



Dancers in 'The Last Ideal Paradise' rehearsing at PFN in Jakarta on Wednesday. (Photo courtesy of Goethe-Institut Indonesien)

## 'The Last Ideal Paradise': Radical Take on Idealization of Democracy

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**Jakarta.** 'The Last Ideal Paradise' by German artist and choreographer Claudia Bosse is now playing at the old Perum Produksi Film Negara building in Kampung Melayu, Jakarta, on Wednesday, Friday and Saturday.

The artwork, made up of installations and a dance performance, is a radical commentary on social constellation and political thinking on territory and terrorism.

Each night, the audience becomes part of the performance, giving them the freedom to interpret the work as they please.

"I want the audience to have an artistic way to understand spatial and political constellations that we are all a part of," Bosse said in Jakarta on Wednesday.

The two and a half-hour performance reflects social and political upheavals from 2011 to the present, accompanied by footages of refugees and asylum seekers trying to reach Europe from their war-torn countries.

Bosse critically examines how Europe is seen as a promised land with an ideal democratic system.

"There's this idealization of democracy. We tend to forget who is this 'paradise' for, and who is excluded from it. Democracy could only exist at the expense of others, why is it still seen as the most valuable system for many people?" Bosse said.

"What happens when the space in Europe becomes the only safe space to go, while at the same time, radical nationalists try to push people out and create an anti-immigrant narrative?" she said.

The German artist's emphasis on space and body constellation allows the audience to feel what it's like being in a communal journey and also the sense of being infiltrated with no barrier between them and the performers.

"When in a certain territory, there are lines of demarcation. People often feel their rights are pressed, and when it's not possible to negotiate their rights, they feel unable to act at all. So this performance is a space where we can realize that relationship. I want the audience to think about possibilities of how they can act and not just be a passive consumer of circumstances," Bosse said.

For this work, Bosse observed and interviewed locals and immigrants in New York, Alexandria, Beirut, Tel Aviv, Jerusalem, Zagreb and Athens. She also interviewed artists and activists involved in the 2011 Arab Spring uprising in Cairo.

"I was interested in the ways of the political organization there and their new belief of democratic movement after experiencing 37 years of dictatorship," Bosse said.

The Last Ideal Paradise is part of a series of artworks called "Ideal Paradise" that started life in 2015 as an installation featuring more interviews with the people of Cairo and Athens.

Installation in Jakarta was premiered in Düsseldorf in 2016. It was also performed at the Tanzplattform 2018 in Essen as one of the thirteen German productions.