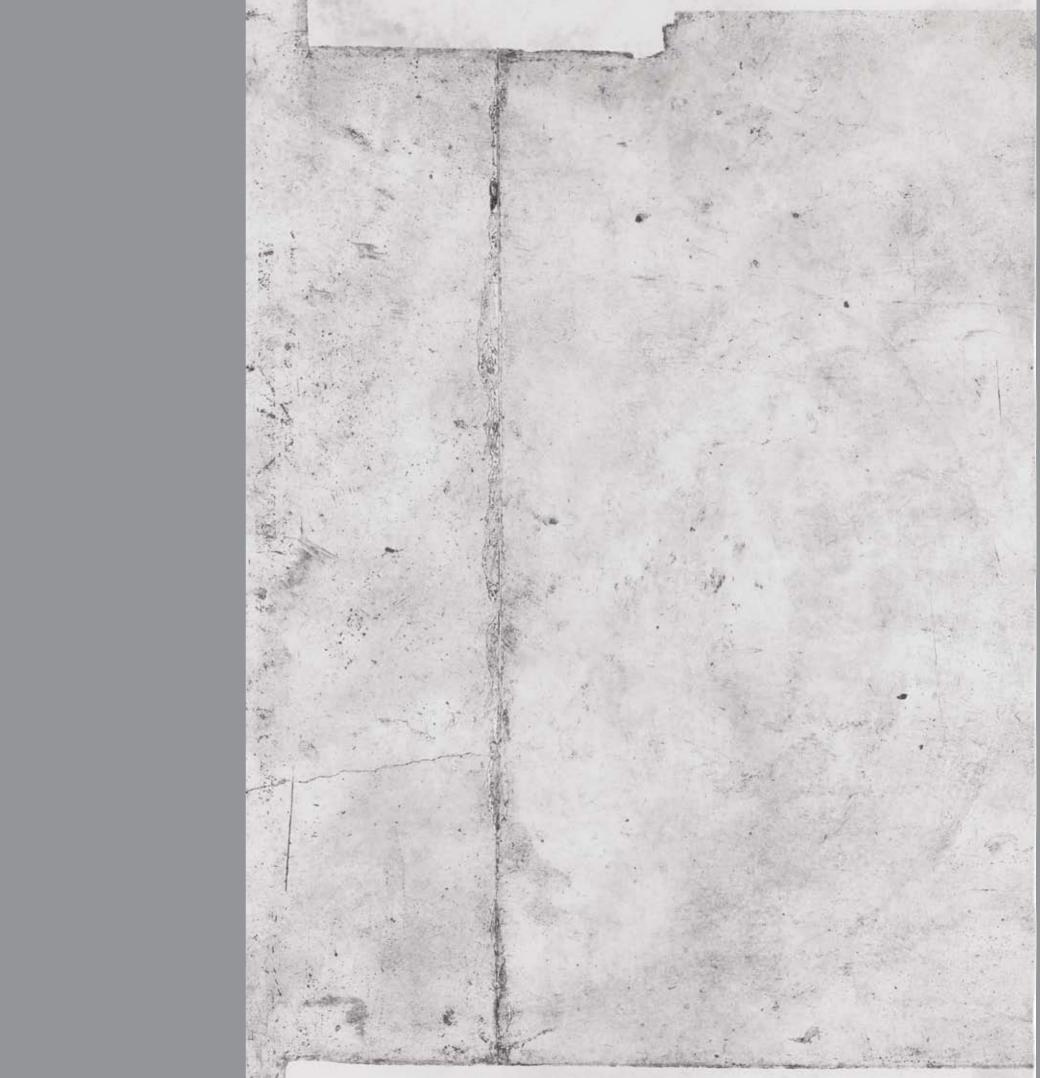
HANDIWIRMAN SAPUTRA UJUNG SANGKUT SISI SENTUH / SUSPENDED FORMS

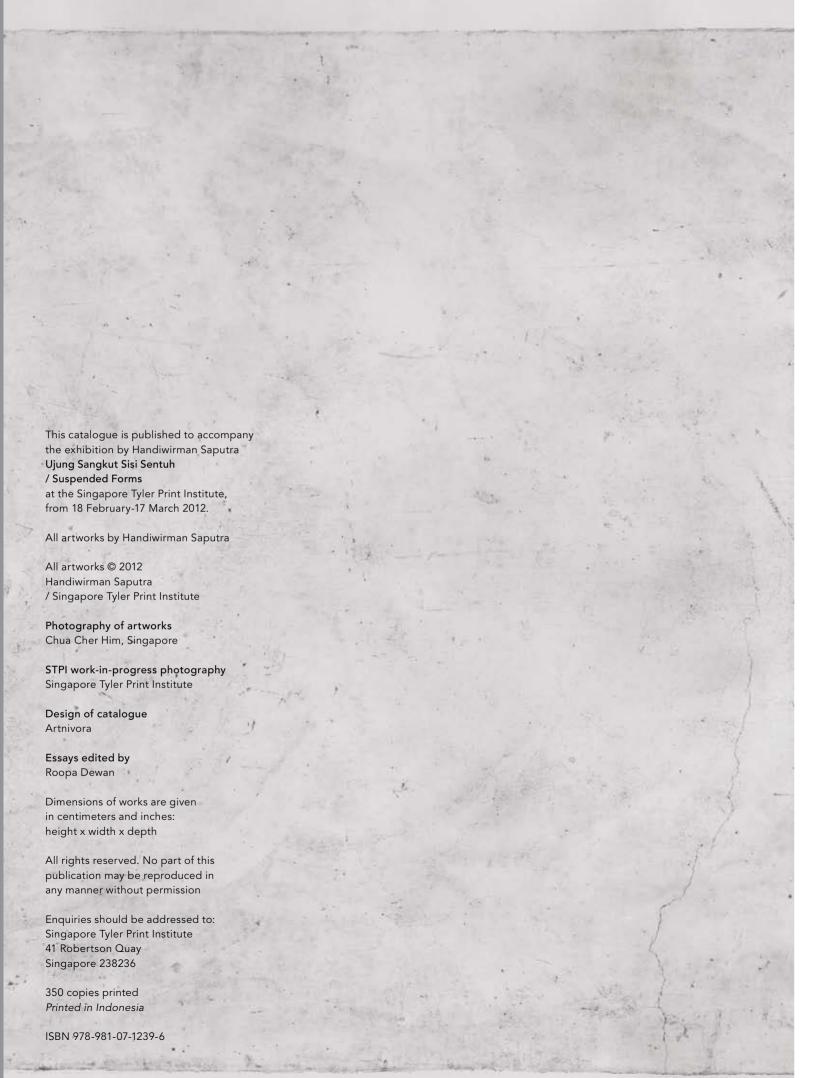












HANDIWIRMAN SAPUTRA UJUNG SANGKUT SISI SENTUH / SUSPENDED FORMS 18 FEB—17 MAR 2012





Handiwirman Saputra is an adept sculptor and painter, moving comfortably between three- and two-dimensional media. Objects - as form, symbols or metaphors - and the narrative potential of material are among the core interests that inform his practice. He possesses an innate gift to see beauty in the most mundane, overlooked objects and materials in our everyday surroundings in pieces of sponge or Styrofoam plucked from a forgotten pile of paraphernalia, fabric scraps rescued from the bin, bits of cast-off plastic or metal parts, strands of hair, the sheen and shape of a filled trash bag, the distressed textures of scrunched paper. In his hands, what we might think of and discard as useless debris is transformed into enigmatic, sensual objects and images that challenge our understanding and experience of form, material and textures, expressing unexpected emotions and narratives.

For his latest series of works, the artist has stepped out of his usual environment in Yogyakarta, entering STPI's studios to explore the possibilities of print-making and papermaking as a three-dimensional process. The title of this resulting exhibition is Ujung Sangkut, Sisi Sentuh four words, understood easily enough in the artist's native Bahasa Indonesia, but a mind-boggling challenge to translate into English. They are simple "big" words that can be applied in various contexts to conjure vastly differing images. "Ujung" is understood as the farthest extreme of something and can mean an edge, a point, a corner, a tip or an end; "sangkut" literally means to hook, but also to suspend, hang, peg or even catch on or connect to - a snag; "sisi" can refer to the (left or right) side or flank, flat (top or bottom) surface or "body" of an object; and finally "sentuh" can mean to touch, come in contact with, lean against, or rest on. When I asked the artist to show me his interpretation of the title, he got up from his seat, stood with his back a few inches away from the wall and stretched out his arms above his head. He then touched the wall with his fingertips, leaning his shoulders against the wall. "This is what I'm trying to communicate - the condition of an object when it is 'standing' in this position without a strong support or base to hold it up."

Those who know Handiwirman, or Handi, as he is commonly known among friends, can tell you that he is a man of few words. Handi tends to communicate more clearly through actions than words; if he is unable to tell you exactly what he wants or means, he will show you. His approach to artmaking is organic; touch and instinct - and a certain amount humour and whimsy – lead the

way in his process. He has said that in many ways he feels his method of working is closer to that of a "tukang", a craftsman or artisan; making (an object) is not only about the idea or concept, but also about developing the right sets of skills or techniques, and understanding the characteristics and temperament of one's material. He is sensitive to fine detail - for example, the difference in emotional quality between lines created by running a pencil against a ruler, drawn freehand, or deliberately jagged. Scale is a major concern - enlarging or reducing the size of an object communicates different messages, inviting one to come close or to stay away. He pays meticulous attention to presentation, the environment that his works inhabit and how they correspond to or displace other objects that surround them.

For an artist who almost always prefers to work alone, and is used to the creature comforts of his studio and Yogyakarta's laid-back environment, this six-week residency in Singapore, which stretched from September to November 2011 (his first ever residency stint), proved to be an "interesting" challenge. Not only did he have to adjust to living in a dense urban environment, he also had to find a feasible method of working and communicating with a team of "strangers" in a collaborative process. Handi's grasp of English is limited, and so to overcome the language barrier, he decided to "shadow" the technicians in the STPI workshop on a daily basis for over a week to learn hands-on about the different aspects of the papermaking and print process. "I need another kind of language to communicate and it is important for me to understand how things work downstairs (in the workshop). That way, even if words fail me, I can communicate through action; we can show each other what we mean."

One of the questions that faced Handi before taking up the residency was this: "why print when I can paint?". "I have to find another way of working with printmaking, as a way of carrying forward what I've been doing so far." After his preliminary visit to STPI, Handi decided that he would concentrate on paper —"as a surface, a medium in art-making, and as an object we encounter everyday. I wanted to learn what paper can do and what I can do with paper". For Chief Printer Eitaro Ogawa, Handi's decision to concentrate on papermaking and moulding made perfect sense. "We were interested to see how an artist like Handiwirman, someone who is instinctively drawn to the three-dimensional form, would respond to and challenge the processes (and perception) of printmaking. It is natural that he would choose to work with paper. Paper is the 'skin' of printmaking; printmaking begins with paper."

Over the span of his residency, Handiwirman, in collaboration with STPI's team, led by Chief Printer Eitaro Ogawa and Senior Papermaker Gordon Koh, produced eight bodies of work - unique prints that range from paper pulp drawings to relief pieces and freestanding sculptures that employ papermaking's broad range of processes. Those familiar with the artist's work will see certain forms and textures from his past works revisited, yet simultaneously witness the artist's move into new territories.

Tutur Karena – Melihat (Tutur Karena – Seeing) was one of the first works they created in STPI's workshop. In the artist's native Padang dialect, "tutur karena" can be understood as "a metaphor" - "a way of saying something without mentioning the thing itself." This motif, usually presented in the form of the human head, or face, has appeared in several exhibitions in the past and is part of a larger ongoing series. Here, the artist distils a common form, the human head, to its barest and most minimal, playfully blurring

the boundaries between figuration and abstraction, and engaging with questions of presentation and representation. With each manifestation, Handi's Tutur Karena head is pregnant with performative potential. The depth of emotion inhabiting each work is palpable, mesmerising. In Tutur Karena – Melihat, cast paper "faces" (or masks) are linked to one another by peculiar voodoolike charms. A resin mould was especially created in the workshop to shape and dry the cast paper into smooth concave forms. The impassive "3-d paper" faces, as the artist playfully calls them, are countered by the frisson of unexpected materials in unlikely juxtapositions used to create the charms. A razor blade wrapped with the finger of a rubber glove, bits of sponge and thread, gingerly placed into particular points of the cast paper, suggests a sense of danger, inflected by a strange black humour. Meanwhile unidentified leftover "bits" - possibly rubber, flesh-coloured paper or polyurethane scraps, are tacked directly onto each face, hinting perhaps at the different features of the human face.

Two further *Tutur Karena* works would follow: *Tutur Karena* – *Air Mata #01* (*Tutur Karena* – *Tears #01*) in black, and its melancholic, "emotional twin", *Tutur Karena* – *Air Mata #02* (*Tutur Karena* – *Tears #02*) in white. These columns of crying heads, supported by the flow of tears create a soulful and heartbreaking image, bringing new meaning to the notion of "crying a river". The "heads" in both works were constructed using a papier-mache technique using Kozo paper, strong yet light, translucent and malleable, enabling the "heads" to balance on the "tears" sculpted by the artist from acrylic resin blocks and rods. The sheeny lead grey surface in *Tutur Karena* – *Air Mata #01* is the result of graphite coating later sealed with epoxy, while a similar layer of epoxy is applied to lend *Tutur Karena* – *Air Mata #02* its porcelain-like character.

Another familiar form that has re-appeared in this exhibition is the "sarong house", first seen in the work *Untitled* shown as part of "*Things: The Order of Handiwirman*" at Cemeti Art House in Yogyakarta in 2009. The original sculptural work presents a conjoined pair of wooden houses on stilts, their lengths wrapped and suspended in checked sarong (pink on the left house and blue-green on the right), balancing atop an inverted version of itself, cast in rubber the colour of exposed flesh. This unusual construction is a typically bizarre product of the artist's curious imagination - unexpected, absurd and even, at times, spine-tinglingly gross.

[1] Several other works in this exhibition are the result of last minute decisions or interventions. Conjuring reminders of cowhide, scarred flesh tissue, and maps, Ujung Sangkut Sisi Sentuh II - Contact Points began as an early material sample for the paper "lungs" in Hisap – Keluarkan. Handi was drawn to the paper's texture and decided to work over it with a layer of flocking and simultaneously "drew" on the flocked area by masking out sections and lines to allow the paper's original texture and colour to come through; the flocked paper work was then "tacked" onto a grid of red thread, needles and acrylic rods. Jalan Terang Berbalut Gelap #01 & #02 (A Bright Road Shrouded by Darkness) were test prints from 1/3 Dari Lorong Ini, airbrushed and painted over with acrylic paint.

In this exhibition, the form of the sarong house is carried forward in two directions. In the pair of panels making up *Dari Untitled #01* (*From Untitled #01*) (diptych), the sarong house is re-interpreted as a relief work. Three conjoined houses are presented on each panel, the checked sarongs forming the walls and roofs clamped onto a fleshy mass cast from polyurethane which appears to ooze out from inside the house structures. The checked sarongs are constructed using coloured cubes made of paper pulp, placed side by side on freshly-made paper, their colours melting into one another. Meanwhile, a velvety surface is applied onto the polyurethane form using the technique of flocking, to accentuate its corporeal nature - a hybrid of animal skin and putty.

Dari Untitled #02 (From Untitled #02) presents us with three incomplete pictures of the original sarong house, Untitled (2009). Each of the images presents alternate negative and positive images of the sarong house, suggesting perhaps that the complete image of this form can only exist in our imagination. In the central panel we see the outline of the house and its inverted form loosely "drawn" in red thread on paper, with the upper body filled in with pressed red-pigmented paper-pulp cubes. On the right, the inverted "flesh" form is flocked with red synthetic fibres on paper, traced around its edges by perforated outlines, suggesting the points where the red thread from the central panel has passed through. At the last minute, the artist decided to include the acrylic 'tray' that had been used to hold the paper pulp cubes for the central image, and cut from it the shape of the sarong house. The left panel "remembers" the process of making the central image, its acrylic surface stained and flecked with traces of red paper pulp cubes, adding another poetic layer to the relationships within the work. [1]

Jalan Berbalik (Moving in Reverse) also plays with the relationship between the positive and negative. A stack of birds (the positive image) is "pushed" or "pulled out" from a column of "graphite slate" (leaving negative space), installed above human eye level. The column of "slate" is in fact made up of paper facsimiles of graphite slate, produced from vats of compressed paper pulp. The work expresses layered paradoxes of image and form. Lightweight, fragile paper takes the form of dark, heavy slate; birds, otherworldly and light, symbols of freedom, take flight from the heavy and brittle slate.

As Eitaro and I talked about the unique manner in which Handi's work has managed to straddle both the two-dimensional or three-dimensional realm, I was reminded that the word "cetak" in Bahasa Indonesia can be applied to mean "to print" (an image) or "to cast" (an object in the context of sculptures). The "heads" and "faces" in Tutur Karena series to the polyurethane forms of Dari Untitled #01 and the slates in Jalan Berbalik are the result of different casting processes (from moulds). "Casting from a mould is not that different from printing from a plate. It has the same intent – to reproduce", Eitaro said. "Handi's work embraces the basic principles of printmaking; I see them as both sculpture and image."

One of the ideas that Handi was determined to realise during his time at STPI was to "print" the passageway (over 17 meters) that connects the gallery to the staff's pantry, artist's studio and workshops, one of the busiest corridors in the building. The idea to print this particular stretch of STPI's floor space was partly inspired by what the artist discovered walking around Singapore and observing pedestrian behaviour, which prompted such questions as, "why do we always follow the path set before us? Why do we naturally

gravitate towards middle ground? Why not take the road less travelled?"

The making of this work was in itself certainly a new technical challenge for the STPI team. First of all, they had to ask themselves what type of material would be suitable to fabricate a mould of the floor - sensitive enough to record the fine, uneven textures of the corridor's cement surface yet durable enough to be pressed on during the printing stage. The team was also concerned about whether they had the means to create the size of the paper needed to fit the mould (the width of corridor). Through the experience of working with Chinese artist Zhan Wang, the STPI team came up with the right polyurethane substance, viscous enough to "peel off the skin of the corridor", and transfer its traces – "a short history (10 years) of the footsteps this passageway has experienced" - onto paper. The result is the epic 1/3 Dari Lorong Ini (1/3 From This Corridor), a suite of 14 prints of actual physical space, offering us an aerial (reverse) view of STPI's corridor. Each print is accompanied by an imaginary dialogue between two characters (A and B), which explains the outcome of the print process. In Eitaro's eyes, this is one of the most conceptually challenging works about printmaking as it is about "going back to basics. Distilling. Printing the thing itself."

In two other ambitious works, the artist has explored new techniques for drawing and sculpting with paper. Ujung Sangkut Sisi Sentuh – Suspended Forms is a series of automatic drawings in paper pulp, quick "sketches" of imagined environments populated by the trash bags, zinc sheets, H-beams and tree trunks and other remembered forms that were presented as monumental sculptures in the artist's recent solo exhibition, "Tak Berakar, Tak Berpucuk" in Jakarta. A special mix of abaca was selected to produce a thin translucent background, with additional layers subsequently poured over the translucent base to build up the opaque sections of each image. Gordon tells me that they had to work "blind" during the pouring process as the mixture for translucent paper is almost clear when in liquid form. In between the layering process, paper pulp lines were laid on the wet surface to form the images for each work. Each pulp drawing is encased in a circular clear acrylic frame with metallic rim, giving the illusion of being suspended in mid air, a visual experience that invites the audience to "come close but don't touch".

Using a technique similar to that for making traditional fire balloons or sky lanterns, the workshop creates a pair of paper "lungs" in the work *Hisap – Keluarkan* (*Inhale – Exhale*). This interactive piece invites the audience to "breathe" into the work by stepping on wooden paddles placed in between a pair of mechanical "paper lungs", stained in flesh tones mixed from shades of salmon, pink and coral, heavily wrinkled and held together by a steel frame. Air is pumped into one side of the form and extracted from the other through the left-right step action, coaxing the work to come to life, gently expanding and deflating. The "lungs" are created by tightly packed abaca and cotton fibres and colour pigments to create a tough, impermeable bag, while the paddles are manual pumps, typically used by silversmiths in Yogyakarta to feed the fire in their workshops.

In bringing his unusual, instinctive and tactile way of working to this project, Handiwirman, working with STPI's team, has successfully transformed and transcended the typical use of paper in the printmaking process, highlighting paper's rich physical and narrative potential as a medium and object. The works in this exhibition are invitations to experience and engage in silent conversations with and about objects and images we encounter, each suggesting in their own way a sense of fragility, vulnerability or precariousness. They remind us of the beauty, the wonder and the strange in the mundane, overlooked, everyday experiences we take for granted in life. "When you examine and you look closely, the familiar becomes the strange. That is the difference between seeing and looking."

—Adeline Ooi, January 2012

Adeline Ooi is an art writer and curator based in Malaysia. She is the co-founder of RogueArt, contemporary Southeast Asian art specialists, focusing on the creative, strategic and organisational management of art and cultural projects, exhibitions, collections and publications.

















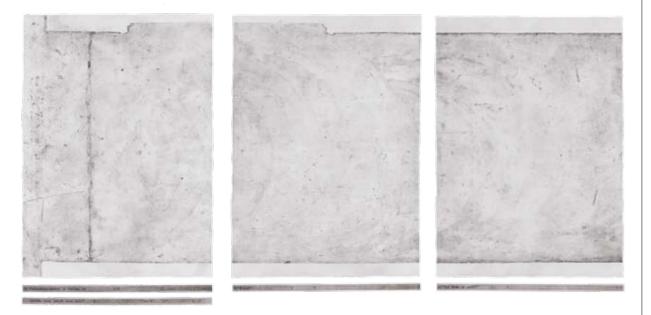




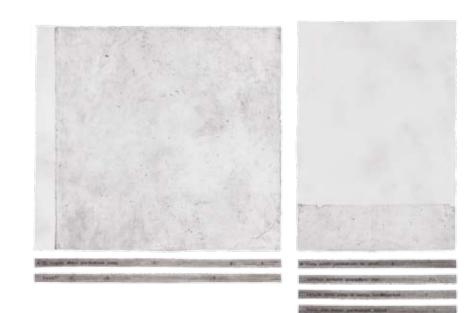


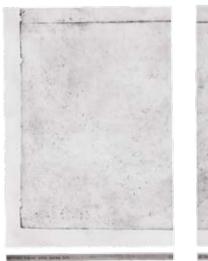


tarlalu luas untuk kita lalui" B. G. Yal Bisa. di print?" J. A. Yal Bisa. di print?" B. Yang pasti permukaan ini akan terlihat terbalik posisinya, dan banyak tinta yang di surap berdasarkan balus dan kasar permukaan kihtat."





















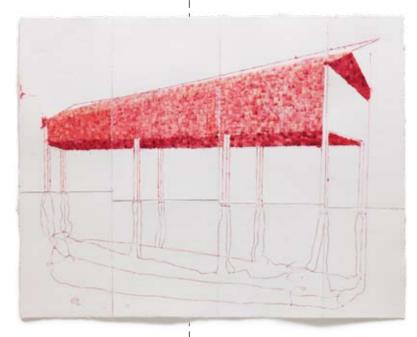














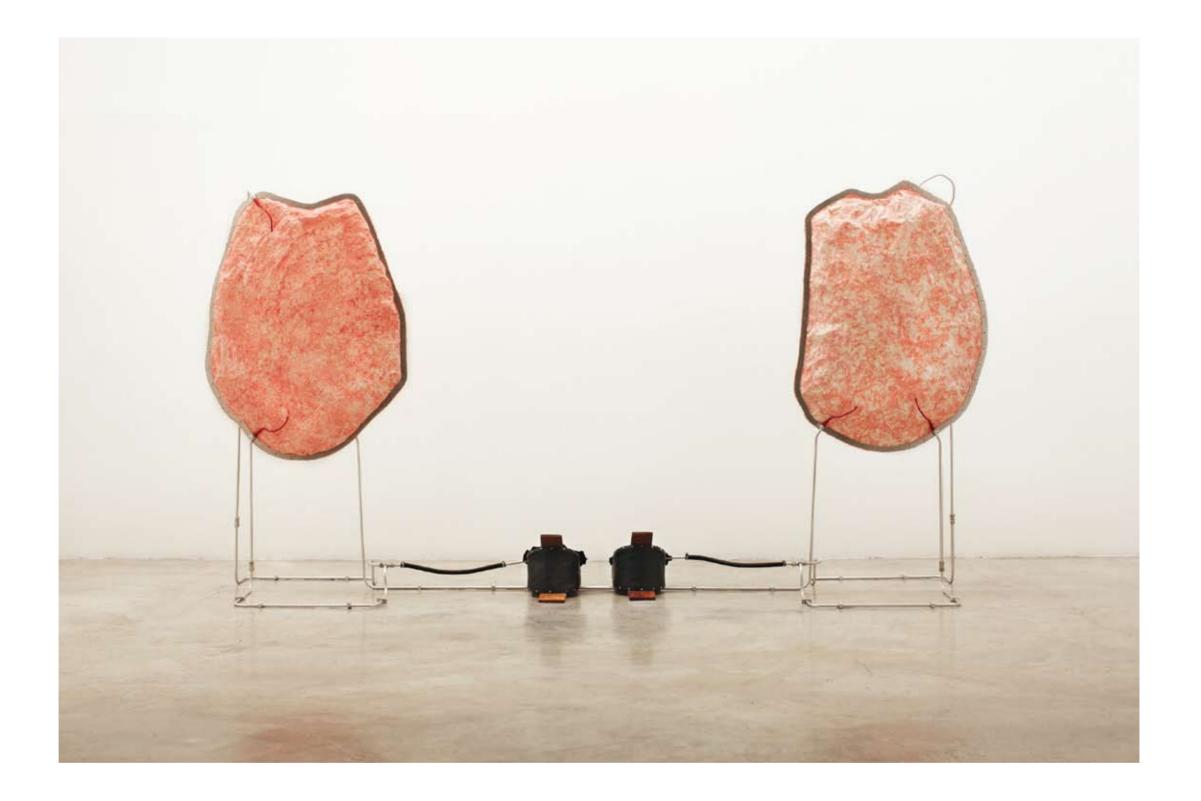
Dari Untitled #02 / From Untitled #02, 2012, Triptych, left piece 146x184x6 cm (57½x72½x2¼ in) mixed media, center piece 129x165 cm (50¾x65 in) mixed media, right piece 130x165 cm (51x65 in) mixed media

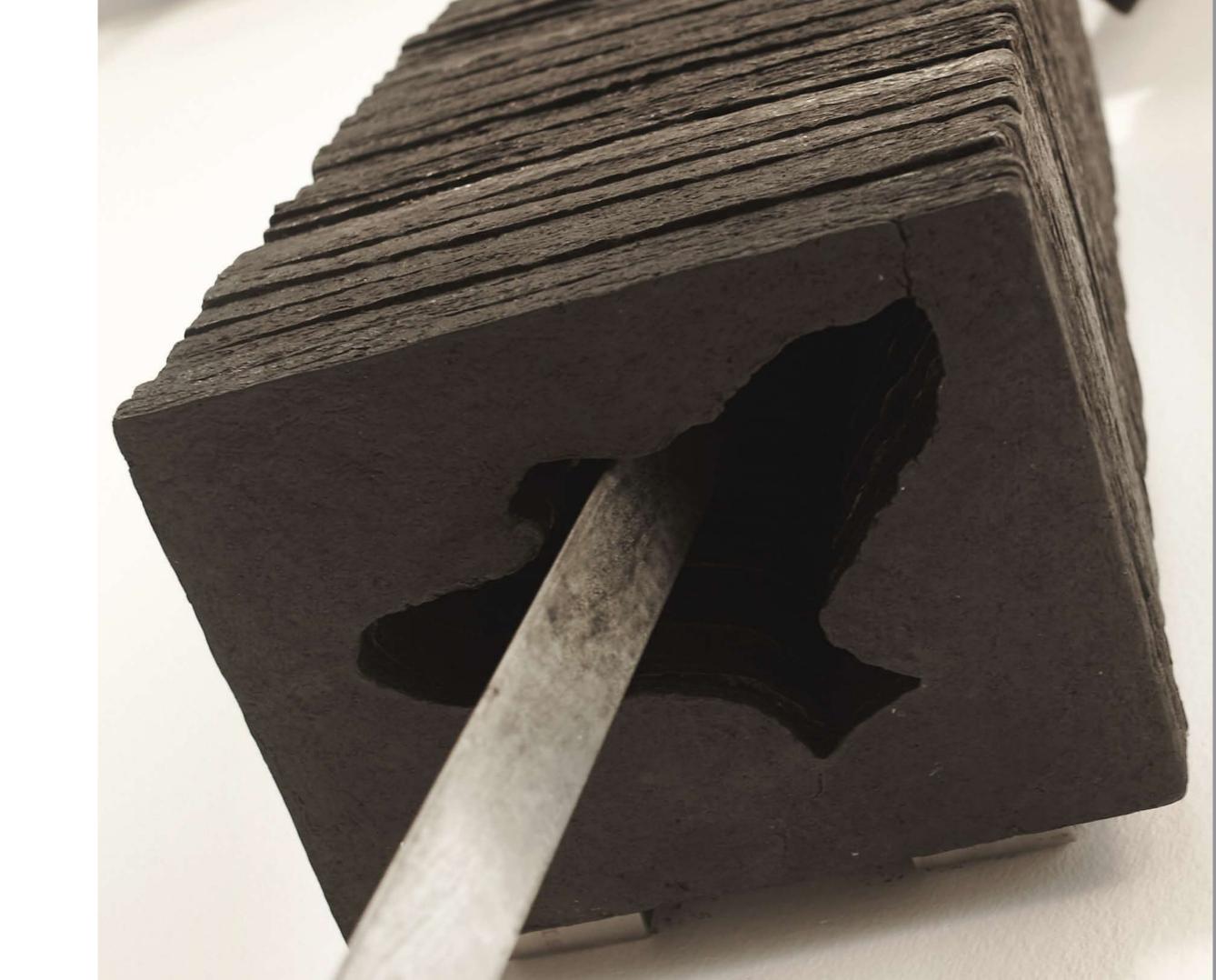


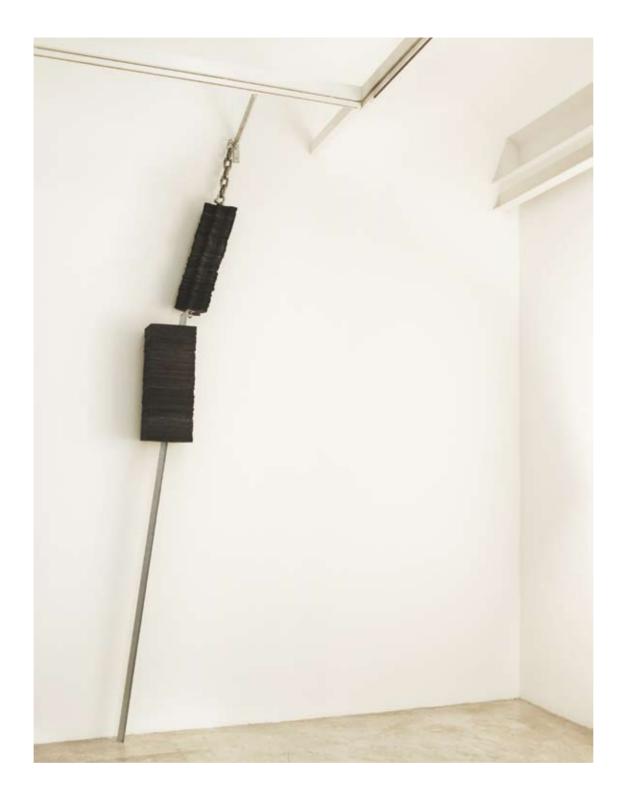
































BIOGRAPHY

Handiwirman Saputra (b. 1975, Bukittinggi, West Sumatra, Indonesia)

Handiwirman Saputra is a cofounder and member of Jendela Art Group (Kelompok Seni Rupa Jendela). An adept sculptor and painter, he is comfortable switching between two- to three dimensional medium, consistently challenging his viewers with different ways of seeing and understanding of material and textures. The artist's world revolves around objects - as form, symbols or metaphors - carefully selected to convey a silent narrative, playful yet disquieting. Handiwirman has exhibited widely on his own as well as a member of Jendela Art Group in important group shows around Indonesia and Asia. His recent international outing included "Everything You Can Imagine Is Real #1" at Galerie Christian Hosp in Berlin with fellow artists Yuli Prayitno and Yusra Martunus (2011) and "Collector's Stage" at the Singapore Art Museum. Handiwirman lives and works in Yogyakarta with his family.

EDUCATION

1993 – 1996

- Indonesian Institute of Arts (ISI), Yogyakarta, Indonesia

SOLO EXHIBITIONS

2011

- "Tak Berakar, Tak Berpucuk/No Roots, No Shoots", National Gallery of Indonesia, Jakarta

2009

- "Things: The Order of Handiwirman", Cemeti Art House, Yogyakarta

2007

- "Archaeology of a Hotel Room", Nadi Gallery, Jakarta

2004

- "Apa-apanya Dong?", Nadi Gallery, Jakarta

2001

- "Patah Hati; Broken Heart", Cemeti Art House, Yogyakarta

2000

- "Provocative Objects", Lontar Gallery, Jakarta

1999

- "Benda", Benda Art Space, Yogyakarta

SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS

201

- "Ekspansi", Indonesian Contemporary Sculpture Exhibition, National Gallery of Indonesia, Jakarta
- "ART JOG 11", Taman Budaya Yogyakarta, Yogyakarta
- "Everything You Can Imagine is Real #1: Handiwirman Saputra, Yuli Prayitno and Yusra Martunus", Galerie Christian Hosp, Berlin
- "Indonesian Eye: Fantasies and Realities", Ciputra Artpreneur Center, Jakarta
- "Collectors Stage: Asian Contemporary Art from Private Collections",
 Singapore Art Museum, Singapore

2010

- "Made in Indonesia", Galerie Christian Hosp, Berlin
- "Contemporaneity: Contemporary Art in Indonesia", Museum of Contemporary Art Shanghai, Shanghai
- "Classic Contemporary: Contemporary Southeast Asian Art from the Singapore Art Museum Collection", Singapore Art Museum
- "Pleasure of Chaos-Inside New Indonesian Art", Primo Marella Gallery, Milan

009

- "Jogja Jamming", 10th Jogja Biennale, Yogyakarta
- "Fluid Zone: Traffic and Mapping", Jakarta Biennale 2009, Grand Indonesia, Jakarta
- "Beyond the Dutch", Centraal Museum Utrecht, Utrecht
- "Jendela A Play of the Ordinary", NUS Museum, Singapore

2008

- "Coffee, Cigarettes and Pad Thai, Contemporary Art in Southeast Asia", Eslite Gallery, Taipei
- "Expose #1 A Presentation of Indonesian Contemporary Art by Deutsche Bank & Nadi Gallery", Four Seasons Hotel, Jakarta
- "Manifesto", National Gallery of Indonesia, Jakarta
- "Inanimate Performance", Soka Art Center, Taipei

2007

- "Cilukba!/Peekaboo!", KSRJ (Kelompok Seni Rupa Jendela), Valentine Willie Fine Art, Kuala Lumpur
- "Soka's View", Southeast Asian Contemporary Art, Soka Contemporary Space, Beijing & Taipei
- "Indonesian Contemporary Art Now", Nadi Gallery, Jakarta

2006

- "Belief", 1st Singapore Biennale, City Hall, Singapore
- "Passing on Distance, Contemporary Art in Indonesia: The 4th Generation", Base Gallery, Tokyo
- "ICON: Retrospective", Jogja Gallery, Yogyakarta

2005

- "Open View", Biasa Art Space, Bali
- "Sculpture Expanded", CP Art Space, Jakarta
- "Realis(Me) Banal", Gracia Art Gallery, Surabaya, Indonesia
- "Seni Rupa Alat Bantu", Bentara Budaya Yogyakarta, Yogyakarta
- "Pseudo Still Life: Obyek dan Auranya", Semarang Gallery, Semarang, Indonesia
- "Passing on Distance, Contemporary Art in Indonesia: The 4th Generation", NAF Gallery, Nagoya, Japan
- "Biasa", KSRJ (Kelompok Seni Rupa Jendela), Nadi Gallery, Jakarta
- "Urban-Culture", 2nd CP Biennale, Bank Indonesia Museum, Jakarta

2004

- "Untitled, an Assemblage of Sign", CCF (French Cultural Center), Jakarta
- "Object(ify)", Nadi Gallery, Jakarta
- "Mempertimbangkan Tradisi", Sanggar Sakato, National Gallery of Indonesia, Jakarta
- "Barcode", 16th Yogyakarta Art Festival, Taman Budaya Yogyakarta, Yogyakarta

2003

- "In Memory of 100 Days of H. Widayat's Death", H. Widayat Museum, Mungkid, Magelang, Indonesia
- "Fusion Strength", Benda Art Space, Yogyakarta
- "Shock and Wave", New Media Art, Bandung
- "Interpellation", CP Open Biennale, National Gallery of Indonesia, Jakarta
- "Countrybution", 7th Jogja Biennale, Taman Budaya Yogyakarta, Yogyakarta

2002

- "Dream Project: Under Construction", Fabriek Gallery, Bandung
- "Under Construction: New Dimensions of Asian Art",
 Tokyo Opera City Art Gallery, Tokyo
- "Ecstaticus Mundi", Selasar Sunaryo Art Space, Bandung & Air Art House, Jakarta
- "Object", Fabriek Gallery, Bandung
- "Tali Ikat: Fiber Connection", Taman Budaya Yogyakarta, Yogyakarta
- "Pose", KSRJ (Kelompok Seni Rupa Jendela), Affandi Museum, Yogyakarta

2001

- "Not I, Am I?", Nadi Gallery, Jakarta
- "Contemporary Craft", National Gallery of Indonesia, Jakarta

2000

 "Membuka Kemungkinan", KSRJ (Kelompok Seni Rupa Jendela), Taman Budaya, Yogyakarta & Cipta Gallery, Taman Ismail Marzuki. Jakarta

RESIDENCIES & AWARDS

2011

- Artist in Residence in STPI, Singapore

998

- Finalist, Philip Morris ASEAN Art Award in Hanoi, Vietnam

1997

- Jurors' Choice Award, Philip Morris Indonesian Art Award

COMMISSIONED PROJECTS

2007

- Novotel Hotel, Bandung

COLLECTIONS

- OHD Museum of Modern & Contemporary Indonesian Art, Singapore Art Museum

STPI Staff

Director: Emi Eu
Deputy Director: Ong Boo Chai
Administrative and Finance: Goh Yong Hee, Maideen Babu
Gallery Manager: Lily Phua
Head, Marketing and Development: Nor Jumaiyah
Education and Public Programmes: Sylvia Tsai
Gallery Assistants: Joycelyn Ng, Teng Yen Hui
Registrar Assistant: Richard Lim

Workshop Manager: Eng Joo Heng Chief Printer: Eitaro Ogawa Senior Printer and Registrar: Tamae Iwasaki

Senior Printers: Chong Li Sze Oh Thiam Guan KC Poh

Senior Papermaker: Gordon Koh Papermaker: Awaluddin Masnor

Workshop Apprentice: Tan Taitien Nur Azam Ismail Calvin Tan Miyuki Chida

Assistants: Karen Heng Olivia Lin Ong Chee Wee Yang Shihui

Singapore Tyler Print Institute

Singapore Tyler Print Institute is a catalyst and an advocate for new ideas, dialogues and developments for contemporary art in print and paper. We collaborate with emerging and recognised artists worldwide to create artworks with our exceptional print and paper-making facilities and expertise.

Established in 2002 with the support of the Singapore Government, STPI is a not-for-profit organisation that presents innovative exhibitions and programmes to a broad audience, where works on paper and print by contemporary artists can be discovered in unique and engaging ways.

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