

# ***Phrase, Rephrase***

5 August – 19 September

with Shazwany Aziz, Vanessa Ban,  
Chen Shitong and Kanchana Gupta



Detail of Chen Shitong, *Wandering*, 2015, oil based paint and silkscreen on paper, 75 x 56 cm

*Singapore, July 2015* ---- Galerie Steph is pleased to present an exciting group exhibition of 4 very diverse artists—Shazwany Aziz, Vanessa Ban, Chen Shitong and Kanchana Gupta. Titled *Phrase, Rephrase*, the exhibition will feature unique prints, burnt paintings and a neon light sculpture. The artists will be present at the opening reception held on Wednesday, 5 August, from 6 - 9 pm.

The exhibition title is derived from the act of translating forms, movements and experiences from one medium or place to another. In this translating, or 'phrasing and rephrasing', some things are gained while others are lost. In Shazwany's and Shitong's printmaking practices, they are not only interested in translating lines, shapes and textures onto paper, but also objects and movements. This is done through various techniques including silkscreen and monotype printing.

For Shazwany, a print represents motion, which is captured in repeated patterns, dripping ink, squiggly lines and the cacophony of crisscrossing scratches. Each print is a residue of past actions. This is especially well represented in her *Results & Findings* series where she takes a used and battered cutting mat to create a lyrical and alluring print. Shitong, on the other hand, takes his forms, tones and textures from found stones and concrete fragments to create soft expansive surreal landscapes. His insertion of small figures conjures up a harmonious narrative and relationship between man and nature.

There is a similar play in translating textures and materials from one form into another in Kanchana's paintings from the series *Fragments in Time*. She paints layers upon layers of oil onto a canvas, only to scorch and peel the combined layers off to create a backless painting. The results are paintings composed of thick oil paint that hang in mid air without a supporting medium, thereby straddling comfortably between the categories of sculpture and painting. Kanchana's experiments with oil paint highlights its plasticity and the different possible iterations of its expression beyond the canvas.

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Vanessa's neon light sculpture with the words "Graveyard Souls & City Ghosts" is an introspective work telling how her experiences of alienation and isolation while studying in London was being effaced and written over by a different kind of alienation and isolation since moving back to Singapore. In her own words,

"During my last year in London, I witnessed the 2012 London riots near to where I worked and lived... For the first time the class differences in the city had escalated during my 2 year stay. Being a foreigner, I couldn't fully empathize with the citizens of London... this became a very surreal, but alienating experience for me. Late at night, I would watch the rioters stealing from shops as police cars gave chase from my bathroom window... I was a silent, almost invisible spectator—like a ghost in the distance. I returned to Singapore some time after, and a new alienating experience occurred when my mental state had majorly shifted from that of the status quo. Pragmatism, consumerism and consumption was the majority's way of life, and everything from the last 2 years was slowly starting to diminish and feel irrelevant..."



Shazwany Aziz, *Untitled*, 2015, mixed-media monotype, 42 x 59.3 cm

### About Galerie Steph

Singapore native Stephanie Tham founded Galerie Steph in July 2007 to showcase both modern European masters and contemporary Asian artists, including Joan Miro, Henri Matisse, Fernando Botero, Mithu Sen, and Nobuyoshi Araki. Educated at Christie's New York, Stephanie developed professional expertise at leading New York galleries before returning to Singapore to establish Galerie Steph. In recent years, the gallery has become a platform for young Singapore artists to experiment, develop and showcase new works.

### Galerie Steph

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