

Alvin: An artist working in the medium of furniture

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Standing in front of the glass facade of Vastuhome Showroom on Jl. Pakuwono VI No. 79, it is hard to miss the white seven-piece stool set inside, which makes an eloquent statement about the person who created it.

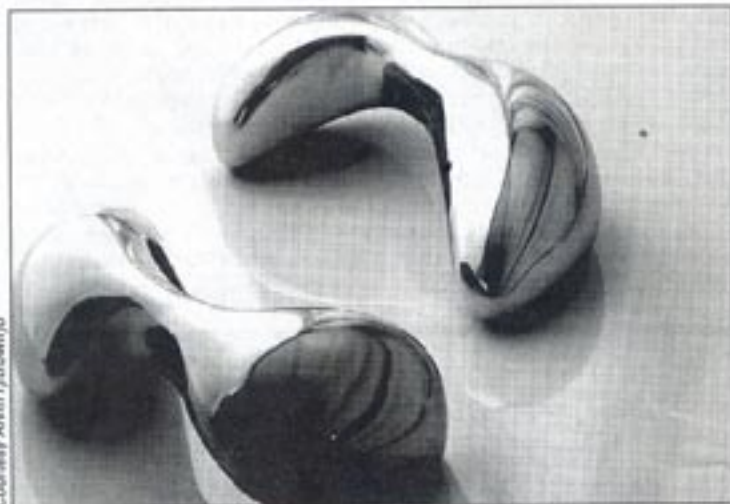
Arranged in a serpentine curve, wrapping around half the side of a round white table, the stool set called *Satool* – which is arguably the best of the works on display – was inspired by traditional fish baskets.

This time, however, the pieces, are woven out of synthetic rattan, giving them durability – a feature not generally associated with rattan.

Young Indonesian designer Alvin Tjitrowirjo's solo exhibition *Mi Casa Su Casa*, which is supported by Vastuhome, Venus Tiles, Harper's Bazaar, and Samsung, opened Thursday, Dec. 13, to a warm reception.

"I am really happy with this exhibition. Even though it rained heavily, around 200-300 people showed up. They said this exhibition was fresh, well-organized," Alvin said.

Entering the showroom, alongside the *Satool* are the *Inge Chairs*. The light brown color of the synthetic rattan also used for this three-piece set – two singles and one double – gives it the natural look of traditional furni-



Courtesy Alvin Tjitrowirjo

Doorstoppers by Alvin Tjitrowirjo

ture, yet the graceful folds of the woven material complement these chairs with a modern touch of casualness, sophistication, as well as function – the sloping part that forms the back leg can be used to store newspapers or magazines.

"Inge is actually my mom's name. This furniture is inspired by her simple and practical attitude," said Alvin, whose influences include the daring concepts and designs of Zaha Hadid, Ron Arad and Patricia Uruquiola.

Calling himself a retro-futurist with avant-garde thoughts and ideas, Alvin also incorporates a Javanese batik motif called the *kawong* into his two designs, the *Kawong Table* and *Bookshelves*. The random scattering of the pattern poetically reflects the vulnera-

Courtesy Alvin Tjitrowirjo

the vuln-

bility of the batik tradition.

"I am simply stating my concern regarding Malaysia's intention to copyright our batik," he said.

His other retro-futuristic design is the *Triad*, occasional furniture made from wood, cut and polished into three-armed tables and stools.

The more straightforwardly modern pieces in the exhibition include the lavish legless lounging chairs called the *Snugs*, which entice anyone to snuggle up on them (or in, considering the bowl-like shape of the seat) after seeing the form and the cover pad of these chairs; *Twisted*, a lamp-table with a square platform and a contorted leg; *Halflamp*, a lamp stand which is apparently designed not to cover the bulb and socket; *Upa*, a coat hanger with pegs in the shape of groping fingers, hence the whimsical name; the *Kleggs*, single-seater stools with hollows that double as storage space; *Snuglette*, a smaller version of the *Snug*, only more vividly colored and has three legs; and the *Liquidors*, colorful doorstoppers that would do just as good sitting on a table as accessories.

The last two designs are reflective in two different senses. First is the *Circle2 Table*. The circular design of this furniture forms a flower diagram, the Hindu and Buddhist symbol of tranquility and divinity. And then there is the *Jewell*, a bench meticulously covered by square-cut precious stones and luminous minerals, giving the impression of a snake-skin pattern.

The message Alvin brings with the exhibition is: Designed by an Indonesian, made in Indonesia for the rest of the world.

"Many people say that Indonesians are creative, but it's just sad that some designers here rip off ideas from celebrated designers. Why not be yourself and be just as good, or better?"

Designer Alvin Tjitrowirjo poses on the *Satool*.

For more information about the work of Alvin Tjitrowirjo go to info@alvin-t.com or www.alvin-t.com