REDBASE FOUNDATION, YOGYAKARTA

Adam de Boer: Jungle Flame

Opening reception Friday, September 22, 4 pm.
On view September 22 - October 21, 10:00 am - 5:00 pm

Redbase Foundation, Bantul, Yogyakarta

Redbase Foundation, Yogyakarta is pleased to present Jungle Flame, resident artist Adam de Boer’s first solo exhibition in Indonesia. As a current Fulbright scholar, based in Yogyakarta, this exhibition is the result of de Boer’s ongoing and intense engagement with Indonesian aesthetic and craft traditions. The seven new multimedia works that constitute Jungle Flame are a reflection of the artist’s multi-layered artistic process, steeped in his critical investigation of identity and the appropriation, or as he states, “misappropriation of cultural forms.” De Boer’s enquiry began in 2010 with his first trip to Indonesia; a trip that awakened his desire to understand his own hybrid identity as a Dutch-Indonesian-American born and raised in Southern California, thousands of miles from his family’s roots in the Central Java town of Purwokerto.

Fundamental to de Boer’s practice is his attention to materials that have, for centuries, dominated the practice of Javanese craft and culture, including batik, carved wood, and leatherwork. For Jungle Flame, de Boer builds on his interest in the possibilities afforded by the unlikely synthesis of seemingly contradictory elements, that when combined, become a congruous image, the result of his thoughtful layering of material, process, and conceptual themes.

De Boer’s work challenges its viewers to look twice as they move through the series, from a mirrored image of a young Javanese Muslim woman, representative of the paradoxes that exist in contemporary Indonesian society, to images of Java’s landscape, reminiscent of the Mooi Indie or “Beautiful Indies” aesthetic, whose rejection by Indonesian nationalists marked the start of a uniquely Indonesian art history distinct from the influence of their Dutch oppressors. The young women are not simply placed on the canvas, but are instead embedded in a batik design derived from the patterns of local “tegel” tile brought to Indonesia by European colonists in the 19th century. While the Mooi Indie landscapes ask what the effect is of an artist reengaging with an aesthetic both lauded and intensely hated by each side of his familial heritage, respectively.

In the context of Yogyakarta, now recognized for its position on the global map of contemporary art, de Boer’s work is especially valuable for its assertion that tradition – be it from the perspective of aesthetics or material – remains relevant to the understanding of the continued development of visual cultures, both for individuals and societies, be they homogeneous or hybrids ever in flux.

In 2016, de Boer was awarded a Fulbright research fellowship to Indonesia that has allowed him to deepen his engagement with the region’s indigenous crafts. He has also received grants from Arts for India, the Cultural Development Corporation, DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities, and the Santa Barbara Arts Fund.

Adam de Boer received his MFA from the Chelsea College of Art, London, and his BA in painting from the College of Creative Studies at the University of California, Santa Barbara. Recent exhibitions include: Hunter Shaw Fine Art, Los Angeles (2016); Riflemaker, London (2016/2013/2011); ArtJog18, Yogyakarta (2015); Indonesian Contemporary Art Network, Yogyakarta (2014); Chelsea College of Art and Design, London (2014); University of California, Santa Barbara (2014); Escuela Taller, Bogotá (2013); ; Flashpoint, Washington, DC (2010).