



About the Project

In the summer of 2017, the National Art Center, Tokyo, the Mori Art Museum, and the Japan Foundation Asia Center will co-organize an exhibition that revisits the development of contemporary Southeast Asian art from the 1980s to the present.

The curatorial team for the exhibition consists not only of the Japanese curators from the two museums but also four Southeast Asian curators of the recent generation—those born after the 1980s—to help provide a deeper understanding required for an exhibition of such a wide theme.

Having engaged in discussions, the curatorial team realized that many current issues of interest come to the fore: the numerous engagements of art collectives to preserve or rediscover cultural memories and values of local communities and provincial towns amidst the development of urbanization and modernization, the performative activities based on DIY-spirit to self-initially bring about change despite the lack of sufficient public and institutional support for the contemporary arts, and, furthermore, the strong will to pass on the development of contemporary art in each area to the proceeding generations through education and archival engagements. All of these can be witnessed in the regions, resonating among each other amidst the multilayered histories embedded deeply in each of the respective countries.

From the research trips since January 2015, the team not only saw the obvious progressivist, economic development, but also a positivist attitude to the “present/current” societal conditions that still continue to be fraught with changes of stagnation, regression, reform, loss, and transposition.

While continuing these research trips into the year 2017 and deepening our communication with professionals of the region, we will explore the ways in which we can share, with Japanese audiences, the many paths the contemporary arts of this region lead throughout the last few decades.

As a part of the project, we will share with the audience the preparation processes and collected information of Southeast Asian contemporary art on this website. By this, we hope it will provide the groundwork for the further understanding of the various artistic practices within each of their respective regions, as well as offer a glimpse into the processes by which an exhibition is constructed.

About the Project Title

Instead of deciding on an exhibition title, the curatorial team agreed to have a project title, “SEA PROJECT: Contemporary Art from Southeast Asia 1980s to Now” which follows the process of the exhibiting-making—such as research, symposia, and curatorial meetings—from its conception in 2014.

Exhibition Outline	Timeline	The Organizers	Curatorial Team
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SUNSHOWER: Contemporary Art from Southeast Asia 1980s to Now Exhibition Outline



Jompet Kuswidananto
Words and Possible Movement

2013

Motorbikes without machine, fabric flags

Dimension variable

Collection: Mori Art Museum, Tokyo

In 2017, 50 years after the formation of ASEAN, the National Art Center, Tokyo, Mori Art Museum and the Japan Foundation Asia Center will stage “SUNSHOWER: Contemporary Art from Southeast Asia 1980s to Now,” the largest-ever exhibition of Southeast Asian contemporary art to be held in Japan.

The exhibition is a culmination of the “SEA PROJECT” which follows the process of the exhibiting-making—such as research, symposia, and curatorial meetings—from its conception in 2014.

The “sunshower” —rain falling from clear skies—is an intriguing meteorological phenomenon, and a frequent occurrence in the tropical climes of Southeast Asia. Here, sunshowers serve as a poetic metaphor for the vicissitudes of a region that in the latter half of the 20th century, in the wake of the colonial era, experienced enormous political, social and economic upheaval: Cold War conflicts and dictatorships followed by modernization and the spread of democracy, and in more recent years, remarkable economic advancement, investment, and urban development. Out-of-the-blue rainfall can also be regarded as a metaphor for the ambiguous nature of these ups and downs.

Multi-ethnic, multi-lingual, multi-faith Southeast Asia has nurtured a truly dynamic and diverse culture. This exhibition will explore contemporary art in Southeast Asia from the 1980s onward from various

perspectives, including aspirations for freedom, identity, growth and its dark sides, community, faith and tradition, and the revisiting of history; showcasing that dynamism and diversity while comparing and contrasting Southeast Asian contemporary art with international contemporary art trends.

●Period

Wednesday, July 5, 2017 – Monday, October 23, 2017

●Venues

The National Art Center, Tokyo Special Exhibition Gallery 2E (7-22-2 Roppongi, Minato-ku, Tokyo, Japan)

Mori Art Museum (53F Roppongi Hills Mori Tower, 6-10-1 Roppongi, Minato-ku, Tokyo, Japan)

●Organizers

The National Art Center, Tokyo; Mori Art Museum; The Japan Foundation Asia Center



Korakrit Arunanondchai

Painting with history in a room filled with people with funny names 3

2015

Video

24 min. 55 sec.

Courtesy: Carlos/Ishikawa London; Clearing Brussels / New York

Timeline

A “work in progress,” the SEA Project: Contemporary Art from Southeast Asia 1980 to Now reveals the preparations and processes by which an exhibition is made. We will update the plan as the project proceeds throughout the months.

2017

2017.07.05 - 10.23

Opening

"SUNSHOWER: Contemporary Art from Southeast Asia 1980s to Now" starts!

2017.01.22&29

Special Screening: Identity Issues in Singapore and Malaysia Seen Through Films

As the exhibition-related event, there will be screenings of two movies from Singapore and Malaysia revolving around the theme of the “diverse identity” issues, which is one of sections constructing the exhibition.

2016

2016.12.21 – 12.22

Curatorial Meeting 04

The entire member of the curatorial team gathered in Roppongi, Tokyo, to discuss structures between the two venues, selection of artists and works.

2016.11.08 – 11.11

Second Research Trip 09: Singapore

The curatorial team flies to Singapore again.

2016.09.25 – 09.29

Second Research Trip 08: Brunei Darussalam and Malaysia

The curatorial team flies to Bandar Seri Begawan and Kuala Lumpur.

2016.09.24

Performance and Talk by Heri Dono + Report of the SEA PROJECT Research in Indonesia

For the second edition of SEA PROJECT-related event, we are happy to announce the twofold program: Part 1) performance and talk by renowned Indonesian artist Heri Dono, and Part 2) progress report on “Now of Indonesian Contemporary Art” by curators who conducted research in Indonesia.

2016.05.23 – 05.27

Curatorial Meeting 03

The entire member of the curatorial team gathers in Roppongi, Tokyo, to discuss the findings of the Thai research, structures between the two venues, selection of artists and works etc.

2016.05.06 – 05.13

Research Trip 07: Thailand

The curatorial team flies to Bangkok and Chiang Mai.

2016.02.28 – 03.02

Curatorial Meeting 02

The entire member of the curatorial team gathers in Roppongi, Tokyo, to discuss the findings of the research trips, exhibition concept(s), structures between the two venues, selection of artists and works etc.

2016.02.27

SEA PROJECT Symposium 01

How has Japan engaged with Contemporary Art in Southeast Asia?

This symposium will explore the questions of how Japan has studied and presented Southeast Asian contemporary art since 1980, what sort of discussions have resulted from this, and what role Japanese performance art has played in Southeast Asia.

2016.01.21 – 01.28

Research Trip 06: Singapore, Cambodia, Laos

The curatorial team flies to Singapore, Phnom Penh, and Vientiane.

2015

2015.12.13 – 12.20

Research Trip 05: Vietnam

The curatorial team flies to Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City.

2015.11.13 – 11.23

Research Trip 04: Indonesia and Australia

The curatorial team flies to Jakarta, Surabaya, Yogyakarta, Brisbane, and Sydney.

2015.10.24 – 10.28

Research Trip 03: Myanmar

The curatorial team flies to Yangon and Mandalay.

2015.10.15

Study Session 05: Myanmar

A preview of Burmese art prior to the research trip.

2015.08.02 – 08.03

Curatorial Meeting 01

The entire Curatorial Team gathers in Tokyo for a brainstorming session. The first day consists of presentations from the curators from Southeast Asia on the art scenes of ASEAN countries, and on the second day, the curatorial team discussed in length about the framework of the exhibition.

2015.07.29

Study Session 04: Vietnamese contemporary art with Zoe Butt (Director, San Art)

The Tokyo curators learn about Vietnamese contemporary art from San Art Director, Zoe Butt.

2015.06.22

Study Session 03: Vandy Rattana and Kanitha Tith

The Tokyo curators speak to contemporary artists, Vandy Rattana and Kanitha Tith about their practices.

2015.02.04 – 02.11

Research Trip 02: Brunei Darussalam and Malaysia

The curatorial team flies to Bandar Seri Begawan, Kota Kinabalu, and Kuala Lumpur.

2015.01.08 – 01.12

Research Trip 01: the Philippines

The curatorial team flies to Manila.

2014

2014.12.05

Study Session 02: the Philippines and Malaysia

A preview of Filipino and Malaysian art prior to the research trip.

2014.11.06

Study Session 01

On Southeast Asian art exhibitions organized by the Japan Foundation.

2014 Summer to Winter

Co-organizers’ meetings, and curators and members from each party gather to discuss the possibility of holding the exhibition.

The Organizers

The National Art Center, Tokyo



A large-scale exhibition on Southeast Asian contemporary art will be held in 2017 in Roppongi, Tokyo. This exhibition is organized by the National Art Center, Tokyo, the Mori Art Museum, and the Japan Foundation. For this coming exhibition, contemporary artists and/or artworks shall be carefully selected from 10 Southeast Asian (ASEAN) countries, and the preparations are already underway that the curators from Japan's two representative museums are ardently visiting the countries, meeting the artists, and evaluating their artworks. As one of the main projects leading up to the Tokyo Olympic and Paralympic Games, we will fill Roppongi with Asian art. Please don't miss it!

Tamotsu Aoki
Director, The National Art Center, Tokyo

Mori Art Museum



A contemporary art exhibition which focuses on the 10 Southeast Asian (ASEAN) countries will be held in 2017 co-organized by the National Art Center, Tokyo, the Japan Foundation, and the Mori Art Museum.

The curatorial team, consisting of curators from both museums as well as those who are from the younger generations working in the region, are currently conducting the research very actively.

I hope this exhibition will introduce the contemporary arts of Southeast Asia to a wider audience in Japan. Furthermore, by encouraging mutual understanding and cultural exchange between these countries and Japan, I believe it will also offer a great opportunity to think collectively about the future of Asia.

Fumio Nanjo
Director, Mori Art Museum

The Japan Foundation



We are very pleased to announce that preparations are underway for a Southeast Asian art exhibition of an unprecedented scale, planned to be held simultaneously at the National Art Center, Tokyo, and the Mori Art Museum. In this project, four independent curators from Southeast Asia join the curatorial team in the development and realization of the exhibition. Diverse in nationalities, age, and careers, it will be exciting to follow, through this website, how the curatorial team prepares for and organizes an exhibition. Sharing its processes, we hope that it will not only encourage further interest in Southeast Asian art, but also in the histories and cultures of each respective country.

Hiroyasu Ando
President, The Japan Foundation

Curatorial Team

The members of this project consist of curators of the National Art Center, Tokyo, the Mori Art Museum, and also four independent curators / artists from Southeast Asia.



Natsumi Araki
Curator
Mori Art Museum



Merv Espina
Artist/Independent Curator



Sayuri Kida
Associate Curator
The National Art Center, Tokyo



Mami Kataoka
Chief Curator
Mori Art Museum



Kenichi Kondo
Curator
Mori Art Museum



Haruko Kumakura
Assistant Curator
Mori Art Museum



Vera Mey
Independent Curator



Yuiko Mukasa
Assistant Curator
The National Art Center, Tokyo



Yusuke Minami
Deputy Director and Chief Curator
The National Art Center, Tokyo



Ong Jo-Lene
Independent Curator



Grace Samboh
Independent Curator



Hirokazu Tokuyama
Associate Curator
Mori Art Museum



Reiko Tsubaki
Associate Curator
Mori Art Museum



Naoki Yoneda
Curator
The National Art Center, Tokyo

Natsumi Araki

Curator

Mori Art Museum

Born in Paris, France. Started her career as a curator in 1994 at the Mitaka City Arts Foundation, before joining the Mori Art Museum in 2003. Adjunct lecturer at Keio University since 2010 and served as co-curator of the City_net Asia 2009 biennale at Seoul Museum of Art. Curated / co-curated exhibitions at the Mori Art Museum include, Go-Betweens: The World Seen through Children (2014), All You Need Is Love: From Chagall to Kusama and Hatsune Miku (2013), Odani Motohiko: Phantom Limb (2010), Roppongi Crossing 2007: Future Beats in Contemporary Japanese Art (2007), and The World Is a Stage: Stories Behind Pictures (2005). Awarded the 26th Ringa Art Encouragement Prize (Art Criticism) and the 10th Western Art Foundation Prize for Go-Betweens exhibition. Lives in Yokohama.

Merv Espina

Artist/Independent Curator

Born in Manila, The Philippines. He is program director for Green Papaya Art Projects, the oldest artist-run creative, interdisciplinary platform in the Philippines, and cook-janitor for WSK, a Manila-based media art kitchen and annual "Festival of the Recently Possible". He is also co-founder of the institute of Lower Learning (iLL), an experimental art and education initiative based in Manila and Ho Chi Minh City. The Kalampag Tracking Agency (2014-), a collaboration with artist Shireen Seno exploring alternative visions in Filipino moving image practice and investigating the screening program as an archival platform, has been touring internationally. His curatorial project HOLDINGS (2014-15) explored art and economics, value and work, and was selected for the 2014 Young Curators' Workshop, "Run & Learn," organized by Japan Foundation and the University of the Philippines' Jorge B. Vargas Museum. Lives in Manila, The Philippines.

Sayuri Kida

Associate Curator

The National Art Center, Tokyo

Born in Kyoto, Japan. Worked at a gallery in Tokyo before moving to Hong Kong to study the archives of Asian art. Conducted research on the Asia Art Archive (AAA) in Hong Kong and the Indonesian Visual Art Archive (IVAA) in Yogyakarta. Earned M.A. (Cultural Studies) at the Chinese University of Hong Kong. Joined the National Art Center, Tokyo, in April 2016. Lives in Tokyo.

Mami Kataoka

Chief Curator

Mori Art Museum

Born in Aichi, Japan. Served as researcher of cultural policies and urban planning at a private think tank prior to taking position of chief curator at the Tokyo Opera City Gallery in 1997. Joined the Mori Art Museum in 2003. Also served as Joint Artistic Director of the 9th Gwangju Biennale (2012), Guest Curator for the Phantoms of Asia: Contemporary Awakens the Past (2012) at the Asian Art Museum in San Francisco, and International Curator at the Hayward Gallery in London from 2007 to 2009 where she curated Laughing in the Foreign Language (2007) and Walking in My Mind (2009). Curated exhibitions at the Mori Art Museum include, MAM Research 002: Who Was Roberto Chabet? (2015), Roppongi Crossing 2013: Out of Doubt (2013), Lee Bul: From Me Belongs to You Only (2012), Makoto Aida: Monument for Nothing (2012-13), and Ai Weiwei: According to What? (2009, U.S. Tour 2012-14). Lives in Tokyo.

Kenichi Kondo

Curator

Mori Art Museum

Born in Kanagawa, Japan. Joined the Mori Art Museum in 2003. Solo exhibitions curated in MAM Project series at the Mori Art Museum include, Yamashiro Chikako (2012), Koizumi Meiro (2009), and John Wood and Paul Harrison (2007), and in MAM Screen series, Gordon Matta-Clark (2015) and Bill Viola (2015). Other exhibitions co-curated at the Mori Art Museum include, Andy Warhol: 15 Minutes Eternal (2014), Arab Express: The Latest Art from the Arab World (2012), Roppongi Crossing 2010: Can There be Art? (2010), and History in the Making: A Retrospective of the Turner Prize (2008). Curated VIDEOZOOM: Giappone Re-inquadrare il quotidiano in 2010 at Sala 1 (Rome, Italy). Research Fellow(2014 -15) at Hamburger Bahnhof - Museum für Gegenwart - Berlin, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin. Lives in Tokyo.

Haruko Kumakura

Assistant Curator

Mori Art Museum

Born in Tokyo, Japan. Joined the Mori Art Museum in 2011. Served as curatorial assistant for Dinh Q. Lê: Memory for Tomorrow (2015), Lee Mingwei and His Relations: The Art of Participation (2014), Roppongi Crossing 2013: Out of Doubt (2013), Aida Makoto: Monument for Nothing (2012-13) among others. Writer for monthly reviews of Bijutsu Techo during 2013. Participated in the 2014 Young Curators' Workshop (in Jakarta, Indonesia) organized by the Japan Foundation and the ICC Curatorial Intensive in 2013. Currently working on the MAM Research 003: Indonesian New Art Movement (tentative title) with Grace Samboh, and also preparing a project of Agatha Gothe-Snape (Australia). Lives in Tokyo.

Vera Mey

Independent Curator

Born in Wellington, New Zealand. Served as Assistant Director of AUT University's ST PAUL St Gallery in Auckland, New Zealand, from 2011 to early 2014 and as Curator, Residencies at the NTU Centre for Contemporary Art Singapore from 2014 onwards. Convened the ST PAUL St Gallery 2013 Curatorial Symposium, From a history of exhibitions towards a future of exhibition making, with Biljana Ciric, looking at creating discourse on exhibition histories from an Asian Pacific-centric position. Co-curated *The Disappearance* (2014) and *FIELDS: an itinerant inquiry across the Kingdom of Cambodia* (2013). Other curatorial projects at the ST PAUL St Gallery and the Dowse Art Museum include, *Local Time: Horotiu* (2012), *Assembly* (2012), and *In Spite of Ourselves: Approaching Documentary* (2012). For 2015 to 2016, participant of *Ambitious Alignments: New Histories of Southeast Asian Art*, a Getty Foundation research initiative, and is on the founding editorial committee of the new scholarly journal *Southeast of Now: Directions in Contemporary and Modern Art*. Lives in Singapore.

Yuiko Mukasa

Assistant Curator

The National Art Center, Tokyo

Born in Saitama, Japan. Studied Abstract Expressionism and its painters including Mark Rothko and Adolph Gottlieb at Tokyo University of the Arts, Brooklyn College and City College of the City University of New York. Author of "The Image of the Artist as a Blind Prophet: An Analysis of Rothko's Tiresias" in *Aspects of Problems in Western Art History*, vol. 9 (Mar. 2011), "Execution of Automatism in Print: The Prints by Stanley William Hayter and Surrealism" in *Journal of the Faculty of Fine Arts, Tokyo National University of Fine Arts and Music*, vol. 7 (Mar, 2011), and "The Motifs of 'Eye' and 'Hero' in Pictographs by Adolph Gottlieb: An Analysis Focusing on His Discussions with Art Critics" in *Bijutsushi* 179, vol. 65, no.1 (Oct. 2015). Joined the National Art Center, Tokyo, in April 2016. Lives in Tokyo.

Yusuke Minami

Deputy Director and Chief Curator
The National Art Center, Tokyo

Born in Tottori, Japan. After serving as curator at the Tokyo Metropolitan Art Museum and the Museum of Contemporary Art, Tokyo, joined the team at the Preparatory Office of the National Art Center, Tokyo, in April 2004. Currently serves as Deputy Director and Chief Curator. Curated exhibitions at the Museum of Contemporary Art Tokyo include, Rethinking Modernism in Japan 1900-2000 (2004), Tadanori Yokoo: All Things in the Universe (2002), Takashi Murakami (2001), MOT Annual 1999: Modest Radicalism (1999), On Kawara: Whole and Parts (1998), and NAKANISHI Natsuyuki (1997) among others. Curated exhibitions at the National Art Center, Tokyo, include, NAKAMURA Kazumi (2014), American Pop Art from the John and Kimiko Powers Collection (2013), Given Forms: TATSUNO Toeko / SHIBATA Toshio (2012), Light: MATSUMOTO Yoko / NOGUCHI Rika (2009), Artist File 2008: The NACT Annual Show of Contemporary Art (2008), and Living in the Material World: "Things" in Art of the 20th Century and Beyond (2007) among others. Lives in Yokohama.

Ong Jo-Lene

Independent Curator

Born in Ipoh, Malaysia. Previously managed Map@Publika, the arts and culture platform of a new urban creative district in Kuala Lumpur where she worked closely with labDNA to develop the annual programming and multi-disciplinary festival. Also co-curated their seven-site public art commissions with the participation of over a hundred artists, writers, designers, and architects. Worked on projects in Kuala Lumpur and Penang, interlacing popular culture, contemporary art, and feminism. Selected to participate in the 8th Berlin Biennale Young Curators Workshop and the 2014 Young Curator's Workshop, "Run & Learn," organized by the Japan Foundation. Lives in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

Grace Samboh

Independent Curator

Born in Jakarta, Indonesia. Began interested to the arts during 2006 in ruangrupa, an artist collective based in Jakarta. Moved to Yogyakarta to gain her master in Visual Art Studies. Curated 21 Years Retrospective of Jogja Biennale under the commission of the Indonesian Visual Art Archive in 2009 as one of the archive-based exhibition for Jogja Biennale IX: Jogja Jamming. Served as Executive Director and curator of the Langgeng Art Foundation between 2010 and 2012 and did 15 shows including How They Did Art Then* a selection of Electronic Arts Intermix (USA) historical video art pieces as part of OK Video (Flesh) 2011 and REPOSITION: Art Merdeka! a retrospective show of S. Teddy D. that toured to ICA LaSalle, Singapore, 2012. In early 2011, co-founded Hyphen, a closed group discussion forum which seeks to piece together the fragmented histories of Indonesian art, which evolved into a group that produces research and curatorial projects. Furthermore, served as Program Manager for the Equator Symposium 2012-2022 (Yogyakarta Biennale Foundation). Lives and work between Jatiwangi, Yogyakarta and Medan, Indonesia.

Hirokazu Tokuyama

Associate Curator

Mori Art Museum

Born in Shizuoka, Japan. Served as curator at the Kyoto City University of Arts ART GALLERY @KCUA from 2012 prior to joining the Mori Art Museum in April 2016. Curated exhibitions at @KCUA include: killing time (2016), a Guido van der Werve solo exhibition; NA (2016), a Yuki Okumura solo exhibition; The Hundred Steps (2014), a workshop-turned-exhibition with Ellen Altfest; PHOTOPHOBIA (2014), an Apichatpong Weerasethakul solo exhibition; American Boyfriend: Bodies of Water (2014), a Futoshi Miyagi solo exhibition and KYOTO STUDIO (2013). Participated in the 2014 Young Curators' Workshop (in Manila, the Philippines) organized by the Japan Foundation. Recipient of Kyoto City Special Bounty Program For Art and Culture (2015). Lives in Tokyo.

Reiko Tsubaki

Associate Curator

Mori Art Museum

Born in Shiga, Japan. Joined the Mori Art Museum in 2002. Solo exhibitions curated in MAM Project series at the Mori Art Museum include Jacob Kirkegaard (2014), Emre Huner (2013), Ho Tzu Nyen (2012), Jules de Balincourt (2010) and Saskia Olde Wolbers (2008). Also curated and in charge of, Simple Forms: contemplating the Beauty (2015) as associate curator. Served as member of the curatorial team for French Window: Looking at Contemporary Art through the Marcel Duchamp Prize (2011), Medicine and Art: Imagining a Future for Life and Love (2010-2009), Africa Remix: Contemporary Art of a Continent (2005) and Archilab: New Experiment in Architecture, Art and the City 1950-2005 (2004). Outside of the Mori Art Museum, curated Duality of Existence: Post Fukushima (Friedman Benda Gallery, NY, 2014) and The Cosmos as Metaphor (Taka Ishii Gallery Kyoto, Hotel Anteroom Kyoto, 2012) etc. Lives in Tokyo.

Naoki Yoneda

Curator

The National Art Center, Tokyo

Born in Kyoto, Japan. Joined the National Art Center, Tokyo in 2007. Curated exhibitions at the National Art Center, Tokyo, include, Artist File 2015: Next Doors - Contemporary Art in Japan and Korea (2015, traveling to the Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art, Korea, Gwacheon, 2015-16), Divisionism from van Gogh and Seurat to Mondrian (2013), and GUTAI: The Spirit of an Era (2012) among others. Author of "Graphic Images of Piet Mondrian and Theo van Doesburg" in *Hikikomisen 2013* (Organizing Committee of Hikikomisen 2013, 2013), "Sophie Taeuber: Design Theory in 1910s and 1920s" in *NACT Review* (The National Art Center, Tokyo, 2015) and others. Lives in Tokyo.

Special Thanks

The Organizers and curatorial team extend their heartfelt thanks to the persons below for their generous help for the research of this project.

*Honorifics omitted, random order

Zoe Butt

Vandy Rattana

Kanitha Tith

Moe Satt

Students of the Panthu Sandar Art School

The Embassy of Japan in Myanmar

John Clark

Veronika Radulovic

Judha Su

Suzanne Lecht

The Japan Foundation, Kuala Lumpur

The Japan Foundation, Manila

The Japan Foundation, Center for Cultural Exchange in Vietnam

The Japan Foundation, Jakarta

The Japan Foundation Asia Center, Phnom Penh Liaison Office

The Japan Foundation Asia Center, Vientiane Liaison Office