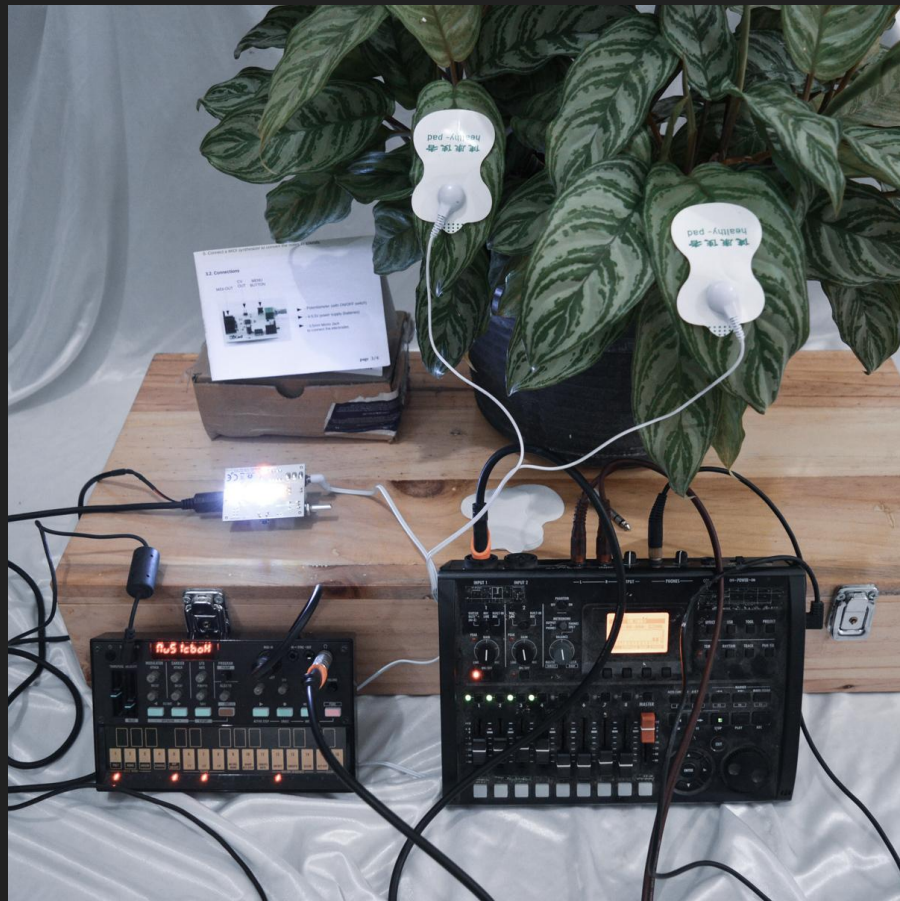


TANAM TUMBUH

Hybrid Exhibition at Goethe-Institut Bandung Courtyard

Fahmi Mursyid



Project Summary

TANAM TUMBUH is a site-specific and hybrid exhibition project that transforms the Goethe-Institut Courtyard into a space for listening to the unseen rhythms of plant life. Through the use of a biodata sonification device, the bioelectrical activity of courtyard plants is translated into real-time MIDI signals and interpreted via modular and digital synthesizers. These signals become improvised sound compositions, where plants are treated not as silent objects but as responsive, living bodies in collaboration.

Over several sessions, a series of audio recordings will be created, each one reflecting the interaction between a particular plant, its microenvironment, and the artist's responsive synthesis. Accompanying this sonic layer, collage-based photographs—assembled from textures, shadows, and patterns of the courtyard flora—will be altered algorithmically, using data drawn from the plant's own electrical responses.

Project Summary (Abstract)

TANAM TUMBUH is a site-specific hybrid sound and media installation that takes place in the courtyard of the Goethe-Institut. The project uses biodata sonification technology to translate the electrical signals of living plants into music, co-composed with a synthesizer in real time. The resulting audio recordings and collage-based visuals are presented through a geolocation-based mobile web app, accessible only within the courtyard. This layered digital environment invites visitors to engage in quiet acts of listening, reflection, and ecological awareness.

By treating the courtyard plants not merely as subjects, but as active co-creators, TANAM TUMBUH offers a new model for interspecies collaboration, data aesthetics, and site-specific ecological art. The work transforms the courtyard into a temporary acoustic garden—a contemplative soundscape where visitors can experience plants as responsive, intelligent agents in shared space.



LISTENING TO PLANTS

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Three plants play a vintage synth (with no built in sequencer) in real time with midi biodata sonification device. By attaching the two probes to the leaves of a plant the device measures and identifies the tiny electrical current fluctuations the plant generates.

These galvanic fluctuations are turned into midi notes and controls that can be read by synthesizers. This allows the plant to tell us about its environment and the changes that are going on around it.



EPISODE #1:
DRACAENA TRIFASCIATA



EPISODE #2:
MONSTERA DELICIOSA



EPISODE #3:
AGLAONEMA

Project Description

Background and Concept

In an era of ecological collapse and digital saturation, this project seeks to foster intimacy with the nonhuman through sonic art and environmental listening. Plants constantly emit micro-electric impulses as part of their natural processes. Devices like MIDI Sprout or PlantWave detect these signals and convert them into MIDI data, which can be translated into musical parameters—pitch, rhythm, modulation, and more.

In TANAM TUMBUH, these plant-generated signals become the starting point for live synthesizer compositions, recorded over a period of weeks. Each session takes place in the Goethe-Institut Courtyard, with a unique plant and spatial context. These compositions are not manipulated for musicality; rather, they represent an honest, improvised response to the plant's internal rhythms, changes in light, humidity, and subtle shifts in its environment.

Parallel to the audio, photographs of each plant and its surroundings are collected and transformed into digital collages. These are then processed by a generative algorithm, resulting in visual works that evolve, layer, and distort in ways that mirror the living complexity of plant time.

All of these materials—audio tracks, generative collages, and explanatory texts—are embedded in a custom-built mobile web app. The app uses geolocation to limit access to visitors physically within the courtyard, ensuring that the experience remains grounded in site and place.

Project Description

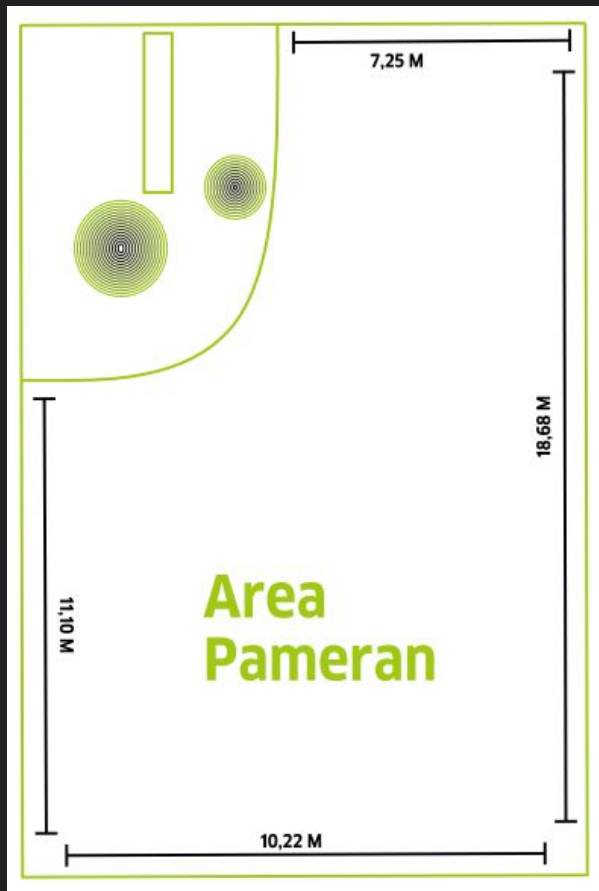
The final work exists as a hybrid digital installation. A custom web application—accessible only within the courtyard through geolocation—acts as a portal. Through their smartphones, visitors will discover:

A library of plant-synth audio recordings, each mapped to specific plants or corners of the courtyard.

Generative visuals that evolve and shift in response to the time data.

Contextual reflections on plant behavior, sonification, and ecological interdependence.

Rather than placing screens or speakers into the space, the project preserves the stillness and openness of the courtyard. Visitors are invited to slow down, move intuitively, and listen differently—to the subtle presence of vegetal life, to the courtyard's ambient histories, and to the unseen languages of nonhuman collaborators.



Goethe Hof

The Goethe-Institut Courtyard serves as a public-private interface: an open, green space framed by architecture, language, and culture. It is already a platform for dialogue, exchange, and informal learning—a role this project extends by inviting nonhuman voices into that exchange.

By situating the work here, the courtyard becomes an active collaborator:

A soundstage for co-composing with plants

A visual site for contemplative movement and discovery

A place of interspecies knowledge and quiet ecological learning

In doing so, the courtyard is reactivated not just as a setting, but as a living medium.

Goethe-Institut Courtyard

This project responds directly to the Goethe-Institut Courtyard as a site of open exchange, intellectual reflection, and shared experience. With its architectural character and diverse plant life, it offers a unique stage for a quiet ecological intervention—a listening act that blurs the boundaries between sound art, biology, and digital media.

By embedding this work into the courtyard's natural and cultural fabric, TANAM TUMBUH expands the definition of dialogue to include plants, microclimates, and data as co-participants in cultural exchange.



Aims

To explore nonhuman agency through sonic and visual forms

To reimagine data as a poetic, expressive medium, not a tool of control

To create site-specific digital art that is ephemeral, responsive, and deeply situated

To foster ecological attention and speculative listening within a cultural institution

Goals and Objectives

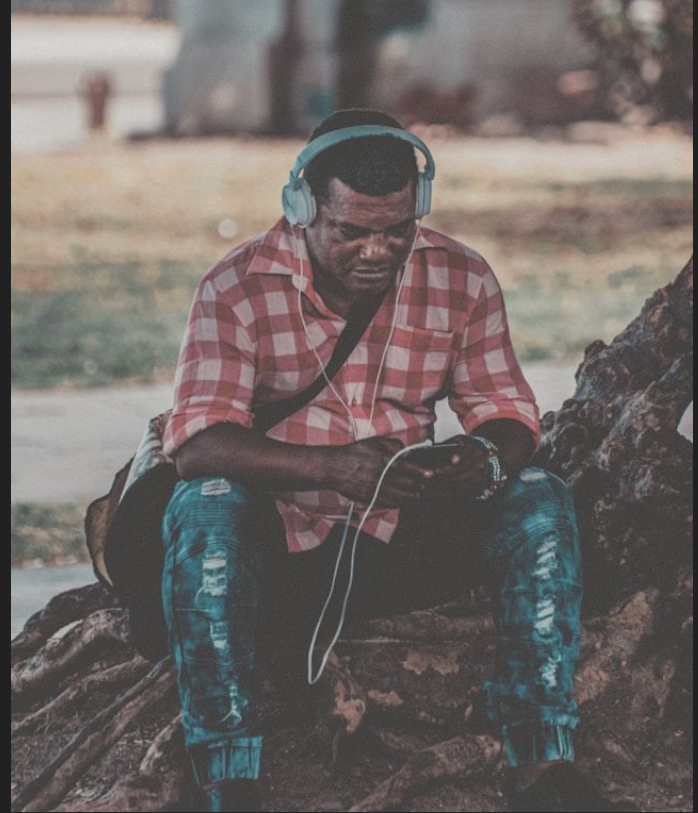
Make the inaudible audible: Translate plant biodata into musical form to reveal nonhuman agency and response.

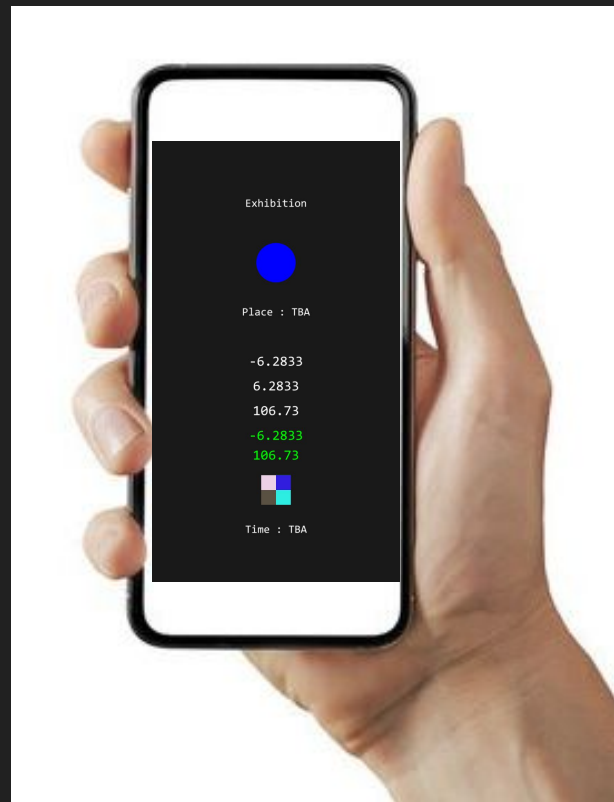
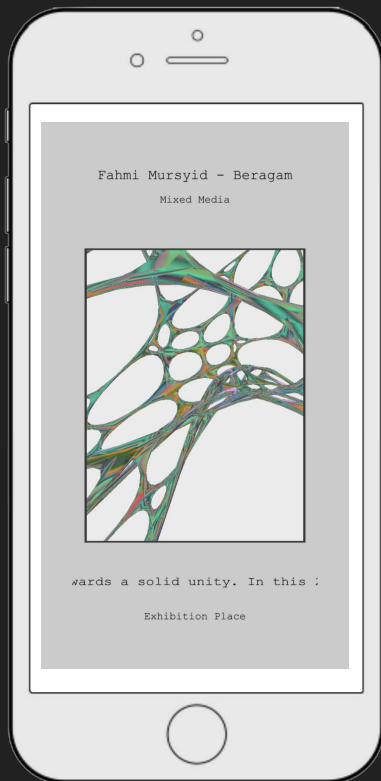
Encourage ecological listening: Create opportunities for visitors to engage in contemplative, multisensory attention to the environment.

Reimagine data as poetic material: Use biodata not for control or analysis, but for expressive and aesthetic transformation.

Build a hybrid exhibition form: Combine physical site, digital layer, and visitor movement into a unified spatial experience.

Situate the Goethe-Institut as a living ecology: Expand the idea of cultural dialogue to include vegetal life, temporal slowness, and shared environments.





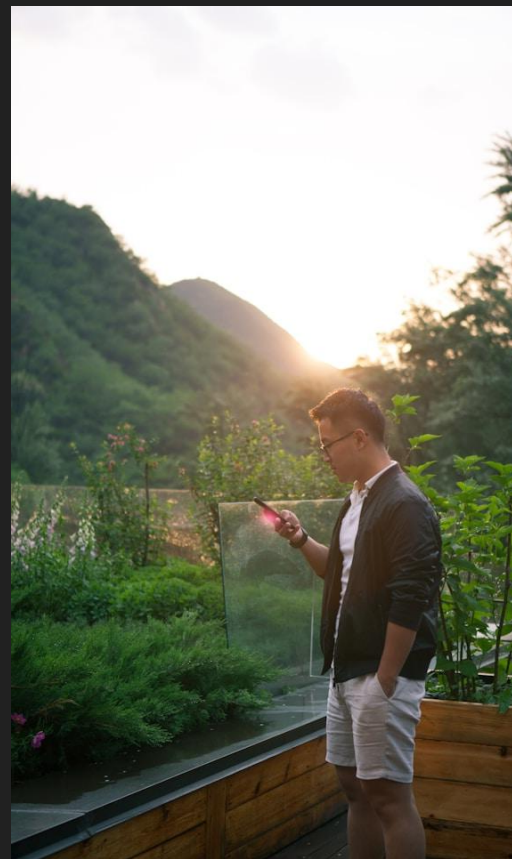


Ecological Framing

The project invites a shift from seeing plants as decorative elements to experiencing them as active, responsive bodies within a shared urban ecology. By making the inaudible audible and the invisible visible, TANAM TUMBUH proposes a new kind of intimacy between human and plant—a quiet reminder of our mutual entanglement.

Dissemination & Legacy

The project will be documented and archived online for future reference. A follow-up publication or web essay may explore the themes of plant intelligence, digital art, and algorithmic ecology. The web app can also be adapted for site-specific residencies elsewhere, allowing for an evolving series of TANAM TUMBUH experiences across multiple urban ecologies.





Artist Biography

Fahmi Mursyid is a multidisciplinary designer and artist based in Bandung, Indonesia. He works in various mediums such as drawing, painting, photography, intermedia, electronics, video, performance, multimedia, internet, installation, sound, and audiovisual. His works have been exhibited in various national and international art events, including Bandung International Digital Arts Festival (2017), Sound/Image Festival (2019), ARTJOG (2019), The Wrong Biennale (2019), Media Art Globale (2020), Liveworks Festival of Experimental Art (2020), Ars Electronica Festival Garden NYC (2021), Pixelache Festival (2021), and Crypto Art Week Asia (2022). In addition to visual works, Fahmi is also active in music, some of his albums that have been released are Tanah Merah (Maryland, 2018); Sejarah (Czechia, 2018); Alam (Italy, 2019); Akur (Indonesia, 2019); Krakatoa (California, 2019); One Instrument Sessions 03 (Germany, 2019); and Suasana Lain (UK, 2025)