



MCAD
COMMONS

THE LIBRARY OF UNREAD BOOKS

HEMAN CHONG & RENÉE STAAL

29 June – 26 August 2017
Tuesdays to Saturdays
5th Floor, First United Bldg, 413 Escolta St,
Binondo, Manila 1006 Philippines

ABOUT THE EXHIBITION

The Library of Unread Books is a reference library where every single volume you see on the tables has been donated by an individual who has, for some reason or another, not read the book they previously had in their possession. It is a simple way to displace an object that has once been in an extremely private place to a site where it is accessible by anyone who comes into this space that is open to the public. The books are arranged randomly, in stacks, and during the course of the exhibition, their position will continually shift around. We like that it remains consistently confusing and surprising. The journey of *The Library of Unread Books* began on 23 September 2016 as part of a generous residency at NTU Center for Contemporary Art in Singapore. After this iteration as part of this group exhibition, it will move to other locations. Most of these future sites are not yet confirmed, but we

hope that the library will never be in storage. We would like the library to enter the permanent collection of an institution. It's a piece that balances nicely between an art work and a part of the public program of an institution. We'll run it ourselves for ten years, accumulating as many unread books as possible in that time, and having many interesting conversations with the people who come and read. Please approach one of the gallery caretakers if you would like to donate a book. We take you at your word that it is an unread book that you are donating to us, much like a handshake. In any case, we're happy that these books have managed to detach from your shelf (or from under your bed) and are now available in the public domain for anyone who wants to read them. Please feel free to sit and read or browse for as long as you like and return the book to any stack you prefer.

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Heman Chong (b. 1977, Muar, Malaysia) received his M.A. in Communication Art and Design from The Royal College of Art, London in 2002. He is an artist, curator, and writer whose work is located at the intersection between image, performance, situations and writing. He considers art as being "conceptually charged investigations into how individuals and communities imagine the future," which take shape as "objects, images, installations, situations, and texts."

He has shown internationally at London, Seoul, New York, Milan, Amsterdam, Dublin, and Berlin. He has participated in group exhibitions at the Tate Modern, De Appel Arts Centre, Taipei Contemporary Art Center, and San Francisco Asian Art Museum among others.

Chong lives and works in Singapore.
www.hemanchong.com

Renée Staal received her Bachelor's degree in Language and Culture Studies at the University of Utrecht and her Master's degree in Arts and Heritage: Policy, Management, and Education at the Maastricht University.

She is a creative archive manager and researcher based in Rotterdam Area, Netherlands. She trained at the Office for Metropolitan Architecture (OMA) and was an intern at the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum. She worked as a curatorial assistant at the Witte de With, Center for Contemporary Art as well as a studio and production assistant for Alexandre Singh.

She is an independent translator, editor, and researcher focusing on contemporary art, visual art, art history, and literary criticism, and currently the co-founder and chief librarian of Heman Chong's 10-year project titled *The Library of Unread Books*.

INTERNS / VOLUNTEERS

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