

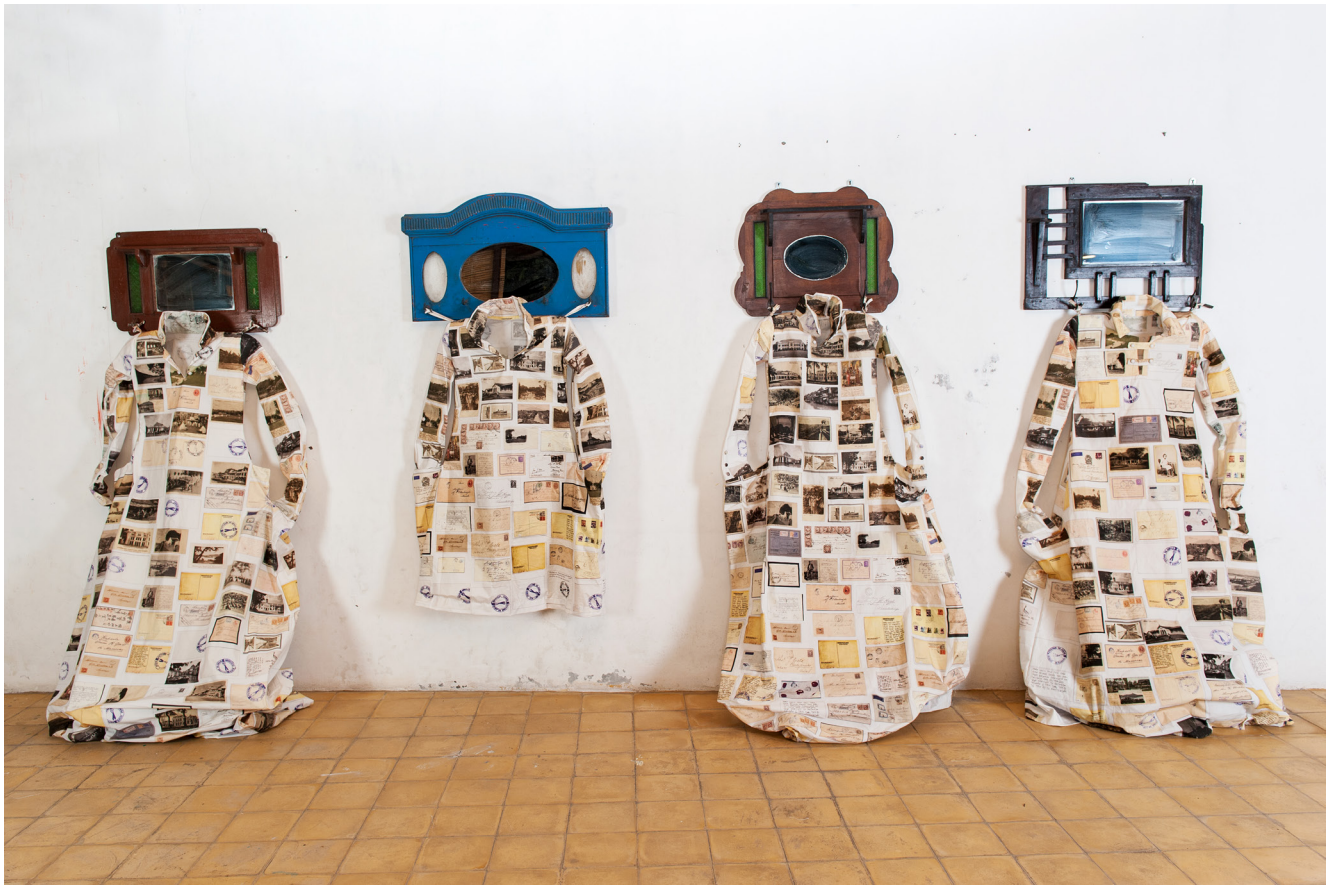
**MELLA**

**JAARSMA**

**BAIK ART**

Mella Jaarsma has become known for her complex costume installations and her focus on forms of cultural and racial diversity embedded within clothing, the body and food. She was born in the Netherlands in 1960 and studied visual art at Minerva Academy in Groningen (1978-1984), after which she left the Netherlands to study at the Art Institute of Jakarta (1984) and at the Indonesian Institute of the Arts in Yogyakarta (1985-1986). She has lived and worked in Indonesia ever since. 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: 'Nurture Gaia' - Bangkok Art Biennale (2024), 'Of Mountains and Seas' - Lahore Biennale 03 (2024), 'Connecting Bodies - Asian Women Artists' - The National Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art, Seoul (2024), 'Ocean in Us: Southern Visions of Women Artists' - a collaborative exhibition between Kaohsiung Museum of Fine Art, Taiwan, National Gallery Singapore and Singapore Art Museum (2024), 'Food in Art' - Museum of Contemporary Art in Krakow, Poland (2024).



**SURAT TERAKHIR** 2014  
DIGITAL PRINT ON COTTON, ANTIQUE MIRRORS  
VARIABLE DIMENSION

'Surat Terakhir / Last Letter' refers to the idea that the 'Kantor Pos' is entering a new stage in history. Part of its history has been cut off or made obsolete. It occupies a new purpose now, searching for other ways of transmitting messages. In this transition a certain chapter closes. 'Surat Terakhir' is an installation about the many letters that have passed through this post office bearing within them so many stories and emotions.

Jaarsma collected some of these postcards from her Dutch family members that were sent from Indonesia to the Netherlands in the 1940's. Some postcards and envelopes she found in various archives that still bare stamps from the 18th and 19th century. This collection of postcards and handwritten envelopes shows certain aesthetic conventions that have lasted for so many centuries, but which will not be carried on by the generations to come.



**YOU ARE ON DISPLAY I** 2018  
ACRYLIC, CHARCOAL, BARKCLOTH ON CANVAS, 190 X 110 CM

Jaarsma took a journey to Sulawesi to track down some of the areas where barkcloth coverings are still worn and produced, predominantly by elderly women. These costumes are made of barkcloth produced by these women. The showcase boxes sticking out from the costumes are meant to demonstrate the irony of the acts of collecting and categorizing by colonizers, anthropologists, and adventurers who had the power to take, collect, and classify objects and people.



**YOU ARE ON DISPLAY II** 2018  
ACRYLIC, CHARCOAL, BARKCLOTH ON CANVAS, 190 X 110 CM



**FEEDING THE NATION 5** 2020  
PENCIL, INK, GOUACHE ON PAPER, 30 X 21 CM

This work relates to Feeding the Nation II (2020)

Jaarsma explores the way our bodies relate to the world around us through the perspectives of food and water. The work aims to rethink basic human needs and questions how our bodies cope in a world in which excess has become common place. By serving water, the two costumes operate as a contemporary offering, while questioning the relationship between those who serve and those who consume. Through the use of maternal signifiers such as the female body and breasts, it furthermore exposes the tension between our insatiable lust for consumption and the basic needs required for human survival.



**WEARING THE HORIZONTAL I** 2020  
ACRYLIC, CHARCOAL, BARKCLOTH ON CANVAS, 130 X 200 CM

This work relates to *Wearing the Horizontal* (2020).

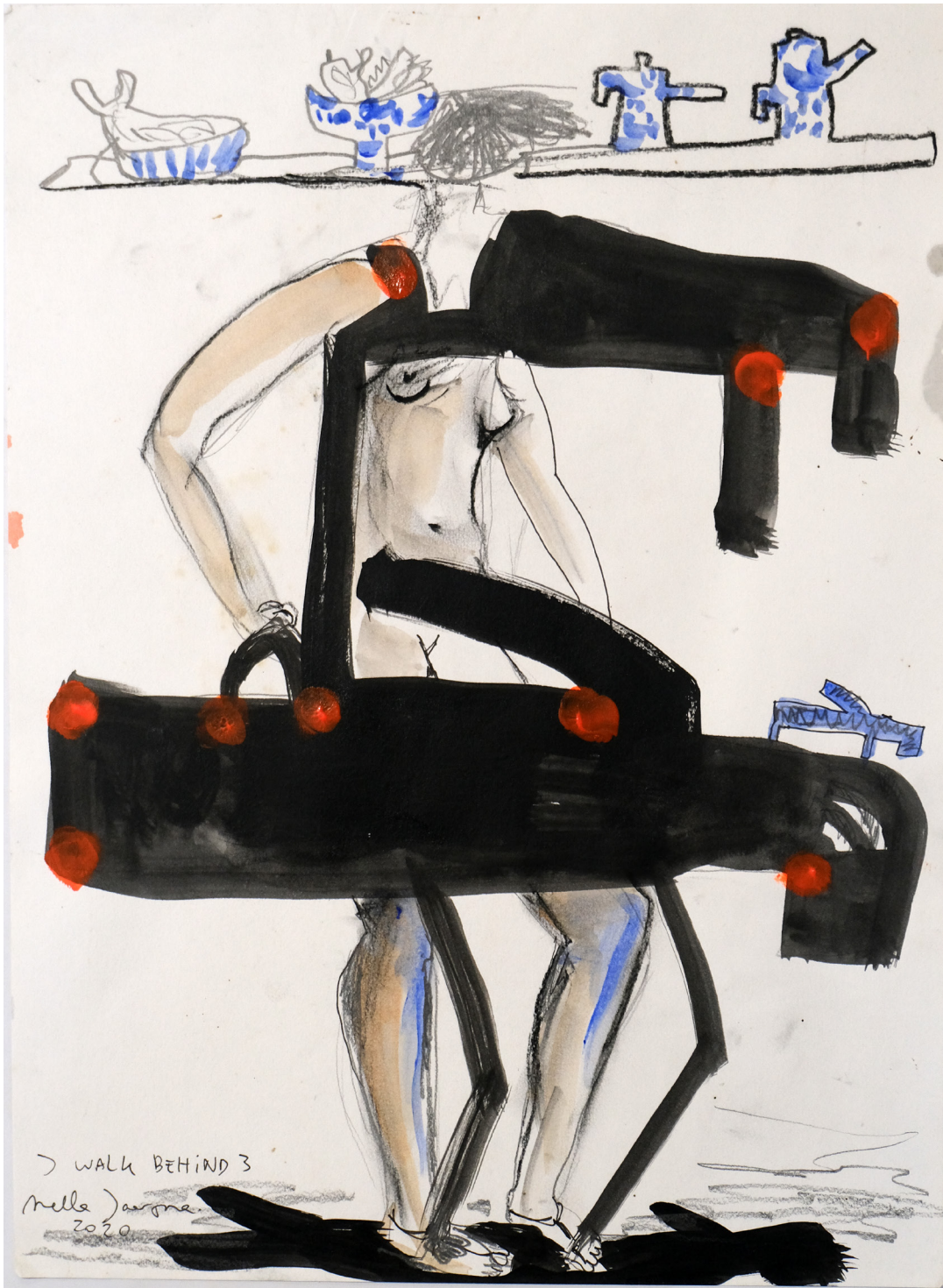
With the outset of the COVID-19 pandemic, Jaarsma started to make drawings and paintings on how we all carry the notion of mortality within us. She was inspired by objects of an ephemeral or finite nature, like the 'Lamak' – beautiful woven and stitched panels, made from palm leaves that hang in front of shrines in Bali, which fade after only one day.

'Wearing the Horizontal' depicts a dress that is virtually impossible to put it on, as it is horizontal and not wearable yet. Through the horizontal dress we get a glimpse of what lies ahead of us.



**WEARING THE HORIZONTAL II** 2020  
ACRYLIC, CHARCOAL, BARKCLOTH ON CANVAS, 130 X 200 CM





**WALK BEHIND 3** 2020  
PENCIL, INK, GOUACHE ON PAPER, 45 X 32 CM



**RAKUS 1** 2018  
PENCIL, INK, GOUACHE ON PAPER, 57 X 27 CM

This work relates to Rakus (2018).

'Rakus' (rakus meaning greedy), the tongues are the artist's comment on the status quo. Sticking out one's tongue represents a feeling of civic frustration at being trapped in the current state of socio-political affairs. 'Rakus' is about greed, corruption, the political manoeuvres of those in power and their continual repetition throughout history.



**RAKUS 3** 2018  
PENCIL, INK, GOUACHE ON PAPER, 57 X 27 CM

"I looked to the image of Rangda, the Balinese widow queen of the demon." Rangda is a witch-like figure with a long, protruding tongue. She is the personification of evil and in her fight against good, represents the eternal battle between good and evil, yet nevertheless is still considered a protective force.



**SHAMAN 1** 2016  
PENCIL, INK, GOUACHE ON PAPER, 38 X 28 CM



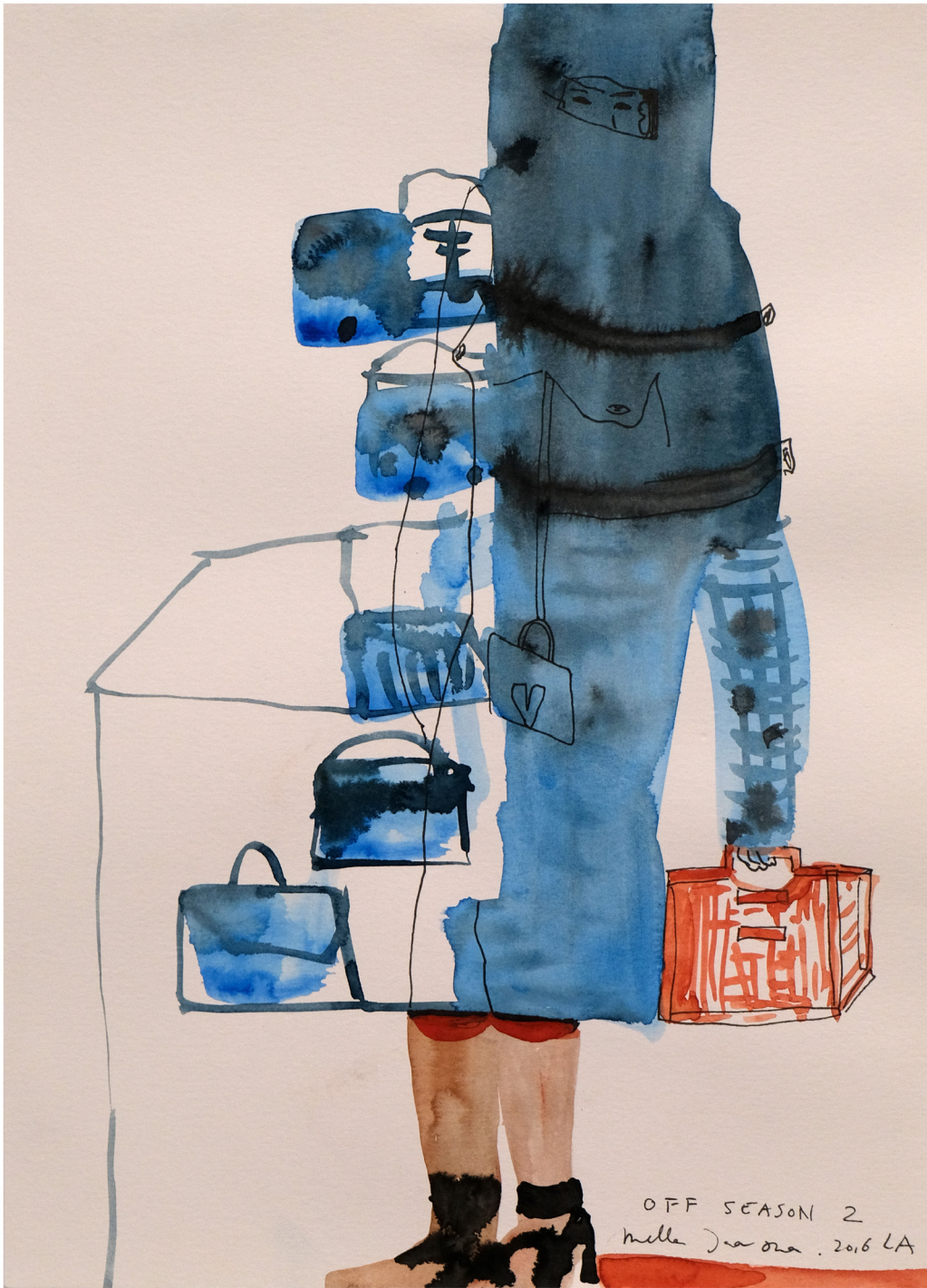
**CARRIER 7 2016**  
WATERCOLOR ON PAPER, 38 X 28 CM

This work relates to The Carrier (2016)

This installation was created during an artist-in-residency in Los Angeles. The costumes with bags, baskets and suitcases comment on collecting and how we much we are attached to belongings. The world is filled with stuff. How much more can we carry around to show off our material properties as status symbols?



**DRAG BAG 1** 2016  
WATERCOLOR ON PAPER, 38 X 28 CM



**OFF SEASON 2** 2016  
WATERCOLOR ON PAPER, 38 X 28 CM



**MEXICAN SPIKES 1** 2024  
PENCIL, INK, GOUACHE ON PAPER, 42 X 30 CM

This work relates to *Silent Wear - Apapacho* (2024).

Along with Ines Somellera and Felia Salim, Jaarsma worked with 12 participants in an intensive workshop on the theme of loss. Heart breaking personal stories were shared through textiles and objects with specific memories.

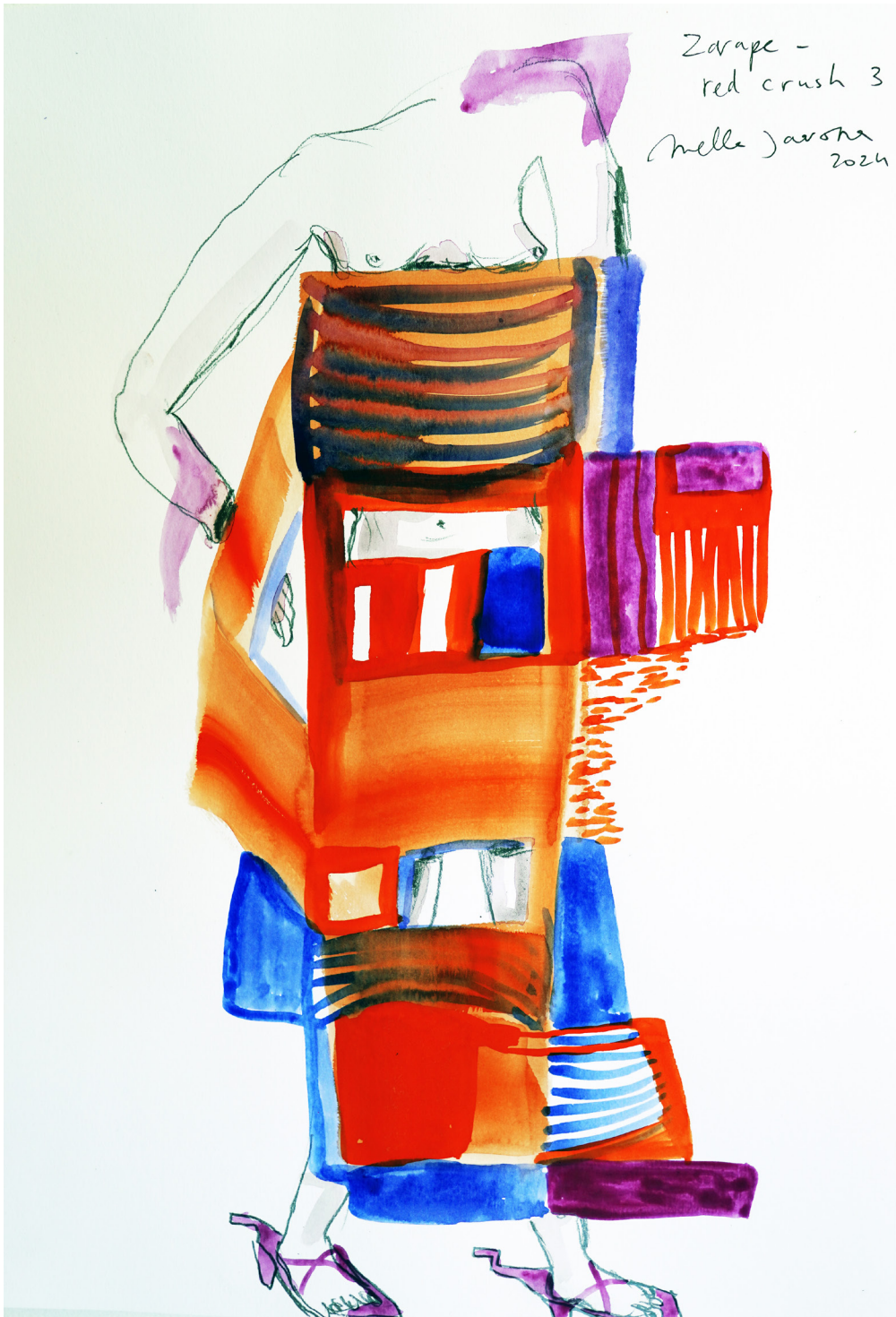




**APPROPRIATION - MEXICAN STRIPES 1** 2024  
PENCIL, INK, GOUACHE ON PAPER, 42 X 30 CM



**APPROPRIATION - MEXICAN STRIPES 5 2024**  
PENCIL, INK, GOUACHE, COLLAGE ON PAPER, 42 X 30 CM



Zarape -  
red crush 3  
Mella Jaarsma  
2024

**ZARAPE - RED CRUSH 3 2024**  
PENCIL, INK, GOUACHE ON PAPER, 42 X 30 CM



**PRIBUMI-PRIBUMI** 1998  
PERFORMANCE (VIDEO)  
EDITION 1 OF 5

Pribumi-Pribumi was performed during the political and racial riots in Indonesia in 1998 that targeted the Chinese community. Jaarsma looked for a way to communicate and open up a dialog about what had happened to the Chinese community. She decided to work with food, which she used frog legs, because the Chinese consider frog legs a delicacy while Muslims consider it to be unclean (haram). The food itself thus reveals different cultural perceptions. Jaarsma created the performance 'Pribumi-Pribumi' (translation: "natives") for which she invited friends -foreigners who live in Yogyakarta- to fry frog legs with me in the street and serve them to the public. "Westerners" can also be considered a minority, but one that people look up to. The artist used the position of my "western" friends to trigger questions from the public: "Why fry frog legs in such sensitive times?"

## B. 1960

### EDUCATION

- 1985- · Indonesian Institute of the Arts (ISI) Yogyakarta, Indonesia
- 1986 · Indonesia
- 1984 · Art Institute Jakarta (IKJ) Jakarta, Indonesia
- 1978- · Fine Art Academy 'Minerva' Groningen, The Netherlands
- 1984 · The Netherlands

### RECENT SOLO EXHIBITIONS

- 2024 · Body – Shelter Baik Art & Khneysser, Zurich, Swiss
- Tiga Pasang Tangan/Three Pairs of Hands Lawangwangi Art Space, Bandung, Indonesia
- 2022 · Performing Artifacts: Objects in Question ROH projects, Jakarta, Indonesia
- 2021 · The Size Of Rice A+ Works of Art, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
- South-South Platform Digital Roh Projects, Jakarta, Indonesia
- 2020 · A Roof Over Your Head Kedai Kebun Forum, Yogyakarta, Indonesia
- 2019 · In Ravel Out ResArtis Project Space, Melbourne, Australia
- The Carrier presented by A+ art Malaysian Art Expo, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
- 2018 · Re-Play #8 OFCA, Sarong Building, Yogyakarta, Indonesia
- 2017 · Bolak Balik Jendela Art Space, Esplanade, Singapore
- 2016 · Carrier Baik Art, Los Angeles, USA
- Carrier LA Art Show, Los Angeles, USA
- 2015 · Lari (together with Nindityo Adipurnomo) Embun Gallery, Medan, Indonesia
- 2014 · Potong Waktu Nadi Gallery, Jakarta, Indonesia
- 2013 · Male Energy / Tenaga LakiLaki Jatiwangi Art Factory, Jatiwangi, Indonesia
- 2012 · Truth, Lies and Senses Lawangwangi Creative Space, Bandung, Indonesia
- Toekar Tambah (together with Nindityo Adipurnomo) Semarang Gallery, Semarang, Indonesia

### RECENT GROUP EXHIBITIONS

- 2024 · 'Nurture Gaia', Bangkok Art Biennale Bangkok National Museum, Bangkok, Thailand
- 'Of Mountains and Seas' Lahore Biennale 03 Lahore, Pakistan
- Connecting Bodies- Asian Women Artists The National Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art, Seoul, Korea
- Ocean in Us: Southern Visions of Women Artists Kaohsiung Museum of Fine Art, Taiwan, National Gallery Singapore and Singapore Art Museum
- Food in Art MOCAK, Museum of Contemporary Art in Krakow, Poland
- Repurposing Paradise Nonfrasa at Amandari, Ubud, Bali, Indonesia
- S.E.A. FOCUS Tamjung Pagar Distripark, Singapore
- 2023 · Your Gold Is Not Our Glory Hotel Maria Kapel, Hoorn, The Netherlands
- De Grote Indonesie Tentoonstelling Nieuwe Kerk, Amsterdam, The Netherlands
- Dinner Conversations - Four artists, one collective, a chef & his friends Omstand, Arnhem, The Netherlands
- 22th Sesc Biennial Videobrasil, 'Memory is an Editing Station Sesc24, Sao Paulo, Brazil
- 'Outskirts' at ArtJog 'Motif – Lamaran Jogja National Museum, Yogyakarta, Indonesia
- Art + Books Fest 2023 The Rattan, Yogyakarta, Indonesia
- Body, Community, and Society : She is House 333 Gallery, Bangkok, Thailand
- Paraphrase A+ Works of Art, Kuala Lumpur Malaysia
- Encounters Art Basel with ROH Projects, Hongkong
- Crossing Ecotones- Mountains Seen; No Mountain Being National Taiwan University of Arts, Taipei, Taiwan

## B. 1960

### RECENT PERFORMANCES

- 2023 · ‘Outskirts’ ArtJog, Jogja National Museum, Yogyakarta, Indonesia
- ‘The Constructor’ Encounters, Art Basel with ROH Projects, Hongkong
- 2022 · ‘The Size of Rice II’ Indonesian Dance Festival ‘Rasa’, Taman Ismai Marzuki, Jakarta, Indonesia
- 2019 · ‘A Personal Diorama’, Fomo/Jomo’ Rubanah Underground Hub, Jakarta, Indonesia
- 2018 · ‘Vanitas’ food designweek, Palazzo Michiel, Venice, Italia
- 2017 · ‘Dogwalk’ Museum MACAN, Jakarta, Indonesia
- 2016 · ‘DogWalk’, ‘20th Biennale of Sydney: The future is already here – it’s just not evenly distributed’ Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney, Australia
- 2011 · ‘Animals have no Religion’ Manila Contemporary, Manila, The Philippines
- 2010 · ‘Image of no Dream’, ‘Het vijfde seizoen’ psychiatrically clinic Altrecht, Den Dolder, The Netherlands
- 2008 · ‘The constructor’ Senthong Seni, Bantul, Indonesia
- 2007 · ‘This land is ours’ Padepokan Lemah Putih, Solo, Indonesia
- 2004 · ‘Rubber Time II’ Asia-Australia Contemporary Arts Centre, Sydney, Australia
- ‘Do I need to feed you? IV’ Via-via café, Yogyakarta, Indonesia
- ‘Nyuwun den’ Kedai Kebun Forum, Yogyakarta, Indonesia
- 2003 · ‘Rubber Time I’ Theertha International Artists Workshop 2003, Lunugangga, Sri Lanka
- ‘Rubber Time II’ Yogyakarta Biennale VII, Taman Budaya Sositet, Yogyakarta, Indonesia
- 2002 · ‘Under Cover’ Lontar Gallery, Jakarta, Indonesia
- ‘Under Cover’ The Art Center, Center of Academic Resources, Chulalongkorn University, Bangkok, Thailand
- 2001 · ‘I Eat You Eat Me I’ EAT ME Restaurant, Bangkok, Thailand
- ‘I Eat You Eat Me II’ Jakarta; Habituspublik 2001, Blok M Plaza, Jakarta, Indonesia

### SPECIAL PROJECTS

- 2006 · ‘Leben Gundlings Friedrich von Preüssen Lessings Schlaf Traum Schrei’ Heiner Müller Foundation, Lichtenberg, Berlin
- 2004 · ‘Seeing with foreign eyes...’ Flying Circus, Theater works, Singapore
- 2003 · Collaboration at Studio 106 with Amanda Heng, Singapore ‘Theertha International Artists Workshop’ Lunagangga, Sri Lanka
- 2002 · ‘Art of Bamboo’ Nitiprayan village, Yogyakarta, Indonesia
- 1996 · ‘Kita Makan Apa Hari Ini’ Surabaya Art Festival, Surabaya, Indonesia
- 1993 · ‘Art and Environment cremation place Pralina at Munduk Village, Bali, Goethe Institute, Jakarta, Indonesia
- 1991 · ‘Inspiraties I’ City Theatre, Arnhem, The Netherlands
- ‘Inspiraties I’ Museum of Modern Art, Arnhem, The Netherlands

### RESIDENCIES

- 2023 · Videobrasil residency Kaaysa Art Residency, Sao Sebastiao, Brazil
- 2021 · Black Hand Gang – Print making studio Ubud, Bali, Indonesia
- 2017 · Europalia residency Welt Museum Vienna, Austria
- Baik Art Residencies, Van Every/Smith Galleries, Davidson College, Davidson, USA
- 2016 · Baik Art Residencies, 18th Street Arts Center, Los Angeles, USA
- AXENÉO7 Quebec, Canada
- 2013 · Jatiwangi Art Factory Jatiwangi, Indonesia
- 2011 · ‘Absence’ valentine Willie Fine Art / Manila Contemporary, Manila, the Philippines
- 2010 · ‘Image of no Dream’ Het Vijfde Seizoen, Den Dolder, The Netherlands
- ‘Small Architects’ Jatiwangi Art Factory, Jatiwangi, Indonesia

B. 1960

## COLLECTIONS

- Singapore Art Museum Singapore
- National Gallery of Singapore Singapore
- QAGOMA Brisbane, Australia
- National Gallery of Australia Canberra, Australia
- National Gallery of Indonesia Jakarta, Indonesia
- Tumurun Museum Surakarta, Indonesia