

Black December 1974 Statement

Considering that over the past several years, art and cultural activities are done without any clear cultural strategy, we draw the conclusion producers of arts and culture are not in the smallest sense aware of the discourse regarding the most basic human problems in our culture. This signals that some time has passed since a spiritual erosion took place, which is currently destroying the development of art and culture.

It is for this reason that we feel it necessary, that in this black December in 1974, we state our opinions about the tendency that is manifesting itself in the forms of contemporary Indonesian paintings.

1. That the diversity of Indonesian painting is a reality that may not be denied, nonetheless this diversity does not in itself show healthy development.
2. That in order to guarantee a sustainable cultural development painters are beckoned to provide spiritual directions that are based on the the values of humanity, and are oriented to the realities of social life and political-economic culture.
3. That creativity is the destiny of painters that go through whatever means possible in order to arrive at new perspectives for Indonesian painting.
4. That therefore the identity of Indonesian painting has an immediate and clear existence.
5. That what creates a dead-end for the development of Indonesian painting to this day is old and over-used concepts, that are still held on to by the establishment, arts and cultural producers and established artists.

For the sake of our painting, it is now time to bestow an honour upon that establishment, which is the honour for the cultural retiree.

Statement of the Jury.

Members of the jury acknowledge that the matter of art's influence on other forms of art is a natural cultural phenomena that is common to every place and time. Influence does not

determine the level of creativity. On the contrary the level of creativity is determined by efforts of imitation, and even more so by raw imitation that lacks comprehension.

In relation to the above, the essence of originality cannot be the basis of a claim. Nonetheless, the importance of originality must be accepted and recognized, as long as it provides depth or enriches meaning and experience.

Attempts at playing with anything so as long as it is “new” and “strange”, could be regarded as merely a halfhearted effort, a mindless search, or even an act done simply for fun, or proof for how rare an idea as well creativity is.

In relation also to the above then it must be stated that methods and tendencies of painting that have long been established may still provide valuable meaning and experience. Members of the jury merely wishes to ensure that those methods are not undertaken solely for imitation and self-repetition.