

Curators' Book

The Japan Foundation Asia Center | Art Studies Vol.04

Condition Report: Shifting Perspectives in Asia

About Art Studies 04

The Japan Foundation Asia Center Art Studies series is published by the Japan Foundation Asia Center with the purpose of deepening artistic exchanges in Southeast Asia.

The first three issues of *Art Studies* reviewed and investigated the conditions for art in Asia since the 1960s through the viewpoints of researchers, curators, artists, and cultural administrators, paying special attention to Southeast Asia. Shifting the focus to the current art scene, this fourth issue takes the form of a “curators’ book.” It is a collection of reports by the curators who participated in “Condition Report,” a collaborative art project developed by young curators from Southeast Asia and Japan from late 2015 to 2017.

The “Condition Report” project was conceived to provide emerging curators from Southeast Asia and Japan opportunities for networking and improving their exhibition-making skills by having them participate in workshops, research art scenes, and plan and execute four large-scale exhibitions and twelve small-scale local exhibitions and events. The project was structured to provide multiple channels and processes for responding to shifting environments and sharing curatorial strategies in their practices in the cities of Southeast Asia. The participating curators expended a great deal of energy, flexibility, and negotiation in order to refine their curatorial ideas and further develop their practices.

In assembling the curators’ reflections at the close of “Condition Report,” this volume, *Condition Report: Shifting Perspectives in Asia*, gives form to the comprehensive platform of the project itself, while also serving as a publication originating from Southeast Asia that examines the ever-changing socio-cultural and artistic contexts and conditions for curatorial activities in the region. By having readers gain an actual sense of the environments in which young curators in the regional art scene work, the kinds of positions and roles they take, the concerns they address, and the kinds of practices they are developing, we hope to create a space for mutual understanding that builds towards the future.

In closing, we wish to once again acknowledge the curators who took time to participate in this more than two-year-long project, and furthermore contribute texts to this publication. We also thank Beverly Yong for her excellent work in editing this volume, and Horiuchi Naoko for her assistance with the Japanese texts. We are incredibly grateful to all.

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Art Studies 04

Condition Report:
Shifting Perspectives in Asia

Curators' Book

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**Condition Report:
Shifting Perspectives in Asia**

Curators' Book

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Introduction

Condition Report: Shifting Perspectives in Asia—a Curators' Book

* See appendix for fig. 04.

The premise of this book was to gather ideas and concerns about curating today from participants in the collaborative “Condition Report” project as a way of looking at current conditions for art through the eyes of curators working in Asia. “Condition Report” offers a broad base for an interesting range of perspectives, since it brings together curators from eight different countries in Southeast Asia, and from Japan. Most of these curators, both independent and attached to institutions, are relatively new to their practice, working in this project alongside mentors who are already leaders in their field. The project itself, carried out over two years and involving workshops, research trips, major co-curated exhibitions in four cities, and individual curatorial projects^[fig.04], has provided a multilayered experience of curating in Southeast Asia.

When asked to consider what they would like to write about for this publication, the participants responded with quite a mixed bag of ideas. There was no real consensus on what a book by curators, in relation to the project's theme, “What is Southeast Asia?” should include. Subject matter was proposed and negotiated; proposals took shape and changed as participants worked through their individual projects, and a few of them never materialized.

Among the 19 essays in the resulting collection, project mentors Che Kyongfa, Iida Shihiko, Ade Darmawan, Hattori Hiroyuki, and Patrick D. Flores take a macroscopic view of challenges and opportunities for curatorial practice in and in relation to Southeast Asia. Meanwhile, the younger participants have by and large chosen to address specific issues which are immediate to them in the local contexts in which they practice and/or their personal journeys, many of them drawing on their experiences during “Condition Report.” What is clear from the range of these contributions is that there are many considerations—discursive, practical, infrastructural and institutional, social and political, and personal—involved in curating today, and that the regionality pursued in the project's theme is multivalent, incoherent, and constantly in flux.

We have attempted to impose an informal order on this very diverse collection of texts, grouping them into broad areas of concern. It begins

by addressing Southeast Asia as a site of curation and curatorial learning, and moves into discussions about curatorial and artistic practices, negotiating a place for contemporary art in developing national contexts, and improving infrastructure, communication and discourse. At the latter end of the publication, participants offer personal reflections on their experience as curators, and of the “Condition Report” program in particular, bringing up issues of learning, relationships, politics, and ethics in practice.

What is Southeast Asia?

“Condition Report” explores the question of “What is Southeast Asia?” The first two essays in this collection discuss the significance of Southeast Asia in this and other curatorial projects initiated in Japan, providing a useful framework for considering the collection as a whole.

For Furuichi Yasuko, Art Coordinator at the Japan Foundation Asia Center, Southeast Asia is a site for constructing collaborative space. As program director, she introduces the concept, motivation and methodology behind “Condition Report” and preceding projects by the Japan Foundation which have focused on collaborations with young curators in Asia since 2000, and specifically Southeast Asia since 2013. Growing from the Asia Center’s original mandate to promote understanding of Asian art in Japan, this kind of programming has developed over time to meet changing circumstances, providing opportunities for building networks and developing human resources within the regional art scene as well as between the region and Japan. Furuichi’s approach is infrastructural—collaborations with and within Southeast Asia, and the artistic and curatorial explorations and experimentations which grow out of them, help to construct the future environment for art in Asia as a whole.

Che Kyongfa puts “Condition Report” and other regional curatorial projects initiated in Japan under closer scrutiny. In her essay, making a curatorial claim for Southeast Asia is inherently problematic from a number of perspectives. How much is this colored by political and diplomatic agendas towards the region? How relevant is it to a new generation of curators busy addressing concerns in their more immediate local contexts? What does or can it mean to curators, and more importantly, audiences in Japan? How does one curate “Southeast Asia” without objectifying it and trapping its artists in the gaze of the other? The essay brings up such issues to provoke further thought, and calls for self-reflexivity on the part of curators approaching the regional subject. A project like “Condition Report” prompts the kind of probing, experiment, and discussion needed to keep the site of curatorial practice open to more expansive discourse and thinking, collaboration being one step towards reciprocity.

Shifting Practices

Iida Shihoko discusses current conditions for curatorial practice and the challenges of representing and evaluating contemporary art and

curatorial practices in Southeast Asia. These include the limitations of the exhibition, as an experience particular to a time and space, and the difficulty of translating art practices from one context to another, as well as prevailing mindsets about difference and assumptions about art. In an evolving context loaded with geopolitical/postcolonial considerations, it is important to consider where value is located and how it is produced. For example, the practices of collectives like ruangrupa in Indonesia, where emphasis is on breaking down hierarchies, group self-management, and engagement with communities, do not fit comfortably into art world systems based on a Western “modernist” model, nor do they necessarily correlate to notions of participatory practice developed in the Euro-American context. In the process of working on “Condition Report,” “provisionality” was identified as a useful descriptor for and characteristic of Southeast Asia, countering static definitions of the region, and open to shifting values and practices.

Ade Darmawan, one of the founders of ruangrupa, expands on the positioning and methodology of collective art practices in Indonesia, centering on the idea of sharing space and conversation. Rooted within their surrounding communities and finding non-hierarchical, organic means of organization and decision-making, these practices open up the dynamic of art’s relationship to and role in society through their events and activities. Addressing the challenge of how to curate such practices in an exhibition context, a fresh approach was taken during the collaborative exhibitions for “Condition Report,” where the curators were invited to work as part of a temporary collective, *Sindikata Campursari*.

Hattori Hiroyuki describes the sympathy and inspiration he has found in collective practices encountered around Southeast Asia in relation to his own practice as an independent curator and organizer in Japan. Drawing parallels between the grassroots activities of these regional collectives and the early 20th century Japanese folk art movement, *Mingei*, he is interested in their capacity and potential for creating public space through art.

Lisa Ito-Tampang looks at how curators have responded to more politicized forms of social engagement in artistic practice, drawing on her research and experience working on her exhibition “Dissident Vicinities,” which addressed the work of artist-activists and collectives in relation to people’s movements for liberation and rights in the Philippines. She surveys ways in which curatorial projects in the Philippines and elsewhere in the world have sought to represent cultural activism, and argues for the importance of such efforts in foregrounding practices of dissent, calling for curators to recognize a responsibility “to intervene where inequality... persists.”

The essays here discuss practices which emphasize social and political engagement, that have perhaps partly grown out of specific circumstances such as a culture of community organization in Indonesia or a tradition of protest in a Philippine political context which has been in perpetual crisis for decades. Such practices invite a rethinking of curatorial roles and approaches, answering a broader urgency to find

new, relevant ways of representing and positioning art in society beyond familiar, modernist frameworks based on Euro-American models.

Negotiating National Contexts

Conditions for curating differ vastly between countries in Southeast Asia.

“Condition Report” is the first of the Japan Foundation Asia Center’s curatorial workshop programs to include participants from Myanmar, Cambodia, and Laos, where infrastructure and discourse supporting contemporary art is at best minimal.

Independent curator and artist Aung Myat Htay introduces the art scene in Myanmar, laying out the challenges in place for the acceptance and development of curatorial practices, briefly describing the character and history of current art practices, and proposing collaboration and collective strategies as ways of working towards a thriving contemporary art scene. Artist and educator Souliya Phoumivong writes about his hopes for change and improvement in art practice in Laos, where the convention is paintings of local landscape and culture, and his ideas for introducing new media as an effective way of communicating ideas and expressing responses to social issues. Unfortunately, his proposed project for “Condition Report,” an exhibition inviting Lao artists to use new media to explore changes happening in Laos today, could not be realized.

For both writers, living in countries which are beginning to open up to globalization, the development of art is part and parcel of social development and the nation-building process. As curators, they assume a role in helping to negotiate the future of their art scenes, and being included in Southeast Asia provides a useful frame of reference.

Institutions, Communication, and Discourse

Infrastructural development remains a core concern for most art scenes in the region. While artist-run and collective-based projects create important, productive spaces and systems supporting art practice and engagement, they operate alongside more conventional mainstream structures, often compensating for their shortcomings. Even in Japan, with its extensive and formidable cultural apparatus, shifts in art practice and cultural discourse invite reconsiderations of approach and methodology. Here, curators address issues regarding and propose ideas for public spaces as sites where they operate, among other concerns affecting the development of curatorial practice.

Vittavin Leelavanachai looks at the challenge of engaging art audiences in the digital era of information overload and virtual accessibility. He surveys the most effective strategies employed by different types of art venues in Bangkok to attract audiences, and suggests that online tools could be better harnessed to promote activities and disseminate information.

Yamaguchi Center for Arts and Media curator Yoshizaki Kazuhiko

considers the issue of communication on a deeper level, specifically the role cultural institutions like art museums can play in society today and how they relate to the communities they serve. Inspired by his encounters with practices using art-based strategies to solve social problems in Indonesia, the United Kingdom, and at his own institution in Japan, he argues that a way forward for museums is to encourage the active participation of citizens in its life and work, taking a non-hierarchical approach in which the curator plays the role of a mediator, bringing together artworks, artists, and communities.

National Gallery of Indonesia assistant curator Bayu Genia Krishbie attempts to address the lack of leadership and underdevelopment of state-sponsored public institutions in the unwieldy context of Indonesia, where artist-run as well as privately sponsored and market-based initiatives provide the main support for a rapidly growing contemporary art scene. Introducing in brief the history and current landscape of museums, institutional collections and curatorship in Indonesia, he underlines the need for more institutional curators, formal curatorial training, and professional benchmarks.

Kurnia Yunita Rahayu takes up a different issue with curatorship in Indonesia, giving her essay the title “Indonesian Curators Do Not Engage in Enough Debate.” While her point is that more written discourse would enliven and give further meaning to the art scene, her punchy summary of topics that have spurred heated exchanges in the mainstream press provides a guide to some of the concerns that have preoccupied curators in Indonesia over the past 20 years—from how art, artists, and curators should be defined to fake paintings in exhibitions.

Learning, Relationships, and Responsibility

In the final part of this book, curators reflect on their personal journeys in curating in Southeast Asia, most of them drawing on the specific experience of “Condition Report” and lessons learned.

Patrick D. Flores, today a leading figure in the fields of curating and art history in the region, looks back at his participation in the first of the Japan Foundation Asia Center’s collaborative curatorial projects, “Under Construction: New Dimensions of Asian Art” (2000–03) as a moment of learning. He uses his essay to reflect on curatorial education, writing about the processes involved in “Under Construction,” of research, collaboration and exhibition making, working within the framework of a curatorial inquiry into a region (Asia), and the approaches and ideas he developed along the way. He then considers “Condition Report” in his capacity as mentor, comparing the structures and processes, and the groups of curators involved in the two projects, finding ultimately that both offered a methodology for honing talent and “troubling the curatorial at its every turn,” and as importantly, conditions for building friendships within the field.

Hoo Fan Chon and Le Thuan Uyen underline the importance of friendship in their respective essays on the relationship between

curators and artists. Being also a member of an artist collective, Hoo Fan Chon struggles with the power he holds over artists as a curator and feels that we need to reconsider this political dynamic, particularly in developing scenes in the region where curators are beginning to exert greater influence. Le Thuan Uyen writes about the importance of cultivating trust and friendship between curator and artist to create a deeper mutual understanding, and a more meaningful and equal working relationship. In Vietnam, where support for art is thin and there remains a culture of surveillance and suspicion, friendship also helps in mobilizing resources and creating a sense of shared passion and solidarity in the art community.

A transnational project like “Condition Report” naturally introduces some of the challenges that come with the increasing globalization of curatorial practices—of how to operate outside one’s comfort zone, remain grounded, and engage with different contexts.

Nakamura Fumiko writes about how she overcame her initial self-consciousness about being Japanese in Southeast Asia during her exhibition project in Chiang Mai. Once she had put aside assumptions about larger frameworks of nation and region, getting to know the place and the people she was working with on an individual level, the experience changed her ideas about exhibition making coming from a Japanese art institution with set protocols.

Conversely, Surabaya-based independent curator Ayos Purwoaji feels overwhelmed by the opportunities and exposure provided by the “Condition Report” project, and struggles with the question of “what next?” In his essay, he assesses the impact of “Condition Report” and other Japan Foundation Art Center projects for curators in Indonesia, making suggestions for how such programs might be improved.

Like Ayos, Alice Sarmiento felt uncomfortable with the fast pace of travel undertaken during the program, but here because it seemed to preclude real engagement or grounded research. In her essay, she forms a critique of the globalization of curatorial practice and the rootlessness it might seem to engender, and concurrently of the curator’s diplomatic role in cultural exchange.

Both Alice Sarmiento and Goh Sze Ying focus on a moment of crisis for the “Condition Report” project—the removal of an artwork by Sabahan collective Pangrok Sulap from the collaborative exhibition “ESCAPE from the SEA” because of its politically controversial content. Sarmiento proposes this act of censorship as a failure of curatorial diplomacy, a failure to engage; Goh goes further, considering the conditions which allow for such censorship, and the violent effects of its enactment on public expression as well as on the relationships built around the affected exhibition. Ultimately, her essay is a way of fulfilling what she argues is a curator’s responsibility, as a defender of the exhibition space and a cultural mediator, to reclaim the power displaced by censors, by “making room for difficult questions to be asked and contentious issues to be unpacked.”

The essays in this collection touch on many aspects of what it is to curate in (and about) Southeast Asia at this moment.

We intuit certain kinds of practices and strategies at play in Southeast Asia of particular interest to this group of curators, which have the potential to transform attitudes to and methodologies in how art relates to society. We may also start to see a picture of how different art scenes in the region are shaping up, and where curators see their role within them—part of the future infrastructure of Asian art envisioned by Furuichi Yasuko. And we learn what is important to curators emerging in Southeast Asia, as well as Japan, as two nodes in a larger context of globalized practice, as they exercise that important self-reflexivity both Che Kyongfa and Iida Shihoko call for in approaching curatorial work, expressing concerns about how to relate, engage, defend, stay true to themselves.

There is a sense that interesting things may be happening in curatorial practices, of new urgencies and changing maps. In places, support systems still need to be built or “fixed.” Partly because of the nature of the “Condition Report” project, and partly perhaps because of the informality and “provisionality” of working in art in Southeast Asia, much is predicated on relationships: collaboration, conversation, friendships, reciprocity.

Through these relationships, a collaboration such as “Condition Report” both registers and helps to shape changing perspectives on Southeast Asia. Bringing together the many voices involved in this project, this curators’ book hopes to deepen knowledge and articulate a clearer image of developments in the region’s art scenes, with a view to contributing to larger conversations on art in Asia and the rest of the world.

Beverly Yong and Furuichi Yasuko

The Construction of Collaborative Space and Its Possibilities 2000–2017: From “Under Construction” to “Condition Report”

Furuichi Yasuko

[Art Coordinator, The Japan Foundation Asia Center]

“Condition Report” is the latest addition to a series of collaborative projects with young Asian curators sponsored by the Japan Foundation since 2000. The series began with “Under Construction” (2000–03), which was followed by “Out the Window” (2004), “Have We Met?” (2004–05), “Omnilogue” (2010–12), “Media/Art Kitchen” (2013–14), “Run & Learn” (2014–15), and now “Condition Report” (2015–17).^[fig.01] None of these projects shared the same structure, as their forms of realization evolved in response to the times in which they were implemented. Reflecting the policy on art exchanges of the first Japan Foundation Asia Center period (1995–2004), the first three projects realized considered Asia as a whole. In contrast, the projects initiated after 2013 have focused on Southeast Asia, with “Condition Report” being organized as an initiative of the new Asia Center (2014–).

* See appendix for figs. 01–03.

There are also collaborative curatorial projects that have been co-organized by the Japan Foundation in Asia on the basis of institutional cooperation, as opposed to collaboration among individual curators. These include “Cubism in Asia” (2005–07, with the National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo, the National Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art, Korea, and the Singapore Art Museum), “Time of others” (2015–16, with the Museum of Contemporary Art Tokyo, the National Museum of Art, Osaka, the Singapore Art Museum, and the Queensland Art Gallery | Gallery of Modern Art), and “Awakenings” (scheduled for 2018–19, with the National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo, the National Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art, Korea, and the National Gallery Singapore). Although I will not touch upon the institutional collaborations in this essay, I would like to explain why and how the Japan Foundation began these types of collaborative projects involving Asian art in general.

Building Networks: From Introductory Efforts to Multinational Understanding

The Japan Foundation’s formal engagement with art exchanges in Asia

For more, see my contribution to the *Under Construction* catalogue. Furuichi Yasuko, "Asia: The Possibility of a Collaborative Space," in *Under Construction: New Dimensions of Asian Art*, exh. cat. (Tokyo: Japan Foundation Asia Center/Tokyo Opera City Art Gallery, 2002), 13–16. Prior to its work in the field of art, the Asia Center had success in collaborative projects with its theatrical production of *Lear* (1997).

began with the establishment of the ASEAN Culture Center in 1990. Initially, the goal was to introduce the best of contemporary art and culture in Southeast Asia to the Japanese people, but in 1995 the ASEAN Culture Center was restructured to cover a broader region and operate on an expanded scale as the Japan Foundation Asia Center, as which it implemented numerous projects for exhibiting contemporary art and promoting understanding of the social and cultural contexts informing that art. This was also around the time when Asian art was starting to be introduced in Australia, to the south, through initiatives like the Queensland Art Gallery's Asia-Pacific Triennial of Contemporary Art.

Entering the 2000s, the Asia Center's program still had the goal of promoting the understanding of Asian art in Japan, but in response to shifts in culture and society in Asia it came to emphasize regional exchanges based on collaborative projects, with the aim of fostering common values and building networks in Asia. The first of these collaborative projects was "Under Construction," led by nine emerging curators from seven Asian countries. Comprising both local exhibitions and a final comprehensive exhibition, this was an Asia-based collaborative/process-oriented project that sought to approach contemporary Asia from multiple perspectives through extensive dialogue and research guided by the main theme, "What is Asia?" The structure of "Under Construction" subsequently became the archetype for similar art projects that built networks through collaboration and sharing in the organizational process.^[01]^[fig.02]

Up to that point, exchange exhibitions had followed the form of having a single exhibition that toured to different venues, such as in bilateral exchange exhibitions between countries like Japan and the Philippines, or Thailand and Indonesia. Administrative formalities took time, as differences in languages and systems were a hindrance, and there were limits to the accessibility of each country. The development of information technology after the year 2000 not only reduced communication time, it also led to the creation of horizontal networks of actors in which information could be shared equally. That is, once the technological conditions were in place, it became easier to build networks across multiple layers from intergovernmental exchange to relations between individual artists, facilitating the diversification of actors involved in these exchange projects. And it was not just information: the emergence of cheaper means of travel and the lifting of visa restrictions eased the actual movement of people and increased the absolute volume of exchange. It could be said that collaboratively produced exhibitions like "Under Construction" were made possible because of such circumstances.

In "Under Construction" the development from initial meetings to a final comprehensive exhibition flowed from the process of carrying out the project itself, and not from a program that had been planned at the start. The comprehensive exhibition was a cutting-edge Asian exhibition that was held simultaneously across two venues, Tokyo Opera City Art Gallery and the Japan Foundation Forum, respectively,

and brought together all 43 participating artists from the local exhibitions organized in each country. From the long-term perspective, the project can be considered a major achievement, as many of the exhibiting artists went on to find global success, and the nine curators grew into contributors not only to their national art scenes but also to the international circuit.

On the other hand, since the comprehensive exhibition was conceived in the middle of the development process as an aggregate exhibition, it lacked the impact it might have had if it had been planned from the start in response to the theme “What is Asia?” This could also be considered a drawback of having an exhibition organized by multiple curators instead of a single curator. Moreover, at the start of the 2000s, the imagination necessary for obtaining a comprehensive overview of Asia may have escaped the curators, who were then in their 20s and 30s. As such, increasing the sharing of information, increasing the number of cooperative exhibitions, and raising the quality of the curation were deemed essential, and so “Under Construction” was followed by the implementation of “Out the Window,” involving curators from China, Korea, and Japan, and “Have We Met?” involving curators from India, Indonesia, Thailand, and Japan.

The issues that arise every time for the participating curators in these projects are what collaboration means when working with multiple partners on collaborative projects, and who should contribute what and how much.^[02] Communication between curators takes time, and negotiation requires a flexible yet tough mentality. However much work goes into it, there is no guarantee that a cooperative exhibition will come out better or more successful than one organized by a single curator.

As program manager, I always seek substance over results, but in fact it is undeniable that a sense of solidarity and cooperation has emerged among the participating curators and artists in all the projects, and that their networks have given visible form to the possibilities for new developments, opening up space for the contributions of future generations.

From Building Networks to Developing Human Resources

While the expansion of the Asian network built by its first three projects came to a halt after the Asia Center was dissolved in 2004, in a globalizing world, a clear expansion of other forms of networks was already taking place via the Internet.

In view of this situation, alongside the goal of building networks that has remained constant from “Under Construction” to “Condition Report,” the element of “developing human resources” was added after the establishment of the new Asia Center in 2014.

The new Asia Center has the mission of producing a new generation of actors for connecting Japan and Southeast Asia and developing art and culture across Asia. The year prior to its establishment, in 2013, “Media/Art Kitchen: Reality Distortion Field” (“M/AK”), a project

02

For a dialogue by curators on collaborative projects, see Pooja Sood, “Have We Met? Have We Told Our Stories? Will We Fall in Love?” in *Have We Met?* exh. cat. (Tokyo: Japan Foundation, 2004), 20–24.

showcasing media art involving Japanese and Southeast Asian curators and artists, was produced in commemoration of the 40th anniversary of Japan-ASEAN Friendship and Cooperation, recommencing a full-scale exchange program in Southeast Asia.

During the 10-year hiatus from 2004 to 2014, rapid economic growth in Southeast Asia progressed even further than before, and there was marked growth in the middle classes, who enjoy culture. Singapore actively incorporated culture into its national strategy, and alongside inviting leading galleries to set up branches there and launching art fairs and international exhibitions as part of its foundational art infrastructure, the government implemented a British-style art museum system, establishing the new National Gallery Singapore in 2015. Although public institutions have been slow to emerge in Thailand and Indonesia, private collectors have started building their own cutting-edge museums for contemporary art in those countries. Furthermore, the activity of artist collectives across Southeast Asia is as lively as ever, particularly in Indonesia. In Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, and Vietnam, the reality is that foreign cultural organizations, foreign gallerists, and artist collectives provide the main support for the local art scenes.

Accompanying the growth of the middle classes, public funds are starting to be invested in the field of art in the form of museum infrastructure and the implementation of international exhibitions. For curators to spread Southeast Asian and international art to local audiences through museum projects and international exhibitions, the holding of high-quality exhibitions is essential, while in terms of know-how it is necessary to increase the number of experienced curators and coordinators who can contribute to the regional art scene. Moreover, there is no single type of curator who is best for all contexts. Opportunities for disciplined training in response to these conditions are necessary.

It could be said of the new Asia Center's collaborative exhibitions that they reflect the concordance of current social and cultural conditions in Southeast Asia with the Japan Foundation's mission as a cultural exchange organization. Specifically, they follow a program by which the Japan Foundation's foreign centers take the lead in organizing open calls to attract potential curators who then participate in workshops with Japanese peers, after which the participants who advance to the next stage are selected from the entire group, and those participants plan and realize an exhibition by conducting surveys and engaging in dialogues on site. This is how "M/AK" led to "Run & Learn," a next generation curator development program in Southeast Asia, which was in turn followed by "Condition Report." In this way, the challenges of "M/AK" were taken up by "Run & Learn," and the challenges of "Run & Learn" were taken up by "Condition Report," reinforcing the human resource development aspect of the program while improving operational protocols and processes.

Condition Report

In planning these collaborative exhibition projects, there are a number of conditions that apply to the participants. First, as the program targets the next generation, the age limit is set at 35. Second, participants must be able to express their ideas in English, which is the shared communication tool. Third, they must have some degree of professional experience or be recognized for possessing especially rich inventiveness and intelligence.

On top of this, the general theme to be shared by all participants is decided in advance of the start of the project. The theme for “Under Construction” was “What is Asia?” and this time the theme for “Condition Report” is “What is Southeast Asia?” In both cases, the theme was a shared framework for producing an at times ambiguous and confusing situation that required all participants to rethink their assumptions. In each of these projects, once the participants were finalized, the first collaborative task was to consider and decide upon the title for the whole project using the shared language, English. From there, they worked toward realizing the project, breaking down the general theme into individual themes, selecting artists and works for exhibition, and discussing practical concerns like exhibition display.^[fig.03]

With the above-mentioned “human resource development” policy in mind, an open-call system was introduced with “Run & Learn.” In order to discover unknown talents, it was decided to cast a wide net through online media. Additionally, in “Condition Report,” a group of slightly older curators were brought on board as mentors to the younger curators. Prior to organizing their exhibitions, the young curators worked as a group to put together collaborative exhibitions by the mentors that were shown in Jakarta, Kuala Lumpur, Manila, and Bangkok, creating a chance for them to experience the possibilities and limitations of working in different countries with different systems, think about what they could contribute, and divide responsibilities.

When they were invited to Tokyo, the curators who were selected from five workshops in Kuala Lumpur, Jakarta, Bangkok, Manila, and Hanoi were split into four groups, and then sent on research trips to the four countries in advance of the collaborative exhibitions. The age difference between the mentors and the younger curators was kept to a minimum because we wanted the participants to have a shared generational sensibility. This is how Jakarta’s “Sindikata Campursari,” Kuala Lumpur’s “ESCAPE from the SEA,” Manila’s “Almost There,” and Bangkok’s “Mode of Liaisons” were produced. Departing from the curators’ individual interests, these four exhibitions were each highly distinctive, reflecting the senior curators’ understanding of Southeast Asia on the basis of their own countries’ historical and cultural contexts as well as the local art scenes.^[03] And then came the final stage of small, local exhibitions organized by the young curators across Southeast Asia. This time, the senior curators advised the younger curators on how best to realize their small-scale projects. Through this structure, the

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For more, see the catalogues for each exhibition: *Condition Report: Sindikat Campursari*, exh. cat. (Tokyo: Japan Foundation Asia Center, 2017); *Condition Report: ESCAPE from the SEA*, exh. cat. (Tokyo: Japan Foundation Asia Center & Kuala Lumpur: National Art Gallery/Art Printing Works, 2017); *Condition Report: Almost There*, exh. cat. (Tokyo: Japan Foundation Asia Center & Manila: Jorge B. Vargas Museum & Filipiniana Research Center, 2017).

communication network spread across multiple levels, and solidarity inevitably deepened across both understandings and misunderstandings (and, at times, also collapsed). The reason for having the local exhibitions come last was that, contrary to “Under Construction,” which assembled all the artists/artworks in Japan for its culmination, we wanted for this project to begin, develop, and end in Southeast Asia.

What is Southeast Asia?

Given its geographical conditions, Southeast Asia is a region of diverse ethnicities, religions and languages where many communities have deepened their political and economic relations after experiencing the progression from colonization by Western powers to postwar independence and nation building under the Cold War-era geopolitical structure. Formed in 1967, ASEAN (the Association of Southeast Asian Nations) initially had five member states and now has 10, essentially covering the entire territory designated by Southeast Asia. That is, Southeast Asia did not exist as a given from the start but is a geographic concept that was formed through numerous historical processes.

The main theme for “Condition Report” is “What is Southeast Asia?” Rather than prescribing it as a research topic from the outside, this project is an attempt to reconsider this question in the field of art, with the young generation who live in Southeast Asia taking the lead. The exhibitions that have been realized can be called a response to this question by the region’s curators and artists in this moment. This urgency is reflected in the title, “Condition Report.” It would be interesting to know what sort of messages audiences received from these exhibitions.

The space for collaboration in Southeast Asia has certainly expanded. Unfortunately, this kind of process-oriented project is unlikely to enjoy the same instant, visible acclaim as regular art events. Yet in thinking about the future of the environment for art in Asia as a whole, including Japan and Southeast Asia, there is no doubt about its importance.

Dogged persistence and passion are necessary for increasing the number and scope of multilevel networks in the region. I look forward to seeing what fruits they bear in 10 or 20 years’ time.

(Translated by Andrew Maerkle)

協働空間の構築とその可能性 2000–2017

Under ConstructionからCondition Reportまで

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古市保子

[国際交流基金アジアセンター 美術コーディネーター]

「Condition Report」は、国際交流基金が2000年より手がけているアジアの若手キュレーターによる共同キュレーション事業の最新のプロジェクトである。「Under Construction」(2000–03)からはじまり、「Out the Window」(2004)、「Have We Met?」(2004–05)、「Omnilouge」(2010–12)、「Media/Art Kitchen」(2013–14)、「Run & Learn」(2014–15)、そして「Condition Report」(2015–17)。[fig.01]これらのプロジェクトはひとつとして同じ構造のものではなく、実施する時代の状況に応じて実施形態を少しずつ変えている。2000年からの3つのプロジェクトは最初のアジアセンター時代(1995–2004)の美術交流事業の最終的アプローチでありアジア全体を対象としている。2013年からはじまった3つのプロジェクトは東南アジアを対象にしており、「Condition Report」は新しいアジアセンター(2014–)の事業として実施している。一方、アジア域内の共同キュレーションとしては、キュレーター個人ではなく組織間の協働を前提とした展覧会もある。「Cubism in Asia」(東京国立近代美術館、韓国国立現代美術館、シンガポール美術館、2005–07)、「Time of others」(東京都現代美術館、国立国際美術館、シンガポール美術館、クィーンズランド州立美術館 | 現代美術館、2015–16)、「Awakenings」(東京国立近代美術館、韓国国立近現代美術館、シンガポール国立美術館、2018–19予定)がある。ただし、組織間の協働については本稿では触れないことにし、まずは国際交流基金がこのような形態のプロジェクトを実施している背景の説明から始めたい。

fig.01–03については巻末のAppendixを参照のこと。

紹介から多国間相互理解へ、ネットワークの構築

国際交流基金のアジア地域への本格的な美術交流の取り組みは、1990年設立の「アセアン文化センター」から始まる。日本の人々に東南アジアの現代の優れた芸術文化を紹介することが当初の目的であり、1995年には対象地域と事業内容

詳細は以下の拙稿を参照。

古市保子「アジア：協働空間の可能性——アンダー・コンストラクション・プロジェクト」『アンダー・コンストラクション：アジア美術の新世代』カタログ、国際交流基金アジアセンター／財団法人東京オペラシティ文化財団、2002年、pp.10-12。アジアセンターの共同事業としては、先行事例として舞台芸術の分野で1997年の「リア」がある。

を拡大して「アジアセンター」となり、美術の分野では現代美術の紹介とその背景である社会・文化への理解を促進する事業を行ってきた。クイーンズランド州立美術館のアジア・パシフィック現代美術トリエンナーレ(APT)をはじめ、南半球のオーストラリアでも活発にアジアの美術が紹介されるようになってきた時期でもある。

2000年代に入って、従来の日本国内におけるアジア美術の理解推進という目的は継続したが、アジア地域の社会・文化の変化を踏まえ、アジア共通の価値観醸成とネットワーク形成を目指して、協働作業を通じた地域内交流を重視する方針をとるようになる。その最初がアジア7カ国9名の新世代キュレーターの共同企画である「Under Construction」であった。「アジアとは何か」という全体テーマのもとに、対話と調査を重ねて現代のアジアを複数の視点で捉える試みとして、ローカル展と総合展で構成されたアジア発の進行形・共同プロジェクトであった。この「Under Construction」の仕組みが、事業のプロセスを共有し協働することによりネットワークを形成していくという、それ以降の同種の美術プロジェクトの原型となった^[01]。^[fig.02] それまでの交流展と言えば、例えば日本とフィリピン、タイとインドネシアといった二国間交流の交換展であったり、ひとつの展覧会が巡回していく形式であった。また言語と制度の違いがネックとなり各国の窓口が限定されたり事務手続きに大変時間がかかった。ところが2000年以降のIT情報技術の発展は、通信時間を短縮するだけでなく、広く情報を提供し、水平的な担手のネットワークを形成していくことになる。つまり、技術的な条件が整うことにより、政府間交流から個別の作家間交流までいくつものレイヤーでのネットワーク構築が容易となり、交流事業における担手の多様化が進んだ。また情報だけでなく安価な移動手段の発達や査証の省略化等も、実際の人の移動を容易にし交流の絶対量を増やした。そのような環境が整うことにより「Under Construction」をはじめとする協働企画展が可能になったとも言える。

「Under Construction」を振り返ると、最初の顔合わせから最後の総合展までの流れは、プログラムの最初から組まれていたものではなく事業を進める過程から生まれてきたもので、総合展は各国で企画されたローカル展の出品作家43名全員の作品が、東京オペラシティアートギャラリーと国際交流基金フォーラムの二会場で開催され、同時開催のカットニングエッジ的なアジアの展覧会であった。出品作家たちはその後グローバルなアートシーンで成功を収めるようになった作家も多く、9名のキュレーターたちは当事国のみならず国際的に活躍するキュレーターに成長したことは、長期的な観点からは大きな成果と言えよう。

一方、反省点としては、総合展は事業の過程で発案された集合展で、「アジアとは何か?」というテーマに直接応答する総合展としての企画構成とインパクトに欠けたことが課題として残った。それがひとりのキュレーターが企画する展覧会ではない複

数のキュレーター企画であるがゆえの弱点とも言える。加えて2000年代はじめには、アジア全域を網羅するような視点を20～30代のキュレーターたちが持ち得なかったための想像力の欠如でもあっただろう。したがって共有する情報を増やし、協働展の数を増やし、質を高めることが重要と思われ、その後、「Out the Window」(日・韓・中のキュレーター)、「Have We Met?」(日・印・タイ・インドネシアのキュレーター)と継続して実施することになる。

このようなプログラムに参加するキュレーターにとっては、複数で企画する場合の協働とは何か、実際に、誰がどこまで何をするのかという課題が毎回ある^[02]。キュレーター間の意思疎通に時間もかかるし、交渉には柔軟かつタフな精神力も必要だ。どれだけ努力しても、成果としての展覧会がひとりが企画した展覧会より出来上がりが良いとか成功するとかいうわけではない。プログラム担当者の立場からいえば、常に企画の強度、質的内容に期待している。現実的には、キュレーター、アーティストの間に共感や共生の意識が生まれ、ネットワークが目に見える形で次の展開を見せて、次世代の活躍の場を拡げていったことは確かである。

ネットワーク構築から人材育成へ

最初のアジアセンターが改組によりなくなった2004年以降も、グローバル化の進む世界のなかでインターネットを介した様々な形態のネットワークは益々増加した。

このような状況を踏まえつつ、2014年設立の新しいアジアセンターでは「Under Construction」から「Condition Report」までのネットワーク構築という目的と平行して、「人材育成」という要素が加わった。新アジアセンターは、日本と東南アジアの若い担い手をつなぎ、アジア共通の文化芸術を創造していこうというミッションを持つ。その前年の2013年には、日・ASEAN友好協力40周年を記念して「Media/Art Kitchen: Reality Distortion Field」(以下、M/AK)を企画し、国際交流基金は再び本格的な東南アジア域内交流プログラムを開始することになった。

2004年から2014年の空白の10年間、東南アジアの高度経済発展はますます進み、大衆文化を享受する中間層が確実に増えた。シンガポールは本格的に文化を国家戦略のひとつに据えて、美術基盤整備の一環として有力画廊の誘致、アートフェアや国際展を開始するとともに、英国式的美術館制度を導入し2015年には新しいシンガポール国立美術館(National Gallery Singapore)を設立した。タイとインドネシアでは公的機関の歩みはゆっくりだが、個人コレクターによる最新の現代美術館建設が始まった。また、東南アジア全般にわたりアーティスト・コレクティブの活動はあいかわらず活発で、特にインドネシアは成功していると言えよう。ベトナム、カンボジア、ラオス、ミャンマーにおいては、外国文化機関と外国人ギャラリスト、アー

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協働をめぐるキュレーターたちの対話は、以下のようなものがある。

プージャ・スード「私たちはすでに出会っているのだろうか? それぞれの物語は語り合えたのだろうか? そして、互いに恋に落ちたのだろうか?」
「Have We Met?」カタログ、国際交流基金、2004年、pp.15-19。

ティスト・コレクティブの活動がその国・地域のアートシーンを支えている現状がある。大衆中間層の成長に伴い美術館の整備、国際展の実施というような形で公的資金が美術の分野にも投資されるようになる。キュレーターが美術館活動や国際展を通じて、東南アジア美術や国際的な美術を自国の観客層に広めていくためには、良質な展覧会が開催されることが不可欠であり、ソフト面では東南アジアのアートシーンに寄与する才能のあるキュレーターやコーディネーターの絶対量を増やしていくことが求められる。しかも、望まれるキュレーターのあり方は各国一様ではない。そのため、状況に応じて切磋琢磨する訓練の場が必要となる。新しいアジアセンターの協働企画展は、このような現在の東南アジアの社会文化環境と文化交流機関としての基金のミッションが併行して進められていると言ってよいだろう。具体的には、基金の海外拠点が中心となってキュレーター志望者を公募形式で募り、日本から同世代キュレーターも参加してワークショップを行い、全員の中から次の段階へと進む参加者を選定し、日本と東南アジアで美術調査と対話を重ね、展覧会を企画し実現するというプログラムとなった。これが「M/AK」に続く東南アジアにおける次世代育成プログラム「Run & Learn」であり、「Condition Report」である。こうして「M/AK」の課題は「Run & Learn」へ、「Run & Learn」の課題は「Condition Report」へと、引き継がれ、人材育成的側面を強化しつつ事業の仕組み/プロセスを改定し、実施していった。

Condition Report

協働プロジェクトを企画する際に参加者の条件としていくつか決めていることがある。第一に、次世代をターゲットにしているので年齢を35歳までとした。第二に、共通のコミュニケーション・ツールとして英語での議論が可能なこと。第三に、参加者はある程度の実績がある、もしくは目立って豊かな発想力と思考力が認められるといった点である。さらに事業の最初に全員に共有される大きなテーマを予め設定する。例えば、「Under Construction」では「アジアとは何か?」、今回の「Condition Report」では「東南アジアとは何か?」といった具合である。つまり参加者全員にとって時として漠然として理解不可能な、しかし誰もが改めて考えなければならぬ共通の枠組みである。参加者が決まった時点で、プロジェクト全体を覆うキーワード/タイトルを全員で考え、共通言語である英語で設定する。これが最初の協働作業となる。その後、全体テーマを各人が個別テーマに落とし込んでいき、個別のタイトルを決め、作家や作品の選定、展示方法など様々な過程の検討を経て、展覧会を具現化していくことになる。[fig.03]

前述したように「人材育成」という観点から、「Run & Learn」以降、公募制度を導

入した。未知の新たな才能を見出すためインターネットを通じて広く呼びかけることにしたのだ。クアラルンプール、ジャカルタ、マニラ、バンコク、ハノイでの5つのワークショップで選んだキュレーターを東京へ招聘した際に、全員を4つのグループに分け、それぞれインドネシア、タイ、フィリピン、マレーシアへの美術調査を行った。さらに「Condition Report」では参加キュレーターとあまり年齢差のない年長のキュレーターたちをメンターの役割で参加してもらい、グループで行うメンター世代の企画展を、ジャカルタ、クアラルンプール、マニラ、バンコクで実施し、参加する育成世代には、環境や制度の異なる外国で仕事をする際の可能性と不可能性を体験し、若いキュレーターたちが現場で貢献できることは何かを考え行動する機会を設けた。

育成世代とメンター世代の年齢差があまりないのは、時代感覚を共有できる範囲の世代で構成しようとしたためである。そのようにして、ジャカルタの「Sindikat Campursari」、クアラルンプールの「ESCAPE from the SEA」、マニラの「Almost There」、バンコクの「Mode of Liaisons」が実施された。これら4つの展覧会は、自国の歴史・文化的背景をもとに年長世代キュレーターの関心事から出発し、アートシーンを踏まえて東南アジアを捉え、各々極めて個性的な展覧会になった^[03]。そしていよいよ最後は、東南アジア各地での若手キュレーターによる小規模なローカル展である。今度は、年長キュレーターが育成世代の小企画をよりよいものにするために若いキュレーターにアドバイスをしていく番だ。このような過程を経て、幾重にもコミュニケーションの網が張り巡らされ、理解も誤解も含めていやがおうにも連帯が深まっている。(そして、時には破綻する)。

なぜローカル展が最後かと言えば、「Under Construction」が作家・作品を日本に集合して帰結したのと反対に、このプロジェクトは東南アジア各地で始まり東南アジア各地で展開され、東南アジアに開かれた形で終わることを目指したからである。

東南アジアとは何か？

東南アジアという地域は、地理的条件はもとより多様な民族、宗教、言語をもとに多くの地域が、西洋の植民地支配と戦後の独立、東西冷戦構造下での国民国家形成の過程を経て、政治・経済的関係性を深めていった。1967年結成のASEAN（東南アジア諸国連合）は当初5カ国から始まり現在では10カ国となり、東南アジアと呼ばれる地域とはほぼ同一地域となった。つまり東南アジアは所与のものとしてはじめから存在したのではなく、幾多の歴史的過程を経て形成されてきた地域概念である。そのことを再考する機会として「Condition Report」の全体テーマを「東南アジアとは何か」とした。

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具体的には各展記録カタログを参照。

- 1)「Condition Report: Sindikat Campursari」カタログ、国際交流基金アジアセンター、2017年。
- 2)「Condition Report: ESCAPE from the SEA」カタログ、国際交流基金アジアセンター／国立美術館／アート・プリンティング・ワークス、2017年。
- 3)「Condition Report: Almost There」カタログ、国際交流基金アジアセンター／フィリピン大学付属ヴァルガス美術館、2017年。

本プロジェクトは、東南アジアという概念を外部から研究対象として規定するのではなく、東南アジア域内に住まう若い世代が主体となって改めて美術の分野から考えてみようとするプロジェクトであり、実現化された展覧会は、投げかけられた問いかけに対する地域のキュレーターとアーティストからの2017年時点の応答とも言えるものなのである。その意味も込めて、「Condition Report」というタイトルがある。鑑賞者たちはどのようなメッセージを受け取ったであろうか。

東南アジアの協働空間は確かに広がった。このようなプロセス重視のプロジェクトは、残念ながら通常の美術イベントのように目に見える形ですぐに評価されることはないだろう。だが、日本や東南アジアを含むこのアジア全体の美術環境の将来を考えるにあたり、事業の重要性は疑うべくもない。

幾重にも張り巡らされたネットワークの数を増やし、幹を太くしていくための根気強い継続と情熱が必要だ。10年後、20年後、どのような形での実りをもたらしてくれるだろうか。

Che Kyongfa

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Originating in 2015 with a series of curatorial workshops held in five cities in Southeast Asia, “Condition Report” was conceived to provide the young Southeast Asian and Japanese curators who were chosen for the project (including cultural producers pursuing curatorial practices in fields other than art) with opportunities to gain experience in different aspects of curatorial practice, ranging from collaborating on relatively large-scale exhibitions in Bangkok, Jakarta, Manila, and Kuala Lumpur to organizing smaller presentations on their own and contributing texts to this publication. My role was to facilitate the workshops in Manila and Bangkok and co-curate an exhibition at the Jorge B. Vargas Museum in Manila, but at each stage of the project I had to respond to the overarching theme chosen by the project’s organizer, the Japan Foundation, which was the question of “What is Southeast Asia?”

This theme recalls the question that was debated in the discourse and historicization of Asian art from the late 1980s to the early 2000s, “What is Asia?” Dialectically driven by the desire to seek out the essence and spirit common to art in the region defined as Asia and formulate these as a coherent discourse on the one hand, and the counter action that resisted and critiqued that desire on the other, this discourse made visible the potential for critiquing and rethinking the Eurocentric modernity that is inevitably—and in differing ways—implicated in modern and contemporary art in Asia. The development of this discourse on the art of Southeast Asia as part of this larger question was led by the countries in the region that already had economic resources and infrastructure: Australia, which emphasized inclusivity toward the art of the Asia-Pacific region through the Asia-Pacific Triennial of Contemporary Art and exchange programs with Southeast Asia such as the Artists’ Regional Exchange; Singapore, which sought to become a cultural hub in Southeast Asia by creating a canon for modern and contemporary art in Southeast Asia through the establishment of museums and collections; and Japan, which, with the Fukuoka Art Museum (the current Fukuoka Asian Art Museum) and the Japan

Foundation as the two main conduits, introduced the modern and contemporary art of Southeast Asia in Japan and further developed the discourse on the basis of cooperation with researchers and practitioners in the region. Behind these developments was the turn toward building politico-economic alliances with Southeast Asia that was made by the above-mentioned countries. Following the economic growth of many Southeast Asian countries after the Cold War, Australia, Singapore, and Japan, having already achieved economic success through the changes in geopolitics, increased their focus on the region in their cultural policies. That is, the approach to Southeast Asia in Asia is connected to a certain degree with cultural diplomacy, and when viewed from a certain angle, it appears that what shifted the attention from the West to Asia were the attempts by each country, in anticipation of a new global era, to establish its position in the cultural hegemony. In this nationalism-based cultural politics, even as the “art of (Southeast) Asia” was formed and modified by the dominant forces generating discourse, there were also many elements that were excluded or occluded in the process. In fact, the Japanese gaze on “Asia” has been criticized by researchers for being imperialist, while Singapore and Australia have also encountered opposition and criticism from their neighbors with regard to the infrastructural advantages that facilitate their hegemonic influence.

Meanwhile, however, specific research on the modern and contemporary art of each country in Asia has been gradually furthered by researchers both within the region and beyond, while the art market and infrastructure have expanded and matured, new art organizations and biennales have materialized, and projects and small-scale organizations rooted in particular communities and regions have emerged and disappeared. Amid these hectic changes, there has been an incredible development of networks of curators and artists in Asia, and with the continued diversification of approaches to curatorial practice, it now feels as though the discourse on “What is Asia?” is already history.

So what possibilities for inquiry, dialogue, and practice did the question “What is Southeast Asia?” provide to the participants in the “Condition Report” project? I took it as an open-ended question, as an opportunity to use curatorial practice to investigate from a specific site the current, dynamically changing geopolitical situation in Southeast Asia, where individual countries continue evolving politically and economically while mutually influencing each other. In fact, many of the concerns and themes in the projects developed by the young curators from Southeast Asia who participated in my workshop responded to the specific contexts and issues of their own societies, focusing on their inquiries into how to integrate these into curatorial practice. Apart from considering the concerns in their curatorial practices, it was also apparent that the question of how to understand Southeast Asia was for the participants not an urgent issue with the same substance as what had been addressed in the past. Rather, it is almost as though the incoherence apparent among their projects was an indirect response to the theme.

It could be said that the potential meanings of the question and the structure of the project itself presented significantly different challenges for the curators who came from the participating Southeast Asian countries and for the “outside” curators from Japan. The curators from Southeast Asia were faced with the question of how to achieve a critical approach to the constantly reimagined community of Southeast Asia. Meanwhile, the Japanese curators invited by the Japan Foundation, who traveled to Southeast Asia (some for the first time), participated in discussions with the curators who came from the Southeast Asian countries, and had to plan an exhibition on site, could not avoid facing questions, as cultural producers, about cultural geopolitics, such as why (aside from the motive of professional curiosity or the desire to acquire resources such as networks and information/knowledge about the region) they would want to engage with Southeast Asia and make an exhibition there, or what Southeast Asia means to Japan (and Japanese people). On those occasions, there may have been times when, in confronting the social and political context of Southeast Asia, they probably could not help being self-conscious about being Japanese, and about the historical relations between Japan and Southeast Asia.

In order to formulate an exhibition with integrity and necessity, it is necessary to self-reflexively investigate one’s motives for “being involved,” and assess one’s standing in a relationship that is neither familiar nor completely new and neutral—even if the opportunity to participate in the project was given by the organizer. As such, it is not only essential to have a visual or linguistic dialogue or negotiation with artists and viewers through one’s curatorial practice, but also to know how to formulate an exhibition and mediate its representation, as well as to be willing to investigate one’s own subjectivity. Without such self-reflexivity, it is impossible to build a horizontal, reciprocal relationship for eliciting new knowledge or imaginative possibilities in response to criticism by other Asian professionals regarding the modality of representation that objectifies (Southeast) Asia as an anthropological “other” from a hegemonic perspective—evident in the exhibitions and discourse on Southeast Asia that have originated in Japan to date—or through a transnational curatorial practice that can overcome mutual psychological distance.

Delving into the recent past, Nakamura Hideki, who was involved in many of the exhibitions of Asian contemporary art held in Japan in the 1990s, posed the question “Who ‘Introduces’ What to Whom and Why?” at the symposium “Asian Art: Prospects for the Future,” hosted by the Japan Foundation Asia Center in 1999. Nakamura asserted that although the introduction of Asian contemporary art in Japan by public institutions and museums had to an extent stimulated exchange between art professionals in Japan and other Asian countries, it did not engage the general audience or make a significant impact on the local art scene in Japan. One reason he gave for this was that, instead of spontaneously emerging from the initiative of people working in the art

scene, the introduction of Asian art in Japan was burdened by a political and commercial agenda that had nothing to do with the Japanese zeitgeist. He further stated that ambiguities about "why" and "to whom" this introduction was being made reflected a lack of awareness that taking a global perspective while being rooted in Japan, and introducing other cultures with a mind toward expanding the Japanese worldview, is the best way to show respect for those cultures. [01]

Since then, there have been more opportunities in Japan for individual presentations of artists from Southeast Asia through exhibitions, residencies, and art festivals organized by institutions of varying scope as well as at commercial galleries. Through this, the connections between art professionals in Japan and Southeast Asia, including artists, curators, and organizers, have continued expanding. But does this really mean that the lack of initiative identified by Nakamura has now been overcome? Amid the spectacularization of contemporary art as a cultural industry that relies on stakeholders in both the governmental and private sectors, there is a tendency toward Southeast Asian artists being consumed by a gaze that (still) expects the peculiarity inherent in otherness. Furthermore, because of the alarming spread of narrow-minded and intolerant attitudes toward otherness across society in recent years (and not just in Japan), sites for cultural production have sought to disinfect themselves, and the room for sharing diverse visions is increasingly circumscribed. Perhaps it could even be said that Nakamura's "initiative" is actually more strictly reined in than before. Of course, it is impossible to make decisive judgments about the current situation. The reality is that many cultural producers in art institutions and organizations in Japan are exploring what they can do, while also dealing with challenges such as budget limitations and quotas for visitor numbers, and negotiating political relationships with the government.

It is precisely because autonomy in cultural production is being threatened by increasingly neoliberal conditions and tighter center-controlled policies that curatorial practices that unravel existing conditions and subjectivities, and seek out and visualize new forms of imagination and knowledge, must be updated and refined. To make way for this, the site of curatorial practice must open a horizon for more expansive thinking that can explore the question of who we are not instead of defining who we are, and allow for alterity.

"Condition Report" went through multiple phases over a two-year period: from workshops and discussions about the significance and structure of the project involving curators who played mentor-like roles, to research in Japan and research in Southeast Asia in preparation for the international exhibition, as well as the implementation of the exhibition itself, and then the planning for individual projects by the workshop participants. The dialogues shared by the participants in order to communicate their activities, critical sensibilities, and interests emerged from a mutual sympathy, from wanting to learn more about

each other. Building trust and camaraderie in this way may lead to more personal friendships or collaborations and exchanges following the conclusion of the project. It is my hope that such relationships will produce collaborations and projects that lead to the cultivation and sharing of a more flexible and radical imagination.

(Translated by Andrew Maerkle)

相互作用と変化に向けて

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「Condition Report」は、2015年から東南アジアの5都市で行われたキュレーター・ワークショップから始まり、そこでの提案企画が選ばれた東南アジアと日本の若い世代のキュレーター（美術以外の専門分野からキュラトリアルな実践を志す文化生産者を含む）による、バンコク、ジャカルタ、クアラルンプール、マニラいずれかの都市で行われた比較的大規模な展覧会への参加や、彼らが個々に実施した小規模な展示、そしてこの出版物への寄稿と、一連のキュラトリアルな実践を行うためのプロジェクトであった。これにおける私の役割の大きなものとしては、マニラとバンコクでのワークショップのファシリテートと、マニラのヴァルガス美術館で行われた展覧会の共同キュレーションであったが、このプロジェクトを組織した国際交流基金が全体を通して掲げたテーマは「東南アジアとは何か？」であり、プロジェクトの各段階で、この問いに対する何らかの応答を求められた。

この「東南アジアとは何か？」という問いは、1980年代後半から2000年代初めにかけて、アジアの美術を巡る言説の構築と歴史化の過程で論じられた「アジアとは何か？」という問いを想起させる。議論は、アジアと括られる地域の美術に共通する本質や精神性を求め、あるまとまりをもたせて言説化しようとする志向性と、それに対する批判や抵抗という循環運動によって、アジア各国の近現代美術が不可避免的に、また異なる仕方でも内包している西欧近代に対する批評と再考の可能性を生み出した。「アジア」の一部である東南アジアの美術に関する言説形成を推し進めてきたのは、アジア内ですでに経済的な資源とインフラを持っていた国々であった。つまり「The Artists' Regional Exchange」で行われた東南アジアとの交流事業や、アジア・パシフィック現代美術トリエンナーレなどで、アジア太平洋地域の美術に対する包括性を強調したオーストラリア、東南アジア美術に焦点を当てた美術館とコレクションの構築によって、この地域の近現代美術に関する正史

を創出し、文化的ハブとなることを目指したシンガポール、そして、主に福岡市美術館——現在の福岡アジア美術館——と国際交流基金を軸として、東南アジア美術の国内紹介や、国内外の研究者や実践者たちの協働をベースに言説構築と交流を進めてきた日本である。そのような動きの背景には、冷戦後、東南アジアの多くの国々が経済的発展を遂げ世界的地政学が変化したことによって、上記のような国々が、東南アジアとの政治経済的同盟を強化すべく舵を切り、文化政策においてもこの地域における協力や交流を重視するようになったということがある。異なる角度から見れば、アジア内における東南アジアへの関心は、程度の差こそあれ、外交上のアジェンダと結びついており、新たなグローバル時代を見据えた、文化覇権を巡る各国のポジション確保のための動きでもあった。そのようなアジェンダとナショナリズムに支えられた文化政治において、「(東南)アジアの美術」は、言説を生成する覇権的な力によって形成され、変容されてきたと同時に、多くの要素が排除され不可視なままにされてきた。実際、日本の「(東南)アジア」に対する眼差しは、他国の研究者たちから帝国主義的であるとの指摘を受けてきたし、シンガポールやオーストラリアも、そのインフラが可能にする覇権的な力に対しての、周辺国からの抵抗や批判を受けてきた。

その一方で、徐々にアジア各国の近現代美術に関する個別的、具体的な研究がアジア内外の研究者によって進み、美術市場やインフラが拡大し、いくつもの新たな美術組織やビエンナーレが立ち上がり、また特定のコミュニティや地域に根付いたプロジェクトや小規模な組織が生まれ、消えていった。その目まぐるしい変化の中で、アジア内のキュレーターやアーティストのネットワークも広がり、キュラトリアルな実践も多様化した現在、「アジアとは何か」という問題はすでに言説史となったような感がある。

では、「Condition Report」における「東南アジアとは何か?」というテーマは、プロジェクトの参加者たちにとって、どのような考察や対話、実践の端緒となりえたのだろうか。私はこれを開かれた問いとして、互いに作用しながらダイナミックに変化する現在の東南アジアの地政学的状況を、ある具体的な場所から、キュラトリアルな実践を通してどう考察しうるのかと解釈し、ワークショップや展覧会のコンセプトの出発点とした。実際、私が関わったワークショップに参加した東南アジア出身の若手キュレーターたちが発表したプロジェクトの企画にある多くの関心やテーマは、彼らの社会のある具体的な文脈や問題から導きだされたものであったし、キュラトリアルな実践を通じてそれらにどのように作用することができるかという考察がなされていた。それらを見ても、彼らにとって東南アジアをどう捉えるかという問題は、以前考察されていた時と同じアクチュアリティを持った、喫緊のテーマではないことを示して

いるようでもある。むしろ彼らのプロジェクトから見えてくるまとまりのなさが、間接的にテーマに応答しているようにも思える。

では日本人キュレーターにとっては、このテーマは何を意味したのだろうか。テーマだけではなく、プロジェクトの構造自体、東南アジアのいずれかの国にバックグラウンドを持つキュレーターと日本のキュレーターに、ずいぶん異なる課題を提示したと言える。東南アジアのキュレーターたちには、これまで繰り返し想像されてきた東南アジアという共同体に、いまだのように批評的にアプローチできるのかが問われた。一方で、このプロジェクトの主催者である国際交流基金からの招聘を受け(その中の何人かは初めて)東南アジアに赴いて、東南アジア各国から集まったキュレーターたちとの議論に参加し、かつ現地での展覧会の企画提案を行わなければならなかった日本人キュレーターにとっては、この地域に関する情報や知識、ネットワークといった職業的な資源の獲得や好奇心という動機以外に、「日本(人である自分)にとって東南アジアとは何か?」もしくは「なぜ東南アジアと関わり、そこで展覧会を行うのか」という、文化的地理学に関わることに對する問いに對峙せざるを得なかったであろうと思われる。同時に、自らの中に立ち顕われてくる日本人としての同一性や自意識、または日本と東南アジアの歴史的関係性を意識せざるを得ないということもあっただろう。展覧会が何を伝えるのか、説得力や必然性を持たせるためには、たとえプロジェクト参加のきっかけが組織による招請であったにせよ、馴染みがないながらもまっさらでニュートラルとはいかない関係性の中で自らの立ち位置を見定め、「なぜ関わるのか」という動機をまず自らの中で検証することが必要となっただけではないかと想像する。またそれには、キュラトリアルな実践を通して行われるアーティストや観客との視覚的または言語的な対話や交渉だけではなく、展覧会を通じて形成される表象や言説の基盤となる自らの知や主観の検証を引き受ける姿勢が要請されるのではないか。このような自己の省察なしには、これまで日本国内で行われてきた東南アジア美術に関する展覧会や言説化において、覇権的な視点から(東南)アジアを人類学的他者として対象化し「紹介」することに対する、他のアジアの実践者たちからの批判や、相互の心理的な距離を克服し、新たな知や想像を引き出すための水平的で相互作用的な関係性を築くことは不可能ではないだろうか。

少し遡るが、1990年代に日本におけるアジア現代美術の展覧会に多く携わった中村英樹は、1999年国際交流基金アジアセンターが開催したシンポジウム「アジアの美術：未来への視点」で、「だれが/だれに/何を/なぜ(紹介)するのか?」という発表を行った。ここで彼は、日本国内における行政機関や美術館によるアジア美術の紹介は、日本とアジア諸国の美術関係者の交流をある程度盛んにはしたものの、一般の観客の関心を引きつけたり、国内の美術状況に大きな影響も与えなかつ

たとし、その理由として、それまでの国内でのアジア美術紹介が、日本の美術に関わる人々の内発性に結びついたものではなく、政治的または商業的なアジェンダをにおわせ、日本の精神状況と無関係に行われたためであると指摘した。さらに、そのような「なぜ」や「だれに」といった問いが曖昧なままに紹介が行われてきたのは、「局所的にしてグローバルな視点を獲得するため」という目的や、「日本の精神状況を深化するために他国の文化を紹介することこそが、それに対する尊重をもたらすという認識が欠けているため」と述べた[01]。

その後、日本国内の異なる規模の組織による展覧会、レジデンス、芸術祭、そして民間のギャラリーでも、東南アジアのアーティストが個別に紹介される機会は増えつづけている。それにより、アーティスト、キュレーター、オーガナイザーをはじめとする日本と東南アジアの美術関係者のつながりは広がりを増した。

この状況を、中村が指摘した内発性の欠如の克服と捉えることが果たしてできるだろうか。現代美術が、行政・民間問わずステークホルダーに頼った文化産業としてスペクタクル化している中、東南アジアのアーティストたちは、他者が織りなす物珍しさを(未だ)期待する眼差しによって消費される傾向にないだろうか。加えて、ここ数年の傾向として、偏狭で不寛容な他者への態度が社会のいたるところで顕著に顕われるようになったことで(日本だけの話ではないが)、文化生産の場はどんどんと自らを無菌化し、異なる視点を共有するための余地を狭めている。中村のいう内発性はむしろより制限されている傾向にあると言ってもいいのではないだろうか。もちろん、現状を白黒つけて判断することはできない。多くの組織や文化生産者が、予算難や目標観客数というハードルや、行政との政治的な折り合いを付けながら、できることを模索しているのも事実なのだから。

だからこそ、中村が述べたように、「局所的にしてグローバルな視野を獲得」し、新たな想像力や知のかたちを模索するキュラトリアルな実践が更新されるべき時ではないだろうか。その風穴を開けるためには、キュラトリアルな実践の場において、「私(たち)は何者であるか」という問いよりも、「私(たち)は何者でないか」を模索し受け入れるための、開かれた思考の地平を創出し、自他ともに変化する可能性を湛えていなければならない。

「Condition Report」は2年にわたり、様々なプロセスを経た。プロジェクトが参加者たちに提示したのは経験や知識だけではなく、それぞれの局面でのコレクティブもしくは個人間での対話であり、それによって生まれた信頼関係であり、親密な友好関係である。そのような関係性を土台に生まれる今後の協働や対話が、より柔軟でラディカルな想像や知の生成に向けたものになることを期待したい。

The Provisionality of Southeast Asia: The Value of Shifting Practices

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Since my first involvement with contemporary art in Asia while working on the “Under Construction” project in 2000–03,^[01] I have had several opportunities to collaboratively work with curators and artists who have explored specific practices of modern and contemporary art of their respective regions, and made them globally recognized through exhibitions, working actively on international stage. This is a good moment to reflect on current conditions for curatorial practice in relation to the recent history established by such pioneers, and I will use this essay to examine the value of practices that shift in and out of the apparatus of art, while also reviewing a number of pertinent discussions regarding contemporary art in Southeast Asia.

The site of curatorial practice is not necessarily an independent, open field. It exists within the numerous institutions and politics that surround art in society, and it is constantly renewed and shaped by endless negotiations with these institutions and the changing times. In particular, in the 1980s and 1990s there was a flurry of art and cultural exchanges in Southeast Asia, East Asia, and the Asia-Pacific that resulted from the support of not only museums but also organizations like Asialink in Australia and the Japan Foundation in Japan, and numerous (collaborative) surveys and exhibitions have been carried out in these regions since then. Benefiting from these initiatives, debates over the reevaluation of modern and contemporary art history have evolved alongside new networks, and the revision of this discourse has gradually proceeded in recent years.^[02] But I often get the feeling that, once shifted to sites of discussion beyond the region’s islands and landmasses, the curatorial practices for contemporary art that were nurtured in Southeast Asia by such pioneering research and practices still do not enjoy sufficient recognition—even in Japan.

One reason for this is that the temporal and geopolitical fields in which an exhibition can be appreciated as lived experience are limited. Put another way, this is because the practices intrinsic to a time and place are transformed and lose their particularity when they are

01

“Under Construction: New Dimensions of Asian Art,” organized by The Japan Foundation Asia Center. After conducting research and organizing local exhibitions in Ashiya, Seoul, Bandung, Manila, Beijing, Mumbai and Bangkok in 2001–02, a comprehensive exhibition was held in Tokyo from December 7, 2002, to March 2, 2003, co-organized by the Tokyo Opera City Cultural Foundation. In all, there were nine curators and 43 participating artists and groups. The author worked for the comprehensive exhibition in Tokyo in her capacity as assistant curator of the Tokyo Opera City Art Gallery at the time.

02

Important precursors include the Fukuoka Art Museum’s Asian Art Show (first held in 1979–80, the exhibition evolved into the current Fukuoka Asian Art Triennale after the opening of the Fukuoka Asian Art Museum in 1999); ARX: Artists’ Regional Exchange, held in Perth from 1987 to 1999; and the Queensland Art Gallery | Gallery of Modern Art’s Asia-Pacific Triennial of Contemporary Art (launched in 1993). For more examples of pioneering projects, papers and references, see Kajiya Kenji, “Learning from Modern and Contemporary Art in Southeast Asia,” introduction, in *The Japan Foundation Asia Center Art Studies Vol. 03: Shaping the History of Art in Southeast Asia* (Tokyo: Japan Foundation Asia Center, 2017), 9–13.

03

Another reason that should not be overlooked is the lack of teaching about Asian modern art in Japan, as noted by Kuroda Raiji. Kuroda Raiji, "In Search of a Lost Totality: Teaching Asian Modern Art (in Japan)," in *The Japan Foundation Asia Center Art Studies Vol. 03*, 83–86. Adapted from a paper presented in English at the international symposium, "Locus Redux: Speaking Across Contexts, Learnings and Negotiations in Writing and Teaching on Art," held at the Yuchengco Museum in Manila on May 19, 2012.

04

See Nicholas Thomas, "Our History is Written in Our Mats," in *The 5th Asia-Pacific Triennial of Contemporary Art*, exh. cat. (Brisbane: Queensland Art Gallery, 2006), 27–29: "The issue that has tended to come up again and again is whether various African and Oceanic genres should be talked of as art... The imputation was that Indigenous art forms emerged from a wholly alien cultural space, that anything approaching their accurate characterisation posed formidable problems of translation or interpretation. Hence, in any instance of their inclusion in a non-native context, such as a collection or an institution, the issues of decontextualisation or inappropriate recontextualisation were inescapable... it cannot be doubted that global processes and cultural forms impact and are received locally in very uneven, diverse and unpredictable ways. Hence the cultures of the colonial and postcolonial world are neither purely exotic (they never were), nor have they become derivative expressions of the West (they are both less and more), nor can we see them productively as hybrids (that suggests too smooth and operation of blending)... If we need a more complex and nuanced vision of the complexity of the postcolonial world... we need to extend this vision to the arts of the modern and postmodern epochs outside the West."

05

A good recent example of this is "Kalpa Vriksha: Contemporary Indigenous and Vernacular Art of India," a special focus project within the 8th Asia-Pacific Triennial of Contemporary Art, held at the Queensland Art Gallery | Gallery of Modern Art, Brisbane, from November 21, 2015, to April 10, 2016.

brought to and shared in different contexts.^[03] From the geopolitical perspective, the particularity of not only Southeast Asia but indeed all postcolonial regions to date has been foregrounded by the difficulty of justifying curatorial attempts to relocate works from one place to another and translate them for different contexts.^[04] Moreover, with the continued rise in the mobility of people, information, and knowledge brought about by globalization, the focus of curation has turned toward fluid and hybrid artistic practices, without objectifying the relevant regions as static, *a priori* objects. As such, curation is expanding to encompass the reevaluation of the subtle but deep-rooted differences and commonalities, the indigeneity and internationality, and the social-political-historical conditions at play in such practices.^[05]

From the temporal aspect, the speed of diffusion and span of relevance for exhibitions attempting to present comprehensive art experiences that extend to space and physicality while transcending time to accumulate/develop experiences along with knowledge simply do not compare to the acceleration in the circulation of information brought about by social changes and media such as the Internet. Even so, as a transient event expected to deliver instant impact, or as a tool for representing the nation or region, the exhibition has been compared to projects for promoting diplomacy, trade, and tourism in capitalist economies. The worldwide proliferation of biennale exhibitions and art projects is another factor spurring on this situation. That is, when confronted with the reality that art practices intrinsic to each region and era are inevitably transformed in their reception as they are spread both regionally and beyond by the circulation of people and media, we naturally become aware of the conditioning and limitation/ephemerality of the exhibition as "a particular practice in a specific time." As such, the effectiveness of concepts of the particularity of region/time is short-lived and limited—and as dubious as those regarding authenticity. What comes to mind here is Paul Virilio's comment on the violence of the speed of the modern state:

If alacrity is the very essence of war, and if, as Kipling explained, "*the first victim of war is the truth*," then it is indeed necessary to state that *the truth is the first victim of speed*.^[06]

The evolution of speed represented by rail, car, and jet fighter is also the history of modern nations conquering others in order to test their own knowledge and power. The art of a Southeast Asian region that is now the object of intense scrutiny from all around the world might also be called a victim of the speed of modernization, in respect to how it has been repeatedly marginalized, exoticized, and represented to date.

In recognition of this limited particularity of the exhibition, there are a number of requirements for sharing the curatorial practices of contemporary art in Southeast Asia substantially, and not just as superficial information, both within the region and beyond. Curators who wish to do so must: 1) represent the unique context and aesthetics

of artists, works, and exhibitions, and produce values and knowledge that can be shared with contemporaneous peers; 2) allow the depth and flexibility for others to imagine the material in their own contexts, even where it might be impossible to completely exchange contexts; 3) develop a discourse that can be recognized by future generations as a resource with social/cultural value; and 4) resist speed (to share time and resist instant “comprehension” while creating a sense of community). In order to pursue these practices, I will further address some prevailing issues we face below.

First, the assumptions about where to find value differ depending on whether one is inside or outside the art system. Institutions “inside” the art system like museums, galleries, biennales, and art fairs, all presume that there is an autonomous universality of value to be found in the work—regardless of their differing missions and objectives. Even though the concept of “the universality of value” is itself a fantasy created by modernism, existing values are revised and new values created on the basis of this presumption. Tatehata Akira, who commented that this aspiration to universality is not a fantasy peculiar to modernism, but rather the “massive rupture” contained within modernism itself, once wrote:

It might be most appropriate to say that modernism did promote the idea of universal values based on rationalism, but as a result it also produced unavoidable conflicts (sometimes latent) between particular traditions. If differences exist, they are not differences from modernism, but differences caused by modernism.^[07]

The above-mentioned institutions all developed with modernization. If even now there are still conflicts or differences between the values produced by Southeast Asia and the universal values upheld by modernism, they result from an attitude that does not adhere to the self-justification of the modernist art system, and today they are better understood as horizontal “distinctions” instead of vertical “gaps.” It is not that they have yet to obtain universality, but rather that they have values and motives that exist on a different horizon from modernism in the West. This has been clearly stated in essays by Shioda Junichi and Apinan Poshyananda as well.^[08, 09]

On the other hand, “outside” the art system—at sites of production/practice that are not integrated into the value system of art institutions—there are indeed different assumptions for debating value. As is evident in the activities of the many collectives in Indonesia, importance is placed on breaking down hierarchy to produce an even community, as well as on identification with, knowledge production for, and co-ownership of that community; and on the self-management and sustaining of activities through an independent economic system that does not rely on the market. For instance, the slogan of the Jakarta-based collective representing the post-Suharto democracy

06

Paul Virilio, *Negative Horizon: An Essay in Dromoscopy*, trans. Michael Degener (London: Continuum, 2005), 125. First published in French by Editions Galilée in 1984.

07

Tatehata Akira, “Art as Criticism,” in *Asian Modernism: Development in Indonesia, the Philippines, and Thailand*, exh. cat. (Tokyo: Japan Foundation Asia Center, 1995), 201; revised and reprinted in *The Japan Foundation Asia Center Art Studies Vol. 03*, 32. The quotes here and below follow the revised text.

08

Shioda Junichi, “Glimpses into the Future of Southeast Asian Art: A Vision of What Art Should Be,” in *The Japan Foundation Asia Center Art Studies Vol. 03*, 46. First published in *Art in Southeast Asia 1997: Glimpses into the Future*, exh. cat. (Tokyo: Museum of Contemporary Art Tokyo, Japan Foundation Asia Center & Hiroshima: Hiroshima City Museum of Contemporary Art, 1997). “Briefly stated, the expression of individuality in a modernist sense is not the most important issue for these artists. Their concern is how to participate in the communities in which they live, how to build a better future for these communities, and what art can do to that end. This also holds for the artists who are involved in the search for their own identities, since they approach the problem of identity in the wider context of family, community and ethnic affiliation. This position is far removed from the thinking of Western modernism, in which absolute value is placed on individual creativity and the artist’s task is to explore a pure and autonomous artistic world... The establishment of art’s independence from society that occurred in Western modernism is an anomaly in the history of art. As Jim Supangkat says, the Indonesian modernism based on moralism has been proactively engaged with society and the defense of the common people. This can also be said for the modernisms of other countries in Southeast Asia.”

Apinan Poshyananda, "‘Con Art’ Seen from the Edge: The Meaning of Conceptual Art in Southeast Asia," in *The Japan Foundation Asia Center Art Studies Vol. 03*, 49–50. First published in *Global Conceptualism: Points of Origin, 1950s–1980s*, exh. cat. (New York: Queens Museum, 1999). "The New Art Movement was galvanized by social and political pressures within the local art scene, and not so much the desire to keep up with Western ‘isms.’ ... In the process, conceptual artists have gained confidence that their works are not merely stylistic quotations of Western ‘originals.’ In fact, many artists dismiss Western versions of conceptualism as self-reflexive, tedious communiqués between members of intellectual cliques."

"List of GB Fellows with Slogans," in "2016 Gwangju Biennale Forum: To All the Contributing Factors," reference material handed out at the Gwangju Biennale Forum, held September 2–4, 2016, as part of the 11th Gwangju Biennale. For more, see the dedicated website of the 2016 biennale, The 8th Climate, accessed July 28, 2017, <http://www.the8thclimate.org>.

Julie Ewington. "Five Elements: An Abbreviated Account of Installation Art in South-East Asia," in *The Japan Foundation Asia Center Art Studies Vol. 03*, 37–38. First published in *Art and AsiaPacific* 2, no. 1 (1995): 108–15.

Claire Bishop, *Artificial Hells: Participatory Art and the Politics of Spectatorship* (New York: Verso, 2012), 19.

generation, ruangrupa (founded in 2000), "Make friends not art,"^[10] might first appear to be playfully provocative, but it also reflects the socio-political background that group action has been considered an expression of resistance to the previous military regime. From their use of organizational methods that resemble associations who cooperatively run their spaces and share the funds and manpower required for their activities with other groups, and from the way they function as an alternative educational organization that sees the collective's entire activity as a site of learning through deep involvement with local artists and diverse communities, we can observe an attitude that places high value not only on works that result from individual creative activities, but also on the ecology of the community that is the matrix for producing such works.

In 1995, Julie Ewington already made the following observation about concepts of community in Southeast Asia:

Notions of community are far stronger in Southeast Asian societies than the sense of the individual personality which animates the practice of art in Western cultures...an essential part of their artistic functioning is not their appearance, however imposing; it is the opportunity that is offered for shared group action by the community.^[11]

Another issue that arises from the standpoint of values and group action as community is the question of how to recognize artistic value in cases where practices obtain significance from the participation of others and from their functioning in actual society. In recent years, practices in which artists address local social issues like education, the environment, gentrification, depopulation, prostitution, and human rights have become known in Japan under names such as social practice, socially engaged art, or the community art movement. Even when the use of these terms is a matter of expedience, similar practices in Southeast and East Asia are not contextualized in the regional art history in the same way as, say, social practice in the United States, which is rooted in art history thanks in part to the work of Suzanne Lacy, who was influenced by Alan Kaprow's aesthetics. This difference from the West in the established historical background and the aesthetics of such practices is still not fully recognized, except by a few scholars and researchers.

Addressing practices involving participation and social engagement, Claire Bishop writes:

In short, the point of comparison and reference for participatory projects always returns to contemporary art, despite the fact that they are perceived to be worthwhile precisely because they are non-artistic. The aspiration is always to move beyond art, but never to the point of comparison with comparable projects in the social domain.^[12]

This may be a reasonable conclusion when working on the assumption

of the universality of modernist values in the West, but as John Clark has also asserted, what brought about the correspondence of anti-establishment art with social practice and linked it with social issues in Southeast Asia from the 1990s onward was the effect of the spread and decline of modernist art.^[13] As such, social practices in Southeast Asia exist at the point where the two fields of art and society overlap, and they are contextualized there as practices that both offer an alternative to modernist art and have artistic value as a new orthodoxy, without resorting to the inversion of perceiving worth in the “non-artistic.”

Collectives are formed and sustained by the artistic/intellectual contributions of their diverse members, while the ecologies and aesthetics that distinguish such communities are produced by group action. It is only on this basis that it becomes possible to build, temporarily form, or reproduce new communities, working with special communities that bear their own problems. Taking this logic to its extreme, when seeking to find artistic value in practices that create communities, which incorporate the dynamic interactions between individual and group, it is necessary for a complete revision of the idea that worth can be found only in discrete, autonomous works made by individual artists.

Yet at the same time, we must keep in mind Tatehata’s warning that “the idea of ‘Asia’ should not be upheld as representing an oppositional value.” Tatehata continues:

Oppositionalism in the name of equality (what might also be called absolutist relativism) in fact entails stifling the ability to imagine the other. ... The prejudiced viewpoint that reduces the other to a single entity is not confined to the dominant culture, but can just as easily be maintained by the opposition.^[14]

Here I would like to return to the preordained questions that accompany curation over how to justify the attempt to relocate a work and translate it for a different context. Context-less external refinement and spectacularization reduce a work to its shell, but the desire to relocate the original context along with work also invites oppositionalism. If this is so, then it might be more productive to seek meaning in reconfirming the kernel of expression that remains even after the filtration and misinterpretations of relocation and translation.

In the collaborative curatorial project series spanning four cities in Southeast Asia that preceded this publication, “Condition Report,” the team in Jakarta attempted to establish a temporary collective, *Sindikata Campursari | Mashup Syndicate*, comprising nine artists, architects and collectives and six curators, including the author, from Southeast Asia and Japan.^[15] In Bangkok, three collectives, and a curator from the first group were joined by Thai artists in a new arrangement whereby the playful means of collaboration characterizing this syndicate were amplified, envisioning an imaginary nation through a series of works produced in response to the context of Bangkok.^[16]

13

John Clark, “Modern Art in Southeast Asia,” in *The Japan Foundation Asia Center Art Studies Vol. 03, 22*. First published in *Art and AsiaPacific*, Sample Issue (1993): 35–38. “With greater security for the art establishments now producing modernist art, the tendency seen in Bangkok and Yogyakarta for certain art schools to dominate state art exhibitions should produce a much stronger art anti-establishment with a wider range of small exhibition venues... In the Philippines, Thailand and Indonesia this art anti-establishment has begun to link its activities to social issues such as environmental despoliation, prostitution and AIDS, both through its subject matter and through the materials it adopts. This may mean a return of a new orthodoxy.”

14

Tatehata, “Art as Criticism,” 31.

15

“Condition Report: *Sindikata Campursari | The Mashup Syndicate*,” held January 14 to February 14, 2017, at Gudang Sarinah Ekosistem (Hall A4), Jakarta. See also the exhibition catalogue published by the Japan Foundation Asia Center, 2017. More information is available on the Japan Foundation website, accessed July 28, 2017, <http://jfac.jp/en/culture/events/condition-report-sindikata-campursari-1701140214/>.

16

Nid Noi Tan (a collective project by Sindikat Campursari) in "Condition Report: Mode of Liaisons," held March 31 to July 9, 2017, at the Bangkok Art and Culture Centre. See also the Japan Foundation website, accessed July 28, 2017, <http://jfac.jp/en/culture/events/condition-report-mode-of-liaisons-1703300702/>.

17

Ewington, "Five Elements," 36–39.

18

From an interview at Jatiwangi Art Factory conducted June 24, 2016, during a research visit with other members of the curatorial team in preparation for "Condition Report: Sindikat Campursari."

Through the Bangkok project's invocation/further development of the curatorial framework of Jakarta by jumping from establishing a temporary collective to establishing an imaginary nation, the idea of "provisionality" emerged as a commonality between the two. As was also suggested previously by the title "Under Construction," this perpetual provisionality could be considered a condition of locality in Southeast Asia. It was a critical response to the question of how to define Southeast Asia in the "Condition Report" project as a whole, and it also resonates with the possibilities and problems that Ewington identified in the historical context for installation art in Southeast Asia.^[17]

Even now, after all our advocating of multiculturalism, or in fact precisely because of it, assumptions of the universality of values based on discourses and art historical views developed in the West insistently appear in the site of curation as vestiges of colonialism. This is due to the above-mentioned limited particularity of exhibitions on the one hand, and also because there are still aspects where artists and viewers have yet to fully break away from those vestiges on the other. The artist's dilemma that "local people do not recognize our practice as art," which I heard on a research trip to Jatiwangi Art Factory in Indonesia, illustrates the deep entrenchment of this issue.^[18]

It is difficult to experientially share the value of group action as community outside of that community. But experientialism could have an exclusionary effect, and it is meaningless for curators who follow artistic practices that shift both in and out of the art system to view different sets of assumptions in binary terms. In the absence of a fully self-contained system, the resources brought to the sites of artistic production also derive from and are tied to the system. Considering that decisions determined from within contiguous systems could affect individual practices, there is no absolute "outside" for curatorial practice. Even under limited conditions, what curators must work toward, in collaboration with artists, is the continued production of values that can shift between contexts and systems. This is because the continued bridging of values from past to future is also the process of the historicization of the larger community of contemporaneity.

(Translated by Andrew Maerkle)

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筆者は2000年から2003年にかけて実施された「Under Construction」^[01]に従事したことを契機にアジア地域の現代美術に携わるようになって以来、国際的な活動をしなが各地域固有の近現代美術の実践を切り拓き、展覧会を通してそれらをグローバルに発信してきたキュレーターやアーティストと協働する機会を幾度か得てきた。キュラトリアルな実践に関する現状を、先達が築いてきた近い過去に重ね合わせながら顧みる好機として、本稿では東南アジア地域の現代美術について極めて示唆的な幾つかの言説を振り返りながら、美術制度の内外で揺れ動く実践の価値について考察する。

キュレーションが実践される現場は、決して独立した自由の平原ではない。それは社会のなかで美術を取り巻く様々な制度と政治の内に存在しており、時代の変化や制度との絶え間ない交渉によって都度更新され、形作られる。特に1980年代から1990年代にかけて、美術館のみならずアジアリンクや国際交流基金といった機関の後押しも作用し、東南アジア、東アジア、アジア太平洋地域間で芸術文化交流が興隆するのに伴い、これらの地域内で数多くの(共同)調査や展覧会が実施されてきた。その恩恵を受けて、ネットワークの構築と共に近現代美術史の再検証に関する議論が蓄積され、近年では言説の再編も徐々に進められている^[02]。こうした先行研究や実践によって培われてきた東南アジア地域における現代美術のキュラトリアルな実践は、しかしながら、ひとたび大陸や島々を隔てた地域外に議論の場を移すと、日本を含め未だ十分には認知されていないと実感することがしばしばである。その理由のひとつには、ある展覧会が生きた経験として享受される時間と地政学上の領域には限りがあることが挙げられる。その時と場に固有な実践は、別の文脈に伝達され共有される頃には変容し、固有性が失われるためと言い換えても良い^[03]。

地政学的な観点からは、文脈を異にする地域へ作品を移相し、翻訳しようとする

01

「アンダー・コンストラクション：アジア美術の新世代」は、国際交流基金アジアセンター主催。2001年から2002年にかけて芦屋、ソウル、バンドゥン、マニラ、北京、ムンバイ、バンコク各都市で現地調査とローカル展を実施後、東京で総合展(2002年12月7日-2003年3月2日)を開催(財団法人東京オペラシティ文化財団共催)。参加キュレーター9名、アーティスト43組。筆者は当時東京で開催された総合展に東京オペラシティアートギャラリーのアシスタント・キュレーターとして従事した。

02

主要な先行事業としては、福岡市美術館「アジア美術展」(1979/80年第一回展開催。1999年の福岡アジア美術館開館以降、「福岡アジア美術トリエンナーレ」)、1987-1999年にかけてパースで実施された「ARX: Artists' Regional Exchange」、クイーンズランド州立美術館|現代美術館「アジア・パシフィック現代美術トリエンナーレ」(1993年第一回展開催)等が挙げられる。他の先行事例、論考や参考文献については、以下の加治屋健司氏の序文を参照のこと。加治屋健司「東南アジアの近現代美術から学ぶ」『The Japan Foundation Asia Center Art Studies Vol. 03 東南アジア美術の歴史を形づくる|国際交流基金アジアセンター、2017年、pp.9-13^[英]/pp.111-115^[日]。

他の理由として、黒田雷児氏が指摘する日本におけるアジア近代美術教育の欠落も看過できない点であることを付記しておく。(黒田雷児「失われた全体を求めて(日本で)アジア近代美術を教えるということ」『The Japan Foundation Asia Center Art Studies Vol. 03』, pp.83-86 [英]/ pp.188-190[日]。所収論考は2012年5月19日マニラのユー・チェンコ美術館で発表された英語原稿に加筆、翻訳、編集されたもの。)

ニコラス・トマス「Our history is written in our mats」『The 5th Asia-Pacific Triennial of Contemporary Art』カタログ、Queensland Art Gallery, 2006年、pp.27-29参照:「何度も浮上しがちな問題は、アフリカやオセアニアのさまざまなジャンルをアートとして議論すべきかどうか、ということだ。…[中略]…先住民のアートの形態が全く見知らぬ文化的空間から現出しているということが、それらの特性を正確に説明しようとするあらゆる姿勢に、翻訳もしくは解釈という手ごわい問題を投げかけることになる。したがって、コレクションまたはインスタレーションといった、本来の帰属先ではない文脈にこれらの作品を含めるあらゆる例において、脱文脈化や不適切な再文脈化は避けられない問題である。…[中略]…グローバルなプロセスと文化的な形態は、きわめて不平等、多様かつ予期しない方法で地域的に影響を与え、かつ受容されることに疑いの余地はない。それゆえ植民地時代ならびに植民地時代以降の世界の文化はいずれも、純粋にエキゾチックでもなければ(それらは決してそうではなかった)、西欧の表現の亜流にもなっておらず(それ以上でも以下でもある)、また、ハイブリッドとして生産的に見なすこともできない(それは円滑すぎる融合手術を連想させる)。…[中略]…もし我々が植民地時代以降の世界の複雑さについて、より複雑で語感をもった展望を必要とするなら…[中略]…我々はこの展望を、西欧の外にあるモダンならびにポストモダン時代のアートに拡大しなければならない。」(筆者訳)

ここでは近年の好例のひとつとして、「第8回アジア・パシフィック現代美術トリエンナーレ」内の特別プロジェクト展「Kalpa Vriksha: Contemporary Indigenous and Vernacular Art of India」を付記しておきたい。(クイーンズランド州立美術館 | 現代美術館、ブリスベン、2015年11月21日-2016年4月10日開催)

キュレーションの試みを正当化することの困難さによって、これまでも東南アジアに限らずポストコロナルな各地域の固有性が前景化されてきた^[04]。加えて、グローバル化によって人々と情報と知識のモビリティがさらに増した現在、キュレーションの焦点は関与する地域を静的でア priori な対象とせず、アーティストの流動性とハイブリッド化した実践に留意したうえで、そのなかにある微細だが根深い差異と共通項、土着性と国際性、社会的・政治的・歴史的諸条件を再検証することへとより拡張している^[05]。時間的な側面からみると、空間や身体性も含めた総合的な芸術体験を提示し、時代を超えてそれらを知識と共に蓄積・継承しようとする展覧会の伝達速度ならびに有効期間は、元来、社会変化とインターネット等のメディアによる情報伝達の加速度に比例しない。にもかかわらず、即時的なインパクトを期待される一過性のイベントとして、あるいは国家や地域を表象するツールとして、展覧会は資本主義経済を背景にした外交や商業、観光促進目的の事業との比較に晒される。ビエンナーレやアート・プロジェクトの世界的な増加もこの状況に拍車をかける一因となっている。つまり、各地域と時代に固有な美術の実践が、人々の移動とメディアによって否応なしに地域内外に速度を伴って伝達され、変容しながら受容されていく現実と対峙する際、自ずと展覧会に「ある特定の時点における固有な実践」という条件付けと限定化/暫定化の意識が働くのである。こうして地域/時代の固有性という概念の有効性は、オーセンティシティと同じくらい疑わしく、短命で限定的なものとなる。ここで筆者が想起するのは、近代国家の速度の暴力について言及したポール・ヴァリリオの一説である。

もし迅速さが戦争の本質そのものであり、またキッピングがかつて述べたように『戦争の最初の犠牲者は真実である』ならば、こう言うべきだろう、『真実とは速度の最初の犠牲者である』と^[06]。

鉄道、車、戦闘機に代表される速度の進化は、近代国家が己の知と権力を確認するために他者を征服していった歴史でもある。今や世界各地から探求の熱い眼差しを向けられる東南アジア地域の美術もまた、これまでしばしば周縁化され、エキゾチック化され、表象されてきた点において、近代化の速度の犠牲者と言えるだろう。展覧会に付随するこうした限定的固有性を認識したうえで、東南アジアにおける現代美術のキュラトリアルな実践を地域内外で表層的な情報としてのみならず、活きた経験として場所や時代を越えて本質的に共有しようとする際、キュレーションに求められることがある。1) アーティスト、作品、展覧会に固有な文脈と美学を提示し、同時代の人々と共有し得る価値と知識を生産すること。2) たとえ他の文脈に置換不可能であっても、他者がそれぞれの文脈で想像できる奥行きと柔軟性を持たせること。

3) 後世においても社会的/文化的な価値を持つ資源として認められ得るよう、言説を築くこと。そして4) 速度に抗う(時間を共有し、即時的な「理解」に抗い、共同体の意識を作る)ことである。これらの実践にあたり、とりわけ現前する課題について以下に論じる。

ひとつは、何に価値を見出すのか議論する際、美術制度の内外で前提が異なることである。美術館、ギャラリー、ビエンナーレあるいはアートフェアといった各種制度の「内」においては、それぞれが負う使命と目的は異なるが、作品には自律した価値の普遍性があることが前提とされる。その前提によって既存の価値が見直され、同時に新たな価値が創出される。「価値の普遍性」という概念自体、モダニズムが産出した幻想であるにもかかわらず。普遍性の志向はモダニズムに特異な幻想ではなく、またモダニズム自体に内在する「巨大な分裂」を指摘した建昌哲は、かつて次のように述べた。

あるいはこのように言うべきかもしれない。確かにモダニズムは悟性に基づいた価値の普遍性を掲げたが、またそれ故に個別の伝統との間に(時に潜在的ではあれ)不可避的な葛藤を生むのだと。落差があるとすれば、それはモダニズムとの落差ではなく、モダニズムによる落差なのである[07]。

先述の諸制度は近代化とともに発展してきた。もし仮に現在でも東南アジアから生み出される価値とモダニズムが掲げた普遍的な価値との間に葛藤や落差があるとすれば、それはモダニズムに依拠した美術制度のマッチポンプに加担しない態度によるものであり、今日では垂直軸の「落差」ではなく、水平軸に位置する「差異」と呼ぶべきものである。そこには、未だ普遍性を獲得していないのではなく、西洋におけるモダニズムとは別の地平に存在する価値と動機がある。このことは塩田純一やアピナン・ポーサーヤンによる論考においても明確に指摘されている[08, 09]。

一方、諸制度の価値体系に組み入れられていない制作/実践の場という意味での制度「外」においては、実際、価値に関する議論の際に異なった前提がある。インドネシアに数多くあるコレクティブの活動に顕著なように、重視されるのはヒエラルキーを解体し水平化した共同体の生成、そこへの帰属意識、知識生産と共有。そしてマーケットに依存しない自立した経済システムを持った活動の自主運営と継続である。例えばジャカルタを拠点とし、スハルト政権後の民主化世代を代表するコレクティブのひとつルアンルパ(2000年設立)が掲げるスローガン「アートより友だち(Make friends not art)」[10]は、一見プレイフルで挑発的だが、集団活動が先の軍事政権時代に対する抗いの表現となる社会的・政治的背景がある。また、活動に要される財源と人的資源を同居団体と一部共有し、スペースを共同運営する組合

06

ポール・ヴィリリオ『ネガティヴ・ホライズン——速度と知覚の変容』(丸岡高弘訳、産業図書、2003年、p.152。

07

建昌哲『批評としての美術』『アジアのモダニズム——その多様な展開:インドネシア、フィリピン、タイ』カタログ、国際交流基金アジアセンター、1995年、p.14 [日]/p.201 [英]初出。なお、本論考の英訳は『The Japan Foundation Asia Center Art Studies Vol. 03』再録時の修正版(p.32)の該当部分を引用した。

08

塩田純一「東南アジアから——来るべき美術のために」『東南アジア 1997 来るべき美術のために』カタログ、東京都現代美術館/広島市現代美術館/国際交流基金アジアセンター、1997年、pp.11-17 [日]/pp.153-159 [英]初出:『The Japan Foundation Asia Center Art Studies Vol. 03』再録、p.46 [英]/148 [日]:「一口で言えば、これらの美術家たちにとって問題なのはモダニスティックな意味での個性の表出ではない。むしろ彼らが住まう共同体にいかに関与し、いかにより良き未来を築いていくかということであり、そのために美術には何ができるかということなのである。個人のアイデンティティの探求を主題とする作家にしたところで、事情は変わらない。彼らもまた家族や共同体、民族といったより大きな枠組みと自己を重ね合わせつつ、アイデンティティの問題を探求している。こうした立場は、個人の創造性に絶対の価値を置き、純粹で自律した芸術世界の探求に邁進してきた、西欧モダニズムの発想からは大きく隔たっている。…[中略]…西欧モダニズムにおけるように、美術が社会から独立した存在であり得たのは、美術史においては例外的な事例にすぎない。スパンカットが述べているように、道徳主義に根差したインドネシアのモダニズムは積極的に社会に関わり、民衆を擁護しようとしてきた。このことは、他の東南アジア諸国のモダニズムにも敷衍して考えることができるだろう。」

アピナン・ポーサヤーナン「辺境からみる「コン・アート」——東南アジアにおけるコンセプチュアル・アートの意味」『Global Conceptualism: Points of Origin, 1950s-1980s』展(New York: Queens Museum, 1999)初出:『Playing with Slippery Lubricants: Apinan Poshyananda, Selected Writings, 1993-2004』(Bangkok: Office of Contemporary Art and Culture, Ministry of Culture, 2010, pp.253-260)再録:『The Japan Foundation Asia Center Art Studies Vol. 03』再録, pp.48-51[英]/pp.151-152[日]:『「ジャカルタの」ニュー・アート・ムーヴメントを奮い立たせたのは、ローカルなアートシーンのうちの社会的政治的の圧力であって、西洋の「諸イデオロギ」に遅れを取るまいという思いはあまりなかったのである。…[中略]…コンセプチュアル・アートの芸術家たちは、彼らの作品が「西洋の「オリジナル」の単なる様式的引用ではない」という自信を獲得してきたのである。実際、多くの芸術家が、知的集団のメンバー間の自己言及的で退屈なコミュケであるとして、西洋版のコンセプチュアリズムを却下しているのである」。

「List of GB Fellows with Slogans」『2016 Gwangju Biennale Forum: To All the Contributing Factors』(フォーラム会場配布プログラム)、2016年9月2日-9月4日開催、第11回光州ビエンナーレ、光州、韓国。[http://www.the8thclimate.org] スローガンの和訳はあいちトリエンナーレ2016出展時の表記に倣った。

ジュリー・エウイントン「5つの要素——東南アジアのインスタレーション・アートに関する概略」『Art and AsiaPacific』2, no.1, 1995年, pp.108-115初出 / 『The Japan Foundation Asia Center Art Studies Vol. 03』再録, pp.37-38[英]/p.139[日]。

クレア・ビショップ『人工地獄 現代アートと観客の政治学』(大森俊克訳)、株式会社フィルムアート社、2016年、p.42。

にも似た経営方式の適用や、地域のアーティストや多様なコミュニティに深く関与しながらコレクティブの活動総体を学びの場とみなすオルタナティブな教育機関としての在り方からは、個人の創造活動の産物としての作品のみならず、それを生成する母体としての共同体の生態系にも大きな価値を置く態度が看守される。東南アジアにおける共同体の概念について、ジュリー・エウイントンは既に1995年の時点で以下のように観察している。

東南アジアの社会において共同体という概念は、西洋文化において美術の実践を活気づけている個性という意識よりもはるかに強い。…[中略]…重要なのは、共同体が集団的行動を共有するための機会を提供していることなのである[11]。

共同体としての集団活動と価値という観点からもうひとつ思い起こされる課題は、他者が関与し、実社会で機能することに意味がある実践の場合、そこにいかにして芸術的価値を認めるかである。近年、アーティストが教育、環境汚染、ジェントリフィケーション、過疎化、売春、人権といった地域社会問題に取り組む活動がソーシャル・プラクティス(社会実践)、ソーシャリー・エンゲージド・アート、コミュニティ・アート運動等の呼称で日本でも知られるようになってきた。便宜上これらの用語を使うことがあったとしても、東南アジアや東アジアにおける同様の実践は、例えばアメリカでアラン・カプローの美学を継承したスザンヌ・レイシーを経て社会実践が美術史に定着したようにはこの地域の美術史に文脈化されておらず、成立の歴史的背景と実践の美学を西洋のそれらとは異にしていることが、一部の研究者を除いてまだあまり意識されていない。クレア・ビショップは参加や社会的関与を伴う実践を念頭にこう述べる。

参加型プロジェクトは、まさにそれが非芸術的であるために価値を見出されるという事実にもかかわらず、その比較と参照点はつねにコンテンポラリー・アートへと舞い戻るのである。それは、つねに芸術を超え出ようと強く望む。だが決して、社会領域に存在する、対比しうるプロジェクトとの比較にまでおよぼうとしない[12]。

これは西洋におけるモダニズムの価値の普遍性を前提とした際にはあり得る帰結かもしれないが、東南アジアで反権威の芸術が1990年代から社会問題とリンクし社会実践に相当するようになったのは、ジョン・クラークが指摘するように、モダニズム芸術の波及と終焉の影響による[13]。したがって、東南アジアにおける社会実践は芸術と社会の両領域が重なり合う地点に存在し、そこでは「非芸術的であるために価値を見出される」という転倒は起きず、むしろモダニズム芸術に対するオルタナ

ティヴかつ新たな正統としての芸術的価値を持つ実践として文脈化される。多彩な個人の芸術的/知的貢献によってコレクティヴは形成・維持され、集団活動によってその共同体を特徴づける生態系と美学が生成される。こうした基盤を以てはじめて、問題を抱えたある特定のコミュニティと新たな共同体を構築、仮設、あるいは再生し得る。個人と集団が相互に影響し合うダイナミズムも含め、共同体が成す実践に芸術的価値を見出すには、極論すれば個人による自律した個別の作品だけが価値を持つという考えを刷新する必要がある。だが同時に、「アジア」は対抗的な価値として主張されるべきではない」という建島の警句も思い起こされるべきである。建島はこう続ける。

対等主義の名を借りた対抗主義（絶対的相対主義と言い換えてもよい）は、その実、他者に対する想像力の封殺を意味するからである。…[中略]…他者の一元化という偏見は何も支配的な文化の側だけがもつものではなく、それに対抗する側にもまた同じ偏見がありうるのだ[14]。

ここで再び、文脈を異にする地域へ作品を移相し、翻訳する試みをいかに正当化するかというキュレーションに付随する宿命的な問いに立ち返ってみたい。文脈を欠いた外観上の洗練やスペクタクル化は作品を形骸化するが、本来の文脈ごとの移相を欲望することは対抗主義を誘き寄せる。そうであるならば、移相や翻訳によって濾過され誤読されてもお立ち現れる表現の核を再確認することに意味を見出す方が生産的ではないだろうか。この出版に先立ち東南アジア4都市で開催された「Condition Report」共同企画展シリーズのうち、ジャカルタでは型どおりのキュレーションではなく、東南アジアと日本から計9組のアーティスト、建築家、コレクティヴと、筆者を含む6名のキュレーターから成るテンポラリーなコレクティヴ「Sindikata Campursari」の仮設を試みた[15]。続くバンコク展では、メンバーのうちコレクティヴ3組と一名のキュレーターにタイのアーティストを加えた新たな編成で、このシンジケートを特徴づけるプレイフルな協働の手法を増幅させ、バンコクの文脈に即して制作された一連の作品によって仮想国家が表象された[16]。コレクティヴを仮設するというジャカルタ展のキュレトリアルな枠組みがバンコク展で仮想国家を設立するアイデアに援用・発展されたことで、「仮設」という共通項が浮かび上がる。振り返ると、かつての「Under Construction」のタイトルも示唆するように、東南アジアの地域性に与えられた条件のひとつは、その永続的な仮設性といえるのではないか。これは東南アジアとは何かを問う「Condition Report」事業全体に対する批評的な応答であり、またエウイントンが東南アジア地域のインスタレーションの歴史的な文脈に見出した可能性と課題にも共鳴する[17]。

13

ジョン・クラーク「東南アジアのモダン・アート」[Art and Asia Pacific]、Sample Issue, 1993, pp.35-38 初出:『The Japan Foundation Asia Center Art Studies Vol. 03』再録, p.22[英]/p.124[日]:「モダニズム芸術を今や生み出している芸術機関がより堅固になっていくにつれ、バンコクやジョグジャカルタで見られるように、特定の美術学校が国の展覧会を支配するという傾向が、より広く幅を持つ小さな展示スペースにおいて反権威的で、強い芸術を生み出すはずである。…[中略]…フリップ、タイ、インドネシアをはじめ、反権威の芸術はその活動を、その主題においてと使用する素材においてとの両方で、環境破壊や売春やAIDSといった社会問題とリンクさせ始めている。これは、新たな正統という信念と創造のためのプロパガンダへと芸術が回帰することを意味しているのかもしれない」。

14

建島、前掲書[7]、p.13[日]/p.200[英]。なお、本論考の英訳は『The Japan Foundation Asia Center Art Studies Vol. 03』再録時の修正版(p.31)の該当部分を引用した。

15

「Condition Report: Sindikata Campursari」, Gudang Sarinah Ekosistem (Hall A4)、ジャカルタ、2017年1月14日-2月14日。同展カタログならびにウェブサイト参照のこと(国際交流基金アジアセンター、2017年); <http://jfac.jp/culture/events/condition-report-sindikata-campursari-1701140214/>(アクセス:2017年7月28日)

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「Nid Noi Tan」(Sindikata Campursariによる展覧会内協働プロジェクト)、「Condition Report: Made of Liaisons」、バンコク芸術文化センター、2017年3月31日-7月9日。
<http://jfac.jp/culture/events/condition-report-mode-of-liaisons-1703300702/>(アクセス:2017年7月28日)

17

エウイントン、前掲[11]論考参照、pp.36-39 [英]/pp.137-141[日]。

2016年6月24日「Condition Report: Sindikat Campursari」調査旅行において、筆者を含むキュレーターチームによるジャティワング・アート・ファクトリーへのインタビューでの聞き取り。

多文化主義が提唱されて久しい今日においてもなお、あるいはだからこそ、キュレーションの現場においては西洋で築かれてきた言説と美術史観に則った価値の普遍性という前提が、旧植民地主義の名残として存在感を持って立ち現れる。一方では先述した展覧会の限定的固有性のためであり、他方ではアーティストと観客もその名残から抜け出せていない側面があるためである。調査で訪れたインドネシアのジャティワング・アート・ファクトリーで耳にした「地域住民には自分たちの実践がアートだと認識されていない」というアーティストのジレンマが、このことの根深さを物語っている[18]。

共同体としての集団行動が持つ価値を、その外で経験的に共有することは難しい。しかし、経験主義は排他的に働く危険性があるうえ、アーティストの実践が制度内外に移行されるどちらの場にも従事するキュレーターにとって、異なる前提を二項対立的に捉えることは意味をなさない。自給自足のシステムを構築しない限り、アーティストの制作の場にもたらされた財源も制度に由来し、紐づけされている。地続きの制度内から届けられる意思決定が個別の実践に影響を及ぼし得ることを考慮するに、キュレーションの実践に決して絶対的な外は存在しないのである。キュレーターが取り組むべきは、限定された条件下においても、アーティストとの協働によって揺れ動く価値を生産し続けることである。過去から未来へとその価値の橋渡しを続けることもまた、同時代性という大きな共同体が歴史化される過程にあるからである。

Ade Darmawan

[Member of ruangrupa]

In 2009, I co-curated “Fixer,” with Rifky Effendy, an exhibition in Jakarta that presented works of communities/groups/collectives of Indonesian artists—21 groups, to be exact, from various cities, including Padang, Jakarta, Bandung, Cirebon, Jatiwangi, Yogyakarta, Semarang, Malang, Surabaya, and Makassar. Today, some of those groups still exist while others have become dormant or even disbanded. The exhibition featured artist-run organizations and groups that had emerged in recent years, which had managed to survive and play a role in their local contexts, whether rural or urban. At least two common tendencies could be observed among the organizations and groups involved in the exhibition. First, their artistic practices, whether collaborative or individual, constituted their artistic statement as a group. Secondly, these artists’ groups and organizations played the role of a support system within the art ecosystem, through activities or programs that raised public awareness, aimed at a broad public, such as exhibitions, workshops, festivals, discussions, publications, film and video screenings, websites, archiving, and research. The combination of these two practices, as artist collectives and as support systems in the art ecosystem, clearly distinguishes the role and type of these artists’ groups and organizations emerging at this time from those of previous generations.

In preparing the exhibition, we did a small survey by sending them questions about their vision as collectives and organizational data, while also requesting some photographs that could represent their practices. When they sent us the pictures, we could see that almost all the photos representing their organizations showed the houses where they have lived and worked. Another common characteristic was that there was always a photo in which they were sitting down in a circle. Meetings and sharing through conversations had become really important, and a house provided a very comfortable space for allowing these to happen.

Such meetings most often took place in the living room, since it is the largest room in most spatial designs of a typical Indonesian home. All the groups above used a home as the starting point and the center of their activities, altering and adapting a domestic space into a more

public space, converting the living room into a meeting space and exhibition space; and the bedrooms into working spaces or studios, the library, and a space for archives. Typically, it is a rented house. There are practical reasons behind the choice of a rented house as a working place: these are easy to find and the rents are affordable. As such, an initiative's space has a better chance of surviving financially. The lease usually applies for a year, and the rent is paid with money collected from members of the group. The rented house is often also used to serve the various combined interests of the group, as a living and working space. Thus, the house can have two functions: as a space for living and a space for working and gathering.

The financial ability to rent in a certain area also shows that the artists come from more or less the same social and economic class as other residents in the area. Most artists usually also divide their time, as workers in the creative or media industries, part-time freelancers, or students. Most groups choose a working or middle-class housing area, or mixed areas with residences and small to medium businesses—secular areas with a melting pot of people from various backgrounds. A mixed area is particularly suitable because it is also a place for diverse kinds of independent enterprises.

From a simple living room, a group positions itself as a vital part of the supporting infrastructure for both art and the community, becoming a stand-alone citizen's initiative. This kind of group, this initiative, which typically uses a residential house as its basecamp or meeting ground, imagines itself as living among the people. Its presence in a residential area is an opening, or calls for a skill, to negotiate and dialogue with the values of the community surrounding it. Living together with the people, its activities are naturally carried out with an awareness of, and alongside these values, and may even tap from them. The direct or indirect involvement of the nearby residents can be a strategy of artistic exploration, influenced by those residents.

Meetings between groups of artists and local residents in spatial contexts have generated certain styles of artistic approaches and methods, and activities and engagement that bring together local residents and the artists' spaces have become a natural process. The festival is a form of activity that has emerged in various places, being a familiar and sensible format to work with—a social event rooted in celebration, togetherness, meeting, sharing, and conversation. The festival form has a strong resonance in the collective memory of society as an artistic and social form that is a tradition in many places. Artist initiatives and residents have given other meanings to the festival as a form of collective artistic celebration that also represents a hierarchical power structure in society. As a combination of some quite complex events and gatherings, this activity has become important as it may come to critique and disturb the existing hierarchical power structures we see in society.

Forms of experimentation in organizing a public activity can be seen as an artistic process that enriches both the public and the artists. They

create a new space where various elements can intersect without having to merge, and remain independent. The event then becomes a space of encounters and conversations, leading to innovations without having to fall into the trap of institutional formality.

The convergence of the two practices in the groups and organizations mentioned earlier—the production of artistic statements and the role of a supporting system—through its public nature, can create a specific color and a more organic character in such an activity or event, being open to adjustments to contextual needs. More imaginative artistic approaches have also greatly influenced methods of management and activities. An activity, an event, becomes a medium of expression. This is manifest not only in the underlying vision of the program design or the contents of the program, but even in the overall approach toward the event and the structure of how it is organized, including how an activity communicates and engages with its space and audience, how it is supposed to exist as an idea to be experienced by the public. An activity can be seen as an artistic event in which parts are open and ready to grow organically, welcoming interventions. Unexpected and speculative events potentially provide for encounters between all kinds of elements. This results in innovations that can be appreciated and absorbed by the public in organic, flexible ways. In taking such a role and approach, an activity becomes a distinctive form of artistic expression.

This is quite a complex action that deals not only with artistic matter, but also with broader matter: the space, the public, and management. It comes in the form of gatherings and social interactions, ones that must be relevant to the context of its space and public. Not only is it an artistic practice, it is furthermore a social practice. It becomes a vehicle for the development of cross-disciplinary and cross-professional works, combining art and activism, combining management with the skills required to network, generate support, read situations, and use local resources.

This act, or platform, that brings together and bridges transactions and social relations slowly grows bigger and finds its public character and position in the community. It grows together with the community's support and engagement. After being organized several times, and gaining acceptance and engagement from the community, an event finds an important and relevant position, and garners good and broad support. Slowly it becomes its own force among other existing forces as a producer of images, ideas, and values in the community.

To seize a space is also to seize a public. The organic nature of the gathering/social interaction/show/attraction/spectacle concept makes an event all the more attractive for the public; it feels more intimate, like a festive, collective party that facilitates social dialogue and transactions. Everyone feels invited to participate in meetings and conversations. It does not specify exceptions or limits; it does not create social or intellectual boundaries. These encounters have a character that is open and diffuse. The position of “living together with the people” imagines an art institution's relationship within a society: it exists within the

society and becomes a part of it—a strategy built on friendship and common enjoyment.

Addressing the idea of artists' collective practices in an exhibition is indeed a challenge. Considering the complexity of spaces, acts, and events involved in certain collective practices, it is almost impossible to transfer an entire experience and event into an exhibition space. How do we present a series of events and complex acts in an exhibition? How do we curate an artistic practice that already contains a curatorial practice and an institutional critique?

Reviewing the experience of curating an exhibition about ideas of collective artistic practices, as well as participating—with *ruangrupa*—in exhibitions based around the idea of collective artistic practices, many of which fell into the trap of representation or group profiling, I have found that such exhibitions ultimately tend to present a selection of archival materials and methods of working collectively, but none of these exhibitions or curatorial projects have ever become collective works in themselves. It is a real challenge to exhibit a collective practice, and so a representative form is always chosen. Archival and documentary materials are shown; sketches, drafts, and process notes are presented for examination by the audience. This is a kind of presentation which always reduces the process and liveliness of the real thing. The question of how to curate and present a collective practice itself constitutes a paradox as a curator's centralistic curatorial practice comes face to face with a collective practice that wants to collapse centralistic power patterns.

For the project, "Condition Report: Sindikat Campursari" in Jakarta, once again we tried to think about and question collective practices, among various artists and groups in Asia. We wanted to use this opportunity to further challenge the idea of the collective by attempting to explore questions around collective work through getting curators and artists to make works together. The closest method we could imagine for doing this was by actually becoming a collective.

There are a number of ideas about collective conversation and decision-making that are familiar to the local Indonesian context. In Jakartan slang, there is the word *nongkrong*, a concept of getting together so typical of Indonesian tradition. It means spending time to come together in a friendly and comfortable atmosphere with old and new friends, or in a small group brought together by space and time due to proximity of location or a common background. It means sharing stories, ideas, problems, and sometimes solutions. There is a sense of mutuality and taking care of each other in the aimless conversations involved. Another phrase is *musyawarah-mufakat*, an assembly in which a group's members humbly gather to solve problems or make decisions for the sake of the common interest, not through casting votes and going with the majority, but instead talking things over to create an agreement—this can be held without a set timeframe and is very open in nature. Yet another phrase, *gotong royong*, can mean a form of mutual

cooperation among a number of people or citizens to carry out a task or work deemed useful for the common good as part of social life. In the social sciences, mutual cooperation is seen as a principle of working together, of helping one another without direct rewards, for the common or public good. *Gotong royong* also means the active participation of an individual in a community, who gets involved and finds positive values in the surroundings, issues, or needs of those around them. Such active participation can take the form of physical help, materials, mental input, skills, and so forth.

By looking at models of dialogue and decision making, as well as models of managing control and power that already exist in society, the “Campursari” project became a way to rethink possible ways of bringing together a more relational and less authoritative curatorial process suited to collective practice.

Conversations teach many things, and grow them into traditions. And so we created, or more exactly speculated, a curatorial strategy that relies on conversations and space. Meetings and forums are held; artists, curators, producers gather and discuss things tirelessly. They throw in, select, and decide on ideas together. Conversations meander, decisions spring. We reduce individual control and ownership, sharing power and authority, as well as respecting silence and absence. Ideas merge organically without a clear ownership. It is a collage, thousands of pieces of ideas coming together. There is an openness to share, give and take, lose and find. Bad ideas are polished up with some imagination through a conversation, making them better ideas. Conversations and communication open up the territory of decision making, widening it and making it a common act without a timeframe. Efficiency can be ignored with this imagined luxury of time. Even uncertainty and failure can be seen as luxuries. Luxuries that contemporary society compels us to do without.

(Translated by Ninus D. Andamuswari)

Kurasi, Kolektif, dan Percakapan

Ade Darmawan

[Anggota ruangrupa]

Pada 2009, saya menjadi kurator bersama Rifky Effendi dalam pameran di Jakarta berjudul “Fixer” yang menampilkan kerja-kerja komunitas/kelompok/kolektif perupa di Indonesia, tepatnya 21 kelompok dari berbagai kota seperti Padang, Jakarta, Bandung, Cirebon, Jatiwangi, Yogyakarta, Semarang, Malang, Surabaya, dan Makassar. Sekarang sebagian dari inisiatif tersebut masih ada yang bertahan hidup sedangkan sebagian yang lain sudah tidak aktif lagi atau bahkan bubar. Pameran itu menampilkan organisasi dan kelompok seni rupa yang dikelola oleh seniman yang muncul selama beberapa tahun terakhir, yang bertahan dan berperan dalam konteks lokal masing-masing, baik rural maupun urban. Paling tidak ada dua kecenderungan praktik yang dapat diamati dari organisasi dan kelompok yang terlibat. Pertama, praktik kerja artistik yang mereka lakukan secara kolaboratif maupun secara individual merupakan pernyataan artistik kelompok. Kedua, organisasi dan kelompok seniman ini mengambil peran sebagai salah satu sistem pendukung dalam ekosistem medan kesenian yang diterjemahkan ke dalam kegiatan atau program yang membangun kesadaran publik, seperti penyelenggaraan pameran, lokakarya, festival, diskusi, penerbitan, pemutaran film dan video, *website*, pengarsipan, dan penelitian. Paduan dari kedua praktik itulah, sebagai kolektif seniman dan lembaga pendukung ekosistem seni, yang dengan sangat jelas membedakan peran dan jenis organisasi dan kelompok seniman yang berkembang saat ini dari generasi sebelumnya.

Saat mempersiapkan pameran tersebut, kami melakukan survei kecil dengan mengirimkan beberapa pertanyaan tentang gagasan kolektif dan data organisasi, juga meminta beberapa foto yang bisa merepresentasikan praktik-praktik mereka. Ketika mereka mengirim foto-foto tersebut, kami bisa melihat hampir semua foto yang dikirim untuk merepresentasikan organisasi mereka memperlihatkan rumah di mana mereka bertempat tinggal dan bekerja. Lalu, selain itu, salah satu ciri khas yang sama adalah selalu ada foto di mana mereka sedang berkumpul dengan formasi melingkar. Pertemuan dan saling berbagi dalam percakapan menjadi hal yang sangat penting. Rumah menjadi

sebuah ruang yang sangat nyaman untuk membuat semua hal tersebut terjadi.

Biasanya pertemuan itu terjadi di ruang tamu rumah, karena ruang ini adalah ruang yang paling besar yang ada di kebanyakan rancangan ruang-ruang dalam rumah tipikal di Indonesia. Semua kelompok menggunakan rumah sebagai awal dan pusat kegiatan mereka; mengubah dan mengadaptasi ruang domestik menjadi sebuah ruang yang lebih publik. Adaptasi ruang dilakukan dengan menjadikan ruang tamu sebagai ruang berkumpul dan ruang pameran; kamar tidur menjadi ruang kerja atau studio, perpustakaan, dan ruang arsip. Biasanya, rumah itu rumah sewaan. Ada alasan praktis, tentu, yang menyebabkan rumah tinggal menjadi pilihan tempat bekerja: harga sewa yang cukup terjangkau dan mudah didapatkan. Dengan begitu, sebuah ruang inisiatif bisa bertahan lebih baik secara finansial. Sistem penyewaan biasanya per tahun dengan uang sewa yang terkumpul dari iuran secara kolektif anggota kelompok. Rumah yang disewa juga sering dipakai untuk atau digabungkan dengan kepentingan anggota kelompok sebagai tempat tinggal dan bekerja. Ini membuat rumah sewaan mempunyai dua fungsi: sebagai tempat tinggal sekaligus tempat bekerja dan berkumpul.

Kemampuan finansial untuk menyewa rumah di area tertentu juga memperlihatkan bahwa para seniman berasal dari kelas ekonomi dan sosial yang kurang-lebih sama seperti warga setempat. Kebanyakan seniman biasanya juga membagi waktu sebagai pekerja industri media atau kreatif, pekerja paruh-waktu, atau mahasiswa. Sebagian besar kelompok memilih area permukiman kelas menengah atau campuran antara permukiman dan usaha kecil hingga menengah—area sekuler berupa wahana percampuran antar orang dari berbagai latar belakang. Area campuran ini khususnya menjadi tempat yang cocok dan tepat untuk banyak inisiatif/kolektif seniman karena merupakan tempat bagi tumbuhnya juga beragam rupa usaha mandiri.

Dari ruang tamu yang sederhana, sebuah kelompok memposisikan diri sebagai pengisi infrastruktur pendukung yang vital, menjadi inisiatif warga yang berdiri sendiri. Kehadiran inisiatif, yang kebanyakan menggunakan sebuah rumah tinggal sebagai markas atau ruang bertemu ini, membayangkan dirinya hidup bersama warga. Keberadaannya di lingkungan permukiman membuka tawaran atau menuntut kemampuan bernegosiasi dan berdialog bersama nilai-nilai yang ada di masyarakat sekitarnya. Berada bersama warga, seluruh kegiatannya menjadi secara alami mempunyai kesadaran akan nilai-nilai sekitar yang bisa saja berdampingan, juga dimanfaatkan. Keterlibatan warga sekitarnya secara langsung tidak langsung menjadi sebuah strategi eksplorasi artistik yang juga dipengaruhi oleh kehadiran warga.

Perjumpaan antara kelompok-kelompok seniman dan warga setempat dalam konteks ruang telah melahirkan gaya pendekatan dan metode artistik tertentu, dan aktivitas dan keterlibatan yang menyatukan warga setempat dengan ruang seniman menjadi proses alami. Festival adalah

bentuk kegiatan yang muncul di berbagai tempat, sebagai format yang familiar dan masuk akal untuk dipakai—ajang sosial yang berakar dalam perayaan, kebersamaan, perjumpaan, aksi berbagi, dan percakapan. Bentuk festival bergaung kuat dalam memori kolektif masyarakat sebagai bentuk sosial dan artistik yang merupakan tradisi di banyak tempat. Inisiatif seniman dan warga memberikan makna lain pada festival sebagai bentuk perayaan artistik kolektif yang juga mewakili struktur kuasa hierarkis dalam masyarakat. Sebagai paduan dari ajang dan kumpul-kumpul yang cukup rumit, kegiatan ini menjadi penting karena bisa menjadi kritik dan mengganggu struktur kuasa hierarkis yang kita lihat dalam masyarakat.

Bentuk-bentuk eksperimentasi dalam penyelenggaraan suatu kegiatan publik dapat dilihat sebagai proses artistik yang memperkaya baik publik maupun seniman. Bentuk-bentuk itu menciptakan ruang baru, ruang-ruang irisan dari berbagai elemen yang bersaling-silang, tanpa harus melebur dan bisa tetap mandiri. Ajang itu maka menjadi sebuah ruang pertemuan dan percakapan dengan penemuan-penemuan di dalamnya tanpa harus terperangkap dengan keformalan kelembagaan.

Meleburnya dua praktik di atas, produksi pernyataan artistik dan peran sebagai sistem pendukung, melalui kepublikannya memberi warna yang spesifik dan warna yang lebih organik dalam kegiatan atau ajang seperti itu, karena secara terbuka bisa disesuaikan dengan kebutuhan-kebutuhan kontekstual. Pendekatan artistik yang lebih imajinatif telah banyak mempengaruhi pula bentuk-bentuk pengelolaan dan bentuk-bentuk kegiatan ini. Kegiatan atau sebuah peristiwa menjadi sebuah media ekspresi. Tidak hanya dalam pandangan perancangan atau penyusunan programatik atau bagaimana isi program, tetapi bahkan dalam pendekatan keseluruhan peristiwa dalam kegiatan dan struktur pengelolaan, termasuk bagaimana sebuah kegiatan harus dikomunikasikan dan didialogkan dengan ruang dan publiknya; bagaimana ia harus berada dan menjadi gagasan yang dialami oleh publik. Sebuah kegiatan bisa dilihat sebagai sebuah peristiwa artistik yang di dalamnya ada bagian terbuka yang siap menjadi penampang organik dan terbuka bagi intervensi-intervensi. Kejadian yang tak terduga dan spekulatif memberi potensi pada pertemuan-pertemuan berbagai elemen. Ini akan menghasilkan juga penemuan-penemuan yang secara organik dan fleksibel dapat diapresiasi dan diserap oleh publik. Dalam peran dan pendekatan inilah, suatu kegiatan menjadi sebarang ekspresi artistik tersendiri.

Ini sebuah tindakan yang cukup kompleks karena tidak hanya berurusan dengan soal artistik tapi juga masuk ke wilayah yang lebih luas: ruang, publik, dan pengelolaan. Wujudnya adalah pertemuan, berkumpul, dan interaksi sosial seperti festival yang selalu harus bisa dipertanggungjawabkan dalam konteks ruang dan publik. Ia tidak hanya menjadi praktik artistik tapi, lebih jauh lagi, menjadi praktik sosial. Ia menjadi wadah berkembangnya kerja-kerja lintas disiplin dan profesi: menggabungkan seni dan aktifisme, menggabungkan pengelolaan dan

kemampuan berjaringan, kemampuan mencari dukungan, membaca sekeliling dan menggunakan sumber daya lokal.

Tindakan atau wadah yang bersifat mempertemukan dan menjalin transaksi serta relasi sosial perlahan membesar dan menemukan sifat kepublikannya dan posisinya di masyarakat. Ia membesar bersamaan dengan dukungan dan keterlibatan masyarakat. Setelah diselenggarakan beberapa kali dan mendapat sambutan serta keterlibatan masyarakat, ketika sebuah peristiwa dapat menemukan posisi penting dan relevansinya, ia mendapat dukungan yang baik dan meluas. Perlahan pula, ia menjadi sebuah kekuatan lain di tengah kekuatan-kekuatan yang ada sebagai produsen citra, gagasan, wacana, dan nilai dalam masyarakat.

Merebut ruang juga berarti merebut publik. Dengan konsep *gathering*-interaksi sosial-pertunjukan-atraksi-spektakel, keorganikannya membuat suatu kegiatan menjadi lebih menarik bagi publik; lebih terasa lebih dekat, seperti pesta bersama yang semarak yang mewadahi transaksi dan dialog sosial. Setiap orang merasa terundang untuk ikut serta dalam pertemuan dan percakapan. Ia tidak juga memberi sebuah batas tertentu dan keberatan tertentu, tidak memberi batas sosial dan intelektual. Pertemuan ini mempunyai sifat terbuka dan melebur. Posisi “hidup bersama warga” ini membayangkan bagaimana sebuah hubungan institusi seni di masyarakat: ia berada di dalamnya dan menjadi bagian dari masyarakatnya; suatu strategi dibangun berdasarkan kedekatan dan kesenangan bersama.

Menyoal gagasan praktik kolektif seniman dalam sebuah pameran menjadi sebuah tantangan. Dengan kompleksitas ruang, tindakan, dan peristiwa yang terjadi dari praktik kolektif tersebut, hampir tidak mungkin seluruh pengalaman dan peristiwa tersebut bisa dipindahkan ke dalam sebuah ruang pamer. Bagaimana memamerkan sebuah rangkaian peristiwa dan tindakan yang kompleks ke dalam sebuah pameran? Bagaimana mengkuratori sebuah praktik artistik yang bahkan di dalamnya sudah mengandung praktik kuratorial dan *institutional critique*?

Melihat kembali pengalaman mengkuratori pameran tentang gagasan praktik seni rupa kolektif, juga mengalami—bersama ruangrupa—partisipasi dalam pameran yang menggagas ide praktik seni kolektif yang banyak terjebak dalam representasi atau *profiling* kelompok, pameran akhirnya berisikan sekumpulan arsip dan cara-cara bekerja kolektif. Tapi pameran atau kerja kuratorial tidak pernah menjadi kerja kolektif itu sendiri. Maka menjadi sebuah tantangan untuk memamerkan sebuah praktek kolektif; bentuk representatif selalu menjadi pilihan yang banyak terjadi. Arsip dan dokumentasi diperlihatkan. Sketsa, draft dan catatan-catatan proses dikemukakan untuk dilihat dan ditelisik oleh pemirsa. Inilah cara presentasi pameran yang selalu mereduksi proses-proses dan momentum-momentum. Pertanyaan bagaimana mengkuratori sebuah praktek kolektif juga menjadi sebuah praktik yang paradox, ketika praktik kuratorial yang

sentralistik pada kurator berhadapan-hadapan dengan praktik kolektif yang justru ingin meruntuhkan pola-pola kuasa yang sentralistik.

Untuk proyek ini, “Condition Report: Sindikat Campursari” di Jakarta, sekali lagi kami berusaha untuk menggagas dan mempertanyakan praktik kolektif beberapa seniman dan kelompok di regional Asia. Kesempatan ini kami gunakan untuk menantang gagasan kolektif secara lebih dalam dengan berusaha menemukan pertanyaan-pertanyaan sekitar kerja kolektif melalui kerja-kerja kolektif antara kurator dan seniman. Cara yang kami bayangkan paling dekat adalah dengan menjadi kolektif itu sendiri.

Paling tidak ada beberapa gagasan tentang berkumpul yang dekat dengan konteks lokal di Indonesia. Dalam bahasa slang Jakarta ada kata *nongkrong* (*hang-out*), sebuah konsep berkumpul yang sangat kental dalam tradisi Indonesia. Artinya adalah menghabiskan waktu untuk berkumpul dalam suasana nyaman dan bersahabat, di tengah kawan baik yang lama maupun yang baru, atau dalam kelompok kecil yang karena lokasi atau kesamaan latar belakang dipertemukan oleh ruang dan waktu. Saling berbagi cerita, ide, masalah, solusi kadang. Ada saling berbagi dan saling jaga dalam perbincangan tanpa tujuan tersebut. Yang berikutnya adalah *musyawarah-mufakat*, bentuk pertemuan dengan sikap rendah hati untuk memecahkan persoalan (mencari jalan keluar) dalam memutuskan beberapa hal atau memecahkan masalah untuk kepentingan bersama. Jadi bukan memutuskan dengan suara terbanyak melainkan membicarakan hal-hal sehingga terbentuk sebuah kesepakatan atau persetujuan. Ini diadakan tanpa kerangka waktu yang jelas dan sangat terbuka. Selanjutnya lagi adalah *gotong royong*, yang dapat diartikan sebagai bentuk kerja sama antara sejumlah orang atau warga masyarakat dalam kehidupan sosial dalam menyelesaikan sesuatu atau pekerjaan tertentu yang dianggap berguna untuk kepentingan bersama. Dalam ilmu sosial, gotong royong diartikan sebagai salah satu bentuk prinsip kerja sama, saling membantu tanpa imbalan yang langsung diterima tapi hasilnya berguna untuk kepentingan bersama atau kepentingan umum. Gotong royong juga dapat diartikan sebagai partisipasi aktif setiap individu yang ikut terlibat di mana ia mendapatkan nilai positif dari setiap objek, permasalahan, atau kebutuhan orang di sekelilingnya. Partisipasi aktif tersebut dapat berupa tenaga, materi, mental, keterampilan atau lain sebagainya.

Dengan mengamati model-model dialog dan pengambilan keputusan, sekaligus model-model pengelolaan kendali dan kuasa yang sudah ada dalam masyarakat, proyek “Campursari” menjadi cara untuk memikirkan kembali langkah-langkah yang mungkin untuk menghadirkan proses kuratorial yang lebih relasional dan tidak terlalu otoritatif, yang sesuai dengan praktik kolektif.

Percakapan mengajarkan banyak hal dan mengembangkannya menjadi tradisi. Maka kami menciptakan, atau lebih tepatnya menspekulasikan, sebuah strategi kuratorial yang bersandar pada ruang dan percakapan. Pertemuan-pertemuan dan forum-forum diadakan. Seniman, kurator, dan produser berkumpul dan berdiskusi tanpa

kenal lelah. Banyak ide dituangkan, dipilih, dan diputuskan bersama. Percakapan bergulir tanpa arah, keputusan-keputusan muncul. Kepemilikan dan kontrol individu berkurang, kuasa dan otoritas diemban bersama sembari menghargai hening dan ketidakhadiran. Gagasan-gagasan lebur secara organik tanpa klaim kepemilikan. Muncul kolase, keping-keping gagasan yang menjadi satu. Ada keterbukaan untuk berbagi, memberi dan mengambil, kehilangan dan menemukan. Gagasan-gagasan buruk menjadi lebih tajam berkat imajinasi dalam percakapan dan terasah menjadi lebih baik. Penggabungan gagasan yang seadanya dan biasa saja menjadi ide yang lebih baik. Percakapan dan komunikasi membuka teritori pengambilan keputusan menjadi lebih luas dan keputusan diambil bersama, tanpa limitasi durasi waktu. Efisiensi menjadi hal yang bisa diabaikan dengan membayangkan kemewahan atas waktu. Bahkan ketidakpastian dan kegagalan dilihat sebagai sebuah kemewahan. Kemewahan yang masyarakat kontemporer telah paksa supaya kita tidak mampu mendapatkannya.

Unseen Connections: Collective Art Practice and Public Space in Southeast Asia and Japan

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Grass has strong roots. For a certain project, I eradicate the weeds before tilling and ridging the soil. But no matter how many times I pluck the weeds, they quickly sprout again. The roots of plants are tenacious, spreading deep into the earth, and although on the surface they may seem to be gone, they hide beneath the soil, never dying out.

In Southeast Asia, I have often heard phrases like “grassroots relationships” and “organic relationships.” Being there, one quickly realizes that invisible relationships develop across borders and over time as an extension of humble and casual friendships between individuals, rather than through the imposing, formal relations that are intentionally constructed between institutions. A mix of different countries and regions all contained in a two-or-three-hour radius by air, Southeast Asia is home to diverse peoples and languages, and cross-border traffic and exchanges are frequent there. In recent years this situation has been reinforced by the emergence of low-cost airlines and the development of virtual social networks. Artists have gained experience, built networks and fostered the conditions for art through their own efforts in places where infrastructure like museums and art centers has been slow to develop, Singapore being an exception.

Of course, this situation is constantly changing. Art spaces and artist collectives appear and disappear, but their roots never perish. Often, venues visited on one trip might have moved or closed down by the time of the next, but the people involved continue making use of their experiences and networks in different ways and places. Certainly, there are multiple reasons for why a space might stop running, from financial issues to political and social conditions, so it is hard to consider this an absolute good. Perhaps it could simply be chalked up to weak infrastructure. But most people flip the situation, using grassroots networks to freely spread into diverse fields. Having felt the restriction of rigidly enforced structures, I have found that “Southeast Asia” presents a way for me to escape preexisting frames and find room to breathe. Grass

roots are strong and never die, continuing to spread where we cannot see. I am drawn to this strength and flexibility.

The Philosophy of Mingei and Artistic Practices in Southeast Asia

Given that they are home to such diverse peoples and more or less incomprehensible as a totality, I am conscious of the violence of lumping the countries of Southeast Asia together into a single category. Yet, looking at the world map, it seems possible to find a degree of coherence within this aggregate of geographically proximal regions, so I will address “Southeast Asia” here in a broad sense.

On my visits to art spaces and collectives in Southeast Asia, there were repeated occasions where, transcending nations and regions, I was reminded of the Japanese folk art movement, Mingei. With the philosopher Yanagi Muneyoshi^[01] as its main proponent, the Mingei movement was active from the Taishō (1912–26) to the early Shōwa (1926–89) periods. It was driven by a philosophy that found value not in branded luxury items, but rather in nameless artifacts like the utensils used over the years by the common people. Instead of individualism and the pursuit of self-interest, it upheld the “public beauty” of the masses, using phrases such as the “expression of connected people” and “cooperative beauty.” It recognized social principles and lifestyle values in collective creation through the arts and crafts.

I think that this philosophy of the common people can also be found in the activities of the art practitioners of Southeast Asia. The ideas of Mingei overlap not only with the way that artists’ activities there are often close to the ground and expression is interconnected with life and politics, but also with an attitude that seeks to form collectives and create new values through group action in places most people would overlook, as well as with the struggle to acquire public space (in a political sense). For instance, the Jakarta-based group *ruangrupa* has strong parallels with the society envisioned by Mingei. Instead of the artist as singular genius who bears artworks by his signature, the slogan they came up with for their Institut *ruangrupa* project^[02] at the Aichi Triennale in 2016, “Moderation, Productivity, Happiness,” and their credo, “Make friends not art,” both emphasize artistic practice as a tactics for living in society, recalling Yanagi’s idea of “social beauty.” Moreover, that many of the artists and art practitioners I met in Southeast Asia had chosen to work in collectives as aggregates of individuals rather than in organizations with hierarchies and clear structures (i.e., institutions; although it could be said they have no choice, given the lack of infrastructure), also seems to echo Yanagi’s belief in establishing “a world of beauty among the people.”^[03]

Searching for the similarities between ideologies and values that emerged in Japan in the Taishō and early Shōwa periods and the activities of contemporary Southeast Asian artists may be nostalgic and slightly presumptuous. Yet, despite their different approaches, the attitude in Southeast Asia of using interdisciplinary grassroots

01

Yanagi Muneyoshi (1889–1961), also known as Yanagi Sōetsu, was a religious philosopher and founder of the Mingei movement. He was the founding director of the Japan Folk Crafts Museum.

02

A project that develops schools with alternative ideals for mutually learning tactics for living imaginatively in the city, using art and culture as the key. It is part of the educational program run by *ruangrupa* called Institut *ruangrupa*.

03

Yanagi Muneyoshi, *Mingei to wa nani ka* [What is Folk Craft?] (Tokyo: Kodansha, 2006), 83.

In 1927, the architecture researcher Kon Wajirō (1888–1973) proposed “modernologio” (modernology) as a field of study for investigating and examining contemporary social phenomena, in counterpart to archaeology.

Known in Japanese as the *Rojō kansatsu gakkai*, the ROJO Society was established in 1986 by Akasegawa Genpei, Fujimori Terunobu, Minami Shinbō and others. As the name suggests, they observed the streets (*rojō*) and found value in things that had been disregarded by society. Akasegawa’s concept of the “Tomason,” which finds value in useless things that have lost their function, is the basis for *rojō* observation.

From 2007 to 2009, the author ran the Maemachi Art Center (MAC) in a house in Yamaguchi City shared by artists like Yamashiro Daisuke and Aida Daiya; from 2009 to 2016, he ran the Midori Art Center (MAC) in part of a Japanese inn in Aomori; and in 2012, he developed the Mami Art Center (MAC) in Hanoi with artist Tuan Mami.

networks and collective action to stir up new waves in oppressive and unchallenged existing situations recalls how Yanagi and his peers expanded their ideas into a social movement, finding value in supposedly worthless objects through their encounters with the people of different regions as they roamed across Japan. In fact, the comparison of the activities of Southeast Asia’s collectives with Mingei is not altogether unrelated to how I arrived at art after studying architecture.

The Homogenization and Loss of Public Space Due to Urban Renewal

Issues related to urban renewal triggered my turn to art. I studied architecture in Tokyo from the late 1990s to the early 2000s, at a time when massive redevelopments were underway in areas like Roppongi and Marunouchi. I enjoyed taking strolls around the city with no particular objective, and my interest in everyday scenes of human activity fed my ambition to pursue architectural design. But with the large-scale redevelopments, I all too often encountered moments where the chaos of the city and the scenes of human activity that were so dear to me were disappearing. On the surface, real-estate developments based on capitalist principles were generating beautiful new skylines while also increasing the value of the land, but there was nothing in this homogenized landscape that inspired me.

I did not want to be directly involved in the kind of urban renewal that stripped away the charm of public spaces where all kinds of people could gather and, at times, friction might occur. Having been exposed to the creative potential of the process of documenting after coming across Kon Wajirō’s “modernologio” (modernology),^[04] I was also deeply inspired by the attitude of playing in the city and the approach to art represented by Akasegawa Genpei and the ROJO Society,^[05] who overturned existing values by discovering, naming, and documenting the seemingly worthless things filling urban space. I sensed beauty in the way artists like Akasegawa found value in the city’s interstices by methods that did not conform to theories of economics and capital. At the time, I thought committing myself to art instead of architectural design, and living outside of Tokyo, could be my own means of resistance against getting caught up in this situation.

Toward Reclaiming Public Space: Deviation and Play

These experiences became the foundation for me to develop specific, individual activities for exploring the public sphere and issues surrounding space and life in small, regional cities. I opened up my home, set up an independent art space, and held artist residencies.^[06] I will forego detailed description here, but through these activities I was trying to create a space that would be part of everyday life, where people with different ways of thinking and values could meet each other, as opposed to a uniform space detached from everyday life. I envisioned

a space like the *engawa*, or veranda of the traditional Japanese house, providing both a border and connection between inside and outside.

From a certain viewpoint, it may have also been a political act aimed at obtaining semi-public space through democratic means. At times, I took actions that overstepped current Japanese law, like making a platform on the river running in front of our space. Perhaps I broke the rules made by those in power, but I believe there was value in generating new relationships with my neighbors and creating a dense, semi-public space where different people could gather as a result, recalling the spirit of earlier art spaces that arose from squatting in places that had been forgotten by the city.

My encounter with Southeast Asia convinced me of this. As my small-scale activities gradually accumulated and brought me new connections, I came to visit Southeast Asia more frequently after 2011. In Southeast Asia, I encountered numerous artists, collectives, and art spaces addressing the same issues related to urban renewal and gentrification that had brought me to art. Their activities were incredibly exciting, and there was much to sympathize with and learn from. Artists were finding spaces in the city that had been neglected or overlooked and establishing their bases there. When I visited a few years later, many of those spaces had already disappeared or moved, but that did not mean their spirit and activities had ceased, as they were still making use of their grassroots networks. Perhaps it is not out of the question to say that in its grassroots connections and philosophy of the people, this is the updated form of *Mingei*?

Aside from the above-mentioned *ruangrupa*, there is also *Lifepatch*,^[07] which brings together professionals from different fields to a quiet house in Yogyakarta for diverse social activities utilizing media technology, or 98B COLLABoratory,^[08] which gathers in half-abandoned buildings in Metro Manila to work on the city's slum problems, while artists, curators, and critics in Kuala Lumpur are coming together to start making new hotbeds. In Bangkok, there is the Reading Room, where books on art can be read for free and it is possible to discuss issues regarding politics, society, and art.^[09] In Hanoi, where the socialist state authorities can make it difficult to practice art, the group *Nhasan* has kept going for more than 20 years while moving around and sustaining a network across multiple generations.^[10]

The list of these collectives' grassroots activities is probably endless, and none of them are necessarily major. Perhaps most of them will go unrecorded in the canonical art histories. Yet they all maintain a sense of play and humor that keeps them from getting too serious. Writing that "civilization arises and unfolds in and as play," the cultural anthropologist Johan Huizinga proposed the idea of the playing man as *homo ludens*.^[11] It is possible to see the human essence of the playing man and the emergence of culture in the activities of these Southeast Asian collectives that have created new values by laughing off the countless difficulties they face and letting things pass without overly worrying.

07

Lifepatch—citizen initiative in art, science, and technology, was established in 2012 as a community-based, cross-territorial project. See lifepatch.org, accessed July 27, 2017, http://lifepatch.org/Main_Page.

08

98B COLLABoratory is an artist initiative and platform in Manila established by Mark Salivates and Hirano Mayumi in 2012. See [98-b.org](http://www.98-b.org), accessed July 27, 2017, <http://www.98-b.org>.

09

The Reading Room is a library for contemporary art that houses over 1,000 publications and also archives Thai contemporary art. See readingroombkk.org, accessed July 27, 2017, <http://www.readingroombkk.org/>.

10

Recent information about these art spaces can be found in publications like the Japan Foundation's *Run & Learn: Projects & Art Guide* (Tokyo: Japan Foundation, 2015) and Ogawa Nozomu's *Southeast Asia Research Trip: 83 Art Spaces in 9 Countries* (Tokyo: Arts Council Tokyo, 2017), as well as his website, *Alternative Asia*, accessed July 27, 2017, <https://alternativeasia.net/en/>.

11

Johan Huizinga, foreword, *Homo Ludens: A Study of the Play-Element in Culture* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1949), 12.

12
Hannah Arendt, *The Human Condition*
(Chicago: University of Chicago Press,
1958), 22.

13
Implemented in 2013 as a part of
“Media/Art Kitchen” in Manila, where
the author was a participating curator.
The program was rapidly assembled
in response to calamities caused by a
massive typhoon that struck soon after
the exhibition opening.

14
A project by Lifepatch.

On the Potential for Creating Public Space Through Artistic Activities

Meeting and working with art practitioners in Southeast Asia led me to focus my thinking on the potential for creating public space through self-organized artistic activities. Something that I encountered and which stayed with me no matter where I visited was the art space as a communal place for people to gather as an extension of the street. I feel Hannah Arendt’s statement, “No human life... is possible without a world which directly or indirectly testifies to the presence of other human beings,”^[12] is intrinsically embodied in many of the art spaces and other places where artists gather. Activities mediated by art are often cultivated in the kind of surprising places that beg the question, “why here?” Gathering or hanging out without any real purpose can be even more important than producing something that is easily defined. Projects arise as an extension of just being there. In many cases, they are directly connected to local issues and contexts, and do not result in what is typically considered an artwork.

All kinds of creative practices that do not conform to the formats of the art market or the exhibition are happening in these places. For instance, in the Philippines, where there are many natural disasters, a workshop was held for building emergency shelters in immediate response to damage caused by a large typhoon,^[13] while in Indonesia, where the government tries to discredit the local brewing culture and production of traditional liquor, and allows global corporations to sell their alcohol in exchange for paying a large tax, there are projects for safely producing homemade liquor using DIY fermentation and brewing apparatuses and homegrown fruits.^[14] Activities that arise in response to the demands of the location become a source for generating public space in each city. Instead of insisting on the norms and formats of art, they establish creative modes for shaping artistic attitudes as alternate structures. Concepts like relationality and antagonism are inherently involved in these activities born out of necessity, and participating in such processes leads to the discovery of value.

Having recognized anew that public space is spontaneously produced not in a park surrounded by a fence or an enclosed area provided by the government, but rather in the gaps in the urban fabric where human activities collide, and that there is potential now in the places where the artists who find value in those gaps gather, I would like to continue exploring how artistic activities can contribute to the generation of public space using my own approach that incorporates what I have experienced and learned in Southeast Asia.

(Translated by Andrew Maerke)

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草の根はつよい。

あるプロジェクトで土を耕し、畝をつくるために、雑草の駆除を行なっている。しかし雑草は抜いても抜いてもすぐに新たな芽を吹き、決して絶えることがない。植物の根は丈夫で、地中深くまで広がっており、表面的にはなにもなくなったように見えても、土の下で息を潜め、決して絶えることはない。

東南アジアで、よく「草の根の関係」とか「有機的な関係」ということばを耳にした。組織と組織のような巨大でフォーマルな意図的に築かれた関係ではなく、個人と個人のささやかで気楽な友達延長での目にみえない関係が国境を越えて時間をかけて築かれてきたことは、現地を経験すると容易に体感するものだろう。飛行機で2～3時間で移動できる圏内に、たくさんの国や地域が入り混じる東南アジアは、多様な民族が暮らし、言語も様々で、国境を越えた往来や交流がとて頻繁だ。近年は格安航空会社生まれ、SNSなどが発展したことで、その状況はさらに加速している。シンガポールなどは例外として、美術館やアートセンターなどのインフラの整備がなかなか進まないなか、アーティストたちが独力で経験を積み、ネットワークを構築し、環境を育ててきた。もちろんその状況は刻々と変化する。アートスペースやアーティスト・コレクティブは生まれては消えを繰り返しているが、その根自体が絶えることは決してない。数年前に訪れた場所が移転したり、既にその活動を終えていることは多いが、彼の地で出会った多くの人々が別の場所で別のかたちでその経験とネットワークを活かした活動を続けている。

もちろん、同じかたちが継続されないことには、資金などの問題だけでなく、政治や社会の状況など、様々な理由があり、この状況が手放しによいとは決して言えない。インフラが脆弱と言ってしまうまでもかもしれない。だが、彼らの多くはその状況を逆手にとり、草の根のネットワークを活かして、自由にさまざまな地へと伸び広がって

01
柳宗悦(1889-1961)。宗教哲学者、民藝運動の創始者。日本民藝館初代館長。

02
文化芸術を基軸に都市を想像的に生きる戦略を相互に学ぶオルタナティブな理想の学校を展開するプロジェクト。「Institut ruangrupa」というルアンルパの教育プログラムの一環となる活動。

03
柳宗悦「民藝とは何か」講談社学術文庫、2006年、p.83。

いく。ガチガチに固められた仕組みのなかで動くことの窮屈さを感じていた僕に、既存の枠を軽々と逸脱し、風穴をあける方法を提示してくれたのが「東南アジア」だった。草の根は強く絶えない、そして見えないところで根を張り続ける。そんな強さとしなやかさに惹かれた。

「民藝」の思想と東南アジアのアーティストたちの実践

多様な人々が暮らし、ほとんど統一的に捉えることが不可能な東南アジアを一括りにするのは随分暴力的なことだとは承知している。しかし、世界地図を眺めると地理的には遠くない地域の集合に、ある程度のまとまりを見出すことは可能だと思うので、敢えて「東南アジア」という地域を大きく括って述べることにする。

東南アジアのアートスペースやコレクティブを訪れると、国や地域を超え、折々の場面で日本の「民藝」の思想が想起された。「民藝」は、大正から昭和初期にかけて、思想家の柳宗悦^[01]が中心となって提唱した運動だ。特定の有銘の高級品ではなく、昔から庶民が用いてきた雑器など無名の工藝品に価値を見出す民の思想だ。そして、個人主義や利己の追求ではなく、「結ばれた人間の表現」や「協同的美」ということばを用い、民衆のなかにある「公有の美」を掲げた。それは、美術や工藝を通じて社会的な理念、生活のあり方の価値を、集団的な創造のなかに認めるものだった。この民の思想は、東南アジアの芸術関係者たちの実践にも見出されるように思う。アーティストたちの活動がストリートと近く、生活や政治と表現が密接に関係しているのみでなく、彼らがコレクティブを形成し、集団的活動を通じて多くの人が気にも留めないところに新たな価値を創造しようとする態度や、(政治的な意味での)公共空間を獲得しようとする姿に、民藝の理念が重ねられてならないのだ。

例えば、ジャカルタに拠点を置くルアンルパのあり方などは、まさに民藝が求めた社会の姿と重なる。彼らがいちトリエンナーレのプロジェクト《ルル学校》^[02]で掲げた「節約、多産、幸福」という標語や、「アートより友だち(Make friends not art)」というメッセージは、唯一の天才としての芸術家とその署名のもと生まれる芸術作品というより、社会を生きる戦術としての芸術活動という側面が強く、柳の言うところの「社会美」と通ずるものがある。

また、東南アジアで出会った多くのアーティストや芸術関係者がヒエラルキーや構造の明確な組織(インスティテュション)という形態よりは、個人の集合であるコレクティブというあり方を選択している点にも(インフラが整わずそうせざるを得なかったという状況があるにしろ)、柳の「美の世界を、大衆の中に樹立せねばならない」^[03]という理念と根源的に共有される思想を感じる。大正から昭和初期の日本で生まれた思想や価値観との共通点を、現代の東南アジアのアーティストたちの活動に見出すこと

は、ノスタルジックで少々乱暴なことかもしれない。しかし、超域的な草の根ネットワークを活かし、誰もが疑わない圧倒的な既存の状況に集団的な活動を通じて新たなうねりを巻き起こす彼らの態度は、柳らが日本全国を歩いて各地域の人々と出会うなかで無価値とされていたものに価値を見出し、ひとつの社会運動へと昇華していったあり方と、手法は違えど重なるものを感じるのだ。

実は、東南アジアのコレクティブの活動と民藝を重ねてしまうのは、僕自身が建築を学んだうえでアートに辿り着いたことと決して無関係ではない。

都市再開発による均質化と公共空間の喪失

僕がアートに傾倒した引き金となったのは、都市再開発にまつわる諸問題だ。1990年代後半から2000年代前半に東京で建築を学んでいたのだが、その頃の東京は六本木や丸の内などを中心に大規模な再開発が進められていた。僕自身は、特に目的もなく街を散策するのが好きで、その際に人の営みがあらわれる、取るに足らない風景に興味をもち建築の設計を志した。しかし、実際に目の当たりにする大規模再開発では、自分が愛おしく思った都市のカオスや、人の営みにより生み出された風景が失われていく瞬間に多く出会った。資本主義の原理に基づいた不動産開発により表面上は美しく新しい景観が生まれ、土地の価値も上がっていくが、均質化する風景には面白味を見出せなかった。そして、雑多な人が集まり時に対立も生じる公共空間の魅力を剥奪するような都市開発に直接携わることは避けたいと思った。

そんなときに、今和次郎の考現学^[04]を知ることで、記録に宿る創造性に刺激を受け、赤瀬川原平や路上観察学会^[05]の都市を遊ぶ態度と街に溢れるなんでもないものを発見し名付け、記述することで価値観を大きく転倒させてしまうアートという方法に激しく揺さぶられた。赤瀬川をはじめとするアーティストたちが経済や資本の論理には則らない方法で、都市の隙間に価値を見出すことに美しさを感じた。建築の設計ではなくアートの現場に身を置いてみることで、そして東京ではない場所で暮らしてみることで、自分なりのこのような状況に巻き込まれないための抵抗の方法だと当時は考えたのだ。

逸脱と遊び、公共空間の再獲得に向けて

これらの体験が基礎となって、空間と生活にまつわる諸問題や、公共圏を探索すべく、地方の小さな都市で具体的で個別の活動を展開することになる。自宅を開き独力でアートスペースを立ち上げたり、アーティスト・イン・レジデンスを展開した^[06]。そ

04

建築学者の今和次郎(1888-1973)が、考古学に対して現代の社会現象を調査・研究する学問として、1927年に考現学(=モデルノチオ)を提唱した。

05

路上観察学会は、赤瀬川原平、藤森照信、南伸坊らを中心に1986年に設立された。文字通り路上を観察し、世間がほとんど意識しないものを対象に価値を見出した。機能を失った無用の長物に価値を見出す赤瀬川の「トマソン」が路上観察の基礎となっている。

06

筆者は、2007年から2009年までは山口市でアーティストの山城大督や会田大也とシェアする一軒家で「Maemachi Art Center (MAC)」を、2009年から2016年までは青森市の旅館の一角で「Midori Art Center (MAC)」を、そして2012年にはハノイにてアーティストのトゥアン・マミとともに「Mami Art Center (MAC)」を展開していた。

07

「Lifepatch – citizen initiative in art, science and technology」は、コミュニティベースの領域横断的活動体として、2012年に設立された。

http://lifepatch.org/Main_Page

(アクセス:2017年7月27日)

08

「98 B COLLABoratory」は、マーク・サルヴァトスと平野真弓が2012年にフィリピンのマニラに設立したアーティスト・イニシアティブでありプラットフォーム。

<http://www.98-b.org/>

(アクセス:2017年7月27日)

09

「The Reading Room」は1000冊以上の書籍を所有する現代アートのライブラリー。タイ現代アートのアーカイブにも取り組む。

<http://www.readingroombkk.org/>

(アクセス:2017年7月27日)

10

近年のアートスペース情報は、国際交流基金他編「RUN & LEARN Projects & Art Guide」(国際交流基金、2015年)や、小川希「東南アジアサーチ紀行——東南アジア9カ国・83カ所のアートスペースを巡る」アーツカウンシル東京(公益財団法人東京都歴史文化財団、2017年)に詳しい。また、小川氏によるウェブサイト(<https://alternativeasia.net/en/>)に多数掲載されている。(アクセス:2017年7月27日)

11

ホイジンガ「ホモ・ルーデンス」(高橋英夫訳)、中公文庫、1973年、p.12。

れについての具体的な記述は省くが、均質で日常から閉ざされた空間ではなく、生活と地続きで、異なった思考や価値観をもつ人々が出会ってしまう場をつくろうとしていた。それは、公私を隔てるとともに接続させる境界面として日本の家屋が備える「縁側」のような場を育むことであった。民主的な方法で半公共空間の獲得を目指す、政治的な行動という側面もあったように思う。自宅を開いたアートスペースでは目の前の小川の上に川床をつくるなど、正規の手続きを踏まずに法の境界を超える行為をゲリラ的に実施してしまったこともあったが、それは近隣との新たな関係を生み出し、より多様な人が集う濃密な半公共空間の生成へとつながり、そこには価値があったと信じている。それらは、都市の忘れられた場所をスクウォッチングすることから始まるアートスペースの原点に立ち戻るものでもあった。東南アジアの多様なアート活動と出会うことで、その無意識の行為の意味について確信を持つことができた。

これらの小さな活動が少しずつ蓄積され、つながりが生まれ、2011年以降東南アジアを訪れることが多くなった。東南アジアでは、僕がアートに辿り着く原点でもあった都市再開発やジェントリフィケーションにまつわる諸問題に取り組むアーティストやコレクティブ、アートスペースに多数出会った。彼らの活動に大いなる刺激を受けたし、共感することや学ぶことも非常に多かった。アーティストたちは、都市のなかで忘れられた、あるいは人があまり気にもとめない場所を発見し、そこに拠点を築く。数年後に訪れると、その場所は無くなったり移動していることも多いが、それでもその精神や活動は絶えず、しなやかに草の根のネットワークを活かして動き続けている。草の根のつながりと民の思想という、民藝の現在進行形の姿がここにあるとは言えまいか？

先に上げたルアンパル以外にも、ジョグジャカルタのひっそりとした一軒家で異なる職能をもつ専門家が集まりメディアテクノロジーを駆使して多様な社会活動を展開する「Lifepatch」^[07]や、メトロマニラの半廃墟のビルに集い都市のスラム化問題などにも取り組む「98 B COLLABoratory」^[08]があり、クアラルンプールではアーティストやキュレーター、批評家たちが集まり新たな巣をつくりはじめている。バンコクには芸術に関する本を無償で読むことができ、集って政治や社会から芸術の諸問題について語れる場として私設図書館「The Reading Room」^[09]がある。社会主義国としてアート活動においては様々な困難があるベトナムのハノイでは、20年以上にわたり場所を変え世代をまたぎネットワークを保ち続ける「Nhasan」の集団が存続する^[10]。コレクティブによる草の根の活動は、際限なく列挙できるだろう。多くの活動は決して大きくはない。大文字の美術史には描かれない側面がほとんどかもしれない。それでも、みんな深刻になりすぎないユーモアや、どこかに遊びの感覚を持っている。文化人類学者のホイジンガは、「人間文化は遊びのなかにおいて、遊びとして発生し、展開してきたのだ」^[11]と述べ、遊ぶ人=ホモ・ルーデンスを提唱した。無数の困難を笑い飛ばし、構えずに適当にやり過ごすように、いつの

まにか新たな価値を創造してきた東南アジアのコレクティヴの動きには、遊ぶ人としての人間の本质と文化の発生を見出すことができる。

芸術活動による公共空間生成の可能性について

東南アジアの芸術関係者との出会いや協働を通じて考えてきたのは、自発的な芸術活動によって公共空間を生み出すことは可能か、に尽きる。どんな土地を訪れても必ず出会い、心に残るのは、ほぼ路上と地続きのかたちで人が集うコミュニティとしてのアートの場だった。アレントによる「人間生活は、…[中略]… 直接間接に他の人間の存在を保証する世界なしには、不可能である」^[12]という言葉が、多くのアートスペースやアーティストたちの集う場において本質的に体现されているように感じる。なぜこのような場所にと驚くような場所ほど、アートを介した活動が育まれていることが多い。そういう場では、わかりやすく何かを生産するよりも、むしろなんとなくそこに集まることや、ただ居ることが重要だったりする。そこにただ居ることの延長で、プロジェクトが発生するのだ。それはその境界の文脈や問題に直結していることが多く、いわゆる展示作品などには繋がらないことも多々ある。例えば、自然災害の多いフィリピンで巨大な台風による被害に即応して緊急時のシェルターをつくるワークショップが開催されたり^[13]、インドネシアでは地場産の伝統的な酒や醸造文化を政府がないがしろにし、大きな税をかけてアルコール類を販売することをグローバルな大企業に許可したことに対して、自ら栽培した果実とDIYによる発酵器や醸造器を用いて自家製の安全なお酒をつくるプロジェクトが起こったり^[14]、いわゆるアートのマーケットや展覧会というフォーマットに縛られることのない多様な創造活動がこれらの場では実践されている。

その場所に応じた必要から生まれる諸活動は、それぞれの都市において、それぞれの公共空間を生み出す源となっている。アートの作法やフォーマットに固執するのではなく、アーティスト的な態度をかたちにしていく創造の手つきをオルター・ストラクチャーとして確立していくこと。必要から生まれるそれらの活動には、関係性や敵対などという概念が自ずと内包されており、そのプロセスに参加することで、価値は見出されていく。

公共空間とは、フェンスで囲まれた公園や行政から与えられた閉域ではなく、人の生活の営みが衝突する隙間に自発的に生み出されるものであるということ、そしてそれは都市の隙間に価値を見出すアーティストたちが集う場に今をもって可能性があることを改めて認識したうえで、芸術活動が公共空間生成にどのように寄与できるか、東南アジアでの経験と学びを咀嚼し自分なりの方法で引き続き探求していきたいと思う。

12

ハンナ・アレント『人間の条件』(志水達雄訳)、ちくま学芸文庫、1994年、p.43。

13

2013年に、筆者がキュレーターのひとりとして参加した「Media/Art Kitchen」マニラ展の一環で実施された。展覧会オープン直後に発生した巨大台風による災害に 대응べく急速組み立てられたプログラム。

14

Lifepatchによるプロジェクト。

Curating Histories of Cultural Activism: What Are We Trying to Change?

Lisa Ito-Tapang

[Independent Curator/Instructor, University of the Philippines College of Fine Arts]

01

Ann Lourdes Clemente and Jose Dalisay, Jr., “Reveille for Revolt in the ROTC (Reserve Officers’ Training Corps),” *Philippine Collegian*, September 29, 1971.

02

The exhibition was held from August 18 to September 1, 2017 at the University of the Philippines Bulwagan ng Dangal Heritage Museum in Quezon City. The museum is located within the current UP Main Library building, where the said protest by the NPAA was staged in 1971.

03

Jose F. Lacaba, “If It’s Wednesday, This Must Be The Cultural Center,” *Philippines Free Press*, September 20, 1969, 10. Lacaba’s account narrates how artists inside the premises held up placards with the words “We want a home not a fascist tomb!” (Mars Galang), “Re: Gun-Go Home!” (Jun Lansang) and “A Bas La Mystification! Down with the Philistines!” (David Nedalla) in the presence of dignitaries.

04

Alice Guerrero Guillermo, *Protest and Revolutionary Art in the Philippines* (Manila: University of the Philippines Press, 2001).

A gargantuan poster spanning a full six floors of the [Architecture] building, bannered the slogan “Expose and isolate the handful of Marcos diehards on the campus!” and penned by the indefatigable comrades of the Nagkakaisang Progresibong Artista at Arkitekto (NPAA), fell seemingly from the skies in blatant protest against militarization. To many this was ultrafantastic; but the greatest joy stemmed from the fact, of course, that it was real and there and hanging, a brilliant tribute to the lengths of labor that revolutionary spirit makes possible.

—Ann Lourdes Clemente and Jose Dalisay, Jr.^[01]

This excerpt was among the archival texts used in my project for “Condition Report,” titled “Dissident Vicinities.”^[02] Extracted from an article published in the student paper of the University of the Philippines (UP) Diliman, it chronicles how the NPAA ’71—an organization of progressive artists and architects—produced a colossal painting, fashioned from craft paper and wheat paste. It was unfurled from a university building fronting a popular public ground during a military parade, a year before President Ferdinand Marcos declared Martial Law in 1972. The story illustrates an opportune moment of cultural activism: a transient but certainly monumental gesture of dissent 46 years ago.

This recalls other daring acts of this period. In September 1969, Filipino artists protested then California Governor Ronald Reagan’s presence at the inauguration of the Cultural Center of the Philippines (CCP) by demonstrating with placards inside the premises.^[03] The NPAA is considered by Filipino art historians as the first militant artists’ organization locally, with a membership of close to 200 before the imposition of Martial Law compelled activists to operate on more covert modes.^[04] Since then, many artists have formed groups, throughout the Marcos dictatorship and the succession of facile democratic regimes from 1986 to today.

For me, as a curator, the drive for redeploying such archival materials within an exhibit is not limited to reminiscing. It is also motivated by the impetus to connect to the present. For such stories

represent cycles of rupture throughout the *longue durée* of crises.

Currently, the Philippines has a number of artist-activist collectives and initiatives who are contributing to the cultural work of its people's movements for rights, land, justice, and other historical demands. These are practices which the "Dissident Vicinities" project tried to touch on, and which can be directly traced to the legacy and groundwork of the NPAA '71 and other initiatives. Antedating the current fascination with craftivist strategies and the institutional validation of socially engaged art practice, these archived moments point to the progressive and emancipatory possibilities of mobilizing creative labor and collective practice throughout history. Which brings us to questions of introspection and action in relation to curatorial practice: *Can we as curators contribute to more encompassing acts of political intervention and histories of cultural activism? What are we trying to change?*

Conditions for Cultural Activism

It seems imperative to return to locality and history in searching for answers to these questions. As curators based in and responding to particular aspects of nation and geopolitics, let us consider the particular material and social conditions of contemporary Southeast Asia, which is often framed as a diverse multicultural region connected by shared seas and skies, shifting towards regional and economic integration.

Historically, this premise has underpinned the discourse of all sorts of statist initiatives, from regional trade alliances, tourism campaigns, and politico-military exercises to cultural production. Yet also arising and responding to these conditions are parallel histories of grassroots movements for independence, democracy, and rights. Like the 1971 article, these stories attest to how the region's peoples continue to protect and defend their respective resources, livelihoods, and communities in the face of economic inequality, intensely feudal ecologies, aggressive colonial and imperial expansion, and rapid political upheavals. Emerging from the archives, one realizes that present-day regional and local dissent against foreign military intervention, saber-rattling, and the opening of vulnerable national economies and ecologies emanate from colonial and postcolonial crises persisting even before ASEAN was founded in 1967.

Often, such struggles and manifestations of social contradiction have been countered with repression, censorship, silence, integration, or fragmentation by both state and market forces. These recurring conditions provided both fire and grounding for so-called "cultural revolutions" across post-war Southeast Asia, the idea of which was articulated and promoted by political figures across the region. Filipino poet, revolutionary, and exile Jose Maria Sison, for instance, was writing about the need for a cultural revolution in the Philippines as early as 1966, responding to the polemics and practice of Maoist revolutionary aesthetics in China and connecting it to the then nascent and still continuing struggle for national democracy in his home country.

Jose Tence Ruiz, "Fact Finding Mission, 2002," in *Locus: Interventions in Art Practice: A Project of the Lopez Memorial Museum and Pananaw ng Sining Bayan, Inc.* (Manila: National Commission for Culture and the Arts, 2005).

Ruiz was a member of the progressive artists group Kaisahan (Solidarity) founded in 1976 during the height of the Marcos dictatorship. Cruz was a founding member of Ugnayan at Galian ng mga Tanod ng Lahi (UGATLahi), founded in 1992 as a collective of progressive artists and activists based in the National Capital Region. UGATLahi exists up to today, continuously producing visual projects for mass mobilizations in coordination with long-standing political umbrella groups such as Bagong Alyansang Makabayan (New Patriotic Alliance).

These are several common tendencies noted in the presentations of art historians and curators Suzuki Katsuo and Patrick D. Flores, as documented in *The Japan Foundation Asia Center Art Studies Vol. 01: Cultural Rebellion in Asia 1960–1989* (Tokyo: Japan Foundation Asia Center, 2015).

Conference histories underscore that these expressions of cultural revolt are interwoven in contemporary narratives of art in the region. The national conference "Locus: Interventions in Art Practice" (2005) in Manila, for instance, devoted a session to discussing the past and prospects of Social Realism in the Philippines with visual artists Jose Tence Ruiz and Mideo Cruz,^[05] who represent a historical arc of artist-activist collectives after the NPAA '71.^[06] Their experiences in turn correspond to a larger post-war phenomenon of progressive artist organizations emerging across Southeast Asia. This was explored by projects such as the international curatorial seminar on "Cultural Rebellion in Asia 1960–1989" nine years later in Tokyo (2014). This featured scholarly presentations on the rise of student-led democracy movements across Asia from the 1960s to the 1980s—looking into the contributions of artistic impulses which responded to "political powers that had prohibited freedom of speech" and the "rediscovery of the political role of art that commits to real situations," advancing the idea of art for the people.^[07]

Such discursive platforms on how cultural revolt has operated across Southeast Asia sheds more light on the respective practices, polemics, and images of activism in and across each country. Continuing cross-disciplinary research and reflection can yield more opportunities for strengthening dialogues, critical assessments, and political solidarity—beyond the surface affirmation of that colorful phrase, "cultural diversity." These and other sources also point to how curatorial practice might articulate local legacies (or continuing courses) of action against the status quo—and to what end, exactly.

Warm Bodies, Tough Objects

The curatorial challenge to respond to practices and histories of cultural activism yields many strategies of representing revolt. Exhibition histories, for instance, reveal how projects engaging such themes surface several current impulses and directions or motivations of practice: among these, the historical, the material, and the interventionist. Though this attempt at curatorial taxonomy can be imprecise and unwieldy—often such impulses are intertwined and combined across many projects in different degrees—it may help unpack the range and degrees of curatorial responses to cultural activism.

History. The interest in cultural activism within and across Southeast Asian countries has been pursued largely through national and regional projects. For instance, one encounters regional exhibitions organized around celebrations or commemorations of how contemporary art production unfolded during particular historical periods of dissent.

Some examples of projects in the Philippines revolve around the experience of Martial Law during the 1970s and the People Power 1 revolt in 1986, or around the 1998 centennial celebrations of the 1898 Philippine Revolution against Spain and centenary occasions of Philippine revolutionaries during the colonial period. In the latter, for

instance, one comes across landmark exhibitions such as “Piglas: Art at the Crossroads, A Celebration of the February Revolution” (1987). This opened the CCP’s premises to a broad range of artists claiming a commitment to art for social change, reflecting the cultural sector’s embrace of coalition politics before the Marcos dictatorship’s downfall. Twenty-five years later in 2012, the CCP again hosted retrospectives of the period, such as “ReCollection 1081: Clear and Present Danger (Visual Dissent on Martial Rule).” Elsewhere, there have been a number of projects involving configurations of artists associated with the development of social realism as well as revisiting the period of Martial Law. One also encounters projects connecting examples across the region, such as “Telah Terbit (Out Now): Southeast Asian Contemporary Practices During the 1960s to 1980s” held parallel to the Singapore Biennale of 2006.

Such undertakings have the potential to contribute to political discourse beyond nostalgic longing, and are often attempts to connect the traumas and traces of the past to the troubles of the present. Exhibiting alternative histories can help assert that parallel practices of dissent do exist alongside forms of cultural expression associated with the status quo. For art as memory and bearing witness becomes a powerful way of truth-telling in this time of fake news and historical revisionism.

Materiality. The material culture of dissent is another significant entry point explored by curatorial projects. It focuses on actual things produced and used for demonstrations or on documentation in the form of archival materials. The use of agitational propaganda, handmade props and other exigent objects deployed in protests, for instance, was the highlight of exhibition projects such as “Objects of Demonstration,” focusing on the “indigenous cultural and political expressions” in Hong Kong, collated by the Community Museum Project and shown in Hong Kong, Seoul, and the United Kingdom (2002–04), and “Disobedient Objects,” focusing on the period of 1980 to the present, at the Victoria and Albert Museum (2014). At the other end of the spectrum and closer to home are largely small-scale and under-the-radar efforts to exhibit objects or crafts produced in cooperation with marginalized groups (such as political prisoners and indigenous peoples), often in alternative or public spaces such as picket lines, camp-outs, universities, and government buildings.

The fascination with objects and the histories that they represent also carries with it the possibility of surfacing stories of how, when, and why they were made. One must not underestimate the materiality and eloquence of tough things. For these are often made or displayed under circumstances of risk—whether of institutional censure, state surveillance, or military harassment—and possessing or making them means crossing the personal line of safety and protection. They are survivors, evidence of the urgent realities of the times. On the other hand, other material objects of interest are those made within safer spaces of production or more opportune times of solidarity, such as civil

Che De los Reyes, "Who's behind Trump's effigy at the ASEAN Summit?" ABS-CBN News Online, November 20, 2017, <http://news.abs-cbn.com/focus/11/20/17/whos-behind-trumps-effigy-at-the-asean-summit>.

Maura Reilly uses the term as title and subject of a forthcoming book, *Curatorial Activism: Towards an Ethics of Curating* (London: Thames & Hudson 2018).

society initiatives, workshops, university projects of a progressive nature, and the like. The experience of documenting such initiatives and objects, of course, yields its own share of lessons and challenges, especially due to the precarious conditions and practices of archiving in these contexts.

Intervention. The fascination with the history and material of cultural activism, lastly, leads one to the question of interventionist and emancipatory practice. This last aspect is inevitably associated with taking risks, whether pursued through the continuous and contiguous deployment of political protest or, conversely, within institutional spaces and initiatives that enable the display and afterlife of protest.

Under such an impulse, cultural activism ultimately goes beyond the project of capturing the effects and material culture of demonstrations. It entails the claiming and continued defense of contested space: space to speak out, to protest, and to change the state of things. Histories of cultural activism teach us that artistic and creative labor have immense potential to mobilize and intervene in social movements, going beyond reflecting social reality to actively articulating what is at stake.

The sites for intervention vary. In the Philippines, militant artistic practice often deliberately operates out of museums. It also thrives in unexpected places, actively contributing to cultural production in the "parliament of the streets" and pockets of dissent in the vast rural countryside. Last November, for instance, Philippine art collective UGATLahi made it to the international and national news with an effigy critical of Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte and of US President Donald Trump, when the latter visited Manila for the 31st ASEAN Summit.^[08]

Some of the works featured in the "Dissident Vicinities" exhibit were produced in the context of—or in response to—such sites and instances. From these, we learned several lessons. For instance, be prepared for unexpected results whenever art is put to the test of public space. Set free into such common and contested sites, objects of protest can inhabit a life of their own. One must adjust to the conditions of the streets, which are neither stable nor sacrosanct: overstepping and overlapping, dismissal and heckling, surveillance and tension are constant and expected risks to be faced in the pursuit of solidarity. One must learn how to communicate and work with the moving crowd—certainly a force to reckon with as it passes through, reclaims, and navigates through the traffic of things.

But sites of artistic intervention may be symbolic as well as physical. In recent years, scholars have been forwarding the idea of curatorial activism as including previously marginalized artists (and consequently the racial, gender, or class constituencies they represent) in exhibitions^[09] while more exhibition projects are increasingly looking at forms of collectivization, unionization, and organizational structures initiated by artists as a response to various expressions of social injustice. These can and should be linked to broader struggles for emancipation and for justice.

These instances underscore that, aside from caring for objects and

their contexts, curatorial practice is largely invested in reaching what it calls publics: audiences, communities, individuals, and warm bodies. The term “warm bodies” unfortunately is often deployed with either utilitarian urgency or dismissive derision, in the parlance of traditional politics. I think we should choose neither and re-wield the term “warm bodies” as a source of life and vitality, a sign of the heart stirring.

For this may well be the most urgent curatorial challenge of all: the responsibility to intervene in conditions where inequality against warm bodies persists. In integrating the discourses of daily life and stakes of real world struggles into the exhibition space—wherever this may be—it may be possible not to be immensely complicit in the aestheticization of politics. Instead, it may be necessary to unpack as political what would otherwise be compartmentalized or left to the fascination as aesthetic. These are things easier said than done, but then the emancipatory enterprise and continuing dream of revolt has never been an easy one.

Imagine the possibilities whenever curatorial labor is invested for purposes beyond largely passive consumption, and into the sphere of activating political participation: for making tough objects and unfinished projects matter to the warm bodies of this world.

Changes and Uncertainties in Contemporary Myanmar Art

Aung Myat Htay

[Artist/Independent Curator/Founder of SOCA]

Curators' workshops in Southeast Asia organized by the Japan Foundation Asia Center have been an important new step for the Myanmar art scene. These workshops have provided new experience, new knowledge, and new technical skills. In Southeast Asia, Myanmar has lagged behind other member countries in terms of gathering data on its post-20th century art history. This has created challenges when it comes to making comparative analyses. We are talking about a country which, despite having a strong history of art and culture, has not seen these aspects develop as much as they should have in the age of globalization. The country embarked on modernist and conceptual art movements in the 1990s like other Southeast Asian countries, but development has stagnated between generations and the integration of art into the education system has also been weak.

Most art exhibitions in the country are organized informally and in a conventional, dated manner. Curators do not have a prominent role in the contemporary Myanmar art scene and, with so much uncertainty about their status and future, there are not many professional curators. There are people who have substantial knowledge of art history, who can manage and who have established galleries, but they are not functioning on a professional level with enough skills and expertise. Therefore, exhibitions lack fresh curatorial ideas and interesting, well-thought out displays. Additionally, if someone chooses to work as both a curator and a full-time artist, they face many difficulties.

In Myanmar, the role of a curator still needs to be discussed and debated. Myanmar artists have not fully acknowledged or understood the importance of art criticism and curating. Some confuse curating with the evaluation of artworks. There are large spaces, buildings, and galleries but these are not equipped to offer to put on contemporary art exhibitions. Art exhibitions have not received their deserved place in the social psyche. Many people do not see why there should be designated spaces or buildings for contemporary art.

As a curator and artist, I see these challenges:

- There is still little support from the government for art and culture, and as a result, people in the art scene are not equipped with enough knowledge of contemporary art, and that includes theoretical, intellectual, and technical understanding of contemporary art forms.
- Due to bureaucratic weaknesses, the performance of the art council has been mediocre, and art and cultural policies have not changed or evolved much since 1962.
- People still feel inhibited from working with foreigners, whether on a personal or organizational basis. This may be related to the differences in language, level of education, and access to professional opportunities, and may also be caused by the nationalist sentiment that some people have.
- Communication and cooperation between young artists who studied art outside of the country and those who did their studies inside the country are next to non-existent.
- Artists who have studied art abroad do not have enough opportunities and space in the local art scene, partly because people have been taught to have contempt for foreign education. They have found it difficult to challenge or criticize the way things are done in the local art scene. People lack understanding of new approaches that these artists attempt to bring in, and there may also be fear of being dominated by these foreign-educated artists.
- Most artists with progressive minds have become indifferent to the local art scene and prioritize showing their works outside of the country. Artists who have made a name in the international art scene and art market also sometimes try to create distance between themselves and other local artists. This has affected the development of the local art scene.
- Curatorial studies, arts management, and arts research are not taught at universities, leading to the continuation of old approaches.
- Artists are only used to making art on an individual basis, and are not familiar with collective art practices. They have very limited knowledge of community art, do not understand the importance of arts management, and have doubts over the role of curators.

Faced with these challenges, working as a curator in Myanmar comes with risks. A few curators are trying to lay a foundation, but have not gone very far at the present moment, and so art curating in Myanmar has not developed much.

How to Set New Standards for Curating Art

Art exhibitions organized in today's Myanmar can be categorized as follows:

- Specific group exhibitions (students only, women only, members only, etc.)

- Exhibitions dedicated to a particular medium or technique (watercolor, traditional art, abstract art, etc.)
- Exhibitions dedicated to specific formal themes (the beauty of Pagan temples, Myanmar landscapes, portraits, etc.)
- Exhibitions of loose or casual groupings of artists (these exhibitions are often organized by the exhibiting group itself or by foreign curators under a common general theme like “beauty of our land,” political propaganda like portraits of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, or as a regular annual show for a gallery)
- Exhibitions that mark the opening of new spaces and galleries
- Exhibitions organized to raise funds for a social cause or for a political campaign

Most Myanmar artists tend to show their works in one of these types of exhibitions. Such exhibitions are more friendship-based than project-based, and do not have a central concept. Therefore, the works shown in these exhibitions do not necessarily dialogue with each other or are not threaded together conceptually. Mostly, they are just a mess of a huge range of different subjects and styles, although some exhibitions may be dedicated to a common theme like women’s issues, civil war, peace, alleviation of poverty, freedom of expression, and environmental degradation.

Art That Has Survived Social and Political Unrest

A researcher may find a lot of Myanmar paintings and sculptures depicting various typical subjects like monks or daily life or the local landscape, drawing on Impressionist and Expressionist techniques. Many of these artworks are largely decorative. There is an art market for these kinds of works and tourists purchase them. The state-run art institutions focus on teaching how to make artworks like these. Like the country itself, the art scene still lacks democratic and progressive thinking. Artists tend to make artworks to express their personal feelings, to promote traditional cultural aspects, to study nature, or to depict people, instead of touching on urgent contemporary issues.

During the military regime, artworks that depict Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, her father General Aung San, roses, guns, and naked women were censored on an arbitrary basis. Having too much red color in a painting could put the artist in danger. Censors obviously did not understand art and made their judgments based on political reasons only. Some artists experimented with new media and approaches, finding different ways to make art to work around the censorship, and continue the same kind of practices today.

In a way, the effect of censorship also stifled the development of the art scene because the artists focused so much on self-expression and resistance against the oppression.

Art That Has Broken Away from the Traditional

There has been experimentation and inventiveness throughout the history of Myanmar art. If we look back at the modernist phase of Myanmar art, we will see two major groups of artists. Modern art trends can first be seen around 1950 in Upper Burma. At this time, for example, the artist U Khin Maung (Bank) studied modern art from Europe and the USA through distance education, and in turn passed on its lessons to his assistant artists Paw Oo Thet and Win Pe.

Then in the lower Burma center at Yangon around 1960, a group of architects, filmmakers, painters and sculptors got together and founded the AI group. Their base was the office of co-founder Khin Maung Yin, Architects Incorporated, which became an art club or meeting point for modern art, a rare place within the old-fashioned mainstream art scene in town.

In the late 1980s and 90s, artists and students from Yangon University made a major breakthrough with their artworks. Interestingly they were from various different faculties of the university and not from any art school. Gangaw Village Art Group and Inya Artist Group are probably the best known groups of artists that emerged in this period.

Contemporary art trends emerged in the following decades. Art festivals and exchanges such as Beyond Pressure International Performance Art Festival, Blue Wind Art Festival, New Zero Multimedia Art Festival, and so on were held. Artists who got engaged with these festivals and exhibitions were drawn to new ideas and art forms. However, reaching a wider audience and being part of the international art community were still a far-off thing.

We Need Art Collectives and Collaborations

It is rare to find people working as a collective in the Myanmar art scene, and not many artists collaborate with each other. This is partly because the notion of art-making as an individual thing has been taught widely among local artists, with an emphasis on personal space and expression in art. The political system that had been used in the country divided artists and created distrust; therefore, politics can also be considered a main reason. Historical and ongoing conflicts between the hundred over ethnic groups in Myanmar has also isolated communities.

Most social teachings center on maintaining traditional values and following the footsteps of the previous generation. Myanmar is a democracy hampered by the old ways of dictatorship. Art associations, art schools, and foundations need to encourage collaboration. Collaborations will bring in new art practices and ideas, and will help lay a good foundation for contemporary art.

The Immune System of Present-day Myanmar

Today, foreign investors are keeping a close watch on Myanmar. A horde

of corporations, aid agencies, and other forms of organizations will come into the country. This will test the strength of the society, test how much people can cope with the changes or work with them.

Recently, an international NGO started talking about having an art fair that will be called Yangon Biennale, its main idea being to create a thriving commercial art market. This has led to an argument between local artists and the organization in question, in which local artists have demanded that the organization not use the name Yangon Biennale. This is an example reflecting the current conditions.

The Myanmar art scene will start attracting a lot of business people and other organizations, for example from other Southeast Asian countries, and this will also bring opportunities to local artists to get larger exposure for their works. But local artists need to make wise decisions by weighing up their options. They need to examine who is benefiting and how. They also need to work to change the policies regarding art and culture. Hopefully, a significant number of independent art spaces will spring up, and there will be more investment from the government to support contemporary Myanmar art.

(Translated by Mg Day)

Laos in Motion

Souliya Phoumivong

[Artist /Lecturer, National Institute of Fine Arts, Vientiane]

Laos is in motion. Laos as I have known it all my life is a peaceful land, full of tradition and culture. The country has changed a great deal during the past 15 years, in many different areas. In my generation, we see so many issues in society. We want to express and discuss these problems, but it is not easy to find platforms for expression. More discussion of social issues in Laos today can be a good thing and get the public more interested and engaged.

I support change and improvement for art in Laos as part of this change. Until now, most artists have only used traditional media like painting, and this is the main thing that is taught in the Lao art education system. I believe that new media is an alternative way for artists to talk about new issues facing Laos, issues which arise partly from Laos' position in between many other powerful nations, and our status as a member of ASEAN. In order for more artists in Laos to feel able to experiment with new media, we need to create opportunities for this. This is why, for "Condition Report," I proposed an exhibition, titled "Laos in Motion," inviting artists to use new media to talk about the changes that are happening in Laos today.

My proposed exhibition is not about criticizing, or being oppositional. Instead, it is more about inviting people to think, to consider the many kinds of problems we are facing, and their many different sources.

Comparing Laos to Other Southeast Asian Nations

I have gained a lot more experience by seeing things outside of Laos, during my travels and residencies. My participation in the Japan Foundation's "Condition Report" project has been especially helpful in allowing me to compare the situation in Laos with that of other Southeast Asian countries. From what I observe, we in Laos, unlike in other countries, have found unique ways to express our opinion. We often use indirect means to express our thoughts, an attitude resulting from the way we have grown up, where we try to avoid conflict.

In Laos, most artists make artwork about Lao culture and the Lao landscape, because this is what we have learnt from art school and this is what most of Lao society accept as art. Most art students when they graduate choose to follow these themes as they think this is the only kind of art they can make money from. This is the main reason why conceptual art or art using new media is not so popular. Only very few Lao artists make work that is more conceptual, or has a more critical attitude. And for those artists, it is difficult to find an audience. It is difficult to show contemporary art and get people involved in it as the audience is still used to beautiful paintings of Lao landscape and culture. The other difficulty faced by the art scene in Laos, as in other countries, is insufficient support from the government.

I have learned a lot from my experience of “Condition Report.” Lao’s contemporary art situation is still in the development stage. Meeting curators from other countries in the region, I am inspired by their work. Vietnamese curators, for example, have a creative way of expressing their ideas. In Myanmar, they also have a very strong government and experience censorship there; however, artists there have their own ways to give their opinion, and many artists have stepped out from the frame of traditional culture and art to create new kinds of thinking and expression in their artworks.

The Potential of New Media

In Laos, most artists work in painting, or in other traditional media. It is only in the last few years that a few artists have joined new media workshops, which have inspired those artists to utilize new media (including photography, installation, video, and clay animation) as an art form.

What are the new subject matters expressed by today’s Lao artists when they are presented with new media and new foreign influences? How does their art, using new tools of expression, reflect the modern social landscape of Laos? What are the strategies used by the artists—painters, performers, animators—in order to freely express themselves while still respecting the deeply varied cultural and social frameworks of Laos?

As a curator, I chose to focus on new media for my proposed project for “Condition Report” because new media is something fresh that can attract more attention than traditional media like painting, to get people more interested, and more open to the messages that we want to talk about. New media can reach a much wider audience.

It is a very powerful tool for communicating ideas to an audience, especially in the new technology era. The new generation loves to share information via new media, including photos, videos, and social media. New media provides a good way for us to learn from outside Laos, and also to share ideas from our neighbors within our society. It is also very fast—audiences can get messages directly and quickly through social media, and they can share among themselves, instead of having to go to see artworks in an exhibition or gallery, or in books. There are more

possibilities for artworks to reach a broader audience, and to discuss them among themselves. In Laos, very few people visit art exhibitions or galleries. If we make new media art, people will be curious about it and share it by social media, which means more people will see the work and join in the discussions about the new problems and changes that Laos is facing today.

In Laos, if we want to develop new media art, we have to start from what we are used to. If we start by doing something too similar to what is happening in other countries with a longer history of new media art, it will be too complicated, and difficult for people to understand. Instead we have to start from what people are familiar with, and not be too complex. New media artwork should be more conceptual, and have a message, but the main purpose is for Lao people to understand what artists want to say. Lao new media art needs to speak primarily to Lao people, though audiences outside the country can follow it.

The Japan Foundation is very good for supporting a small country like Laos to be exposed to new things, to get the chance to do something which can better connect us to the rest of the region. My hope was that this project could be the starting point for a new generation to stand up and think more about the possibilities of new media art, and contemporary art in general. About how to create more work, and how to change the future of art in Laos, and come closer to our neighboring art scenes in ASEAN.

(With thanks to Roger Nelson and Misouda Heaungsoukkhoun)

Institutions, Communication,
and Discourse

Communicating with People Behind the Black Mirror

Vittavin Leelavanachai

[Independent Curator]

The evolution of the Internet and its influence on the modern world has had an undeniable effect on contemporary art and visual culture. Information overflow has changed art audiences' behavior to the point that some may even argue that we may not need to be present in the physical space of an artwork to experience it. As an exhibition-maker, I still believe in the importance of being present in an art space. Obviously, the accessibility to images, videos, or even virtual tours offers alternatives to the traditional art exhibition experience. "Black mirror" is a reflection on the turned-off screen of computers, mobile phones, televisions, and all modern telecommunication devices as such. It is also the title of a British science fiction series which examines modern society with regards to the unanticipated consequences of new technologies.^[01]

This article is written during my participation in a curators' workshop by the Japan Foundation Asia Center. During these two years, I have had the chance to observe and interact with several art spaces including city center art venues, alternative spaces, artist-run spaces, and multipurpose spaces such as cafés or bars which also function as art exhibition spaces, regarding each space's strategies to attract, build, and communicate with their audiences, especially in drawing them out from behind the computer or mobile phone screen to the physical space. Crowd-pulling artists, location, targeted media promotion, well-planned activities and educational programmes, and souvenir stores are various factors considered and tactics applied by each art space depending on their focus and positioning. The positive effect of a successful exhibition opening can extend through the remainder of the exhibition period, so the selection of a suitable opening date (for example, whether it falls on a weekday or weekend) is also important. This article explores recent case studies from contemporary art spaces.

We might begin with a "white cube" space such as Bangkok Art and Culture Centre (BACC), which opened in 2008. BACC is located at a very high audience traffic spot, between several big shopping malls. In handling such an advantage, this space wisely manages the first and second floors as activity areas, which are connected to the public

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"Black Mirror," All 4, Channel 4 Television Corporation, accessed December 7, 2017, <http://www.channel4.com/programmes/black-mirror/>.

Skytrain walkway on the third floor via a circular exhibition walkway. These floors are the crucial determinant to encourage art viewers or irregular viewers to circulate to other upper floors. Moreover, coffee bars and cafés, designer souvenir shops, and selected bookstores also invite people to spend a longer time or even all day in this exhibition complex, inspiring them to take the opportunity to get to art exhibitions and activities. In my opinion, BACC is an early successful model of how to bring people into a contemporary art space, particularly if we consider Thai people's perception of art in the past, which has mostly been based on an appreciation of paintings seen in galleries. Whether they are interested in art or not, audience traffic flows into the first and second floor to eat, shop, or participate in other activities, quickly taking in artworks as they circulate up to the third floor. All these points lead them by elevator access to the seventh, eighth, and ninth floors which are the three connecting floors of the main gallery, which regularly holds temporary exhibitions, running for two to three months at a time.

Unless an art space has a super location like BACC, program and artist selection would be its most important considerations. Bangkok CityCity Gallery is not located in such a prime location but is also quite accessible and surrounded by many foreign art and culture institutes. Its selection of influential artists such as cartoonist and animator Wisut Ponnimit, for its inaugural exhibition ("Melo House," August 26 to October 11, 2015) and artist-filmmaker Nawapol Thamrongrattanarit ("I WRITE YOU A LOT," June 18 to August 7, 2016) is a great strategy to enhance the space's reputation and attract a crossover of art and film visual culture audiences. Other, more critical art exhibitions could have been placed during the same time slots and attracted audiences better, encouraging them to explore other types of art and exhibitions like Korakrit Arunanondchai's "Painting with history in a room filled with people with funny names 3" (April 3 to June 5, 2016) or "To Whom It May Concern" (August 9 to September 3, 2017) curated by Judha Su, an educational program-cum-art exhibition enquiring into the position and reach of art criticism and journalism in Thailand, and reflecting on the importance of discourse for trained and untrained viewers.

Another model can be found in art community-focused spaces that mainly attract people from the art field and art students. N22 space is a shared warehouse in Narathiwat Road which houses gallery VER, Cartel Artspace, Artist + Run Gallery, Tentacles, and three artist studios, as well as art storage. This space often strategically schedules events and gallery exhibition openings on the same day, creating an opportunity for sharing audiences as well as art buyers. Three to four openings and performances always happen at the same time, thus creating small gatherings and discussions among the established and young artists attending. Tentacles is more focused on young artists, and they also conduct workshops every weekend by people with all kinds of expertise. Likewise, JAM, a bar, underground music venue, gallery, and cine club in Sathorn, builds up its community using social networks by conducting interesting visual culture events in conjunction with an art exhibition.

“Cult Movie Night,” “8-bit Bangkok—Modern Retro Night,” “The No Mic Open Mic,” or even the occasional outdoor movie night are some examples of their special events.

You get the highest rate of audience traffic in Bangkok for art at art fairs and festivals, even though their targets are most likely to be art dealers, collectors and upper-class society. The successful Hotel Art Fair, and Art Ground at The Jam Factory are good case studies, for the majority of Bangkok people tend to visit fairs, festivals, and art and visual culture events instead of going to more serious or educational art programs.

I have discussed here some examples of how current art spaces in Bangkok are moving and the curatorial strategies they apply. To conclude, the strategic use of the physical environment around art exhibitions is one key factor in achieving audience traffic at an exhibition venue. Curatorial strategies can be applied to manage audience traffic to the right space, encouraging people to access exhibitions. Meanwhile, including well-known and highly visible artists that also relate to an art space's direction is a crucial factor in maintaining its reputation and visitor rate.

We should consider other mediums besides physical space formats when presenting exhibitions, and find strategies to manage and disseminate information via the Internet and social networking. Public and media relations need to be developed to effectively use social media to communicate with people behind the screen, considering that the mainstream media has already moved onto social networks—expertise on Facebook and online strategies are a must for this era.

How can curatorial practice be applied to social media tools? For example, how do you make an attractive page header following the limited text regulations and still communicate an art space's or exhibition's information? Online film festivals are a good example of curatorial practice applied on an alternative platform. This sort of platform can be found in mobile app stores as well—the new Apple App Store “curates” its content, presenting apps in a story package, and content-led curation is also used on the Steam online game store platform. Although this can indicate an overuse of the concept of “curation,” at the same time it points to interesting ways in which curatorial practice can be applied on new online platforms, especially in this era of information overload.

We need to combine the possibilities of new channels with more established ones to communicate to the audience behind the black mirror, whose antenna has today moved into the digital space.

Learning with Citizens

Yoshizaki Kazuhiko

[Curator, Yamaguchi Center for Arts and Media]

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“Social inclusion” is cited as a function of art and culture even in the Japanese government’s policies for cultural promotion, as in the Third Basic Policy established by cabinet decision on February 8, 2011. See “Bunka geijutsu no shinkō ni kan suru kihon-teki na hōshin (Heisei 23-nen 2-gatsu 8-ka kakugi kettei)” [Basic policy on the promotion of culture and the arts], Agency for Cultural Affairs, Government of Japan, accessed January 9, 2018, http://www.bunka.go.jp/seisaku/bunka_gyosei/hoshin/kihon_hoshin_3ji/index.html.

A heap of soil occupies a corner of the exhibition space in the massive former warehouse building. A tree and grass grow from it, and there are two small pools, as well as a red swing. One of the pools is filled with cloudy water, which is drawn through a hose into a filter and then pumped into the other pool as clear water.

Presented at the Jakarta Biennale in 2015, this is *Flowing Water* (2015), a work made by Lifepatch, an organization based in Yogyakarta. The work is a water purification apparatus that was made for a community in Surabaya, East Java, where there is no access to clean drinking water and the inhabitants must use river water that they disinfect with chlorine.

Including artists, programmers, and scientists, the members of Lifepatch come from diverse backgrounds. Calling themselves a “citizen initiative,” not an “artist collective,” they work not only in art but also in cross-disciplinary fields, such as biotechnology and agriculture. Often collaborating with specialists, they propose concrete solutions for problems faced by communities, using technology, and also open-source their solutions so that other people with similar problems can use them. What distinguishes their practice from other artistic practices is that they not only try to solve issues in specific communities, but also attempt to encourage an environment in which citizens can take initiatives in engaging with social issues.

Such practices, that attempt to solve social issues using art-based strategies, are now being pursued not only by artists but also in the activities of the museums and art centers. In particular, it seems that there is a high degree of interest in the role of art and culture as a factor in promoting inclusivity and enabling people with differences in ability, economic status, race, or nationality to be equally accepted in society.^[01]

During my research trips to Indonesia in recent years, both visiting the Jakarta Biennale as well as during the “Condition Report” program, I have met many artists and artist collectives who engage closely with communities and make works about their issues—not only in Jakarta but also in other cities in Indonesia. Then, in 2017, I had the opportunity to

research educational programs for local communities at museums and art centers in England and saw many examples of projects addressing social inclusion. In 2017, I also relocated from a public museum in Tokyo to an art center in a regional city, and this change in environment has made me more conscious about community relations and the role of museums in society. It is for these reasons that I would like to use this essay to introduce the initiatives of regional museums and art centers in England and Japan, respectively, and consider the roles that are possible for cultural institutions to play in society, focusing on the relationship with citizens.

A Socially Useful Museum: The Initiatives of the Middlesbrough Institute of Modern Art

Located in Middlesbrough in northeast England, the Middlesbrough Institute of Modern Art (mima) is a public museum that actively engages with issues of local communities. With a current population of about 140,000 people, Middlesbrough once had a thriving steel industry, but industrial decline, closed factories, and rising unemployment rates mean that the city now has one of the highest poverty rates in England. Middlesbrough also has many refugees, and societal issues related to housing and public safety are becoming more and more apparent in the area.

Following the appointment of Alistair Hudson as its director in 2014, mima has implemented major changes to its management, programming, and identity as a museum under the vision of the “useful museum.”^[02] Located in a region confronting numerous issues, the museum has a need to present art as a benefit to society that has an immediate connection with society and people’s lives, rather than as objects for viewing only that are divorced from real society. This is the core thinking behind the concept of the “useful museum” that Hudson advocates. Stating that “the role of this institution is to show the value of art in society and how to be creative as a society,” Hudson says, “the subjects we talk about and our way of making exhibitions with people are about getting people to think creatively to address social problems and how to regenerate this postindustrial town collectively by community.”^[03]

Under the rubric of the socially “useful museum,” Hudson announced that the vision for the museum for the four-year period from 2015 to 2018 would be “Museum 3.0.”^[04] Museum 3.0 considers all people who use the museum, including both visitors and staff, to be “users,” with the museum’s significance depending upon how it is employed by these users. It also sees the museum as an environment that is generated from the totality of all the users’ actions.

The vision is an attempt to change the traditional relationship between museums and the public. Following the traditional model, the public would go to the museum to see an exhibition made by the curators, and view and appreciate the artworks on display there. However, Museum 3.0 puts the “user” at the center of the museum

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The concept of the “useful museum” was first proposed by the Cuban artist Tania Bruguera, who organized an exhibition called “Museum of Arte Útil” at the Van Abbemuseum, Eindhoven, in 2013. After the exhibition ended, an organization called Asociación de Arte Útil has continued operating independent of the Van Abbemuseum, focusing its activity on archival projects. As Bruguera's codirector, Hudson has set up the organization's office at mima.

Alistair Hudson is currently the director of the Whitworth and Manchester Art Galleries.

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Alistair Hudson, interview by Yoshizaki Kazuhiko, on February 28, 2017.

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See “Where do we go from here? A vision statement for 2015–18,” Visitmima.com, accessed January 9, 2018, <http://www.visitmima.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/mima-vision2015-18.pdf>.

model, and the museum's resources—such as the works in the collection, the knowledge of the curators, the equipment, and the facilities—are there to be shared and used by the users. The museum's resources are the shared wealth of the community, and the involvement of the community in the planning of programs is also encouraged. Most of the programs at the museum are created through conversations with the users, including the museum staff.

Creating Programs in Dialogue with the Public: Developing Exhibitions Through Educational Programs

In many museums, exhibitions are planned first and then the details (theme, exhibited works, artists, and so on) provide the basis for developing educational programs, but at mima, it is the educational programs that provide the basis for the temporary and collection exhibitions. For example, once a week, the museum holds a community-oriented program called "Community Day." This program features various events throughout the day, from workshops for different age groups and communities, such as children under the age of five, young people between the ages of 14 and 24, and adults with dementia, to English classes for non-native speakers, community gardening, free lunches, and film screenings. Through these participatory events, the themes and artists for planned exhibitions are selected through direct dialogue with the public about their needs and concerns.

Works for exhibitions are selected through conversations between the museum staff and the community, even in the case of collection exhibitions. A public tour of the collection is held once a month, allowing visitors to see the works in person and share their opinions about what they would like to see in future exhibitions. Curators then plan exhibitions based on those requests. Here, curators are not in charge of selecting works but rather take on the role of facilitators. Having the public directly involved in the selection of works fosters an awareness that the museum's collection is the shared wealth of all.

The museum also develops projects for addressing social issues in the region. For example, the former sculpture garden is now a community garden, managed in cooperation with outside groups. The garden is intended primarily to be a space for minority communities to socialize and learn new skills. And it seems that the people who care for the garden are mostly refugees. The harvested vegetables are used at the museum's café and are also given away at community events.

Museums and art centers that address issues faced by the local community are uncommon in Japan. What kind of art is useful to society, and what kind of art could have an effect on the social reality? It would be rash to see what Hudson calls the usefulness of art as an immediate force for providing solutions or panaceas to social problems. As Hudson says, the community is the main constituent that "thinks creatively about social problems," and perhaps the usefulness of art lies in its power to foster the creativity for dealing with such problems.

Although it does not deal with social problems directly, I will next introduce the “Korogaru Koen” project at Yamaguchi Center for Arts and Media, where I currently work, as an instance of creating a space where members of the community can think independently and creativity is nurtured.

A Place for Learning About Renewable Public Space: The Yamaguchi Center for Arts and Media’s “Korogaru Koen”

Yamaguchi Center for Arts and Media, or YCAM, is a multiuse cultural institution that functions as an exhibition space, theater, cinema and library. Since it opened in 2003, YCAM has offered diverse programs such as exhibitions, theater performances and workshops, with a focus on the creation of new expression using media technology. Among these programs is “Korogaru Koen,” launched in 2012.

“Korogaru Koen” is a playground-type installation that is made with large, steep slides and shaky platforms to stimulate children to think and create through play. The playground equipment includes microphones, speakers, lights, and video projections, and there are mechanisms that operate in response to the children’s movements or according to pre-designed programs. Meetings are held regularly during the exhibition period, allowing the children to think on their own about adding new rules of play and software to the playground or changing the hardware itself. Some of the ideas that come up are then implemented a few days later.

The program has been held recurrently since 2012, and over time a group of children has formed that voluntarily maintains the venue and joins in its management. In 2013, the children wanted to extend the four-month exhibition period beyond its scheduled end date, so they independently started a petition and gathered signatures that they delivered to the mayor.^[05] This led to the extension of the exhibition period and the return of the installation the following year.

Here, children can learn through play about the necessity for rules in communal space, as well as their own ability to modify those rules on occasion. Through their experiences in this small community, the children obtain a sense of their self-efficacy in society—a concept which is otherwise so abstract as to escape comprehension.

In this essay, we have looked at the engagement of museums and art centers with local communities through the initiatives of mima and YCAM. What they share in common is the aspiration to a dynamic in which the community is the main constituent and professionals (the curators and staff) and nonprofessionals (the community) think and learn about social realities together through art, instead of one in which museums and art centers provide objects for appreciation to be admired by the people. This non-hierarchical relationship with citizens can also be seen in the practices of Lifepatch, described at the beginning of this essay. The role of the curator or educator in this context is not to

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For details, see Aida Daiya, “Kyōiku fukyū no genba kara: Kore kara no myūjiamu no mottomo shigeki-teki na tsukaikata [From the site of educational activity: The most stimulating way of utilizing the future museum],” *artscape*, August 15, 2016, accessed January 9, 2018, http://artscape.jp/focus/10126094_1635.html.

authoritatively transmit knowledge; rather, it could be said that they are mediators who bring together artworks, artists, and communities.

“Whose museum is it?” “What is public?” These questions have been discussed ad nauseam in recent years with every instance of censorship that occurs when museums try to exhibit works addressing political and social issues. Perhaps the initiatives to encourage the active engagement of the community on the part of these two cultural facilities, as introduced above, could offer a suggestion for breaking through the mental blocks confronting these issues.

(Translated by Andrew Maerkle)

吉崎和彦

[山口情報芸術センター キュレーター]

かつて倉庫だった広大な空間を利用した展示会場の一面に土が盛りられている。その上には木が生え草が生え、二つの小さな池があり、赤いプランコもある。ひとつの池には濁った水が入っており、そこからホースでその水が汲み取られ、フィルターを通してもう一方の池に透明な水となって出ている。

これは、ジャカルタ・ビエンナーレ2015で発表されたインドネシアのジョグジャカルタを拠点に活動する団体、「Lifepatch」の作品《流れる水》(2015年)である。きれいな飲み水にアクセスできず、川から汲み取った水を塩素で消毒して使用しているジャワ島東部の都市スラバヤのあるコミュニティのために浄水装置を開発することによって、都市における水質汚染の問題を顕在化させた。

「Lifepatch」はアーティスト以外にも、プログラマーや科学者、デザイナーなど多様なバックグラウンドを持つメンバーで構成された団体で、自らを「アーティスト・コレクティブ」ではなく「市民団体」と呼び、アートの領域にとどまらず、バイオテクノロジーや農業などさまざまな分野で活動している。彼らはコミュニティが抱える問題に対して、しばしば外部の専門家とも協働しながら、テクノロジーを使って具体的な提案を行い、さらにそのアイデアをオープンソース化し誰もが活用できるようにしている。ただ特定のコミュニティの問題を解決するだけでなく、市民が主体的に問題を解決できるような環境づくりまでをも試みている点が彼らの実践の特徴である。

こうした社会課題の解決を試みる芸術的実践は、アーティストに限ったことではなく、作品を展示する美術館やアートセンターの活動自体にも求められるようになっていく。とりわけ、障がいや貧困、人種及び国籍が異なる人たちが平等に社会に受け入れられるようにする社会包摂機能が文化芸術の効用として注目されているように思われる^[01]。

ジャカルタ・ビエンナーレ2015だけでなく、「Condition Report」の一環で調査のためインドネシアを訪れた際にも、コミュニティと密接に関わり、そのコミュニティが

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例えば、日本政府の芸術文化の振興に関する方針においても、2011年に閣議決定された「第3次基本方針」から「社会包摂」という言葉が、文化芸術の機能のひとつとして使われている。「文化芸術の振興に関する基本的な方針」(第3次基本方針、平成23年2月8日閣議決定)
http://www.bunka.go.jp/seisaku/bunka_gyosei/hoshin/kihon_hoshin_3ji/index.html (アクセス:2018年1月9日)

02

この「有用な美術館」というコンセプトはキューバ人アーティスト、タニア・ブルゲラが提唱したもので、2013年にファン・アベ美術館(オランダ、アイントホーフェン)で「有用芸術のための美術館(Museum of Arte Útil)」という展覧会が開催された。展覧会終了後も、ファン・アベ美術館からは独立した形で、アーカイヴを中心に活動は「Asociación de Arte Útil」という組織として継続している。ハドソンはブルゲラとともに共同ディレクターを務め、その事務所をミドルズブラ・インスティテュート・オブ・モダンアート内に構える。2018年よりハドソンはマンチェスターにあるウィットワース美術館並びにマンチェスター・アートギャラリーの館長を務める。

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筆者によるハドソンへの2017年2月28日のインタビューより。

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2015-18年のビジョンについては、同館ホームページからダウンロードすることができる。<http://www.visitmima.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/mima-vision2015-18.pdf> (アクセス:2018年1月9日)

抱える問題に取り組むアーティストあるいはアーティスト・コレクティブには、ジャカルタ以外の都市においても多く出会った。その一方で、2017年にイギリスの美術館やアートセンターにおける地域住民向けの教育普及事業について調査をする機会を得たが、そこでその多くが社会包摂的な取り組みを行っているのを目の当たりにした。さらに、筆者は同じく2017年東京の公立美術館から地方都市のアートセンターへと移り、この環境の変化によって、コミュニティとの関係性を、そして美術館が社会の中で担う役割についてこれまで以上に考えるようになった。こうした背景から、本稿では、イギリスと日本の地方都市の美術館及びアートセンターの取り組みを紹介し、社会の中で文化施設がどのような役割を担うことができるか、特に市民との関係性に着目して考えてみたい。

社会に有用な美術館：ミドルズブラ・インスティテュート・オブ・モダンアートの試み

イングランド北東部、ミドルズブラ市にあるミドルズブラ・インスティテュート・オブ・モダンアート、通称「mima」は、地域が抱える問題に積極的に取り組んでいる美術館である。美術館が位置するミドルズブラ市は、人口約14万人で、かつては鉄鋼業で栄えてきたが、現在、その鉄鋼業は衰退し、工場は閉鎖され、失業率が高く、英国の中でも貧困率が高い都市となっている。また、難民や亡命者が多く、その他、住宅問題や治安問題など多くの社会問題が顕在化している地域でもある。

2014年にアリスティア・ハドソンが館長に就任して以来、同館は「有用な美術館」というコンセプトを掲げ、それまでの同館の運営やプログラム、そして従来の美術館のあり方を大きく変えるような試みを行ってきた^[02]。様々な問題を抱える地域の美術館として、芸術を現実の社会とかけ離れた、単なる鑑賞するためのオブジェとして提示するのではなく、芸術が人々の生活や社会と直結したものであり、社会にとって役に立つものとして提示していく必要がある。これがハドソンの掲げる「有用な美術館」というコンセプトの根幹にある考えである。「この美術館の役割は、社会における芸術の価値、いかに創造的な社会になりうるかを示すことです」。「私たちのプログラムと、住民と展覧会を作るやりかたというのは、すべて人々に社会問題に創造的に取り組んでもらうためです。そして、脱工業化社会に直面するこの街をコミュニティの手によって再生するためです」とハドソンは語る^[03]。

この社会にとって「有用な美術館」というコンセプトの下、ハドソンは2015年から2018年まで4年間の美術館のビジョンとして「ミュージアム3.0」構想を掲げる^[04]。「ミュージアム3.0」とは、来館者、美術館のスタッフも含めて美術館を利用する人を「ユーザー」と呼び、美術館はユーザーによって使われることによってはじめてその存在意義がある、という考えである。そして、美術館をあらゆるユーザーの行為の総体に

よって生まれる空間と考える。

この構想は、従来の美術館と市民との関係性を変える試みである。従来の美術館モデルでは、キュレーターが作る展覧会を市民が美術館に出かけて行き、そこにある芸術作品を鑑賞し、享受するというものだった。しかし、「ミュージアム3.0」の美術館モデルは、「ユーザー」を中心にした考えであり、収蔵作品、キュレーターの専門知識、技術、施設といった美術館が所有する資源は、ユーザーによってシェアされ、活用されるために存在する。美術館のもつ資源は市民の共有財産であり、そのプログラムの企画に関しても市民の参加を促す。同館において多くのプログラムは美術館のスタッフも含むユーザーとの対話を通して作られている。

市民との対話で作るプログラム：教育普及事業から作る展覧会

多くの美術館では、展覧会がまず企画され、その内容（テーマや出品作家・作品等）に基づいて教育普及プログラムが作られるが、mimaでは、教育普及プログラムから企画展やコレクション展が作られる。例えば、同館では「コミュニティ・デー」という市民向けのイベントを週に一度開催している。このイベントは、5歳以下の子どもや14歳から24歳の若者から認知症を患う人々まで、異なる世代、コミュニティを対象としたワークショップや、英語を母語としない人向け英語教室、コミュニティ・ガーデン、フリーランチ、上映会などさまざまなプログラムを一日中館内で開催する。こうした市民が参加するイベントを通して、市民が何を必要としているのか、どのような問題を抱えているのかを直接話を聞き、そこで聞いたことを元に企画展のテーマや作家を決めていく。

さらに、コレクション展においても、美術館スタッフとコミュニティとの対話から展示作品が構成されている。毎月一回、市民向けの収蔵庫ツアーを行い、作品を直接見てもらい、そこで見たい作品の希望も聞く。その希望を元にキュレーターが展示を構成する。ここでは、キュレーターは作品の選定者ではなく、ファシリテーターの役割を担っている。作品の選定に市民が直接関与することにより、同館のコレクションは市民の共有財産であるという意識が芽生える。

mimaは、地域が抱える社会問題を解決するための事業も展開している。例えば、かつて彫刻庭園だった場所に、コミュニティ・ガーデンを作り、外部団体と協力して運営している。このガーデンは、主にマイノリティのコミュニティの人々にとって社交したり、技術を学んだりする場になることを目指している。この庭を世話するのは、亡命者の人たちが中心だという。ここで収穫された野菜は美術館のカフェで調理され、市民にふるまわれるイベントも開催されている。

この経緯については、会田大也「教育普及の現場から——これからのミュージアムの最も刺激的な使い方」[artscape]2016年8月15日号に詳しい。
http://artscape.jp/focus/10126094_1635.html (アクセス:2018年1月9日)

このように地域住民が抱える問題に取り組む美術館やアートセンターは日本においては多くはない。ここでいう社会にとって有用な芸術とは何か、社会の現実に対して実効性を持つ芸術とは何か。このハドソンの言う芸術の有用性を社会問題の解決策や特効薬を提供するような即時的な効果と捉えてしまうのは危険であろう。ハドソンの言うように「社会問題に対して創造的に考え」る主体はあくまで市民であり、その問題に対処するための創造性を育む力が芸術の持つ有用性ではないだろうか。次に、社会問題に対して直接取り組むわけではないが、市民が主体的に考え、創造性を育む場の創出の事例として、筆者が勤務する山口情報芸術センターの「コロガル公園」シリーズを紹介する。

更新可能な公共空間を学ぶ場：山口情報芸術センターの「コロガル公園」

山口情報芸術センター、通称「YCAM」は、山口市にある展示空間、劇場、映画館、図書館の機能を備える公立の複合文化施設である。2003年の開館以来、メディア・テクノロジーを用いた新しい表現の創出を活動の軸に、展覧会や舞台芸術作品の公演、ワークショップなど多様なプログラムを展開しているが、そのひとつに2012年から開催している「コロガル公園」シリーズというプログラムがある。

本プログラムは、傾斜の急な大きな滑り台や不安定な床がある公園型インスタレーションで、子どもたちが遊びを通して考え、創造するために作られた。遊具の中にはマイク、スピーカー、照明、映像プロジェクションが備え付けられており、子どもの動きに反応する、あるいは事前に作られたプログラムによって作動する仕掛けがある。会期中には、子どもたちが自らこの公園での新しい遊びのルールやソフトウェア、ハードウェアの追加を考えるためのミーティングが定期的で開催される。ここで話し合われたアイデアのいくつかは数日後実現されていく。

本プログラムは2012年から継続的に開催されているが、回を重ねるごとに、子どもたちの中から自発的に会場メンテナンスや運営に加わる自治コミュニティが生まれてきたという。2013年に開催された際には、約4カ月の会期の終わりが迫る頃に、子どもたちの中から継続を求める声が出始め、ついには子どもたちが自発的に著名活動を行い、その集められた署名は市長まで届けられたという^[05]。その結果、子どもたちは会期延長と翌年の開催を勝ち取った。

子どもたちはここで、遊びを通して公共空間におけるルールがなぜ必要かを学び、ときにそのルールは自らアップデートすることもできることを経験する。この小さなコミュニティの中での経験を通して、子どもたちは抽象的だとらえどころない社会への自己効力感を得たのではないだろうか。

本稿では、mimaとYCAMの地域社会に対する取り組みを見てきた。両者に共通するのは、美術館・アートセンターが鑑賞の対象を提供し、市民はそれを享受するという関係性ではなく、あくまで主体は市民にあり、社会の現実について芸術を通して専門家(キュレーター、スタッフ)と非専門家(市民)がともに考え、ともに学ぶ関係性を目指しているということである。こうしたフラットな関係性は、前述の「Lifepatch」のコミュニティの関係性にも同様に見られるものである。ここでのキュレーターやエデュケーターの役割は、一方向的な知識の伝授ではなく、芸術作品やアーティストを市民と結ぶメディアーターと言える。

「美術館は誰のものか」「公共性とは何か」。こうした問いは、近年美術館で政治的、社会的問題を扱う作品を展示する際に表現規制といった問題が生じるたびに議論されては堂々巡りが繰り返される。ここで紹介した、市民の主体的な運動を引き出すような二つの文化機関の試みは、この問いが直面する閉塞感を打ち破る手がかりにならないだろうか。

Fixing a Broken Paper Boat: On Art Museums and Museum Curators in Indonesia

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Bayu Genia Krishbie

[Assistant Curator, National Gallery of Indonesia]

The opening of the MACAN Museum (Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art in Nusantara) in Jakarta in early November 2017 was greeted with two expressions: joy and irony. It is exhilarating of course that, for the first time in history, Indonesia finally has a world-class art museum with a collection, design, management, and programs of such an excellent quality and standard. Under the command of Aaron Seeto—formerly curatorial manager of Asian and Pacific art at Queensland Art Gallery—as director, this ultra-modern museum designed by MET Studio from London holds about 800 important works by Indonesian and prominent international artists. The irony is that this is a private museum.

The MACAN Museum has appeared on the scene just when the art public has been getting increasingly frustrated by the lack of government attention to the development of the cultural sector, and especially art. Thus, while private sector initiatives to turn art-collecting activities to the benefit of public education might be worthy of a thumbs-up, they also give cause for lament.

On the one hand, the presence of the MACAN Museum demonstrates the government's success in stimulating private sector initiatives to contribute to the development of art practices in Indonesia. On the other hand, such initiatives should also provide momentum to fix the state's art management and infrastructure as a means of inclusive cultural education for all citizens, protecting it from market mechanisms that only provide access to an exclusive, segmented audience. In the education sector, for example, the government has been trying hard to improve the quality of public schools to adapt (if not compete) to face the capitalization of education characterized by the onslaught of better quality and costly private schools. The government's task is now becoming more difficult—with a limited budget for the cultural sector (about 1% of the total military budget), they are pushed to improve the infrastructure, management, and programs of art museums to meet fairly high benchmarks. And there are other lingering unresolved fundamental issues, such as the decentralization of modern

art infrastructure to reach communities beyond the capital, and the management of state collections. The question then is, how far has the government come in improving things?

Art Museums and Art Collections in Indonesia

The dynamic history of modern art in Indonesia is not directly reflected in a tradition of collecting works of art by the state. If we mark the beginning of modern art in Indonesia as the moment Raden Saleh returned to Batavia (present-day Jakarta) in 1851, after 20 years of his wandering in Europe, we have seen more than 150 years of modern art in Indonesia. What is the number of modern state-owned art museums to date? Only three, two belonging to the central government and one belonging to Jakarta's provincial government: the National Gallery of Indonesia, the Basoeki Abdullah Museum, and the Museum of Fine Arts and Ceramics. They are all located in Jakarta. In addition to these three museums, there are also collecting institutions such as the Presidential Palace of the Republic of Indonesia under the Ministry of State Secretariat, the Governing Body of Taman Ismail Marzuki (Jakarta Arts Center), and the Jakarta Arts Council, but unfortunately these three institutions do not have museums or permanent exhibition spaces for their collections to be accessed easily by the public.

In general, the development of museums in Indonesia has been quite slow. There are currently around 428 museums^[01] throughout Indonesia that are managed by the government and private owners. That number is of course very small for the biggest country in Southeast Asia, which consists of 34 provinces, 515 districts/cities, and over 261 million inhabitants. In the United States, which has a population of about 320 million people, there are about 35,000 museums^[02] scattered throughout the states! This comparison is of course rather unfair, but the extreme difference in the quantity of museums compared to the population of these two countries is astounding. This indicates how much education in Indonesia depends on the process of learning in the classroom due to the lack of educational infrastructure such as museums outside the school system.

Among the 428 museums in Indonesia, about 24 museums of modern art,^[03] both government-owned and private, have been recorded. These museums tend to be concentrated around major cities such as Jakarta, Bandung, Yogyakarta, and the province of Bali; they are predominantly museums with monographic collections of specific artists, such as the Basoeki Abdullah Museum, Affandi Museum, Ciputra Museum (which focuses its permanent collection on the works of Hendra Gunawan), Widayat Museum, Barli Museum, Selasar Sunaryo Art Space, NuArt Sculpture Park, Nyoman Gunarsa Museum, Le Mayeur Museum, Griya Popo Iskandar Art, and so on. Except for the Basoeki Abdullah Museum, these museums are usually managed and funded independently by artists or their families and private collectors. Meanwhile, the number of museums with art historical collections

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Petrik Matanasi, "Darurat Museum di Indonesia," *Tirto.ID*, November 13, 2016, <https://tirto.id/darurat-museum-di-indonesia-b4KJ>.

02

Jillian Steinhauer, "The United States Has More than 35,000 Museums," *Hyperallergic*, June 24, 2014, <https://hyperallergic.com/134152/the-united-states-has-more-than-35000-museums/>.

03

Mia Maria et al., *Ekonomi Kreatif: Rencana Pengembangan Seni Rupa Nasional 2015-2019* (Jakarta: Republik Solusi, 2014), 56.

Here, it is written that there are 25 art museums in Indonesia, but in my opinion, the Jakarta Arts Building and Jogja National Museum are not museums because they do not have a collection of art. In November 2017, the MACAN Museum opened to the public, bringing the total number of art museums in Indonesia to 24.

04

Reja Hidayat & Mawa Kresna, "Rezim Seni di Istana, Beda Soekarno Beda Soeharto," *Tirto.ID*, August 10, 2016, <https://tirto.id/rezim-seni-di-istana-beda-soekarno-beda-soeharto-bySR>.

05

Sularko, "Koleksi Nasional," *Majalah Mimbar Indonesia* 37 (September 10, 1949), 20-21. S. Sudjojono, RM Subanto Suriosubandrijo, Nyi Tjokrosuharto and Ir. Sam Uddin then left the committee for various reasons, for example on matters of principle or because of prolonged absence.

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Kusnadi, "Sejarah Seni Rupa Indonesia," in *Ars Longa Vita Brevis* (Yogyakarta: Bentara Budaya Yogyakarta, 2011), 183.

in Indonesia is still minimal—in addition to the National Gallery of Indonesia, these include the Museum of Fine Arts and Ceramics (Jakarta), Bentara Budaya (Jakarta, Yogyakarta, and Denpasar), the Oei Hong Djien Museum (Magelang), the Pelita Harapan University Museum (Tangerang), and now the MACAN Museum (Jakarta). Other than in the cases of the National Gallery of Indonesia and the Museum of Fine Arts and Ceramics, the management of these museums is in the hands of private collectors, universities, and corporations in the field of mass media such as Bentara Budaya Kompas Gramedia.

President Sukarno played an important and integral role in initiating the collecting of modern art in Indonesia. He is often referred to as one of the first patrons and collectors of modern art in Indonesia. His collecting activities, which began in 1942, have been documented in the renowned five-volume catalogue, *Paintings and Statues from the Collection of President Sukarno of the Republic of Indonesia*, compiled by artists Dullah and Lee Man Fong. After the fall of President Sukarno and the beginning of the New Order in 1967, approximately 2,400 paintings and 1,300 sculptures were handed over to the state. These are now managed by the Presidential Palace of the Republic of Indonesia.^[04]

Institutionally, art collecting by the state began at least as early as 1947 when the Ministry of Education, Teaching, and Culture formed the Committee for the Acquisition of Artworks, which included figures such as scholars Dr. Prijono (chairman), Ir. Sam Uddin, and Dr. Sularko, educators Katamsi and Nyi Hadjar Dewantoro, artists S. Sudjojono, RM Subanto Suriosubandrijo, Affandi, Basuki Resobowo, Rusli, and Mohd Hadi, art experts Kanjeng Mangkujudo and Nyi Tjokrosuharto, and employees of the Ministry of Education, Teaching, and Culture Sindusawarno and Suhamir.^[05] The committee was an honorary body tasked by the government to select works of art worthy of beginning a national collection which in the future would be shown in a planned National Art Museum. During this process, some important works were successfully selected, such as *Tjap Go Meh* by S. Sudjojono and *Ibu Pelukis* (The Painter's Mother), a rare realist-style painting by Affandi (these works are now part of the collection of the National Gallery of Indonesia, which includes over 1,800 artworks). Later on, Kusnadi, in his position as Head of the Department of the Arts, continued collecting modern artworks through the Directorate of Arts in the Ministry of Education, Teaching, and Culture from the 1950s onwards. Meanwhile, the Ministry of Information and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs also began to acquire art works occasionally.^[06]

At the provincial level, cultural institutions such as Taman Ismail Marzuki (Jakarta Arts Center) and Jakarta Arts Council started collecting works of art in 1968 and 1969 respectively through acquisitions and especially through donations from exhibiting artists. In 1976, President Suharto inaugurated the establishment of the Jakarta Art Gallery, an idea mooted by Vice President Adam Malik, a very influential collector of modern art. This institution evolved into the Museum of Fine Arts and Ceramics in 1990.

An awareness of the role of private collecting can be traced back at least as far as the 1950s, when Raka Sumichan began collecting Affandi's paintings after visiting one of his exhibitions,^[07] and other art collector figures such as Prime Minister Ali Sastroamidjojo, Bambang Sugeng, Overste Prajoga, Harjoto, and Kushardjono also began to appear.^[08] Within a few years, private collectors had grown in number, as recorded in an article by Anita Zarivin, "Can Collectors Become Barometers of Art?" This article talks about a "Painting Exhibition from the Collection of Six Collectors from Jakarta," held from 24 to 30 April 1972 in the Exhibition Room of the Jakarta Arts Center, which showcased the collections of Alex Papadimitrou, Hendra Hadiprana, Mrs. (Herbert) Hutagalung, Soedarpo Sastrosatomo, Dr. Umar Kayam, and Ir. T. Soekarno.^[09] Collecting activities in the private sector then experienced a rapid development, especially in the 1980s and 90s, when there was a paintings boom in the Indonesian art market signifying the emergence of a well-established economic class in Indonesia. This period was marked by high prices for paintings in the market and the emergence of new collectors using paintings as a trade commodity and investment tool. The lack of collecting activities by the government during this period caused many works considered important to the history of Indonesian art to end up in the hands of private collectors.

Art Museums and Curatorial Practice in Indonesia

The emergence of art curating as a profession in Indonesia has been relatively recent. The term "curator" was unfamiliar to the Indonesian art public until Jim Supangkat declared himself an "independent curator" in the early 1990s.^[10] Shortly after, he was involved with Toeti Heraty, Mara Karma, G. Sidharta, Ikranegara, and Sri Warso Wahono in preparing Biennale Jakarta IX 1993, which was the first Jakarta Biennale to employ curators.^[11] This marked a change in the pattern of art exhibition making in Indonesia, so that now exhibitions would ideally be curated by an autonomous person responsible for the content and context of the exhibition as well as communicating and mediating the artworks to the public.

The development of the profession of art curator in Indonesia contrasts with the history of its development in developed countries such as the United States or Western European countries. If in Western countries the curatorial profession has historically been attached to museum institutions, in Indonesia it has emerged from outside the institution. Jim Supangkat has said that he was inspired by the rampant phenomenon in the late 1980s of art museum curators in the United States coming out of institutions and deciding to become independent curators because the government's program was becoming too government-led for the benefit of the United States.^[12] At the time, he also saw the importance of the curator's role in bridging Indonesian artists' networks with international art institutions, especially from Japan and Australia, which had Southeast Asia and Asia-Pacific

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Bambang Bujono, *Melampaui Citra dan Ingatan: Bunga Rampai Tulisan Seni Rupa 1968-2017* (Jakarta: Yayasan Jakarta Biennale, 2017), 451.

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Kusnadi, "Sejarah Seni Rupa Indonesia."

09
Newspaper clipping, Anita Zarivin, "Bisakah Kolektor Menjadi Salah Satu Barometer Senirupa," *Kompas*, Jakarta, May 16, 1972, 4, Indonesian Visual Art Archive, <http://archive.ivaa-online.org/files/uploads/texts/19720516-Bisakah%20Kolektor%20Menjadi.pdf>. Although she writes that the exhibition took place on April 24-30, 1952, I assume there was a typing error and that the date should be 1972, considering the date of the article, and since it mentions that the organizer of the exhibition is the Jakarta Arts Council, which was only founded in 1969.

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Agung Hujatnikajennong, *Kurasi dan Kuasa: Kekuratoran Dalam Medan Seni Rupa Indonesia* (South Tangerang: Marjin Kiri, 2015), 199.

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"Sejarah Jakarta Biennale," Jakarta Biennale, accessed December 13, 2017, <http://jakartabiennale.net/2015/jakarta-biennale/>.

12
Fandy Hutari, "Memonitor Dunia Kurator/Monitoring the Curator's World," *Jurnal Ruang*, February 17, 2017, <https://jurnalruang.com/read/1486023073-memonitor-dunia-kurator>.

programs. The painting boom of the 1980s to 90s period also had the profound effect of creating a market need for curators. In addition to stitching meaning to exhibitions they organized, they also gave some sort of “legitimacy” to the artists being promoted. As a result, a new generation of curators after Jim Supangkat enlivened the Indonesian art scene in the 1990s as new art galleries and art museums opened.

The need for curatorial professionals is an acute problem for museums in Indonesia, not to mention art museums. Until now, most museums in Indonesia do not have a permanent museum curator, and that includes even the National Gallery of Indonesia. Since its founding in 1998, the National Gallery of Indonesia has never had a museum curator who is truly attached to the institution (in-house), working full-time. The board of curators, which was established in 1998 and is not part of the gallery’s organizational structure, consists of five guest curators, selected periodically, who come from academic backgrounds or are professional practitioners in art, and who help to build programming and give input to the director on policy and exhibition content. In the execution of permanent exhibitions and temporary exhibitions, these curators play an important role in the selection and presentation of works from the gallery’s collection. The board of curators also helps to nominate and provide input on appropriate artists’ associations, galleries, and foreign and local cultural institutions to collaborate with the gallery to organize activities and exhibitions. A similar situation occurs in the Basoeki Abdullah Museum and Museum of Fine Arts and Ceramics, which often invite exhibition consultants or guest curators to help prepare both their permanent and temporary exhibitions. Among private art museums, only the Selasar Sunaryo Art Space and MACAN Museum have a permanent organizational structure of curators.

Challenges and Proposals for Art Museums and Museum Curators in Indonesia

The obligation of every museum in Indonesia to have curatorial staff is in fact mandated by Law no. 11/2010 on Cultural Heritage. Government Regulation (PP) no. 66/2015 on Museums even contains technical rules concerning the duties and functions of museum curators and their relation to other museum resources such as conservators, registrars, exhibition administrators, and public relations officers. The government, through the Directorate of Cultural Heritage and Museum, Ministry of Education and Culture, continues to disseminate this regulation and encourage museums in Indonesia to improve the structure of museum management by developing professionals in the field. The ministry has also begun to assign more specific job titles (such as museum curator, conservator, educator, exhibition administrator, public relations, and administrative staff) to state employees in the museum sector. In 2017, the Directorate of Cultural Heritage and Museum conducted a museum curator certification program with an assessment system (interview and portfolio tracking) in several cities in Indonesia, including Jakarta,

Yogyakarta, Makassar, and Batam. This program is intended to legitimize the competence of the museum curator profession, creating a national standard, and it is open to public or private museum curators. It is hoped that in future, this museum curator certification can be developed to include classifications of competency—junior curator, associate curator and senior curator, regulating the curatorial career ladder in Indonesia.

In addition, in order to provide wider career opportunities, it is time the government, both central and local, began to develop new state-owned art museums both in Jakarta and in other cities, so that career progression, networking, and experience for art museum curators will be more dynamic and diverse in the future. We see the potential of art in cities like Bandung and Yogyakarta, where many artists are actively practicing and which have played an important part in the history of Indonesian art. These days there are also emerging new nodes of contemporary art practice in cities such as Surabaya, Semarang, Makassar, Padang, and Medan. Of course, art activities should ideally find room and thrive in all parts of the country, as they do, for example, in Japan. In 2004, The 21st Century Museum of Contemporary Art, Kanazawa, a public museum, opened in Kanazawa, a small city with a population of only 462,000. In addition to supporting education and cultural development, the decentralization of cultural infrastructure, especially in art, can be a means of encouraging economic improvement and contributing to the spread and movement of the population to areas outside of the national and provincial capitals.

The eternal challenge of art museums and museum curators as disseminators of knowledge and ideas is public outreach, to both the art public (ie., the art world) and the general public. Today, the art museum is challenged to position itself as an out-of-school educational center capable of providing a representation and experience of modern Indonesian collective memory, as well as inspiring the public to think critically, rationally, and ethically about various contemporary social issues surrounding them. This is where the museum curator has an important role in contextualizing and mediating collections of art to the public. In the context of collecting works of art, the biggest challenge faced is how to compete with museums that have Asian or Southeast Asian art collections policies such as the Singapore Art Museum, National Gallery Singapore, Queensland Art Gallery | Gallery of Modern Art, Mori Art Museum, and Fukuoka Asian Art Museum in collecting the works of modern and contemporary Indonesian artists.

Finally, in addition to harnessing the political will of the government, it is also necessary to initiate cooperation between public and private museums, who share a role (and interest) in the field of collecting and developing contemporary art practices, especially in the development of art activities at the regional level of Southeast Asia and Asia Pacific, as a strategy to face the phenomena of global art today and in the future.

Memperbaiki Perahu Kertas Yang Rusak: Tentang Museum Seni Rupa dan Kurator Museum di Indonesia

Bayu Genia Krishbie

[Asisten Kurator, Galeri Nasional Indonesia]

Dibukanya Museum MACAN (Modern and Contemporary Art in Nusantara) awal November 2017 ini di Jakarta disambut dengan dua ekspresi: sukacita dan ironi. Menggembirakan tentunya, untuk pertama kalinya dalam sejarah, bangsa Indonesia akhirnya memiliki sebuah museum seni rupa kelas dunia dengan standar kualitas koleksi, desain interior, manajemen, dan program publik yang amat baik. Dibawah komando Aaron Seeto—sebelumnya adalah manajer kuratorial seni rupa Asia Pasifik di Queensland Art Gallery Australia—sebagai direktur, museum dengan desain interior ultra-modern yang dikerjakan oleh MET Studio dari London ini memiliki sekitar 800 koleksi penting dari seniman Indonesia dan seniman Internasional terkemuka. Ironisnya, museum ini milik partikelir.

Museum MACAN hadir tepat saat publik seni rupa sudah frustrasi dengan minimnya perhatian pemerintah pada pengembangan sektor kebudayaan, khususnya seni rupa. Maka, inisiatif sektor privat pada aktivitas pengoleksian karya seni rupa untuk kepentingan edukasi publik ini, sekali lagi, selain patut diacungi jempol juga pantas diratapi.

Di satu sisi, Hadirnya Museum MACAN menunjukkan keberhasilan pemerintah menstimulasi inisiatif sektor privat untuk turut berkontribusi dalam pengembangan praktik seni rupa di Indonesia. Namun di sisi lain, hal ini seharusnya juga menjadi momentum bagi pemerintah untuk membenahi manajemen dan infrastruktur seni rupa milik negara sebagai sarana edukasi kultural yang inklusif bagi seluruh warga, melindunginya dari mekanisme pasar yang hanya memberikan akses pada audiens terbatas yang tersegmentasi. Pada sektor pendidikan, contohnya, pemerintah selama ini berupaya keras meningkatkan kualitas sekolah-sekolah negeri untuk dapat beradaptasi (kalau tidak bisa disebut bersaing) menghadapi kapitalisasi pendidikan yang ditandai dengan gempuran sekolah swasta berkualitas baik dan berbiaya mahal. Tugas pemerintah kini menjadi lebih berat, dengan anggaran untuk sektor kebudayaan yang terbatas (besarnya hanya sekitar 1% dari total anggaran militer), mereka dipacu untuk memperbaiki infrastruktur, manajemen dan program museum seni rupa dengan standar acuan yang cukup

tinggi. Problem fundamental lain yang masih belum terselesaikan juga masih menghantui hingga kini: desentralisasi infrastruktur seni rupa modern dan pengelolaan koleksi seni rupa milik negara. Pertanyaannya kemudian, sudah sejauh manakah pemerintah berbenah?

Museum Seni Rupa dan Pengoleksian Karya Seni Rupa di Indonesia

Sejarah perkembangan seni rupa modern di Indonesia yang dinamis tidak berbanding lurus dengan tradisi pengoleksian karya seni rupa oleh negara. Jika kita menandai permulaan seni rupa modern di Indonesia pada momentum Raden Saleh kembali ke Batavia (Jakarta sekarang) tahun 1851, setelah 20 tahun pengembaraannya di Eropa, maka sudah lebih dari 150 tahun usia seni rupa modern di Indonesia. Berapakah jumlah museum seni rupa modern milik negara hingga saat ini? Hanya tiga, dua milik Pemerintah Pusat dan satu milik Pemerintah Provinsi: Galeri Nasional Indonesia, Museum Basoeki Abdullah, dan Museum Seni Rupa dan Keramik. Ketiganya berada di Jakarta. Selain museum-museum tersebut, terdapat pula institusi pengoleksian karya seni rupa milik negara seperti Istana Kepresidenan Republik Indonesia dibawah Kementerian Sekretariat Negara, Badan Pengelola Taman Ismail Marzuki (Pusat Kesenian Jakarta) dan Dewan Kesenian Jakarta misalnya, namun sayangnya ketiga institusi tersebut tidak memiliki museum atau ruang pameran tetap sehingga koleksinya tidak dapat diakses dengan mudah oleh publik.

Perkembangan museum secara umum di Indonesia cukup memprihatinkan. Saat ini tercatat sekitar 428 museum^[01] di seluruh Indonesia yang dikelola pemerintah dan swasta. Jumlah itu tentu saja sangat sedikit untuk sebuah negara terbesar di Asia Tenggara yang terdiri dari 34 provinsi, 515 Kabupaten/Kota dan lebih dari 261 juta penduduk. Bandingkan dengan Amerika Serikat, dengan jumlah penduduk sekitar 320 juta jiwa, terdapat sekitar 35.000 museum^[02] yang tersebar di seluruh negara bagianya! Perbandingan ini tentu saja sama sekali tidak seimbang, namun ekstrimnya perbedaan kuantitas museum dibandingkan dengan jumlah penduduk kedua negara ini sungguhlah mencengangkan. Ini mengindikasikan betapa pendidikan di Indonesia sangat bergantung pada proses pembelajaran di dalam kelas akibat minimnya infrastruktur pendidikan luar sekolah seperti museum.

Diantara 428 museum di Indonesia tersebut, tercatat sekitar 24 museum seni rupa modern,^[03] baik milik pemerintah ataupun swasta. Sejumlah museum ini masih terpusat di kota besar seperti Jakarta, Bandung, Yogyakarta, dan Provinsi Bali; didominasi oleh museum dengan koleksi monografi seniman tertentu seperti Museum Basoeki Abdullah, Museum Affandi, Museum Ciputra (yang memfokuskan koleksi permanennya pada karya-karya Hendra Gunawan), Museum Widayat, Museum Barli, Selasar Sunaryo Art Space, NuArt Sculpture Park, Museum Nyoman Gunarsa, Museum Le Mayeur, Griya Seni Popo Iskandar, dan sebagainya. Selain Museum Basoeki Abdullah, museum-museum ini biasanya dikelola dan didanai secara mandiri oleh seniman

01
Petrik Matanasi, "Darurat Museum di Indonesia," *Tirto.ID*, 13 November 2016, <https://tirto.id/darurat-museum-di-indonesia-b4KJ>.

02
Jillian Steinhauer, "The United States Has More than 35,000 Museums," *Hyperallergic*, 24 Juni 2014, <https://hyperallergic.com/134152/the-united-states-has-more-than-35000-museums/>.

03
Mia Maria, dkk., *Ekonomi Kreatif: Rencana Pengembangan Seni Rupa Nasional 2015–2019* (Jakarta: Republik Solusi, 2014), 56.

Tertulis 25 museum seni rupa di Indonesia, namun menurut penulis Gedung Kesenian Jakarta dan Jogja National Museum bukan merupakan museum/lembaga pengoleksian karya seni rupa karena mereka tidak memiliki koleksi seni rupa. November 2017 dibuka Museum MACAN sehingga museum seni rupa di Indonesia genap 24 jumlahnya.

04

Reja Hidayat & Mawa Kresna, "Rezim Seni di Istana, Beda Soekarno Beda Soeharto," *Tirto.ID*, 10 Agustus 2016, <https://tirto.id/rezim-seni-di-istana-beda-soekarno-beda-soeharto-bySR>.

05

Sularko, "Koleksi Nasional," *Majalah Mimbah Indonesia* No. 37, 10 September 1949, 20–21. S. Sudjojono, RM Subanto Suriosubandrijo, Katamsi, Nyi Tjokrosuharto dan Ir. Sam Uddin kemudian dicoret dari kepanitiaan karena alasan yang bermacam-macam mulai dari berhalangan hadir dan hal-hal lain yang bersifat prinsip.

06

Kusnadi, "Sejarah Seni Rupa Indonesia," dalam *Ars Longa Vita Brevis* (Yogyakarta: Bentara Budaya Yogyakarta, 2011), 183.

atau keluarga yang bersangkutan dan kolektor swasta. Sedangkan museum dengan koleksi sejarah seni rupa Indonesia jumlahnya masih terbilang minim, selain Galeri Nasional Indonesia kita bisa menyebut Museum Seni Rupa dan Keramik (Jakarta), Bentara Budaya (Jakarta, Yogyakarta, dan Denpasar), Museum Oei Hong Djien (Magelang), Museum Universitas Pelita Harapan (Tangerang), dan yang terbaru Museum MACAN (Jakarta). Selain Galeri Nasional Indonesia dan Museum Seni Rupa dan Keramik, pengelolaan museum-museum ini berada di tangan kolektor swasta, universitas, dan korporasi di bidang media misalnya Bentara Budaya milik Kompas Gramedia.

Upaya pengoleksian karya seni rupa modern di Indonesia sejatinya tidak terlepas dari peran penting Presiden pertama Republik Indonesia, Ir. Sukarno. Beliau kerap disebut sebagai salah satu patron dan kolektor awal dari karya-karya seni rupa modern di Indonesia. Aktivitas pengoleksian yang dilakukannya sejak 1942 kemudian didokumentasikan kedalam buku katalog lima jilid yang tersohor, "Lukisan-lukisan dan Patung-patung Koleksi Presiden Sukarno dari Republik Indonesia" disusun oleh seniman Dullah dan Lee Man Fong. Pasca lengsernya Presiden Sukarno dan dimulainya Orde Baru pada tahun 1967, sekira total 2.400-an lukisan dan 1.300-an patung koleksi Presiden Sukarno kemudian diserahkan kepada negara dan kini dikelola Istana Kepresidenan Republik Indonesia.^[04]

Secara institusional, pengoleksian karya seni rupa oleh negara setidaknya dimulai sejak 1947 ketika Kementerian Pendidikan, Pengajaran, dan Kebudayaan membentuk Panitia Pembelian Barang-Barang Seni Rupa yang terdiri dari tokoh-tokoh seperti Dr. Prijono (chairman), Ir. Sam Uddin, dan Dr. Sularko dari kalangan cendikia, Katamsi dan Nyi Hadjar Dewantoro dari kalangan pendidik, S. Sudjojono, RM Subanto Suriosubandrijo, Affandi, Basuki Resobowo, Rusli, and Mohd Hadi dari kalangan seniman, Kanjeng Mangkujudo dan Nyi Tjokrosuharto dari kalangan ahli kesenian, serta pegawai dari Kementerian Pendidikan, Pengajaran, dan Kebudayaan, Sindusawarno dan Suh Amir.^[05] Panitia ini merupakan badan kehormatan yang diberi kewajiban oleh pemerintah untuk memilih karya-karya seni rupa yang layak untuk dijadikan awal koleksi nasional yang dikemudian hari akan dipamerkan pada sebuah Museum Seni Rupa Nasional (Galeri Nasional). Dari proses ini terpilih karya-karya penting seperti *Tjap Go Meh* karya S. Sudjojono dan *Ibu Pelukis*, lukisan bergaya realis dari Affandi yang cukup langka (karya-karya ini sekarang menjadi bagian dari sekitar 1.800-an koleksi Galeri Nasional Indonesia). Di kemudian hari, Kusnadi dalam posisinya sebagai Kepala Bagian Kesenian, melanjutkan aktivitas pengumpulan karya seni rupa modern di lingkungan Direktorat Kesenian, Kementerian Pendidikan, Pengajaran dan Kebudayaan sejak 1950an. Sementara itu, Kementerian Penerangan dan Kementerian Luar Negeri juga mulai mengakuisisi karya-karya seni rupa modern secara insidental.^[06]

Di level pemerintah provinsi, institusi kebudayaan seperti Badan Pengelola Taman Ismail Marzuki (Pusat Kesenian Jakarta) dan Dewan

Kesenian Jakarta juga memulai tradisi pengoleksian karya seni rupa sejak tahun 1968 dan kemudian 1969 melalui akuisisi dan terutama sumbangan dari seniman yang berpameran. Pada tahun 1976, Presiden Suharto meresmikan berdirinya Balai Seni Rupa Jakarta yang gagasannya diprakarsai Wakil Presiden Adam Malik, kolektor karya seni rupa yang juga sangat berpengaruh selain Presiden Sukarno. Institusi ini kemudian berkembang menjadi Museum Seni Rupa dan Keramik sejak tahun 1990.

Dimulainya kesadaran kolektor partikelir dalam aktivitas pengoleksian karya seni rupa setidaknya terlacak pada tahun 1950an, ketika Raka Sumichan mulai mengoleksi lukisan Affandi setelah mengunjungi salah satu pamerannya,^[07] dan beberapa tokoh kolektor seni rupa seperti Perdana Menteri Ali Sastroamidjojo, Bambang Sugeng, Overste Prajoga, Harjoto, dan Kushardjono mulai muncul.^[08] Beberapa tahun kemudian, kolektor partikelir kemudian semakin bertambah jumlahnya seperti yang tercatat dalam tulisan Anita Zarivin “Bisakah Kolektor Menjadi Salah Satu Barometer Senirupa” pada tahun 1972. Dalam tulisan itu disebutkan bahwa pada tanggal 24–30 April 1972 di Ruang Pameran Pusat Kesenian Jakarta telah diadakan “Pameran Lukisan Koleksi Enam Kolektor Djakarta” yang menampilkan koleksi-koleksi milik Alex Papadimitrou, Hendra Hadiprana, Nyonya (Herbert) Hutagalung, Soedarpo Sastrosatomo, Dr. Umar Kayam, dan Ir. T. Soekarno.^[09] Aktivitas pengoleksian oleh sektor swasta kemudian mengalami perkembangan yang pesat terutama di periode 1980-1990an ketika terjadi boom seni lukis di pasar seni rupa, yang menandai munculnya kelas ekonomi mapan di Indonesia. Periode ini ditandai dengan harga lukisan di pasaran yang melambung tinggi dan bermunculannya kolektor-kolektor baru yang menjadikan lukisan sebagai komoditas dagang dan alat investasi. Minimnya aktivitas pengoleksian oleh pemerintah pada periode ini menyebabkan banyaknya karya-karya yang dianggap penting bagi sejarah seni rupa Indonesia berakhir di tangan kolektor partikelir.

Museum Seni Rupa dan Praktik Kekuratoran di Indonesia

Sejarah kemunculan profesi kurator seni rupa di Indonesia belumlah panjang. Istilah kurator masih begitu asing terdengar oleh publik seni rupa Indonesia hingga pada awal 1990an Jim Supangkat mendeklarasikan dirinya sebagai “kurator independen.”^[10] Tak lama setelahnya, ia bersama Toeti Heraty, Mara Karma, G. Sidharta, Ikranegara, and Sri Warso Wahono terlibat dalam mempersiapkan Biennale Jakarta IX 1993, yang merupakan Biennale Jakarta pertama yang mempekerjakan kurator.^[11] Ini kemudian mengubah tatanan pola penyelenggaraan pameran seni rupa di Indonesia, dimana pameran idealnya terkurasi oleh sosok otonom yang bertanggungjawab terhadap konten dan konteks pameran, juga bertugas mengkomunikasikan dan memediasi karya seni rupa dengan publiknya.

Perkembangan profesi kurator seni rupa di Indonesia kontras

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Bambang Bujono, *Melampaui Citra dan Ingatan: Bunga Rampai Tulisan Seni Rupa 1968-2017* (Jakarta: Yayasan Jakarta Biennale, 2017), 451.

08
Kusnadi, “Sejarah Seni Rupa Indonesia.”

09
Kliping Koran, Anita Zarivin, “Bisakah Kolektor Menjadi Salah Satu Barometer Senirupa,” *Kompas*, Jakarta, 16 Mei 1972, 4, Indonesian Visual Art Archive, <http://archive.ivaa-online.org/files/uploads/texts/19720516-Bisakah%20Kolektor%20Menjadi.pdf>.
Tertulis pameran tersebut berlangsung pada 24–30 April 1972, penulis berasumsi terjadi kesalahan pengetikan karena disebutkan penyelenggara pameran tersebut adalah Dewan Kesenian Jakarta yang baru didirikan pada tahun 1969.

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Agung Hujatnikajennong, *Kurasi dan Kuasa: Kekuratoran Dalam Medan Seni Rupa Indonesia* (Tangerang Selatan: Marjin Kiri, 2015), 199.

11
“Sejarah Jakarta Biennale,” Jakarta Biennale, diakses pada 13 Desember 2017, <http://jakartabiennale.net/2015/jakarta-biennale/>.

berbeda dengan sejarah perkembangannya di negara maju seperti Amerika Serikat atau negara-negara di Eropa Barat. Jika di Barat profesi kurator secara historis melekat dengan institusi museum, di Indonesia profesi ini muncul dari luar institusi. Jim Supangkat menyebut dirinya terinspirasi oleh fenomena maraknya kurator-kurator museum seni rupa di Amerika Serikat keluar dari institusinya di akhir 1980an, memutuskan untuk menjadi "kurator independen" karena program museum terlalu diarahkan oleh Pemerintah untuk kepentingan Amerika Serikat.^[12] Di sisi lain, Jim juga memandang pentingnya peranan kurator untuk menjembatani jejaring seniman Indonesia dengan institusi seni rupa internasional, utamanya dari Jepang dan Australia yang ketika itu memiliki program-program Asia Tenggara dan Asia Pasifik. Booming seni lukis di periode 1980–1990an juga memiliki pengaruh yang besar terhadap kebutuhan pasar atas profesi kurator, utamanya selain untuk menjahit makna pada pameran yang mereka selenggarakan juga memberikan semacam "legitimasi" pada seniman-seniman yang mereka promosikan. Akibatnya, generasi kurator baru setelah Jim Supangkat kemudian meramaikan medan seni rupa Indonesia tahun 1990an seiring maraknya sejumlah galeri dan museum seni rupa partikelir baru dibuka.

Keberadaan profesi kurator museum adalah problem akut bagi permuseuman di Indonesia, tak terkecuali museum seni rupa. Hingga saat ini hampir sebagian besar museum di Indonesia tidak memiliki kurator museum tetap, bahkan Galeri Nasional Indonesia sekalipun. Sejak didirikan pada tahun 1998, Galeri Nasional Indonesia tidak pernah memiliki kurator museum yang benar-benar melekat kepada institusi (*in-house*) dan bekerja penuh waktu. Dewan kurator, dibentuk sejak tahun 1998 dan bukan merupakan bagian dari struktur organisasi Galeri Nasional Indonesia, terdiri dari lima orang kurator tamu yang dipilih secara periodik, berasal dari latar belakang akademisi atau praktisi profesional di bidang seni rupa yang diperbantukan dalam menyusun program dan memberikan masukan kepada Kepala Galeri Nasional Indonesia terkait kebijakan dan konten pameran. Dalam pelaksanaan pameran tetap dan pameran temporer kurator berperan penting dalam proses seleksi dan presentasi koleksi Galeri Nasional Indonesia. Dewan kurator juga berperan penting dalam memilih dan memberikan masukan kepada Kepala Galeri Nasional Indonesia untuk menetapkan institusi yang layak bekerjasama menyelenggarakan kegiatan-kegiatan di Galeri Nasional Indonesia. Hal yang sama juga terjadi pada Museum Basoeki Abdullah dan Museum Seni Rupa dan Keramik yang kerap mengundang konsultan pameran atau kurator tamu untuk pameran tetap maupun temporer yang mereka persiapkan. Kondisi museum seni rupa milik swasta juga setali tiga uang, tercatat hanya Selasar Sunaryo Art Space dan Museum MACAN yang memiliki struktur organisasi kurator tetap.

Tantangan dan Prasaran Untuk Museum Seni Rupa dan Kurator Museum di Indonesia

Kewajiban setiap museum di Indonesia untuk memiliki tenaga kurator

sesungguhnya sudah diamanatkan Undang-undang No. 11 Tahun 2010 tentang Cagar Budaya. Aturan turunannya juga sudah disahkan melalui Peraturan Pemerintah (PP) No. 66 tahun 2015 tentang Museum, memuat aturan teknis mengenai tugas dan fungsi kurator museum dan hubungannya dengan sumber daya permuseuman lain seperti kurator, konservator, registrar, penata pameran, dan hubungan masyarakat. Pemerintah, melalui Direktorat Cagar Budaya dan Permuseuman, Kementerian Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan, terus berupaya mensosialisasikan peraturan ini dan mendorong museum-museum di Indonesia untuk membenahi struktur manajemen museum dengan mengembangkan profesi-profesi di bidang permuseuman. Kementerian juga mulai menerapkan jabatan pekerjaan yang lebih spesifik seperti kurator museum, konservator, edukator, penata pameran, hubungan masyarakat dan staff administrasi kepada pegawai negeri yang berada di lingkungan permuseuman. Pada tahun 2017, Direktorat Cagar Budaya dan Permuseuman melaksanakan program sertifikasi kurator museum dengan pola asesmen (wawancara dan penelusuran portofolio) yang berlangsung di beberapa kota di Indonesia seperti Jakarta, Yogyakarta, Makassar, dan Batam. Program ini dimaksudkan untuk melegitimasi kompetensi profesi kurator museum dengan standar nasional dan terbuka untuk kurator museum publik ataupun privat. Harapan besarnya dikemudian hari sertifikasi kurator museum ini dapat dikembangkan untuk melegitimasi jenjang karir kurator museum di Indonesia kedalam klasifikasi kompetensi—kurator muda, kurator madya, dan kurator ahli.

Disamping itu, guna memberikan peluang karir yang lebih luas, sudah saatnya Pemerintah, baik Pusat maupun Daerah, mulai mewacanakan untuk membangun museum seni rupa milik negara yang baru baik di Jakarta maupun di kota lainnya, agar sirkulasi jenjang karir, jejaring dan pengalaman kurator museum seni rupa di masa depan semakin dinamis dan beragam. Seperti kita ketahui, potensi seni rupa juga terdapat di kota-kota seperti Bandung dan Yogyakarta yang aktif berpraktik dan memiliki sejarah seni rupa yang penting. Belakangan ini bahkan muncul simpul-simpul praktik seni rupa kontemporer baru di kota-kota seperti Surabaya, Semarang, Makassar, Padang dan Medan. Tentu saja idealnya kegiatan seni rupa menemukan ruangnya dan berkembang di seluruh pelosok tanah air, seperti yang terjadi di Jepang, misalnya. Pada tahun 2004 dibuka 21st Century Museum of Contemporary Art, Kanazawa, sebuah kota kecil yang hanya dihuni oleh sekitar 462.000 jiwa penduduk. Desentralisasi infrastruktur kebudayaan khususnya seni rupa ini diyakini selain mendukung program pengembangan pendidikan dan kebudayaan juga memantik kemajuan perekonomian dan berkontribusi terhadap penyebaran serta pergerakan penduduk ke daerah-daerah non-ibukota.

Tantangan abadi dari museum seni rupa dan kurator museum sebagai agen penyebarluasan pengetahuan dan gagasan adalah sejauh mana perluasan publik (*public outreach*) museum dapat dicapai, baik publik seni rupa maupun masyarakat umum. Kini, museum seni rupa

ditantang untuk memosisikan dirinya sebagai pusat pendidikan luar sekolah yang mampu memberikan gambaran dan pengalaman tentang memori kolektif bangsa Indonesia modern sekaligus pula menginspirasi publik untuk berpikir kritis, berbudi, dan rasional merespon pelbagai isu sosial kontemporer di sekitarnya. Disinilah kurator museum memiliki peran penting dalam mengkontekstualisasikan dan memediasi koleksi seni rupa kepada publik. Dalam konteks pengoleksian karya seni rupa, tantangan terbesar yang dihadapi adalah kontestasi pengoleksian karya-karya perupa modern dan kontemporer Indonesia oleh museum-museum yang memiliki kebijakan koleksi seni rupa Asia atau Asia Tenggara seperti Singapore Art Museum, National Gallery Singapore, Queensland Art Gallery | Gallery of Modern Art Australia, Mori Art Museum Tokyo, dan Fukuoka Asian Art Museum.

Akhir kata, selain kemauan politik dari pemerintah, rasanya juga diperlukan inisiatif kerjasama antara museum publik dan museum partikelir dalam berbagi peran (dan kepentingan) di bidang pengoleksian dan pengembangan praktik seni rupa kontemporer, terutama dalam perkembangan aktivitas seni rupa di tingkat regional Asia Tenggara dan Asia Pasifik, sebagai strategi menghadapi fenomena seni rupa global dewasa ini dan di masa yang akan datang.

Indonesian Curators Do Not Engage in Enough Debate

Kurnia Yunita Rahayu

[Member of Serrum]

Visual art curators in Indonesia do not engage in enough debate. Based on my research into media archives in Indonesia over the past 17 years, only 19 articles have been written on ideas about art that challenge or respond to one another.

Professional curators have been active in the Indonesian art scene since the 1990s, coming into curating not through an academic path, but rather via informal training from various cultural institutions, both domestically and abroad. Curators here tend to learn and apply their knowledge by making art exhibitions.

This pattern of learning continues to this day. Dozens of people can call themselves curators. However, only a few of them are actively discussing their curatorial ideas in writing, such as Jim Supangkat, Hendro Wiyanto, and Enin Supriyanto.

Perhaps it is because they are not academically trained that professional curators pay less attention to debating issues through their writing. In addition, in the curator training programs conducted by cultural institutions, with the Japan Foundation being the most consistent institution conducting training in Indonesia and Southeast Asia as a whole, writing material has not been included.

Tracking the debate of ideas on art in the Indonesian print media, we find occurrences in 2000 and from late 2001 to early 2002, as well as in late 2002. After that, such debates are no longer recorded in the mass media until they reappear in 2006, 2009, 2011, and at the end of 2016.

There have also historically been few outlets for debate in the mass media. In the past 17 years, the daily newspaper *KOMPAS* and weekly magazine *TEMPO* have been the main forums for debating ideas about art. Today, however, a variety of mass media provide art commentary, including publications from within art communities. What follows here is a presentation of some of the topics that have been debated.

The Definition of Art

A first written debate on art appeared in 2000 between art observer Agus

Dermawan and curator Hendro Wiyanto. The debate began when Agus, in “Seni Rupa yang ‘Mengutang’ dan ‘Bermuatan’” (Art that is “Indebted” and “Loaded”) in *KOMPAS*, June 11, 2000, criticized contemporary art through the works of Kelompok Seni Rupa Jendela (KSRJ). The works of KSRJ are considered to oversimplify aesthetic factors, prioritizing instead the discourse of the context and process of art-making. In this way, according to Agus, anyone can be an artist, and people with little knowledge of art will surely admire them.

Six days later, on June 18, 2000, Hendro Wiyanto challenged Agus in his piece entitled “Arisan Nama-Nama: Misteri Apa dan Siapa” (A Lottery of Artist’s Names: The Mystery of What and Who) in the same newspaper. Here, Hendro accuses Agus of assessing contemporary artworks solely on the basis of his personal taste:

The names of a number of artists in the article are tangled up together, sorted only according to the author’s taste, to those names “liked” and “disliked.” Without identifying works and trying to discuss them, is it not just a group of names in a bag, with the writer simply declaring he likes all the works by these artists? Is this not a very arbitrary and totalitarian approach—the kind of attitude we see in an *arisan* (a form of private lottery pool). Shake the bag and see what names emerge. Depending on your taste and how you shake it, different names will come out.

In his essay, Hendro demands that Agus discuss every contemporary artwork he has criticized using a clear theoretical framework. Without systematic discussion, art critics are thought to be presenting misguided ideas to the public.

The debate over the issue of criticism and the analysis of artworks ends with Hendro Wiyanto’s article. There were no decent responses from Agus Dermawan or other critics. In line with such an absence of responses, public debate in the print media was not seen again for another year and a half by the art scene.

The Commodification of Paintings

On December 15, 2001, Bandung Institute of Technology (ITB) lecturer Aminudin T. H. Siregar, or Ucok as he is more commonly known, wrote a piece entitled “Seni Rupa Yogyakarta: Gemuruh Pasar yang Tidak Mencerdaskan” (Art in Yogyakarta: The Market’s Roar That Does Not Teach Us Anything) in *KOMPAS*. He argues that at that time no significant discourse had developed in the Yogyakarta art scene although quite a number of exhibitions had been held that year.

For Aminudin, this was because of the economic orientation of art and exhibition making. New artists in Yogyakarta were not like their seniors, who were known for their discourse, such as Heri Dono, Eddie Hara, Hanura Hosea, Mella Jarsma, Agung Kurniawan, Nindityo Adipurnomo, Anusapati, S. Teddy D., Ugo Untoro, and Agus Suwage, but

rather those who began their careers catering to market mechanisms, such as Katirin, Nurkholis, Made Palguna, Made Sukana, Nyoman Sukari, and Erica.

Under these conditions, Aminudin is pessimistic about the dynamics of Indonesian art discourse. Moreover, university art education, and the theoretical and aesthetic development which is part of this, does not play a role in this discourse. Aminudin writes,

Is this a signal that art education has been drowned out in the roar of the art market? That “market power” increasingly reveals its superiority? But a superiority that is also inferior in reading global cultural changes. The rumble of a “local” market does not educate anyone.

The article attracted the attention of some critics. Within two consecutive weeks, reactions emerged from art observers from the Indonesian Institute of the Arts (ISI), Yogyakarta, M. Dwi Marianto, and Hendro Wiyanto.

Hendro Wiyanto in “Surat Buat Ucok dan Para Perupa di Yogya” (A Letter to Ucok and the Artists in Yogya), in *KOMPAS*, December 30, 2001, agreed with Aminudin’s opinion that the Yogyakarta art scene was lacking when it came to the development of ideas. He writes that in the midst of brisk painting sales, it was hard to find artists or painters who were familiar with the latest art studies, or even to find artists who ever read books.

Hendro writes that many artists attend art talks, but none of them ask questions or offer ideas. At that time, Hendro also hoped that artists who had the opportunity to travel around the world could bring back the latest books and discuss them with fellow artists. “How can art development happen if there is no discussion between artists, between artists and critics, or between artists and curators?” he writes.

According to M. Dwi Marianto in “Atmosfer Kehidupan Seni di Yogyakarta” (The Atmosphere of Art Life in Yogyakarta) in *KOMPAS*, December 23, 2001, Aminudin T. H. Siregar’s view of the art scene in Yogyakarta is caught up in economic determinism. In addition, Aminudin only sees things from the point of view of contemporary art in his reading of art trends. There are various art activities that support many people as well as stimulate the growth of cultural dynamics in the city, that are not taken into consideration by Aminudin. The perspective of Aminudin as someone who does not live in Yogyakarta is also questionable.

Marianto suggests that Aminudin should not only take a cynical view of artists who sell a lot of work, but also explore the buyers’ irrational culture of consumption. Why are they willing to buy paintings at a very high price?

In addition, writes Marianto, Aminudin needs to acknowledge that art collectors follow the development of art discourse by reading books or visiting museums both at home and abroad:

It's better than artists who do not want to get out of their own ideological world, or are always blaming others. The success of the art world in Yogyakarta could not have just suddenly come out of nowhere. It is surely born from a situation where various art discourses exist and develop, both academic and arising from intuitive and imaginative approaches.

The debate intensified when Aminudin again responded to Marianto in his piece in *KOMPAS*, January 6, 2002, entitled "Retorika Positivistik Seni Rupa" (Positivist Art Rhetoric). Aminudin calls Marianto's thinking trapped in a positivistic perspective, as if promising progress, celebrating differences, incompatibility, offering a variety of scholarly approaches, but limited to rhetoric. Developments are assumed to be orderly, controlled, based on local-global coherences, rather than on fragmented, discontinuous, and paradoxical points. Such a view on criticism can mislead the public, because it only spoils the artist and seems to resolve social issues:

This kind of critical writing based on aesthetic experience (like art itself) can be turned into "an exchange rate" due to the manipulation of seemingly objective market mechanisms, which legitimize false needs in society.

State Politics and Art

After this debate between the three critics, who also worked as curators, the written exchange of ideas once again flagged. A new debate comes up in *KOMPAS*, December 22, 2002, spurred by an article written by Mikke Susanto entitled "Enam Kesakitan Seni Rupa Indonesia" (Six Maladies of Indonesian Art). Mikke attempts to map out six acute problems affecting Indonesian art, one of which is the state's indifference.

According to him, the state has never created a policy in favor of the development of art. On the contrary, the state often makes the environment uncondusive and even unsafe for artists. Therefore, the Indonesian art scene needs a political policy that supports its development.

This opinion was immediately challenged by the artist Arahmaiani in *KOMPAS*, January 12, 2003, in "Menuju Kesehatan Seni Rupa Indonesia" (Towards a Healthy Indonesian Art). She stresses that while the immaturity of Indonesia's democratization is indeed hampering the development of art, it also creates distinctive characteristics within the artist, such as the ability to take the initiative to survive without government support. Therefore, for Arahmaiani, the urgency of government support for art in the country is not so relevant.

Yuswantoro Adi, in "Siapa yang Sakit, Kawan?" (Who is Sick, Comrade?) in *KOMPAS*, January 19, 2003, wrote the context of the state's absence in Indonesian art should be used as momentum for artists to enact their cathartic role in society. Monumental artworks often appear

when the state is in chaos, or under hegemonic control. For example, Boris Pasternak's *Doctor Zhivago* was produced under the powerful Kremlin regime in Russia, Pramoedya Ananta Toer's *Buru Quartet* was written during Soeharto's authoritarian regime, and Pablo Picasso created *Guernica* with a good composition during a period of civil conflict in Spain.

The Artist's Identity

Unfortunately, the written debate of art ideas again stalled after this last article by Yuswanto Adi. The public debate of ideas about art only returned seven years later, on January 11, 2009, when Wicaksono Adi's published an article entitled "Yang Keren dan Terkendali" (The Cool and Controlled) in *KOMPAS*.

Wicaksono characterized young Bandung artists as artists with an urban, pop, and agile character in their exploration of art in terms of ideas, objects, and artistic strategies. They are supported by the urban culture of Bandung and a more active reading culture thanks to the quality of education at ITB. At the same time, he compares them with young Yogyakarta artists who are considered closer to agrarian culture, coming from lower economic class families but always trying to be the main actors in the Indonesian visual art scene. Besides which, according to Wicaksono, Yogya artists are not fond of reading.

Yuswanto Adi, in "Yang Mbentoyong yang Keren Euy" (Humble is Cool) in *KOMPAS*, January 18, 2009, responded that whether artists tended to come from an agricultural background or urban background is irrelevant. A passion for reading books cannot be the only measure to determine the intelligence of an artist. "There are so many methodologies to choose from to use your intelligence—reading reality is one of them," he writes. In addition, artistic intelligence takes a variety of principles and instruments learned over a long period in an always dynamic context of space and time, and is better judged by the work produced.

G. Budi Subanar, in "Potret Perupa Yogyakarta: Dari Kepurbaan Nasirun sampai Mimpi Samuel" (Portrait of Yogyakarta Artists: From the Nasirun Priest to the Dream of Samuel) in *KOMPAS*, February 1, 2009, corroborated Yuswanto's opinion. From analyzing a number of artists, he concludes that the identity of an artist is a private realm that then merges with their social experience. For Subanar, it is important that the artist's identity is not alienated from their society, and is not dictated by fashion. Matters of identity are not directly correlated with their artworks, because an artwork is a manifestation of the aesthetic experience of each artist.

The Definition of "Artist" and "Curator"

The history of written debate on ideas about Indonesian art has also included the question of the meaning of the word "artist," both professionally and culturally. Aminudin T. H. Siregar's article "Salah

Kaprah Istilah Seniman” (The Misguided Use of the Term “Artist”) in *KOMPAS*, September 11, 2011, is about how entertainers conveniently use the term “artist” to identify their profession. On top of this, entertainers also often use the term “artist” to get around issues or to justify activities that are difficult for society to accept.

In fact, Aminudin writes, the term “artist” has a long history. The father of modern Indonesian painting S. Sudjojono was the first to popularize the term in his writings during the 1930s. Sudjojono began by defining the artist as a person who creates works which come to be called art. However, this alone is not enough. In 1946, Sudjojono wrote that the artist does not only have to have skill but also great character and spirit. With this in mind, Aminudin invites entertainers such as dancers, singers, and movie actors, not to be so ready to call themselves artists.

Yuswantoro Adi in his piece in *KOMPAS*, September 18, 2011, entitled “Salah Kaprah yang Jadi Salah Parah” (From Misguided to Misunderstood) agreed with Aminudin. According to him, the title of artist cannot be used by just anyone regardless of their background. However, in Indonesia, it is not only the term “artist” that is often arbitrarily used to recognize someone’s profession, but also the term “curator.”

Yuswantoro writes that people might claim to be curators simply because they had done some writing about art. In fact, there are various types of art writing, including writing by journalists, artists, critics, as well as curators. According to him, a curator is someone who has mastered curatorial knowledge through their task of sorting through and selecting artworks to further identify, categorize, and present them to the public. In addition, a curator also needs to master various disciplines such as history, sociology, psychology, and other supporting disciplines as their profession helps to shape the development of art. He writes,

I imagine if only Indonesian curators could one day produce new theories from their observations and research on various art events and those involved, so that these later could become a reference for the next generation. Following the example of S. Sudjojono. Not just picking up theories here and there from popular texts that are sometimes forced onto art.

Fake Paintings

The most recent debate to emerge among Indonesian art curators concerned the problem of fake paintings. In “Sebuah Pertanyaan untuk Jim Supangkat” (A Question for Jim Supangkat) in *TEMPO*, March 14, 2016, Hendro Wiyanto questioned the fact that Jim Supangkat’s curator’s statement in the catalogue for “The People in 70 Years,” at the Oei Hong Djien Museum in Magelang, Central Java, neglected to link the exhibition with the problem of fake paintings.

For Hendro, Jim’s remarks were made merely to give the impression that the exhibition was flawless. In fact, there are a number of masterpieces in the Oei Hong Djien Museum which have been alleged

to be false based on several studies. A number of works selected for “The People in 70 Years,” came from the museum. Therefore, Hendro considers Jim Supangkat’s statement unwise and urges that he should be willing to read the relevant literature and to be wary of fake paintings in an exhibition.

Jim Supangkat in *TEMPO*, April 4, 2016, acknowledged that he had not been concerned about the issue of fake paintings while preparing “The People in 70 Years,” held in November 2015. The issue of fake paintings in the museum had been blowing about since 2012, and was still being discussed in 2016.

According to Jim Supangkat, connecting an exhibition with the issue of fake paintings would not be very useful. The public should be able to judge for themselves the authenticity of a painting, without the guidance of an authority.

For this author, written debate on art should be more prevalent because, currently, Indonesian art is growing rapidly. Hundreds of exhibitions with thousands interesting ideas can be presented by curators. The achievements of the Indonesian curators would not only be recognized in their own national context, but also internationally.

The habit of debating ideas in writing would also expand the scope of the understanding of art. This would mean we could build a picture of a continually thriving art scene, instead of just creating events that run out in an instant.

Kurator Indonesia Minim Adu Gagasan

Kurnia Yunita Rahayu

[Anggota Serrum]

Kurator seni rupa di Indonesia minim adu gagasan tertulis. Berdasarkan penelusuran terhadap arsip media massa di Indonesia selama 17 tahun terakhir, hanya ditemukan 19 tulisan mengenai gagasan seni rupa yang saling mengonfrontir.

Skena seni rupa di Indonesia baru mengenal profesi kurator pada periode 1990-an. Perkenalannya pun tidak melalui jalur akademik melainkan pelatihan informal dari beberapa lembaga kebudayaan baik dalam negeri maupun luar negeri. Para kurator di sini belajar sambil menerapkan ilmunya secara langsung dengan membuat pameran-pameran seni.

Pola belajar itu berlanjut hingga saat ini. Puluhan orang dapat menyebut dirinya sebagai kurator. Namun, hanya beberapa orang yang aktif mendiskusikan gagasan kuratorialnya secara tertulis, antara lain Jim Supangkat, Hendro Wiyanto, dan Enin Supriyanto.

Bisa jadi penyebabnya adalah perkenalan Indonesia dengan profesi kurator yang tidak melalui jalur akademik, sehingga kurang memerhatikan persoalan perdebatan gagasan melalui tulisan. Selain itu, dalam pelatihan kurator yang dilakukan lembaga-lembaga kebudayaan, salah satunya the Japan Foundation sebagai lembaga yang paling konsisten menyelenggarakan pelatihan baik di Indonesia maupun di seluruh Asia Tenggara, materi penulisan belum disertakan.

Perdebatan gagasan tertulis mengenai seni rupa di media massa hanya terjadi pada 2000, akhir 2001 hingga awal 2002, dan akhir 2002. Setelah itu, debat tidak lagi tercatat oleh media massa hingga muncul kembali pada 2006, 2009, 2011, dan terakhir 2016.

Secara historis, media massa yang mewadahi perdebatan juga tidak banyak. Selama 17 tahun terakhir, harian *KOMPAS* dan majalah mingguan *TEMPO* menjadi forum utama yang mewadahi perdebatan seni rupa. Padahal, saat ini beragam media massa menyediakan rubrik seni, termasuk publikasi dari komunitas-komunitas seni rupa. Berikut penulis sajikan beberapa topik perdebatan yang pernah terjadi.

Definisi Seni

Adu gagasan seni rupa yang dapat penulis telusuri setidaknya muncul pada tahun 2000 antara pengamat seni rupa Agus Dermawan dan kurator Hendro Wiyanto. Perdebatan bermula ketika Agus, dalam “Seni Rupa yang Mengutang dan Bermuatan,” di *KOMPAS*, 11 Juni 2000, mengkritisi seni rupa kontemporer dalam karya Kelompok Seni Rupa Jendela (KSRJ). Karya KSRJ dianggap menyederhanakan faktor estetika karena memprioritaskan pembahasan konteks dan dokumentasi sosial proses pembuatan karya. Dengan begitu, menurut Agus, siapa saja dapat menjadi seniman. Publik dengan pengetahuan seni rupa yang minim akan serta merta mengaguminya.

Enam hari setelahnya, 18 Juni 2000, Hendro Wiyanto membantah Agus melalui esainya berjudul “Arisan Nama-Nama: Misteri Apa dan Siapa” di media massa yang sama. Hendro menuding penilaian Agus pada karya-karya seni rupa kontemporer hanya berdasarkan selera pribadinya saja:

Nama-nama sejumlah perupa dalam tulisan itu dideretkan, dipilih menurut selera sang penulis, antara “nama yang disukai” dan “yang tidak disukai.” Dengan tidak menunjukkan karya dan mencoba mem bahas nya, tidakkah kepada kelompok nama-nama yang berada dalam karung, si penulis menyatakan bahwa selernya telah dipuaskan oleh seluruh karya mereka? Tidakkah cara ini sangat sewenang-wenang dan totaliter—suatu sikap totaliter seperti yang kita saksikan dalam sebuah arisan? Kocoklah dan bersiaplah untuk membaca sejumlah nama yang lolos dari sana. Berbeda selera dan cara mengocok, akan berbeda nama yang keluar.

Dalam esainya, Hendro menuntut Agus membahas setiap karya seni kontemporer yang dikritiknya menggunakan kerangka teori yang jelas. Tanpa pembahasan yang sistematis, kritikus seni dianggap akan menghadirkan sesat pikir kepada publik.

Perdebatan yang berkesudahan pada persoalan kelaikan kritikus untuk menganalisis karya itu berakhir pada tulisan Hendro Wiyanto. Tidak ditemukan lagi tanggapan baik dari Agus Dermawan maupun kritikus lain. Sejalan dengan ketiadaan tanggapan itu, adu gagasan tertulis dalam skena seni rupa pun hilang selama satu setengah tahun.

Komodifikasi Lukisan

Pada 15 Desember 2001, pengajar seni rupa Institut Teknologi Bandung (ITB) Aminudin T. H. Siregar, yang akrab disapa Ucok, menulis esai berjudul “Seni Rupa Yogyakarta: Gemuruh Pasar yang Tidak Mencerdaskan” di harian *KOMPAS*. Ia berpendapat bahwa pada masa itu tidak terjadi perkembangan diskusi yang signifikan pada skena seni rupa Yogyakarta. Padahal, pada tahun itu pula berlangsung sejumlah pameran.

Bagi Aminudin, hal itu terjadi karena orientasi ekonomis dalam pembuatan karya dan penyelenggaraan pameran. Seniman-seniman baru yang mengemuka di Yogyakarta pun bukan orang-orang yang dikenal dengan wacananya seperti Heri Dono, Eddie Hara, Hanura Hosea, Mella Jarsma, Agung Kurniawan, Nindityo Adipurnomo, Anusapati, S. Teddy D., Ugo Untoro, dan Agus Suwage melainkan seniman yang justru mengawali kariernya dengan tunjangan mekanisme pasar, yaitu Katirin, Nurkholis, Made Palguna, Made Sukana, Nyoman Sukari, dan Erica.

Berdasarkan kondisi itu, Aminudin pesimis terhadap dinamika gagasan seni rupa Indonesia. Apalagi pendidikan seni rupa di tingkat universitas yang dianggap bisa diandalkan sebagai referensi, acuan perkembangan teori atau estetika, justru tidak mengambil peran apa-apa. Aminudin kata,

Adakah ini sinyal, pendidikan seni terbenam dalam gemuruh pasar seni lukis? Bahwa “kekuatan pasar” makin menampakkan superioritasnya? Sebuah superioritas yang juga inferior dalam membaca perubahan budaya secara global. Gemuruh pasar “lokal” yang tidak mencerdaskan siapa-siapa.

Tulisan itu menarik perhatian beberapa kritikus. Dalam waktu dua minggu berturut-turut muncul tanggapan untuk Aminudin dari pengamat seni Lembaga Penelitian Institut Seni Indonesia (ISI), Yogyakarta, M. Dwi Marianto, dan Hendro Wiyanto.

Hendro Wiyanto dalam “Surat Buat Ucok dan Para Perupa di Yogya,” di *KOMPAS*, 30 Desember 2001, menyetujui pendapat Aminudin mengenai skena seni rupa Yogyakarta yang kurang perkembangan gagasan. Ia mengatakan, di tengah maraknya penjualan lukisan sulit mendapati perupa atau pelukis yang akrab dengan kajian seni rupa terbaru, bahkan mendapati seniman membaca buku saja tidak pernah.

Dalam berbagai diskusi seni rupa, kata Hendro, banyak seniman berpartisipasi untuk hadir. Namun, tidak satu pun dari mereka mengajukan pertanyaan dan gagasan. Saat itu, Hendro pun berharap agar seniman yang kerap mendapat kesempatan keliling dunia dapat membawa oleh-oleh buku terbaru dan mendiskusikannya dengan sesama pegiat seni. “Bagaimana perkembangan seni rupa dapat terjadi jika tidak ada diskusi antarperupa, antara perupa dan kritikus, atau antara perupa dan kurator?” tutur Hendro.

Menurut M. Dwi Marianto dalam tulisan berjudul “Atmosfer Kehidupan Seni di Yogyakarta,” di *KOMPAS*, 23 Desember 2001, pandangan Aminudin T. H. Siregar mengenai skena seni di Yogyakarta terperangkap pada determinisme ekonomi. Selain itu, Aminudin hanya menggunakan cara pandang seni kontemporer dalam membaca kecenderungan seni rupa. Ada beragam aktivitas seni yang menghidupi banyak orang serta merangsang tumbuhnya dinamika budaya di kota itu, tetapi tidak dijadikan pertimbangan oleh Aminudin. Perspektif Aminudin sebagai orang yang tidak tinggal di Yogyakarta juga dipermasalahkan.

Mariato menyarankan agar Aminudin tidak hanya memandang sinis pada seniman yang kerap menjual karya, tetapi juga mengeksplorasi budaya konsumtif pembeli yang irasional. Mengapa mereka bersedia membeli lukisan dengan harga yang sangat tinggi?

Selain itu, kata Mariato, Aminudin perlu memerhatikan kenyataan bahwa kolektor seni rupa justru merupakan pihak yang selalu mengikuti perkembangan wacana seni rupa dengan membaca buku atau berkunjung ke museum baik di dalam maupun di luar negeri:

Ini lebih baik ketimbang seniman yang tidak mau keluar dari dunia ideologisnya sendiri, apalagi yang hanya menyalahkan pihak lain. Berbagai keberhasilan dunia seni rupa di Yogyakarta itu tidak mungkin keluar dari kekosongan, atas sebagai sesuatu yang tiba-tiba muncul. Akan tetapi sudah tentu lahir dari situasi dimana berbagai wacana seni eksis dan berkembang, baik yang terkonsepsi secara akademik maupun yang muncul dari pendekatan intuitif dan imajinatif.

Perdebatan semakin sengit ketika Aminudin kembali merespon Mariato dalam tulisannya di *KOMPAS*, 6 Januari 2002, yang berjudul “Retorika Positivistik Seni Rupa.” Aminudin menyebut cara berpikir Mariato terjebak dalam perspektif positivistik, seakan menjanjikan harapan kemajuan, merayakan perbedaan, ketidakcocokan, menawarkan berbagai pendekatan ilmiah, namun sebatas retorika. Perkembangan diasumsikan berlangsung dengan tertib, terkendali, terkontrol, berdasarkan kesepakatan lokal-global, bukan sebagai titik yang terfragmen, diskontinu, dan paradoksal.

Pandangan kritis seperti itu dapat menyesatkan publik, karena hanya menyajikan karya seni yang seolah-olah dapat menyelesaikan masalah sosial. Ujar Aminudin,

Kritik yang awalnya merupakan pengalaman estetis (seperti seni itu sendiri) dapat berubah jadi “nilai tukar” karena manipulasi mekanisme pasar, diam-diam empiris sambil melegitimasi kebutuhan-kebutuhan palsu di masyarakat.

Seni dan Politik Negara

Usai perdebatan diantara ketiga kritikus yang sebagian juga berprofesi sebagai kurator itu, gagasan tertulis mengenai seni rupa kembali lesu. Perdebatan baru dapat ditemukan kembali di *KOMPAS*, 22 Desember 2002, dalam esai yang ditulis Mikke Susanto berjudul “Enam Kesakitan Seni Rupa Indonesia.” Mikke berusaha memetakan enam masalah akut yang melanda kondisi seni Indonesia, salah satunya pengabaian negara.

Menurutnya, negara tidak pernah menciptakan kebijakan yang berpihak pada perkembangan seni. Sebaliknya, negara justru kerap membuat suasana tidak kondusif bahkan tidak aman bagi para pegiat seni. Oleh karena itu, skena seni rupa Indonesia membutuhkan kebijakan politik yang mendukung perkembangannya.

Pendapat itu segera saja mendapat tanggapan dari seniman Arahmaiani dalam esainya di *KOMPAS*, 12 Januari 2003 yang berjudul “Menuju Kesehatan Seni Rupa Indonesia.” Perupa ini menekankan, demokratisasi Indonesia yang berjalan tidak matang memang menghambat perkembangan seni rupa. Namun hal itu juga menciptakan karakteristik yang khas di dalam diri pegiat seni, yaitu kemampuan berinisiatif untuk bertahan tanpa dukungan pemerintah. Oleh karenanya, bagi Arahmaiani, urgensi keberadaan pemerintah dalam mendukung kerja seni di Tanah Air menjadi kurang relevan.

Yuswanto Adi dalam tulisan berjudul “Siapa yang Sakit, Kawan?” di *KOMPAS*, 19 Januari 2003, mengatakan, konteks abainya negara pada seni rupa Indonesia semestinya dimanfaatkan sebagai momentum bagi pegiat seni menunjukkan perannya sebagai katarsis. Karya-karya seni monumental seringkali hadir dalam situasi negara yang kacau maupun di bawah kekuasaan yang hegemonik. Beberapa contohnya adalah *Dokter Zhivago* karya Boris Pasternak yang dibuat di tengah kuatnya rezim Kremlin di Rusia. *Tetralogi Buru* milik Pramoedya Ananta Toer dibuat pada masa rezim otoriter Soeharto. Pablo Picasso pun menciptakan *Guernica* dengan komposisi yang baik pada masa konflik saudara berlangsung di Spanyol.

Identitas Seniman

Sayangnya, perdebatan gagasan seni rupa kembali terhenti usai tulisan terakhir Yuswanto Adi. Perdebatan ide seni rupa baru hadir kembali tujuh tahun setelahnya, yaitu pada 11 Januari 2009 ketika tulisan Wicaksono Adi berjudul “Yang Keren dan Terkendali” terbit di harian *KOMPAS*.

Wicaksono menganalisis karakteristik seniman muda Bandung, sebagai pegiat seni yang memiliki karakter urban, pop, serta lincah dalam mengeksplorasi seni baik dari segi ide, objek, hingga strategi artistik. Mereka didukung oleh kultur urban Bandung serta budaya baca yang lebih terbangun berkat kualitas pendidikan ITB yang bisa dipertanggung jawabkan. Secara bersamaan, ia membandingkan dengan seniman muda Yogyakarta yang dianggap lebih akrab dengan kultur agraris, berasal dari keluarga kelas ekonomi bawah, namun selalu berusaha menjadi aktor utama dalam skena seni rupa Indonesia. Padahal, seniman Yogya menurut Wicaksono tidak gemar membaca.

Yuswanto Adi, dalam tulisannya “Yang Mbentoyong Yang Keren Euy” di *KOMPAS*, 18 Januari 2009, mengatakan, kecenderungan penampilan seniman dari latar belakang kultur agraris atau perkotaan sudah tidak relevan. Kegemaran membaca buku pun tidak bisa dijadikan satu-satunya ukuran untuk menentukan kecerdasan seniman. “Ada begitu banyak metodologi yang bisa dipilih untuk menjadi cerdas, membaca realitas adalah salah satunya,” kata Yuswanto.

Selain itu, kecerdasan dalam seni rupa juga akan lebih baik jika dinilai dari karya yang dihasilkan. Untuk itu, perlu berbagai kaidah dan instrumen yang dipelajari dalam waktu lama dalam konteks ruang dan

waktu yang selalu berdinamika.

G. Budi Subanar dalam “Potret Perupa Yogyakarta: Dari Kepurbaan Nasirun sampai Mimpi Samuel” di *KOMPAS*, 1 Februari 2009 menguatkan pendapat Yuswantoro. Dari sejumlah seniman yang dianalisis, ia menyimpulkan bahwa penampilan seorang seniman merupakan ranah pribadi yang kemudian dileburkan bersama pengalaman sosial mereka. Bagi Subanar, bagaimana pun penampilan seniman yang terpenting adalah mereka tidak terasing dari masyarakatnya, serta tidak dikuasai oleh benda-benda yang digunakan. Hal-hal menyangkut penampilan pun tidak berkorelasi langsung dengan karya, sebab karya adalah perwujudan dari pengalaman estetis masing-masing seniman.

Definisi “Seniman” dan “Kurator”

Sejarah perdebatan gagasan seni rupa Indonesia secara tertulis juga pernah mempersoalkan arti kata seniman baik ditinjau dari segi profesi maupun budaya. Aminudin TH Siregar dalam “Salah Kaprah Istilah Seniman” di *KOMPAS*, 11 September 2011, mempermasalahkan mudahnya pekerja hiburan menggunakan istilah seniman untuk mengidentifikasi profesinya. Selain itu, istilah seniman juga sering digunakan pekerja hiburan untuk berkelit dari masalah atau pembenaran atas aktivitas mereka yang sulit diterima masyarakat.

Padahal, kata Aminudin, istilah seniman memiliki sejarah yang panjang. Bapak seni lukis modern Indonesia S. Sudjojono adalah orang pertama yang mempopulerkan istilah itu dalam tulisan-tulisannya pada periode 1930-an. Sudjojono memulai definisi seniman sebagai orang yang menciptakan karya yang kemudian disebut sebagai seni. Namun, itu saja tidak cukup. Pada 1946 Sudjojono menulis bahwa seniman tidak cukup memiliki kecakapan saja tetapi juga harus mempunyai watak dan jiwa yang besar. Dengan begitu, Aminudin mengajak pekerja hiburan seperti penari, penyanyi, pemain film, untuk tidak serta merta menyebut dirinya sebagai seniman.

Yuswantoro Adi dalam tulisannya di *KOMPAS*, 18 September 2011, yang berjudul “Salah Kaprah yang Jadi Salah Parah” sepakat dengan Aminudin. Menurut dia, titel seniman tidak bisa digunakan oleh siapa saja secara asal. Namun, di Indonesia bukan hanya seniman yang kerap semena-mena diakui sebagai profesi seseorang tetapi juga kurator.

Yuswantoro mengatakan, pada periode itu begitu mudah orang mendaku diri sebagai kurator setelah menulis tentang seni. Padahal, tulisan seni terdiri dari beragam jenis yang bisa dibuat oleh jurnalis, seniman, kritikus, hingga kurator.

Menurut Yuswantoro, kurator adalah seseorang yang menguasai curatorial knowledge karena tugasnya memilah dan memilih karya seni rupa untuk selanjutnya menamai, menandai, sekaligus menyajikannya kepada publik. Selain itu, kurator juga perlu menguasai berbagai disiplin ilmu seperti sejarah, sosiologi, psikologi, dan disiplin ilmu penunjang lainnya karena profesi itu akan menentukan perkembangan seni rupa.

Ujar Yuswantoro,

Saya membayangkan seandainya kurator Indonesia mampu membuat teori baru hasil pengamatan dan penelitiannya terhadap aneka peristiwa seni rupa dan yang meliputinya. Agar kelak dapat menjadi referensi generasi berikutnya. Sebagaimana telah dicontohkan S Sudjojono. Bukan sekadar mencomot sana-sini teori dari bacaan populer yang kadang dipaksakan menyenirupa padahal bukan.

Lukisan-lukisan Palsu

Perdebatan terakhir yang muncul dari kurator seni rupa Indonesia adalah mengenai persoalan lukisan-lukisan palsu yang dibahas Hendro Wiyanto dan Jim Supangkat. Pada tulisan “Sebuah Pertanyaan untuk Jim Supangkat” di *TEMPO*, 14 Maret 2016, Hendro mempertanyakan pernyataan kuratorial Jim Supangkat dalam katalog pameran “The People in 70 Years” di Oei Hong Djien Museum, Magelang, Jawa Tengah, mengenai ketiadaan hubungan antara pameran dan masalah lukisan palsu.

Bagi Hendro, pernyataan Jim dibuat hanya untuk memberi kesan bahwa pameran yang digelar hadir sempurna. Padahal, di Museum OHD terdapat sejumlah old master yang diduga palsu berdasarkan beberapa penelitian. Beberapa karya yang diseleksi kurator pada pameran “The People in 70 Years” juga berasal dari museum yang sama. Oleh karena itu, Hendro menganggap pernyataan Jim Supangkat tidak terlalu bijak dan semestinya bersedia untuk membaca berbagai literatur untuk mewaspadai adanya lukisan palsu dalam sebuah pameran.

Jim Supangkat di majalah *TEMPO*, 4 April 2016, mengakui bahwa dirinya tidak mempedulikan isu lukisan palsu saat menyusun pameran “The People in 70 Years” pada November 2015 di Museum OHD, Magelang, Jawa Tengah. Isu lukisan palsu yang ada di museum itu memang sudah berhembus sejak 2012 dan masih didiskusikan pada 2016.

Menurut Jim Supangkat, menghubungkan pameran itu dengan isu lukisan palsu tidak terlalu banyak manfaatnya. Publik dianggap dapat menilai sendiri keaslian sebuah lukisan tanpa bimbingan otoritas.

Menurut penulis, perdebatan tertulis mengenai seni rupa semestinya bisa lebih banyak terjadi, karena saat ini seni rupa Indonesia berkembang pesat. Ratusan pameran dengan ribuan ide-ide menarik dapat disajikan oleh para kurator. Prestasi para kurator Indonesia pun tidak hanya diakui dalam lingkup nasional, tetapi juga dalam lingkup internasional.

Kebiasaan mendebatkan gagasan secara tertulis juga mampu meluaskan jangkauan penikmat seni. Hal itu juga dapat menjadi gambaran bahwa ada skena seni rupa yang hidup dan senantiasa berkembang. Tidak sekadar membuat acara yang habis dalam sekejap.

Learning, Relationships,
and Responsibility

Patrick D. Flores

[Curator, Jorge B. Vargas Museum, University of the Philippines]

One of the aspirations of “Condition Report” was to explore ways by which curators in Southeast Asia and Japan gather and grasp what is broadly conceived as the curatorial. This elaborate project did not only mean to offer an exhibition or a relay of exhibitions; it sought to configure a passage in curatorial learning, one that invested in workshops and research, collaboration, and discussions with peers of the current generation and colleagues with more extensive experience in the practice. For the curators from Japan, this was an initiation into the region through curatorial work. For their contemporaries in Southeast Asia, this was an opportunity to be in a field school, as it were, and go through the process of thinking through and fleshing out a curatorial inspiration, an exhibitionary urgency, or an intellectual anxiety. In these instances in Japan and Southeast Asia, context and discipline were central: the need to mark Southeast Asia as a curatorial situation and to cast the curatorial as a task, an effort, an activity that may end up in an exhibition but need not be reduced to this event, object or, if one were sufficiently self-righteous and malicious, the much-dreaded spectacle. After all, there was a process involved before this exhibition took place and it would have an afterlife of speculation beyond its duration in the locus of appearance. That said, the workshop template was pivotal, and for the Jorge B. Vargas Museum, the museum where I work as curator, the collaboration with the Japan Foundation to nurture curatorial promise had been fertile through what we called the Curatorial Development Program for young curators in 2009, 2011, 2014 and 2015.

Curators always struggle with this possibility of going around, filling out gaps between what they think is right and what might be achieved in light of certain material constraints. It is a tricky tightrope act that others can belabor and dismiss as a mere exploitation of an opportunity that practitioners profit on. Such a fundamentalist, uncharitable gesture forecloses not only the curatorial but also the contemporary.

I reflect on “Condition Report” from the vantage of my own involvement in “Under Construction: New Dimensions of Asian Art” (2000-2003). I was one of the nine curators from seven Asian countries

of this undertaking that strove to track the energies of contemporary art in Asia through the exigencies of the curatorial. I reconsider the said project in this text as a moment of learning.

I remember very well that the long-term project began with a working seminar in Tokyo on the question of “What is Asia?” It was an unnerving proposition. How does one answer this monolith of a question? But I also saw it as a provocation. Ontologies always provoke, and they always require equally provocative anthropologies. The curatorium was, therefore, convened under the aegis of this conceptual predicament and in the environment of a seminar, a word that alludes to an ongoing discourse. At the outset, the project was framed intellectually as well as regionally. In many ways, the curators were led to a discursive inquiry of a region as well as a regional inquiry into the discourse of curation. Discourse and region intersected curatorially, or were made to shape the curatorial inquiry. Asia was being curated; and the curatorial dispersed or dissipated through and across the condition that was Asia. It is thus but opportune that “Under Construction,” some 17 years later, be followed through with “Condition Report.”

The succeeding phase was research. The Japan Foundation provided the resources for the curators to do research in the region on whatever it was that interested them. I was keen on craft, or the relationship between craft and the contemporary. For me, craft was a cipher of a deep cosmology that was constantly subjected to refunctioning by diverse interests. It was this openness that struck me, its being prone to be apprehended as an index of tradition and heritage, authenticity and lineage, skill and spirituality. But it was also quite enmeshed in capitalist exchange, the production of cultural prestige, and the appropriation of labor and bodies. I went to Osaka, Kobe, and Bali for this, investigating a range of ways by which craft was rendered at once residual and emergent. I then curated in 2001 an exhibition in Manila, at the Cultural Center of the Philippines, on craft. Titled “Crafting Economies,” it sought to reveal the different modes in which craft and the contemporary encountered each other and the techniques through which contemporary artists would come in contact with so-called artisans. It was a problematic proposition that initially rested on a binary opposition—and that was the main idea. I learned that the curatorial was not about staging self-fulfilling prophecies but about coming to terms with the points at which persons and things get ambiguous, elusive, difficult to explicate. It could be about errors and hindsight; obsessions and orthodoxies; chances and lapses and longings. As a writer and critic, I would liken it to an essay, an attempt at an argument, a stab at a premise.

In this regard, I set up matrices of possible interactions between spheres of expressive practice. For instance, I invited the contemporary painter and installation artist Mike Muñoz to engage with the woodcarver Paloy Cagayat and his workshop in Paete, Laguna. Both were immersed in the culture of icon making, and I thought that Muñoz’s installative aesthetic might be a productive tangent to Cagayat’s steady production of religious statuary. Wire Rommel Tuazon, for his

part, reinscribed the aesthetic milieu of his hometown Angono in his installation, recalling ritual and folklore. And Mark Maestro, who lived in Canada, renewed his ties to the homeland and the travails of migration through terracotta and ceramic work. All these involved a level of what I broadly conceived as “craft,” and the dialogue was either a matter of translation or an issue of self-consciousness. Either way, craft was always a vessel on an uneven keel. Paloy Cagayat, to cite a case, was confounded, puzzled by how he was inserted into a contemporary art context, while the sculptor Kitao Hiroshi was nearly autonomous in his exquisite metal work that evoked flora and the cosmos.

As an aspect of curatorial learning, research offered me another trajectory into the dissemination of ideas and exhibitions, knowing about artistic practice in disparate terrains, and appreciating the vast ecology in which plural creative endeavors play out. It was through the research period that I had interesting conversations with Ranjit Hoskote from Bombay and Yamamoto Atsuo who was then working in Ashiya City. Their backgrounds in cultural theory and poetry and curating the Japanese avant-garde, respectively, introduced me to other archives of reading and writing, so to speak.

Together with research, collaboration was critical in my curatorial education through “Under Construction.” The project allowed the curators to explore lateral links within the already horizontal scheme of the curatorium. And so, I decided to work with Atsuo who shared with me the desire to reference other ways of recognizing and presenting creative form beyond the auspices of the modernity of art. As I was drawn to craft, so was he attracted to art and artists who were, I surmised, ungovernable by the typical rules of art, like a forager of the forest in the person of Futana Yoshihi, the two men of Rogues’ Gallery making sound from cars, and Jose Legaspi, whose turbulent drawings were testimonies of a very private torment. We shared artists in our exhibitions, an occasion for Philippine artists to collaborate with Japanese artists and for the latter to be in Manila to carry out on-site experiments. The collaborative dynamic, therefore, could be felt artistically and curatorially. Ranjit also came over to Manila and was struck by the imagery of Philippine art; this led him to choose the painter Alfredo Esquillo to exhibit works in his exhibition in Bombay. The exhibitions I and Atsuo curated had a common publication and I wrote for Ranjit’s catalogue. The reciprocity in intellection and interrogation was salient.

Finally, the aspect of exhibition making formed a significant part of the curatorial process. The collaborative nature of the research partly animated the exhibitionary aesthetic. This came through dramatically in site-specific initiations as when Futana Yoshihi and Alfredo and Isabel Aquilizan collaborated on an installation in the atria of the Cultural Center of the Philippines and when Wire Rommel Tuazon worked with the painting of Tanaka Atsuko and kindergarten schoolchildren in Ashiya City.

The omnibus exhibition of “Under Construction” in the two spaces in Tokyo in 2002 and 2003 was daunting. It was in that setting where

I realized that a curatorium as robust as ours could not be adequately nimble in spite of the reflexivity of the conceptual technology. At this point, we found it hard to intervene in the layout of the exhibition and we had to defer to the judgment of the curators of the venues and to some extent the advisors. No one among the curators had a sweeping perspective to take in the details of the various articulations of the (trans)local exhibitions, so it was impossible for any of us to actively take part in the design of the exhibition as a whole, which definitely was more than the sum of its parts. Here, I learned that curatorial practice is effective when it is viewed as being made to happen in terms of different scales, and that no single scale needs to dominate others within a hierarchy. The local or collaborative exhibition was as significant as the integrative one in Tokyo. The latter did not absorb the rest and was not a culmination in a linear sequence of excursions. The exhibitions across the three years mutated under multiple metabolisms.

“Condition Report” was in a way structured similarly, except that the emerging curators chosen were younger and had less mileage in curatorial work. In fact, they were positioned within the project to interact with curators who had invested more time in the practice. The entire enterprise was akin to a curatorial residency in a region where curatorial training has not been widely formalized. I think that a formal education in curating should not overdetermine curatorial intelligence. The processes put in place by “Under Construction” and “Condition Report” offer an equivalent methodology of honing the talent of curators and troubling the curatorial at its every turn. I intuited from both ventures that in the learning of the curatorial, atmosphere is vital: the ecology of forces at work and the relationships that are woven around a curator’s personal biography. In “Under Construction,” the curatorium was greatly enhanced by the instincts not only of professional curators but of poets, art historians and cultural workers. In “Condition Report,” colleagues from a successor generation were equivalently strongly placed to mediate the curatorial by a lush disposition reared elsewhere. They were concerned about activism and cast their lot with specific ideological visions. They were fascinated with the temper of a global world as it acted upon a gamut of domains from housing to ecology to memory. They were staking out an alternative topography of the art world in their countries, building institutions while pursuing academic or museological work. These identifications or belongingness to passions and politics require co-implications, liaisons with authority and sensitive, adept uses of power. Curatorial learning is constantly calibrated by these co-operations and co-incidences, and the other way around. Curators in the course of their toil become alert to prospects and precarities. What I noticed in this cohort is that they are patient with their agency and that they are not quick to judge, and that they are attentive to form and the demands of close reading. I am happy to see this kind of curator. While they may inevitably align themselves with certain political programs or theoretical persuasions, they are not

careerists who take the curatorial signature so seriously as a professional insignia. Also, they are not evangelists of the so-called alternative, who are always lunging at evidence of complicity but silent on how they themselves partake of the largesse of their self-proclaimed critical arbitration and, worst of all, are not moved or chastened by the integrity of the creative form and the exhibitionary latitude, confining the latter to functions of economy or curatorial calculation and explaining the same conveniently by anecdotes, polemics, and frustrations that are passed off as critique.

What is finally indispensable in this curatorial exposure is the friendship that springs from the curatorial commitment to be in a common space of work. It is the friendship that generates afterlives beyond the pale of even the most proficient of projects because it is a friendship premised on respect, that delicate virtue of generosity, that lightens the burden of curatorial responsibility and at the same time sharpens its edge against those who try too hard to curate in the name of disavowing its influence. Curatorial learning in Asia is unlearning this pretense and working through the always obliging curatorial potential.

The Game-maker, the Player, and Levelling the Playing Field

Hoo Fan Chon

[Artist/Independent Curator/Member of Run Amok]

01

“Sindikata Campursari” was the collaborative project from the Jakarta curatorial team, as an attempt to speculate on the sustainability of art collective practices, and to address the possible symbiosis between art collectives and individual artists by forming a temporal collective through the format of a residency workshop.

It was the fourth day of the collaborative “Sindikata Campursari” exhibition at Gudang Sarinah Ekosistem, Jakarta.^[01] The pre-exhibition opening adrenaline rush had subsided and some of us had managed to sleep in for a little longer. As the day progressed, artists and curators gradually showed up at the exhibition site. The co-curators team did their routine check at the exhibition hall to ensure the artworks were running smoothly while compiling the exhibition manual for gallery sitters. Several artists were busy setting up workshops that were going to take place later. Many, including myself, looked forward to the farewell party later in the evening at Jaya Pub, a local kitsch pub with 1980s memorabilia, live music, and eight-ball pool.

Before that, there would be two more meetings to attend—the first to finalize and discuss the content, budget, timeline, and tasks delegation for the post-exhibition publication, and the second to formulate ideas on Sindikata Campursari’s participation in the Bangkok exhibition, “Mode of Liaisons,” a concluding collaborative exhibition which would feature previously exhibited and newly commissioned artworks from the Jakarta, Manila and Kuala Lumpur projects, along with Bangkok’s selection of artworks.

During the second meeting, instead of selecting existing artworks, the curatorial team favored the idea of reenacting the working environment of Sindikata Campursari’s residency workshop by putting together artists and collective members from Sindikata Campursari together with Thai artists to form another temporal collective, to respond to the local sociocultural circumstances. Soon after, we discussed the logistics and brainstormed on communities they could be engaging in Bangkok. The team started to review each artist’s work and envisaged the possibilities of them working in a new temporal collective. All in all, considering the time constraints and relatively smaller budget, we were looking for artists who could help to mobilize community, and catalyze and facilitate the new collective in Bangkok.

After a few rounds of deliberations, the artists list was finalized. As we were wrapping up, the co-curators were asked by Ade Darmawan, one

of the mentor curators:^[02] During the whole process of the curatorial workshop, did we realize how much power was given to the curators? The curators were in the position to allocate resources to the artists. It was a decision made exclusively by curators, and this decision determined who got to further develop their project in an extended exhibition, and who did not.

After immersing ourselves in the communal living of the residency workshop for the past three weeks in Jakarta, it was easy to indulge in the idea of a non-hierarchical lateral working structure, the one we were accustomed to seeing in collective practice. The residency workshop demanded an art-making process and working strategy different from studio-based practice. Before the artists could start fabricating artwork, they had to work with the curators to decide which local communities to engage, ways in which they would like to collaborate with one another, and formulate a theme for the exhibition. The exhibition-making format might have afforded a greater sense of ownership among the artists by sharing some of the decision-making processes with the artists. However, many decisions were made beforehand that shaped the exhibition-making process and conceptual parameters of the exhibition, by the curators.

Sometimes, the artist-curator relationship is akin to the one of player and game-maker. One work in the “Sindikot Campursari” exhibition in particular exemplified this relationship in a light-hearted manner. Arie Syarifuddin’s food-expo-kiosk work, *Cur.*, reflected on the relationship between artist and curator through coffee-drinking culture. According to the artist, despite being influenced by the Dutch coffee bean trade, the coffee-drinking lifestyle has deep roots in Javanese culture; and a conical coffee dripper, made from bamboo, had been used long before a Japanese company invented the conical coffee dripper in the 1950s. Unaccustomed with Javanese culture, the co-curator team tried to fact-check and verify this claim, and we found out that it was in fact a fabrication. By engaging local craftmakers, Arie custom designed a handwoven bamboo conical coffee filter, and programmed a coffee drip competition among curators to celebrate Javanese coffee heritage. During the process, the multinational curators had to learn how to use the bamboo conical dripper to produce the best tasting cup of coffee, with a winner decided by a group from the local audience. Arie employed everyday marketing language (catchy logo, pseudo-historical claim, merchandise, competition with reward) to fortify his falsified claim for Javanese coffee-drinking culture. His work not only questioned the curator’s responsiveness toward local culture (authentic or fabricated), it also queried the power relations in play. During the competition, the supposed player turned out to be the game-maker. Sometimes, the player does not follow the rules set by the game-maker.

Art-making is one of the ways in which the artist may choose to respond to the dichotomy between the artist and curator. Arie’s work, through humour, aptly highlighted the tension. But such ploys could also end up being something of an in-joke catering to those involved in

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The co-curators of “Sindikot Campursari” were Hoo Fan Chon, Yoshizaki Kazuhiko, Le Thuan Uyen, and Vittavin Leelavanachai among 21 emerging curators selected from Cambodia, Indonesia, Japan, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Thailand, and Vietnam to participate in the Japan Foundation Asia Center curators’ workshop, as part of the project, “Condition Report.” Established curators were appointed to mentor co-curators and to lead the collaborative exhibitions.

a project, or discerning audiences who might pick up the artist's hidden agenda. Do the artist and curator really share the same playing field? They exercise control in different areas. One at the artistic production level that deals with visual art language and the chosen medium to generate content for exhibition; the other at the exhibition making level that handles resources, drafts artists lists, and contextualizes the artistic production of artists. Knowing this power relationship, why do artists find it difficult to say no to curators' invitations to take part in exhibitions? In my view, the lack of a transparent state funding system in Malaysia, a relatively small art market compared to that of neighboring countries, and the need for exposure have conditioned artists to be more amenable to such opportunities.

Visual artist Liew Kwai Fei coined the term "workshop curator" in a WhatsApp exchange, where he observed a recent rise in the number of curators who were not necessarily institutional or academically trained but had gained exposure through curator-focus workshops organized by international cultural agencies or local art institutions. With the support of these agencies, these curators had the capacity to mobilize artists and produce exhibitions with adequate production budgets. In the past few years, substantial funding has been poured into nurturing Southeast Asian curators in projects by international cultural agencies such as the Japan Foundation Asia Center's sophomore edition of its curators' workshop, "Condition Report" (2015-17), and the Goethe Institut's CuratorsLab (2015-17), workshops serving as an alternative model to learning and producing knowledge outside of academia.

The Japan Foundation Asia Center's "Condition Report" project, which I took part in, was a curatorial training program which spread across a two-year period. It started with a working seminar that covered nine cities in Japan, with visits to different private and national art museums, independent art spaces and cultural institutions, during which we were given private exhibition tours by curators, interacted with local artists, and attended lectures on Japanese art and cultural infrastructure and conditions, as well as happenings. After the working seminar, the co-curators were grouped into four different collaborative projects based in Bangkok, Manila, Jakarta, and Kuala Lumpur. Informed by their chosen theme and respective exhibition focus, each group then conducted research trips to gain insights into the local art scenes while formulating ideas for a collaborative exhibition.

The co-curators worked alongside mentor curators to produce the collaborative exhibitions before going on to carry out their individual projects in their city of residence in Southeast Asia. Through the format of "Condition Report," we could look at how these hands-on learning experiences in large-scale exhibition making, the networks built along the process, and international cultural agency recognition have afforded the co-curators social and cultural capital. As an increasingly mobile class of cultural practitioner, curators are potentially positioned as vital players within the art ecosystem by such privileged experiences.

As someone who straddles between the two fields of artistic

production and curatorial practice, I was at once made aware of the privileged position of the curator and at the same time empathetic towards the artist's reliance on the curator for exhibition opportunities. But is there a way to level the playing field? Perhaps we should consider ways in which we could keep the curator's "power" in check, or at the very least make the curatorial process visible during exhibitions and elucidate how certain curatorial decisions were made.

We could also expand our focus beyond just the power relations between curators and artists, as we know there are other key players in the the field of art and not all curators' primary working relationship is with artists, as Simon Soon put it in another WhatsApp exchange to discuss the framework for a roundtable discussion focusing on the role of curator. We should consider the agency of artistic production and curatorial practice along with other players to imagine a meaningful and fruitful working relationship for the production of knowledge and aesthetic experience.

Back in Jakarta, before we headed off to Jaya Pub for the farewell party, I had to announce the selected artists for the Bangkok exhibition during dinner. I do not remember if I explained how the selection was made, nor were there any questions asked. The team congratulated the selected artists, and soon after, we made our way to the farewell party. Most of the production team, including the artists, technicians, facilitators, and curators were present. Many engaged in conversations, shared a few jokes, took candid group photos, and exchanged contacts. It was at the pool table where the team got animated and came to life once again. That was the time where most of us shared the same role as players, no matter if we were potting the solids or stripes.

Friend First, Colleague Second!

A Reflection on the Issue of Trust in Curatorial Practice

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Le Thuan Uyen

[Independent Curator]

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At least in Vietnam, where the term “curator” is still being defined and made sense of, and where there is little attribution to what the job entails or requires. The recruitment of curators, particularly at alternative/independent spaces, tends to be more flexible in terms of box-ticking of academic backgrounds, former training, and so on, especially when compared with the analytical tests and rounds of interviews in corporate recruitment.

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As highlighted by Singapore-based curator Vera Mey and Saigon-based curator Zoe Butt, there is an “ecology of cultural lack” evident in but not exclusive to Vietnam, characterized by “a dearth of state (or any) funding; active historical amnesia through destruction of memory—archival, architectural or otherwise; visible and violent impoverishment; and freedom of expression in public existing as a real threat with political ramifications.” Vera Mey “We’re in This Together,” *A Year of Conscious Practice*, accessed December 15, 2017, <http://ayeurofconsciouspractice.com/texts/were-in-this-together>.

In most careers, when facing the challenge of finding a job, there are certain “ticks,” or criteria, one needs to meet in order to secure a position. I often wonder what these would be for a curator, particularly an independent visual art curator who works mostly with living, practising artists? Here, the qualifications, requirements, or personal qualities required tend to be somewhat flexible, and the same might be said of the selection process.^[01] So what does it take to be a curator?

Of course, knowledge of art history and of visual languages are must-haves, but more than that, a curator ought to be able to gain trust from the artistic community which he/she considers him or herself rooted in. In the context of Vietnam, trust replaces the credibility associated with official establishments, and friendship acts as an institution itself—a platform where contextual dialogues concerned with artistic languages, aesthetics, and politics take place, consequently leading to the production of new knowledge.

Why is this? In the landscape of Vietnamese art, where there is an unmistakable cultural lack,^[02] physical, political, and knowledge infrastructures and resources come from agencies that are not official public institutions—the conventional entities that are assigned to carry the task of providing for and legitimizing art and culture. Such agencies include foreign funding bodies, independent art spaces, as well as those who mediate between them and artists—curators. Thus, curators, in Vietnam as elsewhere, are seen as bearers of accountability (to both sponsors and the public), a validating mechanism, sometimes even patrons—roles that are traditionally identified with formal art institutions.^[03]

It is important to acknowledge that the significance and power that I mention here are not innate; they are earned through acquiring work experience. Indirectly, they are proportional to the level of trust that artists confide in curators.

I must qualify that what I am presenting in this article is restricted to my experiences and knowledge of working in Vietnam, particularly in Hanoi. I entered the local art scene as an outsider. I had no formal

training in art history or art practice. I was partially ignorant of the historical and social context that I lived in, having lived abroad and grown accustomed to Western ideologies and perspectives. My colleagues and new-found friends welcomed me with open arms, yet I still felt there was a silken thread that separated me and them. I was able to deliver administrative tasks exceptionally well to produce events, but I was not included in artistic dialogues. How could I have been, for I, in all honesty, at that time knew very little about art-making or about the backgrounds and personalities of the artists I was working so closely with. In my present conception, a curator is someone who cares. Did I really care enough? For what is curating but facilitating contextual dialogues, enabling encounters between politics and aesthetics, mobilizing resources to assist artistic production, and projecting the outcomes of such conversations on to the wider community? Was I really a friend artists could rely on and entrust their personal histories with, or was I merely a colleague who treated my work as tasks to be done without feeling the need to understand mentalities or get emotionally involved?

Over time, I came to understand the importance of trust and friendship. In saying this, I make a distinction between colleague, or network associate, and friend. In my definition, the term colleague is void of the emotional attachment (or compassion) that is embedded in friendship, predominantly due to the frameworks and rules that govern the working environment.^[04] Furthermore, working relationships are formed through appointment/recruitment, whereas friendships are formed by personal choice. Revisiting recent art history, it is evident that friendship has been a remarkable force that has held up the Vietnamese art scene over the years despite the presence of an “ecology of cultural lack.”^[05] Friendships in the arts allow practitioners to mobilize resources that may be unquantifiable in monetary terms, enable them to create room for artistic languages to be challenged and developed, art spaces to be formed, projects to be realized, and infrastructural platforms to be built. Such friendships are sustained through a system of trust. This trust may be founded on various bases: shared aesthetics, shared experiences, common goals, respect for each other’s talent or expertise, and so on. It is gained, not given. It is consolidated and tested with time, not permanent.

There are different approaches to curation and one may question my fascination with friendship and trust, and point out that there exists such a thing as so-called professionalism and that artistic production does not always require friendship to take shape. Call me naïve or romantic if you must, but I am a firm believer that trust enhances curatorial practice in more ways than one can imagine. Light-speed studio visits and portfolio viewing can only unveil a fraction of artists’ practices, for what they create is also informed by their personal backgrounds, and the social circumstances where they live. If a curator flashes through the artworks, what guarantees that he/she is not likely simply to interpret the

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It is worth noting that independent curators are never fully independent. And independent curators sometimes associate themselves with institutions that they work for on a temporary basis (such as a biennale) or they have close connections with (for example, working as an assistant to an established artist/curator/collector is akin to working for a small-scale institution). What I am referring to is a stark contrast between Vietnam, where museums are perceived to be dated and irrelevant to contemporary life, and some other art scenes (Singapore, for example), where museums are largely trusted houses of knowledge.

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There are exceptions, always. But as colleagues, we adhere to institutional regulations and codes of conduct. There is also no obligation outside of office hours.

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See footnote 03.

A Vietnamese idiom referring to the custom practiced by many Vietnamese in the olden days of offering each other betel nut to chew, similar to offering tea or water to a guest nowadays.

works in such existing frames that he/she is already familiar with? We learn from a young age that everyone is unique and we need to embrace our differences, but we also are taught to “categorize” each other into boxes, to figure each other out and deal with situations according to a set formula. Knowledge differs from one community to another—what gives me or any curator the authority to claim that my knowledge is superior to that of an artist?

For example, if I was educated in England, where punctuality is a virtue and formal etiquette in the workplace is respected, should I consider an artist in Vietnam to be unprofessional and disrespectful if they arrived 15 minutes late to our meeting and asked to have a beer first? Or would I understand that to be typical social conduct locally, or that the artist might have a certain complex and required some warming up? “Miếng trầu mở đầu câu chuyện” (the betel nut opens up the conversation)^[06] as my elders often quote. Without this kind of understanding, would the artist want to share their thoughts with me given I did not respect their way of life?

For the exhibition I curated as part of the “Condition Report” curatorial development program, I had a chance to work with a group of important modernist painters who are considered leading figures who have helped to open up the Vietnamese art scene to an international audience. They developed their practices in a critical historic period, when Vietnam had just escaped isolation and witnessed drastic changes in all aspects of society. They come from an utterly different generation—a generation that may find the work of a curator completely unnecessary. In Vietnam, the war generation appears to have nothing in common with the post-war generation. Different times, different measures! Changing values and ways of life are not easy to comprehend and accept. It is not uncommon that people are reluctant to share for fear of existing prejudice against them and misinterpretation. Let us not forget that censorship exists in Vietnam. The presence of a surveillance system fosters a sense of suspicion, resulting in unfruitful relationships. In such situations, how do you resolve frictions that are the product of history? The only answer is, with time and genuine care, and to find the motivation to put yourself in others’ shoes. It is through mutual understanding that we open up and become friends. As friends, we not only understand each other’s practice from an aesthetic perspective but are connected as people. This perception enables us to have compassion and tolerance, consolidating our will to share and build each other’s resources, to work together in a productive manner.

Curators are extremely lucky because, unlike the regular audience, we have the opportunity to engage ourselves in the formation of a work of art, seeing things develop every step along the way. And what is art but a visual and sensational experience that evokes emotions and reflections? In this light, what do we make of the art landscape if curators treat artists predominantly as content, not friends we share the same passion with?

Having said all this, I am well aware that this way of working as

friends does have its flaws. There have been known cases of favoritism and unproductive exchanges due to the familiarity and emotional attachment that are the very essence of friendship. However, we should remember that another foundation of friendship is honesty—a quality that can limit the risks mentioned above. In a globalized world where art is increasingly being commodified, regulated, and institutionalized, it is important not to forget that there are more than mutual gains in any working relationship. For friendship and passion are what keep your fire going over the years.

Letting Go of Doubts: My Views on Transnational Curation

Nakamura Fumiko

[Curator, Aichi Prefectural Museum of Art]

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In the first half of the 20th century, many Japanese artists visited the countries of Asia for both research and military service. Inspired by the cultures and climates of these foreign countries, their works were not always directly linked to promoting national influence or boosting fighting spirit, but even so we must cautiously investigate their Orientalist perspective toward other Asian countries and their artistic activities as shaped by the national context of Japan.

I gaze absentmindedly out the window from the back of the station wagon. Small shops, houses, and fields spread along the road, and looking beyond them I see low hills stretching into the distance. As I continue gazing at the scenery, I suddenly have the illusion I am driving through the small town in Hiroshima Prefecture where my grandparents lived. But recognizing the next moment that the vegetation is completely different from that of Hiroshima, I come to myself, and remember that I am in Chiang Mai, Thailand.

Visiting there for the first time on my research trip, I found Chiang Mai to be full of novelty, as well as nostalgia and intimacy. Perhaps this is because the relaxed atmosphere, particular to former capitals, reminded me of Kyoto, where I live. But the rush of familiarity I felt toward Chiang Mai was not entirely pleasant, as there was also something discomfiting about it. It may have been overly naïve, but I could not forget the existence of the many Japanese artists who visited Southeast Asia before and during World War II. Regardless of their intentions, many of them ended up tacitly approving Japan's invasion of Asia.^[01] It was on top of this history that I was visiting Chiang Mai and feeling some familiarity there. What could I make of this gaze of mine?

Moreover, what does it mean to put together an exhibition in such a place under such a broad theme as "What is Southeast Asia?" In my experience of working at public institutions in Japan, presenting exhibitions is an unquestioned part of the job description. But Chiang Mai was a foreign place to which I had practically no prior connection. And an exhibition is in part an apparatus for highlighting specific subjects and orienting the awareness of the viewers. It was because of these factors that I was extremely excited to be working as a curator on this exhibition project in Chiang Mai, but I also had to admit a sense of doubt and anxiety.

Then I discovered a fascinating figure in my preparations for the exhibition, the Japanese photographer Tanaka Morinosuke. Tanaka moved to Chiang Mai nearly a century ago, and established the first

photography studio there. Although he was a prominent figure in Chiang Mai who was liked by many people, Tanaka also cooperated with the Japanese military during World War II, and was briefly incarcerated in a concentration camp for Japanese following the war. He was a transnational migrant, a contributor to Japanese-Thai relations, a promoter of the visual apparatus of photography, a cooperater with the military, and a victim of war. Refracted across these multiple layers, his true identity cannot be easily resolved. I had the intuition that, with Tanaka as the starting point, I could assess my own position of temporarily entering from the outside to curate an exhibition in Chiang Mai, and eventually decided to invite the participating artists according to the theme, “Play in the Flow,” inspired by a photograph of Tanaka playing in a waterfall.

Fortunately, while looking for potential exhibition venues in Chiang Mai, I found a building that had ties to Tanaka. Called the Sriprakard Hotel, it was an over hundred-year-old wooden building located on the Ping River, near where Tanaka’s studio used to be. Moreover, the family of the building’s owner had been close with Tanaka, and the owner told me stories about receiving kimonos from him and how he had been such a great neighbor. Since I was developing the exhibition around Tanaka, being able to use this building as an exhibition space was a golden opportunity for me. What was also interesting was that the building had been renovated many times in response to necessity, alternately serving as a kindergarten, zoo, printing plant, hospital, and hotel. I sensed a parallel between this building with its many past lives and Tanaka’s unveiling of different identities at different times in his life. When I thought about the current space as yet another instance of those many transformations, the strained framework between Chiang Mai and myself as an outsider gradually relaxed, and I was able to recognize the exhibition as a site that provisionally comes into being through the mutual interactions between spaces that evolve and people on the move.

Likewise, through working on the exhibition in Chiang Mai, my preconceptions of curation were to a certain extent unraveled. Chiang Mai is known for the artist-led art project Chiang Mai Social Installation (CMSI). Walking through the city, I could appreciate why CMSI was possible here, even some 20 years since its inception. In Chiang Mai, tightknit communities exist both in the art scene and in the broader public, and these communities are the foundation for flexible responses to different events. For example, one of the participating artists proposed constructing sculptures at a scale that exceeded my expectations, and installing them at locations across the city. In the case of urban areas in Japan, numerous procedures are required for this kind of proposal, such as securing a site for constructing the sculptures, preparing a method of transportation, and applying for a permit to install the sculptures in public space. But this time, fortunately enough, everything from securing a site for construction to obtaining manpower went smoothly thanks to our engagement with the community, and we were able to

accommodate the artist's evolving thought process. Perhaps we got lucky with the people around us, such as the building owner and coordinator, but I felt that we were able to realize what the artist wanted to express without overburdening anyone or putting them in risky situations.

This process differed somewhat from my experiences organizing exhibitions in Japan. The fundamental principle of organizing exhibitions in Japan is to avoid problems by anticipating, adjusting, and preparing everything in advance. Especially in multiuse facilities and large-scale exhibitions where people of various positions are always coming and going, the precision of the advance adjustments often determines the quality of the exhibition. Through organizing the exhibition in Chiang Mai, however, I realized that this method is not necessarily guaranteed to work everywhere. For instance, the whole area experienced a sudden power outage while we were installing. Because of the occurrence of such situations where detailed preparation is futile, it is perhaps sometimes more effective to cooperate and determine the best solution as each problem arises, instead of making detailed plans for averting risks beforehand. Doing so also allows the benefit of not limiting the artistic motivation of the artist through excessive prior adjustments. And so my preconceptions about organizing exhibitions were swept away.

My initial doubts were relativized in the midst of these experiences. It could be said that my doubts at the time were the result of unconsciously viewing frameworks such as Southeast Asia, Japan, and Thailand as having actual substance, and basing my thinking on that assumption. But then the exhibition is a medium that produces meaning through the temporary gathering of individual artists and artworks in a specific place, and it has more physical and temporal restraints than other media. For this reason, in an exhibition space where it is not necessarily possible to account for everything, ideas must begin from examining interactions between individuals, even when they are fragmented, rather than from totalizing, conceptual frameworks such as the nation-state. And, for better or worse, when these connections between individual, specific matters are overturned, perhaps the larger framework itself is restructured and corrected. This is what I sensed as I got to know, in my own limited way, the town around the Sriprakard Hotel and the views of the people I met there.

Of course, it may be that this feeling is too simplistic, symptomatic of a temporary visitor. And the outcomes that this feeling may produce in the contexts of Japan, Southeast Asia, and the globalized art scene cannot be determined as of yet. But I can individually and specifically reveal the elements concealed within words such as "diversity," and redefine them by actively integrating myself into that deeper context. And, even while having doubts, I can acquire methods for relaxing a defensive bearing or gaze. I would like to conclude by suggesting that doing so could lead to me obtaining a more thrilling, nuanced picture of myself, Southeast Asia, and the world.

(Translated by Andrew Maerkle)

戸惑うこと、ほぐすこと トランスナショナルなキュレーションについての私見

—
中村史子

[愛知県美術館学芸員]

ワゴン車の後部座席に乗ってぼんやりと窓の外を眺める。車道沿いに小さな雑貨店と民家、そして田畑が広がり、遠くを見やるとなだらかな山並みが続いている。その風景をなんとはなしにずっと眺めていると、ふと、祖父母が生前暮らしていた広島の田舎町を走っているかのような錯覚を覚える。しかし、次の瞬間、植生が広島とは全く異なることに気づき、ここがタイのチェンマイだと我にかえる。リサーチで初めて訪れたチェンマイは、私にとって新鮮さと共に懐かしさや親しさをたたえた場所だった。古都特有のゆったりとした雰囲気が、私の住む京都とどこか似通っていたからかもしれない。

そして、このチェンマイに対して湧き上がる親近感は、心地良いだけではなくどこか居心地悪いものでもあった。ナイーブすぎるかもしれないが、それは、第二次世界大戦以前、東南アジアを訪問した多くの日本人芸術家の存在が脳裏をよぎったためだ。真意がどうであれ、彼らの多くが結果的に日本のアジア侵攻を黙認することになってしまった^[01]。その歴史の蓄積の上に立ちながら私はこうしてチェンマイを訪れ、そこに親近感を覚えている。この私の眼差しについて、一体どう考えれば良いのだろう。

ましてや「東南アジアとは何か」という大きなテーマのもと、その土地で展覧会を組み立てるとはいかなる行為なのだろう。日本の公立美術館で働く限りにおいて、施設内での展覧会実施は改めて問うまでもない職務である。しかし、チェンマイはほとんど縁のなかった未知の土地だ。しかも展覧会は、特定のものを称揚し見る者の方向付けを行う装置という側面を備えている。これらの点から私は、チェンマイでの展覧会実施という本プロジェクトを前に、キュレーターとして非常に高揚すると同時に何か戸惑いと緊張を覚えずにはいられなかった。

けれども、展覧会を組み立てる過程で私は興味深い人物を見出す。それは田中盛之助という日本人写真家だ。彼は100年近く前にチェンマイに移り住み、チェンマイ

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20世紀前半、多くの日本人芸術家が取材そして従軍のためにアジア諸国を訪れた。異国の文化や風土から刺激を受けた彼らの作品は、必ずしも国威発揚や戦意高揚と直接的に結びつくものばかりではないが、それでも、アジア諸国に対するオリエンタリズムや国家に囲込まれた表現活動については慎重に検証しなくてはいけない。

初の写真館を開いた。そして田中はチェンマイの名士として多くの人々に親しまれる一方で、第二次世界大戦中は日本軍に協力し、戦後は日本人収容所にも一時収監される。トランスナショナルな移住者、日泰の交流の貢献者、写真という視覚装置の伝播者、軍への協力者、戦争の犠牲者。彼の実像は幾重にも乱反射し容易にひとつには収斂されない。彼を手掛かりとすることで、外部から一時的にやって来てチェンマイで展覧会をキュレーションする自分自身の有り様を見定められるような直感があり、最終的に彼が滝遊びをする写真から企画のコンセプト「Play in the Flow」を立ちあげ、出展作家を選ぶこととした。

そして偶然にも、展示会場候補地をチェンマイ市内で探す中で、田中ともゆかりのある建築物と出会う。それはピン川沿いに建つシープラカート・ホテルという築100年以上の古い木造建築で、田中のスタジオ跡地のすぐ近隣に位置する。さらに、シープラカート・ホテルのオーナーの親族は田中本人とも親しく、田中から着物をもらった話などオーナーは非常に友好的な隣人としての田中を語ってくれた。彼を軸に企画を構成していた私にとって、この建物を展覧会会場として貸してもらえたのは、またとない幸運であった。しかも興味深いのは、この建物が時代の要請に合わせて、幼稚園、動物園、印刷工場、病院、ホテルと何度も改装されてきた点である。様々な役割を担ってきた建物は、その時々で異なる姿を見せる田中に似つかわしく感じられた。そして、今現在の空間は度重なる変遷の一環であると考えるうちに、タイのチェンマイとよそ者である私という硬直した構造が徐々にほぐされ、移ろいゆく場所と移動し続ける人々の相互干渉によって仮設的に生まれる場として展覧会を捉えられるようになった。

また、チェンマイで展覧会作りを進める過程において、キュレーションに関する私の思い込みも一定、ほぐされた。チェンマイは、「チェンマイ・ソーシャル・インスタレーション(CMSI)」というアーティスト主導のアート・プロジェクトで知られる街だ。そして、CMSIから20年近く経過した今でも、チェンマイの街を歩くとこの地域でCMSIが可能となった理由がよく分かる。チェンマイでは、アートシーンにおいても、また、市井においても密なコミュニティが築かれており、そのコミュニティが基盤となって様々な出来事に対して柔軟な対応がなされているのだ。例えば、出展アーティストの一人が私の予想を超えた大型の立体物を街中で制作し市内各所に設置したいと言いついた時のことだ。こうした提案に対し日本の市街地であれば、大型立体物の制作場所の確保から、その輸送手段の準備、そして街中に設置する際の各申請手続きに至るまで、様々な事前準備が必要となる。けれども今回は、非常にありがたいことに、コミュニティ内でのやり取りを通じて制作場所から人手の確保まで難なく進み、変わり続けるアーティストの考え方に臨機応変に寄り添うことができた。建物のオー

ナーやコーディネーター等、周りの人々に恵まれたのかもしれないが、諸々のリスクを含め周囲にそれほど負荷をかけることなく、アーティストの目指す表現を実現できたように考えている。

そして、このやり方は日本で私が経験してきた展覧会作りとは、幾分異なっている。日本では全てを事前に予測、調整、準備し、問題を回避してゆく展覧会作りが基本だ。とりわけ、様々な立場の者が出入りする複合施設や大型展覧会では、事前の調整の精度がしばしば展示の質につながる。しかし、チェンマイでの展覧会準備を通じて、この方法は必ずしも絶対ではないと気づかされた。実際、本展の展示作業中に突然、地域一帯が停電に見舞われることがあった。停電のように、綿密な事前準備が意味をなさない事態があるからこそ、前もってリスク回避の計画を綿密に立てるよりも、問題が目に見える段になってそれを協力しあって最善の形で着地させる方が有効なのだろう。また、こうすると、度重なる事前調整によってアーティストの表現意欲を抑え込まずに済むという利点もある。こうして、展覧会作りに関する私の固定観念は軽やかに打ち崩された。

そして、これらの経験を積む中で、いつしか最初に抱いていた戸惑いは相対化されていった。当初の戸惑いは、東南アジア、日本、タイといった枠組みを、無意識のうちに実体があるかのように見なし、思考の前提としていたが故のものと言える。一方、展覧会は、具体的な会場に個別のアーティストと作品を一定期間、集合させて意味を生じさせるメディアであり、他のメディアと比較しても物理的、時間的制約が多い。そのため、事象の全てを決して網羅仕切れない展覧会という場においては、国家等の総体的かつ観念的な枠組みよりも、断片的であっても個と個の交錯に注視することから考え始めないといけない。そして、この個別具体的な事物の連関が翻って、良きにせよ悪きにせよ、大きな枠組み全体をも編成し直してしまうのではないだろうか。シーブラカート・ホテル周辺の町の様子や、そこで出会った人々の考えにわずかながらも触れるうちに、私はこのような予感を強く抱くようになったのだ。

無論、この予感は一時滞在者ゆえの楽観的すぎるものかもしれない。また、この予感が、日本と東南アジア、そしてグローバル化するアートシーンの中でいかなる実を結ぶのか、現段階では未だ見極め切れない。ただ、多様性等の言葉で覆われたその内にあるものを個別具体的に再描写し、自らの存在をも内側へ積極的に組み込みながら再編すること。そして、戸惑いつつも同時に、強張った仕種や眼差しをほぐす術を身につけること。それが自分自身と東南アジア、そして世界に対するよりスリリングでニュアンスに富んだ見取り図の獲得につながるのではないかと述べ、本文を締めくりたい。

Curatorial Circuit: Getting Past the Confusion

Ayos Purwoaji

[Writer/Independent Curator]

01

Ayos Purwoaji, "Atas Nama Kolektif, Kami Bersukarial," *Sarasvati* 41 (April 2017).

For the last two years, I have been participating in a curatorial development program organized by the Japan Foundation Asia Center. I feel lucky, since through this program I have met other young curators from Southeast Asia, seen other countries' curatorial practices and art developments, had opportunities to share my thoughts with senior curators whose ideas I could previously only enjoy through their writings or exhibition catalogues, and gotten the support to develop my own curatorial project. It can be said that through the "Condition Report" program, I have been able to view my own practice in a broader context.

For the last two years, I have also felt like I have been on a race circuit, along a track and at a speed I have never experienced before. All of a sudden, my passport was filled up with immigration stamps, my inbox full of emails that had to be replied as soon as possible, and I was working collaboratively with keen and brilliant fellow young curators, all the while moving through superefficient Japanese-style corridors. Was this what they called the internationalization of the art world?

Not long before this, I was just a young man who wanted to be a curator in Surabaya, a pragmatic port city with a very minimum of art infrastructure and activities. Some good artists have indeed emerged from this city, but they eventually either quit because of the uncondusive artistic climate or are forced to move out from the city to save their career. Some surviving artists or collectives have to work odd jobs to make a living. There is not the aesthetic debate or experimentation that there is in Jakarta, Bandung, or Yogyakarta. Surabaya has never had a position in the development of Indonesia's art narrative.^[01] Thus, it is safe to say that the decision to become a curator in Surabaya was a choice that should have been free from any burden or expectations.

Then when I suddenly entered this internationalization (or regionalization) whirlpool, what happened turned everything around—my imagination began to burst with fear and expectation about the future. I needed to take a deep breath and start thinking further ahead. Speculative questions arose in my mind: when the program—with all its speed and luxury—was done, what would I do next? Would I be able

to maintain the rhythm of work and speed that had been established? What kind of expectations would society have of me now, and how would I fulfill them? How do I fit in with internationalization without losing sight of the context of Surabaya?

I could not stop this list of questions and this kind of confusion from growing wildly in my head. But this kind of anxiety did not seem to hit me exclusively. Con Cabrera, a young curator from Manila, who had also attended a curatorial workshop by the Japan Foundation, once said something similar during a sharing session in the Jorge B. Vargas Museum, and that the future seemed very uncertain for an independent curator like herself. I assume this anxiety is a shared anxiety for almost all young independent curators in most parts of Southeast Asia, where government support for cultural work is limited.^[02] Thus, young curators in Southeast Asia feel that it is important to spend time joining various training programs and residencies, or to continue their studies to a higher level. These are some of the forms of personal investment made in order to increase their acceptance in the world of art, which can help fulfill a vision of a steady life and career.

The profession of curator has evolved organically in Indonesia. You do not have to come from an art background to become an art curator. The museology tradition and art history studies are very weak in Indonesia. Art schools tend only to prepare their students to be artists or art educators, and do not provide any curriculum to prepare students to be art historians, art critics, curators, conservators, researchers, archivists, or art managers.^[03] In 2013, Bandung Institute of Technology launched a new art management and curatorial option for their master's degree in fine arts, and the Indonesian Art Institute Yogyakarta opened a Department of Art Administration in 2014. Apart from this, the lack of formal curatorial training has been compensated for by various workshops organized by art councils, art collectives, discussion groups, and cultural institutions like the Japan Foundation and Goethe Institut and those from countries like Australia.^[04] These informal methods of knowledge transfer have become the main force driving the curatorial landscape in Indonesia today.^[05]

If we take a quick glance at the past, the footprint of the Japan Foundation in Indonesia's curatorial development can be traced back to the "New Art from Southeast Asia 1992" exhibition (1992) which involved curator Jim Supangkat.^[06] Since then, Jim Supangkat has been involved in many curatorial projects with the Japan Foundation, such as "Asian Modernism: Diverse Development in Indonesia, the Philippines, and Thailand" (1995), "Art in Southeast Asia 1997: Glimpses into the Future" (1997), "The Mutation: Painstaking Realism in Indonesian Contemporary Painting" (1997), and "Heri Dono: Dancing Demons and Drunken Deities" (2000). Through such exhibitions at an international level, Jim Supangkat's curatorial ability and reputation was shaped and honed, and the breadth and scope of his practice can be considered as a model for other curators.

In 1997, the Japan Foundation held a workshop on curatorship.

02

In the context of Indonesia, this subject has been written about by Alia Swastika in her article "Praktik Kuratorial di Indonesia: Individu Sebagai Institusi," in *Turning Targets: 25 Tahun Cemeti*, eds Mella Jaarsma et al. (Yogyakarta: Cemeti Art House, 2014), 97–122.

03

Ade Darmawan, "Haruskah Seniman Hidup Bergantung Dari Penjualan Karya Seni?" interview, *Surat 23* (February–April 2005).

04

See Sita Maghfira, "Menjadi Kurator: Jalur Pendidikan yang Berlubang dan Kecelakaan Takdir," *Skripta 4*, Semester II (2016), and Mitha Budhyarto, "Beberapa Catatan Tentang Forum Kurator Muda," in *Turning Targets*, 123–126.

05

Agung Hujatnikajennong, *Kurasi dan Kuasa* (Jakarta: Marjin Kiri, 2015).

06

Patrick D. Flores, *Past Peripheral: Curation in Southeast Asia* (Singapore: NUS Museum, 2008), 36–48.

07

A fairly comprehensive list tracing curatorial projects between the Japan Foundation Asia Center with Southeast Asian curators can be accessed via the website SEA PROJECT: Contemporary Art from Southeast Asia 1980s to Now, last modified 2017, http://seaproject.asia/en/recommended_readings/japan-foundation/.

08

Suzy Sulaiman, "Trouble in Paradise: How the removal of Pangrok Sulap's *Sabah Tanah Air-ku* points to a weakened state of artistic expression in Malaysia (revised)," accessed December 2, 2017, <https://suzysulaiman.wordpress.com/2017/03/17/trouble-in-paradise-how-the-removal-of-pangrok-sulaps-sabah-tanah-air-ku-points-to-a-weakened-state-of-artistic-expression-in-malaysia/>.

09

Furuichi Yasuko has headed the curatorial programs organised by the Japan Foundation Asia Center since 2000, and previously worked on a number of important exhibitions involving Southeast Asian art. See "Collaborators: Yasuko Furuichi," Independent Curators International, accessed January 24, 2018, <http://curatorsintl.org/collaborators/yasuko-furuichi>.

10

Asep Topan, interview by Ayos Purwoaji, June 10, 2017.

Participants included two lecturers from Bandung Institute of Technology, Rizki A. Zaelani and Asmujo Jono Irianto, who would go on to practice as independent curators.

Several programs related to curatorial and cultural exchange organized by the Japan Foundation would go on to encourage young Indonesian curators of the next generations, such as "Under Construction: New Dimensions of Asian Art" (2000–03) involving Asmujo Jono Irianto; "Have We Met?" (2004–05) involving Ade Darmawan; JENESYS Programme (2007) involving Hafiz Rancajale and Gustaff H. Iskandar; and "Media/Art Kitchen: Reality Distortion Field" (2013–14) which involved Ade Darmawan and M. Sigit Budi. S.^[07]

Through such programs, the Japan Foundation and its Asia Center have made a cultural investment in the form of establishing Indonesia's art world actors. Malaysian art organizer/curator Suzy Sulaiman, who took part in "Media/Art Kitchen" in 2013–14, has called the kind of training and opportunities offered "Furuichi's baptism-of-fire styled curatorial training,"^[08] in which young curators are molded through a series of short programs headed by program director Furuichi Yasuko. This kind of cultural investment is a long-term commitment, so in my view, it is natural for the Japan Foundation Asia Center to have assigned someone who has been involved in the Southeast Asian art trajectory, observing and mapping its dynamics, since the 1990s.^[09] With all her experience, Furuichi is considered capable of identifying potential (though not always with perfect precision), and in whom this investment should be made. A curator's curator.

The Japan Foundation Asia Center once again held a workshop for young Southeast Asian curators in 2014. Called "Run & Learn," this workshop was open to young curators from Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand, and the Philippines. From Indonesia, four young curators were chosen from three cities—Angga Wijaya and Asep Topan from Jakarta, Sita Maghfira from Yogyakarta, and Ahmad Khairudin from Semarang. They completed a one-year program in which they each created a curatorial project. Their projects mostly responded to social issues in their respective cities.

Anxiety drove me to find me a way to meet these four curators. I invited them to talk about what they are currently doing and what they have gained from the "Run & Learn" workshop. Are they still pursuing curatorial practices today?

Asep Topan is a calm and careful person. He seems like a strategic thinker who always pays attention to his every move. Currently he teaches at Jakarta Institute of Arts, and is still actively working on various exhibitions, including assisting the Jakarta Biennale. When we met, Topan said that by joining the "Run & Learn" program, he expanded his networks in Southeast Asia and Japan. Armed with this network that he takes care to maintain, he hopes to expand his work and its scope. He also told me that he got a recommendation from Kataoka Mami from Mori Art Museum to join the one-year De Appel curatorial study program in Amsterdam.^[10]

Angga Wijaya told a similar story. After “Run & Learn” ended, he took advantage of the networks that he acquired from the program to undertake follow-up projects involving artists and institutions from Indonesia and Japan, like exhibiting EkstrakurikuLab projects by Serrum at Koganecho Area Management Center^[11] and becoming a project coordinator in Jakarta for artist Kitazawa Jun.^[12]

In contrast, Asep Topan and Angga Wijaya’s two colleagues, Sita Maghfira and Ahmad Khairudin, said that after “Run & Learn,” they did not have much opportunity to do follow-up work with the networks they established either in Southeast Asia or Japan. Perhaps this is partly because both of them are also preoccupied with other activities apart from curating. After the success of the exhibition “Jinayah Siyasah” and other shows in Yogyakarta, Sita Maghfira chose to become a researcher with Lifepatch, a collective which develops interdisciplinary projects.^[13] Meanwhile Ahmad Khairudin is currently taking a master’s degree in anthropology at the University of Indonesia and now prefers to be known as an anthropologist rather than a curator.^[14]

All of these four participants in “Run & Learn” noted that the methods and approaches in this program did not provide a strong enough foundation for further curatorial practice. Asep Topan compared it with the curatorial course held by De Appel which also ran over a year but was very intensive, since there was a clear syllabus and each participant was given knowledge about multifarious theoretical frameworks as well as reading materials related to curatorial studies.

Through an article in *Skripta*, a publication of contemporary art ideas published in Yogyakarta, Sita Maghfira tried to evaluate in detail what she got out of “Run & Learn” and compared it with a number of other curatorial workshop programs which she had attended, such as workshops organized by ruangrupa or Cemeti Art House. Echoing Topan, Maghfira noted that the lack of a clear syllabus and benchmarks personally made her feel “a little confused.” For her, the existence of a syllabus within a workshop is important because with that syllabus she can measure her own competency, rather than having to “guess what kind of competency that was actually expected” by the organizer, as was the case in “Run & Learn.”^[15]

Next, Sita Maghfira provided notes on the open recruitment mechanism of the workshop’s participants, where the Japan Foundation Asia Center opened the opportunity even to participants who were truly “green” in curatorial practices. This kind of mechanism has a bigger risk than workshops with a closed recruitment system such as the one at Cemeti Art House, as there is no guarantee that the workshop participants will continue to practice as curators, since their participation in the workshop might be on a “just try and see” basis.^[16]

Ahmad Khairudin and Angga Wijaya also noted that the “Run & Learn” program did not provide for alternative aesthetics in reviewing curatorial practices in Southeast Asia. Considering the framework of this program includes young curators of Southeast Asia, there should have been productive discussions about curatorial practice in the region,

11
Meita Meilita, “EkstrakurikuLab: Pasar Ilmu a Koganecho Area Management Center, Yokohama, Japan” accessed December 2, 2017, <http://meitameilita.blogspot.co.id/2016/05/ekstrakurikulab-pasar-ilmu-koganecho.html>.

12
Angga Wijaya, interview by Ayos Purwoaji, June 9, 2017.

13
Sita Maghfira, interview by Ayos Purwoaji, June 9, 2017. “Jinayah Siyasah” was held at Lifepatch from November 2014 to February 2015.

14
Ahmad Khairudin, interview by Ayos Purwoaji, June 9, 2017.

15
Sita Maghfira, “Menjadi Kurator,” 64.

16
Ibid., 62.

17
Ibid., 61.

18
This is well described in the article “Sindikot Campursari exhibition summary: To Make Sense of a Cacophony Chaos” compiled by Hoo Fan Chon, Le Thuan Uyen, Yoshizaki Kazuhiko, and Vittavin Leelavanachai in the exhibition catalogue, *Sindikot Campursari*, eds Iida Shihoko and Ade Darmawan (Jakarta: Japan Foundation Asia Center, 2017).

19
Steven ten Thije, *The Emancipated Museum* (Amsterdam: Mondriaan Fund, 2017).

generating dialogues or experimentations that could be worked on in the future. But the one-year-long program did not provide further opportunities, other than through some sharing sessions in Tokyo,^[17] to explore and experience art practices in neighboring countries.

Some of the issues above seem to have been recognized by the Japan Foundation Asia Center, and workshop methods and approaches were significantly changed in the following year. In the “Condition Report” workshop, the time span of the training was extended to two years, and included a collaborative project where participants from the different Southeast Asian countries and Japan worked together, guided by senior curators. In my observation, this change provided a broader experience, dynamic and perspective of the artistic situation, development and context in neighboring countries. Even though it felt like the curators remained at the stage of “trying to get to know each other,” still leaving some confusion here and there,^[18] the experience of this kind of collaborative work is a small step in the right direction, and hopefully it can lead to alternative aesthetics for curatorial practices in the region.

The search for alternative aesthetics is an important area to develop, considering that the workshops organized by the Japan Foundation Asia Center are dedicated to the development of Southeast Asia’s young curators. So that such workshops are not only reactive, responding to the need for curators as supporting agents in the growth of the region’s art industry, but also anticipatory, playing an important part in shaping the future of Southeast Asia’s curatorial landscape. Workshop participants need to be invited to review the curatorial practices they already know and understand, and challenged to find new, more speculative configurations, so as not to get continuously stuck in the white cube system, and to bring new approaches into Southeast Asia’s curatorial practices. This is in line with the push for the decolonization of discourse in the discipline of museology (or curatorial studies) which has developed in recent years. Steven ten Thije, in his book *The Emancipated Museum*, illustrates how today it has become increasingly important—in the European context—to break down the previously patriarchal and authoritative walls of the museum, so that it can be more open and democratic, and follow social shifts within an increasingly dynamic society.^[19] Without doing so, the museum would increasingly lose its relevance within society. In the context of Southeast Asia, there is a need for young curators to understand and discuss such tendencies, and to find new configurations for positioning curatorial practices in a very diverse society, in anticipation of all kinds of possibilities in the uncertain future.

(Translated by Nadia Maya Ardiani)

Gelanggang Kekuratoran: Lepas dari Kebingungan

Ayos Purwoaji

[Penulis/Kurator Independen]

Selama dua tahun belakangan, saya mengikuti sebuah program pengembangan kuratorial yang diadakan oleh The Japan Foundation Asia Center. Saya merasa beruntung, karena melalui program ini saya dapat bertemu dengan kurator-kurator muda lain dari Asia Tenggara, melihat praktik kuratorial dan perkembangan seni rupa di negara lain, mendapatkan kesempatan untuk berbagai gagasan dengan kurator senior yang sebelumnya pemikiran mereka hanya bisa saya nikmati melalui tulisan dan katalog pameran yang mereka susun, serta dukungan untuk mengembangkan proyek kuratorial sendiri. Dapat dikatakan, melalui program “Condition Report” saya dapat melihat praktik kekuratoran saya dalam konteks yang lebih luas.

Selama dua tahun belakangan ini juga, saya seperti masuk dalam sebuah sirkuit balap yang memiliki lintasan dan kecepatan yang belum pernah saya alami sebelumnya. Tiba-tiba saja paspor saya penuh dengan cap imigrasi, *inbox* saya menjadi penuh dengan tumpukan *email* yang harus segera dibalas, berkolaborasi dengan rekan-rekan kurator muda yang gesit dan cemerlang, serta bergerak dalam koridor gaya Jepang yang superefisien. Apakah ini yang disebut internasionalisasi dalam dunia seni rupa?

Sebelumnya, saya hanyalah seorang anak muda yang ingin menjadi kurator di Surabaya, sebuah kota pelabuhan yang pragmatis dengan infrastruktur dan kegiatan seni rupa yang sangat minim. Beberapa perupa yang bagus memang sempat muncul dari kota ini, tapi kebanyakan mereka menyerah karena iklim seni yang tidak kondusif atau akhirnya terpaksa pindah kota untuk menyelamatkan karirnya sebagai seniman. Beberapa seniman atau kolektif yang bertahan harus bekerja serabutan untuk menyambung hidup mereka. Tidak ada perdebatan dan eksperimentasi estetis sebagaimana yang terjadi di Jakarta, Bandung, atau Yogyakarta.^[01] Hal semacam itu yang kemudian membuat Surabaya tidak pernah punya posisi dalam narasi perkembangan seni rupa di Indonesia. Sehingga, boleh dikatakan keputusan menjadi seorang kurator di Surabaya adalah sebuah pilihan yang seharusnya tanpa beban dan ekspektasi.

01

Ayos Purwoaji, “Atas Nama Kolektif, Kami Bersukaria!,” *Sarasvati* 41 (April 2017).

02

Dalam konteks Indonesia, Alia Swastika menuliskannya dalam "Praktik Kuratorial di Indonesia: Individu Sebagai Institusi," pada *Turning Targets: 25 Tahun Cemeti*, eds Mella Jaarsma et al. (Yogyakarta: Cemeti Art House, 2014), 97–122.

03

Ade Darmawan, "Haruskah Seniman Hidup Bergantung Dari Penjualan Karya Seni?" wawancara, *Surat 23* (Februari–April 2005).

04

Lihat Sita Maghfira, "Menjadi Kurator: Jalur Pendidikan yang Berlubang dan Kecelakaan Takdir," *Skripta 4*, II (2016), dan Miitha Budhyarto, "Beberapa Catatan Tentang Forum Kurator Muda," pada *Turning Targets*, 123–126.

05

Agung Hujatnikajennong, *Kurasi dan Kuasa* (Jakarta: Marjin Kiri, 2015).

06

Patrick D. Flores, *Past Peripheral: Curation in Southeast Asia* (Singapore: NUS Museum, 2008), 36–48.

Jadi ketika tiba-tiba saya masuk dalam pusaran internasionalisasi (atau regionalisasi) ini, yang terjadi justru sebaliknya, ketakutan imajinatif dan ekspektasi akan masa depan mulai menyeruak. Saya perlu menyiapkan nafas panjang dan mulai berpikir lebih jauh. Di benak saya mulai timbul pertanyaan-pertanyaan yang bersifat spekulatif: ketika program—dengan segala kecepatan dan kemewahan—ini berakhir, apa yang akan saya lakukan selanjutnya? Dapatkah saya menjaga ritme kerja dan kecepatan yang sudah dibangun? Ekspektasi semacam apa yang perlu saya penuhi kelak di masyarakat? Bagaimana menyelaraskan diri dengan internasionalisasi tanpa harus kehilangan konteks dengan Surabaya?

Tanpa bisa saya hentikan, daftar pertanyaan dan kebingungan semacam itu terus saja tumbuh liar dalam kepala. Namun kegelisahan yang sama rupanya tidak hanya saya rasakan sendiri. Con Cabrera, seorang kurator muda dari Manila yang sempat mengikuti workshop kuratorial dari Japan Foundation, sempat mengatakan hal yang sama dalam sebuah sesi berbagi di Jorge B. Vargas Museum, bahwa rasanya hampir tidak ada masa depan yang pasti bagi seorang kurator independen seperti dirinya. Saya rasa kecemasan itu adalah kecemasan bersama bagi hampir semua kurator muda independen di Asia Tenggara, di mana dukungan pemerintah tidak cukup signifikan untuk kerja-kerja kebudayaan.^[02] Sehingga para kurator muda di Asia Tenggara merasa perlu meluangkan waktu untuk mengikuti berbagai pelatihan, residensi, atau melanjutkan pendidikan ke jenjang yang lebih tinggi. Semua itu adalah bentuk-bentuk investasi personal demi meningkatkan penerimaan di dunia seni yang berujung pada bayangan atas karir dan hidup yang lebih mapan.

Dapat dikatakan profesi kurator tumbuh secara organik di Indonesia. Seseorang dengan latar belakang pendidikan apa saja dapat menjadi kurator seni rupa. Kondisi ini terjadi antara lain karena tradisi museologi dan kajian sejarah seni di Indonesia sangat lemah. Berbagai sekolah tinggi seni yang ada dianggap hanya berusaha mencetak mahasiswa mereka untuk menjadi seniman atau guru seni, dan tidak menyiapkan kurikulum untuk mencetak sejarawan seni, kritikus seni, kurator, konservator, peneliti, pengarsip, dan manajer seni.^[03] Pada tahun 2013, Institut Teknologi Bandung membuka jurusan Studi Kuratorial untuk program master di Jurusan Seni Rupa. Sedangkan Institut Seni Indonesia Yogyakarta membuka jurusan Tata Kelola Seni sejak tahun 2014. Namun selebihnya, kurangnya pelatihan formal untuk calon kurator ditambah dengan berbagai lokakarya yang diadakan oleh dewan kesenian, kolektif seni, kelompok diskusi, hingga institusi kebudayaan seperti The Japan Foundation dan Goethe Institut hingga negara seperti Australia.^[04] Berbagai metode alih pengetahuan yang bersifat informal ini merupakan pendorong utama yang mewarnai lanskap kekuratoran di Indonesia hingga hari ini.^[05]

Sedikit menengok ke belakang, peran The Japan Foundation dalam pengembangan kekuratoran di Indonesia sendiri dapat dijejak sejak pameran "New Art from Southeast Asia" (1992) yang melibatkan kurator

Jim Supangkat.^[06] Sejak saat itu, Jim Supangkat banyak terlibat dalam berbagai proyek kuratorial bersama The Japan Foundation, antara lain “Asian Modernism: Diverse Development in Indonesia, the Philippines, and Thailand” (1995); “Art in Southeast Asia 1997: Glimpses into the Future” (1997); “The Mutation: Painstaking Realism in Indonesian Contemporary Painting” (1997); dan “Heri Dono: Dancing Demons and Drunken Deities” (2000). Melalui berbagai kesempatan pameran di tingkat internasional inilah kemampuan serta reputasi kekuratoran Jim Supangkat dibentuk dan diasah, selain itu meluasnya jangkauan dan wilayah praktik Jim Supangkat bisa dikatakan menjadi model bagi kurator-kurator lain setelahnya.

Pada tahun 1997, The Japan Foundation menyelenggarakan lokakarya kekuratoran yang diikuti oleh dua pengajar Institut Teknologi Bandung, Rizki A. Zaelani dan Asmujo Jono Irianto, yang kelak juga berpraktik sebagai kurator independen.

Beberapa program terkait dengan praktik kekuratoran dan pertukaran budaya yang diselenggarakan The Japan Foundation terus berlanjut mendorong munculnya kurator-kurator baru, seperti “Under Construction: New Dimensions of Asian Art” (2000–03) yang melibatkan Asmujo Jono Irianto; “Have We Met?” (2004–05) yang melibatkan Ade Darmawan; Jenesys Program (2007) yang melibatkan Hafiz Rancajale dan Gustaff H. Iskandar; “Media/Art Kitchen: Reality Distortion Field” (2013–14) yang melibatkan Ade Darmawan dan M. Sigit Budi. S.^[07]

Melalui program-program semacam itu The Japan Foundation dan The Japan Foundation Asia Center melakukan investasi kultural dalam bentuk memunculkan aktor-aktor dalam dunia seni di Indonesia. Kurator Malaysia, Suzy Sulaiman, yang menjadi bagian dalam program “Media/Art Kitchen” (2013–14), sempat menyebut pelatihan dan kesempatan semacam ini sebagai “*Furuichi’s baptism-of-fire styled curatorial training*,”^[08] di mana kurator-kurator muda dibentuk melalui sebuah rangkaian program yang ketat di bawah kendali seorang Furuichi Yasuko. Mengingat investasi kultural adalah sebuah komitmen jangka panjang, maka menurut saya hal tersebut adalah sesuatu yang wajar, sehingga The Japan Foundation perlu melibatkan seseorang yang terlibat dalam lintasan seni rupa Asia Tenggara, termasuk mengamati dan memetakan dinamika di dalamnya, sejak 1990an.^[09] Dengan segala pengalaman tersebut, Furuichi dianggap mampu memprediksi potensi (meski tak selalu jitu) kepada siapa investasi ini mesti diberikan. *A curator’s curator*.

The Japan Foundation Asia Center membuat lokakarya lainnya untuk kurator muda dari Asia Tenggara pada tahun 2014 yang diberi nama “Run & Learn.” Lokakarya ini menjaring sekelompok kurator muda dari Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand dan Filipina. Dari Indonesia, terpilih empat kurator muda dari tiga kota yaitu Angga Wijaya dan Asep Topan dari Jakarta, Sita Maghfira dari Yogyakarta dan Ahmad Khairudin dari Semarang. Mereka menyelesaikan rangkaian program selama setahun dengan membuat sebuah proyek kuratorial di mana sebagian besar merespon isu sosial dari masing-masing kota.

07

Sebuah daftar yang cukup komprehensif mengenai proyek kekuratoran antara The Japan Foundation Asia Center dengan kurator-kurator Asia Tenggara dapat dilihat pada website SEA PROJECT: Contemporary Art from Southeast Asia 1980s to Now, terakhir diubah pada tahun 2017, http://seaproject.asia/en/recommended_readings/japan-foundation/.

08

Suzy Sulaiman, “Trouble in Paradise: How the removal of Pangrok Sulap’s Sabah Tanah Air-ku points to a weakened state of artistic expression in Malaysia (revised),” diakses pada 2 Desember 2017, <https://suzysulaiman.wordpress.com/2017/03/17/trouble-in-paradise-how-the-removal-of-pangrok-sulaps-sabah-tanah-air-ku-points-to-a-weakened-state-of-artistic-expression-in-malaysia/>.

09

Furuichi Yasuko telah mengepalai berbagai program kuratorial yang diselenggarakan oleh The Japan Foundation Asia Center sejak tahun 2000, dan sebelumnya telah terlibat dalam beberapa pameran penting yang memamerkan seni rupa dari Asia Tenggara. Dapat dilihat “Collaborators: Yasuko Furuichi,” Independent Curators International, diakses pada 24 January 2018, <http://curatorsintl.org/collaborators/yasuko-furuichi>.

10
Asep Topan, wawancara oleh Ayo Purwoaji, 10 Juni 2017.

11
Meita Meilita, "EkstrakurikLab: Pasar Ilmu a Koganecho Area Management Center, Yokohama, Japan," diakses pada 2 Desember 2017, <http://meitameilita.blogspot.co.id/2016/05/ekstrakuriklab-pasar-ilmu-koganecho.html>.

12
Angga Wijaya, wawancara oleh Ayo Purwoaji, 9 Juni 2017.

13
Sita Maghfira, wawancara oleh Ayo Purwoaji, 9 Juni, 2017. Proyek "Jinayah Siyasah" diadakan di Lifepatch dari November 2014 hingga Februari 2015.

14
Ahmad Khairudin, wawancara oleh Ayo Purwoaji, 9 Juni 2017.

Kecemasan saya mempertemukan saya dengan keempat kurator muda ini. Saya mengajak mereka berbincang mengenai apa yang sedang mereka lakukan dan membahas apa yang telah mereka dapatkan dari lokakarya "Run & Learn." Apakah hari ini mereka masih melakukan praktik kekuratoran?

Asep Topan adalah seseorang yang tenang dan berhati-hati. Dia memiliki tipe sebagai seorang pemikir yang selalu memperhatikan langkahnya dengan strategis. Saat ini ia mengajar di almamaternya, Institut Kesenian Jakarta, dan masih aktif membuat berbagai pameran, termasuk membantu penyelenggaraan Jakarta Biennale. Saat kami bertemu, Asep Topan mengatakan bahwa dengan mengikuti "Run & Learn," ia dapat meluaskan jejaring di wilayah Asia Tenggara dan Jepang. Berbekal jejaring yang terus dijaganya itu, ia berharap bisa meluaskan kerja dan jangkauannya. Ia pun mendapatkan rekomendasi dari Kataoka Mami dari Mori Art Museum untuk melanjutkan program studi setahun mengenai kuratorial di De Appel, Amsterdam.^[10]

Hal yang sama juga dilakukan oleh Angga Wijaya. Setelah program "Run & Learn" berakhir, ia masih dapat memanfaatkan jejaring yang ia dapatkan dari program tersebut untuk melakukan proyek-proyek lanjutan yang melibatkan seniman dan institusi dari dua negara, Jepang dan Indonesia, seperti memamerkan proyek EkstrakurikLab milik Serrum di Koganecho Area Management Center^[11] atau menjadi koordinator proyek bagi seniman Kitazawa Jun di Jakarta.^[12]

Berbeda dengan dua koleganya, Sita Maghfira dan Ahmad Khairudin mengaku bahwa setelah "Run & Learn" mereka mengaku tidak cukup punya banyak kesempatan untuk melakukan kerja-kerja lanjutan dengan jejaring yang sudah dibangun. Baik itu dengan jejaring mereka yang ada di Asia Tenggara maupun Jepang. Barangkali salah satu penyebabnya karena saat ini keduanya juga disibukkan dengan kegiatan-kegiatan lain di luar kerja kuratorial. Setelah sukses menggelar pameran "Jinayah Siyasah" dan beberapa pameran lain di Yogyakarta, Sita Maghfira memilih aktif sebagai peneliti di Lifepatch, sebuah kolektif yang mengembangkan proyek-proyek seni lintas disiplin.^[13] Sementara Ahmad Khairudin, yang saat ini sedang mengambil master dalam jurusan Antropologi di Universitas Indonesia, saat ini lebih suka dikenal sebagai antropolog daripada sebagai kurator.^[14]

Keempat alumni tersebut memberikan catatan bahwa metode dan pendekatan yang digunakan dalam program "Run & Learn" tidak cukup memberikan fondasi yang kuat terhadap praktik kekuratoran mereka di kemudian hari. Asep Topan membandingkan dengan kursus kekuratoran De Appel yang juga berlangsung selama setahun namun terbilang sangat intensif, karena setiap peserta diberi pengetahuan atas berbagai kerangka teoretik dan dukungan akan bacaan-bacaan yang menunjang studi kekuratoran.

Melalui artikel di *Skripta*, sebuah publikasi pemikiran seni kontemporer yang terbit di Yogyakarta, Sita Maghfira berusaha mengevaluasi dengan detail apa yang ia dapatkan dari program "Run & Learn" dan memperbandingkannya dengan beberapa program lokakarya

kuratorial lain yang sempat ia ikuti—seperti lokakarya yang diorganisir oleh ruangrupa atau Rumah Seni Cemeti. Hampir senada dengan apa yang dikemukakan Asep Topan, Sita Maghfira mencatat tanpa adanya silabus dan tolok ukur yang jelas, secara personal ia merasa “sedikit kebingungan.” Baginya keberadaan silabus dalam sebuah pelatihan menjadi penting sebab dengan silabus tersebut ia dapat mengukur kompetensi dirinya sendiri dan tak perlu “meraba-raba kompetensi apa yang sebenarnya diharapkan” oleh The Japan Foundation Asia Center sebagai penyelenggara.^[15]

Berikutnya Sita Maghfira memberikan catatan atas mekanisme perekrutan peserta lokakarya yang terbuka, di mana The Japan Foundation Asia Center membuka kesempatan lebar-lebar bahkan kepada peserta yang “benar-benar hijau” dalam praktik kuratorial. Mekanisme semacam itu memiliki resiko yang lebih besar daripada lokakarya dengan sistem perekrutan tertutup sebagaimana yang dilakukan oleh lokakarya yang diadakan Rumah Seni Cemeti. Terutama bahwa tidak ada jaminan dari peserta yang telah mengikuti pelatihan akan terus berpraktik sebagai kurator, sebab bisa saja partisipasi mereka dalam lokakarya tersebut hanya didasarkan pada “rasa ingin tahu dan coba-coba” belaka.^[16]

Pendapat lainnya disampaikan oleh Ahmad Khairudin dan Angga Wijaya yang mencatat bahwa program “Run & Learn” belum mampu memberikan “tawaran estetika alternatif” dalam melihat ulang praktik kekuratoran di Asia Tenggara. Ekspektasi semacam itu adalah hal yang wajar mengingat kerangka dari program ini mencakup kurator-kurator muda dari Asia Tenggara. Melalui pertemuan tersebut diharapkan terjadi diskusi yang produktif dalam praktik kekuratoran di kawasan yang dapat memunculkan dialog atau eksperimentasi yang dapat dikerjakan di masa depan. Namun program yang hanya belangsung setahun tersebut tidak memberikan kesempatan lebih jauh, selain lewat sesi-sesi berbagi di Tokyo,^[17] untuk berusaha mendalami dan mengalami praktik berkesenian di negara-negara tetangga.

Beberapa catatan di atas tampaknya juga disadari oleh The Japan Foundation Asia Center, sehingga metode dan pendekatan lokakarya berubah cukup signifikan pada tahun berikutnya. Dalam lokakarya “Condition Report” waktu pelatihan diperpanjang menjadi dua tahun dengan menyisipkan sebuah proyek kolaboratif yang diikuti oleh beberapa peserta dari negara-negara tetangga dan dibimbing oleh kurator-kurator senior. Dalam pengamatan saya, perubahan ini mampu memberikan pengalaman, dinamika, dan sudut pandang yang lebih luas mengenai situasi, perkembangan serta konteks seni rupa di negara-negara tetangga di Asia Tenggara. Pengalaman bekerja kolaboratif semacam ini, walaupun dalam amatan saya masih dalam tahap saling meraba dan masih menyisakan kebingungan di sana-sini,^[18] namun sedikit demi sedikit berjalan menuju arah yang baik dan semoga dapat menimbulkan “tawaran estetika alternatif” bagi praktik kekuratoran di wilayah ini.

Mencari “tawaran estetika alternatif” semacam ini menjadi sesuatu

15
“Sita Maghfira, Menjadi Kurator,” 64.

16
Ibid., 62.

17
Ibid., 61.

18
Hal ini juga mengemuka dalam artikel “Sindikat Campursari exhibition summary: To Make Sense of a Cacophony Chaos” yang disusun oleh Hoo Fan Chon, Le Thuan Uyen, Yoshizaki Kazuhiko, dan Vittavin Leelavanachai dalam katalog pameran, *Sindikat Campursari*, eds Iida Shihoko and Ade Darmawan (Jakarta: Japan Foundation Asia Center, 2017).

yang perlu diusahakan, mengingat lokakarya yang diadakan oleh The Japan Foundation Asia Center ditujukan bagi pengembangan kurator-kurator muda di Asia Tenggara. Sehingga workshop ini terlaksana tidak hanya bersifat reaktif, hanya merespon kebutuhan kurator sebagai agen pelengkap dalam pertumbuhan industri seni rupa di kawasan, melainkan juga bersifat antisipatoris sehingga dapat menjadi bagian yang penting dalam membentuk masa depan lanskap kuratorial di Asia Tenggara. Untuk itu para peserta lokakarya perlu diajak untuk melihat kembali praktik kuratorial yang selama ini mereka pahami dan ditantang untuk mencari konfigurasi-konfigurasi baru yang bersifat spekulatif. Sehingga tidak terjebak terus-menerus dalam sistem *white cube* dan bisa memunculkan kebaruan dalam praktik kuratorial di Asia Tenggara. Hal ini sejalan dengan desakan wacana dekolonisasi dalam disiplin museologi (atau studi kuratorial) yang berkembang beberapa tahun terakhir. Steven ten Thije, dalam bukunya *The Emancipated Museum*, menggambarkan bagaimana hari ini—dalam konteks Eropa—menjadi semakin penting untuk meruntuhkan tembok museum yang sebelumnya bersifat patriarkal dan autoritatif, agar menjadi lebih terbuka dan demokratis sehingga mampu mengikuti pergeseran-pergeseran sosial di masyarakat yang semakin dinamis.^[19] Tanpa melakukan hal tersebut, museum akan semakin kehilangan relevansinya di tengah masyarakat. Dalam konteks Asia Tenggara, ada desakan bagi para kurator muda untuk memahami dan mendiskusikan gejala-gejala semacam ini, termasuk mencari konfigurasi-konfigurasi baru untuk menempatkan praktik kuratorial di tengah masyarakat yang sangat majemuk, sebagai antisipasi terhadap berbagai kemungkinan masa depan yang penuh ketidakpastian.

The Earth From The Air: Curating as Diplomatic Work

Alice Sarmiento

[Writer/Independent Curator]

The research for “Condition Report” meant spending a substantial amount of time in transit—a sizeable portion of which was spent in the air. For me, a writer with no experience curating, it fulfilled my desire to see more of the world and the fantasy that my ideas about what I had seen on my travels could find an audience. This was the naïve assumption that came with beginning my curatorial practice in an art scene that was already—I had, again, naïvely assumed—global in scope. From where I stood and from what I observed, it seemed artists were always in transit, with the world as their studio. Indeed many artists from Manila confirmed this, by always leaving for or returning from some residency, fellowship, or exhibition abroad. This observation, naïve as it was, became more evident from my experience with this program—an experience that confirmed the good in having artists and curators move around the world (or in our case, around the region). Alongside however, it also raised persistent questions about when real cultural exchange happens and how it could be nurtured. In an art world that was beginning to prioritize conversation, it raised questions about curatorship as an act of diplomacy.

In 2009, curator Nicolas Bourriaud coined the term “altermodern”: Serving not only as an alternative to “postmodern,” Bourriaud meant to problematize the identity politics that had become central to the global art world—a world of biennials, art fairs, and jetsetting curators and gallerists. These were the same conditions that made it necessary for artists to turn nomadic, questioning whether and how the practice came to require travel. Speaking from the views of certain artists that a “globalised state of culture” can already be taken as a matter of fact, Bourriaud stated in an interview with Bartholomew Ryan that:

the fact that you are born here or there does not necessarily determine your frame of mind anymore. I am more interested in artists who produce singular itineraries within the different streams of knowledge, than in those who insist on “representing” their cultures.^[01]

01

Nicolas Bourriaud, “Altermodern: a Conversation with Nicolas Bourriaud,” interview by Bartholomew Ryan, *Art in America*, March 17, 2009, <http://www.artinamericamagazine.com/news-features/interviews/altermodern-a-conversation-with-nicolas-bourriaud/>.

Bourriaud's insistence on a new terminology was not without its critics. In a review of the eponymous blockbuster show at the Tate Britain, the critic Nicholas Lambrianou questions how a new term could actually free artists—and by extension, art and curators—from the conditions of the postmodern, which are, it goes without saying, the conditions of neoliberal capitalism.^[02] Could all this travel, this rootlessness, this being suspended in air, be a productive starting point for an emerging curator? Or, like Bourriaud's altermodern, does it only serve to make the profession more marketable?

These conditions nagged at me through the first meeting in Tokyo. To even call it a meeting does not feel entirely accurate—without adequate time for introductions at our hotel, we were whisked away almost immediately to another space, where we would be introducing our projects. That was one of many opportunities to get to know each other, but even then it felt too brief, too rushed, like flying over a country and being asked to make sense of the life on the ground. Even in the brief intervals wherein we could set our feet down and rest, I still could not speak of being grounded—of being able to set down roots. My suitcase remained packed, meals were typically taken in transit, there were flights, trains, or buses to board in as little as a few hours.

To spend that much time in the air, I can imagine how one can develop an uneasy relationship with the ground, and maybe with gravity itself. An idea takes shape, lifts off, takes flight, and the promise thereafter is that you are never the same. I came to think that this was "normal" for an art world that spoke more and more of global conditions, where art was often tasked with speaking of universal truths. This also became the means by which to tease out the good in "good art." "Good art" reached across divides carrying this light, transcendent, and typically vague "universal."

In our case, as curators attempting to build exhibitions around the question of "What is Southeast Asia?" good art meant going beyond the national, beyond the regional, even. It was like describing air, in its capacity for abstraction and transcendence. But to do so went against what I thought to be the very objectives of travel—to immerse, to understand, and to engage.

A productive challenge to this belief came about through an exhibition we co-curated in Malaysia. As part of the apprenticeship offered through "Condition Report," all the curators would have the opportunity to work together on larger exhibitions in Southeast Asia's major cities. Working under Yap Sau Bin and Hattori Hiroyuki, four of us were there to open "ESCAPE from the SEA" at two venues, the National Art Gallery and Art Printing Works (APW), in Kuala Lumpur. There were stark differences between Japan and Malaysia, where the lack of infrastructure alone substantially increased our travel time, making the ground all the more real. Going from Kuala Lumpur to Ipoh to Penang meant spending entire days on the road and getting to know my co-curators better; but it also granted a familiarity with the landscape that had not been as available during our brisk tour through Japan.

Seeing the Malaysian art scene meant taking the time to see things, waiting, planting roots. “Finally, we could have conversations and engage!” or so I thought. On the night of the exhibition opening, as we, artists and curators, sat down to celebrate, complaints about the large-scale print, *Sabah Tanah Air-ku*, installed by Sabah-based collective Pangrok Sulap at APW, were received by the organizers. For us, the transient international arts professionals, the work had been selected for how it alluded to the possibility of another kind of world—the utopian premise and promise often invoked by exhibitions. Like most of the works in the show, *Sabah Tanah Air-ku* was the result of negotiations and conversations within a collective, but it also expressed what could be achieved when communities prioritized creative pursuits and used art—even critical art—as a means of healing.

That this could be questioned to the point of censorship seemed absurd and unlikely. The fact that its censorship pushed through is, to my naïve and idealistic emerging curator brain, still a shock. That “something was misinterpreted” was a common refrain, but this is also an excuse we should not allow ourselves to get used to. How could they misinterpret when the very exercise, to my mind, was one of communication? We had a story to tell and conversations to initiate. What was going to happen to that narrative once a plot point had been stricken out?

Like diplomacy, to communicate as a curator should not be anticipated as a simple back and forth. I want to say that this is because you never know who you will be up against, but even that is too simplistic. In an interview with Carolee Thea, Harald Szeemann—arguably the pioneer of international and independent curatorial practice—proclaimed globalization as “the great enemy of art.” Putting the role of the transient curator in perspective, Szeemann goes on to explain how:

Globalization is perfect if it brings more justice and equality to the world... but it doesn't. Artists dream of using computers or digital means to have contact and to bring continents closer. But once you have the information, it's up to you what to do with it. Globalization without roots is meaningless in art.^[03]

I bring up Szeemann in light of how the global had been a crucial element in the narrative of “ESCAPE from the SEA,” wherein bodies of water stood in for the very borders being rendered problematic within Bourriaud's altermodern. Should censorship (an unfortunate event that took center stage, arguably getting cast as an artifact on display in the exhibition) be seen as a failure of the diplomatic relations promised, or at the very least alluded to, within curation? Is engagement, on the other hand, the point where curatorial diplomacy triumphs?

How curious that we should see the importance of being able to distinguish the earth from the air in an exhibition about the sea/SEA .

Giving Shape to Painful Things

Goh Sze Ying

[Assistant Curator, National Gallery Singapore]

01

muf, *This is what we do: a muf manual* (London: Ellipsis, 2001), 25.

02

I worked as a publication assistant on muf's second monograph, *more than one (fragile) thing at a time*. It was at around the same time I submitted my exhibition proposal to Japan Foundation Asia Center's call for applications to the sophomore edition of its curators' development workshop.

03

muf architecture / art, interview by Florian Heilmeyer, *Crystal Talk*, accessed November 25, 2017, <http://www.baunetz.de/talk/crystal/index.php?lang=en&cat=Interview&nr=27>.

04

Howard Becker, *Art Worlds* (London: University of California Press, 1982), 5.

05

Stefan Heidenreich, "Against Curating," &&&, June 23, 2017, <http://tripleampersand.org/against-curating/>.

I

Paradoxically, in order to make the thing, the collaboration has to be about the making of the relationship rather than the object.

—muf^[01]

I begin this essay with a line from a monograph published by muf, an all-women art and architecture studio I interned at in late 2015.^[02] One endearing ethos of muf's practice is in how they think of architecture: looking at the building beyond its being just a single, autonomous object; as having edges that extend beyond its built boundary, each a complex network of relationships.^[03] So much of their ethos can be applied to how we think of art, and by extension—as they are containers through which we encounter and consume art today—how we think of exhibitions. Artworks and exhibitions, as objects and containers that extend beyond their material and temporal boundaries; each a condition as well as consequence of relationships. We could also refer to the central premise in Howard Becker's *Art Worlds*, which holds that art is social in character: for any work of art to appear as it *finally* does, it entails a number of people setting out to undertake and complete a series of tasks.^[04] Art is described as an agglomeration of activities, a product of cooperation not only of artists but of all other constituents involved in the production, distribution, and interpretation of the works of art. The sociological worlding of the art landscape is as relational as it is aesthetic.

Whilst curating and exhibition making are often seen as acts of collaboration, calling something a collaboration these days has become so *de rigueur* that it has become one of those words without consequence, an end that legitimizes participation without any consideration of the necessary labor entailed. Today, the cult of curating has elevated curators to a rank of glorified gatekeepers between the art world and the public. Art world folk who make decisions on who and what to show in order to say something "about something,"^[05] a gesture which for some has become sufficiently exasperating to inspire a fair amount backlash

against the ascendancy of curating. This proverbial gauntlet to “overcome the curating” is by no means a concession to discredit curatorial labor, rather an opportunity to clarify what it *really* means to “involve the viewer [and] democratize exhibition making.”^[06]

I return to the line from muf, this time in the form of a query: What are the “thing,” the “collaboration,” and “relationships” we are making?

Throughout this essay, in an attempt to lend more specificity to these definitions, I draw references from the recent “Condition Report” exhibition organized in Kuala Lumpur.^[07] So, suppose “the thing” we are making is an exhibition and suppose curating is a “collaborative” act—a way of making and working together—which emphasizes in its labor a social and relational dimension: what happens when there arrives a moment which threatens or ruptures this sociorelational bind? How do we continue to be resolute in making and working together? The short answer is: We cannot. Difficult moments take place within specific chronological containers. However, if we consider curating beyond the timeframe of exhibitions, how might this temporal consideration influence what and how we do in terms of labor, i.e., the work we must do, and praxis, i.e., an application of what we do as a process?

In other words, how do we continue the making of relationships *beyond* the thing?

Nine months on, the spectre of censorship of Pangrok Sulap’s *Sabah Tanah Air-ku* from the “ESCAPE from the SEA” exhibition has yet to be exorcized.^[08] The ironic solace in censorship is this: it is never a lonely statistic. This year alone, there have been a number of high profile cases in circulation, enough to satiate the attention economy of the art world: the Whitney Biennale row over Dana Schutz’s *Open Casket*,^[09] the three works axed from the *Art and China after 1989: Theater of the World* show at the Guggenheim Museum,^[10] and more locally and recently, the withdrawal of seven artists from the Kuala Lumpur Biennale.^[11] In the words of curator-writer, David Xu Borgonjon, the more pertinent question in the aftermath of censorship and protest is perhaps not whether the work should stay or go, but *how* should it go?^[12]

II

Censorship is like the house of the undertaker in which one never speaks of death.

—Michael Holquist ^[13]

When an artwork is taken down before an exhibition is over, the violence of its expulsion is visceral. Censorship arrives like a sudden death, and it is rarely a fair departure. Loss is inscribed twice in a single instance: first, a blackout of a public expression; second, a private demise of relationships—those built around and upon the meanings and labor of the censored object. However, the first loss provides an insight to a different sort of gain. Censorship is a paradox.^[14] The act of censoring doubles as a context that explicitly foregrounds a conflict around an

06
Ibid.

07
For my participation in “Condition Report,” I was involved in the curatorial team of “ESCAPE from the SEA” before curating my own show, “Between States.”

08
A timeline of the removal of the artwork is documented by co-curators Alice Sarmiento and Goh Sze Ying here: “Timeline of removal of Pangrok Sulap’s ‘Sabah Tanah Air-Ku’ from ESCAPE from the SEA exhibition, 2017,” tumblr, March 13, 2017, <http://sze.tumblr.com/post/158371967598/timeline-of-removal-of-pangrok-sulaps-sabah>.

09
Helen Stoilas, “Controversy over Emmett Till painting at Whitney Biennial goes beyond art world,” *The Art Newspaper*, March 24, 2017, <http://theartnewspaper.com/news/controversy-over-emmett-till-painting-at-whitney-biennial-goes-beyond-art-world>.

10
“The Guggenheim Surrenders on Free Expression,” editorial, *New York Times*, October 13, 2017, <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/10/13/opinion/editorials/the-guggenheim-surrenders-on-free-expression.html>.

11
“Artists must challenge censorship,” *The Malaysian Insight*, November 28, 2017, <https://www.themalaysianinsight.com/s/24951/>.

12
David Xu Borgonjon, “The Art of Destroying an Artwork,” *New York Times*, October 25, 2017, <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/10/25/opinion/guggenheim-artwork-animals-racism.html>.

13
Michael Holquist, “Corrupt Originals: The Paradox of Censorship,” *PMLA* 109, no. 1 (January 1994): 14.

14
Ibid., 14–15.

15
Becker, *Art Worlds*, 186.

16
Ibid.

17
Helen Freshwater, "Towards a Redefinition of Censorship," in *Censorship and Cultural Regulation in the Modern Age*, Beate Müller, ed. (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2004).

18
Claire Fontaine, "Giving Shape to Painful Things," interview, *Anarchist Without Content*, accessed October 1, 2017, <https://anarchistwithoutcontent.wordpress.com/2012/06/11/giving-shape-to-painful-things-an-interview-with-claire-fontaine/amp/>.

artwork and consequently, audiences are ostensibly made more aware of the nuances of a redacted work insofar as what was potentially contentious is now framed as effectively problematic. Censors call our attention to that which they deny and why they deny it. Their motives therein become a contention: who decides what is morally, politically, unacceptable, and on what grounds are such proscriptions based?

Furthermore, in a restrictive political climate that is still governed by market logic, the removal of an artwork neither diminishes its value nor restricts its subsequent circulation. A censored object just *does* not disappear. Even if we consider a more extreme scenario of an efficient censorious regime where every physical copy of a work is destroyed (Ray Bradbury's *Fahrenheit 451* comes to mind), the work continues to exist in people's memories.^[15] The conditions and meanings of the artwork are magnified in its absence as its presence is now perpetuated through debates as to why it has been expunged from the white cube. Holquist explains the paradox as a reification of an omnipresent tension "between text and context."^[16] It is this tension that makes censorship emblematically a counterintuitive device of erasure. The life of the object becomes as if reincarnated in another form, a haunting more pronounced. In spite of a period of protracted silence after *Sabah Tanah Air-ku* was taken down, attention around the work, artists, organizers, and exhibition intensified. The paradox highlighted by Holquist offers us an initial consolation: a knowledge that the loss of an object is in fact a reinforcement of its presence. While this is not an excuse to turn a blind eye to censorship when it happens, this complicates the narrative of loss we are accustomed to.

The impetus to censorship is manifold—the suppression of expression may be direct or indirect, imposed by the state, instigated by an outraged public or initiated internally. The decision to take down *Sabah Tanah Air-ku* from the exhibition space in APW Bangsar was initiated internally. Thus, it is insufficient within our larger discourse to unpack the effects of censorship by framing interdiction as a discrete action, reducing it within an either/or logic. Censorship is rarely an us versus them dichotomy but a process that reveals and enacted through "complex and often contradictory relations of power."^[17]

III

We are not providing a social service with our art but giving shape to disturbing and painful things.

—Claire Fontaine ^[18]

The task of lifting the lid over the networks, patterns, and divisions in the art world within which we are located helps frame power relations outside of a binary-vertical imaginary (us/them, top/down) so common within art discourse. What Becker offers through his sociological lens is a moment of brief relief—the extra but necessary elbow room—for us to be able to voice out loud and matter-of-factly the agendas and vested

interests typically left unspoken due to art world's self importance in discussing anything outside of formal, aesthetic considerations. In order to overcome the binary-vertical imaginary, we begin by locating our own position within the art world. We would then come to realize how those who make relationships are located coextensively with those who unmake them.

For one, cultural grants and exchanges facilitated by institutions operating under the aegis of foreign ministries or offices (such as the Japan Foundation) in this region are also instrumentalized as diplomatic exercises for stakeholders not directly involved in the art or exhibition-making. In fact, the exhibition in Kuala Lumpur organized in 2017 as part of "Condition Report," publicized as a "collaborative art project by curators" from this region and Japan, was also positioned as one of the cultural offerings—or collaborations—in celebration of the 60th anniversary of Malaysia-Japan diplomatic relations.^[19]

Once these extraneous conditions are acknowledged, the revelation is instantaneous: matters related to the exhibition become matters related to interstate affairs. We suddenly see how exhibition spaces are at once also playgrounds for diplomatic pleasantries. In short, art does not escape the reality of being the handmaiden of the administrative. Yet, we easily neglect—either out of idealism or ignorance—that the state or an exhibition sponsor, not unlike any other participants in the production and distribution of artworks, pursues its own interests and does so by having power to simultaneously sanction what it likes and proscribe what it dislikes. The altruism of the state or sponsor in the arts extends only as far as its own interests. Here, Becker states, "government policy on support becomes de facto censorship."^[20]

The earlier section of this essay elucidates the double bind of censorship and how the act of disappearance is also an act of preservation and circulation. Here, we acknowledge that the potential for state intervention—and its non-intervention—gives art a political dimension regardless of the artist's intention:

If the state refuses to censor a work, people may decide that after all it does not contain any dangerous political content, no matter how much the artist may have intended just that. Conversely, if the state suppresses an art work, people will try to find some dangerous or radical political message in it, and will usually succeed, no matter how innocent of such intent the artist was.^[21]

In other words, the potential for state intervention lends a latent political potential to art, but this moment arrives only when the work is selected for an exhibition.

IV

The exhibition space acts as a mirror to society at large. Claire Fontaine, a Paris-based collective, speaks of exhibition space as a "context" and

19

This was evident in the placement of the logo of the 60th anniversary of Malaysia-Japan diplomatic relations along the other exhibition partners' logos on the exhibition acknowledgement wall during the "ESCAPE from the SEA" exhibition.

20

Becker, *Art Worlds*, 185.

21

Ibid., 188.

that the role of art is thus to "challenge its pretended neutrality."^[22] Curators must undertake the necessary labor to defend this context, and a commitment to this labor when a work goes on display and if a work is prematurely taken down. Capitulation in the exhibition space portends a greater crisis within the cultural landscape, in which the curator relinquishes her role as a cultural mediator to the censor, allowing instead the antagonist to "speak" to the public. At this moment, relationships become unmade.

How do we redress this loss after the fact of censorship, remaking the relationships unmade?

In order to reclaim power displaced by censors, curators ought to find ways to open up space for uncertainty again; the exhibition space must strive to go against the undertaker's maxim and find ways to speak of death, more frequently and openly. Otherwise, some things become impossible to say or, if said, are impossible to take seriously. When we cannot step out of the space of prohibition, we are fated to responsibility.

Censorship's success is at first indicated by its apparent abolition of the censored object, but its ultimate triumph is in the subsequent silence of voices. What follows the painful aftermath of censorship is a silence of denial, a silence of guilt, a silence of fear; we resist speaking about the loss—both of object and of relationships—because mere recollection of why and how censorship happens is painful. This is a necessary aspect of our labor as cultural workers—organizers, curators, critics, collaborators, and artists—must perform, "giving shape to painful things," or at least, making room for difficult questions to be asked and contentious issues to be unpacked. Collaboration necessitates a commitment to relationships wherein the curator's tasks do not end when the exhibition begins.

Even when the art goes down, the show must go on.

Afterword

The overall structure of “Condition Report” was largely decided at a conference held in Tokyo in March 2016 for all the project members, who had been chosen through the previous year’s workshop sessions. At the end of the conference, the question arose of how to encapsulate the project, and a collection of reports was proposed as a “curator’s book”: a publication originating in Southeast Asia that would differ from conventional approaches to exhibition documentation. We assigned this volume to be the fourth issue of *Art Studies*, the publication series run by the Japan Foundation Asia Center. Since the previous three editions had all dealt with the history of Asian art, we felt that it was necessary for following issues of *Art Studies* to include perspectives on the present and visions for the future. Hence, starting with this fourth issue, the design of *Art Studies* has also been revamped.

Although we used English as the common language for preparing this publication, some of the essays are written in the participating curators’ native languages. Insofar as it was possible to edit and print them in Japan, we have included these original texts alongside the English translation. Given the necessity of editing in English, we asked Beverly Yong of RogueArt, who have contributed to the Southeast Asian art scene through their work publishing art books in Kuala Lumpur, to coordinate with the curators and edit their texts. Furthermore, Horiuchi Naoko agreed to oversee the editing process in Japan, along with me. We also benefited from the cooperation of those who translated the essays from the source languages into English at short notice. This publication would not have been possible without everyone’s seamless coordination and effort. And of course, we are deeply grateful to the curators who took time from their busy schedules to write their essays with such enthusiasm. We express our gratitude to all involved.

As readers will have noticed, the “condition reports” by the young curators from Southeast Asia and Japan are quite diverse in content. The question of how to acknowledge and further develop the achievements of the pioneers who have guided the regional art scene to date depends now upon the intellectual vision of the emerging curators and their actual practices. It is our sincere hope that through this publication we will gain more colleagues who take an interest not only in art, but in all creative fields in Southeast Asia.

Furuichi Yasuko

Art Coordinator, The Japan Foundation Asia Center

Appendix

fig.01_Collaborative Curatorial Projects by the Japan Foundation

Year	Title	City Country	Venue
2000–2013	<p>Under Construction</p> <p>—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local Exhibitions <ol style="list-style-type: none"> From the Sea of Trees Fantasia Dream Project Crafting Economies Clicking into the Place Sorry for the Inconvenience <p>—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collaborative Exhibition Under Construction: New Dimensions of Asian Art 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Ashiya, Japan Seoul, Korea / Beijing, China Bandung, Indonesia Manila, Philippines Mumbai, India Bangkok, Thailand <p>Tokyo, Japan</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Ashiya City Museum of Art & History Space imA / East Modern Art Centre Fabrik Gallery Cultural Center of the Philippines Sakshi Gallery Project 304, Bangkok University Art Gallery, Si-Am Art Space <p>The Japan Foundation Forum & Tokyo Opera City Art Gallery</p>
2004	<p>Out the Window: Spaces of Distraction</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Tokyo, Japan Seoul, Korea 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> The Japan Foundation Forum, Tokyo Project Space Zip
2004–2005	<p>Have We Met?</p>	Tokyo, Japan	The Japan Foundation Forum, Tokyo
2011–2013	<p>Omnilogue</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Alternating Currents Journey to the West Your Voice is Mine 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Perth, Australia New Delhi, India Singapore 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Perth Institute of Contemporary Arts (PICA) Lalit Kala Akademi NUS Museum
2013–2014	<p>Media/Art Kitchen: Reality Distortion Field</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Consumer VS The Power of Industry: Society who Criticize Technology extra/ordinary Sensorium Media Shapes Mind: Mind Shapes Choice: Choice Shapes Future 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Jakarta, Indonesia Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia Manila, Philippines Bangkok, Thailand 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> National Gallery of Indonesia (Galeri Nasional Indonesia) Black Box, Map KL & Art Row, Publika Ayala Museum Bangkok Art and Culture Centre (BACC)
2014–2015	<p>Run & Learn: New Curatorial Constellations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 14 Local Exhibitions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Manila, Philippines Jakarta / Semarang / Yogyakarta, Indonesia Kuala Lumpur / Penang / Kota Kinabalu, Malaysia Bangkok / Chiang Mai, Thailand 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Jorge B. Vargas Museum, Manila Kampung Bustaman, Semarang / Tetangga Seniman, Yogyakarta / Awanama Art Habitat / The Japan Foundation Hall, Jakarta Sekeping Sin Chew Kee, Kuala Lumpur / People's Court, Penang / Sabah Art Gallery, Kota Kinabalu Bangkok Art and Culture Centre (BACC) / Cloud, Bangkok / Gallery Seescape, Chiang Mai
2015–2017	<p>Condition Report</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collaborative Exhibitions <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Sindikata Campursari ESCAPE from the SEA Almost There Mode of Liaisons <p>—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 12 Local Exhibitions and Events 	<p>Jakarta / Surabaya / Yogyakarta, Indonesia</p> <p>Kuala Lumpur / Penang, Malaysia, Manila, Philippines</p> <p>Bangkok / Chiang Mai, Thailand</p> <p>Hanoi, Vietnam</p> <p>Phnom Penh, Cambodia</p> <p>Yangon, Myanmar</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collaborative Exhibitions <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Gudang Sarinah Ekosistem, Jakarta National Art Gallery & Art Printing Works, Kuala Lumpur Jorge B. Vargas Museum, Manila Bangkok Art and Culture Centre (BACC), Bangkok <p>—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local Exhibitions

Curators	Artists
<p>Patrick D. Flores Gridthiya Gaweewong Ranjit Hoskote Asmujo Jono Irianto Kamiya Yuki Kim Sunjung Pi Li Yamamoto Atsuo Kataoka Mami</p>	<p>Alfredo Juan & Maria Isabel Aquilizan, Chen Shaoxiong, Cui Xiuwen, Mareeya Dumrongphol, Alferedo Esquillo, Futana Yoshihi, Gimhongsok, Subodh Gupta, Ham Jin, Handiwrman, Jiang Zhi, Jung Yeondoo, Jitish Kallat, Kan Xuan, Bharti Kher, Kim Beom, Kim Sora, Kitao Hiroshi, Lee Milyung, José Legaspi, Gusbarlian Lubis, Mark Maestro, Miao Xiaochun, Mike Muñoz + Paloy Cagayat Woodceaving Workshop, Shibu Natesan, Noguchi Rika, Ozawa Tsuyoshi, Baiju Parthan, Syagini Ratnawulan, Rhii Jewyo, Rogues' Gallery, Saki Satom, Sharmila Samant, Thasnai Sethaseree, Shinoda Taro, Michael Shaowanasai, Sofwan, S. Teddy D., Montri Toemsombat, Wire Rommel Tuazon, Wang Gongxin, Apichatpong Weerasethakul, Yang Zhenzhong</p>
<p>Li Zhenhua Suh Jinsuk Sumitomo Fumihiko</p>	<p>8gg, Bowda Katsushi, Cao Fei, Cao Kai, Chen Dili, Cho Isu, Cui Xiuwen, Du Jie, Furukawa Koichi, Goshima Kazuhiro, Gwon Osang, Han Kyeryoon, Hayashi Yuki, Hino Keiko, Ise Shoko, Jeon Joonho, Kim Changkyum, Kim Hyekeung, Kim Jaewha, Kim Joon, Kim Kira, Kim Yongkyoung, Kimura Mayumi, Kobayashi Kohei, Koizumi Meiro, Ku Jayoung, Lee Hyungkoo, Lee Yongbaek, Li Yongbin, Nakamura Toshihiro, Noh Jaeeon, Okado Mikio, Ou Ning, Park Hyesung, Park Jihoon, Park Junebum, Pol Malo, Ryu Biho, Saito Masakazu, Sato Yoshinao, Sasaguchi Kazz, Seo Bohyung, Shimada Masamichi, Shi Qing, Shin Yongsik, Tanaka Koki, Yang Ning, Wu Ershan, Wu Quan, Yang Fudong, Yoon Miyeon, Yu Hyoungjun, Zhang Dan & Chen Man, Zhao Liang, Zhen Yunhan, Zhou Xiaohu</p>
<p>Ade Darmawan Khono Haruko Pooja Sood Prabda Yoon</p>	<p>Krishnaraj Chonat, Anant Joshi, Kobayashi Youko, Rudi Mantofani, Mori Hiroharu, Nawa Kohei, Eko Nugroho, Wit Pimkanchanapong, Sigit Pius, Anggun Priambodo, Portaweesak Rimsakul, Sawa Hiraki, Kiran Subbaiah, Hema Upadhyay</p>
<p>1. Hashimoto Azusa, Jaime Pacena II, Leigh Robb 2. Che Kyongfa, Iida Shihoko, Nivedita Magar, Chattiya Kate Nitpolprasert 3. Ikegami Tsukasa, Yabumae Tomoko, Michelle Ho, Shabbir Hussain Mustafa</p>	<p>1. Fujimoto Yukio, Izumi Taro, Mohri Yuko, Nadegata Instant Party, Otomo Yoshihide, Sugawa Sakiko 2. Hashimoto Satoshi, Koizumi Meiro, Mori Hiroharu, Sasamoto Aki, Teruya Yuken, Yahata Aki 3. Koie Makiko, Sasa Shun, SHIMURAbros, Tomii Motohiro, Yamakawa Fuyuki, Yamamoto Takayuki</p>
<p>Ade Darmawan M. Sigit Budi. S Aida Daiya Hattori Hiroyuki Okamura Keiko Adeline Ooi Suzy Sulaiman Lian Ladia Dayang Yraola Charmaine Toh Pichaya Aime Suphavanij Nikan Bow Wasinondh Nguyen Trinh Thi</p>	<p>Achmad Krisgatha, Anggun Priambodo, Duto Hardono, lifepatch, Muhammad Akbar, Narpati Awangga a.k.a. Oomleo, Prilla Tania, Reza Afisina a.k.a. Asung, contactGONZO, Hagihara Kenichi, Horio Kanta, Kuwakubo Ryota, Makino Takashi, mamoru, Hohri Yuko, Otomo Yoshihide, Rhizomatics, Sachiko M. Takeuchi Kota, Tamura Yuichiro, Tsuda Michiko, Umeda Tetsuya, Yagi Lyota, Chew Win Chen a.k.a. Okui Lala, Chris Chong Chan Fui, Fairuz Sulaiman, Lim Kok Yoong, Operasi Cassava, That Effing Show, Mel Araneta, Yason Banal, Ringo Bunoan, Erick Callilan, Caliph8, Tad Ermitaño, Merv Espina, Paolo Garcia, Cris Garcimo, Kawayan De Guia, Liby Limoso, Manny Montelibano, Kaloy Olavides, Renan Ortiz, Gary-Ross Pastrana, Stanley Ruiz, Jon Romero, Mark Salvatus, Stephanie Sjuco, Tengel, Tito & Tita, John Torres, Mannet Villariba, Weather Bureau, Maria Rosalie Zerrudo, Song-Ming Ang, Lucy Davis, Bani Haykal, Ho Tzu Nyen, Bruce Quek, Apostrophy's, B-Floor, Witaya Junma, Mute Mute, Kamol Phaasavadi, Taiki Sakpisit, Nitipak Samsen, Chulayarnon Siriphol, Pathompon Tesprateep, Sina Wittayawiroj, Jamie Maxtone-Graham, Nguyen Trinh Thi, The Propeller Group</p>
<p>Con Cabrera Merv Espina Ricky Francisco Hirano Mayumi Ahmad Khairudin Asep Topan Angga Wijaya Sita Maghfira Ong Jo-Lene Lee Cheah Ni Harold Egn Eswar Soifa Saenkhamkon Turning Tweets Pulse Horiuchi Naoko</p>	<p>Reza Afisina, Log Out Corps, Ardi Gunawan, Yudha"Fehung" Kusuma, Ismal Muntafa / Octara, Wulang Sunu, The Popo/Annisa Rizkiana, Haryo Wibowo, Bowo Kajangan, Arief Hadinata, Papillon, Tri Aryanto, Imam Budi, Cahyono, Hysteria, Pembangunan, Bayu Putro, Bayu Tambeng, Karamba Art Movement, Serrum Jose Tence Ruiz, Hoshiba Ishihara Yumiko, Vermont Coronel II, Bru Sim, Derek Tumala, The Axel Pinpin Propaganda Machine, Working Artists Group (WAG), Niwa Yoshinori, Kiri Dalena, Allison Wong David, Marc Gaba, ChimPom, Aida Santos, Santiphap Inkong-ngam, Elisa Nurvita, Yagi Kanade, Zeus Bascon, Maria Victoria Beltran / Zedeck Siew, Sharon Chin, Maung Day, Saiful Razman, Ilham Fadli, Okui Lala, Kontakt, Jeffrey Lim, Goh Lee Kwang, Engku Iman, Daniel Chong, Chang Yoong Chia, Chua Teck Yeo, Okui Lala, Tan Lay Heong / Bram Ibrahim, Dina Gadia, Pangrok Sulap, Kato Tsubasa, Cracko Art Group / Eyedropper Fill, Tokin Teekanun, Wannarit Pongprayoon, Uttipong Mahasamut, Siwanut Boonsripornchai, Nattapol Rojjanarattanangkool, Apichart Yimyoung, Chaiwat Wiansantia, Namfon Udornlertlak, Tippawan Narinton, Surajate Tongchua, Paphonsak La-or, Kritchnun Srirakit, Nuttapon Sawasdee, Kotaka Takuo</p>
<p>Ade Darmawan, Iida Shihoko, Hoo Fan Chon, Le Thuan Uyen, Vitavin Leeelavanachai, Yoshizaki Kazuhiko, Yap Sau Bin, Hattori Hiroyuki, Goh Sze Ying, Kurnia Yunita Rahayu, Alice Sarmiento, Souliya Phoumivong, Patrick D. Flores, Che Kyongfa, Ayos Purwoaji, Lisa Ito-Tapang, Lyno Vuth, Pichaya Aime Suphavanij, Aung Myat Htay, Bayu Genia Krishbie, Nakamura Fumiko</p>	<p>• Collaborative Exhibitions 1. Ardi Gunawan, Arie Syarifuddin, Buka Warung, Buku Jalanan, Erika Ernawan, Kato Tsubasa, Lab Tanya, Then Group, Waft Lab / 2. Catalina Africa, Aoyama Satoru, Au Sow Yee, Adam David, Han Ishu, Ismal Muntaha, Jeffrey Lim, Pangrok Sulap, Roslisham Ismail a.k.a. Ise, Shitamichi Motoyuki, Mark Teh, Tita Salina, yang02-Ishige Kenta, Zai Kuning / 3. Universe Baldoza, Carolina Caycedo, Cian Dayrit, Ho Rui An, Winner Jumalon, Kapwani Kiwanga, Runo Lagomarsino, An-My Lê, Miyagi Futoshi, Nousaku Fuminori, Philippine Educational Theater Association(PETA), Shen Shaomin, Maria Taniguchi, Adrienne Vergera / 4. Karakrit Arunondchai, Au Sow Yee, Universe Baldoza, Ho Rui An, Miyagi Futoshi, Roslisham Ismail a.k.a. Ise, Albert Samreth, Ukrit Sa-nguanhai, Tamura Yuichiro, Mark Teh, Rirkrit Tiravanija, Zai Kuning, Sindikat Campursari • For Local Exhibitions see fig.04.</p>

"Under Construction" Timetable and Process

[FY2000]

Planning & Research

The First Working Seminar (Aug. 3–5, 2000) (Tokyo)

- Members meet for the first time and exchange perspectives on Asia
- Discuss potential project theme and exhibition framework



Research Trip to Asian cities (Oct. – Dec., 2000)

- Each member visits 2–3 Asian cities to prepare plans for exhibitions



The Second Working Seminar (Feb. 19–21, 2001) (Tokyo)

- Discuss each exhibition proposal
- Decide project theme: "Under Construction"
- Decide framework: 7 local exhibitions + Tokyo exhibition



[FY2001]

Local Exhibitions

Planning & Research

Local Exhibitions in 7 Cities / Research Trips (Oct. 2001 – Mar. 2002)

From Sea of Trees * (Ashiya, Japan)	Fantasia ** (Seoul, Korea)
Crafting Economies * (Manila, Philippines)	Fantasia ** (Beijing, China)
Dream Project (Bandung, Indonesia)	Clicking into Place (Mumbai, India)
Sorry for the Inconvenience (Bangkok, Thailand)	

* collaboration by 2 curators
** co-curation by 3 curators



[FY2002]

Meeting & Collective Exhibition (Tokyo)

The Third Working Seminar (Apr. 11–13, 2002)

- Evaluate local exhibitions
- Plan logistics, exhibition layout, etc. related to Collective (Tokyo) Exhibition



Collective Exhibition (Dec. 7, 2002 – Mar. 2, 2003)

Under Construction: New Dimensions of Asian Art
(Tokyo Opera City Art Gallery / The Japan Foundation Forum)

"Condition Report" Timetable and Process

[FY2015]

Open entry



Workshop/
Selection



Research/
Working Seminar/
Grouping

Curators' Workshop in Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Thailand, & Vietnam (Nov.-Dec., 2015)

- Selection of co-curators based on presentations of exhibition proposals



Curators' Working Seminar and Research Trip in Japan (Feb.22 - Mar.6, 2016)

- Develop an understanding of the situation of Japanese contemporary art through museum and exhibition tours, attending lectures and interviews with people in the art field
- Presentation of the collaborative exhibition project and discussion
- Grouping curators into 4 teams (curators + co-curators)



[FY2016]

Research



Plan



Preparation



Collaborative
Exhibition



Meeting

Group Research Trip in 4 countries in Southeast Asia (May - Aug., 2016)

Malaysia (May 23 - 29), Philippines (June 16 - 24)

Indonesia (June 20 - 29), Thailand (Aug. 25 - 31)

- Develop an understanding of the art scene in each country
- Confirmation of the content of the collaborative exhibitions (participating artists and works, role-sharing)



Collaborative Exhibitions in 4 Cities (Jan. - July, 2017)



Meeting in Bangkok (Mar. 29 - 30, 2017)

- Evaluate collaborative exhibitions
- Presentation of plans for local exhibitions, advice and support from curators



[FY2017]

Preparation



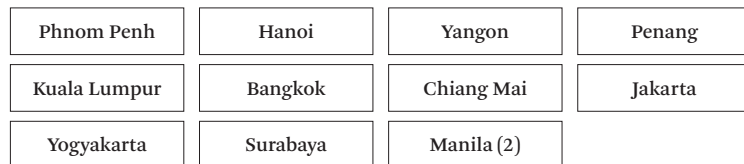
Local Exhibition



Publication

Local Exhibitions (Aug.-Nov., 2017)

- Organize 12 exhibitions and events by co-curators in each city of Southeast Asia



Publish Curators' Book (Mar., 2018)

- Create a book on curation in Southeast Asia as an achievement of the project

fig.04a_Condition Report in 2017

No.	Title	City	Curators	Dates
1	Sindikar Campursari Mashup Syndicate	Jakarta	Ade Darmawan Iida Shihoko	January 14 – February 14
a	Vernacular is The New Gold	Bangkok	Vittavin Leelavanachai	October 14 – November 12
b	Gang of Five: Chancing Modern	Hanoi	Le Thuan Uyen	October 21 – November 19
c	Reperformed Stereotypes	Yogyakarta	Yoshizaki Kazuhiko	October 21 – November 5
d	Sindikar Kurator di Penang	Penang	Hoo Fan Chon	November 18–19
2	ESCAPE from the SEA	Kuala Lumpur	Yap Sau Bin Hattori Hiroyuki	February 24 – April 23
e	Living Spaces: Hyperreal Estate and the Architecture of Dispossession	Manila	Alice Sarmiento	August 5–20
f	Between States	Kuala Lumpur	Goh Sze Ying	September 21 – October 2
3	Almost There	Manila	Patrick D. Flores Che Kyongfa	March 2 – May 6
g	Dissident Vicinities	Manila	Lisa Ito-Tapang	August 18 – September 1
h	When the River Reverses	Phnom Penh	Lyno Vuth	September 14 – November 12
i	Adu Doro : Art and Archive Exhibition	Surabaya	Ayos Purwoaji	September 22–28
4	Mode of Liaisons	Bangkok	Pichaya Aime Suphavanij	March 30 – July 9
j	Play in the Flow	Chiang Mai	Nakamura Fumiko	September 22 – October 8
k	Melting Boundary: Making Identity	Yangon	Aung Myat Htay	September 23 – October 2
l	Recipro(wo)cation: Participatory Art Practices in Indonesia Post-Reformation	Jakarta	Bayu Genia Krishbie	October 5–19

Venue	Artists
Gudang Sarinah Ekosistem	Ardi Gunawan, Arie Syarifuddin, Buka Warung, Buku Jalanan, Erika Ernawan, Kato Tsubasa, LabTanya, Then Group, Waft Lab
In front of Ku Bar	Pichan Sujaritsatit, Pakphum (Nanu) Youttananukorn, Atelier2+, Sarun Yen Panya (56 th Studio), Grisana Eimamkamaol
Vietnam Film Studio	Dang Xuan Hoa, Hong Viet Dung, Tran Luong, Ha Tri Hieu, Pham Quang Vinh
iCAN	Eldwin Pradipta, mamoru
Wisma U. A. B.	Participating Curators: Chuah Ee Yan, Haryany Mohamad, Hoo Fan Chon, Kuah Li Feng, Yoshizaki Kazuhiko, Le Thuan Uyen
National Art Gallery Art Printing Works Sdn Bhd	Catalina Africa, Aoyama Satoru, Au Sow Yee, Adam David, Han Ishu, Ismal Muntaha, Jeffrey Lim, Pangrok Sulap, Roslisham Ismail a.k.a. Ise, Shitamichi Motoyuki, Ali Alasri, Faiq Syazwan Kuhiri, Mark Teh, Wong Tay Sy, Tita Salina, yang02+Ishige Kenta, Zai Kuning
VETRO	Marla Darwin, Grid Magazine, Make Believe Production and Marie Aguilar, Indy Paredes, Miti Ruangkritya
OUR ArtProjects	Sharon Chin, Ian Carlo Jaucian, Candice Ng, Miguel Inumerable
Jorge B. Vargas Museum, University of the Philippines, Diliman	Universe Baldoza, Carolina Caycedo, Cian Dayrit, Ho Rui An, Winner Jumalon, Kapwani Kiwanga, Runo Lagomarsino, An-My Lê, Miyagi Futoshi, Nousaku Fuminori, Philippine Educational Theater Association/PETA, Shen Shaomin, Maria Taniguchi, Adrienne Vergara
Bulwagan ng Dangal, University of the Philippines Diliman	Nathalie Dagmang, Leonilo Doloricon & Tom Estrera, Renan Ortiz, Henrielle Pagkaliwangan, Melvin Pollero, Pablo Baen Santos, Aldrein Silanga, UGATLahi Artists Collective, Renz Lee, KARATULA, Tambisan sa Sining, Bakwit School, Archie Oculos, Karl Castro, Kiri Dalena, Voltaire Guray, Federico "BoyD" Sulapas Dominguez, Raoul Ignacio "Iggy" Rodriguez
Sa Sa Art Projects	Chu Hao Pei, Hsu Chia-Wei, Piyarat Piyapongwiwat, Than Sok
C2O Library & Collabtive Shin Hua Barbershop etc.	Surabaya Contemporary Heritage Council, Benny Wicaksono, Cahyo Prayogo, Pertigaan Map
Bangkok Art and Culture Centre	Korakrit Arunondchai, Au Sow Yee, Universe Baldoza, Ho Rui An, Miyagi Futoshi, Roslisham Ismail a.k.a. Ise, Albert Samreth, Ukrit Sa-nguanhai, Sindikat Campursari/Mashup Syndicate, Tamura Yuichiro, Mark Teh, Rirkrit Tiravanija, Zai Kuning
Sriprakard Hotel	Tanaka Morinosuke, Yamashita Takuya, Wantanee Siripattananuntakul, Piyarat Piyapongwiwat and Arnont Nongyao
Myanm/Art Gallery	Napat Vatanakuljaras, Mayco Naing, Kriz Channyein
National Gallery of Indonesia (Galeri Nasional Indonesia)	Moelyono, Angki Purbandono, Irwan Ahmett, Wimo Ambala Bayang, Elia Nurvista, Fajar Abadi, Viencent Rumahloine, Alfiah Rahdini, Jatiwangi Art Factory, Cut and Rescue

fig.04b



