

'Indonesian Contemporary Art and Design 13 - Feel Good Lab'  
Amanda Ariawan

**INDONESIAN  
CONTEMPORARY  
ART AND DESIGN 13**



YAYASAN  
DESIGN ART  
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STRATEGIC PARTNERS

JAKARTA  
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Jakarta  
Creative



wonderful  
indonesia

KEN  
2023

AHTURA

grandkemang  
JAKARTA

Tribute to Benjamin Suaeb  
 (Yayasan Benjamin Suaeb in  
 collaboration with Studio Woor,  
 La Munai Records, Cut & Rescue  
 Arahmaiani  
 Entang Wiharso  
 Adhi Nugraha  
 Irene Agriyana  
 Jalanpular (Handiwiroman  
 Saputra, Kurniawan, M. M.  
 Irfan, Sigit Purnomo, Prayitno)  
 Mit Jai Inn  
 Ramadhan Bou  
 Sinta Tantra  
 Adin Ibrahim x Asmara Abigail  
 Aldri Indrayana  
 Alex Abbad x VIRO  
 Alfaz Syam (Buttonnetwork)  
 Couture Concrete Lab  
 Eames Demetrios  
 Fadrié  
 Galih Johar & RSA All Day  
 Habitat Design Group  
 Indra Dodi  
 Museum Benda  
 Naufal Abshar  
 Nidiya Kusmaya  
 No-To-Scale\* x Mebelle  
 Octo Cornelius  
 öd architecture studio x MYCL-  
 Mycotech Lab  
 Ourchetype  
 Parti Gastronomi  
 Rara Sekar  
 Sasanti Puri Ardini  
 Ari Puguh  
 Arum Larasati Winarso, Auster  
 Premakara, Dearista Nooria  
 Kusuma  
 Forrest Wong  
 Ivonne Kani  
 Kancata  
 Lee Mok Yee (In collaboration  
 with FABU)  
 Mahaputra Vito  
 Məkmur Djaja  
 Mater Design Lab  
 Meita Meilita  
 Otak Atik Kotak  
 Ressa Rizky Mutiara  
 Reza Kutjh  
 Rima Aisha & Aditya Suwito  
 Sabiq Hibatulbaqi  
 Sight At Site  
 Studio Pancaroba  
 SZKUTY  
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 Veronica Ajeng Larasati  
 Erasmus Huis: Arike Gill  
 British Council (In collaboration  
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 Indonesia Design Development  
 Center (IDDC)  
 Japan Foundation: NOSIGNER  
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# INDONESIAN CONTEMPORARY ART AND DESIGN



Feel-Good Lab or “FGL,” is a contemplation and celebration of the transformative power of emotions in creative exploration. Through this exhibition, ICAD 13 endeavors to create a space where artists, designers, and the public alike can delve into their emotions, activate

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their senses, and rework their feelings. This curatorial statement puts forward the acts of experimenting, playing, and tinkering as essential expressions of our curiosities, desires, and needs.





Feel-Good Lab atau "FG<sup>L</sup>" adalah sebuah kontemplasi dan perayaan atas kekuatan transformatif emosi untuk mengeksplorasi kreativitas. Melalui pameran ini, ICAD 13 berupaya menciptakan ruang bagi para seniman, desainer, dan publik untuk menyelami emosi, mengaktifkan indera dan mengolah kembali perasaan mereka. Pernyataan kuratorial ini menekankan aktivitas bereksperimen, bermain, dan kesenangan dalam bekerja sebagai ekspresi mendasar dari keingintahuan, keinginan, dan kebutuhan kita.

Tema ini juga menegaskan kedaulatan kita untuk menumbuhkan kesejahteraan emosional dalam setiap praktik di keseharian kita – baik itu pengalaman murni manusia atau hasil dialog kita dengan subjek non-manusia (teknologi). Sebagai contoh untuk yang terakhir adalah proses kreasi *o.d* architecture studio yang mengadopsi prinsip material komposit agregat-perekat; menggabungkan limbah perkebunan dengan jamur sebagai upaya mendaur naik produk berbasis biologis.

Karya seni, yang mencakup beragam teknik, dari instalasi hingga pertunjukan, menawarkan eksplorasi mendalam yang menghubungkan satu aspek dengan aspek lainnya, tapi tidak terbatas pada tema-tema pokok berikut ini: perempuan dan kepedulian, alam dan kesejahteraan emosional, perjuangan hidup dan humor, yang nyata dan imajiner, kenangan pribadi dan kolektif.

#### PEREMPUAN DAN KEPEDULIAN

Ressa Rizky Mutiara dengan penuh kelembutan menceritakan perjalanan seorang ibu selama setahun, mengangkat hubungan mendalam antara mengAShli dan cinta. Meita memberikan contoh pengembalian kemurnian jiwa anak-anak yang tidak berdosa, menggarisbawahi betapa pentingnya pengasuhan. Karya Arahmaiani secara kritis memilin aktivisme artistik dengan kesuburan perempuan, subjek yang sering berada di bawah kendali institusional.

#### ALAM DAN KESEJAHTERAAN EMOSI

Irene Agrivina mengundang eksplorasi kontemplatif mengenai keterkaitan manusia dan bioma dari beragam perspektif dan ekosistem. Pengalaman kamar tidur holistik menanti, ditransformasi oleh tiga seniman menggunakan material alami dan limbah: Nidiya Kusmaya, Widi Pangestu, dan Sasanti Puri Ardini. Pendekatan Rara Sekar yang seru dan menyenangkan dalam memasukkan alam ke konteks lingkungan perkotaan memperkuat simbiosis ini.

#### PERJUANGAN HIDUP DAN HUMOR

Naufal Abshar menggunakan humor sebagai alat yang ampuh untuk memperlihatkan ketidakacuhan kita dan dampaknya terhadap masyarakat. Dalam persembahan untuk Benyamin Sueab, seorang ikon yang pengaruhnya tetap bertahan dalam budaya pop Indonesia, anak-anak muda kreatif berkolaborasi mengungkap kehidupan sang seniman yang dinamis, kata-katanya yang lucu namun kritis, dan pendekatan multisegi dalam kreasi seni.

#### YANG NYATA DAN IMAJINER

Instalasi patung Sinta Tantra yang mengalir darah Bali-nya, menjembatani masa lalu, masa kini, dan masa depan, menawarkan portal transenden ke alam semesta lain. Terowongan Jalanpulung menyambut sebagai pintu gerbang yang membius pengunjung untuk hanyut ke dalam pusaran pameran, memberikan momen relaksasi, menyelimuti bangunan dengan lanskap imajiner.

#### KENANGAN PRIBADI DAN KOLEKTIF

Karya-karya Octo Cornelius tersaji sebagai bukti visual kerinduan manusia akan konektivitas untuk mengisi kekosongan dalam diri kita, terinspirasi oleh kisah pribadinya dalam mengatasi kesedihan. Arsip grafis Parti Gastronomi tentang kecap Indonesia merupakan sebuah upaya untuk meneguhkan warisan kuliner bersama yang menghubungkan selera dengan memori kolektif nasional.

Dengan lebih dari 50 karya seni yang mencakup banyak tema lainnya – yang tidak bisa lagi kita pisahkan saat ini –, "FG<sup>L</sup>" menawarkan pengalaman yang selalu berubah, mengundang semua yang masuk untuk membuka keran emosi yang membandung, sembari menawarkan sebuah tempat aman untuk melebur dalam sebuah introspeksi kolektif.

## “Feel-Good” Decoded: Behind the Collaborative Works in ICAD 13

As one of two curators of the Indonesian Contemporary Art and Design (ICAD) 13: Feel-Good Lab, collaborating with Prananda L Malasan, the endeavor to curate a show centered around “feel-good” amidst the backdrop of global conflicts presents a

challenging juxtaposition. The inherent contradictions between the theme of well-being and the stark realities of the world outside the exhibition space add layers of complexity to the showcase.

### THE CURATORIAL CHALLENGE

The concept of “feel-good” often invokes images of joy, positivity, and personal contentment. It often finds its place in popular culture, associated with music, movies, and other entertainment. However, this exhibition challenges the superficial understanding of the term, aiming to reclaim it as something personal and earned, rather than taken for granted. The curated works invite artists and designers to critically reflect on the notion and explore their agency in achieving a state of well-being through creation.

Certainly, curating a show with this theme during a period marked by socio-political turmoils prompts a critical examination of the complexities inherent in exploring personal well-being against a global landscape filled with challenges. This writing delves into the intricacies of several collaborative works presented at ICAD 13: Feel-Good Lab, offering a nuanced analysis that acknowledges both personal emotions and the external realities that demand our attention. Collaboration indeed lies as one of the playful methods explored in this exhibition, which is viewed as a space for experimentation of feelings.



As an example of emotional exploration, adhering to the concept of the extinction of experience that was conceived by ecologist Robert Pyle, through Belantara (2023), Rara Sekar and Rangga Kuzuma explore the decline in human interaction with nature, and imagines nature as an “intermediate space”; a place where humans seek a sanctuary before returning to the fatigue and their life routines. The two-minute sound piece by Rara can be experienced in an elevator as a space of “in-between”, within which Rangga weaves found objects with wild “rambanan” (leaves), presenting them in a variety of shapes, colors, and textures, that are left alive but let to die and fall naturally during the exhibition.

### THE PARADOX IN JALANPULANG'S MONUMENTAL INSTALLATION

“INNERSCAPE” (2023) emerges as a paradoxical oasis within the bustling city of Jakarta. A collective consisting of Handiwirman Saputra, Kokok P. Sancoko, M. Irfan, Sigit Pius Kuncoro, and Yuli Prayitno, Jalanpulang responds to the facade of the grandkemang Jakarta hotel building – being the exhibition's entrance – and gives it a new context that is more in tune with its surroundings, by neutralising the primary colors in the building, and softening the austere architectural forms by wrapping it with an extensive net. The concept of an “escape” space challenges the urbanite's relationship with their environment, suggesting that an aesthetic retreat can serve as an “anesthesia bridge” to temporarily disconnect from the demands of everyday life. The visual transformation of the hotel into a hypnotic landscape raises critical questions about the nature of urban liberation.



While the intent of *Jalanpulang* is to provide a meditative journey in between two contrasting spaces - that of the streets and that of the hotel - the question arises: does this meditative escape truly address the root causes of urban stress, or does it merely provide an illusion of liberation? In the context of a show dedicated to well-being, it becomes crucial to explore whether such aesthetic interventions contribute meaningfully to the urban experience or serve as a temporary distraction. The paradox of desiring freedom while creating partitions invites contemplation on the genuine pursuit of well-being.

#### IDENTITY EXPLORATION AMIDST GLOBAL UNREST

The interactive installation, "Transcendence Unveiled" (2023), by Arum Larasati, Austera Premakara, and Dearista Nooria, attempts to reveal the buried aspects of individual identities. Visitors are invited to fill out a set of questions regarding their personality through a machine, and the answers will appear in the form of a unique and colourfully shaped character representing their inner personality. Then, these characters will inhabit an alternate world which has a unique game aesthetics. By allowing the essence of oneself to appear in concrete form, the designers invite visitors to reflect on their own authentic identities.

Within the global context of conflict, can individual identity exploration truly occur in isolation from the collective distress permeating society? While the installation encourages visitors to delve into their inner selves, the external world's turmoil inevitably seeps into this introspective journey. The juxtaposition of colorful, stylized characters against an alternate world also prompts reflection on whether individual well-being can genuinely be achieved in the digital age.



#### AESTHETICS IN THE FACE OF REALITY

The collaboration between two friends, Asmara Abigail and Adin Ibrahim, titled "La Stanza di Asmara" (2023), merges design, new material production, and performance video. The project combines Adin's love for Italian postmodernism style of the 1970s and mainly the colour purple; a hue that best represents Asmara, as well as the femininity and freedom attached to her. The installation invites visitors to explore a room full of light play and strong purple hues from the arranged lamps.

A collaborative film is incorporated into the installation, introducing an additional dimension. As Asmara dances in response to the space, accompanied by Ricky Surya Virgana's music, a palpable synergy emerges. Yet, within the confines of this aesthetic harmony lies a tension—a juxtaposition of artistic beauty, and intimate self-expression of a woman, against the realities that lie beyond the purple-tinted glass box.



#### THE DUALITY OF FUNCTIONALITY AND ARTISTIC INTENT

The collaborative project "Bolak-Balik" (2023) by No-to-scale and Mebelle successfully blurs the lines between furniture and sculpture. Yet, in the current global landscape, does the emphasis on functionality risk overshadowing the potential



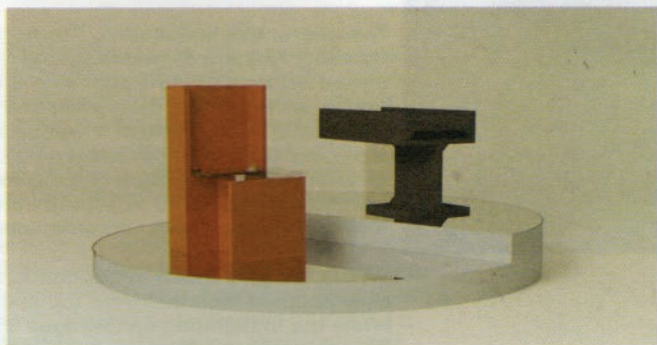
for profound artistic expression? The multi-functional piece addresses essential room needs like seating, storage, and display, optimising living spaces through its efficient design. It offers users the freedom to define its utility, aligning with a non-prescriptive design philosophy. Born out of a commitment to sustainability and cost-effective shipping, the project showcases regional craftsmanship and local sourcing.

While the project admirably promotes sustainability and cross-border collaboration, the delicate balance between utility and artistic expression becomes a focal point for discussion. To further challenge this, the designers invited the experimental dance group *Dansity* to choreograph a piece that explores the relationship between the body and the object.

#### SUSTAINABILITY ENDEAVOR

Mater Design Lab's "STREAM" (2023) introduces soy paper as a sustainable material produced from tofu industry waste. Tofu, fermented soybean that is familiar to many Indonesians, has a fairly large industry in the country. Unfortunately, the liquid waste produced from the tofu industry ruins water quality and aquatic ecosystems.

Based on this issue, the collective experimented and created soy paper, which is a unique material that is produced by processing liquid waste from tofu production into semi-transparent soy paper for lampshades. Modular and interlocking, these

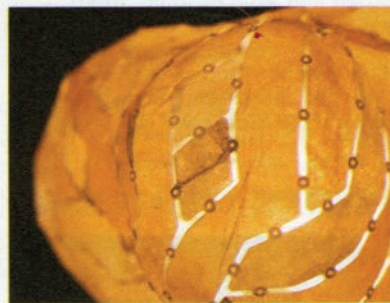


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three-dimensional objects can be shaped according to the users' needs, combining manual and digital technology such as application and coding.



The innovative use of soy paper as a lampshade material presents a commendable effort in sustainability. Nevertheless, in the broader context of environmental crises and socio-political challenges, one may question whether such material innovation could contribute meaningfully to addressing the pressing global issues, or risks becoming a symbolic gesture amidst the magnitude of real-world concerns.

#### DECONSTRUCTING OBJECT MEMORY

In Galih Johar's "Macak No. 1" (2023), the artist boldly challenges the traditional notion of object memory, introducing a critical yet humorous perspective that questions the established values and interpretations assigned to everyday objects. The essence of Johar's work lies in dismantling the conventional functions and memories attached to objects, creating a space for unconventional interpretations and dialogues.

"Macak," an acronym for "Manipulative Alteration Catwalk," transforms some of his selected objects into dysfunctional or obsolete fashion items. In collaboration with RSA All Day—a cultural channel encompassing skateboarding, music, and streetwear—Johar presents five distinct works that challenge the conventional understanding of fashion objects. By pushing the boundaries of conventional interpretation, Galih Johar encourages viewers to engage critically with the objects presented,



inviting them to participate actively in the reconstruction of meaning.

#### THE BEDROOM RESPONDED: INDIVIDUAL WELL-BEING VS. COLLECTIVE STRUGGLE

The collaborative synergy between Nidiya Kusmaya, Sasanti Puri Ardini, and Widi unfolds within a shared space, specifically manifested in one of the hotel bedrooms. For years, Nidiya Kusmaya has embarked on an experimental journey, harnessing the potential of leftover food waste and industrial discards to create distinctive hues. This alchemical process involved the symbiosis of microorganisms and waste within the soil, resulting in pigments. Through "Coal Particles" (2023), she marries pigment with rice paper and fabric to express her concerns on the coal mining in Kalimantan.

Sasanti Puri Ardini attempts to provide a solution by experimenting and giving new life to failed ceramic products, especially those made out of clay. Here, Ardini presents two types of tiles: The base material of "Si Cera" (2023) is the result of an experiment using mixed clay and glaze waste, which are then formed into modular tiles, while TeraMik (2023) tiles are made by mixing semi-finished ceramic waste ("bisque") and concrete. The many combinations of colours and shapes enables this module configuration to be arranged into various compositions.



Widi Pangestu's exploration of handmade paper from natural materials represents a deep connection with nature and craftsmanship. Widi exhibits his latest series of works in the form of sheets of paper, which resulted from his experiments in creating paper by using various natural fibers with screen printing technique. In response to the hotel room, Widi was inspired by shōji, which are interior partitions used in traditional Japanese houses, to expose the thinness and beauty of paper.

In this collaborative venture, the artists embark on a visual exploration of silence and tranquility, encapsulating the essence of well-being. Yet, the challenge within the broader discourse of environmental sustainability lies in whether these artistic experiments can transcend their aesthetic appeal and contribute meaningfully to the larger conversations about waste management and ecological balance.

#### LIGHTING THE PATH TO SOCIAL ENGAGEMENT

Mit Jain Inn's "Marking Lights" (2023) emerges as a unique interplay of oil on papier-mâché and lights, challenging the conventional boundaries of artistic expression. Inspired by the communal ethos of his previous project, "Bangkok Apartments" (2022), Jain Inn seamlessly integrates artistic creation with collective existence. The artwork draws inspiration from the Bai Sema, traditional boundary stones placed before the construction of Buddhist temples. In Jain Inn's hands, these stones become a symbol of collective presence, a declaration woven into the very fabric of the community.

Mit's unconventional approach extends beyond the material and into the realm of social engagement. The absence of a formal purchase agreement challenges established norms of the art market, emphasizing a more communal and inclusive perspective. The planned distribution of the artworks to various recipients, from historians to cultural workers, raises



questions about the role of art in societal exchanges. As an exchange to receiving the artwork, these recipients are to spend time with children through various ways; teaching, collaborating with or conducting activities for them. So while we have seen works that are results of collaborative efforts, Mit's work lends a possibility for these personages to become, in a way, his collaborators. However, as we delve into this collaborative endeavor the question poses: does the act of giving away artworks risk diminishing their intrinsic value, or does it amplify their significance as a shared cultural experience?

#### NAVIGATING CONTRADICTIONS

Curating a show entitled "Feel-Good Lab" in the midst of global challenges requires navigating the contradictions inherent in exploring personal well-being within the broader context of collective struggle. The critical perspectives shared underscore the challenges of reconciling artistic expression, aestheticism, and functionality with the pressing issues that demand attention outside the exhibition space.

As a curator, the delicate task has been in regards to fostering dialogues that acknowledge the complexities of the world, while inviting viewers to engage critically with the curated works, prompting a nuanced understanding of well-being amidst the turbulence of the current global landscape. The curatorial journey involved not only presenting aesthetically-pleasing works that immediately sends us to the notion of "feel-good", but also initiating discussions that transcend the exhibition space into a critical discourse.

These collaborative works showcased at ICAD 13: Feel-Good Lab become not just expressions of artistic prowess but mirrors reflecting the intricate interplay between

the personal and the global. The responsibility of the exhibition lies in facilitating a discourse that goes beyond the immediate aesthetics, to inviting viewers to question, reflect, and engage with the world both inside and outside the curated space.

ICAD 13: Feel-Good Lab was held  
from 13 October-26 November 2023  
at grandkemang Jakarta hotel.

Amanda Ariawan  
November 2023

# TIRTA TAWAR

2023

Glass, aluminium, Balinese  
rock, and clay pot  
Variable dimensions

N°  
09

2023

Kaca, aluminium, batu Bali,  
dan pot tanah liat  
Dimensi beragam



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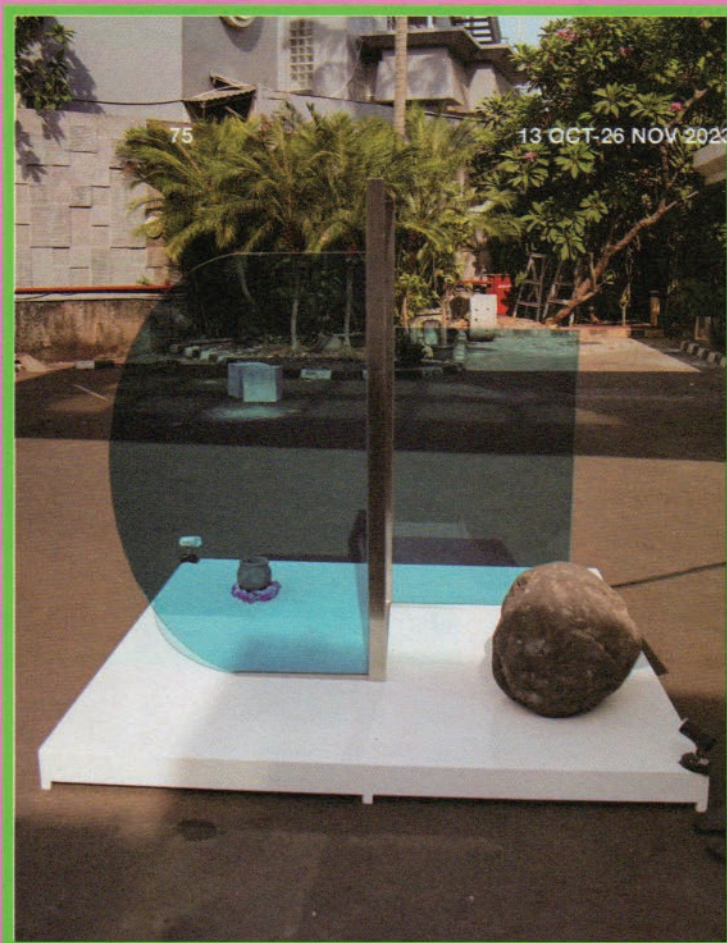
## IN FOCUS

# SINTA TANTRA

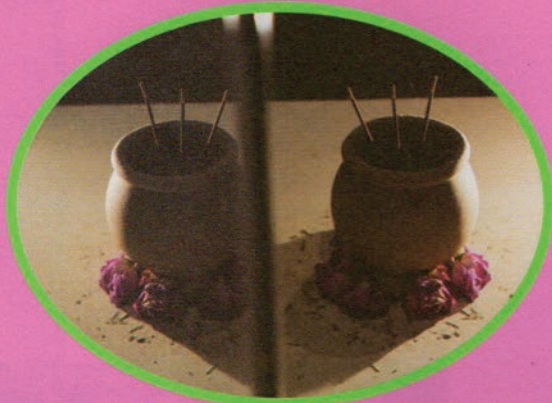
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Inspired by her Balinese heritage, artist Sinta Tantra creates a sculptural installation that unifies past, present and future, offering a window to another world, a portal to another universe. Walking around the sculpture, we see a rectangular steel frame standing proudly between two blue glass panels, overlapping like ocean tides or rivers that merge. Incense sticks and flowers reflect the idea of abundance and joy, ritual and purpose. The Balinese black rock represents a natural order, balance, grounding our sense of self - it is also a nod to Tantra's ancestors, who came from a lineage of Balinese stone carvers. In this installation, we see all elements represented: water, earth, fire, and air.



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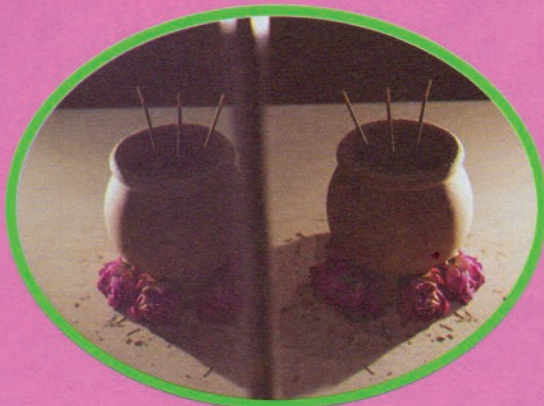
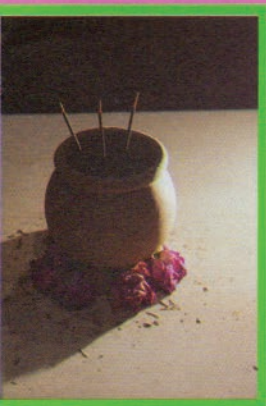
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Sinta Tantra, a Balinese artist born in 1979, operates between the UK and Indonesia. A graduate of London's Slade School of Fine Art and the Royal Academy, she blends influences from Bauhaus to Balinese heritage in her artwork. Early career challenges helped her develop a multifaceted artistic approach that transcends Indonesian traditional boundaries.

Terinspirasi warisan budaya Bali, seniman Sinta Tantra menciptakan instalasi pahatan yang menyatukan waktu masa lalu, masa kini, dan masa depan; guna mempersembahkan jendela ke dunia lain, sebuah portal ke alam semesta lain. Ketika berjalan mengelilingi patung pahatannya, pengunjung dapat melihat rangka baja berbentuk persegi panjang yang berdiri gagah di antara dua panel kaca berwarna biru. Mereka saling tumpah tindih bak pasang surut air laut atau sungai yang menyatu. Dupa dan bunga pada karya ini mencerminkan gagasan mengenai keberlimpahan dan kegembiraan, ritual, serta tujuan. Sedangkan batu hitam Bali mewakili keteraturan alam, keseimbangan, juga landasan rasa diri kita- hal ini juga merupakan anggukan kepada nenek moyang Tantra yang berasal dari garis keturunan pemahat batu Bali. Dalam instalasi ini, kita juga dapat melihat bahwa semua elemen telah terwakili: air, tanah, api, dan udara.



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Sinta Tantra adalah seorang seniman asal Bali (lahir tahun 1979) yang berpindah antara Inggris dan Indonesia. Lulusan dari London's Slade School of Fine Art dan The Royal Academy, ia memadukan pengaruh Bauhaus hingga warisan budaya Bali dalam karya-karyanya. Tantangan yang ia alami di titik awal karirnya membantu Sinta Tantra mengembangkan metode pendekatan artistik beragam yang melampaui batas-batas tradisional Indonesia.

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ANASTASIA TIRTABUDI  
ANDHIKA PERMATA  
ANGELA H TANOESOEDIBJO  
ANGGA CIPTA  
ANIL KUMAR NAIR  
AQUILA CAROL ADIMURTI

DEFFA LUGHAS  
DENNY RANGIPANG  
DIAH RAHMAWATI  
DIAJENG ANDINA  
DIAZ HENSUK  
DINDA JAYANTI SAFITRI  
DJ MEAR  
EMRAN SUPREMAWAN  
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Held for the first time in 2009, for over a decade, the team behind Indonesian Contemporary Art and Design (ICAD), under Yayasan Design+Art Indonesia, has devoted their expertise by creating a platform meant to bridge art and design with other disciplines ranging from fashion, film, hospitality, technology, F&B and more. It is the first exhibition to initiate the collaboration between these various disciplines in the region. In a concentrated effort to achieve this, ICAD has established its name by offering curated exhibitions and programs highlighting cutting-edge creations and innovations of our times. Their annual events, taking place in Jakarta's happening lifestyle neighborhood Kemang, have featured prominent artists, designers, and cross-discipline creators from across the globe. ICAD has also partnered with prestigious international platforms such as Superdesign Show Milan, La Biennale di Venezia, and London Design Biennale, in curating and showcasing Indonesian art and design to the world.

