



Htein LIN (b. 1966, Myanmar), developed his distinctive artistic practice through extraordinary circumstances. Initially trained in law and traditional Burmese theater (Anyaint), he first studied visual art in a refugee camp while involved in the 1988 pro-democracy uprising. While imprisoned for seven years on false political charges, he created hundreds of paintings on prison uniforms using makeshift tools like soap blocks and cigarette lighters—works that powerfully document the harsh conditions and resilience of prisoners. His multidisciplinary approach spans painting, sculpture, installation, performance and writing, exploring themes of personal and diasporic experience, Buddhist philosophy, and Myanmar's cultural memory. As a pioneer of performance art in Myanmar, Lin bridges traditional cultural forms with contemporary expression.

SELECTED EXHIBITIONS

- 2025 'Ek Kha Ya', Solo Show, West Eden Gallery in collaboration with Coming from Kalaw (a community focused arts centre in Kalaw, founded by Lin), Bangkok
- 'un/quiet', Group Show, ai. Gallery, London
- The Fly* (video), KW Institute for Contemporary Art, 13th Berlin Biennale
- 'Htein Lin - Escape', Solo Show, IKON Gallery, Birmingham
- 2024 'Heritage of the Golden Land: Mother's Embrace', Group Show, The Myanmar Pavilion, 2024 Gwangju Biennale
- 'Reincarceration', Solo Show, Richard Koh Fine Art, Singapore
- 2022 'Another Spring', Solo Show, Richard Koh Fine Art, Singapore
- 2021 Group Show, 'Myanmar Voices: We Are Still Here', Virtual Exhibition, Karin Weber Gallery, Hong Kong
- Group Show, 'Soutien aux artistes et aux photographes birmans', Retour de Voyage, La Maison sur la Sorgue, France
- Group Show, 'Love in the Dream', 20th Anniversary Exhibition, 10 Chancery Lane Gallery, Hong Kong
- 'The Cycle of Life', Solo Show, Pont Arte, Tasneem Gallery, the Netherlands
- 2020 Group Show, 'Essentialist Images', Richard Koh Fine Art, Gillman Barracks, Singapore
- 2019 *Recently Departed* (installation), Group Show 'Context, Context, Contestation', Secretariat, Yangon
- Solo Show, 'Skirting the Issue', 10 Chancery Lane Gallery, Hong Kong
- Solo Show, 'A Show of Hands', Albright-Knox Gallery, Buffalo, NY
- Group Show, 'Silent is Golden', Japan Foundation, Yangon

Solo Show, River Gallery, Yangon

Solo Show, Shinwa Gallery, Ginza, Tokyo

Solo Show 'Skirting the Issue', River Gallery, Yangon

'Found: Our Heritage, Our Future', Aung Soe Myint and Htein Lin, Yangon Heritage Trust, Yangon

Prison Paintings included in 'Sunshower', Southeast Asia Group Show at Museum of Fine Arts, Kaohsiung, Taipei

Solo Show, 'The Longyi Project', Shinwa Gallery, Ginza, Tokyo

Group Show 'Everyday Justice, Arts Films and Stories' curated by MyJustice programme/EU at Tourist Burma building, Yangon

2018 Pure Gold: Upcycled! Upgraded! Group Show, curated by Volker Albus/Goethe Institute (Dhamma Seat), Yangon

Performance, Zero Platform Performance Art Festival, Goethe Institute, Yangon

Installation (Thabeiq-hmauq - monks bowls) included Asia-Pacific Triennale, Brisbane

Curator of 'Sound Weaving' by Tun Win Aung/Wah Nu, National Museum, Yangon

Curator of 'Seven Decades', a major group exhibition at The Secretariat, Yangon

Group Show 'Our Turn Now', Gallery de la Retour, Isle de La Sorgue, France

Group Show: Speaking Out – 9 Myanmar Artists, Gallery Route One, Point Reyes, and Abrams Claghorn Gallery, Berkeley, CA

Mangrove, Installation in Bearing Points, at Dhaka Art Summit, February

2017 'Htein Lin: Recovering the Past', Yavuz Gallery, Singapore

Solo Show, Gallery de la Retour, Isle de La Sorgue, France

'Artists Beyond Boundaries' Group Show, American Center, Yangon

'Sunshower', Southeast Asia Group Show at Mori Gallery, Tokyo and Fukuoka Art Museum

'After Darkness Comes the Light', Group Show at Asia Society, New York

Group Show, 'Allegory', Galeri Petronas, Kuala Lumpur

Group Show, 'Myanmar 2050', River Gallery, Yangon

Group Show, 'Voices of Transition – Contemporary Art from Myanmar', Lunn and Sgarbossa, London

	Group Show, '10 x 10', Article 25, London		Gallery
2016	Gangaw Village, Group Show, Yangon		Beyond the Itch, solo show, River Gallery 2, Yangon
	Group Show 'Silent for a While – Contemporary Art from Myanmar', Chancery Lane Gallery, Hong Kong		Rosary Bowl/Mastery of the Mind (installation) and paintings included in group show of Myanmar contemporary art at Pagodas, Longvis and Nats' at the Staatliche Museum Funf Kontinente (Munich), Germany
	Group Show, 10/10 exhibition, Celebrating River Gallery's First Decade 2006 – 2016, Yangon		Panellist and performance, Contemporary Dialogues festival organised by Fluxkit, Pun and projects and Institut Francais Yangon
	Speaker, Living Arts in Post-Conflict Contexts: Practices, Partnerships & Possibilities, Forum organized by Cambodian Living Arts, Phnom Penh		Performance 'Give us back our land', opening of exhibition 'Blank Mind' by Soe Naing, A-hla Thit gallery, Yangon
	Asian Performing Arts Market, Setouchi Triennale 2016, Takamatsu/Seto inland Sea, Japan		Private group exhibition at Art Basel 2014 Miami, (in association with Pall Mall Art Advisors and Quintessentially)
	Ongoing additions to <i>A Show of Hands</i> (multimedia project, including public participation)		Capturing Only Merit, installation in group show, Peoples Park, Yangon
	Solo Show 'Picking up the Pieces' (installations), Goethe Villa, Yangon	2013	'Art of Transition' conference, Yangon
	Solo Show, 'Signs of the Times', River Gallery, Yangon		Htein Lin and Ernesto Leal, 'El Fragmento Eliminado', Tasneem Gallery
	<i>The Fly</i> (video) in 'Body Luggage' Migration of gestures', Kunsthau Graz, Austria / Space02		Nominated Artist, Absolut Art Award Returned to Yangon, and commenced <i>A Show of Hands</i> project
	<i>Rise and Pass Away</i> (video/installation), SEAsia+ Triennale, Jakarta		Advisory Committee, Artraker Fund, 2013, and judge for 1st award
	'Soap Blocked', Singapore Art Museum (SAM), Singapore Biennale		
	Nominated by SAM for Benesse Foundation Award	2012	Video Lounge, India Art Fair, courtesy Tasneem Gallery
	<i>Mangrove</i> (sculpture) included in Group Show 'Mangroves: Forests of the Tide', Gallery 65, Yangon		<i>The Triple Gem</i> (installation), Singapore Fringe Festival
2015	Group Show at 20th anniversary of River Gallery, Yangon		Asia House, Group Show, London
	Htein Lin's 1999 prison soapblock carving (in the permanent collection of the ICRC museum) was included with pieces by <i>inter alia</i> Yves Klein, Ai Wei Wei, Magritte, Rauschenberg, and Dan Flavin in the exhibition 'Experiments with Trust: Gandhi and images of nonviolence' at ICRC Museum, Geneva curated by Josef Helfenstein, now Director, Kunstmuseum Basel and at the time, the Director of the Menil Collection, Houston, where the exhibition was first shown in 2014).		Workshops and performances in Rangoon and Mandalay, Burma
	'The Storyteller', Solo Show (including premiere of <i>A Show of Hands</i>), Yangon		Shanghai Contemporary Art Fair, courtesy Tasneem Gallery
	'Happyland' (paintings and video performance) Tasneem Gallery, Barcelona		Visiting Artist, Charleston College, South Carolina, USA
	Kamarado, Group show by the Clark House Initiative, Stedelijk Museum Project Space, Amsterdam	2011	<i>Prison Paintings</i> , and <i>Rises and Passes Away</i> (video and performance), Freedom Film Festival, Copenhagen
2014	Dhaka Art Summit, <i>A Show of Hands</i> (performance courtesy of Samdani Foundation), paintings shown by Tasneem		Clark House Mumbai at ISCP New York, USA
			'I C U Jest', collateral exhibition (installation and performance) by the Clark House Initiative at the 1st Indian Biennale, Kochi India
			Burmese Group Show, Karin Weber Gallery, Hong Kong
			Brighton Festival, UK
			<i>Prison Paintings</i> , Chimay, Belgium



Solo Show, North Wall Arts Centre, Oxford

Nominated artist, Signature Art Prize.
Asia-Pacific Breweries
Foundation/Singapore Art Museum

TAMA Tupada Performance Art Festival,
Philippines

Exhibition of *Prison Paintings* for Human Rights Day, Prague

'When I was a Lousy Millionaire'
(translated extract from forthcoming
autobiographical account of experiences of
detention in the jungle)

2010 Installation: The Scale of Justice,
Singapore Fringe Festival

Let Me out of Hell, Burmese Theatre Workshop, London and Marseille

Curator, Burmese Arts Festival, Free Word
Centre, London

Thavibu Gallery (with artist Chaw Ei Thein), Bangkok

ArtAsia Miami, Karin Weber Gallery

Regular performer, ArtEvict, London

2009 Beyond Burma II Group show, Menier
Chocolate Factory, London

‘Outside In: Alternative Narratives in Contemporary Art’, Group Show including *Prison Paintings*, University Museum and Art Gallery, Hong Kong

Group Show, Karin Weber Gallery, Hong Kong

'Missing Asia, Observing Europe', Solow
How, Tasneem Gallery, Barcelona, Spain

2008 'Beyond Burma' Group Show, Chocolate
Factory, London

'Twenty Years On', Suwunnabhumi Gallery,
Chiang Mai

'The Cell', Karin Weber Gallery , Hong Kong

'Out of Burma', Solo Show, Quest Gallery, Bath

'Recycled', Solo Show, Coningsby Gallery, London

'Recovering Lives', Group Show, School of Art Gallery, Australian National University, Canberra

'Crossings, Contemporary Asian Art',
Group Show, Olson Gallery, Northern
Illinois University, DeKalb, Illinois

Museum of Resistance, Deportation, the War, Rights and Freedom, Museo del Carcere Le Nuove, Turin, (solo show - exhibition of *Prison Paintings*)

Featured Artist, Himel Magazine

2007

Artist in Residence, www.rimbundahan.org
nr Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

Paintings completed secretly while in prison on cotton cloth using a variety of media and techniques were exhibited in a solo show 'Burma: Inside Out' at Asia House, London July-Oct 2007 (see www.hteinlin.com for media coverage including Economist, Int. Herald Tribune/NY Times, Sunday Times, BBC, CNN, C4 News).

Venice Biennale 2007 collateral event:
Migration Addicts group show (curated by
DDM warehouse Shanghai)

Asian Attitudes, Poznan National Museum,
Poland, July 2007 (group show)

OTHER CULTURAL ACTIVITIES, INCLUDING CURATION AND WRITING.

Myanmar Founder, Coming From Kalaw (CFK), CFK Art Fund and CFK Art Platform, a community focused art centre devoted to empowering local artists and promoting cultural appreciation, Kalaw, Southern Shan State.

Curator of 'Seven Decades' Group Show,
Secretariat Building Pyinsaratha
Artspace, Yangon

Co-Director, "My Yangon My Home"
Yangon Art and Heritage Festival, a
festival of community art projects to
explore heritage, culture and art in
Yangon

Autobiography: 'Ma-Pa – the ABSDF Northern Branch Affair', Yangon (published in Burmese - see online 'When I was a Lousy Millionaire' (2012) for English taster)

Curator, Bo Aung Kyaw Centenary event
and book, Mezaligon

Judge, 2015, 2016 Yangon Film School-
Goethe Institut Documentary
Competition

Juror, Yangon Human Rights film festival, June 2014; group performance at opening

Contributes articles, radio dramas, poetry, short stories and illustrations for magazines in Burma, Burmese vernacular radio stations and international media

Meditation discipline guide for warders and prisoners, Insein Jail

Elsewhere Advisory Committee, INDEX on
Censorship (2012-2018)

Judge, Murals, Koestler Trust Prison Art prize (UK) 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014.

Selection Panellist for the first
Artventure/Article 19 'Freedom to Create'
prize, 2008

Consultant, 'This Prison Where I Live'



(about Burmese actor and political prisoner Zargana), Rex Entertainment Films, 2010

Participated in NYU seminar, 'Imagining the Future: New Worlds, New Arts, New Models', co-curators Anna Deavere Smith and Gideon Lester, Abu Dhabi, April 2011
Established kaungkin.com to showcase the best of Burmese writing and art (in Burmese) live and online, in Burma and in London

Adviser to Writers and Scholars Education Trust on arts capacity strengthening in Burma, 2012/2013, including convenor of the 'Art in Transition' seminar in Yangon, March 2013

Founding member of Burmese Theatre Workshop, a London-based drama co-operative performing original plays in English (2008/9)

Coach to young Burmese actors and comedians. Judge for awards to graduates of documentary and short film courses in Burma

Regular contributor on the arts to Sone-Nan-Tha magazine (2013-4)

Awareness raising work with Amnesty and other human rights groups

Educational work with primary and secondary schools, exploring themes of capture and imprisonment, and using printing techniques with found objects

WORKS IN MUSEUM AND PRIVATE COLLECTION

M+ Museum, Hong Kong; ICRC Museum (Musée International de la Croix-Rouge et du Croissant-Rouge), Geneva; Singapore Art Museum; Staatliche Museum Funf Kontinente, Munich.

Two of Htein Lin's paintings on cloth were purchased for the US Embassy Yangon.

Other works are in numerous private collections in Belgium, Cambodia, France, Netherlands, India (including a specially commissioned piece, Night Shift, for Lekha Poddar, 2014), Japan, Malaysia, Myanmar, Singapore, Spain, Sweden, Thailand, the US and UK. His works are also included in the Artists' Pension Trust, Beijing Collection, China, and the Lekha and Anupam Poddar Collection, Devi Art Foundation, India.