

animal Concerns

JOHN GEE meets Indon artist Bunga Jeruk who says she is not an animal lover despite her exhibition on the abuse of these creatures

IT all started with a cat. Bunga Jeruk's current exhibition with the theme of animal abuse sprang from an incident one day when she started her car and realised she had run over something. She was shocked to discover that it was Cemot (Spot), one of her sister's beloved cats.

One of the first things that the Indonesian artist told me when I met her was: "I love animals, but I'm not an animal lover." She may not dote on them, but after the unfortunate cat incident, she began to create a series of works showing how humans abuse animals.

She makes her point gently: there are no blood or innards on display in her art. Sometimes, she has just taken the ordinary and given it a twist, such as in the chairs covered with (fake) animal skin. Putting tails on the skins gives the viewer a little extra reminder that they once belonged to living creatures.

I ask her about another work that looks very cheerful, although it shows caged birds: five large hen chicks, coloured orange, yellow, green, red and blue.

She explains: "In Indonesia, there are people who dye chicks bright colours to make them look more attractive to children. The children buy them to play with. The colour

eventually disappears and they look like other chickens. A lot just die soon after they're bought." Neither the vendors nor the children really give much thought to them.

She emphasises she is not suggesting that Indonesians are particularly cruel or insensitive towards animals, but she does feel that the issue of how humans treat animals should be raised and Indonesia is the place where she lives. Jeruk shows understanding of popular attitudes even as she criticises them: "Their own lives are hard, so they don't think about this."

That being the case, what was the response of the people who came to see her exhibition when it was shown recently in Jogjakarta?

"It was good. Everyone wrote comments about it in the book that was left out. One person wrote that this was the first exhibition he'd seen in Jogjakarta which wasn't violent or scary."

That violence and "scariness" comes out of the political situation in Indonesia.

"In Indonesia now, people are free to do anything in art, but a lot of artists are talking about Suharto and criticising him. They couldn't do that before." Their feelings about the Suharto era are expressed forcefully.

She does not speak as though she is deliberately taking a different artistic direction, but as one who knows what she wants to do and does it, whatever may be

occurring around her. Jeruk was born in Solo, in Java, in 1972. Her father and sister were both writers, but from an early age, she took up painting. She drew encouragement from the example of her grandmother, who was a batik artist, but also from her father's praise.

"He was working in London for a while and my sister used to write to him. I drew pictures in the letters and when my father returned, he said that I had a real talent for art."

Jeruk studied fine art at Jogjakarta's Indonesian Institute of Art after finishing high school, graduating cum laude in 1996. She became a professional painter and her paintings and sculptures have been exhibited in 11 countries besides her own.

Surprisingly, her work with sculpture only began a couple of years ago. With disarming honesty, she says: "I only did it for fun at first. My boyfriend does sculpture, and I wanted to try doing the same thing."

Looking around her works as Bunga Jeruk positions them, ponders and then repositions them, I see that she's come a long way in a very short time.

Binatang Animaux is being exhibited at Sculpture Square, 155, Middle Road, from Aug 4 to Sept 7



PHOTOS BY SEW YAW HOONG

Message behind cuteness: Bunga Jeruk's (top) works deal with the issue of how humans treat animals



吴启基 ● 报道

印尼雕塑家文楷·嘉露卡 (Bunga Jeruk) 创作了一个大型的铁笼子，笼子内外共有4只小鸡；小鸡分成红青两色，鸡身肥大，全都露出惊疑不定的明亮眼睛。

印尼虐畜情况严重

这个题为《1000只小鸡的来处》的作品，和其他11件有关动物的雕塑，目前在雕塑广场展出。这个展览的主题是：反对人们虐待动物，尤其是体型瘦小的动物。

嘉露卡在谈到印尼虐畜的严重性时说，在印尼的许多地方，有很多商人为了销售小鸡，不惜把它们髹漆得五颜六色以广招徕，也有人以赌博方式来赢取小鸡。总之，世界各地都有人在虐待小鸡牛羊狗蛇等大小动物。

未表现受苦情景

有趣的是，她并没有把动物受苦的情景表现出来，有些动物的形象，还是那么天真、可爱，其中只有兔子的一件，上面有一只人手，显然是在把兔子的双耳重重提起。

关于这样的看法，嘉露卡说：“我不想让人见到动物丑恶的一面，我自己知道它们受苦就好了，我不要别人有和我一样的感受。在印尼的青年艺术家中，有很多也把矛头指向社会和政治，我也曾经想到这么做，可是，最后我还是回到比较适合我的风格上来。”

从小重视美术教育

嘉露卡出生于印尼的梭罗，父亲是一位诗人，外祖母是个峇迪画的民间艺人。

说到她对美术的兴趣，她说：“由于有一年老爸到英国去，家里想写一封信通音讯，于是由大姐负责写信，由我来画画，没想到，父亲回信说，我很有艺术天份。也从此，家里特别重视我的美术教育。”

不喜饲养动物

1996年，她毕业自日惹

反对虐待动物 印尼女雕塑家

印尼工艺美术学院。她善于画画和雕塑，所用的创作材料是玻璃纤维，至今已开过两次个展。

虽然嘉露卡的作品是以反虐待动物为题，但她说：“我自己并不是一个喜欢蓄养动物的人，虽然在雨季中我拥有过14只猫，在旱季里我有6头猫，我只偶尔会逗猫玩，我对动物的态度是，也许它们比我高级，也许我比它们高级，这也难说，到头来，我们是不同的两类存在。”

人类有时不如别的动物

以生存本能来说，有时人类还不如别的动物，她展出的一件作品，是一架飞机的黑色机尾站着一只黄色的小鸟，创作灵感来自美国著名家族小肯尼迪坠机的新闻。

她说，人们发明了先进的飞行器，问题是，人的素质大大不如小鸟，小鸟掉落了会再次飞起，人呢？飞机失事，根本没有逃生的机会。

文楷·嘉露卡个展：

日期：今天到9月7日

时间：上午10时到下午6时

地点：雕塑广场(密驼路155号)

