

## Made Wiguna Valasara

The development of Balinese art was originally defined by the painting of religious stories and images onto canvas, paper and cloth. At first these images were “flat” and 2 dimensional, then given the influence of western techniques local artists began in the 1930’s to create “new” scenes with depth of field. Today, painting still dominates the creative output of the island’s artists.

Made Wiguna Valasara, however, is one young creative force that believes that the canvas is not only a medium for painting and adopts an approach to artistic self-expression that is far from the conventional. From the Balinese perspective he has helped redefine what is possible using canvas and in doing so has positively contributed to the growth of the local and national contemporary art.

Relocating from Sukawati, Ginayar to the dynamic cultural and creative capital of Java, Yogyakarta, Valasara, (b. 1983) resided in the city for ten years and graduated from the Indonesian Institute of Arts, ISI with a Bachelor of Fine Arts (Sculpture) in 2009.

Pondering the two-dimensional limits of the canvas, and with a desire to innovative and somehow break with local tradition, endless experimentation with textures, shapes, lines and collages enabled Valasara to define his artistic “voice”. Living outside the restrictions of his culture allowed him ample time for exploring possibilities, and in 2007 he settled on a decorative method that proved the perfect vehicle to communicate his ideas. Using a technique of embossing to create relief images upon the surface of the canvas transforming it into a medium of 3D was Valasara’s solution, while at the same time succeeding in departing from time honored Balinese traditions.

Valasara systematically stitches directly to the canvas and then adds synthetic fiberfill into the defined areas, the canvas then takes on volume creating the desired relief forms. Often he creates images of animals and trees through which to make environmental statements, or he depicts icons of the Balinese Hindu culture. Mindful to create art that has something to say, Valasara often portrays Barong and Raganda to critique the Balinese government and society’s rapid embracement of tourism and modern culture.

To his credit Valasara remains true to his passion for sculptural 3 dimensional concepts while combining them with a medium that can be presented on a wall just like a conventional painting. Generally using only white color upon the body of his works, or at times merging this with the sparse use of black or red ink creating dramatic optical effects, under defined lighting Valasara’s creations are both visually minimally bold, yet indeed brilliant in stark white as well.

One question that arises when observing an artist such as Valasara is, how will he be able to innovate and grow creatively while using such materials and technique? In 2013 he exhibited works that revealed a breakthrough adopting his embossing to the interior liner of a suitcase with strong results, he has also experimented combining works with video art as well.



valasara, konstruksi semesta, 160x160, stuffed canvas (courtesy of artist)



VALSARA, semesta yang teralienasi mempertanyakan kediriannya dalam ekspresi tunggal, mix media( courtesy of artist) 5

Other works became increasingly intricate and technically challenging, and in a complete departure of style he created small embossed figurines beautifully presented along with contrasting materials and placed in stylish wooden frames.

The breadth of an individual's imagination along with technical prowess is the recipe for creativity that helps an artist to be distinguished amongst their peers. As national award-winning artist in recent years Valasara's work is in the limelight of the Indonesian art world where art lovers, critics, and collectors alike recognize the unique character and strength of his work.



VALSARA, semesta yang teralienasi mempertanyakan kediriannya dalam ekspresi tunggal, mix media( courtesy of artist) 8



VALSARA, semesta yang teralienasi mempertanyakan kediriannya dalam ekspresi tunggal, mix media( courtesy of artist) 12