

Press Release



Sukses! Cross-generational Exhibition of Indonesian Female Artists ISA Art & Design Gallery 2021



Jakarta, 3rd March 2021 - ISA Art & Design is honoured to present **Sukses!**, an exhibition of Indonesian female artists featuring works from three distinct generations. From the seventeen participating artists, there are four pioneer female artists: **Arahmaiani, Dolorosa Sinaga, I Gak Murniasih** and **Rita Widagdo**, four mid-career artists: **Cempaka Surakusumah x Amelia Adysaputra, Fika Ria Santika, Prilla Tania**, and **Yaya Sung**, as well as nine emerging female artists: **Anastasia Astika, AY Sekar F, Cynthia Delaney, Dini Nur Aghnia, Etza Meisyara, Evi Pangestu, Luh Gede, Talitha Maranila**, and **Tara Kasenda**.

This exhibition will launch on the **20th of March**, marking **ISA Art and Design's** new space's inauguration while celebrating **Women's Day** and the **gallery's first anniversary**. **ISA Art and Design's** new space would be located at **Wisma BNI46**, presenting to you a white-cube style gallery with floor to ceiling windows and a seven-meter ceiling. Located at the heart of **Jakarta City, Sudirman** area, this space ensures that we would be able to present quality exhibitions to wider audiences as well as contribute to the vibrancy of the city.

About the exhibition itself, **Sukses!** highlights the ongoing plight of female, and specifically, female artists in occupying creative space. The issues that appear in female artists artworks range from art-specific marginalization, -such as the fight against the diminution of female creative expression into

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exclusively the realm of crafts and kitsch. It also includes broader issues which impacts are reflected in the art, -such as the resistance against governmental policing of feminine bodies.

It is essential to be aware that "female artists" are not a single homogenous unit whose experience, background, and concerns are exactly the same. Reducing them to a stereotype or an agglomeration of tragic stories is a slippery slope towards saviorism and patronizing behavior. Therefore, one should not entail or demand female artists' artwork to solely serve a political agenda for it to be considered beneficial to women's betterment in art.

Female artists are diverse individuals whose stories reflect, crossover, resonate, and influence their community and beyond. Highlighting and giving space to each unique story, including narratives that are inward-looking and intuitive, creates a positive impact on the community and enriches the recognition of female artists. Supporting the individual contributes to the collective interest, and vice versa. Additionally, looking at female artists as individuals gives a nuanced understanding of their plight as a collective.

Seemingly non-political artistic and formalistic exploration is just as important because the female identity should not be constructed merely by what it is "against", but also everything it is "about". To express that "about" is also to explore the thoughts, aesthetic and artistic sensibilities, imagination and interests of these female artists.

The fact that feministic call-for-actions are still relevant today does not mean that the effort done by earlier generations are made in vain. One reason we can demand accountability regarding current issues is because of the insistence of female artists in previous generations. Moreover, the contemporary female narratives are not just repetitions from the past, but continuations from what has previously been paved. By looking at artworks from artists spanning across different generations, we hope to deduce the prevailing challenges, generation-specific visual expressions, and progresses that has been attained by female artists in art.

This exhibition does it's best to observe what these artists from different generations find relevant, what drives them to create. The mediums that best expresses their sensibility; and try to find formal, contextual,

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and conceptual commonalities and overlaps between the diverse artworks. Finally, this exhibition hopes to hypothesize or synthesize the continuing narrative in Indonesian female artists' works in accordance with their shared historical moments and cultural experiences.

ARTISTS

Arahmaiani

Arahmaiani, (b.1961, Yogyakarta) is one of Indonesia's most seminal and respected contemporary visual artists. She established herself in the 1980s as a pioneer in the Southeast Asia Performance Art scene, although her practice also incorporates a wide variety of media. Arahmaiani frequently uses art as a means of critical commentary on social, religious, and cultural issues. For the past 10 years, a particular focus of her work has been environmental issues in the Tibetan plateau region, where she has been actively collaborating on-site with Buddhist monks and villagers to foster greater environmental consciousness through an array of ongoing community projects.

In Bandung, she became active in the experimental art group Sumber Waras (Source of Wellbeing or Source of Sanity, 1988–89) with other ITB students and graduates. The creative exploration in Sumber Waras consolidated her development as a performance artist. Sumber Waras and similar performance art collectives that emerged in Bandung in the late 1980s and early 1990s, including Perengkel Jahe (1991–94), have been categorized retrospectively, since the mid-1990s, under the umbrella of the Sundanese performance art genre of Jeprut. Arahmaiani confirms that her career development is “the result of the seeds that were planted in the Jeprut era” and that its “development has not only brought personal benefit but has extended to the environment and the community”.

Dolorosa Sinaga

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Dolorosa Sinaga (b.1953, North Sumatra), is a female sculptor. Dolorosa Sinaga graduated from the Jakarta Arts Institute in 1977 and then continued her studies at St. Petersburg. Martin's School of Art, London, Karnarija Lubliana, Yugoslavia, and the San Francisco Art Institute and the University of Maryland, United States. Most of her sculptures tell stories about women, symbolizing illusion and loyalty, crisis, solidarity, multiculturalism, and women's struggle against violence. Dolorosa has received several awards and recognition for her achievements in Indonesia, including the Cultural Adhikarya Image Award and the 2009 Art Award from the Republic of Indonesia's Government. She was then appointed Dean of the Jakarta Arts Institute.

Dolorosa Sinaga already in her 60s, is involved in many social activities and meetings, teaches classes at the Jakarta Arts Institute (IKJ) and works on various sculptural projects. For her, art is her life, a way to express her emotions and ease her mind but most importantly, a medium for social advancement. Dolorosa is now actively organizing exhibitions that showcase the works of young sculptors which are based on research methodology.

I Gusti Kadek Murniasih

I Gusti Kadek Murniasih (b.1966, Tabanan, Bali) Murni is a self-taught artist who constantly searching for herself in her paintings. Murni's works from the 90's were considered shocking for their sensual visualizations and provocative nature. The visualization of Murni's works includes surreal forms, from feminine objects such as bags and shoes, in which she hopes for viewers to see her own body. These works were later deemed by the public as too selfish and overexposing their bodies.

Her work before becoming a painter was mostly concerned with jobs that required aesthetic sensitivity, such as garment workers and silver craftsmen. However, her decision to become an artist began when she met I Dewa Putu Mokoh and Italian artist Mondo Zanulini, who later became her lover until the end of Murni's life. The visualization of Murni's works is inseparable from a thick surrealistic concept, such as the visualization of fragments of her memory, and her works always include elements of the female body with solid and bold colors.

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Rita Widagdo

Rita Widagdo (b.1938). In 1957 she began her study at Staatliche Akademie der Bildenden Künste in Stuttgart. In her student years she won art competitions at SABK, in Stuttgart and in Rottweil. She completed her study in 1964, acquiring Meisterschüler degree. At the end of the same year, she married Professor Widagdo and followed her husband who returned to Indonesia after both of them pursued education in Germany. Rita Widagdo's great interest in education has led her to be an educator besides being a sculptor. In 1966 she began developing sculpture education at the Faculty of Visual Arts and Design of Bandung Institute of Technology. Later, she was also lecturer at the Department of Architecture, Faculty of Civil Engineering and Planning of the Institute.

In her works she pursuing into formalism, Rita makes further exploration into the realm of forms to the utmost extent she manages to achieve. Forms that are developed out of composed lines and interweaving spaces, filigrees, curving, cavity, waving, and so forth, serve as the elements of rhythm we often find in her work. The interrelatedness among those forms leads us to sense gravity, tensions, supleness and the whole range of reactions prescribed by the law of causality. In addition to a sensibility associated with esthetic matters, here we meet with issue that we can rationally take as belonging to the law of causality.

Cempaka x Amelia Adysaputra

Cempaka was born in Jakarta, Indonesia, in 1987. With a background in graphic design, she now focuses on experimental textile wearable art under her brand "Person A Person" along with her partner. Cempaka is also currently active in a band called Efek Rumah Kaca as a backing vocalist. She took to art as therapy to her anxiety; her work features various colors and geometric shapes that calms her anxieties and bring together the composition.

Cempaka received her B.A from the University of Pelita Harapan in 2009. She has participated in several group exhibitions ranging from print art and installation art, such as Exi(s)t #4 "The Food Files" (Jakarta 2015), Martell art exhibition "Living with Art" (Jakarta, 2016), Discourse (Jakarta 2017), and International poster exhibition +A9 (Seoul, Korea 2017).

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She is also actively participating in several art exhibitions. Her work mostly talks about emotion, which is visualized into geometric abstract through music as the medium. Emotions are pictured into abstract compositions of geometrical shapes, where each composition portrays specific emotions that she felt at the time of the making. Her process begins by listening to musical composition almost repeatedly until she drifts into a state of mindfulness, letting the harmony of the music guide her on making abstract forms.

Fika Ria Santika

Fika Ria Santika (b. 1987, West Sumatra, Indonesia), finds nature and the surrounding environment as an inexhaustible source of inspiration. She was born and raised in the Minang culture, a society which adopted the philosophies of nature into its way of life. Her work, 'Alam Takambang Jadi Guru' makes her contemplate the deeper meaning of nature's role as a philosophy of life. This proverb is familiar to most Minang people, but it left Fika wondering whether it still retains its relevance amongst youths in today's society. Departing from this thought, she was curious to dig deeper into the Minangkabau essence which has made her who she is today.

Cycle, growth, layers, dynamics, changes, and uncertainties are just a few of the things she has discovered in her study of nature. From these characters, Fika's series of work entitled 'Tumpuk Lapis Tampak Isi' (Stacked Layers, Visible Borders) started to form. This series explores the morning scenery in particular, and how it is visually constructed by layers of mist and fog. This morning scenery is a metaphor which features prominently in searching for the essence of a Minangkabau identity. In this process of discovery, Fika went through several different phases which she described as stacked layers. These stacked layers are a different form of her personal experience of interacting with nature. 'Tumpuk Lapis Tampak Isi' has become a main theme of her artistic practice since the beginning of 2016, and it remains an ongoing process of research until now.

Prilla Tania

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Prilla Tania (b.1979) Graduated from the ITB FSRD in 2001, has been active in participating in various group exhibitions since 2003. She is interested in how humans relate to their natural surroundings as well as the relationship between culture and nature. Since its inception, she has often raised daily themes because she believes that the problems, we encounter every day are the basis of the world's significant issues.

In 2007 she had the opportunity to undertake an artist residency program in Australia which then opened her eyes to human problems within their natural surroundings. This experience made her more concerned with human and environmental (ecosystem) problems. Through her work, she raises the issue of food, which is an important part of human life.

Although she's widely known as a video artist, she also works with other media from performance to paper cutting and more. Most of her works are site-specific therefore, rarely shown twice. Since 2007, she has joined several artists in residence programs in Australia, Asia, and Europe. These experiences have exposed her to different cultures and geographic situations which enriches her exploration and observations on culture and nature.

Yaya Sung

Yaya Sung (b.1986) A visual artist, born in Jakarta - Indonesia. She has been engaged in the contemporary art scene since 2006. In her work, Yaya explores areas such as: questioning her identity as a Chinese descendant in Indonesia that went through racial discrimination during Indonesia's 32 years of dictatorship. Her works, Examining Kamisan acts (a silent protest held every Thursday outside presidential palace in Jakarta), Rediscovering history relate to Anti-Chinese riots in 1998, and the destruction of the women's movement in 1965. Her medium of expression varies from photography, image/photo-based installation, videography, performance, to text and design installation.

She is keen to explore cross-discipline collaborations, experimenting with the limits and boundaries of being an artist. Yaya is determined to use fear and trauma as the first door to understand the meaning of

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her existence. Yaya actively participates in art projects, exhibitions, residencies (both local and international)

Anastasia Astika

Anastasia Astika (b.1995) an artist and graphic designer based in Bandung, Indonesia. She studied at Institut Teknologi Bandung where she studied graphic design, but spent her free time in printmaking studies. She has a strong interest in the rigid process of creation as well as the detail of a composition for the complex organic forms in her work. Her works represent the documentation of her attempt to define reality in the environment in which she lives as well as digging up implicit memories as a fragment. The fluidity of ink and watercolor is part of her process due to her sensitivity to the subconscious; tracking the various moments in subtle forms.

AY Sekar F.

AY Sekar F (b.1993), works as a part-time artist and full-time textile designer for her own clothing line as well as a freelance lecturer at Telkom University, with a focus on textile experimental and fashion manufacturing subjects. Having an education in fashion and crafts, textiles and a master of fine arts, Sekar often uses design and research methodologies as artistic ideas and practices. Traditional objects and social phenomena are often the subject of discussion in her art, which is expressed through media such as paper, textiles and installations. She became more well versed in Indonesian textiles, particularly with the traditional craft of batik.

Her work explores the relationship between static patterns and dynamic patterns abstracted into formal forms. With a background as a batik artist, she adapted the traditional scale in classical batik to create a pattern represented through dynamic ornaments to create a certain meaning. She encourages viewers to imagine through the forms that are created from the relationship of these patterns, opening the possibility of whatever impressions are shown.

Cynthia Delaney Suwito

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Born in 1993 in Jakarta, Cynthia completed her Bachelor in Fine Arts, First Class Honours at LASALLE College of the Arts, Singapore. Internationally, Cynthia was featured on BBC Asia and Channel News Asia, and was a part of the 2017 FORBES 30 under 30 Asia in the Arts. In Indonesia, she exhibited at 2017's Body-Out and 2019's Media Art Globale, both in Jakarta, as well as the Bandung Contemporary Art Award Assemblage in 2019. In Singapore, Cynthia was a finalist at the Harper's Bazaar Art Prize 2015, exhibited at the 2016 Affordable Art Fair, The Only Paradise is Paradise Lost in 2019, You May Enter at the SOTA Gallery in 2020.

Cynthia Delaney Suwito's practice explores the subtleties of everyday life and the experience of time. Based in Singapore, this Indonesian-born artist takes inspiration from simple materials, such as instant noodles, and everyday situations, such as filling out forms. As we pause in front of her works of seemingly ordinary items, the meanings we attach to them and the stories we involve them in all slowly unravel. Her works breathe life into these familiar objects, enabling people to see and value the beauty and significance that is overlooked in their daily lives. She hopes that her works can invite people to reflect on their own daily activities and see things with different perspectives and new approaches of thinking.

Cynthia is curious about the way things work and what lies behind each person's behaviour. She believes that our actions are never truly our own, but informed by multi-layered systems of learnt behaviour. Cynthia is able to distill this complexity into a poetic simplicity so that it is accessible and relatable. Using different mediums, such as installation, drawing and video, her works engage the audience both experientially and in participatory ways, allowing a rediscovery of the wonder inherent in the everyday.

Dini Nur Aghnia

Dini Nur Aghnia is an emerging artist currently studying at the Institut Seni Indonesia in Yogyakarta. Taking from bio-organic materials, she forms vibrant landscapes sculpted from discs composed of a mixture of corn flour and clay. Dini's works are a discussion of familiar geographies around her and also a

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way of capturing the landscapes that she believes are often overlooked. Her brightly-coloured depictions of the Indonesian landscape highlight the small victories we should be grateful for each passing day.

Her artistic practice moves her to intensely observe the daily glories in her surrounding environment in Yogyakarta- from rugged mountains to sprawling fields. Which eternally change depending on the time of day. Yet, Dini expresses the natural environment she sees every day in a fresh, evocative way, forming textured, vividly colored landscapes comprised of myriad small disks made out of synthetic clay. She uses her medium to portray how each captured moment, from dawn to dusk, exist in her memory, and even in frozen pictures, only in fragments, pixels. Veering away from painting a complete, fixed image, Dini's landscapes encourage one to become fully immersed in the subtleties of the present, knowing that the wonders of every moment can never be truly recreated.

Etza Meisyara

Born in 1991 in Bandung, Indonesia, Etza Meisyara is interested in art's potential to express humanist values. Her foray into the visual art was through the Intermedia Art Studio program at the Bandung Institute of Technology (ITB), where she graduated with a Masters in Art in 2016. Etza continues to infuse her childhood passion in music through projects that combine sound art, installation and performance. She has participated in group presentations such as ARTJOG MMXIX 'Arts in Common' (Yogyakarta, Indonesia), 'AURORA' (Liverpool, England, 2018) and the 2016 KLANG KUNST Sound Art Festival (Braunschweig, Germany). In 2017, Etza was a recipient of the fifth Bandung Contemporary Art Award (BaCaa), a biannual art prize presented by ArtSociates and Lawangwangi Art Space. Past BaCaa winners include Aditya Novali and Syaiful Aulia Garibaldi.

Inspired by printmaking classes during her study exchange in Germany, Etza's recent works explore the alchemical qualities of copper etching plates. 'Pursuit of the Horizon' (2018) is an example which combines photo etching techniques with chemical processes, to create a luminous landscape scene. For

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the artist, this oxidation process is akin to the release of emotions. The negative charge that produces vibrant hues on the metal surface is a metaphor for feelings of melancholia spurred by being away from home.

Evi Pangestu

Evi Pangestu (b.1992, Indonesia) is a painter who investigates rebellion and control within the parameter of convention. Evi is currently based between Oakland, Jakarta, and London. She has lived and worked itinerantly since she graduated from Royal College of Art in 2019. In creating her work, Evi has her own process and concept. Her work consists of reconstructing the structure of the frame, and uses colour as a contrast to highlight the modifications, with aggressive modifications in process and color. Evi is interested in the idea of constant adaptation in a world that requires one to fit in to survive. Based on personal experience and reflections of life within the last 10 years of her life.

Stretched Lines is a series of paintings that focuses on the idea of intention at a state of discomfort. Having been used to constantly adapting to new surroundings, the current lockdown has put a break to change, bringing hers to reflect upon the control that people seem to no longer have. She believes that humans are driven with the tendency to manage things in a perfect grid system according to their own standard and acceptance. However, in more modern times, we are under a bigger structure that requires fixing with agreeing and disagreeing, consequences and compromises.

Luh Gede Gita Sangita Yasa

Luh Gede Gita Sangita Yasa is a recent graduate from Institut Teknologi Bandung. Majoring in Fine Arts, she works primarily with oils, watercolor, graphite and sometimes resin. She often employs bold colors and composition in a juxtaposing manner. Her recent works struggle to create a perfect cohesive whole, an 'ideal reality' out of fragments from memories, dreams and mundane routines, a sensible narrative out of these divergent parts.

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Talitha Maranila

Born and raised in Jakarta, Talitha went on to pursue her studies at Lasalle College International. Half of her childhood in the 90's was spent with her grandfather, who was a doctor and instilled in her a strong interest in biology and science. Her natural inclination brought her to the fine arts, but his influence is still very present throughout her body of work. Talitha's aim is to infuse and project aspects of science and spirituality through her art. She considers her creative work to be a manifestation of her spirituality. She explores the possible worlds we could create through the help of science and art, and what each discipline could do to reflect society's issues and perhaps affect political responses.

Having engaged with diverse religions and cultures, her work is inspired by their visual symbols and cues -- yet rearranges them into new, conceptually layered installations. The choice of materials in her work is uncalculated. She often finds herself in avenues of the unexpected; adding an ironic twist to familiar scenes and provoking the spectator to new and perhaps unexplored territories. Her arrangements are schematic and invite the viewer to leave certainty and move into a space of speculation. She relies on our innate desires for beauty, poetics and seduction. Since starting her professional career in 2012, Talitha has produced numerous commissioned projects in public spaces, as well as many commercial projects and Exhibitions both locally and internationally.

Tara Kasenda

Tara Kasenda obtained her Bachelor's degree at the Institute of Technology Bandung, Indonesia, specializing in painting (2013) and her Master of Fine Arts degree in Transdisciplinary New Media from Paris College of Art (2019). She works with oil painting, installation, prints, sculpture, and new media – each of them depicts the spirit of her time while still rooted in the convention of painting.

Through obscureness and soft pastel hues that ties her work together, she emphasizes the issue of identity, perception, and memory. The dream-like quality of her work simultaneously evokes the feeling of ambiguity, paradox, and comfort.

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Research is the foundation of Tara's work. She collects data, observes, and investigates the history, theories, and studies on color in correlation to her subject. Her soft color palette offers thresholds of beauty and chaos, the defined and undefined, reality and dream, old and new - that drifts the spectator into a contemplative sphere.

Based in Paris, Tara exhibits her works regularly in South East Asia and Europe. She had three solo exhibitions, one shown as a special section for young emerging artists in Art Taipei 2015, Taiwan. In 2019 Tara was recognized as Forbes Indonesia's 30 under 30.