

Culture

INTERVIEW/Indonesian artist hopes Taipei show offers a window into human psyche

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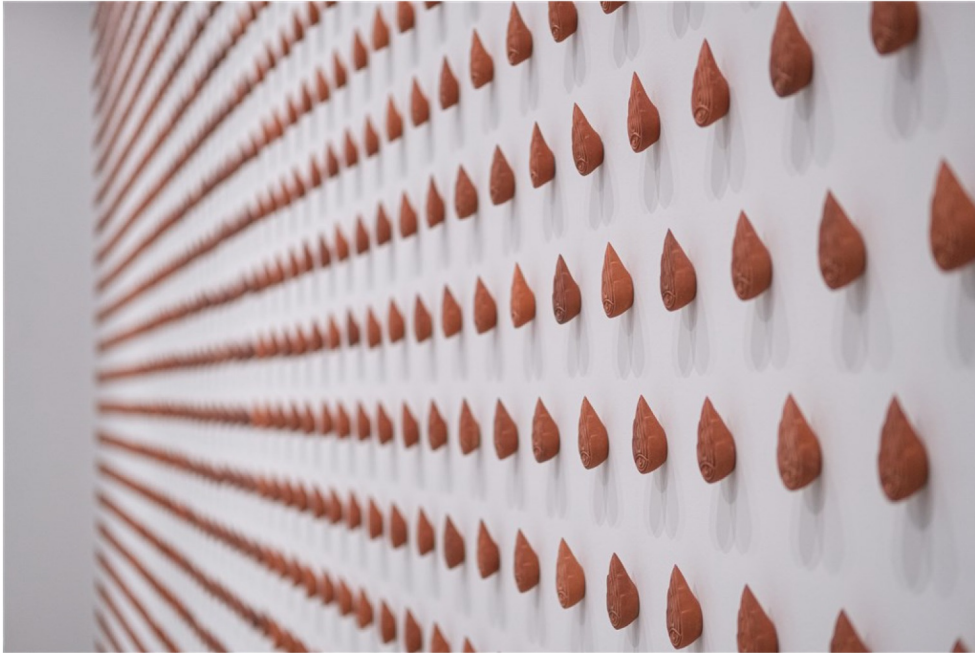
Albert Yonathan Setyawan. Photo courtesy of Mind Set Art Center

Taipei, June 10 (CNA) Japan-based Indonesian ceramic artist Albert Yonathan Setyawan has expressed hope that his "Speaking in Tongues" solo exhibition at Mind Set Art Center (MSAC) in Taipei will provide visitors with a window on the human psyche.

"I just want people to be there and experience the work and feel inspired by the symmetrical patterns. I think people first notice the symmetrical composition, and symmetrical composition is a way to connect people to their psychological state...their psyche," Albert told CNA Friday.

According to the organizers of the June 7-July 14 exhibition, the 11 featured works, all created in the last two years, often display large, expansive symmetrical arrangements of ceramic sculptures that lead the viewer's thoughts into a spiritual realm beyond the physical space.

Albert said he hoped his works stay in the minds of people who see them and help the viewers reflect on certain issues in their lives. "We talk about reflections to reflect on your own past life, for example, so you can make a better decision in the future."



Infinitude (2022). Photo courtesy of Mind Set Art Center

One of Albert's creations included in the MSAC exhibition is "Infinitude," a large-scale wall installation made using 2,552 pieces of slip-cast terracotta ceramics.

By covering a whole wall with similar terracotta ceramics shapes, Albert said he wants to communicate the idea that physical hierarchies are an illusion.

"What I want people to see from the work is that they are left with the impression of there is no top, there is no bottom, there is no left, and there is no right," Albert said.

He hopes viewers will be able to feel lost as they zoom in and out of the artwork exploring the patterns on each of the terracotta pieces, Albert said, adding that he uses clay as a metaphor to create a vessel-like body.

"Ignivomous," a 214-by-214 cm, 384-piece work that was also made in 2022 with terracotta and slip casting techniques, uses patterns resembling many three-eyed faces spitting flames to represent consciousness and awareness, Albert said.



Ignivomous (2022). Photo courtesy of Mind Set Art Center

"I'm always intrigued to looking beneath something, to discover or uncover something that lies beneath physical experience," Albert said.

Born in 1983 in Bandung, Indonesia, Albert graduated from the Bandung Institute of Technology in 2012 with a Master of Fine Arts. He then moved to Japan that same year and enrolled in a ceramics PhD. program at Kyoto Seika University.

In 2013, Albert was one of five Indonesian artists to represent the country at the 55th Venice Biennale. At the event, he presented "Cosmic Labyrinth: the Silent Path", a floor installation that consisted of 1,200 ceramics stupas.



Albert Yonathan Setyawan. Photo courtesy of Mind Set Art Center

The MSAC is a contemporary art platform founded in Taipei in 2010 that exhibits and promotes artworks by Taiwanese, Asian and international artists. It is dedicated to fostering cultural exchanges through creative programs and collaborative projects with curators from different regions.

(By William Yen)
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