

PURI MENGGAH FOR JKT GLOBE

In the midst of a display of Balinese officialdom rarely witnessed by the local art community the new Puri Menggah Gallery, in East Bali was opened by Balinese Governor Mangku Pastika.

Often invited though seldom obliging to personally officiate over such events, on Monday 30th September Governor Pastika punctuated the extraordinary ceremony with a colorful opening address to a large crowd of officials including Balinese regents, members of various royal families and art lovers.

“Keeping The Light Alive”, an exhibition of Balinese art marked the occasion and highlighted the importance that Balinese master artists have made upon the development of local traditional art.

“The selection of art on display is a form of tribute to the two pioneering artists, I Gusti Nyoman Lempad and Ida Bagus Nyana. Two maestros in the field of Balinese painting and sculpture who have opened the doors to new creative possibilities,” says head of the Puri Menggah artist committee Ketut Budiana.

“The inaugural exhibition is to be celebrated with the works by 8 local painters and 5 sculptors, with the theme ‘Respect for Teachers’. Respect is the first step in increasing the appreciation of works of art and artists,” Budiana says.

Upon his death in Ubud in 1978 Gusti Lempad was estimated to be 116 years of age. A sculptor and undagi (Balinese architect) of extraordinary talent who built the palaces and temples in Ubud and neighboring villages, in his later years he produced hundreds of linear drawings of Balinese mythology and folklore.

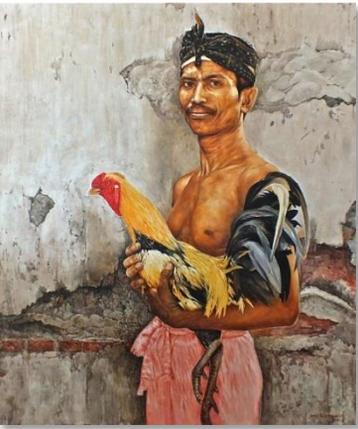
Although he maintained close relationships with the influential foreign artists Spies and Bonnet during the formative years of Balinese modern traditional art, Lempad never compromised his distinctive identity as a Balinese artist. Arguably this may be the most telling factor, along with his unique talent and productivity that have marked the legacy of the man cited as the foremost Balinese art maestro.

While it was the experimentation in the ‘new’ genre of sculpting by a woodcarver from Mas, Ida Bagus Nyana, that too was to set original creative standards. His works of immense sensitivity, often determined by the unique character of the wood and his intuitive talent initiated a figurative stylization of sculpture that was to be enormously popular with connoisseurs, novices and students of wood carving alike.

The Puri Menggah founder Ketut Gede Yudiantara revealed that the new Gallery complex, which he plans to expand into a facility for the arts, education, social development, branding and entrepreneurship has been inspired by the legacy of his ancestors, “The land where Puri Menggah Gallery stands belongs to my parents. It was handed to me as heritage to be utilized for the future benefit of their children. I now wish to contribute the land and new complex to developing the arts of Bali to honor the memory of my parents.”

“The Gallery is part of Balê GRD a facility that is not simply physical, but a haven for creativity, collective awareness and the essence self-sufficiency that we trust will help to reestablish the unique creative spirit of Bali and its people at the forefront of the global sphere,” added Ketut.

Exhibiting sculptors in ‘Keeping the Light Alive’ include Ketut Muja, Wayan Mudana, and Ketut Gledih, I.B. Putu Gede Utama and Putu Adi Gunawan, who are all artist of reputation. Notably in the sculptures by Utama from the village of Sanur, it is artifacts from his coastal heritage, traditional fishing boats, that he transforms into contemporary works that are rich in character and verve.



Gusti Sura Ardana



Ketut Budiana



Putu Adi Gunawan



Wayan Sudarna Putra

“Keeping the Light Alive” continues through to November 30, 2013
Puri Menggah Gallery
Jalan I.B Mantra By Pass 8, Desa Lebih, Gianyar, Bali
Tel: 0361 953254
Open daily 9am – 6pm



Pande Bawa