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EXHIBITOR



MARYANTO // ARTBASELHK 2016

# MINERAL DESIRE

*W*

YEO WORKSHOP





## Colophon

This catalogue is published on the occasion of the exhibition

Maryanto  
**MINERAL DESIRE**  
 Discoveries Section  
 Art Basel Hong Kong  
 22 – 26 March 2016

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*Mineral Desire, 2016, booth sketch for discoveries section Art Basel Hong Kong*

## INTRODUCTION

Yeo Workshop at the Discoveries section, Art Basel Hong Kong presents the work of Maryanto. The work depicts a landscape environment of some sort, with minerals on the ground and mining activity that had occurred in its recent past. The presentation is a theatrical installation comprising of an epic landscape painting in photo-realistic style, as well as several cabinets and tables of objects and sculptures on the walls and floors. The largest singular work is a painting entitled “Mineral Desire” that forms the background of the booth as installation. The painting portrays a black-and-white photo-realist landscape in acrylic on canvas. The narrative of this landscape painting is a post-apocalyptic environment that is at once arresting and shocking, and at the same time romantic and tragic. The background is an epic landscape that stretches on for what seems like miles of stone, resources and minerals layered together to form the land. In the foreground in high relief is what the artist describes as “nightmare and poverty”, drilling equipment and flagpoles of protesters. The composition of the rest of the booth are cabinets of curiosities with mysterious objects: mined stones and strange forms as if coveted minerals excavated and archived by explorers. The cabinets are made from materials sourced from local Indonesian resources: antique wood from rice milling buckets. The viewer enters in the booth, seduced by the textures, the depth and length of the landscape. Through entrance, the viewer is at once implicit, and an actor, in the narrative and plot of mining, its desire, and the motivations of the who what where how of resource mining.

Maryanto (b. 1977, Indonesia) makes artworks that serve as a form of storytelling with the impression of theatrical stage or landscape setting. The work as stories explores and transfers knowledge through historical research, myths and stories combined with the artist’s own artistic imagination and constructed forms. The results are dramatic and romantic black and white installations made of paintings, etchings, rich charcoal drawings that evoke stories and environments. The subject of his ongoing

project that commenced several years ago have to do with his curiosity on resources and its effect on a country and politics. In his daily observations of life in Indonesia, combined with his formal training in the arts at the Institute of the Art, Yogyakarta, Indonesia, and his subsequent residencies in the Netherlands at the Rijksacademie van beeldende kunsten, as well as the Esculea de Orient programme at Casa Asia Barcelona, Spain, and his gallery solo shows such as those Yeo Workshop 2014, he is able to compare and explore the history of colonialism and its role in the allocation of resources. He sees “resource” as a Pandora’s box. That a country with big resources could cause tension and conflict between the systems that navigates and governs economics and daily life of the people. The artist Maryanto recently participated at the Yogyakarta Biennale 2015 “*Hacking Conflict, Indonesia meets Nigera*”, creating a large entrance piece for the biennale, and participated Jakarta Biennale 2015 “*Neither Forward Nor Back*” as curated by Charles Esche with an installation work “*Temah Ruah di Wonocolo*”. His upcoming projects this year in the Setouchi Triennale 2016, and solo exhibition at Yeo Workshop Gillman Barracks in November 2016.



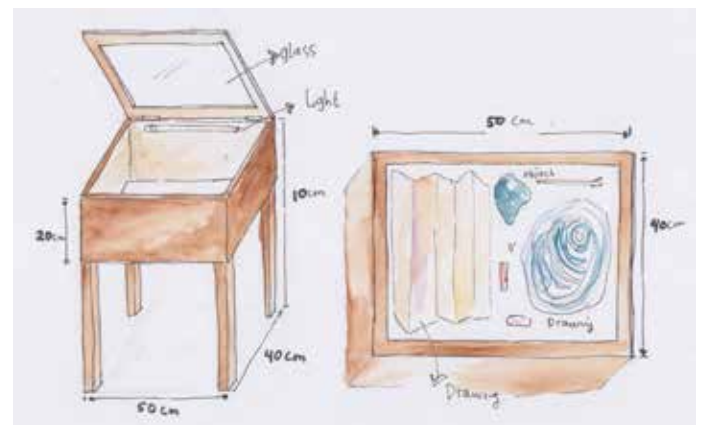
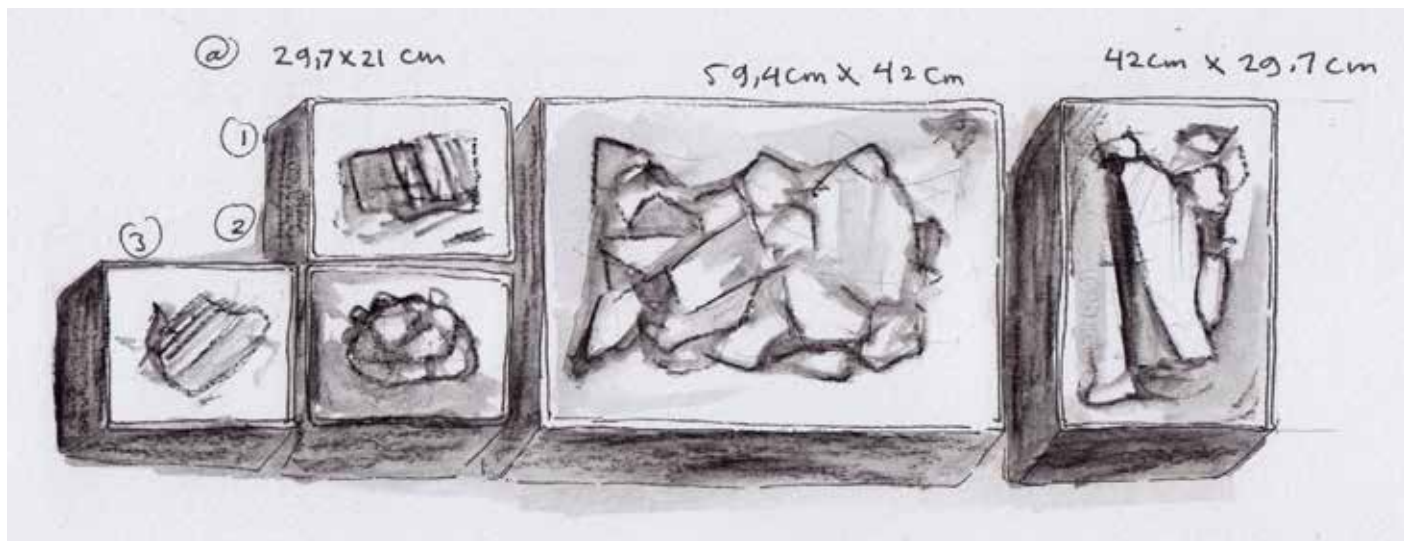
*The Source, 2014, graphite on paper, 84 x 147cm*







*Mineral Desire*  
2016  
200 x 200 cm x 2 (diptych)  
Acrylic on Canvas







## LANDSCAPE

The genre of landscape painting in Indonesia has taken various forms. One subgenre of landscape painting was the *Mooi Indie* (Beautiful East Indies), popular during the Dutch colonial period in Indonesia. These paintings depicted pastoral scenes of the Indonesian landscapes, with sweeping vistas of paddy fields, lush tropical trees, flowing rivers, and wild animals. There was more emphasis on the landscape, while human subjects were often eclipsed by the majestic views. If there were human subjects in the paintings, they were more often than not exoticised. These paintings were painted by Dutch painters for the tourist or colonial market.

underlying nationalism that was brewing under the colonial powers. The painting is not only a call to action but as a warning that Indonesians would one day rise up and erupt to once again take over their own land.

Raden Saleh (1811-1870) is hardly the only artist who depicted the mountain as a symbol of strength and nationalism. Hendra Gunawan (1918 – 1983) was part of an artist resistance group Pelukis Front (Frontline Painters), who fought battles against the Dutch during Indonesia's War of Independence. *War and Peace* depicts two armed figures in the foreground with their heads



*Pandora's Box*, 2013, charcoal, carbon powder on wall, woodstick, Installation at the Rijksakademie, The Netherlands

In response to the *Mooi Indie*, Indonesians have subverted the genre in myriad ways. For Indonesians, the land refers not only to the physicality of the earth – it also encompasses the relationship between people and the land. A landscape painting shows not only the beauty of the painting but also the sublime strength of nature and as well as a symbol of the people.

Raden Saleh, a 19<sup>th</sup> century Indonesian painter, painted landscape paintings that hint at strength within the symbols of Indonesian pride. In his painting *Gunung Merapi Meletus di Malam Hari* (Mount Merapi erupts through the day and night), 1865, he paints Mount Merapi, the mythological and (almost) physical centre of Javanese tradition. The painting of the mountain's eruption shows the strength of the mountain, and hints at the

turned to look back towards the mountain sagely looming in the background. It seemed that the figures were looking to the mountain for guidance and strength.

In this century, Maryanto has responded to this call to arms in defence of the Indonesian landscape. The exploitation of Indonesia has been occurring for centuries. In the four centuries of Dutch presence in the East Indies, the Dutch East India Company (VOC) exported spices from the East, during which process exploited the indigenous land while making the VOC a very profitable company. Exploitation of the land plumbed further into the land since Carstenszgebergte, the first mining company was set up near Puncak Jaya in Papua. Considered a sacred land to the Papuans, Puncak Jaya was rich with gold and copper. Yet,





*Tales of the Gold Mountain*, 2012, acrylic on wood panel, 200 x 450 cm

Carstenszgebergte mined the land with blatant disregard to the indigenous population and with tremendous environmental impact and tremendous profit to the company.

In critique to the exploitation of the land and its people is Maryanto's monumental painting *Tales of the Gold Mountain*. On three large panels, Maryanto depicts a mining wasteland. In the background is an image of a mined mountain, presumably Puncak Jaya, with its concentric circles in the upper middle part of the painting. In the foreground are images of machine parts such as heavy metal chain mail, I-beams, and plummets that look as if they are precariously swinging in the landscape. The black acrylic adds to the bleakness of the painting. In stark contrast to a *Mooi Indies* painting, which would depict a lush landscape, Maryanto's painting is a wasteland.



*Garden of Peace and Eternal Memory*, 2015, acrylic on canvas, 180 x 150cm

Further investigation from a two-dimensional painting to a three-dimensional installation results in Maryanto's 2013 installation *Pandora's Box* at the Rijksakademie in Amsterdam<sup>1</sup>. Once again utilising the black-and-white barren landscape, *Pandora's Box* envelops the viewer with a wall-to-ceiling charcoal and carbon powder installation of barren overmined landscape with deserted roads on stepped mountain sides dominated by oversized machinery. When the viewer enters the room, the viewer essentially enters the barren landscape and feels how bleak the atmosphere is. Mining essentially opened up a Pandora's Box, the consequences of which are not paid for by the mining company but by the original residents of the land. As with the eponymous keeper of the box, mining companies opened a landscape that was not theirs to open in the first place.



*Gergasi (Monster)*, 2014, charcoal on paper, 400 x 500cm

Maryanto's signature black charcoal medium continues to dominate in his future works. His landscape paintings do not depict the sublime in the landscape. Instead of appreciating the sublime, mining companies literally take what makes the land sublime – the minerals in the earth.

<sup>1</sup> The works was re-installed for the exhibition *After Utopia* at the Singapore Art Museum in 2015

## MARYANTO'S RESEARCH INTERESTS AS TOLD THROUGH LANDSCAPE

Maryanto's research interest began in Rawalelatu, a site he saw as a potential subject of inquiry. A thriving suburb of Satellite City, Rawalelatu's main industry was handmade wooden furniture, whose source of timber came from the swamplands of Rawalelatu ('rawa' means swamp in Indonesian). However, as foreign corporations inhabited Satellite City and started constructing expressways, the residents of Rawalelatu felt the tentacles of urban sprawl encroach upon them. The surge in the number of factories built devoured resources and labour away from the indigenous industry on which Rawalelatu relied for income. Rawalelatu was a classic example of the residents feeling the squeeze by corporations and the feeling of being betrayed by the town officials. The town officials and corporations operated on the notion that they were

woodcuts, watercolor on paper works, scratching on photo papers, a wall drawing, and an installation of huts accompanied by story telling against ambient city sounds. The etched aesthetic of the works hints at Maryanto's training as a printmaker. The paintings depict seemingly sanguine scenes of urban life, with anthropomorphic animal subjects standing in for the human residents of Rawalelatu. A painting shows a group of rabbits hanging out in a room and eating, presumably their dinner, with despondence and dejection evident on their faces. Another painting portrays an entrance to a factory at what seems to be the morning rush hour, with rabbits walking or riding their scooters towards the factory, presumably to start their day at the factory. A more vivid painting shows a sweatshop factory scene with rows of sewing machines and seamstresses tirelessly working at their machines.



Rawalelatu is a fictional town Maryanto created, an allegory for a traumatic life-changing event in his childhood. Though fictional, the events and characters of Rawalelatu has been, and continues to be, experienced by many displaced Indonesians in the face of urban expansion. This urban development was a product of Suharto's economic policies during his three-decade reign as President. While his "New Order" Presidency may have produced Indonesia's economic expansion, it came at a price – rampant corruption permitted foreign companies to develop in Indonesia's



*Rawalelatu*, 2009, exhibition Installation view at Semarang Gallery, Jakarta, Indonesia

doing to the town a favor by developing and modernising the area. However, the residents of Rawalelatu felt they were sold out and that personal interests were discarded in favour of corporate gains.

Rawalelatu's tale is expressed in an exhibition format through various media: large-scale acrylic on canvas paintings, digital prints,



*The Excavator in Rawalelatu (The Defeater and the Builder)*, 2009, acrylic on canvas, 200 x 300cm

cities and exploit the land. A teenage Maryanto was one of the millions affected and displaced by urban development – during his childhood he witnessed the rise of wealthy developments in Jakarta, and at age 14, he was forced to move from his home to make way for further development. While the country may have prospered, her citizens felt their government sold out and lined the pockets of government officials at the citizen's expense.





*Space of Exception, 2015, exhibition installation view at Yeo Workshop Gillman Barracks, Singapore*

Maryanto's story telling prowess and critique of authoritarian rule continue in *Space of Exception*, his solo exhibition at Yeo Workshop, Singapore, in which he weaves anecdotes from politics, mythology, and philosophy into his paintings, drawings, and installation. The largest painting in the exhibition is *Bahurekso (The Elder)*, a painting of charcoal on canvas, 2 metres by 3 metres. The subject of the painting is Mount Merapi, the eponymous image of which takes up most of the painting. The monochromatic painting is made of black charcoal, and it depicts the mountain in the middle of an eruption, spewing ash and adding to the general feeling of gloom of the painting.

When hung, the painting takes up a large proportion of the largest wall in the main gallery. The gallery visitor can see the painting upon entering the gallery, and it seems as if the painting is greeting the visitor and also watching over the gallery and the visitor's movements within the gallery. This is an allegory for Mount Merapi in the physical and mystical landscape of Yogyakarta, where Maryanto now resides. The mountain looms large over the city, omnipresent in the background. Of mountains, art historian Astri Wright explains that "[in] Indonesia, mountains, especially their peaks, were believed to be the site where gods and ancestor spirits dwell and whence they take active part in human affairs".<sup>1</sup> In *Bahurekso*, the spirit of the mountain – the omnipotent entity – dwells in the image of the mountain. Hung on the largest wall in the main gallery, the spirit of the painting would watch over gallery visitors, the way the spirits of the mountain would avail themselves to assist their human wards.

In the middle of the main gallery of *Space of Exception* is an installation of a camping tent in which visitors are encouraged to sit under. From under the tent, visitors would be able to view *Bahurekso*, the way the painting is watching over the gallery. The artist would encourage visitors to write in his notebooks laid under the tent to annotate their ideal utopian life. The participatory activity renders the viewer as an active participant in Maryanto's installation.

Maryanto's practice of turning multi-media works into an installation set is demonstrated once again at Art Basel Hong Kong. Culling elements from his previous works, *Mineral Desire*, the largest work in the installation, is a 2-metre high by 4-metre high monochromatic black acrylic on canvas depicting a post-apocalyptic landscape of mineral deposits. Against the backdrop installation are other installation works such as a cabinet of curiosities, a mineral sculpture, and framed works on the wall. Viewers may enter the booth and be part of the exhibition and feel the landscape, as if the viewers themselves were miners, making them complicit in the act of mining. Where in the past, the exploitation of Indonesia's land had exhumed the raw riches from the earth, *Mineral Desire* reminds us of the riches that still exist, and that one day, nature will reclaim the earth. Despite his seemingly bleak works, Maryanto works do convey hope for the future.

<sup>1</sup> Astri Wright, *Soul, Spirit, and Mountain: Preoccupations of Contemporary Indonesian Painters*. (Kuala Lumpur, Singapore, New York: Oxford University Press, 1994) page 42.



*Sweet crude, black gold, 2015, acrylic on wood board, Hacking Conflict, Jogja Biennale XIII Equator 3, Installation view*



*Artist in Residence Lagos Nigeria for Hacking Conflict, Jogja Biennale XIII Equator 3*

### Jogyakarta Biennale, “Hacking Conflict: Indonesia Meets Nigeria”, Indonesia ID

Maryanto's work and critique of exploitation is further expressed in *Sweet Crude, Black Gold*, Maryanto's installation for the Yogyakarta Biennale in 2015. Made of oil barrels and acrylic on board, Maryanto's distinctive motifs of mining machinery, such as steel rope, creates a theatrical backdrop through which biennale audience walks to enter the biennale. The audience's act of walking into Maryanto's installation makes them complicit and essentially an active participant in his critique of exploitation of the land.



*Wonocolo images taken by the artist*

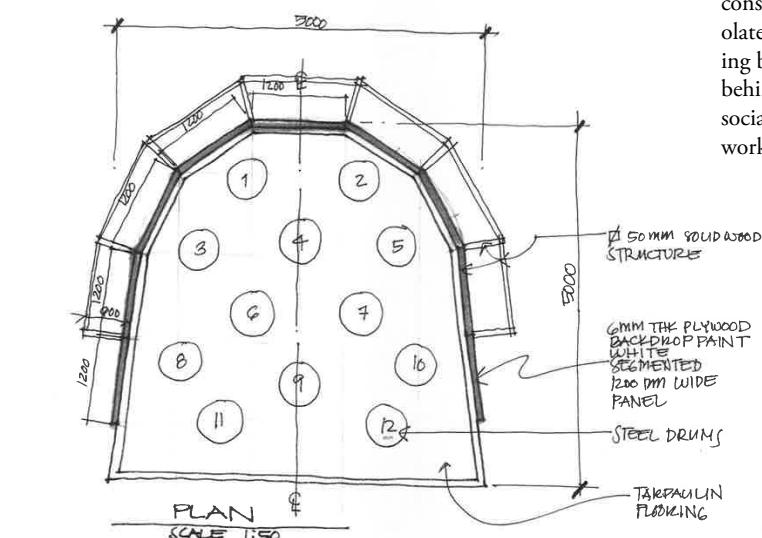




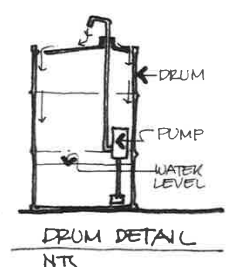
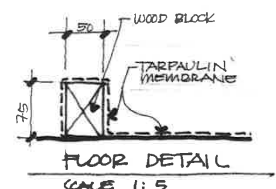
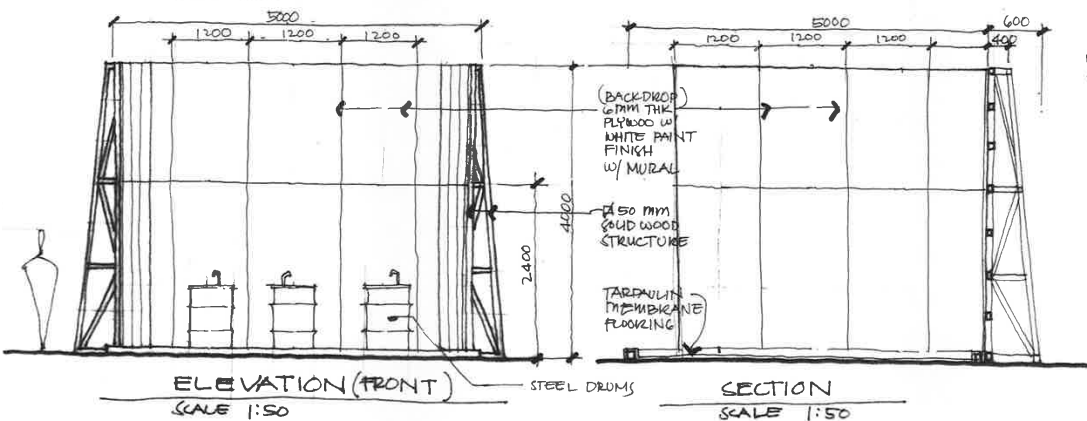
***Tumpah Ruah di Wonocolo (Brimming in Wonocolo) 2015***  
 charcoal on wood, oil barrels, ink in water, fountain pump system (plastic insulation  
 and various) | 500 (length) x 500 (breadth) x 400cm (height)

**Jakarta Biennale, “Neither Forward Nor Back”, Curator: Charles  
 Esche, Indonesia ID**

*Tumpah Rumah at Wonocolo* (Brimming at Wonocolo), a site-specific installation at the Jakarta Biennale 2015, once again utilises Maryanto’s mixed media installation of wall drawing and found objects. Three walls constitute his trademark charcoal drawings, this time of oilrigs on a desolate landscape. The three walls encompass a group of 12 oil barrels spewing black liquid out of the oil barrels. There is no mistaking the message behind Maryanto’s work. His environmental concerns and his critique of social sacrifices in the name capitalist expansion remain prevalent in his works.



Architectural drawings courtesy of  
**Randy Chan, zarch collaboratives pte ltd**



## MARYANTO

Born **Jakarta (ID)** 1977

Nationality **ID**

### EDUCATION

**1997** Faculty of Fine Art, **Indonesia Institute of the Art**, Yogyakarta, ID

**2012 RIJNSAKADEMIE VAN BEELDENDE KUNSTEN** / Dutch Ministry of Education, Culture and Science, Amsterdam, NL (2 years Program)

### RESIDENCY

**2004**

Escuela de Orient programme, Casa Asia Barcelona, Mallorca, ES

**2015**

Jogja Biennale "Equator", Artist in Residence Lagos, Nigeria

### GRANT

2015 **SAM Fund for Art and Ecology**, Jakarta, ID

### SOLO EXHIBITIONS

**2015**

Yeo Workshop, **Space of Exception**, Gillman Barrack, Singapore

**2013**

Rijksakademie van beeldende kunsten, **RABKopen 2013**, Amsterdam, NL

ArtAffairs, **Contemporary Indonesia: Maryanto**, Amsterdam, NL

Heden, **The New Order**, Den Haag, NL

**2012**

Rijksakademie van Beeldende Kunsten, **RABKopen 2012**, Amsterdam, NL

**2011**

Galeri Semarang, JAD Main Hall, **Once upon a time in Rawalelu**, Jakarta, ID

**2008**

Kedai Kebun Forum, **Rawalelatu**, Yogyakarta, ID

**2005**

Wisma Ary's, **A graphic art exhibition**, Yogyakarta, ID

**2003**

Quatro Gato Cafe, **Minggiran**, Alicante, ES

### BIENNALE

**2016**

Setouchi Triennale, Japan (upcoming)

**2015**

Jakarta Biennale **Maju Kena Mundur Kena**, Jakarta, ID

Jogja Biennale XIII **Hacking Conflict**, JNM Yogyakarta, ID

**2013**

ARTPLAY, 5<sup>TH</sup> **MOSCOW BIENNALE**, ЧРЕЗВЫЧАЙНЫЕ И ПОЛНОМОЧНЫЕ, Moscow, RU

### GROUP EXHIBITION & ART PROJECT

**2015**

Singapore Art Museum, **AFTER UTOPIA**, Singapore

Fund Raising Biennale Jogja "Hacking Conflict" RUCI Art Space Jakarta

**2014**

Gillman Barracks, **Drive Public Art Project**, SG

National Museum Of Cambodia, **Socio-Landscape**, Phnom Penh, KH

Langgeng Gallery, **Neo Iconoclas**, Magelang, ID

Singapore **Artstage** 2014

Art[JOG]14 Taman Budaya Yogyakarta, ID

**2013**

Stedelijk Museum Bureau Amsterdam, **Made In Commons**, Amstrdam, NL



Nest, **Gloomy Prospects and Lucid Adventures**, Den Haag, NL  
 Cemeti Art House, **Turning Targets#1**, Yogyakarta, ID  
 Kunst Rai Amsterdam, NL  
 Art at The Warehouse, Rotterdam, NL  
 ART|JOG|13, Taman Budaya Yogyakarta, ID

## 2012

CEIA Funarte, **Permeability**, Belo Horizonte, BR  
 House of Matahati, **Drawing a distance: drawings from 3 cities**,  
 Selangor, MY  
 Langgeng art foundation, **Here and there, now and then**, Yogyakarta,  
 ID  
 ESA Sampoerna Art Museum, **"The LEGACY: The trace of Civiliza-  
 tion"**, Surabaya, ID  
 Biennale Jogja XI, ICAN, **Des Indies Orientales**, Sejarah Komunitas  
 India di Yogyakarta, ID.  
 ART|JOG|12, Taman Budaya Yogyakarta, ID

## 2011

ART|JOG|11, Taman Budaya Yogyakarta, ID  
 Salihara, **Beastly**, Jakarta, ID  
 Langgeng Art Foundation, **PAUSE; Automatic Drawing Simple and  
 Dangerous**, Yogyakarta, ID  
 Galeri Canna, **Crop Cycle**, Jakarta, ID  
 Cemeti Art House, **Beastly**, Yogyakarta ID  
 Tembi Contemporary, **Mix Hang #2 : Fine Art Graphic**, Yogyakarta, ID  
 Sogan Gallery, **Bandar**, Singapore, SG  
 Snuff Puppet theatre Australia, **Wedhus Gembel Puppet performance**,  
 tour to Yogyakarta, Tegal, Indramayu, Jakarta. ID

## 2010

ART|JOG|10, **The Strategies of Being** Taman Budaya Yogyakarta, ID  
 HONE, **Cells Button #4 "Invincible Cells"**, Yogyakarta. ID  
 Andi's Gallery at National Gallery, **Comical Brothers**, Jakarta, ID  
 Ciputra World Marketing Gallery, **Space & Image | Artpreneurship**,  
 Jakarta, ID

## 2009

Stedelijk Museum Bureau of Amsterdam, **Demons of Comparisons**,  
 Amsterdam, NL  
 Ark Galerie, **Bridges of Spaces**, Jakarta, ID  
 Esa Sampoerna Art House, **IN RAINBOW**, Surabaya, ID  
 Bentara Budaya, **Ooh Messias**, Yogyakarta, ID  
 Sanata Dharma University, **Eduart, Rereading Dryarkarya: Humanity,  
 Education, Nationalism**, Yogyakarta, ID  
 Roomate, 24 Hours Gallery, Australia – ICAN, **Immemorial Project**,  
 Yogyakarta, ID  
 Kunci Cultural Studies Center & Garasi Theatre, **Space / Scape Project**,  
 Alun-Alun Selatan, Yogyakarta, ID

## 2008

Kedai Kebun Forum, **Happening Kota Komik**, held by Centre Culturel  
 Francais Yogyakarta, ID  
 Edwin Galery, **HELLO PRINT!**, Jakarta, ID  
 Tembi Contemporary, **INDONESIA PRINT MAKING TODAY**,  
 Yogyakarta  
 Oei Hong Djien, **Contemporary Wedding Tobacco 'Roro Blonyo' #2**,  
 Magelang, ID  
 Edwin Gallery, **IVAA Book Aid (Indonesia Visual Art Archive)**, Jakarta,  
 ID

## 2007

Jogja Bienial VII, **NEO NATION**, Yogyakarta, ID  
 Cemeti Art House, **Open Studio Grafis Minggiran**, Yogyakarta, ID

## 2006

Cemeti Art House, **The Past The Forgotten (Masa Lalu Masa Lupa) #2**  
**"MUSEUM of SUKRODIMEJO"** Project on visual history collabo-

ration with Agus Suwage, Agung Kurniawan, Maryanto & Lian Sahar,  
 Yogyakarta, ID.

## 2005

Lessedra Contemporary Art Project, **Lessedra 4th World Art Print  
 Annual**, Sofia, Bulgaria  
**Public Art Project "Re:publik Art"**, Code River, held by Kedai Kebun  
 Forum, Yogyakarta, ID

## 2004

Lessedra Contemporary Art Project, **Lessedra 3th World Art Print  
 Annual**, Sofia, BG

## 2003

Lessedra Contemporary Art Project, **Lessedra 2nd World Art Print  
 Annual**, Sofia, BG

## 2002

Museum Benteng Vredeburg, **Serangan Fajar**, Yogyakarta, ID  
 Taman Budaya Yogyakarta, **Yogyakarta-Liechtenstein Journey**, Yogya-  
 karta, ID

## ARTEFAIRS

## 2016

Art Basel Hong Kong, Discoveries Section, Hong Kong HK  
 ART|JOG|16, Taman Budaya Yogyakarta, ID

## 2015

Art Paris Art Fair 2015, Grand Palais, Paris FR  
 ART|JOG|15, Taman Budaya Yogyakarta, ID  
 Art Bazaar Jakarta 2015, Jakarta ID

## 2014

ART STAGE, Marina Bay Sands, Singapore 2014  
 ART|JOG|14, Taman Budaya Yogyakarta, ID

## 2013

Kunst Rai Amsterdam, NL  
 Art at the warehouse, Rotterdam, NL  
 ART|JOG|13, Taman Budaya Yogyakarta, ID

## PUBLIC COLLECTION

- Tropen Museum, Amsterdam. The Netherland





Yeo Workshop is a contemporary art gallery that produces a series of exhibitions, represented artists projects, and gallery based programmes such as talks, symposiums and guiding research. Its aim is to promote the work of contemporary local and international artists with a strong artistic practice, and engage with the Singaporean and visiting audience. It puts emphasis on education via programmes surrounding its exhibition.

Yeo Workshop has been permanently based at Gillman Barracks, Singapore since Fall 2013.

Other projects of the gallery include the Arnoldii Arts Club, a course-based arts club, focusing on art history, art production and art markets. It also initiates and curates community projects, such as the recent "Singapore Arts Club", a Gillman-Barracks-wide public art project in January 2016, to provide platforms for artists and to reach a wider audience.

[www.yeoworkshop.com](http://www.yeoworkshop.com)

"This is a Singapore Pavilion organised by Art Galleries Association Singapore (AGAS) and supported by IE Singapore"

