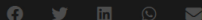


The Arts Writers Series: Kim Tay from The Artling

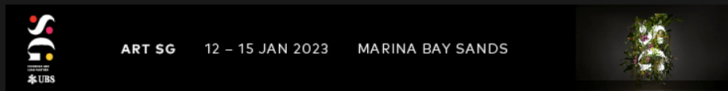


Plural Art Mag's series on the behind-the-scenes of arts writers' lives continues with our conversation with Kim Tay. Tay is a long-standing founding member and Gallery Director of The Artling, an online gallery, art consulting firm, and web magazine.

These days, we can find Tay managing The Artling's online platform; working with artists, designers, and galleries; leading consultancy projects; as well as sourcing and commissioning artworks for private and corporate clients.

Over the years, she has worn many hats and managed to balance her career as a writer, curator, and co-founder of design studio Nendo. Wearing many hats, she remains an example of how figures in the art world have to manage their time effectively to contribute to the scene.

Tay's expertise also lies in art collecting, the regional art scene, and the intersection between art and technology. She has spoken on these topics at various conferences, such as the Art World Forum in Singapore, and on panels for Hermès and The Art Week Conversations in Singapore.



What does your typical day look like? Do you have a routine?

My morning usually starts with e-mails, reviewing all the latest submissions to the website and taking a look at any new uploads. In the afternoon, I then try to focus on consultancy projects and sourcing artworks for private and corporate clients. I've found that segmenting my day in this way allows me to be more efficient and dive deeper into any tasks.



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Some of Tay's clients for consulting projects included the hotel Mondrian Singapore Duxton. Image credit: Mondrian Singapore Duxton.

You joined The Artling in 2014 upon returning to Singapore after spending several years in the United States and Russia. What compelled you to come back to Singapore?

Singapore has always been home, but I had never spent a prolonged period of time here outside of some school years. It was a bit of a culture shock coming back, but the timing ended up being for the best. I came back when the Southeast Asian art scene was growing in prominence and since then, I've had opportunities to work with so many fantastic artists and galleries.



Palms (2019) by Cássio Vasconcellos was another work that Tay placed as part of her consultancy work. Image courtesy of Patina Maldives & Georg Roske.

As the manager of The Artling's online platform, you have many different roles that include working with artists, designers, and galleries. What is your favourite part of the job?

Definitely being able to place artists' works directly in physical spaces! The online platform offers increased exposure, but the best thing that we can do is to help artists and galleries continue to survive by making sales, whether it is directly through the website or our offline projects.



With these sales, a network effect naturally builds as their works are then seen in physical spaces all over the world.



One such project Tay was involved in included placing Hongjie Yang's *Synthesis-Monoliths* (2020) in the Maldives. Image credit: Patina-Maldives, Georg-Roske.

The Artling has an incredibly engaging Artzine. What relationship do you have with your writers at the magazine?

We have in-house writers as well as freelancers that we work with to create the content on our Artzine. I work closely with each of them to make sure that the messaging and writing style suits our readership and branding.

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Do you prefer writers to pitch you ideas or to assign them stories to research?

There's only so much one can keep track of in the art world and there's always something new happening. I love when writers bring content ideas that I hadn't thought of or known before, but sometimes it also helps when we are able to structure the piece before pitching it to the writer to ensure it's aligned with the message we want to achieve.

What do you like the most about the writing team at The Artling and what sets them apart?

We work with a relatively young team, so it's great to be up to date on the latest trends within the art and design scenes.

In what direction will The Artling's editorial content expand in the following years?

We'd like to continue to engage novice collectors with content that guides them along every step of their art-buying journey.

There is a lot of cross-collecting that already happens with more seasoned collectors, but we would also like to elevate the field of collectable design to make it more understandable and accessible to new collectors as well.



Image credit: Amelia Bartlett on Unsplash.

How do you judge a great piece of writing for the Artzine?

For our target audience, the best content writing is direct and to the point – providing the most information within a succinct article. We want to be able to share about artists, galleries, exhibitions, and events without making them seem too esoteric or unapproachable to a new collector.

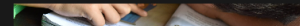
What are your go-to media for the latest news about the art world?

Instagram! I can keep track of all the major art news outlets (Art Newspaper, Artnet, etc.), follow art critics, and discover new artists all on one platform.

To wrap up, what are the things you are most grateful for in your life today, beyond work?

Ultimately, it still relates back to work! We spend most of our week at work, and I am incredibly grateful to have a job that continues to challenge me every day, while still being fun and inspiring.

Feature Image Credit: Lavender Chang



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