

Home – Wayan Upadana

The most creative Balinese contemporary artists develop their own manner of expressing symbols from their tradition and represent them in new aesthetic ways, and by doing so succeed in creating their own individual “voice”. One of Bali’s most dynamic young artist Wayan Upadana has already consolidated his name on the national stage with his sculptures, yet only in recent years has he focused on exhibiting his 2 dimensional works.

“Home”, Upadana’s 3rd solo exhibition, that includes 14 paintings in acrylic on canvas and water colors on paper, went on display 26 May at the Ganesha Gallery in the Four Seasons Resort in Jimbaran.

"My sculptures require a lot of time, and care and attention is needed during the stages of planning and construction," Upadana says. "Painting, however allows me to spontaneously explore ideas. Making sculptures is a more controlled and restrictive process that requires different disciplines, therefore I really enjoy creating quickly on the smaller format."

Born in Gianyar 1983, Upadana is a graduate from ISI (Indonesian Art Institute) Yogyakarta, majoring in sculpture and he often appears in some of the most prestigious group exhibitions held in Indonesia. A regular finalist in major recent art awards Upadana’s name is never far from the national spot light, capturing the eye of art lovers, critics and collectors alike.

Having spent ten years in Yogyakarta while studying at ISI, living outside the complexities of his culture, Upadana became adept at self-observation and being critical of his Balinese Hindu culture. Becoming increasingly sensitive to the social, cultural and environmental changes confronting him and his island, Upadana’s works therefore come complete with both aesthetic quality, as well as having relevant something to say.

“Home communicates from the two different spaces in my imagination, from the personal and emotional, to the collective, combining social, cultural and environmental values,” he says.

While “Home” is the theme of exhibition, it is derived from "who me?" questioning myself and my roots and culture."

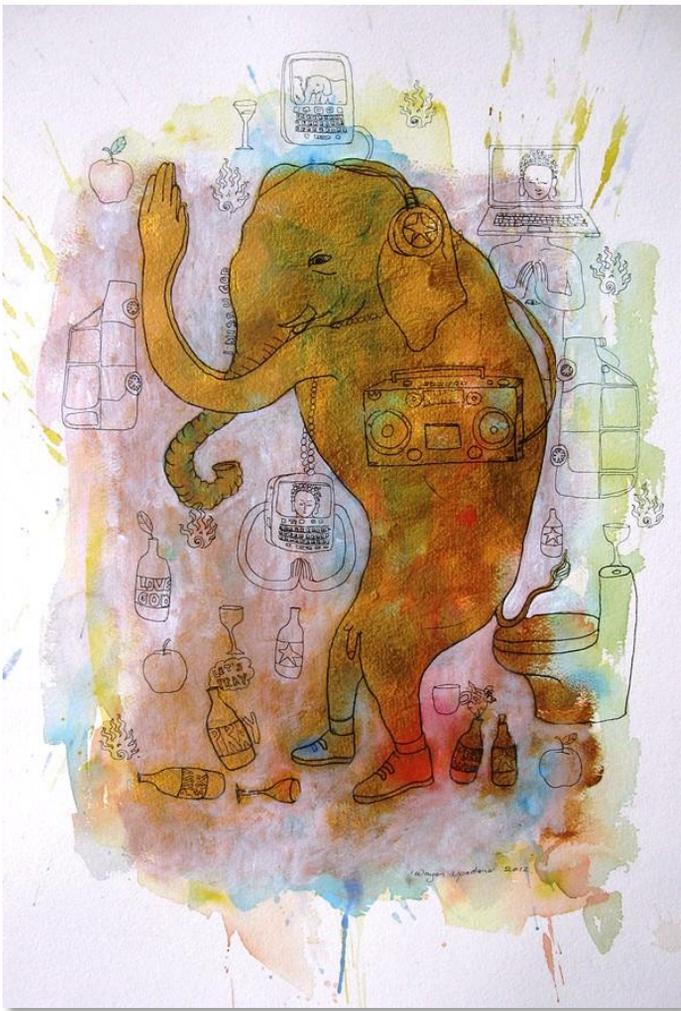
“The figures in these paintings are a meeting of modern culture with Balinese mythology. The topeng (mask), along with other traditional or philosophical symbols I use to represent virtues of tradition while positioning into a composition that identifies with the modern world.”

In “Passion” 2014, the Barong mask appears juxtaposed alongside items from the contemporary consumer world, and complete with a body suited in a jacket. Yet Barong’s eyes are studying these modern items while grinning with joy. In “The Wise Man and his Lucky Bird” 2014 Upadana creates a parody of the wise talking spiritual guru. While “The Devotee of the Material” 2014 and “Looking For Peace” 2012 emphasizes his people’s obsession with material possessions.

Upadana’s images communicate with an array of emotions, being poignant and humorous, playful and contemplative, in “Relax Time” 2014, however, the subject a male with a pigs head, the pig a metaphor for the human greed, communicates from a place of power and arrogance.

Works such as “The Devotee of the Material” and “Looking for Peace” are more complex compositions, whereby he attempts to obscure the meaning of each symbol by fusing them together. While Upadana is not out to denounce modern culture he accentuates that the preoccupation with the material world he is witnessing needs to be given much greater critical consideration.

“Home” continue through until 23 July at the Ganesha Gallery, Four Seasons Resort, in Jimbaran, South Bali.



The Worshiper water colour and ink on paper
28 cm x 56 cm 2012



Wayan Upadana Journey to the East
2014 110 x 135 cm acrylic and charcoal on canvas



The Devotee of Material 29.7 x 42 cm
watercolor on paper 2014



The wise man and his lucky bird 2014 100 x 100 cm acrylic on canvas