

OVERVIEW

Dr Sumugan Sivanesan is an artist, researcher and writer whose interests span music, media arts, minority politics and more-than-human rights. He earned a Doctorate from the Transforming Cultures research centre, University of Technology Sydney in 2014. In 2016 he was a post-Doctorate Research Fellow 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.” He participated in the Jan van Eyck Post-Academie, Maastricht, 2022–23.

Over 2020–21 Sumugan was a recipient of a Kone Foundation fellowship to pursue artistic research into migrant media activism and music in Helsinki, in partnership with (not only) media-arts association Pixelache. His project, *fugitive radio*, was selected for the Saari International Artist Residence programme, Finland, September–October 2021. He was the Australia Council for the Arts resident at Helsinki International Artist Programme (February–May 2022), where he continued to develop *fugitive radio*’s modes of “performance–radio”. *fugitive radio* participated in documenta fifteen (2022), curated by Jakarta-based collective ruangrupa. Over October and November 2022, *fugitive radio* embarked on *radio em fuga*, a series of residencies in Brazil during the presidential elections. Here Sumugan worked with community/urban research initiatives Lanchonete.org (São Paulo) and Instituto Procomum (Santos), and undertook a production residency at Residência São João (Rio de Janeiro) funded by Creative Australia. Sumugan continued to develop *fugitive radio* as a fellow at the Jan van Eyck Academie, 2022–23. <http://fugitive-radio.net>

Between 1 April to 30 June 2024, Sumugan was a Community & Education resident at Singapore Art Museum, SAM Residencies. Here he initiated the *Bureau of Race Neutrality*, a collaborative inquiry into colonial legacies, legislation and migrant activism in Singapore. At SAM he hosted meals, published pamphlets and podcasts and developed and performed a sound piece based on spaces where migrant workers gather. <https://sivanesan.net/bureau/>

In February 2024, Sumugan co-hosted a ten-day intensive music production “bootcamp”, *Dham Dham Riddim* at DreamSpace Academy, Batticaloa, Sri Lanka. Working in collaboration with artist Lucinda Dayhew and with support from Goethe-Institut, they developed a program that progressed from recording sounds in the environment to producing an original song. The results were released as a mini-album in August. <https://dreamspacerecords.bandcamp.com/album/dham-dham-riddim>

With the artist and writer Tessa Zettel he co-founded *The T. Rudzinskaitė Memorial Amateur Lichenologists Society* during a two month residency at the Nida Art Colony to develop a work for its 2018 Inter-format Symposium “On Rites and Terrabytes.” Its activities have since grown to encompass myriad curious forms of multispecies research, happening, performances and publications. <http://www.welikelichen.space/>

SELECT EXHIBITIONS & EVENTS

Singapore Art Museum (2024), Pixelache Helsinki Festival (2023, 2021), documenta fifteen (Kassel, 2022), Helsinki International Artist Programme (2022), Mustarinda (Finland 2020), Tehai (Dhaka, Bangladesh 2020), Frame Contemporary Art (Helsinki, 2019), The Floating Berlin (2021, 2019), EX-EMBASSY (Berlin 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 (2024, 2015, 2014), Perth Institute of Contemporary Arts (2014). The Reading Room (Bangkok 2013), Performance Space (Sydney 2013), Yau-tepec Gallery (Mexico City 2011), OK Video (Jakarta 2009), 4A Centre for Contemporary Asian Art (Sydney 2011, 2010) among others.

PUBLICATIONS**SELECT ARTS & ACADEMIC**

“Radios Appear (In Contemporary Art)”, in *WAVES: Radio as Collective Imagination*, lumbung radio & MISS READ (eds), MISS READ, Berlin 2024.

“Karaoke Theory/Karaoke Therapy”, *Acta Academiae Artium Vilnensis (AAAV) Journal*, No. 109, September 2023. <https://aaav.vda.lt/journal/issue/view/aaav109>

“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, with Tessa Zettel.

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

Sumugan’s journalism and cultural criticism are collected at: <http://www.slowtheory.org/>

SELECT ART PROJECTS

- 2024 *Bureau of Race Neutrality, Singapore*
<https://sivanesan.net/bureau/>
- On 1 June 2024, the Bureau opened its doors to the public for SAM Residencies Open Studios. Offering bowls of rojak ice cream, it sought to “break the ice” with visitors to discuss Singapore’s state-enforced racial categories.
- 2023 *fugitive feminist empathics*
 with Anastasia Diavasti
 live performance-radio
<https://www.onassis.org/whats-on/onassis-air-open-day-6>
- A live broadcast event with Anastasia Diavasti, founder of the feminist platform, NTIZEZA, showcasing collaborative research undertaken during a month-long residency at Onassis AiR, Athens. Curators: Nefeli Myrodia and Marina Troupi.
- NightShift*
 with Rose Nordin and Chen Jehn
<https://fugitive-radio.net/category/events/nightshift/>
- An all night publishing-performance-happening at independent art book store Limestone Book, Maastricht and made in collaboration with Rose Nordin. Streamed live for six hours straight on π node and {openradio}.
- 2022 *fugitive radio, documenta fifteen, lumbung radio*
 podcasts and live performance-radio
<https://lumbungradio.org/>
- Programmed by Station of Commons, *lumbung radio* followed *fugitive radio* as it travels from Kassel to Sri Lanka, Malaysia and Australia before returning to *documenta fifteen* for a special live broadcast event. Curators: ruangrupa
- 2021 *Was Ist Zu Tune?*
 songwriting live-art market installation
<https://solo-solo.eu/solo-markt/>
- The proposition is that everyone has a song inside them and I will help them get it out. A performative workshop for the programme *SOLO Markt* held in several local markets in Berlin. Curators: Johanna Landscheit and Lola Göller.
- fugitive radio, Pixelache Helsinki Festival #BURN___2021*
 live performance-radio
www.fugitive-radio.net
- For eight consecutive days *fugitive radio* broadcast live from Oodi central library. Curators: Andrew Gryf Paterson and Laura Gustafsson.
- The T. Rudzinskaitė Memorial Amateur Lichenologists Society: “Hello World!” Satellite Launch and inaugural Space-Lichen Transmission.*
 with Tessa Zettel
 live hybrid platform performance
www.welikelichen.space
- The Society’s inaugural satellite transmission for its Metta Verse Mutual Aid Space Program at *Strange/Letters*, Association for the Study of Literature, Environment and Culture, 4 February (online).
- 2020 *fugitive radio: Radio Wok Helsinki*
 with Irina Mutt, Suva Das and Sophea Lerner.
 live hybrid platform performance
www.fugitive-radio.net
- A live “radio fanzine” comprised of migrant experiences in Finland. Made for *Nepantlas: Infrastructures for World-building #4*, Akademie Schloss Solitude and broadcast on {openradio}. Curator: Daphne Dragona
- The T. Rudzinskaitė Memorial Amateur Lichenologists Society: 2088 Lichen Fest Revival*
 with Tessa Zettel
 hybrid radio play and guided meditation
www.welikelichen.space
- Commissioned for the tenth anniversary and *Lichen Fest* of Mustarinda, an experimental arts and science research association located on the edge of the old growth Paljakka Nature Reserve, Finland.
- Poethics & Publishing: a writing collective*
 writing and performance workshop.
- A workshop organised “behind closed doors” amongst the queer community of Dhaka, Bangladesh. Through writing, drawing and discussion we shared experiences and stories that developed into a puppet show. Images and texts were shared amongst networks as a digital zine.
- 2019 *K2K2K2...Commuter Salon & Speakeasy*
 with Irina Mutt
 performance & public interventions
<https://frame-finland.fi/en/ohjelma/rehearsing-hospitalities/>
- Commissioned for Frame Contemporary Art Finland’s *Autumn Gathering for Rehearsing Hospitalities*. Offering 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 and street actions
- An urban artistic-research project organised around a series of plant-based meals. Procomum LABxSantos, Brazil.
 Director: Georgina Nicolau.

SELECT RESIDENCIES AND WORKSHOPS

2024	Saari Residence, Hietamäki, Finland with Tessa Zettel and Aliisa Talja.	A four week residency initiating <i>The T. Rudzinskaitė Memorial Amateur Lichenologists Society Therolin-guistics Reading Group</i> .
	Singapore Art Museum, SAM Residencies.	A three month Community & Education research residency, initiating the <i>Bureau of Race Neutrality</i> .
2023	Onassis AiR Tailor Made Support, Greece with Anastasia Diavast	A month long residency to initiate a collaborative research process and broadcasting practice.
	Jan van Eyck Post-Academie, Maastricht, Netherlands (2022-23).	An eleven month multidisciplinary research residen-cy to develop <i>fugitive radio</i> via a series of experi-mental live events and workshops.
2022	Constant: Techno-Cul-de-Sac, Brussels Belgium.	A week long intensive work session concerned with the infrastructural and governmental capacities of networks in Brussels, using radio as a mode of investigation.
	<i>fugitive radio: radio em fuga em brasil</i> , Lan-chonete.org, São Paulo; Instituto Procomum, Santos; Residência São João, Rio de Janeiro.	A series of self-organised residencies that co-incident with the Brazilian presidential elections. Outcomes included a community radio festival, <i>Rádio Santos Dumont</i> , workshops, podcasts and digital music.
	Digital Naturalism Conference (Dinacon) 3, DreamSpace Academy, Batticaloa, Sri Lanka.	Month long “unconference” gathering biologists, technologists, artists and designers from around the world. Hosted by grassroots social enterprise and peace-building organisation, DreamSpace Acad-emy.
	Helsinki International Artist Programme (HIAP).	Three month studio residency awarded by the Creative Australia. Here I developed live broadcast events for <i>fugitive radio</i> including a “silent disco/ online club and karaoke therapy clinic.
	Saari Residence, Hietamäki, Finland.	Two month residency to archive and prepare papers and publications for my Kone Foundation funded project <i>fugitive radio</i> : www.fugitive-radio.net .
2021	Constant: Alchorisma, Z33 House for Con-temporary Art, Design and Architecture, Has-selt, Belgium.	Week long worksession about integrating cosmoge-netic views with the charisma surrounding technol-ogy. Led by the artist-run experimental media art organisation Constant.
	Instituto Procomum LabXSantos, Brazil.	Month long residency where I initiated <i>Lunch Against Work: Almoço Contra o Trabalho</i> , a social kitchen and laboratory for exchanging knowledge about plants, poverty, foraging and food systems.
2018	Nida Art Colony Residency and Inter-format Symposium: ‘On Rites and Terrabytes’ with Tessa Zettel.	Two month residency in the build up to the Colo-ny’s annual inter-format symposium for which we founded <i>The T. Rudzinskaitė Memorial Amateur Lichenologists Society</i> .
2017	Closer: Interactive, Simultaneous, Multi-user VR Experiences, School of Machines, Making and Make-Believe, Berlin.	Four week, full-time program approaching Virtual Reality as a creative platform to address social issues and new forms of social engagement.
	Arts / Politics / Action, ART + CLIMATE = CHANGE, Festival, Melbourne.	Week long symposium on the intersection of contemporary art and activism organised by A Centre for Everything and CLIMARTE.

SELECT CONFERENCE PAPERS

2024	<p>Doubling down in Berlin: A Citizens' Political Science Social Club Opening panel presentation</p>	<p><i>this & that</i>, Institute for History and Theory of Architecture and the City (GTAS) TU Braunschweig.</p>
2022	<p>Disordering Humans A visual lecture concerned with different genres of human and practices of worlding that trouble the notion of the anthropocene.</p>	<p><i>After Tomorrow</i>, Bremen Theatre, <i>Critical Un-inhabitations</i>, University of Rostock, Cultural Studies.</p>
2021	<p>"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.</p>	<p><i>Strange/Letters</i>, Association for the Study of Literature, Environment and Culture, February (online).</p>
2019	<p>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.</p>	<p><i>Multispecies Storytelling in Intermedial Practices</i> Linnaeus University, Sweden, January.</p>
2017	<p>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.</p>	<p><i>Overflow</i>, Performance Studies international #23, University of Hamburg, June; <i>Digital Media on Site: Infrastructures, Mobilities, and Practices across Asia and Beyond</i>, Lingnan University, Hong Kong.</p>
2016	<p>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.</p> <p>Choreography of Disobedience A discussion and preliminary critique of the art-activism of <i>Climate Games</i> held during the United Nations COP21, Paris 2015.</p> <p>Mass Action Media A discussion of the use of media and aesthetics by popular German anti-coal movement, <i>Ende Gelände</i>.</p> <p>Plan Bienen: Sharing (in) the more-than-human city Part of a rolling panel of overlapping papers gathered around the topic 'excessive research.'</p>	<p><i>War and Visual Technologies</i>, convened by Professor Suvendrini Perera, School of Media, Culture and Creative Arts, Curtin University, September.</p> <p><i>Performance Climates</i>, Performance Studies international #22, University of Melbourne, July.</p> <p><i>Pluralising Practices</i>, Institute for Visual Art and Cultures, University for Art and Design Linz, June.</p> <p><i>Transmediale: conversationpiece</i>, House of World Cultures, Berlin, February.</p>
2015	<p>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.</p>	<p><i>Neolife</i>, Society of Literature Science and the Arts, University of Western Australia, October.</p>