A Window on the Underground Music Scenes of Malaysia
By Mr Marco Ferrarese

Date : 9 Mar 2016
Time : 16:00 - 17:30
Venue : Asia Research Institute Seminar Room
Tower Block Level 10, 469A Bukit Timah Road
National University of Singapore @ BTC

CHAIRPERSON

Dr Liew Khai Khiun, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore

ABSTRACT

Between 2010 and 2015, Italian guitarist Marco Ferrarese managed to join Penang thrashcore band WEOT SKAM, becoming the only “foreigner” actively involved in the Malaysian underground metal and punk scene. Thanks to his particular insider position, Ferrarese observed a segment of multi-ethnic Malaysian youth that contradicts stereotypical and authority-defined Malaysian identities.

Social reality in Malaysia is in fact considered as highly fractured between “everyday-defined” and “authority-defined” contexts – constructed by those who are part of the nation’s dominant power structure, and “represent” its ascribed Malay majority. In other words, the performance of extreme music in Malaysia is seemingly dependent not only upon the authenticity-defined boundaries of global extreme music performance, but also upon the friction between “everyday” and “authority-defined” spheres of ethnicised Malaysian society.

This talk aims to introduce and explore contemporary Malaysian extreme music as a liminal territory where globalising musical influences sediment upon pre-existing ethnic-identities, suggesting new ways of thinking about popular music, globalisation, youth and ethnicity in fast-developing Malaysian society.

ABOUT THE SPEAKER

Marco Ferrarese is a musician, freelance travel writer, author and PhD candidate at Monash University Malaysia. He has played guitar, recorded and toured internationally with Italian metal-punk band The Nerds until 2007, before relocating to the People’s Republic of China to teach languages at Hebei Normal University of Science and Technology, Qinhuangdao. He has been teaching, travelling and researching in the greater Asian region since 2008, with a particular focus on Insular Southeast Asia and its extreme music scenes. He is the author of novel Nazi Goreng (Monsoon Books, 2013)—currently banned in Malaysia—and Banana Punk Rawk Trails: A Euro-Fool’s Metal Punk Journeys in Malaysia, Borneo and Indonesia (SIRD, 2016). He also currently plays guitar and records with thrash-core band WEOT SKAM in Penang, Malaysia.

REGISTRATION

Admission is free. We would greatly appreciate if you RSVP to Ms Tay Minghua via email: minghua.tay@nus.edu.sg.