

Venty Vergianti & Maria Yohana Raharjo

Venty Vergianti, architect and sculptor, gained her bachelor degree in Architecture from Bandung Institute of Technology, Indonesia and later earned her master degree in Design for Interaction from TU Delft, Netherlands. She has been working as Architect since she graduated while maintaining her art exploration on a daily basis. Venty started to use clay as medium for her art exploration in 2010 under the guidance of Keng Sien Liem, a prominent Indonesian ceramic artist. Since then she has developed sculpture technique that is rich in tactual and playful experience. Spontaneous movement becomes her key to unravel form and expression. Using a process-based approach she lets her work evolves through time.

Specialized in designing spaces that promote modesty, and thus breaking the boundaries between various social hierarchies particularly in Indonesian society, Maria Yohana Raharjo went to UNSW (University of New South Wales - Sydney) for her bachelor and master degree in Architecture. Yohana continued her career in Australian company for several years after her graduation, before she came back to Indonesia to continue developing local resources and material as solution for a better sanctuary. Yohana is also the architect and co-founder of Frog House, Jogjakarta and Bali.

Interview

1. In a short paragraph, please describe yourself

(YOAN)

I am changing from time to time. When needed I could be a creative designer, or sometimes could be a very perfectionist architect. But also most of the time I am more passionate about harmonious relationship between people and nature, and in this moment I could easily give up all design idealism and perfectionism, just to be harmonious with the world. Sadly, sometimes design idealism is not always in line with what other people and nature want. At this moment, you just need to know where to stand as Pak Eko Prawoto said, world is bigger than architecture.

(VENTY)

I'm a ceramic artist with architect/ design background. I work mostly on figurative sculpture depicting laughter and joy. Fresh idea and spontaneity are the key ingredients of my artistic exploration.

2. Is there a particular incident during your childhood that steer you in this artistic journey ?

(YOAN)

From memory, I remember everyday I made a cubby house just from whatever around me, sticks, table, fabrics, chairs. Maybe I already have passion about making and exploring spaces.

(VENTY)

no. But I enjoy playing when i was a child like most children, either by myself or with my siblings or friends, and we did different things everyday. From playing toys, playing hide and seek on the street to playing kite on the roof, we were barely restricted to anything: not object nor circumstances, hardly follow any rules. We played with what we found at that moment, with our fantasy we created our toys and stories. Me and my siblings for instance, we use everything as a toy, including our house decoration; from table cloth to artwork. We broke things sometimes, and though our parents will complain, they don't really punish us. So for me my current artistic journey is more to rekindle the creativity that I had at that time.

3. Thank you for being part of 'CHARCOAL FOR CHILDREN'. It is wonderful to see children and working artists interacting together. Why do you participate and support this program ?

(YOAN)

I'm always willing to positively respond to offers coming from people that I respect or program that resonate to my life. Suria and Jindee are very inspiring couple who run many holistic programs at Cush Cush Gallery. Their ideas are simple and straight to the point, and most importantly they see economy as the side effect from a good program, not the main aim.

So, it doesn't matter if the program is involving children, young people, old people, etc. I believe CushCush Gallery has a good rationale behind everything.

(VENTY)

For me children are real artist especially those who are below 8. Their creativity are still very pure, but sometimes "environment" gives them too many rules and they become too afraid to show or be what they want. I like to help the ones that have problem with expressing themselves, to do fun things and living their true potential. On the other hand I also learn from them either those who are too shy to come out or those who are like most children (playful and full of fantasy). For me it is not about me teaching the children, it is in fact about me as an adult learning to break boundaries from real artists.

4. What's the idea behind your session ?

(YOAN)

The idea was to give as many possibilities as we could to the children to explore various shapes and space through the simple wooden toy that we developed. Children needs freedom, limitless possibilities, interesting shapes so that they can sit and focus, build and demolish, and enjoy the process.

(VENTY)

explore and play

5. What do you observe during the session ?

(YOAN)

Everybody, including children, needs time to adapt. Sometimes as a mentor, you already have the idea how the session might run. But in fact, each child reacts to ideas in different ways. This process sometimes make adult think that the children are not interested or the children are too naughty, but actually they just need time to digest the ideas and be comfortable. As soon as they reach that point, then you can see children's creativity and imagination are the wildest.

(VENTY)

the children fantasy and story

6. What is the title of your collaborative artwork ? and what it is about ?

(YOAN)

how ven?? Hahaha

(VENTY)

The world as we see it. ??? "we" here refers to the children

I think for me i see them as the artist, while we as the facilitators act more like the curator for their work.

The showcase will be about how children perceive the world around them, how they perceive world as a comfort and familiar "place". Through their eyes home can mean many things, from a physical space (a building), an idea about something you care about (a pet, your music instrument), an idea about a place where they feel safe (a fort, a barn for the pet. gate, a jail and the policemen, a protective robot figure), an idea about being in an adventure/journey (a ship), a sharing space (the sea, the pool)...