

ABAD FOTOGRAFI - The Age of Photography #2

The origins of the ABAD FOTOGRAFI - The Age of Photography exhibition that opened at the National Gallery of Indonesia in Jakarta 15 November may be traced back to 2013, and the artistic and cultural heartland of Bali, Ubud.

A small group of senior photographers from Jakarta travelled to Bali to do some shooting assignments and met up with expat photographers from various countries who reside in Bali. This spontaneous meet-up developed into serious discussion and eventually expanded, involving more photographers, both local and international.

Inspired by developments and the diversity in the world of photography, the idea of organizing a joint exhibition came about to show this diversity, an exhibition featuring photography of the most conventional, to the most progressive works.

The Age of Photography – Intentions and Transparency in Photographs opened 12 December 2013 at the Tony Raka Art Gallery in Ubud, presenting the work of leading Indonesian and expatriate professional and amateur photographers. Senior Indonesian curator Jim Supangkat brought together 29 photographers from Indonesia, America, Japan, Australia and Europe in an exhibition full of contrasts and delights.

One of the highlights were work by Swiss born engineer and software developer Jiri Kudrna, a pioneer in experimental photography. Kudrna's photo machine created fantastic images - a fusion of the four time space dimensions - housed within a dark room in the gallery and allowed observers to participate within his unique procedure. "The picture take process is a complex choreography between the photographer, model and machine with often almost unpredictable results. Randomness is a desired and calculated part of the process," Kudrna said.

Given the recent revolution in digital smart phone technology, that includes cameras as a functional component, photography as now been accessed by the masses. While most are obsessed with self-empowerment via "selfies" and posting the images onto social media platforms, many too are exploring the creative and practical potentials of photography. Considering these conditions the opening of The Age of Photography #2 in Jakarta attracted an enormous crowd, along with much media attention.

The exhibition featured a huge array of diversity, works printed on stone, acrylic glass, cloth and bamboo, cyanotypes, pinhole shots, analog processed pictures, hi-res landscapes, along with abstract images difficult to identify as photographs (or even artwork). While being more experimental than the first exhibition in 2013 some of the highlights of The Age of Photography #2 include American photographer, artist and designer based in New York and Bali James Wilkins' two technically perfect, huge abstracts of body armor. According to Wilkins, "Conflict is a complex, layered consideration of both the interpersonal, micro aspects of psychology and being, and the macro themes of conflict throughout the history of time."

Popular with the local media, Indonesian photographer Sjaiful Boen exhibited two very political, controversial (and censored) installations, 'Pemahaman Nenek Luh...!!!' & "As Your Grandmother's Understanding...!!!" featuring the Governor of Jakarta Ahok. Boen's interactive installations talk to the audience.

Renowned Japanese photographer Yasu Suzuka (b.1947) contributes an impressive installation Tapestry of Buddhist Monks Hands featuring large textiles with large black and white dye printed images of praying monk hands. His installation resonates with a contemplative aura while being a potent message for world peace. At the center of the 'Praying Hands' work there is a pinhole photograph showing the Hiroshima Atomic Bomb Dome in Japan.

Prominent Balinese painter Agung Mangu Putra works shine with the simplicity and genius. De Ja Yu #5, a black and white image printed on paper captures a twisted cloth floating in mid air set against gloomy skies and an ocean seascape. "Photography is a medium that allows me to express ideas and thoughts that I cannot achieve using conventional mediums," Mangu Putra said.

Indonesian photographer Hermandari Kartowisastra (b.1943) presents two beautiful black and white minimal landscape images printed on aluminum silver brush, Ekuilibrium 1 & 2. Presenting the work side-by-side she splits the images in the middle with the horizon line contrasting light and dark darks upon empty, surreal landscapes. Kun Tanubrata (b.1947) exhibits four beautiful works printed on rattan mats, Aku Bertanya is both elegant and haunting in its simplicity and comes complete in the exhibition with a complementing poetic verse.

Again Jiri Kudrna's work was a highlight of the exhibition, presenting six Light Plane Photographs (LPP) created with his experimental machines, half printed on acrylic glass and the remainder printed on brushed aluminum. His three interactive installations, Space – Time Variations were very popular, the audience creating over 1800 pictures in four days. "The most satisfactory thing for me is to watch the Indonesian kids experimenting with my installations, being creative and having fun," Kudrna said. LPP is a technique invented by Kudrna uses a plane of light and a camera to record photographs with unique optic effects.

ABAD FOTOGRAFI - The Age of Photography

Continues through until 28 November at the National Gallery of Indonesia.

More images may be accessed on [Facebook.com/abadfotografi](https://www.facebook.com/abadfotografi) & @abadfotografi on Twitter

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Kun Tanubrata



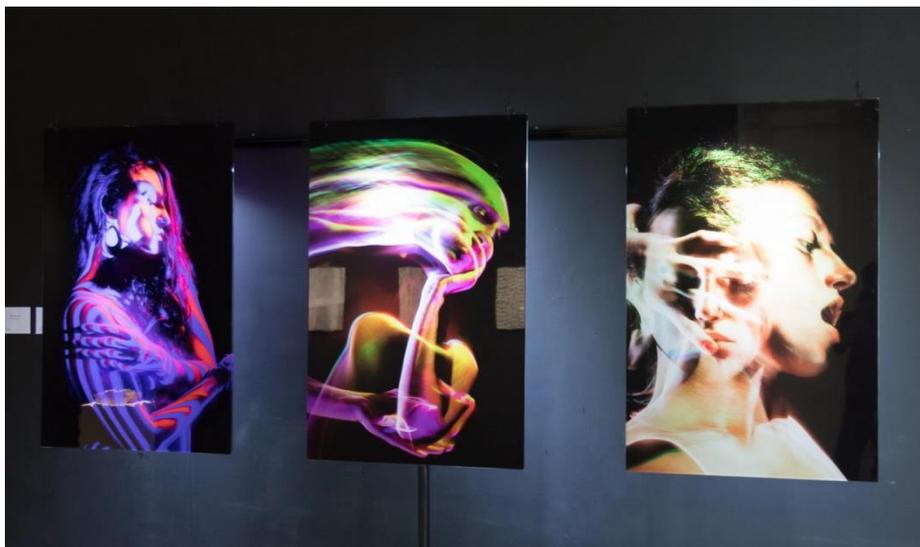
Jay Subyakto



Jiri Kudrna 3



Yasu Suzuka



Jiri Kudrna 1



Hermandari Kartowisastro



James Wilkins



Sjaiful Boen



Hermandari Kartowisastro



Jiri Kudrna 2