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Artist drinks his blood

This year's performance art festival will see, among other shows, an artist having his blood drawn and using it to write

adeline chia

arts correspondent

n artist is going to drink his own blood, while another trio want to challenge an "annoying" but elusive artist to a fight in a wrestling ring.

This carnivalesque series of events is all in a day's work for the participants in Future Of Imagination, an annual performance art festival that is taking place next week.

Now in its seventh edition, the event is organised by local multi-disciplinary artist Jason Lim, who has decided that the performers included this year are those working as a pair or a trio. In previous festivals, the artists performed solo.

He has invited 16 international artists and 15 Singapore-based ones to take part in the festival, which runs from Nov 16 to 20 at the Goodman Arts

Lim, 44, observes that many performance artists abroad worked in groups, but adds that "it is more challenging for local artists to do so because we have to look for collaborators, but the community is so small".

He adds: "But I believe that we should be sharing ideas and not be individualistic and egoistic." Performance art has a complicated history in Singapore, having been out in the cold because of a 10-year no-funding rule by the National Arts Coun-

cil. The decision followed an infamous performance in 1993 by Josef Ng where the artist snipped off his pubic hair in public. Since 2004, the no-funding rule has been lifted,

and Future Of Imagination is one of the spaces where proponents of the art form, usually a one-off, ephemeral presentation that is less scripted than a conventional theatrical play, practise and carry out artistic exchanges in Singapore.

Lim will be performing a piece called For Loss with musician-composer Kawai Shiu, 44. Shiu will play a restored piano, originally discarded, while Lim will be improvising a series of movements. Hong Kong-born Shiu, who is assistant profes-

sor at the Yong Siew Toh Conservatory Of Music, says the performance was inspired by an image from the recent earthquake tragedy in Japan of a broken piano lying on the beach. The most controversial performance, however,

is likely to be VestAndPage's untitled piece, where blood is drawn and consumed. The duo is made up of Italian artists Andrea Pagnes, 48, and his wife, German artist Verena Stenke, 30. A professional nurse will be hired to take out

20ml of Pagnes' blood and pour it into glasses. He then uses his blood to write a poem on a white blanket, among other things. Stenke will pour milk and oil over herself, and

run and fall because of the slipperiness. Eventually Pagnes will approach her with the glasses of blood, and they will drink it together. Pagnes tells Life! over the telephone from Italy

that he is not using blood "for sensationalism". Instead, blood is the "purest part of me".

He adds: "Chemically speaking, the soul or our spirit resides in our blood. I'm not even using





In VestAndPage's untitled piece (above), Italian artists Andrea Pagnes and his wife Verena Stenke consume blood, and in For Loss, Jason Lim (far left) improvises some actions and Kawai Shiu (left) plays on a restored piano. PHOTOS: MĀTILDE SAMBO, TERRENCE LIM

FUTURE OF IMAGINATION

Where: Goodman Arts Centre, Block C, 01-08 When: Nov 16 to 20, 7,30pm till

words from my mouth or my mind, but using little

drops of my soul to say something.'

Award-winning local art collective Vertical Submarine, comprising Joshua Yang, 37, Justin Loke, 32, and Fiona Koh, 28, have challenged another local artist, Lim Tzay Chuen, to a fight, which, to all intents and purposes, looks serious.

Yang, the appointed spokesman for the group, says that this fight is to "settle a personal feud and a protracted aesthetic disagreement" with Lim, an artist who lives in Beijing.

Yang says: "We've always had a bone to pick with him and his projects. We've always wanted to have it out with him. The point of his projects is that he does nothing, and his work is considered a success."

Lim, 39, is a conceptual artist who is well known for being Singapore's representative in the 2005 Venice Biennale. His artwork was the documentation of his failed attempt to move the 70-tonne Merlion from Singapore's CBD to Ven-

Later in the same year, he did an exhibition of near-empty white walls in Earl Lu Gallery. In 2008, he did an untitled artwork at Singapore Management University which decreed that there should be no sale of Milo beverages cold or hot on

"The last straw", says Yang, was when he read about a new artwork Lim did in Beijing where he gave away a jar of Nutella sandwich spread to a bread and noodle shop.

"What was that?" Yang asks incredulously.

Appropriately, Vertical Submarine's challenge to a duel is called Chocolate For Blood.

Yang says he has e-mailed Lim to throw down the gauntlet but has not received a reply. E-mails from Life! also remained unanswered. The fighter who is representing Vertical Submarine is Singaporean artist Yang Jie, 27.

Yang says: "If he does nothing or is too chicken to show up, it's a walkover. This forces him to do something - for once."

He adds with a laugh: "We're not the only people who want to beat him up. We're doing the art community a favour." M chiahta@sph.com.sg

■ www.facebook.com/chiahta



▲ 23:59 (PG13) MAND (E/ CS) 11.30, 1.10, 3.30, 5.15, 7.30, 9.25pm

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FOOTLOOSE (PG13) E (CS)
10.00, 12.20, 2.40, 9.05pm
ONE DAY (NC16) E 2.15pm
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PARANORMAL ACTIVITY 3 (NC16) E (CS)
10.20, E. OODEM

New Da Vinci work

London - A landmark exhibition of paintings by Leonardo Da Vinci goes on show at London's National Gallery today, the first time so many of his masterpieces have been displayed together.

Among the nine paintings at Leonardo Da Vinci: Painter At The Court Of Milan is a newly revealed work, catalogued Christ As Salvator Mundi (Christ As Saviour Of The World) and show-

ing Christ's hand raised in blessing. Dated "about 1499 onwards" and attributed without any qualification to

Da Vinci (1452-1519), it was sold at auction in 1958 for £45 and is now estimated at US\$200 million (S\$253 million). Now owned by a US consortium of

art dealers, it was recently authenticated as the missing Da Vinci once owned by King Charles I and Charles II of England. It was known to exist due to documentation and a 1650 etching by printmaker Wenceslaus Hollar. Da Vinci's paintings are rare – he is

thought to have produced about 20 paintings but only 15 have survived. An addition to that number, accepted by the scholarly world, would be a once-in-a-century event.

So what, in the opinion of Luke Syson, curator of The National Gallery,

makes this an authentic Da Vinci? Ultimately, he said, the decision comes down to intuition.

"It really just feels right," he said, "powerful, extraordinary, looking like no one else. Christ has real presence – rather like the Mona Lisa or particularly akin to the Saint John The Baptist in the Louvre a combination of feeling

as if he's both really there and incredibly remote. And then there's an intensity of thought allied with painstaking craft, something unique to Leonardo."

The exhibition will also show two versions of Da Vinci's Virgin Of The Rocks, and three ground-breaking portraits - The Portrait Of A Musician, La Belle Ferronniere and The Lady With An Ermine. Most were loaned from European museums.

The show focuses on Da Vinci's formative years as a court painter in the 1480s and 1490s. There is also a full-scale contemporary copy of The Last Supper mural in Milan.

A gallery spokesman said it has sold an "unprecedented number" of advance tickets to the show, which runs till Feb 5. Five hundred tickets will be held back for sale each day.

Bloomberg, Agence France-Presse



