



# Mahdi Abdullah

Born in Banda Aceh, 1960.



Born in Banda Aceh in 1960, Mahdi Abdullah is one of Indonesia's most significant painters. He graduated from Faculty of Architecture in Banda Aceh (1988) before earning his master degree at Indonesian Art Institute Yogyakarta in 2012. His works use realism to depict his anxieties about the social reality that he has witnessed while focusing on the life of common people from his hometown. At first, the images might look calm and peaceful but there's dualism existing in each work.

"It is an introspection, an inventory of his thoughts and feelings that he found inside. Sometimes they're dreamy, poetic, sometimes mirroring fears and terror, leaving the plane of realism and opening almost surrealist dimensions,"-quoted from art writer Anton Larenz about Mahdi's realist approach.

He has several exhibitions locally and internationally, with his works present in various collections from museums, galleries and private collectors abroad.

Mahdi Abdullah starts a journey through his inner life and his memories with his new paintings, but looking inwards and outwards, too. His observances of the past and his views of his present result in a detailed picture of his surroundings and his current conditions. With his excellent realist technique he paints pictures of a tremendous persuasive power which touches the viewer immediately. It is an introspection, an inventory of his thoughts and feelings that he found inside. Sometimes dreamy, poetic, sometimes mirroring fears and terror, leaving the plane of realism and opening almost surrealist dimensions. His paintings show his clear view of reality (history included) and give way for the wish of another, hopefully better future.

Mahdi Abdullah has come to the conclusion that there is some fundamental dualism implied in human life, an all-pervading dual structure which underlies all human activities, but often escaping from our consciousness. Dark and light, high and low, good and evil, heaven and hell – belonging together, not possible to have one without the other. It is like the two sides of a medal, we can see only one side, for seeing the other side we have to turn it around.





Option, Black or White  
Oil on canvas  
100cm x 80cm  
2023



Meeting  
Oil on canvas  
100cm x 80cm  
2019



The Window of Malayan Partitions (triptych)  
Oil on canvas  
200cm x 240cm  
2023

## Mahdi Abdullah

Born in Banda Aceh, 1960.

### Education

1988      Graduated from Faculty of Architecture in Banda Aceh  
2012      Indonesian Art Institute Yogyakarta

### Exhibition

2023      Art Jakarta, Vin Gallery booth, Jakarta - Indonesia.  
2022      Memory Transformed, Arte Maha Studio (Jogja Art Weeks), Yogyakarta.  
            Art Jakarta, Vin Gallery booth, Jakarta - Indonesia.  
2019      Conjoint Existence, Galerie Grand Siècle, Taipei.  
2018      Two Sides of the Medal in Kaoh Siung, Taiwan.  
            Two Sides of the Medal at Sangkring Art Project, Yogyakarta, Indonesia.  
2016      Transmemorabilia: The World of Mahdi Abdullah,  
            Mada Gallery, Monash University, Melbourne, Australia.  
2012      Transmemorabilia, Tujuh Bintang Art Space, Yogyakarta, Indonesia.  
2009      Zwischenzeiten, Galerie Kulturmodell, Passau, Germany.  
2008      History (critic) sisme, the Episentrum Uleekareng, Banda Aceh, Indonesia.  
2007      Exhibition of Paintings and Black & White Drawings in Swiss-Belhotel  
            Banda Aceh, Indonesia.  
2006      Message from Aceh, the Hyogo International Plaza to commemorate  
            the 11th Earthquake in Kobe City, Hyogo, Japan.  
2005      Aceh in the Caricature at Indonesia Culture Plaza, Tokyo, Japan.  
            Aceh Tsunami in Indonesia Culture Plaza, Tokyo, Japan.  
            Message from Aceh, Sangyo University, Kyoto, Japan.  
            Message from Aceh, Shizuoka University of Art and Culture - Hamamatsu,  
            Shizuoka, Japan.  
            Aceh Tsunami, Hokkaido International Foundation, Hakodate, Hokkaido.  
            Tsunami Painting Exhibition, Taman Budaya, Banda Aceh, Indonesia.  
2002      Nyawong Aceh, di Indonesia Culture Plaza, Tokyo, Jepang.  
            Nyawong Aceh, di Nagoya Institute of Technology Nagoya, Jepang.  
2000      Pesan dari Tanah Rencong, di Graha Medco, Sudirman, Jakarta.

## Honors

- |           |   |
|-----------|---|
| 2009      | Art Meukuta Alam from The Provincial Government of Aceh.<br>Fine Art of The Provincial Aceh Departemant of Culture and Tourism. |
| 2000      | The best painting as Sumatra in Jambi.  |
| 1985      | 1st Winner Poster Competition Environmental Hygiene in Banda Aceh.  |
| 1981      | First prize in calligraphy art competitions Akprin Yogyakarta.  |
| 1977 - 79 | Talent and Achievement Scholarship from Dept.<br>Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan Indonesia.   |



## GALLERY INFORMATION

### HO CHI MINH CITY

35/8 Nguyen Van Dau Street, Ward 6  
Binh Thanh District, HCMC, Vietnam

+84 88 920 9420

Monday - Saturday, 10:00am - 5:00pm

### SHANGHAI

Unit C1a, Building B4-1, Yue Jie Expo Park,  
No.376 Bansongyuan Road,  
Huangpu District, Shanghai, China

+86 13524077729

Tuesday - Saturday, 10:30am - 5:30pm