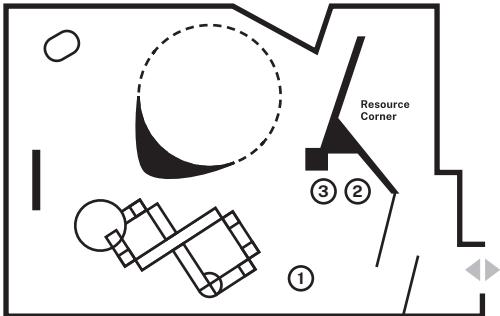

**MATERIAL
INTELLIGENCE**

Nafasan Bumi~ An Endless Harvest

Nafasan Bumi ~ An Endless Harvest begins with ordinary materials that shape our lives. Palm oil enters our food, our homes and our daily routines. Nickel sits inside the technologies we depend on, from batteries to everyday electronic devices. Through the works of Elia Nurvista and Bagus Pandega, this exhibition follows these materials back to their sources, asking what kinds of lives, landscapes and labour make our present way of living possible.

Nafasan bumi, or “breath of the earth,” speaks to the fragile balance between what the earth gives and what we take from it. Today, much of the world’s demand for palm oil and nickel is met by Indonesia. The plantations and mining sites there are not distant or abstract places. Their effects travel, much like the seasonal haze that drifts across Indonesia, Singapore and Malaysia, settling into shared air and shared consequences. This exhibition reflects on that condition: a moment when extraction has become constant and the earth’s breath feels strained by an endless harvest.



Bagus Pandega (b. 1985, Indonesia)

① *L.O.G (Lenyap Oleh Gerigi) (Vanished by Serrations)*

2026

Borneo asam (*Garcinia parvifolia*),
clove (*Syzygium aromaticum*), music boxes,
wireless transmitter, speaker and modular synthesiser
Collection of the artist

In *L.O.G (Lenyap Oleh Gerigi) (Vanished by Serrations)*, Bagus Pandega arranges mechanical music boxes mounted on a log made from Borneo asam timber, a rare hardwood from Kalimantan. Piezoelectric sensors capture the vibrations of nickel ore fragments falling into a metal basin in a related work across the room, *L.O.O.P (Less Organic Operation Procedure)*. These signals trigger the music boxes, connecting both installations in a continuous sonic loop. The work suggests that the impacts of extraction, though not readily visible, can become perceptible through reverberation.

Elia Nurvista (b. 1983, Indonesia)

② *Cyborg*

2026

3D-printed sculpture, filament, resin, aluminium, water hose and LED light

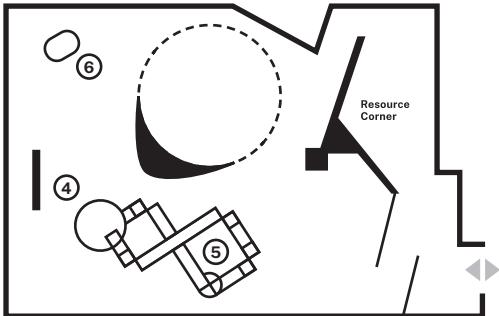
③ *Exhausted*

2026

Batik technique on cotton fabric and palm oil wax
Collection of the artist

Elia Nurvista's *Cyborg* is a central figure in the film *Plantation Tragedy*, set in a world where oil palms are imagined as going on strike. *Cyborg* personifies plantation power, encapsulating its systems of ownership and control. In the film, *Cyborg* reports figures and conditions, its monologue moving between confession and calculation. Through this character, capital, technology and emotion collapse into one voice, in which even grief and guilt are processed as data.

Elia's *Exhausted* turns palm oil wax into a material of memory. Extending from her batik work *The Route* (2024), part of the ongoing *Long Hanging Fruit* series, the earlier work traces the linked histories of palm oil and Dutch-African wax prints. Using batik's wax-resist process, this new work depicts palm trees and fruits within a plantation, as well as the hands and bodies that harvest them, the latter portrayed as mutating under the toxic conditions, drawing attention to the women whose unseen labour sustains these plantations.



Bagus Pandega (b. 1985, Indonesia)

④ **L.O.O.P (Less Organic Operation Procedure)**

2026

Programmed motorised conveyor machine, tropical plants, nickel ore and customised electrical biofeedback receiver

⑤ **Gurat Lara (Scars)**

2026

Three-channel video on live feed, 16:9 aspect ratio, nickel-plated, copper-coated sculpture, DIY nickel-plating solution and aquarium

⑥ **Fabric of the Earth**

2025

Programmed motorised conveyor machine, DIY-modified Tripteron 3D printer, Sidoarjo mud filament and customised pegboard, single-channel video on loop, 9:16 aspect ratio, 9 sec

Collection of the artist

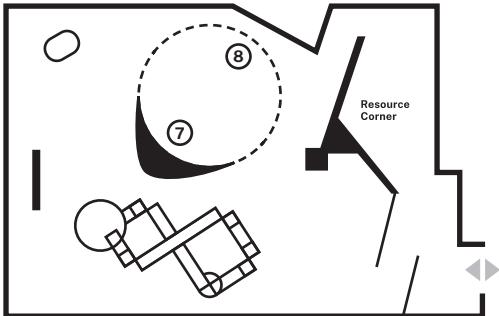
Video: Collection of private lender

L.O.O.P (Less Organic Operation Procedure) looks at extractive systems caught in continuous cycles. Fragments of nickel ore travel in a steady rhythm along a ten-metre green conveyor belt. The movement appears mechanical, but its pace is not set by a machine or a person. Instead, it responds to biofeedback from nearby tropical plants. At the end of the loop, the ore drops into a metal basin with a sharp, echoing sound. Through this gesture, the work imagines a different way of thinking about mining: in which natural processes influence the system and nature shifts from being treated as a resource to becoming an active presence.

Within *L.O.O.P*, another work, *Gurat Lara (Scars)* features a copper-coated reproduction of the head of Bagja, a nickel-mining worker who faced workplace abuse. The sculpture is submerged in a tank of electrolyte solution, where a natural chemical process gradually coats the head with layers of nickel. This process is streamed live on screens mounted as part of *L.O.O.P*.

The live image is inverted, turning rising hydrogen bubbles into a downward fall that resembles rain, tears or sweat. Indonesia is the world's largest producer of nickel and intensive mining has led to deforestation, polluted waterways and toxic soil. *Gurat Lara* draws attention to the fragile labour conditions within mining environments while reminding us how closely nickel is tied to our own lives. Present in our phones, screens and batteries, nickel rests near our bodies every day. The work asks what kind of relationship we have with the materials we depend on and how well we truly know them.

In *Fabric of the Earth*, small 3D-printed houses, lilies, shrimps and seated figures travel in quiet procession. These forms are modelled after drawings made by people who once lived near the site of the 2006 Sidoarjo mudflow disaster in East Java. They are printed using filament made from mud taken from the gas-drilling accident, which continues to release mud. A video shows the still-erupting ground, emphasising its scale and persistence. As the installation grows, it becomes a record of displacement, loss and environmental change.



Elia Nurvista (b. 1983, Indonesia)

⑦ **Plantation Tragedy**

2026

Film produced in collaboration with New Pessimism
Single-channel video, 16:9 aspect ratio, colour and
sound (stereo), 30 min

⑧ **Bodies in Penumbra:
The Soft Machinery of Light**

2026

Synthetic resin and wax, processed oil palm fronds, palm oil
wax and palm trunk

Collection of the artist

Blending the material realities of plantation economies with imagined futures, *Plantation Tragedy* presents a surreal dreamscape in which trees, labourers, scientists and artificial intelligence confront one another in a shared state of exhaustion. Four figures—Francis the overseer, Dona the vegetal communicator, Watiman the scientist and Cyborg the sentient machine—express competing desires for progress, justice and rest. As the oil palms begin to groan, complain and ultimately refuse to produce, a fantasy of vegetal strike emerges. As the trees “strike,” the plantation becomes a scene of imagined resistance, inviting us to consider whether the Earth itself might one day refuse or retaliate.

Plantation Tragedy unfolds within a circular pavilion that draws on the language of Renaissance architecture while unsettling it. In the place of marble columns, the space is anchored by sculptures from *Bodies in Penumbra: The Soft Machinery of Light*. Figures and fragments emerge from the material residue of oil palm plantations, including a charred palm trunk carved with human faces and woven palm-frond sculptures. Amongst them, human figures echo the poses of classical sculpture, yet their surfaces of melted palm-oil-wax suggest bodies dissolving under an invisible heat. What might once have appeared monumental instead feels fragile, vulnerable and unstable, as the artist substitutes ideals and representations of perfection with the realities of plantation labour.

Resource Corner

Palm oil and nickel are central to the production of many everyday items, from instant noodles and shampoo to digital screens and cutlery. Yet what do we really know about them? This resource corner brings together objects and materials that offer insights into the artists' engagements with palm oil and nickel, and highlight the economic, social and environmental conditions shaped by these industries.

These materials and objects serve as an entry point to a wider web of extraction that involves not only resources but also labour, land and the environment. Rather than offering a complete picture or definitive answers, this space invites visitors to pause, explore and question the narratives and media that shape how these materials are understood.

This resource corner is a collaboration between SAM's Curatorial, Access and Learning teams, with data visualisation by Kontinentalist and contributions from the artists as well as from writer Brigitta Isabella.

Material Workbench

Prepared by SAM's Access team, this workbench offers multi-sensory access. Engage your senses of touch and smell through everyday products derived from the materials present in the artworks. The workbench also includes tactile relief prints of selected works by Bagus Pandega and Elia Nurvista. These prints translate visual forms into tactile language, offering another way to experience the artworks and stories contained in this exhibition through touch.