

# Sister Water, Brother Sun

An exhibition by Mauro De Giorgi & Billy Soh

There is a poetic purity in the use of water and sunlight as artistic materials. In this exhibition, which explores mythology, geometry and nature, there is a meaningful connection to time-honoured techniques: You will notice traces of Japanese sumi ink painting, textures of Korean calligraphy paper, and be transported back to the roots of cyanotype photography. Both artists present entirely new ways of art-making; fusing old with new and undertaking experimental new processes which push the boundaries of both the medium and their artistic practices.

Stone, water and metal are transmuted into representations of gods and mythical creatures in Mauro De Giorgi's collages on canvas. With reference to sacred geometry, mythology and Peranakan colour palette as seen in traditional tiles, the collages' geometric and abstract shapes take on symbolic significance that is further reinforced in carefully woven layers of rice paper and sumi calligraphy ink. Mauro's newest works created at NPE are a continuation of his artistic quest in capturing the beauty and mystery of the natural world, and reflect his interests in the mythological and the mystical.

Whereas Mauro paints with water, Billy Soh prints with sunlight: he has exposed sensitised calligraphy paper to sunlight, creating a series of photograms, and through this he has simplified the process of image capture back to its most basic form. In doing so he questions contemporary methods of photography that utilise the camera as a means to an end in point-shoot documentation, which he believes compromises the essence of the captured subject. At NPE, Billy thus returned to the roots of photography and explored the capture of light using a minimal selection of materials imbued with historic significance - such as traditional rice paper and cyanotype chemistry. By taking away the camera, the practice of photography has been simplified and made raw. The resulting artworks reflect the ephemeral and unpredictable nature of light in flux.

## ABOUT MAURO DE GIORGI:

Mauro De Giorgi is an international artist whose works have been displayed in Italy (Venice Biennale), United Kingdom (London), Japan (Tokyo), Switzerland (Art Basel) & Singapore, where he currently resides. In 2015 he was selected by the Benetton Art Foundation to exhibit at the Venice Biennale. His artwork has been published in the Benetton Collection book *Preastigium*. His work has been collected by international jazz singer Aki Yashiro.

Mauro's practice of art is a constant attempt to achieve balance and purity through a minimal yet experimental approach which also includes ancient techniques such as sumi (calligraphy ink), gyotaku (fish printing) and iwa enogu (mineral pigments).

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## ABOUT BILLY SOH:

Billy Soh is a multi-disciplinary artist working within the realms of photography, paper making, sound and installation art. He also co-founded the PlayItForwardSG initiative that intervenes in public places, turning them into music-making spaces through public piano installations.

Clicking away behind the camera since the tender age of 14, Billy believes that the lens captures more than the human eye can perceive, and that the mind can conjure up more than what the camera itself captures. He constantly explores the essence of photography as a medium, and is currently developing a photographic practice that stays true to its roots as an artform instead of mere documentation.

## ABOUT NPE ART RESIDENCY & GALLERY:

Since establishment in 2015 NPE Art Residency has invited selected contemporary artists in Singapore to expand, nurture and develop their skills at NPE. Meanwhile they are encouraged to collaborate with other creatives & NPE in-house fine art digital print and paper experts.

NPE Art Residency is the art arm of NPE Print Communications (Previously known as National Photo Engravers). NPE has a long creative history stemming back to 1967. In contemporary times, NPE has an ever growing team of designers & technicians, running Singapore's leading press & communication agency. This means that our artist residency studio has more in-house facilities than any other studio or creative space in Singapore. The NPE Art Residency is founded by Daryl Goh.

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