

## Introduction

With *Sumber Alam*, Kunsthalle Basel presents the first institutional solo exhibition in Europe by Bagus Pandega (b. 1985). Spanning several rooms, the exhibition unfolds as a choreographed sequence of works that speak to each other, fusing poetic sensibility with a deep engagement with technological processes tracing shifting entanglements between machines, signals, and living matter.

Rooted in field research, the exhibition responds to environmental upheavals in Indonesia, where the expansion of palm oil plantations and nickel extraction are transforming landscapes and livelihoods. Pandega translates these dynamics into an ecosystem of interacting machines and signals: a plant-controlled erasing machine, a sound installation carved from wood obtained through deforestation, and a video game-like excavation simulator exploring how extractive, resource-driven growth reverberates through ecology and everyday life.

The title *Sumber Alam*, or “source of nature,” points to both the material resources and symbolic forces at play in the exhibition. Pandega treats objects not as static elements but as active agents, recording, resonating with, and reconfiguring the world around them. Materials, such as nickel, wood, and biofeedback signals, become part of a fragile yet intricate circuit, where plants prompt motion and machines echo natural rhythms.

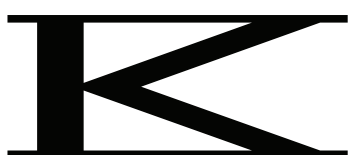
By reconfiguring industrial materials and mechanical processes, Pandega opens up a space where nature speaks back. When wood hums, nickel pulses and sends out signals, and plants control machines, the presence and influence of nonhuman life becomes unmistakably animate within human systems.

Rather than offering a fixed narrative, the exhibition invites visitors to navigate a loop of energies between growth and erosion and memory and erasure, questioning the cost of so-called sustainable progress and imagining a future led not by extraction, but by nature itself.

# Bagus Pandega

## *Sumber Alam*

29 Aug.–  
16 Nov. 2025



## Bagus Pandega: *Sumber Alam*

Mechanical systems, living organisms, and human histories are bound into a shared circuitry where plants fuel machines, natural materials become carriers of sound, and handmade devices hum in perpetual loops. Following field research in Indonesia, Bagus Pandega responds to the intertwined transformations of land, livelihood, and ecology under the pressures of resource extraction. Nickel, drawn from the red earth of Sulawesi and carried through global supply chains, anchors the works materially and as a witness to centuries of environmental and cultural change.

Excavation, in this context, is not only an industry but also an echo of earlier extractive economies, from the spice routes that mapped colonial ambitions to the plantation systems that replaced diverse forests with monocultures. Pandega does not present this history as a static fact. Instead, he reimagines it through mutable, responsive installations that shift over the course of the exhibition, mirroring the instability of the systems they evoke. In the exhibition *Sumber Alam*, nickel becomes a lens through which human experience and the natural world merge in a shifting interplay of sound and motion.

### Living Signal

The exhibition begins on the staircase landing with *Artificial Green by Nature Green v.5* (2025), created in collaboration with artist Kei Imazu. Across a six-meter-wide, three-meter-high canvas, Imazu's painted rainforest glows in deep green, rooted in late nineteenth-century colonial botanical illustration, and emerges and disappears in repeating cycles. Whilst one machine paints, the other erases; the erasing machine translates the real-time bioelectrical signals of a living palm tree into brushstrokes, changes of pace, and washes of water. Over the course of three days, a single motif is painted — palm oil plantations, harvesting and transport labor, exotic rainforest plants, a trapped tiger, a hunted elephant, or an orangutan mother with her child — and then gradually erased over the following two days before the next motif comes into view. The piece unfolds as a living score in which the plant sets the tempo, reflecting the precarious balance of Indonesian rainforests increasingly overtaken by palm oil plantations.

### Biofeedback

At the core of the exhibition is *L.O.O.P. (Loss Overgrown Organic Pulse)* (2025), a thirty-meter-long conveyor belt modeled on industrial mining equipment. Nickel ore travels its length, controlled by tropical green plants whose biofeedback subtly adjusts the belt's speed. At the end of each loop, the ore falls into a metal basin, producing a resonant strike. Piezoelectric sensors capture these vibrations and transmit them wirelessly to the exhibition's final room. There, they animate *Swara Sirna* (2025), an arrangement of

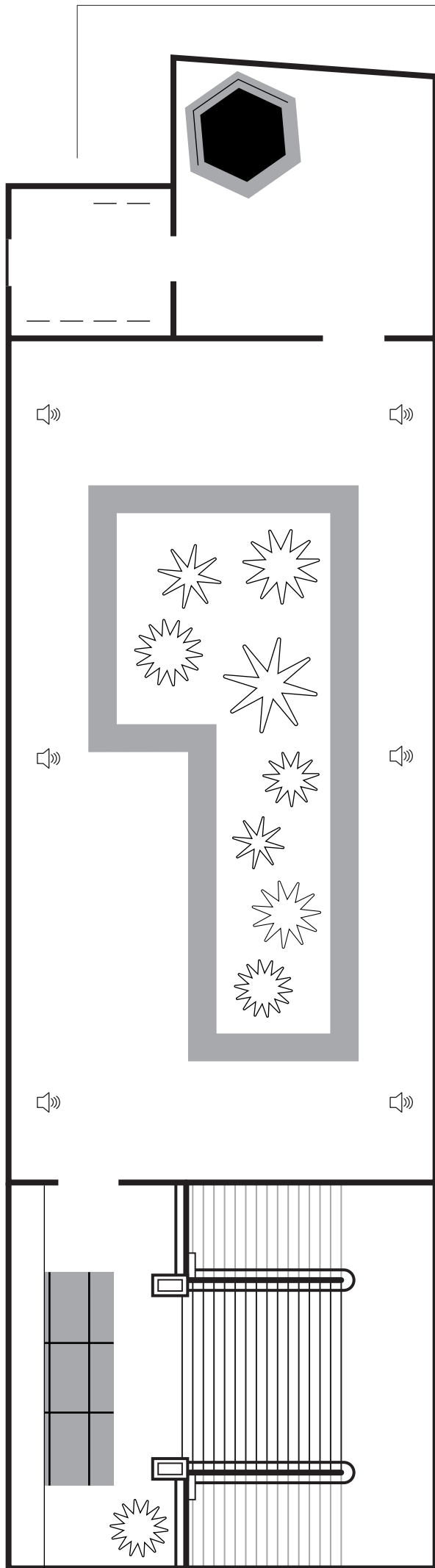
mechanical music boxes mounted on exotic Indonesian woods, remnants of forests now diminished or erased.

*Swara Sirna* plays fragments of popular songs, sending ripples of sound back toward the conveyor belt. The two installations form a closed circuit in which neither space contains the whole. Melodies fragment and reassemble as they travel, shifting with each repetition. The visitor's movement between them becomes an essential part of the loop's operation.

### Where Industry Meets Ecology

Between these two major installations is *Lap of Extraction* (2025), a participatory video work centered on a motorcycle used for haulage operations. In Indonesia, motorcycles are indispensable for navigating both dense cities and remote, uneven terrain. Here, the vehicle becomes an interface for experiencing the bodily and environmental dynamics of extraction. Those who take to the saddle engage physically with a simulation of mining's terrain and tempo, its shifting demands on workers, and its visible imprint on the land.

Across the exhibition, machines are not presented as dominating forces but as collaborators in a continuous exchange with natural systems. Nickel, hardwood, water, and the faint electrical currents of plants travel through delicate feedback loops, altering and being altered in return. The installations themselves behave like ecosystems, shaped by flows of energy, sound, and signals that move in multiple directions at once. Rather than fixing these processes into a single narrative, *Sumber Alam* leaves them open, almost unfinished. Ore travels endlessly in cycles, images dissolve and reform, and sounds travel as echoes between rooms. Extraction appears not as a frozen fact but as a restless pulse moving through forests, economies, and human bodies alike. In this shifting terrain, the works do not demand resolution. Instead, they invite a sustained attentiveness to the subtle negotiations between industry and ecology, to the possibility that these rhythms might one day align in ways that allow the Earth's own systems to endure.



## Room 3

*Swara Sirna*, 2025

Exotic Indonesian wood, music boxes, wireless transmitter, speaker, modular synthesizer  
Dimensions variable

## Room 2

*Lap of Extraction*, 2025

Modified used motorcycle, steel stage, gaming simulation, TV screen  
Dimensions variable

Mechanical Design Engineer: Andy Mahardika

Game Design: Don Quihote Studio

Creative Director (Game Development):

Bandu Darmawan

Music: Lydo

Metal Manufacturer: Yayat Ruhiyat

## Room 1

*L.O.O.P. (Loss Overgrown Organic Pulse)*, 2025

Programmed motorized conveyor machine, tropical plants, nickel ore, customized electrical biofeedback receiver  
Dimensions variable

Mechanical Design Engineer and Instrument

Programming: Bandu Darmawan

Metal Manufacturer: Estha Workshop, Yayat Ruhiyat

## Staircase Landing

Bagus Pandega and Kei Imazu

*Artificial Green by Nature Green v.5*, 2025

Painting machine, erasing machine, canvas, modular synthesizer, palm tree (*Phoenix roebelenii*)  
300 × 660 × 150 cm

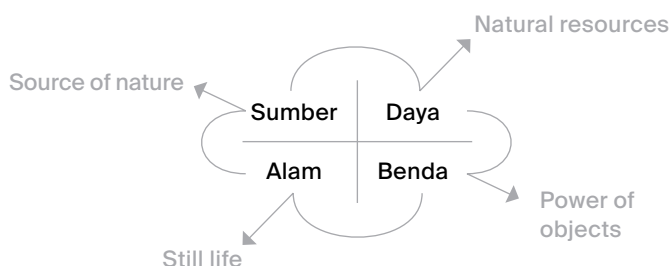
Watercolor painting: Kei Imazu

Mechanical, Electrical, and Interface Design:

Ario Wibhisono

Courtesy the artist, and ROH, Jakarta

*Sumber Alam* is organized in collaboration with the Swiss Institute New York, where the artist's exhibition *Daya Benda* is on view concurrently. Both titles reference two Indonesian idioms referring to natural resources, still life, and the power of objects.



The exhibition is made possible through institutional support from the MV Foundation and Tumurun Museum. Kunsthalle Basel gratefully acknowledges the Bagus Pandega Exhibition Circle: Sigit Nugroho, Natasha Sidharta, Chai Schnyder, SUPER PROJECTS, Nicholas Tan, and Fiona Xie. Thanks to M Art Foundation and ROH for production support.

The mediation projects are realized through the generous support of the Art Mentor Foundation Lucerne, the Thomas and Doris Ammann Foundation, and the Canton of Basel-Stadt.

Thanks to  
James Amberson, Dr. Frederik Baumgarten, Bea Camacho, Alison Coplan, Martina Huber, Winfred Hutabarat, Stefanie Hessler, Mirco Joao-Pedro, Teddy Lazuardi, Thymaya Payne, Lourdes Samson, Michelangelo Samson, Sigit Nugroho, Natasha Sidharta, Kenneth Tan, and Margaret Wang

The artist wishes to thank  
Kei Imazu, Taku, Jun, Harry, Rosana, the ROH Family, the Ratkolo Family, Adinda, Bandu, Ario, Takustudio, Sena, Wama, Dini, Aji, Coune, Arif, Sugab, Pak Yayat, Pak Ebin, Pak Uus, Pak Indra, C on Temporary, Galih, Hilman, Mba Baya, Don Quihote Studio, Lydo, Randy, Indomodular, the Kunsthalle Basel team: Mohamed, Ananda, Christopher, Claire, Clarisse, David, Desirée, Elena, Irina, Jenni, Karsten, Lale, Layla, Lena, Linus, Lionne, Lukas, Mara, Max, Ophélie, Philip, Reinhard, Semaya, Sina, Tom, Uwe, Vera, and Yana

Curated by Mohamed Almusibli

Kunsthalle Basel / Basler Kunstverein is generously supported by the Canton of Basel-Stadt.



Graphic design by PORTO ROCHA; Studio SMS (Alix Stria & Katharina Shafiei-Nasab)  
Copy-edited by Amanda Gomez

The Kunsthalle Basel bookshop stocks publications on Bagus Pandega alongside its broader selection of art books. You will find a selection of publications related to the artist in the Kunsthalle Basel library.

More information at [kunsthallebasel.ch](http://kunsthallebasel.ch)

## Public Programs

Kunsttage Basel  
29–31.08.2025, Friday–Sunday, 11 a.m.–6 p.m.

Linocut, in German and English  
At *Flâneur – Das Stadtraum Festival*, 12 and 13.09.2025, Friday and Saturday, 4 p.m.–midnight  
At *Rosennacht*, Kunsthalle Basel x Jugi Dreirosen, 19.09.2025, Friday, 3–9 p.m.

Inspired by Bagus Pandega's exhibition, a group of students has developed motifs for printing on fabric and cards.  
Bring your own bags, T-shirts, or fabrics.

*Screen Dialogs*, at Stadtkino Basel  
04.11.2025, Tuesday, 6 p.m.  
An art and film program by Kunsthalle Basel at Stadtkino Basel.

*Mal•Mal*, in German and English  
12.11.2025, Wednesday, 6–8 p.m.  
Life drawing in the current exhibition; drawing materials provided.

---

## Thursdays at Kunsthalle Basel

Themed guided tour, Kunsthalle Basel x Plant Science Center x WE ARE AIA | Awareness in Art, in German  
02.10.2025, Thursday, 6.30 p.m.  
Tree physiologist Dr. Frederik Baumgarten (Department of Environmental Sciences, University of Basel) and Martina Huber (curator AIA) provide scientific perspectives on Bagus Pandega's exhibition.

*Espresso Tour*, in German  
09.10.2025, Thursday, 12:30 p.m.  
The exhibition's key points are presented in twenty minutes, accompanied by an espresso.

---

## Sundays at Kunsthalle Basel

Public guided tour, in German  
07.09.2025, Sunday, 3 p.m.

*Tandem Tour*, with S AM Schweizerisches Architekturmuseum, in German  
14.09.2025, Sunday, 3 p.m.

*Curatorial Tour*, with Yana Kadykova (Curatorial Assistant), in German  
21.09.2026, Sunday, 3 p.m.  
Registration at [kunstvermittlung@kunsthallebasel.ch](mailto:kunstvermittlung@kunsthallebasel.ch)

*Espresso Tour*, in German  
05.10.2025, Sunday, 3 p.m.

*Director's Tour*, with Mohamed Almusibli, in English  
26.10.2025, Sunday, 3 p.m.  
Registration at [kunstvermittlung@kunsthallebasel.ch](mailto:kunstvermittlung@kunsthallebasel.ch)

Public guided tour, in German  
02.11.2025, Sunday, 3 p.m.

*Tandem Tour*, with S AM Schweizerisches Architekturmuseum, in German  
09.11.2025, Sunday, 3 p.m.

*Espresso Tour*, in English  
16.11.2025, Sunday, 3 p.m.