

Jakarta Paris graffiti exhibition

WALL STREET ARTS





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10 July - 2 Agustus 2010

Jakarta: Bujangan Urban, Darbotz, Kims, Nsane5, Popo, Wormo, Tutu

Paris: Ceet, Colorz, Gilbert, Kongo, Lazoo, Sonic

Guest artists: Farhan Siki & Soni Irawan

Curator: Alia Swastika

Producer: Claude Kunez

Supported by: Sophie Paris and Indosat

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Indonesia





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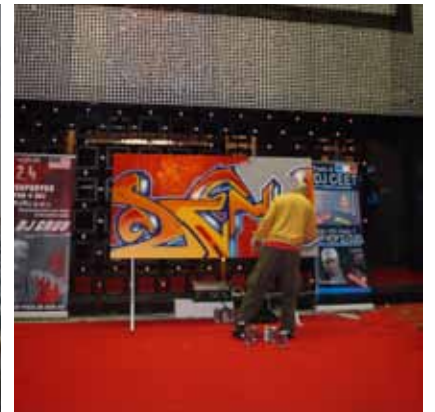












bottom: Ceet's work | top: Gilbert's Work









Sonic's Work



Kongo's Work



Ceet's Work



Sonic's Work



Foreword



Gilbert collaboration with Alexandros Vasmoulakis

Street art makes its entrance into the exhibition space with two or three layers of anxiety. The artists are worried that their art would become tame, yielding, and sterile. The exhibition organizer might suppose that what would be on display is inchoate horror, neither fearsome nor entertaining. Meanwhile, the audience might feel a peculiar sensation of being suspended in a realm of threshold that is neither of the art nor of the street.

Had we been aware of the fact that street art is the kind of art that is full of paradoxes, we would certainly transform such disquiet into delight. From art history we know how art can bore into its essence, affirm its distinctness from reality; but it can also take things apart, moving in any direction, seemingly expansive like life itself. Street art, which we now have before us, seems to be at ease in the tug of war between the two extremes; safe and cozy to be on the middle path.

The end of art is here with us, some critics say. Street art does not reject the end of art; neither does it affirm it. The street artists are actually opportunistic creatures who are able to draw lessons from the tides of art movements and genres from all over the world, and at the same time they act as if they are dismissing art. They had been baptized as the offspring of the global mass culture; but they are in fact omnivores who would devour any techniques and media in order to boost their productions.

Meanwhile, the adjective of "street" in "street art" is ambiguous. The artists do not venerate the street, and they are not constricted by it, either. "Street" also constitutes the opportunity to appear on Hermes bags, to interrupt philosophical discussions about art, or to make art as fun as skateboarding. We have foreseen the presence of street art in our land since the New Art Movement emerged; sensed its intrusion since Apotik Komik's feat in Yogyakarta; witnessed it with a sense of detachment on the flyover pillars in Jakarta; and eventually are forced to accept it as a global movement as we read, for example, *Juxtapoz* magazine, published in San Francisco.

We are pleased because this exhibition, while making no pretension to presenting novelty, enables us to re-observe how street art is doing after having been recognized for more or less a decade. By presenting those who work in Paris and Jakarta, the exhibition analyzes how the rustic and the semi-urban assign new meanings on the street, and how the margin exchange places with the center. Indeed, as the curator Alia Swastika has said, an exhibition like this lessens the distance between the guerilla and the mainstream.

As has been the norm, Komunitas Salihara does not see any contradiction between being engaged in a guerilla movement and moving to the center. We are aware that there are not a few artists of repute who also want to rebel in order to create distinct works, ones that agitate the market. On the other hand, we also need to delve deep below the surface, to discover new seeds and present them to the public.

That is thus the way of this street art exhibition: it brings those who have been accepted at the center as well as those who are still moving wildly on the margins. It freely exchanges the two positions.

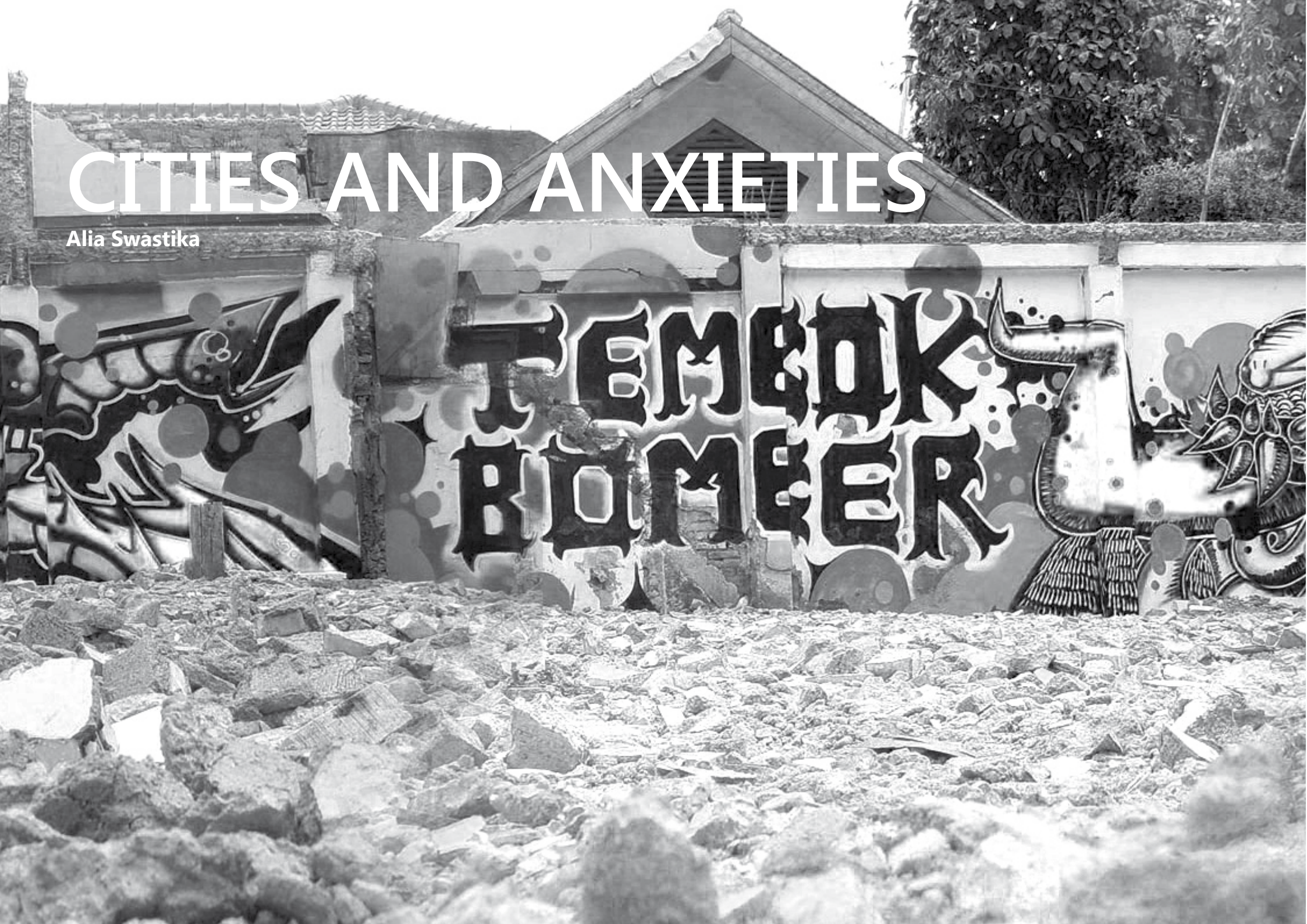
I am pleased because this exhibition underlines Komunitas Salihara's stance to maintain and foster diversity. By diversity we mean the potpourri of artistic sources that we have and the artists' perspectives toward them. We strive to present works of art from a variety of types and backgrounds, reprocessed in novel contexts and needs. Avant-gardism might be something of the past, but it is clear that artists must rejuvenate themselves, unceasingly reformulating their relationships with art history as well as with the society around them.

And so the artists of Jakarta and Paris are contrasting their inherent contexts and at the same time exchanging them. They embark on an affair, enjoying one another, stealing from each other, in order to discover their respective future. I believe our disquiet has not been futile, and our delight is not excessive.

Galeri Salihara
Nirwan Dewanto

CITIES AND ANXIETIES

Alia Swastika



Now that hip-hop is maturing in the fields of art, activism, education and business, what are the risks of hip-hop theatre itself becoming elitist and exclusive because of having penetrated mainstream institutions? What happens to graffiti's aesthetics when the canvas is legal and the museum is commissioning you?... What happens when we share (and sell) the language that the man wasn't supposed to understand? If the answer is that we create a new language, then where is it? What happens when hip-hop moves into the opera house and we still don't own the opera house? What happens if we do own it?

— **Danny Hoch** from "Toward a Hip-Hop Aesthetic"

As one visits the big cities of the world such as Paris, London, or New York, especially from the early nineties onward, one cannot deny the fact that what art history often deems as "street art" has become one of the dominant elements that visually shape the city landscapes, especially in areas that have become centers for youth subculture. Indeed, almost all references in cultural analyses will say that graffiti is an inseparable part of the youth subculture, which is always related to the issue about marginality and youth rebellion. Lately, as I walk down the streets of these cities, I feel that graffiti has revealed its evolutionary face; it has transcended its stigma as a medium of vandalism and moved into the realm of art with a clear aesthetic vision.

In 2005, an exhibition was held at Kunstler Betanien in Berlin, Germany, which presented street art as expressions of youth subculture. The exhibition, in which no fewer than a hundred artists participated, showed how street art, especially one that took place in public spaces, created the opportunity for interesting interactions between the public and the artists. Many participants to this exhibition were indeed artists who had been working in the area of public spaces and street art,

or exploring those issues. The media presented in this exhibition were truly wide-ranging, starting from graffiti, video art (which had quite a dominant presence), photography, to works of installation. Although the exhibition was held in a gallery rather than in an open public space, at the time I felt that in certain ways the exhibition truly opened a room for dialogues between the public at large and the world of art.

Almost half a decade later, I again had a chance to see a similarly-important exhibition in Paris. This city, which serves as a center of art in Europe, invited well-known world figures in the realm of graffiti to take part in an exhibition held in a venue of great reputation for the European contemporary art: Foundation Cartier. Important artists in the world of graffiti, especially in Europe (Paris, Amsterdam, Berlin, Barcelona) and America (South America and the United States) took part in this exhibition. Artists such as Barry McGee, Zev, Sonic, Obey (Sephard Fairley), and other street legends helped make the exhibition one of the most interesting spectacles in Paris from June 2009 to January 2010.



Meanwhile, in America, similar movements—exhibitions of works by street artists in established art spaces such as galleries and museums—took place more sporadically in a range of big cities such as New York, San Francisco, and Los Angeles. Not only presenting wall paintings that are the obligatory media for graffiti artists, the exhibitions in the commercial galleries also facilitated the meeting between the street artists and the established art media, especially canvases. At the end of the nineties, the art market made a larger space for street artists to contribute to contemporary art development. On one hand, such diversity gave rise to previously-unimaginable possibilities in art; on the other hand, however, there arose the quandary of commercialization, arguing that the spirit of freedom and the sense of marginalization, which constituted the underlying spirit of the street art movement, were thus co-opted and commoditized by the market. Furthermore, the use of such established media was accused of turning graffiti into a ghost of sorts for the spirit of rebellion; its name resonant, but its form has been brought into well-established spaces.

This exhibition tries to lay out the distance between the established and the marginalized, the free and the ordered, the ideological and the pragmatic, the “West” and the “other”, the serious and the playful. From Jakarta and Paris, artists of the two cities present tales of how graffiti reveals its evolutionary visages and invite us to revisit our memories of the visual tracks that have apparently become very familiar to us as we live our lives in a big city. Rather than further sharpening the controversies that accompanies graffiti’s entrance into the established realm in the contemporary art world, the exhibition constitutes an effort to stand in the middle, embracing all the existing categories and playing with them.

Paris: A Multiracial and Multifaith City of Graffiti

One can say that Paris today is the center for new developments in street art from all over the world. In terms of artistic development, Paris’s position is not too significant

compared to all other big cities in the world. Lately, however, it is Paris that has clearly viewed graffiti as residing on a similarly-established position as other forms of art, including in terms of its position in the contemporary art market. Not only at the Foundation Cartier; big exhibitions of graffiti are entering such established spaces as Grand Palais, the place where retrospective exhibitions of artists like Anselm Kiefer and Christian Boltansky are commonly held.¹ Graffiti becomes a novel trend with quite a significant influence on the young artists in France, and especially in Paris.

To me, what is interesting about the graffiti tendency in Paris—although this does not constitute a special Parisian signature—is the representation of the diversity that lurks behind it. Most of the actors of graffiti art in Paris are youth who come from families of immigrants, from Africa, the Middle East, and Asia. All of these graffiti writers, whether or not they are aware of it, carries with them their own cultural backgrounds to be expressed on the walls as graffiti, which the public can then read as the representations of their self-identity.

From the city walls around Belleville, Rue Denoyez, and the areas at the city margins especially those near the subway routes, graffiti artists are entering the most prestigious area in Paris. Today, due to the popularity of graffiti in the city that is always full of tourists, graffiti become a distinct city attraction that capture people’s fascination. We can obtain a special map that points out where the significant and interesting graffiti are located, and then we can make our own graffiti tour, which might take two days. Graffiti are also collected by the urban middle class who wish to show their openness toward things that are edgy, marginal, and at the same time familiar.

Blek Le Rat, a graffiti pioneer who inspires all graffiti artists the world over, said that

1 This exhibition presented works all in the same size, on canvases provided by a collector named Alain-Dominique Gallizia. No fewer than 150 graffiti artists who have been quite well-known in Paris took part in the exhibition, contributing two works each, on 180x160 cm canvases.



in the eighties there was no graffiti in Paris. His experience of living in New York motivated him to create novel visual expressions that constituted a breakthrough compared to the established graffiti styles in Big Apple. He started to make stencil graffiti art on the streets of Paris, not only preparing the path for a new tradition for the visual culture in Paris, but also contributing to the development of graffiti and street art. It is such traditions that then grew rapidly and inspired the discovery of new techniques and styles that show the rich visual possibilities of graffiti art. Nowadays, there are many different visual styles develop by different artists in Paris. For example, Kongo has his distinction for using letters and visual symbols at the same time. Colorz is more influenced by abstract style in painting, while Lazoo has more tendencies in narrative style.

Most of the graffiti artists whose works are on display in this Wall Street Arts exhibition are from the MacCrew group, a group of graffiti artists with quite a significant bearing in Paris, founded by Kongo, as one of the pioneer. Most of them have been practicing street art since the genre first emerged in France. Ceet and Gilbert are among the first generation of graffiti artists to write tags on the Parisian subways, some periode later after Sonic bombed most of subway trains in New York. Graffiti has taken them all around the world, adsorbing new cultures and new visual techniques from many different cities.

Along with the growth of new markets in contemporary art that tend to be more open to innovative experiments, the six artists are also entering off-street arena. They hold exhibitions in established galleries, explore new media such as the canvas and three-dimensional objects. As they tame the resistance in the fight for the open spaces on the street, in the new space of the galleries these artists are challenged to explore expressions that are more individual and reflective in nature, born out of their experiences and interactions with the situations on the street.

Apart from the controversy surrounding the issue of the market, the artists

perceive the experience of transforming the medium as an effort to define, in novel ways, their street practices. Moving from the fear, insecurity, haste, freedom, expansiveness, and camaraderie, they then enter the new territories of the establishment, restrictions, confinement, and especially of the solitary practices in the studio space. The fear and the experience of interacting with the people as reflected in the works made using the new media are, in my view, provide another impetus for spontaneity, especially in terms of painting signification. Apart from being affected by developments in pop art and comics, these artists have also received quite a significant influence from the conventional forms of art known in art history, and combine them with the current tendencies. We thus see in their paintings a tinge of abstract art, expressionism, and even of South American models of surrealism, which all seem fresher because they are done using novel and innovative technical approaches.

Jakarta: Breaking the Rules, Pursuing Pleasures

As discussed by another essay in this book, historically graffiti in Indonesia was always related to the spirit of resistance. It was only when the youth subculture has grown in Indonesia that graffiti started to gain recognition and appeared in the analyses of visual art and urban studies. The rapid development of the youth subculture, especially of independent music, independent films, and the new “rave” culture have given rise to new cultural products such as DJs and electronic music, drove the evolution of graffiti as a part of a new visual culture (accompanying the development of designs, architecture, and the intersections of all the forms of expression of the new visual culture). Apart from its political signification, especially as Politics with capital ‘P’, graffiti grows as a trend among the urban youth.

Naturally, due to the different cultural background, graffiti has a different context in Indonesia. The hip-hop culture—the form of counterculture that invariably exists alongside graffiti—does not grow big in Jakarta, outdone by the rave culture of



the elite nightclubs with DJs presenting the accompanying music. The lack—or the absence—of open public spaces that constitute an important part of the hip-hop culture also plays a significant role in the development of graffiti in Jakarta.

The youth are searching for suitable media to break the rules and distance themselves from the establishment, to reveal anonymous existence in public spaces all across the city. In a big city that grows in non-linear patterns like Jakarta, where everything and nothing seems possible and all seems to be available yet restricted, to be engaged in street art practices such as graffiti constitutes an effort to assert one's existence. The youth thus overcome the sense of being constrained due to the abundance of public spaces that have been taken over by the government and the commercial sectors. The city becomes full of billboards and advertisement boards that have been allowed to embellish all corners of the city, while more imaginative and interesting forms of art are provided with nary a space. The important spots for graffiti practices are thus found in hidden or transient spaces, such as the flyover pillars, the enclosing walls of construction projects, or the streets at the margins of the city.

Artistically, street art in Jakarta has grown swiftly, which is representative of how the graffiti artists in Jakarta improve their knowledge and follow the global graffiti art development. The links with the world are maintained through direct meetings with graffiti actors from other cities in the world, or by becoming a part of the virtual network that narrows the gap of communication among fellow graffiti actors. It is in such interactions that new techniques are explored and new knowledge is distributed. Graffiti artists in Jakarta maintain their contacts with graffiti actors in other Indonesian cities such as Bandung, Solo, and Yogyakarta, subsequently giving rise to unique styles in relation to the local contents and the importance of locality. It is also interesting to observe how graffiti made a later entrance to the world of art

compared to murals.²

Graffiti that initially were found only as tags subsequently grew, absorbing the forms of murals, stencils, and other new techniques that made graffiti appear intriguing in the midst of the deluge of commercial advertisements. Some of the artists like to summarize the stories of their lives on the street, making them a source of inspirations for their graffiti while from time to time identifying themselves with the marginalized group, incessantly restricted by a range of rules and regulations of living in the city.

Unlike the contemporary art development in other parts of the world, graffiti's entrance to mainstream art in Indonesia is still in an early stage, and as such is often perceived merely as an effort to turn graffiti into commercial art products. Some graffiti artists have held exhibitions in galleries, whether alternative galleries such as Ruang Rupa in Jakarta, or the commercial galleries. They have also been involved in the side projects of the Jakarta Biennale 2009 and presented graffiti as a form of art with extensive public exposure instead of merely as social commentaries or representations of the urban visual tendencies. There are also numerous artists who employ graffiti styles, such as Soni Irawan, Arie Dyanto, and Farhan Siki, who in this exhibition reveal how the ideas of graffiti are applied in paintings.

As one observes some of the tendencies that are presented in this exhibition, it would transpire that the graffiti artists have received a significant influence from the world of graphic design, as they employ the techniques of cut-and-paste, making patterns and characters especially when they transfer their works on to the canvases. Some of them do come from graphic design background, and it is

² In Indonesia, or in Yogyakarta to be precise, a large-scale street art project took place in 2000, in an effort to "take back" the public spaces and "conduct negotiations" in them, by inviting artists to create artwork on the city walls. It was an initiative of Apotik Komik, a group of artists from Yogyakarta. The project had positive results in that the locals then accepted murals as art and a part of their day-to-day lives, and there was an effort to understand the development of art without having to concern oneself about what the artwork signifies. After the project was concluded in Yogyakarta, many locals decided to embark on similar projects.



therefore understandable how design ideas affect their artistic concepts. Compared to the French graffiti artists who revisited the painting tendencies in art history—albeit perhaps in more spontaneous ways that contrasted the analyses or studies done by “professional artists”—the Indonesian artists have perhaps received greater influence from the pragmatic visual realms, which were born out of the dialogues with day-to-day existence. The history of the encounters between the world of “fine art” and the contemporary art is still short; there are still possibilities for graffiti art to grow, with its ability to absorb so many ideas and concepts in spontaneous and liberated ways, without being burdened by the weight of art history or by market direction. The encounter with the contemporary art, in my view, is important so that we can read the practices of graffiti actors in novel ways and assign new meanings to them. In the artists’ studios, these art practices are viewed in a distance, and a reflective attitude can thus be maintained.

From the Street to the Gallery

In Paris, the market for works of street art is one of the fastest growing sectors during the last three years. Every month a special auction is held at the Grand Palais for graffiti artwork. The expansive and intensive market developments are naturally not without problems. Some graffiti artists have rejected the actions that they see as going strongly on the path of commercialization, because for them the most important thing is to maintain their independence vis-à-vis the economic motives. Meanwhile, some other graffiti artists who have been involved directly with the market see that drawings on the walls and on canvases both reflect creativity and spontaneity, and at the same time also constitute an act of reflection toward our day-to-day existence.

As the graffiti artists make their entrance to the galleries, maintaining a distance from the apparatus that they have generally been fighting against, they gain a whole new artistic experience. Such situations give rise to questions about their position as artists, about how they perceive the artworld, and about their beliefs in the idea of resistance. Of course, transformations, reductions, and adaptations will take place naturally as new contexts arise.

It seems appropriate to bring up again the initial question that opens this essay; presenting it not in a nihilistic note or negative passiveness, but instead with a tinge of optimism in the search for novel forms and possibilities of graffiti that can bring art closer to the public and the youth who have been staying away from the galleries and the established concepts of art.

The contemporary art, with its rapid and dynamic developments, indeed tends to co-opt everything within its reach in order to extend its spread. The distance between “the guerilla” and “the mainstream” is continuously made smaller, thus creating dialectics between them, constructing a new space that they own and share together.

A Conversation about Graffiti in Jakarta

Brigitta Isabella



If you live in Jakarta and are used to being trapped in the traffic jam on your way home from the office, you might find yourself become familiar with the drawings or scribbles on the city walls. In the traffic jam, the drawings and scribbling might provide some sort of entertainment; you can look at them to take your mind off the traffic jam and ease off the stress. But have you ever thought who it was that had so determinedly created those drawings? This question led me to an encounter with Darbotz, Tutu, and Kims—three out of scores of people in Jakarta who call themselves graffiti artists. Our conversations might shed a light about the graffiti development in Jakarta.

Darbotz, a soft-spoken man who during the day works as a graphic designer, has been creating drawings on the street since late nineties. Having the background of a design student with a penchant for drawing, Darbotz felt challenged by the large drawing surface provided by the walls. Darbotz is known for his “octopus” character that decorates the walls of Jakarta in black and white. “I choose to use black and white so that the character can appear outstanding among the other graffiti that use a lot of colors,” Darbotz explains.

Meanwhile, Tutu, a graphic-design graduate from Bandung Institute of Technology, chooses to explore the visual characters of squirrels. His rodents can look cute, but sometimes they also appear vicious, complete with fangs. “It all depends on my mood when I’m drawing them,” explains Tutu, who during the day works as an animator. Unlike Darbotz who uses black and white, Tutu employs detailed and fine coloring techniques.

The visual explorations among the graffiti artists are indeed wide-ranging. While Tutu’s squirrels always appear in great details, Kims’s works are simpler and focused on the quantity. This means that this writer chooses to make a greater number of scribbling in a variety of places rather than making one large piece on one wall. Kims admits that the reason behind his act of making graffiti is the desire to be better known and recognized. “It’s perhaps a bit narcissistic, but we only want people to notice us,” he says, laughing.

In the world of graffiti, what Kims makes is known as tags, or a kind of signature with a unique font style and a modest size. After the tags, there are the throws-up, or font-based signature in greater size and modest design. The highest in the hierarchy is the piece—short for ‘masterpiece’—which is a large graffiti with detailed design and can take the form of characters, like the one made by Darbotz and Tutu, or of fonts but in more intricate forms.

From the three types of graffiti mentioned above, Kims believes that the most common types to be found in Jakarta are the tags and the throws-up. This is because tags and throws-up can be made quickly—it perhaps takes only ten minutes for a skillful graffiti artist to make a tag or a throw-up. Swiftness is important because the graffiti artists often have to play hide and seek with the security





Graffiti in Paris.

officers who want to “maintain order” and capture the graffiti artists whom they see as ruining the city walls. This is what makes Jakarta graffiti appear rough and lacking in details, except in some special cases like Tutu’s works, which are characteristically complex.

Jakarta graffiti do not stay long on the walls. The walls in Jakarta constitute a highly contested realm with intricate politics of space and complex power relations between the city government and the artists, as well as among the graffiti artists themselves. Often a graffiti that one artist has painstakingly made is erased by government officers, or sprayed over by some other artists. “Respect is key in the world of graffiti,” says Tutu, who laments the existence of people who do not respect the works of their own colleagues. Still, that is how it works with graffiti: the works exist in public spaces that are owned by everyone.

According to Tutu, Jakarta in the nineties had not been so full of graffiti, unlike today. The city walls were still devoid of graffiti—at most, there were only wall scribbles made by high school gangs. The graffiti artists still worked individually and did not know one another, and only became acquainted with each other when they accidentally met during their covert activities of making graffiti on the city walls at night. From such chance encounters, they began to share information among themselves, which eventually served to improve their techniques and knowledge about graffiti.

In 2005, as increasingly more graffiti appear on the streets of Jakarta, Darbotz and a few of his friends had the idea to launch the site of tembokbomber.com, which serves as a place to document their works of graffiti and to communicate with fellow graffiti artists in Indonesia.

Pictures

(top left) Examples of tags in a parking lot in Jakarta.

(top right) Graffiti piece of a squirrel by Tutu.

(bottom left) A throw-up by Kims.

(bottom right) A collaboration of graffiti artists; from left to right: Choco7/Nsane5/Darbotz/Yellowdino/Mondayz/Tutu.

A black and white photograph of a person in a dark, industrial setting, possibly a tunnel or underground space. The person is wearing a dark shirt and light-colored pants, and is holding a spray can, suggesting they are graffitiing. The background is dark and textured, with a metal grate or mesh in the foreground. The overall mood is gritty and rebellious.

Graffiti as Counterculture

**This essay is an excerpt from the thesis written in 2002 by Aditya Dipta Anindita, a graduate of the Department of Sociology, Faculty of Social and Political Science, Gadjah Mada University. The excerpt underlines the history and understanding of graffiti and how the urban graffiti represents a youth counterculture that challenges their parental generation and the technocratic environment.*

A Brief History

The word 'graffiti' originated from the Greek word '*graphein*', which means "write". The word 'graffiti' is also an Italian word, the plural form of 'graffito', which means scribbling or scratching. Graffiti can be simply understood as drawings on the wall. Tucker maintains that a drawing be considered as graffiti only when it is made in a public space or in someone's property, and made without permissions. Graffiti represents human needs to communicate, and in fact if we look at the history of humans, this way of communication constituted one of the first means of communication between humans; i.e. through scribbling or drawings. Graffiti is present in a variety of forms. On the walls of public toilets or telephone booths, we often encounter a range of scribbling with various messages. Such writing is called latrinalia. Often, a message receives a response in another scribbling, and thus a dialogue is formed.

In the urban space context, graffiti is present along the streets as large scribbles, which in general are made using spray paints. Graffiti can be present on the walls, on the right and left of the streets, on the traffic signs or on a range of other public facilities, as well as on the road surface itself. As they write on others' or public properties, the graffiti writers must move quickly. That is why graffiti is generally made at night, using spray paints to capitalize on their ability to help graffiti writers make quick scribbling. Many foreign researchers claim that the city of New York and graffiti are inextricably linked and that the city will always become a graffiti Mecca. In New York, graffiti grew along the development of rap music and break dance as parts of the hip hop culture that constitutes the expressions of the minority youth or the young people from the ghettos. Graffiti movement in New York began at the end of the sixties when a young man wrote his identity, "Julio 204", on the subway. In 1968, one could encounter many "Julio 204" tags in New York. Graffiti's true emergence, however, began in the early seventies, when a seventeen year old Greek

youth "decorated" many New York corners with his tag, "Taki 183". The success of a *New York Times* reporter to find and interview the writer of "Taki 183" tag significantly increased graffiti's popularity and other New York youth soon followed suit. From then on, graffiti could be easily found on many urban walls, and of course on the subway trains as well. The acceleration in the spread of information as a part of globalization has helped transform the hip hop culture into a lifestyle trend that anyone anywhere could adopt, without having to own any link to the historical background that had given rise to this culture. Each city, however, has a distinct character, affecting the behavior of its residents. Graffiti in other places in the world can therefore be read differently from how one would read the New York graffiti, keeping in mind the fact that graffiti represents human's desire to communicate.

In Indonesia, the hip hop culture has been reproduced by the media targeted at the youth, presenting it as a lifestyle trend. Such hip hop culture mainly appears in clothing and music styles. However, graffiti is almost never presented here as a part of the hip hop trend; rather, it is invariably perceived stereotypically as a destructive act of vandalism. This is despite the fact that graffiti had been used in the Indonesian independence revolution. We can see in history books how during the independence revolution, graffiti was used to convey messages of freedom, to set the revolutionary spirit afire. Graffiti was then used again during the Reformation era. In May 1998, many home and store owners who lived along the streets were afraid that they would become targets of looting. Using spray paints, they wrote on the doors to their houses and stores the phrases of "pro-reform" or "owned by indigenous Indonesian". Graffiti thus appeared not as a trend, but as a means to communicate messages that might not be welcomed in formal media.

Besides, we cannot deny the fact that graffiti written by the young people also serve as a way out, a means of communication and self-actualization.



The Scribbling of the Night Children

Tag is written in a variety of ways; on the walls that are still free from scribbling, next to existing graffiti, or on the top of other graffiti by first crossing the first graffiti. This shows that there are friendships as well as competitions among graffiti writers in marking their territories. A piece of graffiti does not usually stay alone on a wall. Another scribbling will follow, and then another one will soon ensue. Tags of groups often include the name of the (individual) writers, for example: "GHE-DEXs by: KMB, ONY", or "QZR by: rino arif '89". There is also a tag of "QZR k-beh" ("k-beh" refers to the Javanese word of '*kabeh*', meaning "all"), which means that the tag was written by many group members. Tag is a form of graffiti that is most commonly found on the street. Apart from on the city walls, tags are also written on traffic signs, traffic light, advertising boards, monuments, bus terminals, road street, and other places.

Meanwhile, graffiti conveying messages are usually written on relatively large spaces; for example on the street surfaces, on the wall fence, or on the corrugated iron fences that are usually installed around construction projects. There are two kinds of messages that we commonly encounter: messages related to political issues, and non-political messages. The political messages usually contain demands or protests about government policies. In my observation, graffiti with political messages generally appear around the time of students' demonstration. Many of such graffiti are found around Gadjah Mada University in Yogyakarta, conveying messages of "GOLKAR MUSUH+PENINDAS RAKYAT" (Golkar is the Enemy and Oppressor of the People), "BUBARKAN DPR MPR" (Disband the Houses of Representatives and the People's Assembly) and "TOLAK KENAIKAN BBM" (Reject Gas Price Increase). There are also political graffiti in the areas of Kotabaru and Kleringan, such as those signed by "Asep" and conveyed the messages of "PRIA/WANITA SAMA(,) TOLAK POLISI(,) GANTUNG SUHARTO" (Male and female are the same; Reject the police; Hang Suharto), or of "BBM NAIK ULAH ORBA" (More expensive gasoline [is] the deed of

the Old Order regime) in front of Tugu train station.

Meanwhile, the non-political messages usually tell stories of the daily deeds of the youth. Understandably, messages of love are prevalent, for example the love proclamation written on the street in front of Stella Duce 1 High School, an all-girl school in Kotabaru, Yogyakarta, saying "Upiex LOVE I&U", or "KeLIKs LOVE Heppy" in front of the Bopkri 3 Junior High School near the Gadjah Mada University roundabout, or "PAPA ADIT LULUS, NAX's" (Papa Adit passed, Nax's) near Selokan Mataram, Gadjah Mada University. Then there are also "happy birthday" messages and holiday greetings, as found on the pillar walls of the Lempuyangan flyover. Sometimes, a message follows a tag, for example "QZR, BOLCOM IS BACK".

Graffiti in the form of drawings are made with many colors on relatively large surfaces, such as the flyover walls or walls of buildings. Such graffiti might also include marks of identity or messages with well-planned composition of letters and colors.

Graffiti: Reading the Youth, Reading the City

The youth are those who, in Roszak's term, have been alienated from the parental generation, or the generation that sees themselves as more important than the youth. This view also provides the parental generation with a better bargaining position in controlling the youth and directing them to ensure that the youth fulfill their hopes—especially because the young people are still financially dependant, relying on their parents for financial support.

The application of social engineering system in the modern society has set the standards of success and made them very important in order to fulfill technocratic needs. At school, the success of these young people is measured through marks, written on their report books. On all levels of education, marks are considered as

highly important. Awards will be given to students who receive high marks in class or at school. Everyone works to ensure that the students will get high marks at school, despite the fact that each human being has a different set of abilities.

Graffiti constitute the effort of the youth to show their identity through ways that are distinctly different from the ways taken by their parents' generation. Graffiti have their own language and rules understood by the youth who write them. The competition among the graffiti makers cannot be assessed with marks, unlike the system of the report books at school. Because graffiti are made with the objective to show a clear break from the values installed by the parental generation, they cannot be made randomly—otherwise, the writers have to deal with sanctions and restrictive stereotyping.

Graffiti are thus produced on the street at night, at the time when the youth can be free from the spaces that are conventionally considered as representing truth and order, such as the school, malls, or their own home. Graffiti in public places represent the youth who are searching for spaces in which they can be themselves. This research, therefore, does not view graffiti as a problem created by idle youth with nothing better to do, because the term of "idle" or "not idle" are themselves produced by the society that wants the youth to act in ways that would suit the needs of the technocratic society.



CEET

Aries-born Marc Chagall said it best “Art must be an expression of love or it is nothing” and it is no small coincidence that today, Ceet Fouad at 39, a jack of all trades, lives by that quote. Over the years, Fouad has built an impressive portfolio showcasing work from his days with his home town crew, Trumac extending his talents from DJing to graphic design from his one true love of graffiti. Fouad hails from Toulouse, South of France but originates from North Africa. His interest in graffiti and his career in graffiti took 5-6 years to initiate however once the wheels were in motion, nothing can stand in the way of Fouad and his artistry. What now has become typography Fouad mastered at a tender age with graffiti, turning his expression through words in to a visionary image of his emotions and mindset.

What does graffiti represent for you?

Painting on the walls, canvas, train. When I first started to graffiti I didn't think about what the audience could perceive from my work but the more I got into it and the more experience I got from it, I realized that through graffiti, those that liked my work understood what graffiti stands for. And of course in time, my work represented an expression of that understanding. Graffiti to me is like a representation of what I like to call “the ego-less man”, this meaning that every graffiti artist can find a wall and paint a piece of himself on it for display without any fear of a curator undermining their work or passing judgment. If the audience liked your work, in a sense they like you, the artist. Of course, one has to understand and appreciate that you cannot please everybody and not everyone is going to like your work however, you will undoubtedly find one that does. Who knows that one person could turn out to be a property developer and hire you to paint ever wall in the building!

What would you like to say to those who don't understand graffiti?

Don't be afraid. Open your minds. Take in someone else's view, consider someone else's perception of the truth, realize that from another's point of view or angle, the truth may look different. But to shut yourself off from not even considering that there may be another path to the truth is silly, foolish. We are all players of the same game called life. The difference between you and I are the different versions of the game, so you could be playing the 80s version but with me, when you're part of the graffiti world, your game is always the one that one step ahead. Always got to be ahead of the game. [smiles]

Now looking back on your work, you've clearly matured in your artwork. Is there any difference between canvas and graffiti to you?

Yes of course. Not just on a technical aspect but on an emotional and mental aspect as well. When you do graffiti on a wall, you are rarely doing one on your own. So it's a big group of us mixing colors together, exchanging mindsets, where we're at on our space of the wall and where we are progressing to. I guess the best way to describe it is an orgy of artists only without the actual sex! Now when I do work on canvas, I'm more centered, focused and meticulous. Because every inch, centimeter and millimeter is mine, a representation of me, I work very hard to make sure that its a true and accurate depiction of that.

Of the two, which do you prefer to work on?

Graffiti... on the walls of course! That goes without saying! But my finest work is on canvas. And when this is your bread and water sometimes you just gotta put your brothers aside and concentrate on number one. As much as we all would love to sell a wall, that belongs to the streets, it belongs to the community so I do have to be realistic and that's where my canvas work comes in.

Over the years it has become apparent that your work has gotten darker in color. Any particular reason?

I think it's fair to say that as I have matured in age, so has my skill and I've always been the type that has been misunderstood a lot. Which is why I find so much solace in graffiti and painting. It was my own expression, the way I saw things and the way I choose to express my point of view and no-one can take that away from me. When you have been misunderstood a lot of times in your life with no leg to stand on, no chance to defend yourself, you are often left stripped away of your personality, character and what defines you. To find a passion, a calling and a purpose that gives you that undisturbed individual voice, it just all makes sense. So as I mature in age, I work hard to express myself as clear as possible however it is true to say that indeed my struggles have also matured with time.

Matured struggle? Is that possible?

Well, what I mean to say is that as a kid, a child, when you experiment with a hobby or interest such as football or graffiti...you approach it with such enthusiasm and energy. As you get older, sure skills and talent mature for the better but so do the costs of responsibilities, relationships and decisions. When you do graffiti, when you take on the task of painting a wall, it's one of these projects that you take on as a family. As a close group of like minded artists, well, you don't even have to be likeminded, just open minded enough to visualize taking on board another person's visual concept in to the greater picture. So as you get older, as boys turn into men, its natural to have communication problems between partners and work - partners - that then naturally disrupts the personal mindset and forward move into the future. But I suppose this is what you call the game of life.

What words of wisdom would you like to say to the younger generation?

Hey you there, listen. The only way to do something, whether it be in the world of graffiti or DJing or any kind of art form, you have to be patient. And this is very important. Being patient and focusing, especially on finding that one style. When you have found that one style, you then have to be patient in the perfection of it. You have to be able to grow with it, it has to be able to grow with you and take on new technologies and hurdles that life takes on. This is really really important because this one style is and becomes your bread and water.

We've noticed a presence of a chicken that surrounds your work in the last decade. Care to explain?

When I moved over to China in 2002, you can imagine as a French native, it was a complete culture shock. But a good shock. I loved the fact that graffiti was close to nonexistent and with the language barriers, it was virtually impossible to

communicate. I embraced China with open arms and used my tools to communicate or at least, make communication easier. So one day I was trying to explain to the waiter I wanted to eat chicken. After several attempts at hand gestures I reverted to type and drew it. The chicken seemed to get a lot attention and it went from there! Although 2 years later I found out that the word for chicken in Chinese means prostitute but I don't care, it doesn't stop me and my chicken! We are all prostitutes in one sense or another if you think about it... [laughs]

Let's get a bit personal here. If you could be represented by any current artist in the music industry today, who would it be and why?

DJ Quik. he's an eclectic mix of smooth, classy beats, rap and a DJ. I like to see myself as a French version of DJ Quik but funnier!

Where would you like to see graffiti in 10 years time?

Still remaining on the streets where it started and originated from.

Where do you see yourself then in 10 years time?

The same. [laughs]

More graffiti, more art and more expression of myself through my artwork. I am concentrating all my efforts and strengths into my two artistic passions which are DJing and graffiti. So hopefully in 10 years time I am doing those two with perfection and ease.

And the chicken?

With teeth! [laughs] In French, we have an expression "Quand les poules auront des dents" which literally means "when chicken grow teeth" which is to suggest... never. But I am hopeful!

Your one true love is...

my son.



1. **Super Heroes**
200 x 150 cm | Acrylic, spray paint on canvas | 2010
2. **Mr. Paul**
200 x 150 cm | Acrylic, spray paint on canvas | 2010
3. **Real Spider**
130 x 95 cm | Acrylic, spray paint on canvas | 2010



TUTU



Corrupt City Clown
150x150cm
spraycan on canvas
2010



Sharpie
120x160cm
spraycan on canvas
2010



One Less Suv
120x160cm
spraycan on canvas
2010



Prime Sinister
160x120cm
spraycan on canvas
2010



Supreme Roller
160x120cm
spraycan on canvas
2010



City Tick
120x160cm
spraycan on canvas
2010

How do you define your artworks?

My works refer to the style of mural and character rather than font and letters. In those works, I put special character called TUTU tupai. When I created this character, I responded to my own daily life and what I've seen in my surrounding. Tupai represents the marginalized group that been limited with all the rules and law, but still want to be existed on the walls and buildings all around Jakarta. This character has the nature of naughtiness and wild, situation with his own way. I really like to show a dynamic action in my works.

What does graffiti represent you?

Ya. While doing my graffiti art, I feel I have all the freedom and the space to think. I don't feel like being limited by any kind of ideology and I can dig down to my own potentiality with various medium

What has graffiti given to you?

I feel I have the challenge to communicate with many people directly in the public space, while they are doing their own activities in their daily life. This experience had encouraged me to be more sensitive with the public so I can start to learn about their character. I learn the society through this contact with public.

What have you given to graffiti?

Graffiti is the real representation of daily life. I try to respond the life of society in Jakarta in my works. In the future, I hope that graffiti works in Jakarta will develop their own character that will differ them to the style of graffiti in any other cities or countries in the world.

What would you like to say to those who don't understand graffiti?

Human being is created to respond or to interpret something at the very basic principal. I feel that not all the people will like or understand graffiti. It is only about opinion, and we can not force any opinion to any other people.

Is there any difference between canvas and wall to you?

For me, canvas touches more my personal or individual side. While to paint on the wall is more general, because involves public's opinion.

Do you see any evolution of this Graffiti culture?

Big evolution had happened in local and international graffiti art scene. Graffiti could be evolved because its position in the grey area, the spirit of freedom and the tight competition. from those nature, Graffiti been developed technically in term visuality and style so that could be still exist in the street walls and still appeared to be interesting to the public. From tagging, graffiti now become the medium to deliver messages/ impression or critic. Most of people think graffiti is only part of the trend. But this kind of statement would be a bigger challenge for graffiti artists to explore any possibilities to develop their works.

What would you like to see in Graffiti for the next 10 years?

I still keep the hope that graffiti would be existed in the grey area, where they meet support and contradiction. Public easily feel bored with the established mediums. They need something fresh and surprising!

GILBERT





Mr Oil
Spray/acrylic on canvas
200 x 200 cm
2010



Entertainment
Spray/acrylic on canvas
208 x 161 cm
2010



Francois
Spray/acrylic on canvas
208 x 161 cm
2010



So French
Spray/acrylic on canvas
208 x 161 cm
2010



Like a Bird
Spray/acrylic on canvas
210 x 160 cm
2010

My name is Gilbert. I was born in 1971 in Lomé, capital of Togo, West Africa. As a half-breed myself, my art is a whole blend of Asian, African and European influences. These cultural and natural influences determined my narrative and figurative pictorial style, a style which borrows from the symbolism of forms and from pop culture too.

I've painted and drawn since the age of 10. My first inspirations came from comic strips. I created my first team in high school, the CDM, a group of painters and drawers I met there. At that time, the art of Graffiti had no meaning for me as it was too rebellious and egocentric. To say the truth, I was too fearful, not confident enough as a teenager to opt in. Hence, I remained an observer during the 80's, waiting and hoping for my awakening! My Graffiti hero artists were then Mode 2, Futura, Boxer, Colorz, Degree, Jackson, the PCP, Popay, etc. Some of them were *writers* and the others were much more representative or abstract.

My awakening to Graffiti began in 1998 with my first urban signatures, a logotype as a tag representing a dog. Afterwards in 2002, I created the Kosmopolite festival with Mac, Myre and the Twelve twelve. The festival lasted till 2008. It offered the artists a platform to display their

art as a real cultural and political commitment and offered the audience a way of discovering the Graffiti Street Art movement.

To me, Graffiti is a political language and an art in itself, though sometimes a little bit too much a coded art (e.g. the New York Writing or the rebellious Brazilian Pixcao). Yet, different forms connected together make the present Street Art in which all is allowed without any constraint or restraint (stencil, tag, painting, collage...). Freedom is fundamental in my art : no limit in terms of style and tools used in the street or on the canvas (two complete and different art forms).

My urban actions are mostly pictorial, political, graphic and playful interactions with the street, going from logotype to painted stripes, from tape to Mr chewing gum... Today, I'm working on digital performances mixing Street Art and technology: the Akrylonumerik (digital akrylo [to know more about it visit akrylonumerik.com]). That's the reason why I do not consider myself as a *writer* but rather as a Street Artist.

POPO

PIPIS YU.

YU

"Today, the degradation of
the inner life is symbolized by the fact
that the only place sacred from
interruption is the private toilet."

LEWIS MUMFORD





Pook
110x 120 cm | Spray paint and acrylic on canvas | 2010



UFO PLPP
100x100 cm | spray paint on canvas | 2010



Popo Swan
100x100 cm | spray paint on canvas | 2010

How do you define your artworks?

obstinate, undisciplined, humorist, friendly and applicable in any media.

What does graffiti represent you?

really helpful when I want to clarify my hunger.

What has graffiti given to you?

It gives all the more than text, richer than visual, much more beautiful than aesthetic, more direct than communication.

What have you given to graffiti?

All the more than text, visual, aesthetic and communication.

What would you like to say to those who don't understand graffiti?

They better stand where they are now, because I will not ask them to like or understand graffiti. But, I can show them how to create artworks with fun :)

Is there any difference between canvas and wall to you?

What makes the difference is only about the price of the wood, cement and stone.

Do you see any evolution of this Graffiti culture?

Yes, graffiti is now more popular, the price of the spray paint is increasing, and the bombers now are well-dressed. The school kids now not only write in their books but also in walls, cars, shops, billboard—everywhere, without any limit.

What would you like to see in Graffiti for the next 10 years?

I hope it won't be like tasting the same French fries that McDonalds, KFC and Burger King has made. Well, they could not improve better French fries in the last 10 years, and one thing for sure: I hope in the next 10 years, there will be 10 Banksy and 10 Blek Le Rat born in every single year.



LAZOO

Acting in the Hip hop scene for more than 20 years, Lazoo has developed his artwork in various creative fields like sleeve designs, press illustrations, and Graffiti productions. Building bridges between all this media, he's still in the search of the Magic Moment with his creations. Pure product from Paris of the French popular culture, Lazoo act on his canvases as a witness of the urban society.

Optimistic, colorful...How do you define your artwork?

My artworks is the result of a long evolution. Yes, I try to put hope in my painting, and most of the time I use many colors in it. Thus, I wish to give to people a possibility to dream of a better world with my paintings, murals or canvases... I like to make people think in a positive way, and I use for that a figurative approach of painting.

What does graffiti represent for you?

Graffiti is definitely my field of freedom. There is no rules, nobody to tell you what to do, except the voice of the street. So I feel really comfortable with Graffiti, because it gives me the possibility to express myself as I want, in the mood of the moment I do it... Moreover, graffiti as I practice is really often a collective action, and it's really interesting to share our motivation to each other: we share the wall; the time we spend and our passion for free with peoples in the street. So Graffiti is the combination of a meeting between people with the same motivation, the place where we act, and the people we meet at the time we paint it. In this way graffiti is an art of the moment, the moment we share in the place we do it. Compared to my work as an illustrator or a designer, Graffiti is the ground from where I find my inspiration, and get the roots of my artwork. Graffiti is the foundation of my work on canvas and paper, I try to put on it this special feeling I get when I paint a graffiti mural.

What would you like to say to those who don't understand graffiti?

Don't misunderstand what is Graffiti. Graffiti is just a mark on walls, so if you think it's related to violence and insecurity, please understand that the main violence is not pictorial, but architectural... Most of the time I paint walls

which are a kind of wart of the city. The problem is not the paint I put on the wall, but the wall itself. The city is alive, and Graffiti is his voice...it 's like the fever effect you get when you're sick: the fever is not the cause of the sickness, it's a consequence of it.

Is there any difference between canvas and graffiti to you?

As I said, graffiti is for me a passion I share with peoples in the street. The context of a canvas creation is significantly different. It's more personal, with a different dynamics. So I believe that my canvases are not graffiti as I define it, but a production with deep roots in the graffiti culture. All what I do get influenced by Graffiti, it's my inspiration source.

How do you define your style?

I'm a figurative graffiti artist. Putting characters in my productions gives me the possibility to put "life" in my art... I like also to paint women, because woman kind is still a fascination to me. Moreover, I enjoy especially to create variations about the modern woman. Women. Women are for me the symbol and the hope our world. Sensuality and respect, that's how I called the way I represent women.

Do you see any evolution of this Graffiti culture?

Of course, things change. The moments I spent in the past doing Graffiti are gone, and Graffiti became a global culture. So it's easier to get access to this culture, but in the same time it becomes harder to do something new in it for the new generation. I'm not nostalgic about it, I think it's a logical evolution of this trend, which is now a culture. The protagonists get older, matured. As many graffiti artists, before I was a graffiti painter, and one day I decided to be an artist.

where would you like to see Graffiti in 10 years time?

Everywhere! Graffiti is still in expansion, physically and in the minds. I wish to be still part of it with the same energy I put in it nowadays. Who could imagine art ten years ago that Graffiti is officially recognize as an today?! The street is still the source of the Trend, I guess cities will still get some streets in the future...



1. **Drippin' Obama**
200 x 150 cm | Spray paint on canvas | 2010
2. **Drippin' Basquiat**
200 x 150 cm | Spray paint on canvas | 2010
3. **The Lost Train**
200 x 150 cm | Spray and marker on canvas | 2010
4. **Silent Majority**
200 x 150 cm | Spray paint on canvas | 2010

BUJANGAN URBAN





1. 1% Skill 99% Nekat | 70x100cm | acrylic on canvas | 2010
2. Kami Ada Karena Kami Berkarya | 60x100 cm | acrylic and spray cans on canvas | 2010
3. Senyum Santai Melambai | 60x100 cm | acrylic on canvas | 2010
4. Lempar Senyum Tampar Benci | 95x154 cm | acrylic, spray cans on canvas | 2010

How do you define your artworks?

I feel flowing, and smiling. My works are very local in term of the form, because I adopt literature works and the forms of optical vignette dimension that is very popular during 80s.

What does graffiti represent you?

It's not in at best for my potent since I am a very talented young man, so its not only graffiti that become mediums to express my ideas, but also music.

What has graffiti given to you?

The best part is when I could meet many people. I consider it is important because I like to communicate with people and like to involve with new things. Because of graffiti I could also visit some cities that I never imagined before. One example was when I visited Padang. Because of my works on the streets, some people asked me to teach the kids from earthquake survivors to build their imagination in the form of arts.

What have you given to graffiti?

Spirit and also part of my capability and my mind. Because I really like to communicate with people, while I realized I can always be there to communicate, so, my works are the medium to replace my self to be face to face to public.

What would you like to say to those who don't understand graffiti?

I believe balance, something like Yi n and Yang in Chinese belief. So, if everybody accepted graffiti perfectly, I rather to see that as the point of zero. When I met people who said they don't understand my works, I would be really happy because then I will get the chance to explain about my works and entering real communication with public. It would be better if they have beautiful daughter, so I will have chance to get to know the girl... hehehe... that's why I called my name bujangan urban (urban single man).

Is there any difference between canvas and wall to you?

Hmmm.... Kanvas made of fabric, and wall made of concrete. Hahaha.. no, in term of the application, I don't think they are different, its only to differs the medium.

Do you see any evolution of this Graffiti culture?

Yes, very fast indeed, so there is no more space. In my early years painting on the wall, people will understand that the guys who were painting on the wall must be artists. But now, it changes since everybody does that, from the bank officers to school students. Graffiti become a good visual experience for many people since not everybody would like to come to gallery. Graffiti can strike the eyes of everyone without being in a gallery.

What would you like to see in Graffiti for the next 10 years?

Graffiti would still be graffiti. I hope everybody can accept graffiti.



SONIC

1

2

3

4



NYC Subways 1979
210x120cm | Spray paint on canvas | 2010



New York New York
200x155cm | Spray paint on canvas | 2010



Fantasonic
212x160cm | Spraypaint on canvas | 2010



Paparazi
212x160cm | Spraypaint on canvas | 2010

Tell me a little bit about Sonic and where you started?

I was born in Brooklyn, New York, 1961. I first noticed graffiti in 1970. From that point I wanted to know more. However, back in those days, there was not much on graffiti, no books, movies or Internet. Graffiti was exclusively on the streets and of course within the NYC Subway System.

I first started sketching Graffiti on paper, then quickly moved on to tagging my neighborhood with my favorite tool of choice, the "El Marko", marker. Soon I needed more! Spray paint was the answer and the place to go to paint was the NYC underground subway. That was the beginning.

What does Graffiti represent for you?

Graffiti represents a lifestyle, my lifestyle. I am and forever will be a "Graffiti" Artist. Graffiti is an art form that took many years to get the credit it deserves. Though Graffiti has evolved for me over the last 30 years, it still distinguishes me as an artist. From the trains that started it all, to the canvases that I now use, Graffiti is and will always be a part of who I am.

What has Graffiti given to you?

Graffiti gave me the chance to express myself like no other art form can. Being a graffiti writer isn't like the average artist, who is limited. We used to go out at night with bags full of paint, and create graffiti murals on trains for the entire city to see. Now graffiti artists have a worldwide network. A graffiti artist can go anywhere in the world and find a community of other graffiti artists that will welcome them. It doesn't matter whether we speak the same language because graffiti is our translator. Graffiti has taken me all over the US, Europe and now Asia. I have met many creative people from different cities and countries through graffiti. People that I now regard as my friends and family. Graffiti has taught me more about different cultures than any history lesson I could have ever received.

What have you given to Graffiti?

I have dedicated myself to staying true to the graffiti art form. I wasn't satisfied with just tags and bubble letters, I wanted graffiti to soar to new heights and go beyond. I wanted to create different styles most notable are my folding letters and vivid colors. I also was one of the first to use characters as letters such as my gangster character that I still use today. I gave graffiti its first naked girl on a whole train car. I have given graffiti the best years of my life.

As one of the original NYC subway Graffiti artists, describe what it was like going into the underground tunnels to paint?

It was dark and scary. All your other senses had to kick into high gear. I can still hear the sounds of the steel wheels rolling on the iron tracks. I can smell the spray paint as it flowed through the tunnels and mixed with the dust, creating a distinct odor and fume in the underground subway. Then there is the fear. The fear, as you walk through the underground, looking for the right spot to paint being careful not to step on the 3rd rail (which will fry you in an instant). Once you find that spot and start to paint, the fear is still there, looking over my shoulder, watching out for passing trains or worse the dreaded Transit Police. Because once they were in your sights you had no choice but to run. Run into the darkness. But after it was all said and done, it was worth every minute. To see my work of art, my top to bottoms, on trains, running through the system, gave me such a thrill, that I can still feel today.

What would you like to say to those who don't understand graffiti?

Well you can't please everybody. Either you love it or hate it.

Where do you see yourself then in 10 years time?

I hope in 10 years to still be painting. Continuing to sell my canvases throughout Europe and abroad. Painting murals around the world with my friends. Just doing my thing. Graffiti!



DARBOTZ



1



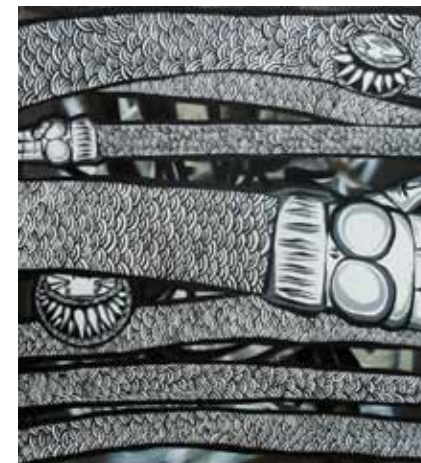
2



3



4



5

1. I Clean Your God Damn Wall #1 | mixed media | 2010
2. I Clean Your God Damn Wall #2 | mixed media | 2010
3. Rat Road #1 | 160x100cm | mixed media | 2010
4. Rat Road #2 | 160x100cm | mixed media | 2010
5. Rat Road #3 | 160x100cm | mixed media | 2010

How do you define your artworks?

Raw. Just like the character of Jakarta city.

What does graffiti represent you?

For me graffiti represents my ego.

What has graffiti given to you?

Credibility, freedom and fame.

What have you given to graffiti?

Consistency and existence.

What would you like to say to those who don't understand graffiti?

Graffiti is just like the advertisements in the street, you'll still see it whether you like it or not.

Is there any difference between canvas and wall to you?

The difference is just about the media. I usually draw in a big wall, and the texture is rough. What makes it different is the result of the lines that I trace on it.

Do you see any evolution of this Graffiti culture?

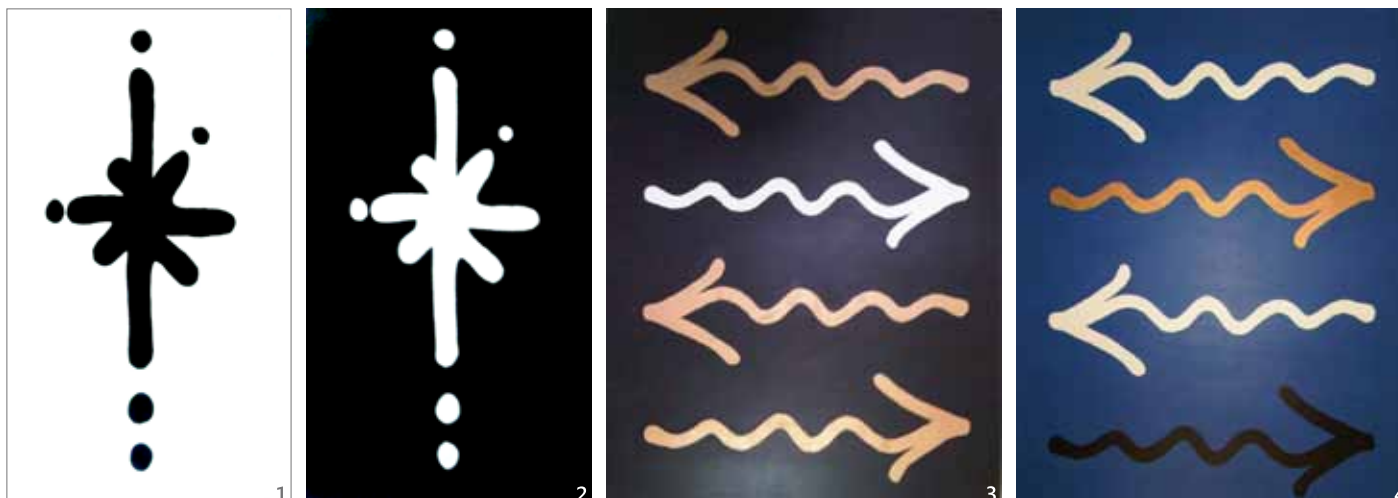
Of course, conventional graffiti is just typography, but now it evolve with so many styles and media.

What would you like to see in Graffiti for the next 10 years?

Still exist!



KIMS



1. Star - Black on white
100x150 | Acrylic on Canvas | 2010
2. Star - White on black
100x150 | Acrylic on Canvas | 2010
3. Arrows - Blue, Black, Gold, White
120x150 | Acrylic, Aerosol Paint on Canvas | 2010
4. Arrows - Black, Gold, White
120x150 | Acrylic, Aerosol Paint on Canvas | 2010

How do you define your artworks?

I define my graffiti works as a basic element. It is the early graffiti shapes, like spray cans, arrows, bubble letters, star, tagging, throw up, vandal, nice spot and adrenalin.

What does graffiti represent you?

More or less, graffiti has given so many influences to my life.

What have you given to graffiti?

Freedom. Freedom which anyone can get it too, but not from graffiti. So far, graffiti is an activity that I couldn't stop doing it, considering that graffiti is also a form of vandalism.

What have you given to graffiti?

Regeneration. Now, more and more new generation start to draw graffiti. Though it's subject to not a really good thing, they would understand by them self what is graffiti and experience the fun of the game inside it.

What would you like to say to those who don't understand graffiti?

For those who did not understand graffiti, I will not force them to understand, or-- I will try to draw graffiti that they can easily understand because graffiti is a form of freedom.

Maybe it's just about the perspective. And for those who didn't like it, maybe I will ask them to go out with me and draw some piece in the street walls so they could see and feel the adrenaline.

Is there any difference between canvas and wall to you?

Canvas as a media has limited space, not like wall. Canvas also could not substitute the texture that wall has it. And maybe, working with canvas will take more time for exploration to find the right style without losing my real characteristic in graffiti.

Do you see any evolution of this Graffiti culture?

Yes, well Indonesia is a bit late about this, I think in another country graffiti or street art has become a global issue. In present, the contemporary art world has recognized and appreciates the existence of street artists and their works. So the evolution in graffiti is now happening.

What would you like to see in Graffiti for the next 10 years?

I believe that the next generation can give more to graffiti by contributing new and fresh form of expression. And also, maybe one of Indonesian street artist can be a well-known international graffiti artist



NSANE5



--
100x50 cm (5 panel)
Spray paint on canvas
2010



Color Burst 1
100x120 cm
Spray paint on canvas
2010



"Pantone 2"
90x100
spray paint on canvas
2010



Pantone 1
100x120 cm
Spray paint on canvas
2010



"Signature"
80x100
spray paint on canvas
2010

How do you define your artworks?

Just like my name, nsane5: it is taken from the word "insane", which means ridiculous, crazy, sick, abnormal, absurd, mad, nuts, silly, odd, and wild. My name defines all artworks that I made.

What does graffiti represent you?

For me, graffiti can't represent who I really was, but graffiti inform a little bit of myself, because graffiti that I have done has some similarity with my personality.

What has graffiti given to you?

Taste, happiness, joy, friends, fashion, credibility, jobs, music; basically graffiti gives me knowledge and ability to see different things with different perspectives.

What have you given to graffiti?

My artworks and my life...

What would you like to say to those who don't understand graffiti?

Take a deep look at graffiti and ask yourself, can you do it? Then tell me if it's easy. If it's not, then you have to understand or at least appreciate what we have done. Because it takes a lot of time, energy and ideas just to make what people believe as an act of vandalism.

Is there any difference between canvas and wall to you?

Canvas and wall is only media, the differences are only in the location, size and shape.

Do you see any evolution of this Graffiti culture?

Absolutely. People now are appreciating graffiti more than ever. That's what matter.

What would you like to see in Graffiti for the next 10 years?

Stronger! Because graffiti should be consider as an art. We all know what we're doing, but we are just using different materials called spray paint...



KONGO

Who has not dreamed to take a world tour in 24 days like Phileas Foggs from Jules Vernes? Take off immediately in a hot air balloon with your guide, Cyril Phan, who grew up in Asia, Africa, and Europe. His 'nom de plume' is Kongo, and he paints walls all over the world. He has delivered his thoughts on his voyages around the world.

Your travels take you to Latin America and Asia. How is graffiti in those places?

Graffiti in Latin America is only 10 years old and the painters have the innocence and energy of their start in the craft. Their conception of the street as a living space is different from Paris. People from the street come to mix, they talk while you paint, like in New York where there is a strong Latin community. On the other hand, their cities lend themselves to street art, you can paint anywhere, or nearly. Graffiti in China started only in the early 2000's, the artists were inspired from what was already there. But their influences were so many and they assimilated in the culture that they soon create their own style, and there weren't enough streets for their expressions. In Japan, graffiti has been around for awhile, but the art is considered a crime.

Travel is important. As soon as you get out of Paris, you realize there is another life to live. You need to live in the moment, otherwise you let people outside the movement create business and rewrite history. I am someone who does things himself. With our MACs, we started developing our ideas from beginning to end. We realized that in doing something ourselves we are going somewhere... that way we have a greater chance for success.

Is graffiti an impulse or an artistic medium?

These 2 notions are part of graffiti. There is a market that is thinking about graffiti, and we need to be interested in it. Creative tension is brought on by many things. In any case, without tension, creativity is without thought and you don't go anywhere. So yes, graffiti can be lived as a tension that comes from life...

When I collaborate with Cope 2 (famous NY graffiti artist), patients of the Premontre psychiatric patients or Thomas Lelu (contemporary artist, photographer and French novelist), I

am confronted with another vision. The genre of the universe interests me today, I like this exchange and it brings me back to see life in this way. I think we cannot sit back on our laurels, just open up - every experience is worth living. Graffiti is a real artistic branch with its masters, critics, collectioners, and artists, and it is a living art.

One day there is a crime and the next day there is Art?

No! Nobody holds back truth! Only god can judge me.

You are a grown up and you are always travelling in Asia and Europe. What are the impacts of your life on your creations and your visions for the world?

All these travels have obviously influenced me. I built myself with these places and they are all a part of me. My survival reflex made me drop my suitcases at Gwada, a small island far from the society of consummation. Paris, Hong Kong, New York, it's for business, I have my own background, I bring it to other reflections. I started graffiti as a contentious act. I lived between Africa and France. I remember when my friends from Cameroon came back from New York with hip-hop. I was young, right away I loved this movement and the energy it gave. I liked drawing. I went out a lot and I liked the energy tagging gave on the streets, the city and the people who passed through.

Graffiti is my medium, it leaves a trace in the real world but also in time. It's a profoundly human reflex, like an exchange. I like the idea of leaving part of myself somewhere. I represent the French Touch (Kongo smiles). I am appropriating this country, its smells, its colors...i am at home everywhere in the world, I am without roots because of my family history but I am also attached to the Earth.

Where do you see yourself in 10 years and how?

I don't really know where, but in any case I see myself harvesting what I planted 10 years before (lol). I see myself continuing to paint big graffiti pieces with my friends, as usual...! Why change? I have been doing this for 20 years...lol

Seriously though I won't stop painting, whether it's on walls or on canvas, I will always express my cultural heritage, wherever the wind will take me.



1. **Graffiti History**
210x150cm | Spray/acrylic on canvas | 2010
2. **One Blood**
210x160cm | spray/acrylic on canvas | 2010
3. **Paris Skillz**
210x160cm | Spray/acrylic on canvas | 2010



WORMO



Cacing Beton
120x100cm
acrylic on canvas
2010



Kembang Beton
120x100cm
spraypaint on canvas
2010



Wormo 1
120x100cm
acrylic on canvas
2010



Wormo 2
120x100cm
acrylic on canvas
2010

How do you define your artworks?

In the street I usually draw worm which I called it "cacing beton" (steel concrete worm), because it hobby is to eat the steel concrete. I can draw both character/figure and also fonts, but the cacing beton will always be there. My work is full color, because I think the walls in Jakarta have a dim and dull color, so I hope that with some color on it, it will look more beautiful.

What does graffiti represent you?

Ya. Graffiti in Indonesia is a form of freedom. When I draw in the street, I'm free to draw anything. I also free to choose where and when to draw. Freedom is what I'm looking for. Anyway, graffiti in Indonesia got nothing to do with violence.

What has graffiti given to you?

New friends, local and international friends. Networking, new experience, new places and some additional money. And also, a new way of thinking, thank you.

What have you given to graffiti?

Hmmm... bring it up here in Indonesia! Hahaha check www.tembokbomber.com

What would you like to say to those who don't understand graffiti?

Nothing. If they don't like it, it's ok.

Is there any difference between canvas and wall to you?

Yes, for me working in the wall streets is more free than in canvas.

Do you see any evolution of this Graffiti culture?

Graffiti in Indonesia is not trending anymore. But the works from thefbombers in Indonesia can be compare with the works from bomber outside the country. The works of Indonesian bombers have a very superb quality. We are getting better and better.

What would you like to see in Graffiti for the next 10 years?

I hope I still can find graffiti on the street.



COLORZ



Etienne Marcel
210x150cm
Acrylic and spray on canvas



Champs-Élysées
200x155cm
Acrylic and spray on canvas



Paris 3
200x 155cm
Acrylic and spray on canvas

Where do you come from ?

From a suburb of Paris, Sartrouville, in the middle of nowhere where nothing happened, no bus after 9h30 PM, not even the telethon...

We used to go down to the train station by bike to try to reach Paris and see what was going on there in the big city where everything was supposed to happen...

When did you start painting ?

Around 13, I got busted in school for tagging the name of a music band, then I started to tag regularly under various names until I went for COLORZ.

What were your influences at the time ?

None ! There was no notice, we all wanted to be number one !

You went to several countries to paint ?

Netherlands in 1990 to show what the « French fat cap » was. At the time there was a battle to have the biggest fat cap on a wall space and become the KING ! Then England, trains in London, and in Spain, Belgium, Thailand, a subway in Greece. In 1994, I was in

New York for a first run in the Bronx.

You went in trouble with the police ?

Several times I got to escape from the security, hide on the top of trains... I got in trouble many times and almost went to prison.

What was your strategy ?

My real strategy was to always carry a spray and a fat cap on me and be on it day or night. 50 tags a day multiplied by 365 days a year with 60% loss. Just guess...

This kind of street art was not supposed to last, how did it become almost official art ?

It's a general movement, the development of street culture and hip hop, advertisement, interest of new emergent expressions, the illegal impact and its added value brought a focus on us. It pushed us to use formats and canvas instead of walls and trains to share our expression with the others, between us... then came the galleries and the professionals

...

« To all my friends and enemies, to all the people I respect : just do it and keep it real ! »

FARHANSIKI



Enter Nothing
200x250 cm
mix media on canvas
2010

Born in Lamongan (East Java), 17 July 1971. **Educations:** 1992 – studied painting (informally) at Studio Seni Rupa UKM Kesenian (Student Art Organization), Jember State University / 2000 – graduated from Historiography Department, Faculty of Cultural Science, Jember State University, (East Java), Indonesia. **Solo Exhibitions:** 2008- Breaking the Wall- Koong Gallery, Jakarta 2000 – Trash Story, Garbage bins comic project, [aikon!] Jakarta / 2002 – The Yellow Project ,Gramedia-Merdeka, Bandung / 2003 – Animalscriba,Via Via Café, Yogyakarta / 2007 – iUrban Rupturesi, Biasa Art Space, Kuta- Bali. **Group Exhibitions:** 2010: Proclamation- Chang Gallery, Seoul Korea 2006 – Drawings from the Stockroom, Biasa Art Space, Bali / 2007 – Neo-Nation, Biennale Jogja IX, Taman Budaya Yogyakarta; International Earth Day Festival, Playground & Arts Center Sayan-Ubud Bali / 2008 – Animal Kingdom, The Last Chronicle, Jogja Gallery, Yogyakarta. **Awards:** 1997 – 1st Winner (Saraswati Prize) The National Poster Art Competition Pimnas X, Udayana University Bali / 1999 – The Best Nominee Students Painting Selection Peksiminal V, STKW / Wilwatikta Art College, Surabaya / 2005 – The Best 5 Winner ITC Wall Painting Competition, ITC Megagrosir Surabaya / 2006 – The Best 20 Comics Lass Uns Fussball Spielen, Aber wo?, Goethe Institut Jakarta.

SONI IRAWAN



▲ **In the broken land #2**
100x400cm

◀ **Untitled**
200x200cm

Born in Yogyakarta, 15 January 1975, Graduated from Indonesian Institute of the Arts, Faculty of Fine Arts **Solo Exhibition 2010** "ODE to PERMATA UNGUKU", Semarang Gallery, Grand Indonesia, Jakarta, Indonesia **2001** Mural exhibition, Apotik Komik, Jogjakarta, Indonesia **Group Exhibition: 2010** «Dua Kota Dua Cerita», Semarang Gallery, Semarang, Indonesia **2009** Biennale Jogja "Jogja Jamming", Taman Budaya Yogyakarta, Jogjakarta, Indonesia "Malaysia Art Expo", Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia "Bazaar Art Fair", Ritz Carlton, Jakarta, Indonesia "Jogja Art Fair" #2, Taman Budaya Yogyakarta, Jogjakarta, "In Rainbow", Esa Sampoerna Art House, Surabaya, "STREET – NOISE", Semarang Gallery, Semarang, "Fresh 4 You", Jogja Gallery, Jogjakarta, Indonesia **2008** "Jogja Art Fair" (JAF), Taman Budaya Yogyakarta, Jogjakarta, "Loro Blonyo Kontemporer", Magelang, Indonesia, "Urban Art Fest" Mural Project, Kompas newspaper anniversary, Pantai Karnaval, Ancol, Jakarta, Indonesia **2006** "Fringers Art", Toi Moi Gallery, Jakarta, Indonesia **2005** "Art For Aceh", Taman Budaya Yogyakarta, Jogjakarta, Indonesia **2004** "Neo Indies", Kedai Kebun, Jogjakarta, Indonesia, "GEDEBOOK!!!", Kedai Kebun Forum, Jogjakarta, Indonesia, Mural Exhibition, Duke Distro & Clothing, Bali, Indonesia **2003** "CountryBution" (Biennale Yogyakarta VII), Taman Budaya Yogyakarta, Jogjakarta, Indonesia, Digital Art Exhibition, Gramedia Bookstore, Jogjakarta, Indonesia "NOBODY", Mon Décor Gallery, Jakarta, Indonesia

LAURENT SEGRETIER

From young age, French born Laurent Segretier has been fascinated by visual images. After a degree in visual communications, he has chosen photography as his tool to "see more things than the eyes." He moved to Beijing in 2003 where art direction and a wide range of design projects have shaped his aesthetics and ability to bring his ideas and visions to reality. Currently based in Hongkong, Segretier presents images with a beauty and power fuelled by his focus on aesthetics and experimentation. Rather than conventionally depicting his subjects, form dominates the narrative of the subject. His recent work is based on the interplay of light and water. The slow motions and gravity-defying images under water has given the human body a new freedom, further enhances the sense of an imagined reality. His work as both an artist and a fashion photographer has seen him grace the pages of Prestiges.



REI

Reinhold Makasutji aka REI is Jazz and Soul fanatic. His love for Jazz started on earlier age from his musician father. He listened to the sound of Miles Davies, John Coltrane, Lester Young, Duke Ellington, Sun-Ra, Billie Holiday, Roy Ayers, Bill Evans, and many more.

As producer, re-mixer and DJ, REI got his first taste of electronic music when he was in Seattle from spring 1997 to fall 2006.

His love for Detroit Sound, inspire him to make his own music production based in Jakarta, Indonesia.

Artist such as Jeff Mills, Carl Craig, Paperclip People, Juan Atkins, Jay Dee (J-Dilla), Dwele, Waajed, Titonton Duvante, Dabrye, DJ Krush, DJ Cam, DJ Shadow, La Funk Mob from Mo Wax (earlier 90's production) and Ninja Tune are his early inspiration to create music.

As DJ, he's known for his eclectic DJ set, he introduces the sound of jazz in different format. From Down tempo, Trip Hop, Hip Hop, Jazzy Groove, Latin Breaks, Broken Beat, Deep House and Minimal, all the way to Boogie, Electro Funk, Disco, he always try to introduce new sound to the mix.

Because of his eclectic styles, he got invited to join Seattle Label called FOURTHCITY in 2003.

From 2004 to 2006, he was regular DJ on highly anticipated popular Tuesday night at Lo-Fi performance gallery as a part of FOURTHCITY event called STOP-BITTING.

He started F.O.B (Future of Beats) in 2005 with Kamui Sumida, Michito and Suntzu Sound to spread deep minimal infectious space boogie funk vibes to Seattle Music Scene.

In this event we invited re-known DJ such as Daz-I-Kue, Domu, Dego from 4 Hero, Rich Medina, Ahu and FOURTHCITY Collective DJ's.

Now in Jakarta, he spreads his love for Jazz regularly on Tabac and also on other different events as well such as Potato Head Grand Opening with Cro-Magnon

and DJ Masaya Fantasista from Jazzy Sport - Tokyo, Japan, SUNDAZE and many other places.

Also, he starts producing numerous songs in different format of music from Minimal, Jazzy Hip Hop, Breaks, Soulful Beat and Deep House that heavily influenced by Jazz.

After long overdue, he will release his first EP by the year of Libra in 2010

Also starting this June, he and Bagus Yoga started event called HOME COOKING with local talent such as DJ Nasa, S-Tea, Kulki and local DJ talents to spread out the love for our music to Jakarta Scene.

Don't sleep on this one!!!!

For more information regarding REI please visit at

<http://www.fourthcity.net/artists/?a=43>



DJ Nasa

Details: DJ Nasa began his DJing career in 1997 in Jakarta before moving to the UK for 3 1/2 years. While in the UK DJ Nasa was greatly influenced by the skills of the DJ's around him and the music they played. Taking an interest in the technical aspects of DJing, Nasa has been refining his scratch techniques over the past five years after moving back to Jakarta. Since a child Nasa always took an interest in music, playing around with his fathers collection of old Jazz and other genres. With his true love lying in the area of DJ Breaks and Grooves DJ Nasa's musical interest is vast, spanning from Acid Jazz to House to Drum & Bass and Hip Hop. Not only is Nasa a DJ he also applies his musical knowledge to create original production and beats that he uses to scratch over and write and record his own unique songs. As a key member of The Diplomats DJ Nasa provides quality production and his technical scratching skills to the explosive live show.

Recent Accomplishments: DJ Nasa Has opened for the following artists:

- Inul Daratista @ The Golden Crown Disco
- Ja Rule @ The Grand Manhattan Club (2005)
- Sean Paul @ Tennis Indoor, Senayan Jakarta (2004)

- Gemilang @ Kafe Taman Semanggi Jakarta (2003)
- NAUGHTY by NATURE Pantai Festival Ancol at Indo Dance Music Festival 2008
- He performed for gigs at Gods Kitchen (2003) @ Pantai Festival in Ancol
- LMH 2003 Look Model Hunt @ Noval Hotel in Bali
- MEDIUM RARE Sneaker & Urban Art Exhibition @ Museum Nasional in Jakarta 2005
- SNEAKER PIMPS Jakarta Exhibition @ Semanggi Expo in Jakarta 2007

as well as many local gigs in Jakarta, he has also DJed for Dewi Sandra, Iwa K, The Bones, Neo, The Juice, The Diplomats, DICE, and DYNOMONK.



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PARIS

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