

HOFSTRA UNIVERSITY MUSEUM

Past Traditions/New Voices in Asian Art

September 2-December 10, 2014

Emily Lowe Gallery

Presented in association with the
Hofstra Cultural Center international conference
Asia Transforming: Old Values and New Presences
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Fx Harsono

(Indonesian, born 1949)

Screenshot from Writing in the Rain #4, 2011

Acrylic on canvas

71 x 78 1/2 in.

Courtesy of the artist and Tyler Rollins Fine Art, New York

Plate 2

Fx Harsono has long been interested in issues of identity and cultural roots, particularly in his own Chinese Indonesian community. *Screenshot from Writing in the Rain #4* is based upon his video *Writing in the Rain* in which the artist uses an ink brush to write his name in Chinese characters as the water slowly washes the ink away. Both the video and the painting are a reflection on the artist's personal and cultural history. In 1967 Indonesian law required all Indonesians of Chinese descent, such as Harsono, to change their original names to "authentic" Indonesian ones. Even though his family

has been in Indonesia for a number of generations, he was still considered "foreign" because of his Chinese name, Oh Hong Bun. The social and political issues relating to this strict idea of national identity and the forced assimilation of one cultural group continue to be addressed in Harsono's work.

The text on the painting reads "Indigenous Indonesian names is the names in conformity with those customarily used in the Indonesian community."