

## **So The Red Rose**

Artists **Derek Tyman and Andy Webster** (both UK) are interested in the potentials for music, certain key recordings and related structures to act as platforms to recall the past, address the present and imaginatively speculate about the future and in so doing, perhaps suggest alternative ways of thinking and living.

In July 1985, independent-minded environmentalist Vanda Chan set off in *Arcadia*, her home-made houseboat, to sail the short distance from Pulawat towards Pulpap Atolls in Micronesia. A storm caused her to change course and the houseboat hit rocks close to an uninhabited island. Chan believed she would be found quickly, but her solitude would last – it would be over 8 months before she was rescued. Chan managed to salvage a few personal artefacts including an old atlas (by the radical geographer Elisée Reclus), a cassette player, a broken ship radio, and most importantly, a box of recordings of radio broadcasts which had accompanied her on previous expeditions. The radio was irreparable, but she managed to fix the onboard solar panel system to power the cassette player. To pass time, and what would become a regular daily routine, Chan would browse through the Reclus atlas whilst playing the tapes. In complete solitude, she became engrossed in listening to and making playlists of the recordings and this became a catalyst for undertaking imaginary travel, where her only option was to look towards her own imagination.

Chan's collection of tapes formed a kind of recorded archive, which was no longer simply a compilation of songs, but had become a material that virtually prompted her to move from place to place, to imagine and reimagine the future on a daily basis. For their project 'So The Red Rose' \* at Fred & Ferry, Tyman and Webster have invited artists, musicians, composers and curators to respond to Chan's story, and to produce their own recorded audio journeys and playlists, and in doing so reproduce a contemporary surrogate archive.

A fragment of Vanda Chan's storm damaged houseboat, built on site in the attic space of the gallery and reconstructed using exhausted wooden pallets (the ubiquitous transportation tool of global capital), as well as artefacts referencing the 19th century geographer Elisée Reclus, an early advocate of nature conservation and bioregionalism\*\*, will become host to the recorded archive, selections of which will be played throughout the duration of the exhibition.

Audio journeys produced in response to the project include specially produced group improvisations, spoken texts, poetry, music, together with philosophical and social reflections, as well as field recordings, experimental music and classical pieces.\*\*\*

### **'Excerpts from the Vanda Chan Archive' radio broadcasts**

To coincide with the exhibition at Fred & Ferry, Tyman and Webster are collaborating with Radio Centraal in Antwerp. Each Tuesday, for two hours (from 11 am - 1pm), for the seven week duration of 'So The Red Rose' they will present excerpts from the 'Vanda Chan Archive', recordings from over fifty contributions made by artists, musicians, curators. The series will be previewed on Radio Centraal from 18.00 to 20.00 hrs Saturday 27th November.

#### **Notes:**

\*'So the Red Rose' was first realised early this year, as part of 'Where Is The Way To Arcadia?' a biennial Art Festival in Ebersberg, Germany.

\*\*Bioregionalism is a vision of a future that works for people and for the Earth. Simply put, it is philosophy that suggests that political, cultural, and economic systems are more sustainable and just if they are organized around naturally defined areas called bioregions,

\*\*\*Recordings submitted digitally are transferred to outmoded analogue cassette for archiving, but they are also available on a project website [sotheredrose.org](http://sotheredrose.org). A low spec fanzine in the gallery catalogues and details the many audio contributions.