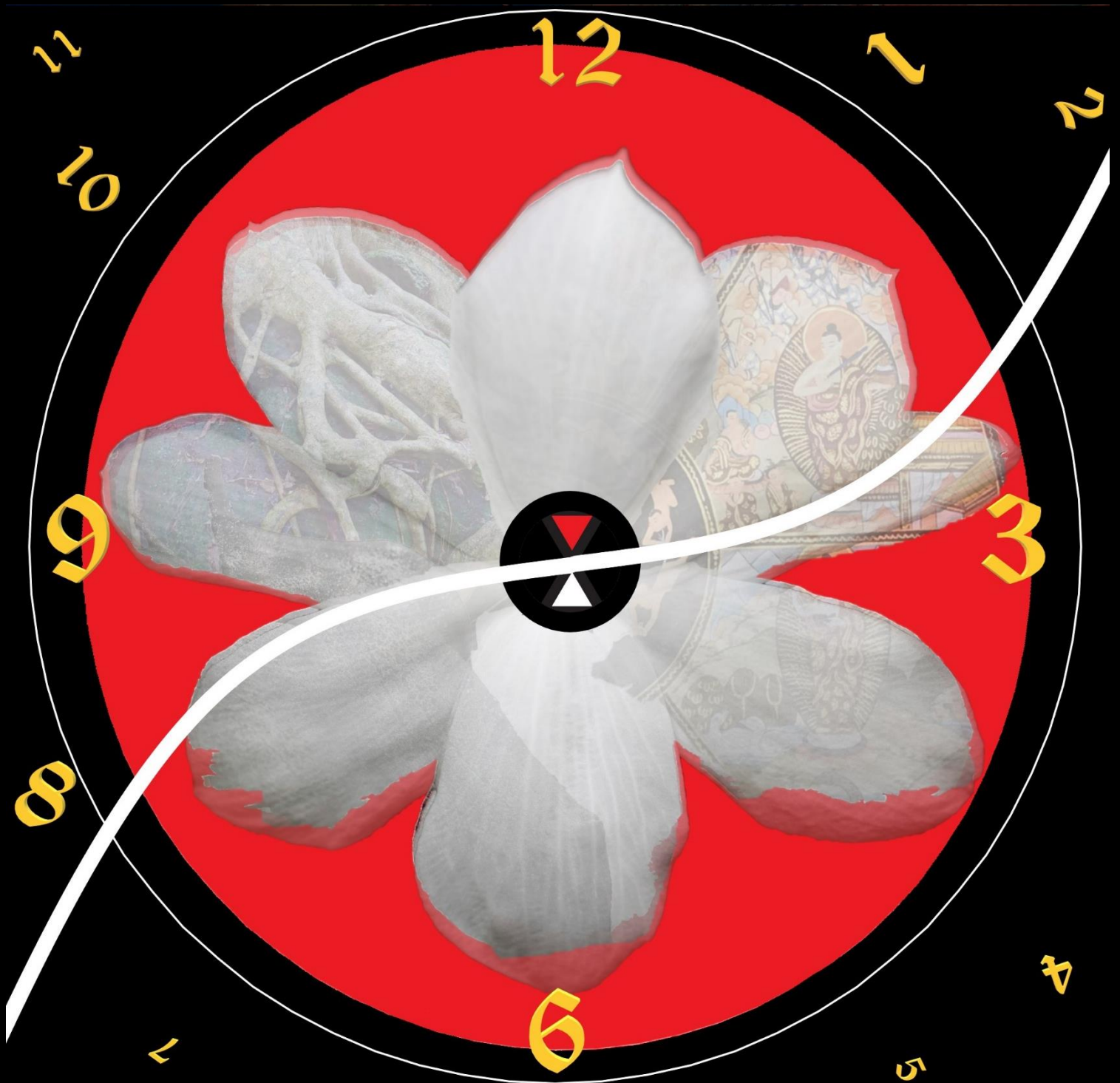


QUEER SOUTHEAST ASIA FOLIO SERIES . VOLUME I

Temp-'O'-rality Tempo in Orality





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Speaking about queerness throws us back to the old days, prompting us to trace the remnants, trail, and trial of our early ‘queer’ consciousness and affective attachments that have eventually constituted what and how we are now. We continue making the present by redefining and reshaping the past, and equally, by imagining the futures beyond what the existing optics allows us to comprehend. Bringing the visual works, poems, and short essays by Indonesian queer artists-activists-scholars, *Temp-‘O’-rality* highlights the big ‘O’ at its epicentre to evince the great depths of the past that call for perpetual reinvention. Importantly, this linguistic strategy also aims to highlight the interconnectivity between “temporality” (subjective time) and “orality” (verbal/written expressions). As these artists show, we speak about and understand ourselves, always from a particular point in time. Self is made and remade, stories are reinvented, and thus, the self continues to remain in the “re-” mode. Finally, these poems, comic strips, and collages invite us to start seeing the self as an open-ended terrain, crisscrossing with times, technologies, and memories.

Sincerely,
Hendri Yulius Wijaya



Once upon a time, I travelled to Jakarta from Bandung by train. It was only for about three hours, but it did not feel like that because I sat on a seat that faced towards Bandung. When the train was moving on the way to Jakarta, I was moving backward into the past. From time to time, the sight of cities, slums, rice fields, bridges, tunnels, and the men I used to like emerged from the window.



P took his time before he responded to my stories. He told me about his ex-boyfriend whom he liked for his chubby figure. Once when P and I had dinner, the ex-boyfriend called. P said that he was all alone.



M had his work exhibited outside and inside Indonesia. We had our e-mail correspondence which ended after he asked me to stop sending him e-mails. It had been awkward each time we bumped into each other at the café where I worked.



I met G at a secondhand bookshop where he worked part time. He was the first person to whom I confessed my romantic feelings. He rejected it gently, and we became good friends for many years. Our friendship lost its innocence that one time I spent the night in his place. Another day, he said that I would call him anyway whenever I have some difficulties.



Y is a part of a few memories I keep of my high school years. He liked to tease me. It was annoying until I understood that it was a peculiar form of attention. I liked to sniff the smell of cologne that he sprayed on his jacket. I have not heard from him again since graduation.

Where to begin a story in which I began to identify myself as gay?



Did it begin when I first came out to my friends from writer's circle?



Did it begin when I had my first crush in junior high?



Did it begin when I was more than happy to wear a mukena the time Mama asked me to join our family's communal pray?



Did it begin when I watched Keith and David from Six Feet Under?



Did it begin when I envisioned myself as a Sidney Sheldon's antiheroine?



Did it begin when I started to find pleasure in Papa's touch?



Andika Budiman lives in Bandung, West Java. Before the COVID-19 pandemic, he called himself a writer-shopkeeper. He wrote his experience working at a local library-bookshop-cafe in a letter to his best friend who was studying creative writing in the U.K. The letter was translated to English by the friend and got published in *The Letters Page* journal (2019). Andika used to make comics as a kid. After 20 ++ years of hiatus, he is making comics again. He asked his best friend to proofread the translation of these comics.



EACH TIME I COUNT, 7



Each Time I Count...

Karya ini berbicara banyak tentang sebuah ingatan yang membawa aku pada seorang asing yang sekonyong-konyong bertanya, “Kamu *belok* ya?” Sebetulnya, pertanyaan itu bukanlah hal yang rumit untuk dijawab. Jawabannya cukup berada di antara “ya” dan “tidak”. Namun, kala itu, aku hanya bisa tertegun lama. Pikiranku melayang mempertanyakan, “Apa itu *belok*? Seberapa jauh aku *belok* ketika aku tidak termasuk bagian yang *lurus* menurut si penanya?” Di antara putaran detik dan menit itu pula, aku sempatkan untuk bertanya pada perasaanku sendiri, “Apa aku harus tersinggung dengan pertanyaan itu? Jengkel? Marah?” Sampai akhirnya, aku hanya berkata dalam diam, membuat si asing itu larut dalam kebingungan.

Kini, ketika seseorang melontarkan pertanyaan yang sama, aku akan berbangga bilang bahwa aku adalah seseorang yang *belok*. Penghargaan akan “kebelokan”-ku menjadi tidak terbantahkan. Karya ini ingin menyampaikan bahwa kesadaran setiap masa bersamaan momen yang kulalui tidaklah selalu *lurus* seperti kebanyakan orang *lurus* lainnya. Mereka yang *lurus* selalu berusaha mengiming-imingi “linimasa yang heteronormatif” bahkan parahnya menjajalkannya secara paksa padaku. Bagiku, melantangkan “kebelokan” diri dan berani mengambil jalan yang berseberangan dan *nyeleneh* selayaknya pemikir trans* Jack Halberstam katakan dalam *Theorizing Queer Temporalities: A Roundtable Discussion* (2007, 182) “*that will not be my timeline*” adalah sebuah langkah penting. Mereka tidak lagi dapat menuntutku atas nama kata “kebahagiaan” di benak mereka atau pakem-pakem normatif lain yang mengungkung karena jalan masa yang kutempuh sudah sangat “berbelok-belok” dan penuh dengan momen “kebelokan” yang aku rangkul dan maknai di setiap keseharianku.



Each Time I Count...

This artwork captures a particular memory when one day a stranger asked me, “You’re not straight, right?” Back then, I could’ve answered it with a simple “yes” or “no”. Yet, the question left me speechless and stunned. My mind was racing and questioning, “What does it mean by being ‘not straight’? Does it mean I deviate from the right path by not going ‘straight’?” At that very second, I asked myself, “Should I feel offended by the question? Should I be upset? Or angry?”. To the very end, I left him hanging, his question unanswered, as I was too busy with my own thoughts.

Now, if I hear similar questions, I would say it with pride that I am indeed “not straight”. It’s undeniably me, and I shall embrace it. This artwork wants to show how unique and particular every moment in my life is, and thus, none of it is comparable to others’, especially those who are straight. People often tried to tempt me and even force me into heteronormative timeline. But for me, to declare myself as “not straight” and to be courageous in taking the opposite side of the majority are some important steps to take. I can never go through what supposedly other people’s life experiences, or in trans* theorist Jack Halberstam’s words articulated in *Theorizing Queer Temporalities: A Roundtable Discussion* (2007, 182), “...that will not be in my timeline.” Others cannot dictate how I should live each moment in my life based on their own perceptions of “happiness”. For my life is full of twists and turns, I cherish every turning point in my every day of being “not straight”.



Firdhan Aria Wijaya is currently working in one of universities in Central Java as a lecturer and researcher. He is fascinated with Halberstam's work on failure and the intersection of food justice and sexual diversity issues.



Tales as Old as Time

HIDE

I can hide you in Indonesian
with *ia* or *dia*

but I can't hide you in English.

Probolinggo. December 12, 2020.

ADAM

I am the Adam of no wounds
born from the books of Abraham
my rib should be a body with a hole
that breeds your missing child

I am the Adam of time
who grants dust to fill my cup,
lets curses seep into my coffee,
lets our bodies burned and crumbled

from ashes to ashes:

together.

Probolinggo. December 12, 2020.



TAKE AWAY

Our Father in Heaven
give me today a nice handsome guy
and forgive my stupidity last night
as I have absolved the sin of the rich daddy bear

who forgot to pay our dinner weeks ago

and blocked me on Whatsapp

Lead us through the path of temptations
to the heavenly desire:

outside the universe of words.

Amen.

Probolingo. December 12, 2020.



Stebby Julionatan is an Indonesian writer, based in Probolinggo, East Java (Jawa Timur, Jatim). In 2019, he received the Jatim Harmony Award from the East Java Governor, Khofifah Indar Parawansah to recognise his work in promoting multiculturalism through writing.





How many clocks does it take to show you that love has no periodicity

Born this Way



Musa is a 21-year-old poet and graphic designer who's currently studying English Literature at Diponegoro University. Living his life in an entirely conservative region has compelled him to deny his identity for years. Self-acceptance is a long journey for him. To express his identity, he does a lot of writing and visual arts experiments.



Lencana

dan waktu beku

*maka selengkap itulah aku mulai menuju
mengeja tanya demi tanya yang mengular
meruwat tanda demi tanda yang berulang
satu.. dua.. satu..*

*tanpa henti
pegang kendali atas nyali
peluk kemudi atas diri*

dan waktu beku

*tanpa buru-buru yang keliru
lepas setubuh kuluruh penuh
deret ritus yang menggenggam utuh
sejak dogma berkawan kuasa
dan kebenaran menjelma atas nama segala*

maka waktu bebat-mampat

*meski penghakiman nodai altar
dan singgasana dosa berupa pesanan
aku moksa sepanjang putaran
berkencan dengan diri, menelusuri hati
diselimuti restu dentang tak lekang lekang,
pangkuan ingatan juga lekukan penerimaan*

*sampai senoktah lencana
menautkan dada yang menggumam
; magenta-kuning-sian
membuka ketakbernamaan kesekian*

*dan waktu larut-
melangut*

*kemudian kita merupa laut
yang di palungnya tumbuh beribu*

leburan aku yang terus melaju



Paraphernalia

(translated from the Indonesian by Athallah F. Rafardhanu)

and the time is numb

*so thorough that I decide to go through
shifting from question after question
projecting sign after sign
one..two..one..
no halt
controlling the guts
embracing the wheel of myself*

and the time is numb

*left the wrong rush
lay my whole body and let it melt through
the row of the rhythm that holds full
since the dogma is so powerful
and the truth stares on behalf of all*

then the time is stuck

*despite the judgements disgracing the altar
and the sin of throne arises as a bucket list
I'm latching liberty all around me
dating myself, seeking bits of my heart
shielded in the blessing of a timeless chime,
the cradle of memory and the twisted acceptance*

*until the paraphernalia
linked the mumbling chest
; magenta-yellow-cyan
embracing the birth of the umpteenth unknown*

*and the time now melt-
longing something*

*then we emerge through the sea
with trough that grows thousands of
the melting me that goes through*



Himas Nur, born in Semarang on 2 December 1995, is a writer of poetry and essay. Her first-single poetry anthology, “Bianglala, Komidi Putar dan Negeri Dongeng” was published in 2013. Her works have appeared in joint anthologies and mass media platforms, such as Media Indonesia, Suara Merdeka, Arus Pelangi’s Outzine, Panggung Minoritas’s Zine, Indoproggress.com, Remotivi.or.id, Suarakita.org, Qbukatabu.org, and Pamflet.or.id. She is currently pursuing Cultural and Media Studies in the graduate school of the University of Gadjah Madah. Her Instagram account handle is @himasnur. Email: himasnur6@gmail.com.

Athallah Rafardhanu, born in Semarang, began his adventurous, endless, and intimate journey right after his college graduation, 2 years ago. Now, he is the founder of Trans Men Talk Indonesia, fellow of Amplifying Trans Advocacy by Asia Pacific Transgender Network, and was once the Main Coordinator of Women’s March Yogyakarta 2020. He loves mixing and matching words into a so-called-poem, and you can find some of his mix and match words in his Instagram account @rafardhanu. Email: rafamarikerja@gmail.com.



Post~

motherland:

an orphan

fails to be model minority

subtitles are not merely a one-inch barrier

as the global south always shoulders the post

post-colonial. post-modern. post-humanist.

post-coital.

post-post:

the world is post-orphanage

progress narratives for the homeless

we have never been pre.



Hendri Yulius is co-editor of *Queer Southeast Asia* and author of “*Intimate Assemblages: The Politics of Queer Identities and Sexualities in Indonesia*” (Palgrave Macmillan, 2020) and a poetry book in Bahasa Indonesia, “*Stonewall Tak Mampir di Atlantis*” (EA Books, 2020).