



BD/Richard Horstman

**Peasant:** Opheusden's colorful interpretation of Balinese farmers working in their rice fields.

# Opheusden's offering of colors

**Richard Horstman**  
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It is the law of nature that arranges color and form to create our physical world.

The environmental wonders of Bali allow us to enjoy the azure blue sea, rich green forests and the burning sun drifting slowly over the horizon at sunset. These phenomena have an enormous impact on the conscious and subconscious mind.

When a gifted artist manipulates color upon canvas in an expression of pure spontaneity and freedom, the results may be dramatic and magical. The laws of nature are again mysteriously at work.

Frequencies of color respond to the codes of our subconscious. Our emotions may be provoked, and the imagination sparked into life. Somehow, we are seduced by what is observed, even though the conscious mind is yet to understand. This is the potency of fine art and one of the reasons why it is regarded with high esteem.

On exhibition at Ubud's Agung Rai Museum of Art from Jan. 25

until Feb. 23 are paintings by Dutch colorist Jan Peter Van Opheusden.

"Banten" (Balinese for religious offering) showcases over 70 paintings, ranging from small portraits to large expressionistic paintings, in a body of work produced over the past year.

Van Opheusden (b. 1941, Eindhoven, the Netherlands) is an international artist having exhibited and painted in many countries throughout Europe and is a regular visitor to the island. He was trained not as a painter but at the Academy for Industrial Design in Eindhoven.

In "Banten", Balinese people and events are a feature of his creative drive, along with works that tell of his love of life, the emotions that it encapsulates, both logical and mysterious.

Within his works, we can make reference to many modern art genres, and for local artists, art lovers and visitors alike, he offers an opportunity to engage in paintings of a caliber that is rarely seen on display in Bali.

Van Opheusden's talent is re-



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**'Barong':** The painter's take on *Barong*, the lion-like mythological creature, is characterized by melting colors and broad strokes.

vealed through the power of suggestion. He need not be concerned with the details, yet cleverly adds enough information - color and form, to

allow the observers' subconscious and imagination to create the paintings. Often his works strike deep chord, triggering powerful emotional responses.

The artist believes his talent is his gift from the gods and due to the unique inspiration he receives when visiting this island. "Banten" is his gift to Bali, the people and the Balinese gods.

Sawah is an extraordinary composition that is as equally beautiful as it is disturbing. A fragment of dark blue sky looms unsettlingly in the distance. Two dark figures toil in the rice field, depicted as a plane of red acrylic contrasting with the brilliance of sheets of gold leaf.

This ignites images of shimmering and iconic golden rice fields prior to harvest, yet with darker undertones and the memory of atrocities that have been a real part of Bali's recent history. This history is rarely mentioned and today remains intentionally buried by the powers that be.

Agung Rai Museum of Art is located on Jl. Pengosekan in Ubud.