CREATIVE PRACTICES OF CONTEMPORARY ART IN DAILY LIFE OF JAKARTA¹

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Abstract

Jakarta is a fascinating location for both artists and art curators. This paper attempts to show how the city serves as a cultural open stage where ordinary dreams unfold through the practices of contemporary art in the daily lives of citizens. Utilizing the philosophical inquiries of Michel De Certeau, on the relation between 'Space' and 'Place', a qualitative study was conducted based upon data about Jakarta's expansion, in terms of its urban physical structure and demographics; data analysis was also carried out on the contemporary art present in the daily life of the city. Through a phenomenological experience of and investigation into the artistic phenomena in Jakarta, three conclusions have been drawn: (1) Jakarta is a city of collaboration with local marginalized communities, (2) Jakarta is responding to its urban landscape and (3) Jakarta unwittingly has become the host of an alternative space in one of its ordinary traditional markets.

Keywords: artistic actions, marginalization, community participation, traditional market

Jakarta merupakan lokasi yang menarik baik untuk seniman maupun kurator seni. Tulisan ini mencoba menunjukkan bagaimana kota berfungsi sebagai panggung terbuka budaya di mana mimpi biasa terungkap melalui praktik seni kontemporer dalam kehidupan sehari-hari warga. Memanfaatkan pertanyaan filosofis Michel De Certeau, pada hubungan antara 'Ruang' dan 'Tempat', penelitian kualitatif ini dilakukan berdasarkan data tentang ekspansi Jakarta, dalam hal struktur fisik perkotaan dan demografi; analisis data juga dilakukan pada seni kontemporer yang terjadi dalam kehidupan perkotaan sehari-hari. Melalui pengalaman fenomenologis dan penyelidikan fenomena seni di Jakarta, tiga kesimpulan telah ditarik: (1) Jakarta adalah kota kolaborasi dengan masyarakat lokal terpinggirkan, (2) Jakarta merespons pada lansekap kota dan (3) Jakarta tanpa disadari telah menjadi tuan rumah suatu ruang alternatif bagi salah satu pasar tradisional.

Kata kunci: tindakan artistik, marginalisasi, partisipasi masyarakat, pasar tradisional

Introduction

"Cities are a collection of many things: memories, desires, signs of a language, are places of exchange, as explaining all the history books of the economy, but these trade-offs are not only of goods, are also traded their words, desires, memories." —Italo Calvino in Invisible Cities

Although this may be a little unorthodox, I would like to begin by confessing that I have a pending exhibition proposal, first drafted in September 2013, on which I have yet to make significant progress. It is for a project titled "Dream of a City" concerning the city of Jakarta and its growing suburbs. If carried out according to the initial curatorial plan, it might have been an interdisciplinary practice-based research exhibition about urban development in and around metropolitan Jakarta. The exhibition would have examined a variety of phenomena around the city, revealing them through numerous artistic standpoints. I might also have formed a collective—with individuals from different fields of

study, such as art, architecture, design, urban planning, environmental studies, public art and cultural studies—which would have been able to generate a synergy of collaboration and may have arrived at something unexpected. It was indeed an ambitious project that required a great deal of resources and expertise.

In September 2014, after a year of attempting to develop the proposal, I received an invitation to lecture on Jakarta, the very city where this paper was originally presented. I was delighted, first because as one of its foreign residents, I have always been fascinated by the topic of Jakarta, and second because this opportunity appeared to offer a chance to revisit my exhibition proposal, enhance its content, and perhaps execute it in the form of an exhibition in the near future. Reviewing the proposal, however, I found a couple of problems in approaching the topic that I see as possible reasons why I have been unable to make progress in the past year. In the proposal, I suggested an analysis of problems in the process of Jakarta's urbanization and modernization, basing this analysis on a particular set of frameworks such as urban structure and expansion, centralization and marginalization, trans-culturality and globalization, time and space, to name a few.

I am still convinced that the aforementioned conceptual frameworks can reveal, and in fact partially have revealed in this paper, how contemporary arts and artists reflect on our urban lives in the city and allow them to present their ideas through exhibitions or other forms of presentation that will elicit a variety of stances toward the problems around our city. Nevertheless, three concerns have preoccupied me: first, how appropriate is it to assume that this framework is a proper frame of reference within which urban problems could and should be articulated. Second, how would I extract 'plausible' problems within this framework, and third, how would I meaningfully situate those problems in the complex and evolving setting of Jakarta. The frames of reference I have chosen are nothing more than popularly cited concepts that have been used for dealing with similar issues and topics in just about every other metropolitan city in Asia, due to the seemingly shared experiences these cities underwent during the time of colonization and modernization. In other words, my proposal appeared, to myself at least, to have a predetermined 'right' answer to which a constructed path artificially led me.

Returning to the invitation to participate in the lecture program, I viewed it as an opportunity once again to ponder on what has been crucially overlooked on the subject of the city. In the past year, the biggest change I experienced was that I gained, not as an alien but as an ordinary resident, more direct associations and communications with local artists and communities who sought to implement changes and pursue possibilities for themselves and others through numerous artistic practices in public spaces. Some of the practices were based on collaboration with and participation by local communities, while others artistic inquiries into and gestures toward the urban landscape of Jakarta, which is treated as an open stage. The activities are in fact significant components for enhancing socio-cultural aspects of the city. Additionally, I drew upon the concept of the 'practiced place' by Michel De Certeau (1984) to suggest that, as a consequence of such lively practices by the artists and

communities, whether they are organized or occur spontaneously, Jakarta has been transformed into an organic entity as a space, rather than merely being a physical place.

A variety of artistic practices in the context of the city can be characterized as irregular, spontaneous, and guerrilla forms of action. These activities are carried out here and there, apparently to mark the city of Jakarta as an alternative space. This observation led me to the realization that examining the traces of these small-scale activities must precede establishing a grand conceptual framework for the exhibition, and as a result I have formulated a new approach toward this subject matter for the potential exhibition in which I hope to elucidate such a context. In that respect, by looking at the numerous small-scale artistic actions taking place in and shaping ordinary daily life in Jakarta, and by presenting those movements in this paper, I hope to find the cultural and aesthetical meaning of art that is being used as a mode of dialogue to intervene in and change the society.

Theoretical Framework

Space and Place

Jakarta is a 'place' often represented by the images of its official monuments, mega malls, high-rise buildings, flyovers and roads with bumper-to-bumper traffic. As Indonesia's capital city of 10.2 million inhabitants (World Population Review, 2015), Jakarta is also a 'place' viewed through a variety of statistics, such as its demographics of cultural and ethnical diversity (Statistics Indonesia, 2014), emergence of the middle class, rising aspirations toward education (Oberman, R. *et al.*, 2012), increasing number of internet users (Internet Society, 2014), and growing settlement of foreign residents. To accommodate the physical growth of every aspect of its urban society, Jakarta has become a 'place' where endless construction takes place in every corner, no matter how small or big, whether or not it is inbound or outbound, drawing its new urban morphology both vertically and horizontally. All these conditions that are merely material, visual and figurative may determine the impression of Jakarta—more specifically of its own people who live in the space and are actually experiencing day-to-day interactions with that space—that is formed by those who have neither visited the city nor had any direct association with locals on a daily basis, yet generate assumptions about the city and its people. For that reason, Jakarta as a 'place' can be understood as a city constructed on the basis of a dominant urban concept and encountered through a gaze of power that views the city as a whole (De Certeau, 1984, p.92).

However, as the philosopher Michel De Certeau (1984) recognized, Jakarta would not make sense to itself, when viewed as a whole from a distance, because that would mean it is focusing on its physical condition rather than truly discovering the myriad ways in which the routine lives of ordinary people melt together over long expanses of time in city spaces, such as streets, parks and markets. As a consequence, we must approach Jakarta not merely as a place, but as a space where daily encounters and everyday stories are built, accumulated and discovered. Borrowing De Certeau's concept, place is "the order in accord with which elements are distributed in relationships of coexistence" and "an

instantaneous configuration of positions” (De Certeau, 1984, p.171). Stated differently, ‘place’ for him is where stability and order are secured. For example, Bundaran HI, located in Central Jakarta, is an area in which several distinguished buildings and structures are positioned, such as the symbolic Tugu Selamat Datang (Welcome Monument) standing in the middle of a roundabout that is surrounded by a number of multinational high-end franchise hotels and malls. Composed of stable and durable architectural material in International Architecture Style, these clusters of buildings collectively denote the gateway to Jakarta that represents the strong and modern capital city of Indonesia.

Figure 1. Bundaran HI on an Ordinary Day.

Figure 2. Bundaran HI in the Foreground of Some of Jakarta's Prominent Skyscrapers.

In contrast to his definition of ‘place’ as indicating stability and order, De Certeau explains that “space is composed of intersections of mobile elements” in that “it is actuated by the ensemble of movements deployed within it,” and thus, as he puts it, it is in short “a practiced place” (De Certeau, 1984, p.171). Bundaran HI is a space that is composed of a collection of company workers hurrying to their offices in the morning; street vendors cooking and selling local meals and snacks for passersby; tourists, in idyllic outfits with souvenir bags, stopping here and there to take photos of the cityscape; chauffeurs taking a leisurely break, giggling with other drivers; traffic police whistling and directing

the flow of traffic. It is now also famous for jogging and cycling on car free days and serves as a popular spot for crowds gathering to watch K-Pop cover dances or civic demonstrations. In Bundaran HI, many things come and go, are traded and exchanged, are operated and practiced. Endless movements of its various elements thereby have transformed a stable place into a practiced space. In effect, it is the passersby and their livelihoods that make a place become a practiced space. The passersby are the practiced performers of the place, and through their spatial practices Bundaran HI becomes a living space.

Figure 3. Crowds Gathered at Bundaran HI for K-pop Cover Dance.

Figure 4. Full of Movements and Sounds at Bundaran HI during New Year Gathering.

Figure 5. Odel-odel Entertaining Foreign Visitors on Street in Jakarta.

Figure 6. People Dining Out in Jalan Jaksa, A Famous Street in Jakarta Among Foreigners.

The Research Method

The research refers to a qualitative method, based on the data about Jakarta's urbanization and modernization built on its material and figurative growth. It also refers to a qualitative method over the contemporary art activities happening across the town, particularly marginalized places in the artistic sense. By examining a wide range of collected data from artist statements, exhibition catalogues, journals and video presentations, the research examines a variety of small artistic actions in our ordinary daily life in several places in Jakarta. As a professional curator, I hope to find the cultural and aesthetical meaning of art that is used as a communicative means to intervene in and change the society. This paper is also self-reflective in that I shall discuss my personal involvement in creating an alternative space in a specific public space, Pasar Santa, one of the local markets located in the heart of Jakarta. This market gallery functions as a platform where young artists can experiment in and challenge the space in the context of the market, which is an unconventional exhibition space. After all, the ordinary actions and practices of the art of everyday life are what bring our city to life, allowing it to express itself and dream about its future—and this, in turn, fulfills our own dreams.

Findings

Garbage Collectors and Their Mobile Paintings

Jakarta at ground level is not as beautiful a place as you might think of when viewing it from the sky. Lending to its unsightliness are immense numbers of slums across the city, massive flyovers blocking the urban view, bumpy pedestrian roads with overgrown weeds or even their non-existence, graffiti on private walls with no artistic sense, and litter strewn here and there. My first encounter with this city baffled and confused me as an art curator. I was forced to reflect on how art could even be possible in such a disharmonized environment; where artists find inspiration in this chaotic maze; and whether art can ever reach the public who are the very subject of its appreciation. Despite the disorganized condition and lack of infrastructure, however, a variety of art exhibitions and events are actively held on a regular basis and a great number of art communities passionately work in town. Art practices are indeed carried out, in the midst of the chaos, by ordinary people. Using unpredictable media in their daily lives, these artists offer a new perception of art, arguably the best example of which is found in the work of Abdularahman Saleh,

A graduate of the Indonesian Institute of the Arts in Yogyakarta, Abdularahman Saleh, also known as Maman, is an artist who pays attention to socially marginalized inhabitants of the city, such as juvenile delinquents² and garbage collectors. These groups of people are mostly excluded from society, unseen or forced to be unseen, granted no attention, and exploited due to misconceptions. They are also judged based upon what they did in the past or are doing in the present, and thus often treated as hopeless inhabitants. Maman realized the power of art to bring them back to society by giving them a sense of confidence and teaching them how to express their feelings and social struggles. By using comics as an art-making tool that allows them not only to paint but to write, his ultimate goal through his community-based project is to make people aware of the role of art that empowers various communities, reducing the distances between them, and opening a space for dialogue as citizens who live together (Septriana, 2013).

One of his recent projects *Manusia Gerobag (garbage collectors)*, presented as part of a public program during the Jakarta Biennale 2013, and exemplifies how he involves an ordinary community in his work by teaching them how to use the act of art-making as a means of communication. The project involves a series of workshop programs in which the garbage collectors learned how to decorate their own garbage carts, or gerobag, that are usually left plain, and which, for some of the collectors, serve also as their living space (Saleh, 2013, p.31).

Figure 7. Sample Comics of Student Work Reflecting and Describing His Wrong Doing in The Past.

Figure 8. Collection of Published Books as the Result of Workshop Program.

By teaching the garbage collectors how to decorate their gerobag, Maman wishes to change the stereotypes – that they are burglars or criminal suspects – socially constructed and imposed on them, further helping them to be accepted into society (Jakarta Binnale, 2013). Employing cartoon-drawing techniques, they decorated their *gerobag* with figurative images and speech bubbles stating their hopes, pride in their profession, and social criticism, such as “Your Trash is My Blessing,” “Gerobag People Want to Go on Hajj Too,” “Better Collect Junk Than Be Jobless,” or “We Take Society’s Trash” (Saleh, 2013, p.31).

Figure 9. *Manusia Gerobag* Installation View at Jakarta Biennale 2013.

Manusia Gerobag was presented in a variety of ways, including not only a gallery art installation along with documentation through its official blog, but also shown on its own YouTube channel, titled NGEPOTV and hosted by Mr. Gro, a tacky-looking character who visits the site of the workshops and conveys vivid reports about them to the audience. In the YouTube clips, the artists speak of their poor working conditions and discriminatory experience in their daily lives. Mimicking a trendy form of reality show that broadcasts the comments and actions of ordinary performers as naturally as possible, the program attempts to focus on its subjects, as if finding hidden treasures in town. The result is that the garbage collectors, who might otherwise seem to be so trivial as to be invisible in society, end up with greater visibility and dignity, thereby implicitly becoming a part of the city's more privileged inhabitants.

Figure 10. Opening Teaser of Mr. Gro.

Figure 11. Cartoon Drawing on A Gerobag Shown on A Video Clip from Mr. Gro.

Figure 12. Mural in Process on A Gerobag Shown on A Video Clip from Mr. Gro.

It is noteworthy that *Manusia Gerobag* raises an important question regarding the concept of art in terms of space and audience. *Manusia Gerobag* works toward a new kind of space, one that not just gives a sense of place outside galleries or museums illuminated by public sculptures and statues that stand still, but one that evokes temporality as it moves around the town and explores the heart of neighborhoods that themselves become art. It also reinvents potential audiences, not just in the way it blurs the distinctions between artist and audience, creator and non-creator, expert and amateur, but in the way that the audience is regarded both as the ultimate goal of communication and the heart of the art-making process, starting from the very point of conceptualization. The audience creator in this sense is not the potential gallery visitor who merely participates in the partial operation of art, but someone who may seemingly not have been related to any sort of art and yet connects art with life and society. Through the process of making art and communicating with the garbage collector community,

Manusia Gerobag suggests a new way in which art transcends the dichotomy of Modernism and Postmodernism.

Jakarta Walls

As seen in the illustrations of the mobile art of garbage collectors, many different kinds of artistic activities are held beyond the gallery wall and generally are considered to fall under the rubric of ‘street art’ (Art Terms, 2004, p.19). Street art can be traced back to the spectacular works and propaganda pieces for the masses during the Russian Revolution, when artists were encouraged by the Russian poet Vladimir Mayakovsky’s slogan, “let us make the streets our brushes, the squares our palettes” (Art Terms, 2004, p.19). Street art thus implies a political sense, aiming to intervene in and change some aspects of society. Among the numerous forms of street art, citizens over the world have probably seen scribbles, tags and decorative images under a bridge, overpass or just about any kind of wall. This kind of art, known as graffiti, is perhaps the most common or popular forms of art taking place in public spaces across Indonesia³.

Born in the streets, graffiti is known as a means of challenging the mainstream art that usually takes place inside galleries and museums. In the form of writing, drawing, stenciling, scribbling or tagging onto urban walls, graffiti ranges from simple written words to elaborate wall paintings. Utilizing spray paint and marker pens, it aims to express social and political statements, delivering messages about life or simply displaying personal identities. Sometimes, being created in a specific site, graffiti also aims at communicating with inhabitants in the immediate neighborhood. One active Jakarta-based graffiti artist, Rizky Aditya Nugroho, a.k.a. Bujangan Urban, focuses on the potential of graffiti as a mode of dialogue (Saleh, 2013, p.125)⁴. Well known for the colorful flower patterns and stylish typography in his graffiti writings, Bujangan Urban vibrantly marks his presence throughout the city, transforming the city of Jakarta into an alternative space that becomes his performance stage.

One of his recent site-specific works displayed in an open area is the mural he created during Jakarta Biennale 2013. Displayed on a long wall right in front of the headquarter complex of the Indonesian State Bank (BNI), it attempts to communicate with local commuters, mainly office workers, executives and other residents of the city. Paying attention to the locale’s soulless concrete surroundings, the artist brought his flower paints and message to offer professionals a moment to step out of their daily professional routines and reflect on their own rewarding lives. The wall is inscribed, “Loyalitas Tanpa Batas Bikin Hidup Jadi Terbatas (Unlimited Loyalty Limits Life) (Saleh, 2013, p.125). As buildings that symbolize technological and economic achievement, skyscrapers in the urban space have made us look to a vertical way of life in which we hope for high-speed success in the workplace. However, in order to read the artist’s writing and think closely about its meaning, one must slowly contemplate the horizontally long wall that is filled with natural images that are missing in the area. Bujangan Urban’s graffiti in that sense is a tool of communication that may change our way of life by pushing us to confront our values.

Figure 13. Bujangan Urban's Trademark of Floral Pattern and Graffiti Writing on The Wall in front of BNI 46 Building, Jl. Jenderal Sudirman, Jakarta.

Figure 14. A View from The Opposite Side of The Road Showing Bujangan Urban's Graffiti Work.

Like Bujangan Urban, most graffiti artists work in the street because of their interest in street culture. Eschewing galleries and museums, they mark their trace in public spaces by means of a variety of media such as painting, drawing, writing and posting stickers onto public features. Because these community actions admittedly constitute the illicit alteration of public property, they are still considered an act of vandalism in Jakarta and many other cities. It should be noted, however, that several graffiti writers have gained wealth and fame from their distinctive artistic style and language. As such, they are no longer street artists, but rather part of the mainstream. Nevertheless, their art and vision continues to influence urban art making in that gallery owners and cooperates see the potential of graffiti as a form of art and pay attention to fledgling graffiti artists to discover.

Although graffiti art has had an avoidable association with the capital in reality, one graffiti community, Graffiteach, takes a significantly different approach to its artistic activity. Rather than expressing public commentary, Graffiteach members use walls and pedagogical techniques to help street children learn school subjects. Composed of volunteer teachers, organizers and graffiti artists,

the community's hope is that it will be able to help such children leave the streets and return to school so as to invest in their futures.

Aware that many children in Indonesia have been abandoned to the streets (Unwin, 2013)⁵, asking for money by singing or playing an instrument, Graffiteach members founded the organization in February 2013 out of its members' sociopolitical desire to act as a social movement that turns public walls into a giant blackboard. Mainly situated underneath flyovers, these public walls are filled with graffiti conveying inspirational lessons on subjects that vary from basic English, math, science, health and culture (Petersen & Amato, 2013). Collaborating with volunteer teachers, graffiti artists such as Darbotz, Gradu House, Pack D, Yellow Dino and Eno Ruge not only participate in this alternative education dedicated to the children of our city, but they have provided the public with a new idea of what graffiti can do for people⁶.

Figure 15. Students Participating in a Graffiteach Class in front of A Wall Painted by The Yello Dino and Koma.

Figure 16. Biology Wall at Graffiteach.

Figure 17. Children Learning English at Graffiteach.

Alternative artspace ‘SPACE: Galeri Pasar’

The traditional market is a living space that embraces the historicity and locality of the place where it is located. It is also a place where objects of both material and cultural value are exchanged. Traditional markets, however, have faced a threat to their existence due to industrialization, globalization and capitalism such that they have been neglected because consumers nowadays choose to go to the modern supermarkets and markets inside shopping malls. As a place that insures the economy of ordinary people and also a place that represents their lives, the existence of the traditional market is crucial. With this in mind, it is noteworthy to look at the revitalization movement being carried out in a traditional market, Pasar Santa (Santa Market), located in the southern heart of Jakarta. The revitalization movement has not only changed the market’s physical appearance but, through the installation of artwork and art activities, has helped the market evolve into a cultural space.

Pasar Santa, which began around 1971 and initially sold nine staples for everyday use, over time invited batik merchants into it. For the seven years from 2007 to 2014, however, it was a deserted place with hundreds of empty kiosks (Restu, 2014). In order to stop the decline of tenants and increase traffic to the market, the managers of Pasar Santa attracted young entrepreneurs with an extremely reasonable rental rate. Starting with new tenants representing the coffee trade, they successfully filled its three-storey market building with a variety of vendors, including coffee stores, LP shops, book stores, and clothing shops⁷. While most of these high-end, pop-culture vendors settled on the upper floor, the kiosks on the ground level tend to be filled with traditional stores that sell merchandise such as clothing, shoes and jewelry, or offer services such as alterations and shoe repair.

Critiques about the Pasar Santa revitalization program take two opposing viewpoints. According to some vendors, this makeover will provide all of the merchants in the market with additional chances to attract potential buyers, thus helping to increase the daily incomes of the traditional merchants as well as the high-end newcomers. Other vendors claim that the concentration of the young, so-called

creativepreneurs' shops on the upper floor may prevent customers from interacting with other vendors and merchants located on different levels, due to the different lifestyles of high-end customers and the traditional shopkeepers⁸.

Such critiques provided my team and myself an insight on how to approach a new market gallery being planned by the center where I serve as a director. We came to the conclusion that leasing space between the traditional shops housed in the lower two floors, and the modern creative kiosks on the upper floor, would be both a challenge and a merit for our gallery space. Our priority, as a center focusing on programs for art and community development, has been to resolve the seemingly segregated atmosphere between the two kinds of vendors, yet avoid dominating the market via our art programs.

Figure 18. Basement View of Pasar Santa Full of Shops Selling Food.

Figure 19. Ground Floor View of Pasar Santa Full of Shops Selling Ordinary Goods.

Figure 20. Modern Creative Kioks on The Upper Floor of Pasar Santa.

Figure 21. Crowds on The Food Court on The Upper Floor of Pasar Santa.

SPACE: Galeri Pasar (SPACE)⁹ is an alternative space located on the ground level of Pasar Santa and surrounded by ordinary shops selling clothing and shoes. Officially opened in December 2014, SPACE features programs that encourage dialogue between visual art exhibition and community development. SPACE provides a space to support community-based art by young contemporary artists and curators from various media. Each month, an open call is held for the selection of artist proposals that are then nurtured through the process of curatorial guidance and discussion with artist. SPACE also serves as a medium of artwork. Its physical space is approximately 2.5 m x 3 m, and artists are encouraged to challenge the limitation of the space while maximizing the impact of their work of art. Within the context of ordinary life in the market, artists are encouraged to seek out different interactions with traders, buyers, clothing artisans, vegetable vendors and numerous merchants. SPACE aims to contribute towards an increase in public awareness about the market as both a cultural space and living space where the grassroots community of the traditional market is also encouraged to acquire equal access to the arts and cultural appreciation in its everyday life.

One recent program at SPACE was (G) (O) (N) (I), meaning ‘burlap’, by a young artist named M. Haryo Hutomo. (G) (O) (N) (I) presented one of the most relevant vehicles for Arcolab’s primary goal of community development. Haryo had observed a shift in the social and cultural significance of burlap material in Indonesian society. Historically, it was the main fabric for clothing the masses, signifying poverty and hardship during the Japanese occupation (1942-1945). Following the country’s independence, it became the material for burlap sack races held in conjunction with Independence Day Festival. (G) (O) (N) (I) is an acronym for Gruesome, Opposite, Nationalism and Independence. By bringing a festive connotation to the dark colonial history of Indonesia, Haryo questioned the status of human independence and freedom in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries.

Figure 22. A Gallery View of “(G)(O)(N)(I)” at SPACE: Galeri Pasar in Pasar Santa.

Figure 23. A Video Still Image from The Performance Conducted in The Traditional Market in The Basement of Pasar Santa.

In closer look, as a performance artist, Haryo brought sack races to the communities in the basement of Pasar Santa. 18 contestants – consisting of the guards as well as shopkeepers who sell clothing, vegetable, fruit, groceries and textiles – helped organize the competition, which was held at a vegetable stall. Indeed, the video documentation of this race became a major work in the exhibition

installation of (G) (O) (N) (I). When the video was aired, both the contestants and other merchants gathered at the gallery, were surprised to see themselves presented in the video as part of an art exhibition. Although it was a short, dream-like event, by participating in this artistic activity, the market community has slowly come to understand some unconventional aspects of contemporary art.

While Haryo looked at the socio-cultural phenomena of the people, the artist of the followed exhibition, Powder Room, has taken an autobiographical approach. Tamara Pertamina, who lives and works in Yogyakarta, brought his fashion sculpture into the gallery juxtaposed with a hanging mirror. Staged as if a dressing room, SPACE creates a dense atmosphere revealing the artist's transgender identity. Appearing to be a high-end luxury dress, but in fact made of pieces of industrial rope and plastic bags, Powder Room creates tension between nature and artificiality, luxury and kitsch, and seeing and being seen. The dress as a desired commodity for women reflects through the mirror as the desired identity of the artist. As Pertamina states, clothing is the most obvious indicator of any person, providing numerous clues as to that person's identity. Like a piece of live drama, the exhibition stimulates the market audience's imagination about becoming a different person.

Figure 24. A Gallery View of “Powder Room” at SPACE: Geleri Pasar in Pasar Santa.

Figure 25. The Artist Looking at The Mirror of His Own Installation.

Conclusion

By investigating the physical structures and the statistical data of Jakarta City, this study has found that the phenomenon of the city is well represented by Michel De Certeau's theory in *The Practice of Everyday Life*. Jakarta is a city in which structural order is in accordance with particular elements that are stable, ordered and durable. In turn, this means that Jakarta can be considered to be a "PLACE" that has a sense of stability and order. On the other hand, Jakarta is also a city where a variety of artistic and cultural actions take place in such places as Bundaran Hotel Indonesia, during the New Year Celebration, and marginalized neighborhoods in the city. The garbage collectors and their mobile paintings on Gerobag, organized and instructed by Abdulahman Saleh, a.k.a. Maman, with his community named RTJ (Rumah Tanpa Jendela), serve as a notable illustration of community-based art.

Across the city, numerous wall paintings classified as street art can be seen. The artists have transformed the streets with myriad colors and writings, using brushes and sprays. As if the phenomenon represents Mayakovsky's abovementioned slogan, "Let us make the streets our brushes, the squares our palettes," many graffiti artists use art for dialogue and public speech. Meanwhile, the social movement of Graffiteach has employed public walls and graffiti for an educational purpose. During the research phase of this paper, I also found the new phenomenon of Pasar Santa in Jakarta. By situating an alternative art gallery in the traditional market and naming it SPACE: Galeri Pasar, our hope was that SPACE will become a place to enliven the local arts and culture scene through the market, inspiring young artists and allowing them to reach out to and grow with the market community.

Through the phenomenological experience of investigating a number of artistic activities in Jakarta, three conclusions have been drawn regarding contemporary art practices in the daily life of Jakarta: (1) Jakarta, a vast urban space, is in collaboration with its local communities, (2) Jakarta is responding to the urban landscape, and (3) Jakarta is endowed with an alternative space in an ordinary market.

Endnotes

¹ This paper is a revised and expanded version of a paper "Ordinary Dreams and an Open Stage: Practices of Contemporary Art in Daily Life of Jakarta": presented at Jak_A 2014 International Seminar and Exhibition on Architecture_Design_Art + Engineers, organized by Pancasila University Jakarta on December 1, 2014.

² Since 2005 Maman and his group members in RTJ (Rumah Tanpa Jendela) have been working together with a Jakarta based NGO PKBI to help juveniles in Penjara Anak (Children's Correction Center) in three different locations – Tangerang (2005-2012), Palembang (2012-present), Kutoarjo (2012-present) – providing comic book making workshops that have given them an opportunity to reflect on their wrongdoings and put their hope in the future. The workshop outcomes were recently compiled in a book and exhibited (Artist interview conducted on November 17, 2014 in Depok).

- ³ ISAD (Indonesian Street Art Database) organized Festival ISAD 2013 to showcase its networks of street art and artists from 12 cities across the country. The images and videos of graffiti and murals in the database are widely shared via artist blogs or the social media of collectively established communities such as Tembok Bomber, Gardu House and Indonesian Walls. Despite the numerous forms of these street art activities and their distinct function, graffiti and murals are conjointly called 'street art' in Indonesia.
- ⁴ "Bujangan Urban (Urban Bachelor) was born Rizky Aditya Nugroho. He did completed his undergraduate studies in 2003 at the Interstudi's Visual Communication Design department, which he finished in 2003, and afterwards joined Artcoholic, a street art community actively working in Jakarta's public spaces. His murals can be viewed at schools and on flyovers, in Jakarta and other cities. He is among the most notable graffiti artists who have inspired teenagers to learn graffiti. He was involved as a curator in the solo exhibition of The Popo at RURU Gallery (2010); as art director of respectastreesartgalery.com (2010), GARDUHOUSE (2010), and Jakarta Street Art United Exhibition (2009)."
- ⁵ According to reports, approximately 12,000 children in Jakarta spend most of their time on the street. For some of these children, the fact that their parents lack a marriage certificate means the children themselves have no birth certificate. Worse, yet, if neither the parents nor the children have identification cards, they are further pushed into marginalization.
- ⁶ Unfortunately, the government of Jakarta began to cover the mural of the street walls in early April 2014, Graffiteach's teaching walls were also affected.
- ⁷ Pasar Santa is a three-storey building that is composed of a basement selling kitchen ingredients, a ground floor dealing with ordinary goods and commodities, and an upper floor selling food, desserts and creative products.
- ⁸ Numerous articles have covered the recent phenomena at Pasar Santa. Publications ranging from The Jakarta Post and Kompas to The Wall Street Journal have featured interviews of both the tenants of and visitors to the market.
- ⁹ SPACE is managed by the Center for Art and Community Management (Arcolabs) at Surya University.

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