

The Voice of Nature I Made Djirna

MIZUMA GALLERY

CURATED BY HERMANTO SOERJANTO

24.7-29.8.21

THE VOICE OF NATURE

In his solo exhibition at Mizuma Gallery Singapore, entitled *The Voice of Nature*, I Made Djirna discusses the awareness of the relationship between humans and nature. According to Djirna, nature and humans communicate through natural signs. For example: a cloudy sky is a sign that rain will come, a certain insect's chirp is a sign of the change of seasons, and even a gust of wind might in fact carry a message. Unfortunately, modern humans like us are too involved in our daily activities that we often ignore 'the voice of nature'. We even tend to no longer respect nature so that the balance of the relationship between humans and nature is disturbed. As a consequence, this triggers the emergence of various problems, including ones that have recently surfaced.

Djirna is an artist who was born, grew up, and works in Bali, a place where Balinese Hindu spiritualism still flourishes in daily life, and this has become a fundamental influence in how he views his artmaking process. Through the nine works shown in this exhibition, Djirna discusses the philosophy of life for the Balinese Hindu community known as *Tri Hita Karana* or "Three Causes of Well-Being", which consists of harmony with God, harmony among humans, and harmony with nature. This philosophy also perfectly describes Djirna's daily life, which is filled with religious ceremonies. In both his studio and home, Djirna is always surrounded by various kinds of plants, pets – his favourite dogs and many species of birds – as well as numerous natural objects such as stones, logs, and pieces of relief from demolished temples (in Bali, temples are always renovated) which he brought home as a symbol of his trips to countless parts of Bali. These objects often become the inspiration of his work, and also the medium in his works. Visiting Djirna's studio feels like visiting a place of spiritual worship.

Although his works are far from the stereotypical Balinese paintings, Djirna is heavily influenced by traditional Balinese art, such as temple reliefs where many figures in primitive deformation are lined up flat, with no perspective. At first glance, Djirna's works remind us of Jean Dubuffet's works, but in the nuance of Balinese spirituality.

In his works *Purwa Carita (Primordial Tale)*, *Alam Purba (Prehistoric Nature)*, *Riuh (Boisterous)*, *Cerita Lama (Old Story)* and *Kenangan (Memory)*, Djirna depicts many human and animal figures in intertwined positions as a picture of our intermingled relationships.

The overall compositions we see here are harmonious and full.

Meanwhile, in his two paintings entitled *Totem-Totem (Totems)* and *Wajah Tersembunyi (Hidden Face)*, Djirna describes the totem figure as a symbol of our respect for humans and other living creatures who have departed, whom we will always remember. Although their body has passed on, their soul or spirit remains eternal in our hearts and minds.

In a small work from 2016 entitled *Mandala*, Djirna depicts a shape that resembles a cross as a universal symbol, with the vertical line representing the relationship between humans and God, and humans and the underworld (Djirna's term to describe people who have departed), and the horizontal line symbolizing the relationship between humans and other humans, and humans and nature. In the middle of the image, a circular composition of eight human faces symbolizes the eight directions of the compass and the position of mankind as the center. On the top, we see religious symbols, while on the bottom, we see a meditating human figure which represents the underworld. On the left and right, there are images of a human as well as a mountain, to symbolize nature.

In the exhibition's largest painting, *Suara Alam (The Voice of Nature)*, Djirna attempts to visualize an array of experiences and abstract feelings that he perceives as nature tries to convey its message.

One question that came to my mind upon seeing Djirna's paintings was, "Is this pandemic that we are going through right now also a form of nature's voice trying to tell us something?"

– Hermanto Soerjanto, 2021



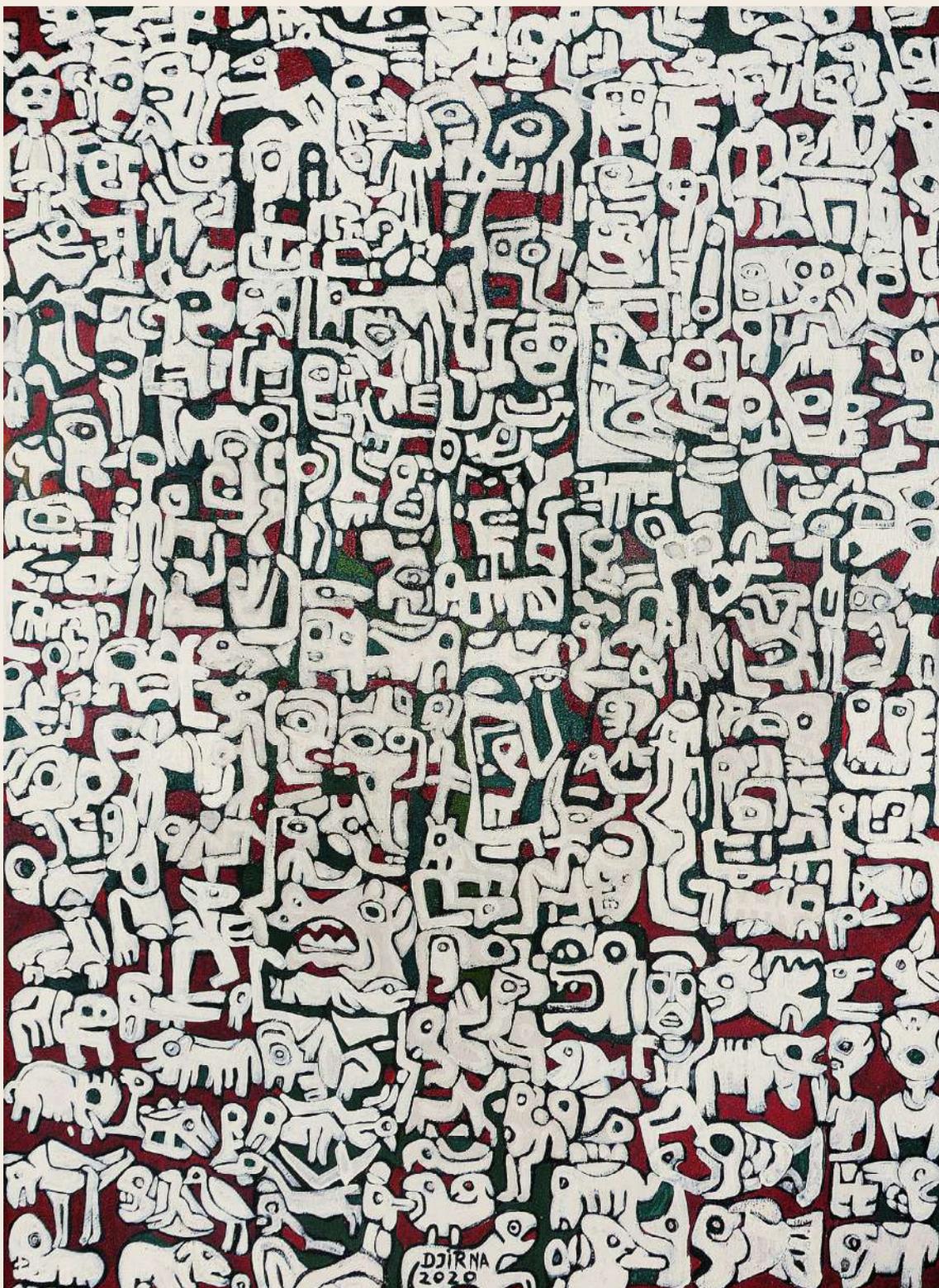
Hermanto Soerjanto (b. 1970, Indonesia) went to Palin School of Arts & Design in Singapore and Akademi Teknik Desain Interior (ATDI) in Jakarta, Indonesia, before joining Cipta Citra advertising agency in 1994. Since then, he had built his career in the field of advertising and currently holds a position at Pantarei Communications as Chief Creative Officer. As an art collector, Hermanto Soerjanto is familiar with Indonesian artists, having spent much time conversing with them and visiting their studios. In 2008 he established GARIS Artspace, an art gallery in Jakarta showcasing works by contemporary Indonesian artists, where he organizes and curates the exhibitions on regular basis. To date, Hermanto Soerjanto has organized several exhibitions, most notably *Ethnicity Now*, a group exhibition at Galeri Nasional Indonesia, Jakarta (2010), and *Unveiling Fundamentals in Contemporary Art Through Asia* at OHD Museum, Magelang, Indonesia (2015). Hermanto Soerjanto lives and works in Jakarta, Indonesia.



I Made Djirna
Suara Alam (The Voice of Nature)
2020
mixed media on canvas
280 × 380 × 5 cm



DJIRNA 2020



I Made Djirna
Kenangan (Memory)
2020
mixed media on canvas
180 × 130 × 4 cm



I Made Djirna
Cerita Lama (Old Story)
2021
mixed media on canvas
130 × 210 × 4 cm



I Made Djirna
Purwa Carita (Primordial Tale)
2020
mixed media on canvas
135 × 135 × 4 cm



I Made Djirna
Rih (Boisterous)
2020
mixed media on canvas
180 × 140 × 5 cm



I Made Djirna
Totem Totem (Totems)
2021
mixed media on canvas
150 × 200 × 5 cm



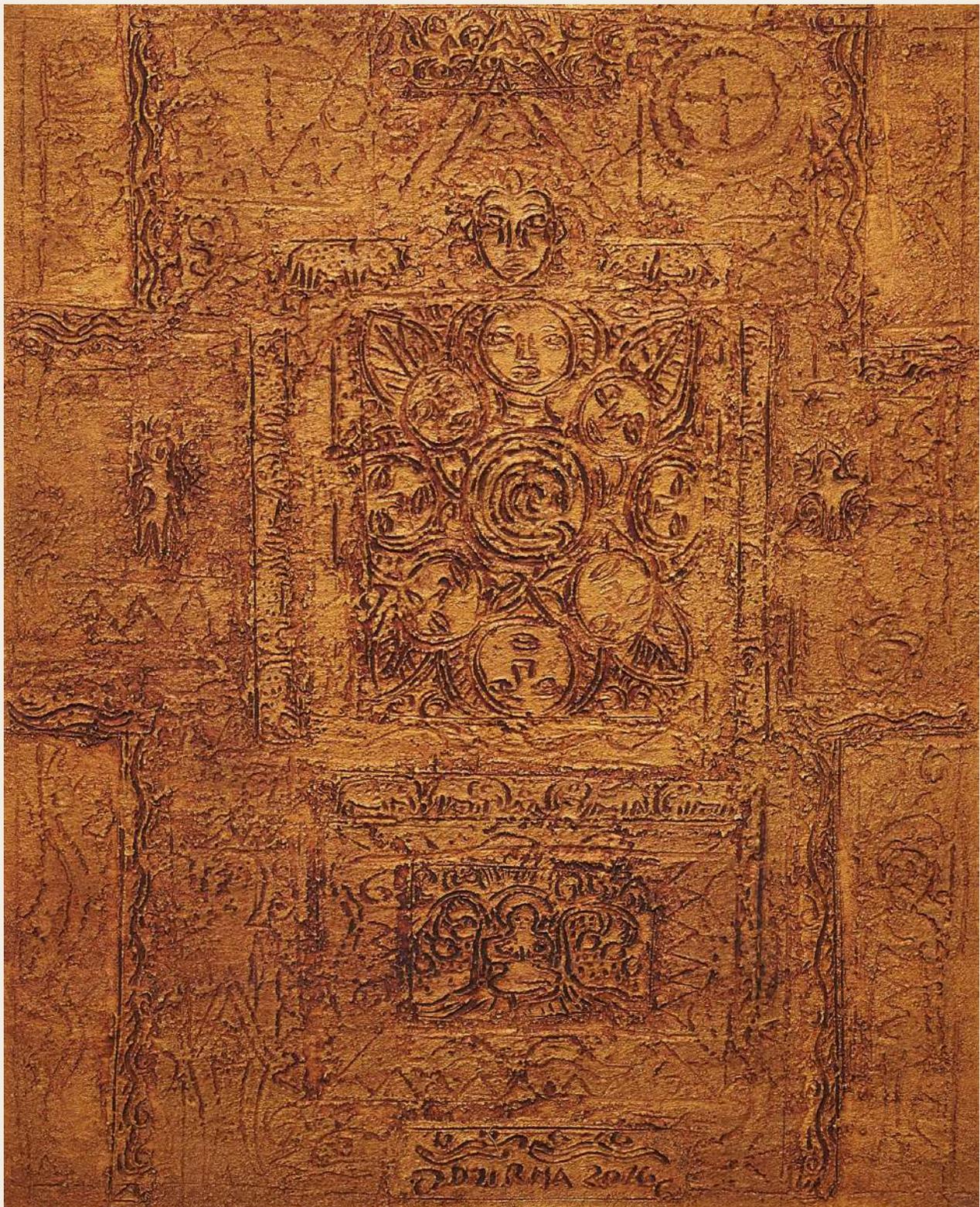
I Made Djirna
Wajah Tersembunyi (*Hidden Face*)
2021

mixed media on canvas

10 130 × 200 × 4 cm



I Made Djirna
Alam Purba (Prehistoric Nature)
2020
mixed media on canvas
130 × 200 × 4 cm



I Made Djirna
Mandala
2016

mixed media on canvas
100 × 80.5 × 2.2 cm (unframed),
104.4 × 84.7 × 5.8 cm (framed)





About the Artist

I Made Djirna (b. 1957, Bali, Indonesia) graduated from the Faculty of Fine Arts and Design at the Indonesia Institute of the Arts (ISI) Yogyakarta, Indonesia in 1985. Djirna grew up in a village in Ubud, Bali, surrounded by Balinese stories of spirits, dance, and shadow puppetry. The people of Ubud treated traditions, customs, and religion with great significance, as it was believed that it could help achieve peace and well being – a principal of life rooted deep down in Djirna’s heart. Through his works, Djirna explores the social and political issues of Indonesia and human relationships. Exploring the use of different materials, techniques and styles, he masterfully translates these thoughts and emotions into his paintings and installations. I Made Djirna lives and works in Bali, Indonesia.

I MADE DJIRNA

Born in Bali, Indonesia, 1957
Lives and works in Bali, Indonesia

EDUCATION

1993
International Exchange Programme Basel, Basel,
Switzerland

1985
Faculty of Fine Arts and Design, Indonesia Institute of
the Arts, Yogyakarta, Indonesia

SELECTED SOLO EXHIBITIONS

2021
The Voice of Nature, Mizuma Gallery, Singapore

2017
Transparan, Historia, Jakarta, Indonesia

2013
The Logic of Ritual, Sangkring Art Space, Yogyakarta
Indonesia

2012
Ubud 1963 (Re) Reading The Growth of Made Dzirna,
National Gallery of Indonesia, Jakarta, Indonesia

2010
Dzirna Menguak Tabir Baru, Emmitan Gallery,
Surabaya, Indonesia

2007
Seascapes, Gajah Gallery, Singapore
Modern Indonesian Master, Museum Rudana, Bali,
Indonesia

2002
Taksu, Gajah Gallery, Singapore

2001
Selected Works of Made Dzirna from the Year 2000,
Padma Hotel, Bali, Indonesia

2000
Santi Gallery Jakarta, Indonesia

1998
Mystique of Motherhood, Gajah Gallery, Singapore

1996
Komaneka Gallery, Bali, Indonesia

1989
Northern Territory Museum of Art and Sciences,
Darwin, Australia

SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS

2019
Rooted in Bali, Mizuma Gallery, Singapore
ARTJOG Common Space, Jogja National Museum,
Yogyakarta, Indonesia

2018
ART BALI, ABBC Building Nusa Dua Bali, Bali,
Indonesia
The IMPART Collectors' Show, Singapore Chinese
Cultural Centre, Singapore

2017
Jakarta Biennale 2017: JIWA, Gudang Sarinah
Ekosistem, Jakarta, Indonesia
LINKAGE: 20TH OHD MUSEUM, OHD Museum,
Magelang, Indonesia

2016
5th Singapore Biennale: An Atlas of Mirrors,
Singapore Art Museum, Singapore
Manifesto V: ARUS, National Gallery of Indonesia,
Jakarta, Indonesia
Group Exhibition, 20th Anniversary Exhibition, Gajah
Gallery, Singapore

2013
VERSUS - Indonesian Contemporary Art, Mizuma
Gallery, Singapore
Irony In Paradise, ARMA Museum, Bali, Indonesia

2012
Tribute to a Mentor, Garis Art Space, Jakarta,
Indonesia
Homo Ludens 3, Emmitan Contemporary Art Gallery,
Surabaya, Indonesia

2011
We Are Now Open, Garis Art Space, Jakarta,
Indonesia
Homo Ludens 2, Emmitan Contemporary Art Gallery,
Surabaya, Indonesia
Good Luck Charm, Garis Art Space, Jakarta,
Indonesia

2010
Ethnicity Now, National Gallery of Indonesia, Jakarta,
Indonesia

2009
12 Indonesian Artist "Indonesian Journey", Galerie

The Voice of Nature

I Made Dzirna

Waterton, Singapore
Sanggar Dewata Indonesia, Bentara Budaya, Bali, Indonesia

2008
Self Portrait: Famous Living Artists of Indonesia, Jogja Gallery, Yogyakarta, Indonesia

2006
Angkor – The Djin Within, Gajah Gallery, Singapore

2005
Between Glasses and Two Bottles, joint exhibition with Vietnamese artist, Nguyen Trung, Gajah Gallery, Singapore

2004
Asian Masters, Gajah Gallery, Singapore

2003
Epic, Gajah Gallery, Singapore

2001
Patterns of Identity: Artist Experience Bali, Komaneka Gallery, Bali, Indonesia

2000
12 Painters of Sanggar Dewata, Hotel Padma Bali, Indonesia
Exhibition of Contemporary Arts, Hotel Padma, Bali, Indonesia

1999
Soul Ties: The Land & Her People – Art from Indonesia, Singapore Art Museum, Singapore
Tiga Rupa, Hotel Padma, Bali, Indonesia
Indonesian Paintings: Towards the Third Millennium, Jawa Pos, Surabaya, Indonesia
Sanggar Dewata Millennium Exhibition, travelled to six museums in Indonesia: Agung Rai Museum of Art, Ubud, Indonesia; Bali Museum, Denpasar, Indonesia; Gunarsa Museum, Klungkung, Indonesia; Neka Art Museum, Ubud, Indonesia; Rudana Museum, Ubud, Indonesia; Taman Budaya, Denpasar, Indonesia

1998
Ruwatan Bumi, Art Center, Bali, Indonesia

1997
Between Two Worlds: Contemporary Balinese Art, Parliament House, Darwin, Australia

1996
Biennial Arts Exhibition X, Taman Ismail Marzuki, Jakarta, Indonesia
Museum fur Volkerkunde, Basel, Switzerland

1995
Tom Thomson Memorial Gallery, Ontario, Canada
Farewell to Paradise? New Views from Bali, Museum

für Völkerkunde und Schweizerisches Museum für Völkskunde, Basel, Switzerland
Torque, Perth Institute of Contemporary Arts, Perth, Australia
ARK 4 Asia Pacific, Pica Art Gallery, Perth, Australia

1994
From Ritual to Romance: Paintings Inspired by Bali, National Museum Art Gallery (now Singapore Art Museum), Singapore
Group exhibition of Contemporary Art (Installation), Taman Budaya Yogyakarta, Indonesia

1993
Art Center 9, Guam, USA
Museum fur Volkerkunde, Basel, Switzerland

1992
Lotus Art Gallery, Rotterdam, Netherlands

1989
8th Biennial Indonesian Painting Exhibition, Jakarta, Indonesia

1982
SDI Group Exhibition, Karta Pustaka, Yogyakarta; Indonesia America League Building, Jakarta, Indonesia

1978
Young Artist Group Exhibition, Ratna Warta Museum, Bali, Indonesia

AWARDS

1987
Best Painting Award, *PORSENI Exhibition*, Jakarta, Indonesia

1983
Pratisara Affandi Adhi Karya, Indonesia Academy of fine Arts, Yogyakarta, Indonesia

1982
Lempad Prize – Best Painting, Sanggar Dewata Indonesia, Yogyakarta, Indonesia

1978
Best Sketch and Best Painting Awards, Indonesia Institute of the Arts, Yogyakarta, Indonesia

COLLECTIONS

Tumurun Private Museum, Solo, Indonesia
OHD Museum, Magelang, Indonesia
Singapore Art Museum, Singapore
Northern Territory Museum of Art and Sciences, Darwin, Australia
Museum fur Volkerkunde, Basel, Switzerland

Executive Director Sueo Mizuma established Mizuma Art Gallery in Tokyo in 1994. Since its opening in Gillman Barracks, Singapore in 2012, the gallery aims for the promotion of East Asian artists in the region as well as the introduction of Southeast Asian artists to the international art scene. From 2014 to 2019, the artist residency space "Rumah Kijang Mizuma" operated in Yogyakarta, Indonesia, providing a new platform for dialogue by supporting exchanges between East Asia and Southeast Asia. In 2018, a new gallery space, "Mizuma & Kips" in New York, USA, as a shared collaboration between Mizuma Gallery from Tokyo and Singapore, and Kips Gallery from New York.

Mizuma Gallery features the works of Japanese artists including Aida Makoto, Aiko Miyanaga, Amano Yoshitaka, Ikeda Manabu, Tenmyouya Hisashi, and Yamaguchi Akira. Moreover, it showcases the works of renown East Asian artists such as Ai Weiwei, Du Kun, Jun Nguyen-Hatsushiba, Ken + Julia Yonetani, and Zhao Zhao. The gallery also features the creations of prominent and emerging artists from the region including Agan Harahap, Albert Yonathan Setyawan, Angki Purbandono, Entang Wiharso, Gilang Fradika, Heri Dono, indieguerillas, Made Wianta, Mark Justiniani, Nasirun, Budi Agung Kuswara, Robert Zhao Renhui, Zen Teh, Ashley Yeo, and Ben Loong. Mizuma Gallery participates annually in international art fairs including Art Basel Hong Kong and The Armory Show New York, promoting Asian artists on an international scale.

GILLMAN BARRACKS

Set in a former military barracks dating back to 1936 and surrounded by lush tropical greenery, the Gillman Barracks visual arts cluster was launched in September 2012. Gillman Barracks' vision is to be Asia's destination for the presentation and discussion of international and Southeast Asian art. Today, Gillman Barracks is a place for art lovers, art collectors, and those curious about art. The cluster is a focal point of Singapore's arts landscape, and anchors the development of visual art in the region and beyond. For more information: www.gillmanbarracks.com

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Closed on Mondays and
Public Holidays

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First published in Singapore, 2021,
in a print run of 300.

TEXT © Hermanto Soerjanto

ARTWORK IMAGES © I Made Djirna, courtesy of
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EXHIBITION PHOTOGRAPHY by Wong Jing Wei,
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