

**GAJAH GALLERY** 

**CONTEMPLATING  
ALTERNATIVES**

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# FOREWORD

Following the success of women-aligned exhibitions recently, I thought it a good time to focus on the accomplishments of young women artists from Indonesia- a dynamic pool of artists that constantly set the standard for contemporary art not only in Indonesia but worldwide. That is the basis of *Contemplating Alternatives*- to amplify the voices of these artists and let their work speak for them.

The concept of changing perspectives when looking at art or letting art change perspectives is not a novel one; yet, it is something these artists seamlessly explore in their practice. To utilise a work of art to portray a cultural or personal shift in landscape, to alter the viewer's frame of reference for the definition of "woman artist", is a natural feat for them and I am in awe at the beauty that they produce in addition to thought-provoking and insightful works that contain depth and complexity. The multitudes that are presented in this show by each artist is so inspiring and makes me excited for the future of contemporary art in Indonesia.

To our talented artists: bravo. I applaud your tenacity and look forward to following your successful careers. May you always have the ability to use your art as a catalyst for change.

JASDEEP SANDHU



**Tumpuk Lapis Tampak Isi : Sibir 4** by Fika Ria Santika, 2020  
digital print, oil paint, variable dimensions

## CONTEMPLATING ALTERNATIVES

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NICOLE SORIANO

In her poem "A Woman's Portrait 1938", written in 1989, Indonesian poet and activist Dr. Toeti Heraty described an elusive painting of a woman adorned in exquisite jewelry and the traditional *selendang*, but whose deeper interiority was painfully concealed: "Yearning, restlessness, and the turmoil of fear / are not recorded in the brush-strokes," she wrote.<sup>1</sup> While containing countless layers of interpretation, the poem offers a subtle glance into the deep-seated history of women in Indonesian art who had been flattened and subordinated to fit the male gaze. As various political, religious, and cultural forces censored the woman's glorious complexities, her full face, her whole truth, was rarely revealed.

Over four decades since Heraty wrote that poem, women in the contemporary Indonesian art scene are arguably working in environments more open and receptive to their voices and truths. In the past two years alone, curators and art historians across the country and region have embarked on painstaking efforts to recognize the invaluable work of women artists in Indonesia. *Medium at Play* (2018) at Gajah Gallery Yogyakarta highlighted the profound relationships that the participating women artists had with their materials. *Shaping Geographies* (2019) at Gajah Gallery Singapore, featuring 11 women artists from across Southeast Asia, spotlighted three Indonesian artists—Tintin Wulia, GAK Murnashih, and Fika Rika Santika—and dove deep into their cultural contexts, from Bali to West Sumatra; and finally, the landmark book *Into the Future* (2019) by journalist Carla Bianpoen critically discussed 20 Indonesian women artists under 40,

servicing as a prophetic peek into a hopefully more inclusive future for the next generation of Indonesian artists. Indeed, we find ourselves at a particular moment where a steadfast quest for a female-centered art discourse in Indonesia is finally alive, and does not seem to be slowing down. Featuring eight emerging women artists from across Indonesia, *Contemplating Alternatives* situates itself within this prevailing narrative, engaging the ongoing conversation surrounding the question: why does the need for alternatives persist for women in the arts?

I began this dialogue by asking the artists themselves how they felt about these recent progressions. Naturally, they were unanimously happy that women artists in Indonesia were finally receiving the attention and opportunities they deserve—grateful to be part of a narrative where women are seen as creators. Yet, it is interesting to note that most of them did not cite female artists from Indonesia's art history as their inspirations. Rather, a handful nodded to internationally recognized artists such as Frida Kahlo, Yayoi Kusama, and Jenny Saville, while others mentioned that they were not too concerned about gender issues, preferring not to confine artists nor be confined by their gender. Some admitted to not knowing many women artists they could look up to, naming mostly men that dominated their particular fields of interest. A common thread among them, however, was how they mainly drew inspiration from what was familiar, such as the people and environments close to them—from their mother and sister, the traditions and crafts from their distinct culture, to the heroic female figure that happened to hail from their own hometown.

The exhibit thus begins to investigate these cultural contexts surrounding the artists, and dives deeper into each artist's potential and power to carve alternatives within or outside dominant artistic or cultural norms. The curatorial premise looks into how their practices reflect, whether intentionally or unintentionally, a shared inclination towards alternative ways of seeing, being, and creating—an inclination in continuity with women artists who paved crucial paths before them. At the same time, it recognizes how the quest for alternatives

constantly needs to be critiqued and sustained—not just to rally against existing norms, but to engage a deeper, more self-reflexive understanding of their own complicated relationships with the structures that both shaped and constrained them.

In Indonesia's art history, women have played an integral role in bringing to the foreground alternate realities overlooked in a male-dominated art world. Hailed the "Mother of Indonesian Modern Art", Emira Sunassa painted ethnic communities and portraits of nude women throughout the 1940s and 50s—a subtle, singular counter to the ubiquitous nationalist subjects depicted by her contemporaries at the time.<sup>2</sup> In the 1990s, at a time when a burgeoning religious fundamentalism gave rise to various forms of repression and self-censorship in the arts, artist-activist Ardhiana was radical in challenging militant interpretations of Islam through her works, despite threats and accusations of blasphemy.<sup>3</sup> Active in the early 2000s, IGAK Murniasih, through her stark, grotesque paintings of female sexuality and desire, offered a vitally new visual vocabulary for seeing the female body that countered pleasant, idealized objects existing solely for the male gaze.<sup>4</sup>

Engaging this lineage, I asked each artist to ponder what comes to mind when they think of the word "alternative". A common response that cropped up was how they saw their chosen medium and materials as crucial alternatives allowing them to freely play with their ideas. Whether they worked with paint, ceramic, or clay, some artists saw their intimate, evolving relationships with their materials as vital components to their message. This is coincidentally in line with the curatorial premise of the show *Medium at Play*, mentioned earlier, which invited artists to let their materials "speak" and allow "repressed, messy, or unstable substances to surface".<sup>5</sup> Similarly, artists Dyah Retno and Anis Kurniasih were naturally fascinated with the dynamic and spontaneous elements of their mediums—allowing these organic qualities to

teach them crucial lessons in letting go of control and being open to mistakes and failures.<sup>6</sup> In seeing their medium as an alternative way to look at the messy and unpredictable in their art and life, these artists are already showing traces of continuity with women artists preceding them.

Another significant discovery among their responses was how they saw their own career paths as artists as alternative choices outside the ordinary within the cultures they came from. Lolli Rusman and Fika Ria Santika, who both hail from West Sumatra, mentioned how being an artist is still perceived as alien and unfamiliar to their local community, wherein Fika claims the arts scene is not fully developed and still lacks a "great artist" for their families to look up to.<sup>7</sup> Fika thus decided to move to Yogyakarta, where the arts scene is thriving and she can fully explore and expand her practice with a vibrant network of artists. Desy bemoaned the difficulty of being a woman artist in Indonesia as a whole, faced with obstacles such as gossip and "written and unwritten rules"—rules she still strives to respect, yet create her own way within.<sup>8</sup> Thus, to her, leaving her career as a journalist and news anchor and becoming a self-taught full-time artist was in itself a bold alternative move. Whatever the motivation for their alternative decisions, what is implicitly reflected in their answers was how choosing the alternative became a powerful tool to express their agency.

While drawing connections among their perspectives on the alternative is crucial, it is equally illuminating to see where their works diverged, and how they explored alternatives within their own chosen forms, subjects, and themes. In this light, I found two strands that organically emerged: unorthodox expressions of the female body, struggle, and beauty; and newfound gazes at the nuances of nature, altering their relationships to their environments, their everyday, and their identities. Across these two categories, the artists explored a wide



range of alternative ways to reveal their complex interior and exterior worlds—opening up new paths and possibilities for future artists in their lineage to reveal their faces and their truths.

Coming from a family of “diaspora Balinese”, Satya Cipta paints in the lineage of Balinese indigenous art, merging a mix of techniques from Ubud and Batuan. Yet, while Balinese traditional painting is not known to challenge cultural and spiritual norms, Satya asserts herself firmly within this tradition by bringing contemporary feminist concerns to the forefront. Though she claims to draw mainly from her personal life, she aims to shed light on the still taboo, yet very real and particular struggles Balinese women face within their male-dominated society—tainted with sexism, harassment, and domestic violence. In the past, she has daringly portrayed rape scenes and a woman’s isolated, sexual suffering—all within the rules and particular styles of Balinese traditional painting. Rather than seeing this artistic tradition as restrictive and repressive, she has carved her own alternative space within it and used it to freely and unflinchingly express urgent issues, ranging from her personal history with the female body to her complex relationship with deep-rooted Balinese cultural and spiritual values, which she still respects and subscribes to.

For this show, she diverts from her past work depicting stark violence and suffering by uncovering another side to her culture: the “subliminal beauty” among male and female relationships within the Balinese spiritual world. At the foreground of *REMINISCENTIA*, a woman lays gently with her back turned against the viewer, exposing her long, delicate hair at the front, rather than her face. While the woman appears to be relaxed and asleep, her two arms lay awkwardly behind her back, as if they had just been released from being bound together. Her right leg is also strangely bent, showing the bottoms of both her feet to the audience—a subtle symbol revealing what the Balinese consider the “dirtiest” part of the body. Around her, three heads float: one woman and two men, who all have their eyes closed, as if peacefully and reverentially flowing from the woman’s naked presence. A flower sprouts from the mouth of one man’s head, which seems to emerge from water below the woman. It is difficult to distinguish who is the man and who is the woman in this scene—

wherein the long, luscious hair of the men resemble the women's, where domination is absent and where the woman appears to be free.

Unlike Satya, who is steeped in the style of her Balinese tradition, Ayu Rika draws from Western painting techniques as she depicts the complex conditions of women around her. She mentions two figurative artists, Danish painter Gerda Wegener and British painter Lucian Freud, as sources of inspiration for the way they visualize and establish their points of view in seeing their subjects. Growing up, Ayu Rika had always been sensitive to the details on human bodies around her and the way these details subtly revealed doorways into a person's emotions, experiences, and soul. In the past, she found it difficult to enjoy focusing on details such as fingers, ankles, the curves of waists, and minute details on skin surfaces—yet, it was precisely these details that provoked her and stayed on her mind until she could no longer contain the urge to express them. Her process involves inviting models whose presence would leave intense impressions on her. She speaks of the "addiction" she feels from the sensual aspects of this process, such as sniffing a person's scent or touching their skin, which would then motivate her to immediately sketch the stories and impressions triggered by the conditions of their bodies.

*High* depicts a hyperrealist portrait of a woman against a deep red background, with her neck bent, right shoulder hiked up, eyes almost fully closed, and one hand embracing her neck and chin—looking as if she were in ecstasy or pain. Whatever the state may be, she appears to be fully engrossed and submerged in her present, intensely absorbing the feeling that washes over her. In stark contrast, *Lost #2* shows a woman's head lying languidly on the ground. Her eyes are open, yet her gaze is vacant, almost lifeless like a mannequin. In this painting, passion, desire, and a hunger for life seems absent; and a hollow, haunting presence takes over—moving one to ponder the conditions that led to such a stark disappearance of emotion.



Expressing opposing sides within the wide spectrum of one's interior world, Ayu Rika opens up an alternate way of seeing and understanding the people in her context: one in which subtle and oftentimes unnoticed details take centre stage, powerfully revealing interior conditions which may have previously been concealed.

A self-taught artist, Desy Gitary approaches a more instinctive process in her practice. Rather than relying on sketches or photos before painting, she allows a more organic, unpredictable picture flow from her original concepts. She enjoys being able to "play" with a blank canvas in her process—a significant mark from the previous artists, who rely on particular techniques to shape their work. The results are rougher, expressionist forms on canvases, yet still contain recognizable figures and scenes involving intriguing dynamics between women and men. Unlike Ayu Rika, who draws attention to the realism of details, Desy refrains from focusing too much on the minutiae of body parts. Instead, she highlights the essence and mood of personal histories—drawing from her own experience and body, for these are the things she knows intimately.

For this show, she departs from her previous work employing strong, vivid colors, and instead turns to a quieter, more subdued mood. Maintaining her signature loose, expressionist strokes, she uses only white paint to portray her plays with the female body—putting the focus entirely on their rugged textures and shapes. Rather than boldly confronting the viewer through strong colors, the bodies blend into the white background, speaking more profoundly in their cunning muteness. The titles of the works themselves similarly reveal clues of fresh beginnings, wherein each title starts with the word "new": *New Me*, *New Beginning*, *New Path*. *New Me* shows a rough outline of a nude woman in full frontal view, with her legs apart and her arms firmly planted over her legs—a position that may be read as a powerful protest against objectified and sexualized depictions of the female nude, or may hold a more personal meaning for the artist's

own evolving perceptions of her body. *New Beginning* and *New Path* portray women captured in movement: one woman appears as if she were about to stand up, while another is caught in the middle of a dance. Like the strokes used to shape them, the women seem to enjoy a renewed sense of liberty and spontaneity—recalling that universal feeling of breaking free from anything that had once stifled one's autonomy.

Among the four artists in the exhibit exploring the nuances in women's bodies and stories, Loli Rusman's works are the most abstract. Experimenting with the paint medium, Loli Rusman's body of work combines her interests in feminism, personal history, and the duality of nature and humankind. For this particular show, she was inspired by the first female Indonesian journalist and hailed hero, Rohanda Kudus. Born in 1884, Kudus fought for women's education in the early 20th century. She founded a school and a newspaper intended for women in her hometown in West Sumatra, even though she herself was not formally educated. She continued to struggle for women's liberation throughout her life in spite of cultural constraints that restricted women from engaging in politics. Similarly coming from West Sumatra and feeling a profound connection to Rohana, Loli hopes to evoke her courage in her works—translating Rohana's invisible strength and fighting spirit into her distinct abstract forms.

For this exhibit, Loli paints two works suggesting a strong sensitivity to the dynamics of colors and lines. A cool, violet tone forms the background of *Persembahan untuk Rohana Kudus*, while streams of blue flow down from the upper right corner to the bottom left corner of the canvas, appearing like an otherworldly waterfall. Strong and controlled lavender lines, resembling the stems of flowers, are painted on the foreground, drawing attention to their bold and sensuous curves. *Persembahan untuk Rohana Kudus 7* is washed in an old rose color while strokes of black paint are splashed above, starkly contrasting the soft color beneath. The strokes on this piece appear quicker



and rougher compared to the violet painting, implying more free-flowing gestures. Yet, both pieces draw close attention to natural flows and curved lines, evoking a sublime wildness emerging from the abstraction. Through these curves and unrestrained strokes, Loli channels the female form and the evolving, unpredictable twists and turns of her journey. But the works hold deeper meaning when remembering the main source of inspiration behind them: a woman who, despite the constrictive time and culture she worked within, was unafraid to enter into territories outside straight narrow paths—to hone her more complex capabilities as a woman, and as a human being.

While the previous artists evoked the female form to explore alternative insights into their personal histories, the spirits of women that fascinate them, or their complex relationships with societal and cultural norms, Dyah Retno sets her gaze to the natural world—and how its perplexities open up new ways of seeing herself and the world around her. Marrying her artistic practice with her curiosities in the organic processes of biology and chemistry, she possesses the unique eye to see how subtleties in nature can reveal certain philosophical truths. To her, the science behind the three-dimensional ceramic medium, which is vulnerable to the natural movements of water, wind, soil and fire, teaches her vital lessons on accepting repeated failures and surprising successes in her life. It is her paradoxical fascination in both art and science that nourishes her openness to unanswered questions and enigmas, turning her artistic practice into an endless quest exploring mysteries in both scientific and mystical worlds.

For this show, Dyah plays with the ceramic material to dive deep into the diverse world of creatures—particularly the miniscule, overlooked ones such as the amoeba, sperm, and ovum. She is fascinated with how humans grow into innately unique individuals—possessing wide-ranging traits, philosophies, and personalities—yet all come from the same cell, the same origin. Her work *The Secret of Human Heart* draws inspiration from the story of Adam and Eve, wherein grotesque sculptures of red blood cells reveal how despite our differences in race, religion, and culture, humanity is connected by blood—blood that, in her belief, comes from the same

ancestor. Her largest series, *Living in a Cell*, similarly delves into what has been around since the beginning of time. 100 ceramic pieces containing bold colors and complex patterns explore the unseen, natural progression that occurs when a woman becomes pregnant. She reimagines how the sperm meets an egg, and the process of division that evolves until a human grows. Just as Dyan plays with both controllable and uncontrollable forces with the ceramic material, so can a mother only do so much to create her child, until she must ultimately let go of all control—and watch in hopeful anticipation as her child grows wildly into her own being.

Guided by the philosophy that humans and the environment are profoundly interdependent, Anis Kurniasih is similarly drawn to the details and minutiae of nature, wherein infinite patterns and repetitions pervade. She employs drawing techniques to imitate these repetitive patterns in her work, seeing her practice as a way to understand life's complex processes. Her deep concern for nature is grounded in her belief that nature, like every woman, must be an active subject capable of creating, and must not be reduced to resources or objects to be manipulated and exploited. She holds utmost respect for the artist and environmental activist Aurora Robson, who creates ornate, otherworldly sculptural creatures out of discarded debris. This alternative, and oftentimes uncomfortable, choice to see beauty in what others might consider trash is something that undeniably bleeds into the practice of Anis—who refuses to let the tiniest wonders of the environment around her go unnoticed.

For her works in this show, she uses various mediums to express the intricate, exquisite details of varied nature forms—leaves, wings, birds, flowers—and



merges them seamlessly together, such that some forms almost morph into the next ones. Painstakingly expressing their subtle, overlooked beauty, she shows how creatures of nature, no matter how distinct from one another, are bonded by these basic elements of unending lines, elegant curves, raw shapes and textures—evidence of a harmoniously designed universe. She chooses the ink medium in her paintings to mirror how life decisions, particularly mistakes and failures, can never be erased. Yet, Anis hopes to show how despite our inevitable shortcomings, human beings have the powerful and infinite capacity to grow, evolve, and heal together with our flawed nature—that beauty persists amidst these imperfections not in spite of them, but in part, because of them.

Born and raised in the Minangkabau Highlands of Sumatra, Fika Ria Santika grew up within a culture where philosophies of nature are deeply ingrained into daily life. She embraces the Minang adage *Alam Takambang Jadi Guru*, meaning nature is the best teacher, perpetually inspired by the endless cycles and evolutions in nature that nurture and sustain human beings. Through her artistic practice, she searches for ways to readapt and make relevant the true meaning behind these proverbs to her contemporary context and to the youth. Having moved from West Sumatra to Yogyakarta to hone her artistic practice, Fika carves her own path as she both “escapes” her own culture while simultaneously holding on to it as she immerses in different ways of life. She thus engages with the endless possibilities of her materials as a means to rediscover her surrounding environment and identity, which continues to evolve and expand as her curiosity deepens not only for her own culture, but the cultures of others.

To Fika, her materials and processes are integral to the message she hopes to express. While her initial inspiration comes from organic forms and natural processes, she employs artificial materials and technology to juxtapose the organic with the inorganic—merging soft, abstract

shapes from natural creatures with the coldness and hardness of what she calls “contemporary mediums”. This combination of the natural and unnatural then becomes a powerful allegory of her desire to harmonize her roots and tradition with the contemporary. Employing a mix of acrylic, plastic, steel, nylon, oil paint, and digital print, *Tumpuk Lapis Tampak Isi: Stir 3* continues her ongoing inquiry into the way this interplay of man-made materials mirror the complexity and ephemerality of nature and of life. In this piece, she stacks layers of acrylic discs, paints vivid, wistful landscapes, and creates ethereal sculptural pieces to capture and reassemble organic forms from her memory. The results evoke sensuous flowing lines and fluctuating shapes and shadows, resembling alien creatures roaming the undiscovered worlds of the sea.

Similarly based in Yogyakarta, Dini Nur Agnia looks to nature as her main source of creativity, retrieving nature scenes that have nourished her through her memory. Her artistic practice moves her to intensely observe the daily glories in her surrounding landscapes in Yogyakarta, from rugged mountains to sprawling fields, which eternally change depending on the time of day. While her works hark back the impressionist approach of capturing ephemeral landscapes, Dini expresses the natural environment she sees everyday in a fresh evocative way—incorporating inspirations from when she was previously in the craft of making women’s accessories. Observing the aesthetic potentials of marbled clay, she was drawn to the creative possibilities of synthetic clay in her artistic practice, seeing it as an alternative medium that allows her to fully express her plays with nature outside conventional art materials.

From dawn to dusk, she portrays how she sees each moment’s unique magnificence, yet uses her materials and forms to express how the moment exists in her memory—and even in pictures—only in fragments, pixels. Thus, for her series in this show, she uses clay to create marbled disks that, when assembled together, form a unique blend of classic romantic landscapes and modern-

day pixelated photos. Veering away from painting a total, fixed image, she focuses instead on the essence that makes each moment particularly captivating: the way morning fog creates a mystical atmosphere in the mountains; how cold tones of blue gloriously kiss warm tones of orange and yellow during dawn, as the world awakens to a new day; and that melancholic beauty that overpowers us during dusk, as shades of pink briefly wash our sky before disappearing into dark. These vividly colored clay disks then move the viewer to absorb the scene from various positions, whether stepping far back to see the totality of the majestic landscape, or moving close to the canvas to observe the way the landscape almost becomes abstract in its myriad, hypnotic blend of colors and shapes. Either way, Dini's works implore one to become fully immersed in the subtleties of the present: knowing that the wonders of every moment can never be truly recreated.

As the exhibit situates itself within the broader narrative of a more female-centered art history in Indonesia, it is crucial to point out that each artist featured here is still at the foundational stages of her career. Their practices, while already distinct and profound at present, are continually evolving—what they create one year or decade from now may be entirely different, even contrary, to what we see today. Yet, it is important to acknowledge where they stand now, and how the desire to see, be, and create in alternative ways had already existed from the beginning of their artistic journey. While themes about the female body and nature evidently overlapped and intersected, their diverse explorations within these themes proves that the potential to carve new paths even within existing dominant trajectories persists to be a thread that binds Indonesian women artists across generations and localities. The inclination to open up alternatives and enter into undiscovered practices—whether through injecting feminist issues within traditional painting styles, paying homage to the courage of a local hero in abstract forms rather than fixed monuments, or employing unorthodox mediums to express deep-rooted relationships to natural landscapes—is an invaluable trait that would hopefully serve as the fuel to the artists as they, individually and collectively, face the inevitable challenges that come with the already unconventional path they have chosen. So that one day, seeing the boundaries they have broken, a young woman choosing to be an artist in Indonesia will no longer find the path so unconventional—but instead, normal.

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- 1 Toeti Heraty, "A Woman's Portrait 1938," 1989, accessed 25 February 2020, <https://www.poetrytranslation.org/poems/a-womans-portrait-1938>.
  - 2 Wulan Dirgantoro, "Interrogating the Feminine in Indonesian Modern and Contemporary Art," *Southeast of Now: Directions in Contemporary and Modern Art in Asia*, vol. 3 no. 1, 2019, p. 103-124.
  - 3 Wulan Dirgantoro, "Feminisms and Contemporary Art in Indonesia: Defining Experiences," (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2017), 268.
  - 4 Dirgantoro, "Interrogating the Feminine in Indonesian Modern and Contemporary Art."
  - 5 Wulan Dirgantoro, "Living in a Material World," *Medium at Play*, exhibition catalogue (Singapore: Gajah Gallery, 2018).
  - 6 Email interview with the artists.
  - 7 Email interview with the artists.
  - 8 *Ibid.*

## PLATES

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# ANIS KURNIASIH

Anis Kurniasih (b. 1994) believes that humans and nature exist in inseparable unity; that the biological components found in nature are interrelated, functional, and interdependent on each other. Kurniasih feels that mankind sustain their lives by drawing from elements of their environment, finding nourishment from even the tiniest things that grow around us. Kurniasih finds the environment to be an integral part of human life and that we are merely abstractions with it. She mostly works with a ballpoint medium to portray the natural form that we find in our daily life. She does this because unlike graphite, ink cannot be erased; she understands that in some aspects, there are various forms of failure and the urge to erase mistakes may be overwhelming and uses her practice to say that every creature has an extraordinary adaptive ability and can grow perfectly even beyond their flaws.

Anis Kurniasih graduated from Sebelas Maret University, Surakarta, in 2017. She was awarded the bronze medal for UOB Painting of the year in 2017 in the emerging artists category. Kurniasih lives in Jogja while continuing her studies in the master's program in ISI Yogyakarta.



**ephytina**, 2020

ballpoint and acrylic ink on canvas, 100 x 120 cm

# AYURIKA

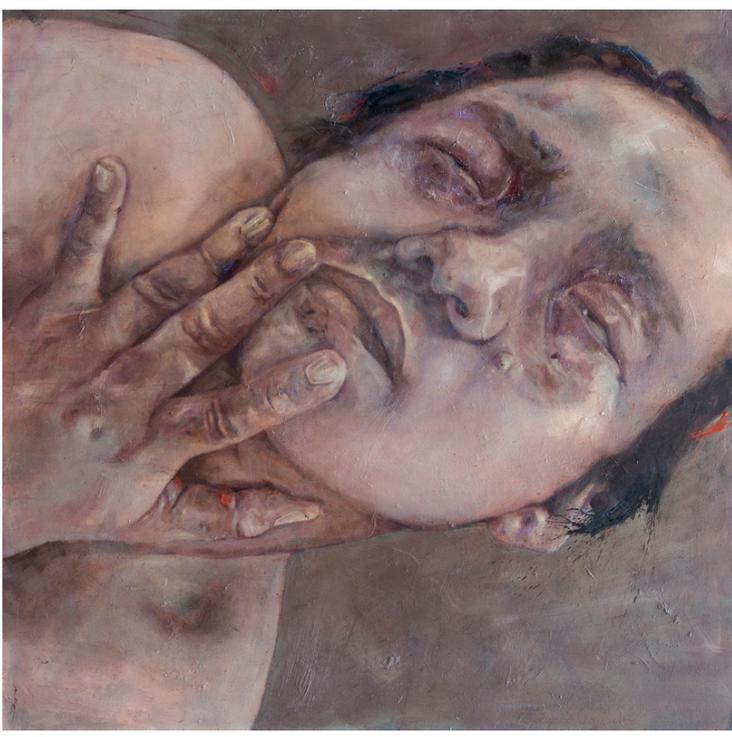
Ayurika (b. 1996) believes that some events that occur directly in contact with the body build certain human conditions. She considers the body to be a container, a kind of memory storage and also a revealing medium to convey emotions. She understands that everyone has personal moments and unique experiences that sometimes leave traces - gestures, expressions, and marks on the skin. Her obsession with the body and scars is the beginning of her personal observation that motivates her to create works. Ayurika works not as a woman who has more power to get to a certain place, but rather as a human who shares her ideas by creating works.

Ayurika has been a student at the Indonesian Institute of Arts since 2014. She was commended for creating one of the best paintings in a competition that was organized by Basoeki Abdullah Museum in Vredenburg fort, Yogyakarta, in 2018, and was one of nominees for Young Artists China 2017 in Beijing.



**Lost #2, 2020**

oil on canvas 200 x 300 cm



**High, 2020**  
oil on canvas 200 x 200 cm

# DESY GITARY

Desy Gitary (b. 1980) does not try hard to create accurate visual depictions—rather, she focuses on the character, memories, and hopes of her subjects. Most of her works centralise on the human figure and are done in charcoal, a medium she believes is similar to herself—fragile but strong. Her works bear many concepts, ranging from her personal memories and hopes to her regrets and the unpredictable rules she is forced to navigate. Charcoal, pastels, and acrylic are the main medium she uses to create paintings of all sizes on canvas and paper. She applies layers and uses short strokes when drawing to blur the objects in her works and present the complexity of feeling and mind.

Since 2016, Gitary has had two solo exhibitions, 07:00 at Ruang Dalam Art House, Yogyakarta, in 2016, and Beyond at Syang Art space, Magelang, in 2018. Desy Gitary has two studios situated in the cities of Jakarta and Yogyakarta in Indonesia.



## **New Me, 2020**

acrylic and oil on canvas, 150 x 120 cm



**New Beginning**, 2020  
acrylic and oil on canvas, 150 x 100 cm

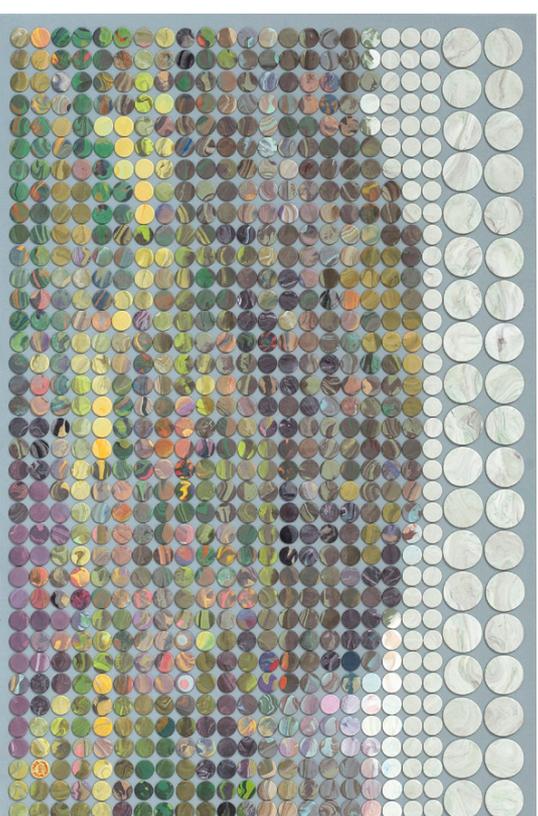


**New Path**, 2020  
acrylic and oil on canvas, 150 x 100 cm

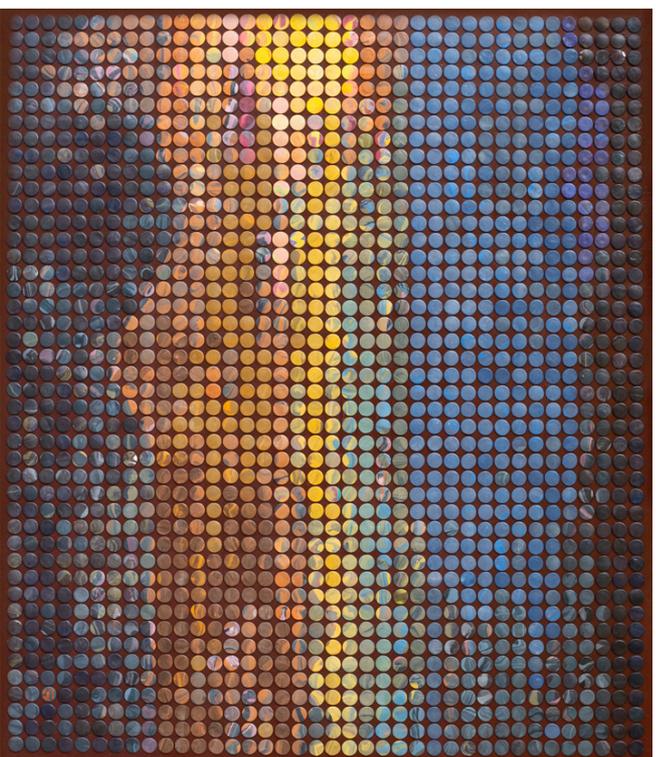
# DINI NUR AGH Nia

Dini Nur Aghnia (b. 1995), a recent graduate of the Institut Seni Indonesia (Yogyakarta), is a visual artist who works with the unique medium of clay on canvas. Using the unique medium of clay on canvas, she forms textured landscapes from individually sculpted discs. Her works recapture the often-overlooked landscapes around her in brilliant colours, highlighting for example, the sunrise and sunset that we might take for granted. In this everyday solar phenomenon, the artist views the sun as a symbol of rebirth, joy, life and victory.

Dini has exhibited both locally and regionally in Yogyakarta, Solo, Gresik, Surabaya, Singapore and Malaysia.



**Fog**, 2019  
clay flour on canvas board, 80 x 120 cm



**Morning at Prau**, 2019  
clay flour on canvas board, 120 x 140 cm



**Violet Paris #3**, 2019  
clay flour on canvas board, 120 x 140 cm

# DYAH RETNO FITRIANI

For Dyah Retno (b. 1994, Indonesia), working with ceramics seems to be like a miniature of life: how it feels to conceive, give birth, raise and give life and soul to something else. Working with ceramics becomes a medium of meditation, reflecting on how we cannot live and work alone - there is nature and God with all its secrets and plans.

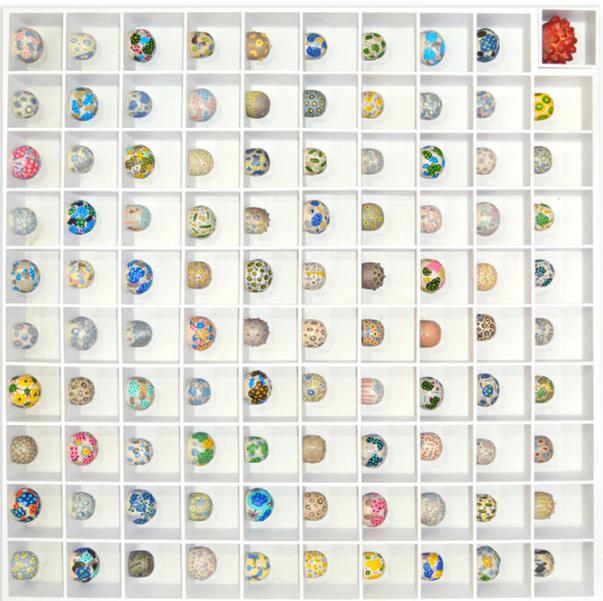
In her practice, she experiments with methods such as processing clay waste, glaze and other processes related to chemical science. In working with ceramics, she has found a new vocabulary: rather than viewing events as successes and failures, instead she sees them on a scale from 'as expected' to 'the unpredictable'. Her artistic practice attempts to merge chemistry and science into her art.

Dyah Retno graduated from the Yogyakarta Art Institute in 2012. Her first solo exhibition in 2017 was entitled *Physis*



## **Story of Quidi and Eve, 2020**

ceramic and wood, 8,5 x 8,5 x 8,5 cm (smallest) to 12 x 12 x 12 cm (largest)



**Living in Cell**, 2020  
ceramic and wood, 140 x 140 cm



**The Secret of Human Heart**, 2020  
ceramic, 16 x 19 x 8 cm per sculpture

## FIKA RIA SANTIKA

For Fika Ria Santika (b. 1987, West Sumatra), nature has always been an unlimited source of inspiration. Born and raised in the Minangkabau Highlands of West Sumatra, a society which adopts the nature into everyday life, she seeks inspiration from themes such as unexplained change, cycles of life and inevitable growth. In particular, the phrase 'Alam Takambang Jadi Guru,' which means "Nature is the best teacher," is familiar to most Minang people, but it leaves Fika wondering about its relevance to youths today. Departing from this thought, she makes sure to embrace the essence of Minangkabau as she travels out of Indonesia; always keeping it in mind as she encounters different ways of life.

Fika Ria Santika graduated from Padang State University, Padang – Indonesia in 2010 and graduated from ISI Yogyakarta – Indonesia in 2012 for Magister. She was a winner of Mural Design Contest at National Gallery of Indonesia in 2014. Recently she undertook a residency at Selasar Sunaryo Artspace, Bandung – Indonesia in 2015.

**Tumpuk Lapis Tampak Isi : Sibir 3, 2020**  
plastic, steel, thread, nylon, acrylic, variable dimensions



# LOLI RUSMAN

Loli Rusman's (b. 1979, Bukittinggi) approach to her works has been largely informed by the duality of nature and humankind. Perhaps similar to her fellow artists from West Sumatra, she perceives the two things as inseparable and this provides her with sources of artistic engagement. Loli's focus on the materiality of her medium underlines her distinct approach to her discipline.

Loli graduated from Indonesian Institute of the Arts (ISI Yogyakarta) in has actively exhibited in Indonesia, with group exhibitions in Yogyakarta, Magelang and Surabaya. In 2015 she was one of the finalists in Ciputat International Painting Festival, Tangerang.



**Persembahan untuk Rohana Kudus 1, 2020**

acrylic on canvas, 130 x 180 cm



**Persembahan untuk Rohana Kudus 2**, 2020  
acrylic on canvas, 150 x 130 cm

# SATYA CIPTA

Living as a female Balinese artist for Satya Cipta (b. 1988, Indonesia) is quite a challenge in a culture and society that is largely dominated by male chauvinism. She uses her art practice as a tool to express her personal struggle and expression against this domination. The core element of this domination is of course the body, which is why the body in her painting is the crucial site of her critique and expression. Yet, her world has also been surrounded by the immense beauty and spirituality of Balinese art and culture; these two elements are therefore simultaneously embodied in her art practice.

Satya Cipta has been painting since her childhood. Although she majored in theater at the Jakarta Institute of the Arts (IKJ), painting has always been part of her daily life. Her first exhibition as a professional painter was in the national art exhibition EPICENTRUM in Manado, North Sulawesi in 2016. In 2017 she was invited to La Salle College of Arts, Singapore as a new media artist in residence and showed her video art work at the Déjà Vu art event. After participating in many other group exhibitions in 2018, she did her first solo exhibition at Puri Lukisan Museum, Ubud-Bali. Following that solo exhibition she participated in Art Bali (2018), Intimist 2 (Hongkong 2019), and her second solo exhibition at The Oberoi, Bali (2019).



**REMINISCENTIA**, 2020

24 ct gold and mixed media on canvas, 150 x 200 cm



**LONGING, 2020**  
24 ct gold and mixed media on canvas, 150 x 100 cm

**CONTEMPLATING ALTERNATIVES**

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