

KINGS Artist Run acknowledges the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people of the Kulin Nation as the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we operate. We offer our respect to Elders both past and present and extend this offer to all First Nations people.

KINGS

Natasha Tontey
WA'ANAK WITU
WATU

MAY TO JUNE
19.05.22–11.06.22

Artist Run

Established in 2003, KINGS Artist-Run provides a location for contemporary art practice, supporting distinctive experimental projects by artists at all stages of their careers.

Open 12-5pm Thursday,
Friday, Saturday
69 Capel Street,
West Melbourne VIC 3003

Natasha Tontey
Wa'anak Witu Watu

Researched and speculated on the North Sulawesi where once belief that the first person was a woman and gave birth through a stone, Wa'anak Witu Watu investigates the fiction, myth, and cosmology of the Minahasan and their relation to the geo entity stone. The indigenous practice of Minahasa tribe—where humans celebrate their form of communication with stone—is understood as only a pre-institutionalised religion practice and categorised as animist belief. However, for people living there they see themselves practicing monotheism. There are almost no boundaries between Life and Non-Life in Minahasa cosmology.

The stone-revering Minahasa were organised according to the gift economy of Mapalus, which was based on volunteerism, kinship with nature and mutual aid. According to native cosmology, the first person ever to exist was a woman who gave birth through a stone. With the presence of colonialists from the West and their interactions with the locals, the Minahasans evolved to a stone-based exchange system that was informed by a mixture of their ancient spiritual beliefs and the Christian-influenced capitalist ideas.

In this work, the dynamic of Minahasan cosmology is explored alongside its potential to imagine an alternative world where the phenomena of anthropocentrism practically does not exist. Seeing the dynamics of Minahasa worldview through the perspective of digital culture, speculating on its potential for imagining an alternative society based on a reciprocity that brings together animate and inanimate realms.

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Mawale Movement

Natasha Tontey is an artist living and working in Yogyakarta, Indonesia. Her artistic practice predominantly explores the fictional accounts of the history and myths surrounding 'manufactured fear.' In her practice, she observes any possibilities of other futures that are projected not from the perspective of major and established institutions, but a subtle and personal struggle of the outcasted entities and beings. Her work has been shown at Asian Art Biennale 2021, Hamburger Bahnhof Museum (Berlin), transmediale 2021, Performance Space 2021, Other Futures 2021, Singapore International Film Festival 2021, Kyoto Experiment 2021, Asian Film Archive (2021), amongst others. In 2020 she received the HASH Award from ZKM and Akademie Schloss-Solitude and is currently a fellow for Human Machine of the Junge Akademie at Akademie der Künste Berlin 2021–2023.

Natasha Tontey, *Wa'anak Witu Watu*, 2021, 24:37.