

OVERVIEW

Dr Sumugan Sivanesan is an anti-disciplinary artistic-researcher and writer. He completed a Doctorate of Creative Arts at the Transforming Cultures Research Centre, University of Technology Sydney in 2014. His research interests include: Contemporary Art and Activism, Critical Race Media Theory, Environmental Humanities, Queer Theory and Tamil Studies.

He is a current recipient of a twelve-month Kone Foundation grant (2019) to undertake research into migrant and indigenous media activism and music in Helsinki, in partnership with Pixelache. His project, *fugitive radio*, was selected for the Saari residence program, Finland, September 2021: www.fugitive-radio.net

In June 2016 he completed a six month residency at the Institute for English and American Studies (Cultural Studies), University of Potsdam supported by the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD, 2015) to research 'Urban Eco-politics of the Anthropocene': www.shadowofthefuture.org

Late in 2014 Sumugan undertook a two month residency with the Faculty of Arts, University of Peradeniya, funded by the Australia Council for the Arts Literature (2014) and Arts NSW (2014). Here he initiated a micro-publishing project, *Theoretically Tamil*: www.theoreticallytamil.net

In November 2018 he traveled to Brazil where he was selected via competitive application for the inaugural residency program of Procomum LABxSantos. For its theme: 'Arts, communities and aesthetics of the commons' he initiated a social laboratory/kitchen based around a series of plant-based meals, *Almoço Contra o Trabalho / Lunch Against Work*: www.blogagainstwork.org

SELECT EXHIBITIONS & EVENTS

Pixelache Helsinki Festival (2021), Mustarinda (Finland 2020), Tehai (Dhaka 2020), Frame Contemporary Art (Helsinki, 2019), The Floating University Berlin (2019), EX-EMBASSY (Berlin 2018), BE.BoP 2018: Black Europe Body Politics, Maxim Gorki Theatre (Berlin, 2018), Nida Art Colony Inter-format Symposium (Lithuania, 2018), Art Laboratory Berlin (2015), ZK/U Centre for Art & Urbanistics, Berlin (2015, 2014), Perth Institute of Contemporary Arts (2014), The Reading Room (Bangkok 2013), Performance Space (Sydney 2013), Yautepac Gallery (Mexico City 2011), OK Video (Jakarta 2009) and 4A Centre for Contemporary Asian Art (Sydney 2011, 2010). Sumugan was a member of the experimental documentary collective *theweathergroup_U* who formed for the Bienale of Sydney 2008. He was active with media/art gang *boat-people.org* who engaged Australian publics in issues of borders, race and nationalism between 2002 and 2014.

GRANTS

Sumugan has been awarded grants from: Kone Foundation, Finland (2020, 2019), CreateNSW 360 Visions Virtual Reality Initiative (Australia 2017), Australia Council for the Arts Literature (2014), Australia Council for the Arts Emerging & Experimental Arts (2013), Arts NSW (2014, 2010), National Association for Visual Arts (2015, 2013, 2012), Australia Council for the Arts Music Board (2008, 2005) among others.

PUBLICATIONS

SELECT ACADEMIC

'Movements of Minorities: AusLankans Struggle for Transnational Justice', (book chapter). In Kandasamy, N., Perera, N., Ratnam, C. (eds) *A Sense of Viidu: The (re)creation of 'home' by the Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora in Australia*, Palgrave Macmillan, 2020.

'Alex & I: The Afterlife of Images.' *PARSE*, Spring 2020.
<https://parsejournal.com/article/alex-i/>

'Alex & I: Narrative and Network Resistance.' *Social Identities*, August 2018.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/13504630.2018.1514161>

'Plan Bienen: Sharing (in) The More-Than-Human City', (with Tessa Zettel) *A Peer Review Journal About: Excessive Research*, vol. 5, iss. 1, February 2016. http://www.aprja.net/?page_id=2804

SELECT ARTS & CULTURE

'The T. Rudzinskaitė Memorial Amateur Lichenologists Society Goes Platinum: 70 Years of Lichen Love.' In: Wiffen, D. (ed) *Litmus Magazine, no. 5, The Lichen Issue*, 2021.

'The T. Rudzinskaitė Memorial Amateur Lichenologists Society Bulletin, Summer 2086.' In: Michelkevicius, V. (ed) *Nida Art Colony. On Lines & Rituals*, 2019.

SELECT ARTWORKS

- 2021 *fugitive radio @ Pixelache Helsinki Festival: #BURN_____2021*
live performance-radio
www.fugitive-radio.net
- For each day of the the eight-day festival, fugitive radio broadcast live from Oodi central library, employing a number of collaborative performance strategies including: vox pop, interviews, collective networked performance, karaoke and environmental percussion. Curators: Andrew Gryf Paterson & Laura Gustafsson.
- 2020 *fugitive radio: radio wok Helsinki*
with Irina Mutt & Suva Das
Hybrid platform performance
www.fugitive-radio.net
- A live 'radio fanzine' for *nepantlas#4*, Akademie Schloss Solitude and broadcast on {openradio}. Curator: Daphne Dragona
- The T. Rudzinskaitė Memorial Amateur Lichenologists Society, Lichen Fest Revival 2088*
with Tessa Zettel
Hybrid radio play & guided meditation
www.welikelichen.space
- Commissioned for Mustarinda's ten year anniversary and *Lichen Fest*.
- 2019 *K2K2K2...Commuter Salon & Speakeasy*
with Irina Mutt
Performance & public interventions
<https://frame-finland.fi/en/ohjelma/rehearsing-hospitalities/>
- Commissioned for FRAME Finland's Autumn gathering, *Rehearsing Hospitalities*. As newcomers to Helsinki, our salon & speakeasy inverted relations between host and guest. Hand massages, manicures and palm readings are a means to initiate contact, intimacy and queer modes of care among strangers commuting between different venues. Curators: Jussi Koitela & Yvonne Billimore.
- 2018 *Lunch Against Work: Almoço Contra o Trabalho*
with Diego Andrade
Social kitchen, publications & street actions
www.blogagainstwork.life
- An artistic-infrastructureal research project organised around a series of plant-based meals. The project investigated in the overlap of plant knowledges, experimental cooking, poverty and commoning cultures. Procomum LABxSantos, Brazil. Director: Georgia Nicolau.
- Ex-Pat Cash*
with Carl Gerber & Simone van Dijken
Dialectical tennis match & musical game
www.ex-embassy.co
- An absurdist musical game played in near 40°C heat on the landmark tennis courts of the former Australian Embassy to the German Democratic Republic, Berlin. For the program *EX-EMBASSY* Curators: Sonja Hornung & Rachel O'Reilly.
- The 2086 T. Rudzinskaitė Memorial Amateur Lichenologists Society Annual Field Trip and Picnic*
with Tessa Zettel
Performative picnic
www.welikelichen.space
- An SF-storytelling-picnic foregrounding the work of 'Lithuania's only female amateur lichenologist', Teklė Rudzinskaitė on the biocultural landscape of the Curonian Spit. Nida Art Colony's Inter-format Symposium *On Rites & Terrabytes*. Curators: Vytautas Michelkevicius & Andrew Gryf Paterson.
- 2017 *Alex & I: Moving Pictures*
Video essay (12:21 mins)
www.vimeo.com/184811567
- A video essay discussing the circulation of images of Tamil refugee and media figure, Sanjeev 'Alex' Kuhendrarajah included in *SAVAC: Monitor 12: Figures Pointing Outside the Frame*, Images Festival Toronto. Curators: Oliver Husain, Otty Widasari and Yuki Aditya; *Strangeness, Betweenness, and the Cosmopolitan Imagination*, Royal Holloway, University of London. Curator: Laura McLean.
- 2015 *Plan Bienen: Statements of Profit and Loss / Rates of Exchange, a discursive Sonntagsbrunch*
with Tessa Zettel
Exhibition & event
- An exhibition of research materials and limited edition risograph-printed *notgeld* (emergency money) documenting non-monetary exchanges between local bees, beekeepers and community members. The exhibition concluded with a discursive meal and collective mapping event. Art Laboratory Berlin. Directors: Regine Rapp & Christian de Lutz.
- 2014 *Plan Bienen*
with Tessa Zettel
Research residency & honey exchange network
www.planbienen.net
- A three month research residency investigating the renewed interest in urban beekeeping in Berlin, with reference to the dual crises of disappearing bees (Colony Collapse Disorder) and financial collapse. The project developed as a non-monetary exchange network in which participants traded their time, goods and labour in exchange for raw local honey.

SELECT CONFERENCE PAPERS

- 2021 **'Hello World!' Satellite Launch and inaugural Space-Lichen Transmission.**
The T. Rudzinskaitė Memorial Amateur Lichenologists Society inaugural satellite transmission, as part of its Metta Verse Mutual Aid Space Program. *Strange/Letters*, Association for the Study of Literature, Environment and Culture, February (online).
- 2019 **The T. Rudzinskaitė Memorial Amateur Lichenologists Society Annual Convention 2017**
Society co-convenors Tessa Zettel and Dr. Sumugan Sivanesan delivered the official Opening Address of the Society's Annual Convention. Due to some confusion in the venue was double booked by the Centre for Intermedial and Multimodal Studies. *'Multispecies Storytelling in Intermedial Practices'* Linnaeus University, Sweden, January.
- 2017 **Alex & I: Profiling**
In recent years refugees have been required to submit iris scans to the UNHCR as part of their biometric identification procedures. This paper discusses the vulnerabilities of the refugee as a 'data body' across a range of digital archives. *OverFlow*, Performance Studies international #23, University of Hamburg, June; *Digital Media on Site: Infrastructures, Mobilities, and Practices across Asia and Beyond*, Lingnan University, Hong Kong.
- 2016 **Alex & I: Rhetoric and Reception**
A critical reflection on my use of photo-media and portraiture in my ongoing artist-research collaboration with the refugee and media figure, Sanjeev 'Alex' Kuhendrarajah. *War and Visual Technologies*, convened by Professor Suvendrini Perera, School of Media, Culture and Creative Arts, Curtin University, September.
- Choreography of Disobedience**
A discussion and preliminary critique of the art-activism of *Climate Games* held during the United Nations COP21, Paris 2015. *Performance Climates*, Performance Studies international #22, University of Melbourne, July.
- Mass Action Media**
A discussion of the use of media and aesthetics by popular German anti-coal movement, *Ende Gelände*. *Pluralising Practices*, Institute for Visual Art and Cultures, University for Art and Design Linz, June.
- Plan Bienen: Sharing (in) the more-than-human city**
Part of a rolling panel of overlapping papers gathered around the topic 'excessive research.' *Transmediale: conversationpiece*, House of World Cultures, Berlin, February.
- 2015 **Disappearing Humans**
Responded to the notion of 'Neolife' as a change in human consciousness due to climate change, the Anthropocene geological proposition and the rapid loss of biodiversity marking the current period of the Sixth Great Extinction. *Neolife*, Society of Literature Science and the Arts, University of Western Australia, October.
- Disappearing Bees (with Tessa Zettel)**
A performative conference paper and ficto-critical text that speculates on the mass disappearance of honey bees as a political act. It is an outcome of the research project *Plan Bienen*. *Aesthetics After Finitude*, National Institute of Experimental Art, University of New South Wales.
- 2013–2014 **Alex & I: Moving Pictures**
A critical reflection on the narratives describing the Tamil refugee Sanjeev 'Alex' Kuhendrarajah in the news media, in social media and in his applications for re-settlement. *Postcolonial Justice*, University of Potsdam. *In Many Worlds: Kudi/Kudiyurimai, Citizenship & Belonging*. Tamil Studies Conference, University of Toronto; *Indian Ocean Futures*, Curtin University, Australia