

"Moderation(s)": Witte de With and Spring Workshop In Year-long Collaboration

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Photo by Eunice Adorno, courtesy Latitudes

Latitudes duo Max Andrews and Mariana Cánepa Luna will take up a curatorial residency at "Moderation(s)."

by BLOUIN ARTINFO Hong Kong, Zoe Li

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Defne Ayas from Rotterdam's **Witte de With Center for Contemporary Art** has teamed up with Hong Kong's **Spring Workshop** founder **Mimi Brown** to launch "Moderation(s)." The year-long project is aimed at ideas exchange between 50 local and international artists, curators and writers. Moderated by Singaporean artist and writer **Heman Chong**, the program includes conferences, residencies and exhibitions, some of which are open to the public.

The collaboration stands out for its immersive nature, matching up artists from different corners of the globe to spend long hours together and hopefully spark new creative energy.

"It's not just about importing something to Hong Kong," says Chong. "To resist the impulse to only make an exhibition, that's at the core of the project."

Ayas echoes Chong, adding that: "We could easily have done two shows and said 'zaijian' (goodbye). That's what some museums do in China, they come, install their collection for just a show and get out. We don't want to do it that way."

The first item on the program calendar is a curatorial residency at Spring that takes place this month. Chong brought together the Barcelona-based curatorial team **Latitudes** and four Hong Kong artists: **Nadim Abbas**, **Samson Young**, **Ho Sin Tung**, and **Yuk King Tan**. Each artist will spend a day with Latitudes, showing them around Hong Kong, connecting specific sites in the city with their personal artistic concerns.

The idea is to take the time to allow creative personalities to merge and exchange. Time is at the center of Chong's planning. The moderator wanted to produce a series of events that would propose ways to stretch time.

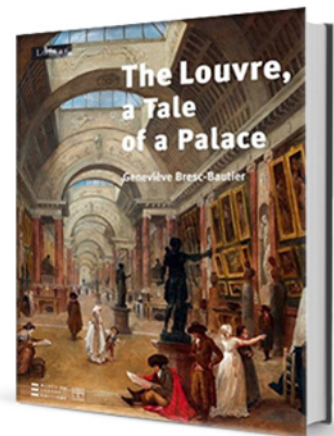
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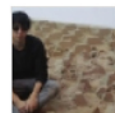
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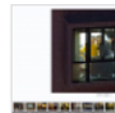
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"Max Andrews and Mariana Cánepa Luna [who make up Latitudes] will spend a month in Hong Kong. It sounds like a short time, but to spend a month without a fixed brief is actually a great undertaking," says Chong.

This lengthening of time is essential to allow for what Ayas calls the "soft" side of creativity to emerge from the meeting of artists who previously were strangers.

"A genuine desire to show the soft parts of creation is what drives this project," says Ayas. "I want us to be closer to the studio, closer to the ideas that drive art-making. I want us to be closer to the inner creation of art rather than its outer consumption only, rather than the transaction that happens on a white wall. It's very fragile and fragility also has to be embraced a bit more in the art world, because everything is always so finished and perfect."






Although several events, exhibitions and residencies have been announced, the full spectrum of the project is still in flux. The indefiniteness of it all is part of the point of "Moderation(s)." "All we're doing is setting up some conditions and context. The rest is going to play out on its own," says Ayas. Invitations to participating artists will continue to go out. New events will be generated as the project progresses through the year and new ideas crop up.

For now it is confirmed that there will be a fiction writing residency introduced in June where 15 artists, writers and curators will produce short stories together. Then in October, the artist duo **A Contructed World** will set up "The Social Contract" at the Spring Workshop space. Before viewing the installation, the audience must sign a legally binding non-disclosure agreement, forcing them to refrain from discussing what they saw in the room.

See the full program for "Moderation(s)" at www.springworkshop.org. Nadim Abbas' tour of Hong Kong is open to the public, January 19, rsvp is required at info@springworkshop.org.

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



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