

PRUDENTIAL 

 **EYE AWARDS**
CONTEMPORARY ASIAN ART

SARETH SVAY, EX-CAMBODIAN REFUGEE AWARDED THE 2016 PRUDENTIAL EYE AWARD FOR OVERALL BEST EMERGING ARTIST



Singapore, Tuesday 20 January 2016 – Sareth Svay has been named as the Overall Best Emerging Artist at the Prudential Eye Awards 2016 for Contemporary Asian Art. Sareth Svay will receive a total of US\$50,000 as his prize as well as a solo exhibition at START Art Fair at the renowned Saatchi Gallery later this year.

Sareth Svay was born in Battambang, Cambodia in 1972. In 1979 he moved with his family to a refugee camp at the border of Thailand where he lived for the next thirteen years. There he encountered a French volunteer teaching art and learned how to draw. His art practice developed from his time in the refugee camp and his work draws on the social and political history of Cambodia through sculpture, performance and installation. He addresses his country's history through poetic and personal reflections.

Niru Ratnam, Director of the Prudential Eye Programme said: "Sareth Svay's story is incredible and inspiring. His art work draws on a very specific context but transcends that. He produces works that are funny, poetic and confident. He is a worthy winner of the Prudential Eye Awards."

Grace Fu, Minister for Culture, Community and Youth said: "The Prudential Eye Awards is an initiative between the public and private sectors that recognises contemporary art and

emerging artists in Asia. The contemporary art scene in Asia is vibrant and growing and many young artists from the region have much to offer to Singaporeans. This exhibition and Awards, the result of active participation of the corporate sector, is giving us a great opportunity to appreciate the works of these artists by bringing their works to Singapore. The support of the private sector is crucial to the development of the arts in Singapore. A strong ecosystem in the art sector is essential in realising our goal of becoming a vibrant cultural city."

Sean Rach, Chief Marketing Officer, Prudential Corporation Asia said, "Prudential has a long heritage of supporting contemporary art and we are proud to be hosting the Prudential Eye Awards in Singapore for the third consecutive year. All of these artists provide a unique view into the heart and soul of this dynamic and vibrant region, and we hope these Awards will help them gain greater international acclaim while further raising global awareness and appreciation of Asian contemporary arts and culture."

Launched in 2014, the prestigious annual Awards recognises the best emerging Asian contemporary artists as well as the leading exhibitions, galleries, institutions and art critics working to promote Asian contemporary art.

The third edition of the Prudential Eye Awards featured ten Awards, with five categories of Best Emerging Artist, using various mediums including digital/video, installation, painting, photography and sculpture. Grace Fu, Minister of Culture, Community and Youth, officiated at the 2016 Awards, held as part of Singapore Art Week and also made the presentation to the Overall Winner.

Accompanying the awards is a public exhibition at ArtScience Museum which will run from 16 January to 27 March 2016. The exhibition will shine the spotlight on 39 works from the 15 shortlisted artists for the Prudential Eye Awards in the following categories: Digital/Video, Installation, Painting, Sculpture and Photography. This is the second year that Marina Bay Sands is hosting the prestigious awards ceremony and the exhibition.

The winning artists

As well as being nominated the overall winner, Sareth Svay also won in the category of Best Emerging Artist Using Sculpture.

Each winning artist received a reward of US\$20,000 at a red carpet awards ceremony at the MasterCard Theatres - Sands Theatre at Marina Bay Sands, Singapore.

Huang Po Chih (Taiwan) won in the category of Best Emerging Artist Using Installation.

Manish Nai (India) won in the category of Best Emerging Artist Using Painting.

Shumon Ahmed (Bangladesh) won in the category of Best Emerging Artist Using Photography.

Trinh Thi Nguyen (Vietnam) won in the category of Best Emerging Artist Using Digital/Video.

Other award winners

Celebrated Thai artist Sakarin Krue-On was honoured with the Lifetime Achievement Award for Asian Contemporary Art. His works have consistently addressed Thailand's traditions from a contemporary perspective and his practice is rooted in concerns specific to Asia. With experience of exhibiting both at the Venice Biennale (twice) and Documenta, the artist has taken these local concerns to a global stage.

The award for Visual and Pop Culture recognising creativity that blurs the borders of art and shows a contemporary aesthetic drive across cultural products was handed to Thai rock group Slot Machine, who is known for their unique Thai sound, particularly through the use of guitar melody and vocals, which are rooted in traditional Thai music.

Other category winners that were announced at the awards are Spring Workshop (Hong Kong) as 'The Best Asian Contemporary Art Institution' and 'Great Crescent: Art and Agitation in the 1960s – Japan, South Korea and Taiwan' from Para Site (Hong Kong) as the Best Exhibition of Asian Contemporary Art.

The Prudential Eye Awards 2016 winners are:

1. Overall Emerging Artist of the Year
Sareth Svay (Cambodia)
2. Installation
Huang Po Chih (Taiwan)
3. Digital/Video
Trinh Thi Nguyen (Vietnam)
4. Painting
Manish Nai (India)
5. Photography
Shumon Ahmed (Bangladesh)
6. Sculpture
Sareth Svay (Cambodia)
7. Lifetime Achievement Award for Asian Contemporary Art
Sakarin Krue-On (Thailand)
8. Visual & Pop Culture
Slot Machine (Thailand)

9. Best Asian Contemporary Art Institution
Spring Workshop (Hong Kong)

10. Best Exhibition of Asian Contemporary Art
'Great Crescent: Art and Agitation in the 1960s – Japan, South Korea and Taiwan'
from Para Site (Hong Kong)

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About the Prudential Eye Awards

The Prudential Eye Awards were launched in 2014 by the Global Eye Programme, a partnership between Prudential, Parallel Contemporary Art and the Saatchi Gallery. The annual awards focus on emerging artists from across Greater Asia and highlight the breadth, range and diversity of the works being made by emerging Asian artists. In partnership with the Saatchi Gallery they enable the work of these artists to reach audiences and receive international exposure. The Awards ceremony of the third edition of the Prudential Eye Awards will take place in Singapore on 19 January 2016. www.prudentialeyeawards.com

About the Prudential Eye Awards judges:

Serenella Ciclitira has an Honours Degree in Art History from Trinity College, Dublin and has worked extensively with artists and galleries throughout the world. With her husband, David Ciclitira, she is the co-founder of Global Eye Programme and a member of its curatorial board. She has been an Honorary Fellow at the Royal College of Art in London, and since 1990 has been awarding the Parallel Prize for Painting and the Serenella Ciclitira Scholarship for Sculpture. Winner of the Parallel Prize, Gillian Carnegie, was later nominated for the Turner Prize and Benedict Carpenter and Gereon Krebber went on to win the prestigious Jerwood Sculpture Prize. Martin Westwood, a former Parallel Prize winner, was featured in the Art Now exhibition at the Tate Britain in 2005.

Nigel Hurst is Director and Chief Executive of the Saatchi Gallery in London. He graduated from Goldsmiths College, London University in 1986 and since then has curated numerous international exhibitions. He joined the Saatchi Gallery as a curator in 1997, working on *Sensation* at the Royal Academy of Arts, London, the National Galerie at the Hamburger Bahnhof, Berlin and the Brooklyn Museum of Art in New York. More recent exhibitions have focused on Asian contemporary art, including *The Revolution Continues: New Art from China*

(2008), *Unveiled: New Art from Middle East* (2009), *The Empire Strikes Back: Indian Art Today* (2010), *The Silk Road* in collaboration with the City of Lille, France (2011) and *Korean Eye* (2012). He has also been a member of the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea Public Art Advisory Board since 2009, is a collection advisor for Chelsea & Westminster Hospital and also sits on the Development Council of University of the Arts London.

Chang Tsong-Zung (Johnson Chang) is curator, guest professor of China Academy of Art in Hangzhou, director of Hanart TZ Gallery and board member of Asia Art Archive and Inter-Asia School. He has been active in curating Chinese exhibitions since the 1980s, including *China's New Art Post-1989* (travelling 1993-98), Special Exhibitions at São Paulo Biennial 1996 and Venice Biennale 2001. Major curatorial projects include the *Power of the Word* series of exhibitions (since 1999), the *Yellow Box* series of research projects about contemporary art practice and Chinese culture of connoisseurship (since 2004). He co-curator of Guangzhou Triennial 2008 *Farewell to Post-Colonialism*, West Heavens projects of India-China art and social thought (since 2010), and was co-curator of the 9th Shanghai Biennale (2012), *Reactivation*.

Fumio Nanjo is the director of Mori Art Museum since November in 2006. He graduated from Keio University in the faculty of Economics (1972) and Letters (Aesthetics/Art History; 1977). His main achievements include commissioner of the Japan Pavilion at the Venice Biennale (1997), commissioner at the Taipei Biennale (1998), member of jury committee of the Turner Prize (1998), artistic director of the Yokohama Triennale 2001, jury member of the Golden Lion Prize of the Venice Biennale (2005) and artistic director of the Singapore Biennale (2006/2008). Publications include *Asian Contemporary Art Report: China, India, Middle East and Japan* (2010) and *A Life with Art* (2012).

Honor Harger is the Executive Director for ArtScience Museum at Marina Bay Sands. A curator from New Zealand, she has a strong interest in artistic uses of technologies and in science as part of culture. Honor brings with her over 15 years of experience of working at the intersection between art, science and technology. She is responsible for charting the overall direction and strategy for ArtScience Museum. Through her career, Honor has held several key appointments in the United Kingdom, New Zealand and Australia, and has curated many international exhibitions and events around the world. From 2009-2010 she was guest curator of Transmediale, an international festival of art and digital culture in Berlin. From 2004-2008, she was the director of the AV Festival, the UK's largest biennial of media art, film and music. She was the first webcasting curator for Tate Modern in London from 2000-2003, where she also curated events and concerts on art and technology.

Gu Wenda is the recipient of the 2015 Prudential Eye Awards Lifetime Achievement Award. Since 1981, Wenda Gu has participated in numerous international solo and group exhibitions and biennales in more than 30 countries. He had a survey exhibition for the first time in his artistic career at the National Gallery of Australia in 2001-2002. His art works are in permanent collections of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, Guggenheim Museum, Museum of Art New York, Hong Kong Museum of Art, San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, National Gallery of Australia among others & private collections.

Dr. Peter Selz, described Wenda Gu as "arguably the most original and authentic artist to emerge in China since the revolution". Roberta Smith of The New York Times wrote "Wenda Gu...seems to be joining the list of artists whose work is attacked by a large public questioning its status as art and defended by fervent art worlders...". Edward Lucie-Smith

recently wrote, "Wenda Gu is the most celebrated of a new generation of avant-garde artists who emerged from China in the very late 1980s and in the 1990s...he has made himself into a fully international figure. In more senses than one, he is a key figure in the culture of our time."

Rosalyn D'Mello, is a widely published freelance art writer based in New Delhi. She was the Editor-in-chief of BLOUIN ARTINFO India. She is a regular contributor to Vogue, Open, Mint Lounge and Art Review Asia. She was among five writers nominated for Forbes' Best Emerging Art Writer Award in 2014 and was also nominated for the inaugural Prudential Eye Art Award for Best Writing on Asian Contemporary Art in 2014. She was the associate editor of The Art Critic, a 600+ page selection of the art writings of Richard Bartholomew from the 1950s to the early '80s. Her first book, *A Handbook For My Lover* has been published in India by Harper Collins.

About the Prudential Eye Programme

Established in 2008 by David and Serenella Ciclitira and sponsored by the region's leading life insurer and asset manager Prudential, the Prudential Eye Programme is an initiative that nurtures artistic talent. The programme aims to develop arts infrastructure in territories where this is lacking, in order to provide artists with the platforms, support and recognition they need to develop their careers. It works to build networks and opportunities for artists and galleries through strategic partnerships and a variety of platforms.

Previous projects from the Prudential Eye Programme include *Korean Eye* (2009 to 2012), *Indonesian Eye* (2011), *Hong Kong Eye* (2013), *Prudential Malaysian Eye* (2014), *Prudential Singapore Eye* (2015): a series of international touring exhibitions and publications providing emerging Asian artists with opportunities to showcase their work. To date, the programme has held 23 exhibitions worldwide, which have been viewed by over two million people.

In January 2014, the Prudential Eye Programme launched the *Prudential Eye Awards* in Singapore, honouring the accomplishments of emerging artists throughout greater Asia and launching a creative education programme with the British Council.

The latest exhibition in the Prudential Eye Programme is *Thailand Eye presented by Prudential* which was held at Saatchi Gallery, London from 25 November 2015 to 2 January 2016. The exhibition will also be on display at the Bangkok Art and Culture Centre from 17 March to 26 June 2016. More information on the exhibition at www.prudentialthailandeye.com

About Parallel Contemporary Art

Parallel Contemporary Art is a not-for-profit organisation dedicated to supporting emerging artists across the world. It was founded by David and Serenella Ciclitira who have been collectors and patrons of contemporary art for over two decades. Through their love of travel and discovering new artistic talent, they realised young artists in many parts of Asia were under supported and going unnoticed. To help develop the careers of these emerging Asian artists, they launched the Global Eye Programme, an initiative that nurtures worldwide artistic talent, which is sponsored by Prudential.

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Prudential Corporation Asia is a business unit of Prudential plc (United Kingdom)*, comprising its life insurance operations in Asia, and its asset management business, Eastspring Investments. It is headquartered in Hong Kong.

Prudential is a leading life insurer that spans 12 markets in Asia, covering Cambodia, China, Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, Korea, Malaysia, The Philippines, Singapore, Taiwan, Thailand and Vietnam. Prudential has a robust multi-channel distribution platform providing a comprehensive range of savings, investment and protection products to meet the diverse needs of Asian families.

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About Singapore Art Week

The Prudential Eye Awards 2016 and Exhibition are part of Singapore Art Week (16 – 24 January 2016). An initiative by the National Arts Council, in partnership with the Singapore Tourism Board and Singapore Economic Development Board, Singapore Art Week reinforces Singapore's position as Asia's leading arts destination. It is a nine-day celebration of the visual arts, held at many venues across Singapore, including museums, art precincts and non-profit spaces.

Reaching out to both Singapore residents and international visitors, Singapore Art Week offers a myriad of quality art experiences, from art fairs, gallery openings, exhibitions, lifestyle events and public art walks, to enriching discussions on art and culture. Covering the visual arts beyond contemporary practices, including modern and traditional visual forms, Singapore Art Week also aims to galvanise the arts sector to launch innovative art and lifestyle concepts and events in conjunction with it. For more information, please visit www.artweek.sg

About Marina Bay Sands Pte Ltd

Marina Bay Sands is the leading business, leisure and entertainment destination in Asia. It features large and flexible convention and exhibition facilities, 2,560 hotel rooms and suites, the rooftop Sands SkyPark, the best shopping mall in Asia, world-class celebrity chef restaurants and an outdoor event plaza. Its two theatres showcase a range of leading entertainment performances including world-renowned Broadway shows. Completing the line-up of attractions is ArtScience Museum at Marina Bay Sands which plays host to permanent and marquee exhibitions. For more information, please visit www.marinabaysands.com

About ArtScience Museum

ArtScience Museum at Marina Bay Sands is Southeast Asia's leading cultural institution that explores the inter-relationship between art, science, technology and culture. Featuring 21 galleries totaling 50,000 square feet, the iconic lotus-inspired building has staged major

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exhibitions by some of the 20th century's key artists, including Salvador Dalí, Andy Warhol and Vincent Van Gogh, as well as major exhibitions which explore aspects of scientific history.

About the Saatchi Gallery

The Saatchi Gallery was founded in 1985 with the aim of making contemporary art accessible to the widest possible audience by providing an innovative platform for emerging artists to show their work. Over the last four years the Saatchi Gallery has hosted ten out of the top 15 most visited exhibitions in London according to The Art Newspaper's survey of international museum attendance. It is also ranked amongst the world's top three most liked museums on Facebook and Twitter by Museum Analytics. The Saatchi Gallery website has become a global meeting place for people interested in contemporary art.