



A SLICE OF THE GODS

NGREBEG TRADITION IN TEGALALANG VILLAGE

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KOMANEKA FAMILY

The Masterpiece of Bisma Residence

...The Masterpiece of Bisma Residence offers everything you need for an ultimate holiday...

Located in the secluded north wing of Komaneka at Bisma, our comfortable Bisma Residence completely takes the concept of personal services of Komaneka as “A Welcome from the Heart”.

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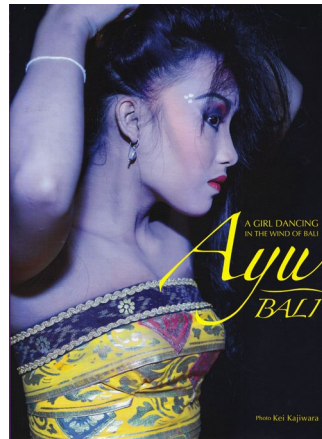
KOMANEKA FINE ART GALLERY

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Ngrebeg is a very unique ritual that has been practiced by the inhabitants of Tegalalang Village, outskirts of Ubud. This ritual is held in conjunction with the anniversary of Dur Bingin Temple that is celebrated every 6 months. The participants of *Ngrebeg* ritual are members of Pura Dur Bingin’s congregation that comes from several customary villages in Tegalalang area. Participants are mostly children and teenage boys. There is no gender restriction to join the ritual, according to the official of the village, but as far as he can remember women rarely participate.

This ritual usually with a gathering at Dur Bingin Temple for a communal pray, then after praying session is over the parade begins. The participants walk around the village (8 kilometers). Each participant brings a bamboo stick or palm branch that is decorated with coconut leaves. This stick symbolizes a weapon and it produces noise when stroked.

During the parade, participants create a very hectic atmosphere. The moving of thousands participants create a dynamic marching sound, interspersed by cries shouts of a phrase “*Pengayah Duur Bingin*” (servant of Duur Bingin Temple) adding sacred nuance to the tradition. *Beleganjur* orchestra accompanies the parade. Along the parade-route thousands of villagers line on road side watching the parade enthusiastically. They also supply drinking water to the participants.

The special features of this *Ngrebeg* ritual are facial and clothing appearance of the participants. They try to express their imaginations on super natural beings and negative powers that are believed to be the inhabitants of *Niskala* (unseen world). Balinese believe there are two types of worlds, *Sekala* and *Niskala*. *Sekala* is human world, the seen one while *Niskala* is unseen realm that is believed to contain negative energy that is need to be neutralized lest it can interfere with human life. Negative energy can take many forms including supernatural being, genie or other *Niskala* inhabitants. In Bali these creatures are often referred to as *Tonya*, *Memedi*, *Gamang*, *Dedemit*, etc. Each term is used to refer to specific character and form of these creatures. In this ritual many participants take references to these frightening *Niskala* being. But today a new phenomenon occur, teenage boys who participated in this ritual use this moment to show their creativity in fashion design. They show case contemporary fashion that draws its inspiration from various parts of the world as well as from popular figures.

Basically, *Ngrebeg* tradition aims to neutralize the negative force that exists in the village environment. The villagers believe that there are 288 types of jinn or supernatural beings who settled in the rivers around the village such as Petulu and Empul River. Therefore in every village ceremony, the villagers offer 288 types of *Segehan* or rice offerings.

The village leader said that the *Ngrebeg* tradition is not held to expel supernatural beings, but to neutralize negative energy so it will not interfere with the villagers’ daily life. The villages hope that by carrying out this tradition the village will be safe, peaceful and prosperous without any disturbance or calamity.

Photo courtesy of:

Putu Sayoga/Getty Images (<http://blogs.ft.com/photo-diary/>)

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KOMANEKA FAMILY



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Melayang Di Atas Bidang, acrylic on canvas, 180x140 cm, 1999

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...Artworks that are born from the hands of Mangku, comes with the non-image representation of reality amid the din of visual sensation that tends to ignore the search of art essence...

I Made Mahendra Mangku or popularly known as Mangku is a Balinese artist who faithfully use abstract visual language in his work. He was born in 1972 in Sukawati Village and took his career as an artist seriously in his collage. He joined Painting Department in Indonesian Arts Institute (ISI) Yogyakarta. Mangku was accepted as a student in ISI in 1992.

Mangku's interest in art has been nurtured since childhood, especially traditional art of Bali. At the age of 8-year old, Mangku, began his study on traditional painting to some local Balinese classical painters, he also had a chance to learn traditional painting from Ida Bagus Poleng. Due to his family financial situation Mangku learned to color painting (*perada*) and worked as handyman at a local art shop. The young Mangku started to master coloring pattern of Balinese Classical painting styles, such as Batuan, Pengosekan and Ubud style.

Mangku is a fast learner, energetic, tactical, and can neatly store visual memories. His interest in the artistic representation reached its peak when he read news of solo exhibition by Made Budhiana in The Northern Territory Museum of Arts and Sciences, Darwin - Australia (1989). Mangku decided to leave his work as a handyman and continued his study in SMSR, with special interest on modern art. In this school Mangku met many teachers including many Pande Gede Supada who provided advices and technical guidance. Mangku also met up with new friends with their uniqueness, talents and shortcomings. Until now, many of these friends became his good friends.

At this time, Mangku also had the opportunity to meet and learn from his admired artist, Made Budhiana who gave inspiration to many aspiring young Balinese artists at that time.

Mangku fostered his self-confidence by entering the cultural city of Yogyakarta, on the encouragement of Mr. Pengsong, father of artist Mantra Ardhana. Mangku studied at Indonesia Arts Institute (ISI), joined Dewata Indonesia Studio (SDI), received a Supersemar scholarship, participated in various exhibitions and won several awards as the best.

In this period Mangku increasingly aware of his shortcomings in terms of shapes and lines, on the other hand he further understood his potential in terms of color. Furthermore, it directed Mangku awareness to find a non-Bali visual language reference that fits his character. At the national level, Mangku refers to the works of Zaini (March 17, 1926 - September 25, 1977), a painter from Pariaman whose formal education only fifth class Elementary School. While at the global level, Mangku mainly refers to Robert Rauschenberg (US) and to Antoni Tapies (Spanish).

Artworks that are born from the hands of Mangku, comes with the non-image representation of reality amid the din of visual sensation that tends to ignore the search of art essence. His works were born through exploration and organization of the elements that form the most essential lines, shapes, textures and color space. All essences are created as conductors (referent) to the birth of the perception of the image that appear in the image space of each enthusiast of his two dimensional work.

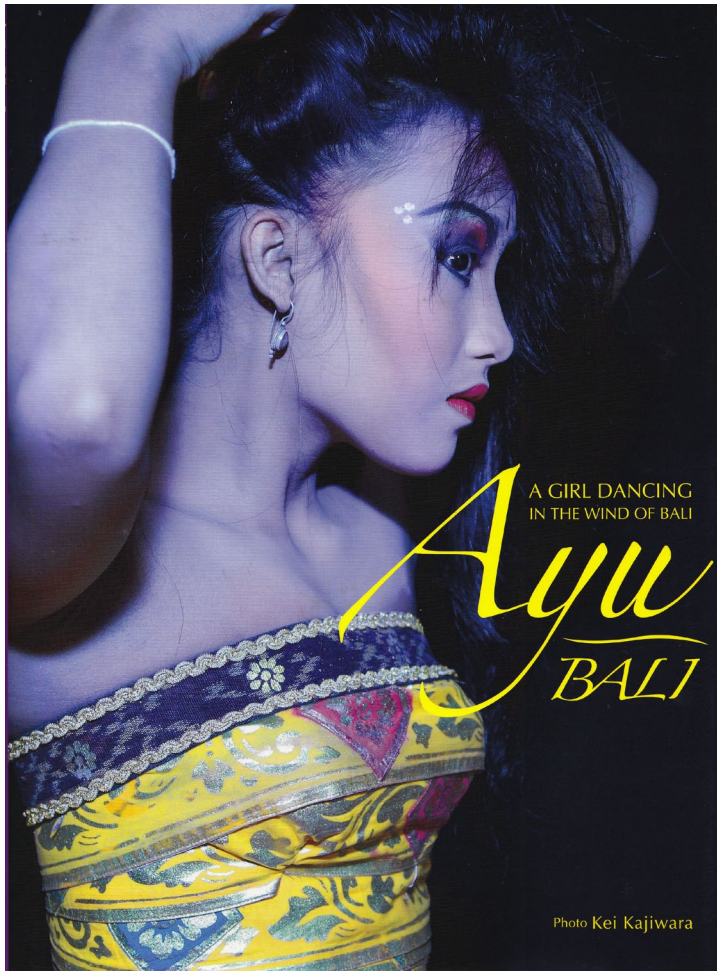
Space becomes a very important element, through the space he communicates his personal experiences about various aspects of community social life and also the experience of being part of customary society in which he should always be involved in customary activities as well as traditional Balinese Hindu ceremony. Experience in attending traditional activities (such as performing masked dancers *Bondres* that features jokes through a funny mask and dialogues) for Mangku it stands side-by-side with the chosen abstract visual language that he chooses as a medium of expression by showcasing essence of form as its main element.

Abstract language gives Mangku flexibility in displaying variety of issues which he feels in more neutral way that are presented in line, color, and organization in a particular composition. Mangku's works incorporate metaphors about traveling to reach the light in which light is a metaphor of hope, sincerity and something that is sublime as well as anything related to spirituality.

Until now, Mangku have attended various exhibition, and received several awards such as Finalists Philip Morris Indonesia Art Award (1996-1998), Award from the Ministry of Education And Culture (1998).

View I Made Mahendra Mangku artworks at Komaneke Fine Art Gallery.

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WHAT TO READ

Ayu Bali A Girl Dancing in The Wind of Bali

...This book offers a different perspective of beauty, a different approach to appreciate the beauty of Balinese dance that has been widely displayed through previous photographic work...

Every Balinese is also a dancer. Dancers are highly appreciated in Balinese social life. Almost all traditional activities in Bali provide a space for the community to express themselves through dance. For Balinese, dancer is a profession full of devotion, devotion to religion and society.

Devotion in Balinese language is known as Ngayah, offering capabilities sincerely. Basically the spirit of Ngayah keeps Balinese tradition alive. However, the dawn of tourism industry, gives Ngayah material reward. Dancing is no longer in the temple or in social activities in the community but also can be performed to entertain tourists thus getting material rewards.

Balinese dance is very popular with tourists visiting Bali. Dexterity, agility and elegance of Balinese dances have long been drawing their attention. Many foreigners are interested in learning. Notes and writing on Balinese dances are mostly can easily be found. Recording, in the form of films and photographs often show the beauty of Balinese dances. The photos of Balinese dances beauty also display profile of models that are well known in Bali.

A book entitled Ayu Bali A Girl Dancing in The Wind of Bali features photographs of female Balinese dancer. The photos are artwork of Japanese photographer, Kei Kajiwara. This book is very

interesting, page by page showing pose of a Balinese dancer named Ayu. Ayu comes from the village of Ubud, a village well-known as a superior tourist village through its art activities. Every night, various dance performances can be enjoyed, bring festivity to the village night. These performances involve many local artists from the village of Ubud. Each performance involves no less than 20 artists, dancers and gambelan players. From the photographs in this book we are invited to explore the life of a Balinese dancer who falls in love with her profession. Ayu met Kei when she was 13 years old. The first meeting led to a series of meetings until Ayu was 17-year-old. For five years Kei successfully made continual record of changes in Ayu as a dancer.

Most of the poses were taken by the close-up or medium close-up, displaying the careful details and giving a very intimate impression for the audience. The takings of the scenes were performed in an impressive way. The model did not seem to be bothered by the presence of a close camera. The photographer was able to eliminate the distance with the model, enabling him to record the moment and the scene in a very natural way.

This book offers a different perspective of beauty, a different approach to appreciate the beauty of Balinese dance that has been widely displayed through previous photographic work. This book will be a very fascinating read to those who are interested in Balinese dance or want to learn about Bali.

This book could be found at Komaneka Fine Art Gallery.

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