



NEW GODS

OLD GODS

I Made "Bayak" Muliana  
March 25-April 28, 2019

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# **New Gods | Old Gods**

## **March 25-April 28, 2019**

Athens Institute for Contemporary Art

Featuring the work of

# **I Made “Bayak” Muliana**

Curated by Peter Brosius and Alden DiCamillo  
Research Support by Sarah Hitchner





## The Artist I Made “Bayak” Muliana, Bali, and Athens, Georgia: An Anthropologist’s Observations

The Indonesian island of Bali is notable for its distinctive brand of Hinduism and its visually exuberant elaboration of ritual and the arts. There is also a long legacy of western portrayals of Bali as an exotic Paradise, and this continues to be a foundation of touristic portrayals of the island. In recent decades, this exoticized Western portrayal of Bali has led to an explosion of development as surfers, golfers, yoga practitioners, retirees, and others have descended on the island to claim their piece of Balinese “paradise.” This has created a great deal of anxiety among Balinese, who fear that the purity of what they describe as the “Island of the Gods” (*Pulau Dewata*) is being defiled by runaway development. These anxieties were confirmed for them with the 2002 Kuta bombings in which over 200 people—Balinese and foreigners alike—were killed.

Many Balinese have come to depend on tourism, and it is today the greatest contributor to the local economy. At the same time, Balinese are expressing profound anxiety about their future on an island increasingly dominated by foreign investment in land. Besides a rising trend in dispossession, tourism and real estate development have produced a crisis in plastic waste, pollution, and water shortages caused by the fragmentation of centuries-old irrigation systems and the diversion of water to resorts and private villas.

In recent years this has led to a diffuse but growing “Bali Not For Sale” movement, and a broader movement focused on stopping the planned “reclamation” of Benoa Bay for mass tourism development. These movements are being led by alliances between traditional Balinese Hindu religious leaders, environmental organizations, and a collective of artists and punk/grunge/metal bands. This movement is most visible in frequent demonstrations and in the massive banners that are erected in towns all over Bali—banners that invoke the wrath of innumerable Hindu Gods and local deities/demons defending Bali from defilement.

This is the context in which to understand the work of Balinese artist I Made “Bayak” Muliana. As an anthropologist whose work over many decades has focused on issues of indigenous dispossession in Southeast Asia, and who has engaged with resistance to dispossession through the lens of representation and the politics of translation, I was immediately struck by the visual force of Bayak’s work. Bali has been the subject of ethnographic and historical research by scholars from the Global North for decades, and these scholars have addressed topics ranging from Balinese religion and culture to the 1965 genocide, tourism and mass development. Numerous Indonesian scholars have also addressed these topics, often providing important correctives to Western scholarship.

What immediately struck me on my first encounter with Bayak’s work was the way he made visual connections between these fields of concern in new and powerful ways. Against the linearity of academic writing about Bali, Bayak’s work captures the complex conjunctions of colonial history, exoticization, legacies of violence, the commodification of culture, and the appropriation of Balinese spirituality like lightning in a bottle.

The Bali that Bayak shows us is one in which mass killing becomes the foundation for mass tourism, where the desire of foreign investors to “live the dream” has come to overshadow the silences of those who died in the most nightmarish ways in the 1965 genocide. It is a Bali in which the “Eat, Pray, Love” economy of touristic enchantment overlays (often literally) sites of haunting.

Against official Suharto-era New Order policies of erasure and the demonization of political dissent that continue up to the present, a legacy of anthropological representation that perpetuates images of a culture obsessed with ceremonial formalism, and transformations of landscape that accompany runaway hyper-development, Bayak’s work presents a vision of Bali in which the Balinese are talking back in multiple registers—music, art, ritual, graffiti, writing, performance, and protest. It is a Bali in which the gods are political actors. Here cosmology is not an instrument of supine obedience, but a weapon through which the divine and the demonic combine forces in alliance with punks to challenge the pathologies of development, defilement, consumption, and waste.

Bayak’s work is often hard to look at, and for those not familiar with Bali it is work that one must learn how to read. This catalog is an attempt to provide a guide through his work. For me this exhibition, and the public events we have planned to accompany it, also represent an effort to develop a new language of collaboration that brings together historical context, ethnographic understanding, and the unique ability of a Balinese artist to express truths that have been unsaid or may be unsayable. I have never before collaborated with an artist, and for me this collaboration is uncharted ground, presenting a steep learning curve that continues to unfold. It reminds me forcefully that the “politics of translation” is not a mere academic abstraction, but rather a constant and inescapable effort to understand and communicate the vision of an artist whose work is dedicated to talking back to a history of silences and erasure.

What we learn from Bayak, and what we gain from being attentive to the truths he is expressing, is not simply some orientalist encounter about a place and a context far removed from our own. The erasures that result from the displacement of the Balinese in the process of hyper-development have parallels in the process of the erasure of Muskogee Creek presence in the lands we now occupy in Athens, Georgia. One of the most ardent enthusiasts for the 1965 Indonesian genocide was a U.S. Secretary of State whose legacy is celebrated in the Dean Rusk International Law Center at UGA. In 2015 and 2016, I witnessed the excavation of human remains outside the window of my office in Baldwin Hall, and in the time since, the university community has become embroiled in a debate about the silencing and erasure of our history of slavery. The truths that Bayak’s work expresses are timeless and universal in their salience and significance, and our community is enriched by his willingness to share this work with us.

—Dr. Peter Brosius, Co-Curator

### About the Artist I Made “Bayak” Muliana (Made Bayak)

Made Bayak was born in 1980 in Tampaksiring, Gianyar Regency, Bali, Indonesia. He completed his studies at the Indonesian Institute of the Arts Denpasar in Denpasar, Bali, Indonesia in 2006. His work addresses the human devastation of the Indonesian genocide of 1965-66 and the environmental devastation of the Balinese island's once-pristine environment caused by tourism-driven development and the lack of local awareness of best ecological practices. His methods include activism and social organization, teaching workshops, painting, drawing, sculptural objects, installations, performance art, and music performed with his heavy metal rock band Geekssmile.



*Plasticology* is an ongoing project in which he uses waste plastic to make art objects, paintings, and performances, as well as teaching *Plasticology* workshops to children and communities. In 2014, he was buried up to his neck by an excavator/backhoe during his performance at the Padang Galak Beach Tolak Reklamasi Art Event held to protest the Balinese government's plan to develop the Benoa Bay to the benefit of outside commercial interests (Reklamasi Benoa). The populist movement Tolak Reklamasi calls for Bali to reject (tolak) this “reclamation” of the Benoa Bay. Nominated as a finalist in Singapore's prestigious 2013 Sovereign Art Prize, Made Bayak continues to conduct his activist practice and to exhibit his works in Bali and, most recently, in Germany and Poland.

### Made Bayak on His Practice and Philosophy

I attribute my talent to my mother's family. My maternal grandfather and great-grandfather are lontar (ancient Balinese manuscript) readers and writers. They made many *Rajah* (mystical Balinese drawings). When I was younger, I enjoyed watching my grandfather create *Rerajahan* (magical) drawings and now they are a key influence for my current artistic practice.

The idea is that my art works are from a subculture theme but in a wide point of view. I am interested in a non-mainstream way of thinking, especially regarding my social and cultural background as a Balinese person. It is from this wide frame of reference that I create my art through paintings, installations, performance art, object art, and underground music.

I believe that in this world there's no deadline except Death itself. Life is short; let's try the best we can do with the “weapon” that we have. Via my art and music, I can connect with people from different backgrounds and express to them what I believe is essential. Let us all be a part of this phenomenon of social change that is occurring—as we are. If you are a writer, do it with the power of your words; if you are a musician, do it with your songs and your music. As an artist, you can do it by the messages within your work. For me, as a visual artist and a musician, I will be socially active in these positive ways.

## **An Ethnographer's Dilemma: Brosius, DiCamillo, and Hitchner**

This catalog is a fabric of story-telling, ethnography, activism, studio visits, interviews, punk concerts, memories, family legacies, grief, and hope: each part is drawing toward and stemming out from the visual work of Balinese artist I Made "Bayak" Muliana.

Within and beyond the discipline of anthropology, collaboration and decolonizing have become buzzwords, but they emerge from recognition that our legacies of representation are inseparable from legacies of violence. We belatedly recognize the need to seek collaboration across cultures and histories and across disciplines. We seek communal friction that results in difficult conversations about systems of inequality. We acknowledge that radical (re)archiving and imaginative history-making from within communities on the peripheries of history are anthropological ventures that work to deconstruct hierarchies dependent on othering. This demands collaborations across communities, rather than working over and about communities. As many contemporary anthropologists have come to recognize, there is a need to stop seeking out that which is "Other," superseded by the need to enter into productive entanglements: intersectional, interdisciplinary, imaginative weavings of history, activism, and hope.

Bali is a place famously saturated with a long history of ethnographic representations. This legacy of representation has worked for and against exoticism, orientalism, genocide, and the development of mass tourism. Anthropological work has both instigated and attempted to alleviate social domestication resulting from neocolonial systems of violence. Some ethnographies have been the watchman for silences around everything from the 1965 genocide (that led to the founding of the New Order) to the vast cultural shifts between 1930s Ubud and 2000s Ubud that forced Balinese culture into a whitened version of itself, pushing it under an oppressive globalized gaze. This kind of ethnography has perpetuated and stood to the side of legacies of violence, both explicit and implicit. Other ethnographies have exposed painful truths that governments and individuals have worked hard to hide from the world.

When we met I Made "Bayak" Muliana, he presented us with a new way of seeing Bali and the systems that constructed our own imaginings of that space. We found it necessary to shift the way ethnography and anthropology positions itself within collaboration. Bayak's ability to create a body of sensorial knowledge with everything from Balinese painting motifs to influences like "Rage Against the Machine," Georgia 'O Keefe, and Balinese Cosmology, has revealed truth-to-power approaches to creating visibility for forbidden topics and hidden histories. We recognized that the conversations generated by Bayak's work were more than just essentialized versions of Balinese thought. They were resilient and imaginative expressions of archives that were erased, of life lost and lived. We recognized that these conversations could help the University of Georgia as it confronts its own history of enslavement and marginalization as we enter an era of storytelling where the (un)historied is a point of debate and where the (re)imagination of these histories from communities on the periphery is pivotal. This is the place where these stories merge and where we, as storytellers, find new ways to seek and express truths. It's a messy place, where some pieces don't fit, where some paths dead end, and where painful facts cannot be avoided. We wade into this territory knowing that, as the poet Rita Dove has written, "beyond this point lie monsters."





## Excavation, ForBali, and Tolak Reklamasi

Since 2014 the ForBali movement has galvanized activists and youth organizations throughout Bali to oppose the filling in of Benoa Bay in South Bali for the construction of a massive 800-hectare tourism complex. In recent years, along nearly every major road in Bali, community groups have erected massive banners declaring “Tolak Reklamasi” (Reject Reclamation). Using the excavator as the universal symbol of reclamation, these banners feature images of gods, demons, or fists clenched in righteous anger pulling the excavator down into the sea. At the same time, frequent protests featured tens of thousands of people occupying public spaces or blocking roads, all wearing pakaian adat (temple clothes). Taken together, the message conveyed is that those joining the ForBali movement are acting in solidarity with the Gods.

In 2015, the ForBali movement organized one of the signature events in the history of the movement: the Nawa Sanga Bali Tolak Reklamasi Art Event. It was a day of music, art, and theatrical performances. One of the highlights was Bayak’s performance piece, in which he allowed himself to be covered with dirt. As he stood in a position of meditative prayer, an excavator scooped up buckets of soil and dropped them one at a time over his head and body until he was buried up to his neck—an embodiment of how he experiences the intersection of mass tourism development with Balinese life. After being buried, his son and other children dug him out, a part of the piece that honored the role of younger generations in challenging the violence of reclamation.

— A.D.

## Four Guides

These four pieces are guides to reading and understanding Bayak's use of Balinese cosmology and visual media to navigate and embody implicit violences. These lead into his pieces about explicit violence within the 1965-66 Indonesian genocide, creating a complex and dynamic body of work that speaks across generational and cultural divides.

### I. *My Exquisite Body*

Mirroring the Surrealist game *exquisite corpse*, this painting was made one panel at a time in a semi-stream-of-consciousness method. As we know about Surrealist work now, stream of consciousness is never unguided. It draws out the innate desires or thought patterns of the artist. What appeared for Made Bayak was a self-portrait in the style of *Rerajahan* drawing, a type of holy or magical drawing in Bali that is used for healing or protection from the forces of nature, the chaotic energies of demonic presence, or the threat of human avarice. Bayak, in his desire for healing for Balinese land and communities, created a powerful cosmological portrait based on this kind of drawing.

Two dragons seem to peel away from the face of this figure. They represent the Balinese belief that you are born with spiritual siblings, unseen but present. Moving down the body, the hand holding the lotus flower is in the *mudra* position, poised for meditation and prayer. This position symbolizes *Saraswati*, the goddess of knowledge. This knowledge is mirrored in the different parts of the body, such as the hand, the elbow, and the foot that have eyes drawn on them. These are different (eye) sights within the body, described often in Balinese Hinduism. Between the figure's legs is a structure that represents the balance between male and female principles, indicating that neither should be greater or less than the other, and neither should be sought as a binary physical expression. This structure is both yonic/floral and phallic. It is a symbol of fertility or *kesuburan*. The specific fertility depicted here reaches past mere reproduction into non-binary gender and cultural expressions. The chakras drawn along the body mediate the flesh of the body with the energy of the world and the energy of other creatures. They lead down to the skulls that the figure balances on—the line between life and death is thin, and we are always between the two.

The entire figure is derived from Balinese Hindu religious principles, calling for entanglement and balance with the earth. However, this figure is surrounded by plastic, acknowledging that this religion is embedded within a society that has been forced into an economic system that depends on tourist practices that produce massive amounts of waste and mindlessly consume property, all while teaching tourists about mindfulness practices like yoga. He places this body as a mediator between Balinese beliefs, the threat of mass tourism, and the strength of his communities. — A.D.

*My Exquisite Body*  
2015  
Acrylic and Plastic Waste on Canvas  
150 x 50 cm



## II. *Politik Dasamuka*

*Dasamuka* is another name for *Rawana*, the king of the demons in the ancient Hindu *Ramayana* epic, which is revered in Bali. While this character is often used as a representation for political corruption, Bayak uses *Dasamuka* to construct a creature that evokes the space in between the politician and the political. Within the story of the *Ramayana*, this character attempts to steal Rama's wife Sita, and the excessive number of eyes for each of the character's heads and the crown atop each one is symbolic of greed and an inability to listen. The creature's hands, however, are the artist's handprints and the artist's footprint is the bottom of Rawana's raised foot; the human is always entangled in this greed. On each hand are flags or symbols of different political parties, delineating that all parties are complicit in this demonic dance.

In the god's stomach is an image of the archipelago of Indonesia covered by a barcode; the islands have been sold in return for the title "nation." During interviews, Bayak mentioned that many people believe the island of Java, which houses the capital city of Indonesia, Jakarta, is seen as quintessential Indonesian culture. However, there is a rallying cry from the other islands, including Bali, that each island must retain its cultural autonomy and must be heard as an individual identity. This political existence within a globalized world is infinitely complex. Bayak takes this complexity and inserts Hindu mythology and Balinese cosmology, creating a visual mediator between the politician and the political that exists within everyday life for Balinese individuals and communities.

Bayak's painting style begins to reveal itself in this work. The bottom of the painting is laden with drips, a technique that accentuates the painterly nature of his work and the physical weight of the media. The blue and red hues shiver next to each other; the darker values of the red sink back to create a slight concave space in the painting. The god emerges. — A.D.



*Politik Dasamuka*  
2014  
acrylic paint, collage on canvas  
150x100 cm



### III. *Reminder of NIRgender*

This work continues Bayak's contemporary mythology through a collaboration with his son, Damar. The painting became about gender and the reminder that the meanings of our bodies are fluid and that there is energy in everybody.

This painting centers on the image of Rangda, sometimes referred to as the Balinese Queen of the Witches, the ultimate expression of evil. The figure of Rangda looms large in Balinese ritual life, the ever-vengeful personification of devouring malevolence who does battle with the benevolent protector Barong in temple rituals. In this painting Rangda and her disciples—Rarung, Maheswadana, Jaran Guyang, and Raksirsa—dance wildly within an energetically blue field. These bodies are adorned with black and white *poleng* (holy fabric) whose colors symbolize the balance between good and evil. Rangda holds the god Acintya, the highest expression of god, whose embodiment has no gender.

Originally, Rangda and similar gods are without gender; they are what they are, their depictions slipping in between anthropomorphic form and wild creature. Birds in the back of the painting reference a part of the narrative that speaks to creatures having souls. Raksirsa is associated with the creature Rarung, a master of multiple trades including medicine. Other gods depicted are known for specific paths of wisdom or knowledge.

Throughout Bali's history of being a subject of anthropology and tourism development, gender roles have been rigorously formed into binaries. From the construction of *Dharma Wanita* (Women's Duty) to counter the *Gerwani* movement (Wieringa, 2003) to the development of the word *Wanita* ("she who boldly allows herself to be rearranged"), gender has been given a clear path. This gender binary structures itself like prison bars—there is no free movement within. Works like "Reminder of NIRgender" become declarations of a non-binary resilience, one that builds from that which is the *felt-but-not-seen*. Here, gender is cosmological. — A.D.





*Reminder of NIRgender*  
Damar Langit and Made Bayak  
2018  
Acrylic on canvas  
150 x 300 cm

#### **IV. *Sekala Niskala Bali Tolak Reklamasi***

This work is also a family collaboration about the Tolak Reklamasi movement. Bayak's son Damar and his cousin created fish and other marine life weeping in response to the potential loss of Benoa Bay. They created birds and other animal life within the painting as Bayak created the image of *Wisnu Murti* (Vishnu in his angry aspect, symbolized by multi-headedness), perched atop winding *nagas* (dragons) that hold a Tolak Reklamasi banner. Along the naga's slithering bodies are the words from the Balinese *Kama Loa*, or the six basic characteristics of humans: *Kama* (desire), *Lobba* (greed), *Krodha* (anger), *Moha* (stupidity), *Mada* (drunkenness) and *Matsarya* (jealousy). Adorning the horizon line are silhouettes of Balinese temples. Foregrounded are images of Rangda and other gods, wildly gesturing.

The title of the painting—*Sekala Niskala* (the seen and unseen realms)—refers to both the gods in the painting and the spiritual practices used within the Tolak Reklamasi movement before and during protests. Pieces like these, and movements like Tolak Reklamasi, advocate for younger and upcoming generations, who will bear the weight of current land degradation—the unseen destructive environmental practices will be seen eventually. Bayak hopes to give Damar and his peers tools to combat this degradation—the power of the gods and the knowledge that we have to do better. — *A.D.*

*Sekala Niskala Bali Tolak Reklamasi (Detail)*

2018

Acrylic on canvas







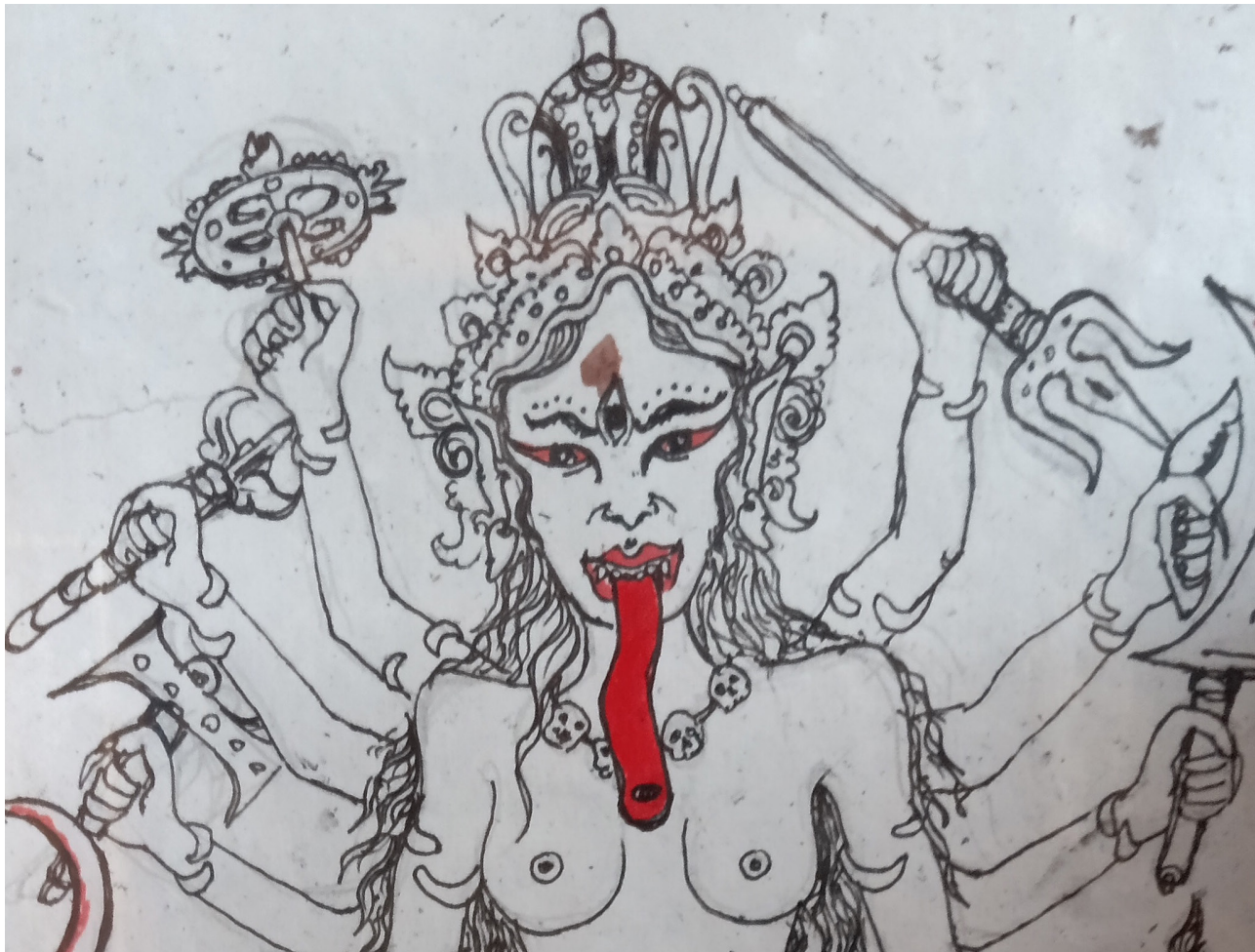
### ***Kedi: The Knowledge Symbols***

What is male and what is female? What are these distinctions we've made? This piece is a depiction of the witch god Rangda, who, while now referred to in English writing as "she/her" and referenced in Indonesia as a woman, was originally written about in gender neutral terms. This character, appearing throughout Bayak's body of work, is unapologetically wild, capturing a multitude of genders. Bayak's depiction of Rangda reorients how we think of bodies: Rangda has both breasts and a phallus. Their belly curves outward, hair stands on end, fangs and claws are unabashedly displayed. As gender is explored in the context of witch gods and creaturely forms, we can find new visions for the boundaries of the body and male/female dichotomy, deconstructing strict gender and body definitions. — A.D.



*Kedi: The Knowledge Symbols (Detail)*  
2016 Drawing, pen on paper

*Durga Bhirawa (Detail)*  
2016 Drawing, pen on paper



***Durga Bhirawa***

Bayak was influenced by a statue of Siwa Bhirawa at the National Museum of Ethnology Leiden, Netherlands. Siwa Bhirawa is a Javanese Hindu goddess that depicts the power of female-personing characteristics. Durga Bhirawa, the subject of this painting, is a similar deity. Durga is the partner for Siwa (Shiva)—a balancing marriage. Bayak wanted to pay tribute to the power of Durga to celebrate his wife. Bayak adorned this figure of Durga with ferocious implements, including a severed head. The body of the figure is unapologetic, uncovered, and growling. As characteristics like this are celebrated, not feared, within Bayak's work we can find kinship built on strength and protection. — A.D.

## Six Prison Songs

Similar to the double obscuring of indigenous communities and communities of color within the United States, both official and commercial representations in Bali deny and are built over histories of genocide. Acknowledging atrocities begins with re-envisioning the history of violence using symbols, media, and composition. These sensory materials re-orient and combine new memory with old history, creating new visual language for cultural identity.

This series of images was created by Bayak as a contribution to a compilation of songs documented by the *Taman 65* community, a group of activists whose families suffered numerous losses in the 1965 genocide and who have dedicated themselves to ensuring that the history of that period is not lost due to silence. Over time, they sought out former political prisoners who spoke forthrightly about the experience of imprisonment, both in the immediate aftermath of the 1965 genocide and in the years thereafter. Their experiences are embodied in vivid descriptions of their daily routines and in the things that they feared, but most notably in the songs that express longing for lost and absent loved ones as well as defiance against oppression. Some of the sites they describe are still hidden in plain sight today, converted from sites of human suffering to shops, houses, and office buildings.

In this series, we see an evocative use of silhouette work. The compositions create visual narratives built on sharp positive and negative spaces that are reserved in their withholding of the grotesque, yet still maintain the unmistakable clarity of their violent history. The minimal handling of the media allows the viewer to layer meanings. Bayak invites us to understand this history through his process of piecing together shadows and fragments of memory shared by those who were held against their will, but who managed to maintain lives of dignity in conditions of unspeakable brutality. — *A.D.*





*Prison Size*  
 2015  
 Acrylic on Paper  
 30 x 40 cm

### **I. *Prison Size***

In this image we are looking in on a schematic of history not revealed to Indonesian individuals in the prison. A prison guard tower stands watch over a small schematic of a jail cell in Pekambangan Prison. Numbers represent pain when one realizes that fourteen individuals were kept in each cell—too many for physical survival. Barbed wire stretches across the middle of the picture plane, jutting harshly to the edge, a sorrowful warning. — A.D.



*Blok D*  
2015  
Acrylic on Paper

## II. *Blok D*

Blok D was a larger cell in Pekambingin prison. Usually reserved for political prisoners, they would stay there for some time and then be moved to a different cell. Here, we see the barcode being used in conjunction with the number 1965 and the number 12 for the number of prisoners that were placed in the cell at one time. — A.D.





*Shadow Trapped Behind Bars*  
2015  
Acrylic on Paper  
30 x 40 cm

### **III. *Shadow Trapped Behind Bars***

Prisoners would entertain themselves while in jail with shadow-hand puppets that mirrored the Balinese *Wayang Kulit* (shadow puppets) productions that have been used up to the present day for entertainment and oral exchange of Balinese Hindu mythology. The bars over this scene mirror the barcode symbols that Bayak uses in other works: the industrial eradication of a culture and its history. — A.D.



*The Sound of the Keys*  
2015  
Acrylic on Paper  
30 x 40 cm

#### **IV. *The Sound of the Keys***

A fist juts into the negative space surrounded on three sides by silhouettes of heads side-by-side. The blocky shoulders meld together to become both prison wall and human figure. The viewer could be looking up into a hell-scape or down into an abyss—one where metal and shelter means waiting for death. *The Sound of the Keys* references the terror a prisoner might feel when hearing the approach of the guard. — A.D.





*Key Hole*  
2015  
Acrylic on Paper  
30 x 40 cm

#### ***V. Key Hole***

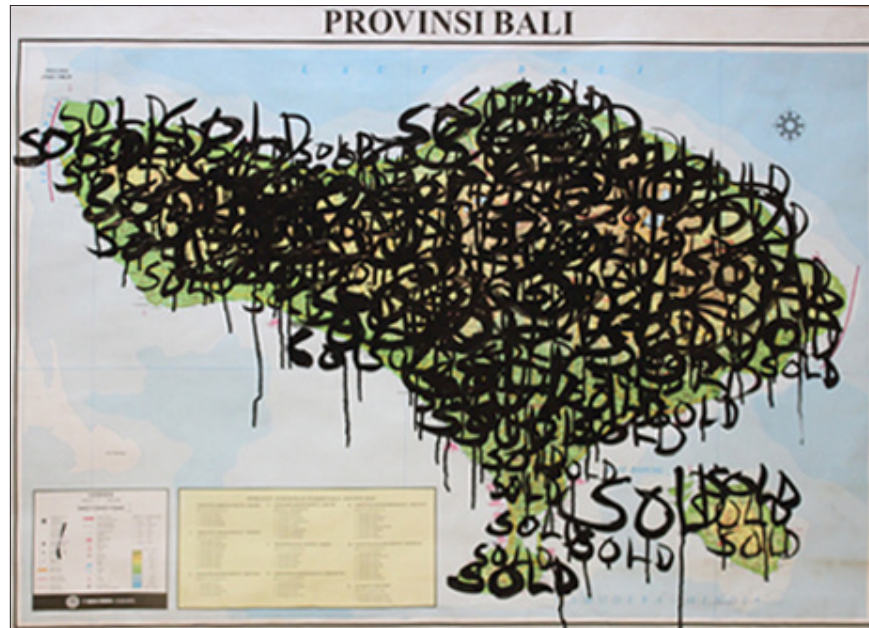
In *Key Hole*, we become a prisoner looking out from within a prison cell, unable to help, unable to move. Most prisoners had no strong political affiliations and were accused falsely of communist and leftist ties. Prisons filled quickly, people were slaughtered quickly, and new memories of violence and loss accumulated. — A.D.



*The Prison*  
2015  
Acrylic on Paper  
30 x 40 cm

## VI. *The Prison*

Looming over empty-faced human figures is a guard tower with haunting windows. A red line of blood and death functions as a compositional stop that brings gravity to the bottom of the picture plane. The faces do not have features because that's how they were presented within the government. The space in between the building and the figures feels empty. There is no color here and no filling with pattern or line. — A.D.



*The Map of Bali is Sold*  
Artifact from performance

**Mantan Tameng (*Former Tameng*)**  
**Mantan Gerwani (*Former Gerwani*)**

These portraits feel normal. They could be anyone. In fact, they're generic faces, used as symbolic portraits of a 1965-66 killer and a member of the leftist Women's movement called the Gerwani (short for *Gerakan Wanita*) that pioneered progressive gender roles during the postcolonial era. During the 1965 genocide, leftists, in general, but especially women who challenged conventional gender roles, were demonized and were marked for extermination. It was a time of "kill or be killed," during which any hint of sympathy for the condemned could mark you for killing. If you were asked to slaughter, and you refused, you would be slaughtered. New methods of killing were invented, and mythologies of horror developed between villages.

These portraits pair in complex ways. The Tameng (literally "shields") were men who traditionally played a role as village guardians, but during the 1965 genocide, the notion of guardian was extended to extermination of community members marked for their political beliefs. The portrait of the killer wears an *udeng*, a head covering worn by men when they enter a temple or participate in a holy ceremony. Victims in fear of their lives commonly took refuge in temples, and many of the killers committed acts of murder nearby after pulling them from their refuges. After the genocide many Tameng became priests to find forgiveness for their actions—actions that they didn't feel they had a choice in. The portrait of the Gerwani individual is older, more tired. There was immense loss during that time, particularly for women. Not only did they lose family and safety, they became a symbol of something that could be easily destroyed. The Gerwani were rumored to have the communist symbol of the hammer and sickle tattooed on their inner thighs, and searching for these tattoos became a pretense for rape.

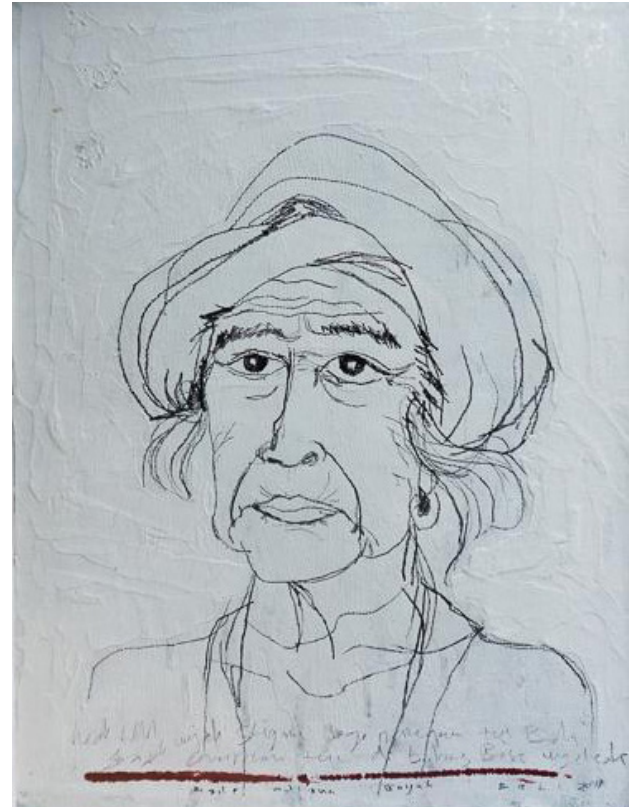
Bayak searched for new visual language to communicate both the silencing of these events and the resulting generational and gendered grief. He was influenced by Mondrian and Andy Warhol, artists whose work is often perceived as design-oriented, but who both developed evocative media qualities throughout their careers. In these portraits, Bayak piled white paint on top of white paint, allowing it to crack and drip. He drew the faces on top of this surface in the style of *rerajahan* magical painting.

— A.D.





*Mantan Tameng (Former Tameng)*  
 2017  
 Charcoal and acrylic on canvas  
 80 x 90 cm



*Mantan Gerwani (Former Gerwani)*  
 2017  
 Charcoal and acrylic on canvas  
 80 x 90 cm

### Djorma Sejarah Yang Hilang 1 (*Diorama of History Which is Lost 1*)

### Djorma Sejarah Yang Hilang 2 (*Diorama of History Which is Lost 2*)

These are difficult pieces. During the 1965 genocide, female bodies were slaughtered with methods used for cooking animals. Films featuring interviews and group discussions between killers, soldiers, and generals about the mutilation of women reveal a small fraction of the horror received by women during the 1965 genocides.

Bayak read the recent book *Suara Suara Perempuan Tragedi Enam Lima (Voices of Women of the 1965 Tragedy)* to deepen his understanding about what happened to women. Instead of grief as despair, he created grief as resilience. He spoke often during interviews of a grief that could not be named. It was not allowed to be spoken. Bayak gives this grief a visual name—a name that is every emotion evoked by these images.

Religious symbols from Balinese Hinduism surround the images of women being subjected to unspeakable atrocities. They serve as both a critique and a question. Balinese religion was often used as justification for atrocities, and Bayak has often asked what the role of the Balinese gods is in face of these atrocities. Who are these old gods? How do they become new gods? How do voices find new words, and how do we create new names? — A.D.



*Detail*  
2017  
Pen and acrylic on  
paper





*Industry, Hidden History and Legacy of the Island of the Gods II*  
2019  
Acrylic on canvas



## Senjakala Bali Dwipa (*Twilight for the Island of Bali*)

This piece, *Senjakala Bali Dwipa*, is perhaps the most complicated piece in this exhibition, and demonstrates Bayak's ability as an artist to tie disparate times together. He reaches both all the way back to the beginning of colonization within Bali and all the way forward to current neo-colonization and radical Balinese resilience.

The uppermost layer of this painting visually narrates the Dutch colonization of Bali. The sea is black acrylic paint, solid and compositionally heavy as it merges with the dark gray of the sky. The steamships are part of the Dutch line K.P.M. These were launched after the 1906 and 1908 *Puputan* or mass suicide events where the Royal families in Badung (1906) and Klungkung (1908) killed themselves in response to Dutch invasion. Feeling embarrassed that their colonization caused such horror, the Dutch began to explicitly romanticize Bali as a point of policy, advertising the land within Europe as an exotic paradise, free from violence. On the horizon of this layer is the excavator—a contemporary Balinese symbol for government corruption and anxiety surrounding the destruction of land to accelerate tourism.

In the second layer from the top, directly below the heavy, black sea, the phrase *Bali Taksu* is written in *Aksara*, Balinese script. The word *Taksu* originates from Balinese religion and philosophy and refers to an inner creative spirit that is a gift of the gods and that is experienced as the equivalent of when an artist or musician “nails it.” Art and artist alike have *Taksu*. In the painting, the text is covered with a barcode. The vertical stripes of the bar code act both as obscurant and also boundary between the layers above and below it. This obscuring and boundary-making begins to establish a visual hierarchy of emerging and receding elements, and an internal dialogue of contrasts and tensions within the piece.

The third layer from the top confronts the 1965 genocide, depicting methods of killing, victims, and killers. All of the stories Bayak has gathered swirl organically under the geometry of the barcode, order and sterility pressing sharply onto the mass of bodies and the pools of red paint. Undergirding this horrific scene is a traditional *Kamasan* painting border that symbolizes stone and earth. Intersecting the border are two *Naga* fountains, with blood pouring from their mouths—the blood spilling into the earth from the temples, from the holy places. During the 1965 genocide, bodies were thrown into the rivers that ran past holy temples and emptied into the sea.

The blood depicted in the third layer flows into the fourth and mingles with a ground of paint drips and unstable media. On either side, beneath the drips, Bayak has written two narratives in Indonesian: on the left, he writes about the national history that the painting depicts; on the right, he writes his own narrative of discovering that history. Red lines move throughout, in dialogue with the red blood of the history of the genocide and the red of the Balinese script.

In the center, disrupting the upper three layers of the painting, the image of Wisnu (Vishnu) Murti stands among the victims and perpetrators of genocide. The multi-headed depiction is a Balinese artistic convention for depicting divine anger. The figure's red mouths echo the pooling and dripping blood, as well as the red of the obscured text in the second and fourth layers of the image. — A.D.



*Senjakala Bali Dwipa (Twilight For the Island of Bali)*  
2014  
Pen and acrylic paint on canvas  
200 x 300 cm

## **(Re)imagining the Un-Historied: Thoughts of An Unconfined Artist and Ethnographer**

“Within the term ‘history’ lies a conceptual confinement—the presumption that the topics being written about remain consigned to the past. [We seek] to counter history’s containment and to foreground its continuing relevance in the present. Through the notion of ‘un-histories,’ conventional limits can be unsettled by prompting critical inquiries into how history functions: by re-organizing the composition of the past, by re-constructing methods of transmitting narratives, and by destabilizing the seeming linearity of events. Un-histories reimagine history as a practice for addressing the “unconcluded”—subjectivities and narratives previously considered spectral, disparaged, marginalized, erased, shamed, abashed, or localized.”  
—Opening statement, *Unhistories: Art and the Unconcluded*, The 2018 Contemporary Art, Design, and New Media Art Histories Graduate Student Conference at OCAD University

Since the beginning of this collaboration with I Made “Bayak” Muliana’s work, Dr. Peter Brosius and I have had many conversations with him in Bali, engaging in long interviews about the ways that his work presents a complicated history that has been destroyed and silenced. As a result, I have asked myself many questions: What do you do with histories of grief that flow from the ground? What should be done, when these histories are both unsayable and unseen? Within art and art history, what methods of seeing do we apply to these histories that have been silenced and are suddenly un-silenced? How can the method of un-silencing through visual, media-based work not only undo post-colonial structures, but also set up a structure of imaginative history-making and visual storytelling? How does the expression of non-archivable histories within visual art not only deconstruct colonial and post-colonial narratives that misrepresent, but also allow the agency of the Balinese people to create an imaginative history that encompasses how they have been misrepresented, who and what they say they are, and how they are anticipating the future?

I posit here that there are pivotal art movements that are currently shifting linear, cisgendered perceptions of history and culture toward non-binary, intersectional iterations of events, time, and identity (both individual and communal). These movements are forthcoming, not as radical alternatives to mainstream pressures of globalized regulations, but as powerful cultural signifiers that deconstruct hegemonic scaffoldings left over by colonialism and perpetuated by neo(liberal)colonialism. I Made “Bayak” Muliana’s work is a poignant segment of movements like these.

Having spoken with Bayak about the way that he was bringing out a hidden narrative within Bali, built from personal experience and extending outward toward cultural identity, I began dubbing visual, media-based (re)archiving as “imaginative history-making.” I used the word “imagine” not to express romanticized pondering of a preferred future, but as the powerful and physical manifestation of the internality of individuals and the communities in which they live when their past has been destroyed, altered, silenced, or hidden.

Within the United States, we see imaginative history-making in works by artists like Kara Walker, who presents viewers with silhouettes and other figurative work to speak about slave narratives, the history of race and race within history. Her large



silhouette installation pieces confront stereotypes of black bodies and bodies of color to shift our understanding of how images of the past affect our present understandings of bodies. However, these bodies are not passive; they are full of energy, redefining resilience over and above returning to the status quo. In a similar way, Bayak's work constructs new ways for language and form to shift our perceptions of what has happened, orienting us toward current manifestations of time and narrative that perceive complex futures with incredible intersecting histories.

In Indonesia, many artists are developing media-based work that stems from the center of their culture, subverting the neo-colonial gaze and redefining processes of history-making, material, and visual language through art making that engages histories that are unseen. Productions like the Papermoon Puppet Theater, which narrates the 1965 genocide events through the story of a young child, and the works of the street artist Slinat, which show exoticized images of Balinese women wearing gas masks, coincide with Bayak's work. Together they weave powerful narratives that capture multiple dimensions of history-making and actively dismantle hegemonic narratives.

In Bayak's *Senjakala Bali Dwipa*, we are able to understand how his work pushes against a history that usually pre-decides who counts and who doesn't count within its larger narratives. The visual history in *Senjakala Bali Dwipa* is narratively non-linear; it allows different sets of stories to coexist simultaneously by using compositional elements to visually and conceptually link them together. As edge meets edge and element confronts element, visual relationships guide our eyes across and into Bayak's painting, lending both spatial and emotional direction. Each boundary in the painting is a fissure in both the visual reality of the image and also the temporal and historical reality of Bali. This fissure is not something that disorients or negates, but rather re-orientates and adds. As each re-orientation is added to the picture plane in the form of layers, an oscillating, dynamic, and non-linear historical, political, and visual dialogue is formed.

When I spoke to Bayak during the summer of 2017, he described the work *Senjakala Bali Dwipa* as being like a diary—all of the histories connecting. The events of the present moment build upon the actions of the past. The death still haunts, and the pain still haunts. He described the history of Bali as being like a festering wound that had been closed over before it had been cleaned. Government propaganda acted like sutures compounding over time. Injustice, anxiety, and grief would persist until the wound was re-opened and the truth revealed. —Alden DiCamillo, Co-Curator



### **About the Curators**

Peter Brosius is Distinguished Research Professor of Anthropology at the University of Georgia. He received his Ph.D. from the University of Michigan. Much of his career has been devoted to research in island Southeast Asia, including the Philippines, Malaysia and Indonesia. He has worked with several groups of indigenous people, particularly Penan hunter-gatherers in the Malaysian state of Sarawak on the island of Borneo. His research has mostly focused on the political ecology of conservation, with a particular focus on the impact of environmental degradation on local communities and the multiple linkages that connect those communities to global institutions and processes. He is also the founding director of UGA's Center for Integrative Conservation Research ([www.cicr.uga.edu](http://www.cicr.uga.edu)), which promotes interdisciplinary research collaborations that foster integrative approaches that make space for multiple perspectives and ways of thinking about complex trade-offs in conservation and development.

Alden DiCamillo is an MFA student in the Lamar Dodd School of Art whose research stems from a queer artist lens that asks questions about (re)imagining the un-historied and how visual/sensory media practices fit with anthropology at the intersection of policy-making. Having garnered their BA in studio art and business management from Mount Vernon Nazarene University in Ohio in 2015, they have continuously pursued courses of study that will allow their studio practice to become increasingly cross-disciplinary. Personally, their work manifests in a multi-media studio practice that seeks to develop an understanding of (third)spaces that enter between and outside of binary notions of narrative, history, philosophy, and identity-building.

### **About the Researcher**

Sarah Hitchner is an Assistant Research Scientist at the Center for Integrative Conservation Research and an Adjunct Professor in the Department of Anthropology at the University of Georgia. She is a cultural anthropologist whose research interests include sacred sites and cultural landscapes of Southeast Asia, wood-based bioenergy in the southeastern United States, heirs' property and family land among African American landowners, and understanding long-distance hikes as a form of spiritual pilgrimage. She is currently the co-director of the Bali & Beyond Maymester Study Abroad Program at UGA and teaches an ethnographic writing course called "Writing Bali."

### **Research Project Assistants**

Madison Werner, Emily Turner, Emily Justice, and Maggie Wigton transcribed the many hours of interviews that Dr. Brosius and Alden DiCamillo conducted during November 2017 and July 2018. Special thanks to Madison Werner for organization of information prepared for this catalog and for her tireless support of this project.



## **Complete Schedule of Related Events**

Monday, March 25, 2019, 5:00–7:00 PM: Opening Reception for Exhibition at ATHICA

Wednesday, March 27, 2019:

- 3:00–5:00 PM: Roundtable: “Representations of Violence, Radical Storytelling, Art-based Activism, and Imaginative History-making,” at the Miller Learning Center, UGA.
- 7:00 PM: Made Bayak musical performance featuring the artist, Killick, and other local musicians, at ATHICA

Sunday, March 31, 2019, 4:00–6:00 PM: Made Bayak Artist Talk and Performance Art “Radical Resilience within Visual Art-making (Art as Activism)” at ATHICA

Tuesday, April 2, 2019, 7:00 PM: Musical Performance by Gamelan Chandra Natha, a Balinese Gamelan Ensemble from the UGA Hugh Hodgson School of Music, at ATHICA

Wednesday, April 3, 2019

- 2:00–3:00 PM, Traditional Balinese Painting Workshop with Made Bayak at the Lamar Dodd School of Art
- 5:00–7:00 PM, Documentary Film “The Look of Silence” at the Lamar Dodd School of Art

Thursday, April 4, 5:30–7:30 PM, Youth Workshop, Art with Recycled Materials/Plasticology with Made Bayak, in conjunction with Plastic Bodies: River Tribute by Abigail West, at the Lyndon House Arts Center.

Saturday, April 6, 9:00 AM – 5:00 PM, Eco-Art, Lake Herrick

Monday, April 8, 5:30 – 7:00 PM, Curator’s Talk: “Revealing Systems of Violence through Interdisciplinary Collaboration” by Peter Brosius, Sarah Hitchner, and Alden DiCamillo at ATHICA

## **Exhibition Credits**

Curators: Peter Brosius and Alden DiCamillo

Preparators: Jon Vogt, Ty Jones, Alden DiCamillo, Made Bayak, Peter Brosius, Lauren Fancher

Lighting: Jason Huffer

Graphic Design: Lauren Fancher

Catalog: Lauren Fancher, Alden DiCamillo, Peter Brosius, Sarah Hitchner, Ty Jones

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