Multatuli

Sebuah Liputan

Jean Cooper

1997



Multatuli Collective

The Indonesian art collective "Multatuli", founded by two dissidents, M. Kisariyah and Khairil Tjipto in Jakarta around 1977, mostly consisted of Maoists. The group produced and published numerous poems, artworks, and political pamphlets—most of which were burned to ashes by the regime—criticizing the New Order dictatorship and the inherent traits of the bourgeoisie that had grown within Indonesian society itself. They hated David Bowie, calling him names such as "Ziggy Starcrap: monstrous, hybrid, and pitiful dandy." They described their art as "new brutalism," whose aim, according to one former associate, was to "brutally criticize and destroy everything that exists."

There is scant information regarding this enigmatic group of dissidents. Some say a few of the original members, including Kisariyah and Tjipto, traveled all the way to Latin America to meet their longtime idols, the Peruvian avant-garde poets Hora Zero, and died in a plane crash on their way home. Surya Mendung, Tjipto's literary executor, believed that Kisariyah, Tjipto, and Yayan went to the UK, plotted to kill David Bowie, but failed—because Bowie (supposedly) killed them first. While this account seems highly unlikely, Surya insisted he spoke nothing but the truth. Others claim they were rounded up and kidnapped by a group of masked soldiers during a clandestine meeting and never returned. No one has seen them since. Some even say they are still alive, selling porridge around Cikini with dubious slogans like: "Warm porridge for your cold and empty alphabets."

Cumbu Sigil, another enigmatic figure, once wrote an unofficial manifesto for "Multatuli" to celebrate their brief yet glorious era.

(Jean Cooper, Australian Press 1997)

Perpustakaan Anarkis

“Mintalah pendidikan. Jika mereka tidak memberimu pendidikan, mintalah buku. Jika mereka tidak memberimu pendidikan maupun buku, maka rebutlah buku itu.”



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