



Detail shot of *Leaving is a Process II*, Ida Lawrence

# BUAH TANGAN

An Exhibition of Indonesian Diaspora Artist's

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# FOREWORD

An Exhibition of Indonesian Diaspora Artist's

**ISA Art and Design** is proud to present **Buah Tangan**, a group exhibition of Indonesian Diaspora artists, as part of our exhibition lineup for the inaugural session of Art Jakarta Online Art Fair 2020. Featuring artworks from Adam De Boer (USA), Hadassah Emmerich (NL), Ines Katamso (ID), Ida Lawrence (AU), and Sinta Tantra (UK) selected works will be available for viewing on Art Jakarta's online platform and the full show will be exhibited at our gallery in Kebayoran Baru.

**Buah Tangan** features artists that came from Indonesian diaspora backgrounds; having mixed heritage or living away from Indonesia yet still feel somehow connected to the culture. While still identifying themselves with parts of Indonesian culture and identity, the diasporic narratives and experiences are different from the mainstream ones.

The artists in this exhibition explore the fluid concept of national identity, locality, and belonging in contrast to the rigid and permanent state narratives. It also explores expressions of topophilia and terraphilia, as well as the sense of space attachment, placement, and displacement.

The title of this exhibition plays on the double entendre of the figure of speech **Buah Tangan**, contextually means 'souvenir' while at the same time carries the literal meaning of Buah (Fruit) and Tangan (Hands); the fruit of the hand. Fittingly, these artists are also bringing home mementoes from places afar, -with the "place afar" and "home" being constantly interchanging, or even simultaneous for them; East and West, Self and Other, Foreign and Familiar- while at the same time expressing their itinerant experiences through the creations of their hands.

Through this exhibition, **ISA Art and Design** is providing a platform for alternate narratives as a homage and reminder to the dynamism of Indonesian Art history canon and visual tradition.

# BUAH TANGAN

An Exhibition of Indonesian Diaspora Artist's

## ESSAY

### **The State of Things and The State in Time**

Filipino curator Patrick D Flores presents us with the question, “How can a history of art in the present proceed from these ‘state of things’ and this ‘state in time?’”, -with the context of the “state of things”<sup>1</sup> and “state in time” within this essay is the constant and continuous wave of instability, hitting one after another, in an even more unimaginable frequency this year. This instability then garners xenophobia, reactive populism, and waning support for internationalism<sup>2</sup>. It is clear, the need to reassess our concept of belongingness and identity that is beyond the rigid geopolitical border, has become an issue that needs to be addressed now more than ever.

In between international art fairs and Biennales, which feature artists from various regions, coupled with the diaspora pavilion at Venice Biennale in 2017, it seems that the art world has become in tune with this issue. At the same time, as of late, there have been qualms rising about the ethics of big art institutions behind this show of internationalism and multiculturalism. The art world fluctuates back and forth, between being skeptical that multiculturalism has become a commodification of culture. As an act of othering a more sophisticated kind; and being hopeful that art is one of the ways to show a sense of belonging.

It is in awareness of the current situation that bridges us to these artists of varied diaspora backgrounds, which catalyzed this exhibition entitled ‘Buah Tangan’. Titled as such because the convention, -of bringing an object representing a region and culture as a recounting tool for those who did not experience the place. Therefore this ambiguity and interchangeability of direction contained in the title ‘Buah Tangan’ (Souvenirs) fits well with the diaspora experience and identity which is shared amongst the artists that are featured in this exhibition.

## **Both yet Neither at Once**

The aesthetics of these diaspora artists are ones which “Dwells in travel”<sup>3</sup> and present themselves to be at various points of in-betweenness. What strings together these diverse works of art is that it, in one way or another, presents an element of displacement, adaptation, and movement. Diaspora, does inherently stipulate a condition of certain displacements happening; but from where were they displaced from? And where to? Or the answers for these two questions will always be elusive and paradoxical for us?

As explained in this quote, “Contemporary diaspora studies which emerged in the 1990s has tried to elaborate on the intricate picture of diaspora as complex transversals and circular flows that blur boundaries between ‘home’ and ‘away’”—it appears that the place of return might have become a site of yet another displacement.

For the diaspora artists, their hybridized culture needs to be acknowledged as a distinct culture in its own right. Homi Bhabha, a scholar on colonial theory, has warned us against disregarding the “in-between” culture because of its temporality and its similarity to certain cultures. A similarity that grants them a position that is “somewhere between the too visible and the not visible enough”<sup>5</sup>. By disregarding these in-between cultures, we are also rejecting the dynamic nature of how cultures form, as well as recent variations and hybridization of ‘older’ cultures. In actuality these in-between cultures are the ones through which the bridges and sutures of this global world are built upon. In today’s context, this reminder also calls us to reflect on more recent diasporas that happen in smaller units; as a result of more recent political instability, globalism, trade, the increased connectivity of the world, and other reasons.

Additionally, the term diaspora and displacement that we are using here, should not be interpreted only with its traditional meaning. We also include fringe definitions of diasporas where the displacement is not always exclusively involuntary, or requires that there is a single place of origin where these members of a community are set to eventually return to. This wider definition of diaspora will also include the more contemporary corporate and professional diasporas.

## Happy Land Somewhere<sup>6</sup>

Unsurprisingly, topics such as memory, exoticism and romanticized ideals are prevalent in this exhibition, as re-telling, re-imagining and remembering is a big part in the building of cultural identity. What makes one feel connected towards a homeland they have never been to? It might be the idealized imagination of mutuality or the unshakeable feeling of otherness they experience in their migrant land; it might be both, creating a simultaneous push-pull force. But what happened to the generation that does not remember enough of their homeland? Or never seen nor experienced that homeland in-person? How do they retain the desire to return and align their values with what their ancestors had in mind?

Adam De Boer, an artist based in Los Angeles, traces his heritage back to an Indo family working and living in the historical Kalibagor Sugar factory compound. During the mid to late 1950s following the nationalization of many factories in Indonesia. De Boer's family joined the wave of exodus before finding themselves settling in Los Angeles. His family history being in the sugar business becomes so poetic, a such fitting parable to the sweetness of idealized nostalgia.

Looking at Adam's artworks, we could grasp the outside-looking-in perspective it is portraying, and with that outsider perspective comes fascination, idealisation, and romanticisation. It could be inferred that this 'outsiderness' relates to Adam's diasporic background. Adam's paintings also emit an air of surreality to it, like it is not completely real but rather happening on a stage or behind a veil which the audience and himself peers into and projects their desires. The partial obscurity caused by disruption, gaps, and distortion of memory is what makes these Javan landscapes so alluring, yet so romantic for the outsider's eyes<sup>7</sup>.

Thematically moving away from Yogyakarta scenes, his more recent cityscape series portrays the 'becoming' of Adam's identity. Returning to Los Angeles, he applies these Indonesian traditional art techniques into more American subject matters.

Similarly, Hadassah Emmerich also explores the themes of idealization and

desire. Hadassah is an artist who came from an Indo-German-Chinese family. Her grandfather has worked at the Dutch East Indies railway company. Nearing the events of repatriation, he was offered to move to the Netherlands, because of his occupation, and decided to do so to attain a chance of 'better living' and education for his children.

Emmerich went to Indonesia in her 20s as an art student looking to understand more about her identity and family legacy. She managed to visit her extended family that still resided in Indonesia in the mid-90s. In the month that Hadassah had in Bandung, she was studying in ITB while residing together with other international students. Her fellow international students, deducing her Indonesian heritage, placed Hadassah as their point of communication with the locals. From that experience, she confirmed her position as someone in-between.

Hadassah uses decorative approaches to present the topics of exoticism and eroticism, which she calls in her words "Decoration as Statement, and the Exotic as an Alter Ego". This is a concept that she has been developing constantly throughout her linocut series, murals, and calendar girls, or the current vinyl monoprint pieces. The statement Hadassah made in these paintings, problematizes the commodification and over-romanticization of both 'erotic' bodies and 'exotic' bodies. Accepting multiculturalism as a commodity, as brand power, to appear avant-garde and fashionable.

### **The Threat of Colour**

The illness of exoticism, orientalism, and sexism in the art world does not happen only in regards to nudes and the depicted human body, instead, it has taken root in even the most principle elements, colours.

Chromophobia by Scottish artist and writer David Batchelor calls us to notice the supremacist and sexist disregard and fear of colour that came with the academization of art in the 1960s<sup>8</sup>. Drawing a parallel, fear and rejection also occur in Charlie Chaplin, as the end of silent movies are approaching fast with the dawn of 'talkies'. Chaplin was terribly reluctant to introduce the human voice in his films. It is only after Chaplin's visit to Bali that he produced two

semi-talkies, 'Modern Times'(1936) and 'The Great Dictator'(1940).

What parallel does David Batchelor's Chromophobia as well as Charlie Chaplin's Modern Times and Bali footage have with the British-Balinese artist Sinta Tantra? The colourist prefers to be known as a British-Balinese artist, rather than, say, an American-Indonesian one(following her birthplace and nationality). Her sense of 'home', identity, and belonging is not one that follows geopolitical demarcation, as she feels more Balinese than she is Indonesian, more of a Londoner rather than a New Yorker despite being born in New York. She regards two specific places as 'home' despite the two locations being very far apart in real life.

Reflective of her itinerant 'in-between' background, there are clear minimalistic influences in Sinta's paintings, but they are queered through colours. Yet they also beg to differ from the industriality of other coloured minimalists such as Frank Stella, or pop art colourist Warhol. The colour that Sinta uses is rooted in the 'others'; Balinese colours. Its similarity to minimalism is exactly that, a subversion, insulting the clinicality and greyness of minimalism as the claimed 'pinnacle' of academic art. Just like how, it is possible that Chaplin found the redemption of sound, -that it could be subverted, and used into something sincere, that there is no need to reject the form to reject the corruption that it brings to thwart the terror of the voice,- only after looking and accepting the 'others'. This subversion through hybridity might just be the answer to the 'fears' brought about by unknowingness.

Sinta's paintings are a fight against the monolithic notion of what a refined art should be, as well as the fight against the alienation of humanity from the art world. It is absurd that the modern man, even in art, imagines and accepts themselves as part of greyness with a disturbing readiness. Even worse, they dream, compete, hustle, strive to be part of that greyness.

Similarly, another artist in this exhibition, Ines Katamso addresses the displacement of man from its humanity. Ines's artwork speaks of awareness towards our life, body, co-existence, and nature, especially amidst all the detachment brought about by the high-current digital environment. Ines has always included plants and other floral items in her artworks, which is meant to represent herself. Back then, she was exploring realistic and figurative styles,

reminding her audience that humans are part of nature by portraying portraits and figure paintings together with depictions of plants.

Her current practice has since shifted, focusing more on the structure of life, biology, astrobiology and quantum physics, as well as the sustainability of art. It has become unsuitable for her to continue to practice using oil painting, as for her to deliver her message with integrity, there is a necessity for her art-making materials to not contradict her environmental concept and cause. Her paintings depict abstract and blurred microscopic objects that are fragile but essential to our life, intentionally blown up in proportion to be larger-than-life, reminding us of the importance of these microscopic mechanisms that exist in ourselves as a unit of nature.

There is also another commonality that Sinta and Ines share between them, which is the interplay between the surface and the underlying structure. As previously mentioned, whilst colours are associated with the feminine, primitive, and unrefined, lines, on the other hand, is the representation of the masculine, sophisticated and refined<sup>9</sup>. Colour is also associated with the ‘surface’ and ‘cosmetic’, having the potential to conceal, distort, and corrupt the ‘honesty’ of lines and structure beneath it. Sinta subverts that dichotomy by presenting the structural lines and forms alongside the colours, sometimes reversing the roles of colours and lines as well.

Ines’s method of subversion comes in the way she treats her canvases. Rather than utilizing canvas as a structure or base to paint on, Ines uses the canvas as a medium in its own right. The inner surface of the canvas is flipped and stitched to the front, literally subverting the surface-structure of the artwork; no longer just a painting or just a sculpture. Similar to how Ines steers away from compartmentalizing her identity as either Indonesian or French, she would also like for her artworks to be able to exist beyond labels; blurring the line between painting, sculpture, drawing, craft, and art.

### **A Handkerchief Pinched Together in Five (or more) Points**

Ida Lawrence is an Australian-Indonesian artist, born and raised in Sydney, Australia by her mother while her paternal side of the family lived in Bali and Java. Once every three years during her early childhood, her mother would

make trips to Bali for Ida to meet her father and siblings. As an adult, Ida came back as a dance student at ISI Yogyakarta under the Darmasiswa scholarship, after she had obtained her Bachelors of Fine Arts in Australia.

It is important to address Ida's ties to both domains, Indonesia, -in particular the island of Java, and Australia, as the perpetual translation and mistranslation between the two cultures. Some of the memories that Ida has in Indonesia might not be registered with its intended context, but rather as an agglomeration of fascinating yet slightly absurd experiences. Those experiences are then further recontextualized in an Australian convention; creating narratives in her artworks that are distinctly and uniquely her own.

Ida's paintings deal with cultural gestures and as well as tradition. Tradition came from utilitarian acts that have been separated from its function. The fluid line between utilitarian act and tradition is presented through the self-referential quality of Ida's painting. There is a considerable flattening that happens in this two-toned painting, with Ida's stylistic choice, it is never clear which forms are intended to be a representation of an object.

Not only in the stylistic choice and subject matter, the emphasis on performativity and gesture is also contained in Ida's method of painting. Rather than painting the outline, she employs the technique of 'reverse painting' where instead the negative space constitutes the line work of the painting. The ineffectiveness of the painting method that Ida employs further emphasizes that her focus and meaning lies in the act and the labour of painting, rather than effectivity.

## **Afterword**

No two diaspora experiences are alike. Diasporic individuals could and should not be summarized into a single trope, and neither does their works. Instead of trying to reduce their nuanced practice, through the attempt of classification, one can try to firstly view identity as a constant process of becoming, rather than a static inherent quality.

There were waves of awareness towards one's identity that took over London in 2003. The movement largely happened because the influence of DOCUMENTA 11<sup>10</sup> by Okwui Enwezor, the first-ever of its installment to be African-curator-led.

Next year, Ruang Rupa from Indonesia will become the artistic director for DOCUMENTA 15. Will this event also rouse a reflection towards Indonesian history, identity, and culture?

As derived from Philosopher Jaques Derrida, identity is always deferred, never finished, always moving, widening, constricting in other areas to encompass more additional and supplementary meaning<sup>11</sup>. There is no “original self” that exists alongside us unchanging through time, and if there is, it is one that we could no longer return to. It is very much about difference as it is positioning, in context to a locale and other communities. Similarly, these artists that we represent will have different enunciation, different positioning they speak from and for, in Europe, Australia, America than they have in Indonesia. By presenting them in a show in Indonesia, the ‘homeland’, we are presenting is a distinct interpretation to their artworks.

This exhibition intends to open the ways to seeing displacement as a continuous state, rather than something static or one-directional. It is to view movement and displacement as reality and part of the world’s condition, pulsing like the cells of an organism, where the geopolitical border and demarcation is only as valid as its inhabitant’s sense of attachment and belonging.

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  9. David Batchelor- Chromaphobia and How to Recognize It (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Gzap6ErZ9fc&t=1s>)

ARTISTS  
AND  
WORKS

# ADAM DE BOER



**Adam De Boer** (b. Riverside, California 1984) graduated with a BA in Painting from the College of Creative Studies at the University of California, Santa Barbara (2006), and an MA in Fine Art from the Chelsea College of Art, London (2012). His work invokes his Dutch-Indonesian cultural legacy to address broader themes of cultural hybridity and representations of interpersonal and international power dynamics. Growing up in a diverse community in Southern California as a first-generation American, he adapted with an almost unconscious fluidity to his American Identity. His awareness of the grief and dislocation that birthed this new identity was largely ignored as his family assimilated into middle-class American life.

In 2017, de Boer was awarded a Fulbright research fellowship to Indonesia. Other grants include those from Arts for India, The Cultural Development Corporation, DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities, and The Santa Barbara Arts Fund.

For the past ten years, de Boer has traveled throughout Indonesia to investigate his Eurasian heritage. His recent work employs imagery and traditional crafts from the region as a way to connect his artistic practice with those of his distant cultural forebears. He currently lives and works in Los Angeles.



Volcano Viewpoint, 2015  
Wax-resist acrylic stain and oil paint on linen  
120 cm x 160 cm

In 'Volcano Viewpoint', Adam presents the trifecta of a mooi indie landscape: featuring paddy fields, mountains, and palm trees. Gunung Merapi is reflected on the glistening surface of the slightly flooded impromptu football field. Presenting a dream-like scenario, which could be interpreted as blissful ignorance as well as a longing for home and better times. The becak drivers in 'Volcano Viewpoint' are portrayed climbing on top of their becaks, struggling to look at the football match happening at the other side of the wall. The wall and the voyeuristic action of peering over it and into the football match is quite a direct representation of the veil in Lacan's theory, here, that desire is for an ideal tropical homeland long gone.



Tobong, 2015  
Wax-resist acrylic stain and oil paint on linen  
120 cm x 160 cm

Adam's choice of portraying Ketoprak Tobong in 'Tobong' painting is melancholically representative of the act of preserving memories and maintaining that inherited imagination. Competing against the fast and easy contemporary world of entertainment, Tobong becomes a dying art that its practitioners unrelentingly try to revive, as if holding onto something that has long gone. Likewise, the vision of home always stands on the edge of being forgotten, and it is through the ingrained sense of belonging, the vision is rebuilt, retold, and reimagined. Additionally, Tobong itself refers to an impermanent, nomadic theatre building, a fitting allegory of the itinerant history of diasporic communities.



Star Orchid, 2019

Wax-resist acrylic stain and oil paint on linen

61 cm x 81 cm

This painting features clumps of Star Orchids against the background of Hollywood Hills looking over the famous Stahl House. The house opens itself to public tours for those who want to admire the architecture, or play-pretend; fantasizing a life of stardom. America, in its global context, is the terra incognita where many diasporic communities intentionally or unintentionally find their way into. Just like the Stahl House, America, represents that 'unknown yet varied' quality, as well as their hegemony in the media industry via Hollywood. It becomes the object of desire for many communities seeking for a dream, a better life. Drawing a connection between the name of the flower and Hollywood as the peak of stardom, Adam poses questions towards idealized imagination by presenting outside-looking-in viewpoints and scenarios of role reversal.



Left to Right:

Volcano Viewpoint, 2015  
Wax-resist acrylic stain and oil paint on linen  
120 cm x 160 cm

Tobong, 2015  
Wax-resist acrylic stain and oil paint on linen  
120 cm x 160 cm

# HADASSAH EMMERICH



Photo cr. Teri Romkey

**Hadassah Emmerich** (b. Netherlands, 1974), lives and works in Brussels. Body and identity, the sensory and the sensual, the commodification of the erotic and the exotic: these are frequently recurring themes in Hadassah Emmerich's work.

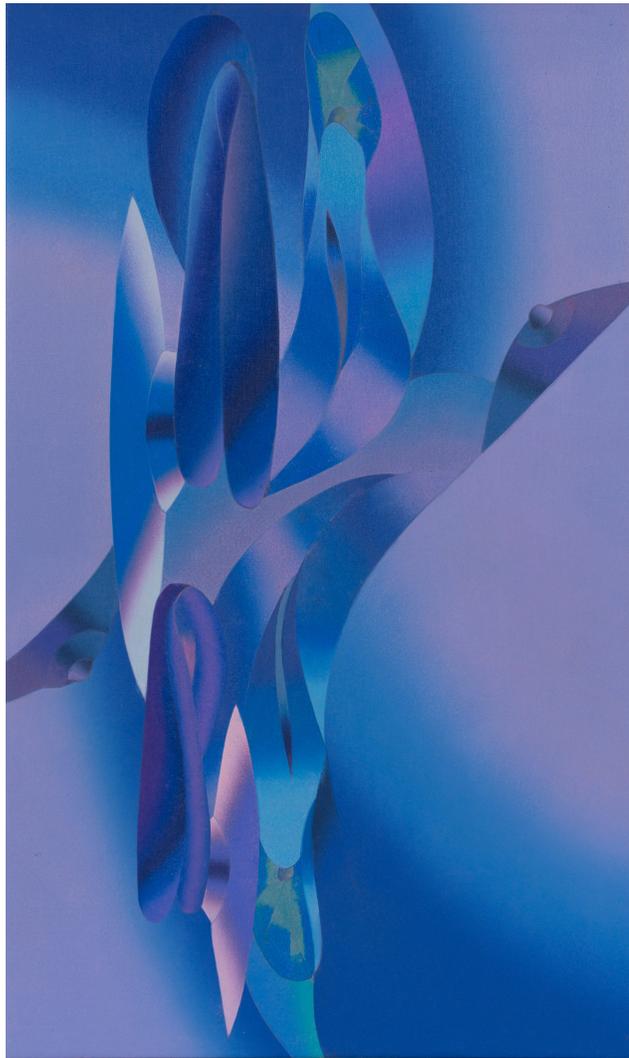
An M.A. in Fine Art, Goldsmiths College, London graduate, the sensuality of her painting resides not only on the surface of the (erotic) image but also in her refined use of color and technical execution. Since 2016, Emmerich has worked with a new painting technique, using stencils cut from vinyl flooring, which she covers with ink and then impresses onto canvas, paper, or a wall.

Referring to the visual language of advertising and Pop art, she creates images that both aestheticize and problematize the female body. She depicts the paradox of simultaneous attraction and repulsion, intimacy and cool detachment, seduction, and critique. In this way, Emmerich succeeds in making the act of looking truly provocative.



Cancan, 2019  
Oil on Linen  
180 cm x 135 cm

In 'Cancan', sections of bodies, from thigh to torso, abruptly cut just below the ribs, are displayed doing the signature pose of Cancan dance, one leg kicking upwards. These rows of partial bodies are then duplicated and flipped upside down. The legs that are kicked up merges with the adjacent legs on top of it. The repetition of dancing human bodies in Hadassah's monoprints, create patterns, abstraction, and variation, entrancing its audiences. Just like the Cancan dancers are aware that they are lifting their skirt and exposing their legs, -its intentionality and awareness ruin the voyeuristic experience for those who seek it, Hadassah's subversive nudes are aware that they are playing with desires, both colonial and sexual, empoweredly flirty.



Blue Mirror, 2019  
Oil on Linen  
150 cm x 90 cm

The 'Blue Mirror' monoprint-painting is originally part of a series with other paintings entitled 'Crimson Mirror', 'Rubicon Mirror', and 'Solar Mirror', with corresponding colours, crimson, red, and golden yellow. The four in this series features almost identical shapes of breasts, labia, and anuses yet different in colour, almost as if one same object is reflected by four mirrors with different interference colours. The colours are distinctly tropical yet unnatural and un-skinlike, dehumanizes the form, almost like testing the boundaries of desire by subverting the object of desire. And if we think of the paintings as mirrors, it creates another layer of meaning, which the painting returns, or more accurately, reflects back the gaze; as if we have woken up to realize that the position has been switched, we have become the exotic and erotic body, the desirer has been transformed into the desired.

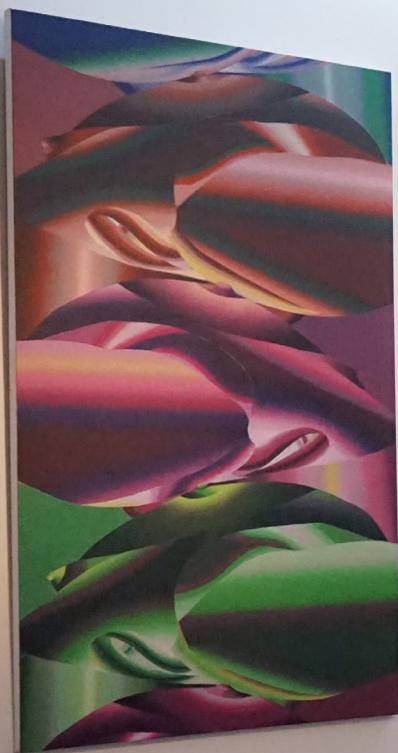


Tigereye Totem, 2020  
Oil on Linen  
93.5 x 61.5 cm



Tigereye Totem II, 2020  
Oil on Linen  
150 cm x 90 cm

The lack of facial features in Hadassah's nudes objectifies these bodies, but the repetition and the overlapping creates a distance of abstraction between the audience and the object of desire. Other than abstraction, what this repetition brings about is also slight variations, not only in colours but also in scale and texture. In 'Tigereye Totem' and 'Tigereye Totem II' Hadassah uses very similar patterns and forms yet the scale of Tigereye Totem II is almost three times of the 'Tigereye Totem'. The bands of colour gradation in 'Tigereye Totem' are arranged much more tightly, with more abrupt shifts, creating a metallic texture as opposed to the satin look of the "Tigereye Totem II'.



**Left to Right:**

Tigereye Totem II, 2020

Oil on Linen

150 cm x 90 cm

Tigereye Totem, 2020

Oil on Linen

93.5 x 61.5 cm

Cancan, 2019

Oil on Linen

180 cm x 135 cm

# INES KATAMSO



**Ines Katamso** (b.1990) is a French-Indonesian painter based in Bali. After studying art and design in France, Ines was drawn back to her homeland where she currently works as an artist and designer (her studio Atelier Seni). The self-described anak-campur from Yogyakarta continues to draw inspiration from her multicultural background and unconventional upbringing in otherwise conservative Java (her father was a musician, her mother a tattoo artist).

Upon her return to the islands, she began her artistic journey creating commissioned murals before gradually transitioning to more intimate scales and subject-matter.

Her recent practice explores the themes of biology, astrobiology, and quantum physics. She is also focusing to push her art-making mediums to be environmentally sustainable, exploring canvas cutting and splicing aside from just painting.



Morphogenesis I, 2020  
Gouache on raw cotton with recycled plastic frame  
196 cm x 146 cm

Ines's paintings depict abstract and blurred microscopic objects that are fragile but essential to our life, intentionally blown up in proportion to be larger-than-life, reminding us of the importance of these microscopic mechanisms that exist in ourselves as a unit of nature. In her 'Morphogenesis' series, she treats her painting as a petri dish, on which blobs of colours are fusing and spreading like fungus, giving off the feeling of impermanence and growth. Symbolizing the constant evolution of nature and matters existing in constant flux.



Synthesis I, 2020  
Gouache on raw cotton with recycled plastic frame  
192 cm x 146 cm

Rather than treating the canvas as a structure or base to paint on, Ines uses the canvas as a medium in its own right. In her 'Synthesis' series, Ines grafts and combines different raw-cotton canvases, layering them, in exploration and inquisition towards 'the matter', with the canvas as the matter. What is usually part of the structure is now exposed, revealing another painted surface within the structure. The inner surface of the canvas is flipped and stitched to the front, literally subverting the surface-structure order of the artwork

This technique also reflects the process of molecule bonding that perpetually happens in every part and scale of life. Similar to how Ines steers away from compartmentalizing her identity as either Indonesian or French, she would also like for her artworks to be able to exist beyond labels; blurring the line between painting, sculpture, drawing, craft, and art.



Synthetis II, 2020  
Gouache on raw cotton with recycled plastic frame  
190 cm x 146 cm



Synthesis III, 2020  
Gouache on raw cotton with wooden frame  
190 cm x 146 cm



Binary Fission II, 2020  
Gouache on raw cotton with wooden frame  
140 cm x 180 cm

In 'Binary Fission', Ines's technique of canvas grafting and collaging are further developed and explored to create a Rorschach-like sensation, a semi-symmetrical image that incites our imagination.



*"Two sides, opposite to each other and yet both light and frien  
their magic spell over my soul. There the paradise of my chil  
the bright sunlight, washed by the Indian Ocean, where my  
ones live and where the ashes of my ancestors rest*

*Here Europe's luckiest countries, where the arts, science  
educational values shine like diamond jewellery, to where the y  
my youth finally brought me : where I was lucky enough to fi  
within the noblest circles, friends who replaced father, mothe  
and sisters*

*Between these two worlds my heart is split.  
And I feel urged to offer both sides my loving thank*

*"Between these two worlds my heart is split. And I fee  
offer both sides my loving thanks"*

- Raci

### **Left to Right:**

Synthesis II, 2020  
Gouache on raw cotton  
with recycled plastic frame  
190 cm x 146 cm

Binary Fission II, 2020  
Gouache on raw cotton  
with wooden frame  
140 cm x 180 cm

Synthesis I, 2020  
Gouache on raw cotton  
with recycled plastic frame  
192 cm x 146 cm

# IDA LAWRENCE



**Ida Lawrence** (b. 1988 Sydney, Australia) is a visual artist who weaves stories through her art & education projects. Her narrative paintings combine text & images, drawing from daily observations, personal experiences & research. In projects she calls Fabricated Histories, she brings fictions to life through installation, painting, text & collaboration.

Ida graduated with a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Painting at the art school situated in an old gaol and received First Class Honours in Sculpture located in a former mental asylum, in Sydney Australia. Between 2010-2013 she was based in Indonesia while also studying dance at the Indonesian Arts Institute, Yogyakarta. She is currently based in Berlin, Germany.

Ida has held solo exhibitions in Japan, Indonesia, and Australia and her work has been included in group exhibitions such as The 15th Asian Art Biennale, Dhaka, Bangladesh (2012), Sculpture By The Sea, Sydney (2013), and looking here looking north at Casula Powerhouse Arts Centre, Sydney (2019). She has been an artist in residence in Japan, Indonesia, Malaysia, and Sydney and her practice has included working collaboratively with visual artists, writers, musicians, actors, filmmakers, and dancers. Sometimes she works in performance, and sometimes she takes commissions. Ida is also a member of Woven Kolektif, a group of Australian artists with personal ties to Indonesia.



Leaving is a Process I, 2020  
 Acrylic on Canvas  
 180 x 155 cm

In 'Leaving is a Process I' Ida depicts a comb of bananas, boxes, biscuit jars, standing fans, and duck eggs wrapped in raffia strings. With each iteration of the objects, the wrapping style becomes increasingly exaggerated and excessive. At first, the objects are wrapped with such compulsion that the original objects are buried underneath layers of raffia string, only visible in gaps near where the two bands of raffia intersect. Eventually, there is no longer a need for the object to be depicted, the crossing of the raffia strings defines the outline and structure of the object, creating a polygon wireframe structure replacing the original gifts. The act of wrapping loses its functionality, instead, it becomes a performative gesture. Through Ida's interpretation, the unique way Javanese secures their packages, -with raffia ties looping in three axes, becomes a symbol of love.



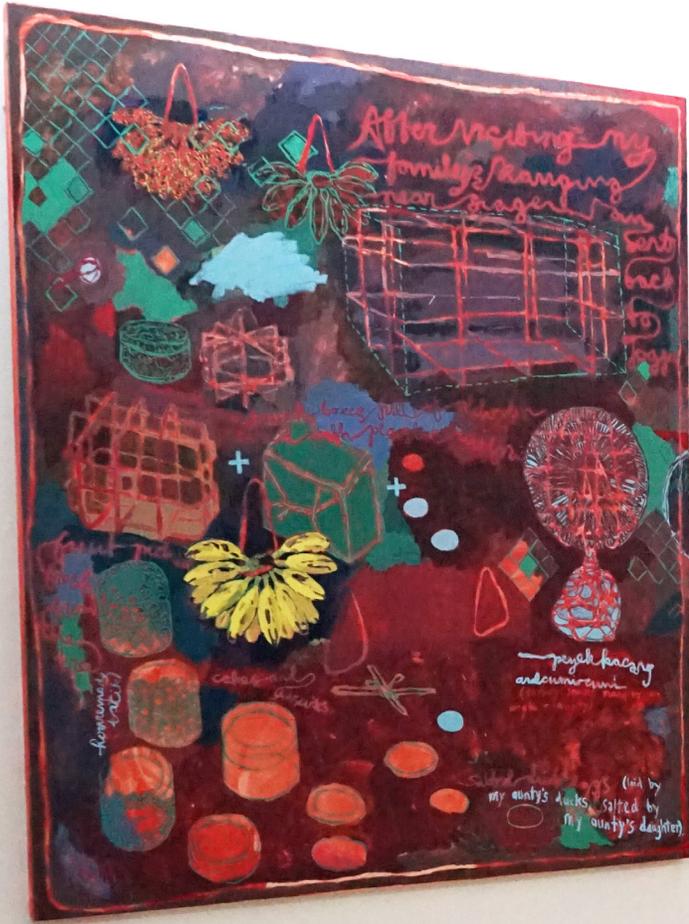
Leaving is a Process II, 2020  
 Acrylic on Canvas  
 180 x 155 cm

‘Leaving is a Process II’ portrays a different kind of excessiveness; the gift itself becomes increasingly outrageous in quantity. For example, rather than just a comb/hand of bananas, the hypothetical souvenir that Ida receives is now a bunch of bananas, still attached to the main stem containing multiple combs of bananas. Originally, the customs of equipping someone dear before a long journey and attending for their needs is a rational act to ensure the efficiency of their journey and their safety, but somewhere along the line, through excessiveness, the functionality of the act has changed into a tradition, a gesture. However, despite the transformation, that act still carries the same well wishes and hope for one’s safety; the generosity of giving.



Oleh Oleh Fails, 2020  
Acrylic on Canvas  
200 x 155 cm

Ida does not only receive the souvenirs, but also intends to return the gesture. The painting is titled 'Oleh Oleh Fails'; failing in the sense that the gifts are either functionally redundant, because the giftee already has plenty of similar items, or that the function is not translatable into the context of the giftee's locale. In essence, she did not fail to carry out the action of giving, because the souvenir was received by her extended family. Just like in 'Leaving is a Process', the act of souvenir gifting is no longer utilitarian. The object and its use for the giftee have become less important than the gesture itself.



**Left to Right:**

Leaving is a Process I, 2020  
Acrylic on Canvas  
180 x 155 cm

Leaving is a Process II, 2020  
Acrylic on Canvas  
180 x 155 cm

*“As I farewell each household, family members load me up with more and more oleh-oleh, like it’s a competition, nearly. There is only so much one can carry back to Jogja on the back of a motorbike (without falling off) and then on the crowded two-hour bus ride (without having one’s circulation cut off by snacks). At the last house, my bag is already bursting, boxes are stuffed to their corrugated capacity, my arms are full.*

*While my uncle is not looking, I hide some oleh-oleh gifted by another relative a couple of hours earlier (leaving is a process) under the coffee table, in order to graciously accept this final batch.”*

*- ‘Leaving is a Process’*

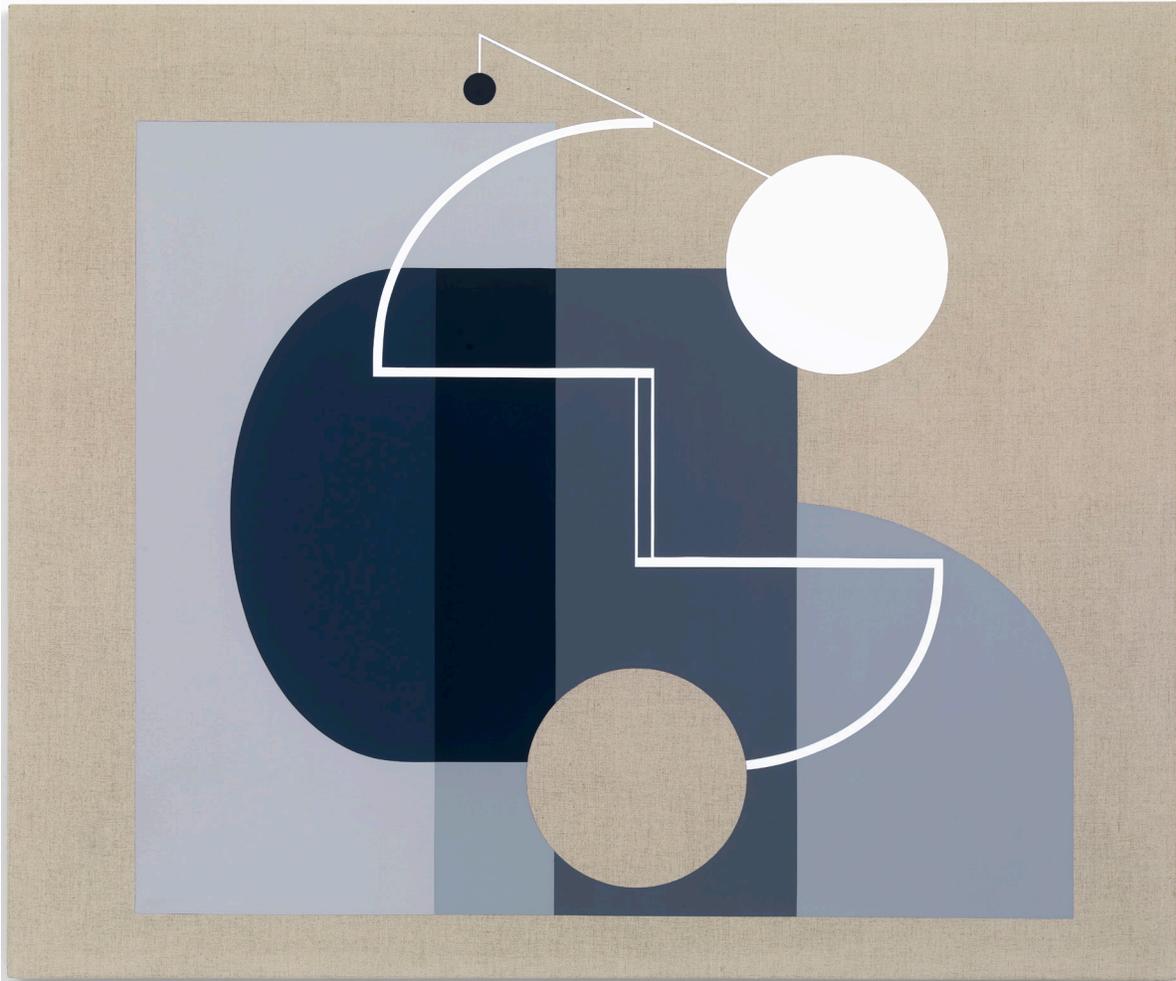
# SINTA TANTRA

**Sinta Tantra** (b.1979, New York) is known for her colorful large scale public artworks and geometric paintings. Living and working in between her two studios in London and Bali, Tantra's artwork occupies multiple dimensions and scales. Her canvas shifts comfortably from a bridge slicing through the urban skyline to a stretched linen frame produced within the intimate setting of her studio – each artwork is an abstract blueprint for her utopian aspirations.



Born in New York to Balinese parents, Tantra grew up in London and studied art at the Slade School of Fine Art (2003) and the Royal Academy Schools (2006). Within her work, motifs derive from Western movements such as Bauhaus, Art Deco, modernism, and abstraction. Her Balinese identity within the post-colonial context is central to her work. The drawings of 20th century Balinese artist, architect, and stone carver I Gusti Nyoman Lempad have informed explorations into two-dimensional lines and three-dimensional space. Her pop-tropical color palette draws from the culture and environment of Bali.

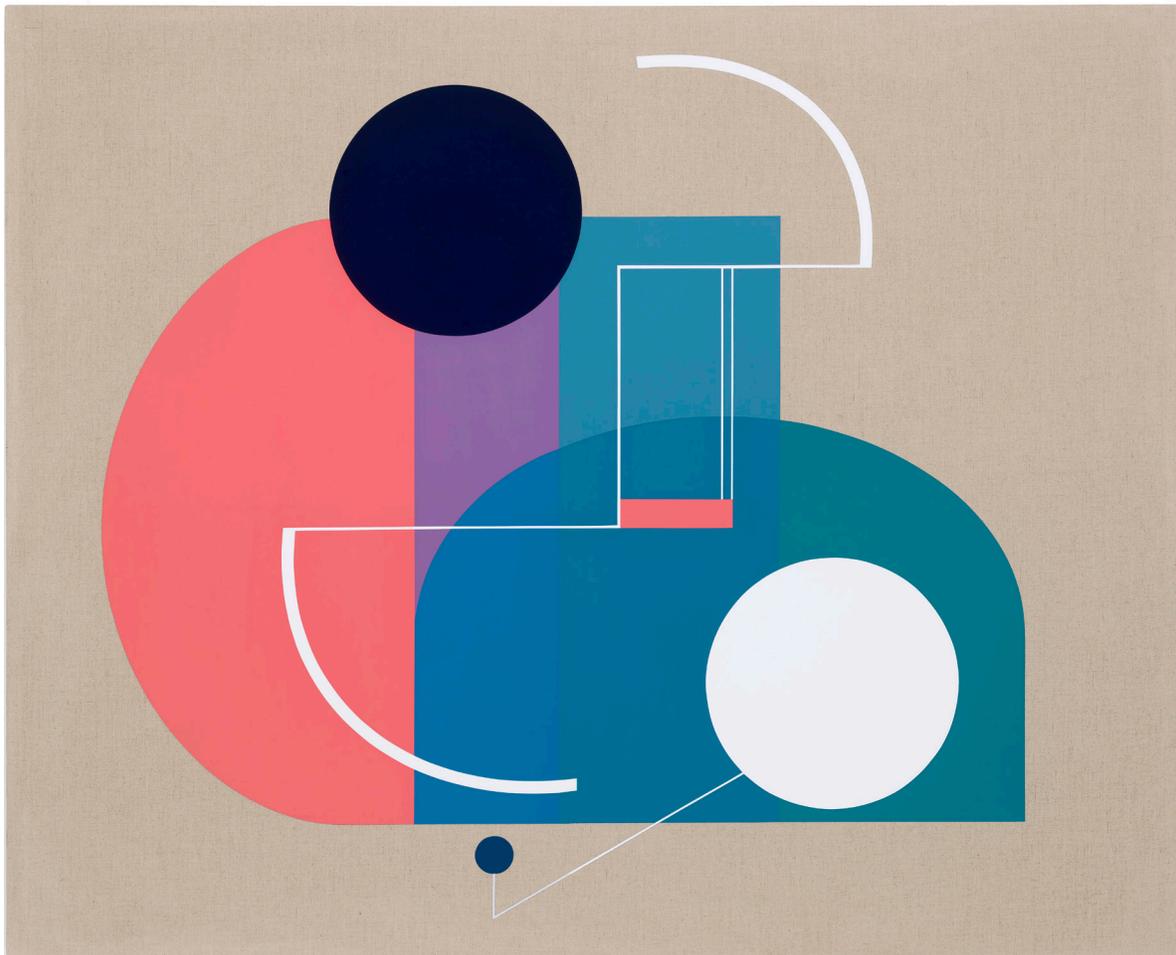
Tantra's site-specific public art murals are “asymmetric-anti-patterns” that respond closely to their surroundings. She describes them as “living paintings that not only exist on a human scale – where the body can become immersed in color – but also on a city scale, where color breaks up the grey architectural blocks of the city. Examples of this can be seen at the Al Majaz Waterfront in Sharjah (2019), Lee Tung Avenue in Hong Kong (2018), and across a 300-meter bridge in Canary Wharf in London (2012).



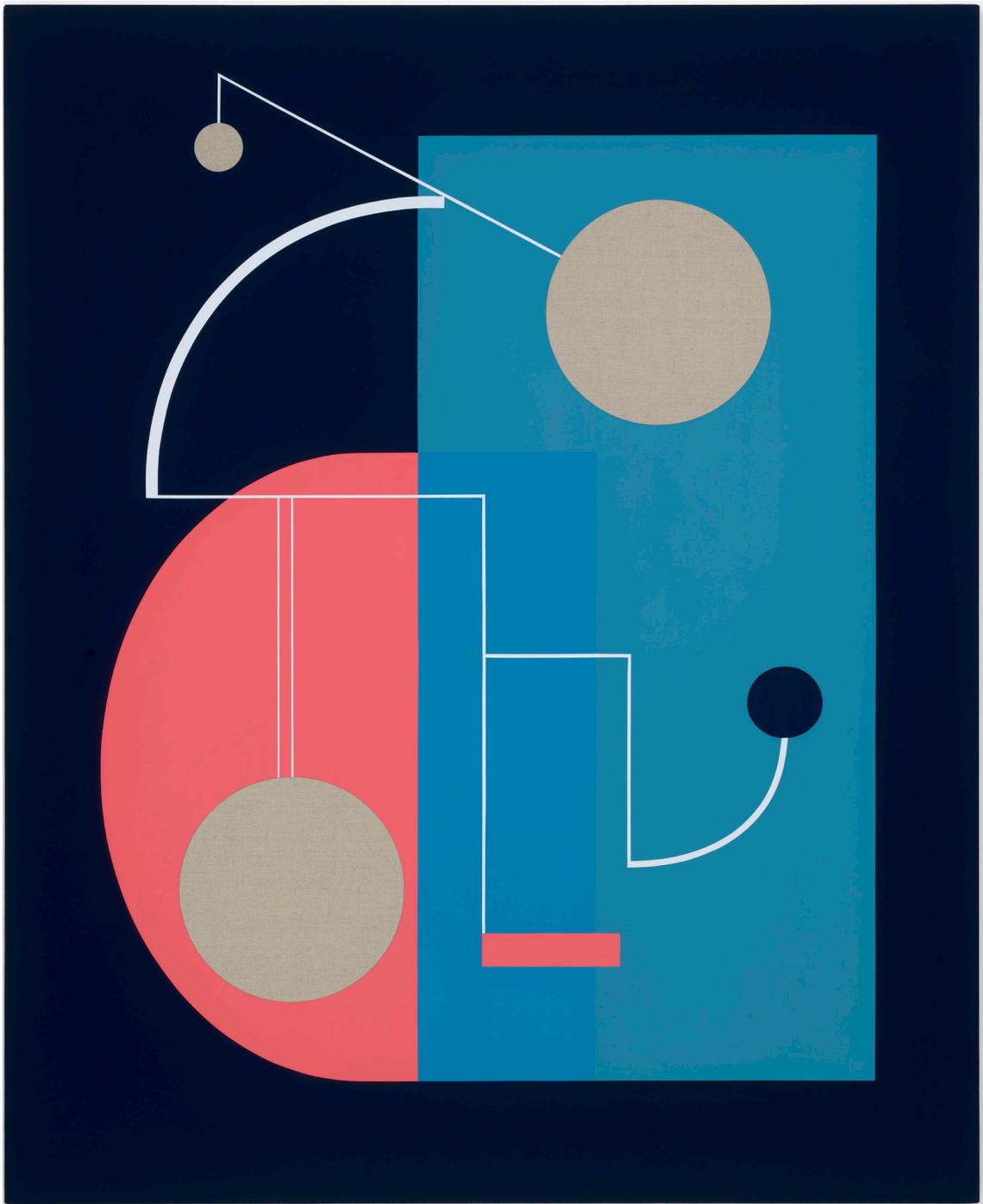
Modern Times III, 2019  
Tempera on Linen  
100 cm x 120 cm

Sinta's works in this exhibition are from her more recent series; with the greyer-toned paintings from the 'Modern Times' series, and colourful and tropical yet still very structural artworks in the 'Bali Birdsong' series. In this exhibition, the black and white colours are contrasted against the tropical colours, however, the similar shapes, lines, and structures that exist in both series create a coherent narrative that ties the two series together. Moreover, the stylistic consistency creates the sense that the two series are like different sides of a coin, or a pair of 'alternate realities'. Borrowing again an example from David Batchelor, a Scottish art writer and artist whose book Sinta refers to; the 'Modern Times' series and the 'Bali

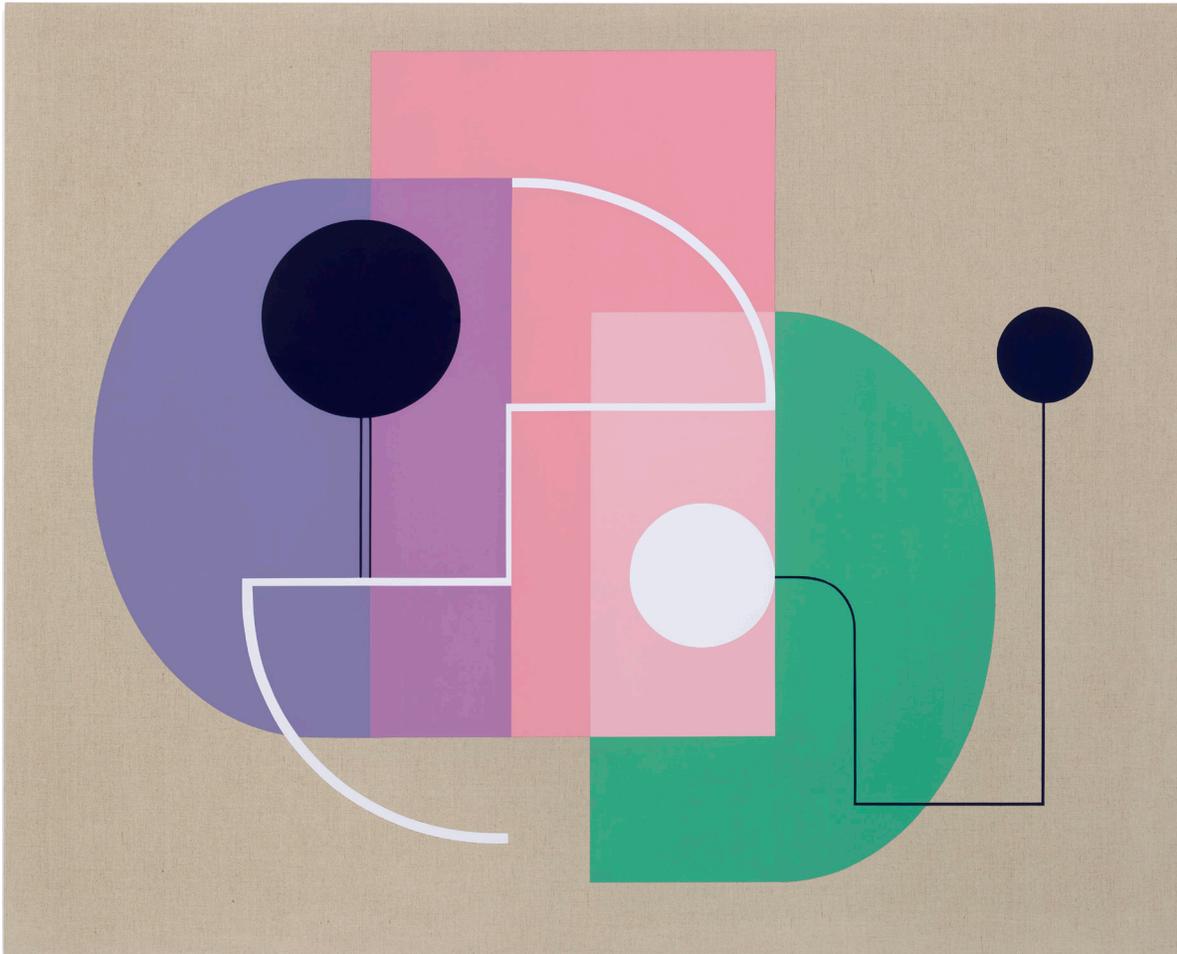
Birdsong' series are like Kansas farm and the Munchkinland in the Wizard of Oz movie, but with less decidedness which one is the rational and which ones are irrational. The difference between the two is between archive and reality, between the imagination of the past versus the reality of the past.



Bird of Paradise , 2020  
Tempera on Linen  
130 cm x 160 cm



A Farewell Midnight Kiss II, 2019  
Tempera on Linen  
160 cm x 130 cm

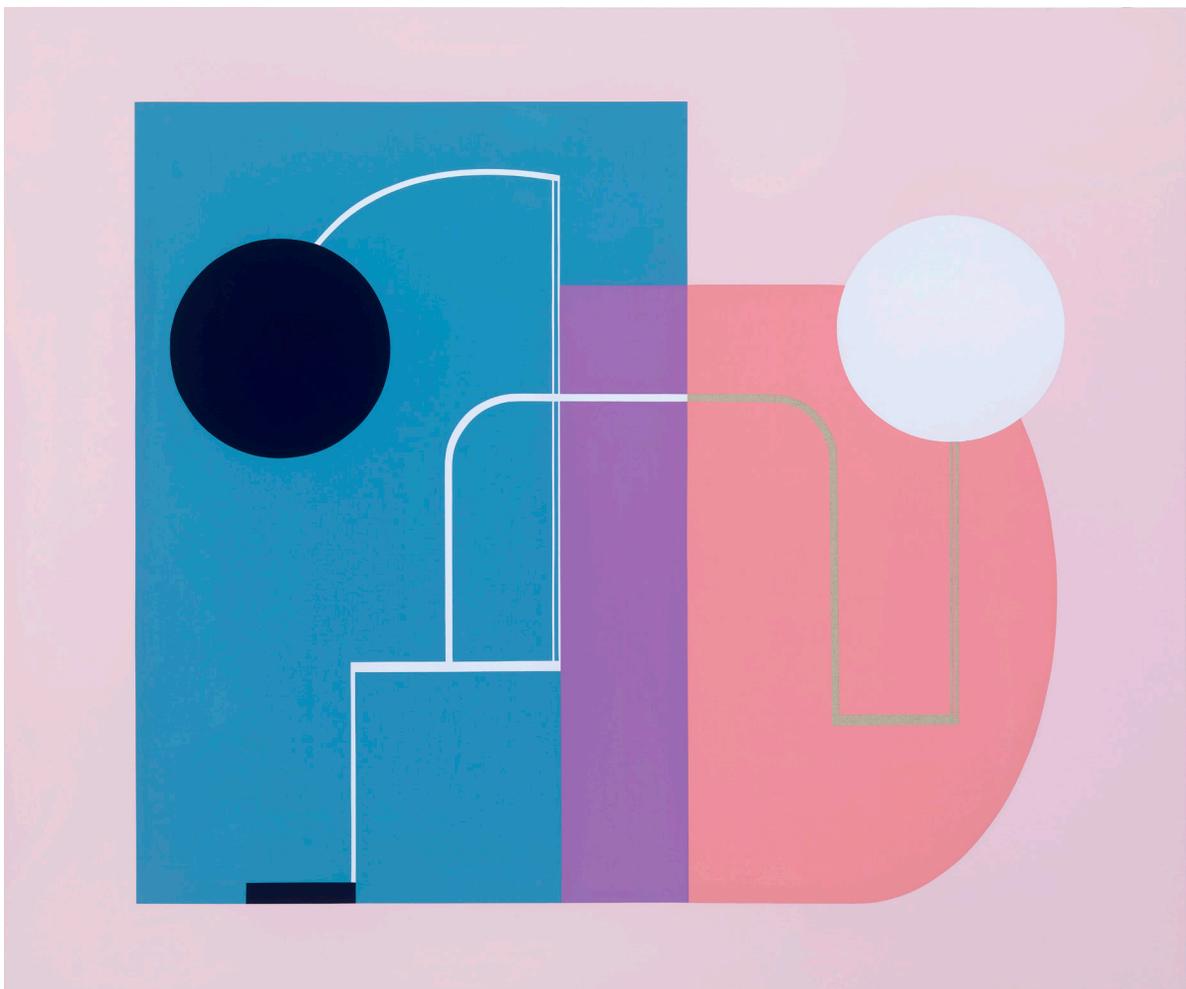


Rose Kiss, 2019  
Tempera on Linen  
130 cm x 160 cm

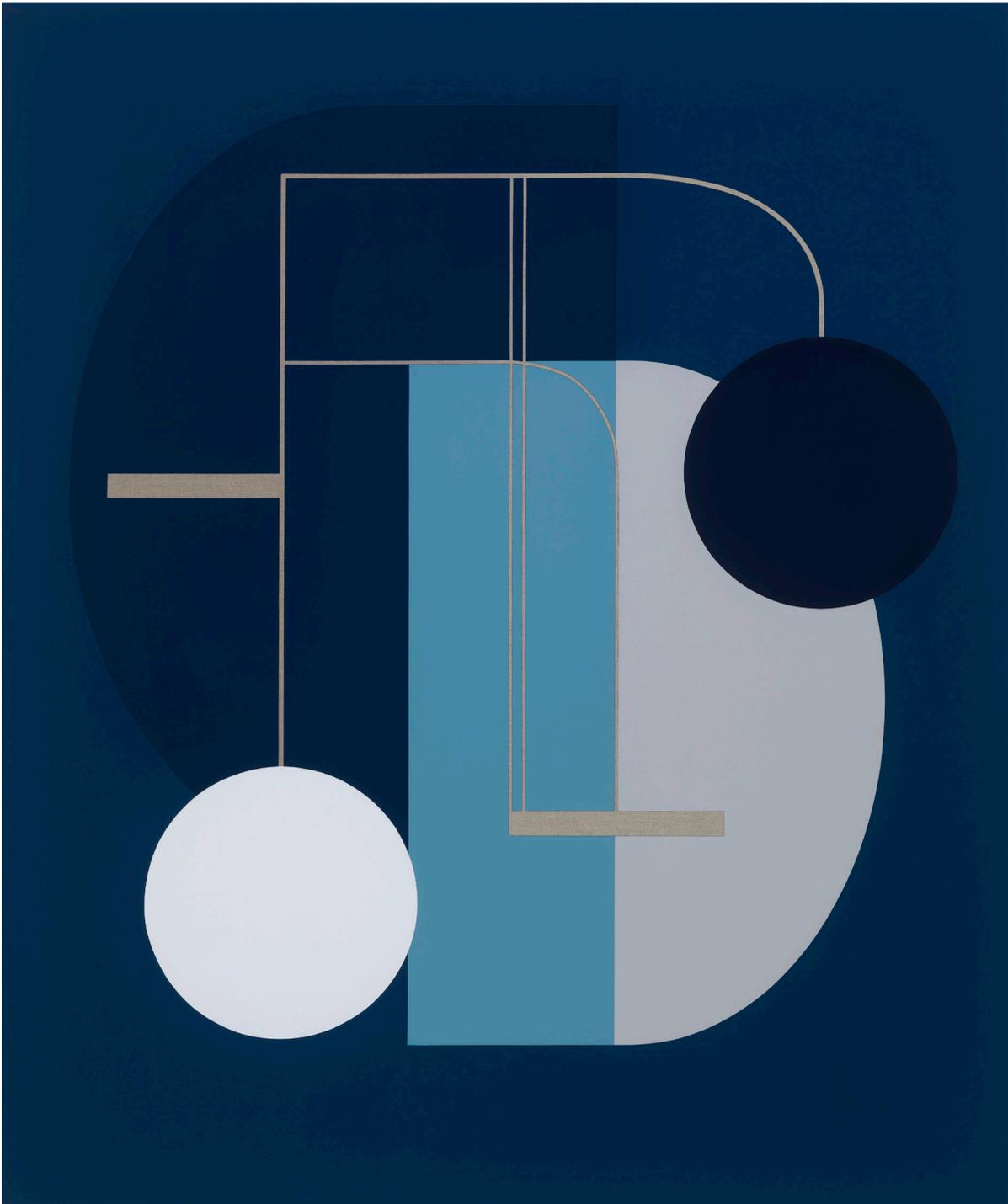
There are clear minimalistic influences in those paintings, but they are queered through colours. Yet they also beg to differ from the industriality of other coloured minimalists such as Frank Stella, or pop art colourist Warhol. The colours that Sinta uses are rooted in the 'others'; Balinese colours. Its similarity to minimalism is exactly that, a subversion, insulting the clinicality and greyness of minimalism as the claimed 'pinnacle' of academic art.

Unlike traditional minimalism, Sinta's paintings willingly tumble into colour. The planes are flat and pigmented, and because of such flatness and intenseness of

colour, it creates a sense of non-dimensionality. Sinta's paintings seed a constant suspicion in its audience mind, that instead of it being flat, it possesses a space so vast that it appears flat, like looking down into a pit that is so deep it becomes flat. Exactly what the western academics fear, Sinta's paintings are sucking you in, makes you drown in the colour, for a moment, unaware about everything else but itself, it makes you forget why you are who you are.



An Atomic Age in Pink , 2020  
Tempera on Linen  
100 cm x 120 cm



Ocean Mist, 2019  
Tempera on Linen  
120 cm x 100 cm



**Left to Right:**

Rose Kiss, 2019  
Tempera on Linen  
130 cm x 160 cm

Bird of Paradise , 2020  
Tempera on Linen  
130 cm x 160 cm

# INSTALLATION SHOTS





## Buah Tangan

*Exhibition of Indonesian Diaspora Artist Featuring: Adam De Boer, Hadassah Emmerich, Ines Katamsa, Ida Lawrence, and Sinta Tantra*

This exhibition explores the fluid concept of national identity, locality, and belonging in contrast to the rigid and permanent geopolitical border. It also explores expressions of topophilia and terraphilia, as well as the sense of space attachment, placement, and displacement.

Buah Tangan features artists that came from Indonesian Diaspora background;

having mixed heritage or living away from Indonesia, yet still feel they are connected to the culture.

While they still identify themselves with parts of Indonesian culture and identity, the diasporic narratives and experiences are different from the mainstream one.

The title of this exhibition plays on the double entendre of the figure of speech "Buah Tangan", contextually defined as Souvenir while at the same time carries the literal meaning of Buah (Fruit) and Tangan (Hands); fruit of the hand.

Fittingly, these artists are also bringing home mementos from places afar, -with the "place afar" and "home" being constantly interchanging for them, or even simultaneous, East and West, Self and Other, Foreign and Familiar - while at the same time expressing their itinerant experiences through the creations of their hands.



# About our Gallery

ISA Art & Design believes in empowering female artists through giving space, exposure, and market support. With our thorough understanding of the art market, we are determined to change the stigma against collecting artworks by young female artists.

Actively representing interdisciplinary and new media artworks, we contribute to the creation of a thriving art market for non-traditional mediums. We are doing so because artists should not have to limit their medium of creation or compromise the integrity of their artworks over bread-and-butter concerns.

We advocate for Personalized Collection. In our definition, to collect is to express yourself, what you believe in, and what you stand for; that it is just as much a creative activity than it is an investment. We stand by the act of collecting as a form of support based on personal resonance between artists and their audiences.

For the reasons above, we also believe in presenting and diligently supporting the secondary market. Secondary market artworks, being collected previously, is a pre-curated selection of the best of its era, tested through time. The secondary market also contains artworks from specific times in history, encompassing the zeitgeist of its contemporary.

In representing both the first and secondary market, we are providing a form of longer-lasting support for artists. ISA Art & Design aims to provide variation and flexibility in the art scene, through our activity in public art projects and curated exhibitions, connecting artists, art audience, and the public at large.

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