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Elia Nurvista

Feeding the Scene

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- Part of an ongoing series collecting the work of young artists on residency in Berlin, from a diverse range of countries from Latin America to the Middle East
- Humorous and critical reflections on migration and flight

Elia Nurvista (born 1983 in Yogyakarta, Indonesia) focuses on the intersection between art and research-based community projects in her artistic practice. Many of her works centre on food as an issue of political, cultural, social, and gender-specific relevance.

In Berlin, the artist visited a range of initiatives and projects for refugees to learn more about how they see our society, which is foreign from their perspective. The works resulting from this experience address our frequently ambiguous attitude to what is foreign to us: whereas ‘exotic’ luxury items and food such as tropical fruit are regarded as positive and precious, people who come to us as refugees from the same countries are often rejected as being ‘foreign,’ and their ‘exotic’ nature is sometimes even perceived as a threat. Elia Nurvista portrays this ambiguity with subtle irony, for instance by affixing contemporary official quality seals and brand labels to Old Masters still life paintings or historical pictures of the ‘noble savage,’ thus adding a humourous and critical layer of meaning and turning them into new, independent pieces of work.

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