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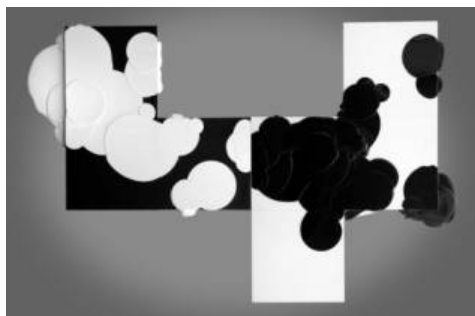
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## In Touch With Fluid Friction

April 09, 2010



A debt is owed to chance due to the unpredictable nature of the resin the artist uses to paint "Chiaroscuro."

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Looking for a different kind of inspiration? Then perhaps you should attend an art exhibition called Fluid Friction by a talented young painter named Arin Dwi Hartanto. In one 169-by-146 centimeter painting at the show titled "Orange-White," Arin plays with the two colors. But the glassy effect, smeared on the canvas like sound waves or the Aurora Borealis, may be a bit hard to decipher. Regardless, it should be appreciated as a new way of expressing one's wild imagination.

Fluid Friction opened on Wednesday at the SIGlarts Gallery in South Jakarta, and runs through April 25.

According to the show's curator, Hendro Wiyanto, Arin is an artist who loves to use different kinds of techniques in producing his works. In doing so, Arin always reflects the tradition surrounding him, Hendro said, while also jumping over the "fence," Hendro's word for the regular or predictable.

"I think we all should agree that there are not many artists like Arin in this country," he said.

Arin was born in 1978 and studied fine art at the Bandung Institute of Technology before completing a masters degree in fine art at the Central Saint Martins College of Art and Design in London.

His artworks have been well-received, and he has been involved in many exhibitions, notably, solo shows at Toni Heath Gallery in London in 2006 and at Netherland's Artipoli Art Gallery the year afterward.

Arin told the Jakarta Globe that he always tries to do something different in his works. "As an artist, I always try to experiment with new things."

And at his latest exhibition, he has again added something completely new into his artworks. As a painter, he is very familiar with materials such as acrylic, oil, and charcoal. But he recently decided he wanted to experiment with a material that he'd never used: resin.

Resin is a secretion made from plants, especially coniferous trees, and it is used in the manufacture of everything from plastic consumer goods to sculptures.

"Resin is a very unique material," Arin said, adding that it only stays liquid for about 15 minutes before hardening permanently.

"It's amazingly tense," he said of using resin in the creative process. For the best results, he said that he had to finish each painting in just five minutes. "I have to compromise with the character of resin. It is so hard to predict. It always flows here and there once you put it on the object."

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He said although he had decided what to paint on his canvasses, the "wild" nature of resin produced results that always took him by surprise. "That's what's so challenging in using resin."

Arin said his paintings were not meant to specifically represent anything. Instead, they are abstractions that display his attention and focus in dealing with the unpredictable resin.

He said that the philosophy behind his exhibition is to rethink the whole concept of the painting world. "Does painting have always to do with oil?" Arin said.

He added that paintings, commonly made using oils, acrylics or watercolors, usually have a discernible texture on the surface. But despite the employment of several different techniques, including splashing, stroking, layering and melting, his new paintings display no texture at all, instead appearing glassy and frictionless. "That's the kind of character that you'll find from my paintings," he said.

Although Arin said that his resin-painting technique can be used on any type of surface, he still chose to apply it to the traditional canvas.

But when you see from Arin's large "Cyan-Magenta-Yellow-Black," you may wonder how he created such a color combination. The painting shows a complicated layering of the four colors in its title, and looks like a meteor collision or a stellar nebula.

Arin admitted that his paintings may look unusual to many, but he said that was actually his motivation and a way to satisfy his curiosity.

"Through this exhibition, I see that painting is more flexible towards new ideas and methods."

