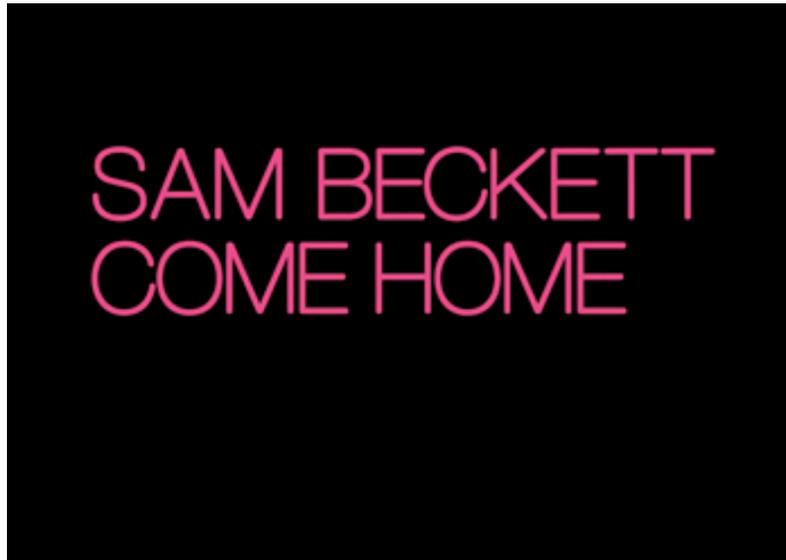


ART IN GENERAL

79 WALKER STREET | NEW YORK, NY 10013-3523 | TEL 212-219-0473 | FAX 212-219-0511 | WWW.ARTINGENERAL.ORG



Heman Chong, *Common People and Other Stories*, 2007.

For Immediate Release

Heman Chong

Common People and Other Stories

April 21-June 30, 2007

Opening Reception Saturday, April 21 6-8 p.m.

New York, NY (March 28, 2007) For his residency at Art in General, **Heman Chong** will create ***Common People and Other Stories***, a new project inspired by *Quantum Leap*, a short-lived American science-fiction television program about an imaginary physics experiment gone awry and its consequent ethical dilemmas. The name of the TV show's protagonist, Dr. Sam Beckett, is a thinly veiled allusion to the Irish playwright known for his pessimistic outlook on the human condition. In what has now become a television cult classic, Sam travels through time, randomly "leaping," or "Swiss-cheesing" into the bodies of other people (including men, women, and once, a chimpanzee), attempting to prevent history-altering catastrophes all the while trying to make his way back to his own place and time.

Heman takes the stories of Sam's travels and expands them by bringing them into the context of Art in General's ground-floor Project Space, which he will use as a studio as well as a venue where visitors may see the ongoing development of his new work. There, Heman plans to explore the often humorous narratives and serious moral underpinnings of *Quantum Leap*, which aired on NBC from 1989 until 1993 but remains an active fixation for many. He also explores the aspects of the TV show that have caused it to become an underground craze as it touched on a range of gripping themes such as the order of the universe, family drama, nostalgia, coincidence and a seemingly sentient supercomputer named Ziggy. *Common People and Other Stories* also stems from Heman's broad research on literary and visual representations in science-fiction literature and film.

Art in General has also commissioned Heman to create a world map, which will be published in the spring edition of *INSIDE*, Art in General's periodic publication announcing and elaborating on its programs. Far from a traditional map that outlines topographies and territories, Heman's contribution is a diagrammatic chart of the years and places Sam Beckett visited in his time travels.

A public program will also be scheduled near the beginning of Heman's residency. This will provide a broader context for *Common People and Other Stories* by showcasing a book published in conjunction with Heman's recent exhibition *The Sole Proprietor and Other Stories* (2007), at **Vitamin Creative Space** in Guangzhou, China. Edited by **Melissa Lim** and published by Vitamin Creative Space, it includes nine commissioned texts about thought experiments, social conditions in the Third World, world religions, magic and other assorted nightmares. The contributors include **Cosmin Costinas** (contributing editor, European and US sector, *Documenta 12 Magazine*), **Astrid Mania** (freelance curator and writer for *ArtAsiaPacific*, Berlin), **Joselina Cruz** (curator, Singapore Art Museum), **Rodney LaTourelle** (art writer, Winnipeg and Berlin), **Leif Magne Tangen** (art journalist, Leipzig and Oslo), **Binna Choi** (curator, BAK, Utrecht, The Netherlands), **Hu Fang** (novelist and gallerist, Vitamin Creative Space, Guangzhou, China) and **Russell Storer** (curator, Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney).

Heman Chong was born in 1977. He graduated from Temasek Polytechnic in Singapore with a diploma in visual communication, and received his master's degree in art in communication and design at the Royal College of Art in London. Heman came to public notice with the exhibition of his video installation *Molotov Cocktails* at the Singapore Art Museum (2000). This work subsequently represented Singapore at the 10th India Triennale (2001) and was awarded the Triennale Prize. In 2003, Heman was given a one-year grant by the National Arts Council to participate in the International Studio Programme at the Künstlerhaus Bethanien in Berlin. In the same year, he was also selected for the President's Young Talents exhibition held at the Singapore Art Museum. Between 2003 and 2004, Heman was invited to show his work at various international exhibitions, including the 50th Venice Biennale (2003) and the 5th Busan Biennale (2004). Heman has also produced artworks for the Hamburger Bahnhof in Berlin (*The Social Seduction*, 2003), the Kröller-Müller Museum in the Netherlands (*God Bless Diana*, 2004) and Rhizome.org in New York (*Real Estate*, 2005). In addition to more than 50 group exhibitions, Heman's curatorial project *Old Habits Die Hard* (2003) has been presented around the world, in venues including The Museum of Contemporary Art in Sydney, the Norwich Gallery in the UK and Kunstneres Hus in Oslo. In Singapore, Heman has been active as an associate artist at The Substation, where he has had two solo exhibitions, *The End of Traveling* (2002) and *Snore Louder if You Can* (2004). In line with the multidisciplinary nature of his work, Heman has collaborated with talents including the poet/playwright Alfian Sa'at (*Geograffiti*, 1999), theater director Ong Ken Sen (*The Global Soul*, 2003) and Yoko Ono (*Water Event*, 2005). He currently works as an artist and curator in Singapore and Berlin (www.hemanchong.com).

About Art in General

Founded in 1981 in Lower Manhattan, Art in General is a nonprofit organization that assists artists with the production and presentation of new work. It changes in response to the needs of artists with the mission of informing and engaging the public about their work. In 25 years, Art in General has emerged as one of New York City's leading nonprofits devoted to supporting and stimulating the creation of contemporary art, providing an environment in which artists can exhibit unconventional work and exchange ideas with their peers. Art in General has exhibited the work of nearly 5,000 artists working across a wide range of media. Heman Chong's residency is supported in part by an award from the National Endowment for the Arts. Additional support has been provided by the National Arts Council in Singapore.

General support of Art in General is provided by General Tools Manufacturing LLC; the Lower Manhattan Development Corporation; the Abraham and Lillian Rosenberg Foundation; Seymour and Dorothy Weinstein Foundation; Starry Night Fund of Tides Foundation; New York State Council on the Arts, a state agency; Carnegie Corporation of New York; Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts; JPMorgan Chase Foundation; Miller-Sweezy Charitable Trust; Altria Group, Inc.; Bloomberg LP; The Greenwich Collection Ltd.; the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs; The Cowles Charitable Trust; Foundation for Contemporary Arts; Edward and Marjorie Goldberger Foundation; Materials for the Arts; and by individuals.



ART IN GENERAL 79 Walker Street | New York, NY 10013 |
Tel 212-219-0473 | www.artingeneral.org | info@artingeneral.org
Media Contact | press@artingeneral.org