



'CITY Lost in Words'

THE tragic consequences that resulted from the prolonged political conflict, coupled with the tragedy of catastrophic proportions brought by the tsunami upon Aceh, Indonesia, on Christmas Day 2004, had inspired the artwork of ceramic artist and art lecturer, Endang Lestari. Her installations of ceramic art pieces endeavor to capture the feelings of that tragic time period and to illustrate the emotional turmoil resulting from the passing of several relatives and friends. Born in February 1976 in Banda Aceh, Endang is a lecturer in Visual Art and Technology at the Faculty of Applied and Creative Art at University Malaysia Sarawak (UNIMAS).

She holds a Master's Degree in Ceramic Art from the Indonesian Institute of Arts (ISI) in Yogyakarta, Indonesia. During a recent "Bicara Warisan" event organised by the Sarawak Museum Department in Kuching, she presented three installations of her work. The first was titled 'Conversation in Silence', featuring twenty ceramic figures of women covered from head-to-toe in thick, flowing robe-like clothing.

The ceramic art piece, now the property of a collector, represents women who are attempting to voice their desire for equal rights and treatment, but in silence and via their actions. They are ever-present, but yet go unnoticed. Her second installation – made of glazed ceramic, wood and cloth – was created in 2000. Named 'Forbidden to Tread on the Grass', it portrays Aceh's struggle for control and political power as well as the prolonged political conflict with the central government, both of which resulted in the killing of thousands of innocent people.

The art piece depicts plots of vacant and fertile land, and leaves it to the viewer to imagine the remains of hundreds, or perhaps thousands, of innocent victims of the conflict buried deep beneath thick, healthy grass. The art piece is now on display in the Indonesian National Gallery in Jakarta. Her third installation, 'City Lost in Words', was created in 2008 and was inspired by the aftermath of the horrific tsunami tragedy that destroyed and flattened a large part of Aceh, killing thousands of people.

The aftermath witnessed vast changes in the people, in the surroundings and in infrastructure, and the