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WOMEN IN ART

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WIA Artist Profile: Sinta Tantra [Featured image: Sinta Tantra, A Beautiful Sunset Mistaken By a Dawn, 2012 Paint on steel, 3 x 300m approx Commissioned by Canary Wharf Group, London.] 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 and at the Royal Academy and exhibits internationally. Tantra is well regarded for her site-specific murals and installations, many in the public realm. These include works in the UK for the Southbank Centre and the Liverpool Biennial, and recently Korea and exhibited this year at Art Central, Hong Kong. Tantra's bold interventions use colour abstractions that wrap themselves around architectural environments, transforming them in the process. The works are a hybridity of pop and formalism, full of colour and rhythm, an exploration of identity and aesthetics. Tantra challenges our understanding of geography and deconstructs the

modern obsession with brand. Themes include the slippage between pictorial and physical space, of turning something 'inside out' and how we as bodies become submerged in surface and structure.



Sinta Tantra, Le Bonheur, 2012 Nest, The Hague Part of group show Confined

What are you doing today? I'm currently based at The British School at Rome for the next six months. Today, I'm stretching canvases. Tell us about your creative process. I take inspiration from my recent travels, exhibitions, books and films. I work on designs on the computer first and then transfer these onto a surface or site. Designs are painted on canvas or become part of an architectural installation on the wall, floor, ceiling. Describe where you do most of your creative work. A lot of my 'light bulb' moments come from walking around the city.



Sinta Tantra, Stranger in Town, 2016 150 x 150 cm Tempera on linen

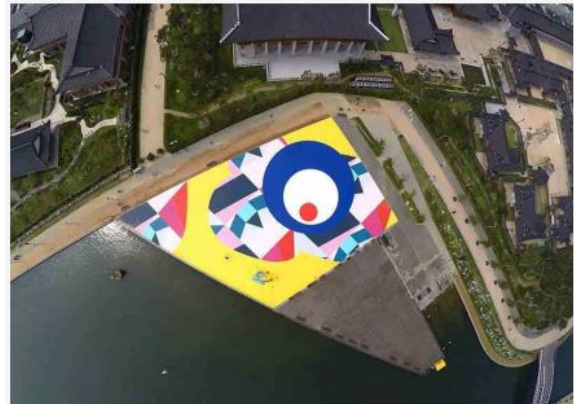
What's the most exciting project you've worked on? Probably my painted bridge in Canary Wharf. The bridge measures 300 metres in length, so it was a challenge to create a visually striking piece against the skyscrapers. What made you decide to become an artist? Being able to express what I want to express – using a visual, rather than written language.



Sinta Tantra, The Piranesi Effect (Screen), 2017 4 panels of 180 x 60 cm Tempera on linen

What are you currently working on? I've recently been selected to design the 'Drappalone Flag' (winning flag) for the Palio Horse Race in Siena this year. The Sienese are incredibly proud of their Palio roots, and it's been a complete honour to have met some fascinating people and gained insight knowledge in this medieval tradition. What are the key themes in your work? The relationship between 2D and 3D, creating art in public spaces and using the language of colour to communicate. What would you like people to notice in your work? I would like people to respond

to the work in a sensorial way – how scale, colour and geometry change our sense of perception.



Sinta Tantra, City of Songdo, 2015 Paint on floor, 3300 m2
Commissioned by the South Korean Government

What attracts you to the mediums you work in? I paint with a tempera paint – very similar to the finish of an Italian fresco; highly pigmented, very matt and has a brilliant lustre ... when you stare at it, it's almost like 'falling' into the colour. What equipment could you not do without? My computer – designing the work digitally means that it can be scaled to any size. It's exciting to jump from a small painting to the facade of an entire building. Who or what inspires you? I'm a magpie for colour, so I mentally collect, take notes and photograph anything that catches my eye. How does gender affect your work? It would be nice to see more female artists selected for things, especially female artists of colour. However, I do believe things are changing... slowly but surely.



Sinta Tantra, Flatland A Romance of Many Dimensions, 2016
Pearl Lam Gallery, Hong Kong Solo show

What's your favourite gallery, or place to see or experience art? Venice Biennale is always fun – it's such a magical location made even more surreal when you bump into people you know. If you could own one piece of art, what would it be and why? Anything by Sol Le Witt – he's been a huge influence

on my work. Le Witt coined the term 'conceptual painting' – reducing painting to a series of instructions or blueprints. If you could collaborate with one artist, from any time, who would it be, and why? I Gusti Nyoman Lempad – a Balinese artist from the early twentieth century known for his figurative drawings in pen and ink. Even though our works seem entirely different on the surface – Lempad trained as an architect and sculptor – I think we both share an interest in spatial relationships and the what the drawn line can convey. Is there an artist, movement or collective you'd like to see re- evaluated, or a contemporary artist who is underrated? Most people assume Indonesian contemporary art stemmed from a figurative tradition which then developed into socially engaged and political practice from the mid-twentieth century. It would be interesting to see how (slightly forgotten) artists such as Mochtar Apin (1923–1994) could be re-evaluated. After his travels to Europe, Apin created a series of abstract geometric paintings – I only discovered them a couple of years ago, they are thoroughly breathtaking. What's your favourite colour It changes month by month ... but my current favourite is a type of 'phthalo blue' I discovered it last week on the medieval frescoes I visited in Siena.

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