

VIEW FINDER

JEPPE UGELVIG

ROH is pleased to announce the exhibition *View Finder* by multimedia artist Davy Linggar, his second solo exhibition with the gallery. *View Finder* presents a new series of paintings across both of the gallery's spaces, extending into and around a custom-built architectural installation developed by architect Andra Matin (of the renowned Jakarta architecture office, *andramatin*). In the exhibition, Linggar's daily painting practice is given center stage to pay homage to the domestic as both a motif and as a context of artistic production, a quotidian anti-dote to the routines of industrial aesthetic labor.

Linggar, born in 1974 in Jakarta, trained as a painter in Bandung as well as in Germany, but abandoned both in favour of an autodidact education in lens-based image-making. It was when traveling through Europe that the artist began taking pictures, which soon extended to videography; since, Linggar established himself as one of Jakarta's most trusted characters in the creative industry, working across fashion, music, advertising, architecture, and stage design. Linggar's interdisciplinarity is instinctual and ever-

evolving, the result not only of a hybridity of form or process but of the sociality of local, cross-system collaboration.

If these successes taught Linggar the industrial and commercial capacities of the photographic medium, painting has, for him, remained a precious free space, seeped not in any professional framework but rather in the intimately domestic. The artist paints only at home, in the corner of his living room, surrounded by his life—his wife and their two kids, whose presences and creative input often make direct imprints on his work.

These psychosocial spatial envelopments are directly modelled in the exhibition at ROH, where the artist's friend and collaborator, the architect Andra Matin, has designed an impressionistic display structure inspired by Linggar's family home. Taking visitors from the standard white cube display of the first gallery into a dream-like, speculative wooden architecture in the second, the exhibition urges us to reconsider not only how and where paintings are made but how and where they should be experienced. Linggar proposes the sincere, if not

uncontroversial, idea that paintings are—first and foremost—quodidian objects: things to live with, around, and through.

The paintings on display form the series *Following Mother Nature #1-12*, all variations of a single image shot by the artist himself, depicting a pair of crossed hands. The close crop of the image immediately isolates and amplifies the signifying potential of the limbs, asserting their unmistakable—if still highly abstract—ability to express emotion. It is unclear if these hands belong to a single person, or if they indicate the embrace of two; this is left for the viewer to interpret. Linggar's past work has frequently included hands, feet, and other limbs; rather than the directness of facial expression, he calls attention upon how corporeal messaging happens in a myriad of ways, and how images can capture these in all their fleetingness.

Photography surrounds the canvases of Linggar, both processually and conceptually. The exhibition title, *View Finder*, is sourced directly from photographic parlance, in line with past exhibitions such as *iso* (2020)

and *Aperture* (2022). The almost compulsive repetition of motif across numerous canvases recalls the voracity of commercial image-making, where countless shots are fired within minutes before only a single one is chosen, labored on, and disseminated for consumption. Painting, the ultimate slow-medium, would seem a natural opposite to this mode of working, but Linggar's patient repetition yields similar results. Across a variety of painterly hues ranging from earthy reds to midnight blue and brownish greys—and even moments of virtuosic abstraction—he meditates, stubbornly, on the reproducibility of photographic images, a fact that even painting, often considered a medium of unique originals, is not able to deny. As Linggar's motif reproduces on canvas after canvas, we are asked to seriously consider how deeply our understanding of visuality has been altered by the fast shutter and the endless availability of copying.

So what purposes do these canvases serve, as paintings “about” photography? In his process of technological reckoning, the artist muses on the pragmatics of

aesthetic labour and how it registers—or fails to register—more subtle aesthetic nuances such as mood, affect, and atmosphere. Painting, to Davy, may be a site of image reproduction much like photography, but it is also a site of a unique, emotional deepening an image, a place to investigate how images imprint themselves on our minds, or memories, our psychic environments—both private and shared.

Contrary to popular belief, this is not an effect that diminishes with manual repetition; in fact, it only deepens it, akin to the iterative nature of a mantra.

DAVY LINGGAR'S EXPANDED STUDIO

DENISE LAI

This essay supplements Jeppe Ugelvig's insightful text on the relationship between Davy Linggar's practice as a photographer and painter, where I hope to offer additional insights from my visit to Linggar's home-studio as a crucial foundation for his painterly practice. The exhibition marks the first time he has invited us so overtly into this epicenter.

The recreation of Linggar's home in *View Finder* forms more than a backdrop for his paintings; it is an extension of his artistic process where life and art blur into one another. His house—chic, with a facade softened by an enveloping layer of greenery—stands as this living organism. Upon entering, the distinction between domestic and studio space immediately dissolves. We see a ground floor split between the artist's studio space and the family's living room, where one is surrounded by boxes of his children's toys and a salon hang of Linggar's works, the latter which frames the room in a visual dialogue that feels both curated and casual. As we sat on his living room carpet, it was evident that the spaces to be lived in were not merely a retreat from his studio but an extension of it.

During our visit, unfinished works from his *Following Mother Nature* series were raised on easels and arranged beside each other for reference, where the artist might return to one upon completing the other. It was a useful reminder that the first exhibition space is the artist's studio. Their display in the gallery is an expanded version of this earlier arrangement, with the paintings creating a horizontal plane across the gallery's three walls. The viewer is in this way given a privileged insight into his process, where they might imagine the paintings' dialogic relationship in which the artist focuses and flits between different canvases and expressive modes.

When I first encountered the series, I found this conceptual premise of painting the same subject in such different applications interesting, if not peculiar. And why do so in such dramatic leaps within a solo exhibition, typically when one expects the development of a distinctive language that we can attach to the artist? They seem, instead, to evade recognition. Here, allow me to share a surprising anecdote from our conversation that opened me to Linggar's practice of yanking you away from these reductive questions:

when asked about the series' jettisoning modes, Linggar answered that each was part informed by the watches that he wears when beginning each canvas. It has to do with his self-admitted dogmatism towards dress codes, for example, of his attentiveness to the specificities of a particular watch to match the event attended—a dress watch should never be worn casually etc. He understands his encounter with each painting in this manner too, that each necessitates a considered logic and solution determined by what felt appropriate to that moment.

This was a revelatory moment for me of what these paintings could possibly tell us about our inherited ideas about life and painting, to the extent of how much we are capable of allowing the medium to expand from a self-contained category to something that extends beyond its boundaries, mingling with an artist's quirks that materialize in the comforts of a domestic setting. Linggar's paintings inhabit this expanded field of painting, not by any radical innovation in technique, but by quietly dissolving the boundaries between the painterly and personality, public and private.

The unexplained, yet undeniable motif of the hand, is one level, a biographical element. His practice, after all, unfolds within a space where familial care and labor converge. Yet, there is something that extends them beyond the realm of representation. These hands—gesturing, reaching, holding, caressing—becomes a cipher for the precarious balance between creation and care, between making and touching. Their lighting further heightens their intimacy, cast by the warmth of candlelight or the intimate flash of a polaroid photograph. This is a world composed of partial glimpses, of gestures half-seen and half-felt, inviting us into a scene of encounters that we are not entirely meant to witness or on which to so intensely fixate.

At the heart of this exhibition are these stolen glances, firmly rooted in the intimate domain of the home, both as a site of artistic production and as the conceptual ground for the works themselves. The home-studio emerges as more than just a physical environment—it is an extension of Linggar's embodied engagement with those closest to him: his wife, children, the friends that pass

by. On one hand, the studio is a space of familiarity and comfort, a place where the artist can dissolve into the rhythms of familial life. On the other, it becomes a zone of deep introspection, where those same rhythms are subject to an almost voyeuristic attention.

It is not simply the hands that convey this intimacy. Across the exhibition, the motif is at times punctured by other images of daily life: a birthday cake, a mattress, a shot glass, a dachshund. There's also a foot that forms an island in the middle of an ocean, taking on an almost mythic quality. Domestic life is not given an overly sentimental treatment here; these images anchor the home in a world of unspoken desires that cast the everyday rituals of domestic life into a more complex light. Beneath the surface of Linggar's intimate scenes, there might be a life filled with dreams, both sensual and unsettling. This ambiguity, far from unsettling the tenderness of the exhibition, deepens it, revealing a more nuanced picture of home as a place where the boundaries between the real and the imagined are constantly in flux.

Cast under these reflections, Linggar's paintings might be read as meditations on the artist's dual role as both creator and caretaker, as someone whose paintings are a site for nurturing relationships.

The title, *Following Mother Nature*, was inspired by his son Jia's words when they spoke about their collaborative painting within the series. The painting unfolds like a conversation between father and son, where a palm painted by Linggar forms the foundation upon which Jia charts a map unfolding along its contours. To return to my time in Linggar's studio, the work recalls the moment the artist led us into his office, where a single desk was divided informally into two workspaces—one for him and one for his son. Above Jia's end of the table were tiny dioramas revealing a prodigal architectural practice, one given ample space to evidence a parental support that was entirely moving.

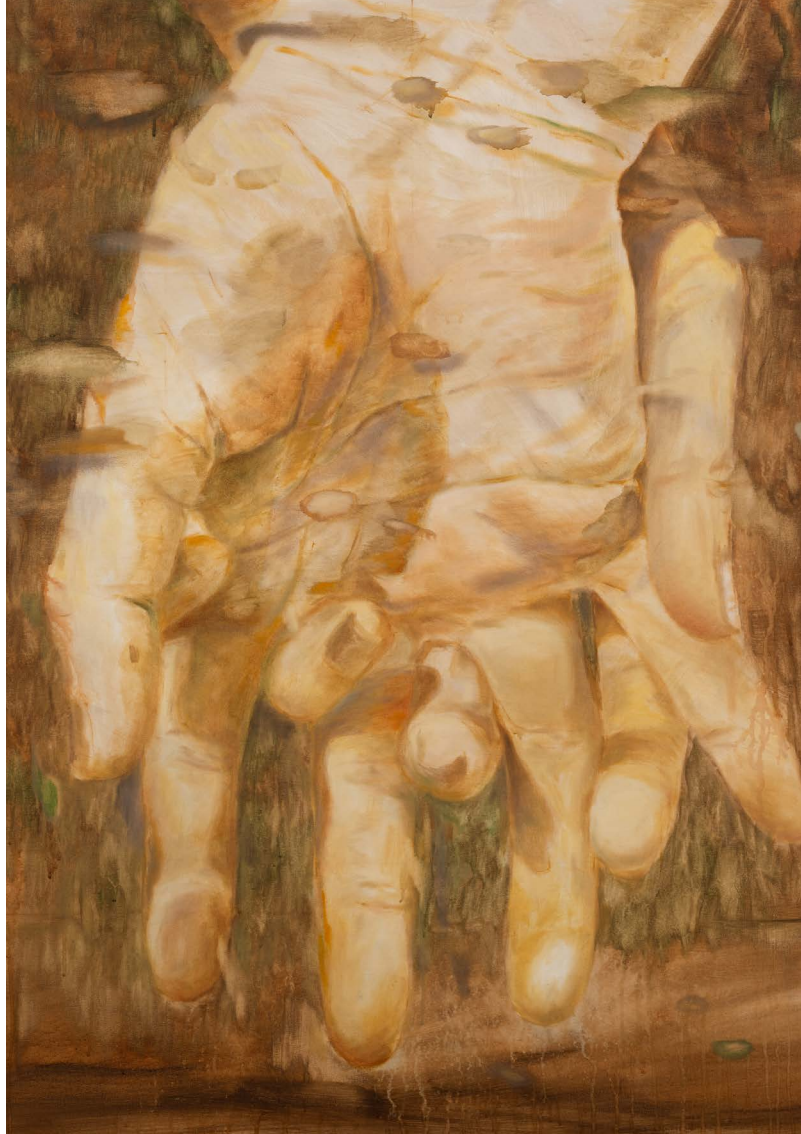
On Linggar's canvas, the map becomes a platform for his son's architectural philosophy—that city planning should respect and follow the natural contours of the land. Within the exhibition, it is a tribute to a home of enviable creative energy and love from which Linggar's paintings are borne.

This installation acts as a prototype for a house built utilizing used wood panels previously used for the purpose of concrete formwork for previous construction projects. Wood panels such as these are commonly disposed of afterwards or repurposed to as fire wood. The choice of wood as primary material is also based on its sustainable nature as well as its potential as a material for industrial construction in the future. Its construction process is reliant on an interlocking mechanism structure that allows for a prefabricated prototype to be constructed and thereafter reconstructed within a short time span of 14 days.

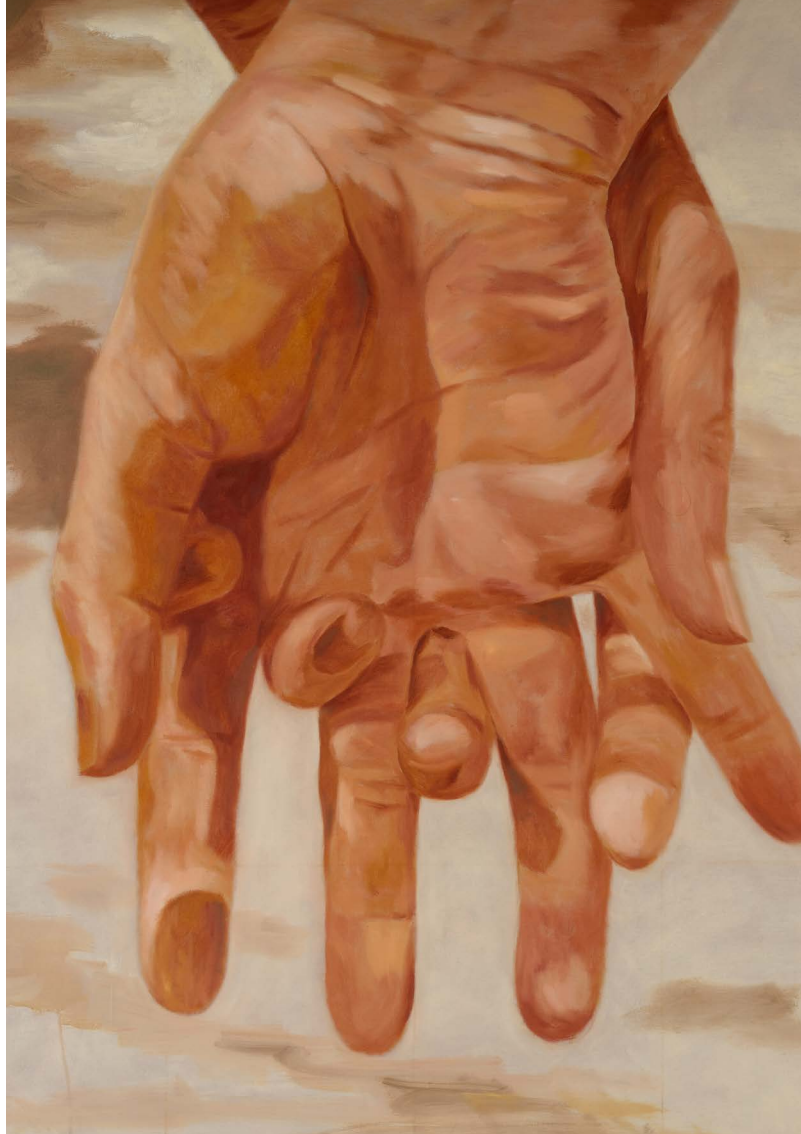
*Following Mother Nature #1 (2024),
oil on canvas, 120 x 100 cm.*



Following Mother Nature #2 (2024),
oil on canvas, 120 x 100 cm.



Following Mother Nature #3 (2024),
oil on canvas, 120 x 100 cm.



Following Mother Nature #4 (2024),
oil on canvas, 120 x 100 cm.



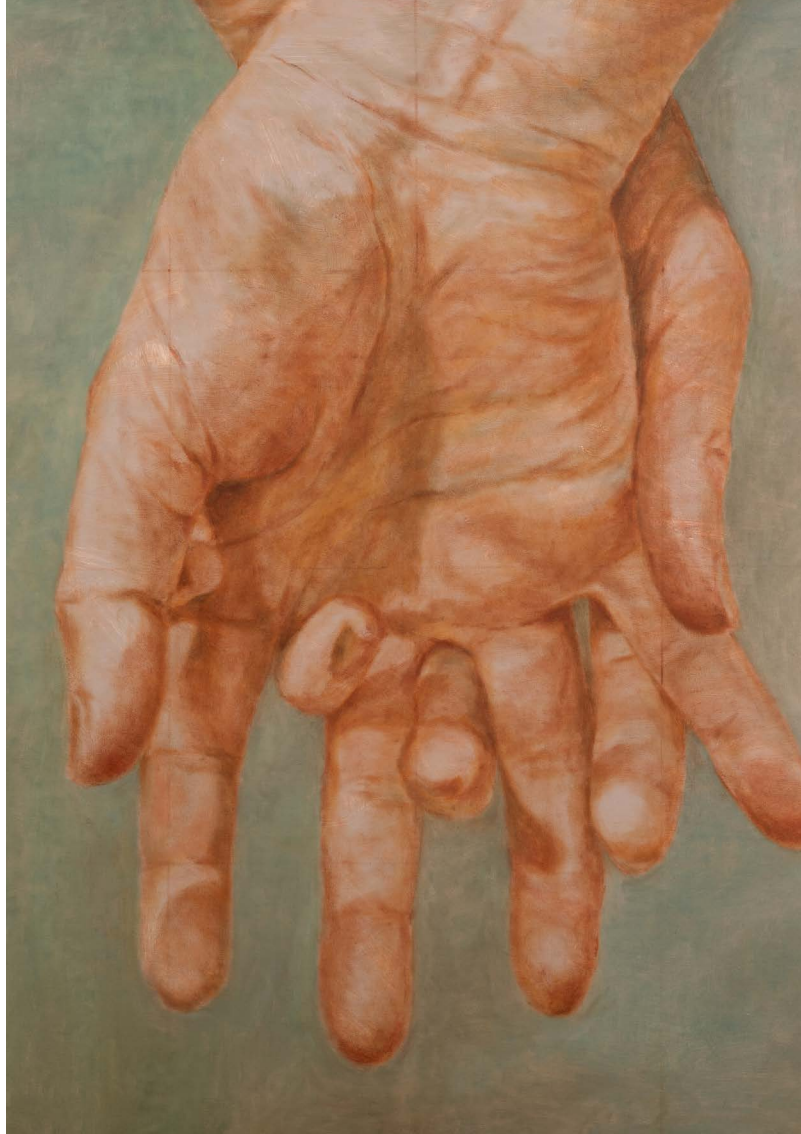
*Following Mother Nature #5 (2024),
oil on canvas, 120 x 100 cm.*



*Following Mother Nature #6 (2024),
oil on canvas, 120 x 100 cm.*



*Following Mother Nature #7 (2024),
oil on canvas, 120 x 100 cm.*



*Following Mother Nature #8 (2024),
oil on canvas, 120 x 100 cm.*



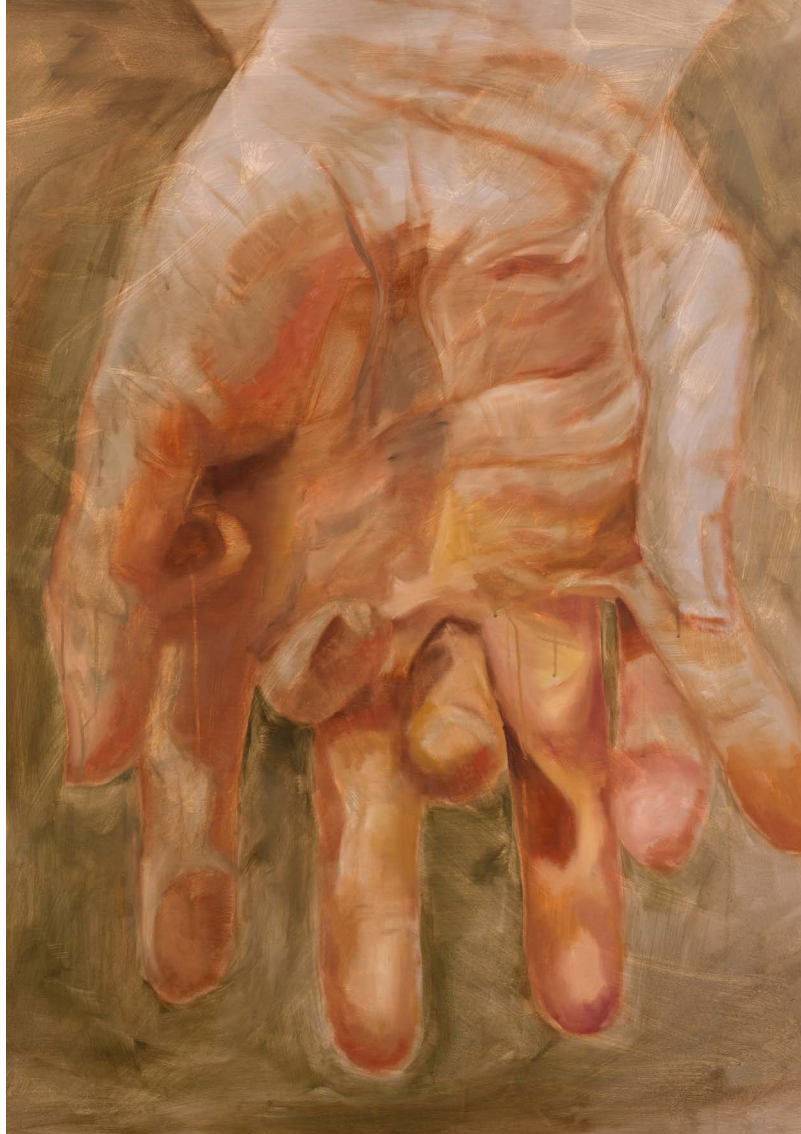
*Following Mother Nature #9 (2024),
oil on canvas, 120 x 100 cm.*



Following Mother Nature #10 (2024),
oil on canvas, 120 x 100 cm.



Following Mother Nature #11 (2024),
oil on canvas, 120 x 100 cm.



Following Mother Nature #12 (2024),
oil on canvas, 120 x 100 cm.



JEPPE UGELVIG

B. 1993, Denmark

Lives and works in New York

Jeppé Ugelvig is a curator, historian, and cultural critic based in New York City. He is a current Ph.D. candidate at UC Santa Cruz, where his research focuses on artistic responses to consumerism in the global 20th century.

Jeppé holds an undergraduate degree in Communication, Curation, Criticism from Central Saint Martins, and an MA degree from the Center for Curatorial Studies, Bard College. He has taught and lectured at institutions around the world such as Central Saint Martins, FIT, NYU, and University of Copenhagen on ranging topics in art criticism, fashion and curatorial theory, and art history.

Jeppé's criticism appears regularly in *Artforum*, *Frieze*, and *Spike Art Quarterly*, where he serves as contributing editor. He has contributed texts to exhibition catalogs published by institutions such as MIT List Center, Pro Helvetia, the Hessel Museum, the MACRO, and Kunsthall Charlottenborg. He is the founding editor-in-chief of *Viscose*, a journal for fashion criticism and analysis. *Viscose* has partnered with art institutions globally in pursuit of fashion research, including X Museum in Beijing and Leslie-Lohman Museum in New York City. His first book, *Fashion Work: 25 Years of Art in Fashion* was published by Damiani in 2020.

Jeppé has staged exhibitions in institutions and museums around the world, most recently co-curating the 2023 Charlottenborg Biennale with Hans Ulrich Obrist. In 2021, he curated the Talks program at Frieze London. Other exhibitions include the two-part "The Endless Garment" at X Museum (Beijing), "Witch-Hunt" at Kunsthall Charlottenborg, and "Phantom Plane" at Tai Kwun, Hong Kong.

DAVY LINGGAR

B. 1974, Jakarta

Lives and works in Jakarta

Davy Linggar is a celebrated Indonesian artist who works primarily through the mediums of photography and painting. There is a substantial breadth to his practice in his investigation of the things that constitute an image and its interrelatedness to perception, memory, form, feeling, and experience. His acute sensibilities are then translated into a diverse array of possibilities – be it through moving images, photographs, paintings, or drawings. In establishing a distinctive aesthetic vernacular, Linggar engages with and through architecture, popular culture, fashion, and nature. He deftly negotiates, and finds balance, between many different forms of energies and forces.

Linggar finished his training at Bandung Institute of Technology, Bandung, Indonesia in 1995 and at UGH Essen, Essen, Germany in 1997. Selected solo exhibitions include *Aperture* at ROH, Jakarta, Indonesia (2022); *Cut* at AAAAHHH!!! Paris Internationale, Paris, France (2022); *FILM* at The Papilion, Jakarta, Indonesia (2015); and *Sketch, Photo, Image* at Ark Galerie, Jakarta, Indonesia (2008). Linggar has been part of local and international exhibitions, including *Transposition 1: Observing The Walking Patterns* at Whistle, Seoul, South Korea (2024); *Unbearable Lightness* at ROH, Jakarta, Indonesia (2024); Frieze Seoul with ROH at COEX Hall and Convention Centre, Seoul, South Korea (2023); Art Basel Hong Kong with ROH at Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre, Hong Kong (2023); *Companion* at Art Basel Hong Kong Satellite, Hong Kong (2021); *iso* at AAAAHHH!!! Paris Internationale, Paris, France (2020); *After Utopia: Revisiting the Ideal in Asian Contemporary Art* at Singapore Art Museum, Singapore (2015); *Pink Swing Park* in CP Biennale: *Urban/Culture* at Museum Bank Indonesia (2005); and the 11th Asian Art Biennale in Dhaka, Bangladesh (2004).

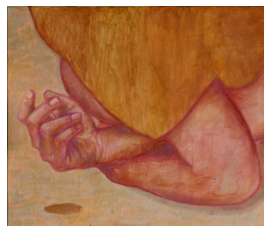
VIEW FINDER



Indistinct (2024), oil on canvas
60 x 50 cm.



Wishing (2024), oil on canvas,
40 x 60 cm.



Depleted (2024), oil on canvas,
50 x 60 cm.



Unfasten (2024), oil on canvas,
60 x 40 cm.



Cherished (2024), oil on canvas,
40 x 40 cm.



Bless (2024), oil on canvas,
40 x 50 cm.



Hope (2024), oil on canvas,
40 x 50 cm.



Always (2024), oil on canvas,
40 x 50 cm.



Endless (2024), oil on canvas,
30 x 40 cm.



Belief (2024), oil on canvas,
30 x 40 cm.



Easy (2024), oil on canvas,
30 x 40 cm.



Terra (2024), oil on canvas,
60 x 50 cm.



Burden (2024), oil on canvas,
40 x 30 cm.



Daydreaming (2020), oil on canvas,
30 x 30 cm.



Fill In (2024), oil and acrylic on canvas,
60 x 50 cm.



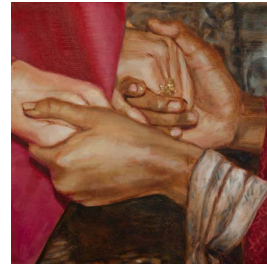
As One (2024), oil and acrylic on canvas,
50 x 40 cm.



Ceased (2024), oil on canvas,
30 x 40 cm.



Hereafter (2024), oil on canvas,
30 x 30 cm.



Ease (2024), oil on canvas,
40 x 40 cm.



Caretaker (2024), oil on canvas,
40 x 30 cm.



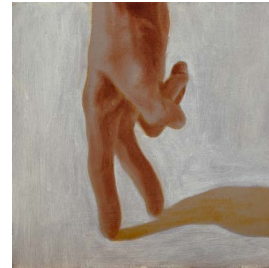
Gunting Batu Kertas #1 (2024), oil, acrylic and pencil on wood panel, 20 x 20 cm.



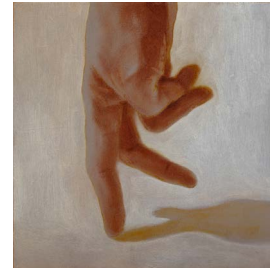
Gunting Batu Kertas #2 (2024), oil, acrylic and pencil on wood panel, 20 x 20 cm.



Gunting Batu Kertas #3 (2024), oil, acrylic and pencil on wood panel, 20 x 20 cm.



Selfie #1 (2024), oil and acrylic on wood panel, 15 x 15 cm.



Selfie #2 (2024), oil and acrylic on wood panel, 15 x 15 cm.



Selfie #3 (2024), oil and acrylic on wood panel, 15 x 15 cm.



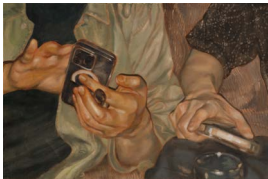
Selfie #4 (2024), oil and acrylic on wood panel, 15 x 15 cm.



View Finder (2024), oil on canvas,
100 x 100 cm.



Catch (2022), acrylic, pencil, marker,
ballpoint, tracing paper, tissue paper on
paper, 30 x 40 cm.



Relx (2024), oil on canvas, 40 x 60 cm.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

MY FAMILY
JUN AND ROH TEAM
ANDRA MATIN AND TEAM
WINFRED AND UNION
PAPILION MARKET
ARTNIVORA
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AND EVERYBODY WHO SUPPORT
MY CAREER ALL THIS TIME



