Indonesian Visual Arts Manifests

Visual arts is a field of work and expertise, equals to other fields of science, have its own rule and its own field of autonomy. Problems on perception developments, thoughts, and interpretations on visual artworks should accordingly prioritize the achievement of visual arts discipline.

We defend and support fully the freedom of interpretation and judgement on visual artworks, in the same way we defend and support fully the freedom to create visual artworks. Our position on the freedom of creation and interpretation upon visual artworks is based on the spirit of appreciation on the dignity, rights, and human freedom in a mature, civilized, and democratic society.

We refuse any judgement on visual artworks, using wanton views and norms not related to visual arts discipline and expertise. Even more when such interpretation and judgement asserts itself as the only truth albeit with a label of “representing the voice and interest of majority”.

We fully defend the freedom of expression, but not as a reason and or method to threaten, punish, impair, or even abrogate/annihilate the freedom of expression of others.

We refuse any method and effort that abusively see and treat the creation of a visual artwork as a criminal act.

We fully defend the right and freedom of every party to conduct various activity, in uniting the visual artworks with the public –exhibitions, shows, discussions, publications, et cetera–because we believe that the people of Indonesia have all the rights to savor and to appreciate visual artworks in a free and open social space.

We felt deeply concern and call forth on parties that hitherto has been silence –allowing the violence attack on visual artworks and the practice of visual arts. We demand the role of government –in this context the Ministry of Culture and Tourism of Indonesia, the Ministry of Education, and other related bodies of government– and also institutions of visual arts education to defend the validity of Indonesian visual arts as a field of expertise with a scientific authority and can be practiced in an open and free social space.

We believe that every parties involved in and work hard for the development and progress of Indonesian visual arts and all its supporting institutions –artists, writers, critics, curators, models, artists community, collectors, gallery administrator, auctioneers, mass media, visual arts magazine, arts journals and so on– are able to manage its own life as a part of civilized and democratics Indonesian society.

As a responsible citizen, we have the capability to govern our own affair. We will gather to unite our mind in uniting ethical principle on visual arts practices that guarantees the development and progress of Indonesian Visual Arts amidst our own public as well as amidst the progress of world’s visual arts.

Cemara Galeri-Kafe
Jakarta, 15 Februari 2006

1. Enin Supriyanto – writer, visual arts curator
2. Rifky Effendy – writer, visual arts curator
3. Aminudin Th Siregar – writer, visual arts curator
4. Hendro Wiyanto – writer, visual arts curator
5. Tisna Sanjaya – artist
6. Irawan Karseno – artist
7. Arief Ash Shiddiq – writer, journalist
8. Tita Rubi – artist
9. Bambang Bujono
10. Nirwan Dewanto – sastrawan, editor
11. Farah Wardhani
12. Dst
13. Dst