

## ARTS &amp; ENTERTAINMENT

## REVIEWS

## Islands off the Shores of Asia

## Spring Workshop

Organised by Para Site and Spring Workshop, this exhibition opens as Hong Kong explores the boundaries of its own (island-like) autonomy.

Curators Cosmin Costinas and Inti Guerrero explain that the show "focuses on the ideological, historical, mystical, and fictional interpretations of the small, remote, largely uninhabited and unvisited islands claimed" by some East Asian countries.

Notions of nationalism are explored, but the selected art is mostly muted in its commentary, and a much stronger political or historical analysis is needed to explain the complexities of the disputed ownership of some islands in the South China Sea.

But a liberal exploration of the topic does allow artists from around the world, using different locations and ideas,

to explore the psychology of attachment that residents and nations have for islands.

Italian-German artist Rosa Barba's fictional Swedish island of Gotska Sandön is depicted in her spoof documentary, *Outwardly from the Earth's Centre*, as drifting towards the North Pole. An "archaeologist" explains that earlier occupants had tried to halt the island's drift using primitive artefacts, and an official "archivist" pulls out documents showing that islanders believed a folk tale that says the island's tethered ropes to the seabed were sabotaged by "evil pirates".

There is a similar



commentary by Spring Workshop resident-artist Ming Wong, who cleverly films himself floating as an astronaut in a spaceship cabin (left). Once his helmet is removed, a Cantonese opera diva is revealed replete with hair-bun, lipstick and mascara.

The exhibition is encircled by Charles Lim's paired photographs of buoys marking the ocean border between Malaysia and Singapore.

In a set of eight drawings, MAP Office imagines the islands of Hong Kong in different guises: their *Island of the Self* is an "intricate, maze-like network of alleys". It is an appropriate metaphor for Hong Kong at this very moment.

John Batten

The exhibition runs until December 7

## East Wing West Wing 11 – Find Ghost Do the CE

Zuni Icosahedron  
Cultural Centre Studio Theatre  
Reviewed: October 3

This political satire series by Zuni Icosahedron – running since 2003 and now into its 11th edition – is something I try to catch every year. Written and directed by the company's artistic director, Mathias Woo Yan-wai, *East Wing West Wing* has kept its sardonic edge, biting wit and intelligent humour over the years.

I'm often impressed by how well researched the materials are for each production and *Find Ghost Do the CE* is no exception. It could not have come at a better time as the city is torn apart socially and politically over the issue of universal suffrage. Woo and his creative team were quick to react by updating things, probably right up to the

opening night on Friday. It is no surprise they put the blame for all the chaos squarely on Chief Executive Leung Chun-ying – portraying him in a fantastic, if not horrific, animation by Lai Tat Tat Wing as a Godzilla-like, rampaging monster, destroying everything in his way.

The show also revisited some older issues such as Hong Kong's identity – this time through Canto-pop and Cantonese – as well as one of Woo's biggest peeves, the West Kowloon Cultural District project and its lack of progress.

The *EWWW* motley crew returns: music director Edgar Hung Yik-kai on the keyboard, singer Cedric Chan Ho-fung, and actors David Yeung Wing-tak, Carson Chung Ka-shing and Ng Ka-man, all did their best to keep the performance fresh. The real drama, as Woo pointed out after curtain call, was unfolding outside the theatre, adding a darker edge to this relevant production.

Kevin Kwong  
*Find Ghost Do the CE* runs until October 17

