

## Art imitates an injustice

Paul Appelkamp | 23rd July 2012 7:06 AM

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Some of the 24 performers in the Survive performance.

Jacklyn Wagner

THE disappearance of Dadang Christanto's father 47 years ago continues to give the Indonesian-Australian artist inspiration to create highly political and internationally acclaimed art.

In 1965, Mr Christanto's father went missing in Indonesia along with thousands of other people under the brutal rule of the Sukarno regime.

"The Indonesian government killed people who might have been aligned with communism or who were ethnic Chinese," Lismore Regional Gallery curator Kezia Geddes said.

"His father had the finger pointed at him because he was ethnic Chinese. "It has made Dadang more inclined to speak up against the Indonesian government."

Mr Christanto grew up to create highly political art and became one of Indonesia's first internationally recognised contemporary artists.

"He's very clear and deals with a lot of issues other artists tend to shy away from," Ms Geddes said. Inspired by an emerging injustice in East Java, Mr Christanto created a provocative political work which will be exhibited at the Lismore Regional Gallery in July and August.

"The exhibition is about this mud in East Java which started to seep up in 2006," Ms Geddes said. "It looks like it was caused by a mining accident but the government is saying it's a natural disaster so it doesn't have to compensate local people who've been affected. "Dadang wants to increase awareness around it."

On Friday, the first part of the exhibition was held at the gallery where 24 local volunteers covered themselves in white clay, held a picture of a person affected by the catastrophe and stood silently for two hours.

The event was filmed and photographed and footage will be exhibited at the gallery from tomorrow until August 26.

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