

PRESS RELEASE

15 OCTOBER 2022

**ROH presents Mella Jaarsma's first solo exhibition with the gallery,  
*Performing Artifacts: Objects in Question*.**

**Jakarta, October 2022** – ROH is pleased to present *Performing Artifacts: Objects in Question*, the first solo exhibition with the gallery of Mella Jaarsma, an artist born in the Netherlands who has lived in Indonesia now since beginning her studies at the Art Institute of Jakarta in 1984 and thereafter the Institute of the Arts in Yogyakarta (1985-1986). Jaarsma also co-founded in 1988, with Nindityo Adipurnomo, Cemeti Art House, the first contemporary art space in Indonesia that remains until today a crucial platform for young artists, curators, and writers for Indonesia as well as the region—many of the most important artists in Indonesia have had their first exhibitions in Cemeti and have gone on to flourish thereafter. Both her own practice as an artist as well as her contributions in initiating and developing Cemeti Art House have played a tremendous influence upon a whole generation of practitioners in art. ROH is in many ways shaped and influenced by the legacy of her and Nindityo's work in shaping the discourse around Indonesian contemporary art and its development until the present day.

Her multidisciplinary practice centers around her consistent exploration into the utilization of costumes as a symbol that pertains to many layers of the human condition: culture, race, the corporeal body, the things we consume, and the way we relate between ourselves and the world, among others. Jaarsma's works navigate intersections between sculpture, fashion, and performance in a diverse array of permutations, imbued with a critical outlook upon her own Dutch diasporic identity. Throughout her time in Indonesia, she has very sensitively approached, and built deep conversations with, communities from throughout the expansive archipelago and has developed thereafter a body of work that contains critical aspects of these interactions.

The exhibition *Performing Artifacts: Objects in Question* showcases works that Jaarsma has made between 2010-2022, and many of them have not been shown in Indonesia before. Many of the costume installations will be activated by performers in a scale and magnitude that has not been conducted prior. These installations will be shown with new paintings and works on paper that present some of her more current interests pertaining to her recent projects with communities in Papua, as well as her project that looks at the largetooth sawfish. The intention of the exhibition is to present to the audience a more comprehensive understanding pertaining to the structure and methodology behind how Mella Jaarsma works as an artist, building ways in which to see her work through many different points of view.

*Performing Artifacts: Objects in Question* will be open to the public starting on 19 October to 20 November 2022. Follow the gallery's Instagram account @rohprojects or reach out to info@rohprojects.net for further updates on operational hours and announcements of public programs.

## ROH

### MELLA JAARSMA

B. 1960, Emmeloord, Belanda  
Lives and works in Yogyakarta, Indonesia

Mella Jaarsma is known for her complex costume installations and her focus on forms of cultural and racial diversity embedded within clothing, the body and food. In 1988, she co-founded Cemeti Art House (with Nindityo Adipurnomo), the first space for contemporary art in Indonesia, which to this day remains an important platform for young artists and art workers in the country and region.

Mella Jaarsma's works have been presented widely in exhibitions and art events in Indonesia and abroad, including *Visaraloka*, part of the Indonesia Bertutur Festival (2022) at Museum H. Widayat, Magelang, Indonesia; *Indonesian Women Artists #3: Infusions into Contemporary Art* (2022), National Gallery of Indonesia, Jakarta, Indonesia; *The Size of Rice* (2021) at A+ Works of Art, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia; *Bayang* (2021) at South South Veza with ROH; the 20th Sydney Biennale (2016); *The Roving Eye* (2014) at Arter, Istanbul, Turkey; Jakarta Biennale: *Siasat* (2013) at Museum of Ceramics and Fine Arts, Jakarta, Indonesia; *Suspended Histories* (2013) at Museum Van Loon, Amsterdam, The Netherlands; Singapore Biennale (2011) at Singapore Art Museum, Singapore; *Aware: Art Fashion Identity* (2010) at the Royal Academy of Arts, London, UK; *RE-Addressing Identities* (2009) at Katonah Museum, New York, USA; *Accidentally Fashion* (2007) at Museum of Contemporary Art, Taipei, Taiwan; Yokohama Triennial (2005), Japan; and many others. Her work is part of the permanent collection of the Queensland Art Gallery, Brisbane, Australia.

## ROH

ROH is a gallery initiated in 2014 that aims to serve the Indonesian art ecosystem by building a consistent local program, while simultaneously fostering a broader, borderless dialogue. ROH has played a more nomadic role in the past couple of years while building its new permanent space, exploring unconventional presentations for artists in dynamic temporal settings and situations. In 2022, ROH has moved into its new permanent space in Jalan Surabaya 66, Jakarta, carefully reconsidering a colonial mid-century house into a flexible space for contemporary art.

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For further information, please reach out to [info@rohprojects.net](mailto:info@rohprojects.net).

Wednesday - Friday, 13:00 - 19:00  
Saturday - Sunday, 11:00 - 19:00  
Closed Monday, Tuesday and public holiday

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