

**GALLERYSMITH**  
EST. 2008

# DADANG CHRISTANTO

Surrounded by Cactus

2021

**DADANG CHRISTANTO was born and grew up on Java, the largest island in Indonesia. In this tropical environment, cactus and succulents were not familiar to the landscape and only ever seen at the cinema or on tv.**

After he immigrated to Australia, Dadang visited Sydney Botanical Gardens and saw these unusual plants for the very first time.

Now where the artist lives, near the Northern Rivers region in NSW, cactus gardens are commonplace.

While the forms and colours of cacti are rich, to Dadang they represent a dichotomy of beauty and horror, much like the Indonesian archipelago - a beautiful place, but one which conceals its dark history and the genocide of 1965-66.

These new works embody this tension. Figures are hidden within the foliage of these dense and spiked plants. Dadang describes them as "Beauty wounded. Something which looks so soft on the surface but hard and dark inside."





*Cactus Man #1*  
2020, acrylic on Belgian linen, 137x115cm  
\$ 18,800





*Cactus Man #2*  
2020, acrylic on Belgian linen, 60x44cm  
\$ 6,000





*Cactus Man #3*  
2021, acrylic on Belgian linen, 155x201cm  
\$ 36,000

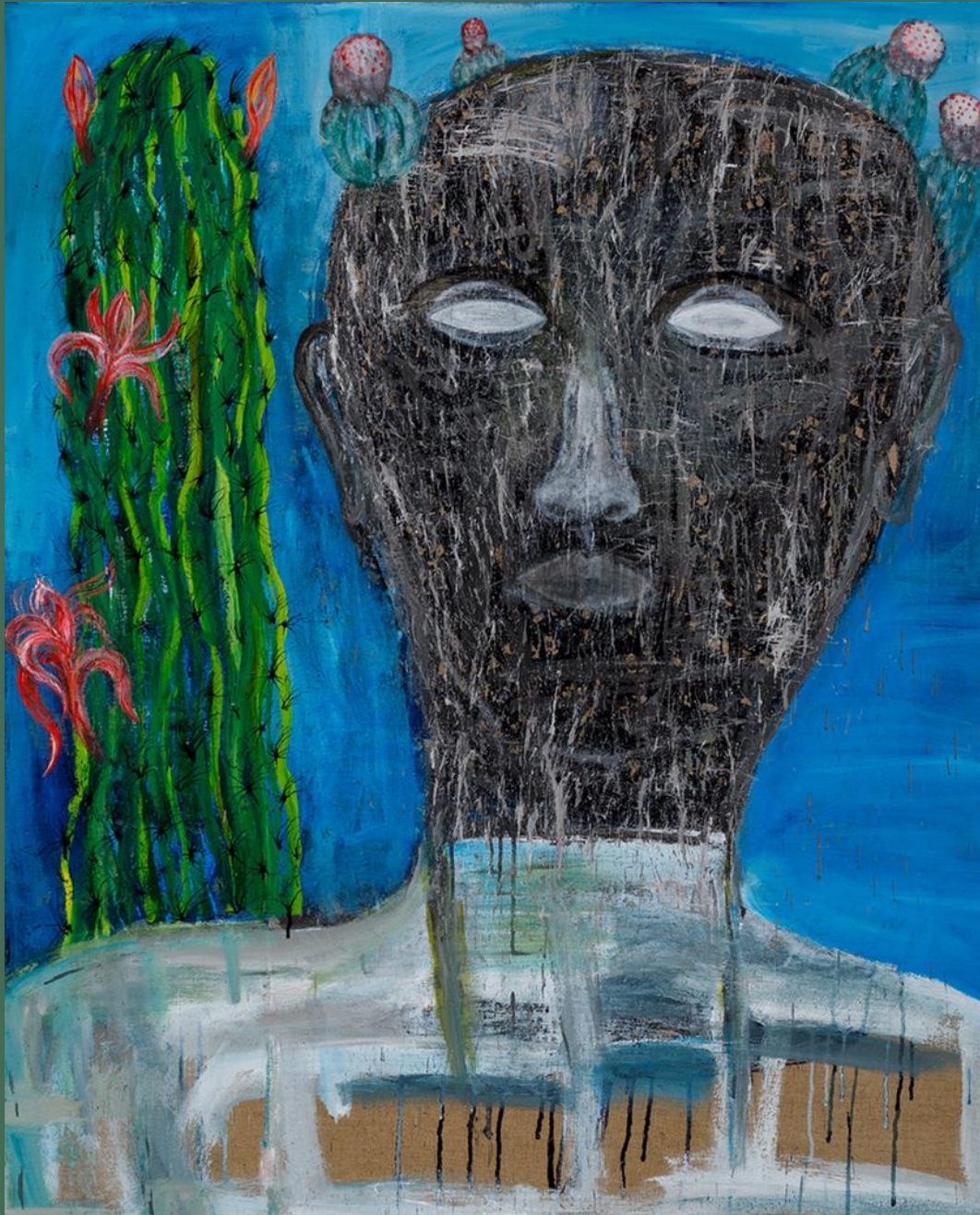






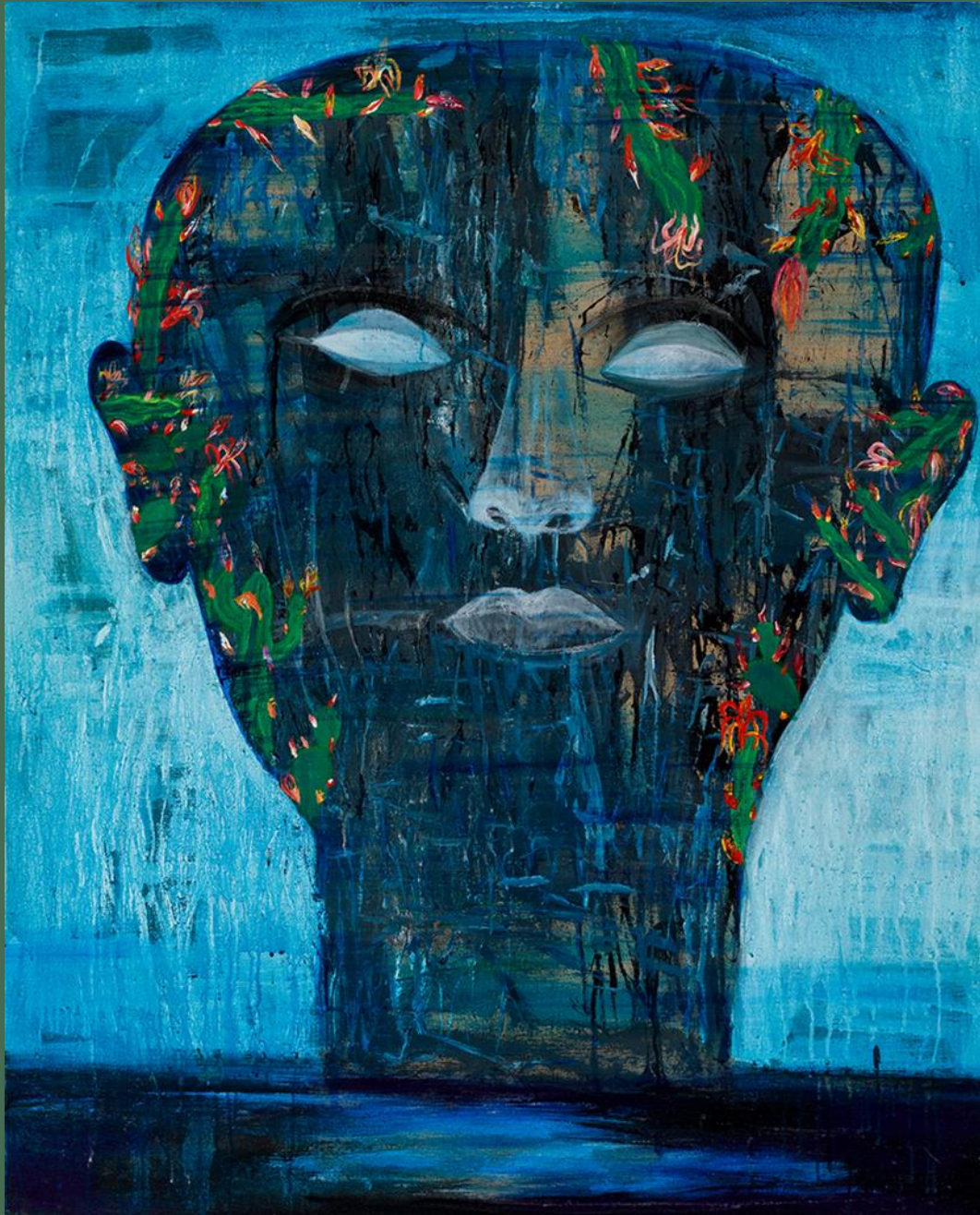
*Cactus Man #4*  
2021, acrylic on Belgian linen, 137x115cm  
\$ 18,800





**Cactus Man #5**  
2021, acrylic on Belgian linen, 136x110cm  
\$ 16,800





*Cactus Man #6*  
2021, acrylic on Belgian linen, 136x110cm  
\$ 16,800



## ARTIST BIOGRAPHY

Born in central Java in 1957, Dadang Christanto has spent his career honouring those affected by political violence and crimes against humanity. His large-scale paintings, which are mostly spare renderings on raw linen, use the human head as a recurring motif in a consciously futile attempt to count the countless victims.

Christanto was the first Indonesian artist to represent his native country at the Venice Biennale in 2003. He has been curated into many other major art events worldwide including the Sydney Biennale (2010), the Yogyakarta Biennial, Indonesia (2003), Kwangju Biennale, South Korea (2000), the Bienal de Sao Paulo, Brazil (1998) and the first and third Asia-Pacific Triennials of Contemporary Art, Brisbane (1993 & 1999).

Christanto's work is held in major public and private collections around the globe including Yuz Museum, Jakarta, Indonesia, Fukuoka Museum of Modern Art, Fukuoka, Japan, Museum of Contemporary Art, Tokyo, Japan, Magdeburg Museum, Magdeburg, Germany, and the following institutions in Australia; Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney, Queensland Art Gallery, Gallery of Modern Art, Brisbane, Museum and Art Gallery Northern Territory in Darwin, National Gallery of Australia, Canberra and the Australian National University in Canberra.



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