

Thamyris/
**Intersecting: Place,
Sex, and Race**

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**Cosmopatriots:
On Distant Belongings and
Close Encounters**

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Rodopi

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Mission Statement

Thamyris Intersecting: Place, Sex, and "Race"

Thamyris/Intersecting is a new series of edited volumes with a critical, interdisciplinary focus.

Thamyris/Intersecting's mission is to rigorously bring into encounter the crucial insights of black and ethnic studies, gender studies, and queer studies, and facilitate dialogue and confrontations between them. *Intersecting* shares this focus with *Thamyris*, the socially committed international journal which was established by Jan Best en Nanny de Vries, in 1994, out of which *Intersecting* has evolved. The sharpness and urgency of these issues is our point of departure, and our title reflects our decision to work on the cutting edge.

We envision these confrontations and dialogues through three recurring categories: place, sex, and race. To us they are three of the most decisive categories that order society, locate power, and inflict pain and/or pleasure. Gender and class will necessarily figure prominently in our engagement with the above. *Race*, for we will keep analyzing this ugly, much-debated concept, instead of turning to more civil concepts (ethnicity, culture) that do not address the full disgrace of racism. *Sex*, for sexuality has to be addressed as an always active social strategy of locating, controlling, and mobilizing people, and as an all-important, not necessarily obvious, cultural practice. And *place*, for we agree with other cultural analysts that this is a most productive framework for the analysis of situated identities and acts that allow us to move beyond narrow identitarian theories.

The title of the new book series points at what we, its editors, want to do: *think together*. Our series will not satisfy itself with merely demonstrating the complexity of our times, or with analyzing the shaping factors of that complexity. We know how to theorize the intertwining of, for example, sexuality and race, but pushing these intersections one step further is what we aim for: How can this complexity be understood in practice? That is, in concrete forms of political agency, and the efforts of self-reflexive, contextualized interpretation. How can different socially and theoretically relevant issues be *thought together*? And: how can scholars (of different backgrounds) and activists think together, and realize productive alliances in a radical, transnational community?

We invite proposals for edited volumes that take the issues that *Intersecting* addresses seriously. These contributions should combine an activist-oriented perspective with intellectual rigor and theoretical insights, interdisciplinary and transnational perspectives. The editors seek cultural criticism that is daring, invigorating and self-reflexive; that shares our commitment to thinking together. Contact us at intersecting@let.leidenuniv.nl.

...a certain idea of cosmopolitanism, *an other*, has not yet arrived, *perhaps*

– If it has (*indeed*) arrived...

– ... then, one has perhaps not recognised it.

Jacques Derrida

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Deterritorializing Aesthetics: International Art and its New Cosmopolitanisms, from an Indonesian Perspective

Michelle Antoinette

Art will be able to set a kind of common base of knowledge—a new global standard. One effect might be that the Asian artist will become as widely known as, for example, Picasso is now.

(International Asian Art Curator, Fumio Nanjo)

... a real global world is yet to be invented. We are currently on the midground of such an endless invention, and a truly global art is a step forward in the long march.

(International Asian Art Curator, Hou Hanru)

ABSTRACT

This chapter examines the contemporary art practice of two “Indonesian” artists who form part of a new class of international, (hyper)mobile “cosmopolitan” artists: Heri Dono and Mella Jaarsma. Representing the Indonesian contemporary art scene, both artists have traveled frequently on the international art circuit with their work featuring in a number of international exhibitions since the 1990s. It is argued that the increased global mobility and interactions experienced by these Indonesian artists situates them and their art within a distinctive cosmopolitan milieu of contemporary international art practice which, at the same time, offers alternative definitions of Indonesian space, place and subjectivity. Significantly, the fact that one artist is a “native” to Indonesia and the other a “foreigner” – whose heritage relates to the former Dutch colonial power – is highlighted, in order to demonstrate how the artists’ respective cosmopolitan practices are rooted in and distinguished by different cultural histories and relationships, to Indonesia and to the world.

Introduction

Since the 1990s, Asian avant-garde artists and their art have acquired unprecedented international exposure together with a renewed capacity for multiple, fluid and shifting patterns of cross-cultural movement across a variety of spaces, including virtual space. In this context, questions of locality have occupied a continuing importance for the representation of Asian art in contemporary international art exhibitions, particularly as new patterns of transnational movement – and their attendant “detritorializations” – encourage a reevaluation of inter/national forms of exhibition representation. As Gupta and Ferguson have remarked, the forces of globalization have conditioned a world in which “identities are increasingly coming to be, if not wholly deterritorialized, at least differently deterritorialized” (9). One result of these shifting identities is the potential disruption of conventional representations of artists and their art through bounded notions of place and culture, especially of the nation. Increasing attention has been drawn to the multivalent cultural positionings of the international artist, which complicate any neat links to race, nation, ethnicity, and homeland. Factors such as economic positioning, technological access, education, gender, sexuality, class, religion, and others, interrupt the essentialist contours of culture and, moreover, connect artists from one locale to another. In this context, new cosmopolitanisms have emerged which signify both national and universal affiliations in art production and its reception.

Underpinning this are the influences of globalization and, more specifically, the new patterns of intensified movement that artists undergo for their art. Artists are now exposed to a multitude of cultural experiences due to their resettlement in other countries and/or their constant movements from one city to the next, as well through their exposure to global influences from a distance. Noting this, exhibition curators have added more nuanced terms for artists of international experience including “diaspora” artists; artists that “cross borders”; artists of “transcultural” experience; “nomadic” artists; and more.¹ Terms such as nomadism, migration, mobility, immigration, diaspora, hybridity, and syncretism have, in various ways, come to be regularly associated with the new interconnected but also dis-connected patterns of being under globalization. Moreover, new conditions of migration have also reconfigured colonial relationships and, more specifically, the cultural position of artists within and across postcolonial contexts.

Through the impact of globalization on Asian contemporary art and the coinciding rise of interest in it, a cosmopolitan circuit of Asian art, artists and curators has been created. In this paper I examine the contemporary visual arts practice of two established and internationally exhibiting “Indonesian” artists who form part of this new class of hyper-mobile, “cosmopolitan” artists: Heri Dono and Mella Jaarsma. Both artists have been frequent travelers in the international art circuit since the 1990s and their practice has often been posited in exhibitions as representative of the Indonesian

contemporary art scene. They have both featured in a number of international exhibitions over recent decades and are often selected by both Asian and European curators for major shows. Within the Indonesian art scene, both are regarded as established artists, well-known locally and holding a privileged position as leading international artists who represent Indonesian avant-garde art. Dono was born in Java and continues to live and work there between his travels for art. And certainly, while he has developed a significant international reputation and may be seen to engage in an aesthetic that is in line with trends in contemporary international avant-garde art practice, his art making has, nonetheless, also often been connected to the everyday life and aesthetics of various communities in his home-country of Indonesia. Jaarsma was born in the Netherlands and has been resident in Java since 1984. Since the development of her art in Indonesia, she has become recognized internationally for her elaborate and, often, intricate fabrications of *jilbab*-like “second skins” that also serve as a medium for cross-cultural encounters. Moreover, Jaarsma is the co-director of *Cemeti*, a major contemporary international art gallery in Yogyakarta that has held a central role in fostering and promoting Indonesian contemporary art. By comparatively exploring these artists’ practice, I seek to show how their art offers alternative representational scripts for rethinking the relationship of “Indonesian” space, place and subjectivity. In particular, I highlight a major point of difference between these two artists – one a “native” to Indonesia, and the other a “foreigner” whose heritage relates to the former Dutch colonial power in Indonesia – in order to show how contemporary cosmopolitanisms are variously rooted in different historical, socio-cultural, and political experiences. Moreover, I wish to explore how notions of Indonesian belonging are being reconstituted under present conditions of cosmopolitanism in postcolonial, globalized contexts. In considering such issues in this discussion, I turn to various interconnected and sometimes conflicting sources, namely the discourse of the artworks of these two artists and what they reveal as cultural texts; the respective artists’ own statements and reflections concerning their art practice; Indonesian art discourses; and the discourses of the international avant-garde art scene.

Significantly, my application of the term “cosmopolitan” to describe contemporary international artists such as Dono and Jaarsma is rare in the contemporary art world, and, furthermore, might seem peculiarly odd to apply to a context such as Indonesia.² More often than not, the term “cosmopolitanism” has been applied to describe the kind of lifestyle that is associated with a thriving modern-day metropolis such as New York, Paris, and London. These days, however, Asian locales such as Tokyo, Shanghai, Hong Kong and even the city-state of Singapore cannot be ignored for their cosmopolitan characteristics.³ However, rarely is Indonesia or an Indonesian artist described as cosmopolitan; a “patriot” yes, but seldom “cosmopolitan”. In my use of the term, I wish to take advantage of new conceptions of cosmopolitanism that acknowledge the existence of cosmopolitanisms outside of Europe, and that extend

beyond the discipline of Western philosophy to include forms of cosmopolitan art practice in Asia. As Pollock *et al.* argue, "What the new archives, geographies, and practices of different historical cosmopolitanisms might reveal is ... that cosmopolitanism is not a circle created by culture diffused from a centre, but instead, that centers are everywhere and circumferences nowhere" (12). Moreover, as Robbins asserts, "Like nations, cosmopolitanisms are now plural and particular" (2). In this sense, the Indonesian aesthetic cosmopolitanisms I discuss might also be considered as new forms of what Clifford describes as "discrepant cosmopolitanisms" (108).

Unlike terms such as "diaspora," I have found recent theories of "cosmopolitanism" to be illuminating and useful for thinking through these different but commonly situated life conditions for contemporary artists of global experience. Notwithstanding the many-sided perspectives on what constitutes cosmopolitanism, I have found its application to be especially useful in describing those artists who move from one international exhibition to another and continue to return, however brief, to "a place of origin" or a place they call "home." In this context, alternative "cosmopolitan" forms of art expression and subjectivity emerge based on the multi-spatial, mobile and/or temporal experiences of performing trans/local belonging and trans/local art. Consequently, the "expansion of the meaning of home involves the creation of a new imagined home and community, that of the globe itself" (Ahmed 85). Importantly, these changes in spatial and cultural identifications call into question what it means to be a "patriotic" and/or "international" artist in a globalized art milieu, and one in which an increasing number of diaspora artists, such as Jaarsma, make Asia their home and vice-versa. From this perspective, I take cosmopolitanism to be not an uncomplicated universalist view of world citizenship that is posited as the binary opposite of patriotism. Rather, I argue that localized expressions of Indonesia/Asia are made dynamic by adopting a more fluid *and* grounded notion of cosmopolitanism that simultaneously encompasses both worldly and more localized lived experiences. Moreover, cosmopolitanisms are acknowledged as plural and particular, "actually existing" (Malcolmson) and located, against a detached transculturalism with preferences to universalism. In this, the local is always necessarily a regional/national/global nexus.

Notably, the type of cosmopolitanism I employ in discussing elite *avant-garde* artists such as Dono and Jaarsma is in keeping with the forms of "high culture" traditionally associated with cosmopolitan practice. As Chaney remarks, "A cosmopolitan *avant-garde* has not only survived [the onslaught of popular culture] but also prospered in the sense of enjoying the privileges of celebrity status and concomitant financial reward" (157). This might be contrasted to Beck's concept of "banal cosmopolitanisms" that describes *everyday, popular* practices of cosmopolitanism (19). As I will discuss in relation to Dono and Jaarsma, "Asian" *avant-garde* artists are no exception to the elite practices of cosmopolitanism to be found at the level of international

avant-garde art practice – especially when we consider their privileged education, class, economic and urban status within both their Asian and international, metropolitan spheres of circulation.

Importantly, increased global mobility has not automatically exempted artists from the allure, responsibilities, or effects of nationhood; for transnationality, especially of diasporic cultures, has not necessarily interrupted allegiance to the nation-state, nor essentialist identifications.⁴ Nor has it automatically situated artists "at edges" or "on borders."⁵ Indeed, the nation has actually been *reinforced* in international survey exhibitions, as issues of nationalism and "Asian-ness" continue to buttress the representation of Asian art, both in art historical discourse and within the curatorial design of international art exhibitions. There is no doubt, however, that Asian artists have also been affected by the universalizing effects of contemporary globalization. Many theorists have discussed the globalization of culture that occurs as people, art and information circulate in new global flows of communication, distribution and access from various centers around the world.⁶ In the field of art practice, the effects of globalization are especially manifest in the proliferation of international biennial and triennial "blockbuster" exhibitions and the increased transits of artists and artworks. As a consequence of these new global processes, "... artists are becoming professional foreign travelers and, unlike many of their compatriots, are able to legitimize their journeys with official invitations. They are expected and welcomed abroad" (Institut für Auslandsbeziehungen [IFA]). International art industries have created a particular world space for international artists in which a form of "global nomadic citizenship" is performed by artists, not by their practice of art within nation-states, but by "mov[ing] through space and across national borders" to pursue their art (Ahmed 85). Recognizing the trans/local geographies that are navigated in these movements, some have even gone so far as to define the particular kind of art that is produced within these new conditions as a "nomad aesthetic" or "global art" (Combinatoria).⁷ Contemporary Asian artists have been no exception to these processes, experiencing greater human mobility through their international travels for art, and their art reaching wider international audiences.

"A Border Crosser with Good Ballast": The Consummate "Hybrid" Artist, Heri Dono.⁸

You see Heri Dono everywhere. (Philippine artist Alfredo Aquilizan, on fellow contemporary artist Heri Dono)⁹

Among other pre-eminent Asian artists invited for the fourth Asia-Pacific Triennial of Contemporary Art (APT2002) was popular Indonesian artist, Heri Dono. APT2002 sought to reflect on the maturation of contemporary art of the Asia-Pacific since the inception of the Asia-Pacific Triennial exhibitions in 1993. Dono had featured in both the first and third APTs; his inclusion in the fourth was an acknowledgement of his

international success and an affirmation of his established reputation as an Asian contemporary artist. Among other works that Dono presented in 2002 was his installation *Angels Caught in a Trap* (2002), which visitors encountered in the entrance hall of the gallery. It recalled his earlier *Flying Angels [Bidadari]* (1996) and the installation-performance piece *Fake Human Being* (1999). In all three works, a series of mechanized winged dolls resembling angels forms the focus of the piece, each angel suspended from the ceiling. As their fragile wings flap and whirl, the multiples of angels appear to fly gracefully though the air. No ordinary angels, the delicate, human-like heads of these *wayang* puppet-like dolls don helmets, their little dangling feet wear pointed red boots, gender is denoted by the presence or absence of a penis attachment, and the rudimentary, heart-like mechanisms embedded in their chests propel their movement.

The angels have become an emblematic symbol for Dono, and seem an apt visual metaphor for the type of cosmopolitan art practice and more mobile life experiences that his prolific international art career has afforded him. Moreover, they visualize the kind of cosmopolitan life that Beck describes as a condition of "having 'roots' and 'wings' at the same time" (19). In this respect, Dono remarks, "I am an Indonesian, but I am also a person who lives in an international world. So I belong to the world. In art I feel I am a mediator, because art is not just concerned with the concept of beauty, but is also meant to raise the consciousness of others" (Polansky). Based in Yogyakarta, Indonesia, Heri Dono has become a distinguished international artist that has participated regularly in various art exhibitions over the world in the last fifteen years. In Indonesia, his steadfast rise to an impressive international prominence has been acknowledged in the affectionate title of "Donosaurus" (Wiyanto and Wardani). It was in his childhood, however, that the character of the angel captured his imagination in the stories he was told. Since then, angels have symbolized, for him, the freedom to dream and imagine. Says Dono, "Without imagination, life would be very dull. Angels are free to fly wherever they want" (Webb).

Like his angels, Dono has experienced a newfound freedom since his rise to fame on the international art scene. It is interesting to note, however, that Dono's international travels only began in 1990, when he left Indonesia for the first time for an exhibition in Switzerland at the Völkerkunde Museum. Since then, he has participated in numerous overseas artist residencies and exhibitions abroad – including in Holland, Germany, Japan, Australia, England, and New Zealand. In this sense, there is a direct correlation that may be traced between Dono's increased global mobility and his transnational art practice. In particular, he demonstrates the privileged mobility and global access of contemporary international artists and, therefore, a form of elite cosmopolitanism. Relating this freedom to the kinds of motifs of mobility that Dono engages with in his art, Indonesian art historian Astri Wright comments:

Heri Dono is also one of the most free [sic] individuals I know, inside and outside of the contemporary Indonesian art world. With this, I mean freedom from constrictions

while at the same time, being centred and morally/ethically informed by a philosophy all of his own. This is what allows him both freedom and connections across conventional categories and boundaries. Heri's freedom from being tied down in his personal and professional life-style, vis-à-vis both tradition and the machinations of contemporary art institutions, is evident also in his art. If his figures are not flying, in any number of contortionist positions, their sitting or walking is not bound or hampered by gravity. Feet – whether of the mythological lion-yak beast Heri calls a Barong in "The King who is Scared of the Approaching Barong" (2000) or the spiked boots in "Flower Diplomacy" (2000), barely even touch the ground. (87–88)

Importantly, the freedom Wright alludes to also suggests that Dono has not simply acquired an independence from the bounds of his home community in Indonesia towards a free-floating international existence. Rather, his freedom relates to a more expansive and flexible approach to his art and life practice that provides access to locally and globally rooted influences and experiences. In this sense, he exemplifies Robbins' idea of cosmopolitanism as "a reality of (re)attachment, multiple attachment, or attachment at a distance ... Habitation that is complex and multiple [but] ... does not cease to be a mode of belonging" (3). Recalling the title of Clifford's well-known work *Routes* – suggestive not only of "roots" (arboreal and/or cultural) and "routes" (as pathways), but also of the verb to "rout" – Dono's movements and attachments may be likened to Clifford's notion of an identity that is about "dwelling-in-travel" (7–8).

While Dono continues to exhibit internationally, he also remains deeply engaged in the everyday life of his home community in Yogyakarta, Indonesia, continuing to return there between his travels and maintaining grass-roots connections with artists, intellectuals, activists, friends, and general members of the local community. In particular, Dono often involves the everyday people of his hometown (such as mechanics, gravediggers, children, electricians, and *wayang* performers) in forms of collaborative art practice, from production of the work through to reception. Moreover, he also draws on local cultural forms, traditions, and beliefs in his work.

Dono's form of "discrepant cosmopolitan" art practice is evidenced, for example, in his collaboration with people from a village in Yogyakarta in the performance of *Kuda Binal [Wild Horses]* (1992).¹⁰ Based on a traditional Indonesian horse-dance trance (*Jaran Kepang*), Dono's contemporary interpretation took place just outside the Sultan's palace complex and incorporated visual devices from both Indonesian folk-dance theatre and contemporary "performance art" practice. More specifically, it involved an evening fire-dance in which ten dancers (instead of traditional puppets) wore strange-looking teargas masks on their heads and underwear over their trousers. The dancers – children, housewives and *becak* drivers from Kleben, a *kampung* in Yogyakarta – "straddled constructions with the heads of horses, humans and other animals" (Sumartono 35). Accompanying the dancers' movements was contemporary music by Indonesian instrumentalist, Joseph Praba.

In traditional trance rituals of *kuda lumping*, people come to assume animal-like states as, for instance, snakes, pigs, monkeys, or horses. Dono's take on this ritual involves an appropriation of elements of traditional mythology which upholds the sacredness of animals, to comment on the hypocrisy of contemporary Indonesian society in which the destruction of the natural environment and endangered animal species occurs as a result of human greed. Interestingly, forms of traditional trance dancing were considered taboo under the Suharto government. When Suharto's New Order took over in 1965, Indonesians were forced to adopt an official religion. Moreover, with its traditional animist spiritual associations, trance dancing represented an anomaly to the earlier Sukarno government's nation-building agenda, and in particular, to its state-defined version of civil religion based on the state philosophy of *Pancasila*.¹¹ Borrowing from Geertz, the sort of "Neo-Javanist" revivalism that Dono participates in suggests "an attempt to revitalize traditional Javanese beliefs and expressive forms, to return them to public favor by demonstrating their continued relevance to the contemporary world" (80).¹² This revivalism runs counter to the effects of "Pancasilalism" which, as Geertz argues, was intended to "muffle particularistic cultural expressions, to thin them out in favor of a generalized moralism of a developmentalist, pan-Indonesian sort" (80). Dono's reminder of local animist traditions is also, therefore, a critical reminder of particular Javanese cultural histories prior to the establishment of a state-driven, prescriptive, modernist national culture.

In his crossings of local and global experience, Dono's hybrid art practice provides for an examination of a new breed of *cosmopolitan* contemporary artist, poised somewhere between worldly and homely interests, universal but by no means postnational in their artistic inspirations and motivations. Previously, cosmopolitanism referred exclusively to ideas and experiences of universality and an elitist sense of free-floating "detachment from the bonds, commitments, and affiliations that constrain ordinary nation-bound lives" (Robbins 1). However, recent social theorists have called for more complex and diverse notions of cosmopolitanism that might take into account the blurring boundaries between national and transnational affiliations in lieu of intensified forms of contemporary globalization.¹³ This includes the cultural and geographic boundaries traversed and maintained by contemporary artists such as Dono, whose cultural allegiances, influences and experiences in art and life are recognizably *plural and particular* in their outlook and attachment and, therefore, complicate any easy categorization of their art.

As well as the border crossings of geography that Dono performs as he moves around the world for his art, there are the crossings he makes as he melds and shifts between ideas, forms and media in his actual art practice. While Dono's art communicates easily with most audiences worldwide, finding correlation with the formal and stylistic qualities in international formulas of contemporary art, there remain significant locally embedded connections, motivations and materials in his art; he often

takes on the task of acquainting himself with Javanese rituals, customs, beliefs, practices, and people as part of his art process and inspiration. In this vein, some have even gone so far as to argue that Dono continues the chain of a localized, Southeast Asian installation and performance art practice which precedes their emergence in contemporary, international avant-garde art practice.¹⁴ However, Dono gives an indication of his own perspective regarding notions of cultural synthesis and purity when he says:

I am not worried about Javanese culture disappearing because of the influence of Western culture ... In my opinion it is not possible for a culture to fade or disappear, as long as there are people who are actively creating. If there are no such people, why then, the culture is already dead!" (Wright 87–88)

Dono's remarks here also point to his own "cosmopolitan" interventions into local cultural practice, as well as the always-changing character of the local in relation to external influences. Interestingly, the hybrid economy of cultural symbols and artistic modes that Dono employs provides for varying reception of his works across different contexts of art reception. For instance, while an Indonesian audience might interpret Dono's art as a subversion of local cultural symbols, Western audiences might simply reify essentialist images of Indonesia in their translations of his work.

The kind of "organic hybridities"¹⁵ (Bakhtin) and convergences of influence and form that Dono alludes to explains his particular style of "appropriation" in art. A consummate hybrid in art and life, Dono explains his many influences and attitudes regarding his sources of artistic inspiration in the following:

*... this is culture we have to share. I don't want to claim things, and say that other people cannot express themselves through this style. It belongs to everyone. It's like Balinese sculpture ... when I was a student in art school, I saw many European painters, like Paul Klee, Miro, Picasso, Kandinsky. So in the medium [of painting] I was influenced I guess. But at the same time I also did research about *wayang beber* [Javanese *wayang* stories on painted scrolls] ... and also *lukisan kaca* [reverse glass painting, typically from Cirebon, in north west Java] ... (Polansky)*

Dono's perspective on culture is worth reflecting on in relation to Stuart Hall's formulations of cultural identity as *production*. For Hall, cultural identity is a dynamic process that constantly shifts in meaning in relation to its social, political, and cultural contexts. This production of cultural identity is perhaps nowhere more obvious than in the making of visual forms of material cultural production that are fine art, literature, and film. As with Dono's art practice, identity is presented in these art forms, not as an already accomplished truth, but as something *in process* or *production*. Hence, identity comes to be defined within representation itself, rather than outside of it (Hall 222–37). As such, there can be no assumption of an authoritative "original" culture. Moreover, the sort of hybrid process Dono engages in his art is also "determined by specific historical formations and cultural repertoires of enunciation" (Papastergiadis 189). This includes the constitution of cultural identity through processes of artistic

and social collaboration, in which Dono's position as artist is achieved in relation to his Indonesian and international communities of belonging.

Well acquainted with the forms and ideas of modernist art since his time at the Institute of the Arts (ISI) in Yogyakarta, Dono has also become fluent in the art of *wayang kulit* – traditional Indonesian shadow plays – following his apprenticeship with the renowned shadow puppet master Sukasman. Like the multi-media forms that are undertaken in *wayang kulit*, Dono is a cross-disciplinary artist engaging in painting, sculpture, music, and performance. And certainly there is a theatrical sensibility that we find in Dono's work, whether in his moving and audible "cinematic sculpture" or his forays into performance and puppetry. Moreover, there is also a certain blend of tragic comedy, political satire, and playful humor that is characteristic of Javanese *wayang*, that also comes through in Dono's art. For instance, cartoonish *wayang*-like authority figures point deadly guns in paintings such as *Dialog with a Pistol* (1998) and *Flower Diplomacy* (2000), and the serious idiocies of political repression are evident in installations such as *Political Clowns* (1999), *Magician Who Never Killed* (2000) and *Superman Still Learning How to Wear Underwear* (2000).

In recent years, Dono has turned more directly to issues of international politics, particularly after the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001. At the 50th Venice Biennale of 2003, Dono presented the installation entitled *Trojan Horse* (2003) as part of the "Zones of Urgency" exhibition, curated by Hou Hanru. Importantly, Dono's inclusion in the Biennale was separate from the Indonesian pavilion suggesting his transnational status.¹⁶ *Trojan Horse* comprised a painting and gigantic shadow puppet in the form of a horse. Depicted in the painting are prominent international political figures such as a diminutive former Iraqi president Saddam Hussein; and the towering alliance of United States President George Bush in the form of "Superman" and Prime Minister Tony Blair as "Badman"; while an airplane blazes in the skies above.

Significantly, there also appears a shift here in the choice of subject matter for Dono. *Trojan Horse* evinces an apparent turn to issues of world politics in Dono's art which were not so prevalent in his oeuvre prior to the fall of the New Order regime. Read against his other, more localized works with their references to Indonesian socio-political issues, *Trojan Horse* becomes a marker for a loss of local political resistance as regular subject matter for Dono's art and, instead, reveals a differently focused attention to socio-political issues of international relevance. This shift might reflect Dono's now more familiar *habitus* of international art practice. It also reinforces Dono's established international reputation by the time of his participation in the Venice Biennale – itself, a recurring exhibition that presents the work of established international artists. Interestingly, in the Indonesian pavilion, more localized socio-political issues were addressed in works by artists including Dadang Christanto and Arahmaiani, who presented works under the theme of "Paradise Lost: Mourning the World," commemorating the Bali Bombings of 2002.

Dono is acutely aware of the economic and ideological disparities among people as he travels between Indonesia and other countries, and, for this reason, is often critical in his art of the ill effects of modernization and the destructive technologies that it has produced. He points to the discord between the natural and constructed worlds and, by contrast, attempts to create an ecology of inspirations, forms, and outcomes in his art practice, from production through to reception. In doing so, he disregards old art-historical divides between high and low art, purity of forms and ideas, and leans, instead, towards a postmodern high-art aesthetic of purposeful ambivalence. For instance, in works such as *Gamelan of Rumour* (1992-93), *Ceremony of the Soul* (1995), *Fermentation of Mind* (1994), *Flying Angels* (1996), and *Watching the Marginal People* (2000), Dono employs low-tech mechanical technologies to create kinetic installations of material and symphonic energies. In the installation *Gamelan of Rumour*, for instance, the sounds of Javanese musical instruments are played electronically by an invisible gamelan orchestra. This electronic gamelan is presented in the form of several electronic sound devices propped on low wooden blocks, each connected by wire to a central power station. Their scattered placement and low-level dimensions echo the configurations of a traditional gamelan orchestra, but, unlike the identifiable members of the gamelan, the musicians behind these sounds remain faceless. Accountability for noise is difficult to identify, much like everyday rumors in public life and, in particular, those that are a result of "anonymous" actions within bureaucracies.

In his use of electronic and mechanical apparatus, Dono is described as "a low-tech magician" bringing to life the unwanted junk stuff of Yogyakarta rubbish tips and roadsides in buzzing, whirling, and humming audio-visual installations. Commenting on the processes of recycling that are common to Yogyakarta, Dono points to the resourcefulness that underlies his own work and that of the everyday practices of reappropriation in his Yogyakarta community:

You can find thousands of small radio shops in Yogyakarta repairing used transistor radios. After [being] repaired these radios [are] sold cheaply ... The used radio business is a culture. The mechanics recycle goods that were thrown away. They make a device out of invaluable things that could spread information among the grassroots and also provide entertainment. (Supangkat 60)

Dono's "low-tech magician" skills were taken to dramatic effect in his performance-installation piece *Animal Journey* (1997), presented at the Harima Sounding Sphere Festival. For this project, Dono built on his earlier explorations of sound in works such as *Gamelan of Rumour* and *Ceremony of the Soul*. The piece comprised twenty-five bicycles turned into instruments of sound. More specifically, a tape recorder was attached to each bicycle with the sounds of various Indonesian animals pre-recorded on tape. By pedaling each bicycle, riders activated the different animal sounds and, depending on the speed at which they pedaled, the animal sounds were either slowed down or quickened. Alongside the installation, a performance was also

orchestrated in which five bicycles were positioned in one of five lanes in a circular racetrack. Once the "conductor" of the performance gave a signal, the animal sounds were heard as performers began pedaling around the track. At one point in the track, performers were requested to don animal masks and then continue on their way. Pointing to the inspiration behind this project, Dono explained, "Everyday in Yogya, I use a bicycle, and I go everywhere with it. This makes me think of people, especially the people in Harima [Japan] because Harima is a 'technopolis,' a new city. I wanted to remind them that the bicycle is still important" (Campbell). Certainly, while Dono's desire is to remind others of Indonesian socio-economic and technological conditions, it is worth noting that the bicycle is just as important in technologically advanced and modern localities such as Amsterdam.

Like other works of Dono, *Animal Journey* becomes a reminder of the everyday technologies and means of transport, which define the lives of those living in developing countries such as Indonesia. However, there is also a reminder of the destruction of nature, including animal life, on the march to modernization. Misinterpretation and misuse of advanced technologies has seen an increase in pollution and the marginalization, if not total elimination, of natural habitats. The bicycle and the animal face similar kinds of extinction in the race to modernity. Reflecting a traditional modernist-romantic critique on the destructive effects of technology, Dono remarks, "In the modernization process, the bicycle has no place to go; it's dangerous because of motorbikes and cars. For the animals it is the same: there is no space for them" (Binder and Haupt). Hence, for Dono, the (re-)animation of bicycle into animal is in line with his beliefs on the soul and spirit to be found in all things. Dono believes "everything has a soul" and through his art processes of recycling and reincarnation in particular, there is a plea for realizing the connectedness of things in the world. It was Dono's childhood fascination with Western cartoons which led him to imagine the likeness between the world of cartoon animation and that of animistic spirits, finding links between animation and animism: "In my mind the cartoon world is similar to an animistic world where everything has soul, spirit and feelings. In this kind of world, communication has no barriers" (Supangkat 101).

To label Dono's work as either Indonesian or Western, or even an uncomplicated synthesis of both, is a simplification and an injustice to the philosophy and ethics that underlie his art and life practice. Nor is his art exemplary of a kind of essential cosmopolitanism.¹⁷ Rather, Dono's art expresses the perpetual condition of social change and transition, of art process and continuity. There is a sense of becoming that belies the traces of an origin or final destination. However, there is also no doubt that Dono now represents an elite group of Asian artists who have been accorded disproportionate representation in purported "survey" exhibitions. As Joan Kee remarks, "one discerns the implicit formation of an overclass of Asian artists monopolizing a finite amount of critical visibility" (603-4).

For many of his Indonesian contemporaries, Dono has come to represent such an "overclass." "The realm of the transnational is still largely inaccessible to all but a small, well-funded minority, despite the idealism embedded," as Kee points out, "in curatorial premises like 'global mobility' or 'hybridity'" (604). Despite his reputation of transnational privilege, Heri Dono remains one of the most warm-spirited, "down-to-earth" people I have ever come to know. This irony, for me, only adds to remembering the hybrid possibilities for being an actually existing cosmopolitan artist and the humanity that might persist in the most celebrated and high-flying of international artists.

Within transnational movements, notions of home and belonging become constituted in different ways. While the constant border-crossings of contemporary international artists might be perceived as a state of "homelessness,"¹⁸ the reality is that the transnational space of the art world may also come to be constituted as another kind of home for many of these artists, with their regular international travels, travel-spots and acquaintances. Moreover, for diaspora artists, distance from the home country might actually serve to strengthen homely ties. Drawing from her real-life circumstances of migration to and resettlement in Indonesia, the art practice of Dutch-born Indonesian artist, Mella Jaarsma, reveals the nuances and complexities of such movements. As I discuss in the next section, her art often provokes a questioning of cultural authenticity at the skin surface.

Exchanging Skins: the art of Mella Jaarsma

Dari mana? Mau ke mana? Asli mana? Where are you from? Where are you going? Where are you from originally? So goes the customary Indonesian call to travelers passing through the Indonesian archipelago, also adopted as the title for one of the most celebrated Orientalist paintings by French modernist artist Paul Gauguin.¹⁹ It is an appeal that suggests a presumed trajectory of movement and cultural shift as a traveler, and, moreover, evokes an encounter of unfamiliarity between two strangers: one, a foreigner, and the other a native. Hence, it is also a proposal from one stranger to another to overcome the distance between them – of cultures and life histories – now that their bodily proximity makes them at least physically intimate strangers.

Encountering embodied otherness during experiences of travel and migration has been a key theme motivating the art of Mella Jaarsma ever since her own move to Indonesia. Born in the Netherlands, Jaarsma has been resident in Java since 1984 and has become recognized internationally for her elaborate and, often, intricate fabrications of "second skins." Adopting the motif of skin, she has created numerous bodily coverings which resemble the *jilbab* – the traditional robe worn by Muslim girls that hides everything but the eyes.²⁰ These skins have been made from a variety of materials including natural animal and plant skins as well as artificial skins, where the choice of material often relates to specific cultural identities and contexts.²¹ She says,

We wear a second skin every day that indicates, for instance, our membership of specific groups in our cultural, social and religious surroundings. Wearing a veil, covering the body and face, on one hand can be seen as a dress code that signifies the group to which we belong. On the other hand, it conceals identity much in the way camouflage does. In both cases, it is about giving up individuality and personal identity for the sake of becoming unapproachable and untouchable – the person's identity becomes totally blurred. (Jaarsma "Identities versus Globalisation Catalogue")

In effect, Jaarsma investigates the different cultural skins we inhabit and come across in our travels and the kind of outcomes that the meeting of different skins brings about. In doing so, she urges us to consider how our encounters with strangers take place at the level of the body, as well as how skin performs a peculiar interplay of containing and exposing the subject, "paradoxically protect[ing] us from others and expos[ing] us to them" (Cataldi 145). Hence, at the same time as Jaarsma's veils mask



Figure 1 Mella Jaarsma, *Hi Inlander No 14*, 1999. (Queensland Art Gallery Foundation)

All Mella Jaarsma figures: Treated skins (kangaroo, frog, fish and chicken) 244 × 97 cm (kangaroo); 140 × 84 cm (frog); 150 × 100 cm (fish); 152 × 95 cm (chicken).



Figure 2 Mella Jaarsma, *Hi Inlander*, 1999. (Queensland Art Gallery Foundation)

the racial background of the wearer, both the wearer (the stranger within) and the viewer (the stranger without) are also encouraged to experience "another skin." Throughout this process, Jaarsma asks us to consider questions such as: what might it be like to inhabit and to move in another's skin? Does taking residence in another body create an alternative subjectivity? In adopting the skin of another, can skin become comfortable shelter or is it always an altogether foreign experience? Is skin a porous interface for movements of intercultural communication or an impermeable barrier to passages for intercultural dialogue? The artist regards these as important questions in what she feels is a waning tolerance for multi-ethnic and multi-religious societies.

An obvious source of inspiration for the kind of inter-cultural and cross-cultural investigations Jaarsma undertakes in her installations and performances is her own diasporic existence. While it is the case that she grew up in the Netherlands, Jaarsma has established fairly solid albeit hybrid roots in Indonesia since her move. Following her art education in the Netherlands at the Fine Arts Academy "Minerva" in Groningen (1978–1984), Jaarsma undertook further art training in Indonesia at the Art Institute of Indonesia in Yogyakarta (1985–1986) and at the Art Institute Jakarta (1984). She has chosen to live, work, and raise a family from Java, and shares her life with husband and fellow artist, Nindityo Adipurnomo, with whom she established the independent art space, *Cemeti Art House* in Yogyakarta in 1988. In this regard, her experience of being a diaspora artist is unusual, as a Western artist moving to Asia; more often, non-Western artists move to the West. While some locals are hostile to Jaarsma's representation as an "Indonesian" artist, most acknowledge her important contribution to developing the contemporary art scene in Indonesia as the co-director of *Cemeti*. Commenting on her experience of migration from the Netherlands and resettlement in Indonesia she remarks:

By choosing to live within a totally different culture, after having grown up in the Netherlands, I became more aware of the values and norms of my own cultural background. This process made me conscious of differences between cultures and also taught me how to identify these differences. What we consider reality comes to us by means of contrasts in experiences. My work focuses on an awareness of these experiences – ideas about our own existence in a certain place in a particular world. (Huangfu 167)

Jaarsma here affirms that the experience of migration often produces a condition of strangeness that is contrasted with a more familiar place that one usually calls "home." In leaving her home nation, Jaarsma becomes a stranger, "a body out of place" in the everyday world and in the communities she initially encountered and came to inhabit in Indonesia. Following Ahmed's work, "here, the condition of being a stranger is determined by the event of leaving home" (87). However, as Ahmed also points out, in this formulation "home is implicitly constructed as a purified space of belonging in which the subject is too comfortable to question the limits or borders of her or his experience, indeed where the subject is so at ease that she or he does not think." Moreover, "home becomes associated with stasis, boundaries, identity and fixity" (87).

But when does a stranger begin to acquire the status of less strange and more familiar and what does "home" come to mean as diasporic peoples such as Jaarsma come to know different experiences of locality? Jaarsma's accumulated experiences and lived connections with and within Indonesia would suggest that she is, at least now, not a *complete* stranger. Instead, she is likely to tread along a continuum of alienation and intimacy, distance and proximity, in which degrees of strangeness and familiarity are experienced dependent on specific encounters with strange and familiar Others. In this, two contrasting definitions of "home territories" (Morley) emerge: home as "where one lives" and home as "where one comes from." In her work on diasporic communities, Avtar Brah astutely observes that while the concept of diaspora implicitly inscribes the imagination of a mythic homeland, "not all diasporas inscribe homing desire through a wish to return to a place of origin" (193). In Jaarsma's case, for example, home is also inscribed as the lived experience of her Yogyakarta-Indonesian locality. Here, as Ahmed explains,

Home as "where one usually lives" becomes theorized as the lived experience of locality ... the locality intrudes into the senses: it defines what one smells, hears, touches, feels, remembers. The lived experience of being-at-home hence involves the enveloping of subjects in a space which is not simply outside them: being-at-home suggests that the subject and space leak into each other, inhabit each other. (89)

Since her move to Indonesia, Jaarsma has participated in a number of exhibitions outside Indonesia in which she has represented Indonesian contemporary art practice, including "The Third Asia-Pacific Triennial of Contemporary Art" (APT3). Like the growing number of other internationally practicing artists who take residence in a place other than their country of origin, her inclusion in these exhibitions has brought to the fore problems of representation.²² Quite tellingly, in her catalogue essay for The Third Asia-Pacific Triennial of Contemporary Art, curator Julie Ewington headed Jaarsma's art as concerning "the problem of location" (62). For APT3 curators, Jaarsma's Dutch heritage was regarded as less important than her contributions to Indonesian art and, in this sense, also disrupted traditional models of diaspora that place diasporic communities at the peripheries of their "receiving" country. She was controversially presented within the Indonesia section of the exhibition, raising questions about her suitability to this category considering the addition of the "Crossing Borders" section to the 1999 triennial. The "Crossing Borders" section sought to include "Artists who cross borders in their life and work ... and who have a direct relationship and involvement with the Asia-Pacific region today" (Turner *et al.* 188). For some, Jaarsma was considered better suited to the latter exhibition section, with its themes of diaspora, border crossings, and cultural mobility. Given the suggestion of cultural homogeneity in the national exhibition frameworks, when posited against the "Crossing Borders" section, Jaarsma's "Indonesian" inclusion was made confusing. Was this curatorial strategy a case of reflecting contemporary Indonesian cultural



Figure 3 Mella Jaarsma, *Hi Inlander No 6*, 1999. (Queensland Art Gallery Foundation)

heterogeneity, an intentional prioritizing of Jaarsma's Indonesian home base over her continued diasporic identifications and international travels as an artist, or the result of genuine deliberation between the paradoxical binary that was created against nation/crossing borders?²³ Whatever the reasoning, these very questions strike at the heart of Jaarsma's own cultural investigations, and her attempts through her art, "to reject the question of origin and actually deconstruct identities by producing renewable identities, seeing identity as a transient invention" (Jaarsma, as quoted in Valentine Willie Fine Art 3). Jaarsma's rejection of the idea of origin is particularly interesting when compared with Dono's more "Indonesian"-inflected art practice. While Jaarsma draws on the visual economy of animals to highlight human connections beyond cultural difference, Dono's art practice relies more heavily on cultural signifiers of "Indonesian-ness" to emphasize changing Indonesian cultures and traditions.

For a performance in Yogyakarta in July 1998, Jaarsma invited several foreigners who were living in Yogyakarta at the time, to cook and share frog-legs with passersby in a prominent public street in Yogyakarta. Entitled *Pribumi* (literally, "son of the soil", hence, "indigenous person"), the performance attempted to open up a space for dialogue between people of different races through the culturally codified medium of (animal) food. Frog-legs, while a Chinese delicacy in Indonesia, are, on the other hand, usually considered unclean (*haram*) by Muslims. However, in this culinary performance, many Muslim Javanese were made sufficiently curious so as to try the, until then, unfamiliar cuisine, provoking the question of how the literal consumption of strangers (and their foreign food) might incite a transformation in the subject who consumes (Ahmed 115). More specifically, this sense of "inhabiting the other" through ingesting food provokes a moment of cross-cultural understanding. The timing of this performance is significant, for it followed the riots of 13 and 14 May 1998, in the neighboring city of Solo, in which numerous Indonesians of Chinese ethnicity were raped and killed. The title of the performance referred to the notes that many people placed on their front doors with the word *Pribumi*, *Pribumi asli*, or *Pribumi asli Muslim* in a precautionary declaration of their indigenosity or even Muslim indigenosity.²⁴

These were, in fact, the sorts of issues Jaarsma further developed in her engaging installation and performance for APT3. Entitled *Hi Inlander (Hello Native)* (1999), in this follow-up work to *Pribumi*, Jaarsma continued to engage in a kind of socially committed art that would, again, attempt to promote cross-cultural dialogue through the exchange and consumption of cooked animal food. Looking back on the project she explains, "I really wanted to create a work which could open up discussions between different kinds of people and get people interested in different cultures, different religions and so on" (Jaarsma, as quoted in Queensland Art Gallery). Alongside the creation of four of her now iconic robes – on this occasion made from Javanese *gurami* fish skins, frog skins, chicken skin (and feet) and kangaroo hides – Jaarsma also directed two performances. The first involved four people who modeled the robes on the opening night of the exhibition as they intermingled with curious-minded exhibition visitors. Given the Australian context of this exhibition, the robe made of kangaroo-hide suggested a cultural skin particular to Australians. The second and principal performance involved the participation of these models as cooks for yet another culinary performance in which different animal meats were fried and offered to gallery visitors, with the visitors, in effect, *consuming strangers*. The models, unrecognizable except for their naked eyes, hands, and feet, performed the role of hospitable strangers in a foreign land; a metaphor for cultural trust and understanding through sharing and ingesting the gift and human necessity of food. At another level, the animal associations – particularly that of humans dressed in animal skins – was a humbling reminder of human connectedness across cultural differences through the shared condition of animality.²⁵



Figure 4 Mella Jaarsma, *Hi Inlander*, 1999. (Queensland Art Gallery Foundation)

The title alone was evocative of the politics of social positioning with its reference to the Dutch word "inlander" – a derogatory and now taboo term for "native" or "indigenous" Indonesians that is also suggestive of their colonized and, therefore, more lowly status. While Jaarsma's use of the term was an attempt to disrupt the taboo associated with it, her own Dutch heritage provoked some discomfort for at least one Indonesian-born artist.²⁶ By contrast, the joy of discovering unexpected cultural affinities and connections also provided for positive cultural engagements. Recalling one such episode, Jaarsma explains:

The exhibition organizers promised me an Aboriginal model, who would walk around in my veil, made of chicken feet, during the press conference at the APT3. I had never met the model, Rodney, and when I arrived he was already wearing the veil. He was surprised to see a white person representing Indonesia and when we started to whisper, because the press conference had already started, he whispered through the veil and I only could see his dark eyes surrounded by all the chicken feet. Hearing my Dutch accent he suddenly started to speak Dutch to me, a big surprise! We exchanged information about where we were born, where we grew up and where we lived now. Rodney turned out to be an Aboriginal from the stolen generation; a generation of indigenous children that were taken away from their parents, to grow up in a "white" family. I already knew about this stolen generation, because I was in Australia when it was hot news on the television at that time. The Prime Minister didn't want to apologize for what had happened and he was getting a lot of protests. Rodney grew up in a Dutch immigrant family, who moved back to the Netherlands when he was eleven. As an adult, he decided to go back to Arnhemland searching for his indigenous background. Isn't it a moment of exchange like this that I had made the artwork for? (Jaarsma, "About the Performances")

Jaarsma's visual investigations into the relationship between cultural recognition, identity, and belonging, forcefully challenge the idea of culture (especially national and regional culture) as a hermetically sealed and unchanging entity. This demonstrates how the experience of diasporicity, cultural displacement and experiences of otherness, open up new possibilities of being-in-becoming, questioning notions of authenticity and the very concept of cultural identity itself. Cross-cultural citizenship, belonging and exchange are made dynamic, elastic and uncertain. In this way, the fragmentary and dislocatory effects of diasporicity and its implicit movements also signal the possibility for new critical cultural imaginings and expressions unencumbered by racially essentialist definitions of subjectivity. In the case of her strange encounter with the Dutch-speaking, Aboriginal model, the notion of skin as both bodily contour and porous opening is revealed. In this instance of inhabiting a second skin, the skin does not simply contain the homely subject, but ... allows the subject to be touched and touch the world that is neither simply in the home or away from the home. The home as skin suggests the boundary between home and away is permeable, but also that the boundary between home and away is permeable as well. (Ahmed 89)

Importantly, Jaarsma's is a diasporic position of privilege and choice rather than one of forced exile.²⁷ By contrast, the Aboriginal model's own diasporic experiences away from his Aboriginal community within Australia, as well as while growing up in the Netherlands, offers an altogether different kind of diasporic existence. As Brah remarks on the issue of migration, "The question is not simply about who travels, but when, how, and under what circumstances?" (Brah 182). Moreover, the personal experiences of migration that both Jaarsma and the Aboriginal model have lived through demonstrate that "Movement away is also movement within the constitution of home as such. Movement away is always affective: it affects how 'homely' one might feel and fail to feel" (Ahmed 80). However, it is important to remember the different kinds of journeys undertaken by traveling figures such as the migrant, the nomad and the exile, so as to highlight "the real and substantive differences in which particular movements across spatial borders take place" (Ahmed 80). Again, Ahmed poses provocative questions relating to such comparative freedoms: "[W]hat different effect does it have on identity when one is forced to move? Does one ever move freely? What movements are possible and, moreover, what movements are impossible? Who has a passport and can move *there*? Who does not have a passport, and yet moves?" (original emphasis) (Ahmed 80).

Conclusion

In the past few decades, much effort has been made to acknowledge Indonesian contemporary art and its unique place in the field of international art practice. However, Indonesian curator Rizki Zaelani has recently pondered the relational character of contemporary art internationally, asking the controversial question, "Are not the developments and advances now taking place in the countries in Asia also determined by their relationship to the advances happening in the developed countries of the West?" (Zaelani). But surely the destiny of Asian art can no longer be determined in the oppositional categories of East and West in a world where artists' and art objects' real trajectories, through and across geo-spatial borders, intersect, merge, converge, and overlap in ways which defy such essentialist mappings. Indeed, the physically and culturally mobile Asian artist that now oscillates between myriad geographic, cultural, social, and institutional spaces poses a different set of representational issues for the exhibitions and interpretation of Asian contemporary art.

Dono and Jaarsma push categorical conceptions of "Indonesia," "Asia," "Southeast Asia," "Asian diasporas," and "Asian cosmopolitanisms" into increasingly complex territory for their representational charting in exhibitions. Both artists carry out regular travels on the passport of international installation and performance artist – a certain kind of *privileged* cosmopolitan mobility and transaction, given the frequency and relative freedom with which they experience "strange encounters" with Others during such journeys. While they both draw on local experiences in Indonesia for their

art practice, as well as from their transnational movements as international artists, their individual histories suggest different notions of cosmopolitan belonging. As I have discussed here, these artists' respective practices are rooted in different cultural histories and relationships to Indonesia and to the world. Moreover, while both are popularly received by international art audiences, Dono's cultural position has tended to be valued and sanctioned by the international art world through essentialized notions of Indonesian culture and origin, while Jaarsma's unusual translocal, diasporic experiences have been emphasized. Importantly, attention to where and how artists nurture cultural roots – however anarchic, transitory or entrenched – highlights different modes of being cosmopolitan in today's international art world, and necessarily complicates any straightforward expressions and representations of patriotic proclivity or universalist aspirations, of East or West, and of colonial or postcolonial belonging. As a result of such transformations, artists such as Dono and Jaarsma are creating renewed critical possibilities for conceiving and performing contemporary subjectivity and belonging, defying the simplified "Asian differential" presented in the curatorial discourses of dominant biennial/triennial international art exhibitions and redefining Indonesian art.

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Notes

1. The label of "diaspora artist" was increasingly used throughout the 1990s to describe those artists scattered in various parts of the world, but especially non-Western artists. While the term formally referred to exiled communities forced to leave their territories under political, economic or other persecution, today, diaspora has come to refer to "the migration (either forced or voluntary) of groups of people belonging to the same nationality or the same culture, and the resultant intercultural contacts among immigrants." As art historian Kitty Zijlmans explains in her "East West Home's Best: Cultural Identity in the Present Nomadic Age": "Nowadays the diaspora concept is also used in studies on art when referring to artists, notable non-Western artists, who live and work outside their native countries" (Ang et al. 82). While there is now a plethora of published material relating to diasporic cultures, among those which deal with how visual culture is engaged with in the diasporas are: Nikos Papastergiadis' *Dialogues in the Diasporas: Essays and Conversations on Cultural Identity of 1998*; Nicholas Mirzoeff (ed.) *Diaspora and Visual Culture: Representing Africans and Jews of 2000*; and the special issue of the journal *Art & Design* guest edited by Nikos Papastergiadis and entitled "Art & Cultural Difference: Hybrids and Clusters" of 1995.

2. The few attempts at applying the theory of cosmopolitanism in any rigorous way to the international milieu of contemporary art practice include Peter Wollen's "The cosmopolitan ideal in the Arts" in the 1994 *Travellers' Tales: Narratives of home and displacement* (George Robertson et al) and David Chaney's "Cosmopolitan Art and Cultural Citizenship" in *Theory, Culture & Society* 19.1–2 (2002).

3. Recent studies of cosmopolitanism are "interested to see what new archives might be

Zaelani, Rizki A. "Heman Chong and Isabelle Carnavo [sic]." *CP Open Biennale* (Exhibition Catalogue CD Rom), 2003.

brought to bear on the analysis of cosmopolitanism; to discover whether the historical and, what is equally important, the geocultural perspective on the problem [can] be extended beyond the singular, privileged location of European thought and history; and to determine whether disciplinary approaches [can] be varied so as to move the discussion beyond the stultifying preoccupations of Western philosophy and to allow the possibility of capturing the wider range of cosmopolitan practices that have actually existed in history." See "Cosmopolitanisms" by Sheldon Pollock et al. (9–10).

4. As Friedman suggests, there is often "a conflation of territorial and social boundaries" which leads to the assumption that transnationalisms that refer to the escape from one physical territory to another also interrupt prior social identifications and attachments to the originating territory. This is not necessarily the case, and is most obviously evidenced through the localizing power of national passports within the global administration of people. See Jonathon Friedman, "From Roots to Routes: Tropes for Trippers" in *Anthropological Theory* 2.1 (March 2002): 34; n3.

5. In this respect Abdul R. JanMohamed asks, "How can one situate oneself on the border? What kind of space characterises it? In theory, and effectively in practice, borders are neither inside nor outside the territory they define but simply designate the difference between interiority and exteriority, they are points of infinite regression. Thus, intellectuals located at this site are not, so to speak, 'sitting' on the border; rather they are forced to constitute themselves as the border." See Abdul R. JanMohamed, "Worldliness-without-World, Homelessness-as-Home: Toward a Definition of the Specular Border Intellectual,"

in Michael Sprinker (ed.), *Edward Said: A Critical Reader* (1992: 103).

6. See for instance Saskia Sassen's theories of globalization in *The Global City: New York, London, Tokyo of 1991*; and Frederick Buell's, *National Culture and the New Global System of 1994*.

7. Along with the mobility of artists, the ability for art itself to travel more readily through the flows of such networks as "a text-in-motion" (Appadurai 9) has also effected cultural consequences for the global production, exhibition and reception of Asian art. Globalization has made it increasingly easy for the already made art object to travel without the artist, and even, for the art object to be "made" by others upon reaching its destination using the artist's instructions. By contrast, while it is not always possible or necessary for the artist to travel with or for their work, many do so now for the purpose of installing their work, especially for newly commissioned works to be created for exhibitions or for general publicity purposes. On the mobility of cultural objects see Arjun Appadurai, *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalisation* (1998).

8. I borrow this description of Dono from art historian Astri Wright. See Wright. Regrettably it was not possible to include reproductions of Heri Dono's art work in this article, as was originally intended, due to delays in acquiring permissions.

9. The obvious irony is, of course, that Alfredo Aquilizan is himself one of the most internationally represented artists from the Philippines since the 1990s. His representation (alongside that of his partner in art and life, Isabel Aquilizan) in major exhibitions such as the APT, Fukuoka Triennale and the Havana Biennale, may also explain why he frequently meets Dono, who has also featured in these shows.

10. Kuda Binal was presented as part of the exhibition Pameran Binal Experimental Arts, a counter-exhibition to the State-funded Third Yogyakarta Art Biennial of July–August 1992. The latter competition, as Indonesian art critic Sumartono explains, "set up criteria that young and alternative artists could not meet ... that

participants must be at least thirty-five years old, and ... must produce 'painting works.' Contemporary art was consequently excluded." In response to this, the exhibition Pameran Binal was organized as a protest to the restrictions placed on artists in the "official" biennial. Interestingly, "binal" was also a word play on the Indonesian for "wild," at the same time as it closely referenced the English word "Biennial." The alternative "Binal" exhibition included 130 participants that showed in various locations around Yogyakarta. In contrast to the official biennial, age was of no issue and a variety of artistic media, such as installation and performance art, was exhibited. As Sumartono astutely points out, however, the subversive capacity of works presented in Binal was weakened when taken out of Yogyakarta, Indonesia, and into the international art arena where official acknowledgement and accommodation of political art specific to Indonesia was more easily accepted. See Sumartono "The Role of Power in Contemporary Yogyakarta art" in *Outlet: Yogyakarta within the Contemporary Indonesian Art Scene* edited by Jim Supangkat et al. (2001: 33–35).

11. The Pancasila is the official five-point national creed introduced by President Sukarno, which forms the philosophical foundations of the modern Indonesian nation, guiding the republic and its citizenry. They are: belief in one supreme God, justice and civility among peoples; the unity of Indonesia; democracy through deliberation and consensus among representatives; and social justice for all. The Pancasila is further underpinned by the state doctrine of cultural "unity in diversity" (Bhinneka Tunggal Ika) across the Indonesian nation. However, under this motto, history has shown that the modern Indonesian government has selectively and actively encouraged some local cultures, while actually suppressing others under the rubric of national identity.

12. On the tensions between the development of a single national against diverse local cultures in Indonesia see also Keith Foulcher "The Construction of an Indonesian National Culture: Patterns of Hegemony and Resistance" in Arief Budiman (ed.) *State and Civil Society in Indonesia of 1990* (301–20).

13. See, for instance, the comprehensive publication of recent theorists of cosmopolitanism in Pheng Cheah and Bruce Robbins (eds.) *Cosmopolitanism: Thinking and Feeling Beyond the Nation* of 1998.

14. See varying perspectives on this issue offered by Julie Ewington and Lee Weng Choy in *ART and AsiaPacific* 2.1 (1995): Julie Ewington, "Five Elements: An Abbreviated Account of Installation Art in South-East Asia" (108-15), and Lee Weng Choy, "Local Coconuts: Simryn Gill and the Politics of Identity" in *ART AsiaPacific* 4.16 (1997).

15. See Mikhail Bakhtin's work on hybridity, especially his separation of an "organic hybridity" and "intentional hybridity." In the former, hybrid forms emerge as unconscious evolutions and mutations and are the result of organic convergences; "intentional hybridity," on the other hand, involves politically intended orchestration of otherwise separate entities, in order to produce irony, contestation and collision (Bakhtin).

16. Where the Venice Biennale has included Asian art, it has largely done so within its separate national pavilions and not in its main exhibition. Since its participation in 1954, Indonesia was again represented in a national pavilion at the 50th Venice Biennale of 2003. Note that in this separate Indonesian National Pavilion of 2003, the artists represented were Dadang Christanto, Arahmaiani, Tisna Sanjaya and Made Wianta, and exhibited in the theme exhibition "Paradise Lost: Mourning the World," adapted from Nehru's reference to Bali as "The Morning of the World." As Indonesian Pavilion curator Amir Sidharta explained:

On Saturday, 12 October 2002 (just a year, a month and a day after the attack on the twin towers of the World Trade Center on Tuesday, 11 September 2001), two bombs exploded in Kuta on the island of Bali, killing 180 individuals, mostly Australians, but also Americans, Europeans and Indonesians. The incident sent a grim message to the world that there was no longer any place in the entire world that was isolated from terror and violence.

The works in the pavilion commemorated not only the deaths as a result of these bombings,

but also the "Mourning of the World." For, as Sidharta explains, "What has happened is a tragedy for the whole world." See Amir Sidharta's "50th Venice Biennial, Indonesia" press release available online at <http://www.universes-in-universe.de/car/venezia/bien50/idn/e-press.htm>.

17. On the avoidance of "cosmopolitan essences" see Clifford (*Routes*, 274-75).

18. On the issue of "homelessness" see Edward Said's 2000 *Reflections on Exile and Other Essays*.

19. The paintings and sculptures of French artist Paul Gauguin were deeply influenced by his time in the Pacific but also by the carvings of the ancient temple of Borobudur in Java. Possibly his most famous painting, *Where do we come from? What are we? Where are we going?* (1897), is a play on the Indonesian expression,

20. Interestingly, Jaarsma has reported that, "Since September 11th the veils suddenly got a one-sided interpretation, which [the artist] is not very happy with." She goes on to assert that, "Everyone who confronts [her] work is coming at it from different backgrounds and cultures, dealing with highly personal sets of taboos and therefore experiencing the work in different ways. [She] want[s her] work to relate to these specific audiences, to deal with some of their taboos and interpretations." See Remy Jungerman, "Interview: Mella Jaarsma interviewed by Remy Jungerman," in Ang et al. (55).

21. For instance, *Saya Goreng Kamu* (I fry you) (2000) is made of squirrel skins; *Saya Goreng Kamu II/I Fry You II* (2000) is made of snake skins; *SARA-swati* (2000) is made of dried banana tree trunks; *I Am Ethnic I* (2001) is made of goat skins; *Shameless Gold* (2002) is comprised of gold-painted cocoons; *Bolak-Balik* (2002) is made of buffalo skins and horn; in *The Follower* (2003) Jaarsma sewed the badges of all manner of organizations together, collected in Yogyakarta from religious groups, political parties, schools, separatists groups, to sport clubs, etc.; in *Witnessing to Silence: Art and Human Rights* Jaarsma created cloaks using

seaweed, squid, seahorses and medicinal plants to comment on hunting, killing, feeding and healing.

22. Related to this, Jaarsma has explained that: *Up until the end of the 1990s, most foreign curators passing through Cemeti Gallery [the Gallery for which Jaarsma is Co-director and in which her work is often shown, in Yogyakarta, Indonesia] didn't consider my work for two reasons: because they were searching for "authentic" Indonesian artists and because I found it difficult to be a promoter of the other artists at Cemeti and promote my own work at the same time. Since 1998, entering the era of globalization, thanks to curators like Joanna Lee, Hou Hanru, Apinan Poshyananda, Julie Ewington and others, I have been invited to join international exhibitions and events in countries such as Japan, Australia, Singapore and Thailand, mainly representing "Indonesia"... Although finally accepted in the international circuit, I still have mixed feelings about representing Indonesia; I always feel that I have to excuse myself for being white, as if I have stolen an opportunity for a "native" artist. When I was picked up at the airport in Ireland to go to EV1A at Limerick, I got the reaction "Oh, I thought you'd look more oriental." (Jungerman 54)*

Jaarsma has also reported an instance in which Indonesian curator, Jim Supangkat, "wrote about

[her] work for a book published in Singapore in 1994, but the article was banned because [she] wasn't an Indonesian" (Jungerman 54).

23. As well as having exhibited in the Netherlands numerous times, Jaarsma is also a board member of the Cemeti Art Foundation and, as one of the representatives for Indonesia, she advises on the general policy of the program in the Erasmus Huis, the Dutch Cultural Centre in Jakarta.

24. Cultural studies theorist Ien Ang provides an interesting personal account of this sense of cultural divide in Indonesia between *pribumi* and Others, from her own position as an Indonesian of Chinese ethnicity. See, for instance, Ien Ang, "Returning to Indonesia: Between Memory and the Present," in Ang et al.

25. For a discussion of human animality and the connected subjectivities of "human beings" and "animal beings" see Elaine L. Graham, *Representations of the Post/Human: Monsters, Aliens and Others in Popular Culture*, 2002.

26. Specific artist is not identified in this statement by Jaarsma. See Jaarsma's "About the Performances."

27. This may be compared with the term's initial use, referring to the forced exile of Jewish and African people.

and who the Chinese are? In such multifaceted interrogations of the uncertainty of identities lies perhaps one of the key questions pertaining to cosmopolitanism: how exactly do we grapple with the competing libidinal investments constituting the subjectivity of the cosmopolitan, caught as she/he is (and we are) among different, often unbridgeable geopolitical, temporal, sexual, and media zones? Would the figure of mobility that I mention at the beginning still suffice?

Finally, cosmopolitanism may demand something beyond what I'd call a "horizontal" approach, in which it is a phenomenon shared by multiple cultures, each with its historical and mediated specifics, and in which every culture seems to be different but at the same time "equal" to the others. My reason for suggesting this is simple: some cosmopolitans are more equal than others because they in fact command more global attention and cultural capital.

In the context of Asia, the recent rise of China, which followed the rise in the 1970s and 1980s of Japan and the "Asian Tigers," obviously has huge numerical and demographic implications. The sheer magnitude of what is happening means that apart from the usual complications of global-local encounters, what is rapidly assuming center stage these days is the disturbing new symptom of Chinese exceptionalism, whereby everything Chinese is believed to be unique, different, deserving special treatment, and ultimately rewarding under the global hegemony of a market-driven economy. How might such exceptionalism complicate things? Might it not necessitate our going beyond the horizontal approach – by conceptualizing cosmopolitanism, instead, as a highly uneven phenomenon, one that is underwritten with extreme power differentials? The essays in this volume provide us with an incentive to venture further along these lines.

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