

# Kiang Malingue

馬凌畫廊

kiangmalingue.com

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(Opening)  
Sat, 8 Jul, 12 – 3 PM

(Date)  
11 Jul – 26 Aug 2023

(Opening Hours)  
Tue to Sat, 11 AM – 7 PM  
Closed on public holidays

(Location)  
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## 2000 Years...Something on Coming - Something on Going

(Artist) Truong Cong Tung

Kiang Malingue is pleased to present at its Tin Wan gallery space Truong Cong Tung's exhibition *2000 years...Something on coming - Something on going*, the artist's first solo exhibition with the gallery, coinciding with the artist's exhibition at Institute of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles (June 10–September 10, 2023). Introducing new iterations of an ongoing series of sculptures and a central video project debuted a decade ago, *Journey of a Piece of Soil* (2013), Truong revisits crucial motifs, examining the temporal aspect of materialised entities and movements.

For more than a decade, Truong as both an independent artist and a member of the Art Labor collective is recognised for his profound interest in history, landscape and materiality. Emphasising the earthen quality of his materials, the meticulously sculpted artworks are delicate yet solid relics, tracing the passage through which the past and the future are connected. Regarding Truong's art in relation to the confrontation between "territory of sacred places and spirits...and another set of beliefs based on the rhetoric of modernity and prosperity, built by the State and by private development companies," Caroline Ha Thuc, in the curatorial statement of the 2018 exhibition *Constructing Mythologies*: "Truong's installation and sculptures embody this cultural confrontation, combining hybrid found objects made of newly sacralised elements and natural parts, mingling local cosmologies with imposed technologies. His work is deeply informed by the traditional values of his native region of the Central Highlands in Vietnam." The total installation *2000 years...Something on coming - Something on going* consists of four individual sculptures first made appearance in the 2018 exhibition: *Terra; From the primitive to the civilized; From a land long lost to a land dwindling*; and *Forming deforming ongoing*.

Made of red soil from the Vietnamese highlands, *Terra* delineates a pair of praying hands detached from a body. The artwork is emblematic of Truong's interest in looking into religious and cultural differences, pondering ways in which shared or clashing beliefs are symbolised. *From the primitive to the civilized* is a tinkered device whose functions depend on the cabled connection between a rock, a honeyed beehive, pieces of wood and an antenna. It reconnects the ideas behind man-made machines to nature, drawing an unlikely parallel between radio engineering and insects' organisational patterns. *From a land long lost to a land dwindling* approximates the large-scale wall installation *Traces of overthrow* shown in *Constructing Mythologies*, and is also in conversation with *The Flags of Red Soil* series of silk paintings: the sheet hung over a neon light tube resembles a hide, but is in fact a deconstructed fertiliser burlap sack that has absorbed the natural colour of the Central Highlands basalt soil, over an extended period of time. Truong: "It is soil that haunts; once it clings to something, it persists. The eternal nature and soil devour and hold tightly the temporary plastic, abandoned to the environment. Plastic sheets gradually become artificial skin, grafting nature into their own body – beautiful as a painting." The title of the artwork is also tattooed on this layer of hybrid-soil-skin. Lastly, as one of the most iconoclastic gesture Truong has made to date, *Forming deforming ongoing* fashions a makeshift altar with a found statue, a spade, and golden cicada shells. It does not only reflect upon the way in which mythologies are

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constructed, but also, by incorporating insect remains, highlights impermanence in relation to a yearning for immortality.

The four artworks are representative of the different paths Truong's art embarks on; they also share an insistence on the import of weather and time — ungraspable factors that play a significant role in determining the appearance and nature of a tangible artwork. Regarding historical, temporal traces found in the artworks, Truong: "The history of plants, insects, people, land... Life moves on in the materiality of the artwork: wavy, flowing, rising, overflowing, bubbling...violently, aggressively."

The major video work *Journey of a Piece of Soil* can be viewed as an embodied experience of weather and time, as well as an examination of ritual in larger modes of collective engagement and cultural production. The 30-minute video features a man who works on a red-soil field, carrying a strange object that turns out to be a nest infested with termites. For unspecified reasons, the man holds tightly onto the nest, treating it as a beloved object, a companion and a relic—caressing, collaborating, and praying, together experiencing time. Understanding the abstract idea of 2000 years as either a fraction of a second or an eternity, Truong speaks of the temporality of an exhibition:

Each exhibition is a coming and going of the experience of time. The works in this exhibition offer an alternative way to grasp the subject, to describe a scene, a land, a community, to find an exit... it requires a slower, deeper way of seeing. Because by just coming and going immediately it doesn't let us see things truly, deeply. This exhibition can be perceived in the flow of time. It slips from one realm to another realm, between fantasies, illusions, hallucinations... and it laughs at the futile attempt to erase time, or to control time.  
Coming and going.  
Eternity in the blink of an eye.

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(About Truong Cong Tung)

Born in 1986, Truong Cong Tung grew up in Dak Lak among various ethnic minorities in the Central Highlands, Vietnam. He graduated from the Ho Chi Minh Fine Arts University in 2010, majoring in lacquer painting. With research interests in science, cosmology, philosophy and the environment, Truong Cong Tung works with a range of media, including video, installation, painting and found objects, which reflect personal contemplations on the cultural and geopolitical shifts of modernization, as embodied in the morphing ecology, belief or mythology of a land. He is also a member of Art Labor (founded in 2012), a collective working between visual art and social/life sciences to produce alternative non-formal knowledge via artistic and cultural activities in various public contexts and locales.

Truong Cong Tung has exhibited extensively in Vietnam and abroad as a solo artist and as part of Art Labor Collective. Select recent exhibitions include "The Sap still runs" (2019), San Art, Ho Chi Minh City; Bangkok Biennale (2018); "Between Fragmentation and Wholeness" at Galerie Quynh in Ho Chi Minh City (2018); "A Beast, a God, and a Line" at Para Site, Hong Kong (2018) and Museum of Modern Art, Warsaw (2018); Dhaka Art Summit, Dhaka (2018); Carnegie International 57th edition at Carnegie Museum of Art (2018); Cosmopolis, Collective Intelligence, Centre Pompidou, Paris (2017); "Soil and Stones, Souls and Songs" at Para Site, Hong Kong (2017) and Kadist, San Francisco (2016); "Across the Forest," an installation for Project Skylines with Flying People 3 at Nhà Sàn Collective, Hanoi (2016); "Gestures and Archives of the Present, Genealogies of the Future" at Taipei Biennial, Taiwan (2016) and "Ghosts – Spies – Grandmothers", at SeMA Biennale Media City, Seoul, Korea (2014).