

ara contemporary Opens in Jakarta, Championing Southeast Asian Artists with

“We Begin with Everything”

Jakarta, 2025 — ara contemporary, a new addition to Jakarta's vibrant art scene, will open its doors in April, championing Southeast Asian artists and advocating for their practices both locally and internationally. The gallery will feature a diverse mix of emerging to established voices from the region, founded by three partners with over 15 years of experience in the art scene: Fiesta Ramadanti, Fredy Chandra, and Megan Arlin. With backgrounds at prominent institutions such as Art Jakarta (Jakarta), Mizuma Gallery (Singapore, Tokyo), and Sullivan+Strumpf (Singapore, Sydney, Melbourne), the founders bring extensive expertise in global art dialogue.

The name *ara* reflects both the founders' vision and the gallery's broader vision. A combination of the founders' last names (Arlin, Ramadanti, Chandra) and the Sanskrit word for "a place of shelter," *ara* embodies a space for contemplation and thoughtful considerations. The gallery's focus will center on artists whose practices engage with the context of Southeast Asia, exploring the connections between immediacy and global discourse.

With two exhibition spaces in the building—the *Main Gallery* and *Focus*—ara contemporary will serve as a dynamic platform for dialogue and collaboration with the hope of contributing to the burgeoning Southeast Asian art scene and beyond. *Focus* will be dedicated to highlighting emerging artists, art practitioners, writers, and curators and to nurturing new and experimental practices.

Inaugural Exhibition: *We Begin with Everything*

ara contemporary's inaugural exhibition, *We Begin with Everything*, draws inspiration from Rick Rubin's *The Creative Act: A Way of Being*. The exhibition title reflects a central tenet of Rubin's philosophy: that the act of creating is an endless, ever-present source. *We Begin with Everything* celebrates a concept turned into a tangible manifestation and a continual process of becoming, reflected in not only the gallery's beginning but also the value of artists' processes.

We Begin with Everything features works by 17 distinguished Southeast Asian Artists, including (in alphabetical order)

Agan Harahap (Indonesia)
Albert Yonathan Setyawan (Indonesia)
Alisa Chunchue (Thailand)
Carmen Ceniga Prado (Seoul/Spain/Singapore)
Condro Priyoaji (Indonesia)
Dawn Ng (Singapore) – in collaboration with Sullivan+Strumpf
Enggar Rhomadioni (Indonesia)
Irfan Hendrian (Indonesia)
Ipeh Nur (Indonesia)
Iwan Effendi (Indonesia)
Kelly Jin Mei (Singapore)
Mar Kristoff (Indonesia)
Marcos Kueh (Malaysia) – in collaboration with The Backroom
Natalie Sasi Organ (Thailand)
S. Urubingwaru (Indonesia)
Wedhar Riyadi (Indonesia)
Xiuching Tsay (Thailand)

About the Founders

Fiesta Ramadanti

Fiesta Ramadanti, often affectionately known as Danti, started her career as a studio manager of Indonesian artist J.A Pramuhendra in 2013. In 2015, she joined ROH Projects to oversee the gallery's exhibitions and programming in Indonesia and beyond. She was pivotal in overseeing the gallery's day-to-day operations and fostering relationships with the gallery's artists. Danti then took the role of exhibitor manager of Art Jakarta, the biggest art fair in Indonesia, where she held an important role in organizing a leading platform for both local and international contemporary art. In 2025, she co-founded ara contemporary to foster and advocate for Southeast Asian artists in Indonesia and beyond.

Fredy Chandra

Fredy Chandra started his career in Yogyakarta, having worked in V-Art Gallery in 2007, and with artist duo Indieguerillas in 2010, before relocating to Jakarta to join Garis Art Space. In 2013, he joined Mizuma Gallery, Singapore, where he held the position of gallery director. Fredy was an instrumental part of Mizuma Gallery's programming, sales, and management of the gallery's represented Southeast Asian artists. He has successfully placed the artists' works in the collection of Benesse Art Site Naoshima, Japan; Mori Art Museum, Japan; Pola Museum Annex, Japan; National Gallery Singapore; Singapore Art Museum; Sigg Collection, Switzerland; and Freunde der Nationalgalerie Hamburger Bahnhof, Germany. In 2025, Fredy co-founded ara contemporary co-founded ara contemporary to foster and advocate for Southeast Asian artists in Indonesia and beyond.

Megan Arlin

Previously based in Singapore, Megan Arlin was at the forefront of Sullivan+Strumpf's international development to establish the Australian gallery's presence in the Southeast Asia region and pioneered the shift to strategic itinerant programming, both in Singapore and internationally. She led the acquisitions of works by the gallery's artists for the collections of Benesse Art Site Naoshima, Denver Art Museum, Singapore Art Museum, Museum MACAN, and UBS Art Collection, amongst other notable institutions, and collaborated with international partner Apsara Studio (London, UK), for international projects and presentations. Before Sullivan+Strumpf, Megan was involved in the launch of ROH Projects, in Jakarta, Indonesia (2014). In 2024, she took part in the in_tangible institute's CULTIVATE in Bangkok, Thailand, as one of the first group of cohorts in module 1 (Programming in the Arts). After one decade in Singapore, she relocated back to her hometown and co-founded ara contemporary co-founded ara contemporary to foster and advocate for Southeast Asian artists in Indonesia and beyond.

We Begin with Everything
12 April – 4 May 2025

ara contemporary
Jalan Tulodong Bawah I no 163
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www.aracontemporary.id (website launching in week 4, March 2025)
[@aracontemporary.id](https://www.instagram.com/aracontemporary.id)



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