

9.

Jumaadi

Over the past 18 months Australian-Indonesian artist **Jumaadi** has been feeding his global wanderlust. In late 2013, fresh from his participation in the 5th Moscow Biennale, he divided his time between Amsterdam and Sydney. In mid-2014 he staged an installation and performance at Sydney's Mosman Art Gallery and later a solo show with William Mora Galleries in Melbourne, before leaving for the United States in October to take up an artist residency in North Carolina.

Jumaadi's peripatetic life has taken him from Sidoarjo, his birthplace in East Java, to Sydney in the late 1990s, where he gained a bachelor and masters of fine art at the National Art School. Since then his journeys as an artist have taken him across Central Australia, Asia and Europe, engaging in cross cultural workshops and along the way participating in the Istanbul Student International Triennale in 2010 and the Jakarta Biennale in 2011, as well as holding more than 20 solo exhibitions.

A multimedia artist who melds semi-autobiographical dream like watercolours with his own poetry, Jumaadi is also a video and performance artist, who incorporates traditional Indonesian shadow puppetry as part of his performances.

His subjects usually resemble primordial archetypes drawn from Ancient Greek or Indian fables - elemental motifs such as clouds, rain, trees and mountains serve as a backdrop for strange, wild beasts and mythological human figures. His characters are often physically entwined or carrying heavy sacs like weighted burdens on their backs. Often roughly executed, his paintings and drawings possess a visual immediacy and fluidity that arrest the viewer.

His paper cut outs and projected silhouettes allude to the struggles of agrarian cultures in the face of encroaching urbanisation and industrialisation. Yet, his narratives are deliberately loose and open to the viewer's interpretation. They operate like fragments of dreams or memories floating in the subconscious.

The artist's recent residency in the US led to a major exhibition at the Halsey Institute of Contemporary Art in South Carolina, which ran from October to December 2014. He is currently staging commercial shows in Wilmington in North Carolina and Brooklyn in New York.

Halsey Institute director **Mark Sloan** learnt about Jumaadi's work from a local shadow puppeteer



and was immediately struck by the poetry of his practice. "Jumaadi manages to create a self-contained universe of poetic imagery," remarks Sloan. "There is something wonderfully evocative, yet imprecise about his drawings. They reveal an imagination richly layered with poetic possibilities."

Whether painting works on paper or aluminium, carving wooden sculptures or creating video projections and performances, Jumaadi's multimedia works cross cultural boundaries and have a universal resonance.

The artist is represented by Watters Gallery in Sydney and **William Mora** in Melbourne. Mora remarks that: "His are ultimately optimistic works that make you smile while reflecting on the human condition. We look forward to seeing his continued ascendancy on the national and international art stage."

Victoria Hynes

9. Jumaadi

This page from left:

Jumaadi, *Head and Tail*, 2013.
Pigment on buffalo hide,
30 x 18cm.

Jumaadi, *Pineapple head*, 2013.
Pigment on buffalo hide,
38 x 18cm.

Opposite page:

Jumaadi, *In the hair*, 2013.
Pigment on buffalo hide,
29 x 26cm.

COURTESY: THE ARTIST AND WILLIAM MORA, MELBOURNE

