



A SLICE OF THE GODS

The Month of *Kartika*, when Beauty Fascinates

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[click to continue](#)



KOMANEKA FAMILY

The Komaneka Family: a culture of honoring guests

...the warm human element of the Komaneka Family that makes the magic come alive...

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[click to continue](#)



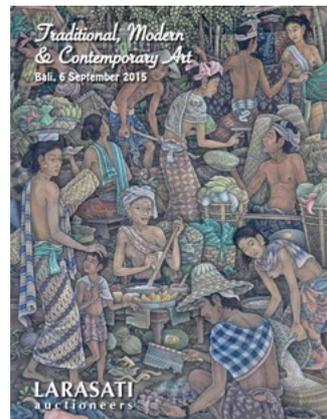
KOMANEKA FINE ART GALLERY

Madé Sumadiyasa

...In his work, there is always an inner turmoil driven by a fascination with the natural and supernatural heritage of Bali...

Madé Sumadiyasa, is a very dynamic Balinese artist, acknowledged as one of the most talented abstract painters in Indonesia. His painting is about color and movement arising from the legacy of Balinese tradition. His work emphasizes the beauty of nature and the cosmos with great authenticity. This has earned him recognition both locally and internationally.

[click to continue](#)



WHAT TO READ

Traditional, Modern & Contemporary Art

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[click to continue](#)

A SLICE OF THE GODS



The Month of *Kartika*, when Beauty Fascinates

*My goddess, who like the mists of the month of Kapat,
you are truly beautiful, dazzling to behold;
You do not know the heart adrift because of love,
sad because it is always longing;
My goddess, this is a poem and a painting,
a message from one immersed in savoring beauty,
If only you would accept it, I beg you to read it and feel it,
and unite with me in tears. (Anyang Nirartha) ¹*

The holy priest Mpu Nirartha, who came from Java to Bali in the 16th century, is the author of the poem *Anyang Nirartha*. According to legend, he traveled the coasts of Bali, stopping here and there to create hermitages and write poetry, particularly in the month of *Kartika*, also called *Sasih Kapat*, which falls around October.

Sasih Kapat is the time chosen by lovers of beauty to inscribe tender shoots of beauty on *lontar* leaves or stone. The *punduk*, the fragrant flower of the *pandan* tree, found abundantly on the sea

coast, quickens the imagination to create prose or paintings. And this *punduk* flower is offered to the goddess, the beloved, with the help of birds who carry it to her. *Sasih Kapat* is a season full of colors, full of flowers that blossom and fill the air with their perfume.

Old Javanese literature (*Kawi*) records the progress of the seasons with striking lines. In the month of *Srawana* (July), the weather is bright and dry, and trees begin to lose their freshness. In *Bhadrawada* (August) the air becomes cool and trees shed their leaves. September (*Asuji*) the season turns hot and there is little rain; the rivers shrink, the roads are dusty, and the birds weep. In the month of *Kartika*, light rains begin to fall. There is the sound of distant thunder, and all sorts of colorful flowers burst into bloom. In *Margasira* (November), seeds burst forth and clouds fill the sky, yet still the sun feels hot. The fields begin to be wet in December (*Posya*) because of heavy rain, and in *Phalguna* (January) the sun remains hidden and often the oxen are muddy. In March (*Caitra*) the rain skips from place to place, while in April (*Waisakha*) the trees begin to flower—all but the *Angsana* flower which waits for the last rains. In the month of *Jiyestha* (May) comes the sound of thunder, like the words of parting lovers. And in June (*Asadha*) the poets shiver and moan, as if ill.

Mpu Tanakung, another poet, calls the month of *Kartika* the “season of life” (*amreta masa*) when all is lively and filled with vitality. His poem *Bhasa Amreta Masa*, a lyrical work in *Kawi* in praise of the beauty of *Kartika*, especially when the moon is perfect in the sky. But Mpu Tanakung treats the beauty of *Kartika* as the cause of lovers’ hearts screaming with desire for the beloved, the Goddess of Beauty. He depicts the devastation of the heart of a poet longing for his lover, and then describes his letter:

*When the full moon of Kartika, with the sound of distant thunder,
when the moonlight waters the Angsoka flowers with a brilliant glow,
when the beautiful song of the kuwong birds pierces the heart,
when I think of your beauty and loveliness, o Goddess of mine.*

Such is the beauty of the month of *Kartika*, when the trees are in flower, butterflies fill the air, and the senses awaken—a time when all lovers of beauty wait to write and make pictures of this beauty.

Original Article by : Wayan Agus

English Translation by : Diana Darling

¹Agastia, IBG., 2009. *Anyang Nirartha, ajaran Yoga Sastra*. Denpasar: Yayasan Dharma Sastra

[back to Top](#)

KOMANEKA FAMILY

The Komaneka Family: a culture of honoring guests

The secret of Bali's famous hospitality may well be found behind the walls of its many temples: the Hindu Balinese are in the habit of treating their gods as honored guests. At their temple festivals, the deities are greeted with offerings of food, flowers, music, dance, theatre, and much festivity.

This generosity infuses the character of the Balinese people, and it expresses itself in the welcome they extend to visitors from around the world. In Bali, the word for 'guest' is tamu, a term full of respect and esteem.

At Komaneka Resorts—a small collection of boutique hotels in Ubud, in central Bali—the Komaneka Family comprises staff and management, all drawn from the Balinese community, and all bringing something unique from their rich cultural tradition of hospitality as art.

Guests may not realize that the young woman serving them afternoon tea is also a talented dancer, or that the older man tending the garden is renowned in his village as a sculptor; the head of accounting may also be a musician. In their own villages, members of the Komaneka Family offer their talents during times of ritual celebrations. This is living offering is called ayahan, a form of worship in itself.

In a similar spirit, Bali, like other parts of Indonesia, has an old custom known as gotong royong—helping each other with whatever task is at hand. The Komaneka Family practice this among themselves and particularly during events such as special dinners, providing entertainment and decorations with skill and good cheer, whether they be staff or managers.

This spirit of generosity creates a happy atmosphere, and it extends naturally to guests. The Komaneka Family are always ready to give that extra measure of help and effort to make their guests feel at home. Komaneka is exceptional for the handsome architecture its resorts—with their strategic locations, luxurious interiors, and excellent value—but it is the warm human element of the Komaneka Family that makes the magic come alive.



KOMANEKA

the soul of Bali
in the heart of
Ubud

[back to Top](#)

KOMANEKA FINE ART GALLERY



Passage of Life, oil on canvas, 200x500 cm, 2000

MADE SUMADIYASA

Madé Sumadiyasa, is a very dynamic Balinese artist, acknowledged as one of the most talented abstract painters in Indonesia. His painting is about color and movement arising from the legacy of Balinese tradition. His work emphasizes the beauty of nature and the cosmos with great authenticity. This has earned him recognition both locally and internationally.

Madé Sumadiyasa is the first Indonesian artist whose work has appeared on the cover of the prestigious magazine *Asian Art News*, in 1996. While much of his earlier work showed lines dealing with the divinity of the universe, it is now dominated by wordly colors, which goes much deeper to reveal the spiritual essence of his thinking.

His works are an expression of the spiritual in our everyday environment. His paintings display the flow of a distinctive style, creating a world by way of Bali's aesthetic heritage. They invite the viewer to journey with his feelings through the concepts of probability and eternity.

For example, in the series *Songs of the Rainbow*, Sumadiyasa displays a spectral game of light and shadow. Here the viewer is invited to admire an inspiring natural phenomenon. In the foreground are dark, luminous colors, reminding us that the rainbow is born from dark clouds and rain. Madé Sumadiyasa is of the young generation of Balinese trying to realize its identity in the midst of globalization and post-modern, with displays of beauty through passion and luminous lines and scratches, not pretty pictures.

In his work, there is always an inner turmoil driven by a fascination with the natural and supernatural heritage of Bali. His abstract expressionist work shows the universal aspects of Balinese culture and philosophy. He focused on movement and color to bring out the spiritual essence of the subject.

Madé Sumadiyasa was born in the village of Langlanglinggah in Tabanan in 1971. Soon after graduation from the Indonesian Art Institute (ISI) in Yogyakarta in 1997, he quickly established himself as one of the leading abstract artists, and part of a dynamic new generation. He has participated in numerous solo and group exhibitions both national and international.

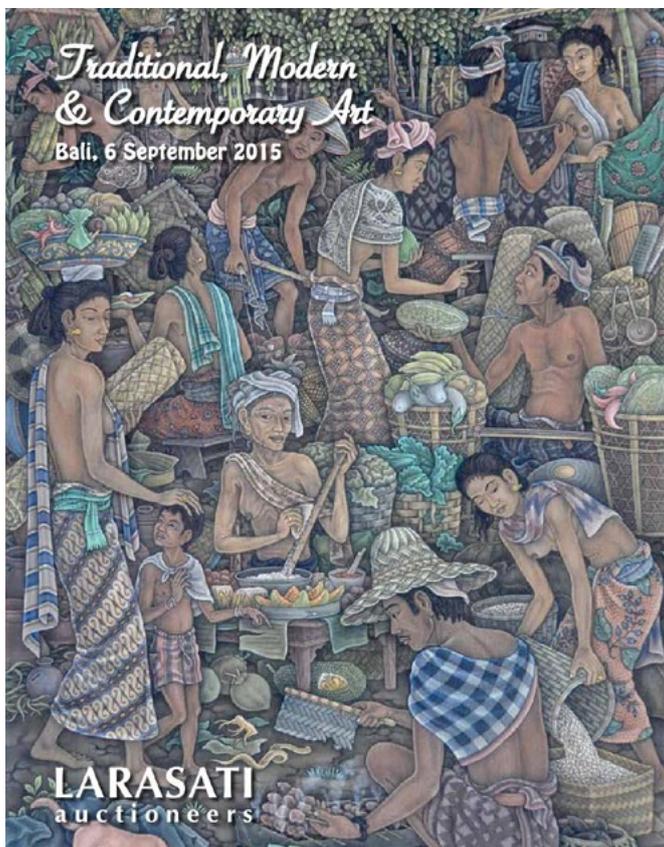
He was the first Indonesian artist to be invited to participate in the prestigious Art Asia international fine arts exhibition held in Hong Kong in 1995. Among his prizes and awards are the McDonald Mataram award (ISI, Yogyakarta, 1994) and finalist Philips Morris Art Award (1994 and 1997). His exhibitions include: National Museum (Jakarta, 1995), Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Center (1995), the Center for Strategic and International Studies (Jakarta, 1996), the Festival of Friendship between Indonesia and Japan (Morioka, Tokyo, 1997), Bamboo Gallery, Komaneke Fine Art Gallery, Neka Art Museum (Ubud, Bali, 1998) and many others.

Original Article by : Wayan Agus

English Translation by : Diana Darling

View Made Sumadiyasa artworks at Komaneke Fine Art Gallery.

[back to Top](#)



WHAT TO READ

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...Balinese painting is in many ways unique. It is often said that Balinese painting has its own separate place in the art of Indonesia...

The earliest Balinese painting is referred to *wayang* style, after the sacred shadow puppet theatre *wayang kulit*. This painting style is easily identified by its flat figures and its use of the characters and iconography of the *wayang* puppet theatre, with its themes taken from the great Hindu epics *Mahabarata* and the *Ramayana*. *Wayang* painting flourished in almost all regions of Bali, mainly under the patronage of the many small royal courts. It decorated palaces and temples, and was often used in religious ritual. *Wayang* painted dates from at least the 16th century, when the island was largely ruled by the kingdom of Klungkung. The seat of *wayang* painting then was in the village of Kamasan, not far from the royal center of Klungkung, and today Kamasan still maintains the tradition of *wayang* painting. It is regarded as classical Balinese painting, with a very clear technique and strong stylistic character.

In the early 20th century, Balinese painting came under the influence of Western art, particularly by way of two European artists living in Bali: Walter Spies from Germany and Rudolf Bonnet from the Netherlands. Together with Tjokorda Gde Agung Sukawati (a member of the leading noble family of Ubud) and a number of local artists such as I Gusti Nyoman Lempad, they established an association of artists called Pita Maha, with a view to maintaining quality and assisting in the sale of artworks to visiting foreigners. The content of painting now focused on scenes from daily life, such as temples ceremonies and ritual performances, landscapes and scenes from the rice fields, cremation rituals, and market scenes. Colors were no longer restricted to those obtain from natural substances; now they included acrylics and oil paint.

The Pita Maha movement triggered the birth of many distinctive new painting styles, named for the villages in which they appeared: Ubud, Pengosekan, Batuan, Sanur, Penestanan, and Kliki. Even with their differences, all these are readily identified as Balinese, because their themes are taken from Balinese society and culture, and they retain certain techniques of wayang painting. Thus the renewal triggered by Pita Maha is often regarded by outsiders as traditional Balinese painting.

Meanwhile, modern art arose from the art academies, where new generation of artists has been educated, and where they have been exposed to the art of Europe and America. But, interestingly, the work of modern academy-trained Balinese artists still shows its own Balinese peculiarities, both from the use of Balinese iconography to Balinese themes expressing the concepts and values of traditional Balinese society.

The book *Traditional, Modern & Contemporary Art*—published by the auctioneers Larasati and functioning as an auction catalog—is of particular interest to lovers of Balinese painting. Here one can trace the development of this dynamic and creative art, and follow trends displayed in the flow of paintings. The book features hundreds of high-quality images of paintings from several generations and numerous styles of Balinese artists, as well as artists from outside Bali who take Bali as their theme. This is an inspiring book that should be collected and studied by enthusiasts, observers, and artists alike.

Book review: **Traditional, Modern & Contemporary Art**

Larasati Auctioneers, 2015

124 pages, 150 color images

[*back to Top*](#)