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# PERFECT SPACE IN PFN OLD BUILDING

*The Last Ideal Paradise* chose an unusual place, the State Film Production Building, Jakarta. Titled by a German director, this theater raised the issue of political, cultural and terrorism in Indonesia.

Isma Savitri // 29th February 2020

THIS is like the night-wing in a camping activity. It was none other than us watching the theater of *The Last Ideal Paradise* being herded down the aisles of the state-owned company building Film Film Negara (PFN) on Jalan Otista, East Jakarta, Wednesday evening February 26. There were spectators who just grinned, others expressed their horrors verbally because they had to pass through the old PFN building which was partly built during the Dutch colonial era. Most of the outer walls of the building looked dull and peeled, mingled with tall bushes. The building was last renovated in the 1980s, along with the construction of a studio and film laboratory.

Dozens of spectators followed the performers in action while walking slowly and taking short steps. Occasionally dozens of performers directed by German director, Claudia Bosse, softly say a little narration that makes the hair on the back of the skin crawl. "People who don't die in this disaster, they still worship evil spirits. They do not repent of murder, magic, or theft that has been done", said a male performer. The look on his face is serious.

Around the PFN office area is only a small part of *The Last Ideal Paradise* stage. Claudia Bosse said she was the one who chose the PFN building as its performance space. That's after she researched the history of politics and Indonesian cinema and felt comfortable with the anatomy of the building as well as the aisles in this region. "Here many national historical narratives, as well as political propaganda, are produced. In addition, this office has many interesting buildings and spaces that we can use. It fits with the concept that we raised, especially the dialogue about space and body", she said when met after the stage.

*The Last Ideal Paradise* went on stage three times in Jakarta, on 26, 28 and 29 February 2020. Since 2018, Bosse has visited Indonesia several times. She met a number of artists from various regions, who then collaborated on the Goethe-Institut project. They include dancers Ayu Permata Sari; sculpture artist Alfiah Rahdini; director Ibed Surgana Yuga; choreographer Yola Yulfianti; member of the Lenteng Forum Community, Akbar Yumni; and Karlina Supelli.

Bosse has been known as a choreographer who is close to the work that smells of space and body. *The Last Ideal Paradise* first appeared in 2015 at the Weltmuseum Vienna, Austria, the country where Bosse lives. The beginning was the installation that she was working on from her research in Cairo and Athens, about the political situation and social change in Egypt and Greece. After that, Bosse worked with performers and choirs, presenting a collection of ethnographic, objects and videos.

The stage in Jakarta, she said, was one level above previous performances, including those that had been held in Düsseldorf, Germany. "I make use of the material available here and the knowledge of the viewer that is influenced by history and personal experience", she said. Indonesia's demographics, which are predominantly Muslim, also influenced Bosse in composing texts, in addition to the history of 1965 and terrorism. "Interesting because in Indonesia there is Islam and there is radical Islam."

*The Last Ideal Paradise* lasts more than two and a half hours. Before the show, Bosse said, she wanted the show to lure the audience to react and choose their point of view. She does this by freeing us choose the order of the room to be visited. In each of those dimly lit rooms, we encounter installations that are scary to look at. There are headless dolls, statues with heads in the form of roentgen photos, intestines scattered, plastic skulls, pieces of human bodies similar to mutilation victims, game animals, as well as PFN movie posters, such as *The Last Train* (aired in 1981).

Not only the visuals are terrifying, the sounds that are played in various rooms also make the impression of a haunted room. From the faint sound of people whispering, snippets of interviews about the 1965 tragedy, also the creaking of a door like a part of a horror movie scene.

After the spectators finished passing through the rooms, the performers (Ayu Permata Sari and friends) walked one by one to the hall which everyday functioned as a PFN studio. Spectators flocked to them. In the hall, the performers - called Ghost Team by Bosse - moved to play with the space and the image of the audience. It is as if they

formed a partition, passed through it, dismantled it, and closed it again. The transposition refers to violence and submission that grow and last in different places.

With the audience, the viewers also open interactions. Besides Ghost Team, four other people appeared wearing some kind of silver *long john* with a partially covered face in latex. They make a commotion by surging into the audience, past the sitting, nudging the standing, disrupt the order that was originally calm. Their intimidation is not only through motion, but also the look in the terrorizing eyes. "Ghost Team refers to many things. Not just tragedy, but also body positions for individuals and the public," Bosse said.

Before the chaos had subsided, the viewers then escorted the audience out of the building. Walk through the streets between buildings, before returning to the hall and struggling with territorial games. Bosse initiated it by asking the player to again disturb the audience standing in the hall. The performers held tarps that forced the audience to step aside. However, if the audience stays in place, the performer does not have the courage to force. "A lot of conflicts have been sparked by territorial matters, and I think the way to react is by collectivity," Bosse said.

PFN Director General of Housing, Judith J. Dipodiputro, said that *The Last Ideal Paradise* was permitted to show its commitment to appreciate art forms other than films. The initiative to open the PFN office complex to the non-film public is related to the company's collaboration with PT Wika Realty. In the 2 hectare land, four film production studios and *creative hubs* will be built, including a cinema and a mall, which is planned to be completed in 2023.

According to the company secretary, Ade, the construction costing hundreds of billions of rupiah is planned to begin in the middle of this year. "If many people consider PFN to have a long sleep, we actually have prepared many concepts to rise," he said. After *The Last Ideal Paradise*, PFN hasn't stopped. Their building will also be the location of the JakArt theater stage titled *Beautiful Water* in mid-March 2020.