

FAD DEMOCRACY

Tales of freedom in new Indonesia

-curation by Mia Maria

The word democracy has been the most must have a concept in modern governments. Impassioned by the strength of the people's voice and choice, when it comes to the practical level, how far can we carry on the concept all the way through systems? A bit of a look back at the most recent presidential election in Indonesia, when an ex-army-general with a series of human rights violation accusations were head to head with a furniture-businessman who happened to be the people's favorite rookie in Indonesian politics, to lead a country! The resistance towards the dark character from the past versus the light of new hope in the 'people for people idea' found in the rookie. People's reaction was overwhelming to a point it created a refreshed spirit in the so-called Indonesian democracy.

This phenomenon was extended even louder and bigger with the presence of new media technology that did not exist in the previous political movements in Indonesia. The impact was overblown and stirred the people harder. This brought in a new generation of 'social media Politicians', moving the people using Twitter accounts, Facebook pages, Instagram, and doctored and manipulated photography. Mass media and black campaigns found their toll-free artery through social media.

Suddenly people were interested in politics, the hedonists, the celebrities, the artists, the taxi drivers, the housewives, the middle class, the classy and not so classy, Suddenly everybody were attending a political class through social media. The spirit of the people for the people distributed through social media created another form of campaign, one that is dominated by the volunteers. The strength of the voluntary campaign meant to show the power of real people vested in their chosen leader. Also this meant to show genuine motives that forms a free-from-reward support towards the leader. This idea of voluntary act and free-from-reward-expectation was soon proved a setback after the election. Special requests and pay-back-the-deeds had to be done, on a higher level

Agan Harahap | "#tokomemorabilia" (#memorabiliashop), 2015, C print and found objects, Variable sizes



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Fad - <noun> A temporary fashion, notion, manner of conduct, etc. especially one followed enthusiastically by a group.
Democracy - <noun> 3. A state of society characterized by formal equality of rights and privileges.

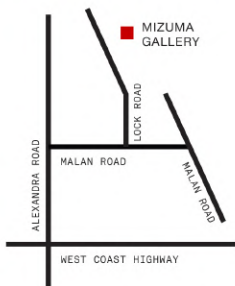
About the curator

Mia Maria is a curator and art writer working in Jakarta, Indonesia. From 2009-2013 she has been running an art column for an Indonesian lifestyle magazine as well as writing for various media in Indonesia and Singapore. The past few years, she has curated a number of experimental projects featuring emerging and established Indonesian artists, some of them are Comic Demonic (2011), Parallax (2012), Personal Project (2012), and Graffiti On History (2014).

In 2012, she was engaged by the Indonesian Exchange (Bursa Efek Indonesia) to build its first semi-public art collection, and she initiated a series of site-specific commissioned artworks by emerging as well as mid-career contemporary Indonesian artists.

She was also one of the co-curators for Singapore Biennale 2013. In 2014 Mia leads the team to compile Indonesian visual art blueprint for Department of Creative Economy Indonesia. Her latest curatorial before Fad Democracy was Redraw at Edwin's Gallery Jakarta.

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Wiyoga Muhandanto | "Everything and Something Else", 2014, Plywood, Emulsion Paint, Painted Readymade Object, Resin & Automotive Paint, 170 x 150 x 50 cm



there is no such thing as genuine motives. On the other hand, the people for people spirit crashed hard on the previous bureaucracy and manipulation of regulation that has become a culture in the government. The representational democracy concluded that democracy is a skin deep conception in Indonesian politics, and maybe in all other cases.

The artists were invited to make a survey on democracy in their practical levels, to observe the trends, the fashion, and the fads. Most of the artist relates the term democracy with freedom, with deconstruction of thinking, and with the idea of breaking through a system of standard. Agan Harahap through his doctored photography series digging through multiple layers of trends in social media and visual literacy. His work Toko Memorabilia (Memorabilia Store) is combining the latest phenomenon of social media trends and online shop. Agan created a fake online shop through an

instagram account, selling world-class celebrities memorabilia, fictional, of course. In a matter of few days, this account was followed by thousands of people, some actually emailed the address mentioned to seriously order the items. Agan puts consumers to be powerless of visual manipulation. Entering such frantic consumer culture, Agan show a mechanism that should make us re-think and re-evaluate consumer products, visual imagery, and beliefs in reality. In an attempt to challenged our system of beliefs on what is real and what is fictional, Wiyoga traced back a man named Jackson Sze Leung, a regular Indonesian citizen who was involved as the



Reza Afisina | "Under Construction As Long As You're Not Paying Attention", 2015, 20 pieces of printed fabricated silk-satin, 75 x 100 cm

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27 February - 29 March 2015

Curated by Mia Maria

- Agan Harahap
- Faisal Habibi
- J. Ariadhitya Pramuhenra
- Mahardika Yudha
- Narpati Awangga "oomleo"
- R. Yuki Agriardi
- Reza Afisina
- Tisa Granicia
- Wiyoga Muhandanto



man who gave the flower wreath to the President of Republic of China in his historical Asia-Africa Conference 1955. In his work Wiyoga confronted the celebration of democracy in 1955 with a small narrative belongs to Jackson Leung, one that is contradictory to the big dreams of democracy in the context of how it is now. Using a real character, Leung, Wiyoga created fictional realistic story of personal struggles on mental freedom within the life of Jackson Leung. Adding a layer of visual trick, Wiyoga once again tricked the believing mind by using visually realistic replica of everyday items placed in odd settings.

The reality of recent democracy that is intertwined and allied with capitalism has become a new belief of system that is agreed upon by default. Reza Afisina in his installation "Under Construction as long as You're Not Paying Attention" try to look critically about these relationships. Probe into machine of capitalism with a mechanism involving production and consumption of processed imaging of powerful industrial products, those all that have entered the reality of everyday life. Reza linking the political reality of large manufacturing countries with the reality of image making industry. Using red marker, Reza scribbled related political dates and texts on the products labels before they were blown up into large print on his chosen fabric, the ever-so-largely-produced-and-used satin.

"Democracy is successful is when the



Narpati Awangga "oomleo" | "Where's Where?", 2015, Installation, Video loop

Narpati Awangga "oomleo" | "Scenes We'd Like to Pix", 2014, Acrylic objects installation, various sizes

power of a common people's hand is able to destroy an existing standard." - Narpati Awangga a.k.a Oomleo

Using his usual pixel art method, Oomleo created a condensed city scene displaying regular activities with one spot that highlights the "uncommon". This uncommonly may create or may be seen as something that destroy stereotyped standards of lifestyle and therefore it may be seen as dangerous. The audience is expected to interactively find that one point of oddity within the condensed frames that he created.

Oomleo created a number of 'common scenes' of a city that he collected from various different cities in the world. Among them are from Tokyo and Jakarta. When those 'common scenes' from differ-

ent cities of the world are displayed and compared to the context of the city of Singapore, it creates a certain disturbance in the eyes of the spectators, many of the 'commons' become 'Uncommon', the standard in one city may be a violation of law or ethic in another city. Still in the context of the power of citizens in the democratic trend and its relation to the access and use of information technology media, Mahardika Yudha in his *Senandung Ombak* (Humming of the Waves) chose a footage, taken by an Indonesian worker in Hong Kong, on the unrest event between the organizers of 2014 presidential election and the Indonesian citizens, which are mostly Indonesian workers. A copy was uploaded on youtube channel within a short period of time after the footage was taken. That footage went through a smart and simple manipulation by Mahardika and produced an intense visual abstraction video of the originally narrative democratic party.

In another form of abstraction, as always in his works the past few years, Faisal Habibi is breaking through from



Mahardika Yudha | "Senandung Ombak" (Humming of the waves), 2014-2015, Smartphone installation, Video loop

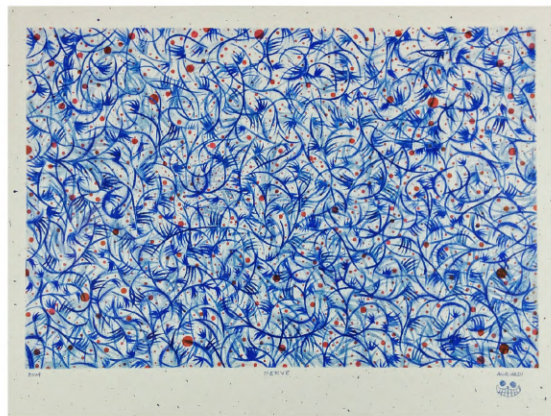
constructed perception of design thinking and the use of objects, deconstruct and reconstruct objects before his eyes.

Democratic election is a moment when every voice matters, the ideal idea when one voice matters. Through his work 'Nerve', Yuki presented a close self-contemplation on the dynamic of thought and feelings of common citizen like himself in experiencing the chance to choose, a chance to decide the fate of a nation. While Tisa Granicia collected prayers for the nation in every piece of roses that she has been creating every day in the past 5 years. A repeated hopeful prayers, a mantra for the better. Tisa has been creating hundreds and hundreds of these roses, and scattered them along in almost every art works that she did since 2010, sneaking a prayer into each one of them. While Pramuhendra highlights double standard of happiness and pressure, through his works "Preparation for the Dreaming Land" where he drew a picture of Walt Disney in preparation to build Disneyland. Pramuhendra questioning the fantastic concept of a built dream versus cultural suppression that comes along with it. The cause and effect of a socially constructed dream. Ideal Democracy. Dreamt Idea.



Tisa Granicia | "Sekotak Doa-doa" (Box of Prayers), 2015, Hand build bone china, unglazed, engobe, 1230c, 45 x 35 x 7.5 cm

R. Yuki Agriardi | "Nerve", 2014, Pigmented ink on Canson CA grain paper, 65 x 50 cm



Faisal Habibi | "Object Tracking", 2014, Steel and Wood, 79 x 60 x 5 cm



J. Ariadhitya Pramuhendra | "Preparation For The Dreaming Land", 2014, Charcoal on canvas, 300 x 190 cm