

Kitty Anderson, Graiwoot Chulphongsathorn, Emma Dove, Tina Fiske, Philippa Lovatt, and David Upton

Reflections on โลก(ไร้)รูป (Im)material worlds: Tracing creative practice, histories and environmental contexts in artists' moving image from Southeast Asia and the UK

In memory of Emma Wolukau-Wanambwa (1976 - 2023)



Promised Lands (Emma Wolukau-Wanambwa, 2015)

โลก(ไร้)รูป (Im)material worlds was an artists' moving image programme that gave focus to the environmental crisis from Global South and postcolonial perspectives and was screened online and in person in St Andrews, Scotland from January to March 2022.¹ Funded by a British Council Connections Through Culture UK-Southeast Asia Grant, (Im)material worlds was a collaborative curatorial project instigated by film scholars Graiwoot Chulphongsathorn and Philippa Lovatt, with Emma Dove and Tina Fiske from the Dumfriesshire independent arts organisation and gallery CAMPLE LINE, and LUX Scotland's Kitty Anderson and David Upton. The programme stems from the publication of the *Screen* dossier 'Tracing the Anthropocene in Southeast Asian film and artists' moving image' – a collection of essays co-edited by Graiwoot and Philippa that addresses the environmental crisis from the perspective of Southeast Asia.

โลก(ไร้)รูป (Im)material worlds brought together recent and new moving image work by ten Southeast Asian and UK-based artists and filmmakers who use experimental and essayistic

¹ <https://campleline.org.uk/immaterialworlds/>

forms to explore communities, habitats and places through their colonial, political, military and environmental histories in a fortnightly series of paired screenings and online conversations. Spanning diverse terrains from the Puerto Rican island of Vieques to the peatlands of Cape Wrath in northern Scotland, the Central Highlands of Vietnam, the rural foothills of western Uganda, coastal Mindanao in the southern Philippines, the route of the Yangon Circular Railway in Myanmar, the riverscapes of the Nakhon Ratchasima and Ubon Provinces in Thailand, and one of Singapore's oldest social housing estates, the films within the programme share critical and pressing concerns that include land privatisation, environmental exploitation, the displacement of peoples, the destruction of ecosystems, the dilution of local traditions and cultures, and the denial of rights.

Through these films we encounter places, habitats and communities that have been made precarious, their futures uncertain, by institutions and practices rooted in imperialism, its legacies and its corporate and governmental iterations. Whilst Apichatpong Weerasethakul and Alia Syed engage a seemingly elemental register in their films – thick cloud descending upon a village, the inevitable back and forth of the tide against a near empty horizon – they frame succinctly the abstract nature of government or state ownership as well as the questionable land management practices that exclude the rights of longstanding inhabitants.² Films by Shireen Seno and Emilia Beatriz expose the limits of official histories, the mediums with which they were recorded and the repositories that preserve them, redrawing the archive with new subjectivities, speculations of meaning and modulations of voice. Likewise, concerns with language, memory and representation also inform the films of Emma Wolukau-Wanambwa and Prapat Jiwarangsana, which consider the arbitrariness of borders and boundaries as well as the politics of forced migration and displacement. The films of Nguyễn Trinh Thi and Maeve Brennan challenge, respectively, the primacy placed upon visuality and the image and upon human scales of time as ways of knowing the world, instead returning focus to sound and aural experience across human and non-human spectrums, as well as to geological and evolutionary temporalities. Lastly, films by Som Supparinya and The Migrant Ecologies Project, screened at an expanded version of the programme at Sands: International Film Festival of St Andrews, attend to the layered histories of their respective locations and to the environmental impact of man-made infrastructures and development on human and non-human relations.

From these stories come notes of resilience, of hope and of healing. Beatriz's *a forecast, a haunting, a crossing, a visitation* explores ways in which people come together collectively to

² For further discussion of this aspect of Apichatpong's work, see Graiwoot Chulphongsathorn, 'Apichatpong Weerasethakul's Planetary Cinema,' *Screen*, 62: 4, Winter 2021, pp. 541-548.

protect and speak of the health of the land, their bodies and the climate. Elsewhere, for instance, Nguyễn Trinh Thi has talked of her sense of responsibility as a filmmaker to ‘look for a more balanced and sensitive approach in perceiving the world by paying more attention to aural landscapes, in line with my interests in the unknown, the invisible, the inaccessible, and in potentialities.’³ As a whole, the programme calls attention to what Graiwoot and Philippa have described as ‘the tremendous capacity and potential of the moving image to traverse multiple temporal and spatial scales and durations, to connect human and nonhuman histories through affective and imaginative experience, and offer us a glimpse into the possibility of a liveable future.’⁴

What follows is a conversation between Kitty Anderson (Director, LUX Scotland), Graiwoot Chulphongsathorn (Lecturer, Chulalongkorn University and Film Producer), Emma Dove (Programme Co-ordinator, CAMPLE LINE), Tina Fiske (Director, CAMPLE LINE), Philippa Lovatt (Lecturer, University of St Andrews), and David Upton (Public Programme Manager, LUX Scotland) that took place on Zoom in August 2022 in which they discuss their collaboration; the potential for shared learning across critical, creative, and curatorial practice; the peripheral nature of Scotland-Southeast Asia exchanges; questions of access, time-zones, remoteness, and reach across the Global North and South; and the effect of the weather on audience numbers.



From top left to right: Graiwoot Chulphongsathorn, Apichatpong Weerasethakul, and Alia Syed.

³‘How to Improve the World’ (2021) <https://nguyentrinthi.wordpress.com/2021/11/28/how-to-improve-the-world-2021/>

⁴ Graiwoot Chulphongsathorn and Philippa Lovatt, ‘Tracing the Anthropocene in Southeast Asian film and artists’ moving image,’ *Screen*, 62: 4, Winter 2021, p. 504.

Emma Dove: Why did you feel like it would be valuable to invite CAMPLE LINE and LUX Scotland to collaborate on the film programme?

Graiwoot Chulpongsathorn: I think the main reason that we invited you is that the nature of the Anthropocene discussion is inherently interdisciplinary, so academics like myself and Philippa should not monopolise and dictate the conversation. I think that's why we wanted other sectors involved – other moving image organisations, to be a part of the project. One sector is the University of St Andrews and Chulalongkorn University, the second sector is the other moving image organisations, and the third sector is the British Council, which makes the project more interesting from my point of view.

Kitty Anderson: The British Council were the silent partner within this. Their agenda (for us to work together and collaborate across different countries) was fundamental to the project but we never addressed it directly. The environmental crisis is a shared concern so international collaboration was vital to the conversation, but somehow I'd forgotten that somebody else was invested in that.

Philippa Lovatt: Part of our thinking was about the importance of hearing from artists directly about their own research into the environmental histories of specific localities and how they have explored these through their work. So in inviting CAMPLE LINE and LUX Scotland to collaborate with us, we wanted to learn from your experience of opening up the conversation not just to audiences (which was very important to us) but also, crucially, to work out how best to give space to the artists to reflect on their own research and practice – so we could start to make connections between different contexts, histories, and experiences collectively. And to recognise and make visible how massively enriching and important that is for our own research, to have discussion and learn from each other.

And the collaborative, international aspect of that is crucially important for me as a Scotland-based academic employed by an institution like University of St Andrews writing about work from Southeast Asia (and ideas of distance, remoteness and situatedness have been central to the way we've approached the project in our planning and conversations). Recognising the ethics of that is really important – a question I think about is how do we as film scholars in the Global North do research in a non-extractive way? And what do feminist research methodologies look like when organised around collaboration and the co-creation of knowledge(s) (to return to Graiwoot's point about academics not monopolising the conversation)? What that means to me is creating spaces for artists and filmmakers to show

their work, for it to be seen by others, but also, importantly, for them to be given that platform – and supporting that practically, materially, in every way possible.

And obviously another aspect of that is: what does it mean to write about work that is rarely seen in Scotland? (Im)material worlds was about opening up to as wide an audience as possible not just in Scotland but in other parts of the world where it's hard to see films like this in person for whatever reason - maybe because you live somewhere "remote" (i.e. not a metropolis like London, Berlin or New York) or due to restrictions related to physical access. This was an aspect of the project that felt particularly important due to the ongoing situation with the pandemic where putting the films and conversations online and providing a broadband top-up fund meant that people who were more at risk could watch them safely from home even if they were tuning in from a part of the world with unstable internet access. We wanted to try to anticipate and remove all of the potential barriers that people might come up against. And your (CAMPLE LINE's and LUX Scotland's) expertise in how to make the programme accessible was crucial for both the online and in person screenings. Although we didn't describe it in this way at the time, I think that (Im)material worlds's feminist approach is evident in the care and attention given to access measures across the whole programme (which was supported by Matchbox Cineclub, Screen Language, and Sheena Macdonald, the BSL interpretor at the in person screenings at Sands: International Film Festival of St Andrews). We also tried to encourage participation in the discussions from audiences in Thailand and so Sethinun Jariyavilaskul (a Thai interpreter) transcribed the conversations into Thai in the chat while Graiwoot translated some of the conversation into Thai and English. I feel that we all learned a lot from that experience about what was possible.

Kitty Anderson: There are so many different relationships within the project - between the academics and the artists, between the arts organisations and the artists, and between the artists themselves. We knew one another in different ways, and the project provided an opportunity to develop existing relationships, establish new ones, and learn more about one another's practices. Something really generative came from that, and introducing the artists to one another felt really productive. It was a pretty intense project to be working on and it had to be pulled together in such a short amount of time. We didn't articulate it at the beginning, but it was really important that we trusted one another and were able to share different ways of doing things. Essentially we shared the wider vision for the project and the themes we were addressing.

ED: Yes, I was thinking about that. There's quite a few of us. But I think that was a real value to the project. There could have been a bit of a risk of there being too many cooks, but it worked because of Philippa and Graiwoot identifying that you wanted to work with CAMPLE LINE and

LUX Scotland – and the reasons that you wanted to work with us, drawing on the strengths that each of us have and that you guys also have in terms of a background to the project through your research. It felt like everyone's contributions were really valuable to the success of the programme.

KA: And being really generous with that research. You presented your work to us and asked us what we would do with it. And that created space for us to suggest various approaches and find a way through that made sense to everybody. And it does feel like it has been really useful and productive for all of us. It's been wonderful for us to learn from CAMPLE LINE, which I don't think we would have had the opportunity to do otherwise, or at least not in this way. We all found our own way of doing things during the pandemic and being able to share that knowledge has been really useful.

David Upton: Yeah, trying to imagine this programme taking place in 2019, I just don't think it would have happened. I don't think artists or us as an organisation would have been as comfortable with making work available online. There are fears of piracy, and the effect that showing work online might have on film festival submissions which often demand national premiere status, but the main hesitation was that work would not be valued in the same way online as opposed to in a cinema or gallery context. During lockdown we put a lot of thought into how to make an online presentation of work meaningful and that gave us more confidence going into this collaboration. We also took away from this project a lot of learning on how a project could function across time zones. We've brought that into a following project called 'Hadithi Hadithi: Place is mostly open space' which is a collaboration with Ajabu Ajabu Audio Visual House in Tanzania, also supported by the British Council. There was a lot of hard work at the beginning of (Im)material worlds, thinking how this format could be useful for the artists, organisations, audiences, everyone involved.

KA: We came up with the online ONE WORK⁵ series in April 2020 and we've become quite comfortable with it as a platform and a way of working. But the idea of bringing in multiple people, organisations and time zones has really strengthened our work. From understanding what a webinar offers compared to an online meeting, and how to adjust things when you're dealing with a large audience, the (Im)material worlds project has introduced us to different ways of working. That learning has been really useful for us. Even just the experience of

⁵ ONE WORK is a series of online events presented by LUX Scotland that focus closely on a single work. These generous discussions provide an opportunity for an artist to present a recent work and talk through how the work came into being. Each work is available as a month-long online screening, followed by a specially commissioned written response that serves as documentation of both the work and the discussion.

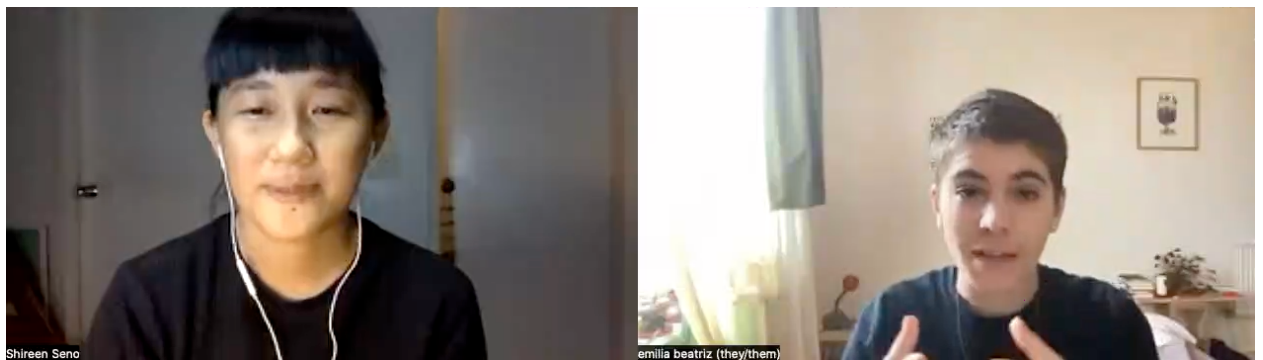
examining our audience, thinking about who they are and how we work with them. Both in Scotland and internationally.

PL: Did you learn anything about your audiences through this that you didn't know before?

KA: What was amazing is how many people knew about the project. It felt like the reach was huge. People knew about it and were excited by it. Whether that translated into... I was going to say bums on seats but it's more like faces on screens, I don't know if it did, but they knew about it. Did you feel that as well David? That it felt like we reached more people?

DU: Yeah, just anecdotally I felt a real excitement from people I spoke to who were finding new artists' practices and hearing new perspectives through the project, though one of the discussions fell on a rare sunny Saturday morning in February so we didn't have a huge Scottish audience for that one but we had a big audience in Southeast Asia, which was kind of amazing.

KA: Yes we definitely learnt that through the pandemic. If the sun is out in Scotland no one wants to be at their computers, and that's when you rely on your international audience who are a bit more relaxed about whether it's sunny or not!



From left to right: Shireen Seno, and Emilia Beatriz

PL: Can I ask something about the fact that both organisations (CAMPLE LINE and LUX Scotland) are based in Scotland? What are the strengths of working with collaborators in Scotland specifically? And also internationally?

Tina Fiske: CAMPLE LINE is based in Dumfries and Galloway in southwest Scotland, a region where 1 in 3 people live in communities with populations of less than 500. Applying the Scottish Government Urban Rural Classification (2016, 2020), Cample where we are located is classed as

'remote rural'.⁶ From our base, we present a year-round programme of exhibitions, film screenings, workshops, talks and so on, sharing the work of contemporary artists, filmmakers and writers from across the world with our local communities and far beyond. We have to work hard to reach people - whether they live 2 miles away or 125 miles, or much further, and because of our rurality, we have always had to be creative and proactive in how people can in turn reach us and access and engage with our programme. So, collaborations and partnerships have been (and continue to be) very important for us, from those we are building with the local development trusts that support our surrounding communities for instance, to this collaboration with St Andrews and Chulalongkorn Universities and LUX Scotland. For us, it is about working across these scales, which has always felt possible in Scotland, and here through this project, internationally.

*Already in 2019, we had begun to look at ways we could take parts of our programme online, but the onset of the pandemic accelerated that for us too. We were able to respond quickly, but it was a steep learning curve. It seemed like suddenly things could be generated from contexts like Cample - peripheral places, marginal places, rural places, not necessarily the central hubs that we are familiar with – and we were able to reach audiences across Scotland and the UK, and in some cases internationally. We shared films by Jumana Manna, Fiona Tan, Sharon Lockhart, Shireen Seno and others, some of whose work we had screened previously in our building. We have always tried to bring a range of voices, insights and perspectives into our programme through collaborations and invitations – this is how we first worked with you Philippa. Working online opened up further possibilities for us to connect, reach and build conversation with artists or around their work. I remember a Sunday afternoon in early 2021, during the second lockdown, when you were in conversation online with Shireen about her film *Big Boy* for us, which you joined from St Andrews, Shireen from the Philippines (her early evening), and Emma and I hosting from Dumfriesshire.*

KA: Working online seems to flatten things, so St Andrews, Cample, and Glasgow felt more similar than different in the context of (Im)material worlds. And something similar happens when you take Scotland in relation to Southeast Asia – we're all equal in a sense. There's something really nice about that. And thinking about that in relation to being Scottish, I always feel like within this small country we have a lot more - not power, or control - but perhaps potential for change. I don't think it translates into real action every time, but it feels like we can discuss something and we can change. Three organisations within this small country, talking about something, feels powerful.

⁶ <https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-government-urban-rural-classification-2016/pages/2/>

TF: As three organisations in Scotland, though, we do each have very different audiences, and different dynamics with our audiences. With this programme we had the opportunity to bring those aspects together, alongside the audiences and networks that Graiwoot and the contributing artists and filmmakers drew. It did produce a very interesting texture. At CAMPLE LINE, our local audience is very broad, and it includes those who, whilst they may watch some world or independent cinema through more mainstream venues, will have little or no experience of watching artists' moving image or other experimental approaches. From the outset, though, we have been committed to sharing artists' moving image as part of our own year-round programme, including long form work by artists and filmmakers such as Laura Horelli, Rania Stephen, or Filipa Cesar. And often we find that our 'local' audience is remote from us, that audience members joining us in person for a screening may have travelled twenty-plus miles to reach us. This is a feature of film provision in a region such as Dumfries & Galloway. To be able to connect someone who has accessed the programme remotely from Gatehouse of Fleet, which would be an hour's drive away from us, to Alia's work or Thi's, to that sense of a wider global audience through Graiwoot's networks, is amazing. And the line drawn through that was obviously a shared concern around the material issues raised within the programme.

GC: For me, from the point of view of a Thai cinophile, I think there is something that is very fresh in terms of the relationship between Southeast Asia and Scotland. Because normally when we (in Southeast Asia) think of the moving image scene in the UK it is about the BFI, and the London-centric context. But this time is different, both in terms of the choice of films and because of the focus of the discussion.

TF: That I think is also reflective of the range of contexts that the film material drew into the programme. Many of the contexts seen in the programme - that are the subjects of the films - are more remote, mostly away from centres or high population zones, historically peripheral or perhaps more recently so.

PL: I love how this idea of remoteness and locality is something that's emerging through this conversation both in relation to the films themselves but also in terms of access and the reach of the project.

*TF: Yes, it felt like a lot of material was made available or accessible online over the period of the pandemic; it became possible to be in Dumfries & Galloway and watch material shared online by organisations in the Isle of Skye, or Rotterdam, or Los Angeles. That was how we, Emma and I, first watched vqueeram and Vishal Jugdeo's *Does Your House Have Lions* (2021), which we subsequently screened in partnership with GAMIS (Glasgow Artists' Moving Image Studio) last summer. Over the course of (Im)material worlds, we spoke a lot about equality of*

access, about who is able to access what from where, as determined by geopolitical factors. I think the pandemic cast an interesting, necessary light on that.



From top left to bottom left: Kitty Anderson, David Upton, Nguyễn Trinh Thi, and Maeve Brennan

DU: Access in a wide sense has been integral to the programme. As Philippa mentioned, having the works captioned so they were accessible to d/Deaf and hard of hearing audiences is essential but also something that an online screening affords is the possibility for a viewer to watch the work when they have the capacity at any time of day, over a two week period in this case, for each pair of films. This makes a programme accessible to people who might have caring responsibilities, health conditions, who may be shielding, or who just aren't working a typical 9 to 5 and can't go to the cinema in the evening. With some distance since the project now I have been reflecting on the politics of language and of English being the default language for international art and academia.

Maybe it would be interesting to talk about the screenings at Sands: International Film Festival of St Andrews - while watching the works in person over a weekend there was a feeling of being completely immersed in the programme for that time and having some of the artists present gave such a richness to the experience. Seeing the whole programme in its fullness with Som Supaparinya's and with Lucy Davis's (The Migrant Ecologies Project) work included, which

were'n't part of the online series, really gave more of a sense of the wider curatorial voice of the programme.



From top left to bottom left: Philippa Lovatt, Graiwoot Chulphongsathorn, Prapat Jiwangsan, Emma Dove and Emma Wolukau-Wanambwa

KA: We knew the structure we wanted and the artists we were interested in working with, but found ourselves focusing on the relationship between practices rather than the bigger themes, which were slightly overwhelming in the abstract. It was only once we got to the in-person events and everyone was together in an immersive situation that we could actually start to address the wider concerns. Tina, in your longer introduction you quote Graiwoot and Philippa speaking of 'the tremendous capacity and potential of the moving image to traverse multiple temporal and spatial scales and generations, to connect human and non-human histories through the affective and imaginative experience, offering a glimpse into the possible possibility of a liveable future.' Do you think that happened?

ED: Yes. I was thinking about the value of, as you were saying David, being together in person, but also the fact that it had a geographic located-ness in St Andrews. It attached the programme to a specific place in a way that the online programme didn't. The value of the online programme was perhaps that it was more amorphous and individual because we were not experiencing it in one place together. But it's trickier to gauge the value of the online programme to each of our local geographical locations and communities. For example, what

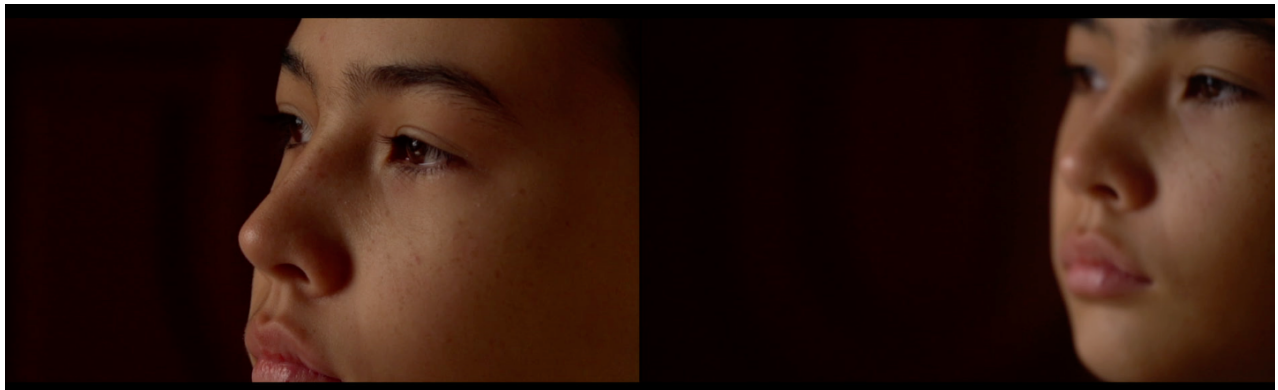
was the value of the online programme to local audiences around Camp? I suppose it may have been the chance for them to connect with international audiences and be a part of a very international conversation, as Tina mentioned. It's perhaps easier to look at the value of the online programme at an organisational level, in that we had viewers from 35 different countries and over 1000 different viewers for the programme as a whole - and that's amazing. I think it's fair to say that CAMP LINE alone could never have got that reach for a programme, because it's a combination of the reach of all of us and the artists as well. But in St Andrews, because it was in a specific place at a specific time, and we know who was there in the room, and who we had conversations with, and the artists that were there - and we went to the pub together afterwards. It's much easier to have a handle on that as something that was experienced collectively and in-person.

KA: There's something amazing about the picture of you on the beach in St. Andrews with the artists. It's really powerful to see people, actual real people, in a landscape. It spoke to me in a very different way from the rest of the programme. Just trying to imagine... a big beach, you know... seeing the land and sea feels really significant. Geography is significant. That's maybe the bit that gets lost online.



[Left to right: Peter Taylor (Director of Berwick Film and Media Arts Festival), Som Supaparinya, Lucy Davis, Alia Syed, and Emma Dove at East Sands, St Andrews.]

PL: There are practical things to deal with when organising an artists' film sidebar as part of a new film festival like Sands in a place like St Andrews, and the event was not without its difficulties, but the sense of companionship and care that felt very special at the in person screenings, is something that we also felt when Graiwoot and I were writing the introduction to the Screen dossier. Particularly, how much care and attention is a crucial part of the artists' approach to the specific histories, localities, and communities (human and non-human) that their work is engaging with. That was evident in the space of the online programme but very tangibly, and in a different way, at the in-person screenings. To experience the final film, Nguyễn Trinh Thi's 'How to Improve the World' (2021) in that space with an audience - after working together (but distantly) on the online programme for so many months, and having written about the film for the original dossier⁷ - was really incredible. I think that's significant too. There's the attention that the filmmakers give to the material and the subjects of their films, but there's also the care that we give to each other in this space.



How to Improve the World (Nguyễn Trinh Thi, 2021)

KA: One of the things that would be good to address is how the artists responded to the themes that we were talking about and how open they were... the subtitle we had of 'tracing creative practice, histories and environmental contexts in artists' moving image from Southeast Asia and the UK' was a very broad heading. But when we got into some of those more specific things there was resistance from some of the artists about being categorised in that way. It was quite interesting. It came up about how the words 'postcolonial' and 'Anthropocene' were problematic. It is interesting, here we are trying to address these topics and there's some resistance from the artists about being connected specifically with that word or idea. Maybe because both their practice and the idea are huge and how do you make those things match up? They are not equivalent. I guess I am frustrated that we can't address anything directly because it has to remain broad at every stage because nobody is making a piece of work to address a

⁷ Philippa Lovatt, 'Foraging in the ruins: Nguyễn Trinh Thi's mycological moving image practice,' Screen Dossier, Vol. 22, Issue 4, Winter 2021, pp. 559-567.

theme. How does creative practice address the environmental crisis? Does it? It probably doesn't, but it feeds into our understanding of what an environmental crisis is. There's something about this possibility of a liveable future which I love... the idea that culture can take us through this in some way. I would just be really interested to understand how you see it, how you all see that as a possibility, whether that is realistic and generative, does it do something? Because it got me closer. I learned a lot by exploring those artists' works and the things that they were talking about in their work.

In so many ways it was a huge learning experience, looking at their work and then the ideas that they were exploring within their works. But whether or not we could ever tackle something as overwhelming as an environmental crisis through those works... where does it take us now? What's the next step in addressing this? It's like an action plan, you know? This progresses things in this way. What would be the next step in terms of our shared work and our individual practices in terms of changing things?

ED: Maybe it's lots of little steps? You mentioned earlier about connecting those artists and the potential of what might come from that in future, and we don't know what that might be, but it's creating those links that maybe weren't there before. And they are in place now. I know from the feedback from speaking to Emilia (Beatriz) and Shireen (Seno) for example, the value that they felt in being introduced and having had the opportunity to start a conversation about their works, but also about wider things and the meeting points of what they're both looking at. I'm not sure what specific actions might be, though...

GC: For me I think it is the nature of visual artists that they don't want to be put into one box, one concept, which is very different from environmental filmmakers who speak more directly about environmental themes. Yet, I think the good thing about our project is that it might help the artist see the connection between their works and the wider questions that other artists are also addressing, such as the Anthropocene. I'm not sure if I claim too much, but at least I think they might find it easier to situate their work within a dialogue about the environmental crisis.

ED: Also, from an audience perspective, in terms of the potential trickle effects of attending and learning around that - but also from a creative perspective: we've spoken about how some of these films are difficult to access, especially the UK films in Southeast Asia, and vice versa. So there's also the creative inspiration that it offers to people who may be working in similar areas. Just seeing what else is happening, how other people are working. What that can offer.

DU: Almost opposed to an active thing there is a passive kind of growing awareness. And a closing of distance, seeing work being made in Scotland alongside work being made in

Southeast Asia. I think that kind of awareness and presence creates solidarity and has been a really important growth during the project. I know it's not dramatic and... it's hard to quantify... but at the same time it is present.

ED: Your question was, what can we do next? What's our next step? I suppose that difficulty in quantifying it makes it tricky for us to know how to then support the next stage or stages.

KA: But maybe it's this conversation? And that it will be printed and have some future life. That's a massive thing on top of a normal body of work. Normally you report back to the funder and then that's the end of it. But we're leaving lots of threads that can be taken on by other people.

PL: I feel like we've talked quite a lot about the context of Scotland, and the smallness of Scotland. I really like the ideas that have been emerging around scale, it has made these different contexts feel much closer together which allows us to see the ripple effect of the way that actions on the small scale can bring about something much bigger. Graiwoot, in the context of the audiences in Southeast Asia and or Thailand, what do you see as the value of this film programme?

GC: As an audience we share many similarities. In many films, there is clearly one theme coming up again and again, that is, the legacy of colonialism on the environment. I see the programme as a list of case studies from one place to another place. That makes me think a lot about the similarities across these different contexts, and in some cases it is very surprising - when Alia Syed talked about her future projects, that she planned to make a film on an island in the Indian Ocean - in that moment I felt so very close to her.

ED: The realisation that came out of the film programme and seeing the breadth of audience that attended for me, was thinking about relevance. On the surface it might not be apparent that a film about the colonial history of the Philippines has relevance to someone's life living in rural Scotland. But something that really emerged from the paired conversations between the filmmakers was that these things are all interconnected. It broke down that sense of distance between places. There's a lot more that connects those places than separates them.

TF: It's interesting building on what Graiwoot said about environmental filmmakers. Certainly our audience at CAMPLE LINE would be familiar and potentially more comfortable with environmental documentaries than artists' moving image, because the documentary format is one that they are more used to accessing and watching and getting information from. The value of showing artists' moving image work is perhaps that it can be driven by different kinds of agendas or commitments to place. It can make present stories, and worlds, and places, and

issues in ways that are to be felt, or sensed or recognised. Even some of the more anecdotal feedback we got from our regular audience members who accessed parts of the (Im)material worlds programme was about the value to them of connecting to moods and different horizons. It wasn't necessarily about coming away with a body of knowledge about environmental issues in the Philippines, as Emma says, or feeling that you had to know the history to get the film, or understand the artist's intent. But just connecting with images and moods, and that there can be a thing, an element in any one of those films that stays with you, whether that's one of the images in Shireen's film for instance, that you just carry on carrying with you for a few days.

ED: I think the conversations were significant for audiences to access those more informational and contextual parts. I know that wasn't the only reason to have those conversations. But I always think about my mum in artists' moving image screenings. Often when I watch a film with her of this kind of type, it does challenge her because she's very used to narrative unfolding in a linear way - telling her what's going on and why. And so often I end up having a conversation with her after watching these types of films and she's like 'but what's it trying to say?' But that opportunity to actually tune in and listen to the artist talking about where it's coming from and why is really valuable - to give audiences access to things that are maybe not apparent on the surface of those types of films. But watching those types of films also generates conversations between the people watching the films (whether they have access to the artist talking about the work or not). You then have this process of unpicking it and interpreting it, and trying to understand it from your own perspective.

DU: I don't think any of the works gave easy answers. There are no tidy conclusions or emotional arcs that you might expect from a classic documentary or commercial cinema. During the Q&A at Sands someone commented to Som Supaparinya that they admired the resilience and strength of the fisher people in her film 'Two Sides of the Moon', Som responded 'Sure, they're resilient but they still shouldn't have to go through this'. That encounter touched at the reality of the environmental crisis, that it's continuing and there was no time for romanticising the struggle.

I would be interested to hear more about your collaboration, Philippa and Graiwoot. What's your next step going to be?

PL: First of all writing my book that I've been working on for a while⁸ but the (Im)material worlds project has reshaped what the book originally was, so that's been incredibly generative in terms of where my interests lie now compared to when I first started thinking about writing it

⁸ 'Reverberant Histories: Expanded Listening in Art Cinema and Artists' moving image in Asia' (Edinburgh University Press)

especially in relation to how political, colonial, military and environmental histories are so deeply entwined.

GC: In fact the British Council allows me to submit for the continual grant but the money will be much smaller. But maybe I will submit it next year and maybe we can do something together, as a small project.