

## **Yuli Prayitno: A Bricoleur with Love as His Message**

Yuli Prayitno loves assembling various materials and objects. Assembling and fitting things together provides the strength and general feature of his oeuvre so far. And regarding this – as a technique, approach as well as conceptual principle – world's contemporary art owes to the mischievous but at once genial key figure of Dada movement Marcel Duchamp. At least it is Duchamp who specifically and effectively introduced the use of various daily objects and materials categorizing as discarded items, junk, waste, or industrial products as proper formal and visual elements of artworks. In Duchamp's times, such stuff was called ready-mades.

In general the approach was then called assemblage or bricolage. Both terms basically refer to the pattern of art creation that emphasizes the process of assembling different materials, objects and forms. Art historian William Seitz relates assemblage art with the Dada movement and its legacy until today. Among the reasons for the approach, according to Seitz, is *"the need of certain artists to defy and obliterate accepted categories, to fabricate aggressive objects, to present subjects tabooed by accepted standards, to undermine the striving for permanency by using soiled, valueless, and fragile materials, and even to present ordinary objects for examination unaltered."*<sup>iii</sup>

So assemblage is distinguishable from collage from the viewpoint of the three-dimensional materials in use. In this respect Seitz says that assemblage is *"the fitting together of parts and pieces."* In the actual practice, the activity of fitting together parts and pieces straightly deals with materials, forms, and objects already existent as they are, as real and

common as we find them in daily life. In addition, assemblage almost always significantly involves the artist's manual skills in fitting together various different things.

That's why some art theoreticians think the term bricolage more suitable. They borrow the term from the studies by the French anthropologist Claude Lévi-Strauss. Bricoleur, according to Lévi-Strauss, is a person who relies on manual skills in working. Yet, the sort of work done by a bricoleur differs from that of a craftsperson. Bricoleurs can work without requiring any specific conditions regarding tools and materials. They can do with anything at hand.<sup>ii</sup> The "anything at hand" may include various articles already made by another craftsperson or expert, the materials, forms as well as original functions of which may have no connection at all, both functionally and symbolically, with what bricoleurs produce. Explaining the uniqueness of bricoleurs, Lévi-Strauss distinguishes bricoleurs from engineers. Bricoleurs have the ability to handle different things simultaneously without having to divide them into significant and insignificant halves in relation with the availability of materials or tools. They design, assemble and construct something "other" than (not necessarily and exclusively "new") everything already there. Engineers work by relying on the availability of materials and tools, and in connection with some specific goal, a project. Therefore engineers approximate or manifest scientific reasoning while bricoleurs manifest "mischievous and wild" reasoning.<sup>iii</sup>

In the case of Yuli Prayitno's works we are face to face with various forms and objects, also different materials and techniques, worked on with astonishing meticulousness. He makes use of lamps, plastic dolls, chairs, matches, faucets, doorframes, and through used railroad planks. He works with wood, metals, polyester resin, rubber, aluminum, and

silver. In working he involves his skills in molding, shaping, joining, arranging, and carving while using different kinds of tools.

Because bricoleurs begin with – and ‘converse’ directly – actual daily objects, they are always in dialogs with the actual, the objective and the concrete. Not surprisingly, in modern art the concrete – concrete art – used to be taken as the antithesis of the abstract.<sup>iv</sup> At the same time bricolage, which refers to bricoleurs’ approach, process and product, acquires a strategic meaning with regard to the contemporary issue around the production-distribution-consumption of various goods in our daily practices.

There is the widely spread assumption that currently people are already overwhelmed by objects and goods unceasingly produced – to be then consumed – almost excessively. As critical sociology examines this doesn’t necessarily imply that individuals or societies have become totally subservient and bereft of the option for freedom. Michael de Certeau, on his study on the issue, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, accurately shows that daily life practices also have their strategic points where individuals and societies are actually actively involved as the subjects of social transformation. And one of the practices that have strategic functions in the process is, borrowing again from Lévi-Strauss, bricolage. De Certeau takes bricolage as an action, the word being a verb (*bricolent*), and says, “The ‘everyday’ arts no more ‘form’ a new product than they have their own language. They ‘make do’ (*bricolent*).”<sup>v</sup> Bricolage enables everyone to change or shift the functions and values of various objects and goods that one consumes to suit one’s needs and purposes.

Today this very aspect characterizes various contemporary artworks. Artists pick, use or

borrow daily objects not for the mere sake of exposing the dominance of industrial production over our daily life. Of more importance is the demonstration of the wildness, mischief and creativity of human beings that still take part in producing “alternative” meanings and values out of such objects as an attempt to enrich and liberate their own lives and worlds.

I have touched upon how bricoleurs work “wildly” to put taboos to the test while trying to extend definitions and standards. The inclination to fit together different materials, objects and ready-mades, to be associated later with the drive to put to the test common definitions and standards, are observable in Yuli Prayitno’s works on exhibition now. Yuli himself connects this with his childhood memories and habits, with the narrow definition of sculpture imposed on him during his student years, and with his most specific interest in technical skills to work with different kinds of materials and tools.

Following is Yuli Prayitno’s explanations and observations, taken from my interview with him, which reveal his experiences and thoughts regarding techniques and materials that remain central in his creative process.

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*Enin Supriyanto (ES): You studied sculpture. Any specific reason to choose the particular field of study?*

Yuli Prayitno (YP): Ever since childhood my interest in three-dimensional objects has

been much greater than my interest in, say, drawing. It maybe because my father worked at the Ceramic Research Center in Bandung (under to the Department of Industry of the Republic of Indonesia). My father's workplace had a gallery displaying ceramic works. I would often go there with my father, going in and out the gallery. I think my childhood memories of the various three-dimensional forms are far more strongly stuck in my mind than those of paintings are, for instance. When I was a primary school pupil I made, say, sculptures more often than drawing. What's more, at home my father kept various tools. I could easily play with them.

So, it's been with me since childhood I guess ... About the decision to study sculpture, it was like ... How should I put it...? Hmmm... There is the obvious physical effort to make, to produce certain objects. Besides, there is the studio filled up with tools, including even heavy machinery too. Well ... That was what I used to figure as a child.

*Enin Supriyanto (ES): What year did you enroll in the ISI Institute of the Arts?*

Yuli Prayitno (YP): 1993

*ES: And were graduated in 2001?*

YP: Yes.

*ES: During your student years did you already make works and take part in exhibitions?*

YP: Yes... I began exhibiting my works in 1996, at our campus and some places else. That year, 1996, the institute gave me the best sculpture award, and in 1997 I was selected to participate in the ASEAN Young Sculptors Forum, together with Ikhwan Noor.

*ES: Was it a local or regional event?*

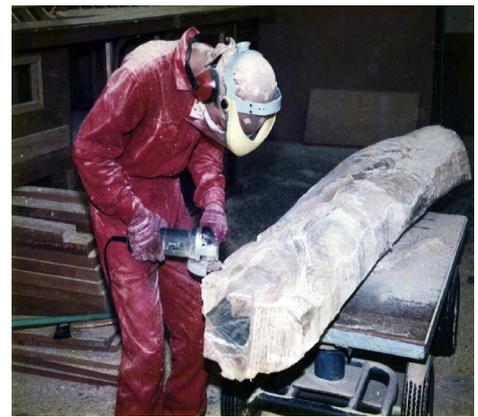
YP: If I'm not mistaken the event had something to do with ASEAN. Senior and junior sculptors were selected to take part in it.

*ES: Really? Great! Never heard before about the forum.*

YP: As I remember, the forum involved educational institutions. ISI was appointed to handle the program. That's as far as I know.

*ES: What work won you the award?*

YP: It was just a wooden sculpture. Back then I hadn't played yet with different kinds of materials as I do now.



Yuli Prayitno in action, and with the work that was appointed the Best Work, *Work Shop ASEAN Youth Sculpture Exhibition*, Bandar Sri Begawan, Brunei Darussalam, 1997.

*ES: Where is it now? Collected by the arts institute?*

YP: No... It was exhibited together with other works from the other studios at our campus like the painting and graphics studios. Next, the selected ones were sent to Brunei to exhibit in a museum. Mine, so they said, was displayed at the airport there. *(Since then Yuli has never seen the work again. He doesn't know where exactly and how his work is now displayed in Brunei.)*

*ES: You've ever stayed a while in Bali to work at a studio that produces artworks using glass as the material, is that right? When was it?*

YP: Right... From 2001 till 2002...exactly one year. I worked for Bali Glass, working with a Japanese artist Seiki Torige.

*ES: What did you do there? How could you get a job like that in Bali?*

YP: Seiki encountered a problem. His works were from glass... So he was faced with the problem of how to make molds for high-temperature firing. He challenged me to solve the problem. There were the samples. There were few people he'd ever asked to try. Someone ever succeeded in making the mold for a work from glass in the form of the human figure, high... But for the head, he couldn't make it. Then I said, I'd rather try my own molding technique. After trying several times to make the intended work in small sizes, it worked out. Satisfied, Seiki then asked me to work there.

I knew Seiki through a friend, also an artist from Japan, who ever visited my studio to see my works. This friend already knew Seiki and introduced me to him.

*ES: Where did you learn the molding technique?*

YP: Oh... When I was a student I got very much interested in ceramics for some time. So I learned from my friends about the molds and through the baking, firing... And again, I have my father who is knowledgeable about ceramics. So I could ask him about blends of materials, molds, and so on. Since long I have always been interested in the technical aspects of material processing for making artworks and in learning a certain technique to the level of proficiency. So, when in Bali, I experimented with my technical knowledge of ceramics. ... It turned out it also works ... (for glass).

*ES: Looking back at your artistic career so far, what do you have to say about your ideas, in general, in creating works?*

YP: Uuumh... Actually, my ideas about it were shaped during student years. Even then my works were often criticized already. Once I made a work out of a hardened fish, molded in a chunk of translucent resin. Friends criticized it, saying that was not a sculpture. So I wondered: "But why?" In my opinion this is all about art ... Because I am an artist I'll be more articulate when using all the media known in the visual arts. If I excelled in writing, well, I'd rather be a writer.

I saw this fish, real fish, and it had its formal and visual elements. It had its artistic elements. If I used the fish in my work, what was the problem?

But back then my friends still held to the conventions in sculpture. Concerning materials, monumental forms, and many other things. But I didn't want to just fulfill the conventional requirements of sculpture. Instead, I was interested in the various questions around three-dimensional forms. I think as far as a work is three-dimensional, it is a sculpture no matter if it is posted on the wall or otherwise displayed.

Someone asked me once, "What good is it in making a sculpture to post on the wall?" Well, what's wrong with that? Volume and form remain there, don't they?

*ES: And are you still with that view now?*

YP: Well... I think ... It's like this. When I see a work that has a characteristic, maybe I'll get bored. In making artworks I begin with the interest to learn certain technical aspects and materials. When I already arrive at a certain proficiency level, I'll be driven to learn something else. This influences my creative process very much.

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How is it to connect the bricolage inclination in Yuli Prayitno's works, which present various objects, articles and forms we commonly find and recognize in daily life, and the theme of "Love" in this current exhibition of his? At this point I think we need to ponder a

while on what Erich Fromm thought about the nature of human beings who are seized by capitalistic industry.

The capitalistic production presupposes a consumption pattern that continuously hungers for various objects, goods, and articles to have. It doesn't matter if they are excessive or superfluous. In a social structure controlled by such production-consumption logic, modern people grow as beings driven entirely by the "Having" mode of existence. In such a situation modern people continuously want to have "new" things. "*New is beautiful!*"<sup>vi</sup>

In the mode of 'Having' people immediately enter an aggressive condition while the others immediately become "enemies". In Fromm's words, "*In this mode of existence all that matters is my acquisition of property and my unlimited right to keep what I have acquired. The having mode excludes others; it does not require any further effort on my part to keep my property or to make productive use of it.*"<sup>vii</sup> In other words the 'Having' mode is the form of *love* for objects, goods, and material wealth, which is extremely exclusive: centered only on the owner, everything is *my property*. And in the logic of production-consumption of today's capitalism, to have as many as possible creates the illusion of human beings' "self-fulfillment".

To Fromm, this illusory and manipulative condition can basically be counterbalanced by another mode of existence that is also potential in human beings: the mode of 'Being'. As Fromm sees it, this mode of 'Being' can operate in connection with the self of an active human being (to love "others") and at the same time distancing oneself from the illusory world and approaching the real world. The human self that is being and active "requires

giving up one's egocentricity and selfishness... "viii Meanwhile it also opens itself to the real world: "*Being refers to the real, in contrast to the falsified, illusionary picture. In this sense, any attempt to increase the sector of being means increased insight into the reality of one's self, of others, of the world around us*".ix

In other words, Fromm discusses "Love" in its two different or even diametrically opposite qualities. The first one is aggressive, illusory and egocentric while the second one is liberating, real and open to the world and coexistence.

Yuli's works presented in this exhibition represent another way of expressing the dealing with what Fromm discusses. In Yuli's own words, the works shown here wants to tell stories about "the love for something... Even the "love" for war is also exposed..."

Here below I quote again part of my interview with Yuli Prayitno dealing with the themes of his works and the origins of the forms in his works. He also tells us what he thinks about the artscene we currently have and what he wants to do with his art next.

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*ES: I surveyed your works, during some last five years, ... and I found that in your works there are almost always references to certain forms that you have used again and again ... uuuhm... for example: matches, ears ... What's so special about these objects or forms?*

YP: Hmmmm... to tell you the truth ... I was brought up in a really chaotic milieu. So I

rarely went out. *(Yuli then said a lot of things about the milieu of a crowded neighborhood in the area of Cicadas in Bandung where he lived with his parents. Wars between gangs often broke there. It often happened that soldiers had to patrol the area at night. That was why his parents always forbade Yuli to play outside in the street with other kids. This was strange and absurd for Yuli as a child. Having no playmates, he would just observe things going around him from inside the house. To kill time he made his own toys, mixing parts of different dolls and toys to produce his own versions of them. He did that every day while watching the behaviors of others, the neighbors, ranging from aged persons who keenly went to the mosque through young people boozing when it was only morning.)*

I often studied people's characters. They vary. The process of identifying people's different characters resembles ignited matches. The ignitions of different matches, though only in seconds, bring different flames. The forms of the flame have different characters. That's how my interest in matches sprang.

*ES: And what about ears?*

YP: Uuumh... My parents are of the Javanese blood. At home we had strict rules, perhaps too rigid to apply these days, about the right way to laugh, the right way to prepare drinks. Such rules were severe indeed in our family. So I thought, well, children don't have any freedom. As a child you only have the obligation to listen to your parents. Just to listen. Those doctrines. This went further even up through schooling and community organizations. I always thought there was no freedom to think independently in our tradition in this country. So I always kept things to myself. I should not say them. Facing

our elders or seniors I was only to listen.

There is actually a sort of parody when I combined the telephone and the ear or the radio and the ear. I think people may say: “When you need to and when it suits you, listen. If you don’t, you needn’t (listen).”

*ES: There are other recurrent formal references: the chili, the balloon, and uhm... the banana leaf.*

YP: Yes... Chili is unique. The form is attractive. But because of what’s inside it, the taste of it, people generally just say “I like it” or “I don’t like it”. That is like clear-cut, black-and-white choices. I use the form of the chili for that very reason, for its potency to remind of that particular issue. The balloon and also the tire have forms and nature familiar to us. They can look inflated or deflated, but they contain “nothing”, only air... Just like people’s hearts, with what shall we fill them?

The banana leaf is just the continuation of my first solo exhibition at the Cemeti Art House. At that time I brought the issue of wrappings, packaging. Well, we have banana leaves to use as different forms of wrappings. With that my interest in the banana leaf began.

*ES: So in your works two significant issues meet. One, technically you tend to combine different materials and forms that have various natures or characters. Two, there is the symbolic issue that is your intention to convey messages however highly personal they are*

*as they concern much with your childhood experiences or your reflections on your daily experiences.*

YP: Yes.... Because my childhood memories are too profound. I see it as an unnatural life. Just think about it, early in the morning two young men with wounds on their bodies, from stabbing, were being carried on three-wheeled pedicabs, passing in front of our house. Such occurrences. They were absurd for me.

*ES: The social environment of your childhood was very tough, wasn't it?*

YP: Yes... *(Yuli then explained again how he often had to nestle at home when there was a gang war in the vicinity. Then soldiers would have to patrol the area till late into the night. He could only peep out from inside the house. His father forbade his children to go out.)*

*ES: Let's go back to your works. Do you pick certain materials because of certain characteristics the materials have, or because you already have some ideas of forms then you think they will be appropriately executed by the use of certain materials?*

YP: In fact it's like this ... The techniques of processing materials always interest me because I've kept this question since my student years: "Why does sculpture only deal with and process copper?" Is it because they don't know the techniques of working with other materials or is there a different reason? This is notwithstanding the fact that at that time, despite the outdated literature, we already had examples of sculptures from materials

other than copper. So I think it is for the artists' interests to learn various techniques and to study different materials to make sculptures. So the technique and material for one work are not always equally suitable for another work. I never limit myself to just one and the same technique. New techniques and materials always interest me. Acquiring new techniques and knowledge of new materials keep me from being constrained by inadequate capacity when I get ideas for new works in particular.

We must strive for a situation when people outside Indonesia know that here in our artscene we have works of different techniques and materials. Not just artworks from the age of animism. Hahaha. So during my student years I already kept trying to make works from various materials although people didn't want to take them as sculptures.

*ES: As in the case of the real fish you have mentioned ...*

YP: Yes. The real fish. It was a small-sized work. I wrapped the fish, put it inside a chunk of resin and on the surface I put text. Later, I moderated my approach. I made molds of chicken wings, chicken heads. There were a lot of controversies then. Some said, "How easy it is to be an artist today. Just buy chicken wings, chicken heads, mold them, and you get artworks." I often rebutted: "I don't need the skill, the expertise in modeling chicken wings and chicken heads. Should I want to make realistic works, I have the ability. But that's not what I need." Such was the situation back then. Everyone thought that if you want to make sculptures, the only material to use is copper.

But things were more complex than that. For instance, in 1996 once a year was already

good enough for sculpture exhibitions to run.

*ES: Okay... Now about your current solo exhibition. A lot of 'hearts' are here. Why?*

YP: When I pick a form to make works out of it, I tend to pick a form already familiar to many people. The point is that the first problem I always face is the typical ignorant remark given by people, and even by those who know me quite well, as soon as they see artworks "Oooh..... I know nothing about art; I just don't get it ... Like a mad man!" That's how it goes. So I've come to think that my work needs a door, which people cannot easily ignore, to enter. So the heart is just a popular icon. People must know and people can immediately connect themselves with the issue of love. Love for something. And even "love" for war is also exposed here.

*ES: So it began with the form of the heart and the love for something? Then it developed into various forms of works?*

YP: Yes, it developed into anything.

*ES: Then you use different techniques and materials. The blackboard, the resin mold, the chair...*

YP: Yes, I'll tell you. When I'm taking a walk, see a certain material, I can get an idea: "All right, I can make a work out of this ..." I often take a walk, to a market for antiques, for example, to enrich my visual experiences. The forms of antique articles often provoke

ideas to make artworks out of them. That's how the process goes.

*ES: Let's regard your works on exhibition here as finished and separate individual works. To you, do these individual works always have their own stories and meanings, or are there some of them that only deal with your preoccupation with "manipulating" materials to achieve certain forms and visual effects?*

YP: Actually some works of mine only deal with techniques and materials. But this time, speaking about the works exhibited here, I have the intention to try to make or compel people to stop a while when they view a work and reflect on it. Say, suppose my work is put amid hundreds of other works, how can my work compel people to stop a while, look at it and think about it.

*ES: It could be merely due to the materials, the forms, or the technical aspects.*

YP: Yes because I also have the conviction that a work should not be burdened with the wish to convey message. I think other people will always have their own ideas about the work in question. But my interest as an artist is at least to provide the door for people to look inside and enter. For instance I can say: "That is the psychological reflections of my childhood." But another person viewing the same work may have a different idea. There's no problem. At least the person in question can go home bringing something, some issue, which he/she can process in his/her mind. That's the motive behind my work. Concerning esthetic and artistic issues, well ... all artists must have been through with them. Now the point is how to make the people who view artworks find interesting subject matters to

think about.

*ES: Aside from materials and formal references there is another element often present in your works, which is text that takes forms as the alphabet, words or sentences ...*

YP: Actually I have the habit of writing down freely and spontaneously things that cross my mind. So my text mostly just flows freely. For an instance suddenly trees cross my mind, then emerges a thought of a brown leaf, it falls into the water, then the ripples, and so on and so forth. I write them all.

That is also the way with the colors in my works. Because I want to make people stop, I think I can use colors to attract them. Since my early student years I have known that colors are attractive and can still be worked further to enhance their attractiveness by means of combinations, chiaroscuro, and so on.

*ES: Did you make most of these works at your own studio?*

YP: Yes. And when in a few cases I worked in other places I had to find persons (artisans) who are really suitable. And even so, at times the result is not quite what I really want. It means I still have to improve it again by myself. I strongly believe that an artist will be recognized through his/her works. So I think the point is not the extent to which I do it myself and the extent to which someone else assists me. The point lies in whether what I accomplish in a given work will have the appearance of my work.

*ES: But overall there are many parts in your works that require technical skills, craftsmanship, to make certain details. As far as I know you are highly skillful in using the tool to write on wood and on glass.*

YP: Yes, that's right ... since childhood my idea about sculptors has been like that. Sculptors are persons busily working with various tools and materials, processing things. *(Since his teens, Yuli has been very confident about living as a sculptor. He told me how immediately after finishing the Senior High School he secretively used the money given by his parents to pay for extra courses in preparation of his admission test to the university for another purpose. He used the money to get extra courses to prepare for his admission test to the Fine Arts Department. The courses took place in Villa Merah, Bandung, run by Fine Arts students of the ITB Bandung Institute of Technology).*

*ES: Yes, until currently you still work at home that is also your studio. All kinds of tools and objects are there.*

YP: That is because it is really hard for me to stop. Once I already begin working I must go on. I once had a studio at some distance from my house. It happened that when I was on my way home I suddenly remembered something and I felt like continuing my work. But it was quite far. Now my studio is one with my house. Sometimes I suddenly get ideas or find a solution for a problem that concerns my work. In such cases the distance between the house and the studio matters.

*ES: Back to sculpture. Considering the various materials and formal approaches you*

*apply for your works so far, it seems clear that you already disregard the conventions in sculpture. What do you think?*

YP: Yes, that's why I think 'object' is more appropriate a term to refer to my work. If I am not allowed to call my works sculptures because there are certain conventions regarding sculpture, all right, I'll take the term 'objects' for my works. That will give me a greater freedom to speak through three-dimensional works. Anything. I am more interested in expressing ideas and thoughts by means of various objects. Rather than being burdened by conventions known in sculpture, it is better for me to just abandon them. I believe that the purpose of art is also communication, and the media can be anything.

*ES: How long did you prepare this exhibition?*

YP: Long enough. With some interruptions; there were commissioned works, invitations for exhibitions... I found it hard to say no, more or less. (*Smiling*). My friends gave me encouragements to concentrate on this solo exhibition.

*ES: If I remember it well, you already began preparing works for this exhibition some two years ago?*

YP: Yes... Some two years ago.

*ES: Ah yes ... One more thing before I forget. I think in 2007 you went to Shanghai for a residency program or ... what? What did you do there?*

YP: Well... At first the inviter said it was a residency program. But it turned out that the program mostly consisted of visiting artists' studios.

*ES: Who was the host?*

YP: BizArt, in Shanghai.

*ES: Did you manage to make artworks there?*

YP: I had such plan. But, there ... gosh, I wanted to meet with an artist and to try to make a work, in collaboration, perhaps. But it was very hard to meet with those artists; they were very busy. I made a proposal to collaborate with a certain artist. But the answer I got was "Oh, he was very busy..." During a one-month stay there I visited numerous art galleries and artists' studios, chatting about the developments of their art. *(According to Alia Swastika, who still worked as a curator at the Cemeti Art House then, and together with Yuli went to Shanghai, the invitation was indeed just for a visit and observation.)*

*ES: What else interested you there?*

YP: Now... We in Indonesia still often think in terms of 'camps', for instance we have the Bandung camp and the Jogja camp. Some even say that modern Indonesian art has no history. Well ... I don't know. I think if we still only dispute such matters, where are we going? We are now only recognized in the scope of Asia. We are not to call ourselves

great before we can already reach Europe and America... In Shanghai, gosh! The artists keep busy with creating great works. Because their works are great, it is easy for the artists to exhibit in Shanghai, Beijing and New York. Their sole business is making great artworks. There isn't any friction.

Now I'll think about how to make people in other countries pay attention to our works. Our potency to develop, together, is much greater. People say we are gregarious. We from the 1993's generation at the arts institute were used to repression and harsh criticisms. Such treatments just made a lot of them strive for ways to practice their arts, produce works and win recognitions. They've kept doing it. Take Rudi Mantofani and Yusra Martunus for instance.

*ES: Who else were your friends of the same generation at the sculpture studio?*

YP: Rudi, Yusra, Budi Kustarto, Abdi Setiawan... they were my close friends in our student years.

*ES: About this current exhibition of yours. Is this your first solo exhibition??*

YP: This is the second. The first one was at the Cemeti Art Gallery in 2005.

*ES: Four years separate your first and second exhibitions. For you, what differences are there between them?*

YP: For this exhibition there is some increase in my explorations of ideas. Now I'm more confident that my works interest people and they can accept my object art. For the first exhibition I had to prepare works while doing other jobs to get the money to cover the expenses. For this current exhibition I am sure I can make more works, and people will look at and accept them.

*ES: Are you satisfied with all these works you accomplished?*

YP: I always make works thoroughly till I regard them as fully accomplished. Satisfaction follows accomplishment. It is not a question of the ideas and forms that I've managed to generate. Once a work is done I'll be busy with the thought of the possibility for a wilder work to make. Formerly I made small-sized works. That was just a policy. By so doing I was able to continuously show series of my small-sized works. Small or big, as long as they are good artworks, they are as valuable. Sheer size doesn't make any difference. Little by little I managed to have some considerable sum of money. Finally I decided it was time to make works of bigger sizes.

The fact is that only around ... uuuhm... 2003 people began buying 'objects' – am I not right? Before then, I had to do various other jobs for the money; only after that could I make works. That's why it took a long time to make and exhibit my works.

*ES: How many works did you prepare for this exhibition?*

YP: Some twenty works.

*ES: How did you make the connecting line among such a lot of works to make one whole exhibition?*

YP: The connecting line deals with the different areas that people love. The various things that people are fond of these days. These are like fetishes of the people of this era. The people of today could love anything, toys, or any other things. They can make even statuses and power their fetishes. That is the notion that connects together these works on exhibition. Yes, this is about love, crazes. About fetishism.

*ES: And does it also explain how the heart finds its way into a lot of works shown in the exhibition?*

YP: Uuumh... Yes, like what I've already said. When I pick a form to be a reference for a work I tend to choose a form already familiar to many people. My works should provide the door for people to enter. I no longer have any business with esthetic issues, I guess. And I really don't want to burden my works with any contents that can be regarded as profound or weighty. My only interest is being in touch with others. To be slightly in touch is enough. Like I've said. Here in Indonesia people tend to behave ignorantly ... "Oooh, an artwork, I don't get it!"

But I wish that at least people would firstly observe the forms and get interested. People who think that they know nothing about art can also begin with finding themselves interested in the forms first. It's simple. Should there be someone who glimpses at my

work and then just utters: “Pooh... Nasty!”, it’s okay for me. It’s already communication through artworks. That’s what I think. If someone gets interested in a work then says ”Good... But, what’s this?” – that’s already quite exciting.

*ES: So you never make purely abstract, non-representational works?*

YP: I don’t mind doing that. I don’t want to have characteristics. That will be like imprisoning oneself. Who knows that next time I’ll make different kinds of works? At first people may get perplexed by my ever-changing works. Yet I have my reason. I do it so that I can easily make explorations into anything later on. Yes, it prolongs my process. It makes hard for people to identify my works as mine. But that’s the risk, and I’m fully aware of it.

*ES: What obsessions remain with you, or: what do you keenly want to do after this solo exhibition?*

YP: I’m still going to try to apply for a program of MOMA in New York. In 2008 ACC (New York) invited proposals from artists for collaboration with several institutions abroad. I submitted a proposal for an exhibition at the MOMA, New York. My proposal was received by MOMA. They looked at the pictures of several samples of my works and then asked me to submit my financial plans and so on. But then I became doubtful. I was busy preparing this current exhibition. Also, the program involved considerable risks and I had to make a really good preparation. Let alone preparing works that they (MOMA) would consider as great, even finding a professional assistant was hard. Very hard. What’s

more, I was late in checking incoming e-mails. So I only noticed their response almost one month after the deadline.

Yes, this is my obsession. It doesn't have to be me. Any Indonesian artists whose works are acceptable to the art community there (in the USA and Europe) should go. I am sure that there are Indonesian artists, though not many of them, who qualify for the program. The problem is that we in Indonesia are not professional as yet. Maybe we need to work together as a team that involves many parties in striving toward the goal.

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<sup>i</sup> Quoted in Julia Kelly, "The Anthropology of Assemblage", *Art Journal*, Spring, 2008. ([http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi\\_m0425/is\\_1\\_67/ai\\_n26670569?tag=rbxcra.2.a.11](http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_m0425/is_1_67/ai_n26670569?tag=rbxcra.2.a.11))

<sup>ii</sup> In the English version of Claude Lévi-Strauss, *The Savage Mind*, The University of Chicago Press, 1966, the translator needs to ask the readers' attention to distinguish "craftsman" from "bricoleur" (in the footnote on p. 17): "The 'bricoleur' has no precise equivalent in English. He is a man who undertakes odd jobs and is a Jack of all trades or a kind of professional do-it-yourself man, but, as the text makes clear, he is of a different standing from, for instance, the English 'odd job man' or handyman."

<sup>iii</sup> Ibid, pp. 17-18.

<sup>iv</sup> Here 'concrete' refers to "The Science of The Concrete", the title of the first chapter in Lévi-Strauss' *The Savage Mind* when he explains the bricoleur's socio-anthropological scope. Ibid, pp. 1-33.

<sup>v</sup> Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*. University of California Press, Berkeley, 1984, p. 66

<sup>vi</sup> Erich Fromm, *To Have or To Be*, Continuum, London, 1997, p. 59

<sup>vii</sup> Ibid, p. 63

<sup>viii</sup> Ibid, pp. 72-73

<sup>ix</sup> Ibid, p. 81