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# Sweat and Bitter

## A solo presentation by Zuraisa

6 Dec 2025  
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18 Jan 2026

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# Sweat and Bitter

Zuraisa

*Sweat and Bitter* merupakan presentasi karya-karya terbaru Zuraisa yang berangkat dari refleksi personalnya atas tubuh dan laku kerja. Zuraisa menggambarkan tubuh-tubuh perempuan yang terperangkap dalam industri kerja dan menjadi bagian dari mesin kapitalisme yang bergerak cepat dan repetitif. Sistem sosial yang patriarki memperburuk keadaan ini dengan kurangnya pengakuan terhadap kerja perempuan yang sering kali tersembunyi dan tak tampak dalam koridor tindak perawatan.

Sweat dan Bitter merujuk pada 'keringat' sebagai metafora kerja keras dan bagaimana kenyataan dalam dunia kerja masih jauh dari upaya menciptakan ruang aman bagi perempuan. Merujuk pada periode Orde Baru, propaganda tentang peran ganda perempuan telah mengonstruksi sistem sosial dan beban mental yang tidak adil dalam kehidupan perempuan. Pada satu sisi, peran kerja di ruang publik menunjukkan hierarki yang tidak berpihak pada perempuan di tengah keterbatasan fasilitas penting yang menjamin keamanan perempuan. Dalam kerja-kerja di ruang domestik yang kerap tidak dilihat sebagai kontribusi ekonomi, perempuan masih dihantui stereotip atas citra ibu yang sempurna.

Zuraisa menghadapkan dan menyejajarkan tubuh perempuan dengan perumpamaan kuda betina, sosok yang melambangkan kekuatan, kesetiaan, serta ketahanan. Kuda betina menjadi bagi tubuh perempuan yang terus bergerak, bekerja, dan beradaptasi di tengah beban, waktu, serta tuntutan. Kuda betina juga mesti menjaga dan menjamin keberlangsungan hidup dalam kehidupan yang tidak selalu adil.

Alia Swastika



# Sweat and Bitter

Zuraisa

*Sweat and Bitter* presents Zuraisa's latest works, emerging from her personal reflections on the body and the conditions of labor. She depicts women's bodies trapped within the structures of industrial work, becoming part of a capitalist machine that moves rapidly and repetitively. This condition is further worsened by a patriarchal social system, which offers little recognition to women's labor—work that is often hidden and rendered invisible within the realm of care.

*Sweat and Bitter* refers to 'sweat' as a metaphor for hard work, and to the reality that the world of labor remains far from creating safe spaces for women. Looking back to the New Order era, the propaganda of women's dual roles helped construct a social system and mental burden that continue to shape women's lives unjustly. In the public sphere, women face workplace hierarchies that do not favor them, compounded by the lack of essential facilities that ensure their safety. In the domestic sphere, where labor is often overlooked as an economic contribution, women remain haunted by stereotypes tied to the image of the ideal mother.

Zuraisa places women's bodies alongside the figure of the mare, a symbol of strength, loyalty, and endurance. The mare becomes a parallel for the female body that continually moves, works, and adapts amid burdens, time pressures, and demands. She must also safeguard and ensure the continuity of life within conditions that are not always fair.

Alia Swastika

## Artworks



**The Working Mare**

2025  
Oil on canvas  
150 x 300 cm



**A Solstice of Rest**

2025  
Metal relief  
40 x 30 cm



**Kinship in the Burden**

2025  
Metal relief  
40 x 30 cm



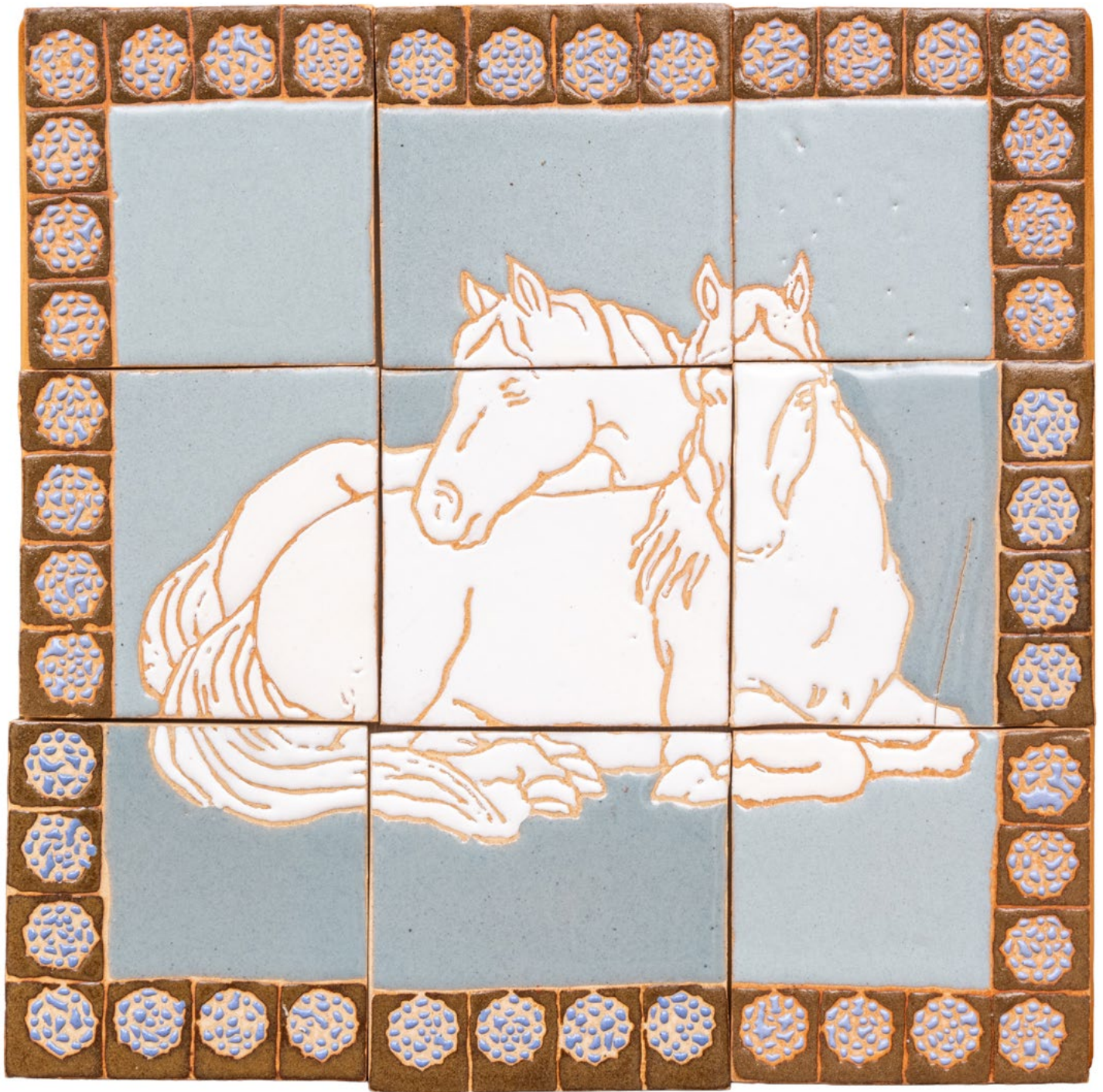
**Fables Tiled in Glaze**

2025  
Ceramic tiles  
30 x 30 cm



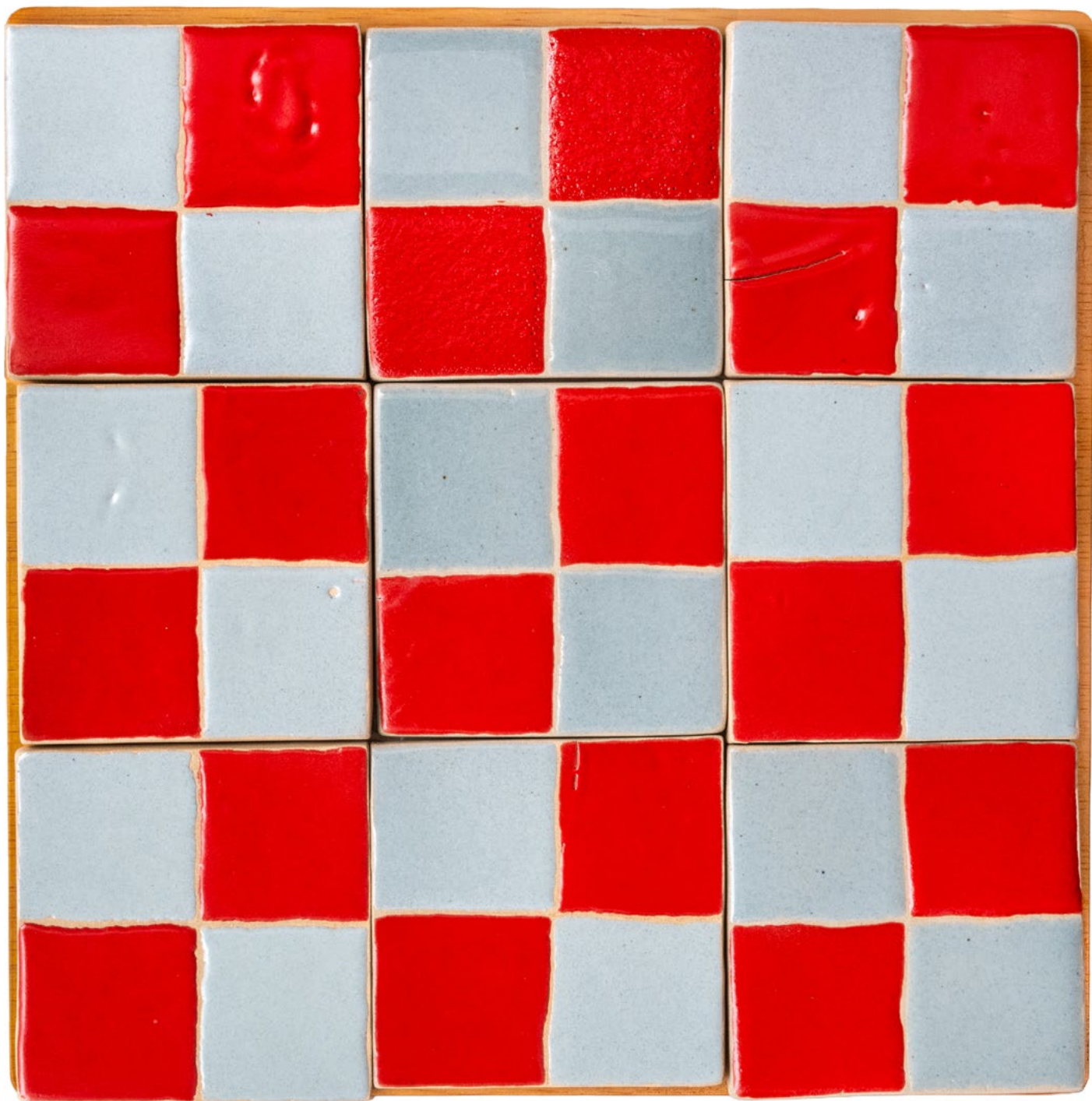
**The Anchor of the Familiar**

2025  
Ceramic tiles  
30 x 30 cm



**Two Souls on a Quiet Ground**

2025  
Ceramic tiles  
30 x 30 cm



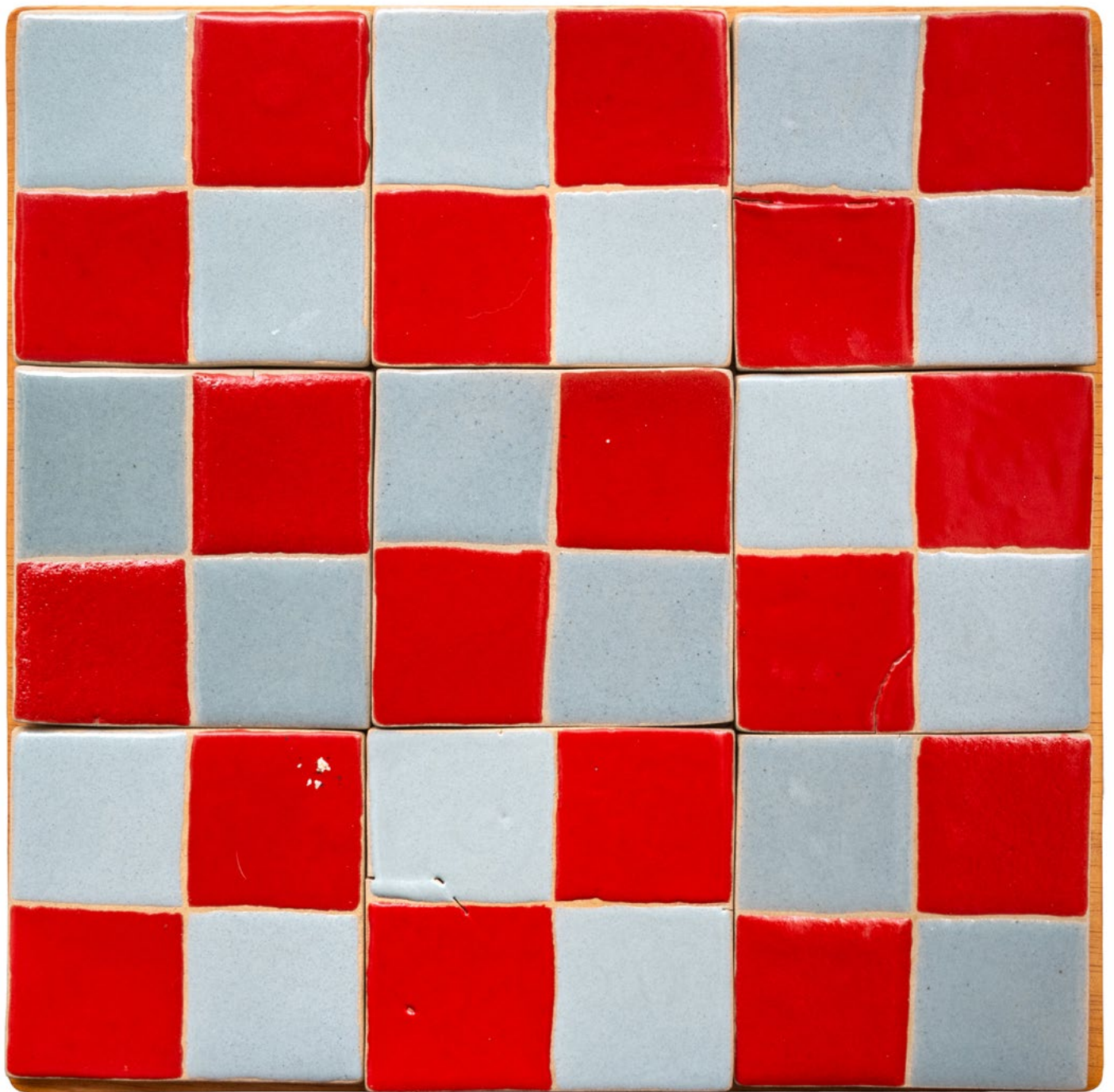
**Horseless Chessboard 1.0**

2025  
Ceramic tiles  
30 x 30 cm



**The Breath of Unburdening**

2025  
Ceramic tiles  
30 x 30 cm



**Horseless Chessboard 2.0**

2025  
Ceramic tiles  
30 x 30 cm



An Ode to the Unsung

2025  
Ceramic tiles  
30 x 30 cm



**The Quiet Testament**

2025  
Ceramic tiles  
30 x 30 cm



**The Unseen Labor**

2025  
Ceramic tiles  
30 x 30 cm

## Zuraisa

Zuraisa (b. Bandung, 1995) completed her Bachelor of Fine Arts at the Indonesia Institute of the Arts, Yogyakarta. Zuraisa takes a distinctive approach to self-portraiture through painting on ceramic tiles, offering intimate perspectives on women's issues and amplifying voices that are often overlooked. She explores beauty in imperfection—highlighting abstraction, asymmetry, and visual contrasts within representations of womanhood. In her most recent body of research, she explores women's experiences within religious structures.

She has participated in various group exhibitions, residency programs, and art projects in Yogyakarta, Sukabumi, Jakarta, and Bali. In 2025, she took part in ARTJOG 2025 – Motif: Amalan and Art Jakarta Garden with RUCI Art Space. She has also been involved in international exhibitions, including Shape Shifting in Pari, Australia. Her works have been featured in Mengingat 25 Tahun Reformasi (Cemeti Art Institute, 2024) and in Dewi Magazine (2025).



## Education

Faculty of Fine Art, Indonesia Institute of the Arts,  
Yogyakarta

## Solo exhibitions

2025

Sweat & Bitter, STEM Projects, Tirtodipuran Link Building  
A, Yogyakarta, Indonesia

## Selected group exhibitions

2025

Art Jakarta Gardens, Ruci Art Space, Hutan Kota by  
Plataran, Jakarta, Indonesia

Shape Shifting, Pari, Sydney, Australia

Motif: Amalan, ARTJOG, Jogja National Museum,  
Yogyakarta, Indonesia

2024

Press Print Party, Art Book Fair, Jakarta, Indonesia  
Agregasi Talenta Nusantara, Indonesian Ministry of  
Culture, Jakarta, Indonesia

Tumbuh Rimpang, Nonfrasa Gallery, Bali, Indonesia  
Hari Ini dan Esok, Sun Contemporary, Bali, Indonesia  
Jakarta Biennale, Taman Ismail Marzuki, Jakarta, Indonesia  
Art Jakarta, Ruci Art Space, JIExpo Kemayoran, Jakarta,  
Indonesia

Keep the Fire On #10, Survive Garage, Yogyakarta,  
Indonesia

Maymorable , MERAMU, Sinarmas Land, Jakarta, Indonesia  
Salon et Cetera, Ace House Collective, Yogyakarta,  
Indonesia  
Flawsome, MERAMU, Orange Grooves, Jakarta, Indonesia

2023

Habitat: Loka Carita, Nandur Srawung, Taman Budaya  
Yogyakarta, Yogyakarta, Indonesia  
Setempat, Asana Bina Seni, Taman Budaya Yogyakarta,

Yogyakarta, Indonesia

Sekolah Salah Didik, KUNCI Study Forum & Collective,  
Yogyakarta, Indonesia  
25 Tahun Reformasi, Perkawanan Perempuan Menulis,  
Yogyakarta, Indonesia

2022

Aksi Artsy 5, Galeri R.J Katamsi, Yogyakarta, Indonesia  
Menurut Kami Begini,, Puan Nawanata, Kelas Pagi  
Yogyakarta, Yogyakarta, Indonesia

2021

Queer: a Celebration of Art and Activism, Kaalo  
Community, Kathmandu, Nepal  
Buwuh Aji: Mengenali Dualisme Demak-Majapahit, Galeri  
mBah Ndary, Yogyakarta, Indonesia

## Residency

2024

Baku Konek, Ruang Rupa, Sukabumi, Indonesia

2023

Nandur Gawe, Nandur Srawung, Yogyakarta, Indonesia

2022

Lohjinawi Ark Studio, Yogyakarta, Indonesia

# STEM

STEM Projects was established with the main purpose of discovering and nurturing emerging and under-represented artists

With an artist-focused approach at our core, we intend to create a platform that enables artists to gain the necessary level of support in the early stage of their careers, while encouraging them to explore their practices and create new works.

Through our programs and activities, STEM places an emphasis on the need for accessibility and engagement between art and people, where we provide the environment that urges the interaction between both; a place for artists to introduce their works to wider audiences.

# STEM

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