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The last three decades of artistic production in Indonesia: 25 years of Cemeti Art House and the status of curating contemporary art.

A review by Mella Jaarsma and Enin Supriyanto
Introduction and moderation: Katerina Valdivia Bruch

April 27th, 4.00 pm at ARNDT Berlin

Indonesian contemporary art is in vogue: exhibitions in London, Paris, Rome and now Venice - this year's Venice Biennale will have its Indonesian Pavillion - confirm the trend of Indonesian contemporary art in the European art circuit. Apart from the international market boom, Indonesia's arts scene has an interesting development that is noteworthy to talk about.

Following the exhibition on view at the gallery, the talk will give a short review on the status of arts production in Indonesia in the last three decades. At that time, Indonesia was living under a dictatorship that lasted for more than three decades (1967-1998). Under this regime, art was influenced not only by the sociopolitical environment, but also by the entrance of the neoliberal economy opened and promoted by Suharto's government. In this regard, conceptual artists started to flourish, such as FX Harsono, a member of the GSRB (Gerakan Seni Rupa Baru: New Arts Movement) and one of the pioneers who traced the path for the younger generations. In the 90s, Indonesian contemporary artists gained international attention, mainly in the Southeast Asian region, Japan and Australia, participating for instance in exhibitions at the Fukuoka Asian Art Museum or the Asia Pacific Triennial of Contemporary Art at the Queensland Art Gallery in Brisbane. Back then, artists were strongly committed to the sociopolitical situation of the country.

In this context, Cemeti Art House played a major role in the internationalisation of Indonesian contemporary art. Founded in 1988 by Mella Jaarsma and Nindityo Adipurnomo, it was one of the first artist initiatives dedicated to foster the discourse about art and society, organising art exhibitions and encouraging arts production, but also establishing an international network through their artist in residency programmes. Since its beginning, it has collaborated with a number of institutions generating echoes beyond Indonesia's boundaries.

This year, Cemeti is celebrating its 25 years of existence, a reason to celebrate and to review about the past and present of contemporary art in Indonesia. During the talk, Mella Jaarsma will speak about Cemeti and its role in shaping Indonesia's art scene.

With the beginning of the new democracy, Indonesia had a painting boom particularly popular at auction houses. Nowadays, the arts scene is more involved in a global art discourse highly influenced by social networks and the internet, but also by art fairs and other art market oriented forces. In the absence of public funding for contemporary arts, private initiatives, galleries and artist-run spaces supply this gap. Under these circumstances, curators generally work for galleries supporting their commercial intentions. Hence, curators usually move across art journalism or were former artists working as exhibition makers.

Enin Supriyanto is one of the few established curators dedicated to publish texts about contemporary art, giving talks and editing catalogues for a local and an international audience. During the talk, he will give us a glimpse about the state of curating in Indonesia and the development of contemporary art discourse despite the current trend of the art market.

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About the speakers:

Mella Jaarsma (1960, the Netherlands) is a visual artist and co-director of Cemeti Art House, one of the major artist initiatives in Indonesia. She has participated in a number of local and international exhibitions, including the Yokohama Triennale, the Gwangju Biennale and the Third Asia Pacific Triennial of Contemporary Art. Her work has been exhibited in international art institutions, such as Espace Culturel Louis Vuitton in Paris, MACRO in Rome, SAM (Singapore Art Museum) in Singapore, KIASMA Museum in Helsinki, the Museum of Contemporary Art in Taipei and The Royal Academy of Arts in London. Together with Nindityo Adipurnomo, she received the John D. Rockefeller 3rd Award, New York, USA (2006), the Academic Art Award #2 from Jogja Gallery/Indonesia Institute of the Arts, Yogyakarta (2008) and the Yogyakarta Biennale Art Award (2010). Her work is part of international collections, such as the Queensland Art Gallery and the Singapore Art Museum. Mella is board member of the Indonesian Visual Art Archive (IVAA) and of the Jogja Biennale Foundation. The artist lives and works in Yogyakarta.
www.mellajaarsma.com
www.cemetiarthouse.com

Enin Supriyanto is an independent curator and writer. He curates exhibitions and contributes with essays for various art publications in Indonesia and abroad. Among his publications are *Indonesian Contemporary Art Now*, edited by Marc Bollandsee and Enin Supriyanto (Singapore: SNP Editions, 2007), *Agus Suwage: Still Crazy After All These Years*, edited by Enin Supriyanto, Adeline Ooi, Beverly Yong (Yogyakarta: Studio Biru, 2010). He has curated a number of exhibitions with Indonesian contemporary artists, such as the solo exhibition *Agus Suwage: Still Crazy After All These Years* (Jogja National Museum, Yogyakarta, and Selasar Sunaryo Art Space, Bandung, 2009), *Beyond The Dutch* (co-curated with Meta Knol, Centraal Museum Utrecht, The Netherlands, 2009) and *Handiwirman Saputra: No Roots, No Shoots* (co-curated with Agung Hujatnikajennong, National Gallery, Jakarta, 2011). Currently, he is working as Project Officer of the Equator International Symposium, a parallel event of the upcoming Jogja Biennale, and is part of the editorial board of a book publication about the GSRB. He lives and works in Jakarta.

Katerina Valdivia Bruch is a Berlin-based independent curator and art critic. She has curated exhibitions for a number of institutions, including ZKM-Center for Art and Media Karlsruhe, Bielefelder Kunstverein (Bielefeld), CCCB (Barcelona), Instituto Cervantes (Berlin and Munich), Instituto Cultural de Leon (Mexico), Para/Site Art Space (Hong Kong), and the Institute of Contemporary Arts Singapore, LASALLE College of the Arts. In 2008, she was co-curator of the Prague Triennale at the National Gallery in Prague. Besides her work as a curator, she contributes with essays and articles for art publications and magazines. Since 2009, she has organised a number of talks and exhibitions on Indonesian contemporary art.
www.artatak.net

The talk is organised and conceptualised by Katerina Valdivia Bruch with the support of ARNDT Berlin.

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