

PRESS RELEASE - FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

TRAJECTORIES

12 – 21 Nov @ Gallery Habana, 460 Vedado, La Habana, Cuba

Gajah Gallery is proud to present, TRAJECTORIES, a landmark exhibition in Cuba featuring a selection of Southeast Asian based artists including; Ashley Bickerton, Ahmad Zakii Anwar, Mangu Putra, Yunizar, Yusra Martunus, Putu Sutawijaya, Alfi Jumaldi, Handiirman Saputra & Ugo Untoro. This exhibition in Cuba is a second installment to Gajah Gallery's ongoing commitment to expanding the audience base of Southeast Asian Art which had its inception at Lokanat Galleries, Yangon, Myanmar in late 2013, with the fundamental purpose of contributing to the intellectual discourse of contemporary art. TRAJECTORIES opens 12 Nov and runs till 21 Nov 2014.

Jasdeep Sandhu, founder of Gajah Gallery comments: *"TRAJECTORIES is a unique exhibition outside the norm of gallery initiatives such as art fairs and museum shows. It is more focused on the artist and their intersection with a different environment. And the collectors are naturally intrigued."*

Amongst the selection of artists, Bali-based-American artist Ashley Bickerton is the most identifiable with the Latin American audience. Bickerton who still retains a presence in New York through Lehmann Maupin, will showcase new works from his highly sought after *Junk Anthropologies* series which meshes various sub-cultures, offering some acidulous observations on our contemporary existence. There is also an affinity to Bickerton with the Latin American audiences mainly due to the tropical undertones of his paintings that create a sense of equatorial kinship.

Acclaimed Malaysian artist, Ahmad Zakii Anwar contributes to the dialogue with his depiction of animal portraits from his *Tales from the Primordial Garden* series, with the intention to stir within us memories of our primordial origins which modern genetics has determined originated from East Africa. This series brings forth questions of beginning and purpose which the exhibition intends to explore.

The core of the exhibition will be anchored around the collective of Indonesian artists featuring; Mangu Putra, Yunizar, Yusra Martunus, Putu Sutawijaya, Jumaldi Alfo and Ugo Untoro. Cuban art is often time identified with the symbolic story of a country affected by its political and social environment that is an inherent part of its history. This is also akin to Indonesian art which still commonly serves as a personal voice that offers a critique on the current power structures and struggles which have been prevalent since the waning years of the Suharto period in the 1990s.

[About Gajah Gallery]

Gajah Gallery is a Singapore based art gallery that explores the diverse concerns of contemporary Southeast Asia through art from the region. Established in 1996, Gajah Gallery is dedicated to the promotion of Southeast Asian Contemporary Art with a particular emphasis on the **Indonesian Contemporary**. We have limited our scope of activity as it is our primary mission to gain representation for them before increasing our stable of artist. We are focused on these objectives as we believe that every generation produces a limited number of artists who reinvents the wheel.

With growing interest in the recent years, Indonesian contemporary art has seen a marked increase in international collectors. Gajah Gallery's extensive client-base includes private collectors, art consultants, architects and interior designers. Exhibitions are held regularly at the gallery including collaborations with the Singapore Art Museum and the National University of Singapore Museum.

For artist interviews or more information, please contact: Jing Chao (jingchao@gajahgallery.com)

Ashley Bickerton (1959)

Ashley Bickerton graduated from the California Institute of the Arts in 1982 and continued his education in the Whitney Museum's Independent Studies Program in New York. A seminal figure in the East Village scene, Bickerton was one of the original members of the group of artists that became known as "Neo-Geo". Over the last twenty-five years Bickerton has exhibited extensively at the Tate Modern, London; The New Museum of Contemporary Art, New York and the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York. Stepping away from New York, Bickerton has lived and practiced in Bali since the early 1990s. Far from reflecting an idyllic 'island exotica', his works fixate on the compromising, dark and ambiguous underbelly of Balinese and Thai tourist cultures.

Ahmad Zakii Anwar (1955)

A graduate of the School of Art and Design, MARA Institute of Technology Malaysia, Ahmad Zakii Anwar began his career as a graphic artist, producing some of the leading advertising graphics of his time before turning to fine art practice. Zakii came to attention for his virtuosity and command of a spectrum of media from charcoals to oils, building a reputation for stunning photo-realist still-life paintings and expressive portraits. He is lauded for capturing not just city motifs and urban features but also a distinctive psychological dimension and cinematic quality in these scenarios.

Mangu Putra (1963)

Within a short span of time since the beginning of his artistic career, Mangu Putra has caused more than a stir in his exhibitions throughout Indonesia. A graphic designer before turning to full-time painting in 1998, his paintings exude acuteness and sensitivity to visual forms. The influence from his design background is further apparent in his technique and the execution of ideas on his canvases, where strong lines, shapes and colours are composed in a mature and harmonious manner. In creating, Mangu Putra believes in absolute freedom in aesthetic expression. Even though the works of Mangu Putra possesses certain distinctive characteristics, the artist seldom abides by one style of painting –abstract, realistic, figurative.

Putu Sutawijaya (1971)

Hailed as one of the most important young artists to watch out for, Putu Sutawijaya's canvases are highly charged with the energy, or "qi", that is suggestive of Chinese calligraphy masters. While Chinese calligraphy influences his technique, his subject matter captures the essence of Balinese religious and tribal rituals. The visual impact of his canvases is explosive yet contemplative. They reflect the mutual desire for harmony in order and chaos, a oneness with the universe. Man as the centrifugal figure in paintings is distinctively 'Sutawijaya' and continues to be prominent in his works.

Ugo Untoro (1970)

Ugo Untoro graduated from the Indonesia Institute of the Arts in Yogyakarta, where he has since been living and working. He is regarded by many to be one of Indonesia's most established artists, and has received considerable attention for his signature energetic, raw style. His affinity for the street culture and graffiti art of the city has profoundly shaped the development of his artistic philosophy, infusing it with an edgy quality that is manifested through all his works.

Yunizar (1971)

Yunizar spent his formative years at the Indonesian Institute of Arts in Yogyakarta - a school of national pride in the heart of progressive art-making in Indonesia. Yunizar's training reveals itself in his sophisticated expressive style, articulated through a playful composition and subtle palette. Executed primarily in acrylic and pencil, his works stand out in terms of texture, colour, brushwork and rhythm. A restrained palette of cool colours- yellows, browns and greens- is deliberately dirtied and smudged in his working and reworking of the canvas. The result is a highly tactile work that entices the viewer to feel the piece.

Jumaldi Alfi (1973)

Jumaldi Alfi is a painter who works sequentially on a set of ideas and themes. He is a graduate from the Institut Seni Indonesia (ISI) in Yogyakarta, and a member of the Kelompok Seni Rupa Jendela (Jendela Art Group), one of Indonesia's most prominent contemporary art collectives. Alfi is one of the key members in the progressive movement of Indonesian contemporary art, where his pieces present how Western and Chinese contemporary art affects Indonesia's art and society. Commonly found among Alfi's works is the urge for immediacy through the drawing, marking, and scribbling, applied over variations of landscapes and scenes, clued by way of elemental aspects such as foreground, horizon, and suggestions of space. Alfi's markings are feverish, shifting, and ever-transforming, against a tableau that is disconcerting in its fixity and quiet monumentality.

Yusra Martunus (1973)

Since the early 2000s, Yusra has often manipulated the nature of his materials in his objects. Wire or aluminum, for example, is crafted into forms seemingly soft, pliable or even liquid. By this, he also delays the settling of meaning in the signs and forms that he puts forward. This tendency grows stronger as he never gives title, only numbers, to his works. The strategy of allusion is strongly applied by Yusra in his art-making.

[Selected Exhibition Images]



Ashley Bickerton, Arcanery-Chicanery/Chicanery-SophistryC2A_w,

2014, Mixed Media on Jute, 100 x 174 cm



Ahmad Zakii Anwar, Stallion, 2014, Acrylic on Jute, 289 x 148 cm



Mangu Putra, Dua Sahabat (Two Friends), 2014, Acrylic and Oil on Canvas, 160 x 210 cm

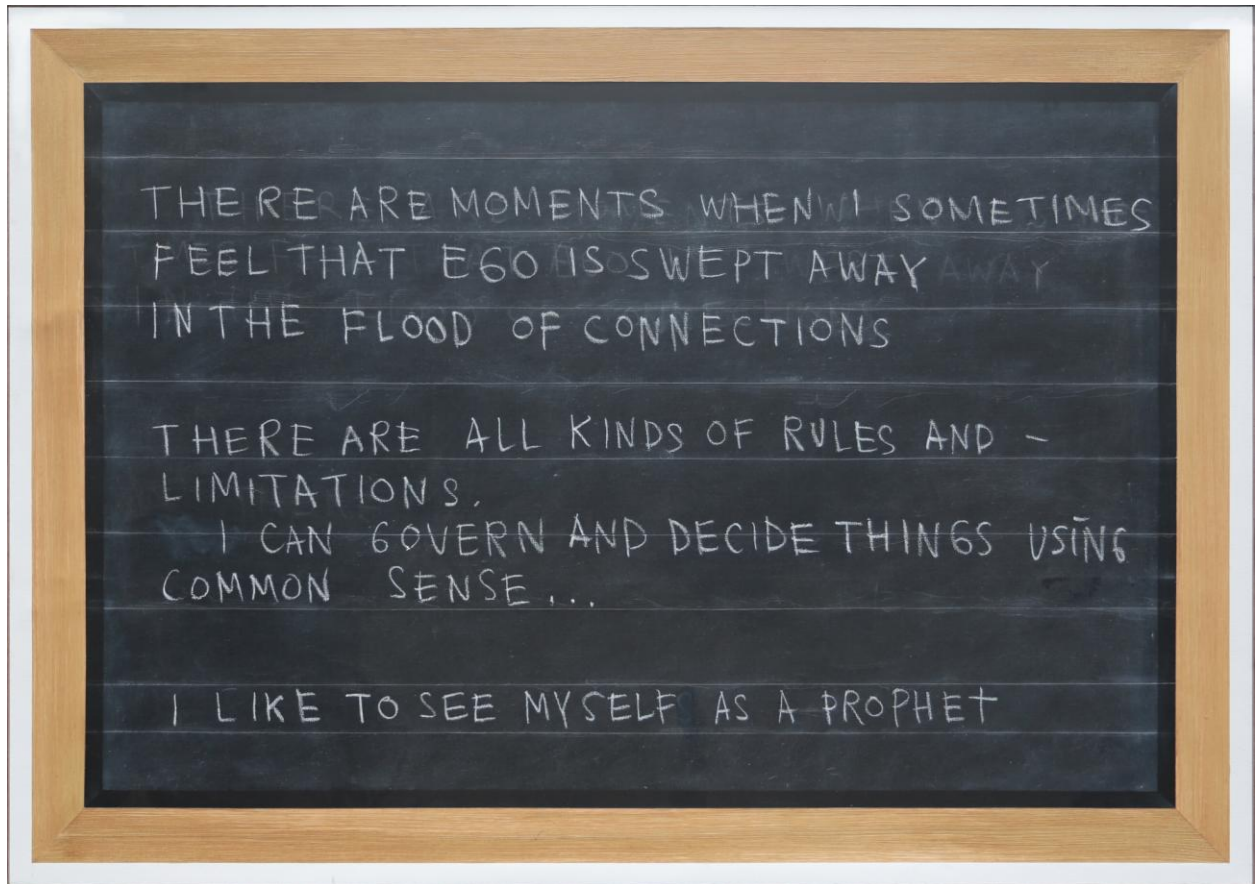
Yunizar, Untitled, 2014, Acrylic on Canvas, 200 x 200 cm



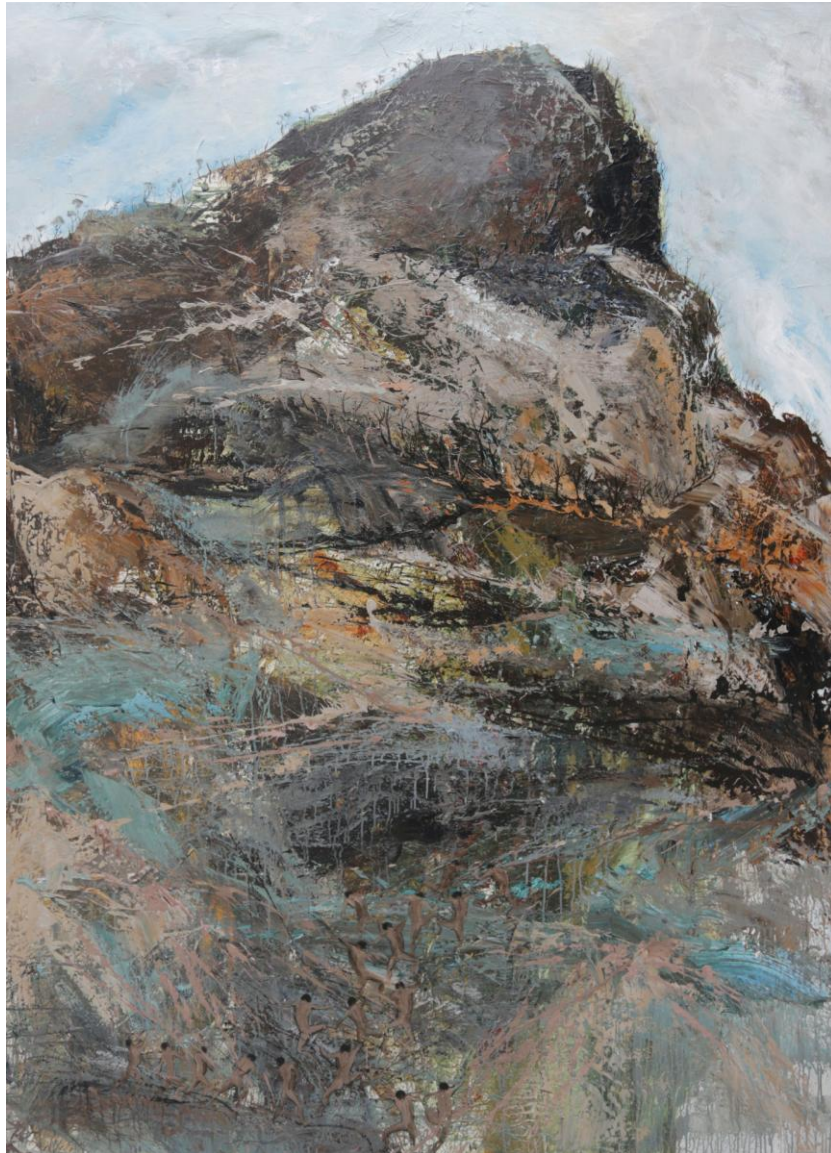
Yusra Martunus, "14104", 2014, Stone, Door Handle, 16.5 x 16 x 8 cm



Ugo Untoro, Think Blue, 2014, Oil on Canvas, 200 x 150 cm



Jumaldi Alfi, Footote #6, 2014, Acrylic on Canvas, 175 x 200 cm



Putu Sutawijaya, Merangkak Naik (Climbing Up), 2014, Oil on Canvas, 250 x 180 cm