



On 16 June 2023 after an exceptional and moving lecture-cum-performance in the conference room of the KITLV, Indonesian artist Theo Frids Hutabarat revealed his impressive work *Anonim*. The painting, a result of a special cooperation in the context of Atelier KITLV, revolves around the figure of the *baboe*, and it is a study of the many anonymous faces in the colonial image archive. At the same time, Hutabarat lays a connection in his painting with gradually disappearing memories in family photos affected by floods, damage, and the passage of time.

The painting together with the institute will be relocated to the renovated Herta Mohr building in the spring. In many ways, this represents the new chosen paths of the KITLV in the recent years. We are especially grateful to Theo and all colleagues who contributed their time and energy to the above-mentioned cooperation. Theo, who was the Atelier KITLV-Framer Framed Artist in Residence, is succeeded by Clara Jo. With the help of a film project, she will depict her artistic research on 'epidemiological routes' in the seas of Afro-Asia.

The year 2023 was also dedicated to interesting book presentations in the context of research on the colonial past and slavery. On 15 June, the Minister of the Interior and Kingdom Relations Hanke Bruins Slot was presented a copy of the book *Staat en slavernij: Het Nederlandse slavernijverleden en zijn doorwerkingen*. This book is part of a project commissioned by the said ministry and carried out by KITLV (coordinator), the International Institute for Social History (IISG), the National Institute for the History and Heritage of Dutch Slavery (NiNsee), and the University of Curaçao. It has been shown that the Dutch

government was intentionally, protractedly, and structurally involved in colonial slavery in the Atlantic world and Asia. The results show, in the words of the minister, ‘a confrontational, and even outright shocking picture’ of the involvement of the Dutch state in colonial slavery.

On 16 November, amid much local interest in Haarlem, the presentation of the book *Koloniaal Haarlem* took place. At the end of the presentation, the Mayor of Haarlem Jos Wielen offered his apologies for the involvement of the City Council in the city’s slave history.

In October, *Melewati batas* and *Dunia revolusi*, the Indonesian translation of *Over de grens* and *Revolutionary Worlds*, respectively, were launched in Indonesia. These two books were KITLV’s final contributions to the project ‘Onafhankelijkheid, Dekolonisatie, Geweld en Oorlog in Indonesië, 1945-1950’. Symposia and public forums in Jakarta and Yogyakarta were followed by book launches in different cities in the country.

The cooperation between KITLV and TeamJava Maryland, an American group of Indian and Javanese philosophy enthusiasts in the project ‘Exploring Indian Influences in Javanese Civilization’ came to a formal end in 2023. The scientific part of the project and corresponding book manuscript are expected to be fully completed in 2024.

Another project that will come to an end is the transdisciplinary pilot research on climate change and marine nature conservation in Indonesia and the Caribbean. The project-based theme group of the Dutch Institute for Advanced Study (NIAS) was rounded off by a well-attended talk titled ‘Secrets of the Sea in Times of Climate Breakdown’ held at Spui25 in Amsterdam. In September, a writing workshop was conducted in Leiden with mainly Indonesian partners in the project.

In the meantime, studies under the theme of climate governance are proceeding at full steam, in the context of an extensive research financed by NWO ‘Island(er)s at the Helm: Co-creating Sustainable and Inclusive Solutions for Social Adaptation to Climate Challenges in the (Dutch) Caribbean’. Under the auspices of the project, a five-day community engagement workshop was organized at the National Archaeological Museum

in Aruba titled 'Traditional Knowledge Solutions for Present and Future Climate Change Adaptation and Resilience in the Caribbean'. Under the banner of the Trans-Atlantic Academic Platform, a sizeable group of Caribbean and Dutch academics travelled to the islands to conduct workshops, lectures, and training as well as to share their knowledge.

Where one project ends, another project begins. The KNAW-financed project 'Cyber Troops and Computational Propaganda' – a collaboration between KITLV and Southeast Asian researchers – examines how manipulation of public opinion is aided by social media. The project will be carried out in Thailand, the Philippines, and Indonesia.

The NWO project 'Costs of Democracy: The Political Economy of Campaign Finance', with the help of qualitative as well as quantitative data, investigates how politicians in India and Indonesia finance their election campaigns, what these campaigns cost, and how and why they differ.

A festive occasion was the promotion of Sanne Rotmeijer, who defended her dissertation 'News in a Glasshouse: Media, Publics, and Senses of Belonging' on 23 May at Leiden University. In the meantime, three doctoral candidates have begun their research at KITLV, namely Wigke Capri, Kim Darbouze, and Widya Tuslian.

Tom Hoogervorst received the IPB 2023 Ground-Breaking Publication Accolade for his book *Language Ungoverned: Indonesia's Chinese Print Entrepreneurs, 1911-1949*. It was by any account an extraordinary year for him. He was also awarded the prestigious ERC-Consolidator Grant for his project 'Trajectories of Taste: An Analytical Framework of Culinary Change After Migration'.

Tom van de Berge has bid KITLV farewell, after almost 22 years of employment at the institute. First as editor, then later as researcher, Tom has meant a lot to the institute through the years. His sharp mind, knowledge, collegiality, and rhetorical skills will be missed by many.

Besides presentations of projects, retirement, and other endings, in 2023 the institute was especially preoccupied with the future. During the annual staff retreat, much thought was given to strategies for the institute in the coming years. A committee was created to strengthen internal cohesion through workshops and presentations. Another committee worked on a new mission statement. A newly designed website and revitalized house style are in the pipeline. All staff members are preparing for the approaching relocation of the institute.

The future of the institute is promising and within reach.