

The Rise of Private Museums in Indonesia

Until recently, the popular destinations for art lovers in Indonesia had been Yogyakarta, Bandung or Bali. But now things are rapidly changing as private art museums are opening in cities all over Indonesia. A good example is Solo, a city in Central Java also known as Surakarta, which boasts an awe-inspiring combination of history and culture. It offers many popular tourist attractions and destinations, including the Keraton Surakarta, and various batik markets. However, despite the historical and cultural richness of Solo, it was never really renowned for its art until recently, with luxury hotels increasingly investing in artworks and the opening of a new private museum.



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Earlier this year, Solo finally got its own prestigious private museum called Tumurun Private Museum. Opened in April, the Tumurun exhibits contemporary and modern art from both international and local artists and is setting out to educate the people of Solo about how much art contributes and adds value to a culture. Originally intended to showcase a collection of vintage cars owned by H.M. Lukminto, the founder and former owner of PT Sri Rejeki Tekstil. The Lukminto family, being enthusiastic art collectors, decided they would also display pieces of art to achieve a more creative and artistic ambiance. Their artwork collection includes paintings and sculptures by modern and contemporary artists from Indonesia and abroad. Besides promoting artistic knowledge, the museum's mission is to increase local awareness on the importance of art conservation. The main reason it was established as a private museum was that it could filter out visitors who might only be interested in taking a few snaps and, instead, focus

on those who are genuinely interested in increasing their knowledge about art.

Tumurun prioritises modern and contemporary art so that the public, and the younger generation in particular, can learn and understand about the evolution of art in Indonesia. The museum holds an impressive collection of 200 artworks sourced from galleries, auctions and exhibitions, with each piece having been carefully selected for its uniqueness in order to highlight the diversity of art. The museum emphasises a clear distinction between the contemporary and modern collections, as they want guests to recognise the particular characteristics of their respective histories and styles. The layout of the museum has been designed to reflect this differentiation; the contemporary art is displayed on the ground floor, while the modern art collection is exhibited on the first floor. The Tumurun Private Museum group strongly believes that if the public can learn to value art, it would be an important step in the

1-3 Tumurun Private Museum emphasises modern and contemporary art. They screen their visitors to make sure they enter to actually learn and appreciate the evolution of art in Indonesia, not only to snap a few photos and leave.



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advancement of Indonesia as a nation. Consequently, their goal is to acquire more Indonesian artworks so that they can simultaneously promote and preserve local art.

As the number of private art museums in Indonesia continues to grow, their role in encouraging art appreciation is steadily expanding on a national scale. The Jakarta-based Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art in Nusantara (MACAN) and Akili Museum of Art (AMA), as well as the Pasifika Museum located in Bali, are all evidence of the progress being made in increasing the public's exposure to art. Museum MACAN was founded by Haryanto Adikoesoemo in 2017 and it is the first institution of its kind in Indonesia. It was created following Adikoesoemo's decade-long vision, as he aimed to provide a platform for Indonesian and international artists to instigate a conversation and for the Indonesian public to be included in the exchange.

Likewise, the Akili Museum of Art, established in 2006, is particularly influential in its contribution to art awareness; its collection bridges modern and contemporary artworks, reflecting the timeline of Indonesia's art history. The founder of AMA, Rudy Akili, and his family play a crucial role in the growth of art appreciation in Indonesia by regularly organising large-scale exhibitions showcasing local and international artists. Their modern art collection includes pieces by acclaimed artists such as Affandi, Hendra, Srihadi Soeharsono and other prominent names. Rudy also exhibits contemporary works from young emerging artists such as Eko Nugroho, Jompet Kuswidananto, Entang Wiharso, Christine Ay Tjoe, S. Teddy D. and Wimo Ambala Bayang, and many others. Furthermore, the chosen artworks tend to have a socio-political theme, making this collection exceptionally valuable as a direct reflection of Indonesia's expansive socio-political history, narrated through the unique perspective of art.

Established in 2006, the Museum Pasifika based in Nusa Dua in Bali, is another institution dedicated to spreading artistic knowledge and increasing public

awareness and appreciation for art. More than 600 artworks are on permanent display, demonstrating the complex artistic and cultural diversity of the Asia-Pacific region. Museum Pasifika also hosts regular temporary exhibitions as part of their effort to promote art and, as a result, their endeavours have encouraged a fruitful interaction between the local and foreign communities in Bali. As one of its missions, the museum cites preserving and divulging the multifaceted traditions of the region's inhabitants, while presenting them next to significant works from the 20th century.

The Indonesian public's knowledge and appreciation of art has witnessed a gradual rise, thanks to the efforts of the private museums mentioned here and other similar institutions. The Tumurun Museum in Solo is a welcome addition to this exclusive group. The country's booming art market, the growing number of art tourists and their impact on the national economy are further reasons to invest in art education. It is great to see that while attitudes towards art are changing and the general level of awareness is increasing, the number of museums is also on the increase. There is clearly a demand for culture when people want to discover and get immersed in local and foreign artistic heritage. Art brings huge value to the culture and the whole nation, therefore it is important to not only preserve existing works, but also to encourage future artists to create, by understanding and showing that their work matters. ¹⁰

04 Akili Museum of Art is an exhibition space that brings the art collections of Rudy Akili, with the richness of style and artistic approach. AMA now accommodates the collections of prominent and young artists with a "bridge" between them to show the ongoing movement in the history of Indonesian art.

05 Museum Pasifika, located in Nusa Dua, Bali, was established as a permanent institution to showcase the styles and forms of humanity to study and enjoy. Museum Pasifika: Selected Artwork of Asia Pacific is a tribute to the artistic and cultural heritage of the region and is a required resource for all interested in the fascinating and complex region we know as Asia Pacific.

06 The museum of Modern and Contemporary Art in Nusantara (Museum MACAN) is the first institution of its kind in Indonesia. It provides public access to a significant and growing collection of modern and contemporary arts from Indonesia and around the world.