

A Solo Show of I Made Widya Diputra

# The End of Journey

20 September- 20 October 2014

Opening: 3 pm. Saturday, 20 September 2014



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**REDBASE**

CONTEMPORARY ART

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## Curatorial Notes

### LAMPUNG'S BACKGROUND

I Made Widya Diputra, or mostly known as 'Lampung', was graduated from Sculpture Department, ISI (Indonesian Arts Institute) Yogyakarta. His nickname, 'Lampung', was obtained when he was studying at the Denpasar, Bali SMSR (Visual Arts High School), for he was, indeed, born at Lampung (the southern part of Sumatera). His Bali-origin parents had transmigrated to Lampung and became teachers there. Ever since his study at the Denpasar Bali SMSR, Lampung began to be acquainted with the world of visual arts. His intensity was even stronger when he starts studying at ISI Yogyakarta at year 2000. I knew Lampung on 2001, when he enrolled in my class of illustration subject.

In Jogja, Lampung was initially interacted only with fellow students from Bali as himself. But gradually, the very-conducive arts atmosphere in Jogja introduced him to other senior artists. My acquaintanceship with Lampung was later becoming closer and melted by the help of Made Aswino Aji (or Aji; that's how he often called), so that our relationship were becoming less awkward than we're used to be, on campus. When we hung out together beyond campus, the atmospheres were also became more relax and pliant. Aji was Lampung's senior in SMSR Denpasar. My house is by chance close with Aji's, we're neighbor at Soboman, Ngestiharjo, Kasihan, Bantul. Lampung was frequently come to Aji's place. That is when Lampung became more and more engaged in chats between me and Aji, as well as with Aji's other friends who were coming to his house, not only those from Bali, but also from other area, even Aji's bule (foreigner) friends. Back then, Lampung sets himself more as a loyal listener, considering that he still feels as a junior. But the more he visited Aji's house, the broader his social intercourse became. Until one day, he got to know Michelle Chin, a Singapore woman who owns a visual arts business and working at a gallery in Singapore. Michelle rented a house in Sewon, Bantul, which was at that time functioned as well as storage to put bunches of arts collection—that is why Michelle went Singapore-Jogja back and forth a lot. His friendship with Michelle was strengthened when Lampung rented a house in front of Michelle's place. That is when Lampung starts to recognize the visual arts market; thus, gaining more insights through Michelle.

Lampung's activities reached beyond campus. He never skipped exhibition projects with Sanggar Dewata Indonesia. Besides that, he also initiated Kakul Group with his college fellows from the same-year. This group has held several exhibitions at some alternative art spaces in Jogja, such as Parkir Space which is located in tourist area, Prawirotaman.

His art insight was also evolved in line with his encounters to several other artists (mostly are seniors) who lived in Jogja, such as Agus Suwage, Titarubi, S. Teddy D, Ugo Untoro, Samuel Indratma, Eko Nugroho, etc. He even got a chance to be the artisan for Titarubi. Through his further interaction with some circles of artists, curators, collectors, and galleries, Lampung gained more lessons and experiences. Not only on matters of both technics and concepts in making artworks, but also on artists' managerial scheme.

Lampung lived in front of Michelle's house until he finished his final assignment at ISI in 2006. He explored much of wooden and rattan material in making works for the final assignment. He treated the perception of material characters, which was originally hard to be tenderer. I remember one of his final assignment-works in which he molded wood into spherical like a surface of bed, added with rattan twists. In 2007, his work was

selected as the best sculpture in the exhibition of Dies Natalis XXIII ISI Yogyakarta. Still in the same year, he was awarded the Academi Art Award for young visual artist from ISI Yogyakarta category. Since then, his art career is rapidly evolving. Lampung starts to be oftentimes invited to participate in big exhibition events, both in and beyond Jogja, even abroad.

### **THE WORKING PROCESS**

In making artworks, Lampung accustomed himself to make sketches/designs first, then creating a small-scale mock up in the next step. The mock up itself is usually lack of details. Not until he comes to making the framework or the body (mostly using resin material), Lampung furthermore prepared his sculpture rigorously, by paying more attention to the construction and weighing more about its composition. Only on the final phase, he worked on the details and complex ornament, when he starts coating the body of the sculpture.

To add his references, Lampung would browse the internet to find technical details or complex ornaments from photos of other artists' works, products, or even a mere illustration. His special attention to details and ornaments cannot be detached from Balinese tradition when preparing the offerings or making crafts. The using of various materials in offerings preparation and skills yet perseverance in making it has brought Lampung to explore more materials in making his sculptures.

Process of material exploration would obviously be seen on his duet exhibition with Made Wiguna Valasara at Edwin's Gallery, two years ago. Beneath the subject of "The Studio Moved Out", Lampung and Valasara present the making process of their artworks to the public as its main activity. Craftsmanship and high skill aspects in treating materials into sculpture have its own portion in their working process.

Now, Lampung is almost always experimenting new techniques and materials. Experiments would usually be done by his own hand, some would fail and some, indeed, would succeed. For him, experimenting process plays an important role. We may say that Lampung is learning by doing, like a Javanese proverb: "Ngelmu iku kalakone kanthi laku" (lessons are gained by undergoing the process).

### **WORKING MATERIALS**

In the last 3 years, Lampung has been very intense in processing silicon as material in making sculpture. Silicon squeeze in forms of small spherical objects decorates the surfaces of his sculpture. Squeezing silicon manually is indeed requiring skill, perseverance, and a long time. For this process, Lampung had once made an equipment to ease him and makes the silicon-squeezing process to be more practical. But it failed, so he reverted to the manual squeezing technique.

Lampung starts to make works by silicon material in 2010. His artwork entitled "Microcosm" shapes a figure wrapped by white silicon squeezes which is composing particular texts. Those texts were piled up as to cover the figure up. On this work, Lampung has already combined the silicon-squeeze technique with such functional object as a corset. This work is included in "Dua Kota Dua Cerita" (Two Cities, Two Tales) exhibition held at Semarang Gallery.

Since then, Lampung uses a lot the combination between a figure texturized by silicon squeezes and functional objects for his sculptures. Figures that combined with other factory articles as wheel, crutches, walker, gun replica, and chair, implies a feeling of eliminated, weary, sick, and defeated people. For instance is when Lampung made a work entitled "Post Power Syndrome" which was enrolled in Biennale Jogja X – 2009 event, by combining a figure covered up by silicon squeezes with a wheelchair. The other works that is in tune with it are those which were presented in "The Studio Moved Out" duet exhibition with Made Wiguna Valasara at Edwin's Gallery. There were 3 works that is using combination of silicon squeezes technique with crutches, walker, and a typical wheel of wheelchairs.

Each work has their own narration, albeit they weren't composing a coherent story. Most of those were also made for joint exhibitions; so that his works were seemingly to offer partial narration.

He had begun using leather material since 2011. Initially he used cow leather, but later on he experimented with many kinds of leather. Last year, as Lampung was appointed as an artist commission for ART|JOG event, he made a gigantic elephant sculpture from leather material. That is when he begun processing the leather intensively. The leather was being shaped, stitched, texturized, and even treated specifically to give the impression of old leather by using all sorts of ways. Later on, he put ornaments to the leathers by tattooing it. Now, he conquers the leather material already.

Relentlessly, he kept on extending his experiments on material. This time, Lampung works on metal material by manually making buckle, sword, and any other accessories. Though he was able to order to a blacksmith, yet once again, the matter of undergoing (lelaku) the making process on his own hand, has trained him to feel the metal material.

Bambang 'Toko' Witjaksono, 2013

**ARTIST: I MADE WIDYA DIPUTRA (LAMPUNG)**



**THE ART OF WAR**

Resin, silicone, brass, leather, leather paint  
145 x 350 x 100 cm, 2013

The work "The Art of War" is about two figures, both heads and hands were coated by silicon, one is colored black and the other is white. Both figures are wearing costumes from leather material enriched with ornaments. Both seem propping their left-hand on a piece of sword, while sitting on an almost 3 meters-long chessboard. In front of them were arrayed on the board, a usual row in the common chess game: from left to right are the rook, the knight, the bishop, the queen, the king, the queen, the bishop, the knight, and the rook. Yet on the next row, stacks of pawns as much as approximately 2000 pieces in mixed color, white and black, were heaped up. The work depicts the war of Bharatayudha. Lampung tries to associate the war of Bharatayudha as in the chess game, in which the pawns, with more amounts, will always be the victim of wars, meanwhile the kings, queens, bishops, and even the knights are still neatly in line inside the fortress. We may interpret this scene not as the war of Bharatayudha, yet would feel the same essence: that war—in whatever kinds of it, would cause a lot of victims. Most casualties would be among the lower class society, whether they were soldiers or proletariats. Wars are, indeed, merciless. Sometimes, war is merely a result of some people's avarice. "All wars are descendants of vengeance," wrote WS Rendra in his poem, "Balada Sumilah" (Ballad of Sumilah).

**ARTIST: I MADE WIDYA DIPUTRA (LAMPUNG)**



**"Hatred, Torment and Pain are My Strengths"**

Trolley, resin, silicone, dacron, brass, leather, leather paint  
100 x 245 x 65 cm, 2013

This work is about a figure wearing costume from leather material that seems to be faded, appear to push with a vengeance, a trolley that laden with piles of homogenous textured objects (seem like fried nugget) in white color. These objects that wrapped by the silicon squeezes are depicting Kurawa, whereas the figure that pushes the trolley resembles the figure of Sengkuni. Lampung isn't trying to convey the story about the relationship between Sengkuni and Kurawa as in the puppet story. Instead, he chose a free interpretation. As we know in the story, Sengkuni is a sneaky person that always trying to defeat Pandawa. Sengkuni prevents the Kingdom of Astina to fall into Pandawa's hand. For the sake of that purpose, he relentlessly provoked Kurawa to against Pandawa.

The nature of someone that is relentlessly carrying out a mission, despite of its incongruousness with truth, still is undertaken wholeheartedly. To achieve his goals, he may devote his whole endeavor, wrapped by deviousness. No matter how heavy the burden is, it will always be done sacrificially. It is the nature of working relentlessly and endeavoring with a vengeance which Lampung tries to visualize, despite the good and the bad of the provocateur. It reminds me of the nature of devil, who relentlessly tantalize human to leave the goodness and incite human to jump into maliciousness.



**ARTIST: I MADE WIDYA DIPUTRA (LAMPUNG)**



**“NO ONE ESCAPES THE DEATH I RIDE”**

Resin, Silicon, Brass, Leather, Leather Paint  
145x170x90 cm, 2013

This work is sourced from the tale of “Bisma Gugur” (Fall of Bisma). It is a scene in the war of Bharatayudha, in which the mighty and sorcerous Resi Bisma can only be beaten by the arrow that flown by a woman named Srikandi, whose body possessed by the spirit of Amba. This is in accordance with Amba’s vow to welcoming the death of Bisma. As has been known in the shadow play story, Dewabrata (the young Bisma) was beloved by Amba, but Dewabrata that had vowed not to get married along his life, declined to marry Amba. So accidentally that Dewabrata fired an arrow on to Amba’s body and killed her. Prior to her death, Amba vowed to welcome Bisma’s death, someday in the war of Bharatayudha, with an intercession of a woman.

Back to the scene in the war of Bharatayudha, even though Bisma has been beforehand stabbed by Arjuna’s arrow, yet he was fine and felt no ailing. Finally, using Sarotama’s bow, Srikandi succeeded to shoot and collapse Bisma. Fall to earth; Bisma was propped by hundreds of arrows embedded on his body. As the descendant of God, Bisma has his own power to ascertain his time to die.

Visually, a supine body that propped by embedded arrows is identical with the figure of Bisma. So is the work created by Lampung. Though Lampung does not specifically depict the fall of Bisma, he has deliberately taken a condition in which a figure was laying supine and be propped by a number of objects embedded on his body. A condition in which somebody is drooping in sort of resignation to meet his destiny. A condition that describing silence and tranquility in welcoming his death.

**ARTIST: I MADE WIDYA DIPUTRA (LAMPUNG)**



**"Shepherd in Hatred"**

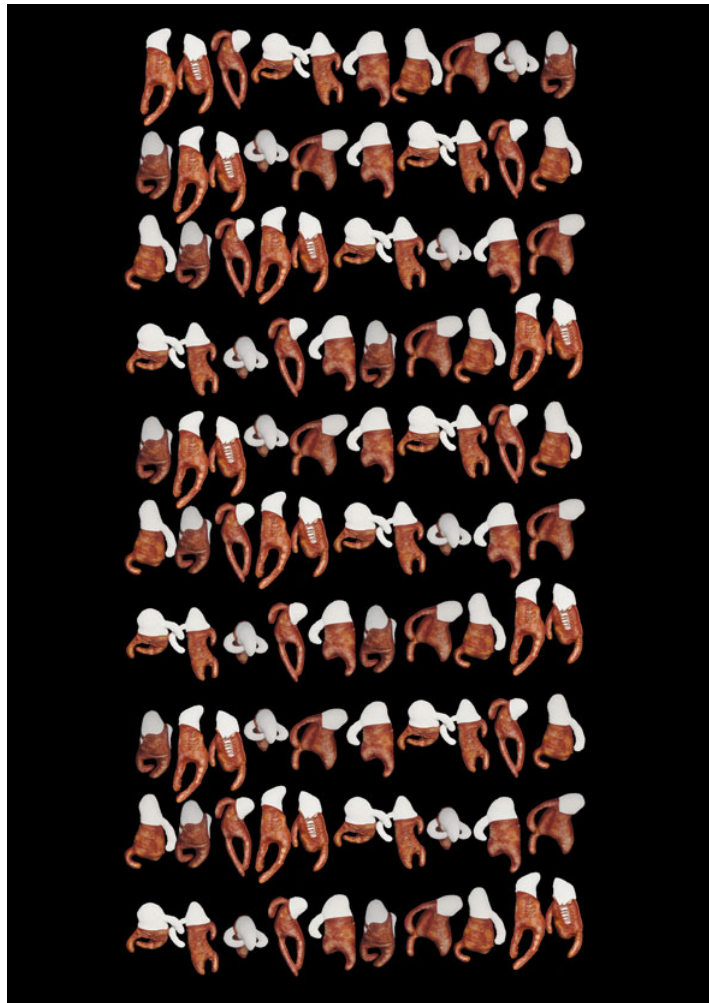
Resin, brass, leather, leather paint, silicone, dacron  
155 x 75 x 150 cm, 2013

The work "Shepherd in Hatred" narrating relationship between Sengkuni and Kurawa. Sengkuni is the uncle of the Kurawa, as he is the younger brother of Gandari, Kurawa's mother. Gandari herself is the younger sister of Prabu (King) Gandara from Plasajenar Kingdom. Pandu Dewanata, which is the younger brother of Prabu Destrarata, has won Putri (Princess) Gandari as a prize, after defeating Prabu Gandara. By Pandu, Gandari was then granted to Destrarata to be his groom, for Pandu has already had two wives: Kunti and Madrim. Sengkuni felt that Gandari was supposed to be Pandu's wife, instead of being the wife of blind Destrarata. It is this stance that later becoming his motive of not consenting the Astina Kingdom to fall into Pandawa's hands. That is why Sengkuni kept disfavoring Pandawa. Under Sengkuni's upbringing, the Kurawa grew as kids who are dominated by hatred toward the Pandawa, the children of Pandu. In every single day, Sengkuni flamed a sense of hostility in their heart, particularly to the eldest one, Duryudana. Purportedly, Sengkuni was the reincarnation of Dwapara, a god whose duty is to cause chaos in world. Lampung's sixth work depicts Sengkuni educating Kurawa.

In visual, seemed a figure in shabby leather costume, holding the rein. At the rein end, several figures that layered by silicon squeezes were attached. This scene seemed more like someone is herding his cattle. One that is very patient in taking care of his cattle, as if to follow his cattle's volition, but in fact, still, the rein were in his hands. A scene that implies the existence of power toward something though can also be seen that those who were controlled can bring troubles for their commander. A satire above the relations of power. Who are controlling who?



**ARTIST: I MADE WIDYA DIPUTRA (LAMPUNG)**



**"A Hundred Greedy Person"**

Dacron, silicone, leather, leather paint  
65 x 25 x 12 cm x 100 pcs, 2013

The work "A Hundred Greedy Person" consists of so many figures wrapped by silicon squeezes with some seem to be wrapped by leather. This big amount of figures can be interpreted as Kurawa, 100 giants with the same nature: voracious. But observing its appearance which is anonymous, it would seem as a bunch of dolls being displayed, or as a troop in military unit, even can be connoted as a group of people in various natures and behaviors.