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Press Release

Bangkok Art Biennale (BAB 2024): Nurture Gaia Cole Lu at the Museum and Library of Abbots of Wat Bowonniwet Vihara

Nova Contemporary is pleased to announce *The Engineers*, a solo exhibition by Cole Lu as part of the Bangkok Art Biennale (BAB2024): Nurture Gaia, which will run from October 24, 2024 to February 25, 2025.

The Engineers is a site-specific installation at The Museum and Library of Abbots of Wat Bowonniwet Vihara, a first-class royal temple complex built in the early nineteenth century. Combining Thai, Chinese, Khmer, and European influences, the temple is home to the first Buddhist educational institution and is also the ordination site for many Chakri kings and royal family members. The Gothic-style Museum and Library serves as a significant repository of Thai-Buddhist knowledge, housing countless religious artifacts and monastic utensils associated with the four Supreme Patriarchs who resided at the temple.

The title of the exhibition references Lu's questioning of engineers as architects of humanity, and the myth-making origins of our social hierarchy. Through two large-scale, free-standing doors burned from Neem (Sao Dao) wood and linen, Lu explores time and time travel, historical texts, religious scriptures, mythologies, and ancient artifacts. Using fire to mark his gestures, he also returns to a possible origin of storytelling before social construction, delving into issues of history, memory, and home. The paired doors echo the space's original entries, acting as portals into an infinite Universal cycle between birth and death.

Cole Lu was born in 1984 in Taipei, Taiwan and lives and works in Brooklyn, New York. His recent solo exhibitions include: *The Temple of Sleep* (Chapter NY, 2022), *Millennium Approaches* (Nir Altman, 2022), *Amnesia* (Herald St, 2024), and *Stoicheion* (ICA Maine, 2024). His publication *Smells Like Content* (Endless Editions, 2015) belongs to the collection of The Museum of Modern Art Library.

The exhibition will be accompanied by a public talk between the artist and Hera Chan, Adjunct Curator, Asia-Pacific, Tate, at the Bangkok Kunsthalle from 2-3:30pm on October 22, 2024.

The Engineers (2024) is supported by the Culture Division, Taipei Economic and Cultural Office in Thailand, Bangkok Kunsthalle, and Holiday Tours. Lu was artist-in-residence at the Bangkok Kunsthalle, where he completed the production of the exhibited works.

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