American-Indonesian artist Adam de Boer addresses his hybrid cultural identity through hybrid paintings. Fusing Javanese folk art techniques with contemporary lo-fi aesthetics and highly traditional subject matter with strikingly modern scenes, he expresses the disjuncture of coming from two quite disparate cultures. A traditional religious procession is painted in delicate gouache together with a teenage bather caught off-guard. He is in contemporary dress, but de Boer has used an ancient batik technique to render his clothing in a subsequent artwork which this gouache has served as a study.

“The ongoing series of work examines my Eurasian heritage as a way to help me better understand a part of my cultural identity that I have had trouble connecting to throughout my life”, says de Boer. “Most importantly, it is helping me to know how that identity influences my participation in the world”.

In 2010, de Boer (b.1984) revisited his father’s birthplace in Purwokerto, Central Java, to search for locations and landscapes appearing in family photo albums. He studied the local crafts of Javanese batik and woodcarving, and recorded his journey using the European sojourner’s preferred sketching medium of gouache. The artist’s melding of techniques approaches art history head-on, questioning the use of iconography and the historical image in the present day in an age of high-definition and subjects which are informed by a modern, transient Western culture.

De Boer, graduated from the college of Creative Studies at the University of California in 2006. He was the recipient of the Arts For India scholarship in 2011. He participated in a studio residency at the International Institute of Fine Arts in Modinagar, India in 2012.

JALAN is his debut solo exhibition.