



Documents

The \$100,000 gallery of art

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<p>Project: The \$100,000 gallery of art</p>	<p>Book: Documents</p> 	<p>Title: Frontispiece</p>	<p>Creators: Michael Lee Hong Hwee with Lilian Chee (Editor), Chun Kai Feng (Artist's Assistant), Torrance Goh (Creative Editor), Dr Ho Kok Hoe (Architect), Willie Koh (Project Manager) & Seng Yu Jin (Curator)</p>	<p>Dimensions: 1:2 All dimensions are in millimetres unless otherwise stated.</p>	<p>Date: 23/8/2007</p>	<p>Page: 1/52</p>
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Documents compiles text, image and audio materials related to the book art installation titled *The \$100,000 gallery of art* by Michael Lee Hong Hwee. The texts feature contributions by the artist and his collaborators: publisher Torrance Goh, architect Dr Ho Kok Hoe, curator Seng Yu Jin and editor Lilian Chee. It also includes a letter from art philanthropist Loke Wan Tho to Dr Ho, and is accompanied by key archival material from local newspapers. Images include sketches and photographs of the work-in-progress as well as the completed installation. Audio consists of an interview with Dr Ho on a CD. These text, image and audio materials collectively provide the audiovisual contexts to the artwork.


Project: The \$100,000 gallery of art	Book: Documents 	Title: User's Guide	Creator: N.A.	Dimensions: 1-2 All dimensions are in millimetres unless otherwise stated.	Date: 23/8/2007	Page: 3/52
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Publisher's Introduction

by Torrance Goh

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<p>Project: The \$100,000 gallery of art</p>	<p>Book: Documents</p> 	<p>Title: Chapter Title</p>	<p>Creator: N.A.</p>	<p>Dimensions: 1:2 All dimensions are in millimetres unless otherwise stated.</p>	<p>Date: 23/8/2007</p>	<p>Page: 6/52</p>
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Michael Lee's *The \$100,000 gallery of art* re-examines the book as a three-dimensional spatial object.

The brief for the project was simple yet daunting:

How to make a book that would translate the ways an architectural drawing could be read?

Here, there was an opportunity to explore the materiality of the book as an object with its own consciousness. Hence, the action of flipping a page, the limits of the spine, the thickness of the volume, the flatness of the book, the weight of the cover, the sequencing of content following the conventions of the page, amongst other elements, became paramount to the conception and development of these books.

In this sense, the matter, which makes a book a book, is fundamental to the reading of *The \$100,000 gallery of art*.

These books not only explore form in relation to function,
but also experiment with the conceptual limits and freedom of the book as an object.

That the book has a certain size and needs to be bound neatly is less an obstacle
than an opportunity to rediscover its fullest potential.


Finally, how does one read these books?

While each book re-engages the linearity, sequence and boundaries of the bound volume,
these books cannot be read in a conventional manner because they demand the reader to take stock of the book's dimensions,
weight, transparency, depth, as well as to be conscious of his or her own physical position in relation to the book's,
that is, is one peering downwards, looking across, digging into or glancing beyond the object?

To read *The \$100,000 gallery of art* requires a bodily awareness of reader to book.

And as such, we might say that it approaches, in the manner of Jacques Derrida and Roland Barthes's
definition of an infinite and relational construction, that is, books which open up labyrinthine networks
rather than a mere compilation of architectural drawings.

I wish you an eventful journey.

Project: The \$100,000 gallery of art	Book: Documents 	Title: Publisher's Introduction	Creator: Torrance Goh	Dimensions: 1-2 All dimensions are in millimetres unless otherwise stated.	Date: 23/8/2007	Page: 7/52
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That \$10,000 gift wins approval of the art patrons

SINGAPORE art patrons yesterday hailed the Finance Committee's vote of \$10,000 to establish a collection in a proposed art gallery in Raffles Museum as "a beginning—but a very small one."

Here are some comments:

MR. TONY BEAMISH: "With \$10,000 one could buy a few worthwhile paintings, but they are going to look rather lonely in an art gallery."

"That sum might buy one or two classical Indian or Siamese pictures and, perhaps, an old Chinese scroll."

"If it was decided to buy modern work, there are some quite good Indian and local artists, and the \$10,000 might stretch to 25 paintings."

"If it is to be a gallery of Far Eastern art, I certainly think Chinese porcelain should be included and it is nothing to pay \$2,000 for one good piece."

"Private collectors might donate some of their treasures, but they are not going to give away their best pieces."

MR. HO KOK HOE chairman of the Singapore Art Society: "This \$10,000 won't go far but we must be thankful to

the Government for offering us even this much for a start."

"It would be better to spend the money on a few really good works of art than to buy mediocre stuff that would have to be scrapped later."

"The selection committee appointed to spend the money should be a small one composed of well-known artists and art connoisseurs."

"As the gallery grows it should include Western as well as Eastern art and other forms of Eastern art besides paintings."

MR. LOKE WAN THO: "It is a good thing that a start is to be made—every big city has its art gallery."

"I think it would be best to start the gallery with a small collection of local works of art. There are several fine artists in Malaya, one in particular."

"The highest price for a single painting might be \$2,000 but there are some good paintings to be bought for between \$400 and \$500."

"An appeal to Singapore art lovers would probably produce some worthwhile donations from private collections."

Project: The \$100,000 gallery of art	Book: Documents	Title: That \$10,000 gift wins approval of the art patrons	Creator: The Straits Times © Singapore Press Holdings	Dimensions: 1:2 All dimensions are in millimetres unless otherwise stated.	Date: 13/8/1954	Page: 8/52
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新加坡美術協會兩大計劃 特設獎學金 · 開辦美術館


新加坡美術協會，昨夜八時假座英國文化協會召開第一屆會員大會，主席何國壽氏起立致詞，報告該會之工作進展以及未來之目標。

何氏首謂：本會成立以來，雖則為時已有五年，但此次却第一次舉行會議，本晚各人聚集一堂，乃足以作為本會會務發展之佐証，本會現正逐漸滋長，深信在新組織下，來年之會員人數將再增加。在舊有組織下，本會之宗旨是促進新加坡之美術，并規定六項主要活動。惟吾人之新組織則有更高之目標，除履行過往五年之計劃，以及本年開始之新發展外，尚有數項新目標。

本會為鼓勵及發展青年人之美術天才起見，現擬設辦一獎學金，資送此輩青年往海外深造，希望此計劃，得到本坡熱心家之資助。

此外，吾人亟需設立一間美術館，此種設施，不但可以陳列美術家之傑作，同時亦可藉此舉行美術展覽會，以及作為傳授美術之永久地點。

何氏最後呼籲會員，共同為該會努力，以期實現一切新企望，并對會員之協作，申致謝忱。


<p>Project: The \$100,000 gallery of art</p>	<p>Book: Documents</p> 	<p>Title: Singapore Art Society's two major plans: Set up scholarship and open an art gallery</p>	<p>Creator: Nanyang Siang Pau © Singapore Press Holdings</p>	<p>Dimensions: 1:2 All dimensions are in millimetres unless otherwise stated.</p>	<p>Date: 8/12/1954</p>	<p>Page: 9/52</p>
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Curator's Note

by Seng Yu Jin

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<p>Project: The \$100,000 gallery of art</p>	<p>Book: Documents</p> 	<p>Title: Chapter Title</p>	<p>Creator: N.A.</p>	<p>Dimensions: 1:2 All dimensions are in millimetres unless otherwise stated.</p>	<p>Date: 23/8/2007</p>	<p>Page: 10/52</p>
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Michael Lee's installation, *The \$100,000 gallery of art* employs the genre of 'Artist Book' (Book Art is another term often used but the nuanced distinctions between the two terms will not be discussed here) to interrogate the architectural and art histories of Singapore by responding to the unrealised aspirations of building a Singapore Art Gallery in 1958. The idea to build an art gallery was first mooted by art philanthropist Loke Wan Tho, who was in discussions to secure the land on which the art gallery would be built. Loke subsequently approached Dr Ho Kok Hoe, then President of the Singapore Art Society and also a trained architect, to design the gallery.

This Artist Book installation is conceived as part of the exhibition, *From Words to Pictures: Art During the Emergency*, which aims to challenge audiences to think about how the Malayan Emergency (1948 – 1960) shaped, and was in turn, shaped by artistic activities and practices in Singapore. I will briefly outline how *The \$100,000 gallery of art* correlates with this exhibition in three related modes, that is, conceptually, spatially, and in terms of art history.

The curatorial concept of *From Words to Pictures* explores artists-led initiatives during the Emergency. The unrealised aspiration to build an art gallery was one such artists' initiative whereby records of its existence reside only in the memories of those involved and in historical documents such as newspaper articles. As pointed out by Michael Lee, 'Since its independence, Singapore has focused its energy on industrialisation, and providing employment, education and housing all round'. Culture comes after other more urgent national priorities. This condition has been concretised in official narratives of Singapore's history and forms a cornerstone ideology of the People's Action Party.


The \$100,000 gallery of art brings to life a significant initiative to build an art institution for artists, by artists, in 1958 amidst uncertain times. It prompts us to ask what would have happened if the Singapore Art Gallery had been realised. Can artists run a national art gallery (the Singapore Art Gallery would have functioned as an artist-run space if realised)? And more importantly, whom does an art gallery address? These are pertinent questions in the impending realisation of the National Art Gallery at the Supreme Court and City Hall buildings in 2012.

Spatially, *The \$100,000 gallery of art* relates to the installation of printed output produced during the Emergency. The Emergency was a period marked by unprecedented intellectual, artistic and ideological tensions and aspirations, which were embodied in a wide range of printed and broadcast output such as books, leaflets, posters, magazines, government reports and newspapers. The profusion of mass media containing texts and images related to the Emergency function as vessels of information and records of our histories, some of which are reproduced, displayed and made accessible to audiences in the exhibition.

In itself, *The \$100,000 gallery of art* as a documentation project is charged with social, political and cultural potency, as well as a concern for site specificity as it relates to the proliferation of printed materials of the Emergency. It also engages in a collision, contestation and fusion of texts, images, sounds and discourses of the Emergency created in this imagined but unbuild space.

An encounter between the Artist Book and printed material forces us to consider the making of books in the artistic context as a mutable art form, which directly involves the audience in its reception and its meanings. Book making is a complex process possibly involving various relationships between artists, editors, publishers and curators, with the book form itself acting as a site of creativity and imagination. From the earlier book forms of William Blake who integrated visual and written work at the turn of the nineteenth century to the *livre d'artiste* book format of original prints by artists such as Picasso, published by Ambroise Vollard, the genre of Artist Book in the late twentieth century has stretched and subverted conventions of book making.

The \$100,000 gallery of art breaks from conventional book forms by creating imagined architectural spaces within a book using primarily the pop-up book technique. The use of the codex format suggests oppositional forces of containment and release. The ideas, histories and aspirations of those involved in the Singapore Art Gallery project are potentially released by the sensitive reader, who can choose to open the book, and henceforth, experience the tactile unfolding of intellectual, emotional and physical simultaneously. Finally, in the age of digitisation, *The \$100,000 gallery of art* reaffirms the value of the book as an object worthy of attention, collection and affection.

<p>Project: The \$100,000 gallery of art</p>	<p>Book: Documents</p> 	<p>Title: Curator's Note</p>	<p>Creator: Seng Yu Jin</p>	<p>Dimensions: 1-2 All dimensions are in millimetres unless otherwise stated.</p>	<p>Date: 23/8/2007</p>	<p>Page: 11/52</p>
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新加坡藝術協會

正籌建永久性藝術館

希望在實丹卜律附近覓一館址

會長何國豪親自設計建築藍圖

新加坡藝術協會現正採取步驟，計劃在本坡設立一個永久性之藝術館，其中包括藝術學校應用之實習室，(目前設於英國文化協會)協會職員辦公室，以及建築學會。據該協會會長何國豪氏昨日稱：一俟計劃完成，將呼籲公眾人士予以支持，何氏更盼羅首席部長予以支持。何氏更稱：該協會希望一段位於實丹卜律，勿拉新峇沙律及滑鐵盧街間之土地，因地點極為理想，渠本人現正設計建築之藍圖，並將組織一委員會負起推進此項計劃之各種任務，包括籌募基金，以及向政府申請建築之土地等。在此項建議於去年四月間，已由何氏首次提出。

Project:
The \$100,000 gallery of art

Book:
Documents



Title:
Singapore Art Society raising money for a permanent art gallery

Creator:
Nanyang Siang Pau
© Singapore Press Holdings

Dimensions:
1:2
All dimensions are in millimetres unless otherwise stated.

Date:
3/1/1957

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12/52

It's an offer unsurpassed in Malaya's history, says Mr. Ho

Singapore to get own national art gallery soon

SINGAPORE is to have its own national art gallery.

In an exclusive Free Press interview before he left for India and the U.S. yesterday, cinema magnate Mr. Loke Wan Tho said that with the co-operation of an anonymous Colony philanthropist he would go ahead with the plans when he returned in a few weeks.

"I shall match funds, dollar for dollar with this donor, whatever the cost of

the building," said Mr. Loke.

Mr. Ho Kok Hoe, president of the Singapore Art Society, later said: "This magnanimous offer not only to Singapore but to the nation as a whole is unsurpassed in Malaya's history."

Mr. Ho and Mr.

By Adelaide Eastley

Frank Sullivan, vice-president of the society, told the Free Press: "There will be an urgent meeting of the society tomorrow night to make plans for a fitting celebration."

This will probably take the form of a week's art exhibition,

highlighted by a reception on the opening night at the Adelphi Hotel during the first week of December.

Invitations to the opening night will be sent to Singapore Government officials and VIPs and to Federation representatives including the



Mr. HO KOK HOE . . . "a milestone of which we are proud."

Yang di-Pertuan Besar, Tengku Abdul Rahman and the Rulers.

Project:
The \$100,000 gallery of art

Book:
Documents



Title:
Singapore to get own national art gallery soon

Creator:
Singapore Free Press
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Dimensions:
1:2
All dimensions are in millimetres unless otherwise stated.

Date:
6/11/1957

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Between a Book and a Building:
On the Unbuilt Singapore Art Gallery (1958)
by Michael Lee Hong Hwee

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Project: The \$100,000 gallery of art	Book: Documents 	Title: Chapter Title	Creator: N.A.	Dimensions: 1:2 All dimensions are in millimetres unless otherwise stated.	Date: 23/8/2007	Page: 14/52
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Among buildings conceived across culture and history, the most poetic must be those deemed useless, whether by wear and tear or by not having been built at all. Architectural ruins and fantasies alike belie the human longing for a better or different world from that which physically exists. For Robert Harbison, such 'uselessness is the most sublime of all human constructs, and art fulfills itself in floating miles above every desperate human involvement'.¹ Like poems bearing no practical and immediate function, buildings as such are concentrations of realities dreamt up by a select few, desired for a few precious and intense moments, and deserted by most for their lack of an imaginable use.

In 1957, Dr Ho Kok Hoe, then a practising architect and also the president of Singapore Art Society, was tasked to make the first sketch for a proposed Singapore Art Gallery. When this sketch was finally released through the media in 1958, Dr Ho's proposed three-storey rectilinear slab block was much anticipated by the local art community. Originally to be located along Penang Road near the Presbyterian Church, it was to be Singapore's first purpose-built space for archiving, exhibiting and promoting masterpieces by local and regional artists. However from the late 1950s through to the 1970s, such anticipation had no chance of being fulfilled as attention was averted to more exigent matters in Singapore's post-war years: self-governance from 1959, membership into Malaysia in 1963, expulsion from it and consequently, independence in 1965, to name but a few pressing concerns. Since its independence, Singapore has focused its energy on industrialisation, and providing employment, education and housing all round. The nascent Singapore Art Gallery, a matter of more cultural than economic significance, understandably remained on paper.

The \$100,000 gallery of art was the headline of a news article published by the local leading broadsheet, *The Straits Times*, on 30 September 1958² to announce Dr Ho's design of a proposed Singapore Art Gallery. I have adopted it as the title of my own installation, with the aim of engaging this scarcely known aspect of Singapore's art and architectural histories. The artwork comprises a series of books containing stencils, cutouts, folded and pop-up architectural models of the unbuilt Singapore Art Gallery. It is also an attempt to engage the marginal practices of architectural model making and book making in a contemporary art context.

On initial thought, the scale model as a miniature form of an architectural idea seems to be the purview of a designer rather than an artist. However, because the model serves as an important agent in 'defining a culture's universe',³ it has ramifications in

broader culture and history, including in fine art practice. Artists from way back such as Michelangelo and Tatlin and contemporary ones like Vito Acconci, Daniel Buren, Thomas Demand and Nathan Coley use architectural models as a means of making observations and statements about space, power and play. In the current project, I endeavour to apply architectural model making techniques not only to represent Dr Ho's proposed design in a three-dimensional form, that is, not just to physically realise his unfulfilled dream, but also to explore ways that the model can be creatively re-investigated alongside the book. I strive to do this by blurring boundaries between an architectural model and a book.

The book is both a mechanical and poetic artifact of human civilisation. A carrier and disseminator of information, the book promotes and produces the development of ideas about human endeavours. With its form and material, a book is equally subject to poetic contemplation and formal transformation. If it were true, as Symbolist poet Stéphane Mallarmé argues, that '[e]verything in the world exists to end up in a book',⁴ I wish to explore if the architectural model as a miniaturised representation of the mother of all arts, can be problematised as an object whilst being contained within the book form.

A book is conventionally regarded to comprise a front and a back cover with pages in between, bound on one side called the spine. But books exist beyond the spine-bound and rectilinear form. The Chinese scroll book, in which pages are rolled up or gatefolded, is a fine example. One of the most amazing challenges to the traditional book form is the pop-up book, whereby three-dimensional forms spring up from between pages to create sculptural surprises not unlike that of a Jack-in-the-Box. My project aims to engage both the pop-up book technique⁵ and the discourse of the architectural model, through a kind of artistic case study of the unbuilt Singapore Art Gallery.

Two aspects of the creative strategy are paramount. The work is to be an oblique response to, rather than a literal representation of, the architect's design ideas; and it critically questions the boundaries between the book and the architectural scale model. In the artwork's conception and development, it is the architect's unbuilt ideas which provide fertile ground for contemporary reflection and experimentation.

When interviewed, Dr Ho recalls his vision for a three-storey building of simple modernist design so as to highlight rather than draw attention from the art. He planned

the first level as a car-park, the second level for temporary exhibitions, the third level for a gallery showcasing the permanent collection and a research library, and the rooftop for Singapore Art Society's evening painting classes. On one side of the building, he dedicated a triple-volume space for large sculptures and ceramics.

In addition to the overall architectural programming of the space, he also shared his ideas for interior finishes and fittings. For example, to address the shortage of space, he thought of having vertical poles on which paintings could be creatively installed, not unlike directional signs on a street pole, thus, serving the dual purpose of storage and display. Interestingly, he derived the idea from how pages are flipped in a book. The other space-saving idea was a collapsible filing cabinet-like display system, which could be hidden from view. Flexibility was a primary concern, and one of its manifestations in his design ideas is the use of movable partitions rather than fixed walls for displaying two-dimensional works. Another problem he envisioned was the transportation of large works across the different floors. For this, he planned to design slots within the gallery's floors, creating gaps through which paintings could be hoisted up from ground level to the higher floors for storage or display purposes.

No one can be certain if the ideas Dr Ho shared during the interview were conceived when he made the first sketch of the proposed Gallery in 1958, or if they were ultimately adapted from observations and ideas afterwards. This uncertainty leaves room for creative interpretation and intervention on the part of this work. The strategy will be to creatively develop Dr Ho's initial design ideas, and whenever a choice of alternatives arises, the artwork strives to uphold his creative spirit more so than his specific ideas and forms.


The artwork seeks a third term beyond the book and the scale model, a 'creature' that may not yet have a name. It consists of four books that make up the book installation, *The \$100,000 gallery of art*, as well as a documentation volume on the project. Book One or *Texts*, compiles essays by the curator, editor and myself on the project, along with an edited interview with the architect. Book Two or *Plans*, gives a bird's eye view of the Gallery, and by flipping its pages, one progressively gets deeper into the space of the proposed building. Book Three or *Perspectives*, comprises page after page of a virtual

fly-through into the interiors of the proposed Gallery. When flipped open, Book Four or *Assemblages*, spews a collection of paper-folded and paper-cut ideas related to the gallery's interior furnishing, fittings and fixtures. Finally, *Documents*, the book you now hold, compiles writings, visual documentation, archival materials and an audio CD related to the project.

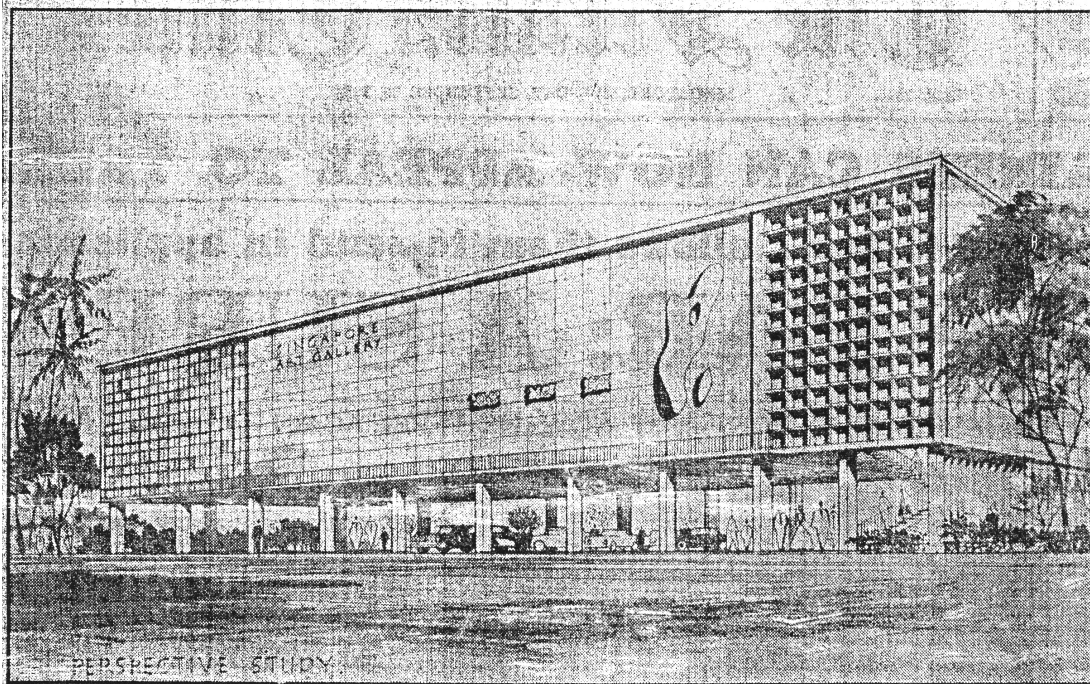
On its own, each book will provide a specific means to perceive the proposed building. Read together, they offer complementary viewpoints to engage this imagined space, taking into consideration aspects of the hermeneutic, the visual and the tactile.

Notes:

- ¹ Robert Harbison, *The Built, the Unbuilt and the Unbuildable* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1991), p.8.
- ² 10 other press articles, with this article are included in the present volume. Other related press articles include: 'Art Society pays tribute to Council', *Singapore Tiger Standard*, 2/10/1957; 'Art Gallery in Hotel', *Singapore Tiger Standard*, 9/12/1957; '\$100-A-Day (Quick-Quiz) Contest Resule', *Singapore Tiger Standard*, 27/8/1954, and 'Singapore plans a \$100,000 art gallery', *Singapore Tiger Standard*, 30/9/1956.
- ³ Albert C. Smith, *Architectural Model as Machine: A New View of Models from Antiquity to the Present Day* (Oxford: Elsevier, 2004), p.1.
- ⁴ Stéphane Mallarmé, 'Variations sur un Sujet.' I.- L'Action, in *La Revue Blanche* (Paris: 1er février, 1895), pp.97-101.
- ⁵ In crafting the work, I have referred to, and been inspired by, two key texts on the making of pop-up books: David A. Carter and James Diaz, *The Elements of Pop-Up* (New York: Little Simon, 1999); and Miyuki Yoshida, *Paper Folding for Pop-Up* (Tokyo: PIE Books, 2006).

<p>Project: The \$100,000 gallery of art</p>	<p>Book: Documents</p> 	<p>Title: The \$100,000 gallery of art: On the Unbuilt Singapore Art Gallery (1958)</p>	<p>Creators: Michael Lee Hong Hwee</p>	<p>Dimensions: 1:2 All dimensions are in millimetres unless otherwise stated.</p>	<p>Date: 23/8/2007</p> <p>Page: 16/52</p>
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The \$100,000 gallery of art



THE BUILDING of a permanent art gallery in Singapore was taken a step nearer yesterday with the completion of drawings for a three-storey building, estimated to cost \$100,000. The drawings and design are by Mr. Ho Kok Hoe, a City Councillor and president of the Singapore Art Society, who had offered to do the work without charge.

Mr. Ho showed the design for the proposed gallery to his society when it met yesterday for the annual meeting.

The building is to be financed by a \$75,000 trust fund set up in 1917 with the object of building a public hall. Mr. Loke Wan Tho has also promised \$25,000 to the building fund, besides giving his valuable collection of contemporary Eastern paintings and photographs to the gallery.

The proposed site of the new building is a vacant plot in Penang Road within a stone's throw of the Presbyterian Church.

According to Mr. Ho's plan, the first floor of the gallery with 5,600 sq. feet of exhibition space, will be used for permanent exhibits and the second floor for shows by visiting artists.

British Council administrative offices will also be on the first floor. The ground floor will be a car park. The design allows for future development and expansion of the exhibition area.

Above is an artist's impression of the art gallery.

Project:
The \$100,000 gallery of art

Book:
Documents



Title:
The \$100,000 gallery of art

Creator:
The Straits Times
© Singapore Press Holdings

Dimensions:
1:2
All dimensions are in millimetres unless otherwise stated.

Date:
30/9/1958


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Divine Library: Building an Unseen Monument

by Lilian Chee

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<p>Project: The \$100,000 gallery of art</p>	<p>Book: Documents</p> 	<p>Title: Chapter Title</p>	<p>Creator: N.A.</p>	<p>Dimensions: 1:2 All dimensions are in millimetres unless otherwise stated.</p>	<p>Date: 23/8/2007</p>	<p>Page: 18/52</p>
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An email arrives with an attachment. He sends us an image of the building. It is the only one that survives. It arrives as a grainy scanned sketch from an old newspaper. There is a rectangular box elevated on columns, with a mural in the centre. The paper promised a monument worth a hundred thousand dollars, which was never made. He dreams of resurrecting the box, 49 years after it vanished, buried like a ruin in a forgotten paper archive. He systematically investigates. He talks to the architect. He is looking for answers.

Paradoxically, the more persistently he digs, the less he finds. So he starts folding, cutting, creasing and slicing paper. This is not a mindless activity. He visits bookshop after bookshop in search of techniques. He stays for a long time in the children's books section. Parts of the building start to appear in paper fragments. Their fragile carcasses lie precariously on tables. Some are pinned on walls. In the meantime, the singular image of the building acquires more weight than its original role as historical evidence. It turns into a talisman. In the next three weeks, we all stay transfixed on the image. He complains of backaches and does not sleep well.

It must, we imagine, occupy his dreams.

With the rise of the book as an object in its own right, nineteenth-century French novelist Victor Hugo forewarned that 'This would kill that', meaning that the book would threaten the stronghold of the building as a primary medium of experience and meaning. Hugo's premonition could not have been more prescient especially in the realm of unbuilt architecture, whose afterlife is guaranteed only insofar as it is properly preserved on the page.

Yet, paper architecture is no bad thing. Architects from Vitruvius to Le Corbusier and Rem Koolhaas have implicitly acknowledged the pulling power of the book as a corollary medium to the building. Books have also tended to outlast buildings. While operating at vastly incommensurate scales and emphasising different materialities, the building and the book nevertheless share a common desire to communicate emotion and poetry through an immersive experience, one which may be described simply, if not summarily, as enabling us to 'enter' another world. This mode of entry is however highly differentiated given that the realm of the building coheres more closely with a physical and tangible reality, while the book operates loosely through allusions, associations, imagery and imagination.

Michael Lee's *The \$100,000 gallery of art* is situated at the threshold of these two experiential dimensions. Taking Singapore architect, past city councillor and past president of the Singapore Art Society Dr Ho Kok Hoe's 1958 unbuilt sketch for the Singapore Art Gallery as its seed, Lee constructs three sets of architecturally inspired models, each

encased in an identical book format. *Plans* is based on imagined architectural plans of the gallery, *Perspectives* reflects one-point perspective views of the building's key spaces, and *Assemblages* contains a mélange of the gallery's structural framework with the interior contents spilling out of the book's tidy A4 boundaries, recalling the all-time favourite pop-up book. Lee's books explore the experiential and visual mileage of the architectural model whilst keeping this three-dimensional artifact firmly within the conventions of the bound copy.

'The construction of a model, therefore, was for him a miracle of equilibrium between principles (left in shadow) and experience (elusive), but the result should be more substantial than either'.¹

In themselves, the architectural model and the book are powerful objects, which function equally through metaphorical and metonymical means as they do in their literal forms. Albert C. Smith argues that the architectural model carries the propensity of a 'divining mechanism', that is, the model can be used 'to foretell through inspiration, intuition and reflection' what is still unseen.² Etymologically, the word 'model' may also be associated with the French word *maquette*, which means a kind of demonstration. Significantly, 'the word "demonstrate"', Smith reiterates, 'comes from the Latin *monstrum*, and means to divine, portend or warn. ... [and] allows a certain prophetic indication of meaning through marvel, prodigy and wonder'.³

The architectural model is also never a mere representation of the real but a barely imaginable ideal with a life of its own, in a sense, a utopia constructed. As architect Michael Graves succinctly declares, 'Once we have modeled or represented an idea, that representation, the object made, begins to have a life of its own, somewhat separate or beyond our original conception'.⁴ In striving to point towards an idealised and still invisible condition, the model is essentially, that is, necessarily, always incomplete:

... the space of the model lies on the border between representation and actuality. Like the frame of a painting, it demarcates a limit between the work and what lies beyond. And like the frame, the model is neither wholly inside nor wholly outside, neither pure representation nor transcendent object. It claims a certain autonomous object hood, yet this condition is always incomplete. The model is always a model of.⁵

While envisioning a size, which far exceeds its physical form, the richness of the model lies precisely in its minute scale. Mark Morris observes that the model captures our 'precondition' to relate to and understand miniature objects given that this skill was developed since childhood.⁶ The miniature creates an illusion of control or alienation (recall Gulliver with the Lilliputians or Alice after she ate the cake). It 'presents a diminutive, and thereby manipulatable, version of experience, a version which is domesticated and protected from contamination'.⁷ The experience of a miniature is also enriched by what Susan Stewart astutely observes to be firstly, a rare insight into the slippery notion of time, '... an accumulation of transformations made in time; the laboriously handmade object results in a representation of *temporal* magnitude'.⁸ And secondly, the miniature restores a fleeting intimacy between consumer and maker:

... the miniature historically has emphasised a particular configuration of subjectivity: first-person experience; single-point perspective; spatial extension from the individual perceiving viewer; interiority and domesticity in opposition to ... the monumental; the diminutive, the childlike, the pastoral, and the picturesque as 'alternative' or alienated views.⁹

More poignantly, the smallness of an object emphasises the frailty of the human condition, and honours a period in one's life when greatness and elegance could still be grasped through things, which were comparatively simple and ephemeral.

'... it is worth remembering how very strange a thing a book actually is'.¹⁰

Books are not only used for reading. As Alec Finlay convincingly argues, 'a new proprioception of the book' has emerged, that is to say, our relationship to books and how they are used has evolved given that books are valued 'not only in reading but in the reassuring and inspiring presence that they have'.¹¹ In her sophisticated discourse on the miniature, Stewart includes the book as part of an exclusive inventory of physically small yet psychologically immense objects. The book, according to Stewart, has a metaphorical structure, 'The metaphors of the book are metaphors of containment, of exteriority and interiority, of surface and depth, of covering and exposure, of taking apart and putting together'.¹² In Stewart's description, the book is explored in its own right as a space, which can be occupied.

Similarly, Gérard Genette suggests that one's ability to read a book hinges on the book's formal conventions or what he calls 'paratext', that is, the banal materiality of often taken-for-granted elements such as 'the title, the frontispiece, the author's name, the publisher's colophon, the binding, format or dimension, the fact of a bookmark, etc.'.¹³ Genette observes that the 'paratext' is actually a 'dthreshold' or a 'vestibule', which offers the reader 'the possibility of stepping inside or turning back', and thus, may be also seen as 'a zone between text and off-text, a zone not only of transition but also of transaction'.¹⁴ Thus, books, in the sense of their unique objecthood and in their capacity to transport the reader to somewhere else, may be also seen as spatially orientated objects. Consequently, the confluence of the architectural model and the book, as we find here in the case of Lee's *The \$100,000 gallery of art*, produces an uncanny third space, which is at once alluring in its familiarity of forms, yet also demanding in this hybrid object's foreignness.

Lee's book-models are meant to be tactile, intimate and wondrous. They are miniatures of a utopian moment. They seek out the lone reader. They strive to materialise the unseen monument. While emphasising the labour and ephemerality of the handcut and handmade, Lee's technique is significantly modelled after architectural drawing conventions, albeit by transposing hermetic architectural drawing codifications into more tangible forms. For example, in *Plans*, the strategy is to cut through voids, literally hollowing out the page while simultaneously using the thickness of the book to burrow, as it were, into the vertical depths of the imagined building. Similarly, each page of *Perspectives* captures a void, which initially appears on its own like a misplaced hole but effectively represents a discrete space contained within one's single frame of vision as one journeys through the gallery. Consequently, only when the pages of *Perspectives* are turned do the fragmented voids merge to form a legible space: a room, a corridor, a doorway takes shape as the book-model is read.

Assemblages explores the architectural section, which technically means a 'cut' through the building. Here, Lee's desire to manifest the 'magical' takes hold. The genre of the pop-up book is an inverse of the experiences provided by the other two books, which respectively demonstrate space as a quantity to be excavated or an element, which envelops. A 'cut' through the building unfurls its unpredictable contents, which promptly spill out of the neat box frame structure, and subsequently also outside the formal boundaries of the bound book. Unless disciplined under the covers of the book, the section is a slice through the box, which demonstrates the excessive and alchemical assembly of hidden forms, furtive movement and secret desires. By literally opening the book, the reader liberates the section of the gallery, that is, its innermost potential, a dream space vast and familiar in the

manner of childhood afternoons spent with magnificent castles, beautiful maidens and monstrous creatures, all summoned or dismissed by the flip of a page.


Beyond the pleasure of the page, the book and the model all rolled into one, the three model-books and an accompanying volume of texts (compiling a list of historical documents and a transcribed interview with the architect of the gallery) serves an archival function. They open a cultural window into a historical event, which has largely been forgotten. The reading of these model-books bring to life the makers, in this instance, both Ho the architect and Lee the artist, in almost equal collaboration, and thus cast, on a larger scale, architecture and art as rich interdisciplinary counterpoints. Most importantly, the book-models give us, its readers, a way into the Singapore Art Gallery, from which we are at liberty to proceed or detour, accept or contest. Here is a threshold space, which we can inhabit alone in private, or collectively in reverie.

Recalling that the model is a divining mechanism, which can inspire and reveal the invisible, then, we may perceive these books as to form a divine library, that simultaneously portends, unearths, remembers and mourns a monument, which never would be.

*'I never... searched for nests... never looked for plants or threw stones at birds. But books were my birds and nests, my pets, my stable and my countryside; the library was the world trapped in a mirror; it had its infinite breadth, its variety and unpredictability...'*¹⁵

Notes:

- ¹ Italo Calvino, 'The model of models', in *Mr Palomar*, trans. William Weaver (London: Minerva, 1994), pp.97-100; here p.98.
- ² Albert C. Smith, 'Define/Divine/Design', in *Architectural Model as Machine: A New View of Models from Antiquity to the Present Day* (Oxford: Architectural Press, 2004), pp.1-37; here p.2.
- ³ Smith, 'Define/Divine/Design', p.2.
- ⁴ Michael Graves, 'The Wagen House and the Crooks House', in Kenneth Frampton and Silvia Kolbowski (eds.), *Idea as Model* (New York: Rizzoli, 1981), p.38 [catalogue for architectural model exhibition in New York (1977), curated by Peter Eisenman]. See also Karen Moon, *Modeling Messages: The Architect and the Model* (New York: Monacelli Press, 2005), pp.11-32; Marian Macken, 'Supermodels', review of an exhibition of *Supermodels: An Exhibition of Space and Form of Architectural Models* at St Margaret's Complex, Sydney (2006), curated by Sam Marshall <http://www.archmedia.com.au/aa/aissue.php?issueid=200611&article=4&typeon=1> (accessed on 19 July 2007); Mark Morris, *Architecture and the Miniature* (West Sussex: Wiley Academy, 2006), pp.117-8.
- ⁵ Christian Hubert, 'The Ruins of Representation' (1981), original essay in exhibition catalogue for *Idea as Model*, republished online <http://www.christianhubert.com/writings/index.htm> (accessed 19 July 2007).
- ⁶ Morris, *Architecture and the Miniature*, p.117.
- ⁷ Susan Stewart, 'The Miniature', in *On Longing: Narratives of the Miniature, the Gigantic, the Souvenir, the Collection* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1999), pp.37-69; here p.69.
- ⁸ Susan Stewart, 'On the Threshold of the Visible', in *The Open Studio: Essays on Art and Aesthetics* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2005), pp.159-65; here p.162.
- ⁹ Stewart, 'On the Threshold of the Visible', p.164.
- ¹⁰ Shepherd Steiner and Rodney Graham, 'Book Things', in Alec Finlay (ed.), *The Libraries of Thought and Imagination: An Anthology of Books and Bookshelves* (Edinburgh: Pocket Books, 2001), pp.155-9, here p.158.
- ¹¹ Alec Finlay, 'And so books entered our lives...', in Finlay (ed.), *The Libraries of Thought and Imagination*, pp.13-20, here p.15.
- ¹² Stewart, 'The Miniature', p.37.
- ¹³ Steiner and Graham, 'Book Things', p.157.
- ¹⁴ Gérard Genette cited by Steiner and Graham, 'Book Things', p.157.
- ¹⁵ From Jean-Paul Sartre, *Les Mots*, cited by Finlay, 'And so books entered our lives...', p.13.

<p>Project: The \$100,000 gallery of art</p>	<p>Book: Documents</p> 	<p>Title: Divine Library: Building an Unseen Monument</p>	<p>Creator: Dr Lillian Chee</p>	<p>Dimensions: 1-2 All dimensions are in millimetres unless otherwise stated.</p>	<p>Date: 23/8/2007</p>	<p>Page: 21/52</p>
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Govt. backs art gallery idea

BUT NO MONEY TO CARRY OUT PROJECT NOW, SAYS MINISTER

By Free Press Staff Reporter

THE Minister for Culture, Mr. S. Rajaratnam, yesterday gave his blessing to the proposal for a public art gallery in Singapore, but doubted the Government could launch the project immediately because of financial stringency.

He told the Free Press: "The idea is good, but we must consider the Government's financial position. I am not prepared to say anything more until I have studied the suggestion further."

The Minister said the suggestion made by Mr. Loke Wan Tho, the cinema magnate, that the Government should buy works by Malayan artists and hang them up in public buildings was also being considered.

Contributions

When told of the Minister's approval of the proposal for a public gallery, patrons of art in Singapore said that it might not be necessary for the Government to foot the whole bill.

If the Government sponsored the project, many people in the State would be glad to contribute towards the cost.

They emphasised, however, that the lead must come from the Government.

The Government is also understood to be considering a suggestion that it build open air theatres or performing stages in King George V Park and the Botanic Gardens.

Supporters of the idea said the various communities were carrying on various cultural activities. It was not always that one section knew what the others were doing.

Patronage

If the various cultural groups put up performances in the proposed open-air theatres or platforms, all sections of the public could see for themselves and benefit from the shows.

Official patronage would bring these cultural groups together in a big cultural advance for Singapore.

FOOTNOTE: The suggestion to build an art gallery was first made in 1918. There is a trust fund of \$75,000. Mr. Loke Wan Tho has promised a further \$25,000.

Project: The \$100,000 gallery of art	Book: Documents	Title: Govt. backs art gallery idea	Creator: Singapore Free Press © Singapore Press Holdings	Dimensions: 1:2 All dimensions are in millimetres unless otherwise stated.	Date: 11/5/1959	Page: 22/52
						

And still no Art Gallery

IN March 1918 the Government of the time appointed a committee to draw up plans to commemorate the forthcoming Centenary of Singapore.

One of the suggestions put forward by that committee was that there should be an **Art Gallery.**

That was forty-one years ago, and Singapore is still without its Art Gallery despite the fact that the need for one has been stressed time and time again.



We have a Singapore Arts Society; we have a number of brilliant artists, and we have a multitude of art lovers. It is incredible that in a city such as ours we have no gallery where works of arts can be exhibited to the public.

Starting on Friday next week the Arts Society is staging a series of one man exhibitions which will be held in the Hollywood Room of the Odjon Theatre.

Mr. Ho Kok Hoe, the president of the Singapore Arts Society, has made the point that with the rapid growth of the population and the ample existence of talent the need for an art gallery is **more pressing than ever.**



There is a trust fund which holds \$75,000 for this particular project and Mr. Loke Wan Tho has promised a further **\$25,000.** These figures alone give a clear indication of the desire for such a building.

It is perhaps a little early for our newly-elected Government to interest itself in this matter but this is a facet of culture which cannot be ignored.


The demand is there and Mr. Ho Kok Hoe and his associates should be given every encouragement and every art lover should play his part to ensure that the plan to provide an art gallery does not suffer the same fate as that plan envisaged in **March 1918.**

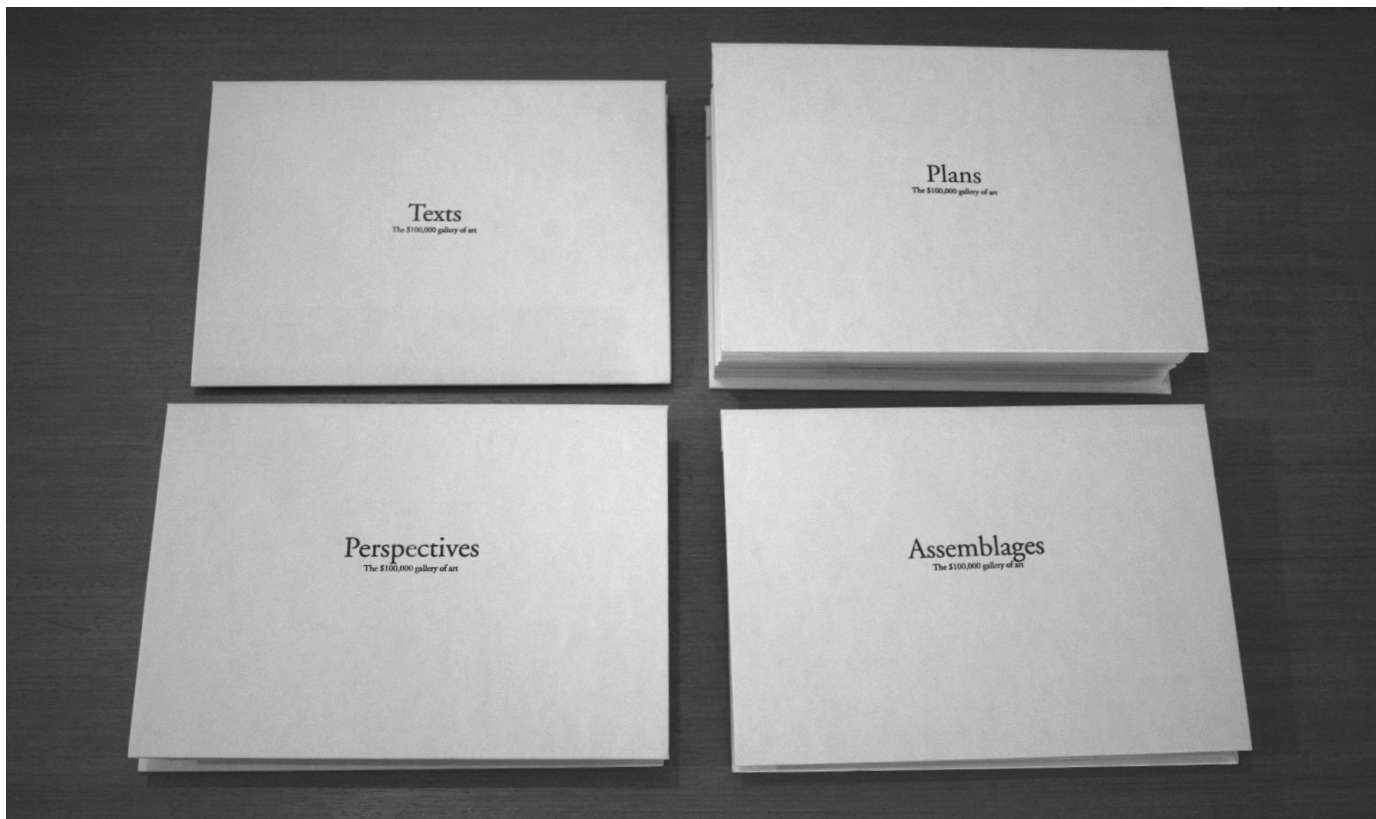
Project: The \$100,000 gallery of art	Book: Documents 	Title: And still no Art Gallery	Creator: Singapore Free Press © Singapore Press Holdings	Dimensions: 1:2 All dimensions are in millimetres unless otherwise stated.	Date: 18/6/1959	Page: 23/52
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Documentation of *The \$100,000 gallery of art*
by Michael Lee Hong Hwee and Chun Kai Feng

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Project: The \$100,000 gallery of art	Book: Documents 	Title: Chapter Title	Creator: N.A.	Dimensions: 1:2 All dimensions are in millimetres unless otherwise stated.	Date: 23/8/2007	Page: 24/52
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<p>Project: The \$100,000 gallery of art</p>	<p>Book: Documents</p> 	<p>Title: Documentation of <i>The \$100,000 gallery of art</i>. Installation view</p>	<p>Creators: Michael Lee Hong Hwee & Chun Kai Feng</p>	<p>Dimensions: 1:2 All dimensions are in millimetres unless otherwise stated.</p>	<p>Date: 23/8/2007</p>	<p>Page: 25/52</p>
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the first level as a car park, the second level for temporary exhibitions, the third level for a gallery showcasing the permanent collection and a research library, and the rooftop deck for a Singapore Art Society evening painting class. On one side of the building, he delineated a large outdoor space for large sculptures and events.

In addition to the overall architectural programming of the space, he also shared his ideas for the interior finishes, furniture and fittings. For example, to address the shortage of space, he suggested that the gallery be divided into smaller, more intimate spaces and smaller, two-storey, hexagonal-shaped display alcoves. In some instances, he derived the idea from how paper are folded in a book. The display alcoves would be designed to collapse being adjacent the display systems, which would be hidden away.

He also shared his ideas for the display systems, which would be multi-dimensional works. Another problem he envisioned was the transportation of the gallery's diverse collection. In this, he planned to design ideas within the gallery's theme, creating large, white, mobile, and foldable furniture of various ground level to the highest floors for storage or display purposes.

His own role as architect (the idea of) He shared during the presentation was concerned when he made the first ideas of the proposed Gallery in 1978, as if they were ultimately adopted from observations and ideas afterwards. This uncertainty leaves room for creative interpretation and interventions on the part of this work. The strategy of the architect was to create a space that would be flexible and adaptable to the changing abstracts ideas, the research areas to uphold his creative spirit more so than his specific ideas and forms.

The research work is ideal seen beyond the book and the wide world's "creation" that may not have a name. It consists of four books that make up the book installation. The \$100,000 gallery of art, as well as a documentation volume on the project. Book One of the \$100,000 gallery of art, the first of the four books, is the book that the architect designed for the gallery. The other three books are the book that the architect designed for the gallery. The book that the architect designed for the gallery is the book that the architect designed for the gallery.

ended by a through into the sections of the proposed Gallery. When flipped open, Book One of the \$100,000 gallery of art, the first of the four books, is the book that the architect designed for the gallery. The other three books are the book that the architect designed for the gallery.

On its cover, each book will provide a specific reason to purchase the proposed building. Read together, they offer complementary interpretations to complete this imagined space, being more complementary aspects of the firmament, the visual and the tactile.

Name

- Robert Holzman, the book, the building and the architecture (London: Thames and Hudson, 1978).
- 1. Under your watch, with the arches an included in the ground volume. Other related page include the book's perspective on ground, page 101, page 102, page 103, page 104, page 105, page 106, page 107, page 108, page 109, page 110, page 111, page 112, page 113, page 114, page 115, page 116, page 117, page 118, page 119, page 120, page 121, page 122, page 123, page 124, page 125, page 126, page 127, page 128, page 129, page 130, page 131, page 132, page 133, page 134, page 135, page 136, page 137, page 138, page 139, page 140, page 141, page 142, page 143, page 144, page 145, page 146, page 147, page 148, page 149, page 150, page 151, page 152, page 153, page 154, page 155, page 156, page 157, page 158, page 159, page 160, page 161, page 162, page 163, page 164, page 165, page 166, page 167, page 168, page 169, page 170, page 171, page 172, page 173, page 174, page 175, page 176, page 177, page 178, page 179, page 180, page 181, page 182, page 183, page 184, page 185, page 186, page 187, page 188, page 189, page 190, page 191, page 192, page 193, page 194, page 195, page 196, page 197, page 198, page 199, page 200.
- Robert C. Smith, *Architectural Model: A New View of Models from Europe to the United States* (London: Thames, 1985), p. 1.
- 1. Under your watch, with the arches an included in the ground volume. Other related page include the book's perspective on ground, page 101, page 102, page 103, page 104, page 105, page 106, page 107, page 108, page 109, page 110, page 111, page 112, page 113, page 114, page 115, page 116, page 117, page 118, page 119, page 120, page 121, page 122, page 123, page 124, page 125, page 126, page 127, page 128, page 129, page 130, page 131, page 132, page 133, page 134, page 135, page 136, page 137, page 138, page 139, page 140, page 141, page 142, page 143, page 144, page 145, page 146, page 147, page 148, page 149, page 150, page 151, page 152, page 153, page 154, page 155, page 156, page 157, page 158, page 159, page 160, page 161, page 162, page 163, page 164, page 165, page 166, page 167, page 168, page 169, page 170, page 171, page 172, page 173, page 174, page 175, page 176, page 177, page 178, page 179, page 180, page 181, page 182, page 183, page 184, page 185, page 186, page 187, page 188, page 189, page 190, page 191, page 192, page 193, page 194, page 195, page 196, page 197, page 198, page 199, page 200.
- Michael Lee Hong Hwee & Chun Kai Feng, *The \$100,000 gallery of art* (Singapore: The Architectural Press, 2007), pp. 1-200.
- 1. Under your watch, with the arches an included in the ground volume. Other related page include the book's perspective on ground, page 101, page 102, page 103, page 104, page 105, page 106, page 107, page 108, page 109, page 110, page 111, page 112, page 113, page 114, page 115, page 116, page 117, page 118, page 119, page 120, page 121, page 122, page 123, page 124, page 125, page 126, page 127, page 128, page 129, page 130, page 131, page 132, page 133, page 134, page 135, page 136, page 137, page 138, page 139, page 140, page 141, page 142, page 143, page 144, page 145, page 146, page 147, page 148, page 149, page 150, page 151, page 152, page 153, page 154, page 155, page 156, page 157, page 158, page 159, page 160, page 161, page 162, page 163, page 164, page 165, page 166, page 167, page 168, page 169, page 170, page 171, page 172, page 173, page 174, page 175, page 176, page 177, page 178, page 179, page 180, page 181, page 182, page 183, page 184, page 185, page 186, page 187, page 188, page 189, page 190, page 191, page 192, page 193, page 194, page 195, page 196, page 197, page 198, page 199, page 200.

Book One of the \$100,000 gallery of art

Book One of the \$100,000 gallery of art

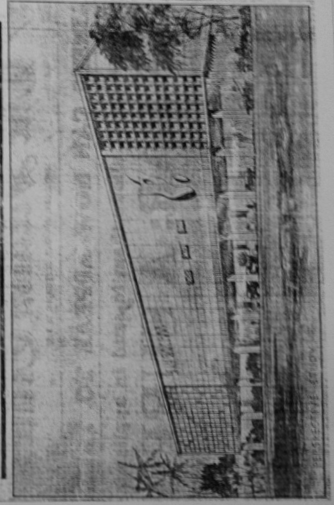
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Project:
The \$100,000 gallery of art

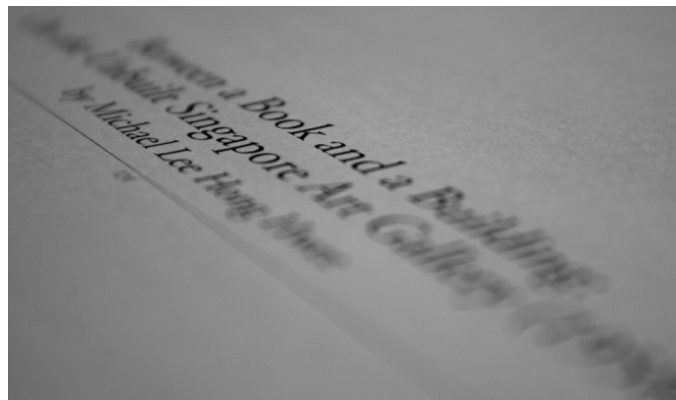
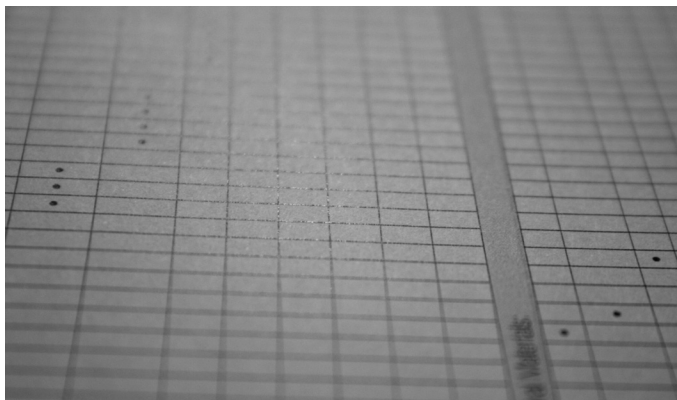
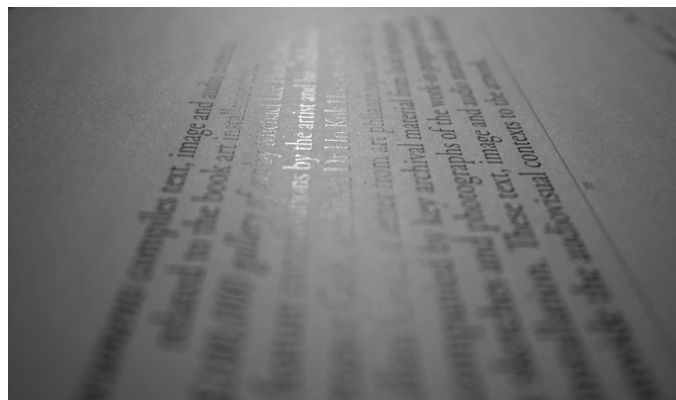
Book:
Documents
Title:
Documentation of *The \$100,000 gallery of art*.
Book One Texts


Creators:
Michael Lee Hong Hwee & Chun Kai Feng

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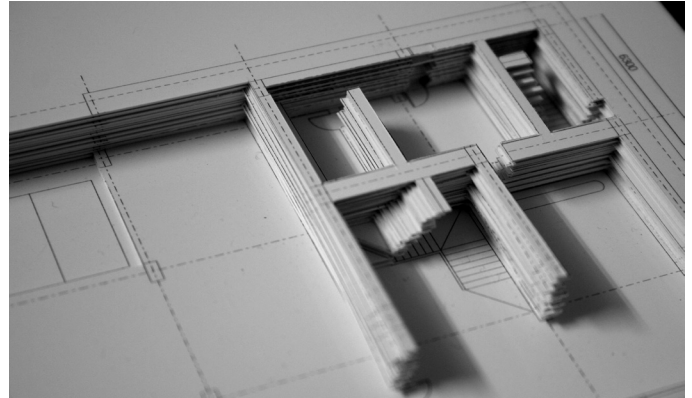
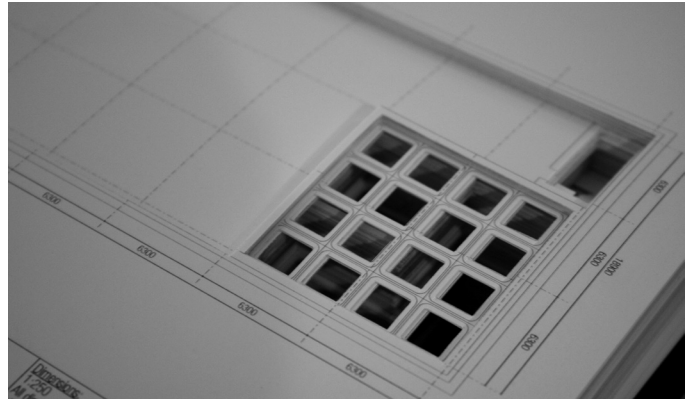
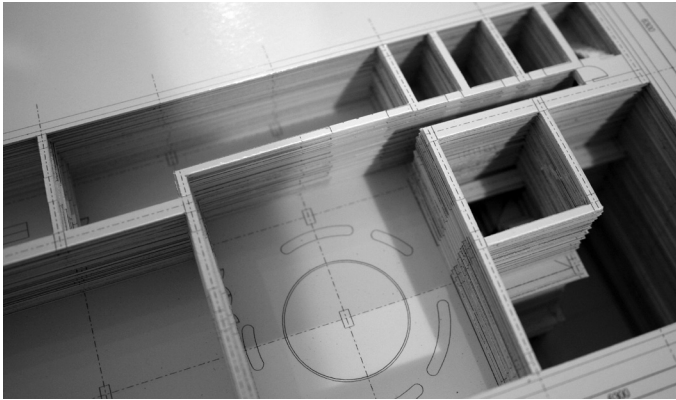
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<p>Project: The \$100,000 gallery of art</p>	<p>Book: Documents</p> 	<p>Title: Documentation of <i>The \$100,000 gallery of art</i>. Details of Book One Texts</p>	<p>Creators: Michael Lee Hong Hwee & Chun Kai Feng</p>	<p>Dimensions: 1:2 All dimensions are in millimetres unless otherwise stated.</p>	<p>Date: 23/8/2007</p>	<p>Page: 27/52</p>
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<p>Project: The \$100,000 gallery of art</p>	<p>Book: Documents</p>	<p>Title: Documentation of <i>The \$100,000 gallery of art.</i> Book Two Plans</p>	<p>Creators: Michael Lee Hong Hwee & Chun Kai Feng</p>	<p>Dimensions: 1:2 All dimensions are in millimetres unless otherwise stated.</p>	<p>Date: 23/8/2007</p>	<p>Page: 28/52</p>
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Project:
The \$100,000 gallery of art

Book:
Documents



Title:
Documentation of *The \$100,000 gallery of art.*
Details of Book Two Plans

Creators:
Michael Lee Hong Hwee & Chun Kai Feng

Dimensions:
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Project:
The \$100,000 gallery of art

Book:
Documents



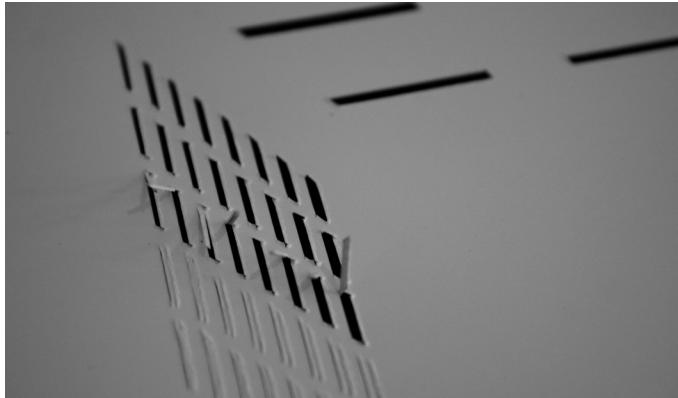
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Book Three Perspectives


Creators:
Michael Lee Hong Hwee & Chun Kai Feng

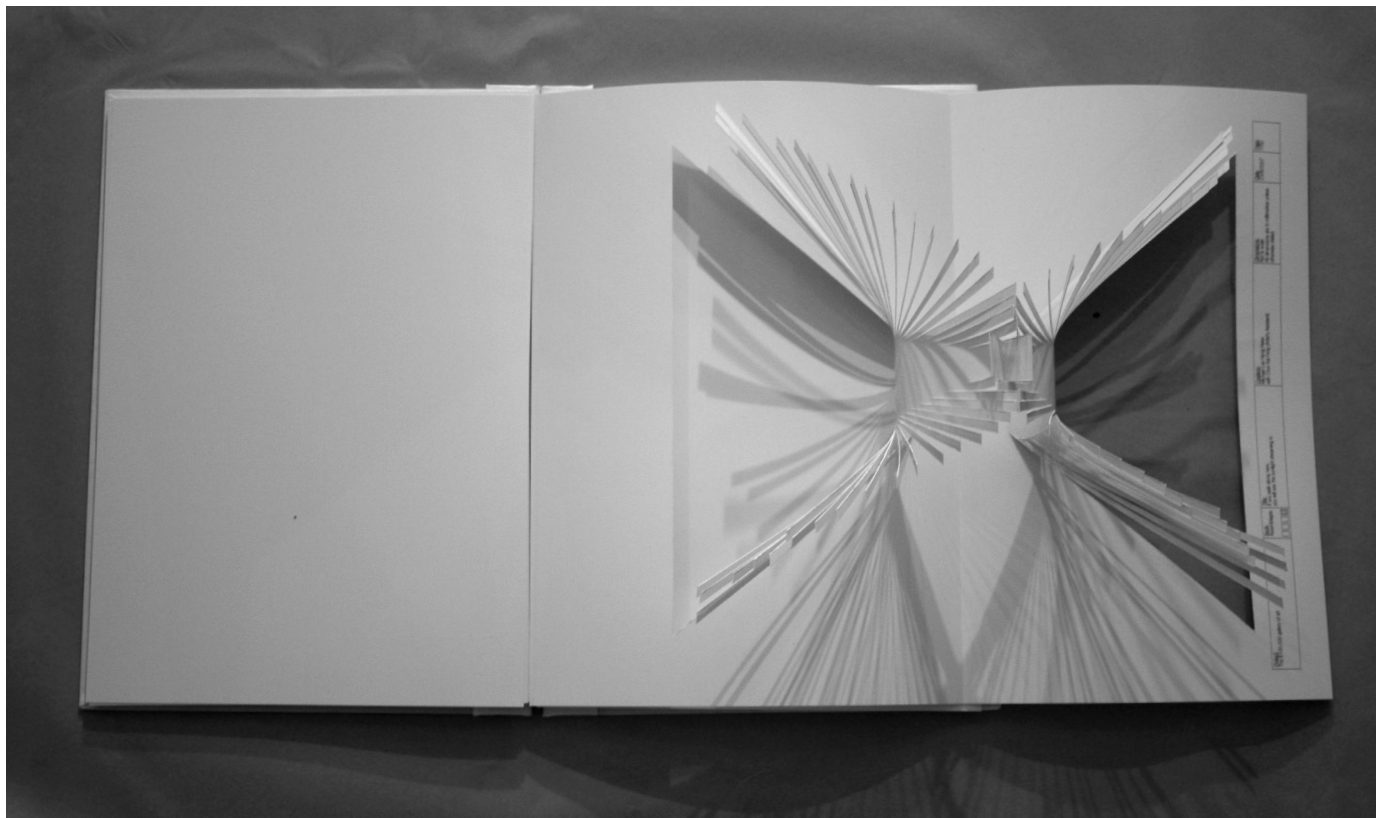
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<p>Project: The \$100,000 gallery of art</p>	<p>Book: Documents</p> 	<p>Title: Documentation of <i>The \$100,000 gallery of art.</i> Details of Book Three <i>Perspectives</i></p>	<p>Creators: Michael Lee Hong Hwee & Chun Kai Feng</p>	<p>Dimensions: 1:2 All dimensions are in millimetres unless otherwise stated.</p>	<p>Date: 23/8/2007</p>	<p>Page: 317/52</p>
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Project:
The \$100,000 gallery of art

Book:
Documents



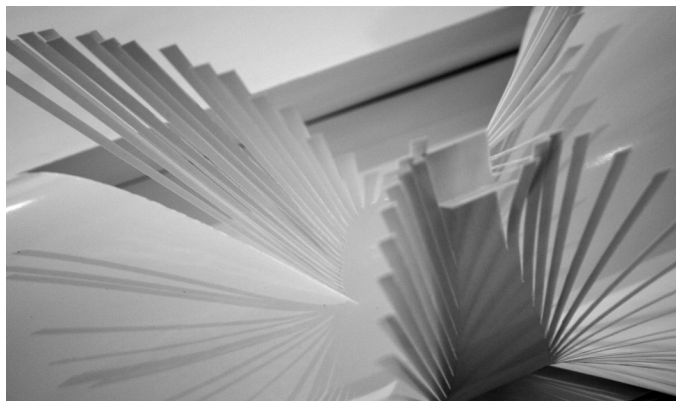
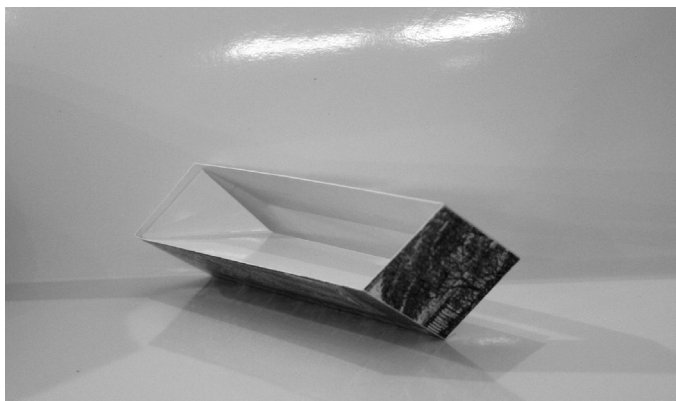
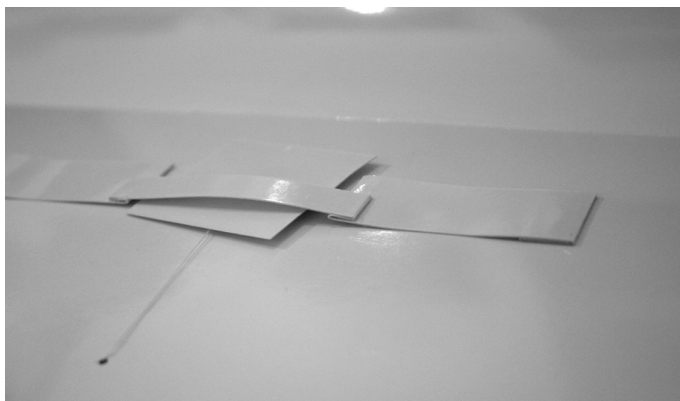
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Book Four Assemblages

Creators:
Michael Lee Hong Hwee & Chun Kai Feng

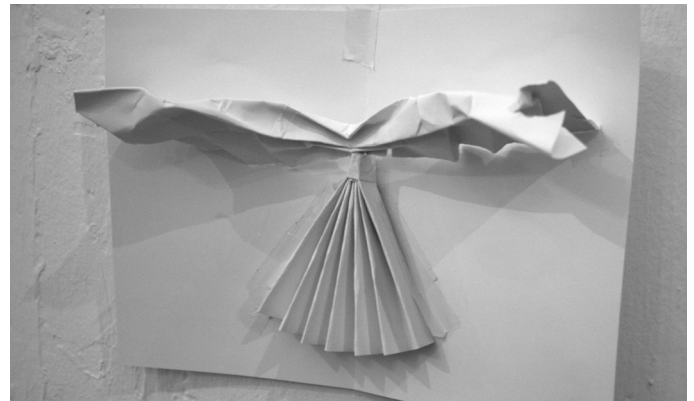
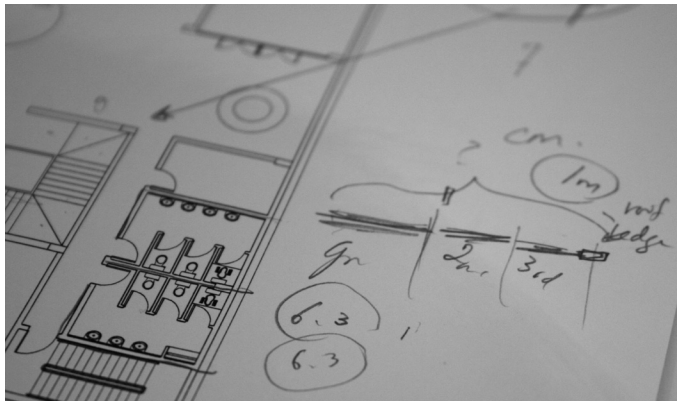
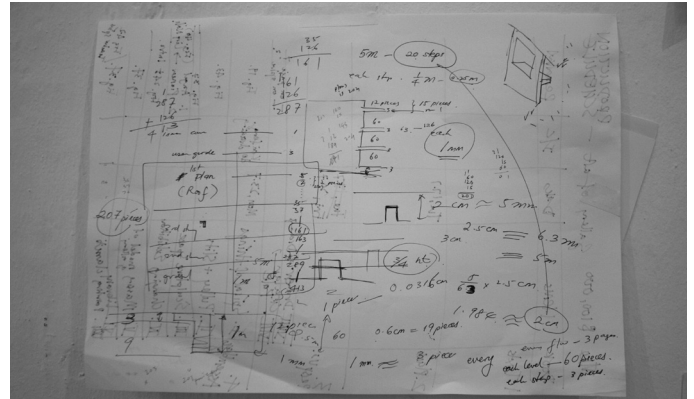
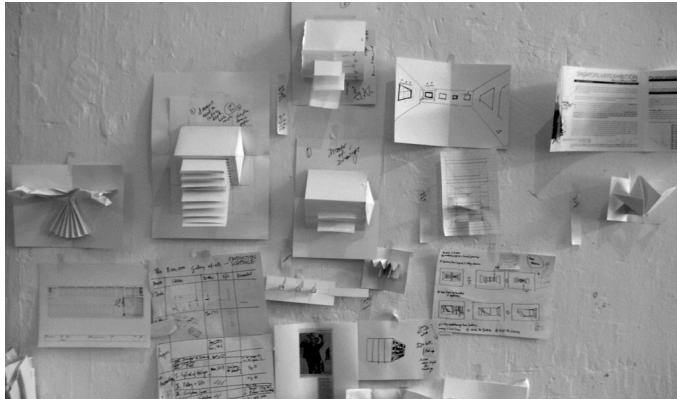
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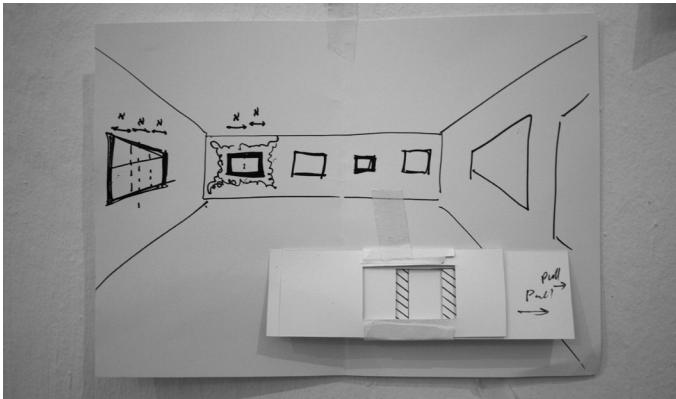
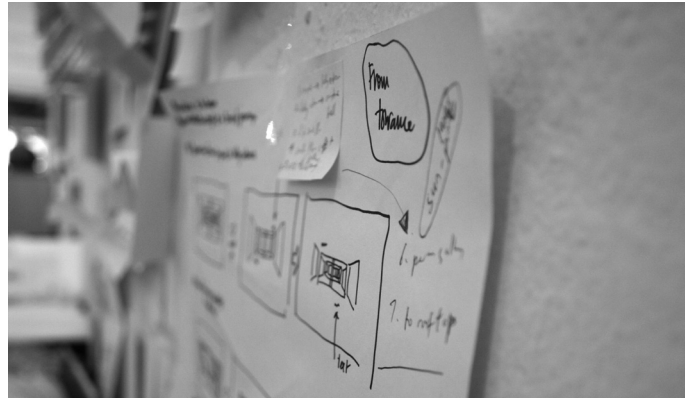



<p><u>Project:</u> The \$100,000 gallery of art</p>	<p><u>Book:</u> Documents ▨▨▨▨</p>	<p><u>Title:</u> Documentation of <i>The \$100,000 gallery of art.</i> Details of Book Four <i>Assemblages</i></p>	<p><u>Creators:</u> Michael Lee Hong Hwee & Chun Kai Feng</p>	<p><u>Dimensions:</u> 1:2 All dimensions are in millimetres unless otherwise stated.</p>	<p><u>Date:</u> 23/8/2007</p>	<p><u>Page:</u> 33/52</p>
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<p>Project: The \$100,000 gallery of art</p>	<p>Book: Documents</p>	<p>Title: Documentation of <i>The \$100,000 gallery of art</i>. Work-in-progress</p>	<p>Creators: Michael Lee Hong Hwee & Chun Kai Feng</p>	<p>Dimensions: 1:2 All dimensions are in millimetres unless otherwise stated.</p>	<p>Date: 23/8/2007</p>	<p>Page: 34/52</p>
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<p>Project: The \$100,000 gallery of art</p>	<p>Book: Documents</p> 	<p>Title: Documentation of The \$100,000 gallery of art. Work-in-progress</p>	<p>Creators: Michael Lee Hong Hwee & Chun Kai Feng</p>	<p>Dimensions: 1:2 All dimensions are in millimetres unless otherwise stated.</p>	<p>Date: 23/8/2007</p>	<p>Page: 35/52</p>
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Project:
The \$100,000 gallery of art

Book:
Documents



Title:
Documentation of *The \$100,000 gallery of art*.
Photo of Dr Ho Kok Hoe with Michael Lee

Creator:
Seng Yu Jin

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MOVE FOR S'PORE ART GALLERY

Deputation to see Mr. Lee

THE Singapore Art Society plans to send a delegation to call on the Prime Minister, Mr. Lee Kuan Yew, and present its case for an art gallery.

The society's president, Mr. Ho Kok Hoe, said today it was calling a meeting on Wednesday to select the members of the delegation.

They would ask Mr. Lee for help in connection with the project, such as getting a site and the money needed to build the proposed art gallery.

The society would need at least \$250,000 from the government for the building.

Members of the society hope that the new culture-conscious Government will help them to achieve their long-cherished aim.

They feel that budding artists would feel discouraged if their paintings could not find a home, especially since their Federation counterparts already have an art gallery in Kuala Lumpur.

Malayan paintings have created a favourable impression in London, and to encourage local talent an art gallery is essential.

Footnote: At present there is \$75,000 in a trust fund for the building of the Singapore art gallery. Cinema magnate, Mr. Loke Wan Tho, has promised to donate \$25,000.

<p>Project: The \$100,000 gallery of art</p>	<p>Book: Documents</p> 	<p>Title: Move for S'pore Art Gallery</p>	<p>Creator: Singapore Free Press © Singapore Press Holdings</p>	<p>Dimensions: 1:2 All dimensions are in millimetres unless otherwise stated.</p>	<p>Date: 22/6/1959</p> <p>Page: 38/52</p>
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THE NEXT CULTURAL GOAL: A NATIONAL ART GALLERY

SINGAPORE, Thurs.

THE Deputy Prime Minister, Dr. Toh Chin Chye, today called for the establishment of a national art gallery, where paintings, sculptures and ceramics could be exhibited permanently and where exhibitions could also be held.

Dr. Toh was speaking at the opening of the one-man art exhibition by Mr. Yeo Chew Hong, a 23-year-old school teacher, at the Chinese Chamber of Commerce.

"The number of artists in Singapore," Dr. Toh said, "is now large enough for them to form a school of their own."

The people of Singapore had responded enthusiastically

to the idea of a national theatre.

This showed that there was a great genuine desire in them to express their feelings through art, he said.

Dr. Toh continued: "we should, therefore, seek also to mobilise the people to help in establishing a national art gallery worthy of this city."

A deficiency


Dr. Toh said: "We have a museum which is visited daily by hundreds of visitors and school-children, but we do not have an art gallery. Let us not be considered lacking on culture because of this deficiency."

Dr. Toh said the artist, Mr. Yeo, was "a happy combination of English and Chinese education," as he had been educated both in English and Chinese schools.

He said: "Let us hope that this combination of virtues will lead him to produce a style of painting which is a synthesis of the training he has received in different

schools, and which will be typical of Singapore, the meeting place of the cultures of Asia and Europe."


The art exhibition was sponsored by the Singapore Art Society, the Society of Chinese Artists and the Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts.

<p>Project: The \$100,000 gallery of art</p>	<p>Book: Documents</p> 	<p>Title: The next cultural goal: a national art gallery</p>	<p>Creator: The Straits Times © Singapore Press Holdings</p>	<p>Dimensions: 1:2 All dimensions are in millimetres unless otherwise stated.</p>	<p>Date: 13/5/1960</p>	<p>Page: 39/52</p>
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Interview with the architect Dr Ho Kok Hoe
Conducted and transcribed by Michael Lee Hong Hwee, recorded by Seng Yu Jin

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<p>Project: The \$100,000 gallery of art</p>	<p>Book: Documents</p> 	<p>Title: Chapter Title</p>	<p>Creator: N.A.</p>	<p>Dimensions: 1:2 All dimensions are in millimetres unless otherwise stated.</p>	<p>Date: 23/8/2007</p>	<p>Page: 40/52</p>
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Dr Ho, I understand you were the architect for the proposed Singapore Art Gallery designed in 1958. Can you share with us how that proposal came about?

To be frank, this proposed art gallery was a dream house for many art lovers in Singapore, not only for myself. I was then the president of Singapore Art Society when our patron Datuk Loke Wan Tho told me he had a place for a national art gallery and that his lawyer friend was now looking into the matter. The Datuk said to me, 'Since you're an architect and an artist and the president of Singapore Art Society, you do a first sketch and let us know how much it costs and what your idea of an art gallery would be.'

At that time, the price for constructing a building was very low. We could build it for about S\$100,000. The trend was for a simple modern facade. I had in mind a big four-walled building with a high ceiling. Once you have a nice space for people to exhibit, and run it in a good way, then the art gallery will prosper because donors and art lovers will donate to make a better gallery. The design was pragmatic, guided by the need for utility. And the sketch that you see now (in the newspaper cutting) was what it was at that time.

All the society members and art lovers were very excited. Some even wanted to donate paintings for the gallery. We got a lot of write-ups and good comments. No doubt it was a humble one but it was the beginning of things.

It was to be a three-storey building with an entrance down below and carpark. We designed the second floor to be an open exhibition gallery, for temporary exhibition of works by young and promising artists. In other words, that gallery is a changeable gallery. The third floor was for the permanent collection. It was the place to go if a foreigner or a young Singaporean wanted to learn about our ancestral artists. The third floor would also cater to research work, and there were plans to house a research library. The roof was a garden with an open studio so that we could carry on the art society's work, night class events and if possible, lectures and so on. On the other side of the open-air gallery, we would have the open sculpture hall to inspire sculptors and potters to exhibit their works.

We had high hopes. Datuk Loke told me to leave this matter to him. After that I heard no more news about it. The thing was handled over to the arts council but eventually the arts council also stayed stagnant on the matter. I began to feel

very frustrated and sad. As a consolation, I have been able to see a new art gallery established at the old St. Joseph's Institution. And I'm glad to be one of the first people to join the gallery's inaugural council.

Where was the proposed site of the gallery?

They gave me a site but I do not remember where it was as it was not important to me. What I had in mind was a four-walled gallery – that was important. If you have four walls and a roof, and good collection, then you will form a natural gallery, not something forceful or something highly manufactured, but just a plain simple art form. In art, simplicity is beauty.

Compared to the Kuala Lumpur National Museum, which you designed, the proposed Singapore Art Gallery of 1958 was evidently more modern, very Corbusian.

In the case of National Museum in Kuala Lumpur, my client's brief was for a building with a 'Malaysian touch'. But in the case of the proposed art gallery in Singapore, we envisaged a timeless building that could adapt to any period. The building must have a flexible design. If we were to build on a Singaporean style, then a question immediately arises: 'What is a Singaporean style?' That's a bit difficult to answer. But there was a Singapore style or school of painting because art students here thought their expressions were Singaporean. A Singaporean style amounted to a way of thinking. It meant, for me, that the gallery could not have a fixed design.

During my visits to London, I saw the London Museum of Art, London Art Gallery and the National Portrait Gallery. Roman Palladian architecture was privileged in that cultural context. Also, at that time, English architecture was very conservative. In our case however, I wanted a simple timeless design, and would have been very happy if it was realised.

So, unlike the KL Museum, which had a client's specification, the proposal for the Singapore Art Gallery was a response to an open brief?

Yes, that's correct.

Perhaps what was really important for you was to have a gallery that highlights the collection rather than have one that draws attention from the artworks?

First and foremost, you must have a building that must draw the attention of the public first. What does that building look like? White building? Black building? Building with funny windows?

Now because of world competition, architecture is used to attract people to visit the country, and architects are now allowed to try out and build all sorts of concepts. In the old days, the client had the money and he also controlled how the building would look. I give you an example. On becoming rich, a hardworking young clerk would get an architect to build a house like one in Cameron Highlands resort in Singapore, that is, English style with a steep roof and a little garden plot for planting roses. The architect had to follow the client's wishes because it meant business. In my case, when my client asked me to make a 'Cameron Highland design' I would agree to do that for him but would also try to propose another more economic, contemporary, timeless and modern-looking one with a plain design.

Has any art museum or gallery abroad been influential in your design concept for the proposed Singapore Art Gallery?

Quite a number of places, particularly one in Canberra, which features a garden with a fountain and sculptures by Bill Carson. Very inspirational. The British Museum was also a classic for me. But then you must think of the time when they were building the museum and the objects they were going to house in these. If you put contemporary art in a Roman courtyard, it might look out of place. But having said this, it is also possible for a classical building to accommodate a contemporary artwork in an exhibition. If this situation is not possible then, the art gallery has a very limited scope.

Dr Ho, I understand that you had the ambition to be an artist. How did you end up as an architect, and how did you become the president of the Singapore Art Society?

This is a long story. When I was a small boy, about nine years old, I followed my grandfather. Normally, in a Chinese family, the grandson would be the grandfather's pet. My brother and I were twins, and my grandfather enjoyed holding one of us with each of his hands. He was a tailor and a calligraphist, and a Chinese classicist.

Many an evening, he would catch hold of me, not my second brother who would run somewhere else to play, and put me on his big cutting table for dress designing. On the table, he would lay a lot of old newspapers. He had a big Chinese ink stand, a Chinese ink stick, water and brushes. He would grind the ink stick first, and then, being cheeky, I also helped him to do the grinding. He would let me grind. So from that day on, I became the ink grinder for his Chinese calligraphy.

He worked quietly. He would write his thoughts, put his hand into the black ink, make blobs and swirl the ink around. It was fascinating. When he went off to wash his hands, I took out another piece of paper and started to draw. When my grandfather came back, he realised that this grandson was creative. So, he encouraged me. Every evening, every two or three days, when he was free, he would come along, and I would be very excited, so much so that I would jump onto the table without him carrying me up. From then on, he inculcated in me the love of painting. When I went to school, I had top marks in Chinese calligraphy when we had to write Chinese classic verses like *ren zhi chu* [Chinese for 'the birth of humanity'].

After some time, my father also recognised my artistic potential. He taught me how to do perspective. He would take out pencil and paper, and just drew straightaway with all the lines and angles, to demonstrate to me how perspective drawing was done. I found this drawing quite fun and loved drawing from then on. At school, I would have 100 marks for the drawing class, but for others, such as literature I got *ayam* [Malay for 'chicken', or associatively meaning zero mark]. Later on, I did realise that other subjects were also important. My father told Xu Bei Hong that this boy was very lazy. Xu Bei Hong told me that I had to study; otherwise I would not be able to cope. He meant that one must pursue knowledge in order to get a deepened sense in painting. His advice was true and meaningful.

When I was 10, my mother passed away, and my father had to look after us. When I was about 10 to 12 years old, he brought us to his office, and the draughtspersons looked after us while he went for his meetings. From there, I learnt the craft of his trade unconsciously, running around buying coffee for the draughtsmen, and then changing water for the colouring of architectural drawings. At the age of 14, I was asked by the clerk to deliver letters to the banks and so on, and went into the City Council to deliver plans for approval. Because my father was a staff there too, they said, 'This is Ho Kong Yew's son.' When I went on to become an architect myself, they still remembered me, 'Oh, you used to be a small boy, now you have become a qualified architect'.

Eventually when I wanted to become an artist, I couldn't because my father was taken away during the Japanese Occupation and never came home. There was a common saying about artists: *'hua jia er zhong jiao'* ('the artist will starve till his feet get swollen'), which means that artists cannot find a living for themselves. It was true in those days; the common perception was that the artist had a pathetic life and in the end, he would hang himself because of the lack of people buying his work.

Because of the conditions of life during this period, I decided to become an architect. Art would remain supplementary to my career. Besides studying architecture in the daytime, I continued to attend life-drawing classes after school. I was often late for dinner. I soon realised that art and architecture were linked: Architecture being the mother of all arts. So I said, 'Hey this is good. My architecture work can support the family business and my brothers can start studying in England'. This is how I became an architect.

In 1955 while still studying architecture in Sydney, I went back to my old school, St. Andrew's School, to see my principal and my old teachers. Mr Francis Thomas was then the Minister of Labour for Lim Yew Hock's government. He said to me: 'Hey, why don't you join the art society? We just started it you know'. I decided to join the Singapore Art Society thereafter.

After five or six years, Dr Gibson Hill stepped down from his role as the museum director. The Society members wanted to elect me as president one night but I said no. I told them that I was new and could not be the president. They said, 'It's not up to you, this is by vote, it's not whether you want to be or not. It's whether we want you or not'. So that's how I became the president of the Art Society.

I used to observe Gibson Hill at work. He was terrific and a workaholic. He never went home. He would take a few sandwiches, sat in the council hall, slept on the bench, and then hung all the pictures for any exhibition by himself. He was the one who elevated the Singapore Art Society's photographic group into an internationally known competition group. When I took over the chairmanship, we sent out invitation cards to foreign countries, and the members submitted their best photographic works, which were of very high quality. In fact, many of the members were associates of the Royal Photographic Society. Dr Loke Wan Tho asked why the art society had to associate itself with the photographic society. Art and architecture are related, but with photography, it was different. The answering of letters throughout the world was enormous task. We had to send out package after package of work. As you know, the

SAS was not a big society. It was more like a hobby society, which aimed to encourage people to paint, and to enjoy and appreciate art. A few of the members came out to join and help the photographic society set up their exhibitions. Eventually, the members agreed that it was better for the photographic society to continue running the show. So that's how the art society relinquished that section to a well-known photographic group.

How did the night classes for the Singapore Art Society start?

That is another good story to tell. During that time, we had a few British servicemen who came to us as members. To my surprise, they were not just ordinary members. They came from art schools in London, for example, Chelsea School of Art, St. Martin's, St. John's Art College, and other famous London schools. When they had nothing to do after their service, they asked about the possibility of starting night classes, which they could help us out with. As the night classes went on, many of our young local artists joined these, and sought advice from this group about joining the London art schools. Many of our young artists went to London with their help.

For example, I still remember a few of the expatriate artists' names: Boltheus and Bullock. These people were very faithful art society members even though they were from England. They still wrote to me, and helped me when we were organising an exhibition in the London Imperial Institute. I was inspired by their wholeheartedness in giving their views and criticisms on art. That helped a lot. They also made arrangements for Indonesian dancers and the *jagas* (guards) to pose as models for us, and when there were no models available, they would pose for us themselves.

Coming back to the design for the proposed art gallery, you mentioned about its modern design orientation. You briefly said the first storey was a carpark and an open gallery, the second storey catered for young artists and sculpture, and the top floor to house the permanent collection and a library, while the roof was reserved for events, art classes and open studios. How about the interior? Did you envision totally open spaces, or partitioned areas?

The partitions I had in mind were not fixed. The walls could be moved from one end to the other and could be turned to all sorts of angles. There would be a store room for storing pictures.

I also had the idea of a screen hanging all the paintings from a main pole. It was almost like a fan that opened up. Each fan could open up like this and it would only show a certain group of pictures at any one time. The works for the next show would be concealed behind the fan.

Did you get this idea from overseas?

I got it from books. I had it in my mind for a long time. The structure was like the pages of a book. You had a hole in the centre. If you had a lot of works and limited space, you could put everything here. You could see so and so's paintings, you could turn and push, or push using the wheels. I thought it would be very good for filing because when the show was over, you just pull the curtain, and the pictures would be readily stored in this structure.

So audiences could interact with the partition, and they could decide which painting to look at and even push the partition themselves?

Yes.

There is another roller system. I initially wanted to try it out in my house. Imagine: I put one pole there, which looks like a cupboard, and when I want to show off, I just pull the curtain out, and you can see my collection. An exhibition can take place there and then. If you have a few spots like that, it would help a lot. That's fruit for thought.

Any other special interior design ideas?

Not at the moment, unless I am paid some fees!

You mentioned about a very high-ceiling area where sculptures could be exhibited. Did you want it to be on the sides or in the middle?

On the side, because you need to crane things up. You create an extension to carry up

the painting. I designed a pylon. And that pylon would actually be used for hanging up heavy statues and paintings.

You were certainly ahead of time.

I saw this idea in the Museum of Modern Art. They were experts. Imagine Picasso's work, which is 8 feet by 8 feet: How do you bring this painting up by staircase? At the Museum of Modern Art, after reaching the right level, you can go anywhere because the space is column-free.

So in terms of the interiors, did you envision the gallery space to be column-free?

There would have been columns. Nowadays, the span can be maximised to the extent that an aeroplane can pass through. In those days you couldn't. You had to consult the engineers. That's why I retired to enjoy my painting.

As the president of SAS, you've put up many shows. Were there any difficulties? What experiences did you encounter that might have affected or helped you in the design of the proposed Singapore Art Gallery?

When I was running the society, I had a lot of wishes about what a building should have. For example, if you had about 100 paintings coming in and you had a staircase, which was 5 feet by 12 feet high, how would you carry those large paintings to the third storey?


So I was dreaming that one of those buildings would have a slit in the floor nearer to place a slot of 10 feet by 2 feet wide with a mechanism, which could carry the paintings up. This design would have saved a lot of time. You would not have needed a labour force to do the carrying. Even nowadays the paintings may still be large, for example 8 feet by 8 feet, and still cannot be fitted into a lift.

The walls, as I said, should not be fixed, because if the painting is too large, it can still be transported horizontally on the same floor, or it can be hoisted up vertically through the slit across the different floors.

As for containing pictures, sometimes you want to have a show for only one artist, or if the rest of the galleries are occupied and only one room is available. With space-saving devices like the ones I mentioned, the room can exhibit at least thirty to sixty pictures at any one time. What you could use is a book-like or fan-like partition system. On each steel pole you could potentially hold thirty paintings. Then, the audience may choose to view the paintings intimately, and at their leisure.

For me, these are a few important things that art galleries should have. There could be more requirements now but these were the key aspects, which I occupied my mind as an exhibition organiser and also the President of the Singapore Art Society at that time.

Thank you.

<u>Project:</u> The \$100,000 gallery of art	<u>Book:</u> Documents 	<u>Title:</u> Interview with the architect Dr Ho Kok Hoe	<u>Creators:</u> Dr Ho Kok Hoe with Michael Lee Hong Hwee & Seng Yu Jin	<u>Dimensions:</u> 1:2 All dimensions are in millimetres unless otherwise stated.	<u>Date:</u> 23/8/2007	<u>Page:</u> 45/52
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洛 運 陸

Loke Wan Tho

Phone - General Office 24371/2/3

Cathay Building,

Singapore, 2

3rd November, 1957.

Dear Kok Hoe,

I am sorry I was not in the office when you telephoned. I am most grateful for your very kind offer of help for the proposed Art Gallery. I hope that the negotiations which I am now engaged in will bear fruit and that we shall be able to have not only the land but also the money to construct the new building. Of course I will keep you in touch with developments and when the time comes I shall be more than grateful for your help and advice.

With renewed thanks for your most generous offer and kindest regards,


Yours sincerely,



Loke Wan Tho

Ho Kok Hoe Esq.,
Messrs. Ho Kwong Yew & Sons,
31B North Canal Road,
SINGAPORE 1.

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Project: The \$100,000 gallery of art	Book: Documents 	Title: Letter to Dr Ho Kok Hoe	Creator: Loke Wan Tho	Dimensions: 1:2 All dimensions are in millimetres unless otherwise stated.	Date: 3/11/1957	Page: 47/52
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Lilian Chee, Ph.D (b.1971) is an architectural writer, designer, theorist and academic, as well as the co-founder of WORM. She read architecture at the Bartlett School of Architecture in London, where she previously taught, and at the National University of Singapore, where she currently holds a teaching position. A recipient of numerous academic grants from the UK, USA and Singapore, her research focuses on issues of gender, domesticity and subjectivity in architectural production. She is a keen gardener, an aspiring yogini and currently lives in Singapore with her husband Peter and her Jack Russells, Ginger and Mojo.

Chun Kai Feng (b.1982) is an emerging artist whose interest lies in the notions of private/public spaces. His drawings and meticulously crafted miniatures speak of the need for individuality and freedom along with conflicting desires for security and a relationship with the community. Chun held his first solo exhibition entitled *Me, Myself and All* at the Esplanade, Singapore in April 2007.

Torrance Goh (b.1977) is the founder of FARM and under its umbrella, several projects were born -ROJAK, WORM, L.C.D, STAMP, LOBANG etc. All of them have one thing in common: To celebrate, bring together and work with Singapore artists and designers. Keen in graphic and web design, Torrance studied architecture at the National University of Singapore and has worked in architecture firms in Singapore and UK. He is also the co-founder of FARMWORK, a design practice keen to collaborate with artists and designers in Singapore on spatial projects. He loves to cook and play videogames in his free time.


Dr Ho Kok Hoe (b.1922) is a prominent architect and an artist. He apprenticed for his father, Ho Kwong Yew (1903-1939), who was a practising architect. After the Japanese Occupation in 1945, Ho furthered his studies in architecture at the Sydney Technical College (now re-named the University of Technology Sydney). While pursuing his studies in Sydney, he submitted two Chinese ink and brush paintings, which were both accepted and exhibited at the national gallery in New South Wales. In 1955, he organised an exhibition for Singapore artists at the Imperial Institute (UK). The exhibition proved to be an international success. It was praised by art critics and widely covered by the London press. Besides his contributions as the President of

the Singapore Art Society, he has also designed many important buildings such as the Muzium Negara in Kuala Lumpur.

Willie Koh (b.1976) is a curator and project manager in FARM. Undertaken projects include STAMP – Singapore 1st postbox painting competition, ongoing urban furniture design project – bench, and WORM. Formally trained in architecture from the National University of Singapore, and later, filmmaking from Ngee Ann Polytechnic on a Media Development Authority scholarship, Willie enjoys straddling between different realms. A keen observer of human behavior and its vicissitudes, he believes that films are not mere entertainment, but could possibly have deeper affectations to our life. As a writer, director and editor, he has screened his shorts in various places here and abroad, including Hong Kong, Brisbane, Hungary and also the prestigious International Film Festival Rotterdam. In 2006, he represented Singapore in the Nokia-Discovery Channel Mobile Filmmakers Award South East Asia. A film junkie, he reckons he escapes to the cinema perhaps too often.

Michael Lee Hong Hwee (b.1972) is an artist, writer, educator and independent curator currently dividing his time between Hong Kong and Singapore. Concerned about the relations between desire and space, Lee is intrigued by how human psychology may reflect, inspire and interact with the architectural environment – a focus he has been developing through various media, especially photography, model-making, book-making, installation, video, and performance. He is the founding director of Studio Bibliothèque, which facilitates experiments in making, writing, curating and learning. Lee has garnered accolades for his creative practice, including the Young Artist Award (Visual Arts) 2005, conferred by the National Arts Council, Singapore.

Seng Yu Jin (b.1979) completed a Master of Arts at the Department of History, National University of Singapore in 2006, with research specialisation in the history of art in Southeast Asia, particularly Singapore. He was previously involved in exhibitions such as *Crossroads: The Making of New Identities* (2004) and *Errata@NUS* (2005). He is currently an Assistant Curator with the Singapore Art Museum and the Art Gallery Project Unit.


Project: The \$100,000 gallery of art	Book: Documents 	Title: Biographies	Creator: N.A.	Dimensions: 1:2 All dimensions are in millimetres unless otherwise stated.	Date: 23/8/2007	Page: 48/52
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The **Singapore Art Museum** (SAM) is one of the first art museums with international standard museum facilities and programmes in Southeast Asia. Dedicated to the collection and display of twentieth-century Singapore and Southeast Asian modern and contemporary art, SAM joins a league of new generation museums around the world with well-executed exhibitions and community outreach programmes. SAM's mission is to preserve and present the art histories and contemporary art practices of Singapore and the Southeast Asian region so as to facilitate visual arts education, exchange, research and development. The objectives of the Museum are to collect and conserve artworks representative of this region; curate, organise and produce exhibitions, publications and public education programmes to promote awareness, appreciation and discussion on visual arts.

Main board-listed **Singapore Press Holdings** Ltd (SPH) is the leading media company in Singapore. It publishes 14 newspapers in four languages. 2.7 million individuals or 83 percent of people above 15 years old, read one of SPH's news publications daily. The Internet editions of SPH newspapers enjoy over 100 million pageviews with 6 million unique visitors every month. SPH also publishes over 90 magazine titles in Singapore and the region. SPH UnionWorks Pte Ltd operates entertainment stations Radio 100.3 in Mandarin and Radio 91.3 in English.

Studio Bibliothèque facilitates experiments in making, writing, curating and learning. It is the Hong Kong-based workspace of Singapore artist Michael Lee Hong Hwee. It kicked off its *Things Artists Do* series of exhibition with *Autobiobliophiles: Artists Who Make Or Use Books* in 2007. Upcoming projects include the inaugural Asia Book Art Award in 2008 to be held in Hong Kong and an anthology of Asian artists' writings.

WORM is the new publishing arm of FARM, an independent Singapore-based society that likes to nurture local designers and artists alike. Headed by Torrance Goh and Lilian Chee, WORM aims to conceptualise, develop and produce artist books. Think: creative, quirky, exquisite, handmade, sensuous, haunting...


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Acknowledgements

by Michael Lee Hong Hwee

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This work is the outcome of a collaboration
between various creative personnel and supporting organisations.

Dr Ho Kok Hoe provided precious archival information and ideas through his recollections
on the design context of the proposed Singapore Art Gallery.

Curator Seng Yu Jin's relentless support and curatorial finesse provided the wider contextual
framework for situating this work in the group exhibition *From Words to Pictures: Art During the Emergency*.

Lilian Chee, an architectural designer, writer and academic made important discursive
connections and ensured overall clarity and consistency in her role as the project's editor.

Architectural designer and creative editor for this project, Torrance Goh never failed to
animate the creative process with his infectious enthusiasm and flair.

My book/model-making assistant, Chun Kai Feng, a formidable emerging artist in his own right,
has supported me not just in the manual crafting of the work but also
endlessly brainstorming ideas to embed in these books some kind of 'magic'.

Ho Hsiu Yen and Tang Ling Nah, I thank you for meticulously proofreading this publication,
and Enny Tan, for mastering the interview onto audio CD.


Willie Koh, I am indebted to you for your patience in your role as the project manager.

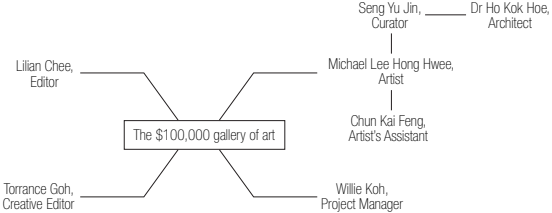

I wish to express my sincere appreciation to Singapore Press Holdings for sponsoring
the cost of copyright clearance for the press articles used in this book.

I also wish to thank Singapore Art Museum for supporting my artistic growth all these years
as well as organising and hosting the exhibition *From Words to Pictures*.

Like any architectural or book endeavour, this artwork would not have been possible
without the respective and collective inputs of these individuals and institutions.

I salute them with respect and gratitude.

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<p>Project Creator: Michael Lee Hong Hwee</p>	<p>Edition: 1000</p>	<p>Publishers: First published and distributed by WORM, an independent publishing unit of FARM, 213A Selegie Road, Singapore 188336 www.worm.farm.sg</p> <p>Singapore Art Museum 71 Bras Basah Road, Singapore 189555 www.nhb.gov.sg/sam</p> <p>Studio Bibliothèque 1812 Block B Wah Luen Industrial Centre 15-21 Wong Chuk Yeung Street Fo Tan, New Territories Hong Kong SAR www.studiobibliotheque.blogspot.com</p> <p>This book is published as the documentation of <i>The \$100,000 gallery of art</i>, a book art installation by Michael Lee Hong Hwee as part of the exhibition <i>From Words to Pictures: Art During the Emergency</i>, shown from 24 Aug 2007 to 31 Oct 2007 at the Singapore Art Museum, 71 Bras Basah Road, Singapore 189555. www.nhb.gov.sg/sam</p>	<p>Collaborations:</p> 				
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<p>ISBN: 978-981-05-8861-8</p>							
<p>Project: The \$100,000 gallery of art</p>	<p>Book: Documents</p> 	<p>Title: Colophon</p>	<p>Creator: N.A.</p>	<p>Dimensions: 1:2 All dimensions are in millimetres unless otherwise stated.</p>	<p>Date: 23/8/2007</p>	<p>Page: 52/52</p>	