



karin weber gallery
Contemporary Fine Art

PRESS RELEASE
For Immediate Release



Khin Thethtar Latt (Nora). *Losing Identity* series, digital print on archival paper, 91 x 65cm, 2021

AGAINST THE TIDE: Myanmar Art in the Moment

curated by Melissa Carlson, PhD

**Aung Myint | Htein Lin | Khin Thethtar Latt (Nora) | Min Zaw | Nan Da
| Richie Nath | Sandar Khine | Soe Yu Nwe | Thynn Lei Nwe**

Exhibition Period: 6 – 16 February 2024

Coningsby Gallery, 30 Tottenham Street, London W1T 4 RJ, UK

JOIN US:

**Opening Reception:
Tuesday, 6 February 2024, 5-8 pm**



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**Panel Discussion:
'New Imaginings of Myanmar Identity: Ruptures in Painting and Prose'**

Thursday, 8 February 2024, 6-7 pm

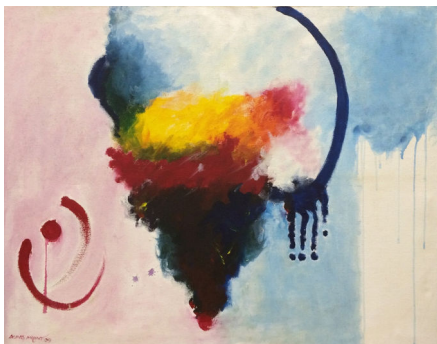
**Featuring artist Richie Nath, author Dr. Ma Thida Sanchaung, journalist and cookbook author MiMi Aye and former Ambassador to Myanmar Vicky Bowman CMG
Moderated by Melissa Carlson, PhD**

Drop-In Session with Prospect Burma:

Explore the unique art, meet the curator and learn more about the inspiring artists. Plus, meet members of the Prospect Burma team to hear more about their impactful work.

Saturday, 10 February 2024, 3-6 pm

RSVP for all events essential: art@karinwebergallery.com



Aung Myint. *The Curves*. acrylic on canvas. 86 x 116cm. 2009

Karin Weber Gallery is excited to make its London debut with 'Against the Tide: Myanmar Art in the Moment', a show which features work by nine of Myanmar's leading modern and contemporary artists. Each offers a unique lens on modern life in Myanmar. The artists, spanning a range of generations, all use their work to reflect on their surroundings, standing resilient in the face of many political, economic, and social challenges. Their paintings on canvas and paper alongside digital photography offer viewers alternative considerations for visual depictions of Myanmar. Each artist re-examines who and what can represent Myanmar today.



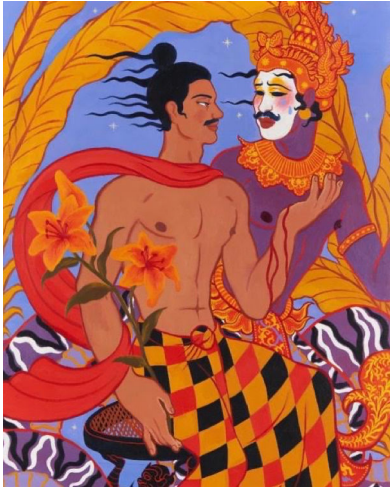
Htein Lin. *Nyo Nyo Khin*. acrylic on longyi on canvas. 123 x 92cm. 2019

Senior artist Aung Myint, the pioneer of semi-abstraction and performance art in Myanmar, uses degrees of abstraction to comment on modern life amid increasing censorship. Htein Lin's series of women wearing *htamein*, the female sarong, questions the traditional Myanmar cultural belief that frames womens' clothing as polluted and capable of sapping men of their strength. Khin Thethtar Latt (Nora) uses digital photography in her 'Losing Identity' series to showcase how the February 2021 coup d'état and the resulting restrictions on movement and freedom of expression stripped individuals of their identity. As she reveals, pockets of life continue despite these changes.

Min Zaw, creating collages from newspapers and his papercuts, offers a defiant pose of the female form amid the chatter of headlines. Working from scenes observed



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Richie Nath, *Melancholy*, acrylic on canvas, 130 x 89cm, 2023

on the streets of Yangon or in his beloved teashops, Nan Da paints the faces around him: seas of people moving forward no matter what comes their way. Richie Nath activates his canvases to challenge the notion of who and what can define Myanmar identity. Working from Myanmar folklore, he weaves queer identities alongside traditional figures.

Sandar Khine, the first female artist to paint nudes from live models in Myanmar, constructs her figures with the bold lines of Bagan temple mural paintings to create strong forms who playfully engage the viewer with cameras or read newspapers, seeking forms of truth. Soe Yu Nwe explores her Sino-Burmese identity with exquisitely drawn plants and serpents that are intertwined into new beings. Finally, Thynn Lei Nwe paints hybrid plants, animals, and humans that subtly comment on the environmental and political changes underway in Myanmar.



Sandar Khine, *Our Revolution 2*, acrylic on paper, 76 x 56cm, 2022

As gallery Director Stephanie Braun notes, "Karin Weber Gallery has supported Myanmar artists for the past 25 years, and we are proud to be sharing our enthusiasm for the art and artists of Myanmar with a new audience in London." Karin Weber Gallery continues to provide a platform for Myanmar's modern and contemporary artists to share their experimental art forms in new markets. Curator Melissa Carlson concludes, "No matter the decades of isolationism under military regimes, the avant garde art community in Burma persevered and created, and are continuing to create, an amazing body of artwork, unique in outlook, format, and application of materials."

This show has been made possible with support from:

Ms. Vicky Bowman CMG & Mr. Htein Lin

Mr. Victor (Phone Si Thu) Ye Yint Kyaw Win

Charity Partner: Prospect Burma <https://www.prospectburma.org/>



About the Artists:

Aung Myint (male, b. 1946), a self-taught artist and Psychology graduate, pioneered contemporary, often experimental art in Myanmar from the mid-1960s. Best known for his paintings, which blend figurative elements with a strong focus on Abstract Expressionism,



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Aung Myint's practice also encompasses performance and installation, always capturing moments of personal reflection and social commentary. His Inya Art Gallery, co-founded in 1989, remains family-run and active in Yangon even today.

One of the best-known Myanmar artists on the international stage, Aung Myint was one of the first Burmese artists to participate in the ASEAN art awards in 1998 and won the 'Jurors Choice' award for some of his signature single stroke 'Mother & Child' paintings in 2002. He was also a key participant in the seminal exhibition 'No Country: Contemporary Art for South and Southeast Asia' (2013) at the Guggenheim Museum, New York, and the Centre for Contemporary Art, Singapore (2014). Key institutional collections include the Singapore Art Museum, the National Art Gallery of Malaysia, and the Fukuoka Asian Art Museum, Japan.

Htein Lin (male, b. 1966) originally studied law before discovering his passion for visual and performance arts. Two imprisonments and a third detention have never discouraged – but rather inspired – his engagement with (often public) self-expression and socio-political criticism through different art forms. Htein Lin is most widely recognised for an extensive series of paintings created during his first prison sentence 1998-2004, using a range of utility objects to paint and print on white cotton longyi cloth. His works are in key institutional and private collections around the world, most notably the M+Museum, Hong Kong, the International Red Cross Museum, Geneva, Switzerland, Singapore Art Museum; Five Continents Museum, Munich, Germany and the US Embassy in Yangon, Myanmar.

Khin Thethtar Latt (Nora) (female, b. 1990) is a multi-media artist working in painting, performance and photography. Nora studied with the New Zero Art Space collective in Yangon, Myanmar. Her work focuses on issues impacting her generation, including gender and the environment and is held in the collection of the British Museum, London, UK.

Min Zaw (male, b. 1972), a former cartoonist and graduate from the National University of Arts and Culture, Yangon (1998) is best known for his 'Ordinary People' series which comments on the loss of identity under the local military regime. New work features collage alongside paintings of ethereal Myanmar landscapes. Min Zaw's work is in the collections of the Fukuoka Asian Art Museum, Japan, and the Singapore Art Museum.

Nan Da (male, b. 1981) was born in Yangon and studied at the State School of Fine Arts in Yangon. His paintings, often large-scale, draw from his observations of the teashops that he frequents and his neighbourhood street. Nan Da paints highly detailed portraits or veers into abstraction when he captures the buzz of Yangon's crowds with a focus on human emotions, faces and forms. His work is in the collection of the British Museum, London.

Richie Nath (male, b. 1995) reinvigorates Myanmar folklore and mythological themes by inserting depictions of queer identities and culture. He graduated in fashion illustration from the London College of Fashion, UK. Nath's paintings comment on Myanmar society and politics, drawing from his own experiences growing up in Yangon. Currently, he lives in Paris, France.

Sandar Khine (female, b. 1971). Decades of strict state censorship prohibited depiction of the nude human figure. Sandar Khine, working in charcoal and acrylics, is the lone female artist who painted nudes and used live models, often her family members. Her emphasis on line progressed from tightly framed, static compositions to a liberated female figure



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imbued with movement. Sandar Khine favours figures with an abundance of curves that add strength to her subject and portrays women in an unconventional form.

Soe Yu Nwe (female, b. 1989) holds a MFA degree in Ceramics from the Rhode Island School of Design (2015). She uses drawing and ceramics to explore issues such as gender or her ethnic Chinese heritage in relation to her Myanmar identity. Key exhibitions include the 9th Asia Pacific Triennial of Contemporary Art (Australia), 2018 Dhaka Art Summit (Bangladesh), The New Taipei City Yingge Ceramic Museum (Taiwan), Yavuz Gallery (Singapore), ZieherSmith in Chelsea, New York (USA), and The National Gallery of Indonesia, Jakarta (Indonesia). Recently, Soe Yu Nwe has become an invited member of the International Academy of Ceramics (IAC) as the first member from Myanmar. Her work has been acquired by the Queensland Art Gallery and the Gallery of Modern Art, both in Brisbane, Australia, and more recently by the British Museum, London.

Thynn Lei Nwe (female, b. 1991) graduated in 2014 from Lasalle College of the Arts in Singapore with a diploma in fine arts. She uses painting to create an imaginary world often filled with hybrid creatures. Her work is in the British Museum collection, London.

About the Curator:

Melissa Carlson, PhD, is an independent researcher and curator based in London. Her research is focused on the development of Southeast Asian modernism in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries. As a Fellow in the 2019-2020 program 'Modern Art Histories of South and Southeast Asia (MAHASSA)', funded by the Getty Foundation, she presented on innovative forms of artist collectives and biennales as part of the public programming of the 2020 Dhaka Art Summit in Bangladesh.

Publications include chapters in *Burma to Myanmar* (British Museum, 2023) and *Ambitious Alignments: New Art Histories of Southeast Asia* (National Gallery of Singapore, 2018) alongside an article in the peer-reviewed *Sojourn: Journal of Social Issues in Southeast Asia* (2016). Curatorial projects include *Burma by Proxy: Art at the Dawn of Democracy* (2015), an exhibition of painting in advance of the Myanmar 2015 general election and *Banned in Burma: Painting Under Censorship* (2014), an exhibition of censored works from Myanmar.

About Prospect Burma:

Prospect Burma has led efforts to widen access to international higher education for Myanmar's youth for 35 years. It was established in the wake of the 1988 pro-democracy uprising in Myanmar with the aim of supporting long term, sustainable and democratic education across the country. Prospect Burma is a non-political organisation which places an emphasis on nurturing individuals from diverse, marginalised and disadvantaged backgrounds, with particular attention to the needs of people from remote and/or conflict affected areas which have traditionally been denied access to government education services.

A UK registered charity with a US arm, registered as a 501(c)(3), its UK based staff support local team members in Thailand and India, so they can remain as close as possible to trusted partners on the ground and the beneficiaries that they serve. Prospect Burma's



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1,500+ alumni have made significant contributions across a wide range of sectors over the last three decades. These alumni, and those of the future, will lead and enable the positive change that Myanmar needs.

About Karin Weber Gallery:

Established in 1999 by German-born Karin Weber and celebrating its 25th anniversary this year, Karin Weber Gallery is one of Hong Kong's oldest contemporary art galleries. Situated on Aberdeen Street, in the heart of central Hong Kong, the gallery presents a year-round programme of curated exhibitions, talks, and collector events. The gallery's unique network of partners based in London and Mumbai allows it to source emerging and established contemporary art from around the world.

Karin Weber Gallery is equally passionate about presenting works by local artists. The gallery assists artists through exhibitions, art fairs, and residency programmes throughout the world. Small in size, yet global in outlook, Karin Weber Gallery is one of Hong Kong's truly international boutique galleries.

CONTACT

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VISIT

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