

PRESS RELEASE

18 JUNE 2022

ROH is pleased to announce tumbuh, a solo exhibition of new works by Syaiful Aulia Garibaldi with an accompanying text by Goenawan Mohamad.

Jakarta, Juni 2022 – ROH is pleased to share the first solo exhibition at its new gallery space in Menteng, Jakarta, *tumbuh*, by Syaiful Aulia Garibaldi.

The work and practice of Syaiful Aulia Garibaldi (b. 1985, Jakarta, Indonesia) has fascinated the gallery since the artist's first solo exhibition, *Regnum Fungi* (2012), which was shown in a small alternative space in Bandung, Padi Art Ground. In that exhibition, Garibaldi was able to present some of the initial aesthetic as well as conceptual interests that have been developed into what it is today. From that first show, it was quite evident that he had a great potential to express complex ideas in a multi-faceted manner, working in paper, living sculptural installations, as well as murals to express the embedded relationships between art and science, especially pertaining to the ways in which biology, even in its most microscopic of scales, has much to inform us of many things about our own selves and our relationship to intuition and imagination.

These initial interests, which were expounded upon further in a number of exhibitions in the years thereafter, *Abiogenesis: Terhah Landscape* at Pearl Lam Galleries, Singapore in 2014, *Quiescent* at ROH Projects, Jakarta, *Limaciform* at Silverlens Galleries, Manila in 2017, as well as *Lemniscate* at Mind Set Art Center, Taipei, Taiwan, have consequently been carefully refined and developed slowly into the more mature practice he presents currently in *tumbuh* (grow).

In *tumbuh*, Garibaldi turns his gaze and concentration upon *Eleusine indica*, a specific type of grass. He investigates the specimens through magnification, multiplication, and transitions from representation to abstraction in expressing his findings. The works are communicated in a number of different languages he has been building upon throughout his practice, from actual specimens of the grass roots plated in gold to establish electrical conductivity when viewed under an electron microscope, a video installation that incorporates numerous depths of magnification pertaining to different types of specimens and variations of microscopes being utilized, a paper installation of approximately 4,000 unique monotypes on paper, as well as a number of new paintings that express this new branch of Garibaldi's interests.

In order to understand Garibaldi's works, this more descriptive basis of mediums and its respective relationships to more scientific functions, as well as artistic functions, acts as a necessary foundation for the work to then be deciphered in a manner that extends beyond the constraints of its constituent components and into the realm of the metaphysical or the imaginative.

The title of the exhibition *tumbuh*, or grow, hints at this provocation of sorts for the viewer to engage with the works and challenge their own assumptions and presuppositions regarding their own encounter with the individual works in the show, as well as then the exhibition in its entirety. That the diminutive grass roots become the subject matter for *tumbuh*, is one way in which Garibaldi draws our

aesthetic intuitions into the direction or scale of an idea that is small, and perhaps also humble, in its insinuation.

ROH and Garibaldi are also very fortunate to have received the support of one of Indonesia's leading thinkers and cultural figures, Goenawan Mohamad, to interview Syaiful Aulia Garibaldi pertaining to his interests and aesthetic explorations in the exhibition. Through a series of written correspondences, Mohamad sparked a series of conversations that discuss the confluences of science in Garibaldi's art practice with Mohamad's interpretations and correlative postulations connecting Garibaldi's work with other artists as well as ideas.

In his response to Mohamad, Garibaldi expressed how his exploration and research had led him to the discovery of "allelopathy", a natural phenomenon that occurs whenever an organism, in this case the *Eleusine indica*, is threatened by its environment. The said organism will then emit allelochemicals that invade the life and growth of its neighboring plants. Allelopathy, which in literal Greek means "mutual suffering", is considered as a harmful biochemical infection towards the survival of other organisms.

According to Garibaldi, on the other hand, he sees that this phenomenon is a manner by which ecosystems and ecologies can be resilient through different environmental conditions — in the sharing of suffering between one organism with its surroundings. A mutual suffering is then seen as ways to survive together, rather than to harm or inflict pain. Through the microscopic lenses that allow for many degrees of magnification into what would otherwise be invisible worlds, Garibaldi invites the viewer to what appear to be complex, multilayered universes that are interestingly present around us everyday if we were to pay attention and look deeper.

In this subject, Syaiful's canvases are lyrical poetry that is subversive – which in its silence speaks the values of nuance and ambiguity, the things that are no longer considered practical and bound to be set aside at every moment.

We are grateful that root reminds us of this. Instead of just looking backwards.

Goenawan Mohamad

The solo exhibition of Syaiful Aulia Garibaldi, *tumbuh*, will open by invitation on Saturday, 18 June 2022 and to the public starting on the following Tuesday, 21 June 2022 until Sunday, 31 July 2022. Follow the gallery's Instagram account @rohprojects or reach out to info@rohprojects.net for further updates on operational hours and announcements of public programs. dan kepada publik mulai Selasa, 21 Juni 2022 hingga Minggu, 31 Juli 2022.

ROH

SYAIFUL AULIA GARIBALDI

B. 1985, Jakarta, Indonesia
Living and working in Bandung, Indonesia

Syaiful Aulia Garibaldi's works in installation, painting, drawing, printmaking, and video, in developing a practice that looks at the relationship between science and a constructed aesthetic universe. Garibaldi is interested in the networked and interconnected nature of ecologies, and microorganisms as symbols of death, decay, and life.

Garibaldi has numerous solo exhibitions, the most recent ones being *Sudor* (2020) at *Silverlens* Galleries, Manila, Philippines; *Lemniscate* (2018) at Mind Set Art Center, Taipei, Taiwan; *Limaciform* (2017) at Silverlens Galleries, Manila, Philippines; *Quiescent* (2016) at ROH Projects, Jakarta, Indonesia; and *Abiogenesis: Terhah Landscape* (2014) at Pearl Lam, Singapore. Group exhibitions include *1* (2022) at ROH, Jakarta, Indonesia; *Chromatic Network* (2020) at Galeri Salihara, Jakarta, Indonesia; *And Life Goes On* (2020) at Mind Set Art Center, Taipei, Taiwan; Art Basel Hong Kong 2019, *Natural Capital (Modal Alam)* (2018), Europalia Indonesia, BOZAR, Centre for Fine Arts, Brussels, Belgium; West Bund Art and Design (2019) and West Bund TALENT (2017) with ROH Projects in Shanghai, China; Jogja Biennale 2017; Art Stage Jakarta and SEA+ Triennale at National Gallery, Jakarta (2016), Indonesia; and Prudential Eye Zone (2015) at Art Science Museum, Singapore. Garibaldi with Lokus Found is also currently part of *Iron Placenta* (2022), an ongoing research project initiated by Irwan Ahmett and Tita Salina; had residencies at ABC Learning Town, Siheung, South Korea in 2015; and Centre Intermondes, La Rochelle, France in 2014. He is awarded Best Artist for Tempo Magazine Award in 2016; and Bandung Contemporary Art Award (BaCAA) in 2013.

ROH

ROH is a gallery initiated in 2014 that aims to serve the Indonesian art ecosystem by building a consistent local program, while simultaneously fostering a broader, borderless dialogue. ROH has played a more nomadic role in the past couple of years while building its new permanent space, exploring unconventional presentations for artists in dynamic temporal settings and situations. In 2022, ROH has moved into its new permanent space in Jalan Surabaya 66, Jakarta, carefully reconsidering a colonial mid-century house into a flexible space for contemporary art.

For further information, please reach out to info@rohprojects.net.

Tuesday – Sunday
11 AM – 7 PM
Closed on Mondays and public holiday

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