



SANTRIAN
ART GALLERY

Writers : • Mikke Susanto
• Ronieste

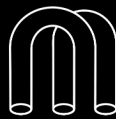
Kissing The Poetry

MANTRA ARDHANA

VISUAL EXHIBITION at SANTRIAN GALLERY

JL.Danau Tamblingan No : 47~ Sanur BALI ~ 80228

OPENING : Friday 9 juni 2023 until 31 july 2023



ORGANIC MIND
everything we made is poetry

w w w . m a n t r a d i g i t a l . c o m

KISSING THE POETRY

2023 – VISUAL ART EXHIBITION

by **MANTRA ARDHANA**



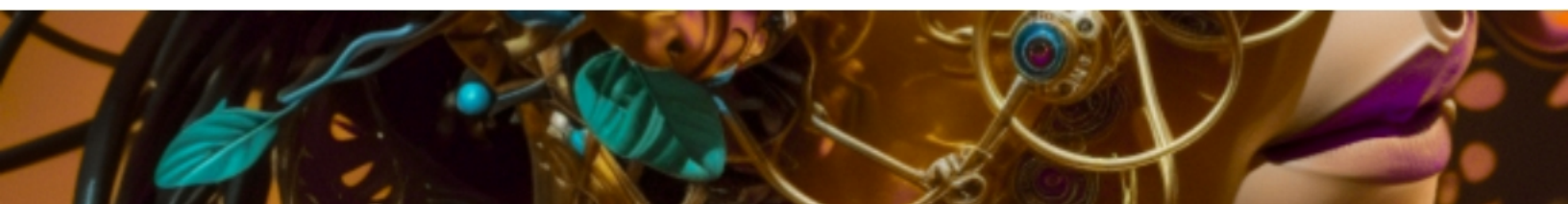
Mantras resonate within each dense work, addressing the problematic balance of human existence. Paintings, installations, and digital creations harbor a curiosity rooted in the concept of macro-micro. A headline that opens the path for humans to comply with the everdifferent and uncertain nature of reality.

Science-mythology, spirituality-profanity, seen-unseen, physical-virtual, real-illusory, black-white, and various opposing realities intertwine like texts within each individual. They cannot be avoided by anyone. It is not easy to decide and choose among them. Interestingly, these oppositions mutually and consistently need each other.

~~Kissing the Devil~~, as the title of the exhibition, aims to recognize, understand, and mark the human 'ignorance' about the many opposing aspects. It is not merely an understanding of 'ignorance,' but also a precise search for positions and perspectives in observing something we do not yet know or recognize.

If we perceive it clearly, all prohibitions, laws, myths, knowledge, or parental advice are products of belief in the macro-micro concept. Can we neutralize or transcend their existence? Therefore, immerse yourself in each artwork in this exhibition. Perhaps you will discover 'something' within them and gain clarity when observing and experiencing them.

Mikke Susanto

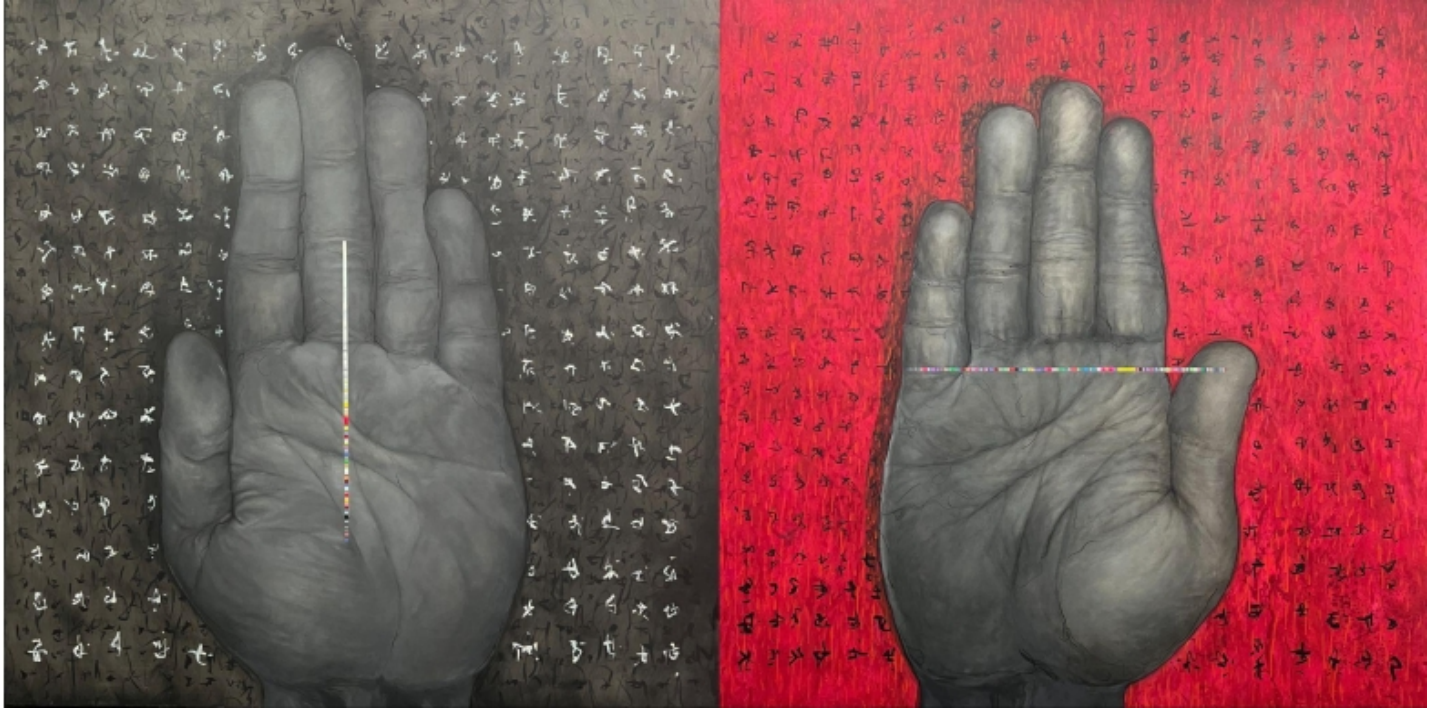




" JANJI DJIWA " - Oil Color on Canvas - 300 cm x 145 cm - Mantra Ardhana - 2023



" THE PROMISE " - Oil Color on Canvas – 200 cm x 120 cm - Mantra Ardhana - 2023



" SEKALA NISKALA " - Oil Color on Canvas – 400 cm x 145 cm - Mantra Ardhana - 2023



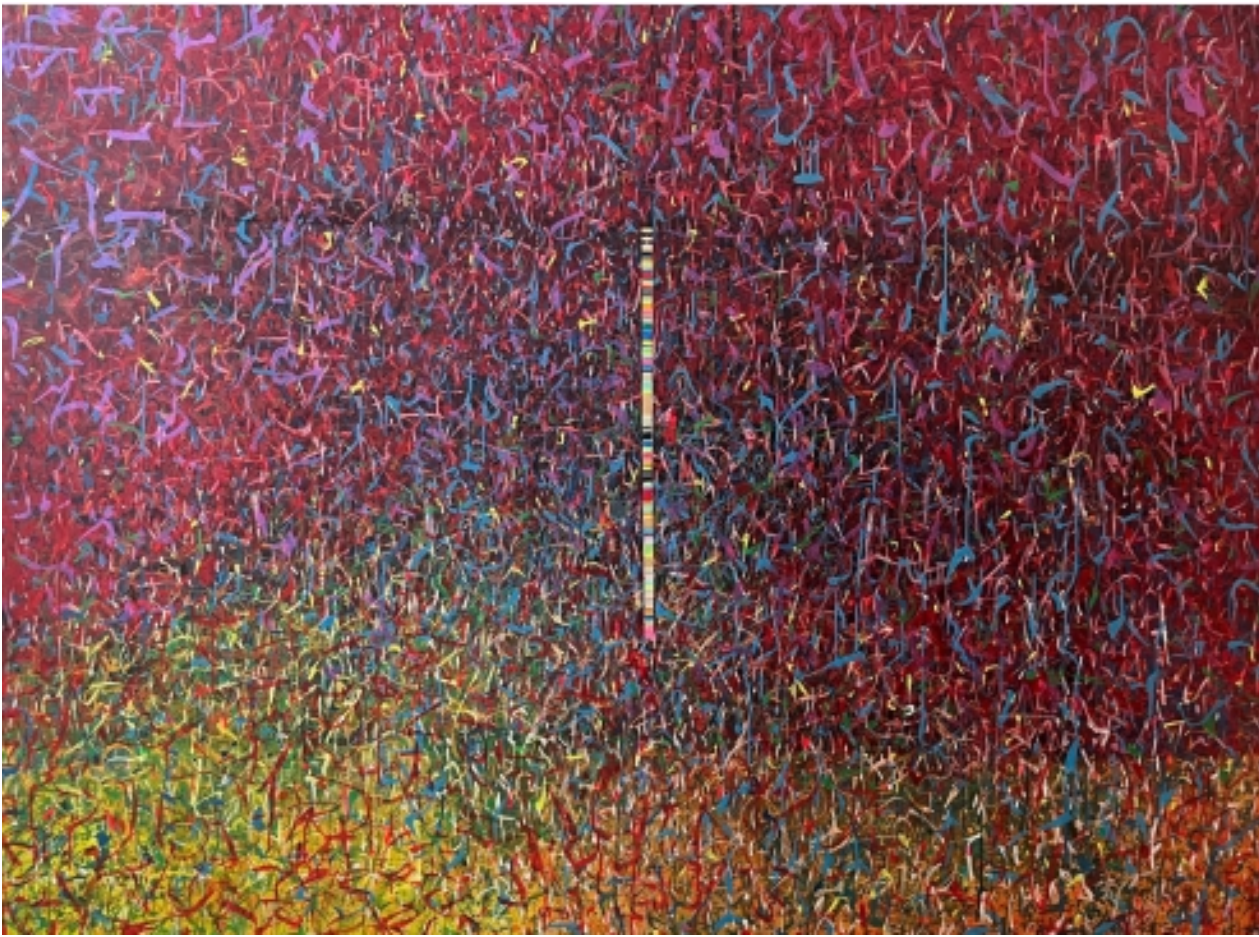
" SECRET GARDEN " - Oil Color on Canvas - 300 cm x 145 cm - Mantra Ardhana - 2023



" KISSING THE DEVIL " - Oil Color on Canvas – 200 cm x 145 cm - Mantra Ardhana - 2023



" INWARD JOURNEY " - Oil Color on Canvas – 250 cm x 160 cm - Mantra Ardhana - 2023



“ **WOMAN** ” - Oil Color on Canvas – 250 cm x 160 cm - Mantra Ardhana - 2023



“ **SOUND of SILENCE BEAUTY** ” - Oil Color on Canvas – 250 cm x 160 cm - Mantra Ardhana - 2023

WATER, PIGMENTS and PAPER

Review of the artwork in watercolor on paper
by Ronieste

Bersua tanpa waktu terdakwa
Tumpah seperti luapan Kali, menetes bagai hujan pertama
Dibiarkannya mereka saling meraba dan mencecap
Di antaranya ada pula yang merambat dan meresap.

This Breath is the topography from the desire in the landscape of life, both past and present. Every line formation - straight, curved - holds the knowledge of life's drama from infancy to now. Its spaces estimate the diverse contours of will; happiness, trauma, or mobius. They are the sediment of practices, emotions, and intelligence stored within.

If breath were a character in a drama, it would be the protagonist. With its various attributes, it enters the stage - a blank sheet of paper - briefly traversing the prologue scene. The movement of its hand establishes a dialogue's propagation into various perspectives where points and lines appear.

It captures echoes that manifest as puddles and then molds them into various forms. Some are angular, imprecise circles, strands, or waves. Amongst these events, breath pauses, observing the gradually metamorphosing light from the pigments on the paper. It relishes and comprehends the interplay of colors that flirt with one another, creating a spectrum; shallowness moving towards depth - linear or random. Some mischievously breach the rigidity of form, creating channels reminiscent of God's water trickling on a windowpane.

In this narrative flow, almost without code, breath moves away from the play's arena. It leaves behind a number of fragmented pools. Does this signify an end? Only it knows. However, what is implied is its belief that something - one of which is perceived as energy - plays a role in placing a point as the final mark. That something can emanate from memory - intimate or societal -, poetic material experienced - language or incidents -, and the universe.

Visual Archaeology

Initially, the eyes are drawn to dominant forms amidst warm colors, bright hues amidst darkness, and vice versa. Or, they are fixated on points and lines - some opposing, others interconnected - that reflect the multifaceted manifestations; be it the gestures of humans, animals, codes, symbols, patterns, and other intricate entities that are challenging to decipher. Then, curiosity demands a gaze towards shapes resembling a collection of land plots or lakes. Tracing each fragment - a legacy of encounters - and immersing oneself in their essence within their frames.



" PUISI GUNUNG " - Water Color on Paper – 10 cm x 10 cm x 4 - Mantra Ardhana - 2023

Titik dan garis dalam empat sekuen.

Asali titik itu lingkaran sedangkan garis adalah segi.

Mereka bertemu dalam transisi perasaan beku hingga mencair.

Mengalir tersurat; kotak, bundar, segitiga.

Tersirat genangan citra; gunung, matahari, bulan, sinar,

cahaya, air, tanda, figur, dan tipografi #

Those letters bring forth a space laden with implications of a culture or a number of nations. The desire to know is drawn to greet and understand them, as they often occupy the forefront or at least stand out compared to other compositions. The body becomes trapped or intentionally surrenders to the trap, in order to escape from an inferior situation. Assuming they are messages, even though they cannot be read in the slightest, they may serve as lines to estimate fields.

"This is my own typography, not meant to be read. It is a kind of symbol, and only I understand its meaning"

" BERCERMIN "
Water Color on Paper – 50 cm x 30 cm
Mantra Ardhana - 2023



Ia menaruh garis separuh wajahnya di tengah gundukan perasaan yang mewujudkan bentangan tubuh bersayap

He is Mantra Ardhana, a visual artist born on the island of Lombok, West Nusa Tenggara Indonesia. Composition, resembling typography - whether random or orderly - can always be found in each of his works.

A series of watercolor paintings on paper signifies the traces of statements born from his thoughts and creative process twelve years ago, stating, "there is something we don't know, but that something exists". He refers to this allegory as the **"Unknown World"**.

In 2008, while working on an art project in Malaysia, Mantra abstracted the concept of the Unknown World to an Australian anthropologist:

"The space exists but is not understood. It's like a fantasy realm, where I can become anything, unlike the real space that is actually false. In that space, anyone can become what they desire, there is no discrimination, it's equal and open, like the virtual world, the internet."



" KISSING THE DEVIL II "

Water Color on Paper – 40 cm x 30 cm
Mantra Ardhana - 2023

Pandang aku saja andai kamu ingin bebas dari benang-benang malam.
Ini ada laut dalam kepalaku. #

Unknown World seperti bayi yang sedang tumbuh, disusui asam garam tapak-tapak pemikirnya. Kedewasaannya diasup oleh gula serta getir fakta dunia, serupa gairah yang ranum dan ada koloni lalat di sekitarnya.

In 2011, through the accumulation of intellectual journeys and artistic practices, the Unknown World transformed like a chrysalis into Organicmind. It is here that Mantra gave birth to typography, which is like a combination of lines and shapes that construct a field. The arrangement, resembling characters, is like an empty space that constructs words and phrases.

" KISSING THE DEVIL III "

Water Color on Paper – 13 cm x 13 cm
Mantra Ardhana - 2023





" KISSING THE DEVIL IV "

Water Color on Paper – 40 cm x 30 cm
Mantra Ardhana - 2023

Mantra considers it as a paragraph. Perhaps this is part of consciousness, where language, with one of its elements, letters, is something that constructs consciousness as the "I", as in Freud Sigmund's mirror fragment. So here, the artist becomes like a mirror for appreciation to project the "I". I, as an artist, and I, as an audience (appreciation), are constructed beings shaped by society.



" KISSING THE DEVIL V "

Water Color on Paper – 40 cm x 30 cm
Mantra Ardhana - 2023



" ANIMAL "

Water Color on Paper – 40 cm x 30 cm
Mantra Ardhana - 2023

Binal cenderung menghidupkan sebaliknya Banal mematikan



" FLOWERS of THE FOREST II "

Water Color on Paper – 13 cm x 13 cm
Mantra Ardhana - 2023



" DJIWA "

Water Color on Paper – 30 cm x 30 cm

Mantra Ardhana - 2023

Di kedalaman palung itu aku berlipat kali merendam rindu yang selalu cinta curiga,
di situ pula aku kandaskan akal sehat demi kegilaan yang estetik #



" DJIWA II "

Water Color on Paper – 50 cm x 30 cm

Mantra Ardhana - 2023



" DAUN DJIWA "

Water Color on Paper – 30 cm x 30 cm
Mantra Ardhana - 2023

Ada sekeping semangat saat nyawa-nyawa direnggut guncangan bumi.
Daun kering itu jadi saksi, juga korban, sekaligus menjadi naungan,
hingga setitik dalam bundaran itu mendapat asa, meski tak mudah ditemukan #

Because those symbols appear to construct patterns, it is understandable that appreciation sometimes perceives them as the decorative actions of an artist. This assumption aligns with the artistic creation in the past that has given birth to works with decorative touches. Mantra emphasizes that decoration is a characteristic inherent in every human being, the act of arranging something.

"As a characteristic, decoration often emerges in the creation of artwork when we desire a perfect condition. Perfectionists", he stated.

" EARTH POETRY "

Water Color on Paper – 13 cm x 13 cm
Mantra Ardhana - 2023





" WARRIORS "

Water Color on Paper – 40 cm x 30 cm
Mantra Ardhana - 2023

Matahari berselimut petang adalah jutaan bulu rabaan,
mereka tekstur romantisme yang menandai ketegangan abad #

Derau acap muncul pada setiap kubangan yang mengering, – hasil siraman cat - ada yang berupa bercak-bercak, juga ada yang membentuk jalinan gelombang mirip permukaan gurun pasir yang diterpa angin.

Watercolor and paper are tools and materials that, when compared to other media, have their own techniques and provide unique visual effects. Their nature, which is deeper in terms of absorption, gives the impression of wetness even when dry, and transparency, making it a vast playground for Mantra Ardhana.

Their expression tends to be implicit, spontaneous, like drizzle in the dry season. Absurd.

" MATAHARIKU "

Water Color on Paper – 30 cm x 30 cm
Mantra Ardhana - 2023





" FLOWERS of THE FOREST "

Water Color on Paper – 50 cm x 30 cm
Mantra Ardhana - 2023

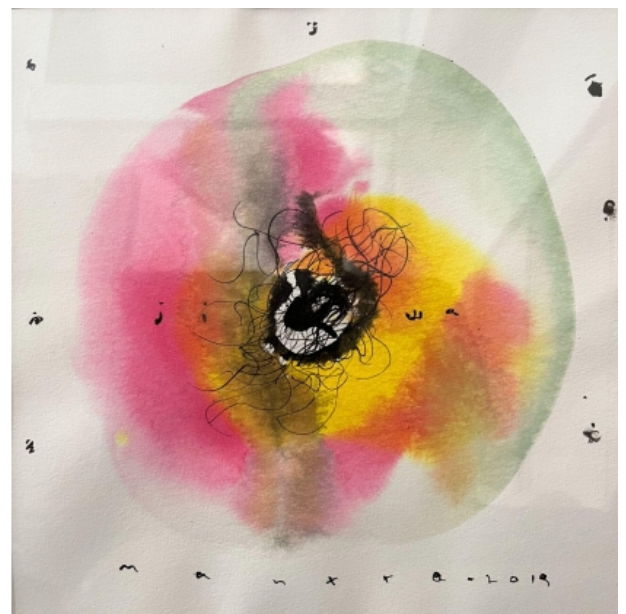
Tubuh,
bejana hasrat yang nyaris segalanya gelombang,
sudutnya samar, kerap berujung hambar #

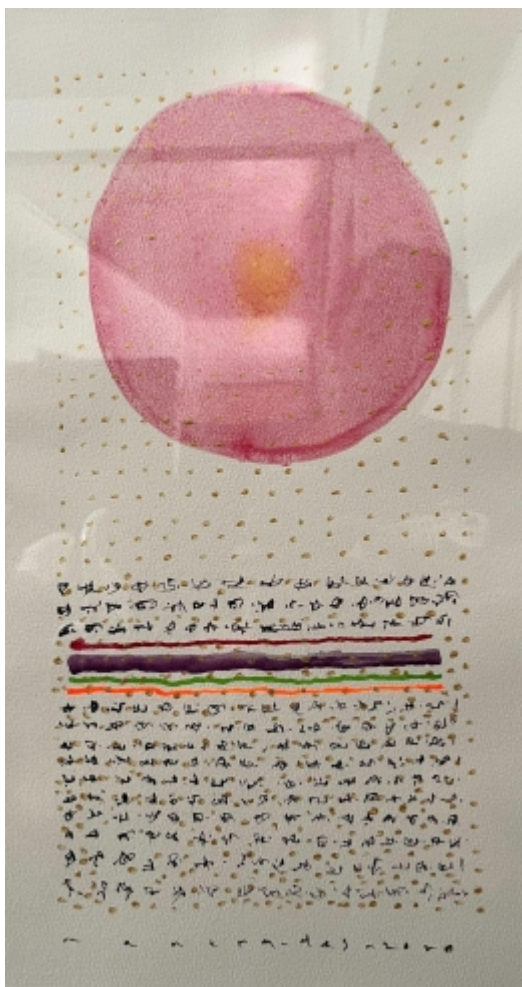
In reality, there is no satisfaction. The desire for ideas expressed through brushstrokes, strokes, strokes, and various other touches must be controlled. That is where the "Tapak Dara" is embedded.

For Mantra Ardhana, the "Tapak Dara" that we encounter in several of his works is not just a symbol or sign to conclude an action but a manifestation of his religiosity, believing that balance is the ultimate, the pinnacle. It unites human desires in the form of horizontal lines with the will of the universe or the creator in the form of vertical lines.

" NEW HOPE "

Water Color on Paper – 30 cm x 30 cm
Mantra Ardhana - 2023





" THE MOON of POETRY "

Water Color on Paper – 50 cm x 30 cm
Mantra Ardhana - 2023

Each artwork is a reflection of an archive where knowledge and experiences reside. The archive is the result of the artist's dedication and responsibility to what they do, including the intensity and perseverance of practice, research, and creation.

When the artist confronts an object, they mentally describe their ideas, and then the body projects those images. Similarly, the archive operates instantaneously through the subconscious.

And finally, enjoy and encounter the archives of knowledge and aesthetic experiences that are implicit in every layer of Mantra Ardhana's visual works.

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" HOME "

Water Color on Paper – 50 cm x 30 cm
Mantra Ardhana - 2023



" THE BRAYUT " - New Media – three parts @40 cm x 40 cm - Mantra Ardhana - 2023

MANTRA ARDHANA

was born on August 22, 1971, on Lombok Island, West Nusa Tenggara. He completed his undergraduate studies in 1999 at the Faculty of Fine Arts - Fine Arts - Indonesian Institute of the Arts (ISI) Yogyakarta. In his artistic creation, Mantra is not limited to conventional mediums (painting), but his research and experimentation extend to the realms of music, electronics, digital technology (audio, visual, video), as well as the latest, Artificial Intelligence (AI).

Mantra treats these various mediums as tools and materials to expand the expression of ideas. In addition to painting, his interdisciplinary approach is manifested in digital art, sound art, song albums, music scores (for film, dance, theater), media art performances, and new media art.

One of the new media works presented in this exhibition is titled **THE BRAYUT**. The concept originates from a classic story in Balinese society about the perseverance of a mother named Men Brayut, who gave birth to and raised 18 children. Due to her resilience, fortitude, and purity of heart, the Balinese people consider Men Brayut as an icon of virtue and wisdom.

The perseverance, fortitude, and purity of heart embodied by the mother figure are presented by Mantra in the form of a trilogy, incorporating the intersection of graphics, electronics, digital technology, and AI. The projections resulting from the treatment of various tools and artistic disciplines create an illusion of depth and sublimation amidst the turbulence of civilization, innovation, and the rapid pace of technology itself. **THE BRAYUT** feels like a time machine that invites us to rediscover buried mysteries, with its vehicle being its predatory body.

For the public who wishes to learn about Mantra Ardhana's complete biography and his latest works, they can visit the website at <https://mantradigital.com>

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About the writers

Dr. MIEKE SUSANTO, MA

Lecturer in the Department of Art Governance - FSR ISI Yogyakarta. He completed his Bachelor's degree in Fine Arts at ISI Yogyakarta and his Master's and Doctorate degrees in Performing Arts and Visual Arts Studies (PSPSR) at the Graduate School of Gadjah Mada University (UGM). In addition to his work in visual arts, Mikke is also the founder of an independent archive institution: Dicti Art Laboratory Yogyakarta. Since 2000, he has curated over 140 art exhibitions. His other activities include exhibiting artworks, writing critiques and books, as well as working as a dynamic creative professional. This plant-loving man who collects cultural archives and watches films has also been assisting as a curatorial consultant for the Presidential Palace collection in Indonesia since 2009.

In the field of asset assessment, he has been involved in assessing the art collection assets of the Presidential Palace in Indonesia since 2011. In 2015, he worked on the asset assessment for the Tax Office of Bantul, ANZ Bank Jakarta in 2018, Museum Basoeeki Abdullah Jakarta, and will soon begin assessing the collection assets of Bank Indonesia.

His international activities include being a member of the Collection Acquisition Board of the National Gallery Singapore from 2017 to 2022. This includes participating in an international symposium at the Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam and giving a public lecture on Raden Saleh at the National Gallery Singapore. In July 2021, he was the keynote speaker on curating cultural objects at the International Javanese Culture Seminar held at the Kraton Yogyakarta. In September 2021, he gave a lecture on the creative industry at the Asia Institute Faculty of Arts, University of Melbourne, Australia. In October 2021, he was invited as a speaker on art and religion by the Berlin Institute of Islamic Theology, Humboldt University Berlin, Germany. From 2020 to 2022, he was a member of the Cultural Council of the Special Region of Yogyakarta (DIY), providing cultural input to the Governor. He has given several public lectures on arts management at ISI Padangpanjang, State University of Malang, UNY, and ITB.

He has authored more than 50 books. His most recent book is titled "Mengapa sih Lukisan Mahal?: Wacana Penerapan Harga Karya Seni" (2021) which translates to "Why Are Paintings Expensive?: Discourse on the Application of Artwork Prices." Currently, he is compiling a century-long chronicle of art exhibitions in Indonesia from 1900 to 2000 through the Art archives he has collected over the past decade. In addition to serving as the Head of the Department/Program of Art Governance at ISI Yogyakarta, he is also the deputy for membership in the organization Alinea (Indonesian Writers Alliance).

RONIESTE

is an observer and cultural art activist born in Malang, East Java, and currently resides in Lombok, West Nusa Tenggara. Apart from closely observing the works of Mantra Ardhana, he is also involved in the "Organicmind" project initiated by Mantra Ardhana, as a media and music artist. In the writing titled "WATER, PIGMENTS, and PAPER", a series of texts accompanied by hashtags (#) at the beginning and end of each photo artwork are created by the writer based on poetic experiences with Mantra Ardhana's works.

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