

ADELAIDE INSTALLATIONS

incorporating the 1994 Adelaide Biennial of Australian Art

Adelaide Festival 1994



**DENNIS DEL FAVERO,
EAMON D'ARCY,
TONY MACGREGOR,
DEREK NICHOLSON**

Australia

The work of Dennis Del Favero and his collaborators Eamon D'Arcy, Tony MacGregor, and Derek Nicholson has focused on the politics of displacement and loss, with particular reference to immigrant experiences. Spread between two sites – the Adelaide airport and the Gerard and Goodman building – their installation deals with the flight of refugees and the reconstitution and re-examination of identity that comes with it. The experience of the refugee is developed as a metaphor for a contemporary deterritorialisation of cultural and, more broadly, personal space. Together the two components of their installation use photographs, narrative text, sound and video to focus on the fragmentation involved in transit, loss and arrival in new country and context.

HERI DONO

Indonesia

Heri Dono was born in 1960 in Jakarta, Indonesia. He currently lives in Yogyakarta. He studied at art school in Indonesia, as well as with a *wayang kulit* (puppet-theatre) master artist. He has shown work in Indonesia, the Netherlands, the United States of America, Canada, Switzerland and Japan.

Heri Dono is one of Indonesia's most active and broad-ranging artists. Known for his paintings as well as installation and performance, he believes art is possible for and in everyone; that the distinctions between art and life are false; that he can make anything in his work. He questions the definitions and boundaries of reality; he believes everything has a soul. His work is lively and fun. It is also extremely and pointedly political, and refers to living and developing traditions of Indonesia. He aims to continue old traditions into the present to make and keep them relevant, calling them 'traditions with blood'. His *Kuda binal*, produced in Yogyakarta in 1992, included puppets, music, and dancers working from the old horse trance dancers of Java, reactivating an old tradition in contemporary form.



above left: **DENNIS DEL FAVERO**, *Linea di Fuocu*, 1987, multi-media installation, 5 x 6 x 3 m. Photograph courtesy the artist.

above: **HERI DONO**, *From the performance Kuda Binal*, Yogyakarta, 1992. Photograph courtesy Anne Virgo

THE PLURALISING OF CULTURE'S SYMBOLS

Heri Dono is an artist of the 80s generation in Indonesian contemporary art which continued the visual arts rebellion of the 1970s.

The 1970s rebellion was an opposition to the influence of modernism in Indonesia and international modernism based on a belief in universal values. It was marked, in part, by a rejection of internationalism and high art - which excluded traditional art - as the only frame of reference in contemporary visual art.

The connection between the rebellion of the 1970s and the 80s generation can be seen in the increasing belief in pluralism, and the phenomenon of 'low art' (simple objects made to be sold, whose production is connected to tradition).

Heri Dono's creative process can be seen as originating in these two principles. He explores various communities and tries to acquaint himself with their customs, their beliefs, the ways in which they adapt modernity, and their tradition of making various products.

Heri Dono creates his work in this community setting, often together with the people. But Dono never contemplates community art in the sense of trying to teach a certain community to become re-acquainted with their artistic tradition. He cannot answer the question: who should be nurtured, he or they?

Through his explorations, Dono discovers, for example, that these people's art products often have no intrinsic value; they are merely accessories in a particular artistic tradition, game or ritual. The artistic process, or another happening, occurs independently of these products - in the imagination, in communication, perhaps, or in spirituality.

Consequently, an art product in the form of an object is temporary in nature. It is flimsy, and usually made of simple materials that can naturally decompose when broken or discarded.

When new art is transformed into a commodity - economic pressure causing the people to 'sell' tradition - it becomes associated with poor quality. Something that is cheap and ugly.

Low art is 'traditional mass culture'. Unlike homogeneous mass culture, it shows a pluralistic nature, and varies for each community. When low art makes contact with

mass culture, mass culture's various symbols are lifted out of their context and gain multiple meanings. Symbols in modern society, which generate uniformity, have various interpretations in various communities.

*Jim Supangkat
Jakarta, 1993*

Heri Dono, *Fermentation of Minds*, 1993, Yogyakarta, fibreglass heads, school desks, video projector, tape recorders, blackboard

30.0850.0813.1241

