

Exit Strategies James Nguyen

4 September – 10 October 2015

Opening: Thursday 3 September 2015, 6-8pm



James Nguyen, *RiverCrossing* (still), 2015, single-channel video. Image: Joey Nguyen. Courtesy the artist.

4A Centre for Contemporary Asian Art is pleased to present *Exit Strategies*, the first major solo exhibition by rising Vietnamese-Australian artist **James Nguyen** (b.1982, Vietnam).

Specially commissioned by 4A, *Exit Strategies* reflects upon Nguyen's experience living in a factory in south-west Sydney with his family during the 1990s in an effort to save their failing textiles business. The works explore the complexities of familial relationships between himself, his brother and parents as migrants in an adopted country.

4A's Director, **Mikala Tai** said, "As the artist's first significant solo exhibition, *Exit Strategies* marks an important contribution by a member of a younger generation of Vietnamese-Australian artists, of which a critical mass share an upbringing in western Sydney, and are likewise exploring concerns relating to the Vietnamese diaspora in Australia."

Working in a semi-documentary mode of construction, *Exit Strategies* sees Nguyen collaborate with his parents and brother as key characters in a fragmented narrative of family history. Through restaging and framing intimate familial gestures in the face of financial ruin, *Exit Strategies* draws human and personal connections alongside broader geopolitics of war, economic reform and nationhood.

Exit Strategies includes a newly-commissioned **4-channel video work**, *Gimbal* (2015) that focuses on the artists' parents. Dressed in matching white t-shirts and shorts, the couple re-enact and narrate the experiences of their children through split scene sequences.

Concealed in the storage spaces of 4A, are a series of short video vignettes which see Nguyen playing the role of the parent, in one scene giving his brother a hair cut and in another rifling through a school bag to search for any truths concealed by the children.

Together with his mother, Nguyen has also created a large-scale sculptural screen, *Flatbed Knit Polo Collars (Surplus Stock)* (2015) sewn together from hundreds of polo shirt collars saved from the factory – a tribute to his mother's efforts to support the family as the factory began to fail.

The artist is available for interview and photo opportunities.

Please direct media enquiries to: Joanna Bayndrian, joanna@creative-asia.net or Hannah Skrzynski hannah@creative-asia.net / 0412825586.

EXHIBITION OPENING: Thursday 3 September 2015, 6-8pm, to be launched by Mikala Tai, Director of 4A
EXHIBITION DATES: 4 September – 10 October 2015
ARTIST TALK: 5 September 2015, 2pm - 3pm
VENUE: 4A Centre for Contemporary Asian Art, 181 – 187 Hay St, Sydney NSW 2000
4A OPENING HOURS: Tuesday – Saturday 11am – 6pm, closed on public holidays.

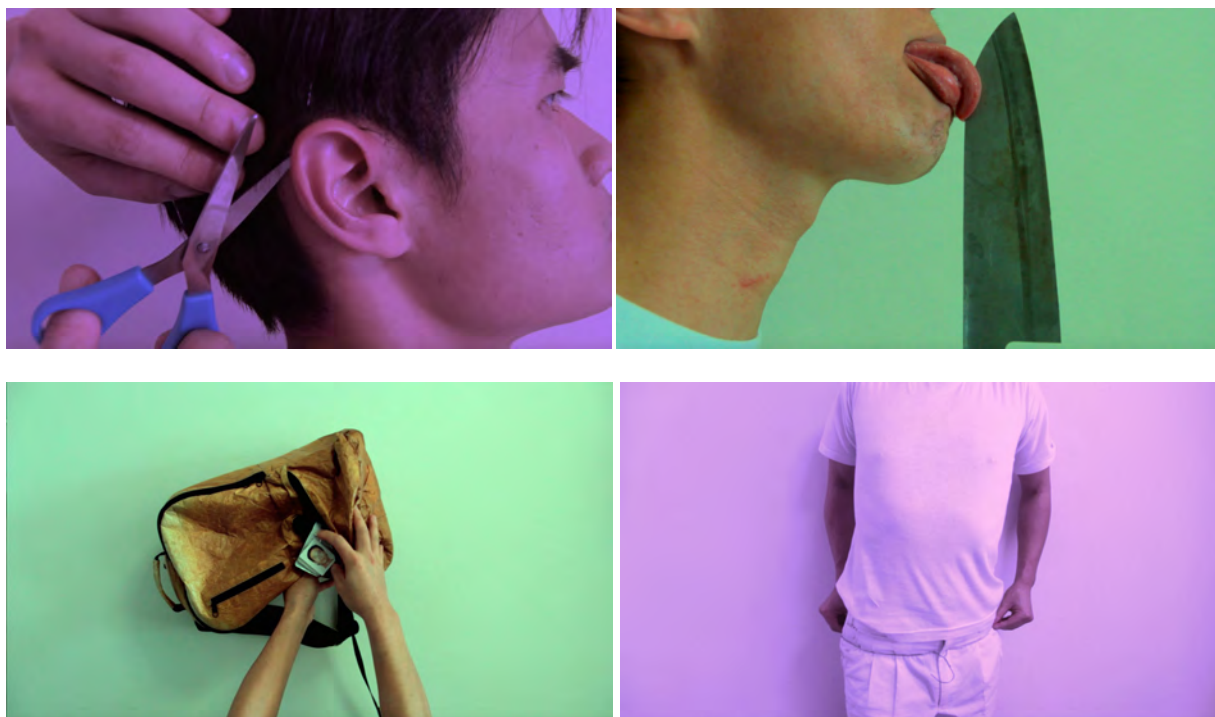
In conjunction with the exhibition *Exit Strategies*, Nguyen will be presenting a new performance during the VIP opening event of Sydney Contemporary.

Venue: Carriageworks, 245 Wilson St, Eveleigh NSW 2015
 Date: Wednesday 9 September
 For more details and to purchase VIP passes go to Sydney Contemporary.

www.4a.com.au
#JamesNguyen #ExitStrategies

James Nguyen, *RiverCrossing* (still), 2015, single-channel video. Image: Joey Nguyen. Courtesy the artist.





Clockwise from top right: James Nguyen, *Tripod (Knife)* (still), 2015, single-channel video. Courtesy the artist. James Nguyen, *Tripod (bag) (Coathanger)*, 2015, single-channel video. Courtesy the artist. James Nguyen, *Tripod (Bag)* (still), 2015, single-channel video. Courtesy the artist. James Nguyen, *Tripod (Scissors)* (still), 2015, single-channel video. Courtesy the artist.

James Nguyen (b.1982, Vietnam) is a Sydney-based artist whose output ranges from drawing, installation, video and performance. He graduated with a Bachelor of Fine Arts (Honours) from the National Art School, Sydney, in 2012 and is currently undertaking a Masters of Fine Arts at Sydney College of Arts (SCA), University of Sydney. He has been the recipient of the Clitheroe Foundation Scholarship and the Anne & Gordon Samstag International Visual Arts Scholarship.

ABOUT 4A

From early beginnings as an independent space on Sussex St incorporated in 1996 to its present location on Hay St in Sydney's Chinatown, 4A has come a long way to being recognised as one of Australia's foremost contemporary art organisations. 4A is committed to creating opportunities for artists, developing platforms to exhibit and encouraging critical discussion along the way. 4A is known both within Australia and internationally as an authority on the contemporary art from the Asia Pacific Region.