

SINTA TANTRA



A British artist of Balinese descent, Sinta Tantra was born in New York in 1979. She studied at the Slade School of Fine Art, University College London 1999-2003 and at the Royal Academy Schools London 2004-06. In 2017 she was the first recipient of the Bridget Riley Drawing Fellowship at The British School at Rome. Tantra currently lives in between London and Bali.

Highly regarded for her site-specific murals and installations in the public realm, commissions include; Karachi Biennale (2019); Sharjah Islamic Art Festival (2019); Honor Hills, Seoul commissioned by Hyundai (2019); Facebook HQ London (2018); Lee Tung Avenue, Hong Kong (2018); Folkestone Triennial UK (2017); Newnham College, Cambridge University (2016); Songdo South Korea (2015); Royal British Society of Sculptors (2013); Liverpool Biennial UK (2012); Southbank Centre (2007).

Solo shows include: Modern Times (Kristin Hjellegjerde Gallery, London 2020); Your Private Sky (Kristin Hjellegjerde Gallery, London 2018); A House in Bali (ISA Art Advisory, Jakarta 2017); Flatland: A Romance of Many Dimensions (Pearl Lam Gallery, Hong Kong 2016) and Fantastic Chromatic (Kristin Hjellegjerde Gallery, London 2015). International group shows include: On the Nature of Botanical Gardens, (Framer Framed, Amsterdam 2020), Strangers in Town (Kristin Hjellegjerde Gallery, Berlin 2019), Woven & Illuminated, (Kristin Hjellegjerde Gallery, Berlin 2019), Voyage to Indonesia, The World Bank, Washington (2018); Tetap Terang / Always Bright, ISA Jakarta 2018; High Noon, Accademia Belle Arti di Rome, Rome (2017), Quotidian,

Left: *The Eccentricity of Zero* – Holland Park, London, 2013 commissioned by RBSS

Pearl Lam Gallery, Shanghai (2017). Awards include: British Council's International Development Award (2014) and The Pyramid Deutsche Bank Award (2006).

IN HER OWN WORDS

Graphic shapes, bold lines, and at times tropical motifs, wrap around architectural spaces such as buildings, bridges, public squares and parks. As an artist, I'm interested in colour and form occupying the liminal space between two-and three-dimensions. I am drawn to working on an architectural scale, creating works that question the decorative, functional and social role of art, turning the white cube space inside out.

Drawing is always the starting point for my practice, exploring the slippage between the two and the three-dimensional world – the clarity of line, its distortion, the push and pull. My paintings, installations and sculptures are designed on the computer first and like blueprints, are transferred to the surface or site and then executed. Once lines are marked, colours are systematically added, layer by layer. I consider my process as something physical and sculptural: 'built' rather than 'emerged', 'cut' rather than 'blended'.

I have close-knit teams both in my studios in London and Indonesia. The way I work is perhaps more akin to that of an architect/designer than a traditional artist. This 'blueprint' approach gives me the flexibility to work with fabricators from all over the world. From sculpture foundries in England to sign painters in Pakistan, my initial drawings become a universal language to realise my final projects.

I take inspiration from a wide range of sources from classic Hollywood movies with Marilyn Monroe, Audrey Hepburn and Charlie Chaplin to modernist artists like Eileen Grey, Sonia Delaunay, Annie Albers and visionaries such as Buckminster Fuller and



Horizon to Horizon, 2019 commissioned Sharjah Islamic Arts Festival

A Beautiful Sunset Mistaken For a Dawn, 2012 commissioned by Canary Wharf Group, London



Walter Gropius. You could say I have a fondness for old fashioned glamour combined with something utopian. What I like most about these people are their interdisciplinary ways of working and their relentless drive to push boundaries between art and life.

These days, I spend a lot of my time in Bali, where most of my family continue to live. While I regularly show and exhibit in Europe, Asia, and more recently, the Middle East, Bali has always been a significant influence on my art, giving me a sense of who I am and my origins. Daily activities in the village are still centred around religious ceremonies where activities such as dance, music and art are frequently performed. The island's position on the equator gives a unique and beautiful light on its natural surroundings and I try to capture these bold colours into my work.

Two generations ago, my Balinese grandparents would have been able to carve and weave and this is something I want to continue with my art. In some of my more recent pieces, I have pushed myself to work beyond digital technology and work with Balinese craftsmen to make traditional woven tapestries and textiles. I have also been experimenting with wood-carving and stone-carving as a means of creating new art. In this way, I am somehow piecing together parts of my identity merging together the past with the present and then back again.

As I continue to grow as an artist, I have adapted in ways that I could not have known or foreseen. Quite often, the sites that I'm working on are immensely large and physically challenging. Over the years, I've developed good communication skills, especially working in non-English speaking countries, looking at the bigger picture to make the process more collaborative. In a male-dominated practice such as sculpture, especially where female Asian artists are few and far between, I hope my work can set a positive change for a younger generation of artists to emerge.