BEING AND BECOMING FEMALE IN THE MALAY WORLD: DIGITAL ARCHIVES RESEARCH AND A VIRTUAL EXHIBITION

About The Project

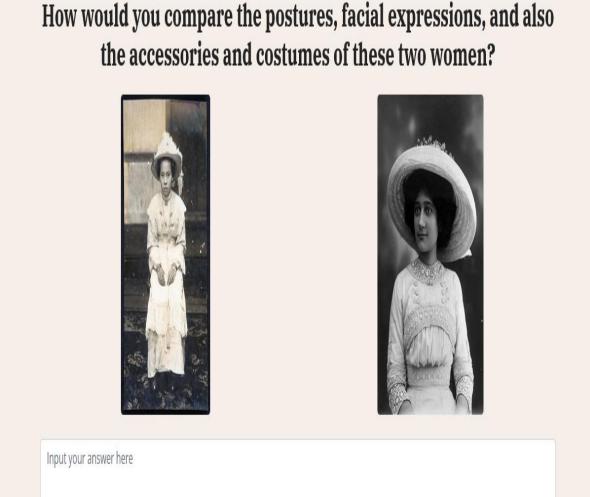
This exhibition is part of a larger research project, entitled 'Being and Becoming Female in the Malay World: Interrogating and Curating the Photo-Archives of Early Singapore', funded by the National Heritage Board's Heritage Research Grant (HRG) scheme. The project team consists of Associate Professor Dr Maznah Mohamad, Dr Suriani Suratman, Dr Imran Tajudeen (all from the Malay Studies Department, NUS) and Associate Professor Dr Bahar Gürsel, from the Department of History of Middle East Technical University (METU), Ankara, Turkey.

ArtsEquator Ltd. is the host of the online exhibition. Tusitala is the web developer.

The research aims to study how gender and race have been visually depicted in the history of the Malay world, comprising presentday Indonesia, Singapore and Malaysia. There are several ways of interpreting photographic images in our collection. One of which is to think of them as a powerful visual means through which the identity categories of gender, ethnicity, class and religion are represented through the hegemonic scheme of ordering. Another is that the female and gendered bodies are specifically positioned, costumed, adorned and assembled to be in accordance with the hierarchy of power and inequality of the time. Racialisation and feminisation are thus constitutive of the power of divide and differentiation through photography. An enduring gendered and racialised 'Otherness' may thus be sustained and reproduced, unless and until they can be interrogated and undone, even if through a single frame of the camera.

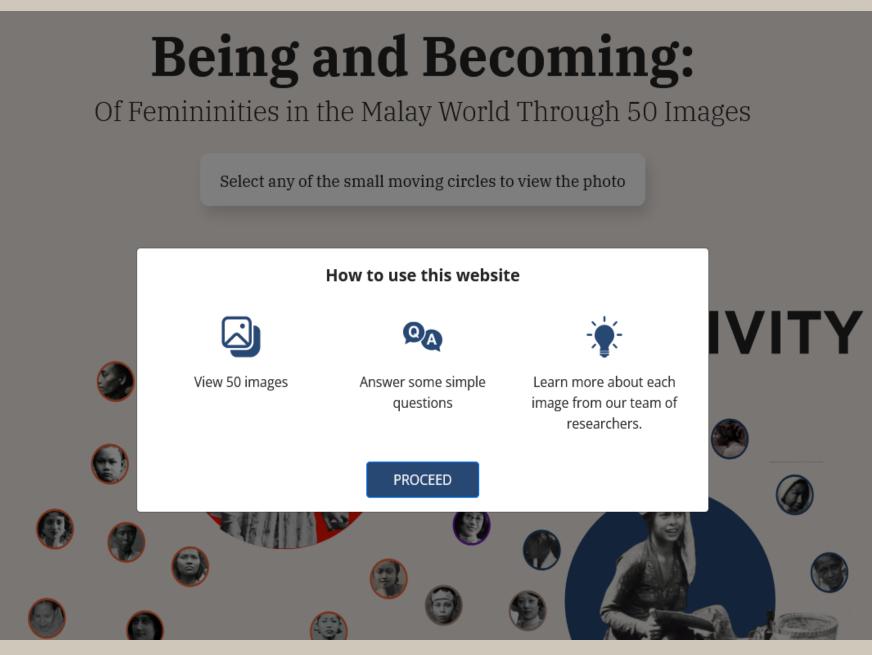


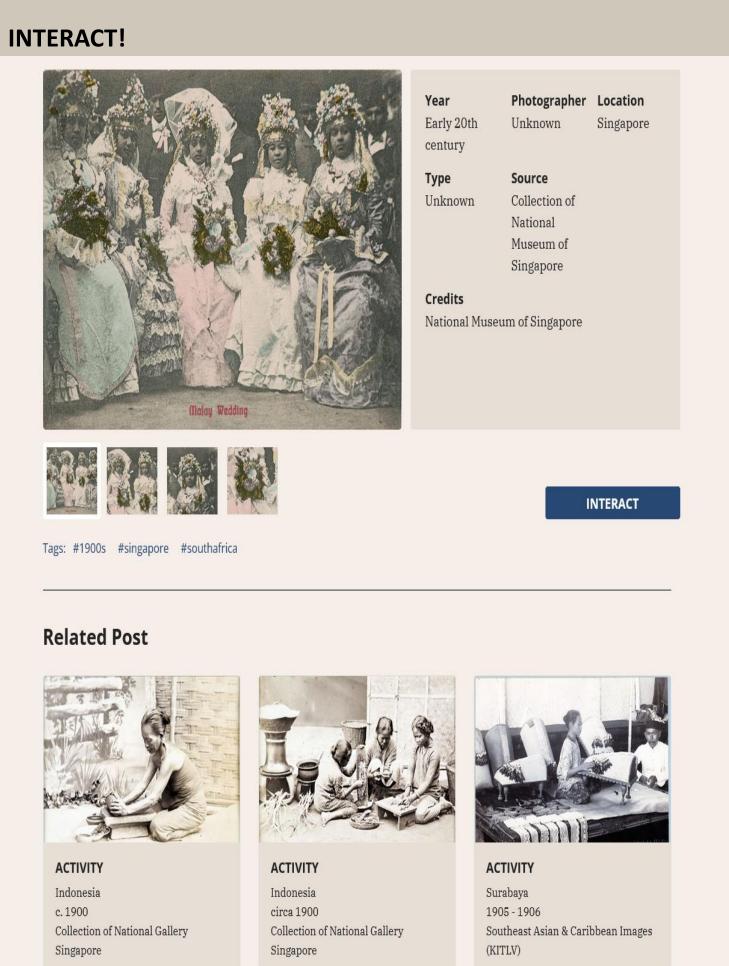
OPEN-ENDED INTERACTION











ABOUT



Curatorial Statement English

Being and Becoming: Of Femininities in the Malay World Through 50 Images engages with collections of archival photographs, postcards and illustrations from the mid-1800s to the 1950s. They feature people and places of the Malay world, encompassing the region of present-day Singapore, Malaysia and Indonesia. In examining thousands of images of women located in the Malay world (of various ethnic origins), held in collections all over the world, we select 50 iconic images to actively view them as living cultural products open to reinterpretation and methods of analysis.

Theories of visual representations underscore how photographic images have been used as a medium to authenticate naming, classification, framing and identification. When the camera was first invented, its use in this region was also instrumentalised as a form of colonial power to create, maintain and circulate a certain representation of subjectivity, refracted through the lenses of gender, ethnicity, class and place. Yet, the endurance of these same photographic images today also affords us the possibility of uncovering the workings of power and structural violence behind them.

CONSULTED ONLINE ARCHIVES

Wellcome Collection https://wellcomecollection.org/images

Asian Civilisations Museum

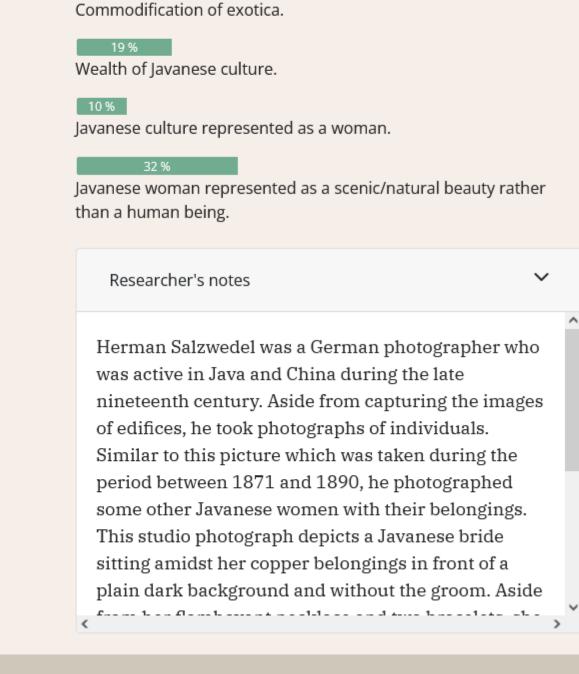
Cambridge Digital Library https://cudl.lib.cam.ac.uk/ National Archives of Singapore https://www.nas.gov.sg/archivesonline/ National Gallery Singapore Roots https://www.roots.gov.sg/ National Chidlren's Museum Roots https://www.roots.gov.sg/ National Museum Singapore Roots https://www.roots.gov.sg/ National Archives of Malaysia https://arkib.gov.my Malaysia Design Archive https://www.malaysiadesignarchive.org/category/collections/ Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities, Sweden https://collections.smvk.se/carlotta-om/web Leiden Univ Libraries Digital Collections https://digitalcollections.universiteitleiden.nl/ Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Online Catalog (PPOC) https://www.loc.gov/pictures/ Peranakan Museum Roots https://www.roots.gov.sg/ Rijksmuseum https://www.rijksmuseum.nl/en Royal Collection Trust https://www.rct.uk/collection The Henry Ford, Digital Collections https://www.thehenryford.org/collections-and-research/digital-collections/ The NY Public Library Digital Collections https://digitalcollections.nypl.org/ Tropenmuseum https://collectie.wereldculturen.nl UMass Amherst Walter Woodbury Photography Collection, 1865-1866 https://credo.library.umass.edu/view/collection/muph003 Univ of Southern California Digital Library http://digitallibrary.usc.edu/cdm Univ of Wisconsin Milwaukee Digital Collections, AGSL Digital Photo Archive: Asia & Middle East https://uwm.edu/lib-collections/asia-middle-

Partners Web Developer Enabling Partner: National Heritage Board ARTS EQUATOR Department of Malay Studies Faculty of Arts & Social Sciences

MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTION INTERACTION

What does this image of a Javanese woman in white, surrounded by native plants and in a studio setting make you think of?

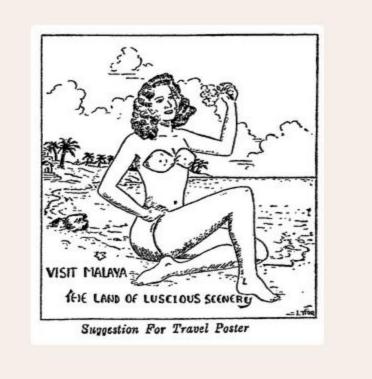




COMPARE AND CONTRAST INTERACTION

Which of these two travel posters is a better representation of Malaya in your opinion?





Analytics).

RESULTS

- > The exhibition was visited by 1,396 users, with a total of 17,000 page views between 12 May - 24 August 2022 (Google
- > The majority of visitors were from Malaysia, followed by Singapore and the United States.
- > There were a total of 964 MCQ interactions, 1316 Compare and Contrast interactions and 569 open-ended interactions. Six publicly curated exhibitions were approved on the website.

VISITORS AS CURATORS

