

# Presenting 'Art after Drama' at Salihara

Novia D. Rulistia, The Jakarta Post, Jakarta | Art and Design | Fri, July 26 2013, 12:07 PM



'Tale of Sangupati': This video combines the theatrical with the visual through a narrative video that features Yogyakarta-based stage actor Landung Simatupang as its narrator, as well as actor.

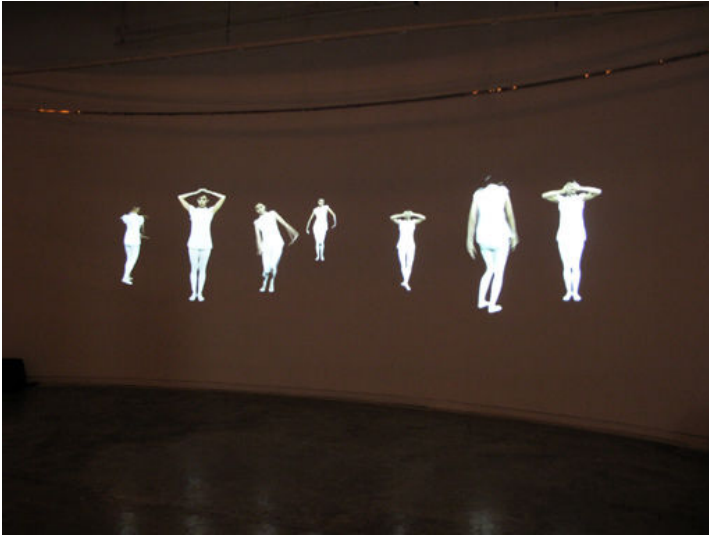
The use of diverse forms of art in Krisna Murti's "Art After Drama" video installation exhibition invites viewers to observe life through a different prism.

Krisna, whose work was featured at the 2013 Art Stage Singapore, has used elements of theater, dance, animation and even literature in five different videos that each tell different stories of life.

The videos — "Dance of the Unknown", "Eggology", "The Tale of Sangupati", "Cup of Tea/The Lagoon", and "Branded Fruits Archipelago" — will be exhibited at the Salihara Gallery in South Jakarta until Aug. 4.

Visiting exhibition curator Jeong-ok Jeon from the US said that the art of Krisna was closely related to the artistic concept of the origin of life, as shown in "Dance of The Unknown".

The video tells a story that begins with a performer posing like a fetus that is about to be born.



'Dance of the Unknown': "The whole video implies the process of life from birth, growing up, living and, finally, dying," Krisna, the artist said.

After birth, the performer begins to dance erratically, at times looking like a bird flying in the wild, at times evoking a shaman performing a ritual dance.

"The whole video implies the process of life from birth, growing up, living and, finally, dying," Krisna said.

Some of the movement is shown in slow motion and is at time repeated, while other movements appeared ignited through visual effects on the screen.

Projected using a double-landscape perspective, the video shows the performer clad in white dancing in a dark space, which Jeon defined as the "immateriality" of her presence in life.

Unlike the "Dance of the Unknown", which was projected on one of the walls of the gallery, "Eggology" was projected onto an egg-shaped structure with a diameter of 1.6 meters hanging from the ceiling, evoking an egg or womb.

The video illustrated the moments of life before birth, with a dancer performing abstract movements inside the egg.

"The blend of the materiality of the eggshell and virtuality of movement gives the audience the fantasy of being in a mother's womb at a highly dramatic moment," Jeon said. "This video installation blurs the boundary between installation and stage art."

Krisna said despite the space limitations of the eggshell, the dance showed freedom and even beauty in its movements.

"But this piece can also mean hope, when we can no longer rely on the current situation, so we're waiting for the egg to hatch," she said.



'Eggology': "The blend of the materiality of the eggshell and virtuality of movement gives the audience the fantasy of being in a mother's womb at a highly dramatic moment," according to the exhibit's curator.

Krisna's work took a different turn in a piece on the next wall, where audiences saw a half-body portrait of a man who told a story in the "Tale of Sangupati" video.

In many literary works and ancient Javanese dance compositions, Sangupati means the mental preparations for battle for dignified life. But the idea of Sangupati in the video indicates the moment when the values of life and civilization collapse.

The 17-minute video tells about the tragedy of the protagonist, Joyo, who is unable to preserve his Javanese cultural heritage because he has to sell his inherited shadow puppets to tourists in a souvenir shop to survive.

It combines the theatrical with the visual through a narrative video that features Yogyakarta-based stage actor Landung Simatupang as the narrator, as well as the actor, who speaks calmly, but strongly, in his storytelling.

The puppet characters that appear on the screen, hovering around Joyo's face, enrich the video that represents memory and symbols.

Unlike in other videos where audiences are indulged in visual art, here viewers need to listen carefully to the actor to understand the tale.

In "Branded Fruits Archipelago", Krisna showed his concern about the domination of imported fruits in an agrarian country like Indonesia.

The video shows the fruits which were arranged like a Balinese offering to give the impression that imported fruits were not only for daily consumption, but could also be used in many local rituals.



'The Lagoon': The exhibit curator said that the work highlighted tactility by provoking multiple senses through the sound of waves, the taste of tea, visual text and the feel of sand and coral reefs.

Krisna's last video, "Cup of Tea/The Lagoon" was presented differently. "Cup of Tea" is video poem installed in a coffee table with objects from the sea surrounding the screen.

Jeon said the work highlighted tactility by provoking multiple senses through the sound of waves, the taste of tea, visual text and the feel of sand and coral reefs.

Due to its position and its unusual form compared to the other exhibited installation, the work was almost overlooked by some in the audience.

All in all, Jeon said, "Art After Drama" required not only a new way of perceiving, but also different approaches in appreciation.

Krisna's collaboration with various artists in different genres over the last several years has shown that art could go beyond categorization, Jeon said.

"His art is not based upon the materiality of new technology, but is steeped in the understanding of new culture," Jeon said.

Video Installation Exhibition Krisna Murti's Art After Drama  
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