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COURTESY OF ROH PROJECTS

The Year in Art: 2018

Reflecting back to the past 12 months, it has been a golden year for art in Indonesia. Many great exhibitions held in the country succeeded in attracting large numbers of visitors. From famous artists to rising stars, big museums to small galleries, all played an important role in contributing to the advancement of Indonesian art. It would be hard to pick the most meaningful art events or trends, but it becomes clear that women have become big players in the art scene to keep the stance and speak up their voices. This step moves in the right direction as we aim to progress as a society and women have proven to be invaluable assets to the art industry.

Today, Indonesian's art scene is flourishing and has little to envy from its counterparts in other major art cities. Many Western countries start to realise the value of Indonesian art as the demand for Indonesian artists abroad is clearly increasing. It has also been rewarding to witness how female artists are getting more position in a traditionally male-dominated field. To move forward gender equality, at Indonesian Luxury we have dedicated an entire exhibition for women to show our support to the feminist movement; the Exhibition Women in Art is open at WTC 3 building in Jakarta until February 2019.

Curated by ISA Art Advisory, Women in Art presents the work of six female artists including Indonesian artists Ruth Marbun, Ines Katamso, Rega Ayundya, Natasha Lubis and Claudia Dian as well

as British artist Kate Bright. Women's accomplishments in art have been systematically demolished from history books, leaving unexplained gaps in the evolution and practice of female artists. Therefore, it is important to show women's work and finally start giving them the space and recognition they deserve. The artworks on display are as different from one another as the backgrounds of the six artists. Some use their art to address personal issues they may experience as women; others are to highlight social problems such as poverty, racism or conflicts. Although the experience of being females unifies them, it would be too simplistic to state that they are a homogeneous group. Each artist's creative journey and aesthetic expression are very distinctive as they are influenced by each individual's personal development. While the exhibitions focusing solely on



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01 Masriadi's TENDER Exhibition By ROH Projects at West Bund Art Center in Shanghai, China 8-11 November 2018



women's art are a great step to the right direction, they should not remain isolated and be only the rare initiatives, which further marginalise female artists from the general discourse and movement.

Another noteworthy exhibition was held in the summer by artist Syagini Ratna Wulan (Cagi) at Jakarta-based gallery ROH Projects. Literally meaning a whispering or rustling sound, *Susurrus* challenges the audience to observe, explore and examine from up-close. Curated by Agung Hujatnikajennong, the show contains various objects, images and texts, which appear obscured or disguised under colours, lights and the walls


of the gallery, intertwined with often disregarded or neglected entities. Originally comes from Bandung, Cagi works on a variety of two or 3D works and installations, focusing on issues of perception, speculation, enigma and fantasy. Since 1999, she has been involved in numerous group exhibitions including ARTJOG 11 in Yogyakarta, Indonesia (2018) and *Coming Home* at Hara Museum in Japan (2012). She has also held solo exhibitions in major Asian cities. In *Susurrus*, her works invite the audiences to comprehend what is not said but implied and to convey the meaning of a message.

ROH Projects had also an honour to participate in the West Bund Art

Fair Shanghai 2018 with *Tender*, a solo exhibition by Indonesian artist I Nyoman Masriadi. Born in Bali, Masriadi is currently considered as one of Asia's most successful contemporary artists at auctions, as he is the first living Southeast Asian artist whose work has been auctioned for over one million US dollars. As a leading painter of the post-Soeharto era, he combines creative genius, cultural sensitivity and an eternal refusal to conform. Many of his works depict superheroes or figures, which are rooted in Indonesian cultural history, offering witty and occasionally cutting commentary on contemporary life and pop culture. In his exhibition in Shanghai, Masriadi focuses on the complex and evolving roles women

have played in his practice for the last two decades. The show name, "*Tender*", refers to intimacy and affection, but it also has another meaning in the context of commerce, which it acts as an initiation of trade and exchange. This dual significance in his works symbolises the negotiation of women's position over the years. Equally, the characters of his paintings may appear powerful one moment and vulnerable the next. The exhibition contains new works as well as a number of pieces on loan from the collectors all over Southeast Asia.

Walking the way towards even more successful year in 2019, Indonesian Luxury's mission is more relevant than ever as its online database

gathers galleries and artists in the most comprehensive source for Asian, particularly Indonesian art. The past year has brought us new artists, galleries and private museums, without ignoring a growing number of collectors, who represent an important part of the art chain. More and more people are interested in art, whether as buyers or simply as self-learners. Nothing makes me happier than witnessing our Indonesian art scene blooming! With such promising prospects, it is gratifying to continue our job to promote Indonesian art in the country and abroad, while looking forward to an even brighter new year. 

- 02 Ines Katamso's artworks that were exhibited in "*Tetap Terang*" exhibition at Ambiente in Jakarta.
- 03 Syagini Ratna Wulan's *SUSURRUS* Exhibition By ROH Projects at Equity Tower in Jakarta, 31 Jul - 21 Aug 2018
- 04 Rega Ayundya's artworks that are currently being exhibited in "*Women in Art*" exhibition at WTC 3 Building in Jakarta.