ARTICULATING FIXER 2021

An Appraisal of Indonesian Art Collectives in the Last Decade

FIXER

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PREFACE

FIXER is a research initiative that collects and archives knowledge about the operating models and sustainability strategies of art collectives in Indonesia. This initiative started in 2010, when North Art Space, Jakarta, launched a research project and exhibition called "Alternative Space & Art Groups in Indonesia," later known as FIXER. The research project in 2010 involved 21 art groups and alternative spaces that had flourished between 2000-2010 across several cities in Indonesia. The first FIXER exhibition was curated by Ade Darmawan and Rifky Effendi, along with Mirwan Andan as researcher. Nearly a decade later, we have a renewed aspiration to record the dynamics of art collectives in Indonesia. Thus, Gudskul Ekosistem is now continuing the project of mapping and examining the development of art collectives over the last ten years, especially in the context of their sustainability strategies, artistic ideas and practices, and how these factors vary and interconnect across multiple generations and regions. Building upon FIXER's previous research, the FIXER survey this time covers 59 art collectives spread across various locations in Indonesia.

FIXER's aspiration to record the dynamics of art collectives in Indonesia is motivated by an awareness of the significant growth of the Indonesian art ecosystem over the last 11 years. This is marked by the emergence of a multitude of collectives with various artistic practices—some of which have received recognition from international art communities. The growth of art collectives in many regions in Indonesia has led to the birth of numerous artistic events and initiatives, which have been organized without facilitation by the state. To cite Ade Darmawan in the 2010 FIXER catalog, the emergence of these art collectives or groups needs to be seen as "an effort to respond to changes in the society, for the sake of the development of

ideas of art practices that are more relevant and immediately involved with the reality in the society."[1]

On that basis, we believe that an ongoing survey is needed to record developments in the practices of these art collectives. However, in the current survey we do not stop at just recording; there is also an aspiration to expand this research initiative into a common platform that, one day, can become a bridge for collectives, organizations, and alternative spaces in Indonesia to connect, support each other, and share resources.

The Significance of Art Collectives in Indonesia

In an essay, Sanento Yuliman wrote that collective expressions in art have deep cultural roots in Indonesia. This is due to the social ties imbued in the life of traditional communities in Indonesia. These collective artistic expressions are still very common today in various communities in Indonesia. In the process of *bolon* house construction among the Batak community, for example, the collective participation of the community is a necessity. Some people will be busy laying out the structure of the house; others are in charge of installing the roof; while those with certain talents will work on the intricate *gorga* carvings around the façade of the house. It is the same with the Balinese, who have endless cycle of ceremonies throughout their lives, art as a collective expression becomes everyday reality and is passed down from one generation to next. As Sanento wrote, it "is integrated with collective life, becoming an inseparable part of people's lives."[2]

Although this kind of collective artistic expression is still alive in society, knowledge about it has been absent from art academies in Indonesia. This is because the knowledge taught in art education institutions consists of the modern art forms developed in the

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[1] Ade Darmawan, "Fixing the Chain of the Cycle of Ideas" in *FIXER: Alternative Spaces and Art Groups in Indonesia*, catalog (Jakarta: North Art Space, 2010), p. 15.
[2] Sanento Yuliman, "Keindonesiaan, Kerakyatan dan Modernisme dalam Kritik Seni Lukis di Indonesia," in *Estetika yang Merabunkan*, eds. Danuh Tyas Pradipta, Hendro Wiyanto, Puja Anindita (Jakarta: Penerbit Gang Kabel, 2020).

West—prioritizing rationalism and individual expression. Sanento's essay provides an early sketch of how modern art came to Indonesia and marked many socio-cultural fractures and shifts, such as "loosened regional boundaries" and "the breakup of old traditions", which enabled the birth of a "new art at a distance from society", a "manifestation of national consciousness (...) that must be disseminated beyond the boundaries of regional traditions to a public of diverse cultural backgrounds."

Meanwhile, the collective art expression of traditional art forms was "becoming more marginalized (...) less and less seen" while some other art forms were "in decline or neglected," and even "corrupted." Perhaps Sanento's conception of collective art was derived from a very limited perspective, but he wrote as if this small fragment was representative of the whole. In addition, it is very possible that Sanento's conception of collective artistic expression was situated in a vacuum, where there was a certain standard of quality—to distinguish what was corrupt and what was not, and guaranteed that the forms of expression seen as traditional were exempt from changing across time.

We can surmise that what Sanento described is not entirely accurate by comparing it with sociologist Umar Kayam's travelogue, which invites us to see the cultural expressions of various communities, from Aceh Gayo, Dayak Kenyah Bakung, to Asmat. From his notes, one gets an impression that modernization appeared in many places, but collective expression was adaptable in the face of all kinds of change.[3] Umar Kayam notably wrote about the art of *didong*— a collective art performance that consists of a group of men energetically singing and replying to each other all night long. Despite the difficult times during the Indonesian government's military operation in Aceh, Gayo artists continued to practice *didong*. To this day, we can still find this art in the Gayo highlands, Central Aceh. The lyrics have evolved with the times and the artists have given way to a new generation. The

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[3] Umar Kayam, Harri Peccinotti, *Semangat Indonesia: Suatu Perjalanan Budaya,* (Jakarta: Gramedia & Mobil Oil Indonesia, 1985).

resilience of traditional art isn't exclusive to Gayo; it can be found everywhere in Indonesia.

Through the various works of Umar Kayam—both fiction and nonfiction—we get a picture of how modernity and traditionality often go hand in hand. This kind of eclecticism remains common, even in the most heterogeneous societies in some cities of Java, where rationality can coexist with spirituality, and individuality is intertwined with collectivity. Although we may suspect that such mixtures are very likely to occur in opportunistic and situational contexts, it's worth emphasizing that the cultural memory of these traditional ties has never been completely lost in Indonesian society— or in other communities around the world that have experienced, or continue to experience, forced modernization. The idea of hybridity was championed by Ki Hajar Dewantara during the Cultural Polemic in the 1930s. At that time, the scholar Sutan Takdir Alisjahbana became a representative of modernists who believed in advancing Indonesia by way of comprehension and implementation of progressive Western values, such as materialism, intellectualism, and individualism. In the opposite camp, Ki Hajar Dewantara considered that the implementation of progressive Western values must be matched with traditional values in the life of the Indonesian nation, namely spiritualism, compassion, and collectivism.[4]

In fact, the development of modern art in Indonesia has never been separate from the spirit of collectivism. It began with the formation of Seniman Indonesia Muda (SIM—Young Indonesian Artists) in 1946; Lembaga Seniman Indonesia Tionghoa (Yin Hua Meishu Xiehui, the Chinese Indonesian Artists Association) in 1949;[5] Lembaga Kebudayaan Rakyat (Lekra—the People's Cultural Institute) in 1950; Lembaga Seniman dan Budayawan Muslim (Lesbumi—the Indonesian

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[4] *Polemik Kebudayaan,* ed. Achdiat K. Mihardja (Jakarta: Balai Pustaka, 1948); the digitalized version can be accessed from http://archive.ivaa-online.org/khazanahs/detail/3749.
[5] Brigitta Isabella, Yerry Wirawan, "Praktik Seni Rupa Seniman Tionghoa Indonesia 1955-1965," in Hibah Penulisan Seni Visual IVAA (2015), a project by IVAA and Ford Foundation to support archiving of visual art in Indonesia.

Muslim Artists and Culture Activists Association) in 1954;[6] Gerakan Seni Rupa Baru Indonesia (GSRBI—the Indonesian New Art Movement) in 1974; Decenta in 1975; Kelompok Kepribadian Apa (PIPA—What Personality Group) in 1977; Jaringan Kerja Kebudayaan (JAKER—Cultural Networks) in 1989; up to the emergence of artist groups in the '90s, including Kelompok Seni Rupa Jendela (1993), Apotik Komik (1997), Taring Padi (1998), KUNCI Study Forum & Collective (1999), HONF (1999), and Tanahindie (1999). Apart from those mentioned, there have also been studios that accommodate artists' need for space—to gather, have a process, and create. Some of these are Sanggar Jiwa Mukti (1948), Sanggar Seniman Kartono Yudhokusumo (1952), Sanggar Bambu (1959), Sanggar Bumi Tarung (1961), Akademi Seni Rupa Surabaya (AKSERA—the Surabaya Fine Arts Academy) (1967), and Sanggar Dewata (1970).

This fact can actually serve as a premise about the contribution of artist groups, collectives, or studios and their long history in the development of modern art in Indonesia. And this tendency to gather together continued into the 2000s, and until today. In fact, it has recently emerged strongly in various regions. In his article in this book, Hendro Wiyanto—quoting Ugeng T. Moetidjo—notes that the emergence of numerous artist groups in the last 20 years has marked a shift in artistic practice from activism to collectivism. One of the impacts is the positional shift of the public in an artistic work. If artist-activists in the 1980s "presented the individual voice of the artist" and saw the exhibition hall as "a terminal for an activist's adventures and explorations," then an art collective of the 2000s "echoes the struggle of identification regarding issues of citizenship" and uses public space as its "arena, target, engagement, victory, and defeat." An attempt to identify this shift in artistic practice is very likely to be developed in the future, given the wide variety of the practices in Indonesia today that dissolve into everyday life, making them difficult to measure in conventional terms.

The fusion of collective artistic practice with social practice was a

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[6] Choirotun Chisaan, *Lesbumi: Strategi Politik Kebudayaan* (Yogyakarta: LKiS, 2008).
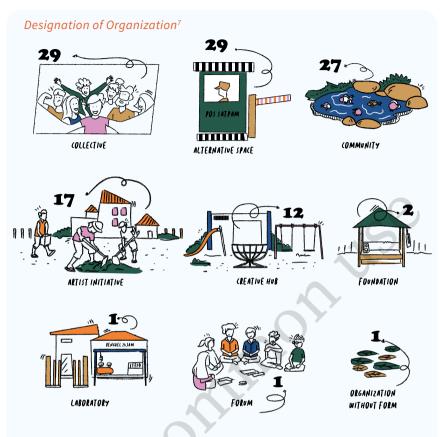
crucial starting point for this survey: Is there a rigorous definition of "art collective"? How do we differentiate between the practice of an art collective and the work of a local neighborhood youth group? How do we assess the artistic practice of an art collective whose members are not artists?

In truth, the questions above reflect the diversity of forms, principles, and practices of various art collectives that are growing in Indonesia today. Thus, the definition is not limited to their institutional structure. There are even art collectives that do not call themselves "art collectives". Instead, our definition of them refers to their prominent principles of collectivity. Hence, the definition of an art collective in Indonesia is not limiting, or even exclusionary, and in fact allows a further development along the shift in practices that may arise in the future. Gesyada Siregar, in her essay in this book, tries to pursue the intertwining insights to be used in detecting art collectives' practices that are often amphibious and take the form of institutional experimentation.

As far as this survey has been conducted, we have come to understand that art collectives are awareness, method, and survival strategy that generally emerge on the basis of a certain closeness; have dynamic collaborative relationships; have an interest and need to learn, grow, and work together; share resources and the workload of managing a space/forum; strive for independence; and have a division of labor and artistic articulation in expressing opinions. Typically, membership in art collectives is open and managed in a joyful spirit. The form of the organization is also fluid, in congruence with the needs and context of the place in which a collective appears or is situated: some are formal, but many more are organic.

Research Team

29 COLLECTIVE

29 ALTERNATIVE SPACE

POS SATPAM

27 COMMUNITY

17 ARTIST INITIATIVE

12 CREATIVE HUB

2 FOUNDATION

1 LABORATORY

BENGKEL 24 JAM

1 FORUM

1 ORGANIZATION WITHOUT FORM

From the designations above, we can conclude that collectives' names or designations can largely overlap. The definition of a collective is not predetermined but evolves over time and throughout the context in which they work. Some collectives have more than one definition. This indicates that any singular designation might actually limit the full range of their potential creative work.

One can also conclude that a collective is a way of working. The organizational structure can take any form. This is perhaps because a collective cannot apply for a legal status as a collective per se since, in the legal nomenclature of organizations in Indonesia, "collective" as a category doesn't exist.

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[7] In the FIXER survey, this question allows a collective to choose more than one answer.

When comparing our study subjects to those in the FIXER 2010 survey, we found that several art collectives or groups still exist; some have evolved and changed their names; others have disbanded. However, disbanding here does not mean a dead end, because in many cases members of art collectives that have disbanded went on to form other collectives. For them, an art collective is not only a medium for channeling artistic expression, but also a social forum or even a mode of survival. This answers a classic question: How can a collective's artwork enter and be accepted by the art market? *First*, most art collectives have no idea about, nor dependence on, market mechanisms. Theirs have a different character compared to artist groups that are oriented toward a certain artistic medium. *Second*, most art collectives position their artistic practice as a method for achieving social goals. Their artworks cannot be neatly framed as commodities, but can include various forms of interdisciplinary work. Ayos Purwoaji, in his essay in this book, writes, "[t]heir process of art creation—and the artworks produced—can only be seen from a certain vantage point because it requires a long timespan and involves the participation of many parties."

The absence of a direct relationship between the artistic practices of art collectives and the mechanisms of the art market is interesting and deserves further examination. In this survey, we try to map collectives' sustainability strategies—not only in terms of ideas, but also in an economic sense. How do these collectives survive? How do they map their resources? Through various interviews, we discovered that there is a diversity of resources that sustain the practices of art collectives today. In the 1990s or even in the 2000s, some art collectives received support through foreign funding or resorted to dues, as described in Berto Tukan's essay on factors leading to the emergence of art collectives. In it, he argues that in the last ten years there has been a diversification of resources, ranging from cooperation with the private sector, establishment of business cooperatives, securement of access to government funding, to building independent economic strategies

and developing community-based businesses. The definition of capital for art collectives in Indonesia is not limited to financial capital. Above all, various forms of social capital turn out to support their survival in more robust ways as an art collective.

An interesting illustration of this appears in one of the interview sessions with an art collective that is more than ten years old and has not yet received external funding. Their works are not for sale, but they take part in various activities involving dozens of other art collectives in their region. Through interviews hosted by Ajeng Nurul Aini, also published in this book, representatives of these collectives share stories of their survival strategies. How do they survive as an art collective? Collective members we interviewed say that their collectives survive because of factors such as spare time, generosity, social relationship, shared sense of humor, etc. They fulfill their personal daily needs by working odd jobs, while art collectives function as their social fora and channels of expression. Since they never depend on the global art market, their existence is not influenced by fluctuations in market prices and value. In this context, independence must be understood as a form of resilience and sovereignty to support the social dimension of their artistic practices.

Working Together

This survey was carried out for approximately 16 months (throughout 2019-2021) by a research team consisting of Ajeng Nurul Aini, Ayos Purwoaji, Berto Tukan, Gesyada Siregar, Dwita Diah Astari, and Gusti Hendra Pratama. Initially, we designed a qualitative research method in which every researcher was to travel and make direct observations of the art collectives across the various regions of Indonesia. Before setting out, the team conducted workshops to collect the names of potential art collectives, enrich our research literature, and invite two sources to share perspectives on youth collective culture and the basic anthropology of social networks. However, the COVID-19 pandemic turned this research agenda upside down. The method

was then adjusted, and we distributed survey sheets and conducted remote interviews.

There were survey sheets for 59 collectives, of which 49 responded, four responded through interview, and the remaining six did not respond. In these sheets, six aspects were the focus of our questions: (1) organization; (2) economic sustainability; (3) continuity of ideas; (4) artistic articulation; (5) carrying capacity and locality; and (6) communication and media. The responses were then processed into data and collectively studied by members of the research team. A review of the results was then verified through a series of remote interviews. These were also an attempt to obtain a variety of views between members of an art collective, especially one with a generational bias. Why is this important? Because in a collective, especially one with a long life, a dynamic interchange of ideas between generations inevitably occurs. It is likely that what the founder initially conceives an art collective to be is different from the conceptions of newly joined members. This difference in views or distance between generations is important because every generation within a collective will have different ideals. How can they bridge this difference? What is the division of authority and power in an art collective? How does an art collective pass on its ideas between its own members?

Throughout 2020, the research team also paid attention to the several collectives that adjusted their normal activities and formed crisis units to respond to social problems faced by residents around them due to COVID-19. When exhibitions, residencies, or trips were canceled, art collectives did not become dormant and wait for the pandemic to pass. Some of them quickly organized workshops to produce personal protective equipment (PPE), built solidarity networks, organized distribution of masks, coordinated public kitchens, helped farmers distribute crops, opened community educational spaces to teach residents about the pandemic, invited residents to plant spices and medicinal plants, set up online workshops, and so on.

Research Team

One of those initiatives is recorded in this book by Nuraini Juliastuti, who writes about the collective garden Humatera, cultivated by the art collective Kerjasama 59 in Surabaya, East Java. When the pandemic hit, members of Kerjasama 59 realized that the crisis was likely to last a long time. So, they modified the roof of their rented house into a garden for various vegetables and plants, from eggplant, spinach, tomatoes, and chilies to rice. The initiative is based on "a desire to be able to meet their regular food needs, in the hope of reducing daily living costs." In addition to Humatera, Kerjasama 59 collective also initiated Pawon'e Arek-Arek: a public kitchen that distributes free food to residents in need—the majority of whom are informal workers—every Friday. Nuraini writes about Kerjasama 59's two pandemic initiatives as characteristic of a collective with an organic way of working and the flexibility to throw together activities designed toward achieving independence. To record such impromptu initiatives, the research team also created a WhatsApp group and a limited virtual chat session where collectives could share the local conditions and their activities in the first months of the pandemic.
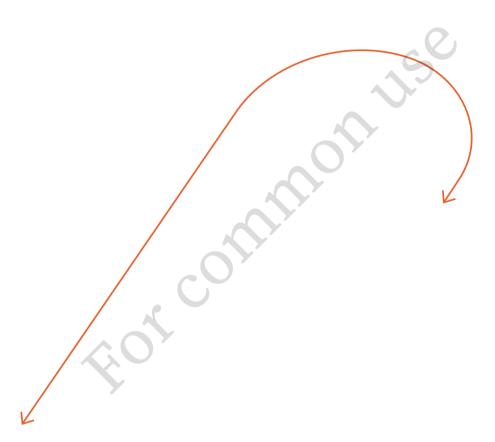
A Multitude of Perspectives

Not only presenting the research team's articles, this time FIXER has also invited guest writers to enrich our study of the development of art collectives in Indonesia in the last ten years. They are Doni Ahmad, Hendro Wiyanto, Nuraini Juliastuti, and Renal Rinoza. In addition, FIXER has also invited writers from art collectives across a variety of contexts and practices, namely Jatiwangi art Factory, Hysteria, Pasirputih, Ladang Rupa, Rakarsa, Taring Padi, and Tikar Pandan, while Lakoat.Kujawas article is written by us based on interview and a short visit there.

We hope that FIXER will become a decennary survey to record the development of art collectives and groups in Indonesia. It is hoped that continuous examination can provide adequate information and

materials for other researchers who are interested in documenting the work and contribution of art collectives to the development of contemporary art in Indonesia. We would like to thank all parties that have been involved in and assisted in the process of FIXER 2021.
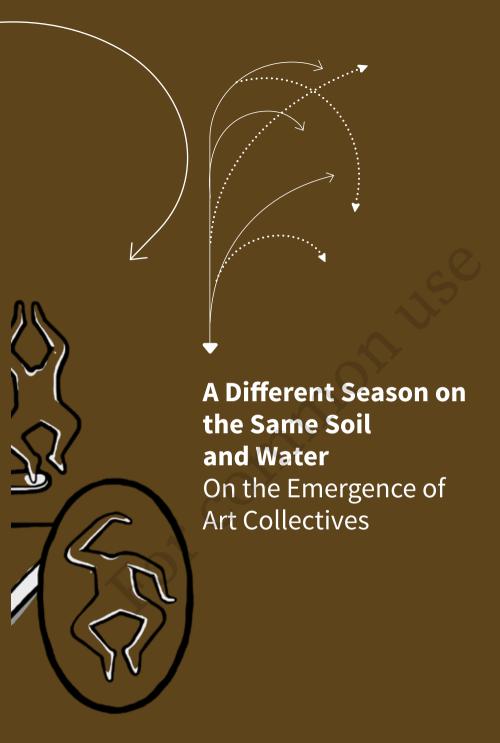
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On the Emergence of Art Collectives

Berto Tukan

What motivates groups of people to come together and work with certain rules of thumb—sometimes set from the start, but more often formulated organically—in the Indonesian contemporary art scene? One of our earliest assumptions was the urge to work and live in a communalistic-collective way. This way of life is not new in Indonesian culture. Living among a collective and/or community requires an operating mechanism that is summed up in one phrase: *gotong royong* (mutual cooperation).

The peoples of Indonesia have long been familiar with this concept of mutual cooperation. When our republic was about to embark on its journey as an independent nation, it was decided that a national foundation of *gotong royong* was required. At that time, in his Pancasila speech at a session of Badan Penyelidik Usaha-usaha Kemerdekaan Indonesia (BPUPKI—the Investigating Committee for Preparatory Work for Independence), on June 1, 1945, Sukarno said, "…If I squeeze five into three, and three into one, I can think of one word that truly embodies Indonesia: *'gotong royong'.* The State of Indonesia that we found must be a state of *'gotong royong'."*[1] Thus *gotong royong* is Indonesian *Philosophische Grondslag.*

Mutual cooperation emerged because the two historically predominant types of occupation of this archipelagic people—i.e., fishing and farming—required collective work. In farming, a *lumbung* (barn) system developed. At sea, of course, a ship needs many people to work together in the middle of a vast ocean (in fact, in modern marine navigation, a captain is not the only leader since there is also the head of the engine room). However, the economic development model, which molds the occupational and social patterns of a society, changed and eroded these ways of life little by little, leaving an individualistic model of living and working, which is in concordance with the capitalist economy of today. It could be that the shift from a communalistic life

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[1] From "Pidato Soekarno: Lahirnya Pancasila", https://kepustakaan-presiden.perpusnas.go.id, accessed on February 11, 2021.

A Different Season on the Same Soil and Water: On the Emergence of Art Collectives

to an individualistic one is an inevitable change in any society. In the case of Indonesia, colonialism accelerated this process. Paraphrasing the Indonesian poet Chairil Anwar, colonialism simply accelerates darkness—the loss of communalism, replaced by individualism.

Art, of course, is not a supreme entity free from that curse; individualism in art, for example, is accelerated by Tirto Adhi Soerjo's pride in Raden Saleh or Sutan Takdir Alisjahbana's in Mas Pirngadie.[2] These two important intellectuals took pride in someone's signature on an artwork, an unknown gesture for two generations before them. This means that traditional Indonesian art, which did not recognize authorship, was also affected by modernity—authorship in art being clearly a product of European modernism—brought about by colonialism; the communal work of art slowly was transformed into an individualistic pursuit.

In truth, the structure of collective work has persisted in art, even if it is camouflaged and thus hidden from plain sight. It appears in what we call the social field of art, or the art ecosystem. In this space, hands move according to their respective roles. Sometimes they don't know each other but each person's work reinforces and emphasizes the presence of the other; one cannot exist without the other.

In this context, the emergence of art collectives can be seen as an effort to reinforce these lines of collective work. Within such a setting, from Pancasila to art ecosystems, in all over Indonesia numerous collectives/communities engaged in art and culture have emerged and developed.[3] FIXER 2021's appraisal looked closely at 56 art collectives in Indonesia. In this section we are going to look at their emergence and the local contexts in which they were born and evolved.

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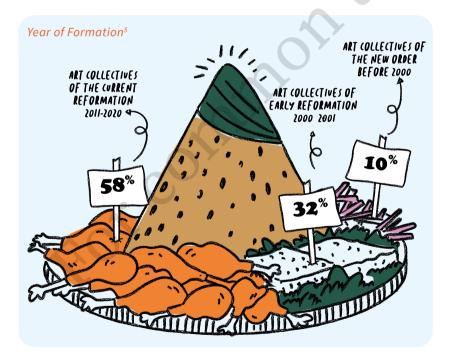
[2] See Tirto Adhi Soerjo, "Raden Saleh," *Medan Prijaji,* No. 8, Th. IV, Saturday, February 26, 1910. See also Sutan Takdir Alisjahbana, "Mas Pirngadie: Ahli Gambar Bangsa Indonesia," in eds. Bambang Bujono and Wicaksono Adi, *Seni Rupa Indonesia dalam Kritik dan Esai* (Jakarta: Dewan Kesenian Jakarta, 2012), pp. 7-20. This piece by Sutan Takdir was initially published on *Majalah Poedjangga Baroe*, Th. II, November 1934.

[3] Ibrahim Soetomo, *Direktori: Peta Kolektif Indonesia 2010-2020* (Jakarta: Whiteboard Journal and British Council, 2020). In addition, there is also the network of artists, collectives/communities, and alternative spaces initiated by, among others, Hysteria and Serbuk Kayu, Surabaya, called Jejaring SARTCAS. See further on the official Instagram account of Jejaring SARTCAS, @sartcas.id, accessed on February 16, 2021.

Three Waves of Collectives

It is the opinion of FIXER, and of some academic literature,[4] that the emergence of art collectives in Indonesia is inseparable from Indonesia's socio-political background. In a larger sense, a similar categorization of all Indonesian art can be made vis-à-vis the socio-political context of certain periods of time. It is possible to periodize these forms of art through several points of analysis, perhaps a stance of resistance toward certain socio-political conditions. Alternatively, periodic categorizations can be made based on the forms of technology used in artmaking. In our opinion, in the case of the emergence of art collectives, the socio-political aspects are inevitably the main and the only factor considered.

Year of Formation[5]

ART COLLECTIVES OF THE CURRENT REFORMATION 2011-2020

ART COLLECTIVES OF EARLY REFORMATION 2000 2001

ART COLLECTIVES OF THE NEW ORDER BEFORE 2000

58%

32%

10%

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[4] See Ade Darmawan in *FIXER: Alternative Spaces in Art Groups in Indonesia,* catalog (Jakarta: North Art Space, 2010). See also Ade Darmawan and Agung Hujatnika in *Siasat: Seni Rupa dan Budaya Kontemporer di Indonesia,* eds. Hafiz and Ronny Agustinus (Jakarta: Yayasan Ruang Rupa, 2012).

[5] In the FIXER survey, this question allows every collective to choose more than one answer.

This can be seen in Ade Darmawan and Agung Hujatnika's discussion of the emergence of post-Reformation art collectives; both consider the new freedom of expression after the New Order's fall as an important factor in the emergence of collectives in the early 2000s. This is obvious when we see that the motives behind the emergence of art collectives in FIXER 2021's appraisal are *first*, working and studying with community, *second*, problematizing art's social field, or, *third*, expanding people's access to art and culture.

In this appraisal, we divide the emergence of art collectives and their socio-political backgrounds into three periods: the Current Reformation (2010-2020), Early Reformation (2000-2010), and New Order. As previously mentioned, the thrill of these art collectives' emergences in Indonesia is evident in the Current Reformation, as seen in the table below:

Table of Collectives of the Current Reformation

Collective	Year	Location
Ace House Collective	2011	Yogyakarta, Special Region
Gubuak Kopi	2011	Solok, West Sumatera
Serbuk Kayu	2011	Surabaya, East Java
SkolMus	2011	Kupang, East Nusa Tenggara
Waft Lab	2011	Surabaya, East Jawa
Grafis Huru Hara	2012	Jakarta, Special Region
Lifepatch	2012	Yogyakarta, Special Region
Kampung Segart	2013	Jakarta, Special Region
Cata Odata	2014	Ubud, Bali
Ilubiung	2014	Bandung, West Java
katakerja	2014	Makassar, South Sulawesi

Collective	Year	Location
Komunitas Action	2014	Jayapura, Papua
Komunitas KAHE	2015	Maumere, East Nusa Tenggara
Ladang Rupa	2015	Bukittinggi, West Sumatra
Omnispace	2015	Bandung, West Java
Ruang Alternatif	2015	Cirebon, West Java
Rumah Mesra	2015	Sukabumi, West Java
Rumah Sanur	2015	Denpasar, Bali
Sandwich Attack	2015	Tangerang, Banten
Forum Sudut Pandang	2016	Palu, Central Sulawesi
Kelas Pagi Papua	2016	Jayapura, Papua
Lakoat.Kujawas	2016	Mollo, East Nusa Tenggara
SimpaSio Institute	2016	Larantuka, East Nusa Tenggara
BERGERAK.ETC	2017	Balikpapan, East Kalimantan
Bilik Bersenyawa	2017	Banjarmasin, South Kalimantan
Sindikat Milenial	2017	Pontianak, West Kalimantan
Studio Batur[6]	2017	Bandung, West Java
Degil House	2018	Medan, North Sumatra
Gudskul Ekosistem	2018	Jakarta, Special Region
Komunitas Action	2018	Jayapura, Papua
Rakarsa	2018	Bandung, West Java

[6] Since 2020, it has become Gelanggang Olah Rasa.

Collective	Year	Location
Omah Balong	2019	Kuningan, West Java
SIKU Ruang Terpadu	2019	Makassar, South Sulawesi

Of the 32 collectives from the Current Reformation documented by FIXER 2021, there are 15 that emerged in Java.[7] During the same period, three emerged in Sumatra, two in Bali, three in Kalimantan, three in Sulawesi, two in Papua, and four in East Nusa Tenggara. These numbers do not just show the exact number of the collectives that emerged in these areas but also illustrate the phenomenon of their emergence in Indonesia during this period.

Further data is still necessary, but it can be said that FIXER 2010 shaped the discourse around collectives and collective work in Indonesian contemporary art. Thus, it is possible that these discourses encouraged more artists or those working in other disciplines to pay attention to collective forms of artmaking. Viewed from its distribution, it can be said that collective work as a method in art and culture (or the use of art and culture as a strategy to deal with other problems) have started to spread evenly throughout Indonesia. The excitement of the art collectives' emergence during the Current Reformation is more or less influenced by socio-political developments, first, in the governmental sector, and second, in the private sector.

First, from the government side, this era has seen the advent of policies supporting cultural work carried out by art collectives. Directly or indirectly, this has affected the emergence of art collectives. At least, some government programs have encouraged other programs that are consistent with collectives' concerns or prompt collectives to establish a legal entity since almost all government programs require an organization to have formal legal status.

[7] The phrase Current Reformation has been coined despite a lack of theoretical frameworks, it simply refers to the 2010s-2020s.

There are two government programs that demonstrate this new level of support for creative industries. First, the emergence of Badan Ekonomi Kreatif (Bekraf—Creative Economy Agency), which has now merged with the Ministry of Tourism into the Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy. Second, the declaration of Gerakan Literasi (Literacy Movement) by President Jokowi.[8] Bekraf has launched a variety of programs, such as Program Banper Infrastruktur Ekonomi Kreatif (Government Assistance for Creative Economy Infrastructure Program). Many art collectives have applied for this program. Two organizations analyzed by FIXER 2021 have managed to obtain it: Ruang MES 56 and Gudskul Ekosistem. Several collectives have also taken advantage of Gerakan Literasi to support their programs: katakerja, Lakoat.Kujawas, and SimpaSio Institute. Through the program, they have obtained grants for programs or taken advantage of the government's policy of free book delivery. The latter has helped several collectives to build libraries to facilitate the distribution of reading materials. It has also helped collectives to keep their ideas in motion.

There are also collectives that run other government programs or collaborate with government agencies. One example is Ketjilbergerak, which in the last years has been running a program called Village Youth School. In fact, in 2019 they organized the Village Cultural Congress in collaboration with the Ministry of Villages, Corruption Eradication Commission, and the Ministry of Education and Culture. Another art collective, Sinau Art, also had the opportunity to manage an area on a river basin, as part of a program administered by the Ministry of Environment.

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[8] The survey or data collection took place around March-June 2020. A program of the Directorate General of Culture of the Ministry of Education and Culture has not been included here, namely Fasilitasi Bidang Kebudayaan (FBK—the Facilitation of the Culture Sector). The program, held in two stages in 2020, was accessed by many art collectives. For the record, the Director General of Culture has also launched Dana Abadi Kebudayaan (Culture Sector Endowment Fund), which, if all goes well, could be one of the driving forces for art collectives' work in the future. Art collectives' relationship with the government has been also supported by a public push for the government to open information, and we can see that some of the government's grants now use an open registration system. This is something that was perhaps rarely found in early 2000s.

The agencies mentioned above are part of the central government. However, this does not mean that no collaboration between the government and art collectives exists at the local level. For the past few years, Pasirputih in Pemenang, North Lombok, has been building good relations with district and regency level administrations. Their cooperation does not only extend to financial support, but also the presence of local officials at Pasirputih's annual event Bangsal Menggawe. Komunitas Action, Jayapura, is another art collective that has cooperated with local government. Unlike Pasirputih, which has direct cooperation with the government, members of Komunitas Action are heavily involved in the culture and arts programs of the Papua provincial government. The collective acknowledges that collaborating with the government has helped them expand the scope of their organization.

Another interesting example is Sanggar Anak Akar. Several years ago, they had to relocate, as their existing house/collective space was in an area slated for toll road construction. They received some compensation, but they, and other impacted citizens, felt that it was inadequate. They filed a complaint, and their objections were accepted. With the increased compensation payment, Sanggar Anak Akar was able to purchase a new, larger property, a few kilometers away from their previous one.

Such cooperation between government and art collectives does not just happen spontaneously; it is the fruit of a long process, which involves activism by culture and art actors (who are mostly also members of art collectives) to intervene in governance by entering the system, and then influencing policies from within. Such work is vital, according to Marintan Sirait, a founder of Jendela Ide, to occupy and utilize public space. This conviction is manifested in individuals' work within Jendela Ide that continues to watch over culture and art policies by the City of Bandung and West Java government.
It should be noted that in this case it does not mean that the government has softened its position, and thus ceded more space to
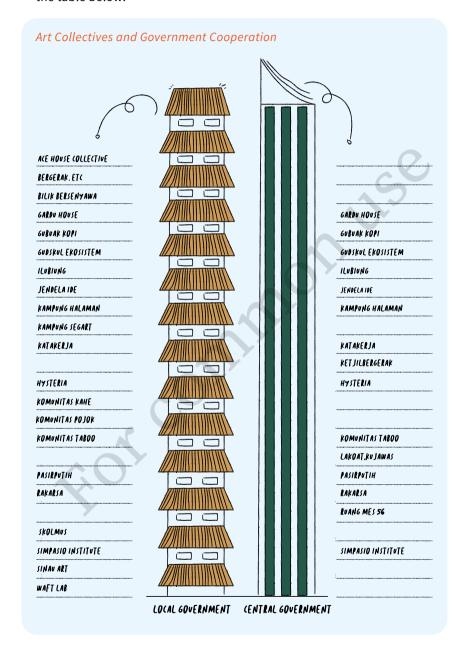
art collectives. We assume that what has been happening is the result of a long process of struggle by cultural and political activists, often intersecting with each other, since the movement to overthrow the New Order, which brought Indonesia into the Reformation period. And this can be seen as a new public space where. Contestations between various interests take place. What has been faced by art collectives and the art and culture scene in general as elaborated above is the outcome of efforts to seize this new public space in diverse forms of struggle.[9] Like it or not, art and culture workers must also see practical politics as an arena of struggle.

Notions about art collectives and cultural actors are only a few factors among a multitude of other relevant factors. Even in the artistic and cultural sphere we find diverse ideas that sometimes contradict each other (sometimes one must destroy the other in order to exist). Art collectives and other cultural actors are well aware that they are not the only ones trying to seize this space. Unfortunately, instead of realizing the diversity, attempts to seize the space become mere discourse—often gossip—in the artistic and cultural sphere. How can policymakers be in accordance with art and culture workers' ambitions and actions? Our assumption is that a collaboration between the government and art collectives occurs because ambitions and actions intersect between the two camps, whether in a specific or a broader context.

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[9] Such phenomenon doesn't escape Nuraini Juliastuti's attention. In her essay in this book, she discusses briefly about this. See Nuraini Juliastuti, "Art to Live: Experimental Survival Strategies for Economic Independence in Alternative Cultural Art Spaces", p. 291.

Collaborations between art collectives and governments can be seen in the table below:

Art Collectives and Government Cooperation

LOCAL GOVERNMENT	CENTRAL GOVERNMENT
ACE HOUSE COLLECTIVE	
BERGERAK.ETC	
BILIK BERSENYAWA	
GARDU HOUSE	GARDU HOUSE
GUBUAK KOPI	GUBUAK KOPI
GUDSKUL EKOSISTEM	GUDSKUL EKOSISTEM
ILUBIUNG	ILUBIUNG
JENDELA IDE	JENDELA IDE
KAMPUNG HALAMAN	KAMPUNG HALAMAN
KAMPUNG SEGART	
KATAKERJA	KATAKERJA
	KETJILBERGERAK
HYSTERIA	HYSTERIA
KOMUNITAS KAHE	
KOMUNITAS POJOK	
KOMUNITAS TABOO	KOMUNITAS TABOO
	LAKOAT.KUJAWAS
PASIRPUTIH	PASIRPUTIH
RAKARSA	RAKARSA
	RUANG MES 56
SKOLMUS	
SIMPASIO INSTITUTE	SIMPASIO INSTITUTE
SINAU ART	
WAFT LAB	

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The table above shows that nearly all art collectives observed by FIXER 2021 claimed to have some form of cooperation with the government. Specifically, we can see art collectives that work only with the local/regional government, only with the central government, and some that work with both of levels of government.

The *second* factor, as mentioned above, is cooperation with the private and corporate sector. In recent years, a higher level of cooperation between corporations and art collectives has developed. There are two reasons for this:

First: Art collectives realize that they must have an independent business entity. This awareness has encouraged some of them to establish independent business entities, some of which are legal entities, such as limited liability companies, while others are not. With an independent business entity, it becomes possible for art collectives to formally cooperate with private sector.

Second: The need for corporations to find new alternatives for how they approach consumers. This is related to a constriction in advertising space for certain products. Most visibly, in the last few years cigarette brands have entered into a considerable number of collaborations with art collectives.

Apart from the government and the private sector, another important consideration is the emergence of social media, which has grown stronger in the last decade. It is undeniable that social media has enabled art collectives to connect to one another and thus learn from each other, inspire each other, and access more information and funding.[10]

With such contextual factors as the driving force for the emergence of art collectives in the Current Reformation period, it is not surprising that in the previous decade, the Early Reformation, fewer art collectives

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[10] See Adin's statement in his manifesto in this book. p. 271.

emerged. However, it must be noted that art collectives of the current period are significantly influenced by those of the previous period, which initiated the discourses within which they operate.

During the Early Reformation, art collectives began to emerge outside the three cities that were the artistic centers of Indonesia. They started to spread to Sumatra, Bali, and Lombok, as well as other regions in Java (Cirebon, Majalengka, Kuningan, and Semarang).

Collectives of the Early Reformation

Collective	Year	Location
Komunitas Pojok	2000	Denpasar, Bali
ruangrupa	2000	Jakarta, Special Region
TROTOARt	2001	Jakarta, Special Region
Tikar Pandan	2002	Banda Aceh, Aceh
Ruang MES 56	2002	Yogyakarta, Special Region
Hysteria	2004	Semarang, Central Java
Jatiwangi art Factory	2005	Majalengka, West Java
Kampung Halaman	2006	Yogyakarta, Special Region
Ketjilbergerak	2006	Yogyakarta, Special Region
Serrum	2006	Jakarta, Special Region
Sinau Art	2006	Cirebon, West Java
Komunitas Taboo	2007	Bandung, West Java
Omuniuum	2007	Bandung, West Java

Collective	Year	Location
Pasirputih	2009	North Lombok, West Nusa Tenggara
TUDGAM	2009	Kuningan, West Java
Gardu House	2010	Jakarta, Special Region
Rumah Budaya Sikukeluang	2010	Pekanbaru, Riau

What is interesting is that, in this era outside of Java island art collectives started to emerge. Tikar Pandan was founded in Banda Aceh, followed by Rumah Budaya Sikukeluang in Pekanbaru, and Pasirputih in North Lombok. As far as observation goes, plus data collected through interviews with friends from these collectives, we find diverse motivations for the founding of the three collectives.

Tikar Pandan was born because of deepening concerns about a lack of artistic and cultural activities for youth collectives after the Aceh tsunami.[11] Rumah Budaya Sikukeluang, which was founded in 2010, departed from an initiative that had existed since 2004. Several artists working in the contemporary and non-Malay arts scene in Pekanbaru initiated a special platform for contemporary Malay or non-Malay arts in Pekanbaru because the art center there at that time was solely focused on Malay art and culture. After functioning as a space for artists working outside of Malay traditions, the group transformed itself into Rumah Budaya Sikukeluang when a massive haze disaster, caused by forest fires, occurred in Pekanbaru.[12] The artists in this community then responded to and "fought" the disaster by means of art. From this they concluded that art must be a weapon against something, and an evident crucial problem in Riau was forest fires. So, in 2010 they changed into Rumah Budaya Sikukeluang with a focus on environmental problems.

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[11] See Putra Hidayatullah, "From Tikar Pandan for FIXER," in this book. p. 57
[12] As said by Heri Budiman in a discussion with the Director of General of Culture Hilmar Farid on *Asli Indonesia, Edisi Hutan*, on TVRI, October 19, 2020, 19.00-20.00 WIB.

Pasirputih has a different story. Of the several communities of the later Early Reformation period, Pasirputih was clearly influenced by forms of collectivism at the "centers" of art. It started with the akumassa program initiated by Forum Lenteng, Jakarta, but that program was only one among many. Such programs considered the importance of contextual relevance, so that program activities could continue and even flourish in local environments. Pasirputih's success was due to the way in which they managed to localize themselves; to find specific themes and work methods that better suited local needs.[13] Pasirputih is like the dry land that the collective's work successfully ignited.

It should also be noted that TROTOARt that emerged in Jakarta in 2001 was actually rooted in an activity they carried out a decade earlier, in 1989. At that time, a group of painters who often worked on Jalan Pintu Besar Selatan, Kota Tua, Jakarta, formed a group called Kesatuan Pelukis Pintu Besar Selatan (KEPBES—Great South Gate Painters Union). It was only on May 17, 2001 that they established TROTOARt Semesta Raya Foundation, commonly known as TROTOARt. The collective is headquartered in Penjaringan, North Jakarta, and works with the surrounding community, most of whom come from the lower class of society. TROTOARt is also active in establishing communication and cooperation with various parties in and outside Jakarta. One of the results was the establishment of TROTOARt Bumiayu in Central Java in 2018. Looking at their history, it can be said that TROTOARt has tasted the bittersweet art and culture world of Jakarta and Indonesia in general, since the New Order era.

The collectives that emerged during the New Order Era that we studied at FIXER 2021 were Jendela Ide (Bandung, 1995), Sanggar Anak Akar (Jakarta, 1994), Taring Padi (Yogyakarta, 1998), KUNCI Study & Collective (Yogyakarta, 1999), and HONF (Yogyakarta, 1999). Thus, it appears that during the New Order era art collectives existed only in three cities: the "usual suspects" driving contemporary art or even

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[13] See Muhammad Sibawaihi, "Stories from Pasirputih," in this book. p. 197.

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modern art in Indonesia, namely Jakarta, Bandung, and Yogyakarta. It should be emphasized that, in this section, FIXER 2021 has only referred to art collectives that are active when this research was being conducted. We are going to go deeper about that in the next section.

On the Cycle of Art Collectives

As an organization, a collective certainly experiences ups and downs. However, collectives also morph into other forms. This is what has been called the collective cycle. Being in a cycle, a collective's age must be seen in a wider context. How do art collectives morph? Where do the members' ideas travel, before joining or founding a collective, and after leaving or breaking one up? All collectives have certain life cycles (because they do not come out of a vacuum). Their members can testify to any collective's history. There are always certain local and global conditions that surround the emergence of a collective.

The collective cycle presupposes that a collective's work never ends. Art collectives will continue to morph—a pause for a short while, a clamor next, another brief pause, then back to another clamor. It is not always in one place; it can move places. It is not always in a same form; it can switch forms. This cycle can be seen as, and indeed borrows from, what we know in natural science: the food cycle (the food web) or the water cycle.[14] The art collectives in FIXER 2021, building on the research of FIXER 2010, have undergone such changes. However, some trends are visible: *First*, there are those that have changed names and, at the same time, their area of focus. *Second*, the formation of a meta-collective. *Third*, there are cases in which a collective's activities have ceased, or the collective has dissolved, but the platform or name of the collective has been used by other parties that are seen as upholding the same spirit. *Fourth*, another collective emerges as continuation or development of ideas from a previous one.

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[14] It never ends. For example, humans eat plants and animals, and their waste is consumed by plants while plants are consumed by animals; humans go back to consuming animals and plants, and the cycle continues. It is also similar to the water cycle.

In the first case, we can look at some examples, one of which is Sinau Art (Cirebon), previously known as Gardu Unik. Originally, Sinau Art was the name of one of Gardu Unik's programs. Along the way, the program was taken on as the name of the collective. In Jakarta, Sanggar Anak Akar took off in the 1980s from the Child Advocacy Bureau program, ran by the Jakarta Social Institute.[15] What they experienced in fact similar to TROTOARt, as discussed above. Such transformations have occurred in collectives and alternative spaces covered by FIXER 2010 as well. For example, the Malang Meeting Point changed its name to Panna Foto Institute. Not only that, it also moved to another city. Meanwhile, the Maros Visual Culture Initiative (Jakarta) has disbanded. However, one of the activists continued some of the collective's programs on a smaller scale under the name the Friday Art Design Session. Likewise, Byar Creative Industry (Semarang) has now changed its name to White Camp.

Second, the formation of meta-collectives can be seen in Gudskul Ekosistem (Jakarta) and SIKU Ruang Terpadu (Makassar). A meta-collective is defined here as a collective consisting of several other collectives. Gudskul Ekosistem came into being from RURUCorps (2012), as a joint enterprise of ruangrupa, Serrum, and Forum Lenteng. In 2016, with Grafis Huru Hara, they managed a common space, Gudang Sarinah Ekosistem, in Gudang Sarinah, Pancoran, Jakarta. Then, in 2018, ruangrupa, Serrum, and Grafis Huru Hara created Gudskul Ekosistem, located on Jalan Durian Raya, Jagakarsa, Jakarta. Meanwhile, SIKU Ruang Terpadu was born from the friendship between several initiatives in Makassar, South Sulawesi. Some of these, Bonfire, Jalur Timur, Nara, Masihopsi, and Ritus, agreed to rent a place together in 2019.

The third form of collective-cycle transformation can be seen in Tembokbomber (Jakarta). This collective, which started as an online forum, is no longer active. But the name Tembokbomber still pops up on

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[15] *Jakarta Biennale 2013: "Siasat",* catalog (Jakarta: Jakarta Biennale, 2013).

occasion. The organization is gone. But some of its former members still use the platform name for some of their projects and artworks. In fact, the name is also used by friends, who were not part of Tembokbomber, but feel a need to use the name for their creative projects.

The fourth phenomenon is also widely seen among collectives. The ideas championed by a collective certainly grow, sometimes unaccommodated by the collective itself. Such ideas live on without an organizational vessel until a new collective emerges to champion them. This happened, for example, with Lifepatch, whose members once were involved with HONF.

These are just a few examples. There are many collectives with their own cycles and varieties of transformation—which can be explained within the framework of the four models above. It could be the case that there are other trends that have not been recorded or observed by FIXER 2021.

The Art Collective *Via Negativa*

What emerges as a primary driving force of art collective cycles is a change of ideas and an art collective's response to changes that happen to itself and its immediate surroundings. This raises the question of identifying the driving force behind the emergence of an art collective. This question pertains to the periodization detailed in the previous section. In these next paragraphs, we will look into the emergence of Indonesian art collectives through the background of their respective periods. Of course, a discussion of each collective is beyond the scope this article. All of them will be mentioned, but only a few will be discussed at sufficient length. The collectives discussed more deeply are considered to represent the overall picture of the emergence of Indonesian art collectives in their respective periods. The inequality and authoritarianism of the New Order era seems to be the fundamental conditions for the emergence of art collectives in Indonesia during that period. Jendela Ide, Sanggar Anak Akar,

and Taring Padi are quite typical of this era. KUNCI Study Forum & Collective and HONF are perhaps somewhat different because these were born a year after the 1998 Reformation.

In 1995, public sentiment was deliberately and systematically compartmentalized—separated from one another based on ethnicity, religion, race, etc. It affected adults as well as children. It was unsettling for the founders of Jendela Ide, and they came up with the idea of making something concrete for children. They imagined that in the future, say ten years from back then, children would become adults who would appreciate diversity. Jendela Ide was—and is—an attempt to open up space in which diversity is appreciated. It is an attempt to open up a space of democratic communication among children (considering that the milieus created by the New Order at that time were generally undemocratic).[16]

Sanggar Anak Akar started as a halfway house for children in Kampung Melayu Kecil and Matraman, Jakarta. The concentration of Sanggar Anak Akar on alternative education for street children can be seen from two factors: (1) the socio-economic inequality of the New Order era, stripping many people of educational opportunities, and (2) the educational curriculum in Indonesia, which was deemed unideal. This second factor is reflected in the basic principles of Sanggar Anak Akar, in which each person is a teacher and also a student (a philosophy known as liberation pedagogy, which was promoted by figures such as Paulo Freire and Ivan Illich, also Ki Hadjar Dewantara).

It is interesting that the two oldest art collectives in FIXER 2021 both focus on children. Perhaps this is also one of the factors that has made the two of them last so long. In Sanggar Anak Akar, the alumni are now the frontline organizers, managing the daily life of the collective. Two of them are Hairun Nisa and Yuli Setiawati. Both have been involved in Sanggar Anak Akar since the early 2000s and

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[16] Extracted from interview with Marintan Sirait.

now they manage its daily activities. Meanwhile, several other alumni have initiated alternative spaces in other places by taking inspiration from Sanggar Anak Akar. Such is also the case with children who used to be members of Jendela Ide. Some of them have become activists in various communities and citizen initiatives. They have formed a network of open nodes for Jendela Ide to continue developing and doing their activities until now.

However, perhaps the main factor that explains their survival is that Sanggar Anak Akar and Jendela Ide are not driven by "I" or "we" but "them," as Ibe Karyanto reflected on his Facebook page on the 26th birthday of Sanggar Anak Akar, entitled, "Karena Mereka, Sanggar Anak Akar Masih Ada" (Because of Them, Sanggar Anak Akar Lives On).

> "Today we are empowered because of the spirit of the young people who call themselves Sanggar Anak Akar alumni, [who] have never forgotten the mother who breastfed them (their alma mater). Today we can still speak up because we are with child-education activists who never tire of speaking out. Because of them, Sanggar Anak Akar Lives On. To those who once have been part of Sanggar Anak Akar, to those who have been part of the history of the Sanggar Anak Akar movement, not all of whom we remember and have their names recorded in our book of eternity, only this continuing commitment we can give as a token of our endless gratitude and grace."[17]

In Yogyakarta, Taring Padi, founded in 1998, can be seen as a direct effect of the 1998 Reformation. The members of Taring Padi deliberately declared themselves to be an art collective with certain political tendencies. They were young people actively fighting for the manifestation of the ideals of the 1998 Reformation, with which they were not fully satisfied. Taring Padi became a vehicle for carrying out reforms in line with this political tendency, as described by Heidi

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[17] Translated from Ibe Karya's Facebook post, see https://www.facebook.com/ibe.karyanto, accessed on December 15, 2020.

Arbuckle Gultom, "(...) Taring Padi stipulates that their task is to rebuild 'people's culture,' and advocate for a united front in order to promote popular democratic change in Indonesia."[18]

Taring Padi, as explained by Heidi, is a collective that strongly emphasizes folk art. They intentionally declared themselves to be continuing the work of Lembaga Kebudayaan Rakyat (Lekra—People's Cultural Institute) to spawn populist art. This is because, for Taring Padi, the 1998 Reformation has created a bourgeois democracy. Is this still the goal that guides Taring Padi today? It is interesting to consider their reflections, also included in this book.[19] In the same city, HONF and KUNCI Study Forum & Collective, born a year after the 1998 Reformation, obviously have different stories.

By describing the three settings above, it is possible to get a general overview of how art collectives in Indonesia emerged. There is a passion among the art collectives to go to the grassroots and use art to address negative social conditions.

Various reasons behind the emergence of such collectives again re-surfaced in the early Reformation period. ruangrupa, founded on April 1, 2000, and now part of the Gudskul Ekosistem (2018), pointed to art's social field as one of the main drivers of its emergence. The social field of art in Jakarta, back then almost inaccesible for young artists with experimental works, drove ruangrupa to open and create their own playground. Thus, they made the metropolis of Jakarta their focus.

It is almost the same case with Omuniuum (2007), which was initiated as a space or forum for local musicians and artists in Bandung who were on the fringes (an endeavor they continue up to this day). In the capital city of Central Java, urban issues became the concentration of Hysteria (2004), originating from university campus activism in

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[18] Heidi Arbuckle Gultom, *Taring Padi: Praktik Budaya Radikal di Indonesia*, (Yogyakarta: Penerbit Octopus, 2019), p. 38.
[19] See Ladija Triana Dewi, "Evoking Memories: Construing the Taring Padi Collective," in this book, p. 143.

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Semarang. Hysteria, with their members' background as college students, saw Semarang and its surroundings as their playground, and the source of their identity, so they worked on urban and social issues by always centering their position in a city that was different from other collectives' locales or art spheres in bigger cities. Adin, who has been with Hysteria since his era of printing zines all the way to traveling from one biennale to the next, expressed it his manifesto.[20]

A tendency for art collectives to spring up around a particular art medium became more pronounced in the Early Reformation (although this wasn't unprecedented and was seen, for example, with HONF in the New Order era). One example of this tendency is Gardu House, whose presence and work can be summarized as "Popularizing graffiti and making graffiti of the people". Another example is Ruang MES 56, which began as a forum for photographic experimentation—though from here it has been the springboard for many other initiatives and wild ideas.

What is interesting in the Early Reformation is the emergence of art collectives that are driven by region-specific problems. This is clear in the case of Tikar Pandan, Pasirputih, and Rumah Budaya Sikukeluang, as well as JaF and its two close relatives: TUDGAM and Sinau Art. Ketjilbergerak and Kampung Halaman in Yogyakarta perhaps embody a slightly different spirit in terms of community empowerment. In this era there are also those with strong motives similar to art collectives in the New Order era, i.e., a desire to use art as a response to social problems, such as Komunitas Taboo (Bandung).

In the Early Reformation, art collectives view of art somewhat shifted. In the New Order era, art was seen as an effective way to solve problems in society. In the Early Reformation, this point of view began to be questioned. As represented by Ronny Agustinus's essay in *Absolut Versus*, artists must learn from society. "The artist is the

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[20] See further in Adin's essay in this book, "Juwana Softboned Milkfish Art Manifesto". p. 271.

one who needs to be enlightened," said Ronny.[21] Perhaps artists and culture workers in this country have slowly begun to realize that not only can they come down to the grassroots level to help people in their communities, but that they can also learn from the people with whom they work. The pedagogical principles that inspire Sanggar Anak Akar—for example, the idea that everyone is both a student and a teacher—have been gradually spreading among the wider public. This has become the motto and an important principle of Serrum, along with many other art collectives.

The Second Era of Reformation has been a fertile period for the birth of art collectives in Indonesia. Not only in one or two places—art collectives have spread throughout the country. As far as FIXER 2021 can tell, the setting for the emergence of these collectives is not significantly different from the Early Reformation. However, those with motives similar to those of collectives in the New Order era have not been found.

Continuities between the art collectives of the Early Reformation and Current Reformation are easier to identify. The social field of art as a motive is found in Serbuk Kayu, Ace House Collective, Omnispace, Ladang Rupa, Rakarsa, Studio Batur, and several others—with certain variations, of course. Still, their emergence can all be categorized as a response to problems in the social field of art. Orientation around a specific medium or method of practice can be seen in Waft Lab, SkolMus, Lifepatch, and several other collectives. Specific issues of local areas surface in Gubuak Kopi, Komunitas KAHE, Lakoat.Kujawas, katakerja, SimpaSio Institute, Forum Sudut Pandang, Komunitas Action, and others. It should be noted that matters in the social field of art always go hand in hand with specific problems of a region, or vice versa, the specific problems of a region are intertwined with the social field of art.

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[21] See Ronny Agustinus, "Cold Beer Conversation, dan Tiga Tahun Sesudahnya," in eds. Ronny Agustinus, Ade Darmawan, Amanda Katherine Rath, *Absolut Versus* (Jakarta: ruangrupa, n.d.), pp. 18-41.

Conclusion

Following this appraisal of art collectives' emergence in Indonesia, spanning a long period of time (1980–2020, or four decades), it can be said that an awareness of the importance and effectiveness of collective work in Indonesia has gradually been getting stronger, more pronounced, and tangible. This is evident from the number and distribution of art collectives.[22] The efficacy of collective work has come out of a long struggle, and various cycles will keep rolling on, unfolding perhaps with new forms in the future—unbeknownst to us today.

Arts collectives, in our opinion, address certain problems. This means that they emerge from negative social conditions. Thus, art collectives are not too different from NGOs—they are like firefighters who are deployed when a fire breaks out. The difference between art collectives and NGOs is that so far art collectives are becoming more and more celebrated, while NGOs are becoming, at least in our opinion, more ineffective at realizing the goals for which they were founded. If this is the case, the question for art collectives is: how does an art collective maintain its mechanisms and systems so as not to experience the same stagnation that has plagued NGOs? Finding answers to this question is our collective mission. The second question is whether an art collective can arise from something aside from negative social conditions. Can it arise from positive circumstances; social environments without any problems and times when all areas of life are in a most satisfactory state?

Art collectives' emergence *via negativa* also presupposes that these artists are guided by certain ideals. Since these ideals are obviously unrealized in the space and time in which those artists work, art collectives are a platform for the struggle towards these ideal conditions. Where do these forms of idealization come from? First of all, there are references. Several art collectives in the regions were founded by those who had experience in the art milieus of art centers

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[22] See Ayos Purwoaji, "Plowing Soil, Spreading Seeds: Geographic Dispersion of Art Collectives in Indonesia 2010-2020," in this book, p. 155

such as Jakarta, Bandung, Yogyakarta. Thus, their ideals were formed by the milieu of art-center cities. Their art collectives were founded to fill a void in the art milieu of their respective hometowns and regions. This reference point leads us to references of Western modern and contemporary art. Some collectives, based on inspiration, have programs that are almost similar in form to each other (different only in name and content). That said, over time art collectives have proven to be aware of these forms of idealization. Such awareness has then led them to search for new modes of expression, new methods of work that are more appropriate to their local conditions.

At this point, there is a reason for us to be suspicious of our own appraisal. Is it because we are surveying the Indonesian art landscape from our own collective's standpoint that we have only seen those art collectives with certain ideals that are similar to our own? However, we are only able to see with the lenses available to us. Beyond that is something we cannot see—yet. It may be that there are other "art collectives" with completely different forms, ways, and styles from the collective reconstruction in our heads. We are stuck with the "measurement problem." We can only measure things by starting at zero from where we stand, unable to start at zero from somewhere else.

With awareness of the possible pitfalls of the "measurement problem", allow us to end this article with a humble conclusion. Seeing the phenomenon of art collectives and the periods and cycles they pass through, we would like to conclude that those who continue to survive are those that have kept evolving, like a chameleon. Or, those that have continued to challenge themselves to change; to challenge themselves to face bigger problems than those they were designed to address. So, perhaps, art collectives should carry on subjecting themselves to perilous situations and never get comfortable with the status quo for too long. Anyway, art is essentially a social experiment. And an art collective is a social
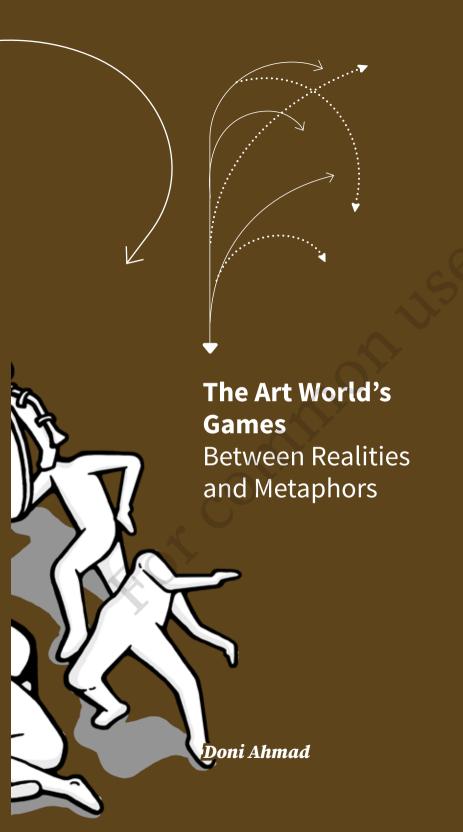
Berto Tukan

experiment of living together; an art collective is a laboratory of social life. Since it is a laboratory, it has the privilege of "permission to fail". This privilege must be dealt with wisely.

Panas setahun dihapus hujan sehari (a year-long drought is wiped out by a day of rain), as goes the saying of our agricultural ancestors from whom the spirit of the *lumbung* system originated. For a laboratory, "a thousand experimental errors are wiped out by one coincidence that leads to one success." Such is the social laboratory; a thousand art collective failures are "forgiven" because there is the imagined ideal condition: a small success that contributes to social change for a better life together.

Jakarta, 2020-2021

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**…an art collective is a social experiment
of living together; an art collective
is a laboratory of social life. Since it
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Berto Tukan

The Art World's Games

Between Realities and Metaphors

Doni Ahmad

> ## "The life of this world is nothing but play and amusement."
> ### (*The Holy Koran*, Al-An'am: 32)[1]

What do we have in mind when we're thinking of games? So many options are available to us today, ranging from the traditional games that have existed for the last 4,000 years to digital games.[2] We are familiar with a wide variety of games, from those that we play in our free time to international competitions. But has it ever crossed our minds that, apart from the things we usually know as games, we can also perceive everyday systems and interactions as games? Games and the world are inextricably linked, and we all play them throughout our lives.

When we talk about social situations and interactions in a game, we should not hasten to imagine enjoyable settings. Eric Berne argues that the word "game" does not necessarily mean fun or entertainment.[3] We should not equate games with trivial things, and some might even have a profound impact on human behavior and psychology.

The art world, which contains a multitude of social interactions and situations, can also be considered a distinct game with numerous players and untold transactions. The social situations and exchanges among the players are not always enjoyable, nor are they invariably pleasing. The art world offers collaborations alongside competitions. Sometimes one player wins while others lose; at other times players collaboratively devise common strategies and plans. Some games are competitive in nature, such as the selection of works in prestigious art events, while others test the player's ability to survive, as in the case of management of alternative art spaces.

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[1] *Al-Qur'an dan Terjemahnya* (Bandung: Department of Religion of the Republic of Indonesia, 2008).
[2] The Royal Game of Ur has existed since around 2600 BCE – 2400 BCE, during the Early Dynastic Period of Mesopotamia.
[3] Eric Berne was a psychiatrist who created the theory of transactional analysis in psychotherapy.

"There are at least two kinds of games. One could be called finite, the other infinite. A finite game is played for the purpose of winning, an infinite game for the purpose of continuing the play."[4]

If we consider the range of games in circulation today, we see two dominant tendencies: PVP (Player vs. Player, which is competitive in nature), and PVE (Player vs. Environment, which has a stronger collaborative aspect). PVP games are finite and the players are aware of a set of rules governing the game, which reaches its end when a player wins or loses. In contrast, PVE collaborative games are infinite and the players try to sustain the game as long as possible. In a PVE game, the rules might change with time and players must adapt to changing situations.

Examples of PVP games are battle video games such as *Mortal Kombat* and *Street Fighter*, where players aim to defeat their opponents. *Tower Defense*, on the other hand, is exemplary of a PVE game that compels players to survive against waves of attacks. Earlier forms of the subgenre can be traced to *Space Invaders*. *SimCity 5* in its latest version is an example in which players collaborate among themselves, each of them managing an interlinked city that allows them to work together to solve problems in their respective cities and help one another by sending monies and energy and by building complementary infrastructures.

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[4] James P. Carse, *Finite and Infinite Games* (New York: The Free Press, 1986).

Figure 1. *Mortal Kombat* (1992).
Source: Doni Ahmad.

The games we can now download to our devices offer a variety of themes and storylines. Some have science fiction themes, presenting robots and outer space combats; others have fantasy themes played in fairy-tale lands. Some games take a reality-based approach (whether in terms of the visual presentations or in the interactions and situations presented within), while others tend to be more fantastical and reduce the complexities of the real world. Both science fiction and fantasy themes have a multitude of interpretations. Obviously, unlike science, fictional works do not seek to provide accurate descriptions of nature or reality. Here, fiction operates much like art.

Figure 2. *Sim City 5* (2013).
Source: Doni Ahmad.

If we take into consideration the different themes and backgrounds in popular games today, the art world tends more to resemble the world of fantasy (i.e., narrates a hero's journey and adventures) than it does the world of science fiction. This is especially true in terms of the social conditions and the institutional structures underlying the game. Unlike science fiction games with their customary state and planetary alliances, fantasy games often illustrate geo-political conditions among city-states.

In the realm of fantasy, cities become centers where social situations and players' identities revolve. Consider, for example, the rivalry between Winterfell and Kingslanding in *A Game of Thrones* (G.R.R. Martin; 1996). We can also see the pivotal role of cities such as Rivendell and Minas Tirith in *The Lord of the Rings* trilogy (J.R.R. Tolkien; 1954-1955). Similarly, the art world's main background also operates on the level of the city. This is apparent in how artists are identified with certain cities, and how important biennales and renowned art fair franchises usually carry city names.

Just as in the world of fantasy, we do not have to appreciate art based on its applicability. The success of a work of art does not depend on how closely related the work is to science and technology.

The success of a work of art does not depend on how closely related the work is to science and technology.

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Art can enchant in ways that are subtler and vaguer—it does not rely on descriptions based on scientific theories. This is akin to magical and spiritual elements in fantastical narratives. Even its principles and the ways art operates in the real world are not always clear and seem imprecise compared to how science operates.

Pedagogy and Interactions

The pedagogy that has taken shape and become institutionalized in the world of art derived from technical teaching to help learners create works. Today, art academies equip students with knowledge about the history and current states of the art world in addition to cultural theory. Using fantasy games as an analogy, we could postulate that pedagogy is the means for transferring knowledge from mentors to future heroes embarking on their journeys. In the old pedagogical system, what is being transferred is not merely the knowledge and techniques; rather, the academy also shapes the attitudes, behaviors, and interactions within the world of art. This is especially obvious in conventional art academies.

Conventional art academies operate with a set of fixed rules known to all participants. The teaching focuses on individual assessments; collective work, therefore, is perceived in a negative light in certain circumstances (such as during theoretical examinations). Like competitions, art academies limit the period of engagement for the participants (students have to graduate after a certain time), have assessment points (GPA), and rank the participants in their evaluations based on their achievements. It is thus understandable how graduates of Indonesian art academies are accustomed to behaving competitively when embarking on their careers as artists.

We also find such a pattern in PVP games in which players are competing for limited resources. In the art world, these may take many forms: prize money, residential or exhibition opportunities, or use of spaces. Participants can win such resources in a small window of time through selections or assessment processes. Players in a PVP

game continuously strengthen their specific skills to win the game. Art academies as conventional art pedagogical institutions become the place where "winners" are forged—the protagonists with their own heroic fantasies.

Between 2011 and 2019 a range of big competitions and exhibitions took place with an open selection system for artists, especially for young artists. The city of Bandung and represent an extreme example of how a city and its art academy forge a competitive pattern of interactions among their students and graduates.

At least six lecturers from the Visual Art Major of FSRD-ITB have served as juries or curators, selecting and assessing works in diverse national competitions and exhibitions. Events such as Bandung Contemporary Art Award, Print Triennial, Sculpture Triennial, Manifesto Exhibition, SEA+ Triennial, Jakarta Contemporary Ceramics Biennale, and UOB Painting Award became competition arenas for artists. The presence of lecturers from FSRD-ITB in such events spurred the competitive interaction pattern to continue beyond the walls of FSRD-ITB and accompanied its graduates into the world.

Despite the increasingly vibrant arena of competitive art events, there has been no decrease in collective-based art activities in Bandung within the same period. Several collectives of young artists have emerged since 2009: Platform 3, Ruang Gerilya, Ilubiung, and Omnispace. They manage art spaces—owned or rented—collectively, and some also run exchange programs or residence programs for artists from outside Bandung.

There are also groups of young artists who gather, have discussions, and hold exhibitions without having communally managed spaces. The existence of groups such as kelasentarmalem, YIFI, Pemuda Setempat, Klub Remaja, and Sanggar Seni Rupa Kontemporer also add to the variety of collective activities among young artists in Bandung.

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Although some collectives emerge from personal interactions between lecturers at the art academies, these academies tend to brush aside the existence of such collectives. This was also the case with Invalid Urban collective, established in 2002 within the circle of the Indonesian Art and Culture Institute of Bandung (ISBI Bandung) but remained separate from the formal curriculum at the institute. Meanwhile, in FSRD-ITB, formal interest in the existence of art collectives in Bandung grew only in 2014 thanks to a course involving its junior lecturers.

Figure 3. Left: A work of the collective.
Right: Invalid Urban in the exhibition "Seni Bandung".
Location: Imah Budaya, Cigondewah, West Java (2017).
Source: Doni Ahmad.

Does the art pedagogy in the academies thus fail to recognize the practices of these art collectives? If we define collectives as groups of artists who create works and hold exhibitions together, their art history courses have obviously acknowledged such collectives in their teaching about Persatuan Ahli Gambar (Persagi—Indonesian Drawing Experts' Association), Seniman Indonesia Muda (Young Indonesian Artists), and Gerakan Seni Rupa Baru Indonesia (GSRBI—Indonesian

New Art Movement). However, if we're talking about collectives as a form of sustainable collaborative work, these art academies are yet to introduce a suitable model in their curricula. If we are to continue with our game metaphors to explain this condition, it's clear that the art curricula of academy faculties tend to train PVP winners. Only a few courses train students in PVE.

The Ilubiung collective was first established as a class project in the "Art in Public Spaces" course by Alfiah Rahdini in 2014. The project started as a collaboration between young artists and local children in the neighborhood of Dago Pojok in the north of Bandung. In the following year, a group of students from the next cohort made the striking choice to continue the Ilubiung project collectively for the same course. This served as an important landmark for how art academies try to teach and assess the aspects of sustainability and collaboration in an art project. In 2015, a class project continued an existing project from the previous year and the group was given a collective mark instead of individual marks.

Figure 4. Ilubiung Project, involving students of SMAN 5 of Bandung City, in "Seni Bandung" exhibition.
Location: Bandung, West Java (2017).
Source: Doni Ahmad.

The evaluation of this experiment would certainly not be straightforward, but we can compare the experiment with the two types of games we have been talking about. In a PVP game, every player begins with the information about the rules of the game, starting from the duration of the game, the rounds involved, up to the registered competitors. These rules would be the same from one year to the next. In a PVE game, however, the rules and challenges would differ from time to time. The conditions and assessments used one year might not be applicable the next.

With the continuation of the Ilubiung project, the issues and challenges faced by its initiators in 2014 might not be the same as those the subsequent cohort encountered in 2015. Compared with projects in which the students create works of art, a project to sustain an alternative space or an organization would be more challenging to evaluate. It is therefore understandable if the competitive PVP standard of success still dominates evaluation processes in conventional art academies, since the evaluation parameters could simply be reused in the subsequent years.

One fact in the art world is, however, undeniable: not everyone is a winner. Competitions are zero-sum games because the resources to be won are insufficient to be distributed among all competing players.[5] There *will* be winners and losers. Faced with this reality, conventional art academies do not always provide alternative solutions to the less fortunate players. Inequalities in terms of the starting points and the initial capital of the players are also vital issues. In the PVP game of the art world, every player has a different point of departure.

A PVE game can be a solution for us to adapt to this reality. The players who for some reason choose not to compete for the limited resources will be able to have collaborative interactions. Players can work together just like the sentries in a watchtower in fantasy stories

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[5] In the game and math theories, a zero-sum game is a situation in which the gain or loss experienced by a player is precisely balanced by the loss or gain of the other participants.

in which the city is not free from external threats, and players can join forces to sustain their lives and livelihoods.

Although we can perceive PVE as a playing mode in which players compete against the environment, it does not necessarily mean that the goal is for a player to "defeat" the environment. Here, success does not mean winning. In a PVE game mode the aim is to sustain the game— no player is ever deemed the winner. The main variables for measuring success involve duration (i.e., how long the collaboration is sustained) and how many players are able to carry on.

Another case related to the relationship between pedagogy and collective work is that of Sanggar Seni Rupa Kontemporer, formed in 2018. The group started off as a circle of students from the Indonesia Computer University (UNIKOM) Bandung, who decided to hold a photography exhibition. This was intriguing, as UNIKOM does not have an art major—students learned about photography and its techniques from extra-curricular activities and not from a main course in the university's curriculum.

The group's noteworthy perspective regarding art pedagogy is related to its awareness of the two different approaches in art and art learning: the formal approach as implemented by conventional art academies on the one hand, and the natural or intuitive approach that the group took on the other. This natural approach originated from the interest shared by the learners (instead of having been introduced via a standardized curriculum or syllabus). A joint exhibition was the goal. An important fact to emphasize here is that there was no obligation to create works. Of the original twenty students who were involved at the start of the initiative, twelve remained to the day of the exhibition, and not all twelve exhibited their works. Four of them opted to organize the exhibition, which served as a moment of celebration and signified the conclusion of a learning process similar to a graduation ceremony. No assessment or examination was involved. What we had at the end

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of the process were the two groups of participants: the ones who remained to the end of the learning process (i.e., the exhibition) and the ones who did not.

With such examples we can start to understand the challenges in an art pedagogical system that puts greater emphasis on the collaborative patterns of a PVE game. The crucial aspects to observe: the system for a collective assessment, the duration, and the conditioning of the participants to be flexible and adaptable to changes in the rules. The PVP game pattern is still required to evaluate how each player's skill progresses. In a PVE setting, as each player strengthens his/her expertise, the ability of the group to survive improves. Here the chain is indeed as strong as its weakest link.

Between PVP and PVE

In their careers and creative enterprises, players in the art world will encounter different interactions. Opportunities will be available for them to show what they are capable of, and they will be able to compete for prizes. However, they must realize that success in one competition will not sustain their artistic journey to its conclusion. Players' resources may become depleted and they may be required to obtain new resources. No one player is able to win continuously, but the player who cannot survive will lose.

In their efforts to remain relevant, artists and other art activists work like a team composed of an array of characters. In the practices of different art collectives, we perceive the variety in the roles of the members. A collective is like a troop in the watchtower in which archers monitor the surroundings for threats and challenges. In a collective, this is the task of those who prepare proposals for future projects. The team of healers, or the medical corps, is on alert to the collective's financial condition. Is it ailing? Does it need an injection of funds? The healers are usually the ones connected to a network of funding resources, similar to the way doctors are linked to a network of clinics and hospitals.

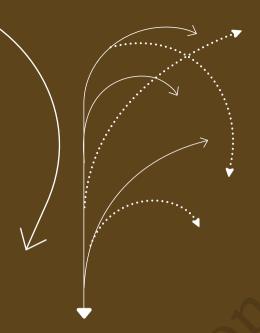*The Art World's Games: Between Realities and Metaphors*

Equally important, of course, is the backbone of the watch tower personnel: the ground troops who go into the field and defend the city. Equipped with tools, logistical acumen, and the right formation, the troops move in unison to implement the collective's programs and activities. In the effort to sustain the collective's existence, the ground troops are at the forefront. They are the first ones to repel attacks from the outside.

It is an illusion to consider choosing between the PVP and PVE approaches. The reason is that although PVP mode is an option, the PVE mode is a must. Consider the analogy of gladiators and combatants in an arena: they would be forced to stop the game if the city came under attack because they would be required to defend the city in order to keep the game going. In the art world's game, players can opt out of the PVP game mode, but they would still have to take part in the PVE game mode.

The pedagogical system in a conventional art academy seems to put a greater emphasis on the successes of players in the PVP game mode rather than those in the PVE mode. The system tries to hone the participants' skills in the hope that their expertise is directly commensurate with their success and survivability in the world of art. Success is easy to forecast short term, but less so over a longer period of time. If we consider a time span of more than a decade, the players who were once superior in competitions are no longer so. In a game that continues for a longer stretch of time, it is not those with the greatest expertise who survive; rather, it is those who are able to survive that become experts.

Bandung, 2020

Doni Ahmad

An Alternative for a Daring and Resilient Art Education

Hidayatul Azmi

The story started with the creation of a BlackBerry Messenger group named "Bukittinggi Art" during the month of Ramadan in 2015. We formed the group to organize a drawing activity and dinner for breaking our fast. Most of us were art students of State University of Padang (UNP) living in and around Bukittinggi. The day's passionate conversation sparked further discussions on the days that followed and led to the formation of an awesome youth union we called "Ladang Rupa" (literally: Visual Field).

Since the inception of Ladang Rupa five years ago, we have been doing our work armed with a keen awareness that we have to do something—and that something should begin from our own town. We started our organization through trial and error, without first formulating a clear vision statement or common aim. "Just do it, just create art!"—such was the sentiment.

Figure 1. Arsip Panen Raya Exhibition
for Ladang Rupa's 5th Anniversary.
Location: Balairung Sari, Bukittinggi (2020).
Source: Leon Yansen.

An Alternative for a Daring and Resilient Art Education

Perhaps it is our shared similarities and habits that have led us to find our direction and strategy. The Art Students' Association of UNP opened the door for us to see how art developed outside West Sumatra. This was an opportunity we did not have in the classroom. The enthusiasm and passion to learn and create works of art in that small office were boundless, since we had just become students at the university. Up to 2014, before we saw the orientation week as something threatening, our seniors were happy to teach us different tricks (conveyed in tough love, naturally).

Apart from the Students' Association, Komunitas Seni Belanak (KSB) and Rumah Ada Seni also provided us with a learning environment that always gave us novel challenges. KSB was established around 2003, full of passion to rise above the condition of scarcity in art (lack of galleries, curators, art critics, media, and collectors). KSB's enthusiasm and passion started to wane after the art boom period

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in 2007–2008. Still, in such liberating alternative spaces, we learned a lot and connected to our seniors who either had remained home or moved out of the village. In 2013, Rumah Ada Seni in Padang and Teras in Padang Panjang brought in a fresh breeze. These groups were actively holding small-scale exhibitions in alternative spaces. During this period, the rapport between the students' associations and artists' groups from UNP and the Indonesian Institute of the Arts (ISI) Padangpanjang, that campus in the cool highlands, was very close. Whenever there were exhibitions in Padang, the Padang Panjang group would come "down" to visit us. Similarly, whenever exhibitions were held in Padang Panjang, the Padang group would go "up" to the hills. Such is the romantic relationship between the two most influential universities in West Sumatra's world of art—at least based on what my seniors told me.

Around 2014, pockets of art activities that shared a similar passion emerged in the Padang area. This activity was driven mostly by students who had been involved in the students' associations in UNP and ISI Padangpanjang. Examples of such communities were Rumah Coretan, Kamart Kost, Rumah Ragam, and Jembatan Pelangi in Padang; Komunitas Gubuak Kopi in Solok; PKAN Padang Sibusuak in Sijunjung; Komunitas Teras Seni in Padang Panjang; Ruang Bangkit in Batusangkar; and Ladang Rupa in Bukittinggi. It is undeniable that art activities in Padang have shaped our daring and resilient attitudes in doing art. We had so much fun that we wanted to do the same thing in Bukittinggi.

Today, Ladang Rupa focuses on developing art education programs. We manage the organization as a space to share ideas, promote critical thinking, and cultivate our senses. As an alternative art education provider, we offer critical education methods for art workers and community members, allowing them to learn together, exchange thoughts, and refine and present their ideas.

We need to fight against some regrettable tendencies. We believe that art education institutions (i.e., the universities) are not yet able to create a space for discussing the latest developments in art. As students who have been trained to become art teachers, we think that the art curriculum fails to humanize students. The national curriculum of 2013 that we have been implementing in Indonesia has three fundamental aspects. One of them is the affective aspect, which is related to emotions, feelings, interests, and attitudes. Art education is the education of the senses and is inseparable from the affective aspect. Unfortunately, in practice, learning activities are often focused more on the two other aspects. In the words of the philosopher Bambang Sugiharto: "Art education in Indonesia is akin to a handyman workshop."[1]

Figure 2. "Parak Ria" Open Studio.
Location: Ladang Rupa's secretariat, Pulai Anak Air (2018).
Source: Ladang Rupa.

We have observed how most students who are going to become teachers do not realize how art plays a role in this affective education.

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[1] Bambang Sugiharto in *Untuk Apa Seni?* (Bandung: Pustaka Matahari, 2013)*,* p. 9.

In the Art Education class for art teachers-to-be, there is still a lack of understanding about the fundamental ideas bridging art and the science of education. Basically, there are three categories of subjects provided to students majoring in Art Education. The first category is the Learning Process Skills, which is about the skills teachers require in the learning process: the learning approaches, methods, procedures, curriculum, and evaluation. The second is Education Development, which trains students to develop work plans that are generally conveyed in proposals: research, art work, and business proposals. The third category is the Field of Expertise of art and craft. This categorization separates the subjects with no essential link that would help us answer the question of why art education exists. What we see in practice are teachers providing theories and introducing art practices in line with their expertise by using the teaching skills they have learned at university. Their university art education neglects the affective aspect.

Figure 3. *In the Box,* a performance art by Bayu Rahmad Trisya.
Location: Balairung Sari, Bukittinggi (2020).
Source: Ladang Rupa.

For five years we at Ladang Rupa have been experimenting with a range of art education methods, through programs that we develop using inspirations from different models of art activities. We divide

our programs into areas based on the scale of the activity. Thus, activities in the Big Program require special preparations and include exhibitions, art camps, and research. The Routine Program only needs minor technical preparations and includes our Bioskop Taman and Kelas Lasuah. The Daily Program requires no special preparation because we carry it out on a daily basis; it includes Parak Ria's gardening activity, creative product market Serikat Oesaha, and the Ladang Rupa library. We have these programs and distribute our ideas in zines to maintain our rapport with the community.

Figure 4. Bioskop Taman.
Location: Ladang Rupa's secretariat, Tangah Jua (2016).
Source: Ladang Rupa.

Ladang Rupa members, art actors, and community members all take part in our programs. Ladang Rupa has become a space for our members to strengthen their capacities, learn, and create works of art. It also provides space for art actors as drivers of culture, space for them to present their works in exhibitions and art performances, film screenings, and book reviews. Ladang Rupa offers an alternative to art education for community members through the Kelas Lasuah and Ladang Kids programs, in which we invite art practitioners and other experts to share their knowledge and experience.

Figure 5. Ladang Disko.
Location: Ladang Rupa's secretariat, Tangah Jua (2016).
Source: Ladang Rupa.

To this day, we have not developed an established method using any specific strategy. The strategy that we employ in our classes—whether in Kelas Lasuah or in Ladang Kids—depends on the resource persons and the topics we intend to introduce. Because of the diverse topics on offer, before the class starts, we as facilitators need to design a specific strategy for each class along with the resource persons—the art practitioners and other experts. We realize that participants will not come empty-handed. They will already have something with them, tangible or otherwise. Dialogues are therefore crucial in our class. We encourage the resource persons to engage in dialogues with every participant so we know what they have. We take this approach to create the awareness that all of us are powerful and that we can work with what we already have. The approach plays out differently for each topic. Every class has produced intriguing results; it would be difficult to expand on them here as the topics are extremely diverse. Kelas Lasuah has provided us with invaluable experience that we had not expected when we first designed our strategy.

An Alternative for a Daring and Resilient Art Education

Figure 6. Kelas Lasuah, book binding class.
Location: Ngarai Maaram Park, Bukittinggi (2017).
Source: Ladang Rupa.

Figure 7. Kelas Lasuah, collage art class.
Location: Ladang Rupa's secretariat, Tangah Jua (2016).
Source: Ladang Rupa.

Something that I as a founder consider most intriguing is how in the space of five years Ladang Rupa has captured these daring and resilient people. We have many members now, and they come from different disciplines. Ladang Rupa is not yet self-sufficient, much less able to provide financial support to those who have been working with us. This makes me wonder, how can we have such people?

Hidayatul Azmi

To philosophize a moment, we use the name Ladang Rupa because we believe what we sow determines what we reap. Our gardening activities, however, have been quite accidental. It just so happened that as we moved houses, we always had a yard that would be adequate for gardening activities. It has also been our daring and resilient attitudes that allowed us to access daunting land parcels full of shrubs and bushes (imagine a gallery and an office in the middle of the woods). Since 2015, we have moved house four times, and for some reason have always had to deal with shrubs and bushes. This almost annual process of moving house takes a lot of time—the fixing, preparing the place, and adapting to the new site. Today, Ladang Rupa is using Balairung Sari, which was the former house of the organization Bundo Kanduang Bukittinggi. The building had been unoccupied for twenty years. At the time of writing, we have been fixing up our new home for three months. Curious? You can watch the video here…
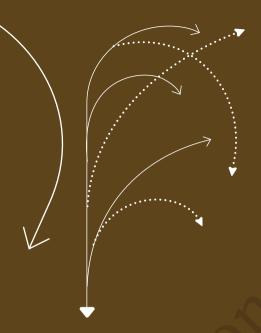
Bukittinggi, 2020

> " Since 2015, we have moved house four times and for some reason have always had to deal with shrubs and bushes. "

Figure 8. Ladang Rupa's secretariat before the move to Balairung Sari.
Location: Ladang Rupa's secretariat, Pulai Anak Air (2019).
Source: Ladang Rupa.

Hidayatul Azmi

From Tikar Pandan to FIXER

Putra Hidayatullah

Tikar Pandan's birth as a collective is inextricably linked to the political conflict in Aceh, when Gerakan Aceh Merdeka (GAM—Free Aceh Movement) and Tentara Nasional Indonesia (TNI—the Indonesian National Army) were still at war. Economic injustice and the history of Aceh (which was perceived as a sovereign land) led to the protracted conflict. The situation did not improve after Soeharto's New Order regime ended.

Although I experienced the same social dynamics that formed the background and reason for Tikar Pandan's birth, I was a latecomer to the collective. In this article, I would like to share the trials and tribulations of the community we call TP, and related stories.

I went to meet Muhammad Yulfan, Azhari Aiyub, and Fozan Santa, three of Tikar Pandan's original founders. Naturally, they are the ones who understand the most about the collective's history. It so happened that we were also going to have a meeting to discuss the direction Tikar Pandan was going to take in the future. After the meeting, we continued our conversation while enjoying a cup of coffee, as usual.

Although I have actually heard about Tikar Pandan's history from others, I was not satisfied and asked them to tell me more. Sipping his coffee and lighting his cigarette, Yulfan told me the story. I turned on the recorder on my mobile phone to make sure I would miss nothing.

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"Our community came to be because of the demands among the students. At the time, university students already had their organizations—KARMA, Students Solidarity for the People (SMUR), and others," Yulfan said. "We thought, why wasn't there any for high school students?"
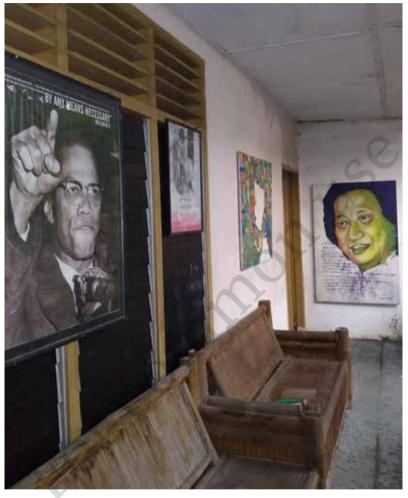
From Tikar Pandan to FIXER

Figure 1. The place where people hang out and
have discussions in Tikar Pandan.
Source: Muhammad Reza Rachmad.

As time went on, the situation deteriorated. Militarism and violence were the norm. The youth who found the issue important took action and held discussions. "After we graduated from high school, we were no longer able to use the school as our platform because we were no longer students there," Yulfan said. "That was why we were thinking to use other spaces. At the time, we used a corner at Banda Aceh Cultural Center and held discussions every Saturday afternoon. We started to form our own distinctive ideas. Eventually, in 2002, we established Tikar Pandan."

I remember a related conversation with Azhari Aiyub sometime ago. The trend to establish collectives emerged after the New Order regime collapsed. Azhari was one of the many people who played an important role in formulating the concepts for Tikar Pandan and determining the direction of the community. He and his colleagues produced a literary journal titled *Titik Tolak* (Point of Departure). I remember one of the articles was based on an interview with the eminent Indonesian writer Pramoedya Ananta Toer, in which he apologized to the Acehnese. "They have been sending mercenaries to Aceh for a long time," the writer said in the interview.

Apart from publishing the journal, Tikar Pandan also opened a bookstore they called Dokarim, from the name of an Acehnese poet who lived during the Dutch occupation. I found the bookstore impressive because they sold books that were out of the ordinary and of a very high quality. It was the first time I saw the works of Arundhati Roy, Gabriel García Márquez, Leo Tolstoy, and John Roosa. There were also books whose titles might be quite unnerving to us Acehnese, such as *Bertuhan Tanpa Agama* ("God without Religion", a translation of Bertrand Russell's *On God and Religion*).

Outsiders have perceived Tikar Pandan as an odd organization, labelled it communist, liberal, and Shiite—although it is actually impossible for the three to co-exist in one organization. My friends and I have learned a lot from Tikar Pandan. Many researchers have also

come for a visit, for example the anthropologist Professor James T. Siegel. Whenever a researcher comes to interview me about the collective, I always say that Tikar Pandan is like a university, a place where everyone can learn.

In its early days, Tikar Pandan sought to promote literacy. I commend this effort, as the region has performed very poorly in that area, especially during the time when they started Tikar Pandan. Considering the current situation, I believe we still have a lot to do about increasing literacy in Aceh. It is an unfinished journey.
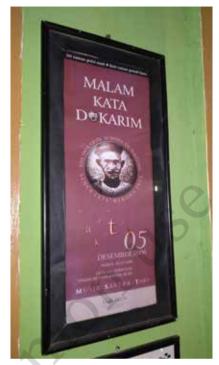

Figure 2. A poster of Dokarim Literary Awarding Night, a Tikar Pandan's program.
Source: Muhammad Reza Rachmad.

"We started with stories and story-telling, especially through the dramatic arts. The media had been stifled. We had nothing to voice our concerns. We had no social media and limited internet connections," recalled Yulfan.

When I was still a student in junior high, I often heard gun shots. When my friends and I walked to school every day, we had to duck now and then, lie down on the gravel to avoid bullets. Once at the end of the school year, when we were going to get our school reports, a bomb went off. It was quite far from us, but we could still feel the ground shaking. As a boy living in the village, I had no idea about what life was like in a city such as Banda Aceh. Was life there as suspenseful as in the village?

It was good to do the interview for this article as I learned something new. I had always thought that art did not play a significant role during the conflict in Aceh. I was wrong. In Banda Aceh, literature, especially drama, played a role, mediated by such collectives as Tikar Pandan. Yulfan and his colleagues often held performances, though under the shadow of strict censorship.

"Art, especially the dramatic arts, was a medium for us to present what was happening at the grass roots. There was violence, raping, and other savagery," explained Yulfan. He remembered the times when he had to seek ways to get out of problems, such as when soldiers saw the poster for the performance that showed a person being tied to a chair and tortured. "What does this mean? Who is torturing who?" the soldier would ask.

To overcome the challenges of censorship, Tikar Pandan prepared two kinds of script for every performance. The script they submitted to the military for their report would be the one with no criticism, which differed from the script they performed on the stage. Sometimes intelligence agents walked among the public to gather impressions from the audience after watching the performance.

Tikar Pandan also continued their work in promoting literacy by establishing an impressive school they called Dokarim. The school produced young writers who sent their works to newspapers and other media. I learned a lot about writing at Dokarim. We are indebted to Azhari Aiyub for teaching us about creative writing and opening up spaces for us to have critical discussions on various topics.

As I look back, I think Tikar Pandan has in fact been using art as a medium to talk about social issues. One time they brought together children whose parents supported the GAM and children of Indonesian military personnel, and they organized an event for them to perform a

play together. The event organizers discovered that children from the two groups inherited the feelings of resentment between the military and GAM. GAM offspring would sing "Prang Sabi", a song about the wars in Aceh, while the children from the military families would sing "Gugur Pahlawan". The theatrical performance, however, tried to unite them all.

Figure 3. A poster of TV Eng Ong's activities as a trauma healing effort for the community in the aftermath of conflict and tsunami.
Source: Muhammad Reza Rachmad.

A big earthquake hit Aceh in 2004. I was a high school freshman back then and would join Tikar Pandan nine years later. The earthquake shifted Tikar Pandan's direction. Previously, they focused primarily on social and political issues, but after the earthquake the focus was more on trauma healing using cultural approaches. "We believe that art heals, whether we're talking about wounds of war or of disasters," explained Yulfan.

One of the riveting ways they adopted for trauma healing was a storytelling activity called TV Eng Ong, a superb program. Agus Nur Amal a.k.a. PM TOH performed stories that he wrote along with Azhari, Reza Idria, and others. They called PM TOH the *puliek pike*, or the thought specialist. On one occasion a mother who had been silent because of trauma, was suddenly able to speak when she entered the space of the plywood TV. That was why I found the program superb. The script also contained a lot of humor, and people in the villages enjoyed it a lot.

After the tsunami and as peace prevailed in 2005, other natural disasters struck, such as the earthquake in Gayo and the flash flooding in Tangse. There was also the time when the tsunami alarm went off and caused people to make a frantic dash because they thought it was another tsunami. But it wasn't. The alarm was faulty.

All that time, Tikar Pandan was still taking the cultural approach, albeit with a slight difference. They were now using comic books conveying stories and strategies of disaster mitigation, drawn by students and using their experience as the basis.

Tikar Pandan has now slowed down a bit. A major problem is funding strategy. To this day, Tikar Pandan does not have an independent financing system. Previously, the funds came from donors and the organization's business unit, namely the Dokarim bookstore. The bookstore did not raise enough money because it could not meet market demands that leaned more towards popular books.

From Tikar Pandan to FIXER

As a space for cultural resistance, Tikar Pandan has become smaller, less popular, and is stagnating. Our enemies have become powerful, our comrades have become artists and cultural activists who maintain the status quo. We used to have only the military as our enemy; today we have many.

The dominant narrative is that Aceh is now a democratic place where human rights are respected and rehabilitation and reconciliation have taken place successfully, making it a model for other regions, or even other countries, that are still in conflict. That is in contrast to the previous situation in which Aceh was obviously not a democratic place, where human rights violations were rampant and violence was the norm. The current situation actually reflects an image that the elite in power are trying to establish.

If we care to delve deeper, it would be obvious that there are still many problems at the grassroots. The issues are still the same: human rights, past violence, and mining. Only the actors are new. Democracy is still an issue in Aceh, and the current dogmatic hegemony has become a new problem. In the public space, stagnancy stifles opinions. It was formerly an achievement to be able to talk about human rights; if we discuss human rights now, we earn the label infidel, liberal, or foreign stooge.

Another important issue is how the collective connects to the younger generation in view of increasing digitalization. Millennials perceive Tikar Pandan as being too serious and not up-to-date. Another issue is the collective's failure to manage its resources in terms of the people who have been involved in their learning process. They are now all doing their own things instead of working together to establish a common platform and a community.

Tikar Pandan must change its course. We are now seeking a new form, thinking of ways to become self-sustaining. It is also a challenge to find a system that can provide us with revenue on a continuous basis.

Putra Hidayatullah

We have had no experience doing business. Another strategy is to turn Tikar Pandan's personnel to our advantage, whether in terms of their time, energy, or skills. We are also trying to map out our networks with other collectives working on the same issues, to ensure that we can complement and strengthen one another. We would also do the same with like-minded individuals and researchers who still care about the issues we have in Aceh.

The social dynamics in Aceh have changed, and the same is true of the collectives and the roles they're playing. A gap exists between the collectives' agendas and the people's needs.
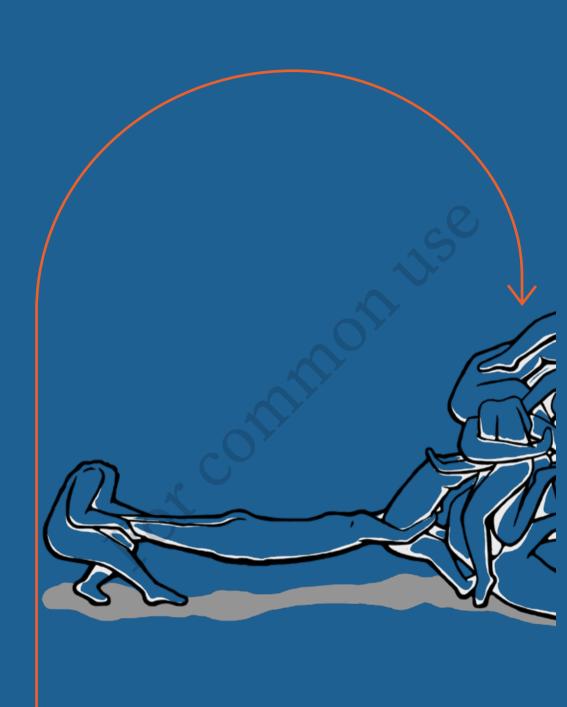
In other words, the people have become objects: of research and programs. Mistakes made in the initial strategies and approaches prevent the needs of collectives and those of the people from converging. As we learn from what we have experienced so far, we are trying to employ a fresh approach: trying to strengthen the collective itself internally before we move on to strengthen our work at the grassroots.
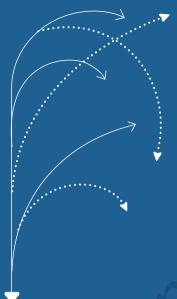
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It was getting late. I sipped my coffee again, and my tongue sensed the acidity, which usually happens when I've had too much coffee. The conversation has been meaningful, just like other talks we've had in Tikar Pandan, which almost always offer new perspectives. Sometimes such perspectives might be slightly bitter, like our coffee that evening. We heard the recording of a Koranic recital from the outside, a sign that the dusk prayer time has come. Yulfan excused himself. I took my mobile phone and pressed "Stop".

Banda Aceh, 2020

From Tikar Pandan to FIXER

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As we learn from what we have experienced so far, we are trying to employ a fresh approach: trying to strengthen the collective itself internally before we move on to strengthen our work at the grassroots.

Putra Hidayatullah

As If Looking at
the Weaving of Ampang
In Search of Art within
Art Collective Practice in
Indonesia

Gesyada Siregar

It is an odd fact that during the course of FIXER 2021 the subject of art did not often surface during the discussions with the 59 respondent collectives. Jokes and stories about problems with economic sustainability, organization, and management were more common. Even if a few people touched upon the topic of art, the discussion would veer toward descriptions of the programs they were working on. Why did this happen? This article will explore this question and ultimately conclude that this absence doesn't make these collectives less "artistic".

First of all, we must distinguish between what we refer to by the terms "art collective" and "artist group". It is very easy to identify the artistic practice or aesthetics of an artist group, because generally their main practice is creating and exhibiting together. These include Pita Maha (Ubud, 1936), Komunitas Seni Sakato (Yogyakarta, 1995), Kelompok Seni Rupa Jendela (Yogyakarta, 1996), Tromarama (Bandung, 2006), and Cut and Rescue (Jakarta, 2011). The distinctions between these art groups and the collectives that will be explored in this section is that the latter: own and manage physical space, open up their physical space to members of the public who are outside the collective, and work on periodical programs/projects for the public.

In our research, we try to examine the thin line between the artwork and the program of an art collective since it is easy to confuse the two. Is this in fact an advantage or a problem? A point of compromise was then found:

A program can be considered as a long term artwork as well as a curatorial strategy. Through a program, a collective tries to express a standpoint by way of praxis and boost the dissemination of knowledge as a method of spreading the discourses they champion on a regular basis beyond the symbolic or representational aspects of art.

Through such programs, collectives can make use of their members' artistic skills, starting from something as simple as directing an artistic

As If Looking at the Weaving of Ampang: In Search of Art within Art Collective Practice in Indonesia

performance, designing publications and public communications, performing, editing videos, to exhibiting collective members' artworks. Managing an art program is a skill that has continued to develop since the emergence of collectives in the aftermath of 1998 Reformation. It can also be said that the art of programming an art activity[1] is a typical artistic practice of a collective.

Our next line of curiosity is: What perspective can we use as a lens to understand collectives' artistic practice in Indonesia when many discourses of participatory art, or relational aesthetics, come from outside Indonesia and are often incompatible with the context of our lives?

For example, the American online persona and art critic Hennessy Youngman provides a satirical description of the relational aesthetics as conceived by Nicolas Bourriaud, on his vlog of art criticism, ART THOUGHTZ:

> "When someone with an MFA wants to meet new people but because they spend all their time pursuing the MFA, they don't know how to talk to people normally, and they got really poor social skills, and they can't find no other way to meet new people other than forcing them into art activities at their own poorly attended art openings. Relational aesthetics is also when successful artists, who are too busy touring the globe, goin' from biennial to biennial, have no time to make physical art objects anymore, so the famous artist uses the attendees at the exhibition as an artwork in some way."[2]

This gibe signifies a different universe from the reality of art collective practice in Indonesia because:

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[1] The term is proposed to consider a collective's art programming work as a form of artwork. We reflect on aspects of management, administrative work, diplomacy, communication strategy, curatorial, and creativity in art programming as artistic practice.
[2] Hennessy Youngman. "ART THOUGHTZ: Relational Aesthetics". Video file. *YouTube*, March 16, 2011. Web. February 18, 2020.

First, collectives in Indonesia generally live in residential areas rather than commercial districts. In such an environment, communication with neighbors is a necessity, such as when shopping at the nearest grocery store, asking permission from the local RT[3] to hold a large event, or chatting with motorcycle taxi drivers on their way home from their collective space. Thus, social interaction skills are always honed in their everyday life.

Second, the "audience" of Indonesian collective art activities often consists of friends and acquaintances of the collective members, whether those from the art field those from different backgrounds, ensuring an intimacy between the artists and the audience. This is, of course, different from the context of art events held by large art institutions such as museums or galleries, where "audience" means the larger public. It is important to note that Bourriaud originally came up with the term relational aesthetics in an introduction to an exhibition catalog for a large museum show featuring individual artists.

Third, openings of an art event by collective spaces function as a means of communal gathering. In some extreme cases, the artworks at the event are not even as significant as the moment for the audience to eat, drink, and laugh together—no matter how many are in attendance.

Therefore, it seems that we need to look inward to find a perspective to understand Indonesian art collective practice: Before such practices became commonplace, what is the drive behind these collective actors to do things on behalf of their community? What sparked the spirit of "just do it" among the collectives that we meet in Indonesia?

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[3] Rukun Tetangga: the local neighborhood and lowest administrative level in Indonesian urban governance.

Art Collectives in Indonesia: Nasharian Art Institution

We found that there are many collectives with members who are not academically trained in the arts. For them, a collective itself often serves as a school through which they learn about art and attain self-actualization within the art ecosystem. Thus, we can find myriad forms of creation through collective artistic practice, even those that depart from any higher-education art curriculum, allowing us to see this practice as a "playfulness" vis-à-vis established aspects of art.[4] This also creates a blind spot for art academics who observe artistic statements by Indonesian collectives, which can seem like texts written in a new, previously unknown script. With its "playfulness", an Indonesian collective artistic practice is not inclined to be a resistance against the establishment of mainstream art infrastructure, especially when claims of art centers in our art ecosystem are increasingly shifting.[5]

This type of playfulness in collectives' artistic practice can be seen as an intuitive institutional experiment à la Nashar (referring to his principle of Three-Nons: non-preconceptional, non-academic-technical, and non-academic-aesthetic)[6]. Deeply engrossed in the art collectives' micro-universe, these collectives always try to nevertheless connect with the art ecosystem in their local environment. This is because every member of a collective is truly aware that they cannot do art activities alone.

Art Carried Out Together as Indonesian Culture

One perspective we can use to study this collective artistic practice is to see that the "art" that they practice is a continuation (not a revitalization) of the working principles of *didong*[7] (Gayo), *kagunan*[8]

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[4] Established aspects of art here refer to art market's mechanism (for instance, auction house or art fair), perception of artist as genius, and what's considered as high art.

[5] See Ayos Purwoaji, "Plowing Soil, Spreading Seeds: The Geographic Dispersion of Art Collectives in Indonesia 2010-2020," in this book, p. 155.

[6] Nashar (1928-1994), an Indonesian painter and writer who was famed for his bohemian lifestyle and extreme dedication to painting even, or especially, during hard times in his life.

[7] *Didong*, a form of Gayo art in Aceh in which a group of people sit down and sing together, clapping their hands, bodies, or pillows, to create percussive sounds. Perceived as an "art during work or for solace", *didong* songs usually raise everyday matters through humor or other creative ways.

[8] *Kagunan*, meaning 'skill', 'intelligence', and 'application' (almost close to *ars* in Latin that became the word art), is an artistic principle according to which a person creates something that's useful for their surrounding environment while also conveying an artist's aesthetic or ideational emotions.

(Javanese), *sangging*[9] and *undagi* [10] (Bali), *markobar*[11] and *panggorga*[12] (Batak), and other various ancestral cultures that exist in Indonesia, as has been argued by Sanento Yuliman.[13] These principles are generally built on the cycles of natural balance, dialog, and collective work, while wisely making use of surrounding resources and individual skills to communicate broadly and artistically address everyday problems. They see all of this as a form of dedication to society and the universe. They understand that an awareness of human frailty and place in this world—which drives the collective instinct—concerns not only fellow humans, but also plants, animals, ancestral spirits, and great entities of the surrounding landscape, such as rivers, mountains, seas, lakes, and forests.

In addition to ancestral art forms in everyday life, we know that common art traditions are often present at important events as an expression of gratitude for an achievement, an offering, or a symbol of mourning. This common art exists in situations of joy and sorrow—in times of surplus and deficit. The post-fordist circumstances in Indonesia seep awkwardly into our culture as modernist individualism runs counter to the desire for togetherness in our society. As reported by Muhammad Faisal, "The deeper penetration of cellphones and internet connections is not inversely proportional to the intensity of hanging out. On the contrary, the more exposed young people are to the internet, the more often they hang out."[14] This is evidenced by the large number of communities that have sprung up from Facebook groups and the numerous talks held on Zoom due to the pandemic.

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[9] *Sangging* is a drawer, or a visual artist, whether in sculpture, painting, or statue.
[10] *Undagi* is an architect who is also knowledgeable about religion, custom, art, and culture, more or less similar to the concept of Renaissance man but with more significant social characteristics (thus, not individualistic). The word *undagi* is also related to iron/bronze age culture.
[11] Markobar is a Mandailing oral tradition in which all individuals at an event take turns expressing their opinions. It emphasizes people's public speaking skills, not only in terms of diplomatic and narrative abilities but also artistic ones.
[12] *Panggorga* is a Batak sculptor or ornament craver.
[13] Sanento Yuliman, *Sepilihan Tulisan Sanento Yuliman*, ed. Asikin Hasan (Jakarta: Yayasan Kalam, 2001).
[14] Dr. Muhammad Faisal, *Generasi Kembali ke Akar: Upaya Generasi Muda Meneruskan Imajinasi Indonesia* (Jakarta: Penerbit Buku Kompas, 2020), p. 233.

We can then speculate that our society may never truly be "modern." With this perspective, we can also understand that the proliferation of collective practice in Indonesia is not something born from the *glocal* currents of the 21st century, but an instinctive way of life carried by memory that has been biologically embedded within the deoxyribonucleic acid clusters of Indonesian collective actors from their ancestors' era.

Even though times change, we can see parallels. People used to build stilt houses for work and domestic activities (farming, raising livestock, sleeping). Today, a collective space is used by members to exhibit artworks, play films, write, design, surf the internet, edit videos, and sleep. If people used to gather to voice their aspirations through *didong*, *markobar*, and deliberation at village halls, today we find that collectives organize meetings, discussion fora, and performances in their respective spaces. Whereas in the past people created earthenware for their daily needs and managed resources from livestock, gardens, and communities, people in collectives today use their managerial, organizational, and diplomatic skills to organize art programs that support their collectives. Therefore, to enrich this exploration we should try to see what the position/role of art is in these various collectives, both in their institutional/organizational and artistic aspects.

Medium- and Issue-Based Art Collectives

It is relatively easy to identify a collective's artistic statement if their artistic strategy comes from the type of medium and issues that are the members' common interest. Medium as something that binds can be found in the House of Natural Fiber or HONF (1999) and Lifepatch (2012) in Yogyakarta, also Waft Lab in Surabaya (2011), all three of which tinker with art and technology. In Majalengka, the largest tile-producing area in West Java, Jatiwangi art Factory (2005) playfully explores tile and soil as medium and culture. In Jakarta, portrait painters have come together to form TROTOARt (2001), while several

graphic artist activists established Grafis Huru Hara (2012), just as their colleagues in Yogyakarta founded printmaking collectives such as, Grafis Minggiran (2001) and Krack! Studio (2013). In Jakarta, street art activists, too, founded Gardu House (2010) while photography artists in Yogyakarta established Ruang MES 56 (2002).

Meanwhile, issue-based collectives such as Ace House Collective in Yogyakarta (2011) focus on popular culture. In Jakarta, ruangrupa (2000) focuses on their urban and regional identity, and so does Pasirputih in Lombok (2009), Ladang Rupa in Bukittinggi (2015), Gubuak Kopi in Solok (2011), Hysteria in Semarang (2004), and Serbuk Kayu in Surabaya (2011).

These are all collectives that often participate in various exhibitions, biennales, festivals as collective artists. In our opinion, their artworks can generally be moved to or transformed into exhibition halls, which means that their work is expressed in concrete forms (for example, installations, two-dimensional works, videos) and can be nomadic from the context of their collective's spatial environment.

With art collectives typified by educational, collaborative, and organizational approaches, we often encounter, in white cube galleries, forms of presentation of collective artworks such as living-room simulations, workspace simulations, pseudo-museums, mapping sheets, workshop results, archives, artifacts, publications, documentation in the form of photos and videos of activities prior to the exhibition, as well as interactivity and collaboration with visitors.

Examples of such artworks include *THE KUDA: The Untold Story of Indonesian Underground Music in the 70s* by ruangrupa (The 7th Asia Pacific Triennial of Contemporary Art, Queensland Art Gallery, Gallery of Modern Art Brisbane, Australia, in 2012)*, Kediaman yang Tak Ingin Tinggal Diam* by Jatiwangi art Factory ("Resipro(vo)kasi: Praktik Seni Rupa Terlibat", Galeri Nasional Indonesia, Jakarta in 2013), *KurikuLab:*

Pasar Ilmu by Serrum (Biennale Jogja 2015: "Hacking the Conflict", Jogja National Museum), *Mbanyu Mili* by Lifepatch (Jakarta Biennale 2015: "Maju Kena Mundur Kena", Gudang Sarinah Ekosistem, and Strenkali, Surabaya), *Glued #2* by Gardu House ("Visual Jalanan: Bebas Tapi Sopan", Galeri Nasional Indonesia, in 2015), and *Pasar Misteri* by Serbuk Kayu (Jakarta 32°C Festival 2016, Gudang Sarinah Ekosistem).

Figure 1. *KurikuLab: Pasar Ilmu* by Serrum at
the Biennale Jogja: "Hacking the Conflict".
Location: Jogja National Museum, Yogyakarta (2015).
Source: Serrum/Haviz Maha.

However, it often seems inevitable to encounter detached narration between what we see at an exhibition and the dynamics and the "blood, sweat, and tears" of their collective work that largely happens before the exhibition itself.

Art Collective Nature: Amphibious

From the examples mentioned above, we see a tendency to present artworks at biennale events or at the Galeri Nasional Indonesia. To understand collective artistic practice, though, we cannot ignore independent initiatives outside of major art events—which are carried out by many collectives whose artworks are anchored in the context of their respective regions and thus outside the framework of white cube galleries.

Collective artistic practice, then, takes place in an amphibious space: in galleries *and* in the environment where collectives live. Often, their works stand out more in the regions in which they operate, and are presented in festivals, performances, research, and public space projects. For example, Holy Market by ruangrupa, Rampak Genteng by JaF, Dinas Artistik Kota by Serrum, Jogja River Project by Lifepatch, Street Dealin Festival by Gardu House, Dinas Rahasia Respon Ruang by Serbuk Kayu, Research Exhibition of Oesman Effendi and Kampong by Ladang Rupa, Penta KLabs by Hysteria, Mapag Purnama Caang by Jendela Ide (Bandung, 1995), Maumerelogia Festival by Komunitas KAHE (Maumere, 2015), Skyland To by Komunitas Action (Jayapura, 2014), Bangsal Menggawe Festival by Pasirputih, Kota Tanpa Sampah by Lab Tanya (South Tangerang, 2015), Jagakali Art Festival by Sinau Art (Cirebon, 2007), and Yellow Memories by Forum Sudut Pandang (Palu, 2016).

Figure 2. Skyland To #4 by Komunitas Action.
Location: Kafe Bukit Jokowi, Jayapura, Papua (2017).
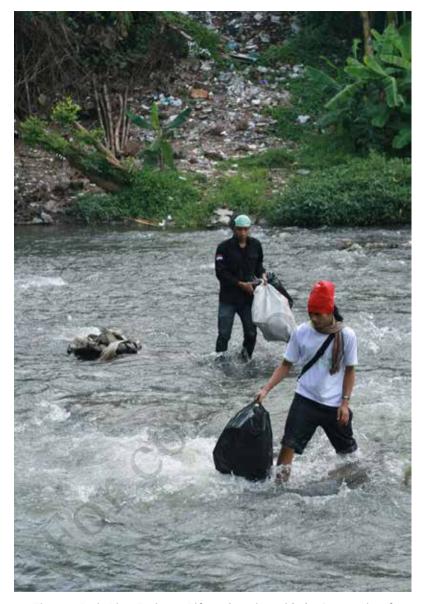Source: komunitasaction.blogspot.com.

Figure 3. Jogja River Project, a Lifepatch project with the Community of
Microbiology Laboratory, Faculty of Agriculture,
Gadjah Mada University and Cantigi Indonesia.
Location: Winanga River, Yogyakarta (2012).
Source: lifepatch.id.

The Art of Programming Art Activities in Nature

With its connection to nature—as base and space—artistic practice anchored in an area's topography reminds us of our ancestral cultural artistic practices. We can find the management of natural abundance as an artistic practice in collectives such as JaF, Rumah Budaya Sikukeluang (Pekanbaru, 2011) and Pasirputih.[15]

Rumah Budaya Sikukeluang—through programs such as #melawanasap (#fightagainstsmoke) campaign, Dinas Kerimba, and Lab Kiblat—explores the issue of Rimbang Baling rainforest as the domain of their artistic work. For them, art is a means of actualizing collective power in the midst of government policies, the operations of non-governmental organizations, religious preaching, and the dealings of private companies—especially in the struggle for natural resources and land.

The art of programming art activities in nature can be seen as a continuation of activist art, which used to take the form of demonstrations with printmaking, performance art, and public art.[16] The art collectives' responsivity in activist art or political art is extended long-term and periodically through annual, monthly, weekly, and daily art programs to prevent the amnesia of thematic bursts of activist art, which only flare up symbolically at certain times. The cross-disciplinary background that underlies this practice also produces a non-representational artistic tendency, while representationality is identical with the training of fine arts academies. And this art of programming of art activities comes in actual presence.

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[15] See Muhammad Sibawaihi, "Stories from Pasirputih" in this book, p. 197.
[16] See Hendro Wiyanto, "Anonymous Creativity: Activism and Collectivism", in this book, p. 101.

Art of Institutionality: A Parody of Institutional Practice as Artistic Practice

We have found that the practices of some of the art collectives often play with their institutional structure of organization. In JaF and Waft Lab, for example, the position of "director" or other leadership roles can be rotated to anyone, according to the needs of an ongoing project. Such parody of organizational systems can also be seen in Open P.O. by Omnispace (Bandung, 2015), which experimented with the transaction patterns between collectors and artists. We must remember that managerial and administrative jobs in these collectives are usually carried out by artists who do not have an academic or background in administration, accounting, business, management, or secretarial work.

Figure 4. A screenshot of Open P.O #3 video ad by Omnispace.
Source: openpo.omnispace.info.

The formation of divisions, sub-units, and sub-programs can take place fluidly, congruous with the interests being pursued by each member and can be taken as artistic statements of the collective (for example, Badan Kajian Pertanahan of JaF, Main Lab of Ruang Alternatif, Klub Baca by Komunitas KAHE, Mobile Lab by Waft Lab, Timur Liar by Serbuk Kayu, Lapuak-lapuak Dikajangi by Gubuak Kopi, Parak Ria by Ladang Rupa, SIKU Senin Slebor by SIKU Ruang Terpadu, Dinas Kerimba by Rumah Budaya Sikukeluang, Kamisukagambar by Forum Sudut Pandang, CO.Lab by Cata Odata, Dapoer Bergerak by Ketjilbergerak.

Figure 5. Kelompok Ruang Baca at SIKU Senin Slebor.
Location: SIKU Ruang Terpadu, Makassar (2019).
Source: SIKU Ruang Terpadu.

Figure 6. Members of Waft Lab with their Mobile Lab, on the way to Jakarta
from Surabaya. The collective held media art workshops
at several stop-offs on their route.
Location: Dlundung, Trawas, East Java (2018).
Source: Waft Lab.

Gesyada Siregar

Collectives can also play with the pace of organizational work according to experience, energy, time, space availability, and even mood, so that a gap between programs is one of the benefits of working in the collective. A hiatus between programs, or of a collective in general, is not a failure or an end. This is because agents of the collective will naturally evolve their collective practice under another name (or undergo an osmosis, diffusing to other collective projects, like the workings of blood cells across tissues of organs through their walls).

As an antithesis of industrialist, bureaucratic, and capitalistic work patterns, oriented toward targets and capital owners, experiment of institutional or organizational practice above can be understood as an artistic practice, too, in managing power, system, role division, capital, time, and space. We can trace this practice from the roots of Indonesian culture where art is based on communal understanding while each artist has various functions—which is certainly independent of the ideal industrial workings.

Art Collectives' Institutional Experimentation to Take up a Role in Their City

Many collectives purposefully invigorate the art scene in their city in the absence of art galleries and museums that are open to them. It is as if "the main idea is to be there, stirring things first" and finding out "how we can accommodate as many artists as possible in the network." These spaces include TUDGAM (Kuningan, 2013), Ruang Alternatif (Cirebon, 2015), Kedubes Bekasi (Bekasi 2015), Ruang Atas (Solo, 2015), Cata Odata (Ubud, 2015), Degil House (Medan, 2018), Omah Balong (Kuningan, 2019), SIKU Ruang Terpadu (Makassar, 2019), Bilik Bersenyawa (Banjarmasin, 2017), BERGERAK.ETC (Balikpapan, 2017), Sindikat Milenial (Pontianak, 2017), Sandwich Attack (Tangerang, 2015), Rumah Mesra (Sukabumi, 2015).

Figure 7. A discussion at the food business unit of Kedubes Bekasi during
Hutbek (HUT Bekasi, or the city of Bekasi's 24th anniversary).
Location: Bekasi, West Java (2021).
Source: Kedubes Bekasi/Ageng Adhi Prasetyo.

Judging from their age, these collectives are between the "toddler"
phase and on the eve of "puberty". They have opened themselves up
to diverse artistic practices, adopting and negotiating the preceding
collective models while building an identity based on what they like
and dislike from their collective experience of running programs.
These collectives have been initiated and led by the generation
born in the last decade of the New Order. The artistic statements in
their programs aim to promote interdisciplinary issues, diversity, a
spirit of contemporaneity, popular art (two-dimensional, digital art,
video, comics, and street art), and alternative music. Functioning as
meeting points, the spaces of these collectives often have food and
beverage business units run by artist members, with their products
presented as "artistic food". Meanwhile, members of the internal team
of the collective work as programmers, facilitators, organizers, public
relations officers, management officials, and space providers. The

collective becomes an intermediary between artists, stakeholders/ supporters of sustainability, and the art public.

Art Collectives' Artistic Negotiation with Donors

International institutions, such as the Japan Foundation (Asia Center), Ford Foundation, Stichting Doen, Hivos, British Council, Institut Français d'Indonésie, and Goethe Institut, play a role for Indonesian collectives who are involved in the programs they support. Some of these collectives include Gudskul Ekosistem (Jakarta, 2018), Kampung Halaman (Yogyakarta, 2006), Hysteria, KUNCI Study Forum & Collective (Yogyakarta, 1999), JaF, Lifepatch, Taring Padi, Waft Lab, Tikar Pandan (Banda Aceh, 2002), Forum Lenteng (Jakarta, 2003), and Rumah Sanur (Denpasar, 2015).

If we interpret a collective program as an artwork, one impact of connecting with such international institutions is an emphasis on cultural dialog between countries through their "state representatives", i.e., the artists involved in these programs. Even though each of the support programs has its own political agenda—internationalism, post-colonial narratives, activism, and different definitions of community such as "non-profit organization", "creative hub", "cultural/ social entrepreneurship"—most of the collectives mentioned above were independent in their practice before the arrival of such support programs. Hence, they have the experience to be firm and shrewd in artistic negotiations, which allows their practice to remain rooted in their collective identity. We can see this in the publication *Membongkar Tirani* by Taring Padi (2011), educational program Sekolah Salah Didik Uji Coba 1 (2016-2019) by KUNCI Study Forum & Collective, Tengok public art project Tengok Bustaman II (Bok Cinta) by Hysteria, and the publication of the comic book *SADAR DINI: Mitigasi Bencana untuk Remaja* by Tikar Pandan (2015).

Tobacco companies' support for collective artistic practice in Indonesia is nothing new in this decade, given that in art activities such as

theater, film, and music-festival collectives have long worked with such private parties. The art of programming art activities that attract crowds is seen by these companies as a strategy for the marketing of their products. The artistic negotiations of collectives working with tobacco companies are thus more about audience quantification and visual strategies in laying out marketing items since generally collectives have full authority over the content of programs and full trust from the companies.

It is these maneuvers that create a mutualism between art collectives' and tobacco companies, instead of parasitism. An art collective's sophistication in conducting negotiations with tobacco companies is also an aspect of the art of programming art activities related to the collective's ethics and politics.

Collective Art Education

In the context of education in Indonesia, art lessons are not integral to elementary education—and thus how students understand the world.

In many of the collective educational art practices that FIXER has surveyed, art is a method for learning or attaining literacy which acts as a form of community capacity-building behind such programs.

We can find this, for example, in the practices of Jendela Ide, Sanggar Anak Akar (Jakarta, 1994), Kampung Halaman, Komunitas Taboo (Bandung, 2009), Kelas Pagi Papua (Jayapura, 2016), SimpaSio Institute (Larantuka, 2016), katakerja (Makassar, 2014), Ketjilbergerak, and Sinau Art.

Some of these collectives have also begun to experiment with education as an artistic practice, such as Sekolah Mendea by Pasirputih, Sekolah Salah Didik by KUNCI Study Forum & Collective, and GUDSKUL: Contemporary Art Collective and Ecosystem Studies by Gudskul Ekosistem. At the local level, this practice is manifested

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in workshops and classes, such as those conducted by Kelas Lasuah by Ladang Rupa, Edukasi Fokus Program by HONF, TITEN by Waft Lab, mural workshops by Komunitas Pojok (Denpasar, 2000), Proyek Kelas Uyel-Uyelan by SURVIVE! Garage (Yogyakarta, 2009), Remedial by Serrum, Raw Power by Ruang MES 56, Remaja Bermedia by Gubuak Kopi, and Studi Kelab SIKU by SIKU Ruang Terpadu.

Figure 8. A class in Sekolah Salah Didik.
Location: KUNCI Study Forum & Collective, Yogyakarta, (2018).
Source: KUNCI Study Forum & Collective.

Figure 9. Remaja Bermedia (Teenagers and Media) by Gubuak Kopi with
Tukang Kupak Pilem and Photo (TKP) Study Club,
a study group of SMAN 2 West Sumatra.
Location: SMAN 2 Solok, West Sumatra (2017).
Source: gubuakkopi.id.

Figure 10. Remaja Bermedia Exhibition: "Unconscious",
with artworks by TKP Study Club.
Location: Gubuak Kopi Gallery, Solok, West Sumatra (2018).
Source: gubuakkopi.id

Educational art thus becomes a driving force for the continuity of collective ideas, since it often serves as a magnet for young people who later become collective members. In many cases, an educational aspect is not only present in programs explicitly labelled as classes or workshops, but also in volunteering work in art activities. Although not all participants of the educational programs of a collective will go on to become members, the strategy of such programs is to expand the art ecosystem of the collective's surrounding area—producing new artists, curators, writers, activists, managers, and new art fans.

Educational art organized by collectives is not only useful for the public, but also acts as a medium of reflection on the practices that the collectives have been working on for years. It can then result in formulaic estimates or speculations about how art can be practiced according to their stylistic preferences and local context. On the other hand, educational programs play a role in introducing members of the collective to the public, because collective work does not mean disguising individuals behind an organizational banner. Without

Figure 11. Production of personal protective equipment.
Location: Gudskul Ekosistem Hall, Jakarta (2020).
Source: Gudskul Ekosistem/Jin Panji.

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carrying out educational programs, art collectives might continue to poke around without ever trying out their internal principles or identifying their members' knowledge as a form of collective strength. What such practice does is thus proposing a way to connect the broken chain of knowledge dissemination, becoming collective-as-school whether intuitively or by design.

The Art of Programming Art Activities with Health Protocols During the COVID-19 Pandemic

The seeds of collective artistic practice in experimenting with food security and health have emerged in the last decades, mainly in those collectives located in rural regions. However, the pandemic led to the proliferation of this trend in many collectives in Indonesia, especially those in urban spaces. Examples of these include Studio Batur (Bandung, 2013),[17] which organizes food labs and yoga sessions; Gudskul Ekosistem, which houses initiatives such as Gudsayur with Tanakita, Sukabumi, Petani Kesorean and the production of personal health equipment; not to mention various community kitchens within the Yogyakarta art ecosystem.[18]

This artistic practice was still ongoing at the time of writing, potentially allowing future development into forms of art programming entirely different from the previous decade—with physical distancing rules and other health protocols provoking certain artistic maneuvers while still gathering under one roof.

[17] Since 2020 Studio Batur has changed its name to Gelanggang Olah Rasa (GOR).
[18] See Nuraini Juliastuti "Art to Live: Experimental Survival Strategies for Economic Independence in Alternative Cultural Art Spaces" in this book on p.,

People Who Make You Laugh Will Help You When You Need It

At the end of this article, we find that the position/role of art in collective practice is a lubricant or connector for various scientific practices because it offers flexibility and an interpretive point of measure. The value of humor also colors this artistic practice, in contrast to art that dominates the art market or established institutional systems that exist in the wider art scene.

Figure 12. Artifacts of Dinas Artistik Kota by Serrum at Pameran Besar Seni Rupa Indonesia. MANIFESTO N0. 4: "Keseharian".
Location: Galeri Nasional Indonesia, Jakarta (2014).
Source: Serrum.

Every collective practice has a different manifestation of humor. It can be an internal joke, gag, witticism, one-liner, meme, sketch, satire, sarcasm, sitcom, dark comedy, observational comedy, or self-deprecation in criticizing or representing art practice and institutional practice as a collective program. For example, Forum Semangka (Watermelon Forum), held by Hysteria, the name of which is derived from the refreshments Hysteria provided at art discussions:

watermelon (as food and drink combined into one), or Dinas Artistik Kota (City Artistic Service), in which Serrum members wear fake versions of the official vests worn by government service employees to trick security officers who are on patrol when they create murals on the street. In these projects one can identify another perspective with which to understand collective artistic practice in Indonesia: the expression of humor in artistic ways.

Figure 13. Propagraphic Movement project by Serrum.
Location: Jl. Asia Afrika, Senayan, Jakarta (2011).
Source: Serrum.

Collective artistic practice challenges us to broaden our ways of understanding art. It requires a sensitivity that lies outside the canonical strictures of conventional modernist art, which, oddly

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...one can identify another perspective with which to understand collective artistic practice in Indonesia: the expression of humor in artistic ways.
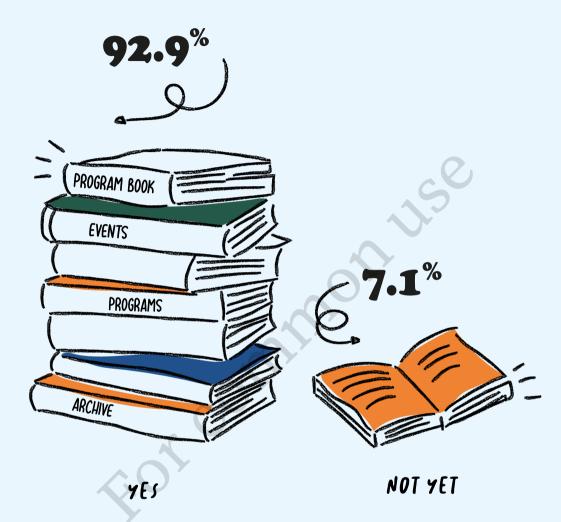
"

enough, has become the popular definition of art. Readers may perceive how troublesome, messy, and inefficient it is to work as an art collective. Still, it is a thriving practice that will continue to grow as a form of opposition to the ideas of efficiency and individualism fostered by the practices of established industry. It is unlikely that this work is something to be done sequentially or systematically as one would carry out academic research; rather, it leaps across, intuitively making linkages and intersections, like the weaving of an *ampang*—a traditional basket of the Batak people, used in the kitchen or for offerings as part of a marriage ritual symbolizing love, peace, joy, and hope.

To quote a Batak Mandailing proverb, "*Suangkon parlus lus ni ampangdo marlumpat-lumpat sada martading-tading dua*." In English, it could be rendered as 'be like an *ampang*, nimble and slipping from one to another while leaving two parts', which means working in a flexible way, without adhering to a certain rigid order.

This is why "art" as a subject has seldom appeared in discussions during our research. For collective actors, their way of life—in all its *ampang*-weaving-like intersections—is itself a form of art.

Depok - Jakarta - Bogor, 2020-2021

Gesyada Siregar

92.9%

PROGRAM BOOK

EVENTS

PROGRAMS

ARCHIVE

YES

7.1%

NOT YET

31 PERFORMANCE

17 WORKSHOP

14 EXHIBITION

14 DISCUSSION

9 FESTIVAL

5 RESIDENCY

4 PUBLICATION

4 FILM SCREENING

2 ECOTOURIST TRIP

Although funding is often uncertain, art collectives in Indonesia are capable of organizing regular activities every year. Perhaps this could be called collective cultural resilience: when a collective is able to use their social capital to support their various programs. These include festivals, performances, workshops, discussions, exhibitions, and film screenings. Some collectives also have regular research or archival programs. All of the regular activities held by these art collectives are influenced by their social context in relation to the public they reach out to. Some of these programs are held regularly to respond to specific issues and problems they face in their immediate environment.[19]

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[19] In the FIXER survey, this question allows a collective to choose more than one answer.

23 BOOK

ZINE **16**

7 ONLINE JOURNAL

7 NEWSLETTER

5 COMIC

3 MAGAZINE
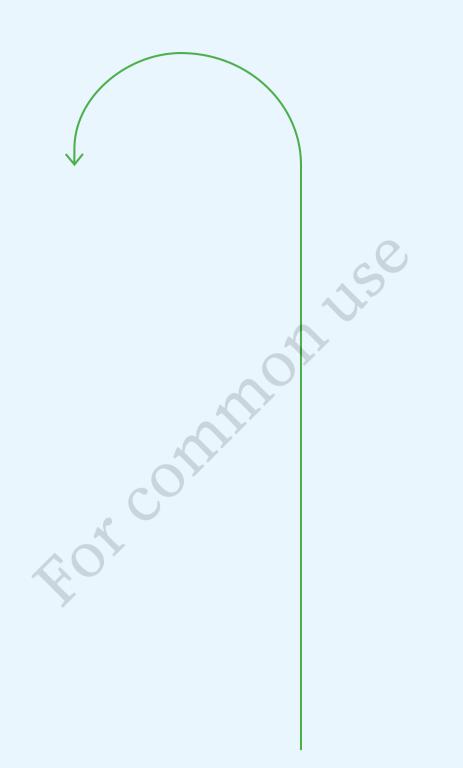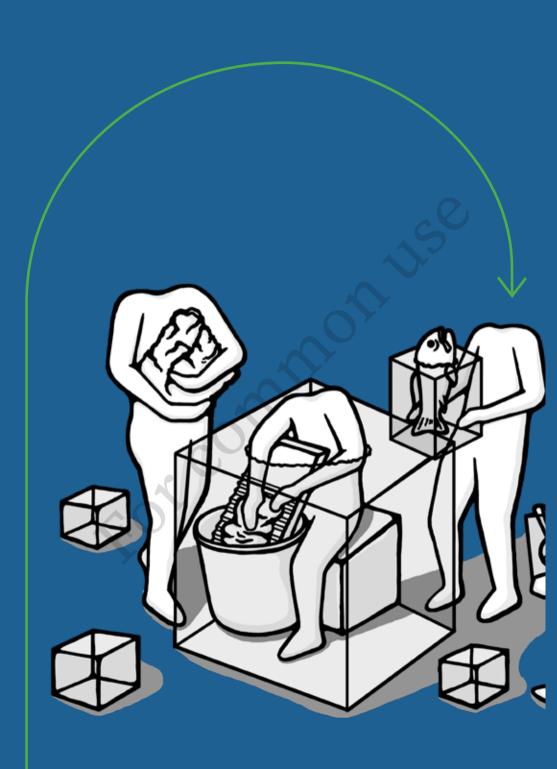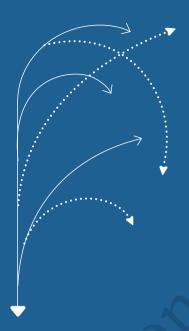
One can trace the processes of these art collectives via their various publications. Most art collectives still see the publication of books, catalogs, magazines, and newsletters as an important step in communicating and documenting their ideas and programs. Others see publication as a form of aesthetic articulation in the form of comics or zines. Hysteria in Semarang has published 100 different zines over the past sixteen years to document the dynamics of art and development in their city. Taring Padi and Pasirputih use comics as a means of transmitting information to the public about social issues happening around them.[20]

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[20] In the FIXER survey, this question allows a collective to choose more than one answer.

Anonymous Creativity
Activism and Collectivism

Hendro Wiyanto

When the window opens, you hear the hustle and bustle/ of the city. "What have I ever given you," said/ the poet, "except this tormented life."/ Poor people barge through the fore. "We want/ your eyes!" they shout. "We want your eyes/ to turn grains of sand trickled from sacks/ into gold on the streets. Give us your eyes, your eyes!"/ Some stand up for the poet. "Remember,/ without his eyes he will be blind!"/ But in desperation people could care less. They/ tear the poet's eyes out of his eye sockets, and through/ both of his eyeballs they see the surrounding world./ But the trickled sand do not turn into gold. They/ become disillusioned and boil and devour the two/ eyeballs. And nothing happens./ The poet, blind and laughing, sits at the window / onto the city. With no eyes he could see everything so/ beautiful. So beautiful!"
Subagio Sastrowardoyo, 1993.[1]

If good art is for all, then surely it should start on the streets we walk.
—ruangrupa's 10th anniversary exhibition, 2010.[2]

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[1] Subagio Sastrowardoyo, "Mata Penyair," in *Horison*, No. 7, XXVII (1993), p. 57.
[2] *Decompression #10: Expanding the Space and Public*, catalog (Jakarta: ruangrupa, 2010), p. 222.

Anonymous Creativity: Activism and Collectivism

In mid to early 2000, an artist and essayist in Jakarta wrote long, complex sentences in his paper, as is shown below:

> "(...) It was only just before the mid-1980s that a concept of the awareness of the importance of direct involvement and a participatory relationship between art and actual problems seemed to appear (it is always suspected to be in a socio-political condition, from which point art must initiate the steps of its internal resolution, of which the first, together with the pretext of merging a reflectional situation into a physical action, is to take realistic action against imagination) through attempts to break the bridge from the observation of objects believed to be reflective signifiers that function as links in the chain that controls interpretation and then utilization of artworks, which seem destined to be placed in the conditions of the nature of conventional judgment, and the last, prompted by the spirit, first of all, of a movement for the liberation of the aesthetic realm, that is, and the death and renewal of the symbolistic dysfunctions of the elemental order of art."[3]

I have attempted to quote verbatim the part of this essay, which caught my attention when I began gathering material for this paper. From it we obtain a clue about a period of time, namely the "mid-1980s." This period is the background of the writer's observations about a new tendency—a certain "concept of awareness" in the art world, namely "the importance of direct involvement and a participatory relationship between art and actual problems." Around that time, artistic practices seemed to be incrementally developing toward a certain tendency, or "pretext", based on "socio-political conditions." It was thought that the impetus for this change was a desire to solve certain problems that plagued society. Art, or so it was implied, should no longer be seen as a world of inner contemplation;

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[3] Ugeng T. Moetidjo, "Pemerihalan 'Khalayak' sebagai Suatu Tendensi yang Tertentu", a paper presented at the Japan Foundation, Jakarta (2000).

or, in more concrete ways, artists were no longer contemplating subjects—whether in their studios or elsewhere—but were "merging a reflectional situation into a physical action."[4]

It is said in that essay that a new situation emerged, which was seemingly not reflected in the art world, and at the following stages even tended to show certain attitudes that could be defined as "realism against the imagination."[5] According to the same essay, it was around this period that art objects could no longer be properly taken as reflective signifiers that called for various interpretations, as had happened with their fate, so far determined mainly by "the conditions of the nature of conventional judgment."[6]

[4] The term "physical action" first of all reminds us of what the critic Sanento Yuliman generally referred to as a "new perspective" in the mid-1970s. Through this "new perspective", artworks were seen as real objects, presenting concrete and human experiences in an exhibition space. And, at a later stage, if necessary, the presence of these objects/things would even physically disturb the audience. The 1980s provided more emphatic examples of this "physical action" in particular, for instance, through the emergence of a tendency toward performance art. Such action was generally referred to as "more than just an exhibition."
    The exhibition "Pasaraya Dunia Fantasi" (1987) at Taman Ismail Marzuki also took place during this period. A result of several artists' collaborative work, this exhibition presented and parodied various forms of urban expression, which overwhelmed daily life in big cities such as Jakarta (urban lifestyle trends, advertising culture, popular mass media, film posters, calendars, stickers, comics). However, this spatial installation—in contrast to the previous performative tendency—actually tended to dampen physical action. Visual elements and tangible objects in the exhibition space—"situational artworks"—appeared as silent configurations, not intended to arouse or invite the audience's physical response to such broad and concrete themes. The exhibition was "multi-sensory in nature" that emphasized "too much on the visual (two-dimensional) and did not display three-dimensional objects that could be 'handled' by the public." See Sanento Yuliman, "Parodi Pasaraya", in *Estetika yang Merabunkan: Bunga Rampai Esai dan Kritik Seni Rupa (1969-1992)*, (Jakarta: Jakarta Arts Council and Penerbit Gang Kabel, 2020), p. 565.
[5] This expression immediately brings to my memory a very "realistic" scene when an artist called Semsar Siahaan tried to end the "imagination" of his own works. Semsar set fire to 250 of his drawings in the hall of the Yayasan Pembina Kesenian Building (YPK—Art Board Foundation), Bandung, after exhibiting them in a number of cities (Jakarta, Yogyakarta, Surakarta, Salatiga, and Bandung) on April 10, 1988. However, as Semsar's realistic action showed, in my opinion, "against imagination" is not necessarily synonymous with "non-reflective."
[6] Even though it doesn't feel like it fits the timeframe given by the writer, this sentence, for some reason, instantly brings to my memory an A.D. Pirous's painting, *Mentari Setelah September 1965* (The Sun After September 1965), finished in 1968. This work creates a stark contrast in interpretation among art historians and anthropologists (and the artist himself): does the work signify "visual resistance" as "criticism of the Soeharto regime", or does it signify the arrival of the "aesthetic regime" that shows the artist's "joy" after the "gloom and suffering after 1966"? See Kenneth M. George, *Politik Kebudayaan di Dunia Seni Rupa Kontemporer: A.D. Pirous dan Medan Seni Indonesia* (Yogyakarta: Cemeti Art Foundation, 2005), pp. 25, 41.

Figure 1. A situational work at the exhibition "Pasaraya Dunia Fantasi".
Location: Main Exhibition Hall, Taman Ismail Marzuki, Jakarta (1987).
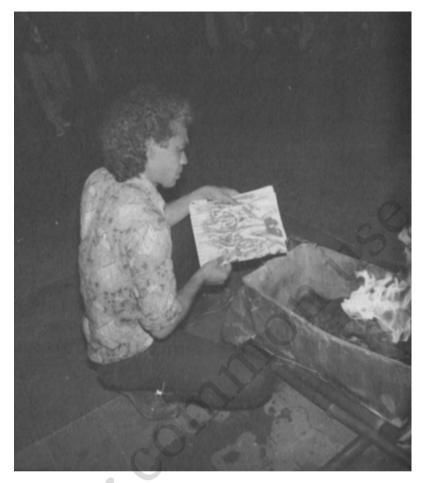Source: F.X. Harsono.

Figure 2. Semsar Siahaan (1952-2005) burns his own drawings.
Location: Hall of Yayasan Pembina Kesenian, Bandung (1988).
Source: *The Book Seni Manubilis: Semsar Siahaan 1952-2005* (2017).

The next step, or what the writer calls "the last", is expressed more straightforwardly as a severance of the "bridge" or "link" between the two questions he observed. It is the severance between the "observation of objects believed to be reflective signifiers" and the emergence of a new tendency of art practice, "prompted by the spirit, first of all, of the movement for the liberation of the aesthetic realm, that is, and the death and renewal of the symbolistic dysfunctions of

the elemental order of art."[7] This "liberation movement" immediately came face to face with the tradition of symbolism in art practice, erasing but also renewing it. However, more importantly, regarding the relationship between art and actual problems, this new artistic concept of awareness "seemed to appear".

This somewhat complicated essay, written in a distinctive style, has helped me get into the next period. In fact, this period marked the emergence of practices of "direct involvement and a participatory relationship" between art and its actual problems, which can no longer be described with the phrase "seemed to appear." Some of the descriptions in this brief article will often return to the same essay, either to borrow some of its phrases and expressions or to untangle—or to question—its complexity. We can even use its time frame as points of contact for various new developments in our art world, to bring us to the era of the 2000s and beyond.

The Debate of Two Collectives

In April 2000, a community of artists was founded in Jakarta under the name ruru, which is short for *ruang and rupa*—space and visual. The essay by Ugeng T. Moetidjo above was written just a few months after ruru was founded, marking one of the first public space agendas launched by this group of young artists. In mid-2000, ruru held an open debate between two recently founded artist communities in Yogyakarta, namely Apotik Komik (1997) and Taring Padi (1998).[8] In

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[7] Inevitably, the phrase "liberation of the aesthetic realm" set in the 1980s reminds us of some young artists' tendency to go beyond the tradition of formalism and aestheticism. In Bandung, in the late 1980s, for example, there emerged the group Sumber Waras that accommodated some students of Fakultas Seni Rupa dan Desain Institut Teknologi Bandung (FSRD ITB—Faculty of Art and Design of the Bandung Institute of Technology) who leaned towards performance actions. This move became known as "*jeprut*", "*ngejeprut*", and "*jepruters*". It was considered original and distinctive, *sui generis*, as the artist's reaction to the socio-political situation and the restrictions on aesthetic expression under the political regime in Indonesia at that time.

In 1985, Moelyono submitted his project "Kesenian Unit Desa" (Village Unit Art), the result of his observations of farmers' daily life in the village of Waung, Tulungagung, for his final exam at Fakultas Seni Rupa Institut Seni Indonesia, Yogyakarta (FSR ISI Yogyakarta—Faculty of Visual Arts, Indonesian Art Institute, Yogyakarta). Next, field research and designs by a number of artists in Jakarta and Bandung resulted in the exhibition "Pasaraya Dunia Fantasi" with the 1987 Manifesto Gerakan Seni Rupa Baru (New Art Movement): "Art of Liberation, Liberation of Art." The manifesto was written by artist-cum-critic Jim Supangkat together with Sanento Yuliman.

[8] Ugeng T. Moetidjo's paper, of which I have cited several parts, was presented as material for the debate between the two groups. The event was held as "ruangrupa's first public space art project", at the Japan Foundation, Jakarta, June 17, 2000.

Hendro Wiyanto

the late 1990s, an awareness of the openness and liberation of public space—a real, emerging issue, and responded to by students and young people who rallied in the streets before the fall of the New Order regime in May 1998—turned into a kind of artistic activism in urban public spaces in various forms of representation. This practice of activism and activist artists generally began to be identified and referred to in the mid-1980s. Lucy Lippard, the art critic who founded several feminist artist collectives, described activist art as a practice in which "some element of the art takes place in the 'outside world,' including some teaching and media practice as well as community and labor organizing, public political work, and organizing within artist's community." Activist art is "the opposite of those aesthetic practices that, however well-intentioned or overtly political in content, remain dependent on the space of the museum for their meaning."[9]

While an institutional framework such as museums that formalize messages of anti-fascism in paintings such as *Guernica*—or the political works of Lembaga Kebudayaan Rakyat (Lekra, the People's Cultural Institution), for example—is absent, activism in the development of art in Indonesia is defined as an attempt by contemporary artists to analyze social problems with an approach that is no longer intuitive, but critical and rational, and present their work as a form of socio-political awareness/concern in an open space. One of the social issues that artists in Indonesia often raised at that time was environmental damage and the relationship between humans and nature.

[9] Gregory Sholette, "News from Nowhere: Activist Art and After: A Report from New York City 9," in *Third Text* 45, (Winter 1998-99), p. 49.

Figure 3. *Konsep Alam Terbuka*, environmental artwork
of Bonyong Munny Ardhie.
Location: Parangtritis Beach, Yogyakarta (1974).
Source: IVAA (Indonesian Visual Art Archives).

The two communities of young artists, Apotik Komik and Taring Padi,
as mentioned above, would later be seen as marking the blossoming
of similar communities of young artists. After the formation of ruru in
Jakarta in early 2000, the trend or shift from activism to collectivism
appeared to be increasing in various regions in Indonesia. Collectivism
is defined by Ade Darmawan as artists' organizations and groups that

> "(...) have at least two tendencies in their art practices. First
> is their artistic work that they do collaboratively as well as
> individually, which itself functions as an artistic statement.
> Second is the fact that these artists' organizations and groups
> have significant public awareness, as they manage a variety of

activities for the public such as holding exhibitions, workshops, festivals, discussions, film and video screenings; releasing publications; maintaining websites; conducting archival work and research. It is the combination of these two practices that clearly differentiate the roles and kinds of the artists' organizations and groups that are developing today with those of the previous generations."[10]

However, in ruru's vocabulary, the shift from "activism" that "seemed to appear" towards collectivism in the 1980s—as "real awareness", no longer "seemed to"—did not completely eliminate individual roles or careers (whether those of artists or non-artists). Ardi Yunanto—who joined ruru in 2004—said, "ruru was designed so loosely that everybody could continue to work individually." This was to describe the "activism" that can be executed by individuals and groups, both inside and outside ruru. And, "rather than seeing ruangrupa as a rigid organization that believes that anyone can be placed in a certain position within it, perhaps it is more fitting to view it as a musical group, which over time enriches itself with many musicians and assorted instruments." And, perhaps because ruru was "designed so loosely," the office was often burglarized. It wasn't until 2015 that this well-known art collective had a 24-hour security guard.[11]

The emergent tendency for artist collectives, among other things, seems to have been driven by the increasing spread of ruru's initiatives and enterprises in organizing a series of presentations and workshops—especially in video art—for young artists and the public outside Jakarta. It can be said that video art was the main actor-medium in the development of contemporary art in Indonesia in the 2000s, a shift from artists' penchant for installation art in the 1990s. The rapidly burgeoning models of artist initiatives through

[10] Ade Darmawan, "Fixing the Chain of the Cycle of Ideas" in *FIXER: Alternative Spaces and Art Groups in Indonesia,* catalog (Jakarta: North Art Space, 2010), p. 18.
[11] Ardi Yunanto, Ajeng Nurul Aini, Ade Darmawan, Indra Ameng, *ruangrupa 2000-2015* (ruangrupa: Jakarta, 2015), published in the 15th anniversary of ruangrupa and the opening of ORDE BARU OK. Video - Indonesia Media Arts Festival, on June 14, 2015, at the Galeri Nasional Indonesia, Jakarta.

the formation of collectives/groups/communities by artists can be seen, for example, in the last decade of the 2000s. *FIXER: An Exhibition of Alternative Spaces & Art Groups in Indonesia*, held in Jakarta in 2010, for example, documented dozens of such groups—with distribution covering cities outside Jakarta, such as Bandung, Yogyakarta, Cirebon, Jatiwangi, Semarang, Surabaya, Malang, even Makassar and Padang Panjang.

ruru's Turn

ruru's turn in 2000 was marked by a debate that it organized between two communities of young artists in Yogyakarta regarding public spaces, which signaled what had become the focus of this young artists' community in Jakarta. As mentioned above, Ugeng had touched on "the question of the public" as a certain tendency among artists in the previous era. The two artists' groups in 2000, as expected, developed at least two different formulations about the function and nature of public space. *First*, as shown by Taring Padi's practice, public space was integral part of art activism—from the making of billboards containing messages of social empowerment to organizing festivals—with the public as broad and general as possible in every space where their "political" agenda would be implemented. If public space was interpreted as an arena of social action—a person's conscious action to influence and prompt reactions from other people or parties—then Taring Padi's activism was, first of all, an artistic statement with a purpose or a message expected to bring about political change in social life. *Second*, as exemplified by Apotik Komik's activism, the agenda of that debate attempted to expand the area of artistic expression or conversation, to free artists themselves from the confinement of art politics within the art world that surrounded them.

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Figure 4. *Action Against the Fuel Price Hike* by the collective Taring Padi.
Location: Yogyakarta (2003).
Source: Taring Padi: Seni Membongkar Tirani.

Thus, Taring Padi would consider public space to be a political space in
which their interventions did not necessarily have to be labeled "art",
while Apotik Komik would refer to the public space as an artistic space
in which their interventions did not necessarily have to be labeled
"political". Taring Padi artists would prefer their activism in the public
space to liberate the public from socio-political repression or certain
forms of cultural hegemony, while Apotik Komik would enjoy their
artistic freedom in the public space from a certain institutional, and
therefore "political", hegemony in the art world. The choices of the
public space for the two groups would also naturally be determined
by the differences in their political and aesthetic orientations,
whether realized or not. For Taring Padi, activism could only be born
in public space, while for Apotik Komik, public space was another
alternative to activities in the crowded art world, which could no
longer accommodate their artistic ideas and messages. In other words,
the tension between the two—as has been well recorded by *Jurnal
Karbon*, a journal published by ruru—is the distinction between two
views: "anticonventional while grasping societal problems" (Apotik

Komik) and "physical and psychological struggles in standing up for the oppressed" (Taring Padi).[12]

Apparently, ruru's position in the early 2000s was like a tension cable holding up this "question of the public". However, the real challenges in the art world that gave birth to, and were faced by, ruru are typical of the Jakartan urban environment. This urban space is a reflection of the accumulated complexity of social problems confronted by all urban environments in Indonesia, as a result of accelerated development or modernization projects in Indonesia launched in the early 1970s. For ruru, apart from this problem, no less important was the question of "cultural politics"[13] taking place in art institutions—which tended to be concentrated in Jakarta. There was a wide gap between the cultural politics of the "arts center" in this capital city and citizens' cultural expressions. On a practical level, the gap was between the dominant aesthetic tendency—which was strongly oriented toward aesthetics— and the daily expressions of its citizens.[14]

This tendency toward aesthetics can be seen from the prominent Indonesian poet's expression in the poem quoted at the beginning of this paper. While ruru's "cultural politics" is represented by the

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[12] Ugeng T. Moetidjo, "Publik, Guna dan Akalcara: Tidak Terkadang, Bertempatlah Itu di dalam Seni Rupa" in *Karbon* (2000), pp. 1-11.

[13] The sociology of art in Indonesia generally views two main problems in urban artistic expression. First, urban art has not really become part of "urban culture" and is still under the influence of "backwater culture (coastal, hinterland, rural and imaginary areas of palace culture)." Second, art institutions in an urban setting tend to regulate culture in a "center-regional" or "top-down" relationship. See "Kesenian Kota Dipengaruhi 'Kebudayaan Garis Belakang' (Urban Art is Influenced by 'Backwater Culture'," *Kompas*, February 10, 1988.

From that point of view, ruru's turn actually reversed this tendency, making "urban culture" a part of urban art/artistic expression.

Another problem is that there is still a strong view of culture/art in Indonesia that's more "polemical" than "political". A major cultural polemic revolves around culture based on arguments regarding "source" (origins of cultural influence), "commitment" (specific goals of artwork), and "validity" (regarding quality/canon of beauty of artwork). It is time for such polemicizing culture to be replaced by politicizing it, or producing a design of "cultural politics" (See Ignas Kleden, "Pergeseran Nilai Moral, Perkembangan Kesenian dan Perubahan Sosial" in *Kalam*, 8th Edition, 1996).

In other words, if the "cultural polemic" produces dichotomous views or binary opposition between choices of either/or in culture, then "cultural politics" emphasizes cultural works, namely the tendency to cultivate and utilize various cultural resources, without being trapped in choices of particular/ universal commitments, embracing various ideas about beauty. Thus, the "cultural politics" pursued by ruru can also be described as a twist to step away from either/or choices, between identity/nonidentity, and between specific art audience/public citizens.

[14] "Aestheticism" is defined as the use of aesthetic categories, namely those regarding the values of beauty in art, to respond to values outside the realm of beauty and to view social problems with a purely aesthetic lens. (See Ignas Kleden, *ibid*). The poem by Subagio Sastrowardoyo quoted above is arguably the best example of "aestheticism".

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explicitness of an anonymous author on the FIXER 2010 exhibition poster. This politics means that there is no special area of aesthetics in artistic expression, whether it comes from "hustle and bustle of the city" or a poet's eyeballs that long for "beauty" and end up blind.

> **This politics means that there is no special area of aesthetics in artistic expression, whether it comes from "hustle and bustle of the city" or a poet's eyeballs that long for "beauty" and end up blind.**

Indeed, ruru's turn is almost without precedent in the history of art collectives. They decided to "work on their projects as they go along, courageously, unafraid of making mistakes, and with conviction—because there aren't many examples at the first place." As mentioned above, this collective has often been imagined by one of its members as a musical group that "enriches itself with many musicians and various instruments," rather than a group of—whatever the number—"poet[s], blind and laughing, sit[ting] at the window / onto the city."

By and large, ruru has grown by deploying its collective activism in two issues at once: urban culture and the rapid development of information and communication technology. How these issues are closely intertwined shows a continuous shift as well as the simultaneity of their current states in the global world. An example of this activism and shift is manifested in OK.

Video's organizing model, previously a festival (since 2003)— again almost unprecedented in Indonesia among other festivals. OK. Video then developed into an institutional division that focuses on the development of media technology-based art in Indonesia through workshops, archiving, production, and distribution of media artworks in Indonesia.[15]
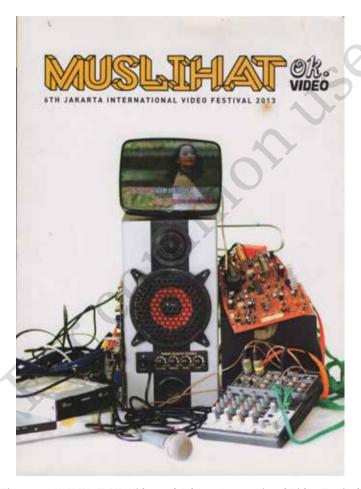

Figure 5. MUSLIHAT OK. Video—6th Jakarta International Video Festival Catalog (2013).
Source: Hendro Wiyanto.

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[15] Ardi Yunanto, Ajeng Nurul Aini, Ade Darmawan, Indra Ameng (2015).

The first festival of OK. Video (2003) attempted to bring together these two domains, while realizing the unique situation in Indonesia: an "experience of art history and technology (that) had developed separately." On the one hand, new discoveries in technology would open up new possibilities in the artistic sphere along with the use of video media and moving images. However, artists also absorbed the experiences of people who incorporated these technological developments into their ways of life. In the hands of citizens or technology consumers, technology wasn't simply a consumer good, but shifted to become a means of production as well—often an "aesthetic trick."[16]

Unclearly separating the reality of the virtual world or simulacra that exploded through the high technology of communication from people's real "strategies"—including the artistic inspirations behind such "strategies"—was a phenomenon that marked the shift of distinctions in real geographical boundaries between the "First World" and the "Third World". However, along with this phenomenon, another emerged which could be called a Digital Third World. The first and the second were intertwined within the facility of technology accessible from anywhere, without barriers or boundaries. However, this third world of the digital realm was another reality that remained unreachable by that platform, people who were unable to obtain or access "the Net", which was increasingly becoming a primary need. This reality, says the Nigerian-American artist, Olu Oguibe, is widespread around the world, both in the "Third World" and the "First World", both in Africa and in the United States.[17]

Bent on eliminating the attribute of "art" in the title of the festival, with continuous video workshops in various regions or small cities, this agenda implicitly looked at "the Net", which was essentially an extension of everyday reality, instead of the reality of the Third World,

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[16] Mahardika Yudha, "Sudah Waktunya Menggunakan Hak Jawab Kita" in *MUSLIHAT OK. Video: 6th Jakarta International Video Festival 2013*, catalog (Jakarta: ruangrupa, 2013), p. 6.
[17] Massimiliano Gioni, "An Interview with Olu Oguibe," in *Third Text* 47 (Summer, 1999), p. 52.

as a kind of "Jurassic Park", where anything could be created and engineered. In the context of such a "strategy", the actual conditions of people's daily existence seized artists' attention more than their ability to "lose [themselves] entirely in the alluring fictions of creative scientific narratives."[18]

In the FIXER 2010 exhibition, Ade Darmawan wrote that art collectives such as ruru and others "altered the position of the artists in the midst of their society" after 1998. A collective was seen as an opportunity and attempt to fix the "severance in the chain of the production cycle of art ideas," which would "bring ideas into the larger context of the public."[19] And, although ruru was a "model" for art practice in the urban environment of Jakarta, their strategy to expand the art world's audience to include the general public could be very flexibly applied in other places. This approach can be called a political art strategy as part of everyday politics—that is, interpreting public space as the "inevitability of us."[20] Citizens' involvement is one thing, but artists' daily aesthetic problem seems to be an increasingly "uniform" creative issue that has the same global scope: the relationship between art and technology.

Jakarta is a strange art scene for ruru. Being the environment of a center for art considered as the "canon" of top-quality achievement, very influential and the orientation of artists across Indonesia, it is actually "unfriendly" to young artists or aspiring artists. In fact, Jakarta "has never been considered a city that produces artists when compared to Bandung and Yogyakarta."[21] And thus, the idea of establishing an artist community can be imagined as one way to overcome the "unfriendliness", as well as the elitism, of the Jakartan

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[18] *Ibid.*, p. 53.
[19] Ade Darmawan (2010), pp. 14-15.
[20] This inevitability reads like this: "Even if something which is usually called public space does not exist, as long as we wish for a sense of 'us', and the coordination of living together is condensed in the term 'us', the public space—cannot not—be created." (B. Herry-Priyono S.J., "Menyelamatkan Ruang Publik", in *Ruang Public: Melacak "Partisipasi Demokratis" dari Polis sampai Cyberspace,* ed. F. Budi Hardiman (Yogyakarta: Penerbit Kanisius, 2010), pp. 370-371.
[21] Agung Hujatnikajennong, "Kepada Mereka yang Mencintai Jakarta" in *Decompression #10: Expanding the Space and Public,* catalog (Jakarta: ruangrupa, 2010), p. 13.

art scene. Indeed, this unfriendliness can be felt by anyone, not only artists, in Jakarta's public spaces, which raises deep urban problems of its own. The intertwined issues of public space and citizenship were thus a central issue for the young artists who founded ruru. This complex issue connected various parts of the art world, as well as the common problem faced by citizens, as part of "us". Realizing the centrality of this matter, the public that is imagined, and is ruru's main focus, is not the same as what has often been referred to, albeit in more limited ways, by the art community as "the art public."

The public, in ruru's terms (2010), is "a group of individuals with social, political, and cultural motives in which people negotiate with each other to compile narratives of history, identity, and collective imagination in a wider, more socially complete realm."[22] Hence, there has been no phrase more cited by young artists in the post-2000 period than "public awareness," or "the question of the public" in Ugeng's essay. This phrase means a platform upon which the activism of various young artist communities is based, and has replaced another expression more frequently heard in the past: "an artist's awareness."[23]

Let's return to Ugeng's essay to point to something outside of "an artist's awareness." In that essay, the artist's "public awareness" can be traced in the narrative of the development of art history in Indonesia as "aesthetic praxis" and "technical praxis." In the context of the artist's awareness of "the question of the public", there are similarities between "aesthetic praxis" and "technical praxis", namely the desire to make art into something more "impersonal", involving more or less "common ownership" or "use". If "aesthetic

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[22] *Ibid.*, p. 212.

[23] In the theory of art institutions and the art world, for example, an artwork is defined as an object/thing/artifact; a set of aspects attached to that object/thing/artifact, providing it with the status of a "candidate for appreciation" for a number of people acting on behalf of a particular social institution. The "art world" consists of the following core members: artists; presenters, or parties presenting an artwork; and the audience/viewers, or parties who appreciate the work. A theater audience or visitor to an exhibition, for example, is not someone who just happens to be watching. As part of the "art world", they come with certain expectations and knowledge about what to watch, and understand what to do when dealing with the work. "Artists' awareness" in the art world is directed toward the art audience in that particular sense. In this context, theoretically, citizens or the general public are not included in core members of an art world.

praxis" emphasizes participation, involvement, and partisanship, then "technical praxis"—for example seen in individual artwork—is indirect in nature, yet it places the role of "intuitive" enlightenment with standard rules that apply to both parties (artist and the public). "Aesthetic praxis" is a conscious effort to turn "visible art" into an idea of "engaged art" or "praxis"—by including any visual and nonvisual elements (conception, actual theme). The artist's awareness of "aesthetic praxis" and "technical praxis" is a "border between real and imaginary actions." For Ugeng, in a certain period of development, these two praxes must also face "praxis of reality."[24]

The "praxis of reality" foregrounds art's political function and has been tried, for example, by Lekra artists in the 1950s to mid 1965. However, their representation in Ugeng's opinion failed to integrate the aesthetic and the political. This tendency of integration between "aesthetic praxis" and the "praxis of reality" is precisely what is demonstrated by the activism trend of artist collectives of post-2000. The activist practices of several young art collectives will be briefly discussed in the following section.

Activism and Collectivism: Citizens' Strategy

"Can we access the world of art without having the skill to draw, paint, and such?"[25] This "naive" question was raised by a young curator in Makassar—a reflection of his own personal experience—while involved in the Curators Lab at the 2015 Jakarta Biennale: "Neither Back nor Forward: Acting in the Present." On that occasion several young Indonesian curators worked together with the seasoned lead curator, Charles Esche, describing the biennale as an event for "celebrating small victories" of citizens. What are these "small victories"?

Anwar "Jimpe" Rahman, armed with the "naive" question above, defined it in the context of citizenship. He wrote that citizens are

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[24] Ugeng T. Moetidjo (2000).
[25] *Jakarta Biennale — Maju Kena Mundur Kena: Bertindak Sekarang,* catalog (Jakarta: Jakarta Biennale, 2015), p. 34.

those who "have been defeated by the political and social structures for so long. Only art and literature give a huge opportunity to voice their hopes, in their attempts for sovereignty. Art and literature can energize people and boost their power to maintain the environment and the humans in it."[26]

If the "small victories" of art represent citizens' strategies or power in coping with socio-political problems, then the Jakarta Biennale can be interpreted as a form of institutional/collective activism that represents those various strategies. The "art" of a biennale is no longer simply a picture of the latest artistic development; it has shifted to become a "praxis of reality"—beginning from this "naive" question. Thus, art is not only seen as a "socio-political function"; (art) activism itself is a political event. At least that's the trend we have seen in biennales lately, such as the one in Jakarta in 2015.

Another young curator, also a member of the Curators Lab, Benny Wicaksono, described a biennale as "a place for negotiation and cultural transaction." Transaction and negotiation are not only a matter of aesthetic values but also "relate to other social and economic issues." In fact, he maintained that Indonesian biennales—unlike those of developed countries—should not be interpreted only within the scope of arts, but within the broader scope of "the cultural."[27] Meanwhile, for Putra Hidayatullah (another young curator of the Curators Lab), art practices were increasingly being recognized as "newness" that "is further away or even against cultural definitions that are sometimes devoid of meaning."[28]

The opposition to "cultural definitions that are sometimes devoid of meaning" is apparently built upon sociological criticism toward "aesthetic perception" or art practices that have become historically institutionalized. The French thinker, Pierre Bourdieu, referred to

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[26] *Ibid.*, p. 37.
[27] *Ibid.*, p. 58.
[28] *Ibid.*, p. 28.

such perception of art—let's say "high art"—as something historical, emphasizing difference, and with an awareness of deviations (*écarts*) that lead to the birth of artistic styles. Being outside this realm, one would look like a "naive" painter or observer outside of art history, unable to grasp an understanding of distinctive artworks whose values are related to the distinctive history of artistic traditions. This is because perceiving aesthetic symptoms demands specific abilities in an autonomous sphere of art production, inseparable from the specifics of cultural competence. Mastery over aesthetic matters—the main element in the aristocracy of culture—can only be obtained through contact with artworks that are studied without going through explicit rules or criteria. Even among aesthetists, said Bourdieu, the criteria for determining certain stylistic properties or (art) styles, for example, remain implicit.[29]

A biennale is a collective work, no longer a yardstick to "implicitly" mark the achievements of artists but to show citizens' "explicit" strategies and life forces, to become a "bienniale" of people's projects and small victories. An example of this was illustrated by Anwar "Jimpe" Rahman through the work of residents of Kampung Pisang, a dense residential area of southern Makassar. Since early 2000s, they have been planning to build a kampong using excavated dirt from a lake construction in the GMTDC's area (Gowa-Makassar Tourism Development Corporation), which has been constantly under threat of eviction. Artists presented strategies such as this at the biennale. Forms of representation would re-examine the effectiveness of language, or visual narratives would re-present such strategies rather than focusing on "artistic" values.

Another young curator carried out a residential survey in collaboration with Paguyuban Warga Strenkali Surabaya (PWSS, Surabaya Strenkali Residents Association), an organization of residents whose occupation of that particular section of the riverbank was considered illegal by

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[29] Pierre Bourdieu, "Distinction & the Aristocracy of Culture", in *Cultural Theory and Popular Culture,* ed. John Storey (Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 1998), p. 433.

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the local government. Although their residential area was not far from PDAM (the regional state water company), and although they kept their section of the river clean, clean water did not flow into their area. The artist collectives Lifepatch (Yogyakarta) and Bik Van der Pol (Rotterdam) collected data from the survey and their work was exhibited at the 2015 Jakarta Biennale. Bik Van der Pol (consisting of two artists, Liesbeth Bik and Jos van der Pol) "maps out the human interactions behind social tensions which often escape public narratives and observations."[30] Meanwhile, the collective Lifepatch, in collaboration with microbiologists, executed a campaign about the value of *kelor* seed (*Moringa oleifera*), mashed and then mixed with water and filtered, to become an alternative solution for residents on the river bank who did not get clean water from PDAM, their "neighbor".[31]

We shall return again to the excerpt from Ugeng's essay. The development of art's function as a symbol to a practice of activism came about by "break[ing] the bridge" between the two in the mid-1980s. If we borrow this term, in the early 2000s, the progression from the practice of activism to collectivism in turn required a connective bridge through the use of the term "public" or "citizen". Above, we have repeatedly referred to the "public awareness" that has become a new guide for art collectives. The shifts in meaning around the terms "people," "public," "audience", and "citizen" in art discourses are certainly beyond the scope of this paper.[32] However, one thing is clear—to borrow a phrase from political philosophy—a shift has happened from the purview of identity to the problem of identification. Identity politics presupposes "political absolutism" and absolutism in politics demands the practice of violence. As for the practice of identification, "the individual is oriented to a field of social values that is constantly changing, and in that way he or she learns about pluralism."[33] In this

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[30] *Jakarta Biennale — Maju Kena Mundur Kena: Bertindak Sekarang, catalog* (Jakarta: Jakarta Biennale, 2015), p. 114.
[31] *Ibid*.
[32] In his paper, Ugeng T. Moetidjo, for example, wrote, "In art, 'the people' must still be seen as an abstract construct unless they have been drawn into the collective consciousness that is even free and unrelated to the calculation of sum." In this essay, there is no explanation regarding the difference between the terms "people" and "public" in the development of art discourses in Indonesia.
[33] Rocky Gerung, "Pengantar: Kita dan Politik," in *Kembalinya Politik: Pemikiran Politik Kontemporer dari (A) rendt sampai Z(izek)* (Jakarta: Perhimpunan Pendidikan Demokrasi [P2D] and Marjin Kiri, 2008), p. xvii.

context, the individual can be replaced by a collective subject. Identification processes to get artist ideas rid of various forms of "compressed" identity in the work itself, for example, can be found in "samsudin," a character (and noncharacter) in a very funny comic, "samsudin dan kereta api" (2004) by Narpati Awangga. Narpati Awangga is an artist who is interested in idioms and sequence images in comics. He drew mini comic panels of 5 x 3.5 cm on computer to produce a distinctive cartoon image. The sequence of images is like a series of stop motion of which the entire narrative represents our impossibility of understanding "samsudin". Narpati or oomleo, among other things, wrote:

> "...samsudin ran fast because he was afraid of the PKI. PKI is also afraid of meeting samsudin, afraid of not knowing samsudin... many thought that samsudin was a livestock animal. there was no electricity then but the polytron cable was already there ... samsudin didn't like indonesia raya in the dangdut version. samsudin has 3 electric guitars, but in his house there was no electricity... samsudin once tried to gather 30 indonesian magicians to bewitch and torture bob marley from a distance, but samsudin couldn't bear to do it because bob marley is a reggae singer. then all the witchcraft masters sent spells to each other..."[34]

and so on.[35] In the comic, "samsudin" is the center of image together with a railroad track and a locomotive "moving" forward, suggesting stories that are not connected to one another. This comic identifies the complexities of problems surrounding "samsudin," which are almost impossible for himself to describe. samsudin's "identity" becomes very blurred, his presence is not important—similar to or the same as the locomotive and railroad track that are always with him—and in fact shaped by the multiplication of non-samsudins, the problems surrounding "samsudin".

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[34] PKI (Partai Komunis Indonesia)—Indonesian Communist Party.
[35] *Decompression #10: Expanding the Space and Public,* catalog (Jakarta: ruangrupa, 2010), p. 45.
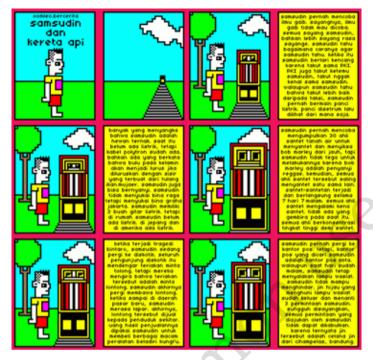
Figure 6. Narpati Awangga's work, *samsudin dan kereta api* (2004).
Source: ruangrupa's 10th anniversary exhibition catalog,
Decompression #10: Expanding the Space and Public.

The public or citizen has become a bridge between the activism of the mid-1980s and the collectivist tendencies in the 2000s. However, while 1980s activism—remember, for example, the famous practice of the "art of conscientization"—presented the individual voice of the artist, a collective initiative echoes the struggle of identification regarding issues of citizenship and public space, just as oomleo depicted it in his work. If the activism of the 1980s model made an exhibition or an exhibition hall a kind of terminal for an activist's adventures and explorations, the public space for artist collectives would be their arena, target, engagement, victory, and defeat.

Activist art, by definition, is art that wants to break free from the approach of "isms" in the fine arts. On the other hand, the collectivism of the 2000s—and beyond—does not presuppose any guilt for any "ism"

in which art might be categorized. Activism in itself connects us with the tendency of collectivism when the image of an artist is not primarily as an activist, but exists as part of the commons or collective subject. The activist subject—by breaking the bridge to the "object as a reflective signifier"—tends to be afflicted by certain burdens of art history. On the other hand, the collective subject is free from such burdens. The activist subject, for example, tries to free him/herself from the poet's pure gaze, as we can see from the poem quoted above. The collective subject, on the other hand, does not view a mode of representation as more important than the object it represents. The collective subject finds "art" in public spaces, amid the hustle and bustle of the city,[36] as suggested by the text of the anonymous artist at the 2010 ruru exhibition.

In this case, activism/collectivism is neither style, pattern, or uniformity. The artists, for example, do not design a global platform to win a Nobel prize, or any similarly prestigious recognition. This is because what is most relevant is precisely "diverse projects around the world that are not initiated by the state, corporations, banks or by Nobel Prize nominations but by people themselves. (...) These modes of existing cannot be thought of as uni-global, uni-form, homo-geneous. All these claims are modern imperial claims. (...) People organising themselves all over the world to delink from the fictions of modernity and the logic of coloniality."[37]

Two Perspectives

In 2018, two books were published which, in my opinion, are important to better understand the activist—and later collectivist—tendencies briefly elucidated above. The first is *Dampak Seni di Masyarakat* (Jakarta: Koalisi Seni, 2018). Art activism and collectivism

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[36] The pure gaze is a historical invention associated with the emergence of an autonomous realm of artistic production. This realm has the ability to impose its own norms on the production and consumption of its products. Pure gaze prioritizes the mode of representation over the object of representation, categorically demanding attention to form as required by previous art development. It implies a break with a general or everyday attitude toward the world, through which the terms constitute social separation or distinction. See Pierre Bourdieu, "Distinction & the Aristocracy of Culture" in *Cultural Theory and Popular Culture*, ed. Storey (Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 1998), pp. 433, 434.
[37] Walter D. Mignolo, "Coloniality is Far from Over, and so must be Decoloniality," in *Power & Other Things: Indonesia & Art 1835-Now, Europalia Arts Festival Indonesia* (Ghent: Snoeck Publishers, 2017), p. 27.

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have had demonstrable impacts in diverse initiatives through collaboration with many communities and shared inspiration with various citizen groups. Both rely on forms of citizen creativity through various strategies of processing local cultural and physical materials, which naturally includes the socio-cultural problems of certain areas. Annayu Maharani has called it "cultural moves" for a reserve for the future of a multicultural Indonesia that "respects differences, upholds cultural expression, feels happy and is able to deal with the nation's own problems, and answers the challenges of the times smartly and wisely."[38] Let's say, it's a kind of anonymous creativity.

A multitude of forms of collectivism are shown in the second book, *Unjuk Rasa: Aktivisme-Seni-Performativitas* (Jakarta: Yayasan Kelola, 2018). Activist and collectivist forms of theater, music, literature, cinema, and art are held in public spaces as festivals, meeting spaces, and other formats of communal expression.

A community of residents in Pemenang District, North Lombok—the home of a famous tourist attraction, Tiga Gili (Gili Air, Gili Meno, and Gili Trawangan)—provides an interesting example. This nonprofit community, called Pasirputih, was founded in 2009 to focus on knowledge-building in media literacy, art, and socio-cultural studies. Knowledge is disseminated through folk festivals, film screenings, videos, theatrical performances, art performances, discussions, and so on. This activism is the citizens' attempt to "counterattack" mainstream media coverage that prioritizes political news of the center and entertainment that does not educate local people. Muhammad Sibawaihi, from Pasirputih wrote, "one does not need to search far and wide to find works that are now called collaborative or participatory in the discourses of contemporary art practice. These forms of practice already exist in various activities of Pemenang people. (…) Instead of referring to art history, we are more interested

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[38] Annayu Maharani, "Investasi Kebudayaan untuk Masa Depan" in *Dampak Seni di Masyarakat* (Jakarta: Koalisi Seni, 2018), p. 11.

in linking our work practices to the cultural history of mutual cooperation that exists within Pemenang society."[39]
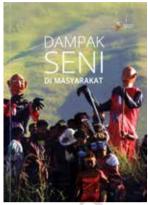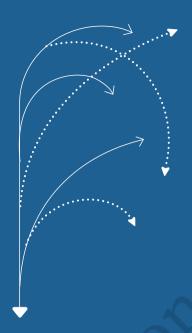

Figure 7. *Unjuk Rasa* (2018) and *Dampak Seni di Masyarakat* (2018).

The two illustrations above exhibit two perspectives to be used in looking at the practice of activism/collectivism that has recently developed in many circles of young artists. In the "citizen's perspective", activism and collectivism are not art, as it is strictly defined, but rather an expression of the social values they live by. From the "artist's perspective", collectivism strives for an "art" that re-creates social cohesion—however fragile it may be—in the public space as shown by the various practices in the two books. Morika Tetelepta, who initiated the #Ambonartwalk for youths after the highly violent religious conflict in Ambon (1999), was an endeavor to fill the "void of human recovery through spaces of encounter".[40] It is in this public space that activism and collectivism, art and not-art, all merge into one.

Jakarta, 2021

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[39] Muhammad Sibawaihi, "Pemenang; Warga Berdaya," in *Unjuk Rasa: Seni-Performativitas-Aktivisme* (Jakarta: Yayasan Kelola and the Embassy of Denmark in Indonesia), pp. 220, 222.
[40] *Ibid.,* p. 74.

Hendro Wiyanto

Communal Tea-Drinking at Jatiwangi art Factory

An Analysis of the Effect on the Policies of Government, Family, Spouses, and Friends

Arie Syarifuddin

First of all, let me extend my gratitude to you dear readers, friends, and families. I hope this essay reaches you in a form that's modest, frank, and unpretentious. If you feel that my introduction is formal, it's because I'm trying to create a distinct atmosphere for your reading experience. I realize, however, that only God alone is perfect and that this essay is neither a scientific article nor a thesis—thank God for that.

I was asked to write about the experiences and capabilities of the organization in which I have been involved—this is truly an awkward thing to do. We at Jatiwangi art Factory (JaF) have a monthly meeting called "Forum 27an"[1] where we invite people to practice talking about themselves. It is held on the 27th of every month. Friends, neighbors, mothers, students, punks, religious leaders, business people, government officials, workers, artists, culturati, curators, academicians, hipsters, politicians, farmers, radio announcers, traditional healers, event organizers, and local thugs can come to the forum to talk about themselves. Sometimes we focus on a particular topic in the forum and let it bounce off the audience as our fellow participants offer their perspectives. The discussion might seem wide-ranging, with different ideas bouncing around like basketballs, but this is exactly how we start the game: to gather and connect the various keywords from the discussion.

Many who join the forum for the first time might feel nervous. They may be asked to talk about themselves, or they may feel intimidated by the space in which government officials and commoners sit as equals without formal protocol or bureaucratic courtesy. The forum starts after the afternoon prayer and ends just before the sunset prayer. We close it off with coffee, tea, and sometimes snacks. Some participants become so involved that they continue chatting well after midnight, and suddenly it's 2 a.m. Time to go home. Heading home, we sometimes visit the traditional market not far from the JaF office

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[1] This is a play of words, as "27an" in Indonesian has the literal meaning of something that is held on the 27th, but it is also pronounced like the phrase that means "having two goals".

Communal Tea-Drinking at Jatiwangi art Factory:
An Analysis of the Effect on the Policies of Government, Family, Spouses, and Friends

to fill our bellies with chicken congee, soup, rice cakes, and deep-fried snacks hot off the stove. We wash it down with cups of warm sweet tea and then continue home.

Figure 1. Forum 27an at the Edition of Reallabs University with
Foa Flux & Zurich University of Arts, Switzerland.
Location: Ceramics Studio of JaF, Majalengka, West Java (2017).
Source: JaF.

Arie Syarifuddin

Figure 2. Rampak Genteng Reunion.
Location: Jebor Hall, Majalengka, West Java (2018).
Source: JaF.

Figure 3. Jatiwangi's district head, Ono Haryono, and his deputy,
Dadang Sandi, in Forum 27an.
Location: Ceramics Studio of JaF, Majalengka, West Java.
Source: JaF.

We reach many agreements in Forum 27an. Some turn into programs and projects, even collaborations. Most importantly, the agreements influence different policies. Ginggi Syarif Hasyim, former village head of Jatisura and co-founder of JaF, once said during a noon discussion before Friday prayer: If we only think about influencing government policies, it's clear that none of them will be implemented as we have wanted and hoped. Though the government may share our ideas, there is no guarantee those ideas will blossom into well-implemented projects. That's why we try to extend our efforts to influence different policies, not only governmental policies. Our spouses, families, friends, and neighbors all have their own policies that we might want to influence in a careful and timely manner. Discussions on our different ideas will result in agreements, and for JaF, the participatory process is key to such consensus.

Our voices as citizens might be too faint for the government to hear. Ginggi says that we should reap the benefits of our art-making activities by delivering presentations to others in the village every time we come home from visits abroad, whether art residences, exhibitions, or symposiums. These presentations serve as travel reports to which we invite government officials and other stakeholders to enjoy and review our findings and discoveries. Our "verbal travel reports" have become mandatory for JaF members who receive invitations to travel aboard.

In 2014, Ginggi, then head of Jatisura village, along with Ono Haryono, the subdistrict head of Jatiwangi, went to Japan to represent JaF in the exhibition "Mapping the Unmapped" in Fukuoka Asian Art Museum. It's not only the Jatiwangi subdistrict head who suddenly became an artist. JaF has also sent "non-artists" to art events in Indonesia and abroad: Maman Sudirman, head of Wates sub-village, took part in the Asian Art Biennial 2017 at the National Taiwan Museum of Fine Arts; Andri Meghan, a talented young entrepreneur, represented JaF at the Singapore Biennale 2019; and Illa Syukrilah Syarief, a tile-roof trader and former head of Burujul Wetan sub-village, took part in the exhibition "Looking for Another Family" at the National Museum of

Figure 4. Jatiwangi art Factory and Fabrikaat visited Nijmegen's mayor,
Hubert Bruls, to discuss a collaboration called "Terratory" between Jatiwangi-
Nijmegen. Location: Nijmegen Stadhuis, City Hall, the Netherlands (2018).

Source: JaF.

Figure 5. Three countries trip report.
Location: Jebor Hall, Majalengka, West Java (2020).

Source: JaF.

Modern and Contemporary Art in Seoul, South Korea. It is impossible for us to list all of our travelling friends here.

This is where our tradition of drinking tea together was born, where we learn to sit down together, drink tea or coffee, take time to chat, listen to personal stories and thoughts of diverse citizens, government officials, and community members. We at JaF sneak in our ideas through all those chats—ideas that at first glance seem insignificant. What ideas has JaF introduced? Irwan Ahmett, a graphic designer and artist known for a variety of fresh art interventions, wrote in *10 Strategi Imunisasi Budaya* (Ten Strategies of Cultural Immunization), "JaF leads us off target, but to the right path; they manage our anxieties, laugh at life, and come up with different modus operandi."

Meanwhile, JaF founder and initiator Arief Yudi Rahman often says: "We know that God provides daily sustenance for us. However, for knowledge, awareness, understanding, appreciation, and beauty, we have to do it ourselves. If we start from a deep appreciation of our efforts, we'd be able to redistribute the results. That's what we call economy. The government always talks of economy in terms of the increase in purchasing power and what we can consume. Where will it end? Meanwhile, we're talking about appreciation and harmony. The government maintains such things slow down the development process."

The fundamental patterns of economy for JaF consist of rapport and networking that are non-transactional and have three characteristics: camaraderie, investment, and resolutions. Camaraderie: visitors come to us not because of curatorial considerations. Investment: financial or otherwise—experience and thoughts count as well. Resolutions or consensus: seeking opportunities to improve something based on good intentions. If we're using the ideas of transactional economy as our sole basis of operation, fundamental patterns of economy will change and follow temporal trends. It will be challenging for JaF to operate if we focus only on issues of transactional economy, whether it is about the relationships with our clients or with our production base.

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Figure 6. Mamang Sudirman and Ling Solihin, representatives of Kampung
Wates, in an investment project at Asian Art Biennale.
Location: National Taiwan Museum of Fine Art, Taiwan (2017).

Source: JaF.

Figure 7. Illa Syukrillah (left, red jacket) in the preparation of
"Looking for Another Family" exhibition.
Location: National Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art
Seoul, South Korea (2020).

Source: JaF.

That's why JaF members and relatives who have been indirectly affected by JaF's fundamental patterns of economy will facilitate the emergence of movers and shakers. We will experience how art serves to maintain the dignity of individuals in the community. This in turn influences opinions, policies, and perhaps even economic status. For example, these individuals at least will receive higher remuneration in collaborations to develop programs. This ensures that art in Jatiwangi also has a positive social impact on people.

JaF has no intention of turning its members and Jatiwangi residents into artists, and residents are probably not interested in becoming artists either. What makes group work unique is preserving the dignity of each member. The more people value their lives, the more they will want to share their knowledge and know-how. The public then starts to recognize JaF members as artists. JaF builds up networks, gains trust based on a strong sense of camaraderie and the noble desire to develop a region—Jatiwangi. The network that JaF has slowly but surely established has resulted in JaF swimming in the strong currents of art, nationally and internationally, connecting different streams of politics,

This in turn influences opinions, policies, and perhaps even economic status.

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education, music, and tourism. Our ongoing projects and programs create a close rapport between JaF and members of its network.

Figure 8. Panenergi.
Location: Jatiwangi-Kalijati, West Java (2014).
Source: JaF.

Figure 9. Apamart (the monthly Surprise Market in the "Custom Republik" edition, Recycled Motorcycle Market).
Location: Jebor Hall, Majalengka, West Java (2018).
Source: JaF.

A good short-term program will become only a monument or memory. A routine long-term program will become a ritual and lose its significance. Once when I requested a recommendation letter from Ade Darmawan, director and founder of ruangrupa, he wrote that JaF was a "cultural producer", continually developing and implementing programs that give rise to alternative forms of culture, a new civilization. This is why JaF ensures our routine programs end in a consensus and a common desire. From a discussion about earth, we came up with the idea of ceramic music. We eventually established a band that plays ceramic musical instruments, and we developed the required infrastructure. These efforts gave rise to a new form of culture in Jatiwangi: The Ceramic Music Festival.

Figure 10. The band Hanyaterra.
Location: Jakarta (2017).
Source: @america.

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Figure 11-13. Ceramic Music Festival 2018.
Location: The former sugar factory of Jatiwangi, West Java.
Source: JaF.

Forum 27an does not stop at reaffirming earth as a material, a patch of land, and a source of ideas that all serve to establish Jatiwangi's identity. The next challenge is to turn Jatiwangi into "Kota Terakota" (Terracotta City). The region has the raw material for that: earth, which will keep on supporting us to discover possibilities as we design our town. How do we make sure visitors understand what the residents are trying to do? We have talked about the past and the present, but what about the future? We are what tomorrow is, the ones who maintain and take care of everything that will fit into the place we call home. This is no longer about mere physical developments—it is about the entire ecosystem of the region: education, health, economy, culture, social lives, and perhaps politics as well.

To close off, I wish to extend my gratitude to you again, dear readers, because now we have reached the happy moment at which we end the essay. Greetings from Jatiwangi where the wind blows at 40 km/hour from the Ciremai Mountain. I hope this essay has brought you good tidings. Amen.
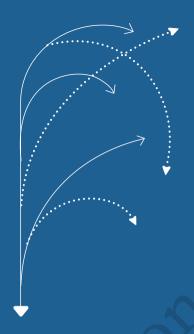
Jatiwangi, 2020.

Figure 14. Remainder of tea in the morning after scheming a
"revolution" all night long.
Location: Jebor Hall, Majalengka, West Java (2018).
Source: JaF.

Arie Syarifuddin

Evoking Memories
Construing Taring Padi

Ladija Triana Dewi

A discussion about Taring Padi's existence as an active collective for more than twenty years leads us to gathering memories of every person who has been involved along the journey and how we built an enduring Taring Padi (an Indonesian term for the spiky first growth of the rice plant), a collective concerned with art and activism. Taring Padi has been faithful to solidarity with the people during harsh social and political situations. The collective has experienced much and has devised and revised strategies to respond to the dynamics of the times. Its many events represent the continuity of a collective that has maintained its spirit of solidarity for over two decades.

A Model for Collective Work: What Is Maintained and Questioned

Many found Taring Padi's moves at the end of 1990s very attractive and would later define the group's identity. The social-political conditions under the New Order regime fueled the group's zeal to fight against the repression. The enemy was so clear that many felt the call to join the struggle. The situation changed significantly in the years that followed. There is now no primary enemy. Dehumanizing incidents increasingly take place, the enemies are vague, and Taring Padi faces the dual challenge of remaining faithful to its vision while keeping the flame of solidarity burning.

The issues of collectives and organic work models are inseparable in the discussion about the collective movement. Unlike work models in structured institutions or in studios where apprentices work under the masters, collective work often has no hierarchy. People come and go. This is a challenge for all collectives. The strategy to counteract this depends on the goal the collective wishes to achieve. Taring Padi's vision is solidarity with repressed communities expressed through artistic practices. The involvement of people in the group is fluid. There is no structure. It is all based on voluntary involvement and

the principles of comradeship. Taring Padi once had a president, the late Yustoni Volunteero, who held the position from 1990 to 2000. Muhammad "Ucup" Yusuf followed from 2000 to 2002. This led to a tendency to place responsibilities solely in the hands of the president. It is a challenge to maintain a democratic approach in a collective. Lengthy discussions and debates are unavoidable whenever Taring Padi creates works, develops agendas, and encounters obstacles.

Figure 1. Taring Padi's volunteers creating a mural for the exhibition marking 20 years of struggle, "Bara Lapar Jadikan Palu" (Let Hunger be a Hammer). Location: R.J. Katamsi Gallery, Indonesian Institute of the Arts, Yogyakarta (2018).
Source: Taring Padi.

Figure 2. The 4ᵗʰ annual parade to commemorate the Lapindo mud disaster.
Location: Porong, Sidoarjo, East Java (2010).
Source: Taring Padi.

The flexibility of the collective work model that Taring Padi implements also explains how the organization respects and understands individuals' rights to meet their domestic needs and maintain creative productivity. This, however, affects the creative productivity of the collective as a whole. To maintain close relationships and to keep the organization moving, Taring Padi holds a "Seninan" event every Monday at Sembungan House, Bantul, Yogyakarta. Here artists talk about their plans and agendas, whether those of Taring Padi or invitations from other parties. The collective's agenda includes a long-term task to develop its annual program. Considering the organization's track record, strong identity, and the complexity of unsolved problems in the country, it would be wise for Taring Padi to design its program to ensure the continuity of the movement and distribution of its ideas. It would be challenging for Taring Padi to meet these goals without a clear structure. This is not about hierarchical,

Figure 3. Installation performance *Hands of Hope,* commemorating
the 8th anniversary of the Lapindo mud disaster.
Location: Lapindo, Porong, Sidoarjo (2014).
Source: Taring Padi.

conventional structures—it is about the organic distribution of work.
How Taring Padi tries to distribute the idea of activism is through
artistic approach. On several occasions, Taring Padi works with the
public to voice social issues and aspirations of marginalized people.
The activism that involves the public requires gradual stages of
socialization. It often takes a long time to convince the public that
Taring Padi is present on behalf of solidarity. For instance, Taring Padi
members went to the victims of PT Lapindo's mudflow in Porong,
but people did not immediately welcome them despite a previous
survey. One month later, they had to return to those victims. This was
understandable; the people must have been feeling wary due to the
crisis. Taring Padi approached them by holding activities with the
children, making cardboard wayang puppets that they then colored
together. And gradually people began to trust Taring Padi. During
their live-in period, Taring Padi held workshops, art performances,

and dialogues. The community approved of what Taring Padi had done and sensed that they were all on the same page concerning actionable solidarity. They then invited Taring Padi to their subsequent commemorations. Taring Padi attended the fifth commemoration, but they could not attend the sixth and seventh commemorations. The eighth and last one was in 2014.

In the *Hands of Hope* installation, the Lapindo mudflow victims expressed their feelings on cardboard hands. Taring Padi had been there as a friend who shared their pain and fought with them. The series of activities created a strong emotional bond between the organization and the community. Taring Padi has taken part in the Porong Tragedy commemorations since then.

Figure 4. Workshop creating an installation with cardboard.
Batang Solidarity, "Food Not Coal, Evil Power Plant" (2014).
Source: Taring Padi.

Evoking Memories: Construing Taring Padi

Taring Padi's characteristic approach of creating works by employing the live-in method also takes into consideration the materials used for the works. The focus is on making sure the community can access the materials they need to create works in the future based on the regional accessibility of art tools and materials. The community must be able to create visually-arresting works using widely available materials such as cardboard and paint. Greater access to works of art and the capacity to make them will facilitate the distribution of activistic ideas and the strengthening of artistic skills. This has been the strategy that Taring Padi takes to ensure the sustainability of its ideas.

As mentioned, Taring Padi is not alone in trying to ensure the sustainability of its activism. People in the organization and in other grass root collectives have also consistently voiced their concerns about justice.

Figure 5. The exhibition "Polyphony: Southeast Asia".
Location: AMNUA (2020).
Source: Taring Padi.

Ladija Triana Dewi

Figure 6. The series "*Terompet Rakyat*", in response to the general election.
Location: The Kewek Bridge, Yogyakarta (2019).
Source: Taring Padi.

Volunteering and networking ensure the sustainability of Taring Padi's ideas regarding contemporary art. Invitations to take part in a range of exhibitions come from the relationships the organization has cultivated as well as from agreements and proposed curatorial themes and ideas concerned with the democratic climate and human rights issues. Taring Padi's narratives in contemporary art scenes follow its vision when it takes part in exhibitions, art spaces and movements that share its sense of activism. Two examples: the exhibition "Polyphony: Southeast Asia" at the Art Museum of Nanjing University of the Arts (AMNUA), China, in 2020; and the exhibition of "Democracy in Action" in Democracy Fest at the Black Box, Publika, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia in 2019.

While people may say contemporary art has dissolved boundaries and given ample opportunities for multidisciplinary approaches, Taring Padi has been doing this for a long time. It creates works using the method of collaboration and live-in with the community, and no leading figures emerge as artists because it involves everyone expressing their thoughts. The works in the *Terompet Rakyat* series, for example, used the woodcut technique, but engaged with cross-disciplinary artists. The space they use for presenting their works is not limited to art spaces or galleries; the space may be streets, bridges and village stages.

A Closing Remark: Records with an Enduring Trace

Taring Padi observes social and political situations in Indonesia in a natural way, not hastily. It maintains an open attitude, conducts dialogues with different parties, and is true to its vision. Taring Padi's activism through art shows we can distribute ideas via art. By using unpretentious works of art, Taring Padi fosters solidarity. As the organization analyzes the protracted social and political problems in the country, it realizes the fight must go on and has become tougher. Many enemies have struck up alliances to establish unfair systems that deny people justice. Taring Padi no longer focuses on winning against a regime as it did in the late nineties. Its aim now is to foster solidarity and keep the movement vibrant.

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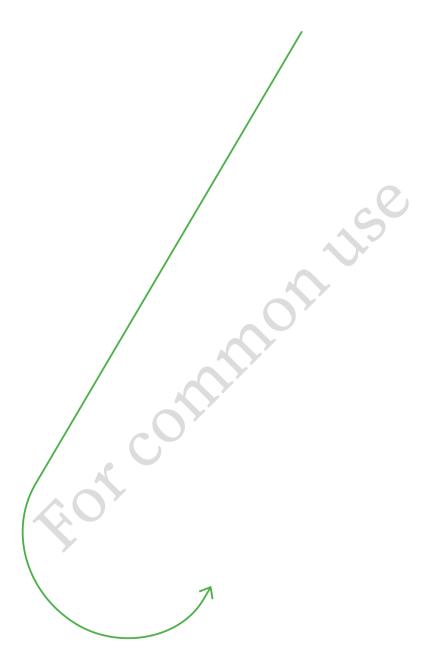
Taring Padi no longer focuses on winning against a regime as it did in the late nineties. Its aim now is to foster solidarity and keep the movement vibrant.
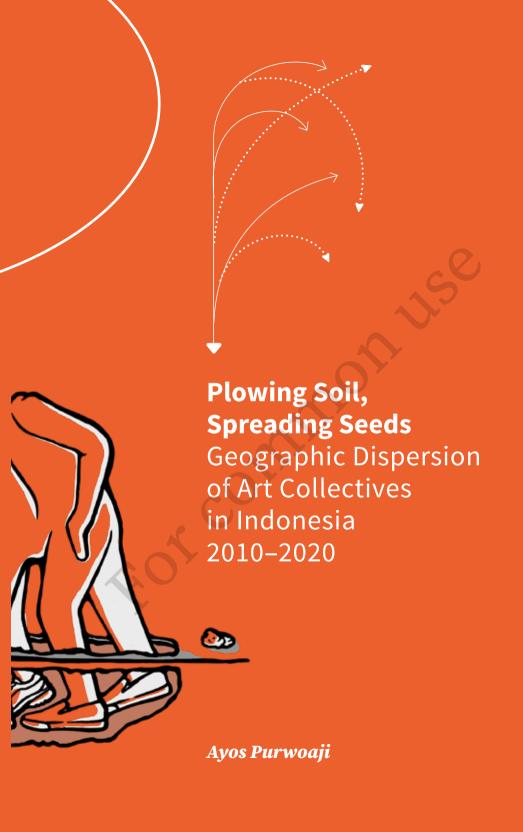
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Ladija Triana Dewi

Taring Padi has internal issues to deal with for the good of the collective. This era poses many uncertainties, foremost among them is the raging pandemic. The cancellation of the organization's annual program is an issue to address—Taring Padi has not kept up to date with the technology to transform the media and forge networks with digital activism movements. Though this is not a demand, we all need to respond to the challenge. And it is equally important that Taring Padi, as a collective for art activism, can remain faithful to its mission and walk hand-in-hand with the grass-roots movements despite its considerable reputation.

The archives of Taring Padi's events and activities will endure. The question now is how to analyze their activities beyond the romantic narrative of an art collective; how to perceive them as akin to the struggle of collectives involving peasants, fishermen, and workers. The bottom line is that the quintessence of Taring Padi is not artistic production—it is activism itself. Ethics, not aesthetics.

Yogyakarta, 2020

For common use

Plowing Soil, Spreading Seeds

Geographic Dispersion
of Art Collectives
in Indonesia
2010–2020

Ayos Purwoaji

Diri nian tutur, depo tana doneng.
(Listen to the world speaking,
follow the earth's teachings)
–A proverb of Sikka, East Nusa Tenggara

For the last ten years we have witnessed a development in which art collectives in Indonesia have been flourishing not only in big cities, but also in small towns and even rural areas. They have developed a variety of artistic practices and survival strategies tailored to meet the unique possibilities and challenges of their local conditions. This paper explores the geographic dispersion of these artists' collectives and alternative spaces. What made them appear and spread in such a way in the last ten years? What's so interesting about the way their practices are related to their local conditions? How can rural-based collectives help us rethink the map of future arts and cultural resources?

Since the late 1980s, numerous art collectives and alternative spaces have sprung up in major cities in Indonesia. This development has been understood as a form of activism against the ruling regime's domination over art. Many studies have noted that the New Order regime controlled almost all artistic activities through government-owned cultural institutions. The regime's cultural strategy was a massive depoliticization of art, in which political and ideological elements were separated from artistic work; an uneven development of art infrastructure; and a militaristic style of governance with a strong tendency to suppress artistic expression that contradicted official policy.

One aspect of this centralized cultural policy can be seen in the developmental pattern of artistic infrastructure, such as museums, exhibition halls, art councils, and art academies, which were centered

only in big cities. Some of the facilities were deliberately constructed as a manifestation of the State's artistic and cultural ideology. For example, the construction of 24 *taman budayas* (culture parks) between 1978-1994 in various provinces in Indonesia were based on the Minister of Education and Culture's decree in 1978. What's more, it was only after 1992 that the then Chairman of the Dewan Kesenian Jakarta (DKJ—Jakarta Arts Council) Salim Said proposed an initiative supported by the Ministry of Home Affairs to provide funding for the establishment of arts councils in various cities. Through these two instruments, the state directed art as a means to evoke "national pride" and safeguard the "regional character" of certain areas.[1] After the Reformation, many culture parks and arts councils tumbled and even stopped operating. Koalisi Seni, in its research on the sustainability of art institutions in eight cities in 2015, recorded that various organs of the state-owned art infrastructure were not able to accommodate the needs of thriving artistic expression in society.[2]

Meanwhile, cultural expression growing from the grassroots and thriving in rural areas during the New Order era—which was often associated with the mobilization of the left—was closely watched by the military. In 1980, General M. Yusuf initiated a program known as ABRI Masuk Desa (AMD—ABRI Goes to Village),[3] focusing on rural community development. The book *Sewindu TNI-ABRI Masuk Desa 1980-1988,* published by Dinas Penerangan Angkatan Darat (Dispenad—Army Information Service), explained that one of the program's objectives was for the military to "get to know directly the people, customs, culture, and the region." In practice, the military personnel's presence in rural areas has had a long-term impact as the ruling regime's tool of legitimacy for non-physical interventions, such as infrastructure development exhibitions in villages that become the government's propaganda channel for developmentalism.

[1] A more comprehensive study of the functions of culture parks and arts councils during the times of the New Order can be found in Tod Jones, *Kebudayaan dan Kekuasaan di Indonesia: Kebijakan Budaya Selama Abad ke-20 hingga Era Reformasi* (Jakarta: Yayasan Pustaka Obor Indonesia, 2015), pp.238-271.
[2] Hafez Gumay et al., *Keberlangsungan Lembaga Seni di 8 Kota* (Jakarta: Koalisi Seni Indonesia, 2015), pp. 41-47.
[3] ABRI, Angkatan Bersenjata Republik Indonesia (Armed Forces of the Republic of Indonesia), changed its name to TNI, Tentara Nasional Indonesia, after the 1998 Reformation.

Ayos Purwoaji

In addition, the military's presence in rural areas also became a means of social control in overseeing the political activities of rural communities.[4] In turn, this had an impact on forms of cultural expression that were essentially full of social criticism, such as *ludruk* and *ketoprak*, two traditional popular performing arts in East Java which were then closely monitored by the military apparatus.

In this context, a motley array of alternative spaces and art collectives sprung up that were fully aware of their oppositional position toward governmental authorities. Even though a celebratory moment for freedom of expression presented itself after the New Order regime collapsed in 1998, some art collectives that emerged at that time retained a particularly strong desire to be independent from the ruler's intervention for several years.

The emergent art collectives not long after 1998 Reformation include HONF (1999), KUNCI Study Forum & Collective (1999), Tanahindie (1999), ruangrupa (2000), Komunitas Pojok (2000), Tikar Pandan, and Ruang MES 56 (2002). They upheld a critical awareness of what was previously thought to be established. Through workshops, discussions, and publications, KUNCI invited young people in Yogyakarta to question all kinds of aspects of their daily lives, from those seen as a routine to traditions sanctified by historical authority and held in place by ruling powers.[5] In Makassar, Tanahindie invited local youth to explore alternative narratives from all corners of the city.[6] In Banda Aceh, Tikar Pandan held literacy and artistic activities, especially those with reference to human rights issues in their city.[7] Meanwhile, Komunitas Pojok, ruangrupa, and Ruang MES 56 tried to escape from the consensus of modernist art that had been overshadowing exhibition halls in their cities.

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[4] Isnu Novia Setiowati, "Perkembangan ABRI Masuk Desa (AMD) Tahun 1980-1998", *Jurnal Avatara*, Vol. 3/No. 1 (2015).

[5] Some relevant artistic projects in this case are Juminahan Neighborhood (2006) and Santan Ketumbar Jintan: Sejarah Orang India di Yogya (2011).

[6] Some relevant books in this case are *Pasar Terong Makassar: Dunia Dalam Kota* (2013), *Makassar Nol Kilometer* (2014), *Kota Diperam Dalam Lontang/City Soaked in Drinking Stall* (2018).

[7] See Putra Hidayatullah, "From Tikar Pandan for FIXER", in this book, p. 57.

Below is a table that shows the number of art collectives in the FIXER survey of 2010 and 2021 and their geographical dispersion (this number is representative of a portion of the collectives in each region).

The number and dispersion of art collectives in the FIXER 2010 and 2021.

Region	2010	2021
Bali	0	3
Jawa	18	32
Kalimantan	0	3
Maluku Islands	0	0
East Nusa Tenggara	0	4
West Nusa Tenggara	0	1
Papua	0	2
Sulawesi	1	3
Sumatera	1	5
Total	20	53

This period was documented by the FIXER survey in 2010, in which the emergence of these art initiatives as playing some role to "improve the conditions of the art world that they consider as not ideal, by trying to complement, establish, and develop novel forms of art infrastructure and practices that originate from the need to speed up the distribution of art ideas and improve the social political conditions in the society."[8] This view was strengthened by an interview conducted by Nuraini Juliastuti with Ade Darmawan in an article written in 2012. The article asserts that the various activities of these independent cultural organizations served as "response to an emergency situation" while filling gaps in the art ecosystem that the state cannot provide.[9]

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[8] Ade Darmawan, "Fixing the chain of the cycle of ideas", in *FIXER: Alternative Spaces and Art Groups in Indonesia,* catalog (Jakarta: North Art Space, 2010), pp. 14-19.
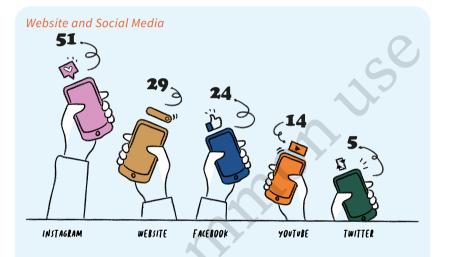[9] Nuraini Juliastuti, "A Conversation on Horizontal Organization", *Afterall: A Journal of Art, Context, and Enquiry,* 30 (2012), pp. 118-125.

During the last decade, as more art infrastructure has been constructed, the role of the government and the private sector in funding art activities has grown larger, and access to information and knowledge has become more open while art collectives have emerged in truly different contexts. As mentioned above, currently these art collectives are widely dispersed, not only concentrated in big cities, but also in rural areas. As a result, there is also a diversity of artistic practices and survival strategies adapted to diverse local socio-economic conditions.

In hindsight, the social changes ten years ago were marked by the increasing number of Internet users in Indonesia alongside the development of digital platforms, such as online fora or social media that allowed users to connect according to specific social preferences and interests. It is through these diverse platforms that social circles were formed around shared interests, which at the same time intensified the unity of identity among members. The Indonesian people's penchant for hanging out or spending time together talking endlessly about all manner of topics then found its way into these digital platforms. It could be said in fact that these new forms extended the range of hanging out, as someone from one city could connect with users from another without ever actually meeting in the real world. Through assorted online fora and social media, they could observe each other, share inspiration, or learn from one another.
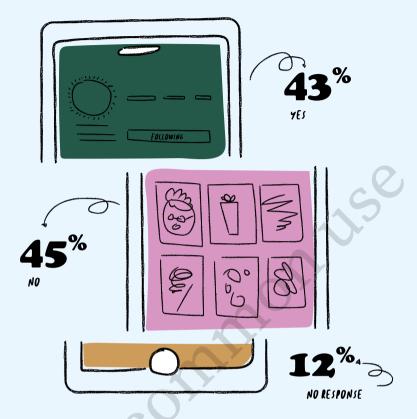
This interconnectedness and easy access to new information were some of the driving factors behind the emergence of diverse art groups and collectives with a dispersed growth pattern. Indeed, the idea of a collective art practice was not only possible in big cities but could also be duplicated and translated into small towns without the support of established art infrastructure. By adopting ideas of the existing collective practices, new collectives sustained the growing local art ecosystem. Thus, a collective could also be seen

as a form of independent infrastructure operating via a network of available resources, without having to rely on existing infrastructure or authorities. Although growing as independent entities, these collectives flourishing in many cities were also connected to one another. Through the aforementioned survey, almost all collectives in Indonesia could be mapped, interconnected either directly or indirectly through a giant network.

Website and Social Media

| INSTAGRAM | WEBSITE | FACEBOOK | YOUTUBE | TWITTER |
| 51 | 29 | 24 | 14 | 5 |

In the FIXER survey, most of the active collectives use social media as a communication channel with the public. Social media also allows the public to reach out to an art collective, to study it, and to replicate its format and activities. In our appraisal, several collectives that have developed lately have used social media to observe, replicate, and modify the ideas and forms of others considered more established and more mature. This adoption process usually occurs alongside examination and interpretation according to local social contexts.

Alternative Income from the Social Media[10]

43% YES

45% NO

12% NO RESPONSE

Thus, social media has had a significant role for collectives, art groups, and alternative spaces. Not only to communicate their ideas and activities, it also serves as a display window for products they create and sell— an economic model developed by Sinau Art, Lakoat. Kujawas, Jatiwangi art Factory, Omuniuum, and Ruang MES 56. Several collectives and alternative spaces that run food businesses also see social media as a channel to promote their businesses, as done by Rumah Mesra, Sandwich Attack, BERGERAK.ETC, and Kedutaan Besar Bekasi. In addition, Waft Lab in Surabaya also uses social media to showcase their portfolio of media art installation production services that they build. In Jakarta, Gudskul Ekosistem uses social media to attract people who are interested in joining their collective studies, short courses, and workshops.

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[10] In the FIXER survey this question allows a collective to choose more than one answer.
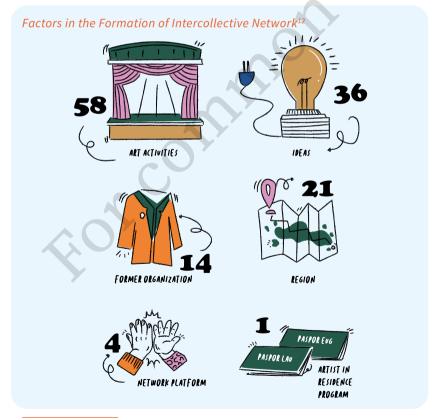
By adopting the ideas of their predecessors, newly formed art collectives then support the growing local art ecosystem. In this case, a collective can be seen as a form of independent infrastructure that rely on its own operations and resources without having to depend on established forms of infrastructure or authority. Although growing as independent entities, these collectives that have emerged in various cities are in fact connected to each other. This survey sketches the lines of a map on which nearly all collectives in Indonesia are interconnected through the direct and indirect lines of a massive network.

In a section of a survey conducted by FIXER and responded to by 55 art collectives in Indonesia, each art collective is asked to name several others connected to it. Through the answers provided, a social network analysis provides a map of these collectives' interconnectedness in Indonesia. Most of them reveal that they are connected with other art collectives mainly because of similarities in artistic ideas or practices. Those concerned with community-based art activities, for example, are easier to connect with others who have similar tendencies. Thus, street art collectives connect with those similar to them. It can be assumed that a connection based on common ideas and practices is a strategy for sharing knowledge and resources among artistic and social circles. Through these circles, each collective, artistic community, or alternative space can support each other and build independence within an ecosystem that they create themselves.

An inter-collective network can also take shape on account of art activities such as exhibitions or festivals. With the social network map that is formed,[11] it appears that several collectives have developed into nodes that are able to connect one collective to another because they have various initiatives or programs involving other collectives, by way of residencies, workshops, festivals, or other art activities.

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[11] Check out the map of Collectives' Social Network at www.fixer.id.

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One example is Ace House Collective, which created Arisan Tenggara, a residency program with several other collectives and art spaces in Yogyakarta, namely Krack! Studio, Lifepatch, Ruang Gulma, Ruang MES 56, and SURVIVE! Garage in 2018. Through Arisan Tenggara, designed as a pilot forum in building a collaborative platform among art collectives in Southeast Asia, Ace House Collective could then connect various groups and individuals in Yogyakarta with others from neighboring countries such as Tentacles (Bangkok, Thailand), Tanah indie (Makassar, Indonesia), WSK! Festival of the Recently Possible (Manila, Philippines), Rumah Api (Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia), Rekreatif (Dili, Timor Leste), and Gembel Art Collective (Dili, Timor Leste). It is argued that this kind of art activity was effective in generating a network of relationships among collectives in Indonesia and abroad.

Factors in the Formation of Intercollective Network[12]

58 ART ACTIVITIES

36 IDEAS

14 FORMER ORGANIZATION

21 REGION

4 NETWORK PLATFORM

1 PASPOR EUG / PASPOR LAU — ARTIST IN RESIDENCE PROGRAM

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[12] In the FIXER survey this question allows a collective to choose more than one answer.

A collective usually expands their social outreach through friendly relations with other collectives. In Indonesia, various forms of art activities—whether exhibitions, biennales, festivals, symposia, discussion, or publication—have become the biggest opportunities for art collectives to build a network beyond their own immediate region. Apart from shared ideas or ideals, some collectives are connected to others because they live in the same city of a region, such as Pasirputih and Lingkar Seni Wallacea, that consists of various collectives or artists in Eastern Indonesia. Some collectives have even actively built their own networking platform, such as Ketjilbergerak in Yogyakarta, which has done it with rural youth; Ace House Collective that has initiated Arisan Tenggara; and Hysteria, which founded the Syndicate of Artists' Collectives & Alternative Spaces (SARTCAS). Similarly, although in its own way, Serbuk Kayu has initiated the exhibition "Timur Liar" that brought together other collectives' artworks and art projects in East Java. Meanwhile, others like Lakoat.Kujawas and Jatiwangi art Factory have organized residency programs that allow them to create a new network node with even more collectives.

Apart from such ideas and art activities, collectives can also be connected because their members share former organization, geography, or even social media. Social media's role in the development of art collectives' landscape formation in Indonesia after 2010 was quite significant because, not only connecting one collective to another or to individuals outside the known social circles or even geography, it also has another practical function, i.e., being a showcase for art collectives to communicate their ideas, activities, and needs. In the survey conducted by FIXER, most of the collectives used social media as a communication channel between them and the public. Social media also allowed an art collective to be more easily reached, studied, or even imitated in terms of its format and activities. In our reading, some of the collectives that emerged later also used social media to observe, imitate, and modify ideas and forms from other art collectives seen as more mature and established. Usually, the process of adopting ideas was also accompanied by adapting these ideas and forms to the recipient collective's social context.

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Not only that, it seems that the collectives' development in cities in Indonesia was also very likely influenced by return migration flow. Founders of these art collectives, who had experienced life or study in big cities—where they learned about and possibly involved themselves with collectives—brought their experience back to their hometowns because they saw the potential to develop similar things using the material of their more familiar local cultures.

The idea of going back and building hometowns has become increasingly popular in Indonesia over the last decade. Previously, rural areas experienced brain drain as a result of so many young people migrating to cities to study or work without ever returning. This phenomenon is a result of uneven development that emphasizes progress—or at least a certain image of it—in urban areas only. Now, a return migration flow has begun, in which educated people are returning and building their villages. With a new perspective, they now see rural areas as having diversity and potential cultural resources to cultivate and develop. These educated returnees then bring about change, such as embarking on literacy activities, organizing residents to manage cultural assets, and involving residents in artistic work.

The founder of Jatiwangi art Factory (JaF), Arief Yudi, for example, was initially active as an art activist in Bandung. After about ten years of working in theater and producing performances, in 1998 he committed himself to the art world by founding Galeri Barak as an alternative space—outside of existing art spaces—to exhibit the works of young Bandung artists. Galeri Barak lasted for only four years. Encouraged by thriving ideas about the public in art discourses and Joseph Beuys' views, who said that "Everyone is an artist," he returned to his hometown in Jatiwangi, West Java, known as a tile-producing area. In Jatiwangi, Arief Yudi then tried to explore turning existing cultural materials and collective memory into a variety of new ways of presenting art. In an interview with Hafiz Rancajale and Otty Widasari, he said that he founded Jatiwangi art Factory in 2005, exactly a year

after a regulation on regional autonomy was enacted. For him, this policy opened up opportunities for each region to be in charge of its own culture so that "every region will have its own character and a projection of its own future," in contrast to the cultural policies of the New Order which were centralized and especially Javanese-centric.[13]

Such is also the case with Dicky Senda, the founder of Lakoat.Kujawas, who chose to return to his village after having been known as an author with published books and having worked as an education counselor at a private school in Kupang City.[14] In 2016, he decided to return to his childhood home in the village of Taiftob, North Mollo. The return made him realize the various social problems in his village, including the low level of literacy, children's limited access to books, human trafficking, and loss of the youth's knowledge of local food wealth and wisdom. He began to open a space and organize programs. He invited young people in his village to start archiving and documenting culture. They recorded the various plants and products of local food, opened a residency program for artists and writers, and held various workshops connecting art and ecology.[15]

Such works in art (or art activism) exemplified by the projects of Arief Yudi and Dicky Senda will certainly be difficult to understand from a perspective that sees the process of art creation as an individual act that must be materialized in the form of a concrete or tangible artwork. However, there are more and more art collectives in Indonesia born outside that framework of art who see their work in a more interdisciplinary way. Their process of art creation—and the artworks produced—can only be seen from a certain vantage point because it requires a long timespan and involves a public participation. Such art collectives view artistic practice mostly as work method, process, experimentation, or even bridge to capture and build awareness of

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[13] Hafiz Rancajale, "Arief Yudi: Dramaturgi Kolektif", https://sudji.id/id/arief-yudi-dramaturgi-kolektif/, accessed on December 18, 2020.

[14] Dicky Senda also studied in the Faculty of Psychology at Universitas Mercu Buana, Yogyakarta. In several occasions he was involved with and experienced art events in the city.

[15] Fransiskus Wisnu Wardhana Dany, "Dicky Senda Mewujudkan Mimpi Dari Mollo," *Kompas* (July 27, 2020).

broader social problems in society. On one occasion, Akiq A.W., a member of Ruang MES 56, said that "our artistic medium is our own life."[16] Thus, it can be understood that art practice, for art collectives, merges into the realities of their daily lives, as does traditional culture that grows from the cosmological reality of a community.[17]

Rural art practices as carried out by Jatiwangi art Factory and Lakoat. Kujawas can actually be traced all the way back to activities by art collectives under the auspices of Lekra (1950-1965), art projects organized by Moelyono through Seni Rupa Penyadaran (Art of Conscientization) (1985-2013), and Komunitas Lima Gunung initiated by Sutanto Mendut since 2002.

For revolutionary aesthetics, which was Lekra's direction, living and working among the people in rural areas was an important part of creating artwork. For Lekra artists who lived in Yogyakarta around the 1950s, two words reverberated, namely *beleven* and *meeleven*, meaning 'to experience, appreciate, and participate in sensing what others experience', 'to be appreciated or be sensed'. Such views translated into, among other things, the method *Turba*: an abbreviation of *turun ke bawah*, meaning 'to come down'. Hersri Setiawan, a Lekra artist, explained that Turba aimed to get to know the "underneath", to capture the "heartbeat of the underneath," and to make an artist a vehicle for those at the underneath in voicing what was happening in their lives. This was possible only when there was no longer a gap between them and the "underneath". This also explains why there were so many Lekra artists spreading out into urban or rural areas. Both those who were "educated" and "unschooled" merged into what were known as folk culture workers.[18]

[16] Expressed in a presentation session organized by Gudskul, January 8, 2021.
[17] See Gesyada Siregar, as it looking at "The Weaving of Ampang: In Search of Art within Art Collective Practice in Indonesia", in this book, p. 69.
[18] On *Turba*, see Hersri Setiawan's note in *Antariksa, Tuan Tanah Kawin Muda: Hubungan Seni Rupa-LEKRA 1950-1965,* (Yogyakarta: Yayasan Seni Cemeti, 2005).

Out of a different background, Moelyono started working with rural communities in Tulungagung, East Java, when he was a student. Initially, around the 1980s, he was an artist whose paintings reflecting themes of poverty in a realist style. However, he began to feel uncomfortable with the conventional relationship in which artists only use poor people as inanimate objects to put on their canvas. Moelyono envisioned a relationship where artists and society, as problem owners, would work together to explore the various imbalances in life. He then became a facilitator who started artistic processes with villagers in Teluk Brumbun and Nggerangan; Wonosari village in Tulungagung; Kebonsari village in Pacitan; Sumber and Ngguyangan hamlets in Ponorogo; until he got the opportunity to expand his artistic practice to villages outside Java, including in Lombok, Kupang, Rote, Maumere, Luwuk, Aceh, Medan, Seram Island, Ambon, Jayapura, Kerom, to Kurima District in Wamena.[19]

Meanwhile, Komunitas Lima Gunung was established in 2002 on the initiative of culture activist Sutanto Mendut. The artists who joined the collective were residents in villages on the slopes of Mount Merapi, Mount Merbabu, Mount Sumbing, Mount Andong, and the Menoreh Hills. Most of them worked as farmers, field laborers, and animal breeders. For them, art is primarily a way of enjoying their free time. For two decades, these resident-artists have been building an art ecosystem and celebrating it through Festival Lima Gunung (Five Mountains Festival), a dignified art festival built on the residents' support and independence, without ever depending on external funding. Their organizational pattern is horizontal. All citizens can take part and contribute according to their own abilities without any ambition or forced targets—as goes the logic of art projects that depend on external funding structures that it is only natural that many of these cannot last long as funding halts. The working system

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[19] In early 2000, Moelyono and friends of Yayasan Seni Rupa Komunitas (YSRK) founded Lembaga Budaya Desa (LBD—Village Cultural Institute) that built a network of cultural communities along the villages of the southern coasts of East Java, including Kebonsari, Pacitan; Tugurejo, Ponorogo; Winong and Pagerwojo, Tulungagung; and Glagahdowo, Malang. Some of the works in these villages have been presented at exhibitions in Yogyakarta, Tokyo, and Hiroshima.

of Festival Lima Gunung, based on the principles of subsistence, has been able to durably support the art ecosystem of their area. Through these forms of subsistence, they seem to be able to appreciate other forms of capital, such as leisure, generosity, humor, social relationships, solidarity, openness, and a sense of belonging. The view that a paradigm of subsistence should be avoided in managing art ecosystems needs to be recalibrated.[20]

After 2010, several art collectives in Indonesia emerged and worked in rural areas, including Ketjilbergerak (Yogyakarta), Pasirputih (Lombok), Prewangan Studio (Tuban), Sudut Kalisat (Jember), and Rumah Budaya Sikukeluang (Pekanbaru). We believe that there are still more that are operating in small towns, villages, and rural areas that have not been recorded in this essay, providing an opportunity for further research in the future. Through their existence, lessons can be learned. One of them is the benefits of using a map of resources, which has so far escaped the attention of urban art ecosystem.

The collectives and art groups above prove that they are capable of surviving, taking root, and developing themselves precisely by utilizing the social capital and cultural materials found in the rural areas in which they live. Rumah Budaya Sikukeluang, for example, was founded by artists in 2010 to respond to various social and cultural issues in their surroundings, especially environmental issues in Riau Province. In 2014, this art collective launched the campaign "Melawan Asap" (Fight Against the Smoke)—to protest widespread forest fires lit to clear land for plantations in Sumatra—and organized an art residency program, workshops, and festivals to raise public awareness of the Rimbang Baling Wildlife Reserve. For Sikukeluang, the unified cultural-biological ecosystem in Rimbang Baling is a living laboratory for artists, cultural workers, and environmental activists to explore.[21]

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[20] See Renal Rinoza, "Lumbung: Sharing Strength, Sharing Power", in this book, p. 219.
[21] For further information about Rumah Budaya Sikukeluang's art activism, see Edwin Jurriëns, "Indonesian Activism: Layers of Performativity and Connectivity," *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Art,* 2020, No. 2, pp. 231-252.

In Tuban on Java's northern coast, Prewangan Studio sees the life of coastal communities as a playground and experimentation space. The spirit of "play" is very much felt by the collective that was only established in 2020, whose members consist of young people from assorted backgrounds, ranging from artists, carperters, fishermen and mechanics, to veterinarians. The desire to come together and play as a response to the needs and social conditions around them was the biggest motivation for the formation of Prewangan Studio. Their activities in the form of classes and workshops are open for villagers. They set up, for instance, workshops to produce veterinary medicine to last in storage and to construct a machine to mix herbal concoctions based on dream interpretations, while also creating learning modules for contemporary art that are easily understood by villagers.

An enthusiasm and desire to get together, play, and spend free time together can also be found in Sudut Kalisat in Jember. This collective consists of a group of young people who actively collect and work with photographic archives and historical artifacts from their surrounding area. Through these findings, they dig up residents' memories of *petites histoires* in their municipality. The archives, artifacts, and stories they collect are then compiled and re-interpreted by way of an annual archival exhibition. The funds to organize the exhibition are collected from residents' donation or independent businesses run by the collective's members. The creators and visitors of this archival exhibition are Kalisat residents themselves, making the event intimate, warm, and a poetic medium to integrate, transmit, remodel, or reshape shared memories among the residents, bridging the past and the present in their own agreed context.

Meanwhile, Ketjilbergerak grew from a subcultural zine initiated by Greg Sindana and Invani Lela Herliana in 2006. Over time, their creative activities have developed into an art collective that has been often involved in empowering young people in villages and rural areas around Yogyakarta. Art projects run by Ketjilbergerak always use three approaches: education, art, and citizen participation. Since

2018, Ketjilbergerak have been organizing Sekolah Desa (Village School) and Sekolah Pemuda Desa (Village Youth School) to respond to government policies with regard to Dana Desa (Village Fund), the special funds disbursed by the state for village development.[22] This opportunity has been used by Ketjilbergerak to encourage village youth to actively participate in building their villages, not only with material infrastructure, but also through the development of culture and arts. The collective's attention to village development issues has only grown stronger. In mid-2020 they were a collaborator for Kongres Kebudayaan Desa (Village Cultural Congress), held in Panggungharjo, Yogyakarta.

Like Ketjilbergerak, the Village Fund has recently been utilized by Pasirputih, a collective founded by cultural activists, media activists, and artists in Pemenang, North Lombok, in 2010. Since its inception, Pasirputih orients its work toward the community and adjusts its various activities and programs to the potential of its local area. One program that interprets such vision is Sekolah Mendea (Mendea School), an informal school that teaches young people about agricultural culture based on citizens' memories and narratives. For Pasirputih, Sekolah Mendea is a forum for art activism with an agricultural focus and is, in fact, a continuation of the Aksara Tani program, which they have been working on since 2017.

The various rural initiatives emerged almost simultaneously with the *Strategic Plan of the Ministry of Education and Culture for 2015-2019* that repeatedly mentions cultural development "from the margins by strengthening regions and villages".[23] However, in the 2015-2019 plan this phrase is given no explanation or adequate technical instructions for implementation. In what ways will this cultural development from the periphery be carried out? Within the vast territory of Indonesia,

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[22] Dana Desa is an implementation of the Law No. 6 2014 on Villages: a milestone piece of legislation that represents a paradigm shift in village governance. Villages are no longer seen as an object of development but a subject of development and a spearhead of people's welfare.
[23] *Rencana Strategis Kementerian Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan 2015-2019,* (Jakarta: Kementerian Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan, 2015) p. 71.

which rural and suburban areas are to be prioritized? How should cultural development initiatives that come from citizens themselves be accommodated? All these questions were not answered until the publication of the *Strategic Plan of the Ministry of Education and Culture for 2020-2024,* stripped off of all the impressive jargons.[24] There is no longer any aspiration for cultural development from the margins. Instead, the village is positioned as a unit for allocating Village Fund for the purposes of cultural activities. The village is not seen as an independent and autonomous organ, but as a central government agency for distributing the state budget.

The cooperative relationship between art collectives and the government, such as that of Ketjilbergerak and Pasirputih, is a relatively new development. It could be that this is a step forward, as the state begins to accommodate artistic work carried out by art collectives after considering their social impact on society. In fact, along the way the relationship has become more complex. The members and networks of the two collectives mentioned above have even played a role in the formulation of village policies and programs. This bargaining position is important as these two collectives not only access sources of funding, but also take part in village development planning. Their participatory forms of art are then expanded into institutional aesthetics. However, this kind of state support is not evenly distributed.[25] Many art collectives in Indonesia remain reliant on independent funding and social networks as capital for their activities.

The growth of art collectives previously found in urban areas and now starting to move to small cities and rural areas also seems to have triggered a shift in the artistic and organizational character of art collectives in Indonesia. It is interesting to compare how these two types of art collectives—the urban-based and the rural-based—use and manage space. Art collectives arising in urban areas usually acquire

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[24] *Rencana Strategis Kementerian Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan 2020-2024* (Jakarta: Kementerian Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan, 2020).
[25] See the comparison with the FIXER result in the infographics on pp. 34-35.

a space by renting a house. Each room in the house is utilized according to the needs of the collective. The living room, located at the front, is usually transformed into a public space where members can hold exhibitions, film screenings, or small discussions. Meanwhile rooms further in the back are used as work stations, mini libraries, or even bedrooms. Through this kind of spatial division, art collectives in urban ecosystems work with limited space or even gentrification—increases in the rent/purchase price of spaces. A collective in an urban context can change address from one rented house to another in order to get around the ever-increasing costs. In each of these moves, a collective is required to adapt to both the available space and the character of an environment and the people around it.

Meanwhile, for art collectives in rural areas, the problem of space is different because, in general, space is more permanent there. Some rural-based collectives acquire space through a gift or utilize an available space, making them relatively immune to the problems of gentrification and rental price increases. The space used is usually tied socio-historically with residents and the environment around them so that they need no adjustments to be contextually appropriate. Art activities, such as exhibitions, festivals, workshops, discussions, or film screenings can be held anywhere using residents' houses, rice fields, fields, mosques, courts, and even roads.

The differences in orientation and spatial dynamics between collectives in urban areas and those in small cities or rural areas also differentially shapes their organizational structures and artistic practices. Those that develop in urban areas usually have the "living room orientation," which is more transactional, collaborative, or short-term, and has a dynamic character, as urban social problems change rapidly. Meanwhile, collectives in small cities or rural areas usually have the "kitchen orientation," which mostly raises living space issues and cultural resilience, and generally addresses more static and sustainable issues.

Conclusion

The emergence of rural-based art collectives and groups is an interesting development. If two decades ago the growth of collectives and alternative spaces in urban areas was supported by centralized institutions and academies, the shift to rural areas could be seen as a symptom of the decentralization of art practices and territories. The village is also a cultural foundation for communal living, which is significant for the work of art collectives. Indonesians in general are familiar with the phrases *gotong royong* (mutual aid) and *nongkrong* (hanging out), which are still common for people living at the slower pace of rural life. For young people active in Sudut Kalisat, for example, the awareness of getting together and making art among them has emerged because of *gângghuk*, a Madurese word that means 'to take advantage of unlimited free time.'

The distribution of art collectives in Indonesia today also proves that the tension between the center and the periphery is increasingly irrelevant. During the New Order regime, centralistic policies created psycho-geographic problems. There were artists' groups who were close to power, yet there were also those who were far from power. This view then created an impression that collectives in big cities would be more lasting and more capable to carry out programs because of easy access to information and funding. It seems that

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The distribution of art collectives in Indonesia today also proves that the tension between the center and the periphery is increasingly irrelevant.

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Ayos Purwoaji

nowadays this paradigm needs to be revisited since it views an art collective's survival as if guaranteed only through the support of external forces, such as private projects, government assistance, or foreign donors. In fact, the practices of art collectives in rural areas have demonstrated that there are resources that have never been mapped and utilized before.

The practices of the various collectives discussed above are evidence that rural art work is eminently viable and is becoming increasingly relevant for development in the future. In this way, art activities can run without having to rely on global art circuits. However, this change of current, the flow that reverses from cities to villages, requires a fundamental shift from the paradigm of scarcity to the paradigm of abundance. The view that villages lack the resources and opportunities available in cities must be questioned (or rejected). Since, after all, it is cities that depend more on rural resources— whether human resources, knowledge, land, or water. Imagining this relationship, one is reminded of a mural at an exhibition of carpentry tools curated by the architect-artist Eko Prawoto some years ago, "The village is a source of nearly forgotten knowledge because of our understanding that only the city develops."
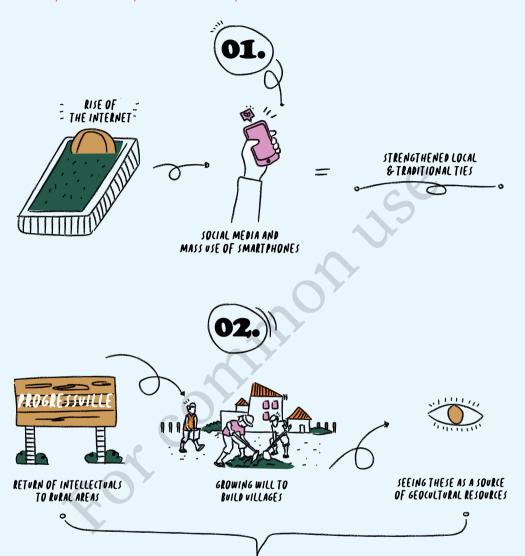
The assertion above does not mean to imply an oppositional rural-urban discourse, given that the flow of information and access to technology increasingly transcends geographical boundaries. In this essay, the "village" is placed in an ideological position, in which rural art collectives should be seen as an alternative to the urban art that has been more highlighted in popular culture so far. By starting out from the village, art can be developed and used to raise awareness about social issues; as a cultural laboratory for sustainable cultural resources; and as a space for the growth of popular expression.

A few years from now, we can imagine that there will be more and more art collectives in rural areas in Indonesia. These groups will

be driven by young people who are eager to work with the cultural materials in the villages where they live. In line with the Sikka proverb, the practices of these collectives will be something that sprouts from the context and social realities faced on a daily basis by people in rural areas, although connected to the development of art across the world. Through different paths and logics, they will define and create their own museums, compile their own repertoires of knowledge, create their own art schools, envisage their own art festivals, and most importantly try to realize the basis and direction of their own culture.[26]

Sidoarjo, 2021

[26] Ayos Purwoaji, "Museum Kosong dan Kesenian Kita Setelah Pandemi," in *Seni di Tengah Pandemi: Siasat dan Strategi Seni Menghadapi Ancaman Wabah Covid-19* (Surabaya: Dewan Kesenian Jawa Timur, 2020).

01.

RISE OF
THE INTERNET

SOCIAL MEDIA AND
MASS USE OF SMARTPHONES

STRENGTHENED LOCAL
& TRADITIONAL TIES

02.

PROGRESSVILLE

RETURN OF INTELLECTUALS
TO RURAL AREAS

GROWING WILL TO
BUILD VILLAGES

SEEING THESE AS A SOURCE
OF GEOCULTURAL RESOURCES
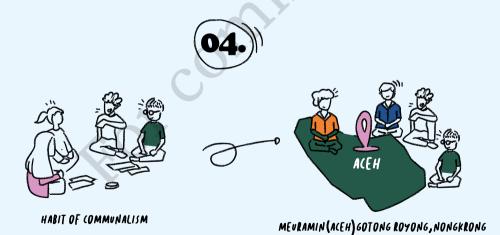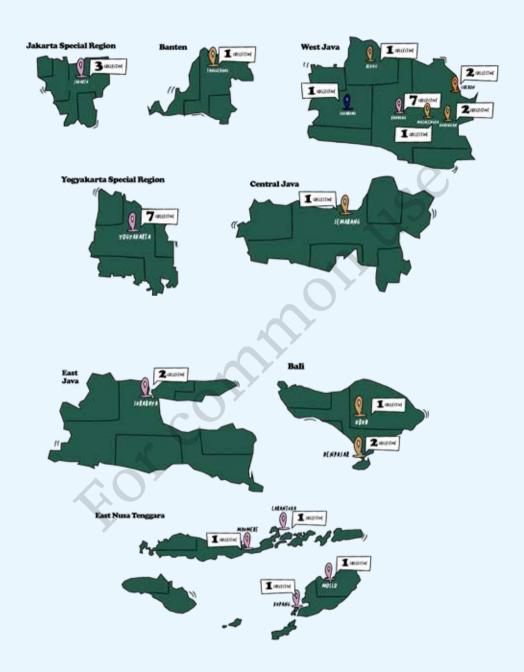
HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF VILLAGE-BASED ART
RISE OF LITERACY > TIKAR PANDAN, LAKOAT.KUJAWAS
ESCAPING FROM GENTRIFIED CITIES

03.
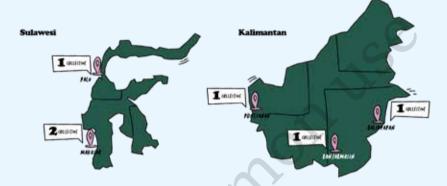
GOVERNMENT PROGRAMS SUCH AS VILLAGE DEVELOPMENT FUNDS
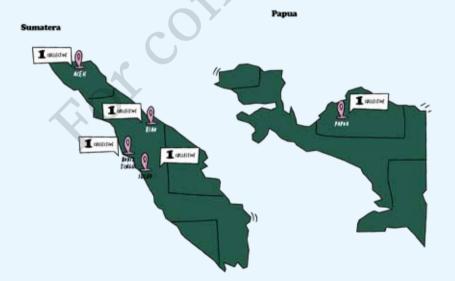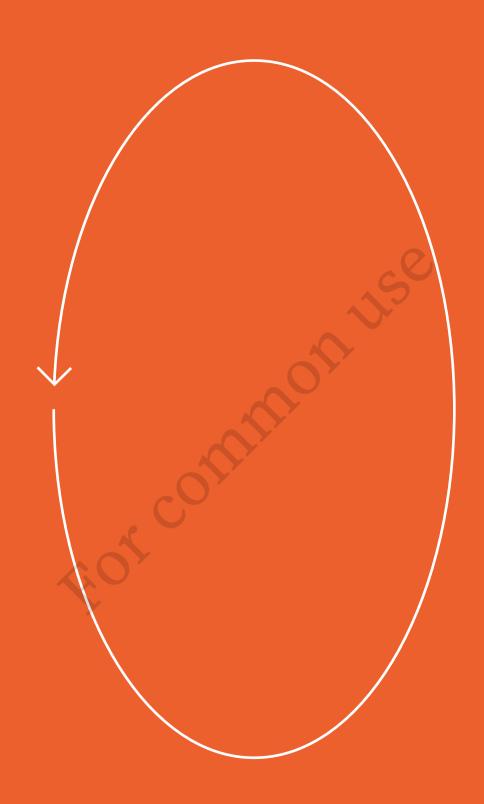
04.

HABIT OF COMMUNALISM

MEURAMIN (ACEH) GOTONG ROYONG, NONGKRONG

Dispersion and Density

West Nusa Tenggara

1 COLLECTIVE
LOMBOK

Sulawesi

1 COLLECTIVE
PALU

2 COLLECTIVE
MAKASAR

Kalimantan

1 COLLECTIVE
PONTIANAK

1 COLLECTIVE
BALIKPAPAN

1 COLLECTIVE
BANJARMASIN

Sumatera

1 COLLECTIVE
ACEH

1 COLLECTIVE
RIAU

1 COLLECTIVE
BUKIT TINGGI

1 COLLECTIVE
JAMBI

Papua

1 COLLECTIVE
PAPUA

Lakoat.Kujawas and Mollo
Cultural Practice
and Local Mutualism

Berto Tukan & Ayos Purwoaji[1]
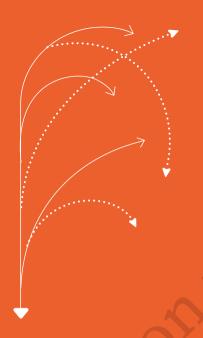
It is not difficult to find Lakoat.Kujawas' address in North Mollo, East Nusa Tenggara. Young people will show its direction with pleasure. Located on top of a hill, Lakoat. Kujawas' "playground" is a thatched-roofed wooden hut filled with books and the boisterous voices of young people having a discussion. In front of this headquarters lies the view of the National Park of Mount Mutis, the highest and most sacred mountain on the island of Timor.

Dicky Senda, Lakoat.Kujawas' founder, came out to greet us. He said he had just finished a workshop series that brought together activists of West Javanese and Filipino indigenous societies. In the last few years, Dicky Senda and other Mollo youths' activities have been drawing attention from many places due to their contextual nature through programs and narratives that correspond to their local culture and social problems.

As we talked, Mama Fun, a Lakoat.Kujawas's member, served us hot coffee cups and a plate of local snacks made of corn. "We do a lot of culinary experiments using local food sources, because food sovereignty and climate change are some of the issues that we care about," said Senda. Drizzle and fog began to settle as the background of our conversation that afternoon.

Senda founded Lakoat.Kujawas in 2016, with the help of a number of young people from Mollo and SoE who chose to return to their hometown after leaving for school or working outside the region. Before eventually returning to Mollo, Dicky sought experience in various organizations and communities while studying in Yogyakarta and working in Kupang. Initially, Dicky joined the NTT-Flobamorata Blogger Community. He had also been active in writing and known as a writer. Through this community, he was connected to and involved in several other communities' activities in Kupang, such as Dusun Flobamora, a

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[1] Extracted from Berto Tukan's interview with Dicky Senda and a short visit by Ayos Purwoaji.

Lakoat.Kujawas and Mollo: Cultural Practice and Local Mutualism

Figure 1. Mama Janse, a weaver in Mollo who is also a facilitator
of Skol Tamolok program.
Location: Taiftob, North Mollo (2018).

Source: Armin Septiexan.

literary community; Kupang Bagarak, a volunteers community founded after Mount Rokatenda's eruption in Flores; and the Kupang Film Community (KFK). Senda's artistic experience has also been cultivated through several residency programs that he has participated in. One of them is a residency at Bumi Pemuda Rahayu, a center for learning architecture, urbanism, and art in Bantul, Yogyakarta.

Figure 2. Dicky Senda, with children of Mollo
who are members of Lakoat.Kujawas.
Location: Taiftob, North Mollo (2018).
Source: Armin Septiexan.

Before Lakoat.Kujawas, together with several friends across communities from South Central Timor, Senda also initiated a solidarity action for victims of Mount Rokatenda's eruption, called SoE Peduli Forum (2013). It is these various experiences that prompted Dicky to establish Lakoat.Kujawas when he returned to his hometown.
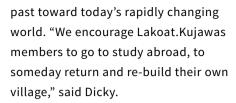
On their blog page, Lakoat.Kujawas defines itself as, "...a social entrepreneurial community of young people engaged in the arts and culture." However, Lakoat.Kujawas actually started their collective work by providing a library for children in the village of Taiftob, North Mollo. If initially their main attention was literacy, though, today they

are engaged in broader cultural activities. Some of Lakoat.Kujawas programs are based on the archiving of local knowledge (history and cultural arts), which are then followed by activities to build a creative economic base in the form of ecotourism, heritage trail, and local gastronomic tours. They are also developing a cultural or indigenous school based on a contextual and critical education model while providing residency space for artists who want to study with the Mollo residents.

An emphasis of Lakoat.Kujawas' activities is on the various types of knowledge development that they set out, in which local residents are not facilitated by outsiders, but by their own neighbors. These forms of activity are not the sort of "awareness program" à la NGO, often only short-term and limited to certain specific agenda, but rather sustainable, collective learning programs developed by the community for the community itself. For example, they organize a creative writing class, called To the Lighthouse, around the theme of local food. Class participants consisting of teenagers and young people are asked to document and conduct interviews with elders about local food. The results are presented in the form of book as well as archive and photography exhibitions. Having accomplished these activities, Lakoat.Kujawas follow them up by creating another program that concerns with how to save Mollo's local food. This is called Mnahat Fe'u, a harvest festival combined with ecotourism. In it, visitors from outside Mollo who want to watch the harvest festival are welcome. Currently Lakoat.Kujawas is also initiating a food laboratory and seed archive to conserves indigenous Mollo food and promote local culinary inclusively.

Lakoat.Kujawas calls the network of relationships highlighted in the above activities as an ecosystem for active citizens. They envision this ecosystem as consisting of young children in the middle layer. The elderly and traditional leaders constitute the inner layer, while the church and village government make up the outer one. In this scheme, young people serve as the bridge that carries on the legacy of the

> **Lakoat.Kujawas calls the network of relationships highlighted in the above activities as an ecosystem for active citizens.**

past toward today's rapidly changing world. "We encourage Lakoat.Kujawas members to go to study abroad, to someday return and re-build their own village," said Dicky.
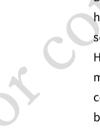
A mutualism symbiosis is thus formed between Lakoat.Kujawas and the Mollo people. The people benefit from Lakoat.Kujawas's activities and, vice versa, Lakoat.Kujawas reaped their inspiration from the customs and knowledge preserved still by the local residents. The result of the symbiosis between the two can ameliorate human resources in Mollo and lead to several creative products that are favorable for their programs' sustainability.

Dicky has admitted that the pandemic has impacted the implementation of some of Lakoat.Kujawas's activities. However, it does not mean that their movement came to a halt. Several collective learning programs are still being carried out, such as writing class, discussion, and documentation with traditional elders, and fun culinary experiments. Other activities that have been carried out by Lakoat.Kujawas are:

Skol Tamolok (Citizens Speak)
Through this program, citizens share about their daily problems, such as

plastic waste management. It is an alternative educational space for the locals, where visitors such as researchers from Kupang, pastors, lecturers, and social activists can join them.

Forum for families of children with disabilities
In this bi-monthly forum, Lakoat.Kujawas brings together families of children with disabilities to engage in a dialog. It is hoped that this sharing forum can help build these families' self-confidence.

Ketong Bisa 1 and 2 photography workshop and exhibition
A platform for youths to learn about photography and tell stories about their houses through the medium. Their works, supported by participants' own research, are exhibited at the district level or during 17 Agustusan (Indonesia Independence Day) celebrations. The exhibition is also enriched by archives from the Netherlands, assisted by friends studying there.

Mnahat Fe'u Heritage Trail
An ecotourism program focusing on the art, culture, and history of Mollo. This annual program is held during the harvest season (January-August) and is a further development of the collective's work documenting and archiving the art, culture, and history of Mollo.

To the Lighthouse Creative Writing Class
As the name suggests, it teaches creative writing skills, and is a collaboration with St. Yoseph Junior High School's extracurricular program in Taiftob.

Apinat-Aklahat Art Residency
An annual residency program (at minimum three days, at maximum one month) open to artists in music, film, dance, theater, photography, and architecture, as well as activists in farming and food activism, and researchers, to learn together with Mollo residents.

Figure 3. Various local delicacies ready to be sampled
on the Mnahat Fe'u Heritage Trail.
Location: Taiftob, North Mollo (2018).
Source: Dicky Senda.

Figure 4. Local seeds in Lakoat.Kujawas' archive.
Location: Taiftob, North Mollo (2018).
Source: Dicky Senda.

Figure 5. Shinta Febriany, a Makassar-based artist,
when she was taking part in Apinat-Aklahat.
Location: Taiftob, North Mollo (2017).
Source: Koalisi Seni.

Meanwhile, as a collective with a concern in literacy, Lakoat.Kujawas has published a number of books, including *Tanda Salib di Rumah Sang Klerk* (2017), a book about a *petite histoire* of the Catholic church in the Mollo Mountains (2017); *Dongeng dari Kap Na'm To Fen* (2018), a collection of short stories by children as part of To the Lighthouse (2018); *Badanku Batu, Rumahku Bulan* (2019), a collection of poetry from To the Lighthouse themed around "batu" (stone); *Ketika Malam Semakin Larut* (2019), a collection of children's poetry from To the Lighthouse in collaboration with the Resident Artist of the National Book Committee, Royyan Julian; *Dongeng dari Nunuh Haumeni* (2020), a collection of short stories around the theme "pohon" (tree) created as part of To the Lighthouse.

All of the books above contain narratives about Mollo's wealth of resources. "One of them is a book about stones, documenting various Mollo's folklore and myths in relation to stones, because every family has a tie to certain types of them," said Dicky. These publications are Lakoat.Kujawas' attempt to respond to local social problems, which are related to alternative education for indigenous peoples, human trafficking, migration to cities, stunting, malnutrition, and food crisis due to climate change.

It is their hope that ecotourism and the growth of local products in Mollo can support the people's economy and reduce the number of migration and cases of human trafficking; while publications of local content can support alternative education for indigenous people. In the future, with documented knowledge of local resources and local food sources, the Mollo community can take part in resolving the various existing social problems.
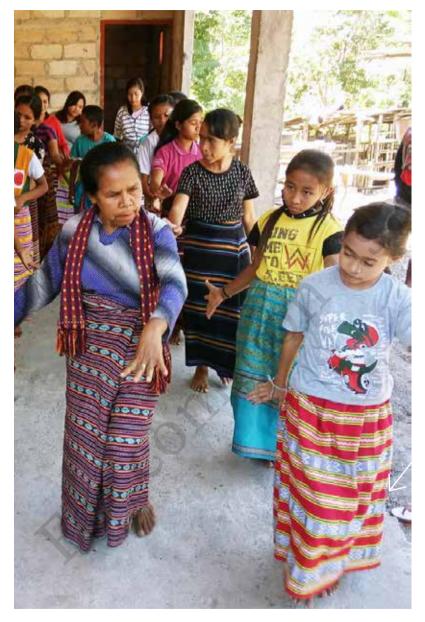
Figure 6. A Mollo traditional dancing class with local artist Mama Fransina.
Location: Taiftob, North Mollo (2020).
Source: Dicky Senda.
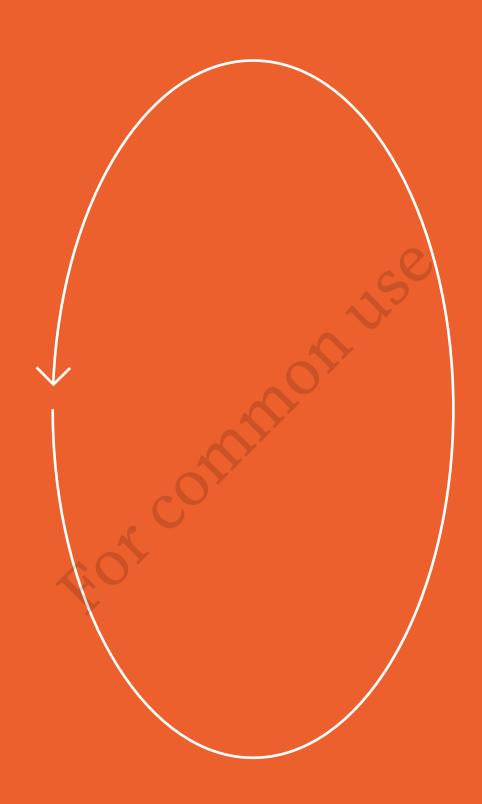
Figure 7. Products of Lakoat.Kujawas' work archiving local history, art, culture, and agriculture, exhibited in the village and the district.
Location: Kapan, East Nusa Tenggara (2019).
Source: Petrus Maure.

Reflecting on Lakoat.Kujawas, we can imagine an art collective that grows, develops, and is empowered in village. Notwithstanding the inspirations that come from cities and other places, they develop various activities according to the characteristics and needs of the villagers themselves. The mutualism of Lakoat.Kujawas-Mollo is possible because the art collective is an inextricable part of the society while the society is positioned as the main axis for artistic works developed by the art collective.

Jakarta, 2021

Berto Tukan & Ayos Purwoaji

Stories from Pasirputih

Muhammad Sibawaihi

On December 29, 2009, a diverse group of youngsters from North Lombok founded Pasirputih, and on January, 7, 2010 the organization already had a simple logo and structure. Muhammad Gozali acted as chairperson of the group.

We cannot talk about how Pasirputih came to be without talking about Forum Lenteng, a Jakarta-based organization, with its akumassa empowerment program for community-based media. At the time, young people in Pemenang, North Lombok, enjoyed socializing with friends, practicing dramatic arts, creating short films, and taking part in other social activities. They welcomed the akumassa program. Gozali believed the program motivated them to later become Pasirputih founders. This was because it gave them the opportunity to learn more about the video-film technology that was all the rage among the youth in Pemenang; it provided them with a chance to improve their writing skills; and, most importantly, the program opened up opportunities for them to establish networks with communities outside of Lombok. It was difficult for young people in Lombok to create such a network because of the considerable clout that some senior figures wielded there, the hegemony of cultural institutions, and/or the centralized art space.[1] Young people saw the akumassa program as a novel window of opportunity for them to expand their knowledge and networks in a bigger cultural sphere.

Some questions, however, still linger. Did Pasirputih manage to bring about everything they had envisioned? And if so, how did they go about it? What happened after the akumassa program came to its conclusion? How have Pasirputih been doing, and how have they survived so far?

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[1] Interview with Muhammad Gozali (September 29, 2020).

Figure 1. 30 Days of Pemenang in Camera Frames.
Location: Bangsal port, Pemenang (2017).
Source: Pasirputih.

Taking those questions as the basis of my investigation, I tried
to uncover the stories of Pasirputih's journey starting from their
inception to their current situation, and I'm going to present them in
several sections. The sections help me, and perhaps also readers, to
observe more closely the different phases that this organization has
gone through.

The Trial Period: the Strength of Friendship and Faith

Developing a community, an organization, an association, or an
initiative is like raising a child. It requires our full attention, with
firm commitment, sincerity and acceptance. Like parents, founders
or members of the organization need to have a clear vision and
missions using the right methods and strategies. And like parents who
sometimes consult child development experts or friends and family
members who have made the parenting journey before them and know
what it's like to nurture and raise a child, organization members and

> ## Developing a community, an organization, an association, or an initiative is like raising a child.

leaders have to be open to suggestions. If needed, we must seek advice to improve the wellbeing of our community, organization, association, or initiative. Just as parents have dreams about what the future will be for their children and try to make those dreams come true, we also need to envision the future for our organization and try our best to accomplish that common vision.

This is how I perceive Pasirputih: a platform that we had never dreamed of having. Like the bliss that parents feel after their baby is born, the sheer happiness was there in the beginning as we had a new meeting space, new friends, new vibes, and learned about new tools, gathered new perspectives. Everything was new. We were so elated, and we forgot that equipment such as hard disks, computers and cameras had limitations, and when they were broken we would be upset. It was like taking care of a newborn, and when the newborn was febrile, everyone would be panicking. As the illness becomes more severe, parent distress increases correspondingly, and they often make a wrong move.

This was the case when the people who had been involved in establishing Pasirputih went their own ways, and only three people remained: Muhammad Gozali, Lalu Maldi, and Hujjatul Islam. These remaining members almost lost their faith in growing their new "baby". Had their friends not encouraged them to keep their faith and plod on, Pasirputih wouldn't be here today.

Stories from Pasirputih

I was not fully involved in the akumassa program at the time—only in the last few weeks. However, my interest in writing, making videos, and working with editing software kept me at Pasirputih. In the midst of my busy schedule of teaching at a religious boarding school, I always made time to go to Pasirputih during the weekends, sometimes to continue writing, to record scenes from the neighborhood on a handycam, or to discuss things. I felt that Pasirputih was the right place for me to share my anxieties and worries about the various issues I was dealing with.

As time went by, more and more people went to Pasirputih. It became increasingly popular, especially among the youth around Pemenang. We saw unfamiliar faces. Gozali, who was working as a lecturer in one of the private universities in North Lombok, often invited students from his drama and theater class to come and discuss things in Pasirputih.

Figure 2. Members of Perempuan Pemenang (Pemenang Women), a Pasirputih's sub-program, practice gymnastics every Wednesday in Pemenang.
Location: Pasirputih's office, Pemenang (2018).
Source: Pasirputih.

Muhammad Sibawaihi

The atmosphere at Pasirputih became increasingly lively. People not only went there to make videos or write, but also to engage in other activities such as visual and performing arts. Pasirputih was where people from all walks of life gathered: crafters, hawkers from Bangsal port, members of the local community, mosque youth groups, and the local scouts. This is because Pasirputih often held collaborative public activities in response to a range of events, including public holidays.

In our second year, as we got to know and collaborate with different parties, we at Pasirputih started to think about establishing a more mature form of organization, with the position of a secretary to take care of administrative matters and a treasurer to take care of the finances. We also encouraged participants to commit to raising Pasirputih.

The wish to keep on nurturing and raising Pasirputih with a more solid structure was expressed in internal discussions, including via input from our friends. Such questions came up very frequently: Why are we organizing ourselves? What is our objective? What do we give to this organization? What does this organization give us?

We learned how to strengthen Pasirputih from those who had raised and nurtured their own "children" before us. These included Forum Lenteng, ruangrupa, Serrum, Jatiwangi art Factory, communities within akumassa networks, and other communities in Lombok. We then tried to implement one or two models we thought would be appropriate for Pasirputih. However, the challenges made those models hard to implement, or it didn't go as we imagined. We would later realize that every organization had its own problems and its own way of solving those problems. This forced us at Pasirputih to reassess the situation, seek the right strategy, and solve our problems independently.

I can roughly divide the problems we faced in Pasirputih in our first years into two categories: internal and external issues. Structural, financial, membership and programmatic issues fit into the first category; the second category contained more abstract issues, such

as contempt, interference from people who didn't know us well, interventions from family members who didn't see any significant financial benefit from their family's involvement with Pasirputih, challenges in establishing collaborations with stakeholders as a new organization, and—this might be rather extreme but perhaps also to be expected—the public perception of us as a group of lunatics.

We didn't perceive the issues concerning our secretariat, work space, or base camp as fundamental in our first year. We still did not have a clear vision about what Pasirputih would be in the coming years. We had little knowledge about how to manage such a space. All we knew was that what we had been doing at Pemenang and North Lombok was important for the community. It was something that had not been done before as a method to observe, examine and respond to the socio-cultural issues within the community. And we believed it was something that would at least be beneficial to us and our families.

Efforts to record day-to-day community issues from the perspective of the "commoner" were unusual in North Lombok. Living in a new and small region, strongly influenced by mass media, our community was used to discussing big issues on the national level. Instead of talking about problems we saw around us, we preferred discussing national politics, celebrity gossip, and other areas that were worlds apart from our everyday reality. People were understandably bemused when we visited our neighbors to talk about their problems and then wrote and published it. This was the case when I was writing about the river near my house, which was very polluted, smelly, and full of debris. Similarly, we wrote about the *cidomo*, the horse-drawn carriage that was characteristic of our region. We wanted to solve the issues together concerning the *cidomo*.

To ensure that our community could read about the issues we raised in our writing, we published a weekly bulletin containing articles written by Pasirputih members. We distributed the bulletin at the market, in the alleys, and at other public places where people gathered, with the

Muhammad Sibawaihi

belief that one day the things that concerned us would also be common concerns for us all, and that the community in Pemenang would take collective actions to find the solutions.

Our first years saw us going through awful psychological shocks because of the collision between reality and what we had dreamt about. Had there been no sympathy and encouragement from our friends, and had our faith not been so strong, perhaps Pasirputih would have ceased to exist. Personally, I call this situation a "blessed curse" (or perhaps others would call it a "blessing in disguise"). On the one hand, Pasirputih's existence brought with it the wind of hope to Pemenang; on the other hand, our faith seemed to have brought us to a space of alienation.

In our effort to keep on nurturing Pasirputih and cultivating the tree of faith that we had grown, we launched different initiatives—and not only did these initiatives assert Pasirputih's existence, they also helped us to understand ourselves better. Instead of preoccupying ourselves with external issues—although we still talked about them—we focused our efforts on fixing our internal problems, as I try to elaborate in the following sub-themes.

Status

Six years after its founding, Pasirputih determined to change its legal status from community or association to foundation. We realized that as a modern organization, Pasirputih must have a strong legal basis in line with regulations.

We also based this decision on the realization that Pasirputih would not grow if we didn't dare to take on greater challenges, such as managing larger sums of money, whether from the government or institutional donors. In our collaborations with different parties, they would always ask us about our legal status.

The switch from a community or informal association to a formal foundation created the opportunity for Pasirputih to grow as a more mature organization in terms of our management and program. It also forced us to be more transparent, since as a foundation we had to be open to scrutiny from related organizations and from the public.

We also registered Pasirputih at Badan Kesatuan Bangsa dan Politik (Kesbangpol—Office of National Unity and Politics) in North Lombok to obtain a registration number, which enabled us to gain access to funds from the local government.

Basecamp

In its early days, Pasirputih used Gozali's and my house as our basecamp, which also served as the place for the akumassa workshop. We had used the two-story house for almost a year and a half, and all the while our parents had to foot the bill for such necessities as electricity, water and (often) food. As we didn't want to burden our parents any longer, we tried to lobby the District Government of North Lombok to allow us to make use of one of their unused buildings. In mid 2011, we held the Young North Lombok Artists' Exhibition and invited the Office of Education and Culture as well as the Office of Tourism of North Lombok District. We used the occasion to ask the local government to assist us in providing a more representative space for us to work and house our activities. As a result, they entrusted us with a building of around 56 m^2 near Bangsal port that we started to use since the beginning of 2012. The move to the new secretariat had a positive impact on Pasirputih. We learned to manage our expenses and income independently. We deliberated about how to make our art and activism self-sustaining.

Unfortunately, because of membership issues and our busy schedule out of the office, we didn't use the space for several months. As a result, in early 2014 the local government emptied the building with no warning and removed all of our belongings and archives from the

Muhammad Sibawaihi

building. Archives were exposed to the elements and ruined. We lost many of our possessions. We had to return to the house where we first started our organization.

As our archives and membership grew, the space in the house became inadequate for our work, and at the end of 2015, we decided to rent a house. We looked all over in the sub-districts Pemenang and Tanjung, and we eventually rented a house in the sub-village of Karang Baru, Pemenang Timur Village. At 104 m^2, the house was quite spacious for us. The rent was relatively expensive in Pemenang. We were fortunate that at the time we were organizing the akumassa Chronicle program in collaboration with Forum Lenteng, which would then lead to the folk festival of Bangsal Menggawe, a program that we initiated. With the funds we secured from the program, we were able to pay the rent

Figure 3. Pasirputih's new basecamp.
Location: Gang GOR Bulu Tangkis Pemenang, Kr. Subagan Daya (2018).
Source: Pasirputih.

for the first two years, and from 2015 to 2018 we used the house as our basecamp. It had a good location in a good neighborhood, but unfortunately there was a dispute regarding the legal status of the premises, so we didn't extend our rent agreement.

At the end of 2018, we moved out and looked for another house that should be located near the main street, accessible, and with no family disputes. We eventually moved to a house on Jalan Raya Senggigi, sub-village of Mekar Sari, West Pemenang Village. It was quite spacious, with a big lawn, and near the main street. However, during the Lombok earthquake on August 5, 2018, the house collapsed, the walls gave way, and we could no longer use the space. We all moved to the evacuation camps.

Muhammad Sibawaihi

After spending six months in the camp, we were finally able to use a plot of land on loan that was as big as half a soccer field. We built a small lodge and temporary housing there to continue our work at Pasirputih. As we didn't feel comfortable using the space for free, we leased the land for ten years. This is where we are working now, on Gang GOR Bulu Tangkis Pemenang, sub-village of Karang Subagan Daya, West Pemenang Village, the Pemenang sub-district, North Lombok.

We think that at least in the next ten years Pasirputih does not have to worry about where we work. From early 2019 to the present, we have collected many memories while working from this location. Our dream: "Hopefully the land will be ours one day."

Finances

In the early days, when Pasirputih didn't yet have a place of our own (2010-2013), we thought that at least we could reimburse my father for the electricity bills he paid, or that we would have the money to buy instant noodles, coffee, and cigarettes when our friends came to discuss things. Among the few members who stayed with Pasirputih, only one or two have had permanent employment; further, their income was far below average. It was already difficult for us to fend for ourselves, much less to take care of Pasirputih. We used our skills to record and edit videos to have a little bit of income to maintain Pasirputih.

Figure 4. Some of the seeds sold at Warung Tani.
Source: Pasirputih.

Figure 5. The This-Kon Homestay, a partner of Pasirputih.
Location: Gili Meno (2017).
Source: Pasirputih.

We promoted our skills to document family events such as circumcisions, celebration and other kinds of events, including governmental. That, however, was not enough—the cost of running an organization is enormous. Therefore, we also developed proposals and submitted them to the government, which supported some of them but didn't respond to most. It was exhausting. One day during an art event we created an installation made of printed proposals comprising all of those we had written.

Apart from being handy at wedding videography, we also tried our luck in proposal writing and screen-printing business. We learned how to screen-print from a friend who had started such an enterprise. In 2012, our friends from Serrum, Jakarta came for a visit and ran a screen-printing course. The screen-printing business was quite promising, since youngsters in North Lombok liked to have group uniforms. We were able to run our organization from the income this trade generated.

From 2012 to 2018, Pasirputih still didn't have a business manager. The income we had was usually from the different programs we proposed to different parties. We kept a portion of the funds to manage our

organization. In mid 2019, however, we established a business division to maintain organizational independence. We used Pasirputih's savings as seed money to start several subdivisions: Serba Bisa Advertising, Warung Tani (Farmers' Shop), and Dahrun Kopi (Coffee Dahrun). We also tried to establish partnerships with different companies. So far, we have forged a partnership with The This-Kon, a homestay establishment in Gili Meno. We signed a contract with The This-Kon in which it committed a portion of its income to Pasirputih.

Figure 6. Dahrun Kopi's product.
Source: Instagram @dahrunkopi.

Program

As mentioned above, our initial programs in Pasirputih were random and not measurable. We were jack-of-all-trades and did what we could while trying to maintain our focus on our main line of work: writing and video-making (documenting social events). We held many stopgap activities, but these eventually tired us out.

Since 2013 we have tried to run a better-targeted and measurable program that focuses on knowledge-strengthening, archiving, independent business, and yearly events. We have held weekly workshops and invited speakers, especially from the art community.

We have also held weekly film screenings and book discussions. We had a library and opened a makeshift book station on the street on Jalan Raya Bangsal every week. We didn't sell the books but lent them to visitors coming to the Bangsal area on Sundays. We stopped the program because the books were not returned and we ran out of books to lend.

We also held archiving projects, usually by engaging with Pemenang youth. We ran workshops in villages, stayed there one to two months, and we produced a series of articles, videos and films.

In terms of our independent business program, we established the enterprise Kemumun Production, through which we managed our wedding videography, printing, and coffee shop business.

We made use of the national holidays for our yearly events, and we have hosted a youth camp at the end of every year since 2011.

Pasirputih's program matured from 2014 to 2018. We categorized activities as weekly, bi-annual, and annual. We had so many activities in the pipeline that we sometimes could not perform all of them, and even if we could, it was often in a frenzy. We eventually merged similar activities and came up with three programs:

1.	Knowledge distribution	Berajah Aksara
		Kelas Wah Discussion Forum
		Pasirputih cinema
		Aksara Tani
2.	Production	Book/article production
		Film production
3.	Cultural events	Bangsal Menggawe
		Beyoung Art Camp

Muhammad Sibawaihi

Looking at our programs at Pasirputih, we conclude that at the end of the day these programs serve as alternative education space for the community in Pemenang and North Lombok—we focus on the production and distribution of knowledge.

Berajah Aksara, for example, is a platform for collective research: to study the potential of public spaces and events through archiving and reviewing day-to-day realities. We express this in writing, photography, videography, and cultural events framed within the community's small narratives to produce novel ideas and forms. Berajah Aksara's online platform—www.berajahaksara.org—presents our writing, ideas, and our effort to re-analyze social issues.

This is obvious in how we at Pasirputih articulate our views on Pemenang and North Lombok as a laboratory that provides us with a wealth of materials we can analyze using different standpoints. One example is the *mempolong-merenten*[2] social bond, which we can analyze in terms of social and economic relations, or the three coexisting religions in Pemenang, which can be a basis for a peace study. Different forms of local agriculture and marine knowledge can also enrich our treasury of popular lore.

Pasirputih is one group that has been actively promoting the significance of local knowledge, not only to the people outside Pemenang but also to the community of Pemenang and North Lombok. This has not been an easy feat, especially since people in Pemenang have seen how knowledge presented in formal education focuses on national policies. At school, Pemenang students learn Balinese dance and ignore the Sireh Tebango dance that is originally from the region. Schools also ignore the traditional comedic art of Rudat Terengan, an important part of the social and religious lives of the community. Pasirputih in collaboration with Rudat Setia Budi Terengan group has fostered innovations in the Rudat tradition, making it today a source of pride for the people of North Lombok.

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[2] *Mempolong-merenten* refers to social ties among North Lombok society.

Figure 9-11. Aksara Tani's presentation.
Location: Gili Meno (2017).
Source: Pasirputih.

Figure 12. Aksara Tani presentation (cooking together
with the people in collaboration with a local chef).
Location: Gili Meno (2017).
Source: Pasirputih.

In managing local resources, the greatest challenge has been the
community itself in the sense that the real struggle is actually how
to solve the chronic issues within the community. It has not been
easy to encourage the people in Pemenang to return to Bangsal
Beach and reassess the potential of Bangsal in view of the tourism
industry centering on the three Gilis (Gili Air, Gili Meno, and Gili
Trawangan), which has been the mainstay for regional income and
is managed by the local government. That's why building rapport
with the community is more important than managing the local
materials themselves. Once we have established that rapport, we can
collaborate in managing any local material.

The next step would be to encourage the local government to take part
in realizing a common vision with the community. Pasirputih believes

that we can best conduct our work if the people and the government are on the same page.

In this context, for Pasirputih, the wishes of the people will always take precedence. In every Bangsal Menggawe festival, for example, the emphasis should always be on the people's wishes. If the community does not want formal ceremonies (with strict protocols and a lot of speeches), the formal activities that the government proposes should not take place. Working together with representatives of the community (public figures and social leaders within the community), Pasirputih makes sure that Bangsal Menggawe is a festival by the people and for the people in which all members of the community can rejoice.

In nearly all of Pasirputih's programs, the involvement of the community and the government are the two main things. Pasirputih always pays the head of the local government a visit to report—verbally or in writing—about our activities. We think that this is important to ensure the government knows what the community has done. Such a relationship ensures our good standing; the local government always invites us to any Musyawarah Rencana Pembangunan (Musrenbang—Development Planning Assembly) at the village and district levels. On those occasions, we use the opportunity to advocate for our programs and critically review government programs.

North Lombok, 2020

Muhammad Sibawaihi

Figure 13. One of community projects initiated by Bangsal
Menggawe's Artist Residency.
Location: Kr. Subagan Daya, Pemenang (2017).
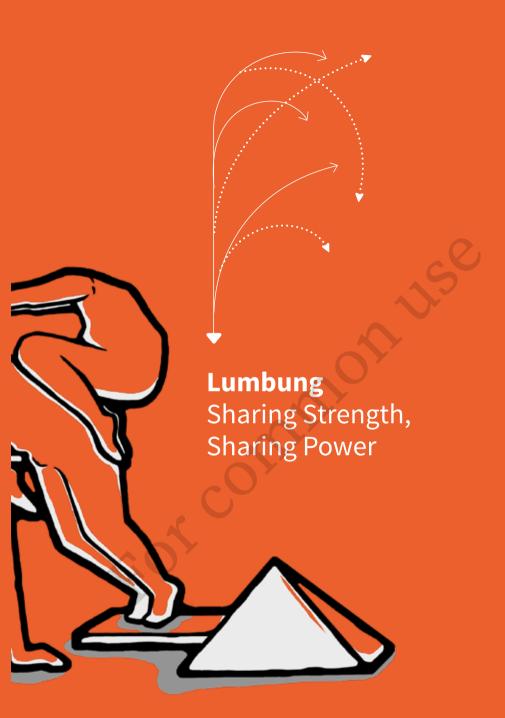Source: Pasirputih.

Figure 14. Pemenang Monument which was initiated
during Bangsal Menggawe.
Location: Dusun Jeliman Ireng, Pemenang Timur Village (2018).
Source: Pasirputih.

Lumbung
Sharing Strength,
Sharing Power

Renal Rinoza

long with the house, the *lumbung,* or barn, is the main feature of the knowledge system in rural communities in the Indonesian archipelago. As a part of the knowledge system, the *lumbung* is not only where rice is stored but also where social and other daily rites take place. It is also important to perceive the *lumbung* as we would the house, i.e., a cultural entity that provides social continuity (Fox, 2006: 1).[1] Lévi-Strauss writes that the *lumbung* is an inseparable part of the culture in house societies and in societies that are primarily agricultural.[2]

The *lumbung* is where members of such societies remember the past, thus sustaining certain continuities. It is where they connect with their ancestors and with the goddess of rice. Some would even say that the *lumbung* is where spirits rest after spending months out in the field under the scorching sun. To the Kanekes community in Banten, the *lumbung* is the place where Nyi Pohaci, the rice goddess, takes shelter after tending the rice in the field for months on end.[3] In Bali, farmers harvest their rice extremely carefully to ensure no grain falls to the ground and parts with the other grains. The farmers believe such parting would sadden the grains as they would be separated forever. Further, because the spirit of Dewi Sri, the rice goddess, has descended to the earth and permeated these grains,[4] farmers must pamper the rice stored in the *lumbung* lest they risk the goddess's wrath. To the Toraja community in South Sulawesi, the *lumbung* is where they worship the rice spirit, signifying a cosmic orientation that connects the community with the sacred and divine upper realm.[5]

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[1] James J. Fox, "Comparative Perspectives on Austronesian Houses: An Introductory Essay" in ed. James J. Fox *INSIDE AUSTRONESIAN HOUSES: Perspectives on Domestic Designs for Living* (Canberra: ANU E Press, 2006).

[2] Roxana Waterson, "Houses and the Built Environment in Island South-East Asia: Tracing some shared themes in the uses of space" in James J. Fox (2006).

[3] Robert Bressing, Bart Barendregt, "Centred on the source: Hamlets and houses of Kanekes (Baduy)" in eds. R. Schefold, Peter J.M. Nas, *Indonesian Houses: Volume 2: Survey of Vernacular Architecture in Western Indonesia* (Leiden: KITLV Press & Brill, 2008).

[4] N.C. van Setten van der Meer, *Sawah Cultivation in Ancient Java: Aspects of Development during the Indo-Javanese Period, 5th to 15th Century* (Canberra: ANU Press, 1979).

[5] Brian Auersbach, "The House, the Rice and the Buffalo: Cosmological Perceptions in the Indigenous Architecture of Austronesia," in *SPAFA Journal,* Vol. 2 (2018).

We often associate the *lumbung* with the domestic sphere and the female realm, as it is inextricably related to ideas of reproduction and fertility. However, Waterson warns us against falling into the trap of gender ideas that originate from the West, which perceives the domestic realm as a form of female subordination.[6] The *lumbung* domestic realm is not a manifestation of the separation between the domestic and public spaces; rather, it is more about a profound symbolic bond between women and rice grain. This bond reflects the important economic and production roles that women play. (This differs from the capitalistic division of gendered spaces that situates the female domestic sphere on the lower rank within the public space hierarchy and even identifies it as a powerless space.) The *lumbung*'s domestic sphere contains a close relationship between agricultural fertility and women, between women's nurturing capacity as a source of life and agriculture as a source of food. Waterson writes that there is a continuity between the sacred and the pure, imbued as they are with vital forces, in the idea of the *lumbung* as the domestic, female realm within a house society.[7] Waterson explains that "the womb as life-source serves as the starting point for a wide-reaching web of ideas about life processes and the reproduction of social groupings, which themselves are intimately identified with the house."

The same is true of the *sopo*, the barn in the Batak Toba community in North Sumatra. However, here they perceive the *sopo* as a whole as a male realm in which the attic, where rice is stored, is seen as a female space; the space below is the male domain. In the Batak Toba's gender perception, the *sopo* is contrasted with the female *ruma* (the house). Symbolically, they complement and depend on each other. This contrast is important in understanding the life-giving dialectical relationship. The community perceives the contrast as positive for the realm of the living.[8] Here the barn is linked with the life-cycle force of

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[6] Roxana Waterson (2006), pp. 232, 235.
[7] *Ibid.,* p. 237.
[8] Gaudenz Domenig, "Inverted Posts for the Granary: Opposition and Reversal in Toba Batak architecture," in ed. Stephen Sparkes, *The House in Southeast Asia: A Changing Social, Economic and Political Domain (NIAS Studies in Asian Topics No. 28).* (London, New York: Signe Howell, Routledge Curzon), pp. 204, 209.

the rice god, as revealed in the yearly harvest. The *lumbung*, therefore, reflects the recurring cycle of death and rebirth, and it explains why the *lumbung* also contains heirlooms and relics connecting the living with the souls of the ancestors and other spirits—all of whom live under one roof, or at least in the same compound. It is these spirits that maintain the continuity between the fertility of the land and the human reproductive cycle.[9]

A Common Space in the *Lumbung*

As mentioned, the *lumbung* as a life-source is the starting point for multiplying hubs of life webs and reproducing social groupings. Apart from its symbolic and cosmic expressions, the *lumbung* reveals social relations, the division of work between men and women, encounters, and everything related to the pulses of everyday life. The *lumbung* usually has an empty space underneath that residents use for meetings to discuss important matters related to the village community, such as the planting and harvesting schedule, irrigation set-up, birth and death. It is also for receiving guests, holding assemblies, for resting and enjoying a cup of coffee in the afternoon. The *lumbung's* architectural design as well as its spatial orientation and organization are the manifestations of its social function. It is the social space within the *lumbung* where everyday activities take place. On some occasions, the *lumbung* takes a central role. For example, among the Kanekes and Kasepuhan Banten Kidul communities in West Java. This is during the *seren taun* festive rituals when the villagers take their rice to *leuit* (the village communal barns). The rituals are solemn yet festive, and they provide an abundance of energy to the *lumbung's* social role in the web of life and reproduction of social groupings. Anthropologists call such energy the *smangat* or *smanaf* (spirit), which originates from mutual relationships between the ancestral souls, gods, and the living.[10] The spirit of camaraderie, collaboration, social

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[9] Koji Sato, "Menghuni Lumbung: Beberapa Pertimbangan Mengenai Asal-Usul Konstruksi Rumah Panggung di Kepulauan Pasifik," in *Antropologi Indonesia* 49 (1991), pp. 31-47; Roxana Waterson, *The Living House: An Anthropology of Architecture in South-East Asia* (Singapore: Oxford University Press, 1990).
[10] Roxana Waterson (1990), p. 158; Roxana Waterson (2006), p. 230; N.C. van Setten van deer Meer (1979), p. 101.

solidarity and cooperation imbue such practices with mutualism. The spirit of cooperation results from the dialectical relations within the natural processes of development in an agrarian society's ecological sustainability, especially regarding the use of common spaces, what we now call "the commons".

Figure 1. Rice barn with carvings.
Location: Fort de Kock, Bukittinggi, West Sumatra.
Source: Woodbury & Page, CC0 1.0, Collection of Rijksmuseum.

Renal Rinoza

Figure 2. Children and adults at a rice barn.
Location: Batipuh, West Sumatra (ca. 1895-1905).
Source: Christiaan Benjamin Nieuwenhuis, CC0 1.0, Collection of Rijksmuseum.

Figure 3. Uma Lulik (Ancestor's House).
Location: Aldeia Macausa, Irabin de Baixo, East Timor.
Source: Isabel Nolasco, CC BY-SA 4.0.

Figure 4. Children grinding rice.
Location: West Java.
Source: Tropenmuseum, CC BY-SA 3.0.

Figure 5. *Leuit*.
Location: Sirnarasa, a Kasepuhan village near Pelabuhan Ratu,
Sukabumi, West Java.
Source: Wibowo Djatmiko, CC BY-SA 3.0.

The *Lumbung* as a Feature of the Commons

The lumbung plays a key role in the ecological sustainability processes of an agrarian society because of its relation to the cycle of life. In a *lumbung* society, rice is the center of life and the main source of energy. It is thus understandable that in a society depending on rice cultivation many cultural activities center on the *lumbung*, where community members worship the god of rice.[11] The worship rituals along with everyday practices that take place in *lumbung* reflect a specific ecological cycle of life that requires people to organize the material and spiritual dialectically. Due to limited ecological and natural sources, agricultural societies need to organize, maintain, and manage the sustainability of their food sources. This has resulted in a set of cognitive systems that Dobrowolski calls "wise-sayings" shaped by community experience, receptive abilities, and audio-visual perceptions.[12] Dobrowolski continues to explain that an agrarian society transmits its cognitive system verbally and through images. These audio-visual transmissions enable people to acquire knowledge with greater accuracy. These wise sayings include neat and expressive linguistic formulas in verses containing meteorological records and analyses, facts about the climate, information on farming and livestock, religious and moral teaching, and the entirety of life experiences. In the Javanese agrarian culture, an example of this is the *pranata mangsa*, or the "rules of the seasons", a calendar system that equips farmers with the knowledge of planting schedules, harvesting seasons, the climate, outbreaks of pests and how to deal with them. The cognitive system is a product of the commons in an agricultural society and specific to a place.

In such a *sui generis* knowledge dynamic, the *lumbung* becomes very important economically during perilous situations such as famines. It is a storehouse that sustains the community until the next plentiful

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[11] Koji Sato (1991).

[12] Kazimiers Dobrowolski, "Peasant Traditional Culture dalam Teodor Shanin," in *Peasant and Peasant Societies* (Harmondsworth, Middlesex, England: Penguin Education, Penguin Books Ltd., 1975).

season, and it provides a sense of adequacy[13] and moral economy.[14] The moral values of subsistence are typical of the commons. In terms of the division of power, every male and female member of society has a role that complements the other, despite the existing inversion and contrasts. In terms of how the community perceives sexuality, the *lumbung* is a symbol that unites the female and male elements. As a life-sustaining force, it multiplies the social reproduction processes as manifested in collaborations, cooperation, decision-making processes, and assemblies—and, most importantly, the all-too-human relationships that take place underneath the *lumbung*.

The *Lumbung*, the Commons, and How Shall We Implement the Agenda for the Sustainability of Art Collectives in Indonesia?

Based on the experience of each collective or community, as in Gudskul Ekosistem's experience, *lumbung* is interpreted as collaborative work, exchange of ideas, time- and resource-sharing, and creation of common space that allow them to build an expanded scope of art ecosystem.

> As a life-sustaining force, it multiplies the social reproduction processes as manifested in collaborations, cooperation, decision-making processes, and assemblies—and, most importantly, the all-too-human relationships that take place underneath the lumbung.

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[13] Ecologist, "Whose Common Future?: Reclaiming the Commons," in *Environment and Urbanization Vol. 6, No. 1* (1994).

[14] Veronika Bennholdt-Thomsen, Maria Mies, "Defending, Reclaiming and Reinventing the Commons," in *Canadian Journal of Development Studies/Revue canadienne d'études du développement* 22:4 (2001), pp. 997-1023.

The art practice happens in public and becomes an inextricable part of it. It is an attempt and a response toward the ever-challenging future—not to mention uncertain and vulnerable circumstances. Therefore, in the midst of fast-paced changes, ruangrupa, Serrum, and Grafis Huru Hara have been building a new model of artistic exploration "through (…) expanded notion of artistic practices".[15] This takes the form of an ecosystem that is based on the idea that "all resources owned, tangible and intangible, are deposited and stored",[16] inspired by the notion of *lumbung* above.

This ecosystem built by the three art collectives has now transformed into GUDSKUL Contemporary Art Ecosystem and Collective Studies. Based on the values of friendship, solidarity, equality, and togetherness, it bolsters cross disciplinary and collaborative works, and also network expansion.

Meanwhile, other collectives such as Kerjasama 59 in Surabaya, East Java, also have artistic experiences in public. Recently they have founded Pawon'e Arek-Arek, a community kitchen platform that provides free, ready-to-eat meals for anyone in need during the COVID-19 pandemic. This initiative is driven by the spirit of mutual help, sharing, and a sense of social solidarity, and done collectively and independently. In this sense, Pawon'e Arek-Arek initiative can be seen as the practice of the commons that places community in the sense of *oikonomia*, human reproduction within the social household and reciprocal relationships to support a common survival,[17] especially at critical moments. Collectives' experiences certainly are built on the basis of equal, fluid, and reciprocal relations—unexchangeable outside the bounds of the logic of state and market exchanges.[18] What is practiced by Gudskul Ekosistem, Kerjasama 59, and other collectives is what Hardt and Negri call the practice of the

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[15] ruangrupa, *Lumbung,* Issue 1, 2020.
[16] *Ibid.*
[17] Veronika Bennholdt-Thomsen, Maria Mies (2001), pp. 997-1023.
[18] David Harvey, *Rebel Cities: From the Right to the City to the Revolution* (London & New York: Verso, 2012).

multitude,[19] in which takes places the process of occupying a common living space, sharing resources, communication, and exchange of ideas and goods. It is produced by promoting a pleasant meeting—such as *nongkrong* (hanging out) or *cangkrukan* (whiling time away with neighbors or friends)—leading to a creation of a social body with an increasingly expanded capacity. This expansion of capacity is being tried by various collectives through the accommodation of diverse resources for growth, survival, and the agenda of their sustainability. In this case, Stavrides emphasized that practices he calls communing are oriented towards creating a common space as a form of collective survival strategy in vulnerable and threatened conditions.[20] However, this ability to survive is the limits where we find forms of solidarity and a common space among different subjects.

Therefore, an agenda of art collective sustainability should take its form within the reciprocal social relations of the *lumbung* community. The notion of *lumbung* that represents collectivity and life force will always resonate with collaborative, alternatingly shared power and forces among fellow "citizens of ecosystem" or the individuals who support the collective. Embarking from *lumbung* as the source of life is a starting point to expand the network of ideas about life processes and reproductions of social group.[21] And, the practices of communal space in the art collective ecosystem—by adopting the values of *lumbung*—can continue to live and become "incubator of a wider transformation"[22] where art is inseparable from life, becoming the pulse of life itself.
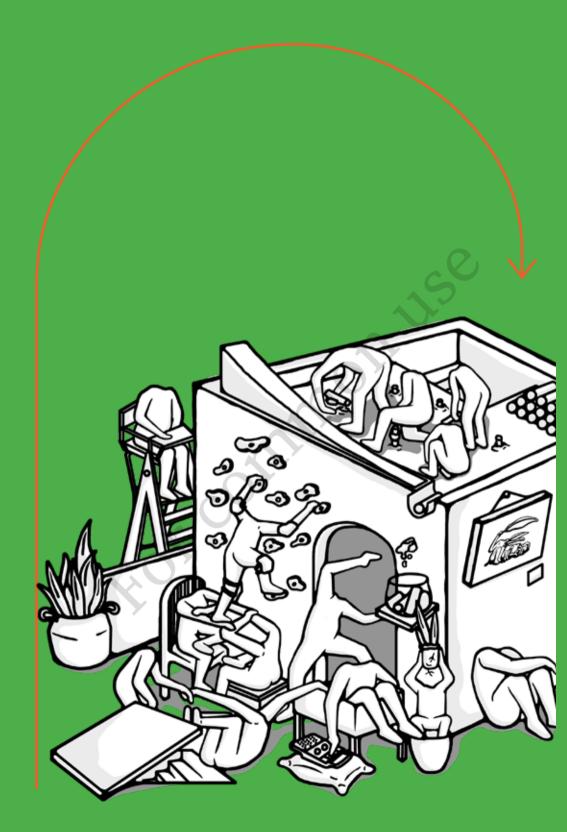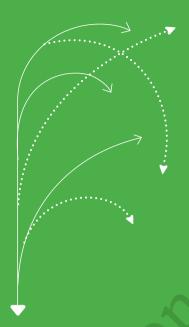
Bogor, 2020

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[19] Michael Hardt, Antonio Negri, *Multitude: War and Democracy in the Age of Empire* (New York: The Penguin Press, 2004).
[20] Stavros Stavrides, *Common Space: The City as Commons* (London: Zed Books, 2016).
[21] Roxana Waterson (2006), p. 237.
[22] ruangrupa (2020).

Now or
Ten More Years?

Edited and Rewritten by
Ajeng Nurul Aini

"How the heck do we pay for electricity and internet next month? Not to mention the rent! We've gotta be ready to move our stuff if we're gonna be evicted or suddenly asked to move. This program must go on! What format should we use now?! How can we have a stable income? Come on, let's make a proposal! Don't forget to save some! Duh, no connection! What business should we do? The front area is empty, what can we do about it, huh? Wow, so many people, here! Maybe some of them can work with us? Payday tomorrow, yeah! Got a place but got no cash! Gotta tighten our belts now! Why hasn't anybody replied on the WhatsApp group, huh?! Ah, that's just your feeling! Watch out, the neighbors can't stand the noise! Don't forget to visit Pak RT!"

A talk about collective practices and sustainability efforts with Ajeng Nurul Aini, Angga Wijaya, and Gesyada Siregar (Gudskul Ekosistem, Jakarta), Adhari Donora, Heri Budiman and Husin (Rumah Budaya Sikukeluang, Pekanbaru), Adin (Kolektif Hysteria, Semarang), Anang Saptoto (Ruang MES 56, Yogyakarta), Bunga Siagian (Jatiwangi art Factory), Hairun Nisa (Sanggar Anak Akar, Jakarta), Leonhard Bartolomeus, Muh. Rais and Rahmat Arham (SIKU Ruang Terpadu, Makassar), and Rahmadiyah "Ama" Tria Gayathri (Forum Sudut Pandang, Palu).

It is a reflection on the notion of FIXER 2010 regarding the issues in how art spaces are maintained, reclaimed, and used within the ongoing developments of public space in post-1998 Indonesia. A decade has passed (at least, at the time this book was produced) and many things have happened along the way. Some collectives have gone, some others are doing fine. The question might not only be "how to survive for a long time?" or "how to survive at all?" but also "how to keep on connecting, supporting each other, and sharing resources in the future?"

The three-hour talk via Zoom went quite well despite occasional technical errors due to rain, which caused some respondents to bounce out or their voices to become unclear. Our discussion explored the meanings of space, ideas about independent economic survival, regeneration, and crucial aspects of sustainability. This talk was a starting point for further discussions in the future that might create new formats for sharing tactics, experience, knowledge, and, of course, resources and capabilities.

The discussion below has been transcribed, translated, rewritten, and edited for clarity.

Ajeng Nurul Aini (Ajeng): Okay! So, from the FIXER survey form that we distributed, when we talk about space, it turns out that most do have physical space. In your opinion, does it still matter to have a physical space to do collective work? Because, in 2010, ownership of space was important in the context of that time.[1] Right now, with the pandemic, is physical space still necessary? Does anybody want to answer first? Please do.

Heri Budiman (Heri): May I? In our case, in Sikukeluang, when it comes to physical space, we don't have to rent space. It happens that I have a place that can be used as Rumah Budaya Sikukeluang. So, there's no need to pay rent. And, in my opinion, physical space remains important. As a gathering place, you know. Although until today we haven't been successful, we haven't been able to found a formal community. In other words, we don't have legal status yet, we have no deeds. Why is physical space important to Sikukeluang? Because Sikukeluang is like a hub for many other communities. Like Husin, for example. He's also active in Lorong Theater. Except Acong, who is in Sikukeluang exclusively. Or, Ade. Ade has serempak.org. So, we don't have standard rules. No membership cards. No formal organizational structure. In fact, the only thing we have is the house—where we

[1] Ade Darmawan, "Fixing the chain of the cycle of ideas", in *FIXER: Alternative Spaces in Art Groups in Indonesia,* catalog (Jakarta: North Art Space, 2010).
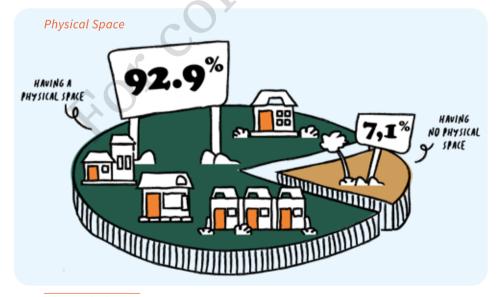
gather, where we can talk, where we discuss all kinds of things. And, there's also the coffee shop where we have coffee. It's this physical space that allows us to have stronger emotional (ties) as we see each other face to face.

Ajeng: How about Rais?

Muh. Rais (Rais): Yes, it's more or less the same. It's very important for SIKU Ruang Terpadu. Before there was SIKU, we used to hang out a lot. But the location was random; sometimes at Arham's house; sometimes at another friend's rented house... And, from what we talked about at that time very little happened, because there was no physical space where we could say, "OK! We'll come back here to talk about what we discussed yesterday." So, we've found that a physical space has a function of documenting.

Rahmat Arham (Rahmat): And, most importantly, to play *gaple*,[2] hahaha!

Rais: Not exactly, if it's *gaple* online. Hahahaha!

Physical Space

HAVING A PHYSICAL SPACE

92.9%

7,1%

HAVING NO PHYSICAL SPACE

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[2] The game dominoes.

Now or Ten More Years?

Ajeng: You play *gaple* with Pak RT, don't you?

Angga Wijaya (Angga): I'd like to add a few questions. Could you also tell us how to initiate an active [collective] space? In the current discourse around space, we know, there are a lot of intersections. We also imagine digital spaces. So, what kind of physical space do you guys in these collectives imagine to be sustainable?

Adin: First of all, if we see [space] as a form of capital accumulation, it's indeed important. Since it's an asset and property, right. When it comes to how space is, it doesn't need to be actively used. In fact, to store tools, to carry out an inventory of things, it's also necessary because almost every collective has its (own) means of production. That will cut rental costs [so that the money can be allocated] for other things. Now, I have a follow-up question: what is space actually? Is it an asset and property? Or, is it a space of activity? Because if it's an active space, it means it's a space that also needs programming. Unlike space that functions as a place to store assets.

Angga: Yes, [how] to interpret space, not just as a center of activity, right.

Adin: In Hysteria, since we were not included in the "spatial map" of the 2010 FIXER Exhibition, giving meaning to space is both important and not important. Having no space is fine as long as there is a place to store assets. But interestingly when we've built a network with kampongs—communities and all its manifestations—space can be created anywhere. It makes me think, now that people can do business without using assets, is it possible for us to imagine a space like that? For example, like Agoda, Gojek, and such things, right. These are all start-ups that have no assets themselves but instead rely on existing assemblages. Well, I don't know, but—in my wildest dreams—would that also be possible in the future collective work?

Ajeng: What do you think, Bunga?

Bunga Siagian (Bunga): In my opinion, a space is where we brand ourselves to the public, you know. What community are you from? Is it an artist collective, or an architectural firm, maybe? Now what's interesting is the development of collectives, in the last five to ten years, whose identities are actually very ambiguous. "It's an architectural firm but it also does this and that and blablabla?" An identity label itself is avoided. Because, when you're working with the public, it creates a distance, you know. It's like, "Oh, this means they usually organize A, B, C, D, which means I can't go in there." Now, there have emerged communities that are truly subject to the local needs: sometimes a community is needed as A; other times it is needed as B or C or D. So, it's very fluid. It seems there's a shift. Collectives change. How do we perceive them is based on the previous generation. And, that's about it, I guess.

Ajeng: Okay. That's interesting, Bunga. If it has something to do with the previous generation, maybe we can discuss that later. Maybe Nisa, or Ama, wants to add something? Or, Mas Rangga?[3] Nisa, please!
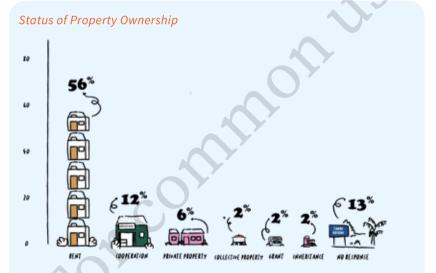
Hairun Nisa (Nisa): Okay! For Sanggar Anak Akar, physical space is important. So, guys, for your information, Sanggar Anak Akar is an educational organization that focuses on marginalized children. Children must have space. But we've been close to being evicted by residents in the neighborhood several times because the street children were really punk kids, with scary looks, you know, with piercings and stuff. We ended up getting kicked out several times. There have been also rumors of Christianization. We got kicked out because of that too. And then we tried to find a way, until at one point we held a fundraising for Sanggar Akar. Finally, we were able to build a house in the 2000s. And, what children love most is, you know, the approach through art, music, and theater. Also sculpting and screen printing. So, when it comes to marginalized children, the most successful approach is through art. So, definitely, physical space is important. Especially since

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[3] *Mas,* for male, and *Mbak,* for female, are Javanese designations to address someone older/more respected.

Sanggar Anak Akar has also become a home. Many children have ended up living with us, you know. And recently, Sanggar Anak Akar has been trying to build a school—an alternative school. And there are many rooms already. Before we got evicted, in 2017, we already had a music studio, a fine art studio, and a theater. That's what I can tell you. Until finally we got evicted. Now we are rebuilding our space.

Ajeng: Okay. Thank you, Nisa! But the evicted space was already Sanggar's own space, wasn't it, Nisa?

Nisa: Yes.

Status of Property Ownership

Space remains important for collective work. Through space, art collectives organize activities and gather around. For some, the existence of a common space also means the existence of a gathering point or hangout spot where they can spend time together. Art collectives access these spaces in many ways. A few of them own their space while most acquire a space by renting. Some rent the land and build permanent structures on it. Others acquire a space freely through the generosity of owners. However, with the development of information technology in the last ten years, some art collectives have begun to move their works to virtual spaces. The need for space can be replaced by various activities that can be carried out through the internet.

Ajeng: Okay. Maybe, before we go to Ama, a few things from Mas Rangga, okay? Because MES 56 was also involved in FIXER 2010. Perhaps Mas Rangga can explain a little, not only what's important, but also maybe what Ampyang said earlier, what has changed in terms of space? Please, Mas Rangga!

Rangga Purbaya (Rangga):…

Ajeng: Yoo-hoo! Mas Rangga? He's gone, hasn't he? Hahaha! Okay, since Mas Rangga is gone, let's go straight to Ama, yes? Please Ama! Maybe in the Palu context it's a little different, yeah?

Gesyada Siregar (Gesya): In Palu, the function of space must be different. In Semarang too. Maybe Palu has its own concern about the need for space, you know.

Rahmadiyah Tria Gayathri (Ama): In Palu, actually—especially regarding my collective—indeed since the beginning the space was built for work: for work and not to the public. So, since almost all of the members had no office space, as they didn't have day jobs at an office, the community space became a place for us to work. During the pandemic, everyone has been at home, and busy doing personal works, and our space hasn't often been actively used. Freelance work initiatives have only taken off again when we all met.

Gesya: Okay! Earlier we've heard about functions of space—whether it's a shelter, a place to work—but it's also been mentioned, in its latest development, that our understanding of collective space is not just the space owned but also the one we can take advantage of—like Mas Adin said—public spaces like, let's say *poskamling* (*pos keamanan lingkungan*, neighborhood security post), and such. And this explains the communication practice of community. Say, it's sort of how the collective practice is anchored in the area in which it lives. Thus, let's discuss about how you strive to build an understanding with

neighbors—citizens in the neighborhood—about the practices that you do. And, also, does it affect the programs that you create?

Ama: In Palu, back then in 2018,[4] right after the disaster, we did have an awareness that space was important because so many members lost their homes, and this [space] was like our basecamp. At the end of the day, it became a temporary residence for friends who had lost their homes. We even built a harmonious relationship with the local citizens because at that time you could say that, from early on, we became known as some of the few volunteers who hailed from that area. There was no telecommunications network at that time: the power was out for over a week. Then finally we purposefully gathered friends who had provisions who still had savings to help their nearest neighbors. At that time, we thought, before we would help people, we would help our own families. So, all members of the collective were called and if anyone was short of rice, people traded with each other. In the end, it indirectly made neighbors aware that this collective is part of this city.

Gesya: So, the disaster was a turning point in terms of building an understanding, wasn't it? How 'bout before, Ma, was there any relationship built already?

Ama: We live—you could say—in the middle of a city. But next to us there's an orphanage. And there are many hardline [religious] groups in the neighborhood. But our approach is as simple as when there's a neighbor who wants to get married, and they need a photographer, our crew will go there and help them. Our neighbor's kid want to make invitation cards, our members can do the design. I remember that during the disaster many of them went back to their hometowns, and when they returned, they brought us fruit from their hometowns.

Gesya: Thank you, Ama, for the story about communication with neighbors, with residents. Mas Adin also has many projects, like Tengok

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[4] In September 28, 2018, an earthquake and tsunami caused significant destruction in Palu (Central Sulawesi) and surrounding areas.

Bustaman.[5] Could you tell us, too, what was the communications strategy [in those projects]? How do local residents respond to Hysteria's projects? Please, Mas Adin!

Adin: Actually it wasn't neighbors [in our case]! And things haven't been good till now, hahahaha! So, it's okay if, for example, we don't explain [what we do] that well to neighbors. There are still distant neighbors, right? In fact, it depends on the context of what we want to do. Whatever it is, in my opinion, it depends on needs, anyway. If the needs are here, for example, in Hysteria's neighborhood, the neighbors aren't very fun, so we don't give it too much thought and that's okay, too. Hahahaha! Because, we can still care for other places.

Ajeng: I'd like to add a little. In this context, the point is, quoting a little from Ade Darmawan's essay in the FIXER 2010 catalog. There's the discussion about how artist groups create a space together. Right? And it's usually where artists become the center of ideas or awareness, but then there are developments and all kinds of changes and accelerations in the society, and then they use a collaborative approach, where an artist's position turns into that of a collaborator or mediator. We'd like to know from our friends here, do you pay attention to or are you aware of the residents' responses to the practices that you do in your respective places? Have you had any inspiring experiences?

Adin: So, the key factors are anything that can build social appreciation or solidarity, and it can be through stories, through websites, through artefacts, through hangouts, anything that can spark collective memory can be used to organize the masses. That's all, that's the key. That's why, in my preliminary research, I usually never talk about social structures, but rather, sometimes, I just talk about personal stuff, daily stuff. Because of these personal stuff, we can map people's tendencies, a society's tendencies, and then from there we can set things off and it's really nice, you know!

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[5] Tengok Bustaman is an art project held by Hysteria in Kampung Bustaman, Purwodinatan, North Semarang. It was first held in 2013 in a series of urban knowledge dynamics project.

Ajeng: Okay! Okay! Anybody wants to answer or respond, maybe? What about the context of SIKU Ruang Terpadu, maybe?

Rais: Umm, involvement with the surrounding community is actually one of our most important concerns, when we realized that the location is—as mentioned earlier—actually not very friendly for noise because it's a housing complex. But, in the end, we still needed to find a way to for it not to become an obstacle. In the first months we occupied that place, we immediately talked with Pak RT and mingled with the residents. For example, with *bakso* sellers.[6] We built relationships by letting them know if we had an event the next day and we'd invite people, "You know, why don't you try at this hour, do come here, there might by many people to whom you can sell your *bakso*." Our living room was once a kind of security post. So, friends who are local residents hung out here and guarded the neighborhood until morning.

Rahmat: At most... one of the ways we create an active space is through community service and hanging out. That's all. Oh, and we let residents borrow our ping-pong table for tournaments. Stuff like that.

Rais: Yes, yes. So, from there we seem to have shared facilities regularly. Shared assets. When they need something, and we have it, we let them borrow it. And vice versa. When we have an event and we have no sound system, we borrow it from Pak RT. It's more or less like that. And, by the way, Pak RT has a business renting out sound systems. Hahaha!

Gesya: Oh, okay! Maybe a follow-up question for SIKU—I think you guys will be able to imagine the answer—apart from things like playing *gaple*, and helping at the security post, what we really would like to know is whether things like that can become an artistic practice; for example, do those activities affect your artistic programs or projects? And how far is it?

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[6] *Bakso* is beef meatball with soup. A dish sold in restaurants or by street peddlers.

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Rais: In the end, the impact on our artistic activities is, well, what's very obvious is that they [locals] finally start to visit, open up to us, and recognize and learn about what we are doing. That's what happens.

Gesya: Thank you, Agent SIKU! Now we go to Sikukeluang. Sikukeluang's practices involve a lot of cooperation with the surrounding community. Cultivating nature, the place you own, as part of the work. Maybe you can tell us shortly. How you ask the community or neighbors to get involved in Sikukeluang's artistic practice. Just a short explanation, maybe. Ade or Kang Heri, since there's Dinas Kerimba.[7] And also some products with the Lab Kiblat,[8] could you briefly share with us something about your strategy?

Heri: In Sikukeluang, by the way, we don't live in a dense settlement, but on a big street. So, we have neighbors only on our left, right, behind, and at the front. And it's pretty distant, separated by great patches of land. So, it's not as complicated as being neighborly. Only, it's usually like what Adin said earlier, you know, it's normal, neighbors can be a hassle, they may complain and all, whenever there's a music event. Especially Ade's music is noise. Once the next-door neighbor came to us because we blasted noise until midnight. But they spoke nicely. It wasn't like they used violence or they reprimanded us harshly. They just reminded us that it's already late at night and they would like us to turn it down.

Gesya: What about [activities] with the community, Kang Heri?

Heri: We do have a lot of activities with the community. Only, we use the approach like I said earlier. Because, maybe, we make art, play guitars, hang out, sing together, and also, yes, play *gaple*, all of these are accepted in the community. Also, we're not formal. [Wearing]

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[7] Dinas Kerimba is a commercial tourist program initiated by Rumah Budaya Sikukeluang. Participants from two to four can visit Rimbang Baling while doing chores such as cleaning Lab Kiblat's area, taking care of coffee plants, building bathing facilities, etc.

[8] Lab Kiblat is an open lab for artists, researchers, and citizens to process results of explorations of the nature and the indigenous people in Rimbang Baling through artist-in-residence programs, research, workshops, shows, and exhibitions.

shorts, having a nap wherever we feel like it. And even, in the village, my friends, we sleep anywhere, we can go to sleep at anyone's house, you know, this being Rimbang Baling, right?[9] It's a remote rural area. So, when people came, the locals were confused. "How come people want to stay here?" For one, there is no toilet. You go relieve yourself in the river. So, they're proud of having visitors. And we always use a flexible approach, you know. There are also our friends at NGOs, such as environmental NGOs, right. But, well, they're a little stiff, and their programs are rigid. So, according to the people, we are more fluid. Anything to add, Ade?

Adhari Donora (Ade): In the city, meaning in Pekanbaru, it's not always the case. When friends drop by, for instance, we create an event for them. For example, a music show that's intended to be entertaining—since we have a music studio in our place, it's semi-outdoor and everyone can play there. So, the sound is heard on the street. Neighbors can hear it. But, it's the kind of music that's nice to their ears. It gets noisy sometimes, it does. But it's just natural. Experimental, right. Hahaha! But, anyway, indeed in Rimbang Baling one way is getting the artists to be involved with the community. For example, the residencies, some of those that we've organized in Rimbang Baling, [participants] always have to be actively involved. That's the right thing to do, to get closer to the community. Who knows if they get close to Pak RT's child, huh. Who knows?

Gesya: Let's welcome another participant! Hello, Mas Anang! Change of players, no?

Ajeng: Mas Rangga just pm'd me. Blackout, he said. Hahahaha!

Anang Saptoto (Anang): Hey, hello! Hahahaha!

Gesya: At the moment we're talking about the artistic practice that's

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[9] Rimbang Baling is a wildlife reserve that's also a tropical rainforest ecosystem in Riau.

anchored in a local context. We've shared stories, our friends here. Now, maybe it's Sanggar Anak Akar, I guess, since earlier we've heard about their focus on marginalized children. They've even been evicted. Maybe you could tell us too: what's your strategy, really—especially through art—to integrate into the local community?

Nisa: There was one case where we got a visit because the neighborhood wasn't happy. However, Sanggar and the neighborhood made an agreement after that. So, we have deals like, playing noisy music until nine o'clock at the latest, pausing during the *azan*,[10] if we're doing noisy activities. So, we approached Pak RT, and Pak RW especially, it's very important. Just like the others, the *Karang Taruna* sucks;[11] no activities either. And they saw an opportunity, "Oh, there's a studio, maybe young people here can use the studio." We try to accept little things like that, and the important thing is to create activities that involve the local community, so to speak. Until we were finally accepted, and at one point we end up needing each other. This means when the community needs the studio space for their activities, such as a celebration, we provide it for them. And it's convenient when we need friends to help with the studio. So, starting with little things, then we need each other, we become family, and they're very welcome. Until finally we had to move again to another house. Then we have to do it all over again… go through those dynamics again.

Gesya: How to involve community, and what their response is regarding the practices of MES. Maybe you can tell us briefly, Mas.

Anang: OK. At MES, there is public involvement in several programs. For example, in the early days before MES 56 became what it is now, MES is very open, such as for RT meetings, for community events like Eid al-Adha, to slaughter cows. That's first. Second, in terms of our program, we take advantage of social moments, such as community

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[10] Muslim call for prayer.
[11] Youth organization supposedly in every administrative unit of Indonesia.

kitchens or [celebrations of] August 17.[12] We also often prioritize the surrounding residents to create things that can be exhibited at MES 56. Apart from that, we hold movie screenings fairly regularly. In this case: Café Society. So, in MES there's a cinema program managed by three groups, namely MES 56, the Documentary Film Festival, and Bakudapan Food Study Group. We run this cinema, called Café Society, which was supposed to—before the pandemic—screen films every Tuesday and open a kitchen for friends to sell dishes. Now, Café Society has two platforms. The first model is the one at MES. We set up a room for a cinema. The other model is Café Society Extra that's not necessarily at MES—it is often held in kampongs around MES, with a committee involving young people there. Sometimes on a badminton court or in someone's front yard. Like *layar tancap*,[13] we have it quite often. The movies, sometimes people ask for a certain movie, this, this, this. And then we try to find films produced in Yogyakarta and around the region. The rest is fairly common. If there are notifications for events such as RT/RW meeting, it's MES's obligation to be involved in matters like that.

Ajeng: Thanks, Mas Anang! Bunga, you'd like to add something?

Bunga: This has something to do with what I mentioned earlier about space, right. I might actually avoid the question of space and identity that I am currently working on with Ismal (JaF), because it is related to how people communicate with us. So, it's not just us who communicate with them, but [also] how they communicate with us. It's actually a fluid position, those who can come here can go there. So, it's clear, Ismal and me, we have no problems, say, with neighbors, and whether we have misunderstandings or all kinds of things. It's because the program is not centered on us. It can be done anywhere. That's one of our strategies, though, to avoid being viewed by our neighbors as something fixed. For example, like, Ismal and me, we set

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[12] Indonesian Independence Day.
[13] An outdoor screening with a wide screen projection on a yard, with a very public audience.

up Badan Kajian Pertanahan.[14] When you hear the name, it sounds really serious, right; research work, sitting in front of the laptop, stuff like that. But it's actually quite far from that. In fact, nowadays our neighbors often come, almost every day. Although the name sounds intimidating, the work is the opposite. Now, that's ultimately what makes our neighbors feel like doing things together. Besides the fact that our identity is not fixed, we're also quite flexible [in] how we brand our programs. The programs actually never come from us, and we propose what things to do together. The important thing is that we—as neighbors, as friends—we often have equal positions, and they don't see us as a lab or a research institute, but people with whom they can play together in this location.

Ajeng: Okay! Thanks, Bunga! I'd like to ask Adin again. In the forms that we've distributed for this FIXER survey, in the generational question, Adin answers on the form—or Hysteria, in the context of the organization—that generation has become less important; the important thing is upscaling—maybe later Adin can explain more. However, I also wonder if each of you here has found a way to share knowledge, from the previous [generation] to the next, to spread ideas? Adin, maybe? Don't act like you're sleeping, Din!

Adin: Hahaha! Okay! I think, in terms of regeneration, we all think about regeneration, after all. But we're not an LPM (Lembaga Pemberdayaan Masyarakat, or Community Empowerment Institution), or an Islamic boarding school, or anything. We're aware of our limitations. We do have methods for distribution of knowledge; we do have internships, we do make a curriculum, which sounds kind of pretentious, yes. And we receive volunteers, working to recruit people. We do that. But the fact is that sometimes they work, sometimes they don't. Hence, the emphasis on upscaling, instead of regeneration, is nothing but, well, it's also a way of consoling ourselves as collective members who sustain the collective, and try to fit many things into our

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[14] Land Study Affairs Agency, a research group to study land affairs and their cultural aspects in Jatiwangi, West Java, that intentionally imitates the National Land Agency (BPN, Badan Pertanahan Nasional).

lives. So, to upscale actually means reaching out as much as possible to increase the workforce. That's our concern. Even if, let's say, we have networks in many kampongs, sometimes we invite them to come in, but we also often let them work organically with us. So, a mechanism for the transfer of knowledge is created, but it won't be the only source of frustration if what we hope is lost.

Ajeng: Anyone wants to continue or respond to Adin would be good.

Anang: In MES 56, in February we... uh, sorry, sorry... let me get my charger first, okay! Pass...

Ajeng: Okay, Mas Anang! The others perhaps would like to share about regeneration? Interesting, there's Nisa here too. Nisa, we can say you're from the fifth generation of Sanggar Anak Akar, right? I found it really fascinating, Sanggar Anak Akar has more, like, even younger members, but also... Nisa should tell us more. Are there any other obstacles?

Nisa: It's the same, generation is a problem in itself, and it's difficult, yes, because it's related to our commitment to Sanggar. Sanggar Akar's target is teenagers, especially those who stay. Even though it's possible when we look at an eight-year-old, seven-year-old, we'd like to take them home. We stay with them, you see. But the learning method, you see, we make all of it for teenagers actually. That's the truth. And, most importantly, building a generation means we have transitional periods. This means that when Sanggar Akar children are no longer children, for example 17 to 18 years, in transitional periods, we give the children the opportunity to choose: "What do you want to do in the future?" Some answer, "I just want to go home and help my parents." Others say, "I want to save for college." Or else, "I want to stay at Sanggar." We welcome such choices, although Sanggar Akar doesn't pay for their higher education when they're in college. So, some children stay at Sanggar while saving, while looking for personal donors, looking for scholarships, or studying for college, and gradually learning to manage

things here. Say, [in terms of] academic dynamics, over time they think about the problems; how is the learning evaluation? How about the learning material? Usually, there will be children who are committed; I want to be a manager at Sanggar, or in the end someone decides, "Okay, I already got a lot from Sanggar, I want to go home and build a community in my own neighborhood."

Ajeng: Okay, Nisa! Mas Anang, can you continue? Thanks, Nisa!

Anang: Okay, in MES, we have had many regenerations in the last 18 years. Initially, MES 56 was just a kind of a program division. It was only in late 2019 and early 2020 that MES was divided into three parts: there's the program, management, and business unit. So, from there, regarding regeneration, maybe it's almost similar to what Adin talked about earlier; Indeed, we have several systems used to reach out to our friends from the younger generation, to get them active and involved in MES. For example, we invite them to do internships or receive certain project priorities. However, after they get in MES, what do they want to do? We try to work it out through raising awareness of marginal aspects. Among vocal people, there must be those who aren't. Among people who have initiative, there must be those who don't. From there, we kind of draw lines and create small subdivisions, which are then divided into those three: program, management, and business unit. Initially, when we built this new platform, everyone was asked, "What do you want to do at MES?" As it turned out, the answers came as quite a surprise. There are some who want to be artists in MES, some others want to earn money, some want to manage MES, and other expectations, you know. From there, things can be detailed, small groups are created, strategies of each group become easy to implement. But then these small groups in MES began to experience shortcomings and obstacles. However, it's precisely from these that we saw capacity building, to strengthen individual capabilities in several sectors in MES. And then, from there, the initiatives to make workshop classes are intended for internal teams, although most are

open to the public. Some get upgraded, from having a lack of initiative to becoming very daring in the way they show initiatives; those who weren't able to do many things before, now they are able.

Ajeng: Still in the context of regeneration. In what form or what model, say, do you imagine being able to meet with each other or talk about things with different thoughts, or is there a way, for example, at Sanggar Anak Akar, there's a meeting, um, what's it called, plenary? Isn't that Sanggar Anak Akar's forum?

Nisa: In Sanggar Anak Akar—me, I was from a young age, I think from the age of 10—from a very young age children participate in plays, they play music at the studio. It's Sanggar's way that makes children grow up quickly. When we're in junior high school (12-13 years), we're taught to be able to assist other children. So, when we're still children, we're taught to be able to assist the others. And, you know in school there's OSIS (Organisasi Siswa Intra Sekolah, or Intra-School Student Organization). Now, in Sanggar there's DEKAN, Dewan Perwakilan Anak (Children's Representative Council). Well, DEKAN has a very significant function in Sanggar since, as an educational organization, we really value children's voices. So, we go ahead with programs that come from the voices of DEKAN. Usually, the discussions of DEKAN are quite serious and adult in style—initiating a program and discussing it among board members. That's why a DEKAN [member] is expected to be a brave person. When they're in charge of something and have to implement something in their environment one day, they'll be ready. DEKAN is where we really teach [children] how to live independently; when we return home, when we leave, we can support ourselves and our environment. That's the point. However, lately Sanggar children have become fewer. One reason is possibly that we've moved. The house is quite far, at the border between Jakarta and Bekasi. Another thing, the condition is not what it used to be. There are so many children on the street but, thank God, many of them have schooling, although formal schooling. So, I don't know whether to be happy or

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sad when children are able to go to school. What I want is to recruit children who don't get access to school at all in the end. Usually, they're from areas that we know, we invite them to Jakarta, we invite them to live together. Yes, so, it's normal for us to have discussions, plenary, and monthly meetings, these are very important for us, Mbak.

Ajeng: Thank you, Nisa!

Angga: Jeng! Jeng! I'd like elaborate, Jeng!

Ajeng: Please do.

Angga: If we look at the development of art collectives or art spaces in the past 10 years, there's continuity actually, you know, carried out by these new generations, who have passed the torch of the collective or space. The question might be: "How do we deal with this regeneration?" In my opinion, the challenge is the patronage of the founder in implementing it—what does regeneration mean, you know? Successor or servant? Or, if we don't carry the legacy of the previous patron—how can we see the collective running over the next 10 years? Can you imagine? So, [it's about] how to interpret regeneration today within the collective, you know? Just like what I said earlier, "Is he a successor, or a servant?" It's another opportunity for some critical analysis. Maybe, [a question] for Bunga, because I'm interested in her having an intersection with Jatiwangi art Factory, and the other spaces, and eventually forming a new space, for example, with Ismal. And, perhaps I'd like to ask SIKU Ruang Terpadu as well. Because, interestingly, they emerged from the various previous collectives. How did they interpret regeneration before this?

Bunga: Okay! This is also my question, really, earlier. Regeneration, you mean, how, right? Is it really a new generation, or in a collective new faces emerge but a patron persists? Meaning, nothing at all new. The programs may be new, but the spirit is still that of the founder. Regeneration is indeed interesting. How do we view the tradition

of revered figure? That's why we seem to be really afraid to fail or have a short life. A revered figure's status is recognized or obtained when we're able to breathe slow and long, run programs, and have endurance. I'm a little curious, actually, where does this tradition come from? Because, for me, instead of reading the success of a figure who has been successful for 15 or 20 years, I'm more interested in reading an ecosystem that involves initiatives or practices that are short-lived, but in fact being a medium for collective growth that can last 15 years. It's actually how to see what a generation gives birth to, I mean, it's actually the same as—maybe if you ever read Ronny Agustinus's essay [about video art] where he challenged Krisna Mukti, actually, it wasn't about Krisna's skill in making video, rather he was talking about how it's born from one generation, namely the MTV [generation], who played with it and DIY (do it yourself) and so on. It's actually about how can we broaden something called a complete generation, which is complete, with social, political, all kinds of contexts, of the times. Instead of, say, looking at a generation whose success in carrying on a collective lasts for 10 generations but the spirit is the same, right? I'm more interested in seeing what the 90s generation gave birth to. What the 2000s gave birth to. For example, ruangrupa, JaF, and their friends. And then, what the 2010 generation gave birth to. And how we learn that it gives birth to something or not is not something we can do by looking at one or two collectives that survive to be able to have regenerations, since, like I said earlier, what's wrong with being short-lived? Why don't we want it to be short-lived? Actually, if we're short-lived, it's not because, you know, it might not be due to failure. We do face social, political, and economic situations and all kinds of things, naturally we can't fight against that. If we don't contextualize ourselves within a certain location, then it's done. Instead of trying to survive and become a patron, and gradually it becomes coercion, it's just natural in the human relationship with an environment. Now, I find it kind of interesting to see what generations give birth to something from a complete practice. Not from a practice to last a long time, and which one can regenerate, but is there [a way] or not that we can see how an ecosystem emerges;

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small collectives that, maybe, play a big role, either in being a medium of friendship, economic support, or exchange of knowledge and everything, then form a long-lasting collective.

Ajeng: Then it's also important to think about whether a collective can be, perhaps, flexible or adapt to the times, and changes in generations and so on?

Bunga: Yes. Because in my opinion it's important. We also see the development happening in our environment. I mean, what's being worried about is that later on, rather than us becoming the center in an area, it would be better for us to stimulate small initiatives of the next generation. Instead of us maintaining one space. Yes, there are new things in it. But there's a patron there.

Ajeng: Okay! Thanks, man! Maybe others would like to respond or answer?

Gesya: A definition of regeneration or meaning. How 'bout SIKU?

Rais: Our concern nowadays is that we still try to mingle. We have an age gap. For example, my oldest friends here are in their 30s. While those who come to hang out are in their 20s. It's about how we can have a dialogue together. What's happening now, with games we have the chance to talk. I still play games with kids of the 2000s. So, we can have a dialogue and not create distance. They can talk with us about anything. For instance, when there's an opportunity or necessity for regeneration, in the end it's not too difficult because we've built a space for dialogue. What do you think, Ra? Wanna add more?

Rahmat: A little more, Rais. Since there are several communities—there are five [communities] here—the main focus, the most general, the most basic, is sharing resources. Meaning, even though individually someone belongs to a community, this individual can mingle whenever there's a program run by a community here. For example, films or

discussions, or research in South Sulawesi. If there is some stuff, administrative or technical stuff, [they] will be invited, and through that the dialogue happens. From there, we start to learn more about each other. For example, he invites other friends to come and—as Rais said—play games. We play games, it's what we do most in our free time; we play Mobile Legend or PUBG (Player Unknown Battle Ground). So, from here this friend invites others. It's as simple as providing a place to play online games. From there, a simple question comes up, "What do you like?" So, we introduce ourselves, invite others, and hang out in this way. There's also a coffee shop here, so when we're not playing games we can chat with friends.

Rais: And, in our current position, we absorb more of our friends' experiences, and we're very grateful to be involved here because we can listen to MES's stories, Sanggar Anak Akar's stories and learn about our friends' sustainability strategies. And, there are points that we can adopt here. We can try to apply it and see what the results look like. So, we're still in a phase of looking for forms and experimenting because the current concern is more about how we can stay in this space. Will there still be SIKU next year, you know?

Ajeng: Okay! Thank you, SIKU!

Heri: I'd like to add, for us what's important is building a network, and a lot of volunteers. So it's not a generation who become like servants. We just want to have lots of volunteers.

Ade: Yes, maybe like what Adin said earlier, organic. It's not intentional, to invite or reach out, only through learning by doing. What activities are [they] invited to participate in? Interests can be directed from there. Acong is an example. After Gudskul, he started to take more initiatives: "I want to do this, Bang! I want to make this!" Well, let's go! And we try to make whatever he wants. For example, some programs that consist of many volunteers such as Kerimbang

Baling. It is a festival with many people involved. We also have small events. For example, Dinas Kerimba. Dinas Kerimba actually is a way to involve people outside of their interest in art, by seeing direct activities. For example, on Rimbang Baling's site, they're told to clean up the coffee plantation that we built. But there's involvement, there's hanging out. Involvement becomes one of the ways to learn about Sikukeluang. [They] Also actively study the context of our struggle. You know, there's oil palm plantations, coal mining. How's the legal issues; how's the corruption. So, a lot of things are discussed. From that involvement, [it's] about how we get them interested and keep going to Sikukeluang in Pekanbaru.

Ajeng: So there's the process of sharing knowledge, De, right, in this Dinas Kerimba. Could Ama also tell us a little about Forum Sudut Pandang and the Palu context because four years is not a short time for Ama or the friends in the collective.

Ama: Yes, since its inception, we never thought about regeneration. Then, when we have members and we gather around, we activate the space in the form of a program, it becomes a sort of implicit responsibility. A few weeks ago, I took part in a workshop, Shifting Realities.[15] There's something interesting, in my opinion, about the collective discourse, where we talk about collectives and being organic, which at the same time we realize that we're being bound more deeply than in spaces that are institutional because, well, being organic, I just realized that it's kind of bad, in a way. I must, I feel like raising this like a child. The space makes us *bucin* (*budak cinta*, a slave of love). If the program doesn't work, if we can't get funding, it becomes... hmm... it's a dynamic that I just realized now. And, because it always comes with the jargon of being "organic", everything seems to be euphemized while it grows like a family space. And, regarding regeneration, if we look at Forum Sudut Pandang, we already have three generations and we never imagined that they would serve, or

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[15] A platform that focuses on practices and art manangement discourses based in Yogyakarta, IG @shift.ing.realities. More on this, see Nuraini Juliastuti... p. 291.

have to continue or maintain, the space for it to exist. It has happened unintentionally. When there's no activity, "What else are we going to do now?" We often become indifferent to the words "organic" and "collective". But now the patterns that we do in giving meanings to regeneration seem to be that we have to realize that our space is a door for friends inside to network. There's no other benefit that we can give other than networking. And the space physically can be used as a home, a place to work. Currently I'm also asking for some time from them to go back to school, study again, while the other generations, too, try to connect with other networks and communities where they can go for internships, to learn. And there's no obligation, if they've gone away, to return again. So, it's organically *bucin*. It makes you want to go home, to fix it.
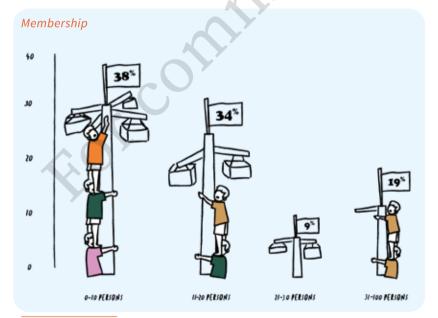
Anang: I'd like to respond to that topic of being organic, too.

Ajeng: Please, Mas Anang. But I still have a few more questions. So, please make it brief.

Anang: Okay! From MES 56's point of view, we still see being organic as the same thing: something absurd—unclear—although it appears as something good. Because, in our opinion, everything must be mapped. It's impossible for things to run organically. There are things that run rapidly; there are others that need to slow down. We have to be able to map that. From there we'll know what steps each division should take, I suppose.

Ajeng: Okay! If we shall discuss the meaning of "organic" itself, maybe we can see several views. On the one hand, it kind of makes things chaotic, it creates chaos, right? While, in fact the intention is to grow naturally, growing steadily. And, in my opinion, it takes a huge amount of mutual trust to cultivate an organic situation.

Let's go to the next topic—this is also what we found when talking with several collectives and during Nongkrong Online KolKom session,[16] if I'm not mistaken it was during a talk with Pasirputih or with MES 56—I forgot, at that time we might be talking about the context of the pandemic and how it affected each of them. We're aware that, pandemic or not, we've struggled and faced many challenges. With the pandemic, it could be harder. In some of the forms we received, the results reveal that, on average, for financial income, it comes from separate businesses or a contribution model from each collective. I'd like to ask you guys again, when we talk about economics, when did you start to realize that economic issues were important for a collective's sustainability, including for, say, the welfare of its members, not only for how they continue to carry out their practice? Is there anyone who was aware from the start? Or, if not, when did people start to express such concerns? Or, perhaps, over time, "Oh! We're married now, it can't go on like this!" Or, is there something else? Mas Anang, could you start first?

Membership

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[16] Nongkrong Online Kolkom (Kolektif-Komunitas) is a temporary online forum created by FIXER during the research process as a response to the pandemic. The goal was to create a space for sharing and provide the latest information about the impacts of the pandemic on every collective/community in their respective regions.

Now or Ten More Years?

Most of the art collectives and groups in Indonesia are founded based on networks of friends and informal relationships. There are no rigid definitions of the membership of an art collective or group. Many collectives answered that they have members ranging from two to 20 people. Others wrote down members as more than 31 persons. Jatiwangi art Factory, for example, wrote down 31 members while Gudskul Ecosystem 30. These numbers seem small, though, when one looks at their daily activities, as both have large social networks that involve larger social circles in their various activities. Next, Rakarsa documented 52 persons as their members in the cooperative and Kelas Pagi Papua more than 100 members. However, what binds the membership? Can each member contribute to the collective? Several collectives, art groups, and alternative spaces such as Komunitas Taboo, Sinau Art, Rumah Sanur, Rumah Budaya Sikukeluang, Kampung Segart, and Jendela Ide regard every volunteer who has been involved in their activities as a "collective member". Thus, it can be seen that collectives' membership in Indonesia is fluid, a "collective member" can come and go all the time without formality for binding relationships.

Anang: Okay! So, at MES 56, the situation in Jogja is different from that in Jakarta. In Jakarta, you know, you have to pay just to fart. In Jogja, you can have a meal for five thousand. But, collectively, we were aware of the chaos in 2018, where we felt then that we couldn't be self-funding all the time. Self-funding means dues. And then, in late 2019 we decided to create a new business unit. We calculated all the objects in MES, all the human resources, all their daily needs, up to their annual needs. Then, we got the numbers, the basic cost, to run MES 56 for a month, for a year. From there, we felt very small and very ignorant of the situation.

Instead of looking for sponsorship from mining companies or oil palm companies, we just decided to run a business unit. From early 2020 to December—where previously it was just our aspiration or a dream of having salary—we made it happen. By the end of December 2020, we were able to save enough for our basic operational costs for the next five years.
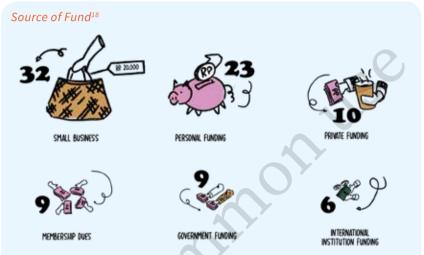
Adin: Ouch! That's exactly it! In that way, Hysteria is almost a semi-Islamic boarding school.[17] When dues are collected, people cursed me. It's not healthy. Well, it's the same. If the calculation is on us, us being evaluated, it doesn't make sense. It's also a criticism, actually. Us—these spaces, or these collectives—are built impulsively, usually, right? That guy can, so can I. It's more or less like that, you know! But we don't realize that there's a business model that needs to be developed. It starts from ego, or a vision—you name it, right! The problem is when we start calculating everything, it doesn't make sense. Part of what makes us happy is flowing like a gushing river [not a rigorous system of planning]. Hahaha!

Anang: But there's a way where a river can gush. There's a way, especially to make it into turbines—electricity input—there's a way.

Adin: Well, it's just that sometimes companies in a city become specific. What ruangrupa has done, for example—with funding, with the government, with all kinds of thing—can't be automatically adopted in cities like Cilacap, Cirebon, Rembang, right? So, I think there are a multitude of choices. First, what are we going to do here? You can choose an institution with funding or a formal institution, well, you have to build it. And it has a more complicated standard operating procedure—friends of ruangrupa will definitely understand. However, there are also many groups based on community, *paguyuban*. We have to understand that, too. Now, these choices should be well thought out. There are also groups that are practically like a *perguruan pencak silat*, a martial arts association. As an association like that, [you] can't become very wealthy, right? Except for the leaders, right? The members only get access [to networks and contacts] from which they get other jobs and are able donate to this association, for instance. See, there are those like that. This is what we need to realize. This is also what I usually say by way of introduction when we go to smaller towns, to kampongs. We always bring in models, "Oh, this should be like this

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[17] Most Islamic boarding schools are subsidized or receive funds from donors.

way; that should be like that." You know! Hysteria has many assets, has good connections, but it's difficult to monetize. It's a big problem. Well, we can't say we've made it in this case. But we've achieved this and we don't know what to do yet. However, it's based on a belief [in collective ideals]. It's kind of hard with this belief. We go back to Islamic boarding school or martial arts association, you know! So, this is our next task.

Source of Fund[18]

SMALL BUSINESS — 32 (RP 20.000)

PERSONAL FUNDING — 23

PRIVATE FUNDING — 10

MEMBERSHIP DUES — 9

GOVERNMENT FUNDING — 9

INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTION FUNDING — 6

To run activities and operational stuff, every collective tries to secure funding from various sources. In 2000-2010 many international donors entered Indonesia and supported works of art collectives but during the last decade there has been a shift in which many collectives arrived to an awareness to build a base for an independent business. It has been surmised that it is due to the increasing number of Indonesian collectives in many regions while accesses to foreign funds for arts have been decreasing instead. Typical businesses among collectives in Indonesia for example are creative services, art merchandise, and cafeteria. There are also 23 collectives still dependent on member dues and personal funding, and it can be said that working as a collective to some people means side activity from someone's main job. This is indicated by the fact that most of art collectives in the FIXER survey do not have any remuneration system for their members. One thing, though, is that the government during the last decade has been increasingly supportive toward artistic works, allowing collectives to benefit from policies.

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[18] In the FIXER survey, this question allows a collective to choose more than one answer.

Nisa: In Sanggar, it's also a question from many of my friends. Like, why is Sanggar still active at the age of 26? It's also a mystery. Hahaha! Cause, you know, Sanggar lives not because it has a lot of money. In our fundraising, we don't think only of the funds, but also of support, involvement in terms of time. Funds run out, but time never does. My friends always come back to Sanggar. When there's a class, they get to be involved in all kinds of things. From little things we've organized, it's from these that we continue to learn. The kids at Sanggar now have a music group that's often invited to perform at company birthdays or individual events. Usually, we receive some token of appreciation for this and those funds are allocated for education costs. So, those become the personal savings of the children who performed. But for the rest, we submit proposals to the government. We have ideas, you know, but we don't have money. We also have Sang Akar Coffee Studio, a business unit in Tebet, South Jakarta. It's six years old. And it's also a hub for educational communities, artists, where there's not only a coffeeshop, but also a collaborative space because there's also a cinema room. We can watch movies, have discussions, we can organize workshops. But, unfortunately, it was closed during the pandemic— last year in July—because the annual rent was quite expensive. However, two years ago we also founded Kedai Kopi Ndalem Eyang (Ndalem Eyang coffee shop), another business unit. It's the same as Tebet, which is a hub for education activist fellows and artists. Now this is the one that what we hope to back up the operations of Sanggar Akar since we've been under the auspices of the foundation. So, the foundation is responsible for creating these business units.
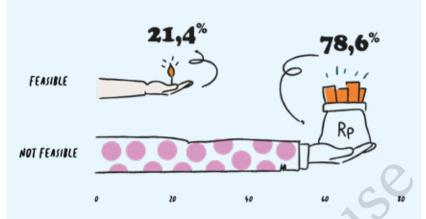
Ajeng: Okay! I once read Sanggar Akar's statement that what drives Sanggar Anak Akar's survival is not money, but networks. Works evolve from a network, don't they? Hahaha! Okay, we'd like to remind you, we only have half an hour left. Ama, did you want to add something? And let me have one last question after this. Ama, please, if you want to share?

Ama: Yes, so, in Forum Sudut Pandang we just thought about making it legal in 2017, and we realized that we need to do it to access funding. Previously there were several programs that were later revived and created for profit to support other programs. And these are still running. I do agree that what keeps us going is not the profit-making programs—because the profit's actually really small and the goal is to support other operational activities. It's the networks where we can get jobs, individually, and there's a kind of mutual agreement. For example, yesterday, we got a documentary film project, and we invited members who focus on film and several other institutions, such as campuses and museums. But it's our collective that raises funds. And there's some sort of agreement that a few percent should be donated to the community. It's from early on. And finally, other programs can run. That's how we do it. And there are also schemes in which we intentionally create commercial programs to access corporate funds. So, we're not limited to funding from foreign donors or the government. I think we've almost never accessed the government. But there are two programs which are funded from corporate sources, like cigarette companies. The visitors aren't specific either, they're general, and the funding's the same. After we finish a program, the profit is shared among members, then the rest is saved for the community and other programs. So, there are three divisions: friends who work, the collective's space [for electricity and wifi], and the rest for the programs themselves—to run them again.

Ajeng: SIKU Ruang Terpadu, anything to add?

Rais: The same.

Ajeng Nurul Aini

Remuneration System

Based on the FIXER survey, some of the collectives are able to allocate some funds to remunerate their core members, in sums ranging from Rp500,000-5,000,000. They obtain the funds from the business unit models that they develop, commercial projects, or grants from the government, private sector, or international donors.

Ajeng: This is actually the last question but there are two things. When we talk about our own artistic practices, or our ideas and so on, what do you think is the most crucial aspect in sustainability strategies? Another thing, which actually goes back to FIXER 2010, when the context was the absence of the role of government or other large institutions in contemporary art, until they [collectives] finally created their own supposedly ideal spaces. What about you guys here, what do you think is the ideal way in which a collective should work, and what do you want to achieve in the future?

Adin: Can I go first? Just because I need to leave soon. I actually would like to ask, what does FIXER want this year? It's a crucial question. What are the goals? Is it going to be a pressure group or a database group? It's important. In terms of sustainability, we just keep going. If you want to network, we can just go along. Art is something that we complain about but we keep doing on and on. It's really a toxic

relationship. But now the question is: What does FIXER want? With all this potential, with ruangrupa's strategic position, with friends in Jakarta, at least we can talk about sustainability.

Ajeng: FIXER, even in 2010, not only wanted to map collectives in Indonesia, but also to create a movement or platform. But it didn't continue after 2010. The exhibition was over, then there was nothing else. That's what we're attempting to do with FIXER this time. One way is by continuing the research and the mapping through dialogue, to dig up information from all of our friends: "What do we need and what can we share from each other? We hope that in the future, FIXER, and not just FIXER—whatever it'll be called—could be a platform for us to share capabilities and resources, I guess.

Ajeng: Can the others share something? There are two aspects. First, what's crucial about this? Next, what's ideal according to each of these collectives in the future. Mas Anang, please. What do you think? You've been involved since the early days of MES 56, right?

Anang: It's quite a difficult question, in my opinion. But, at least, the most crucial things relate to both internal and external factors. Regarding internal factors, we are concerned with how our capacities have been increasing. By capacity, I mean insight and skill. Like it or not, fostering these capacities is something that must be pursued. From an external perspective, what we upgrade, through internal effort, must be useful for society. Especially in the current environment and with the issues [society is experiencing], not only in the context of art, but also in the context of the social living space. That's to answer the first question. Meanwhile, the second question, [what's] ideal, right? Until now, we feel that we're not ideal. Only, we feel that to run a structure that gets ever bigger it takes things, like, strong internal foundations. Because, of course, we don't prioritize [our personal] needs or money. Earlier, many have said that's not the target—but it's impossible for a vehicle to run without fuel. Well,

in things like that we see the potentials of Yogyakarta, in the visual arts and in the relationship with arts and non-art organizations, and we feel we have an opportunity. Once we can map ourselves, our collective is in a position to know how to do things that are actually needed out there. From there, we think, in terms of positioning, we're very careful about taking on a project. We meticulously choose the parties we collaborate with. There are several criteria. The important thing is not being evil to humans and animals. Hahaha! Hence, like it or not, ideals have to be broken down, for example, when we talk about business unit platforms, we have to obtain profit. Yet, on the other hand, a program or management platform is not all about money. There's an incubation process to discuss the aesthetic insights and context around MES 56.

Rais: Crucial and ideal, right? Now—because it's approaching the second year and the rent's about to run out—what's crucial is thinking about how this space can continue. How do we pay the rent next year? So, indeed, the priority is, [figuring out] how this space can be sustainable. And as for the ideal business unit, well, we're not in a city [where businesses should ideally be located]. Whether or not you like it, money is important. And we will prioritize the business unit as much as possible.

Rahmat: I'd like to add a little bit about the context of SIKU in Makassar. That's also important. In the context of Makassar, spaces like these are new, and the easiest thing to do is to focus on the daily stuff happening around us—in Makassar, in this case. From this, we can map ideas about how to secure a space, how practices like these can exist, because none of the programs here make money unless a business unit is set up. So, that's the reciprocity, we think of a formula that fits and try it on.

Ajeng: Until finally you guys are in one place—from various previous collectives—do you think what you've arrived at is ideal? Could you talk a bit more about that?

Rahmat: It may look ideal, but inside it's not really. It's kind of hazy. Hahaha!

Rais: Our dissatisfaction is actually our strength, though. If it was ideal, we'd be too satisfied.

Rahmat: Because we just hang out all the time. Is hanging out ideal actually?

Ade: It's crucial, perhaps, because hanging out is the base, while it's now getting more difficult. I mean, not the hanging out itself. But, after hanging out, there are many ideas that we talk about doing while we're hanging out. We make a lot of events. That, perhaps, is crucial right now. Because we can't—we're still very physical, meeting is a must. We're still learning how friends participate in experimental activities with us—and the community as well—[we] must continue to study further. Since times change, people change, ideas change, interests change, politics change, too, capitals also change. That's possibly what's crucial in Sikukeluang: networking with friends, sharing, learning what lessons to take from something, or how to combine things. This could be that experiment of idealness. I think, umm, you just keep going. Whatever we want to do individually or collectively, it all depends on the context at this moment. And we keep trying to work it out.

Nisa: As for Sanggar Anak Akar, maybe what's crucial now is that we want it to be able to support itself from the business unit that we build. Hence, we won't be dependent on anyone. At least, that's the goal. Secondly, we want Sanggar to be a public space where all our friends here can drop by, or, like, organize exhibitions or cultural and artistic events. So, from children to adults, everyone can use Sanggar as a public space, a space to work. We haven't solved our land title problem yet. So, we haven't been able to build a house and we're still looking for funds to build it as well.

Ama: What's crucial, maybe, I'd like to emphasize the current condition of the pandemic. I still feel this is a crucial time that we face, and we have to take care of space physically. I'm sure that the pandemic won't be over too soon. I think we might have to do social distancing and wear masks for the next two or three years. It'll be completely normal. And the space must continue. How it continues is something that's crucial to think about. Ideally, it's offline, right? Like musical performances and film screening—these really affect a community's profit and are still crucial in 2021 or beyond. We still think about how to end programs that are quite tiresome—we're fed up with online events. Also, how can we make a living [for the space] despite the pandemic? And then, what's ideal, I see it as an affirmation. A simple thing, perhaps. We've had legal status for four years, and we work as a collective. What we've obtained is a position in society, and the government, they see us as a collective. So, maybe our ideal is that the collective members are equal: not just a vehicle for the vision of individual figures who dominate the collective. Everyone has an equal position, equal abilities, knowing exactly what to do in the collective.

Legal Entity

For art collectives in Indonesia, it is all the more important for them to register themselves as legal entity. Hence, they can move more easily to cooperate with donors, private sectors, NGOs, or a government agency. However, more than half of art collectives in the FIXER survey haven't had a legal status as organization.

Ajeng: Thanks, everyone! So, through a process that starts with a conversation like this, and also with several other collectives, I wonder, according to you guys, with FIXER, is it necessary or not, to have one platform in the future? A kind of one platform to mutually support—sharing strategies, sharing resources with each other?

Anang: I think it's important.

Rahmat: Imagine, from here you can go to Pekanbaru, then stop by Java or something; sharing resources, programs that can be executed together.

Ajeng: Nisa, Ama, and Ade, maybe? Is Ade gone? But, maybe Ama or Nisa can just be brief?

Ama: I'm well aware of that, because, you know, I live in the collective space, and there are many things that really suck up our energy, we have to divide it to take care of the space, to think about the work, which sometimes makes us wonder, "What the heck is this?" And in spaces like this, it's important for us to know that every region has its own map of such work and struggle. Lately, I see that in recent years there have been initiations of collective gatherings and the effect is not personal, it's for many people. So, that's important.

Ajeng: Thank you, Ama! Nisa has just dm'd me, her battery ran out, maybe she'll call me later. Ade, could you give a response or a short answer, De? Is Ade freezing, or is it us?

Ade: Sorry. I had a bad reception. Yes. In my opinion, we can't be alone, we can't be self-centered—of course we learn from other communities that have different opportunities and capabilities, which can enrich us, be it in our hearts or our wallets. Hahaha! And, which can do more aggressively, regarding what's in FIXER. Especially because you guys are very experienced in the contexts of your respective regions—that makes us excited, really. To make something fun.
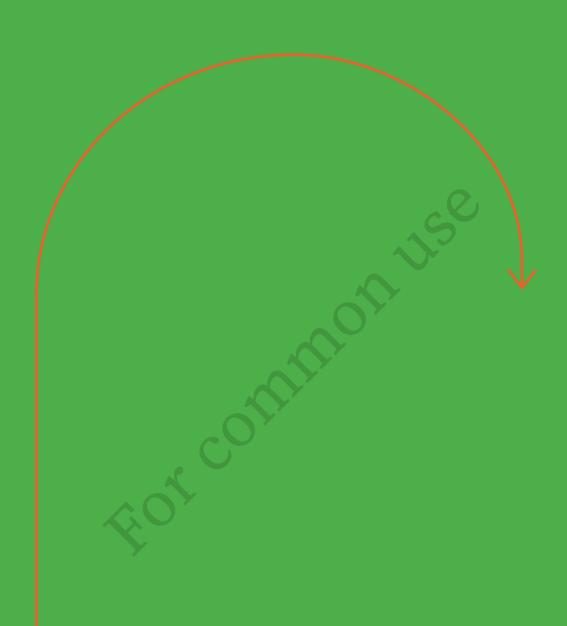
Leonhard Bartolomeus: From this conversation, instead of imagining the future, maybe we should imagine the collective work as a method or strategy of survival that can be done in the present—because of the nature of a collective itself. Earlier, MES 56, or Adin, already mentioned some examples of evolution, which is actually a mistake that I often encounter, that a collective is a form, a genre or -ism, a contemporary art form, being compared with expressionism in painting or other isms in modern art. What's not realized is that the collective work that we do is actually an awareness of thought instead of a form or a formula to be perceived as "contemporary art." And this may be a matter that deserves more serious discussion in FIXER—regardless of the book, website, or exhibition. How can we make this of way of thinking not only limited to one space or institution, but every individual working in a collective has the same passion and similar ideas, whether employing art or other disciplines. Maybe that's what the FIXER team can elaborate on later. Because our present conversation obviously can't cover the views of all the existing collectives. From what I heard earlier, though, it really touched the bottom of my heart. Hahaha!
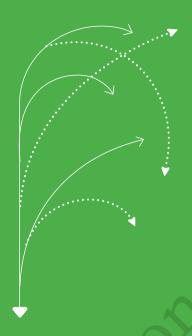
The digital universe, 2020

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What's not realized is that the collective work that we do is actually an awareness of thought instead of a form or a formula to be perceived as "contemporary art."

Ajeng Nurul Aini

Juwana Softboned Milkfish Art Manifesto

Adin

How can an art collective survive and flourish in a city with a pathetic art ecosystem? That is a question we often receive, especially as a hub-cum-visual-collective that has been active for the last sixteen years in Semarang, Central Java. In terms of its geographical scope, population, and the steady supply of youth coming to study, Semarang has enormous potentials. In reality, however, within the realm of art, especially regarding contemporary art discourse, Semarang shares a similar fate with small towns like Rembang, Cirebon, and Pasuruan: acknowledged only statistically. We can, of course, debate the content of this first paragraph, dominated as it is with claims instead of convincing data, but, believe me, such debates about data would only remind us of how peasants in Rembang have been considered foolish for failing to read the environmental analysis report when the ambitions of a cement factory are sown into their land. This article will not focus on such claims and data but on sharing how the conditions in Semarang have impelled Hysteria to write its own manifesto. Perhaps other cities with similar ecosystems can relate and share survival strategies rather than adopting long-standing patterns from cities with established art infrastructures.

We hereby present "The Juwana Softboned Milkfish Art Manifesto":

Follow the Market

Never believe the saying that you can create the market. The market has always been there from the start. The problem is whether it is a mainstream or an alternative market, and whether we can identify and enter that cycle of exchanges.

In Kolektif Hysteria's practice, the belief in the saying that we can create the market has proven to be a distinct trap; it is as if markets emerge from a vacuum. People are more inclined to accept innovations built on existing structures instead of avant-garde breakthroughs that are difficult to grasp. Such rootless innovations pose a challenge to the sustainability of the collective. If we don't have the wherewithal to swim against the current, we should follow the market and, at certain junctures, deflect it somewhat. Based on our observations and experience as a group that has grown and flourished in Semarang, we postulate that the flurry of cultural activities, including art, is generally driven by four factors.

First, driven by substantial capital

Any kind of enterprise or activity—be it coffee shops, bistros, or art activities—that receives funds from tobacco companies or the government never experiences a quiet spell. Ventures in line with the activities of big capital will always survive, whether they have few or many customers.

Second, driven by trends

Following a certain trend can also help the enterprise to latch on to market share. The trends of co-working spaces, start-ups and creative hubs of late will still grow here, although people are debating about their business models. This is similar to what is happening in music with its various trending genres, from folk music to the aching-heart *dangdut* songs of Didi Kempot and his epigones.

Third, fad-driven activism

Such activism is usually popular among those students who have to endure only two to four years more until they graduate. This is the short-lived version of activism, but it usually produces fresh enterprises.

Adin

Last, activities initiated by idealistic, militant groups

Unfortunately, such groups are few and far between in Semarang. When they do exist, their activities usually carry highbrow labels, and they are often unaware of current trends, much less of emerging business models.

Unlike the trend of co-working spaces, which emerged already equipped with business models, art spaces or communities often arise from impulsive urges. The proponents, therefore, rarely have clear ideas about the appropriate business models, much less of their target markets. This was also the issue that we faced in Kolektif Hysteria. We initially intended to supply the public in Semarang with a variety of art expressions, not only the mainstream. The enthusiasm to "swim against the market" and create a market of our own turned out to be a seductive supposition that made it challenging for Kolektif Hysteria to adapt to the contemporary context. In short, we should not try to fight the market but follow it and later on try to deflect it now and then. This is in line with what Roy Wagner wrote in *Invention of Culture*, namely that for migration to be possible, values and cultures should build on existing structures rather than emerge from a vacuum, which would render them impossible to understand.

This is thus the first principle of "Juwana Softboned Milkfish Manifesto". We have selected the name not without reasons. Because we are an art that developed in a city perceived as a hub of trade and services, the question, "*Ono dite rak*?" (Javanese for "Will there be any money?") usually preceded any form of communication we had. We have to be adaptable to ensure that our venture is sustainable.

Juwana softboned milkfish is a Semarang souvenir that does not originate from Semarang. Juwana is a subdistrict in the District of Pati, but it is in Semarang that the softboned milkfish gains fame—just as *wingko babat* (a coconut-based snack presumably originating from the subdistrict Babat), the famous Soto Bangkong soup, and the court dance-drama group of Kelompok Wayang Orang Ngesti Pandowo did

Juwana Softboned Milkfish Art Manifesto

not originate in Semarang but became popular there. It is unnecessary to develop genuine and original forms of culture, because ever since the era of the Dutch East Indies, Semarang has been the place where products from the central area of Java are displayed. Considering the general characteristics of the city, which is not seen as "truly Javanese" even though it is the capital of Central Java Province, Semarang's identity is in limbo because the heart of the Javanese culture is perceived to be in Surakarta and Yogyakarta. This is obvious in the wedding ceremonies in Central Java: they generally adopt the cultural attributes of inland Surakarta instead of using the distinct characteristics of coastal Javanese culture. Eclecticism has always been the underlying spirit of the city.

No Need to Be Extraordinarily Creative

Pity our poor brains that would be forced to expend extra energy. The principle of observe, copy, and modify still works. Imitations requiring no extra creativity but are successful nonetheless can be seen in Kampung Pelangi, or the Rainbow Village in Semarang. We know the late Romo Mangun at the Code River village and the residents of Jodipan Village in Malang had previously turned their villages colorful, but Kampung Pelangi enjoys a distinct fame as it appeared at the right time. It used the right momentum propelled by the selfies trend on Instagram and received full media support from the government and foreign media. No new forms and content here. It adopted the idea to paint the village in a quite straightforward manner, and it turned out to be successful—at least if we consider the media fame and financial support that the village has enjoyed. The question is this: What are we striving for? If the need is to survive locally, it is sometimes enough to be an epigone. Not many art activists can be found outside the mainstream cities, and the few activists there usually focus on one art form, e.g. two-dimensional art. Visual art, for example, is largely dominated by galleries that rely on two-dimensional works, while three-dimensional works and other art experiments receive little attention. One does not need to be creative. Imitate and provide appropriate context, and it might very well be successful. Rename

Figure 1. Kampung Pelangi. Location: Semarang, Central Java (2017). Source: pixabay.com/Endho.

existing practices, or reuse old categories. A case in point is the label of participatory art; it has not moved beyond Moelyono's time. It seems no innovative practices since then have compelled art workers to think hard and make powerful statements. The applicable categories are still from the olden days. Because searching for

new statements might be quite tiring and it might be difficult to gain recognition in the Indonesian art world, it would be better to add new colors to existing structures. Common practice has been to consider cities other than Yogyakarta, Bandung, and Jakarta as epigones or derivations of existing practices. We should not put in extra effort to be acknowledged in the grand history of Indonesian visual art. Perhaps it would be better for us to use the energy for something else—such as selling *martabak* cakes or making portrait paintings to sustain us.

Hysteria

**buletin sastra bawah tanah
terbit setiap minggu sekali**

CHAUBAU

■ sebuah cerpen

Jarum jam menunjukkan angka 5, malaikat itu datang lebih cepat dari waktu yang telah ditetapkan. Tampaknya segera dia akan bekerja seperti biasa: mencabut nyawa. Dia telah mendatangi orang yang bakal ia cabut nyawanya. Orang itu. Semuanya telah ada dalam catatan kematian. Catatan yang dengan rinci menjelaskan segalanya; nama orang yang akan dicabut, jam berapa orang itu akan dicabut, semuanya ada. Wajahnya riang saja melakukan pekerjaan itu, karena ini hal yang sudah biasa di lakukan, dan tidak membuat dirinya merasa takut dosa atau apa. Inikan perintah Tuhan. Begitulah, dengan jubahnya yang putih ia terbang dari satu tempat ketempat yang lain. Mencabut nyawa dari satu orang keorang lain. Dari pagi hingga paginya besok. Tak pernah berhenti.

Dia membuka catatannya lagi. Membaca dengan perlahan urut dari lembar satu kelembar berikutnya. Nah. Akhirnya dia mendapatkan juga nama orang itu. Kini dia sedang menunggu waktu tiba. Dia telah menemukannya dan mengamati orang itu. Dirinya mendekat kepada mangsanya.

"kau sudah datang ya sakaratul maut" kata orang itu tersenyum menyambut kedatangannya.

Dia tersentak. Kenapa orang itu tiba-tiba tahu keberadaanya.

"kau tak usah kaget sakaratul maut. Aku tahu akan kedatanganmu padaku. Silakan duduk dulu. Aku sudah lama mennunggumu" katanya lagi sambil menyilakan malaikat untuk duduk di kursi.

"kalau sudah tahu dengan kedatanganku, bersiap sajalah untuk kucabut nyawamu" tukasnya sambil mengambil dudukan yang nyaman.

"tunggulah sebentar. Waktunya kan masih agak lama. Masih satu jam lagi. Santai saja yach. Aku sudah menyiapkan secangkir kopi dan sepiring kue. Kau harus mencicipinya. Ini untukmu. Makanlah !"

"memangnya aku ini manusia apa? Aku kan malaikat kau tahu itu!" tegasnya dengan air muka sengit. Namun orang itu malah tertawa.

"haha ternyata rasa humormu jelek sekali! Begitu saja marah" Suaranya mengikik tertawa.

"Kau itu, sudah tahu mau mati masih juga cengengesan" malaikat maut memendelikkan matanya yang bening dan tajam menatap wajah aneh orang itu.

Tapi tiba-tiba saja hatinya ingin juga ikut tertawa. Sekali ini ditemuinya manusia yang santai dan pintar melucu bahkan sebelum dia mati. Masih sempat-sempatnya membuat lelucon. Ini hal lucu yang tak pernah terjadi sebelumnya selama dia menjalankan tugas ini. Ditahannya hal yang konyol ini dalam hatinya.

"hei malaikat kau tahu hidup jadi manusia itu berat. Enakan jadi malaikat seperti kamu sudah pasti masuk surga. Lain dengan aku, manusia berbuat baik pun belum tentu bisa masuk surga." Orang itu mendadak berceramah, "makanya sebelum kau cabut nyawaku. Biarkan aku menyelesaikan pekerjaanku dulu. Ok !"

"memangnya apa yang akan kau kerjakan sebelum kucabut nyawamu ?" tanyanya ingin tahu.

"manusia kan pasti berbuat salah dan banyak punya utang dalam hidupnya. Karenanya aku ingin menulis pesan permintaan maaf kepada semua orang yang sengaja atau tidak pernah aku sakiti. Sekalian aku ingin membayar utang-utang yang pernah aku pinjam dari orang lain. Kau tak keberatan kan menemaniku melakukannya"
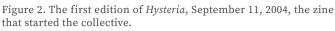
"kau ini benar-benar gila atau bagaimana. Masak malaikat kau suruh menemanimu menyelesaikan urusan-urusanmu itu. Dasar !"

"iho ya tidak apa-apa. Dari pada kamu bengong menunggui aku, lebih baikkan membantuku. Toch kamu nanti juga dapat amal karena membantuku menyelesaikan urusan-urusanku ini. Apalagi ini kan juga urusan kebaikan. Ayolah. Kan tidak ada salahnya membantu!"

Dipikirnya tawaran ganjil itu. Ada benarnya juga kata orang yang mau segera sekarat itu. Tak ada salahnya juga bagiku dan itu adalah kewajiban sesama mahluk ciptaan Tuhan untuk hidup saling bantu membantu bila ada yang kesusahan. Apalagi yang akan dilakukannya juga termasuk mulia. Membantu membuat pesan permohonan maaf dan menghitung uang untuk membayar hutang-hutang orang itu.

"baiklah" katanya. "tapi aku tak mau terlena begitu saja oleh permintaanmu. Kalau waktunya sudah tiba aku tak segan-segan mencabut nyawamu tanpa mengindahkan pekerjaanmu ini sudah selesai atau

Hysteria **/edisi perdana**

Figure 2. The first edition of *Hysteria,* September 11, 2004, the zine that started the collective.
Source: Hysteria.

Start with What We Have, in Line with Our Capacity

Just for your information, we started our enterprise by creating zines, a two-page publication made on A4 paper, laid out using a rented computer for which we paid Rp3,000 per hour (today US$0.21). We made photocopies and freely distributed them. We later realized that such audacity is a distinct form of privilege—even with all the limitations we had, our below-par design skills, and convoluted writing, we still took the first steps. Today, perhaps with the allure of coffee shops, co-working spaces, and other hyped places, many youngsters feel a sense of inferiority if they have to start from deprivation; it is as if one needs to have a fancy, good-looking place and a strong network to establish an alternative space. As a member of the orphaned generation that grew up copying other establishments when we lacked references, we at Hysteria visited other cities to observe the situations there. We did this because of the dearth of art groups in Semarang in the previous twenty years. We had no role models; we inevitably had to find other references. Hysteria learned mostly from Surakarta, Bandung, Yogyakarta, and Jakarta.

Be Suspicious of the Mainstream Methods and Forms

Cities other than Yogyakarta, Bandung, and Jakarta seem to exist merely as epigones, as mere imitators. Many books on the history of contemporary art in Indonesia attest to this. One cannot deny the fact that these three cities often represent Indonesian art in international exhibitions, equipped as they are with better infrastructures and ecosystems. The three cities often serve as role models for others living in areas with completely unique ecosystems. Since time immemorial, art activists and artists in those areas wonder what it is they still lack when they already master technical skills yet fail recognition in the mainstream market and discourses. Complaints about the dearth of reviewers, critics, galleries and museums are endless. It is already

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an achievement to survive and remain active, let alone improve the infrastructure! Do you think once you have a gallery then access to the Indonesian contemporary art circle will be wide open? Not that easy, young man!

Link It to the Context (Understanding the Relevance of the Collective Within the Urban Ecosystem)

Figure 3. Nginguk Githok 2019, an experiment to combine contemporary art and *sedekah bumi ritual* (offerings to earth) funded by the public.
Source: Hysteria.

This compels Hysteria to focus on local issues: the desire to be a part of our own city. Thorough understanding about the local contexts grounds Hysteria's praxis and opens up funding opportunities from different stakeholders with a shared interest in this ecosystem. Hysteria understands climate change in Semarang, and it is aware of the leading sectors. Large funding institutions such as Rockefeller have an interest in this. These institutions might be an alternative step rather than competing for mainstream funding opportunities within the contemporary art realm, which has been in the clutch of the status quo. It is this strategy to comprehend the local conditions that led us to learn more about public participation in the urban development process, a process that is inextricably linked to local government and enterprises. I think such understanding of the local context and the strengths of the city will help the collective connect to a larger circle of stakeholders. The Old Town area, for example, has become the entrance to Semarang; it is the largest area in Indonesia endowed with architecture of the olden days. Similarly, Borobudur has become the entrance to Central Java and even to Java itself. I think every city is able to find a key to why the city is worth visiting. Awareness of the local context, therefore, can help the art collective to target crucial issues. Banjarmasin, for example, is considered the only river city in Indonesia that still exists today. By understanding the unique characteristics of its local context and finding the "entrance" to the city's significant issues, art collectives in the regions can gain greater prestige because they hold the unique passwords to their respective cities and need not copy existing models.

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Move on a Small Scale, Massively, Aware of Its Disruptive or Inspiring Nature

Figure 4. Tengok Bustaman Poster 2013.
Source: Hysteria.

The years 2012–2013 became a turning point for the umpteenth time when tobacco companies entered and showed interest in the development of communities. Hysteria did not take part in that scheme for a variety of reasons. Hysteria initiated the program to strengthen community empowerment and then moved to the urban villages at the RT and RW[1] levels. Hysteria moved away from celebratory events in public places with an audience of thousands because we had insufficient financial capital for that. Hysteria recognized this limitation and initiated small-scale, intensive, simultaneous activities and strengthened ourselves regarding the content and discourses we offered. Tengok Bustaman was our first pilot project; it involved many artists responding to issues at a specific site, which in 2013 was the

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[1] RT, *rukun tetangga*, or neighborhood communities, is the lowest administrative division in Indonesia. Several RTs will make an RW, *rukun warga*.

urban village of Kampung Bustaman. This was followed by Penta KLabs art projects, the site-spesific biennale since 2016, that we move from one place to another. Kampung Bustaman was where we experimented and learned, and then we extended the project to other sites and villages. We have initiated a number of kampong-based events that still exist. These include Festival Bukit Jatiwayang in Ngemplak Simongan, Semarang, and Nginguk Githok in Sekararum (District of Rembang). Penta KLabs has taken place twice: at Kemijen (*Narasi Kemijen*, 2016) and Randusari (*Sedulur Banyu*, 2018). In addition to these events, other kampong networks can be activated anytime—Hysteria has gained the trust of residents. Although these are small-scale actions, they have been presented in Tokyo, Berlin, Birmingham, and Heidelberg thanks to the links they have with global issues.

No System is Perfect, All Platforms Have Gaps, Let's Hack Them to the Best of Our Ability

Government agencies work in silos. It never functions as a sole agent. It involves many actors. The same is true for other systems. Rumah Seni Cemeti (now Cemeti—Institute for Art and Society), Jakarta Biennale, and Biennale Jogja often serve as benchmarks to measure the success of an artist or a collective. As a group, Kolektif Hysteria is quite removed from the frenzy; it is unnecessary to strive for a place in that circle. There are so many other ways to be successful. The desire among local artists to exhibit their works at Galeri Nasional Indonesia seems incongruous with the essence of why art collectives exist. Many other channels are available. It should therefore be understandable that when Bekraf (Creative Economy Agency) was established, Hysteria effortlessly re-branded to become a creative economy venture, enabling us to gain access to equipment and refurbishment support thanks to our new brands of CoLaboratorium and Creative Impact Hub.

Use the Politics of Language, Adopt Terms That are in Vogue

Indonesians like to use fancy and sophisticated terminologies. When postmodernism was all the rage, art curator Jim Supangkat labelled the works of several artists as representative of the postmodern elan, although some of those artists expressed their reservations about such a label. Perhaps that is the work of a curator: to provide the framing through which we view the works, no matter what the frame is, as long as a wider audience can accept it. People who do not truly understand what co-working is, for example, would think that the term represents a certain trend, and then the phenomenon is accepted into an existing system of categorization. Playing with words and terms still works. Issues and opportunities that might emerge can be dealt with. The strategy of branding transformation is effective enough for us to be acknowledged on the national level (similar to "smart city" branding, which unfortunately refers only to the number of digital applications the city government has created without adequate consideration of the potential users). I think the practice of adopting existing terms is prevalent everywhere to ensure access to systems of categorization. If the actual practice does not correspond exactly to the one signified by the term, it is a modification, mutation, or variant of the mainstream.

Open Yourself to Groups from Other Fields

In the years 2004–2016, 85% of the funding that Hysteria secured did not come from the field of art. Interactions with other urban activists opened up access to different funding opportunities. Hysteria took this route instead of competing for portions of financial support for the art sector, which at that time seemed too much of a challenge. It was only in 2017 that the Ministry of Education and Culture and Bekraf provided us with financial support, and since then Hysteria has been collaborating with the central government at least once a year. It was also this openness to different possibilities that led Hysteria to collaborate with Kenya's Ushahidi mapping platform in 2015 and with the global humanitarian network of open street maps in the subsequent year, when we were invited to give a presentation

in the Philippines. There was no link whatsoever to art. This made us realize the importance of establishing a stronger political position in the urban context rather than concerning ourselves with aesthetic achievements only.

Understand Political Positions

Figure 5. A visit from the Mayor of Semarang Hendrar Prihardi
at Grobak Art Kos, Hysteria's basecamp.
Location: Hysteria basecamp, Semarang, Central Java (2020).
Source: Hysteria.

Political positions give access to the main machinery of negotiations in Indonesia. This is revealed in electoral politics. Political services count more than aesthetic achievements, a fact we see in many regions. Establishing rapport with local politicians and mass organizations is necessary if we want to have a say in the use of local resources.

Make Good Use of the Internet

The challenge of communicating in English is now more manageable with the help of Google Translate and grammar-checking applications. Opportunities abound. No need to wait for recommendations from existing stakeholders. Whimsical, nothing-to-lose approaches might sometimes come to fruition. This has proven effective in our practices in Kolektif Hysteria. Our first residency in Germany was in 2013 and resulted from 256 random email submissions. We remember this

number of applications because Gmail settings enable us to determine how many files we want to display and how many we want to delete. Of the 256 random emails, six received responses and one suggested we contact another organization. It was from this suggestion that we eventually had a successful proposal. With such convenience, this way of working is worth doing if we want to take advantage of residency opportunities, a luxury for local artists. This is especially true if we thoroughly understand the context in which we are operating and always try to find different opportunities.

Forms and Methods are Fluid

Make changes as needed; be loyal to your visions and social welfare. Kolektif Hysteria does not reject manual work to help us survive. (Sometimes we organize public demonstrations with fishermen; sometimes we work as members of a survey team for the development of Trans Semarang bus system.) It is no longer important to remain loyal to a discipline if it only leads you to ruin as you find yourself unable to pay for food and rent.

Those twelve principles form the core creed, and the remaining three are meant to give us spiritual consolation if the described methods do not prove to be successful.

Find Positive Distraction, or at Least a Coping Mechanism, if Art Intended as Recreational Activity Turned Out to Be a Source of Depression

If it still does not work, no need to abandon it. Take a break. Hibernate. Perhaps the kind of art we are passionate about is not programmatic art that would normally be supported by a funding agency and is performed on a monthly basis. Perhaps it needs to emerge once every season, or once a year, just like the harvest rituals in traditional art. Such practices are no less valuable than monthly programmatic art practices for which we need to be accountable to donor agencies. Our contemporary art grew alongside secularism and the strengthening of

individualism. Traditional art forms that survive are those related to rites and rituals. The art of *ketoprak* drama in Pati and Rembang, for example, will never die because it is a part of the offering ritual and an expression of gratitude for the nourishment that nature provides. Art takes place in the context of such rituals. Who knows, perhaps this can also serve as a model for future development.

If You Can No Longer Continue, Stop, and Do Not Be Cynical Toward Those Just Starting, Those Who Might Be Experiencing the Same Pitfall

Assist them so they don't repeat our mistakes. We have seen enough people trying hard and then quitting, whatever the reasons.

Last, Pray

This might be our last try. Who knows, fortune and the right moment might come unexpectedly, as success is not always commensurate with the amount of effort we expend. The endeavor is what is required of us. Life is always surprising. Praying—for those who still believe— might prove to be good therapy, the requirement for faith. For the online atheists, however, perhaps it is not about to whom they are praying but about surrendering themselves and accepting whatever results their endeavors might bring. Failure, therefore, is a part of the experiment. We accept everything with an open heart; this is better than permanent mental damage for the art actors. It would be a terrible pity if activism broke our souls. It is supposed to be a cathartic activity, not a trigger for depression. Am I right?

In conclusion: this manifesto is an effort to find novel methods and forms of faith, especially for art collectives with poor ecosystems that believe the mainstream cities are models of perfection. The audacity to discover new paths opens up the possibilities for more exciting practices in the regions. We need to appreciate them instead of labelling them as epigones and dismissing them. Such a reading of mere forms can be misleading. It is time for us to read such art

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collectives through the lens of anthropology. Analogous to religion, contemporary art has two fundamental requirements: faith (as a set of values and teachings) and rituals (the practice). In a different ecosystem, the idea will inevitably mutate. Similarly, we cannot always assess the practices using an existing system of categories, which may in fact impoverish them.

Semarang, 2020

Figure 6. SARTCAS (Syndicate of Artist Collective and Alternative Space). Location: Jatiwayang, Semarang, Central Java (2019). Source: Hysteria.

Juwana Softboned Milkfish Art Manifesto

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Art to Live
Experimental Survival
Strategies for Economic
Independence
in Alternative Cultural
Arts Spaces

Nuraini Juliastuti

This paper aims to analyze the creation of survival mechanisms in cultural arts practices, which are related to spatial management. As a case study, I examine a variety of practices that independent arts and cultural organizations and art collectives have implemented to achieve and maintain independence. I am presenting them as experimental independent survival strategies and ways in different historical trajectories.

In daily conversations, speaking of care in arts and culture means thinking of mechanisms to nurture ideas, promote regeneration while building potential networks for the future. I use the concept of survival to broaden conversations about sustainability. It is not restricted to potential shortages of ideas or funding, but also touches on work-life balance. It is related to the concept of multidimensional forms of care.

An observation of independent organizations deepens the discourse about developing long-term, grassroots cultural strategies. The history of the development of independent cultural organizations shows that such organizations often function as "fixers", or intermediaries, that fill gaps in the needs of local communities.[1] According to Melani Budianta, they reflect a spirit of emergency activism, inherited from the political climate of the post-1998 Reformation period.[2] This proposition is useful for articulating an emergency situation as a condition that creates political reconfiguration and points to new directions for cultural arts practices. All the case studies analyzed in the article have taken place in a different context from the post-1998 Reformation period. As Doreen Lee put it, the people who have driven these organisations "lived in a post-Suharto world without mystery."[3]

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[1] Nuraini Juliastuti, "A conversation on horizontal organization," *Afterall: A Journal of Art, Context, and Enquiry*, 30 (2012), pp. 118-125.
[2] Melani Budianta, "The Blessed Tragedy: The Making of Women's Activism during the Reformasi Years," in *Challenging Authoritarianism in Southeast Asia: Comparing Indonesia and Malaysia*, eds. Ariel Heryanto & Sumit K. Mandal (London and New York: Routledge Curzon, 2003), pp. 145-178.
[3] Doreen Lee, *Activist Archives: Youth Culture and the Political Past in Indonesia* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2016), p. 213.

Thus, this article will explore the extent to which the struggle for sustainability affects the institutional character of various organisations' cultural production. What are the sustainability goals of the cultural sector? Is the future imagined by them able to accommodate the interests of common people? How far are these experiments and survival mechanisms designed not only to meet short-term needs but also to reflect the desire to build more sustainable relationships with the organisations' immediate surroundings and people? Can these desires be encouraged to create solidarity between humans and improve the broader environment in which we live? How does this also reflect the elements of flux and constancy within the development of alternative spaces in Indonesia?

An Alternative Cultural Infrastructure Ecosystem

In referring to the cultural and experimental spaces decribed in this article as independent cultural practices, I use the definition of alternative space from my previous research. An alternative space refers to new cultural spaces—artists' collective, gallery, performance space, cultural laboratory, discussion room, library, or archive center—for thoughts that would be homeless otherwise in the spaces formed and designed by the established cultural authorities. Founding an independent cultural space has been a common practice developed by a new generation of cultural activists as a model platform for fulfilling their visionary ideas. Such independent cultural spaces have not only evolved to provide a range of contextually relevant responses and infrastructure for local artistic and cultural spaces. These spaces also foster the capacity for self-organization, collectivism, and institutionalization of cultural production. Meanwhile, the word "alternative" serves as a horizon of possibility, flexibility, and openness in cultural practices. I would argue that the term "alternative space" is able to capture the disobedient character constantly being cultivated in the local context.[4]

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[4] Nuraini Juliastuti, "Commons People: Managing Music and Culture in Contemporary Yogyakarta," (PhD. dissertation, Leiden University, 2019), pp. 23–27.

Local cultural arts ecosystems—of which alternative spaces are only one component—have grown rapidly. Artists, cultural advocates, academics, social movement activists, and art workers move in and out of various spaces. They circulate through alternative spaces, state institutions, non-governmental organizations, international art organizations, and commercial art markets. Some independent cultural organizations also occasionally function as, and collaborate closely with, non-governmental organizations. This article does not have sufficient space to discuss these linkages. However, in line with Chiara de Cesari's assertion in her study on art and activism in Palestine, the relations between cultural organizations and non-governmental organizations pave the way to discuss how grassroots cultural organizations do not necessarily erase state power in the context of difficult and fraught postcolonial histories.[5]

A truly independent cultural practice requires financial autonomy. Some of these organizations rely on personal financial resources. Others try to develop community-based businesses. Others combine personal funds with cultural funding schemes managed by local and international donor agencies. In the early 2000s, funds from international donor agencies played a vital role in shaping the "knowledge performativity of alternative spaces,"[6] indicating a lack of state financial support for arts and culture. Changes in the landscape of infrastructural ecosystem also brought diversity in the funding structure.

Artistic initiatives and alternative art spaces can simultaneously source funding from the philanthropic practices of art collectors, state institutions, and commercial art sales. Some initiatives may be solely funded by significant donations from a single foreign agency while others may lack regular financial support despite having been in operation for almost a decade.

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[5] Chiara de Cesari, "Anticipatory Representation: Thinking Art and Museum as Resourceful Statecraft," in eds. Davina Cooper, Nikita Dhawan, and Janet Newman, *Reimagining the State: Theoretical Challenges and Transformative Possibilities* (Oxon & New York: Routledge, 2020), pp. 153-170.

[6] Nuraini Juliastuti, "Knowledge Performativity of Alternative Spaces," paper presented in "Cultural Performance in Post-New Order Indonesia: New Structures, Scenes, Meanings" in Sanata Dharma University, Yogyakarta, 2010.

This paper does not provide an in-depth review of state policy regarding arts and cultural funding. During the pandemic, the Ministry of Education and Culture has been managing some funding programs, such as the Safety Net for Cultural Practitioners Affected by COVID-19 and the Fund for Cultural Practitioners. Nonetheless, the lack of funding for cultural initiatives continues to be seen as a major problem. These highly contingent patterns of funding indicates a state that is prone to reactive policy and is unable to see the funding of education and culture with a long-term perspective. It also reflects problems around equitable access and priority scale among policymakers.

Informal Productivity and a Heterogeneity of Resources

For activists who organize alternative spaces, discourses of funding are multidimensional. Being active in an independent organization does not always mean getting paid. However, time spent in cultural organizations is not always wasted. Money is not always an essential medium of exchange. In this way, these alternative spaces complicate the category of work. In line with Nicole Cox and Silvia Federici, it is argued here that wage labor's formal status within the framework of capitalist production oversimplifies the definition of "work" and "non-work," and the relationships between humans and capital.[7] Written from a feminist perspective, Cox and Federici's arguments are useful in rethinking the dichotomies that determine the general definitions of work and learning to identify the many emotional and psychological aspects of work in the contemporary art environment. Informal work practices in alternative spaces often seem like merely hanging out and wasting what might otherwise be productive time. Hanging out, which seems to have no clear purpose, conveys the impression of privileged actors with an abundance of "free time". In practice, hanging out is often an effective mechanism for informal exchanges of knowledge and expertise building. This opportunity to enjoy non-monetary forms of exchange is the main attraction of independent cultural spaces.

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[7] Nicole Cox, Silvia Federici, *Counter-Planning from the Kitchen: Capital and the Left* (New York: New York Wages for Housework Committee dan Falling Wall Press, 1975).

Brent Luvaas,[8] Alexandra Crosby,[9] and Sonja Dahl[10] all emphasize the productivity of hanging out as a common mode of working together. However, I observe that their research does not discuss how these artists manage their time to achieve a sustainable balance of "hanging out" and earning sufficient income. Meanwhile, artistic and cultural practices are always connected with the struggle for personal welfare and survival. Independent cultural projects always deal with the daily needs of family, friendships, and personal limits. There is an understanding that in order to be involved in a cultural project, basic needs must be met first. Discussions of ownership of financial resources, useful materials, and other assets are often confined to the lives of vulnerable artists and cultural activism. In daily conversations, this vulnerability appears in various acrobatic financial solutions such as *"palugada"* (literally 'hammer' and 'mace,' nowadays used as an acronym of "*apa lu mau, gua ada"* or *"whatever you need, I can deliver"*) and *"mulur mungkret"* (Javanese: an ability to stretch and shrink according to circumstances). However, this financial imagination is often seen as separate from the organization of cultural activities. In addition, cultural organizing often depends on the existence of an informal infrastructure that is often taken for granted as something that serves certain interests without having to be reciprocally cared for.

Sustainability, at least how the term is used in this paper, is also connected with humans who function as a kind of infrastructure. Humans serve as resources in providing assistance and support for cultural projects. Abdoumaliq Simoné proposed the idea of "people as infrastructure" to broaden the notions of infrastructure and human activities.[11] His idea of "people as infrastructure" describes adeptness at generating maximal outcomes from the tentative and precarious processes of remaking the city and urban environment. This, in turn, according to Simoné, affects how a person lives, makes things,

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[8] Brent Luvaas, *DIY Style: Fashion, Music, and Global Digital Culture* (London: Berg, 2012).
[9] Alexandra Crosby, "Festivals in Java: Localizing Cultural Activism and Environmental Politics 2005-2010" (PhD. dissertation, University of Technology, Sydney, 2013).
[10] Sonja Dahl, "Nongkrong and the Non-Productive Time in Yogyakarta's Contemporary Arts," *Parse Journal*, issue #4 (2016), pp. 107-119.
[11] Abdoumaliq Simoné, "People as Infrastructure: Intersecting Fragments in Johannesburg," *Public Culture*, 16(3) (2004), pp. 407-429.

and collaborates with others. My observations show that "people as infrastructure" comes in many forms—connections, cooperation, volunteering culture, and networks. Some people refer to another group of people as a "support system." This raises the question of how to dismantle a hierarchy of social relations invisible in independent cultural organizing if it is formed and sustained by a powerful environment and community and, in Budianta's terms, is considered a "*lumbung budaya*" (cultural barn)?[12]

Donation is a common type of fundraising. It is considered effective because it conveys an image of human capacity as infrastructure. Donations are given and received through many mechanisms. Especially during the pandemic, I have seen donations used as a method of fundraising to meet various community needs. The practice of donating and almsgiving in general is an important factor in cultural participation and has an ethical dimension in work production processes. It feels natural to implement this practice as an effective form of fundraising. It is rooted in the existing principle in local contexts that helping people, while being involved in a cultural project, is both good and noble. It is important that this practice be put alongside other ways known to fund arts and culture. Local mutual aid (*gotong royong*) is a set of norms that govern the relationships between members of the public, and also between them and the state. It is part of a political imagination that must be activated in order to function as a cultural project's foundation. When an activity takes place in the spirit of mutual cooperation, a large source of free labor is seen as always present. According to John Bowen, human labor in the spirit of cooperation is defined as "to be donated and not to be purchased" because it assumes that community members are "willing to work in mutual cooperation, that is, without being paid".[13] The success of *gotong royong* is due to its position as part of a tradition of community and civic labor based on reciprocal relations.

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[12] Melani Budianta, "Lumbung Budaya Sepanjang Gang", a paper that was presented as the 2020 cultural speech of the Jakarta Arts Council (Jakarta, November 10, 2020). Accessed from https://dkj.or.id/pidato-kebudayaan/pidato-kebudayaan-2020-lumbung-budaya-di-sepanjang-gang/.

[13] John R. Bowen, "On the Political Construction of Tradition: Gotong Royong in Indonesia," *Journal of Asian Studies*, 45(3) (1986), pp. 545-561.

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Through the analysis of the case studies below, I would like to show how daily struggles to maintain a cultural project's sustainability and dealing with everyday pragmatic matters are a major part of a cultural production. J.K. Gibson-Graham, Jenny Cameron, and Stephen Healy's idea of taking over the economy through a series of actions based on ethical values encourages a redefinition of sustainability in arts and culture in the framework of social and environmental justice. Survival is not just being able to continue working or meeting daily needs. Following their thinking, the idea of survival needs to be integrated with the concept of a good life. Gibson-Graham et al. sum up the meaning of welfare as an interaction between the following:

> "living well and justly together, distribution of surpluses to enrich social and environmental health, seeking to meet other people in a way that supports common welfare, consumption practices that take into account environmental balance, care for natural resources and shared culture (safeguard, maintain, grow), and investment in future generations for their wellness."[14]

Maria Mies and Veronika Bennholdt-Thomsen's idea about the "good life" enriches this perspective on surviving well. To live well does not necessarily mean to live happily. It is a life based on production for life, not for commodities and surplus value.[15]

My definition of sustainability is related not only to the existence of an initiative but also to the dynamics between those who drive it and the space where activities occur. In this research, the idea of sustainability articulates important moments when resources, infrastructure, and access are used, interpreted, created and rethought. Through a mapping of independent survival experiments, I explore how the meanings of sustainability, welfare, and sufficiency are redefined. Can this also lead to ideas about limitation as a perspective in conducting cultural works?

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[14] J.K. Gibson-Graham, Jenny Cameron, and Stephen Healy, *Take Back the Economy: An Ethical Guide for Transforming Our Communities* (Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press, 2013), p. xviii.
[15] Maria Mies, Veronika Bennholdt-Thomsen, *The Subsistence Perspective: Beyond the Globalised Economy* (London: Zed Books, 2000).

Arisan: Savings for Artistic Projects

The Parasite Lottery is an art project initiated by the Yogyakarta-based artist, curator, and music producer Wok the Rock. It works as a lottery system for art organizations and collectives. This project's mechanism is based on the concept of *arisan*—a cross between a lottery and collective savings system practiced in many communities in Indonesia. This project was initiated by Wok during his residency at Casco Art Institute, Utrecht, The Netherlands, in 2016. During the residency, most of the debates in the arts and culture sector in the Netherlands revolved around budget cuts, activity downscaling, and closing of spaces. Even though the project's trial took place in the Netherlands, the Parasite Lottery was intended to reflect a pre-existing collective mode of survival in Indonesia.

In this section, I would like to discuss how the Parasite Lottery was envisioned as an exploration of new possibilities to support creative production processes into the future. The Parasite Lottery strove to achieve sustainability by drawing on and inspiring local traditions. *Arisan* was developed as a practice applicable in many social contexts. In its own way, the Parasite Lottery was presented as a model of sustainability for artists and art collectives. As an activity, *arisan* cannot be done alone. It is closely related to solidarity building since it emerges as an effort to create a system of funding that must be carried out together.

Prior to developing the Parasite Lottery, Wok had long been involved in Ruang MES 56 (a collective of visual artists working with photography and visual culture) and the Indonesian Net Label Union (an association of musicians, producers, and net labels that distribute music freely via the Internet and encourage a culture of sharing). Wok is also known for creating Burn Your Idol: a music-based art project in which music fans are invited to copy and burn their favorite albums onto CDs. Wok's work often takes the form of collective projects and uses collectivism as a starting point for discussions about access, ownership, and ways to work collectively. All of this served as the basis for developing

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the Parasite Lottery. Casco Art Institute, on the other hand, is an art organization that has long been working with issues around the themes of the commons and solidarity.

The Parasite Lottery, being an alternative funding system, is described as the following:

> "Adapting and fusing a lottery model for art funding that survives despite the dwindling of other cultural budgets and *arisan*, a commons-oriented, micro-crediting system popular in Indonesia, Parasite Lottery invites a number of art organisations of different scales together as bidders, winners, and hosts of lottery drawing events that are open to the public. The winners receive a sum of money to be used as a *fee for deviation*.[16] In other words, the prize money should be spent on something that the winning organisation would usually never have the budget for. Beyond the prize itself, Parasite Lottery is a collective exploration of chance effects, not just in the thrill of winning, but also through a series of gatherings that will take place around it, including talks, food, and music."

The word "parasite" in this project refers to the popular portrayal of artists as parasites. This depiction shows art organizations' vulnerable position regarding the sustainability of artistic production and their wellbeing as cultural producers. The description also asserts that the Parasite Lottery is intended as a project that "intervenes in the economy governing artistic production."

Times of trouble come unexpectedly. They bring with them a feeling of vulnerability. Not everyone has the advantage of being in a position where resources are abundant or wealth of networks are reliable. And there is nothing more terrible than having the burden of debt. The fear of debt is very strong. David Henley's study shows that credit and

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[16] See the project's description from this link: https://www.arte-util.org/projects/parasite-lottery.

debt have a long history in Southeast Asia, forming complex, multi-layered social structures.[17] He narrates the power of creditors and the constraints of those who owe them. *Arisan* emerged as a supportive institution embedded in familiar realm and at the same time as a mechanism to offer assurance that everyone will be able to fulfill their own needs. Jan Newberry defines *arisan* as a monthly credit lottery that is part of Javanese rituals and rules.[18] Hanna Papanek and Laurel Schwede read *arisan* as part of women's strategy to help ease their family's economic burdens. Furthermore, they see it as part of women's deliberate decision to be actively involved in the search and management of family livelihoods.[19] *Arisan* members usually refer to it as a mechanism for savings—in a somewhat coerced manner. Clifford Geertz's study points out that *arisan* serves more as an economic institution than a diffuse social institution.[20]

In *arisan*, resources are interpreted as the availability of cash to meet daily needs. It is a mechanism implemented to ensure the availability of these funds. In their book, J.K. Gibson-Graham et al. also discuss the dominance of the economic paradigm as a machine, controlled by the principles of growth and consumption. Their study suggests the importance of dismantling this growth paradigm as part of the effort to regain economic independence. Following this line of thinking, *arisan* is growth-oriented because, despite it being defined as a savings institution, funds obtained can also be spent on various needs and spent quickly.

From the start, the purpose of Parasite Lottery funds was to fund activities categorized as deviations. The project's description does not clearly specify what "deviation" means. It can refer to open

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[17] David Henley, "Credit and Debt in Indonesian History: Introduction," in *Credit and Debt in Indonesia, 860-1930: From Peonage to Pawnshop, From Kongsi to Cooperative,* eds. David Henley and Peter Boomgaard (Singapore and Leiden: ISEAS/KITLV Press, 2009), pp. 1-40.

[18] Jan Newberry, "Rituals of Rule in the Administered Community: The Javanese Selametan Reconsidered," *Modern Asian Studies* 41, No. 6 (2007), pp. 1295-1329.

[19] Hanna Papanek and Laurel Schwede, "Women are Good with Money: Earning and Managing in an Indonesian City," *Economic and Political Weekly* 23, No. 44 (1988), pp. WS-73-WS-84

[20] Clifford Geertz, "The Rotating Credit Association: A 'Middle Rung' Development," *Modern Asian Studies* 25, No. 2 (1991), p. 246.

interpretation and redefinition of expenditure while simultaneously encouraging diverse measures and indicators of needs that are not always dictated by individual ones, but also those of many people.

Figure 1. Panels of Parasite Lottery comic strip. Image by Wok the Rock.
Source: Wok the Rock (2016).

As Wok's residency in the Netherlands ended, so did the project. One of the reasons he gave for ending the project was that he felt it didn't gain enough momentum in Yogyakarta. The practice of *arisan* requires allocating a time to hold regular meetings. I assume that time allocation among cultural and arts activists might have been a main obstacle. An *arisan* needs certain conditions to be able to run smoothly, such as a warm, comfortable social atmosphere. As a space to manage collective funds, it also calls for mutual trust among

participants. The funds themselves aren't directly accesible once a person joins. The mechanism obliges participants to continue paying dues while they wait for their turn to be able to access the funds. In the meantime, there may be many other ways to obtain quicker funds.

In 2018, two years after the Parasite Lottery trial, a residency and collaboration platform for artists' collectives emerged in Southeast Asia called Forum Arisan Tenggara. This program was initiated by an artists' collective based in Yogyakarta, Ace House Collective. In it, Ace House collaborated with other collectives such as Krack! Studio, Lifepatch, Ruang Gulma, Ruang MES 56, and Survive! Garage. In implementing the project, these collectives played the role of host for other organizations in Southeast Asia such as Tentacles (Bangkok, Thailand), Tanahindie (Makassar, Indonesia), WSK! Festival of the Recently Possible (Manila, Philippines), Rumah Api (Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia), and Rekreatif Gembel Art Collective (Dili, Timor Leste).

Forum Arisan Tenggara has no direct connection with the Parasite Lottery. However, both use the *arisan* as a starting point and elaborate on its potential as a technique for achieving organizational sustainability. This initiative appropriated *arisan* practice as a mechanism for holding meetings and building networks. The activities included the Commons Credit Cooperativa (CCC), described as follows:

> "Commons Credit Cooperativa (CCC) is a resource exchange platform by adopting the concept of 'cooperatives.' This form of cooperative emphasizes the exchange of skills based on time and aims to support the artistic production of its members, who are actors in arts and culture. This cooperative is envisioned as a space to help each other in realizing each other's practices by exchanging existing resources. Any resources that the members 'invest' will later be calculated and measured as credits that can be exchanged for others."[21]

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[21] From an interview with a member of CCC.

The meaning of resources in this initiative moves away from money as a form of currency accumulated in a traditional *arisan*. It seems to emphasize the support system of a cultural environment as well as an invitation to replicate the empowerment of informal support systems in a Southeast Asian context.

In 2019, Wok and Dina—his wife, curator, and also my colleague at KUNCI Study Forum & Collective—opened Dapur Sleko, a small shop selling traditional East Javanese food. This shop has provided another insight into Wok's latest ideas about how an artist should reinvent methods to support their daily needs and work. During my research, I observed that the idea of setting up cafes, stalls, and food businesses to support the operation of galleries, art spaces, and families has gained importance, especially during the pandemic. Opening a food stall or business reflects an ideal desire to receive funds on a regular basis through a mechanism that can be managed independently. In our talk about their shop last year, Wok and Dina said that managing it allowed them to reflect further on the how art practices are supported. What does it mean to be a full-time artist and a part-time artist? Should making art be seen as something that supports life? Or should we define it within a different framework—that we live to support art?

Invisible Female Staff and Support Systems

In this section, I would like to discuss resources in areas deep within art institutions and exhibitions of artwork on gallery walls. I am thinking of those who spend their time and energy helping to produce what is defined as art. They are not artists yet they have many labels attached to them, according to the work they do. These labels include artist assistant, part-time worker, art manager, gallery assistant, operations manager, program manager, and art worker. They work to manage people, places, and all things related to art. To illustrate this point, I am going to discuss Pengelolaan Ruang Seni (PR Seni— Art Space Management) and Shifting Realities. Their work practices provide another perspective on aspects of work in the artistic and cultural arena. Working in cultural arts is not only a matter of raising

funds to produce artworks, pursuing advanced education, or living well and being able to eat every day. PR Seni and Shifting Realities are a reminder that the backbone of cultural and artistic infrastructure is human resources and various forms of work that are sometimes unable to be quantified.

PR Seni takes on the role of a support group and learning space for art managers to discuss art management discourses. The term "PR" (public relations) can also refer to an identical abbreviation in Indonesian, namely "Pekerjaan Rumah" (*homework*). As will be explained further in this section, PR Seni targets sensitive areas that art policymakers tend to ignore. It gives rise to a common sentiment among art workers in demanding recognition of the importance of their work in cultural production. Currently, PR Seni is inactive. Nonetheless, it has paved the way for healthier conversations about organizing cultural work.

One of PR Seni's initiators, Theodora Agni (Agni), initiated Shifting Realities in October 2020. It was founded right in the middle of the COVID-19 pandemic. In contrast to PR Seni, which works as a collective, Shifting Realities works as a collective learning platform with a more flexible structure. Both PR Seni and Shifting Realities are aimed at building a shared awareness that those in managerial positions are more than just curators and artists' working horses. They have the same role as other stakeholders in the chain of contemporary art institutions, and therefore cannot be considered inferior. At the time of writing, Shifting Realities is preparing to set up a series of arts management workshops.

A new vision is an important element of the various independent spaces that have enlivened the post-1998 local cultural arts landscape. This has fostered a new type of art manager. These art managers are not products of conventional cultural arts institutions, but are born from a specific context in which experiments are an important part of managing space and carrying out visions and plans.

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Most managers involved in PR Seni and Shifting Realities learn art management through hands-on practice. Agni's experience is shaped by her time as an art manager at Cemeti—Institute for Art and Society (formerly Cemeti Art House). It gave her the chance to be involved and observe how other spaces work. Beyond teaching members about independence, the experience of working in an independent cultural arts space also means working in a flexible organizational system, arising from the organizational principle of "learning by doing." In the long run, this flexibility will potentially lead to work overlap and burnout. Art managers' inferiority, according to Agni, is partly due to the legacy of a work system that weakens their position.

In the Indonesian context, art management is an area largely populated by women. Speaking of art management often means speaking of forms of organization and support that revolve around gender-specific discourses. Every day, and in their own ways, they demonstrate assorted practices of support that must be performed to ensure that artistic events are carried out. However, this kind of work is usually not recognized as legitimate artistic work. According to Macushla Robinson, it is often hidden behind the perspective of being a labor of love and passion for art.[22] This view tends to make room for exploitation and appropriation while seeing women as an inexhaustible source of natural energy. Robinson calls it "invisible dark matter," because it is rarely discussed openly. Moving along this similar line of thinking, the two speakers at a meeting on the topic of "Landscape and Management Work Relationships" in a series of art management workshops organized by Shifting Realities, Brigitta Isabella and Hizkia Yosie Polimpung, respectively refer to the phrases "*bucin*" (an acronym for *budak cinta*, 'love slave') and "just helping around" as markers of the manifold dark matter that often characterizes work in the arts and culture area.

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[22] Macushla Robinson, "Labours of Love: Women's Labour as the Cultural Sector's Invisible Dark Matter," *Runway Journal,* Issue 32: Re/production (2016), accessed from http://runway.org.au/labours-of-love-womens-labour-as-the-culture-sectors-invisible-dark-matter.

Art to Live: Experimental Survival Strategies for Economic Independence in Alternative Cultural Arts Spaces

Contemporary art operates at a fast pace. It often leaves nothing but work to meet the targets of a series of tasks from production to exhibition. Discussions about management are often seen as trivial, or in Agni's words, belittled and considered only as "*curhat*" (*curahan hati*, or 'heart-to-heart conversation') and "*baper*" (*bawa perasaan*, or 'taking things too seriously'). In the end, these discussions are largely swallowed up by the obligation to compromise to ensure daily needs are met.

In September 2017, in a moment defined by Mierle Laderman Ukules in "Manifesto for Maintenance Art" (1969) as an epiphany, PR Seni decided to showcase their artwork in an archival festival organized by the Indonesian Visual Art Archive (IVAA). The festival is analogous to a realization creeping up from behind the scenes, always hidden, as opposed to an art presentation that emphasizes the performativity of an artwork.

Before the archive festival was held, there was another initiative to collectively translate Ukules's manuscript, "Manifesto for Maintenance Art," into Indonesian. This translation was initiated by Cemeti, as part of the kick-off for the Maintenance Works, a long-term project. There is no direct connection between PR Seni's archive exhibition and this translation. But her involvement in the translation, as Agni sees it, was a moment of enlightenment about the reproductive patterns of art management. The exhibition can thus be read as a critical response to the way independent art spaces have been organized.

The exhibition, initiated by PR Seni, functioned as an event that presented the mix of desire, obstacles, doubt, and fragility that characterises working in artistic spaces. It showed the daily struggles to carry out various cultural projects while confronting pragmatic issues, which at the same time exposed the problem of support at cultural production's core.

In the exhibition, PR Seni's members presented a site specific installation, in the form of maps and pictures that imitate everyday

workspaces as well as the workloads they are normally expected to bear. I quote the exhibition note as follows:

> "This simulation room is built based on various elements present in our workspace every day. We carry our tables and chairs, crucial to accommodate meetings with a wide variety of people. We carry various tools and equipment, all the essential things imperative in any installation in an exhibition hall. Coffee and tea are equally important in every meeting and work process. Our notebooks are our personal production tool."[23]

One of the charts on display indicates several points, or areas, that they have to deal with on a day-to-day basis. They can all be categorized as non-curatorial work. Nonetheless, they are routine and essential work in the industry—email communication, networking, cleaning rooms, creating workspace friendliness, and ensuring spaces have the capacy to entertain large numbers of people.

The pandemic has been followed by travel restrictions, cancellation of exhibitions or residency schedules, and the closure of art buildings. Some managers and art workers work on a part-time basis and are governed by the arrangement that no work means no pay. Many of them have lost their jobs. I have explained how art workers' vulnerable position is created by an institutional climate that tends to devalue non-curatorial and non-artistic workers. For art workers themselves, the pandemic has meant turning this reproductive energy around to meet their daily needs. Staying at home has not slowed down the rhythm of life. The total absence of—or at least decline in—the number of artworks and artists to be handled have forced them to try various new types of work outside the arts. These new jobs have ranged from selling food, working in hotels and shops, to teaching English. Apart from the issue of survival, this indicates that people in the art community lack financial savings to sustain themselves

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[23] PR Seni, "Presentasi Simulasi Ruang Kerja di Festival Arsip IVAA, 2017" in *Festival Arsip IVAA 2017*, Yogyakarta.

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through unexpected periods of disruption. As experienced by Agni, it has not left enough time for personal reflection.

Shifting Realities is intended to provide space for events like discussion forums that will hopefully teach participants something beyond technical and pragmatic skills. In the long term, it is designed to be a forum for art workers to share and advocate for a healthier work environment in art management.

This discussion of invisible resources is intended to lay bare the internal formation process of a vision and plan. PR Seni and its art experiment are still young. Even so, they have uncovered something previously invisible. They illuminate other coordinates that can be used to navigate forward. They question the purpose of doing something and provide an in-depth look at the ethics of working for a goal.

Moving with a Lens of Limitations: Creating a Chain of Self-Subsisting Way of Life

The availability of funds may be only one of the many conditions needed to work and simultaneously carry on living. Humatera is a collective garden located on the rooftop of the rented house of Kerjasama 59—an independent space based in Surabaya. On the rooftop of their house, they grow the various plants they usually consume—eggplant, spinach, tomato, chili, and rice. Humatera's garden management shows that a minimal and effective survival mechanism is to operate and plan for the future by centering the very idea of limitations themselves.

Figure 2. Identification map of PR Seni's managerial work.
Location: Yogyakarta (2017).
Source: PR Seni.

Figure 3. Kebun Humatera.
Source: Instagram @humatera.

Kebun Humatera is managed by live-in activists at the center of Kerjasama 59's activities. Officially the house functions as a base for Kerjasama 59's activities. Most of the activists there do not have permanent jobs. Some of them are freelancers in film production and creative digital content. Some of them are actively engaged in the empowerment of urban communities. On a daily basis, the house is more like a place where members and a diverse network of friends come together and share ideas. For those who are active in it, hanging out at Kerjasama 59 is part of the process of learning many things.

In this section I would like to show how the organic way they work at this house creates the freedom to produce diverse activities designed to achieve independence. These activities appear less burdened with, and even beyond, programmatic targets. They are executed in a relaxed manner, moving according to the rhythm of existing needs.

The dynamics brought forward by the everyday social climate at the house result in other independent initiatives being formed organically. Belang Telon Initiative and Pawon'e Arek-arek are a couple of

examples. Belang Telon Initiative is a film collective, while Pawon'e Arek-arek is a community kitchen that aims to meet the food needs of many vulnerable communities during the pandemic. This house has also thrived as a place where many people try to put business ideas into practice on a small scale, such as managing coffee shops and merchandise stores. At the time of writing, another business is about to take off, which is a tobacco shop. Pawon'e Arek-Arek depends on donations. Most of the activities run in this house do not have fixed financial backing.

Kebun Humatera was born with the simple idea of making the most of everything that is owned and available for use. According to Cahyo Prayogo (Yoyo), before it was turned into a garden, the rooftop was neglected and filled with various unused stuff. The house activists who also live in it also cook for their own needs. The idea of tending a garden came from a desire to be able to meet their regular food needs, in the hope of reducing daily living costs.

Kebun Humatera has taken on a new significance during the pandemic. The pandemic has left many people at Kerjasama 59 out of work, so cooking food using the various garden products is increasingly valuable for daily survival. The garden's produce can also be used as cooking materials for the food donations organized by Pawon'e Arek-arek. In this way, the practice of cooking becomes a gateway to liberating food from being a commodity that negates the power of traditional female knowledge, as Vandana Shiva puts it.[24] This practice is also actively used as a way to improve relationships with other people (through building collective kitchen) and nature (through gardening).

The property used for these activities is owned by Redi Murti's parents, one of Kerjasama 59's main activists. This makes it easier because they don't have to pay rent. This property can be considered as a grant, or a fortune, in the form of organizational infrastructure. The house then is

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[24] Vandana Shiva, "Women and the Gendered Politics of Food," *Philosophical Topics*, Vol 37, No 2, Global Gender Justice (Fall 2009), pp. 17-32.

a form of economic capital, obtained through the strong ownership of social capital. It is largely used by its residents as a means of survival or, in Redi's words, a place to be productive together. Although there is no obligation to pay rent, the home users contribute what they can to cover regular expenses such electricity, Internet, and water. That is the minimum thing to do so that the house can function and be used for various activities, being also an expression of the members' appreciation of Redi's family's goodwill.

Renting a house is often a heavy burden for collectives. Not all of them have sufficient financial capacity to fulfill their rental obligations. The freedom from paying rent provides an initial economic foundation that allows a degree of freedom for organizing. The capacities created through property ownership led to new goals and projections for future work. In a situation when access to cultural funds is uncertain, free use of a property is a welcome relief. This reinforces a sense of independence in imagining work orientation.[25] In line with Maria Mies, space ownership becomes the capital to build a "survival subsistence perspective," aimed at "to regain self-reliance and subsistence security, that is, to become ecologically, socially and economically more independent from external market forces."[26] In the context of Indonesian politics, Mies's concept of self-reliance resonates strongly with Sukarno's concept of "standing on one's own feet" (dubbed as *berdikari*, or *berdiri di atas kaki sendiri*). In everyday discourse, self-sufficiency becomes an ordinary expression of the desire to achieve broad economic autonomy. Amiruddin Al Rahab analyzes how to concept of *berdikari* was implemented in Sukarno's economic policy during the Guided Democracy period in 1959.[27] According to Al Rabah, the application of *berdikari* was part of Indonesia's effort to create a strong economic foundation at the beginning of the nation's

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[25] Another example, Yuli Andari Merdikaningtyas, Sumbawa Cinema Society's initiator in Sumbawa Besar (West Nusa Tenggara), also shared a future plan in which a secretariat, studio, and film studies library would be built on her father's garden. Apart from the family's goodwill and trust, it is also based on the desire to be free from rental obligations that require a large amount of funds.

[26] Maria Mies, "The Need for a New Vision: the Subsistence Perspective," in *Ecofeminism*, eds. Maria Mies and Vandana Shiva (London & New York: Zed Books, 2014), p. 312.

[27] Amiruddin Al Rahab, *Ekonomi Berdikari Sukarno* (Jakarta: Komunitas Bambu, 2014).

independence. The strength of this foundation was not only Indonesia's abundant natural resources, but also a will to focus on the welfare of the public, without being dictated by foreign economic powers.

In the previous section, I made the observation that in the early 2000s, success in obtaining cultural funds from local and international funding organizations was seen as an ideal. Acquiring funds from abroad is considered a recognition of an initiative's importance. An observation of the diverse activities taking place at Kerjasama 59's home indicates a shift in the view of how to finance cultural activities. When it comes to doing long-term work in the cultural sector, the possibility of continuing to live together is perhaps more important than obtaining a reliable, long-term source of funds.

Closing

This paper began with the intention of exploring the various survival strategies of art collectives to investigate whether they were also accompanied by visions of building more sustainable relationships with humans and the broader environment. Exploration of the case studies shows that the creation of self-financing models, mixed with the dynamics of thinking about types of non-monetary resources and struggles to create more ethical living relationships. The meaning of resources as a driving force in the creative sector moves back and forth from money, networks, human resources, opportunity, and property ownership, and the ability to fill one's stomach every day. Awareness of the limitations on cultural projects' funding mechanisms have led to various experiments in creating new funding mechanisms and ecosystems, as well as healthy ways of life.

The Parasite Lottery, Arisan Tenggara, and CCC are interventions to build an infrastructure of self-financing. All three refer to the *arisan* mechanism, which in Indonesia is already well known as a collective support system and way to organize savings. However, their experiments show that managing funding and human resources for art production isn't a job that can be done quickly. While work in the

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> " The meaning of resources as a driving force in the creative sector moves back and forth from money, networks, human resources, opportunity, and property ownership, and the ability to fill one's stomach every day. "

sector is often time-constrained, it often required a significant investment of time to maintain the human networks that allow everything to run smoothly. At this point, it is necessary to reflect on how the cultural sector creates work which can be labelled as either a "project" or "program", both of which seem to be solely oriented toward project growth and quantifiable results.
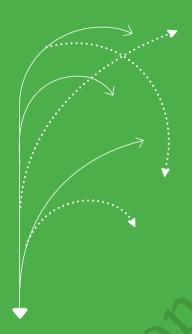
In this section, I look at the last two case studies, Shifting Realities and Kerjasama 59, within the perspective of the historical development of alternative spaces in Indonesia. Both cases demonstrate the development of a survival strategy directly related to a dismantling of conventional mechanisms and structures of organizing culture. In the case of Shifting Realities (preceded by PR Seni), a closer relationship with the environment exists via a desire to make explicit the various forms of invisible labor while creating healthy work systems–that is, by including these forms of labor in discourses of cultural management. The democratization of cultural space must be accompanied by a capacity to eliminate hierarchical and exploitative social relations. The issues discussed in this project have paved the way for a positioning of contemporary art practices within a broader perspective of life.

Kerjasama 59 shows that making friends, hanging out, realizing various ideas together—cooking, building a collective kitchen, opening a shop, gardening—are all part of a survival strategy that works organically, according to the needs and dynamics of the people involved. As these various activities are performed, Kerjasama 59's organizational structure swells like a large bubble that also holds many smaller ones within it. Shifting Realities and Kerjasama 59's community shows that mutual respect and fostering social networks, rather than the accumulation of money, can be the impetus for doing cultural work. In the context of Kerjasama 59, cultural work with a strong environmental perspective is built through the creation of a subsistence way of life. This shows the creation of a cultural framework with a perspective based on recognizing limitations. However, further reflection raises other questions about how it—cultural work—always appears to be preceded by conditions of crisis.

Melbourne, 2021

Nuraini Juliastuti

Premature Evaluation
Co-operative As a
Model for Collective
Work in Bandung

Azizi Al Majid & Endira F. Julianda

The Landscape of the Art Collectives in Bandung

Compared to other art capitals in Indonesia, such as Jakarta and Yogyakarta, it might seem that Bandung does not have a lot of flourishing collectives that affect its ecosystem. People recognize Bandung's art ecosystem more as a place where individual, studio-based artists grow rather than an environment where collectives emerge, significantly affecting the dynamics of its art world.

It is obvious, however, that the collective spirit in Bandung was and still is alive and well. Art collectives have emerged and grown in Bandung in a variety of forms and types of association. Not many of them are able to live long and be on a par with the artists who carve out their careers individually. People perceive individual, Bandung-based artists as having greater access to exhibitions, art fairs, and biennales. As they create their art works and build their careers, the individual, studio-based artists are more flexible and better able to adapt to changing market situations because they only need to deal with themselves. Many conclude that collective work would be impossible in Bandung if the aim is to pursue a long and financially rewarding career in art.

The absence of sustainable art collectives that would be able to make a considerable impact on the art ecosystem makes it feel as if Bandung has a missing link, a yet-to-be discovered piece of the puzzle, or a messias that is yet to come. It is as if one day there would be a perfect collective that is able to solve all problems and bring benefits to the art ecosystem in Bandung. The question that comes up frequently in informal conversations and public discussions on art is: *What kind of system or collective work would be appropriate for the art landscape in Bandung?*

The choice to work in a collective in Bandung's world of art is often perceived as what the artist Zico Albaiquini calls "existential survival",[1] or something that is based on the urge to survive. This gives us an idea of how the art world in Bandung has suffered after the contemporary art boom when collective initiatives are a choice that artists can make to survive after having focused their attention mainly on the art market. The contemporary art boom, which many suggested occurred from 2007 to 2012, had a significant impact on the art world in Bandung. People often perceive the boom as having provided a career boost for many artists. Young artists at the time—who mostly graduated from Facuty of Art and Design at the Bandung Institute of Technology (FSRD-ITB)—formed networks with their lecturers, who also worked as curators. They gained access to gallery exhibitions in Bandung, Jakarta, Yogyakarta, and Magelang, and some even expanded their reach to regional markets via exhibitions in Singapore, Malaysia, and the Philippines.

This helped create the illusion among various actors in the art world that a career in art was limited to that of artist, curator, writer, or manager, and that each would find his or her own nook in the market. Art production that took the form of exhibitions and discussions primarily focused on the market rather than on the critical aspects of the art practice itself. This was evident in the emergence of different art exhibitions sporting the moniker of "Bandung"— Bandung New Emergence, Bandung Initiative, Bandung Art Now, and Bandung Invasion. During the boom period, activities in the Bandung art world had centered on the market. People did not discuss collective work much, nor did they pay it much attention. Collective work during the boom period was more about providing a supporting role in market positioning, as was the case of ABSTRA-X and Parallab.

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[1] Nina Hidayat, "Babak Baru Industri Kreatif Bandung," destinasian.co.id/babak-baru-industri-kreatif-bandung, accessed June 13, 2018.

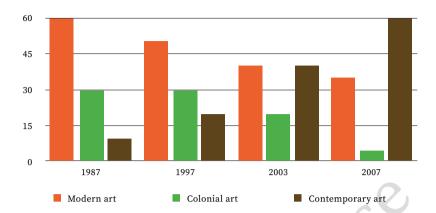*Azizi Al Majid & Endira F. Julianda*

Figure 1. Artistic tendencies of works sold during the art boom.
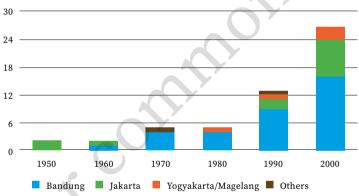
Source: Djatiprambudi (2009).

Figure 2. Exhibitions sporting the moniker of "Bandung" from 1950 to 2000.

Source: Gumilar (2013).

Around 2011, the boom started to dissipate and commercial galleries curbed their activities. Bandung artists who had been active during the boom saw increasingly fewer publications of their works. Art practitioners in Bandung found themselves at sea when the market gradually lost its power to support them. The market was not able to serve as a strong foundation on which art could progress in a sustainable and consistent manner.

In the post-boom period, art activists in Bandung thought again about the importance of creating a healthier art world that focused more on art discourses, regeneration, and sustainable art ecosystems. Collective work in the form of art programs with communities, artist-run spaces, or performance art groups grew, and people took them into account. The collectives that made headway during the post-boom era, such as Ruang Gerilya, Omnispace, and Ruang Tamblong, represent a reaction to the art situation in Bandung at that time. They created a space run by artists' groups to facilitate their members' activities and those of art workers in their surroundings. Artists from younger generations also established collectives of their own, and discourses about collectives were gaining ground. Initiatives like Ilubiung, Klub Remaja, Bandung Performance Art Forum, and Pemuda Setempat are among the collectives that a new generation of artists have established during the post-boom era (and perhaps some of these artists did not directly experience the boom).

The Rakarsa Cooperative

Around 2018, we thought that few art collectives eventually formed formal organizations with a legal basis, and this might have hampered the flourishing of art collectives in Bandung. Without a legal basis, it would be difficult for art collectives to access funds and other opportunities from government and non-government institutions. This assumption spurred the foundation of the Rakarsa cooperative. The idea was to establish an organization with an economic orientation and a legal basis to strengthen the art ecosystem, share resources, and

establish a common network. This was an effort to shift the existential survival status to a pragmatic one, in the sense that Rakarsa was established as a collective whose survival efforts would be based on economic benefits.

Rakarsa was established in two versions, each with an official legal basis: one as a cooperative, and another as a foundation. This article focuses on the cooperative as an uncommon model among the art collectives in Bandung. After we had been doing this for a while, we realized this direction posed novel challenges for the managers and members. A cooperative is a business entity that collectively gathers capital, and we chose to be a service-providing cooperative offering services related to art workers and other creative workers.

Rakarsa membership is open to art workers living in West Java.[2] Every member must pay a fee and is entitled to an annual dividend. Rakarsa encourages members to take part in every activity the cooperative holds and any activity related to it. Apart from the fee, member participation is valued proportionally in the payment of dividends. Members can also use the cooperative as a platform for their activities. In 2018, the Rakarsa Cooperative invited about 30 art workers in Bandung to an information gathering, and in 2020 Rakarsa officially became a service cooperative with a legal basis, with 21 members. It based member selection on the founders' network and considered the different types of expertise the organization should house: artists, curators, writers, artisans, art handlers, and designers.

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[2] Rakarsa is a primary cooperative with members coming from the province where the cooperative was established. Those residing in other provinces might take part but can only become extraordinary members and cannot work as part of the management.

Figure 3. Rakarsa's annual members' meeting.
Location: Bandung (2018).
Source: Rakarsa.

The cooperative has so far hosted exhibitions, discussions, workshops, and training events. It has also provided members' recommendations for activities held by the foundation. Realizing that we need funds to execute our independent programs, the plan of our first period focuses on three points:[3] stability of capital, portfolio of programs and collaboration, strengthening member participation. The first and second points direct the managers to prioritize profitable collaboration programs with other institutions, such as workshops, event organizing, and commission work with Danone, Gojek Art Jakarta, and Bekraf (Creative Economy Agency). To encourage member participation further, we also hold not-for-profit activities such as film screenings, discussion series with Omnispace and Nuart Sculpture Park, and training events at the Ciburial Village, in collaboration with the Institute of Research and Community Service of ITB (LPPM ITB). Not

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[3] De facto, Rakarsa's first period is 2018-2021, but if we're using the year we first established the legal organization, it would be 2020-2023.

long after we officially became a legal organization, we started a re-structuration process that is still on-going at the time of writing. The cooperative is not accepting new members while the re-structuration process is underway.

Figure 4. Commission work with Alfiah Rahdini for Aqua Life.
Location: Gandaria City, Jakarta (2019).
Source: Rakarsa.

Figure 5. A training program of waste utilization with LPPM ITB.
Location: Ciburial village, Bandung (2019).
Source: Nuri Fatima.

Figure 6. Commission work with Kolasa Workshop for Gojek Food Festival.
Location: Gelora Bung Karno, Jakarta (2019).
Source: Rakarsa.

Figure 7. Art Unlimited (ART_UNLTD) with Bekraf.
Location: Art Jakarta, Jakarta Convention Center (2019).
Source: Ardiles Klimarsen.

Challenges to the Cooperative

Ideally, the cooperative system that Rakarsa designed could solve
the problems within the art ecosystem in Bandung by offering
an organization system for art workers. The expectation is that
organization and collective work would not be limited to aesthetic
preferences or peer-to-peer work based on social networks, but
rather focus on developing the art ecosystem together in ways that
are healthier and benefit all. Conceptually, a cooperative might be
appropriate for the art ecosystem in Bandung, which some perceive as
an ecosystem of individualistic art workers.

Naturally, Rakarsa has its own share of challenges, the most significant
one being *understanding the work of a cooperative.* A cooperative is
not merely a place for people to collaborate, to gather, and to generate
money together. We need to understand the principles of a cooperative
as an enterprise. It has taken us quite a while to apply the new system

Figure 8. Art Unlimited (ART_UNLTD) with Bekraf.
Location: Art Jakarta, Jakarta Convention Center (2019).
Source: Ardiles Klimarsen.

" ...organization and collective work would not be limited to aesthetic preferences or peer-to-peer work based on social networks, but rather focus on developing the art ecosystem together in ways that are healthier and benefit all. "

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of collective work, both as managers and as members. The managers are still learning how to manage the business, while the members are still figuring out what the role of the cooperative is and how they can take part in the cooperative's efforts. Sometimes members who question how Rakarsa will continue to exist as a cooperative because many of them find it challenging to take part. Some members feel their responsibilities are limited to paying membership fees and receiving dividends. They therefore think that Rakarsa is not operating as a collective, or not like *art collectives with which they are familiar.*

The lack of general assemblies since the first one in 2018 also makes members perceive problems in terms of how Rakarsa communicates with them about the organization's work and impact. The cooperative managers are trying to overcome the communication issue in different ways. They now realize that the collective spirit we are trying to establish must be supported in "non-collective" ways: personal approaches are more effective for gathering members' aspirations. This also relates to the fact that members have different careers and artistic practices, and therefore different schedules.

The second challenge is that as a service cooperative Rakarsa is still looking *for the right format for its program,* one that is *right on target* and *consistent.* As a result, the cooperative still depends on programs proposed by other institutions; this is essentially collaboration work and not sustainable. As a service cooperative, Rakarsa is not yet able to develop a sustainable program with parameters that reflect member participation. Consequently, there will be gaps when many members cannot participate in the annual program because it has not required their expertise. This might be understandable in the cooperative's early days, but it is important for Rakarsa to find a sustainable format for a program that can accommodate the various types of expertise it houses. Otherwise, Rakarsa might become an organization that relies too much on available opportunities without the capacity to strengthen the potential value of each of its members significantly and sustainably.

The third challenge is the *lack of adequate space.* In Bandung's art landscape, the issue of space always proves to be an obstacle, whether it is about a space to gather, to create works, or to hold exhibitions. The problems are always about accessibility and rent. As a cooperative for creative workers, it would certainly be helpful to have adequate space that would encourage and facilitate member participation. This might solve a lot of problems, both within Rakarsa Cooperative itself and within the art ecosystem in Bandung in general. The absence of a physical space makes Rakarsa's work invisible, and this might lead to assumptions and rumors.
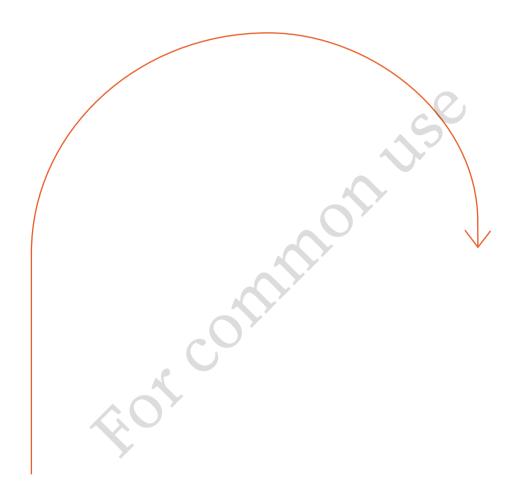
Envisioning a Cooperative in the Near Future

Conceptually, a cooperative system might be the right model for the art ecosystem in Bandung. Rakarsa has established itself as a cooperative and still has time to change its path and adapt to new situations. Managers and members need to learn more about how a cooperative works. The cooperative system, which on paper seems to be highly democratic, requires stronger participation by members. This might prove quite a complex challenge, considering the individualistic character of different activities in Bandung. The effort to understand the aspirations of its members represents the commitment of an organization. This can take place through online and offline assemblies. Members' aspirations regarding the cooperative's performance are crucial to the organization, since cooperatives exist to increase the welfare of their members. As the cooperative listens to its members, it will envision ways to develop its programs, to accommodate the different types of expertise of its members, to generate revenue and benefits with clear parameters, and to do it all sustainably.

Adequate space is vital and should be the main agenda in our effort to evaluate cooperatives as a way of empowerment. At least for members who work as artists and curators, adequate space will be highly beneficial. They would be able to use such a space for meetings, holding exhibitions, creating works, or doing business. With such a space, Rakarsa would at least be able to establish a small-scale

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ecosystem that can accommodate the needs of its members and raise and redistribute the capital to open up a range of possibilities and strengthen its members. The cooperative could also demonstrate its performance and impact while preventing wild assumptions and prejudice about its ideas and work. Rakarsa Cooperative exists in an environment where people are engaged in the visual discipline. Physicality is a must.

In closing, we would like to convey our wish for Rakarsa to clarify its strategies vis-à-vis the art constellation in Bandung. With the existence of a legal certificate acknowledging its presence as a legal body, Rakarsa has found its vehicle, but the existence of a legal basis is not enough for its *raison d'être*. We can only assume that the choice to become a cooperative represents an effort to develop and strengthen the economic context of a collective, yet we still need to link this with the actual needs of the different art actors in Bandung. The cooperative format is theoretically promising as an alternative for managing a collective's activities because it might change the work ethic and performance of the collective while encouraging a new culture among the collectives in Bandung. When Rakarsa Cooperative can explain its *raison d'être* clearly and reflect it in its programs, no matter how small the program's scale, perhaps more members will take that leap of faith.

Bandung, 2020

Azizi Al Majid & Endira F. Julianda

Afterword

The FIXER survey has given us a glimpse of how various art collectives have flourished in Indonesia over the past ten years. The number and dispersion of art collectives in this survey have increased from those of the FIXER survey carried out ten years ago. However, the results of the current FIXER survey do not represent the whole phenomenon of art collective growth in Indonesia today. There are still many new collectives with diverse features and characteristics for us to list and study further. However, we hope that this FIXER survey can contribute to the information and discourse on the development of art collectives in Indonesia between 2010-2021.

Of the 53 art collectives that participated in the current FIXER survey, we see a trend: collectives have begun to think more deeply about their economic sustainability by developing economic strategies. The classic problem of ensuring the longevity of a collective, which was supposedly determined by access to donors and external funding networks, needs a rethink. In fact, project-based funding schemes that have supported the work of some art collectives in Indonesia are inadequate for empowering art collectives. Ideas and strategies to build resilience from within, by strengthening social relations and roles, can be a new model for Indonesian art collectives in the future. However, this is only possible if a collective has the ability to map the resources around them and create an ecosystem that links these resources into a mutually reinforcing network.

This kind of insight did not emerge from the FIXER survey a decade ago. At that time, most of the emerging artistic initiatives or collectives fought for independence as an expression of freedom before and after the 1998 Reformation, which marked the end of the Suharto regime. The desire for independence was a common theme among the growing art collective movement at that time, when

founders and members struggled to rent spaces and turn them into collective residences and alternative art spaces that were open to the public. It is thus understandable that, at that time, a domestic logic often shaped the organizational management of collectives. It was a direct consequence of the separation between domestic and public affairs—a dichotomy that has always been blurred in the operations of Indonesian art collectives.

Nowadays, art collectives display increasingly flexible responses when it comes to making choices about their independence. This marks a clear difference from earlier periods, when art collectives positioned themselves in opposition to established authorities—whether the government or artistic elites—as a statement about their "independence". In the last ten years, art collectives have more commonly made use of funding opportunities provided by the government and private sector to support their activities or add physical facilities to their spaces. Bridges of cooperation between art collectives and senior artists and cultural activists are also increasingly open through exhibition program, workshop, facilitation, and forum. This is partly due to the fact that several new art collectives are primarily focused on exploring their local cultural roots as a source of creative inspiration, driving them closer to the "the elite of arts" or "local cultural figures" to connect with the narratives of the previous generation. We see this shift as a consequence of art collectives starting to think about the direction of their work in accordance with changes in art infrastructure after 1998 Reformation and the accelerated access to information about sustainable sources of funding.

These two shifts seem to require a new discussion about the development of art collectives in Indonesia. How do collectives see "independence" if what is needed today is an awareness of further dependence among collectives to share resources and inspiration? This awareness is driven by the fact that art collectives have a strategic

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position in relation to the various endeavor of democratization of ideas and actions in society. We imagine a network that connects existing art collectives, amplifying the cultural work already carried out and providing a runway for more ambitious work in the future.

In building such interdependence within an ecosystem, it is necessary to have openness and continuous conversations within networks of art collectives. Through such conversations, values are communicated, interests are negotiated, and experiments are conducted. Building a narrative through conversation is an invitation to an alternative future, given the increasing "narrative competition" between collectives. An instinct to compete has been shaped over time through a variety of mechanisms that emphasize limited resources among a large number of collectives. Accessing these limited resources (or, to make it more explicit, donors and external funding) fosters a competitive atmosphere, which, realized or not, has pitted collectives against one another in a struggle that they don't fully comprehend. As a result, there has been a division between collectives in the center of the vortex, who receive more attention from funding institutions, and the many collectives that survive with no assistance from the government or external funding. This creates an art ecosystem of inequality, and it is common for larger collectives to take advantage of smaller ones as an extension of their programs. It is imperative to resolve such inequality to build a healthier art collective ecosystem in Indonesia— one in which every collective has an equal position, giving rise to continuous conversations and reversing top-down power structures.

An equal position among collectives must be seen as a step and an opportunity to build independence together. Without independence and autonomy as common ideals, sustainability will only be a flight of fancy since, to achieve it, external support is always required— instead of just building resilience from within. We can achieve internal resilience not only by fostering a mutually reinforcing intercollective network, but also by mapping resources around which an art collective

grows. The FIXER survey provides a window to look at various examples of empowered art collectives who are able to take root in the environment in which they grow. Without having to wait for external support, these collectives survive by relying on the resources around them. It is a paradigm that reverses the public's position in a collective's creative practice. If the public was previously positioned as a passive subject, now the public is seen as an active subject or even the main support system of art collective practice. This shift in understanding has other implications, such as how art collective practice must be congruous with the context and needs of a collective's surrounding community so that they follow the rhythm and dynamics of their society. Thus, the understanding of creative work also expands; it is no longer possible to make such a clear distinction between creators and fans of art within the art collective framework—just as how producer and consumer fuse into prosumer in the digital jungle; everyone is capable of simultaneously being a producer and a consumer.

One of the impacts of this paradigm shift is the phenomenon of interstate mobility that in the past ten years has increasingly colored the dynamics of art collective growth in Indonesia. So far, this mobility has been understood as the impact of internationalization in the global art scene after the end of the Cold War. A legion of biennales, triennales, and other international exhibitions makes global mobility a significant factor for art collectives today. Some collectives with a strong artistic vision and ability to articulate their practice on the international stage particularly stand out. They receive invitations to various exhibitions by various institutions. However, a criticism arises: this kind of internationalization brings those collectives into a situation that will distance them further from the local context in which they developed. Finally, in this vortex of internationalization, art collectives run the risk of becoming an object within stronger art scenes and discourses. This criticism is followed by another development: art collectives that work in a strong local context can potentially use their locality as a language in parallel with other contexts in the global art scene.

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Another difference between FIXER 2010 and FIXER 2021 is the definition of the organizational entities. In the past, FIXER used the term alternative space and contemporary art groups, this time FIXER uses the term "collective". This current use is based on changes in designation by many art collectives themselves, whether in their names or in the discourses about such collectives in public discussion. The word "collective" marks new changes happening over the past decade. Its absorption from the English word "collective" indicates the need of Indonesian art collectives today to position themselves and actively engage in the discourses of global contemporary art.

These art collectives in Indonesia will certainly face more complex challenges in the future. Not only do they have to strike a balance between locality and the great current of internationalization, they also have to manage resources around them by growing stronger roots in society, rethinking independence in an increasingly connected world, and putting away the old paradigm of competition to start a conversation on an equal footing.

Future Challenges and the Emergence of Collective Movement

The shifts in the working models of art collectives discussed above will also certainly face various challenges and possibilities in the future. Internally, art collectives will face tests at the level of practical sustainability; among other questions, how should they support their organization? How do they pass on ideas between generations? How will their artistic practice develop in the future? Meanwhile, externally, art collectives in Indonesia may face the possibility of art academies adopting collective art pedagogy into their syllabus, art markets trying to commodify and fossilize collective practice as an object to be offered in auction rooms, donor agencies taking advantage of art collectives as an intermediary to facilitate public participatory programs, and society itself becoming a medium to calibrate the urgency of art collectives in their own surroundings.

To face such circumstances, an aspiration has emerged to create a collective movement for an intercollective ecosystem, a storehouse of resources, or *lumbung* (barn), that allows sharing of surplus among art collectives in Indonesia. This storehouse is an experimental system that will ideally support the practical sustainability of art collectives within it. In contemporary art, this can be understood as a model for institution-building as an art form. However, such an offer is also an endeavor inspired by an awareness to continue various resource-sharing practices already common in many cultures in Indonesia, in which agrarian communities work together to fulfill and manage a storehouse—in diverse roles without fixed labels—to be able to sustain themselves and their surroundings. Therefore, this concept of a storehouse of resources has not been created from a vacuum; it comes from existing practices that are always evolving to achieve certain ideals.

It is the mechanism and operational concept of this resource storehouse that collectives and other arts organizations in Indonesia are trying to offer, as a practical extension of the FIXER survey. It is through this storehouse that the various entities incorporated in it can share their resources and support each other in order to achieve independence for collective works in the future. Can this sharing and distribution model be a solution for the sustainability of ideas and alternative economies of art collectives or organizations in Indonesia? This offer and experimentation in independence must be tried out as times change and uncertainty looms over the future.

Research Team

Directory

Ace House Collective (Yogyakarta, 2011)

Ace House Collective consists of artists who work with communities and their networks to manage a space of their own. This space serves as a laboratory that brings together arts and other disciplines by way of popular cultural approach. Ace House Collective seeks to develop and contribute to current art practices by providing a platform for production, dialogue, and collaboration through fora for meeting, and exchanging and assembling ideas. As of today, Ace House Collective has 10 members. They divide their resources in two categories, i.e., cultural and social modalities. Cultural modality comprises each member's artistic and non-artistic capacities and capabilities. Meanwhile, social modality is the extent of a member's and the collective's relationships or networks. In addition, they own a building/physical space and archives/documentation. Currently, Ace House Collective is developing an independent business of appropriate artistic services for certain specific industries while running the already established business of merchandise and artworks, and accommodation for art workers.

📍 Jalan Mangkuyudan No. 41, Yogyakarta 55143
f acehousecollective 📷 acehousecollective
▶ Ace House Collective

BERGERAK.ETC (Balikpapan, 2017)

BERGERAK.ETC is a cross-disciplinary collective that seeks to be a driving force for collaborative works among cross-disciplinary creative industry players in Balikpapan. What has become a concern for the members is how to change their city's stigma as an industrial city. BERGERAK (means 'moving') would like to offer a new reality for the people of their city that work does not necessarily have to be within the established industry or for the government or private institutions. They would like to present another face of Balikpapan as a city of creative industry. This collective has no permanent members because the space constitutes a meeting place for cross-disciplinary communities in Balikpapan. However, there are about 21 individuals active in it. They see human resources within the collective as the main capital. They are currently running independent businesses covering culinary sector called BURGER.AK, a coffee shop, and a photography studio. They also produce and sell merchandise while providing a packaged service for performances.

📍 Jalan Mayor TNI A.D. Imat Saili, Central Balikpapan, Balikpapan, East Kalimantan 76114

🌐 www.bergerak.co 📷 bergerak.etc

Bilik Bersenyawa (Banjarmasin, 2017)

Bilik Bersenyawa (means 'chamber of compounds') seeks to act as a forum of appreciation for the works of local creative industry activists; a space for expression and artistic exploration as well as a space for appreciation for creative industry activists in Banjarmasin, South Kalimantan, and its surroundings. Bilik Bersenyawa is fronted by eight active members supported by several contributors who are often involved in their various activities. Talents and passion of each member in the subculture are Bilik Bersenyawa's main assets, coupled with the spirit of mutual help and cooperation among them. For them, Bilik Bersenyawa is not just a forum of appreciation but also a place for learning. Currently they are planning to set up a merchandise

shop to sell their own products and showcase their collaboration with other parties. This shop is expected to be a distribution channel for merchandise by Banjarmasin's creative actors.

📍 Jalan Saka Permai No. 45, South Belitung, West Banjarmasin, Banjarmasin, South Kalimantan 70116

🌐 www.bilikbersenyawa.com　　⬛ bilikbersenyawa

🐦 bilikbersenyawa　　▶ Bilik Bersenyawa

Cata Odata (Ubud, 2014)

Cata Odata began as an initiative of Ratna Odata, a theater artistic director, and Djunaidi Kenyut, a multidisciplinary visual artist, in 2014. Cata Odata adopts an interdisciplinary approach in designing programs and activities. Its main mission is to grow together and facilitate artistries, especially in Bali and East Java. Cata Odata has been working together with at least 100 collaborators consisting of artists/communities/public spaces both in the country and abroad. Cata Odata also runs exhibitions, shows, artist-in-residences, and educational programs. Since 2016 it has been initiating a program of cultural exchanges of ideas, CO.Lab. Working together with international artists, CO.Lab sees that differences in ideas as a form of diversity must be maintained to create a more open, progressive, and even art ecosystem. Cata Odata now has five members and runs independent business units, i.e., artist agency for several galleries in Europe; art and design project for commercial establishments in Bali, Jakarta, and Singapore; and paid workshop.

📍 Jalan Sri Wedari, Junjungan Sawah, Ubud, Gianyar, Bali 80571

🌐 www.cataodata.com　　⬛ cataodata

Degil House (Medan, 2018)

Starting as zine publishing, Degil House (*degil*, meaning 'stubborn') is now a space that accommodates various subcultural movements in Medan, be it film, music, literature, performing arts, and fine arts. Their programs, such as Degil Unplugged, Malam Hujan Kata-kata, Layar Tancap Degil, Sirkulasi Kreasi Perempuan (Sirkam), and Kelas Berbagi, constitute spaces that become the locus of collaboration and knowledge-sharing about arts and culture for Medan's youth. To be sustainable, they use their space to host labels/recording studios, cafe, paid classes, and creative markets initiated by their members. Currently, they are focusing on a development of alternative education in art and a research regarding subcultures in Medan.

📍 Jalan Sei Silau No. 50/54, Merdeka, Medan Baru, Medan, North Sumatra 20154

📷 degilhouse   ▶ Degil Production

Forum Sudut Pandang (Palu, 2016)

Forum Sudut Pandang (means 'forum of perspective') is a non-profit organization run by cross-disciplinary artists. This collective has a legal status as association. Since its establishment, Forum Sudut Pandang has initiated regular programs such as workshop, exhibition, film screening, musical performance, and alternative market. They were involved in a recovery program for victims of Palu earthquake in 2018. Currently, Forum Sudut Pandang has 20 members. For them, the main resource of their collective, past and present, has been networking. As for independent business, they run a shop and community business.

📍 Jalan M.T. Haryono No. 19, Palu, Central Sulawesi 94118

🌐 www.sudutpandang.org   f forumsudutpandang

📷 forumsudutpandang

Gardu House (Jakarta, 2010)

Gardu House is perhaps the most well-known street art collective in Indonesia (*gardu* means 'guard house' or 'station'). With their motto "making graffiti of the people and popularizing graffiti", this collective that started as a hangout group for drinkers has consistently been operating as an alternative space for graffiti community and a channel for street art artists to work, for more than ten years. Gardu House has quite numerous members because they adopt the principle of hanging out, ever-changing with volunteerism. However, it can be said that there are ten people active in Gardu House's daily life. So far, the collective whose Street Dealin can be said to be Indonesian street art's biggest celebration has been running independent businesses such as the sale of graffiti tools, graffiti materials, and merchandise. Funding is also obtained through "graffiti activation" at major events such as Synchronize Fest, Jakarta Sneakers Day, Super Art Fest, We The Youth, and others.

📍 Taman Barat Ruko Grand Bintaro No. 11, Bintaro Jaya Sektor 1, Bintaro, Pesanggrahan, South Jakarta, Jakarta 12330

📷 garduhouse   ▶ GarduHouse

Gelanggang Olah Rasa (Formerly Known As Studio Batur) (Bandung, 2020)

Gelanggang Olah Rasa (means 'arena of emotional refinement') originated at Studio Batur, which was established in 2017. It is a cluster of habitats of various creative entities in Bandung, among them are Jurig Studio, Infinomedia, Lab_Pangan, Link Art, Mahardika Instrument, Plastic Processing, Plépah, and Tilude. It is called GOR, the usual acronym of Gelanggang Olah Raga (sports arena), but to adapt to the context of the entities here, what transpires is more about *rasa* (feelings, senses) instead of *raga* (body).

📍 Jalan Bukit Pakar Utara No. 31, Ciburial, Cimenyan, Bandung, West Java 40198

f gelanggangolahrasa   📷 gelanggangolahrasa   ▶ GelanggangOlahRasa

Grafis Huru Hara (Jakarta, 2012)

Grafis Huru Hara (means 'riot printmaking' a collective of graphic artists that began from exhibition activities and friendship in their campus, Jakarta State University. One of the collectives belonging to the Gudskul Ekosistem, it focuses on exploration, experimentation, and education methods using graphic art as its main media. GHH's programs include exhibitions, graphic art classes, art residencies, and various publication projects on graphic art. Their independent businesses are merchandise production, artistic services, and paid workshops.

📍 Jalan Durian Raya No. 30A, Jagakarsa, Jakarta 12620

🄵 grafishuruhara   📷 grafishuruhara

Gudskul Ekosistem (Jakarta, 2018)

Gudskul Ekosistem is a collective of collectives founded by three art groups in Jakarta: ruangrupa, Serrum, and Graphic Huru Hara (GHH). Gudskul Ekosistem set out from an art ecosystem developed based on a non-profit model. Most of the operational support of each collective has been obtained from donor agencies, sponsors, and self-financing from joint business units, in addition to voluntary funds from collective members. They also have created a collective barn system, where all resources have been pooled and shared proportionally, according to the needs of each collective. These resources are greatly diverse, from funds, programs, tools to books, which are pooled to be accessible and shared among all collectives. Currently, there are approximately 50 people involved within the structure of Gudskul Ekosistem. These individuals make up the collectives with a variety of artistic practices and mediums such as installation, archive, video, sound, performance, media arts, citizen's participation, graphic arts, design, education, and others. This diversity enriches the circulating issues and the various parties involved in a number of collaborative projects in it, be it social, political, cultural, economic, or environmental ones.

📍 Jalan Durian Raya No. 30A, Jagakarsa, Jakarta 12620
🌐 www.gudskul.art 𝐟 gudskul 🅾 gudskul
🐦 gudskul ▶ Gudskul

HONF (Yogyakarta, 1999)

HONF (The House of Natural Fiber), in principle, constitutes an interpretation of the four key principles of avant-garde, i.e., destruction of artistic autonomy, engagement in daily life praxis, a utopian vision, and aesthetic innovation. Born in the beginning of the Reformation, HONF was originally called Yogyakarta New Media Art Laboratory. Open-community method has been applied since their inception. It is related to the need for cross-disciplinary collaborative actions in response to technological developments and their use in everyday life. HONF now has 15 members. A common vision and ideas among the members and their networks this collective's main asset. They also run an independent business unit that sells merchandise, organizes paid workshops, and maximizes the utility of their equipment. This collective, often referred to by young Indonesian artists in the media art, is currently pursuing an economic system based on an open source and an openness practiced by all parties interacting in it.

📍 Jalan Keloran No. 18, Tegal Kenanga, Tirtonirmolo, Kasihan, Bantul, Yogyakarta 55184
🌐 www.honf.org 🅾 honf_lab

Hysteria (Semarang, 2004)

Hysteria is a collective that focuses on creating art and facilitating cross-disciplinary meetings on local and global scales. Through their programs, they seek breakthroughs in creativity, art, community, youth, and city issues. They often deploy an art project in public space as a strategy to get around the lack of adequate exhibition infrastructure in their city. With 15 members, Hysteria is known for

its art projects involving citizen urbanism, such as Peka Kota and Tengok Bustaman. For the members, friendship and creativity in creating methods are the resources that sustain them until now, even though Hysteria is not located in the "center of the vortex of fine arts" in Indonesia. This is proven by the Trubus Kusala Award (2017) and Youfab Award in Tokyo (2020) that they received. As a collective that started as a zine, Hysteria claims to be the publisher of the longest running zine in Southeast Asia. They have published 99 editions during 2004-2020.

📍 Jalan Stonen No. 29, Bendan Ngisor, Gajahmungkur, Semarang, Central Java 50232

🌐 www.grobakhysteria.or.id   f @Grobak.Hysteria

📷 @grobakhysteria   🐦 @grobakhysteria   ▶ Kolektif Hysteria

Ilubiung (Bandung, 2014)

This forum originated from Alfiah Rahdini's art project that uses participatory and collaborative methods with artists across mediums and communities in an urban village area. Seeing that there were people from various disciplinary backgrounds interested in getting involved, Ilubiung (Sundanese, means 'to participate') changed into a forum in 2015. Nowadays it has about 17 permanent members, and approximately 40 non-permanent members. Their projects are known for their trial, called Lembaga Pendidikan Gunakarya, on art curriculum model at Bandung public schools. In addition, through Senirupa Dua Gunung project, they try to explore the understanding of art in various layers of society. They are currently managing a mini library in their space while exploring forms of digital artistic presentation to disseminate knowledge about art discourse often considered very exclusive.

📍 Jalan Cihapit No. 9, Pasar Cihapit, Bandung, West Java 40114

🌐 www.ilubiungproject.blogspot.com   f ilubiung.forum

📷 ilubiung   ▶ Ilubiung Project

Jatiwangi art Factory (Majalengka, 2005)

Jatiwangi art Factory is a community that examines how contemporary art and cultural practices can be contextualized with a local rural life, both in forms and ideas. With 31 members, this community explores "land" as the identity and the topographical landscape of Jatiwangi as a tile industry region. One of the most highly evolved forms of their exploration is the Jatiwangi Rampak Genteng Festival, the only ceramic music festival in the world, involving more than 11,000 people from all walks of life. They also hold art residency, visited by hundreds of artists from around the world, which has made Jatiwangi a crucial point in the world contemporary art circuit. From exhibitions, festivals, projects, to monthly forums that invite various stakeholders from social, cultural, and political fields, they try to develop their area as "Kota Terracotta" (Terracotta City).

📍 Jalan Makmur No. 71, Jatisura, Jatiwangi, Majalengka, West Java 45454

🌐 www.jaf.art.blog   f jatiwangiartfactory

📷 jatiwangiartfactory   🐦 jatiwangiart   ▶ jatiwangiartfactory

Jendela Ide (Bandung, 1995)

Jendela Ide (means 'window of ideas') is a cultural institution for children and young people with diverse economic, social, cultural, and political backgrounds, including those with special needs. Founded by artists Marintan Sirait and Andar Manik, Jendela Ide's programs focus on value transformation through visual, auditive, performative, participatory, and sustainable cultural arts media. These programs target children, teenagers, and their supporting communities: family, school, and the public. More than 100 core communities as members create collective works with Jendela Ide as the facilitator. Thus, as program participants, members are creators. One of their songs, "Semangat Pagi", received an award by Anugerah Musik Indonesia (Indonesian Music Award). They are also known for Teater Musik

Raksasa, of which the assets, including stories, songs, sounds, visuals, choreography, etc. are the creation of participants of Jendela Ide's various workshops. To sustain resources, they develop independent business in creative services such as organizing performances, training, and art facilitation for various other institutions.

📍 Dalemwangi Art Space, Komp PPR ITB D10, Bandung, West Java 40391

🌐 www.jendelaide.org   f Jendela-Ide

📷 jendelaide.indonesia   ▶ jendelaide

Kampung Halaman (Yogyakarta, 2006)

Kampung Halaman (means 'hometown') is a collective that aims to strengthen the role of youth in their own communities in a participatory manner through art and media. Kampung Halaman believes that anywhere in the world youth are the most important members of society who can ensure a regeneration process in a community. Numbering 11 members, they view the experiences embedded to collective members as the main resource driving their sustainability. An independent business Kampung Halaman has been managing so far is a consultancy service for universities, schools, and local and international NGOs.

📍 Dusun Krapyak, No. 05, RT 05/RW 55, Desa Wedomartani, Ngemplak, Sleman, Yogyakarta 55584

🌐 www.kampunghalaman.org   f yayasankampunghalaman

📷 kampunghalamanfoundation   🐦 kampunghalaman

▶ KampungHalamanFoundation

Kampung Segart (Jakarta, 2013)

Kampung Segart is a drawing collective at Lenteng Agung that becomes a Student Activity Unit at the Jakarta Institute of Social and

Political Sciences (IISIP). Kampung Segart responds to public sites in the capital city with an artistic approach in the form of murals, posters, stickers, and outdoor installations. Kampung Segart's members today are involved in various art projects with other art collectives.

📍 Jalan Lenteng Agung Raya No. 32, Lenteng Agung, Jagakarsa, South Jakarta, Jakarta 12610

f kampungsegart **◎** kampungsegart **◆** kampungsegart

katakerja (Makassar, 2014)

katakerja is a collective of literacy. katakerja, which means 'verb', started by opening a public library that's freely accessible to anyone. Along the line, it also facilitates collective arts and cultural activities as a response toward a broad understanding of literacy. At the same time, their activities, initially limited to issues in books and reading, grow into other realms such as music, films, and other cultural studies. katakerja believes that the most important of all subjects are human beings and humanity. Currently it comprises 22 members. With literacy movement as their basis, they view books and librarians and their respective and collective abilities as katakerja's greatest resource. So far, they manage a shop as an independent business, selling merchandise that they produce themselves and food products from other communities. This shop's regular collaborator is Payo-Payo Community, which provides assistance to rural communities, especially farmers. katakerja is also planning to organize paid classes, research, and writing/editing services as further independent endeavors.

📍 BTN Wesabbe C 64, Tamalanrea, Makassar, South Sulawesi 90245

◎ katakerja **◆** katakerja65 **▶** Perpustakaan Katakerja

Kedutaan Besar Bekasi (Bekasi, 2015)

Kedutaan Besar Bekasi (means 'Bekasi embassy') started as an initiative called PDGD Creative, a tribute to Pondok Gede, Bekasi,

once a beacon for underground music movement in the surrounding area. The name Kedutaan Besar Bekasi, an effort to point out the identity of Bekasi City, came out in response to widespread derision at Bekasi on the social media—notorious for the poor planning and public transportation as part of Jakarta's agglomeration. The collective regularly carries out various creative activities and programs, including gigs, workshops, discussions, exhibitions etc. Kedutaan Besar Bekasi now has 14 members. Their two main resources are people along with their ideas/thoughts and space/object that support these ideas. These two resources are mutually in dialectics within the sustainability of Kedutaan Besar Bekasi. So far, each personnel at the Bekasi Embassy has their own job/economic model, which will usually be linked to projects that can be carried out jointly. The independent businesses they have run so far are event organizers, creative agencies, production houses, and MSMEs.

📍 Jalan Jatikramat No. 2A, Jatiasih, Bekasi, West Java 17421
f kedubesbekasi 📷 kedubesbekasi ▶ Kedubes Bekasi

Kelas Pagi Papua (Jayapura, 2016)

Kelas Pagi Papua (means 'Papua morning class') is a community-based photography and film "school", free for everyone. They believe that education is the right of all people. They often collaborate with the church and the government, whether in conducting programs or in matters of finance. The members of the collective often work in activities or programs of the church and government to create income, some of which is set aside for the collective's interests. Kelas Pagi Papua has no less than 100 members. They are also affiliated with Kelas Pagi Jakarta, Kelas Pagi Yogyakarta, and Kelas Pagi Kediri.

📍 Tifa Residence 1 No. 4, Sentani, Papua
f KPPapua 📷 kelaspagipapua ▶ Kelas Pagi Papua

Ketjilbergerak (Yogyakarta, 2006)

Ketjilbergerak (*kecil* 'small'; *bergerak* 'moving') is a collective that has gradually been evolving from its birth into a fluid and independent shared learning space, using art as its main approach. Ketjilbergerak often invites young people from diverse backgrounds to study the past and the present, and prepare for the future, by learning together through dialogs and dialectics. They aspire to strengthen young people's bargaining position by forming networks and strengthening their knowledge based on the principle "*ngelmu iku kelakone kanthi laku*" (Javanese, 'knowledge is manifested through action'). In 2017, they registered themselves as a legal entity as foundation, encouraged by several parties. However, it turns out that this foundation hasn't been very useful because it has been incompatible with their organic nature that promotes a sense of kinship and democracy. They also have no record of their membership numbers. Basically, every Ketjilbergerak program has a self-funding system through the sale of merchandise (t-shirts) or public donation system.

📍 Jalan Kusumanegara 2B, Yogyakarta 55167
🅕 ketjil.bergerak 📷 ketjilbergerak 🐦 ketjilbergerak
▶ ketjilbergerak

Komunitas Action (Jayapura, 2014)

Komunitas Action aspires to change, improve, and create Papuan arts and cultural activities that must be manifested in effect through real actions instead of just talks. Komunitas Action was founded by a group of young people with backgrounds in art education and later became art teachers, mainly performing arts, at the Indonesian Cultural Arts Institute in Tanah Papua. Today this community consists of seven people. The most valuable asset they have is the Land of Papua.

📍 Gang Deho V No. 106 Perumnas III Distrik Heram, Yabansai, Jayapura, Papua 99358

www.komunitasaction.blogspot.com   KomunitasAction Papua
Komunitas Action

Komunitas Gubuak Kopi (Solok, 2011)

Komunitas Gubuak Kopi (means 'coffee hut community') is the popular name of Lembaga Pengetahuan Pengembangan Seni dan Media: Gubuak Kopi (Institute for the Development of Arts and Media Knowledge: Gubuak Kopi). They produce and disseminate media literacy knowledge through creative activities, organizing collaborations between professionals (artists, writers, and researchers) and citizens. They also develop local media and alternative filing systems, and build alternative spaces to raise environment-friendly cultural awareness in the local region. Komunitas Gubuak Kopi has eight members. They differentiate between social resources and material resources (or what they call capital). Social resources include access to other institutional facilities, networks, individual member's skills, etc. Meanwhile, material resources are space and equipment. They run their own business of selling local creative products, including those from community networks. For the future, they are working to build a physical creative shop and a garden while also offering services of simple artistic handling.

Jalan Lingkar Utara, Kampung Jawa, Tanjung Harapan, Solok, West Sumatra 27321
www.gubuakkopi.id   gubuakkopisolok
gubuakkopi   Gubuakkopi   gubuakkopi

Komunitas KAHE (Maumere, 2015)

Komunitas KAHE gathers artists, researchers, activists, and writers. They conduct interdisciplinary work with art and culture approach. Komunitas KAHE uses art as a lens to see and reflect on phenomena happening in society, as well as a medium for production, distribution, and documentation of knowledge. Komunitas KAHE works with a

socio-political mindset in a radical sense as an effort to get involved in societal issues and concerns. One of the programs that illustrates their work process is the annual Festival Maumerelogia. This collective with a strong background in performing arts has 15 members. Main resources for them are human resources, or members themselves, and the networks belonging to these members. They also pursue an independent business, i.e., to sell books and merchandise. They are also considering about founding a cooperative.

📍 Jalan Nairoa Lokaria RT 11/RW 13, Desa Habi, Kangae, Maumere Flores, East Nusa Tenggara 86180

🌐 www.laune.id   f komunitas.kahe   📷 komunitas.kahe

Komunitas Pojok (Denpasar, 2000)

Komunitas Pojok (means 'corner community') is mural and street art community that regularly holds the biennial Festival Mural Bali Yang Binal (Balinese Wild Mural Festival). As a group of artists, they try to stay outside a defining box. They believe that a definition would limit the freedom of their personnel that now consist of five people. They also believe that truth is a mere interpretation of a certain condition, and consequently normal values are always conditional. The members' existence and activeness are this collective's main asset in keeping the movement alive. They also manage an independent business that sells merchandise and organize fundraising events for their activities.

📍 Jalan WR. Supratman 218 Kesiman - Denpasar, Bali 80237

f komunitas.pojok.7   📷 the_pojoks

Komunitas Taboo (Bandung, 2007)

Komunitas Taboo is a creative learning community with a democratic method. This collective's underlying idea is that "the essence of science is not in an absolute enigma". For this reason, they practice a learning pattern in which they occupy a stagnant public space or village as an

organic creative learning space. This collective's membership is subject to conditions since it concerns with citizens that they are engaged with. Komunitas Taboo owns a creative children's studio, a fine arts workshop, a puppet show studio, and a traditional dance (*jaipong*) studio.

📍 Jalan Dago Pojok No. 60/161A, Dago, Coblong, Bandung, West Java 40134

📘 kampungkreatifdagopojok 📷 kampungkreatif

KUNCI Study Forum & Collective (Yogyakarta,1999)

KUNCI Study Forum & Collective (hereafter KUNCI) started as a cultural studies group. KUNCI experiments with production methods and shared knowledge through collaborative learning activities influenced by an intersection of affective, manual, and intellectual works. Since its establishment, KUNCI, meaning 'key', has transformed itself in structure, method, and means of working. Currently, KUNCI's practice focuses on collectivization of learning, including space management, discussion, library, research, publishing, printing, and school organization. KUNCI crosses and connects the boundaries of institutions, disciplines, and localities. Its membership is based on friendship and informality, with principles of self-organization and collaboration, with 10 active members. A network that continues to grow with time and the changing membership of KUNCI are the key to their main resource. KUNCI is currently also trying out a printing business.

📍 Ngadinegaran MJ3/100, Mantrijeron, Yogyakarta 55143

🌐 www.kunci.or.id 📘 KUNCI Study Forum & Collective 📷 cikunci

LabTanya (South Tangerang, 2014)

LabTanya (means 'question lab') is a social and ecological design studio that develops various research and experimental methods with urban communities. This studio was initiated by the architectural bureau Adhi Wiswakarma Dewantara (AWD) to provide space for all

kinds of "questions" about architecture and urban issues that cannot be answered in industrial work. They argue that architecture is not only about buildings; space is not always about walls that limit a field. With four core members, this studio is known for its initiative, Kota Tanpa Sampah, which is engaged in intervening in various waste production-consumption in housing complexes and policies of the local government agencies. Some of their projects include Jalan Milik Bersama, Kantor Keliling, Aparkment, and Fraktal City. These are experimentations and speculations about human space in urban cities that "are in fact not designed for humans." Currently they are setting up a start-up shop developed from Kota Tanpa Sampah, which sells composter, hamper, natural soap, *besek* (bamboo woven container), loofah, and *telang* flower in an attempt of sustainability strategy, both in their collective context and in the wider surroundings.

📍 Jalan Camar III No. 10 Blok AH, Pd. Betung, Bintaro Jaya, South Tangerang, Banten 15221

🌐 www.labtanya.wixsite.com   f labtanya   📷 labtanya

🐦 labtanya   ▶ studio labtanya

Ladang Rupa (Bukittinggi, 2015)

Ladang Rupa (means 'visual field') brings together a group of young people who aspire to develop and advance cultural arts education for the general public in Bukittinggi, South Sumatra. Championing alternative education, the activists do not hesitate to prioritize critical values, supported by assets in the form of loan office space, library, exhibition equipment, and farming tools. Their higher art education background is an effective asset in realizing these aspirations. These art educators everyday manage and run public programs flexibly according to the medium being discussed, for example classes, alternative cinemas, galleries, or simply discussion fora. This collective's activity is also structured, with daily, monthly, and yearly programs exploring various topics in discourses of art and art history in Indonesia. With seven members, Ladang Rupa's small-medium scale activities proceed

thanks to membership fees. However, they also set an agenda called Ladang Market where the sale of creative products and agricultural products can provide additional income, in addition to sponsorship funding, for the organization. Ladang Market also functions as a vehicle for creative economy actors and their communities.

📍 Balairung Sari, Jalan Basa Nan Kuniang, Kelurahan Pulai Anak Air, Mandiangin Koto Selayan, Bukittinggi, West Sumatra 26138
🌐 www.ladangrupa.wordpress.com 📷 ladangrupa
▶ Ladang Rupa

Lakoat.Kujawas (North Mollo, 2016)

Lakoat.Kujawas makes the name of a small village in East Nusa Tenggara, Taiftob, resonating in distant places. This collective mobilizes village activities to cultivate local resources, both natural and human, to achieve independence. Digging into local history and knowledge, Taiftob youth initiate ecotourism, home-scale creative industries, and artistic and cultural expressions. They also involve traditional leaders, church leaders, village women, village government, and children, which they call the "active community ecosystem". A profit-sharing system is established between economic actors and the collective's members. A portion of profits is always allocated to finance programs and their cooperative. Lakoat.Kujawas also organizes residencies for artists, involving both Indonesian and foreign artists, and links Lakoat.Kujawas with regional, national, and international cultural arts networks. With about 200 members, Lakoat.Kujawas carefully builds the sustainability of the organization, because for them it means building the sustainability of their beloved village.

📍 Jalan Kampung Baru, No. 2, Desa Taiftob, North Mollo, Southern Central Timor, East Nusa Tenggara 85552
🌐 www.lakoatkujawas.blogspot.com 📷 lakoat.kujawas

Lifepatch (Yogyakarta, 2012)

Lifepatch, a cross-disciplinary collective that explores art, science, and technology, makes citizen initiative the foundation of its movement. Upholding the spirit of DIY (Do It Yourself) and DIWO (Do It with Others), Lifepatch encourages the public to research, study, and develop the resources around them. Benefit is chosen as the mission's goal, with working principles such as how to be creative, collaborative, interactive, and open. It is not surprising that their programs can fall into the realm of the environment, food technology, agriculture, and sociology. Social network is a mainstay in the survival of this collective, with their seasoned experiences in various exhibitions, biennales, festivals, seminars, symposiums, and others. The personnel number of 11 makes it flexible in terms of discourse and praxis. Apart from holding workshops and publications, Lifepatch also actively manages a hardware workshop that functions as a business unit.

📍 Jalan Dr. Sutomo No. 696 (behind the Batik Museum) RT 48/RW 12, Bausasran, Danurejan, Yogyakarta 55212

🌐 www.lifepatch.id   f lifepatch   🗔 lfptch
🐦 lifepatch   ▶ lifepatchorg

Omah Balong (Kuningan, 2019)

Omah Balong is an alternative space envisioned as a means of education and empowerment for people who respect the local environment. Located outside the art networks of big cities, Omah Balong is founded to show that Kuningan has enormous local potentials to explore and develop through citizens' initiatives. Through a program called Ruang Riung, they accommodate various activities of art creation and appreciation, while in Bertani Asik they embrace local women to grow crops together. A strong communal spirit is characterized by personal resources to jointly organize various events. Driven by the husband and wife, Opik and Ina, Omah Balong also provides a space for local youth to sell their arts. Especially during the

pandemic, Omah Balong has intensified crop cultivation to strengthen the food security of the community.

📍 Jalan Sariayu 1 No. 9, Kp. Kliwon, Desa Sindangsari, Sindangagung, Kuningan, Jawa Barat 45573

📷 omahbalong

Omnispace (Bandung, 2015)

Omnispace is a small gallery born on the third floor of Omuniuum, a small shop that provides music and books as well as a space to discuss various topics around music. If Omuniuum deals a lot with music, Omnispace is centered on the idea of organic public space to experiment and explore various media and ideas within the framework of public collaboration. The activists are aware that the art world, especially Bandung, has at least four problems, i.e., presentation, education, distribution, and regeneration. These four issues become a reference point for them to respond and design programs. With eight members, Omnispace provides a space for young artists who want to display their works in public spaces as well as facilitate discourses through discussions and film screenings. Resources in the form of space and networks become the foundation for Omnispace to be able to carve an existence in the art scene through various projects, festivals, or other events.

📍 Jalan Ciumbuleuit No. 151 B, Hegarmanah, Cidadap, Bandung, West Java 40141

📷 omni.space   📘 Omni.SpaceBDG

Omuniuum (Bandung, 2007)

Omuniuum, that started as a bookstore, has become a meeting point for musicians, music lovers, illustrators, journalists, and artists across the arts. Further sparks of creativity culminate in various events, from

shows, exhibitions, to workshops, all of which help support the retail activity as Omuniuum's foundation. The six members believe that their community space is empowered thanks to a well-maintained business unit. However, for them, the unit is not only about business, but also about networking, which they see as their most important resource. By combining the strength of their network with commercial activities, various initiatives can be carried out as routine agendas, for example a musical performance they are able to organize without major sponsorships.

📍 Jalan Ciumbuleuit No. 151 B, Hegarmanah, Cidadap, Bandung, West Java 40141

🌐 www.omuniuum.net   f omuniuum

📷 omuniuum   ▶ omuniuum

Pasirputih (Lombok, 2009)

Pasirputih (means 'whitesand'), founded by culture activists, media activists, and artists, works in community-based media empowerment. In practice, it becomes a space for alternative media production and data center managed by citizens for the development of local knowledge and cultural wisdom. Their method heavily uses art and experimental approaches, whether in aesthetics and artistry or the social arena. They organize various researches and archiving in an attempt to produce textual and audiovisual materials for open and public distribution. With 17 members, Pasirputih has several independent units comprising advertising services, photography and videography services, and coffee, seeds, and vegetable business.

📍 Jalan Raya Pemenang, Gg. GOR Bulu Tangkis, Dusun Karang Subagan Daya, West Pemenang, Pemenang, North Lombok, West Nusa Tenggara 83352

🌐 www.pasirputih.id   f mediapasirputih

📷 pasirputih_pemenang

Rakarsa (Bandung, 2018)

Rakarsa is an art collective in the form of cooperative with 52 members. For the sake of capital stability, Rakarsa directs its administrators to prioritize cooperation with profit-oriented institutions, for instance to organize an activity or a workshop with a corporate, and set up an exchange of commission works for its members. Rakarsa aspires to build the right and healthy pattern for the art ecosystem in Bandung, which they see as a barren land for the growth of art workers on a collective basis. This art collective also organizes workshop and discussion that concern art, culture, and urban issues in Bandung.

📍 Kompleks Griya Bukit Mas II, Jalan Griya Permai III Blok D 6-9, Cimenyan, Bandung, West Java 40191

🅾 ra.kar.sa

Ruang Alternatif (Cirebon, 2015)

Since its establishment, Ruang Alternatif has been running programs related to audio, visual, and social activities with the public, especially children and adolescents. Ruang Alternatif cultivates an inclusive space where anyone can be involved and share ideas. This art collective constitutes an interdisciplinary community exploring all possibilities through research and other creations. Their goal is to create a healthy creative ecosystem in Cirebon. It is also a space for pop culture activities, including music, video, and performing arts. Ruang Alternatif's main capital is the members, now numbering 10 people, and the public who has been involved in their various activities. As for independent business, they provide services in event branding, company branding, and multipurpose business space, Continuum, although it has been forced to close due to limited operational costs after the COVID-19 pandemic.

📍 Perumahan Lobunta, Jalan Banjar Elok, Banjarwangunan, Mundu, Cirebon, West Java 45173

🅵 ruang.alt   🅾 ruang.alt

Ruang MES 56 (Yogyakarta, 2002)

Ruang MES 56 manages an alternative space that functions as a space for studying, playing, and working as well as a shared living space. The long-term vision is to help create an open, creative, and independent society, which guides their movements thus far. By focusing on photography and contemporary art, and their intersections with other fields, Ruang MES 56 develops thanks to its members' expertise and networks in photography, research, analysis, and curatorial work. They, numbering 22 people, are supported by in-depth technical skills, both in photography and videography, and cultural knowledge. Their complete equipment as studio, gallery, and residency location bolsters their capacity to organize activities. Being almost two decades old, this collective's dexterity in maintaining its sustainability is obvious. Currently Ruang MES 56 operates several business units, such as Toko 56 that sells books and souvenirs, Back to Back Class as paid online workshop, and audiovisual equipment rental.

📍 Jalan Mangkuyudan No. 53, Mantrijeron, Yogyakarta 55143
🌐 www.mes56.com 🅕 mes56
📷 ruangmes56 ▶ mes56tv

ruangrupa (Jakarta, 2000)

ruangrupa (*ruang rupa*, 'visual space') actively promotes the advancement of art ideas in the urban context and the wider scope of culture through exhibition, festival, art laboratory, workshop, research, and publication of book, magazine, and online journal. Along the way, ruangrupa has evolved into a contemporary art collective and ecosystem studies, with Serrum and Grafis Huru Hara creating a platform called Gudskul Ekosistem. This platform is designed as a simulation of collective work learning space that emphasizes the importance of critical and experimental dialogs through sharing and experiential learning, while providing a public learning space that upholds the values of equality, sharing, solidarity, friendship, and togetherness.

📍 Jalan Durian Raya No. 30A, Jagakarsa, Jakarta 12620
🌐 www.ruangrupa.id   f ruangrupa   📷 ruangrupa
🐦 ruangrupa   ▶ ruangrupajakarta

Rumah Budaya Sikukeluang (Pekanbaru, 2010)

Embarking on an idea to set up a space for non-Malay or contemporary Malay art, Rumah Budaya Sikukeluang has been growing as an art collective that focuses on environmental sustainability after the haze disaster struck Riau in 2010. Rumah Budaya Sikukeluang (Sikukeluang Culture House) organizes a cultural laboratory in an area of tropical rainforest called Rimbang Baling Hill. Their membership is an open volunteering participation. They also manage independent business units that consist of coffee shop and ecotourism.

📍 Jalan Dwikora No. 2, Gobah, Suka Maju, Sail, Pekanbaru, Riau 28132
f SIKUKELUANG   📷 sikukeluang   ▶ sikukeluang

Rumah Mesra (Sukabumi, 2015)

Rumah Mesra (means 'house of endearment') is proclaimed as an alternative space and idea hub, where ideas and insights pass through among the community and creators of Sukabumi, West Java. This space is part of the Sukabumi creative industry scene where various local expressions gain audiences and appreciation. Along the way, Rumah Mesra sometimes functions as a local "agency". Through it, various services are provided, such as space rental, stage production, artistic décor, content production and social media management, not to mention classes or workshops. At Rumah Mesra there is also a craft shop that sells local craft products. Consisting of six people, the members view, among other things, their experiences, ideas, geographic location, and network of friends as resources. Income from commercial works that they do together is allocated to support the sustainability of the space, especially for leasing and operational purposes.

📍 Jalan Suryakencana No. 21, Cikole, Gunung Puyuh, Sukabumi, West Java 43114

🌐 www.rumahmesra.id 📷 rumahmesra

Rumah Sanur (Denpasar, 2015)

Rumah Sanur (on Sanur house) is a meeting, networking, creating, and collaborating center for creative people in Bali. Unlike most alternative spaces that provide workplace or office and event venue, in Rumah Sanur there is already an ecosystem consisting of Kedai Kopi Kultur, Teras Gandum, to-ko Concept Store, Semesta Nusantara Foundation, and Chris the Barber. Each creative business unit collaborates with other entities and is always open to new collaborations. to~ko Concept Store, for example, has collaborated with more than 60 local brands. Meanwhile, Kedai Kopi Kultur not only serves coffee, but also offers activities such as workshop and discussion about coffee. Similar to Kedai Kopi Kultur, Teras Gandum does not only serve beer, but also organizes workshop on the making of fermented drinks for public. Currently Rumah Sanur has more than 14 members.

📍 Jalan Danau Poso No. 51A, Semawang, Denpasar, Bali 80228

🌐 www.rumahsanur.com f rumahsanur 📷 rumahsanur

Sandwich Attack (Tangerang, 2015)

Sandwich Attack is an alternative space that originated from its three founders' independent enterprise in the food industry, i.e., a cafe that serves sandwiches as the main menu. Relying on interactive and networking skills, Sandwich Attack has been gradually seen as a "must" place for Tangerang artists to appear or present their works. Music performances, exhibitions, and workshops proceed side by side with the business unit, all of them complement each other in terms of existence. Resources in the form of space, art network, and cafe customers are jointly cared for by its fourteen members. Apart from

having a cafe that provides regular income for the members, Sandwich Attack is also exploring other sources of income such as space/building rental to support the growing art scene in their space.

📍 Jalan Taman Hiburan No. 5, Sukasari, Tangerang, Banten 15118
📷 sandwichattack

Sanggar Anak Akar (Jakarta, 1994)

Sanggar Anak Akar (means 'children of roots studio') organizes educational facilities and self-development programs for marginalized children or those who live in settlements that are not conducive for their growth and development, such as street children, scavengers, and children of urban street workers and vendors. This collective is a manifestation of a community's commitment to the amelioration of children's education through the mobilization of community involvement and support in various forms. Sanggar Anak Akar runs a coffee shop and a *jamu* trade as their independent business units.

📍 Jalan Pangkalan Jati IA No. 28-29, Cipinang Melayu, Makasar, East Jakarta 13620
📘 SanggarAnakAkarID 📷 sanggar.anak.akar
▶ Sanggar Anak Akar

Serbuk Kayu (Surabaya, 2011)

Serbuk Kayu (means 'sawdust') was originally founded by chance after a group of students created a wooden car installation to take part in a protest in response to rising fuel prices. The day after the action, they moved the installation to the Car Free Day event in Surabaya, and the group agreed to form a community. Gradually Serbuk Kayu establishes itself to carry the mission of spreading interdisciplinary arts as knowledge. For them, art is not a matter of talent but a practice that is measurable and can have an impact on or benefit society. Through

art, people can reflect and gain insight to determine their attitude or find solutions. Viewing friendship, ideology, and common goals as resources, Serbuk Kayu collaborates with the private sector by acting as an art consultant.

📍 Jalan Bangkingan VIII XF-33 Perum Wisma Lidah Kulon, West Surabaya, East Java 60213

🌐 www.serbukayu.org   f serbukkayu

📷 serbukayu   🐦 serbukayu

Serrum (Jakarta, 2006)

The name Serrum is taken from the English phrase "share room". This collective was founded by a group of young people from Jakarta with a background in education of fine arts. With such a background, Serrum's activities are more concentrated in education with art approach. To support their livelihood, Serrum provides art handling services, a professional domain in the art ecosystem in which they are still active today. In keeping with their motto "*pantang pulang sebelum terpasang*" (never go home before all is in position), Serrum has handled many exhibitions both at home and abroad; both solo and large scale exhibitions such as biennale. Together with two other collectives that also grow in Jakarta, namely ruangrupa and Grafis Huru Hara, Serrum belongs to the Gudskul Ekosistem.

📍 Jalan Durian Raya No. 30A, Jagakarsa, Jakarta 12620

🌐 www.serrum.id   f serrum.shareroom

📷 serrum_studio   🐦 serrum   ▶ serrumvideo

SIKU Ruang Terpadu (Makassar, 2019)

SIKU Ruang Terpadu was initiated by one laboratory (Nara), one company (Bonfire), and two creative enterprises (MASIHOPSI and Rite). SIKU Ruang Terpadu, or 'integrated space angle', is made up of

those collectives plus a cross-disciplinary initiative called Jalur Timur. Bonfire is a design and multimedia company while Nara is a creative laboratory that combines art and science. Meanwhile, MASIHOPSI is a coffee shop and Ritus is a shop of supplies and necessities in street art that also sells clothes. SIKU Ruang Terpadu then is a confluence where they unite a common vision to build a contemporary art ecosystem in Makassar. Through SIKU Ruang Terpadu, they organize not only discussions and art exhibitions but also an array of workshops, which they see as a stimulant to the growth of contemporary art in their city.

📍 Jalan Bonto Tangnga No. 1, Manuruki, Tamalate, Makassar, South Sulawesi 90221

🌐 www.sikuterpadu.org   f RuangTerpaduSIKU

📷 sikuterpadu   🐦 SikuTerpadu

SimpaSio Institute (Larantuka, 2016)

SimpaSio Institute, an organization of 12 members, concerns itself with archives and socio-cultural studies of East Flores. One of its programs is the community library called Serambi Pustaka SimpaSio Institute. This *taman bacaan* (reading garden) brings together children in various creative activities. This institute is highly invested in the fate of the nation's children, so it involves a lot of young people in their agenda, which includes craft classes, storytelling roadshows, workshops, festivals, cultural camps, and scientific and cultural literacy activities. One of their recent efforts is to pioneer and develop the Kosaro Literacy Village that has become an inspiration and motivation for other "literacy villages" in Indonesia. To support their activities, they also sell t-shirts and locally produced food.

📍 Jalan Diponegoro, RT 07/RW 02, Central Sarotari, Larantuka, East Flores, East Nusa Tenggara

f Simpa-Sio-Institute   📷 simpasioinstitute

Sinau Art (Cirebon, 2006)

Sinau Art was originally called Gardu Unik (means 'unique post'). The name Sinau Art came from one of their programs, Sinau Art Course Training Institute. Believing that education should have become their focus, they changed their name into Sinau Art. *Sinau*, in Javanese, means 'to learn'. In addition to organizing art classes, Sinau Art also uses art as a medium to advocate for environmental issues. Regarding the latter, Sinau Art organizes a fairly momentous annual festival, the Jagakali Art Festival. In it, the public is invited to reflect on environmental conditions through various art performances, workshops, and activities such as cleaning up rivers and planting trees. In its eighth implementation, this festival brought in international artists to participate. This collective that self-proclaims as the first art- and culture-based non-formal educational institute in Cirebon has 20 members. They run independent business units i.e., paid art classes for children in kindergarten and students, and sales of craftwork and artwork of the members. The spirit of kinship manifested in solidarity and common idea become the driving force behind this collective.

📍 Permata Harjamukti Tahap VI No. 12, Kalijaga, Harjamukti, Cirebon, West Java 45144

🅕 sinau.art   📷 sinauart

Sindikat Milenial (Pontianak, 2017)

Sindikat Milenial was established to chart the contributions of its members, numbering 12, in an effort to build an art ecosystem in the capital city of West Kalimantan. Positioning itself as a collaborative vehicle without structure, Sindikat Milenial works across art disciplines, realizing that Pontianak is full of these potentials. Creativity is the collective's main resource, especially in realizing ideas that can be useful for a wider scope of the society. Stemming from circle of friends, Sindikat Milenial does not hesitate to work with various parties, including the private sector, because they believe that

the concept of open collaboration is necessary to prolong the life of the movement. In addition, the principle of volunteerism applies, in which members carry out their responsibilities flexibly according to their capacities and abilities.

📍 Jalan Imam Bonjol Gg. H. Ali. No. 8A, Pontianak, West Kalimantan 78242

📷 sindikatmilenial

SkolMus
(Kupang, 2011)

SkolMus (Sekolah Multimedia untuk Semua, or 'multimedia school for all') accommodates young people who immerse themselves in social entrepreneurship, especially in photography and videography, in order to take part in revitalizing and archiving cultural knowledge and encouraging a culture of cross-knowledge collaboration. Realizing the potentials and values of visual cultural products, SkolMus has deliberately set up a business unit called SkolMus Enterprise that provides multimedia consulting services. They produce photos, videos, digital storytelling, short films, and annual reports for many agencies and organizations in Kupang. With assets such as photographic and videographic equipment as well as supporting literature, along with professional, committed, and loyal human resources, SkolMus aspires to become a long-term movement. Currently they collect member fees and are trying to develop a side income in the form of crops grown in their collective's garden.

📍 Jalan Cak Doko No. 04, Oebobo, Kupang, East Nusa Tenggara 85228

🌐 www.sekolahmusa.org   📘 skolmuskupang   📷 sekolahmusa

🐦 skol_mus   ▶ SkolMus Multimedia Untuk Semua

Taring Padi (Yogyakarta, 1998)

Taring Padi (literally 'teeth of rice', referring to the fur on rice grains) believes that art can play a powerful role in expressing ideas. This collective actively explores the wants and needs of communities, making their creations highly relevant for the people. In their process, they prioritize transparency, social welfare, people's sovereignty, intergenerational justice, democracy, human rights, global relations reform, gender perspective, and the environment. While building a network with other institutions, organizations, and collectives both at home and abroad, Taring Padi views their work as their resources, whether in art, literature, music, publications, or performance. Nowadays this collective has 78 active volunteers. To support art and activism, they also sell artworks and souvenirs at exhibitions and festivals.

📍 Dusun Sembungan, RT 02, Desa Bangunjiwo, Kasihan, Bantul, Yogyakarta 55184

🌐 www.taringpadi.com 📘 Taring Padi 📷 taring_padi

Tikar Pandan (Banda Aceh, 2002)

Tikar Pandan was established to anticipate and help solve problems such as (a) the loss of critical studies of Acehnese cultural history, resulting in the cultural art world that's limited to tourism commodities and a set of anti-criticism social institutions, (b) the absence of emancipatory interpretations of Acehnese culture that shuts the possibility of contextual alternatives for societal changes, (c) the development of an elitist and symbolic culture as a result of the hegemony of monolithic and anti-critical power authorities, (d) the weakening of critical traditions of society due to a breakdown in the process of emancipatory interpretation of Acehnese culture in the midst of the development of modern and global cultures, and (e) state policies that eliminate the intellectual capacity of society in carrying out emancipatory interpretations of culture in Aceh. With seven members, Tikar Pandan carry out literacy programs.

📍 Jalan Sudirman VI No. 19, Kampung Geuceue Iniem,
Banda Aceh 23232
🅕 Komunitas Tikar Pandan   📷 komunitas_tikar_pandan

TROTOARt (Jakarta, 2001)

TROTOARt Semesta Raya Foundation was originally a group of painting artists who have been creating their art since 1989 on Jalan Pintu Besar Selatan, Old Town, Jakarta. The founders, Jhons Patriatik Karlah, Sobirin, Rahim Bekend, Eko Wibisono, and M. Khamim, merged their ideas and perspectives of art by founding the TROTOART Semesta Raya Foundation. As a collective, they aim to encourage a perspective of art that can serve the society. TROTOARt is based in Penjaringan, North Jakarta, and the activists collaborate with artists across cities and provinces. As a result of their activities, TROTOARt Bumiayu, Central Java, was established in 2018. Nowadays no less than 40 individuals are active both in Penjaringan and Bumiayu. They also run independent business units called Katro Kopi (cafes in Penjaringan and Bumiayu) and Katro Studio (a music studio in Bumiayu). The word *katro* is from the Jakartan slang meaning 'shoddy', 'trashy', but in TROTOARt's context it represents Keluarga TROTOARt (TROTOARt family). As their independent business unit, film screening in kampongs with voluntary donation from citizens, and musical concert with open donation, all came to a halt due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

📍 Jalan Kertajaya Raya No. 19, Penjaringan, North Jakarta 14440
🌐 www.trotoartjakarta.blogspot.com   🅕 Trotoart
📷 trotoart_community   ▶ Trotoart Community

TUDGAM (Kuningan, 2009)

TUDGAM is an interdisciplinary collective with a mission to disseminate art knowledge. They carry out this mission through activities such as workshop, exhibition, performance, research, and archiving. With

five members, they aspire to see how people own their art knowledge and artists become part of the community. To achieve such ideal, they organize a national-scale Kuningan Biennale as one of their efforts. Viewing organizational experience and networking as their resources, TUDGAM also provides services such as custom order in mural, painting, screenprinting, design, editorial, etc. Currently, to support itself, TUDGAM also opens art and design classes for students and the general public.
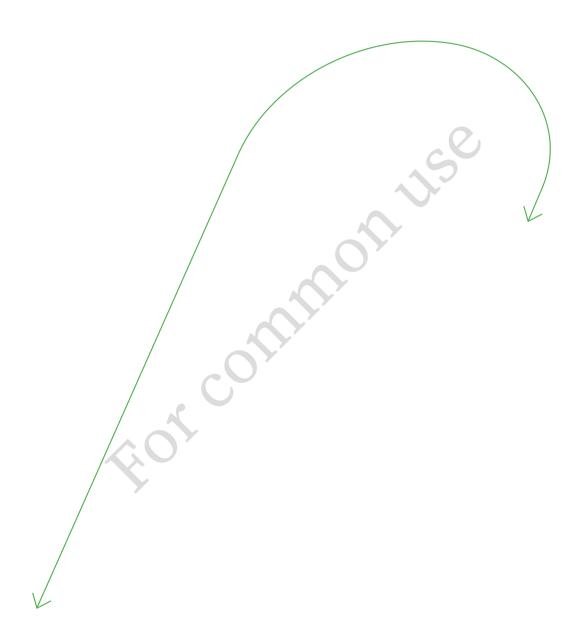
📍 Jalan Otista Gg. Mawar 2 No. 270, Pasapen, Kuningan, West Java 45512

📷 tud_gam

Waft Lab (Surabaya, 2011)

Waft Lab is an art collective that focuses on interdisciplinary art practices. Although founded in 2011 by several media arts and technology activists, they have been initiating many artistic practices since 2008. This collective has then grown by organizing workshop, mobile lab, class, creation, cross-disciplinary experimentation, and festival with citizens. Their regular programs include / VIDEO: WRK, an international video festival; / ELECTRO: WORK, an annual electro music festival; / NO: WORK, a periodical agenda that focuses on interdisciplinary educational projects; and / ABANDONED, a cross-disciplinary art exhibition. With 13 members, Waft Lab relies on resources such as the members' respective expertise and skills, which serve to complement each other. To contribute to their immediate environment, they are currently designing a workshop for young people in an effort to transfer knowledge.

📍 Puri Lidah Kulon Gg. Binangun I No. 605, Lakarsantri, Surabaya, East Jawa 60213

🌐 www.waft-lab.com   f Waft – Lab   📷 waftlab

Contributors' Profiles

Adin (b. Rembang, 1985) is Hysteria's co-founder. In 2012, he initiated Peka Kota, a forum for citizens' participation in the processes of city planning and formation. His urban activism led him to an appointment as one of the steering committees in 100 Resilience City, inducted by the Rockefeller Foundation and the Semarang City Government from 2015 to 2017. In 2017, he was Kompas's inspirational person of the month in March. Two years later, Adin was selected as the Indonesian delegation for the Young Global Changer in Berlin, Germany. In addition to managing Hysteria, Adin is also the Chairperson of the Central Java Creative Economy Committee and a teaching staff at the Anthropology Department of Diponegoro University.

Arie Syarifuddin (b. Majalengka, 1985), is also known as Alghorie. Affiliated as an artist, curator, cultural producer, designer, and director of artist in residency department to the artist initiative Jatiwangi art Factory in the village of Jatiwangi in West Java, which is Indonesia's biggest roof-tile manufacturing centre.

Azizi Al Majid (b. Palembang, 1994) is currently active as an art worker and art teacher in Bandung. He studied at the Faculty of Art and Design, Bandung Institute of Technology, until 2017. He has been actively managing collective works and arts in public spaces, including with the initiative Moving Class. In 2018, he participated in the Curators Academy organized by TheaterWorks in Singapore. He is currently an active media contributor for *IndoArtNow*. Since 2018, Azizi has also been involved in several programs by Rakarsa.

Doni Ahmad (b. Jakarta, 1989) graduated from the Faculty of Art and Design of the Bandung Institute of Technology in 2012. In 2014-2016 he managed Beta-Test, a program of Ruang Gerilya (Bandung) while also acting as curator in it. Some of the solo exhibitions that he has curated include "Titik Balik" (Aliansyah Caniago, 2014), "Passing By" (Etza Meisyara, 2018), and "Ketika Bulan Terbelah" (Radhinal Indra, 2020).

Author Profile

In 2017, he co-wrote and co-edit with Adhisuryo *Liplap: 35 Bandung Artists Under 35.* Pursuing a postgraduate study in his alma mater, his interests now include issues of metaphorical truth and contemporary Islamic art and its practices.

Endira F. Julianda (b. Jakarta, 1984) is an artist and visual art activist in Bandung. She completed her bachelor's degree program in graphic design and is currently pursuing her postgraduate study in art at the Bandung Institute of Technology. Her works revolve around constructions of nature based on observations of urban life. Endira has been participating in various collective, solo, and art fair exhibitions in Indonesia, Singapore, Philippines, and Taiwan. Besides creating arts, she has also been involved in art initiatives' management in Bandung, such as Platform3 and Bandung Contemporary Art Awards, and co-founded Rakarsa.

Hidayatul Azmi, also known as Ami (b. Bukittinggi, 1996) finished her study in fine art at the State University of Padang in 2019. Since 2017 she has been researching about the artist Oesman Effendi and the Indonesian modern art history. Ami is currently active in Ladang Rupa Study Forum as secretary and researcher while also managing *Tomato Zine*, Ladang Rupa's monthly publication.

Hendro Wiyanto studied art at the Indonesian Art Institute (Yogyakarta) and philosophy at the Driyarkara School of Philosophy (Jakarta). He has curated several exhibitions in Indonesia and written about artists and groups of artists, including Alit Sembodo, Dolorosa Sinaga, F.X. Harsono, Gerakan Seni Rupa Baru, Heri Dono, Jim Allen Abel, Jogja Agropop, Mahendra Yasa, Melati Suryodarmo, Theresia Agustina, Tisna Sanjaya, S. Teddy D., and Ugo Untoro.

Ladija Triana Dewi (b. Yogyakarta, 1994) graduated from the Department of Arts Management of the Indonesia Institute of the Arts, Yogyakarta. Since 2016, she has been active in art event managements while also giving her attention to literacy

and curatorial practices. She is currently delving into human resource management behind an art event. She writes articles about her experiences in art event management practice, essays about collective issues, and exhibition texts. In 2018, with her colleagues she initiated the collective Kantin Kurasi that works in multidisciplinary art projects and other curatorial practices.

Muhammad Sibawaihi (b. Pemenang, 1988) is a videomaker and journalist. He completed his undergraduate study at the Mataram Teaching and Education Institute, and is currently pursuing his master's degree in Applied Anthropology and Participatory Development at the Australian National University. In 2016, he obtained a residency opportunity from the Ujazdowski Castle Center for Contemporary Art, Poland, in "Re-Directing: East". In 2018, he became a contributor to a book published by Yayasan Kelola, *Unjuk Rasa: Seni-Performativitas-Aktivisme*. In the same year, he presented a video work of akumassa Pasirputih at the Visayan Visual Art Exhibition and Conference in the Philippines. In 2019, he was one of the speakers at the SAARM (Southeast Asian Art Residencies Meeting) in Taitung, Taiwan.

Nuraini Juliastuti (b. Surabaya, 1975) is a researcher and a co-founder of KUNCI Study Forum & Collective, Yogyakarta, Indonesia. She obtained a PhD from Leiden University with a dissertation titled Commons People: Managing Music and Culture in Contemporary Yogyakarta. Recently she was appointed as a postdoctoral fellow at Worlding Public Cultures: The Arts and Social Innovation project, University of Amsterdam (2020-2022). Her recent writings include: "Care, Practice, Art Communities in Indonesia" (*un Magazine* 14.1*,* May 2020); "Indonesian Migrant Workers' Writings as a Performance of Self-Care and Embodied Archives" (*PARSE Journal,* Issue 10, Migration, June 2020). Her article "The Studying Turn: Free Schools as Tools for Inclusion" is included in the edited volume *Forces of Art — Perspectives from a Changing World* published by Valiz (November 2020). Other projects include running an the independent publishing house

Sideways Press and *Domestic Notes*, a publication-based project on domestic, migrant spaces, and politics of productivity.

Putra Hidayatullah (b. Aceh, 1988) is active in Tikar Pandan and one of the curators of the 2015 Jakarta Biennale. In 2014, together with ruangrupa and the Jakarta Arts Council, he held the exhibition "Puing Perang" (War Ruins) at Taman Ismail Marzuki, Central Jakarta. In 2019, he became the curator of "Lorong Ingatan: Khauri Nujoh" exhibition organized by KontraS Aceh. He also writes essays and short stories, some of which have been published in *Koran Tempo* and *The Jakarta Post*. He has completed his study in Contemporary Art and Art Theory of Asia and Africa at the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London.

Renal Rinoza (b. Jakarta, 1984) completed his Bachelor's degree program in Communication Science of the Faculty of Da'wa and Communication at the State Islamic University, Jakarta, in 2010. In 2008, he joined Forum Lenteng and became a participant of the Jakarta 32°C organized by ruangrupa. In 2009, he co-founded Komunitas Djuanda, a study club of cinema, photography, and media empowerment. In 2017, he became assistant curator for OK. Pangan OK. Video – Indonesia Media Arts Festival in Gudang Sarinah Ekosistem, Jakarta. In mid-2018, he became a research assistant for a doctoral program of the University of California, Berkeley. In 2019, with Risman Buamona, he wrote *Bumi dan Manusia Mamasa: Sebuah Ihwal Tentang Perubahan Sosial-Ekologi di Dataran Tinggi Sulawesi.*

Participants' Profiles in the Discussion "Now or Ten More Years"

Adhari Donora (b. Pekanbaru, 1982) is a graduate of Interior Design, Faculty of Visual Arts, Indonesia Institute of the Arts, Yogyakarta, and Masters Program in Media and Cultural Studies at Gadjah Mada University, Yogyakarta. He is a hybrid who is passionate about experimental practices, Do-It-Yourself/Do-It-With-Others culture, and interdisciplinary collaboration. Events, exhibitions, workshops, or projects that he initiates are always based on cross-disciplinary studies (with an emphasis on concepts, art discourse, social and cultural conditions), providing him with experiences of how art, environment, science, and technology are interconnected. In early 2012, he co-founded a community-based organization working on interdisciplinary practice in art, science, and technology, lifepatch.org. Adhari is also involved in the artist initiative Rumah Budaya Sikukeluang in Pekanbaru, Riau, where he now lives after having founded the collective Serempak (serempak.org).

Angga Wijaya (b. Bandar Lampung, 1989) works in a collective called Serrum. Angga taught Collective Art Review in Gudskul Ekosistem, which maps the development of collective art practices. In his curatorial works, Angga employs project-based art practices that intersect with community work, social dynamics, and society. Angga is also part of Kelompok Kurator Kampung (KKK—Urban Poor Curators), a collective that does art activities in urban and rural areas. He is a quiet man until you take him to karaoke, where he unleashes his inner karaoke king charm.

Anang Saptoto (b. Yogyakarta, 1982) is an artist, designer, and activist in Yogyakarta, who has been the Director of Ruang MES 56 since 2020. He completed his education in Visual Communication Design at the

Collective Profile:

Visi Indonesia College of Visual Arts and Design in 2005 and graduated from the Faculty of Recording Media Arts at the Indonesia Institute of the Arts, Yogyakarta, in 2009. Anang's practice focuses on ecology and social change, articulated through workshops and collaborations with children, schools, disability groups, and various social organizations. For him, direct interaction, building solidarity, and collaboration are the most important aspects of artistic practice.

Bunga Siagian (b. Jakarta, 1988) studied at the Driyarkara School of Philosophy, Jakarta. In 2013-2016, she was a curator of Arkipel Film Festival. Occasionally, she writes about moving image. She is currently interested in the practice of curating moving image within the framework of how knowledge is presented in public spaces. In 2017, together with Ismal Muntaha, she founded Badan Kajian Pertanahan (Land Study Affairs Agency), a temporary institution that experiments with roles, methods, and forms of art in specific land-related issues.

Hairun Nisa (b. Jakarta, 1993) is the second of four children. Her most recent formal education is the undergraduate program in Social Sciences at the Faculty of Social and Political Sciences, National University of Jakarta. Since 10 years old, she has been active in Sanggar Anak Akar, acting in plays and playing music. Since 2013, she has become one the collective's officers and, since 2017, the Daily Coordinator of Sanggar Anak Akar.

Heri Budiman (b. Indragiri Hulu, 1971) is an art activist who was a lecturer at the Faculty of Communication Sciences, Muhammadiyah University of Riau and Riau Islamic University. In 2011, he founded Rumah Budaya Sikukeluang (Sikukeluang Cultural House), a non-profit organization that supports the advancement of artistic ideas and a larger scope of art spaces. In 2014, Heri initiated a movement against forest and land burning that has caused haze in Riau since 1997, called #melawanasap. In 2015, he instigated #saverimbangbaling, a movement of artists to save Bukit Rimbang

Bukit Baling Wildlife Reserve. In 2009-2013, Heri held a festival that produced six documentary films and seven research books, Ekspedisi Kebudayaan 4 Sungai.

Leonhard Bartolomeus aka Barto (b. Depok, 1987) currently works as a curator at the Yamaguchi Center for Arts and Media (YCAM), Japan. In 2012, after completing his education at the Jakarta Arts Institute, he joined ruangrupa. In 2017, together with friends from Jakarta, Semarang, and Surabaya, he founded Kelompok Kurator Kampung (KKK). His curatorial projects in recent years have focused on open and collaborative, educational practices. He remains active in research and collaborative projects in Indonesia and Japan.

Muh. Rais (b. Palopo, 1989) is a multidisciplinary artist and visual designer. In 2015, he founded the audio-visual duo, BOMBO. In 2016, the Dutch Art Institute (DAI), Arnhem, The Netherlands, invited the duo to speak in their symposium program, "Roaming Assembly #6." In 2017, Rais participated in the Artist-in-Residency program at the Foundation for Art and Creative Technology (FACT) and the one-night art festival, Light Night (both in Liverpool, UK), and the 2017 UK/ID Festival in Jakarta. In 2018, he joined the Makassar-Yirrkala Artist Exchange, then founded an audio-visual laboratory that focuses on art and technology called NARA Incubator. Currently Rais manages SIKU Ruang Terpadu.

Rahmadiyah "Ama" Tria Gayathri (b. Palu, 1992) currently works as a cross-media artist, producer, and disaster literacy activist. Rahmadiyah manages a collective space called Forum Sudut Pandang based in the city of Palu. Since 2017, she has been involved as a producer in film projects, including *Mountain Song* and documentaries produced by UNESCO and the Indian Ocean Tsunami Information Center (IOTIC), *Living Witness: History of Earthquake & Tsunami Central Celebes*.

Rahmat Arham (b. Makassar, 1990) lived in Bandung, West Java, for several years. He was the writer and managing editor of *Gigsplay*, a music webzine in the city. In 2013-2015, he was Program Manager of an

independent library in Bandung called Kineruku. His writings, about films, music, etc. can be found in a number of publications. In 2015, he participated in the curatorial workshop of ruangrupa and Japan Foundation. In 2018, he participated in a curatorial workshop in Sàn Art, Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam, and co-edited the book *20Kuldesak: Berjejaring, Bergerak, Bersiasat, Berontak*. In 2019, he was an artist and researcher for "Voicing The Silent Archives", an exhibition at the Basel Museum, Switzerland. Currently, he manages SIKU Ruang Terpadu, Makassar, while pursuing a masters program in Fine Arts Education at State University of Makassar.

Researchers' Profiles

Ajeng Nurul Aini (b. Jakarta, 1985) has been managing ruangrupa since 2011. Previously she joined Forum Lenteng and worked as video journalist in various television programs. She graduated from the Social and Political Sciences Institute (IISIP), Jakarta, in 2010. She has been active as project officer in a number of art events, such as Proyek Seni Perempuan Perupa, held by the Jakarta Arts Council, and the Jakarta Biennale in 2013 and 2015. With ruangrupa, she was a co-curator in TRANSaction: Sonsbeek 2016 in Arnhem, the Netherlands. In addition to organizing diverse art events, Ajeng is also the manager of the DJ duo Iramamama.

Ayos Purwoaji (b. Jember, 1987) is an independent writer and curator who works at the intersection of history, architecture, and art. Graduated from the Design Product Department of Sepuluh November Technology Institute, Surabaya, he has been working on numerous exhibitions and curatorial projects since 2015, some of which have been representing his special interests, vernacular architecture and collective memory. His belief that "everyone is potentially a cultural creator" is manifested in one of his projects, Surabaya Contemporary Heritage Council. Ayos is also a member of Kelompok Kurator Kampung (KKK) and c2o Library & Collabtive, and a lecturer of Cultural Studies at the University of Ciputra, Surabaya.

Berto Tukan is a Jakarta-based independent researcher and writer. He completed his undergraduate and postgraduate programs in philosophy in Driyarkara School of Philosophy, Jakarta, in 2018. He writes essays in both online and mass media, and conducts research for Jakarta Arts Council's programs, such as the publication of *Seni Rupa Indonesia dalam Kritik dan Esai* (2012) and a project called Penelitian Karya Ilmiah Seni Rupa di Tiga Kota (Jakarta, Yogyakarta, dan Bandung). Today he is the coordinator for the subject Collective Culture Discourse at Gudskul Ekosistem and the editor of *Jurnal Karbon.*

Participant Profile

Dwita Astari alias Distry graduated from Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University Japan, majoring in International Business. She was once a corporate marketing executive at one of the retail companies in Indonesia for more than two and a half years before she decided to pursue her passion in art and focus on art management. To enhance her knowledge in art, she took an art history class at Sotheby's Institute of Art and a one-year program at GUDSKUL Jakarta to learn more about Contemporary Art Ecosystem and Collective Studies. Currently, she is working for Australia Council for the Art as an international producer, a gallery relation manager at an art fair company in Jakarta.

Gesyada Siregar (b. Medan, 1994) is curator, writer, and art event organizer. Gesyada graduated from the Department of Fine Arts. of the Jakarta Institute of Arts in 2016 and an alumna of Lokakarya Kurator Muda Indonesia, a workshop held by the Jakarta Arts Council and ruangrupa in 2013. Since then, she has been active in various art projects, exhibitions, festivals, publications, and programs, both on national and international levels. Currently she works in Gudskul Ekosistem as the coordinator for the subject Articulation and Curation while also being involved in collaborative pedagogical art projects with various institutions. Some of her art projects can be seen on gesyada.com.

Gusti Hendra Pratama, also known as Enda, is art manager, artist, producer, and researcher who lives and works in Jakarta. Since 2015, he has been dedicating himself for artistic work that comprises production processes of knowledge and art while developing infrastructures to support the advancement and sustainability of art. In 2018, he was a member of the first batch of Contemporary Art Ecosystem and Collective Studies Program at Gudskul Ekosistem. In 2019, he organized an art project called "Tak Kenal Maka". With several art collectives in Jakarta, he was also a researcher for the project RETURNS: Migration Narratives in Southeast and East Asia (2019) and OK. Video: Asia City Pop Network Research Trip, Jakarta, Kuala Lumpur, and Tokyo (2020).

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