



Ruins and Blueprints

Agan Harahap
Dita Gambiro
Enka Komariah
Ipeh Nur
Irfan Hendrian
Lai Yu Tong
Natalie Sasi Organ

ara
contemporary

ruins and blueprints explores the continuous dialogue between the past and the present in a way to trace the origins of current realities, particularly the reinterpretation of historical events or contexts through the lens of present perspectives. The works in the exhibition examine the enduring relevance of history and its continued influence on the present, using the metaphor of ruins as a starting point. Through their works and practices, the seven artists delve into the legacies of the past that have or continue to shape the present, examining how revisiting history can illuminate tensions between historical accuracy and contemporary reinterpretation. While firmly rooted in the present, the works reflect on how the past continues to inform current views, practices, and actions, demonstrating the ways in which history remains embedded in today's lived experiences.

Together, the metaphors of 'ruins' and 'blueprints' suggest a cyclical relationship in which the past shapes the present, and the present, in turn, lays the foundation for the future just like a continuous loop of remembering and reimagining.

Known for his practice in photography and digital manipulations, Agan Harahap offers a reading of social conditions through a blend of satire and parody. Harahap creates new scenarios by blurring the threshold between fiction and reality, filling up the grey area that connects one fact with the others with his authorship. As a result, his works often carry not only a sense of humor but also a critique of contemporary society's unthinking consumption of images.

Harahap has participated in exhibitions in Indonesia and internationally such as *Indonesia Bertutur* at the Museum Puri Lukisan, Bali (2024), *Indonesia: Living Pictures: Photography in Southeast Asia*, National Gallery Singapore, Singapore (2022); *Nation, Narration, Narcosis: Collecting Entanglements and Embodied Histories*, Hamburger Bahnhof - Museum für Gegenwart, Berlin, Germany (2021); and *The 5th Singapore Biennale 2016: An Atlas of Mirrors*, Singapore Art Museum, Singapore (2016). His works are in the collections of the Sigg Collection Mauensee, Switzerland; Singapore Art Museum, Singapore; Freunde der Nationalgalerie, Berlin, Germany; and Tumurun Private Museum, Solo, Indonesia. Agan Harahap is one of the recipients of the Singapore Art Museum S.E.A Arts Fund in 2025.

AGAN HARAHAAP

b.1980

Lives and works in Yogyakarta, Indonesia

Agan Harahap's latest works focus on the sense of sight, particularly in an era when photography and recording technology were limited. At that time, moments—along with their settings, sounds, scents, and surroundings- were primarily captured through our senses, stored in memory, and naturally faded over time. These mental impressions, though imperfect, became deeply personal. Without the precision of recorded documentation, we remember things as our minds perceived them, and for Harahap, these memories often feel more vivid than those that were formally recorded.

In his earlier works, Harahap used photography as a medium for storytelling, often through manipulated documentation. In *Untitled*, he uses Artificial Intelligence (AI) to generate a series of photographs based on his undocumented memories. This marks a continued investigation into photography as a storytelling tool rather than merely a documentary one. Where his past works questioned and sometimes reimaged history, this new series attempts to give form to memories that never had a visual representation. If photography, traditionally seen as a means of documentation, was previously his tool for reinterpreting history through manipulations, now AI, known for its creation, enhancement, and manipulation capabilities, is used by Harahap to "document" historical moments that were never visually recorded.

Agan Harahap

Mad Dog 1986, 2025
archival inkjet print on photographic paper
100 x 66 cm
edition 2 of 3, plus 1AP





Agan Harahap

Untitled (Set 1), 2025
archival inkjet print on photographic paper
variable dimensions
edition of 2 of 3, plus 1AP



Agan Harahap

Untitled (Set 2), 2025
archival inkjet print on photographic paper
variable dimensions
edition of 2 of 3, plus 1AP

Edition 1 (Whole set)

Based in Jakarta, Indonesia, Dita Gambiro's artistic journey is deeply rooted in profound themes such as value, power, existence, and the complexities of human relationships. With a keen focus on one's connection with the divine, self-reflection, and interpersonal dynamics, her body of work reflects a rich tapestry of experiences and insights. Dita's exploration of spatial concepts and installations stems from her background in Sculpture at the Faculty of Art and Design, Bandung Institute of Technology (2009), further pursued through a Master's Degree in Production Design for Film & Television at Kingston University, London (2014). Beyond her contributions to the fine arts, Dita actively engages in the Indonesian film industry, where she has lent her creative vision as an Artistic Director to various cinematic productions.

Her works have been exhibited at ARTJOG, Jogja National Museum (JNM), Yogyakarta, Indonesia (2022); Cheongju Biennale & Ach Busan, South Korea (2019-2020); and "Synthesis: Indonesian & Bulgarian Contemporary Art", National Gallery, Sophia, Bulgaria (2019); and Asia Woman Artist, Jeonbuk Museum Of Art, South Korea (2019). Past solo exhibitions include *The Future of the Past*, Galeri Ruang Dini, Bandung, Indonesia (2024); and *White Lies At Project Stage*, Galerie Michael Janssen At Singapore Art Stage, Singapore (2012).

DITA GAMBIRO

b.1986

Lives and works in Jakarta, Indonesia



Dita Gambiro

Today's Paper, Yesterday's Home, 2025
archival inkjet print on photographic paper
plywood, newspaper, PVC board, wire mesh,
aluminium sheets, paint
107 x 57 x 12 cm

Through her practice as both an artist and a film art director, Dita Gambiro explores themes of value, power, existence, border, barrier, and liminal spaces. A shophouse, known in Bahasa Indonesia as rumah toko or ruko, is typically a two- or three-story building found in commercial areas, often in Chinatowns. Among the Chinese Indonesian community, these buildings often symbolize financial stability and social mobility.

During the May 1998 riots, which primarily targeted the Chinese Indonesian population, many of these shophouses were looted and burned. In response, Dita Gambiro created replicas of their charred and dilapidated facades. Upon closer inspection, viewers notice “for sale” advertisements embedded within the works. For many, the riots marked both the beginning of societal change and the end of a repressive regime. For the victims, however, the sale signs evoke a deep sense of loss, a forced surrender of what had once been carefully built and hoped for.



The tragedy also left behind a lingering psychological trauma. This is reflected in the barricades that were built afterward—structures that can still be seen today, perhaps as a means of staying silent and unseen. The sense of alienation and isolation persists, both within and outside these shophouses, as the Chinese Indonesian community continues to be regarded as "the Others" or a minority. Gambiro's work preserves the memory of the tragedy, presenting these barriers outside their protective use but as monuments to the cost of survival.



Dita Gambiro

Harapan Baru / New Hope, 2024
plywood, acrylic, pvc board, wire mesh, paint
107 x 70 x 10 cm

Enka Komariah was born in Klaten in 1993. He graduated from the Graphic Arts department at the Indonesian Art Institute of Yogyakarta. The strengths of Enka's work include transforming various media and imaginative narratives as the main idea of the work, often using drawing on paper. He frequently fools around with satirical and ironic symbols while simultaneously playing with the boundaries between taboos and norms in the eyes of society. His interest in cultivating his own identity with the agrarian tradition of Java Nan and juxtaposing it with contradictory popular cultural images became a distinctive character in his work.

Recent collective and duo exhibitions include *Eroded Borders* (Gegerboyoyo) at Elleboogkerk, Amersfoort, Netherlands (2025); *Ghost from the Past* at 16Albermale Project, Sydney, Australia (2023); The Setouchi Triennale (Gegerboyoyo) at Ibuki Island Old Post Office, Setouchi, Japan (2022), and ARTJOG, Jogja National Museum, Yogyakarta, Indonesia (2021 and 2022). In 2019, Enka Komariah won the ARTJOG Young Artist Award.

ENKA KOMARIAH

b.1993

Lives and works in Yogyakarta, Indonesia

Enka Komariah's work reflects the poignant paradox of Indonesia: a land of immense abundance, where the real scarcity lies in justice and truth. Indonesia is known for its boundless natural wealth, blessed with mountains, seas, oil, gold, and other resources. The dream of independence was once driven by knowledge and idealism, as the nation sent its brightest youths to distant countries to be educated in scientific advancement, with the hope that they would one day return as leaders of an independent Indonesia. However, that dream quickly fractured during the political upheaval of 1965, when the military seized control of politics, government, state enterprises, property, energy, and more.

For decades, Indonesia lived under the illusion of order and peace. Beneath the rhetoric of development, the military's grip fostered a false sense of security that masked deep control and suppression. Those once destined to carry the torch of sovereignty were exiled and cast out of their homeland by the very power meant to protect it.

Manusia Modern dan Militer di atas Tanah Makmur (Modern Man and the Military Upon a Fertile Land) questions what becomes of a nation when modern man loses touch with the wisdom of the earth, when "development" becomes a tool of domination rather than empowerment. Amid rising concerns over the military's expanding role in civilian life today, his work also warns of the cyclical return of power structures once believed dismantled.



Enka Komariah

Manusia Modern dan Militer di atas Tanah Makmur (Modern Man and the Military Upon a Fertile Land), 2025

oil on paper

107 x 78 cm each (2 panels)

Born and based in Yogyakarta, Indonesia, Ipeh Nur creates narratives exploring Indonesian history and its connections to her experiences and memories. Her artistic practice includes black-and-white illustrations, drawings, screen printing, etching, murals, resin sculptures, and installations. Since 2019, Ipeh has been investigating maritime cultures in different parts of the Indonesian archipelago. She depicts the embodied knowledge harbored by the older generations, from the seasonal calendar and traditional medicines to local recipes. Her storytelling often builds on an open interpretation of ancient mythologies.

Ipeh Nur has participated in numerous group exhibitions, including *We Begin with Everything*, ara contemporary, Jakarta, Indonesia (2025); *Constellations*, 47 Canal, New York, USA (2025); The Sharjah Biennial 16, Sharjah, UAE; *Future Generation Art Prize*, Pinchuk Art Centre, Ukraine (2024); *Indonesia Bertutur: Visaraloka*, Arma Museum, Bali, Indonesia (2024); *Small World Cinema*, Sculpture Center, New York, USA (2024); *Small World*, 13th Taipei Biennial, Taipei Fine Arts Museum, Taipei, Taiwan (2023); and Biennale Jogja XV, Yogyakarta, Indonesia (2019).

IPEH NUR

b.1993

Lives and works in Yogyakarta, Indonesia

Ipeh Nur's work *Pertarungan Ular Raksasa dan Buaya Putih* (*The Battle between the Giant Serpent and the White Crocodile*) continues her ongoing exploration of the Muria Strait, a theme she previously presented at the Sharjah Biennial. As part of this research, she traveled through the cities of Jepara, Demak, Kudus, and Grobogan, regions that were once submerged as part of a strait. Her visit to Grobogan, Central Java, brought her to the geological site of Bledug Kuwu, a rare mud volcano that serves as living evidence of the area's ancient oceanic past. The salt-rich mud that erupts from its depths has been harvested for local salt farming since the colonial period.

Recent studies indicate that Bledug Kuwu's mud contains lithium, a mineral now under consideration by the government for extraction due to its importance in electric vehicle production. Meanwhile, the nearby karst mountains have been heavily exploited by mining operations, prompting continued resistance from local communities.

Ipeh's interest lies in the intersection of land, history, and mythology. One such myth, *The Legend of the Giant Serpent and the White Crocodile*, offers a symbolic explanation for the volcano's origins. In this work, she reinterprets the myth not merely as folklore but as a cultural marker, a metaphor for disaster mitigation, and a symbol of resistance. Ipeh has long been drawn to myth, particularly the act of questioning it. What does myth look like today? Can she construct a new mythology of her own? Is it still relevant? And might it serve, once again, as a form of protection or resistance, just as it did for our ancestors in making sense of natural forces?



Ipeh Nur

Pertarungan Ular Raksasa dan Buaya Putih (The Battle Between the Giant Serpent and the White Crocodile) , 2025

mud, rock powder, charcoal, indigo powder, red oxide, marble powder, hemp rope on jute, woven fabric, and carved wooden pole

190 x 93 cm

An artist and printmaker by profession, Irfan Hendrian has consistently explored and pushed paper's formal qualities as well as its sculptural potential. In Hendrian's hands, paper is no longer merely a planar support for representation; it becomes both pigment and canvas, shaped into objects and installations that have grown in intricacy and scale throughout Hendrian's artistic practice.

He has held several solo shows; these include *Incognito*, The Arts House, Singapore (2024); *Incognito* at Art Jakarta, Jakarta, Indonesia (2022); *Constructed _scape* at Sullivan+Strumpf Singapore (2020); *Some Other Matter* at Aloft at Hermes, Singapore (2019); *SANS*, at Sullivan+Strumpf Singapore (2018); and *Terenne* at Jeonbuk Museum of Art, South Korea (2016). Hendrian's works are in the collection of Deutsche Bank, Germany; Jeonbuk Museum of Art, South Korea; Museum MACAN, Indonesia; Singapore Art Museum, Singapore; and Tumurun Museum, Indonesia.

IRFAN HENDRIAN

b.1987

Lives and works in Bandung, Indonesia

Hendrian explores both his personal experiences and the collective trauma that has shaped the coming-of-age of many Chinese Indonesians (Tionghoa) by delving into the indelible chapters of harsh governmental policies targeting the community. *Foreign Build* is a continuation of his previous series, *Unobtainable Build*, which focuses on a specific aspect of the Tionghoa community in Yogyakarta, Indonesia. According to a 1975 edict from the Special Region of Yogyakarta, which is still in effect today, Indonesian citizens of non-local descent are prohibited from full ownership of property in the province. Hendrian uses documents referencing these laws and restrictions, stacking and compressing them to form barriers and structures. Images of shophouse facades, found in the Chinatowns around Java, are reworked into abstract ciphers, concealed within the stacks of paper that suggest shutters or blinds. Through this visual metaphor, he conveys the persistent sense of insecurity experienced by the community.



Irfan Hendrian

Foreign Build I, 2025
risography and dye cut on layers of paper
56 x 69 x 9 cm





Irfan Hendrian

Foreign Build 2 , 2025
risography and dye cut on layers of paper
57 x 52 x 9 cm



Irfan Hendrian

Foreign Build 3, 2025
risography and dye cut on layers of paper
48 x 61 x 9 cm

Lai Yu Tong is an artist from Singapore who works across drawing, image-making, sculpture and sound. His practice is interested in creating adequate media to articulate the present, believing in the intrinsic need for humans to make images and tell stories. Besides his art, Lai regularly publishes books under Thumb Books, a self-founded press that makes children's books for both children and adults. His recent curatorial projects include Frida, an exhibition platform by his kitchen window; and Robin, a series of group exhibitions held in camping tents around Singapore.

His selected solo exhibitions include Tom's Day Out, Temporary Unit, Singapore (2022); Cardboard Lamps & Adequate Images, Comma Space, Singapore (2021); and It's strange I feel like I've seen this one before, DECK, Singapore (2019). Yu Tong has participated in numerous group exhibitions such as Restless Presences, Radio28cs, Mexico City, Mexico (2025); Lineage: The Winston Oh Travelogue Award 25 Year Anniversary, LASALLE Institute of Contemporary Art, Singapore (2024); Ode to Absence, ADM Gallery, Singapore (2024); and Time Present Time Past, DECK, Singapore (2022). Lai Yu Tong is one of the recipients of the Singapore Art Museum Arts Funds at the S.E.A Focus 2025, Singapore.

LAI YU TONG

b.1996

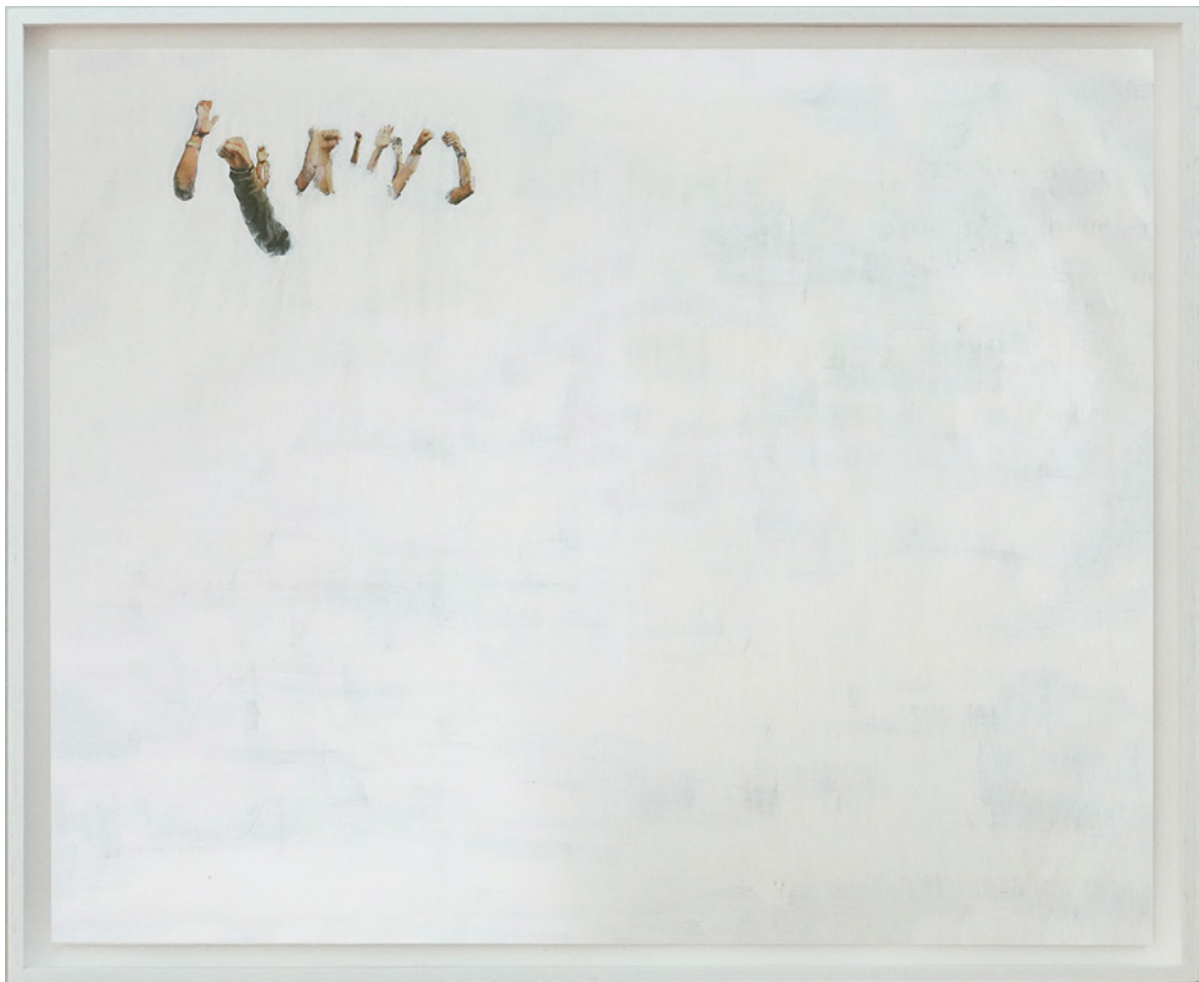
Lives and works in Singapore



Lai Yu Tong

Newspaper Painting No.37, 2018
synthetic polymer paint on newspaper
63 x 76 x 4 cm (framed)
57.5 x 70 cm (unframed)

Lai Yu Tong builds a practice that centers on articulating the present and creating media that adequately reflect the times we live in. Originally trained as a photographer, his series *Newspaper Painting* marks a shift in his practice prompted by the theft of his first DSLR camera—an event that led to the realization that he might not need it after all. The series involves painting over selected newspaper spreads with white acrylic paint, a response to the growing overproduction and overconsumption of images in the present day. He paints over printed text and graphics, intervening in a medium traditionally regarded as a primary source of public information. Through the process of erasure and selective preservation, Yu Tong alters both text and imagery until a composition emerges.



Lai Yu Tong

Newspaper Painting No.89, 2020
synthetic polymer paint on newspaper
63 x 76 x 4 cm (framed)
57.5 x 70 cm (unframed)

His method involves a close reading of each page, through which he discerns recurring patterns in the newspaper's publishing cycle. For instance, he has observed the cyclical appearance of luxury watch and jewelry advertisements, occupying the centrefold of Sunday editions. Such insights inform his broader interest in systemic structures that operate beneath the surface of everyday life, often unnoticed unless deliberately sought out. Yu Tong's practice is marked by a consistent and sincere rhythm, drawing inspiration from the mundane and the ubiquitous with a quiet attention to the material and temporal layers embedded in the media we consume.

Natalie Sasi Organ examines fragmented historiographies, creating artificial yet familiar scenes of composite memories and territories. Investigating the liminalities of her own biracial experience, Sasi Organ confronts the personal and cultural tensions of migration, displacement, and assimilation. Her practice, defined by continuous dualities and dichotomies, mirrors the binary thinking of cultural hybridity, also tracing the artist's personal search for living in the in-between. Forming a practice of recollection and recontextualization, Sasi Organ highlights the ephemeral and overlooked, challenging the subjective ambiguities of identity and memory.

Sasi Organ has participated in numerous group exhibitions including *Affinities*, Nova Contemporary, Bangkok, Thailand (2025); *We Begin with Everything*, ara contemporary, Jakarta, Indonesia (2025); *from here to here*, Nova Contemporary, Thailand (2023); *Hell: Arts of Asian Underworlds & Bernice Bing Open Call*, Asian Art Museum, San Fransisco, U.S (2023); and *Friends and Family: Part II*, Pi Artworks, London, UK (2023)..

NATALIE SASI ORGAN

b.1999

Lives and works in Bangkok, Thailand

Natalie Sasi Organ's painting, *The Devouring*, draws from the visual language of European modernism, particularly of chiaroscuro, which is known for its dramatic contrasts of light and shadow to create a sense of volume and three-dimensionality. Engaging with this Eurocentric art movement, Sasi Organ prominently incorporates elements such as highlights, midtones, deep shadows, reflected light, cast shadows, and intricately rendered drapery. While these formal features dominate the composition, a subtle yet significant detail appears in the bottom corner: the betel nut, a recurring motif and central symbol in Sasi Organ's broader practice, once known in Thailand and Southeast Asia as a symbol of ritual and kinship.



Natalie Sasi Organ

The Devouring, 2025
oil on linen, stainless steel engraved frame
100 x 67 x 3.5 cm



Natalie Sasi Organ

White Buds of Tuberoses in a Dark Night, 2025

overall oil on linen, stainless steel engraved frame, freshwater pearls, casted resin,
chainmail
17 x 60 x 10 cm

Sasi Organ's new works continue her exploration of a world shaped by the relics of a fading era. Rich in symbolism tied to status, connections, and womanhood, the betel nut weaves through her work as a central narrative thread. Her investigation is rather intimate as it is rooted in familial history, particularly the time when the betel plant was a recurring presence during her childhood. Her sculptural works, often cast in steel, stand as cold imitations of once-living practices. These pieces serve both as a continuation of her research and a testament to honouring the past while asserting her place in the present, continuing her interest in the dualities of things coming from Sasi Organ's mixed-heritage identity.



now,





Natalie Sasi Organ

Mind Your Legs, 2024

laser-engraved shelf, aluminium, and steel fan
31 x 18 x 2 cm



Jalan Tulodong Bawah I no 16, Senayan
Jakarta Selatan 12190
Indonesia

Tuesday to Saturday 11am - 7pm
Sunday 12-6pm

info@aracontemporary.id
www.aracontemporary.id
[@aracontemporary](#)