

PRESS RELEASE



Turmeric, Kencur, and the Complexity of Women's Position during a Crisis in "Jamu Ngatiyem"



© Syska La Veggie

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Goethe-Institut Indonesien presents "Jamu Ngatiyem", by Sidoarjo-based artist Syska La Veggie, in the inaugural GoetheHaus Foyer exhibition series, running from 2-27 August 2023. This mixed media installation addresses the complexity of women's position and the life strategies used to survive in a crisis.

"Jamu Ngatiyem" is the first work to be exhibited in the GoetheHaus Foyer exhibition series after an open call. The exhibition can be visited in the centre courtyard of Goethe-Institut Jakarta from 12 - 8 p.m. WIB (closed on Mondays).

"The GoetheHaus Foyer exhibition series stems from a desire to continue to encourage the use of spaces at Goethe-Institut Jakarta, specifically the foyer at the GoetheHaus performance venue, as a place for artists to showcase their work, interact with the public, and circulate new discourses," said Dr. Ingo Schöningh, Head of Cultural Programmes at Goethe-Institut Indonesien.

Taking the form of a brewed *jamu* depot installation, "Jamu Ngatiyem" talks about different tragedies with similar experiences. The monetary crises during the Reformation in 1998 and Covid-19 Pandemic became its own tragedies that affected women, which affected women through violence and heavier burdens.

The work also draws on the experience of Syska's mother, Ngatiyem, who once sold brewed *jamu* to help support the family economy. Syska adopted her mother's name as the title of the work.

There is a similar experience between Syska and her mother. Syska's mother grew in the construction of Orde Baru (New Order) with the country's patriarchy through *Ibuisme* or "motherhood", while Syska lives in the era of post-Reformation, growing with resilience and feminism ideology. "As fellow women and female workers who support the family economy during different crisis periods, *jamu* becomes a metaphor, medium, and visual expression in this artwork," stated Syska.

Jamu itself means prayer and healing. Both Syska and her mother, similarly, live as a "sandwich generation" caught in the trap of upward (i.e. parents) and downward (i.e. children) family responsibilities.

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In this artwork, Syska provides *jamu* made from turmeric and kencur as well as suggestive words that serve as the title of each *jamu*, such as *Jamu Tolak Rasisme*, *Jamu Galian Demokrasi*, *Jamu Tuntas Patriarki*, *Jamu Anti Korupsi*, *Jamu Sehat Normal Baru*, as well as two new variants presented specifically for this exhibition series. In addition, there are also complementary herbs such as honey, kolesom grapes, lime, and eucalyptus candy. At certain times, Syska will do a performance art of brewing *jamu* according to visitors' choices while wearing full PPE clothing.

"Jamu Ngatiyem" is the result of a six-week residency program undertaken by Syska in Yogyakarta together with Ruang MES 56 and Cemeti-Institute for Art and Society.

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About Goethe-Institut

The Goethe-Institut is the Federal Republic of Germany's cultural institute, active worldwide. We promote the study of German abroad and encourage international cultural exchange. We also provide a comprehensive image of Germany through information on German political, social and cultural life. Our various cultural and educational programs support intercultural dialogue and enable cultural participation. These various programs strengthen the structures of civil society and support global mobility.

About Syska La Veggie

Syska La Veggie, birth name Syska Liana, is a visual artist working in various media: painting, drawing, embroidery, graphic arts, mixed media, video art, and performance art. Most of her works address women's issues, particularly gender equality and resistance to patriarchal culture. Together with several female artists in East Java, Syska manages Perempuan Pengkaji Seni, a forum for women to convey their perspectives through art and to build a more critical, diverse, and equal art ecosystem in the context of gender equality. Since 2019, Syska has served as Program Director of Biennale Jatim.

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