

Arts & Culture

Graphic Design at Erasmus

Swirls, sketchings and the abstract is typical of work by Indonesian and Dutch artists showing at Erasmus Huis. **Cathy Heycock** reviews the mix for the *Sunday Observer*.

THE FUSION of 10 Dutch and Indonesian artists for a graphic art exhibition titled *Saksi Mata*, currently showing at the Erasmus Huis, results in an eclectic mix of styles and expressions. The show is a joint venture between the Yogyakarta Cemeti Art Foundation and Grafisch Atelier Utrecht, and when it finishes here on November 17 will travel to Yogyakarta for viewing.

The artists' methods of expression vary from picture to picture, and the exhibition has been randomly set up around the main area of Erasmus Huis. The works are grouped in no particular order, but are a mishmash of styles that keep you thinking. This choice of placement means that each picture offers something new to absorb as you move around the room.

Moritz Ebinger's work kicks off the exhibition, only by lack of being placed near the entrance. His piece, *The flying Dutchman through the flying sea*, is a monoprint. It depicts a ship surrounded by pink hues and has a foggy, fantastical feel to it. The thickly textured paper further enhances its mystique, the pirate flag inspiring images of this ship flying through your dreams.

Dutchman is more ethereal than Ebinger's other works, that display an almost comic strip-style as seen in the humorous figures carefully penned around the page. Pale tones and colors display a collection of doodles direct



GRAPHIC ART exhibited at *Saksi Mata*, an exhibition that showcases a variety of prints and printmaking techniques, includes work such as, from left to right, a detail from *First Time Herring*, *U.J.L.* and *Untitled*.

from the artist's imagination. This is especially evident in *Aan het werk/ Busy*, where there are many subjects on which to focus and the eye is continually moving. It is of a style reminiscent of Mambo artwork and comic strip characters, where pale background colors lead the eye to bolder lines used for figures that seem to dance all over the page. Lighter objects have been painstakingly drawn on the bottom of the page, and the longer you look, the more you see.

This idea of searching for detail is picked up by Mirjam Burer, in *Zwerfkeien/Boulder's*. She has placed paper on the mounting paper to create a textured look. There are layers of color—yellow, blue, red and gray—in somber hues that seem flat at first glance. Circles, lines and squares are employed in strong and defined strokes. The more you view the work, the more shapes become clear—the outline of a woman, for instance, is

seen in the yellow splash of color in the center of the picture.

More abstract in style is Sudaryono Sudarso. His most brightly colored and abstract piece is an untitled filter print full of symbols and figures placed in a gaily colored and random order. More cheerful than some of the pen drawings by other artists, the figures are primitive, like those one might find on cave walls. Wavy lines, ovals, splashes and curves have been applied with plenty of flourish. A slightly comic, casual style is portrayed via bright colors and shapes that catch the eye as it meanders around.

One of the works that uses etching, rather than paint is *Old Heroes* can do no wrong, by Agung Kurniawan. It is stark and confrontational with political overtones, and relies on contrast for effect. The shadows, thick lines and rough caricatures are typical of the more serious style of Kurniawan.

Another artist to use the filter print

style is Yamyuli Dwi Imam. Ripped paper, colors that are flat and subdued categorize this artwork. Perspective is not important, figures and shapes not sharply detailed; the important goal is to convey a mood, place or concept. The piece *First time herring* is of frames within frames, with pockets of color and shapes that are like snapshots of everyday scenes familiar to all—a pet, kitchen utensils and magazines—but with another, less obvious message.

Pieter van der Veen's work appears to represent the very abstract end of the exhibition's scale. *Terra II, Glacier II* and *Satellite I* are a series of geographical pieces, and lines and squiggles with large and small numbers in a range of different colors make up the bulk of his work. The colors are responsible for shaping the interest of the work: he has mixed a brown with a blue and created artistic swirls of shade and color that look like weather patterns, and are a delight to



the eye.

Saksi Mata is an exhibition appealing in its diversity and the mix of artists, and a worthwhile study of various graphic art methods. Perhaps the appeal of such work is that whatever you think it means, it does—such an abstract form is open to interpretation. Although sometimes

confusing, you can be assured of a new view each time you look at it. While for a purist in search of an exact or true meaning, it would obviously be best to consult the artist.

Saksi Mata runs until November 17 at Erasmus Huis, Jln. Raasuna Saint, Kav. S-3.