

## Yamaguchi Center for Arts and Media [YCAM] Exhibition

Ho Tzu Nyen

## Voice of Void

In collaboration with YCAM

Saturday, April 3, 2021 - Sunday, July 4, 10:00-19:00

Yamaguchi Center for Arts and Media [YCAM] Studio A

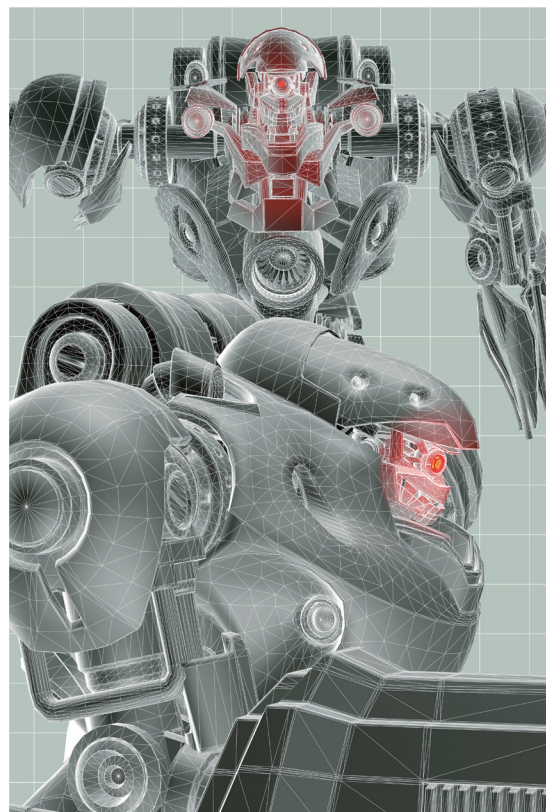
**A new project by Ho Tzu Nyen, an acclaimed artist from Singapore  
World premiere: "Kyoto School" themed moving image installation incorporating VR**

Yamaguchi Center for Arts and Media [YCAM] will present the exhibition "Voice of Void," where Ho Tzu Nyen will unveil his new installation.

Ho Tzu Nyen is a leading artist from Singapore who has been transforming a wide array of historical and philosophical texts, into artworks across a range of different formats, including video, installation, and theatrical performance. In recent years, he has focused his energies on the situation of Japan during WWII, and the way this relates to the history of Southeast Asia.

The new work introduced at this exhibition is themed on the "Kyoto School," an informal network around the philosophers Kitaro Nishida and Hajime Tanabe, which was highly influential in the intellectual circles in Japan in the 1930s-40s. Incorporating elements of virtual reality (VR) and refracted through an anime aesthetic, the installation is being realized in collaboration with YCAM.

Breaking down public history through an accumulation, and subsequent reconfiguration of images and texts, *Voice of Void* highlights the complex and multi-layered nature of history.



Sketch for a "Mecha" that appears in the work

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## Another collaboration between YCAM and an internationally renowned artist



Ho Tzu Nyen, "Hotel Aporia", 2019 / photograph by Takeshi Hirabayashi  
Courtesy of Artist, Aichi Triennale and Edouard Malingue Gallery

Since its opening, YCAM has been producing and presenting a diverse range of installation works together with such pioneering artists as Seiko Mikami, exonemo, Ryuichi Sakamoto, Carsten Nicolai, and Fujiko Nakaya, as a vital part of the YCAM's explorations into new forms of art incorporating media technology. Unveiled at this exhibition is a new installation by Ho Tzu Nyen, an artist based in Singapore.

Ho Tzu Nyen focuses on historical events, figures, and traditions, which he translates into diverse visual formats, including video, installation, and stage performance. Through these endeavors, he has established a reputation as an artist who engages with various complex issues in Asia, such as the contrast between East / West and tradition / modernity. His works highlight the complex and multi-layered nature of history itself, for which they have received high international acclaim in the realms of contemporary art and performing arts alike. Ho Tzu Nyen is today one of the most well-known artists from Singapore, and has represented Singapore at the 2011 Venice Biennale as well as numerous other art, performing arts, and film festivals around the world.

*Voice of Void*, Ho Tzu Nyen's newest work, which took more than a year to realize, is an animated, VR-based moving image installation themed on the "Kyoto School." This theme has served as a focal point for Ho Tzu Nyen's revisitation of Japanese history through the tumultuous years of the 1930s and 1940s. The work presents the complicated background of this influential network formed around the philosophers Kitaro Nishida (1870-1945) and Hajime Tanabe (1885-1962), which significantly impacted the Japanese intellectual circles during the wartime period.

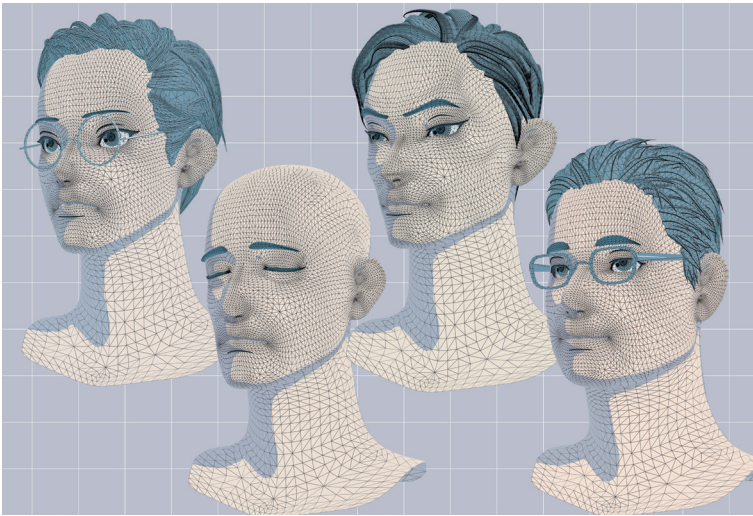
### ■ Ho Tzu Nyen

Born in Singapore. Transforms a wide array of historical and philosophical texts and artifacts into artworks across various formats such as video, installation, and theatrical performance. His recent works prominently feature appearances of metamorphic characters such as weretigers (*One or Several Tigers*, 2017), and triple agents and traitors (*The Nameless*, 2015 & *The Mysterious Lai Teck*, 2018). In addition to representing Singapore at the 2011 Venice Biennale, he has been invited to numerous international art exhibitions, performing arts and film festivals.



Photograph by Matthew Teo  
Courtesy of Art Review Asia

## Restaging history by way of VR and animation



3D models of the Iwao Koyama, Keiji Nishitani, Shigetaka Suzuki and Masaaki Kosaka

One starting point of *Voice of Void*, is "The World-Historical Standpoint and Japan," a roundtable discussion by the so-called "Big Four of the Kyoto School" – Keiji Nishitani (1900-1990), Masaaki Kosaka (1900-1969), Iwao Koyama (1905-1993), and Shigetaka Suzuki (1907-1988) – at the end of November 1941, shortly before the attack on Pearl Harbor. By restaging this discussion, the work explores the complex and often contradictory contexts around the extended network of "Kyoto School" in the 1930s and 1940s.

*Voice of Void* combines elements of 3D animation and anime aesthetics, using a combination of video projections and VR technology, to create an immersive experience in which the audience is invited to slip beneath the uneasy skins of these characters. Ho Tzu Nyen breaks down public history by accumulating images, texts and biographies to expose the complexity of history with all its fictions and contradictions, while YCAM continues to explore new forms of artistic expression such as VR and other cutting-edge technologies. Their most recent collaboration results in a work that presents a fresh perspective on a convoluted moment of Japanese history involving masters and students, lecturers and audiences, perpetrators and victims.

**Ho Tzu Nyen**

### **Voice of Void**

In collaboration with YCAM, 2021  
World premiere

Produced by Yamaguchi Center for Arts and Media [YCAM]

Co-produced by Kadist Art Foundation,  
TPAM-Performing Arts Meeting in Yokohama  
Supported by National Arts Council,  
Singapore

Voice actors: Uichiro Fueda (Uichiro Fueda  
Drama Office), Akira Takayama (Port B),  
Yudai Kamisato (Okazaki Art Theatre),  
Masahiro Oishi (mamagoto / NYLON100 °C/  
Switch Research Institute), Agito, Yuma  
Tsurumai, Koichi Murakami, Yabuki

Direction and Script: Ho Tzu Nyen  
Dramaturge and Translation: Arai Tomoyuki  
Translation: Miho Tsujii  
Spatial Sound Design: Katsuhiro Chiba  
VR Platform Design: Shoya Dozono (Qosmo),  
Ryosuke Nakajima (Qosmo)  
3D Modeling: Masaki Toriyabe  
Character Design: Takuya Sugimoto  
Voice Recording: Kohsuke Nakamura  
Graphic Design: Tezzo Suzuki

## General Information

**Ho Tzu Nyen**  
**Voice of Void**

In collaboration with YCAM

Saturday, April 3, 2021 - Sunday, July 4, 10:00-19:00

Yamaguchi Center for Arts and Media [YCAM] StudioA

Admission free

Closed on Tuesdays (except May 4); April 22; May 6, 12 & 13

This exhibition includes VR works. For viewing VR works, the target age is 13 years old and over. Other video works can be viewed without age restrictions.

Organized by Yamaguchi City, Yamaguchi City Foundation for Cultural Promotion  
In association with Yamaguchi City Board of Education  
Supported by The Kao Foundation for Arts and Sciences  
Produced by Yamaguchi Center for Arts and Media [YCAM]

## Related event

**Talk session with the artist and the production team**

April 3, 2021, 14:00-15:30 Venue: Foyer

Admission free (reservation required)

English translation available

**Triangle Talk Session**

14:00-16:00 on April 17, May 22, June 12, and June 26, 2021

Venue: Foyer / Admission free

(reservation required, no entry for children aged 13 or below)

Visitors participate in a three-way conversation that involves themselves, the work and other spectators. The exchange of individual views on the work will be an opportunity for visitors to discover new perspectives. (only in Japanese)

**Talk session with the YCAM staff**

14:00-14:40 on April 10, May 1, and June 5

Venue: Foyer / Admission free

(reservation required, no entry for children aged 13 or below)

YCAM curators and educators in charge of this exhibition will explain the concepts and backgrounds behind the work. (only in Japanese)

**Related film program**

Scheduled for May 2021 at Studio C / Admission TBA

The program is planned to feature movies related to the artist and his work. Detailed information will be available on the YCAM website soon.

**Bookings**

For events requiring advance bookings, please complete the necessary details on the booking form on the YCAM website.

**[www.ycam.jp/en](http://www.ycam.jp/en)**