

LEÓN GALLERY INTERNATIONAL



RAM MALLARI  
MEGS EMPINADO

# MISGALLA

2.2.22



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# DIAPYSGIS

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**‘Di Pasisiil**  
**The Unconquerable**  
 By Lisa Guerrero Nakpil

Lapulapu and Sultan Muhammad Kudarat, José Rizal and Andres Bonifacio, Emilio Aguinaldo and Apolinario Mabini, Antonio Luna and Macario Sakay, Gabriela Silang and Gregorio del Pilar.

These are The Unconquerable, the Filipino heroes who each stand for one facet of the Filipino spirit. They have a purity of heart but are also imbued with courage and strength, imagination and purpose; noble as lions but also as cunning as tigers.

These are the ‘Di Pasisiil, the men and women who carved out with their blood and tears the future of the Filipino nation.

‘Di Pasisiil is an extraordinary exhibition that puts together two excellent sculptors, Ram Mallari and Megs Empinado, in their quest to bring this Filipino pantheon into the 21st century.

They did this by a special alchemy, using the most recognizable aspects of these heroes and making them super-heroes armed with poetic steampunk contraptions that are strangely of this world but also of the next.

Thus, Bonifacio rides a majestic warhorse into battle; Mabini is on a wheelchair with tank treads but brandishes a quill nevertheless; Sakay’s locks stream behind him on a Mad-Max motocross; the dapper gentleman-general Goyo strikes a languid pose beside a two-wheeler. Rizal stands tall, doctor’s bag in hand, ready to take flight with twin propulsion jets strapped to his back. Sultan Kudarat steers a ship with riveted sails and Lapulapu is an android warrior. Emilio Aguinaldo, Heneral Luna, Gabriela Silang fight on in metal and resin. All of them go beyond their personal histories and are as we venerate them.

The work style for the ‘Di Pasisiil heroes was highly collaborative: “We did extensive research on the elements that we could use, then we brainstormed about the concept before going on with the sculpting process. After each initial sculpture was done, Ram would add the steampunk magic,” said Megs Empinado describing their process. “A number of adjustments and revisions were made, for both our parts, to ensure that the ultimate outcome was as close to perfection as possible.”

Megs would take two to three weeks to do each sculpture, as Ram would provide input. Another fortnight was necessary to add Ram’s particular steampunk adornment. There are gears and cogs, dials and switches, not to mention Victorian armaments such as flintlocks to create the overall look. A suitably period paint finish in weathered gun metal, copper and bronze was the final touch.

But there are other characters in this collection, both historic and pop phenomenons, from the 500-year old Battle of Mactan to the bulul as well as uniquely Philippine creatures from our jungles, the eagle and the tarsier.

We invite you to enter this world created by Mallari and Empinado that is by turns solemn and playful, familiar yet surprising, but always Filipino.

*Re-use, re-cycle and re-purpose : This is the mantra of my art to help create a sustainable future.— Ram Mallari*

*Cyberpunk and steampunk are brothers in the arts. They both fuse together the past, present and the future. — Megs Empinado*

**MARIO “RAM” MALLARI JR.**

Ram Mallari’s first dream was to become an architect but that was put aside when he became a married man and a father, obliged to leave the country to work as a draftsman in the Middle East in order to support his family.

He next longed to become an artist but it was only in 2012 that he finally found the courage to quit his job and strike out on his own.

In his childhood around Batasan, Quezon City, he lived near a landfill that was covered with heaps of scrap metal. He befriended a picker — and recalls now, “I thought he must be the richest man in the world! His hut was full of the most fascinating objects!”

This became the start of a lifelong obsession, helped along by a family that included several skilled metal-smiths. Mallari would learn to find both beauty and inspiration in the piles of salvageable materials in the neighborhood. “The art of re-purposing objects was not as important nor as relevant as it has become in the past decade. Today, the entire world has seen the wisdom of re-using the objects that have been created before at considerable cost to the environment. Harnessing these resources and giving them a new meaning is what my art is based on.

Mallari has thus received international attention from the likes of the Washington Post, NBC and BBC News. Most recently, he was invited to be guest artist and lecturer at an art workshop of the Singapore Science Museum.

His works may be described as “RetroFuturistic,” straddling both the past and the future, living both in found memory and an imagined utopia inhabited by knights in shining armor, wildcats and puppy dogs, zeppelins, chess pieces, clocks, wicked guitars and pop icons.

— LGN

**MEGS EMPINADO**

Megs Empinado is a CG Artist/Art Director with several years of professional experience in a wide variety of areas such as films, tv commercials ,game development, and rapid prototyping. (Rapid prototyping is the fast fabrication of a physical part, model or assembly using 3D computer-aided design (CAD).)

He has worked in-house at some of the leading local studios for Visual Special Effects (VFX). Empinado was also a sculptor for major collectible companies under license from Marvel and DC. This year, Megs enters the art scene as Ram Mallari’s collaborator and protégé.

“I’d like my artwork to speak across time, across eras,” Megs emphasizes. “I’d like to think that even a century from now, future generations will appreciate these Filipino heroes and how we have presented them. I would like to go beyond the ‘modern’, even when speaking about the process. ”

“If I could develop a sub-genre of punk, I would call it ‘wormhole punk’, he says, “time travel that has history lock arms with the future.”

— LGN



**APOLINARIO MABINI**

(1864-1903)  
Intellectual,  
Revolutionary Statesman

Mixed Media  
Welded Sculpture  
H 26 x W 15.5 x L 20.5 inches  
H 66 x W 39.4 x L 52 cm







**GREGORIO DEL PILAR**

(1875-1899)  
General of the Philippine  
Revolutionary Army  
Hero of Tirad Pass

Mixed Media  
Welded Sculpture  
H 25 x W 21 x L 13 inches  
H 63.5 x W 53.3 x L 33 cm





**MACARIO SAKAY**

(1870-1907)  
General of the Philippine  
Revolutionary Army

Mixed Media Welded Sculpture  
H 27 x W 27 x L 14 inches  
H 68.6 x W 68.6 x L 35.6 cm



# SULTAN MUHAMMAD KUDARAT

Defender of Mindanao

Mixed Media Welded Sculpture

H 33.25 x W 27.5 x L 19 inches

H 84.5 x W 70 x L 48.3 cm







The First Unconquerable  
Hero of the Battle of Mactan

## LAPULAPU

Mixed Media Welded Sculpture

H 25 x W 12 x L 15 inches

H 63.5 x W 30.5 x L 38 cm



**ANTONIO LUNA**

(1866-1899)

General of the Philippine  
Revolutionary Army

Mixed Media

Welded Sculpture

H 25 x W 22 x L 15 inches

H 63.5 x W 56 x L 38 cm





## JOSE RIZAL

(1861-1896)

Intellectual, Writer

Mixed Media

Welded Sculpture

H 45 x W 13.25 x L 15 inches

H 114.3 x W 33.7 x L 38 cm







**ANDRES BONIFACIO**

(1863-1897)

Father of the Philippine Revolution

Mixed Media Welded Sculpture

H 27 x W 22 x L 12 inches

H 68.6 x W 56 x L 30.5 cm



**TARSIUS**

Mixed Media Welded Sculpture

H 26 x W 12 x L 12 inches

H 66 x W 30.5 x L 30.5 cm



**JOLIBEE RIDER**

Mixed Media Welded Sculpture

H 19.5 x W 20 x L 9 inches

H 49.5 x W 51 x L 23 cm

**MECHANICAL BULL**

Mixed Media Welded Sculpture

H 7 x W 7 x L 10 inches

H 17.8 x W 17.8 x L 25.4 cm







**MAZINGER BULUL**

Mixed Media Welded Sculpture  
H 24 x W 11 x L 13 inches  
H 61 x W 28 x L 33 cm



**LAWIN**

Mixed Media  
Welded Sculpture  
H 22.5 x W 16 x L 24 inches  
H 57.2 x W 38 x L 61 cm



**BATTLE OF MACTAN**

Resin  
H 30 x W 21.5 x L 21.5 inches  
H 76 x W 54.6 x L 54.6 cm



**TANDANG SORA**

Resin  
H 22 x W 12 x L 11.5 inches  
H 56 x W 30.5 x L 29 cm



**CYBERPUNK LUNA**

Resin  
H 24 x W 11 x L 9.5 inches  
H 61 x W 28 x L 24 cm







**CYBERPUNK BONIFACIO**

Resin

H 24 x W 11 x L 11 inches

H 61 x W 28 x L 28 cm

Resin

H 24 x W 11 x L 11 inches

H 61 x W 28 x L 28 cm



**CYBERPUNK RIZAL**

Resin

H 24 x W 10 x L 13.5 inches

H 61 W 25.4 x L 34.3 cm





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