



JP/Carla Bianpoen

Coming soon: Curator Agung Hujatnikkajennong (*from left*), artistic director Farah Wardani and curator Sarah Rifky discuss the Jogja Biennale XII Equator #2 in Jakarta on Sunday.

EXHIBITION

A visionary curatorial path for Jogja Biennale XII

The Jogja Biennale XII Equator #2, which will be held from Nov. 16, 2013 to Jan. 6, 2014, takes the theme "Mobility", in which mobility, meeting and interaction will be key words to explore new artistic paths for the rereading and rethinking of the role that art plays in contemporary society and in the global context.

On Sunday, the biennale's artistic team concluded their biennale promotional roadshow at Dialogue and Umah Seni galleries in Jakarta. Led by artistic director Farah Wardani, curators Agung Hujatnikkajennong from Indonesia and Sarah Rifky from Egypt.

Working with artists from Egypt, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, the biennale's exhibition will be based on the meeting between artists and artists' groups in residencies held in Yogyakarta, while also duly considering dialogue in historical interaction and the significance of gender roles in the respective countries.

Shifting economic and political situations on the global map have been a major inspiration for art practitioners and thinkers to initiate alternative centers, away from the conventional mainstream centers for the arts. Jogja Biennale XII Equator2 is one such initiative.

Farah Wardani, an independent curator who is also the director of the Indonesian Art Archive in Yogyakarta, says: "we would like to talk about the conditions in our countries as an entry road to a platform for contemporary art in Indonesia and the Arab countries."

Agung Hujatnikkajennong, who holds a doctorate degree for curatorial practice in Indonesia from the Bandung Institute of Technology, reiterates his interest in curatorial practice in the respective countries, as he pursues exploring

the role of art in the contemporary community.

"I am hoping our curatorial frame will be able to open up opportunities for rethinking art and its position in contemporary society," said Agus, who is also the innovative curator for the Selasar Sunaryo art space in Bandung, besides being an international speaker on theoretical art issues.

Agung said that around 40 artists from Egypt, Saudi Arabia and the UAE will be in dialogue and working with artist and artists' groups in Indonesia, specifically in Yogya, although the number has not yet been fixed.

There is still a host of hurdles to face, including financial and logistic issues, but the team is optimistic.

Meanwhile, Farah Rifky, curator at the well-noted Townhouse Gallery of Contemporary Art in Cairo, said the biennale is interested in inter-artist communication, historical references, the gender dialogue and coming together in a new platform.

"It's exciting," said the director of CIRCA (Cairo International Resource Center for Art), a lecturer at the American University in Cairo,

The Jogja Biennale XII- Equator #2 is the second series organized by the Biennale Yogyakarta foundation, which launched the Equator series in 2011 with curators Alia Swastika (Indonesia) and Suman Gopinath (India) as the curators for the show with the overarching theme of "religiosity, spirituality and belief".

— CARLA BIANPOEN

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