



Abdi Setiawan

MENGARANG

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NADIGALLERY

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Pengantar Galeri

Semoga kemeriahan pasar seni rupa, sebagaimana terjadi beberapa tahun lalu, dapat segera balik pulih, lebih sehat dan diimbangi dengan peningkatan kualitas karya dari para seniman kita di tahun ini dan seterusnya.

Nadi Gallery pernah menyelenggarakan pameran tunggal Abdi Setiawan "The Flâneur" pada 2007. Kali ini, untuk kedua kalinya, kami bekerjasama menggelar pameran tunggalnya bertajuk MENGARANG sebagai agenda akhir tahun 2022 di Nadi Gallery.

Pameran ini cukup lama direncanakan, sekitar tahun 2018. Saya sangat tertarik saat kali pertama melihat karya Abdi Setiawan bermedium arang, dan menawarkannya untuk berpameran tunggal lagi di Nadi Gallery. Tapi, situasi pandemik yang cukup panjang membuat pameran ini baru bisa terlaksana sekarang.

Seluruh karya di pameran ini dibuat dari kayu yang dibakar (arang) plus lukisan bermedia charcoal pada kertas. Temanya merespon karya-karya seniman besar dunia.

Terima kasih kepada Abdi 'Set' Setiawan atas semangat dan ketekunannya dalam mempersiapkan karya-karya yang sangat bagus, dan kepada kurator pameran Wahyudin atas kerjasamanya. Terimakasih juga kepada sahabat saya Jose Dima Satria yang bersedia membuka pameran ini.

Biantoro Santoso

The Gallery Foreword

Hopefully the lively visual art market, as it was a few years ago, can quickly recover, more robust and also in line with the improved quality of our artists's artworks this year and in the future.

Nadi Gallery had once held a solo exhibiton of Abdi Setiawan "The Flâneur" in 2007. This time, for the second time, we worked together to create his solo exhibition titled MENGARANG as Nadi Gallery's end of year agenda in 2022.

This exhibition has long been planned, ever since the year 2018. I was very interested when I first saw Abdi Setiawan's work using charcoal as a medium, which led me to offer him to have another solo exhibition in Nadi Gallery. Alas, because of the lengthy pandemic situation, we could only just realized the exhibition now.

All the works in this exhibition are created with burnt wood (charcoal) as well as the paintings that use charcoal on paper as the medium. The theme responded to the artworks of the world art masters.

Thank you to Abdi 'Set' Setiawan for his passion and dilligence in preparing amazing artworks, and to the curator Wahyudin for his collaboration. Also thank you to my friend Jose Dima Satria who is willing to open this exhibition.

Biantoro Santoso





Dan Abdi Setiawan pun Mengarang

“Saya tidak percaya bahwa seorang perupa hanya akan menciptakan karya begitu-begitu saja—kecuali dia seorang pemalu atau pendusta.”

—Abdi Setiawan

“There is a myth that to create something new, to be creative in general, you have to reject anything traditional, forget the past, and begin anew.”

—Boris Groys

Salah satu studio seni rupa (wan) di sekitar dukuh Kersan, Tirtonirmolo, Bantul, yang kerap—kalau bukan yang terkerap—saya sambangi adalah Studio 211. Saya suka menyambangnya karena pemiliknya seorang perupa yang terbuka dan senang berbagi cerita, kopi dan kudapan, bahkan angin untuk ban sepeda saya.

Studio 211 adalah studio perupa Abdi Setiawan—masyhur dengan panggilan Set—yang bertempat di sebuah rumah tua sekira tahun 60-an, seluas 150 m², dengan dua pintu masuk dari sebelah barat Jalan Assamawat, tak jauh dari Taman Kanak-Kanak PKK Tunas Harapan, dan dari sebelah selatan di ujung barat lapangan badminton; tujuh kamar 2 x 4 meter atau sebaliknya; tiga toilet; sebuah dapur kecil; dan ruang tengah selebar 72 m² sebagai pusat studio dengan aneka rupa dan jenis alat, antara lain mesin bor, mesin gergaji, kompresor angin listrik, pahat, palu, obeng, dan drum besi dengan tutup berwarna coklat tembaga setinggi 14 sentimeter dan berdiameter 57 sentimeter untuk membakar potongan dan serpihan kayu.

Abdi Setiawan menyewa rumah itu kali pertama pada 2004 dari keluarga mendiang Burjo Ponco Sadewo, kepala Kelurahan Tirtonirmolo yang legendaris pada 1960-an-1980-an. Sempat berbagi ruang kerja dan simpan karya dengan perupa Rudi Mantofani dan Rudi Hendriatno, lima tahun belakangan dia menempatinya sendiri sebagai studio sekaligus tempat tinggal keluarga.

Di Studio 211 itulah, kecuali belasan karya akademis untuk pameran tunggalnya pertama, *Gairah Malam* (2004), yang beroleh pengakuan tinggi dari penghayat seni rupa (di) Indonesia, Abdi Setiawan menciptakan ratusan karya seni patung yang mengukuhkannya sebagai Geppetto di dunia seni rupa kontemporer Indonesia.

Dari tangannya yang terampil dalam delapan belas tahun terakhir telah lahir "pinokio-pinokio" aneka rupa dan karakter. Ada yang elok, ada yang buruk, ada yang lucu,

ada yang kaku, ada yang sok, ada yang lunak, ada yang galak, ada yang bijak. Tapi semua sama-sama menarik bom imajinasi tak tepermanai. Semua adalah anak-anak kehidupan khayali yang lahir dari pergulatan insani Abdi Setiawan.

Itulah yang memungkinkan pemirsa bertualang di dunia—dalam imajinasi kanak-kanak untuk masuk-menemu makna kehidupan atau permenungan hidup orang dewasa sebagai individu dan anggota masyarakat. Kemungkinan itu tersua dalam pameran tunggalnya, *The Future is Here*, di Redbase Contemporary Art, Jakarta, 30 Oktober-30 November 2014.

Dalam pameran tersebut, alumnus Institut Seni Indonesia (ISI) Yogyakarta itu kembali memanggungkan patung-patung sosok anak-anak dan orang dewasa yang pernah tampil dalam pelbagai pameran seni rupa di dalam dan luar negeri sekitar satu dasawarsa belakangan. Persisnya, ada tujuh patung sosok bocah laki-laki "bernama" Aktor (2009), Batman (2011), Burger Time (2009), Commodore (2010), Kapiten (2009), The Tiger (2011), dan Ultraman (2010). Kecuali Batman dan Tiger yang berbahan serat gelas atau kaca serat (*fiberglass*), lima lainnya berbahan kayu.

Aktor, Batman, dan Kapiten pernah pentas di dua kota Eropa. Yang pertama dalam pameran tunggalnya, *New Sculptures*, di Metis Gallery, Amsterdam, Belanda, 5 Juni-3 Juli 2010. Yang kedua dalam pameran tunggalnya, *New Sculptures*, di Andre Simoens Gallery, Knokke, Belgia, 18 September-24 Oktober 2010. Commodore, Ultraman, dan The Tiger pernah bermain dalam lakon *The Victims* untuk Jakarta Biennale Ke-14 bertajuk *Maximum City: Survive or Escape?* di Galeri Nasional Indonesia, Jakarta, selama 30 hari, 15 Desember 2011-15 Januari 2012.

Sebelas bulan berselang, mereka ikut serta bersama Aktor selama satu purnama, 5 Desember 2012-5 Januari 2013, dalam pameran kelompok berjudul *A Sign of Absence* di Edwin's Gallery, Jakarta. Setelah rehat enam candra, minus Aktor, mereka berlakon lagi dalam pertunjukan *RePLAY #4* berjudul *Malacca's Boys* di Office for Contemporary Art (OFCA) International, Yogyakarta, selama 30 hari, 28 Juni-28 Juli 2013. Adapun Burger Time bersama Batman pernah naik panggung bareng sejumlah lukisan kontemporer Andy Dewantoro dan Eddie Hara selama satu bulan, 8 Maret -7 April 2012, di Sin Sin Fine Art Gallery, Hongkong.

Selain mereka, ada satu patung sosok orang dewasa, yaitu Security Guard (2013), yang sebelumnya menjadi petugas

keamanan nan santun dan penuh pengabdian selama tiga bulan, 11 November 2013-10 Januari 2014, dalam perhelatan *Yogyakarta Open Studio* di OFCA International, Yogyakarta.

Dengan riwayat pertunjukan yang mengesankan itu, praktik artistik Abdi Setiawan boleh dibilang serupa dengan praktik penyutradaraan dalam seni pertunjukan, teater, dan film—yang menuntut kepiawaian serta kepekaan menata-kelola pelakon, cerita, dan panggung. Bukan cakap kecap, pematung kelahiran Sicincin, Pariaman, Sumatera Barat, 29 Desember 1971, itu sudah menginsafi keserupaan itu sejak 2004, ketika dirinya memanggungkan patung-patung figur manusia kawasan remang-remang pinggir kota dalam pameran *Gairah Malam* di Lembaga Indonesia Prancis, Yogyakarta.

Dari sana, saya peroleh pengetahuan "baru" yang belum diketahui banyak orang bahwa praktik artistik Direktur Sicincin Indonesia Contemporary Art, Yogyakarta itu bertolak dari apa yang "seksi" di dunia seni rupa kontemporer Indonesia hari-hari ini sebagai praktik atau proyek seni rupa berbasis riset—tepatnya riset etnografis. Karena itulah bisa dimengerti jika Abdi Setiawan mendaku seni patungnya sebagai seni patung naratif dan reflektif.

Artinya, pada patung-patung eksponen Forum Ceblang Ceblung itu tercurat apa yang disebut Susan Sontag sebagai citra dan teks yang menyodorkan dua hal simultan—yaitu sodoran kenikmatan sensual yang bebas dari "isi" dan undangan pendayagunaan kecerdasan. Dengan begitu, tercipta peluangnya membangun momen apresiasi yang demokratis dalam setiap pameran karya seni pantungnya.

Dalam momen itu, Abdi Setiawan sahaja membuka kotak perkakas estetika aneka jenis yang memungkinkan pemirsa meresepsi karya seni patungnya sesuai dengan kepentingan mereka. Dengan itu, mereka menjadi teremansipasi untuk mengada di antara "yang awam" dan "yang pakar" dalam aktivitas semiotis yang berambisi membuat makna dari tanda dan simbol pada karya seni rupa atau sekadar bersenang-senang memanfaatkan waktu senggang di galeri seni rupa.

Dengan kata lain, setiap pemirsa berkesempatan merayakan pertemuannya dengan karya seni patung Abdi Setiawan sebagai objek kenikmatan yang memungkinkan mereka tenggelam dalam kolam keintiman penuh emosi dan sensasi

yang sukar diungkapkan dengan kata-kata. Sementara itu mereka pun berpeluang menggali dan mengorek sedalam-dalamnya pemahaman kritis karya seni patung anggota Sanggar Sakato itu sebagai objek intelektual yang berkehendak merefleksikan waktu, tindakan, nilai, sejarah, dan identitas manusia dengan lanskap imajiner yuwana.

Apa pun itu, perkara pemirsa tetap sama: bagaimana menjadi arif dalam suatu perjumpaan yang belum-sudah dengan karya seni rupa. Perkara itu adalah jarak, baik intelektual maupun emosional. Ternyata, dalam pameran *The Future is Here*, Abdi Setiawan sudah mengisyaratkan secara lembut perkara itu dengan menghadirkan patung sosok gadis cilik "bersarira" jelaga dan "bernama" Girl a.k.a Kiss (2014).

Kehadirannya tidak hanya menyiratkan presensi pemirsa yang jeli, tapi juga, pinjam kalimat Jacques Ranciere, citra yang merujuk kepada sesuatu yang-Lain. Itu bisa berarti kehadirannya merupakan sosok dan pokok baru yang memungkinkan Abdi Setiawan menggelar narasi baru di atas panggung imajiner baru. Dengan begitu, sosok-sosok lama pun terbarukan dalam rekreasi konteks pertunjukan yang memungkinkan mereka bersama Kiss mencapai derajat ekspresi tak terduga di mata pemirsa.

Karena itulah, alih-alih mencerminkan figur lemah yang tersisihkan, pelengkap penderita yang tersia-sia di dunia patriarkis yang bengis, Kiss menggambarkan sewajarnya penguasa utama, dengan raut muka lajat dan sikap anteng, tengah mengawasi aparatus kekuasaannya yang lembek serta mengontrol kejantanan yang kekanak-kanakan dan dibikin-bikin dari dekat dan cermat.

Walhasil, kehadiran Kiss memungkinkan Abdi Setiawan meremajakan kebijaksanaan lama ihwal perempuan dan anak-anak sebagai empu masa depan dan sumber keagungan pemirsa yang tak akan berhenti tafakur bahwa seni rupa (wan) masih menyimpan harta berharga kehidupan berupa bom imajinasi tak tepermanai yang sanggup meledakkan dunia maskulin, liar, dan beringas dengan kehormatan insani penuh arti.

Setelah lima tahun pameran *The Future is Here* berlalu—Kiss, Commodore, dan Tiger (berbahan kayu) tampil kembali dalam pameran *Set and His People* di Galeri Semarang, 16 November-15 Desember 2019. Begitu pula dengan Pinky,

Tatto Man, Belaian Angin Malam, Salome, dan Melepas Lelah, yang pernah berlakon dalam *The Flaneur* di Nadi Gallery, Jakarta (2007); Asongan dalam *A Sign of Absence* di Edwin's Gallery, Jakarta (2013), The Chef alias Mooi Indie dalam *Jogja Joged* di Artjog, Yogyakarta (2014); Shooter dalam *New Sculptures* di Metis Gallery, Amsterdam, Belanda (2010); Boogeyman dalam *Melihat Indonesia* di Ciputra Artprenuer Centre, Jakarta (2013); Awas Anjing Galak di Gajah Gallery, Singapura (tt); dan Si Pelukis Rakyat dalam *Potret* di Bentara Budaya Yogyakarta (13-22 Agustus 2019).

Dengan begitu, Abdi Setiawan bukan hanya melakukan peremajaan atas sejumlah karya patungnya dari lalu waktu, melainkan juga memanggungkan ulang mereka guna pembaruan nilai artistik, ekonomi, dan diskursif yang berkaitan dengan 12 patung baru yang dibuatnya sepanjang sepuluh bulan di tahun 2019—yaitu *To Be A Star*, *Kung Fu Boy*, *Jump*, *The Dreamer*, *Smoker*, *Akur*, *Mickey*, *Loro Blonyo Kiri*, *Loro Blonyo Kanan*, *Balance*, *The Spy*, dan *Celebrities*.

Selain kedua belas patung baru itu, Set mengalih-wahana patung-patung protagonis *Malacca's Boys*—Aktor, Hero, dan Sang Kapten—ke dalam lukisan potret bergaya pop art yang menggelikan. Setali tiga uang dengan Boogeyman yang menjelma Bangsawan di selembur kanvas bergambar-latar tokoh kartun Jepang dan Barat. Keempat lukisan itu bertarikh 2019.

Sampai pada titik itu, saya harus katakan bahwa kebaruan 12 patung dan 4 lukisan tersebut tidak terletak pada perangkat formal dan materialnya (sejak awal 2000-an Abdi Setiawan telah memanfaatkan kayu sebagai perangkat material karya-karya patungnya sehingga memampukannya mengartikulasikan, kalau bukan menerobos, apa yang dimanfaatkan pematung Gregorius Sidharta [1932-2006] dan Amrus Natalsya [1933]); tidak juga pada isi yang terpahat, terurat, atau terekspresikannya (sebelumnya Abdi Setiawan pernah membikin sejumlah patung dan lukisan serupa pada 2012 dan 2017), tapi pada konteks dan bentuk pemanggungannya.

(Dalam 6 pameran tunggalnya sebelumnya: *Gairah Malam* [2004], *The Flaneur* [2007], *New Sculptures* [di Belgia dan Belanda, 2010], *Re-Play #4* [2013], dan *The Future is Here* [2014], Abdi Setiawan menggunakan bentuk pemanggungan ala pentas teater yang, sebagaimana sudah saya kemukakan di atas, memampukannya menjadi semacam

sutradara yang unik dalam tradisi seni patung kontemporer [di] Indonesia—sehingga membikinnya berkerabat secara artistik dengan pematung-pelukis Amerika George Segal [1924-200]).

Nah, dalam pameran *Set and His People*, Abdi Setiawan tak lagi berlaku sebagai sutradara. Alih-alih, dia bertindak sebagai semacam juru-foto yang mengarahkan patung-patungnya berpose atau bergaya sesuai dengan karakter, tabiat, atau kecenderungan alamiah mereka. Dalam hal itu, Abdi Setiawan mengingatkan saya pada tindakan artistik Stephan Balkenhol (1957), pematung Jerman yang kini tinggal dan berkarya di antara Karlsruhe, Jerman, dan Meisenthal, Prancis.

Dengan begitu, kita beroleh sebuah pergeleran “model penggambaran” patung dan lukisan (atau patung yang dilukis) manusia—dewasa dan kanak-kanak—dan sedikit binatang-boneka-binatang (kembangan dari patung potret bocah “bernama” Ugly Boy [2013, kayu dan akrilik, 35 x 100 sentimeter), yang berbeda dan khas, kalau bukan baru, yang terbilang langka di dunia seni rupa kontemporer Indonesia hari-hari ini.

Setelah semua pencapaian artistik yang beroleh pengakuan eksistensial (dari sesama perupa) dan kritis (dari kurator dan kritikus), penghargaan ekonomi (dari penjaja dan kolektor), dan penghormatan publik (dari pemirsa) itu, ini kali, terbukti melalui pameran *Mengarang* ini, Abdi Setiawan menampilkan karya baru yang berbeda dari segi gagasan, pendekatan, dan pokok perupa.

Apa yang melatarbelakanginya adalah ikhtiar Abdi Setiawan untuk mengembangkan pilar artistik—bentuk, teknik, ide—karyanya dengan “visi kreatif” yang tak sama dengan “visi kreatif” karyanya sebelumnya yang telah dikenal luas di kalangan penghayat seni rupa Indonesia.

Abdi Setiawan menjelaskan kepada saya “visi kreatif” itu, lebih kurangnya mirip dengan pemahaman sosiolog Hannah Wohl, sebagai “seikat konsistensi yang dapat dikenali dan bertahan lama di dalam suatu kumpulan karya.”

Untuk itu, pada awal 2017, dia mulai beride mengarang karya lewat suatu *performance art* di sebuah pameran tunggalnya. Karya yang ingin diarangkannya itu berjudul *What Else Could We Think About? Bon Appetite*—berupa

objek-patung-instalasi kayu jati lima orang parlente berkepala gorila, dengan potongan rambut ala tanduk rusa, meriung di sebuah meja besar penuh minuman dan makanan berbentuk pabrik, perumahan, kilang minyak, dan tambang batu bara. Ada satu kursi kosong di sana yang dijaga seorang pelayan berpakaian necis—pun berkepala gorila dan berambut ala tanduk rusa—memegang nampan berisi macam-macam makanan kecil serupa di meja besar. Di belakang si pelayan terdapat sebuah meja sedang berisi aneka minuman dan makanan sejenis di meja besar.

Tapi, kenyataannya, ide itu tinggal ide karena ketidakpekaan seorang penjaja seni rupa yang berniat memanggungkan karya tersebut di galerinya, padahal Abdi Setiawan sudah membayangkan pengarangannya itu berguna sebagai kejutan baru artistik dan eksistensial yang memperlihatkan kesegaran dan kemungkinan lain dari daya ciptanya.

Apa boleh buat, kegagalan mengejawantahkan ide itu jadi lebih menjengkelkan Abdi Setiawan dengan senyapnya si penjaja dari komunikasi interpersonal mereka.

(Ada untung di balik buntung: tak lama setelah dipanggungkan dalam pameran *Linkage: 20th Anniversary of OHD Museum* di OHD Museum, Magelang, 20 Mei-30 Oktober 2017, *What Else Could We Think About? Bon Appetite* dibeli oleh seorang kolektor seni rupa Indonesia yang mastautin di Negeri Kanguru.)

Pada akhirnya, Abdi Setiawan benar-benar bisa mengeksekusi gagasan mengarang karya pada 2020 melalui sebuah objek-patung, *Bicycle* (44 x 66 x 135 sentimeter), yang mengapropriasi karya *readymade* Marcel Duchamp dari tahun 1913, *Bicycle Wheel* (1,3 meter x 64 x 42 sentimeter), yang kini tersimpan di Israel Museum, Yerusalem.

Sesungguhnya, kalau saya tak salah ingat, pada pertengahan 2018, Abdi Setiawan sudah mendahuluinya dengan sebuah karya berpokok perupa lanskap, *Alam Desa* (175 x 122 sentimeter), dalam pameran *To The Landscape* di Museum Dan Tanah Liat, Bantul, yang memampukannya melukis sekaligus mematung, alih-alih “merelief”, dengan potongan-potongan kecil arang kayu.

Ternyata, sebelum *Alam Desa*, Abdi Setiawan sudah menampilkan tiga karya nonrepresentatif, *The Story of December* (2017, arang, 115 x 164 x 10 sentimeter), *24/12/17* (2017, arang, 115 x 164 x 10 sentimeter), dan *Katarsis* (2018,

arang, diameter 138 sentimeter x 12 sentimeter), untuk pameran grup *Landscape's Legacies: Visualizing Alam Minangkabau* di Gajah Gallery, Singapura, 24 Januari-15 Februari 2018, yang memampukannya merupakan kala dan suasana tertentu dengan ratusan potong arang kayu berbentuk balok kecil atau runcing tajam.

Merekalah, terutama *Alam Desa*, yang menandakan (*presages*) *Sun Flower* (2018, arang balok, diameter 126 sentimeter), *Starry Night* (2020, arang balok, 175 x 127 sentimeter), *Vincent Van Gogh* (2020, arang balok, 127 x 126 sentimeter), *La Gioconda* (2021, arang balok, diameter 26 sentimeter), *Femme au et Col en Chapeau Fourrure* (2022, arang balok, 126 x 126 sentimeter), *Self Portrait by Van Gogh* (2022, arang balok, 126 x 126 sentimeter), *Buste de Femme au Chapeau Bleu* (2022, arang balok, 128 x 186 sentimeter), *Bust of a Woman* (2022, arang balok, 175 x 128 sentimeter), dan *Target* (2022, arang balok, diameter 126 sentimeter), yang ada di pameran *Mengarang* ini.

Tapi, berbeda dengan *Alam Desa*, kesembilan karya tersebut berpokok perupa: potret, lanskap, dan alam-benda—dan berjudul pinjaman dari pokok perupa dan judul lukisan Vincent van Gogh (*Starry Night* dari *The Starry Night*; *Sun Flower* dari *Sunflowers*; *Vincent Van Gogh* dari *Self-Portrait with Straw Hat*; dan *Self Portrait Van Gogh* dari *Self-Portrait with Bandaged Ear*), Pablo Picasso (*Femme au et Col en Chapeau Fourrure*; *Buste de Femme au Chapeau Bleu*; dan *Bust of a Woman* dari tiga lukisan Picasso berjudul sama), Leonardo da Vinci (*La Gioconda* dari *Mona Lisa*), dan Lucio Fontana (*Target* dari kanvas-kanvas karya Fontana yang disayat dan ditusuk).

Sementara itu, *Bicycle* yang pernah tampil di Artjog 2020 memiliki variasinya dalam *The Persistence of Memory* (2020, arang balok, 180 x 170 sentimeter) yang mengambil judul dan mengapropriasi pokok perupa—tepatnya objek jam meleleh—lukisan *The Persistence of Memory* Salvador Dali.

Sampai pada titik itu, saya kira, sudah saatnya diketahui bahwa arang balok yang menjadi media utama kesebelas karya tersebut—sebagaimana telah saya singgung sedikit di atas—berasal dari sisa, serpihan, atau potongan kayu karya-karya patung Abdi Setiawan yang dibakar-arangkannya dalam sebuah tong besi.

Pada mulanya pembakaran dan pengarangan itu merupakan cara praktis Abdi Setiawan untuk memusnahkan sampah atau limbah dari karya seni patungnya. Selanjutnya,

pada suatu “momen kebenaran” yang tak diduganya, pembakaran dan pengarangan itu menjadi sebuah jalan kesempatan berdaya cipta dengan “visi kreatif” yang memampukannya menghargai sesuatu yang terbangun atau yang dianggap tak bermanfaat.

Dengan begitu, untuk mengatakan dengan agak berlebihan, arang pun bertransendensi secara eksistensial sebagai bukan residu belaka, melainkan mesiu berharga guna melawan kemalasan, kejahatan, dan kejumudan dalam daya cipta Abdi Setiawan.

Maka bisa dimengerti jika Abdi Setiawan mengakui bahwa selama lima tahun belakangan arang dan pengarangan telah menyuntikkan semangat baru yang membuatnya tak cemas dan takut lagi dengan pergeseran dan perubahan pilar artistik karyanya, apalagi khazanah seni rupa kontemporer mendukungnya dengan teknik atau praktik apropriasi.

Sudah menjadi pengetahuan umum, sebagaimana disiarkan oleh Terry Barret, Marita Sturken, dan Lisa Cartwright misalnya, apropriasi dipahami secara tradisional sebagai “*taking something for oneself without consent*” atau secara kultural sebagai “*the process ‘borrowing’ and changing the meaning of cultural products, slogans, images, or element fashion.*”

Oleh karena itu, mengapropriasi pun dimaklumi sebagai ikhtiar kreatif “*to possess, borrow, steal, copy, quote, or excerpt images that already exist, made by other artists or available in the public domain and general culture.*”

Atas pengetahuan itu, masuk akal jika Hal Foster menganggap perupa yang mengamalkan apropriasi sebagai “*a manipulator of signs more than a producer of art objects, and the viewer an active reader of messages rather than a passive contemplator of aesthetic or consumer of the spectacle.*”

Dengan itu, tak bisa dimungkiri bahwa Abdi Setiawan telah mewujudkan dengan baik apropriasi dan mengapropriasi dalam semua karyanya di pameran *Mengarang* ini. Tapi tak bisa disangkal pula bahwa Abdi Setiawan bukanlah perupa Indonesia satu-satunya yang melaksanakan apropriasi dan memanfaatkan arang dalam laku seni rupa. Sejumlah perupa Indonesia lainnya pun gemar mengapropriasi dan mengarang—antara lain Agus Suwage, Bestrizal Besta, Dadang Rukmana, J Ariadhitya Pramuhendra, Roby Dwi Antono, dan Titarubi.

Namun demikian, tanpa bermaksud membanding-bandingkannya dengan tendensi kritis, moralistik, atau maknawi berupa-pemeluk teguh apropriasi dan pemanfaatan besar arang lainnya, khususnya yang tersebut di atas, dalam praktik apropriasinya, sebagaimana bisa kita periksa dalam karya-karya di pameran *Mengarang* ini, Abdi Setiawan bukan hanya memperlihatkan bahwa "*appropriation is not always an oppositional practice*"—melainkan juga membuktikan pernyataan Kyung An dan Jessica Cerasi bahwa "*contemporary art isn't some wacky destructive credo that sets out to crumble all that has come before.*"

Itu sebabnya yang menjauhkan karya-karya Abdi Setiawan dalam pameran *Mengarang* ini dari mitos tentang kebaruan dan kreativitas sebagaimana termaktub dalam perkataan Boris Groys yang ter kutip di awal tulisan ini.

Kalau kita perhatikan secara saksama dalam tempo sesantai-santainya dua karya *drawing* Abdi Setiawan yang menggunakan arang pabrikaan, yang dibelinya dari toko alat tulis atau lukis, di pameran *Mengarang* ini: *Monalisa* (2022, arang di kertas linen, 79,3 x 108,9 sentimeter x 3) dan *The Immortal* (2022, arang di kertas linen, 79,3 x 108,9 sentimeter x 3), rasanya sulit untuk menghindari kesan keduanya sebagai pengakuan dan penghormatan atas instalasi masyhur seharga 12 juta dolar Amerika Damien Hirts, *The Physical Impossibility of Death in the Mind of Someone Living* (1991, media campuran), dan lukisan adiknya Leonardo da Vinci, *Mona Lisa* (1503-1519, cat minyak, panel, kayu, poplar, 77 x 53 sentimeter. Pada 2010, sebagaimana ceritanya kepada saya, Abdi Setiawan pernah menonton langsung *Mona Lisa* di Louvre, Paris, tapi terpaksa dari jarak 3-4 meter, yang tak memungkinkannya menikmati detail-detail lukisan itu, karena begitu banyak orang yang mengular di depannya. Cerita itu pun memaksa saya mengakui pernyataan Walter Isaacson, penulis biografi mutakhir Leonardo da Vinci, tentang *Mona Lisa* ini: "*What began as a portrait of a silk merchant's young wife became a quest to portray the complexities of human emotion, made memorable through the mysteries of a hinted smile, and to connect our nature to that of our universe.*" Maka *Monalisa* Abdi Setiawan sangat mungkin diresepsi sebagai semacam pantulan pengalamannya setelah menonton *Mona Lisa* Leonardo da Vinci dengan tiga cara melihat yang berbeda).

Tentu saja tetap terbuka kemungkinan lain untuk memberikan kesan dan penilaian pada kedua *drawing* tersebut—pun sebelas karya objek-lukisan-relief Abdi Setiawan di pameran *Mengarang* ini. Apa pun hasilnya,

untuk mengakhiri tulisan ini, izinkan saya mengapropriasi perkataan Kyung An dan Jessica Cerasi ini: sangat menarik melihat karya seni rupa (wan) dari lalu waktu yang jauh maupun yang dekat—Leonardo da Vinci, Vincent van Gogh, Marcel Duchamp, Pablo Picasso, Salvador Dali, Lucio Fontana, dan Damien Hirts—masih begitu bergema dalam praktik seni rupa (wan) kontemporer saat ini, sebagaimana diperlihatkan Abdi Setiawan lewat pameran tunggalnya, *Mengarang*, di Nadi Gallery.

Yogyakarta, 3 November 2022

WAHYUDIN

Abdi Setiawan Burns Slow

“I don’t believe any artist would create just average artworks—unless they are shy or a liar.”

—Abdi Setiawan

“There is a myth that to create something new, to be creative in general, you have to reject anything traditional, forget the past, and begin anew.”

—Boris Groys

One of the visual art(ist) studios in Kersan hamlet, Tirtonirmolo, Bantul, which I often—if not most often—visited is Studio 221. I love visiting it because the owner is an artist who is open and likes to share stories, coffee, snacks, and even some air for my bicycle tires.

Studio 211 is the studio of the artist Abdi Setiawan—famously referred to as Set—located in an old house that is built in the 60’s. It is 150 m² wide with two entrances, from the west is Jalan Assamawat, not far from Tunas Harapan PKK Kindergarten, and from the south is at the west side of a badminton court. The house consists of seven 2 x 4 rooms, and across it three toilets, a small kitchen, and a 72 m² wide living room as the center of the studio with various types of equipments, i.e. drill, sawing machine, electric air compressor, chisel, hammer, screwdriver and iron drum with copper brown lid 14 centimeters high and 57 centimeters in diameter that is used to burn wood cuts and woodchips.

Abdi Setiawan rented the house for the first time in 2004 from the family of the late Burjo Ponco Sadewo, the head of Tirtonirmolo village who was famous during the period of 1960’s to 1980’s. The house was once a shared work space with fellow artists Rudi Mantofani and Rudi Hendriatno, but in the last five years he used it alone as a work studio and residence for his family.

It was in Studio 211 that Abdi Setiawan created hundreds of sculpture works—except for the dozens of works for his first academic solo exhibition *Gairah Malam* (2004) that received high recognition from art lovers in Indonesia—, which established him as the Gepetto in the Indonesian contemporary art scene.

The last eighteen years have witnessed the births of various form and characters of “pinocchios” from his skillful hands. Some were pretty, some were hideous; some were funny, some were stiff; some were ostentatious, some were gentle; some were fierce, some were wise. But all of them attract

invaluable imagination bombs. All of them are the imaginary children born from Abdi Setiawan's humane struggles.

This allows the audience to have an adventure in the world of children's imagination, to enter and discover the meaning of life or the life-reflections of adults as an individual and member of the community. This possibility was met in his solo exhibition, *The Future is Here*, at Redbase Contemporary Art, Jakarta, 30 October–30 November 2014.

In the exhibition, the Indonesian Art Institute (ISI) alumnus presented sculptures of children and adult figures that had been shown in various art exhibitions nationally and internationally in the last decade. To be exact, seven sculptures of boys that are "named" *Aktor* (2009), *Batman* (2011), *Burger Time* (2009), *Commodore* (2010), *Kapiten* (2009), *The Tiger* (2011), and *Ultraman* (2010). Excluding Batman and Tiger, which were made of fiberglass, the sculptures were made of wood.

Aktor, *Batman*, and *Kapiten* were once displayed in two European cities. The first one was in his solo exhibition, *New Sculptures*, at the Metis Gallery, Amsterdam, the Netherlands, 5 June–3 July 2010. The second one was in the *New Sculptures* solo exhibition at the Andre Simoens Gallery, Knokke, Belgium, 18 September–24 October 2010. *Commodore*, *Ultraman*, and *The Tiger* were displayed in *The Victims* for the 14th Jakarta Biennale, *Maximum City: Survive or Escape?* at the Indonesian National Gallery, Jakarta, for 30 days from 15 December 2011–15 January 2012.

Eleven months later, the three joined *Aktor* for one month display, 5 December 2012–5 January 2013, in a group exhibition titled *A Sign of Absence* at Edwin's Gallery, Jakarta. After a six months break, this time without *Aktor*, the sculptures went on display during RePLAY #4 event titled *Malacca's Boys* at the Office for Contemporary Art (OFCA) International, Yogyakarta, for 30 days from 28 June–28 July 2013. Whereas *Burger Time* together with *Batman*, was displayed along Andy Dewantoro's and Eddie Hara's contemporary painting artworks for one month, 8 March–7 April 2012, at Sin Sin Fine Art Gallery, Hongkong.

Aside of them, there is one sculpture of an adult figure, the *Security Guard* (2013), which previously was a polite and dedicated security worker for three months, 11 November 2013–10 January 2014, during the *Yogyakarta Open Studio* event at OFCA International, Yogyakarta.

With the impressive performance portfolio, Abdi Setiawan's artistic practice could be considered as similar to the practice of directing in the art of performance, theatre, and film—which demands for skills and sensitivity in managing the performers, the story, and the stage. Not just empty talks, the sculptor who was born in Sicincin, Pariaman, West Sumatera on 29 December 1971 had created the visual works since 2004, when he exhibited sculptures of human figures from the suburban red district area in the *Gairah Malam* exhibition at the Indonesian-French Institute, Yogyakarta.

From then on, I have gained a "new" knowledge that not many people have, that the artistic practice of this Director of Sicincin Indonesia Contemporary Art Yogyakarta set off from what is considered as a "sexy" discourse in the Indonesian contemporary art world, which currently is known as research-based visual art practice or project—ethnographic research, to be precise. Therefore it is understandable if Abdi Setiawan dubbed his works as the art of narrative and reflective sculpture.

This means, on the sculptures of this Forum Cebalang Ceblung's exponent is engraved what Susan Sontag described as image and text that offer two things simultaneously—the offer of sexual pleasure that is free from "content" and invitation to the utilization of intelligence. Thusfore, an opportunity is created to build a moment of democratic appreciation in each of his sculpture exhibition.

In that moment, Abdi Setiawan simply opened a tool box of aesthetic variety that enabled the audience to perceive the sculptures in accordance with their interests. By doing so, they became emancipated to exist between "common people" and "experts" in a semiotic activity that has the ambition to interpret meanings from signs and symbols in the artworks, or just spending leisure time in a visual art gallery.

In other words, every audience have the chance to celebrate the meeting with Abdi Setiawan's sculpture work as an object of pleasure that enables them to immerse in a pool of intimacy filled with indescribable emotions and sensations. In the mean time they also have the chance for deep exploration and investigation of critical understanding on the sculpture work of the Sanggar Sakato's member as the intellectual objects that wish to reflect time, actions, values, history, and human identity with an imaginary landscape of youth.

Whatever it is, the issue of any audience remains the same, how to be wise in a meeting that is yet-had passed with a visual artwork. The issue is about distance, both intellectual and emotional. As it turned out, in *The Future is Here* exhibition, Abdi Setiawan had already gently signaled this matter by presenting the sculpture of a small girl in the “embodiment” of soot and was “named” *Girl a.k.a Kiss* (2014).

Its presence not only implied the presence of observant viewers, but also, in the words of Jacques Ranciere, an image that refers to an-Other. It could mean that its presence is a new figure and principal that enables Abdi Setiawan to display new narratives on a new imaginary stage. Therefore, old figures are rejuvenated in the context of performance recreation, which enabled these figures together with Kiss to achieve a new unprecedented level of expression in the eyes of the audience.

Instead of depicting a marginalized weak figure, an object of misery that is neglected in the cruel patriarchal world, Kiss depicted the common main authority, with an overwrought facial expression and calm attitude, overseeing their flaccid apparatus of power and controlling the childish virility that is closely and carefully contrived.

As a result, Kiss’ existence allowed Abdi Setiawan to rejuvenate the old wisdom regarding women and children as the master of the future and the source of glory of the audiences who keep contemplating on how visual art(ist) still keeps a precious treasure of life in the form of invaluable imagination bombs, able to detonate the masculine, wild, and violent world with meaningful human warmth.

Five years after *The Future is Here* exhibition, Kiss, Commodore, and Tiger (in wood), returned in the *Set and His People* exhibition in Galeri Semarang, 16 November–15 December 2019. So were *Pinky*, *Tatto Man*, *Belaian Angin Malam*, *Salome*, and *Melepas Lelah*, which once exhibited in *The Flaneur* at Nadi Gallery, Jakarta (2007); *Asongan that was in A Sign of Absence* at Edwin's Gallery, Jakarta (2013), *The Chef alias Mooi Indie* that was in *Jogja Joked* at Artjog, Yogyakarta (2014); *Shooter* that was in *New Sculptures* at the Metis Gallery, Amsterdam, the Netherlands (2010); *Boogeyman* that was in *Melihat Indonesia* at the Ciputra Artpreneur Centre, Jakarta (2013); *Awas Anjing Galak*

that was exhibited at Gajah Gallery, Singapura (tt); and *Si Pelukis Rakyat* that was in *Potret* at the Bentara Budaya Yogyakarta (13–22 August 2019).

By doing so, Abdi Setiawan not only rejuvenated a number of his sculptures from the passing of times, but also redisplayed them for the renewal of artistic, economic, and discursive values related to the new 12 sculptures he created in the course of ten months in 2019—i.e. *To Be A Star*, *Kung Fu Boy*, *Jump*, *The Dreamer*, *Smoker*, *Akur*, *Mickey*, *Loro Blonyo Kiri*, *Loro Blonyo Kanan*, *Balance*, *The Spy*, and *Celebrities*.

Aside of the dozen new sculptures, Set transferred the medium of the *Malacca's Boys'* protagonist sculptures—*Aktor*, *Hero*, and *Sang Kapten*—into portrait paintings in ridiculous pop art style. The same also happened with *Boogeyman* that incarnated into *Bangsawan* (Noble Man) in a piece of canvas on a background of Japanese and Western cartoon characters. The four paintings were created in 2019.

Up to that point, I must say that the newness of the 12 sculptures and 4 paintings was not due to the formal formal device and materials (since early 2000's, Abdi Setiawan had utilized wood as the material for his sculpture works that he was able to articulate, if not break through, what sculptors Gregorius Sidharta [1932–2006] and Amrus Natalsya [1933] were using), it also didn't lay in the sculpted, etched, or expressed contents (previously Abdi Setiawan had produced a number of similar sculptures and paintings in 2012 and 2017). The novelty laid on the context and the format of display.

(In his previous 6 solo exhibitions: *Gairah Malam* [2004], *The Flaneur* [2007], *New Sculptures* [in Belgium and Netherland, 2010], *Re-Play #4* [2013], and *The Future is Here* [2014], Abdi Setiawan used a theatrical way of display, which, as I already mentioned above, already allowed him to become some sort of unique director in the tradition of contemporary sculpture art in Indonesia—which made him an artistic kinsman with the American sculptor-painter George Segal [1924–200]).

Well, in the *Set and His People* exhibition, Abdi Setiawan was no longer a director. Instead, he took a role akin to photographer who directed the sculptures to pose or acted in accordance with their given character, behavior, or inclinations. In this case, Abdi Setiawan reminds me on

the artistic action of Stephan Balkenhol (1957), a Deutsch sculptor who now resides and works between Karlsruhe, Germany and Meisenthal, France.

Hence, we get a performance of "illustration models" of sculptures and paintings (or painted sculptures) of human—adult and children—and a bit of animal-puppet-animal (the development of the portrait sculpture of a child “named” *Ugly Boy* [2013, wood and acrylic, 35 x 100 centimeter]), which are different and particular, if not new, that is considered to be rare in the Indonesian contemporary visual art world today.

After all of the artistic achievements that gained existential acknowledgement (from fellow artists) and critical (from curators and critics), economic awards (from dealers and collectors), and public appreciations (from the audience), this time, proven through the *Mengarang* (Burns Slow) exhibition, Abdi Setiawan presents new works that are different from the aspects of ideas, approaches, and visual principles.

The background leading to this is Abdi Setiawan’s attempts to develop the artistic pillars—form, technique, idea—of his artworks with “creative visions” that are not similar with the “creative visions” of his previous artworks, which had been widely known by Indonesian art enthusiasts.

Abdi Setiawan explained this “creative vision” to me, more or less similar to the understanding of sociologist Hannah Wohl, as “bundles of recognizable and enduring elements within producers’ bodies of work”.

Therefore, at the beginning of 2017, he had the idea to burn slow an artwork through a performance art in his solo exhibition. The artwork he composed about is titled *What Else Could We Think About? Bon Appetite*—in the form of object-sculpture-teak wood installation of five flamboyant people with gorilla heads, hair cut like deer antlers, gathering around a big table filled with food and beverages in the shape of manufacture factory, housing complex, oil refinery, and coal mine. The one empty chair is guarded by a servant in neat clothing—also with gorilla head and deer antler hair—holding a tray filled with snacks in similar shapes to the ones on the big table. Behind the servant is a table filled with food and beverages similar to the ones in the big table.

But, in actuality, the idea remains only an idea due to the insensitivity of an art dealer who wanted to display this work in their gallery, when Abdi Setiawan had already imagined this composition would serve as a new artistic and esistentian surprise that shows freshness and other possibilities from his creativity.

Alas, the failure to implement this idea became even more annoying for Abdi Setiawan with the dealer ghosted him in their interpersonal communication line.

(There is silver lining in the rain cloud: not long after displayed in the *Linkage: 20th Anniversary of OHD Museum* exhibition at OHD Museum, Magelang, 20 May–30 October 2017, *What Else Could We Think About? Bon Appetite* was purchased by a collector of Indonesian visual art who resided in the Land Down Under.)

In the end, Abdi Setiawan was truly able to put the idea of burning slow an artwork into reality in 2020 through an object-sculpture *Bicycle* (44 x 66 x 135 centimeter), which appropriated Marcel Duchamp’s readymade artwork from the 1913, *Bicycle Wheel* (1.3 meter x 64 x 42 centimeter), which is now under the collection of Israel Museum, Jerusalem.

Indeed, if I remembered correctly, in mid 2018, Abdi Setiawan had initiated this y an artwork with landscape visual principle, *Alam Desa* (175 x 122 centimeter), in the *To The Landscape* exhibition at Museum dan Tanah Liat, Bantul, which allowed him to paint and sculpt at the same time, instead of creating a relief, using small bits of charcoal.

As it turned out, before *Alam Desa*, Abdi Setiawan had displayed three nonrepresentative artworks, *The Story of December* (2017, chacoal, 115 x 164 x 10 centimeter), *241217* (2017, charcoal, 115 x 164 x 10 centimeter), and *Katarsis* (2018, charcoal, 138 centimeter in diameter x 12 centimeter), for group exhibition titled *Landscape’s Legacies: Visualizing Alam Minangkabau* at the Gajah Gallery, Singapore, 24 January–15 Februari 2018, that let him depicted certain times and mood with hundreds of small blocks or sharp pointed charcoal bits.

These artworks, especially *Desa*, which presages the *Sun Flower* (2018, charcoal blocks, 126 centimeter in diameter), *Starry Night* (2020, charcoal block, 175 x 127 centimeter), *Vincent Van Gogh* (2020, charcoal block, 127 x 126 centimeter), *La Giocondo* (2021, charcoal block, 26 centimeter in diameter), *Femme au et Col en Chapeau*

Fourrure (2022, charcoal block, 126 x 126 centimeter), *Self Portrait by Van Gogh* (2022, charcoal block, 126 x 126 centimeter), *Buste de Femme au Chapeau Bleu* (2022, charcoal block, 128 x 186 centimeter), *Bust of a Woman* (2022, charcoal block, 175 x 128 centimeter), and *Target* (2022, charcoal block, 126 centimeter in diameter), are presented in this *Mengarang* exhibition.

Although, different to *Alam Desa*, these nine works have the visual principles of: portrait, landscape, and still life—with titles borrowed from the visual principles and titles from paintings of Vincent van Gogh (*Starry Night* from *The Starry Night*; *Sun Flower* from *Sunflowers*; *Vincent Van Gogh* from *Self-Portrait with Straw Hat*; and *Self Portrait Van Gogh* from *Self-Portrait with Bandaged Ear*), Pablo Picasso (*Femme au et Col en Chapeau Fourrure*; *Buste de Femme au Chapeau Bleu*; and *Bust of a Woman* dari are from three Picasso's paintings with the same title), Leonardo da Vinci (*La Gioconda* from *Mona Lisa*), and Lucio Fontana (*Target* from Fontana canvases that are slashed and stabbed).

Meanwhile, *Bicycle* that was displayed in Artjog 2020 has its variation in *The Persistence of Memory* (2020, charcoal block, 180 x 170 centimeter) that took the title and appropriate from the visual principle—to be precise, the melting clock—from the painting *The Persistence of Memory* by Salvador Dali.

Up to this point, I think, it's time to reveal that the charcoal blocks used as the main media for these eleven works—as I already mentioned a little at the above—came from wood scraps, chips or pieces of Abdi Setiawan sculpture works that he burned slow into charchoal in an iron barrel.

In the beginning, the burning and charcoal making is a practical way Abdi Setiawan chose to remove trash or waste from his sculpture works. Then, at an unexpected “moment of truth”, the burning and turning into charcoal becomes a creative opportunity path with a “creative vision” that enables him to appreciate what is wasted or deemed to have no value.

In this way, to say in a bit of exaggeration, charcoal also transcends existentially as not mere residue, but precious gunpowder to fight laziness, ignorance, and boredom in Abdi Setiawan's creativity.

Thus, it is understandable when Abdi Setiawan admitted that for the past five years charcoal and making charcoal

have injected a new spirit that drives away his anxieties and fear of shifts and changes in the artistic pillars of his work, moreover the affluence of contemporary art support it with appropriation techniques or practices.

It has been a common knowledge, as stated by Terry Barret, Marita Sturken, and Lisa Cartwright for instance, appropriation is understood traditionally as “*taking something for oneself without consent*” atau secara kultural sebagai “*the process ‘borrowing’ and changing the meaning of cultural products, slogans, images, or element fashion*”.

Consequently, appropriating is understood as a creative effort “*to possess, borrow, steal, copy, quote, or excerpt images that already exist, made by other artists or available in the public domain and general culture*”.

Based on this, it makes sense when Hal Foster considered artists who practice appropriaton as “*a manipulator of signs more than a producer of art objects, and the viewer an active reader of messages rather than a passive contemplator of aesthetic or consumer of the spectacle*”.

With that, it is undeniable that Abdi Setiawan has created with prowess the appropriation and appropriating in all of his works in this *Mengarang* exhibition. But, it is also undeniable that Abdi Setiawan is not the only Indonesian visual artists who do appropriations and use charcoal in visual art production. A number of Indonesian artists also like to appropriate and use charcoals—among them are Agus Suwage, Bestrizal Besta, Dadang Rukmana, J Ariadhitya Pramuhendra, Roby Dwi Antono, and Titarubi.

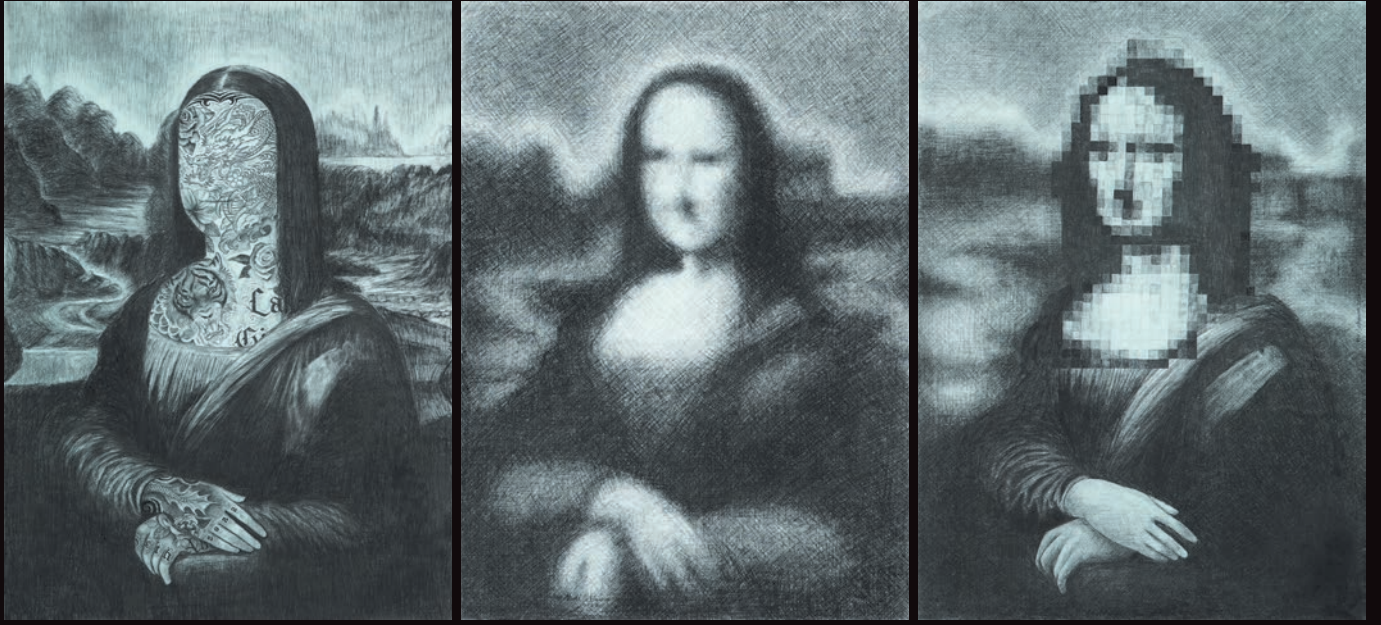
However, with no intention to compare it with the critical, moralistic, or meaningful tendencies of the artists who are staunch adherer of appropriation and other great users of charcoal, especially those mentioned above, in his practice of appropriation, as we can see in the works in this *Mengarang* exhibition, Abdi Setiawan not only shows that “*appropriation is not always an oppositional practice*”—but also proved the statement of Kyung An and Jessica Gerasi that “*contemporary art isn't some wacky destructive credo that sets out to crumble all that has come before.*”

That is why separating Abdi Setiawan's works in *Mengarang* exhibition from the myths on novelty and creativity as stated in the words of Boris Groys quoted at the beginning of this essay.

When we take a closer look at the relaxed pace of two of Abdi Setiawan's drawings using manufactured charcoal, bought from a stationery or painting shop, at this *Mengarang* exhibition: *Monalisa* (2022, charcoal on linen paper, 79.3 x 108.9 centimeter x 3) and *The Immortal* (2022, charcoal on linen paper, 79.3 x 108.9 centimeter x 3), it is difficult to ignore the impression that both are acknowledgement and tribute to the famed 12 million dollars installation art of the American Damien Hirst, *The Physical Impossibility of Death in the Mind of Someone Living* (1991, mix media), and the masterpiece work of Leonardo da Vinci, *Mona Lisa* (1503-1519, oil paint, panel, wood, poplar, 77 x 53 centimeter). In 2010, as he told me, Abdi Setiawan once saw the *Mona Lisa* at the Louvre Paris with his own eyes, albeit from the 3-4 meter distance that made it hard to observe the details in the painting, since there were so many people queueing in front of it. This anecdote forced me to acknowledge the statement made by Walter Isaacson, the author of Leonardo da Vinci latest biography regarding the *Mona Lisa*: "*What began as a portrait of a silk merchant's young wife became a quest to portray the complexities of human emotion, made memorable through the mysteries of a hinted smile, and to connect our nature to that of our universe.*" Therefore, Abdi Setiawan's *Monalisa* can very much be perceived as a reflection of his experience seeing Leonardo da Vinci's *Mona Lisa* with three different ways of perceiving.

Of course there are still other possibilities to give impressions and opinions on the two drawings—as well as the other eleven object-painting-relief works of Abdi Setiawan in this *Mengarang* exhibition. Whatever its results are, to end this essay, please allow me to appropriate what Kyung An and Jessica Cerasi stated: it is very interesting to observe how the work of art(ist) from both the near or far past—Leonardo da Vinci, Vincent van Gogh, Marcel Duchamp, Pablo Picasso, Salvador Dali, Lucio Fontana, and Damien Hirst—still have echoes in the contemporary visual art(ist) practice of today, as Abdi Setiawan shows in his solo exhibition, *Mengarang*, at Nadi Gallery.

Yogyakarta, 3 November 2022
WAHYUDIN





The Immortal, 2022, Charcoal on linen paper, 3 panels each: 109 x 79.3 cm.



Bicycle, 2020, Charcoal, 44 X 66 X 135 cm.



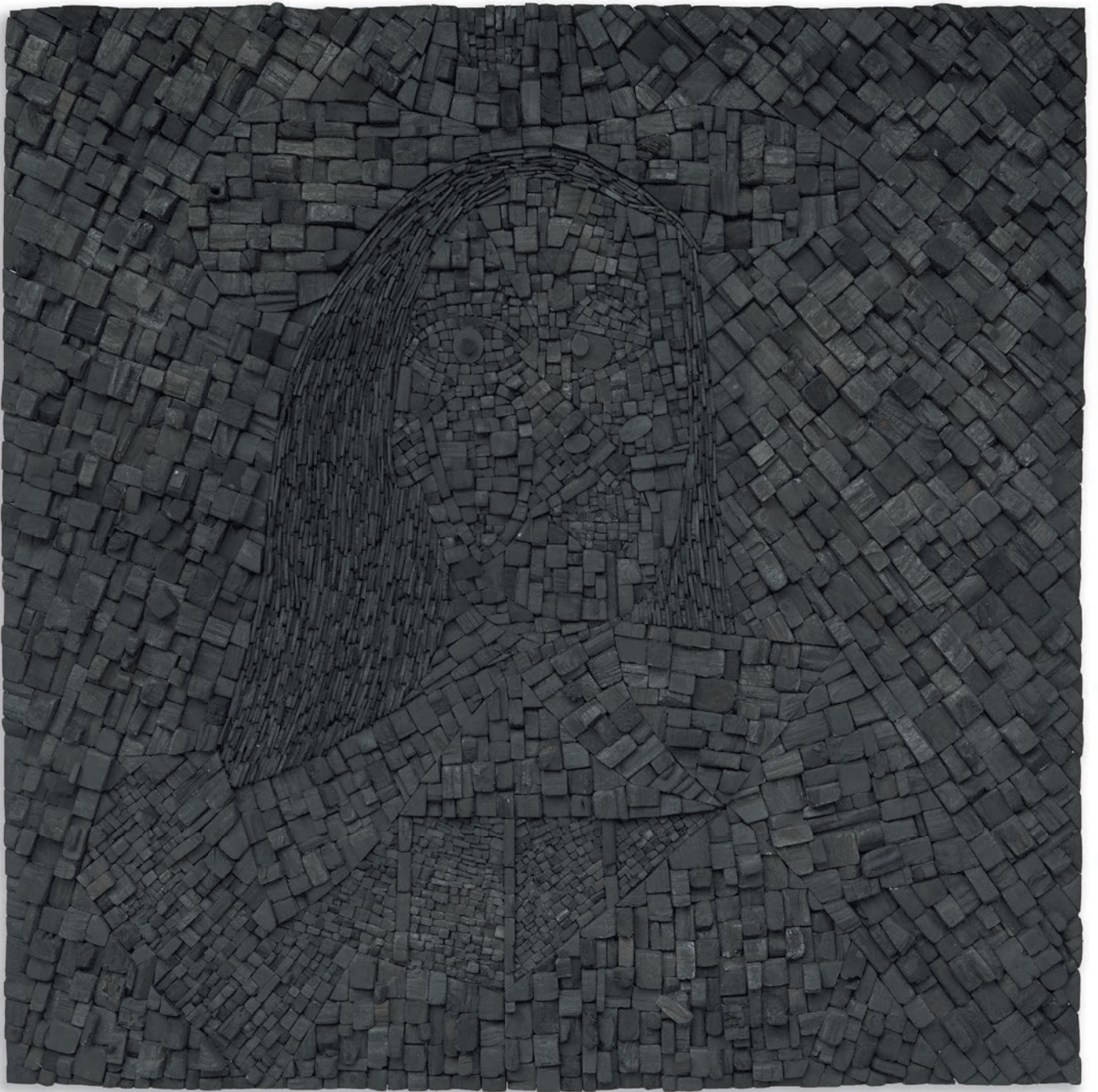
The Persistence of Memory, 2020, Charcoal block, 180 x 170 cm. (Dimension variable)

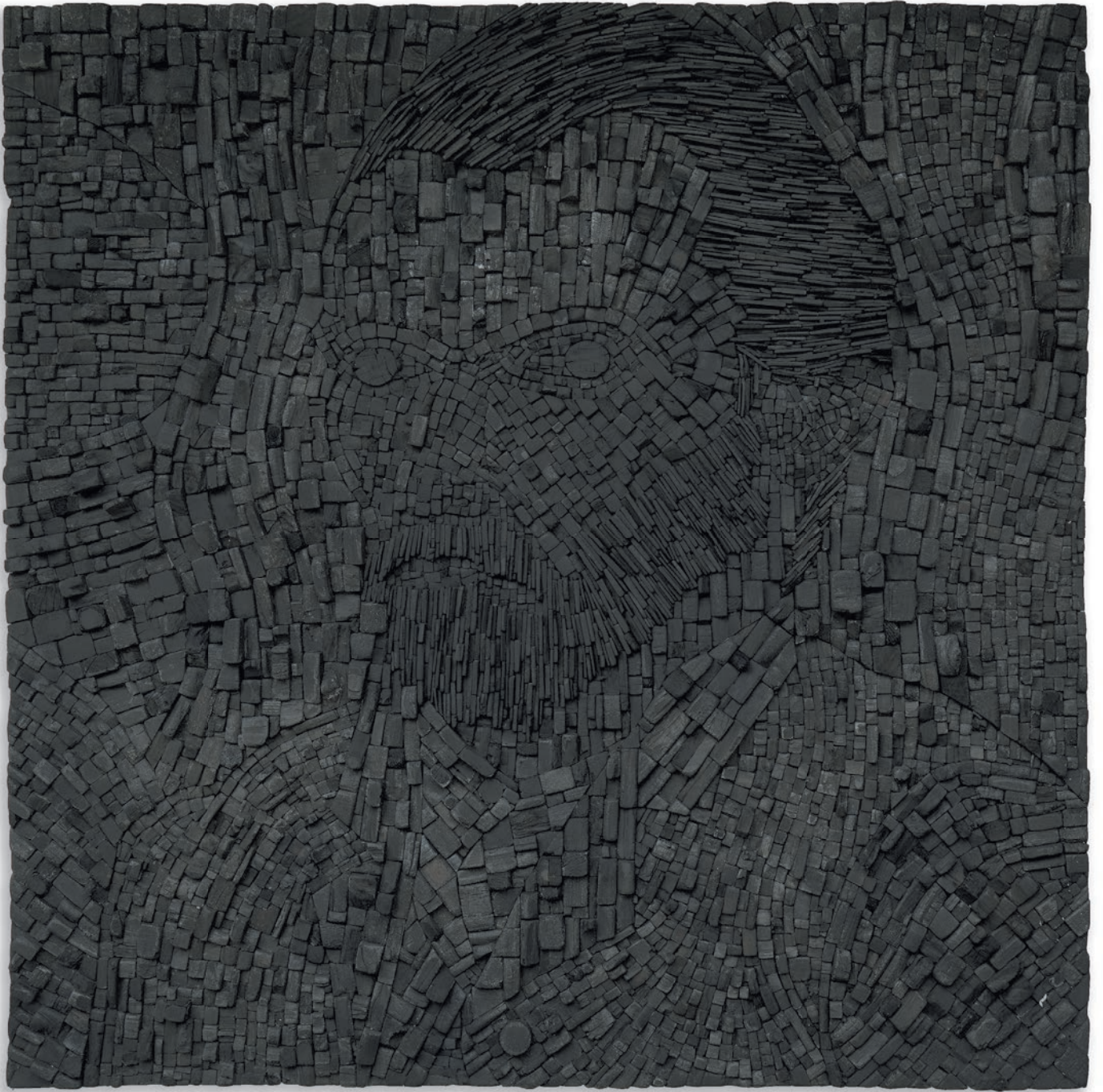




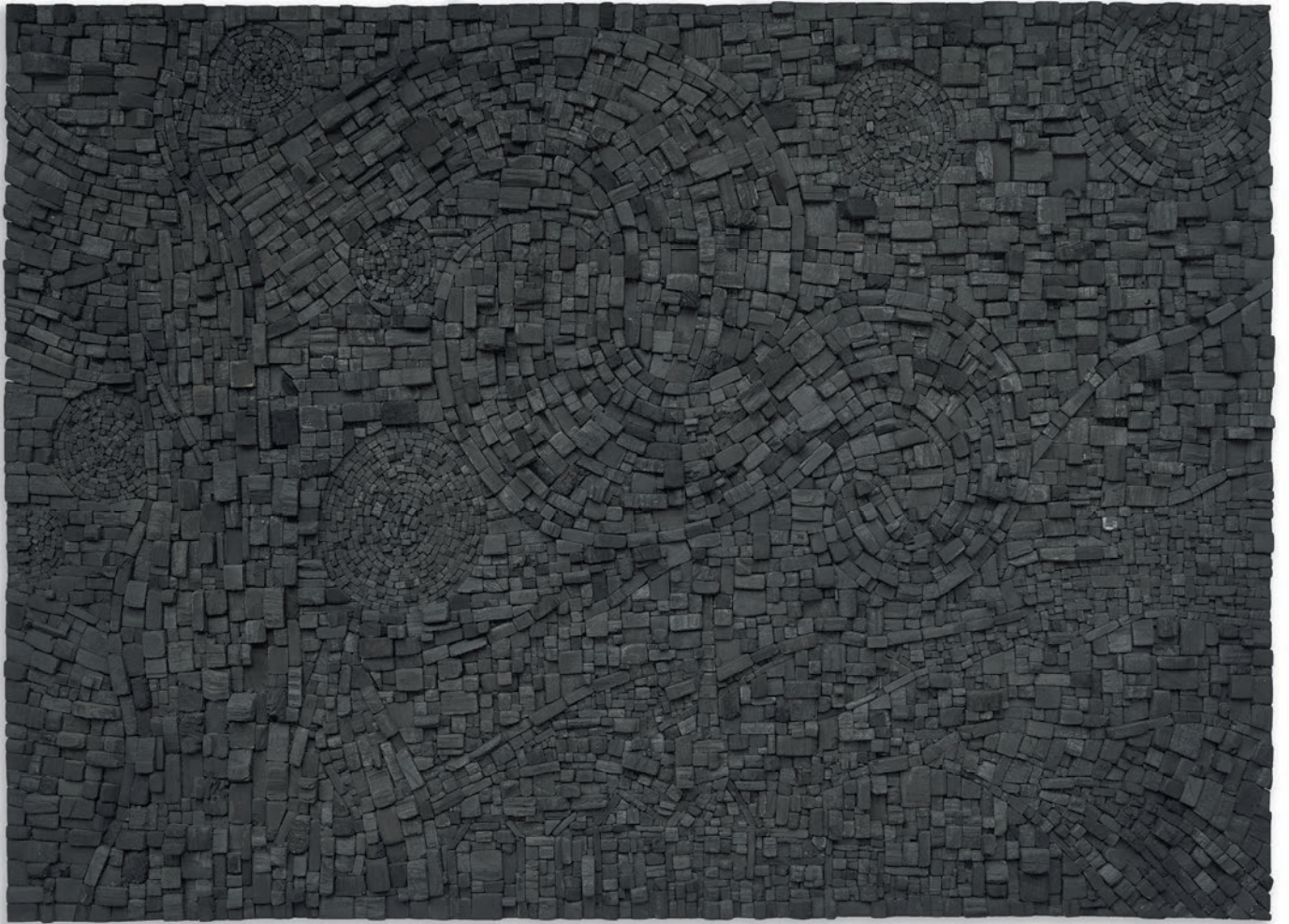








Self Potrait by Van Gogh, 2022, Charcoal block, 126 x 126 cm.





Bust of a Woman, 2022, Charcoal block, 175 x 128 cm.





Buste de Femme Au Chapeau Bluebis, 2022, Charcoal block, 186 x 120 cm.

Abdi Setiawan



Abdi Setiawan is sculptor born in December 29, 1971 in Sicincin, Pariaman, West Sumatra, Indonesia. He lives and works in Yogyakarta, Indonesia. Abdi's work is installation-based, and features life-size wood sculpture of everyday Indonesian in various social settings. In his work, he raises many social problems that occur in society. Abdi works using wood with chisel technique and sometimes using fiberglass with printing technique.

Born December 21, 1971 in Sicincin, Pariaman, Indonesia.

Education:

1993-2003 Institut Seni Indonesia (ISI/Indonesian Institute of Fine Arts), Yogyakarta, Indonesia

Awards:

2001 Finalist of Philip Morris Art Award

2016 The Best Work of BAKABA #5, Sakato Art Community

Solo Exhibition:

2019 "Set and His People", Semarang Contemporary Art Gallery, Semarang, Indonesia

2014 "The Future is Here", REDBASE Contemporary Art, Jakarta, Indonesia

2013 "Re-PLAY #4 Abdi Setiawan", OFCA International, Yogyakarta, Indonesia

2010 "New Sculptures", André Simoens Gallery, Knokke-Zoute, Belgium
 "New Sculptures", Metis Gallery, Amsterdam, The Netherlands

2007 "The Flâneur", Nadi Gallery, Jakarta, Indonesia

2004 "Gairah Malam", France Cultural Center, Yogyakarta, Indonesia

Selected Group Exhibitions:

2022 "Art Jakarta 2022", Nadi Gallery, Jakarta, Indonesia

"Konvergensi – Pasca Tradisionalisme", Srisasanti Syndicate, Galeri RJ. Katamsi, Yogyakarta, Indonesia

Bakaba #8 "NOISE", Sarang Building II, Yogyakarta, Indonesia

"Yogya Annual Art #7 FLOW", Sangkring ArtSpace, Yogyakarta, Indonesia

"Titik Balik", Limanjawi Art House, Magelang, Indonesia

2021 "PROKES", Sakato Art Community, Yogyakarta, Indonesia

"DIS&DAT", Visual Dialogues On Art Toys, SIKa GALLERY, Bali, Indonesia

"TRANSboundaries", Yogyakarta Annual Award #6, Sangkring Art Space, Yogyakarta, Indonesia

Indonesia Art Expo, L Project, Yogyakarta, Indonesia
 "Morphosis", Bundoora Homestead Art Centre, Victoria, Australia

"Influx: Inauguration", Galeri Ruang Dini, Bandung, Indonesia

"ARANG", Duo Exhibition, Latar Art Space, Jakarta, Indonesia

"Hidup Berdampingan Dengan Musuh", Ciputra Artpreneur, Jakarta, Indonesia

"Seni Yang Tidak Pernah Pudar", Talenta Organizer, Plaza Indonesia, Jakarta, Indonesia

2020 JICAF, ISI Yogyakarta, Yogyakarta, Indonesia

FKY 2020 Mulanira 2, Museum Sonobudoyo, Yogyakarta, Indonesia

Group Exhibition, Gallery Lukisan, Bergen op Zoom, The Netherlands

"ARTJOG: RESILIENCE", Jogja National Museum, Yogyakarta, Indonesia

2019 Art Jakarta, Nadi Gallery, JCC Senayan, Jakarta, Indonesia

Pameran Potret "Penyelidikan Estetika", Bentara Budaya, Yogyakarta, Indonesia

"KunstRai", Gallery Lukisan, Amsterdam, The Netherlands

"Delapan Puluh Nan Ampuh", Bale Banjar Sangkring, by SICA, Yogyakarta, Indonesia

2018 Jateng Bienalle, Semarang Gallery, Semarang, Indonesia

"Small Thing, High Value", Visma Gallery, Surabaya, Indonesia

"Spektrum Hendra Gunawan", Ciputra Artpreneur, Jakarta, Indonesia

"Landscape's Legacies", Gajah Gallery, Singapore

"To Landscape And...", Museum dan Tanah Liat, by SICA, Yogyakarta, Indonesia

"Kecil Itu Indah After Edwin (KIIAE)", Miracle Prints Space, Yogyakarta, Indonesia

2017 "Turbulence", Edwin Gallery, Jakarta, Indonesia

Bakaba # 6, Jogja Gallery, Yogyakarta, Indonesia

"LINKAGE: 20 : 20 Years OHD Museum", OHD Museum, Magelang, Indonesia

Art Sampoerna: Flow Into Now, Sampoerna Strategic Square, Jakarta, Indonesia

2016 "Aksi Artsy", Galeri RJ. Katamsi, ISI Yogyakarta, Indonesia

"Kecil Itu Indah XXIV", Edwin's Gallery, Jakarta, Indonesia

Bantul Art Summit, Gajah Gallery, Yogyakarta, Indonesia
 Mandiri Charity, Jakarta, Indonesia

- "Alam Benda dan Gambar Lainnya", Museum Dan Tanah Liat, Yogyakarta, Indonesia
- Bakaba # 5, Jogja Gallery, Yogyakarta, Indonesia
- "ART|JOG|9: UNIVERSAL INFLUENCE", Jogja Nasional Museum (JNM), Yogyakarta, Indonesia
- 2015 "Mencegah Bara", Galeria Fatahilah, Jakarta, Indonesia
- "Keajaiban Kecil", Nalarrupa, Yogyakarta, Indonesia
- "Langkah Kepalang Dekolonisasi", National Gallery of Indonesia, Jakarta, Indonesia
- "Kepada Republik", DPR RI Jakarta, Indonesia
- Bakaba #4, Jogja Gallery, Yogyakarta, Indonesia
- "Yogyakarta Open Studio 2015", Yogyakarta, Indonesia
- ARTMOMENTS: JOGJA, Jogja Nasional Museum (JNM), Yogyakarta, Indonesia
- 2014 Yogyakarta Open Studio 2014, Yogyakarta, Indonesia
- Singapore Art Fair, Singapore
- BOS (Berlin Open Studio), Berlin, Germany
- "VERSI", Indonesia Sculpture Triennial #2, Jakarta, Indonesia
- "Domesticity V", by Lucie Fontaine, Bali, Indonesia
- "Melihat Indonesia", Ciputra Artpreneur, Jakarta, Indonesia
- "Wood & Good", Ciputra Artpreneur, Jakarta, Indonesia
- "Pandora #2", Yogyakarta, Indonesia
- Bakaba #3, Yogyakarta, Indonesia
- ArtJOG 14, Yogyakarta, Indonesia
- Art Basel Hongkong, Hongkong
- Art Stage Singapore, Singapore
- 2013 "Peristiwa Sebuah Kelas", Sangkring Art Space, Yogyakarta, Indonesia
- Yogyakarta Open Studio, Yogyakarta, Indonesia
- ArtJOG 13, Taman Budaya Yogyakarta, Yogyakarta, Indonesia
- Korea - Indonesia Contemporary Plastic, National Gallery of Indonesia, Jakarta, Indonesia
- Art Basel Hongkong, Hongkong
- Art Stage Singapore, Singapore
- 2012 "Seni Patung Baru", Galeri Salihara, Jakarta, Indonesia
- "YOGYAKARTA: Five Artists from Indonesia", Marc Strauss Gallery, New York, USA
- "Collective Ground: The Gallery in the Midst of Market and Discourse", Gallery Rachel, Jakarta
- "A Tribute to a Mentor", OHD Museum, Magelang, Indonesia
- Indonesian Contemporary Art, Sin Sin Gallery, Hongkong
- "Lintas", Edwin's Gallery, Jakarta, Indonesia
- "LEGACY The Trace of Civilization", Esa Sampoerna Art Museum, Surabaya, Indonesia
- 2011 "Maximum City", Jakarta Bienalle #14, Jakarta, Indonesia
- "BEASTLY", Cemeti Art House, Yogyakarta, Indonesia
- "Bandar", Sogan Art Gallery, Singapore
- "EKSPANSI", National Gallery of Indonesia, Jakarta, Indonesia
- ArtJOG 11, Yogyakarta, Indonesia
- "Hong Kong International Art Fair (ART HK 11)", Nadi Gallery, Hong Kong
- "Mambo Tango", Luis Adelantado Gallery, Mexico City, Mexico
- "Indonesian Contemporary Sculpture", Grand Indonesia Shopping Town, Jakarta, Indonesia
- "ARCO Madrid", André Simoens Gallery, Madrid, Spain
- "Speak of", Jogja Nasional Museum (JNM), Yogyakarta, Indonesia
- 2010 "The Show Must Go On", celebrating the 10th Anniversary of Nadi Gallery, the National Gallery of Indonesia, Jakarta, Indonesia
- "Tramendum", organized by Philo Art Space, National Gallery of Indonesia, Jakarta, Indonesia
- "Shopping", Nadi Gallery at Jakarta Art District, Grand Indonesia Shopping Town, Jakarta, Indonesia
- "No Direction Home", Edwin's Gallery, Jakarta, Indonesia
- "Art Amsterdam", RAI, Amsterdam, The Netherlands
- "Space and Image", Ciputra World Marketing Gallery, Jakarta, Indonesia
- "MiArt", Milan, Italy
- "Ecce Homo", Semarang Gallery, Semarang, Indonesia
- "Bakaba", Sakato Art Community, Jogja National Museum, Yogyakarta, Indonesia
- 2009 "Jogja Jamming", Jogja Biennale X, Yogyakarta, Indonesia
- "Higher Ground", Metis Gallery, Amsterdam, The Netherlands
- "XYZ", Edwin's Gallery, Jakarta, Indonesia
- "South Asia Project", KKF, Yogyakarta, Indonesia
- "From 2D to 3D", Sin Sin Gallery, Hong Kong
- "Poli [Chromatic]", V-Art and Bentara Budaya Yogyakarta, Indonesia
- "In Rainbow", Esa Sampoerna Art House, Surabaya, Indonesia
- "GRIP", Young Contemporary Artists from Indonesia and China, Vanessa Art Link, Beijing, China
- "The Spirit of Interaction", Erasmus Huis, Jakarta, Indonesia
- 2008 "Self Portrait – Famous Living Artists of Indonesia", Jogja Gallery, Yogyakarta, Indonesia

- "Lampu Merah", Kelompok Semoet, Bika Gallery, Jakarta, Indonesia
- "Bentuk – Bentuk: Contemporary Indonesian Art in 3D", Melbourne Art Fair 2008, Melbourne, Australia, organized by Nadi Gallery & Valentine Willie Fine Art
- "Contemporary Apaan Tuh?", heART Space, Bali, Indonesia
- "Res Publicum", Canna Gallery, Jakarta, Indonesia
- "Manifesto", The National Gallery of Indonesia, Jakarta, Indonesia
- "KITA", Japanese Artists Meet Indonesia, Organized by The Japan Foundation, LIP Yogyakarta, Indonesia
- "IVAA Book Aid Volume 2", Edwin's Gallery, Jakarta, Indonesia
- "CIGE 2008" (China International Gallery Exposition), Nadi Gallery, Beijing, China
- "Strategies Towards The Real: S.Soedjojono and Contemporary Indonesian Art", NUS Museum, Singapore
- 2007 "Anti Aging", Gaya Fusion, Art Space, Bali, Indonesia
- "Boeng Ajo Boeng 100 th Affandi", Taman Budaya Yogyakarta, Yogyakarta, Indonesia
- "Quota", The National Gallery of Indonesia, Jakarta, Indonesia
- 2006 "Habis Gelap Tak Kunjung Padam", Taman Budaya Yogyakarta, Yogyakarta, Indonesia
- "Orde & Order", Archives exhibition of Yayasan Seni Cemeti collection, Kedai Kebun Forum, Yogyakarta, Indonesia
- "Beyond the Limits and Its Challenges", Jakarta Biennale, Jakarta, Indonesia
- "Wedding Tobacco and Art", Magelang, Indonesia
- "The First Indonesian Contemporary Art Festival", Langgeng Gallery, Magelang, Indonesia
- "JakARTa Collectors II", John H. McGlynn, Jakarta, Indonesia
- "8 Young Contemporaries", Art Forum, Singapore
- "ICON : Retrospective", Jogja Gallery, Yogyakarta, Indonesia
- "People of Asia", Art Forum, Singapore
- 2005 "Art of Aceh", Societet Militair, Yogyakarta, Indonesia
- "Spirit of Play", Bentara Budaya Yogyakarta, Yogyakarta, Indonesia
- "Omong Kosong # 1", Cemeti Art House, Yogyakarta, Indonesia
- "Makan Senirupa", Yogyakarta, Indonesia
- "Open View", Biasa Art Space, Bali, Indonesia
- "Urban/Culture", CP International Biennale 2005, Bank Indonesia Museum, Jakarta, Indonesia
- "Ayo Ngguyu", Bentara Budaya Yogyakarta, Indonesia
- "Kecil itu Indah VIII", Edwin's Gallery, Jakarta, Indonesia
- "Di Sini & Kini", 8th Yogyakarta Biennale, Taman Budaya Yogyakarta, Yogyakarta, Indonesia
- 2004 "Barcode", 16th Yogyakarta Art Festival, Taman Budaya Yogyakarta, Yogyakarta, Indonesia
- "Di Sini Akan Dibangun Mall", Public Art Exhibition, Yogyakarta, Indonesia
- "Environment Art", 27th Sasenitalia ISI Yogyakarta Dies Natalies, Bebung, Yogyakarta, Indonesia
- 2003 "What's in Your Pocket?", Purna Budaya Yogyakarta, Yogyakarta, Indonesia
- "Reply", 15th Yogyakarta Art Festival, Yogyakarta, Indonesia
- 2002 "Kata Rupa", Gelaran Budaya, Yogyakarta, Indonesia
- "Sepiring Indonesia", Yogyakarta; Bandung; Bali, Indonesia
- "Gelar Seni Alam Raya", ISI Gallery, Yogyakarta, Indonesia
- 2001 "Phillip Morris Indonesian Art Award", National Gallery of Indonesia, Jakarta, Indonesia
- "Kelompok Semoet II", Purna Budaya Yogyakarta, Yogyakarta, Indonesia
- "Gelanggang Seni Sakato", Purna Budaya Yogyakarta, Yogyakarta, Indonesia
- 2000 "Kelompok Semoet I", Purna Budaya Yogyakarta, Yogyakarta, Indonesia
- "Seni Budaya Minang", Taman Ismail Marzuki, Jakarta, Indonesia
- 1997 The 9th Yogyakarta Art Festival, Benteng Vredeburg Museum, Yogyakarta, Indonesia
- 1996 The 8th Yogyakarta Art Festival, Benteng Vredeburg Museum, Yogyakarta, Indonesia
- "Dialog Dua Kota I", Cipta Gallery, TIM, Jakarta, Indonesia

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