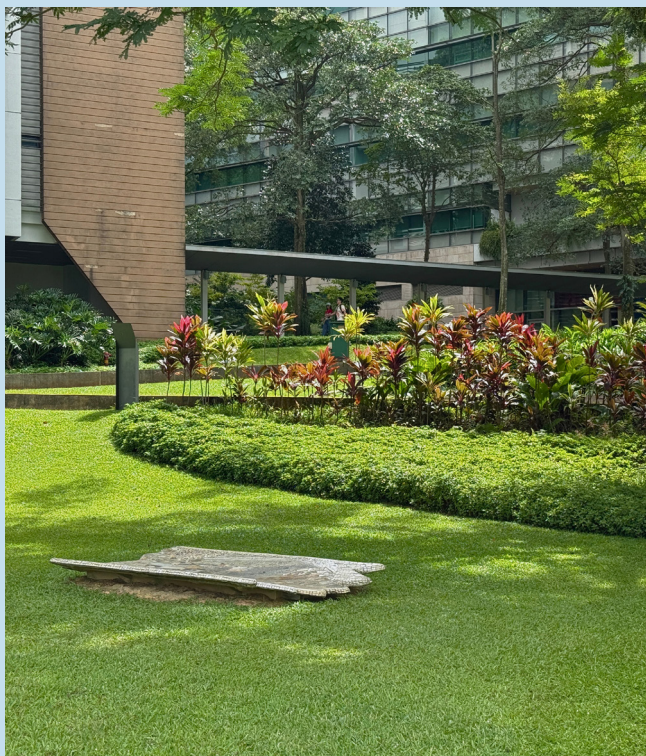




COMMUNITY-LED TOURS

BASKING IN SLOWNESS

A Public Art Tour

by AIDA NADIRAH BINTE ABDUL RAZIFF

BASKING IN SLOWNESS

A Public Art Tour

This tour begins from an idea of slowness.
Slowness as method.
Slowness as material.
Slowness as memory.

Slowness is not simply the passing of time—it's a way of making and a way of seeing. Public art appears where we least expect it: in-between walkways, near trees, beside classrooms, in corners we rush past. Because of this, public art carries a different kind of time: one shaped by weather, footsteps, routine, and neglect. It waits quietly in spaces designed for movement.

Public art refers to artworks that exist outside the walls of museums and galleries. They may be sculptures, installations, murals—or works that don't resemble “art” at all. Their “in-betweenness” gives them a slow presence. They change with light and rain. They age in public. They become part of the landscape long before we notice them.

What does it mean to be here but overlooked?
To take up space but vanish from memory?
To speak only when someone pauses?

Let this tour be a shift in tempo—a small, unhurried hour in a campus that rarely pauses. An invitation to notice: why something is here, who made it, who it speaks to, and who it waits for.

NUS Campus Map

START

UNIVERSITY CULTURAL CENTRE
Entrance

1

Francis Ng, *I WAS HERE* (2004).

2

LEE KONG CHIAN NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM
Entrance

Chang Ting Hsuan, Lim XingYi, Subashri
Sankarasubramanian, Lim Soo Ngee,
Alfred Wallace and Ali (2019).

3

Chang Ting Hsuan, Lim XingYi, Subashri
Sankarasubramanian, Lim Soo Ngee,
Standardwing Bird-of-Paradise (2019).

4

Kate Daudy and Kostya Novoselov,
Light Years, Week Days (2023).

UTOWN GREEN

5

Delia Prvački, *Picnic in a Garden* (2006).

6

UTOWN EDUCATION RESOURCE CENTRE
Level 1

Delia Prvački, *A Piece of Sky, No.7* (1999).

Legend



Artwork



Stairs



Lift



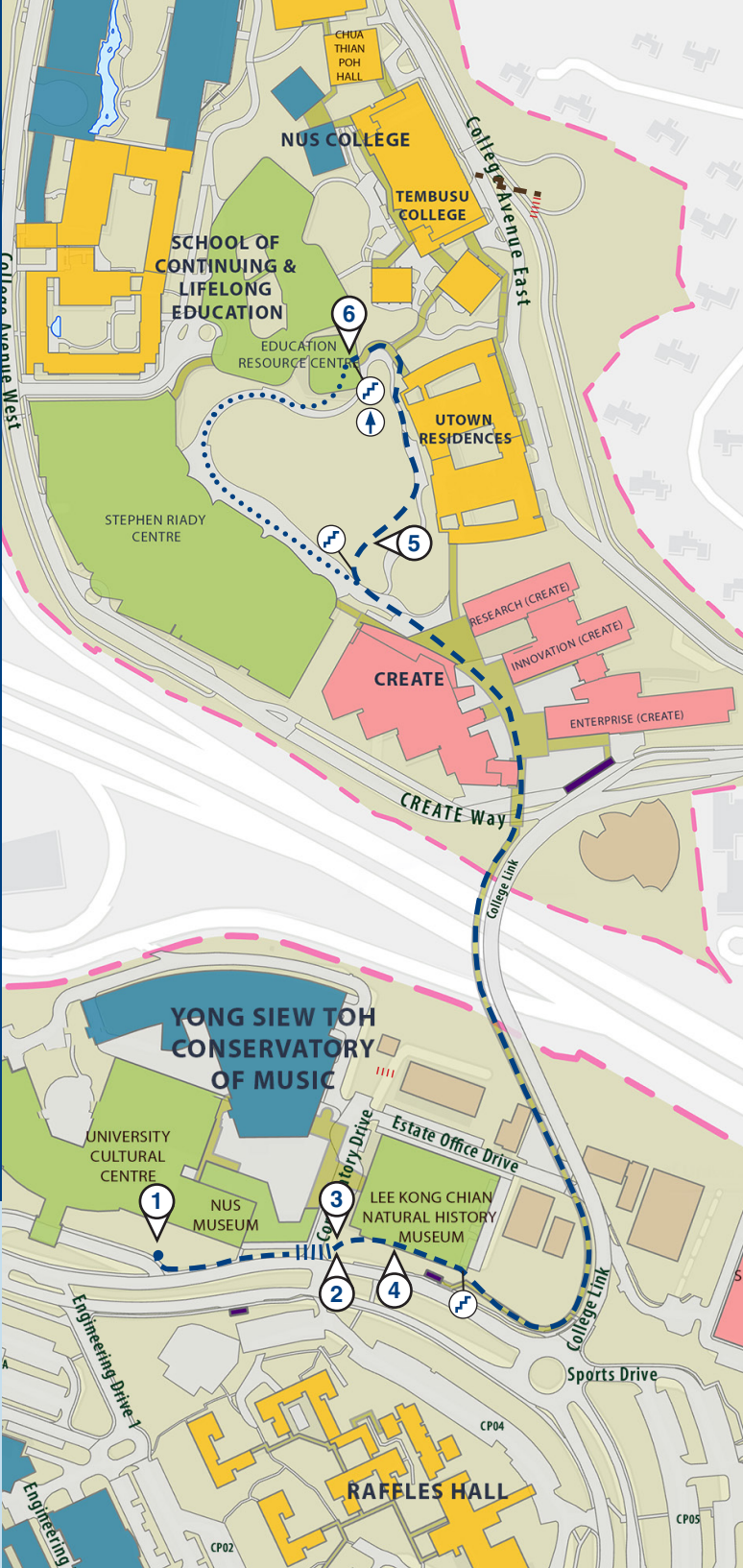
Suggested Route



Alternative Route



Pedestrian Crossing



I WAS HERE

1

Francis Ng's *I WAS HERE* is a life-sized concrete sculpture. Conceived to be a travelling piece, it garnered widespread popularity and appeal, making its rounds in a number of key institutions in Singapore since its inception, including the Esplanade and the Singapore Art Museum. Cast in stark, neutral concrete screed and measuring 1.7 metres in height, the dominating presence and structural permanence embodied in these monumental letter blocks seem to run counter to the transient nature of presence and time. In such a fluid world, can one attempt to cement one's identity and presence? *I WAS HERE* complicates the ease with which viewers accept who they are and what it means to be present.

Teasingly, it also engages the subtle urges of vanity of its passersby who seek to leave their footprints behind by merely observing the work or of those who choose to take away a piece of the space, perhaps by taking a photograph with it.

Outside University Cultural Centre.

Francis Ng, *I WAS HERE* (2004);
Cast concrete, 171 x 1200 x 30 cm.
On loan to NUS Museum.



Alfred Russel Wallace and Ali

2

Made by Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts (NAFA) students under Lim Soo Ngee, this bronze sculpture presents naturalist Alfred Russel Wallace alongside his Sarawakian assistant Ali. Wallace's breakthrough theories were shaped by the region's biodiversity, yet Ali's labour—collecting, documenting, navigating—remains only partially recorded. The sculpture's posture, tools, and dynamic arrangement hint at both collaboration and asymmetry. Slowing down reveals how histories of science are built on uneven visibility. Whose contributions come into focus only when we choose to look more carefully?

Outside Lee Kong Chian Natural History Museum, Entrance.

Chang Ting Hsuan, Lim XingYi, Subashri Sankarasubramanian, Lim Soo Ngee, **Alfred Russel Wallace and Ali** (2019); Bronze, 200 x 100 cm.
Collection of Lee Kong Chian Natural History Museum.



On pillar at Lee Kong Chian Natural History Museum, Entrance.

Chang Ting Hsuan, Lim XingYi, Subashri Sankarasubramanian, Lim Soo Ngee, **Standardwing Bird-of-Paradise** (2019); Bronze, 60 cm (diameter).
Collection of Lee Kong Chian Natural History Museum.

Standardwing Bird-of-Paradise

3

This bronze *Standardwing Bird-of-Paradise* recalls one of Wallace's rarest discoveries and the long journey of specimens through colonial trade, scientific study, and museum display. Perched high above eye level, the sculpture mirrors the feeling of encountering the bird in its forest canopy—beautiful, elusive, and slightly out of reach.

But there's another story here. The specimen this sculpture refers to is one of only three that have made their way back to Southeast Asia out of the 126,000 specimens Wallace collected. Most of his collection was sold to the British Museum, and the rest was scattered after he passed away. Today, almost all of it is still in the UK.

This sculpture's position in the atrium invites viewers to look upward, disrupting habitual sightlines and reminding us that natural history often unfolds beyond easy access.

Light Years, Week Days

The title *Light Years, Week Days* collapses two scales: “Light Years”: refers to vast, astronomical distances and “Week Days”: implies the mundane rhythm of daily life.

Created for the NUS Arts Festival in 2023, this collaboration between artist Kate Daudy and physicist Kostya Novoselov merges material experimentation with sonic chance. Suspended metallic chimes catch wind and pedestrian movement, producing tones that are never quite the same twice. Against the tunnel’s rigid geometry, their gentle sway introduces a different register of time—speculative, wandering, and unhurried. Standing beneath them feels like stepping into a pocket of attention amid circulation.

Here, slowness requires listening. And listening requires staying. While you listen to the chimes, this artwork invites and rewards those who linger. This piece asks simple, fundamental questions:

What happens when you let the world move you, instead of the other way around?

How does the sound change as you walk through the tunnel? Do you feel yourself slowing down or speeding up?



At Lee Kong Chian Natural History Museum Arcade.

Kate Daudy and Kostya Novoselov, *Light Years, Week Days* (2023); Mixed media, dimensions variable.
Temporary installation part of the NUS Arts Festival 2023.

Composer

Chow Jun Yan

Student Contributors

Engineering Solutions

Kravtsov Mikhail
Grebenchuk Sergey

Music Solutions

Chew Joshua Gabriel Hok On
Chow Hong Yao
David Michael Woodside
Ganesh Abhinav Srivatsa
Hu Kevin S
Ng Xin Ci
Pak Alexis Jin Sun
Regalado Ortiz Daniel
Tan Guang Xin
Wang Leo
Wong Tina



Picnic in the Garden

5

Delia Prvački, a Romanian-born artist who made Singapore her home, often considers how handmade forms can soften institutional spaces. *Picnic in the Garden* was first exhibited at Fort Canning in 2006 as part of Prvački's *Plein Air* project. Inspired by Édouard Manet's *Le déjeuner sur l'herbe* (*The Luncheon on the Grass*) (1860s), the sculpture alludes to being outdoors, being together, and being unhurried. Prvački translates that idea through sculpture, not painting, and places it directly into the landscape.

In UTown Green.

Delia Prvački, ***Picnic in the Garden*** (2006);
Hand-made painted and glazed ceramic, cast in glass-fibre
reinforced concrete, 250 x 150 cm.
Collection of NUS Museum.

Picnic in the Garden, composed of glazed tiles and glass-fibre-reinforced concrete, transforms a picnic cloth into an architectural gesture—an unusual invitation to slow down on a weekday. Its sweeping folds and tiled surfaces evoke leisure within a campus built on momentum. Here, rest becomes both material and metaphor, a reminder that contemplation has its own kind of productivity.

What does rest look like in a place built for productivity?

A Piece of Sky, No.7

6

This boulder-like sculpture carries many handmade porcelain stars. Some gold, some silver. Delia created this piece at the turn of the millennium, marking not just a date but a feeling: that the sky is something we all shared.

This work emerges from Prvacki's memory of encountering an enormous night sky in Australia. Formed from cobalt-glazed porcelain and studded with hundreds of hand-shaped stars—including 1,976 silver ones marking her daughter's birth year—*A Piece of Sky, No.7* collapses cosmic vastness into an intimate object; a mother's gesture folded into a universal sky.

Placed between study rooms, it interrupts the forward pace of campus life with an upward pull. Touching earth while referencing the heavens, it reframes the ordinary act of looking.

How does a shift in angle transform something as familiar as the sky?

Level 1 of Education Resource Centre, UTown.

Delia Prvački, *A Piece of Sky, No. 7* (1999);
Glass-fibre reinforced concrete, blue pigment and porcelain,
240 x 250 x 80 cm. Collection of NUS Museum.



NUS Public Art Initiative

Tour Author

Aida Nadirah Binte Abdul Raziff

Supervisor

Ling Jia Le

Additional Editorial Support

Michelle Kuek
Siddharta Perez
Ye Thu

NUS Museum is a university museum that advances critical inquiry, interdisciplinary learning, and experimental curatorial practices. Positioned within the National University of Singapore and focused on Southeast Asian and Asian visual cultures, the Museum serves as a platform for teaching, research, and dialogue across disciplines. Through collections-based inquiry, collaborative partnerships, and reflective exhibition-making, it fosters new ways of engaging histories, shaping knowledge, and contributing to regional museological discourse.



Museum

50 Kent Ridge Crescent
National University of Singapore
Singapore 119279

TELEPHONE	(+65) 6516 8817
EMAIL	museum@nus.edu.sg
WEBSITE	museum.nus.edu.sg
FACEBOOK	facebook.com/nusmuseum
INSTAGRAM	instagram.com/nusmuseum instagram.com/nusbabahouse
TELEGRAM	telegram.com/nusmuseumbabahouse

OPENING HOURS:
Monday: By appointment (for schools/faculties)
Tuesday to Saturday: 10:00 am – 6:00 pm
Sunday and Public Holidays: Closed