



SHE WHO HAS NO MASTER(S):
WOULD THAT

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GEORGE S. & DOLORES DORÉ ECCLES ART GALLERY

Center for Arts & Media. South City Campus

1575 S State Street

Salt Lake City, UT 84115

Gallery Hours:

Monday - Friday, 7 AM - 10 PM

<http://www.slcc.edu/art-gallery>

... —*Would that?*

~Emily Dickinson

SHE WHO HAS NO MASTER(S) : WOULD THAT

As women/womxn of the Vietnamese diaspora, our bodies hold many *would thats*: hungers, silences, absences, wonder(ings)s, and wound(er)ings. There are many things we might wonder *would that* be, *would that* have been, would *we* be—other/not Other(ed) than we are or have been? However, in the Vietnamese language—which we stem from but here do not write in—there is no such thing as the subjunctive mood, which, if it is to be conveyed in Vietnamese must rely on the context—the environment—of its adjoining words; what surrounds the action or description places it in or out of time. Which may be to say, what surrounds us is what places us in relation to: history, inheritance, the present, possible futures. We have migrated through time and across geographies, and time and contexts in varying ways have migrated with and within us. As bodies, we know ourselves to be repositories of no-longer-present actions and events, of many layers of witness and memory, of inheritances both evident and abstract, of potential futures too—desires, fears, unknowns. But what if we dis-place our (kn)own bodies from the seeable backgrounds, and what if we re-make those bodies? What if we absent our enfigured selves and ask you instead to (learn to) read anew the spaces left behind? This exhibit explores those spaces of the self, and self-conception/s, and challenges how you will read us, how you will see us, as a cohesive yet collective, diasporic, multi-voiced, Vietnamese-feminine descended entity.

The Artist/s

She Who Has No Master(s) is a project of multi-voiced collectivity, hybrid poetics, encounters, in-between spaces and (dis)places of the Vietnamese diaspora. Through a collaborative art and writing process this project brings together voices of women/womxn writers of the Vietnamese diaspora. She Who Has No Master(s) initiated in 2015 as a group of Vietnamese women writers (and we include in this designation: cis, queer, trans, nonbinary) who in coming together aim to express the diversity and complexity of our diasporic experiences and perspectives. This collective-collaborative process roots itself in the literary art form, but expresses the literary in

hybrid and multiple modalities to create “multi-voice” and hybrid-poetic artworks. Each piece and/or series will always engage different formations and numbers of “voices” with the belief that this poly-vocality, while honoring the nuances of individual visions and beings, also expresses the dynamic plurality and connectivity that exists within our diaspora.

She Who Has No Master(s) is a project of the Diasporic Vietnamese Artists Network (DVAN).

She Who Has No Master(s): Would That gathers into poetic concert the voices of: Angie Chau / Lan Duong / Anna Moi / Vi Khi Nao / Anh-Hoa Thi Nguyen / Diana Khoi Nguyen / Hoa Nguyen / Thao P. Nguyen / Isabelle Thuy Pelaud / Aimee Phan / Abbigail N. Rosewood / Dao Strom / Sophia Terazawa / Stacey Tran / Julie Thi Underhill.

Collective Bios

ANGIE CHAU was born in Vietnam. She has also lived in Malaysia, Italy, Spain, Hawaii, and currently resides in the Bay Area. Her work has appeared in *BOMB Magazine*, *Ajar Journal*, *Indiana Review*, *Santa Clara Review*, *Night Train Magazine*, and the Heyday Books anthology, *New California Writing*. She has been awarded a Hedgebrook Residency, an Anderson Center Residency, a Macondo Foundation Fellowship, and the UC Davis Maurice Prize in Fiction. The *Dallas Morning News* described Chau’s debut collection, *Quiet As They Come*, stating, “Angie Chau’s fine collection of stories does for immigrants from South Vietnam what Jhumpa Lahiri did for East Indians or Junot Diaz did for people from the Dominican Republic. She tells their truth.” She serves on the Board of Litquake and is a member of The San Francisco Writers’ Grotto and DVAN. She is at work on a novel.

LAN DUONG is Associate Professor in Cinema and Media Studies at the University of Southern California. She is the author of *Treacherous Subjects: Gender, Culture, and Trans-Vietnamese Feminism* (Temple University Press, 2012). Dr. Duong’s second book project, *Transnational Vietnamese Cinemas and the Archives of Memory*, examines Vietnamese cinema from its inception to the present day. Her research interests include

feminist film theory, postcolonial literature, and Asian/American film and literature. She coedited an award-winning anthology called *Troubling Borders: Southeast Asian Women in the Diaspora in Literature and Art* (University of Washington Press, 2013). Duong is a Founding Member of the Critical Refugee Studies Collective (www.criticalrefugeestudies.com). Her poetry can be found in *Watermark: Vietnamese American Poetry and Prose*, *Bold Words: Asian American Writing to Span the Centuries* and *Tilting the Continent: Southeast Asian American Writing*.

ANNA MOÏ migrated to France at the age of 18, then journeyed back to Vietnam in 1992 where she lived for twenty years. The homecoming sparked emotions that kicked off words, then sentences, then short stories, then novels. She published eight literary works. Her latest work, written both in English and French, is *The Butterfly's Venom* (Gallimard, 2017).

VI KHI NAO is the author of the poetry collections, *Sheep Machine* (2018) and *Umbilical Hospital* (2017), the short stories collection, *A Brief Alphabet of Torture*, which won FC2's Ronald Sukenick Innovative Fiction Prize in 2016, the novel, *Fish in Exile* (2016), and the poetry collection, *The Old Philosopher*, which won the Nightboat Books Prize for Poetry in 2014. Her work includes poetry, fiction, film and cross-genre collaboration. Her stories, poems, and drawings have appeared in NOON, Ploughshares, Black Warrior Review and BOMB, among others. She holds an MFA in fiction from Brown University.

ANH-HOA THI NGUYEN is a poet, community artist, activist and educator. Her work has appeared in *AS IS: A Collection of Visual and Literary Works by Vietnamese American Artists* and *Troubling Borders, An Anthology of Art and Literature by Southeast Asian Women in the Diaspora*. She has been an Artist-in-Residence at the de Young Museum and Writer-in-Residence at Hedgebrook. She is a VONA alumna, Elizabeth George Foundation Fellow, and a Minnesota State Arts Board Artist Initiative Grant Winner. Anh-Hoa was recently a host for the Minnesota Humanities Center's War and Memory Series, and a presenter for the PBS/MELSA *The Vietnam War: 360 series*. She was an artist-in-residence for The Floating Library and is a lecturer at St. Catherine University.

DIANA KHOI NGUYEN, a poet and multimedia artist, is the author of *Ghost Of* (Omnidawn 2018), which was selected by Terrance Hayes.

In addition to winning the 92Y “Discovery” / *Boston Review* Poetry Contest, 2019 Kate Tufts Discovery Award, and Colorado Book Award, she was also a finalist for the National Book Award and *L.A. Times* Book Prize. A Kundiman fellow, she currently teaches in the Randolph College Low-Residency MFA and is an Assistant Professor at the University of Pittsburgh.

HOA NGUYEN is the author of several books of poetry, including *As Long As Trees Last*, *Red Juice*, and *Violet Energy Ingots*, which was shortlisted for the 2017 Griffin Poetry Prize. She was a finalist for the 2019 Neudstadt Prize. She teaches poetics at Ryerson University, for the low residency MFA programs at Miami University and Bard College, and in a long-running, private workshop.

THAO P. NGUYEN (they/them > she/her) is a solo performer, writer, and producer whose first full-length one-person comedy, *Fortunate Daughter*, was named one of the Top 10 Bay Area Plays of 2013 by KQED Year in the Arts. They make art about whatever pisses them off—racism, sexual violence, white power, hetero/cis-sexism, and people who don’t say “please” and “thank you.” Nguyen is currently a doctoral student at Stanford University’s Theater & Performance Studies program, writing a dissertation on sexual violence, queer migration, and performance.

ISABELLE THUY PELAUD is a professor in Asian American Studies at San Francisco State University and the author of *This is All I Choose to Tell: History and Hybridity in Vietnamese American Literature* (2011), and co-editor of *Troubling Borders: An Anthology of Art and Literature by Southeast Asian Women in the Diaspora* (2013). She is co-founder and executive director of DVAN and co-founder of She Who Has No Master(s).

AIMEE PHAN grew up in Orange County, California and now teaches in the MFA Writing Program and Writing and Literature Program at California College of the Arts. She is the author of *The Reeducation of Cherry Truong* and *We Should Never Meet*, which was named a Notable Book by the Kiryama Prize in fiction and a finalist for the 2005 Asian American Literary Awards. A 2010 NEA Creative Writing Fellow, Aimee received her MFA from the University of Iowa. She has received fellowships from the Rockefeller Foundation’s Bellagio Center, MacDowell Arts Colony,

and Hedgebrook. Her writing has appeared in *The New York Times*, *Salon*, *USA Today*, and *Guernica*, among others.

ABBIGAIL N. ROSEWOOD was born in Vietnam, where she lived until the age of twelve. She holds an MFA in creative writing from Columbia University and lives in New York. Her debut novel, *If I Had Two Lives*, has been hailed as “a tale of staggering artistry” by the *Los Angeles Review of Books* and “a lyrical, exquisitely written novel” by the *New York Journal of Books*. The *New Yorker* said “the novel poignantly conjures the difficulties of reconciling the present with an ‘ungraspable history.’” An excerpt from *If I Had Two Lives* won first place in the Writers Workshop of Asheville Literary Fiction Contest.

DAO STROM is the author of a bilingual poetry-art book, *You Will Always Be Someone From Somewhere Else* (2018); an experimental memoir, *We Were Meant To Be a Gentle People*; a song-cycle, *East/West* (2015); and two books of fiction, *The Gentle Order of Girls and Boys* (2006) and *Grass Roof, Tin Roof* (2003). She has received awards from the Creative Capital Foundation, RACC, the NEA, and others. She is the editor of *diaCRITICS* and co-founder of the arts collective, She Who Has No Master(s).

SOPHIA TERAZAWA is a poet of Vietnamese-Japanese descent. She is the author of two chapbooks: *Correspondent Medley* (winner of the 2018 Tomaž Šalamun Prize, published with Factory Hollow Press) and *I Am Not a War* (winner of the 2015 Essay Press Digital Chapbook Contest). Her poems appear in *The Seattle Review*, *Puerto del Sol*, *Poor Claudia*, and elsewhere. She is currently working toward the MFA in Poetry at the University of Arizona. Her favorite color is purple.

STACEY TRAN is a writer from Portland, OR living in Providence, RI. She is the author of *Soap for the Dogs* (Gramma, 2018) and her poems can be found in *BOMB Magazine*, *The Brooklyn Rail*, *diaCRITICS*, and others. She is the creator of Tender Table, a storytelling series about food, community, identity.

JULIE THI UNDERHILL is an interdisciplinary artist, scholar, and activist based in Berkeley, California. She has published writing and photography in *Inheriting the War: Poetry & Prose by Descendants of*

Vietnam Veterans and Refugees; Troubling Borders: An Anthology of Art and Literature by Southeast Asian Women in the Diaspora; BOMB Magazine; positions: asia cultures critique; Nuclear Impact; Completely Mixed Up; TrenchArt Monographs; Veterans of War, Veterans of Peace; Embodying Asian/American Sexualities; ColorLines; and Hayden's Ferry Review. Julie holds degrees from The Evergreen State College (B.A.) and UC Berkeley (M.A.).

PARTNERS & ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

She Who Has No Master(s): Would That is a collaborative, collective project co-curated by Dao Strom and Diana Khoi Nguyen.

She Who Has No Master(s) is a project of the **Diasporic Vietnamese Artists Network** (DVAN.org) whose mission is to promote voices and stories of the Vietnamese diaspora, from all over the globe. Through dialogues between writers and artists, readings and literary art events, writer/artist residencies, collaborative projects and publications, DVAN offers support and spaces in which Vietnamese diasporic writers and artists can make and present their art works on their own terms, without pressure to comply with mainstream or majority narratives about identity, ethnicity, war, memory or representation. DVAN encourages writers and artists to explore multi-faceted ways of being Vietnamese in the diaspora, with the understanding that our identities are fluid, ever-changing, multilingual and multi-confluent, shaped by various axes of power while also possessing power to establish our own new axes of agency and insight. DVAN's impact reshapes how Vietnamese people are perceived and builds an international, diasporic community of artists in conversation with Vietnamese in Vietnam and with other diasporic communities at large.

This project is made possible in part by support from the Surdna Foundation and Jade Vu Henry.

ARTWORKS

- 1 *When we are young, we know how to sail through the air / We were raised to expect and anticipate everything*
2020, Digital print on matte linen, 8x10
- 2 *A is for Anise star-shaped and the secret spice in your grandmother's famous barbequed ribs /*
2020, Digital print on matte linen, 8x10
- 3 *L is for Longans when life was sweeter*
2020, Digital print on matte linen, 8x10
- 4 *A rose. Three ladies / My mom enjoys bitter melon*
2020, Digital print on matte linen, 8x10
- 5 */ a rock inside your throat that throbs,*
2020, Digital print on matte linen, 8x10
- 6 *Nearly every night I dream of monsters*
2020, Digital print on matte linen, 8x10
- 7 *Once I escaped from you*
2020, Digital print on matte linen, 8x10
- 8 *You do not hear a scream because*
2020, Digital print on matte linen, 8x10
- 9 *We are born into colonies, even after the time of colonies*
2020, Digital print on matte linen, 8x10
- 10 *Or is it like a prism redirecting all of the rays of light*
2020, Digital print on matte linen, 8x10
- 11 *What I am trying to say is that other people's hunger*
2020, Digital print on matte linen, 8x10
- 12 *My first memory of hunger, which is related to my first memory of food, is the memory of*
2020, Digital print on matte linen, 8x10

- 13 *in the story the men get to live / and hungry (x)*
2020, Digital print on matte linen, 8x10
- 14 *I learned to love my father through the curvature of his absence*
2020, Digital print on matte linen, 8x10
- 15 *torn from limb and fruit—*
2020, Digital print on matte linen, 8x10
- 16 *Sông Hồng*
2020, Digital print on matte linen, 8x10
- 17 *Father who has carried all of his battles in his hands,*
2020, Digital print on matte linen, 8x10
- 18 *Once upon a time her story does not repeat*
2020, Digital print on matte linen, 8x10
- 19 *] L is for Longans when life was sweeter []*
2020, Digital print on photo paper, 8x10
- 20 *] / a rock inside your throat that throbs, []*
2020, Digital print on photo paper, 8x10
- 21 *] Nearly every night I dream of monsters []*
2020, Digital print on photo paper, 8x10
- 22 *] Once I escaped from you []*
2020, Digital print on photo paper, 8x10
- 23 *] You do not hear a scream because []*
2020, Digital print on photo paper, 8x10
- 24 *] We are born into colonies, even after the time of colonies []*
2020, Digital print on photo paper, 8x10
- 25 *] Or is it like a prism redirecting all of the rays of light []*
2020, Digital print on photo paper, 8x10
- 26 *] What I am trying to say is that other people's hunger []*
2020, Digital print on photo paper, 8x10

27 *] in the story the men get to live / and hungry (x) []*
2020, Digital print on photo paper, 8x10

28 *] Father who has carried all of his battles in his hands, []*
2020
Digital print on photo paper, 8x10

29 *] Once upon a time her story does not repeat []*
2020, Digital print on photo paper, 8x10

~

30 *Beside*
2020, Digital prints on clear plastic, 54x72; audio

~

31 *Love|Object|Treason*
2020, Video-Poem, in three languages (English; Vietnamese; French), 34 min.

Artwork Process

The artworks in this exhibit are intended to convey our collectivity via a holistic, non-delineated “multi-voice” format. However, within this process, we also wish to honor the specificity of individual voices that contribute to create our collectivity. The artworks in this exhibit engage, in total, the “voices” of fifteen women writers of the Vietnamese diaspora, based in the U.S., Canada, and France, with each “voice” contributing original writing and personal archival images from which the pieces of the “Would That” series were shaped. If viewers wish to delve deeper into the individual perspectives within this multiplicity, the index below indicates which authors’ “voices” contribute to each individual artwork:

ANGIE CHAU: 2, 3, 19, 31

LAN DUONG: 17, 28, 31

VI KHI NAO: 11, 12, 26

ANNA MOÏ: 31

ANH-HOA THI NGUYEN: 8, 23

DIANA KHOI NGUYEN: 30

HOA NGUYEN: 13, 27, 31

THAO P. NGUYEN: 31

ISABELLE THUY PELAUD: 5, 18, 20, 29, 31

AIMEE PHAN: 1, 31

ABBIGAIL N. ROSEWOOD: 14

DAO STROM: 9, 10, 24, 25, 31

SOPHIA TERAZAWA: 15, 16

STACEY TRAN: 4

JULIE THI UNDERHILL: 6, 7, 21, 22, 31

Additional credits:

“Love|Object|Treason” was filmed by Dao Strom and Julie Thi Underhill, edited by Roland Dahwen. With Vietnamese text translation by Quan Tran; French text translation by Genève Chao.

