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## Pera + Flora + Fauna

### The Story of Indigenusness and the Ownership of History

Collateral Event of the 59th International Art Exhibition – La Biennale di Venezia  
23 April -27 November 2022, Archivi della Misericordia, Venice, Italy



Projek Rabak. *Hik Bersamak - Indigenous Pop.* Video Still 2022.

10 March 2022, Kuala Lumpur – People of Remarkable Talents (PORT), an arts and culture agency under the Perak State Government, with support from the Ministry of Tourism, Arts and Culture, and the National Art Gallery Malaysia, announces its commission of the exhibition Pera + Flora + Fauna, as an official Collateral Event at the 59th International Art Exhibition – La Biennale di Venezia. PORT is honoured to present at this prestigious international art event, the artists and artworks that have been inspired by the rich histories and context of the state of Perak, Malaysia.

Pera + Flora + Fauna engages with the discourse around how indigenusness and nature are affected by mainstream cultural attitudes of industrialised nations, the very nations contributing to existing environmental problems. This leads us to question, can aesthetic thinking support the conservation and restoration of nature or indigenous rights and ways of life? Can indigenous populations across the globe challenge the mainstream documented (art) history written by the non-indigenous? Can indigenous populations achieve the liberty to collectively claim “their own history and narratives”, antagonising the dominant discourse? Pera + Flora + Fauna intends to address these questions drawing on different perspectives of man, nature, and their interrelation.

Pera + Flora + Fauna will take place at Archivi della Misericordia in Cannaregio, Venice; commissioned by Nur Hanim Mohamed Khairuddin, General Manager of PORT, and curated by appointed lead curators Amir Zainorin and Khaled Ramadan, and associate curators Annie Jael Kwan and Camilla Boemio.

The exhibition features Malaysian artists and collectives, and an Italian artist, from multiple disciplines ranging across performance, film, sound, sculpture, and new media. The artists are Azizan Paiman (MY), Kamal Sabran (MY), Kapallorek Artspace (MY), Kim Ng (MY), Projek Rabak (MY), Saiful Razman (MY) and Stefano Cagol (ITA), with the contribution and participation of the people of the Semai tribe from Kampung Ras, Sungkai, Perak.



Kim Ng. *The Silent Sound of Seeds*. 2022..

The curatorial team intersects across diverse expertise and contexts of practice. Amir Zainorin is a Denmark-based Malaysian artist, curator, and co-founder of interdisciplinary artist association Jambatan, while Lebanese born Khaled Ramadan is a curator, art historian, filmmaker and cultural writer who works in Asia, Europe, and the Middle East. Ramadan curated Maldives Pavilion at the 55th International Art Exhibition - La Biennale di Venezia and co-curated Manifesta 8, Murcia, Spain.

The team includes associate curators Annie Jael Kwan and Camilla Boemio; Boemio has published extensively on issues of indigeneity in relation to the climate crisis, and her curatorial research is focused on the ethics of ecology, while Kwan is an independent curator and researcher whose work at Asia-Art-Activism and Asia Forum refocuses on "Asia/s" as a lens for alternative histories and perspectives when exploring critical contemporary themes and practices. The team is advised by Alfredo Cramerotti, the president of IKT and the director of MOSTYN, Wales.



Stefano Cagol. *Far Before and After Us*. 2022.

"We invited seven artists, art collectives and contributors to Pera + Flora + Fauna with the intention to present a different narrative and an aesthetic experience that builds upon research, knowledge, and participation," said lead curators Zainorin and Ramadan. "This project is meant to re-imagine nature and Indigenoussness in relation to ethics and aesthetics, questioning who owns nature and who owns Indigenous history."

YB Dato' Nolee Ashilin Dato' Mohamed Radzi, the State of Perak's Chairman for Housing, Local Government and Tourism committee and member of the board of directors of PORT, further added, "The State of Perak is dense with its diverse flora, fauna, historical and cultural assets. Their essences are explored and aesthetically presented through this fascinating exhibition. The fact that this project is accepted by the main curator of the biennale has made us very proud."

In conjunction with the exhibition, the discourse expands through a forum where invited panelists Alfredo Cramerotti, Dorian Batycka, Henry Meyric Hughes, and Jo-Lene Ong, along with the curators and artists, will share their observations and interpretations around the concept of Ownership of Nature and History; attempting to contextualise the notion of the natural and the historic and why it cannot be independent of the intellectual, artistic, emotional, and technological resources available to us in the industrialised world. In addition, there will be three on-site performances by the artists; one which explores sound and body movement to heal the internal psychic and spiritual body based on Malay traditional healing rituals; the others inviting the audience to engage with the ongoing contest between capitalist-driven narratives of extractivism towards land and indigenous peoples, and the agency and creative resilience of indigenous communities in sharing their histories and holistic principles of coexistence with nature.



Kamal Sabran. *SSegar Angin: The Healing Art Project*. Performance 2022

“It is our hope that Pera + Flora + Fauna will become a gentle reminder for both artists and the audience to ponder and contemplate the importance of sustaining a sense of respect among living beings,” Nur Hanim emphasised.

Director General of National Art Gallery Malaysia Mr. Amerrudin Ahmed states, “The effort made by PORT and their appointed curatorial team to present our own contemporary works at this world class event is a huge achievement for the Malaysian visual art world. On behalf of the Ministry of Tourism, Arts and Culture, the National Art Gallery is very glad to be able to support this great initiative.”



Projek Rabak. *Hik Bersamak - Indigenous Pop*. Video Still 2022.

Several other agencies and private entities have lent their support to the realization of this project. PORT, the organiser, wishes to thank Art Events, Chamber of Public Secrets, George Town Festival 2022, Jambatan, Laterna Magica Museum, MUSE Science Museum of Trento, Autonomous Province of Trento, RogueArt, Tourism Malaysia, Tourism Perak, Universiti Sains Malaysia, Universiti Teknologi MARA, and UOB Malaysia.



Saiful Razman. *Rumah Saya & Angkasa*. Film Still 2022.

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Pera + Flora + Fauna exhibition will open to the public  
from 23 April to 27 November 2022

\*20, 21 & 22 April 2022:  
programs for accredited press and/or guests with invitation



Venue: Archivi della Misericordia

## **Venue**

Archivi della Misericordia  
Campo de l'Abazia  
3549 Cannaregio  
Venezia

## **Openings**

21st April, 5:30 PM:  
Curators' talk and press opening

22nd April, 7:00 PM:  
Dignitaries and official inauguration

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## **Forum**

Pera + Flora + Fauna:  
The Ownership of Indigenusness and the Social Construction of Nature  
\*22nd April 2022, 5:30 PM

### Panelists:

Alfredo Cramerotti, Director of MOSTYN Wales  
Annie Jael Kwan and Camilla Boemio, Curators  
Henry Meyric Hughes, Honoree President AICA  
Jo-Lene Ong, Curator  
Moderator: Art writer and curator Dorian Batycka

## **Performances**

\*21st April 2022, 3:30 PM - 4:10 PM

### **"The Human Status, Indigenous Me-We"**

Special life event by and with Amir Zainorin, David Lopez, Dorian Batycka, Kapallorek, Khaled Ramadan, Ronnie Bahari, Stefano Cagol, and Yahya Torek

\*21st & 22nd April 2022, 4:20 PM

### **"Ssegar Angin: The Healing Art Project"**

by Kamal Sabran in collaboration with Aida Redza

23rd April 2022, 4:20 PM

### **"We the Mengkuang"** by Projek Rabak

## **Satellite Events**

During the course of the exhibition, Pera + Flora + Fauna offers a series of satellite events with collaborators across Asia, Europe, and the UK.

For more information on Pera + Flora + Fauna visit <https://portperakvenice.com>

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