

sarasvati



Art Market Review

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THE GREAT WALL OF THE CHINESE ART MARKET

Zeng Fanzhi: A Dialogue between China and West

**Private Museum: Between Pride,
Heritage and Idealism**



Arin Dwiheartanto: Guggenheim via Resin

Suci Dian Hayati

This might be Arin's view to see such prestigious moment as a way to push himself even further and to go beyond this exhibition. He still has a long way to go in the art world, especially as he is seen as young artist in Indonesia's contemporary art scene, not yet as art-market-established as Agus Suwage, Heri Dono or Dadang Kristanto. No wonder, the fact that Arin was selected for this exhibition was surprising to many - even though artistically, Arin deserved to be chosen.

Resin, his signature choice of art media, is rather new - not only to himself but also to the whole contemporary artists in Indonesia. Before, he explored comics, caricature, manga and oil painting - until he finally 'found' this chemical compound called resin. This recent exploration is one of the factors why his work is displayed in Guggenheim Museum, New York - besides theme, aesthetics and also artistic considerations.

His choice of resin began with his dissatisfaction with oil paints he used when he did his Master of Fine Art in Central Saint Martin's College of Art & Design, London. Instead of using brush, Arin poured oil paints directly onto the canvas surface.

To create his work, he poured paints over and over again on the canvas. He often shook the canvas to various directions, so the drips of the paint would move all over the place and create a composition he wanted - with unusual texture. This resulted in a series of beautiful, different flower paintings.

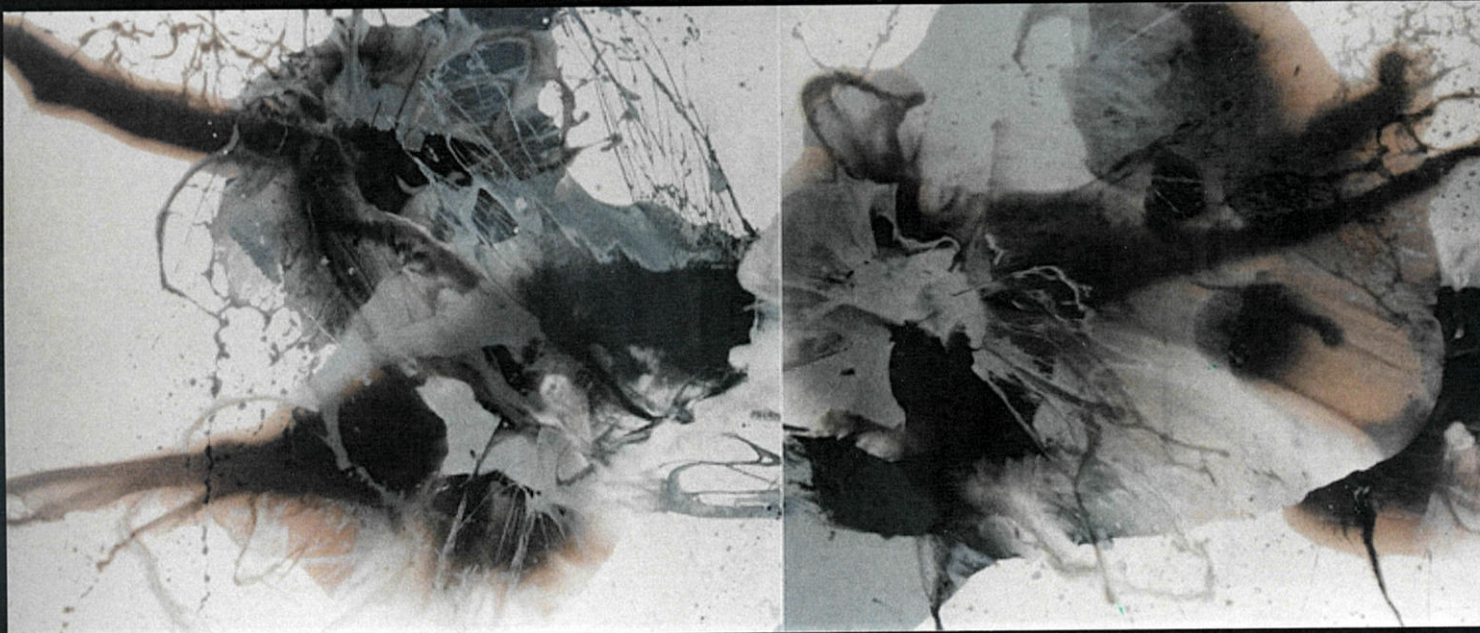
Yet Arin was still not happy with oil paints. Not only that oil painting took time to dry, but he also was thirsty with material and paint exploration as mediums. "I keep on thinking, why painting has to use canvas? Why oil paint? Can the medium become the painting itself?" said the 1999 Phillip Morris National Art Award recipient.

One day, Arin decided to throw away all of his brushes and changed into buckets, clay pitcher, can or jug to create drips and splashes of color while continuing his exploration on other media. In 2008, he accidentally experimented with resin, an industrial liquid synthetic materials which can be hardened into solid and transparent shapes in just one day. Arin admitted that, at that time, he did not think of using resin as his main medium.

At the beginning, Arin only used resin to cover the surface of his canvas to make it smooth and to create particular effect as he used

Believe in blessing in disguise, as this happened to Arin Dwiheartanto Sunaryo. When two potential buyers of *Volcanic Ash Series #4* cancelled, Country: Contemporary Art for South and Southeast Asia curator June Yap, part of Guggenheim UBS MAP Global Art Initiative, came to visit. It was the only work left from Arin's solo exhibition in Nadi Gallery from 22 February to 5 March 2012. Interested, Yap then brought his artwork to Guggenheim and included it as one of 22 works in the exhibition she curated.

It was a proud moment for Arin indeed, especially because no Indonesian artists have ever exhibited his or her works in Guggenheim. "Even my work has not yet reached Guggenheim," said Drs Sunaryo, Arin's father who is also a well-known Indonesian artist. Arin responded humbly. "Guggenheim is indeed one of an important community in modern art scene. Yet there are other communities as well. Besides, the selection of works exhibited in Guggenheim is highly subjective. If I may say, the whole thing is a different experience compared to exhibiting in other communities, and this is not yet my masterpiece," Arin said.



▲
Volcanic Ash Series #4, 2012

Merapi volcanic ash, pigmented resin mounted on wooden panel
146 x 547 cm (triptych)

oil paints on top of it. "Yet my work has never been neat, the resin dripped on the canvas edges then dried out. I became more and more interested in exploring the shape of resin drips on the canvas edge rather than checking whether the resin surface on the canvas was perfect or not," said Arin. From this "accident", Arin saw how resin created images he had been looking for. "It created an unexpected visual characteristics," explained this Art graduate from Bandung Institute of Technology.

Resin is actually not a new material. It has been used in toys, plates, car repair to false teeth. Resin is even use in mummy preservation. Using resin as art material however, is still new. Here Arin is viewed to create breakthrough in terms of materials and techniques.

Arin's resin arts also leaves the common rule of thumb in art painting – the use of brush. He dripped resin on the flat surface and created flat, smooth resin with color progression nuances. To him, this was such an emotional method because he could not predict the end result. "Quite often, it turned out as a disappointment, not as I expected. Yet sometimes, the end result is very surprising," he said.

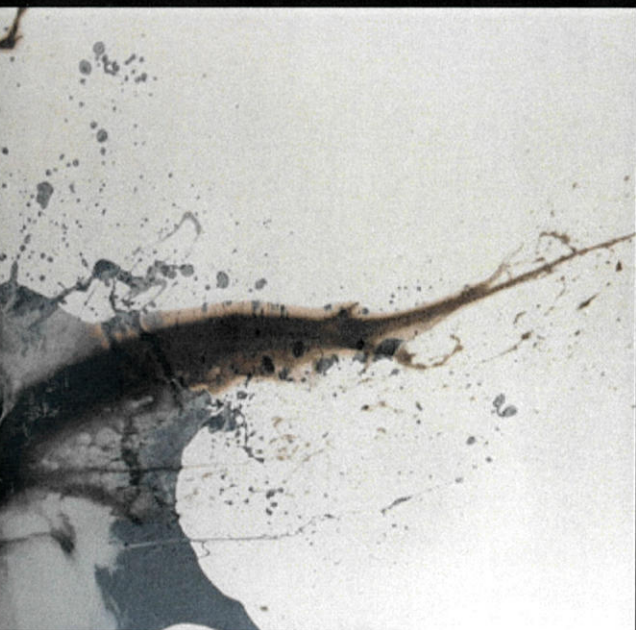
And such unexpected result brought him to Guggenheim. He never expected that his five-meter-sized *Volcanic Ash Series #4* would fit into June Yap's curatorial framework, when she conducted a number of interviews with arts and curators in Indonesia.

Arin assumed his work was chosen because it was in general, widely accepted. "There is no political element in it. It also speaks beyond Asia. Hence, anyone in the world would easily accept this. Meanwhile, this has local content and is by no means vulgar," said this glasses-wearing man.



▲
Stratum #4/ CMYCMK, 2011

Pigmented resin, digital print mounted on wooden panel
184, 5 x 144 cm



In *Volcanic Ash Series*, the local content is expressed through theme and materials used. Responding to the eruption of Merapi mountain, Arin mixed volcanic ashes into resin as his way to 'preserve' the tragedy. The result was unexpected. Volcanic ashes from Merapi created different illusion and color compared to his previous works.

"Each of us can contribute to this tragedy and express sympathies in various ways. I express mine by making Merapi volcanic ash as part of the medium," explained the painter who had been involved in the 20th Asian International Art Exhibition in Ayala, Manila, the Philippines.

In the last couple of years, Arin explored new methods using resin. He mixed digital prints into some of his new works. This can be seen in CMYK (an abbreviation of Cyan, Magenta, Yellow and Black/Key) series, in which not only Arin displayed paintings with bursts of bright color, he also 'trapped' himself in the paintings through photographic images he inserted behind transparent resin layer.

"I displayed resin with its colors as well as photographic image, made in such a way to create connection between the back and front dimensions. As a result, this is not just an abstract painting but also figurative," said Arin.

With this method, Arin hopes that the audience will capture not just two dimension of resin layer, but also its third dimension. "Not only do they see the result but they also know the process, as if the audience is watching me pouring paint in front of them," he said. In his work, Arin is conscious of the ecological and conservation aspects of his works. This can be seen from his recycled resin 'waste' artworks. "My works have to be eco-friendly. I recycle remains of resin, including failed works," said Arin. Resin remains are recycled into a mosaic of boxes and poles. Artists' breakthrough exploration should go beyond theme but also to include medium and technique – and Arin Dwiheartanto Sunaryo has achieved this. ✨

Born

1978 Bandung, Indonesia

Education

- 2005 MA (Fine Art) Central Saint Martin's College of Art & Design, London, United Kingdom
- 2001 MA, Institut Teknologi Bandung, FSRD (Faculty of Fine Art and Design, majoring in painting, Indonesia

Solo Exhibitions

- 2012 **frozen | stratum**, Nadi Gallery Jakarta, Indonesia
- 2010 **Fluid Friction #2**, Sigiarts Jakarta, Indonesia
- 2007 **Liquid Friction**, Artipoli Gallery, Nordeen, Netherland
- 2006 **Unstable ground**, Toni Heath Gallery, London, UK
- 2000 **Machine Head**, Koong Gallery, Jakarta, Indonesia

Selected Group Exhibitions

- 2012 **Marcel Duchamp in Southeast Asia**, Equator Art Project, Gillman Barracks, Singapore
Gallery Rachel Opening, Jakarta, Indonesia
- 2011 1001 Doors to reinvent traditions, Gallery Ciputra, Jakarta, Indonesia
- 2010 **Moment to abstract**, Canna Gallery, Jakarta, Indonesia
Critical Point, Edwin Gallery, Jakarta, Indonesia
- 2009 **EUROART open studios 2009**, London UK
- 2008 **Ganti Oli**, Vallentine Willie Fine Art, Singapore
Manifesto, National Gallery Jakarta, Indonesia
- 2007 **Young Masters**, Toni Heath Gallery London, UK
- 2006 **Displaced on arrival**, **Grace Exhibition Space**, New York
USA The 21th Asian International Art Exhibition, Singapore
- 2005 **The 20th Asian International Art Exhibition**, Ayala Museum, Manila, Philippines
Leviathan, Candid Gallery, London, UK

Selected Awards

- 2002 **Indofood Art Award**, National Museum, Indonesia
- 2000 **Top 25, Asia-Europe Young Artist Painting Competition**, South Korea
- 1999 **Phillip Morris National Art Award**, National Gallery, Jakarta, Indonesia
- 1997 **PEKSIMINAS, National Art Student Competition**, Indonesia