

# Apa Kabar?

MARCH 29 - MAY 26 2019 \* MAMA \* WITTE DE WITHSTRAAT 29 - 31

What's  
new?

REMIXING  
THE  
MAINSTREAM



www.thisismama.nl

Agan Harahap,  
Childhood Memories #2  
- Notorious B.I.G., 2018.  
[More on page 6](#)



## Calendar

29 maart

**Opening: Apa kabar? (What's new?)**

@MAMA 18.00 - 21.00

18 - 20 april

**MOMO x MAMA:**

**Hallo, halo, hello! Hallo Bandung.**

@MAMA, 14.00 - 15.30

25 - 28 april

**Caetano performances: Wokeness in music**

@ Poppositions, Brussel

26 mei

**Closing party: Team MAMA take over**

@MAMA. Check [thisismama.nl](#)



Caetano creates spaces in which sound, light and performance play a large role. He is interested in observing and bending social (...)  
[More on page 2](#)



Sandim Mendes is a Rotterdam based visual artist working with mixed media. After graduating at the Willem de Kooning Academie in 2010 (...)  
[More on page 10](#)

## Reflecting on remixing ethics through the works of artists and DJs

*Apa kabar? (What's new?)* explores the relationship and tensions between mainstream culture and local remixes.

A seemingly universally understandable popular visual language has emerged online. Photos of politicians, celebrities, music clips, vlogs and personal videos are quickly spread to a worldwide audience. The social media remixes that emerge as a reaction to this, in turn, go viral and join the mainstream. Childish Gambino's *This is America*, one of the most talked about videos of 2018, was subsequently remixed as *This is Nigeria* and *This is Iraq*, with each also receiving millions of views online. Remixes, emoticons, and GIFs make up the ingredients of this universal visual language. But, how well do we actually understand each other? Do we transcend the orig-

inal local context with these new visual languages, or are we falling short? And how new is this remix culture?

For the exhibition *Apa kabar?*, programme maker Maria Lamslag selected artists and DJs whose practices establish exchanges between mainstream culture and local contexts. They mix recognisable images from online media with personal visual languages or subtly respond to dominant cultures. In doing so, they often draw inspiration from their multilayered cultural identity. As such, the exhibition connects themes such as online culture, mestizo cultures, global citizenship and cultural ownership.

The interior of *Apa kabar?* also plays with contrasts between the personal and specific on one side, and a global mainstream on the other. Interactive installations in a living-room-meets-record-store vibe are set against a more traditional exhibition space showing

a selection of photo, video, online and mixed media works. A supplementary programme of live music, DJ sets and panel discussions focuses on the parallels between artists and musicians and their relationship to mainstream culture.

During *Apa kabar? (What's new?)* MAMA's showroom becomes an accessible research space where you can check for yourself whether cultural exchange and the remixing of mainstream culture is problematic or liberating.

The Indonesian 'apa kabar?' means 'what's the news?' but is used to ask 'how are you?' In Indonesia this expression rarely gives rise to confusion: everyone answers, 'good' or 'not so good.' The English exhibition subtitle 'What's new?' is a nod to the common mistranslation of 'Apa kabar?' and refers to how 'what's new' and 'how are things' seem to be interchangeable online too.

**On May 6th 2018 during an episode of Saturday Night Live, Childish Gambino's new music video went into premiere. It only took a few hours (...) [More on page 16](#)**





# CAETANO



Caetano - Gueto Blaster Discos (2019); Photo by Lotte Stenkenburg

## Gueto Blaster Discos (2019)

Commissioned by curator Maria Lamslag to create a record shop that reflects on the music industry, post-colonialism and appropriation, Caetano introduces Gueto Blaster Discos as functioning sound system, piracy record shop supporting the artists and is at the same time an act of resistance to continuation of colonial systems of economic power and prosperity distribution in the music industry. Visually the installation Gueto Blaster Discos is informed by mobile street vendors found in the streets of Latin American countries: a mobile structure complete with a sound installation, burned CD-R's for sale and promotion material supporting the artists. Functioning as an actual shop during Apa kabar and Propositions, Gueto Blaster

Discos is challenging visitors to participate in the colonizing aspects of dominant economy of the music industry and the western desire to consume ghetto's aesthetics and creative production. Connotations with colonial power structures in music industry are strongly intertwined in record companies' and other gatekeepers' bureaucracies; with high import fees western countries raise; with big power centers in Western countries and a still existing Western fascination for "raw", "exotic" and "ghetto" as material to extract from. Music industry is often - just like colonial practices - sourcing 'the exotic' and selling it to western countries, serving power and prosperity of a Western consumer more than the original laborers or sources.

Piracy as a music distribution system is a common economy used by independent producers in the north of Brazil, next to many other corners of the world. Gueto Blaster Discos encourages to actively investigate our desire to exploit raw creation by reproducing a "purified" version without acknowledging its source. The pirate produced CD-R's with their artworks are burned and produced in Caetano's studio in France and carry music from contemporary artist from the global south. With selling through Gueto Blaster Discos the artists' music can be distributed and promoted in Europe, bypassing European importation fees. Caetano aims at sending back at least 75% of the final revenue of each CD-R sold to the artist.

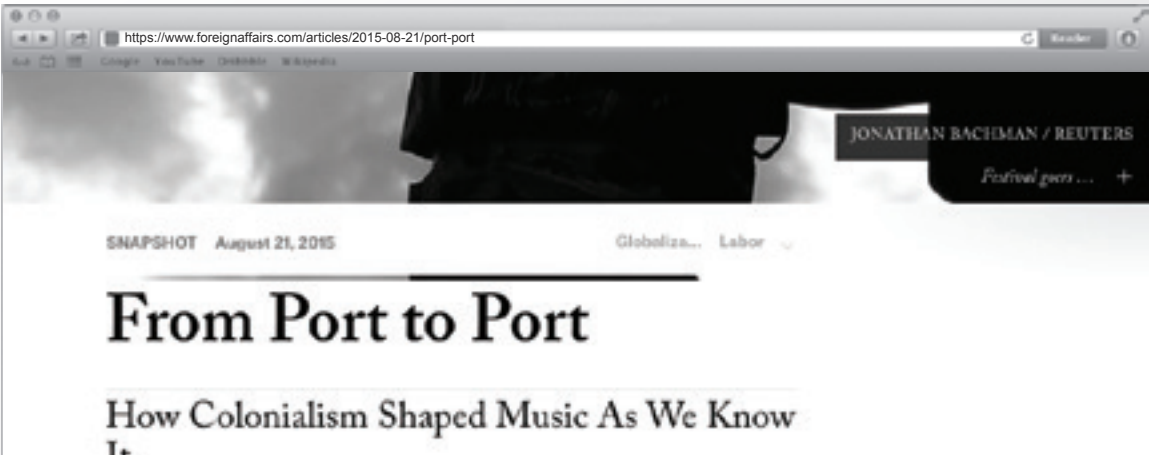
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### Caetano (b. 1980 Salvador, Brazil)

Caetano creates spaces in which sound, light and performance play a large role. He is interested in observing and bending social systems by using media and technological tools that are part of our everyday life. In his projects such as the public steam bath C'hu at W139 (Amsterdam), he created bodily experiences that go beyond rational or visual understanding. In his work Caetano often shows a playful and unique look on contemporary political issues. He cursed computer science school in Brazil, later he acquired a Bachelor and Master degree at two different Dutch institutions.

In 2018 he collaborated in the creation of "ORPHIC EXUBERANCE

VS SOLAR CAPITALISM" for Kunstenfestivalde-sarts in Brussels and "La découverte de l'Amazonie par les Turcs enchantés" for Mucem, in Marseille. In 2017 his installation Poder Som Sistema, created for his solo exhibition at Showroom MAMA, traveled on to be presented in the Museum's Quartier in Vienna. Other works include "Radical Software" an exhibition and seminar surrounding cybernetics and arts, W139, Amsterdam. In 2009 together with the Pirate Bay he collaborated in the Internet Pavilion at Venice Biennial, which later extended in the video archive and essay "the internet died in 2015". Caetano lives in Marseille, France.



# From Port to Port

How Colonialism Shaped Music As We Know It

By Michael D.



B

tango, Seville's flamenco, Cairo's tarab, Johannesburg's marabi, Jakarta's kroncong, and Honolulu's hula. The new vernacular musics reverberated on the edges and borders of empires, in the *barrios*, *bidonvilles*, barrack-yards, *arrabales*, and *favelas* of an archipelago of colonial ports, linked by the steamships, railway lines, and telegraph cables that moved commodities, people, and information across and between empires.



REUTERS

Why was such music first heard in these ports? The answer lies in the peculiar social and cultural formation of the colonial port: a volatile mix of millions of new migrants living in waterfront neighborhoods imbricated with the racial and ethnic logics of settler regimes and imperial conquests; a population dense enough to provide the critical mass to support the emerging institutions of commercial musicking, the urban industry of theaters, brothels and dance halls; a physical and cultural distance from the powerful and prestigious capitals; and finally, a peculiar encounter and alliance of migrant

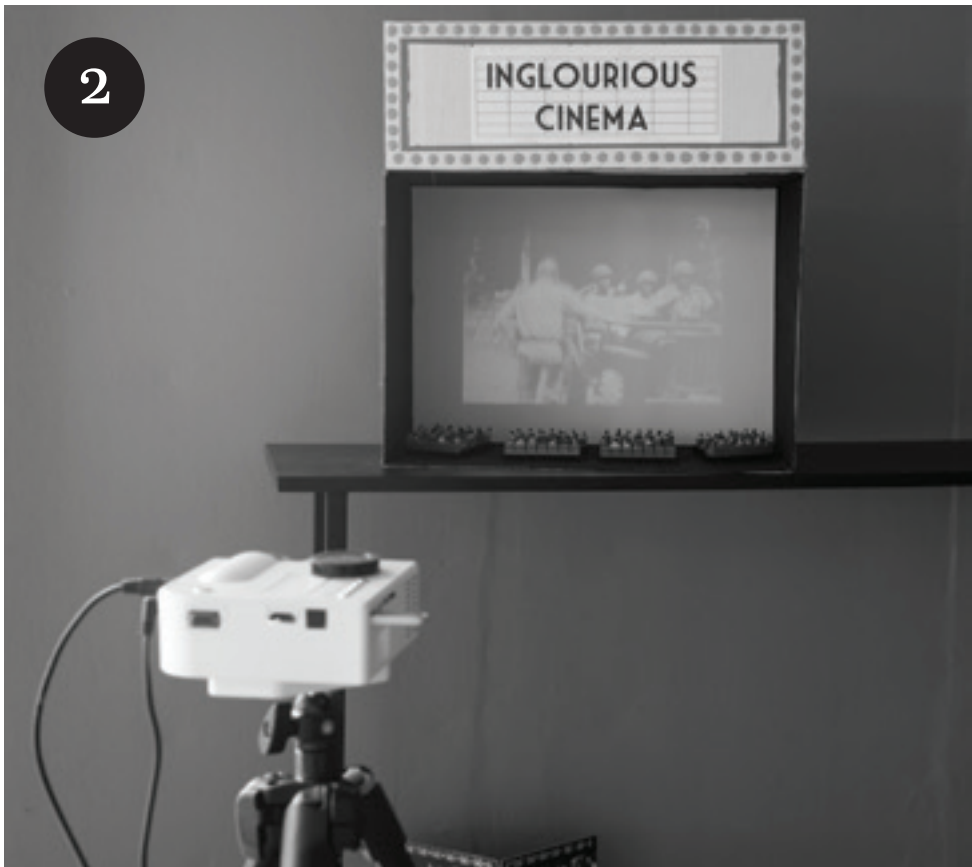
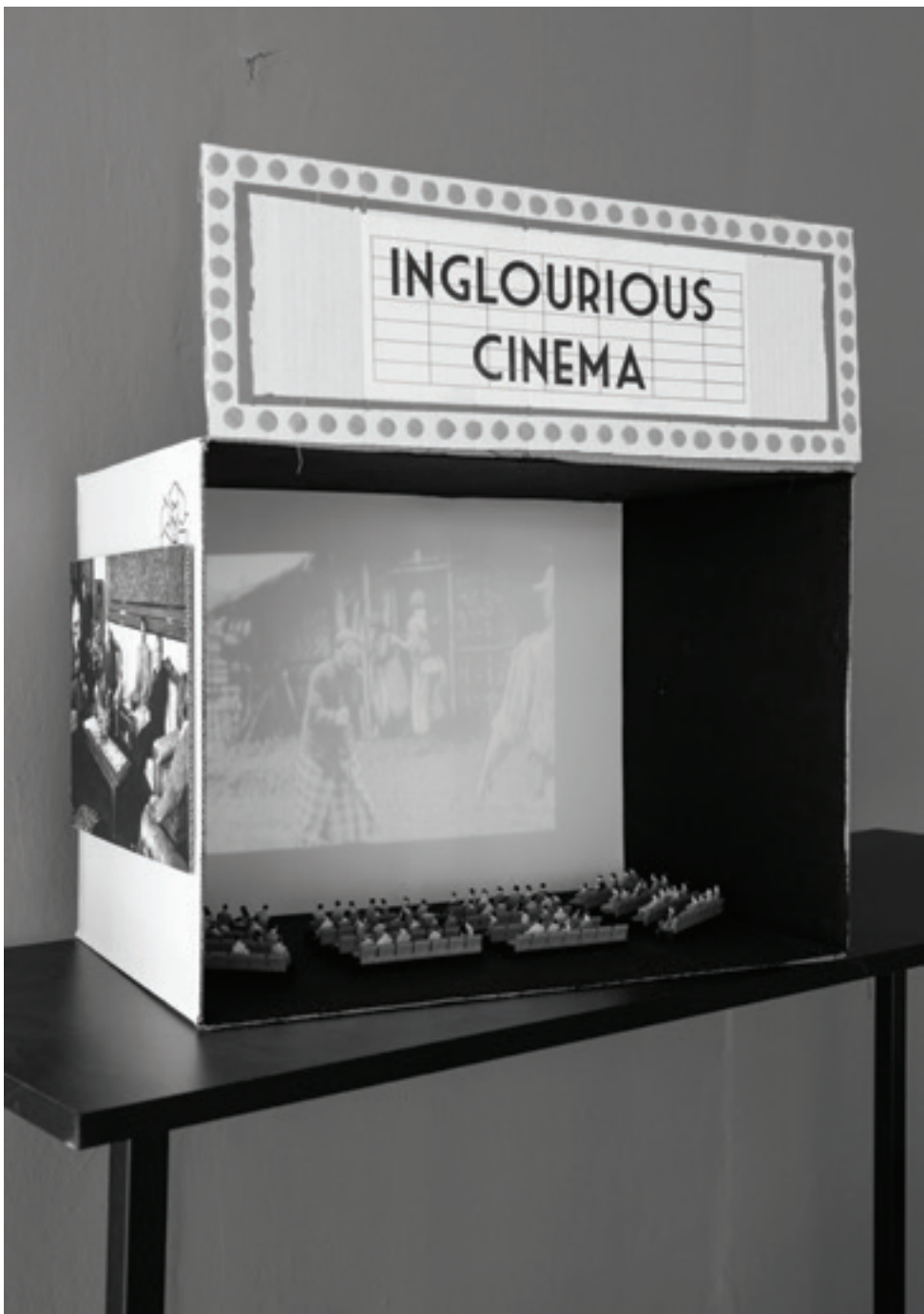
migrant  
produce  
crafted  
those an  
"talented  
hymns a

of the learned musics of court and concert hall, the agrarian musicking of sharecroppers and tenant farmers, or even the popular parlor songs of piano sheet music. Colonial ports embodied the contradictions in globalizing empires: urban country musics, commercial religious musics, professional folk musics, and popular musics celebrated by elite intellectuals. The recorded vernacular musics we have today capture that.





# L.C. VON SUKMEISTER



L.C. von Sukmeister - Inglorious Cinema (2019); Photo by Lotte Stekenburg

## Inglorious Cinema (2019)

The video installation *Inglorious Cinema* (2019) consists of two films. The Indonesian nationalistic film *Inglourious Indonesian Bastards, Merah Putih* (2009) by director Yadi Sugandi plays on a portable dvd-player, and a film by artist L.C. von Sukmeister is being projected in a cardboard miniature cinema.

For this film L.C. von Sukmeister remixed several video footage. Fragments from the *Inglourious Indonesian Bastards* are cut with shooting scenes from Quentin Tarantino's *Inglourious Basterds* (2009); next to clips of a person in a hotel room shooting with a toy machine gun; and also grainy footage of actual violence and suppression in West Papua by the Indonesian army. Fragments from the *Inglourious Indonesian Bastards* are dubbed with a voice-over from a YouTube-review discussing the portrayal of violence in Tarantino's film. With his video Von Sukmeister reflects on the emptiness of violence and our hypocritical attitude towards it, as well as on the use of mainstream media in culture and politics.

In Sugandi's *Inglourious Indonesian Bastards* a group of Indonesians from different islands (Bali, Sulawesi, Java) is fighting for freedom against the Dutch, who after World War II tried to hold on to their former colony. Sugandi's film is inspired by Tarantino's

*Inglourious Basterds*, a fake history about Jewish American spies on a revenge mission to kill the leaders of the Third Reich at a film premiere in a cinema. Sugandi's nationalistic version however lacks Tarantino's clever subtlety in challenging his audience not just to consume his film, but also to find double and deeper meanings.

The voice-over from the YouTube-review is remixed by Von Sukmeister. The original version maintains that Tarantino ridicules his audience with making them laugh at the vulgar violence of the Nazis. After all, they cheer for *Stolz der Nation* (*The Nation's Pride*), a fictional film in the film, in which the murders of a Nazi sniper are being glorified.

With placing the Indonesian dubbed remake next to real life footage from violence in West Papua, Von Sukmeister is shifting Tarantino's mockery to a broader historical Indonesian context. In Sugandi's film the Indonesians want freedom 'merdeka' from the Dutch. This is often showcased in Indonesian history museums via dioramas – miniature models. Strikingly enough, after Indonesia's independence the Indonesian army has been suppressing West Papua all the while, partly due to American mining interests of *Freeport-McMoRan*. Hence, the historical photo of Henry Kissinger and dictator Suharto together at the side of the miniature cinema.

### L.C. von Sukmeister (b. 1981 Surabaya, Indonesia)

L.C. von Sukmeister is the pseudonym of Suki. As a self-taught artist he mostly works with video, creating installations in which he often questions the self-evidence of image constructions. Amongst various exhibitions, he participated twice in OK. Video, the largest video art festival in Asia, bi annually organized in Jakarta by Indonesian artists collective Ruangrupa.

Von Sukmeister, adopted by Dutch parents, says he has an ambiguous relationship with Indonesia. It wasn't until 2009 that he met his biological Indonesian family. Schooled as an academic historian he understands the importance of Indonesia

promoting its own narrative of national history, especially since The Netherlands have not recognized Indonesia's independence on the declaration date August 17, 1945. Until this day the Dutch hold on to 27 december 1949, the date the transfer of sovereignty took place. At the same time, Von Sukmeister is critical of the Indonesian propagandistic historiography. He cannot close his eyes to the shadow sides of his loved mother country, like the imaginative historiography in popular films and museums, and the current extreme nationalism that goes together with violent suppression in West Papua.

**GONZO** CIRCUS

[gonzocircus.com](http://gonzocircus.com)

https://www.nytimes.com/2018/06/03/world/asia/indonesia-papua-independence-human-rights.html

Indonesia Clamps Down on Simmering Independence Effort in Papua








A Papuan activist during a rally in Jakarta, Indonesia, in 1999, as the country transitioned to democratic forms of governance.

https://www.nytimes.com/2018/06/03/world/asia/indonesia-papua-independence-human-rights.html

By Joe Cochrane

June 3, 2018




JAKARTA, Indonesia — Yanto Awerkion knew quite well that he would infuriate the local Indonesian authorities for organizing a meeting to discuss a petition for an independence referendum in the strife-torn Papua region — but he did it anyway.

“I was exercising my right to free speech,” said Mr. Awerkion, a senior official of the West Papua National Committee, a pro-independence organization, who said his ensuing arrest on accusations of treason was the third time he had faced charges for his political beliefs.

The local police, however, did not see the case as a free-speech issue. He was arrested after the gathering in his hometown Timika, where he is vice chairman of the local branch of the independence committee, in May last year on charges of trying to overthrow the state. He was jailed for 10 months.



https://www.nytimes.com/2018/06/03/world/asia/indonesia-papua-independence-human-rights.html



A street market in Timika in Papua Province. The Papua and West Papua provinces are troubled by high rates of poverty, illiteracy and infant and maternal mortality.  
Ray Donny/Agnese France-Press — Getty Images

“They are using colonial laws to arrest people in modern, democratic Indonesia,” said Calum Hyslop, an Australian who is a longtime political observer of the Papua region. “They fail to understand the difference between freedom of speech and real acts of armed separatism.”

Indonesia’s Papua region lies on the western side of New Guinea Island, the eastern side being the nation of Papua New Guinea.

Indonesia annexed the former Dutch-controlled region in 1963, and took sovereignty after the 1969 Act of Free Choice, a vote on whether

https://www.nytimes.com/2018/06/03/world/asia/indonesia-papua-independence-human-rights.html

geographies are comparable to sub-Saharan Africa, with an alarming gap between Papuans and those who live in the remote highlands, where life is harsh and poverty rates there are the highest in the world, at 41 percent, compared with only 5 percent in the United States. Papuans have the highest rates of illiteracy in the world, 41 percent of children not in school, and the highest child and maternal mortality rates in the world, and lowest basic child vaccination rates.

“When it comes to broader questions of human rights in Papua, the real violation relates to the complete lack of services in the countryside,” said Bobby Anderson, a researcher with the School of Oriental and African Studies at the University of London. “Things like lack of health care, lack of education, with teachers no-showing at schools.”



# AGAN HARAHAP

## Childhood Memories #2 (2018)

Regarded as one of the most prominent contemporary artists of his generation, Agan Harahap has coined himself as the ‘master visual appropriator’. Showcased in this exhibition is his highly-acclaimed 2-part series “Childhood Memories”, that draws on the impact of media and celebrity culture on people and communities. Spread across the series are the familiar faces of celebrities, religious clerics, politicians, and public figures, composed in ‘Indonesianized’ situations that express a local brand of humor. The subjects are depicted at a young age of their childhood, to be living in layman Indonesia and participating in local community activities, donning traditional Indonesian attire, posing with recognizable Indonesian brand products or landmarks etc. The presentation of the photographs in such old-fashioned frames is very typical to the way Indonesian people in the villages hung their family photos in

their house. The evidence of a strong Indonesian identity in the montages may very well lead on the imaginative narrative of international celebrities having lived such a normal life, and even more so in Indonesia. These popular imagery raises an unexpected visual and contextual intervention, as they blur the boundaries of fiction and reality. In this digital era of rapid online activity and “fake news”, Agan’s visual hoaxes are distributed nationally and internationally, creating a massive response on different levels of trust; some have easily let themselves be deceived by his skilful manipulation, while others were more skeptical to these surreal scenarios and had his claims challenged. “Childhood Memories” interrupts the authenticity and integrity of our daily consumption of media and information, underscoring our dependency on photographic images to inform us of the recorded truth.



Agan Harahap - Childhood Memories I (2018); Photo by Lotte Stekenburg

## Rihanna dan payungnya (2019)

Making its debut here at MAMA is an audio work by Agan Harahap, titled “Rihanna dan payungnya” (Rihanna and her Umbrella), referencing the American pop music icon, Rihanna and her hit track Umbrella. The original version of this work was a written narrative first published on the artist’s personal blog back in 2015. This fiction began to develop over the years into many sequels, tailing the life of Rihanna as she spent her childhood and teenage days in modern day Yogyakarta before moving to New York to pursue her music career.

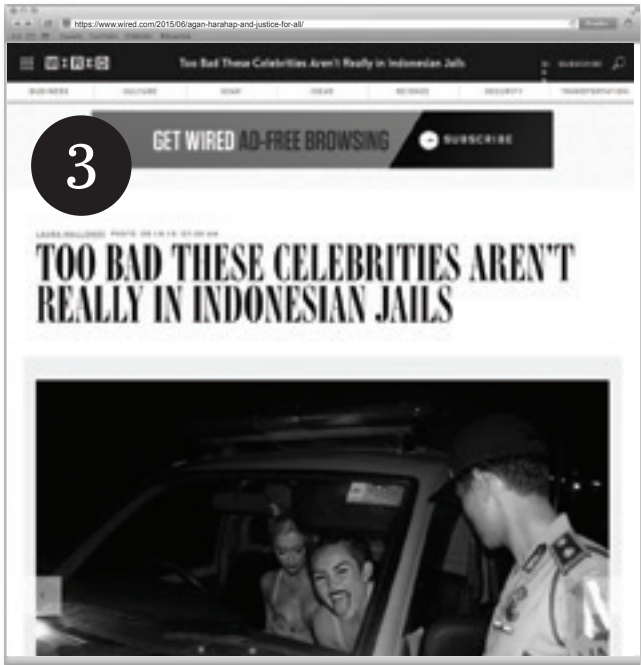
Amongst the many stories, the one featured here is the most popular as it dives into the troubling times Rihanna

had gone through as a child that birthed her hit song Umbrella. She reminisces about her experiences of having to desperately earn money while working as an ojek payung – a person who holds out their umbrellas in pouring weather, to strangers (usually office workers) looking to keep dry in exchange for a nominal fee. Here, you witness the ‘Indonesianized’ brand of humour from the artist, making connections between the glamorous western celebrity world and a societal movement mainly witnessed in Indonesia.

Scripted and recorded in a style commonly heard in 80’s Indonesia, the musical composition of “Rihanna dan payungnya” is akin to a theatrical

storytelling audio. Again, the artist draws on his own personal childhood growing up in Indonesia during the 80’s when people, often in smaller cities or villages, would frequently listen to cassette recordings of popular musicals and theatre plays that were selectively performed in bigger cities. This mass production of audio plays helped increase the accessibility to more Indonesians. “Rihanna dan payungnya” is performed with a narrator telling the story and a humorous dialogue between a local journalist and Rihanna, all amidst playful tunes of jingles and instrumentations.

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### Agan Harahap (b. 1980 Jakarta, Indonesia)

Agan Harahap studied graphic design at STDI (Design and Art College) in Bandung, Indonesia and began his career as a painter and illustrator. After working as a photographer for Indonesian-based music magazine Trax Magazine, he held on to photography as his main medium and started his career as independent visual artist. He was a finalist for

the Indonesian Art Award in 2008, and his first solo exhibition was with MES 56 in Yogyakarta a year later. As full-time artist since September 2011, his works have been exhibited in Southeast Asia, Korea, Japan, Portugal, Colombia, and Australia. In his latest works Harahap often makes practice of photo editing in his works, melting fantasy and real-

ity into satire or parodic comments on human life, often with pop culture references. With Sejarah\_X he manipulates (Indonesian) historical images. His hoaxes with international celebrities in Indonesian scenes, posted on Instagram, went viral in 2017. Harahap currently lives and works in Yogyakarta, Indonesia.

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English script of Rihanna dan payungnya RIHANNA AND HER UMBRELLA

[SOUND EFFECT] Opening Jingle  
[OPENING] Narrator: "Hello, my brothers and sisters, it is nice to see you again... Are you ready to listen to my story? Today, I will tell you about a singer named Rihanna. I'm sure you know her, right? This story is titled "Rihanna and Her Umbrella". What is it about? Let's hear it together."  
[SOUND EFFECT] Sound of train approaching -totally irrelevant to this story-  
Narrator: "Once upon a time, in a hotel lobby in North Yogyakarta, there was a journalist, nervously waiting for an interview session with Rihanna, one of the world's most dazzling diva in today's pop music industry. Jogja, a city where Rihanna spent her childhood, was chosen as one of the venues of her upcoming concerts, alongside Lahat, Magetan, and Pamengkasan.  
Thanks to some string-pulling by one of his friends who happens to be the concert organiser, this journalist gains access to interview Rihanna directly. This young journalist was brought over to the suite where Rihanna spends the night. He said that Rihanna had been informed of this interview, and has prepared herself accordingly."  
[SOUND EFFECT] Hasty foot steps  
Liaison Officer: "This is the room, Mas. Please... Rihanna is ready for the interview."  
Journalist: "Wah.. Thank you, Mas. Oh my. I'm really nervous."  
[PAUSE – 2 seconds]  
Journalist: "Bismillahirrahman-irrahim"  
[SOUND EFFECT] Knocks on door  
Journalist: "Assalamualaikum, Mbak Rihanna."  
[SOUND EFFECT] Door opens  
Rihanna: "Walaikumsalam, Mas... Are you the one who will interview me?"  
Journalist: (nervously) "Ehm... yes, Mbak."  
Rihanna: "Please sit down, Mas, make yourself at home..."  
Narrator: "In the living room of the hotel suite, the journalist seems to float in disbelief. Well, of course, he is given an opportunity to meet one of the world's most successful divas, and to interview her exclusively. Her hotel room is very lavish that even the living room is very spacious."  
Rihanna: "Just a minute, Mas. I'm gonna put on some lipstick, so my mouth will look fresh in the recording."  
Journalist: "Oh... sure, Mbak..."  
Narrator: "The journalist is quiet for a while, still in disbelief that Rihanna is now in front of him, in person. Once she's done with her lips, Rihanna elegantly sits on a sofa. The journalist's heart is beating even faster.  
Journalist: (voice over) "Amazing... Even the way she sits down clearly shows that she is a high-class diva... Tight tiger print tank top and shorts... and her healthy, chunky, thighs look so provocative. Hmm..."  
Rihanna: "Have you been a journalist for a long time?"  
Journalist: (surprised) "Eh... I suppose so, Mbak. About two years now... Prior to this, I used to do various odd jobs. Sometimes I would work as a courier, sometimes as a social media admin, and sometimes as a writer."  
Rihanna: "Well, whatever you do, you just have to do it patiently, Mas. Most importantly, it brings you results..."  
Journalist: "Yes, Mbak Rihanna..."  
Rihanna: "You don't have to call me 'mbak', just Rihanna will do. I'm a nobody."  
Journalist: "Yes, understood, Mbak Riha.... Eh, Rihanna. Hehehe"  
Narrator: "Equipment has been set up. Camera is on stand-by. Voice recorder is ready. The journalist reads through his notepad, filled with questions that he wants to ask her."  
[SOUND EFFECT] Sound of notepad pages turning  
Journalist: "Wait, Mbak... I will get the questions ready.. Where is my cheat sheet..."  
Rihanna: "No, no, we don't need to use the notes. Let's just chat. Just talk to me as if you are talking to your friend."  
Narrator: "The journalist is forced to follow what Rihanna says, even though he did not get any sleep last night, composing all the questions that he wanted to ask and writing them in his notepad. But well, what can he do? If Rihanna wants it this way, what else can he do? Furthermore, he is afraid that Rihanna may feel uncomfortable to be interviewed with the list of questionnaires that he prepared."  
Journalist: "OK, so we'll just have a relaxed chat?"  
Rihanna: "Yes, let's just talk, Mas"  
Narrator: "The journalist tries to start the interview with questions about her upcoming concert at Kridosono stadium next week. Rihanna deliberately chose Kridosono stadium as the venue, as it reminds her of childhood. To her, Kridosono stadium is a place full of memories and moments that indirectly influenced her music career."  
Journalist: "So, Mbak..."  
Rihanna: "See, I've told you but you refused to listen. You don't have to call me 'mbak'..."  
Journalist: "Oh yes, I forgot. So, Rihanna" (pause) "Hmm, it feels inappropriate for me to call you without 'mbak'. Can I just call you 'mbak Rihanna'? It's more natural that way..."  
Rihanna: "Fine, it's up to you."  
Journalist: "OK, Mbak. You have chosen Kridosono stadium as the venue of your concert next week. Could you tell us why you chose this place? In Jogja, there are many other places that are probably even more suitable, like Prambanan temple, sportorium UMY, Jogja National Museum, and others."  
Narrator: "There is a distant look in Rihanna's eyes, as if she is trying to remember something from long ago. She said that Kridosono stadium was the place where she had the chance to watch a concert by Nicky Astria, an old-school rocker who would eventually inspire Rihanna to be a singer herself."  
Rihanna: "I was still very young, Mas. Maybe in my first year of high school. At that time, I was invited by my aunt who was a big fan of Nicky Astria. She was very into Nicky Astria, that she even named her daughter Yayuk Astria."  
Journalist: (small laugh) "Oh.. hahaha"  
Narrator: "Rihanna changed her sitting position. This time round, she crossed her legs, making her thighs look even more provocative."  
Rihanna: "I did not understand who Nicky Astria was, but I agreed to go with my aunt. Only when I got there, I found out that Nicky Astria was a female rock singer."  
Journalist: "So, you became a fan of Nicky Astria too?"  
Rihanna: "Yes... when I saw her singing, I immediately knew that I had to be a fan of this singer. It's her voice... So raspy and "rock". Basically, she is VERY GOOD"  
Journalist: "Well, Nicky Astria is a legend, Quality Assurance 100%."  
Rihanna: "I still remember when she sang the song "Jarum Nera-ka". Whoa, it was captivating!!"  
Rihanna: (sings off-pitch) "Jarum-jarum setan bisa mencabut nyawa..."  
"Bila kau tak cepat berhenti memakainya..."  
"Tanpa kau sadari tanpa engkau rasakan..."  
"Kau bunuh dirimu secara perlahan..."  
Rihanna: "I don't remember the rest of the lyrics (laughs) ... Well, anyway, Mbak Nicky is really a champion. When Mbak Nicky sang, all the audience at Kridosono sang along with her. She was really amazing, Mas."  
Journalist: "Whoa, I can imagine how it must feel to watch her concert at Kridosono, Mbak".  
Rihanna: "It was certainly rousing, Mas. Because of that, I wanted to be like Mbak Nicky Astria. I dreamt of becoming a singer. That's why, one of the reasons why I am a famous singer now was because of that Nicky Astria concert at Kridosono that I saw years ago.  
Journalist: "Oohh.. so that was the reason why you insist on having your concert at Kridosono?"  
Rihanna: "Ho-oh, Mas!"  
Narrator: "The journalist then asked Rihanna about her childhood in Jogja. As we know, Rihanna spent her childhood and teenage years in Jogja before she moved to Manhattan, New York, to pursue her dream of becoming an international singer.  
Her childhood in Jogja was relatively full of sad stories. Her dad worked as a free-lance assistant of bong supit (traditional male circumcision practitioner). His pay is uncertain every month. Whereas her mom worked as a street hawker, selling vegetables from door to door. Being in the state of complete deprivation, Rihanna was forced to work after school to help her family. She took part in various odd jobs to earn money for food and for her school fees."  
Rihanna: (low voice) "Due to circumstances, I had to work for my family, Mas. Sometimes I'd sell newspapers, sometimes I'd work as a dishwasher..." (sobbing)  
Journalist: (voice over) "Mbak Rihanna is really amazing... I've never guessed that her past would be so painful..."  
Journalist: "Mbak, let's talk about music now, alright..."  
Rihanna: (Low voice) "Yes, Mas..."  
Journalist: "That song that goes 'Ella Ella E...E...' What was the inspiration behind it?"  
Rihanna: "Huh?? You mean the song Umbrella?"  
[PAUSE – 4 seconds, Rihanna takes a deep breath]  
Rihanna: (Low voice) "The lyric of the song "Umbrella" was inspired by the difficult period of my life, Mas..." (sobs)  
[PAUSE – 2 seconds]  
Rihanna: (Sighs) "Those days, other than working as a paper-girl, I used to lend my umbrella to passers-by during the rainy season, Mas..."  
Narrator: "This time, Rihanna is unable to hold back her tears. Her mascara runs down her face. The journalist spontaneously hands her a piece of Alfamart tissue to wipe off her tears."  
Rihanna: "My heart sinks every time I think of those days" (sobs) "After school, if it rained, I would grab my umbrella and run towards the bus terminal, and find people to lend my umbrella to"  
Journalist: "Wow, your life was really full of struggle, Mbak..."  
Rihanna: "Iyo... All the other kids would play in the rain for fun. As for me, I was soaked to the skin in the pouring rain working for a living, Mas..."  
Journalist: "Weren't you scared you might catch a cold?"  
Rihanna: "Well, I didn't even think of catching a cold or falling sick, I was too busy thinking of how to make money. If I were not drenched, there would be no food."  
Narrator: "According to Rihanna, in the song "Umbrella", she tells a story of her best friend who used to rent out umbrellas too. She was struck by lightning. For the sake of her recovery, she was forced to undergo a therapy in an alternative medicine clinic."  
Rihanna: "Her name was Marni, she was my neighbour in the village. A pitiful child, her family was as poor as mine. Now she's married. Her left hand was amputated."  
[SOUND EFFECT] Blowing nose  
Journalist: "What about the song "Take A Bow"?"  
Rihanna: (Sighs) "Honestly, the song is about feeling broken hearted, having been dumped by my ex-boyfriend when I was young, Mas..."  
Journalist: "Ooo.... Was it because of a third party, Mbak? Was there another girl?"  
Rihanna: "No, Mas... He chose to be with Pardi, his archery athlete friend, rather than dating me..."  
Narrator: "Rihanna stands up and walks towards the window where she looks at the view of Jogja city with an empty gaze. The journalist is afraid to disturb her. She stands quietly for a while."  
Rihanna: "My apology, Mas... I got carried away." (Weeps)  
Journalist: "Iyo, Mbak... I understand how you feel."  
Narrator: "This condition prompts the journalist to stop the interview session. He feels that he cannot ask any more question, as Rihanna seems emotional and sentimental, reminiscing about her past."  
Journalist: "Well, Mbak Rihanna... I suppose we can continue with the interview another time, perhaps through email? It's hardly conducive now..."  
Rihanna: "Iyo, Mas... once again, I really apologise..."  
Journalist: "Mbak, perhaps you will have any tip on how to maintain fitness and health in the midst of your busy schedule?"  
Rihanna: (Sobs) "After school, I would also sell boiled peanuts at Giwangan bus station, Mas..." (Wails)  
Journalist: "Don't think about it anymore, Mbak. That's already in the past..."  
Rihanna: (Sobs quietly)  
Journalist: "Mbak. I think that's enough. Thank you for making time to meet me..."  
Rihanna: "OK Mas... Be careful on your way back. My regards to your family..."  
Journalist: "Oh ya, Mbak, perhaps you have any special preparation for the release of your new album?"  
Rihanna: "I will do anything, as long as it is halal, Mas..."  
Journalist: "Alright... Assalamualaikum, Mbak..."  
Rihanna: " Waalaikumsalam, Mas..."  
Narrator: "The journalist steps out of the hotel suite and walks towards the parking area proudly-his chest expanded and a big smile on his face-as he's completed the interview with Rihanna, his favourite idol. Rihanna's hell of a concert in Kridosono Stadium finally takes place and reaps a great success."  
[SOUND EFFECT] Part of the song "Umbrella" by Rihanna  
Rihanna: "Thank you, Jogjakarta, you guys are amazinggggg"  
[SOUND EFFECT] Audience cheering  
[CLOSING] Narrator: "Well... That's the story, my brothers and sisters. The road to success is winding and filled with sharp pebbles. But whatever your dream is, you must work as hard as you can, so you can reach it one day, okay? And don't forget, while chasing your dreams, always be sincere, and put your trust in God. Good bye..."  
[SOUND EFFECT] Closing Jingle



# SEKAN AND ADISON

## Private record collection

Small selection of sleeves from Michiel Sekan’s and Adison dos Reis’s private vinyl collections, to represent how their heritage inspires them in their professional careers as musicians and performers.



Sekan & Adison - Private record collection; Photo by Lotte Stekenburg

### Sekan (b. 1989 Purmerend, The Netherlands)

Sekan is the founder of Jiwa Jiwa, a platform and reissue record label that specializes in rare and hard to find Indonesian funk, soul, disco and psychedelic melodies, mostly from the 70s and 80s. With his Indo-European roots and his love for music as well as for his family, he has made it his mission to share the unknown gems from Indonesia with the world. Travels through the homeland of his granddad he often combines with treasure hunting music on vinyl and cassette.

Sekan has his own monthly radio show ‘Alleskan w/ sekan’ at Operator radio Rotterdam, where he spins and mixes all kinds of musical genres. For Red

Light Radio in Amsterdam he has a special Jiwa Jiwa series, where the popular (folkish) Indonesian dangdut beats and his other Indonesian finds are star of the show. His unique collection of musical records, together with his mixtape-skills and his performances on the internet radios makes Sekan popular far beyond The Netherlands and Indonesia. Sekan is part of a generation music creatives who through the web quick share and spread music from niches they researched, often inspired by connecting to their own heritage, uniting a mainstream audience with the unknown local.

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Sekan & Adison - Record Store installation; Photo by Lotte Stekenburg

## Record Store installation

A central element of the exhibition is to raise awareness for the societal discussion and sensitivities around the topics of cultural exchange, cultural ownership and cultural appropriation in our culture consumption and (art) institutions. With making references to music and music culture in the selected participants and works, programme maker Maria Lamslag tries to find a nuanced and positive perspective to let visitors reflect on the topics. In the record store installation visitors are challenged to think on the appropriateness of their interest in the ‘new’ and ‘unknown’ through drawing a parallel with music consumption. The excitement of finding a new tune

is probably a recognisable feeling for most people. In the spheres of record labels, record shops and record collectors this even counts more. The search for rare and unique music also known as ‘crate digging’, is for some people to bestow respect in the DJ and collectors’ scene but could be criticised as to spring from a Western fascination for the raw, unknown and exotic. The fact that record shops often still label their categories as *world music*, *exotica*, *tropical tunes* shows that their perspective is not decolonized yet. Negative connotations with this rare tunes crate digging and colonial structures are even more bitter when the actors have a European background and monetise their collections

or DJ-sets when the original artists (from their former colonies) can not. In the record shop installation visitors are challenged to think about the (in)appropriateness of their musical interest in ‘the unknown’ or ‘rare’. All the records in the crates are borrowed from Rotterdam based record stores and are for actual sale.

The selection of record sleeves from the private collections of Sekan and Adison dos Reis, representing ‘mestizo’ identities, presented just above the record shop installation, shows the complexity of determining what’s who’s legacy and when sincere interests are culturally (in)appropriate.

\*\*\*\*\*

### Adison dos Reis (b. 1981 Rotterdam, The Netherlands)

The Dutch Cape Verdian beatmaker, musician, DJ, actor and rapper Adison dos Reis grew up with music all around him. He remembers his mother humming traditional Cape Verdian songs during chores and discovering his father’s impressive disco vinyl collection. In the periods his father was away from home as a sailorman, Adison listened to the music. Through radio and tv, Adison got introduced to popular artists like Michael Jackson, Cameo and Duran Duran, but also new sounds from hiphop groups like Public Enemy and N.W.A. Growing up in the 80’s and 90’s his love for hiphop evolved. Parallel to this he developed an interest in Cape Verdian

music from the sixties and seventies. With checking the record sleeves he realized a lot of Cape Verdian music is recorded in European cities, where Cape Verdian diaspora communities live. In Rotterdam the record label Morabeza Records, founded in the 1960s by the Cape Verdian Joao Silva, was an important label. As one of the precursors of his generation showing interest in his parents’ and grandparents’ music, Adison started collecting vinyl and organizing parties where he spins these sixties and seventies grooves. All the influences together contributed to Adison dos Reis’ all round musical interest and expression.

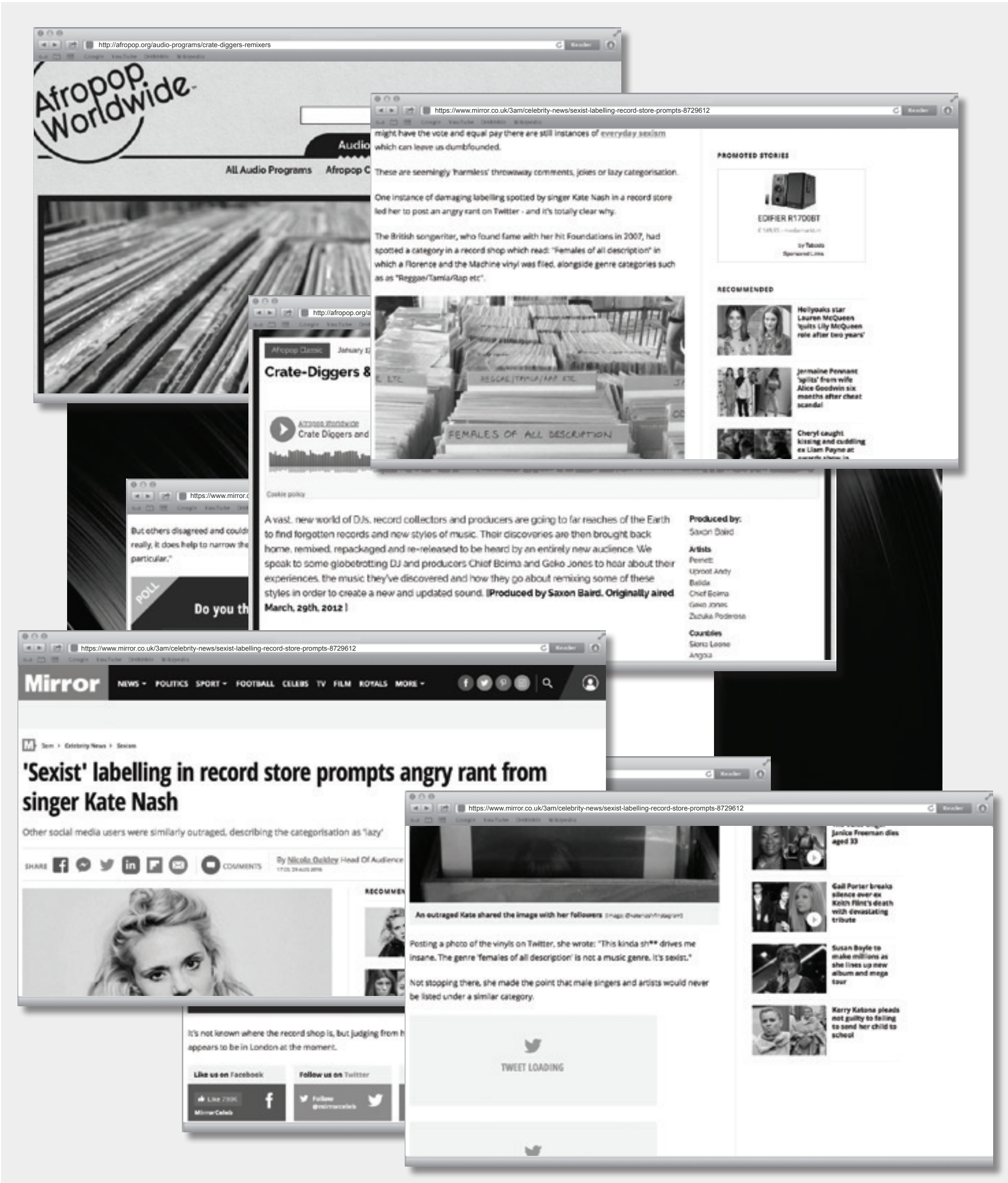


@bestkeptrecords



**Hans Tweedehands**  
Provenierssingel 89-B  
Rotterdam







# SANDIM MENDES



Sandim Mendes - Amílcar (2010); Photo by Lotte Stekenburg



Sandim Mendes - Untitled (2010); Photo by Lotte Stekenburg

## Amílcar (2010) & Untitled (2010)

Early work from Sandim Mendes is selected for *Apa kabar? (What's new?)* exhibition: both Amílcar and the Untitled photos are from 2010, when Mendes was a graduate at the Willem de Kooning Academie. In this time Mendes was trying to get grasp of perception and identity.

In a performance embodying the Cape Verdean independence fighter Amílcar Cabral in his PAIGC party office writing a speech, she tried getting in touch with the Cape Verdean history, that is hers as well but while growing up in Rotterdam felt distant. Through the performance she wanted to honour Cabral's important role in Cape

Verde's independence from Portugal. With collected items from her parents' interior - including her mom's freshly prepared couscous dish - she tried to conduct an intimate setting in the imagined PAIGC office. Still during the performance Mendes felt she is more than her Cape Verdean heritage. The text she wrote during the performance illustrates started off in Creole, but ended in Dutch.

In the Untitled series of six self-portraits Mendes dressed herself up, vulnerably looking into the camera, due to her internal struggle to embrace and simultaneously losing identity. Her audience might not even notice she is

dressing up and the fact that Mendes doesn't recognize her-self in her self-portraits.

Her work not only explores the tenuous nature of cultural identity, it also examines the relation between the one who objectifies and the subject who is framed. In some respects Sandim has struggled with the fact that she hovers between these perspectives, but ultimately this is the virtue of her work. Rather than fixing identity or exposing a simple power relation within photography, the strength of her project is in the lack of resolution. After all, identity is always in flux.

\*\*\*\*\*

### Sandim Mendes (b. 1986 Rotterdam, The Netherlands)

Sandim Mendes is a Rotterdam based visual artist working with mixed media. After graduating at the Willem de Kooning Academie in 2010, Mendes was artist-in-residency at the Icelandic Textile Center in 2016. From 2010 on Sandim has participated in various national and

international group exhibitions, like Parallel Doors of Perception (MUHKA Antwerp 2010), Kurni Kurato (Berlin 2015), Solo Photo Fest (Surakarta 2016) and Going Back to Forget (TENT Rotterdam 2017). Through photography, performances, textile, drawings and installations

her main investigation touches upon identities in and in-between various cultures. Born in the Netherlands with a Cape Verdean background, she experienced this *being in the middle* herself. As an exchange student in The United States she was confronted by how the gaze of 'the

other' reflected on her self-image.

With use of historical elements, her family history and historical (non) existing personalities (fiction) in her work, she often plays with the tension between past and present, with the self and the other.

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# IRINEU DESTOURELLES



Irineu Destourelles - New Words for Mindelo's Urban Creole (2014) ; Photo by Lotte Stekenburg

## New Words for Mindelo's Urban Creole (2014)

*Displays neologisms, aimed at enriching the vocabulary of the substratum creole language from Cape Verde spoken in informal contexts, and their definitions that refer to social dynamics that have emerged in the country since the end of single-party Marxist regime and the beginning of democracy in 1990. The neologisms are made from names of Portuguese colonial administrators and names of Greek mythology characters and propose relations between ongoing social practices and Cape Verde's colonial history under Portuguese rule.*




### Irineu (born 1974 Santo Antar, Cape Verde)

Working across moving-image, text, painting and drawing Irineu Destourelles explores what he considers to be the intricate relationship between the process of signification and colonial thinking frameworks. At the core of his practice is the questioning of our reliance on binary structures and opposite identities to create meaning. Often making reference to modernist artistic strategies, from minimalism and conceptualism to expressionism, he works by challenging the way in which signification emerges from oppositional relations through layering ideas, intertwining the reassuring with the disquieting.

His videos have been displayed in group screenings at, for example, ICA in London, Hangar Bicocca in Milan, Transmediale in Berlin and Galerie de l'UQAM Montreal, group exhibitions include 'Being and Becoming' at UNISA Art Gallery, Pretoria and 'Another Country', at City Art Centre, Edinburgh, and and solo exhibitions include 'Tainted Verbal' at Transmission Gallery Glasgow and forthcoming at Gulbenkian Museum Lisbon. Destourelles was born in the island of Santo Antao in Cape Verde, trained at Willem de Kooning Academy, Rotterdam and Central St. Martins College of Art & Design, London and lives and works in Edinburgh.



https://www.omniglot.com/writing/kriol.php

 **Omniglot** the online encyclopedia of writing systems & languages

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### Cape Verdean Creole (Kriolu)


Cape Verdean Creole is a creole language based mainly on Portuguese, and also on West African languages which is spoken mainly in Cape Verde. In 2017 there were about 871,000 speakers. It is also spoken by the Cape Verdean diaspora in in other countries, such as Angola, Brazil, Guinea-Bissau, Portugal and Senegal.

Cape Verdean Creole is known as *kriolu* by its speakers. Different dialects are spoken on the different Cape Verde islands, but they are all considered one language by the Cape Verdean authorities. Although Portuguese is the official language of Cape Verde, almost everybody speaks Cape Verdean Creole as their first language.

The official spelling system for Cape Verdean Creole is known as ALUPEC (*Alfabeto Unificado para a Escrita do Caboverdiano* - Unified Alphabet for Cape Verdean Writing), or as *Alfabetu Kabuverdianu* (Cape Verdean Alphabet). Not everyone use this system, and since Cape Verdean Creole is not an official language, this spelling system is not used in official documents, signs or most other printed material.

#### Cape Verdean Creole alphabet

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
a	b	c	d	e	f	g	h	i



https://www.omniglot.com/writing/kriol.php

System is not used in official documents, signs or most other printed material.

### Cape Verdean Creole alphabet

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
a	b	c	d	e	f	g	h	i
[a]	[b]	[c]	[d]	[e]	[f]	[g]	[h]	[i]

J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R
j	k	l	m	n	o	p	q	r
[j]	[k]	[l]	[m]	[n]	[o]	[p]	[q]	[r]

S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z
s	t	u	v	w	x	y	z
[s]	[t]	[u]	[v]	[w]	[x]	[y]	[z]

Other letters

dj	lh	nh	tx
[ɗ]	[l]	[ɲ]	[tʃ]

### Cape Verdean Creole pronunciation

https://www.omniglot.com/writing/kriol.php

v	x	tx	y	z
[v]	[x]	[tʃ]	[j]	[z]

### Notes

- The digraphs DJ, LH, NH and TX are not considered letters of the alphabet. In collation they are considered as two letters, for example, in dictionaries, words beginning with DJ come between words beginning with DI and DO.
- Technically, the combinations vowel + N (when this letter shows nasalization) are digraphs. They are also considered as two separate letters.
- When N comes after a vowel and before a consonant, or at the end of a word, it nasalizes the vowel. A tilde is also used to indicate a nasal vowel in some cases, such as *mã* [mã̃] and *nãu* [nã̃u].
- The phoneme /w/, which is also pronounced [ɣ] or [x], is written RL, except at the beginning of words, where it's written RL.
- The name of the letter R is also pronounced [ʀ] or [ʀ̃]
- In northern island dialects the unstressed i, (shown in brackets in the alphabet) is not pronounced
- When unstressed A is pronounced [ɐ]
- The letters C, Q and W are only used in foreign loanwords, proper names, acron and international symbols.

Download an alphabet chart for Cape Verdean Creole (Excel)


### Sample text

Tudo ser humano na ês mundo nacô libri e igual na ês dignidade e na sês drôto. Na sês razôn e na sês concênça, tudo arguem debê portolô pa co tudo guemti na aprto di fraternidade.

https://www.omniglot.com/writing/kriol.php

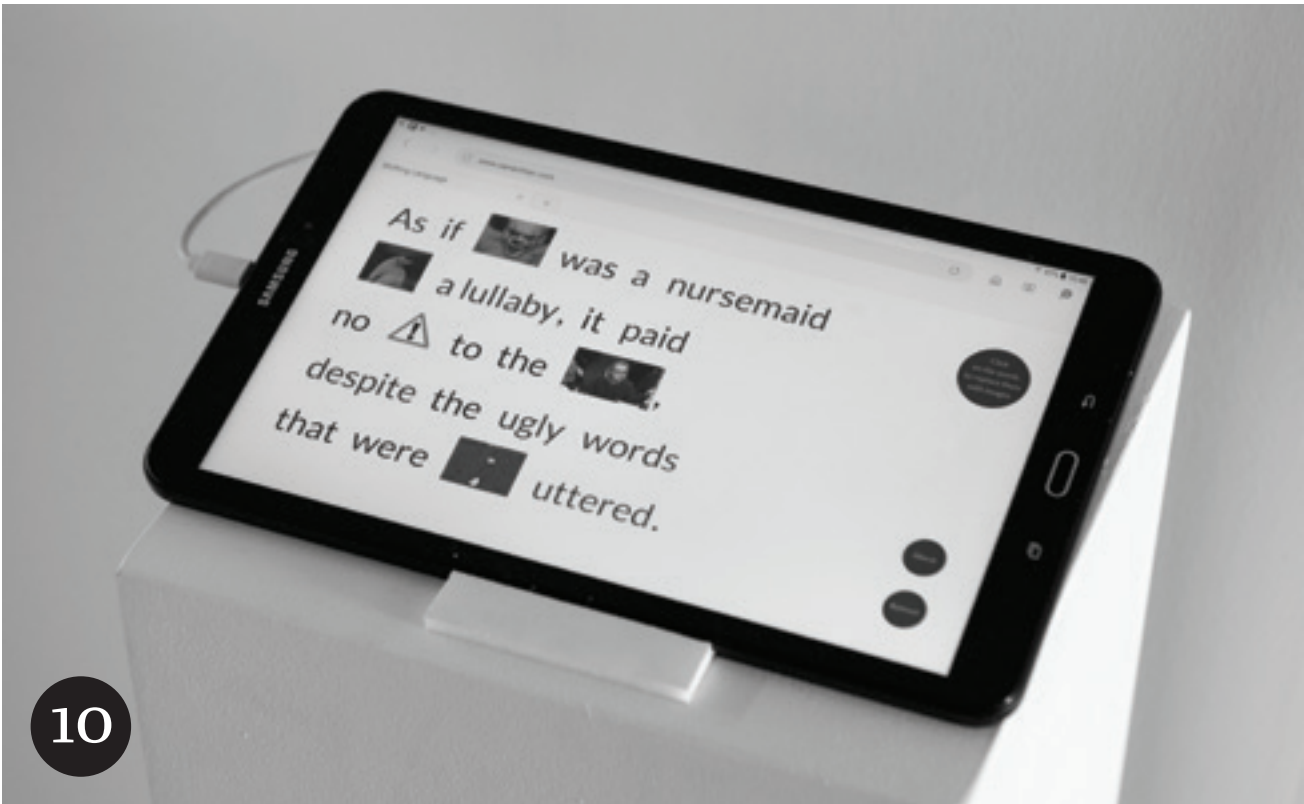
Information about the Cape Verdean Creole alphabet and pronunciation compiled by Wolfram Siegel, with corrections and additions by Cláudio Alexandre Duarte

### Sample video in and about Cape Verdean Creole





# OANA CLITAN



10

Oana Clitan - Shifting Language (2017) ; Photo by Lotte Stekenburg

## Shifting Language (2017)

Oana Clitan is an interdisciplinary designer and artist exploring themes like language and contemporary communication influenced by technology and media. She moves through gifs, collages, drawings, installations and other various mediums and uses mostly kitsch and pop imagery. Oana is currently working on a research about the transition from communicating with text to communicating with images in online conversations and the use

of animated GIFs as rhetorical devices. Part of this are the two works 'Shifting Language' and 'Disputations between rocks and hearts'. Shifting Language is an interactive website prototype that contains a piece of text from the Sumerian Disputation between Bird and Fish. The audience is invited to replace the words with images, thus playing with the degree of interpretability of the text, and creating new meaning through juxtapositions.

### Oana Clitan (b. 1989 Bistrita, Romania)

Born in Romania, Oana studied Graphic Arts at the University of Art and Design in Cluj-Napoca and moved to The Netherlands for her Master studies in Graphic Design at AKV St Joost. Since her graduation in 2014 she has been based in Rotterdam, maintaining her practice as a designer and focusing more and more on artistic projects. Besides her visual practice she has also been co-organizer at Conversas Rotterdam for two years and has recently launched a collection of silk scarves called Pulse by Clitan. Her recent exhibitions include Goodbye Expectations (solo exhibition at Visual Kontakt gallery, Cluj-Napoca, Romania, 2017), Anthropomorphism of Media (group exhibition at Dynamo Artist Association, Vancouver BC, Canada, 2017) and Hubbub le Scope (group exhibition presented in Rotterdam, Palermo and Cluj-Napoca in 2017/2018).

## Disputation between rocks and hearts (2018)

Disputation between rocks and hearts is an installation inspired by the early stages of writing and visual communication, and the paradox that we are now using images to communicate, just like in ancient times when written language had not been invented yet. The reference is Sumerian disputations, short stories written in the 3rd

millennium BC on clay tablets in cuneiform script. They address philosophical topics such as humanity's place in the world through allegory (Debate between cattle and grain, Debate between Summer and Winter). The installation consists of projecting a looping series of animated GIFs on a structure of stones. The GIFs are popular ones to express

emotions in online communication, they are taken from chat apps and assembled in order to have a conversation. Through their loops, the gifs reference the above-mentioned paradox and seek to reflect the current attitudes in online communication.

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Oana Clitan - Disputation Between Rocks and Hearts (2018) ; Photo by Lotte Stekenburg

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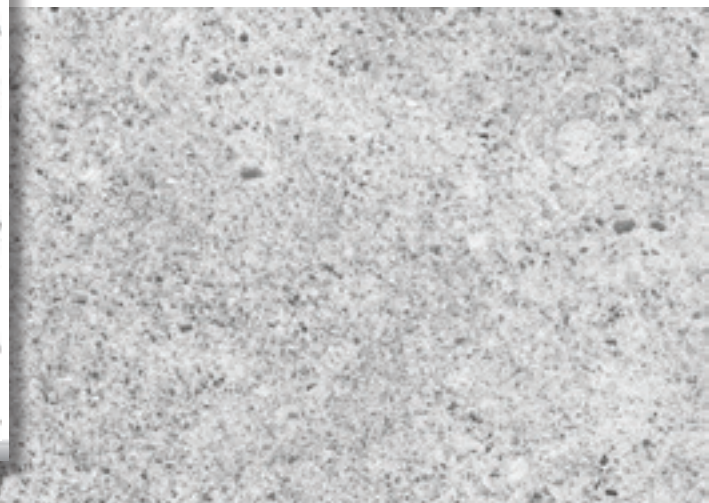


**info@vandendool.nl**











# This is (not) America installation

On May 6th 2018 during an episode of Saturday Night Live, Childish Gambino's new music video went into premiere. It only took a few hours for the song to top the international charts. The song and the video received a great amount of attention in the media. The video did not only become the talk of the day, the month, but the entire year. During the 61st edition of the Grammy Awards, Childish Gambino's This Is America took several awards home – such as Song of The Year, Record of the Year. Besides that, Gambino also won Best Rap Performance and Best Music Video. Childish Gambino, also known as Donald Glover, has up until this very day denied to go further into the deeper meaning and symbolism behind the controversial music video. He

leaves the different interpretations entirely to the Internet. It is generally speculated that the song has U.S society as its central theme, a society characterized by gun violence, racism, capitalism and online sensation. Right after the premiere of the music video, an incredible amount of analyses and theories about Glover's symbolism started appearing on the Internet. Aside from that, it took just a few days for remakes from all over the world to appear on platforms such as Youtube. Great examples are This is Nigeria, This is France, This is India and This is Iraq, among many others. Especially the choreography and symbolism that were never explained by Glover took a central position in these remakes. These elements of the video seem to have become a catchy format

for international criticism on society. During the exhibition *Apa kabar? (What's new?)* an installation created by Maria Lamslag in collaboration with L.C. von Sukmeister is on display that consists of a looped visual in which the original video is shown alongside the remakes. The loop also includes an explanatory video about the symbolism. The space in which this installation is displayed has similarities with the set for the original Childish Gambino music video. The industrial aesthetic and chair with guitar from the opening scene have been copied into MAMA's showroom to make the installation come to life, and make the visitor think about what This Is The Netherlands were to look like if realized. Spontaneous performances are, therefore, always welcome!



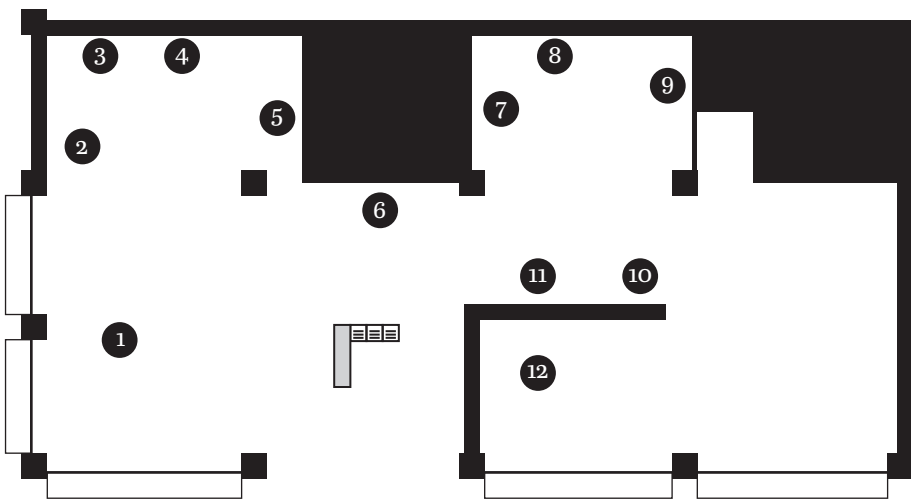
This is (not) America installation ; Photo by Lotte Stekenburg

## About MAMA

MAMA is a platform for visual culture in Rotterdam, focussing on talent development through (often new) productions and presentations at the interface of art and popular culture. MAMA realises exhibitions, books, magazines, performances, master classes and events in its showroom, online, on location, both locally and internationally. MAMA's programme is rooted in youth and popular culture and takes place in areas where broader cultural developments – social, technological, economic – become visible within contemporary art practice. New tendencies often emerge outside of the institutional context – online and offline, the private sphere and public domain. This is where collective activity thrives and where culture and

creativity can manifest beyond institutional consent. MAMA closely follows the developments of a young generation of artists, striving to achieve this through invitation, support, and development. MAMA works together with a large and diverse group of emerging professionals: Team MAMA. They provide feedback, solicited and unsolicited, on our content and the direction of the programme and the organisation. Many have become staff members or participated in our exhibitions and projects. Our supporters – both organisation and audience – are actively engaged, ambitious, and articulate. MAMA emphasises collectivity and welcomes diverse voices in the programme. \*\*\*\*\* [www.thisismama.nl](http://www.thisismama.nl)

## Floorplan



- 1 Caetano - Gueto Blaster Discos
- 2 L.C. von Sukmeister - Inglorious Cinema
- 3 Agan Harahap - Childhood memories I
- 4 Agan Harahap - Childhood memories II
- 5 Agan Harahap - Rihanna dan payungnya
- 6 Sekan & Adison - Record Store installation
- 7 Sandim Mendes - Amilcar
- 8 Sandim Mendes - Untitled
- 9 Irineu Destourelles - New Words for Mindelo's Urban Creole
- 10 Oana Clitan - Shifting Language
- 11 Oana Clitan - Disputation between rocks and hearts
- 12 This is (not) America installation

### Maria Lamslag (b. 1988 Harderwijk, The Netherlands)

As a creative and curator, Maria Lamslag experiences how often in discussions on cultural appropriation and cultural ownership people want to position themselves and others in a clear right or wrong category, while she herself doubts if this is actual possible. From her own mixed background as Indonesian-European, which is not always noticed or recognized by others, she is looking for the nuances in the discussion. With *Apa kabar?* she not only wants to raise awareness on

complexity of the questions on cultural (in)appropriateness and ownership, also she wants to try and present positives perspectives on “remixed culture”, drawing parallels with online and music culture and highlighting the practice of musicians and artists that deal with this (in)voluntarily mixing creatively and from their own mixed ‘mestizo’ identity. \*\*\*\*\*



Ever had misunderstandings or funny coincidences because of your use of emojis and gifs? or just have thoughts about them?

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send your stories to [hello@oanaclitan.com](mailto:hello@oanaclitan.com)