

# Japanese, RI artists meet on common ground

JAKARTA (JP): The start of a new year is a good time for renewing relationships and reinforcing cultural bonds.

So when a new millennium dawns, it is only fitting that the idealized domain of art serve as a tool of intercultural dialogue.

Art Exchange 2000 Indonesia - Japan is an amalgamation of the abstract art of four Indonesian artists and four Japanese artists. The exhibition was opened on March 15 by Japanese Ambassador to Indonesia Takao Kawakami at the Japan Foundation on Jl. Sudirman in Jakarta.

The four Japanese artists displayed various themes and styles in mixed media. Particularly eye-catching were the three-dimensional works of Hironori Hagiwara, who painted on serrated paper cut in various triangular forms and placed in linear equilibrium.

It reminds one of the Ikebana flower arrangements which aim for transcendental beauty in every angle. Just as full blooms are harmonized with twigs and artistically crooked sticks, the paper wedges in Hironori's works entitled *Stick Moves* seem to hang in symmetric and aesthetic equations.

By Pavan Kapoor

Kazuyuki Uno presents a number of works in paint and print. A black-and-white maze is crisscrossed with stark red lines, creating a fascinating 3-D effect for the observer. Born in Chiba, Japan, Kazuyuki studied art at the Tokyo National University of Fine Art and Music and has participated in numerous solo and group exhibitions.

Kazuyuki questions perceptions of reality in the abstract black-and-white prints in his works. He tries to portray the dilemma that the real and tangible in life are indeed as elusive as his fleeting landscapes and settings. In *Landscape of Mimesis*, he presents images of architecture nature as they emerge and submerge in our view. People, animals and vegetation are also elusively portrayed.

Kozo Matsuda is a Japanese artist who revels in the fusion of European watercolor techniques and his Japanese artistic roots. Born in Saga-Ken, Kozo studied art in Tokyo, France and

Switzerland.

Kozo's *Hortensias IOB* shows limpid squares of soft, flowing watercolors punctuated with smudges of transparent flowers placed in geometric pattern, expressing simultaneously the Japanese love for order and beauty.

The fourth Japanese artist, Tetsuo Onari, chooses to stymie those observers who would read the title of the piece and then work toward understanding the artist's point of view.

He leaves his simple and small frames untitled and urges people to find their own meanings. Tetsuo graduated from the Tokyo University of Fine Arts and has exhibited his works in Japan, Korea and Bali.

Tetsua expresses the complications of life in vibrantly colored canvases on which there are colored dots, including his work *Route 14*.

There are four Indonesian painters displaying their works at the exhibition, some of who have previously exhibited in Japan.

Sulebar M. Soekarman was born in Bandung and has been involved in art since he was small. His large colorful canvases are placed on the right side of

the entrance of the exhibition hall, catching the eye of those entering the hall. In *Nature of Jakarta*, intricate batik cloth and magazine clippings combine with bright paint to form an attractive and thought-provoking work.

*Souvenir from IPOH* has a large turquoise and sunflower yellow spiral forming the nucleus of the canvas. An exquisite piece of black and beige batik textile is incorporated with the big leaves at the base of the sunflower, giving the observer the feeling of spiraling.

On the other side of the entrance hang the works of Nunung WS, whose *Krida Waodya* was honored by the state minister of the empowerment of women.

Nunung's simple canvases are flooded with one or two flat colors, evidence of her obsession with color. As she has said, color is the most important medium in her work, and spirit is something she wishes to express through color.

Color is a way to total expression, she says. *Satu Bunga Satu Daun* (One flower with one leaf) and *Yellow Path* are two of her works on display. The paintings are dominated by browns, reds and amber yellows.

A little more challenging are Elisha's canvases, which take the eye from one detail to the next as if in a designed pattern.

In *Life Behind the Door*, Elisha has intelligently incorporated a mixture of mediums, such as Japanese ribbon, textile and paper to create an abstraction of the cultural interaction between Japan and Indonesia.

And last but not least is Rudolf G. Usman, who coordinated the exhibition and is showing his works as well. Rudolf attended the Institute of Fine Arts in Jakarta and also studied under painter Siaw Tik Kwie. Rudolf's admiration for traditional East Asia ink painting is apparent in his work.

He feels ink painting emphasizes man's humble position in the greatness of nature. Rudolf's paintings feature vivid gold colors and in *The Soul of the Todaiji Temple*, he has fused small Japanese fans with oriental colors and Japanese script.

The perspective and nuances in shading show the tranquil beauty of the world. Serenity is the greatest inspiration for Rudolf, and this feeling is obvious one views his works.

The exhibition will run until March 25 at The Japan Foundation, Summitas I.



JP/Berto Wiedhatama

*The Soul of The Todaiji Temple*, mixed media on canvas by Rudolf G. Usman.