BODIES OF POWER/ POWER FOR BODIES

24 August—19 September 2018

Arahmaiani & Tritura and young people from Yogyakarta | Anang Saptoto | Elia Nurvista | HONF Collective | Julian Abraham "Togar" | Kerjasama 59 | Lifepatch - citizen Initiative In Art, Science And Technology | M.N.Qomaruddin & Performer Studio Teater Garasi | Serrum & Kelompok Kurator Kampung ("Urban Poor Curators")

Cemeti
Institute for Art and Society

INTRODUCTION

Bodies of Power/Power for Bodies is a group exhibition and events program at Cemeti-Institute for Art and Society. It marks the start of a new ongoing programme thread (of the same name) that will include a number of other group and solo projects, as well as research developed with a range of practitioners. This first exhibition brings together artists and collectives from Indonesia who either work directly with communities through DIY civic action, or use the space of art to critique dominant social and political systems. Through these practices, as well as those of various community initiatives involved in the associated public programmes, we hope to explore the social role and political agency of cultural practice; how we can speak to (bodies of) power, as well as directly support our individual and collective bodies.

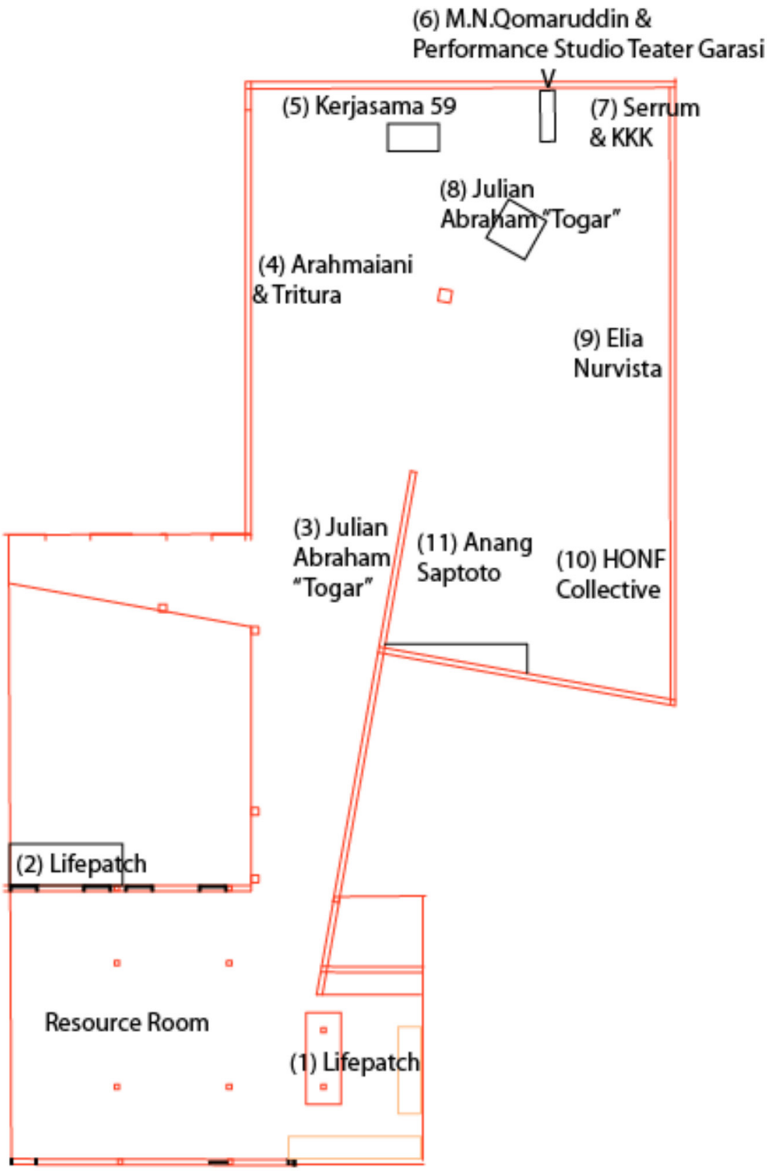
The works in this exhibition contain a wide variety of artistic languages, methods and ways of working. Some of the artists present and activate ongoing collaborations with specific communities, whilst others critically reflect on different political issues through multisensory, humourous or interactive artworks. As part of the artists' contributions, there will be workshops, performances and events at Cemeti and around the city. In addition, there will be a two-day symposium, co-curated with Jogja based collective Hyphen; a film program curated by researcher Fiky Daulay and a resource room, brought together by assistant curator Khairunnisa.

More broadly, *Bodies of Power/Power for Bodies* evolved out of questions raised during *Maintenance Works*, our previous long-term programme. In particular, it was developed to create a platform to support and publically reflect on the praxis of artists and groups who are deeply invested in rethinking the civic role of art. As these artist works are often centered outside of a gallery context and located within specific communities, we wanted to ask how we might connect with the communities these projects are engaged with. To see what possibilities they offer for changing the role of the institution itself to become a site of civic action. With this year marking the launch of campaigns for a key presidential election taking place in 2019 as well as the 20-year anniversary of *Reformasi*, the process of democratisation initiated after the fall of the Suharto regime, we feel it is a crucial moment to think together about the possibilities for grassroots community and social action and the potential for socially and politically transformative practice.

For more information about the works in this exhibition and the artists, please read on.

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(6) M.N.Qomaruddin &
Performance Studio Teater Garasi
(5) Kerjasama 59
(7) Serrum
& KKK
(8) Julian
Abraham "Togar"
(4) Arahmaiani
& Tritura
(9) Elia
Nurvista
(3) Julian
Abraham
"Togar"
(11) Anang
Saptoto
(10) HONF
Collective
(2) Lifepatch
Resource Room
(1) Lifepatch

ARTWORKS

1-2.

Lifepatch – citizen initiative for art, science and technology, *Before Everything Starts and Goes*, Jamu clinic and medicinal garden (2018)

The art and citizen science/technology initiative Lifepatch have set up a traditional healing consultancy in Cemeti's interior garden. It is open to visitors during the opening and on Saturday afternoons throughout the exhibition period. After making an appointment with the healer, patients will be prescribed a *Jamu* (traditional medicinal drink). Their *Jamu* will be made directly in Cemeti's kitchen, using herbs that Lifepatch have planted in the garden for this project. The work reflects on the blurry line between belief and the medicinal properties of the plants and herbs found in traditional remedies.

Lifepatch - Citizen Initiative In Art, Science And Technology *is a community-based interdisciplinary organization formed in 2012 in Yogyakarta. Taking a DIY and DIWO (Do It With Others) approach, Lifepatch aims to be useful by developing the potential of human resources and local natural resources, creating local and international collaborations, and providing open access to research tools and results. https://lifepatch.org*

3.

Julian Abraham "Togar"

Artist Julian Abraham "Togar" presents two work that were previously exhibited in Alami Tanah ["Experience the Earth"] (2015), a solo project at Jatiwangi Art Factory, in Jatiwangi, West Java, a district famous for its ceramic roof tiles family industry since 1905. For this exhibition, Togar has re-imagined both works with new display units and performative seller.

Bau Tanah, installation (2015) (2018 version)

Bau Tanah, or "the smell of the earth", is a metaphor in Indonesian language for elders or a person who is about to pass away from aging. The metaphor is

influenced by monotheistic religions that believe that the human body is made out of earth. The metaphor shares similar structure to Geosmin, derived from the Greek γεω- "earth" and ὀσμή "smell", a compound produced by certain bacteria and a contributor to the strong scent of petrichor. The work Bau Tanah is a perfume made from the raw materials of ceramic roof tiles in Jatiwangi. This project intends to literally actualize the metaphor, to make it "real", therefore tactile and visceral, so that we can sense it with our nose. By smelling the perfume, you are smelling the earth.

***Tepung Tayammum*, installation (2015) (2018 version)**

In terms of cleansing your body, have you ever thought of earth (soil, dust, clay, etc) as an alternative to water? One example would be Tayammum (Arabic: تيمم). Tayammum is the act of dry ablution using purified sand or dust, which may be performed in place of ritual washing (*wudu* or *ghusl*), if no clean water is readily available. Tepung Tayammum is a speculative product, a packed purified dust made from the same raw materials as the ceramic roof tiles taken from the soil of the newly built airport in Kertajati (West-Java). The soil was first mixed, filtered, then sterilized with flames, and once again filtered before it was stored into the vial for convenient travel. This sterile dust is made especially for people with high mobility, those who travel a lot, and need to pray on the road.

Julian Abraham "Togar" *(b. 1987 in Medan, Indonesia) is an artist, musician and pseudo-scientist based in Yogyakarta. Words like generative, manipulating, dematerialization are often used to identify his work. Connecting one thing to another, expressed in complex algorithms, have enabled his experiences in how art, the environment, science and technology relate to one another to provide new tools to educate and engage both the artist and the society. www.julianabraham.net*

4.

Arahmaiani & Tritura with young people from Yogyakarta, ***Nusantara Flag Project,*** performance and installation

Artist Arahmaiani in collaboration with cultural collective Tritura has been working with a growing group of young people in Yogyakarta for over a year. These groups are from areas where they face threat of youth violence and unemployment is high. This collaboration has provided them with a regular space to meet and to hang out in a safe environment. They work to develop cultural projects that combine traditional cultural forms such as Wayang and dance with rap, beat box and street

6.

M.N.Qomaruddin & Performer Studio Teater Garasi, *Percakapan Tentang yang Tak Pernah Selesai*, video and performance (2018). Performance on 15 September 2018.

This work is based on the reading of and discussion on fundamentalism and the interrelation between two keywords; myth and spectatorship. M.N. Qomaruddin and the participants of Performer Studio Teater Garasi used their findings as a first step towards creating a performance that relates to questions of each performer and the spectators. This work was initiated by M.N.Qomaruddin and developed in collaboration with Putu Alit Panca Nugraha, Rizky Irwan Wijaya, Annu Cutter, Rafia Ali Akbar, Yesa Utomo, Chaerussabry, Hartmantyo Utomo, Mega Nur, Regina Gandes Mutiary, Muhammad Eva Nuril Huda, Halida Bunga Fisandra and Agam Satya Muhammad.

M.N. Qomaruddin *is an artist based in Yogyakarta. He has played in and contributed to various theatre plays and films. He is a resident artist of Theater Garasi, where he initiated and coordinates Teater Garasi's Performer Studio and Lab activities. Qomar is furthermore a frequent dramatic reader in the annual Indonesia Dramatic Reading Festival. He was artist-in-residence in Cheunchen, South Korea (2012) and worked with choreographer Arco Renz on a collaboration with dancers in Padang Panjang commissioned by Indonesia Dance Festival (2014).*

Performer Studio Theater Garasi *(Yogyakarta) is an acting program, developed by Teater Garasi since 2006, for any novice performer who wants to learn about acting and acquire basic acting skills. www.teatergarasi.org*

7.

Serrum & Kelompok Kurator Kampung (KKK/"Urban Poor Curators"), *Merdeka Di Tanah Negara*, video, documentation and proposals from ongoing community project (2018)

Merdeka Di Tanah Negara is an ongoing collaboration between Serrum and Kelompok Kurator Kampung (KKK) ("urban poor curators") and the residents of Penjaringan, a slum area settlement in North Jakarta (an informal name for those who occupy plots of land, houses, or buildings without legal status/ownership). The problem of illegal settlements in big cities like Jakarta is very difficult to overcome. One of the common sites for such squatter settlements is under toll roads. The

illegal use of the area under the Rawa Bebek Toll Road in Penjaringan is a very complex context with regulatory, legal and socio-economic issues faced by the community. For over a year, Serrum and KKK have been working with the community here to reimagine their public spaces, education systems and more. For this exhibition they present a documentary film following Rasdullah, member of a becak (traditional paddy cab) union active in the Teluk Gong area. Rasdullah is also a "kurator kampung", acting as a bridge to the community for this longer-term project. Alongside the film are images and proposals showing plans for Serrum and KKK's longer-term interventions into the area. Serrum also share documentation of a previous project Karnaval Sepeda Hias in Kayu Manis area in East Jakarta, in which they initiated an Independence Day parade and competition, working with residents to design and decorate their own bicycle floats.

Serrum *is an artist collective based in Jakarta, founded in 2006. Serrum (coming from the word "share room") focuses on educational, socio-political and urban issues, working with communities using an educational and artistic approach. Activities include art projects, exhibitions, workshops, discussions and creative propaganda. www.serrum.id.*

8.

Julian Abraham "Togar", *Tolerating the Intolerance*, sound work (2018)

In this sound work by artist Julian Abraham "Togar", the whirring sound of the roof ventilator dome is constantly present. The next thing you will hear is an intermittently disrupting sound. It is a feedback of the microphone installed directly across the megaphone. This is the act of an echo chamber. The mic operates as a tool to deliver sound, meanwhile the megaphone accepts and amplifies the sound. Other than its own movement, there is no other sonic source. The roof ventilator dome in the middle is speaking and listening to itself. Architecturally, the dome functions as ventilator. It circulates air for the interior of the building to which it is attached. The dome is an architectural device for creating a "tolerant" environment for a building. The failure of both the speaker and the megaphone, resulting in the echo chamber, is a reminder that different forms of intolerance may surprise us.

9.

Elia Nurvista, *Possibility of Inauthentic Recipe*, video installation (2018)

Elia Nurvista is an artist using an interdisciplinary approach to scrutinize power relations and social and economic inequality through the discourse around food. The film presented here departs from Nurvista's interest in recipes and food as cultural value/national identity, particularly the ways in which nation-states try to claim certain recipes as their authentic legacy. These claims often reveal complex narratives, including the origin of ingredients and/or cooking methods through migration of people by conquest, enslavement and colonization. When capitalization of cultural inheritance has a political currency, the idea of ownership toward so-called Intangible Cultural Heritage (a term used by UNESCO) becomes distorted. This work explores how these issues have an ambivalent character of possession, for example between the acceptance of goods and rejection of human migration, as well as asylum seeker and migrant communities attachments to cultural customs such as recipes, dances, etc.

Elia Nurvista *(b. 1983) is an artist based in Yogyakarta who explores existing power dynamics and inequalities through the lens of food. In 2015 she initiated Bakudapan food study group, with whom she has conducted research on food within the socio-political and cultural context. She is currently artist-in-residence at Künstlerhaus Bethanien in Berlin, Germany (2018). www.elianurvista.com*

10.

HONF Collective, *GALACTICA*, video installation and workshop series (2018)

HONF, a citizen science and technology collective, will initiate a range of activities, both at Cemeti and at HONF HQ, as well as "expeditions" to other communities. The project focuses on DIY astrobiology where the sci-fi artist, scientist and technologist try to seek and understand the origin of the building blocks of life: how biogenic compounds combine to create life, how life affects and is affected by the environment from which it arises, and whether and how life expands beyond its planet of origin. This project tries to provide a philosophical and programmatic underpinning of life's place in the universe, an exploration ranging van from the molecular to the galactic.

HONF (House Of Natural Fiber) *is a collective based in Yogyakarta that explores the interaction between life, art, science and technology in both practical and aesthetic ways, organising cross-collaborative actions responding to technology development and its practical use in daily life. www.natural-fiber.com*

11.

Anang Saptoto, *Swara Pembangunan (toko dan ruang serbaguna)*, installation, shop and workshop series (2018)

Artist Anang Saptoto builds on his artist activist practice in which he has worked with various communities facing different crisis, to develop forms of resistance, alternative economies and ecological ways of living and working. For this exhibition, Anang presents a series of banners reflecting on land rights that will be used at a range of community events. He will also initiate a workshop and workspace in Cemeti's gallery where old t-shirts are used to make carpets, which can later be sold in support of the communities her works with. T-shirts are a material often over-donated to communities in need, here repurposed to create an alternative economy.

Anang Saptoto *(b. 1982) lives and works in Yogyakarta. He is active as an artist, graphic designer, and workshop facilitator. He is a member of MES 56, Video Report and Swara Pembangunan, and was previously part of Yogyakarta Green Map Community/Greenmap Jogja and POOP Together We Found. He often works with friends from the community or from other disciplines, making works and activities that connect art and the social environment. http://anangsaptotoworks.wordpress.com*

For more information about Cemeti - Institute for Art and Society and our programme, please ask us in person in the gallery or visit our website.

Cemeti - Institute for Art and Society
Jl. D. I.Panjaitan 41
Yogyakarta 55143, Indonesia
www.cemeti.org

@cemeti.institute
#bodiesofpower
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