



Asian women artists: A local and global perspective

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Abstract: In this paper, I focus on contemporary Asian art that deals with images of women, by women or about women. I canvas issues pertinent to the position of women and art production in the social setting of contemporary Asia and Asian Diaspora. I begin with a brief historical discussion of images of Asian women as traditional, masculine and Western. In recent times nudity and eroticism has had mixed reactions in the Asian public realm. Many contemporary Asian women artists have turned to the female body as a primary subject of the female experience. Gender, sexuality and power are distinct sites of struggle in the politics of difference for Asian women artists. Western modernist and colonialist presumptions, however, still persist in many cultural institutions. The local and global contexts of Asian women artists and their creations are seen as contested sites. As an exemplar in this paper, the exhibition *Text and Subtext: Contemporary Art and Asian Women* provides a critical framework that suggests provocative ways of rethinking contemporary art created by Asian women in which identity and cultural practice are to be conceived. Contemporary women artists in a local and global realm have demarcated a critical space for the articulation of a transnational Asian culture.

Key terms: Asian art, Diaspora, Women Artists, Gender, Identity

Preamble

AUTHOR'S ASIDE

From an Australian perspective, I focus on contemporary Asian art that deals with images of women, by women or about women. I am a white woman taking the familiar colonial role of putting this material together. I am paradoxically speaking for others whose art I hope to make visible. To introduce polyphony to this discussion, there are a variety of quotations from artists and writers that sometimes contradict each other and me.

Both Asia and the West have distinguishable cultural artistic traditions. This is changing as Asian artists adopt and adapt Western art styles. Contemporary Asian artists are concerned with establishing themselves in the world art scene. Women also want to be accepted as equal players in world contemporary art as well as addressing issues of gender and society. Within this context I look at the responses of Asian women to the contemporary world. In many ways the artists I focus on

carry the issues of being a woman and of being Asian as secondary to the issues of contemporary art. This paper canvasses issues pertinent to the position of women and art production in the social setting of modern Asia and the Asian Diaspora. I explore contemporary Asian women's art from a local and global perspective.

Feminism/s, Asian images and art

Images of Women was for the early feminist movement the first drafted means of recognising that art objects had ideological meanings which affected us as we live our lives. The phrase *Images of ...* was initially used by women and other cultural traditions, marginalised by the Western mainstream, to draw attention to recurrent patterns of oppressive representation (Kendall and Pollack, 1991, p. 27).

From an ideological perspective art is treated as a package of social information, full of symbols and ideas. Feminist theories are part of a broader political movement aimed at widespread social changes that affect women and more recently non-Western peoples. Race and gender have become principal concerns of ideological art. If art meant something in broad social terms then the audience would expand and art itself would escape from the ivory tower, from the clutches of the ruling institutions of art that releases and interprets it to the rest of the world (Lippard, 1995).

Feminist analysis of Asian art reveals an ideological continuity between high art, with its erotically available Asian temptresses, or saccharine and devoted mothers, and pop culture's appropriated versions of femininity. The idealisation of woman is very potent in Asian art through images of valiant worker and adoring mother or daughter of the nation. Such icons are encouraged and preferred to sociosexual indifference towards gender discrimination.

CHINA ART FLASH

"What sells [in Hong Kong] are pretty women in traditional costumes..." (Tsong-zung, 1993, p. 9).

It is feminist art theories that have placed questions of sexuality and representation on the agenda for analysis and interpretation of Asian art. Feminism is not just a new perspective that simply gives gender a priority in the analysis of the iconographies of Asian art, or versions of the social history of Asian art. Women's art in Asia is beginning to take root and evolve, with more artists and curators taking the initiative to stage events at national and international levels (Nair, 2000, p. 28).

Huang Zhuan (1997, p. 19) said, "Contemporary Chinese art has not yet seen the emergence of a "feminist movement" that would look familiar to people in the West. Women's themes are, however, dealt with by a growing number of inquiring women artists.... Especially for women from the Third World, life is a double 'otherness'. Female identity as expressed in contemporary art has the dual problem of being the other in the world of others."

Jian Jie quoted in Singapore, "In China, there are few female artists, and there are fewer female installation artists. The female artist has the same ability and even stronger creativity" (Wu Qi Ji 20-06-1997 *Lianhe Zaobao*, p. 4).

Feminist analysis of the formations of masculinity within the regime of sexual difference, as it articulates with racial as well as class power, reads the images that the art world produces as masculine and Western. In general, Asian women are absent, unrepresented and unsignified. A tacit convention has long prevailed in art that male artists address themselves primarily to a male viewer. Men are the **"EYE"**, a powerful metaphor in art for knowledge, liberated from the body by means of their enjoyment of a mastering gaze (Kendall and Pollack, 1991).

In the history of Western culture, the making of art has been construed as an essentially masculine activity (Bohm-Duchen, 1991; Kendall and Pollack, 1991). Similarly in Asia, female artists have never been widely recognised or popular. Berger (1972, p. 47) identified one of the most pervasive myths of western culture: "Men act and women appear: men look at women. Women watch themselves being looked at". Art, in other words, has been seen as the preserve of the male.

CHINA FLASH BACK

In traditional Chinese society, a female who had no educational background was considered as an ideal wife and highly desirable to men (Pang Chong Leong, 1998).

INDONESIA FLASH BACK

A traditional Indonesian phrase '... *masak, macak* and *manak* (cook, make herself up and have children)' (Williams and Simpson, 1996, p. 78)

The question of women in Asian art reveals the politics of othering where women remain the ones who are suppressed and exploited. The majority of Asian women do not feel themselves defined through images of women by Manet, Degas, Lichtenstein, Warhol, or even the Australian artist, Norman Lindsay. Lindsay, who believed in the hierarchy of racial types, reflected European Orientalist assumptions about the sexual availability of Eastern women (Broinowski, 1996).

Nudity and Eroticism in Asian Art

There is evidence of increasing eroticisation of public space in several Asian cultures (Clark, 1998). Symbols such as the body and genitalia, accepted as traditional devices for those dealing with gendered spaces in the West, can be seen as very confronting to Asian audiences (Huangfu, 1999).

Historically, a feature of Asian art has been an absence of the academic nude genre, (traditionally a young female subject) because such paintings would be considered immoral or anti-social. Because of such moral constraints, Asian artists would not usually depict the female nude in their art works. By contrast, Western artists have often used the female nude as a subject for their art.

USA ART FLASH

A mix of curiosity and prurience drew record crowds ... to the *Beijing* Art Gallery [for China's first show of nude art].... 'Oh, I'm so embarrassed,' stammered Chen Hong,

a medical student, when asked why she came to see the exhibition.... 'This is the first time I've seen this kind of thing'.... Some stood gaping at the more realistic and sensuous of the paintings; others hurried by.... (McEvelley, 1992, pp. 80-81).

CHINA FLASH BACK

Nude portraiture became an officially accepted genre in China only since a decision of state council in 1985 (Clark, 1998)... Chinese artists have not usually depicted the female nude in their art works. Some artists felt that such representation would allow a healthy attitude to the body after centuries of Chinese prudery. However, in life-drawing classes which started in 1984, ... art students tended to represent women in their pictures with whiter skin and larger breasts than the Chinese models (McEvelley, 1992).

Yu Hong's long series of portraits of women in 1988-90 was an effort to put women into the Chinese vernacular as perceived by women, not as they had historically been depicted by men as heroic toilers or subjects for soft pornography (Clark, 1998). Yu Hong's *Nude* (1988) is a strong statement against masculine appropriation of the spectacle of woman's body by refusing to ignore the process of aging. However, "The naked Chinese female artist might be viewed as 'cocky' or offensive by an audience embracing [Confucian] moral values" (Lin, 1997, p. 121)

The female body as Asian identity

If Asian women enter the cultural milieu, they have done so most often as exotic model, passive muse, or sexual mistress (or combinations of the three). Asian women artists have tried, consciously or not, to circumvent the risk of exploitation inherent in traditional artist/model relationships by turning to the genre of the self-portrait and the process of self-scrutiny. Many contemporary women Asian artists have turned to the female body as a primary subject of the female experience. Amanda Heng from Singapore uses images of the female body to explore her relationship with her mother (Lim, 1998) as an expression of "generic, genealogical and gendered [Chineseness]" (Webb, 1999, p. 128).

Masahiro Ushiroshoji (1997) about the Second Asia-Pacific Triennial of Contemporary Art (APT), "On reflection, much of the most impressive work was made by women.... Emiko Kasahara and Suzann Victor took up the theme of gender directly and indirectly, and there were many artists in this show who make us think about women in this region's cultures. This exhibition was unique for both the quality and quantity of presentation of women's art".

Suzann Victor, the Singaporean artist, has used human hair, bodily fluids such as breast milk, vaginal fluids, and even menstrual blood in her confrontational performance/installations (Huangfu, 1999). Huangfu (1999, p. 3) sees the power of Victor's ideological art in its supposed universality and representation of "all people who feel marginalised and excluded". In her self-portrait, *Ako* (1995), the Philippino artist, Agnes Arellano, deified herself as the goddess of multiple breasts and flowing milk, an image of plenty that threatens to burst with ripeness (Webb, 1999). Arellano contested powerful religious traditions "Where God has to be a man", by presenting herself as a female Buddha in *Vesta* (1995) with her legs unfolded from the lotus position intended as bold affirmations of her sexuality.

Pinaree Sanpitak (Webb, 1999, p, 158) said in an interview concerning her large textile/fibre installation *Womanly Bodies* (1998): Woman is the mystery, the incomplete, the versatile, the passionate, the vessel, the practical and the nonsensical.

Pinaree Sanpitak's work uses, as a starting point, the female body and the conditions of womanhood. Her work is also informed by the multiplicity of her personal experience as a contemporary, internationally educated Thai woman artist (Giakoumi, 1999, p.52). In *I'm Confused* 1991, Pinaree Sanpitak uses collage to evoke certain narrative elements referring to eggs and other symbols of motherhood and female sexuality. *Breastworks* (1994-5) by Pinaree was a project of art works that depicted female breasts in various shapes, colours and textures including images of her own breasts, revealing changes that she experienced during motherhood (Webb, 1999). The artist began to use a line for a navel in her art after she went through a caesarian operation (Lim, 1998).

These artists clearly use their work not only to represent self, but also to question the status of women and their roles in society. Showing the woman/artist unclothed reflects a widespread feeling that nakedness in this context signifies not sexual availability but rigorous self-scrutiny. The self-portraits by these women are intensely felt autobiographical images depicted in a profoundly lively vein that liberate women from patriarchal forms of representation. This search for identity by women artists is centred on autobiographical details and everyday experiences of being woman as object/subject and as spectator/character (Lim, 1998).

Gender, sexuality, and power

Issues of sexuality and power accepted as rights in the West are still being confronted in Asia (Huangfu, 1999). The politics of space are always sexual, even if space is central to the mechanisms of the erasure of sexuality (King, 1996). The complex space that Asian women occupy is across the intersection of race, gender, and sexuality as politics of difference.

This type of work created by Asian women artists presents one of the key motifs of contemporary world art: cultural politics as a particular struggle across many fronts. Class, race, gender, and sexuality are each distinct sites of struggle in the politics of difference. But it is in the intersection of these domains that some of the most tangled questions of identity reside. Such is the complex territory that Asian women occupy. Confronted by the dominance of both ethnocentric and patriarchal values, theirs is a position that is doubly circumscribed (Yang, 1998, p. 73). Living within a

"polylingual" society, Asian Diaspora women artists investigate the break-up of language as a coherent system of meaning through their art.

Alice Yang in 1994 (1998, p. 61-62) said, "In *Book of Names*, Jin Lee [a Korean-American artist] lists various terms - Asian, artists, Korean, woman, American - in multiple configurations to show how the designation of identity through language itself shifts and mutates, taking on various nuances in different contexts.

To judge from two early 1990s shows in Australia: *Mao Goes Pop* and *Art Taiwan*; there was a lack of art which was created by women and which had a sexual element (Jaivan, 1995). Although *Art Taiwan* featured some women artists, most steered clear of themes or topics related to sexuality. A notable exception was *Three Apples*, by Yan Ming-huy, a startlingly vaginal interpretation of a tempting fruit.

Questions of gender and sexuality also surface in the work of Asian and Asia Diaspora artists in ways that are dissimilar, although more subtly so (Yang, 1998, p. 70). Many contemporary Asian women artists address patriarchal society and traditional Confucian culture that has historically erased women from its social hierarchy. Contemporary Asian women artists direct their critique to the Western male gaze, under which Asian women have been historically constructed as passive, exotic objects of desire.

Amanda Heng's installations in the early 1990s relied heavily on household and domestic objects and gestures to create a gendered space (King, 1996). Her range of everyday common materials in her installations corresponds to perceptions of her role as a woman as well as her cultural background. The use of everyday materials in art by Asian women is manifest in a variety of ways, such as bricolage (found objects), domestic ready-mades, gestures traditionally associated with the sphere of women, and eco-environmental concerns. Indigenous materials from nature and familiar cultural objects of domestic social settings signify the meaning of the artwork.

KOREA ART FLASH

In late 2000 a group of feminist artists in Korea made the evening news.... Incensed by the group's exhibition of installation and performance art and the theme of femininity therein, patriarchal men tore down the installations, kicked the collages and stomped on tubes of paint. Pointing to soft sculptures, they screamed: 'What is this? Whores! Why don't you display yours!' Not satisfied with the destruction of the art festival, the men began to push and shove the women artists (Choy, 2002, pp. 35-6)

Many of Feng Jiali's performance works and paintings examine her own engagement with feminism and female sexuality. In her series, *City Witches* and *Painted Women*, Feng examines the stereotypical roles of women as mothers, friends and objects of male desire. All wear 'masks' - exaggeratedly bright, painted faces the only discordant element in an otherwise loose naturalistic representation. Feng is concerned with the changing role of women and the challenges they face in China's new social order: "The women I see in the cities, especially Beijing, all wear far too much make-up, they look very false, but this is considered modern" (Dewar, 1997, p. 72). Feng is also making a direct reference to female sexuality and the way that it has been exploited and transformed into a commercial commodity (Dewar, 1997).

Cultural institutions

Within the current art paradigm, men still claim mastery over the production of images of women and their meaning. Art history has established an array of traditions and institutions to support and celebrate that mastery (Kendall and Pollack, 1991). Art, in other words, can be disconcertingly linked with real-life cultural politics. "In the phallogocentric order of male bonding - networks of contacts, seniority, and the illusion of power - known collectively as bullshit, women are often treated as second class citizens" (Poshyananda, 1993, p. 7).

AUSTRALIA FLASH BACK

When, in 1912, Australian Parliament provided for a maternity allowance it was in these terms: Section 6(1) provides that 'Women who are Asiatics, or are aboriginal natives of Australia, Papua, or the islands of the Pacific, shall not be paid a maternity allowance.' The legislation was amended in 1926 to delete the word 'Asiatics' and insert the word 'aliens'. By 1944 under the Social Services Consolidation Act 1947-1950 aboriginal native mothers were given some concessions (Berns, 1998, p. 8).

Berns (1998, p. 8-9) writes about citizenship using I-Lann Yee's *Cactus*, 1992 "Whose are these faces? They look at us as if to accuse us... They are the other. In the beginning, our laws excluded them, saw them as threatening. They still accuse us. Their government protests at negative reports in the Australian press. We hawk our educational wares, lure them to study in our universities, hope that they will return to Malaysia. They come on student visas, and they cannot remain.

Varsha Nair (2000, p. 29) reviewed *Womanifesto 1999* in Thailand and wrote that some Asian women artists find it difficult to show their work in their respective countries. "Singapore artist Amanda Heng's works are mainly performance-based and are not favourably looked upon in her native Singapore, where non-text based

performance artists are required to have their work vetted and 'passed' (censored?) by the authorities".

Art works ceremoniously displayed in elite institutions are not innocent in the social games of power. Art by Asian women has been accepted as such only after the art world or the institutions of art decided. It is the community of artists, audiences, critics, art funding bodies, dealers, curators and theorists who jointly create a work of art. Over time art institutions privilege certain art objects over others. Art is subject to fashion and convention and operates between these competing conditions. This is the nature of art in changing cultures.

USA ART FLASH

The police released an artist today after holding her for three days for shooting a *BB gun* at her own sculpture in an exhibition of *avant-garde* art (McEvelley, 1992, p. 83).

In 1989 the Queensland Art Gallery presented the first major exhibition of contemporary Asian art seen in Australia. Later, the magazine, *Asia Art News*, was published in 1990 and the journal, *Art AsiaPacific*, in 1993. There has been a proliferation of international exhibitions of Asian art in Australia since that time. However, Western norms continue to monopolise many critical discussions, posing as the standard by which most art is judged and admitted into circulation. Despite all the awareness fostered by postmodern theories and multiculturalism in the 1980s, the old modern and western and colonial presumptions still persist. There is still a widespread belief in the western art world that the flow of influence is a one-way street leading out (Levin, 1996, p. 50).

A local and global context

Hou Hanru (1999, p. 191) considers Diaspora, Chinese artists and global art as a significant phenomenon: "The central problem of today's global interaction is the tension between cultural homogenization and cultural heterogenization'.... It is in such a process that a new art which is truly global - implying the perpetual tension and movements between the global & the local - can be imagined and developed, a place where global & local overlap each other...."

Asia has a differentiated notion of culture made up of many voices from diverse backgrounds, customs, artistic traditions, beliefs and practices. There is no collective Asian identity (Turner, 1993). Consequently, Asian artists are concerned with a large range of issues. The possibility of comparison exists in "unmediated tension with sheer incongruity, the familiar and the strange, the here and everywhere" (Lippard, 1995, p. 199). I have not intended to provide a homogeneous survey of Asian women's art. I have selected a variety of artists and works to suggest not only the diversity of Asia and the Asian Diaspora but also the similarities of intent demonstrated by some artists in quite different contexts.

Both Asia and the West have distinguishable cultural and artistic traditions. Issues that are important to women in the West can be lost to Asian audiences (Huangfu, 1999). However, the perceptions of contemporary art practice are changing as Asian artists adopt and adapt a Western art paradigm. Conversely the Western art world is influenced by a melange of global cultures, especially those from Asia. Sketching these panoramas at a time when global migrations are rapidly increasing, I tackle in this essay important and difficult questions about race, gender, and sexuality that are mediated by a transcultural self. The task at hand is not to hegemonise or homogenise the categories of race, class, gender but to decentre them reflecting the mobile context of contemporary art.

While some of the artists are Asian going global, others are recent migrants, and others trace their family ties in Asia for two or three generations. For these women, who inhabit an in-between space straddling disparate cultures and societies, the effects of cultural dislocation have made the ground of identity ever more volatile.

Hung Liu, who emigrated to the US from China in 1984, was lauded as an American artist in Tokyo during the late 1990s - an apt and ironic acknowledgment of her position as a transcultural person. As an American artist born and raised in China, she is interested in the migration of personal identity across genders, cultures, languages and epochs (Hung Liu cited in Huangfu, 2000). It is striking how vital various traditional "languages" remain for Asian artists. Certainly, most women artists mentioned in this discussion employ aesthetic media and styles - such as installation and performance art - generally associated with the West. Nonetheless, forms of aesthetic expression derived from Asian traditions remain available if not for straight adaptation, then at least for quotation and redirection for new uses.

Voluntary exiles, who choose to live and work in another place, translating, understanding, and communicating across cultural zones or fields, can provide powerful moments of mutual understanding of art in both Asia and Australia (Hamilton, 1993). In one of her reproduction Hokusai's wave photographs, Australian artist, Fiona Hall, substituted a pair of baby shoes for Mount Fuji (Williams and Simpson, 1994). In another of her creations, Hall gave new meaning to filial devotion by weaving a cloak of drink pop-tops for her father (Losche, 1997).

Feng Jiali (2001, p. 67) states " There has not been enough art and exhibitions that reflect the spirit of feminism, even if there are more and more exhibitions of women's art. Moreover, I don't think there is such a thing as 'women's art', just as there is no such entity as 'western women' or even 'Chinese women'. Feminist art depends on differences of time place, status, race, system, class and background for its individual, unique meaning".

Although many Asian Diaspora activists and cultural producers champion the overall goals of identity politics, opinions can nonetheless be mixed. The desire to establish commonalities and form alliances among members of one racial group is offset by misgivings about the tendency toward generalisation and self-marginalisation (Yang, 1998, p. 65). The interpretive process of relating an art work to the artist and their background has the effect of locating it outside mainstream art practice as a kind of testimonial art (Chiu, 1999). Further, the multitude of transnational and hyphenated artistic identities appear as simplistic solutions and new stereotypes in response to an increasingly globalised art world (Levin, 1996, p. 55).

Fu-Chia-Wen Lien (Goodman, 1998, p. 25) wrote about *Site of Asia/Site of Body*, a group show of contemporary Asian women artists in New York: The notion of a distinctively Asian self requires re-definition in the face of work by women artists belonging to so wide-ranging a Diaspora. "The initial question to be asked is what 'Asian' means in the contemporary context and whether we can locate the authenticity of Asian identity as a specific site."

There is, correspondingly, a degree of caution about designating "Asian-women's art" as such. Given the tremendous diversity of cultures and ethnicities grouped under the title, no agreement has been reached as to what constitutes contemporary Asian-women's art - beyond the ethnic, racial and gendered identity of its producers - or how it could be best served. Any effort to understand or explain another culture is by necessity flawed (Levin, 1996, p. 55). On the other hand, cross-cultural chronologies can wreak some necessary havoc with the standard western history of art. But however flawed, creative misunderstandings can provoke new developments.

Focus on an exhibition

Within the aforementioned context, a currently international touring exhibition, *Text & Subtext: Contemporary Art and Asian Women*, curated by the talented Binghui Huangfu, provides a critical framework that is at once concise and expansive. For one, the exhibition singles out a particular group within the Asian Diaspora population, that is, women, as the subject of an in-depth examination. At the same time, however, these artists are exhibited alongside their peers from Asia. The combination of these two strategies runs counter to prevailing curatorial practices in the US, Australia and Europe (Yang, 1998). The predominant trend has been to address Asian Diaspora art as a separate whole.

As suggested by its title, *Text & Subtext* makes literal the reading of art as polylingual, adopting a bipartite structure that tentatively breaks down the restrictions of a dichotomous Asian or Asian Diaspora art practice and discourse. In the process, it suggests provocative ways of rethinking contemporary art created by Asian women. The challenge has been to articulate the relationships within the work of Asian and Asian Diaspora women artists, while at the same time resisting the petrified categories of identity. *Text & Subtext* shows that avenues exist through which such a process can fruitfully begin. If there is going to be a truly global culture, this exhibition is a step towards it.

The exhibition has been criticised for being "safe and coy, in the tradition of grand, sleek, but unfocused events..." that it should have been "... more courageous and less intellectually neutral" and "that the project is safe, intellectually free-for-all, and politically neutral" (Datuin, 2001, p. 41). Consideration of artistic value and merit are relevant and of great consequence in the exhibition. Further, over-politicisation of artistic expression can result in obvious, heavy handed, crowd pleasing and sloganeering work that ends up preaching to the converted - preaching is the key word here. The art works displayed in the *Text & Subtext* exhibition do not preach.

The artworks featured in the *Text & Subtext* exhibition are informed by the multiplicity of the artists' personal experiences as contemporary, internationally educated women. They use video, installation, painting, and spectacle to evoke

certain narrative elements referring to shared symbols of race, gender and sexuality. The artists' choice of media, the focus on language as a primary element, and the unusual citing not associated with mainstream art address the social experience of Asian women in various contexts. The exhibition purposely makes problematic that which we take for granted, and tries to make explicit that which is implicit and hidden in language and images.

Conclusion

Images by and of Asian women discussed are far more than just art. Deeply implicated in social and cultural relations, the aesthetic 'aura' of art and creative genius lends legitimacy to hierarchies of race, gender, class, and sexuality (Kendall and Pollock, 1991). The position of the Asian female as artist/viewer and subject/object can be seen as ambiguous and problematic in relation to the dominance of both ethnocentric and patriarchal values.

The combination of feminist concepts and femininity in Asian women's art reflects the search for a new reality for Asian women rather than the wholesale adoption of pre-formulated Western roles. It is increasingly clear that contemporary Asian women's art poses particular challenges to artists, critics, curators and viewers, and stand in need of more informed criticism. Most critics no longer believe that they can interpret, let alone judge, art from a society other than their own without considerable historical and cultural knowledge.

In challenging gender biases and questioning established attitudes, Asian women working in the visual arts - artists, curators, administrators, and critics - have come to function as a community, forging ties with each other through group activities and demarcating a critical space for the articulation of a transnational Asian culture.

Although the artists mentioned in this essay cannot be taken as representative of all Asian women's art internationally, it is nonetheless instructive and suggests some ways of thinking critically not only about contemporary women's art, but, more broadly, about Asian and Asian Diaspora art. In this paper I point to, above all, significant differences in the ways in which identity and cultural practice are to be conceived transnationally, both within and outside national contexts.

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