

Seniwati Gallery of Art by Women

By Mary Northmore



Seniwati Gallery, photo courtesy of Alphonse Falcone

The Seniwati Gallery of Art by Women in Ubud, Bali was founded in 1991. From the start, its founding principles supported the right of women to participate in an artistic community formerly closed to them.

To encourage the emergence of new ideas about the role of women, a small school for girl artists from the Ubud area, the *Seniwati Sanggar Muda*, was set up in 1992. Sponsors are found to cover each girl's expenses (approximately Rp 300,000 or S\$43). To date, over 400 girls have been through the school.

All styles of painting are represented, including traditional (Batuan, Kamasan, Ubud, Penestanan) and modern, both abstract and representational; print making, photography and wood carving are also featured.

The gallery supports itself through the sale of its students' art, and has organised exhibitions both within and outside Indonesia, including Singapore, England, Germany, Hong Kong and Australia. The last-mentioned was attended by three young Ubud artists. Travelling abroad is invaluable for an artist's confidence and brings respect from their families and communities.

The Freeman Foundation, based in Vermont, offers grants to artists to spend two months on site with other artists from around the world. A Seniwati artist, Cok Mas Astiti, was the first Indonesian artist to be given this grant. She has been followed by five more from Seniwati.

Visitors to Bali are warmly invited to visit the Seniwati Gallery at Jalan Sriwedari 2B, Banjar Taman, Ubud, Bali.

Website: www.seniwatigallery.com

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