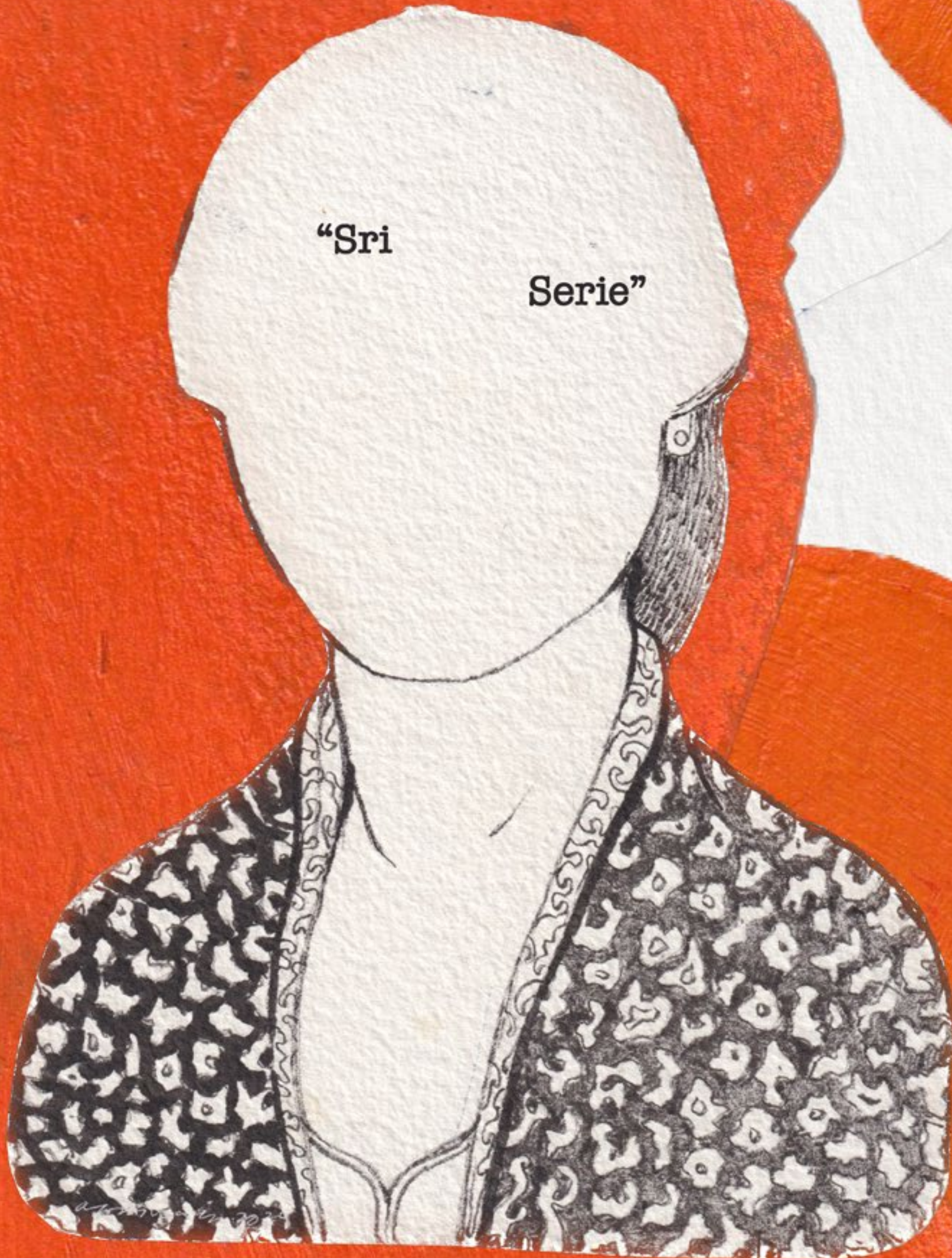


at Nonfrasa Gallery



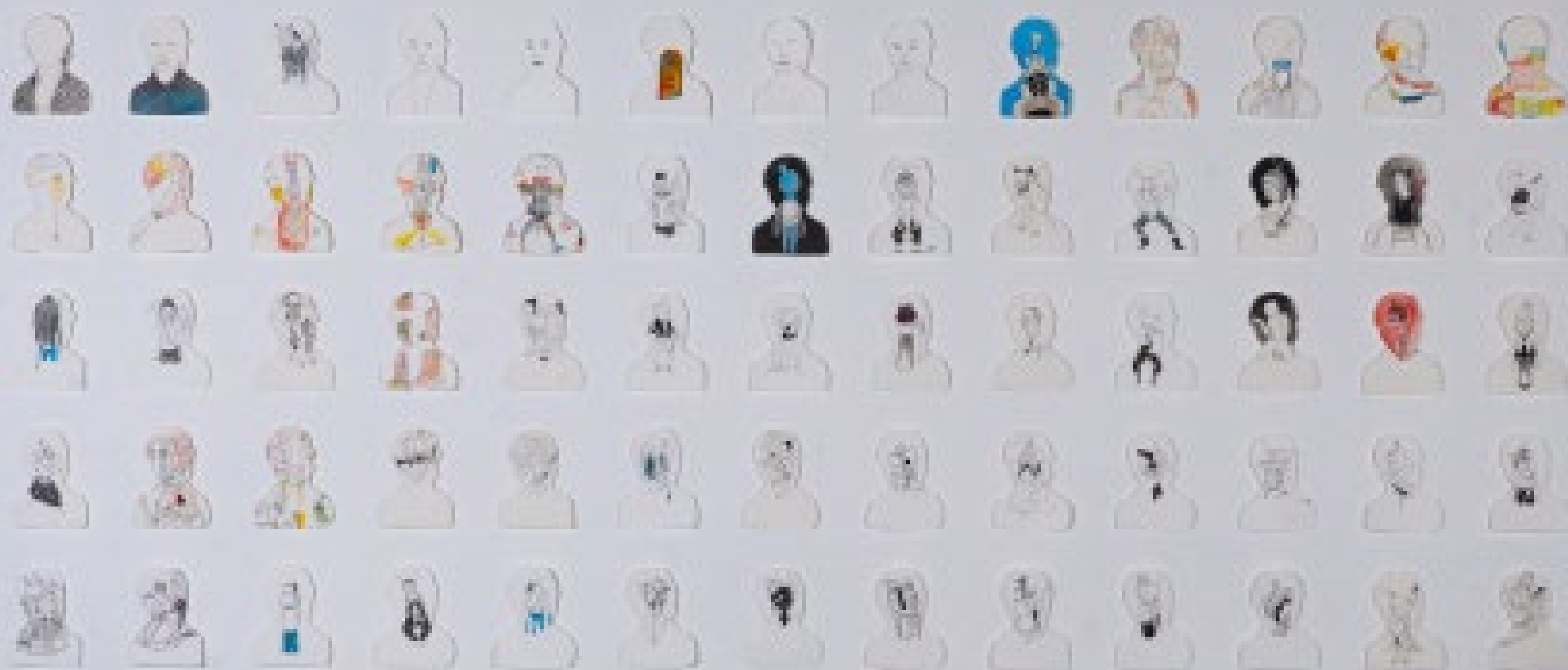
Drawing as Poetic Performance;
Agung Kurniawan

Solo Show by

Saturday, December 21TH 2024 / 4PM

“SRI SERIE”
Drawing as Poetic Performance
Solo Show by Agung Kurniawan

at NONFRASA.GALLERY Ubud Jalan Raya Sanggingan
No.21, Kedewatan, Ubud 80571
Opening for public DECEMBER, 21ST 2024 / 4PM
The exhibition until will be run until JANUARY, 21ST 2025



1. SRI

Written by
Agung Kurniawan

Saya memulai proyek ini kurang lebih delapan tahun yang lalu. Manuskrip performance dimulai dalam gedung gelanggang mahasiswa UGM, bersama enam puluh lima mahasiswa yang terpaksa ikut. Belum berjalan secara baik, tapi saya melihat potensi metode ini untuk membicarakan isu genosida 65 secara berbeda. Tidak lagi melalui seminar, workshop atau melukis yang biasanya bersifat temporer dan self centris akan tetapi lewat banyak orang. Keengganan yang muncul ketika isu genosida 65 diangkat ke permukaan adalah konsekuensi politis dari membicarakannya. Digrebek Ormas, polisi atau intel gadungan selalu membayangi. Meski dalam praktiknya sensor lebih sering muncul lewat keengganan atau ketakutan yang kita bentuk dari diri sendiri.

Dalam gedung gelanggang mahasiswa itu seorang mahasiswa nyeletuk dengan isengnya, “kalau dikasih gambarmu aku mau ikut”. Saya segera menghentikan protes itu dengan hardikan tapi dalam perjalanan pulang celetukan itu membayang sepanjang jalan. Melihat potensi gambar sebagai alat untuk mengajak orang terlibat bisa jadi mengurangi rasa enggan atau takut seseorang untuk terlibat dalam proyek performance ini. Sebuah fakta yang godaan tak tertahankan.

Setelah performance nan menggelora di Museum Macan Jakarta, saya sadar soalnya bukanlah pada membagi gambar atau bukan, tetapi saya menemukan bahwa sebagian besar peserta tak pernah tahu bahwa genosida 65 pernah terjadi di Indonesia. Sebuah fakta yang membuka mata, bahwa proyek ini tak bisa berhenti sekali jalan karena masalahnya lebih besar dari dugaan. Selain itu dalam performance juga menemukan meski banyak peserta yang tak tahu soal soal dibelakangnya, akan tetapi mereka merefleksikan fenomena genosida 65 ini dengan masalah pribadi mereka sendiri, semacam refleksi pribadi untuk meringkus keresahan hidup. Sebuah plot twist yang menghibur di tengah kepung kenyataan bahwa genosida yang telah merenggut jutaan nyawa ini tak pernah sungguh sungguh diingat.

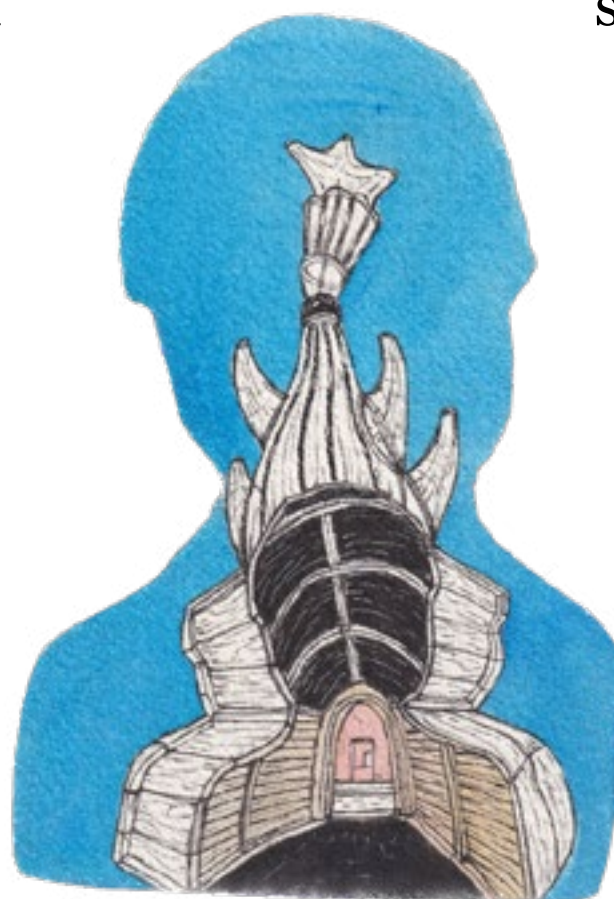
Performance pertama itu menghasilkan banyak catatan yang memperkaya banyak performance berikut. Di tengah kesibukan itu saya juga terus menerus mendengar kabar banyak penyintas yang saya kenal gugur satu pesersatu. Ada yang meninggal karena sakit tua, atau dirajam kehilangan ingatan karena pikun. Semakin sedikit sumber yang bisa menjelaskan secara detail kejamnya penjara, siksaan dan sangsi sosial yang mereka terima selama hidup. Sebentar lagi semua peristiwa keji akan jadi mitos belaka. Tertutup, dalam segel kebisuan dan tak terceritakan.

Semua fakta hidup itu, makin menguatkan bahwa performance sederhana yang melibatkan 65 orang untuk berbicara lewat sepenggal kata yang disembunyikan dalam gambar, semakin penting. Orang bisa memahami jalannya sejarah tanpa harus terjebak dalam isu besarnya. Cukup dengan meneriakkan satu kata saja, selama ia tersambung dengan 64 kata lain, maka terbukalah kotak pandora peradaban itu.

Bertanggung jawab pada satu kata, adalah kata kunci dalam performance. Kata yang dilepaskan dari konteks, sehingga tak punya makna selain makna leksikalnya. Wantah (mentah) saja. Tugas seniman adalah mentautkan kata itu sehingga terbentuklah jalinan maknanya. Kata yang diteriakkan lantang itu adalah jalan setapak menuju kenyataan mengerikan yang tersembunyi dalam kerimbunan konteksnya. Dipermainkan dengan jejalin kata lain sebelum akhirnya, pada akhir pertunjukan, ditekuk dalam sebuah jalin kisah utuh. Cerita tentang seorang penyanyi tua, dipenjara dan tak bisa menyanyi lagi, hanya karena berada dalam sisi sejarah yang salah.

Cerita itu tersembunyi dalam sepenggal kata yang dibungkus, ditekuk, dan disembunyikan dalam gambar sederhana.

Membuat orang tak melulu mengingat cerita besarnya, tapi lebih dulu terpikat dengan gambar. Bagai laron dengan sinar lampu, terjebak dengan terangnya, lalu menanggalkan sayap kemudian hidup atau mati dengan kenyataan barunya.



ENGLISH

I began this project about eight years ago. The performance manuscript started at the UGM student center, involving sixty-five students who were reluctantly participating. It wasn't going well initially, but I saw the potential of using this method to address the issue of the 1965 genocide differently. No longer through seminars, workshops, or paintings that tend to be temporary and self-centered, but through involving many people. The reluctance that arises when discussing the 1965 genocide is due to the political consequences of broaching the subject. The fear of raids by mass organizations, police, or fake intelligence agents looms overhead. In practice, however, censorship often manifests through reluctance or fear that we impose upon ourselves.

In that student building, a student jokingly remarked, "If you give me your picture, I'll join." I quickly stopped the protest with a stern word, but that comment lingered in my mind on the way home. Seeing the potential of using images as a tool to engage people could ease their reluctance or fear to participate in this performance project—a temptation that's hard to resist.

After a thrilling performance at the Museum Macan in Jakarta, I realized that the issue wasn't about distributing images or not, but rather that most participants never knew that the 1965 genocide had occurred in Indonesia. An eye-opening fact showing that this project couldn't stop after one attempt because the issue was more substantial than anticipated. Moreover, during the performance, even though many participants were unaware of the issues behind it, they reflected on the 1965 genocide through their personal struggles—a personal reflection to capture their life's anxieties. An entertaining plot twist amid the stark reality that the genocide, which claimed millions of lives, is never truly remembered.

The first performance yielded numerous notes that enriched subsequent performances. Amid

all the busyness, I continuously received news about the passing of many survivors I knew, one by one. Some died from old age, others were struck by memory loss due to senility. There are dwindling sources that can detail the cruelty of imprisonment, torture, and social sanctions they endured throughout their lives. Soon, all these horrific events will become mere myths. Concealed, sealed in silence, and untold.

All these living facts reinforce the importance of this simple performance involving 65 people to speak through a single word hidden within an image. People can grasp the course of history without getting caught up in its major issues. Just by shouting one word, as long as it connects to the other 64 words, the Pandora's box of civilization opens.

Being responsible for one word is the key in the performance. A word released from its context, thus having no meaning other than its lexical one. Raw and unrefined. The artist's task is to weave these words together to form a network of meaning. The word shouted out loud is a path to the terrifying reality hidden within its dense context. Played with in a tangle of other words until, finally, at the end of the performance, it unfolds into a complete story. A tale about an old singer, imprisoned and unable to sing again, just for being on the wrong side of history.

This story is hidden within a word that's wrapped, bent, and concealed in a simple picture. It entices people not only to remember the bigger story but to first be captivated by the image. Like moths to a flame, trapped by its brightness, then shedding their wings and either living or dying with their new reality.

Agung Kurniawan
Sembungan Yogyakarta
2024



SRI SERIE - SEOUL WORK
watercolor on paper
24 cm x 8,5 cm per each
2024



SRI SERIE - SEOUL WORK

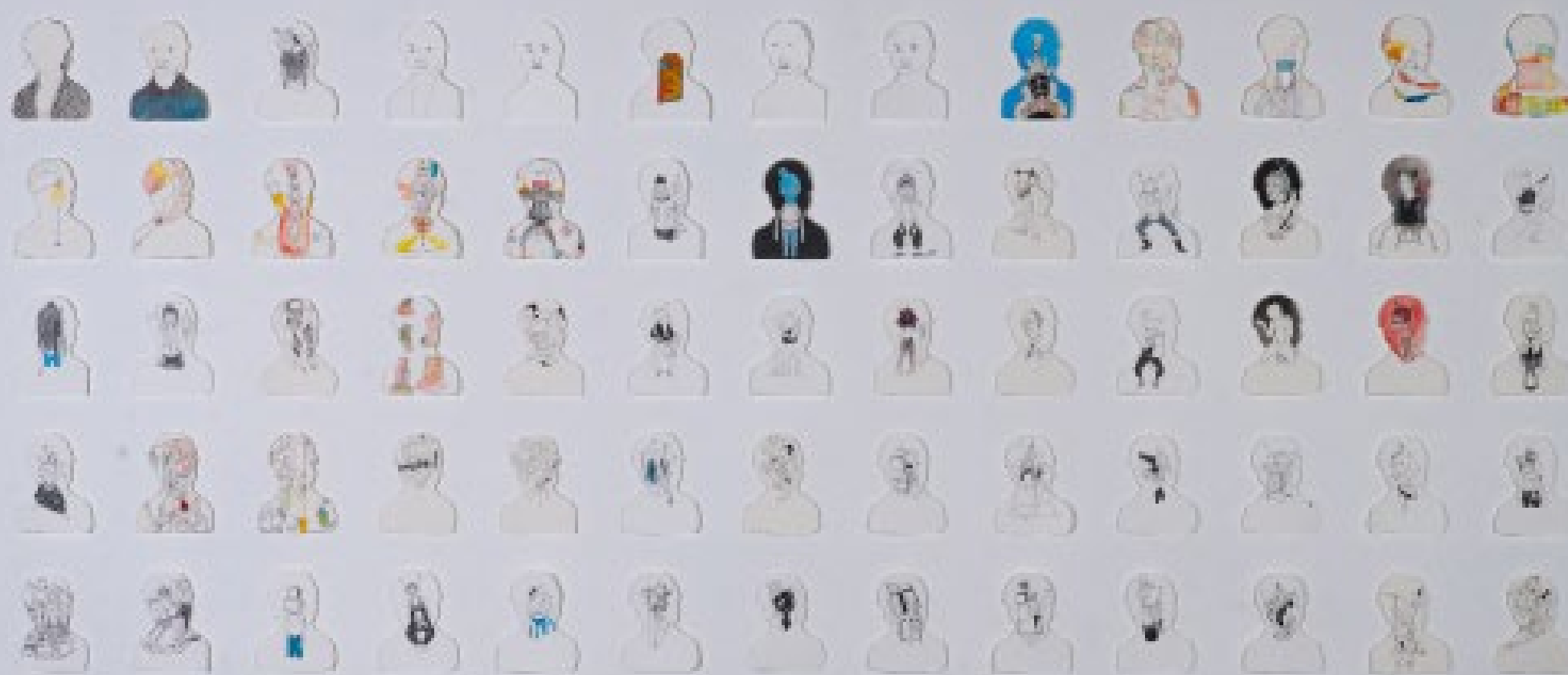
watercolor on paper
24 cm x 8,5 cm per each

2024



SRI SERIE - YOGYAKARTA WORK
watercolor on paper
24 cm x 8,5 cm per each

2023



SRI SERIE - YOGYAKARTA WORK
watercolor on paper
24 cm x 8,5 cm per each

2023



**from left to right*

SRI SERIE - SEOUL WORK

watercolor on paper
24 cm x 8,5 cm per each

2024

SRI SERIE - YOGYAKARTA WORK

watercolor on paper
24 cm x 8,5 cm per each

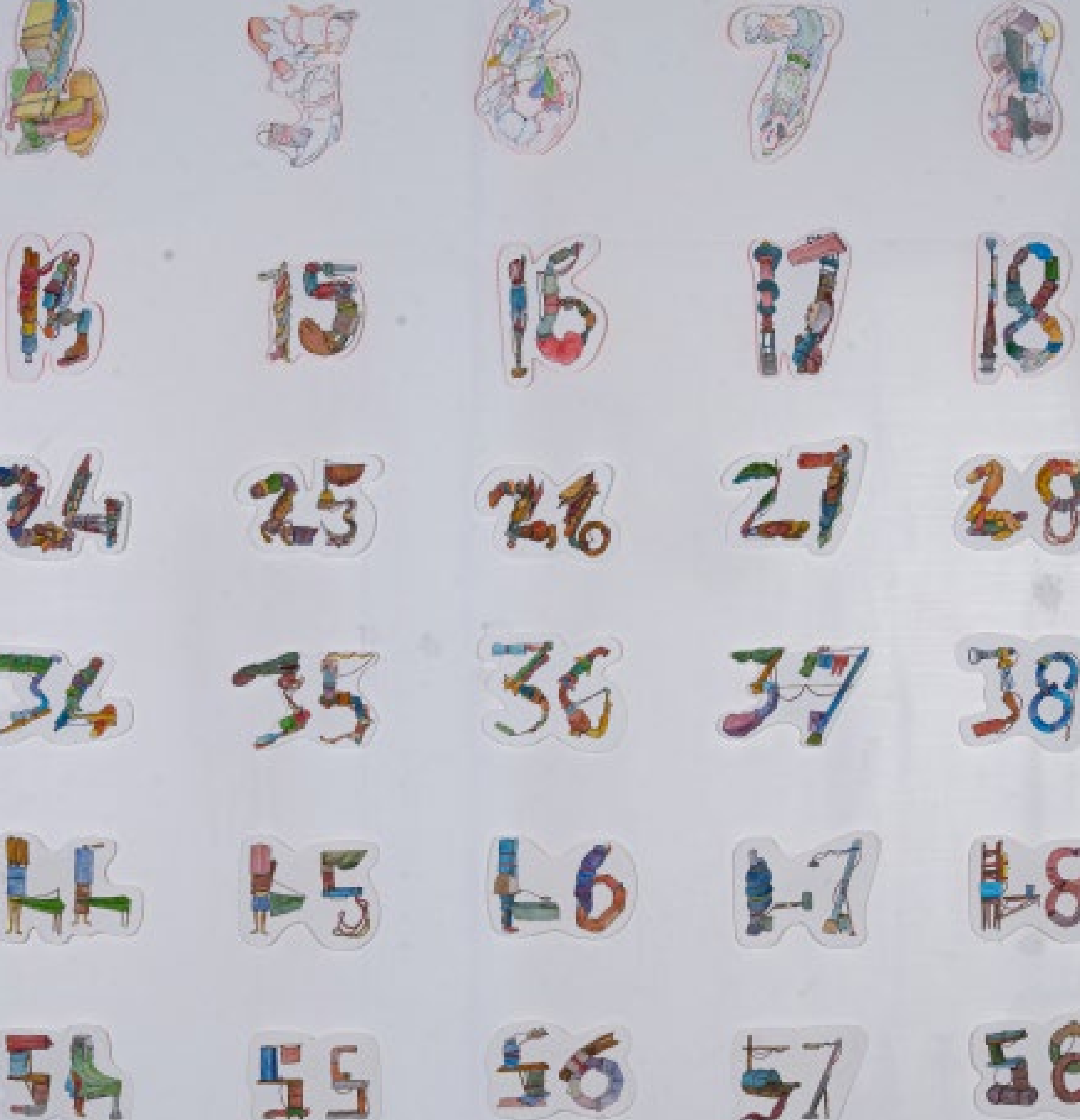
2023



SRI SERIE - SINGAPORE WORK

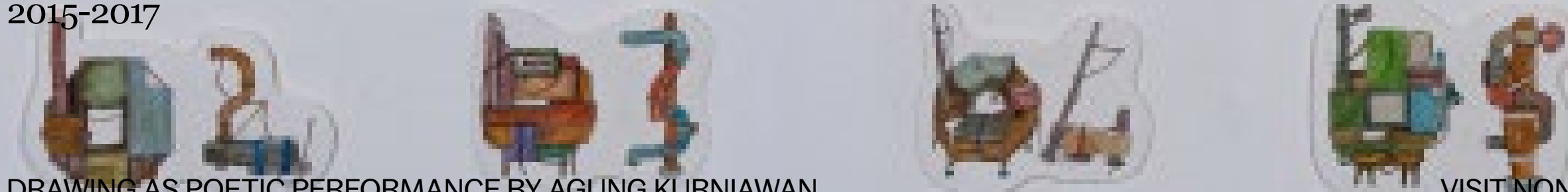
watercolor on paper
variable dimensions

2015-2017



SRI SERIE - SINGAPORE WORK
watercolor on paper
variable dimensions

2015-2017





SRI SERIE - BANDUNG WORK

watercolor on paper
24 cm x 8,5 cm per each

2024



SRI SERIE - BANDUNG WORK

watercolor on paper
24 cm x 8,5 cm per each

2024

Agung Kurniawan

Born 1968, Jember, Indonesia.
Lives and works in Yogyakarta, Indonesia.

Agung Kurniawan is a multidisciplinary artist working with drawings, installations, and in more recent years, performances, theater, and happening arts. He looks at the socio-political as well as historical aspects of trauma and tragedy situated in a place or a nation by unraveling the stories from first-hand sources and recounting them with his own imaginative narration. Kurniawan has been developing a new series of striking works on paper that interweave complex layers of history and narrative with fiction based off of his ongoing interest in the Indonesian reformation period of 1965.

Kurniawan studied Archeology at the University of Gadjah Mada, Yogyakarta, Indonesia in 1987 and later in the Fine Art Department with a concentration in printmaking at the Indonesian Art Institute, Yogyakarta, Indonesia in 1991. Kurniawan's artistic practice spans more than twenty years with numerous solo exhibitions held in Indonesia and abroad. His recent solo presentation was *The God of Small Things* at S.E.A. Focus with ROH, Singapore (2023); solo exhibitions include *Milik Nggendong Lali*, Richard Koh Fine Art, Singapore (2013); *Actus Contritionis*, Umahseni, Jakarta, Indonesia (2012); and *The Lines that Remind Me of You*, Kendra Gallery, Bali, Indonesia (2011). Group exhibitions include *Art Basel Hong Kong* with ROH, Hong Kong (2023); *Art Jakarta* with ROH, Jakarta, Indonesia (2022); *ArtJOG MMXXII: Expanding Awareness* at Jogja National Museum, Yogyakarta, Indonesia (2022); *ERRATA: Collecting Entanglements and Embodied History* at MAIIAM Contemporary art Museum, Chiang Mai, Thailand (2021); *Europalia Indonesia: Power and Other Things*, BOZAR, Brussels, Belgium (2017); *First Sight: August* at Museum MACAN, Jakarta, Indonesia (2017); *Jakarta Biennale 2015: Neither Back nor Forward: Acting in the Present* at Gudang Sarinah Ekosistem, Jakarta, Indonesia (2015); *Biennale Jogja XII: Equator #2* at Sarang Art Space, Yogyakarta, Indonesia (2013); *Sip! Indonesian Art Today* at ARNDT Berlin, Berlin, Germany and at ARNDT Singapore, Singapore (2013); *9th Gwangju Biennale: Roundtable*, Gwangju, South Korea (2012); and *Be(com)ing Dutch* at Van Abbemuseum, Eindhoven, Netherlands (2008).

Kurniawan's interwoven creative activism flourished into several collaborations with writers, poets, theater houses, musicians and more prominently the survivor groups of 1965. He has written and staged numerous plays, among them are *Gejolak Makam Keramat* performed at Koesnadi Hardjosoemantri Cultural Center, Yogyakarta, Indonesia (2017) and *Hanya Kematian yang Setia Menunggu* performed at Institut Français Indonesia, Yogyakarta, Indonesia (2015). His works are part of the public collection of Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam and Van Abbemuseum in the Netherlands; MAIIAM Contemporary Art Museum, Thailand; National Gallery Singapore and Singapore Art Museum, Singapore; and Queensland Art Gallery (QAGOMA), Brisbane, Queensland, Australia.

Agung Kurniawan

Curriculum Vitae

EDUCATION

- 1987 Archeology, Universitas Gadjah Mada, Yogyakarta, Indonesia
- 1991 Fine Art Department, Printmaking Studio, Institut Seni Indonesia, Yogyakarta, Indonesia

SELECTED SOLO EXHIBITIONS

- 2023 The God of Small Things. S.E.A. Focus, Tanjong Pagar Distripark, Singapore
- 2017 Gejolak Makam Keramat. Performance at Koesnadi Hardjosoemantri Cultural Center, Yogyakarta, Indonesia
- 2015 Hanya Kematian Yang Setia Menunggu. Performance at Indonesian French Institute, Yogyakarta, Indonesia
- 2013 Milik Nggendong Lali. Richard Koh Gallery, Singapore
- 2012 Actus Contritionis. Umahseni @Mentengartspace, Jakarta, Indonesia
- 2011 The Lines that Remind Me of You. Kendra Gallery, Bali, Indonesia

SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS

- 2024 Art Jakarta 2024. ROH, Jakarta International Expo, Jakarta, Indonesia
- 2023 murmur. ROH, Jakarta, Indonesia
Art Basel Hong Kong 2023: Galleries, ROH, Hong Kong
- 2022 Pameran Institut Seni Indonesia. Gallery R. J. Katamsi ISI, Yogyakarta, Indonesia
Art Jakarta 2022. ROH, Jakarta Convention Center, Jakarta, Indonesia
ArtJOG MMXXII: Expanding Awareness. Jogja National Museum, Yogyakarta, Indonesia
- 2021 ARTJOG MMXXI: Time (to) Wonder. Jogja National Museum, Yogyakarta, Indonesia
ERRATA: Collecting Entanglements and Embodied History. MAIIAM Contemporary art Museum, Chiang Mai, Thailand
Broken White Project #1. Ace House Collective, Yogyakarta, Indonesia
- 2020 ArtJOG 2020: Resilience. Jogja National Museum, Yogyakarta, Indonesia
- 2017 EUROPALIA INDONESIA: Power and Other Things. BOZAR, Brussels, Belgium
- 2016 The Observant Club's Fine (Art) Dining. LIR Space, Yogyakarta, Indonesia
- 2015 Jakarta Biennale 2015: Maju Kena Mundur Kena: Bertindak Sekarang. Gudang Sarinah Ekosistem, Jakarta, Indonesia
- 2014 Ten Million Rooms of Yearning. Sex in Hong Kong. Para Site, Hong Kong

Nonfrasa was founded in 2021 as a platform dedicated for discovering emerging artists and rediscovering leftfield work from artists in Bali, Indonesia.

As art is both reflective and personal in nature, getting a message across in those landscapes is truly difficult, if not nearly impossible at all. Nonfrasa is an attempt to provide a platform, a space, a discourse in which artists could offer their respective and differing perspectives in ways that stimulate dialogue rather than diatribe, that promote engagement rather than abandonment.

Nonfrasa is an inclusive space dedicated to thought-provoking young artists and to make sure that their voices are heard and listened to amid the cacophony of the domineering echo chambers.

nonfrasa.gallery



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