



The Ballad of Treasures
Performance
2004

Can we, the children of time, finally be alone, exist as we are, when our minds are set free from all borders, borders that place us within the drawers of identifications, pressures of historical and political belongings?

Melati is dragged along by an old carriage drawn by tow horses. She soon lets go of the rope that ties her to the carriage, gets up and sings an Indonesian patriotic song. The performance is about obstacles the world imposes upon an individual depending on nationality, race and historical and political baggage.

Duration: 15 minutes
Performed at the NMAC Foundation, Cadix, Spain 2004.

My Fingers are the Triggers
Performance
2007

*The dreams come to me though my eyes are open
I hear nothing but my silent self,
The sound I hear echoes in the cubic room
The silence I hear, grows louder
Through the soundscapes, my ego becomes public
And the white empty ceiling above me
Becomes a platform of a picture
I draw with my fingers and form with air
My arms drive movement and motion
I do not command them to stop
Telling me what is going on
Until I enter the terminal of
These sleepless nights.*

This work is inspired by the psychological pressure and emotional disorder that impacts on physical resistance and personal endurance. Melati's ten fingers are connected with black industrial rubber strings, which are attached at the ceiling. She moves in concentrated gestures, while trying to keep the hands in a low position to the maximum stretch of the rubber.

Duration: 6 hours
Performed at the Insomnia, La Nuit Blanche, Le Générateur, Paris 2007.



ALÉ LINO
Performance
2003

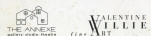
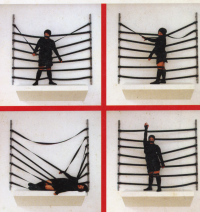
Ale Lino is based on Melati's investigation of transsexual shamanic customs in South Sulawesi tribal spiritualism. The study seeks to understand the process of gender non-identification through its spiritual practices and the obliteration of physicality and its conventions by accessing an altered state of consciousness. In order to create a 'silence among the bustle' — a mental gateway between human beings and the Gods — Melati uses a plinth and a pole to reach the desired state of transcendence.

Duration: 2 hours
Performed at the 50th Venice Biennale 2003; As soon as possible PAC, Milar, Friedericianum, Kassel 2003; Navigato Life-Art, Newcastle, UK 2006; Kaaskoden Kondensator Basel, 2006.

Boundaries That Lie
Performance
2004

In an attempt at observing and charting my emotional landscape, I intend to focus on my body and force it to experience the details of physical seduction by using objects and materials that point out the sources of anxiety present in my body.

Duration: 2 hours
Performed at the MAMTA Herford Germany 2004, and Corneli Art House Jogjakarta 2005.



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**Melati Suryodarmo:
Solitaire**

The Annexe Studio
The Annexe, Central Market
Exhibition dates
10 April – 27 April 2008

Opening hours: 11 am – 7 pm daily
(Closed on Monday)

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With thanks to:



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MELATI SURYODARMO
solitaire



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Solitaire is Melati Suryodarmo's (b 1969, Indonesia) first solo exhibition in Kuala Lumpur, showcasing selected documentation of her performances in video and photography. Recognised today for her long, intense and highly physical performances, Suryodarmo uses her body to create what she calls 'a concentrated level of intensity'. She has performed widely all over the world, with recent participation in the Venice Biennale Dance Festival (2007), eBent 07 Festival in Barcelona, Accione 06 in Madrid, 15th International Electronic Art Festival — Video Brasil, Sao Paulo, Brasil 2005, International Performance Art Festival in Toronto (2004), as well as shows in New York, Paris, Barcelona, Bali, Singapore and Sydney.

Melati's work can be traced back to two significant avant garde lineages — Butoh dance and Sixties Performance Art. From 1994–2001, she attended the Hochschule fuer Bildende Kuenste in Braunschweig, Germany, studying under renowned Butoh dancer Anzu Furukawa and acclaimed performance artist Marina Abramovic.

Melati discovers in these two disparate traditions a shared concern in their artistic endeavour for locating the intersection between corporeal presence and mental transcendence.

As such, the conscription of the artist's body as a means of expression becomes a fitting vehicle for exploring the fluid borders between the body and its environment. The body is employed as a theatrical canvas, encapsulating the tragicomedy of our contemporary experiences, exaggerating its existential conundrums, and perhaps through its articulation, offering some form of catharsis.

In her performances, Melati engages in seemingly redundant actions — dancing on butter, communicating with rabbits, pumping balloons to the tune of Elvis Presley — combining both her arresting physicality with the foibles of her struggle. The result is often absurd though no less heroic, as we come to see her fragility redeemed by the tenacity of her will in what Emanuel Nobille Mino calls her 'poetic of overcoming'.

Simon Soen



Perception of Patterns in Timeless Influence Performance 2007

Perception of Patterns in Timeless Influence is a 5-hour performance where a *tableau vivant* reminiscent of baroque chiaroscuro painting is enacted. Accompanied by seven white rabbits, Melati performs in a box with a glass front that references both a large painting and a museum vitrine.

The box is placed towards the back of the room allowing the audience a frontal perspective of the work. Experimenting with perception psychology and referencing the mythological significance of the rabbit in different cultures, Melati examines the possibilities of inter-species communication.

At intervals, an opera singer and a violinist enter the room and perform the aria *Blute Nur* from Bach's *Mattheus Passion* in front of the box, directing it to the artist. The music creates an intimate connection between the three, and by repeating this pattern their wordless communications deepen throughout the duration of the performance, painting a picture that expresses a certain melancholia and introversion, but not without its humorous and absurdist undertones.

Duration: 5 hours
Performed at the Lilith Performance Studio, Malmö, Sweden 2007.



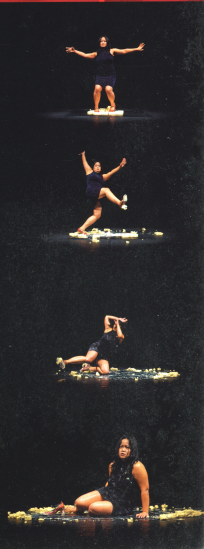
EXERGIE — Butter Dance Performance 2003

*There are moments
Which I never expect to happen
Which explode when I lose my senses
Which create emptiness when I hope for fulfillment*

*Accident is just one moment
Silence is just one moment
Happiness is just one moment
This is just one moment
Of being caught by the moment*

Wearing a tight black dress and red shoes, Melati walks in and steps on 20 blocks of butter. Accompanied by Makassar drum beats, she starts dancing, then falling, crashing on the floor, gets up and remains continuously on the verge of standing, slipping and falling on the greasy dance floor. *Exergie — butter dance* is based on Melati's interest in dealing with the body and its temporality.

Duration: 20 minutes
Drama: Dengi Bani Sita and Khaerudin (dancing Makassar) recorded for CD.
Performed at *Visible Difference* — an event, Hebbel Theater, Berlin 2002; *Soil + Places*, Performance Origines, Orange, Cologne 2008; *Performance Passing Through*, Geddi, Stuttgart 2008; von well-rhoe zu rot, Luther Turm, Cologne 2001; *Marking The Territory*, Irish Museum of Modern Art, Dublin, Ireland 2001; *Festa dell'arte*, Acquafredda, Roma, Italy 2001; 4th International Performance Festival, Osaka, Cologne 2003; *Live Art for Tokyo* Caracal Teatro Nacional de São João, Porto Portugal 2003; *7x11rd*, International Performance Art Festival, Toronto, Canada 2004; *Navigate — live art*, BALTIC & Studio, Gateshead Newcastle, UK 2005; 15th International Electronic Art Festival — Video Brasil, Sao Paulo, Brasil 2005; *Exergie — Butter Dance*, Gosthe Institut, Jakarta, Indonesia 2006; *Exergie — Butter Dance*, Performance Space, Sydney, Australia 2008; *Flying Circus Project*, Theatreworks, Singapore 2007.



The Promise Performance 2002

In a red dress, with her black hair trailing for more than 11 meters across the floor, Melati sits cradling a cow liver. This organ is commonly associated with the concealment of problems. The work mixes images of elegance and monotony and touches upon the transformation of the artist's personality into an archetypal mother whose boundaries of affection are unlimited.

Duration: 3 hours
Performed at *Tiansan02*, Franzesfestung, Bolzano 2002; *Galeria Futura* Prague 2004; *Origines* Cologne 2004; *Machine House* Essen 2004; *Carnet Art House* Jogjakarta 2006; *Accione* at Conde Duque, Madrid 2006.



I LOVE YOU Performance 2007

I Love You contends for a deeper significance, of its fragility and ambiguity, in regards to the feelings that humans may express verbally. Though we are used to saying "I love you" to express our feeling of love to somebody else, in this performance I intend to deal with and question the meaning of the language I am using. I also want to explore, on a subconscious level, the collective psyche of being a woman. For example, I use my personal experiences to relate to other people's situations. I call this my egocentric point of view.

On the other hand, I realise that my past experiences may be dissimilar or irrelevant to what others are going through. Because of this, my ego is challenged and also expanded, forcing me to let go my assumptions, opening myself to new perceptions. So when I use the expression "I love you", it is often stated with questions about its value. Can the phrase convey the fullness of my desires and expectations? Does it contain my sincerest intention towards the person I love?

How has the role of my past experience shaped my utterance?

Relationships between human beings are probably about the replacement process between egos, compelling us to do away with our preconceptions that we have accrued from our past experiences. It is through this process that I believe we can build new bridges, seek new connections and progress beyond individual limits.

Duration: 2 – 3 hours
Performed at eBent07 off-Angle, Barcelona, Spain 2007.

