

### Red stools central in first JavaArts Cambodian artist residency – picture feast

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### Cambodian-born artist Anida Yoeu Ali concludes the inaugural artist-in-residence placement at JavaArts Gallery in Phnom Penh, Cambodia.

As part of JavaArts' new artist residency programme, Anida Yoeu Ali combines collaborative performance and installation to explore "The Space Between Inside/Outside". She uses the red stool commonly found in Phnom Penh street eateries as a motif, placing Cambodia squarely in a Western-style "white cube" setting.



Anida Yoeu Ali, 'I Want Coconut/She Needs Ice Coffee (Street 49)', 2012, digital colour print, 139cm x 50cm, in 'The Space between Inside/Outside', at JavaArts Gallery, Phnom Penh, Cambodia. Image courtesy the artist.

"**The Space Between Inside/Outside**", which ran from 2 July 2012 to 2 September 2012, marked the conclusion of the inaugural artist residency at JavaArts, part of an ongoing art residency programme. From June to September 2012, Anida Yoeu Ali partnered with JavaArts and the local community to create installations, part performance and part object, that explore "the playful and the reflective, performance and the real, proximity and distance".



Anida Yoeu Ali, 'Enter the Field#1 / Arch Pose', digital colour print, 310cm x 40cm, in exhibit "The Space Between Inside/Outside", at JavaArts Gallery, Phnom Penh, Cambodia. Image courtesy the artist.

Installations, short films, photography and performance became an avenue for the artist to "explore personal and poetic ruminations on loss and life ... as measures of time and space". By bringing a piece of the Phnom Penh street eatery, the ubiquitous red stool, to a Western-style contemporary art gallery, Ali shares Cambodian tradition in an unconventional way.

In some of the installations, viewers became collaborators by interacting with the red stools. In *View from Here*, visitors were invited to become part of the work by arranging or sitting on the stools. In other works the stools were used as a sculptural element, forming, for example, the base for the black and white striped *Vertigo Dress*. Photographs and videos documenting Ali's performances in and around Phnom Penh, events that often included public interaction, complement the exhibition.



Anida Yoeu Ali, 2012, installation view of 'Vertigo Dress', mixed media, dimensions variable, in exhibit "The Space Between Inside/Outside", at JavaArts Gallery, Phnom Penh, Cambodia. Image courtesy the artist.

A major proponent of contemporary art in Phnom Penh, JavaArts started out as an arts café and gallery that aimed "to bring art to the public and the public to art, by building a bridge through awareness, education and accessibility". Throughout the twelve years of their existence, JavaArts has partnered with local artists or art groups, the private sector and the government "with the belief that a holistic approach leads to long-term stability" in art communities. In 2012, JavaArts will launch a new programme, Arts Lab, "a platform for producing artist initiatives and supporting research".





Anida Yoeu Ali, 2012, 'Enter the Red Wind / Naga #1', digital colour print, 100 cm x 65 cm, in the exhibit "The Space Between Inside/Outside", at JavaArts Gallery, Phnom Penh, Cambodia. Image courtesy the artist.



Anida Yoeu Ali, installation view 'View from Here', 2012, interactive mixed media installation, dimensions variable, in the exhibit "The Space Between Inside/Outside", at JavaArts Gallery, Phnom Penh, Cambodia. Image courtesy the artist.





Anida Yoeu Ali, "Enter the Ruins #1", 2012, digital colour print, 45 cm x 65 cm, in "The Space Between Inside/Outside" at JavaArts Gallery, Phnom Penh, Cambodia. Image courtesy the artist.



Anida Yoeu Ali, 2012, installation view of 'Really Big Red Stool', sculpture, wood and red paint, in the exhibit "The Space Between Inside/Outside", at JavaArts Gallery, Phnom Penh, Cambodia. Image courtesy the artist.

## Anida Yoeu Ali: global agitator

Raised in Chicago, Illinois, **Anida Yoeu Ali** earned her BFA from the **University of Illinois (Urbana-Champaign)** and an MFA from **School of the Art Institute of Chicago**. Ali was born in Cambodia and her Muslim Khmer heritage is central to her

interdisciplinary approach to art practice. A self-proclaimed “global agitator”, Ali’s work combines performance, written word and activism to “investigate the artistic, spiritual and political collisions of a hybrid transnational identity”.

Her work in the USA has been supported by the **Rockefeller Foundation**, the **Ford Foundation**, the **National Endowment of the Arts** and the **Illinois Arts Council**. In 2011, her short film ***My Asian Americana*** won the public vote in the US White House’s What’s Your Story **video challenge**, and in 2010, a short film created for **1700% Project** called ***Mistaken for Muslim*** was the recipient of the Grand Prize award for LinkTV’s **One Chicago, One Nation film competition**.

Ali is a co-founder of **Studio Revolt** in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, formed with Japanese film-maker Masahiro Sugano during her 2011 Fulbright Fellowship year. The Studio is an independent artist-run “collaborative media lab”, a group that aims to help emerging and deported artists tell their stories. The main focus for Studio Revolt is on “fiction and creative storytelling ... narratives built from imagination and consciousness beyond war and poverty”.



Anida Yoeu Ali (left), co-founder of Studio Revolt, with fellow founder Masahiro Sugano (right).

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