

Articulate project space

497 Parramatta Rd, Leichhardt Sydney



IMAGE: WeiZen Ho

PRESS RELEASE:

the subtle beings WeiZen Ho

the subtle beings is a performance installation that is the result of WeiZen Ho's two years of travel in Asia to research and witness of rituals in Sabah (East Malaysia) and Hanoi (Vietnam), rituals that are connected to her own cultural heritage.

The work uses hair, text, sound, text, sound circuitry, movement, vocals and video. Her collaborators are Katja Handt (costume designer), Iqbal Barkat (film artist), Vincent Tay (cinematographer), Binh Ta (cultural artist-guide in Hanoi), Damian Castaldi (sound circuitry, kinetic sound-to-body designer), Michael Touisuta (sound design collaborator + engineer). The installation team includes volunteers Sarah Keighery, William Seeto, Louise Morgan, Alexandra Mitchell and Naomi Ullmann.

The project was made possible by the Australia Council's Arts Project grant for WeiZen to study and develop 'Performances, Interpreted & Reimagined of Asian Animistic & Shamanistic Rituals' 2016-2018.

"I am interested in the performance of ritual-like experiences of being possessed as a transformative experience for both the performer and onlooker. Then there is the notion of possession as the filling in of, and mediating of, many kinds of absences. It makes me wonder about the kinds of qualitative states that may make possession possible: mental vulnerability, uncertainty of social identity, lack of access to deeper communion or devotional spaces (and I don't mean just religious institutional buildings), the thinning veil between life and death, the need for empowerment, unbelonging, dislocation, displacement and uprooting.

Coming from a lineage of Fujian people who migrated into Malaysia and Indonesia before the Cultural Revolution in China, the above-mentioned states are familiar. I suspect the migration process can exacerbate them, depending on the level of trauma and degree of choice involved. Migrants have to grapple with the cultural distance they have travelled from as well. I guess for some, a migrant's world can be akin to a state of perpetual purgatory...

Possession can possibly be an instrument against despair and humiliation, where perhaps even a person dispossessed of country of origin, who is part of an invisible class in society or whose sense of identity is porous, can experience a sense of spiritual authority and communion, for example.

Part of my practice is the continual search for a performance structure that has integrity and yet is so minimal that it allows sixty to seventy percent space for improvisation and thereby hopefully, mediumship to occur. By mediumship I mean heightening my sensitivity to the guts of the performance, body imageries I am working on, and the presence of the space I am inhabiting..."

WeiZen Ho, *Potus Sedere: Part of the Stories from the Body Performance Series; Rabbit 20 - Dance* (A Journal for Non-fiction Poetry) published by RMIT in 2017

TITLE: *the subtle beings*

WHERE: Articulate Project Space, 497 Parramatta Road, Leichhardt. NSW 2040

WHEN:

Performance Dates:

Thursday 22 March, 6:30 - 8pm

Friday 23 March, 6:30 - 8pm

Saturday 24 March, 2:00 - 3:30pm & 6:30 - 8pm followed by closing drinks.

Forum: Sunday 25th March, 2pm (panel members Julie Vulca, Phillip Mar, Iqbal Barkat, WeiZen Ho)

Open Hours: 11am-5pm, Monday to Sunday 11 to 25 March 2018 (installation-in-progress open for viewing).

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BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

<http://www.weizenho.com/performance-installationinprogress/>

<http://articulate497.blogspot.com.au/p/comin-weizen->

[ho.html](http://articulate497.blogspot.com.au/2018/03/t-h-e-s-u-b-t-l-e-b-e-i-n-g-s-weizen-ho.html)<http://articulate497.blogspot.com.au/2018/03/t-h-e-s-u-b-t-l-e-b-e-i-n-g-s-weizen-ho.html>

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