

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

On December 31, 1974, The Jakarta Art Council (*Dewan Kesenian Jakarta* or DKJ) held the “Big Indonesian Painting Biennale” (*Pameran Besar Biennale Seni Lukis Indonesia*) at Taman Ismail Marzuki, the Jakarta art center. This exhibition was part of the “Jakarta Art Fair” (*Pesta Seni DKJ*), which also included events such as: the Choir Festival (*Festival Paduan Suara*), Music Gathering (*Pertemuan Musik*), Teenage Theater Festival (*Festival Teater Remaja*), and the Meeting of Indonesian Authors (*Pertemuan Sastrawan Seluruh Indonesia*).

According to the event committee’s report, more than 80 painters participated in this exhibition, representing a number of cities throughout Indonesia. Each painter submitted three paintings. It was planned that at the end of the exhibition the event committee would award prizes to the exhibition’s three best paintings. The criteria necessary in order to win a prize included “originality” and “new elements or developments” within the painting (see: attachment 1, 1974).

Senior painters participated in this exhibition including: Abas Alibasyah, A.D. Pirous, and Irsan (to name a few) as well as a number of young painters. Amongst the young painters were five students from STSRI/ASRI (Academy of Fine Arts), Yogyakarta including: Harsono, Siti Adiyati, Bonyong Munni Ardhi, Ris Purwana, and Hardi. These painters created works considered different from those of other participants, works that were namely experimental or unordinary. After assessment of all works included in the exhibition, the jury chose the five best paintings.

The decision of the jury caused controversy and protest amongst the young painters who argued that the jury was biased. According to the young painters the jury was partial only towards paintings done in a decorative style. Incidentally the work awarded best painting was the work of a senior artist who almost always painted with a decorative style. It was argued that the jury underestimated the work of the young artists. In the jury’s written explanation it was stated that the work of the young painters was not serious, only a “first attempt” of strange origins and could not be considered art.

The statement of the jury was an insult to the young painters. The disappointment and offense left the young artists dissatisfied. As a result the young artists issued a proclamation known as the “Black December Statement” (*Pernyataan Desember Hitam*). The content of this statement addressed the concerns of the young artists towards the condition of art and culture in Indonesia, specifically in regards to painting. According to these young artists, painting must not stop only with that done in a decorative style. Beyond such a style were a multitude of more diverse possibilities. The Black December Statement had a broad impact within a number of circles most pronounced amongst senior artists from ASRI who felt this statement had political intent. Four of the five ASRI students involved were suspended and forbidden from participating in any type of student activity.

The suspension of these students, however, did not solve the problem. As a result new protests and unrest had emerged. On one hand it was argued that the suspension of these students did not teach any type of lesson but rather crushed student creativity. At ASRI, Yogyakarta, the Black December Statement was one of the triggers that led to the Indonesian New Art Movement (*Gerakan Seni Rupa Baru Indonesia*) or GSRB.

Eleven young artists including: Harsono, Hardi, Bonyong Munni Ardhi, Nanik Mirna, Siti Adiyati, Ris Purwana, Anyool Subroto, Bachtiar Zainul, Pandu Sudewo, Muryoto Hartoyo, and Jim Supangkat initiated this New Art Movement. The majority of supporters of this movement were painting students at ASRI and sculpture students from the Department of Fine Arts at ITB or the Bandung Institute of

Technology. Originally, the emergence of the New Art Movement was an expression of the young artists' anger towards their predecessors (the senior artists) whose work they viewed as stagnant and lacking in creativity. In the opinion of the New Art Movement's supporters, the senior artists were tied to the "old provisions," that it had driven them to this imperative that could not be denied.

At each exhibition the New Art Movement displayed new and unusual elements. For example, in terms of material they used objects from daily life such as chairs, tables, bicycles, mattresses, chains, and woven mats as media in their art. If needed, door handles could also be made into art. In terms of theme, the work of the New Art Movement touched on social issues including sex in an open and direct way, something that no painter had ever done before. The presentation of this unusual art constituted a breakthrough in the effort against the limits of fine art that had previously been defined. Besides this, the supporters of New Art furthered the critique against artists and the practice of Indonesian fine art at this time.

The presence of the New Art Movement, gave rise to a controversy that involved art world figures and senior artists on a national scale. The debate surrounding the New Art Movement was published in almost all print media outlets present in Indonesia at this time. On one hand there were those that believed the work of the New Art Movement was not suitable for display because it did not possess artistic elements and because it was the work of vandals - impolite, pornographic and even vulgar. However, there were also observers and senior artists that agreed with the presence of the New Art movement because such work contained *innovative* characteristics.

The New Art Movement held as many as five exhibitions in Jakarta and Bandung. These exhibitions were held in 1975, 1977, and 1979. During this length of time, there was a movement when the New Art Movement disbanded. However, in 1987, the New Art Movement reemerged with Project I, "Shopping Mall Fantasy World" (*Pasaraya Dunia Fantasi*). And in 1989, with Project II entitled "The Silent World." Both of these exhibitions were held at Taman Ismail Marzuki (TIM), Jakarta. Project II, "The Silent World," occurred on an international scale. After its exhibition at TIM, this project traveled to Perth and Hobart, Tasmania, Australia.

The concept and ideology of the New Art Movement was outlined in the "Five Lines of Attack of the New Art Movement" (*Lima Jurus Gebrakan Gerakan Seni Rupa Baru*). These lines of attack were described as follows:

1. Reject the definition of fine art that is limited to painting, sculpture, and graphic arts. This definition is considered worn out because it is no longer in line with reality. Fine Art today has already developed far beyond the conditions that exist within this definition. Now there are already types of art and activities that do not fit within the confines of this definition, for example: conceptual art, which pours forth its work only in the form of writing, installation art, which combines various media into a work of art, or works of art that emphasize the environment. If a work of art must refer to the existing definition, where then would the characteristics described above be placed? The New Art Movement believes that anything that has an artistic characteristic is capable of becoming a work of art.
2. The New Art Movement disregards specialist attitudes, as they will lead to the development of elitist language based on the attitude of "avant- gardism," which is built on the image that artists must hide, looking for subtle things that are not understood by others. In exchange for this, the New Art Movement believes that it is more important to discuss actual social issues than private sentiments. The importance of ideas is stressed over "master" skills, in the creation of form.

3. Aspire for diversity in fine art. Create new possibilities and acknowledge all possibilities without limits. Resist the pedagogical attitude of “apprenticeship” where the student must follow the demands of the teacher.
4. The New Art Movement aspires for the development of fine art that is “Indonesian,” prioritizing the history of Indonesian art that begins with Raden Saleh. Aspiring for the development of fine art that is based on the writing and theory of Indonesians.
5. Aspire for art that lives and is useful within society (Jim Supangkat, 1979).

The ideas or “lines of attack” advanced by the New Art movement (described above), demonstrate the dissatisfaction felt towards the practice of modern Indonesian art.

The analysis in this thesis is based on a descriptive chronology, attempting an objective observation of the New Art Movement during the period 1975, 1977, 1979, 1987, and 1989. The discussion is based around the tendencies of the artwork, themes, and ideas expressed within. The data presented in this writing comes in large part from print media (newspapers, magazines, catalogues, and books), photographs of the artwork, and interviews with a number of individuals involved with the issues discussed. Photographs of artworks are classified based on the year they were exhibited in order to aid in analysis of particular issues. From all of the photographs of artwork only a few are discussed because of the limited space, time and cost of this research. The data included based on photographs will hopefully represent the style and characteristic of the New Art Movement beginning from 1975, 1977, 1979, 1987, and 1989. The photographs included are discussed and described descriptively.

Writing taken from print media is classified by type, including that which is informative, reaction, and debate (polemic). Writing considered informative is based on notes including time of occurrence, place, participant, and event. Writing considered reaction includes the opinion of a number of contemporary artists such as G.Sidharta, Nashar, Zaini, and others. Finally, the writing considered debate or polemic comes specifically from the writing of Kusnadi and Sudarmadji, which appeared in the morning daily *Kedaulatan Rakyat*, printed in Yogyakarta.

Information taken from newspapers and magazines comes from sources including: *Kompas*, *Berita Yudha*, *Berita Buana*, *Pikiran Rakyat*, *Kedaulatan Rakyat*, *Berita Nasional*, *Sinar Harapan*, *Djawa Post*, *Tribun*, *Masa Kini*, *Peloor Yogya*, *Tempo*, *Jakarta-Jakarta*, and *Matra*.

Based on the formula above, this writing is arranged in the following manner. Part one: outline of background and issues to be discussed; Part two: outline of a number of events that led to the emergence and dissolution of the New Art movement; Part three: outline of the influence and development of the New Art Movement after 1979; Part four: outline of the tendencies, themes, and ideas related to the artwork of the New Art Movement; Part five: includes a conclusion of all topics discussed.

CHAPTER 2

THE BIRTH AND DISSOLUTION OF THE NEW ART MOVEMENT

The rebellion of the New Art Movement did not emerge spontaneously without warning. Such unrest had in fact been present amongst young artists expressed by their concern for the survival of art in Indonesia. Evidence of this concern could be seen by the emergence of a number of exhibitions characterized by

expressions of protest, social critique, and critique towards prior trends in art production. The base of this conflict was the opposition between old and new understandings of art.

This conflict reached its height in 1974, when the “Black December Statement” was issued at Taman Ismail Marzuki (TIM) Jakarta, as a declaration of protest from young artists towards the organizing committee of the Big Indonesian Painting Exhibition (*Pameran Besar Seni Lukis Indonesia*). The jury, comprised almost entirely of senior artists, was considered unfair. The jury was accused of being partial only to certain paintings created by senior artists.

At the Yogyakarta Academy of Fine Arts (ASRI) a number of other small events prior to the eruption of the Black December Statement already indicated the existence of a conflict and debate between students and faculty. Students resisted the technique and style that was taught to them by faculty. Student resistance was demonstrated through caricature drawing, sketches, and writing that mocked ASRI’s faculty. Students often created experimental art that deviated from the lessons of their teachers. For example, they created white sketches on white canvas with the intent to make something that was different than ‘old standards,’ which insisted sketches must be done in black and white. Even more absurd, underwear was attached to canvas. This oppositional action was intended as a sign of resistance against the limits of fine art. Prolonged tension and conflict at ASRI led to a host of problems that later evolved into a rebellion.

At almost the same time, a new idiom in the work of a number of art students at the Bandung Institute of Technology (ITB) emerged based on the combination of various media, primarily in the sculpture studios. Due to sculpture’s relationship to space and greater openness towards various types of media, this was not surprising. The introduction of this new idiom was not too far removed from the principles of sculpture. Jim Supangkat, a sculpture student, who had always had a style different from previous sculpture students, engaged in experimental production. Compared to Yogyakarta, the art institute in Bandung was more open to change and gave their students more freedom for experimentation. For example, Jim Supangkat defended successfully, his work entitled “*Kamar Tidur Seorang Ibu dan Anaknya*” (The Bedroom of a Mother and Child), made from various media, in front of lecturers during his final examination at ITB.

These three issues, The Black December Statement, unrest at ASRI Yogyakarta, and the emergence of a new idiom amongst young artists in Bandung, therefore can be seen as the trigger that led to the formation of the Indonesian New Art Movement. While in February 1975 the exhibition “*Nusantara-Nusantara*,” was held in Yogyakarta, this exhibition did not create a controversy as large as that created by the New Art Movement.

After the first exhibition of the New Art Movement, similar exhibitions appeared in 1976 such as “The Essentialism of Pop Art” (*Esensialisme Pop Art*) and “Concept Exhibition” (*Pameran Konsep*). Further, the exhibition “*Kepribadian Apa*” was held in 1977 and the exhibition “Presentation” (*Pameran Presentasi*)” was held in 1978, both in Yogyakarta.

The emergence of this phenomenon can be seen as a result of the New Art Movement’s influence on other young artists. More in-depth research on the extent of this influence, however, still needs to be conducted. The research in this essay is only intended as a descriptive chronology, an outline of events based on the sequence of their occurrence.

2.1 The Black December Statement, 1974

At the end of 1974, Taman Ismail Marzuki (TIM) Jakarta was shocked by the declaration of the “Black December Statement,” accompanied by a bouquet of flowers wrapped in ribbon on which were written the words “Condolences on the death of Indonesian painting.” This single-page statement expressed the

disappointment of these artists towards senior artists, while the bouquet of flowers was a symbol that Indonesian art was dead. This statement, signed by fourteen individuals who were painters, dramatists, and poets included: Muryoto Hartoyo, Juzwar Sulebar, Daryono, D.A. Peransi, Baharudin Marasutan, Ikranegara, Adri Darmadji, and Abdul Hadi WM. Five of these fourteen artists were students at STSRI (*Sekolah Tinggi Seni Rupa Indonesia*) also known as “ASRI” or the Yogyakarta Academy of Fine Arts. These individuals were: Bonyong Munni Ardhi, Harsono, Ris Purwana, Siti Adiyati, and Hardi. These students were also participants at the Big Indonesian Painting Exhibition.

This event showed that there was a misunderstanding between senior and junior artists. The young artists felt dissatisfied with their established predecessors. The work of these predecessors was seen as lacking in creativity, stagnant, and fixated on old concepts. This feeling of dissatisfaction was reflected in the Black December Statement. For example, in the first paragraph it was stated, “for the last few years art and cultural activities have been done without a clear cultural strategy” (see page 5, 1974).

This statement expresses the young artists’ loss of faith in their predecessors and the perceived need to conduct an assessment that would demonstrate that the senior artists did not have insight regarding the fundamental problems facing Indonesian culture. This reality was summed up as spiritual erosion that would destroy the development of arts and culture.

In the statement’s first clause it was argued that Indonesian painting is diverse. Because of this diversity, it was insisted that decorative art was not a good representation of Indonesian painting. The second clause stated that in order to ensure culture continuity, painters must be called to give spiritual direction, originating in humanistic values oriented towards the reality of social life. Many viewed this clause as politically oriented.

The director of STSRI/ASRI Yogyakarta, Abas Alibasyah, stated that this issue was not the concern of fine art. The third clause expressed the importance of creativity for painters in order to make new discoveries. The fourth clause attempted to articulate a clear identity for Indonesian painting in the arena of art. The fifth clause argued that outdated concepts adopted by earlier painters had inhibited the development of Indonesian art. According to the members of the New Art Movement, the senior artists should be required to retire.

The primary reason for the Black December Statement’s publication was the announcement of the jury’s decision (*Keputusan Dewan Juri No: 26/SK/DPH/XII 1974*), of the best five paintings at the Great Indonesian Painting Exhibition. These paintings were Widayat’s “*Keluarga*” (Family) and Aming Prayitno’s “*Pohon*” (Tree), both artists from Yogyakarta, Abas Alibasyah’s “*Lukisan Wajah*” (Painting of a Face) and Irsan’s “*Matahari di atas Taman*” (Sun Above the Field), both artists from Jakarta, and finally, Bandung-based artist A.D. Pirous’s “*Tulisan Putih*” (White Writing). According to the five students from ASRI the choice of these winners was unjust, oriented only towards decorative painting, underestimating the experimental work of the young artists.

The five best paintings were awarded various cash-prizes amounting to as much as Rp. 100.000,00 (one hundred thousand rupiah). This decision deviated from the original plan. Initially the Jakarta Art Committee comprised of painters Nashar and Zaini and cultural leader Umar Kayam had planned to choose the three best paintings. These three paintings would then receive Rp. 250.000,00 (two hundred and fifty thousand rupiah), for first prize, Rp. 150.000,00 (one hundred and fifty thousand rupiah), for second prize, and Rp. 100.000,00 (one hundred thousand rupiah), for third prize.

In order to choose the best paintings the committee established a number of criteria including beauty, originality, and the presence of new or unusual elements in the paintings chosen (see: page 1, 1974).

The jury consisted of seven art and cultural experts including: Affandi, a famous Indonesian expressionist painter; Popo Iskandar, a painter, graduate of ITB department of Fine Art, and docent at IKIP Bandung; Dr. Sudjoko, an art observer and docent at ITB; Kusnadi, an art critic, docent at the Indonesian Academy of Fine Art (ASRI), Yogyakarta, and member of the Department of Education and Culture; Dr. Umar Kayam, a cultural leader and docent in the Faculty of Literature at UGM, Yogyakarta; Fadjar Sidik, a painter and senior docent at ASRI; and Alex Papadimitriou, a prominent collector.

After completing the evaluation of over 240 paintings, five paintings, all painted by senior artists done in a decorative style, were chosen. This decision resulted in controversy amongst the young artists. The jury was accused of being partial only to decorative painting.

In a letter explaining the jury's decision Dr. Sudjoko stated that the selection of the five best paintings was based on their meaningful contribution. Further, the jury did not view the work of the young artist's as good because it was not serious. The production of such work could not provide any meaningful reference or contribution for future painting (see: page 4, 1974).

According to an interview with Harsono in November 1991 (conducted by the writer), the jury's statement discredited the experimental efforts of the young artists. The jury only saw 'true painting' as that which was oriented towards tradition and nationalism. Tradition here referred to historical culture in the form of traditional art such as Borobudur.

Another issue that was not received positively by the group of young artists was the jury's statement that the work of these artists was mere fabrication, not serious, and of strange origins. This statement, which underestimated the work of the young artists, according to Harsono, crushed the young artists' desire for experimentation and exploration. Suggesting it was as if experimental art did not have a place in Indonesia, even though, according to Harsono, art always consisted of the search for something new. Experimentation will arise each time an artist is at work. Experimentation cannot be denied be it in an unusual or conventional form. The denial of experimentation will lead to the constriction or suffocation of fine art.

Harsono argued further, that the development of Indonesian painting was not given a chance outside of the framework of the jury. Painting was fabricated and directed into a particular type of thinking, a sign that Indonesian painting would eventually die if new developments could not emerge.

Denying the young artists' allegations, Umar Kayam in an interview with *Tempo* magazine, argued that the jury had no intention to direct the development of art in a particular direction. The winning paintings were awarded prizes because they received a majority vote from the jury. Sudjoko, a member of the exhibition's jury, stood behind Kayam by agreeing with his assertion. (*Pelopor Yogya*, 19 January 1975).

According to Jim Supangkat, controversy arose because the jury no longer held authority. If the origin of Supangkat's statement is traced, it can be seen to have good cause. For example, the jury was not consistent in choosing the first, second, and third best works, having to make a new decision that identified instead the five best works.

Further, the explanation of the jury regarding the criteria *beauty*, *development* and *originality*, still felt unclear. This led to questions whether or not the work's chosen as five best in fact fulfilled these three criteria. Did the five best paintings possess new elements? If so, where were these new elements? Could the five best paintings be seen as original, without outside influence? Even more complicated, how might one ensure that these five work's contained aesthetic elements while those work's considered less successful did not contain such aesthetic elements?

It appears that the jury, in a statement explaining the results of the Big Indonesian Painting Exhibition of 1974, avoided these questions, stating that mutual influence or influence from outside sources was a natural phenomena, while not natural was impersonated characteristics done without thought or originality. It was clear that the statements “impersonated” or “unoriginal” were directed at the young artists from ASRI. Thus it is clear that the jury already held negative expectations of these young artists.

2.2 Upheaval at ASRI

On January 2, 1975, two days after the declaration of the “Black December Statement,” Abas Alibasyah, the director of the Indonesian Academy of Fine Art (STSRI/ASRI), sent a message from Jakarta to his staff in Yogyakarta including K.K.S. (Student Affairs Officer), Abudl Kadir. MA (Assistant Director), Soedarso Sp. MA (Teaching Affairs Officer), and Fadjar Sidik (Painting Department Head). This message stated that the five students from ASRI involved in the events at TIM, Jakarta, would no longer have the right to participate in student activities or exhibitions.

Following these prohibitions, the leadership of ASRI along with its staff held a meeting between February 17 – 24, 1975. This meeting resulted in the document *Keputusan No. 1/Ket/Kh/1975*, which stated that Hardi and Harsono were to be suspended for an indefinite period. This document was followed by *Surat Keputusan No. 2/Ket/Kh/1975*, which stated that the decision regarding Bonyong Munni Ardhi and Ris Purwana must await further details. These students were still allowed to attend classes, however, they were told to draft a letter of apology to ASRI’s leadership. Finally, Siti Adyati could not be suspended as she had already finished all requirements towards her Bachelor’s degree.

The sanctions imposed on these students led to unrest amongst the ASRI studentbody. The students involved in the events in Jakarta were not allowed to return to ASRI until these issues were resolved. The relationship between the faculty and student activists became increasingly worse, leading to mutual suspicion. Abas Alibasyah accused students involved in the Black December Statement of wanting to destroy national culture. The decision to take action against the students was acknowledged as the insistence of various parties. These actions even led to the attention of Ali Sadikin, Jakarta’s Governor. The faculty members worried that the student activists would encourage other students to join their ranks.

In order to stem this influence, on January 17, 1975, Widayat, a senior docent and one of the winners at the Big Indonesian Painting Exhibition, reminded new students that there were ‘individuals’ creating opposition. These individuals were jealous of those that had been awarded prizes at the Big Indonesian Painting Exhibition in Jakarta. These individuals did not acknowledge that they had been dismissed from ASRI. Further, it was possible that these individuals were trying to strengthen their ranks. Because of this new students were warned to be careful. Finally, Widayat stated that the signatories of the Black December Statement were uneducated (*Masa Kini*, 22 January 1975).

Besides fears of influence, ASRI’s leadership connected these events to previous events at ASRI. The events in question had been led by the same individuals namely, Hardi, Harsono, Siti Adiyati, Nanik Mirna, dan Muryoto Hartoyo. These events were the “Caricature Exhibition” (1973) and the “Sketch Exhibition” (1974). These exhibitions were said to have mocked and insulted ASRI’s docents. For example, on the door of the first level’s entrance, written on a chalkboard, were the words “The game has already begun, Hello Mr. Docent! Dag daag!! Let us persevere in the forum. Hello Civil Servants, I hope this exhibition makes a serious assessment” (*Tribun* No. 58th IV, 1975). This exhibition released itself from all formal criteria, to the point where artists did not feel awkward putting on display even underwear.

Shortly after these exhibitions (the caricature and sketch exhibitions), Widayat created an opposing exhibition, displaying his sketches and writing in large letters “Baru membuat sketsa saja sudah mengeluh, akhirnya, mungguh le!!”

News about the events at ASRI and “Black December” continued to spread outside of Jakarta, Bandung, and Yogyakarta thanks to newspapers that addressed these issues like *Kompas*, *Sinar Harapan*, *Kedaulatan Rakyat*, and the magazine *Tempo*. The Minister of Education and Culture, Dr. Syarief Thayeb, during a visit to ASRI had the opportunity to warn students, stating “the government gives you freedom as artists to create. However, this freedom also has limits” (*Kompas*, 1 March 1975). This warning showed that the events at ASRI and the Black December Statement constituted a serious problem.

The series of student exhibitions that contained criticism, ridicule, and opposition towards ASRI docents asserted that students did not agree with the docents regarding processes of production, amongst other issues. The students wanted to breakdown the traditions or standards that had been defined by docents, which students were forced to follow. Harsono, an ASRI student who was very involved in these issues, in an interview (with the writer 1991), stated that it was as if there was an unwritten dogma. If a person wanted to paint, to express himself, he must follow a certain style that was immediately recognizable. The young artists questioned whether or not this meant that personality was limited to a particular style. Students felt that they must free themselves from such prescriptions in order that freedom of expression might emerge for example – underwear hung to canvas or sketching white on white in order to challenge the idea that sketches must be black and white.

Along with organizing exhibitions, this group of young artists, often held discussions. The theme of these discussions always led to the conflict between old and new understandings. These artists demanded ultimate freedom in their style of production and concept. According to Harsono, painting had the right to refer to or orient itself to all sectors of life - political, economic, social, or cultural. It should not be limited only to traditional themes or narrow definitions of ‘Indonesian-ness.’

In the midst of this youth upheaval, the senior artists and docents rigorously maintained the old conventions. According to Jim Supangkat, this ardent attitude was the result of their limited insights, to the point where it was difficult for them to accept something new. In conclusion, the Black December Statement and the emergence of the New Art Movement occurred as a result of pressures felt by the younger generation, primarily within educational institutions. Such pressures, according to Harsono, were related to the opposition between the ideas of senior artists and docents that were not inline with those of a younger generation. The youthful idealists did not want to be contaminated by commercialization and were unhappy with fraud present in institutions (namely ASRI) regarding examinations or rules.

2.3 The Birth of New Art

At the beginning of August 1975, eight months after the declaration of the Black December Statement, in the same location, at the cultural center, Taman Ismail Marzuki (TIM) Jakarta, an artistic uprising occurred led by a group of youth. They named their group *Indonesian New Art* (Seni Rupa Baru Indonesia). This group was comprised of eleven members, including: Anyool Subroto, Bachtiar Zainul, Pandu Sudewo, Nanik Mirna, Muryoto Hartoyo, Harsono, Bonyong Munni Ardhi, Hardi, Ris Purwana, Siti Adiyati, and Jim Supangkat.

Almost all of the supporters of the New Art Movement were art student activists from Yogyakarta and Bandung. Five of the members were ASRI students that had been involved in the Black December Statement. The exhibitions held at TIM, Jakarta, involved strategic reasoning. The problem is that so far only TIM has been deemed worthy as a site to display contemporary art or as a place to hold discussions

regarding issues of art. The desire of the New Art Movement was to show that they possessed a new horizon through which to see art.

The New Art Movement presented unusual works that combined various media such as chairs, dolls, mattresses, woven mats, chains, and bicycles to name a few. During their first exhibition in 1975, besides unusual works such as this, there were also still a few paintings. This indicated that the New Art Movement still could not release themselves from old conventions. Another possibility is that they wanted to show all types of art. At its base, the New Art movement did not reject conventional art forms such as painting, sculpture, and drawing, but rather rejected the belief that such forms were the only acceptable forms of art. The New Art Movement believed in a diversity of art works.

According to the members of the New Art Movement, the conventions of Indonesian art must be reassessed down to the most fundamental levels. The definition of fine art adopted within the practice of Indonesian fine art was no longer in accordance with reality, global development, or the local environment. Elements of fine art today have already gone beyond the borders that have been set.

The New Art Movement, revealed a phenomenon, showing that in the middle of rapid development there was an artistic tendency that existed within society, a tendency that until now had not been reached by existing definitions of fine art. Such a tendency could be seen in traditional art, art of the people or everyday arts that functioned as communicative media in the lives of the people. The system of reference was far different than *High Art* that had been adopted by artists today. In the referential framework of *High Art*, according to Jim Supangkat:

Art is not a form of everyday communication, a fact that is true in the art of almost all other cultures. The tradition of "High Art" is a specific manifestation, parallel with philosophical meditations. It is believed that art should be free from other purposes -- physical functions, communicative functions, or the function of evoking pleasure. Media that is seen as capable of expressing the ideas of modern art is thus limited (Matra, October 1991).

The writing presented by Jim Supangkat above, indicates the alienation of modern art from the daily lives of the people, because it loses its communicative function. The goal of such art is usually singular, rarely relevant to the reality and needs of the wider community.

The definition of fine art that limits itself to understandings of painting, drawing or sculpture, represents a reflection of the limits of media considered *High Art*, which the New Art Movement criticized as stagnant. According to the New Art Movement the present definition of fine art was distorted and had originated with the tradition of Western art (Project I, Shopping Mall, 1977).

The term *High Art*, showed that there is only a certain tendency in high art, namely, painting, graphic art, and sculpture, whereas artistic tendencies outside of such definitions did not have weight. Dr. Sanento Yuliman referred to such art as *high art* and *low art*. Such understandings of high and low, referred to a class of producers and consumers. High art referred to a phenomenon of the upper-middle class, living in big cities, whereas low art was a phenomenon amongst the low-class, who lived mostly on the city's edges or in villages.

The supporters of the New Art Movement were also worried that the position of Indonesian artists in the future would still only refer to the development of art in the West. In the future, the New Art Movement suggested that Indonesian artists should focus more on history and theory written by Indonesians themselves.

2.4. Action and Reaction

The presence of the New Art Movement resulted in reaction and much debate amongst artists and observers of artistic issues. One such individual who put forth their opinion was Dr. Tuti Heraty Nurhadi, a cultural expert and art observer.

In an article published in the newspaper *Kompas* on September 9, 1975, Dr. Tuti stated that this exhibition was merely the mischief of teenagers. She rejected the concrete objects that were displayed in the exhibition of the New Art Movement because according to her such objects were underdeveloped. The meaning of concrete here refers to the display of found objects like: chairs, bicycles, beds, woven mats, and mattresses as a type of media.

Indonesian senior artist Zaini, worried about the loss of individuality while, Nashar, a prominent painter from Jakarta believed that the New Art Movement was not capable of discussing elements of expression (*Kompas*, 9 September 1975). G. Sidharta, was more careful in his judgment of the New Art Movement, suggesting their development must be seen first before conclusions could be drawn. Could they persist or not? In the 1975 catalogue of the Indonesian New Art Movement, Sanento Yuliman, an art observer stated:

“Their art introduces us to a new artistic experience that is qualitatively different than the experience of art offered by the works of art created by previous generations. Previous artists were satisfied with art that isolated itself within the experience of imagination and inner meditation. The artists in this exhibition have moved away from this and energetically if not “aggressively,” have entered a wider context, the concrete world. As if they wanted to create art that provides a more complete experience” (Catalogue, New Art Movement, 1975).

The exhibition of the New Art Movement not only involved various opinions of Indonesian art world figures but also more widely became a polemic between Kusnadi, an art observer and official within the Indonesian Department of Education and Culture and art critic Sudarmadji. These figures were also known as senior docents at the Indonesian Academy of Fine Arts (STSRI/ASRI), Yogyakarta. Their thoughts and interpretations of the New Art Movement contradicted one another. In general, Kusnadi felt that the work of the New Art Movement was not art but rather, an act of vandalism. While according to Sudarmadji, the New Art Movement put forth something innovative, indicating a sign of development in the arena of Indonesian fine art. Their difference in opinion continued as a debate in the morning daily, *Kedaulatan Rakyat*, Yogyakarta.

Six articles were published in *Kedaulatan Rakyat*, three written by Sudarmadji and three written by Kusnadi. The articles written by Sudarmadji were titled: “Kusnadi’s Vision of the Past” (*Visi Masa Lampau Kusnadi*), “New Art Fishing for Debate” (*Seni Rupa Baru Memancing perdebatan*), and *Kusnadi Nan Buruak Sangko*. In response to Sudarmadji, Kusnadi’s articles were titled: “Evaluating Sudarmadji’s Defense of Indonesian New Art” (*Menilai Pembelaan Sudarmadji Pada Seni Rupa Baru Indonesia*), “Sudarmadji’s Denial and Avoidance of New Art’s Value” (*Pengingkaran dan Pengelakan Sudarmadji Sekitar Nilai Seni Rupa Baru*), and “Lastly for Sudarmadji” (*Terakhir Untuk Sudarmadji*).

This debate began with an interview conducted by Supono. Pr, a reporter with *Kedaulatan Rakyat* Yogyakarta, and Kusnadi (24 September 1975). In this interview Supono. Pr, asked Kusnadi his opinion regarding the New Art Movement’s exhibition at Taman Ismail Marzuki (TIM), Jakarta. In addition he asked about the position of the New Art Movement in the arena of fine art and in the future.

According to Kusnadi, the exhibition of the New Art Movement was not serious. For example in the eyes of Jim Supangkat, Ken Dedes does not to be glorified but rather, made a mockery of.

Kusnadi's opinion in the article "Evaluating Sudarmadji's Defense of Indonesian New Art"

In his article, "Evaluating Sudarmadji's Defense of Indonesian New Art," Kusnadi stated that the exhibition of the New Art Movement was not well received because its values were not appreciated. Further, there were numerous statements expressing disappointment after viewing the exhibition. Only members of the exhibition itself who wrote about it in the newspaper along with Sudarmadji received this exhibition with optimism.

The principle of blurring artistic value or putting aside aesthetics, as the participants did in their writing and artwork, was merely an escape or a demonstration of the inability to compete in the race of fine art. The piece comprised of a cross and self-portrait, the poster titled "Wanted" (*Dicari*), and the painting of an asphalt road, according to Kusnadi, when looked at in terms of both shape and color were bland and underdeveloped. These works gave the impression that it was enough for the artists to simply imagine the idea without realizing it in a work of high quality. This work was childish, dramatic, *over acting*, and outside of the artistic mainstream. Looking at the works displayed in terms of aesthetics nothing new was produced, all of the works tended towards plagiarism. According to Kusnadi, supporters of the New Art Movement were products of an incomplete education, yet felt that they were adults capable of expressing their dissatisfaction. They wanted to express a new *message* that it was ok to be vulgar, profane, and pornographic. Kusnadi stated that the New Art movement had vandalized the Mona Lisa and the sculpture of Ken Dedes. The sculpture of Ken Dedes had been copied from its original and dressed in jeans, with its zipper left undone. This according to Kusnadi was desecration of the nation's culture.

Sudarmadji's opinion in the article "Kusnadi's Vision of the Past"

In the article entitled, "Kusnadi's Vision of the Past," published on October 1, 1975, Sudarmadji challenged Kusnadi's opinion, which he said departed from a base different than the ideas of the young artists. Kusnadi's opinion was seen as outdated and random. His ideas collided with the restless attitude of the young artists and their desire for something new. Kusnadi was judged to be forgetting historical events and the fact that new ideas are always accused of being destructive or threatening as was the case with developments in Europe including Impressionism, Fauvism, Dadaism, and Expressionism.

According to Sudarmadji, the young artists had become bored with existing styles that were predominantly orientated towards ideas of Western art. The actions and attitudes of this new art were a sign of advancement. The young artists were already looking critically at the condition of Indonesian fine art. In addition, they were also being faced with more complex issues than those that Kusnadi had faced in his youth. The artistic environment today is diverse and complex with works by Mondrian, Jackson Pollock, Rothko, Ahmad Sadali, G. Sidharta, and others that are even more complex.

Because of this, according to Sudarmadji it was inappropriate for Kusnadi to jump to such negative conclusions regarding the work of the New Art Movement. The evaluation of Jim Supangkat's work entitled "Ken Dedes" as vandalism, reminds us of the general situation of Indonesian culture, namely the worship of beauty. While Ken Dedes is worshipped because of her beauty, she is not an example of a devout wife as she was ready to be made the wife of Ken Arok who had killed her husband, Tunggal Ametung. Because a large portion of these works were intended as a critique of society, these works could not be produced at the same level as posters, but rather produced like the high-quality caricatures of Dumier.

Kusnadi had also stated in his writing that he had not stopped his assessment of the young artists without making comparisons to larger and healthier achievements, such as those of the best Indonesian artists who had come before them; artists who held a higher position, broader view, possessed a maturity of technique

and style. Such art was tainted by the New Art Movement, which did not acknowledge such art's presence as today's art.

Sudarmadji's article entitled "Kusnadi's Vision of the Past," according to Kusnadi merely diverted public attention, creating the view that the New Art Movement was not important while also creating the excuse that Kusnadi was only familiar with Rembrandt to the point that he did not even know the work of Affandi. Responding to Sudarmadji's arguments, Kusnadi asked whether or not Sudarmadji was too naïve? According to Kusnadi, Sudarmadji had used the example of Affandi to refute the opinion of Oesman Effendi who did not acknowledge the existence of Indonesian painting. On this occasion Sudarmadji made the comment that Kusnadi's example was precise. Because of this, according to Kusnadi, Sudarmadji's allegations were false.

Kusnadi stated that in 1954 he had written about Picasso, Paul Klee, Mondrian, Manesier, Duchamp, and Soulages in the magazine *Culture*, based on what he had witnessed himself at the 2nd Sao Paulo Biennale. With this, Kusnadi hoped that Sudarmadji would not be plagued by the absentmindedness of art criticism. Another careless act by Sudarmadji was his placement of a photographic reproduction of the work of Ris Purnama with the statement "Kusnadi may not like it." Even though, according to Kusnadi he liked this work of art because of its geometric aesthetic and color.

Reformist art such as Impressionism, Fauvism, and Dadaism made examples of by Sudarmadji, were experienced artists, many who had studied via the old masters in museums. Not like the New Art Movement that was underdeveloped. Because of this Kusnadi believed more in the work of artists like Sadali, Popo Iskandar, Srihadi, Fadjar Sidik, and G. Sidharta who had already demonstrated development in their work, not just as attempts at this. Painting or sculpting without pretension is impossible in the production of art, it is difficult to expect success in enriching the quality of Indonesian fine art. Whereas Kusnadi saw the copying of th Ken Dedes as the stunted value of the copier, which may not tarnish Indonesian culture, but rather tarnish the production of Jim Supangkat, because he had copied another's work.

Sudarmadji's response in the article "New Art Fishing for Debate"

Sudarmadji's second response was entitled "The New Art Movement: Fishing for Debate." Based on observations of the New Art Movement's exhibition a great deal was written in newspapers and magazines. Even one month after the exhibition, the New Art Movement remained a topic of discussion – something that rarely occurred. This served as a sign that the New Art Movement could be viewed as meaningful, with increased recognition from society.

According to Sudarmadji, Kusnadi's statement that the exhibition of the New Art Movement had not been welcomed was false. At the time of the exhibition's opening an article appeared in the afternoon daily *Sinar Harapan*, written by Sanento Yuliman about the New Art Movement. At a discussion held at Taman Ismail Marzuki, approximately 150-200 individuals from various fields of art were in attendance. At that time attendees included: Wahyu Sihombing, Satyagraha Hoerip, Zaini, Nashar, Peransi, Gatot Kusumo, Salim Said, Goenawan Mohammad, Arswendo Atmowiloto, Tuti Heraty Nurhadi, Ikranegara, Slamet Sukimanto, Danarto, Bambang Bujono, A.D. Pirous, G. Sidharta, Ti. Sutanto, and Sunaryo.

A number of articles about the New Art Movement appeared in various daily newspapers including *Sinar Harapan*, *Kedaulatan Rakyat*, *Kompas*, *Surabaya Post*, and in the magazines *Tribun* and *Tempo*. Jim Supangkat's article in *Kompas* was requested by the magazine in order to complete an initial report. In Bandung, Professor But Mochtar, a senior docent in the department of fine art at ITB invited the New Art Movement to hold a follow up exhibition at ITB for the purpose of study, appreciation, and evaluation.

The leading literary magazine *Horison* used a reproduction of a piece by the New Art Movement for their cover.

According to Sudarmadji, only a painter such as Affandi might receive a welcome as vibrant as this. It was therefore astonishing for Kusnadi to state that the New Art Movement had not received a positive reception.

Kusnadi's statement that Sudarmadji was confused and careless, according to Sudarmadji was more appropriate if directed at Kusnadi himself. Kusnadi's carelessness could be seen in his reference to Ris Purwanto who in fact was known as Ris Purwana. If Kusnadi had understood the works of art and their process of production, comparing them to the catalogue, he would not have made such a mistake.

Sudarmadji also judged Kusnadi's opinion as impure because his evaluation and opinion were mixed, primarily when he stated that the New Art Movement was merely a group of people fleeing from reality because of their inability to create true art of high quality. Kusnadi was not capable of distinguishing between "applied art" and "pure art." Further, he was still confused distinguishing two and three-dimensional works. According to Sudarmadji such differences did not need to be distinguished because the artists of the New Art Movement no longer paid heed to classifications such as these. They utilized anything as a work of art, which is why Kusnadi, thinking about cups, storefront decorations, and the state of Ken Dedes, considered this work tarnished. Only old perspectives were considered such that fine art was made of lines, shapes, and colors. The new perspective, however, accepted that found and recycled objects could be made into works of art.

Therefore Jim Supangkat's sculpture was not vandalism as Kusnadi argued but rather an example of alternative media. It was this sort of understanding that escaped Kusnadi's interpretation and understanding of the work of the New Art Movement.

According to Sudarmadji, Kusnadi's experience traveling abroad was not enough to ensure his understanding of the development of fine art. Finally, Sudarmadji made a number of conclusions including first, the argument that Kusnadi's criticism of Indonesian New Art was too harsh and not proportional. Second, it was too early to launch such criticism until further developments were seen. And third, Kusnadi's analysis of Jim Supangkat's sculpture was too focused on old understandings.

Kusnadi's Response in the article "Sudarmadji's Denial and Avoidance of New Art's Value"

Kusnadi's response to Sudarmadji's article was entitled *Sudarmadji's Denial and Avoidance of New Art's Value.* Kusnadi stated, that his opinion did not stop merely in assessment of Rembrandt, but also was capable of assessing the work of Affandi and other artists.

According to Kusnadi the discussion at Taman Ismail Marzuki, was not as Sudarmadji described it in his writing. Sudarmadji only counted the individuals in the discussion forum, without clarifying the role of the discussion as bait for appreciation. Many of those in attendance at the discussion questioned the experiment of the New Art Movement, cursing and exposing the underdeveloped principles of the exhibition.

Sudarmadji's critical attitude, according to Kusnadi's assessment was "disproportional." For example, Sudarmadji was brave enough to write about the deterioration in the quality of Affandi's work, yet what was his attitude towards Muryoto whose process of production was seen to be only in fun. Sudarmadji did not acknowledge Muryoto's decline, be it in his ideas or work. Kusnadi questioned Sudarmadji's attitude, asking, was Sudarmadji really of the same opinion or was he afraid to have an opinion because Muryoto was one of the supporter's of the New Art Movement? In addition, according to Sudarmadji,

when looking at a work of art, Kusnadi associated it too closely with his own experiences. For example, in this regard, Sudarmadji associated the work of Jim Supangkat, which consisted of a mattress and wardrobe full of padlocks with his own experience as a child. As a child, Sudarmadji always felt that he was prohibited from participating in his parents' conversations. If during his childhood Sudarmadji's parents had given him freedom, then indeed he would have been interested in a piece of art that was in line with this experience of freedom. Sudarmadji's judgment was not based on the basics of fine art, but rather on other factors that reminded him of his past experiences.

At the end of his article Kusnadi stated that his interest in the New Art Movement was the result of only two things. First, because of the demonstrative infringement on a sense of decency through works like; the body of a naked woman whose legs were spread apart, the drawing of Mona Lisa combined with obscene images, a drawing of people in the middle of intercourse, a baby receiving an injection to its head and a relief illustrating the end of the uterus from which the baby came, and a self-portrait placed on a cross, an offense to religious sentiment. And second, because of the flattening of aesthetic qualities and the simplistic understanding of art, according to Kusnadi, Indonesian New Art, was narrowed through its alignment with Pop art and Optic art.

Sudarmadji's response in the article "Kusnadi Nan Buruak Sanko"

In his article, "Kusnadi Nan Buruak Sangko," Sudarmadji outlined, that his previous article was not in any way intended as a qualification, as it was too early for such an act. Moreover, a qualification or assessment with a harsh crushing tone such as that of Kusnadi.

He admitted that his writing in newspapers was intended only to be informative and interpretative. Informative in order to give news to the wider community that there was a new trend in Indonesian art. Whereas interpretative, referred to his intention to produce an interpretation of the New Art Movement's exhibition, an interpretation that was done very carefully.

According to Sudarmadji, the opinion of figures such as Tuti Herati Nurhadi, Nashar, Zaini, Gatot Kusumo, dan G. Sidharta was evidence that the New Art Movement had been received, free from good or bad judgments. The qualification or evaluation of one work of art was not dependent on a consensus of opinions but rather how those opinions were supported by analysis, interpretation, measurement, and summation.

If Kusnadi viewed the work of the New Art Movement from an ethical standpoint, judging something as polite or impolite, appropriate or inappropriate, then Sudarmadji looked at this art from the viewpoint of *psychoanalysis*. Both, according to Sudarmadji, possessed extrinsic criteria. Thus, if one viewpoint was shallow, then the other was also shallow. Meaning, Sudarmjadi admitted, that his opinion as well as Kusnadi, were both shallow.

Sudarmadji, in his final article explained his theory of art criticism describing first, the theory of *New Criticism* or *Intrinsic Criticism*. This theory assumes that in determining criteria through which to judge a work of art, one must use intrinsic criteria. In fine art such criteria can be found in form; line, field, texture, color, shape, and space. Things, which possess an ethical, psychological, or religious character, cannot be included as criteria to be judged according to this theory. In contrast, *Contextual Criticism* is a theory that includes various factors including history, psychology, religion, politics, ethics, sociology, education, and so forth.

In reference to Muryoto Hartoyo, Sudarmadji stated, that Muryoto had already been teased in his writing in *Sinar Harapan*, but in a polite way. Muryoto did not take painting seriously, it was not something that

needed to be done with full emotion, depth and seriousness, which was also seen in the media he used in his paintings. In reality, doesn't all of this constitute an insinuation of the signs that surrounded him or a personal insinuation?

All of this, according to Sudarmadji, still needed to be observed. An incredibly serious observation was not needed; one that was playful would be enough.

Sudarmadji also questioned, why Kusnadi viewed *Pop Art* and *Optical Art* as something that was low. Sudarmadji admitted truthfully that he personally had never been abroad, however, books that he read mentioned big names such as Andy Warhol, Robert Rauschenberg, Tom Wesselman, Roy Lichtenstein, and Victor Vasarely, all considered Pop-artists who were important in the history of art.

Responding to Kusnadi's statement that the work of the New Art Movement had pornographic tendencies, Sudarmadji reminded Kusnadi of ancient Indonesian art work shown on temples. Many of which depicted scenes of intercourse.

Kusnadi's Response in the article "Lastly for Sudarmadji"

This third response, constituted the conclusion of this polemic, because, according to Kusnadi, it could no longer be continued. In this article entitled, "Lastly for Sudarmadji," Kusnadi stated that with the explanation of the essence of opinions from Zaini, Nashar, G. Sidharta, Tuti Herati Nurhadi, and Gatot Kusomo, Sudarmadji could no longer deny, that his view of the New Art Movement could not convince the mature and experienced artists.

If Sudarmadji viewed these opinions as a series of reception, this was something that could not be proved, and was not appropriate to continue talking about in public newspapers. This also meant that Sudarmadji was not able to communicate with the art community without coercion. If rejection could still be seen as a welcome, then Kusnadi could be viewed as a thief, caught in the act by the community and police, and although beaten, could still be called a success because he received approval from the community who had flocked to beat him.

Finally, Kusnadi concluded the polemic here because, in line with his first article, his argument was originally directed at the wider art community of Yogyakarta, not at Sudarmadji. **Sebagai Kepala Dinas Seni Rupa Direktorat Kesenian,** Kusnadi felt that the hundreds of youth who were not supporters of the New Art Movement as well as the Indonesian society at large should be protected. If Sudarmadji did not feel a responsibility towards ethical and aesthetic values, then, according to Kusnadi, it was appropriate on one hand to view Sudarmadji as a protector while on the other, to view him as a parrot.

Answering which was more important, either criticism that was intrinsic or extrinsic, Kusnadi stated, criticism that was entrenched and socialized always included a combination of these two elements. According to Kusnadi, criticism was not the successor of the artist's desires, moreover of those who were half-artists. Put simply, Kusnadi still thought that the New Art Movement's exhibition, held in August 1975, was still underdeveloped or unfinished.

Outside of Kusnadi and Sudarmadji's polemic, the writer (Asikin Hasan) also complemented this research by asking the opinion of Rita Widagdo, a sculptor and senior lecturer in ITB's department of fine art. There were at least two reasons why this opinion was sought. First, because Rita Widagdo had written a thesis about European and American modern art movements such as Dadaism and Pop Art. These movements were suspected to have influenced the Indonesian New Art Movement. Second, because Rita was born and raised in Germany, the place where Dadaism was founded. The western cultural environment that had surrounded her, at the least gave the impression that Rita possessed a great deal of knowledge

about modern art. In an interview conducted with Rita Widagdo in January 1992, Rita expressed her opinion. In principle, Rita agreed with all of the new developments and stated that this was something that was definitely needed. Each generation has its own statement, its own problem.

Rita Widagdo explained that if they (the New Art Movement), wanted to look for new possibilities in their artistic process, this was very positive. Therefore, based on her observation, the New Art Movement was not innovative. They were influenced by “Pop Art” and “Dadism” as well as information from foreign magazines, primarily from America.

In regards to their art, Rita Widagdo judged the work of the New Art Movement as underdeveloped or unfinished and of low quality. She stated further that there was no connection between the discussion of New Art supporters and the work that they created. They were only concerned with sensation, “shocking,” “new origins,” “strange origins,” using art as a propagandistic tool, appropriating ancient terms like “revolution” and “social protest.”

As a comparison Rita Widagdo used the example of “Pop Art” and “Dadism.” She stated that these movements did something innovative, in an intellectual way. Neither “Pop Art” nor “Dadaism” emerged in order to offend, criticize, or be “anti” towards convention. They saw only new possibilities based on material that had never before been used to create art.

In addition, Rita Widagdo criticized the New Art Movement because it was not consistent in its own opinion. They stated that they were against conventional art and rejected elitism, however in reality, this was not the case. In regards to this Rita used Hardi as an example, one of the members of the New Art Movement. Recently, Hardi has changed, again utilizing old styles in order to create paintings of flowers, horses, and female figures, all done in a sweet style, like those works that before had been rejected and criticized.

In an interview in the newspaper *Media Indonesia*, published on January 12, 1992, Jim Supangkat acknowledge the influence of various outside sources and the inconsistent attitude of a few supporters of the New Art Movement. Jim Supangkat stated that the main issues that most affected the New Art Movement derived from information about new media art in America and Europe. There a new type of expression had already developed, not only in regards to painting but also graphic arts and sculpture as well as new media that could not be categorized as sculpture, painting, or graphic arts. Such art was called installation media. Meanwhile in Indonesia, the majority of people were only familiar with painting, whereas the other types of art had not yet developed.

In regards to the inconsistent opinion of New Art supporters, as Rita Widagdo had criticized, Jim Supangkat explained that such a movement did not have to reflect the artistic tendencies of all of its members. When they gathered and were *committed* to various movement ideologies, then it was possibly that they might have a different tendency in their work. Jim Supangkat also admitted that the New Art Movement was too premature and its ideas were difficult for people to understand. If this movement was conceived of now, maybe many people would follow its thinking (*Media Indonesia*, 12 January 1992).

2.5 The Break up of the New Art Movement

The New Art Movement represented the call for renewal within Indonesian fine art. Because of this, its existence did not need to last long nor did it need to become established. The New Art Movement is not something that can be replicated or followed. Its existence must be seen as the indication of the development of a broader repertoire. Initially, it was only a reaction action against a few problems regarding Indonesian modern art. Its founders met coincidentally and then reached an agreement to hold

an exhibition together. As it turned out, these young artists had the same tendency in their work, to move beyond the standard boundaries of art. They did not intend their work to be judged according to aesthetics or the standards of modern art, quite the opposite. Their work was the antithesis of Indonesian modern art.

When the New Art Movement first emerged in 1975, they displayed only a number of works that were strange and unusual. At that time, this tendency was not called a “movement.” At this time fine art observers used various terms such as “The New Art Group” to refer to this movement. There were also those that used terms such as “gang” and “rebels.” Their initial exhibition asserted the statement of suppressed youth. In their 1977 exhibition, the New Art Movement began to include their thoughts and statements and in 1979, Jim Supangkat called this group by the now official name, the New Art Movement.

Various backgrounds, experiences, insights, and authority regarding problems resulted in not all supporters understanding the principles and ideology of this movement. It is thus necessary to organize the supporters of the New Art Movement into two groups, namely core supporters and accompanying supporters or sympathizers. Core supporters included the main drivers of the movement, namely Jim Supangkat, Harsono, Siti Adiyati, Nanik Mirna, and Hardi. Over the course of the exhibitions held in 1975, 1977, and 1979, these five artists were always present while the composition of the accompanying supporters continually changed.

The reason that I have acknowledged this division is based on each individual’s role. Hardi, Harsono, Nanik Mirna, and Siti Adiyati played a prominent role in the upheaval that led to the formation of the New Art Movement. For example, these four student activists from ASRI Yogyakarta were involved in the “Black December Statement” as well as various exhibitions that created conflict with ASRI lecturers. These important events can be considered sparks that led to the birth of the New Art Movement. Jim Supangkat on the other hand was a supporter who contributed ideas and helped to formulate the movement’s concept. Supangkat had already, for a long time, been questioning the definition of fine art, which was also questioned by the New Art Movement as is evidenced by his thesis. The idiom of installation art had in fact, already been pioneered by Jim Supangkat with his work that included the combination of various media, which he created as a student of ITB’s fine art department as part of his final project. His authority in regards to these concepts is what made Jim Supangkat widely known as the spokesperson for the New Art Movement.

Disagreement that arose between these core supporters was then followed by criticism of one another, especially in regards to personal issues. Harsono was worried that Hardi would misuse the purity of New Art. Debate arose between Jim Supangkat and Hardi about members. On one side Hardi rejected the expansion of the New Art Movement while on the other side Jim Supangkat wanted to include new members. These disagreements ultimately were not resolved and finally in 1979, after the movement’s third exhibition, the members of the New Art Movement agreed to announce the disbandment of the group.

CHAPTER III

INFLUENCE AND DEVELOPMENT OF NEW ART

As was found in Chapter II, there were a number of similar exhibitions, before and after the emergence of the New Art Movement. These exhibitions were similar in their freedom to use various media and search for new possibilities. While these exhibitions, also organized by young artists, did not have a direct connection to the New Art Movement, it is important to describe them in this chapter in order to show the surrounding environment and also maybe the influence of the New Art movement on other youth.

3.1. Various Similar Works

The exhibition's of youth that were similar tended to be experimental, using idioms almost the same as the New Art Movement. These exhibitions were always accompanied by an attitude of protest towards senior artists and the situation of fine art in Indonesia. The themes presented always related to social issues, politics, and society. A number of the artists active in these exhibitions had been involved in the New Art Movement. Generally, they were from the academies of fine art in Bandung and Yogyakarta.

Amongst these similar exhibitions included the exhibition "Nusantara-Nusantara," held in February 1975 in Yogyakarta. This exhibition occurred prior to the start of the New Art Movement, but without continuity, in order not to cause disagreement involving many parties. They also criticized issues that were almost the same as those addressed in the "Black December Statement," including: the demand for a more open attitude from those in power in the field of fine art and the rejection of the apprentice system in which students must follow the steps of their teachers. Besides this they protested against the winners of the Big Indonesian Painting Exhibition 74, held at TIM Jakarta. The participants in this exhibition were Agus Dermawan.T, Agustinus Sumargo, Wardoyo, I Gusti Bagus Widjaja, and Samikun. At that time these artists were listed as students at STSRI/ASRI Yogyakarta. They then received a sanction from this institution because they were seen to have organized a wild exhibition.

Similar exhibitions by young artists only began to spread after the emergence of the New Art Movement, at the beginning of 1975 at TIM Jakarta. In August 1976, only one year after this, Tulus Warsito and Budi Sulisty, exhibited the work "Essentialism of Pop Art." Viewed from the name and material of the exhibition similarities can be drawn with the New Art Movement. In the same year, another exhibition occurred at Balai Budaya Jakarta entitled, "Concept." For these artists, fine art did not only include painting, sculpture, and graphic arts, but also consisted of ideas in the form of writing. This exhibition showed the transition of artistic activity from visual forms to verbal forms (words).

Meanwhile in Yogyakarta, art suggestive of social protest, concern for the environment, and the search for individual identity spread. In the same year, also in Yogyakarta, the exhibition "Kepribadian Apa," was held, doubting the form of art that these artists had been taught. Like other similar exhibitions, this exhibition was a critique of the contemporary situation of Indonesian art. They rejected concepts of Western art that had been accepted by their predecessors. This exhibition intended to restore the identity of Indonesian art while breaking through all of the barriers of fine art. The participants in this exhibition were Dede Eri Supria, Riyanto, Tulus Warsito, Wienardi, Budi Sulisty, Bonyong Munni Ardhi, Slamet Ryadi, Haris Purwana, Redha Sorana, Ronald Manulang, and to musicians, Jack Dody and Sapto. Police closed this exhibition on its second day without clear reason.

Slamet Riadi. Pr and Redha Sorana, two students from STSRI/ASRI, organized an exhibition on 7 November 1977, entitled "Spontaneous Exhibition;" named this way because the exhibition's idea emerged suddenly. This exhibition was organized at the time of the final exams. These students produced their piece starting in the middle of the night until dawn, binding a statue of Katensi, the first director of ASRI with white cloth. Then a white box full of old newspapers was placed in the yard to the left of the bound statue. An old typewriter painted red was placed on top of this box. In the yard behind the STSRI/ASRI building, a statue was tied with raffia. The trees around the building were also connected with the same rope. On the flagpole in front of the building, a birdcage was hung. Inside the birdcage a pair of cut up shoes and paints were placed. The road leading to the building was tiled with newspaper and sandals in various sizes. The newspaper tiles were directed towards a particular window. A black umbrella was placed on the letters A.S.R.I. that decorated the front of the building. A banner was placed over the windows of the building, which read "Happy Competing for Titles" (*Selamat Berlomga Meraih*

Gelar). This spontaneous exhibition only lasted a few hours before faculty destroyed it because it was illegal without permission from STSRI/ASRI or the local police.

From January 17 to January 21, 1978, the "Presentation Exhibition" took place at Balai Budaya Jakarta. This exhibition was also a form of protest against social realities. This exhibition included photos, which were mostly reproductions of student protests of 1966. There was also a photo of Robby Cahyadi, a car dealer on trial. Besides this there was also a photocopy of the newspaper "*Pelopor Yogya*" published on 25 January 1974, which included news on the banning of various mass media from Jakarta like *Indonesia Raya* and *Pedoman*. There was a photo of Adam Malik, who at that time was the head of MPR.

The photos displayed were laced with various marks. There were also those with shaded or colored in faces. Not all of the artists in this exhibition had a fine art's education. A number of these artists came from different fields that did not have a relationship with fine art. Bambang Bujono, an art critic, commented that this exhibition was more inclined to social protest than creating good works of art. In regards to this he took the example of a statement by Hardi, a participant in this exhibition who stated: "*My principle about art, is based on the idea that art must raise social issues*" (*Tempo*, 28 January 1978).

According to Bambang Bujono, no matter what art was still a work of art. By only considering the social function of art did not mean that the problem of value was solved. These artists forget one thing, that people have the ability to differentiate between that which is good and bad. People have aesthetic feeling. By emphasizing protest and forgetting art, what occurs is merely a type of news in the newspaper or a poster that is waved about by demonstrators (*Tempo*, 28 January 1978).

In Bandung, from the beginning of July until 10 August 1979, Jim Supangkat, one of the figures of the New Art Movement organized an unusual exhibition in the waiting room of the Paramount Movie Theater, one of the main movie theatres in Bandung at that time. This exhibition, according to its explanation, was still connected to the spirit of New Art, namely the search for new possibilities outside of that, which was considered valid.

Still in the same year, on 15 December 1979, Harry Suliztiarto, a sculpture student at ITB, known as a rock climber, along with his colleague Agus Resmonohadi, created the "Group of Two" (*Kelompok Dua*) and climbed the dome of the planetarium at Taman Ismail Marzuki (TIM) Jakarta. Harry Suliztiarto completed his work by tying a statue wrapped in black cloth to the top of this dome. This statue was named the "peak sculpture" (*patung puncak*). This event occurred in relation with the **Biennale Senirupawan 4 Studio Patung**. Through this work, Harry wanted to show that the most important aspect of art was the process of production. In order to climb the slipper dome that was 25 meters tall, he conducted preliminary research and consulted with an architect. To climb this dome he need 8 hours, along with special skill. This was piece was intended as a work of fine art, it had no other intention. Harry utilized the value of *shock* in his unusual work.

In 1981, in Bandung, Rahmayani a painting student at ITB, created an exhibition referred to as environmental art. As part of this exhibition, Yani tied red cloth to various electric poles along the road H. Juana Bandung. After this, Yani drew silhouettes of people sprawled out on the asphalt. Yani gave every car that passed a piece of paper that listed victims of traffic accidents. This performance was given the name "Accident I" (*Kecelakaan I*). In the same year, Yani also performed another piece of environmental art along with two friends from ITB. Yani covered almost their entire bodies with newspaper. They then walked to the center of the city, to the movie theatre, and to shops. This work was given the name "Human Newspaper" (*Manusia Koran*).

From January 23 until January 27 1985, Rahmayani created another experimental work at the Central Gallery of the Indonesian-French Cultural Institute in Bandung. This work was entitled "My Dog Dies,

Then Flies” (*Anjingku Mati, Lalu Terbang*), an exhibition, which illustrated her own restlessness. This exhibition was accompanied by experimental music played by Harry Roesli and the reading of poems. This exhibition used the idiom of installation by combining everyday objects like: papayas, cables, a pile of stones, boards used to wash clothes, scrap metal clotheslines, crackers, puppies, water, candles, wood, and medicine as well as various paintings. Yani’s ability to make all of these objects into a singular work of art was observed by Dr. Sanento Yuliman in an article in the magazine *Tempo*.

“These everyday objects are not seen by Yuni as merely functional objects. These objects are also involved with feeling and imagination, as any child might show you. Adults suppress this “imaginary dimension” of everyday objects, for good and for evil. Artists, however, can explore these objects, making us more discerning about objects and humans” (Tempo, 7 February 1987).

In 1981, Semsar Siahaan, a sculpture student at ITB, conducted an experiment that more like a criminal act, namely burning a sculpture created by Sunaryo entitled “The Image of Irian within the Torso” (*Citra Irian Dalam Torso*). The torso sculpture that he burned was combined with trees and banana leaves as incense. This piece was given the title “Gifts from Village II” (*Oleh-Oleh Dari Desa II*). Semsar in a frank manner conducted opposition and protest in response to the social realities around him. This piece was completed with the following statement:

“It is time that activities of art and the academy return to the level of dominant society in Indonesia (farmers and fisherman). Socializing in a simplistic manner without dreaming (masturbating). Instead of a reality that has been appropriated by the art academy, for the sake that the nation’s image remains intact and decent” (Chandra Johan, 1987).

It is not clear why Semsar conducted an experiment that went this far, to the point where the problem had to be handled by the police.

3.2. New Art After 1979

After disbanding in 1979, the New Art Movement reemerged, aided by new supporters. During the period after 1979, a refinement and change occurred in the pattern of creating work. This change was characterized by the loss of individual works and the emergence of collective works. The production process adopted the method of design, namely using the methods of research, planning, collecting data, and drawing conclusions.

The conceptual framework initiated in 1977, was refined with the publication in 1987 of the New Art Manifesto (*Manifesto Seni Rupa Baru*). Work was focused on one theme - the Shopping Mall. An illustration of life in the metropolitan city Jakarta, along with everyday art symbols. The second exhibition after 1979 used the issue of AIDS as its theme, illustrating the dramatic situation of AIDS victims. This is a phenomenon that is now becoming a problem for cosmopolitan societies throughout the world. This exhibition was initiated by an invitation from the organizing committee of the experimental art exhibition, *ARX (Australia and Regions Artists Exchange) 89*, held in Perth, Australia. However before these works were displayed in Australia, they were displayed first at TIM Jakarta.

3.2.1. Project I, Shopping Mall Fantasy World (*Proyek I, Pasaraya Dunia Fantasi*)

The exhibition “Project I, Shopping Mall Fantasy World, was marked by the participation of new supporters. Generally these supporters had diverse educational and professional backgrounds, for example Bernice, was a filmmaker. Priyanto Sunarto was a fine art docent at ITB, a graphic designer, and a caricaturist. S. Malela Mahargasarie was a graduate of interior design at ITB and worked at the magazine *Tempo*. Dadang Christanto was a painter. Wienardi was a photojournalist with the Jakarta-based magazine

Profesi. Before his participation in this exhibition, he was involved with the exhibition “**Seni Rupa Kepribadian Apa.**” Oentarto H. was an illustrator for magazine covers. Taufan S. Ch was a graphic designer. Rudi Indonesia was an entrepreneur. Fendi Siregar was a photographer. Sanento Yuliman was an art critic who had followed closely the development of New Art Movement and then decided to participate. The inclusion of Sanento Yuliman in this group was important to the New Art Movement because of his mastery of the concept of pluralism and his influence within Indonesian modern art.

The old supports who persisted included Jim Supangkat, Harsono, Siti Adyati, Dede Eri Supria, Harris Purnama, and Gendut Riyanto whereas Hardi and Nanik Marna, who had participated in previous exhibitions, did not participate in this exhibition.

The shopping mall was an important part of a number of the exhibitions that had been organized by the New Art Movement. Within this exhibition, they returned to particular desires that had not been achieved in previous exhibitions, namely the application of the patterns of design. Each participant had a task that had been determined by a managing group. This factor demonstrated the attitude of the New Art Movement that believed in collectivism. Works categorized as either art or design, were combined into one category, *art*. This reflected the rejection of the category “High Art.” Further, within this exhibition individualistic works common in art like painting, sculpture, and drawing were not included. The New Art Movement embraced the idioms of installation with a particular style. This exhibition was also called situational art.

Art such as this constituted a new type within Indonesian modern art exhibitions. It shifted the image of egocentrism and individualism within the environment of art and replaced it with the spirit of collective production. Art was no longer created intuitively but rather rationally, objectively, and realistically by conducting research based on the scientific method and the search for solutions. The environment of modern art, which remained distant from society, was intruded by everyday art objects such as stickers, comics, posters, t-shirt art, and advertisements.

During the post-1979 era, supporters of the New Art Movement continued to resist boundaries within fine art and the belief that there was a separation between “fine art” and “design and craft.” Fine art was generally seen as something with no function, because of its high value. While in contrast, design and craft were seen as applied arts, which prioritized function and market value. The rejection of this concept was based on the assumption that any type of art product was essentially the same. As a result, the New Art Movement had to undermine all hierarchies within art, creating an alternative concept, namely an art that was free, based on the spirit of exploration.

The boundaries of art, seen to be a product of the West, were opposed, as they were considered irrelevant with the realities that existed within society. Society has its own type of art. A type of art that is more communicative with its own function. Boundaries that determine the existence of high art and that which is not high, gives rise to a sociological condition that eventually polarizes “high art” and “low art.” The frame of reference of “high art” is impoverished and specific. It does not see the realities that surround it, which reveal various types of art with different frames of reference (Project I, 1987).

Within the New Art Manifesto it was stated that art possesses “plural characteristics” that can be found in many diverse places. New Art believes that culture possesses various frames of reference; it does not refer to a specific value.

“Project I, Shopping Mall Fantasy World,” was exhibited from 15-30 June 1987 in the main exhibition hall at TIM Jakarta, displayed by way of combining various media. This method was known as installation. This tendency towards installation had been present since the first exhibition of the New Art

Movement (1975) as well as the second (1977) and third (1979) exhibitions; however, during these exhibitions installations were still produced individually.

The shopping mall in this exhibition was comprised of dolls, arranged as shoppers and salesmen, within a room of goods that one might find in a shopping center. Visitors to this exhibition constituted an element of the display. The New Art Movement called this *situational art*. Visitors entered a space that created the illusion they were within a shopping mall. In front of the building, an image 9 meters tall was hung of a woman taking off her clothes. This picture was the enlargement of a sticker sold by street vendors in Jakarta. The statement “be patient” was included on this image. At the entrance to the exhibition a small flag was hung with the words “Grand Sale, Quality Styles,” which could be associated with the normal advertisements found in Swalayan Market. Viewers were also confronted with the statement “Obrol Besar” (Big Gossip), a deviation from the statement “Obral Besar” (Big Clearance). This change was intended to catch viewers’ attention and give a witty impression. This exhibition also displayed a variety of magazine covers, mostly of women dressed in various styles, cars covered in stickers, advertisements, drawings of clothes, comics, calendars, and bookstores. In addition, there were various posters advertising products or displaying the image of singer Mick Jagger.

After conducting research it was found that words and images on stickers and within dime comics, products generally consumed by the lower class, were largely illustrated by positive symbols. This contrasted with the suspicion of many that the lower classes lived in a state of sadness, despair, and the loss of faith. This finding also contradicted the idea that everyday arts were only surface decoration without content. Soetjipto Wirosardjono, a statistician and columnist, at a *Kompas* discussion held at Bentara Budaya on 8 June 1987, part of Project I, Shopping Mall Fantasy World, shared his observation that everyday arts possessed their own content and charm. His research stated that five themes could be found within everyday arts, namely:

1. The desire of people to find God. For example within calligraphy, various expressions of Christ, greeting cards, and varieties of wall hangings.
2. The obsession with depicting oneself and the effort to reflect other’s identities. For example self-portraits, the shadow-puppet characters Bima, Semar, Gatot, Kaca and others such as singers and film stars.
3. Tema memantut-mantut dinamika dan konflik kemasyarakatan serta menuangkan pemecahannya.
4. Admiration towards the beauty of nature and the universe’s wisdom. For example landscape paintings, drawings of animals, cities, and forests.
5. Recording of technology and new discoveries, reflections on creativity, knowledge, culture and the helplessness of man in the face of these things. For example, posters of racecars, airplanes, factories, computers, or images of women wearing masks because of pollution (*Tempo*, 27 June 1987).

Whereas Sanento Yuliman in his *Tempo* article viewed this from the existence of everyday arts, criticized by artists, he stated:

“It appears that Shopping Mall Fantasy World wants to draw our attention to everyday objects that normally receive only a glimpse. Primarily objects that involve the imagination of city dwellers such as magazine covers, comics, and calendars. These objects, normally snubbed by artists, are taken up here as works of “fine art” that deserve the same type of attention that is normally given to paintings or sculptures” (*Tempo*, 27 June 1997).

This opinion shows the support and endorsement of the ideas and work of the New Art Movement. Everyday art, or as in the words of Sanento Yuliman “**seni lecehan**,” was placed in parallel with and received the same attention as other art objects.

All of the images in this exhibition intended to demonstrate that the characteristics of art were diverse. This is the characteristic of art that is familiar to cosmopolitan societies such as Jakarta. Art, according to the New Art Movement escaped narrow boundaries of art.

The shopping mall became this exhibition’s central theme because it was seen to be in touch with the concept of pluralism. Regarding this, Jim Supangkat in an interview conducted with the writer (Asikin Hasan) in November 1991, explained that the characteristic of pluralism could be seen in the midst of a cosmopolitan society like in Jakarta. Whereas the sign easiest to spot within the image of pluralism was consumer products such as those offered in shop windows, through advertisements and promotions.

The consumption of advertisements by cosmopolitan society’s like Jakarta and other big cities had become a tradition and a necessity because of the increasing density of industry in every field. If we look at an advanced nation like the United States for example, the amount spent on advertisements per capita had already reached \$376,62 per year, whereas in other parts of the world it was only \$16,87 per year (Jaka Wasana, 1988). It can be estimated that these amounts will only rise with the advancement of industry.

The products displayed in “Project I, Shopping Mall Fantasy World,” included symbols of urban society, and a consumer lifestyle. The diversity of these products at the same time showed sociological symptoms. According to the New Art Movement they included two elements of society, those living on the fringe (*kaum pinggiran*) and those living in comfort (*kaum gedongan*). Those living on the fringe, live on the outskirts of the city in slums. Those living in comfort, lead a lifestyle like those living in advanced nations. While the manifestation of each group is different, the spirit that sustains them is the same. Lusting to gulp down the styles of modern life. Their orientation is also the same. Those living in comfort orient themselves towards foreign nations with abundant material wealth, while those living on the fringes orient themselves towards those living in comfort (in their own nation) (*Kompas*, 15 June, 1987).

The products that symbolize the upper class are displayed through the symbol of cars and advertisements, whereas the products symbolizing the lower class are displayed through the image of the rickshaw, stickers, and comics. A hedonistic lifestyle, stimulated via ads and the attitude of display, is presented here in the same space and time in the midst of the struggle of cosmopolitan society in Jakarta.

3.2.2. Project II, The Silent World

The second exhibition, after 19898, of the New Art Movement took AIDS as its central theme with the title “Project II, The Silent World.” This exhibition was part of an invitation from the organizers of the experimental art festival *Australia and Regions Exchange* (ARX), held on October 1, 1989 in Perth Australia. Approximately 50 artists from Asia, Australia, New Zealand, Canada, and the United States participated. Besides Jakarta and Perth, “Project II, The Silent World,” was exhibited at the Chameleon Contemporary Art Space in Hobart, Tasmania. Dr. Sanento Yuliman commented in a review in the weekly magazine *Tempo* stating, “The Silent World” represents a breakthrough of our art to the international world. Not only in the sense of going abroad but also entering the arena and playing with the latest international language: Installation” (*Tempo*, 23 September 1989).

The central theme of “Project II, The Silent World” was AIDS (Acquired Immuno Deficiency Syndrome). An illustration of one of the most devastating disasters that is incredibly frightening for society as we approach the end of the 20th century. The members of the New Art Movement who participated in this

exhibition had diminished, left with only four participants. They are, Jim Supangkat who has long been known as the spokesperson of the New Art Movement and continues as one of its main supporters. Working as a journalist in areas of health, behavior, knowledge, and technology for the prominent weekly magazine *Tempo*. As a journalist in the area of health, Jim Supangkat understands in depth the issue of AIDS. He has already written dozens of articles about this problem in the magazine *Tempo*. Because of his knowledge on this issue Jim was asked by the government to lead the Indonesian delegation at a WHO (World Health Organization) seminar in India, in 1989. Gendut Ryanto works as a graphic designer. Nyoman Nuarta, known as a sculptor, currently lives in Bandung. In this exhibition Nyoman visualizes the figure of a doll as a representation of those suffering from AIDS. S. Malela, is a merancang konstruksi kamar kaca.

The New Art Movement again questions the issue of the identity of Indonesian modern art, which in previous exhibitions has not been thoroughly discussed. This can be seen in the following from the exhibition's catalogue:

No doubt Indonesia's modern art is part of the world's modern art. Style usually known in modern art such as expressionism, cubism, constructivism, and abstraction also exist in Indonesia's modern art. Even contemporary art principles, introduced by American artists, are popular among Indonesian artists. However like modern art in many developing countries, Indonesia's modern art identity is still questioned (Indonesia's New Art movement, New Art Project 2, 1989).

This exhibition, according to Jim Supangkat, constitutes the conclusion of the entire series of the New Art Movement's exhibitions, since emerging in 1975, disbanding in 1979, and finally in 1989, concluding with "Project II, The Silent World."

The Silent World in this exhibition is envisioned in the shape of a glass room, measuring 6 x 5 meters with the height 2.5 meters. Inside the glass room can be seen a scene of AIDS victims lying about dramatically. This scene is comprised of dolls made from polyester (resin) wrapped in white bandages. On the glass walls that confine the AIDS victims are written messages about AIDS.

Within the catalogue short information about AIDS is included as well as two pictures of victims. One of the sufferers sitting in a wheelchair has an anxious expression. The other photo shows an AIDS patient lying helpless and quiet in the midst of his suffering. According to Jim Supangkat, throughout history there has never been a disease whose spread was as fast as AIDS.

Heeding society's concern, Jim Supangkat feels that it is not enough to communicate the issue of AIDS only through dramatic installation art. Jim also wrote in the exhibition catalogue about this issue stating: *the terror that haunts those with AIDS is much greater than we can imagine. In isolation rooms, death comes quickly. Fear, the feeling of error, sin, being cast aside, and despair have already killed these victims before death actually comes (The Silent World, 1989).*

According to doctors, the virus HIV (Human Immune Deficiency Virus) causes AIDS. This virus infects a particular group of white blood cells, referred to by doctors as "helper T-Cells." These cells control the immune system. The destruction of helper T-Cells causes decline or loss of the immune system, a primary characteristic of AIDS.

In 1981, the first AIDS case was reported in the United States. This disease then spread becoming an epidemic. More than 150 countries have reported cases of this disease. According to estimates from the World Health Organization (WHO), there are more than 10 million people with AIDS throughout the world. A large number of AIDS sufferers have already died including individuals such as American movie star Rock Hudson and English rock star Freddie Mercury (*Kompas*, 1 December 1991).

The ability of the New Art Movement to display facts and data objectively has already changed the opinion that the activities of the New Art Movement were merely subjective and individual. Never before had a group of Indonesian artists possessed this quality.

The idea of “Project I, Shopping Mall Fantasy World” remained connected to “Project II: The Silent World,” primarily in terms of pluralism and the design of the work. However, there were specific qualities to be enjoyed in each work. The exhibition “Project I, Shopping Mall Fantasy World” emphasized more strongly local elements. A field study regarding everyday arts and the phenomenon of the mall was conducted around Jakarta. Whereas “The Silent World” focused on an issue with a more international character, even though AIDS victims could already be seen in a number of big cities throughout Indonesia, albeit a small percent compared to countries in Europe and America.

As new art, Jim Supangkat wrote in a 1975 *Kompas* that these works possessed the desire to communicate. In these last two exhibitions, the New Art Movement wished to communicate elements of everyday art, art of the masses, and the concept of pluralism. In the catalogue of “Project II” this desire to communicate can be seen:

The environmental work titled “Project I, Shopping Mall Fantasy World” was based on discussion of mass culture, urban symbols, and art in every day life. At this event another manifestation was declared. The points were: the belief that art is a plural phenomenon; the possibility to implant the design process in creating works of art; and the possibility of taking social issues as a basic idea of a work of art. “Project II: The Silent World” is based on the study and discussion of AIDS. The work depicts an isolated hospital room for AIDS patients (Indonesia’s New Art Movement, Seni Rupa Baru Project II, 1989).

The choice of AIDS as a theme, according to Jim Supangkat, was based on the dramatic factors of this event and visual language that is easily understood by various other nations.

In principle, the two issues that became themes for the exhibitions of the New Art Movement after 1979 constitute global trends that today are engulfing almost all big cities throughout the world. Originally a threat to the populations of Europe and America, suspected to be the result of a life of free sex, finally AIDS has become a problem for nations in Asia and other continents.

An art exhibition, involving social issues and using the idiom of installation, breaks through familiar art boundaries, that today increasingly have roots and a place amongst other young artists.