

# I GUSTI AYU KADEK MURNIASIH

(b. 1966-2006, Tabanan, Bali, Indonesia)

As a child, I Gusti Ayu Kadek Murniasih (Murni) followed her family when they relocated to Makassar, Sulawesi, as part of a transmigration programme. She returned to Bali in 1987 and settled in Ubud, where she trained under painter I Dewa Putu Mokoh, adopting and later subverting the Pengosekan style of painting. By 1992, she began introducing the Balinese art world to her extraordinary talent, unveiling an intensely personal and vividly imagined world that centred on female identity and lived experience. From 1995 onwards, she participated in numerous group exhibitions in Indonesia and internationally, with solo shows at the Seniwati Gallery of Art by Women in Ubud (1995), as well as in Australia, Italy, and Hong Kong's Fringe Club (1998). She passed away in Ubud, Bali, on 11 January 2006.

Murni's work was initially met with criticism, dismissed as 'dirty', 'perverse', and 'immoral'. Yet, to categorise her practice merely as an explicit exploration of sexuality is to reduce its complexity. She did not paint sex; she painted life—infused with the objects, emotions, and experiences that surrounded her. Through her unfiltered imagination, the ordinary became extraordinary, transformed by a raw and instinctive visual language that defied convention. Beneath her metaphors and symbols lay a deeply personal narrative—one that explored her identity, her environment, and the multitudes of her femininity.

Murni's technique was as compelling as her vision. She followed no rigid compositional principles, instead allowing forms to emerge intuitively. Her canvases eschewed predictable structures—figures and objects might materialise from unexpected corners, or swell and distort at the heart of the composition. Unrestrained by moral or religious codes, her work possessed a surreal naivety, where curved lines and sparse, expressive strokes evoked a sense of both vulnerability and defiance.

Murni's legacy endures as a radical and singular voice in Indonesian contemporary art—one that reshaped the visual discourse on female agency, desire, and self-expression.

## EDUCATION

1995 Studied at Sanggar Seniwati Gallery; Self-taught Artist

## SOLO EXHIBITIONS

- 2024 The Armory Show, New York, United States  
Art Basel Miami Beach - Survey, Miami, United States
- 2023 Art Basel - Feature, Basel, Switzerland
- 2022 *I See Myself Floating*, Gajah Gallery, Jakarta, Indonesia
- 2021 *Shards of My Dreams That Remain in My Consciousness*, Gajah Gallery, Singapore
- 2019 *I Gusti Ayu Kadek Murniasih – On Beginnings*, Gajah Gallery, Yogyakarta, Indonesia
- 2016 *Celebrating Murni*, Sudakara Art Space
- 2003 *Interpeltation*, CP Open Biennale, National Gallery, Jakarta, Indonesia
- 2002 Numthong Gallery, Bangkok, Thailand

- 2001 Internet Gallery, Japan
- 2000 Cemeti Art House, Yogyakarta, Indonesia  
*Fantasi Tubuh*, Nadi Gallery, Jakarta, Indonesia  
*Fantasi Tubuh*, Lingkar Becik Gallery, Jakarta, Indonesia
- 1999 Estro Gallery, Padova, Italy  
Bali 3000 Internet Café and Art Gallery, Ubud, Bali, Indonesia  
Old Bakery Gallery, Sydney, Australia  
Cemeti Art House, Yogyakarta, Indonesia
- 1998 SENIWATI Gallery Ubud, Bali, Indonesia  
Meat Market Craft Centre, Melbourne, Australia  
Studio Cristoforo, Bologna, Italy  
Serai Hotel, Karangasem, Bali, Indonesia  
Nokia Gallery, Fringe Club, Hong Kong  
The Flour Market, Fiera Padova, Italy
- 1996 Strand Bar, Kuta, Bali, Indonesia  
Café Tutmak, Ubud, Bali, Indonesia
- 1995 Seniwati Showspace, Ubud, Bali, Indonesia

## GROUP EXHIBITIONS

- 2025 *Big Bang: A Myth of Origins*, Gajah Gallery, Singapore  
ArtSG 2025, Gajah Gallery, Singapore
- 2024 *MuMoToMo*, Gajah Gallery Jakarta, Indonesia  
*Ocean in Us: Southern Visions of Women Artists*, Kaohsiung Museum of Fine Arts, Kaohsiung, Taiwan  
*Forgive Us Our Trespasses: Of (Un)Real Frontierism Of (Im)Mortalities, and Other Transcendences*, Haus der Kulturen der Welt, Berlin, Germany  
*Two Sides of One Coin: Reflections and Transformations*, Taikang Art Museum, Beijing, China  
*Connecting Bodies: Asian Women Artists*, National Museum of Modern and Contemporary, Seoul, South Korea  
*Ten Thousand Suns* 24th Biennale of Sydney, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney, Australia  
*Small World* 13th Taipei Biennial, Taipei Fine Arts Museum, Taipei, Taiwan  
*di sini, d.l.l. (here, etc.)*, Museum MACAN, Jakarta, Indonesia
- 2023 *Deep Inside My Heart*, National Gallery of Australia, Canberra, Australia
- 2022 *Dream of The Day*, Ilham Gallery, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia  
*Is It Morning For You Yet?* 58th Carnegie International, Carnegie Museum of Art, Pennsylvania, United States
- 2021 *Fresh Vision: Complex Humour*, Gajah Gallery, Singapore (Digital)
- 2020 *Fresh Vision: Challenging Convention*, Gajah Gallery, Singapore (Digital)  
Art Basel Hong Kong – Kabinett, Gajah Gallery, Singapore
- 2019 *Shaping Geographies: Art | Woman | Southeast Asia*, Gajah Gallery, Singapore  
*Genset*, PUBLIKA Whitebox, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia  
*Sea Breeze*, Biennale Jogja, Hong Kong Pavilion  
*Contemporary Worlds: Indonesia*, National Gallery of Australia, Canberra, Australia  
*Balinese Masters: Aesthetic DNA Trajectories of Balinese Visual Art*, Jl. Kawasan Nusa Dua Resort, Bali, Indonesia  
*Dunia Dalam Berita*, Museum Macan, Jakarta, Indonesia

- Bongkar Gudang #1 XOXO*, RUBANAH Underground Hub, Jakarta, Indonesia
- 2018 *MEDIUM @ PLAY*, Gajah Gallery, Singapore
- 2017 *DOMESTICITY VI*, Kayu, Bali, Indonesia
- 2016 *Afterwork*, Ilham Gallery with Para Site Hong Kong, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
- 2014 *TO THE YOUNG GENERATION: A POTPOURRI OF THE CONTEMPORARY*, OHD Museum, Jawa Tengah, Indonesia
- 2005 *Historiografi Seni Rupa Bali (Historiography of Bali Fine Arts)*, Summit Event Bali Biennale, Bali, Indonesia
- Lifestyles*, Danes Art Veranda, Denpasar, Bali, Indonesia
- 2004 Art Summit 4, National Gallery, Jakarta, Indonesia
- Tamarin: In Pursuit of Identity*, Nava Art Gallery, Bali, Indonesia
- Merahnya Merah*, Nadi Gallery, Jakarta
- 10 Fine Art Gallery, Sanur, Bali, Indonesia
- 2003 *Kado*, Nadi Gallery, Jakarta, Indonesia
- Interpellation*, CP Open Biennale, National Gallery, Jakarta, Indonesia
- Galeri Cipta Taman Ismail Marzuki, Jakarta, Indonesia
- All You Need is Love*, Nadi Gallery, Jakarta, Indonesia
- 2002 *Sepuluh Perempuan Pelukis, 80 years of Tamansiswa*, Taman Budaya, Yogyakarta, Indonesia
- Group Show at Belvedere, 140 Hill Street, Singapore
- 2001 SENIWATI, Art Centre, Denpasar, Bali, Indonesia
- Pranoto Gallery, Ubud, Bali, Indonesia
- Bali Bandung*, Retro Gallery, Sanur, Bali, Indonesia
- SENIWATI, ASIAN Conference, Canberra, Australia
- Casa de Cantabria, Madrid, Spain
- Klik Gallery, Phnom Penh, Cambodia
- Sky Door Art Place Doyama, Tokyo, Japan
- Perempuan dan Diseminasi Makna Ruang*, National Gallery, Jakarta, Indonesia
- Membaca Frida Kahlo*, Nadi Gallery, Jakarta, Indonesia
- 2000 Cemeti Art House, Yogyakarta, Indonesia
- Women After Women*, SENIWATI, Seniwati Showspace
- SENIWATI, Gallery Cipta II, Taman Ismail Marzuki, Jakarta, Indonesia
- 1999 SENIWATI, Nusantara Rain Forest, Vegal Park, Walarode, Germany
- Duet exhibition with Nyoman Masriadi, Cemeti Art House, Yogyakarta, Indonesia
- Knalpot*, Inaugural show of Cemeti Art House, Yogyakarta, Indonesia
- 1998 Rudana Museum, Mas, Ubud, Bali, Indonesia
- SENIWATI, Oberoi Hotel, Seminyak, Bali, Indonesia
- SENIWATI, Nusantara Rainforest Vogelpark Walsrode, Germany
- 1997 SENIWATI, Rudana Museum, Ubud, Bali, Indonesia
- 1996 SENIWATI, Bentara Budaya, Jakarta, Indonesia
- SENIWATI, Martini Gallery, Hong Kong
- 1995 SENIWATI, Media Park Sud, Cologne, Germany
- Unveiling the Goddess*, SENIWATI, Ubud, Bali, Indonesia
- SENIWATI, Museum Puri Lukisan, Ubud, Bali, Indonesia
- ISWALI, Intan Village Hotel, Kuta, Bali, Indonesia
- ISWALI, Paon Mas, Galleria Nusa Dua, Bali, Indonesia
- SENIWATI, Bali Arts Centre, Denpasar, Bali, Indonesia