

Batik dan tenun ikat Indonesia yang artistik, dan khazanah wayang yang kaya akan bentuk corak dan warna, merupakan inspirasi lukisan-lukisan Pacita, seorang wanita Filipina.

Lukisan Wayang Pacita Abad

ancing umumnya digunakan untuk pakaian, seperti misalnya, kemeja, blazer, atau kebaya. Tapi Pacita Abad (50) berpikir lain. Bahan keperluan jahit-menjahit itu justru digunakan sebagai aksen untuk memperindah karya-karya lukisannya. Wanita pelukis asal Filipina itu juga memanfaatkan untalan renda, pernak-pernik payet, sobekan kain batik dan tenun ikat, potongan cermin, pecahan kaca, bahkan guntingan kaleng softdrink.

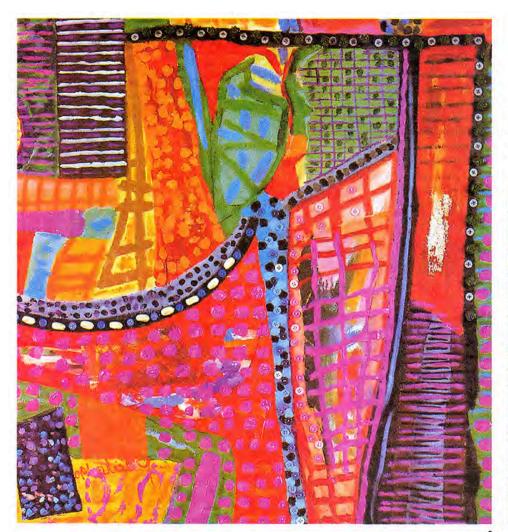
Lihat misalnya lukisan berjudul Pretty in Pink. Puluhan butir kancing baju ditambalkan sedemikian rupa di antara komposisi bentuk garis dan warna di atas kanvas. Suatu lukisan abstrak yang menarik untuk dipandang. Atau bahan renda dan potongan kain perca dalam lukisan berjudul Sugriwa, juga pemanfaatan payet-payet bahkan bros permata seperti dalam lukisan *Arimbi & Antareja*.

Itulah salah satu daya tarik lukisan Pacita Abad. Sekitar 100 karya lukisan (puluhan di antaranya berukuran sekitar 2 X 3 meter) la gelar dalam pameran bertajuk Exploring the Spirit di Gedung Pameran Seni Rupa di depan Stasiun Gambir di Jakarta. Pameran yang berlangsung pada 10-28 Juli lalu itu, dibuka oleh Mendikbud Prof. Dr. Ing. Wardlman Djojonegoro.

1. Mendikbud Prof. Dr. Ing. Wardiman Djojonegoro saat membuka pameran.

2.Subali dalam gaya trapunto painting.





3. Pretty in Pink

4. Arimbi dan Antareja. Payet, kancing, dan bros permata sebagai aksen.



5. Para Punakawan, salah satu ciri khas tradisi wayang Indonesia.



Trapunto

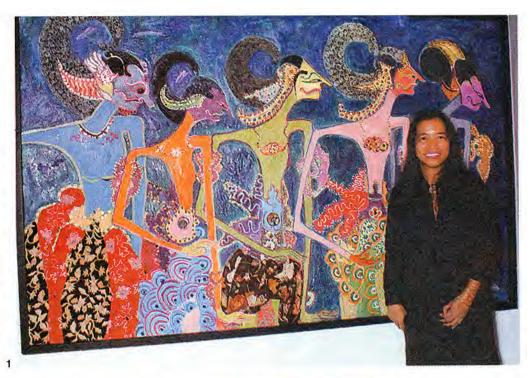
"Ini lukisan atau bed cover?" celetuk seorang remaja pelajar yang bersama beberapa temannya menyaksikan pameran tunggal Pacita Abad. Celetukan yang naif, yang ada baiknya untuk disimak. Sebab —sebagaimana kesan yang tertangkap oleh si remaja tersebut— memang banyak karya Pacita yang sepintas mirip bed cover atau lapisan penutup ranjang. Ya, kalangan awam umumnya memang mengenal lukisan sebagai salah satu bentuk karya seni rupa, yang dibuat

dengan cara memulas atau mencoret-coretkan bahan pewarna di atas lembaran kanvas, dan diberi bingkai.

Tapi lepas dari pemahaman awam, pencapalan bentuk dalam karya seni rupa memang terus berkembang. Yang disebut lukisan misalnya, kini tak lagi terpaku pada pengertian konvensional di atas. Selain dengan zat pewarna, bentuk lukisan bisa dikerjakan secara mix-media, dengan aneka ragam elemen. Pacita Abad misalnya, merasa tak cukup melukis hanya dengan cat atau bahan pewarna di atas kanvas datar. "Untuk mencapai dimensi baru, mencapai nuansa dan nilai-nilai artistik tertentu, ragam media bisa dimanfaatkan untuk melukis," katanya.

Sekilas karya-karya Pacita mengingatkan kita pada gaya lukisan kolase. Tapi Pacita sendiri lebih suka menyebutnya sebagai trapunto painting. Ya, Pacita memang tak sekadar menempel-nempelkan elemen ke bidang kanvas seperti dalam proses kerja membuat kolase, tapi juga menambal-sulam elemen-elemen tersebut. Bahkan ia juga memasukkan kapas, batu, gumpalan kain, atau sabut kelapa ke lapisan dalam 'kanvas' lukisannya, dan menjahitnya dengan benang hingga menghasilkan efek tiga dimensi.

Kata trapunto sendiri, yang ia pungut dari bahasa Italia, memang mengandung arti 'melukis, menjahit, dan mengisi se-





suatu ke dalam lapisan kain'.
"Tapi trapunto painting asli temuan saya," katanya. Bisa jadi begitu. Sebab sebelum Pacita, memang tak tampak pelukis lain menggunakan teknik
seperti ini.

Baju Hanuman

Pacita lahir di Pulau Basco, Filipina, 5 Oktober 1946. Anak ke-5 dari 12 bersaudara, putri pasangan Aurora Barssana dan Jorge Abad. Lulusan ju-



- 1. Pandawa Lima. Juga memanfaatkan sobekan kain batik.
- 2. Hanuman 'berkaus' biru.
- 3. Bisma, dalam pakem wayang Jawa berwajah putih.

rusan politik pada Universitas Filipina dan gelar master dari University of San Fransisco - California ini, belajar melukis di Balai Pendidikan Seni di Corcoran School of Art di Washington DC dan Lembaga Kemahasiswaan Seni (The Art Students League) di New York City, USA.

Sebagai seniman lukis, Pacita telah berpameran di banyak negara di Asia, Afrika, Amerika Latin, Eropa, dan Amerika Serikat. Berbagai penghargaan untuk karyanya juga ia terima, baik berskala nasional maupun internasional.

Bagi publik seni rupa di Indonesia sendiri, Pacita tidaklah asing. Setidaknya dua tahun lalu, ia pernah menggelar karya-karyanya di Museum Nasional di Jakarta. Pameran bertajuk Wayang, Irian dan Sumba itu diselenggarakan sebagai salah satu peristiwa seni yang penting dalam rangka acara pertemuan APEC.

Yang menarik dari wanita pelukis asal Filipina ini, adalah perhatiannya pada bentukbentuk seni tradisional Indonesia, khususnya seni tekstil dan wayang. Dalam pameran tunggalnya kali ini, misalnya, tajuk Exploring the Spirit yang dipilihnya sungguh menggambarkan suatu penafsiran hasil dari eksplorasinya yang pan-

jang —dan belum selesai terhadap seni budaya tradisional Indonesia. Khususnya seni ukir, motif-motif tenun ikat, dan corak batik, serta sosok wayang.

Pacita mengenal Indonesia tahun 1983. Saat itu ia mengikuti suaminya, tinggal selama empat pekan di Jakarta. Pada kesempatan itu ia mulai bersinggungan dengan seni tradisional Indonesia, khususnya motif-motif tenun ikat dan ragam corak hias batik. Tak heran jika warna lokal Indonesia (ragam batik dan tenun ikat) lantas menjadi bagian dari ciri khas karya-karya Pacita Abad.

Tak cuma keluar masuk pasar (atau desa-desa) untuk urusan batik dan tenun ikat, "Saya



merupakan angan-angannya sejak lama. Sebagai orang yang lahir dan besar di Filipina, Pacita heran, "Mengapa Filipina tak punya tradisi puppet?" katanya. "Padahal negeri-negeri di sekitarnya punya tradisi itu. Sebut saja Jepang, Korea, Cina, Vietnam, Khmer, Thailand, Malaysia, Singapura, dan Indonesia, semua punya tradisi seni puppet. Kenapa di negeri saya tidak ada?" tanya wanita yang beberapa tahun terakhir ini bermukim di Indonesia.

Di Indonesia, Pacita benarbenar menemukan impiannya. Yang menarik menurut Pacita,

- 4. Rama & Sinta dalam versi teater Ketoprak Mataram.
- 5. Rama (dan Sinta) dengan kulit warna maroon.
- 6. Kumbakarna, raksasa Alengka berhati bersih.

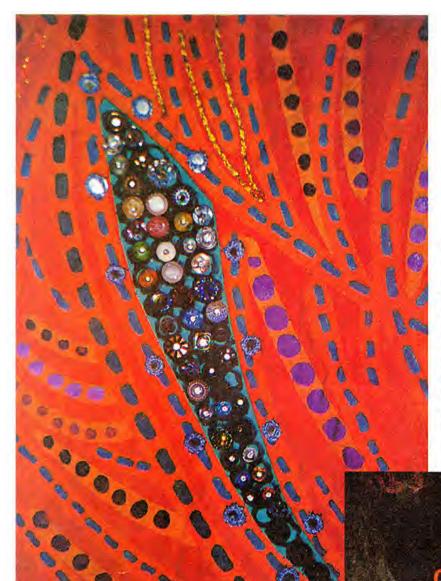




juga kecanduan nonton Wayang Orang Barata," ungkap Pacita yang juga senang menjelajah dan mendaki gunung. Dari gedung pertunjukan di dekat Pasar Senen itulah ia lantas tertarik pada khazanah seni wayang.

Mempelajari seni wayang

"Tradisi seni wayang di Indonesia sangat jauh lebih beragam, dibandingkan yang ada di negara lain. Di Indonesia, tradisi wayang tak cuma tampil dalam bentuk-bentuk seni pertunjukan di banyak daerah — yang masing-masing punya ciri khas— tapi juga sosok wa-



Butir-butir kancing sebagai aksen.

2. Sulaman benang jahit melahirkan tekstur warna yang khas pada lukisan Pacita.

3. Salah satu bentuk lukisan abstrak Pacita Abad. Diilhami corak dan motif batik Jawa. Durna, Bisma, dan lain-lain.

Namun demikian, sebagaimana umumnya mata seorang turis yang hanya berkesempatan melihat secara sepintas, terasa sekali bahwa pengamatan Pacita belum sampai pada tingkat pemahaman yang dalam tentang wayang. Pacita tertawa sambil menganggukangguk, ketika femina mengatakan bahwa ia belum memahami makna simbolik dari wujud sesosok wayang.

Pacita belum paham bahwa posisi duduk ataupun bentuk wayang ada pakemnya. Sosok wayang kulit Arjuna misalnya, ia lukis dengan posisi wajah mendongak. Padahal dalam pakem, Arjuna selalu di-

yang dalam produk bentuk seni rupa."

Sebagai seniman, daya tarik itu merupakan inspirasi yang menarik untuk dituangkan ke dalam bentuk karya lukis. "Wayang itu amat penuh karakter, dan penuh nuansa warna. Saya seperti menemukan suatu inspirasi yang akan menjadi gaya lukisan saya," katanya. Dari situ ia lantas mendalami tentang tekstur dan karakter wayang yang kemudian ia tumpahkan ke dalam kanvas.

Dari sekitar 40 lukisan wayang yang digelar dalam Exploring the Spirit, tergambar bahwa Pacita cukup mengenal nama-nama tokoh wayang. Tak cuma Pandawa Lima, ataupun Rama dan Sinta, ataupun Hanuman, tapi juga tokoh-tokoh seperti Baladewa, Kumbakarna, Subali, Antareja, Arimbi,

gambarkan dengan posisi kepala tertunduk. Ia juga masih belum menangkap arti-arti warna yang berkaitan dengan tokohnya. Misalnya Batara Kresna, yang dalam pakem pewayangan berkulit hitam (termasuk wajahnya), justru disajikan Pacita dalam warna maroon. Atau Hanuman si kera putih, yang justru la pakalkan baju berwarna biru. "Soalnya saya merasa lebih excited dengan memberi warna itu," katanya tertawa.

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Heryus Saputro Foto: HS

Pacita Abad's Wayang Paintings

Heryus Saputro

Artistic Batik and Indonesian ikat weaving and the rich treasures of colorful Wayang puppets are the inspiration of the paintings of Pacita, a Filipino woman.

Buttons are generally used for clothing, such as shirts, blazers or kebaya. But Pacita Abad (50) thinks differently. The sewing materials are used as an accentuate her paintings. The Filipino painter also utilizes strands of laces, sequins, pieces of batik cloth and ikat, mirrors, broken glass, and even drink cans.

See for example a painting titled 'Pretty in Pink'. Dozens of buttons are patched in such a way between the composition of the line and colors on the canvas. An abstract painting that is interesting to look at. Or laces and patchwork pieces in a painting titled 'Sugriwa', also the use of sequins and even jewel brooches like in Arimbi and Antareja paintings.

That is one of the attractiveness of Pacita's painting. About 100 paintings (dozens of them measuring about 2 x 3 meters) are held in an exhibition titled 'Exploring the Spirit' at the Fine Arts Exhibition Building in front of Gambir train station in Jakarta. The exhibition, which took place on July 10-28, was opened by the Minister of Education and Culture, Prof. Dr. Ing. Wardiman Djojonegoro.

"Is this a painting or a bed cover?" Chirped a teenage student who along with some of his friends watched the solo exhibition of Pacita Abad. A naive babble, something that is good to think about. As the impression is captured by the teenager, there are indeed many works of Pacita that at first glance look like bed covers. As the public generally knows a painting as a form of art, which is made by painting oil paints on canvas, and then framed.

But apart from ordinary understanding, the achievement of forms in art works has continued to develop. The socalled paintings for example, are now no longer fixated on the above conventional understanding. In addition to coloring agents, the form of paintings can be done in a mix-media with a variety of elements. Pacita Abad, for example, felt that it was not enough to paint only with paint or coloring material on canvas. "To reach new dimensions, to achieve certain nuances and artistic values, a variety of media can be used to paint." she said.

At a glance Pacita's works remind us of collage artworks. But Pacita herself prefers to call it a 'trapunto' painting. Yes, Pacita does not merely stick elements to the canvas like in the process of making collages, but she also patches up the elements. She even puts cotton, stones, lumps of cloth or coconut fiber into the layers in the 'canvas' of her paintings, and sewing them with threads to create a three-dimensional effect.

The word 'trapunto' itself, which she takes from Italian, means ' to paint, sew and fill something into the fabric layer'. "But I created the term 'trapunto painting'," she said. It could be so. Because before Pacita, it did not appear that other painters used techniques like this.

Pacita was born on Basco Island, Philippines, October 5, 1946. The fifth child of 12 siblings, the daughter of Aurora Barsana and Jorge Abad. A graduate of political major at the University of the Philippines and a master's degree from the University of San Francisco - California, studied painting at the Arts Education Center at the Corcoran School of Art in Washington DC and the Art Student League (The Art Students League) in New York City, USA.

As a painter, Pacita has exhibited in many countries in Asia, Africa, Latin America, Europe and the United States. Various awards for her work are also received, both on national and international scale.

For the fine arts community in Indonesia, Pacita is no stranger. At least two years ago, she had held her works at the National Museum in Jakarta. The exhibition titled 'Wayang, Irian and Sumba' was held as one of the important arts events in the framework of the APEC meeting.

What's interesting about this Filipino painter is her attention to Indonesian traditional art forms, especially textiles and Wayang. For example, in this solo exhibition, the title 'Exploring the Spirit' really illustrates a result of the long exposition - and has not yet finished with traditional Indonesian art and culture. Especially carving, ikat woven motifs and batik patterns, as well as Wayang figures.

Pacita first knew Indonesia in 1983. At that time she came with her husband and stayed for four weeks in Jakarta. At that time, she came in contact with Indonesian traditional art, especially the motifs of Ikat weaving and various batik patterns. Not surprisingly, Indonesian local colors (various batik and ikat) then become part of the characteristics of Pacita Abad's works.

Not just going in and out of markets (or villages) for batik and ikat, "I was a dream for a long time." As a person born and raised in the Philippines, Pacita was surprised," Why doesn't the Philippines have a puppet tradition? " " Even though the surrounding countries have that tradition. Such as Japan, Korea, China, Vietnam, Khmer, Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore, and Indonesia, all have a tradition of puppet art. Why is it that my the country does not have one? "Asked the woman who has lived in Indonesia for the past few years.

In Indonesia, Pacita really found her dream. What's interesting, "I am also addicted to watching Barata Wayang shadow puppet show," said Pacita, who also likes to explore and climb mountains. A Wayang performance near Pasar Senen then made her interested in puppet art treasures.

Learning the art of Wayang puppets

"Wayang art traditions in Indonesia are far more diverse than those in other countries. In Indonesia, wayang traditions do not only appear in forms of performing arts in many regions - each of which has special characteristics - but also the figure of wayang are an art form."

As an artist, that attraction is an interesting inspiration to pour into the form of painting. "The puppets are very full of character, and full of shades of color." I find it as an inspiration that will become my painting style," she said. After that, she then explored the texture and character of the puppet which was then painted onto the canvas.

From about 40 puppet paintings that were exhibited in Exploring the Spirits, it was obvious that Pacita was familiar with the names of puppet characters. Not only Pandawa Lima, or Rama and Sinta, or Hanuman, but also figures like Baladewa, Kumbakarna, Subali, Antareja, Arimbi, Durna, Bisma and others.

However, as generally is the case of an outsider who only had the opportunity to see at a glance, it was obvious that Pacita's does not have a deep understanding of wayang. Pacita laughed while nodding, when Femina said that she did not understand the symbolic meaning of the form of Wayang puppets.

Pacita does not yet understand that the sitting position or the form of puppets have a standard. Arjuna's shadow puppet figure, for example, is painted with a face up. Although according to cultural convention, Arjuna is always portrayed with the head in down position. She also still has not grasped the meaning of colors associated with the characters. For example Batara Kresna, who is always protrayed with a black face, was painted by Pacita in maroon. Or Hanuman the white monkey, she painted in a blue outfit instead. "The thing is I feel more excited by giving it color," she said laughing.