

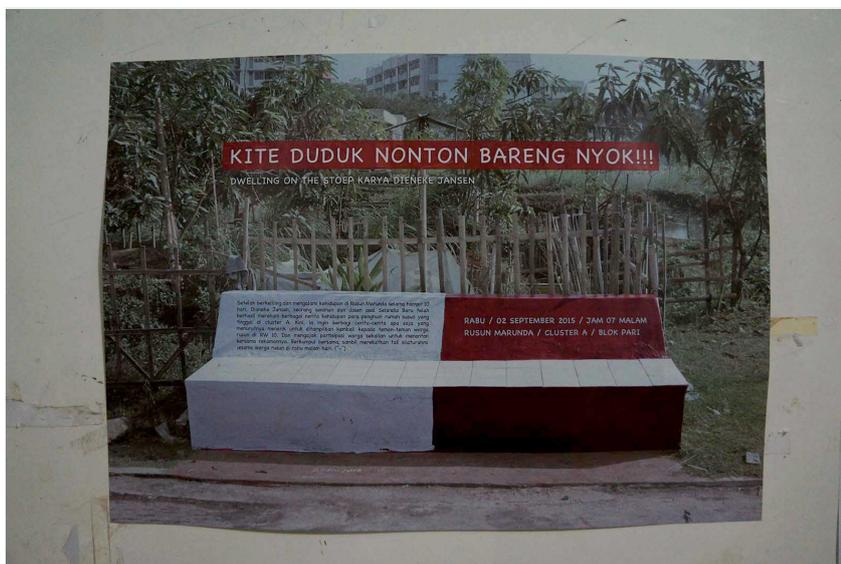


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## VOICES FROM MARUNDA

By Jakarta Biennale | ARTISTS | 0 comment | 22 September, 2015 | ❤️ 6

For sixteen days, Dieneke Jansen stayed at Marunda low-cost apartment, recording the voices of its residents, telling us about their experience living there. This video will be a part of the New Zealand artist's works for the 2015 Jakarta Biennale.



The poster of the Dwelling on the Stoep screening in Marunda housing complex

It was all quiet at the Marunda low-cost apartment complex, except for some teenagers running around on the basketball court, and some men playing chess near the motorcycle parking lot. It was 19:30. Most of the residents were still on their way home from work, except those from Blok Pari at Cluster A of Marunda. On the ground floor, right in front of the secretariate of the youth organization from the RT 05/RW 10 neighborhood in Marunda, children are gathering in front of a screen made of a white-painted triplex board. Moments later, their fathers and mothers came out to sit with them.

That night, 2 September 2015, is Dieneke Jansen's last night in the building. As a farewell, she wanted to screen *Dwelling on the Stoep*, a video she had produced from her interviews with the residents during her stay in Marunda from 19 August to 3 September 2015. In the course of sixteen days, the New Zealand artist had managed to record 36 video clips, with average running times between three to five minutes. The videos consisted of testimonials from the residents of Marunda low-cost apartments, from children, teenagers, adults, and families—part of Jansen's works for the 2015 Jakarta Biennale.

"My initial plan was to set up a small makeshift stage, using random items I would find in Marunda, and set up a camera. Anyone can get on that stage to do anything. They can tell stories about themselves, even perform," Jansen explained. "However, once I went there and

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lived with them, I changed my mind. Instead, I recorded them in various corners of the building. I found that the residents have created 'shared social spaces' in many parts of the compound. I would very much like to emphasize on that in my work."



The local youth organization, as the organizer of the screening

The screening of *Dwelling on the Stoep* started at 21:00. Before the screening, there were musical performances by members of the local youth organization, and screenings of two short films and a photography presentation by the local children and teenagers, from the workshop they had with Jansen. The artist and a representative from Blok Pari also said a few words to bid farewell. Jansen's camera, placed on a side of the stage facing the audience, kept recording throughout.

"I will combine this recording with the testimonial videos, and make a film-in-film piece. I would like to see and capture the moments when they see themselves tell stories about the space that they live in every day," Jansen said.

What attracted Dienneke Jansen's attention to Marunda was the fact that it 'failed' as a housing project for several years. The Marunda low-cost apartment complex was built by the Ministry of Public Housing in 2007, and was intended as an affordable housing solution for the people. After the building was erected, it was poorly managed, resulting in many housing blocks not being able to be accessed by people that needed them, and problematic basic facilities like water and electricity.



Musical performance by members of the local youth organization

The building gained its momentum during the flood in Pluit, North Jakarta, in 2013. It became the housing option offered by the government to the Pluit residents, as a compensation for those who had to move because the government planned to rebuild the area and revitalize the dam in the area.

"A lot have changed since then. The housing complex has been revitalized. Key infrastructures like water and electricity have been improved, but there are other aspects that are overlooked," Jansen said. "Basically, Marunda now is lived not only by people who want to live there, but also by people who have been forced to move. They did not want to live here. The fact is, Marunda is far from Jakarta's busy points, which means less working opportunities. In one of my videos, a resident said, 'it's like they give a bird and a cage, but no food supply.'"

Jansen said that she is drawn to housing projects for people with low income, and the forced migrations that often are the by-products of such projects. For her, "The way the state treats its low-income citizens reflects the way it manage its people in general."



Opening speeches by Dienneke Jansen and the local representative

The artist's previous work also explored similar themes. Last March, Jansen and several local artists were doing some work in Tamaki, a satellite town 11 kilometers from Auckland, New

Zealand. There, they went face-to-face with the transformation of Glen Innes, an affordable housing area built by the government, into a private-owned residential and apartment area.

Jansen responded through a photo installation, showing houses previously standing on the post-eviction land, also screenings of the 1946-produced documentary *Housing in New Zealand* on the walls of the remaining houses. She also organized a public luncheon, where she invited the public to interact with the local residents, to spread information on the drastic changes happening in Tamaki.

"I understand that there are higher and higher demands for housing each year. The question is: what type of housing would be suitable for the people's needs? And who among us would listen to the voices of these evicted people?" Jansen contemplated.



The screening begins

"During my time at Marunda, I heard about the big protests in Kampung Pulo, Jakarta Timur. The people had to be relocated to a flat compound in Jatinegara Barat, Jakarta Barat, because the city government wanted to develop the area for flood prevention. This is a very complicated issue. On one hand, Jakarta has some serious problems with its city planning, especially when it comes to waterways, which are in urgent need for improvement. On the other hand, it's the low-income people who always fall victim. They are repeatedly dispossessed and displaced, in the name of urban development and gentrification ambitions. From what I've observed, something like this doesn't only happen in Jakarta and New Zealand, but everywhere."

Jansen will return to Jakarta at the end of October to prepare her works before the 2015 Jakarta Biennale starts. For updates on the 2015 Jakarta Biennale's artists, visit the website [jakartabiennale.net](http://jakartabiennale.net) and follow [@jakartabiennale](https://twitter.com/jakartabiennale) on Twitter. (AJP)

 Duta Seni



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Indonesia

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Email: info@jakartabiennale.net  
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