



the Island Gallery

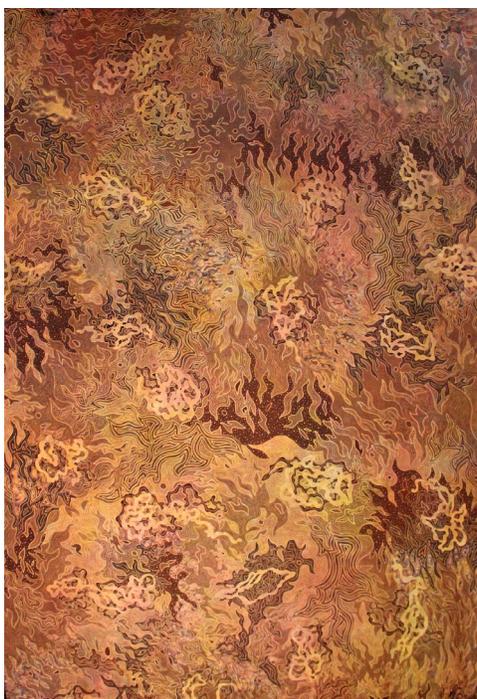
April 26, 2013. For immediate release.

PRESS RELEASE

The Island Gallery
400 Winslow Way E., #120
Bainbridge Island, WA 98110
206-780-9500/www.theislandgallery.net

For more information, contact
Susan Swannack-Nunn, Owner
ssn@theislandgallery.net

Event:



Isnia

Symbols of Nature & Man:

A Journey of 40,000 Years

May 3 - 24, 2013

Previews Begin Friday, April 26th

Artists' Reception Friday, May 10th, 6-8 pm

Featuring in concert

Peter Spencer & Friends



Event Times:

Friday, April 26: Previews begin.

First Friday, May 3: Official opening, featuring Peter Spencer & Friends in concert.

Friday, May 10th, 6-8 pm: reception for the artists.

About the Event:

Currently in exhibition at the Textile Museum, Washington, D.C., these extraordinary artists will travel across the country to visit Bainbridge Island for an adjunct showing of their major works. (The D.C. exhibit, *Out of Southeast Asia: Art that Sustains*, opened Friday, April 12th and runs through October 13th.)

Commentary on the exhibit from *The Washington Post*:

The exhibit, which opened Friday, is the final one before the Textile Museum relocates to the George Washington University campus as the cornerstone of its new museum in 2014. It centers on Indonesia and Laos and examines how four contemporary artists draw inspiration from ancient artistic techniques in a way that also allows them to customize and reinterpret the art — and help keep it relevant.

The 42-item exhibition pairs handmade batiks and ethnic weaving, and includes 17 pieces from the museum's collection to help demonstrate the linkages through time.

There are over 1,000 ethnic groups in Southeast Asian, and most of them have some sort of textile tradition, says exhibit curator Mattiebelle Gittinger. A woman on the north coast of Java in a dark blue sarong is in mourning. Certain motifs in blue and white are worn in another region for weddings. The textiles are "made to be specific. They have a great deal of validity," says Gittinger. "When contemporary artists go in search of inspiration, they sense this validity and that's what they respond to."

The husband-and-wife team Agus Ismoyo and Nia Fliam focus primarily on Indonesian batik (a pattern created by covering parts of the cloth with removable wax to keep them from being dyed). Batik motifs are politically and spiritually powerful and the couple uses the Kawung (a cosmological symbol of overlapping circles), Parang (knife) and Tree of Life throughout the smooth commercially woven cloths that provide the foundation for their patterning. They experiment with techniques: Appliqué and layers of cloth are melded together to create the varicolored forms in the hanging piece "Extended Family"; "Trash Can of Tradition" uses Javanese puppet figures and the Kawang and Parang motifs to express fear over losing the underpinnings of Indonesian cultural history.

Excerpted from: "Textile Museum displays ethnic weaving from Southeast Asia before its move to GW campus"
Lonnae O'Neal Parker, *The Washington Post*, April 12, 2013



About the Artists:

ISNIA stands for the collaborative team of Agus Ismoyo and Nia Fliam, renowned for their intricate, nuanced and time-intensive textiles. They are widely acknowledged as the first artists in Indonesia to go beyond the boundaries of modern batik painting and extensively explore the medium of Javanese batik as contemporary textile art. Ismoyo's ancestors produced batik for the royal court of Surakarta in Central Java; Fliam was born in the United States and studied at the Pratt Institute, New York, traveling to Indonesia in 1983 to study batik, where she has lived since. In 1985 they established the batik studio Brahma Tirta Sari ("Creativity is the source of all knowledge") in Yogyakarta, Indonesia.

Embracing artistic traditions and philosophical ideas that span continents, Ismoyo and Fliam have conducted numerous workshops in Indonesia, Africa, the United States (including Bainbridge Island, Washington), and Australia, working in collaboration with Australian Aboriginals, Native Americans and Asian artists. Their collaborative work in Australia, Africa and Indonesia has had the sponsorship of the Ford Foundation and the American Embassy in Indonesia. One notable collaboration, with a group of Aboriginal artists from the Utopia Community in Alice Springs, Northern Territory, Australia, began in March 1999 and continued for more than two years, producing 20 large batik art pieces subsequently exhibited around the world, including a 2005 exhibit at The Island Gallery, Bainbridge Island. This series, along with the consistent quality and scope of their entire body of work, has garnered Ismoyo and Fliam critical acclaim for successfully exploring their own creativity while pursuing a broader understanding of the value, role and meaning of tradition in the development of world culture.

Ismoyo and Nia explain:

"Our world culture is, in fact, one, and has arisen from the strength of 'budi' or human intelligence, and the spirit of humankind motivates this intelligence. This spirit is the oneness or unity we speak of. In any creative work, an awareness of our position within its framework is of utmost importance. With this in mind, it is our commitment in our creative work to devote ourselves to the work of the spirit in exploring aspects of the heritage of our world culture and its role in the shaping of contemporary culture. At the heart of it our ancient cultural traditions are the roadmap of the future."

The duo has exhibited extensively in Indonesia and at many prestigious locations around the world. Most recently they were recipients of a Fulbright Scholarship, which brought them to Michigan in 2007-2008. During this time they presented "Fiber Face", a very well-received exhibition of their works, at the Textile Museum in Washington, D.C., where their work is part of the permanent collection. This exhibition has also shown at the Netzorg and Kerr Gallery, Richmond Center for the Visual Arts, Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo, Michigan, at the Indonesian Embassy in Washington, D.C., here at The Island Gallery, and at the cultural center of Taman Budaya, Yogyakarta, Java, Indonesia.



Event Location:

The Island Gallery
400 Winslow Way E., #120
Bainbridge Island, WA 98110

Underground parking available at The Winslow off Ericksen Avenue.

(Updates always available on our blog: www.theislandgallery-artblog.blogspot.com)

For more information, images, or to interview the artists, please contact:

ssn@theislandgallery.net

206-780-9500

www.theislandgallery.net/shop/

www.theislandgallery-artblog.blogspot.com