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USA **INDONESIA**

# ENTANG WIHARSO AWARDED 2019 GUGGENHEIM FELLOWSHIP

BY XUAN WEI YAP



**ENTANG WIHARSO** is the recipient of a 2019 Guggenheim Fellowship. Photo by Boris Kirpotin, Bernier/Eliades. Courtesy Marc Straus, New York.

On April 10, the John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation revealed the recipients of the 2019 Guggenheim Fellowships via the New York Times. Among the 168 fellows from various disciplines and backgrounds, and selected from a group of almost 3,000 applicants, is artist Entang Wiharso.

Born in Java in 1967, Wiharso now lives and works between Yogyakarta and Rhode Island. Concerned with understanding and articulating the human condition, Wiharso engages critically with topics such as politics, ethics, race and religion, entangling both personal and societal perspectives. His often densely figurative images, presented across a range of mediums, including paintings, sculptures, and installations, have been featured in solo exhibitions across the globe. In 2013, Wiharso also represented Indonesia at the 55th Venice Biennale.

During his year-long Guggenheim Fellowship, Wiharso will develop his current project, “Tunnel of Light,” which is part of his ongoing “Temple of Hope” series (2009– ). These monumental installations feature sheets of aluminum that have been cut with intricate patterns referencing the relief sculptures of Javanese and Balinese temples, and are lit from within, such that the structures cast intricate texts and images on surrounding walls. In particular, Wiharso will probe the possibility of incorporating one such installation into a landscape. “I plan to visit areas of the United States with important connections to the American story, particularly places connected with narratives about expansion, conflict, morality, belonging and equality. I’m interested in the origin stories of the American character and key historical experiences that shaped Americans’ relationship with the land,” he explained.

The Guggenheim Fellowships are awarded annually to candidates “on the basis of prior achievement and exceptional promise,” and are approved by the Foundation’s Board of Trustees, which comprises 15 members, including board chairman William P. Kelly; and president of the Foundation Edward Hirsch.

Xuan Wei Yap is ArtAsiaPacific’s editorial intern.

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