



Fonds

Prince Claus Fund for
Culture and Development

FX Harsono

THE LIFE AND THE CHAOS OBJECTS, IMAGES AND WORDS

A selection from
the archive and objects
of the works of **FX Harsono**
after Prince Claus Award

Seleksi arsip dan obyek
karya FX Harsono
usai Penghargaan
Prince Claus

**Kehidupan
dan Khaos:
Benda, Citra
dan Kata-Kata**



Pengantar

KOLOFON/ COLOPHON:

Kehidupan dan Khaos: Benda, Citra dan Kata-Kata. Penghargaan Prince Claus untuk FX Harsono/ Life and Chaos: Objects, Images and Words. The Prince Claus Award for FX Harsono

Pameran Tunggal FX Harsono/ Solo Exhibition of FX Harsono
Erasmus Huis, Jakarta,
October 1 - 30, 2015

Kurator Pameran/
Exhibition Curator :
Hendro Wiyanto

Rancang Katalog dan Grafis Pameran/
Graphic Design for Catalog and Exhibition:
Cecil Mariani

Penerjemah Teks/ Text Translator:
Nicolette Moeliono

Foto-Foto/ Photographs by **Cemeti Art House, Dan Suwarjono/ Tempo, FX Harsono, Manit Sriwanichpoom/ Fukuoka Asian Art Museum, Sri Atmo.**

Foto sampul / Cover image:
Harsono sebagai Rahwana untuk performans Destruction, Alun-Alun Selatan, Yogyakarta (1997).
Harsono as Demon-King Ravana in his performance, Destruction, Southern square of The Keraton, Yogyakarta (1997)

Erasmus Huis dan Kedutaan Besar Kerajaan Belanda senantiasa mencari seniman yang menonjol dengan ciri khas tersendiri serta pesan budaya yang penuh arti. Untuk itu kami menghubungkan seniman Indonesia dengan rekan-rekan di Belanda, memfasilitasi pertukaran pengetahuan, memperkuat hubungan dengan seniman terkenal di Indonesia dan menawarkan sebuah platform bagi mereka yang berbakat agar mereka bisa menyajikan kreasi mereka. Selain itu, Erasmus Huis terlibat dalam sejumlah dana dan lembaga budaya Belanda yang menstimulir dan menganugerahkan para seniman dengan penghargaan mereka.

Salah satu seniman paling terkenal dari Indonesia yang diberikan penghargaan istimewa dari Belanda, Prince Claus Award, adalah FX Harsono. Pada tahun 2014, ia menerima nominasi untuk keberhasilannya yang luar biasa dan inspiratif di bidang budaya dan pembangunan.

Prinsip Prince Claus Award adalah bahwa budaya merupakan kebutuhan

dasar bagi masyarakat. Penghargaan ini menyoroti kesuksesan yang signifikan di bidang di mana terdapat keterbatasan dalam sumber daya dan peluang berekspresi, produksi kreatif dan penelitian dan di mana warisan budaya terancam. Berdasarkan prinsip tersebut, maka tidak heran bahwa FX Harsono dianugerahi penghargaan tersebut pada tahun 2014.

FX Harsono mempunyai peran penting dalam dunia seni kontemporer di Indonesia selama lebih dari 40 tahun. Karya instalasi dan pertunjukan FX Harsono yang kritis merupakan ekspresi terhadap perselisihan pendapat pro-demokrasi tentang pengalaman kelompok etnis minoritas (Tionghoa). Karyanya sering diilhami oleh sikap penindasan dan perasaan yang 'berbeda' yang ia alami di negaranya.

Karyanya mengupas pengalaman menjadi 'orang lain'; rasa sakit karena harus menyamakan diri sendiri dan terisolasi dari masyarakat. Karya inovatif, ceramah, tulisan dan kontibusinya dalam debat tentang isu-isu seni dan sosial, bersifat

inspirasi dan menjadi tantangan bagi generasi seniman berikutnya.

Tetapi ada yang lebih dari itu: ia mewakili sekelompok orang yang tidak ciut membungkam. Dengan "keberanian sipil"-nya, Harsono memberikan suara dari apa yang dipikirkan dan dipercayai oleh banyak orang. Lewat karyanya, ia menyembuhkan luka masa lalu Indonesia. Terutama untuk menarik perhatian terhadap pengalaman kelompok etnis minoritas serta memberikan kritik tajam terhadap sikap diskriminasi dan sifat eksklusif sejarah dan identitas 'nasional', Harsono adalah seorang seniman yang menyentuh jiwa saya.

Saya ingin berterima kasih kepada semua pihak yang membuat pameran ini bisa diwujudkan sehingga kita bisa menikmati arti dari karyanya. Tentu saja saya menyampaikan terima kasih secara khusus kepada FX Harsono yang memperkaya kehidupan kita.

Michael Rauner

Director of the Erasmus Huis.

Introduction

4

The Erasmus Huis and the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands are always looking for outstanding artists with their own signature and meaningful cultural message. For that purpose we connect Indonesian artists with Dutch colleagues, facilitate exchange of knowledge, strengthen the relationship with famous Indonesian artists and offer talented people a platform to present their own creations. In addition to this the Erasmus Huis is involved in several Dutch cultural funds and institutions that stimulate and honour artists with their awards.

One of the most famous artists from Indonesia that is honoured with such a special Dutch award, the Prince Claus Award, is FX Harsono. He got his nomination in 2014 for his outstanding and inspiring achievements in the field of culture and development.

The guiding principle of the Prince Claus Award is that culture is a basic need of society. The award highlights significant achievements

in areas where resources and opportunities for cultural expression, creative production and research are limited and cultural heritage is threatened. According to that principle it is not such a surprise that FX Harsono was awarded in 2014.

FX Harsono has played a crucial role in Indonesia's contemporary art scene for more than forty years. His critical installation and performance works are an expression of pro-democracy dissent of the experiences of (Chinese) ethnic minorities. His works are often inspired by the repression and feelings of 'otherness' he has encountered in his country.

His work explores the experience of being 'the other'; the pain of having to camouflage one's true self and being excluded from society. His innovative work, lectures, writings and contributions to debate on art and social issues, are inspiring and challenge the next generation of artists.

But there is more: he represents a group of people which does not reduce themselves to silence. With his “civil courage” he gives voice to what many people think and believe. Through his work he heals the wounds of Indonesia’s past. Especially for drawing attention to the experience of ethnic minorities and incisively critiquing discrimination and the exclusionary nature of ‘national’ history and identity he is an artist that touches my soul.

I want to thank everybody who made this exhibition possible and thereby to allow us to let us experience the meaning of his work. My special thanks naturally goes to FX Harsono himself for enriching our lives.

Michael Rauner

Director of the Erasmus Huis.



6



TOP: **REPUBLIK INDOCHAOS (5 BUAH) REPUBLIC INDOCHAOS (5 PIECES) 1999**

BOTTOM: **Seorang anak korban keracunan Merkuri di Teluk Jakarta, Jakarta/ A child-victim who suffered Mercury poisoning in the Bay of Jakarta, Jakarta, 1984**

Penghargaan bagi “yang Sosial”



Dalam waktu yang hampir bersamaan, FX Harsono memperoleh dua penghargaan bergengsi untuk karya-karyanya. Yang pertama adalah penghargaan *Prince Claus* (2014) dari Belanda yang diserahkan pada awal Desember tahun lalu; yang kedua, *Josep Balestier Award for the Freedom of Art* (2015) diberikan di Singapura, pertengahan Januari tahun ini.

Harsono adalah seniman yang konsisten berkarya sejak pertengahan tahun 1970-an sampai sekarang ini. Dulu, dia anak muda yang di tahun '70an luntang-lantung di Jakarta dengan tubuh ceking 43 kilo, baju putih kusut dan kedodoran, tidur beralas koran bersama pelukis Nashar di Balai Budaya. Di atas lantai yang dingin, mimpinya setiap malam adalah tentang seni rupa. Lalu, sahabatnya, seorang wartawan dan kritikus seni rupa bernama Bambang Bujono bersedia menampungnya beberapa bulan di rumahnya. Di masa itu, tak jarang pula ia kepergok razia rambut gondrong, ketika pemerintah Orde Baru dengan yakin menganggap bahwa masalah terpenting anak muda Indonesia berkaitan dengan kultur *hippies*, rambut gondrong dan celana ketat. Tapi Harsono jelas tak pernah *onverschillig* — bersikap acuh tak acuh—hanya karena berambut gondrong, terlebih untuk cita-cita seni rupanya. 7

Keterlibatan dengan Gerakan Seni Rupa Baru (GSRB; 1975-1979), adalah awal pencarian yang sesungguhnya mengenai “yang sosial” di dalam karya-karyanya. Paradigma “yang sosial” itu bagi Harsono adalah kenyataan sehari-hari yang tampak di dalam masyarakat sendiri, kelindan antara berbagai peristiwa yang tak bisa dilepaskan dari tata-kelola pemerintahan dan politik atau rezim kekuasaan.

8

Tak heran kalau ia mengatakan bahwa ide-ide mengenai “yang sosial” itu bisa ditemukan atau tampil di mana saja, “di jalanan, bengkel, bioskop sampai di tempat tidur”. Tampaknya Harsono mau mengatakan secara lebih sederhana bahwa “yang sosial” tak lain adalah representasi dari kehidupan bersama kita, apa pun bentuknya dan bagaimana “yang sosial” itu selalu mengalami atau sebagai produk dari sebuah represi.

Pada pencarian akan “yang sosial” itulah agaknya Harsono berupaya mencari bahasa yang tepat untuk karyanya. Dia tidak tertarik pada pembaruan (seni) semata demi pembaruan. Baginya, pembaruan semacam itu justru absen untuk menyelesaikan problem-problem untuk “yang sosial”. Dia hanya tertarik pada rasionalitas “yang sosial” di dalam karya seni, ketika

seni baginya bisa menjadi semacam alternatif pandangan atau pencerahan bagi kebuntuan di dalam “yang sosial”. Misalnya, akibat dominasi kekuasaan pada “yang sosial” yang menyebabkan ketakutan, penderitaan, kemiskinan dan ketidakadilan. Hanya dengan menemukan sebuah horizon masalah melalui “yang sosial”, maka Harsono yakin bahwa seni rupa dapat menemukan jalan baru, dan tidak sekadar mengutak-atik soal kemandegan perkembangan di dalam seni itu sendiri. Dengan begitu, “kegelisahan umum” dalam seni rupa menemukan kesahihannya melalui “yang sosial” dan sebaliknya “yang sosial” memperoleh kekhasan bentuk serta makna estetikanya melalui karya seni yang diperbarui. (Harsono dalam Jim Supangkat:1979)

Apakah ini berarti bahwa horizon estetika seniman hanya merupakan sub-ordinasi atau tunduk pada realitas “yang sosial”? Harsono biasanya akan mengatakan bahwa bagaimanapun sosialnya seni, seni “hanyalah” wacana kebudayaan, dan sebagai wacana kebudayaan, ia setara dengan wacana-wacana sosial yang lain —termasuk politik— dan karena itu tidak perlu tunduk kepada wacana yang lain. Yang dikritik Harsono, selalu, adalah individualisme seniman yang ditempatkan dengan sadar

di atas segala-galanya. Pada saat itu, individualitas dianggap sebagai satu-satunya alasan bagi seniman untuk mengungkapkan pokok apa saja. Itulah kiranya, jenis seni yang selalu dikritik oleh Harsono: melihat dunia hanya melalui “mata-kepala” sang seniman sendiri, yang mau membebaskan diri dari “ikatan-ikatan sosial dan tradisi” (Harsono, Gendut Riyanto dan Wienardi:1985).

Maka, bagi Harsono kemajemukan pada karyanya tak lain merupakan upaya seorang seniman untuk menciptakan opini tandingan seraya menunjukkan keberpihakan pada masyarakat marginal yang suaranya terbungkam, khususnya selama kekuasaan rezim Orde Baru (1966-1998). Pernah Harsono mengumpamakan, bahwa posisi karya-karya semacam itu tak ubahnya seperti “berita radio, gambar televisi, artikel koran” yang tugasnya adalah menyodok perhatian dan kesadaran kita akan suatu masalah. Tapi, tentu saja kita juga membayangkan karya seni tidaklah seinstan itu, karena ada mediasi karya melalui simbol, metafora dan medium yang dipilih dan dikerjakan lagi oleh seniman.

Tapi yang sesungguhnya mau disodorkan oleh Harsono (dan beberapa rekannya), bahwa karya seni semacam itu “menghadirkan

masalah yang berkembang di masyarakat secara proporsional” atau tidak berlebih-lebihan mengeksploitasi individualitas para seniman. Pada masa itu, memang tak mungkin kiranya menggambarkan sosok Harsono dan karyanya tanpa sekaligus membayangkan juga kondisi dan patologi sosial — kondisi yang dianggap tak normal, akibat modernitas — yang diamatinya: pembangunan minus pemerataan, keterasingan individu, pelanggaran hak asasi manusia, kerusakan lingkungan karena industrialisasi, dan seterusnya.

Pandangan kekaryaannya Harsono bergeser setelah terjadinya gonjang-ganjing suasana politik di Indonesia, 1998. Orde Baru, kekuasaan utama yang membentuk “yang sosial” selama ini, jatuh. Selama beberapa tahun ia mengalami semacam masa transisi setelah masa reformasi itu. Ia melihat kekuasaan adalah sesuatu yang tidak terpusat pada sebuah rezim (rezim modernitas, seni maupun politik), tapi juga tersebar dan beroperasi ke berbagai institusi, praktik sosial maupun relasi kewargaan di dalam keseharian itu sendiri. Pendeknya, kekuasaan ada di mana-mana di dalam realitas masyarakat. Inilah transisi mengenai “yang sosial”

yang dialami oleh Harsono, yang bahkan dirasakannya lebih kurang sebagai proses deligitimasi terhadap asas dan kode-kode penciptaannya sendiri. Deligitimasi atau keraguan terhadap kesahihan kode-kode estetik (atau: “anti estetik”) yang selama ini dikerjakannya mendorongnya untuk berpaling dan “mencoba untuk melihat kembali diri saya” (Harsono: 2003). Apakah ini berarti ia berpaling sepenuhnya dari “yang sosial”?

10

Harsono boleh dibilang merevisi atau mau membaca ulang upayanya meng-“esensial”-kan “yang sosial” pada karyanya selama ini, terutama melalui dikotomi mengenai masyarakat itu sendiri (publik dan privat, individu dan masyarakat, negara dan warga, pemerintah dan rakyat). Di dalam “yang sosial” itu niscaya ada relasi-relasi horisontal yang jauh lebih rumit, kontestasi terjadi di mana-mana, dan masyarakat pun bahkan saling cakar-cakaran dan gontok-gontokkan satu dengan yang lain, seakan-akan mengingatkan kita akan kondisi purbanya sendiri, “state of nature”. Ternyata, “yang sosial” itu bisa juga menindas individu-individu atau orang-orang biasa, yang selama ini ada dalam tangkapan radar pembelaan seni ala Harsono.

Pada kerusuhan Mei 1998, selama beberapa hari Harsono dihantui ketakutan akan kegarangan “yang

sosial” itu. Isu kerusuhan rasial yang ganas merebak sekitar kerusuhan Mei 1998, membuat dia menyadari kembali ke-Cinaannya untuk kesekian kalinya di sebuah republik yang dicintainya, dengan semua traumanya. Dia bahkan tak berani keluar dari pagar rumahnya sendiri di Jakarta Selatan. Baru setelah dia menerima kabar dari Blitar, bahwa ibunya berpulang, dia membesarkan nyali untuk keluar rumah, menerobos ketakutan di dalam dirinya sendiri dan belantara kemisteriusan “yang sosial”. “Gerakan” tahun 70-an yang diinisiasinya bersama para pemberontak seni sekali lagi mesti mengakui “kebesaran” dan keniscayaan akan “yang sosial”, yang kali ini bahkan memangsa senimannya sendiri.

Harsono menyadari semacam kesalahempatan yang selama ini terjadi antara dia sebagai seniman di satu sisi dan dia yang tetap adalah individu dengan identitas tertentu. Ya, kesalahempatan di tengah belantara yang “sosial” itu mendorongnya untuk menemukan lapisan-lapisan narasi yang selama ini justru dengan sengaja atau tidak ditindas olehnya sendiri. Seni yang nyaris mengesensialkan mengenai “yang sosial” dan wacana tentang “yang sosial” itu sendiri kini berhadapan dengan sosok Harsono sendiri, dengan penciptanya sendiri.

Celah peluang itu memang terbuka setelah 1998, ketika aturan-aturan dan larangan tentang ekspresi ke-Cina-an mengendur, partai politik “pribumi” bisa merayakan pesta ulang tahun dengan kemeriahan barongsai, ketika media massa berbahasa Cina boleh terbit dan dibaca lagi, ketika sekolah-sekolah “nasional plus” mewajibkan bahasa Mandarin dan kursus bahasa itu dibuka di mana-mana, dan ketika Gus Dur dengan sangat tenang meresmikan Hari Raya Imlek sebagai hari besar nasional dan seterusnya, dan seterusnya.

Sekali ini, apakah ini berarti Harsono sedang menunjukkan sikap “anti” terhadap “yang sosial”? Apakah Harsono sedang memalingkan muka sepenuhnya dari wacana yang telah membesarkannya? Bagi Harsono rupanya tidaklah mungkin juga menemukan yang individual atau yang personal tanpa melacak apa yang sosial atau menemukan gagasan-gagasan sosial yang bermakna di dalam narasi-narasi seorang individu. Ia bahkan “janin” yang selamat dalam kisruh atau huru-hara sosial pada 1940-an ketika terjadi penjarahan dan pembunuhan orang-orang Tionghoa di Blitar dan sekitarnya, berlatar peristiwa upaya pendudukan kembali Belanda di Indonesia, dikenal sebagai “aksi polisionil” (1946-1949). Pada akhir

1950-an, bapaknya memutuskan untuk memboyong “pulang” seluruh keluarganya, berlayar menuju Cina daratan. Tapi entah kenapa, takdir “yang sosial” justru menunjukkan jalan yang sebaliknya: bertahun-tahun kemudian “takdir” itu bahkan mengantarnya ke kantor pengadilan setempat untuk mengesahkan nama barunya dan melupakan nama “asli” Tionghoanya. Sejak itu, ia tidak lagi sebagai Oh Hong Boen, tetapi lahir sebagai warga Indonesia bernama FX Harsono. Pada tahun 70-an, dengan sepenuh kesadaran ia memutuskan untuk menjadi seniman, keluar dari bayang-bayang *ghetto* kesempitan sosial melalui “kartu pas” seninya. Tapi rupanya, seni rupa itu pula yang kemudian mendorongnya untuk melihat kembali kekuasaan dari “yang sosial”, sejenis kekuasaan yang selama berabad-abad telah menciptakan kampung-kampung identitas dan wacana mengenai kepribumian di mana-mana. Sejak tahun 2000-an, makin benderang narasi mengenai identitas individu itu disusun ulang oleh Harsono yang di sana-sini berbaur dengan narasi biografisnya sendiri di masa lalu, pada suatu waktu. Narasi semacam itu rupanya juga dimungkinkan di dalam horison mengenai “yang sosial” mengenai apa yang disebut sebagai “identitas kolektif”. Tulis Appiah, “Gagasan mengenai identitas kolektif

yang longgar akan menyediakan sejumlah norma atau model-model yang longgar pula. Gagasan ini memainkan peran dalam membentuk rancangan kehidupan mereka yang menjadikan identitas kolektif bersifat sentral bagi identitas individual. Identitas itu menyediakan apa yang kita sebut sebagai *scripts* (naskah), narasi-narasi yang dapat digunakan orang untuk membentuk rancangan hidup mereka dan mengisahkan cerita hidup mereka sendiri.” (K. Anthony Appiah, dalam Charles Taylor: 1994).

12 Tapi, apa sebenarnya gagasan mengenai “identitas kolektif” dalam karya Harsono sekarang? Para korban dengan identitas etnis tertentu? Kritik terhadap narasi sejarah yang membungkam kaum marginal yang dikambing-hitamkan selalu? Kenasionalan baru? Suara para *liyan*? Seberapa longgar gagasan mengenai identitas kolektif itu bagi Harsono, atau seberapa sempit pandangannya perihal “identitas individu” berikut semua citra dan norma yang melekat padanya? Pertanyaan itu sungguh terbuka tentunya bagi Harsono untuk selalu menguji kembali gagasan mengenai antara “yang seni” dan “yang sosial” setelah kesadaran akan kesalahempatan dan kemungkinan mangsa-memangsa antara keduanya.

Pameran ini menampilkan matra dari “yang sosial” yang selama ini dicari, ditemukan dan di(re) presentasikan oleh Harsono di dalam dan melalui karya-karyanya. Matra itu terkait dengan apa yang secara luas biasa kita sebut sebagai arsip, yang menciptakan anggapan mengenai sebuah “sistem yang menentukan wujud berbagai pernyataan”, yang memberi kita pemahaman atau hubungan-hubungan di dalam wacana (Foucault; Hal Foster: 1989; 2002). Pada pameran ini kita bersua dengan benda-benda temuan, koleksi pernyataan, foto-foto dan citra karya, dokumen berupa katalog, buku rujukan dan catatan tentang perkembangan dan latar peristiwa sosial untuk karya Harsono sejak tahun 1975 sampai belakangan ini. Arsip-arsip inilah yang selama ini membentuk berbagai hubungan kreatif sekaligus penilaian kritis terhadap perkembangan kekaryaannya Harsono.

Harsono memilih simbol-simbol umum seperti senapan mesin, bedil, pistol kerupuk, boneka, rantai baja, keris, gergaji mesin sampai jarum untuk menunjukkan keganasan, banalitas kekuasaan dan khaos dalam kehidupan “yang sosial”. Ia juga memilih barang-barang seperti topeng, daun pintu, kursi,

reranting kering, tali tambang yang sehari-hari sangat kita kenal.

Barang-barang itu telah merangsang Harsono untuk mengungkapkan narasi-narasi mengenai kemunafikan, pemasangan, ketidakbebasan dan para kawula atau rakyat kecil sebagai korban. Bagi Harsono, sifat umum barang menjadi tanda kesetaraan dalam komunikasi antara karya kreatif dan publiknya, dan yang tetap bisa menantang untuk membangkitkan asosiasi dan makna baru. Dalam sepuluh tahun terakhir ini, citra sosoknya atau potret-potret dirinya menghambur bersama sifat umum barang-barang dan penanda.

“Teori” seni Harsono tak lain adalah konfigurasinya melalui benda-benda temuan, sedangkan idiom repetitif yang menjadi ciri artistik utama karyanya baginya merupakan persistensi dari problem-problem dari “yang sosial”. Rangkaian testimoni verbal Harsono dengan gamblang dapat menunjukkan relasi yang niscaya antara seninya dan wacana sosial yang dominan pada suatu masa tertentu. Ketika barang sehari-hari diangkat ke dalam ranah seni, mereka melompat dari takdir sebagai yang fungsional menjadi simbol dan idiom seni yang mengandung pesan-pesan kritis tertentu.

Di dalam “sistem” yang kita sebut arsip, barang-barang, dokumentasi citra, dan himpunan testimoni itu dapat membekali kita mengenai wacana seni tertentu yang dibangun oleh seniman melalui karyanya.

Kehidupan yang dipenuhi oleh barang-barang, citra dan kata-kata tak jarang menunjukkan khaos atau kekacauan hubungan. Tapi kita melihat dengan benderang, khaos pada karya Harsono adalah kehidupan yang selalu menantang seniman, di dalam semesta “yang sosial” yang dipahami olehnya selama ini.

Jakarta, 8 Februari 2015

Hendro Wiyanto

PAMERAN GERAKAN
SENI RUPA BARU
EXHIBITION OF NEW ART
MOVEMENT, JAKARTA 1975





Award for 'the Social'

At almost the same time, FX Harsono received two prestigious awards for his work. The first was the Prince Claus Award (2014) from the Netherlands in early December last year; the second was the Joseph Balestier Award for the Freedom of Art (2015) conferred in Singapore, mid-January of this year.

- 16 Harsono is an artist whose has worked consistently since the mid-1970s up to the present. Once, in the 70's he was a young man, wandering alone in Jakarta, a skinny 43 kilos dressed in crumpled baggy white clothes, at night bedding down on old newspapers, together with the painter Nashar, on the floor of the Balai Budaya (Cultural Centre). On the cold floor, his dreams every night were about art. Then, a friend, a journalist and art critic named Bambang Bujono took him home for a few months. In those days, not infrequently he also got caught in police raids because of his long hair; this was the time when the New Order government assumed that the most important problem of the Indonesian youth had to do with the hippie youth culture, long hair and tight pants. But Harsono was never apathetic- even with long hair, especially where art was concerned.

His engagement with New Art Movement (GSRB; 1975-1979), was the real beginning of a search for 'the social (element)' in his works. The paradigm of 'the social' for Harsono is the daily reality that is visible in the community itself, it is the connecting thread between the various events that can not be separated from governance, politics or a regime. No wonder then, he said, that the ideas of 'the social' can be found or will appear anywhere, 'in the streets, in workshops, the cinema or in bed'. Harsono wants to say simply that 'the social' is nothing but a representation of our common life, whatever form that takes and that 'the social' is always repressed or is the product of a repression.

It is In search of 'the social' Harsono seems trying to find the right language for his work. He is not interested in renewal (of art) solely for the sake of renewal. For him, such renewal is actually absent in resolving the problems for 'the social'. He is only interested in 'the social' rationality in the works of art, when art for him could become a kind of alternative view or enlightenment for the deadlock in 'the social'. For example, due to the dominance of power in 'the social' which causes fear, misery, poverty and injustice. Only by finding a horizon for the problem through 'the social', Harsono

believes that art can find a new way, and not just tamper with the stagnant development of art itself. This being so, the 'general anxiety' in the arts finds its validity through 'the social' and on the other hand 'the social' acquires distinctiveness of aesthetic form and meaning through the renewed artwork. (Harsono in Jim Supangkat: 1979)

Does this mean that the artist's aesthetic horizon is subordinated or subject to the reality of 'the social'? Harsono usually will say that however social the art is, art is 'merely' a cultural discourse, and as a cultural discourse, it is equal to other social discourses - including the political - and therefore does not need to submit to another discourse. What Harsono always criticizes is the individualism of the artist consciously placed above everything else. At that time, individuality was regarded as the sole reason for the artist to express himself on any subject. That presumably is the type of art that Harsono always criticized: seeing the world only through the 'eyes' of the artists themselves, who want to free themselves from the 'social ties and traditions' (Harsono, Gendut Riyanto and Wienardi: 1985).

Thus, for Harsono diversity in his work is nothing but an attempt of an artist to create a counter

opinion as partisan for marginal communities whose voices were silenced, especially during the New Order (1966-1998). Once Harsono compared the position of such works to 'news on the radio, television or newspaper articles' whose purpose it is to arrest our attention and raise awareness of an issue. But, of course, we also see that a work of art is not as direct as that, because there is the mediation of the work through symbols, metaphors and media which are selected and reworked by the artist. But what Harsono (and some colleagues) actually want to say is that such artwork 'proportionally presents a problem that developed in a society ' or does not exploit the individuality of the artist excessively. At that time, it would probably be impossible to see Harsono and his work without simultaneously visualizing also the conditions and social pathologies - conditions that are considered abnormal, a result of modernity - which he observed: development without equity, alienation of individuals, human rights abuses, environmental damage due to industrialization, and so on.

Harsono's views about his work altered after the shift in the political atmosphere in Indonesia post-1998. The New Order, the major power that had been the source of his 'social' element, had fallen. For

several years after the start of the political reform he went through a kind of transition period. He saw that power is not something that is centered in a regime (of modernity, art or politics), but is also scattered and operates daily through various institutions, social practices and relations between citizens. In short, power is everywhere, spread through the whole of society. This was the transition of 'the social' as experienced by Harsono, who felt it more or less as a delegitimation process of the principles and codes of his own creating. This delegitimation or doubts about the validity of aesthetic (or: 'anti-aesthetic') codes he had followed up to then impelled him to turn around and 'try to look back at myself' (Harsono: 2003). Does this mean he turned away entirely from 'the social'?

It can be said that Harsono revised or wanted to reread its efforts to 'essentialize' - the social elements of his work done over the years, mainly through the dichotomy of the society itself (public and private, individual and society, the state and the citizens, the government and the people). Within 'the social' there undoubtedly are complicated horizontal relationships, contestation occurs everywhere, and the people quarrel and bicker with one another,

as if to remind us of the condition of their ancestral 'state of nature'. Apparently, 'the social' could also repress individuals or ordinary people, who now are within the range of art defence radar of Harsono.

During the May 1998 riots, for days Harsono was haunted by fear because of the 'the social' ferocity. Rumors about vicious race riots as part of the May 1998 rioting, made him conscious of his Chineseness - for the umpteenth time in his beloved republic - with all the trauma. He did not even dare to step outside his yard in South Jakarta. Only after he received word from Blitar, that his mother had passed away, did he find the courage to leave the house, and break through the fear and wilderness mystery 'that social'. The 'Movement' 70s which he initiated together with the art rebels once again had to recognize the 'greatness' and the necessity of 'the social', which this time even preyed on the artist himself.

Harsono was conscious of a sort of mismatch that had occurred between himself as an artist on the one hand, and himself as an individual with a particular identity. Yes, a wrong placement in the middle of the 'social' wilderness which impelled him to look for the layers of narrative which had been suppressed, deliberate

or not, by himself. Art that almost made 'the social' and the discourse about 'the social' essential is now face to face with this individual Harsono, the creator himself.

This crack of opportunity was indeed opened after 1998, when the rules and restrictions on the expression of Chineseness were relaxed, 'indigenous' political parties could celebrate their birthday with a festive lion dance, when Chinese-language mass media could be published and be read again, when 'national plus' schools made the teaching of Mandarin compulsory and language courses were opened everywhere, and Gus Dur calmly made Imlek, the Chinese Lunar New Year, an official national holiday and so on, and so on.

For this once, did this mean Harsono was against 'the social'? Did Harsono turn away entirely from the discourse in which he had been raised? For Harsono apparently it was not possible to find the individual or personal without looking for the social elements or finding ideas socially meaningful in individual narratives. He was a yet unborn baby when he survived the tumultuous social riot in the 1940s when there was looting and murder of Chinese people in Blitar and surrounding areas, connected to the efforts of the Dutch to reoccupy

Indonesia, known as the 'police action' (1946- 1949). In the late 1950s, his father decided to take his family 'home' and they, sailed away towards the Chinese mainland. But somehow, fate took a turn towards the opposite direction, many years later this led into the office of the local district court to legalize a new name and forget the original Chinese name. Since then, he is no longer Hong Boen Oh, but was born again as an Indonesian named FX Harsono. In the 70s, he made a deliberate choice to become an artist, to step out from the shadows of the narrow social ghettos with art as a passport. But apparently, it was also art which later prompted him to look back on the power of 'the social', a kind of power that for centuries created identity villages and widespread discourse on ethnic identity.

Since the 2000s, the narrative about individual identity was more clearly rearranged by Harsono, mingled here and there with his own biographical narrative of the past, at a certain time. Such narratives are apparently also possible within the horizon of 'the social' about what is referred to as 'collective identity'. Appiah writes: 'The idea of a loose collective identity will provide a number of, also loose, norms or models. This idea plays a role in shaping the design of

their lives which makes the collective identity central to the individual identity. This identity provides what we call scripts for narratives that people can use to shape the design of their lives and tell the stories of their own lives' (K. Anthony Appiah, in Charles Taylor: 1994).

But, what exactly is the idea of 'collective identity' in the works Harsono now? the victims of a specific ethnicity? Criticism of the historical narrative which always silences the marginal group which is made the scapegoat? The new nationalism? The voice of the other? How loose is the idea of the collective identity for Harsono, or how narrow is his view about 'individual identity' with all the images and norms attached to it? The question is of course really open for Harsono: to constantly reexamine the notion of 'the art' and 'the social' after the awareness of its wrong placement and the possibility of those two preying on one-another.

This exhibition displays the dimension of 'the social' that has been sought, found and in (re)presented by Harsono in and through his works. Those dimensions are related to what we commonly refer to as an archive, which creates a presumption of a 'system that determines the

form of the various statements', which gives us understanding or relations in discourse (Foucault; Hal Foster: 1989; 2002). In this exhibition we meet found objects, a collection of statements, pictures and images of works, documents such as catalogs, reference books and records of the development of social events and background to Harsono's work since 1975 until recently. Those archives form the different creative relationships and also the critical appraisal of the development of Harsono's work.

Harsono chooses common symbols such as machine guns, rifles, pistols crackers, dolls, a steel chain, a dagger, a chainsaw up to and including a needle to indicate cruelty, the banality of power and chaos in the life of 'the social'. He also uses such things as masks, doors, seats, dry branches, rope, everyday items we all know. Those goods that have inspired Harsono to reveal narratives about hypocrisy, deprivation, lack of freedom and the subjects or the common people as victims. For Harsono, the general nature of those items becomes a sign of equality in the communication between the creative work and its public, which can still be challenging in generating new associations and meanings. In the last ten years, the images or portraits


of himself are scattered among his commonplace items and markers.

Harsono's art 'theory' is nothing but the configurations made through found objects, while the repetitive idiom that characterizes his work for him is the persistence of the problems of 'the social'. The series of Harsono's verbal testimonies clearly show a necessary relationship between art and the social discourse dominant at a particular time. When everyday goods are lifted into the realm of art, they leave their functional use and become symbols and art idioms containing certain critical messages. In the 'system' that we call archive, goods, image documentation, and the compilation of testimonies can equip us to know certain artistic discourses constructed by an artist through his work.

A life filled with goods, images and words often indicates chaos or disordered relationships. But we see it plainly, chaos in Harsono's work is life, always challenging artists, in the universe of 'the social' as understood by him in his time.***

Jakarta, 8 Februari 2015

Hendro Wiyanto



HRH Prince Constantijn of the Netherlands presents the Prince Claus Award to FX Harsono (visual artist, Indonesia), at the Royal Palace Amsterdam.



2014 Prince Claus Award
for the contribution of FX Harsono Indonesia

FX Harsono
Indonesia

Fonds C

1. HARSONO DAN GERAKAN SENI RUPA BARU (GSRB)

HARSONO AND THE NEW ART MOVEMENT (GSRB)

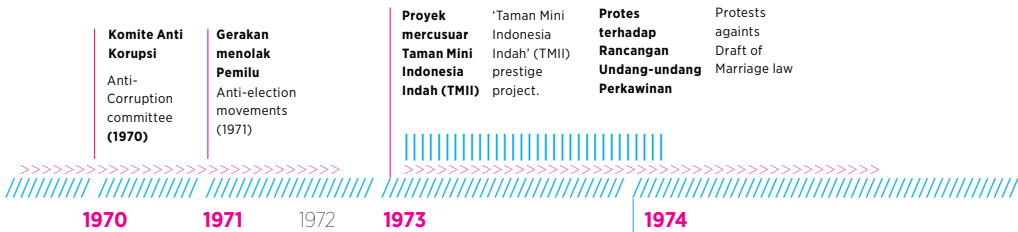
PERISTIWA MALARI

THE MALARI RIOT

Petisi dan demonstrasi oleh mahasiswa Indonesia marak sepanjang 1970-1974: Komite Anti Korupsi (1970), gerakan menolak Pemilu (1971), protes terhadap Rancangan Undang-undang Perkawinan (1973) dan proyek mercusuar Taman Mini Indonesia Indah (TMII). Aksi berubah menjadi kerusuhan massa, meletuskan Peristiwa "Malari" (Malapetaka 15 Januari), huru-hara pertama di masa Orde Baru.

Petitions and demonstrations by Indonesian students were rife in the years 1970-1974: The 'Anti-Corruption Committee' (1970), the movement against the elections (1971), a protest against the draft Marriage Law (1973) and against 'Taman Mini Indonesia Indah' (TMII) prestige project. The actions became mass rioting known as the "Malari" (The 15 January catastrophe) the first riots of the New Order Period.

24



DESEMBER HITAM DAN BUNGA TANDA BERDUKA

'BLACK DECEMBER' AND A WREATH FOR MOURNING.

"Desember Hitam" adalah petisi yang ditandatangani oleh tiga belas seniman, di Jakarta, 31 Desember 1974. Mereka memrotes keputusan Dewan Juri Pameran Besar Seni Lukis Indonesia 1974 yang memenangkan karya para senior sebagai "wajah seni rupa Indonesia kontemporer"

'Black December' was a petition signed by thirteen artists in Jakarta, December 31, 1974. They were protesting against the decision of the jury of the Indonesian Painting Exhibition 1974, which awarded the prizes to the senior's work as being 'the face of Indonesian contemporary art'.

LEGEND / LEGENDA

KARYA / WORKS
sinopsis isi / works synopsis
KONTEKS SOSIAL POLITIK
SOCIAL POLITICAL EVENT

TITIK KESENIAN / ART MILESTONE
Titik peristiwa / milestone highlight text

||||| **Garis sejarah seni budaya**
Historical line to art & culture
>>>>> **Garis konteks sosial politik**
Line for Social Political context
///////// **Garis Utama / Main Timeline**

PROGRAM TRANSMIGRASI

Kepadatan penduduk di Pulau Jawa di tahun 70-an diatasi dengan program transmigrasi massal oleh pemerintah Orba. Penduduk miskin digusur ke luar Jawa, untuk menggarap lahan dan membuka hutan.

TRANSMIGRATION PROGRAM

The New Order government in the seventies planned to remedy the population density problem of Java by way of mass resettlement. The poor were evicted from Java to clear the forest and farm the land elsewhere.

25

PAMERAN “SENI RUPA BARU INDONESIA 75”

Konflik antara murid-guru di Yogyakarta — disulut peristiwa “Desember Hitam”— mendekatkan seniman-seniman muda di Yogya dan Bandung. Mereka sepakat untuk mengadakan Pameran “Seni Rupa Baru Indonesia 75” di Taman Ismail Marzuki, Jakarta, (2- 7 Agustus 1975).

THE EXHIBITION ‘NEW INDONESIAN ART 75’

Conflicts between students and teachers —triggered by ‘Black December’ brought young artists from Yogya and Bandung together. They agreed to hold an exhibition ‘New Art Indonesia 75’ in Taman Ismail Marzuki, Jakarta (2-7 August 1975).



1975

1976

1977

1978

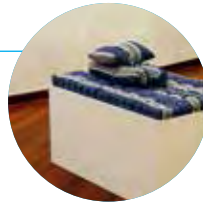
1979



PALING TOP 75 1975

Senapan plastik, kain, kayu, anyaman kawat
50 x 100 x 157 cm

Seperti umumnya seniman Gerakan Seni Rupa Baru (GSRB), Harsono mulai memanfaatkan objek-objek temuan untuk karyanya. Simbol mesin pembunuh ini menyindir pemerintahan Orde Baru yang militeristik dan represif, sekaligus menunjukkan orientasi politik Orba pada negara-negara blok Barat.



TOP 75 1975

Plastic rifle, fabric, wood, wire mesh
50 x 100 x 157 cm

Like most other artists of the GSRB (The New Art Movement) Harsono started using found objects for his work. This work satirizes the New Order regime, which had become increasingly militaristic and repressive, at the same time showing the political orientation of the Orba regime towards the countries of the Western block.

SANTAI YANG RANTAI

1975
Instalasi dengan bantal, kasur, rantai
67 x 97 x 56 cm

Apakah kekuasaan akhirnya akan membatasi kebebasan ekspresi? Dapatkah keduanya hadir bersama-sama dalam kehidupan kita?

RELAXED CHAIN

1975
Installation with pillows, mattress, chain
67 x 97 x 56 cm

Will power ultimately limit the freedom of expression? Can both be present together in our lives?

2. 1980-1998

SENIMAN- AKTIVIS

ARTIST-ACTIVIST

TRANSMIGRASI

1977

Instalasi berbahan kerupuk berbentuk boneka dan kain

Harsono menggambarkan proyek relokasi kemiskinan sebagai "pola" yang centang-perenang. Kemiskinan ditampilkan sebagai boneka-boneka kerupuk diwarnakan jambon dan biru—yang mengandung pewarna tekstil berbahaya.

HUTAN DAN LIMBAH

Luas hutan tropis Indonesia tak kurang dari 143 juta hektar. Tiap tahun telah terjadi penebangan hutan seluas 500.000 ribu hektar melalui konsesi HPH (Hak Pengusahaan Hutan) tanpa jaminan hijau kembali.

FOREST AND WASTE

Indonesia has an area of no less than 143 million hectares tropical forest. Each year an area of 500,000 hectares is logged through forest concessions (HPK) with no guaranty they will ever be green again.. .

2.000 pabrik dan 30.000 usaha membuang limbahnya ke 17 sungai yang bermuara di Teluk Jakarta. "Sindrom Minamata" — kelainan fisik dan syaraf akibat keracunan logam berat (Hg)—mulai diderita penduduk sekitar teluk yang mengonsumsi ikan di atas rata-rata orang Indonesia.

2,000 factories and 30,000 businesses dispose of their waste into the 17 rivers that flow into Jakarta Bay. "Minamata Syndrome" - physical and neurological disorders as a result of heavy metal toxicity (Hg) - begins to appear in the population around the bay who eat more fish than the average Indonesian.

26

Transmigrasi
Transmigration

GSRB bubar.
GSRB disbanded.

1977



TRANSMIGRASI

1977

Installation made out of doll shaped crackers and scraps of cloth.

Harsono represented the poverty relocation project as a haphazard "pattern". Poverty is shown by colored - pink and blue - starch-cracker dolls. Colored with poisonous textile dyes.

1979

1980

1981

1982

1983

1984



PAGAR TRIPLEK DAN HUTAN KITA

1982

Papan triplek dan teks yang disablon 120 x 15 cm x 600 m

Karya instalasi site-specific Harsono di Pantai Parangtritis ini memberi pesan tentang luasnya kerusakan hutan tropis di dunia dan budaya konsumsi yang bertentangan dengan alam

PLYWOOD FENCE AND OUR FORESTS

1982

Plywood board and stenciled text 120 x 15 cm x 600 m

A site-specific work of Harsono on Parangtritis beach with messages about the widespread destruction of tropical forests in the world and the culture of consumption that goes against nature



PAMERAN “SENI RUPA BARU PROYEK I, PASARAYA DUNIA FANTASI”

Taman Ismail Marzuki, Jakarta; 15-30 June 1987

Reuni beberapa eks. anggota GSRB melahirkan projek pameran kolektif dengan isu tren budaya urban mutakhir (konsumerisme, gaya hidup, budaya populer, seni/ ikon pop, dan lain-lain). Melebur batas-batas *high art* dan *low art*.

EXHIBITION “SENI RUPA BARU PROYEK I, PASARAYA DUNIA FANTASI”

Taman Ismail Marzuki, Jakarta; 15-30 June 1987

A “reunion” of some former GSRB members resulted in a collective exhibition project along the theme of urban cultural trends (consumerism, lifestyle, popular culture, art / pop icons etc.). Dissolving the boundaries of *high art* and *low art*.

HUTAN TRIPLEK PLYWOOD FOREST

1985

instalasi dengan sablon pada triplex.

Installation with screen print on plywood



PASAR RAYA DUNIA FANTASI

1987

Multimedia Kolaborasi dengan anggota GSRB

SUPERMARKET FANTASY WORLD

1987

Multimedia collaborative project with New Art movement members

1985

1986

1987

1988 1989 1990 1991

1992

PAMERAN SENI RUPA LINGKUNGAN “PROSES 85” 1985

Bersama segelintir seniman eks GSRB dan Pipa (“Kepribadian Apa”) Harsono memamerkan karya dengan isu lingkungan alam di Galeri Seni Rupa Pasar Jaya Ancol, Jakarta.

ENVIRONMENTAL ART EXHIBITION “PROSES 85” 1985

Together with a handful of ex GSRB artists and Pipa (Kepribadian Apa/ What Personality) Harsono exhibited works with natural environment theme in the Fine Arts Gallery Pasar Jaya Ancol, Jakarta.

PROGRAM RESIDENSI DAN PAMERAN ARX 3, PERTH, AUSTRALIA 1992

Gagasan mengenai seni rupa kawasan dan modernisme Asia menjadi perbincangan di lingkungan internasional. Harsono menjalani program residensi tiga bulan di School of Art, The South Australian University, Adelaide, Australia (1992). Mengikuti Pameran ARX 3 (Perth, 1992) dan Asia Pacific Triennale (APT, Brisbane, 1993), Australia.

RESIDENCY PROGRAM AND EXHIBITION ARX 3, PERTH, AUSTRALIA 1992

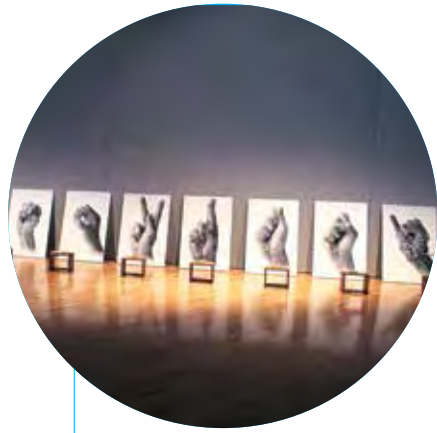
Ideas about environmental art and Asian modernism became an international debate. Harsono attended a three-month residency program at the School of Art, The South Australian University, Adelaide, Australia (1992). Took part in the exhibition ARX 3 (Perth, 1992) and the Asia Pacific Triennial (APT, Brisbane, 1993), Australia.

**AKHIR
REPELITA DAN
PEMBREIDELAN
MEDIA MASSA**

Rencana Pembangunan Lima Tahun I (Repelita, 1969/1970-1993/1994) berakhir. Indonesia tampaknya belum akan "tinggal landas". Suara partai politik makin seragam sejak penetapan asas tunggal Pancasila (1984). Juni 1994 tiga media massa di Jakarta — Majalah Tempo, Editor dan Tabloid Detik— dibreidel karena kasus pemberitaan. Beberapa jurnalis muda, anggota Aliansi Jurnalis Independe (AJI)

**REPELITA AND
THE GAG ON
THE MEDIA**

Repelita and the gag on the media The Five-Year Development Plan I (Repelita 1969 / 1970-1993 / 1994) came to an end. Indonesia was still not "taking off". Since the Pancasila was declared to be the 'single principle' (1984) the voices of the political parties became more and more uniform. In June 1994 three mass media in Jakarta - Majalah Tempo, Editor and Tabloid Detik were gagged because of news they published. Some young journalists, members the Independent Journalists Alliance (AJI) were arrested and detained.



Majalah Tempo, Editor dan Tabloid Detik—dibreidel karena kasus pemberitaan

Majalah Tempo, Editor and Tabloid Detik were gagged because of news they published.

Proses pembebasan tanah untuk waduk Nipah
Nipah dam land buyouts



1992

**KUASA DAN YANG
TERTINDAS**

1992
Instalasi berbahan ranting, kain dengan citra yang disablon, tanah, kursi dan kawat duri
Matra bervariasi

Harsono mengkritik paham Jawa yang melanggengkan kuasa Orba. Kuasa itu makin berjarak dengan citra-citra kerakyatan seperti tanah, kain dan ranting kering yang patah.

**THE POWER AND
THE OPPRESSED**

1992
Installation made of twigs, cloth with printed image, soil, chairs and barbed wire
Varying dimensions

Harsono criticized the Javanese world view which sustained the power of the New Order. The power which became more and more distant from the images for the common people such as soil, pieces of cloth, broken dry twigs.

1993

**SUARA YANG TAK
BERSUARA**

1993-1994
Cetak saring di atas kanvas (9 panel), bangku kayu dan perangkat stempel
143,5 x 95,5 cm (masing-masing)

Sandi kaum tuna rungu pada karya ini adalah "D-E-M-O-K-R-A-S-I". Partisipasi tiap penonton merupakan prasyarat untuk melahirkan teks ini.

1994

VOICE WITHOUT VOICE

1993-1994
Screen printing on canvas (9 panels), wooden benches, stamps and pads.
143.5 x 95.5 cm (each)

The sign language for the deaf on this work can be read as 'D-E-M-O-C-R-A-C-Y'. The participation of the viewers is needed for this text to be there.





**SUARA DARI
DASAR
BENDUNGAN**

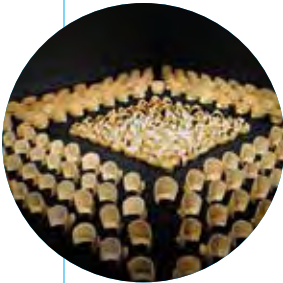
1994

Instalasi dengan perkakas dan pakaian Madura, cabai, belanga, mikrofon, rekaman suara

**VOICE FROM
THE DAM**

1994

Installation with Maduranese attire and utensils, chili, pot, mic, voice recording



**Partai Rakyat
Demokratis
(PRD) berdiri**

People's Democratic Party (PRD) was established

**Antara 1997-1998
terjadi penculikan
& penghilangan
sejumlah aktivis
pro-demokrasi**

The kidnapping and disappearance of a number of pro-democracy activists

**Huru-hara Mei
1998 reformasi dan
anti-Soeharto.**

The May 1998 riots, reform movement and anti-Soeharto.

1994

1995

1996

1997

1998

1999

**SUARA YANG
DIKONTROL OLEH
KEKUASAAN**

1994

Topeng kayu dan kain
Matra bervariasi

Dua pekan setelah peristiwa pembreidean, Harsono menciptakan karya ini untuk pameran tunggalnya yang pertama, "Suara" (1994). Bagi Harsono, kekerasan di Indonesia sudah menjadi "budaya".

**VOICE CONTROLLED
BY POWER**

1994

Wood mask and cloth

Two weeks after the press gag, Harsono created this work for his first solo exhibition 'Voices' (1994). For Harsono, violence in Indonesia has become a sort of 'culture'

**REPUBLIK
INDOCHAOS (5 BUAH)**

1999

Foto etsa di atas kertas
57 x 53 cm (masing-masing)

Harsono mem-parodikan wajah *The Smiling General* dalam rupa perangko dengan tulisan "lengser". Orde Baru mirip "satwa langka" yang layak diperingati melalui simbol-simbol resmi.

**REPUBLIK INDOCHAOS
(5 PIECES)**

1999

Photo etching on paper
57 x 53 cm (each)

This parody-style series of stamps feature the smiling face of Soeharto - just as on the official stamps - with the word 'resigned'. The New Order is like the 'rare species' which should be commemorated through official symbols.



3. 1999- 2008 ERA REFORMASI, PASCA-1998 REFORM ERA, POST 1998



WEAR MASK
2001
Foto-etsa
di atas kertas /
Photoetching on paper
62 x 57 cm



2002

**PIG OR ANGEL?
SO WHAT? #2**
2002
Foto-etsa
di atas kertas
50x 67 cm

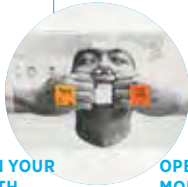
Apa itu moral masyarakat? Mana sisi baik dan buruk? Ketaksamaan itu diwakili sosok kontradiktif yang berwajah ganda: babi-malaekat, kerakusan dan kekuasaan yang sembunyi di balik topeng.

President Gus Dur repealed Presidential Instruction No.14 / 1967 on the prohibition of displays of Chinese cultural expressions. Indonesia experienced what is known as the era of political openness and the euphoria of freedom. In one of his works, Wear Masks (2001), Harsono openly displays Chinese characters

2003

**PIG OR ANGEL?
SO WHAT? #2**
2002
Photo-etching
on paper
50x 67 cm

What are a society's morals? Which is the good and which is the bad side? The reality of society is contradictory hidden behind masks.



OPEN YOUR MOUTH
2001
Foto-etsa
di atas kertas
57 x 219

Potret-potret wajah Harsono muncul pada karyanya, membayangi pertanyaan tentang identitas diri. Rasa muak terhadap politik "cuap-cuap" berbareng dengan keasingan menyaksikan banalitas masyarakat..

OPEN YOUR MOUTH
2001
Photo-etching
on paper
57 x 219

Portraits of Harsono himself began appearing in his work foreshadowing the selfhood identity theme. Disgust towards lots of talk only politics and alienation when witnessing the banality of society.

4. 2009- 2014

KRONIK SEJARAH

HISTORICAL CHRONICLE

Belanda melakukan "aksi-polisionil" (1946-1949) untuk menduduki kembali daerah jajahannya di Indonesia. Di kalangan penduduk pribumi muncul sentimen negatif terhadap orang Tionghoa sebagai antek Belanda.

The Dutch conducted 'police actions' (1946-1949) to reoccupy their colony in Indonesia. Among the native population there grew resentment against the Chinese who were seen as henchmen of the Dutch.



31

2007 **2008**

2009 2010 2011 2012 **2013**

BON APPÉTIT

2008

Instalasi dengan meja, kursi, taplak, mangkuk, piring, kupu-kupu dan jarum

Situasi "salah tempat" membayangkan penjejalahan karya Harsono. Dengan menggunakan metafora lebah dan kupu-kupu yang binasa yang tertembus batang jarum, pertanyaan personal "siapa saya" mendekatkannya pada sosok korban.

BON APPÉTIT

2008

Installation with tables, chairs, tablecloths, bowls, plates, butterflies and pins

A feeling of things 'misplaced' accompanies Harsono's search for new modes of expression in his work. The question 'who am I?' brings the metaphor closer to the victims.

PROYEK NDUDAH

2009

Video dokumenter 21' 20"

Palingan kepada kronik asal-usul membawa Harsono ke riak sejarah. Koleksi foto penggalan korban yang dibuat ayahnya — tahun 50-an — merupakan suluh bagi narasi-narasi pembantaian. "nDudah" (bahasa Jawa) berarti "penggalan kembali".

PROYEK NDUDAH

2009

Video documentary 21' 20"

Turning toward the chronicle of his origins brought Harsono to those ripples in history. The collection of photographs made by his father - in the fifties - was a guideline for the narratives of slaughter. 'nDudah' (Javanese) means 'to dig up'.

5. 2013-2015

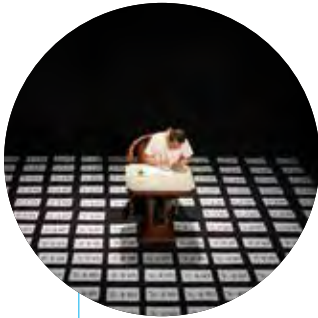
1. PENGHARGAAN

(1-22 JULI 2013)

Pameran tunggal, Jogja National Museum (JNM, Yogyakarta; dulu kampus STSRI "ASRI", yang pernah menskorsnya), "*what we have here perceived as truth we shall some day encounter as beauty*".

(JULY, 1 - 22, 2013)

Solo exhibition at Jogja National Museum (the historic campus, STSRI "ASRI", Yogyakarta, here he was once suspended), "*what we have here perceived as truth we shall some day encounter as beauty*".



2013

Tokoh Seni Kategori

Seni Rupa, Majalah

Tempo, Jakarta.
Outstanding artist, *Tempo* magazine, Jakarta.

2014

Prince Claus, Negeri Belanda

Prince Claus Award, the Netherlands.

2015

The Joseph Balestier Award

for the Freedom of Art

The Joseph Balestier Award for the Freedom of Art.

32

2009

2010

2011

2012

2013

2014

2015

YANG DIHAPUS KUTULIS ULANG #1 DAN #2

2009

C-print di atas kertas foto
110 x 180 cm
(masing-masing)

Selama bertahun-tahun Harsono menyangkal ke-Cina-annya sendiri. Waktunya tiba untuk berdamai dengan trauma. Politik identitasnya adalah mengingat dan menulis kembali tiga kata nama Tonghoanya sendiri, Oh Hong Boen.

THAT WHICH WAS DELETED, I WRITE AGAIN #1 AND #2

2009

C-print on photo paper
110 x 180 cm (each)

For many years Harsono denied his Chineseness. Then the time came to come to terms with the trauma. Part of his identity politics is to remember, write again the three words of his own Chinese name, Oh Hong Boen.

MENULIS ULANG PADA MAKAM

2013

Video performans dan pastel di atas kain

Proyek *NDudah* adalah perjalanan panjang menyusuri lorong-lorong pembantaian yang gelap di sepanjang Pulau Jawa. Masa itu terasa begitu jauh karena jejaknya dihapus oleh sejarah. Harsono mengawali risetnya dari kota Blitar (Jawa Timur).

REWRITING ON THE TOMB

2013

Video performance and pastel on cloth

The *NDudah* project is a long journey along the alleys of dark carnage along the island of Java. This period seems so far away because the track was deleted by history. Harsono started his research from his place of birth Blitar (East Java)

FX HARSONO

1949 born in Blitar (east Java), Indonesia. 1969-'74 studied painting at STSRI 'ASRI', Yogyakarta (Indonesia), 1987-'91 at IKJ (Jakarta Art Institute). 2005 - 2013, lecturer, the Faculty of Art and Design, Pelita Harapan University, Tangerang (west Java). Lives and works in Jakarta (Indonesia).

fxharsono@gmail.com

www.fxharsono.com



SOLO EXHIBITIONS

- 2015 ***Life and Chaos: Objects, Images and Words***, Erasmus Huis, Jakarta
Beyond Identity, Nexus Arts Gallery, Adelaide, Australia
- 2014 ***Things Happen When We Remember / Kita Ingat Maka Terjadilah***, Selasar Sunaryo Art Space, Bandung, Indonesia
- 2013 ***“what we have here perceived as truth we shall some day encounter as beauty”*** Jogja Nasional Museum, Yogyakarta
- 2012 ***Writing In The Rain***, Tyler Rollins, New York, United State of America
- 2010 ***FX Harsono: Testimonies***, Singapore Art Museum, Singapore
Re:petisi/posisi, Langgeng Art Foundation, Yogyakarta
- 2009 ***The Erased Time***, National Gallery of Indonesia, Jakarta
- 2009 ***Surviving Memories***, Vanessa Art Link, Beijing, China
- 2008 ***Aftertaste***, Koong Gallery, Jakarta
- 2007 ***Titik Nyeri/ Point of Pain***, Langgeng Icon Gallery, Jakarta
- 2004 ***Mediamor(e)phosa***, Puri Galllery, Malang, Indonesia
- 2003 ***Displaced***, National Gallery of Indonesia, Jakarta
Displaced, Cemeti Art House, Yogyakarta
- 1998 ***Victim***, Cemeti Art Gallery, Yogyakarta
- 1996 ***Suara (Voice)***, Cemeti Art Gallery, Yogyakarta
- 1994 ***Suara (Voice)***, National Gallery of Indonesia, Jakarta.

35

GROUP EXHIBITIONS (SELECTED)

- 2015 ***Tell Me My Truth***, group exhibition artists from Australia, Asia and the Pacific at 4A, Sydney, Australia 2014 ***The Roving Eye, Contemporary Art From Southeast Asia***, Arter Space for Art, Istanbul, Turkey
Past Traditions / New Voices in Asian Art, Hofstra University Museum, New York, United State of America
Market Forces 2014, From Conceptualism to Abstraction, Osage Art Foundation & City University of Hong Kong
- 2013 ***Concept Context Contestation, Art and the collective in Southeast Asia***, Bangkok Art And Cultural Center, Bangkok, Thailand.
Seeing Painting: Conversations Before The End of History, Sangkring Art Space, Yogyakarta. Indonesia
Jogja Biennale XII, Jogja, Jogja Nasional Museum, Yogyakarta. Indonesia

- Collection: Photography | screenings "Writing in the rain"** National Gallery of Australia, Canberra, Australia
- Sip! Indonesian Art Today**, Group show at ARNDT Gallery, Gillman Barracks, Singapore
- Quota 2013**, Langgeng Art Foundation, Jogjakarta. Indonesia
- Outspoken**. Group show at Biasa Art Space, Bali, Indonesia
- One Step Forward, Two Steps Back – Us and Institution, Us as Institution**, Times Museum, Guangzhou, China
- Sip! Indonesian Art Today**, Group show at ARNDT Gallery, Berlin. Germany
- Indonesian Painting I**, Group show at Equator Art Project, Singapore
- 2012 **Beyond Geography** by South Asian Visual Art Centre (SAVAC) at Art Toronto, Canada
- What is it to be Chinese?** Group exhibition at Grimmuseum, Berlin, Germany
- Encounter, Royal Academy In Asia**, group exhibition at Institute Of Contemporary Art, Lasalle, Singapore
- Edge of Elsewhere**, group exhibition artists from Australia, Asia and the Pacific at 4A, Sydney, Australia
- Archive-Reclaim doc**, group exhibition at National Gallery of Indonesia, Jakarta
- Migration**, ARNDT, Sydney
- Contemporary Indonesia**, Ben Brown Fine Arts London, London, UK
- 2011 **Edge of Elsewhere**, group exhibition artists from Australia, Asia and the Pacific at 4A, Sydney, Australia
- Closing The Gap**, Melbourne Institute Of Fine Art (MIFA). Melbourne, Australia
- Negotiating Home, History and Nation: Two Decades of Contemporary Art in Southeast Asia, 1991 – 2011**. Singapore Art museum, Singapore.
- Beyond The Self**, National Portrait Gallery, Canberra, Australia
- Asia: Looking South**, ARNDT Gallery, Berlin, Germany
- NOW INK: A Call For New Perceptions - a special project** at 5th SH Contemporary, Shanghai Exhibition Center, Shanghai
- 4th Moscow Biennale**, Moscow Russian
- Beyond The East**, Macro, Rome Italy
- 2010 **Contemporaneity/Contemporary Art in Indonesia**, Museum of Contemporary Art, Shanghai

- Recent Art From Indonesia: Contemporary Art-Turn**, SBinArtPlus, Singapore
- Pleasures of Chaos, Inside New Indonesian Art**, Primo Marella Gallery, Milano, Italy
- Digit(all): Indonesian Contemporary New Media Practices**, Umahseni, Jakarta, Indonesia
- Homo Ludens**, Emmitan CA Gallery, Surabaya, Indonesia
- 2009 **Beyond The Dutch**, Centraal Museum, Utrecht, Nederland.
- Face Value**, Exhibition of 4 artists, Agus Suwage, Budi Kustarto, Astari Rasyid and FX Harsono at SIGlarts, Jakarta, Indonesia
- TechnoSign**, Surabaya Art Link, Surabaya, Indonesia
- Milestone**, Vanessa Art Link, Jakarta
- 2008 **Highlight**, ISI, Jogya National Museum, Yogyakarta
- Art With Accent**, Group Exhibition four country China, Japan, Korea and Indonesia, Guang Zhou, China
- ALLEGORICAL BODIES**, A-Art contemporary space, Tai Pei City, Taiwan.2008
- Res Publicum**, Canna Gallery, Jakarta
- 3rd Nanjing Triennale**, Nanjing, China.
- Manifesto**, National Gallery, Jakarta. Indonesia
- Space/spacing**, Semarang Gallery, Semarang. Indonesia
- 2007 **Quota 2007**, Langgeng- Icon Gallery, Jakarta. Indonesia
- Artchipelago Alert**, Tonyraka Contemporary Art Gallery, Ubud Bali. Indonesia
- Imagine Affandi**, National Archive Centre, Jakarta, Indonesia, Organize by Semarang Gallery
- 2006 **Out Now**, Singapore Art Museum. Singapore
- The Past Forgotten Time**, Cemeti Art House, Jogjakarta. Indonesia
- Anti Aging**, Gaya Fusion Contemporary Art Space, Ubud Bali. Indonesia
- 2005 **Quota 2005**, Langgeng- Icon Gallery, Jakarta. Indonesia
- Taboo and Transgression in Contemporary Indonesian Art**, Herbert F. Johnson of Art Museum, Cornel University, USA.
- Text Me**, Sharman Gallery, Sidney, Australia
- Eksodus Barang**, Nadi Gallery, Jakarta. Indonesia
- Reformasi**, Sculpture Square, Singapore
- 2003 **Exploring Vacuum 2**, Cemeti Art House, Jogjakarta. Indonesia
- CP Open Biennale**, Jakarta. Indonesia
- 2001 **Membaca Frida Kahlo**, Nadi Gallery, Jakarta. Indonesia

- International Print Triennial**, Kanagawa, Yokohama, Japan
- Print in The Future**, Cemeti Art House, Jogjakarta. Indonesia
- 2000 **Reformasi Indonesia, Protest in Beeld**, Museum Nusantara, Delft, Netherland.
- The Third Kwangju Biennial**, Kwangju, Korea.
- Setengah Abad Seni Grafis Indonesia**, Bentara Budaya, Jakarta
- 1999 **Art Document 1999**, Kanazu Forest Museum, Kanazu, Japan
- Volume & Form**, Singapore
- 1998 **Meet 3:3 (3 Indonesian artists, 3 Germany artists)**, Purna Budaya, Jogjakarta
- 1997 **Slot in the Box**, Cemeti Art Gallery, Jogjakarta. Indonesia
- International Contemporary Art Festival**, Tokyo, Japan (NICAF)
- 1996 **Museum City Project**, Fukuoka, Japan
- Tradition/Tension**, Asia Society, New York (continued to Vancouver (Canada), Perth (Australia), Seoul (Korea))
- 1995 **Asian Modernism**, Japan Foundation, Tokyo, Japan
- 1994 **Jakarta Biennial Contemporary** Art Taman Ismail Marzuki (TIM), Jakarta
- 38 1993 **Baguio Art Festival**, Baguio, The Philippines
- Asia-Pacific Triennial of Contemporary Art, Queensland Art Gallery, Brisbane, Australia
- 1992 **Artist Regional Exchange (ARX 3)**, Perth, Australia
- Artists Week, Adelaide Festival**, Adelaide, Australia
- 1987 **Pasar Raya Dunia Fantasi, Seni Rupa Baru (SRB) Proyek I**, TIM, Jakarta
- 1985 **Proses 85, Art on the Environment**, Galeri Seni Rupa Ancol, Jakarta Indonesia
- 1982 **Environmental art**, Parangtritis Beach, Jogjakarta. Indonesia
- 1979 **Gerakan Seni Rupa Baru (New Art Movement III)**, TIM, Jakarta. Indonesia
- 1977 **Gerakan Seni Rupa Baru (New Art Movement II)**, TIM, Jakarta. Indonesia
- 1976 **Concept, New At Movement**, Balai Budaya, Jakarta. Indonesia
- 1975 **Established New Art Movement (Gerakan Seni Rupa Baru) with 10 young artists** (Institut Teknologi Bandung (ITB), Bandung and Sekolah Tinggi Seni Rupa Indonesi "ASRI"(STSRI "ASRI",Yogyakarta)
- 1st Exhibition Gerakan Seni Rupa Baru (New At Movement), TIM, Jakarta. Indonesia
- 1974 **Black December movement** in Jakarta. Indonesia
- All Indonesia Painting I**, TIM, Jakarta. Indonesia

1973 **Kelompok Lima Pelukis Muda (KLPM)**, Yogyakarta, Solo,
Indonesia

ARTIST IN RESIDENCES:

2002-2003 The Amsterdam Grafisch Atelier, Amsterdam, Netherland

1992 School of Art, the South Australian University, Adelaide, Australia

PUBLIC COLLECTION

Fukuoka Asian Art Museum, Japan

Ullen Foundation Collection

Singapore Art Museum

National Gallery of Singapore, Singapore

Sherman Foundation, Sydney, Australia

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, Australia

National Gallery of Australia, Canberra, Australia

Gallery of Modern Art, Queensland, Australia

OHD Museum, Magelang, Indonesia

Arthub Asia, Far East Far West collection, Shanghai

The National Gallery of Indonesia

39

AWARDS

2015 Joseph Balestier Award For the Freedom of Art, from U.S. Embassy
Singapore – Art Stage Singapore

2014 Prince Clause Fund Laureate award

2014 Anugrah Adhikarya Rupa 2014 Award, from Minister of Tourism and
Creative Economy, Indonesia

2013 Outstanding artist in Visual Arts, Tempo magazine, Jakarta.

“Tanah asal atau akar bagi kehidupan saya bukanlah suatu hal yang penting. Bahkan dapat dikatakan tidak ada lokasi geografis atau kultural yang bisa disebut sebagai tanah asal atau akar budaya. Saya hanya bisa menyebut cerita dari mana saya lahir dan dibesarkan. Maka kesejarahan bagi saya lebih penting daripada akar kebudayaan.”

“Transisi”, pernyataan seniman, dalam *Displaced*, Pameran Tunggal FX Harsono di Galeri Nasional Indonesia, Jakarta, 4- 13 Juni 2003, dan Cemeti Art House, Yogyakarta, 10 Juli- 17 Agustus 2003; katalog

40

“Country of origin or roots are not important the things in my life. In fact, it can be said there is no geographical or cultural site which can be called my country of origin or my cultural roots. I have only the story of where I was born and raised. This historicity for me is more important than cultural roots.”

“Transisi”, artist’s statement in ‘*Displaced*’ exhibition, Indonesian National Gallery, Jakarta, 4 – 13 June 2003; Cemeti Art House, Yogyakarta, 10 July – 17 August 2003; catalog