

AUCKLAND

# art fair

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2016

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Auckland  
Tourism, Events and  
Economic Development



Books

## Up the Ante

BY SIOBHAN BENT, DENISE CHU, SIMON FRANK, HANAE KO, HG MASTERS,  
SYLVIA TSAI & DENISE TSUI, PHOTOGRAPHY BY JEN KWOK



In a digital age when high-resolution images and instant content are just a swipe away, makers of print books—whether centuries-old publishers or your next-door neighbor—are uncovering ways to add value with more than just heftier paper stock. In fact, there is a mini-boom in art books underway, giving ample room for more experimental publishers (sometimes even galleries) to prove their worth with projects that raise the stakes in both content and form.

Marking anniversaries, three organizations revved up their intellectual output, rather than resting on laurels. In Hong Kong, trailblazing gallery Hanart TZ employed a 483-page super-catalog as a springboard to investigate China's most tumultuous century. Singapore's first independent alternative art space, the Substation, proving the efficacy of its collaborative approach, gathered as many perspectives as it is years old for an ambitious commemorative publication on its 25th anniversary. On the occasion of a major Billy Apple retrospective at the Auckland Art Gallery, the artist's longtime collaborator Wytan Curnow presents the story of a four-decades-long labor of love that is the artist's unique brand.

Several monographs released in 2015 yield the page to primary materials produced by their subjects, to the immense benefit of readers. In one, Beijing-born installationist Yin Xiuzhen shares previously unpublished writings and a photographic tour of her studio, captured by husband Song Dong. Meanwhile, in another volume, Japanese artist Koki Tanaka's 31 unfiltered journalistic entries

offer insight to his social, collaborative practice. A new monograph includes an exact reproduction of Kazuo Shiraga's actual scrapbook, opening a window into the Gutai world, just as the first book on the Philippines' most celebrated conceptual artist, Roberto Chabet, pays tribute to his ebullient practice with a playful design, including artwork pullouts and colorful inserts.

Publishers are looking further afield, no longer letting worthy subjects languish in places the art market forgot. *No Boundaries* lives up to its name, bottling the sheer adrenaline that drove an American couple to chase abstractions from Australia's Indigenous communities. In New Delhi, a private museum doesn't shy away from the raw, grainy, difficult-to-capture aesthetics of Nalini Malani's video and installation practice. An inquiry into the purpose of "the archive" taps disruptive voices from Afghanistan to Abu Dhabi, while a second-edition of a survey of Turkish art goes further back in time, to 1975, tracing the opening of a nation and its art. Tongue-in-cheek collective Slavs and Tatars, whose self-described area of focus is "east of the former Berlin Wall and west of the Great Wall of China," present a publication accompanying their most recent cycle of work. It offers, on each page, bonus tips on ruling for future oligarchs and despots, à la Machiavelli's *The Prince*, because, well, why not? It might even be useful to one of those art mega-collectors out there, or someone they work for. Everywhere in the print world these days, more is more. *SB*

①

HATJE CANTZ  
**Koki Tanaka: Precarious Practice**  
 EDITED BY DEUTSCHE BANK

Deutsche Bank's 2015 "Artist of the Year" monograph celebrates Koki Tanaka with texts about and by the Los Angeles-based Japanese artist, who promises to review his practice "as candid[ly] as possible." In 31 journal-like entries accompanying images of projects from his early years exploring everyday objects and actions to later works homing in on people, participation and performance, Tanaka describes moments big (his 2013 Japan Pavilion at the 55th Venice Biennale) and small (an unrealized project from the same year, represented by a blank space). Closer attention to detail might have remedied captions that are frequently brief or missing altogether, or the scrapbook-like layout that, while fitting, can make text or images difficult to decipher. A section dedicated to Tanaka's book of correspondence does not include a single excerpt. Like the artist, this honest, personal book is gently and imperfectly impactful. *SB*



②  
 NYU ABU DHABI ART GALLERY AND JRP RINGIER  
**Slavs and Tatars – Mirrors for Princes**  
 EDITED BY ANTHONY DOWNEY

Slavs and Tatars's *Mirrors for Princes* is equal parts exhibition catalog, essay collection and medieval Uighur self-help book. The Eurasia-obsessed artist collective directs its attention to the titular genre of "advice literature" for leaders, focusing on the 11th-century *Kutadgu Bilig* ("Wisdom of Royal Glory") written by Yusûf Khâss Hâjib for the prince of Kashgar. Quotes from *Kutadgu Bilig* in Uighur line the edge of pages along with their Arabic, German, Polish, Turkish and English translations. Elsewhere are images of Slavs and Tatars's pun-fueled interactive exhibitions, along with essays from academics and curators. Columbia University professor Manan Ahmed Asif relates how a 1990s TV drama drew ancient political philosophy into Indian nationalism, while University of Glasgow professor Lloyd Ridgeon investigates the intersection of hairstyles, Islam and power. Irreverent as always, Slavs and Tatars continue to challenge East-West binaries. *SF*

③  
 KING HONG ART PROJECTS  
**Roberto Chabet**  
 EDITED BY RINGO BUNOAN

With artwork pullouts, plays on page sizes and surprise inserts of text printed on yellow notebook paper, the dynamic design of this first-ever monograph of Roberto Chabet (1937–2013) is fitting for the Philippines' most celebrated conceptual artist. This fastidious tribute begins in the 1960s, when Chabet entered the art scene with his abstract paintings and works on paper that responded to the WWII-incurred devastation in Manila. These drawings evolved into three-dimensional forms as he experimented with space, eventually maturing into the unconventional transformations of everyday objects and found materials for which he is now known. A wealth of artwork images, exhibition views and newspaper clippings accompanies textual reflections—by Filipino artists and curators—that contextualize Chabet's contributions to contemporary art, many of which paint a personal portrait of the revered teacher and mentor. *ST*

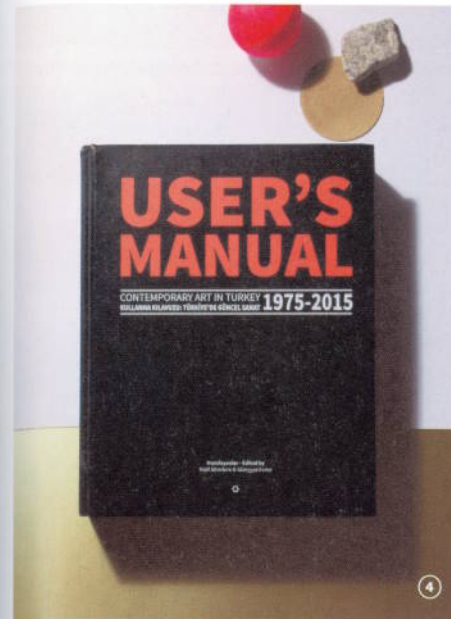
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⑤

ASIA ONE BOOKS AND HANART PROJECTS  
**3 Parallel Artworlds:  
 100 Art Things from  
 Chinese Modern History**  
 EDITED BY CHANG TSONG-ZUNG, GAO SHIMING  
 AND VALERIE C. DORAN

In 2014, Hong Kong art patron and dealer Chang Tsong-zung's Hanart TZ Gallery celebrated its 30th anniversary with "Hanart 100: Idiosyncrasies," a symposium and non-sale showcase of works from Chang's collection of modern and contemporary Chinese art. Expanding on that landmark event, the 483-page super-catalogue *3 Parallel Artworlds: 100 Art Things from Chinese Modern History* posits that three concurrent "worlds"—the literati tradition, the socialist state and globalized capitalism—are the basis for parsing 20th-century Chinese art. Essays by 14 of Chang's coterie, including curator Gao Shiming and conceptual artist Qiu Zhijie, are followed by a section highlighting the gallery's game-changing projects, like "China's New Art, Post-1989" (1993–97). Lovingly crafted inside and out, it is a worthy contribution to the archive of scholarly books on China's most tumultuous century. *SB*

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④  
 REVOLVER VERLAG AND ART-IST  
**User's Manual 2.0: Contemporary  
 Art in Turkey, 1975–2015**  
 EDITED BY HALIL ALTINDERE AND  
 SÜREYYA EVREN

Almost a decade after the first edition, *User's Manual 2.0* starts 11 years earlier and ends nine years later, profiling 101 artists from Turkey in this massive tome edited by artist Halil Altindere and writer Süreyya Evren. While each artist gets two spreads of glossy images representing their practice, the front third of the volume contains 16 bilingual (Turkish-English) texts—some reprised from the first edition, others newly commissioned—surveying the development of contemporary art and its ecosystem amid Turkey's economic and political opening to the world. New contributions primarily come from past Istanbul Biennial curators (such as Fulya Erdemci, Charles Esche, Hou Hanru and Carolyn Christov-Bakargiev), and also include Ahu Antmen's survey of gender constructs in late 20th-century Turkey and Osman Erden's overview of the last 15 years, packing maximum information about a nation's art scene into a single tome. *HGM*

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⑥

I.B. TAURIS  
**Dissonant Archives:  
 Contemporary Visual Culture  
 and Contested Narratives in the  
 Middle East**  
 EDITED BY ANTHONY DOWNEY

How should the relationship between contemporary art and the archive be defined and negotiated? What purpose does the archive serve? These and other questions are probed through writings and artworks by filmmakers, artists, curators and writers in *Dissonant Archives*, the second volume in a series produced by the Kamel Lazaar Foundation, a Geneva-based nonprofit that focuses on visual culture in North Africa and the Middle East. The anthology begins in Afghanistan with filmmaker Mariam Ghani's case study of the Afghan Films archive, which argues that in a country where cultural resources are subject to burning, looting and destruction, the archive can be a "site of resistance and possibility." In Lebanon, photographer Lucien Samaha reveals the shortfalls of the archival process, while New York's Gulf Labor Coalition presents their one-year campaign (2013–14) that highlights the controversy surrounding the construction on Abu Dhabi's Saadiyat Island. *DT*



7

KIRAN NADAR MUSEUM OF ART  
**Nalini Malani: You Can't Keep Acid in a Paper Bag (1969–2014)**  
 EDITED BY LOTTE BETTING, SAUMYA BHATT AND JOHAN PIJNAPPEL

Nalini Malani is known for her mixed-media works and large-scale shadow-play installations that address issues of gender and transnational politics. Though she has exhibited internationally since the 1980s, it was only in 2014 that she had her first retrospective in her native India—a major survey at New Delhi's Kiran Nadar Museum of Art. The exhibition's catalog, *Nalini Malani: You Can't Keep Acid in a Paper Bag*, comprises a wide-ranging selection of visuals from the show, as well as essays and archival materials documenting her artistic journey. Reflecting Malani's penchant for video pieces, the aesthetic tone of the book is dark and often grainy—but with a raw and human sensibility. This, in turn, is effectively juxtaposed with intermittent bursts of dynamic color that appear in her other artworks, such as the bright-yellow canvases comprising her installation *Cassandra* (2009). *HK*

7 8



8

DOMINIQUE LÉVY AND AXEL VERVOORDT GALLERY  
**Kazuo Shiraga**

Between 1953 and 1965, Japanese painter Kazuo Shiraga kept a personal scrapbook documenting his most pivotal years with the Gutai Art Association. Reproduced in full for the first time, the scrapbook unearths a new perspective of appreciating his artistic evolution. *Kazuo Shiraga* is a motley compendium that comprises not only his personal notes and documentation, but also other archival photographs of Gutai events, full-color plates of his heralded foot paintings and academic texts contextualizing the postwar artist's six-decade career. Gutai specialist Ming Tiampo relates Shiraga's visual vocabulary to Japanese *matsuri* ("festival") culture, while Columbia University's John Rajchman delves into wider art historical discourse to conclude ways in which Shiraga achieved a higher disposition in action painting than artists of the American avant-garde. A significant addition to the growing English-language literature on Shiraga, this densely packed monograph provides an enlightening visual and scholarly read. *DT*



9

DELMONICO BOOKS AND PRESTEL  
**No Boundaries: Aboriginal Australian Contemporary Abstract Painting**  
 EDITED BY HENRY F. SKERRITT

Published to accompany a traveling exhibition of works drawn from the private collection of American collectors Debra and Dennis Scholl, *No Boundaries* surveys the lives of nine Aboriginal abstract painters hailing from northwestern Australia. A casual visit seven years ago to Sydney's Art Gallery of New South Wales where Dennis encountered the museum's Indigenous art collection ignited a love affair with Aboriginal abstraction. The Scholls, already veteran collectors of Western contemporary art, then traversed the Australian Kimberley Desert in search of paintings that left them "overcome by [their] power, spirituality and quality." Full-color plates, photographs and scholarly as well as anecdotal contributions—including an account about Warlimpirrnga Tjapaltjarri, who emerged from the wilderness as Australia's "last uncontacted" Indigenous people—take readers through the Scholls' expedition of discovering, in their words, "some of the finest abstract painters this planet has ever seen." *DT*

12

PHAIDON  
**Yin Xiuzhen**  
 BY WU HUNG, HOU HANRU AND STEPHANIE ROSENTHAL

The very first monograph on Chinese artist Yin Xiuzhen investigates the genesis of a body of work that consistently comprises used clothing, cement, suitcases or combinations thereof, as metaphors for memory, demolition and globalization. One of three main contributors, art historian Wu Hung delves into these thematic "threads," discoursing on the artist's sculptures, installations and public interventions as bearers of lived experiences, odes to cities metamorphized in the name of progress and critiques of power structures—in worlds of commerce or international relations—that homogenize local and global spaces and communities. Yin's voice is heard regularly throughout the book, whether in interviews, copious quotes embedded in essays or her own—previously unpublished—writings on specific projects. Husband and fellow artist Song Dong's photo tour around her studio and an illustrated chronology of past exhibitions dating back to 1994 round off the steady survey. *DC*

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10

AUCKLAND ART GALLERY TOI O TĀMAKI  
**Sold on Apple: The Complete Wylan Curnow Writings**  
 BY WYLAN CURNOW

"Billy Apple is the artist; I am the critic," declares Wylan Curnow in the first of a chronological collection of more than 40 essays, reviews and interview transcripts that register an ongoing conversation between himself and New Zealand's foremost conceptualist. Over the last 40 years, Curnow has become Apple's close collaborator: he writes prolifically for the artist—not just art criticism but exhibition texts and even phrases that end up in the artworks—crafting and promoting the "Billy Apple" brand and even managing the artist's public relations. Published on the occasion of a major 2015 retrospective at the Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki, *Sold on Apple* reveals the seminal critic's decades-long mission to explain, mediate and proselytize Apple's practice—first introducing him to a provincial art community in New Zealand during the 1970s, then later to audiences worldwide. *DC*

11

THE SUBSTATION AND ETHOS BOOKS  
**25 Years of the Substation: Reflections on Singapore's First Independent Art Centre**  
 EDITED BY AUDREY WONG

Despite the constant turnover of art spaces in Singapore, the Substation has remained a pillar of the local community and, as it proclaims, the city-state's "Home for the Arts." This year, to mark its 25th anniversary, Singapore's first independent art space published an anthology of its history, in which 25 artists and staff members share their experiences of the art center, reflect on its evolution and consider its future possibilities. Voices from the Substation's formative years—including that of architect Tay Kheng Soon, who designed the initial proposal for the power-station-turned-art-space—are paired with documentary photographs of past events. Quotes from former artistic directors articulating their vision for the institution, which are interspersed throughout the book, and various other contributions—such as by filmmaker Tan Pin Pin, archivist Debbie Ding and photographer Robert Zhao—form a mosaic of the Substation's legacy. *ST*

