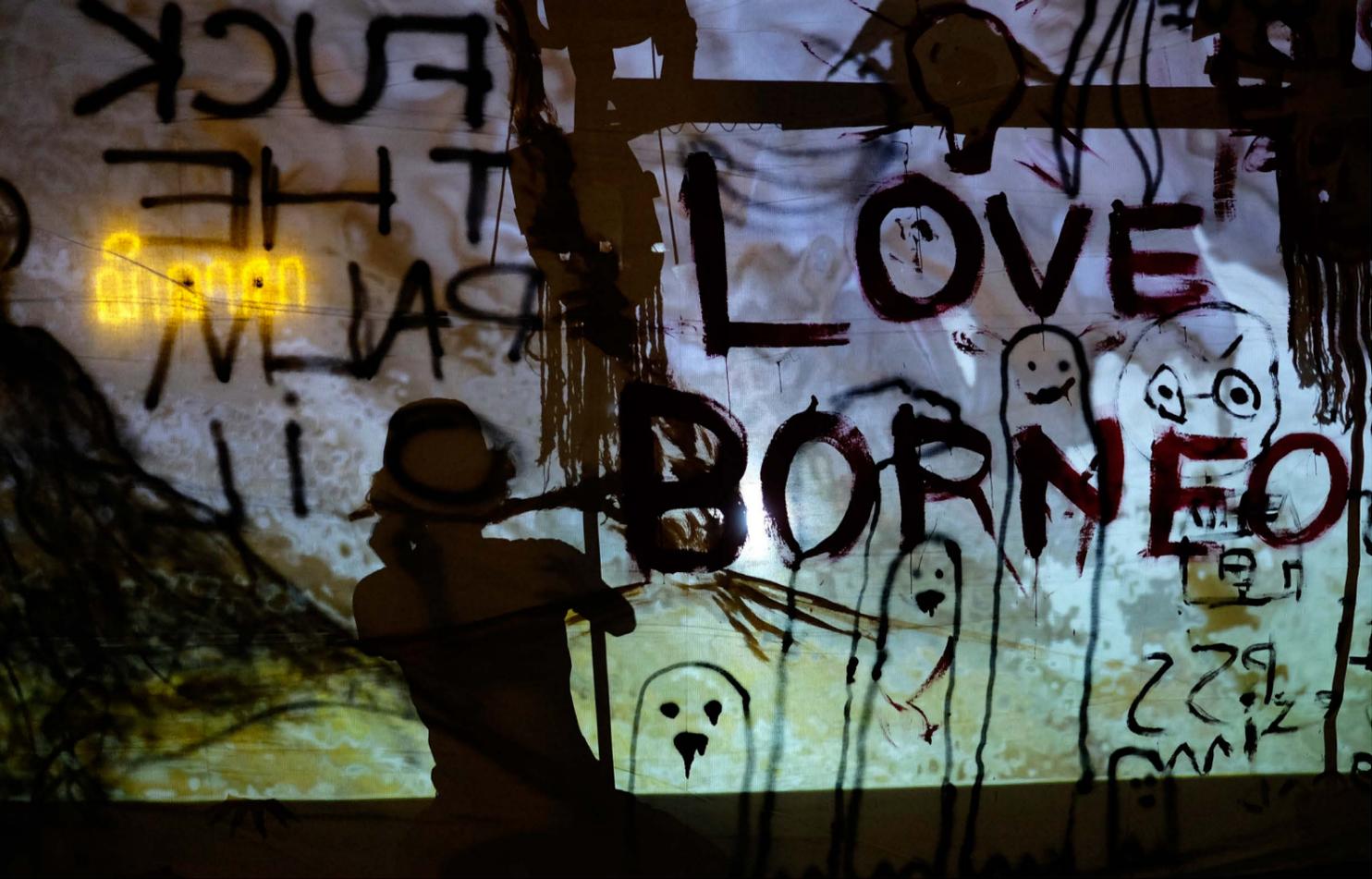


MGZ



SPECIAL EDITION GLOBAL DAY OF CREATIVE ACTION



MGZ IS A PROJECT BY MICRO GALLERIES

February 2020 is a SPECIAL EDITION dedicated to the **GLOBAL DAY OF CREATIVE ACTION**

MGZ TEAM ARE

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SPECIAL EDITION **GLOBAL DAY OF CREATIVE ACTION**

On 21 September, during the 2019 U.N Youth and the U.N Climate Action Summit, Micro Galleries instigated their first **Global Day of Creative Action**: an accessible movement where creatives mobilise within their individual communities, develop, present and document a public, creative response to climate disruption. The initiative united more than 90 artists, environmentalists, scientists, and yes - even kids, across the globe.

Discover all these amazing arts and cultural change-makers who are generating creative waves across the globe in our online exhibition and our mini-documentary series... and here!

Inside the pages of this special edition fully dedicated to the Global Day of Creative Action, you get an exclusive insight into some select works and artists who took part in the project.

The team of MGZ had a chat to learn more about the concepts behind their works, creative processes, community engagement and impact on the people they are working with.

Keep reading and discover the powerful outcomes of their collective actions, murals, festivals, and stories in order to raise awareness on climate disruption!

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DISRUPTING Climate DISRUPTION

GLOBAL DAY OF CREATIVE ACTION
21 September 2019

ONLINE EXHIBITION  click!

MICRO-DOCUMENTARIES





COLLECTIVE ACTIONS IN PUBLIC SPACE

Art is, for us, a form of community building; a nonviolent way to express collective civil action! These works inspired citizens and passersby to participate (and co-create) in collective public events to address local, regional and global environmental challenges. From nursery rhymes on walls, a single drop of water, beach rubbish collection and re-installation, public and musical performances - the artists developed creative interventions for their communities that strengthened understanding, compassion and appreciation for the world around us.

The works culminated in stronger, more informed and action-oriented communities who are better prepared to discuss and explore climate change and its devastating effects.

CEMPAKA COLLECTIVE

Pengganggu Iklim is an interactive public installation by **Cempaka Collective** in Medan Selera Taman Melawati, Kuala Lumpur raising awareness on the rapidly increasing environmental issues in Malaysia.

Can you describe the impact of these rivers on their daily life, health and co-existence?

In the months from June to September 2019 we received the news that the rivers, protected by the indigenous people of Malaysia, got so polluted that more than 20 indigenous peoples died from drinking the water. They didn't have access to clean water since Malaysian pre-independence until now, so they are heavily reliant on the river for their daily usage. Unfortunately the news about polluted rivers doesn't shock people any more, as the actions of corporations logging and mining near the rivers has been covered up. In our opinion, the lack of governmental action towards river pollution is an attempt to erase the concerns of Malaysia's indigenous people and the local flora and fauna surrounding them. The same applies to corporations, ignoring the environmental problems they are causing across Malaysia such as: haze, polluted rivers and how they affect Malaysia's indigenous people. That's why we decided to address their urgent situation, and amplify their voices into "Pengganggu Iklim"

You used a popular Malaysian nursery rhyme to spark a public discussion around the importance of our individual choices and lifestyles in the grander scheme of Malaysia's environmental struggles. What is the story behind this rhyme and what does it bring to the installation?

We grew up singing the rhyme 'Bangau Oh Bangau' and it became one of our earliest and most important lessons on logic thinking and the sequence of things while alternating moral values and advice. For exam-

ple: "don't let the grass grow too long, don't eat raw rice" and so on. The rhymes are important lessons about ecosystems, teamwork, cause and effect, and finding the root cause.

For 'Pengganggu Iklim' we highlighted two of the earliest characters from the original rhyme - the stork and the fish - and we turned them into characters that are affected by environmental issues. The main idea behind incorporating the nursery rhyme into our artwork, was raising environmental awareness with something so well-known and familiar that local communities could easily relate to. As a result we had people of all ages coming to watch us while creating the artwork, for example mothers teaching their children on how to sing the rhyme as we continued on.

The fish (different sizes - to symbolize different generations) asked the stork:

*"Bangau, oh bangau
Kenapa ada jerebu?"*

*(Stork, oh stork,
Why is there haze?)*

To which the stork answered:

*"Macam mana tak ada jerebu,
Orang bakar hutan,
Orang korban hutan."*

*(How can there be no haze,
People are burning the forest,
People are sacrificing the forest.)*

"WE BELIEVED THAT OUR WORK WOULD BRING MORE ATTENTION AND ATTRACTION TO THE AREA BUT INSTEAD WE WERE SEEN AS CRIMINALS."



How did you manage passers-by to engage with "Penggangu Iklim"? And what did you hope they would learn or take away from the installation? Any interactions, comments or observations that really stand out?

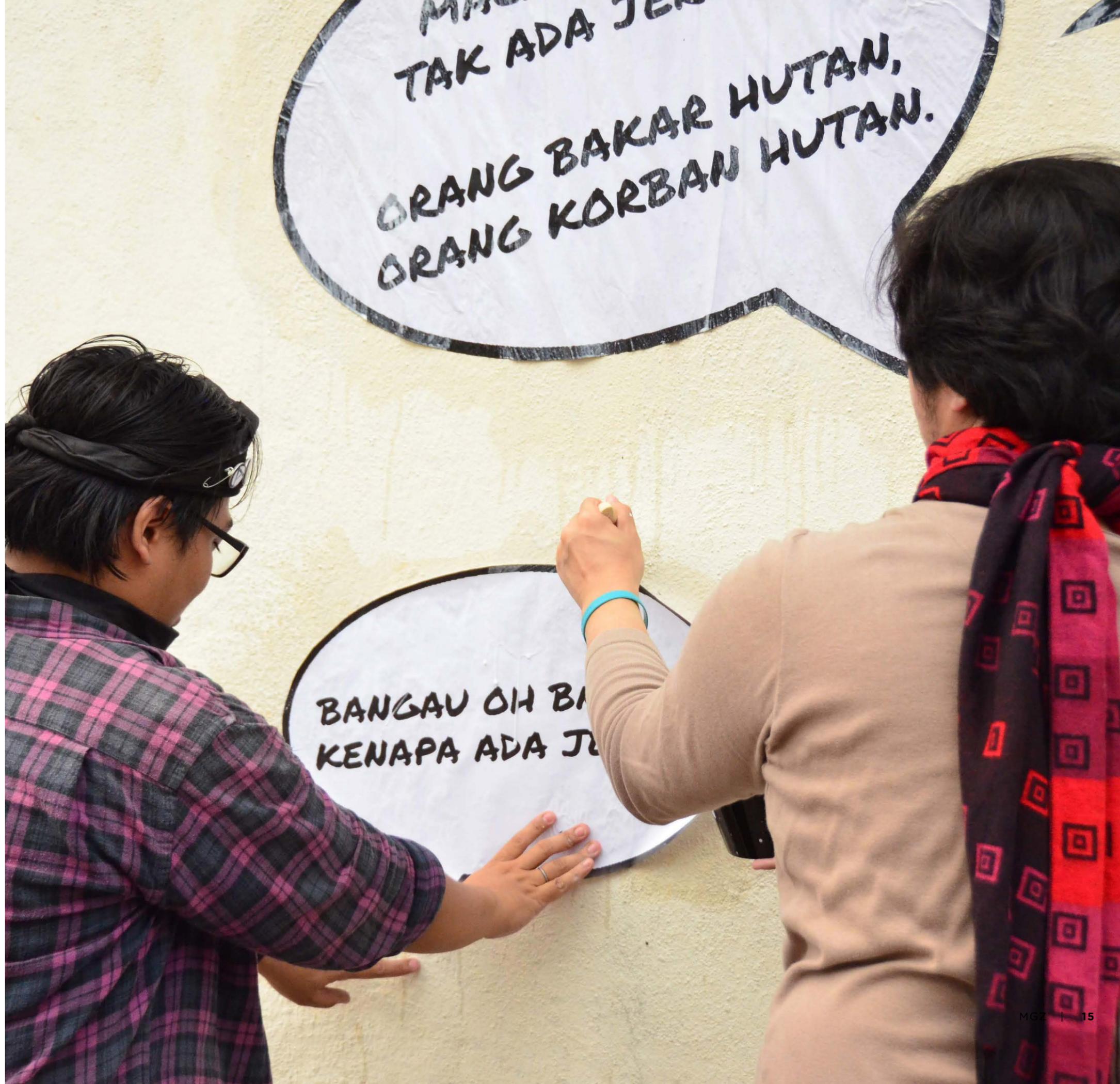
In Malaysia people are taught not to question and give their political opinion, due to a long-standing oppressive regime. We installed early in the morning, and passers-by laughed as they could relate to the rhyme, especially to the current environmental conditions as Malaysia was heavily affected by haze. Some people were even singing the rhyme as we're making the installation! Some people preferred to distance themselves rather than interacting and questioning our work. In the afternoon, people noticed "Penggangu Iklim" and started to interact with us. However, local authority officers and policemen unfortunately harassed us and did not let us finish our work. They threatened to charge us with vandalism and disruption of public property, and commanded us to scrape off all our work and cover it with white paint. These are some common threats activists and artists in Malaysia often experience.

What can you tell us about the challenges of voicing and visualizing your opinions & views in shared public spaces in Malaysia?

When we first visited the spot for the creation of "Penggangu Iklim", we didn't consider authorities would see the artwork as a crime. The food court has been around for decades and it was full of rats and cockroaches! We believed that our work would bring more attention and attraction to the area but instead we were seen as criminals. The authorities told us we had to come back with a permit and licence to continue our work! We questioned if "Penggangu Iklim" would still be street art if we're asking for permission. Over the years Malaysia has seen increased political awareness and more youth groups are voicing their opinions; the amount of creative expressive outlets is growing and the younger generation is becoming more radical. In March last year we organized Women's March Malaysia - an annual rally for International Women's Day - and 1,000 people turned up (90% was under 30 years of age)! Political dissents are making waves across the globe and Malaysia is keeping up!

Anything else we need to know about "Penggangu Iklim"??

Before taking part in Global Day of Creative Action on Sept 21st we created an image of "Penggangu Iklim" with incomplete sentences of the nursery rhyme and released it on social media! People could finish the sentences or add their own touch to it; the online engagement and responses were amazing!



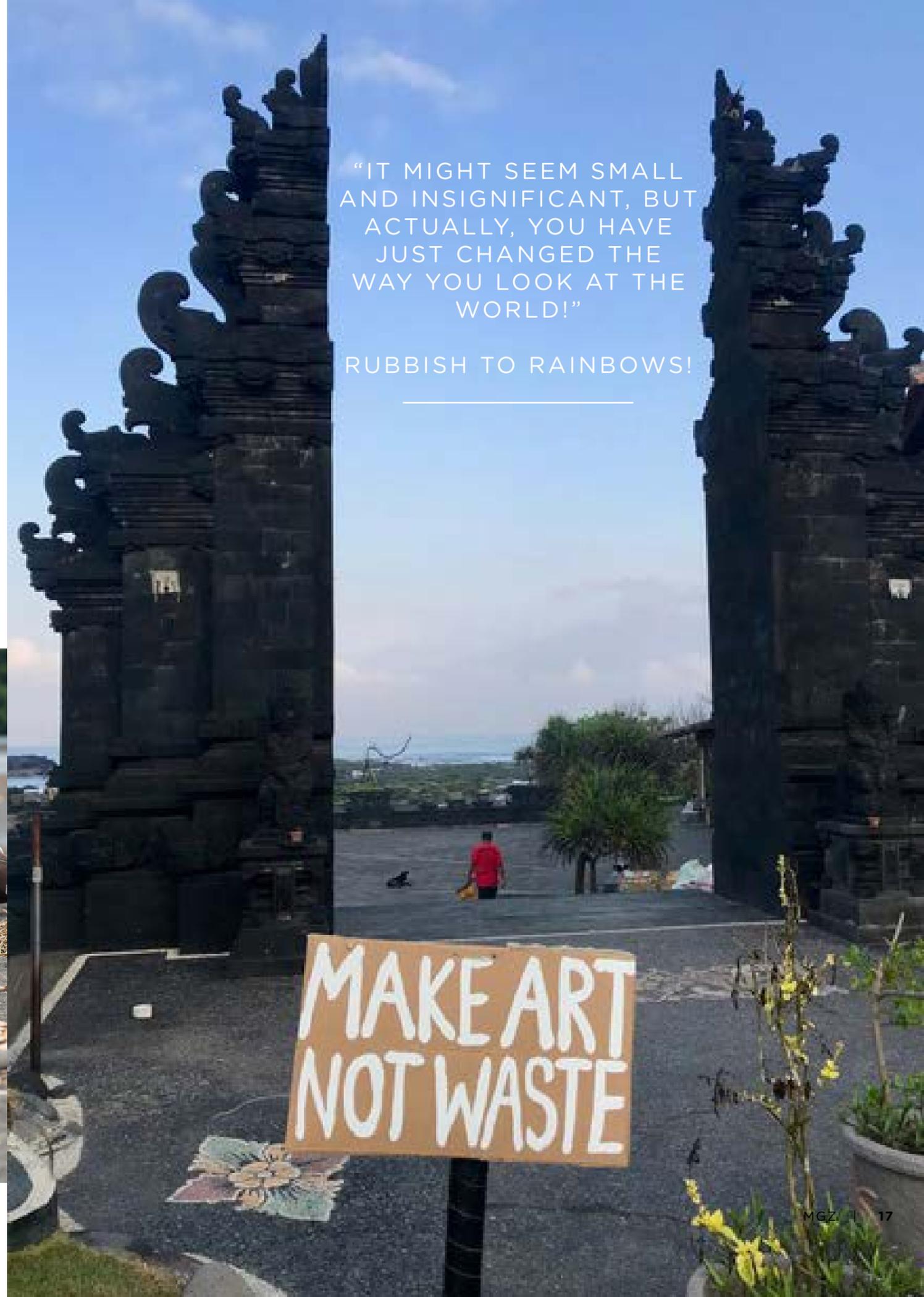
LIINA KLAUSS

Hi Liina,

Can you tell us about your project?

A polluted beach in Bali: plastic cups, straws, lighters, flip-flops, lightbulbs, it looks so depressing. I wanted to transform these negative feelings of shame, blame, and ignorance into decisive creative action.

I still get depressed about stuff that happens out there. It's easy these days, there's so much bad stuff happening, but being sad makes you immobile, and you're in a loop of negativity. Art can break that loop. Get out there, into nature, use your own two hands to change the environment around you. It might seem small and insignificant, but actually, you have just changed the way you look at the world! Rubbish to rainbows!



“IT MIGHT SEEM SMALL AND INSIGNIFICANT, BUT ACTUALLY, YOU HAVE JUST CHANGED THE WAY YOU LOOK AT THE WORLD!”

RUBBISH TO RAINBOWS!



“WE JUDGE AND ASSESS THE WORLD AROUND US AND OURSELVES CONTINUALLY. IT’S GOOD TO LET REALITY FLOOD IN, AND TAKE A BREAK FROM THAT. FROM THERE, NEW THINGS CAN HAPPEN.”

You used a rainbow of colourful debris to create the installation, can you tell us a bit about your process and how long it took to collect the materials?

We collected for 2 hours, and the whole installation took maybe three hours. There is that much plastic on the beach! We also had a lot of helping hands: 25 adults and the same amount of kids.

The process that I use is to look through the eyes of a painter. You get a basket, and then you look out for one single colour only. Imagine red, then collect everything red into your basket. It can be a coke-bottle, a red plastic bag or a red hibiscus flower. Once you look only through the lens of a single colour, you stop judging the world. How can red be good or bad? It just is, it's innocent, and it's good to go back to this state of innocence.

We judge and assess the world around us and ourselves continually.

It's good to let reality flood in, and take a break from that. From there, new things can happen. You can't make new things from old thoughts, from old things. You can only create new work from nothingness.

How did you find the responses from the public?

It's a very remote and wild beach. The public on this beach were mainly the people who participated in making the installation. I find that making art is so much more powerful than looking at art, looking at art is good, but making art can be mind-altering. It can change the way you look at the world. I get that feedback from participants all the time.

Was there anything that came from the day that surprised you, was a happy accident, or didn't go as planned?

I love children participating in my projects. They will do what I tell them, such as "collect one colour!" and then they will wander off to play, or chase waves, or collect seashells. Kids are without concepts; the concept of 'let's make an art installation' is non-existent.

They will then get bored with the ocean and come back. They then started making a kitchen in the middle of our 'trashscape'. A kitchen! So good! Because, in the end, we all need to come home.



MARTINA GRIFONI

You are originally a visual artist, what was your motivation for creating an interactive participatory (performance) piece and what can you tell us about the process of creating "Not a Drop"?

I consider myself a visual artist focusing on participatory art and in the last few years I am leaving more and more traditional artistic practices behind such as my first medium photography. I do not consider "Not a Drop" a performance but a collective action something close to Allan Kaprow's happening. Due to the lack of authentic relationships around me, I started to involve this aspect in my creating process. I believe that new technologies have changed communication between people and caused alienated relationships. I like to create non-intercepted participatory interactions with and among other people to remind us of the communal existence of humanity and nature through participation and aesthetic interstices. As with most of my works, the idea of "Not a Drop" came intuitively like an image that I questioned and smoothed to make it accessible to participants. And I was really looking forward to the reaction and feedback of the participants of "Not a Drop"!

You invited tourists, passers-by, and kids to pass water without dropping even a drop to simply remind us of our personal and collective impact on natural resources! How do you interact with natural resources - especially water - in your daily life?

I try not to take anything for granted! Nowadays in Europe, we are so used to electricity and running water but in a few years these resources possibly will be scarce here too. In practice, I try not to take long showers, turn off the tap when I brush my teeth, not use too many polluting cleaning products and reuse the water I used to wash vegetables, for example, watering the plants! Small but constant daily gestures.



What made you choose Piazza Santo Spirito?

This neighbourhood is very familiar to me as my high school was in this area and therefore connected with my personal history! The square is maybe the only square in Florence where you can meet locals and tourists at the same time, so I could involve all kinds of people in "Not a Drop"! Also, Piazza Santo Spirito is a beautiful location and I believe beauty can be really powerful too!

"Not a Drop" seemed like a lot of fun! How did you manage that people didn't see "Not A Drop" as a game but as collective action towards water?

My artistic practice wants to be playful! I believe that playing has immense transformative power and that adults don't do it enough. The most important thing is to take games as seriously as children do!

What do you think that people inspired to engage with "Not a Drop"? And what did the participants take away?

I think the participants felt part of something and less alone in the battle against this tremendous environmental crisis. The most dangerous thing is to completely lose hope and my collective actions can be seen as rituals to keep this hope alive!

Is there anything you would do next time to generate a bigger impact and engagement?

I would love to repeat "Not a Drop" with more people and fill Piazza Santo Spirito with participants!



MUDDY HANDS

Hi Kishan,

Can you describe who Muddy Hands is?

Muddy Hands is a group of 5 artist friends in Kathmandu that are concerned about climate change and want to raise awareness through arts + cultural events and interventions.

You created a festival "Celebrating As One For All: Disrupting Climate Disruption" in Kathmandu for the Global Day of Creative Action. Can you tell me how this festival came together and what the festival is about?

We all wanted to do something for the Global Day of Creative Action, and our initial plan was to develop a small awareness program but as we are all artists (or involved in the arts) we immediately thought about organizing an exhibition or performance! During the preparations and planning we quickly discovered that we could reach more people and have a bigger impact if we would organize a festival about climate change, Celebrating As One For All! The festival mixed art with

environmentally friendly alternatives that could have a more positive impact on the ongoing environmental issues. There were live paintings, poems, installations, and local environmentally-friendly vendors and products. And as Kathmandu is one of the most polluted cities we wouldn't have many problems gathering a crowd!

Originally, musicians, poets, dancers, and actors would take and disrupt the streets of Kathmandu for the Global Day of Action! What made you not perform on the streets?

We thought about doing simultaneous performances at the major public attractions in the city, but we were unsure if these performances would create the impact we had in mind. As most of us are connected with social media these days we're all in some way aware of Climate Change but what are we doing to further prevent it? We didn't want to do just performances and let people go home afterward and move on with life again.

How did you manage people to go home and move on with their life again? And how did you embed this in Celebrat-

ing As One For All: Disrupting Climate Disruption?

We wanted to create a "real" impact on people's lives and that's why we decided to combine green entrepreneurial heroes that provide innovative solutions and products for our environmental problems with music, poetry and paintings! This way we could grab people's attention with our art and also question people's living style with environmentally friendly products and solutions. Personally, it is inspiring to see these vendors' efforts entering the mainstream market, promoting their eco-friendly ideas and challenging our consuming world! Not consuming is hard but these heroes bring a solution!

What made you choose this neighbourhood?

Our venue was a restaurant nearby one of the busiest of Kathmandu that was accessible for everyone and wouldn't charge an entrance fee! With not many environmental awareness events in this neighbourhood we hoped we would attract a crowd! Furthermore, we also targeted university students and the Buddhist community.

How was the response and feedback of visitors?

Is there anything you would do differently to generate a bigger impact and engagement?

People expressed their opinions on Climate Change and what they will do in the future and against it! I am very proud I was able to create such a space that sparked conversations and discussions! Of course, there are a lot of things we could have done better! We weren't able to execute everything to the fullest such as going to Kathmandu's major streets with performances as we didn't have any budget.

Looking ahead now, what are your hopes and dreams if it comes to climate awareness?

It's time we all start taking measures rather than giving opinions about climate change! As an artist, a person and human I believe I've to straighten myself out first before convey and spark positive change in other beings. I'm sure my music would touch people but that's not enough! I strongly believe that immediate environmental friendly actions are necessary; even the small things matter like questioning yourself when you drink a coke whilst being thirsty! And that's how in my opinion change will start!



VOICE OF JOGJA

Hi Vivien,

Thanks for being a part of the Globe Day of Creative Action, can you tell us about your project?

So basically we went on a beach south of Yogyakarta (Indonesia) and collected some trash that we've put on a wire to make a 25-meter rope. Then we made a public performance and a series of photos on the main spots in town dressed in traditional Javanese suits. The symbol was to bring the trash back to the city where it originates!

The next day we made an open event at Sesama with an installation made of more than a tonne of bricks of paper ready to be recycled on which we screened some footage of our performance. We exhibited some photos and some made murals too. Outside the space, there was a live performance of contemporary shadow theatre by Wayang Polah. They made an original creation on the plastic theme with masks and VJ (video jockey). For that, we installed a 7 x 3 meter screen in the middle of the audience and put some brushes and paint so that everybody could interact with the show by painting something over it.

You worked with other artists for this project. Can you tell us a bit about your process and what inspired you and your collective to do this project?

The idea was to gather some local Indonesian artists with gender parity and to talk about environmental issues and the consequences of climate change here in Java. Very spontaneously, we all agreed that the plastic problem, which is a massive issue in Indonesia, would be the theme of our Day of Creative Action.

It is the visible consequence of a global economic model based on unlimited economic growth, no matter what the implications are for the environment.

I decided to step back a bit and take the role of a project coordinator since I figured the priority was not to expose what I was thinking about the situation here

but to give a voice to those who are directly concerned and let them decide about the form and content.

As this action was in partnership with Sesama, who offered us a beautiful space, we had the chance to make a one-week residency to sit down and talk, create and make it happen!

How did you find the responses from the public?

I was surprised to see how the kids would be part of it. To be honest, I don't know what they got from our works but seeing them practically ruining the space by playing with the mountain of paper, was to me, an art performance on its own! I was delighted to see that this work was theirs! Later many visitors painted on the big outside screen expressing their love for nature and football.

Was there anything that came from the day that surprised you, was a happy accident or didn't go as planned?

Everything was pretty fine since it all went very organically. Everybody knew what they had to do. My main concern was during the production week before the opening, until the very last moment you never really know if everybody would join and what would happen! From a Western perspective, you could easily be anxious and have the feeling everything will go wrong. But the magic of Java always makes things happen!

Do you and "A Voice of Jogja", have plans for creating other projects together, and if so can you tell us a little bit about it?

After this experience, overall, we had lots of good feedback, some media coverage and a real desire to do something together again. But it's difficult to tell when this will happen again since time here is very often extendable!





CLIMATE CHANGE
IS CAUSED
BY HUMANS
97%
of climate
research agrees
Source: J. Cook, et al 2016
Environ. Res. Lett. (11)

#SCIENCEINHELSINKI

KIREESTI HOP

HOP HOP
HURRY UP!
WWW.KYSYILMASTOSTA

STREET ART | MURALS

Vivid, attractive and thought-provoking, the murals and the street artworks amplified visual reminders of our personal and collective impact on our surroundings. Local youth, citizens and scientists explored the causes, consequences and solutions to the climate emergency and its impact if things don't change soon.

HELSINKI URBAN ART, INAR

Hi Stephany, Maija and Maikki,

Please tell me a little about yourselves, the Helsinki Urban Art artists, and the scientists from the Institute for Atmospheric and Earth System Research (INAR)

I'm Stephany Mazon, working at INAR, University of Helsinki. INAR joins scientists from different fields to try to understand how our Earth works from deep inside the soil all the way to different heights of our atmosphere. We see how climate is affecting our ecosystem, or how human activities affect air quality, for example. All the scientists in the team were from INAR and the Finnish Meteorological Institute, from PhD students to research group leaders.

My name is Maija Pulkkinen, I'm one of the five founders of Helsinki Urban Art (HUA). I work mostly with street art production, which included things like applying for permits, budgeting, communication, assisting artists and general planning and organising of our Painting Science project. I've also painted a few small street art pieces and assisted experienced street artists, which has been a great way to learn about different techniques.

My name is Maikki Rantala and I'm a street artist with a background in graphic design. I've been doing street art projects starting with construction site walls, painting with kids, residents, prisoners, teenagers, from both mosque and church etc., anything that makes places more organic and humane. Later I worked with our street art collectives to create large scale murals in train stations.



Why did you decide to participate in Micro Galleries' Global Day of Creative Action together and what was the reason for the project you chose to do?

Stephany: When Maikki and Maija told me about Micro Galleries, I agreed it was a great idea to take part. I saw Micro Galleries was taking on the challenge of making climate change accessible. I wanted to take science to the streets because it belongs to everyone, and in the case of climate science, it directly affects us all. We need to take action, but that only happens if our community is informed. As scientists we have first hand information, and we need to make it accessible to anyone who wants it. So Micro Galleries seemed like a great platform to voice our message!

Maija: I appreciate art in itself, but over the last few years I have become more and more interested in finding ways to use art as a tool for activism. Since the climate crisis is an urgent matter that affects us all, it's important to get creative and find ways to provoke thought and action. Micro Galleries is a great platform for just this and it's a good way to share ideas around the world.

Maikki: I had the wonderful chance to meet Kat Roma Greer a year ago. I was so happy to find out about the Global Day of Creative Action and told Stephany and Maija, "This is when we need to take our action and make a workshop together". Artists need scientists and scientists need artists to fight climate change together; to make the message clear and approachable for people. So of course I was in when Stephany contacted HUA about her collaboration idea.

Why did you choose to collaborate with the other artists and scientists? Why did you choose the materials and location you used?

Stephany: I saw a piece by HUA on an electricity box when I was passing on the tram one day, and it reminded me of a figure from a biology textbook, about cells. I thought it would be awesome if we could have science as pieces of urban art scattered around the city. That way, science would become more familiar to people if we could integrate it into the city. I contacted HUA with the idea, and met Maija



who was behind the electricity box art project. I gathered a team of colleagues that had previously been interested in science communication or climate education to help choose the climate science message. Finally I met Maikki, who seemed passionate about talking about the climate, and that's when I knew it would work, because we all had the same motivation and goal.

Maija: When Stephany first contacted us with this idea, straight away it seemed like a great way to use street art as a tool for something that I saw as important. Our aim was to get a wall in a place where as many people as possible would see it. We were lucky to find a great location for the main piece, it's on a busy road really close to Linnanmäki amusement park in Helsinki where thousands of people go by. All the painted electricity boxes are also along busy streets.

Maikki: I chose laser cut stencils for our street art technique. From the beginning, my intention was to try to spread our work as widely as possible. Stencils are easy for everyone to use. We cut exact scientific facts and diagrams in different sizes and repeated it over and over again. I created enough variation of different kinds of symbolic pictures and texts. We also took a bike carrier full of empty posters, stencils and paints to the climate strike so people could create their own piece of climate art.

How do you view the final product? How was the response and feedback from your community?

Stephany: I love it! Maikki and Maija did an amazing job! Maikki managed to combine numbers, a scientific reference, and images of Alice in Wonderland all under the same figure. I love the metaphor of the greenhouse gas caterpillar transforming into a sustainability butterfly. It's beautiful, symbolically and visually. People told me they walked past it and really liked it!

Maija: I'm very happy with the final product! Maikki did a great job including the scientific data but still keeping the pieces beautiful and visually interesting. This was not an easy task, since there was so much information that could not be simplified too much. One of my favourite parts was using the stencil technique, this enabled us to multiply the message as many times as we wanted. Response from the community was really positive. One of my highlights was helping a nine-year-old spray paint climate messages on an electricity box in her own neighbourhood.

Maikki: I agree that the best thing we created is something that can be used in the future. I want to highlight the importance of Stephany's scientific view and content in everything. It was so much easier to paint climate art on the street knowing that the whole department of scientists at Helsinki University was backing me up! People like to ask a lot of questions when you are on the street with spray paint or a paint bucket in your hand, so we had many good conversations. I told everybody, "You can ask anything that troubles you about the climate directly to scientists". It was also fun to create pieces together with scientists. This is just a simple idea hopefully many other countries will take from us! It's important to have "pretty street art pictures" on the side of hard facts to make it more approachable and hope giving.

Was there anything that surprised you about the project or the way people responded to it? Have you seen a lasting effect on your community because of this project?

Stephany: To me, the most surprising feeling was the immediate 'real time' response we got from people walking by. As a scientist, I'm used to being in my office, working on my data or discussing with colleagues, but in the street, anyone passing by can comment or ask a question. They are having an instinctive or emotional reaction to the work and you can engage with people right there on the spot. We included the hashtag #ScienceInHelsinki, so if you have any questions, feel free to tweet us!

Maija: It was great to see how enthusiastic the scientists were to do street art and to try a new way to reach the public. Even afterwards, when we introduced our project to other scientists at an event, many new people were keen to volunteer in our future projects. This was something I didn't expect since I hadn't met any atmospheric scientists before this project. In all, this was a good learning experience where two different worlds collided.

Maikki: We have new people coming into our project this year and we have a model of how to get everything done. We can make more stencils, make more posters and walls, even post them to different cities. We just have to get a group of people together after winter break and start planning a new painting period.



KATIE VAJA

“..ADVERTISING HAS PLAYED A ROLE IN THE HEARTY ADOPTION OF SINGLE USE PLASTICS OVER THE DECADES. THERE IS A HEAVY NOD TO ADVERTISING CULTURE IN THIS WORK REFERENCING THE 1950'S WHICH BROUGHT IN THE DAWN OF THROW AWAY LIVING.”

Hi Katie,

Can you please briefly introduce yourself and your art practice?

I was born in Sydney, Australia, and lived and worked in Hong Kong for 11 years, before recently returning to Sydney. My fine art practice blends photography, performance and observation to redefine and challenge where the human body fits within the lived paradigm. I received my Bachelor of Fine Arts from RMIT University / Hong Kong Art School. My work has been exhibited widely locally and also internationally in Australia, USA, India and New Zealand. I was the winner of the Hong Kong Human Rights Arts Prize in 2014 and the Hong Kong Arts Festival Gold Award for Photography in 2016. Interested in art's role in society, I became the first artist to act as director of the HK Human Rights Arts Prize 2017 & 2018 and I have contributed to a number of social documentary & photojournalism projects in

Hong Kong.

Tell us about "Body Domestic":

The "Body Domestic" series was conceived in 2015, looking at socialisation and the transformation of female bodies into a location for, and expression of, codes of behaviour and politics within the domestic space. Moving through many iterations, this new work "Body Domestic -Plastic" or "Vanish" as it's become known, looks at plastics as glossy promises versus the looming environmental crisis and the endemic nature of the material in daily life, as it makes its way into the body. It's a disturbing future to imagine. I am also interested in how the visual image and advertising has played a role in the hearty adoption of single use plastics over the decades. There is a heavy nod to advertising culture in this work referencing the 1950's which brought in the dawn of throw away living.





Why did you decide to participate in Micro Galleries' Global Day of Creative Action?

I had been toying with the idea of a street poster campaign for a while after previously exhibiting this work in gallery spaces but for one reason or another didn't have the momentum to execute it. Micro Galleries gave me that momentum and the focus to pull all the pieces together and finalise the concept. I really enjoyed working within a larger global conversation and towards the specific and meaningful timing.

The project "Vanish" was created together with Cristina Mclauchlan. How did this collaboration start? How was the message of the project perceived?

It all started with a blind date of sorts... I was following Cristina for a while on Instagram. We had quite a few friends in common and I loved what she stood for and her bold environmental activism. I had been researching "Plastic" for a while and in terms of the visual narrative around throwaway culture; where it came from, how it started, what was the messaging etc. I reached out to Cristina to catch up for coffee and a chat about a couple of ideas I had. I guess she became my muse for this project. She completely understood where I wanted to go with this conceptually and is highly performative as a person and able to translate concepts physically. There is a wonderful creative synergy and trust between us when making work together. The work is designed to be beautiful and engaging (as with advertising) but with a visceral 'punch' when you read deeper into the image mimicking the qualities of plastic and I was happy when I could see people reading the image like that. It also reflects a frustrating denial and nonchalance we, as a society, have with these issues as we choose to look away. It feels like we are all asleep at the wheel.

Was there anything that surprised you about the project or the way people responded to it?

It was exciting to take it out of the white cube/gallery context and see the work come to life and transform into a mock magazine cover, as a subversion of popular visual culture and consumer advertising vehicles.



Hi Noah,

Describe yourself and your work in a few words, what would you like to say?

I am very eclectic. I work a lot with everyday materials and I'm very interested in helping sift through the noise of our society to elevate the people and thoughts that we should focus on, especially when we're overwhelmed with all of the upsetting and frustrating things we have to deal with in our world right now. We've got too much information coming at us all the time, and it makes me feel overwhelmed. I'm somebody who wants to encourage people to participate in activism. I want to show people that you can change your world. When I work with everyday objects, it's taking familiar things and showing people that you can transform them - that you don't have to accept things as they are.

Do you think there is a lack of imagination or a lack of courage to actually try new things, or is fear about not being good at something?

In the work I do as a consultant around creativity I've realized that for most people who weren't raised to be creative, the arts are shoved aside and deprioritized. People are encouraged to study "serious things" and do "more important things" with their lives. These people feel like they don't have the capacity for creativity now, which is a real shame because creativity is the thing that's going to help get us out of the mess we're in. It's the thing that is going to help us come up with new ideas; new ways of connecting; and new solutions. People who have not expressed themselves creatively since they were kids find it very daunting and something that's scary to them. They think "I can't do it. I'm not going to be good at it" and so they don't even try. Combine that with the endless overwhelming news cycle and our demoralizing social media landscape and the spark that's in you has been completely shut down. If you uncap people's creativity, they'll find ways to move forward.

What would you suggest for young and emerging artists?

Trust your gut. Don't listen to people telling you that there's something you're supposed to be doing, or there's a right way to do it. It's really important to trust the things that you're passionate about and to follow them. If you aim yourself towards those things, you're going to discover really exciting opportunities along the way. In art school they don't teach you how to run a business and almost every artist is an entrepreneur. I think entrepreneurship is a very specific set of skills that don't come naturally to a lot of people. You have to do a lot of learning (and failing) by doing and that's daunting to people. You have to create your own path. I interview a lot of artists about how they got to where they are and everyone's story is different. No one has the same path. The things that happened to you in your life are the things that will create opportunities for you later, if you pay attention to them. You have to learn to identify the doors that are in front of you and walk through them.



How long have you been part of the Micro Galleries collective?

Three years. I actually got involved because my parents had been doing stuff with Kat for a few years. I loved what they were doing, but I couldn't figure out how I could participate. I wasn't doing any street art or murals yet and I didn't know how my work would translate. Kat and I started having conversations and then we came up with an idea for Jakarta in 2017. Since I was focused on portraiture, we decided that Kat would send me a portrait of a girl from the neighborhood where they were going to do the event, and I would make her portrait in my studio. I then sent it back to be wheatpasted and the result was really fantastic! So that's what we've been doing since then.

And how do you find working remotely?

I love it! I love that I can make something here in Richmond, Virginia, in my little studio, and then suddenly, it's in another country. When I see photos of people interacting with my work it makes me feel so happy that I could connect with someone across the globe with my art. Right now I'm collaborating with a fellow Micro Galleries member, Ika Vantiani in Jakarta. We would never have met if it weren't for the collective and I love that we're able to make art together, even though we've never met in person!

What motivated you to join Micro Galleries' Global Day of Creative Action?

Climate change is a subject I'm passionate about, but I've also had a hard time figuring out how to make art around it. It's one of those topics that's so big and overwhelming that I haven't felt like I had a way forward. It's been easier for me to focus on other subjects that have been pressing on my mind here in America, like issues around racial violence and xenophobia around immigrants. Climate change, as important as it is, has been hard to focus on because I'm so overwhelmed with all of this other stuff. When I saw the event come through I thought, "I really want to do this, but I don't know how." At the same time, Daniel Calder, another Richmond artist, and I had been discussing how we might be able to collaborate. It came to me that maybe the Global Day of Creative Action would be the right project to work on together. He immediately started sending me ideas and that got me inspired. We



brainstormed and narrowed down a concept just by passing things back and forth through email. Then Daniel had the great idea to do this as a billboard. I thought it would be too expensive, but he researched it and it turned out that it really wasn't that much money, especially if we both pitched in. It was so cool to have this suggested we make both the image and text be specific to our community so that people here work out as I loved the idea of having this impact that's really big in our own community. Kat could really relate to it. It's great because it went from a global thing to a local thing and at the same time, this local thing could go global! This collaboration made it possible for me to finally address this important issue. Plus, when I went to photograph the billboard I asked my daughter, Zinn, if she wanted to come with me. She just wore those butterfly wings, I didn't tell her to wear them! While I was taking photos she decided to run around and it was just her natural joy that I captured. I thought, "how could this be any more perfect?!" Here's this delicate butterfly, who is also my child and that's really what this is all about. Here's this impending future, and if we don't take care of it properly, we're leaving our children with the results.

What kind of feedback have you received from the community?

It's hard to tell. We put it on a busy public street, so at least I know a lot of people saw it. I don't know what they thought of it, of course, but if it gave people another way to talk about the issue or to start a conversation, then I think it was successful. It also went out into the community through the local media, and the reporter's response was really positive, which felt good. I didn't want to do something apocalyptic and depressing because it just doesn't help; we already feel overwhelmed. I found it helpful for my own state of mind to do this piece, and I think if it's helped me then it's probably going to help other people too.

What question would you ask of your fellow Micro Galleries artists?

How art has helped them deal with how they're feeling about environmental and social justice issues?

SYAMSUL

Why did you decide to participate in Micro Galleries' Global Day of Creative Action and what was the reason for the project you chose to do? What issue were you wanting to address? Was there a specific part of the community you were speaking to with your mural?

I just love doing art stuff, but with MG it was a cool way to do it - make art with a message. The title of my project was "Plastic People". I just wanted to tell the government, especially in my town of East Jakarta, Indonesia, about the plastic waste, garbage everywhere, lack of trash cans, and how the people are trashing their habitat. The thing is, the government's campaign to educate people about how to eliminate trash creates a lot of products, like advertisements and fliers, that become trash, beautiful, right? The rich people with rich companies have it good while the poor ones are left enjoying the beautiful, trashy scenery.

Tell me about the location you chose. Did you look at putting your mural in any other places?

I had the concept to make a project on the "rich" environment: the Kasablanka mall. I had 2 brands back me up. The first brand gave me the space in a two show-window store and the second one gave the cash. The mall smelled the idea and gave me a chance to talk to them about the project, but after the 3rd meeting I got THE BIG NO. Maybe they were scared that other brands would be disturbed about my idea. I got depressed and messaged Kat about it, but the show must go on. So I called a friend to ask if there were any free walls for my second idea. I ended up putting a mural at the BKT (Banjir Kanal Timur) on a citizen wall house together with Rotnosenik and Wanso Titu.

How do you view the final product? How was the response and feedback from your community?

Being with great people at BKT and spreading the message about not dumping trash on the river was fun. The feedback was great. We are still missing a link to stop trashing, but it was fun.

Was there anything that surprised you about the project or the way people responded to it? Have you seen a lasting effect on your community because of this project?

About TRASHING... I don't think so. About ART, YESS. We had fun and the citizens helped us make the mural. I just want to make art and if they don't care about the meaning of the artwork, whatever, but if they love the art, let it be good art. Let's help them make their own art for their community. The message will be born by it.





Exploring climate through an artistic lens can have a tremendous impact on getting people to think about and relate to what's going on environmentally. Nothing beats visual responses to give better access to understanding one of the greatest threats of our time! These selected works are powerful sensory experiences that visually unravel the (in)visible effects, threats and impact of climate change on already vulnerable cities and people.

PHOTO AND VIDEOGRAPHY



GIRLS PAY THE BILLS

Can you tell us a bit about "Girls Pay the Bills"?

Girls Pay The Bills is an interdisciplinary art collective consisting of 8 young women. Of course, we often bring up issues that are related to women, especially in Indonesia. However, we also actively participate in campaigns on social and environmental issues, and we package them through the medium of art.

Why did you choose to be a part of Micro Galleries' first Global Day of Creative Action?

We saw Jakarta was in a risky condition at that time, especially regarding its position as the 3rd city in the world with the highest air pollution. On the other hand, we ourselves felt the direct negative effects, which were respiratory infections. Micro Galleries, through its Global Day of Creative Action, was the right place in terms of timing and issues where we can speak about our fidgetiness, and we realized that we were not speaking up alone. Through that activity, artists around the world supported each other and together encouraged the government to act!

How did the idea of a dance film come to you?

Everything started because of our anxiety. We found the number of Indonesians affected by respiratory problems had increased, including ourselves! Then we looked around and clearly saw the cause of this problem:

1. a huge number of motorised vehicles on the streets
2. power plant systems that damages the surrounding environment
3. Systematic forest burnings!!!

What we had in mind first was: "we must do something." We felt we had to make something continuously, something that people can see over and over again, and we decided "film" was the answer. This film would become a film that intervened even before the production began. We chose the places to intervene by making a performance in the middle of the venue. We wanted the community, at least, to be intrigued by what we are trying to say. We made some related choreography and put on several costumes to support the messages.

What is the message you want to share through the video?

We really want the government to realise that this (the problem of air pollution that never stops in Indonesia) is ridiculous! and that they are the ones who should be fully responsible for improving the situation. Hey, we should not be the ones who make people aware of environmental damage. Where are the bosses of the country??!

How did people react during the shooting on the street?

We found many challenges on the streets, especially the unfriendly response of people who were disrupted by our performance. Haha, that's our goal anyway, right? Sadly, this made us realise that not many Indonesians care about environmental issues. They see this as something that is not 'urgent'.

What's your feeling about initiatives like the Global Day of Creative Action? From your experience do you see any changes in the people close to you?

This initiative must continue because although not many people were aware, we saw the community around us starting to become curious about what we did. If this continues, it may attract more communities.

MIGUEL JERONIMO

Hi Miguel,

Tell us a little bit about yourself.

I am a Portuguese freelance photographer, vagabond writer and curator based in Phnom Penh, Cambodia. I am passionate about working with NGOs in impactful projects, collaborating with other artists and creating exhibitions with meaning. My interest is in visual storytelling and using photography as a tool for awareness and social development, besides working between conceptual and documentary photography in search of visual poetry in the world around.

Why did you decide to participate in Micro Galleries' Global Day of Creative Action and what was the reason for the project you chose to do?

I got to know the project through the internet and was really interested in the idea of collective action throughout the globe, not on a massive scale but rather with small actions within communities to make a huge network of artworks towards the same subject. Kind of like the idea of breaking down the vague big picture of climate change into small action steps that people can realistically tackle in their everyday life in any place. I believe this combination of small gestures put into a worldwide project is quite powerful, and I felt compelled to contribute my little part and put Cambodia on this map of artistic and environmental action. I've chosen this project, "Joss Vines", as a way to use local upcycled materials to tell a story and define the concept of a future in a climate disrupted world in a playful way. This project imagines a post-humanity future where trash conquered the cities once lived in by humans, with vines made by trash growing on top of abandoned structures or crawling on the side of vacant buildings. Also, the process of creating the vines themselves from energy drinks packets functions as a metaphor to the environmental consequences of our actions as consumers. A chain reaction from the act of buying until the package or leftovers of the product end up in a landfill or ocean.





Why did you choose the materials and location you used?

I used packages of Extra Joss, a popular energy drink in powder available in Cambodia and not in many other countries. Informal and low-paid workers with extensive working hours drink it in order to stay awake, with the little yellow packets being left behind in construction sites and on the side of the streets. For locations I've chosen public places in Phnom Penh that have an aesthetic of abandonment. Perhaps construction sites that ended up never being completed or old houses left empty and forgotten by the rapid urbanization of the city and its surrounding areas.

Did you work together with people in your community on the project?

As a process, I wanted to start working by myself on the street, installing the vines and evaluating the reactions of the people passing by. Slowly the community started to be curious about what I was doing and engaged in the project, for instance doing an impromptu clean-up of the surrounding area.

How do you view the final product?

I think the final product is not only the photos of the art installations on the street but the whole experience itself, especially the way the community started to be involved. Cambodia is still a country where the majority of the people don't put much thought into environmental issues or waste management, and plastic being thrown everywhere on the street or waterways is a common sight.

Was there anything that surprised you about the way people responded to your project?

It was really interesting to see, for instance, how a group of tuk-tuk drivers (that was drinking nearby and throwing the beer cans to the ground) started to pick up their trash by themselves and then asked some kids and teens to pick up plastic bags and started to collect all the garbage around.

Did anything interesting happen as a result of this project?

I presented the project at a Waste Summit happening nearby in the same week, where I managed to meet a lot of young and local innovators. Considering that my project was the only art-based one presented in the fair organized in the conference, it was interesting to engage with engineers, politicians, entrepreneurs and students to discuss these issues, receiving interesting feedback about the powerful nature of visual storytelling as a way to spark an emotional reaction to environmental topics rather than just a rational one.



Si
cuidamos a
la **TIERRA**,
ELLA cuidará
de **NOSOTROS**

YOUNG ARTIVISTS: OUR NEXT GENERATION

Young people are often a catalyst for change. We are excited to be featuring young activists committed to addressing climate change within their communities! Coming from diverse backgrounds and corners of the world: Jordan, Australia, USA, Ecuador and Fiji - these young artists are bringing attention to the ongoing environmental problems in the world. They showed us that kids could make incredible artist-led murals, multimedia installations, and text-based investigations, all to spark dialogue and action around the climate crisis. It is this next generation who will keep sounding the alarm on climate change and environmental issues, and we all want to empower them to do so.

“THE GAME IS A PERFECT WAY TO KEEP THE YOUNGER KIDS BUSY DOING SOMETHING COOL AND USEFUL. THE OLDER ONES APPRECIATE AND UNDERSTAND THE PURPOSE MORE.”

COCHAPAMBA



Please tell me a little about yourselves and the school where your Creative Action project happened.

We are Luca Pegoraro, Chiara Fabbri and Giorgia Lazazzera - three Italian guys working in Quito, Ecuador, for our year of civil service. We work with 15 elders and around 60 kids, providing them activities, lunch and educational help. Cochapamba is a poor neighbourhood in this city, quite a tough place to grow up, and having a safe place like this where people can meet, play, do homework and receive a complete meal every day is something really special.

Why did you decide to participate in Micro Galleries' Global Day of Creative Action, and what was the reason for the project you chose to do?

Honestly, our environmental campaign was already on its way when I came across the Micro Galleries' initiative. Chiara is a talented artist and having some time off due to the summer vacation, she started painting the place with colourful murals and nice messages. We're all aware of the importance of educating kids about environmental problems and a more sustainable lifestyle. That's how the murals and the plastic ball game came out.

Why did you choose the materials and location you used?

Materials for the plastic ball game were already there. We put together wood leftovers, broken bins, and some wire. Regarding the murals, the colours have been donated mostly from ENGiM, our association, and the priest of Cochapamba. The location had to be the school: we wanted to begin the new year with some surprises for the kids.

How did you feel about the final project? What did the children think? Did any parents have anything to say about the project?

We're all stoked and happy about the results. The place needed more colours, and we could tell the kids were happy to see the difference. The game is a perfect way to keep the younger kids busy doing something cool and useful. The older ones appreciate and understand the purpose more. When the plastic bin is full is given to a couple of families who can sell the whole lot of plastic for a few dollars.

Is there anything from the project that you all continue to do today at the school or in the children's homes?

I guess that having an environmental conscience is a long process that can't be taught or implemented in such a short time, but we're all really happy that we started it. We already have some new ideas for the center, and we hope the other volunteers will keep on working in this direction in the following years. For the moment, as a last environmental mission, we're planning a day trip, dividing the kids into groups and clearing up all the trash in the 'hood. The winning team, the one that collects the most trash, will be recompensed with big bowls of ice cream.



COLORFULLIVES

Can you say a few words about Colorfullives?

Colorfullives is a small group consisting of high school students that are passionate about many forms of art. Throughout 2019 we partnered up with a local NGO called Mobile Kindy, where we visited with local settlements that suffer from extreme poverty, and engage the kids with activities such as arts and crafts while educating them about climate change. Due to their unstable financial status, many of these kids are deprived of educational opportunities which is why we are trying to help build their confidence and provide free education.

Why did you decide to participate in Micro Galleries' Global Day of Creative Action?

Many of the kids from the village have migrated here in canoes and have also been born on the ocean, thus we call them the children of the ocean, which is why climate change is a very important issue to us. When I saw the opportunity to participate in the Global Day of Creative Action, I thought that it would be a great opportunity to spread the word about climate change here. Fiji is at high risk of being affected by climate change. In fact, Fiji was greatly affected by cyclone Winston which injured many people and destroyed homes. To help with that, our grade camped at a village and helped rebuild their schools. Although climate change is so greatly talked about globally, many people here tend to ignore that it is such a serious issue. Living in such a beautiful country, my team and I wanted to help increase awareness so that we can prevent future problems. I found this project to be an effective way to communicate with a wide range of people and start a conversation among them. I really think that the Micro Galleries initiative is a very effective and amazing one as it has reached so many people globally and it would be great to have many more organizations like it for a more effective approach.

You installed both *Sea Level 2080* by Adam Kuby, and painted a wall on the side of the road. How was the response and feedback from the kids and from the passersby?

Many people were very curious as to why a bunch of kids

were painting a bridge or installing fabric along the shoreline which led to them to ask questions. Those questions helped us understand several different perspectives and also convey informations about the project and climate change to them. We received a lot of media attention and positive feedback, but also some negative responses. Some people would argue and say climate change isn't real and that what we're doing is of no use, but we'd answer back and try to explain that it is a small step towards change. The fact that people don't think it is real needs to change in order to make a difference, which is why we wanted to make a bold statement with the bridge mural. The kids were really excited to paint along the bridge and so were adults as we basically provided a huge blank canvas in the heart of the city. Many tourists also took pictures and complimented us which was very encouraging. To see everyone from different backgrounds come together and paint about a certain issue was very heartwarming as the arts don't have many opportunities here regardless of having so many talented artists.

Was there anything that surprised you about the project?

One interesting conversation was with a father who told us how much his son loved art and how they came from a very poor background so his son would make paint out of natural products such as plants, and he had gotten a scholarship to go to Paris. I think it was very interesting how he found an environmentally friendly way to create art which is what we'd like to focus on doing also.



IT'S ALL IN OUR HANDS

Maningrida Youth, Sport & Rec and Alejandra Ramirez worked together with local young people to explore perceptions about rubbish in their community in Northern Territory, Australia. They created this vibrant mural called "It's All In Our Hands"

Hi Alejandra,

The mural is created by local youth who want to see their community be more conscious of their personal and collective impact towards their surroundings. How was the process of working together and co-creating the mural with the kids and teenagers? And what were they most looking forward to when working towards creating "It's All In Our Hands"?

I am very happy how the community embraced my presence and the opportunity of creating a mural together! After explaining the idea behind this mural the manager was very helpful and gathered the kids and teens providing us with a space and materials! The teenagers are fully aware rubbish doesn't belong in their landscapes and also harms their surroundings; together we sat down and brainstormed what we could write and draw! Maningrida is a coastal community, so we quickly agreed upon including the sea, painting a street that follows the beach and showing usual activities of the Maningrida community. Some people are fishing, spending time with their pets, making fires and

driving cars. The creative process was very spontaneous and at times the kids and teenagers needed my direction. The hand-drawn landscape was our starting point and after I prepared all the colours the participants had a go with the mural! The kids were free to express themselves and paint their everyday life, house, plants, plants, animals and other things that are being part of their lives. I feel to mention that none of the participants thought about painting rubbish as a subject while at the same time their landscape is currently suffering because of it. Their minds subconsciously prompts that rubbish doesn't belong here! The little ones mostly wanted to have fun and to create something beautiful for their youth centre! The teenagers were more focused on the message behind the mural as it's a visual reminder of their personal and collective impact on their surroundings.

What did the kids and teenagers hope their community would take away or learn?

Their mural was created as a daily reminder of the beauty and importance of their land at their doorstep and that it's worth taking care of!



"It's All in Our Hands" was painted on an indoor wall in the centre. Is there a reason you picked this instead of an outdoor wall?

Due to my short stay, the size of the Maningrida community and all the organisations working within the community permissions to paint aren't that easy to get! I started off painting with the kids and teens in the space where they spent most of their time and therefore had the opportunity to build relationships with them. I believe it was beneficial that the kids and teens were able to see the mural every day and talk with each other about it!

How did you manage to have the community interact with the mural? Any interactions, comments or observations that really stand out?

The place was key! The youth centre is a central meeting point and has great vibes, music, videos projected on the wall and has constantly visitors, kids and teenagers come frequently but also other people from the community. When we were creating, people would stop and watch, take photos, ask questions or even participate. It was a great hangout for the day! I think the vibrant colours of the painting and energized kids also caught people's attention and it was therefore hard to resist not to have a go! Also, the mural shows a street that follows a beach into a neighbourhood's coco grove; and the visitors recognised the painted beach and house.



JANNA SAMMON

“THE RESPONSE HAS BEEN VERY INTERESTING. I RECEIVED REQUESTS FROM ARTISTS IN AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND FOR IMAGES FROM THIS PROJECT TO BE A PART OF THEIR LOCAL WHEAT PASTING PROJECTS.”

Hi Janna,

Can you tell us about your project?

My children and I created a large poster displaying the words “Fight for me” next to a drawing of the Earth. I filmed them while they ran around wheat pasting (and playing with our chickens). They then posed next to the sign with papier mache Earth masks I made for each of them.

You worked with your kids for this project, can you tell us a bit about your process and what inspired you and your kids to be apart of the Global Day of Creative Action?

My artwork is typically very colourful and whimsical, and I wanted to do something very different for this project. I wanted it to be fun for my children and to represent them more than my artwork. The idea to make the earth ‘heads’ came to me first. I liked the idea of the children/Earth connection through wearing the mask or bringing the Earth alive in this way. At first, I envisioned setting the Earth masks up somewhere in town and documenting how people engaged with them and using this as a way to engage with people in conversations about climate change. As the Day of Creative Action got closer, my daughter began to talk about wanting to participate in the Climate Day march in our downtown. I knew I wouldn’t be able to take her, so I started looking for a way my children could participate in the day. That’s how I came up with the idea of filming them wheat pasting a sign and wearing the earth heads. We chose the words “Fight for me” as they seemed to represent fighting for our world as well as for our children. I liked that the text could be seen as coming from our planet, as well as our children.

Has doing this project inspired your children to do more?

They haven’t participated in another project like this. Still, we are lucky to live in a city that is pretty environmentally conscious, so things like composting, recycling, and reusing grocery bags are part of our daily lives. My father is a retired professor who continues to write about environmentally conscious topics, and we talk A LOT as a family, with the environment being a core subject. My oldest son is studying Biology at University (so wasn’t home when we made the video). He is taking part in several research studies where he can see the effects of climate change in smaller scales (like through butterfly and bird migrations) which deepens the conversations we have at home.

How did you find the responses from the public?

The response has been fascinating. I received requests from artists in Australia and New Zealand for images from this project to be a part of their local wheat pasting projects. I created line drawings from the photographs which I printed and sent to them.

Was there anything that came from the day that surprised you, was a happy accident or didn’t go as planned?

I have to admit that the overall result came out pretty close to how I envisioned. Since I was working with children and chickens, and it all went well, that in and of itself is a happy accident.



POLLUTED RAINBOW

Hi Raghad,

Can you tell us a bit about yourself and how you decided to join Micro Galleries "Global Day of Creative Action"?

Ruwwad Al-Tanmeya is a non-profit community development organisation that works with disenfranchised communities through education, youth volunteerism, and grassroots organising. Our approach encompasses an array of programs and initiatives that, together, strengthen the agency and facilitate redress to problems prioritised by members of the community. Ruwwad is a citizen-led model. It utilises the community service hours of the scholars to create a safe learning space for children and adolescents; mobilises the families to launch grassroots campaigns that help engender social change; and advocates for access to rights-based services through various partnerships within the private sector, governmental agencies and the civil society. Supportive action and intervention is developed in collaboration with specialists, where applicable, but always in conversation with the community. Today, Ruwwad spans Jordan, Egypt, Lebanon, and Palestine, and operates through a strong network of partnerships with the private sector and civil society and governmental agencies. The connection with MG is a way to reach for a social change not only locally, but also a global one. Our young artists, Ruwwad kids who are living in a marginalised region, worked to illuminate the margins and make social changes via art. Working with MG and engaging Ruwwad kids in this global movement leads to a huge exchange of ideas –which creates artistic growth, mental growth, empathy, and new understandings of the world around us. Frankly, these are Ruwwad's values. As the Creative Art Component Coordinator in Ruwwad and as a self-taught artist, I always try to connect with others in order to build a strong



relationship with artists to develop myself and the space in which I work. Furthermore, art in our country is not prominent, so I am trying to help the kids to connect with the whole world, feel the impact they can create, see how art is as important as breathing, and how it helps us to make a positive change in our community and the whole region.



Where did the idea of the "Polluted Rainbow" come from? How was the part of creating the installation together important?

We held a series of sessions with 15 of Ruwwad's Kids. Ruwwad's sessions are built based on The Inquiry-Based Learning Approach, so we started discussing the issue of Climate Change and how it affects the earth in a very bad way. Then we discussed many artworks that have been made by several artists with the issue of climate change as a source of inspiration. After that, we asked questions to help them come up with ideas. And finally, we tried to combine our ideas as much as we could to settle on one idea. Creating the idea together helped in digging through the climate change issue, and inspired each of us to exchange as many ideas as we could to give our best.

Was there anything that surprised you about the project or the way people responded to it?

Seeing the work itself was not enough for people, they started to ask the kids questions about the process of creating the idea and what they learned from this experience. The way kids were responding freely with confidence was astonishing. We were proud.

Have you seen a lasting effect on your community because of this project?

Yes. Salma, 12 years old, said: "I am proud of myself because I shared our point of view with many people.", so it became their perspective, and they started shouting out for it.

ZARA

Hi Zara,

You created an informative book called 'Save Me' for the Global Day of Creative Action, can you tell us how this project came about?

I found out that the earth is in danger, so I wanted to do something to try and save it and heard about the Micro Galleries' Global Day of Creative Action, so I decided to write a book. It contains information about issues affecting climate change. After some research, I started writing the chapters of what I thought would be helpful. When I finished, I printed it out and illustrated the cover. I enjoyed creating the book because I love drawing pictures and writing. I drew the illustration that's on the front cover, and I love to research and write, so I did all the writing for the book myself.

There is essential information in your book that many people aren't aware of and should know. It's great that someone as young as yourself is creating something that has all this information. How has the response been so far from those that have read it?

I've had lots of positive feedback, with many people telling me how good a job I've done, and "Wow, I didn't realise that was happening". People have since been more aware of what they are doing, which affects climate change.

What are some of your current or future projects that you have planned?

I've started making videos called ETN News, which cover different subjects, such as climate change, or plastic, or about the fires, and droughts here in Australia. I've put them all together and made a video.

That sounds fantastic, where can we see these videos?

ETN News is on my website, my mum has her own business, and I used the software she has to create my website. I've also written blogs and created a map called 'Earth Savers' which you can find on there. <https://lindleepe.wixsite.com/website-2>

Can you tell us about the Earth Savers Map?

Well, I created The Earth Savers Map Project, using scribble maps. It displays pins for environmentally friendly stores. The project is about preventing plastic and climate change, so you can find stores and places that support this, and business' can also apply to be included on the map.

How have you managed to circulate your book, is it through your website etc.?

At my school fete, my mum and I had a stall, of preloved clothes and I had my book available there. We're also doing another stall at the Go Green Festival soon at the Buddhist temple. I have also made some scrunchies from fabric waste, called Zcrunchies, Zara's zero waste Zcrunchies. I'll be selling these along with the book, and some of the profits will go to the RFS. I also have run a couple of lemonade stalls, with all money donated to help support the farmers affected by the drought, through Buy a Bail fundraising.





MISS PRINTED

What's the story behind your name Miss Printed?

It was a long time ago when I was working at Extrapool, in the Netherlands, I was part of an artist collective. I always liked to collect the misprints and make cards out of them; and because I thought the mishmash of these misprints were really beautiful, I named myself "Miss Printed" which sounded better than having a "Workshop with Angela".

How did your idea of doing located collage start?

I would love to tell you a very political story but instead the story is very personal. I emigrated to Norway 13 years ago and two years after that my best friend in the Netherlands lost suddenly the love of her life to cancer. She was devastated and I was far away, in Norway, I just had a little baby without a passport, so I couldn't travel and go to her. So I started making postcards for her because that's my thing. Later that year we went on a summer holiday with a little van and two toddlers and we couldn't have many things with us. That's why I decided to place my paper cuts outside - in the landscape - instead of making postcards to be sent by mail. It was a way to solve my problem and I loved it really much. That's how it all started: a physical postcard transformed into a virtual postcard I sent through WhatsApp. It's not like I wanted to be a street artist or whatever! I just wanted to do something for my friend and I've sent her postcards once a week year in year out. Right now it's probably once a month.

Your work for the Global Day of Creative Action "Collage for Climate" had a very similar process to "The Collage Garden" you did in Kathmandu. How did the open call and selection work?

When I joined Instagram I realized there are a lot of people making collages! And by having an open call you could reach and involve more people: We received over 1,500 submissions for "Collage for Climate". Making a selection is not easy, even if a rare privilege. You get to see some amazing work and think over them as not every image is obvious at first sight: some images hit you in the face, other images work very well on a small screen and some don't and you have to visualise them bigger.

What do you think is the most important feedback you received?

For me it's thinking that over 1,500 people sat at the table and worked on telling a story about climate change. In short, the interaction: it wasn't about a nice picture but every artist really took the time to think and visualize climate change and what they want to say about it.

Image by Clashing Squirrel

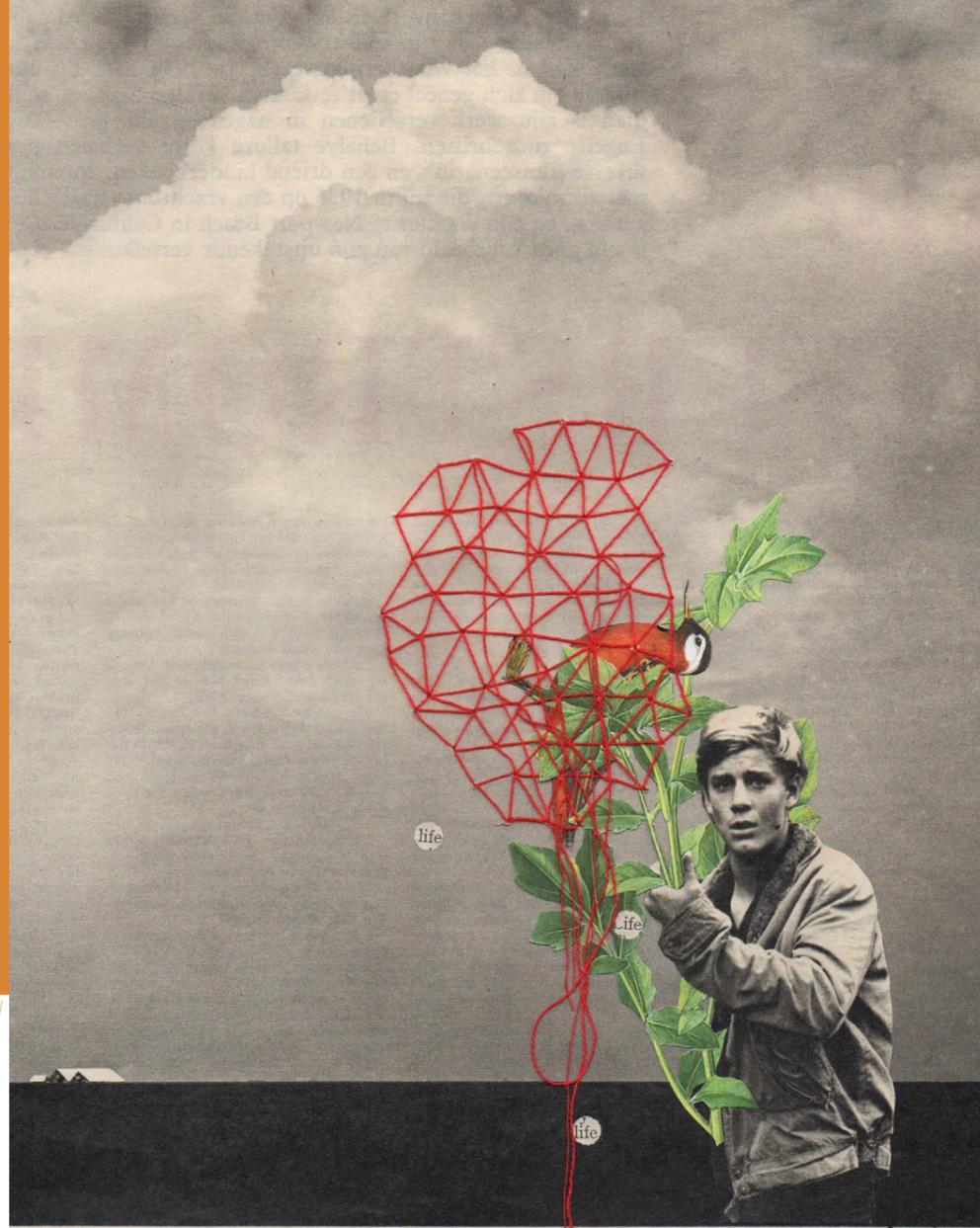


Image by Miss Printed and Rhed Fawell

Can you tell us a bit about the museum you just mentioned?

In 2016 on my way back from work on European route E6,- the only main road that goes from north to south in Norway- I discovered an empty shed which I thought could be a museum. So I wrote to some artists I know if they wanted to donate their work for this museum, and everybody I asked said yes! Nevertheless they agreed with the museum being open for 24h a day and no one watching; the works could be destroyed, stolen or damaged easily! Also there is no heating, the lights work on batteries and turn on only when you enter, so you can watch the works also at night, I think it's the only museum in Norway that is open 24 hours a day. I never expected that so many people would actually visit the museum, I just wanted to make something nice and challenge the idea of what a museum is. I really wish everybody who saw an ugly empty building would transform it into a museum or in whatever they wanted it to be. I would stop admiring all of them.

What would you say to emerging artists?

They need to find a story, they have to find their own voice and make works that speak of this voice. It may sound really difficult, but it's not that difficult! You just have to start working: I was only making work for one friend and it became so much bigger than that.



Image by Kелlette Elliot

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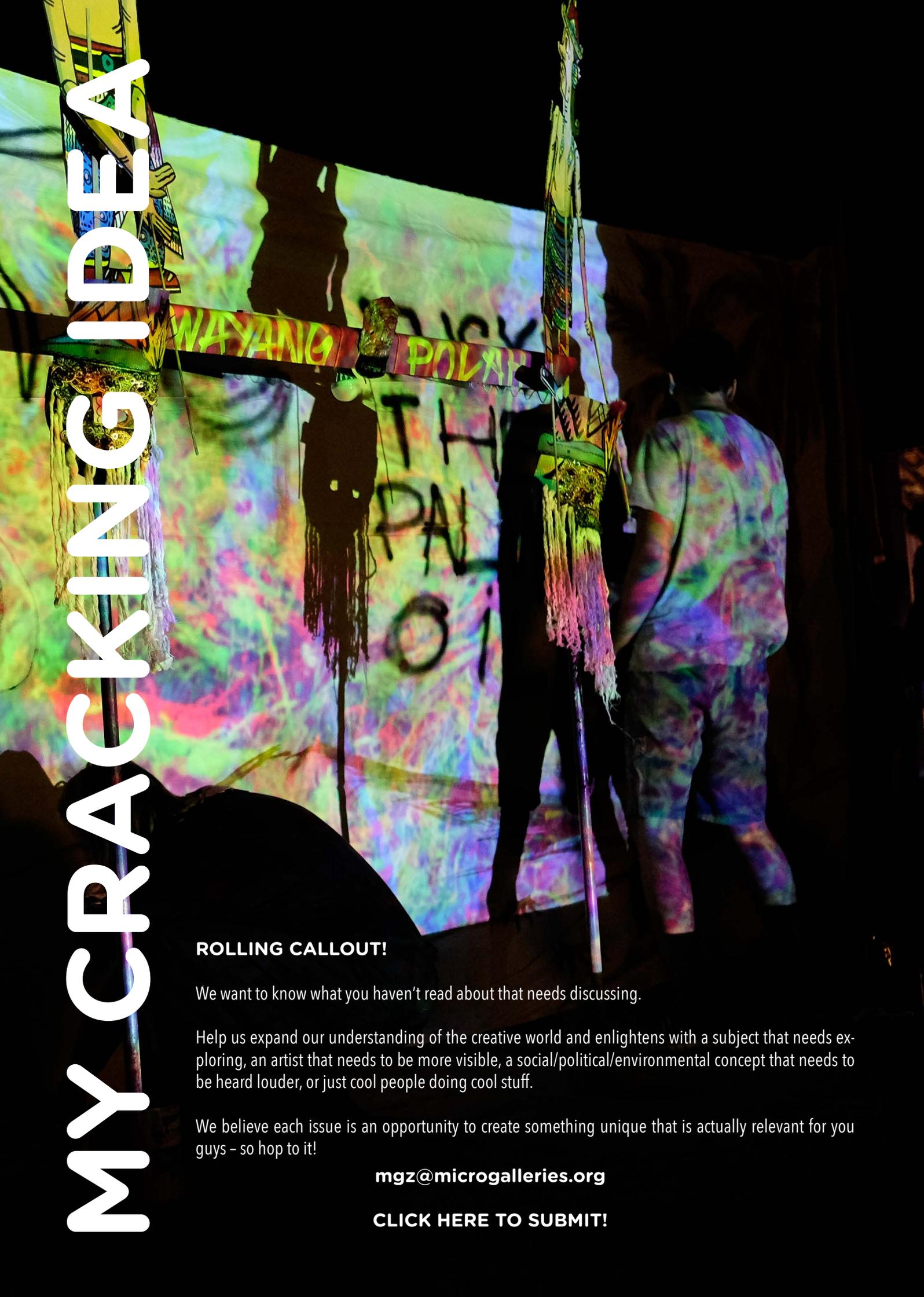
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Acul Syamsul (Indonesia)
Adam Kuby (USA)
Alan Olejniczak (USA)
Alejandra Ramirez (Australia)
Ali Mohamed Mohanna (Palestine)
Amy Wyatt (Australia)
Ana Bolena Chamie, Kata Garces (Colombia)
Anthony and Katharine (Australia)
Avantika Bawa (USA)
Beatriz Alchalaby (USA)
Benjamin Irritant (United Kingdom)
Carmem Gusmao (USA)
Cempaka Collective (Malaysia)
Chiara Fabbri, Luca Pegoraro (Ecuador)
Colorfullives (Fiji)
Cutnotslices (Indonesia)
Dakarai Akil (USA)
Deepak Limbu (Nepal)
Dowatfeelsgood (Australia)
Eleanor McColl, HKGGA (Hong Kong)
Elissa Eriksson (Finland)
Fitri DK (Indonesia)
Florida Conservation Voters (USA)
Fossick Project (Italy/Nepal)

Girls Pay The Bills (Indonesia)
Giulio Fabris / UDAPT (Ecuador)
Hello The Mushroom (United Kingdom)
Helsinki Urban Art, INAR (Finland)
Inkblot (UK)
Ipeh Nur (Indonesia)
Isrol Medialegal (Indonesia)
Jacqui Biffin (Australia)
Jane Gutman (USA)
Janna Sammon (USA)
Jeffry Feeger, Renbo Art Studio (Papua New Guinea)
Jillian McCann, Eco-Centric (Vietnam)
Katie Vajda (Hong Kong)
Kazi Faisal (Bangladesh)
Kirsty Bolton (Australia)
Kristine Buenavista (Philippines)
Kristy Melita (USA)
Lara Furst (Australia)
Leslie Leong (Canada)
Liina Klauss (Indonesia)
Little Brown Dog (Australia)
Mark Epler (USA)
Martina Grifoni (Italy)
Matthew Cottrell (USA)

Miguel Jeronimo (Cambodia)
Miss-Printed, Rhed Fawell (Norway/Scotland)
Muddy Hands (Nepal)
Noah Scalin (USA)
Acil (Indonesia)
Olga Trevisan (Italy)
Ravinder Sehgal (USA)
Rhiannon Hopley (Australia)
Roz Keep (Hong Kong)
Ruwwad Al-Tanmeya Foundation (Jordan)
Sarah Sculley (Australia)
Shannon Downey (USA)
Setu Legi (Indonesia)
Subdude (United Kingdom)
The Collective (Brunei)
Toby Query (USA)
Valeria Grajales (Colombia/Indonesia)
Verena Reiter (Austria)
Vivien Poly (Indonesia)
Wayang Polah (Indonesia)
Wilson Muratha (Kenya)
Yuni Bening (Indonesia)
Zara Epe (Australia)



MY CRACKLING IDEA

ROLLING CALLOUT!

We want to know what you haven't read about that needs discussing.

Help us expand our understanding of the creative world and enlightens with a subject that needs exploring, an artist that needs to be more visible, a social/political/environmental concept that needs to be heard louder, or just cool people doing cool stuff.

We believe each issue is an opportunity to create something unique that is actually relevant for you guys - so hop to it!

mgz@microgalleries.org

[CLICK HERE TO SUBMIT!](#)