

RECONNECT

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Dear SIT Alumni and Friends,

My heartfelt congratulations to the pioneer group of alumni! You have made history by being part of the formative years of our institution and have done very well. Few can lay claim to this. In the years to come, you will have privileged knowledge of your alma mater taking great strides across Singapore's educational landscape. Unlike others, you would have witnessed its very beginnings in fulfilling its critically important role to educate a new generation of ambitious men and women.

I invite you to be a part of this exciting journey. Your SIT experience does not end with your graduation. We will continue engaging you in the hopes that you may continue to benefit and be further enriched from that decision you took, years ago, to be a part of this institution.

I plan to work closely with the Advancement and Alumni Office who are committed, and whose role is, to forge long term partnerships with our graduates. They will help SIT alumni to build strong alumni networks with the goal

of fostering meaningful relationships. The advantages of strong networks should never be underestimated. As new friendships form, new horizons appear where opportunities await those who invest in them. All of us can and will benefit from a community bolstered by our collective successes. To this end, we are committed to strengthening our communications network so that we may share the fruits of these bonds.

Of course, communication is two-way and we are working hard to build platforms for you to easily reach out to us as well. We will develop beneficial programmes of further learning, organise groups where shared interests can be enriched as well as host social and commemorative events. All these efforts working in tandem are designed to bring SIT graduates together and help you stay connected. Here are some examples:

- Educational Events
- Career Assistance Network
- Shared Interest Groups
- Networking Nights
- Reunions

As we further develop and establish the SIT Alumni Association, we aim to widen the breadth and scope of the activities and programmes offered. At these various alumni events, it would be my pleasure to shake your hand and hear your thoughts about your SIT experiences — past, present and future. If you should see me, please do stop to speak to me. My office will always be open and supportive to your thoughts and concerns.

I look forward to the opportunity to meet each and every one of you along your life journey.

Best wishes,

Prof Tan Thiam Soon, President

INAUGURAL GRADUATING COHORT

By Ng Kaijie & Amie Tan

11 January 2013 marked the celebration of achievements by SIT's pioneer cohort of 2010. About 470 students, enrolled across ten programmes from five overseas universities, gathered together at the Resorts World Sentosa Convention Centre to recognise this milestone.



Early morning already saw the convention centre abuzz with activity as staff and student helpers alike tied up loose ends and prepared for the ceremony at 4pm. An air of excitement prevailed as history was in the making - SIT would pass out its first batch of graduates and welcome its very first batch of alumni.



In the opening speech, Minister for Education and Guest-of-Honour Mr Heng Swee Keat (above) applauded the students' trailblazing spirit in being SIT pioneers. Recognising that SIT was "at the cusp of a new and significant chapter", Mr Heng urged the students to wear the SIT brand proudly and to give back to the institution as alumni and mentors for future students.



Student representatives from the five overseas universities also took to the stage to share their diverse experiences, paying tribute to SIT's unique model in bringing to Singapore a qualitative overseas education experience. RECONNECT heard from these enthusiastic students, who were all eager to share some parting reflections about their time in SIT.

Outgoing President of SIT, Professor Tan Chin Tiong addressed graduates for the last time and shared words of wisdom gleaned from his own life experience. Born into a family of businessmen, he had every reason to assume that he too would end up likewise. However, his decision to continue postgraduate studies led him to discover his gift and passion for teaching, eventually ending up in academia. He was a founding member of Singapore Management University and was its Provost and Deputy President from 1999 to 2009 before being invited to head SIT from 2009 to 2012.



Bright smiles from outgoing President of SIT, Professor Tan Chin Tiong (left) and incoming President, Professor Tan Thiam Soon (right).

"Your journey with SIT has not ended. It has just begun. You will be the pioneer alumni of SIT.... There are certain responsibilities. We expect you to come back and visit us. We expect you to organize activities for your fellow alumni. We expect you to recruit new graduates from SIT into your respective organization... We will help to facilitate that...We want you BACK. "

Professor Tan Chin Tiong's
address to graduates.



FROM LEFT TO RIGHT: The graduation gowns of Newcastle University, DigiPen Institute of Technology, University of Nevada, Las Vegas, the Culinary Institute of America, and the Technical University of Munich.



SIT Inaugural Graduation Ceremony 2013 video, [click here](#)

Hear what our **SIT Graduates** have to say...



"To the wonderful classmates in NU for the past 2 years, you guys are awesome! Continue to rock on!"

Peiting,
BEng (Hons) in Marine Engineering with Newcastle University

"It's been a 2-year rollercoaster ride and I want to thank my family, friends, and classmates for being there for me. We did it guys, to the ends of the world and back!"

Walter,
BFA in Digital Art and Animation with DigiPen Institute of Technology

"Tough but enjoyable, it was a great sense of achievement for all of us! As we say: Hope for the best, and work hard, to be the BEST!"

Feng Jue, Leek Heng, Jin Wei,
BSc in Electrical Engineering & Information Technology with Technical University of Munich

SIT INAUGURAL GRADUATION CELEBRATIONS 2013



Friday evening, on the 18 January 2013, Singapore's hottest night spot, St James Power Station was host to almost 100 party-goers, celebrating the graduation of SIT's pioneer cohort. Spirits were high, as the decibels were turned up on the dance floor.

SIT's newly-installed President, Prof Tan Thiam Soon was in attendance, congratulating the new graduates on their achievements. A rousing send-off for SIT's ground-breaking alumni, as they set off down the path of opportunity, armed with their freshly-minted degrees.



Congratulations to all our recently-graduated alumni! We look forward to seeing more of you at our SIT Alumni events. Stay tuned for more exciting Alumni events and activities through your SIT email accounts. Interested in forming your own SIT interest groups? Send your ideas, views and contributions to RECONNECT. Email us @Alumni@SingaporeTech.edu.sg.

FLYING THE SIT FLAG

By Ng Kaijie

Three SIT first-year students became the first-ever representatives to don the national colours in the ASEAN University Games 2012, held in the Laotian city of Vientiane. RECONNECT caught up with them to share their reflections on this once-in-a-lifetime experience.

(From left): SIT Students, Cheang Jian Ming [BEng (Hons) in Chemical Engineering with Newcastle University], Muhammad Hussairi Bin Hussin [BEng (Hons) in Mechanical Design and Manufacturing Engineering with Newcastle University], and Sim Chun Quan [BA (Hons) in Interior Design with The Glasgow School of Art], at the AUG Athlete's Village in the National University of Laos.



Muhammad Hussairi started out playing soccer with his neighbours at the void deck of his HDB block. Little did he know that he would be representing Singapore as a midfielder/striker for the ASEAN University Games (AUG) in 2012. It is similar story for both Cheang Jian Ming (Men's Soccer) and Sim Chun Quan (Centre, Men's Basketball).

Each of them has reached the pinnacle of their respective sports. Needless to say, getting there has not been without its sacrifices! Chun Quan had to travel from his lessons at Temasek Polytechnic to train in Jurong every day, whilst juggling four submissions. It was arduous for him both physically and mentally, but the experience of juggling his packed schedule taught him to set his priorities and manage his time better.

Jian Ming consulted his lecturer, concerned that the trip to the AUG would affect his studies. His lecturer's reply, which he remembers vividly was,

"If I were you, I would go for the trip".

The lecturers voluntarily gave him extra lessons when he was back which got him up to speed.

Hussairi saw training as "keeping his mind away from studies for a few hours". He managed by sacrificing some sleep in order to cope with both his studies and training. Participating in such an event was nonetheless worth it for the three awe-struck students. Being part of the Singapore contingent gave them "the first-hand pride of an athlete representing his country."

The intensity of the international games was also something that they were not accustomed to. For instance, Chun Quan had to undergo a packed 5-day programme with training in the morning, followed by the competition, and then an ice bath at the end of the day. Despite the above, Chun Quan outperformed his own

expectations, getting his first two international points in the game against Thailand, and successfully keeping the opposing team's centre away from the basket despite his height disadvantage.

The AUG also gave the students an opportunity to interact and bond with players from the Region.

"It was an enjoyable experience meeting all the other soccer players from other institutions in Singapore," Hussairi enthused. "I made lots of friends, not only with the players but also the Laotian volunteer guides. We still keep in touch with them!"

A visit to an orphanage was also on their agenda. Hussairi and Jian Ming were humbled by the experience. "The standard of living there was very poor relative to Singapore. The offer of a few snacks and tidbits, and the kids were jumping around as if they had won something big. All they wished for was shelter over their head and 3 meals a day. Unfortunately, it is only till now that I realize that kids in Singapore are generally very fortunate." echoed Jian Ming.



Hussairi and Jian Ming visiting an orphanage with the Men's Soccer team as part of AUG's community service component.

A BALANCING ACT

By Ng Kaijie

By day, Chng Chin Ling and Yeo Hui Wen are SIT students pursuing Hotel Administration with the University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV).

By night, they are dedicated martial arts exponents who train diligently for their day in the sun.



In Equilibrium. Chng Chin Ling and Yeo Hui Wen have found the perfect balance between their studies and Wushu.

The two, who were recent winners at the National Wushu and Sanshou Open Championship 2012 respectively, explain how they manage the delicate feat of juggling sports with their full-time studies, and their impassioned desire to set up an SIT Wushu Club.

"We actually competed because we really wanted to set up an SIT Wushu Club," Chin Ling said. "It is a good way to create positive news about the sport and other students can then see that it is possible to juggle both your studies and sports."

For many students, the intensity of a university education alone demands their full attention. So when Chin Ling and Hui Wen continued to pursue their Wushu training despite their hectic schedules, their family and friends doubted their ability to find a balance. Their commitment paid off handsomely as they found themselves on the winners' rostrum at the National Wushu and Sanshou Open Championship 2012 held at the Jurong East Sports & Cultural Centre from 8 - 16 December last year.

For Hui Wen, the decision to pursue what she loved came very naturally. Having been trained in Wushu and Taiji from the tender age of nine, she enjoys the ongoing challenge of mastering more of its moves and stunts.

Chin Ling too enjoys the same challenges. He derives a sense of satisfaction from being able to surpass his physical and mental limits in his training. Chin Ling's decision to pursue the sport however, is different from Hui Wen's.

"You know those ancient Chinese dramas, where martial pugilists can 'fly here and there'?" Chin Ling laughed, "I thought I could really learn to do that in Wushu, so here I am!"

Chin Ling is now still attempting to defy the laws of physics and he is still mastering that skill.

Training had been very demanding for both of them, particularly since the competition took place just before their semester exams. Each, though, has found their own method of coping. Hui Wen draws a well-defined boundary between her training and studies. She practices thrice a week for one to two hours each.

Chin Ling approaches the juggling act with more spontaneity.

"You don't really need to fix a time and place to train," he said, "It can be a short break from studying."

Sustaining this momentum is very crucial to them now as they intend to form the SIT Wushu Club. Their plan is to reach out to students from the other overseas universities soon before drawing out a concrete plan. "It's a whole new set of challenges since we will have to get a central training area, draw up a budget, and maybe even get a coach," Chin Ling mulled. Both stressed by the necessity of a suitable training venue. Hui Wen practiced for the competition at her void deck, while Chin Ling did it at home.

"I was lucky that the competition had good thick mats for jumping stunts, since I couldn't practice those at home. Otherwise I might have had to call an ambulance!" he laughs.

Interested in joining the SIT Wushu Club? Contact Alumni@SingaporeTech.edu.sg



Hui Wen on taking up Wushu: "It really helped my immune system a lot. I also learnt to be more flexible, and I love the stunts that I always challenge myself to achieve."

Chin Ling on taking up Wushu: "You know those ancient Chinese dramas, where martial pugilists can 'fly here and there'? I thought I could really learn to do that in Wushu ..."



Hui Wen with her medals for coming in 2nd in both International Category 42 Style Taiji, and Traditional Broadsword Taiji.



Chin Ling won 3rd and 4th in the International Category Southern Cudgel and International Category Southern Fist events, respectively.

REACHING BEYOND BORDERS

By Ng Kaijie



SIT volunteers (from University of Nevada, Las Vegas, The Culinary Institute of America, The University of Manchester, Wheelock College, Trinity College Dublin, Newcastle University, and Technical University of Munich) with their Vietnamese students at the end of their balloon sculpting lesson

An education may not only be relevant to one's career, but it can also be used to contribute to society. Our student volunteers on a recent Overseas Community Involvement Trip to Hanoi, Vietnam, tapped into their specialised knowledge to make a meaningful impact and gained much more in return.

A team of volunteers from Singapore Institute of Technology (SIT) embarked on a social-uplifting mission at the end of last year. The Overseas Community Involvement Trip was initiated by SIT students from the Hospitality programmes conducted by the University of Nevada, Las Vegas and the Culinary Institute of America. Aimed at improving the livelihoods of less privileged children in Vietnam, the trip was open to all SIT students enrolled in other programmes.

"We wanted to do something meaningful in the midst of our studies, before we start our careers,"

explained Chairperson Zhuang Lingxiang, (a second-year student in the Hotel Administration programme).

"Community service can be about educating the less fortunate, by imparting to them employable skills,"

agreed Vice-Chairperson Rebecca Teo (a first-year student in the Hotel Administration programme).

"Education can be their stepping stone out of their current conditions."

Early in their planning stages, the student committee responsible for planning the trip discovered that their peers from other partner universities were a tremendous help, especially since their different skills and specialty knowledge meant that their resources were widened.

The group voted to teach the Vietnamese youth basic hospitality skills and first-aid knowledge, in partnership with the Australian-

Vietnamese charity Know One Teach One and a social enterprise that employs locals, the TeaTalk Café. The local not-for-profit organisations, which are dedicated to training the underprivileged, were useful partners in arranging the trip logistics.

In culture-sharing sessions, the SIT volunteers exposed the Vietnamese children to a varied range of skills, including henna painting, balloon sculpting and other childhood games from Singapore. They introduced Singapore culinary delicacies to their hosts, like bak kut teh and honeydew sago. The volunteers also taught the children basic first-aid skills.

"We showed them the art of balloon sculpting, so that if they are working in a restaurant or leisure attraction, they can make simple sculptures for visitors or to decorate the place. Basic first-aid is also good for times of emergency, such as choking, or when they injure themselves," Rebecca elaborated.

In return, SIT student volunteers learnt how to make Vietnamese spring rolls and grilled pork. The biggest takeaway for the SIT students was, however, the realisation of how education can impact lives.

"The Vietnamese children had the bare minimum, but they were very willing to learn. They always gave us their fullest attention in any activities," Lingxiang said. "It was humbling to realise that we do not need to be rich or special to give back to society; every little contribution makes a difference."

STRUTTING THEIR STUFF

By Ooi Yee Mun & Ng Kaijie

SIT Students from the Glasgow School of Art (GSA) commemorated a hundred days of their education by turning the Home Club at Clarke Quay into an overnight art gallery for their own works.



Under the Spotlight. The grungy walls and lighting of Home Club makes for a perfect backdrop.



The Home Club at Clarke Quay is an indie music institution. 12 December 2012 saw it house a different form of art. Posters, postcards, and sculptures stood in place of the usual mics and spotlights as innovative GSA students showcased their creativity.

Most remarkably, the event was initiated by a group of GSA students from both the Communication Design and Interior Design degree programmes, most of whom did not know each other prior to enrolling into GSA. But two months of careful planning saw them all, together with others they pulled in to help, becoming the best of friends. One of the event's main organisers, Dominic Ho, was quick to acknowledge the efforts of "Jeremy, Christine, Christabel, Melvin, Nas, CQ and ...," and many other names who contributed to making the event possible.

"We learn how to think like global designers. We have supportive lecturers who encourage crazy ideas, and crazy ideas are those that change the world."

SIT student, **Dominic Ho**, pursuing BA (Hons) in Communication Design with GSA.





GSA's Got Talent. Students also took to the stage to perform various tunes during the event.

Besides proudly showcasing their work to family members and friends, the artworks were also available for sale, with proceeds going to the students' personal Overseas Immersion Programme (OIP) expenses. Dominic elaborated on their enthusiasm for the Glasgow OIP, "We all want to go there, because experiencing new cultures and artistic styles can really help influence our designs."

Broad exposure and appreciation of their artworks is also important for these budding artists. Industry insiders were invited to get a feel of GSA's standard.



Postcards condensing the students' works were on sale for \$5 each.

DIFFERENT STROKES FOR DIFFERENT FOLKS

By Ooi Yee Mun

Ever viewed a piece of art and thought, "What on earth was the artist thinking?" For a look into the mind of an artist, RECONNECT asks two students from the Communication Design degree programme offered by Glasgow School of Art at Singapore Institute of Technology (SIT) to share their perspective. What inspires their art? How do they express their creativity? Why do they do it?

Christine Neo,
First-year student
BA (Hons) in Communication Design

The Portrait, the Drawing and the Photograph



The Real Deal. Christine standing beside her glitch art self-portrait

What:

To work on a single photograph repeatedly with any kind of media (with the exception of Photoshop filters).

How:

Christine shared that she interpreted the project as an exercise in appropriation – the use of borrowed elements in the creation of a new artwork. After going through myriad interpretations using different processes such as cutting, drawing, animating, re-photographing, and even burning her portrait, Christine eventually stumbled upon the genre of glitch art whilst tampering with the data of the digital image. Glitch art, according to Christine, is the 'aestheticisation' of digital errors, made by corrupting digital code or data. It is 'punk rock' in the image form.

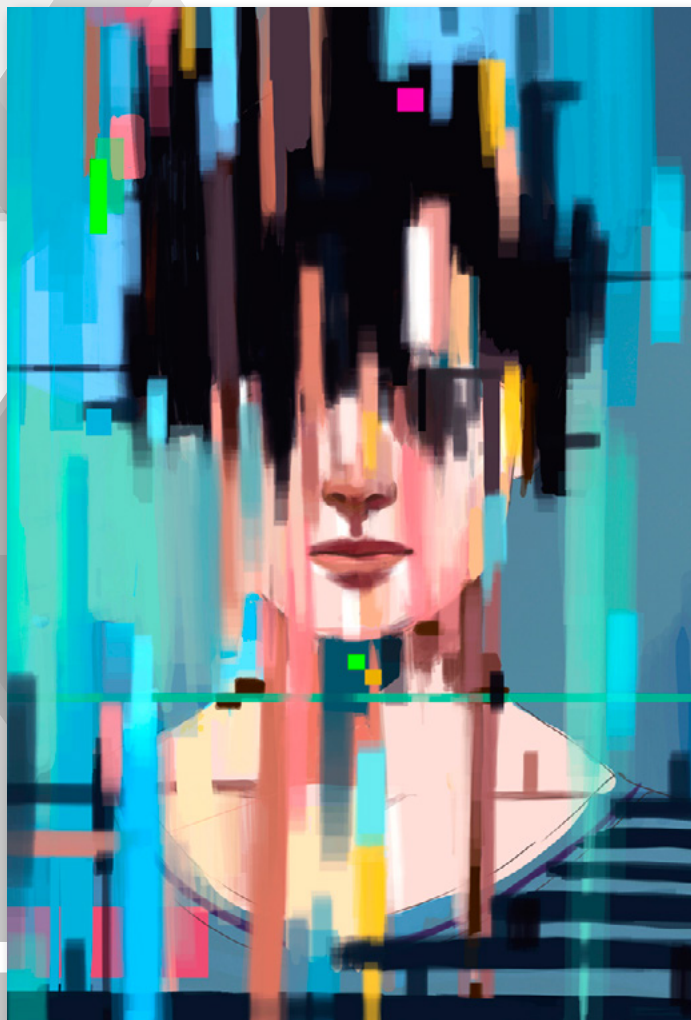
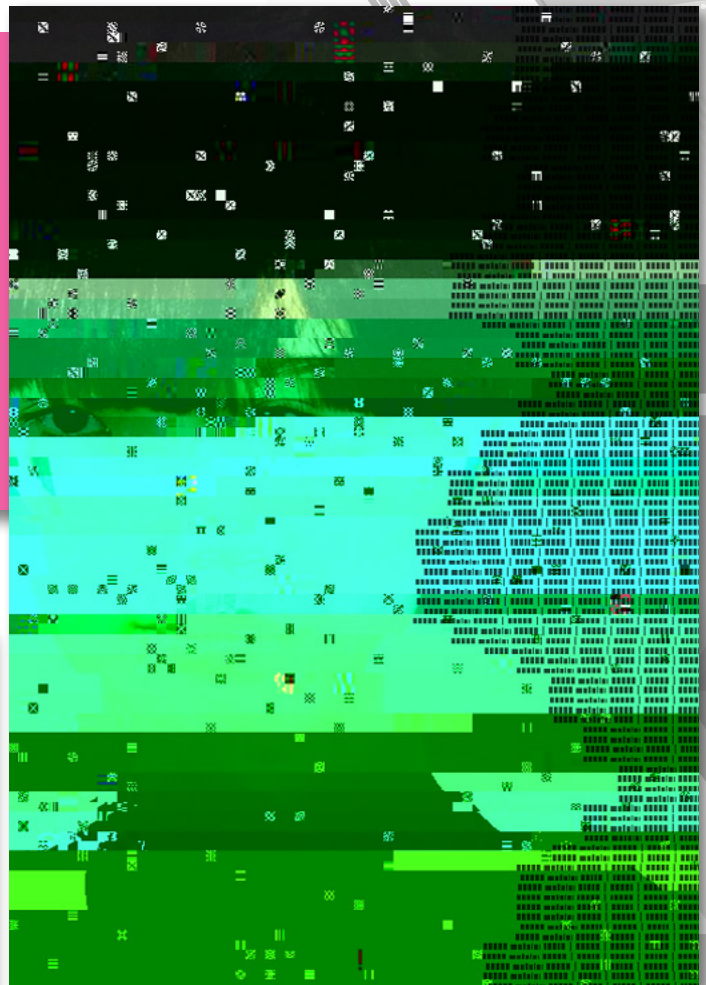
Why:

"What excites me about glitch art is the clashing, often lurid, colours resulting from the 'error'. It is a refreshing change from the high resolution and polished images we are often so used to seeing," explains Christine, on her choice of methodology. Glitch art creates an image with character. "Although you are doing the manipulation, the results are uncontrolled and unexpected," she says. "It works with you, but never for you."

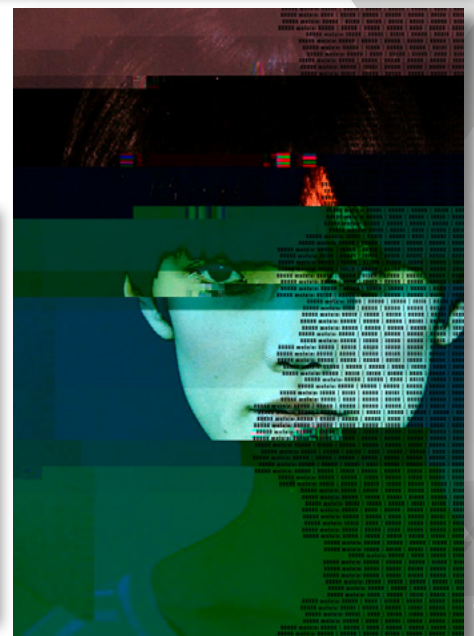


The various methods Christine used to tamper with her self-portrait before discovering glitch art.

On the appeal of glitch art: "What excites me about glitch art is the clashing, often lurid colours resulting from the error. It is a refreshing change from the hi-resolution and polished images we're used to seeing."



"It is an image with character – it works with you, but never for you, for although one is doing the manipulation, the results are uncontrollable and unexpected."



The Voices Underground

Dominic Ho
First-year student
BA (Hons) in Communication Design

What:

To create a piece with an "Underground" theme.

How:

Initially, Dominic had wanted to identify what 'underground' was, but he felt it was too vast. Instead, he focused on what made people turn 'underground'. Dominic placed a sound clip in a bowl, consisting of recordings from various people talking about the unethical things that they wanted to do. To add to the disturbing sense of unease, the voices were blended with a sound clip of a crowd, making the voices more difficult to distinguish. The result is a dark, jumble of indistinct noises.

Why:

"There is a voice in all of us that tells us to do things that we want to do, but it may not be acceptable or deemed appropriate by society," explains Dominic. "What I have done is to give this voice a form." Likening the indistinct voices to "an underground creature that is deeply rooted into the ground", Dominic muses that there is a voice inside of everyone that is always screaming out to be heard.

"To listen, we must have the courage to get close," he says. "Either you have to have the courage to put your head in, or a lack of common sense."

"There is a voice in all of us that tells us to do things that are not acceptable or deemed appropriate by society ... What I have tried to do is to give this voice a form."

Dominic explained that the sound clip placed in the bowl consisted of recordings from various people talking about things that are not acceptable or appropriate. To make it difficult to distinguish and magnify the intended effect, he included recordings of random noises from a crowd.



Designed by Dominic Ho.



"The creature inside the bowl is deeply rooted in the ground. This represents our mind."

"This voice has always been there and has always been screaming out loud, but to us, it sounds like a whisper."

He continues, "To listen to it, we must have the courage to go close to hear that whisper. The worms are there to act as a deterrent for people who want to put their heads in. You have got to have the courage to put your head in or lack common sense..."

RECONNECT is a quarterly publication of the SIT Advancement & Alumni Office. The views and opinions expressed do not necessarily represent the views of SIT Advancement & Alumni Office or SIT.

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We welcome your ideas, views and contributions.

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