

## **The Undiscovered Country - a reflection on mortality through performance art.**

Led by artists Daniela Beltrani and Rajinder Singh



The Undiscovered Country is a performance event created specifically for Art Stage Singapore 2018. Artists Daniela Beltrani and Rajinder Singh have invited four fellow artists to a meditation on death and dying through performance art at Singapore's premiere art fair with the help of Kuala Lumpur's Wei-Ling gallery. The artists involved are award winning performance artist Ezzam Rahman , Daniela Beltrani, Sophia Natasha Wei, Isabelle Desjeux and Tinu Verghis in collaboration with Dublin based Malaysian artist Rajinder Singh.

The schedules for the performance and meditation sessions are as follows:

**Thursday 25 Jan 2018: 3pm - 9pm**

[  
Raj/Tinu: 4pm  
Isabelle: 5pm  
Daniela: 6pm  
Natasha: 7.30 pm  
]

**Friday 26 Jan 2018: 12pm - 9pm**

[  
Natasha: 4pm  
Isabelle: 5pm  
Raj/Tinu: 6pm  
Ezzam: 7pm  
Daniela: 8pm  
]

**Saturday 27 Jan 2018: 11am - 7pm**

Isabelle: 1pm  
Natasha: 2pm  
Raj/Tinu: 3pm  
Daniela: 4pm  
Ezzam: 5pm

**Sunday 28 Jan 2018: 11am - 6pm**

[  
Raj/Tinu: 12pm  
Natasha: 1 pm  
Isabelle: 2pm  
Daniela: 3pm to 4 pm - MEDITATION Session  
]

## Performances:



### **Rajinder Singh/Tinu Verghis** : ( 30 - 45 mins)

Tinu Verghis' performance, in collaboration with Rajinder Singh, will be a study on gestures and movements in worship and mourning, the swaying or skulking movement in particular.. When a devotee, either in worship or mourning utters a word of their holy scriptures, the light in his soul is kindled...and he sways to and fro like the flame of a candle. While swaying, Tinu will commence a slow ritual of enhancing her presence with god through an act of piercing herself with a needle and thread and by tracing patterns of sacred symbols in the space around her using sacred ash.



### **Ezzam Rahman** : (30 to 45 minutes)

Ezzam's performance emphasises the body present in a space which sets its salient perimeters. His performances are characterised by slow actions such as walking in circles pacing and marking the space with the body and using various materials to create actions, shapes and interpretations.

### **Sophia Natasha Wei**: ( 30 to 45 mins)

Natasha invites the audience to consider mortality by interacting with red and white blood cells. Throughout the performance, these will be constructed and deconstructed in various formations to represent the physical competition between the cells in our blood. (Audience may participate). The artist responds to her changing installation using strength, disruptive motions and opposing directions.



### **Daniela Beltrani**: ( one hour)

For one hour - or 900 breaths - the artist will engage in simple and repetitive actions of meditative quality, in order to offer the audience, the opportunity to either have their mirror neurons fired up by watching the performance or directly experience the performance by sitting and copying the actions. If they choose the latter, unconscious breathing may become deactivated by conscious breathing, and

default mode network overridden by direct experience network. Picking lentils, plucking petals, blowing feathers, sucking water, striking matches, cutting ribbons, sticking bindis, pressing thumbs.



**Isabelle:** ( 30 to 45 mins) Projection: Yes

Isabelle's performance lecture will ask the question 'What if humans were part of the plants' grand plan to rule the planet?' Plants are just waiting for us to die so they can grow bigger and stronger. After a 15 minute lecture, she will walk among the crowd offering wild flowers from her lab suit to passers by.

## **Bio**

### **Rajinder Singh (curator artist)**

Rajinder Singh (b. 1964, Ipoh, Malaysia) is an artist and researcher who holds an enduring interest in South Asian magico-religious belief systems and the shape and space that they deny us. His practice is dedicated to the vulnerability of the body in its pain, hidden behind the gestures and movements of worship and the grace of dance. Through his multifaceted practice Rajinder explores the variety of ways the human body unfolds at the intersections of the world of the otherworldly and the dynamics of global modernity.

Rajinder graduated with a PhD in Engineering (UK) in 1993 and a Master's in Fine Arts (Singapore) in 2010. His recent performances and exhibitions include WoundBloom (performance) Wei Ling Gallery, Kuala Lumpur (2017); Cage of Deliverance, Wei Ling Gallery, Kuala Lumpur (2016); Common Ground, Chan Hampe Gallery, Singapore (2015); The ceiling floats away with a sigh, Wei Ling gallery (2014); Muestra Colectiva de Verano, Isabel Anchorena Gallery, Buenos Aires (2014); Fold, ICA, Singapore (2012); MOLC, Chan Hampe Gallery (2012); Ya-ad, ICA, Singapore (2011); Ellaline, Stephanie Hoppen Gallery, London (2011).

[www.unprimed.com](http://www.unprimed.com)

### **Daniela Beltrani (curator artist)**

Daniela Beltrani (b. 1968, Rome, Italy) is an artist based in Singapore. In 2011 she attained her Master of Arts in Contemporary Asian Art Histories from LASALLE College of the Arts, Singapore. She holds 500-hour yoga instructor, sound practitioner and mindfulness coach certificates. She is currently pursuing a graduate diploma in Applied Positive Psychology. Since 2010 Daniela has led solo and group exhibitions, and contributed articles for art publications, and catalogues with a focus on contemporary art in Southeast Asia, and performance art. She has presented over 90 performances, in the Philippines, Singapore, Italy, Myanmar, Cambodia, Turkey, Indonesia, Finland, China, Malaysia, India, and Mexico. Daniela is focused on promoting an understanding and appreciation of performance art as the most appropriate art form to facilitate a meaningful encounter between artist and audience. Her artistic practice extends to theory, photography, video, relics collection, and organising/attending events.

Her latest series, *From Human Doing to Human Being*, intends to elicit an audience response from levels of consciousness beyond mind, intellect, and ego, with a view to recover our sense of true self, through actions of meditative quality, carried out mindfully, in repetition, stillness, silence, and/or non-verbal communication.

[www.danielabeltrani.art](http://www.danielabeltrani.art)

## **Ezzam Rahman**

Ezzam Rahman is an award-winning multi-disciplinary installation and performance artist. He graduated with a Masters in Arts, Fine Arts from Goldsmiths University of London in 2017, Bachelor of Arts (Honors) in Fine Arts from the University of Huddersfield in 2010 and was formally trained as a sculptor from LASALLE-SIA College of the Arts. Ezzam is known for his interest in the body and his use of common, easily accessible and unconventional materials to produce works. Through his work, Ezzam features narratives that challenge/expand notions of identity politics, and the inherent paradoxes of presence and marginality. He was awarded a joint winner of the Grand Prize for the *President's Young Talents 2015* and the *People's Choice Award* by the Singapore Art Museum. Ezzam has been awarded the *Goh Chok Tong Youth Promise Award 2016* by Yayasan Mendaki and the prestigious *Young Artist Award* by the National Arts Council, Singapore.

## **Isabelle Desjeux**

Isabelle Desjeux is an artist based in Singapore. She has a background in molecular biology (PhD, Edinburgh University UK, 1995) and a Masters in Arts (Fine Arts) from LASALLE College of the Arts, Singapore (2010). Isabelle's research is based on the "refuse", the "leftovers", the "failures" and their function in the process of scientific research, and a strong belief in the power of transformation over creation. Drawing from the similarities of practice of both worlds, Isabelle's art feels like science. Her art takes the form of videos, installations and lectures using elaborate techniques of *Pataphysics*.

[www.isabelle-desjeux.com](http://www.isabelle-desjeux.com)

## **Sophia Natasha Wei**

Contemporary artist Sophia Natasha Wei (b. 1982, Singapore) pursues performance art as her main artistic expression. Her performances address the human condition, which she hopes her audience could re-create personal meanings and discover new experiences from. The corporeal endurance of the female body to achieve empathy is expressed through her visual language, where she works regularly with confines of space, distorted beauty and vignettes of dreamlike fantasy. In recent years, her works have evolved to present the liminal zone between painterly images and live action. She is an active contributor to the Singapore arts landscape with her artistic practice and work in education.

[www.sophianatasha.com](http://www.sophianatasha.com)

## **Tinu Verghis**

Born in Kerala, India, Tinu Verghis worked as a fashion model for 15 years before joining LASALLE College of the Arts for both her undergraduate and postgraduate studies. Her stint on the cover of Vogue, in the magazine's epic foray into featuring dark skinned models, played a big part in her awakening as an artist – soon after, she left her modelling career to pursue art as a channel to address systemic injustice, social and gender inequalities.

In her practice, she uses her body as a political and poetic symbol to challenge and expand preconceived ideas surrounding systems of oppression. By re-examining cultural standards as well as

the viewer's own sexuality, she hopes to unpack misogynist ideas of how the body of a woman is over idealised, systematically abject or subjected to intense policing. Tinu has won the President's Award at the International Biennale of Contemporary Art (Italy) in 2015 for her video art (Under My Skin) and The Winston Oh Travel Research Award (Singapore) in 2016.

<http://www.tinuverghis.com>