


GANGGUAN TENGGARA

B♥RG
BEGA VALLEY REGIONAL GALLERY



**EKO NUGROHO
LEYLA STEVENS
ZICO ALBAIQUNI**

EDISIS INDONESIA

CURATED BY TAIN DAWSON

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SEPTEMBER 18 - NOVEMBER 7
BEGA VALLEY REGIONAL GALLERY
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**IT IS MY PLEASURE TO WELCOME YOU
TO THE FOURTH AND FINAL EDITION OF
OUR SOUTH/EAST INTERFERENCE
SERIES OF EXHIBITIONS PRODUCED BY
THE BVRG.**

Gangguan Tenggara - Edisi Indonesia brings together three of Indonesia's leading contemporary artists, all of whom have strong ties with their Australian peers and more recently, audiences.

Our closest neighbour, a country of 267 million people, with a rich history and culture shaped by millennia of artistic, religious and colonial influences offers up exciting narratives for us to examine within our own regional context.

Zico Albaquni, Eko Nugroho and Leyla Stevens all present works which explore recent histories that have guided the country. Touching on themes of beauty, memory and political upheaval - the pieces in the exhibition work across art forms and present powerful moments of reflection.

Working with these important artists highlights and develops the Bega Valley's connection to the South East Asian region. The Bega brand is well known throughout Indonesia, courtesy of our namesake dairy products. This exhibition series aims to build on that awareness and make contemporary art a tool with which we can increase engagement and conversation deep into the future.

**IAIN DAWSON
BVRG DIRECTOR
EXHIBITION CURATOR**



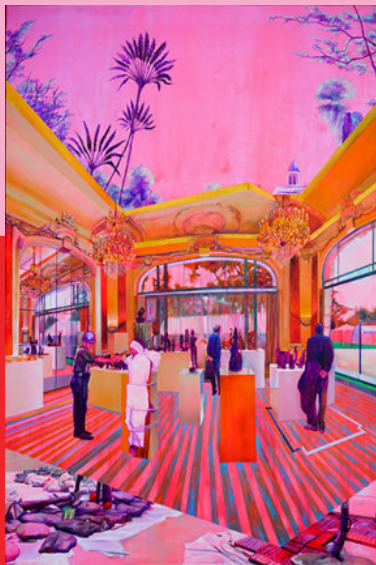
ZICO ALBAIQUNI

Indonesia
b. 1987

Zico Albaiquni's vibrant figurative and landscape paintings play with aspects of Indonesian art history and notions of painterly representation. In particular, he deploys references to various Indonesian traditions such as Mooi Indie ('beautiful Indies') painting — a genre of painting capturing romanticised scenes of the Indonesian landscape and its people under Dutch colonial rule. Albaiquni's unusual and intriguing colour palette developed from the tonal formulas of this early tradition. He also references the links between art, advertising, and the commodification of landscape to investigate contemporary environmental issues in Indonesia. His large-scale works challenge conventional perspectives and formats, often playing with trompe l'oeil illusions and disrupting the rectangular borders of the canvas. In recent paintings, Albaiquni has begun to question the context and operation of painting by incorporating his own studio into his composition, or installing and circulating paintings in public spaces.



Be Kind, Rewind 2020 oil on canvas, 300 x 200cm



The Mooi Enchantment after Sekarmadji
2019 oil on canvas
150 x 100cm

Pewaris Sah Kebudayaan Dunia
2020 oil on canvas
150 x 150cm



Albaiquni comes from a Sundanese family, an ethnic group from the western part of the Indonesian island of Java. According to Albaiquni, the Sundanese believe that art, religion, spirituality and the environment are inseparable. A painter, in the Western sense, is often seen as a genius who creates artwork to inspire others — someone valued for their individuality. In Sundanese tradition, however, (painter) is someone who connects society, spirits and the environment to create balance through their work; it is a much more community-oriented role. Albaiquni is intrigued by these two opposing traditions and considers how the pelukis, at every step of the artistic process, is guided by a set of rituals both physical and metaphysical, asking for a blessing from their community, the spirits and nature before starting a work, and repeating this ritual when the painting is finished. While collecting ideas from past genres, Albaiquni remains part of a new wave of Indonesian artists. He ventures beyond the remnant postcolonial views and socio-political motivations that informed his artistic predecessors, but also contemplates the traditional nature of pelukis (painter) in Indonesia, which draws connotations of community, ritual and spirituality. Combining these broad conceptual influences, Albaiquni experiments with questions of how the Indonesian landscape and its peoples have been represented in the past, and where Indonesian art, and he himself as an artist, fit within an internationalised art world today.

EKO NUGROHO

Indonesia
b. 1977

With its distinctive fusion of styles and influences, the art of Eko Nugroho defies categorisation.

Eko Nugroho is one of the most acclaimed members of the young generation of Indonesian contemporary artists. Nugroho's work represents the daily life of Indonesian society, which is on one hand strongly hierarchical and Muslim-influenced and on the other hand influenced by globalization and the western value system.

Working across drawing, painting, sculpture, animation and embroidery, this acclaimed Indonesian artist draws inspiration from Javanese traditions such as wayang theatre and batik, as well as street art, science fiction, comic books and other forms of popular culture.

His immersive installation *Lot lost* 2013-15 takes us to the streets of Yogyakarta, the artistic and revolutionary capital of Indonesia where Nugroho has been based for the past two decades. The work presents a finely attuned, darkly humoured and – as always – wildly imaginative look at everyday life and politics in Indonesia.



Belonging to the generation of Indonesian contemporary artists that emerged during a period of great political upheaval and reform in the late 1990s, Nugroho is deeply engaged with his local community yet unabashed in his global outlook. *Lot lost* not only reflects the scope of Nugroho's practice and his playful experimentation, but also his daring attitude towards rethinking Indonesian cultural identity within a contemporary context.



Lot Lost 2013-2015
Synthetic polymer paint on fibreglass, manual embroidery rayon thread on fabric, and vinyl, installation dimensions variable. Art Gallery of New South Wales Collection. Purchased with funds provided by the Neilson Foundation and Dr Dick Quan 2015



LEYLA STEVENS

Australia- Indonesia

b. 1982

Leyla Stevens is an Australian-Balinese artist and researcher who works predominantly with moving image. Working within modes of representation that shift between documentary and speculative fictions, her work deals with a notion of counter histories and alternative genealogies.

Stevens holds an MFA by Research from Sydney College of the Arts and since graduating in 2011 her work has been exhibited both nationally and internationally. She is currently undertaking doctoral research at the University of Technology Sydney, which has been supported in part by an Australian Postgraduate Award.

Past exhibitions and selections include: 2019 UTS Gallery Their Sea is Always Hungry, 2019 Emerging Artists Fellowship ARTSPACE Sydney, the 2018 John Fries Award at UNSW Galleries; BEAUT 19, Triennale of Unwhere, Brisbane, 2019; Of Love and Decomposition, Firstdraft, 2016; the 2014 NSW Visual Arts Fellowship (Emerging) at Artspace; and SafARI, 2014.

In Leyla Stevens' video work *Kidung*, nature itself became a silent witness to Bali's historical violence. At once meditative – filled with slow landscapes, coconut trees and rolling waves – yet filled with the tension of bringing visibility to such complex narratives.

Dense with the soundscape of cicadas and wistful singing, *Kidung* is named after a Balinese ceremonial style of singing. The mass murders that erupted across Indonesia were particularly devastating in Bali, where a large number of mass graves remain to this day.



Kidung 2019
3-channel video installation,
stereo sound
courtesy of the artist

“I wanted to respond to these counterpoints in Bali’s self-image,” explains Leyla. “This idea that Bali, unlike other parts of Indonesia, is a peaceful island paradise has been internalised academically and within the tourism industry.”

“This history of political violence is seen as something that came from an external influence – that it’s something that happened to Bali, rather than something that came from within.”

OUR NEAREST NEIGHBOURS VISIT IN GANGGUAN TENGGARA – EDISI INDONESIA

BY JANE O'SULLIVAN - ART GUIDE AUSTRALIA



Image - Far left: Leyla Stevens, *Kidung* 2019, 3 channel video installation, stereo sound, courtesy the artist; Centre: Eko Nugroho, *Lot Lost* 2013-2015, synthetic polymer paint on fibreglass, manual embroidery rayon thread on fabric, and vinyl, installation dimensions variable. Art Gallery Of New South Wales Collection, Purchased with funds provided by the Neilson Foundation and Dr Dick Quan 2015. Image - David Rogers

Gangguan Tenggara – Edisi Indonesia is the fourth and final in Bega Valley Regional Gallery's South/East Interference exhibition series. In this iteration the focus is on Indonesia and “how we relate to one of our closest neighbours,” says curator and gallery director Iain Dawson. In the context of an exhibition series about the south east – from Bega’s place in south east New South Wales to Australia’s place in the region – much of the work in *Gangguan Tenggara* highlights issues of perspective, community, centres and margins.

Gangguan Tenggara features Leyla Stevens, Zico Albaiquni and Eko Nugroho, three artists who are making work about “moving forward in Indonesian history but also acknowledging what has happened there – the ghosts that still linger,” Dawson says.

Stevens is an Australian-Balinese artist and researcher. Her three-channel video work, *Kidung/Lament*, 2019, responds to the mass killings of communists in Indonesia in 1965. It shows a woman chanting a lament towards a banyan tree, the site of an unmarked mass grave and a silent witness to history. Her practice is rooted in interview and collaboration. Stevens blends elements of documentary and performance and she favours long shots with minimal directorial intervention.



Dawson has included three recent paintings by Albaiquni, a Bandung-based artist known for his rich, saturated palette and perspective-shifting compositions. *Mooi Enchantment* after Sekarmadji, 2019, draws on the lush fantasy of Mooi painting traditions and reworks them into a scene of luxury, perhaps a gallery or high-end boutique. There is sparkling glass and a vaulted ceiling that suddenly gives way to reveal an exotic pink sky. “You want to fall in love with the surroundings and the brightness and the perceived happiness,” says Dawson. “But then you are drawn to the realism.”

In the foreground of the work, just off centre, a blindfolded man is tied to a plinth. A uniformed figure stands over him while customers stroll around, their hands tucked neatly behind their backs. Sekarmadji led the Darul Islam rebellion against the Indonesian government and was executed in 1962, and this reference is part of a broader investigation into state-sanctioned violence, commodification, cognitive dissonance and illusion.

Gangguan Tenggara also presents Eko Nugroho’s major installation *Lot Lost*, 2013-2015. It’s a swirling mix of humour, colour and commentary about life in Yogyakarta. Satirical banners blend the language of politics and capitalism, and vinyl floor stickers twist around golden statues that appear to be half-worker, half-mythical creature. One is just a pair of legs rammed into a beehive, like some kind of sightless, scurrying worker bee.



Masks are a recurring theme in the work, from those worn by the statues to aliens in space helmets. “Even though it has that fun, pop, manga sensibility, his work is talking about the Indonesian way of wearing different masks,” says Dawson, “and the different layers of Indonesia after the 1960s massacres.”

The exhibition title *Gangguan Tenggara* roughly translates as South East Disturbance. The focus is on political agitation and its ongoing consequences, but the exhibition also seeks to disrupt the way Indonesia is seen by Australians as a playground and holiday destination. For Dawson, it also makes a point about what regional galleries can do. As he says, “There’s a definite feeling that we are reaching out as well as bringing things in.”

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EXPLORE THE EXHIBITION ONLINE**



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