

M(a)us(ol)eum of  
Precious Past

*and Disposable Futures*

dream

create

[redacted] anymore,

work

care

live

,etc

when [redacted]

the end is

It's too late

we've ruined

,etc

# M(a)us(ol)eum of Precious Past and Disposable Future

Liza Markus

dream  
create  
How do we [REDACTED] anymore,  
work  
care  
live  
,etc  
when [REDACTED]?  
the end is coming  
It's too late  
we've ruined it all  
,etc

I would like to begin this essay with a thesis question that has increasingly come to haunt our minds in recent years of collapse; an existential dilemma for artists as creative individuals and as human beings living within a civilization perceived to be dying. However, I would like to believe that we are asking the wrong question, or miscombining two independent inquiries into one; that behind this question lie interpretations glossed over as accepted facts, which causes cultural death and stagnation.

The first half of the question, "How do we [REDACTED] anymore," is an inquiry into humankind's agency, while the latter, "when [REDACTED]?", places the present against a backdrop of end-times inevitability and irreversibility. I would like to first investigate the second part, because I believe that once we arrive at a more nuanced

understanding of our “end,” and the reasons it feels ever-approaching, we will naturally return to the first, concerning our agency and drive to create.

The eight artists participating in this exhibition have prodded the causal relation between these two clauses through their practices, or have themselves lived and created in ways that actively resist and disprove the fatalist assumptions carried by the thesis question. The first portion of this essay addresses the existential problem at hand, while the second takes from conversations between myself and the participating artists, exploring their unique positions in answering or resisting the symptoms of *eschatomania*.

Readers primarily interested in the artists and those who wish to arrive at the artworks sooner, are welcome to skip ahead. The artistic practices discussed in the latter half often arrive at the same questions through practice rather than theory.

## PART I

### The Flattening of Time

Mark Fisher, in his essay “The Slow Cancellation of the Future,” chapter 00 of his 2014 book *Ghosts of My Life: Writings on Depression, Hauntology and Lost Futures*, drawing from ideas in Franco ‘Bifo’ Berardi’s 2011 book, argues that we, or in less certain terms, the Western cultural sphere, have slowly lost the future over the course of the ’70s - ’00s.<sup>1</sup> I do not think it is far-fetched to discuss humankind’s present preoccupation with the end of the world, *eschatomania*, alongside Fisher’s theory, as both deal with a sense of futurelessness.

How does one “lose” something as fundamental as the future anyway? The future here is not merely the time that has yet to pass; rather, it is discussed as a psychological perception. Across the modern era, both the political right and left have held onto a mythology that equates time with progress: progress as the general direction of our collective movement.

The unexpected consequence of measuring time through progress is that expectation for the new becomes exponentially inflated. It is not that nothing is happening anymore, but rather we have lost the ability to index them as distinct.<sup>2</sup> However, if progress itself becomes the measure of time, what happens once progress slows, stalls, or even halts?

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1 Mark Fisher, *Ghosts of My Life: Writings on Depression, Hauntology and Lost Futures* (Hampshire, UK: Zero Books, 2014), 5–6.

2 *Ibid.* 7.

In capitalism, progress is also comparative. A sense of exceptionalism permeates every value: in competition, it becomes meritocracy; in philanthropy, it turns into stewardship. Exceptionalism is indeed a double-edged sword. The more we imagine ourselves as chosen for progress, the more responsible we become for the failure to sustain it. Progress and apocalypse are indeed two sides of the same coin. Both have distorted our perception of time and the future.

It is not only the future that is fading. Simultaneously, due to the advancement of the Internet, nothing ever truly went away. The past remains constantly accessible with an ever-greater clarity as though it were the present, contributing to our inability to conceive of newness sufficiently divorced from what came before.<sup>3</sup> Yet the result is not simply that the future is lost, or that the past refuses to disappear. Rather, it creates the sensation of **time itself flattening**.

Presently, we have been living in discomfort for quite some time. We become laden with a nostalgic sense that the past was somehow better; that there was a golden era we collectively failed to board.<sup>4</sup> Yet because of the ideology that time and progress must move linearly, the past cannot truly be acknowledged as better, because it should have been “less progressed,” while “better” is imagined to belong only to the present and more so, the future. The myth of progress therefore continues to exist alongside the discomfort of being outside of “prime time.” In attempting to reconcile this paradox, we have resorted to retroactively rationalizing the present condition as though it were what we wished for;<sup>5</sup> a means-ends thinking of If the present is “bad,” then perhaps “bad” was where we were headed all along.

Nostalgia for the past occupies the present, while our present condition is legitimized as the permanent trajectory of the future. Perception of time shifts one musical chair over, until there is no chair left for the future except as something imaginable only through the past.

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3 Ibid. 13.

4 Ibid. 7, 159.

5 Reza Negarestani, “Rational Inhumanism vs Landian Anti-Philosophy\*,” TripleAmpersand Journal (&&&), December 27, 2025, <https://tripleampersand.org/rational-inhumanism-vs-landian-anti-philosophy/>

## Undifferentiation, Doomerism, Vibes, and Other Mechanisms of Control

In many ways, the conditions of futurelessness previously addressed also prime us for top-down **control**. The sensuous and cinematic apocalypse that occupies the public imagination fulfills several unique functions. One of these is catharsis. Certain forms of apocalyptic fiction remove responsibility for collapse from human agency and relocate it into an unavoidable divine or cosmic cause; or they satisfy a desire to “rip the bandage off.”

Its second function is to reconcile the paradox of ‘dependence despite harm’ under oppressive systems. “We simultaneously yearn to be liberated by the systems which constrain us as we still nestle into their comforts, and paradoxically apocalypse provides us a means to do both.”<sup>6</sup> Apocalypse allows us to express pain and anxiety regarding the trajectory of the present, while the suddenness of catastrophe leaves little room to identify structural causes or organize resistance against them.

Reza Negarestani, in his critique of Nick Land’s philosophy of accelerationism and *teleoplexy*, uses the term “Luminous Obscure” to describe something unseen and therefore unquestionable, while still commanding assent and inspiring awe.<sup>7</sup> Apocalypse, with its grand cinematic-yet-fatal quality, is, in my view, a form of the Luminous Obscure. Another such form is progress. Progress hovers over the present age as a generalized direction, yet its actual shape remains unclear. Because of this, progress can continually be rewritten according to the interests of power.

Instead of the possibility of change, what we are offered is an array of mechanisms for coping with lived experience. For the populace to collectively become pliant in defining its own desires and intentions according to the present condition, a certain camouflaging apparatus must first be put in place: **vibe**.

Vibe constructs realism, but realism is not the real. Realism is a style. It’s an illusion, or branding if you will, that assigns value to things which may not inherently possess it. Vibe bypasses scrutiny by feigning mutual acceptance. By framing apocalypse as inevitable, resisting or even questioning its factuality becomes branded as denial or naive behaviour. Thus one may retain and even be affirmed of

6 Ed Simon, “The American Apocalyptic Sublime and the Twilight of Empire,” *The Revealer*, December 7, 2016, <https://therevealer.org/the-american-apocalyptic-sublime-and-the-twilight-of-empire/>

7 Negarestani, 2025.

their intellectual superiority through philosophical surrender.<sup>8</sup> The objective is still to control, but this time subjugation is presented under the illusion of intellectual choice.

### The Glass Vitrines are One-Way Mirrors

Tangential to our expose regarding sense of intellectuality, Douglas Crimp suggests that museums and art history inhabit confining roles similar to schools and prisons within Foucauldian disciplinary society. Tony Bennett, however, argues that these exhibitionary complexes, while still disciplinary apparatuses, do not function through confinement in the same way as prisons or surveillance. Instead, he describes them as a Crystal Palace:<sup>9</sup> an exhibitionary structure through which power renders itself visible.

The museum disciplines through selection, arrangement, and display. It gathers objects once kept behind closed doors, arranges them to reflect particular values, and presents them publicly for admiration and reflection. Bennett writes that museums simultaneously order objects for public inspection while ordering the public that inspects them. Here, order means both arrangement and domination.

Surveillance and exhibition therefore become complementary mechanisms. The panopticon makes the populace visible to power, while the exhibitionary complex makes power visible to the populace as something aspirational. In attempting to align themselves with the values displayed through institutions, subjects begin imagining themselves on the same side as power.<sup>10</sup>

The national museum, as Crystal Palace, goes through great lengths to construct an air of objectivity. Yet museums are not neutral containers of the past. Just as realism is not reality but merely a style framing things as real, what museums display is not the past itself, but a broadcast of power and narrative control. And this control extends beyond time into space. Through colonial collection, international exhibitions, and ethnographic display, geographically distant cultures are assembled into a single visible field beneath a controlling gaze. Museums thus produce a fantasy of global and universal power through visual access.

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8       Ibid.

9       Tony Bennett, "The Exhibitionary Complex," *New Formations*, no. 4 (Spring 1988): 73–102, <https://banmar-chive.org.uk/new-formations/number-4-spring-1988/the-exhibitionary-complex/>, 78.

10      Ibid. 76, 82.

Today, the Crystal Palace no longer exists as a centralized structure somewhere else, but has fragmented into millions of glowing glass devices in our pockets. As these small glass boxes evolve, so too their mechanisms of ordering: the algorithm. What one witnesses, and how one witnesses it, becomes surveilled and economically valuable. We fill social media with contents of our own creation, only for those contents to be reordered and redistributed according to behavioral information extracted from us.

Bennett identifies undifferentiation as one of the ambitions of the exhibitionary complex: the production of a governable public through standardized perception. While the museum flattens space and time, the algorithm flattens experience. Aesthetics and tragedies from most cultures, past or present, become simultaneously accessible through screens while detached from the conditions that produced them. Never before have the conditions for control, ordering perception, and governing the public become this immediate and pervasive.

### The Currently Available 'Future'

A couple of months before writing this essay, a few of my friends made me watch the zombie apocalypse movie *28 Years Later*. I found the Jimmy Savile-inspired character odd, but did not think much of it at the time. Only while writing this essay, I kept thinking about how in the *28 [\_\_\_] Later* cinematic universe the cultural world effectively stopped in 2002. That means, Savile's posthumous exposure will never occur; condemned only in the realm of whispers and plausible deniability. Then it struck me; our eschatological obsession with the "hard reset" plot is perhaps symptomatic of a deeper desire: an attempt by the social body to revise the present through rewriting the past. Futilely, of course.

Years after first reading Mark Fisher's essay "The Slow Cancellation of the Future" in isolation, I finally obtained the full book, *Ghosts of My Life*, only to discover that its opening section discusses Savile himself. The Savile case, his relative impunity and the extraordinary length of time it took for him to be publicly and only posthumously exposed, reveals the problem of **consensual reality**. Like realism, consensual reality is also not reality itself but rather a parameter of acceptable happenings. Things that are true, yet which atrocities exceed the acceptable coordinates of collective morality, are often displaced into the realm of conspiracy; believe it and you're a tinfoil-hat-wearing-madman.

Here, the mechanism of disciplinary society returns once more. Conspiracy occupies a similar position to madness: an out-category through which society defines what is acceptable, so that consensual reality may remain intact. There is therefore constant pressure to determine which traumas and atrocities are permitted to enter history, and which remain too disruptive to institutional legitimacy.

The problem with our current condition of anachronism is that, once both past and future become flattened, even revelations of atrocities that have already escaped the realm of conspiracy and entered documented reality can be pushed back into unreality again. Public testimonies or even material proof can be brushed under the rug by vibe-washing it as paranoia, psyop, or urban legend. At first, we say “it was meant to happen all along” as a coping mechanism. But eventually even that becomes insufficient, and turns into: “nothing was ever wrong at all.”

This is the consequence of what I would call the fallacy of the *unrevising* present. We are conditioned to see the present order as inevitable, immovable, and final. Because the present appears impossible to change, the future also appears impossible to be reshaped. Unable to have agency over what lies ahead, we begin revising what has passed instead. Painful experiences that should have produced resistance become reframed as overreactions, folly, or conspiratorial thinking.

Under these conditions, our ability to cope becomes stronger than our ability to refuse. We become better at enduring contradiction than acting against it. The normalization of inevitability, passivity, and obscurity weakens our political immune system whenever power presents itself as unavoidable,

-and inevitable power is totalitarianism, with the unfortunate side effect of terribly boring art.

### Towards a Revisable Humanity

A state of passivity this deep is not one we can simply will or shame or scare ourselves out of. Before passivity can transform into action, we must first be able to believe that refusal is not futile. We must become capable of seeing and imagining hope, and with it, a way out. Forcing oneself into resistance or activity merely for its own sake, without first exercising hopefulness, would only become another form of self-flagellation.

## PART II

### Anti-Nostalgia

In repairing our vision of the present and future, we must also learn to face the past without manicuring it. Nostalgia is one of the central emotional engines behind the slow cancellation of the future. It offers a present and future that already feel familiar in vibe, palatable to the market because they have already passed through the market once before. Nostalgia is vibe-washing for the past.

I once wrote a marginalia “To overcome nostalgia is to retaste it in its proper direction.” We remember childhood food as tasty sustenance entering the body through the mouth, and assume nostalgia is the desire to seek that same food and eat it again. But nostalgia is time leaking backwards. To truly confront it, perhaps we must taste it with the same indignity as puking, half-digested mush surging back upward: “as throw-up, tasting of bile and stomach acid.”<sup>11</sup>

To face the past without nostalgia is therefore to resist consensual reality in order to arrive closer to the real. When we describe tragic historical events through the language of “realism,” or invoke phrases such as “let’s be realistic,” what we often mean is not reality itself, but conformity to consensual reality: the common-sense version of the world we have collectively agreed to maintain.

Enka Komariah and Lemuel E. Saputra’s artworks spoke of moments within our collective memory that are currently at risk of being vibe-washed; the period between 1964–1998 Indonesia. Incidentally, the two artists draw from archives situated at the beginning and the very end of that era.

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<sup>11</sup> Fisher, 2014, 71.



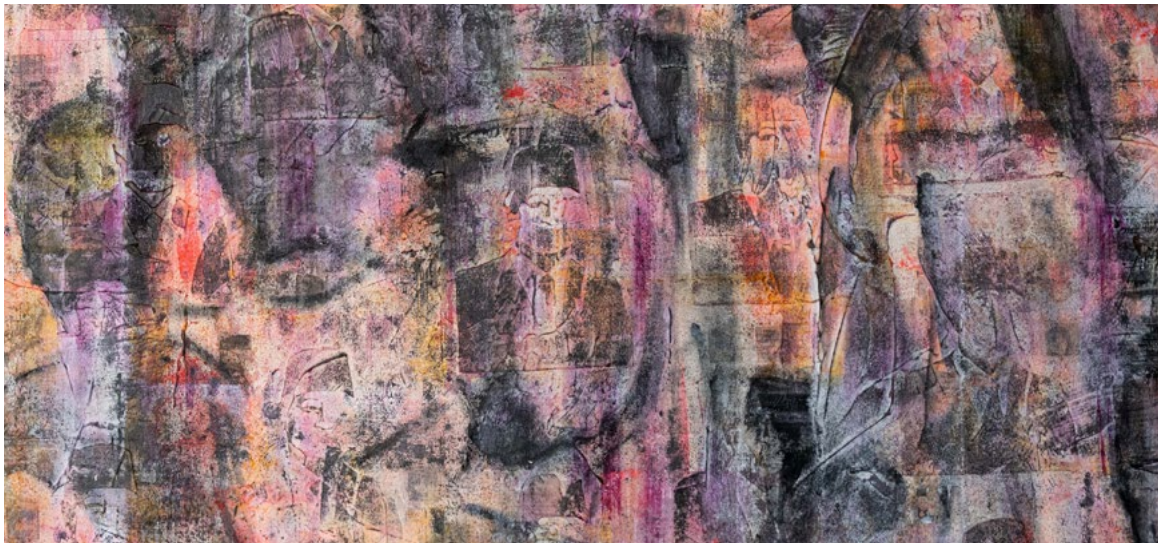
Enka Komariah's series of paintings depict events surrounding the violent regime change between 1964 and 1965, peaking in the G30S movement and the resulting coup against Suharto and the hunt for 'communists' afterwards. Enka chooses not to focus on the commonly discussed year of 1965 itself, but on Soekarno's speech in 1964, TAVIP, Tahun Vivere Pericolosamente, The Year of Living Dangerously.<sup>12</sup>

The speech is titled and themed around precarious 'emergency' years, yet Sukarno simultaneously reassures the public that the end is not yet here, and that those predicting the certainty of Indonesia's economic collapse are conducting 'psy-war.' The quote from his speech constructs the idea that the apocalypse is never predictable, yet always imminent. It calls for romanticism and steadfastness during permanent emergency years spent staving collapse away. This paradoxical, almost-Orwellian reframing makes fantasies of destruction simultaneously fearful and ecstatic. The longer we inhabit a state of permanent emergency, especially one organized around the figure of a leader, the more willing we become to surrender control to increasingly extreme forms of military or centralized power.

Enka Komariah mirrors the figure of Sukarno in his *Konfrontasi* painting with the foreground figure in *Massa*, depicting G30S and the aftermath of McCarthyist anti-communist paranoia. The first painting is created over documents concerning burglary in pre-coup 1964, while the latter is painted over documents declaring uninvolved in the G30S, post-coup 1965, establishing a sense of repetition between two distinct regimes and two distinct eras. Reading the visual language of the works, it is as though Enka is suggesting that even if "apocalypse" truly arrives for one era, power and control inevitably reorganize themselves into another. Instead of producing a sense of revisability, the works leave us washed over by cyclical inevitability.

<sup>12</sup> Soekarno, "Tahun 'Vivere Pericoloso,'" Indonesian 19th Anniversary of Independence Day, (lecture), accessed May 1, 2026, [https://id.wikisource.org/wiki/Tahun\\_%22Vivere\\_Pericoloso%22](https://id.wikisource.org/wiki/Tahun_%22Vivere_Pericoloso%22).

During a phone call with Enka, he described the feeling of working with historical archives while observing the present condition as “watching the same choreography but with new costumes.” Clichés such as “those who do not know history are bound to repeat it” suddenly feel insufficient. I would instead read Enka’s works as suggesting that knowing history alone is not enough, because to recognize patterns as cyclical while remaining unable to envision change, only contributes further to the passivity and *eschatomania* that results in surrender. The question I pose to artists who work with archives and historical study then becomes: what do we do after identifying the cycle?



On another end of that very same era, Lemuel E. Saputra’s monumental piece *Acts (Disorde)* presents the audience with a red field containing what initially appears to be a blurry painting of a crowd seen from behind. Overlaid on top of the sea of back-facing figures, a field repeating portrait faces forward; stencil-like rather than painted. Looking closer still, there are collaged elements of family portraits, name-change papers, and immigration documents, already painted over and obscured, noticeable only through the different texture of the paper against the canvas background. The image is set in 1998, while the stencilled portrait is of Indonesia’s second president, whose regime, the New Order, led to one of the most traumatic inherited memories for many Chinese-Indonesians: the ethnocide surrounding the 1998 Reformasi.

Born in the same year as the event itself, and coming from a Chinese-Indonesian background, the extent of Lemuel’s knowledge regarding the events surrounding his infancy heavily relies on public archives and the retelling of those closest to him. However, many Chinese-Indonesian families respond to the trauma by refusing

to speak about it at all. With a hole in his understanding of past events directly tied to his identity, Lemuel delves into both public and personal archives surrounding that period through collaging information. In attempting to reconcile the gaps within personal archives, he turns toward public archives to imagine and reconstruct familial experience.

We carry both the public and the private within our bodies. Lemuel's works thus collapse the distinction between personal archive and public archive, asserting one's own inherited experience as part of the wider canon instead of bending perception of the past in order to retroactively align oneself with present power narratives and trajectories. This becomes especially urgent as, in the past year alone, the 1998 ethnocide and mass rapes, have increasingly been pushed back into the realm of conspiracy because they no longer align with the current narrative of power.

The traumatic pasts Lemuel paints are anti-nostalgic because they accept the unfinished and uncinematic qualities of historical events. The past contains contradictions, and the longer one stares at it, the more incoherent history becomes. Unlike institutional history, which presents itself as certain, legible, and resolved, Lemuel accepts that even when looking directly at a clear image, its context may still remain obscured.

We have now been invited to face the unbelievable and unrealistic past unmanicured and face-to-face, how do we continue living in the present without carrying the feeling that we, as a species, are permanently blighted?

### On Familiarity with Destruction

Now we have addressed how we may face the past, but that alone remains insufficient if we are still unable to imagine a future with agency. Earlier in this essay, I quoted Mark Fisher's suspicion that the difficulty of conceiving something new may stem from how the past was never truly able to pass. In addition to that, I would like to suggest that our alienation from destruction—as a necessary and natural part of existence—contributes to this overwhelming fear toward death.

What I suspect is happening now is a **misconflation** between the collapse of structures within the human-made world and the forms of destruction that emerge

from the **incommensurability** between human scale and the far larger scales of nature and the cosmos. We treat the necessary collapse of old and broken systems with the same inevitability as destruction we could not control.

If we continue adhering to means-ends thinking, that possible destruction means there is no point in doing anything at all, then existing systems, however broken or unjust, become untouchable.

To imagine something new means being able to imagine the existing becoming obsolete. It requires embracing a degree of iconoclasm. The absence of destruction leaves no room for genuinely new things to emerge. By refusing to think about destruction, we become fixated on it: the vivid imagination of destruction becomes a boogeyman mobilized as a mechanism of fear and control.

Part of why this conflation happens is the failure of contemporary environmental discourse to underline **nature as an active and intelligent force** capable of influencing the beings living within it. Humans do not merely observe nature from outside of it. We remain part of the biosphere itself, and nature can alter us, bend us, and possess us into becoming its sentient, collaborative tools. By mispositioning humanity as entirely separate from the fabric of nature, as merely a glitch or invasive error upon the planet, symbiotic harmony becomes imaginable only through forms of self-martyrdom.

After speaking with several artists in this exhibition, I was surprised by how many of them were shaped by nature and its processes of destruction, particularly volcanic ones. So much so that it becomes impossible to speak of one artist representing one singular facet of communion with nature. Instead, I find myself moving back and forth between them, tracing parallelisms across conversations.

When I first shared the exhibition's concerns with *eschatomania* and futurelessness, Jompet Kuswidananto was immediately reminded of Geger Cilegon, or the Banten Peasant Revolt of 1888, spurred by *eschatomaniac* interpretations of the 1883 Krakatau eruption, cattle epidemics, and plague. Yet interestingly, this apocalyptic reading did not result in passivity. The series of **disasters disrupted the colonial status quo** and catalyzed resistance amongst farmers and religious figures against the VOC.



Maryanto responded similarly to the apocalyptic theme. He reflected that during the 2010 Merapi eruption, anxieties surrounding exhibitions and art careers temporarily dissolved. Society reorganized itself around helping one another survive. His post-apocalyptic imagination paints humanity temporarily returning to a more archaic condition. I admire his belief that humanity's archaic state is fundamentally relational and altruistic.

His reflections reveal a major distinction between imagined versus lived destruction. Whereas an imagined apocalypse often produces a paralyzing spectacle of fatalism, actually experiencing catastrophe, however, seems capable of collapsing certain social abstractions and returning people to immediate forms of relationality.

One of the two pieces Maryanto created for this exhibition depicts Gunung Slamet, an active volcano that continues to emit sulphuric gases to this day. Myths surrounding the mountain such as *Pasar Gaib* (Spirit Market), function as spiritually-wrapped warnings for humans of limits that should not be crossed.

Interestingly, the same volcanic risks that gave rise to these stories are also what attract supposedly sustainable geothermal and mining projects, as civilization attempts to imagine a post-fossil future. In recent years, proposals for geothermal expansion have increasingly been accompanied by concerns regarding ecological imbalance and disaster. The landslide that struck the Tegal region earlier this year serves as a reminder that the mountain is not merely a reserve of resources waiting to be extracted, but as an active force whose rhythms exceed human planning. The mountain becomes simultaneously a site of spirituality, danger, and economic promise.

For Maryanto, these are not separate realities. He currently stands at the crossroads between post-fossil energy extraction and environmental fundamentalism, attempting to carve a difficult middle path between them. To borrow Reza Negarestani's words, searching for "the hard middle where collective agency becomes real."

For Maryanto, the answer to finding the third path is environmental spirituality that is synthesized through encountering nature outside the human body and aligning it with nature within oneself. The answer becomes different for each person. And indeed, he practices what he speaks of, regularly retreating into forests between periods of artmaking.

### Hyper-Places and The Potentials in Ruins

Maryanto's remarks provide the perfect segue into my own improvised term: **Hyper-Places**,<sup>13</sup> as the opposite for Marc Augé's **Non-Places**, "the generic zones of transit" increasingly dominating late capitalism. Where non-places become so optimized that they can no longer be meaningfully differentiated from one another, hyper-places possess such density, particularity, agency and charge that they alter whoever passes through them.

Merapi feels like one of these hyper-places. It generates culture and philosophy while preserving them against flattening. It even transforms outsiders into people capable of perceiving themselves through the perspective of the highlands. Maryanto himself grew up in Jakarta, yet he described experiencing a major perspective shock after finding that, to volcanic cultures around Merapi, re-excavation of temples after eruptions is not always considered necessary, nor is the recovery of everyday structures. They simply continue building in layers, understanding life itself as geological layering.

Almost word for word, a similar observation was later shared by Marten Bayuaji.

Local architecture around Merapi, he said, is built with the potential of ruin already in

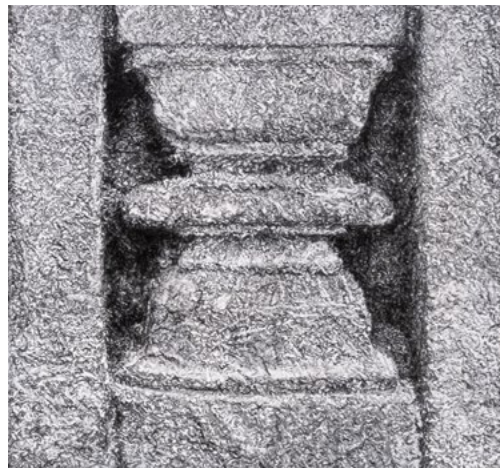
<sup>13</sup> There are other uses of the term hyper-place in existing literature, see: [Inès Guguen-Gicquel and Géraldine Thevenot, "Le Marché, Un Hyper-Lieu Au Service Du Marketing de La Ville et Du Territoire," *Décisions Marketing* N° 98, no. 2 (September 25, 2020): 65-82, <https://doi.org/10.7193/dm.098.65.82>.] However, the term is used differently in this essay.

mind. He remarked, “Who am I to leave Merapi unchanged?”. Over the past several years, Marten has undertaken a “mountain residency.” Yet his ascents are not driven by conquest for physical endurance. He approaches mountains as living cultural sites capable of preserving ways of thinking against the flattening tendencies of the present.

Marten Bayuaji strongly rejects having his project labelled as “research.” “Study” and “research,” to him, differ fundamentally. “Study” is to attain knowledge through doing; *Filsafat Daya*, lived or active philosophy. Because the mode of learning itself functions this way, Javanese culture becomes highly subjective.

The resulting artworks are small- to medium-scale charcoal drawings of Morangan temple ruins on aluminium plates. Stylistically, they appear almost hyperrealistic. The ruins are not enlarged nor altered in any way, just transcribed. That treatment immediately raises a question: why draw them at all if no visual transformation is being performed? And why must the *candi* appear specifically in its ruined state?

According to an archaeologist Marten spoke with, all *candi* ultimately fulfill spiritual needs. The *candi* itself is already an “offspring” of mountain culture. It is made for the Mountain and its metaphors: the dwelling place of gods, source of life, cosmological axis. Knowing how volatile Merapi is, and now understanding the *candi* as an offering toward the spirituality of the mountain itself, it becomes impossible to imagine that the civilization constructing such monumental structures did so without accepting the possibility that one day they would turn into ruin. For someone living in the present such as Marten, witnessing the ruined condition of the *candi* becomes inseparable from understanding the worldview and attitude of the people who built it.



Something else struck me while looking at the drawings. It was not that they lacked volume or realism, but rather that I could not find the usual foundational layer separating shaded and illuminated areas within the surface of the volcanic rock. It is answered when Marten explained that he does not begin by sketching the general shape of the volcanic rock or arranging light and shadow. Instead, he moves from one end of the surface to another, following the pores of the volcanic rock and the traces left behind by chisels, as though retracing both the gestures of people hundreds of years in the past and the gestures of volcanic lava itself in forming the rock.

The works are, in his words, anti-image-making, and in some sense, iconoclastic. It breaks down the *candi* from an icon of human civilization into that of a material and textural dialogue. Marten refers to this process as *Silpin*, a form of anti-time, monastic practice. It was also, to him, a final gesture of anti-anthropocentrism: an attempt to shed the identity of the artist as “he who creates” and instead become “he who is made to create,” a sentient tool through which larger cosmic translates itself into human scale.

### Moving away from political-identity towards bio-identity

If one were to argue that Merapi affected Maryanto, Marten Bayuaji, and Jompet Kuswidananto so deeply only because of their closeness to representational practices, Javanese spirituality, or mountain culture, then Arin Dwihartanto Sunaryo's volcanic ash series becomes a sufficient rebuttal. His practice demonstrates that arriving at the realization of nature as an intelligent force is accessible also for those that came from scientific and western-academic backgrounds.

What particularly struck me in Arin Dwihartanto Sunaryo's practice was his treatment of volcanic ash as a geological marker of identity. He shared that simply by using volcanic ash as material, he already feels capable of representing himself as someone born and living in Indonesia, beyond having to reference batik, wayang, ethnicity, or other cultural artifacts that have become stereotypical. In that statement, Arin shifts identity away from political and cultural categories toward geo-identity and bio-identity.



The two canvas paintings presented in this exhibition, both produced in 2026, contain volcanic ash, including Merapi ash, alongside IKN soil, palm oil, charcoal, and other natural pigments. The resulting works are abstract paintings, yet each material listed could easily become its own artwork narrating specific recent events or political conditions. Arin refuses this narrativizing impulse. Instead, the materials are pulverized, mixed, and applied into the surface as pigments. The singular resin piece, in its form, recalls the logic of the museum vitrine and Crystal Palace: an object encased and made visible behind a transparent surface. Yet unlike the exhibitionary complex, which promises knowledge through visibility, the work offers no stable narrative. If the Crystal Palace organizes objects into a legible order, Arin suspends that ordering impulse. The particles remain visible but uncategorized, unspecified.

For Arin, the volcanic ash series became memorable less because of the eruption event itself and more because of the shift it created within his studio practice. He moved away from relying on industrially prepared pigments and began using volcanic ash as pigment. In the process, his understanding of what pigment even is started to change. Rather than the artist mastering the material, the material began teaching him.

The process opened entirely new perspectives, compelling him to repeatedly travel to Merapi, Gunung Agung, Tangkuban Perahu, and other volcanic sites, meeting local residents, caretakers, miners, spiritual custodians, and different communities surrounding the mountains. Merapi ash remained especially important because of the volcano's constant activity. The ash remains "fresh," continuously renewed through

eruption and relatively uncontaminated by other substances. Frequent destruction is now seen as frequent production. In this sense, volcanic ash becomes both material and archive, tied directly to recurring geological events. Some volcanic ash is gathered through tourism, some through industrial extraction, some through village pollution. Each site produces different social relations around the material.

Around 2015, Arin brought volcanic ash samples into a geological laboratory and observed them under extreme magnification. Under the microscope, the ash revealed unexpected colors and material complexity. Emerging from the earth's interior, volcanic ash contains amalgamations of countless substances: Aluminium, Silica, Iron, other minerals and metals. The closer he looked into the particles, the more universal they appeared. Zooming into the microscopic strangely began resembling zooming outward into the cosmic.

Ines Katamso also arrives at the idea of nature as an intelligent force through a combination of spiritual and material processes. Earlier in her career, particularly around the period of ARTJOG 2024 and the Biennale de Lyon, she was deeply pessimistic about humanity. The environments she constructed in her installations became increasingly arid and apocalyptic. Yet during the Biennale de Lyon, something unexpectedly shifted her perspective: weeds began growing from within one of the sterile environments she had enforced in her installation. Nature rebelled against the fatalist narrative she imposed.

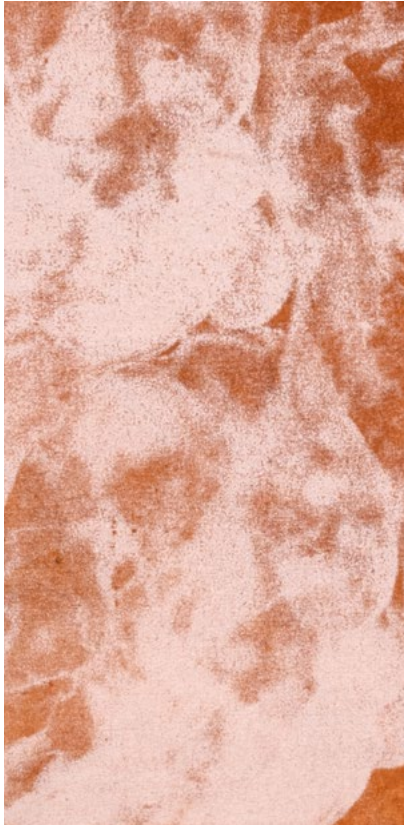
For Ines, that moment became a realization that pessimism alone does not help the earth or the future. The role of the artist, she felt, is not merely to illustrate collapse, but to create new narratives through which people may reconsider their present condition. Over the past several years, this fundamentally altered her practice. Her more recent works increasingly revolve around decomposition and transformation.

Her fascination with mycelium reminds me of the 2010 documentary *Robinson in Ruins* and its director's preoccupation with lichens. The film shifts from treating lichens as merely lingering picturesque shots into understanding them as dominant ecological actors.<sup>14</sup> Ines arrives at a similar realization through fungi and mycelium systems. Like Arin, the use of microscopes also profoundly changed how Ines experiences her subject matter. Through microscopic imaging of mycelium structures

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<sup>14</sup> Fisher, 2014, 194.

and soil organisms, she became interested in enlarging the invisible-yet-vast biological processes into human scale, much like how ancient mythologies translate natural forces into gods and goddesses. The microscopic images she encounters are translated onto cotton fabric canvas using the same materials within which the organisms themselves grow. Similar to Arin, Ines also uses soil from distinct locations as pigment and material.



Ines' departure from fatalism also led her toward older cosmologies and pre-colonial spiritualities. For her, contemporary *eschatomania* is deeply tied to monotheistic frameworks in which the world moves toward a singular endpoint, often centered around humanity itself. She instead became increasingly interested in older Southeast Asian mythologies that understand death, decomposition, and transformation as cyclical and generative rather than terminal; in particular, the Javanese and Balinese stories surrounding Dewi Sri and her father, Antaboga. From Antaboga's tears that become seeds, emerges Dewi Sri, whose later death and dismemberment transform her body into various plants and sources of sustenance. Life emerges through death and decomposition, what Ines calls "nutrient cycling." Mycelium inhabits

this very role within ecosystems; decomposing organic matter while simultaneously redistributing nutrients throughout the environment. There are no such things as scraps. Every death is a way for new things to come.

### Ode to the Unspecified, Undefined, and Constantly Revising

I would like to introduce another term that has the potential to become a strategy against cultural stagnation, "unspecified space." Unspecified spaces are not non-places, in some ways, its opposite. Unspecified spaces are places that resist fixed uses or optimization categories altogether. They function like crevices for fishlets, small openings where culture can incubate before becoming visible to the market. When cities are manicured out of these irregularities, culture too becomes flattened. There

is no longer sufficient room for things to grow before they are forced to answer to productivity and audience expectation.

In Maryanto's second piece, the dilapidated Armed Forces' Gwangju Hospital after the uprising becomes one of such unspecified spaces. Following the collapse of their intended function, they resist clear categorization of use and, through that suspension, become haunting monuments of residue and unresolved pasts. Both restoring the building to its original function or flattening it to the ground risk erasing a bookmark of a paradoxical event: a tragedy that also became a catalyst for popular triumph. Perhaps one must learn to live side-by-side with ruins in order to develop a healthy sense of time. This also returns us to Jompet Kuswidananto's practice. Throughout his works, ghosts repeatedly appear as figures inhabiting history. In some sense, Jompet subverts the archive and the museum by giving bodies to individuals, myths, and events that failed to pass through the gatekeeping mechanisms of official history. The ghost becomes a figure suspended outside specification and use, neither fully absent nor fully recognized, yet always tied to an event, a location, a time.



Kuswidananto's work in this exhibition strips these ghostly bodies of most recognizable markers. In earlier works, the figures were identified through costumes and social roles: demonstrators, *ormas* members, palace guards. Here, three nameless figures remain, almost without volume. Their shoulders are hooked to a motor and pulled upward, yet the limpness of the fabric makes it difficult to tell whether these are clothes or a tattered stage curtain. In differing shades of white, the fabric folds

and unfolds, “bowing” against the industrial light as it moves upward and downward, accompanied by ceremonial music. Rather than pointing toward a specific historical wound, this work conveys a fatigue with endlessly having to revive or relive undead narratives.

The artist relates the word and material “light” in the title *Don’t Leave The Lights On* to a manifestation of power. I would like, instead, to view the gesture presented by the installation as an endless curtain call, an endless encore. Aligned with other works in this exhibition, especially Enka’s, the current political theatre appears as a long play that refuses to accept its dignified end. Through discussions with the artist and the work’s allusion to the form of a curtain, its mechanical nature also recalls the *deus ex machina* (“god from the machine”), a plot device in which a positive resolution is forced upon an otherwise logically unsolvable conflict.

Unspecified spaces, however, do not only exist within explicitly spiritual or political settings. It can emerge within casual and contemporary situations too. In this sense, institutions capable of preserving and providing unspecified space and unspecified time become increasingly important. Interestingly, two artists in this exhibition, Syagini Ratna Wulan and Arin Dwihartanto Sunaryo, also occupy important roles directing and managing an art institution, Selasar Sunaryo Art Space. In some sense, their practices extend beyond artworks themselves and into the shaping of infrastructures, ecosystems, and forms of public interaction.

SSAS started as a museum for Sunaryo, yet by the time the management and direction baton was unexpectedly passed to Arin, the institution’s de facto position within the ecosystem had already exceeded private ownership and became something belonging to the public. It now functions closer to a Kunsthalle.

What interests me is that Arin approaches the institution not as something complete, but as something revisable. He spoke about the importance of building teams capable of introducing other voices into the institution so that Selasar may continue finding new forms that fit the ecosystem’s needs. And perhaps this is the important distinction between museum and mausoleum.. A living institution is one capable of being revised, contradicted, and proven wrong. It is a constructed entity rather than a sacred one. It does not own the public, but is gradually owned by the public.

Still, in regards to the unspecified, at the beginning stages of this exhibition, after the title and concept were shared with Syagini, she asked me a question that had been occupying her recently: what is the purpose of creating art? Before attempting to answer it, I would like to look at the tendencies within her paintings.

Her works often incorporate arrays of objects, texts, and images that initially appear arbitrarily chosen. Yet these objects are never neutral. They arrive already carrying meanings, memories, and associations. Through composition, Syagini arranges them into what she calls a “constellation of associations”, where disparate elements are metabolized through the artist’s internal logic. She describes her paintings as **perceptual devices**, capable of generating multiple readings rather than a single conclusion.

In this sense, her treatment of images and objects recalls the cabinet of curiosities. Unlike the modern museum, whose air of authority rests upon claims of neutrality, order, and public knowledge, the cabinet openly foregrounded the subjective logic of its collector. Meanings emerged through proximity, association, intuition, and personal fascination.

Perhaps this tendency is not as distant from everyday life as it first appears. We bookmark our life events through tchotchkes and assign sentimental value to knick-knacks. Christmas trees accumulate ornaments inherited, gifted, bought, and collected over the years. Bag charms multiply, each carrying its own story, memory, or attachment. In Syagini’s *The Branching Hour*, an amorphous glittering tree becomes a collection of such accumulated meanings. In *Does Your Grief Have Fur?*, dangling trinkets and bag charms form an archive that remains unfinished, constantly changing and additive. Radically speaking, aren’t these tendencies at least a proto-museologic practice? And a living and revising one at that.

As a counterpoint to the exhibitionary complex and its tendency to centralize perception, Syagini’s paintings function as honest and subjective broadcasts of the self. The meanings remain fluid, inviting viewers to construct their own constellations of association. Rather than producing a uniformed perspective, the works validate and push for decentralized and varied ways of seeing.

In a recent online interview, Syagini remarked that people create in search of validation. I do not think validation is necessarily a dirty word. Perhaps one reason we continue to create, and to create publicly, is to make visible the possibility of a revising self. To validate not only our own perceptions, but the right for perceptions to differ, especially in an era where algorithms increasingly reward uniformity and consensus.

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## OUTRO

Perhaps there is no conclusion to this thesis problem that has not already been hinted at by the artists' works themselves. What this exhibition gathers are recurring attempts to resist passivity, flattening, and the feeling that the present cannot be changed.

The struggle is not between institution and anti-institution, or material and spiritual. The answer I continue returning to instead is revisability. A living philosophy breathes through revision, reinterpretation, contradiction, adjustment, decomposition, and reassembly. Philosophy that can coexist with the uncontrollable and not become fatalistic.

"The point is not to abolish destiny-talk, but to discriminate between kinds of destiny. Philosophy has always lived with fate, [...] does not deny that we are carried by processes larger than us. It denies that those processes are entitled to serve as reasons."

To accept that things can end is also to accept that things can change. Perhaps resisting hopelessness begins there: refusing the idea that the current shape of the world is final.

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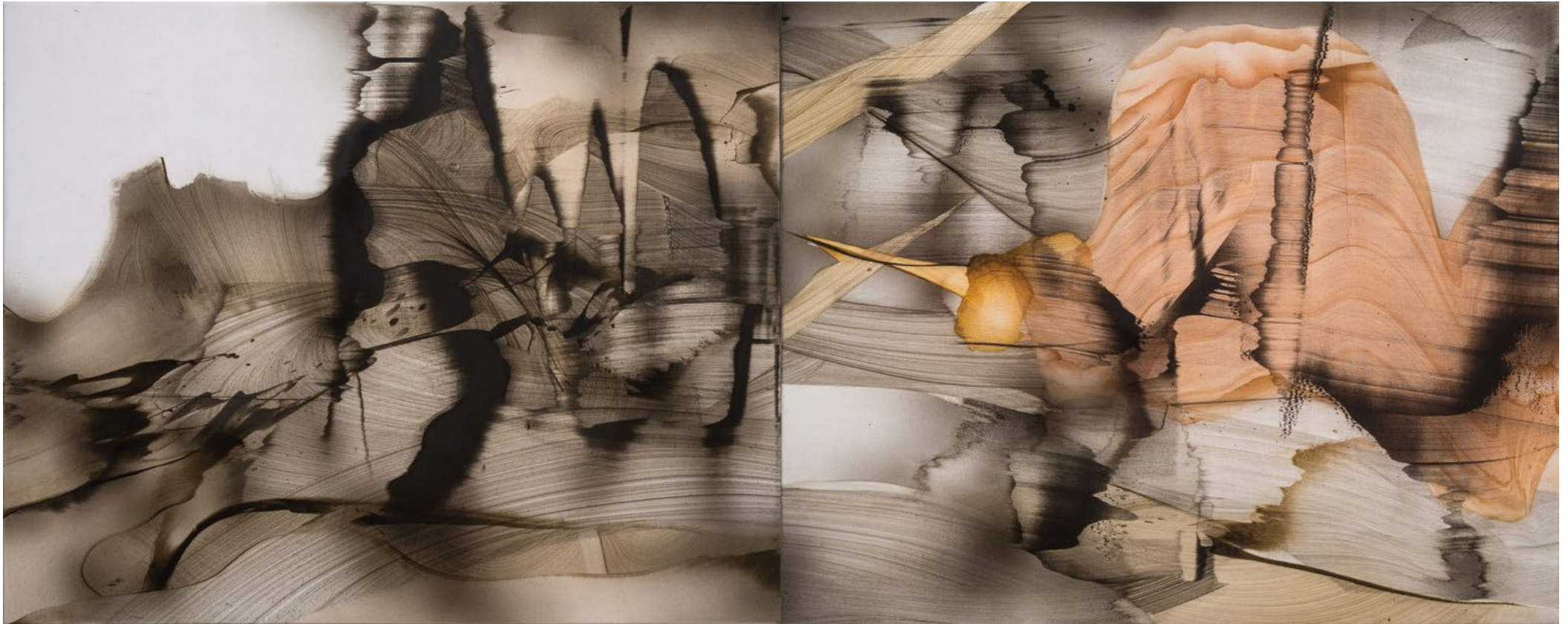
**Arin Dwihartanto Sunaryo**

**Planum Pulveris**

2026

Merapi volcanic ash, palm oil charcoal and canvas on wooden panel

206 x 226 x 5 cm



**Arin Dwihartanto Sunaryo**

**Planum Pulveris #2**

2026

Volcanic ash, IKN soil, palm oil charcoal, coal, natural pigment and canvas on wooden panel

92 x 230 x 5 cm (Diptych)



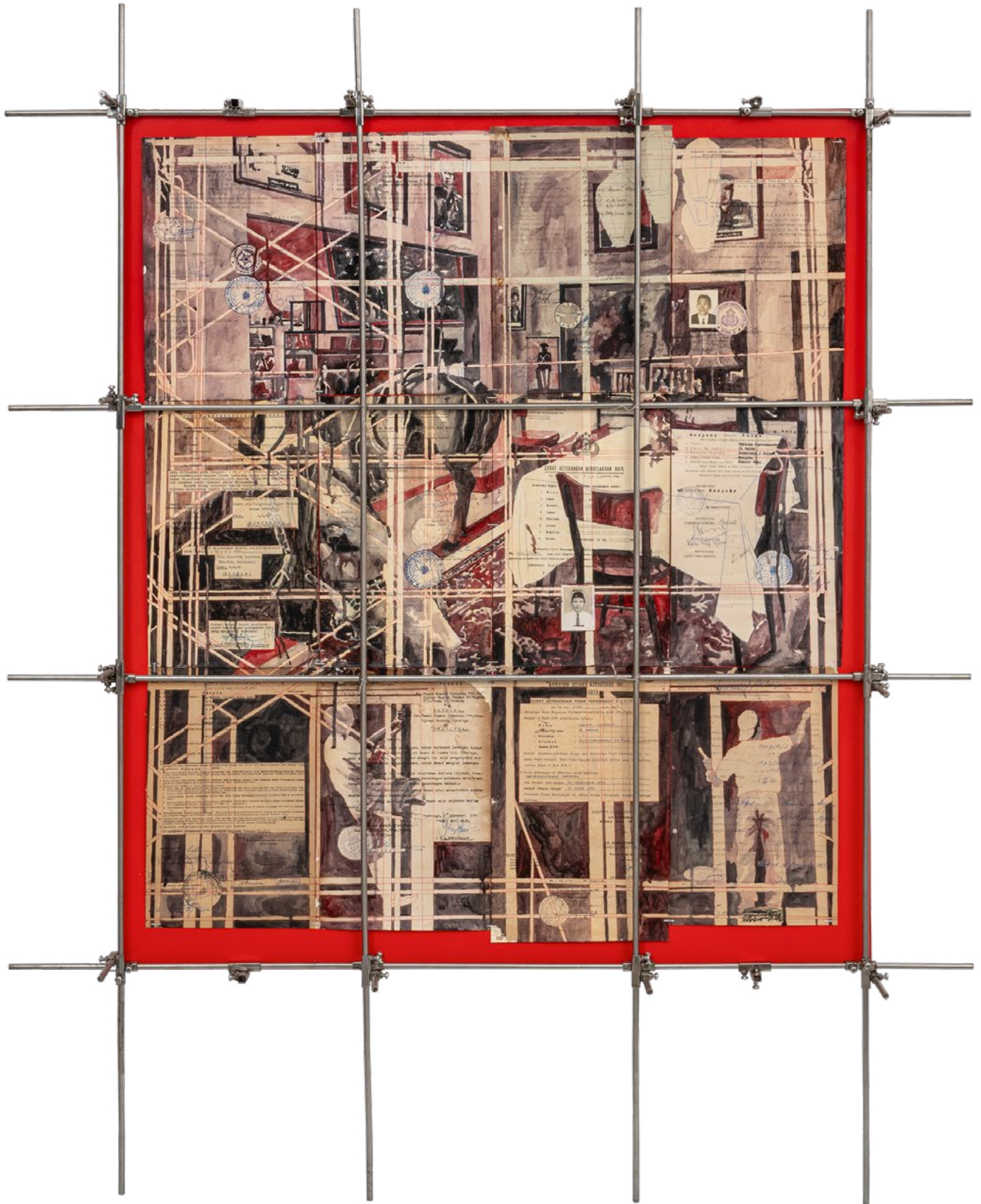
**Arin Dwihartanto Sunaryo**

**Pozzolan #5**

2025

Volcanic ash and pigmented resin mounted on wooden panel

57 x 81 x 5 cm



Enka Komariah

Malam Berkabung

2026

Oil based-water on document wajib lapor ex tapol g30s 80'

108 x 93 cm

149.5 x 120 x 26 cm (framed)



Enka Komariah

Massa

2026

Oil based-water on document bebas terlibat G30s

101 x 92 cm

120 x 120 x 26 cm (framed)



Enka Komariah

Irian Barat

2026

Oil based-water on xerox copy Irian barat map

96 x 68 cm

99 x 71 cm (framed)



Enka Komariah

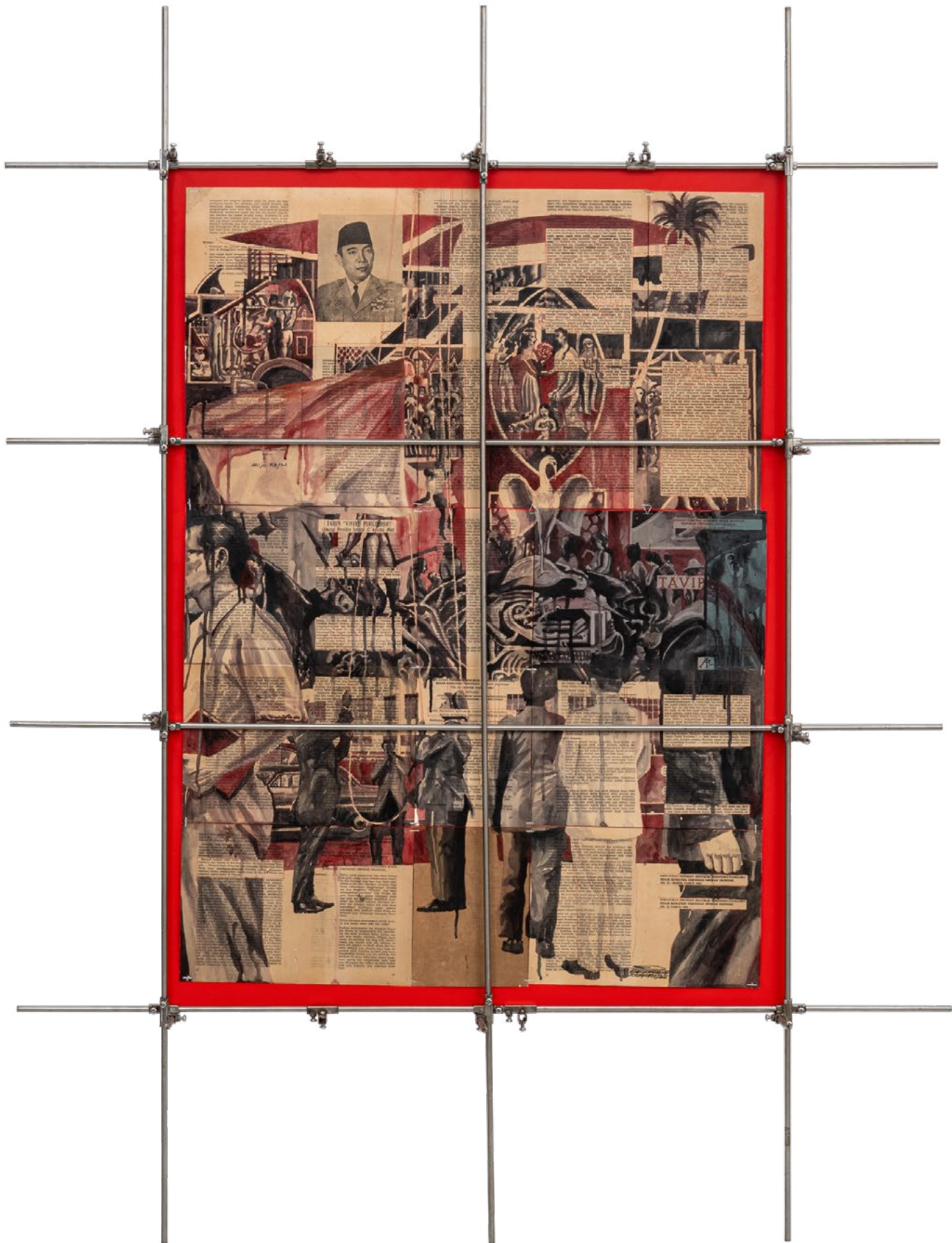
Konfrontasi

2026

Oil based-water on document laporan polisi tentang pencurian 64

73 x 92 cm

76 x 94.7 cm (framed)



Enka Komariah

Tahun Menyerempet Bahaya

2026

Oil based-water paint on TAVIP book 60'

110 x 80.5 cm

160 x 120 x 26 cm (framed)



...tahu akan jaja partai-partai politik itu sedjak sebelum...  
 ...partai-partai politik itu sedjak sebelum...  
 ...partai-partai politik itu sedjak sebelum...

...terhadap oknum-oknum yang lewat partai-partai politik...  
 ...tidak hanya yang lewat partai-partai politik saja!...  
 ...tidak hanya yang lewat partai-partai politik saja!...  
 ...tidak hanya yang lewat partai-partai politik saja!...

22

Peristiwa Asian Games IV, Konferensi terhadap OLA, dan yang terpecah **Ganefo I**;

Konvensi MMAA II, dan disampingnya juga KWAA, sedang eksekutif KPAAS, Sidang Perstapan KIAA, dan PAA III.

Ketika, pemupukan setiakawan Angkatan persegalaan kekuatan New Emerging Forces!

Konsep, terbentuknya front internasional...Malaysia... dan menggolongkan Dwikota.

Silahkan berani mengatakan bahwa kemenangan ini adalah kemenangan yang kecil? Siapa yang tidak bisa mengatakan bahwa kemenangan ini sedikit banjaknya adalah kemenangan yang punya ukurannya sejarahnya, yang historis? Siapa yang tidak mengerti itu, dia belum bedah benar yang betul!

Dengan ini pokok-pokok yang disebutkan tadi masih banjak kemahasiswaan yang diuja penting-penting sekutu, tetapi yang terlalu banjak untuk saja sebutkan semuanya, misalnja penjabatan SOB, yang menunjukkan bahwa kita kuat...  
 ...Saja ingin tekankan positifnya bahwa...  
 ...Saja ingin tekankan positifnya bahwa...  
 ...Saja ingin tekankan positifnya bahwa...

Achir ini udara politik diengerinya diliputi oleh...  
 ...diskusi, polemik ini dan polemik itu, perdebatan...  
 ...diskusi, polemik ini dan polemik itu, perdebatan...  
 ...diskusi, polemik ini dan polemik itu, perdebatan...

...menerima persatuan nasional. Tetapi...  
 ...menerima persatuan nasional. Tetapi...  
 ...menerima persatuan nasional. Tetapi...

Saudara? Saja berbesar hati...  
 ...sudah berapa gunung-karang...  
 ...sudah berapa gunung-karang...  
 ...sudah berapa gunung-karang...

...Untuk didengar oleh telinga lawan itu, saja sekarang...  
 ...Untuk didengar oleh telinga lawan itu, saja sekarang...  
 ...Untuk didengar oleh telinga lawan itu, saja sekarang...

...Tetapi permulaan 1964 Indonesia tidak ambruk...  
 ...Tetapi permulaan 1964 Indonesia tidak ambruk...  
 ...Tetapi permulaan 1964 Indonesia tidak ambruk...

...Pateklik 1962 dan pateklik 1963 tidak membuat Indonesia...  
 ...Pateklik 1962 dan pateklik 1963 tidak membuat Indonesia...  
 ...Pateklik 1962 dan pateklik 1963 tidak membuat Indonesia...

...Of course, sudah barang tentu, kita masih...  
 ...Of course, sudah barang tentu, kita masih...  
 ...Of course, sudah barang tentu, kita masih...

...No Sir, kami tidak akan ambruk! Ber-tamabek...  
 ...No Sir, kami tidak akan ambruk! Ber-tamabek...  
 ...No Sir, kami tidak akan ambruk! Ber-tamabek...

...Revolusi bertukarkan...  
 ...Revolusi bertukarkan...  
 ...Revolusi bertukarkan...

23

tangan saja! Tetapi, Allah...  
 ...tangan saja! Tetapi, Allah...  
 ...tangan saja! Tetapi, Allah...

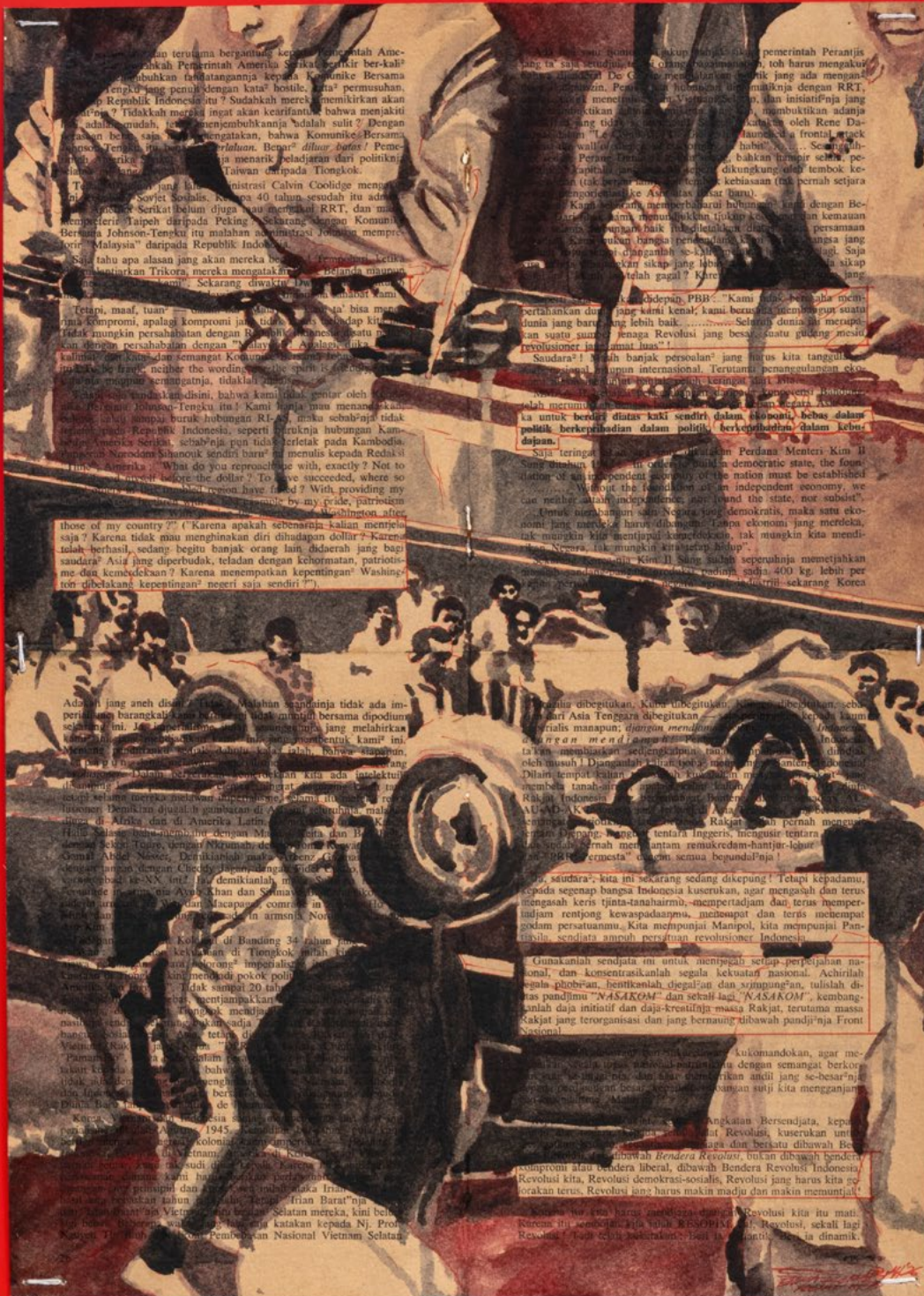
...Saudara-saudara yang berhadapan...  
 ...Saudara-saudara yang berhadapan...  
 ...Saudara-saudara yang berhadapan...

...Dijelaskan sekarang pesannya...  
 ...Dijelaskan sekarang pesannya...  
 ...Dijelaskan sekarang pesannya...

...Bagi saja sendiri...  
 ...Bagi saja sendiri...  
 ...Bagi saja sendiri...

Enka Komariah

Aliansi  
 2026  
 Oil based water on Tavip book  
 46 x 34 cm  
 49 x 37 cm (framed)



Enka Komariah

Signing

2026

Oil based water on Tavip book

46 x 34 cm

49 x 37 cm (framed)



Enka Komariah

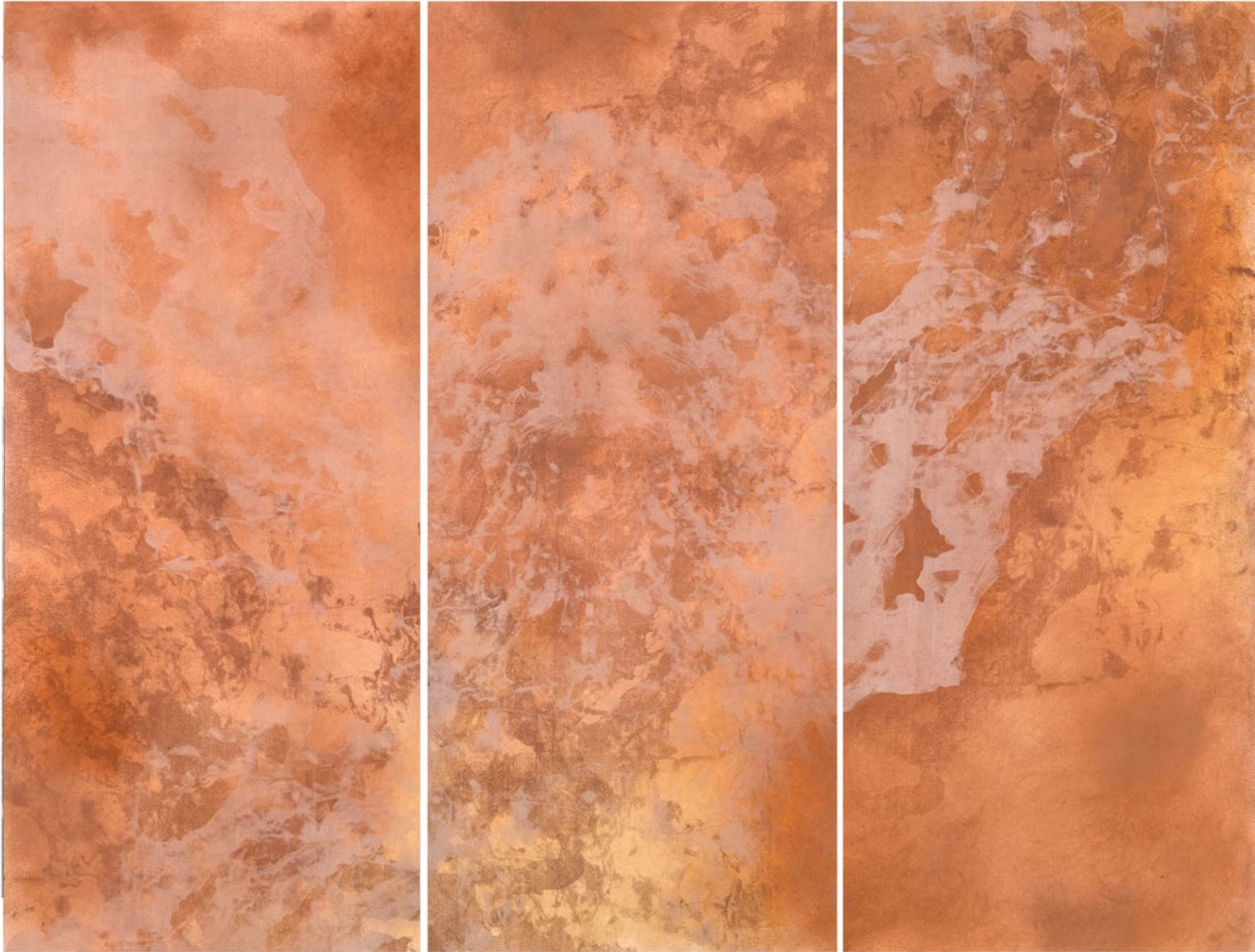
Mata badai

2026

Oil based water on djawa pos newspaper 64

62 x 45 cm

90 x 70 x 10.5 cm (framed)



**Ines Katamso**

**HYPHAE 5**

2026

Soil from Yogyakarta and France on cotton, aluminum accent

180 x 140 cm (triptych)



**Ines Katamso**

**HYPHAE 6**

2026

Soil from Yogyakarta and France on cotton, aluminum accent

120 x 80 cm



**Ines Katamso**

**HYPHAE 7**  
2026

Soil from Yogyakarta and France on cotton, aluminum accent  
80 x 54 cm



Jompet Kuswidananto

Don't Leave the Lights On  
2026

Fabric, shoes, lamp, iron, digital sound player, electronic and  
mechanical system  
Variable dimensions



**Lemuel E. Saputra**

**Acts (Disorde)**

2025

Acrylic, inkjet collage, image transfer on canvas

170 x 460 cm



Lemuel E. Saputra

Acts (not even past)

2026

Acrylic, image transfer, tracing paper on canvas

33 x 42.6 cm



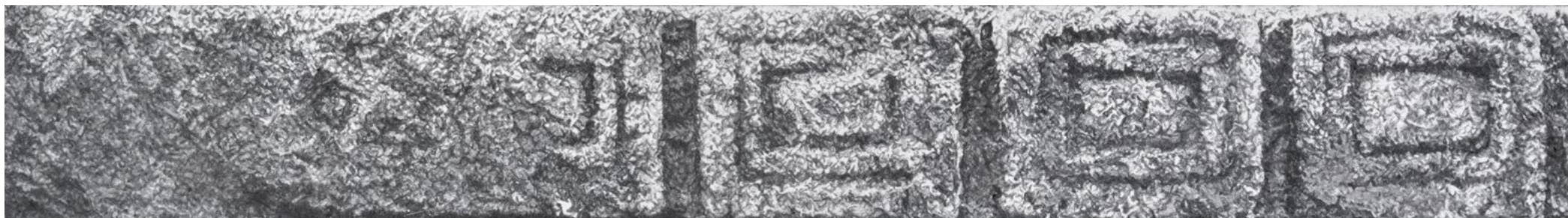
**Lemuel E. Saputra**

Acts (no particular order)

2025

Acrylic, graphite, charcoal, tracing paper on canvas, mounted on wood panel

25 x 31 cm



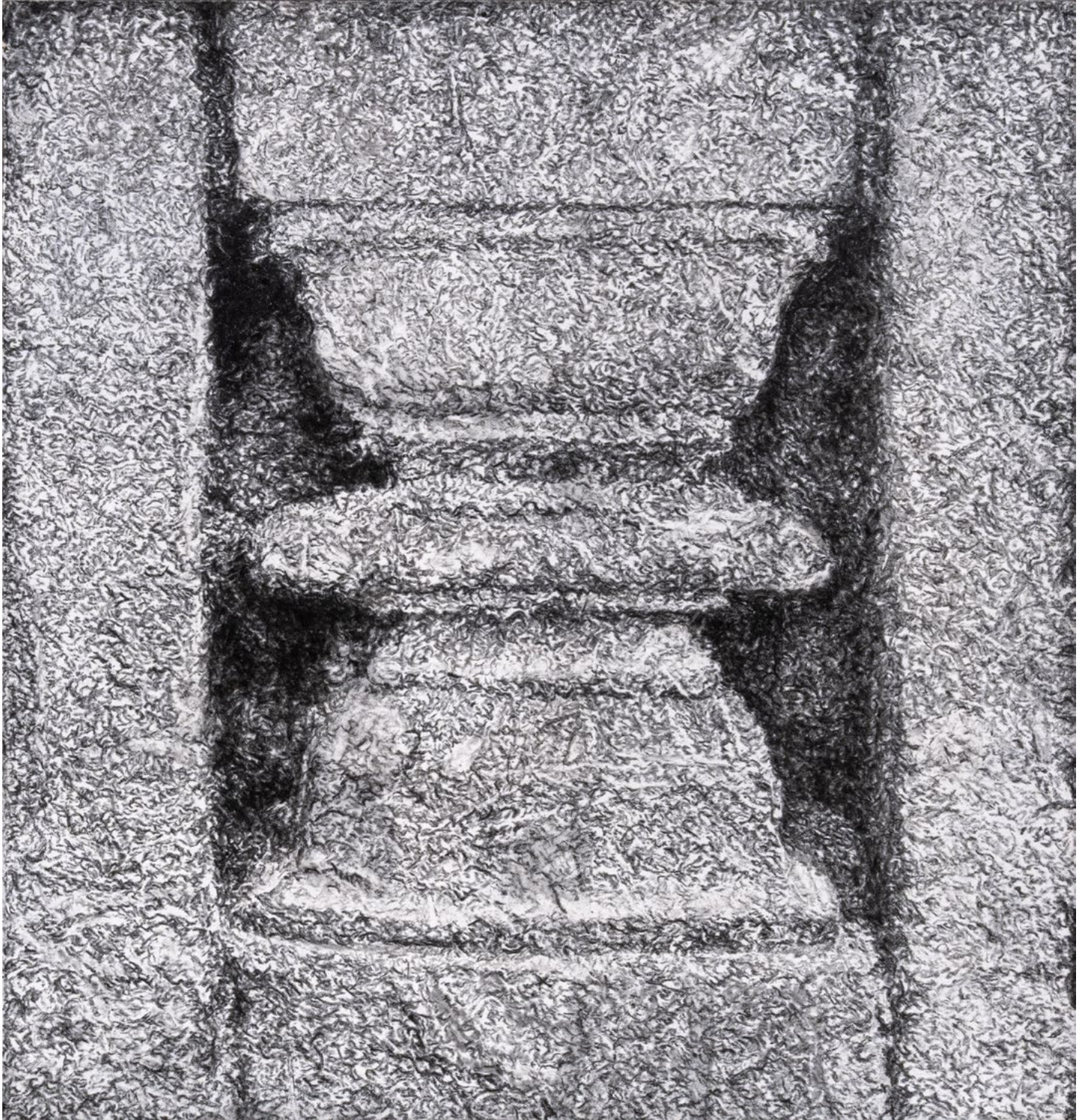
**Marten Bayuaji**

**Bentang Tajug Tiga**

2026

Charcoal on aluminium composite panel

6 x 46 cm



**Marten Bayuaji**

Lapik Dua Sangga

2026

Charcoal on aluminium composite panel

23 x 22 x 2.5 cm



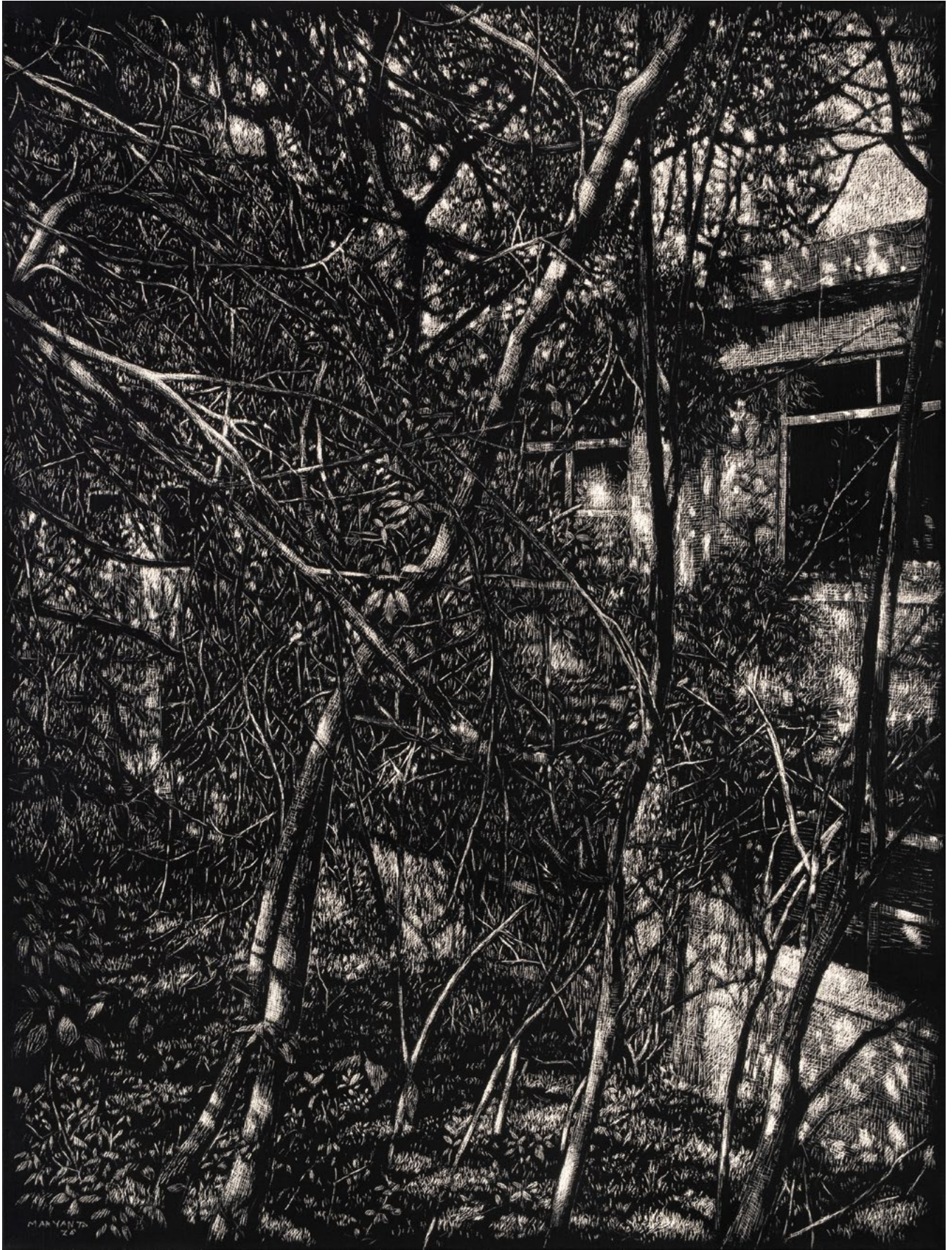
**Marten Bayuaji**

**Empat Saka**

2026

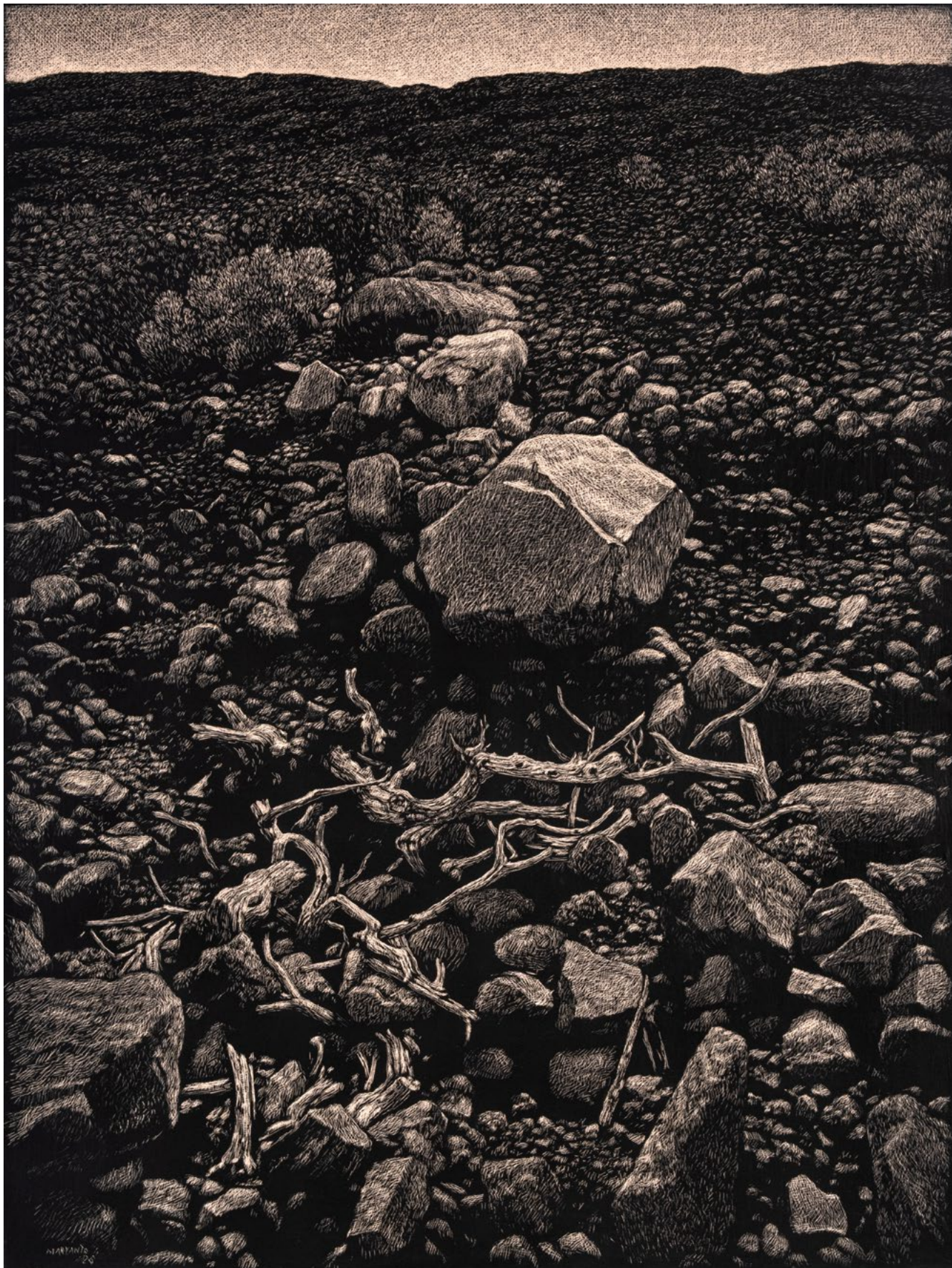
Charcoal on aluminium composite panel

14 x 11.5 cm



Maryanto

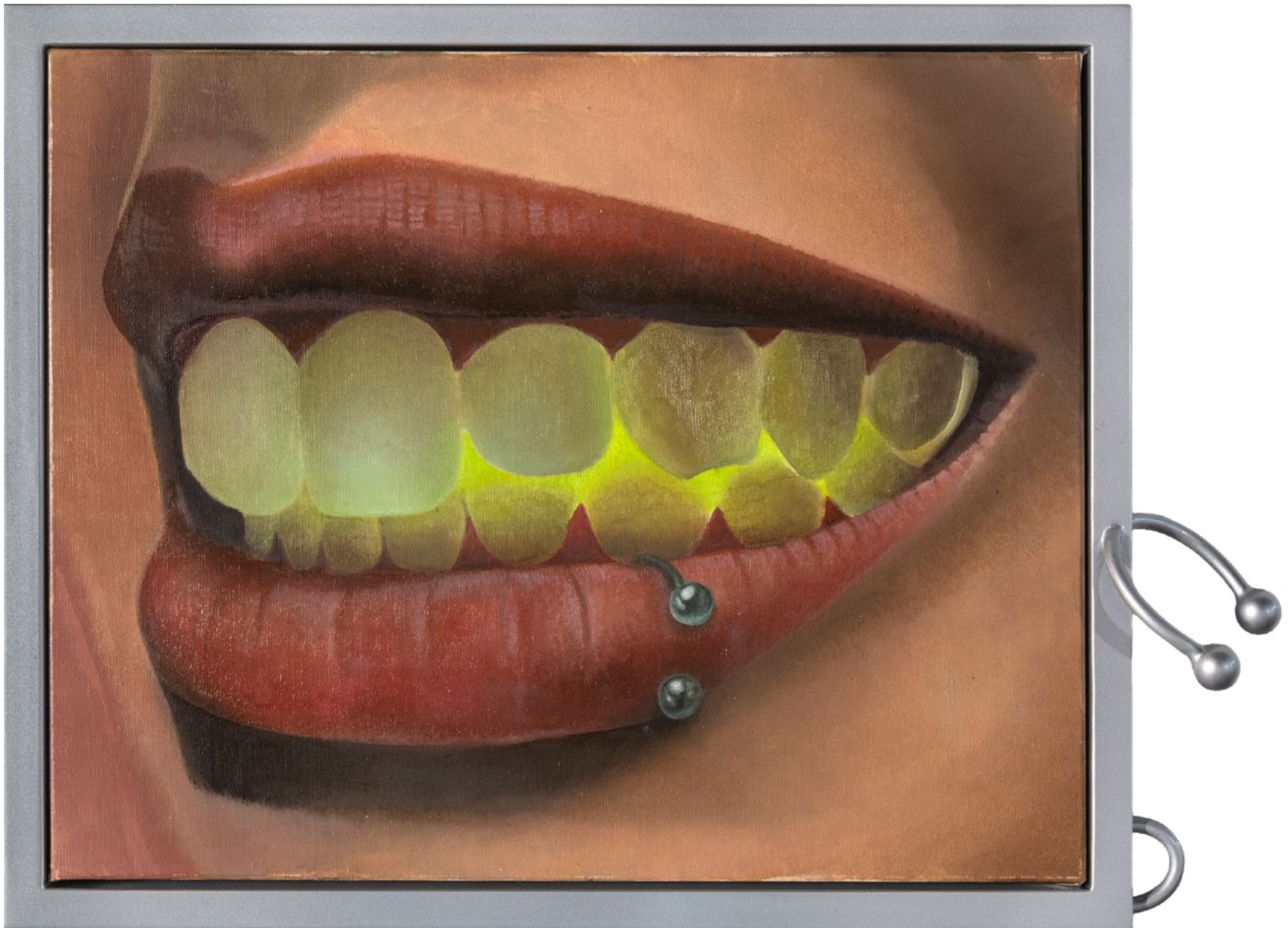
Maryanto, *When the Fire Becomes Leaves*  
2026  
Acrylic on canvas  
80 x 60 cm



Maryanto

When the Fire Becomes Stones  
2026  
Acrylic on canvas  
80 x 60 cm





Syagini

Is Your Philosophy Edible?

2026

Oil paint on canvas

49,5x39,5 cm



Syagini

Does Your Grief Have Fur?  
202x  
Oil paint on canvas  
42.6 x 33 cm

# Writer

## Liza Markus

Liza Markus (b. 1995, Jakarta, Indonesia) is an art practitioner who graduated from the sculpture studio at Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts. Liza's interests lie in art, tradition, and religion, though she has recently taken a more cynical perspective on all three. She is currently exploring readymade art with minimal intervention and lexical etudes. In her writing and research practice, she is particularly drawn to media theory, which often manifests in projects she undertakes with Anathapindika (Dika).

As a duo, *dika+lija* were part of the BAK (Basis voor Actuele Kunst) Fellowship of Situated Practice and released a public pedagogy journal for Victoria University and a journal for Politics of the Machine (POM) Conference Aachen 2024.

## CVs

### Arin Dwihartanto Sunaryo

Arin Dwihartanto Sunaryo (b. 1978) is an artist based in Bandung, Indonesia. He studied painting at Institut Teknologi Bandung (2001) and Central Saint Martins, London (2005). Arin works with painting as an expanded medium. In it, his practice pertains to qualitative difference carried by both the imagerial and the material in painting.

Working often with resin and pigments, as well as canvas and paint, Arin explores the plasticity of how pictures are painted. His practice can be associated with the almost choreographic aspect of action painting. His choice of colouring, however, is collected from various materials associated with everyday life and issues occurring.

Things are ground down to become pigment: ash from an erupting volcano, palm-oil fruits of converted lands, instant ramen, deep-fried egg, and montages of prints. Afloat the paintings, they depict the multiplicity and mobility of matter. Arin's paintings come together not as mere frozen movement of colour spectra, but as narratives relational to the formation of our vision in the now-time.

His works have been featured in exhibitions such as *No Country: Contemporary Art for South and Southeast Asia*, Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York (2013); *Silent Salvo*, ARNDT Berlin, Germany (2015, solo show); *after taste*, Sullivan + Strumpf, Sydney, Australia (2017, solo show); *Argo*, Simon Lee Gallery, London, United Kingdom (2019, solo show); *External Entrails*, Silverlens, New York (2023); *Base Matters*, Selasar Sunaryo Art Space Bandung, Indonesia (2023, solo show); and is part of the public collection of the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, United States.

### Enka Komariah

Enka Komariah (b. 1993, Klaten) graduated from the Department of Graphic Arts at the Indonesia Institute of the Arts Yogyakarta in 2017. Working across a range of media, with drawing often serving as a primary medium, Enka develops imaginative narratives that blend personal mythology, satire, and irony. His works frequently play with symbols and visual codes, navigating the tensions between social norms and taboos while questioning established cultural values.

A recurring interest in Enka's practice is the cultivation of identity through references to Javanese agrarian traditions, which he often juxtaposes with contradictory images drawn from popular culture. This collision of vernacular and contemporary visual languages has become a distinctive characteristic of his work. Beyond his individual practice, Enka is actively involved in several artist collectives, including Barasub (comics), Gegerboyoy (murals), and Beresyit (illustration).

### Ines Katamso

Ines Katamso (b. 1990, Yogyakarta) is a French-Indonesian artist whose practice unfolds at the intersection of ecology, culture, and myth. Working with natural materials such as soil, recycled plastic, and botanical matter, she develops research-driven processes that examine the spiritual and environmental relationships between humans and their ecosystems.

Drawing from animist cosmologies and vernacular knowledge, particularly those rooted in Javanese and Balinese traditions, Katamso approaches the landscape not as a passive backdrop but as an active bearer of memory, agency, and identity. Through foraging, pigment-making, and close observation of living systems, she investigates how ecological histories are embedded within material processes. Her practice often involves collaborations with local communities and ecological networks, incorporating fieldwork and site-responsive methodologies into sculptural installations, paintings, and interdisciplinary projects.

Recent works explore the communicative capacities of living matter by integrating environmental data, organic processes, and ritual gestures. Rather than prescribing fixed meanings, her installations invite forms of attentive listening and embodied engagement, encouraging renewed awareness of the subtle interdependencies that connect human and non-human worlds.

Recent presentations of her work include the Biennale de Lyon (2024), ArtJog (2024), and forthcoming participation in the Jakarta Biennale (2026) and Guangzhou Biennale (2026). She has also been an artist-in-residence at IAC Villeurbanne and exhibited with White Cube in 2025.

### Lemuel E. Saputra

(b. 1998, Salatiga) is an Indonesian painter based in Queens, New York. His practice examines the cultural and historical structures within which we orient identity. He engages with painting and photography in Indonesia's colonial history as a space of encounter between colonizer and colonized subject. Embracing the limitations and tensions inherent with both mediums—fixedness and plasticity, indexicality and invention,

specificity and illegibility, proximity and distance, singularity and reproducibility—images are translated and mistranslated onto the painting surface using image transfer, collage, and assemblage in combination with the language of painting. His multimedia work explores the capacity of both photography and painting to simultaneously contain so much while revealing so little.

### **Marten Bayuaji**

Marten Bayuaji (b. 1992, Jepara) is an Indonesian artist whose practice explores the relationship between humans and the natural world through drawing, sculpture, installation, and site-responsive interventions. He studied at Yogyakarta State University and the Bandung Institute of Technology, where he developed an interdisciplinary approach informed by landscape, ecology, and spatial perception.

Nature functions as both subject and methodology within Bayuaji's work. Drawing inspiration from natural forms, environmental processes, and the idea of nature itself, he employs a wide range of materials and media to investigate how humans position themselves within their surrounding ecosystems. Many of his projects take the form of temporary or site-specific interventions that respond directly to particular landscapes and spatial conditions. Through these often ephemeral works, Bayuaji reflects on anthropocentrism and the ways in which human actions shape, transform, and negotiate the environment. His practice moves fluidly between indoor and outdoor contexts, incorporating organic matter, industrial materials, drawing, sculpture, and installation. Recent works have explored geological formations, volcanic landscapes, environmental memory, and speculative relationships between human and non-human worlds.

In 2021, Bayuaji was awarded the Deutsche Bank Fellowship at the Leipzig International Art Programme (LIA), Germany, where he undertook a three-month residency. His work has been exhibited in Indonesia and internationally, including presentations with Gajah Gallery, Andis Gallery, ISA Art Gallery, and Leipzig International Art Programme.

### **Jompet Kuswidananto**

Jompet Kuswidananto (b. Yogyakarta, 1976) started his artistic journey as an amateur musician. From 1997–1999, he produced several works of indie music recordings individually and in groups. Since 1998 he has grown together with the collective Teater Garasi, which has had a major influence on his artistic language. After completing his studies at the Faculty of Social and Political Sciences, Gadjah Mada University in 1999 he studied contemporary art on his own, the early Reformation era also gave Jompet a strong impetus to explore new realities through the language of art. Currently, Jompet works with various mediums such as installation, video, sound, and performance to

discuss various themes around Indonesia's alternative history that ranges from the ghosts of colonialism to nostalgia for the dictatorship.

Jompet has exhibited his works widely, including: Solo exhibition at Tropenmuseum Amsterdam, 2014; Sherman Contemporary Art Foundation, Sydney, 2016 and MAC's Grand Hornu, Belgium. As well as group exhibitions including: Sun Shower, Mori Art Museum, Tokyo, 2017; Sharjah Biennale 2019; Bangkok Art Biennale 2022. In 2014 he won an award from Prudential – Eye Award in Singapore in the installation art category.

### Maryanto Beb

Maryanto (b. 1977, Indonesia) creates powerful monochromatic paintings and monumental installations that dissect socio-political structures through the depiction of landscapes. His works investigate the impact of technological development, industrialisation, pollution, and resource exploitation on the natural world, reflecting the harsh realities in his home country. Through fable-like and theatrical settings, Maryanto's landscapes present deeply urgent concerns around the encroachment of the environment, both physical and cultural. He will be included in a forthcoming institutional exhibition in Switzerland next year.

Maryanto has been exhibited internationally, selected notable solo and group exhibitions include: Meru / Fractured Paradise, Tabula Rasa Gallery (London, 2023); 16 Albemarle, Sydney (2023); MALLAM Contemporary Art Museum, Thailand (2021); Jogja National Museum, Yogyakarta (2020); Yeo Workshop, Singapore (2019, 2017 and 2015); the 2nd Industrial Biennale, Labin, Croatia (2018); Koganei Art Spot Chateau, Tokyo (2018); Setouchi Triennale, Naoshima, Japan (2016); Samstag Museum of Art, Adelaide; the Asia Culture Centre, Gwangju; the Bozar Centre for Fine Arts, Brussels (2017); Art Basel Hong Kong, Discoveries Section (2016); Singapore Art Museum (2015); Jakarta and Jogja Biennale, Indonesia (2015); Stedelijk Museum Bureau Amsterdam, Amsterdam; Rijksakademie van Beeldende Kunsten, Amsterdam; Art Affairs, Amsterdam; and Heden, Den Haag (2013). He completed a residency at the Rijksakademie in Amsterdam in 2013. His works are in the public collection of Kadist Foundation, Tropenmuseum (Netherlands), and Macan Museum (Indonesia).

Kusno also engages regularly in teaching and guest lecturing, with past invitations from institutions such as the Hessen Film and Media Academy (Berlin), Willem de Kooning Academy (Rotterdam), Beaux-Arts de Paris, Tokyo University of the Arts, and Peking University (Beijing). His essays have appeared in Third Text Online, Retorik, and other publications. He lives and works between Amsterdam (NL) and Yogyakarta (ID).

### Syagini

Syagini Ratna Wulan (b. 1979, Bandung) is an artist based in Bandung, Indonesia. She received a Bachelor of Fine Arts from the Faculty of Art and Design at the Bandung Institute of Technology (2001) and a Master's degree in Cultural Studies from Goldsmiths, University of London (2005).

Throughout her career, Syagini has developed a non-linear artistic practice that moves fluidly across diverse media and methodologies. In recent years, her work has focused on the interplay of light, colour, and perception, exploring the corporeal and sensory dimensions of abstraction. Fascinated by the ways colour is perceived and experienced differently by each individual, she investigates how visual phenomena can shape emotional, psychological, and spatial awareness.

Her practice draws inspiration from natural phenomena such as rainbows and spectral colours, alongside the physics of light, mathematical theories, and the circulation of images through digital technologies. These references converge in works that invite viewers to engage with perception as an active and embodied process.

Syagini has participated in numerous exhibitions in Indonesia and internationally, including Felix Art Fair (2020), Los Angeles; Art Jakarta (2019), Jakarta; ARTJOG 10: Changing Perspective (2017), Yogyakarta; and Art Stage Singapore (2017). Her solo exhibitions include *Susurrus* (2019) and *Spectral Fiction* (2016) at ROH Projects, Jakarta, as well as *ahead-of-itself-already-being-in* (2017) at FOST Gallery, Singapore. In 2011, she presented the solo project *BIBLIOTECA* at ArtHK, Hong Kong, and participated in a residency program at Art Initiative Tokyo. Her works are held in several public and private collections, including the Singapore Art Museum, Obayashi Private Museum, Japan, and Indonesian Exchange.

## kohesi /initiatives

kohesi /initiatives is an Indonesian-based contemporary art gallery.

The gallery is committed to supporting and presenting the career of its artists and their works in a diverse range of media and genres, while also encouraging exploration of their practice in both conceptual and contextual interpretation with a balanced aesthetic consideration.

As an artist-first gallery, kohesi strives to achieve its vision by consistently holding quality exhibitions and artist-focused projects, while actively seeking the opportunity and possibility of working together with institutions globally to enrich and benefit its artists.

## ko hesi **Initiatives**

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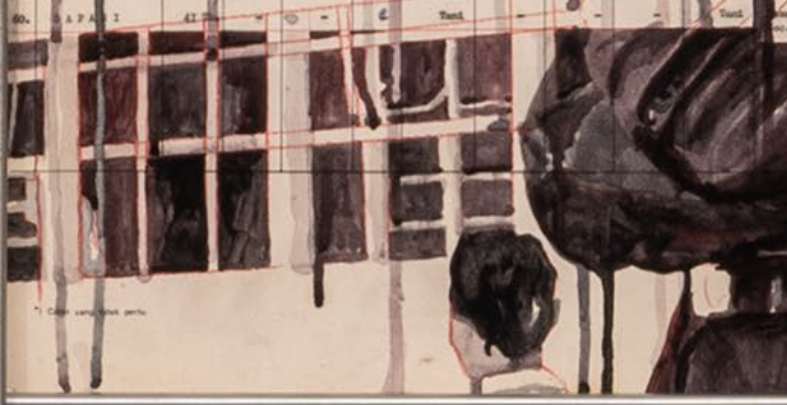
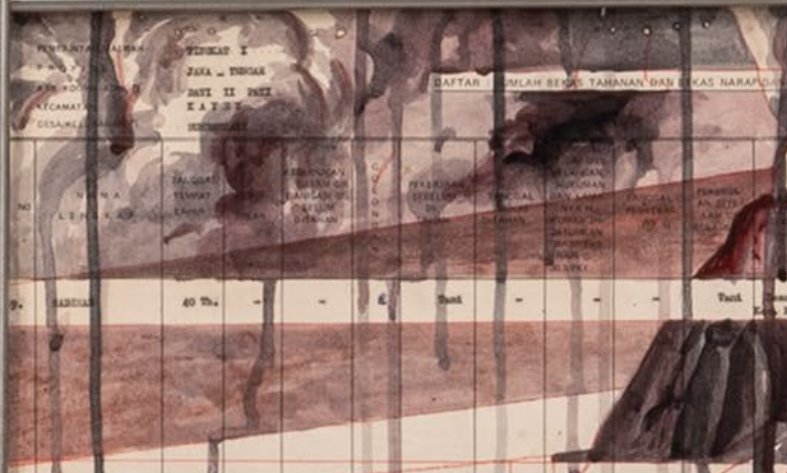
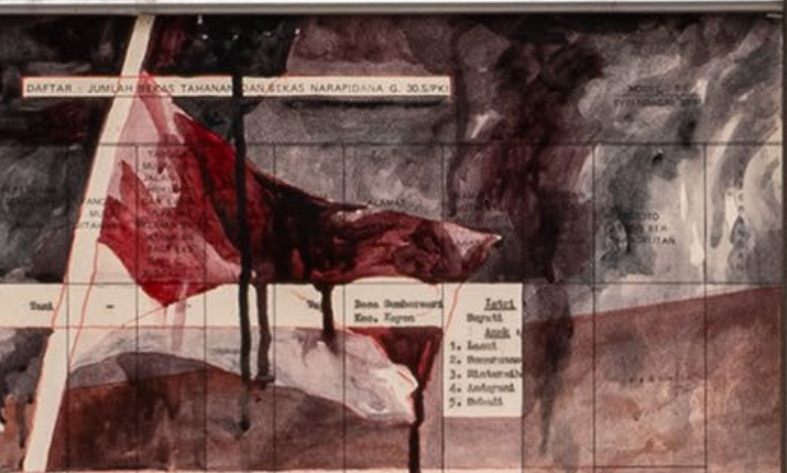
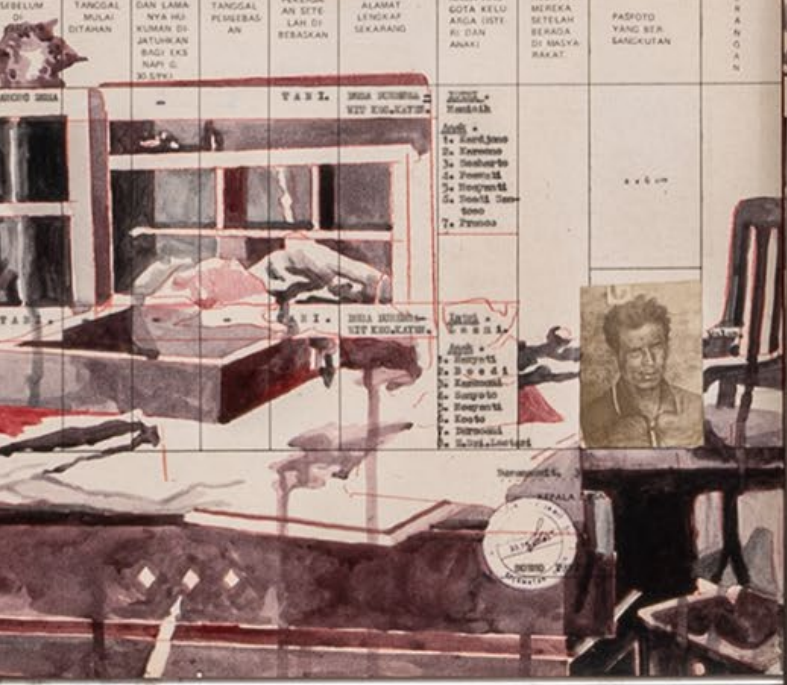
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