

ArtReview Asia



Eko Nugroho

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Ripped White Flags

For the people of Indonesia, real democracy only came with the Reformation of 1998, after the fall of Suharto. Since then we have been celebrating it and feeding it, though this relatively young system also brings big changes and massive challenges. While we are learning, understanding and educating ourselves, the forces of anarchy and the pressure from old powers still haunt this country. However, we, artists of the post-1998 Reformation generation, are not lonely; we stick together. This is the benefit of our democracy today. The project on the pages that follow is all about artists and art that reflect Indonesian society today. It's about art that refuses to raise the white flag in the face of obstacles and that refutes that flag's two primary significances: 'surrender' and 'death'. We would never surrender under any pressure, and will keep our work 'live'. Our work is to bring democracy into art, which could never happen here in Indonesia during the 31 years of Suharto's reign.

Curated by Eko Nugroho

Eko Nugroho

Me, I like to criticise our everyday life through my work.
It is kind of mirroring society and modern life today.



Nugroho's works are grounded in both local crafts, including batik and embroidery, and global popular culture, such as graffiti and comics. In 2000 Nugroho founded *Daging Tumbuh*, a collaborative zine. His work has been shown at the 55th Venice Biennale (2013) and at the Lyon Biennial (2009). Recent solo exhibitions include the Singapore Tyler Print Institute, the Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris; Pekin Fine Arts, Beijing; Kiasma Museum of Contemporary Art, Helsinki; and Artotheek, The Hague.

Cash of Clash, 2014, embroidery, 260 × 152 cm. Photo: Desi Suryanto. Courtesy the artist

Faisal Habibi

He plays with daily objects such as chairs, rulers and tables, and makes them unusable. His sculptures are often seen as strong comments on the consumerism of Indonesia's wealth-oriented society via his 'design' of funny, useless things deployed in a critical way.

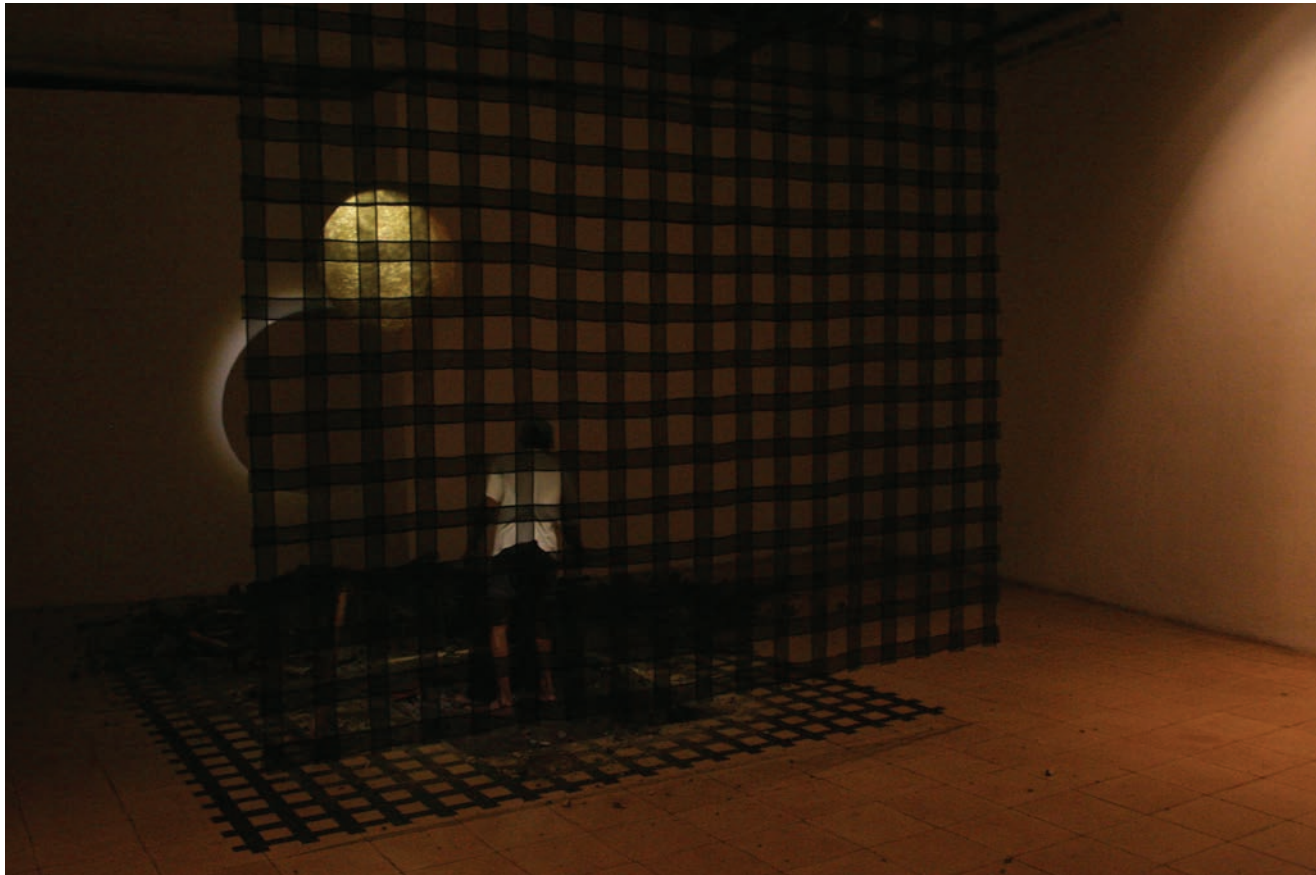


Borrowing the form of everyday objects to investigate the relationship between humans and the designed world, Bandung-based Habibi has shown his work in numerous Jakarta galleries, most recently Galeri Canna and Galeri Salihara. In 2014 he was awarded a residency at zκ/υ – Zentrum für Kunst und Urbanistik, Berlin.

Parkbang #1, 2014, found object (real benches), dimensions variable. Courtesy the artist

Leonardiansyah Allenda

His work is always based on research into different cultural relationships.



Born in Banyuwangi, Allenda studied sculpture at the Institut Teknologi Bandung. In 2011 he participated in the Hot Wave #3 residency programme in Cemeti Art House, Yogyakarta, and in 2012 he was awarded a residency at Britto Arts Trust, Dhaka. In 2014 his work was included in *Domesticity v*, the inaugural exhibition of Kayu, Lucie Fontaine's new gallery in Bali.

Structure No.1, 2014, transparent cloth, Brass, LED light & system, sound, paint, performance, dimensions variable. Courtesy Cemeti Art House, Yogyakarta

Lifepatch

It's a new-generation group whose works mix art, chemistry and new media to explore social and community issues in both practical and theoretical terms, using everyday elements of our tropical life.



A community-based organisation, with members based in Yogyakarta, Pekanbaru and Bogor, that works across art and science to develop and research technology that is useful to the community.

Moist Sense, 2012, new media, dimensions variable. Photo: Joan Prahara Bumi. Courtesy the artists

Melati Suryodarmo

Her work has made a strong breakthrough
in today's artworld. It's about fusing personal relationships
and political poems in performance art.



Suryodarmo studied under Marina Abramović and has staged her performance-based work internationally, including at *Videobrasil*, São Paulo; the 5th International Festival of Contemporary Dance, Venice; Manifesta 7; and the 50th Venice Biennale. For the past six years, Suryodarmo has been presenting her works widely in Indonesia and other Southeast Asian countries, including organising an annual Performance Art Laboratory Project in Surakarta.

ALE LINO, 2007, performance. Courtesy the artist

Mes 56

It's a photography group/movement that explores many different aspects of society, often delving deep inside of contemporary issues.



Nonprofit artist collective Mes 56 was founded in 2002 with the goal of taking an exploratory approach to contemporary photography, both in theory and practice. It operates along various models, including as a gallery, exchange programme, workshop and archive.

Holiday #2. Courtesy the artists

Papermoon Puppet Theater

They use the seemingly easy and child-friendly medium of puppetry to communicate a strong political message. Papermoon's *Mwathirika* (2010) is a work about the anticommunist purge following a failed coup in 1965 and has been a big inspiration.



The theatre company, founded by artists Maria Tri Sulistyani and Iwan Effendi, uses puppetry and multimedia performances to look at Indonesia's turbulent political history. They have toured throughout Indonesia, as well as the USA, South Korea, Malaysia and Singapore.

Mwathirika, 2010. Courtesy Papermoon Puppet Theatre

Setu Legi

He is a founding member of Taring Padi/Paddy Fang, has been active in the art and politics movement since 1998 in Yogyakarta, and continues to criticise the government through his own artworks today.



Born and based in Yogyakarta, Setu Legi is a founding member of Taring Padi, an art and cultural community that was formed in 1998 following the resignation of Indonesia's President Suharto. He now focuses more on his work as an individual (often featuring various readings of the complexity of environmental issues), and his multimedia installations have been shown in exhibitions ranging from Biennale Jogja XI and ID – Indonesia in Berlin (both 2011) to the 25th anniversary show of Cemeti Art House (2013), and in a solo exhibition at Ark Galerie (2014) in his hometown.

Tanah Merah, 2009–10, acrylic on linen, teracota, dimensions variable.

Photo: Setu Legi, aka Hestu Nugroho. Courtesy the artist

Wedhar Riyadi

He has strong painting skills and uses references to contemporary Indonesian popular culture in his work.



Based in Yogyakarta, Riyadi has seen his drawings, murals, comics, stickers, posters, illustrations and limited-edition toys and clothing included the 4th Asian Art Biennial (2013), in Taichung, Taiwan; the 7th Asia Pacific Triennial of Contemporary Art (2012), Brisbane; and the Jogja Biennale XI (2011). He's had solo shows at Yavuz Fine Art, Singapore (2014), and ARNDT, Berlin (2013).

Fade Out #2, 2014, oil on canvas, 150 × 150 cm. Photo: Andry William.
Courtesy of Ark Galerie, Yogyakarta & Yavuz Gallery, Singapore.