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NEWS

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Ho Tzu Nyen Wins 2026 Fukuoka Grand Prize

The Singaporean artist is the first from his country to win the JPY five million (USD 31,500) award.

EMILY NG



Portrait of **HO TZU NYEN**. Courtesy the Singapore Art Museum.

On May 22, the Fukuoka Prize Committee announced Ho Tzu Nyen as the 2026 Grand Prize laureate of the Fukuoka Prize, which honors individuals who have significantly contributed to the fields of Asian studies and arts and culture. He is the first Singaporean artist to receive the JPY five million (USD 31,500) accolade.

Born in 1976 in Singapore, Ho creates films, performances, and video installations that explore Southeast Asian history beyond hegemonic narratives, with a particular focus on the legacy of Japanese imperialism. Often referencing creatures from various regional folklore—such as the supernatural *yōkai* or the tiger—his work blurs fiction and reality to probe the mechanisms behind national mythology and collective consciousness. He has represented Singapore at the 54th Venice Biennale and participated in prestigious exhibitions, including the Shanghai Biennale (2014), the Aichi Triennale (2019), and the Sharjah Biennial (2019). Ho co-curated the Asian Art Biennial in Taiwan in 2019, and is currently serving as the artistic director of the 16th Gwangju Biennale, which opens this September.

Ho, who was selected by an eight-person jury, was lauded in a press release for “pioneering the use of immersive technologies in video art” and offering “multifaceted, fluid perspectives on fundamental questions of Asian identity and Japan’s position in Asia.” Speaking with *The Straits Times*, Ho paid homage to the prize’s alumni as well as the trailblazing artists and filmmakers that inspired his practice, such as Nam June Paik, Akira Kurosawa, and Hou Hsiao-hsien: “In a way, I would like to thank them all. Receiving this award encourages me to continue, to strive to do better and, hopefully, to go further.” He added, “What interests me more is invention: What is possible, what something might become, the capacities it contains. History is not the opposite of transformation. It is what we carry with us as we move through it.”

As part of the prize, Ho will hold a public lecture on September 12, ahead of the official award ceremony for all laureates on September 14.

Emily Ng is an editorial intern at ArtAsiaPacific.