman Saputra, Hestu Stu Legi, Irwan Ahmett, Jompert Kuswidananto, Jumaldi Alfi, Maharani Mancanagara, Reza Afisina (Indonesia); Alice Kok, Lai Sio Kit, Nick Tai, Peng Yun (Macau); Nge Lay (Myanmar); Lee Wen (Singapore); Tiffany Chung, Tran Luong (Vietnam).
- 10 Milton Osborne, *Southeast Asia: An Introductory History* (Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 2016).
- 11 Cuauhtémoc MEDINA, "Sul, sul, sul, sul..." in Aliocha Imhoff and Kantura Quirós, *Géoeshétique* (Clermont Ferrand: ESCM, 2012), p. 120.
- 12 It is important to remember recent projects that are based in the same geopolitical concept. In Brazil, the biennial Videobrasil is the oldest one dedicated to the topic. Crated in 1983 as a festival, in 1991 it became an association and since then, biennially, it is one of the biggest world events dedicated only to artists from the Global South, receiving artists from all continents. I would like also to quote "South as a state of mind", a Greek magazine that before the opening of the last documenta (2017), dedicated four editions to the art and culture related to the philosophical ideas of "South".
- 13 Albert Camus, *O óbvio e o obtuso* (Rio de Janeiro: Record, 1995), p. 18.
- 14 Miguel A. Hernández-Navarro, *Materializar el pasado – el artista como historiador (benjaminiano)* (Murcia: Editorial Micromegas, 2012).
- 15 Hal Foster, "An Archival Impulse," *October*, Vol. 110 (Autumn, 2004), pp. 3-22.
- 16 Hal Foster, *Recodings: Art, Spectacle, Cultural Politics*, New York: The New Press, 1998. Aby Warburg's concept of pathosformel and its use related to classical Western art can be helpful in this field of interpretation.
- 17 The concept of "microhistory" was much developed by the Italian historian Carlo Ginzburg in books like *The Cheese and the Worms: the Cosmos of Sixteenth Century Miller* published for the first time in 1976.
- 18 Stuart Hall, *Representation: Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices* (Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, 1999).
- 19 Conference by Chimamanda Adichie proffered at the TED Global 2009. This quote comes from the final two minutes of her talk. Chimamanda Adichie, "The Danger of a Single Story", filmed July 2009 at TEDGlobal 2009, [https://www.ted.com/talks/chimamanda\\_adichie\\_the\\_danger\\_of\\_a\\_single\\_story](https://www.ted.com/talks/chimamanda_adichie_the_danger_of_a_single_story).

Published as the catalogue to the exhibition

## **The sun teaches us that history is not everything**

held at Osage Hong Kong, 26 March - 6 May 2018

Editor Raphael Fonseca  
Co-Editor Agnes Lin  
Text Editor Charles Merewether  
Copy Editor Andy Cheng, Belle Leung, Wenjin Wang  
Designer Jun Cambel, Belle Leung for Osage Design  
Photographer Lock Cheung, Tiago Cadete

Essays by Raphael Fonseca, Patrick D. Flores, Linda Lai, Caterina Riva,  
Solange Farkas, Charles Merewether

Artists Featured Jonas Arrabal, Chang Chi Chai, Kent Chan, Eric Fok,  
Miho Hagino & Taro Zorrilla, Fx Harsono, Mimian Hsu,  
Mella Jaarsma, Juliana Kase, Linda Lai, Esvin Alarcón Lam,  
Daniel Lie, Sandra Nakamura, Nguyen Trinh Thi, João Ó,  
Yudi Rafael, Norberto Roldan, Mark Salvatus, Shima,  
Melati Suryodarmo, Shinpei Takeda, Tang Kwok-hin,  
André Terayama, Tromarama, David Zink Yi

Published by

**osage art foundation**

4/F, 20 Hing Yip Street, Kwun Tong  
Kowloon, Hong Kong

📍 [www.oaf.cc](http://www.oaf.cc) | [www.hkact.hk](http://www.hkact.hk) ☎ (852) 2389 8332  
✉ [info@oaf.cc](mailto:info@oaf.cc) 📱 [osagehk](https://www.facebook.com/osagehk) 📷 [osagehongkong](https://www.instagram.com/osagehongkong)

ISBN: 978-988-77281-1-5  
First Edition, 1000 copies  
Printed in Hong Kong May 2019

©2019 by individual contributors unless otherwise stated.  
All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or  
by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without prior written permission from the publisher.  
The publisher does not warrant or assume any legal responsibilities for the publication's contents. All opinions expressed in the book  
are of the authors and do not necessarily reflect those of Osage Art Foundation Ltd.

Supported by

---



Edouard Malingue Gallery  
馬凌畫廊

SILVERLENS



HENRIQUE FARIA FINE ART



osage art foundation