

INDONESIAN  
DESIGN  
EMERGING

28 OCTOBER - 27 NOVEMBER 2016



PEACOCK GALLERY AND AUBURN ARTS STUDIO

# FROM THE PEACOCK GALLERY

PEACOCK GALLERY AND AUBURN ARTS STUDIO  
Cumberland Council  
PO Box 118  
Auburn NSW 1835

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FRONT COVER: Samples of design work and production by Black Boots, Spedagi, Tanam Untuk Kehidupan, Sapu and Magno Designs (Photos by Alexandra Crosby or courtesy of the designers)

BACK COVER: Samples of design work, production and workshops by Tanam Untuk Kehidupan, Black Boots, Sapu, Spedagi and Magno Designs (Photos by Alexandra Crosby or courtesy of the designers)

*Indonesian Design Emerging* exhibition compels us to consider the ongoing environmental concerns that impact globally. The project that the University of Technology Sydney, Faculty of Design, Architecture and Building has undertaken with communities and organisations in Indonesia provide the objects and artwork for this exhibition. Responding to environmental concerns about local Indonesian waterways and increasing waste dumps, has led to the creation of design projects that are inspirational, artistic, practical and entrepreneurial.

The Peacock Gallery and Auburn Arts Studio is situated within the Auburn Botanic Gardens precinct which has the Duck River as a boundary on one side. The area along the Duck River was formerly industrial sites and a rubbish tip, with remediation during the 1960s taking place and the creation of the Auburn Botanic Gardens from that

remediation. This exhibition reminds us of this history and encourages us to rethink our contribution to the safekeeping of the environment and ways to re-use, recycle and upcycle items that would otherwise end up as waste. The bamboo bicycles, sleek wooden radios and quirky jewellery take 'junk' to a new level and are truly impressive objects of art.

This exhibition includes National Recycling Week from 7-13 November 2016 and the gallery programs include opportunities for the local community to be inspired by the work of the Indonesian community to reduce waste, recycle and create beautiful design objects. The Peacock Gallery Makers Circle have already been inspired and their banners are also included in the exhibition.

Thank you to Alexandra Crosby from the University of Technology Sydney, the project team, Indonesian artists and communities that have contributed to the exhibition.

JENNY CHEESEMAN  
Arts Coordinator  
Cumberland Council

## FROM THE CURATOR



Map by Jessica Lea Dunn

This exhibition brings together work by five groups of environmentally focused Indonesian designers. Presented as an emerging design movement, it asks what happens when design is not conceived simply in terms of problems and solutions, but rather as a way to address shared global concerns with local production processes and materials. This expanded definition of design has shaped the ongoing relationship between the Design School at The University of Technology and the collectives represented here.

Many of these concerns will resonate strongly for Australian audiences, linking to sustainable design concepts in their own surroundings. For instance, the design of the Auburn Botanic Gardens which transformed a waste collection site and industrial area into 'Gardens of the World' makes the possibilities for rethinking waste as visible as the blossoms on the cherry trees. This transformation links directly to Sapu's

upcycled accessory collection, on display in Gallery 2. The pieces are so carefully designed that the discarded rubber inner tubes, otherwise destined for landfill, are forgotten in the charm of the bags and bracelets.

The banners on display in the main gallery, made for the 2016 Festival Mata Air in Salatiga, are also at home here at Peacock Gallery. Festival Mata Air is an initiative of Indonesian designers and activists to bring attention to Central Java's precious waterways. Like Auburn's Duck River, the waterways of Java support complex ecosystems. In both Auburn and Java, it is the work of artists such as those represented in Peacock Gallery's 2016 'Open Field' exhibition, and those who made the banners on display in 'Indonesian Design Emerging', that point out the responsibilities of humans everywhere to take care of waterways.

There are other connections between the sustainable design philosophies underpinning the work created by these Indonesian designers and the Auburn Botanic Gardens. The carefully assembled, unvarnished wood products in the Magno range, designed by internationally acclaimed Singgih Kartono, remind us that knowledge of plants is the path to understanding their value, and that slowing down is a possible effect of both gardens and well designed objects. Everyone who sees one of Magno's wooden radios wants to touch it, and most of us want to have one in our homes, in the same way we all want to sit under trees in a park and feel the wind and sun on our faces. Magno objects, while beautiful, are far from conventional. Privileging craftsmanship over efficiency, each piece reminds us that design can produce effects that go beyond ease and convenience. Some designers, like Singgih, want to deepen our relationship to things and materials, and to challenge the speed and busyness of our human lives.

Singgih is also responsible for the bamboo bicycle on display in Indonesian Design Emerging. As alluring as it is, this object is designed to start conversations, rather than for mass production. This is the eleventh iteration in a series of bicycle designs that showcase the potential of bamboo as a serious and sustainable material as part of the Spedagi project. While in Indonesia bamboo is often associated with the hardship of village life, poverty, and traditional mindsets, Singgih is determined to design in a way that reveals its aesthetic qualities and revalues its role in village vitalisation and community development.

In Indonesia, where the arrival of design is inseparable from colonisation, there are tensions between its complexity as a

global force and the way it manifests in local contexts. While these tensions are certainly not unique to Indonesia, they play out in distinct and wonderful ways because of the way the local and the global are imagined across the archipelago, in particular at the scale of the *kampung* (neighbourhood), and because of the rich design practices that have been invented, altered and remixed over hundreds of years of trade and colonisation. This remix is perhaps best represented by the political images of Black Boots, a Yogyakarta-based punk collective that began striving for social and environmental justice during Suharto's oppressive New Order Regime. Black Boots' visual communication design, like their music, uses aspects of global punk in very particular ways. The resulting images, while very different in style and form to the soft tactility of Magno products, make the same demands. They ask us to slow down, look around and value our environment and each other.

For those of us committed to design practices that shape the world, there is a need not only for a deep understanding of our own contexts, but also for the critical ability to see and learn how similar matters of concerns play out across different cultural and social formations. This is indeed the first time we have seen these Indonesian designers exhibited side by side in Australia. Peacock Gallery, with its commitment to local voices shaping social and political discourse in the area, has been the perfect host. *Inshallah* it is one of many iterations linking Australian and Indonesian designers and developing creative collaborations into the future.

ALEXANDRA CROSBY

University of Technology Sydney,  
Faculty of Design, Architecture and Building

2016





## SAPU

Sapu is a collective of environmentally concerned designers based in Salatiga. The name comes from the Indonesian word for broom, used by Javanese people to clean up the street, backyards, and parks. A *sapu* is made from a bundle of coconut sticks, which form a very effective tool when tied together. This principle of togetherness is applied in Sapu's design philosophy.

Sapu creates products and art from recycled waste, used objects, and forgotten bits and pieces. They are interested in inspiring people to make their lives more sustainable. The Sapu studio is in a traditional *joglo*, which is like a communal house. The joglo is where many makers sleep, sew, draw, eat and plan together.

[sapuupcycle.com](http://sapuupcycle.com)



- Reina Bag
- Erin Pouch
- Wallet Ben

Photos courtesy of Sapu

## TANAM UNTUK KEHIDUPAN

The collective Tanam Untuk Kehidupan (TUK) formed in 2005 with the goal of combining artistic ambitions with growing environmentalist ideologies in Salatiga. Working with local scientists and elders, TUK learned about the impact of human activity such as deforestation and urbanisation on Java's ancient water sources. Salatiga is home to hundreds of freshwater springs, many of which have spiritual significance in Javanese mythology.

The name of the collective has several levels of meaning. Tanam Untuk Kehidupan translates literally as 'planting for life', referring to the planting of ideas as well as to reforestation. But the collective is more commonly referred to as *tuk*, which means water source in Javanese language.

TUK is most well known for their production of Festival Mata Air, which is a site-specific roving event located at different water sources. The series of banners in Indonesian Design Emerging were made as an act of solidarity for the 2016 event. Some are by well-known artists such as Djwadi Awal and Toni Volunteero, others are by citizens participating in workshops much like those being run at Peacock Gallery as part of the public program.



- Children display the results of a printing workshop at Festival Mata Air (Photo by Alexandra Crosby, 2007)
- Banners on display at Festival Mata Air (Photo by Alexandra Crosby, 2016)
- Printing Workshop at Festival Mata Air (Photo by Alexandra Crosby, 2007)





## MAGNO DESIGNS

*Magno Designs* is the collaboration of husband and wife team Singgih Kartono and Tri Wahyuni, who both trained at the Bandung Institute of Technology (ITB).

Magno is an example of how sustainable, socially responsible product design can generate new business models for villages. The company employs around 30 people to create small, high value, functional items. They build skill capacity within the community through their operation 'New Craft' methodology where handcrafted products are produced using a modern manufacturing approach. Items are designed, production manuals are created and step-by-step assembly methods followed so that an individual with no prior craft experience can be quickly trained and the resulting products are of a standard form and quality.

This exhibition presents the full Magno product range.

[www.magno-design.com](http://www.magno-design.com)

- *Magnifying Glass (Sonokeling wood)*
  - *KLockU Clock (Pine wood & Sonokeling wood)*
  - *IKoNO Radio (Pine wood & Sonokeling wood)*
- Photos courtesy of Magno Designs*

## SPEDAGI

Spedagi is a shortened form of *Sepeda*, bicycle, and *Pagi*, morning, referring to the local tradition of going about one's business in the early morning by bicycle. Villages in Java are facing immense problems as waves of young people move to the big cities in search of employment. Spedagi looks to the significant role of village life in creating a sustainable future. The movement aims to reduce carbon emissions, grow healthier food, and increase the agency of rural communities.

The bamboo bicycle, the icon of Spedagi, was created to be a conversation-starter about a sustainable design movement. It is a way of showcasing local Indonesian design potential that doesn't rely on the export market for economic survival.



- *Pringrolas Spedagi Bamboo Road Bike (Photo courtesy of Spedagi, 2016)*
- *Spedagi Homestay at Kandangan (Photo courtesy of Jessica Lea Dunn, 2015)*
- *Weaving Workshop at Kandangan (Photo courtesy of Jessica Lea Dunn, 2015)*





## BLACK BOOTS

Black Boots formed as a punk band in Yogyakarta in 1996 to resist and fight back against a violent military culture using music, art and design. As students, the members were part of a wider community that was gathering creative energy and political momentum. Punk emerged in Indonesia in the early '90s in response to growing frustrations with the social and political conditions under Suharto's violent and corrupt military regime.

Around the time Suharto stepped down from power in 1998 many changes occurred in the political situation in Indonesia. There was intense vocal protest, new ideas being discussed, political models being tested in new groups and political organisations to reject the culture of corruption, collusion and nepotism. Punk with an anti-authoritarian and DIY philosophy has developed within music, art and activist circles in Indonesia. Still frustrated, saddened and angered by the oppression and injustice in Indonesia and elsewhere, Black Boots members continue their work, playing music, designing and doing art.

Current Black Boots members are Aris Prabawa, Arya Pandjalu, Muhammad Tamzu Budi Prakoso and Wahyu Jatmiko.



• Muhammad Tamzu Budi Prakoso, Wahyu Jatmiko, Aris Prabawa and Arya Pandjalu (Photo courtesy of Aris Prabawa, 2015)  
 • 'Fighting for Nature 1', 'Fighting for Nature 2', 2007. Etching, 26cm x 37cm  
 • Black Boots on tour in Australia (Photo courtesy of Aris Prabawa, 2016)

## Workshop Program

The workshop program for this exhibition is led by Black Boots member Aris Prabawa, an artist and musician living and working in Lismore and Yogyakarta. Aris studied Fine Arts at the Indonesian Institute of Art, majoring in printmaking. In 1996 he started playing in the punk band Black Boots. In 1998 he was involved in establishing the art collective Taring Padi. In 2002 he moved to Australia, and studied for a Diploma of Fine Arts TAFE 2004-2007. His art deals with social and political issues within the context of place. The process of making art allows him to explore and deepen his understanding of different cultures and different ways in which people survive and enjoy life in this world.

## Acknowledgements

The project team acknowledges that the exhibition is held on the lands of the Wangal and Wategora people of the Darug/Eora Nation.

The exhibition is one outcome of a broader research project to map emergent design practices in Indonesia (<https://indoaustraldesignfutures.org/>) and to bring together Indonesian and Australian designers, design writers, design teachers and design thinkers to work on sustainable futures by rethinking the way we design food production, housing, transport and cities, all revealing urgent problems that affect the entire region of Southeast Asia.

Thank you to all the designers and artists who took part in Indonesian Australian Design Futures. Special thank you to Jessica Dunn, without whom the project would not have been initiated, let alone completed. Thank you to Alex Davies. Thank you to Singgih and Tri for visiting Sydney, and Tasman Munroe and Gilbert Grace for being here when they did. Thank you to Aris Prabawa. Thank you to Vanessa Hyde. Thank you to Rudy Ardianto. Thank you to Kiki Mariana. Thank you to Suara Indonesia. Thank you to Kate Major and Jenny Cheeseman for their support.

## INDONESIAN DESIGN EMERGING PROJECT TEAM

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Alexandra Crosby  
 (University of Technology Sydney,  
 Faculty of Design, Architecture  
 and Building)

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Sapu  
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 Magno Designs  
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 Black Boots  
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 project led by artist Aris Prabawa*

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### EXHIBITION

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OPENING HOURS: Tuesday to Sunday: 11am-4pm · Monday: Closed  
(Appointments for tour groups can be organised outside these hours)

[www.auburn.nsw.gov.au/peacockgallery](http://www.auburn.nsw.gov.au/peacockgallery)

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