

end on January 31. Chapters two and three have been indefinitely postponed.

Amid the economic growth, commercial galleries, concentrated in Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City (HCM), have encountered a healthy market for French academic-style paintings. Among the leading venues are Suzanne Lecht's Art Gallery Vietnam in the capital and Galerie Quayhn in HCM, both maintaining rigorous professional standards including exclusive representation of artists. In 2007 **Art Gallery Vietnam** celebrated its relocation to a new space with a tranquil solo show of Nguyen Minh Thanh (10/12-11/9) and closed the year with abstract work by Nguyen Cam (12/14-1/6/08). Lecht also brought her roster of artists to the first Asian Contemporary Art Fair in New York (11/8-12). In the south, **Galerie Quayhn**, which mainly supports emerging artists, mounted "Projecting into the night what has gone with the dawn," new work by HCM favorite Hoang Duong Cam including politically-charged paintings and a video installation (12/7-1/5); and "House of Adoration," featuring the architecturally-inspired work of Lien Truong (8/10) in cooperation with artist-run organization Ryllega in Hanoi (7/28-8/11). The stalwart Mai's Gallery maintained a low profile but continues as an important stop for collectors of works by modernists such as Bui Xuan Phai. Back in Hanoi, **Suffusive Art** looks for young talent and featured work by Vuong Thao that looked at Hanoi as an outdoor museum (10/4-14). **Aroma dd**, which provides art consulting in the capital, maintains a comprehensive online site for those looking to remotely navigate the burgeoning market.

Alternative spaces provide an important counterbalance to the commercial arena and have a dedicated following among the small circle of curators and artists working in



TIFFANY CHUNG — 10.7747°N 106.6667°E (2007) Oil markers on paper, 110 x 80 cm, courtesy the artist

Hanoi and HCM. In Hanoi, **Ryllega Gallery** showcases experimental art and presented an impressive installation of disused materials by Kim Tran (5/18-30). **Salon Natasha**, popular among artists, remained quiet due to artist-director Vu Van Tan's deteriorating health. The now defunct **Wonderful District** founded a new, albeit smaller incarnation, Wonderful Atelier, run by husband-and-wife artist team Bertrand Peret and Sandrine Llouquet out of their apartment. **a little blah, blah, blah** in HCM continues to hold residencies and off-site exhibitions. New to the group is **San-Art Space**, launched in October. Run by Dinh Q. Lê—widely considered Vietnam's leading internationally active artist—it features exhibitions, lecture series, a reading room and a cultural exchange program. The inaugural exhibition, "Future," curated by Lê, featured drawings by Vietnamese artists (10/3-28).

Since then it has already held collaborations with Raqs Media Collective from New Delhi (10/27), Singapore's Flying Circus from (11/7) and Beijing's Long March Project (12/14).

Vietnam's **Ministry of Culture** principally funds official arts associations and museums. Not surprisingly, these entities are riddled with politics and offer government-endorsed fare. Foreign NGOs are the primary supporters of more experimental programming, but 2007 saw reduced funding as the US-based **Ford Foundation** cut back its support this year. However, the Danish Embassy sponsored the National Visual Art Festival, with 58 young artists at the Fine Arts University in Hanoi (3/15). **Goethe-Institut** Hanoi, which in previous years was more sympathetic to the visual arts, shifted gears towards performance and music. Together with counterparts in Southeast Asia and the Pacific, the German NGO organized "Electronic Music in

Tran Luong participated in Vis A Vis art lab in Xiamen, China, where he presented new work (10/28-11/30).

2008 will hopefully see further opening of the art scene. San-Art will likely rise to the top in presenting the country's most rigorous art programs. In addition, June's Hue Festival 2008 is said to be introducing contemporary arts to the schedule. Dinh Q. Lê is working on new work for his gallery show at Shoshana Wayne in Santa Monica outside Los Angeles, scheduled for the second half of 2008, as well as his first mid-career retrospective at the University of Buffalo Art Museum. And once the name of the city is sorted out, it is hoped that Saigon/HCM Open City will issue its remaining two chapters. **EWN**

MUSEUMS

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yemen

OFFICIAL COUNTRY NAME

REPUBLIC OF YEMEN

POPULATION

22,230,531

GROSS DOMESTIC PRODUCT PER CAPITA

US \$1,000

LANGUAGES

ARABIC

Mostly based in the capital city of Sana'a, a handful of established artists make up the Yemeni art scene. There is limited government funding and few commercial spaces, leaving artists to organize exhibitions and workshops by their own resources. Female artists led activities this year with a number of well-received solo and group exhibitions of painting. These were held amidst recent widespread public debate on the role of women in Yemeni society and their inclusion in the official sector. Painter, scholar and art critic **Amnah al-Nasiri** launched the year's events in January with "Kamanjat," a solo show of abstract paintings that received substantial local media coverage.

Although educated in Europe due to a lack of local art programs, Al-Nasiri and her peers are credited with influencing a new generation of artists by teaching aesthetics in the philosophy and literature departments of the University of Sana'a. Academic support has encouraged a small but emerging