

## INDIEGUERILLAS PLAY THE GAME OF NOSTALGIA AT HERMÈS LIAT TOWERS

The French house tells stories about all the games you played as a child.

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Window displays are everything in the magical world of Hermès, and the ones on our little red dot are no exception. The flagship store at Liat Towers recently welcomed a new force of artistry to decorate its space, and this time it came in the form of the Indonesian artist-duo, **indieguerillas**, and a cute gathering of rocking horses, skateboards and brilliant chromatic endeavours in yellow, magenta and cyan.



*The Joybringer* is a curious wagon of playful odes to the husband-and-wife-duo's childhood – leaping off of the Hermès 2018 theme of *Play*, they meld their background in design, respect for traditional values, and love for all kinds of adventures, to explore and highlight the importance of finding joy in contemporary mobility and new possibilities. When we sat down with the duo to talk a little bit about this collaboration with Hermès and their art, we were surprised to find out that much of the couple's artistic style is heavily influenced by the European and Japanese comics they read growing up. They may be widely known for having an artistic vision that is strongly rooted and inspired by traditional Javanese culture, but the philosophy and musings that ground such a direction is what makes them worthy of the title "guerilla", and Hermès seems to know why. Read on to learn more about how they wholeheartedly embrace the fun in the everyday and translate that into captivating creations like the one that's on display at Liat Towers right now.

**What do you think indieguerillas and Hermès have in common?**

A passion for art and the quest for perfection.

**If you had to pick a favourite moment or piece from *The Joybringer*, what would it be and why?**

Our favourite moment(s) would probably be to witness the design process lead into the production process, because it's so fascinating to see the materialization of ideas. For our favourite piece from the installation specifically, it would be the pushbike in the main window – it's cuter than the drawing!



**Is there a certain way that you want passer-bys to feel or take in *The Joybringer* when they walk past it?**

Art is very closely related to interpretation, and in *The Joybringer*, we present a set of symbols. We hope that passer-bys can put together these symbols to create a conclusion of sorts, or a meaning, for themselves. However, even if they can't, we still hope to create something fun that everyone can enjoy. It's fun to make people happy.

**Why do you think that it is important to play even while working, especially for today's globally-connected generation?**

Working without the spirit of play, or passion, is for robots. Humans seek excitement in everything. Happiness and productivity go together, side by side.

**How do you then play when creating new works?**

We play by adding different twist to new works or projects, and making something that we have never made before. We have expanded our works, from paintings to making bicycles and even a fashion performance. Consistency is boring.

**How has coming into contact with European and Japanese comics at a young age influenced or informed the approach you have towards creating works?**

Popular culture, including comics, is a very important element to us. It has played a great role in shaping who we are today. We approach art as the reflection of life, and particularly, the contemporary society. It is insufficient to learn about and to reflect on the contemporary society without taking into consideration the influence of popular culture, so that is why we choose to adapt many symbols from the popular culture, and make it often very explicitly.



**Was having this heightened awareness in an area of knowledge not native to your local culture the reason why both of you decided to take inspiration from traditional Javanese culture? If no, what led you to it?**

In the beginning, we wanted to draw inspiration from the (visual) culture of Javanese traditions simply because we wanted to be different. But while researching, we slowly started to understand and appreciate our mother culture on a whole different level, and that was how we eventually chose to settle with Javanese culture as a foundation of our art practices and direction today. Research taught us that most of the visual concepts and philosophies behind traditional Javanese culture is pretty much the same as what we see and learn from popular culture now; what makes the exploration of such a topic so interesting is to see them collide – we start to question everything, and it is these kinds of moments that serve as the “fuel” to keep us inspired and motivated to create art.

**What makes one’s heritage, upbringing and traditional culture so important to artists today?**

Perhaps this doesn’t apply to all artists, but for us, our heritage, values and traditional culture is too interesting to not be worked on and or ignored. Many of the old values have stood against the test of time and are still relevant today, but we are still in the process of studying them. This constant investigation is what grounds us in the present, allowing us to be adaptive and flexible towards current situation without losing our sense of direction. Just flowing, but not drifting.

**How does the indieguerrillas’ creative process normally begin? Does it start with an idea from one of you?**

Yes, we start with an idea, followed by sessions of brainstorming. We do this over breakfast everyday. Once fixed, we move on to the more technical or logistical side of our operations, which includes things like setting the schedule, choosing materials, colors and techniques, and even the crating and shipping of our work.



**Lastly, what is the best thing about working together professionally and as a couple?**  
Since we've been together for so long now, we understand and trust each other's qualities, so it's a lot easier to share assignments and talk through any concerns.



Photo: Mizuma Gallery

*The Joybringer* is on now till September 2018 at Hermès Liat Towers