

'Opening: On the Nature of Botanical Gardens - group exhibition.' Amsterdam Art, 23 January 2020.

Amsterdam
Art

Opening: On the Nature of Botanical Gardens - group exhibition



23 January at Framer Framed

Curated by Sadiyah Boonstra, with works by: Zico Albaiquni, Arahmaiani, Ade Darmawan, Edwin, Samuel Indratma, Lifepatch, Ipeh Nur, Elia Nurvista, Sinta Tantra.

ON THE NATURE OF BOTANICAL GARDENS -Contemporary Indonesian Perspectives

On the Nature of Botanical Gardens features nine contemporary Indonesian artists who look critically at botanical gardens, colonial power, knowledge building and the economics of nature, its legacies and current consequences of approaching nature and plants. The exhibition seeks to decolonise the concept of botanical gardens and their role in building a Dutch colonial empire in Indonesia.

Botanical gardens exist around the world and have become associated with idyllic and exotic nature. This exhibition takes a different perspective by looking at the darker side of botanical gardens as tools for building an empire following Walter Mignolo's concept of decoloniality*. It regards them as key sites in which colonial power was literally rooted. The exhibition investigates the colonial quest for natural resources, profits and power which formed the context for the establishment and consolidation of botanical science and gardens.

To move beyond the colonial order of the botanical garden the exhibition provides insight into knowledge systems of nature that existed prior to the advance of colonialism. Such knowledges were usually ignored, orientalised or destroyed which ultimately led to a hierarchy of knowledge of nature. The featured artist's works offer fresh perspectives on representing nature by providing an entry- point to the myriad ways of thinking about, and being with and in nature in contemporary Indonesia.

*Walter D. Mignolo, Catherine E. Walsh (2018) On Decoloniality: Concepts, Analytics, Praxis. Durham/London: Duke University Press.