

# Sekar and Bunga

## bloom in fine arts galore



Edwin's Gallery

*Hoki & Hong Sui (Luck & Wind and Water)*, 40cm by 60cm oil on canvas by Bunga Jeruk (above).  
*Sentimental Mood* (b), 36cm by 36cm pencil on paper by Sekar Jatiningrum (below).



Edwin's Gallery



**E**dwin's Gallery in South Jakarta has been running an exhibit of the finest works of two female artists both of whom have names that happen to mean "flower", in Indonesian, Sekar and Bunga. Another coincidence is that they are both alumnae of the Indonesian Art Institute (ISI) in Yogyakarta.

Although they share those things in common, they adhere to different styles and philosophies about art.

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Bunga Jeruk, who was born in Surakarta on May 8, 1972, has displayed her two- and three-dimensional artwork consisting of paintings, statues and installations that all reflect her determination to break free from barriers that shackle her freedom of expression.

Sekar Jatiningrum, born in Yogyakarta on June 10, 1969, has done many black-white pencil sketches on paper.

Bunga's spirit for freedom comes from her maturity and discipline toward herself and her environment. She refuses to follow the path of other artists who glorify socio-political and moral themes in their work.

Her paintings feature dolls, pears, cacti, cats or dogs. She uses colors which do not symbolize anything in particular, just the natural color of the objects.

"At first I was worried critics would lash out against my work (for diverting from the common style) but I have managed to assure myself that I have to be myself.

"Now I want to create art that I like, and worry about nothing," she said.

Of Bunga's 14 works on display, pieces titled *Siapa Takut?* (*Dolphin's Kiss*) featuring a red bear doll with a blue dolphin doll pecking at the bear's head really gives a sense of her freedom.

Another titled *Semua Anjing Juara* (*Every Dog is # 1*), has been used as the theme of the exhibition. It features a

stone dog statue. *Woolly Bully* depicts a number of dolls and *Powderpuff Girls* cartoon characters.

*Percaya Aja Deh* (*Just Trust the Driver*) featuring an overcrowded bus passing a bridge shows superb technical skill.

Art critic Jim Supangkat says that Bunga Jeruk means to portray the real world like the world of cartoon, where people are pictured as animals. "It is a world of humor where sarcasm and slapstick walk a fine line."

After observing Bunga's lively paintings on the first floor of Edwin's Gallery, go upstairs, where Sekar's pieces are exhibited.

The contrast is blinding. As the curator Suwarno Wisetrotomo says, Sekar's art is like a monologue. Her pieces offer structures of unusual tales, shapes and atmospheres.

An admirer of Surabaya-based writer Budi Darma, Sekar has hit on a sentimental mood as her main theme is presenting figures of women: "I am in loneliness" and "I am in relations with" (from other people up to natural environment).

Sekar drew a strange woman in *Sentimental Mood*. The woman is standing, wearing a floral skirt. Her hands are holding a stick. Twigs are coming out of her body and a horn protrudes from her head. She has a frightening face, an odd mix, part human, part animal, part supernatural creature.

The exhibition room seems crowded with Sekar's 21 sketches on small paper but containing grand values of both technique and ideas.

In fact, her pieces have become the object of intense competition among collectors. Nearly all of her paintings on exhibit have been sold.

Several people have even vied with each other for obtaining her other paintings. To make it fair, during the closing of this exhibition on April 7, they will have to draw lots to decide who will own Sekar's small-sized sketches.

*The exhibition is running through April 7, 2002, at Edwin's Gallery on Jl. Kemang Raya 21 in South Jakarta. Phone (021) 7194721.*