

Centre for

Contemporary

Asian Art

# Truc Truong: hai con lân việt kiều (Two overseas Vietnamese unicorns)

4 FEBRUARY – 6 MARCH 2021



4A Centre for Contemporary Asian Art presents *hai con lân việt kiều* (*Two overseas Vietnamese unicorns*), the first solo exhibition of emerging Vietnamese–Australian artist Truc Truong. *hai con lân việt kiều* showcases a bespoke refashioning of traditional lion dance ensembles. By reinventing the costume, Truong delves into the tradition of lion dancing and how the cultural ritual has come to reflect the diasporic nature of multicultural Australian identities.

The costumes use panels of Truong’s own clothing, draping out from beneath traditional Vietnamese lion heads. By utilising material assemblage and fabric bleaching to alter the lion dance costume, Truong articulates the nuances and challenges of assimilation, its impacts on her own familial history and the ‘alterations’ faced by Asian–Australian migrants in an era post-colonisation. Typically, lion dancing symbolises the removal of unwanted spirits. Here, Truong depicts how the fighting lions can transform and become microcosms of Asian–Australian generational wisdom.

Accompanying the exhibition as part of a newly commissioned contemporary lion dance performance, *the love ethic* will be held and documented in Haymarket to herald Lunar New Year. Breaking with tradition, these performances showcase costumes by Truong, embodied and activated by dance performers. Donning a bespoke refashioning of the traditional lion dance costumes hand-made by the artist, the dancers will perform a celebratory act that seeks to rid the world of the misfortune of 2020 and welcome a year of prosperity and happiness.

For many, *hai con lân việt kiều* enacts an unexpected encounter, helping to reignite the Sydney CBD’s vibrancy over the summer festival period. In the past, traditional lion dances have been a common occurrence during Lunar New Year throughout Haymarket. *hai con lân việt kiều* represents an artistic response to the Lunar New Year tradition and the unprecedented changes that have impacted this annual ritual. The project ensures contemporary performance art reaches new audiences in an accessible and captivating way, heralding a new year and celebrating the dynamism of the local, vibrant Haymarket community.

### List of Works:

1. Truc Truong, *hai con lân việt kiều* (*2 unicorns that don’t live in Vietnam*), 2019, traditional lion heads, bleached clothing, aluminium steel frame, paper mache frame, acrylic paint; courtesy the artist
2. Truc Truong, *bench the french*, 2019, cotton drill, bleach, stockings; courtesy the artist
3. Truc Truong, *the love ethic*, performance collaboration (developed with Trung Han Qun Lion Dance and Martial Arts group), 2021 iteration forthcoming, bleached clothing on cotton drill; 2021 iteration commissioned by 4A Centre for Contemporary Asian Art; courtesy the artist

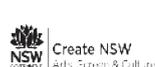
**Curators:** Con Gerakaris and Reina Takeuchi

### Artist Biography:

**Truc Truong** (b. 1987, lives and works in Adelaide, Australia) is an artist living and working on Kaurna land (South Australia, Adelaide), exploring variances between Eastern and Western thinking. Working with sculpture and installation, her work points to colonialism, exploring aspects of racism, hybridity and displacement, often through experiences and stories retold by her family. Truong explores the innovative use of materials, processes, and thematic content that examine issues of identity and Whiteness, and the forces of assimilation and cultural adaptation, especially as they impact on the Vietnamese community in Australia

Image caption: Truc Truong, *Unicorn Land* (detail), 2019, mixed media. Photograph by Bo Wong.

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