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## Initiatives from within her sanctuary

Carla Bianpoen , Contributor , Jakarta | Thu, 01/28/2010 11:39 AM | Arts & Design



Ay Tjoe

Christine, a special structure for a 20-meter painting.

Ay Tjoe, or Christine, as she is also called, is a dearly loved artist in Indonesia. Not only is she beautiful in the eyes of many, she also has a tender countenance, is soft spoken and has a humble demeanor.

But above all, her works are unique, carrying a signature quality that defies any trends existing in the world.

With eight solo exhibitions of works varying between dry point, painting, drawing, photography and installation, she has also shown she is a hard working artist whose splendid command of techniques combined with honest artistry has made her an artist in a class apart.

It is therefore not surprising that her works are wildly sought after, and collectors line up the moment there is the notion she is creating new artwork.

Many even tend to purchase her work without having even seen it. This trend has bothered not only collectors, but also serious artists like Ay Tjoe Christine.

However, most just grumble without taking real action, but Ay Tjoe decided to do something. She thought it was high time to make them aware of her art work, away from market politics, and bring

back the real value of art. She conceived a unique strategy in today's art society, creating a painting of 20 meters, featuring as she explained, her life story.



Ay Tjoe Christine,

Symmetrical Sanctuary.

Curator Asmudjo Irianto conceived the structure in a circular shape for display.

In coordination with SIGIarts, 20 prospective buyers, preferably owning few or none of her works, were invited. She then asked them to look at the 20-meter canvas that was displayed in a special round-shaped wooden construction, determine which part each would like to have, and negotiate with each other how to go about dividing the piece amongst them.

Cutting will take place at the closure of the exhibition on Jan. 30. In doing so, she forced collectors to put aside their strong ego, and focus their attention on the artwork.

Some who were willing to buy the entire painting, but the artist declined, as it would deviate from the objective of having collectors focus on the art work, talk to each other, and to her, and start a new way of collecting art.

The 20 prospective buyers who were invited in a preview a week before the exhibition opened decided together where to best cut the painting so that the cut piece would not spoil another scene in the painting. Nineteen buyers returned home with pieces of varying sizes. The price of each piece is determined by the meter.

It would seem Ay Tjoe Christine created the painting in a relaxed mood of fun. Her usual shapes made of a complex tangle of lines are rarely seen here.

Yet the painful sides of her life remain tangible, with white painting at the end of the long canvas possibly denoting the uncertainty of the future. Or it could also signal another beginning. If this is the case, then this exhibition may be the closure of a chapter of her life.

Ay Tjoe Christine sees the cutting of the large painting as an act of sharing (each gets a slice of the cake). On the other hand, the slices could be metaphors for the phases or episodes of

her life.

Ay Tjoe Christine is known as an introverted artist, who does not speak much. Not many people can enter the secrets of her life around which she keeps a veil of mystery.

Now she has opened the doors of her sanctuary, and we shall wait for her further acts and arts.

— Photos By Carla Bianpoen

**Ay Tjoe Christine, Symmetrical Sanctuary**

Solo exhibition at SIGIarts

Until Jan. 30, 2010

Jl. Mahakam no. 11, Jakarta