



A SLICE OF THE GODS

"Tajen" Cockfighting Tradition in Bali

...The tradition of Tajen in Bali is dated back to 9th century AD. This tradition evolved from a religious ritual called "Tabuh Rah"...

Cockfighting tradition in Bali is called *tajen*. The word "*tajen*" is derived from the word "*taji*" which is the name of a special knife attached to a fighting cock. *Tajen* is a popular pastime for Balinese. Like boxing, this tradition has many hardcore fans called "*bebotoh*". Although this tradition is widely repudiated and banned by the government (considered as gambling), but its existence has never been extinct in Balinese culture up until now.

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KOMANEKA FINE ART GALLERY

Gede Budi Agung Kuswara (KABUL)

... Through his work, Kabul tries to present the message of imminent danger affecting water conservation...

Gede Budi Agung Kuswara or affectionately called Kabul is a young artist with a strong adventure spirit. Kabul produces not just works of conventional paintings, but also alternative installation and multimedia works. Kabul was born in the island of God - Bali. His journey in honing his artistic talent started in 2002 in an Intermediate Arts School (SMSR), then he crossed the ocean, leaving Bali for the island of Java to continue his study of art at the Indonesian Arts Institute (ISI) Yogyakarta.

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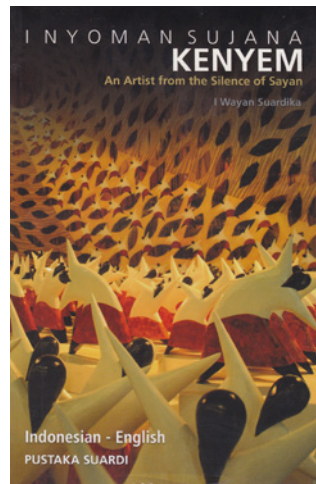
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...Now OPEN, Batukaru Swimming Pool and Batukaru Restaurant, Komaneka at Tanggayuda...

Lost at the enchanting and secluded setting overlooking the Oos River in Ubud. Enjoy the 180° valley view by the pool side of new main pool at Komaneka at Tanggayuda.

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WHAT TO READ

I Nyoman Sujana Kenyem, an Artist From the Silence of Sayan

...Amid the lack of books that documented the life of young Balinese artists, this book is worth a read...

At first, in Balinese tradition, there is no term for artist or art worker as a choice of profession. Artistry is a special skill that serves religious and social functions (socio-religious). Artist is still regarded as a side job to fill free time, but nowadays, artist is increasingly popular.

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**"Tajen" Cockfighting Tradition in Bali**

Cockfighting tradition in Bali is called *tajen*. The word "*tajen*" is derived from the word "*taji*" which is the name of a special knife attached to a fighting cock. *Tajen* is a popular pastime for Balinese. Like boxing, this tradition has many hardcore fans called "*bebotoh*". Although this tradition is widely repudiated and banned by the government (considered as gambling), but its existence has never been extinct in Balinese culture up until now.

The tradition of *Tajen* in Bali is dated back to 9th century AD. This tradition evolved from a religious ritual called "*Tabuh Rah*". A description of *Tabuh Rah* ritual that features animal fight (cock) expressed in various manuscripts and inscriptions, such as *Batur Abang I* inscription (1011 AD) and *Batuan* inscription (1022 AD).

Nowdays, *Tajen* is a very popular entertainment event. Cockfighting turns into a betting arena (gambling) for the *bebotoh*. *Tajen* can usually be found in as a part of customary and religious ceremonies in a village or temple. Information on when and where a *tajen* is hold are usually circulated by word of mouth among *bebotoh*.

Tajen arena always brings excitement and clamor, like watching a *Kecak* performance. When

two chickens fight, the spectators who stand around the battle arena will shout to each other, shouting betting terms that are quite unique and not commonly used in everyday Balinese society, for example: *gasal*, *cok*, *pada*, *telude*, *apit*, and *kedapang*. These terms are betting terms that can only be found in the *tajen* arena. Each term has a meaning, for example *gasal* is betting system in which the ratio of bet is five to four. *Cok* is three to four; *pada* is equal bet; *telude* is two to three; *apit* is one to two, while *kedapang* nine to ten.

Before the fight starts, two *Pakembars* (officers who handle the cock during the fight) introduce each cock by placing it in a rectangle in the middle of the arena. At that time, spectators can assess which cock is seeded and which is not. For example, a *Pakembar* bring *bihing* (red feather) cock, while other brought a *kelau* (gray feather) cock, if there is a *bebotoh* who favors *bihing* cock, he will shout a welcome cheer. If *Pakembars* finish with the introduction and there is no *bebotoh* who favor *kelau* cock, *bihing* cock is automatically seeded. Then, the *bebotoh* can offer the bets.



"Taji" a special knife attached to a fighting cock

Bebotoh who want to get an "enemy" is usually chanted a favored betting system from its place, without moving around the arena, the one who answer his shout with the same betting system will be the opponent. *Bebotoh* also use their finger as a gesture to indicate betting system he wanted. Then the opponent who is interested reply with a similar gesture.

Once the chicken is stated as "seeded fighter", someone shouted "*cok*" (three to four) means he bets on the opponent of the seeded cock with a condition, that if he wins he will get all the bet but he only pays three-quarters of the bet if he loses.

There is referee in *Tajen*, called "*Saya*". There are four *sayas* in charge in each *tajen*, namely *saya kemong*, *ketek*, *garis* and *lap*. *Saya kemong* holds the highest position, he determines when to start and end a fight; he use a small *gong* called *kemong*. If one of the fighting cock lies on the ground, *bebotoh* of the defeated cock will come to the opponent to hand over the bet.

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The new infinity Batukaru Swimming Pool, Komaneka at Tanggayuda

"Amazing resort within the jungle"

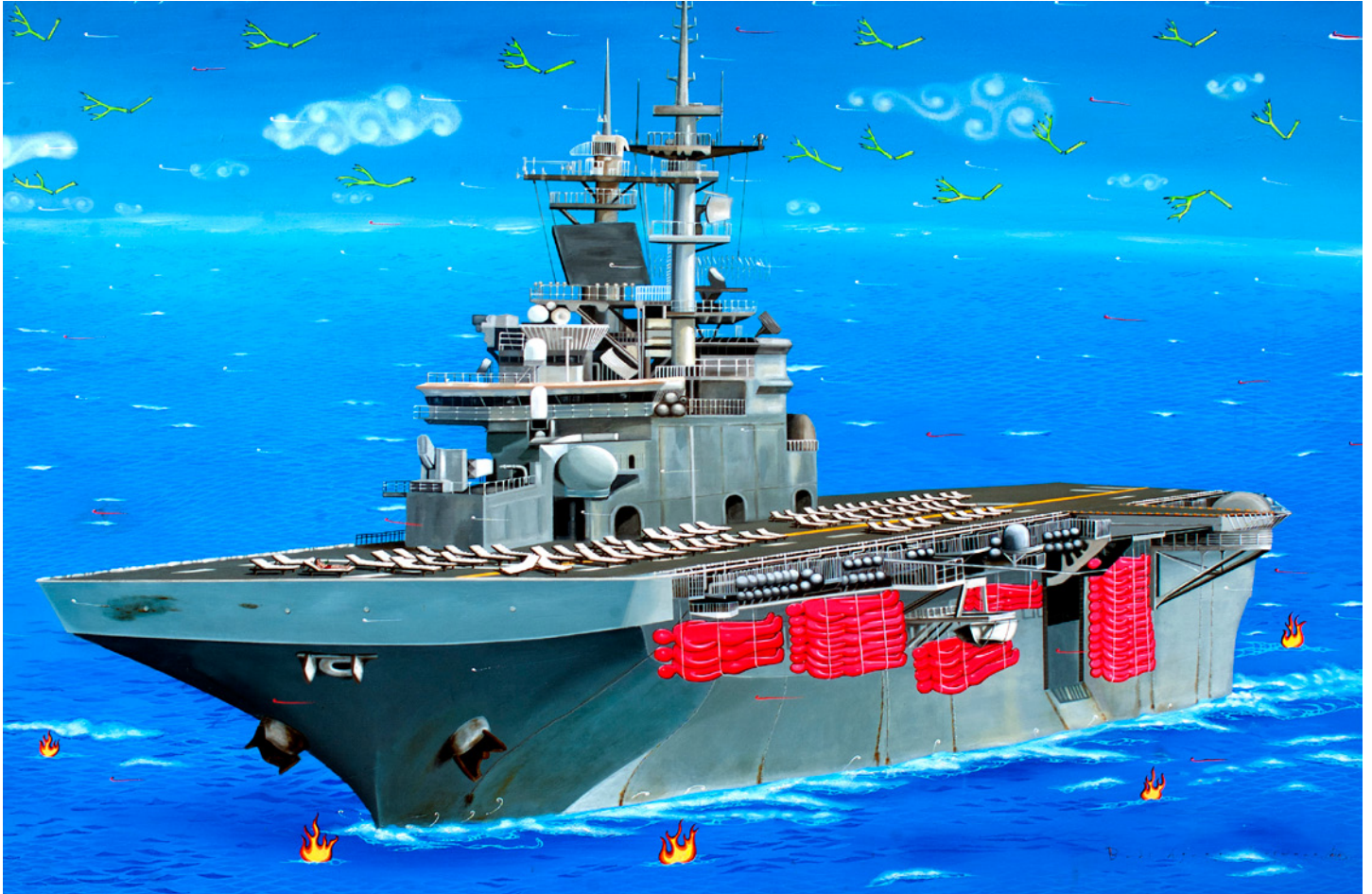
When we visited, the new restaurant was completed, as was the new infinity pool below. The **view** into the forest and distant rice terraces was **amazing**. The **quality** of the restaurant items were amazing and all items were reasonably priced--I really don't have any complaints. The new pool also had an amazing view.

Overall, Komaneka is an **impressive** resort. It has **great views**, wonderful staff, and villas.

Patrick C - New York.

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KOMANEKA FINE ART GALLERY



Enjoy Life, Acrylic on canvas, 150 x 200 cm, 2011

Gede Budi Agung Kuswara (KABUL)

Gede Budi Agung Kuswara or affectionately called Kabul is a young artist with a strong adventure spirit. Kabul produces not just works of conventional paintings, but also alternative installation and multi-media works. Kabul was born in the island of God - Bali. His journey in honing his artistic talent started in 2002 in an Intermediate Arts School (SMSR), then he crossed the ocean, leaving Bali for the island of Java to continue his study of art at the Indonesian Arts Institute (ISI) Yogyakarta. Yogyakarta offers a favorable atmosphere to hone the creativity and vitality of an artist.

Kabul is hailed from a royal family; his father is a descendant of Klungkung Dynasty. In the bygone kingdom era, the kingdom of Klungkung is the center of Bali's government, where various forms of classical arts like Kamasan-style painting thrived. But Kabul's childhood was spent in coastal area, Sanur Beach. As a tourist destination, Sanur Beach offers an open and dynamic environment as well as beach atmosphere and the roars of chasing waves hitting the shoreline that Kabul are very familiar with.

According to Kabul, water has always been a major theme in many of his works. Spending most of his childhood near the ocean enough to affect the themes of most of the work he created.

Water is not just a theme in his work; Kabul portrayal of water comes from realization of water importance in human life, water is a major element in human body and earth. It provides an endless stream of inspiration for Kabul. In Balinese belief, water is an important source of life and a key element in the ceremony. Through his work, Kabul tries to present the message of imminent danger affecting water conservation caused by pollution and environmental degradation. A global issue reflecting artist's concern for environment in which he lives. Relationship with his ancestral land, Klungkung, can still be felt. In his works, classic Kamasan puppet painting character turns into a pretty strong visual style. His canvas seems to be a flat field that is sometimes filled with decorative accents and strong contour line. Through his works, Kabul emerges with his childhood memories interwoven in a character of strong ancestral tradition.

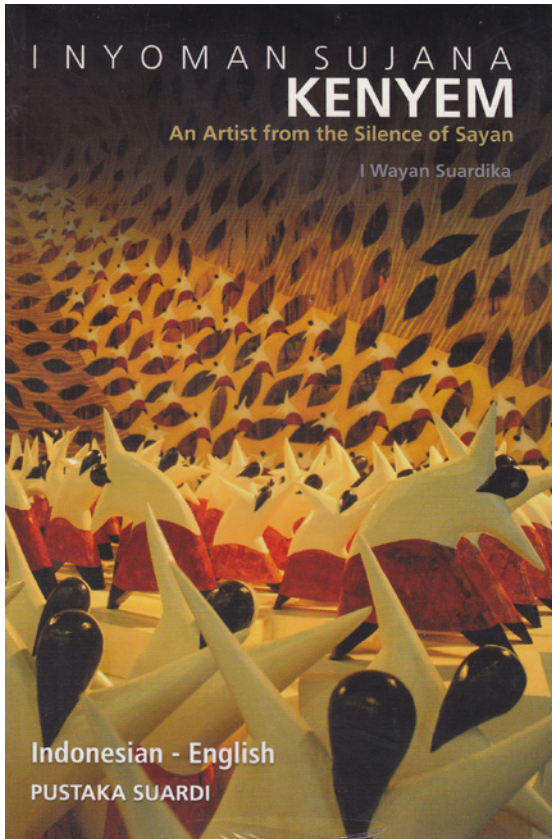


Tubuh Berkaca - Kaca #3, Acrylic on canvas, 107 x 120 cm, 2009

Lately, Kabul is eager to gain international experience by exhibiting his works in various countries. From 2003 until today, Budi Agung Kuswara (Kabul) has participated in numerous group exhibitions in various galleries and art space in Indonesia, Manila, Italia and England. His first solo exhibition entitled *i.Self* was held in Komaneka Gallery in 2008, and the second solo exhibition was presented by TAKSU Singapore in 2012, and again in 2013 Kabul held a solo exhibition "The Wax on Our Fingers", at the Baba House, Singapore National University Museum.

View Gede Budi Agung Kuswara art works at Komaneka Fine Art Gallery

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WHAT TO READ

I Nyoman Sujana Kenyem, an Artist From the Silence of Sayan

...Amid the lack of books that documented the life of young Balinese artists who have integrity in their profession, this book is worth a read...

At first, in Balinese tradition, there is no term for artist or art worker as a choice of profession. Artistry is a special skill that serves religious and social functions (socio-religious). Artist is still regarded as a side job to fill free time, but nowadays, artist is increasingly popular. Despite the pessimistic point of view from many parents regarding this profession, Bali has a lot of youth who want to work as an artist. Art schools begin to be crammed by artist candidates who want to gain the knowledge of art.

As a fledgling profession, working as an artist cannot ensure livelihood one hundred percent. Employment as an artist is not as solid as any other works; there are still many holes here and there. Indonesian government has not been able to establish a favorable atmosphere for artist to become professional art workers. Institution that support artist as a profession is not yet firmly established. Booming in the numbers of the artworks does not match with the development art facilities in term of discourse as well as physical. Thus people who are interested to become artists will need to give a thought or two before deciding.

An artist tends to be regarded as an idealist who gives less consideration on economic side, but in reality it would be difficult to deal with. Artist cannot ignore the reality of what happened in his surrounding. Twists and turns in a young Balinese artist's life named I Nyoman Sujana "Kenyem" could describe the journey of anybody who aspires to become an artist in Bali. A book entitled I Nyoman Sujana Kenyem, An Artist from The Silence of Sayan written by I Wayan

Suardika, captured the journey of a man (Kenyem) which grew into a professional artist.

Kenyem had a carefree childhood in the west-end of Ubud, although poverty become loyal friend in his family life. Brought up in a quiet and simple village environment of Sayan, Kenyem filled his daily life with "Kenyem" (smiles); turbulence was suppressed inside. Kenyem began to see hesitancy when he confronted with choices in deciding his way of life as an artist. Dilemma between pleasure as art worker and socioeconomic demands became the topic.

Kenyem self-awareness to choose a life as an artist grew when he consciously chose to study fine arts at the Intermediate School of Arts (SMSR) Ubud. This was the beginning of his journey to explore his talent and the world of art. He took further step by continuing his study in the Indonesia College of Arts in Denpasar. Development of the art in Ubud gave enough impact on morale of the young artist to stay as an artist.

Amid the lack of books that documented the life of young Balinese artists who have integrity in their profession, this book is worth a read, not only for art lovers but also for public in general, in order to raise an appreciation for creative works of an artist named I Nyoman Sujana Kenyem.

I NYOMAN SUJANA KENYEM, an Artist From the Silence of Sayan,
by I Wayan Suardika,
Library Suardi,
The first edition of 2009,
ISBN 978-602-93595-0-9,
239 pages

*This book could be found at
Komaneka Fine Art Gallery.*

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