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Brady Ng, "Samson Young: Five Plus One," *ArtAsiaPacific*, 2017.

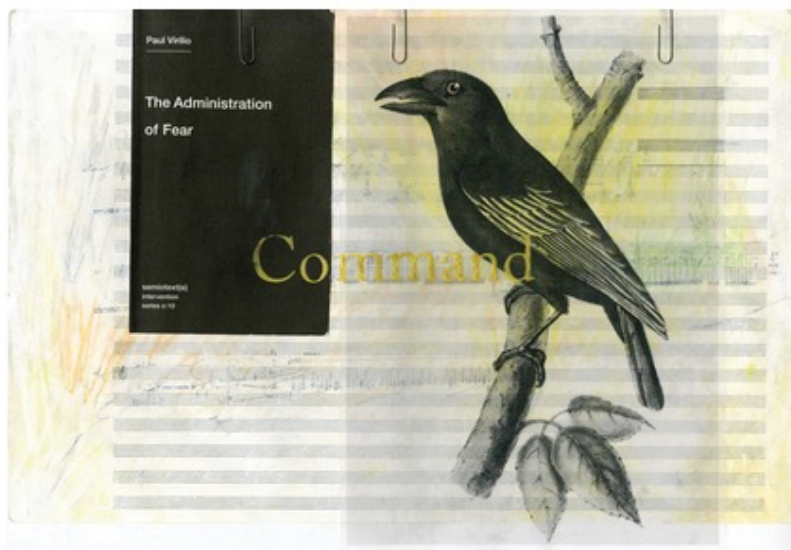


SAMSON YOUNG

FIVE PLUS ONE BY BRADY NG FROM ALMANAC 2017

HONG KONG

ALSO AVAILABLE IN:



SAMSON YOUNG, *To Fanon (The Bell and the Nightingale)*, 2016, pastel, colored pencil, xerox print, silkscreen print and mixed media on original composition manuscripts (ink on paper), suite of 4: 29 × 43 cm each. Courtesy Experimenter, Kolkata.

Fascinated by armed conflict and military technology, Samson Young once noted that cannons and bells are made from the same materials, melted down and reformed depending on whether war drums are sounding or peace currently prevails. That observation sets the tone for Young's art practice, which tackles issues of transnationalism and globalization, and scrutinizes the cost for Asian composers to break into the sphere of classical musical composition.

Trained as a musical composer, Young is a multidisciplinary artist who produces installations, performances, drawings, films and more. The work *Canon (as you set out for Ithaka, hope the voyage is a long one)* (2016) became his best-known work to date and debuted last June at Art

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Basel in Basel (6/16–19), where it became the highlight in the Art Unlimited section. For this, the artist donned a retired uniform of the Hong Kong Police Force and stood atop a platform while avian distress calls played in the background. Using a Long Range Acoustic Device, which is a sound cannon deployed by law enforcement around the world for crowd control, Young beamed birdsongs and calls across the convention center. The artist pointed out that *Canon* was actually a sound installation and live performance that took place at two different locations—more than 150 meters away, birdsongs appeared to have emerged without an obvious sound source.

Aside from Basel, 2016 saw Young exhibiting in Germany, India, the United States and Hong Kong. His debut exhibition in Kolkata’s Experimenter gallery, “Mastery of Language Affords Remarkable Power” (8/20–10/29), featured *To Fanon* (2015–), in which the artist vandalized hand-written manuscripts of his original musical compositions created between 2005 and 2015. These musical compositions were performed publicly before, and sound recordings of those performances exist, but with no copies of the musical notation and the originals completely defaced, no further performances can be staged. The work’s title refers to Frantz Fanon, the Martiniquais-French revolutionary whose writings address issues of European colonial domination. In December, Kunsthalle Düsseldorf presented the artist’s first institutional solo exhibition in Europe (12/17–3/5/17). Keeping up the momentum, Young will represent Hong Kong at the 57th Venice Biennale, beginning in May.

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