

Priyageetha Dia *salt*

Gertrude Contemporary
13 June – 8 August 2026

As a mineral compound, salt (NaCl) precedes human history and has long been implicated in the structures of trade and labour. It has shaped, scarred and sustained life across this planet in ways that continue to unfold. Salt preserves, extending the life of organic matter beyond its natural limit, while also corroding, gradually compromising whatever it encounters over time. Salt also plays a crucial role in the human body, present in blood, tears and sweat. Any account of salt should therefore contend with its simultaneous presence in geological formation, economic structure and bodily process, none of which can be understood in isolation from the others.

It is within this refusal – of the partition between ecological, corporeal, and technological analysis – that Priyageetha Dia's new solo exhibition locates itself. As an artist working between Singapore and The Netherlands, Priyageetha approaches salt not simply as a material, but as a connective agent through which the entanglements of colonial history, diasporic experience and extractivist regimes across Southeast Asia and the broader Asia-Pacific region can be traced.

salt binds three key moving image works along a crystalline axis, each engaging salt through one of its bodily registers. *The Sea is a Blue Memory* (2022) positions the ocean as a repository of collective memory. Incorporating Southeast Asian mythologies of sea spirits and deities, the video animation summons submerged histories and spiritual reverence, presenting the ocean as both a sentient archive and liminal terrain where the human and non-human meet.

The animation work *LAMENT H.E.A.T.* (2023) treats grief as a form of historical knowledge that operates outside the conventions of the colonial archive. In this work, a technological entity called H.E.A.T (Hevea Errichal Automation Tech) adapts and performs oppari – a Tamil lamentation practice – as an act of bereavement and resistance. The work situates mourning as a form of refusal directed at the extractivist regimes of colonial rubber plantations in Malaya, while speculating on technology's capacity to hold empathy and grief.

Night Shift (2025) draws on the sonic and corporeal languages of rave culture. Taking up sweat as the residue of the technologised body, the work stages a metahuman figure performing relentlessly under strobe and bass. Through the recursive interplay of sound, light, and movement, the work explores exhaustion, repetition, and the unstable boundaries between labour and release. Drawing on Moten and Harney's concept of the 'undercommons', a solitary dancer moves between alienation and fugitive sociality, positioning the rave as both an afterlife of labour and a contested site of collective emergence.

Priyageetha Dia (b. 1992, Singapore) is an interdisciplinary artist working across time-based media and installation. Her practice examines entangled afterlives of colonial extraction and racialised labour, tracing their mutations within contemporary digital infrastructures. She mobilises speculative methodologies to destabilise dominant historiographies and render visible the mechanisms through which power materialises.

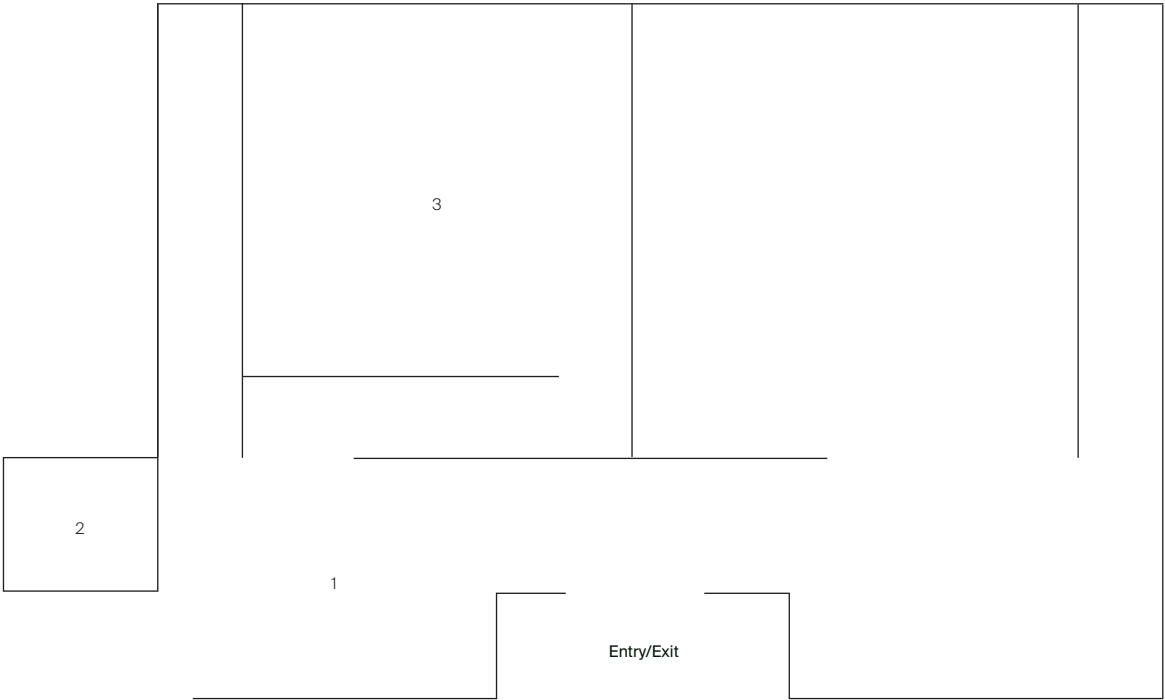
salt is Priyageetha's first solo exhibition in Australia. Recent exhibitions include: *everything you need to see is already in front of you*, Riga Photography Biennale, Riga (2026); *kokki*, The RYDER Projects, Madrid (2026); *Motherboards*, San Jose Museum of Art, California (2026); *Reworlding*, starch, Singapore (2026); *AUTOPOIESIS: A Song for Resuscitation*, Arthshila Goa, Nachinola, India (2026); *Munch Triennale: Almost Unreal*, Munchmuseet, Oslo (2025); *Aichi Triennale: A Time Between Ashes and Roses*, Aichi Arts Centre, Nagoya (2025); *Synthetic Fever*, Coreana Museum of Art, Seoul (2025); *Avatars, Proxies, and Digital Twins*, Tate, London (2025); *4th Bangkok Art Biennale: Nurture Gaia*, Queen Sirikit National Convention Center, Bangkok (2024); *Manifesta 15: Imagining Futures*, Mataró Art Contemporani, Barcelona (2024); *The Spirits of Maritime Crossing*, Palazzo Mangilli Valmarana, 60th La Biennale di Venezia Collateral Event (2024); and *Diriyah Biennale: After Rain*, Jax District, Diriyah, Saudi Arabia (2024).

Priyageetha was an artist-in-residence at the NTU Centre for Contemporary Art Singapore in 2022 and the SEA AiR— Studio Residencies at the Jan van Eyck Academie in the Netherlands in 2023. She is represented by The RYDER Projects, Madrid.

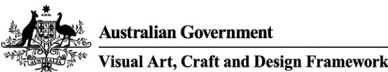
List of works

- 1. *The Sea is a Blue Memory* 2022
HD digital video, colour sound
9 minutes 49 seconds
- 2. *Lament H.E.A.T.* 2023
HD digital video, colour sound
14 minutes 15 seconds
- 3. *Night Shift* 2025
HD digital video, colour sound
18 minutes 4 seconds

All works courtesy of the artist and The RYDER Projects, Madrid



Gertrude is assisted by the Visual Arts, Craft and Design Framework, an initiative of the Australian, State and Territory Governments; and the Victorian Government through Creative Victoria.



Gertrude Contemporary acknowledges the Wurundjeri people as the traditional owners and custodians of this land and pays respect to their Elders past and present.