

The background is a complex, multi-layered abstract painting. It features a dense arrangement of colors including bright yellow, pink, red, green, black, and white, all set against a textured, light-colored base. The composition is filled with various geometric and organic shapes, some of which appear to be layered or overlapping. At the bottom of the image, there is a prominent horizontal band of bright blue and teal, which resembles water or a boat's hull. Within this blue area, there are dark, vertical strokes that could be interpreted as figures or structural elements. The overall style is expressive and somewhat chaotic, characteristic of contemporary abstract art.

Wasak!

**FILIPINO
ART TODAY**

DISTANZ

Wasak!

FILIPINO ART TODAY

Edited by Matthias Arndt

DISTANZ

During the past three decades in contemporary art I have discovered that there is no single art world, but rather a number of different spheres that simultaneously compete with and enrich each other. My first research trip to the Philippines in 2011 made clear to me that the term “art world” does not apply to Filipino art: Metro-Manila alone is a universe in itself. There is an incredibly complex and rich art scene there, driven by a strong sense of community amongst fellow artists, either cultivated through local alliances or forged at art academies.

The Filipino creative scene receives strong encouragement and support across the entire country, and is met with a steadily growing local collector base. Besides Filipino contemporary and modern art increasingly attracting wider Asian audiences, and besides its rising international profile, the sense of loyalty and pride located within this arts community as well as the appetite with which Filipino collectors follow “their artists” are unique in the current global art landscape.

Filipino art deals with the many challenges and realities of contemporary life in the Philippines, but it is also deeply rooted in the multi-layered and colorful Filipino history, both recent and ancient. The artists work across a spectrum of genres, mastering a number of different mediums, from painting and drawing to sculpture, installation, performance and, more recently, film and new media.

The underlying motivation of the *WASAK! Filipino Art Today* publication and the accompanying exhibition in Berlin is to shed light on this fascinating artistic universe. Following the highly successful *Manila: The Night is Restless, The Day is Scornful* exhibition curated by Norman Crisologo for ARNDT Singapore in 2014, *WASAK!* continues this exploration of Filipino contemporary art, in the hope of providing an emblematic contextual compendium for Western audiences.

Signaling the first instance of its kind, *WASAK!* thus offers snapshots of current artistic practices from the Philippines, uniting a selection of its leading protagonists across generational lines, genres, and media.

My gratitude goes to the nineteen participating artists, as well as to the curators of the exhibition Norman Crisologo and Erwin Romulo, DISTANZ publishing house, and co-editor Kristin Rieber.

Matthias Arndt, Singapore, October 2015

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Wasak! Filipino Art Today

Cocoy Lumbao

There have been many claims about the condition of art nowadays that have generated vigorous discussion, mainly in the form of books. This book, being no exception, carries with it two bold assertions: first, that there is such a thing as Filipino art; and secondly, that there are a number of native-born Filipino artists emerging onto the international scene.

The Philippines may be best remembered by the rest of the world through sporadic news headlining, which in hindsight can be divided into two eras and two generations of audience. The earlier generation witnessed the unprecedented peaceful revolution in 1986 named “People Power,” that overthrew the military government; the later saw thousands of people left homeless or perishing in the wake of one of the most destructive typhoons of recent times.

During the former event, people gathered en masse to demonstrate to the wider world what was possible; in the latter, people gathered around mass graves to bury their neighbors and loved ones. In both instances, Filipinos were lauded for their resiliency and unwavering spirit. The Philippines was seen as a country able to reclaim democracy in the face of a dictator’s iron rule and, three decades later, as a nation capable of picking itself up after a huge and terrible natural disaster.

The nineteen artists in this book, entitled *Wasak! Filipino Art Today*, can be considered a fair representation of the various art practices that have emerged in the Philippines in recent decades. All of the nineteen have lived through and witnessed one or both of the aforementioned “eras” of international headlining. Most of them reached maturity grappling with local events that transpired between: natural disasters like earthquakes and flood; political unrest in the form of a coup d’état and calls for presidential impeachments; political ineptitude in the form of corruption and bribes; and the longstanding battle with poverty and urban overpopulation. Most of these artists have nurtured or fed their ideas into the reality that is Manila—the nation’s capital, from where the most pronounced or provocative influences appear.

Although their work was largely inspired by the local, these artists have sought their place in the rest of the world. Through the jumble and mess of their own ground zero—which is a country of broken histories, lush influences, and a people constantly having to live “despite” something—their art has become individually more diverse, yet collectively appears as a single exploded view. Art, as it turned out, was also being produced “despite” something—or to be specific, some things: a conservative heritage, a lopsided economy, an erratic market, a soaring crime rate, a booming population, struggling art institutions, and apathetic government agencies.

Wasak is a Filipino word that means “in ruins.” When used in the vernacular, it means “wrecked”—or as a more encouraging interjection, “going for broke.” It is a term that signals a hazard, a warning: this machine has departed from its normal function.

In another context, a shattering is implied—but of what? Tradition? Consciousness? Homogeneity? The Philippines itself is physically “shattered”—an archipelago amounting to more than 7,000 islands. This has given rise to more than 150 different regional dialects spoken amongst different tribes and villages.¹ It stands to reason, then, that such intrinsically fragmented terrain should produce disconnected practices.

So in this arena of scattered landscapes, broken narratives, and fragmented histories, what could best be described as “Filipino art”?

There was a period when art in the Philippines was understood to be the sort of idyllic, rural scenes, adorned by bathing maidens or men planting rice, painted by Fernando Amorsolo (1892–1972). These traditional studies of light and landscape used to be seen as the epitome of everything Filipino, and indeed they may still be the primary examples of Filipino art in encyclopedias and foreign reference books.

But there is also the art that has become known through expatriates such as Juan Luna (1857–1899) in Madrid, Ben Cabrera (b. 1942) in London, the filmmaker Kidlat Tahimik (b. 1942) in Berlin, performance artist David Cortez Medalla (b. 1942) in New York, and

Manuel Ocampo (b. 1965) in Los Angeles. Like the string of pugilists the country has produced throughout the years, most of these artists have ensured that the red and blue flag will be raised around the world.

There are also artists who have quietly paved the way from their own home ground, creating art that is more palpable and real than any imagined notion of a lush countryside that has in fact vanished since the time the Filipino people woke to discover that their leader had declared martial law; since activist students and reformers began to disappear without explanation; and since the price of commodities became too high for the average family. There may have been a number of different avenues explored by such artists as Carlos Francisco (1912–1969) with his hero-laden epic murals, or Santiago Bose’s (1949–2002) robust primitivism, or Arturo Luz’s (b. 1926) native brand of modernism, or even Roberto Chabet (1937–2013) with his conceptual schemes and candid defilement of tired traditions.

While the world filled the void of what is now known as the “gap” of fifty-one years between 1964 and 2015—the span of time since the Philippines’ inclusion in the prestigious Venice Biennale—with idyllic scenes and piecemeal testaments of Filipino history, art continued to be made in the Philippines, virtually unseen on a wider stage.

All the nineteen artists represented here have emerged from the different crannies within this gap, which explains the varying degrees to which their works attempt to explain not only localities but also small separate nooks in a larger art-historical context. Whether stemming from the city, a mountain-side or one of the remote islands in the vast archipelago, these are clearly works wrought with the utmost attention in a bid for recognition, despite being a part of an almost forgotten resource in the art world.

In an essay in 1979, one of the most influential Filipino art critics, Leo Benesa, asked the question: “What is ‘Philippine’ in Philippine art?” Aware that most art from other places was unable to escape the influence of the Western canon, he provided an optimistic

opinion: that the intention to paint well is what made artists from his home country “Filipino.” “Painters first,” he summarised, “and bearers of message, second.”²

Many of the artists in *Wasak! Filipino Art Today* have chosen painting as their primary medium, with a few exceptions who have dealt primarily with assemblage, sculpture and installation. In looking at their paintings, it is perhaps best to follow Benesa’s prescription: to look at the form first, and the message later; to examine the intentions of the artists before attempting to categorize them as representatives of a socio-historical period or a movement.

There are no movements. There was no “gap” or void in terms of Filipino art production. But there are blind spots that are to be addressed. And this book covers what might otherwise be missed concerning the most recent and vibrant generation of artists working in the Philippines.

In attempting to arrive at any neutral definition of contemporary Filipino art, one must first understand that at its very heart lies the concept of obliteration—of *wasak*—a shattering of a once neatly demarcated frame, which was usually and conveniently used as a viewfinder for the Orientalist’s gaze: searching for the exotic, aboriginal, or political, or for something redolent with native concerns such as pantheism or poverty. There is always that imagined Other: a Big Brother, the presence of a powerful Western gaze, the superlative canon, the determiner by which all efforts are measured—and this is symptomatic of most Filipinos’ mindsets, since the country’s history is mired in colonial rule.³ In the different transitional phases of Filipino art, there always seems to be a breaking point: that point where one begins to display signs of resistance against any enveloping characteristic formulated by the Other.

The question of art for the Filipinos, therefore, is a matter of seeking out what is essentially theirs by breaking free—and this seems to be the inevitable route for all who search for the inherent Filipino identity—from imposed values that were once embraced. It is not strange that among the first to recognize this was the national hero José Rizal who, as a member of the subordinate *indio*⁴ class, was able to strengthen his intellectual prowess by studying abroad in Madrid, Paris, and Heidelberg, and then to use this to break away from his Spanish colonizers back home. In his essay “Filipinas dentro de cien años”⁵ [The Philippines: A Century Hence], Rizal wrote that the indigenous people of a lost civilization like the Philippines after the Spanish conquest “forgot their writing, their songs, their poetry, their

laws, only to learn by rote memory their doctrines, which they did not understand, along with another morality, another aesthetic, different from those inspired in their race by the climate and their way of feeling.”⁶

It is worth mentioning that he included the phrase “another aesthetic,” signifying his anticipation of a culture that, ever since its colonization, was destined to perpetually retrieve the defining characteristics lost through assimilation. For a significant period in Filipino art, this search for an inherent identity was addressed by seeking out the rural-pastoral images by artists such as Fernando Amorsolo and Fabián de la Rosa (1869–1937). Their works permanently entered both the Filipino and the world’s consciousnesses as the definitive “genre” paintings that best represent life in the Philippines: the idyllic atmosphere, the lushness of the countryside farms, and the beauty of the native women. And it is no coincidence that even in the writings of Rizal, as demonstrated in his memoirs of the countryside, one finds the same elements associated with the pastoral attributes of a painting: “the yearning of a past that is constantly slipping away; the identification between one’s separation from homeland and one’s separation from innocence [...] and the idealization of a return home, contrasted with the aimlessness of wandering into the European metropolises.”⁷

Could it be said that after all the aimless turns taken by painters like Amorsolo and de la Rosa while exploring the canons of Western art, the pastoral was the avenue they chose to force a return home? They retreated to the fields to find the heart of the countryside, and there they found what would evolve into the essential Filipino image: the mark of a simple race that loved peace yet at the same time demonstrated resiliency, joviality, and grace under unfavorable conditions. Yet along its interstices, there were artists who, after noticing such a defining style, decided they would not be seen in such restrictive ways and expressed themselves through different forms. Hence, the kind of artists represented in this book emerged: shattering any defining frame, disrupting the long-held worldview, and destroying any neat concepts about Filipino art. And this is the paradox which José Rizal was also able to comprehend: a paradox that has exuded from all the soul-searching made by Filipinos to find their essential truth—that therein lie further contradictions to those Rizal stated in his essay: “for the ancient enmities among different provinces, a common sore, a general affront interpolating an entire race has erased them”⁸—as if to say that colonization did not cause the Philippines to lose

their culture, but was actually instrumental for them to acquire one.

Throughout the 1970s, at the height of Ferdinand Marcos’s dictatorship through martial law, we find the cycle of such a paradox reigning true. It was during this era that the Cultural Center of the Philippines (CCP) was conceived, poised to become one of the major institutions that would help define the development of Filipino art. Filipino art historian and curator Patrick Flores, in his essay “Social Realism: The Turns of a Term in the Philippines,” implied the obliqueness of such a venture that in turn paradoxically inspired another defining style that would thrust Filipino art into another momentous identity: in observing the ambitions of the Center, and ordaining it in Marcos’s own words as “a place where the Filipino can discover the soul of his people, and relate the saga of his race to the vast human experience that begins in the past and advances to the limitless future.”⁹ This was seconded by his wife, Imelda Marcos, who served as its first director, and sought international standing for Filipino talent based on an understanding of modernism as an aspirational discourse of equivalence.¹⁰ Through such idealistic pursuits of ‘beauty, truth, and goodness,’ ironically a dissenting view was generated, coupled with the number of mass protests and rallies held in the streets during this period of martial rule. A number of artists, instead of seeing the promise of beauty or goodness, or their global equivalent, saw how these aspirations necessarily “excluded the unsightly ferment or the socio-economic asymmetries of the present.”¹¹ Thus the brand of social realism, which has come to be associated with the Philippines, was formed. It was described by Flores as an aesthetic movement that resists “the idealization of progress,” and expresses a “dissenting cultural imagination, one wrought throughout centuries of colonialism, and that in many ways persists in postcolonial discourse and practice in the Philippines today.”¹² It was a strategy embraced by a number of artists in order to “expose or lay bare the true conditions of Philippine Society.”¹³

Early examples of social realism can be seen in the works of Antipas Delotavo (b. 1954), Neil Doloricon (b. 1957), Jose Tence Ruiz (b. 1958), and Renato Habulan (b. 1953) to name a few. Their works invoked a “revolutionary continuum sparked by a long history of colonial struggles [...]. [Images] depicting historical movements of resistance were freely cited and recombined with contemporary imagery and graphic codes referencing muralist practice and ideological iconography.”¹⁴ Because the initial issues tackled by social realist

pioneers remained long after the disintegration of martial rule, it is understandable that this tradition or style would be carried over to the succeeding generations—such as that of Alfredo Esquillo (b. 1972) and José Santos III (b. 1970), both of whom are represented in this book. Both have been part of artists' collectives or groups, such as Anting-anting and Saling-Pusa,¹⁵ which have expressly manifested a certain nationalist bent as part of their guiding principles. Both have engaged in painting large murals depicting certain social aspects of life in the Philippines. And both started out as painters seeking what is essentially Filipino in art—whether through experience, imagery, social relevance, or subject matter—and have continued to do so. But both are also crucial examples of artists who started to break away from the general notions about social realist art—to the point where they have completely obliterated from their work the most commonly held expectations.

In Esquillo's case, the plight of the Filipino is expressed inwardly, as the focus shifts towards the individual's longings. In this artist's most recent works, the representation of the common Filipino is combined with visions of spirituality. His oeuvre has started to turn inward, exploring the facets of individual strife and identity, which for him are rooted to the Filipino concept of *being*. While Esquillo's art moves from social realism's wide-ranging views of society towards a more microscopic facet of an individual, Santos edges a little further towards the metaphysical, combining philosophical concepts of time, space, and objects. From his depiction of ambiguous post-colonial tableaux—juxtaposing anachronistic iconographies such as turn-of-the-century costumes from the Spanish colonial era with popular imagery—to his paintings and assemblages of objects stacked in boxes and closets, or hidden in bags and linen, the longstanding themes in Santos's art—identity and time—progress from questions about the social function of objects toward those about the elusive nature of "meaning."

The same could be said about Alwin Reamillo's (b. 1964) sculptures and installations. In his case, the essential Filipino trait is rooted in the experiences gathered around the significance of an actual object: the grand piano. If Esquillo's channeling of the Filipino experience has tended towards the spiritual, Reamillo has chosen a more personal route: an exploration of the living conditions of his father and the people surrounding him, all skilled piano makers. For Reamillo, the piano becomes a vestige of one man's struggle to elucidate the working class's life into the

bearings of poetry as a kind of emancipation through art.

Norberto Roldan (b. 1953), in his assemblages and text-laden paintings, resorts to a scheme that seems to encompass the concerns of the three artists aforementioned, taking on the spiritual, the colonial, and the material groundwork that compiles what could be considered the essential Filipino experience. His efforts could be summarized as an anthropological endeavor to discover and interpret the world's direction through its antiquated articles, where the assemblages he makes essentially dwell within the more minute activities of collecting, arranging, and composing objects to present a new narration of a country's history and her people's collective memory.

Rodel Tapaya (b. 1980) and Ronald Ventura (b. 1972), on the other hand, are able to champion the history of their people through a vast display of skill and imagination, and a unique attention to symbols and details. Tapaya presents social criticisms through fables and myths. He synthesizes historical, satirical, mythical, and folkloric themes with contemporary scenes, and the panoramic imagery is always predicated by a native myth, which eventually intersects with society's present concerns. In contrast, Ventura uses universal animistic themes of horses, birds, and other creatures, contrasting these with the quintessential Filipino figure—wiry, dark-haired, and brown-skinned—and superimposing them with icons from popular Western culture, thus creating paintings and sculptures, seemingly products of parody and juxtaposition, which are in fact uncompromising manifestations of the mind's reality struggling with the ambiguities of history and culture. They present an architecture of the mind, moving back and forth between the tamed surface of reality and the deep recesses of fantasy.

If these artists molded by the grip of social consciousness proceed from the sudden awareness that an inherent Filipino imagery should emerge from their works, there are also those who tried to soldier on as citizens attuned to the global discourses on art, with their sights directed towards ongoing discussions about form, process, concept, and art history in general. There are a number of artists who entered the other enclave of CCP's "aspirational discourse of equivalence" with the rest of the art world. These are the artists who have decided that they are primarily artists, and that being Filipino was a quandary that must be addressed through other means. In 1967, the artist Roberto Chabet was appointed as the director of the Cultural

Center of the Philippines, sharing ideals of advancement through discourses on modernism and eventually postmodernism and conceptualism.

In 2008 in Hong Kong, a large group exhibition was held in Osage Gallery¹⁶ called *Futuramania*. It showcased one of the largest delegates of Filipino artists to be presented outside the Philippines. Consisting of both locally-based Filipino artists and a few who had set up studios abroad elsewhere, it was one of those shows whose conception was directed primarily at eradicating the pastoral notions about Filipino art. It presented Manila as a city of the future, albeit a post-apocalyptic future. It renounced its backwardness and acknowledged its dismal nature. But the most telling objective of the show was communicated through the kind of artists it presented (mostly young and emerging) and the potentially progressive character of current Filipino art. The catalog from this exhibition echoes the aim for a different kind of identity sought by this new breed of artists: "In the local art scene, it is more the longing for relevance to the outside world, a global link that we seek [...] the ones who lingered on our shores constantly send a message in a bottle to whoever is across the water..."¹⁷

Nona Garcia (b. 1978) was one of the artists whose work was featured in *Futuramania*; she showed a painting of a decrepit, abandoned room that is almost falling apart. The catalog described Garcia's works as "allegorical pieces of solitude and isolation, remote landscapes and abandoned spaces," and as "portraits lived in another time and another context."¹⁸ The same words can also be used to describe the emerging group of Filipino artists who pursue their practice based on personal explorations within the medium: out of time and out of context, isolated from their surroundings.

The works of Zean Cabangis (b. 1985) embody this characteristic. His landscapes are lifted from his own immediate surroundings—photograph emulsions of houses, empty lots, and greenery. But at the heart of his paintings resides a massive, multicolored, geometric shape, almost alien to the scene where it floats: akin to the search for a home, when "home" is not found within one's own locality—the search for an apparition; the search for an intervention; and, ultimately, the search for the perfect anomaly that one hopes will change the monotonous strain of existence.

Marina Cruz's (b. 1982) sublime compositions, on the other hand, develop possibilities from a domestic standpoint, using dresses and other family heirlooms. This enclosed

passage of familial undertakings, carefully pieced together and sympathetically presented, has become rare in a world that has developed the propensity to reach outward rather than inward, due to the globalizing technologies.

Meanwhile, Tatong Torres (b. 1979) pursues the possibilities in technology that have become a part of our everyday reality. Instead of depicting events, objects, or landscapes, he turns to the internet and treats it as part of an immediate consciousness. From the intangible, digital sphere to the corporeal surface of the canvas, and then back to the virtual world, he tries to obtain a new visual culture: one that has been acclimatized to onscreen activities, and the digital world-stage. This is the new world: a new landscape in which artists such as Torres have immersed themselves, drawing from it new possibilities and new approaches to producing art.

If there is any art among this group that evokes a truly cosmopolitan nature, it is the work of Annie Cabigting (b. 1971). Cabigting references other people's paintings from different places, different eras, and different phases of art history. She makes art about art—self-reflexive and enclosed within its own activities. She paints these paintings inside her own world, addressing the concepts of art-viewing, reproduction, and gallery and museum settings in general, so that her works act as institutional critiques, questioning the entire process involved in presenting art.

In another corner of the Philippines' vibrant art scene, an insatiable appetite continues to grow, despite all the upheavals and the debate about what is essentially Filipino art. Tired of the endless talk about compromises that must be made for the sake of art's social responsibilities, and the incessant games played by formalists and conceptualists in defining art's nature, this breed on the outskirts—neither here nor there—simply want to do one thing: to paint. And, in the process, to revel in the sensation which the new image provides. The congregation, once phantom, seems to have found a rallying point on the return of Manuel Ocampo to Manila in 2003. Ocampo, whose works garnered considerable success in the United States, served as a model for some Filipino artists who wanted to take a chance at redefining the practices of realism, formalism, or conceptualism. Reluctantly accepting the title of curator, Ocampo solidified the existence of this kind of sensibility in Filipino art-making: defiant, mischievous, and always refusing to be labeled.

In 2010, Manuel Ocampo began curating a series of shows initially called *Bastards*

of *Misrepresentation: Doing Time on Filipino Time*.¹⁹ It featured like-minded artists who were eager to explore the boundaries between what was considered lowbrow and high art. Abject art in the form of paintings was shown, notions about marketability were initially defied, and the collectors' tastes were severely tested. In the accompanying catalog for the *Bastards*' New York exhibition, art writer Gina Fairley wrote: "By nature the bastard is a hybrid being [...] [They] are materially diverse and untethered by political orientation or aesthetic pigeonholing. They are mobile, alert yet laid-back, and their practice remains indelibly sutured to an urban experience."²⁰

The kinds of work these artists produce have become an integral part of what is modern Filipino art. They symbolize everything that has been paradoxical between the aspirations of the CCP or José Rizal's initial observations, and all the clamor against post-colonial detritus. They seem to stare one right in the face and say, "Who cares?"

Manuel Ocampo's works have become almost definitive to art that paradoxically defies the world in which it thrives: the art institutions and the art market. In his work lies a profound inquiry into notions of artistic creation itself, and though the abject qualities continue to reside in his paintings, his are more than spectacles that generate shock. Instead, they are challenges to the academies of "bad" and "good" in art. Ocampo can be regarded as the primary figure who inspired many local artists, even while based in Los Angeles where he first made his mark as an artist representing the sensibilities of the 1990s.

Louie Cordero (b. 1978), who also grew up against the disjuncture of the 1990s, traces his influences to malignancies in a city of Malabon, located at the fringe of Manila, sprawled across low-lying fields near the fishing harbors, riddled with marshes, and prone to flooding. His paintings demonstrate a kind of irreverence, resorting to the grotesque, detailing the shapes of eyeballs, veins, innards, and oozing excrement. In Cordero's view, this is what lurks in the human mind, and what is essentially fundamental to our senses—combining the "incoherence of forms against the incoherence of imagination."²¹

With Pow Martinez's (b. 1983) paintings, primordial turns primitive, reeking with rudimentary representations of cartoonish humans and symbols. Martinez deliberately returns to the unrefined and the raw, and to the underdeveloped quality of images—prompting us to reflect on the childlike qualities from which art can spring, unexpected

and playful. This is a place where innocence and irreverence collide.

Jigger Cruz (b. 1984), with his iconoclastic style that harbors impressions of vandalized works, further develops the attitude of the dilettante as a destroyer: painting idyllic genre paintings that appear to be antique, and then desecrating them with his signature layering of frivolously thick, impasto, multi-colored lines. His method surfaces as an intentional affront to the pretense involved in art valuation; even more importantly, it acts as a critique on the canons of taste. Irreverent, unpractical, his work is a kind of anathema to everything we've been taught about what is good and true in art. His process is one that strongly reflects the concept of *wasak*—an annihilation of the value in art.

So this is the convolution into which Filipino art has progressed: from the colonial, to the pastoral, to the socially radical, to the experimental, and ultimately to the defiantly uninterested—obliterating longheld concepts and harking back to the primitive, the instinctual, and the unknowable.

The search for what is essentially Filipino has also been mired in practices that seek the local equivalent of the concerns of experimentation and representation demonstrated in Western art. There is a cosmopolitan desire to be considered world-class, a longing for relevance in the international scene—perhaps the shortest route is through bastardization.

The impossibility to place anything in a predefined category is exemplified by the works of artists like Kawayan de Guia (b. 1979), who combines indigenous artifacts with contemporary ideas about sculpture and installation. Or consider Kaloy Sanchez's (b. 1982) vivid self-portraits inserted within a tableau of telling social conditions; or Ian Fabro (b. 1993), whose combinations of figurative drawings, baroque expression, and pop assemblages evoke narratives with an ambiguous mystical force. Buen Calubayan's (b. 1980) paintings, installations, performances, and paperwork epitomize everything that is paradoxical in Filipino art: history rooted in personal trivia, bearing cosmopolitan concepts yet essentialist in nature, appropriating Western practices while searching for what is inherently Filipino.

From José Rizal's own conflicting ideas about whether there is truly a "pre-existing race" that is Filipino,²² to what might have been the Cultural Center's inadvertent triggering of protest art after being ordained as a "place where the Filipino can find his soul," we can pose these parallel questions: Could there be any pre-existing artistic sensibilities for the Filipino? And is there any defining

aesthetic quality towards which Filipino art is heading?

In this day and age, and with the kind of art that has been steadily produced in the Philippines' many diverse quarters over the years, the pursuit to find the essential Filipino character in art seems to give rise to nothing but a nostalgic impediment. Nothing seems to stop the Filipinos from rejecting anything that can be finally ascribed to them. Not now, nor in any possible distant futures.

If we can agree on anything about the art being made in the Philippines, it is that it was bound to head in any number of unforeseen directions. After more than four hundred years of suppression by colonial rule, having experienced political upheavals and natural disasters time and again, and having eventually fostered a culture of diaspora, with millions of Filipinos migrating to different countries every year in the search for a more promising future, the effects of these conditions, however convoluted, are the only indisputable clues in defining Filipino art.

The nineteen artists in this book provide us with an opportunity to experience the different directions they have taken, and to glimpse various parts of the history of this fragmented archipelago. Mark Rothko's well-known words are like a particularly apt invitation to explore this particular corner of the world, where "we had nothing to lose but a vision to gain."²³

- 1 *Diksiyunaryong Sentinyal ng Wikang Filipino* [Centennial Dictionary of the Filipino Language] (Quezon City: Komisyon sa Wikang Filipino, 1998), pp. 934–935.
- 2 Leo Benesa, "What is Philippine about Philippine Art?" in idem, *What is Philippine About Philippine Art? And Other Essays* (Manila: National Commission for Culture and Arts, 1978), pp. 135–137, here p. 136.
- 3 The Philippines was occupied by the Spanish from 1521 until 1898, and then became a colony of the US from 1898 until 1935, at which time the Philippine Commonwealth government was established. See Renato Constantino, *The Philippines: A Past Revisited* (Quezon City: Tala Publication Services, 1975).
- 4 *Indio* is a Spanish derogatory term for indigenous people.
- 5 José Rizal's essay "Filipinas dentro de cien años" was originally published serially in the Filipino fortnightly review *La Solidaridad*, running through the issues from September 1889 to January 1890.
- 6 José Rizal, "Filipinas dentro de cien años," quoted and translated in John Blanco, "The Pastoral Theme in Colonial Politics and Literature," in *Philippine Studies: Have We Gone Beyond St. Louis*, edited by Priscelina Patajo-Legasto (Quezon City: University of the Philippines Press, 2008), pp. 68–87, here p. 73.
- 7 Blanco 2008 (as in footnote 6), p. 72.
- 8 Rizal quoted in Blanco 2008 (as in footnote 6), p. 74.

- 9 Ferdinand Marcos, quoted in Patrick Flores, "Social Realism: The Turns of a Term in the Philippines," *Afterall* 34 (Autumn/Winter 2013), <http://www.afterall.org/journal/issue.34/social-realism-the-turns-of-a-term-in-the-philippines> (October 9, 2015).
- 10 Imelda Marcos, quoted in Ileana Maramag (ed.), *The Compassionate Society and Other Selected Speeches of Imelda Romualdez Marcos* (Manila: n.p., 1975), pp. 14f.
- 11 Flores 2013 (as in footnote 10).
- 12 Ibid.
- 13 Ibid.
- 14 Ibid.
- 15 Local art groups established in the mid-1980s focused on essentialist art production of home-grown Filipino art.
- 16 *Futuramania*, a group exhibition organized by Louie Cordero and Gary-Ross Pastrana for Osage Gallery, Hong Kong, which ran from May 9, 2008 until June 10, 2008. The second leg was shown in Osage Gallery, Singapore, which ran from October 24, 2008 until June 2, 2009.
- 17 Ronald Achacoso, "Futuramania," in *Futuramania*, edited by Agnes Lin, exh. cat. Osage Gallery, Hong Kong, and Osage Gallery, Singapore (Hong Kong: Osage Gallery, 2010), pp. 4–15, here p. 4.
- 18 Ibid., p. 8.
- 19 First shown at the Freies Museum, Berlin.
- 20 Gina Fairley, "Time Re-routing Reality," in *Bastards of Misrepresentation: New York Edition*, exh. cat. (New York: Topaz Arts, 2012), unpaginated.
- 21 Louie Cordero, quoted in the text on the artist in this publication on p. 39.
- 22 Blanco 2008 (as in footnote 6), p. 74.
- 23 Mark Rothko in a speech he delivered when he accepted his honorary doctorate from Yale University in 1969.

Zean Cabangis
Annie Cabigting
Buen Calubayan
Louie Cordero
Jigger Cruz
Marina Cruz
Kawayan de Guia
Alfredo Esquillo
Ian Fabro
Nona Garcia
Pow Martinez
Manuel Ocampo
Alwin Reamillo
Norberto Roldan
Kaloy Sanchez
José Santos III
Rodel Tapaya
Tatong Torres
Ronald Ventura



Zean Cabangis

- Education**
- 2007 Bachelor of Fine Arts, Major in Painting, University of the Philippines Diliman, Quezon City, Philippines
- Selected Solo Exhibitions**
- 2014 *Reclaim*, Artinformal, Mandaluyong City, Philippines
Fib, 20Square, Silverlens, Makati City, Philippines
- 2013 *Condestruct*, Artinformal, Mandaluyong City, Philippines
- 2012 *Goat Paths*, Artinformal, Mandaluyong City, Philippines
Would That It Were, West Gallery, Quezon City, Philippines
Shade My Eyes and I Can See You (with Nikki Luna), Silverlens, Makati City, Philippines
- 2011 *Walking on Thin Ice*, Artinformal, Mandaluyong City, Philippines
Gathering, Now Gallery, Makati City, Philippines
- 2010 *WhoWhatWhereWhenHowWhy*, Silverlens, Makati City, Philippines
- Selected Group Exhibitions**
- 2015 *Order of Objects After Arrival*, Project Space Pilipinas Studio, Lucban, Philippines
Naked in Alien Territory, J Studio, Taguig City, Philippines
- 2014 *Re:View 2014*, BenCab Museum, Baguio City, Philippines
CCP: Mona Lisa Project, West Gallery, Quezon City, and Cultural Center of the Philippines, Pasay City, Philippines
Before and After, West Gallery, Quezon City, Philippines
Manila: The Night Is Restless, The Day Is Scornful, Arndt Singapore
- 2013 *Still*, Blanc Gallery, Quezon City, Philippines
No Random Nonsense, Boston Gallery, Quezon City, Philippines
Surface Area, Finale Art File, Makati City, Philippines
Dissecting Air, West Gallery, Quezon City, Philippines
Tones of Home, Blanc Gallery, Quezon City, Philippines
Abstraction: Lost and Found, Taksu Singapore
- 2012 *Counting Headlights*, Now Gallery, Makati City, Philippines
- 2011 *SAGER Manila*, Boston Gallery, Quezon City, Philippines
Line and Space, Magnet Gallery

As the son of an art professor and painter, Zean Cabangis was introduced to the world of art at a very young age. In his early paintings he portrayed subjects close to him, such as his grandmother and uncle, who were part of his household, and whose life stories made an impact on his young imagination. In his recent works, he has shifted and expanded his outlook, leading him in search of “open spaces that bear the capacity to generate awe.” His art has become associated with his travels. He has become accustomed to the integration of long arduous bike rides and countryside walks with the practice of gathering images through photography. From the outskirts of Manila and nearby coastal roads, he collects scenes that later become part of his canvas through emulsion transfers.

Cabangis uses acrylic to paint over the backdrop of gridded photographs, so that his work falls into the category of constructed assemblages. As if completing a puzzle, he places an imposing geometric form defined by a rubric of colors against the landscape or seascape he has chosen as background. These brightly colored structures fill the open space as interventions that completely alter the topography of the world he tries to reconstruct. They tower like monoliths, or fill hollow spaces like bunkers in a field. They are formed with layers and lines of different colors that stand out against the monochromatic scene with which they interfere. Their formations evoke a sudden presence, out of place and out of time, their startling appearances suggesting a quasi-mystical phenomenon to be

meditated on or drawn back from—a sign of foreboding mystery.

Whatever meanings Cabangis’s structures hold, they include significant formal concepts that mix geometric abstractions with the grit and realism of a photographed landscape. But these abstractions inside his frame foster a certain space and depth, thereby acting as objects that are part of the figurative scheme. As much as their presences have become ambiguities in the pictorial realm, their construction within the frame has enabled the artist to bridge the chasm

to an ailment: the lack of center, the abolition of color, and the abandonment of one’s imagination. His pieces, daunting as they may appear, are in fact allegories for a quest, much as he himself has searched during his wanderings for the perfect view. The search for an apparition; the search for an intervention; and, ultimately, the search for the perfect anomaly that one hopes will change the monotonous strain of existence.

Zean Cabangis was born in Tayabas,
Philippines, in 1985

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He lives and works in Quezon City,
Philippines

between abstraction and the natural world, between entities of pure color against the dingy tableau of a landscape.

The “open spaces” that Cabangis has discovered on his travels is a concept that has slowly become extinct within the cramped city of Manila. Cabangis, who was raised there, has become witness to the sudden rise of infrastructures driven by scores of misguided capitalist ventures that have turned the streets of Manila into dense concrete jungles. The insatiable demand for capital and the reckless bid for progress have turned the city into a fortress of gray edifices, and his foreboding works serve as a kind of antidote

2010 Katipunan, Quezon City, Philippines
Dream Come True, Boston Gallery, Quezon City, Philippines
Ano Bayan!?, Cultural Center of the Philippines, Pasay City, Philippines
Alay 13, Boston Gallery, Quezon City, Philippines

2009 *Metrobank Art & Design Excellence*, Metrobank, Pasay City, Philippines

2008 *Lualhati*, Artinformal, Mandaluyong City, Philippines

2007 *Transit*, Cultural Center of the Philippines, Pasay City, Philippines

2005 *Shell National Students Art Exhibition*, Art Center – SM Megamall, Mandaluyong City, Philippines

2004 *Shell National Students Art Exhibition*, Art Center – SM Megamall, Mandaluyong City, Philippines

Selected Bibliography

2015 “Haunting nature.” *Pipeline* 46 (January/February).

2014 “2014 Ateneo Art Awards Shortlists Announced.” *The Philippine Star*. June 23. [Online]
Alonday, Salvador. *Zean Cabangis: Reclaim*. Exh. cat. Artinformal,

Mandaluyong City. Manila. Gomez, Jerome. “Who Owns This Art?” *Esquire Philippines* (February): pp. 82–95.

Hilario, Riel. *Mistaken for Wonders*. Edited by Artinformal. Exh. pamphlet. Art Fair Philippines, Makati City. Mandaluyong City. [Online]

Lopa, Trickie C. “The Lightness of Being.” *Rogue* 79 (August).

2013 Hilario, Riel. *Zean Cabangis: Condestruct*. Exh. cat. Artinformal. Mandaluyong City.

2012 “2012 Ateneo Art Awards: Shortlisted artists.” *The Philippine Star*. July 13. [Online]

Alonday, Salvador. *Zean Cabangis: Goat Paths*. Exh. cat. Artinformal. Mandaluyong City.

Gimena, Aliana, and Tricia Aquino. “Ateneo Art Awards: And then there were three.” *Interaksyon*. August 13. [Online]

“Ordered chaos in Zean Cabangis’ art.” *Manila Bulletin*. November 11. [Online]



Neighbor, 2012
Acrylic and emulsion
transfer on canvas
152 × 213 cm



Territory, 2015
Acrylic and emulsion
transfer on canvas
122 x 183 cm

Weeks Apart, 2015
Acrylic and emulsion
transfer on canvas
183 x 183 cm

Island, 2014
Acrylic and emulsion
transfer on canvas
61 × 81 cm





What You Wouldn't Miss, 2015
Acrylic and emulsion
transfer on canvas
152 x 183 cm



Skipping Town, 2011
Acrylic and emulsion
transfer on canvas
Diameter 61 cm



*The Moment You Realize that
Nothing Will Happen, 2011*
Acrylic and emulsion
transfer on canvas
Diameter 61 cm



It Is Certain to Happen, 2014
Acrylic and emulsion
transfer on wood
Diptych, 122 × 244 cm



Annie Cabigting

Education

1994 Graduated with Major in Painting, University of the Philippines Diliman, Quezon City, Philippines

Selected Solo Exhibitions

2014 *The Lights Going On and Off*, MO_Space, Taguig City, Philippines
 2013 *There's always something to look at if you open your eyes!*, Richard Koh Fine Art, Artspace, Singapore
 2012 *Black and white under a shroud of grey and gray*, Finale Art File, Makati City, Philippines

Under Wraps, Silverlens, Makati City, Philippines

Dietro Mona Lisa, West Gallery, Quezon City, Philippines

2011 *Eccentric Windows*, Richard Koh Fine Art, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
 2010 *title withheld (three paintings)*, Finale Art File, Makati City, Philippines

Mutating Truths, Artesan Gallery + Studio, Singapore

2009 *Pictures of Pictures*, Finale Art File, Makati City, Philippines

2007 *Something to Do with Art*, Finale Art File, Makati City, Philippines

2006 *Hanging Paintings*, Finale Art Gallery, Mandaluyong City, Philippines

2005 *100 Pieces*, Finale Art Gallery, Mandaluyong City, Philippines

Selected Group Exhibitions

2015 *Stick Up Don't Move Smile*, Finale Art File, Makati City, Philippines

2014 *Do You Believe in Angels*, MO_Space, Taguig City, Philippines

2013 *Ateneo Art Awards 2004–2013: A Retrospective*, Ateneo Art Gallery, Quezon City, Philippines
I Love Painting and Painting Loves Me, Finale Art File, Makati City, Philippines

Closed Door Meeting, Finale Art File, Makati City, Philippines

The Mona Lisa Project, West Gallery, Quezon City, and Cultural Center of the Philippines, Pasay City, Philippines

2010 *Latitudes. Encounters with the Philippines*, Primo Marella Gallery, Milan, Italy

2009 *Selected Memory*, Richard Koh Fine Art, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
 4th Prague Biennale, Czech Republic

Post-Tsunami Art: South East B(())ooming, Primo Marella Gallery, Milan, Italy

2008 *Young Contemporary Philippines I*, Richard Koh Fine Art, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

It could be said that the art of Annie Cabigting has always involved painting other people's artworks. She has, throughout her career, made convincing versions of paintings by Jackson Pollock, Mark Rothko, Chuck Close, and even her Filipino colleague Louie Cordero (*My Grotesque*, 2011), to name but a few, all appearing within the frame of her canvas as part of the composition. Considering her methods, one can just imagine the string of questions arising over notions of authorship, appropriation, reproduction, and—even, to a point—imitation, which perhaps begs the question, “Can other works of art be treated as subject matter?”

The whole history of art, including current artworks of both famous painters and colleagues, can inspire artists; but Cabigting brings an oblique slant to the art world's ongoing antiphon by treating iconic pieces as items that have become part of our visual and mental landscape. They have become an inevitable part of the *mise-en-scène* in the locations she has chosen to paint: museums and galleries. Her works explore the idea of appropriation in order to investigate the aura that is inherent in art objects. Her way of reflecting on the traditions of both looking at and presenting works of art is linked to Western practices of institutional critique which developed in the 1970s in close proximity to feminist practices, such as the works of Louise Lawler.

In some cases Cabigting paints the artwork together with its audience—whether by showing the backs of intent viewers or a group of casual onlookers merely glancing

at a painting on the wall—thereby suggesting that her paintings are actually portraits of people who are caught in the middle of an interaction with the work of art she chooses to recreate. But with the viewers' backs turned, the little we know about their identities is overwhelmed by the painting in front of them. In the work *Amongst the Lost People* (2015), we see a woman looking at one of William Bouguereau's mid-nineteenth-century paintings, *Dante and Virgil in Hell* (1850). Cabigting's subject here, a woman in casual clothes with a bag on her shoulder, appears to

Annie Cabigting was born in Makati City, Philippines, in 1971

*

She lives and works in Quezon City, Philippines

be a tourist in a museum. We get the impression that her arms are folded, implying that at this given moment she is engrossed with the image in front of her. Her identity becomes tied not only to her appearance but also to the object before her, which we also view as a sudden juxtaposition of presences. We begin to evaluate her identity in relation to the contrasting milieu that we see in the painting by Bouguereau. The moment is unveiled as if it were a scene captured through photography—something that plays an important aspect in Cabigting's work, as she renders her paintings in a photo-realistic manner. Through this process, she forces herself to “reproduce”

another artist's work, trying to stick as closely as possible to the original, thus merging the specific qualities of the photographed image with the styles of the chosen artists.

Recently she began a series of paintings depicting the backs of Joseph Cornell's frames. Elsewhere, she goes beyond tackling paintings and examines more conceptual pieces such as Martin Creed's Turner-Prize-winning work, *The Lights Going On and Off* (2000). In this particular work from 2014, she turns her attention to published photographs of this work, and renders them showing both states of Creed's work—with the lights turned on and off. Cabigting presents her canvasses as diptychs, lit by theater lights switching on and off.

Whether selecting subject matter that is situated in galleries, museums, or auction houses, drawn from books, or rooted in the peculiar appearances of the objects themselves, Annie Cabigting does not stray far from the world that already contains them. She depicts the whole spectrum of activities—from looking at a piece of art, trading it, publishing, presenting or archiving it—and deconstructs the range of meanings that we attach to it.

2006 *Girls Will Not Be Girls*, Art Center – SM Megamall, Mandaluyong City, Philippines

2004 *Bread and Butter Machine*, West Gallery, Makati City, Philippines

The Sedimentation of the Mind is a Jumbled Museum, UP Vargas Museum, Quezon City, Philippines

Cancelled Metaphor II, Art Center–SM Megamall, Mandaluyong City, Philippines

2002 *Reflecting Skin*, Pinto Art Museum, Antipolo City, Philippines

2001 *The Paint Thing*, West Gallery, Makati City, Philippines

Selected Bibliography

2015 Bunoan, Ringo. *MOMA, Black, White, Presence and Absence*. Edited by Finale Art File. Exh. pamphlet Art Fair Philippines. Makati City.

Daoana, Carlomar Arcangel. “An inquiry into the privacy of sight.” *The Philippine Star*. April 27. [Online]

Villegas, Ramon N. *Seeing the Unseen, Musaeum*. Edited by Finale Art File. Exh. pamphlet Art Central, Hong Kong. Makati City.

2013 Ito, Lisa. *Annie Cabigting: Haven't We Met Before?*. Edited by Finale

Art File. Exh. pamphlet Art Stage Singapore. Makati City.

2012 Ito, Lisa. *Annie Cabigting: Painting Under the Influence of Painting*. Edited by Finale Art File. Exh. pamphlet Art Stage Singapore. Makati City.

Sotto, Jacinto. “The Ambitious Observer.” *Asian Art News* 1, vol. 22 (January/February).

2011 Chan, Jade. “Thoughtful Works of Art.” *Star Metro*. October 22.

Ito, Lisa. *Eccentric Windows: Reframing Form and History. Annie Cabigting*. Exh. cat. Richard Koh Fine Art. Kuala Lumpur.

Shetty, Deepika. “Asian Art in

Focus.” *The Straits Times*. November 15.

2010 Francisco, Francis, and Maria Chittyrene C. Labiran, eds. *Without Walls: A Tour of Philippine Paintings at the Turn of the Millennium*. Pasig City.

Daoana, Carlomar Arcangel. *Annie Cabigting: Mutating Truths*. Exh. cat. Artesan Gallery + Studio, Singapore.

2009 Rivera, Ramona. *Annie Cabigting: Pictures of Pictures*. Exh. cat. Finale Art File. Makati City.

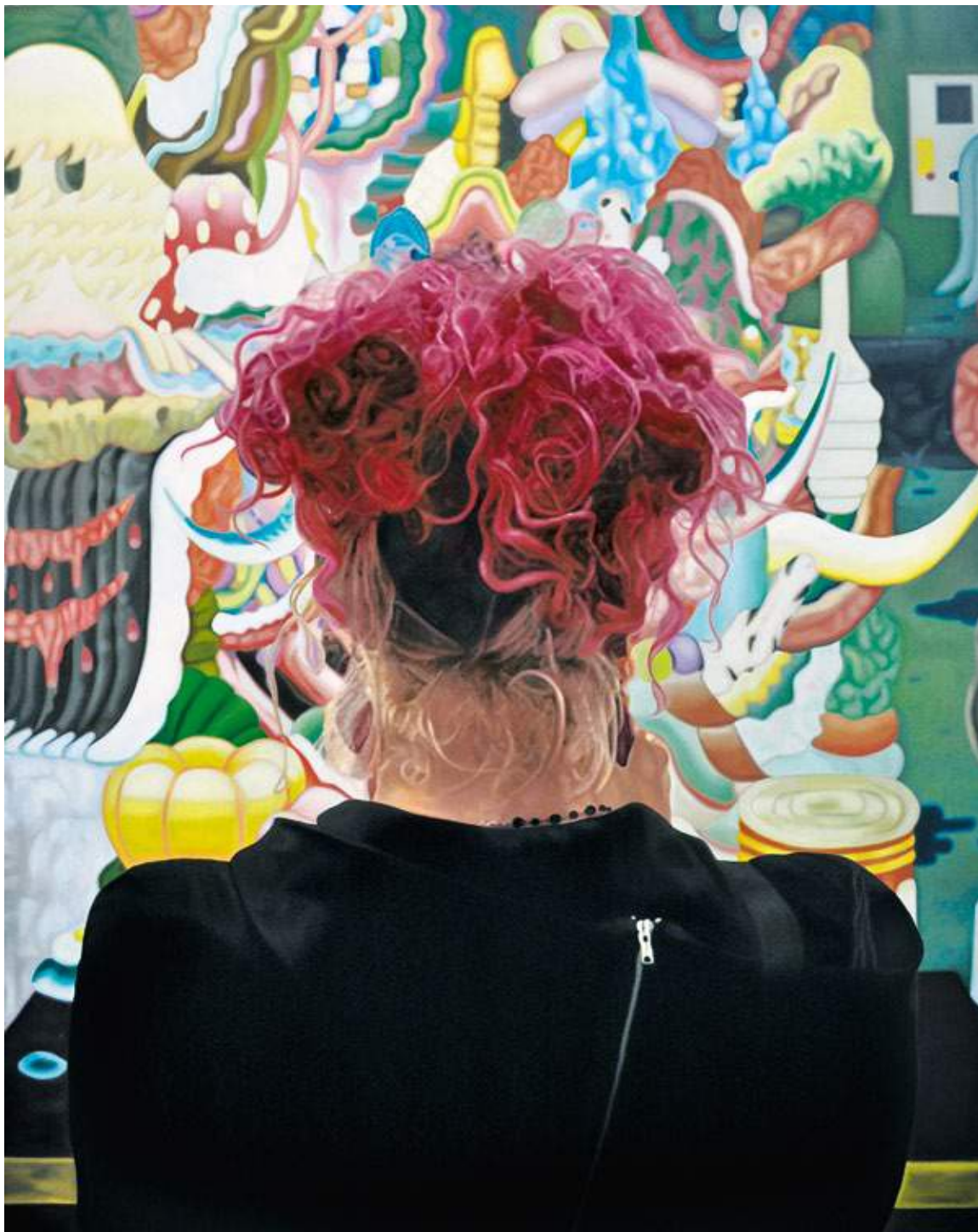
2007 Cobangbang, Lena. *Annie Cabigting: Something to do with Art*. Exh. cat. Finale Art File. Makati City.



An Audience with Vermeer, 2015
Oil on canvas
64 × 53 cm

Amongst the Lost People, 2015
Oil on canvas
254 × 180 cm





My Grotesque (After Cordero), 2011
Oil on canvas
224 x 197 cm



Bacon at the Auction, 2012
Oil on canvas
183 × 255 cm

Presence and Absence (After Lawrence Weiner at the MOMA), 2015
Oil on canvas, wooden floor, white wall,
copy of Mies van der Rohe's Barcelona bench
Overall dimensions variable,
painting 183 × 137 cm

Martin Creed, *Work No. 127, The Lights Going On and Off*
(*Lighting 30 Seconds On, 30 Seconds Off*)
and
Martin Creed, *Work No. 227, The Lights Going On and Off*
(*Installation at the Museum of Modern Art, New York, 2007.*
Lighting 5 Seconds On, 5 Seconds Off), 2014
Oil on canvas, lightbox, programmed lights switching on and off
Exhibition view, MO_Space, Taguig City, Philippines, 2014







Buen Calubayan

Education

- 2001 Master's units in Cultural Heritage Studies, University of Santo Tomas, Manila, Philippines
Bachelor of Fine Arts, Major in Advertising, University of Santo Tomas, Manila, Philippines

Selected Solo Exhibitions

- 2015 *Biowork*, Ateneo Art Gallery, Quezon City, Philippines
2014 *Bionote*, Blanc Gallery and Liongoren Gallery, Quezon City, Philippines

Idiot Knows No Country, La Trobe University Visual Arts Centre, Bendigo, Australia

- 2013 *Biography*, Blanc Gallery, Quezon City, Philippines
Spoliarium, Now Gallery, Makati City, Philippines
2012 *Fressie Capulong*, Blanc Peninsula, Makati City, Philippines
2008 *Crawling Man™*, 1/of Gallery, Taguig City, Philippines
2007 *Idiot Show for Idiots*, Cultural Center of the Philippines, Pasay City, Philippines; *The Cubicle Art Gallery*, Pasig City, Philippines; *Big Sky Mind*, Quezon City, Philippines

TAO™, 1/of Gallery, Taguig City, Philippines

Selected Group Exhibitions

- 2014 *Forces at Work*, UP Vargas Museum, Quezon City, Philippines
Articles of Disagreement, Lopez Memorial Museum, Pasig City, Philippines
The Mirror and Monitor of Democracy in Asia, Gwangju Museum of Art, Republic of Korea
2013 *Ateneo Art Awards 2013: Marking Time*, Shangri-La Plaza and

Ateneo Art Gallery, Quezon City, Philippines

The Philippine Contemporary: To Scale the Past and the Possible, Metropolitan Museum of Manila, Philippines

- 2012 *INexactly THIS*, Kunstvlaai – Festival of Independents, Amsterdam, Netherlands
2011 *Touch Me*, Hiraya Gallery, Manila, Philippines
2010 *Zero In: Extensions*, Lopez Memorial Museum, Pasig City, Philippines
2009 *Thirteen Artists Awards*, Cultural Center of the Philippines, Pasay City, Philippines

Buen Calubayan examines the contradictions found within the notion of Filipino identity through his own endeavors as an artist seeking self-validation. In his painting as well as in performances, sculptures, and conceptual pieces, he combines autobiographical material with canonical works, blurring the distinctions between personal and cultural histories. He believes that personal conflicts can be seen as microcosms of the continuous struggle for autonomy that plagues his country, and that his search for the appropriate form to embody these ideas through art can also reflect a whole nation's search for an inherent aesthetic taste.

In a series of paintings called *Spoliarium* (2013), Calubayan reworked the composition of one of the most canonical paintings in Filipino history: *Spoliarium*, by Juan Luna, one of the leading Nationalist figures during the Spanish occupation. Luna's painting had won a gold medal at the prestigious *Exposición Nacional de Bellas Artes* in Madrid in 1884, which had caused Jose Rizal, a national hero in the Philippines, to utter his famous toast, "Genius knows no country." With his own painting, Calubayan tried to deconstruct this notion, arguing that a sense of pride such as Rizal's only reaffirmed that the Filipino had no real art to speak of as his own: that he was subject to and required validation from the criteria of his colonizers. "This contradiction still echoes to this day," Calubayan says. "There seems to be a desire deeply rooted in the depths of the Filipino consciousness, to measure [one's] own worth against the likings of the West." It was this that prompted

Calubayan's search for a purely "Filipino" spirit through his paintings. His own *Spoliarium* became a series of fragmented scenes culled from the different elements of its historical predecessor. In effect, Calubayan took the original painting apart and rebuilt it, applying his own impressions to each isolated scene, with his own manner of depiction. In his hands the canonical work is broken down into parts: this is "history removed from its center."

While in *Spoliarium* Calubayan probes into history, in his series of landscape paintings (*Biowork, Mount Banahaw, 2015*) he con-

Buen Calubayan was born in Lucena City,
Philippines, in 1980

*

He lives and works in Manila,
Philippines

tinually searches for an essential Filipino aesthetic—what he believes to be an untainted form of native sensibility, unblemished by ideas of Western industrialization and progress as seen in the cities, and deeply tied to Nature and the rituals that local folk associate with her. With these paintings he ventures into the hinterlands of rural areas, onto distant mountainsides, and into the forgotten vistas of a remote island's shoreline.

In a 2014 work deriving its title from *Pasyon and Revolution*, a book written in 1979 by local historian Reynaldo Ileto, who believed that the passion generated from one's own Filipino aesthetic sensibility could

inevitably lead to the nation's enlightenment, Calubayan turns lines of text from the actual pages of the book into strips of paper woven together to produce a hammock. The comforting image of a hammock is combined and contrasted with the frailty of its paper-thin assemblage. Like Calubayan's *Spoliarium*, the object represents a web of textual conjectures, a set of ideologies stripped of context, broken down, and then put together in a different way to produce another meaning: a critical examination of the false promise of comfort that issues from a chorus of ideas.

Essentially, for Calubayan, thoughts should amount to actions, actions constitute objects, and objects be organized into new histories, thus eventually offering new opportunities for re-establishing the Filipino identity.

In his installation *Employee 55* (2014) he moves from the realm of ideas into notions of his own personal identity, blurring the boundaries between art and life. He simulates the environment of a typical office space, complete with desks and documents. But within these files and other office paraphernalia are the artist's own personal documents—recordings, notes, diagrams, and routine time stamps from his day job as an employee of an institution. Presenting the dichotomies between artist and laborer, he poses questions about his own in certain ways contradictory identity as an artist, who must do a mundane day job to earn his living and continue making art.

2008 Tablado, Boston Gallery, Quezon City, Philippines
FoEM, Art Center – SM Megamall, Mandaluyong City, Philippines
TutoK: KARGADO, Ateneo Art Gallery, Quezon City, Philippines
2007 TutoK: NEXUS, Loyola House of Studies, Ateneo de Manila University, Quezon City, Philippines

2014 Flores, Patrick D., and Louise Ann D. Marcelino. "Decisions," in *The Mirror and Monitor of Democracy in Asia*. Exh. cat. Gwangju Museum of Art. Gwangju.
2013 Ateneo Art Awards 2013: *Marking Time*, Shangri-La Plaza and Ateneo Art Gallery, Quezon City, Philippines.
2012 Miranda, Donna, ed. *Working Artists Group*. Published on the occasion of *INexactly THIS*, Kunstvlaai – Festival of Independents, Amsterdam. Manila. [Online]
2011 "Storyline: Malaya." *Storyline* (series). Created by Paolo Villaluna and Patricia Evangelista.

Aired ANC news channel. August 18.
Suárez, Angelo V. "Salvaging the Author: The Social Turn in Philippine Poetry." *High Chair* 15 (July–December). [Online]
2009 Suárez, Angelo V. "Buen Calubayan: Reluctant Insider." *Preview Magazine* (October).
Tuazon, Wire. "Chaosmosis and a Stupidogram," in *13 Artists Awards and Exhibit 2009*, p. 6. Exh. cat. Cultural Center of the Philippines, Manila.
2007 Rondina, Johnathan Libarios. "Buen Calubayan: Unearthing the archaeology of consumption."

Philippine Daily Inquirer. July 23. [Online]
Suárez, Angelo V. "A portrait of the artist as moron." *Philippine Daily Inquirer*. November 20. [Online]

Selected Bibliography

2015 *Buen Calubayan: Biowork*. Exh. cat. Ateneo Art Gallery. Quezon City.



Biwork, Mount Banahaw 3, 2015
Oil on canvas
122 × 152 cm



Biowork, Mount Banahaw 1, 2015
Oil on canvas
122 x 152 cm





Eternal Landscape 1, 2012
Oil on canvas
61 × 183 cm



Site specific: The Necessity of Art. ANIM NA PAGTATANGHAL
 ●kisame ● unang pader ● pangalawang pader ● pangatlong pader ● pang-apat na pader
 ● sahig
 Tag-init, 1961
 George Brecht

The Necessity of Art, 2014
 Oil on canvas
 152 x 183 cm

The Archives, 2014
 Oil on canvas
 152 x 183 cm



Site specific: The Archive. Art History / Theory / Practice, Religion, Philosophy, Science, Politics, Sociology, Literature
 Philippines - History, Ethnology, Trade, Commerce, Chinese, Mindanao, Revolution, Historiography, Politics, Social aspects
 Anthropology and Art Practice, Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion, A Brief History of Time, Brave New World, The Confessions
 Passion and Revolution, The Promise of the Foreign



Spoliarium V, 2013
Oil on canvas
200 × 200 cm



Pasyon and Revolution: Towards a History from Below, 2014
Hammock crafted from strips of texts from the first chapter of
Pasyon and Revolution by Reynaldo Ileto
Dimensions variable
Exhibition view, Ateneo Art Gallery, Quezon City, Philippines, 2015

Employee 55, 2014
Office desk, book shelf, white boards and
bulletin boards, notebooks, map notations,
documentations, office documents and office supplies
Dimensions variable
Exhibition view, Lopez Museum,
Pasig City, Philippines, 2014





Louie Cordero

Education

2001 Bachelor of Fine Arts, Major in Painting, University of the Philippines Diliman, Quezon City, Philippines

Selected Solo Exhibitions

2015 *Golden Rule*, Bangkok University Gallery, Thailand
Warslime, Blanc Gallery, Quezon City, Philippines
 2014 *Colour Combo Phantasma*, West Gallery, Quezon City, Philippines
Through Mind And Back, Finale Art File, Makati City, Philippines
 2013 *Smog for Rainbows*, Richard Koh Fine Art, Singapore
 2012 *Welcome Spiritualist Camp*, West Gallery, Quezon City, Philippines
 2011 *Meta*, Blanc Peninsula, Makati City, Philippines

Slow Education, MO_Space, Taguig City, Philippines
Misprint Messiah (with Carlo Ricafort), DAGC Gallery, Makati City, Philippines
 2010 *Sacred Bones*, Jonathan LeVine Gallery, New York, USA
Soft Death, Osage Gallery, Hong Kong, China
 2009 *Soft Death*, Osage Gallery, Singapore
 2008 *Pilgrimage to Semina Mountains*, West Gallery, Mandaluyong City, Philippines
Absolute Horror, MO_Space, Taguig City, Philippines
Death Scream (with Mariano Ching), Blanc Compound, Mandaluyong City, Philippines
 2007 *DELUBYO*, Giant Robot, Los Angeles, USA
 2006 *Neo-gativland*, Magnet Gallery, Quezon City, Philippines
Synthetic Fury, Finale Art Gallery,

Mandaluyong City, Philippines
Bad Tastes, West Gallery, Quezon City, Philippines
East Meats West (with Heyd Fontenot), Art Palace, Austin, Texas, USA
 2005 *And the World Smiles with You*, Theo Gallery, Makati City, Philippines
Pathology for Boredom, Green Papaya Art Projects, Quezon City, Philippines
Black Boxes and Other Devices, Finale Art Gallery, Mandaluyong City, Philippines
Adobo Empire (with Jordin Isip), Riviera Gallery, New York, USA
 2004 *If Assholes Could Fly*, *This Place Would Be An Airport*, Theo Gallery, Makati City, Philippines
Motherlode (with Robert Gutierrez), 111 Minna Gallery, San Francisco, USA
 2003 *Republic*, Red Mill Gallery,

Vermont Studio Center, Johnson, Vermont, USA
Deluxe, Finale Art Gallery, Mandaluyong City, Philippines
 2002 *Torts and Damages*, Green Papaya Art Projects, Quezon City, Philippines
 2001 *Transmissions*, Finale Art Gallery, Mandaluyong City, Philippines
Knowing Evil Will Prevail, Surrounded By Water, Mandaluyong City, Philippines

Selected Group Exhibitions

2015 *Open Sea*, Musée d'art contemporain de Lyon, France
Black and White Paintings and Drawings, BenCab Museum, Baguio City, Philippines
Imaging Philippine Flora: 1877 to the Present, Metropolitan Museum of Manila, Philippines

There is always an air of ambiguity in the world created by Louie Cordero: a world that is often described as bizarre or riotous, and sometimes even grotesque or abject. In his paintings, sculptures, and installations Cordero uses anatomical innards, muscle tissue, veins, and eyeballs to construct a new, unclassifiable species that has evolved through forms, shapes, and patterns, and then juxtaposes them with iconographies from the current social milieu: the images of Catholicism, the relics of the so-called Third World (Southeast Asia and Africa), the air-brushed panels of the Manila *jeepney*, the stuntmen of lowbrow Filipino films, the primitivism of native crafts, and the localized narratives of Western Popular culture—from Hollywood imagery in shop signs and graffiti to the sanctification of American pop songs in run-down *videoke* bars.

Multiculturalism, kitsch, and pastiche have become trademarks for Filipino art, given that the country is not only a set of different islands with different dialects and traditions, but also a former colony of different imperial forces, starting with the Spaniards in the late sixteenth century to the Japanese in the middle of the twentieth century. It seems as if the average Filipino, who has been swamped to this day with a smorgasbord of influences, suffers from a certain *horror vacui*—a need to fill up the spaces because the nation itself is crowded with unresolved histories.

Most of the artists preceding Cordero portrayed the energy of Manila through its socio-historical context, attempting with their paintings to expose political oppression by

using symbolisms of poverty, imperialism, and consumerism, usually concocted in a gloomy or satirical atmosphere. Cordero, however, deviates from these templates to produce his own rendition of the city, celebrating it in bright, neon colors with depictions of its mundane, almost absurdist moments. In *My We* (2011), he presents a visual parody of an inherently Filipino vice—the indiscriminate singing inside *videoke* bars. He depicts the riotous and sometimes deadly results of some festive moments: incidents that have occasionally made the headlines of local tabloids,

Louie Cordero was born in Manila,
Philippines, in 1978

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He lives and works in Quezon City
and Malabon City, Philippines

especially the right to sing Frank Sinatra’s popular ballad, *My Way*, as the cause of such mayhem.

In terms of composition, in recent years Cordero has slowly deviated from a purely figurative and symbolist portrayal to more constructivist and abstract forms. The result is a new category of images that is entirely his own: a juxtaposition of grotesque, narrative elements with cubist and constructivist forms, a combination of primitivism and formalism, a hodgepodge of whimsical dreamscapes and tropical landscapes. In his latest paintings, *Epitaph for the Hands That Shaped and Built the Divine* (2015), and *Prima Materia*

(*The Second Dark Age*) (2012), Cordero moves forward to what is for him essentially “the incoherence of forms against the incoherence of imagination.” There are strips of lines, curves, shapes, and images which, when treated with both logic and fantasy, are forced into some sort of coherence—the shape of eyeballs, veins, and innards; geometric lines intersecting with free-flowing blobs of tissue and meat.

Through his art, Cordero continues to assimilate the ways of the naïve, the native, and the lowbrow together with the sensuous allure of affluence and progress. His characteristic mélange of forms, uncategorized slew of shapes, and snippets from real life become the symbiosis of good and bad taste, of sanctity and irreverence, and of humor and seriousness, which can be seen as an apt reflection of the current state of Filipino society. For as much as these ventures may result in what most of us would call difficult and sometimes shocking imagery, in Cordero’s world these are the succinct narratives of memory and fantasy, and a faithfulness to the history of his motherland.

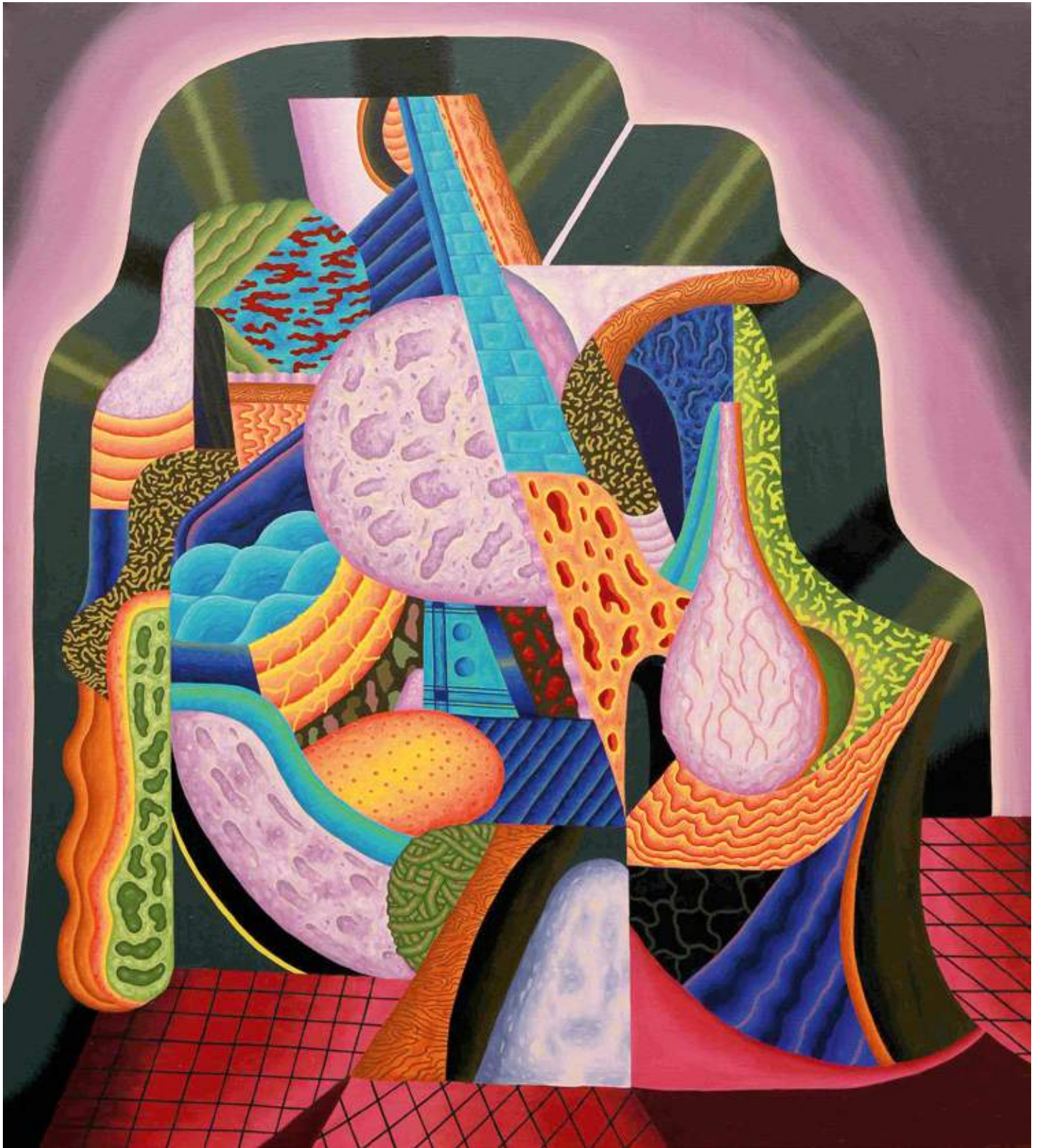
2014	<i>Drawn to Scale</i> , UP Vargas Museum, Quezon City, Philippines	Kong Cultural Centre, China
2013	<i>Manila Vice</i> , Musée International des Arts Modestes, Sète, France	<i>A Tale of Two Cities: Busan/Seoul, Seoul/Busan</i> , Busan Biennale 2006
	<i>Revealing Signs of the Present</i> , Metropolitan Museum of Manila, Philippines	2004 <i>Wild Imagination: The Grotesque Illustrated</i> , Lopez Memorial Museum, Pasig City, Philippines
2012	<i>Panorama: Recent Art from Contemporary Asia</i> , Singapore Art Museum	2002 <i>Faith + the City: A Survey of Contemporary Filipino Art</i> , Metropolitan Museum of Manila, Philippines; Chulalongkorn University, Bangkok, Thailand, et al. (traveling exhibition)
2011	<i>Maximum City: Survive or Escape?</i> , 14th Jakarta Biennale, National Gallery of Indonesia, Jakarta	2001 <i>Surrounded</i> , Cultural Center of the Philippines, Pasay City, Philippines
	<i>BISA: Potent Presences</i> , Metropolitan Museum of Manila, Philippines	2000 <i>Signing at Kataga: An Exhibition of Text and Images</i> , UP Vargas Museum, Quezon City, Philippines
	<i>Open House</i> , 3rd Singapore Biennale, Singapore Art Museum	<i>Faith + the City: A Survey of Contemporary Filipino Art</i> , Earl Lu Gallery, LASALLE-SIA College of the Arts, Singapore
2008	<i>The World in Painting</i> , Heide Museum of Modern Art, Bulleen, Australia	<i>Panimula</i> , Ayala Museum, Makati City, Philippines
2006	<i>Fuzzy Logic</i> , Lopez Memorial Museum, Pasig City, Philippines	
	<i>Metropolitan Mapping</i> , Hong	

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2015	<i>Louie Cordero: Golden Rule</i> . Exh. cat. Bangkok University Gallery. Bangkok.	Incorvaia, Kirsten. “The Second Coming of Thrilla in Manila.” <i>Juxtapoz: Art & Culture Magazine</i> . February.
2011	<i>Singapore Biennale 2011: Open House</i> . Exh. cat. Singapore Art Museum et al. Singapore.	Wong, Jill. “Cordero Revisited Zombies.” <i>C Arts: Asian Contemporary Art and Culture</i> . April.
2010	Francisco, Francis, and Maria Chittyrene C. Labiran, eds. <i>Without Walls: A Tour of Philippine Paintings at the Turn of the Millennium</i> . Pasig City.	2007 Guillermo, Alice G. “Louie Cordero at Finale Art File.” <i>Asian Art News</i> 2, vol. 17 (March/April)
2009	Caruncho, Eric S. “Louie Cordero’s Visceral Art.” <i>Philippine Daily Inquirer</i> . May 31. [Online]	Owens, Annie. “Louie Cordero.” <i>Hi-Fructose: Under the Counter Culture Magazine</i> 6.
	Ching, Isabel. “Louie Cordero: Kitsch with Teeth.” in <i>Some Rooms</i> . Exh. cat. Osage Gallery Hong Kong; Osage Gallery, Shanghai. Hong Kong.	2006 Lerma, Ramon E. S. “The abject art of Louie Cordero.” <i>The Philippine Star</i> . December 4. [Online]
	Fairley, Gina. “Sacred Ghoul.” <i>Asian Art News</i> 3, vol. 9 (May/June).	Ocampo, Manuel. “Mutant Zombie. Catholic Tastes [interview].” <i>Giant Robot</i> 43 (August-September): pp. 68-73.



*Epitaph for the Hands That Shaped
and Built the Divine, 2015*
Acrylic on canvas
200 × 180 cm



Prima Materia (The Second Dark Age), 2015
Acrylic on canvas
200 × 180 cm



Spectrum and Otherness Blues, 2015
Acrylic on canvas
200 × 180 cm



Pong on Earth 4, 2014
Automotive paint, fiberglass,
resin, steel
91 × 152 × 274 cm
Edition of 4

Pong on Earth 3, 2014
Automotive paint, fiberglass,
resin, steel
91 × 152 × 274 cm
Edition of 4



Creation of Matter, 2011
Acrylic on canvas
152 x 152 cm



Society of Ornamental Delusions, 2011
Acrylic on canvas
122 x 152 cm





My We, 2011
Mixed media installation with a videoke
machine, video, paintings, fiberglass sculptures
Dimensions variable
Exhibition view, Singapore Art Museum, 2011



Jigger Cruz

Education

2007 Bachelor of Fine Arts, Far Eastern University, Manila, Philippines

Selected Solo Exhibitions

2015 *Subtraction Paradise*, Arndt Berlin, Germany
Deep Down into the Ecstasy of False Modernism, Primo Marella Gallery, Milan, Italy
 2014 *Overtones of Dispositional Platform*, abc art berlin contemporary, Arndt Berlin, Germany

2013 *Grays Between Bold Parallels*, Blanc Gallery, Quezon City, Philippines
Depth Circus, West Gallery, Quezon City, Philippines
Surface Default, Light & Space Contemporary, Manila, Philippines
 2012 *Counter Glitch Habitation*, Primae Noctis Art Gallery, Lugano, Switzerland
Spatial Soother, West Gallery, Quezon City, Philippines
Birth of the Party Bantam Paintings, Secret Fresh Gallery, San Juan City, Philippines

2011 *Dead End*, West Gallery, Quezon City, Philippines
Anti-Depressants on Paper, The Crucible Gallery, Mandaluyong City, Philippines
 2009 *Constructing Deconstruction*, Tala Gallery, Quezon City, Philippines
 2008 *Swing*, Blanc Gallery, Makati City, Philippines

Selected Group Exhibitions

2014 *Manila: The Night is Restless, The Day is Scornful*, Arndt Singapore
 2013 *Abstrakt*, Michael Haas / Contemporary Fine Arts, Berlin, Germany
Water, Taksu, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
Abstraction: Lost and Found, Taksu, Singapore
 2012 *Latitudes. Encounters with the Philippines, Part II*, Primo Marella Gallery, Milan, Italy
 2011 *Manuel Ocampo's Boycotter of Beauty*, West Gallery, Quezon City, Philippines

Jigger Cruz started to explore the combination of figuration and abstraction within the frame during the early stages of his career. The apparent ambivalence between the illusionistic qualities of painting and its inherent form as a leaden, physical object is a conundrum that would hound Cruz's nascent formulations about the possibilities of constructing art. Experimenting on the academic forms of painting, sculpture, and installation, he directed his queries toward configurations in shapes, pigments, and other propositions about the materiality of art.

In 2011, he finally turned all these questions about the nature of art on the art itself and began to tackle the problem head-on: attempting to fundamentally accept the canonical structure of painting and treat it primarily as an idea and as a part of art history, before tearing it apart again as an object.

In his show *Home Sweet Home* (2011), Cruz undermines our ideas about an antiquated object with a painting he concocted to present the illusion of datedness, replete with a damp, moldy canvas and a rustic, discolored frame. Even the imagery used here engenders disorientation through its archaism: a depiction of an idyllic rural landscape, in the style of the old Flemish masters. This is followed by an artistic act that appears to be totally disjointed from the whole project: a thick conglomeration of lines, bursting with colors, has been splayed liberally in various directions across the center of the frame.

Cruz's method creates the impression of vandalized work which, paradoxically, has been meticulously fabricated from the ground

up—beginning with the canvas, the frame, and the content underneath that has been obstructed from our view. Portraits rendered in Baroque tones, Cubist reconstructions in the manner of Pablo Picasso, or the idyllic landscapes of Dutch realist painters are defaced and, in some instances, deformed, to simulate a scenario or ideology of how precious treasures from the past can fall prey to the whimsical aesthetics of a philistine.

But this act of seeming desecration eventually challenges our judgments on the auratic qualities of art, and finds its place as

expect to be the subject. The overlaying of the undecipherable, which is also evident in Cruz's sculptures such as *Metaphorical Suffocation* (2014), casts a shadow over what is familiar. The shape of a human body is shrouded by a blanket of canvas, bearing the artist's trademark orchestration of free-flowing lines of brushstrokes and pigments. The immediate relational object, the body—the very measure of beauty and humanity—succumbs to Jigger Cruz's transgressions within the throes of tradition. What is defaced, vandalized, occluded, and deconstructed is the whole notion of art itself.

Jigger Cruz was born in Malabon City,
Philippines, in 1984

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He lives and works in Manila,
Philippines

a critique on the canons of taste. In another work called *Broken Sunday* (2013), Cruz dissolves the canvas from the top by scorching, creating a disfigured frame and leaving the object with a "crest" of gaping negative space. The thick layering of impasto lines replaces the theme of "landscape" portrayed on the canvas, creating its own contours, its own terrain—its own version of a landscape. The idea of painting as representation mutates to the idea of painting as material in order to represent a given concept.

The real subject—Cruz's raw, textured, chaotic blots of thickly layered oil pigment—thus obscures the image a viewer would

Survivalism, Light & Space
Contemporary, Fairview, Manila,
Philippines
Thunderkiss, Metro Gallery, San
Juan City, Philippines
Anti-Hero, Altro Mondo, Makati
City, Philippines
A Soundtrack to Nothing, The
Crucible Gallery, Mandaluyong
City, Philippines
Tanaw, Boston Gallery, Quezon
City, Philippines
2010 *Painting with a Hammer to Nail
the Crotch of Civilization*, Manila
Contemporary, Taguig City,
Philippines

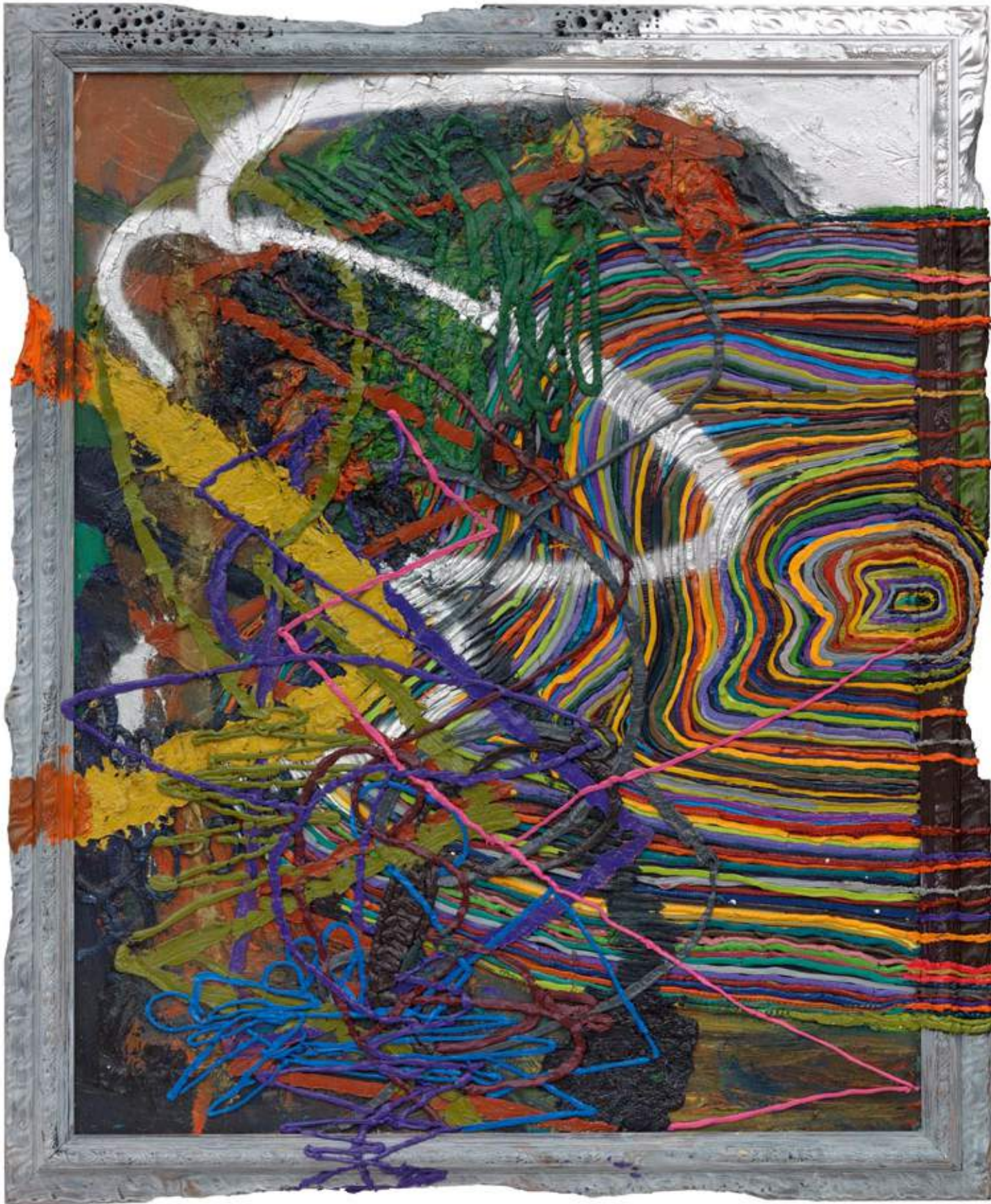
Tabi Tabi Po, 1AM Gallery, San
Francisco, USA
Enemy, Art Center Megamall,
Mandaluyong City, Philippines
You Are Not Here, Pablo Gallery,
Bonifacio Global City, Taguig
City, Philippines
2009 *A Book About Death: An Unbound
Book on the Subject of Death*,
Emily Harvey Foundation, New
York City, USA
If You Only Walk Long Enough,
Studio 83, Singapore
Looking for Juan, Cultural Center
of the Philippines, Manila,
Philippines

2008 *This Time Tomorrow*, Blanc
Compound, Mandaluyong City,
Philippines
Boxed, Cubicle Art Space, Pasig
City, Philippines
2007 *Pink Fumes*, Pablo Gallery,
Quezon City, Philippines
December Show, Blanc Gallery,
Makati City, Philippines
Opposite Attracts, big sky mind,
Quezon City, Philippines
2004–2006 *November Rhapsody*, Art
Center Megamall, Mandaluyong
City, Philippines

2004 *Philippine Art Awards*, National
Museum of the Philippines,
Manila, Philippines

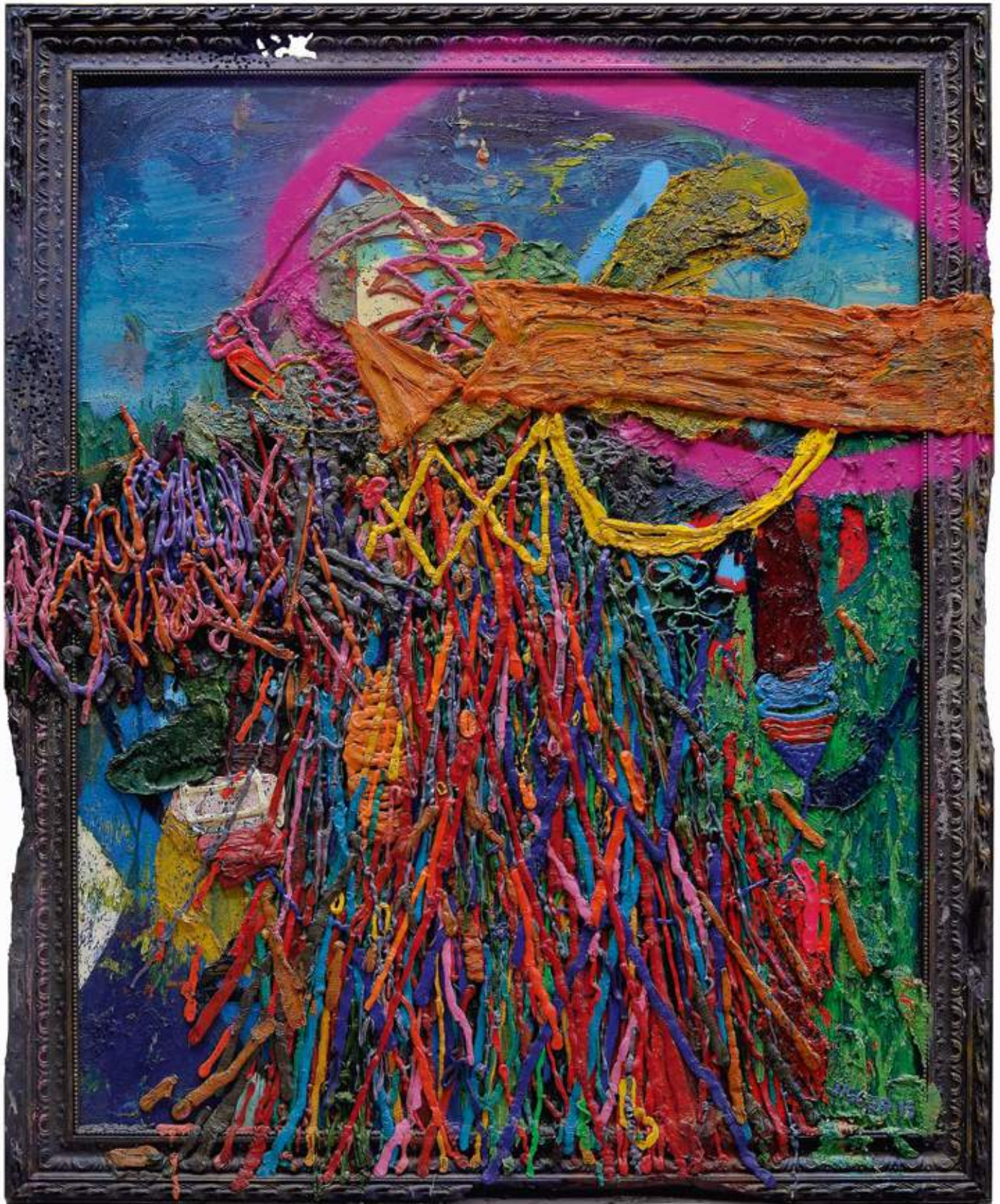
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2015 Arndt, Matthias, ed. *Jigger Cruz*.
Berlin.
2014 Cristobal, Geronimo. "Jigger Cruz
Superstar." *Art Explainer*. May 14.
[Online]





Disjointed, 2015
Oil and spray paint on canvas and wooden frame
Diptych, 172 × 282 cm



The End of Horror in 60 Seconds Extent of Culture, 2014
Oil and spray paint on canvas and wooden frame
180 x 147 cm



Crawling from the Wreckage, 2015
Oil and spray paint on canvas and wooden frame
163 × 132 cm



Blares of the Opposite, 2013
Oil on canvas and wooden frame
163 × 193 cm



Bolted Shadow from Within, 2015
Oil on canvas and wooden frame
172 x 141 cm





Metaphorical Suffocation, 2014
Oil on canvas, resin
132 × 53 × 25 cm

Broken Sunday, 2013
Oil on canvas and wooden frame
65 × 80 cm



Marina Cruz

Education

- 2003 Bachelor of Fine Arts, Major in Painting, University of the Philippines Diliman, Quezon City, Philippines

Selected Solo Exhibitions

- 2015 *Wear and Tear*, Mind Set Art Center, Taipei, Taiwan
Meditations on Unearthed Terrain, West Gallery, Quezon City, Philippines
- 2014 *Fabric Skin*, Artinformal, Mandaluyong City, Philippines
- 2013 *Flower Arrangements*, Finale Art File, Makati City, Philippines,
Lost Finds, Artesan Gallery + Studio, Raffles Arcade, Singapore
- 2012 *Corners of My Sleep*, Artinformal, Mandaluyong City, Philippines
In the House of Memory, Mind Set Art Center, Taipei, Taiwan
Inside Out, BenCab Museum, Baguio City, Philippines
- 2010 *Simple Depictions* (with Rodel Tapaya), Total Gallery, Alliance Française de Manille, Makati City, Philippines
- 2011 *Forget Me Not*, West Gallery, Quezon City, Philippines
The Connective Thread, Ernst & Young Building, Singapore
- 2009 *Spontaneous Moments*, The Drawing Room, Makati City, Philippines
Un/Fold, Ateneo Art Gallery, Quezon City, Philippines
- 2008 *Open House*, The Drawing Room, Makati City, Philippines
Embroidered Landscapes, La Trobe University Visual Arts Center, Bendigo, Australia
Lest You Forget, Boston Gallery, Quezon City, Philippines
Recollections, Artinformal, Mandaluyong City, Philippines
- 2007 *Dollhouse*, Artinformal, Mandaluyong City, Philippines
- 2005 *Kambal*, Boston Gallery, Quezon City, Philippines
- 2013 *The Philippine Contemporary: To Scale the Past and the Possible*, Metropolitan Museum of Manila, Philippines
- 2011 *BISA: Potent Presences*, Metropolitan Museum of Manila, Philippines
- 2009 *Daloy: A Continuing Vision of a Center*, Cultural Center of the Philippines, Pasay City, Philippines
- 2008 *Sentimental Value*, SOKA Contemporary Space and The Drawing Room, Beijing
Strange Familiarities, Familiar Strangers, Alliance Française de Manille, Makati City, Philippines
- 2007 *Sungdu-an 4: Extensions*, Capitol University Museum of Three Cultures, Cagayan de Oro City, Philippines

Selected Group Exhibitions

- 2014 *Woman-Home: In the Name of Asian Female Artists*, Kaohsiung Museum of Fine Arts, Taiwan

Painted dresses, magnified from a certain spot and rendered in detail, call for a formalist mode of interpretation. In the hands of Marina Cruz, they undergo a process of sublime composition to produce an effect similar to minimalist abstraction. The patterns found in each textile—whether checkered, dotted, lace-patterned, or pinstriped—recall the works of abstractionists who focused on to the interaction between colors and shapes. The folds and creases of each dress create a particular kind of texture, similar to the mannered strokes and painterly surfaces perpetuated by formalists. Unexpected details such as threadbare hems or blotchy stains adds further vitality to the overall composition, while buttons, holes, tears, and armies of seams complete the story.

The clothes that Cruz paints are part of a deeper fabric of remembering forgotten family narratives: her chance encounter with a heap of family heirlooms, and discovering the small dresses that her mother and her mother’s twin sister wore as children, which left a lasting impression on her. The damaged, brittle condition of the tiny dresses opened up a remarkable world from the past able to be codified through such objects. From then on, Cruz began to unearth more than a hundred dresses made by her grandmother for her mother and aunt. She proceeded to paint them, embroider them, cast them in resin, and use them in installations and videos for exhibitions. For her, they served as a family archive, through which the unspoken lives and histories of an earlier generation were embedded.

Before she began painting children’s dresses, Cruz explored a wide range of themes revolving around childhood. In her triptych *Waiting for a Home* (2014), she combined dolls she had collected with paintings of dormitories. The title of the work alludes to the sad reality of orphanages. Even though the beds look neat and clean, there is a certain sense of rigor here, which contrasts with our more idealized view of childhood. The dolls placed in front of these paintings insufficiently stand in for the children missing in the images, thus suggesting a feeling of displacement. The specific

acquires imperfections, and how it becomes more fragile through the passing of time.

Through these paintings, Marina Cruz has continually explored an essential trait found within the region: the valued continuum that proceeds from close family ties among succeeding generations. Through her art, she is able to transpose the activity of one generation to the next: her grandmother’s dress-making, her mother’s fittings, and her own activity of painting. This closed cycle of familial undertakings, carefully pieced together and sympathetically presented by Cruz, has become rare in a world that has developed the propensity to reach outward rather than inward, due to the globalizing technologies.

Marina Cruz was born in Bulacan,
Philippines, in 1982

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She lives and works in Bulacan,
Philippines

abstraction of their bodies can be interpreted as suggestions of abuse. In a series of works titled *Doll Heads* (2013–2014) Cruz painted dolls, showing how their use had changed their appearance: their hair in a mess or away, scratches marking their faces.

While in *Doll Heads* the traces of usage, scratches, and stains may refer to psychological states, in the artist’s new paintings of clothes, every hole, stain, and threadbare hem tells its own distinct story. The fabric serves as a metaphor for the close-knit and interwoven relationships of each generation: how it is subject to damages, how it

Tampo Lapuk, 2nd Dumaguete Terracotta Biennial, Philippines

2006 *A/P: Analogue Playground*, Ateneo Art Gallery, Quezon City, Philippines

2005 *Armour*, Corredor Gallery, College of Fine Arts, University of the Philippines Diliman, Quezon City, Philippines

2004 *Babaylan@Kasibulan.net*, Cultural Center of the Philippines, Pasay City, Philippines

Gamit, UP Vargas Museum, Quezon City, Philippines

2003 *Buod: Celebration of the Year of the Family*, National Commission for Culture and the Arts, Manila, Philippines

2002 *Toys*, Ayala Museum, Makati City, Philippines

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2015 Mind Set Art Center, ed. *Marina Cruz*. Taipei.

2014 *Marina Cruz: Dolled Up*. Exh. pamphlet. Art Fair Philippines. Makati City.

Marina Cruz: Flower Arrangements. Exh. pamphlet. Finale Art File. Makati City.

Ito, Lisa. “Deconstructing dress: Form and history in Marina Cruz’s *Fabric Skin*,” in *Marina Cruz: Fabric Skin*. Exh. cat. Artinformal, Mandaluyong City. San Juan City.

2013 *Lost Finds: New Works by Marina Cruz*. Exh. cat. Artesan Gallery + Studio. Singapore.

Guazon, Tessa Maria. “Parallel Bounties: Objects as Presence and Phantom in the works of Pamela Yan and Marina Cruz,” in *Art Basel Hong Kong: The Art Show*. Exh. cat. Ostfildern.

2012 *Marina Cruz-Garcia: In the House of Memory*. Exh. cat. Mind Set Art Center. Taipei.

Marina Cruz: Inside Out. Exh. cat. BenCab Museum, Baguio City. Quezon City.

Cobangbang, Lena. “Marina Cruz,” in *2012 Thirteen Artists Awards*. Exh. cat. CCP – Cultural Center of the Philippines. Pasay City.

Flores, Patrick. “Striking Likeness,” in *Imaging Identity: 100 Filipino Self-Portraits. A Selection from*

the Paulino Que Collection. Exh. cat. Finale Art File. Makati City.

2011 *Marina Cruz: Forget Me Not*. Exh. pamphlet. West Gallery. Quezon City.

2010 Hilario, Riel. “Marina Cruz,” in *Without Walls: A Tour of Philippine Paintings at the Turn of the Millennium*. Edited by Francis Francisco and Maria Chittyrene C. Labiran. Pasig City.

2009 Flores, Patrick. “Home is Leaving,” in *Marina Cruz: Home is the place you will leave*. Exh. cat. The Drawing Room. Makati City.



Waiting for a Home I, II, III, 2014
Oil on wood and found objects
Panel 1: 46 × 102 × 16 cm (middle)
Panel 2: 39 × 82 × 16 cm (top)
Panel 3: 41 × 71 × 16 cm (bottom)

Damaged Dolls, 2014
Automotive paint on fiberglass
76 × 61 × 56 cm
Exhibition view, The Link, Makati, Philippines, 2014







Red Feathers and Red Flowers, 2014
Oil on canvas
183 × 132 cm

White Patterns on Red, 2015
Oil on canvas
157 × 127 cm





Thin Red Line, 2014
Oil on canvas
154 x 102 cm

Blue and White with Pink Under, 2015
Oil on canvas
122 x 102 cm



Kawayan de Guia

Selected Solo Exhibitions

- 2015 *Bezoar (Non-linear Drawings)*, MO_ Space, Taguig City, Philippines
- 2012 *Halsema AX(i)S Art Project*, MO_ Space, Taguig City, Philippines
- Copy Right*, Ben Cab Museum, Baguio City, Philippines
- Buwaya*, La Trobe University Visual Arts Center, Bendigo, Victoria, Australia
- 2011 *A Lot of Sound and Fury Signifying Nothing*, The Drawing Room, Makati City, Philippines
- 2010 *Bomba*, UP Vargas Museum, Quezon City, Philippines
- 2009 *Katas ng Pilipinas: God Knows Hudus Not Pay*, The Drawing Room, Makati City, Philippines
- Ice Cold Happiness*, Soka Art Center, Beijing, China
- 2007 *Incubator*, The Drawing Room, Makati City, Philippines

- 2006 *Junk-tion Box*, Boston Gallery, Quezon City, Philippines
- 2002 *Gestures of the Unfamiliar*, Gallery SOAP, Kitakyūshū, Japan
- 2001 *Earth to Sky*, Lopez Memorial Museum, Pasig City, Philippines

Selected Projects in Public Space

- 2015 *Markets of Resistance*, Baguio City Market, Baguio City, Philippines
- 2014 *Bomba*, Makati Stock Exchange, Makati City, Philippines
- 2012 *To the End of the World*, AX(i)S Art Project, Halsema, Mountain Province, Philippines
- Idaya*, AX(i)S Art Project, Baguio City, Philippines
- 2011 *AX(i)S Art Project Tent*, Burnham Park, Baguio City, Philippines

- 2009 *Bomba*, Botanical Garden Baguio City, Philippines
- 2007 *Where Have All the Monkeys Gone*, VOCAS, Baguio City, Philippines
- 2006 *Bukatot*, Delphic Art, Baguio City, Philippines
- 2005 *Session Road Mosaic Project*, Baguio City, Philippines
- 2004 *Talay Makoy – Ang Maskara ng Politikong Pinoy (The Mask of the Filipino Politician)*, Tuba, Philippines
- 2003 *Baguio Art Congress*, Baguio City, Philippines
- Maize Maze*, Malcolm Square, Baguio City, Philippines
- 2002 *The New Plantations*, rice-terraces, Hapao, Philippines
- 2001 *Earth Art*, Haus Seneca, Steyr, Austria
- 2000 *Freedom Wall*, Baguio City, Philippines

Selected Group Exhibitions

- 2015 *The Vexed Contemporary*, Museum of Contemporary Art and Design, Manila, Philippines
- After Utopia: Revisiting the Ideal in Asian Contemporary Art*, Singapore Art Museum
- Archipel Secret*, Palais de Tokyo, Paris, France
- Black & White Paintings & Drawings*, BenCab Museum, Baguio City, Philippines
- 2014 *Re:View 2014*, BenCab Museum, Baguio City, Philippines
- 2013 *Manila Vice*, Musée International des Arts Modestes, Sète, France
- Vol de Nuit*, Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam
- The Mona Lisa Project*, Cultural Center of the Philippines, Pasay City, Philippines
- Sensorium: Media/Art Kitchen*,

Kawayan de Guia stresses that his drawings, assemblages, installations, and projects in public spaces are not intended to be political art, or art with political subject matter. Rather they are always bound to the act of producing objects politically. Born to a Filipino father (filmmaker Kidlat Tahimik) and a German mother, de Guia grew up in the highlands of Baguio City, Philippines. He is deeply rooted in the traditions and rituals of this mountainous region, once an isolated community of indigenous folk before being subjected to Western influence during the twentieth century. He has always been proud to proclaim the creativity of his community, and his works are nurtured by his geopolitical stance. His idea of history is one where the people's spiritual ties with the land are woven with the material longings of the West and other urbanized cities of the archipelago. Through actively organizing art projects and festivals, de Guia tries to draw from what he believes to be a purer form of art-making—one that is rooted in the topography of the mountains and is deeply connected to the local crafts.

For his own works he gathers from the current lay of the land—entangled with Western civilization and popular culture, trapped between the aftermath of war and the advances of progress. He digs for new relics, pieces from modern man's spoils that have helped define what Baguio City is now known as: a summer capital with an unforeseen mixture of colonial and native cultures, and a vast playground offering recreation and pleasure. In his installation *Bomba* (2010–2015), glittering and rotating bombshells—instruments of death, now covered in sparkling mosaics of

mirrors—offer a whole range of associations both local and global in nature—from ravaging crowds of party tourists leaving a trail of destruction wherever they go, to acts of war based on prevarication and justified by false promises, to the entanglement of economy and politics. That *Bomba* was conceived in 2010 as a site-specific piece in a public space—it was installed at the Manila stock exchange—leads one to assume that the artist's scathing criticism is here directed at the specific global market players trading there.

In another work, *Liberty*, de Guia presents the famous statue in two different versions,

Kawayan de Guia was born in Baguio City,
Philippines, in 1979

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He lives and works in Baguio City,
Philippines

both rendering the icon as a contradiction. At first, in 2014, the statue was presented as a mock replica erected above a bustling marketplace in downtown Baguio City, supported by a crude arrangement of wooden planks. Far removed from the real statue's location in New York Harbor, where it has stood since the late 1800s, a gift from France as the motherland of revolutions, her sudden insertion in the middle of an urban, third-world environment demonstrates how dominant cultures can turn underdeveloped communities into an odd specimen harboring both traditional and Western values. In the second version from 2015, Lady Liberty is lying in fragments on the floor at

Palais de Tokyo in Paris. Her body is entirely wrapped with a surplus of filmstrips from discarded photo albums found in one of Manila's oldest districts, and images range from those of public events to infrastructure projects: in other words, the disjointed symbol of union becomes a patchwork of forgotten memories.

In his series of assemblages *Bezoar (Non-linear Drawings)* (2015) de Guia combines heterogeneous materials and motives: fragments from everyday life are juxtaposed with drawings as well as found prints and photographs that seem to depict or refer to historical events and figures. The title *Bezoar* refers to a mass of encapsulated indigestible fibers trapped in the gastrointestinal systems of animals. Bezoars were believed to have the power of a universal antidote against any poison and were sought-after collectors' items for European cabinets of wonder. De Guia's assemblages, themselves reminiscent of cabinets of wonders, seem to reflect the clash of tradition and modernity, and of Filipino identity and Western culture: just as with a bezoar, influences that are unable to be assimilated are encapsulated.

Kawayan de Guia operates within the surmounting instances of contradictions that pervade his homeland, as well as the conflicts that threaten to engulf his own sense of self. In exploring these flurries of paradoxes, his art touches on subjects ranging from the personal to the collective, depicting, gathering, sculpting, and transforming objects that play a role in the local community's everyday life and tradition into new entities that thrive in a world of contradictions and resistance.

<p>Ayala Museum, Makati City, Philippines <i>The Collectors Show: The Weight of History</i>, Singapore Art Museum</p> <p>2012 <i>Everyday Objects</i>, BenCab Museum, Baguio City, Philippines</p> <p>2011 <i>Stories of Dreams and Realities: Contemporary Art from the Philippines</i>, Rossi & Rossi, London, UK</p> <p>12th Jeonju International Film Festival, Republic of Korea</p> <p>2010 <i>Highland 8</i>, BenCab Museum, Baguio City, Philippines</p> <p>2009 <i>Verso Manila</i>, Verso Arte Contemporanea, Turin, Italy</p> <p><i>New Figuration</i>, BenCab Museum, Baguio City, Philippines</p> <p>2008 <i>Swarm in the Aperture: Recent Photography in the Philippines</i>, National Museum of the Philippines, Manila</p> <p>2007 22nd Asian International Art Exhibition, Bandung, Indonesia</p>	<p>2006 <i>New Directions</i>, The Rotunda Gallery, Neilson Hays Library, Bangkok, Thailand</p> <p>2004 ASEAN Art Awards, National Gallery, Bangkok, Thailand</p> <p><i>Kapwa: Bukal ng Pagkataong Filipino</i>, Metropolitan Museum of Manila, Philippines</p> <p><i>Sungdu-an 3: Making the Local</i>, Cultural Center of the Philippines, Pasay City, Philippines</p> <p>2003 <i>Actuality/Virtuality</i>, Fukuoka Prefectural Museum, Japan</p> <p>2002 <i>RE-MAP</i>, Laforet Museum Kokura, Kitakyūshū, Japan</p>	<p>"Kawayan de Guia," in <i>After Utopia: Revisiting the Ideal in Asian Contemporary Art</i>, pp. 56–57. Exh. cat. Singapore Art Museum. [Online]</p> <p>2013 Sahakian, Marlyne. "These are troubled (tribal) times. Kawayan de Guia." <i>ArtAsiaPacific</i> 81 (March/April). [Online]</p> <p><i>The Collectors Show: The Weight of History</i>. Exh. cat. Singapore Art Museum.</p> <p>Toh, Joyce. "Halsema Hijinks: On the Road with AX(iS) Art Project." <i>Singapore Biennale 2013</i>. [Online]</p> <p>2010 Ito, Lisa. "Kawayan de Guia," in <i>Without Walls: A Tour of Philippine Paintings at the Turn of the Millennium</i>. Edited by Francis Francisco and Maria Chittyrene C. Labiran, pp. 194–197. Pasig City.</p> <p>Guazon, Tessa Maria. "Dissonant Enchantments: The Resonant</p>	<p>Object and Kawayan de Guia's 'Bomba': A Review." <i>Humanities Diliman: A Journal on Philippine Humanities</i> 2, vol. 7. [Online]</p> <p>Flores, Patrick. "Devices of Recollection," in <i>Bomba</i>. Exh. cat. UP Vargas Museum, Quezon City. Makati City.</p> <p>2009 Perez, Padmapani. "[Un]Made by Walking," in <i>Bored on the 4th of July</i>. Exh. cat. Ateneo Art Gallery, Quezon City.</p> <p>2001 Cruz, Joselina. "Earth to Sky by Kawayan de Guia." Curator's notes. <i>Lopez Memorial Museum</i>. [Online]</p>
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Red Dogs (from the Bezoar - Non-linear Drawings series), 2015
Mixed media on paper, meter sticks
100 x 82 cm



Ifugao (from the Bezoar - Non-linear Drawings series), 2015
 Mixed media on paper, meter sticks
 100 x 82 cm



Palit Ulo, 2011
Artist's blood, bullets, found objects, mixed media on paper
152 x 213 cm



Ligaya de Pilipinas – I Scream and Cigarettes, 2014
Mixed media assemblage with found objects and meter sticks
153 × 245 × 61 cm



Bomba, 2010–2015
Mirrors, resin, rotating device, sound, 10 min video
Dimensions variable
Exhibition view, Singapore Art Museum, 2015

Liberty, 2015
Fiberglass, 35mm celluloid film, LED lights
Dimensions variable
Exhibition view, Palais de Tokyo, Paris, 2015





Left and right (detail):

Rock and Roll Jukebox, 2009

Mechanism, wood, metal, speakers, amplifier, vinyl, neon lights
185 × 184 × 74 cm





Alfredo Esquillo

- Education**
- 1993 Bachelor of Fine Arts, Major in Painting, University of Santo Tomas, Manila, Philippines
- Selected Solo Exhibitions**
- 2014 *Sequence Consequence, Finale Art File*, Makati City, Philippines
LOOB (with Renato Habulan), UP Vargas Museum, Quezon City, Philippines
- 2012 *Semblance/Presence* (with Renato Habulan), NUS Museum, National University of Singapore
- 2011 *Kalooban Narratives*, Tin-aw Art Gallery, Makati City, Philippines
- 2010 *Exodus*, Valentine Willie Fine Art, Singapore
- 2008 *Bato Bato Sa Langit*, Slab, Silverlens, Makati City, Philippines
- 2008 *Reclamation Project*, Tin-aw Art Gallery, Makati City, Philippines
- 2007 *Bahay-Bahayan*, West Gallery, Mandaluyong City, Philippines
- 2006 *Enero Nueve*, Boston Gallery, Quezon City, Philippines
- Pasyonista*, Nineveh Artspace, Laguna, Philippines
- 2005 *Autotheater*, West Gallery, Mandaluyong City, Philippines
- 2004 *Third World*, Nineveh Artspace, Laguna, Philippines
- Dysfunctional*, West Gallery, Mandaluyong City, Philippines
- 2003 *Tragikomedya*, West Gallery, Mandaluyong City, Philippines
- High*, Pinto Gallery, Antipolo City, Philippines
- 2001 *Banig Icons*, West Gallery, Mandaluyong City, Philippines
- Devotion* (with Norberto Roldan), John Batten Gallery, Hong Kong, China
- 1999 *Recent Works*, Red Mill Gallery, Vermont Studio Center, Johnson, Vermont, USA
- 1997 *Masa Kultura*, Hiraya Gallery, Manila, Philippines
- Selected Group Exhibitions**
- 2013 *The Philippine Contemporary: To Scale the Past and the Possible*, Metropolitan Museum of Manila, Philippines
- 2011 *Beyond the Self: Contemporary Portraiture from Asia*, National Portrait Gallery, Canberra, Australia, et al. (traveling exhibition)
- El Guernica: Deconstrucción*, Ayala Museum, Makati City, Philippines
- BISA: Potent Presences*, Metropolitan Museum of Manila, Philippines
- 2009 4th Prague Biennale, Czech Republic
- 2006 *Tipon*, Metropolitan Museum of Manila, Philippines
- 2005 *Incarnation, Disarming Figurations in Philippine Art*, National Museum of the Philippines, Manila, Philippines
- 2nd CP Biennale, Jakarta, Indonesia
- 2004 *Identities versus Globalisation?*, Chiang Mai Art Museum, Thailand; National Gallery, Bangkok, Thailand; Museum of Ethnology, Berlin-Dahlem, Germany
- 2003 *The American Effect: Global*

Alfredo Esquillo's meticulous method of embodying realness and accuracy in every detail of his paintings paradoxically subscribes to themes that lie outside the rules of objectivity—visions that evoke surrealism and are built from the throes of fantasy. These images march like penitents from inside the frame: suffering, tumbling, speculating, seeking redemption. His images, which sometimes also unfold in three-dimensional space in his sculptures and installations, are drawn from biblical passages and symbols of Catholic faith, while the surrounding elements are gathered from the more familiar articles of ordinary, contemporary life.

His technical virtuosity is astounding when it comes to rendering photorealistic impressions of the human condition, enough to make his viewers believe that they could be derived from yesterday's events—as sudden incantations from contemporary society. But his subjects often represent visions of a mind entering a dream that is perfectly composed yet disturbingly portrayed. It is a dream that reverts to its own immediate and familiar setting: surrounded by banal objects, Esquillo's characters are undoubtedly homegrown, and his concepts about them are as Filipino as they can get.

Having won numerous accolades during his young career as an artist, including the Grand Prize from the ASEAN Art Awards in 1995, Esquillo has produced art that has gone through several stages of transformation: from dealing with socio-political concerns as in his earlier pieces, to progressing to historical content that explores the Philippines' past under

colonial rule. But during the past decade, his works have started to turn inward, exploring the facets of individual strife and identity, which for him are rooted in the Filipino concept of being. He has begun to explore native concepts of existentialism, which have never completely freed themselves from the shackles of religion and tradition.

His characters are always subject to a moment of trial, to a serendipitous instant or extreme distress, which forces them to take a righteous path. His symbolism is redolent with the binary concepts of good and evil: angel

Alfredo Esquillo was born in
Quezon City, Philippines, in 1972

*

He lives and works in
Las Piñas City, Philippines.

wings and tongues of fire, golden specters against plastic bric-a-brac. He tries to include his own image in the process, being fully aware of the subjectivity of his method even as it tackles inexhaustible and universal concepts of salvation. He presents himself as a man—a subject of art, prone to anguish, misery, temptation, and even loss of meaning—parodying the push and pull between rationality and spirituality that dogs the intricacies of creating art.

His usually understated handling of colors, applied using his present medium of choice—oil on ethylene-vinyl acetates—makes each composition flow like a smooth

uninterrupted revelation within its surface, appearing as an accurate depiction of spiritual reveries. One of his recurrent motifs is loudspeakers, some of them winged, or with legs and a grotesquely large ear in place of the horn (for example, *Megaphoniacs*, 2015). In *Temptation of Sane Eski* (2012) a pointing hand reaches out of the loudspeaker, reminiscent of God's hand in classical Christian iconography giving his command to mankind. The image of the loudspeaker is emblematic in its hybrid combination of a technical apparatus with human and animalistic extremities. Orders that come from above enslave the human figure—whose name "Eski" in the work's title is the nickname of the artist—by wrapping it in inscribed banderoles. In this sense, what emerges from the speakers might be understood as a kind of soliloquy.

Esquillo's paintings develop as subdued symphonies of fantasy and reality, of esoteric visions and of ordinary waking life. They are rich with meaning and religious symbolism, and are always plotted with unexpected visual associations and transformations. Through the combinations of veracity and fantasy, realism and surrealism, anguish and ecstasy, the spiritual and the mundane, the esoteric and the ordinary, and serendipitous scenes grounded in domestic banality, Esquillo creates a piercing portrayal of a man in search of the essence of contemporary Filipino life.

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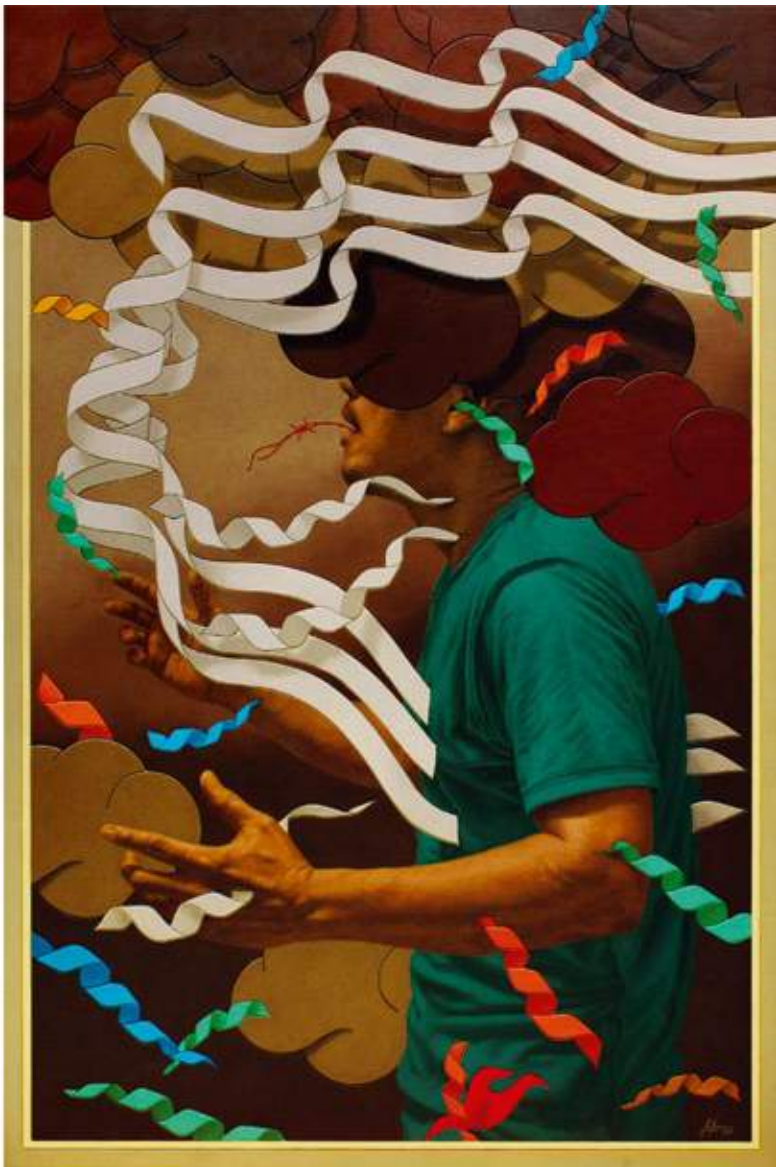
- Perspectives on the United States, 1990–2003*, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, USA
- 2002 *Under Construction: New Dimensions of Asian Art*, Japan Foundation Forum and Tokyo Opera City Art Gallery, Tokyo, Japan
- Brown Man's Burden*, Babilonia 1808, Berkeley, California, USA
- 1999 1st Fukuoka Asian Art Triennale, Japan
- 1998 Cien Años Despues, Cultural Center of the Philippines, Pasay City, Philippines; Museo de Arte de Ponce, Puerto Rico; Spanish Cultural Centre, Havana, Cuba; Generalitat Valenciana, Valencia, Spain
- 1998 *At Home and Abroad: 20 Contemporary Filipino Artists*, Asian Art Museum of San Francisco, USA
- 2014 *Alfredo Esquillo: Sequence* Consequence. Exh. cat. Finale Art File. Makati City.
Quek, Tse Kwang. "Alfredo Esquillo Jr.," in *30 Art Friends 2: Collecting Southeast Asian Art*, pp. 224–225. Singapore.
- 2013 *Loob: Renato Habulan and Alfredo Esquillo*. Exh. cat. Vargas Museum. Quezon City.
Alfredo Esquillo. Makati City.
Flores, Patrick D. "Social Realism: The Turns of a Term in the Philippines." *After All: A Journal of Art, Context and Enquiry* 34: pp. 69–70.
- 2012 Flores, Patrick D. "Materiel," in *Beyond the Self: Contemporary Portraiture from Asia*, pp. 48–53. Exh. cat. National Portrait Gallery, Canberra, et al. Canberra.
Semblance/Presence: Renato Habulan and Alfredo Esquillo, Jr. Exh. cat. NUS Museum. Singapore.
Que, Paulino and Hetty. "Alfredo Esquillo Jr.," in *The Collectors Show: Asian Contemporary Art from Private Collections - Chimera*, pp. 26–29. Exh. cat. Singapore Art Museum. Singapore.
- 2010 Cortes, Joseph. "No Pretty Pictures for Alfredo Esquillo." *Contemporary Art Philippines* 11: pp. 46–51.
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Orlando, Edmundo. "The Seas of Exodus." *Valentine Willie Fine Art*. [Online]
- "Alfredo Esquillo Jr.," in *Without Walls: A tour of Philippine paintings at the turn of the millennium*. Edited by Francis Francisco and Maria Chittyrene C. Labiran, pp. 168–171. Pasig City.
- 1999 "Alfredo Esquillo Jr.," in *The 1st Fukuoka Asian Art Triennale*, pp. 172–175. Exh. cat. Fukuoka Asian Art Museum. Fukuoka.
- 1998 Flores, Patrick. "Alfredo Esquillo, Jr.," in *At Home and Abroad: 20 Contemporary Filipino Artists*, p. 76. Exh. cat. Asian Art Museum of San Francisco. San Francisco.





Megaphoniacs, 2015
Fiberglass reinforced resin, oil,
acrylic, speakers, amplifiers,
audio recording
Dimensions variable
Exhibition view, Secret Fresh
Gallery, Manila, 2015





Attack of the Killer Confetti, 2015
Oil on ethylene-vinyl acetate (EVA) panels
Triptych, 183 × 366 cm





Temptation of Sane Eski (Reprise), 2012
Oil on ethylene-vinyl acetate (EVA) panels
Triptych, 244 × 366 cm



I Heart Quiapo 2, 2014
Two interwoven oil paintings on pelon
182 × 120 cm



Potensiya 1 (top) and 2 (bottom), 2014
Oil on pelon and piña fabric
252 × 163 × 6 cm each



Ian Fabro

Education

Since 2010 Studies in Studio Arts,
University of the Philippines
Diliman, Quezon City,
Philippines

Selected Solo Exhibitions

2015 *Hurt Anatomies*, Artinformal,
Mandaluyong City, Philippines
2014 *Biblical Violence*, Blanc Gallery,
Quezon City, Philippines

Selected Group Exhibitions

2013 *Dirty, Poorly Dressed and Filled
with Love*, Erehwon Center for the
Arts, Quezon City, Philippines
Extraction, Light and Space
Contemporary, Quezon City,
Philippines
2012 *Wander Lost*, Republikha Art
Gallery, Quezon City
2010 *Fresh Meat*, Sining Kamalig
Gallery, Quezon City, Philippines

In Ian Fabro's pen-and-ink drawings and collages, the entire frames are usurped by a host of tragic figures: emaciated bodies, contorted limbs, screaming faces, and skinned carcasses. The idea of a central subject is eradicated, replaced by a single overwhelming event—a debacle that seems to have extinguished all human characteristics as the figures inside the frames meld into a harrowing vision of limbs and faces, dissolving into the great equalizer of the inferno, the apocalypse, or the afterlife.

Fabro is a young, prodigiously gifted artist in whose unexpected sensibility can be seen the influence of the Classicists and the Baroque. Part comic-book illustrations, part El Greco tableaux, part paper-cut collages, Fabro's scenes coalesce into a single mystical force where elongated forms and swirling strokes gravitate across the frame. Both characters and their viewers are drawn inexorably into the cataclysmic event. The crushing lack of space adds to the anguish of crowded bodies; these are more like scenes from Dante Alighieri's *Inferno* than from any other modern-day fable of hell.

Beyond the flux of pale and dark hues, a band of staple wires—made of zinc-plated steel—invade the plane (*You Wanted Me Holy, You Wanted Me Hollow*, 2015). These hordes of foreign intrusions occupy the scene as persistent, dashed lines or serve as stitches adjoining the limbs of Fabro's suffering bodies. They add to the tortuous surface; they seal the fate for each character's imprisonment. Aside from their unexpected lustre, the staple wires and pins also serve as the artist's tool

for composing his works. They hold together hundreds of individually drawn and then cut-out figures, transforming them from drawings into intricate bold reliefs. In *Are My Lessons Done?* (2014), Fabro uses staple wires to stitch together various severed heads, which could have started out as innocent sketches on a pad. By gathering these together *en masse*, Fabro demonstrates the way in which individual lives are subsumed into a type of collective excess—whether through triumph or tragedy, for example, mass protestors or mass victims—in this day and age.

Ian Fabro was born in San Mateo,
Philippines, in 1993

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He lives and works in San Mateo,
Philippines

Tortured masses as depicted in Fabro's drawings have a long history in Western art, from Luca Signorelli's frescoes of hell in the cathedral of Orvieto (1499–1505), to Peter Paul Rubens's *Fall of the Damned* (ca. 1620), to Gustave Doré's illustrations of Dante's *Divina Commedia* (1850)—all of which have heavily influenced the iconography of floating souls in Hollywood films and narrative cartoons. Although Fabro's vision of society seems to summon its own bleak end, there is a comparable specter of violent beauty emanating from each of his drawings. Every bodily gesture portrayed in one of his scenes demonstrates the beauty of the human form,

as the string of interlocked poses flows in unison towards a grander narrative. And the narratives—they grow in Biblical proportions, evidenced by Fabro's 2014 solo show called *Biblical Violence*, for which he tackled scriptural themes such as the apocalypse, drought, flood, plagues, and Judas's creation. In these sets of works, Fabro cast naked female and male bodies out into the frame, as well as winged creatures, decaying carcasses, and possessed faces. Suffering is palpable here, as is the inevitability of violence and death. The greater paradox in Fabro's works is how the harmony and fluidity of his compositions relay the certainty of mankind's fall.

A sense of revelation—tied in with the pronouncements of Judgment Day—is inherent in these drawings. The feeling is both ominous and mystical, yet is almost harrowingly appropriate for a society that has lost in touch with useful divinations. And in the portents of seemingly anachronistic renditions enters Fabro, as a herald of history's violent tales. His art acts as a light re-embodiment of those prophecies drawn on paper that cycle from myth to inanity, from hearsay to humor. His works are specimens of contemporary exegesis—interpreting omens and scriptures through drawings that form like shadows and smoke; compositions that grow into a throng of symbols; and fables that are ensnared by the occasional staple wire.



Left and right (detail):
You Wanted Me Holy,
You Wanted Me Hollow, 2015
Ballpoint pen, ink, staple wire,
paper on canvas
210 × 76 cm





Left and right (detail):
Are My Lessons Done?, 2014
Ballpoint pen, ink, staple wire,
paper on canvas
210 × 76 cm





Left and right (detail):
*Nobody, Not Even the Rain Has Such
Small Hands*, 2014
Ballpoint pen, ink and staple wire on paper
Triptych, central panel: 287 × 124 cm;
right and left panels: 198 × 76 cm





Nona Garcia

- Education**
- 2000 Bachelor of Fine Arts, Major in Painting, University of the Philippines Diliman, Quezon City, Philippines
- Selected Solo Exhibitions**
- 2015 *Unearth*, Arndt Berlin, Germany
- 2014 *Recovery*, BenCab Museum, Baguio City, Philippines
- 2012 *Before the Sea*, West Gallery, Quezon City, Philippines
False Apparitions, Valentine Willie Fine Art, Singapore
Somewhere Else, Finale Art File, Makati City, Philippines
- 2011 *Space and Two Points* (with MM Yu), MO_Space, Taguig City, Philippines
- 2010 *Fractures*, West Gallery, Quezon City, Philippines
Synonyms, Finale Art File, Makati City, Philippines
- 2008 *Planted Landscapes*, Podium, Mandaluyong City, Philippines
- 2007 *Points of Departure*, West Gallery, Mandaluyong City, Philippines
- 2006 *Weather*, Magnet Gallery, Quezon City, Philippines
Strange Familiarity, West Gallery, Mandaluyong City, Philippines
After a While, You Get Used to It, Finale Art File, LaO Centre, Makati City, Philippines
- 2005 *Scene of the Crime*, West Gallery, Mandaluyong City, Philippines
- 2004 *New Paintings*, Galleria Duemila, Mandaluyong City, Philippines
- 2003 *New Specimen*, West Gallery, Makati City, Philippines
- Actuality/Virtuality*, Gallery SOAP, Kitakyūshū, Japan
- 2002 *Ambient Stills*, West Gallery, Mandaluyong City, Philippines
Transmission, Finale Art Gallery, Mandaluyong City, Philippines
RX: Critical Remedies (with Norberto Roldan), Lopez Memorial Museum, Mandaluyong City, Philippines
- Selected Group Exhibitions**
- 2015 *I Went To The Forest To Live Deliberately*, Artinformal, Mandaluyong City
- 2014 *Re:View 2014*, BenCab Museum, Baguio City, Philippines
Markets of Resistance, Baguio City Market, Philippines
What does it all matter, as long as the wounds fit the arrows?, Cultural Center of the Philippines, Pasay City, Philippines
- 2013 *The Porous Border*, G23 Gallery, Bangkok, Thailand
- 2011 *It's Natural to Imagine Jungles*, MO_Space, Taguig City, Philippines
Sit, Richard Koh Fine Art, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
This is not a Fairytale, G23 Gallery, Bangkok, Thailand
- 2010 *Latitudes. Encounters with the Philippines*, Primo Marella Gallery, Milan, Italy
- 2009 *Post-Tsunami Art: South East B(())ooming*, Primo Marella Gallery, Milan, Italy
4th Prague Biennale, Czech Republic
- 2008 *Futuramanila*, Osage Gallery, Hong Kong, China

Nona Garcia's art is a contemplative account into the act of looking. It depicts facets of the known world through her own brand of pictorial realism—faithful in its representation, yet harrowing from where it stands in her chosen vista. Her subjects exist in our everyday world—places, objects, people—and her depiction strategically utilizes the methods of their corresponding genres: landscape, still life, and portraiture. But in Garcia's paintings, these genres are commemorated not through their astounding presence but through states that demonstrate the distressing absences found within the picture. Her way of looking is a continuous memorialization between the seen and the unseen.

Emulating the photographer's eye, Garcia composes her images through the nuances of framing and viewpoint. Her subjects are depicted in the way they were found—abandoned, unkempt, or in ruins. The scenery Garcia chooses to paint stands as evidence to a former presence. The desolated rooms, sheds, and shanties that occupy Garcia's frame speak of lingering activities that used to define their existence, leaving a shadowy, hidden narrative that completes the picture. Even her portraiture invites this kind of completion—of filling the gaps—while being centered, no less, on the face.

In her work *Sitting Still* (2013), the usual elements that characterize portraiture are present, except for a single revision in arrangement: the model's back is turned against the painter. All indicators of the genre are there: the subject sits for the artist, her body is propped into a pose, she occupies the center

of the frame which is devoid of any other component. Does the change in viewpoint negate everything there is to the meaning of portraiture? This is the question that makes Garcia's portraits exceed the classifications of mere depiction, and enter the conceptual plane, using painting itself as a means of inquiry into its own notions about representation.

In the painting *Shed* (2015), the spectacle is reminiscent of a miniature landscape. The troughs and crest that shape the mound of limestone and gravel deposits loosely symbolize the form of mountain ranges. Found

Nona Garcia was born in Quezon City,
Philippines, in 1978

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She lives and works in Baguio City,
Philippines

in a limestone quarry in The Cordilleras, one of the mountainous regions in the Philippines, this shed invokes the haunting existence of the place itself, which is filled with abandoned mines. The soft, pale colors selected by Garcia engulf the entire canvas in a singular view of a desolated entity. Her inclusion of debris, tools, planks of dried wood—minute details rendered in a painstakingly realist fashion—become organic components that comprise a synthesized view of despondency, a metonymic detail of a barren landscape.

Even actual objects in Garcia's art are retrieved from mere appearances. In her installation work *Recovery* (2015), X-ray films

of sacred relics are stored in light-boxes. Their arrangement typifies a crude shape of a mountain. These relics were part of the culture of the mountain region's indigenous tribes, and are dissected through an X-ray machine—an act which resembles an alchemy of science and myth. This installation sums up Garcia's probe into her surroundings and solidifies her enquiry and coolly objective look at what lies beneath the surface of venerated things, making their substance—their crude essence—all the more dumbfounding.

Just as sacred relics can, mountain peaks and vestal landscapes can generate awe. In Garcia's paintings, they turn into desolate, almost banal objects, but they also reveal more mystery than any glorious rendition of a sunset dipping across a valley. Instead of gazing at the panorama, Nona Garcia turns her attention towards its oblique details and concealed views: dilapidated houses, abandoned kitchens, uninhabited rooms, obscured objects, and absent faces. And through the whole spectrum of her work, one is likewise engaged in a continuous search for what is hidden from one's sight.

2005 3rd Fukuoka Asian Art Triennale, Japan

2004 *Cross Currents*, Bangkok University Gallery, Thailand

2003 *Thirteen Artists Awards*, Cultural Center of the Philippines, Pasay City, Philippines

Pleasure + Pain, Green Papaya Art Projects, Quezon City, Philippines; 24HR Art - Northern Territory Centre for Contemporary Art, Darwin, Australia

2002 *Utopia*, The Box, Singapore

Whitewash, Ateneo Art Gallery, Quezon City, Philippines

2001 *Surrounded*, Cultural Center of the Philippines, Pasay City, Philippines

2000 *Faith + the City: A Survey of Contemporary Filipino Art*, Earl Lu Gallery, LASALLE-SIA College of the Arts, Singapore

ASEAN Art Awards, Singapore Art Museum

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2014 *Helu-Trans Collectors Series*. Southeast Asia Contemporary. Exh. cat. Artspace. Singapore.

2012 Lumbao, Cocoy. "Nona Garcia: Before the Sea." *West Gallery*. [Online]

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2011 Gibb, Susan. "Space and Two Points." Exh. pamphlet. Mo_Space. Taguig City. [Online]

2010 Cobangbang, Lena. "Nona Garcia," in *Without Walls: A Tour of Philippine Paintings at the Turn of the Millenium*. Edited by Francis

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2009 "Nona Garcia," in *Post-tsunami Art: Emerging Artists from South-East Asia*. Edited by Eleonora Battiston, p. 119. Exh. cat. Primo Marella Gallery, Milan. Bologna.

2008 *Nona Garcia: Planted Landscapes*. Exh. cat. Podium. Mandaluyong City.

2004 *Cross Currents*. Exh. cat. Bangkok University Gallery. Bangkok.

2003 *13 Artists Awards 2003*. Exh. cat. Cultural Center of the Philippines. Pasay City.

Pleasure + Pain. Exh. cat. Green Papaya Art Projects, Quezon City; 24HR Art - Northern Territory Centre for Contemporary Art, Darwin. Quezon City.

2002 *Whitewash*. Exh. cat. Ateneo Art Gallery. Quezon City.

2001 *RX: Critical Remedies*. Nona Garcia, Norberto Roldan. Exh. cat. Lopez Memorial Museum. Mandaluyong City.



Shed, 2015
Oil on canvas
244 × 335 cm



Unearth, 2015
Oil on canvas
242 × 335 cm



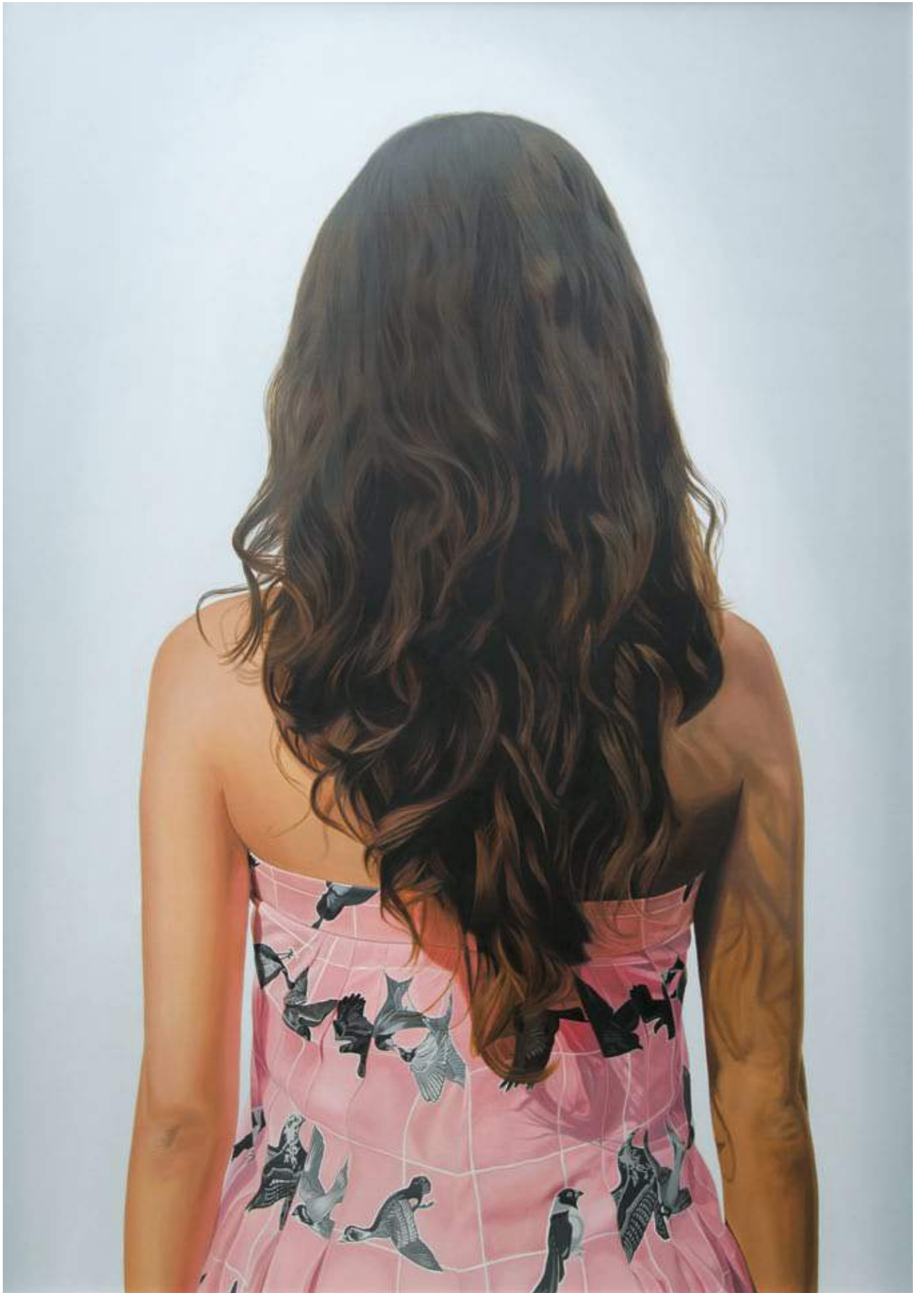


Desert, 2015
Oil on canvas
197 x 335 cm





Recovery, 2014
60 lightboxes, X-rays
Dimensions variable



Sitting Still, 2013
Oil on canvas
213 × 152 cm



Untitled, 2010
Oil on canvas
30 × 21 cm



Pow Martinez

Education

- 2004–2006 Studies in Painting, Kalayaan College, Quezon City, Philippines
- 2002–2004 Studies in Visual Communication, University of the Philippines Diliman, Quezon City, Philippines

Selected Solo Exhibitions

- 2014 *May Cause Profound Mental Retardation*, Pablo Gallery, Taguig City, Philippines
- Caught Between Honor and Revenge*, How Far Will One Man Go, Silverlens, Makati City, Philippines

- 2013 *Dogs Playing Poker*, Manila Contemporary, Makati City, Philippines
- 2013 *1 Bit*, MO_Space, Taguig City, Philippines
- Losing My Edge*, Pablo Gallery, Taguig City, Philippines
- Medieval Woodcuts*, Finale Art File, Makati City, Philippines
- 2012 *Sploshing*, Finale Art File, Makati City, Philippines
- Low Res*, West Gallery, Quezon City, Philippines
- Cyborg Scallops*, SLab, Silverlens, Makati City, Philippines
- 2011 *Nature Paintings*, Now Gallery, Makati City, Philippines
- Destroyed Planets*, Pablo Gallery, Taguig City, Philippines
- Cut Hands Have the Solution*, West

- Gallery, Quezon City, Philippines
- Easy Listening Paintings*, Magnet Gallery, Quezon City, Philippines
- 2010 *March of the Pigs*, LOSTprojects, Marikina City, Philippines
- Hyper Blast Abomination*, Magnet Gallery, Quezon City, Philippines
- 2009 *The Brutal Gardener*, Magnet Gallery, Quezon City, Philippines
- One Billion Years*, West Gallery, Quezon City, Philippines
- 2007 *Pathetic Doggy Paddle*, Magnet Gallery, Quezon City, Philippines

Selected Group Exhibitions

- 2014 *Brave New Worlds*, Metropolitan Museum of Manila, Philippines
- Manila: The Night Is Restless*, The

- Day Is Scornful*, Arndt Singapore
- 2013 *Manila Vice*, Musée International des Arts Modestes, Sète, France
- Pirate*, Megumi Ogita Gallery, Tokyo, Japan
- 2012 *Bastards of Misrepresentation*, Topaz Arts, New York, USA
- 2011 *Confessions of a Sinner*, Manila Contemporary, Makati City, Philippines
- Postlocal: Painting*, SLab, Silverlens, Makati City, Philippines
- Greatest Hits: Bastards of Misrepresentation*, *Doing Time on Filipino Time*, 8. Salon Hamburg, Germany
- Hide the Women and Children*, MO_Space, Taguig City, Philippines
- Salvation in a Nest of Vipers*, Y3K,

The art of Pow Martinez is imbued with an impish delight. His paintings are laden with characters and creatures depicted with his typical mixture of startling rawness and humor. His images are spectacles that move between characteristics of the naïve and the grotesque. His manner of painting, with loose, inchoate, impulsive strokes done in thick, impasto lines and applied in bright colors, suggests an innocence of expression; but there is simultaneously an irreverent take on the significance of culture, for his subjects appear as deliberate presentations of the uncouth and unrefined, and are often depicted in silly or graphically obscene poses.

Martinez is also known as a musician, taking part in experimental music projects. His musical works are composed with layers of electronic effects, found sound, atonal strains, and sheer noise. The cacophony of styles and the amusing names with which he shapes his music are telling to his evolution as a visual artist. His sound works are, for him, exercises in coming up with new aural experiences; and as with all experimental work, they can be seen as a shattering of tradition. Martinez uses the same approach for his paintings, combining various strategies aimed at exposing this medium's excessively mannered tradition.

The deliberate return to the unrefined, raw, and underdeveloped quality of images leads to comparisons with Art Brut painters, while the way Martinez renders the human figure shows an affiliation with the American Abstract Expressionist Philip Guston. The almost solipsistic world of pure expression is

untouched by the more somber and concept-centered complexities of most figurative paintings that follow canonical themes. Martinez's own path to the primal, to finding pure expression, is a return to the naïveté of cartoon-like images with their special kind of humor, as in *Mommy's Acid Trip* (2012). This work makes us reflect on the childlike qualities from which art can spring: the unexpected and the playful. Yet the faces of his characters are marked by round, empty, bewildered eyes while the crooked lines that form their mouths and teeth are equally contradictory

Pow Martinez was born in Manila,
Philippines, in 1983

*

He lives and works in Manila,
Philippines

signs undermining the ostensibly naïve surface. This is where innocence and irreverence meet. The puerile scenes Martinez depicts turn out either vividly obscene or humorously absurd. And like his music—which strives to connect with the unheard tone or melody—his paintings, in relation to the visible world, try to tap the limits of taste and connect it with social topics, as, for example, the reference to sexual exploitation in his painting *We Are Here for the Women* (2014). At times his message verges on the cynical, as when he depicts, in bright colors, a group of people in a small barge guided by the Reaper (*New World*, 2011) or portrays members of *High Society* (2014)

as cannibals, who swallow WD-40 lubricant for better digestion. As an exercise, his oeuvre releases the imagination from restrictions imposed through intellectualizing art. As finished work, it flies in the face of most representational paintings that are bound in their cultural polemic.

Martinez's idea of culture, in whatever medium he chooses, is that of an un-rarefied street commodity. His paintings, direct but with an agenda that seems always to be bound up in jest, are haphazardly composed, like comical graffiti with a certain kind of political awareness combining beauty with roughness. The layers of paint are unruly; the strokes have no apparent scheme and the consequential drips are allowed to run down the canvas as if neglected. But despite the breaking of rules or values normally associated with "good" art, Martinez's works bring us back to the question: how can one's creative impulse ever be validated? One is tempted, of course, to look back to the works of past masters, and the criteria they adhered to, but these are too moribund for contemporary artists such as Martinez, who, in his own way, defies the establishment and their long-held traditions, and puts in their place notions of the wickedly fun.

Melbourne, Australia
Complete and Unabridged, Part II, Osage Gallery, Hong Kong

2010 *Bastards of Misrepresentation, Doing Time on Filipino Time*, Freies Museum, Berlin, Germany

2009 *Selected Memory*, Richard Koh Fine Art, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
Welcome to the Jungle, Artinformal, Mandaluyong City, Philippines

2008 *Serial Killers*, Green Papaya Art Projects, Quezon City, Philippines
Zero Percent, Green Papaya Art Projects, Quezon City, Philippines
Room 307: Inkling, Gutfeel & Hunch, Contemporary Art Projects, National Art Gallery, Manila, Philippines

2007 *Shoot Me: Photographs Now*, MO_Space, Taguig City, Philippines
I Have Nothing to Paint and I'm Painting It, MO_Space, Taguig City, Philippines
Sungdu-an 4: Extensions, Capitol University Museum of Three Cultures, Cagayan de Oro City, Philippines

2006 *The Blank Show*, West Gallery, Quezon City, Philippines.
Long Goodbye, Magnet Gallery Katipunan, Quezon City, Philippines
Strait from the Source, Future Prospects, Manila, Philippines
Missing Vocabularies, Green Papaya Art Projects, Quezon City, Philippines

2005 *Common and Uncommon Goods*, Future Prospects, Manila, Philippines
Other Matters, Future Prospects, Manila, Philippines

Selected Bibliography

2014 *Manila: The Night is Restless, The Day is Scornful*. Exh. cat. Arndt Singapore. [Online]

2012 Flores, Patrick D. *Imagining Identity: 100 Filipino Self-Portraits: A Selection from the Paulino Que Collection*. Exh. cat. Finale Art File. Makati City.

2011 *Ketamine: Pow Martinez*. Makati City, Philippines
"Complete and Unabridged,

Part II," in Roberto Chabet: *Fifty Years*. Exh. cat. King Kong Art Projects Unlimited, et al. Manila.

2010 Ocampo, Manuel, ed. *Bastards of Misrepresentation: Doing Time on Filipino Time*. Exh. cat. Freies Museum Berlin.

2008 *Room 307: Inkling, Gutfeel & Hunch*. Exh. cat. National Art Gallery. Manila.





Aesthetic Police, 2015
Oil on canvas
122 x 183 cm



We Are Here for the Women, 2014
Oil on canvas
183 x 183 cm



Mommy's Acid Trip, 2012
Oil on canvas
183 x 183 cm



The Come Down, 2014
Oil on canvas
137 × 160 cm



High Society, 2014
Oil on canvas
137 x 160 cm



New World, 2011
Oil on canvas
157 × 137 cm



Year 10,000 Problem, 2011
Oil on canvas
213 x 183 cm



Manuel Ocampo

Selected Solo Exhibitions

- | | | | |
|--|---|--|--|
| <p>2015 <i>The Corrections</i>, Tyler Rollins Fine Art, New York, USA
 <i>The Devil Follows Me Day and Night [...]</i>, The Drawing Room, Singapore
 <i>Black Dada</i>, Nosbaum & Reding, Luxembourg
 <i>Goya vu par Ocampo [...]</i>, Musée Goya, Castres, France</p> <p>2014 <i>Notes from the Ste Anne Asylum</i>, Galerie Nathalie Obadia, Paris, France
 <i>Beware of Painting</i>, The Crucible Gallery, Mandaluyong City, Philippines</p> <p>2013 <i>The Corrections</i>, SOD Space of Drawings, Copenhagen, Denmark
 <i>20 Years of Intestinal Mishaps</i>, Carré Sainte-Anne, Montpellier, France</p> | <p>2012 <i>Cryptic Slaughter</i>, Finale Art File, Makati City, Philippines
 <i>The 80s</i>, Topaz Arts, New York, USA</p> <p>2011 Galerie Zimmermann Kratochwill, Graz, Austria
 <i>The Ghost Poo of Painting</i>, philara – Sammlung zeitgenössischer Kunst, Düsseldorf, Germany
 <i>KalimanRawlins</i>, Melbourne, Australia</p> <p>2010 Tyler Rollins Fine Art, New York, USA</p> <p>2009 <i>Monuments to the Institutional Critique of Myself</i>, Pablo Gallery, Taguig City, Philippines
 <i>She Has a Hot Ass</i>, The Gertrude Contemporary, Melbourne, Australia</p> <p>2007 <i>Guided by Sausage</i>, LE (9) BIS, Saint-Etienne, France
 <i>Kitsch Recovery Program</i>, Lizabeth Oliveria Gallery, Los Angeles, USA</p> | <p>2006 <i>No System Can Give the Masses the Proper Social Graces</i> (with Damien Deroubaix), La Maison Rouge, Paris, France</p> <p>2005 <i>Mumu Territorium</i>, Art Center – SM Megamall, Mandaluyong City, Philippines
 <i>New Works</i>, Lieu d'Art Contemporain, Sigean, France</p> <p>2004 <i>Finale Art File</i>, Mandaluyong City, Philippines</p> <p>2003 <i>Wunderkammer</i>, Gesellschaft für Gegenwartskunst, Augsburg, Germany
 <i>Lee Almighty</i>, Magnet Gallery Katipunan, Quezon City, Philippines</p> <p>2001 <i>Free Aesthetic Pleasure Now!</i>, Babilonia 1808, Berkeley, USA</p> <p>2000 <i>Those Long Dormant Pimples of Inattention [...]</i>, Sprüth Magers Projekte, Munich, and Galerie</p> | <p>Bärbel Grässlin, Frankfurt am Main, Germany</p> <p>1999 <i>The Nature of Culture</i> (with Gaston Damag), Centro Andaluz de Arte Contemporáneo, Seville, Spain
 <i>The Inversion of the Ideal</i>, Galería Soledad Lorenzo, Madrid, Spain</p> <p>1998 <i>Yo Tambien Soy Pintura</i>, El Museo Extremeño e Iberoamericano de Arte Contemporáneo, Badajoz, Spain
 <i>Why Must I Care For a Girl Who Always Scratches Wherever She Itches</i>, Delfina Foundation, London, and Centre Cultural Tecla Sala, Barcelona, Spain</p> <p>1997 <i>Heridas de la Lengua</i>, Track 16 Gallery, Santa Monica, USA
 <i>Hacer Pintura Es Hacer Patria</i>, Galería OMR, Mexico City, Mexico</p> |
|--|---|--|--|

“One person’s blasphemy could be another person’s form of spiritual expression.” Thus Manuel Ocampo elucidates on his often misunderstood art forms, stating that if a work starts to offend someone’s tastes and values, then it has succeeded in “staking a claim of its meaning in the world [...] as a statement of existence.”¹

Studying and living in Los Angeles in the early 1990s, Ocampo became part of a new breed of artists who were starting to head in a different direction, away from the career-oriented experiments of the New York scene into more introverted expressions of both banal and multicultural experiences in contemporary America. In 2003, he went back to Manila, where he opened galleries and curated shows with Filipino artists, becoming influential to a number of artists who share the same concerns in challenging the grandiosity and reverence assigned to works of art, especially paintings.

The hard-edged, antagonistic, irreverent, and graphic art of Ocampo met its fair share of controversy during the 1990s. The perceived blasphemy in his works does not essentially occur within the set values of the cultures he chooses to represent, but rather arises within the sterile art world itself. The motivation in each of Ocampo’s new works seems to stem from the idea of a guileless existence. His works simply try to “be,” and in so doing shock us by undermining established taste and values regarding art and beauty. To Ocampo, the associations and agendas overlying paintings have become trite and cumbersome. In his view, the work will always outlast the context.

Ocampo does not shy away from sacrilegious depictions of religious icons, taboo subjects, and forbidden symbols; his most recent works also include more dissociated codes and uncategorized juxtapositions. His work presents the vanity fair of a society desiring products with maximum commercial values as much as perfect-looking bodies. The artist disagrees explicitly by painting in a rough and speedily executed way, showing motives that have been fragmented and destroyed like a Christ figure without head and arms in *Scheiss* (2015), or skeletons, as in *El Tirano de*

Manuel Ocampo was born in Quezon City,
Philippines, in 1965

*

He lives and works in Quezon City,
Philippines

Europa, El Tirano de America (2015) or *Islamic Disco Painting* (2015).

In a series titled *Notes from the Ste. Anne Asylum* (2013), the manner of composition undermines activities that tend to intellectualize the frame. The metaphors are direct, the visual puns appear shallow, and the symbols derived from various contexts coalesce into a singular cartoonish world. Inferences of race, religion, sex, and vice are met with references to humor, distaste, and ignorance. His works embody pastiche in expression, and throughout the years have consistently challenged the notions of standards or taste.

Behind the explicit images lies a profound inquiry into the notions of artistic creation itself. Sometimes the artist himself becomes the subject of his own parody, being included through the use of text or grotesque figures. Ocampo shatters the special distinctions held for artistic agency, for treating the painter as a maker of worlds. This is why his paintings, rather than being spectacles that generate shock, are challenges to the academies of “bad” and “good” in art. For Ocampo a “bad” painting, if such a thing existed, is a concept that limits the possibilities both of personal imagination and visual culture in general. In his world there are no exemptions; everything is thrown together: religious icons, baroque surfaces, supermarket brands, body parts, bones, and buzzards. The abject qualities that continue to pulsate from his paintings are postscripts to a world that has already been dissolved in the mixture of high and low culture, of canonical and street art.

1 Manuel Ocampo in conversation with Ringo Bunoan in: “Interview with Manuel Ocampo.” *Asia Art Archive*, October 2011, <http://www.aaa.org.hk/Diaaologue/Details/1084> (October 9, 2015).

1996 Annina Nosei Gallery, New York, USA
 1995 Galerie Nathalie Obadia, Paris, France
 Musée d’art contemporain de Montréal, Canada
 1994 *Paraíso Abierto a Todos*, The Mexican Museum, San Francisco, USA
Jean-Michel Basquiat & Manuel Ocampo, Henry Art Gallery, University of Washington, Seattle, USA
 1992 *Matrix Berkeley 150*, University Art Museum, University of California, Berkeley, USA
 1988 *Lies, Falls, Hopes, and Megalomania*, La Luz de Jesus Gallery, Los Angeles, USA

Selected Group Exhibitions

2015 *Come as You Are: Art of the 1990s*, Montclair Art Museum, New Jersey, USA, et al. (traveling exhibition)
 2012 7th Asia Pacific Triennial of Contemporary Art, Brisbane, Australia
 2004 1st Bienal Internacional de Arte Contemporáneo de Sevilla, Spain
 2001 *Plateau of Mankind*, 49th Esposizione Internazionale d’Arte, Venice, Italy
 2nd Berlin Biennale, Germany
 2000 *Made in California: Art, Image, and Identity, 1900–2000*, Los Angeles County Museum of Art, USA
Partage d’Exotismes, 5th Biennale d’art contemporain de Lyon, France
 1998 *At Home and Abroad: 21 Contemporary Filipino Artists*, Asian Art Museum of San Francisco, USA

1997 *Unmapping the Earth*, 2nd Gwangju Biennale, Republic of Korea
 1994 *Asia/America: Identities in Contemporary Asian American Art*, Asia Society, New York, USA
 1993 43rd Biennial Exhibition of Contemporary American Painting, Washington, D.C., USA
 1992 *documenta IX*, Kassel, Germany
Helter Skelter: L.A. Art in the 1990s, The Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, USA

Selected Bibliography

2013 *Manuel Ocampo*. Exh. cat. Carré Ste. Anne, Montpellier.
 2010 *Manuel Ocampo: An Arcane Recipe Involving Ingredients Canibalized from the Reliquaries of Some Profane Illumination*. Exh.

cat. Tyler Rollins Fine Art. New York. [Online]
 2009 See, Sarita Echavez. *The Decolonized Eye: Filipino American Art and Performance*. Minneapolis.
 2005 *Manuel Ocampo: Bastards of Misrepresentation*. Exh. cat. Casia Asia. Barcelona.
 2002 *Vitamin P: New Perspectives in Painting*. London/New York.
 2001 *Les Chiens Andaloux*. Exh. cat. Track 16 Gallery. Santa Monica.
 1999 *Manuel Ocampo: God Is My Co-Pilot*. Directed by Phillip Rodriguez. Santa Monica. [DVD]
 1997 *Heridas de la Lengua*. Exh. cat. Track 16 Gallery. Santa Monica.
 1996 *Virgin Destroyer: Manuel Ocampo*. Honolulu.



Notes from the Ste. Anne Asylum 4, 2013
Oil on canvas
250 x 200 cm



Notes from the Ste. Anne Asylum 3, 2013
Oil on canvas
250 x 200 cm



Notes from the Ste. Anne Asylum 2, 2013
Oil on canvas
250 x 200 cm



Notes from the Ste. Anne Asylum 1, 2013
Oil on canvas
250 x 200 cm



El Tirano de Europa, El Tirano de America
(from the *Fashion Update* series), 2015
Silkscreen ink on canvas
243 x 304 cm



Scheiss (from the *Fashion Update* series), 2015
Silkscreen ink, varnish, canvas
182 x 122 cm





Islamic Disco Painting (from *The Correction* series), 2015
Silkscreen ink on canvas
122 × 243 cm



Alwin Reamillo

Education

- 1997-1999 Major in Visual Art, Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts, Edith Cowan University, Perth, Australia
- 1981-1985 Major in Painting, University of the Philippines Diliman, Quezon City, Philippines

Selected Solo Exhibitions

- 2015 *Juanita, Herzog, Jambalambibe & Associates Invites You to UnHedged*, Tin-aw Art Gallery, Quezon City, Philippines
- 2014 *Mise en (Matched) Scene*, West Gallery, Quezon City, Philippines
- 2013 *Tinubuang Lupa*, National Commission for Culture and the Arts Gallery, Manila, Philippines
Re:quiem para un arpicembalo di Bartolomeo Cristofori [...],

- Nova Gallery, Makati City, Philippines
- 2011 *Re:Played by Ear*, Artinformal, Mandaluyong City, Philippines
Ang Balutviand: Manila-Hong Kong-Manila, Tin-aw Art Gallery, Makati City, Philippines
- 2010 *Thuringowa Helicopter Project*, Darwin Festival 2010, Stokes Hill Wharf, Darwin, and The Substation, Melbourne, Australia
- 2009 *Play by Ear I + II*, Galleria Duemila, Pasay City, Philippines
- 2008 *Nicanor Abelardo Grand Piano Project*, UP Vargas Museum, Quezon City, Philippines
Play by Ear (Oido), Gallery East, Perth, Australia
- 2007 *Thuringowa Helicopter Project*, Pinnacles Gallery, Riverway Arts Centre, Townsville, Australia
Mang Emo + Mag-himo Grand Piano Project, Cultural Center

- of the Philippines and Galleria Duemila, Pasay City, Philippines; Fremantle Arts Centre, Australia
- 2001 *Semena Santa Cruxtations*, Cultural Center of the Philippines, Pasay City, Philippines, et al. (traveling exhibition)
- 1994 *P.I. FOR SALE*, Hiraya Gallery, Manila, Philippines
- 1989 *Ang kahon ay isang hukay ay isang kahon*, Cultural Center of the Philippines, Pasay City, Philippines
- 1987 *At ang Bulung-bulungang de-cajon ni Mang Imo [...]*, Pinaglabanan Art Galleries, San Juan City, Philippines

Selected Group Exhibitions

- 2015 *Sculpture by the Sea 2015*, Bondi Beach, Sydney, Australia
Asian Art Biennial 2015, National

- Taiwan Museum of Fine Arts, Taichung City, Taiwan
Bankstown: Live, Sydney Festival 2015, Bankstown, Australia
The Roving Eye: Contemporary Art from Southeast Asia, ARTER Space for Art, Istanbul, Turkey
- 2014 *Concept, Context, Contestation: Art and the Collective in Southeast Asia*, Bangkok Art and Culture Centre, Thailand
- 2011 *Beyond the Self: Contemporary Portraiture from Asia*, National Portrait Gallery, Canberra, Australia, et al. (traveling exhibition)
- 2009 *Making it New: Focus on Contemporary Australian Art*, Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney, Australia
Thrice Upon a Time: A Century of Story in the Art of the Philippines, Singapore Art Museum
- 2008 *Tutubing Baka Helicopter Project*,

Alwin Reamillo, who divides his time between Australia and the Philippines, has continued to work on projects that involve collaboration: whether with other artists, craftsmen, and communities; or with people from other cultures. His methods closely resemble shop practice, requiring collaborative processes and cross-cultural exchanges to carry out the constructions of machines, woodworks, instruments, vehicles, vessels, and simulated environments. His approach to making art strongly echoes one of the cherished values of Filipino folk called *bayanihan*, an old custom which pertains to involving a whole village in order to complete an erstwhile difficult task. At the same time Reamillo reflects upon personal experiences, such as feelings of displacement or the sensation of “gaps” or losses caused by migration or moving between different cultures. Thus he creates “social sculptures,” produced in collaboration across foreign exchange programs in different communities such as in Germany, Japan, and Australia, as well as his native Philippines. These involve not only gathering different materials for his work, but also different people in order to create interactive and functional pieces.

The son of a piano maker, Reamillo has incorporated through his art an organic summation of parts like an instrument—using found or fabricated objects, and inviting people to interact with the work in order to complete its meaning. Several of these works have actually utilized the form of both grand and upright pianos, thus functioning as a tribute to his father’s craft and also to the ideal of human interactivity in sculpture. In some of these sculptures, dynamism is not just confined within the instrument’s ability

to sound but also within the structure itself. In a work called *Ang Rocknroll Piano ni Egay Navarro* (2015) the instrument literally rolls because of its circular profile, thereby pushing the performativity of the piece beyond the function of the musical keys and further into the interactivity of the whole sculpture: a wheeled object that is meant to be playfully set in motion. While some of his sculptures—for instance, *Nicanor Abelardo Grand Piano Project* (2010–2015)—can actually be used as instruments in performances, they work just as well as “pictures” of music, evoking only imaginations of sound.

Alwin Reamillo was born in Manila,
Philippines, in 1964

*

He lives and works in Las Piñas, Philippines,
and Beaconsfield, Australia

Combining articles from different historical and cultural references such as religious symbols from Buddhism (*Ang Apotekariya Vertical ni Antonio Laluna*, 2014) or Christianity (*The Cabinet: Semana Santa Cruxations or How to Go Bble Sideways and Multiply*, 2010–2015), and interjecting processes from both archaic and modern technologies, Reamillo essays rudimentary associations to trivialize both the commodification of culture and our seemingly insatiable appropriation of discordant beliefs that marks an era built on pastiche. Items that adorn his mixed media installations and assemblages are just as diverse: vintage photographs, sets of tools, crab shells and claws, and other fabricated

and found objects such as a box of matches, miniature toys, and shredded banknotes. Some of Reamillo’s assemblages and installations are presented like inventories, using, for example, a glass cabinet that allows the viewer to see all the objects stored inside. But their overall accumulation defies the nature of clinical archives. Scattered, discordant, unexpected, and loosely associated, the only underlying motif is the artist’s use of wooden platforms, shaped out of drums, cabinets, shelves, and boxes. The articles grow from them—a mix of organic and synthetic forms; the earthen, antiquated quality of wood absorbs them like an evolved artefact, mutating into a unique instrument, small enough to be captured in a wooden case or almost as large as an entire room.

Every item in Reamillo’s assemblages, which are essentially ongoing projects, tells a story about a journey—specifically, about being away from home. This is akin to the way migrants often surround themselves with collections of familiar objects to make sense of who they are and where they came from. Reamillo sees his assemblages as a kind of “historical painting,” but one that is “marked by unevenness,” and that is “always in flux.”

Through his art, Alwin Reamillo constantly makes connections between personal objects and cultural relics, memory and history, the audience and the work. He examines how these interactions can change our ways of thinking, and how, eventually, his sculptures, installations, and performances derived from familiar and functional objects can bridge the gap between art and life.

<p>2005 Museo Pambata, Manila, Philippines <i>Echoes of Home: Memory and Mobility in Recent Austral-Asian Art</i>, Museum of Brisbane, Australia et al. (traveling exhibition) <i>Parallel Realities</i>, 3rd Fukuoka Asian Art Triennial, Japan</p> <p>2004 UWA Perth International Arts Festival, Fremantle Arts Centre, Australia</p> <p>2003 <i>National Sculpture Prize & Exhibition</i> (in collaboration with Roselin Eaton), National Gallery of Australia, Canberra, Australia</p> <p>1999 <i>At Home and Abroad: 20 Contemporary Filipino Artists</i>,* Metropolitan Museum of Manila, Philippines</p> <p>1998 <i>Construction in Process VI – The Bridge</i>, Melbourne, Australia <i>The Edge of Awareness</i>,* Organisation Mondiale de la Santé, Geneva, Switzerland, et al. (traveling exhibition)</p>	<p>1997 <i>At Home and Abroad: 20 Contemporary Filipino Artists</i>,* Asian Art Museum of San Francisco, USA, et al. (traveling exhibition) <i>Cinco Continentes y Una Ciudad</i>,* Museo de la Ciudad de Mexico, Mexico City, Mexico</p> <p>1996 6th Bienal de la Habana,* Casa de Asia, Havana, Cuba</p> <p>1996 <i>Above and Beyond: Austral/Asian Interactions</i>, Australian Centre for Contemporary Art, Melbourne, Australia, et al. (traveling exhibition)</p> <p>1995 <i>Peace Art from Asia: War and Art 1995</i>, Osaka International Peace Center, Japan</p>	<p>* in collaboration with Juliet Lea (since 1993)</p>
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<p>Selected Bibliography</p> <p>2014 <i>The Roving Eye: Contemporary Art from Southeast Asia</i>. Exh. cat. ARTER – Space for Art, Istanbul.</p> <p>2013 <i>Beyond the Self: Contemporary Portraiture from Asia</i>. Exh. cat. National Portrait Gallery, Canberra.</p> <p>Garing, Thea. <i>Alwin Reamillo: Requiem para arpícebala di Bartoloneo Cristofori di nuovo inventione chef a il piano e il forte</i>. Exh. cat. Nova Gallery, Manila</p> <p>2010 <i>Making it New: Focus on Contemporary Australian Art</i>. Exh. cat. Museum of Contemporary Art Australia, Sydney.</p> <p>2009 <i>Thrice Upon A Time: A Century of Story in the Art of the Philippines</i>. Exh. cat. Singapore Art Museum.</p> <p>2007 Legaspi-Ramirez, Eileen. “Making Do: The Mang Emo + Mag-himo Grand Piano Project.” <i>Inquirer.net</i>, May 24. [Online]</p>	<p>2005 <i>Echoes of Home: Memory and Mobility in Recent Austral-Asian Art</i>. Exh. cat. Museum of Brisbane.</p> <p><i>Third Fukuoka Asian Art Triennale: Parallel Realities</i>. Exh. cat. Fukuoka Asian Art Museum.</p> <p>2003 <i>National Sculpture Prize and Exhibition</i>. Exh. cat. National Gallery of Australia, Canberra.</p> <p>2002 Shaw, Angel, and Luis Francia, eds. <i>Vestiges of War: The Philippine-American War and the Aftermath of an Imperial Dream 1899–1999</i>. New York.</p> <p>2000 <i>The Bridge / Construction in Process VI</i>. Exh. cat. Melbourne.</p> <p>1995 <i>TransCulture: la Biennale di Venezia 1995</i>. Exh. cat. Palazzo Giustinian Lolin (Fondazione Levi), Venice. Tokyo.</p>
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Ang Rockenroll Piano ni Egay
Navarro, 2015
Mixed media construction with
pine cable drum on disused upright
piano, recycled car-tire strips
113 x 145 x 113 cm



Ang Apotekariya Vertical ni Antonio Laluna, 2014
 Two disused upright pianos, reused pine cable drums,
 digital sign, constructed wooden boxes, ammunition
 case, exhaust fan, Buddha statue, found objects
 Dimensions variable



*The Cabinet: Semana Santa
Cruxtations or How to Go Bbble
Sideways and Multiply, 2010-2015*
Mixed media on printed bedsheet,
found objects, constructed wooden
cabinet, LED lights
243 × 365 × 43 cm





Recuerdo, 2013-2014
Two constructed wooden suitcases,
video, reused pine cable drum, piano
keys and parts, hand tools, objects
Dimensions variable



Nicanor Abelardo Grand Piano Project, 2010–2015
Restored parlor grand piano, grand piano lids,
objects, video
Dimensions variable



*Unnatural History: ang totoong
alamat ng pilipinas o pensar en la
inmortalidad del cangrejo, 2012*
Mixed media on reused pine cable
drum, found objects
75 x 120 x 4 cm





Norberto Roldan

- Education**
- 1973 Bachelor of Arts, Major in Philosophy, St. Pius X Seminary, Roxas City, Philippines
 - 1975 Bachelor of Fine Arts, Major in Visual Communications, University of Santo Tomas, Manila, Philippines
 - 2001 Master of Arts, Major in Art Studies, University of the Philippines Diliman, Quezon City, Philippines
- Selected Solo Exhibitions**
- 2015 *The Past Is Another Country*, MO_Space, Taguig City, Philippines
 - 2014 *One Day I Will Find the Right Words and They Will Be Simple*, Taksu, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
 - 2013 *Savage Nation*, MO_Space, Taguig City, Philippines
 - 2012 *No Empire Lasts Forever*, Taksu Singapore
 - 2012 *Hail Mary*, Vulcan Artbox, Waterford, Ireland
 - Heretical Bias Towards Indifference*, Now Gallery, Makati City, Philippines
 - 2011 *The Beginning of History and Fatal Strategies*, Now Gallery, Makati City, Philippines
 - 2010 *Not Past Nor Future, Neither Dead Or Alive*, Silverlens, Makati City, Philippines
 - 2009 *Give Me Tears Give Me Love Let Me Rest Lord Above*, Pablo Gallery, Taguig City, Philippines
 - Sacred is the New Profane*, Taksu Singapore
 - Everything is Sacred*, Taksu Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
 - 2008 *Objects and Apparitions*, MO_Space, Taguig City, Philippines
 - 2007 *Oil*, Magnet Gallery, Quezon City, Philippines
 - 2005 *Esperanza y Caridad*, Green Papaya Art Projects, Quezon City, Philippines
 - 2004 *Confessional Box*, Alliance Française de Manille, Makati City, Philippines
 - 2003 *Mother of Perpetual Colony*, Charles Darwin University Art Gallery, Darwin, Australia
 - 2001 *Faith on the Periphery*, Green Papaya Art Projects, Quezon City, Philippines
 - RX: Critical Remedies* (with Nona Garcia), Lopez Memorial Museum, Mandaluyong City, Philippines
 - Devotion* (with Alfredo Esquillo), John Batten Gallery, Hong Kong, China
 - 1999 *Faith in Sorcery, Sorcery in Faith*, Hiraya Gallery, Manila, Philippines
 - 1994 *Orasyon*, Hiraya Gallery, Manila, Philippines
 - 1989 *Images of the Continuing Struggle*, Artspace, Sydney, Australia
 - 1987 *Images of War*, Hiraya Gallery, Manila, Philippines
- Selected Group Exhibitions**
- 2015 *Rev | Action: Contemporary Art from Southeast Asia* Sundaram Tagore Gallery, New York, USA
 - First Look: Collecting Contemporary at the Asian, Asian Art Museum, San Francisco, USA*
 - 2014 *What does it all matter, as long as the wounds fit the arrows?*, Cultural Center of the Philippines, Pasay City, Philippines
 - No Country: Contemporary Art for South and Southeast Asia*, NTU Center for Contemporary Art Singapore and Asia Society, Hong Kong, China
 - 2013 *No Country: Contemporary Art for South and Southeast Asia*,

Norberto Roldan's art traces the roots of Filipino identity through the use of objects, images, and text. In his assemblages and installations made from religious garments, vintage fabric, found objects, and antiquated photographs, he presents their union as symbols of the very composition of the Filipino consciousness—as an identity forged through the intertwined agendas of spiritual and political annexation, as subjects deeply influenced by the shadows of an imperial past. His assemblages, which convey a sense of ritual tied to religious ceremonies, beckon like altars: their centerpieces are made from old liturgical vestments—robes used by Catholic priests adorned with intricate embroidery and lacework.

As the Philippines is deeply rooted in the foundation of Catholic teachings, spirituality plays an immense part in forming the concept of Filipino identity. The artist acknowledges this; the priests' chasubles and saints' vestments signify the country's veneration for tales of divine intervention. Whether from past revolutions or modern-day uprisings, religion has always been a driving force in mediating change.

Roldan's assemblages also include antique vases, glassware, and candlesticks, each standing on a panel, contrasting with contemporary liquor and soda bottles—an illustration of the past's stronghold on present-day vices. The placement of light fixtures inside the panels conclude the assemblages, with a new sort of mysticism created through the resulting glowing texts. One piece, for instance, spells out "Revolt," carefully

divided across a diptych sporting a pair of gold-laced vestments removed from a saint's statuette, and enshrined in artificial illumination (Revolt, 2014).

In Roldan's more recent series of paintings, images are paired with textual passages. With titles such as *The War Speech* and *The War Prayer* (both 2013), these diptychs show scenes of machinery related to warfare, appropriated literature from famous authors such as Mark Twain, and speeches from iconic figures such as the former emperor of Ethiopia, Haile Selassie. These two-dimensional

Norberto Roldan was born in Roxas City,
Philippines, in 1953

*

He lives and works in Manila,
Philippines

works, although tackling more contemporary concepts, do not stray from the themes explored in Roldan's assemblages. The role of politics and spirituality are shown to still work in tandem, even in the modern age of imperialism, or as lingering models of influence for a post-colonial era. The depiction of war machines elicit awe, especially in an enormous fleet such as the aircraft carrier in *The War Speech*, which conveys the majestic notions of conquest. Combined with a string of words based on a modern-day emperor's proclamation to the UN while fighting apartheid in his country, the image that Roldan chooses to paint becomes a powerful

critique on the state of racial and territorial dispute.

In *Quiapo, Between Salvation and Damnation* (2014), Roldan constructs a replica of a confessional box usually found inside churches in Manila. The reference to the district of Quiapo is an ode to one of Manila's most symbolic places of worship—the Quiapo Church, as well as one of Manila's busiest flea markets which is situated along the streets of Quiapo. At the middle of the confessional box stands a glass cabinet filled with different objects—a statuette of Christ carrying the cross, a collection of antique armaments, and different concoctions prescribed by quack doctors and faith healers such as abortive potions as well as *anting-anting* amulets or charms trapped in vials, which are important aspects of Filipino mythology. In Roldan's two-winged confessional box, a kind of dichotomy is raised between the spiritual and the worldly; the need for divine absolutism and faith is pitted against the alternative: turning to heretic remedies.

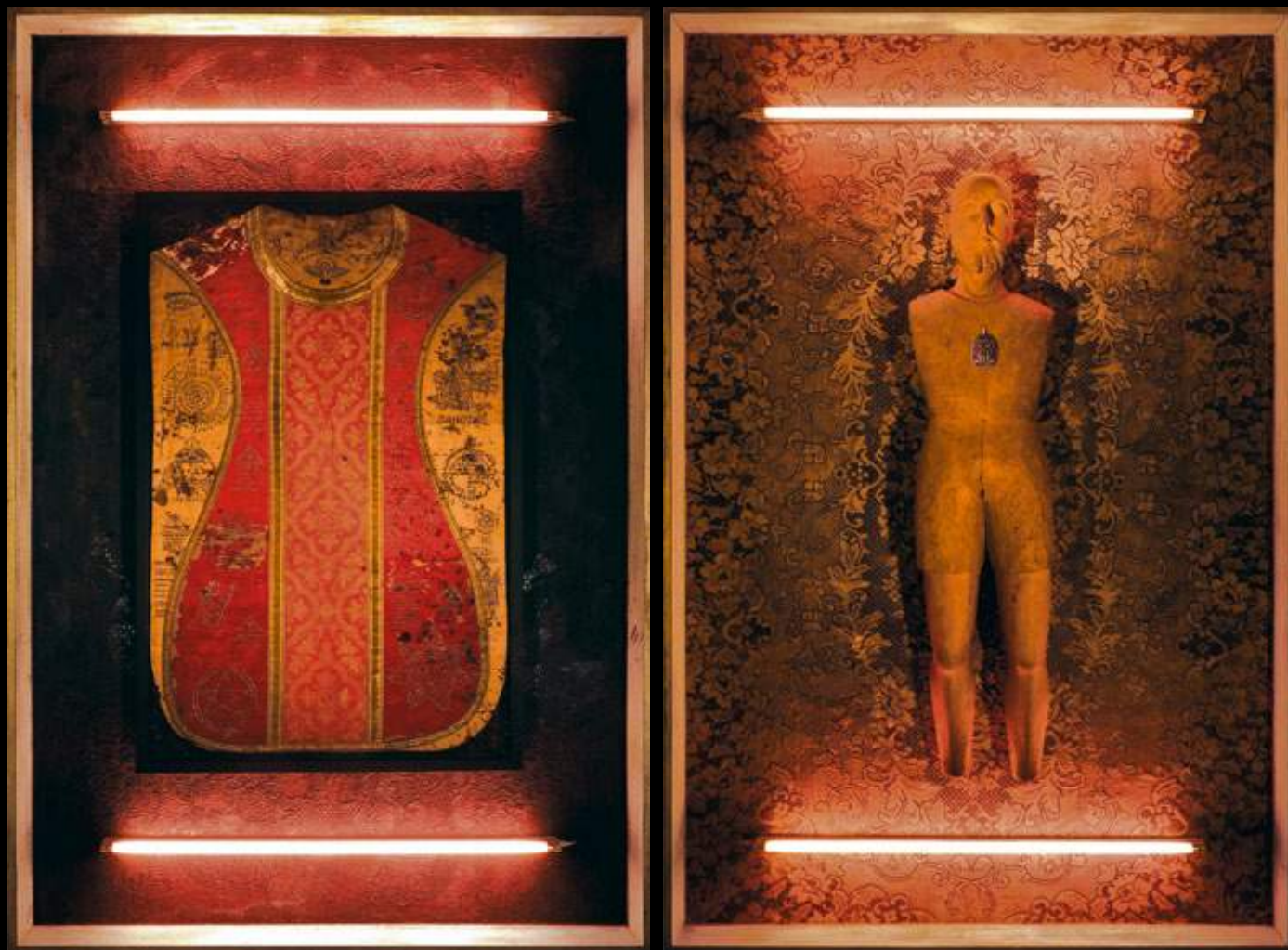
Whether seen as an archive of symbols, texts, and objects, or as an anthropological endeavor to discover and interpret the world through its antiquated articles, the works of Norberto Roldan dwell within the more minute activities of collecting, arranging, and composing objects to present a new narration of a country's history and her people's collective memory.

<p>Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, USA</p> <p>2011 <i>Negotiating Home, History and Nation: Two Decades of Contemporary Art from Southeast Asia, 1991–2010</i>, Singapore Art Museum</p> <p>2010 <i>No Soul for Sale – A Festival of Independents</i>, Tate Modern, London, UK</p> <p>2008 <i>Galleon Trade: Bay Area Now 5</i>, Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, San Francisco, USA</p> <p><i>Beyond Frame: Philippine Photomedia</i>, UTS Gallery, University of Technology, Sydney, Australia</p> <p>2005 <i>Flippin' Out: Maynila to Williamsburg</i>, Goliath Visual Space, New York, USA</p> <p>2004 <i>Crossings: Philippine Modern and Contemporary Art</i>, Ayala</p>	<p>Museum, Makati City, Philippines</p> <p>2003 <i>Arts of People III: Santo</i>, Fukuoka Asian Art Museum, Japan</p> <p>2000 <i>Faith + the City: A Survey of Contemporary Filipino Art</i>, Earl Lu Gallery, LASALLE-SIA College of the Arts, Singapore; Metropolitan Museum of Manila, Philippines; Chulalongkorn University, Bangkok, Thailand (traveling until 2002)</p> <p>1998 ASEAN Art Awards, Hanoi Opera House, Vietnam</p> <p>1997 <i>Memories of Overdevelopment: Philippine Diaspora in Contemporary Art</i>, Art Gallery, University of California, Irvine, California, USA and Plug In ICA Gallery, Winnipeg, Canada</p>	<p>1992 <i>New Art from Southeast Asia</i>, Tokyo Metropolitan Art Space, Fukuoka Asian Art Museum and Hiroshima City Museum of Contemporary Art, Japan</p> <p>Selected Bibliography</p> <p>2013 Constantino, Marika B. "[Norberto Roldan:] CHEERS! What's old is new again." <i>The Philippine Star</i>. January 27. [Online]</p> <p>2011 Lenzi, Iola, <i>Negotiating Home, History and Nation: Two Decades of Contemporary Art from Southeast Asia, 1991–2010</i>. Exh. cat. Singapore Art Museum. Singapore.</p> <p><i>Norberto Roldan: The beauty of history is that it does not reside in one place</i>. Edited by Taksu Singapore. Exh. cat. Art Stage Singapore. Singapore.</p>	<p>2008 de Veyra, Lour. "A Rusty Sign at the End of a Bloody Empire, Norberto Roldan's Oil." <i>Artlink</i> 1, vol. 28.</p> <p>2007 Thompson, Jonathan. "Norberto Roldan at Magnet Gallery." <i>Asian Art News</i> 2, vol. 17 (March/April).</p> <p>1999 Torres, Emmanuel. "The Magic Medicine Cabinets of Norberto Roldan." <i>The Philippine Star</i>, May 10, p L-4.</p> <p>2004 Roldan, Norberto. "War, Politics and Religion," in <i>Contemporary Asian Art Forum</i>. Hong Kong.</p> <p>2002 Kember, Pamela. "Alfredo Esquillo and Norberto Roldan." <i>ArtAsia-Pacific</i> 36 (October–December).</p> <p>1992 Arata, Tani. "Norberto Roldan," in <i>New Art From Southeast Asia</i>. Exh. cat. Tokyo Metropolitan Art Space, et al. Tokyo.</p>
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*Quiapo, Between Salvation
and Damnation, 2014*
Mixed media installation
260 x 366 x 366 cm





Rebel, 2015
Vintage priest's chasuble with
embroidery, lace fabric, wooden
Santo sculpture, metal amulet and
lighting fixtures on wooden panels
Diptych, 183 x 244 cm



Revolt, 2014
Old saints' vestments with gold trimmings
and embroidery, lace fabric, metal and soft
amulets, lighting fixtures on wooden panels
Diptych, 214 × 305 cm



My Brother and the Order of the Knights of the Moonshadows, 2010
Vintage priest's chasuble, vintage fabric,
wooden altar, old photograph and found
objects on wooden panels
Diptych, 183 × 244 cm



Litany, 2014
Vintage religious estampitas,
flattened soft-drink tops and
fabric on wooden panel
Diptych, 208 x 198 cm



Mestiza 2, 2015
Oil and acrylic on canvas
Dptych, 213 × 304 cm

“She walks by the riverbank, naked, healthy, newly bathed, newly born from the night. On her breast burn jewels wrenched from summer. Covering her sex, the withered grass, the blue, almost black grass that grows on the rim of the volcano. On her belly an eagle spreads its wings, two enemy flags entwine, and water rests. She comes from afar, from the humid country. Few had seen her. I will tell her secret: by day, she is stone on the roadside; by night, a river that flows to the flank of man.”



Kaloy Sanchez

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|---|---|--|---|
| <p>Education</p> <p>2006 Bachelor of Fine Arts, Major in Studio Art, University of the Philippines Diliman, Quezon City, Philippines</p> <p>Selected Solo Exhibitions</p> <p>2014 <i>Oh! The Unspeakable Things</i>, Arndt Singapore</p> <p>2013 <i>Nausea</i>, West Gallery, Quezon City, Philippines</p> <p>2012 <i>Ring Around The Rosie</i>, Manila</p> | <p>Contemporary, Makati City, Philippines</p> <p>2011 <i>Missives to the Ocean, This Time Last Year</i>, West Gallery, Quezon City, Philippines</p> <p><i>Too Loud a Solitude</i>, Valentine Willie Fine Art, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia</p> <p>2010 <i>To the Memory of Sin</i>, West Gallery, Quezon City, Philippines</p> <p>2009 <i>Black Water Cross</i>, West Gallery, Quezon City, Philippines</p> <p>2008 <i>Hint:Eye</i>, West Gallery, Quezon City, Philippines</p> | <p>Selected Group Exhibitions</p> <p>2014 <i>Manila: The Night Is Restless, The Day Is Scornful</i>, Arndt Singapore</p> <p>2013 <i>The Mona Lisa Project</i>, Cultural Center of the Philippines, Pasay City, Philippines</p> <p>2012 <i>Painting the Sublime</i>, Manila Contemporary, Makati City, Philippines</p> <p>2012 <i>Secret Rooms & Hidden Motives</i>, Valentine Willie Fine Art, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia</p> <p>2012 <i>Imagining Identity: 100 Filipino</i></p> | <p><i>Self-Portraits</i>, Finale Art File, Makati City, Philippines</p> <p>2011 <i>Anti Hero</i>, Altro Mondo, Makati City, Philippines</p> <p>2010 <i>Twelve by Nine</i>, West Gallery, Quezon City, Philippines</p> <p>2010 <i>Enemy</i>, Paseo Art Gallery, Mandaluyong City, Philippines</p> <p>2010 <i>A Thousand Times Yes</i>, Manila Contemporary, Makati City, Philippines</p> <p>2009 <i>Figuration Now</i>, Paseo Art Gallery Mandaluyong City, Philippines</p> <p><i>Seeing You, Seeing Me: Contem-</i></p> |
|---|---|--|---|

The human figure has always been subject to an interpretation able to be attributed to a specific generation. Kaloy Sanchez represents a new crop of Filipino artists who have continued the tradition of painting the human body, displaying a keen interest in the dynamic between subject and sitter.

Since the time of the British painter Lucian Freud, ideas about nakedness in portraiture have come to be more about confronting the realities of the subject rather than celebrating their form. Sanchez's own depiction of the flesh seems to be traced directly from Freud's unflattering representations of the human body; his figures are likewise requires to the unheralded state of being naked—the frailty of being human, a condition which has perhaps never been so exposed as in the present day.

Sanchez's monochromatic portraits, rendered in acrylic and graphite, reflect the veiled realities of a society that seems to be always struggling against the incomprehensibility of living. His characters, whether young or old, are usually trapped in a state of agitation, bewilderment, or plain resignation, while seemingly having come to terms with the shackles of sexual vice or exclusion. His tableaux depict moments that are arrived at through omission: whether of body parts—faces, limbs, hands; or of a premise—where characters appear to be caught in the middle of an undisclosed episode of loss and desire. They are set against backdrops of what appear to be derelict apartments; the gritti-

ness of the walls, floorboards, tiles, and furniture match the unappealing contortions of the bodies and their seemingly deteriorating state. While the surroundings are sometimes marked by ambiguous graffiti-like shapes and lines, several characters in Sanchez's paintings have legs and feet that are blemished with tattoos, drawing the viewer's attention to another artwork within the work—and into another set of possible narration.

The kind of portrayals found in Kaloy Sanchez's paintings seem to denote two states

Kaloy Sanchez was born in Manila,
Philippines, in 1982

*

He lives and works in
Malabon City, Philippines

only: that of arousal, and that of detumescence. The artist renders his subjects through such a polarity, and the accompanying feeling is either that something taboo has just transpired, or that we are on the brink of a moment about to turn carnal. Either way, Sanchez is progressing from the more neutral instances found in Lucian Freud's paintings. While it is said that the latter's scenes are like moments between main acts, it can be argued that Sanchez's are the initial and final frames. All the same, his works are significant contributions to the contemporaneity of the painted figure.

porary Portraiture, Manila Contemporary, Makati City, Philippines
Halo Halo, Manila Contemporary, Makati City, Philippines
Bayan ni Nanding, Manila Contemporary, Makati City, Philippines
Twelve by Nine, West Gallery, Mandaluyong City, Philippines
2007 *O*, Pablo Gallery, Quezon City, Philippines

Selected Bibliography

- 2014 *Manila: The Night is Restless, The Day is Scornful*. Exh. cat. Arndt Singapore. (Online)
- 2012 Flores, Patrick D. *Imagining Identity: 100 Filipino Self Portraits: A Selection from the Paulino Que Collection*, pp. 188–189. Exh. cat. Finale Art File. Makati City.
- 2011 Lopa, Trickie. "Nothing to Hide." *Town & Country* (December): p. 54.





La tristesse durera toujours, 2015
Acrylic and graphite on canvas
152 x 213 cm



Opposite page:
Tinnitus, 2011
Acrylic and graphite on canvas
183 × 122 cm



Aspartame, 2012
Acrylic on canvas
122 × 91 cm

Nostos, 2011
Acrylic and graphite on canvas
91 × 122 cm





Another Monday Morning, 2012
Acrylic and graphite on canvas
152 × 122 cm



Lollipop, 2015
Acrylic on canvas
122 x 91 cm



Linger, 2015
Acrylic and graphite on canvas
122 x 91 cm



Leviathan, 2013
Acrylic and graphite on canvas
152 x 122 cm



José Santos III

Education

1997 Bachelor of Fine Arts, Major in Painting, University of the Philippines Diliman, Quezon City, Philippines

Selected Solo Exhibitions

2014 *Zhide*, Pearl Lam Galleries, Singapore
 2013 *In Transition*, BenCab Museum, Baguio City, Philippines
Confertum: Collecting Crowds, UP Vargas Museum, Quezon City, Philippines
 2011 *Sneak Peek*, The Centro Iloco de Juan Luna Hall, Sitio Remedios, Ilocos Norte, Philippines

2009 *{Un}common*, Artinformal, Mandaluyong City, Philippines
 2006 *Insights*, West Gallery, Mandaluyong City, Philippines
Journeys, Art Space, Singapore
Phases, Boston Gallery, Quezon City, Philippines
 2005 *Times II*, West Gallery, Mandaluyong City, Philippines
 2004 *Past Presented*, Boston Gallery, Quezon City, Philippines
 2003 *Perspectives*, Boston Gallery, Quezon City, Philippines
Orientations, West Gallery, Mandaluyong City, Philippines
 2002 *Paper Planes*, Pinto Art Gallery, Antipolo City, Philippines
Acts, West Gallery, Makati City, Philippines

2001 *Flat Land*, West Gallery, Mandaluyong City, Philippines
Epeisodion, Boston Gallery, Quezon City, Philippines
 1999 *Reflections*, Boston Gallery, Quezon City, Philippines
 1995 *Building Blocks*, Boston Gallery, Quezon City, Philippines

Selected Group Exhibitions

2015 *Off Site / Out of Sight*, University of the Philippines Diliman, Quezon City, Philippines
 2013 *Revealing Signs of the Present*, Metropolitan Museum of Manila, Philippines
 2012 *Imagining Identity: 100 Filipino Self-Portraits*, Finale Art File,

Makati City, Philippines
 2011 *Monumental*, Manila Contemporary, Makati City, Philippines
 2010 *Crossover: Samtidskunst fra Filippinerne\Sydøstasien*, Brøndsalen Exhibition Hall, Copenhagen, Denmark
Dekalogo, UP Vargas Museum, Quezon City, Philippines
 2009 *Figuring the Times: Philippine Paintings 1996–2009*, Finale Art File, Makati City, Philippines
Pitik-Bulag Letra at Liwanag: A Celebration of Philippine Contemporary Art and Poetry, GSIS Museum, Pasay City, Philippines
 2008 *Silent Tension*, TAKSU, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
 2007 *Beyond Borders II*, Artspace, Singapore

After cutting through a wall of his studio along with the closet in front of it, José Santos III chanced upon an entirely hidden visual composition. The resulting crevice revealed cross-sections of both closet and wall, and sparked Santos's interest in the expansion of meaning able to be generated from what is normally concealed from one's view. The subsequent work, the polyptych *Clockwise* (2012), stands as an homage to both an object's containment and its progression through time. The twelve vertically oriented canvases are projected by the depth of their wooden frames. They approximate the cross-section of a closet cut into several parts. Like time capsules, they signify a different period, taking their cue from an analog clock's segments. Mundane objects from both exterior and interior lives—from domestic routines that inhabit the memory or the hidden codes that dwell within the psyche—are painted with their corresponding accessories attached underneath, and in some cases across, the frames, demarcating the intervals that shape each day.

The idea of containment figures in most of Santos's works, whether depicted in his paintings through the inclusion of receptacles—e.g. boxes, cans, drawers, and wooden crates—or in his installations that present actual objects wrapped in cloth. Santos's inquiry into the notions of representation in art deals with the limiting power of its own subtext: "How do you represent what is hidden?" In a work called *Hide & Seek* (2014), he uses several fabric bags as vessels to hold particular objects. These bags, sealed with resin, are mounted to form rows against the

gallery wall, while their contents remain completely hidden from our view. The ambiguity of such objects—an undoubted condition of something present, signified by the shapes formed through the bags which are both tactile and dense—reveals how the visual representation of an object can paradoxically reveal meaning by actually suppressing it.

Santos's works serve as conveyors to our senses: carrying objects as luggage, which is enveloped and wrapped around a cluster of philosophical considerations that the artist has pursued. His representation of the visible

José Santos III was born in Manila,
Philippines, in 1970

He lives and works in Pasig City,
Philippines

world—one of his main concerns—comes full circle in a work called *Paperweight*¹ (2014). In this work, the image of a rock goes through a succession of transformations and configurations. It is photographed, printed on paper, mutilated, printed once again, and then concealed by the same image before it is finally painted. The final image becomes a loose consolidation derived from a single entity's multiple incarnations. Through this, Santos presents a tautological condition of meaning. The tears and ruptures in the concealing print reveal the same object underneath. The whole process of self-reflexivity is finally synthesized through painting, while a small

fragment of the printed piece is also attached as an object. The extensive process that surrounds this piece demonstrates the artist's propensity to seek meaning through de-familiarization. By breaking down the nature of representation through the combination of several copies of a very mundane object, José Santos III is able to suggest the way meaning permeates visible appearances: through the tears, cuts, cracks and cross-sections of surfaces that are virtually negated by the desire to see through them.

2006 *Emerging Fires*, TAKSU Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

2005 *Portal Shifts*, The Substation, Singapore

2003 11th Asian Art Biennale Bangladesh, Bangladesh National Museum, Dhaka, Bangladesh

2001 16th Asian International Art Exhibition, Guangdong Museum of Art, Guangzhou, China

10th Asian Art Biennale Bangladesh, Bangladesh National Museum, Dhaka, Bangladesh

2000 *Thirteen Artists Awards*, Cultural Center of the Philippines, Pasay City, Philippines

Kathang Kamay, Philippine Center Gallery, New York, USA

1994 *To Be or Not To Be: The Industrial Destruction of Nature*,

Goethe-Institut, Quezon City, Philippines

1992 *Karnabal*, Cultural Center of the Philippines, Pasay City, Philippines

1991 3rd Baguio Arts Festival, Baguio Convention Center, Baguio City, Philippines

Selected Bibliography

2014 Abaya, Leo, and Kenneth Tay. *2hide*. Exh. cat. Pearl Lam Galleries, Singapore.

Chan, Michele. "Hide and seek: Filipino artist Jose Santos III illuminates the ordinary – in pictures." *Art Radar*, November 28. [Online]

2013 Bollansee, Marc. *Southeast Asian Contemporary Art Now*. Singapore.

Flores, Patrick D. *Revealing Signs of the Present: Philippine Paintings 2000–2012. A Selection from the Paulino Que Collection*, Metropolitan Museum of Manila. Manila.

Yraola, Dayang. *José Santos III: Confertum: Collecting Crowds*. Exh. cat. UP Vargas Museum, Quezon City. Mandaluyong City. [Online]

2012 Flores, Patrick D. *Imagining Identity: 100 Filipino Self-Portraits: A Selection from the Paulino Que Collection*. Exh. cat. Finale Art File. Makati City.

—. *José Santos III: Clockwise*.

Edited by Artinformal. Exh. pamphlet. Hong Kong International Art Fair. Manila. [Online]

2011 Flores, Patrick D., ed. *Monumental*. Exh. cat. Manila Contemporary. Makati City.

2010 Francisco, Francis, and Maria Chittyrene C. Labiran, eds. *Without Walls: A Tour of Philippine Paintings at the Turn of the Millennium*. Pasig City.

2009 Almario, Virgilio S., and Marne Kilates, eds. *Pitik-bulag: Letra at liwanag: A Celebration of Contemporary Filipino Art & Poetry*. Manila.

Espinola, Manny, et al. *The Philippines Yearbook 2009: 61 Artists that will Change the World*. Manila.



On Higher Ground, 2014
Resinated fabric, boxes
Approx. 275 x 40 x 40 cm
each
Exhibition view, Pearl Lam
Galleries, Singapore,
2014 / 2015

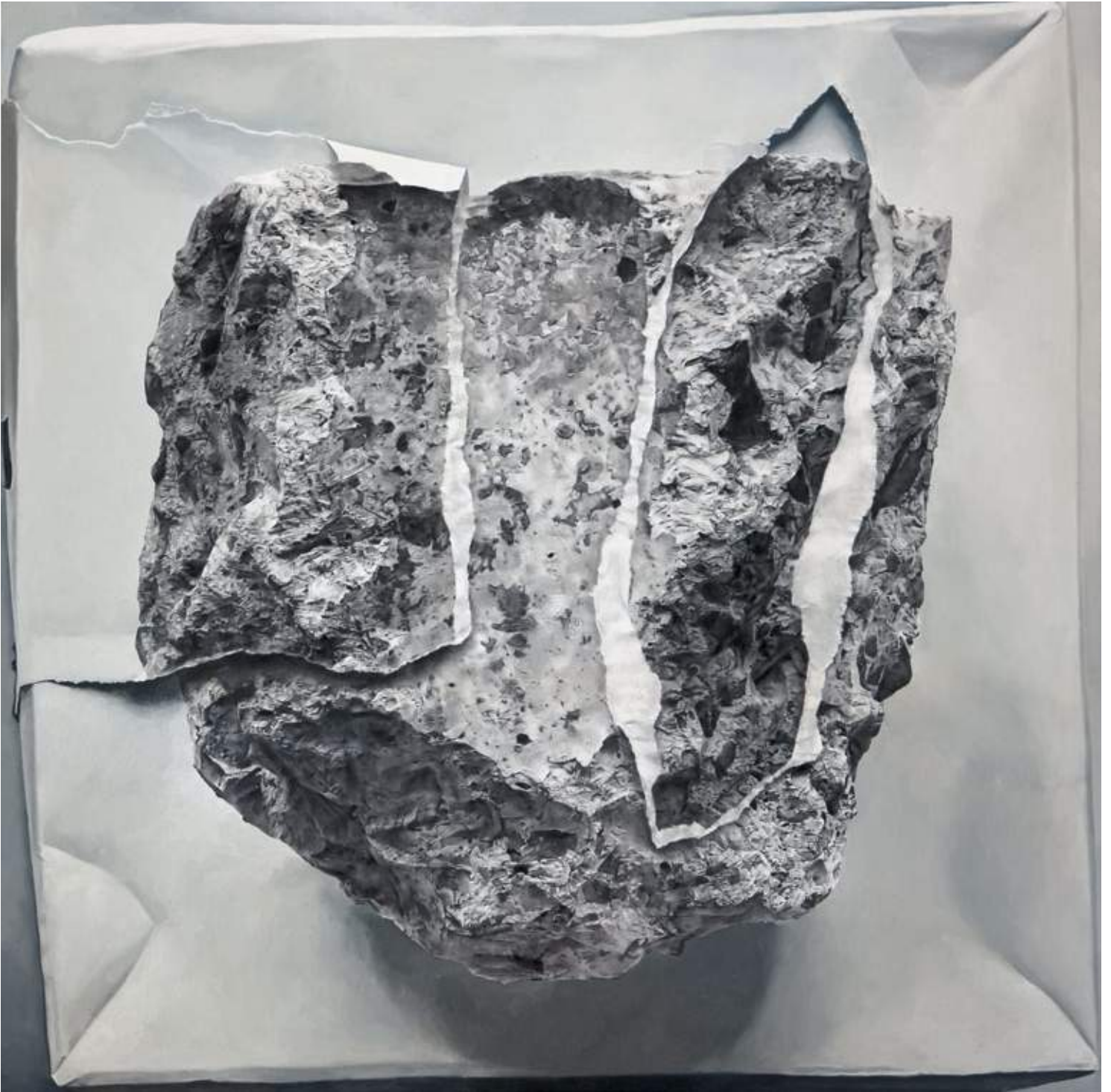


Vertical Sleep, 2014
Resinated fabric, video
by Leo Abaga
Dimensions variable
Exhibition view, Pearl Lam
Galleries, Singapore,
2014 / 2015



Borderline, 2013
Metal fence, concrete, resin,
acrylic on canvas, and video
Dimensions variable

A Collection of Stories IV, 2013
Vitrine containing resin casts
and plaster and rubber molds
Dimensions variable
Exhibition view, UP Vargas Museum,
Quezon City, Philippines, 2013



Paperweight I, 2014
Mixed media on canvas
198 x 198 cm



Flip Side, 2015
Mixed media
122 x 91 cm



Unseen, 2013
Oil on canvas
61 x 51 cm





Clockwise, 2012
Oil and collage on canvas,
wood, plastic, metal, resin
Polyptych, dimensions variable



Rodel Tapaya

Education

- 2002 “Intensive Studies” course, emphasis on drawing and painting, Parsons School of Design, New York, USA
- “Intensive Studies” course, emphasis on drawing and painting, University of Art and Design, Helsinki, Finland
- 2005 Bachelor of Fine Arts, Major in Painting from University of the Philippines Diliman, Quezon City, Philippines

Selected Solo Exhibitions

- 2014 *The Chocolate Ruins*, Arndt Berlin, Germany

- Bato-Balani*, Ateneo Art Gallery, Quezon City, Philippines
- 2013 *The Ladder To Somewhere*, Arndt Singapore
- 2012 *Mystic Origins Plants*, Wada Fine Arts, Tokyo, Japan
- Deities*, West Gallery, Quezon City, Philippines
- Prism and Parallelism*, BenCab Museum, Baguio City, Philippines
- 2011 *Visions of Lore*, Caprice Horn Galerie, Berlin, Germany
- This Beast I Have Become*, Y++ Gallery, Beijing, China
- Believe it or Not*, Pinto Art Museum, Antipolo City, Philippines
- 2010 *Bulaklak ng Dila [Flowers of the Tongue]*, UP Vargas Museum, Quezon City, Philippines

- Memory Landscapes*, The Drawing Room, Makati City, Philippines
- 2009 *Mythical Roots*, Soka Art Center, Beijing, China
- Diorama*, The Drawing Room, Makati City, Philippines
- 2008 *Into the Forest*, Utterly Art and The Drawing Room, Singapore
- FOLKgoten*, The Drawing Room, Makati City, Philippines
- 2007 *Perya*, Boston Gallery, Quezon City, Philippines
- Mapapel*, The Drawing Room, Makati City, Philippines
- 2006 *Parables*, Utterly Art and The Drawing Room, Singapore
- Looban*, Boston Gallery, Quezon City, Philippines
- Tauhan*, Big and Small Art Co., Mandaluyong City, Philippines

- 2005 *Lunan*, Boston Gallery, Quezon City, Philippines
- Recent Paintings*, Big and Small Art Co., Mandaluyong City, Philippines
- 2004 *Balangkas*, Boston Gallery, Quezon City, Philippines

Selected Group Exhibitions

- 2014 10th Gwangju Biennale, Republic of Korea
- 2011 *BISA: Potent Presences*, Metropolitan Museum of Manila, Philippines
- 2009 *Thrice Upon a Time: A Century of Story in the Art of the Philippines*, Singapore Art Museum
- Verso Manila*, Verso Arte Contemporanea, Turin, Italy

Rodel Tapaya's paintings, often monumental in scale, make him the equivalent of an epic storyteller. The strain of narratives that works its way into his canvas is formed through a network of devices—from historical, satirical, mythical, and folkloric themes to contemporary scenes—and makes for an overwhelming composition that seems to draw infinite associations with the other elements within the frame. The vast reach of Tapaya's observations has enabled him to combine ethnic tales with ongoing social and ecological commentaries, resulting in a crowd of fragmented scenes that conjure up grand narratives.

Tapaya's paintings are prime examples of the socially critical art that has overwhelmed the Philippine landscape through years of poverty and political ineptitude. The components in his paintings are as diverse as the land's cultural condition: attempting to assimilate native customs with colonial influences, traditional values with modern vices, Mother Nature with the course of progress, and folk belief against popular entertainment. These yoked combinations inevitably foster a kind of mutation created by Tapaya through both linking and juxtaposition, until they begin to flow into each other, creating their own interwoven tales.

In a work called *Refreshing Fluid* (2014), Tapaya draws inspiration from an archaic legend about the origins of the Bogobo tribe, one of the first to settle the southern Philippine islands. In the story this tribe is described as having overcome a great drought by discovering water in sugar canes. Tapaya establishes a plethora of associations that, like

constellations, are connected by a network of lines originating from an image of a Bogobo tribesman. At the center is a sugar-cane stalk that literally provides droplets of water to the tribesman, while a stream gushes from its core into a dam which eventually turns into a tube and then into a power cable, suggesting the way in which water has been redirected to sustain an industrial society instead, leaving the fields of the tribesmen dry (as shown through the contrasting surfaces of verdant leaves against the mud cracks that formed in the land). In another work called *Repatriated*

Rodel Tapaya was born in Montalban,
Philippines, in 1980

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He lives and works in Bulacan,
Philippines

Bodies (2014), Tapaya depicts the *manananggal*, mythical, accursed creatures from Philippine folk tales said to have the ability to split their bodies in two, leaving behind their torsos as their upper extremities fly off in search of food and prey. The artist uses this bizarre tale as an allegory for the millions of Filipinos who work overseas to ensure the survival of families they leave behind: citizens in effect split in half, toiling in a land far from where their minds and hearts belong. The motifs of decapitation and flight reverberate through the painting, as the desperate expatriates face the perils of beheading and the hazards of working under extreme conditions, while

a winged dog, the symbol of liberation from another ethnic tale, arrives.

Tapaya's imagery is always predicated by native myth, which eventually intersects with society's present concerns. His works reflect the tribulations of his country; he is, first and foremost, a connoisseur of tales, possessing a keen eye for stories and narratives. Whether these are carried from generation to generation via oral tradition or written down in epic poems, Rodel Tapaya finds a way to revitalize the narratives in his canvases. As all great storytellers do, he draws connections between the imagined and the real, history and the present day, and myth and current events. His art is one of the few bearers of Filipino folklore and legends able to cross the threshold into the universal, being rich in both meaning and imagination, and validating a vibrant and worthwhile return to the power of allegory in painting.

- 2008 Bridge Art Show, New York, USA
- 2006 *New Directions*, The Rotunda Gallery, Neilson Hays Library, Bangkok, Thailand
- 2004 *Alay 8*, Pinto Art Museum, Antipolo City, Philippines
- Configured Drawings*, Cultural Center of the Philippines, Pasay City, Philippines
- Gamit*, UP Vargas Museum, Quezon City, Philippines
- Danas: Sinsin*, Cultural Center of the Philippines, Pasay City, Philippines
- 2002 *Toys*, Ayala Museum, Makati City, Philippines

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- 2015 Arndt, Matthias, ed. *Rodel Tapaya*. Berlin.
- 2014 Koerner von Gustorf, Oliver. "The Spirits in the Forests. Rodel Tapaya's Magical Art." *ArtMag by Deutsche Bank* 82. October 14. [Online]
- Rodel Tapaya: Bato-balani*. Exh. cat. Ateneo Art Gallery. Quezon City.
- 2013 Chia, Adeline. "Rodel Tapaya Mines Filipino Folklore for 'Ladder to Somewhere' [interview]." *Blouinartinfo*. April 3. [Online]
- 2012 Cristobal, Geronimo. *Cloudland. Rodel Tapaya*. Exh. pamphlet. Hong Kong International Art Fair. Manila.

- "Philippine Folk in a Labyrinth. Rodel Tapaya at Art Stage Singapore," in *Art Stage Singapore*. Exh. cat. Singapore.
- Emerging Asian Contemporary Philippines, Vol. 1. Rodel Tapaya: Mystic Origins Plants*. Exh. cat. Wada Fine Arts. Tokyo.
- "Rodel Tapaya," in *2012 Thirteen Artists Awards*. Exh. cat. Cultural Center of the Philippines. Pasay City.
- Rodel Tapaya: Prism and Parallelism*. Exh. cat. BenCab Museum. Baguio City.
- 2011 Cristobal, Jun. "Rodel Tapaya: A Painter's Life [interview]," in *Moment's Notice: Collected Encounters*. Edited by Jun Cristobal. Manila/Berlin.

- Rodel Tapaya: Believe it or Not*. Exh. cat. Pinto Art Museum. Antipolo City.
- Rodel Tapaya: The Beast I Have Become*. Exh. cat. Y++ Gallery. Beijing.
- 2010 *Rodel Tapaya: Bulaklak ng Dila [Flowers of the Tongue]*. Exh. cat. The Vargas Museum, Quezon City. Makati City.
- 2009 *Rodel Tapaya: Diorama*. Exh. pamphlet. The Drawing Room. Makati City.



Creation and Destruction, 2015
Acrylic on canvas
215 × 346 cm



Wealth Creation, 2015
Acrylic on canvas
214 x 346 cm



Refreshing Fluid, 2014
Acrylic on canvas
213 × 152 cm



Sound of the Healing Garden, 2015
Acrylic on canvas
229 × 335 cm





Chocolate Ruins, 2013
Acrylic on canvas
305 × 732 cm



Protection in the Forest, 2013
Acrylic on canvas, framed with
engraved tin sheet
166 × 137 cm



Lucky Fight, 2013
Acrylic on canvas, framed with
engraved tin sheet
166 × 137 cm



The Magic Stone, 2012
Acrylic on canvas
152 x 193 cm



Tatong Torres

- Education**
- Studies in Architecture, Mapúa Institute of Technology, Manila, Philippines
- Selected Solo Exhibitions**
- 2011 *Glutted Vertebrates*, 20Square, Silverlens, Makati City, Philippines
 - 2010 *Make_My_Day!*, LOKI at Second Life® (119,37,29)
 - 2010 *Make_My_Day!*, Yarn Factory Art Projects, Tochigi, Japan, at Second Life® (141,231,16)
 - 2009 *Odeon Universal Galaxy* (with Leeroy New), Blanc Compound, Mandaluyong City, Philippines
 - 2008 *The Most Genuine Regret*, Artinformal, Mandaluyong City, Philippines
 - Spotlight Dilemma*, Hiraya Gallery, Manila, Philippines
 - 2006 *Dominion*, Hiraya Gallery, Manila, Philippines
- Selected Group Exhibitions**
- 2014 *Dark Side of the Sun*, Artinformal, Mandaluyong City, Philippines
 - Manila: The Night Is Restless, The Day Is Scornful*, Arndt Singapore Fete Dela WSK 2012, Nova Gallery, Philippines
 - 2012 *Imagining Identity: 100 Filipino Self-Portraits*, Finale Art File, Makati City, Philippines
 - 2011 *Ateneo Art Awards 2011: Anatomy of Autonomy*, Ateneo Art Gallery, Quezon City, Philippines
 - LEA (Linden Endowment for the Arts) Art Sandbox – Self-Curating Gallery*, LEA 5 Sandbox at Second Life® (123,128,24)
 - University of Chester’s Secondlife Experiential Learning*, Art and Design Department, University of Chester at Second Life® (66,17)
 - The Magic of Second Life (SLB8)*, Dazzle at Second Life® (108,20,22)
 - A Crazy Lil Thing Co’llab*, Secret Fresh Gallery, San Juan City, Philippines
 - 2010 *Re:View 2010*, BenCab Museum, Baguio City, Philippines
 - Youtubia*, Finale Art File, Makati City, Philippines
 - Grand Opening*, Pinto Art Museum, Antipolo City, Philippines
 - Cos Zicarelli*, Tatong Torres, Allan Balisi: *Modern Life is Rubbish*, West Gallery, Quezon City, Philippines

In 2010, an avatar artist named Koto Nizna debuted his works in a newly constructed gallery called Yarn Factory Art Projects in Tochigi, Japan (141,231,16)—a virtual address that can only be found in the simulator program called *Second Life*, a virtual platform where internet users from around the world can recreate digital versions of themselves. Nizna's show, which was called *Make_My_Day_!*, was visited by several other avatars during its opening, had live music performances from virtual international bands, and featured virtual artworks: video, installation, and sculpture based on found 3D objects arranged across a virtual gallery. In 2011, Nizna's show was re-exhibited, this time as a video work in the real world, and it received critical attention as a form of pioneering art for the internet age. Conceptualized by Filipino artist Tatong Recheta Torres, the man behind the avatar, this virtual project was shortlisted in the Ateneo Art Awards.

This venture broke new ground in Philippine contemporary art as it offered "the ability to expand from Torres's art practice in real life from which he has since recognized its limitations," as the curators for the Ateneo Art Awards observed.¹ Torres acknowledged, "In this case [the virtual platform Yarn Factory], I am the architect, the construction worker, the manager, the curator, and the artist."² He assumes complete control of the vision for his work, and overcomes the limitations—whether material or conceptual—presented by the real world. As a form of material work, Torres exploits the ever-expanding landscape of the digital world. As a performance piece,

he offers a critical perspective on what can be counted as "real" concepts for art.

Torres's paintings—tangible, physical objects meant for the real world—are primarily sourced from the same digital sphere where he invented his virtual self. They integrate images that are culled from the virtual landscape: from the continuous chain of .jpeg and .gif images, from shared photos on social media, and streaming video from online platforms. Torres has begun to adapt, much in the same way as society did, to the visual landscape formed by the burgeoning world

Tatong Torres was born in Valenzuela,
Philippines, in 1979

*

He lives and works in Quezon City,
Philippines

of codes and binaries. He stalks the digital interface just as a landscape painter might wander a prairie for inspiration. But instead of simulating the nuances of how sunlight casts its shadow over the field or the movements made by each blade of grass, Torres records glitches—a kind of nuance concealed within the world inside the screen. He composes his paintings in contemplation of such digital metamorphoses—the passage from one code to another. Exploding pixels, truncated figures caused by missing data, and un-rendered 3D faces make up the visual artistic language in which Torres has become fluent.

Sources for the images collected by the artist range from obscure movies to pop icons. In his painting *002sntp-lod* (2014), for example, he portrays American singer Nina Simone as she appears during an image search in the internet, mired in the distortions accumulated during an unsteady download progress. Yet most of Torres's scenes are accidental, acquired not for their social or historical relevance but through haphazard appearances on the web. For Torres, these are like sightings, or moments of serendipity: fleeting instances where the significance of the image relies on its state during broadcast or streaming rather than on any inherent symbolism or iconography. Whether his works refer to the real or digital world is of no great consequence. As far as Torres is concerned, the online realm is very much part of our life while offline.

From the intangible, digital sphere onto the corporeal surface of the canvas, and then back to the virtual world: this is the cycle where Torres's images are conceived. It captures a new visual culture, one that has been acclimatized to the digital platform of onscreen activities. This is the new world: a new landscape in which artists such as Torres have immersed themselves, drawing from it new possibilities and new approaches to producing art.

- 1 "Curatorial Notes," in: *Ateneo Art Awards 2011: Anatomy of Autonomy*, exh. pamphlet, Shangri-la Plaza and Ateneo Art Gallery (Quezon City, 2011).
- 2 Tatong Torres, "Make_My_Day_! exhibition of Koto Nizna," *yarnfactoryartprojects.blogspot*, June 6, 2011, <http://yarnfactoryartprojects.blogspot.de/> (October 9, 2015).

<p>2009 <i>Forever and Ever and Ever and Ever</i>, Valentine Willie Fine Art, Singapore</p> <p><i>Seeing You, Seeing Me: Contemporary Portraiture</i>, Manila Contemporary, Philippines</p> <p><i>Leeroy New, Tatong Torres and Costantino Zicarelli</i>, Pinto Art Gallery, Antipolo City, Philippines</p> <p><i>Flow 3</i>, Silverlens, Makati City</p> <p>2008 <i>Room 307: Inkling, Gutfeel & Hunch</i>, National Art Gallery, Manila, Philippines</p> <p><i>Luwalhati</i>, Artinformal, Mandaluyong City, Philippines</p> <p>2007 <i>Tampo Lapuk</i>, 2nd Dumaguete Terracotta Biennial, Philippines</p>	<p>A +, Gallery Orange, Bacolod City, Philippines</p> <p><i>A Massive Disoriented Order</i>, Artinformal, San Juan City, Philippines</p> <p><i>Boxed 2</i>, Cultural Center of the Philippines, Pasay City, Philippines</p> <p>2006 <i>Upgrade: Young Contemporary Artists Series V.1</i>, Pinto Art Gallery, Antipolo City, Philippines</p> <p>Converge, Penguin Café Gallery, Manila, Philippines</p> <p>2006 <i>Space Launch</i>, Artinformal, Mandaluyong, Philippines</p>
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Selected Bibliography

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2012 Flores, Patrick D. *Imagining Identity: 100 Filipino Self-Portraits: A Selection from the Paulino Que Collection*. Exh. cat. Finale Art File. Makati City.

2011 Jaucian, Ian Carlo. *Ateneo Art Awards 2011: Anatomy of Autonomy*. Exh. cat. Ateneo Art Gallery. Quezon City.

2010 Francisco, Francis, and Maria Chittylene C. Labiran, eds. *Without Walls: A Tour of Philippine*

Paintings at the Turn of the Millenium. Pasig City.

2008 Bunoan, Ringo. *Room 307: Inkling, Gutfeel & Hunch*. Exh. cat. National Art Gallery. Manila.

Chan, Yonina. "The Fairest of Them All: A Meditation on Grotesquerie Highlights Arguments against Beauty." *Manila Bulletin*. June 16, p. E6.

Marcelo, Sam. "Ever Grotesque." *BusinessWorld*, May 7, p. 7.

Tatong Torres: The Most Genuine Regret. Exh. cat. Artinformal. Mandaluyong City.



005sntp-lod, 2014
Oil on canvas
Diptych, 183 x152 cm



001sntp-lod, 2014
Oil on canvas
183 × 244 cm



008sntp-lod (top) and 48 hour mush
(bottom), 2012–2015
Oil on canvas
Diptych, 122 × 183 cm

002sntp-lod, 2014
Oil on canvas
152 x 213 cm







Make_My_Day_1, 2010–2011
Screenshots of virtual installation in Second Life®
at Yarn Factory Art Projects, Tochigi, Japan
(141,231,16) and at LOKI (119,37,29)



Ronald Ventura

- Education**
- 1993 Bachelor of Fine Arts, Major in Painting, University of Santo Tomas, Manila, Philippines
- Selected Solo Exhibitions**
- | | | | | | | | |
|------|--|------|--|------|--|------|--|
| 2015 | <i>Big and Small</i> , Ayala Museum, Makati City, Philippines | 2011 | <i>Recyclables</i> , Singapore Tyler Print Institute | 2007 | <i>Zoomanities</i> , Art Center, Mandaluyong City, Philippines | 2003 | <i>Contrived Desires</i> , West Gallery, Mandaluyong City, Philippines |
| 2014 | <i>E.R. (Endless Resurrection)</i> , Tyler Rollins Fine Art, New York, USA | 2010 | <i>Fiesta Carnival</i> , Primo Marella Gallery, Milan, Italy | 2007 | <i>Illusions & Boundaries</i> , The Drawing Room, Makati City, Philippines | 2003 | <i>X-Squared</i> , West Gallery and Big & Small Art Co., Mandaluyong City, Philippines |
| | <i>Bulul, Ronald Ventura and the Traditional Art of the Philippines</i> , Museo delle Culture, Lugano, Switzerland | 2010 | <i>A Thousand Islands</i> , Tyler Rollins Fine Art, New York, USA | | <i>Under The Rainbow</i> , West Gallery, Mandaluyong City, Philippines | 2002 | <i>Visual Defects</i> , West Gallery, Mandaluyong City, Philippines |
| 2013 | <i>Voids and Cages</i> , Galerie Perrotin, Hong Kong, China | | <i>Humanime (I)</i> , Fine Art Centre, Taipei, Taiwan | 2006 | <i>Antipode: The Human Side</i> , Artisan Gallery + Studio, Singapore | 2001 | <i>Body</i> , The Drawing Room, Makati City, Philippines |
| 2012 | <i>Watching the Watchmen</i> , UP Vargas Museum, Quezon City, Philippines | 2010 | <i>Converging Nature</i> , The Drawing Room, Makati City, Philippines | 2006 | <i>Cross Encounters</i> , Ateneo Art Gallery, Quezon City, Philippines | 2001 | <i>The Other Side</i> , The Drawing Room, Makati City, Philippines |
| | | | <i>Fragmented Channels</i> , Primo Marella Gallery, Milan, Italy | | <i>Dialogue Box</i> , West Gallery, Mandaluyong City, Philippines | | <i>Doors</i> , Art Center, Mandaluyong City, Philippines |
| | | 2009 | <i>A Duad in Play (with Francis Ng)</i> , ICA Gallery, LASALLE College of the Arts, Singapore | 2005 | <i>Human Study</i> , The Cross Art Projects, Sydney, Australia | 2000 | <i>All Souls Day</i> , The Drawing Room, Makati City, Philippines |
| | | 2009 | <i>Metaphysics of Skin</i> , Tyler Rollins Fine Art, New York, USA | | <i>Morph</i> , West Gallery, Mandaluyong City, Philippines | | |
| | | | <i>Major Highways, Expressways and Principal Arterials</i> , Akili Museum of Art, Jakarta, Indonesia | 2004 | <i>Human Study</i> , Art Center, Mandaluyong City, Philippines | | |
| | | 2008 | <i>Mapping the Corporeal</i> , NUS Museum, National University of Singapore | | <i>Dead-End Images</i> , Art Center, Mandaluyong City, Philippines | | |
| | | | | | <i>Black Caricature</i> , Big & Small Art Co., Mandaluyong City, Philippines | | |

For many years, Ronald Ventura has produced artworks that attest to the powerful force of imagination when intertwined with the intricacies of history, the ambiguities of nature, and the arbitrariness of contemporary culture. Humans, unicorns and angels, toy figures and animals, skulls and images from popular culture, protagonists from Christian iconography: these may be inhabitants of very different worlds, yet Ventura's paintings allow them to come together in a bizarre union. Brought together erratically they transform each other in their claim for a new grotesque reality. It is their duty to appal and capture us in front of the pictures, just as Saint Anthony was tempted by visions of creatures from hell. In this way they can be compared to Pinocchio—a recurring motif in Ventura's oeuvre—and his desire to become real.

Ventura's works span a myriad of narratives that range from Filipino folklore, world myth, pop fiction, realism, naturalism, and fantasy. Combined in an exploded view inside the canvas, they signify what it means to be living in this day and age, particularly for the third-world Southeast Asian minority. The combination of technical virtuosity and the scope of subject matter displayed in each painting evokes the qualities of an epic, for which Ventura has gained attention as a master of his craft. The incredible depth of realism he applies to his figures generates a haunting view of a once familiar milieu now beset with layers of associations with other worlds: cartoon illustrations, mythical animals, ethnic tales, and elaborate plots. These grow from the base of Ventura's signature monochro-

matic sphere from which, from time to time, burst sudden rays of color; for example, a rainbow beams from the eyes of his creatures in *Rainbow in the Abyss* (2012–2013), or a yellow flame bursts from a dinosaur's mouth in *Greatest Show* (2012). More than stories, these are cautionary tales—of a world being eclipsed by its own imagination.

From human faces to rampaging animals, Ventura's paintings engage by the unshackled spirit within. His scenes depict the vigor of activity and transformation. Even his seemingly static portraits become "unfrozen"

Ronald Ventura was born in Manila,
Philippines, in 1972

*

He lives and works in Manila,
Philippines

through their metamorphoses. Everything inside the canvas breaks into a succession of tales. The passages from each chapter move from canvas to sculpture to installations, like creatures breaking out from their two-dimensional outline. As they roam the gallery space, the essence of Ventura's art becomes more palpable, a lingering force in each individual seeking to break free through expression, imagination, and transformation. This is where, in Ventura's pursuit, man and beast become one, as they shed every notion of history, memory, and cultural identity in lieu of an instinct that puts an end to all distinctions between tamer and untamed, liberator and prisoner.

In *Carne Carnivale* (from the *Endless Resurrection* series) (2014), Ventura presents a carnival scene with performers masked as animals, their faces replaced by those of horses, apes, and eagles. This coincides with Ventura's recurring motif of intertwining man's domain with that of beast, blurring rationality with instinct, and presenting pleasure and entertainment with a kind of ambiguity. Behind the acrobatics and breathtaking routines of circus characters, a text completes the thought: "the greatest show on earth." Through Ventura's vision the *greatest show* becomes a great *absurdity*, where all creatures on the world's stage become one, both tamed and untamed—everything becomes an act, a well-rehearsed trick.

Ronald Ventura's paintings and sculptures, seemingly products of parody and juxtaposition, are in fact uncompromising manifestations of the mind's reality struggling with the ambiguities of history and culture. They present an architecture of the mind, moving back and forth between the tamed surface of reality and the deep recesses of fantasy.

Selected Group Exhibitions

- 2011 *Surreal Versus Surrealism in Contemporary Art*, Institut Valencià d'Art Modern, Spain
- 2010 Nanjing Biennale, China
- 2009 4th Prague Biennale, Czech Republic
- 2005 *Ateneo Art Awards; Cross Encounters*, Power Plant Mall, Rockwell Center, Makati City, Philippines
- 2004 *Korea Asian Art Festival*, Insa Art Plaza, Seoul, Republic of Korea
- 19th Asian International Art Exhibition, Fukuoka Asian Art Museum, Japan
- 2003 *Thirteen Artists Awards*, Cultural Center of the Philippines, Pasay City, Philippines
- 2002 *ASEAN Art Awards*, Bali International Convention Centre, Nusa Dua, Bali, Indonesia
- 2001 8th Annual Filipino American Arts

- Exposition, Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, San Francisco, California
- Balik Guhit*, Cultural Center of the Philippines, Pasay City, Philippines
- 2000 *Guhit I, II & III*, Ayala Museum, Makati City; UST Museum, University of Santo Tomas, Manila; UP Vargas Museum, Quezon City, Philippines
- 1999 *Mad About Lithographs*, Ayala Museum, Makati City, Philippines
- 9th International Biennial Print and Drawing Exhibition, Taipei Fine Arts Museum, Taiwan
- 1998 *ASEAN Art Awards*, Hanoi Fine Arts College and Ho Chi Minh Fine Arts Museum, Hanoi, Vietnam
- 1st Lithograph Competition Exhibition*, Drawing Room, Makati City, Philippines

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- 2014 *Ronald Ventura: E. R. (Endless Resurrection)*. Exh. cat. Tyler Rollins Fine Art. New York.
- 2013 Bollandsee, Marc. "Ronald Ventura," in idem. *Southeast Asian Contemporary Art Now*, pp. 104–119. Singapore. Kolesnikov-Jessop, Sonia. "Filipino Artist Ronald Ventura Is Making Connections Across Cultures." *Blouinartinfo*. February 18, 2013. [Online]
- 2012 Flores, Patrick D. *Ronald Ventura: Watching the Watchmen*. Exh. cat. UP Vargas Museum. Quezon City. [Online]
- Rees, Lucy. "Ronald Ventura, Culture Compression [interview]." *Flash Art* (November/December): pp. 86–89.

- Ronald Ventura: Recyclables*. Exh. cat. Singapore Tyler Print Institute. Singapore.
- 2011 *Ronald Ventura: A Thousand Islands*. Exh. cat. Tyler Rollins Fine Art. New York. [Online]
- 2010 *A Duad in Play: Francis Ng & Ronald Ventura*, LASALLE College of the Arts. Singapore.
- Ito, Lisa. "Ronald Ventura," in *Without Walls: A Tour of Philippine Paintings at the Turn of the Millennium*. Edited by Francis Francisco and Maria Chittyrene C. Labiran, pp. 24–27. Pasig City. [Online]
- 2009 *Metaphysics of Skin*. Exh. cat. Tyler Rollins Fine Art. New York. [Online]



Kiss (from the *Watching the Watchmen* series), 2012
Fiberglass, resin, charcoal
183 × 79 × 59 cm



Ancestry (from the Watching the
Watchmen series), 2012
Fiberglass, resin, charcoal, metal
213 × 82 × 82 cm



Hell (from the *Voids and Cages* series), 2013
Oil on canvas
213 × 152 cm



Greatest Show, 2012
Oil on canvas
152 x 213 cm

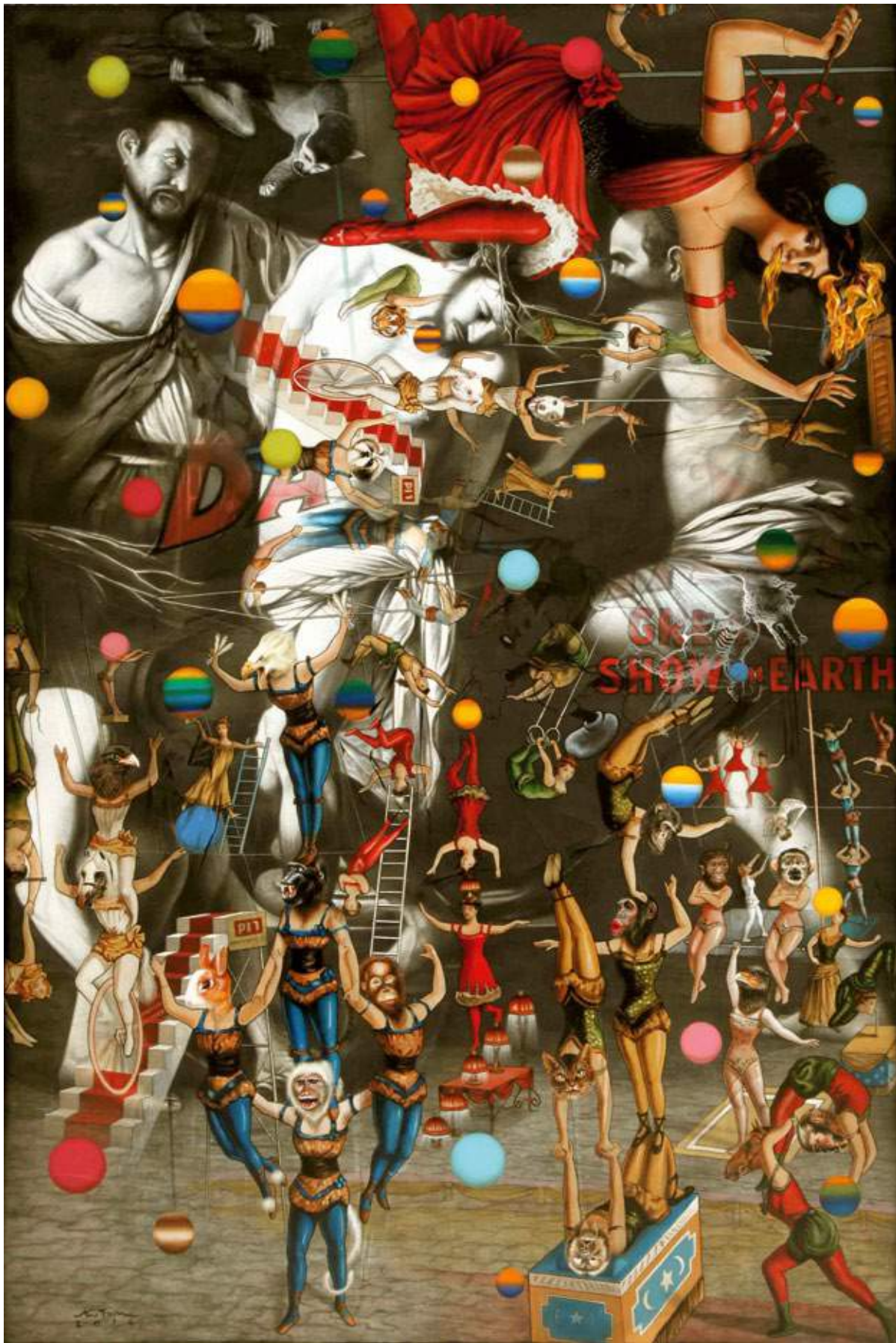


The Inbetween Nest, 2013
Oil on canvas
152 x 305 cm



Rainbow in the Abyss, 2012–2013
Oil and graphite on canvas
214 × 275 cm

Carne Carnivale (from the *Endless Resurrection series*), 2014
Oil on canvas
183 × 122 cm



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Taipei, Taiwan // p. 65: Courtesy of ARNDT Fine Art; photo: Marina Cruz // p. 68: Courtesy of Kawayan de Guia and Collection of Juan Carlo Calma; photo: MM Yu // p. 69: Courtesy of Kawayan de Guia; photo: MM Yu // p. 70: Courtesy of The Drawing Room, Makati City, Philippines, and Collection of Paulino Que; photo: The Drawing Room, Makati City, Philippines // p. 71: Courtesy of SEAC Collection, Singapore; photo: Olivia Kwok // p. 72: Courtesy of Singapore Art Museum Collection; photo: Singapore Art Museum // p. 73 (top and bottom): Courtesy of Palais de Tokoyo, Paris, France; photos: Kawayan de Guia // pp. 74–75: Courtesy of The Drawing Room, Makati City, Philippines, and Collection of Norman Grisologo; photo: The Drawing Room, Makati City, Philippines // pp. 78/79: Courtesy of and photo: Secret Fresh Gallery, San Juan City, Philippines // pp. 80/81: Courtesy of ARNDT Fine Art and Tin-aw Art Management, Inc., Makati City, Philippines; photo: Tin-aw Art Management, Inc., Makati City, Philippines // pp. 82/83: Courtesy of Valentine Willie Fine Art, Singapore, and Tin-aw Art Management, Inc., Makati City, Philippines; photo: Tin-aw Art Management, Inc., Makati City, Philippines // p. 84: Courtesy of ARNDT Fine Art; photo: Olivia Kwok // p. 85: Courtesy of and photo: Tin-aw Art Management, Inc., Makati City, Philippines // pp. 88–89: Courtesy of Artinformal, Mandaluyong City, Philippines; photos: Mark Bugante // pp. 90–91: Courtesy of Artinformal, Mandaluyong City, Philippines; photo: Miguel Castro // pp. 92–93: Courtesy of Blanc Gallery, Quezon City, Philippines; photo: Miguel Castro // pp. 96–101: Courtesy of ARNDT Fine Art; photos: Bernd Borchardt // p. 102: Courtesy of private collection; photo: MM Yu // p. 103: Courtesy of Nona Garcia; photo: MM Yu // pp. 106–109: Courtesy of private collection; photos: Pow Martinez // p. 110: Courtesy of ARNDT Fine Art and private collection, USA; photo: Olivia Kwok // p. 111: Courtesy of ARNDT Fine

Art and private collection, Singapore; photo: Olivia Kwok // pp. 112–113: Courtesy of private collection; photos: Pow Martinez // p. 116–119: Courtesy of Galerie Nathalie Obadia, Paris, and Nosbaum Reding, Luxembourg; photos: Pierre Schwartz // p. 120: Courtesy of Manuel Ocampo; photo: MM Yu // pp. 121–123: Courtesy of Tyler Rollins Fine Art, New York; photos: MM Yu // pp. 126–127: Courtesy of and photos: Alwin Reamillo // pp. 128/129: Courtesy of ARNDT Fine Art; photo: Olivia Kwok // pp. 130–131: Courtesy of and photos: Alwin Reamillo // pp. 132/133: Courtesy of Hugo Bunzl Collection; photo: Alwin Reamillo // pp. 136–138: Courtesy of ARNDT Fine Art; photos: Touki Roldan // p. 139: Courtesy of ARNDT Fine Art and John Chia Collection; photo: Olivia Kwok // p. 140: Courtesy of Michael Angelo and Marilou Samson Collection; photo: At Maculangan // pp. 141–143: Courtesy of ARNDT Fine Art; photos: Touki Roldan // pp. 146/147: Courtesy of Collection of John Lloyd Cruz; photo: Antonio Luis Santos // p. 148 (top): Courtesy of Valentine Willie Fine Art, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia; photo: Kaloy Sanchez // p. 148 (bottom): Courtesy of West Gallery, Quezon City, Philippines; photo: Kaloy Sanchez // p. 149: Courtesy of West Gallery, Quezon City, Philippines; photo: Ian Santos // p. 150: Courtesy of West Gallery, Quezon City, Philippines; photo: Kaloy Sanchez // p. 151: Courtesy of West Gallery, Quezon City, Philippines; photo: Antonio Luis Santos // p. 152: Courtesy of ARNDT Fine Art and private collection, Singapore; photo: Antonio Luis Santos // p. 153: Courtesy of West Gallery, Quezon City, Philippines; photo: Antonio Luis Santos // p. 156 (top and bottom): Courtesy of and photos: Pearl Lam Galleries, Singapore // p. 157: Courtesy of UP Vargas Museum, Quezon City, Philippines; photo: Nathaniel Salang // p. 158: Courtesy of Pearl Lam Galleries, Singapore; photo: At Maculangan // p. 159 (top): Courtesy of UP Vargas Museum, Quezon City, Philippines;

photo: José Santos III // p. 159 (bottom): Courtesy of BenCab Museum, Baguio City, Philippines; photo: José Santos III // pp. 160/161: Courtesy of Hong Kong International Art Fair, Hong Kong, China; photo: At Maculangan // p. 164: Courtesy of ARNDT Fine Art and private collection, Malaysia; photo: Rodel Tapaya // pp. 165–166: Courtesy of ARNDT Fine Art and private collection, Philippines; photos: Rodel Tapaya // p. 167: Courtesy of private collection, Australia; photo: Rodel Tapaya // pp. 168/169: Courtesy of ARNDT Fine Art and private collection, Indonesia; photo: At Maculangan // p. 170 (top): Courtesy of ARNDT Fine Art and private collection, Berlin; photo: At Maculangan // p. 170 (bottom): Courtesy of ARNDT Fine Art and Michael and Janet Buxton Collection, Australia; photo: At Maculangan // p. 171: Courtesy of ARNDT Fine Art and private collection, Berlin; photo: Rodel Tapaya // p. 174: Courtesy of ARNDT Fine Art and private collection, Philippines; photo: Olivia Kwok // p. 175: Courtesy of Collection of Paulino Que; photo: Tatong Torres // p. 176: Courtesy of Collection of Jay Amante (top) and Collection of Toto Salgado (bottom); photos: Tatong Torres // p. 177: Courtesy of Collection of Soler Santos; photo: Tatong Torres // pp. 178–179: Courtesy of Tatong Torres // pp. 182–189: Courtesy of private collections, photos: The Working Animals Art Projects

Colophon

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Pow Martinez, *New World*, 2011

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— *Matthias Arndt*

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Buen Calubayan
Louie Cordero
Jigger Cruz
Marina Cruz
Kawayan de Guia
Alfredo Esquillo
Ian Fabro
Nona Garcia
Pow Martinez
Manuel Ocampo
Alwin Reamillo
Norberto Roldan
Kaloy Sanchez
José Santos III
Rodel Tapaya
Tatong Torres
Ronald Ventura