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Malaysia's 10 Best Contemporary Artists and Where to Find Them

Malaysia is a country where a multi-ethnic population coexists, but more often than not, its various ethnicities keep to their own communities. Malaysian artists both explore their own particular origins and examine the socio-political situation of Malaysia as a unified nation. Through a diverse range of practices, the Malaysian contemporary art landscape is one not to be overlooked. Here are ten of its most exciting exponents.



Yee I-Lann, Picturing Power: Wherein one surreptitiously performs reconnaissance to collect views and freeze points of view to be reflective of one's own kind, 2013, Giclée print on Hahnemüle Photo Rag Ultra Smooth Fine Art, 310 gsm 100% cotton rag paper, 63 x 180 cm, Ed. of 8 + 2AP | Courtesy Tyler Rollins Fine Art

Yee I-Lann

Yee I-Lann (b. 1971, Kota Kinabalu, Sabah, Malaysia) is an artist and film production designer. Her practice engages with issues surrounding the turbulent history of the Southeast Asian archipelago, addressing the socio-political impact of current politics, neo-colonialism and globalisation, and speculating on issues of culture, power and the role of historical memory in our social experience. Her photomedia-based work features a multi-layered vocabulary inspired by historical references, popular culture, archives and everyday objects. In her first solo exhibition at Tyler Rollins Fine Art in New York, entitled *Picturing Power* (2014), she presented eight digital collages that referenced the history of photography in relation to the development of colonialism in

Southeast Asia and its contemporary legacy. Mixing colonial era and contemporary images, Yee seems to 'suggest a Malaysian present still dictated by a complicated and unresolved past.' Her photographic installation *The sun will rise in the East and deliver us from this long night* (2012) features neon-coloured Braille-like motifs of embracing couples collected from the Internet. The erased figures, with only their interlocked arms visible, can be read as an attempt to disarm the past.

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By C. A. Xuan Mai Ardia

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