

PRESS RELEASE EMBARGOED UNTIL MAY 1, 2015

## CAMBODIAN-BASED ARTIST ANIDA YOEU ALI AWARDED THE 2014-15 SOVEREIGN ASIAN ART PRIZE

**HONG KONG, April 2015** The Sovereign Art Foundation is pleased to announce that artist Anida Yoeu Ali, of Cambodia, has won the 11th Sovereign Asian Art Prize. The prize is Asia's longest established and most prestigious prize for the arts and the winner receives not only the respected title but also a trophy and US\$30,000.

The winning artwork, *Spiral Alley*, is one of a series of photographic prints from Anida's interdisciplinary ongoing work, *The Buddhist Bug*, and the piece was nominated into the Prize by Kate Cary Evans – founder and editor-in-chief of Art Radar Asia and former nominator for the Sovereign Asian Art Prize. Kate has been studying, writing and lecturing about contemporary art for almost thirty years, and is well respected within her field for her contributions. In *The Buddhist Bug*, the creature seeks to map a new spiritual and social landscape through its surreal existence amongst ordinary people and everyday environments. Rooted in an autobiographical exploration of identity, the Bug comes from the artist's own spiritual turmoil between Islam and Buddhism. Set amongst everyday people in ordinary moments, the Bug provokes obvious questions of belonging and displacement. In this particular piece, The Bug finds a staircase perfectly fit for her voluminous body. Could she finally be home?

Anida Yoeu Ali is a first generation Muslim Khmer woman born in Cambodia and raised in Chicago. She is an artist whose works span performance, installation, video, images, public encounters, and political agitation. Utilizing an interdisciplinary approach to art making, her installation and performance works investigate the artistic, spiritual and political collisions of a hybrid transnational identity. Anida's artistic work has been the recipient of grants from the Rockefeller Foundation, Ford Foundation, and Center for Asian American Media. She is a founding collaborative partner of Studio Revolt, an independent artist run media lab in Phnom Penh, Cambodia.

*Spiral Alley* was selected by judging panel comprising of world-class art professionals, who each travelled to Hong Kong to view the finalists' exhibition and decide on a winner.

The prize judges were:

- Mr David Elliott, art writer and curator
- Ms Emi Eu, Director of Singapore Tyler Print Institute, Singapore
- Mr Fumio Nanjo, Director of Mori Art Museum, Tokyo
- Ms Rachel Kent, Chief Curator of Australia's Museum of Contemporary Art
- Dr Pi Li, Senior Curator of M+ Visual Culture Museum, Hong Kong
- Ms Sunhee Kim, Director of the Daegu Art Museum, Korea
- Ms Cissy Pao

The 30 finalists' artworks were chosen from a total of 236 independently nominated artists across 13 countries in the Asia Pacific region, from Australia, to Singapore, Pakistan and Dubai. For the first time in the history of the Prize, sculpture was accepted for entry - an exciting development and further testament to the Prize's constant growth since its establishment in 2003.



**Executive Directors:**  
Howard Bilton (Chairman)  
Tiffany Pinkstone (Managing Director)

**Non-executive Directors:**  
Savita Apte  
Georgie Bruce  
Nichole Garnaut  
Levina Li  
Angela Mckay  
Robert Morse  
Peter Siembab  
Vanessa Webb  
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Anida was overjoyed and deeply honoured to receive the award, and said,

*"I am deeply humbled to receive the Sovereign Asian Art Prize. I hope that my win will motivate and inspire other artists to keep pursuing contemporary artmaking and performance art no matter how difficult. I can't help but reflect on this moment in particular for Cambodians, on the 40th year commemoration of the genocide where 90% of Cambodian artists lost their lives along with nearly 2 million people. I am proud to be part of the returning diaspora of Cambodians who are passionately rebuilding our legacy through the arts. I am committed to creating original and thought provoking works of art. This moment is deeply meaningful."*

Howard Bilton, Chairman and founder of The Sovereign Art Foundation, said of the shortlisted artworks,

*"Once again the judges have been extremely pleased with the quality of works entered and this has been reflected by the high scores they have given. This year the majority of funds will be applied towards our Make it Better program, which focuses on assisting local disadvantaged children. In one of the richest cities in the world we continue to be surprised to find that there is such an obvious and substantial need to assist children who are bereft and impoverished. We hope that our generous supporters will share our belief that it is wholly wrong to turn a blind eye to this huge wealth gap on our doorsteps, and we hope that you will, once again, help us make it better by bidding generously at our dinner on May 8."*

The Schoeni Public Prize Winner will also be announced at the Gala Dinner, and will receive a trophy and US\$1,000. To vote for your favourite artwork today simply go to <http://www.sovereignartfoundation.com/art-prizes/asia/gallery/?year=2014&page=2> and cast your vote.

The Foundation currently supports programmes in Cambodia, Vietnam, Mongolia, Nepal, Sri Lanka and since 2013 has run its own *Make It Better* project in Hong Kong, working specifically with children living in the sub-divided homes of Sham Shui Po.

- Ends -

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## Notes to Editors

### About The Sovereign Art Foundation (SAF)

SAF is a charity established in 2003 in Hong Kong. It now has operations in the UK and South Africa. SAF runs the annual Sovereign Asian Art Prize which raises money to help disadvantaged children. Since its inception, SAF has raised over US\$4.5 million for charities worldwide. SAF funds projects using art as education, rehabilitation and therapy for disadvantaged children. The Prize is now in its tenth year and is the biggest and most prestigious arts prize in the Asia region.

SAF has also run two annual School's prizes in Hong Kong and recently established its first School's Prize in Bahrain.

[www.sovereignartfoundation.com](http://www.sovereignartfoundation.com)

### About Sovereign

Sovereign's core business is setting up and managing companies, trusts, pensions, insurance and other structures to meet the specific personal or business needs of its clients. Typically these needs would include tax planning, wealth protection, property ownership and facilitating cross border business.

The first Sovereign office opened in Gibraltar in 1987 and now has offices or agents in all the major international finance centres. We have also developed a wide range of supporting services such as wealth management, specialist tax advice, yacht and aircraft registration, credit cards, fund formation, pension services, residence and citizenship applications, as well as trademark and intellectual property registration and protection.

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