

Press Release

First-ever exhibition of print and paper works by artist Melati Suryodarmo

Memento Mori

24 November 2019 – 27 January 2020

STPI – Creative Workshop & Gallery

Free entry



HOME 1, 2018, Screenprint with charcoal powder on paper, 77.5 x 112 cm

The first exhibition to show print and paper works by artist Melati Suryodarmo, titled *Memento Mori* will open at STPI Gallery on Sunday 24 November. It will draw from 70 unique works and 30 editioned works created by the artist during her residency with STPI in 2018 and 2019.

Celebrated for her performance art, print and papermaking are notable new mediums of expression and avenues of exploration within Suryodarmo's practice, culminating with the solo presentation in Singapore.

The show will present a series of works that centre around the theme of abandoned spaces and the forgotten memories they contain. It is rooted in the artist's own experience – every house that she and her family has lived in, has either been demolished or repurposed. Suryodarmo also draws inspiration from some of the abandoned sites in Singapore, and the histories, identities and relationships once inhabiting them. This theme is explored through screenprints, collagraphs, charcoal rubbings, paper pulp paintings and paper casts.

Screenprints and collagraphs

Suryodarmo focuses on abandoned homes as witness to now neglected histories for her series of screenprints and collagraphs.

The screenprints depicts imagined architectural renderings of interior spaces with an artistic intervention by Suryodarmo to convey the energies that may still reside there. The collagraphs act as an expressive recreation of the screenprints with the artist, placing herself within the spaces – represented by a single square of black fur-like material. The discord between the black and its setting reflect the artist's own sentiments within disused spaces. This is further emphasised by a thin red rope, referencing Suryodarmo's past works on alienation.

Charcoal rubbings

This unique series of charcoal rubbings maintain the ethos found in Suryodarmo's performative works, such as the role of chance in each piece and the recurring subject of the body, its surroundings and its memories. Using charcoal, the artist applies the material with her hands into wet paper pulp to create a sense of depth and movement within the stark, black-and-white abstract projections.

For the artist, charcoal acts as important symbol of the life cycle – a source of finite energy which initially burns brightly but fades over time. Previously used in works such as *I'm a Ghost in My Own House* (2012), she returns to charcoal in this series of prints to further explore the concept of generation and regeneration of energy, and of birth and rebirth.

Works on paper

In her exploration of forgotten spaces, Suryodarmo uses the medium of paper as a means to explore the objectivity and subjectivity of memory.

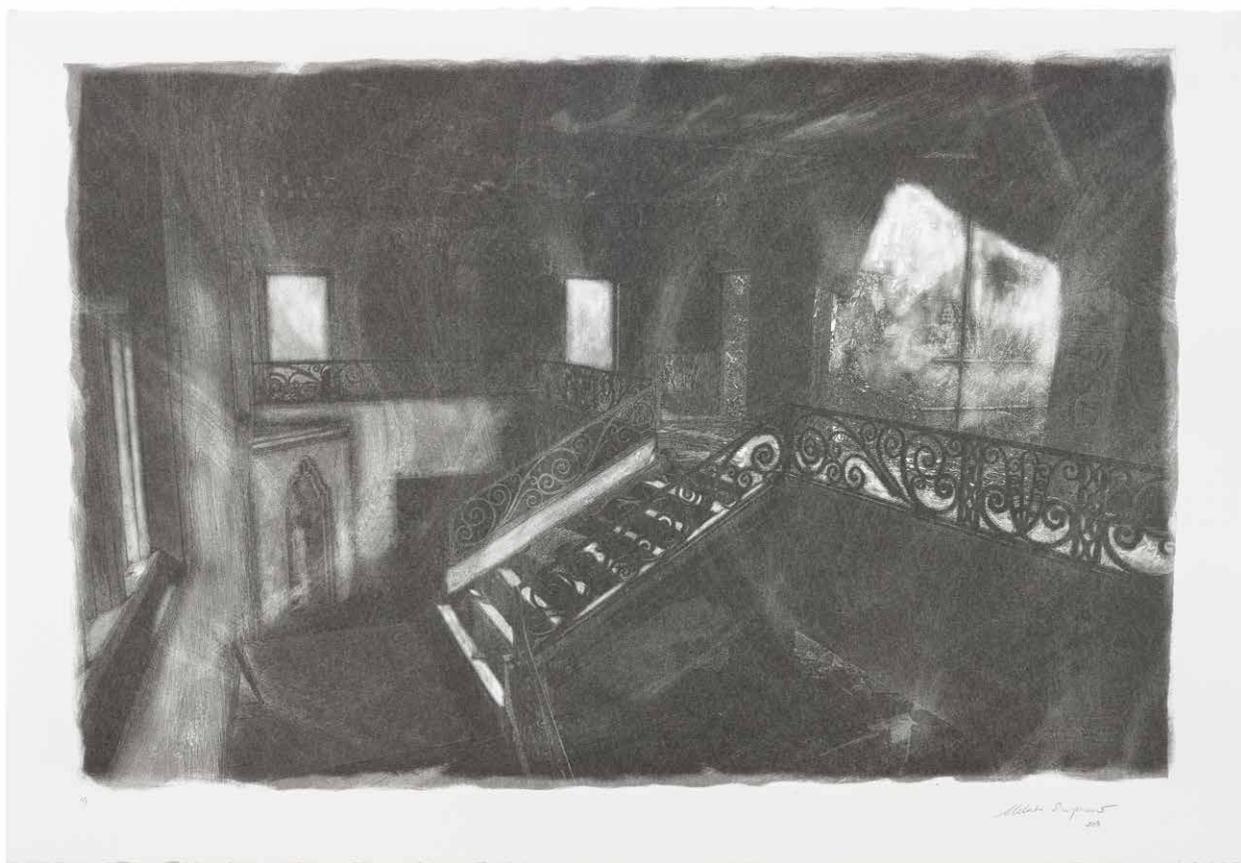
For Suryodarmo, moss growing along surfaces of abandoned architecture becomes a “silent witness of time”. It records the passing of time, while simultaneously representing the growth, life and destruction of its surroundings. For her residency, Suryodarmo utilised the texture of paper pulp to create striking paintings that mimic the texture of moss on a surface. They are at once beguiling while referencing the duality of their subject.

The artist created two series of paper casts for the show to show the development of memories over time. The first is comprised of large architectural casts which objectively capture various patterns and surfaces found by the artist – the concept of “casting a memory”. The second series of casts contrasts the first by looking at much smaller features and adding pieces of mulberry fibre. Here, they reflect what happens to memories over time: how they are often amalgamated with others, augmented or truncated, coloured by emotions like love, longing or desire.

Memento Mori opens Sunday 24 November at STPI Gallery in Singapore. Free entry.

For further information, please contact:

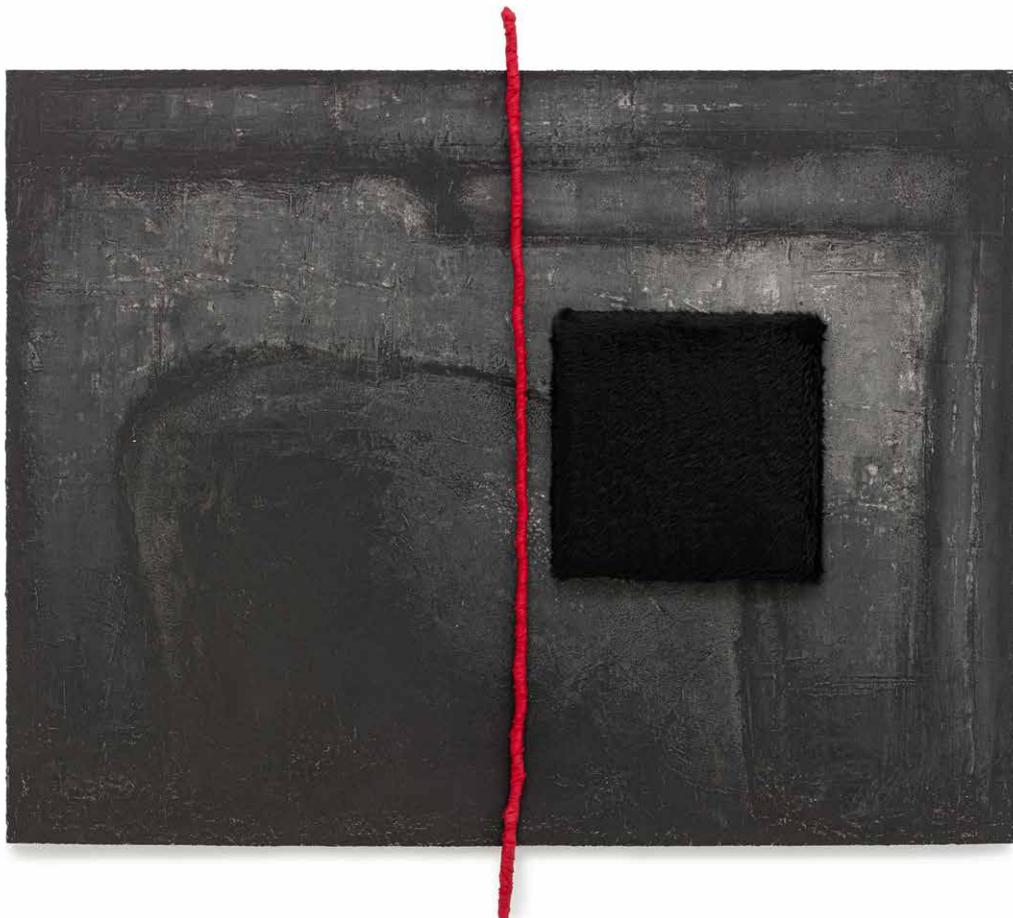
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PHOSPHENES 2, 2018, Screenprint with charcoal powder on paper, 77.5 x 112 cm



SOMNAMBUL 1, 2018, Silk, faux fur and collagraph on paper, 110 x 171 x 7 cm



SOMNAMBUL 5, 2018, Silk, faux fur and collagraph on paper, 132 x 143 x 4 cm



FAUST 4, 2018, Charcoal powder rubbed into STPI handmade paper, 39 x 49 cm



KLAMAUK 4, 2018, Charcoal powder rubbed into STPI handmade paper, 49 x 39 cm



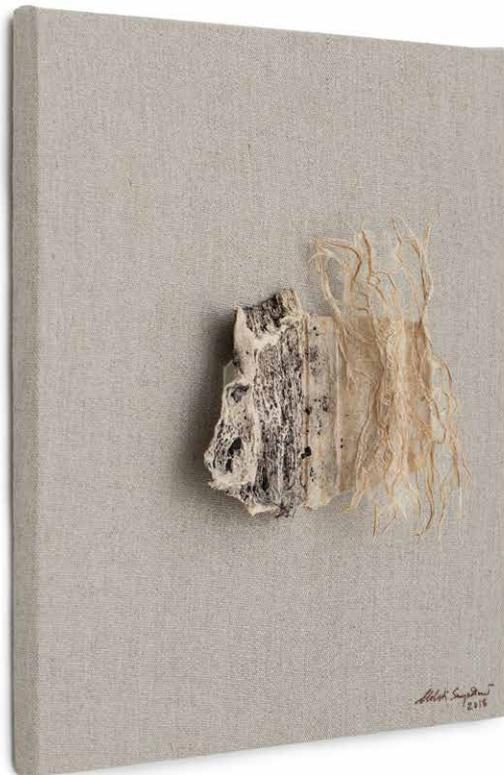
MOSS 2, 2018, Coloured linen and lokta pulp painting, 44 x 102.5 cm



EPOCH 5, 2018, Coloured linen and lokta pulp painting, 150 x 150 cm



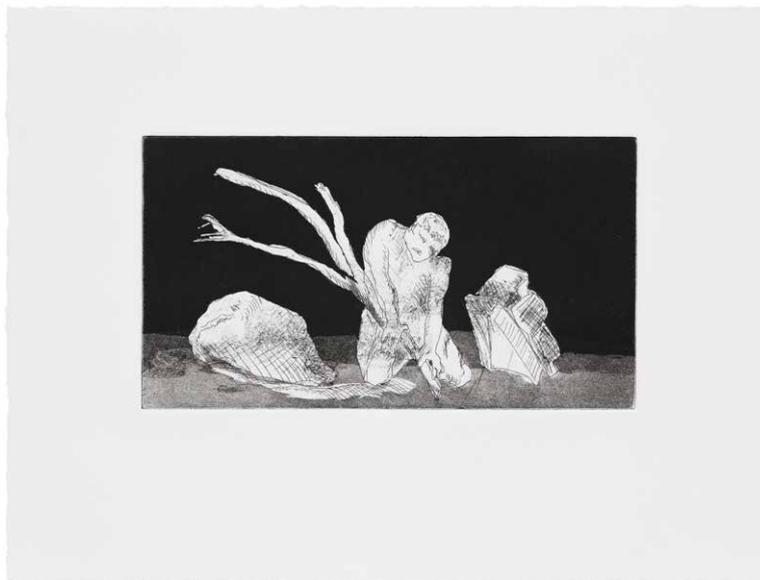
RELIQUIAE 2, 2018, Cast STPI handmade sisal paper, 91 x 116 x 8 cm



SA, 2018, Cast STPI handmade sisal paper and unbleached mulberry on canvas, 40 x 40 x 8 cm



THA, 2018, Cast STPI handmade sisal paper and unbleached mulberry on canvas, 60 x 40 x 3.5 cm



OLD LOVER, 2018, Etching and aquatint on paper, 26 x 34.2 cm

About the Artist



Melati Suryodarmo's (b. 1969, Indonesia) work deals with the relationships between the human body, the culture to which it belongs, and a constellation of the spaces it has inhabited. Through the notion of presence, she compiles, extracts, conceptualises and translates some phenomenon or subjects into movement, actions, and gestures that are specific to her performances. Melati Suryodarmo's performances are concerned with cultural, social and political aspects, which she articulates through her psychological and physical body. Her work features elements of physical presence and visual art to discuss identity, energy, politics and the relationship between the body and its environments.

Melati Suryodarmo studied at the Hochschule für Bildende Künste Braunschweig, Germany under Marina Abramovic. She has presented her works in various international festivals and exhibitions since 1996, including: Irish Museum of Modern Art (IMMA), Dublin (2001); Venice Biennale, Venice (2003); Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam (2005); Associação Cultural Videobrasil, Sao Paulo (2005); Haus der Kulturen der Welt Berlin (HKW Berlin), Berlin (2005); Venice Biennale Dance Festival, Venice (2007); Museum of Contemporary Art Kiasma, Helsinki (2007); Manifesta7, Bolzano, Italy (2008); In Transit Festival, HKW Berlin, Berlin (2009); Luminato Festival, Toronto (2012); Asia Pacific Triennale, Queensland Art Gallery & Gallery of Modern Art (QAGoMA), Brisbane (2015); Guangzhou Triennale, Guangdong (2015); Singapore Biennale, Singapore (2016); National Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art (MMCA), Seoul, South Korea (2017); Hamburger Bahnhof, Berlin (2018); National Gallery of Australia, Canberra (2019); and Asia Society Museum, New York (2019).

Since 2007, Melati has been organising an annual Performance Art Laboratory Project as well as "Undisclosed Territory", a performance art event in Solo, Indonesia. In 2012, she founded "Studio Plesungan", an art space for performance artists to use as a laboratory. In 2017, she served as the Artistic Director of the Jakarta Biennale 2017. She currently lives and works between Gross Gleidingen, Germany and Solo, Indonesia.

About STPI

STPI is a creative workshop and contemporary art gallery based in Singapore. Established in 2002, STPI is committed to promoting artistic experimentation in the mediums of print and paper, making it one of the most cutting-edge destinations for contemporary art in Asia. STPI sits alongside National Gallery Singapore and the Singapore Art Museum as part of the national Visual Arts Cluster of leading institutions in the region.

STPI Creative Workshop pushes the boundaries of various print and papermaking techniques. Bolstered by specialised facilities and a highly qualified workshop team, STPI Creative Workshop produces unique collaborations with leading international artists to challenge conventions in art, explore new trajectories in their practice and share their experience with the public.

STPI Gallery fosters the exchange of ideas in contemporary art with its diverse exhibitions and public programme. The gallery hosts specially curated exhibitions of works produced in the STPI Creative Workshop and regularly participates in international art fairs. This enables it to nurture and sustain local and international interest in both its residency artists as well as the mediums of print and paper.