Study Club
Presentation

CLOTHING AS A STATE OF POWER

11-31 December 2020

Opening
Friday, 11 December 2020 l 18:30 - 20:00 WIB
*Limited to 15 persons

Artists Talk
*Online format only

Session #1
Tuesday, 15 December 2020 l 3 pm - 4:30 pm

Session #2
Wednesday, 16 December 2020 l 3 pm - 4:30 pm

Daily Visit
12 – 31 December 2020
Open: Tuesday - Saturday l 11.00 am - 4.30 pm
4 session per day (Except: 15 – 16 December 2020 available only for 2 session)

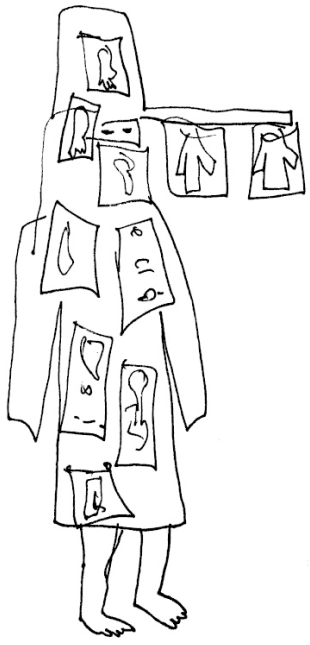
**Limited to 8 persons per session*
**Closed on 24-25 Dec 2020 for Christmas Eve*

Registration is required for entry and all visitors must diligently adhere to health protocol. Tap the link on the Instagram bio @cemeti.institute to register according to the schedules outlined. For further information and health protocols FAQs can be accessed at www.cemeti.art. Please read carefully our health protocols before registering for a visit.

Clothing as A State of Power

The clothing we wear is inseparable from our social system, wherever we are. Power is certainly reflected through clothing and the bodies that wear them. This is not just power in the structural sense (for instance, the relationship between dominant and subordinate groups), but also non-agential and non-structural power, that is “power that is everywhere and originates from everywhere”. It is possible to investigate the complexity of relations of power, including by examining clothing, whether through aspects of the mechanisms of production or by looking at the way meaning is generated in society.

This public presentation will explain a variety of interpretations, beginning with at least seven key words that are explored personally by each participant when they discuss clothing and it’s connection to power: **identity, image, function, ideology, uniform and symbols, along with meaning and memory.** Instead of an exhibition, the appearance of works in “Clothing as a State of Power” is being referred to as a presentation, because it departs from studies that are still ongoing. Developed from independent research on actual issues related to clothing, every participant has tried to explain, from an artistic perspective, how power is manifested and exists as a social determinant through the material and visual forms we wear in the everyday.



sketch by Mella Jaarsma

“Study Club: Clothing as A State of Power” is a study group that focuses on clothing that has been initiated by Mella Jaarsma and managed through the *Inkubator Inisiatif* since November 2019. This group specifically studies topics associated with the relationship between clothing and power. Utilising various interdisciplinary perspectives, the outcomes of the studies are then developed and processed through artistic approaches. As part of this extended learning process, this public presentation is presented by *Inkubator Inisiatif* in cooperation with Cemeti – Institute for Art and Society.

Candrani Yulis

Hijab
2020
fabric and resin (installation),
stickers (mural)
120 × 227 cm

Hijrah
2020
fabric
Variable dimensions

Candrani Yulis's project is conceived against a backdrop of capitalist commodification of faith (religion). In reality, religion as a commodity is often charismatic (because of the perception that believers hold around the sanctity of the teachings they have received), and because of this it is laden with symbolic meaning. The phenomena of the hijab is one example. These clothes—which as a society we attach to the social identity of particular groups—are traded by turning Sharia rules into "strategies" for market formation; a market can be created with the premise of faith. Not to mention that the marketing plans in these clothing trades often manipulate consumers with Arab-style visual marketing. Frequently, Arabic text is socially perceived to imply a "holy narrative"—even though it's by no means guaranteed that all Arabic text has this meaning—because it is believed to originate from the heartland of global Islamic civilisation, and is the language of the holy book. However, these days the meaning of the hijab has shifted. There has been a change in society's attitudes and interpretations around the social function of the hijab itself. Recently, we've become familiar with the "stylish hijab" in association with the kind of hijab that is expected (by capitalists, of course) to accommodate the disposition of today's women.

With this project Candrani addresses how the ideology of particular religions is related to the mechanisms of labour and the power of capital and their influence on public perceptions. This is represented through particular kinds of clothing and society's attitudes towards these clothes. Alongside independent research into the mass media and social media, she processes textual objects that she has found through her investigation of various texts on the hijab, and turns these into a series of installations that carry metaphors for her critical concepts.

Eldhy Hendrawan

Old Normal
2020
fabric and photography
20 x 10 cm (fabric; per item),
20 x 30 cm (photographs; per item)

The traces of Palace civilisation are recorded not only in written form, but also in the form of couture. Palace couture is used as a symbol of legitimacy, social class, profession, gender and even as performing art. Apart from this, couture has various other roles in ceremonies, rituals, coronations, dance and so on. Palace couture has developed as the eras have changed over time. In the Palace there are many rules around the use of couture. Every item and motif of any outfit has its own meaning and philosophy. The influence of Palace philosophy on couture is also felt in the spheres of its authority, including the Palace guards' neighbourhood.

Conscious that the "new normal" resulting from the pandemic would impact on the routines and habits of the community's clothing, Eldhy Hendrawan conceived of a research and production project that encouraged speculation about the possibility contained in the present and future environments of these neighbourhoods. One of these speculations is that the new normal generated by the pandemic is in fact the return of an old story for the guards, who have long become accustomed to changing situations, whether through political regimes, cultural assimilation or other movements of their times. Through the production and distribution of masks as a familiar medium of communication, this project aims to follow in the footprints of change in the Guards' neighbourhood.

In that context, the projects re-imagines the historical, cultural and sacred narratives of the Palace and the areas under its authority, through the design of a particular piece of couture which is, in this case, a face mask. By conceiving of the production of this item and an associated discourse, Eldhy also conducted investigations in various locations that represented the authority of the Yogyakarta Palace, in order to retrace the subjects of this authority who, from a social perspective, are in a particular strata that is represented through forms, images and the way they wear their clothes. This mask-producing project intends to intervene on the public memory of this.

Karina Roosvita

Sarung : Sarune Dikurung
2020
satin ribbon
variable dimensions

Helpful Sarong
2020
brocade
variable dimensions

Loro Blonyo
2020
preloved sarung, hardened with tapioca starch
variable dimensions

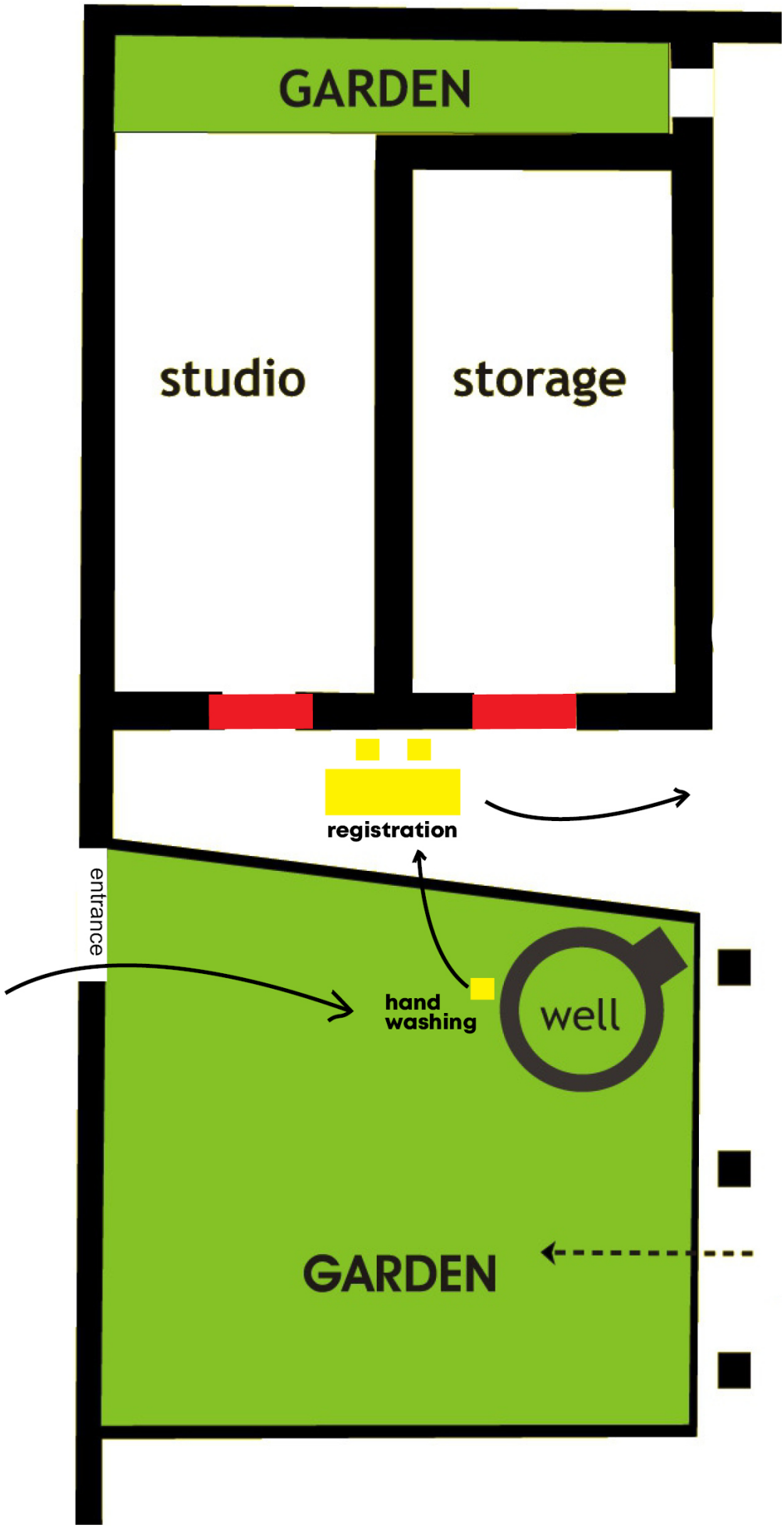
This research project departed from Roosvita's investigations into the relationship between clothing and gender. If clothing is one of the ways that gender is expressed, whereby clothing also forms society's perspectives on gender which then lead to the partitioning of gender, do we need clothing that is gender neutral to help break down this perspective? This work offers the sarong as an androgynous piece of clothing, that is, clothing that has both feminine and masculine values. Through her research Roosvita came to understand that *kain lilit* (a kind of sarong) is one of the oldest forms of clothing and can be worn by women and men. *Kain lilit* is regarded as more civilised than trousers, which are usually worn by labourers and workers. So how do people wear the sarong today? Is it still worn by men and women? What values are represented by those wearing sarong? This representation of values is never fixed. It is influenced by many issues, among them the importance of political interests and cultural burdens. In the independence era, the sarong was identified as regressive and a rejection of colonisation. Today, the sarong is male clothing that represents the middle and educated class, as well as that class of people who love doing the housework.

Lashita Situmorang

The Daster Drama
2020
watercolor, chalk, paper, fabric &
audio

Mistress of The Night
2018
video performance,
12 minutes

Conscious of the shifting meaning and commodification of the daster (homedress), as well as its label as the clothing of the “housewife” (a group of women who have been socially categorised through a process that has domesticated their role in a patriarchal society) this project aims to examine the history of the emergence and development of the homedress in Indonesia, and to analyse how social constructions work to create particular values which are then associated with particular clothing. Interviewing a number of sources to compare perspectives of wearers and non-wearers of the daster, this project positions the homedress as a speculative medium to identify the “drama” (or narrative) of Indonesian women. Through the creation of infographics about daster, which are elaborated with origami and collage, Lashita presents ethnographic citations in an interactive activity. This activity builds criticisms of the sociocultural phenomena of the housecoat, which increasingly carries bizarre implications based on time and space.


GARDEN
studio
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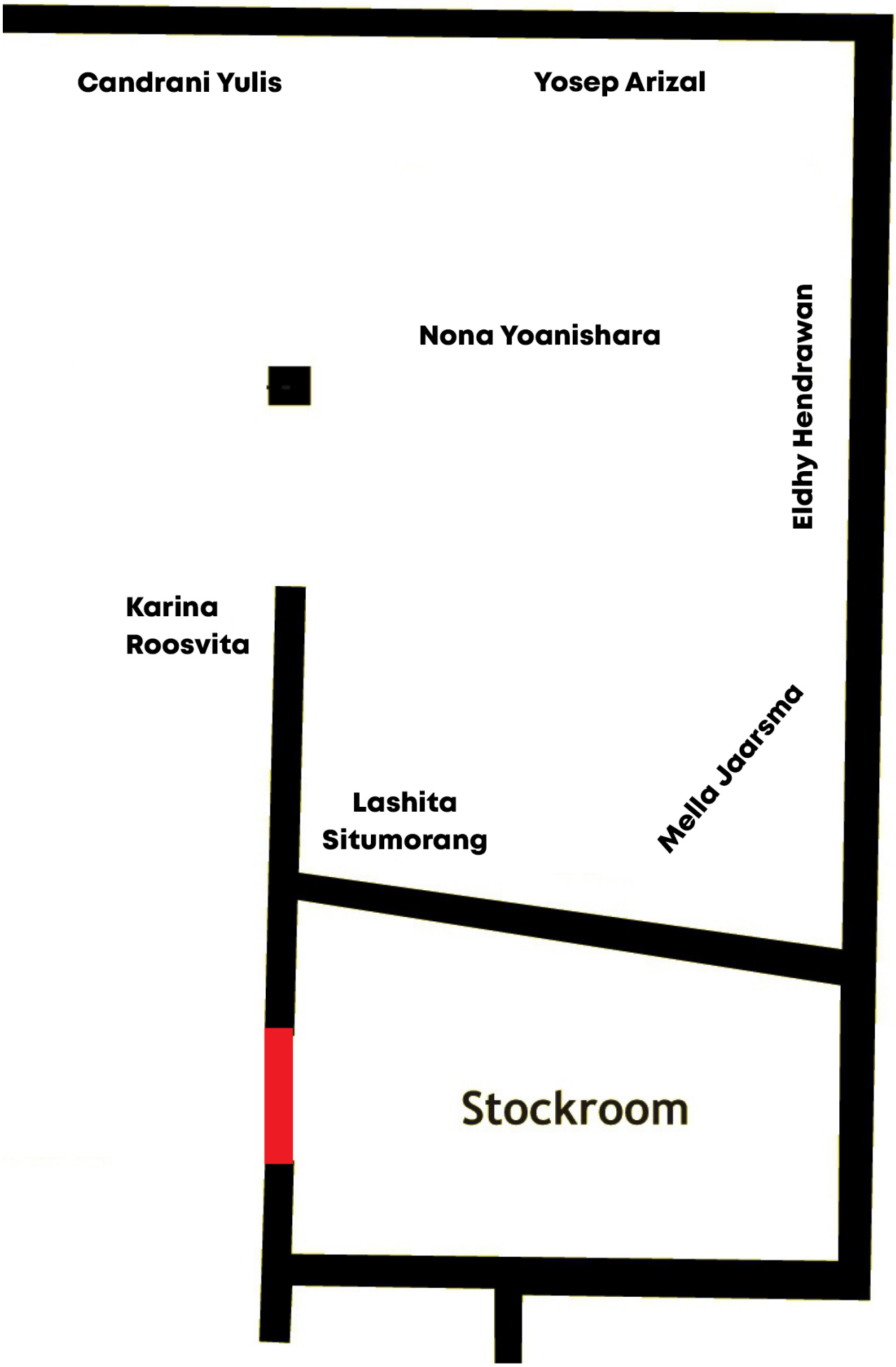
Candrani Yulis
Yosep Arizal
Nona Yoanishara
Eldhy Hendrawan
Karina
Roosvita
Mella Jaarsma
Lashita
Situmorang
Stockroom

Mella Jaarsma

Makna Project
(Drawings by Alfin Agnuba)
2020
digital print on textile, stainless steel,
variable dimensions, 5 costumes

In this project Mella Jaarsma speaks of 'meaning' from an anthropological perspective, inspired by the ritual cleansing of the lion mask and costume, which she witnessed in Ubud. At that time, villagers from all regions in Bali gathered to reanimate the spirits of the mask and costume, lead by priests. On top of the costume they placed images of the character represented by the mask. Mella saw how skilled the Balinese are at vesting meaning in the material world. Trees, leaves, clothing and all the objects around them, whether natural or man-made, are shrouded with meaning, so that the material gains a place in these astounding images. For her, placing images on costumes is the most direct example of vesting meaning or power. Mella compares this process to an artist's creative process, in which in the artist, in which an artist also vests meaning or concepts in a work of art.

In the presentation of this project, Mella exhibits a series of pieces of clothing with images to be attached to cover the body, in the most direct method for vesting meaning and attaching intent to an object. These images, or the labels that refer to five key words with different colours, are related to important existential issues: "the environment" (green), "freedom of expression and civil rights" (black), "religion and faith" (white), "economy, trade and colonial history" (orange), and "racial uniformity and difference" (brown). Each will have a different shape and each will contain things that will be added to the clothes.

The Makna Project is Mella's way of inviting discussion about clothing and how it relates to the body and the structures of power. This work also poses questions about how we use or interpret signs and the social identities we attach to bodies through clothing and how artists can discuss inequality, both at a local and global level, through things that can be worn. Investigating the body and clothing in fact bridges the distance from the public by communicating a number of issues in an intimate atmosphere.

Nona Yoanishara

Sewing Agony
2020
tulle, mirror, metal, LED monitor &
single-channel video
200 x 200 cm

The interpretation of a piece of clothing changes an object from a mere inanimate thing into something that lives through the narration of its owner or subject. This change can be explored through the narration of the owner, user or creator as expressed through memories of the everyday. In fact, clothing and memory are closely related in a unique way.

In this project, Sarah connects clothing and sewing as a tool for exploring the experience and narration of a survivor of 1965. Soemini, the main subject of this project, brings up memories through the material dimension of clothing and explores her experiences of sewing while she was incarcerated.

Using interview and observation, Sarah utilises clothing and the dimension of sewing as a way to explore Soemini's memories of clothing itself, with the intention of maintaining connections between memory and identity, clothing and its implications around change and lifestyle. Presented as an installation of clothing that is 2 x 2 metres, with a replica of the kebaya shirt sewed by Soemini onto which text (narrations from the interview) are embroidered, this work aims to open up the possibilities for clothing as a medium for recasting the events of the past through transfiguration of objecthood.

Yosep Arizal

ke-malu-an*
(Collaborator: Andika Wahyu Adi Putra, M. Mizusee Al-Fayyad, Laviaminora, Satrio Wahyu Nugroho, Kevin Naftali, Adelia Puspa Maharani)
2020
goat-hide, hair and video, variable dimensions

In this project Yosep discusses the loss of fur as the catalyst for humans to wear clothing. For him, apart from *The Naked Ape* (Desmond Morris, 1967), the "Old Testament with its "story of the forbidden fruit" was the starting point for his imaginings of nakedness, the birth of clothing and the emergence of restrictions around genitalia. Long before clothing became the solution to inclement weather (as humans spread out from Africa) clothing, or the act of covering the body or part of it, had different intentions that were mostly related to genitalia, sexuality and privacy. In this presentation, Yosep offers new interpretations of "genitalia" and its restriction, as well as its association with the sexual activities of the "first humans," which were eventually spiced up with a "sense of shame".

Collaborating with several artists in the making of the work, Yosep has produced a video containing a random narrative about fur, the loss of fur, the restriction of genitals and several important concepts around shame and its association with fur and genitalia. This work is also complemented with an installation of clothing made from goat hide and hair that has been chosen as the material and motif to interpret what is written in the Old Testament (fig leaf and animal fur). These clothes cover parts of the body that Yosep regards as "genitals", in association with the functions of those body parts in sexual activities, as is explained by Morris in *The Naked Ape*.

** Translator's note: the word for genitalia in Indonesian, kemaluan, contains the base word malu, which translates as shame or embarrassment. This imbues the word for genitalia in the Indonesian language with a unique and irrevocable relation to these emotions.*

CANDRANI YULIS

is an artist and designer who lives in Bantul, Yogyakarta. She graduated with a degree in Visual Communication and Design from the Indonesian Institute of Art, Yogyakarta, in 2018. In 2016, she was awarded the Display Design Awards DKV 4 ISI Yogyakarta and a Videographic Awards from the Harian Umum Indonesia newspaper. Subsequently in 2019 she was an artist-in-residence during the Artists Post Performance event at the Bagong Kussudiardja Art Centre. Her work has been exhibited in a number of artistic events, including “National Comic” at the Jogja National Museum (2017), “Andong Buku 3” at Bentara Budaya Yogyakarta (2018), “De Grote Postweg” at C2O Library & Collective, Surabaya (2018), “Nandur Srawung, Peer to Peer”, Taman Budaya Yogyakarta (2019), and “Sumonar Fest – Monument of Hope” Yogyakarta (2020).

NONA YOANISHARA

is a fashion designer. She graduated from Gadjah Mada University in the field of Philosophy. She taught herself fashion design and manages her own brand, called DYSEASE, which produces accessories and fashion products. In her work she expresses simple messages which draw closely on the everyday and then merges them with fashion and underground music culture. Her love of fashion design has built her personal career path through her fashion label and its primary concepts around the perspectives of young, modern generations towards fashion, and their frustrations with life. Through fashion, she is able to express herself freely, interpreting this dark side with a different approach. At the moment Sarah lives and works in Yogyakarta.

MELLA JAARSMA

is known for her complex costume installations and her focus on forms of cultural and racial conformity that are vested in clothing, the body and food. She was born in the Netherlands in 1960 and studied art at the Minerva Academy in Groningen (1978-1984) after which she left the Netherlands to study at the Jakarta Institute of Art (1984) and the Indonesian Institute of Art in Yogyakarta (1985-1986). She has lived and worked in Indonesia since then. In 1988, she co-founded Cemeti Art House (with Nindityo Adipurnomo), the first contemporary art space in Indonesia, which has until now consistently been an important platform for young artists and art workers in Indonesia.

Mella Jaarsma’s work is widely exhibited in exhibitions and art events in Indonesia and overseas, including at ‘Dunia Dalam Berita’, Museum Macan, Jakarta (2019); Setouchi Triennale, Japan (2019), Thailand Biennale (2018); 20th Sydney Biennale (2016); ‘The Roving Eye’, Arter, Istanbul (2014); ‘Siasat – Jakarta Biennale’, Museum Seni Rupa dan Keramik, Jakarta (2013); ‘Suspended Histories’, Museum Van Loon, Amsterdam (2013); ‘Singapore Biennale’, Singapore Art Museum (2011); ‘GSK Contemporary – Aware: Art Fashion Identity’, the Royal Academy of Arts, London(2010); ‘RE-Addressing Identities’, Katonah Museum, New York (2009); ‘Accidentally Fashion’, Museum of Contemporary Art, Taipei (2007); Yokohama Triennial (2005), etc. Several of her works have been collected by the Queensland Art Gallery, Brisbane, the National Gallery of Australia and the Singapore Art Museum.

ELDHY HENDRAWAN

studied Mechanical Engineering and then continued his studies in Material Science. He began to explore art when he lived in Yogyakarta and Taiwan. He is an interdisciplinary artist with an interest in obsolete objects, because every object has its own story, which may go ignored. His primary interest is in topics related to history, politics, culture and science.

LASHITA SITUMORANG

is an artist who lives and works in Yogyakarta. She is interested in looking at how art becomes a space for process and communication in which to learn, meet, and share together. In her work, Lashita often touches on issues around the environment, humanity and social issues that are usually seen as taboo or are ignored by broader society. To support her critique, Lashita uses various mediums and artistic approaches, in both her research and her practice. One project she initiated was Red District Project (RDP), 2008, in a prostitution district called Sarkem, as well as RDP #2, 2017, held at Jogja Contemporary, Yogyakarta. The RDP project led to another, Makcik Project with Jimmy Ong, Ferial Afiff and Grace Samboh, episode 1 in 2012 and episode 2 in 2014; Poetic Everyman Project with Amina McConvell, part 1 in 2013 in Yogyakarta and part 2 in the same year in Darwin, Australia; Say No More at the Georgetown Festival in Penang, and the Oz Asia Festival in Adelaide in 2018. Her most recent project, called Guru Project, was represented at *Inkubator Inisiatif* 2019. She also founded *Inkubator Inisiatif* with Karina Roosvita in Yogyakarta.

KARINA ROOSVITA

is a writer who has spent the last 10 years moving between writing for TV and writing stories developed through collaborative methods that are preceded by ethnographic research. Roosvita is especially interested in exploring issues of gender and identity, including by documenting the lives of sex workers and the transgender community. Her collaborative projects have been presented in Adelaide, Brisbane, Penang, Warsaw and Yogyakarta and received the award for the Best Parallel Event in the Jogja Biennale XI and XII. Recently, she has established *Inkubator Inisiatif* as a platform for presenting research by artists and intellectuals from Indonesia and overseas.

YOSEP ARIZAL

is an artist living and working in Yogyakarta. Yosep graduated from the Art Theory Study Program, Fine Arts Department in the Faculty of Fine Arts in Yogyakarta in 2016. In his work he uses diverse media such as leather, metal, wood and paper. Yosep is also interested in curatorial practice and art exhibition writing. Yosep often takes text and stories from the past as subject matter in his art projects. He has been an exhibitor in the Jogja Biennale 2018, the Major Exhibition of Indonesian Stone Art (2018) and represented Yogyakarta Art Centre in the SwaraNusa exhibition in Jayapura (2014). In 2019 he was a finalist in Salihara's Three-Dimensional Works Competition, and UOB Painting of the Year.

Cemeti
Institut untuk Seni dan Masyarakat

CLOTHING AS THE STATEMENT OF POWER

INKUBATOR INISIATIF