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Sinta Tantra on Designing iD's Front Cover

UK-based but of Balinese descent, Sinta Tantra returned to Indonesia in November for her first solo exhibition in the country. Presented by ISA Art Advisory, the event showed a classic collection of Sinta's paintings, characterised by geometric abstraction and bright colours. She chose a particular painting from her show for our front cover this edition.

STORY BY Natasha Gan

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PHOTO BY Bagus Tri Laksono



Why did you choose “Tabuh Tabuhan in Prussian (Colin McPhee)” for our front cover?

[The painting] is in a new style that I’ve been developing. I’m known for colourful, bright works, but for the past six to eight months I’ve been working on a style that is more linear and minimalist.

Where do you get your inspiration from?

Quite often: music and literature. I like how music and literature can add another layer to my work. **My recent show ‘A House in Bali’** was named after a book by Colin McPhee. It’s set in Bali during the magical period of the 1920s

and 1930s. I always imagine that period to be avant-garde in many ways. People looked forward to the future with optimism. Fashion in that era is also an inspiration.



Are there any artists whose works you especially admire?

From the West, I would say **Sol Lewitt**. His works are conceptual and rather graphic, much like mine. When you buy one of his wall paintings, you don't just buy the painting itself; you also buy the instructions on how to make the painting. Reducing painting into a series of instructions that anyone – not necessarily the artist – can do anytime, anywhere, helped me think outside the box. On the Indonesian side, Nyoman Lempad is quite fascinating. He drew traditional Balinese stories that are very clean, with a lot of white space around them. He trained as an architect and sculptor, so his understanding of space comes from a more architectural background. I'm the opposite.

Have you considered expanding to other streams of art?

I do create some **sculptures**. I collaborated with a friend of mine, Nick Hornby. I dip my toe into different forms of art, but I enjoy walking the fine line between 2D and 3D and seeing how far you can stay in between the two. I think you can experiment more with public artworks. With paintings, you can either be very quiet or very loud. With public arts, there's the need for it to compete with its surrounding.



Walk us through your creative process.

The thinking and the doing happen at the same time. The concept also happens as I make art. I usually start everything on the computer, and I translate that into a physical space, like a canvas. I'm interested in a preinternet art, and a lot of my work has a nostalgic feel to it; it's daydreaming into the past and imagining what that would have been like.

What's next on your agenda?

I've never had my works displayed in a **museum space** before – that's one area I would love to explore. It's the purest white cube that you can be in as an artist. I also want to be able to foster more links between here [the UK] and Indonesia. I want to work there more.



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ABOUT NATASHA GAN



Natasha is a writer with 5+ years of experience and a digital marketing professional currently based in Toronto, Canada. You can view her past works on <http://nevagan.com>.

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