



How little I know about you¹

or *PASANGKAN TALI KELEDAR KESELAMATAN SEMASA DUDUK*²

An attempt to start a list to assist museum-like institutions to work together with ruangrupa, in the hope that this list might also be applicable for other similar initiatives³

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¹ A pun from the exhibition title, as an attempt to render the term more generous, mature and humble. The realization is not about you not knowing enough about me, like what teenagers shouted to their parents. But the humility brought by the fact that I don't know enough about you.

² As the picture conveyed, the term is the Malay translation of "fasten your seatbelt while seated". As an Indonesian, reading this term is uncanny—familiar in their unfamiliarity. This brings us to the well-known stunt by the Malaysian artist Roslisham 'Ise' Ismail, where he likes to wear a t-shirt by the budget airline AirAsia to art openings, as to say that the airline has contributed a lot to (at least Southeast) Asian art scenes just by making flying to each other places' contexts affordable.

³ The idea to undertake this attempt comes from conversations with several participants of MMCA's "How little you know about me", during the installation week. Special shoutout to Marika B. Constantino from our fellow exhibition participant, Manila-based 98B COLLABoratory, who extended the conversation several days after in Roxas City, the Philippines, during South East Asia Art Residencies Meeting 2018. I assume she would not realize this fact.

In no particular order:

1. Generosity is key. Humility is as much so. Compare your titling with mine.
2. Eat, drink and socialize with us. Get to know each other better. It will take time. Take it.
3. Embrace slowness—a different slowness, not bureaucratic but the self-caring kind—once in a while.
4. Let us teach each other what flexibility means. We are good for each other that way.
5. Hang out with us. Let's waste time on each other.
6. "Our kind" don't function well in meetings. Thought to be blatant about this, finally.
7. Dance with us. We don't struggle, we hustle. We dance, therefore we revolt.
8. We like to challenge Marx by rarely separating work against leisure. Precarious, they said. We just simply do not want to be alienated, we reply.
9. Our public is different than yours. That is why we were interested in working together in the first place, no?
10. Utilize us to help you reach out to your forgotten next-door neighbors.
11. We deem social skills as important as, if not more vital than, artistic merits.
12. As you put your gaze to the global sky, we know it's difficult to keep in touch with what's happening on the ground. We are ground specialists. It's nice to be working with you.
13. Let us do what we're best at—engage with the locals. Assist us.
14. We're not only a cool product, we also built factories to sustain its very production. You cannot expect the product without preparing its proper factory.
15. Adapt a "can-do" attitude. Always.
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18. We are trained to be networkers, therefore we struggle to be non-representational. We are not stand-ins for our contexts, cities, nations, countries.
19. We exist as a sign of the certain failures in the nation-state system. Do not expect us to act as a United Colors of Benetton signage in your public programmes.
20. For some of us there's no "identity politics". It is just politics. Like there are no "women artists", just artists.
21. Let us realize fully and address one important thing: that between us, we have different responsibilities. For better, but also for worse.
22. We challenge individuality. We challenge the very notion of genius. Your existence is to identify, mystify and guard them.
23. CVs, bios and list of achievements we deem to be superfluous. In the word of the great Richard Bell, "How do you write a collective CV?"⁴
24. We operate in different time-scales. We understand, and therefore experience, age differently.

⁴ Richard Bell, "Bell's Theorem: Aboriginal Art—It's a White Thing!" in *The Koori History Website* (November 2002). [<http://www.kooriweb.org/foley/resources/art/bellessay.html>, last accessed 3 May 2018]

25. There's a reason why "pigeonhole" is a term. Who the pigeon and who the hole is between us, you decide.
26. When there's a need to label us, restrain. We don't fit neatly to categories, while it's your job to produce them.
27. We are a product of certain (non) bureaucracy. You are built upon it as foundation.
28. We should not impose things to each other. When in doubt, refer to point no. 2. Like the late Bowie before us: let's sing, "Let's Dance"!
29. Remember economy, of scale. We are not those artists whose practice fit in with your business model, which in turns were founded to support certain art forms. Again, not our forms.
30. We simply cannot work first, get paid later. Most of our budget goes straight to humans. Some people cannot wait.
31. Unlike what's known now as gig-economy, for us cash often still works best.
32. Conflict is overrated, so don't shy away from it. We strive from it.
33. Horizontality is so much so. It's a useful myth, but nevertheless still a myth.
34. We are not a product of politically correctness, therefore will never be correct politically.
35. Asia is, indeed, a method. The usefulness of any method lies on the hand of its beholder. Our advice: don't be afraid to let it slip from your hand.
36. Having said all the above, be assured that we will never stop trying to surprise you, as we know you do not appreciate surprises.
37. When you think you know us, we know you better.
38. Relax.
39. Last but not least, enjoy the bumpy ride, as we know we will!
40. Don't worry... as you can always flee and do business-as-usual. *JAKET KESELAMATAN DI BAWAH TEMPAT DUDUK.*



[With all wishful thinking, all this shall continue...]