

Table of Contents

| | |
|--|------------|
| After Seven Years by Aung Min..... | 9 |
| Foreword by Nathalie Johnston..... | 11 |
| Dedication by Mrat Lunn Htwann..... | 13 |
| Thanks Page..... | 14 |
| Introduction By Aung Min..... | 19 |
| Chapter 1: Pre-Modernism..... | 29 |
| Ba Yin Galay..... | 33 |
| Yangon Ba Swe..... | 39 |
| Ko Shwe Oung Thein..... | 43 |
| Nan Wai..... | 48 |
| Aung Khin..... | 54 |
| Maung Ngwe Tun..... | 61 |
| Chapter 2: Sources of Inspirations for Modernist Myanmar Art..... | 69 |
| Bagyi Aung Soe..... | 73 |
| Kin Maung (Bank)..... | 87 |
| Chapter 3: Early Days of Modernism..... | 97 |
| A.I. Office..... | 101 |
| Paw Oo Thet..... | 103 |
| Khin Maung Yin..... | 117 |
| Lokanat Gallery..... | 125 |
| Chapter 4: Early Modernists..... | 127 |
| Aung Taik..... | 130 |
| Sun Myint..... | 131 |
| Tin Tin Sann..... | 132 |
| Khin Myint Myint..... | 133 |
| Kyi Twe..... | 134 |
| Myo Nyunt..... | 135 |
| Nyunt Myat..... | 136 |
| Ne Min..... | 137 |
| Myo Myint Percy..... | 138 |
| Khin Maung Maung..... | 139 |
| Khin Maung Than..... | 140 |
| Anna Aung Myint..... | 141 |
| Paw Thame..... | 142 |
| Aung Win (Kyaukse)..... | 143 |
| Chapter 5: Pinnacle of Modernism..... | 145 |
| Khin One..... | 148 |
| Aung Myint..... | 159 |
| Maung Di..... | 169 |
| Ko Ko Gyi..... | 179 |
| Khin Maung Nyunt (Mogok)..... | 183 |
| Kyaw Moe Tha..... | 187 |

| | |
|---|------------|
| Rahula..... | 195 |
| Kyee Myint Saw..... | 201 |
| Sonny Nyein..... | 209 |
| San Minn..... | 212 |
| MPP Ye Myint..... | 221 |
| Win Pe Myint..... | 227 |
| Pe Nyunt Wai..... | 233 |
| Tin Win..... | 241 |
| Ma Thanegi..... | 245 |
| Myint Myint Tin..... | 247 |
| Bogie..... | 251 |
| Tin Maung Oo..... | 257 |
| Tin Maung Oo (Mandalay)..... | 261 |
| Chit Nyein..... | 265 |
| Chapter 6: Some Individual Contemporary Artists..... | 269 |
| Lun Gywe..... | 273 |
| Maung Nyo Win..... | 277 |
| Maung Maung Hla Myint..... | 285 |
| Maung Aw..... | 291 |
| Tun Sein..... | 297 |
| Chapter 7: Inya Gallery..... | 301 |
| Chapter 8: Rectangular Lantern..... | 303 |
| Chapter 9: Gangaw Village..... | 305 |
| Aung Kyaw Moe..... | 309 |
| Saw Andrew..... | 311 |
| Myo Wai..... | 313 |
| Ko Myo..... | 315 |
| Hla Toe..... | 317 |
| Nyo Win Maung..... | 319 |
| Khin Swe Win..... | 320 |
| Tito..... | 321 |
| Chapter 10: Post Modernism..... | 323 |
| Po Po..... | 327 |
| Chan Aye..... | 337 |
| Muu Muu..... | 343 |
| Moat Thone..... | 349 |
| Wai Chit Ko..... | 353 |
| Cho Cho Aung..... | 357 |
| Min Wae Aung..... | 361 |
| Soe Naing..... | 368 |
| Nyunt Wai Thit..... | 377 |
| Aye Ko..... | 383 |
| Kyi Wynn..... | 387 |
| Chapter 11: Shwe Generation..... | 393 |
| Myo Thet Aung..... | 397 |

After seven years

By Aung Min
2016

This English translation came out seven years after the publication of the original Myanmar version in 2009. I remember writing the manuscript back in 2007 at the height of the Saffron Revolution. Mrat Lunn Htwann, the organizer for the book, walked past the groups of protestors to visit me at a teashop next to my house. He came to pick up the finished parts of the manuscript. While most people were talking about the protests, we were busy working with artists and their artworks. On 1 May 2008, we walked around town looking for high-quality paper to print the book—the manuscript had already passed censorship by that time. It was one day before Cyclone Nargis, and Mrat and I had made an appointment to meet the following day. But we did not meet again until the following week. We launched the Myanmar version of the book in 2009.

The genesis of this book can be traced back to the American Embassy and its small grants for cultural projects. Thanks to the efforts made by Mrat and Vice Counsel Walter Parrs, we received a grant in 2007. The purpose was to put out an art book and a poetry book. The latter never saw daylight, as we did not get the approval from the Press Scrutiny and Registration Department to publish it. The Special Branch summoned Mrat. They wanted the full list of names and addresses of people involved in the art book project. They warned that if they found anything subversive or anti-military in the published work, they would arrest all those involved without asking any further questions. We were also asked to sign a statement of compliance with the censorship board, which you can see here in the back of this newly published work. Then we started to see people leaving the project one by one. Only three people were left: artist Aung Myint of Inya Gallery, Mrat and myself. We worked in different capacities—Aung Myint as editor, Mrat as organizer and myself as author of the book. We gave our statements of assurance and signed them. Then I started writing the book. We needed to leave out the names of politicians, artists and even some books that were on the black list. But we created aliases for them to make sure we wrote about them. This English version is a direct translation from the original Myanmar version published during the time of the 2009 military government.

When we did interviews with the artists, we recorded them on tape. Now we have a vault of 50 tapes, which we think of as a great treasure. I am very happy that this book has been useful for the Myanmar art scene, and now that the stories of Myanmar artists and how they worked inside a closed country will reach hundreds of people living outside of Myanmar, I am thrilled. I would like to express my gratitude to Walter Parrs for his massive contribution, Saya U Aung Myint for always standing with us, Mrat Lunn Htwann for his perseverance, and artist-photographer Thurein for his support.

Aung Min

Myanmar Art in Translation

By Nathalie Johnston
Director at MARCA
Yangon, Myanmar

In 2009, theart.com published Myanmar Contemporary Art I – a book of essays, images and interviews written entirely in Burmese, covering contemporary art in Myanmar from 1960-1990. An exhibition was held at the book launch, inviting younger generation artists to collaborate with older generation artists, in order to celebrate the exchange and timeline of art production throughout the country.

The book was censored at the time, and crucial historical context for the images is missing, but the book itself remains an indispensable reference to how artists have been working in Myanmar over the last 60 years. With growing interest in Myanmar, and greater exchange by local artists with international individuals and institutions, sharing the translation of this book into English will provide more opportunity for exchange, while also revealing more reference information for the reader: names and dates, visuals, and proof that Myanmar artists have been working for decades despite isolation.

MARCA or 'Myanmar Art Resource Center and Archive' is a digital and physical resource center, partnering with both local and international organizations on a range of activities revolving around art education. One of our primary concerns are translation – how to work effectively with the Burmese language, while building a bridge to the international art community. Longtime friends with theart.com, we invited them to partner with MARCA to translate their first in a trilogy of books. theart.com has a history of cutting-edge projects, incorporating new media, poetry, and literature in contemporary exhibitions.

theart.com is a grassroots organization formed in 2007 in Yangon, Myanmar. Comprised of poets, filmmakers and artists, the collective aims to engage with the local creative community through documentaries, exhibitions, and publications.

Myanmar Contemporary Art I is one such engagement—a volume of contemporary Myanmar art history

written entirely in Burmese. Aung Min (author + filmmaker) conducted hundreds of hours of interviews and consulted Aung Myint (editor + visual artist) and Mrat Lunn Htwann (managing director + visual artist) to create a unique collection of biographical essays of 70 artists who worked from 1960-1990 in Myanmar.

The published volume you are holding today is a direct translation from the original text. While some names and images were added in order to "un-censor" the book, we tried to maintain the dignity of the original work while adding new design elements. Many sources for photographs were unknown during the original volume's compilation. We maintain that any reproduction of images without permission is unintentional. We hope that our readers will see this book as an art historical reference, free for all to use.

The exhaustive efforts of Aung Min, lead author of the original book, were made clear once more in the compiling of this new edition. Maung Day, poet and our only translator for MCA1, made significant efforts to translate the intimate nature of the interview texts into English, keeping in close contact with Aung Min and the editors throughout. Mrat Lunn Htwann, artist, poet and manager of the original book, continued to support with hard to find information and anecdotes from the censorship process of the original work. Thurein, artist and photographer, shared with us the magnificent archive of images and texts. Maayan Galim showed exceptional patience designing a book with unfamiliar content from a different continent.

Many thanks to Hammad Nasar and Asia Art Archive, who encouraged MARCA to pursue this translation project. Thanks also to Jessica Hodin and Art Basel, for assisting us in navigating the process of crowdfunding through Kickstarter. Infinite thanks to Aung Min, Mrat Lunn Htwann, Maung Day and Maayan Galim for their constant support and companionship. And most of all, thanks to the donors who made this possible. We are so happy you could join us in being a part of this project.