



Still from *APA JIKA, the mis-placed comma*, commissioned by The National Gallery Singapore.

## **The 'Forgotten' Weaver / Erika Tan**

Including *APA JIKA, the mis-placed comma (I, II, III)* commissioned by The National Gallery Singapore and *Balik Kampung - a return by proxy*, supported by The Arts Council England.

For this new installation, titled *The 'Forgotten' Weaver*, located on the ground floor of the Diaspora Pavilion, Erika Tan has assembled together two video works from an ongoing project designed to establish a presence for *Halimah-The-Empire-Exhibition-Weaver-Who-Died-Whilst-Demonstrating-Her-Craft*. Halimah lived and performed in the Malayan Pavilion during the Empire Exhibition (Wembley, 1924) until her untimely demise and removal to her final resting place in an unmarked grave in Woking, UK. For this project, Tan employs a variety of positioned voices and media to foster a spectral return of this minor historical figure.

The first video work, *APA JIKA, the mis-placed comma* is a work in 3 parts commissioned by The National Gallery Singapore and filmed within its exhibitions spaces during the final stages of its transition from colonial period law courts to National Gallery. The video brings together a displaced, deconstructed and orphaned loom, a performer of 'Malay' dance, and a group of young Chinese female amateur debaters who deliberate on the legacy of Empire, the provenance of exhibition histories, notions of representation, indigeneity, the position of craft in relation to modernism, and the validity of archival returns. The work calls into question the place of the artist and that of grand exhibitions and uses the form of 'debate' to instigate a discussion around Halimah's relevance in the postcolonial reframing of modernism. The work is supported by a structure which echoes that of an expanded loom, place of projection, or physical encasing (or trap). A second video work, *Balik Kampung – Return by Proxy*, appears as separate interludes between the main video, acting like supplementary threads. Here a different approach to voicing Halimah takes place through a dialogue between both 'artists'. Historical returns are seen as complex in their desires and methodologies, faulty and faltering, weaving together both past and present to challenge received narratives and produce space for discussion.

*The 'Forgotten' Weaver* installation is supported by the National Arts Council Singapore, The Arts Council England and Central Saint Martins, University of the Arts.



We invite you to the opening of the  
**DIASPORA PAVILION**  
**Wednesday 10th May, 2017 6-9pm**  
[Palazzo Pisani S. Marina, Calle de le Erbe 6104](https://www.arts-council.org/venues/palazzo-pisani-s-marina)

**Exhibiting Artists:** Larry Achiampong, Barby Asante, Sokari Douglas Camp, Libita Clayton, Kimathi Donkor, Michael Forbes, Ellen Gallagher, Nicola Green, Joy Gregory, Isaac Julien, Dave Lewis, Hew Locke, susan pui san lok, Paul Maheke, Khadija Saye, Yinka Shonibare MBE, Erika Tan, Barbara Walker, Abbas Zahedi

DIASPORA PAVILION will showcase the work of 19 artists whose wide-ranging practices variously expand, complicate and destabilise diaspora as an enduring critical concept. The project seeks to provoke discussions around sites of contact and the significance of movement beyond the national frame of contemporary art.  
Curated by David A. Bailey and Jessica Taylor

**For further information please visit** [www.internationalcuratorsforum.org](http://www.internationalcuratorsforum.org)  
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