

COVERAGE
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Tromarama

January 2016
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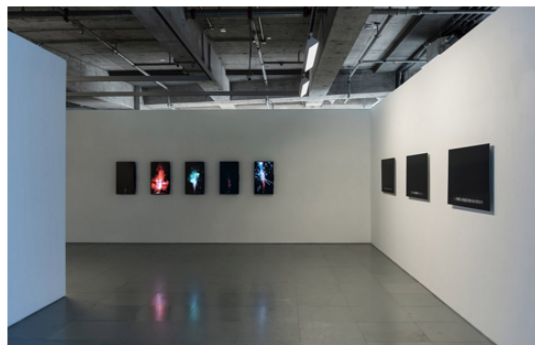
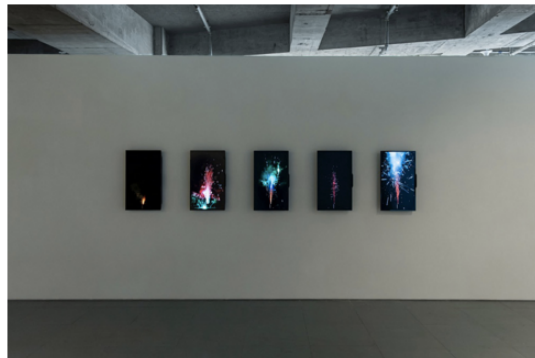


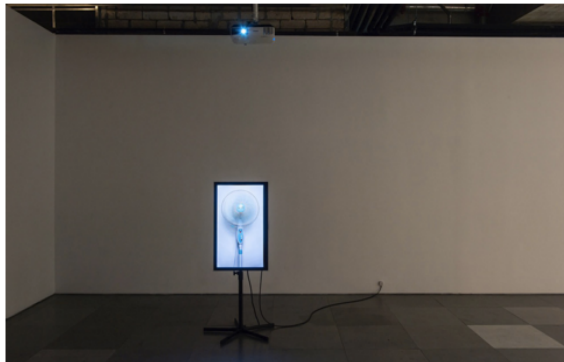
Panoramix

Fri 18 Dec 2015 to Sat 23 Jan 2016

exhibition

'Panoramix' is the first solo exhibition in Hong Kong of the Indonesian collective Tromarama.





Established in 2006 in Bandung, Indonesia, Febie Babyrose, Ruddy Hatumena and Herbert Hans, have been developing inventive responses to contemporary urban culture spanning multiple media. Each work, rather than existing in viewership isolation, is woven into the larger cultural fabric of the city of Bandung and addresses, in interactive reflection, the cornerstones of Indonesia's political and cultural environment.

"This exhibition highlights a new work by the Bandung-based collective Tromarama. They have been producing video animation works and installations since 2006. They shape and create their artworks based on their concern with examining today's society. 'Panoramix' is simply defined as the mixture of surveying a subject, or sequence of events, in our contemporary landscape. The notion of an exhibition brings about an exploration of how the virtual world redefines our existential experience; how it structures our paradigm and experience vis a vis space, dimensions, pictures and text within the virtual realm. 'Panoramix' reveals the phenomenon of daily reality. It is about taking on specific situations in such a way that this phenomenon is dealt with.

Tromarama address as well as observe contemporary fluxes surrounding the relationship between reality outside of a screen and the virtual reality inside of it. The exhibition itself describes the space in between these various realities that now overlap. It is a quest focusing on one's experience of reality, a step towards expressing the idea of a foundation of our existence, which always seeks to sort through the realities presented by modernity: being, ground, or substance. 'Panoramix' questions the mechanisms of our technological era in the context of the present. It is an exploration through artistic practices and reflections on reality by enhancing thought and action in practical terms.

From Tromarama's point of view, the consequence of living in between the two realms – in relation to the virtual world that we live in nowadays – is more of a mental experience rather than a physical one. It bends the scenes from our daily lives in relation to how it creates artificial desires and pushes us to always be in a state of climax within 'nowness'. Overall, Tromarama try to find the space where we stand between the reality behind the monitor and the reality out there, whilst substantially questioning the definition of reality itself." – Riksa Afiaty

Tromarama are widely considered one of Indonesia's most exciting rising talents and have been exhibited around the world. They have held solo exhibitions at the Stedelijk Museum (Amsterdam), National Gallery of Victoria (Melbourne) and Mori Art Museum (Japan), amongst others. Group exhibitions include the Frankfurter Kunstverein (Frankfurt), Samstag Museum of Art (Adelaide), APT 7 QAGOMA (Brisbane) and Singapore Art Museum (Singapore).

Courtesy of Edouard Malingue Gallery

January 2016

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Edouard Malingue Gallery presents **Panoramix**, the first solo exhibition in Hong Kong of the Indonesian collective **Tromarama**. Established in 2006 in Bandung, Indonesia, **Febie Babyrose, Ruddy Hatumena and Herbert Hans**, have been developing inventive responses to contemporary urban culture spanning multiple media. Each work, rather than existing in viewership isolation, is woven into the larger cultural fabric of the city of Bandung and addresses, in interactive reflection, the cornerstones of Indonesia's political and cultural environment.

“This exhibition highlights a new work by the Bandung-based collective **Tromarama**. They have been producing video animation works and installations since 2006. They shape and create their artworks based on their concern with examining today's society. ‘**Panoramix**’ is simply defined as the mixture of surveying a subject, or sequence of events, in our contemporary landscape. The notion of an exhibition brings about an exploration of how the virtual world redefines our existential experience; how it structures our paradigm and experience via a vis space, dimensions, pictures and text within the virtual realm. ‘**Panoramix**’ reveals the phenomenon of daily reality. It is about taking on specific situations in such a way that this phenomenon is dealt with.

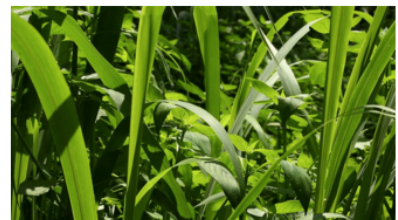
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Tromarama, Still from 'Intercourse', 2015, Two channel video. Courtesy of Edouard Malingue Gallery



Tromarama, Still from 'Panoramix', 2015, Single channel video. Courtesy of Edouard Malingue Gallery

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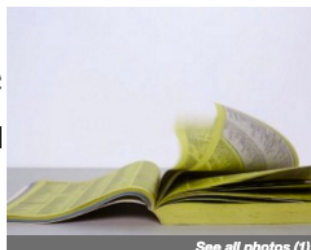
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2015.12.18 Friday - 2016.01.23 Saturday

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Hong Kong
香港中環德輔道中33號6樓

電話

+852 2810 0317

開放時間

Monday-Saturday 10am-7pm

負責人

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馬凌畫廊 – 印尼藝術團體特羅拉馬的首次香港個展

[新聞稿]

馬凌畫廊將於2015年12月18日至2016年1月23日呈獻印尼藝術團體特羅拉馬的首次香港個展。菲比·貝比羅斯、赫伯特·漢斯和路迪·哈圖瑞拉於2006年成立特羅拉馬，希望通過不同藝術媒介對當代城市文化作出回應。他們的作品擺脫了獨立的觀賞視野，更進一步地依據印尼萬隆的社會政治和文化環境編織出極具互動性的反思。



“是次展覽的焦點在於來自印尼萬隆的藝術團體特羅拉馬的新作。自2006年起，他們專注於透過動畫和裝置作品來反思現今社會。從當代風貌之中萃取一組課題或事件作觀察對象，《帕諾哈米克斯》背後的觀念便油然而生。展覽探索虛擬世界如何重新定義我們的存在、在虛擬之內塑造我們面對空間、維度、圖像和文字時的感知範式以及經歷。《帕諾哈米克斯》揭示日常現實的狀態，對個別情況抽絲剝繭從而分析人們對這種狀態的處理。

貫徹特羅拉馬對當代社會圍繞屏幕內外現實張力的關注，展覽進一步描述各種現實的空間重疊。著眼於人的現實經歷，它吐露了存在主義的概念，即在現代性之中尋找並梳理多重現實——比方說存在、基礎又或本質。以藝術實踐為起點昇華哲學和行動，《帕諾哈米克斯》是對當代技術語境的挑戰以及對現實的反思。

對特羅拉馬而言，徘徊於虛擬和現實之間的生活是一種精神凌駕肉體的經歷；它所衍生的人造慾望扭曲日常生活的畫面，把我們推向“現在性”之內持續亢奮的高潮狀態。總括來說，特羅拉馬試著在屏幕內外的現實之間尋找人的駐足點，同時挑戰現實本身的意義。”—— Riksa Afiaty

特羅拉馬為國際公認的印尼新銳之一，曾於阿姆斯特丹市立博物館、墨爾本維多利亞國立美術館及東京森美術館等地舉行個展。當前及過往聯展包括法蘭克福Frankfurt Kunstverein、阿德萊德Samstag Museum of Art、布里斯本昆士蘭現代藝術館之第7屆亞太地區藝術三年展以及新加坡美術館。

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20 January 2016

Lepetitjournal.com (Hong Kong)

"EXPO- Panoramix, de l'art indonésien à la galerie Malingue"

<http://www.lepetitjournal.com/hong-kong/a-voir-a-faire/sorties/235645-expo-panoramix-de-l-art-indonesien-a-la-galerie-malingue>

HONG KONG

EXPO – Panoramix, de l'art indonésien à la galerie Malingue



La galerie Edouard Malingue présente jusqu'au 23 janvier à Hong Kong Panoramix, une exposition dédiée au collectif d'artistes indonésiens Tromarama. Créé en 2006 à Bandung, le groupe composé de 3 plasticiens (Febie Babyrose, Ruddy Hatumena et Herbert Hans) met en scène avec force vidéos l'omniprésence contemporaine des écrans et de l'image, ces interfaces entre réel et virtuel qui perturbent nos sens et bouleversent nos perceptions.

En Indonésie, l'accès aux nouvelles technologies est récent mais ces dernières se sont répandues en un temps record : de 2011 à 2015, le nombre d'utilisateurs de Smartphones est ainsi passé de 11 à 65% de la population. Une prolifération brutale qui amène les artistes locaux à questionner de manière radicale notre rapport au réel et à ses représentations.



Studio, 2015, impression 3D, Tromarama

Images mouvantes ou désordonnées, textes tronqués, changeants selon la position du spectateur... Le collectif Tromarama joue sans cesse de l'illusion. L'image n'est pas l'objet, semble-t-il nous dire comme Magritte en son temps, mais elle démultiplie les possibles, recompose l'espace et les choses, le passé, le présent, conditionnant

ainsi nos perceptions du monde et du temps. Avec **Intercourse**, le trio met au défi nos réflexes de spectateur. Oserons-nous rentrer dans l'oeuvre, nous interposer entre un ventilateur virtuel et la projection de papiers qui s'envolent sans craindre d'entraver son souffle?

La perception n'est pas une expérience physique, c'est un jugement, un exercice mental affirmait dès le 17^{ème} siècle Descartes dans les *Méditations métaphysiques*. Avec l'exposition « Panoramix », Tromarama met en scène avec brio cette pensée cartésienne. « *I see what you see, I think what I think* », le réel est un, je vois ce que tu vois, mais le jugement, le point de vue est individuel multiple, martèle aujourd'hui le collectif avec **Studio** et **Living room**, deux impressions en 3 D représentant à contrechamp l'une un écran d'ordinateur, l'autre un écran de télévision. A rebours de son expérience ordinaire, le spectateur est ainsi projeté à l'intérieur de la machine, contemplant qui son tabouret, qui son canapé. Quelle est la frontière entre réel et virtuel ? Qui est regardant, qui est regardé ? Le trio interroge, s'amuse une fois de plus nos certitudes de voyeurs.



Surflux, 2015, impression 3D, Tromarama

Tromarama est l'un des trios phare de l'art multimédia indonésien. « Panoramix » est la première exposition du collectif à Hong Kong.

Florence Morin (www.lepetitjournal.com/hong-kong) mercredi 20 janvier 2016

Tromarama 'Panoramix'

Galerie Edouard Malingue

6eme etage, 33 des Vœux road Central

Jusqu'au 23 janvier prochain

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19 January 2016

Art Asia Pacific

“PANORAMIX TROMARAMA”

<http://www.artasiapacific.com/Magazine/WebExclusives/TromaramaPanoramix>

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TROMARAMA, *Panoramix*, 2015, single-channel video: 1 min 29 sec. Installation view of “Panoramix” at Edouard Malingue Gallery, Hong Kong, 2015. Courtesy Edouard Malingue Gallery.

PANORAMIX TROMARAMA

ELLIAT ALBRECHT
EDOUARD MALINGUE GALLERY

INDONESIA HONG KONG

Much ink has been spilled (or, perhaps more truthfully, words have been typed) about the increasingly proximal relationship that people have with digital screens. The bond is a tenacious and dependant one—we spend far more time looking into the digital world than we do making eye contact with others. The upending tragedy of a lost or broken smartphone leaves us positively terrified at the idea of having to try to remember how to read paper maps or locate a landline. Screens have become so normalized in visual culture that we barely realize when the line between virtual reality and “real” life begins to blur, or perhaps swap places without notice. The Indonesian video collective Tromarama addresses the meshing of realities in a group of sleek new media works in their exhibition “Panoramix” at Edouard Malingue Gallery in Hong Kong.

Tromarama is comprised of artists Febie Babyrose (aka Baby), Herbert Hans (aka Ebet), and Ruddy Hatumena. The trio met while studying at the Bandung Institute of Technology, where Hatumena and Hans were studying graphic design, while Babyrose was studying printmaking. Their first collaboration began during their final semesters of university, in an extracurricular workshop on music video production, held by a group of alumni artists who would later go on to form the video production collective Cerahati Artwork. In search of a material process that broke from the tired tropes of the genre, the three young artists carved 450 woodcut blocks by hand to make a graphic, stop-motion video titled *Serigala Militia* (2006), set to the beats of Indonesian hard rock band Seringai. From this project, their name was born: “Tromarama” is semi-homonymous with the word “trauma,” which they felt aptly described their experience of having to cut hundreds of wooden blocks by hand.

For years, the trio continued working with stop-motion, a process which they saw as a way of giving a second chance to overlooked, inanimate objects. The video *Ting** (2008), which depicts a range of white chinaware taking a walk through the city, was exhibited for the first time with an installation of real china pieces. Also in 2008, the original woodcut blocks used for *Serigala Militia* were exhibited at the 2nd Singapore Biennale, where they were met with widespread, favorable reception. The collective has since exhibited in their own country and abroad and become one of the best known new-media collectives hailing from Bandung, where they continue to work and live.



TROMARAMA. (left) *Studio*, 2015, 3D lenticular print, 62 × 110 cm; (right) *Living Room*, 2015, 3D lenticular print, 62 × 110 cm. Courtesy Edouard Malingue Gallery, Hong Kong.



TROMARAMA. *Studio* (detail), 2015, 3D lenticular print, 62 × 110 cm. Courtesy Edouard Malingue Gallery, Hong Kong.

Indonesia is well-known for being home to video and new-media artists of remarkable quality, represented in large part by a generation whose proclivity to digital artmaking is traceable through the country's recent political past. In 1997, economic crisis hit Indonesia, bringing down the authoritarian New Order regime of then president Suharto. The country entered a period of social, political and economic stress which put pressure on the youth of the middle class, who dealt with the crisis by taking part in a range of creative industries, effectively creating the foundation of what is now known as Indonesia's "creative economy." The affordability of cheap computers and pirated software gave people access to the tools necessary to experiment with film, sound, animation and video. This expanded access to technology resulted in a generation of artists with strong IT skills who disseminated their work across their own vast social networks. Meeting a demand for public exhibition of this work, 2003 saw the inauguration of OK Video, an international-scale biennial for Indonesian media arts held in Jakarta.

Tromarama's recent work extends beyond stop-motion and animation. In addition to video, their show at Edouard Malingue includes five forays into lenticular printing—a technology that replicates an illusion of depth, or flipping of images, as the viewer moves around the printed product. Three of these works, *Unsettled*, *I do* and *Promise* (all 2015), look like hyper-thin, black plasma televisions showing white subtitles at the bottom of their screens. Lenticular prints, though stagnant objects, emulate time-based media by their peculiar ability to change appearances based on the viewer's positioning, a quality that is capitalized in this series. The subtitles shift as one walks by, creating three-line narratives similar to isolated moments in films. Offering only fractured micro-narratives, one reads: "I will never ever leave you/ever/you and I." Two other lenticular prints in the exhibition, titled *Studio* and *Living Room*, depict interior scenes as described by their respective titles, shown from slightly different vantage points depending on where the viewer stands. Backward text at the bottom of each image (again, as subtitles) reads: "I see what you see/I think what I think," and "I see what you see/I feel what you feel." While the text may refer to the duality of emotional perspective, the experience of viewing the lenticulars is similar to that of shutting one eye after the other to make objects appear to move back and forth in space. Perhaps the words also allude to the imitation of this ocular phenomenon made possible by technology.

Across the room is the work *Panoramix* (2015), comprising a single-channel video projected on a hanging screen, which shows a close-up shot of lush grass and untamed vegetation rustling gently in the breeze. However, when a particularly strong gust blows through the greenery, the entire image itself flutters and retreats backwards into a gray background, as if itself were a soft curtain. The effect, of course, is a digital manipulation, and the physical projection surface does not move. The sudden jolt from the "real" likeness of the plants to the "unreal" illusion of the receding image exposes the extent to which we willfully suspend our disbelief when looking at screens. Tromarama's concern with the complicated consequences of living in between two realms—virtual reality and actual reality—is evident in the work, which interrupts presumptions about how both territories are supposed to behave.

Also utilizing wind is the installation *Intercourse* (2015), consisting of a freestanding screen playing footage of a whirring fan, which faces a large projection showing stacks of everyday objects on the opposite wall. As if the image of the fan really does possess momentous power, napkins, plastic cups, bubble wrap, muffin wrappers and towels in the video across the room are blown over one by one. This work, along with *Panoramix*, acts as a fine example of the treachery of images in contemporary life. Daily consumption of visual culture is ubiquitously touched by technically enhanced optical illusions; films are screened in three-dimension more often than not and even app icons on mobile phones are designed to appear to have volume. By disrupting and expanding the expected nature of screens and still images, the works in the exhibition alert the audience to the fallibility of perceptive habits, which are rapidly acclimatizing to the expanding ability of technology.



TROMARAMA, *Intercourse*, 2015, two-channel video: 4 min 10 sec. Installation view of "Panoramix" at Edouard Malingue Gallery, Hong Kong, 2015. Courtesy Edouard Malingue Gallery.

Tromarama: "Panoramix" is on view until January 23, 2016, at Edouard Malingue Gallery, Hong Kong.

<https://www.artsy.net/article/artsy-editorial-indonesian-artist-trio-tromarama-develop-realities-for-the-digital-age>

Tromarama
Panoramix, 2015



Tromarama is an Indonesian art trio comprised of Febie Babyrose, Herbert Hans, and Ruddy Hatumena. The collective burst onto the Indonesian art scene with an animated music video made from plywood woodcuts, *Serigala Militia* (2006). Since then, they have embraced a variety of digital imaging technologies used to distort perceptions. These force viewers to confront the ever-blurring boundaries between physical and virtual realities in the social media age.



Tromarama
Living room, 2015
Edouard Malingue Gallery



Tromarama
Studio, 2015
Edouard Malingue Gallery

In the case of *Living room* and *Studio* (both 2015), two lenticular prints, one might say that the viewer makes the work. *Living room* depicts a sofa and *Studio*, three stools. "i see what you see, i feel what i feel," read subtitles in the former, while the latter reads "i see what you see, i think what i think." Both are written the way text appears in a mirror—difficult to decipher and backwards. While mesmerising from afar, Tromarama's works transform when seen up-close—one feels as though they are trapped inside of a television, behind its glass—and make the viewer question, "Am I the viewer or the viewed?"



Tromarama
Surflux, 2015
Edouard Malingue Gallery

Surflux (2015), a five-channel video depicting exploding fireworks, resembles their breakthrough stop-motion music video in its use of rhythms and repetition as tools to disorient the viewer. Unlike real fireworks, which dissipate in seconds, *Surflux* freezes that moment within the five video frames. The work shows how, in the age of digital imaging, the ephemeral easily becomes the permanent; what's past can easily, indefinitely remain the present.





"Panoramix" takes common objects—fireworks, a fan, a television—and filters them through ideas of virtual reality. Jean Baudrillard's hyperreality lurks in the shadow of the works on display. The serenity that nature promises, or the celebratory occasion that fireworks imply no longer seem guaranteed. Are they actual parts of the physical reality that we live in? Or are they merely constructs in the human mind? The reversal in roles of sign and signifier invite a questioning of the relationship between self and object, and ultimately, loss in our trust of the image.



Tromarama
Intercourse, 2015
Edouard Malingue Gallery

The blurring between the virtual and the real continues in *Intercourse* (2015), the finale of "Panoramix." Comprising two video projections—one of a blowing fan, the other of fluttering pages of tissue paper and a telephone directory—*Intercourse's* cloying surface suggests a darker message: that hyperreality might be the only reality we get in a tech-saturated world.

—Christie Lee

"Panoramix" is on view at Edouard Malingue Gallery, Hong Kong, Dec. 18, 2015–Jan. 23, 2016.

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19 January 2016

South China Morning Post

"Indonesian art trio bend reality in virtual installations"

<http://www.scmp.com/lifestyle/arts-entertainment/article/1902323/indonesian-art-trio-bend-reality-virtual-installations>

LIFESTYLE • ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

Indonesian art trio bend reality in virtual installations

Thoughtful and engaging exhibition plays tricks on viewers by creating 'third reality'

John Batten
life@scmp.com

PUBLISHED : Tuesday, 19 January, 2016, 5:00am

UPDATED : Tuesday, 19 January, 2016, 5:00am



Tromarama's Panoramix creates a video illusion of a fan blowing random objects.]

Tromarama is a collective of three artists from Bandung, Indonesia – Febie Babyrose, Ruddy Hatumena and Herbert Hans – who have worked together since 2006 producing videos and mixed-media installations.

SEE ALSO: 'MTV generation' tunes in to web: a Hong Kong show for Indonesian video art trio

They have recently completed a stint at the National Gallery of Victoria in Melbourne with "Open House", replicating an Indonesian home where children can make stop-animation videos with the artists' multimedia constructions and engage with smartphone apps.

This is the collective's first exhibition in Hong Kong. Each of the artworks is a subtle exploration of the interplay of the virtual world, as seen on people's digital screens, and the real physical world.

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In "Panoramix", reality is experienced both physically and virtually through sensory knowledge. Also felt is a "third reality", an in-between hybrid space that people increasingly experience in contemporary life. It is, as curator Riksa Afiaty explains, "a more subtle border [that] is drawn between our current reality".

The artists intelligently demonstrate these ideas. The single-channel video, *Panoramix*, is a projection of a forest within a flat, photographic-like view, but then the entire image is "lifted", flapping as if blown in the wind.



A still from Tromarama's *Panoramix*.

Of course, this is just the trick of the video, but is a thoughtful demonstration of people's now oft-experienced virtual reality.

The intriguing *Intercourse* shows the interplay of two video channels. One is a static television monitor showing a whirling fan. The screen points to a large projection of random objects (plastic cups, napkins, telephone books) that appear to be blown around by the air stream, seemingly through the visual implication of a windy fan.

It is a marvellous video illusion. The mind, however, does not readily acknowledge the reality; this is what the artists refer to as the "border".

The simplest representation of the virtual versus physical reality is in a series of lenticular prints that shift the seen image as a viewer moves.

In *I do the words*, "i will never leave you / ever / you and i" move and cross in and over each other. The jumble of words successfully mirrors the confusion of the virtual reality "border", the main theme of this thoughtful and engaging exhibition.




Tromarama: Panoramix, Edouard Malingue Gallery. Until January 23

1 Nov 2016

Art Radar Journal

"Indonesian collective Tromarama explores the concept of reality in today's digital age."

<http://artradarjournal.com/2016/01/11/tromaramas-panoramix-at-edouard-malingue-gallery-in-hong-kong/>



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From MTV to perpetual "nowness": Tromarama at Edouard Malingue in Hong Kong

Posted on 11/01/2016

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Indonesian collective Tromarama explores the concept of reality in today's digital age.

In their debut Hong Kong solo exhibition, the acclaimed collective uses digital imaging to interrogate the internet generation's accelerating temporality.






Tromarama, 'Panoramix', 2015, single channel video. Image courtesy the artists and Edouard Malingue Gallery.

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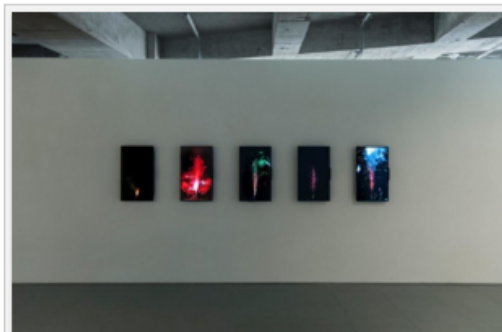
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"**Tromarama: Panoramix**" runs at Hong Kong **Edouard Malingue Hong Kong gallery** until 23 January 2016. The exhibition presents a selection of the Bandung-based collective's most recent video animation works, which address timely themes such as modernity, surveillance, the internet age and the mode of digital imaging itself.

Origins in the MTV generation

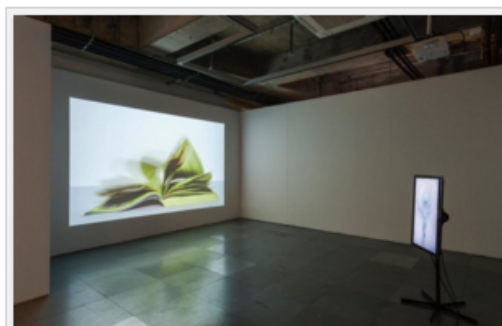
Tromarama is comprised of Febie Babyrose (1985, Jakarta), Herbert Hans Maruli (1984, Jakarta) and Ruddy Hatumena (1984, Bahrain). Founded in 2006, the trio was "among the first generation of artists [...] confronted with the impact of the digital revolution in Indonesia during the early 2000s".



Tromarama, 'Surflux', 2015, five channel video. Image courtesy the artists and Edouard Malingue Gallery.

For the three high school friends, the road to art ran parallel with the growth of the digital age. Graduating with degrees in design, advertising and printmaking respectively, the trio collaborated on a video project inspired by MTV. As the *SCMP* writes:

The result was a stunning piece of animation using nothing but a video camera and a lot of woodcut panels [...] Serigala Militia, created for a song by Indonesian heavy metal band Seringai, was shown at the 2008 Singapore Biennale [...]



Tromarama, 'Intercourse', 2015, double channel video. Image courtesy the artists and Edouard Malingue Gallery.

Interrogating the internet age

The successful collaboration gave birth to the three-person artists' collective, and Tromarama made a name for itself in the art world with video animation and stop-motion works. Widely considered **one of Indonesia's most exciting rising talents**, the collective has held solo exhibitions at the Stedelijk Museum (Amsterdam), the **National Gallery of Victoria** (Melbourne) and the **Mori Art Museum** (Japan), amongst others.



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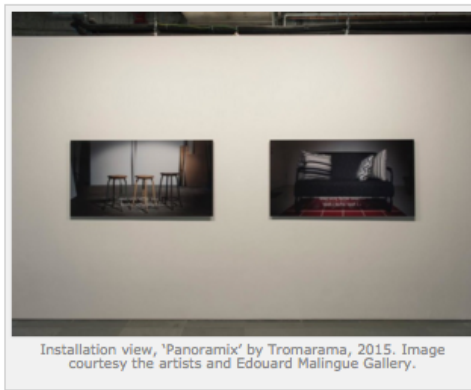


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Installation view, 'Panoramix' by Tromarama, 2015. Image courtesy the artists and Edouard Malingue Gallery.

Recently, the collective turned its skills and attentions away from MTV to the internet. Tromarama's current debut solo show at Edouard Malingue gallery in Hong Kong interrogates the perpetually accelerating, non-narrative-based meta-temporality of our current age. Speaking to the *SCMP*, Maruli says:

Growing up, we were mainly influenced by films and music video directors [...] Now, the internet has come and we want to question how it offers a new reality, how it changes 'the truth' of our daily lives.

Participating in perpetual "nowness"

As *SCMP* writes, the new works are "ruminations on the internet generation and how the web affects our perceptions of reality". The press release further explains that Tromarama addresses and observes "contemporary fluxes surrounding the relationship between reality outside of a screen and the virtual reality inside of it".



Employing stop-motion video works and installations, Tromarama plays on the oftentimes artificial and highly manipulated nature of today's images and its effect on our everyday realities. The viewer or audience is directly implicated in his or her act of spectatorship; we are at once viewer and propagator of this new and surreal definition of reality. The exhibition press release continues:

From Tromarama's point of view, the consequence of living in between the two realms – in relation to the virtual world that we live in nowadays [...] bends the scenes from our daily lives in relation to how it creates artificial desires and pushes us to always be in a state of climax within 'nowness'. Overall, Tromarama try to find the space where we stand between the reality behind the monitor and the reality out there, whilst substantially questioning the definition of reality itself.

At once immersive and contemplative, the works are ingenious responses to contemporary media and urban culture stemmed from a desire to scrutinise and examine the modern landscape and society. *e-flux* summarises:

Through their work, the artists address themes such as progress, modernity, animism, the flow of digital images, and global finances [...] Their preference for stop motion animation is motivated by a curiosity about the relationships between the past and the present, the traditional and the contemporary, and analogue and digital technologies.

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“Tromarama, Panoramix, Edouard Malingue Gallery, Hong Kong”

Link: <http://www.aestheticamagazine.com/tromarama-panoramix-edouard-malingue-gallery/>

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Tromarama, Panoramix. Installation view, courtesy of Edouard Malingue Gallery.

Tromarama, Panoramix, Edouard Malingue Gallery, Hong Kong

Edouard Malingue Gallery unveils Panoramix, the first solo exhibition in Hong Kong of the Indonesian collective Tromarama. Established in 2006 in Bandung, Indonesia, Febie Babyrose, Ruddy Hatumena and Herbert Hans, have been developing inventive responses to contemporary urban culture spanning multiple media. Each work, rather than existing in viewership isolation, is woven into the larger cultural fabric of the city of Bandung and addresses, in interactive reflection, the cornerstones of Indonesia's political and cultural environment.

Until 23 January.

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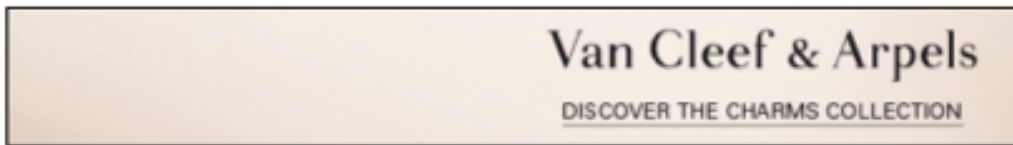
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LIFESTYLE • ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

‘MTV generation’ tunes in to web: a Hong Kong show for Indonesian video art trio

Just as video killed the radio star, the internet has made music television channels less relevant, so Bandung collective’s stop-motion video art has evolved to respond to ‘nowness’ of the web

Enid Tsui
enid.tsui@scmp.com

PUBLISHED : Thursday, 31 December, 2015, 6:01am
UPDATED : Thursday, 31 December, 2015, 6:00am



Panoramix by the Indonesian art collective Tromarama.

The usual labels for contemporary Indonesian artists are often tied to that watershed moment in the country’s recent history: the end of the Suharto dictatorship in 1998.

The three members of Tromarama, the Bandung-based collective recently in Hong Kong with new works exploring the concept of reality in the age of social media, are certainly products of the *post-reformasi* era that has seen the country open up and steadily democratise over the past 17 years. But they would add another description for themselves: the three thirty-somethings are also the MTV generation.

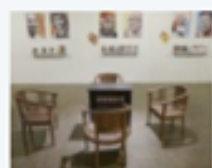
“Growing up, we were mainly influenced by films and music video directors. Because of MTV, which we watched on television at home, we saw how music videos were really experimental,” says Herbert Hans, the 31-year-old who formed the collective with his partner Febie Babyrose and high school friend Ruddy Hatumena.

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Intercourse by Tromarama.

In fact, it was the experience of working together on a music video that convinced the three to jointly pursue a career as artists.

In 2006, they were finishing their respective degrees in design, advertising and print-making at the prestigious Institut Teknologi Bandung when they decided to collaborate on an extracurricular video assignment. The result was a stunning piece of animation using nothing but a video camera and a lot of woodcut panels.

Serigala Militia, created for a song by Indonesian heavy metal band Seringai, was shown at the 2008 Singapore Biennale and the trio refer to the making of it as "traumatic", a moment when it all clicked, and a moment that gave birth to Tromarama.

Since then, they have built up a solid international reputation with their combination of time-lapse camera wizardry and attention to craftsmanship. But just as video killed the radio star, the internet has made music television channels less relevant, and the members of the 10-year-old collective, who owe their start to MTV, have decided to try something new.



The new works on show at Edouard Malingue Gallery in Hong Kong are ruminations on the internet generation and how the web affects our perceptions of reality. If their earlier stop-motion videos were about tricking the audience into believing a piece of fiction, then this new batch of work is the equivalent of the illusionist revealing his tricks.

"We are the generation that grew up with MTV. Now, the internet has come and we want to question how it offers a new reality, how it changes 'the truth' of our daily lives," says Hans.

Panoramix appears to be a video of plants growing in the wild, but it turns out to be a projection, a video within a video.

Intercourse is a two-channel video that shows a fan on one screen "blowing" at the objects displayed on another screen facing it. As the pages of a telephone directory flutter and paper napkins get blown about, it is impossible for the viewer not to see a causal relationship between the two images.



Surflux by Tromarama.

Also included in the exhibition is *Surflux*, five video screens showing exploding fireworks. "In reality, all fireworks will die eventually. But in this work, they live forever. This generation always updates information on the internet, always celebrating the 'nowness'. So we want to freeze the moment of now," says Babyrose.

Their eagerness to explain their works may well be the result of a decade of having to verbalise visual ideas for each other.

"We work as a collective. We discuss ideas. Personal experiences are thrown on to the table and we try and share them, or react to them differently, and then come up with a way to express them through art," says Babyrose. She admits it can be tough.



"It's easier to work by yourself because as an artist you can express everything that's on your mind. With us, it's like living in a commune. You must trust each other and communicate. We give each other space but we also need to know what's happening with you, what you're writing right now," she says.

Many of the music bands that inspired them have split up over the years, but these three staunch friends and artistic partners say they have fine-tuned the way they read each other's minds, and solo careers are not on the agenda.

Tromarama: Panoramix, Edouard Malingue Gallery, 6/F 33 Des Voeux Road Central, Central, Mon- Sat 10am-7pm. Ends Jan 23.

29 December 2015

Mousse Magazine

"Tromarama "Panoramix" at Edouard Malingue Gallery, Hong Kong"

Link: <http://moussemagazine.it/tromarama-edouard-malingue-2015/>

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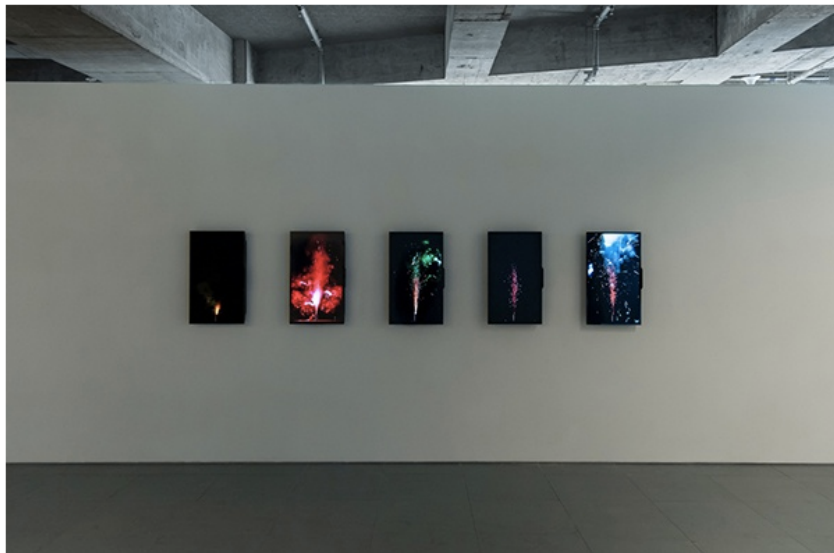
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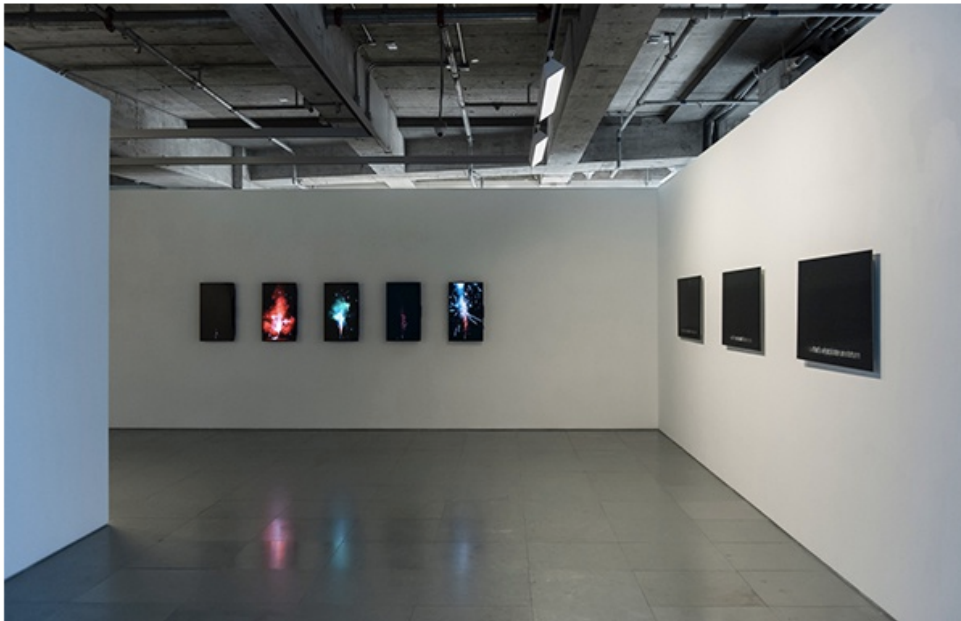
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Tromarama "Panoramix" at Edouard Malingue Gallery, Hong Kong

December 29~2015





Edouard Malingue Gallery is pleased to present "Panoramix", the first solo exhibition in Hong Kong of the Indonesian collective Tromarama. Established in 2006 in Bandung, Indonesia, Febie Babyrose, Ruddy Hatumena and Herbert Hans, have been developing inventive responses to contemporary urban culture spanning multiple media. Each work, rather than existing in viewership isolation, is woven into the larger cultural fabric of the city of Bandung and addresses, in interactive reflection, the cornerstones of Indonesia's political and cultural environment.

"This exhibition highlights a new work by the Bandung-based collective Tromarama. They have been producing video animation works and installations since 2006. They shape and create their artworks based on their concern with examining today's society. 'Panoramix' is simply defined as the mixture of surveying a subject, or sequence of events, in our contemporary landscape. The notion of an exhibition brings about an exploration of how the virtual world redefines our existential experience; how it structures our paradigm and experience *vis a vis* space, dimensions, pictures and text within the virtual realm. 'Panoramix' reveals the phenomenon of daily reality. It is about taking on specific situations in such a way that this phenomenon is dealt with.

Tromarama address as well as observe contemporary fluxes surrounding the relationship between reality outside of a screen and the virtual reality inside of it. The exhibition itself describes the space in between these various realities that now overlap. It is a quest focusing on one's experience of reality, a step towards expressing the idea of a foundation of our existence, which always seeks to sort through the realities presented by modernity: being, ground, or substance. 'Panoramix' questions the mechanisms of our technological era in the context of the present. It is an exploration through artistic practices and reflections on reality by enhancing thought and action in practical terms.

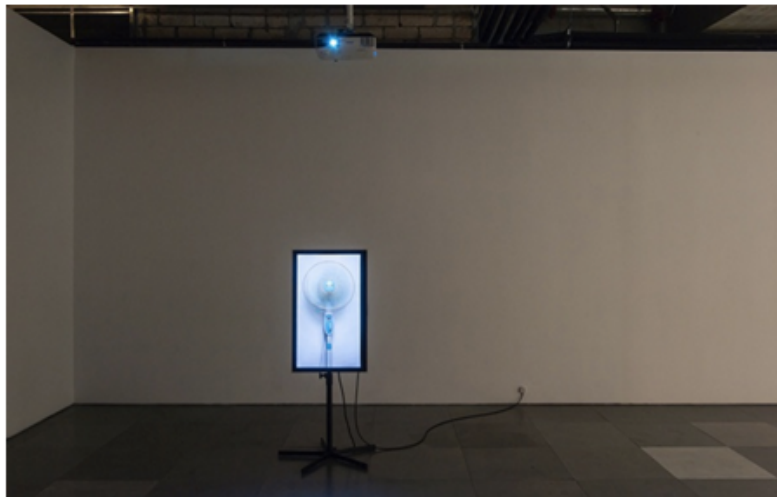
From Tromarama's point of view, the consequence of living in between the two realms—in relation to the virtual world that we live in nowadays—is more of a mental experience rather than a physical one. It bends the scenes from our daily lives in relation to how it creates artificial desires and pushes us to always be in a state of climax within 'nowness'. Overall, Tromarama try to find the space where we stand between the reality behind the monitor and the reality out there, whilst substantially questioning the definition of reality itself."

Riksa Afiaty

at Edouard Malingue Gallery, Hong Kong
until 23 January 2016








Tromarama "Panoramix" installation views at Edouard Malingue Gallery, Hong Kong, 2015
Courtesy: the artists and Edouard Malingue Gallery, Hong Kong.

12 Dec 2015

Art Radar

'When bamboo meets politics: 4 Indonesian artists at the Frankfurter Kunstverein' by Michele Chan

Link: <http://artradarjournal.com/2015/12/12/4-indonesian-artists-at-the-frankfurt-kunstverein/>



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Posted on 12/12/2015

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The Frankfurter Kunstverein spotlights 3 artists and a collective from Indonesia's Post-Reformation generation.

"Roots. Indonesian Contemporary Art" showcases commissioned and site-specific works that unite political discourse, religious beliefs and popular culture.






Joko Avianto, 'Big Trees (Pohon Besar)', 2015, installation view at Frankfurter Kunstverein 2015.
Photo: Andang Iskandar / Humanika Artspace.
Image courtesy the artist and Frankfurter Kunstverein.

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"Roots. Indonesian Contemporary Art" runs at the Frankfurter Kunstverein until 10 January 2016. The invited artists belong to a **'Post-Reformation'** generation in Indonesia that emerged in 1998, roughly 30 years after Suharto's autocracy. Characterised by a newfound freedom of expression and experimental liberties, contemporary art from this era is rooted in an "awareness of Indonesian culture and range[s] between the poles of tradition and participation in modern life", according to the **exhibition press release** (PDF download).

Co-curated by Curator at the National Gallery of Indonesia Asikin Hasan, Director of the Frankfurter Kunstverein Franziska Nori and Rizki A. Zaelani, also from the National Gallery of Indonesia, "Roots" coincides with Indonesia's appearance as Guest of Honour at the Frankfurt Book Fair 2015. For the exhibition, three young artists and one collective created brand-new and mostly site-specific works that shed light on tradition, history, politics and contemporary culture. The press release reads:

The four artists unite political discourse, religious beliefs and traditional craftsmanship with popular culture, street-art and comic illustration.



Joko Avianto, 'Big Trees (Pohon Besar)', 2015, installation view at Frankfurter Kunstverein 2015.
Photo: Andang Iskandar / Humanika Artspace.
Image courtesy the artist and Frankfurter Kunstverein.

1. Joko Avianto

Immediately visible at the entrance of the Kunstverein is *Big Trees (Pohon Besar)*, a stunning site-specific bamboo installation by **Joko Avianto** (b. 1976, Bandung). Simultaneously uncanny and evocative, the mesmerising structure transforms the façade of the Kunstverein and intervenes powerfully with the mundane order of Frankfurt's public urban space.



Joko Avianto, 'Big Trees (Pohon Besar)', 2015, installation view at Frankfurter Kunstverein 2015.
Photo: Andang Iskandar / Humanika Artspace.
Image courtesy the artist and Frankfurter Kunstverein.

The work incorporates 1,500 six-metre-long interlaced bamboo sticks set up over the course of three weeks. Repeated experimentations with bamboo over the years have enabled Avianto to mould extremely rigid bamboo material into flexible, fluid and nostalgically expressive forms.

For the artist, bamboo as a renewable resource represents not just a unique aesthetic but also a critical commentary on modernisation and environmental concerns. His devotion to bamboo, a traditional staple overtaken by modern building materials, constitutes a defiant statement on Indonesia's relentless industrial development.

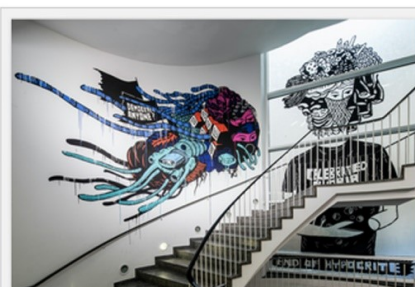


Eko Nugroho, installation view at Frankfurter Kunstverein with the works 'Nicht Politik, Sondern Schicksal', 2015, and 'Traveller', 2015. Photo: N. Miguletz. Image courtesy the artist and Frankfurter Kunstverein.

2. Eko Nugroho

Like Avianto, **Eko Nugroho** (b. 1977, Yogyakarta) creates art that finds its home in public spaces. While the works themselves are two-dimensional, featuring drawings, embroidery, emblems and comic book art, Nugroho's dynamic designs are inextricably intertwined with his studied explorations of three-dimensional space. The press release writes:

In the exhibition, Nugroho uses the floor, wall and ceiling to juxtapose symbols, visual ideas, patterns and forms that go beyond the boundaries of art or design and reach into political and socio-critical realms.



Eko Nugroho, 'Nicht Politik, Sondern Schicksal (Non political, but destiny)', 2015. Photo: N. Miguletz.
Image courtesy the artist and Frankfurter Kunstverein.

Since his beginning days as an art student, Nugroho's works have migrated from the humble streets of Yogyakarta into various indoor and outdoor public spaces. His diverse influences include traditional Javanese cultural heritage, Western pop culture, Indonesia's economic and sociopolitical crises as well as the position of Islam in contemporary Indonesian society.

3. Jompet Kuswidananto

A sound and installation artist, Jompet Kuswidananto (b. 1976, Yogyakarta) explores the kinetic transformations of sound and translates them into visually tangible forms, which include sound pieces, performances and large-scale installations. Conceptualising not just the physics of sound but also socio-political issues, Kuswidananto's work in the first decade of the 21st century interrogated topics surrounding the Javanese Kingdom's army; the series of works were entitled *Java Amplified*, *Java Machine*, and *War of Java*, *Do You Remember*, among others.



Jompet Kuswidananto, 'Power Unit' (detail), 2015, installation view at Frankfurter Kunstverein 2015. Photo: N. Miguletz. Image courtesy the artist and Frankfurter Kunstverein.

In "Roots", Kuswidananto's *Power Unit* installation combines kinetic and visual elements of sound, featuring hooded human heads, motorcycle parts and other objects floating loosely in space and animated by artificial sounds and movements. However, as the press release writes,

[...] their artificial animation [...] cannot hide the fact that they are only empty shells, resembling hatched cocoons. Jompet Kuswidananto thus explores human traces and marks the paradoxes of presence and absence, impermanence and permanence in post-colonial reality.



Tromarama, 'BREAK A LEG' 2015, installation view at Frankfurter Kunstverein 2015. Photo by N. Miguletz. Image courtesy the artists and Frankfurter Kunstverein.

4. Tromarama (Collective)

The artists' collective **Tromarama** was founded in 2006 by Febie Babyrose (b. 1985, Jakarta), Herbert Hans (b. 1984, Jakarta) and Ruddy Alexander Hatumena (b. 1984, Bahrain). Their installation *Break A Leg*, featuring 230 embroidered clothes hung on clothes lines like drying laundry, fills the entire exhibition space. The textiles are complemented by a stop-motion animation film; the press release describes the work thus:

A man wearing western office-apparel is running towards the viewer, while his silhouette is overlain by a digital time display. The words "Good Morning", embroidered on the margins, reference the name of a popular Indonesian towel brand.



Ruddy Alexander Hatumena from Tromarama during the installation of "Roots. Indonesian Contemporary Art" at Frankfurter Kunstverein 2015. Photo: Andang Iskander / Humanika Artspace. Image courtesy Frankfurter Kunstverein.

The installation comments on the rapid acceleration of life in a post-industrial nation where everything is measured by efficiency and economy. The stop-motion animation and embroidery motifs emphasise the slowness of production techniques, which is contrasted against society's demand for ever-increasing productivity. The press release concludes:

Within the context of the installation, the phrase "Good Morning" takes on a double meaning. While implying the hope and optimism associated with welcoming a new day, the installation's structure reveals underlying ironies of urban life, which is defined by technological and digital utopias. [...] With this work, Tromarama succeeds in making a subtle reference to the Indonesian balancing act between social reality and the roots of culture and tradition.

Michele Chan

05 July 2015

The Jakarta Globe

'Tromarama Explores Impact of Digital Revolution in Indonesia'

Link: <http://thejakartaglobe.beritasatu.com/features/tromarama-explores-impact-digital-revolution-indonesia/>

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Tromarama Explores Impact of Digital Revolution in Indonesia

By **Katrin Figge** on 03:05 pm Jul 05, 2015
Category **Arts & Culture**, Front Page, Life & Style
Tags: **art**, The Netherlands, Tromarama





The exhibition focuses on the art of emerging countries from Africa, the Middle East and Southeast Asia. (Photos courtesy of Tromarama)

Jakarta. The digital revolution arrived in Indonesia in the early 2000s and has since made massive headways in all walks of life.

The Indonesian artists' collective Tromarama — a trio made up of Febie Babyrose, Herbert Hans Maruli and Ruddy Hatumena — have experienced this impact firsthand.

Having first met during an animation workshop at the Bandung Institute of Technology (ITB), the artists have worked together under the name Tromarama since, creating animated videos — either standing on their own or as part of an art installation — featuring seemingly inconspicuous objects, frequently experimenting with digital imaging technology.

Their creative works can not only be seen in art exhibitions, but also through online channels such as YouTube.

"What makes us work together as a group is the dialogue between whenever we create something new," says Febie. "We always keep the room open for everyone to play along. There are always a new perspectives popping up which in turn make us continuously searching for new possibilities. And that's what we've been enjoying the most so far by working as a collective."

Tromarama's works can currently be seen at the Stedelijk Museum in Amsterdam. The exhibition marks the first solo show of the trio in Europe and presents a selection of recent animations as well as a new piece, "First Wave," which has been specifically created by Tromarama for this occasion: a multi-layered reflection on how digital technology affects the artists' self-image.

"It all started with the question 'what does it mean to be global?'" Herbert explains when asked how the concept of "First Wave" was born.

"We look at the Internet as a gate where global culture comes in and has a huge influence in our daily lives as Indonesians, how our smartphones become melting pots and how our presence in this new virtual world demands our self-representation. The line between what is real and what is not has become more blurry than ever before."

"First Wave," he adds, explains the feeling of being washed over by the big wave of the internet.

"It didn't come with a manual book," he says. "So, unconsciously we experienced a culture shock. At the same time, there is no room to contemplate as we are trapped in the state of consuming as well as constantly updating the 'what is happening right now?'"

In addition to "First Wave," the exhibition also includes older animations by Tromarama, such as "Happy Hour" (2010), "Unbelievable Beliefs" (2012), "On Progress" (2013) and "The Charade" (2014) — all of which have one thing in common: instead of presenting flawless illusions, Tromarama creates animations that also show imperfections — as a reminder to the audience that reality can easily be manipulated.

Whenever Tromarama works on a new project, the creative process begins with a simple conversation.

"It can be anything — an interesting phenomenon, a scene from a movie or some bizarre experience in our daily life," Ruddy says. "The discussion then generates an initial idea, and once we can see the big picture, we start to give the ideas a form."

The Tromarama exhibition is part of Global Collaborations, a project launched by the Stedelijk Museum in 2013 with the aim to put a focus on the developments in contemporary art from emerging regions such as Africa, the Middle East and Southeast Asia.

"The project is based on collaborations with artists and curators whose work deals in various ways with the effects of globalization on different geographical regions," says curator Kerstin Winking. "The project is based on collaborations with artists and curators whose work deals in various ways with the effects of globalization on different geographical regions."

Tromarama was a perfect match for these project-related parameters, she adds.

"We asked Tromarama to work with us because we are fascinated by their witty, skillful and highly original art," Winking explains.

"Tromarama's work is anchored in the Indonesian context and full of references to Indonesian traditional culture and history, but it also addresses the effects of progressive modernization on the country. Tromarama's working method is hybrid in so far as the collective combines old techniques such as wood cut, batik or etching with digital photography and image editing."

Before Tromarama, the Stedelijk Museum already organized a group exhibition in collaboration with Kunci, the cultural studies center in Yogyakarta in 2013.

"It involved Indonesian artists and collectives like Wok the Rock and Jatiwangi Art Factory, as well as artists based in the Netherlands, such as Vincent Vulsma and Zhana Ivanova," Winking says. "Seeing the tremendous amount of artistic creativity in Indonesia and Southeast Asia, I'm absolutely sure the Stedelijk will show more solo and group exhibitions by Indonesian and Asian artists in the future."

Art from Indonesia, she says, usually generates great interest among the Dutch — not least because of their shared history and the fact that many people in the Netherlands have Indonesian family relations.

"These people are curious about what contemporary art from Indonesia looks like," Winking adds. "Besides the historically anchored relation to Indonesia, the Netherlands also has a large group of Indonesians that more recently came to study or work in the country."

"The Stedelijk Museum also attracts large numbers of international visitors and constantly more visitors from Asia. The best thing, however, is that Tromarama's work also speaks to people who don't have any personal relation to Indonesia. Its sonic and visual appeal captures people's attention regardless of their nationality."

While Tromarama's artworks can still be enjoyed until Sept. 6, Tromarama is already making new plans for the near future.

"We are currently preparing a new work for an upcoming group exhibition at the Frankfurter Kunstverein in Germany in September and a solo exhibition at Edouard Malingue Gallery in Hong Kong at the end of the year," Febie says.

For more information, visit www.tromarama.com or www.stedelijk.nl/en

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09 Jun 2015

Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam

'Global Positions: Tromarama in Conversation with Agung Hujatnikajennong'

Link: <http://global.stedelijk.nl/global-positions/tromarama-in-conversation-with-agung-hujatnikajennong/?lang=en>

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Tromarama

GLOBAL POSITIONS June 9th, 2015

TROMARAMA IN CONVERSATION WITH AGUNG HUJATNIKAJENNONG

LANGUAGE

English
Nederlands (Dutch)

Agung Hujatnikajennong

This Friday, June 12, Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam will open the first European solo exhibition of the Indonesian artist collective, Tromarama. The collective, formed by Febie Babyrose, Herbert Hans and Ruddy Hatumena, experiments with digital image technologies and animation. The exhibition at the Stedelijk Museum will show a selection of recent animations as well as new ones. On the occasion of the exhibition, the Indonesian art historian, writer and curator, Agung Hujatnikajennong, interviewed Tromarama in their hometown, Bandung.

Tromarama's exhibition is part of the three – year project Global Collaborations. The full version of the interview can be found in the publication accompanying the exhibition.



Agung Hujatnikajennong: Can you tell me how TROMARAMA got started? Why did you choose video as a medium?

Herbert Hans: We've been working together since we were students at the Faculty of Art and Design in ITB. It started when Ambon (Ruddy's nickname) asked me and Baby (Febie's nickname) to join in a workshop given by Cerahati (a Bandung-based multimedia group). This workshop was intended to give a technical foundation in making music videos under the tutelage of experienced practitioners. By ballot, we were chosen to make a video for a demo, Serigala Militia, by Seringai, which was an indie-hardcore band whose members happened to be alumni of our faculty. During that time, local pop music videos in Indonesia were still about model-illustrated narratives, and we wanted to break away from that tendency. Initially, we wanted to make short animated clips like what we used to watch on MTV during our high school years, but we didn't have the skills or knowledge of motion graphics software. One day, when we happened to be at the printmaking studio on campus where Baby worked, we got the idea of using a stop-motion technique on a woodcut medium. For Serigala Militia, we used about 400 plates to create a 4-minute animation. After the "traumatic" experience of woodcutting on so many plates, we decided to form TROMARAMA (TROMA: trauma).



Agung: I remember when I asked you to exhibit the music video in 2006 at Selasar Sunaryo Art Space, you were still thinking of working as music video directors.

Febie Babyrose: True. At that time, the indie music industry in Bandung was really good. But shortly after, in 2007, we realized that the impact of computer technology and the internet was killing it, especially since albums

were already downloadable, and being shared freely or easily pirated. But in 2008, it also motivated us to start making videos with music that we composed and produced ourselves.

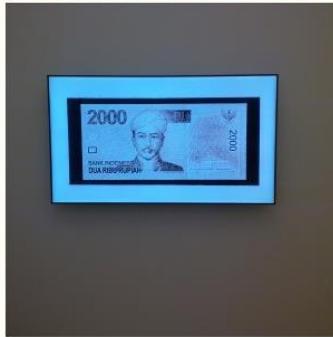
Agung: Other than exhibiting in galleries, museums and art fairs, do you still do commissioned work, like ads?

Febie: We do. We actually enjoy being full-time artists because that's where our passion lies. We still do commissioned work because we need to financially support our art, to produce TROMARAMA's artworks. Also, the market for video art in Indonesia is still unstable, so we don't want to be fully dependent on it.

Herbert: But, we never seriously seek out those commercial projects. They come to us. When we're not making art, we usually take the offers.

Ruddy Hatumena: When we do commercial projects, especially ads, we don't work under the name of TROMARAMA. We don't feel like we can take advantage of being TROMARAMA for profit outside the art world.

Febie: We don't want to be led by the art market and be burdened by the desire to continuously sell artistic work. That's what enables us to remain mentally stable and comfortable. If we don't sell, that's fine ... no need to be frustrated. The commissioned work allows us to have money in our piggy bank for the next artwork.





Agung: Almost every video you've produced uses stop-motion. Why are you so loyal to that animation technique after all these years?

Herbert: Stop-motion animation lets people make moving images without special skills like those you need in free-hand drawing animation, for instance. Stop-motion also has a manual and instantaneous quality to it. With this technique,

we can quickly check on the viewfinder of our digital camera to see whether a scene has been successful.

Febie: The three of us share an interest in the intricate, detailed manual process and craftsmanship. Many of our videos could have been done with other animation techniques. But being able to move things with our hands provides a certain sense of accomplishment. Stop-motion animation consists of still images that are 'moved' by connecting one another. After nine years of working together, we still feel that this technique is visually challenging, and it gives us infinite possibilities.

Ruddy: We actually do work with other animation techniques as well. The work *On Progress* (2013), for example, was made from footage that had been meticulously edited frame by frame. There were thousands of them to edit. We enjoy the obsessive process of working with digital images. I personally think that I'm addicted to working with cameras and computers.

Agung: What kind of approach do you most often use when making video art?

Febie: Visual and musical. Any particularly interesting object, music, rhythm, or sound can quickly inspire us. The visual and the musical are involved in a constant push-and-pull with each other.

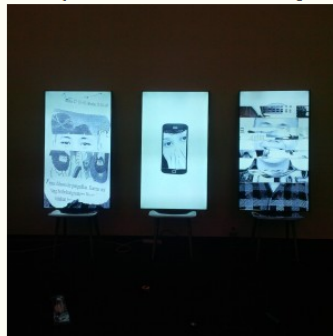
Agung: Have you ever produced a work based on a concept or theory?

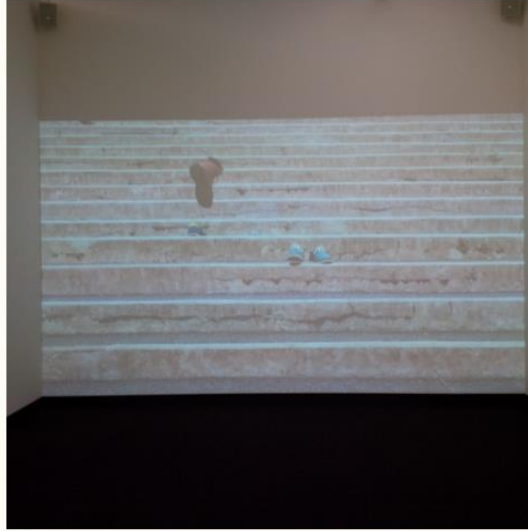
Febie: In fact, we always spend weeks, even months, discussing a lot of things. Sometimes it's about what we've read in books or what we've gotten from appreciating other works of art. We've always wanted to relate our stories to certain discourses, even though we don't directly make it our philosophical, conceptual, or theoretical basis. For example, we're currently discussing the notion of 'mass-produced apathy', about how society has become apathetic towards all things nationalist. We've also spoken a lot about global trends set by the internet that have prompted us to question our 'eastern' views.

Agung: Do you believe that oriental values can be found on the internet? Or, let me rephrase, is there is a western-eastern dichotomy active in globalization?

Febie: There is indeed a push and pull. Although I haven't truly grasped what 'eastern culture' is, I feel that we live in a different reality to what I usually see in the online news and to my own view of the 'west's' idea of lifestyle or sex. I often wonder why I should consume that information? Will the 'western' view be the only one we see in the next few years?

Herbert: There's a paradox, you see, when, for example, the majority of Indonesian people rejected LGBT movements, a lot of stay-at-home moms around the country love some celebrity, host, or presenter that is transgendered or gay. How can the mass media, including popular social media, create a different perception of the reality? I'm personally interested in those paradoxes in the western-eastern dichotomy.





*Agung Hujatnikajennong obtained his doctoral degree from the Bandung Institute of Technology in Bandung, Indonesia. Currently, Agung works as independent curator and writer. He has taught at Bandung Institute of Technology since 2008. His book on the art curatorship in Indonesia, *Kurasi dan Kuasa (Curation and Power)*, was published in March 2015 by the Jakarta Arts Council. In 2014 he was nominated for the Independent Vision Curatorial Award by the Independent Curators International, New York, USA.*

Tromarama is a group artist formed on 2006 by Febie Babyrose (born, 1985), Herbert Hans (born, 1984) and Ruddy Hatumena (born, 1984). They completed their studies in the Department of Art and Design of the Bandung Institute of Technology (ITB). In 2010, they held their first solo exhibition at Mori Art Museum called: MAM PROJECT 012:

*Tromarama. The collective participated at the Singapore Biennale (2008), *Philagrafika: The Graphic Unconscious*, Philadelphia, USA (2010), *VideoZone V, The 5th International Video Art Biennial*, Tel Aviv, Israel (2010), *3rd Asian Art Biennial*, Taiwan (2011) and *7th Asia Pacific Triennial*, Brisbane, Australia (2012).*

All photos by Alexandra Ghidobarca.

The Tromarama exhibition will open on June 12th and will run until September 6th, 2015. More information about their work as well as the full interview with Tromarama by Agung Hujatnikajennong can be found in the publication of the exhibition available in the Stedelijk Museum bookshop.

March 2016
Prestige Magazine
"Naughty but Nice"

PROFILES

Naughty but Nice

Indonesian collective Tromarama's mission is to make art more fun. PAYAL UTTAM explores how the mischievous trio inspires viewers to rethink everyday life



A SELECTION OF IMAGES FROM TROMARAMA'S *PRIVATE RIOTS* INSTALLATION



A STILL FROM TROMARAMA'S STOP-MOTION FILM WATT?/

The first time I came across a work by Tromarama was in the middle of a torrential thunderstorm in Yogyakarta three years ago. I was stepping inside Cemeti Art House, a small artist-run space, when I noticed something in the rain-soaked ground. Pushing aside a pile of leaves, I was surprised to see words carved into tiles: "I don't know what I'm doing and why I keep doing it."

The Indonesian artists' collective Tromarama, consisting of Febie Babyrose, Herbert Hans and Ruddy Hatumena, created that installation during an artists' residency. "We put that text there because it reflected our situation at the time," explains Babyrose. Coming to sleepy Yogyakarta, they were perplexed to find themselves in a traditional culture that strongly adhered to myths. "In one part of the city, for example, the king can't pass through a certain street because they believe if he does he'll die," she says. Their work was a way of raising questions about

such beliefs and provoking the viewer to reconsider social conventions.

It was a simple enough statement, but the words stuck in my head. Tromarama's works tend to have that effect. Bursting through the veneer of quotidian life, their installations and videos inspire viewers to rethink their surroundings. In the past few years the trio has transformed from unassuming art students working quietly in their Bandung studio into internationally recognised names lauded for their exuberant stop-motion animation works rooted in traditional art practices. This month they've been invited to Art Basel in Hong Kong, where they'll exhibit a large work in the fair's much-anticipated Encounters section.

Babyrose confesses that they never thought they'd end up here. When the three met in an extracurricular video workshop at the Bandung Institute of Technology, they had entirely different ambitions. "At that time we wanted to become music-video directors for MTV,"

she recalls with a laugh. Babyrose was learning printmaking, while Hatumena and Hans, old high-school friends, were studying design. For their first collaboration, they used woodcuts to create a four-minute animated music video for the Indonesian heavy-metal band Serigala Malam. They carved 450 pieces of plywood and brought the roughly carved surfaces to life with flickering movement and pounding beats. "We worked from 4pm till midnight every day for four and a half months," she exclaims. "That's why we became so traumatised." This inspired the playful name "Tromarama".

Living together in an apartment in Bandung, Babyrose began dating Hans shortly after they made their first work, and the trio began to draw inspiration from their daily lives. "We were really interested in domestic objects at first. We wanted to give them characters and 'play God' and give them a soul, and after that we started to build a story." Among their experiments

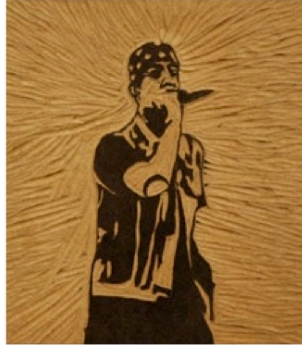
PROFILES

were pieces like *Wattt?!*, a 2010 video portraying a bunch of mischievous lamps taking on a life of their own, carousing around an apartment. "Sometimes we felt our electricity bill became very high, so we thought maybe all the lamps in here were having a party at night," she explains.

What set the trio apart from other video artists was the tactile, raw and deliberately low-tech nature of their stop-motion animations, as well as the way they raise questions about technology while reviving local craft traditions. "At that time, to have a really high-tech computer in Indonesia was very expensive. The first stop-motion we executed was with a digital camera. We're more a DIY generation."

In *Extraneous* (2010), for instance, they used traditional batik technique to dye fabric and create images of the human eye using binary code as a pattern. The work was an exploration of social media and how virtual relationships and interactions contrast starkly with face-to-face contact. "There's a history in batik," she says. "The ladies who did batik preserved a pattern to talk about history at that time. We want to preserve our own history in this digital era."

When they started out in 2006, they struggled to convince collectors that animation was a legitimate art form. "It was difficult," she recalls, "because when people dealt with video they never thought



A STILL FROM *SERIGALA MILITIA*

it was a medium for art. They only knew sculpture or painting. Of course we were worried." But things began changing quickly. "The boom market in China affected the market in Indonesia, so every curator and every gallery was racing to show something new. It helped video artists like us."

The trio's first major show outside Indonesia was a big step. A curator spotted their work in a group exhibition and invited them to show at the 2008 Singapore Biennale. "After that we got invited everywhere," she says. Perhaps their biggest moment to date was their first museum show in Europe, last year at

Amsterdam's Stedelijk Museum.

The opportunity to show at Art Basel in Hong Kong this month will no doubt raise their profile further. They are exhibiting *Private Riots* (2014), a monumental spiralling chandelier made of protest banners dangling from the ceiling. Below the colourful installation is a plywood stage on which viewers can view video footage. The audience is confronted with a barrage of pop-like images from protest banners such as a clock (representing time), feet (marching) and mouths (speeches) flashing across the screens. The work is rooted in the artists' observations of Asia's ever-changing cultural environment. "It's not talking about political movement; it's more about our dilemma as humans," says Babyrose. "There's no balance any more when humans are pursuing progress and they don't care about nature."

Questions about our relationship with our environment and the age we live in are at the core of Tromarama's work. Asked what's next, she explains that they're pushing their work in a new direction following their recent exhibition at Hong Kong's Edouard Malingue Gallery, in which they eschewed stop-motion animation. Instead they created single-channel videos to explore more conceptual themes. Among the works was *Intercourse* (2015), a clever piece in which



LEFT: A STILL FROM *TING**; RIGHT: TROMARAMA'S INSTALLATION OUTSIDE CEMETI ART HOUSE IN YOGYAKARTA

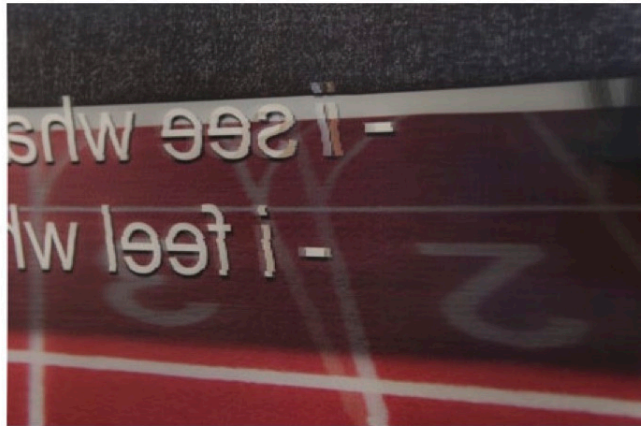


ABOVE AND LEFT: TROMARAMAS WORK ON DISPLAY AT EDOUARD MALINGUE GALLERY IN HONG KONG

two screens faced each other. One showed a static whirring fan while the other screen displayed everyday objects such as cups and towels being blown about as if the fan were real. The show poked holes in our perception of images on screen as being real. "We're looking into how video, reality and the Internet merge and how they come up with a new reality in our life," explains Babyrose.

Things have changed for Tromarama since their post-graduation days, when they lived together in a house that also served as their studio. Babyrose married Hans last year and they've moved out on their own, but some things never change: "After 10 years of being together, the three of us fight every day," she admits. "But after all, it's still exciting. Discussion is really important. Otherwise we'd be working alone in a group, and that doesn't make sense."

Asked if she ever wonders what life would be like had they become music-video directors, she muses, "MTV [music



videos] disappeared around 2007, so I think we buried that kind of dream. But if [it did happen], for sure we wouldn't live in Bandung. Maybe Jakarta. We would do commercial jobs. Every day it would be like a template with a new client each time, trying to deal with our ideas while doing promotion. There would be less freedom."

It's hard to imagine the trio working within restraints. Their calling card has always been their free-spirited nature and impish approach to making art, as

works like *Ting** (2008) aptly illustrate. The video tells the story of three porcelain mugs and a mini-army of tableware on an escape mission outdoors, dancing to a comical soundtrack of rhythmic chinking. The mugs represent the artists and their yearning for freedom.

"We want to play in our daily life, but then after your playtime you must go back to sitting in the cupboard and behave like tableware should. We function like that," she says. "But we want to make art more fun."