

MARC STRAUS

# The New York Times

Entang Wiharso

By Ken Johnson

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One of Indonesia's most prominent contemporary artists, Entang Wiharso represented his country in the Venice Biennale of 2013. He has been included in other biennials and museum exhibitions from Tokyo to Rome. This gaudy, overstuffed exhibition reveals an artist of extraordinary industry and canny versatility. In near mural-scale paintings and in sculptures cast in aluminum, brass and resin, he mixes traditional Indonesian styles with Pop and Surrealism, creating allegories of psychic stress in a global economy.

Mr. Wiharso's paintings exude moods of darkly comical hysteria, calling to mind the works of James Ensor. Painted with a dry, Expressionist touch, "Double Protection: Invisible Threat" has a shirtless man with four eyes and a wide, clownish grin dominating the right half of the almost 10-foot-wide canvas. Other male and female figures fill the picture, kneeling or lying prone in a hellish laboratory where tubes, wires and cables circulate between machines and human bodies. Here and there, knife-wielding hands hint at potential murderous violence.

With too many shiny, cast-metal reliefs representing intertwining, struggling figures, the exhibition gives the impression of an art fair booth. The show's most impressive sculpture, "Inheritance," should have a room to itself but must compete with a large relief and another big painting. It consists of a nuclear family — mother, father and two children — cast life-size in nearly black graphite and arrayed around a dinner table on which lies an enormous carp, whose silvery skin is accented by bright red splotches. It's a very postmodern tableau, but it has the mystery, too, of an old folk tale.

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MARC STRAUS  
299 Grand Street  
Lower East Side  
Through Feb. 8