



I Love You Too Much: Invisible Threat

away. The man's skin is bruised, and he has devilish cloven hooves. In the woman's hand, clasped behind her back, is a dagger. In the second painting of the pair, the same couple stands back to back, eyeing each other. The man's right arm is lengthened unnaturally, and reaches for the heel of the woman's red stiletto.

The painting entitled *Pride and Prejudice* sees the couple again, supine in a forest, with other figures—some ghostly—capering around them. It is reminiscent of Bosch in its grotesque, almost hellish portrayal of the human form, and Brueghel the Younger in its scope and composition. In the *Geo-Self Portrait* triptych, the man appears without his partner, surrounded by dogs and figures, implying that he is the artist. Thus, these works can be viewed as a treatise on Wiharso's sense of identity both on his own and in relation to other people.

While the exhibition's title piece, *Crush Me* (a screen with Indonesian temple carvings), and *Geo-Family* (four figures in traditional clothing) are visually striking, the most compelling of Wiharso's sculpture is found in the series of bronze and aluminum works. In *No Place to Hide*, figures surround a giant fish laid out on a table in a ceremony of sorts, while *You Lost When Someone Felt Hurt* features three people of ambiguous gender, entwined among pipes. *Holy Dream in the Second Homeland* is similarly grotesque. A man, gun raised, sits at the bottom of a mass of bodies, all connected by cords; the human form is deconstructed even further in *Why Are You So Hard to Love* in which the main focus is a cyborg-like figure with wires instead of sinews.

Entang Wiharso's world is one of hyper-reality couched in surrealism, questioning human nature and perception. The quality and technique behind the work make it well worth a look.

■ **Susie Gordon**

Entang Wiharso's "Crush Me" at Pearl Lam Galleries, through July 14

Body Politic

Works from one of Indonesia's foremost artists at **Pearl Lam**

In "Crush Me," his first solo exhibition in China, Entang Wiharso displays an aesthetic that is at once disturbing and surreal as it is appealing and brutally real. Prize-winning Wiharso was born in 1967 and graduated from the Fine Art Department of the Indonesian Institute of Arts Yogyakarta. He has exhibited around the world, with paintings in collections such as the UCCA in Beijing, the Singapore Art Museum, and the Carnegie Mellon Institute.

Most of the work in this exhibition of sculpture and painting dates from the past two years.

There are pieces from the "Untold Story" series, as well as a selection of oil-on-linen paintings. The art attempts to weave a personal narrative that reflects the politics of his home country and the human condition. It deals with how people are shaped by their environment while they are themselves shaping it.

"As I explored the reasons behind feelings and motivations, other stories emerged to reveal another reality, one that reflects immigration, social justice, survival strategies, geography and political systems," Wiharso says. "These kinds of stories, anecdotes that link

to the larger geo-political narrative, are at the core of my current work. I want to put these ideas forward in many contexts to test our perceptions, which often are formed by incomplete information, propaganda, generalizations or prejudice."

The most striking of the paintings are the pair entitled *I Love You Too Much: Invisible Threat*. In the first, a nude man and woman are depicted, oddly surreal and yet simultaneously hyper-realistic. Both have long braided hair that ends in scorpion-like pincers, and they are locked in an embrace from which they are both pulling