

Nitibumi

Open from 3 – 11 June at Bentara Budaya Bali Cultural Center, “Nitibumi” (Managing the Earth) presents the work from a new association of contemporary artists in Bali who have a distinctive mission.

The Nitibumi collective began after discussions and debates by a group of artists, participants in the 2015 Beijing International Art Biennale, in response to the challenges they faced in developing their professional careers.

In October 2015 Wayan Redika, Made Wiradana, Made Supena, Loka Suara, Teja Astawa, Imam Nurofiq, Galung Wiratmaja, Nyoman ‘Kenyem’ Sujana, Made Gunawan, Uuk Paramahita, Bambang Putu Juliarta, Pande Alit Wijaya Suta and their journalist friend Ema Sukarelawanto formalised the Nitibumi Community. Through this collective they endeavour is to not only encourage creativity while attempting to raise the quality of their artwork, yet have an emphasis of targeted networking and communicating with the various levels of local government and institutional agencies, and the broader community to build the foundations of fruitful working collaborations.

Wayan Redika has had previous experience in developing art communities in Bali with the Komunitas Seni Lempuyang in East Bali. “Butus” his mixed media painting highlights his excellence in compositional structure, technique and concept. Depicting environmental destruction caused by large earth moving machinery that rip through the landscape driving by the modern development of Bali (the building of new hotels, houses and other projects), the work clearly communicates the topic of concern by the Nitibumi collective.

Trees are an iconic symbol in the Indonesian state emblem and a banyan tree features on the shield upon the chest of the mythical Garuda bird in the Garuda Pancasila. The pohon beringan (banyan tree) is a potent living symbol of the Balinese traditional culture that melds ancient animistic beliefs with local Hindu religious adaptations. Often featured in the compositions by Made Wiradana, “Illegal Logging” 2016 depicts man and machinery engaging in activity, tiny by comparison, being dwarfed by the omnipotent central subject – the sacred banyan tree.

Made Supena has defined his name as modern Balinese abstract painter of note and in his recent works have been added the aesthetic potency of silver and gold leafing, along with his measured choice of other complimenting colours that are the core of his expression. Yet the carefully calculated areas of blank space on the canvas of “Meruwat Cakaralawa” 2016, 200 x 300 cm, painted in soft grey, become powerful features of his compositions, while perfectly balancing the work.

Javanese born Imam Nurofiq contributes both paintings and an installation to the exhibition, that is centrally positioned within the BBB exhibition pavilion. An expressive painter, always with something to say, his style is a departure from the majority of the works in the exhibition and is both eye catching and the vehicle for potent human emotions.

Nyoman ‘Kenyem’ Sujana’s “To Be C Mining” 2016, 200 x 300 cm is more simplistic and minimalistic composition, a departure from his well known signature style that utilizes various motifs that fully occupy the area of his canvas. This work however depicts 3 of his trademark human figures ascending a volcanic peak, the landscape barren and extreme. The architectural form of the mountain powerfully juxtaposes against the subtle grey background.

“Harmony” 2016, by Made Gunawan, reveals his growing aesthetic and structural sense of composition. Uuk Paramahita as well is striving to develop his easily distinguished and unique compositional style.

Putu Bambang Juliarta’s potent triptych composition “Reflexi Konservasi” 2016 speaks intimately and directly to the audience. Set on a minimalist, dry and barren landscape the central line of cracked earth draws the observers directly to a cow on three quarter side profile with one gazing directly out at the audience. Flanked on both left and right sides is the mirror image of a woman hold a hose without flowing water who is also staring directly at the audience. The painting has the power to engage in the audience with

Galung Wirtmaja featured abstract composition “Kita=....?” (Us ?), 2016, 200 x 300cm is a highlight of the exhibition. His smaller work, “ is equally as potent. Galung has developed a successful formula within his paintings via the power of suggestion. Not only is his choice of colour and abstract forms dynamic while exuding a sense of mystery and allure, the figures that he carefully positions within his compositions add a special dimension. Always with their backs facing the audience, his characters that seem to be appearing into the midst of the abstract unknown incite suggestion and curiosity. Suggestion is a powerful trigger that opens the mind and leads to many possibilities, and is under utilized in Bali. Galung is a rare talent.

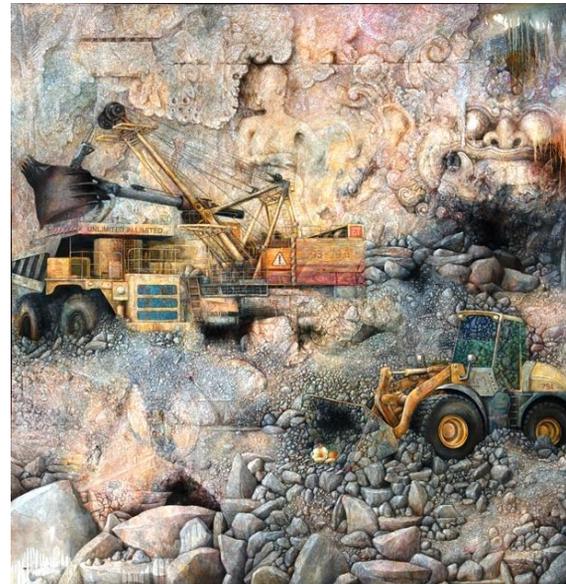
In this technology driven modern era, with powerful social media tools and smartphone technology easily available, artists have increasing access to the international arena and growing audiences, while being increasingly empowered. The paradigm of the middleman taking advantage of the opportunities available to him/her and exploiting both the artist and buyer is changing. The artists are now in the drivers seat and enormous benefits to them exist.

If the artists, both individually and collectively are willing to open their mind, change personal attitudes, learn new skills and approach their career development more strategically, certainly success in various forms is assured.

Their choice is either to engage in trusted professional art management companies, or learn the business development and communication skills themselves. The future is unknown yet full of opportunities.



Galung Wiratmaja



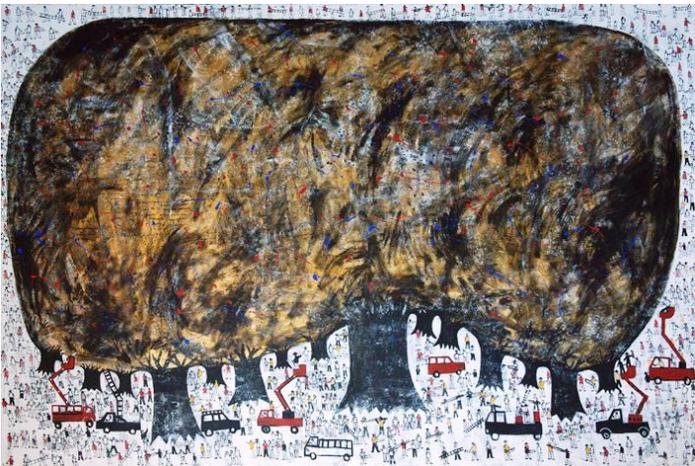
Wayan Redika



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