

Donna Ong
From the Tropics, With Love
Artist in Residence Vienna 2015

Opening: June 26, 2015 / 7p.m
Opening speech by Dr. Sabine B. Vogel, Vienna

Duration: June 27 - August 1, 2015

We are delighted to announce the exhibition opening of Donna Ong - Artist in Residence at KRINZINGER PROJEKTE, Schottenfeldgasse 45, 1070 Vienna on June 26th. On invitation by Ursula Krinzinger Donna Ong participated at the outstanding gallery project as Artist in Residence Vienna from Mai to Juin 2015. The works shown in the exhibition were all produced during her stay in Vienna.

This is a love story about the tropical forest. It is a story of the men and women who ventured from colder climates to explore, conquer and exploit the abundant resources found in these fertile new lands. It tells of how they grew to love, and hate, this place, and how their narratives, illustrations and perspectives founded the contrary views we have of the tropics today – warm and abundant, but ridden with disease and decay; fertile and lush, yet overpowering and out of control; full of exotic species that are beautiful but deadly, and natives who are friendly and sensual, yet lazy and morally lax. These assumptions also extend to the expectations surrounding the idea of a tropical aesthetic with its ubiquitous palm-trees, luxuriant forests and exotic wildlife.

Today, our fascination with the tropics has not abated, as seen by growing population of tourists to tropical destinations as well as the increasing number of tropical attractions being built within zoos and botanical gardens around the world. Neither have our pre-existing assumptions about the tropics been questioned or challenged – this is immediately evident upon entering any of the tropical attractions. Of course, this is not helped by the fact that even today, our first encounter with the tropical forest is still mediated second-hand through mediated images and narratives through the internet, television, books and film.

The works in the exhibition attempt to highlight and challenge the assumptions we have about the tropics, while also paying homage to the sense of romance and wonder that infused these stereotypical images and narratives of the past and gave them such enduring attraction and attention. Each artwork, despite looking like typical scenes and “objects” from the forest, was made entirely from images and souvenirs built, purchased and consumed overseas (i.e. countries not situated within the tropics or in the case of Singapore, a tropical island that embraces enthusiastically the Western assumptions of the tropics within its own landscaping).

2002 wurde KRINZINGER PROJEKTE als Projektraum und Erweiterung der Galerie Krinzinger gegründet. Dort wird seither ein sehr erfolgreiches, internationales Programm realisiert, das vorwiegend aus kuratierten Gruppenausstellungen besteht. Seit 2003 wird das etablierte Ausstellungsprogramm durch das Artist in Residence Vienna Programm begleitet, um internationalen KünstlerInnen die Möglichkeit zu bieten, vor Ort mit Wienbezug zu produzieren.