

ROH

PRESS RELEASE

2 AUGUST 2025

ROH presents *Whoever Stays Until The End Will Tell The Story*, Agung Kurniawan's solo exhibition with the gallery.

Jakarta, August 2025 – ROH is pleased to present *Whoever Stays Until The End Will Tell The Story*, the gallery's first solo exhibition of Agung Kurniawan (b. 1968, Jember, Indonesia).

Agung Kurniawan turns memory into a reconciliatory dance against forgetting, where drawings on paper, performance, trellis sculptures, and paintings act as conduits for preservation. A touchstone for Kurniawan's exhibition is *My Name is Red* by Orhan Pamuk, a novel set in late sixteenth-century Istanbul about two Ottoman miniaturists caught between tradition and the encroaching influence of Western perspective. In describing the exhibition, Kurniawan invokes Pamuk's world as a conceptual lens: a world where painting can be both devotional act and personal expression, giving voice to inanimate things such as color, a miniaturist's depiction of a horse, and the complex relationship between artists.

Kurniawan's works function like illuminated manuscripts – as device to encourage discussion and hitherto effect the day to day in relation to much larger structures. 'En route to a failed struggle, you need daydreams,' he says. Quotidian life is interwoven with sacred symbolism, refracting outward into a myriad of hope, despair, and ongoing existential questions. Framing his paintings—immersed in shades of red—as poetic counterweights to praxis, these are spaces for empathy and universal kinship foregrounded by the enmeshment of our own personal history and its relationship to wider global contexts.

Whoever Stays Until The End Will Tell The Story opens by invitation on 2 August 2025 and to the public on 6 August through 7 September 2025. The exhibition is accompanied with a text by curator Mira Asriningtyas and Exquisite Corpse. The gallery will be closed on Monday, Tuesday, and public holidays. Follow the gallery's Instagram account @rohprojects or reach out to info@rohprojects.net for further updates on operational hours and public program announcements.

AGUNG KURNIAWAN

Agung Kurniawan is a multidisciplinary artist working with drawings, installations, and in more recent years, performances, theater, and happening arts. He looks at the socio-political as well as historical aspects of trauma and tragedy situated in a place or a nation by unraveling the stories from first-hand sources and recounting them with his own imaginative narration. Kurniawan has been developing a new series of striking works on paper that interweave complex layers of history and narrative with fiction based off of his ongoing interest in the Indonesian reformation period of 1965.

Kurniawan studied Archeology at the University of Gadjah Mada, Yogyakarta, Indonesia in 1987 and later in the Fine Art Department with a concentration in printmaking at the Indonesian Art Institute, Yogyakarta, Indonesia in 1991. Kurniawan's artistic practice spans more than twenty years with numerous solo exhibitions held in Indonesia and abroad. His recent solo presentation was *Sri Serie* at Nonfrasa, Bali, Indonesia (2024); *The God of Small Things* at S.E.A. Focus with ROH, Singapore (2023); solo exhibitions include *Milik Nggendong Lali*, Richard Koh Fine Art, Singapore (2013); *Actus Contritionis*, Umahseni, Jakarta, Indonesia (2012); and *The Lines that Remind Me of You*, Kendra Gallery, Bali, Indonesia (2011). Group exhibitions include Art Basel Hong Kong with ROH, Hong Kong (2023); Art Jakarta with ROH, Jakarta, Indonesia (2022); ArtJOG MMXXII: *Expanding Awareness* at Jogja National Museum, Yogyakarta, Indonesia (2022); ERRATA: *Collecting Entanglements and Embodied History* at MALLAM Contemporary art Museum, Chiang Mai, Thailand (2021); *Europalia Indonesia: Power and Other Things*, BOZAR, Brussels, Belgium (2017); *First Sight: August* at Museum MACAN, Jakarta, Indonesia (2017); Jakarta Biennale 2015: *Neither Back nor Forward: Acting in the Present* at Gudang Sarinah Ekosistem, Jakarta, Indonesia (2015); Biennale Jogja XII: *Equator #2* at Sarang Art Space, Yogyakarta, Indonesia (2013); *Sip! Indonesian Art Today* at ARNDT Berlin, Berlin, Germany and at ARNDT Singapore, Singapore (2013); 9th Gwangju Biennale: Roundtable, Gwangju, South Korea (2012); and *Be(com)ing Dutch* at Van Abbemuseum, Eindhoven, Netherlands (2008).

Kurniawan's interwoven creative activism flourished into several collaborations with writers, poets, theater houses, musicians and more prominently the survivor groups of 1965. He has written and staged numerous plays, among them are *Gejolak Makam Keramat* performed at Koesnadi Hardjosoemantri Cultural Center, Yogyakarta, Indonesia (2017) and *Hanya Kematian yang Setia Menunggu* performed at Institut Français Indonesia, Yogyakarta, Indonesia (2015). His works are part of the public collection of Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam and Van Abbemuseum in the Netherlands; MALLAM Contemporary Art Museum, Thailand; National Gallery Singapore and Singapore Art Museum, Singapore; and Queensland Art Gallery (QAGOMA), Brisbane, Queensland, Australia.

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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.

For further information, please reach out to info@rohprojects.net.

Wednesday - Friday, 13:00 - 19:00

Saturday - Sunday, 11:00 - 19:00

Closed Monday, Tuesday and public holiday

JALAN SURABAYA 66
JAKARTA 10310
+628118719066

ROHPROJECTS.NET