



Tapestry of Encounters: Contemporary Indonesian Art

19 August - 6 November 2026

Introduction

The Institute for Australian and Asian Arts and Culture (IAC) at Western Sydney University proudly presents the first contemporary Indonesian art exhibition on our campus—an exhibition that is distinctive, provocative, and visually and intellectually stimulating.

The title *Tapestry of Encounters* evokes both diversity and connection. Bringing together ten contemporary artists, the exhibition offers a glimpse into the richness, complexity and dynamism of contemporary Indonesian art. Spanning painting, sculpture, installation, textiles and mixed media, the works reflect diverse regions, cultural traditions and heritages, personal histories and experiences, global influences, and social and political interrogations.

The exhibiting artists—Agus Wijaya, Citra Sasmita, Ari Bayuaji, Faerie, Made Wiguna Valasara, Lufti Yanuar, Andres Anagard, I Made Widya Diputra, Antonio S. Sinaga and Desrat Fianda—represent different backgrounds and artistic trajectories, including artists working in Indonesia and Indonesian artists based in Australia. Collectively, they demonstrate that contemporary Indonesian art is not defined by a single narrative or identity, but is shaped by a vibrant diversity of traditions, forms, materials and practices, and by ongoing creative transformation.

The exhibition reveals multiple encounters: between tradition and experimentation, memory and imagination, individual experience and collective histories, materials and meaning, identity and social realities, and between Indonesia and the wider world. The artists explore themes ranging from mythology, ritual and cultural memory to environmental issues, migration, urban life and the changing nature of identity. Across their works, inherited forms are reimagined, materials transformed, social realities questioned, and new ways of seeing and belonging take shape.

Presented at Western Sydney University, in one of Australia's most culturally diverse regions, the exhibition also reflects the many histories, communities and cultures that intersect here. It highlights the University's education connection with Indonesia through our Surabaya campus, creating an important bridge between our home

campus in Western Sydney and our offshore campus in Surabaya, and strengthening connections between Australia and Indonesia through art, culture and knowledge.

A further encounter takes place between the artworks and their audiences. For many visitors, this may be their first encounter with contemporary Indonesian art. *Tapestry of Encounters* offers an opportunity to encounter Indonesia through the diverse perspectives of artists responding to their histories, environments, materials and contemporary lives. In this meeting between artworks and viewers, new connections and understandings may emerge.

The exhibition is presented in partnership with Redbase Gallery, Sydney and Kabo Art Collector, Melbourne.



Professor Jing Han

Director, Institute for Australian and Asian Arts and Culture



Agus Wijaya



Born in Cianjur, West Java, Agus Wijaya is an Indonesian artist of Chinese background living and working in Sydney. His artworks have been presented in solo and group exhibitions in Australia and Indonesia, including *Tata Reka* at Stanley Street Gallery, Sydney (2022), *Geographies of the Self* at REDBASE Art, Sydney (2022), *Everything We Inherit* at ISA Art, Indonesia (2024), and *~/a_love_letter_to_kala* at Passage Gallery, Sydney (2025). He has also exhibited at Sydney Contemporary and Art Jakarta.

Wijaya was part of the churchie at the Institute of Modern Art and has been a finalist in the Dobell Drawing Prize, Woollahra Small Sculpture Prize, North Sydney Art Prize, Fisher's Ghost Art Award, Incinerator Art Award and the Blake Prize. He has undertaken a residency at The Lock-Up, and reviews and features on his work have appeared in *Memo Review* and *Art Guide Australia*. His commissions include works for Newcastle Art Gallery, Passage Gallery and Fairfield City Museum & Gallery. His work is held in private collections across Australia, Indonesia and New Zealand.

Agus Wijaya is represented by Stanley Street Gallery.

About His Work

These sculptures explore the structures through which personal and cultural identities become legible. Drawing on familial references alongside political and belief formations, Wijaya approaches forms of constraint, extraction and power as lived conditions—negotiated, transformed and re-narrated through personal experience.

Working across digital abstraction, experimental sculpture and

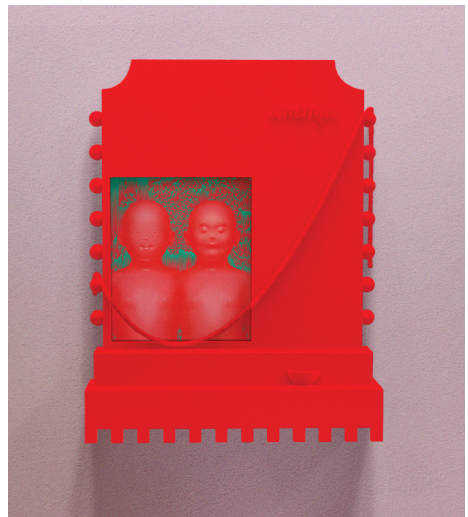
installation, Wijaya uses subtle irreverence to test processes of identification and dis-identification. His imagined figures and creatures hover between the familiar and the unfamiliar, creating a visual language that resists fixed categories of identity. The works register what he describes as “glitches between ways of knowing and seeing”, moments when familiar frameworks begin to strain and new possibilities emerge.

Rather than reproducing established cultural forms, Wijaya creates hybrid and transformed forms through which memory, cultural inheritance and imagination can be renegotiated. His practice moves between recognition and estrangement, authenticity and imitation, the personal and the cultural.

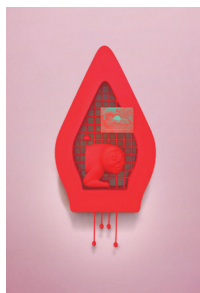
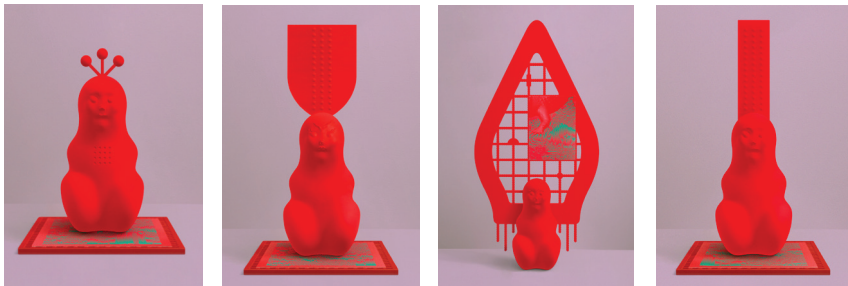
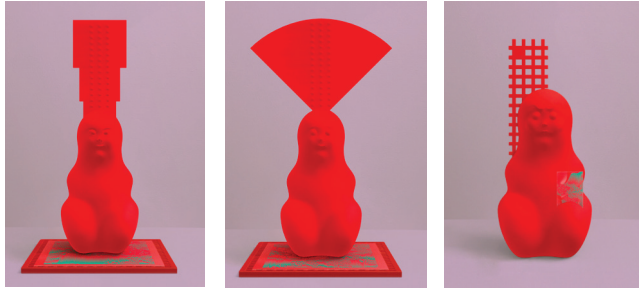
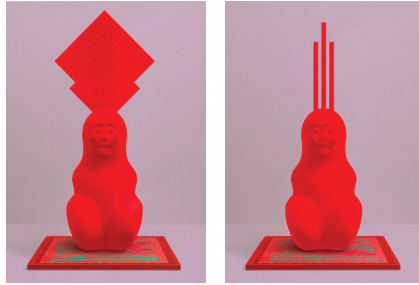
Combining digitally constructed forms, meticulous hand detailing and photographic printing, these works move between the virtual and the physical. Through this interplay, Wijaya transforms questions of identity and belonging into an inventive visual world—one that embraces ambiguity and irreverence while registering glitches between different histories, identities and ways of seeing.



Jejadian, 2022, Installation with recycled teak stools from Indonesia



Yisanyishi, 2022, Mixed media, 22 x 17 cm



ROW 1: *Lan, Las*, 2022, ROW 2: *Eitn, Naintn, Waer*, 2023, ROW 3: *Wapulu, Jisa, Salikur*, 2023, *Juh*, 2022, Hand-detailed digital sculpture with mounted archival pigment printing on art canvas, 25 x 15 x 20 cm each
ROW 4: *Benang Merah*, 2022, Mixed media, 29 x 14.5 x 2 cm

Citra Sasmita



Citra Sasmita is a Balinese contemporary artist whose work has been presented at major international biennales, museums and art institutions across Asia, Europe, the Middle East, Australia and the Americas. Her recent international exhibitions include the 35th São Paulo Biennial and Thailand Biennale, Chiang Rai (2023); Diriyah Biennale, Saudi Arabia, and the 24th Biennale of Sydney, Ten Thousand Suns (2024); Toronto Biennial of Art, Sharjah Biennale and Hawai'i Triennial (2025). In 2025, she presented *Into Eternal Land*, her first solo exhibition in the UK, at The Curve, Barbican Centre, London. In 2026, she presented *Who Stole the Sky* at Kunsthall Stavanger, Norway.

Born in Tabanan, Bali, in 1990, Sasmita received the Gold Award in the UOB Painting of the Year in 2017 and was the Grand Prize winner of the Sovereign Asian Art Prize in 2026. Her solo exhibitions include *Ode to the Sun* at Yeo Workshop, Singapore (2020) and *Atlas of Curiosity* at Yeo Workshop, Singapore (2023). She has undertaken residencies at WIELS, Brussels, and Delfina Foundation, London. Her work is held in institutional collections internationally.

About Her Work

The Embrace of My Motherland is the first major work in Citra Sasmita's *Timur Merah Project*, a research-driven project rooted in ancient Balinese texts and their connections across Java, the Malay Archipelago, Southeast Asia and India. Sasmita observes that major historical and cultural narratives centre on male figures and systems of power, leaving women in marginal positions. She reimagines these narratives by placing women at the centre—not simply replacing male characters with female ones, but proposing alternative ways of understanding history, mythology and knowledge.

She adopts the visual language of Kamasan painting, a traditional Balinese form used for ritual and narrative imagery, transforming its traditionally male-centred visual and literary tradition through female protagonists. The work draws on ancient Balinese *kakawin* and narratives of creation, human existence, spirituality and the relationship between humans and nature.

The work questions patriarchal and colonial constructions of Balinese history and culture. This reconstruction of older narratives is not a nostalgic return to tradition, but an attempt to recover suppressed perspectives and reconsider whose histories and experiences are given authority. It also interweaves narratives of human creation and relationships that existed before the formation of the universe, linking the emergence of human knowledge and the desire to conquer nature to contemporary ecological crises.

The installation, in the form of a *lamak* (shrine hanging) in Kamasan painting, is significant. Its elongated shape, which hangs down to the ground, is often likened to a ladder or bridge to heaven, serving as a connection between the earthly realm and the realm of deities.





Timur Merah Project: The Embrace of My Motherland, 2019, Synthetic polymer paint on traditional Kamasan canvas, 3 panels, 90 x 400 cm each, Photo (Left): Art Gallery of

Ari Bayuaji



Ari Bayuaji is an Indonesian contemporary artist whose practice has been presented internationally through solo exhibitions and projects across Asia, Europe and North America. Born in Indonesia in 1975, he moved permanently to Canada in 2005 and studied Fine Arts at Concordia University, Montreal. He divides his time between Montreal and Bali.

His international solo exhibitions include presentations at Warin Lab Contemporary, Bangkok (2022); Nunu Fine Art, Taipei (2018, 2021); The Esplanade – Theatres on the Bay, Singapore (2014, 2019); Parkhaus im Malkasten, Düsseldorf (2018); Conseil des arts et des lettres du Québec, Montreal (2018); Kunsthal Rotterdam, the Netherlands (2017); and REDBASE Foundation, Yogyakarta (2016). His projects have also included a collaboration with Fondation Agnès b., Paris (2017).

Bayuaji's work is held in collections including the Musée des beaux-arts de Montréal, Musée national des beaux-arts du Québec, Fondation Agnès b., Paris, Coral Triangle Center, Bali, Precious Plastic, Bangkok, and Danfoss, Denmark.

About His Work

September Light and *Sailing Under Thousand Stars* are two works from Ari Bayuaji's *Weaving the Ocean* project, which began with the idea of replacing vanishing natural materials with new materials that are abundant and readily available. While exploring the coast of Sanur in Bali, Bayuaji discovered plastic ropes tangled in the roots of mangrove trees, where they appeared almost as though they had naturally grown alongside them. This encounter led him to transform discarded plastic ropes into fine threads for weaving. As he observes, plastic has become so pervasive that it has effectively

become part of our natural environment, entangling our lives much like the coral growing on plastic ropes along the Sanur shoreline.

The project brings together environmental concerns, traditional Balinese weaving and community collaboration. Beginning during the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, Bayuaji worked with locally recruited assistants to unravel and clean the discarded ropes, producing strands of plastic thread in many colours. He then collaborated with a traditional Balinese weaving workshop to develop colour combinations and line patterns.

The resulting artworks transform discarded plastic into works of intricate beauty while retaining a connection to the ocean environment from which the material emerged. At the same time, *Weaving the Ocean* supports local livelihoods and sustains traditional weaving practices. With more than 15 people eventually involved, the project becomes not only an artistic response to environmental change, but also a model of community engagement, cultural continuity and creative transformation.



LEFT: *Sailing Under Thousand Stars*, 2022, Woven plastic and cotton threads, 103 x 185 cm
RIGHT: *September Light*, 2022, Woven plastic and cotton threads, 103 x 185 cm

Faerie



Born in Wonosobo, Indonesia, in 1994, Faerie is a textile artist who lives and works in Yogyakarta. She graduated from the Indonesian Institute of the Arts (ISI) Yogyakarta, where she developed her practice in textile and crochet.

Faerie received the ARTJOG Young Artists Award in 2025 for her installation *The Thirteen Offerings*, having previously been nominated for the award in 2023.

In 2024, she presented her first solo exhibition in Jakarta and exhibited in *Silent Threads* at REDBASE, Sydney. Her work has been presented extensively in Indonesia and internationally, including at ARTJOG and the Jogja National Museum in Yogyakarta, Art Jakarta, REDBASE in Sydney, and exhibitions in Thailand and Australia.

About Her Work

For Faerie, crochet is a way of transforming threads into planes, forms and volumes, while the prolonged process of making becomes a means of recalling and preserving precious memories. This work explores the intersection of memory, dreams, imagination, and reflection through the repetitive practice of hand crochet. Her intricate knots become a material language through which memory and emotion are given tangible form.

Fragility is central to her practice. Faerie is drawn to objects that appear damaged or fragile yet remain functional and strong, seeing in them a reflection of human existence. In *Bloody Rhythm*, vulnerability and emotional tension are openly exposed and embraced. Hands and feet suggest a body surrendering to a compulsive movement, as though dancing within a violent yet intimate rhythm. The body appears to speak through gesture when words are no longer sufficient, transforming pain and emotional intensity into an act of endurance and even celebration.

Fabric becomes a metaphor for skin, while the rhythm and patterns of the crocheted knots create an inner dialogue with the body. Breath, heartbeat, footsteps and time animate this imagined body, evoking life as a continuous rhythmic progression towards its final moment. Through this interplay of material, memory and bodily rhythm, *Bloody Rhythm* reflects on the fragile nature of human existence and the persistence of life within vulnerability.



Bloody Rhythm, 2024, Hand crochet with cotton yarn, 250 x 204 cm

Made Wiguna Valasara



Made Wiguna Valasara is a contemporary artist who was born in Sukawati, Gianyar, Bali, in 1983. He graduated from the Indonesian Institute of the Arts, Yogyakarta. He has exhibited extensively in Indonesia and internationally, including in Singapore, the Philippines, Australia and Taiwan. His solo exhibitions include *Carousel at YIRI ARTS*, Taipei; *Collective Fragment* at Art Agenda Jakarta, presented by Bale Project; *Playing Balinese* at Art Stage Singapore

(2016), presented by Equator Art Projects; *Lukisan Lukisan* at Art:1 Art Space, Jakarta (2015); *Solo Project* at Art Central Hong Kong, presented by Art:1 Art Space (2015); *Animal Behave* at MonDecor Art Space, Jakarta, and Selasar Sunaryo Art Space, Bandung (2010); and *Marshalling Lines and Colors* at Canna Gallery, Jakarta (2009).

Valasara has received the Public Vote Prize at the Sovereign Asian Art Prize (2020), and was a finalist in the UOB Painting of the Year (2012) and the Indonesian Art Award (2010). He received The Best Painting award at the 23rd Anniversary of ISI Yogyakarta (2007). In 2011, he undertook an artist residency at Selasar Sunaryo Art Space, Bandung.

About His Work

In *Collective Fragment #3*, Made Wiguna Valasara explores the tension between individual identity and the communal structures of Balinese society. Part of his *Collective Fragment* series, the work draws on the visual traditions of Batuan painting, known for its dense representations of Balinese religious, social and everyday life.

Valasara transforms the conventions of painting through his distinctive treatment of canvas. Handstitched and stuffed, the canvas becomes a tactile, dimensional surface, blurring the boundaries between painting and sculpture. The fragmented

construction of the work reflects the relationship between individual elements and the larger collective, echoing the artist's interest in how individuality is negotiated within a closely interconnected society.

The series also engages with the ways Bali has been represented and imagined from outside, particularly through notions of exoticism and mysticism. By reworking elements of Balinese visual culture through a contemporary material language, Valasara simultaneously acknowledges cultural inheritance and questions the fixed images through which Bali is often understood.



Collective Fragment #3, 2021, Handstitched, stuffed canvas, 130 x 135 cm

I Made Widya Diputra



Born in Bali, Indonesia, in 1981, I Made “Lampung” Widya Diputra graduated from the Sculpture Department at the Indonesian Institute of the Arts (ISI) Yogyakarta. He has exhibited extensively in Indonesia and internationally, including in Hong Kong and Singapore.

His solo exhibition *The End of Journey* was presented at Redbase Art Gallery, Jakarta, in 2014. His group exhibitions at Redbase Foundation include *Red Base* (2014), *Base ‘RED’* (2015), *Forms of Diversity* (2018), and *A + T: The Journey* (2023). His work has also

been presented at the Jogja National Museum, ARTJOG and Art Central, as well as in group exhibitions across Indonesia, Hong Kong and Singapore.

About His Work

His sculpture draws on Javanese and Balinese interpretations of the Mahabharata, presenting a contemporary reflection on the death of the legendary warrior Resi Bisma. In the epic, Bisma is brought down by Srikandi, whose arrow is associated with the spirit of the goddess Amba. Diputra translates this dramatic moment into a striking sculptural form: a suspended white body held above the ground, pierced by nine arrows.

Rather than reproducing the familiar visual language of wayang, Diputra presents an anonymous human body. This departure from recognisable characters opens the story beyond its specific mythological context, allowing the sculpture to evoke broader questions of mortality, vulnerability and the inevitability of death. The title itself—*No One Escapes The Death I Ride*—extends the fate of one legendary warrior into a reflection on the universal human condition.

The sculpture's highly refined craftsmanship reflects the precision and discipline associated with Balinese artistic practice. The contrast between its unsettling subject and meticulous execution creates a striking tension between violence and beauty, movement and stillness.

By transforming an ancient epic into an enigmatic contemporary object, Diputra brings a familiar cultural narrative into a more universal space. The suspended body becomes at once a figure from an ancient story and an image of human vulnerability, reminding us that however powerful or heroic we may appear, death remains an inescapable part of existence.



No One Escapes The Death Ride, 2013, Resin, silicone, brass, leather, and leather paint, 145 x 170 x 90 cm

Lutfi Yanuar Sartono



Lutfi Yanuar Sartono, (born in 1994, Bandung, Indonesia, is a Bandung-based artist and a graduate of the Faculty of Fine Art, Bandung Institute of Technology, where he graduated cum laude in 2017. His work has been exhibited extensively in Indonesia and internationally.

In 2019, Sartono was a finalist for the UOB Painting of the Year and the Barli Award #1. In 2022, he participated in the 9th Beijing International Art Biennale at the National Art Museum of China. His solo exhibitions

include *Menoreh Metafora* at Orbital Gallery, Bandung (2022) and *Modern Eden* at Yuan Gallery, Jakarta Art Hub (2025).

His group exhibitions include *MANIFESTO VIII: Transposition* at the National Gallery of Indonesia, Jakarta (2022); *The Light of Life* at the 9th Beijing International Art Biennale, National Art Museum of China (2022); *Art Jakarta* at 2Madison Gallery, Jakarta (2023); *Art Moment Jakarta* at 2Madison Gallery, Gandaria City (2023); and *Bandung Painting Today* at Grey Art Gallery, Bandung (2024).

About His Work

In *The Ground of Fire*, Lutfi Yanuar reflects on human existence within a natural world that has gradually become unfamiliar to us. The works reawaken the human instinct for survival in a world that is inherently unstable, yet often perceived as secure through our sense of ownership and the illusion of control.

The paintings draw on fragments of everyday life in Bandung, presenting scenes as existential spaces in which human figures appear without individual identities. They suggest a collective human presence and our inseparable relationship with the natural world. Floral motifs inspired by Kalpataru, the tree of life, are

incorporated into the figures, while marble powder and sand provide fragile yet resilient tactile surfaces. Lyrical, dissolving ink and embroidery further connect the spaces of daily life, suggesting ecological interconnectedness and a shared field of existence.

Drawing on archival materials relating to the Bandung Sea of Fire of 1946, volcanic ash from the 2019 eruption of Mount Tangkuban Perahu, and geological understandings of Bandung, particularly the Lembang Fault, Yanuar does not seek to reconstruct history as a linear narrative. Instead, he searches for the collective survival instinct embedded within it.

The Bandung Sea of Fire remains particularly resonant. Faced with a force that could not be resisted, the community evacuated collectively, allowed the city to burn, and returned after the devastation to rebuild their lives. For Yanuar, this history speaks directly to the present: we live on land that is vulnerable and constantly moving. Bandung itself, born from ancient eruptions and shaped by successive periods of development, destruction and rebuilding, becomes a powerful site through which to reconsider human resilience—not as domination over nature, but as an ability to recognise and live within its cycles.



FROM LEFT: *The Ground of Fire #10 & #13*, 2026, Sterilized Volcanic Ash from the 2019 eruption of Mount Tangkuban Perahu, Marker, and Cyanotype on Hahnemuhle Paper, 30 x 40 cm each



TOP: *The Ground of Fire* #8, ROW 2: #1 and #2, ROW 3: #14 and #23, 2026, Sterilized Volcanic Ash from the 2019 eruption of Mount Tangkuban Perahu, Marker, and Cyanotype on Hahnemuhle Paper, 30 x 40 cm each

Anagard



Anagard is a stencil street artist based in Yogyakarta, Indonesia, and a graduate of the Indonesian Institute of the Arts. His work has been exhibited extensively across Asia, Europe and Australia. His solo exhibitions include *Spray, Peace, Diversity* at Cuturi Gallery, Singapore (2022); *Artventure* at Latar Art Space, Jakarta (2024); and *From Nasi Padang to the World* at NAFA, Singapore (2024), which featured more than 80 works, including large-scale works and collaborative installations.

Anagard has participated in international residencies and artistic programmes, including at NAFA, Singapore (2022), Tutti Arts as part of the OzAsia Festival, Australia (2016), and programmes in Lithuania, Belgium and Indonesia. He received the UOB Southeast Asian Painting of the Year in Singapore (2019) and the Stencil Art Prize in Sydney (2019).

About His Work

As a stencil street artist, Anagard's works reflect his sustained engagement with the relationship between art and society. For him, art must contribute to life. His practice engages with socio-political and environmental issues, using manually cut stencils and spray paint to bring these concerns into both public and exhibition spaces.

The three works address questions of humanity, diversity, displacement and belonging through direct statements rendered on familiar materials. A sarong, a piece of fabric and a suitcase become carriers of ideas that extend beyond their everyday functions. *Serving Humanity* invokes our responsibilities towards one another; *Swinging the Values of Diversity* reflects on the challenges and possibilities of living with difference; while *We Are All Refugees*

places displacement and movement within an object associated with travel and migration.

Anagard's distinctive visual language is shaped by his cultural experiences, from childhood drawings of Minangkabau traditional house ornaments and West Sumatran landscapes to the influences of Sumatran and Javanese culture, including batik patterns, wayang motifs and the dynamic movements of jatilan dance. Through this hybrid visual vocabulary, he connects cultural memory with contemporary social concerns, demonstrating how art can move between personal experience and collective life.



Serving Humanity, 2025, Stencil spray paint on sarong, 130 x 105 cm



Swinging the Values of Diversity, 2026
Spray paint on fabric, 92.5 x 103 cm



We Are All Refugees, 2024, Stencil spray paint on suitcase

Antonio S. Sinaga



Antonio Sebastian Sinaga was born in Surabaya, Indonesia, in 1988. He graduated from the Bandung Institute of Technology, where he received a BFA in Ceramic Art from the Faculty of Art and Design.

He received the First Prize at the Soemardja Award in 2012 and the Gudang Garam Indonesia Art Award in 2015. His first solo exhibition, *In Absentia*, was presented at Roemah Seni Sarasvati, Bandung, in 2013, followed by *Faith//Fate* at ROH Projects, Jakarta, in 2014.

His exhibition history includes *Manifesto No. 4: Keseharian – Mencandra Tanda-tanda Masa* at the National Gallery of Indonesia, Jakarta (2014); *A.S.A.P.: New Contemporary Artists from Indonesia* at G13 Gallery, Malaysia (2016); *The Concept of Self at Galeri Salihara*, Jakarta (2019); and *Art Jakarta* (2019).

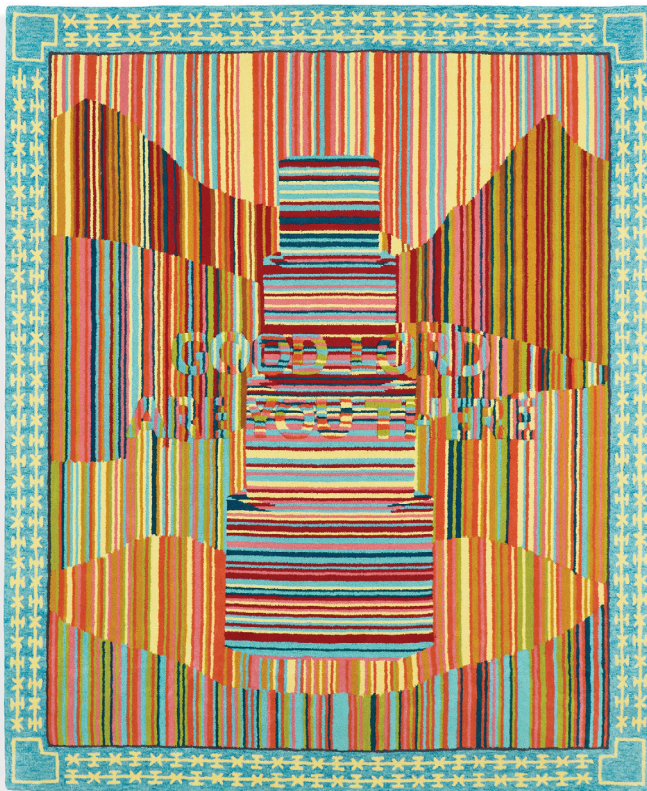
About His Work

This work emerges from the artist's lifelong engagement with religion, language and the production of meaning. Raised in an intensely religious household in Indonesia and as a member of a Christian minority, Sinaga learned to understand the world through a Christian framework. His practice now approaches that inheritance through questioning rather than certainty.

For Sinaga, doubt is productive. Rather than seeking definitive answers, he uses questions to open new directions and challenge the confidence of received beliefs. *Good Lord* draws on the biblical story of the Tower of Babel, in which humanity's attempt to reach heaven is punished by the fragmentation of language. Sinaga asks whether, in the 21st century, we are once again building a tower through increasingly uniform forms of language and communication.

In this work, Sinaga turns text into image and image into object, using satire to question the conventions through which ideology and belief are communicated. Familiar religious imagery and iconography are reconfigured, disrupting their authority and inviting us to reconsider how meaning is produced.

For Sinaga, images may have become a new language. By bringing image and language together, *Good Lord* explores the relationship between representation, belief and ideology, while questioning the boundaries between religion and politics. Ultimately, the work invites viewers not to accept its meanings passively, but to engage their own doubts and questions. As Sinaga suggests, “If God is Go(o)d maybe Doubt can be Go(o)d too?”



Good Lord, 2023, Hand tufted rug with wool and acrylic on cotton canvas, 240 x 200 cm

Desrat Fianda



Born in Padang, Indonesia, in 1983, Desrat Fianda graduated from the Indonesian Institute of the Arts (ISI) Yogyakarta in 2009. He has exhibited extensively in Indonesia and Southeast Asia, with presentations at the National Gallery of Indonesia, Jogja National Museum, ARTJOG, Jogja Gallery and other major contemporary art platforms. His recent exhibitions include *Tumbuh* at REDBASE, Sydney (2025), while his earlier

exhibitions include *Manifesto 6.0: Multipolar* at the National Gallery of Indonesia, Jakarta (2018), *The Meeting* at SaRanG Building, Yogyakarta (2017), and *Malin Kundang, Portrait of a Missing Man* at Sangkring Art Project, Yogyakarta (2015).

About His Work

This series draws on the menhirs of West Sumatra, the “land of a thousand menhirs” where the artist was born. For Fianda, these standing stones are more than monumental objects: they carry stories of past civilisations, beliefs and human lives. Although conventionally regarded as inanimate, stones can hold messages, memories and histories, becoming witnesses to the changing cultures that surround them.

Menhirs have served as symbols, monuments and objects of worship since the Neolithic period. As civilisations developed across the Indonesian archipelago, these traditions evolved, with stones taking new forms and meanings as tombstones during the spread of Islam. For Fianda, tombstones are not only markers of the dead but also three-dimensional works of art, carrying inscriptions, symbols and aesthetic forms that preserve individual and cultural

histories.

Fianda transforms this tradition by carving fossilised wood into forms resembling books, with inscriptions suggesting titles. The work emerged from his observation of tombstones, inscriptions and temple monuments, where names and stories of those who once lived are preserved, remembered and interpreted. The stone book becomes a metaphor for memory, knowledge and the passage of history—a physical object that holds stories while inviting new readings.

As Fianda describes it, the stone book can represent his thoughts, while its carved text becomes “a door for everyone”—an invitation for viewers to enter, interpret and find meanings of their own.



Indonesian Sites, 2013, Wood Fossil, 4 pieces of various dimensions

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