



TOKAS Project Vol. 7

Singing Birds, Moving Mountains

— Exhibition exploring the possibilities of the urban periphery

TOKAS Project is designed to foster international exchange and inspire reflection on diverse themes such as art and society from multicultural perspectives. In its seventh iteration, the project welcomes Ayos Purwoaji, a 2023 participant in TOKAS's Curator Residency Program, as co-curator. This exhibition probes the potential of outlying regions through the works and activities of artists from Indonesia and Japan.

Information

Exhibition Title: TOKAS Project Vol. 7 "Singing Birds, Moving Mountains"
 Artists: OBANA Kenichi, Prewangan Studio, Rangas Wengi
 Co-Curator: Ayos PURWOAJI
 Period: 2024/10/5 (Sat)–11/10 (Sun)
 Venue: Tokyo Arts and Space Hongo (2-4-16 Hongo, Bunkyo-ku, Tokyo)
 Open Hours: 11:00 - 19:00 (Last entry 18:30)
 Closed: Mondays (Except 10/14, 11/4), 10/15, 11/5
 Admission: Free
 Organizer: Tokyo Arts and Space, Museum of Contemporary Art Tokyo,
 Tokyo Metropolitan Foundation for History and Culture
 Support: Embassy of the Republic of Indonesia in Japan
 Website: <https://www.tokyoartsandspace.jp/en/archive/exhibition/2024/20241005-7263.html>

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Overview

In the aftermath of the pandemic, Japan has seen a major population influx to Tokyo and vicinity, further intensifying the concentration of the population in the capital region. Meanwhile, Indonesia plans to gradually relocate its capital approximately 2,000 kilometers from Jakarta to Nusantara, in East Kalimantan province on the east coast of the island of Borneo, starting in 2024 due to issues such as traffic congestion, air pollution, and land subsidence. While cities have historically been hubs of power and magnets for people and goods, such fraying of urban fabrics is now an undeniable global phenomenon.

This exhibition showcases artists who pursue creative endeavors in rural locations, motivated by structural changes in the societies of both Indonesia and Japan. Like birds that play an essential role in the Earth's ecosystem, these artists' locally rooted works have the capacity to carry seeds across diverse environments, and are collectively imbued with the power to metaphorically move mountains.



Related Events

Artist Talk

Date: 2024/10/5 (Sat) 15:00 – 16:30

Speakers: OBANA Kenichi, Prewangan Studio, Rangas Wengi, Ayos PURWOAJI

*With Japanese-English interpreter

Talk Event "Women who moved to Indonesia"

Date: 2024/10/14 (Mon) 15:00 – 16:00

Speakers: OBANA Kenichi, HOMMA Mei (Artist)

*Available only in Japanese

*Additional events are planned. For more latest updates, please visit the TOKAS website.

Artists/ PR images *Please contact PR for more images.

OBANA Kenichi

Obana, whose works address themes of human activity, tradition, landscape, and history, presents a new installation titled *Gazing Into the Distance / The Tale of Jagatara Oharu*. It is inspired by the story of Jagatara Oharu, which unfolded in Nagasaki during the Edo period (1603-1868). Amid increasing suppression of Christianity, Oharu was exiled to Jakarta on the grounds that she was of mixed race (European and Japanese). She was historically portrayed in various media as a tragic figure, but recent research has found that Oharu succeeded in business and independently established a life for herself in Jakarta.

Comprising drawings and sculptures, the installation focuses on Oharu's escape from feudal constraints upon arrival in Jakarta, and questions the structures and values of Japanese society.

[PROFILE]

Born in Gunma in 1981. Based in Akita. Graduated with an MFA in Painting from University of Tsukuba.

Recent exhibitions: "Echigo-Tsumari Art Triennale 2024," Matsudai History Museum, Tokamachi, Niigata, "Tamagawa Geontology," Chofu City Cultural Center Tazukuri, Tokyo, 2024, "Aichi Triennale 2022," "VOCA - THE VISION OF CONTEMPORARY ART 2021," The Ueno Royal Museum, Tokyo, "The Ecology of Expression," Arts Maebashi, 2019.

Recent awards: "Jomo Art and Culture Award," 2022, "VOCA 2021," Grand Prize, "Tokyo Midtown Award 2015," Excellent Prize.



1. *Deep in the forest, and 2018*
Ink on Watson paper, jelutong
Photo: KUSANAGI Yu

Prewangan Studio

Prewangan Studio is located in Tuban on the north coast of East Java, Indonesia. The city is encircled by large industrial complexes, including cement factories, coal-fired power plants, and facilities operated by Indonesia's state-owned oil company PT Pertamina (Persero). The region is steeped in the mythology of the sea goddess Dewi Lanjar, and rituals are held that involve chanting mantras and casting black offerings into the sea to amass wealth.

In this exhibition they present the installation *Pesugihan Dhedhet Kemukus*, inspired by coal transport ships off the Tuban coast and the "pursuit of wealth that comes at a black cost," analogous to the sea rituals. The work reimagines traditional offering platforms, and employs sculpture combined with video and sound to explore contemporary industrial activity through the lens of Dewi Lanjar rituals.

[PROFILE]

Prewangan Studio is based in Tuban, on the north coast of East Java approximately 100 kilometers west of Surabaya, Indonesia's second-largest city. The studio is an open, collaborative, citizen-led community that applies the DIY spirit to creating, developing, and experimenting with objects and products.

Members: Indra Prayhogi, Syaiful Ahmad Kurdiantoro, Buntas Pradoto, Ilmal Yakin, Adiansah Toat Saputro, Moch Rico Pramudya



2. *Grumbul Pangkalan Dimar 2022*
Wood, iron, aluminum, resin, gamelan,
arduino, electronic part



3. *Dengung Lohjinawi 2023*

Rangas Wengi

Rangas Wengi is based in Sukolilo, Pati in Central Java, and conducts research focused on local performing arts, particularly the dance performance known as Tayub. The word Tayub implies “organized to maintain harmony,” and Mbah Madi, a prominent figure in Sukolilo’s folk arts, was a frequent participant.

This exhibition features sculpture incorporating the orderly essence of Tayub, which conveys respect for others and aspirations for prosperity, while sounding an alarm about the unstable security situation afflicting Sukolilo society today.

[PROFILE]

Rangas Wengi is an art collective active since 2021 in the rural region of Sukolilo, Pati, which is home to approximately 90,000 people. The group fuses contemporary art with traditional aesthetics to produce works rooted in the everyday life of the agricultural community.

Members: Bagussatya, Nurul Dwi, Iqbal Havid etc.



4. *Naga Bencana* 2023



5. *Unstable Nature* 2022

Co-Curator

Ayos PURWOAJI

Ayos Purwoaji is a curator working at the intersection of history, architecture and fine art. Since 2015, he has worked on a number of curatorial projects, part of them represents his interest in the practice of vernacular archiving and collective memory. He co-founded the Surabaya Contemporary Heritage Council (SCHC), a study group that explores critical discourses on cultural heritage.

[PROFILE]

Born in Jember (Indonesia) in 1987. Lives and works in Surabaya. Graduated with a BA in Industrial Product Design from Sepuluh Nopember Institute of Technology in 2013.

Participant in TOKAS Curator Residency Program in 2023. Director of the East Java Biennale in 2023.

Recent curations: “Jakarta International Photo Festival,” Blok M, 2022, “Djinn Diplomacy,” Kyushu Geibunkan, Fukuoka, 2022, “Biennale Jogja XVI,” Jogja National Museum, Indonesia, 2021.

TOKAS Project Vol. 7 "Singing Birds, Moving Mountains"
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