

PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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SA SA BASSAC opens *Remember*, a solo exhibition by Yim Maline



Scar 2, 2011, graphite on paper, 110 x 79.5cm



Scar 3, 2011, graphite on paper, 110 x 79.5cm

PHNOM PENH – SA SA BASSAC is pleased to announce *Remember*, a solo exhibition by Yim Maline. *Remember* presents four achromatic interpretations of the artist's childhood memories, in which the playful and the unsettling coincide.

Maline's rigorous practice spans media and scrutinizes the complexities of freedom. Growing up after the official fall of the Khmer Rouge, Maline's childhood years are considered politically "free". While she remembers laughing and playing – innocent actions restricted just years before her birth - she notes the contraction of being surrounded by ongoing violence, utter poverty and the dilapidation of social infrastructure.

In her essay *What is Freedom?*, Hannah Arendt writes: "The experiences of inner freedom are derivative in that they always presuppose a retreat from the world, where freedom was denied, into an inwardness to which no other has access." Maline reconciles her past through the inwardness of imagination, by calling something into being which did not exist before. She states, "War is difficult. We want to be free but we don't know if it will be granted to us. Being an artist allows me to grant my own freedom; if there is something I don't like in reality, I can re-imagine it in my work, and remain playful and curious like a child."

Maline turns her family's poor dinette into an eerie playground. *Dinette* (2010) is a sprawling floor installation of dirt scattered with three hand-built, unglazed ceramic objects in series: knives, bowls, and bones. The knives only seem sharp and the bowls are rendered useless -

punctured by the artist's aggressive hands and echoing detonated cluster bomb shells. The bone shape is taken from "dolls" the artist created as a child using leaves of a *k'plough* tree. *New Face* (2010) is a collection of nine rough plaster masks attached to the wall. The artist cast pieces of a face repeatedly, after which she anarchically pieced together the parts to reflect the disjointed nature of life during and after war.

The centerpiece of the exhibition is a four-meter-long sculpture of a kite entitled *Hope* (2010). Kite-making and flying survived decades of cultural censorship during the Khmer Rouge. Maline remembers flying kites, especially at the end of the monsoon season and the beginning of the dry season – a time filled with hope for a rice harvest. Among the large-scale kites is the *Khleung Ek*. Commonly flown at night, the Khleung Ek is unique for the haunting sounds from the *ek* - a curved bamboo rod at the head of the kite. In the artist's adaptation, the customary kite is built of ceramic rather than the typical light and durable materials of silk or paper. *Hope* defies one's expectations of a vibrant and celebratory recreational object. Heavy, black and silent, *Hope's* fragile, ceramic tails rests on the floor, its flight a mere illusion.

Scar 1-4 (2010) is a series of large, meticulous graphite-on-paper drawings in which the artist has imagined explosions of organically shaped rice clusters. She says, "In Cambodia, like most of Asia, we work for rice; our bodies are built of rice." An explosion indicates a necessary release of pressure. The peculiar explosions in *Scar* are symbolic of a time to open, to travel, to learn. The title however is a reminder of something that never goes away.

About the Artist

Yim Maline was born in Battambang in 1982 and is currently based in Siem Reap. She studied art at Phare Ponleu Selpak, Cambodia (1995-2003), and received her Diplôme National Arts Plastique (DNAP, Art Option) from École Supérieure des Beaux-arts, Caen la mer, France (2010). She has participated in numerous exhibitions in France and Cambodia. *Remember* is Yim Maline's first solo exhibition.

About SA SA BASSAC

SA SA BASSAC is a gallery and resource center dedicated to creating, facilitating, producing, and sharing contemporary visual culture in and from Cambodia.

Exhibition Details

Exhibition: *Remember* by Yim Maline
Opening: 7 April, 6:00-8:00PM
Dates: 7 April – 8 May, 2011
Opening hours: Thu-Fri 2-6pm / Sat-Sun 10am-6pm
Location: SA SA BASSAC #18 2nd Floor, Sothearos Blvd, Phnom Penh
Web: www.sasabassac.com

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