

“Beyond a Light” – Erawan Vs Perupa Cahaya Sejati

The recent work of senior Balinese contemporary artist Nyoman Erawan is highlighted in the group exhibition “Beyond a Light – Erawan Vs Perupa Cahaya Sejati” which opened at Bentara Budaya Bali Cultural Center on May 10.

The exhibition is based on the concept of collaboration and reconstruction, allowing the imagination of six local artists via art photography, installations, conventional photography, and video mapping to interact with works by Erawan adding a more expansive element to his unique creativity.

Artists collaborating with Erawan (b. Sukawati 1958) include Dewa Gede Purwita, Ida Bagus Darmasuta, Agus Wiryadhi Saidi, Raden Cahyoko, Komang Agus Purnama Santi and Komang ‘Totok’ Parwata, while the exhibition is curated by Wayan Seriyoga Parta. Renown for his experimental approach to Balinese abstract art, of which he is one of the pioneers, Erawan has worked with both two and three dimensional paintings, installations, multimedia works, sound installations and performance. “Beyond a Light” may be read as an explorative retrospection of Erawan’s recent work.

In his catalog essay Seriyoga Parta states that photography has become an omnipresent part of the process of Bali’s modern cultural development. Cameramen have been instrumental in recording moments that are historically crucial in the context of traditional and contemporary culture. Photography has not only been an important medium for Erawan, particularly in the documenting of his events, yet in this exhibition it is the creative platform through which the collaborating artists are able to present new creative possibilities initially inspired by Erawan.

Duality has always been a popular theme of Erawan’s exploring Balinese traditional symbolism and the human condition, and in “Beyond a Light” he is both the object and the subject, with his image, along with those of characters from his events, being manipulated into variety of expressions.

The exhibition opening was punctuated by a display of projected digital imagery, known as video mapping, by Raden Cahyoko, upon the façade of the venues outdoor stage. Being complimented by dramatic music, the video mapping was aesthetically dynamic and “primed” the large audience for the works on exhibit inside the pavilion.

Upon entering observers were met with multimedia installations in the middle of the room and upon the stage along with a diverse array of mixed media and multi layered creations adorning the walls. The central installation by Erawan, “Meditate” at a glance appeared like a surreal inter dimensional time travel vehicle. Upon the back wall “Documentation of Erawan Vs Penyair Sejati”, by Komang Parawata, Agus Wiryadhi and Ida Bagus Darmasuta, an arrangement of more than one hundred photos reveal “snapshots” of past events in which Erawan, along with a cast of co performers appear in all manner of creative guises.

Of note were Erawan’s 3 dimensional multimedia works, “Jejak Ritus” 2014, which are a fascinating combination of media, textures, color and symbolism, highlighting the extent to which he has pushed the genre of Balinese abstract art.

“Beyond a Light” serves as an inspiration to the generations of young local photography enthusiasts providing an insight into creative possibilities utilizing photography with modern technology, as well as combining it with contemporary art practices. The exhibition continues through until 17 May at Bentara Budaya Bali, Jalan Ida Bagus Mantra, Kewetel.



Composition #4, Komang 'Totok' Parwata, 2014, Mixed media, digital print.



Documentation of Erawan Vs Penyair Sejati. Photographs, Komang Parawata, Agus Wiryadhi Saidi, Ida Bagus Darmasuta



Nyoman Erawan, Jejak Ritus 2014, 100x100cm, Digital Print, mixed media on canvas and aluminium.