

M E N A L A

T U N I N G - I N

ArtSociates

ISI
SINCE 1987

ETZA MEISYARA

Solo Exhibition

23 October - 20 November 2021

MENALA | TUNING-IN

PAMERAN TUNGGAL ETZA MEISYARA

Human ways of perceiving a phenomenon are determined by natural sensory capacities and by social systems and conventions. We can perceive all kinds of sounds with our sense of hearing but must enjoy 'music' through certain musical conventions. In other cases, anyone who has eyesight can certainly perceive colors, lines, shapes, and textures in a painting, yet the meaning or aesthetic quality perceived by a person will depend on what he/she understands about 'art,' including the categories that apply to it. To a certain extent, the categorization of art (music, theater, visual arts, literature, film, etc.), as well as classification of artistic medium (painting, sculpture, drawing, etc.) do help us understand artistic activity more systematically. However, as a system that have been institutionalized over the centuries, categorization in art also sometimes curtails artistic freedom.

An intermedia artist

Since college, Etza Meisyara has been interested in experiments that cross the boundaries of artistic medium and expression. The Intermedia undergraduate study curriculum that Etza followed at the Bandung Institute of Technology required her to work that way. But she also did it on a more personal basis.

Born and raised in an artist family, Etza has been familiar with a visual language to express ideas, but she admits, her interest in art started from music. Even though she finally chose to take formal art education, she felt she could never completely abandon her interest in music. She can easily show the many principal similarities between visual and audio language. Etza considers music as her first entry point to recognize 'idealistic' concepts such as harmony and balance that underlie the process of exploring almost all artistic fields or practices.

Therefore, if there is something called music or sound in Etza's works, I argue that its presence is not simply influenced by the recent trend or tendency to work on 'sound art', as has been done by many Indonesian artists of her generation. At a more fundamental level, Etza's practice is driven more by her desire to explore the process of translation and conversion of codes and expressions. According to her, anything that is sensory always contains ideas, and artistic expression should not be constrained by the conventions of language, nor by the limitations of human physical capacities. Etza has tried to explore this concept in her undergraduate final project entitled *Iqra* (Recite, 2013).

For *Iqra*, Etza chose to do her research at the Bina Netra Wyata Guna Social Institution complex, a training center for the blind, in Bandung. Starting from her empathy and desire to further understand the hopes and aspirations of people with disabilities, Etza made friends with several blind people who were her age: Nurul, Mala, and Hani. For several weeks, Etza visited them to chat and occasionally work together with the medium of clay. She recorded the conversations between them, then transcribed them into writing. She translated the transcript into plates of braille. In addition to making portraits of her friends, she also experimented with converting the plates into musical compositions, by connecting the dots of braille into musical notes. She played the notes on the piano, recorded them, and made part of the musical composition of her installation.



Etza Meisyara
Nurul | pencil on paper (part of *Iqra* installation, 2013)

I consider *Iqra* as a project that represents conceptual approach and method that have become the basis for Etza's artistic practice to this day. The final form of the collaboration can finally be called 'multi-media' because of its plural media elements: visual and audio, moving and still. But for me, it was the process that Etza went through to produce an installation with these diverse media -- video projections, sounds, and objects (clay, braille plates on score feet, and music composition books) -- that truly represents a 'multi-', or 'inter-media' principle. It seems to give us an idea that in order to understand fully a phenomenon, a mere act of reading (or reciting) is not enough. We have to contextualize and recontextualize our reading continuously, adapting any 'texts' or 'languages' into our own personal language system.



Etza Meisyara
Iqra | installation (2013)

Tuning-in with Nature

For her solo exhibition, *Menala* (Tuning-in), Etza is still keen to explore the relationships between different codes, memories, music, sounds, objects, and images. Fundamentally, the works seek to reveal the relationship between immateriality and materiality. The title of this exhibition, *Menala*, is inspired by the act or process of tuning or adjusting the sound of notes on a musical instrument, which underscores Etza's passion for constant search and experimentation.

Most of the works in this exhibition consist of a series of two-dimensional works made of brass and aluminum plates. Etza does affix color, shape, line, and texture, but the process she took was a bit different from the common painting procedure. Apart from applying paint and transferring photographic images to compose visual compositions, she also worked on metal sheets spontaneously by dousing or brushing certain chemicals, such as acid and sulfur. Allowing the materials to combine by themselves, Etza is fully aware that some of the images formed on the plate cannot be fully controlled. The shape and composition of colors that appear are often unexpected. Etza reflects on this action as a manifestation of an attitude of learning, as well as surrendering to natural processes. Her works are a result of the negotiation between her artistic intentions as a 'creator' and the natural language or codes of the material.

Landscape elements such as horizon, sun, sky, mountains, rivers, and hills appear clearly or dimly in most of Etza's works. The visual fragments are Etza's reflection on several journeys she has made over the past few years. In between her activities at exhibitions or participating in artist residencies at home and abroad, she always finds time to visit the open world such as mountains, forests, and beaches. In such places, she contemplates building a connection with the natural surroundings by being silent and "just listening."

Doing contemplation in the outdoors is Etza's way of capturing, in her own words: "the vibrations of nature". And it is precisely when doing her personal contemplation that Etza carries out the tuning process: The adjustment of thoughts, feelings, physical, and psychological conditions within herself. She believes that the universe, even in silence, actually makes sounds and songs incessantly. Not many of us are aware of how the natural environment always sends meaningful signifiers. Etza wants her works to be a medium to materialize all these processes.

As part of the young generation of 21st-century artists, Etza is certainly influenced by the international contemporary art scene, and absorbs knowledge from various sources -- especially the internet. Still, however, it is not an exaggeration to relate her works to a tendency that was once dominant in Indonesia, and especially in Bandung, the environment in which she grew up as an artist. Indonesian art critic, the late Sanento Yuliman, once formulated the term 'lyricism' as a tendency in which an artist pours various deep emotions into his works. Lyrical emotion is born from how artists experience the world, he wrote. Sanento also explains lyricism as a tendency to filter, minimize, and even deconstruct concreteness. In lyrical paintings, we encounter forms that are imaginary or unreal, although not always completely abstract. Diving into Etza's artistic practice, the principle of lyricism is still quite relevant, especially if we look at the forms of visual composition in her two-dimensional works that developed from natural and landscape forms. We can still find well-organized formal expressions, but not entirely based on emotion or mere symbolization of feelings. Etza's works, however, cannot be completely called lyrical, because there is a tendency to present concreteness, including the material language of objects and the presence of natural elements as they are.

I would argue that Etza's artistic practice, as seen in this exhibition, may suit the term 'post-lyricism', to show her relationship with lyricism as an artistic school that once prevailed in Bandung. Within the framework of 'tuning,' Etza's artistic process of sensory expression begins when she acts like an antenna that receives waves or 'signal frequencies', that then stores these frequencies in the form of memory, thus making herself a filter that then becomes a transmitter. This becomes an artistic language mediated by the body and the materiality of things. In Etza's artistic practice, tuning is not a pre-reflective act, moreover, it is only related to the preparatory procedure for playing a composition (music). Instead, the act has been at the core of her art all along.

Agung Hujatnikajennong

Exhibition Curator

ETZA MEISYARA

Solo Exhibition



M E N A L A

T U N I N G - I N



DILAHNA (RAY)

2021

100 x 100 cm

Photo Etching, Sulfur on Brass Plate.



KALA (TIME)

2021

100 x 100 cm

Photo Etching, Sulfur on Brass Plate.



ARUNA (RED)

2021

100 x 100 cm

Photo Etching, Sulfur on Brass Plate.



ARKANA (BRIGHT)

2021

100 x 100 cm

Photo Etching, Sulfur on Brass Plate.



ARKALA (FLARE)

2021

100 x 100 cm

Photo Etching, Sulfur on Brass Plate.



ABRA (GLISTENING)

2021

100 x 100 cm

Photo Etching, Sulfur on Brass Plate.



CAYA (LIGHT)

2021

100 x 100 cm

Photo Etching, Sulfur on Brass Plate.



ASRAH (SURRENDER)

2021

100 x 100 cm

Photo Etching, Sulfur on Brass Plate.



SABDA (SOUND)

2021

120 x 120 cm

Photo Etching, Mixed Media, Acrylic,
Enamel on Alumunium.



JIWANTA (SERENITY)

2021

120 x 120 cm

Photo Etching, Mixed Media, Acrylic,
Enamel on Alumunium.



SUNYARURI (SILENCE OF NATURE)

2021

120 x 120 cm

Photo Etching, Mixed Media, Acrylic,
Enamel on Alumunium.



KELANA (WANDERING)

2021

240 x 120 cm

Photo Etching, Mixed Media, Acrylic, Enamel on Aluminium.

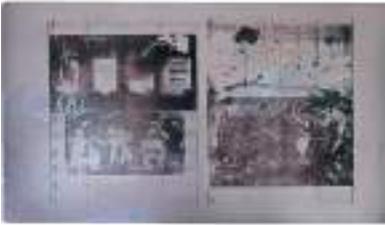


BARUNA (OCEAN)

2021

80 x 120 cm (each)

Photo Etching, Mixed Media, Acrylic, Enamel on Aluminium.



MENALA (TUNING-IN)

2021

Variable Dimension 50 x 32 cm

Aluminium Plate, Music Partiture, Sulfur.



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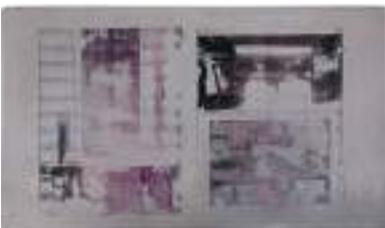


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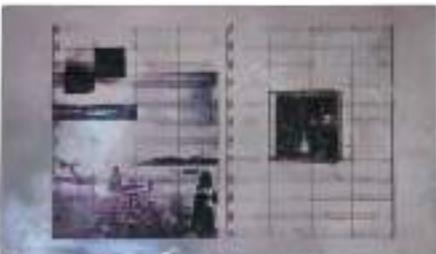


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ARTIST'S BIO



Born in 1991 in Bandung, Indonesia, Etza Meisyara who is concerned with the issue of conversion, which is studied, in the artistic dimension relating to science and technology. Her foray into visual art was through the Intermedia Art Studio programme at the Bandung Institute of Technology (ITB), where she graduated with a Masters in Art in 2016 and got a scholarship in Hochschule für Bildende Künste Braunschweig, Germany. Etza continues to infuse her childhood passion in music through projects that combine sound art, installation and performance. She has participated in group presentations such as ARTJOG MMXIX 'Arts in Common' (Yogyakarta, Indonesia), 'AURORA' (Liverpool, England, 2018) and the 2016 KLANG KUNST Sound Art Festival (Braunschweig, Germany). In 2017, Etza was a recipient of the fifth Bandung Contemporary Art Award (BaCaa), a biannual art prize presented by ArtSociates and Lawangwangi Art Space.

CURRICULUM VITAE

Etza Meisyara

Born – Bandung, 30 May 1991

Live & Works – Bandung, Indonesia

Solo Exhibition

2018 ALCHEMIST. Chapelle Des Dames

Blanches. La Rochelle, France.

2018 PASSING BY. Lawangwangi

Creative Space. Bandung Indonesia

Group Exhibition

2021 JOGJA BIENNALE. Yogyakarta, Indonesia.

2021 ARTMOMENTS. Jakarta, Indonesia.

2021 SUKSES!. Isa Art & Design. Jakarta, Indonesia.

2021 ARISAN. Museum MACAN. Jakarta, Indonesia.

2021 TRAJECTORY. Lawangwangi Creative Space. Bandung, Indonesia.

2020 MACHINE/MAGIC. Goethe Institute Jakarta, Indonesia.

2020 ARTJOG MMXIX. Jogja Nasional Museum. Yogyakarta, Indonesia.

2020 INTERSUBJECTIVITY. ISA Art & Design. Jakarta, Indonesia.

2020 Multipolar. Lawangwangi Creative Space. Bandung, Indonesia.

2019 Art Expo Malaysia. Matrade Exhibition and Convention Centre

(MECC). Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

2019 ARTJAKARTA. JCC Senayan. Jakarta, Indonesia.

2019 SYNTHESIS : Wonders of Indonesia. Indonesian & Bulgarian Contemporary Art. 2019 INTO THE FUTURE : PEREMPUAN.

National Gallery of Indonesia. Jakarta, Indonesia.

2018 AURORA. Toxteth Reservoir, Liverpool, England.

2018 Art Jakarta / Bazaar Art Fair. The

Ritz-Carlton Hotel, Pacific Place,

2018 Pekan Seni Media. Palu, Indonesia.

Artist In Residences & Project

2018 Centre Intermondes. La Rochelle, France.

2018 Toxteth Reservoir Liverpool, England. 2014 Listhus Art Space. Olafsfjordur, Iceland.

2014 Kubilai Khan Art & Body Performance. Toulon, France.

Awards

2nd Winner BANDUNG CONTEMPORARY ART AWARD 2017

2nd Winner YOUNG CREATOR of

TOKYO DESIGN WEEK 2015

Nominee GUDANG GARAM INDONESIAN ART AWARD

Nominee BANDUNG CONTEMPORARY ART AWARD

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