

I Gusti Ayu Kadek Murniasih, *Feels Strangely Good, Ya?* at Nottingham Contemporary

Sat 27 Sep 2025 – Sun 11 Jan 2026

Private View: Fri 26 September



I Gusti Ayu Kadek Murniasih, *Aku dan Anakku*, 2002, Estate of I Gusti Ayu Kadek Murniasih © Courtesy GAJAH GALLERY

Nottingham Contemporary is proud to present the first international institutional solo exhibition of the late Balinese artist I Gusti Ayu Kadek Murniasih “Murni”.

Murni (1966 – 2006, Bali) was a prolific and uncompromising artist whose vivid and acutely personal works emerged as an exploration of her subconsciousness, dreams and psyche and as a form of therapy or diary. Largely self-taught, Murni gained recognition in the 1990s for her striking depictions of female sexuality, addressing themes of pleasure, sex, power dynamics, trauma and desire with humour, absurdity and unflinching honesty. This exhibition marks an important step in championing Murni’s legacy to audiences globally.

Working against the grain of dominant societal, cultural and political norms of Indonesia and Bali in the 1990s, Murni’s paintings challenged taboos around expressions of sexual desire. Unconventional by nature, Murni’s refusal to confine her creativity unsettled audiences. Her direct, bold and unique visual language – at once playful and confessional – led to both acclaim and marginalisation within the growing contemporary Balinese art world.

Feels Strangely Good, Ya? highlights the full force of Murni's boundless imagination and offers a rare opportunity to experience her work in depth. Alongside seminal works created over the artist's lifetime, the exhibition embraces the companionship and creative freedom she found amongst a small group of fellow artists including Edmondo Zanolini (Mondo), I Dewa Putu Mokoh (Mokoh) and Dewa Raram (Total).

The coalescence of Murni's companionship with her fellow painters, her lived experiences and her own creative impulse would sow the seeds for a significant and remarkable body of work made during the short years before her untimely death in 2006. Irrespective of what further work may have come, Murni's practice during her lifetime was undeniably resolute, defined, and uncompromised in its expression - in her own words, 'I paint to feel that I exist.'

Murni's fearless commitment to self-expression has cemented her reputation as one of the most transgressive and vital contemporary figures in Southeast Asian art, whose work continues to inspire others. Today, her work resonates more than ever as an unabashed celebration of desire and freedom, the abject, the grotesque, and the unruly potentials of the body and mind. *Feels Strangely Good, Ya?* invites viewers to find pleasure in the surreal, to sit within the strange, the uncomfortable and the ecstatic and to trust and be guided by the senses.

For more information about *Feels Strangely Good, Ya?* and other exhibitions at Nottingham Contemporary, please visit [our website](#).

Feels Strangely Good, Ya? Is curated by Salma Tuqan and Katie Simpson assisted by Klara Szafrńska

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Exhibition Circle: Natasha Sidartha, Raja Umar Jamalullail (The MENAEA Collection) and those who wish to remain anonymous

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About Nottingham Contemporary

Nottingham Contemporary is one of the leading centres of contemporary art in Europe. Since opening in 2009, we have welcomed over 2 million visitors – with free admission for all – to our highly ambitious programme that has featured hundreds of artists and cultural practitioners from across the globe.

Our programme champions international art and artists who invite us to imagine the world in new ways, and empower different perspectives into the most pressing cultural, social, and political questions of today. We support artists at different stages of their careers – from first-time solo shows in the UK to surveys of renowned or overlooked figures – and regularly present significant thematic exhibitions and major artist-curated projects. Nottingham Contemporary was shortlisted for Art Fund Museum of the Year 2019. Nottingham Contemporary is supported using public funding by Arts Council England and regularly funded through our partnerships with the University of Nottingham and Nottingham Trent University.

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