

León Gallery  
FINE ART & ANTIQUES



# The Asian Cultural Council Auction 2026

14 FEBRUARY 2026 | 2:00 PM





# Auction

14 February 2026  
Saturday, 2:00 PM

## Preview

Saturday to Friday  
7 - 13 September 2026  
9:00 AM - 7:00 PM

## Venue

G/F Eurovilla 1, Rufino corner Legazpi  
Streets, Legazpi Village, Makati City,  
Metro Manila, Philippines

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Lot 13

**Fernando Amorsolo** (1892 - 1972)

*Site of U.P. Diliman*



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Lot 61

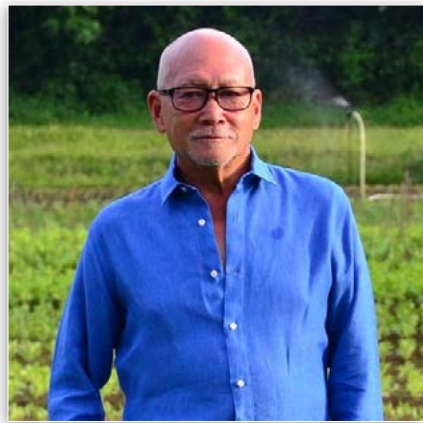
Fernando Zóbel (1924 - 1984)

Painting #2



08 - 09	Foreword
10 - 261	Lots 1 - 148
262	Index
263	Terms & Conditions
264	Registration Form





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## Message of the Chairman Asian Cultural Council Philippines

For eleven years, the Asian Cultural Council Philippines Foundation, Inc. and Leon Gallery have stood side by side in a shared vision—to champion the arts as a force that transcends borders, sparks dialogue, and shapes cultural leadership. This enduring partnership is rooted in a belief that art has the power to connect people, tell our stories, and carry the spirit of creativity forward to future generations of Filipino artists.

This year's benefit art auction is held on Valentine's Day as an ode to love in its most enduring form: love for the arts, love for generosity, and love for helping others realize their creative potential. Each work offered is more than an object of beauty; it is an act of giving, made meaningful through its support of the ACC Philippines Fellowship Program.

Through the generosity of artists, collectors, benefactors, and partners, this fundraising auction sustains opportunities for

Filipino artists, scholars, and arts professionals to explore new ideas, deepen their practice, and engage in cultural exchange across the United States and anywhere in Asia.

On this day of love, we invite you to be part of a collective effort that strengthens our cultural ecosystem and affirms the lasting power of art to inspire, connect, and transform.

Ernest L. Escaler  
Chairman

ASIAN CULTURAL COUNCIL  
PHILIPPINES FOUNDATION INC.



The First Lady and Honorary ACC Chairperson Liza Araneta Marcos together with (Left to right) Alice G. Eduardo, Mercedes Zóbel, Dr. Joven Cuanang, Amb. Isabel Caro Wilson (seated), ACC Chairperson Josie Natori, ACC Philippines Chairman Ernest L. Escaler, Anton Mendoza, Rajo Laurel, Maribel Ongpin, Ching Cruz, Malu Gamboa Lindo, and ACC Philippine Director Tess Rances

León Gallery  
FINE ART & ANTIQUES

## Foreword

DEAR FRIENDS and CLIENTS,

The spirit of collaboration runs deep in this year's edition of the Asian Cultural Council Auction. Now in our 11th year of partnership with our friends from the ACC Philippines Foundation, this annual benefit art auction takes place on Valentine's Day, endowing the gift of love and generosity by remaining committed to championing the virtuoso of the Filipino artist, allowing him to spread his creative wings on foreign shores.

Our major highlights for this year's ACC auction underscore the remarkable collaborations between our esteemed Filipino artists.

**Paglaom Padayon** is a mural-sized painting by the **Sanggawa** group, an artists' collective composed of former Salingpusa group members and now influential forces in the contemporary art scene: Elmer Borlongan, Mark Justiniani, Joy Mallari, Karen Flores, and Federico Sievert. The title is a Cebuano phrase that translates to "move forward with hope" and is a modern-day homage to Botong Francisco's iconic 1964 mural "*Filipino Struggles Through History*." *Paglaom Padayon* encapsulates the Filipino people's collective power, fueled by a shared vision and hope for the nation's advancement.

Another monumental painting is **Mauro Malang Santos' Interaction** with his two beloved sons, **Soler and Steve**. Painted in 2000, the start of the new millennium, the colossal work marked Malang's 72nd birthday and his four decades in the art scene. It was the first collaborative work Malang painted with his two equally talented sons.

**Patricio Gaston O'Farrell**, the favorite student of the great Juan Luna, graces this auction with a copy of his mentor's now-lost 1887 masterpiece, titled **Portrait of Christ**, depicting the weary Jesus as he is presented to Pontius Pilate for his trial. *Portrait of Christ* serves as a surviving memento of Luna's lost work, which he painted four months after his marriage to Paz Pardo de Tavera, to prove his religious piety to her.



Another work by O'Farrell, **Sumbungan**, depicts the discovery of the Katipunan through the confession of Teodoro Patiño, who divulged its existence to Fr. Mariano Gil, then the parish priest of Tondo. The painting is one of O'Farrell's last works, painted a year before he died in 1942. Both *Portrait of Christ* and *Sumbungan* came from the collection of Gaston O'Farrell's daughter, Edith.

**Fernando Amorsolo's Site of U.P. Diliman**, painted in 1947, captures the then-countryside expanse of what would become the future location of the country's prestigious national university. Also important is **Danilo Dalena's America**, a surviving work from an intended series, the Port Authority Series, which would have embodied his satirical impressions of the United States he visited and witnessed in the 80s.

**Fray Juan de la Concepcion's Historia General de Philipinas** comes in this auction in its rare, complete, 14-volume form. Heralded as one of the most significant early modern Spanish colonial publications in the country, it contains an original copper engraving of Fr. Pedro Murillo Velarde's Mapa de las Yslas Filipinas, inarguably the most important of all Philippine maps. Also highlighted is a first edition copy of **Dr. Jose Rizal's El Filibusterismo**, signed and dedicated to a fellow ilustrado, Don Trinidad H. Pardo de Tavera.

On behalf of Team León Gallery, join us as we continue our mission to support the Filipino artist and foster cultural exchanges across the globe. This Valentine's Day, let us allow love to prevail, one that cultivates passion for the arts and goodwill towards each other in building a culturally conscious nation.

Yours sincerely,

Jaime L. Ponce de León  
Director  
LEÓN GALLERY



**Elmer Borlongan** (b. 1967)

*Supremo*  
hand-signed and dated 2020 (lower right)  
rubbercut print, 5/12  
6 1/2" x 4 1/2" (17 cm x 11 cm)

**P 50,000**

PROVENANCE  
Private collection, Manila

Centering the Filipino everyman in many of his works, there is perhaps no better subject for Elmer Borlongan to depict than one of the Filipino revolutionaries, Andres Bonifacio. His 2020 *Supremo* uses only shades of black and red in its depiction of this Filipino hero, and yet it portrays perfectly the grit his story needs to be told.

"There is no overt symbolism in any of my works, but there is always a story to be told," he said in Oscar Campomanes's monograph *Elmer Borlongan: An Ordinary Man, An Extraordinary Life*.



Indeed, his *Supremo* shows his charm – a straightforward portrait with little to assuage on. As Borlongan said in the Campomanes book, "The people in my paintings don't show so much emotion in their entire faces, but you can see it in their eyes." (*Hannah Valiente*)

**Leon Pacunayen** (b. 1935)

*Untitled*  
signed (lower right)  
oil on canvas  
22" x 38" (56 cm x 97 cm)

**P 120,000**



Shortly after graduating from the university, Leon Pacunayen already created a niche for himself in the local art scene with his astonishing watercolor paintings. In 1959, he held his first solo exhibition at the Philippine Art Gallery, and that same year, he won first prize at the Art Association of the Philippines' annual art competition. Using a wet paper technique and treating

his subjects with a sense of weight and atmosphere, he creates ethereal landscapes with distinct fluidity and depth. Pacunayen primarily uses earthy, somber color tones, which, in turn, set the mood of his paintings. This untitled work exemplifies his artistic prowess, creating an oil painting with a visual aesthetic almost identical to that of his revered watercolor paintings. (*Jessica Magno*)

**Lao Lianben** (b. 1948)

*Untitled*  
signed (lower right)  
acrylic on canvas  
11 1/2" x 8 1/2" (29 cm x 22 cm)

**P 300,000**

One of the country's most esteemed abstractionists, Lao Lianben's works are minimalist yet emotionally charged. This particular work echoes a typical Lao work of grey, black, and white. Often associated with the spirit and aesthetics of Zen, his works embody that soft, quiet tension and meditative serenity that translates to soft brushstrokes and layered textures.

There is much to see in the works of Lao Lianben, a piece that draws the eye and invites the viewers into a solemn place separate from the chaotic world. Famed for his poignant abstractions, Lao delivers multitudes of subjects, all in various states of black and white, that are silent in presentation yet powerful in their delivery. (*Hannah Valiente*)



**Mario De Rivera** (b. 1953)

*Ave Maris Stella*  
signed and dated 2007 (lower right)  
acrylic, modeling paste and photo transfers on wood  
29 1/4" x 25 1/4" (74 cm x 64 cm)

**P 60,000**

Accompanied by a certificate signed by the artist confirming the authenticity of this lot

Luminous, devotional, and magnificent, Mario De Rivera's *Ave Maria Stella*, named after an ancient hymn to the Virgin Mary, reimagines Marian devotion through a visual language that blends religious iconography, Filipino folkloric elements, and baroque ornamentation while exploring themes of protection and dedication.

Focusing on the central figure, the standing Virgin Mary, dressed in an elaborately patterned blue mantle, positioned at the edge of the sea vehicle, standing on a golden nautilus shell, Mario De Rivera uses golden shade to mimic Spanish colonial retablos, and the light blue tone provides a surreal atmosphere that gives the painting its otherworldly mood.



The artist used the image of the Virgin Mary as a reference to Christianity's arrival in the Philippines by sea, as well as to maritime being the native's primary livelihood before the Spaniards arrived, effectively transforming the holy image not only into a religious figure but also into an anchor. Building a bridge between indigenous sensibilities and inherited Catholic tradition. (*Mark John Castañeda*)





5 PROPERTY FROM THE DR. LEOVINO MA. GARCIA COLLECTION

**Onib Olmedo** (1937 - 1996)

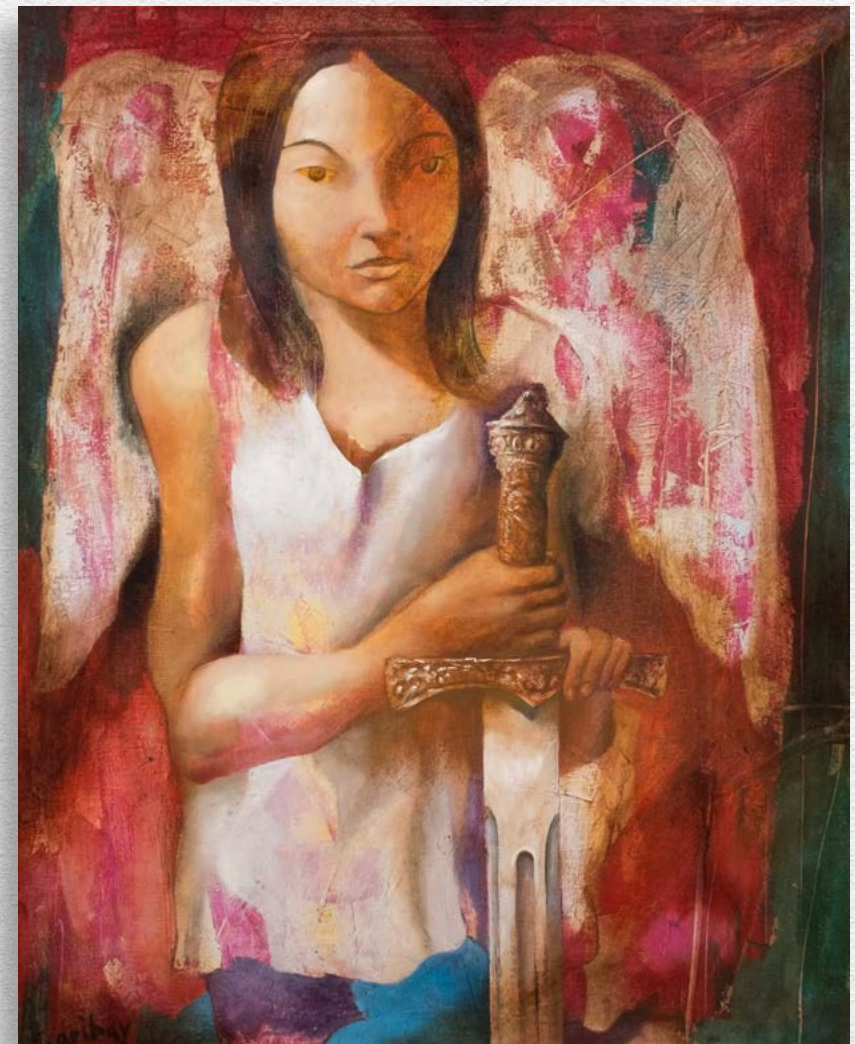
*Untitled (Father and Son)*  
signed and dated 1991 (lower right)  
pastel on felt paper  
27" x 21 1/4" (69 cm x 54 cm)

**P 160,000**

León Gallery wishes to thank Ms. Gisella Olmedo-Araneta for confirming the authenticity of this lot

With canvases characterized by dark, somber, and depressing tones, Onib Olmedo shook the 1970s Philippine art scene, which was, at the time, dominated by relaxing landscapes and genre subjects. Aside from his figures with grotesque, warped features, what makes his paintings more haunting and disturbing is that they depict the realities of people on the fringes of society. The hunger, anguish, suffering, and

injustices they were experiencing were clearly evident in their physiques. In this particular piece, Olmedo's use of pastel and felt paper increased the image's texture and distortion, further highlighting its melancholia. (*Jessica Magno*)



6

**Emmanuel Garibay** (b. 1962)

*Girl with Sword*  
signed (lower left)  
oil on canvas  
29" x 23" (74 cm x 58 cm)

**P 300,000**

Leon Gallery wishes to thank the artist for confirming the authenticity of this lot

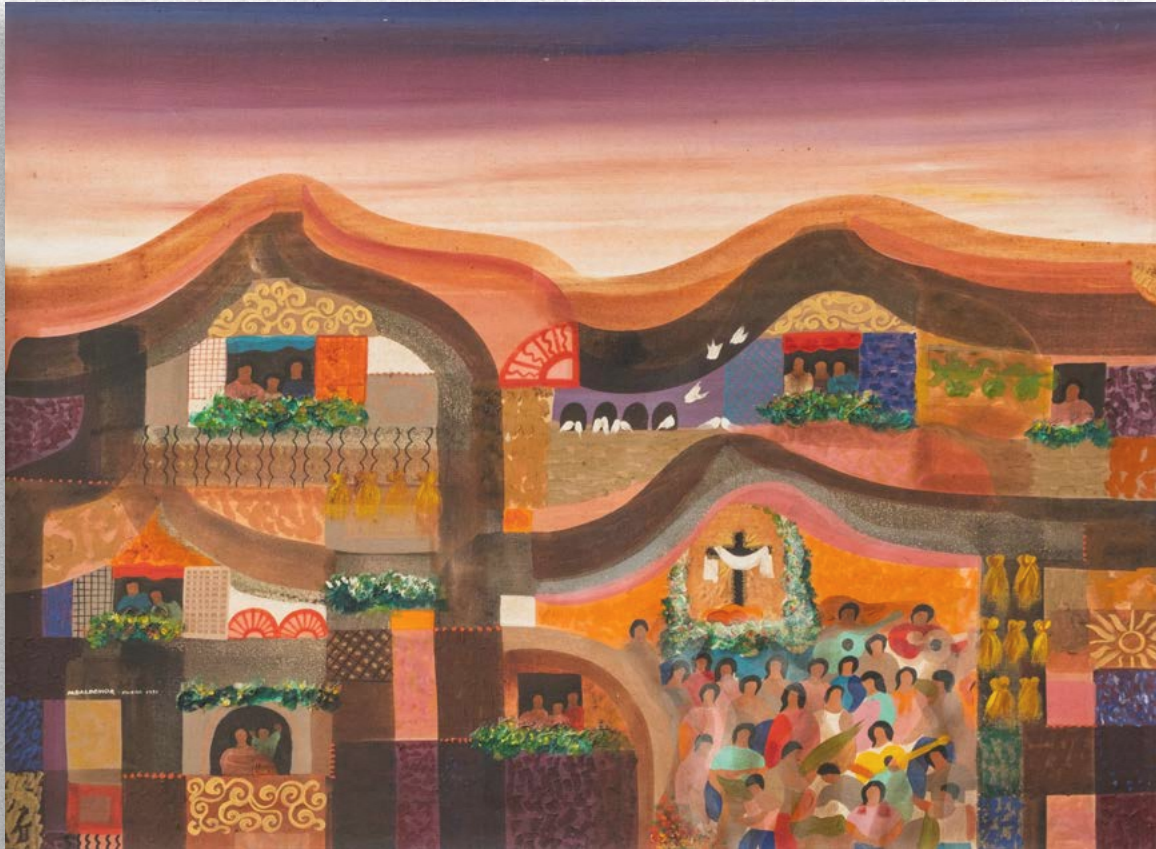
No other Filipino artist in contemporary times has acutely captured the workings of ideology and religion as acutely as Emmanuel Garibay. His experiences as a student organizer, as well as his theology education, coalesce in his works, resulting in a stunning combination of social realism and avant-garde expression.

*Girl with Sword* translates that social realism into portraits that overflow with narrative. Though it may seem a deviation from his usual maximalist works, his storytelling

prowess still shines through. She is dressed simply, wearing a tank top and a pair of denim shorts, as is very common in the humid Philippine weather. In her hand is a longsword, its golden ornate hilt just perfect for her grasp. Peering from her back seem to be angel wings.

"There is something simply prophetic about this quiet man's capacity to make parables that dismantle injustice and offer hope for the future," Rod Pattenden wrote in his Image Journal article entitled 'Recognizing the Stranger: The Art of Emmanuel Garibay.' "In the West, where overtly political art is not in vogue, we still feel somewhat nostalgic about the possibilities of such a prophetic voice." (*Hannah Valiente*)





7

## Manuel Baldemor (b. 1947)

*Prusisyon Series*  
signed and dated 1981 (lower left)  
acrylic on canvas  
30" x 40" (76 cm x 102 cm)

**P 200,000**

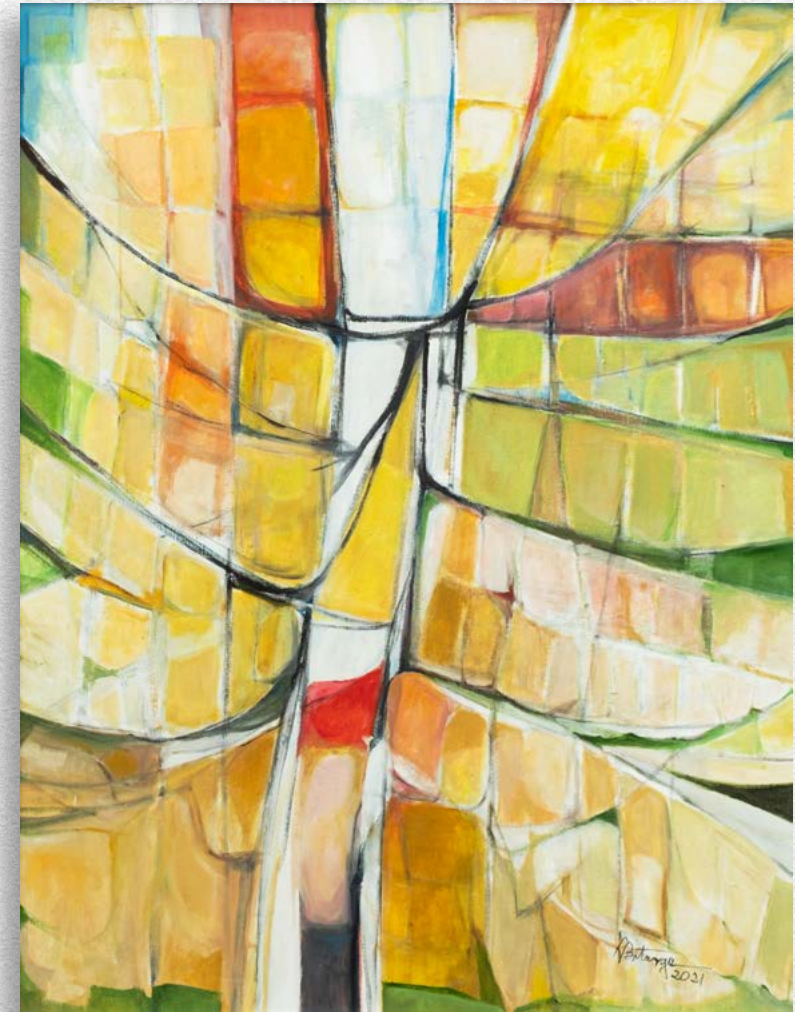
Accompanied by a certificate issued by Art Circle Gallery and signed by the artist confirming the authenticity of this lot

Known for his colorful, geometrical Folk art style, Manuel Baldemor's pieces evoke the quintessential Filipino rural life by presenting a vibrant canvas that weaves together elements of Filipino culture.

Shaded in an earthy color palette to convey a sense of humility from the subject matter, Baldemor's masterpiece highlights a tight landscape of houses, churches, plants, animals, and groups of people—all woven like

compartments in a tapestry, effectively creating an emotional and cultural landscape that shows sides of Filipino cultures such as religion and *bayanihan*, celebrating the Filipino Culture.

Through this landscape, Manuel Baldemor's role as a visual storyteller of Philippine Life was solidified. His illustration, pattern, and symbolic space provide a humble, spiritual, and united representation of his culture in a single image—developing what is supposed to be an ordinary rural scene into a timeless cultural portrait. *(Mark John Castañeda)*



8

## Rosario Bitanga (1934 - 2024)

*Falling Leaves*  
signed and dated 2021 (lower right)  
oil on canvas  
48" x 36" (122 cm x 91 cm)

**P 200,000**

Accompanied by a certificate issued by DF Art Agency confirming the authenticity of this lot

EXHIBITED  
Exhibited: Leon Gallery International, *Likha (Rosario Bitanga Solo Exhibition)*, Makati City, 27 September - 11 October 2022

Painted by Rosario Bitanga, one of the foremost Filipina abstractionists, this untitled lot exemplifies her mastery; a sight to behold. Created at age 87, her virtuosity reflects a lifelong dedication to art, aging like fine wine. Like most of her works, this composition highlights Bitanga's intuitive use of color and form, inviting viewers to explore her harmonious relationship with these elements.

Rosario Bitanga was only 18 when she joined the Art Association of the Philippines, the youngest member AAP ever had. Despite her parents' initial objections, she finished her Fine Arts degree at UST in 1958 and earned her Master of Fine Arts at Cranbrook Academy of Art two years later. That same year, Bitanga mounted her first solo show at Cranbrook, the first of the many solo and collaborative exhibitions she would have across the world. *(Jessica Magno)*



## Oscar Zalameda (1930 - 2010)

### *Sailboats*

signed (lower right)

ca. 1960s

oil on canvas

36" x 40" (91 cm x 102 cm)

**P 800,000**

#### PROVENANCE

Acquired directly from the artist in the 1960s by Manuel Ontanan, a Mexican businessman and a close friend of Zalameda. In one of their encounters in Mexico during one of Zalameda's visits to the country in the 1960s, the artist offered to paint sailboats for his friend. Since Zalameda usually paints in blue, Ontanan suggested to his friend to explore something different, hence this unique version of sailboats painted in red. The painting has remained in Ontanan's collection for six decades.

Oscar Zalameda is a highly acclaimed Filipino artist who has made his mark in the local and international art scene with his vibrant-colored abstract works. His works, reminiscent of his many sojourns and experiences in and out of the Philippines, are a testament to his innate talent and prolific artistry. He was born in Lucban, Quezon, where his high-spirited childhood became the subject of his early watercolor paintings. However, after earning his degree in Fine Arts at UST, he ventured to the foreign lands of America and Europe to further his art studies.

His education and travels abroad exposed him to diverse cultures and experiences, leading him to experiment with different materials and techniques in his pieces. These influences significantly shaped his art, creating a unique blend of his personal experiences and artistic expression. While his earlier works were watercolor paintings depicting his cheerful childhood and the rich culture of his hometown, he would soon, upon his mentor Vicente Manansala's encouragement, delve into cubism, a style he has since made his own.

The lot at hand is a testament to Oscar Zalameda's mastery and profound understanding of color, line, and space. With a washed red palette and clever brushwork, Zalameda depicted in this painting one of his favorite themes: life at sea. Every sweep and stroke of his brush was carefully placed across the canvas, creating the illusion of a storm and raging waves. Zalameda's use of wispy, coarse brush strokes to outline the sailboats signifies their constant movement as they ride through the waves.



ABOVE: Oscar Zalameda © PINTA.CO

Oscar Zalameda is an internationally acclaimed Filipino artist whose works have been acknowledged and received numerous awards in and out of the Philippines. His works have graced the walls of major galleries and museums worldwide, including a prestigious one-man exhibit at the Palacio Nacional de Bellas Artes in Mexico in 1965. A year later, in 1966, he was honored with a personal exhibition at the Malacañang Palace by then-First Lady Imelda Marcos. (Jessica Magno)

## Zalameda Scarlet Sails







10 PROPERTY OF A DISTINGUISHED LADY

**Juvenal Sansó** (1929 - 2025)

*Well Formed Rocks with Passage*

signed (lower right)

ca. late 1970s

oil on canvas

22" x 29" (56 cm x 74 cm)

**P 700,000**

Accompanied by a certificate issued by Fundacion Sansó confirming the authenticity of this lot

An artist deeply in tune with his environment, Juvenal Sansó's works echo both the beauty of the nature that inspired him and the surreal twist born from his childhood experiences.

In the work entitled *Well Formed Rocks with Passage*, Sansó utilizes a monochromatic perspective in his depiction of the titular rockbed. As such, the viewer's attention is not drawn by his usual wealth of colors but by the subtle yet impactful details he incorporated throughout the canvas. This dreamlike reinterpretation of an otherwise common view results in a mysterious vibe that fits quite well within Sansó's oeuvre. (Hannah Valiente)



11

**Emmanuel Garibay** (b. 1962)

*Transition*

signed and dated 2008 (lower left)

oil on canvas

36" x 24" (91 cm x 61 cm)

**P 300,000**

Leon Gallery wishes to thank the artist for confirming the authenticity of this lot

One of the country's foremost contemporary artists, Emmanuel Garibay's works were narrative made visual art. His pulse on the Filipino experience, his oeuvre often features the common, everyday struggles of his fellow countrymen.

This work at hand combined phantasmagoric visions with mordant themes. As is the case with many of Garibay's works, multiple elements converge to create cohesive storylines. Here, Garibay depicts three faces overlapping

one another — one of a man with droopy eyes and neutral expression, a woman with a smile spreading on her face, and one whose face cannot be seen, too transparent to be confirmed. Occupying the bottom part of the canvas is a melting clock reminiscent of Salvador Dalí's iconic work.

Noticeably, the piece is occupied with elements from top to bottom. The earthly palette of the painting also emphasizes the time that seems to tie the scene altogether, giving a claustrophobic and gritty experience to the daily reality of Filipino life that Garibay wants to emulate. (Hannah Valiente)



**Jerry Elizalde Navarro** (1924 - 1999)*The Seasons Four Year of Cory '88*

signed, titled and dated 1988 (lower left)

oil on canvas

32 1/4" x 31 1/2" (82 cm x 80 cm)

**P 700,000****PROVENANCE**

Private collection, Manila

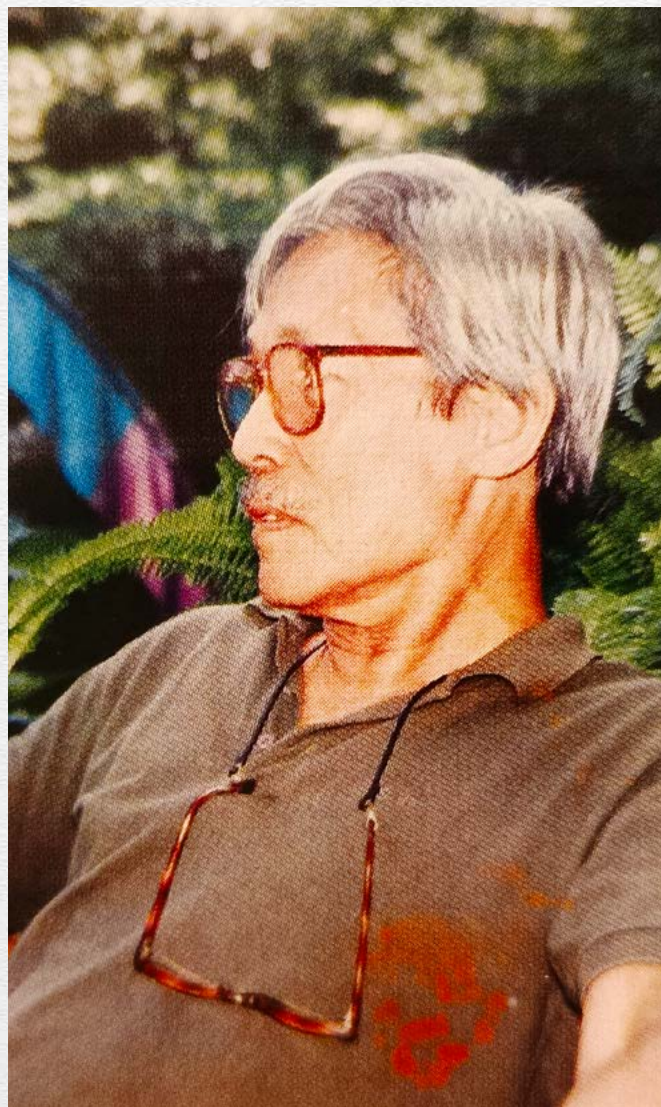
*"One theme or pictorial motif that Navarro constantly held on to was that of the 'Four Seasons'. This subject matter worked for the artist on several levels. First is the literal symbolism of the ideal... Inherent, too, is the allegory of the life of Man: from childhood and adolescence to maturity and old age..."*

— CID REYES FROM THE BOOK *J. ELIZALDE NAVARRO*, 2008.

Creating an outstanding work of art that reflects not only the beauty of nature through visual language but also its allegorical representation of the cycle of life, Jerry Elizalde Navarro creates a masterpiece that transforms the natural cycle of life into a meditation on time, memory, and the human condition.

Colorful, cyclical, and contemplative, this abstract piece embodies Navarro's favourite subject matter as seen in his later four-panel majestic piece, *The Four Seasons* (1992)—all contained in a single canvas. The explosion of colors blends with warm red, orange, and yellows (which symbolize the summer heat as well as autumnal decay), as well as cool greens and blues (reminiscent of the growth of spring and winter coolness), all intermixed, highlighting how natural seasons usually overlap rather than exist in rigid strict divisions—showing nature as a fluid continuous cycle rather than a fixed orderly system.

Navarro uses the seasons to internalize their nature rather than interpret them as external phenomena. Rather than focusing on how the seasons shape the world in every cycle, the artists used the seasons as internal representations of emotional and psychological states that mold human existence and experiences as they unfold. (Mark John Castañeda)



ABOVE: Jerry Elizalde Navarro © J. Elizalde Navarro by Cid Reyes, 2008

## National Artist Jerry Navarro

### *Pays Tribute to President Cory Aquino*





## Fernando Amorsolo (1892 - 1972)

### *Site of U.P. Diliman*

signed, dated and inscribed "UP Site Feb 1947" (lower right)

oil on canvas

18" x 24" (46 cm x 61 cm)

**P 3,600,000**

PROVENANCE

Private collection, USA

Prior to the university's official transfer to Diliman in 1949, officials of the University of the Philippines (UP) had been in deep talks about relocating the university out of Ermita, Manila. The city's rapid urbanization led to a rise in the population from 1903 to 1939. Paired with the university's population increase, the UP Board of Regents was in desperate need of solutions.

Relocating UP to a less urbanized site was an issue to ponder from early on. Thoughts of resettlement were envisioned as early as 1916 with the revised Burnham plan in the talks of a possible new campus of the "heights behind Manila." In 1922, UP President Guy Potter Benton proposed a 100-hectare site in San Juan, Rizal, though the plan did not come to fruition.

Planning for UP's relocation picked up speed during the Commonwealth era. Former Senate President Manuel Quezon became the Commonwealth's president in 1935, and with him came reinvigorated resettlement talks. His initial plans included moving the campus to Tagaytay, a town some sixty kilometers from Manila. Though this plan failed, he continued to insist on the transfer of the university, holding a meeting with his cabinet and UP officials regarding his plans in August 1937.

Participants of this meeting enumerated possible locations for the new campus: Baguio, Los Baños, Alabang, Tagaytay, Novaliches, and Marikina. By December of the same year, Quezon created the Committee of Education Policy, a committee tasked to study UP's relocation. By 1939, the committee had submitted its report to the Board of Regents, favoring the Marikina site, just east of the Diliman estate and about ten kilometers from central Manila. Thus, Quezon seemed hellbent on making this dream of UP's relocation true.

Needless to say, Quezon's Diliman dreams came to a halt, with the Second World War entering the Pacific Hemisphere in the years leading up to the 1940s.

During the destructive war, the UP Ermita site was among the most destroyed buildings, making relocation a postwar expedient. When the Oblation statue was transferred to Diliman in February 1949, it signalled the official and full relocation of UP.

Two years before UP's official resettlement, Fernando Amorsolo's *Site of U.P. Diliman* captured the still-pastoral



ABOVE: The beginning of the transformation of the U.P. Diliman site a year later.

view of the land. Amorsolo had been an instructor at the UP School of Fine Arts since 1914; by 1938, he had replaced his uncle Fabian de la Rosa as Director of the college.

Diliman then was a vast expanse of green grass and greener trees. From a distance, one can see a series of mountain ranges, with the white clouds covering the blue skies. One of Quezon's primary requirements for a new UP campus is a more pastoral space. According to him, Manila has become a raucous place, with the students too embroiled in socio-political activities; he was "tired of seeing the U.P. students making demonstrations or approving resolutions on public or political questions," as he had said in a 1938 meeting with the student council.

As such, Diliman became the perfect remedy to insulate students from radicalism and to reduce the political noise in Manila. This self-contained campus is meant to isolate radicalism and create a truly academic space devoid of unnecessary disturbances to the scholastic tranquility. It is isolated from the vulgar world of Philippine politics.

Though the years would prove that this supposed insulation would not work, the pastoral landscape of Diliman still remains. It is an oasis of green in an otherwise concrete jungle.

Fernando Amorsolo's *Site of U.P. Diliman* is a glimpse of the self-sustained campus before it was as it is known today. "The paintings of Fernando C. Amorsolo overflow with sweetness and optimism," art historian Eric Torres said, and indeed, this work is proof of Amorsolo's tenacity throughout history. His genre paintings are imbued with a luminous and romantic portrayal of the Philippines; the characteristic glow of his canvas is almost a portal that brings its viewers to the past. (Hannah Valiente)

# The Maestro Captures A Turning Point in UP History *A Rare View of the Site of the Future University of the Philippines, Diliman*





**Cedrick Dela Paz** (b. 1995)

*The Mouthless Storyteller*

signed and dated 2020

acrylic on cold cast resin

3/20

H: 14" (36 cm)

L: 13" (33 cm)

W: 13" (33 cm)

**P 70,000**

Delving into complex themes of isolation, uncertainty, and mental load, Cedrick Dela Paz's wonderful sculpture perfectly captures the feeling of individuals trying to make sense of a chaotic world brought on by the pandemic.

Made around 2020, the Dela Paz presents a heavily hunched posture, bent knees, and a seemingly in-focus gaze as it holds an unsolved Rubik's Cube. The way the figure was depicted as burdened, with his pose not just physically but also emotionally and cognitively, perfectly highlights the situation of every individual who gets stuck in a problem they have no control over. The unsolved cube itself highlights the complexity of problem-solving at the



time and the constant pressure to "figure things out," as almost everyone is unprepared for the challenges ahead.

In essence, Dela Paz's masterful craft perfectly captures the human condition during the pandemic. The burden of thinking, coping, and problem-solving. All while enduring isolation that seems—at that time—uncertain as to when it will end. (Mark John Castañeda)

**Ramon Orlina** (b. 1944)

*Ningning in Optical Glass*

signed and dated 2017

carved clear optical glass

H: 10 3/4" (27 cm)

W: 7 1/2" (19 cm)

L: 7 1/4" (18 cm)

**P 800,000**

Accompanied by a certificate signed by the artist confirming the authenticity of this lot

**PROVENANCE**

Acquired directly from the artist

A play on the nickname of his second daughter, Ramon Orlina's Ningning series encapsulates the joy, struggles, and triumphs of motherhood and nourishment. Inspired by the sight of his two-year-old daughter still breastfeeding, the female body became a source of inspiration and exultation. As art critic Eric Torres succinctly described Ningning's fascinating attributes: "The female breast Orlina exhorts is no mere object of voyeuristic prurience. [...] It is also a salute to the curve and the sphere as with an eye to perfection of form and finish. Orlina goes beyond the sensuous in the metaphysical." (Hannah Valiente)



**Federico Aguilar Alcuaz** (1932 - 2011)

*Untitled (Still Life)*

signed and dated 1975 (lower right)

oil on canvas

19 1/2" x 27" (50 cm x 69 cm)

**P 300,000**

Accompanied by a certificate issued by Mr. Christian M. Aguilar confirming the authenticity of this lot

**PROVENANCE**

Sotheby's, Modern and Contemporary Southeast Asian Paintings, Hongkong, May 22, 2025, Lot 1047

Reflecting the artist's mature period, when he merged modernist abstraction with lyrical restraint, Federico Aguilar Alcuaz's abstracted masterpiece demonstrates his mastery in transforming mundane subjects into introspective, meditative compositions by reducing a supposed still-life image into essential rhythms and volumes. Effectively making the viewers go back and forth in seeing objects and pure form. Created in 1975,



Alcuaz transformed the abstract image of a basket full of fruits or goods into an energy container of life, memory, or inner emotion— complete, overfilled, and organic. The muted palette, on the other hand, was used to avoid decorative excess and to emphasize the painting's contemplative nature, making this featured piece a quiet yet exploration of form, rhythm, and containment. (Mark John Castañeda)



**Ronald Ventura** (b. 1973)

*Untitled*

signed and dated 2001 (upper right)

mixed media

72" x 36" (183 cm x 91 cm)

**P 3,000,000**

Accompanied by a certificate issued by West Gallery and signed by the artist confirming the authenticity of this lot

Reflecting his recurrent themes of psychological tension, power, and the fragmentation of identity, Ronald Ventura's featured piece highlights issues—such as exploitation and objectification—accurately conveyed through a dark, illustrated canvas that serves as a meditation on control versus vulnerability, where the human body becomes a site of psychological struggle, forever grasped by unknown forces. Whether it's from figures of authority, the act of violence or desire, or the sheer societal pressure, the force's hand lingers on the body, forever frozen between the state of touch and threat.

Created around 2001, the featured masterpiece combines elements of classical realism, surrealism, and expressionism to convey its intended meaning. The art's central figure involves an anatomically accurate depiction of a female nude body, fully exposed as her posture suggests vulnerability or surrender. The dark background contrasted with the pale body, as a hand from the shadows began reaching out to seemingly touch the vulnerable body, creating visual tension in the piece.

Overall, the piece feels claustrophobic by design, simulating a dream-like, unsettling mood. This quite fitting piece exactly resonates with the artist's early exploration of human fragility under unseen forces. Through his masterpiece, Ronald Ventura directly confronts the viewers by giving a sense of discomfort, hinting that identity and bodily autonomy are never entirely secure, constantly shaped by forces beyond their control—both external and internal. *(Mark John Castañeda)*



ABOVE: Ronald Ventura © Realities RONALD VENTURA, 2011

## Ventura

### *A Woman in the Grasp of Time*





**Pow Martinez** (b. 1983)*Pickles*

signed and dated 2014 (verso)

oil on canvas

72" x 49" (182 cm x 124 cm)

**P 260,000**

Accompanied by a certificate issued by Pablo Galleries and signed by the artist confirming the authenticity of this lot

One of the most compelling multidisciplinary artists working today, Pow Martinez gives form to the restless, often contradictory energies of contemporary life. His practice moves fluidly between painting and sculpture, and extends into sound, installation, and performance, yet remains anchored by a visual language that is distinctly and unmistakably his own. Across these varied forms, Martinez continually returns to enduring questions of humanity, culture, and society, filtering them through the imagery of popular culture, mass media, and an irreverent, almost mischievous sense of humor. This fusion of the playful and the philosophical allows his works to operate on multiple registers—at once disarming in their accessibility and deeply considered in their social and psychological undercurrents. Despite the breadth of his experimentation, a strong thematic cohesion binds his output, affirming a practice that is both expansive and rigorously focused.

In the present work, a large glass vessel becomes both container and quiet theater, holding within it a gathering of pale, simplified faces suspended in a luminous field of blue. Rendered with childlike economy, each head bears subtle distinctions—slight shifts in shape, uneven eyes, faint marks that read as scars or stains—suggesting individuality that persists even within repetition. The bottle, at once transparent and enclosing, evokes notions of preservation and entrapment, as if these figures are specimens held in gentle captivity, observed yet unable to escape their shared space. The cool blue ground recalls both water and laboratory fluid, lending the scene a clinical calm that contrasts with the quiet unease of being collected, categorized, and contained. Through this deceptively tender imagery, Martinez transforms a familiar object into a meditation on identity, vulnerability, and the tension between belonging and anonymity, inviting viewers to reflect on how contemporary society gathers, labels, and watches its own. (*Jed Daya*)



ABOVE: Pow Martinez © SILVERLENS





# Maximo Sison Viola (1857-1933)

## The Man who Financed Rizal's Noli Me Tangere

### *With a Taste for Literature and the Finer Things in Life*

by AUGUSTO MARCELINO REYES GONZALEZ III

Maximo Viola y Sison was born to the couple Pedro Viola and Isabel Sison on October 17, 1857 in barrio Santa Rita, San Miguel de Mayumo, Bulacan. At that time, the Violas were one of the most landed families in San Miguel de Mayumo, Bulacan while the Sisons were the most landed family of Lingayen, Pangasinan. Thus, Maximo Viola was born a very rich hacendero (landowner).

He finished his bachillerato at the Universidad de Santo Tomas in Manila in 1882. He finished his medical studies at the Universitat de Barcelona and became a doctor in Spain in 1886.

Viola became good friends with fellow medical doctor Jose Rizal in Spain. He gradually became involved in the propaganda movement along with other reformists Graciano Lopez-Jaena, Mariano Ponce, and Marcelo del Pilar. Rizal and Viola traveled together through Germany, Austria-Hungary, and Switzerland from May to June 1887, where they met several of Rizal's friends and mentors, including the esteemed Dr. Ferdinand Blumentritt in Leitmeritz, Bohemia (now Litomerice, Czech Republic).

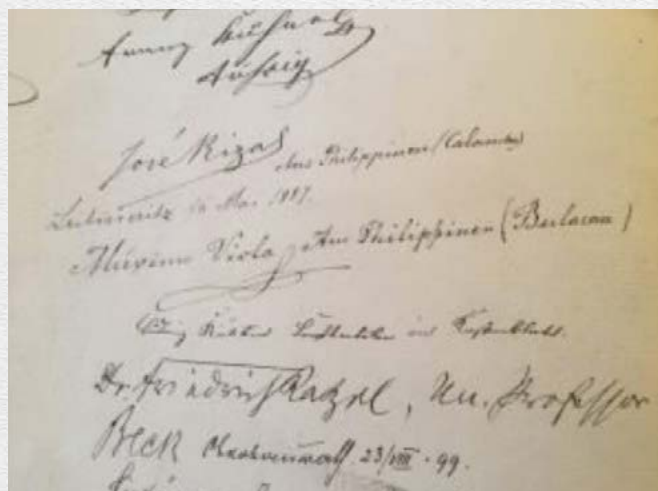
Rizal frequently suffered from a lack of funds in Europe. There were no fast and efficient modes of cash remittances then, not even with the international banks, mostly relying on padala ((handcarry) by visiting family and friends from Manila. Because of this, Rizal became despondent about the publication of his novel Noli Me Tangere and thought of destroying it once and for all. The affluent Viola intervened and provided the funds for the publishing of the first 2,000 copies of the Noli Me Tangere. In gratitude to his good friend, Rizal presented Viola with the galley proof and the first printed copy of his controversial but nationalistic novel.

Viola returned to Filipinas in 1887 as a medical doctor. Like most of the high-minded Filipino ilustrado doctors trained in Europe, he treated poor patients for free.

Upon his return to Filipinas, Viola married Juana Roura, a beautiful Spanish mestiza also of San Miguel de Mayumo, Bulacan, and they had five children.



ABOVE: Rizal's Noli Me Tangere, whose publication Viola financed



ABOVE: The signatures of Rizal and Viola as companion travelers to Litomerice in 1887, from the Collection of Mr. Ambeth Ocampo © León Gallery Archives

Viola secretly met with his good friend Rizal during the latter's visit in June 1892. Rizal traveled to see his friends the Venturas in Bacolor, Pampanga, the Arnedos in Apalit, Pampanga, and the Constantinos in Bigaa, Bulacan. Rizal was under surveillance by the Spanish authorities all throughout and all the prominent families he visited were harassed to varying degrees, not much with the Venturas and the Arnedos, but Valentin Constantino was tortured almost to the point of death.

The Spanish colonial authorities were suspicious of Viola, as they were of all ilustrados and principalias, all the way to the 1896 revolution. For some time during the revolution, Viola and his two brothers stayed in the caves of Biak-na-Bato, some distance away from San Miguel de Mayumo, Bulacan.

Viola, like many prominent revolutionary leaders, was imprisoned by the Americans in Manila during the early part of their occupation in 1899. He was even sent to captivity in Olongapo, Zambales. He was freed when an American doctor, Dr. Fresnell, requested his assistance in the field of infectious tropical diseases.

All his life, Viola liked to express his artistic side. From middle age onwards, he liked to design and produce elegant furniture for his own use, mostly of rare kamagong wood. He won an award at a Manila furniture exposition in 1920, one of several plaudits he received during his furniture-making phase.

As a major hacendero of San Miguel de Mayumo, Viola was active in dealing with the political, economic, and social issues of his time. He became the president of La Liga de Proprietarios, a reactive organization of landowners that sought to diminish the growing influence of unscrupulous politicians over farm tenants. He opposed the illegal acquisition, or outright confiscation, of farmlands by the British firm contracted for the extension of the Manila railroad line to faraway Cabanatuan town in Nueva Ecija. He rallied for just compensation to landowners, big and small.

Viola passed away of cancer at 75 years old on September 3, 1933 in barrio San Jose, San Miguel de Mayumo, Bulacan.



ABOVE: Maximo Viola, Rizal's best friend and the man who saved the Noli Me Tangere from obscurity, from the collection of Ambeth R. Ocampo



**Isabelo Lacandola Tampinco** (1850 - 1933)

*Untitled (Angel Writing in a Book)*

signed

alabaster

H: 11 3/4" (30 cm)

L: 4 3/4" (12 cm)

W: 5 1/2" (14 cm)

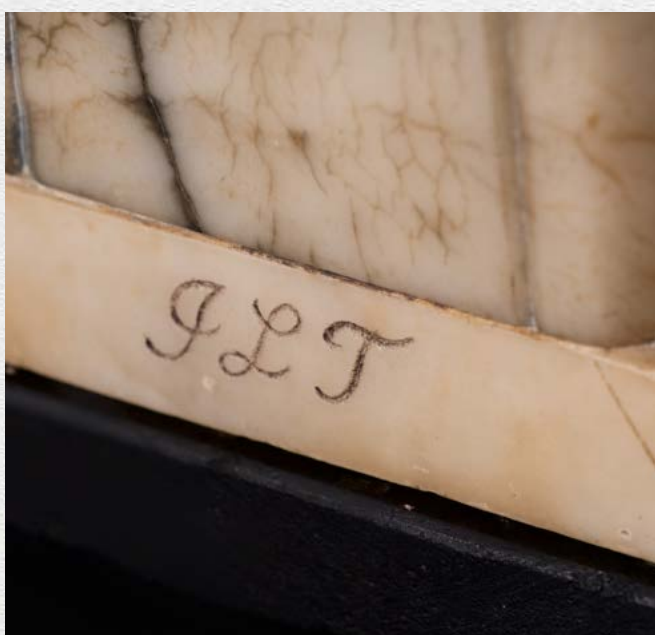
**P 240,000**

By combining academic European technique with humanistic content, Isabelo Tampinco's magnificent piece reflects his mastery of classical realism and delivers Filipino sensitivity. Providing a subtle statement about the value of learning and inner life.

Depicting a young child seated on a platform while intently reading or inscribing on a tablet. Fully focused and relaxed, as the child's posture includes their shoulders positioned slightly rounded and limbs softly bent. In terms of his technique, Tampinco's carving is both delicate and precise—featuring a smooth surface, rounded anatomy, and gentle forms that highlight the subjects' innocence and youth.

This charming alabaster sculpture of a cherub writing in a book may have been commissioned by Viola — wholly appropriate as the financier or "angel" of Rizal's *Noli Me Tangere*.

Resembling European sculptures depicting Greco-Roman putti or cherubs, the artist transformed sculpture into an image that stripped away any mythological symbols, instead posing it with a simple, grounded act of reading or learning. Aligning with the themes of quiet intellectual awakening as the child absorbs a tablet suggests education, introspection, and the formation of the mind. The solitude itself reinforces themes of innocence, curiosity, and inner growth. (Mark John Castañeda)



TOP: Diagonal view from the front BOTTOM: The initials "ILT" are inscribed at the base, for Isabelo Lacandola Tampinco

# The Angel-Scribe of Isabelo Tampinco

*For the Man Who Saved the Noli*





**Joel Chavez** (b. 1991)

*Untitled*  
signed and dated 2015 (lower right)  
oil on canvas  
48" x 36" (122 cm x 91 cm)

**P 180,000**

Combining classical Renaissance-style portraiture with elements of irony and subversion, Joel Chavez's 2015 artwork honors classical European technique while subverting its supposed authority and seriousness.

By inserting a subtle yet powerful symbol of absurdity, like placing a red round dot on the subject's nose to subtly mimic a clown-like nose, the artist transforms what is supposed to be a traditional visual image of a European portrait into a thought-provoking statement about the constructed nature of representation, as such portraiture was considered an elegant and serious piece of art. *(Mark John Castañeda)*



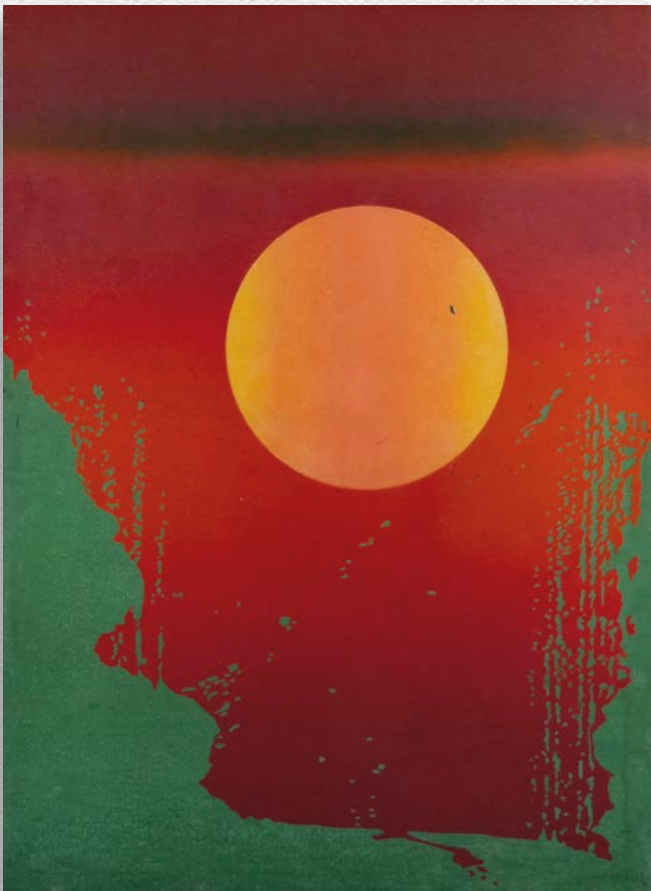
**Impy Pilapil** (b. 1949)

*Dreamer's Zone*  
signed and dated 1981 (lower right)  
acrylic on panel  
49" x 36" (124 cm x 91 cm)

**P 300,000**

PROVENANCE  
Galleria Duemila

A multifaceted artist, Impy Pilapil has worked across a range of media, resulting in varied and sensational paintings, prints, and sculptures. "Pilapil's art centers around themes of solace, tranquility, and the spirit," is what's written on her website's artist profile. With a blend of vivid colors that seem to flow across the canvas, Pilapil's *Dreamer's Zone* series ultimately embodies these qualities. Her intensely colored biomorphic shapes put you in a dream where you either want to escape or keep living in it. Pilapil has received several awards and recognitions for her innovative and compelling artistry, including the CCP Thirteen Artists Award in 1976. *(Jessica Magno)*



**Emmanuel Garibay** (b. 1962)

*Untitled*  
signed and dated 2000 (lower right)  
oil on canvas  
39" x 32 1/4" (99 cm x 82 cm)

**P 400,000**

Accompanied by a certificate signed by the artist confirming the authenticity of this lot

PROVENANCE  
Private collection, Manila

One of the country's foremost Figurative Expressionists, Emmanuel Garibay is distinguished by a body of work driven by a deep and often searing social and political conscience. This sensibility was shaped early on by his roots in Kidapawan, North Cotabato, as well as by his sustained engagement with the rituals, contradictions, and moral weight of the Catholic Church. Equally formative was his immersion in peasant and labor movements, which grounded his art in the lived realities of struggle, dignity, and collective resistance. These experiences converge in a practice that treats the human figure not merely as subject, but as vessel for history, faith, and social reckoning.

In the 1980s, Garibay became a member of *Artista ng Bayan*, a collective devoted to documenting the lives of the dispossessed and marginalized, reinforcing his commitment to art as a tool for witness and solidarity. In the 1990s, he joined fellow Figurative Expressionists



Emong Borlongan, Mark Justiniani, Tony Leaño, Ferdie Montemayor, and others in forming the *Salingpusa* group, which found its home at Dr. Joven Cuanang's Pinto Gallery in Cubao. It was there that Garibay held his first solo exhibition in 1993, marking an important milestone in a career defined by both artistic rigor and social engagement. These affiliations situate Garibay within a generation of artists who sought to reclaim figuration as a powerful language for addressing contemporary realities.

In the present work, Garibay renders the human form with visceral intensity, presenting a cruciform figure suspended between suffering and endurance. The body is elongated and angular, its limbs stretched across the canvas in a posture that recalls both religious iconography and the physical toll of oppression. Thick, impassioned brushstrokes build a surface dense with movement and emotion, while the palette—dominated by deep blues, earthen reds, and ashen whites—suggests both spiritual gravity and corporeal strain. The figure appears simultaneously bound and exalted, echoing themes of sacrifice, faith, and the burden of collective history. Through this charged composition, Garibay transforms the solitary body into a potent symbol of social and spiritual struggle, reaffirming his enduring commitment to figuration as a means of bearing witness to the human condition. *(Jed Daya)*



**Danilo Dalena** (b.1942)*America*

signed and dated 1998 (lower left and verso)

oil on canvas

48" x 36" (122 cm x 91 cm)

**P 2,400,000**

## PROVENANCE

Property of the Artist

## EXHIBITED

"The Last Full Show" (2016), a landmark retrospective at the Cultural Center of the Philippines.

Danilo Echavaria Dalena (born January 4th, 1942), social realist par excellence, is celebrated for his satirical wit and cutting visual commentaries on the Filipino condition. His playground is what has been termed 'the underbelly' of Metro Manila: its betting halls of the now-lost Jai-Alai arena on Taft Avenue, the beer gardens of Cubao, the chaos of Quiapo, and even the city's forlorn public toilets.

In this entirely unique painting, Dalena trains his sights on that behemoth America, ironically touted as the land of the free, not to mention of milk and honey. It is his first — and last — look at the country and its people, the working drawings for an intended series having disappeared. A pity, since every inch of this superpower would have made delightful material for Dalena's mischievous insights.

Nevertheless, in this surviving solitary work is Dalena's familiar, faceless, bulbous figure whose sheer physicality dominates, as the United States does the world, a muddy anonymous background. The top-knotted woman is dressed in the all-American uniform of tee and tight jeans, both stretched to its limit, that becomes its very own landscape.

Across the t-shirt run the words "America" and "Perry Ellis" (a designer who peaked in the 1980s, making this a poignant fashion artifact of influence gone awry.) In one fell swoop, Dalena encapsulates the mindlessness of hyper-consumerism and the absurdity, as always, of urban life — not to mention the larger-than-life scale of the country's inhabitants. The colors are lurid and appetite-inducing, much like those of its fast-food parlors.

"America" contains a powerful theme that crosses borders and says as much about that country as it does its most well-known colony, the Philippines, and for that matter, the rest of the world: Where lies identity if not as a burden on one's back.

Danilo E. Dalena was the recipient of the prestigious Thirteen Artists Awards in 1972, conferred by the Cultural Center of the Philippines; first prize at the influential Art Association of the Philippines competition in 1974; and Mobil Art Awards grand prize in 1980. (*Lisa Guerrero Nakpil*)

## 1997. Danny's First Encounter with America.



Danilo Dalena in New York, 1997. (Artist's Collection)

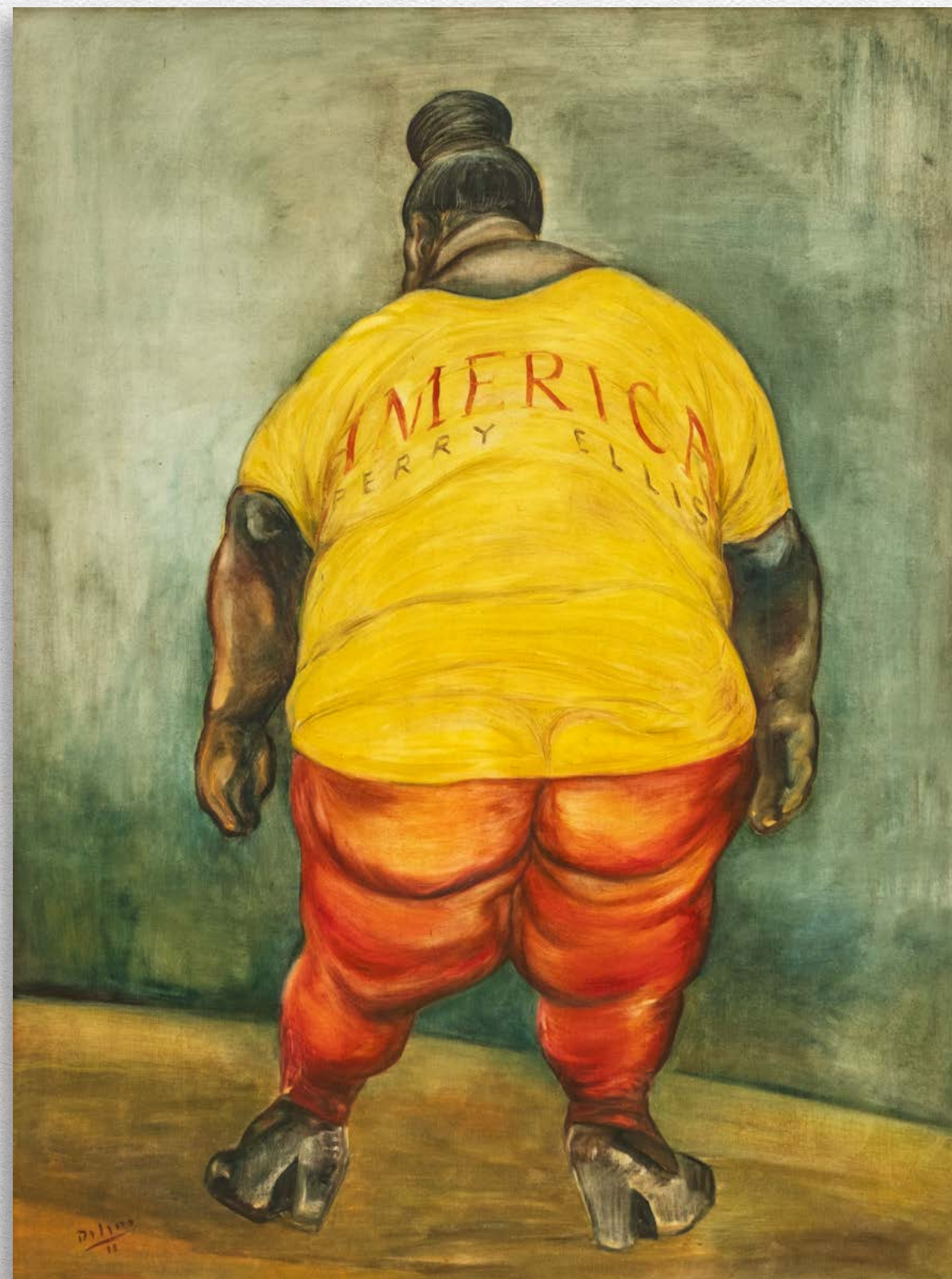
After the obligatory tourist stops, we stayed with his sister in New Jersey and often accompanied her on her daily commute into New York. We would catch the bus a block from her house and get off at the Port Authority Bus Terminal. Once she had oriented us—shown us how to get around—she would head off to work, leaving us to wander the city on our own.

As was his habit, Danny was drawn not to landmarks but to people. The figures lingering in and around Port Authority fascinated him: caught between departure and arrival, between nowhere and somewhere else. With pen and sketchpad, he recorded the ordinary—the overlooked, the uncelebrated—rather than the glamour of New York.

Those drawings have since been lost. What remains is this painting.

He had intended it to be the first of a series—the Port Authority series—but the others were never made. This lone work stands as a record of that moment: a brief encounter, a passing presence, and the way America first revealed itself to him—not as an idea, but as a body, a weight, a human fact. (N.G.)

## Dalena Chronicles America's Underbelly of Life *The First and Last of an Intended Series*





**Bernardo Pacquing** (b. 1967)

*Mound Series 4*  
dated 2010  
mixed media on paper  
23" x 18" (58 cm x 46 cm)

**P 200,000**

PROVENANCE  
Finale Art File

In this piece, Bernardo Pacquing abstractly portrayed the mind as a constructed, organized, and architectural space rather than an expressive or emotional figure. With its composition being restrained and minimal, the three arches form a group and are attached together like "oxygen tanks" connected to a single hose and can be read as mental compartments—a separate but adjacent state containing thought, memory, and identity..

The imagery itself is minimal yet remains loaded. Pacquing had managed to let form, spacing, and texture do the psychological work of interpreting the piece. The abstraction's ambiguity invites the viewer to project their own mental architecture into the piece, meditating on the mind's constructed, organized system. (Mark John Castañeda)



**Romeo Tabuena** (1921- 2015)

*Untitled*  
signed and dated 1972 (lower right)  
watercolor on paper  
15" x 23" (38 cm x 58 cm)

**P 180,000**

Almost two decades after his permanent settlement in San Miguel, Allende, this 1972 Romeo Tabuena work has fully transformed into what is known today as his 'Mexican style.' Prior to this move, his works were darker and more fluid, quite similar to the layered cubism of Manansala's works. It carries within it a sense of proletarianism, with the working class more often than not finding themselves as his protagonists.

His particular work, however, carries his colorful, opaque style, often carrying bright jewel-toned hues. Through his diverse oeuvre, his works are best portrayed as the perfect meeting point between the Filipino and the Mexican cultures. Said Bibsy M. Carballo: "[Tabuena is] a gentle soul who appreciated ... the many similarities between Mexico and the Philippines." Indeed, his works bridge the gap between Mexico and Philippine, marrying the culture of his hometown and the country he chose to live in to create culturally and visually vibrant pieces. (Hannah Valiente).



**Jonathan Ching** (b.1969)

*No Hearing or Breathing, No Movements, No Color*  
signed and dated 2014 (lower right)  
oil on canvas  
48" x 60" (122 cm x 152 cm)

**P 200,000**

Accompanied by a certificate signed by the artist confirming the authenticity of this lot

PROVENANCE  
Tin-Aw Art Gallery

Since his first solo exhibition in 2008 at West Gallery, Ching has exhibited widely in both solo and group presentations in the Philippines and across Southeast Asia, including Malaysia, Singapore, and Indonesia. His works are marked by a quiet intensity and an attentiveness to spaces that are at once familiar and subtly estranged. Drawing from everyday interiors, personal memory, and imagined scenarios, Ching constructs scenes that invite

prolonged looking, where narrative is suggested but never fully resolved, allowing mood and atmosphere to carry the emotional weight of the image.

In the present work, Ching depicts an intimate domestic interior divided across two panels, as if glimpsed in fragments or through shifting recollection. A piano and empty chair occupy one side, while on the other, a seated figure cradles a bouquet, flanked by soft drapery and scattered birds on the floor. The meticulous, almost pointillist handling of paint lends the scene a hushed stillness, heightening its sense of quiet suspension. Light filters gently through the space, softening edges and blurring distinctions between presence and absence, action and pause. The split composition subtly disrupts continuity, suggesting emotional distance or the passage of time, while the carefully arranged objects—musical instruments, flowers, curtains, birds—function as quiet symbols of longing, tenderness, and fragile calm. Through this restrained yet evocative tableau, Ching transforms a seemingly ordinary interior into a contemplative meditation on solitude, memory, and the quiet dramas that unfold within private spaces. (Jed Daya)





**Justin Nuyda** (1944 - 2022)

*Year of the Gold-Breasted Dragon*

signed and dated 1988 (lower left)

oil on canvas

48" x 84" (122 cm x 213 cm)

**P 4,000,000**

PROVENANCE

Altro Mondo Arte Contemporanea

Sino-Filipino relations are so deeply intertwined within the history of the Philippines that it is hard to untangle where one begins and the other ends. Theirs is a friendship stretches back hundreds of years, before borders were formally drawn and nations officially created. Their relative distance created fairly consistent interactions between the countries, and they enjoyed trading goods, knowledge, and, soon enough, practices.

Some of the earliest Chinese settlers in the Philippines established their roots in Binondo, where merchants had already become a formidable force in the early Philippine economy. Mostly settling just outside the walled city of Intramuros (a result of the Spanish authorities restricting their movements within the city), the Catholic-converted Chinese were eventually moved just across the Pasig River, which would eventually be known as Binondo.

Binondo, for its part, remained true to its Chinese heritage while masterfully integrating itself into the ever-changing cultural terrain of the growing Philippines. It is reputed to be the world's oldest Chinatown, a living and breathing testimony to the story of the Chinese-Filipino.

In the present day, a Chinese holiday holds significant weight, one that is tied with Binondo itself. Falling on the second new moon after the winter solstice, Binondo finds itself the epicenter of the celebrations. From the Dragon Dance to the various Chinese traditions that are said to bring luck, the Sino-Filipino traditions are truly alive and well.

It is this Chinese festivity that prolific artist Justin Nuyda took his inspiration from. His *Year of the Golden-Breasted Dragon*, created in the same year as the titular dragon took its turn in the Chinese zodiac cycle in 1988.

The dragon holds a unique and revered position in the Chinese zodiac – unlike its fearsome Western counterpart, the Chinese Dragon is a benevolent creature, a symbol of power, strength, and good fortune. So revered are they that emperors consider themselves the Dragon's descendants, drawing on that ancestry as a symbol of their divine right to rule.

Nuyda's *Year of the Golden-Breasted Dragon* echoes the artist's waiflike brushstrokes. A renowned lepidopterist in his own right, he has spent a good amount of his childhood in the woods, inheriting his family's fascination with butterflies.



"My dad, writer Hermenigildo Nuyda, was second of six brothers who all grew up in Bicol in the 40s," he said, as Jay Bautista wrote in his article 'The Two Lives of Justin Nuyda.' "They had a garden where butterflies roamed freely. Maganda ang kamalig nuon. They started naming them based on their looks and forms: vampire, forest king, green enchantress, spotty green, cabbage."

This fascination bled into his unique sense of colors. Although the hues look almost otherworldly, these are

color combinations seen on the wings of a butterfly. "You cannot go wrong with nature, it is always right," he recalled National Artist Cesar Legaspi telling him.

It is this principle that gave Nuyda's works a surrealist twist while remaining grounded in reality. Developing his own visual language, he favored an airy type of abstraction that is closer to what might've been his view up in the mountains than it is to any preexisting standard.

Here, instead of the aforementioned butterflies and landscapes, Nuyda depicts the titular golden-breasted dragon in all its glory, its long ochre body flying freely above the clouds. With 1988 being the year of the Earth Dragon, there is a certain sense of groundedness with the creature despite its full flight. It is a symbol of strength, resilience, and success — traits that are deeply interwoven within the Sino-Filipino history, culture, and identity. (Hannah Valiente)





28

## Romulo Galicano (b. 1945)

*France*

signed and dated (lower right)  
oil on canvas  
15 1/2" x 19 1/2" (39 cm x 50 cm)

**P 280,000**

### PROVENANCE

Acquired directly from the artist

France has long inspired artists worldwide, evoking admiration and curiosity. Many come to study or find inspiration in its scenery, and Romulo Galicano was no exception.

After graduating from college, Galicano ventured abroad to deepen his skills and experiences, and France was one of the countries he visited. The artist's exalted impressionistic brush strokes and palette capture his personal views of the region's beguiling landscape, inviting the viewers to

share in his experience. Here, he illustrated a scenic French countryside: a pathway leading to a line of houses; to the right, a garden in bloom, each flower dancing with the wind.

The lush landscapes and traditional elements from his hometown, Carcar, Cebu, played a significant role in shaping his artistic vision and approach. Trained under his uncle, the Cebuano master realist Martino Abellana, and as a member of the revered Dimasang Group, Romulo Galicano was a master practitioner of the plein air technique. This practice allows him to observe nature directly, resulting in realistic, genuine portrayals, such as this 1984 piece. Undeniably, Galicano's masterful strokes and dazzling palette breathe life into the scenes he portrays. *(Jessica Magno)*



29

## Romulo Galicano (b. 1945)

*Barrio Scene*

signed and dated (lower left)  
oil on canvas  
17 1/2" x 24" (44 cm x 61 cm)

**P 340,000**

### PROVENANCE

Acquired directly from the artist

Exemplifying the artist's quiet pastoral realism, Romulo Galicano's magnificent landscape evokes the solitude of rural life and the inhabitants' peaceful harmony with nature, effectively transforming an ordinary rural scene into a poetic visual experience.

Featuring a quiet scene of a farmer guiding a group of large farm animals along a narrow path, Galicano's painting does not dramatise rural labor but instead dignifies it through a calming atmosphere that communicates stillness and balance as nature and humanity harmonize—effectively

capturing the fleeting moment of calm given by the daily rhythms of a provincial life.

Overall, this masterpiece effectively reflects Galicano's sensitivity to atmosphere and rural themes, masterfully delivering stillness and balance between nature and human activity all in a single canvas. Emotionally, the painting conveys the broader Filipino rural experience as a humble and enduring rhythm—quiet, pastoral, and meditative. *(Mark John Castañeda)*



**Wire Tuazon** (b. 1973)

*A Random Odyssey or Mankind*

dated 2010  
oil on canvas  
36" x 36" (91 cm x 91 cm)

**P 80,000**

PROVENANCE  
Finale Art File

Known for his hyperrealist paintings, Wire Tuazon's works often feature words plastered across the canvas, something that seems unrelated to the image, the title, or the text. However, there is a thread of connection between the three, should one look deep enough.

*A Random Odyssey or Mankind* fits right in with this description. With the word 'Diaspora' plastered across the canvas, Tuazon depicts a visage of a man who looks quite normal except for his face, which is depicted as a tablet. Though seemingly unrelated, all these elements create a story — that of the diasporic Filipino, who has been far from their homeland in search of a better life and whose only tether to their family is the ever-evolving growth of technology. (Hannah Valiente)



**Don Salubayba** (1979 - 2014)

*Untitled*

signed and dated 2011 (lower right)  
oil on canvas  
24" x 36" (61 cm x 91 cm)

**P 80,000**

Known for his broader work that explores childhood as a psychological space and home as more than an architecture, Don Salubayba's 2011 piece perfectly captures the cross between childhood memories, an architectural blueprint, and a map of movement..

Featuring a vibrant illustration of a house plan but doodled and littered with illustrations of kids all around the house—all in different poses and orientations—which is a perfect hint about memory and a suggestion of time passing in a confined space. A childhood memory, all unfurling at one piece. The piece is nostalgic in itself, as it feels like it was made by someone trying to reconstruct what it felt like to grow up in a household through visual language. (Mark John Castañeda)



**Rodel Tapaya** (b. 1980)

*Mang Bel*

signed and dated 2009 (lower left)  
acrylic on canvas  
48" x 36" (122 cm x 91 cm)

**P 600,000**

PROVENANCE  
Private collection, Manila

Known for combining social realism by focusing on everyday Filipino lives, as well as the Filipino identity that was constantly shaped by history labor and survival, Rodel Tapaya's *Mang Bel* walks away from a generic portraiture of a specific individual but towards a representation of an archetype—a standing for rural Filipino worker, discussing themes about colonial history, economic struggle, and generational labor.

Made in 2009, *Mang Bel* presents a lone illustration of a male figure rendered in an earthy, bruised tone. With a

heavily weathered, elongated face, heavy, tired eyes, and a slightly parted mouth as if panting, the subject appears to be experiencing fatigue or exhaustion. The figure was then rendered with a simple hat and shirt on an earthy background that feels rural and unsettled rather than peaceful. With rough brushwork, Tapaya gave the figure a sense of psychological weight rather than photographic realism.

The painting's distorted illustration of anatomy and somber color palette make the figure feel caught between presence and erasure, mirroring how rural and working-class Filipinos experience—often visible yet remains unheard. Tapaya excellently uses the image of *Mang Bel* not to tell a clear story but to showcase a feeling, one that feels like memory, myth, and reality blending together. (Mark John Castañeda)





**Fernando Amorsolo** (1892 - 1972)

*Sabungero*

signed and dated Manila, 1937 (lower left)

oil on canvas

13" x 17 1/4" (33 cm x 44 cm)

**P 3,000,000**
**PROVENANCE**

Private collection, USA

Fernando Amorsolo's *Sabungero*, created in 1937, belongs to what many consider his "Golden Period." With the American occupation of the Philippines seeing the Philippines on the brink of rapid modernization, debates regarding Philippine independence were widespread, with one faction in favor of immediate independence and the other seeking more time through a plebiscite.

Torn between staying true to the traditional Filipino and riding the wave of modernization, various art forms were born, each leading credence to their side. The *balagtasan*, for once, was an effort to revive the *duplo*. Some 8,000 people packed the Olympic Theatre to listen to Jose Corazon de Jesus extol the virtues of the traditional dalaga. At the same time, the first attempts of Philippine literature in English were published in this decade, with Jose Garcia Villa's short stories, Zolio Galang's 'Child of Sorrow,' and Paz Marquez Benitez's 'Dead Star,' among others.

Amorsolo's Golden Period, which spanned the 1920s to the early 1940s, was a period of nostalgia. With the search for national identity prevalent, the pastoral life was romanticized, the *dalaga* glorified. Amorsolo's works have captured that yearning for the past, cementing his place in Philippine art history.

The works created during this era are among those from Amorsolo's creative peak, seeing him at his best and brightest. He was flexing his creative dexterity, laying down the foundation for the creative giant Amorsolo that he would become in the coming years.

Here, *Sabungero* embodies what made Amorsolo a household name. Here, he focused on a specific rural pastime – cockfighting, or *sabong*. Cockfights are a major social function in the barrios of the Philippines, with records going back to the precolonial era when Antonio Pigafetta recorded it during Magellan's 1521 expedition. The first wave of Filipinos arriving in Hawaii brought the sport into the foreign land, so beloved was this practice.

Cockfighting is emblematic of the quintessential Filipino traits. More than a social event, the *sabungan* or the



ABOVE: Fernando Amorsolo in his studio © Fernando C. Amorsolo Art Foundation, Inc.

cockpit may even be seen as a threshold between childhood and manhood. A son tasked with their family's beloved rooster is a symbol of trust.

Though it may be easy to depict the excitement of cockfighting *in media res*, Amorsolo instead depicts the moments between fights. Beneath the shade of a tree, a man checks on his rooster. With a cigarette pressed between his lips, Amorsolo portrays the quiet and loving relationship of the farmer and his fowl.

Inasmuch as cockfighting is an adrenaline-racing fight, it is also a treasured hobby. For many *sabungeros*, their roosters are part of the family, as beloved as their children and just as taken care of.

There is no denying Amorsolo's longevity in Philippine art history. His works evoke the ordinary and daily life of the rural Philippines, suffused in his trademark light. His impact was cemented even further when he was posthumously conferred the National Artist Award in 1972, the distinction's first awardee. (Hannah Valiente)

# Classic Amorsolo Cockfighter From His Golden Period





**Ronson Culibrina** (b. 1991)

*The Fire Flood is the Flood of Love*  
signed and dated 2012 (lower left)  
oil on canvas  
36" x 24" (91 cm x 61 cm)

**P 240,000**

The Fire Flood is the Flood of Love by Ronson Culibrina, which provides an expressive interpretation of Love, how it feels, and how it could define an individual through a beautiful visual language.

Featuring two figures, with one on the left having notable fractured faces as if the individual's identity is unstable, while the one on the right holds a torch towards the individual on the left. What's interesting in the piece is the title itself, which seems to give the painting its own interpretation: The way the elements fire and flood (water) are complementary opposites, Culibrina describes Love as something that can either consume like burning fire or drown like flooding water. Love can also give warmth and destruction, and it can define an individual's life or extinguish it altogether. (Mark John Castañeda)



**Dengcoy Miel** (b. 1964)

*Rizal at Barbershop*  
signed, dated 2021 (lower right)  
oil on canvas  
36" x 48" (91 cm x 122 cm)

**P 400,000**

Dengcoy Miel's comical painting from 2021 continues his exploration of Filipino identity, post-colonialism, and the absurdities of contemporary life, creating a satirical piece that is playful yet edged with critique..

Featuring a figure of Rizal sitting on a chair while pointing to a specific hairstyle on the wall, as if giving an instruction or making a point. The barber, on the other hand, stands attentively at the back of the seat. A towel in hand, slightly lower. Creating a subtle power imbalance between two central figures.

Witty, ironic, and gently critical, Miel invites viewers of his painting to laugh first and notice the social structures woven into the humor. Despite being a caricature, the barbershop scene is less about humor and exaggerated haircuts and more about a visual critique of how people often see themselves and how they want to be seen. (Mark John Castañeda)



**José Joya** (1931 - 1995)

*Blue Temple*  
signed and dated 1987 (lower right and verso)  
acrylic collage  
15 1/4" x 23 1/4" (38 cm x 58 cm)

**P 1,800,000**

Accompanied by a certificate issued by Mr. Alexander Richard Joya Baldovino confirming the authenticity of this lot

PROVENANCE  
Private collection, Manila

First among equals, the works of José Joya reflect the Philippines from his unique vantage point. Earning the distinction of UP College of Fine Arts' first magna cum laude in 1953, Joya received several prestigious scholarships, which funded exchange programs in Europe, like a one-year grant to study in Madrid and a Fulbright-Smith-Mundt scholarship for a Master's degree at the Cranbrook Academy in Michigan.

This 1987 *Blue Temple* is a perfect amalgamation of the intensity of the East with the vibrancy of the West. Utilizing

fine, translucent layers reminiscent of *kiping*, Joya's expert dexterity with texture and hues creates an enchanting vision of both the architectural magnificence and the natural beauty of the titular temple. Through shades of blue and translucent browns, Joya uses shapes resembling fallen leaves as they float down to the ground.

Considered the pioneering abstract expressionist painter of the Philippines, his works are "characterized by calligraphic gestures and linear forces, and a sense of color vibrancy emanating from an Oriental sensibility." Indeed, he is a visionary who manages to combine the best of both worlds, from the east to the west. (Hannah Valiente)



# The Sanggawa Artists' Group

## Homage to Botong Francisco's Iconic Mural "Filipino Struggles Through History"

by ADRIAN MARANAN



ABOVE: The Sanggawa artists in 1995: (L-R) Elmer Borlongan, Karen Flores, Joy Mallari, Mark Justiniani, and Federico Sievert. In their background is their 1994 mural, *Vox Populi, Vox Dei*, considered their landmark piece.

"SANGGAWA was founded in late December 1994 by Manila-based visual artists Elmer Borlongan, Karen Flores, Mark Justiniani, Joy Mallari, and Federico Sievert as a collective, which will work in unison for visual idioms that relate to Philippine society, taking up topics that delve on history, politics, and its various idiosyncrasies."

"SANGGAWA is more inclined towards popular forms. It seeks to address a Filipino audience which has grown wary of politics. Its work talks about the dilemmas of Pinoy life without taking away the local color and flavor, and more importantly, the humour."

—KAREN FLORES, FORMER SANGGAWA MEMBER,  
FEBRUARY 1996



ABOVE: Salingpusa artists in 1991, photographed in one of their first "sampayan" exhibitions. Encircled are Elmer Borlongan and Karen Flores, future members of the Sanggawa art group. To Borlongan's right are Jose John Santos III, Emmanuel Garibay (back), Mikel Parial (front), and Anthony Palomo. © Pinto Art Museum

The **Sanggawa** collective, founded in December 1994 by Elmer Borlongan, Karen Flores, Mark Justiniani, Joy Mallari, and Federico Sievert, believed in the inherent power of art as a unifying voice that transcends race, religion, sexuality, and social status. The name of the group is a contraction of the Tagalog phrase "isang gawa," which means "one creation." True to its name, the Sanggawa was bonded by a single vision, setting aside their stylistic preferences to produce a homogeneous work.

The Sanggawa's origins can be traced back to two artist collectives in the 1980s: the *Artista ng Bayan* (ABAY) and the Salingpusa, both of which created socio-politically significant works that mirrored the sentiments and struggles of the ordinary Filipino.

In particular, the Salingpusa group, which counted among its original members Emmanuel Garibay, Elmer Borlongan, Jose John Santos III, Mark Justiniani, Antonio Leano, Karen Flores, Joy Mallari, Anthony Palomo, Mikel Parial, and Ferdie Montemayor and emerged around the time of the People Power Revolution of 1986, was nurtured by neurologist and art collector Dr. Joven Cuanang, who invited them to hold painting and sketching sessions in his Antipolo weekend house, particularly in the area now known as the Silangan Gardens, the current location of the Pinto Art Museum. The Salingpusa artists initially gathered and hung out for informal art sessions at the famed Hinulugang Taktak, where Dr. Cuanang discovered them and learned of their precarious situation as artists, i.e., the difficulty in securing major galleries to showcase their works.



ABOVE: The Salingpusa and Sanggawa artists in the present. (Back row, from left) Jim Orencio, Tony Leaño, Renato Salonga, Anthony Palomo, Dr. Joven Cuanang, Gemo Tapales, Emmanuel Garibay, Andy Orencio, Joy Mallari, Tammy Tan, Weena Soberano Espardines; (Front row, from left) Erwin Leaño, Rally Acuña, Mikel Parial, Ferdie Montemayor, Elmer Borlongan, Jose John Santos III, Cris Villanueva, Mark Justiniani. © Pinto Art Museum

BELOW: A Salingpusa mural painting session at Dr. Joven Cuanang's garden, early 1990s. © Pinto Art Museum

Dr. Cuanang organized exhibitions for the Salingpusa called the "Sampayan," in which they hung their paintings on clotheslines strung within the gardens for the physician's art-loving friends to choose from, helping, in the long run, the Salingpusa artists advance.

From the Salingpusa emerged the Sanggawa, created at a time when the former's members were now beginning to forge their individual paths. The Sanggawa diverged from the Salingpusa practice of making each artist's personal style stand out in a single work. Instead, the Sanggawa wedded each painter's technique, resulting in one work that appears to be painted by a single artist, an espousal of a collectivist attitude rather than an individualistic one. On many occasions, fellow former Salingpusa artists Garibay, Palomo, and Parial joined them in painting murals.

The Sanggawa artists had their breakthrough in 1995 with the show *Vox Populi, Vox Dei: Mga Gawang Editoryal*. The show was first mounted at the EDSA Shangri-la, and soon presented at the Cultural Center of the Philippines, even travelling abroad to Australia that same year for their international debut. The group exhibited at the now-defunct Ray Hughes Gallery in Sydney, then one of the most premier centers of art in Australia, founded by the legendary art dealer, Ray Hughes. *Palo-Sebo*, one of the works in the exhibition, was eventually acquired by Brisbane's Queensland Art Gallery, Queensland's



ABOVE: Sections of Botong Francisco's 1964 mural *Filipino Struggles Through History*, now residing at the National Museum of the Philippines. The iconic mural inspired the Sanggawa artists' *Paglaom Padayon*.

premier art institution. The Sanggawa also painted an outdoor mural for the University of New South Wales, one of Australia's most prestigious universities, titled *Getting into the Out*.

The years from 1996 to 2000 witnessed the Sanggawa go from strength to strength as they toured more parts of the world to participate in exhibitions in New York, California, Brisbane, Hiroshima, and Texas. Notably in 1996, the Sanggawa staged their North American debut, participating in the group shows *Traditions/Tensions: Contemporary Art in Asia* held at the Asia Society Galleries in New York City and *Memories of Overdevelopment: Philippine diaspora in Contemporary Art* mounted at the University of California, Irvine, to whom they loaned one work from their landmark *Vox Populi, Vox Dei* show.



**Sanggawa**

**Elmer Borlongan** (b. 1967)

**Karen Ocampo-Flores** (b. 1966)

**Mark Justiniani** (b. 1966)

**Joy Mallari** (b. 1966)

**Federico Sievert** (b. 1961)

*Paglaom Padayon*

signed and dated 1996 (lower right)

oil on canvas

78" x 147" (198 cm x 373 cm)

**P 4,000,000**

This work on offer in this auction, *Paglaom Padayon*, was one of those that the Sanggawa painted during their prime years. A mural-sized painting, it was notably acquired by a Philippine conglomerate. The title is a Cebuano phrase that translates to "move forward with hope" (*paglaom* = hope, *padayon* = carry on, move forward, keep going). Nowhere in this work can the Sanggawa members' various styles be seen. Instead, they meld, echoing the work's central theme: the Filipinos' collective power, fueled by a shared vision of the nation's advancement.

Rendered in vibrant, tropical colors, the work presents a montage of the Filipino nation's turbulent history and empowering future, serving as an homage to the spirit of Botong Francisco's 1964 mural, *Filipino Struggles Through History*, with both masterpieces depicting the historical development of the Filipino identity as a result of centuries of contact, subjugation, and struggle. The work also very much captures Botong's painting style, infusing it with elements of magical realism filled with allegories and symbolism, evoking a feeling of both familiarity and dreamlike delight that stays in character with the painting's intent.

On the upper left, the *balangay* is shown treading the high seas as it facilitated migration, trade, and commerce in the pre-colonial Philippines. The rough seas mark a transition to the turbulent Spanish colonial rule, depicted through the symbolism of the sword and the cross, the instruments of pacification. Below are rendered the colors blue, red, and white, the colors of the French flag (and eventually the Philippine flag), whose 18th-century revolution inspired and influenced both Rizal (represented by the quill), Bonifacio, and the Katipunan. Interestingly, the way the quill and the revolutionaries are placed within a specific color sparks curiosity: the quill resting on the blue and white represents Rizal and the propagandistas' initial aim of peaceful reform and the *katipuneros* seemingly veiled underneath by a red banner, signifying their eagerness to shed blood in the name of freedom (although Rizal implicitly supported the



revolution, as proven by Pio Valenzuela's 1914 memoirs and his final sworn testimony in 1917).

In the lower center of the painting rests a summary of the most significant turning points of the 20th century: the Philippine-American War and the subsequent American colonization (represented by the bald eagle, a US national symbol, wrangling the *kalabaw*), the tragedy and destruction of World War II, and the brutal and repressive dictatorship (represented by the clenched fist and a hand

enmeshed in barbed wires, which Martial Law activists used a symbol of oppression, referenced to in this work as a geared battalion of the infamous MetroCom).

Juan de la Cruz and Inang Bayan emerge from a split-open bamboo. They are the modern-day *Malakas* and *Maganda*, armed with symbols of peace and harmony: the Mindanaoan *kutyapi* and the *tambuli*, instruments that sing of both hope and defiance for the Filipino people as they navigate both the turbulent seas and the

scorching flames in their shared aim of inclusive progress and genuine self-determination. A third figure can be seen: a boy seemingly flying. He represents the youth of the nation, the inheritors of a legacy of a continuous struggle to explore, reclaim, and affirm our nationhood, a mark of our historic identity as stalwarts of resistance and freedom.

*Paglaom Padayon* is a powerful image of the triumph of the Filipino spirit in every generation, forged by fire and consumed by the passionate flames of desire.





38

**Jigger Cruz** (b. 1984)

*Untitled*

signed and dated 2013 (lower right)

oil on canvas

27 1/2" x 21 1/2" (70 cm x 55 cm)

**P 600,000**

PROVENANCE  
Primo Marella Gallery, Singapore

There is a method in the proverbial madness about the works of Jigger Cruz. Created in 2013, this particular piece belongs to a period of his career that Lisa Ito, in her essay "Caught in the Interregnum," described as his development of artistic philosophy.

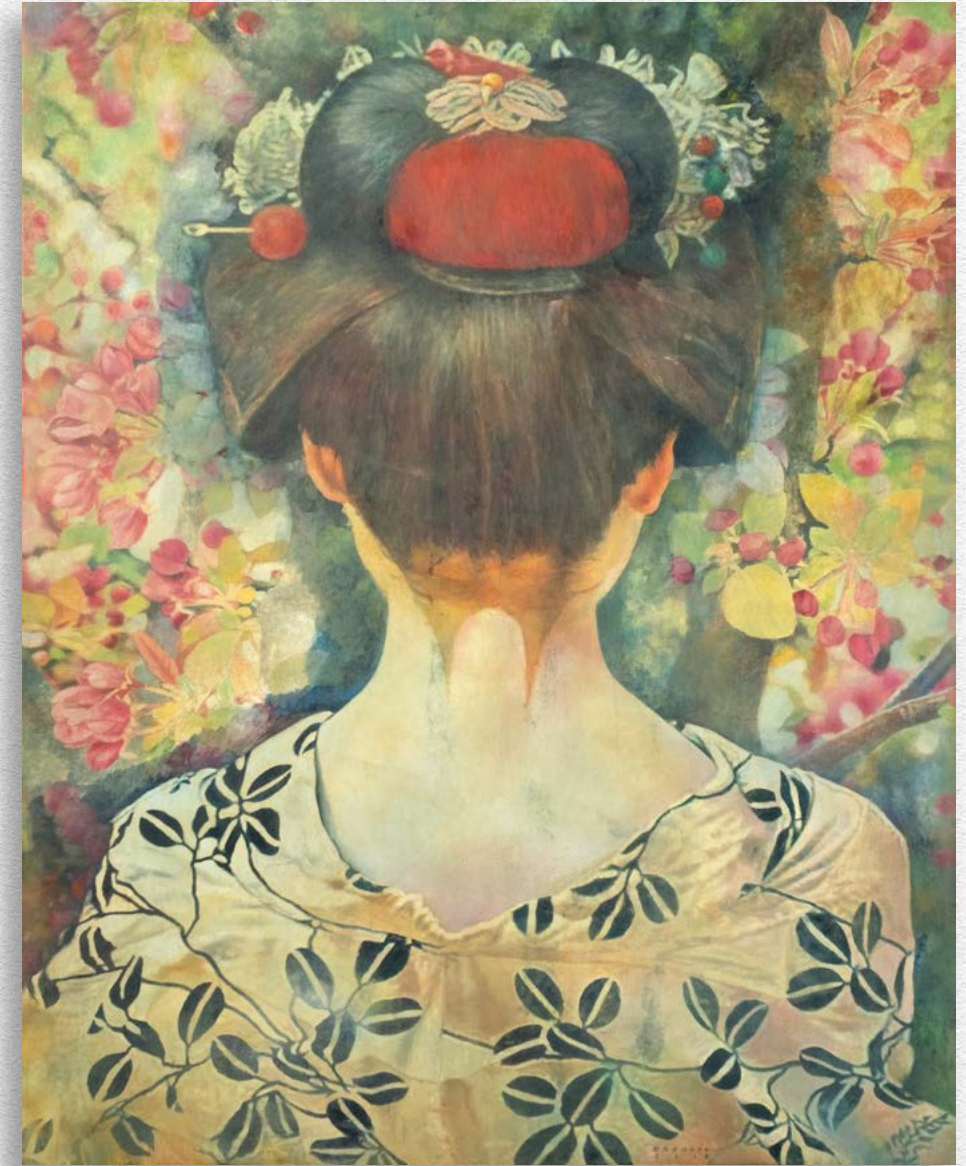
"The artist describes his works as highly entropic acts of personal spontaneity, and explores different approaches to painting at this stage of his personal experience," she wrote.

Indeed, the typical Cruz style is evident in this work, his telltale chaotic paint pigment either smeared, smudged, squeezed directly from the tube onto the canvas, or combinations of one or the other. However, to think it

is mere desecration is a misjudgment of Cruz's talents. Despite the seeming anarchy dominating the canvas, Cruz's ruination can be seen as a deliberate choice, an intentional destabilization of the status quo. After all, many of Cruz's canvases are a duology of works plastered on top of the other — the most noticeable being his textured paint strokes, while the oft-overlooked aspect is a figurative painting done in the classical style buried underneath it.

His method of defacement fares past his canvases and into his frames. Like his work, his physical frame often carries the mark of damage: either burned, slashed, or, in this case, painted over. In that sense, Cruz's iconoclasm responds to the conservatism of the academic art practice and the modernist bent of the avant-garde movements of the 21st century.

"Extending beyond modernist fascination with pushing and extending the limits of representation towards non-representation, Cruz appears to be reveling in the plastic property of paint," Ito said. "Through the rawness of gesture and texture, [he...engages] in an experiential dialogue of sorts with his viewers, [making] tangible the act of communication with the work." (Hannah Valiente)



39

**Jim Orencio** (b. 1969)

*Keen for Harmony*

signed and dated 2018 (lower right)

oil on canvas

60" x 48" (152 cm x 122 cm)

**P 400,000**

PROVENANCE  
Pinto Gallery

Serene. Introspective. Harmonious. The calming presence of Jim Orencio's magnificent masterpiece, entitled *Keen of Harmony*, offers a unique visual meditation on balance, identity, and achieving inner peace. Through the art piece's gentle texture and subdued emotion, Jim Orencio invited reflection on themes of continuity, growth, and interconnectedness. suggesting that harmony can be achieved by aligning oneself with the world's natural rhythms.

Painted around 2018, this beautiful artwork features a contemplative central figure, seen from behind, set against a lush, floral backdrop that slowly envelops the figure in a soft, watercolor-like palette—suggesting unity between human presence and nature. By concealing the figure's face, Orencio universalizes the peaceful experience for the viewers. It allows the subject figure to stand as a quintessential symbol of inner peace and emotional attunement—achieving "harmony" within oneself. (Mark John Castañeda)



**Marina Cruz** (b. 1982)*Untitled*

signed and dated 2018 (lower left)

oil on canvas

36" x 48" (91 cm x 122 cm)

**P 1,000,000**

## PROVENANCE

Pinto Gallery

Creating a masterpiece that quietly centers on fabric as both subject and metaphor, fitting the artist's exploration of items used and seen in everyday life—from clothing and linens to curtains—elevating them with precision through visual art. Marina Cruz challenges the divide between fine art and domestic craft, creating art that bridges painting and lived experience.

Painted around 2018, it features a close-up image of fabric with floral and organic motifs—one you usually see on gartered waist skirts and dresses—all gathered, some with elastic seams, folds, and wrinkles, which hints that the item might come from a gartered fabric of a dress. The way it focuses on the details of the fabric, its striking shape of the vertical seams and elastic bands, the color and pattern of the fabric that seems to dissolve into a rhythmic field of colors, the way the cloth folds naturally as it was woven—all point to how the fabric blends with the flesh during wear. Even when not worn, the fabric retains its intended shape due to its weaving. Effectively transforming the garment into a representation for identity and memory.

The colors, on the other hand, point directly into the contrasting duality between comfort and confinement. The fabric's warm color palette hints at domestic warmth, yet the compression of space and the repetition of folds it creates from the garter seam imply claustrophobia. Adding emotional complexity to the piece and a hint at how domestic spaces and roles are both nurturing and restrictive.

Overall, this beautiful piece by Marina Cruz serves as a powerful testament to the artist's brilliance in transforming the overlooked into a visual scene that invites deep reflection and contemplation on gender, memory, and presence. The art itself invites viewers to slow down and think about the ordinary—a place where personal history sometimes quietly resides. (Mark John Castañeda)



ABOVE: Marina Cruz © Mind Set Art Center







41

## Emmanuel Garibay (b. 1962)

### *Hapunan*

signed (lower left)  
acrylic on canvas  
30" x 24" (76 cm x 61 cm)

**P 300,000**

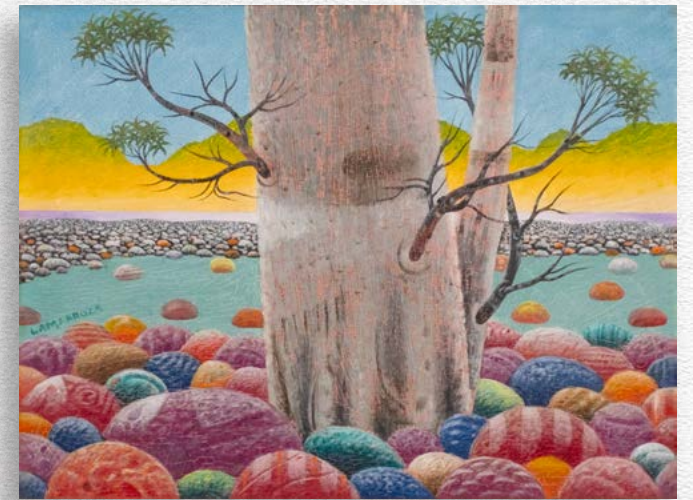
Accompanied by a certificate signed by the artist confirming the authenticity of this lot

A social realist, Emmanuel Garibay's visual narratives blend seriousness and humor with vivid imagery and symbolism to reveal the complexities of life, especially in the Philippine setting and Filipinos' experiences. His college years and background in sociology opened his eyes to the depressing and appalling realities of life, such as poverty, inequality, and social injustice. They allowed him to understand how society and each individual's life correlate. Through his canvases, Garibay helps the audience connect with these raw realities, fostering empathy and understanding.

*Hapunan* is a compelling piece from Garibay. Rather than a lovely family mealtime, the artist pictured a young boy in a worn white shirt holding an empty plate. His dejected and faraway gaze reveals a deep longing—for food, familial warmth, or perhaps both.

Despite his subject's visible sadness, Garibay placed him against a colorful background that subtly forms a heart shape. This symbolism could represent the societal hope that love and family bonds provide comfort amid hardship. While this thinking helps, we know that love alone cannot sustain one's life, let alone a whole family. However, with the kind of government and corrupt officials we have, could we really blame these people for hanging onto this belief?

This sad reality is evident in this oil on canvas work. The child's longing underscores the need for systemic change, as love and hope are insufficient without opportunities and support. Despite the vibrant colors of life around him, the child's facial expression and body language suggest his hunger—not just for sustenance, but also for genuine familial affection and a good life. *(Jessica Magno)*



42

## Prudencio Lamarroza (b.1946)

### *a.) Untitled*

signed (lower left and verso)  
oil on canvas  
12" x 16" (30 cm x 41 cm)

### *b.) Untitled*

signed (lower left)  
oil on canvas  
12" x 16" (30 cm x 41 cm)

### *c.) Untitled*

signed (lower right)  
oil on canvas  
14" x 18" (36 cm x 46 cm)

**P 100,000**

Prudencio Lamarroza's works are perhaps best described as a child's fantasy made literal. Spending his childhood playing on the banks of the Amburayan and Chico Rivers, his works magnify the already majestic views of the rivers. His landscapes are a work of beauty honed by nature and precision, the colors vivid and otherworldly – the sky is yellow, the leaves blue, and the rocks the shades of the rainbow.

"If there is an absolute originality in Lamarroza, it lies in his gift of pure color, for which no amount of reproduction prepares you," Manuel D. Duldunao writes in his monograph *Prudencio Lamarroza: His Life and Art*. A master manipulator of composition, Lamarroza's overflowing canvas is precise in its element, a work that is covered to the brim but never crowded, in proof of the artist's immense talent. *(Hannah Valiente)*



# Don Vicente “Tiking” Hofileña Lopez, Jr. *The Hacendero Collector*

by LISA GUERRERO NAKPIL



Don Vicente “Tiking” H. Lopez, Jr. was the epitome of the gentleman farmer. On his estate in Vallehermoso (or beautiful valley), Negros Oriental, he first planted sugar, then diversified into prawns, bangus, mangoes, cashews, longkom (a variety of Thai lanzones), white Gmelina wood, black pepper, and even cacao.

His gracious plantation house, which he called Il Paradiso, featured four huge themed and art-filled rooms with other structures on the grounds, including a lovely chapel and cozy lanai.

He adored his farm, the produce of which made it possible for him to collect. And collect he did. Don Tiking was passionate about both art and antiques, filling rooms and hallways in his homes with celadon and blue and white porcelain from the various Chinese dynasties.

Prized even more was his collection of modern art. He would invite the famous ‘Saturday Group’ of artists—which included the likes of H.R. Ocampo—to his penthouse at the family-owned Elena Apartments in Ermita. (The

building was named after his mother, the elegant Doña Elena Hofileña Lopez. Tiking was thus cousin two times over to the Eugenio Lopezes.)

Don Tiking was famous for his fabulous buffets, featuring roast beef, lamb, duck, turkey, Russian Salad and Caesar Salad. Ilonggo dishes were not to be missed including a saucelless adobo, chicken binakol, chorizo de Negros, pansit molo, kadyos and apan-apan (kangkong.) There would be Filipino-Spanish courses of relleno, chuletas, lengua, mechado, morcon, paella, lentejas and cocido with all the trimmings.

Gathered at his table would be Vicente Manansala, Hernando R. Ocampo, Sym Mendoza, Alfredo Roces, and Tiny Nuyda, to name a few. There were also musical soirees featuring the Elena String Ensemble which included members of the Philippine Philharmonic Orchestra with Don Tiking on his 17th-century cello. Jose Joya was a particularly avid fan of these evenings. Don Tiking would also invite this circle to enjoy the delights of the Vallehermoso country air.



**This Page:** (Clockwise) Don Tiking with visiting Indonesian dignitaries; Entertaining family and foreign guests at his home in San Juan; As a eucharistic minister he became a fisher of souls, as well as an avid fisherman of the lakeshore variety; the sumptuous buffet at his home, showing the Manansala ‘Madonna No. 2’, and playing with the Elena String Ensemble at a musical soiree in the Elena Apartments. **Opposite Page:** Don Vicente “Tiking” H. Lopez, Jr. examining some of the gems in his collection.

Don Tiking Lopez was born on February 10, 1919, and had his early schooling in the city of Manila at the Ermita Public School (1932) for his primary grades; the Jose Rizal College (1936), for his secondary years; and the Ateneo de Manila for a Bachelor of Arts (1936-38). He then took up Law (1938-40) at the latter. He would complete this course at Silliman University, graduating with an LLB in 1941.

Called to active military duty at the outbreak of World War II, he served the Armed Forces of the Philippines until he resigned with the rank of major in 1946.

He then went into private business and operated the Hacienda Doña Elena Lopez Enterprises Company, Inc., and VICMAR Agro-Industrial, which he headed as president. He guided community-based enterprises such as the San Carlos Planters Cooperative, the Southern Lines Shipping Co., and the Negros Navigation Co. Inc. either as president or a member of the board of directors.

As an entrepreneur, he engaged in the planting of non-traditional crops in Negros. As a hobbyist, he cultivated bonsai and prize-winning orchids, which bear witness to his continued interest in maintaining his roots to the soil. He would attend international orchid shows not just as a buyer but as a judge. One Thai variety of orchid is even named after him. He added other hobbies, including being a skilled golfer and fisherman.

He was deeply involved in the cursillo movement (1967 to 1979) of the country, rising to be president of the Cursillo Foundation of the Philippines, propagating the spiritual and civic dimension of the movement through lectures and seminars in various parts of the country, including among soldiers sent to the Vietnam War. He later became a Eucharistic minister, serving especially in the Nuestra Señora de Guia parish in Ermita. From being a farmer and fisherman, his final role was as God’s fisher of men (and women).



## Vicente Manansala (1910 - 1988)

### *Pieta*

signed and dated 1970 (lower right)

oil on canvas

22" x 29" (56 cm x 74 cm)

**P 5,000,000**

#### PROVENANCE

Acquired directly from the artist

A deeply spiritual and devout person, Don Tiking Lopez—who actively participated in the spiritual retreats and other ministerial activities of the Cursillo Foundation of the Philippines and later became a Eucharistic minister at Ermita's Nuestra Senora de Guia Parish—found solace in the moving image of Christ's passion and death, a reminder of his commitment to his vocation as a servant of the Lord.

Being a devout Catholic, Don Tiking acquired several masterpieces from Manansala, whose religious works convey both the sacred and the profane. Among the Manansala opuses Don Tiking acquired was this poignant interpretation of the *Pieta*, depicting Mary sorrowfully cradling the dead body of her son, Jesus.

A June 26, 1971 article from *The Manila Bulletin* described Don Tiking as "one of the country's avid art collectors." "He has recently converted his hacienda in San Carlos City into a haven for artists who devote themselves to perfecting techniques," the article noted. "Lopez today boasts of one of the biggest collections of Filipino paintings in the country today. His office at the Elena Apartments in Ermita has become converted into an art gallery."

Seasoned writer and journalist Jullie Yap Daza once wrote in her *The Times Journal* column *In search of a voice*, "Unlike many of his contemporaries who collect for speculation's sake, Tiking loves his collection to the point of being thoroughly emotional about every single piece." Daza continued, "Nearly every artist of note enjoys the honor of being hung on the walls of the penthouse of Elena Apartments, which he owns."

Manansala's *Pieta* was among those works once proudly displayed in Don Tiking's own collector's haven.

Manansala created *Pieta* at a time of his sweet, overwhelming success. In the same year as this work, he was conferred the Araw ng Maynila Award. Seven years prior, in 1963, Manansala was awarded the Republic Cultural Heritage Award, the prestigious precursor to the National Artist Award.



ABOVE: Don Vicente Lopez's grandson Martin Lopez when he was 4 years old

But more than this string of continuous success, *Pieta* shows the maturation of Manansala's Transparent Cubism, with his smooth, delicate brush strokes showing refinement and the meticulous ability to render transparent layers of superimposed planes, thereby retaining their sheer realism and heightened emotional resonance while imbuing a sense of humanization.

Manansala's journey to Transparent Cubism was an arduous two-decade-long process. He first laid its foundations during his studies at the *École des Beaux-Arts* in Banff, Canada in 1949 and his nine-month Parisian sojourn of 1950-51, during which he became the first Filipino to be awarded a scholarship by the French government to the famed *École des Beaux-Arts* of the University of Paris. There, Manansala was mentored by the French cubist Fernand Léger, a close contemporary of the pioneers of Cubism Pablo Picasso and Georges Braque, two of Manansala's foremost luminaries.

Agnes Duval, in her article "Manansala" in the April 1968 issue of *Solidarity: Current Affairs, Ideas, and the Arts* magazine, writes of Manansala's particular catalyst for the birth of his Transparent Cubism. "Window shopping

## Manansala

### *The Most Moving Mother and Child*



one day [in Paris], he [Manansala] noted the interplay of reflected images on the plate-glass and the objects inside the window displays."

From there, Manansala began forging his own path and embarked on carving his legacy.

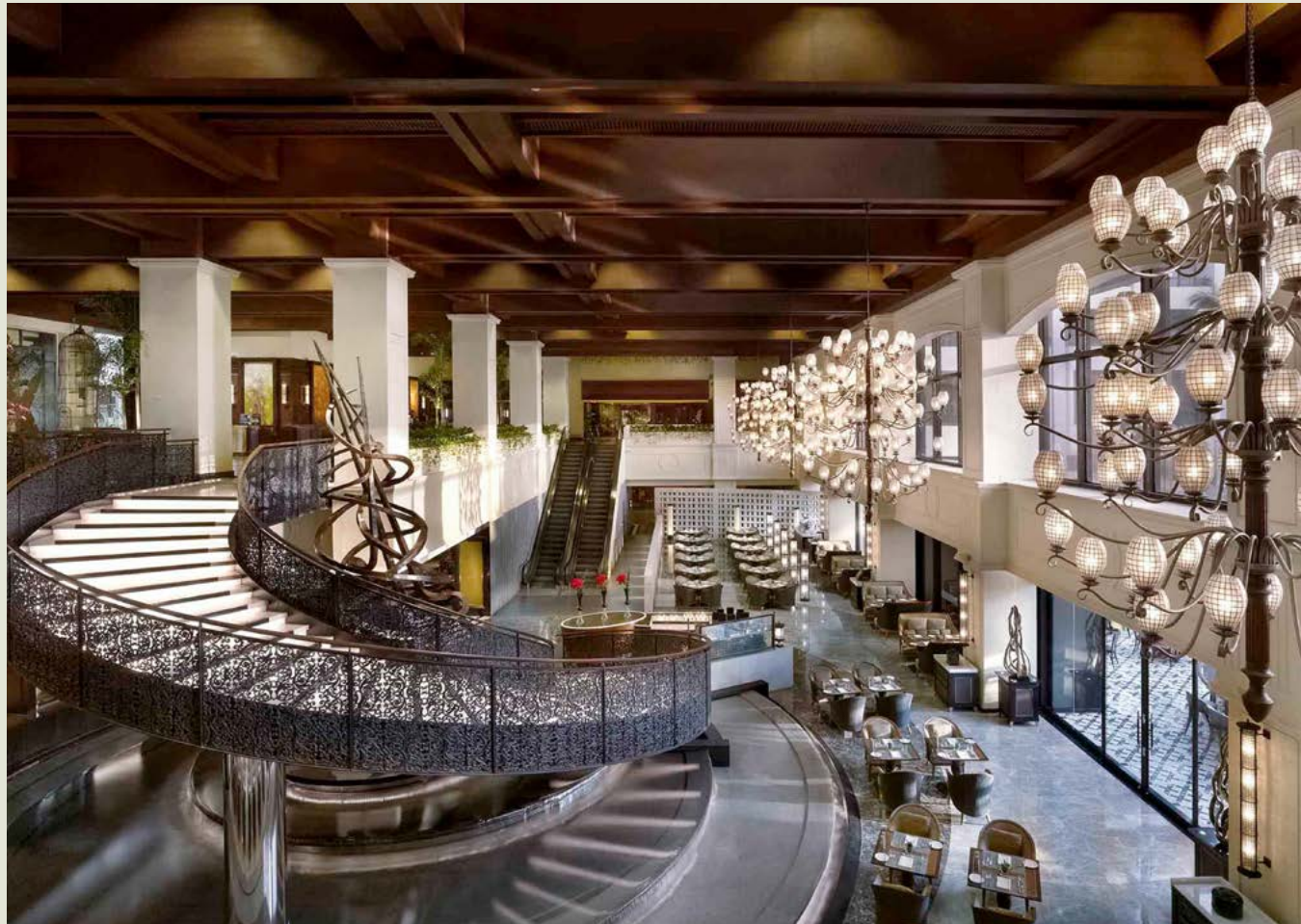
*Pieta* also encapsulates Manansala's Catholic faith. In his landmark book *Conversations on Philippine Art*, Cid Reyes said to Manansala: "Isa pa hong lagi ninyong ipinipinta e yung Kristo." To which Manansala answers, "Oo. Taon-taon yan, gumagawa ako ng isang Kristo." The artist adds that it has become a kind of devotion, a religious vow. In Rod.

Paras-Perez's book *Manansala*, the maestro revealed: "I used to go to Mass every day at the San Francisco Church. At 14, I wanted to become a priest."

On that account, Manansala imbues his paintings of the suffering Christ not only with a solemn, reverential atmosphere but also with a profound understanding of his human nature, the Son of God incarnate. In his language of Transparent Cubism, Manansala never fragmented the subject; he remained faithful to its corporeality. Hence, *Pieta* evokes solemnity and humanity at once; a hallowed reminder of God's humble partaking in humanity's sins and suffering. (*Adrian Maranan*)



# The Grand Dame of Philippine Hotels: The Philippine Plaza



ABOVE: The hotel's majestic staircase and its imposing lobby dotted with Castrillo sculptures.

As reported in *The New York Times*, 29 September 1976: "The glittering showplace of the Philippines — the 700-room (Philippine) Plaza Hotel—staged its gala opening last night (28 September 1976), but there were no bellboys, no room clerks, and no guests. The celebration saw more than 2,000 guests sampling smoked salmon and ham en croute on tables groaning under hors d'oeuvres while workers still hammered away on scaffolding on floors high above... The (Philippine) Plaza Hotel, an integral part of the sprawling Philippine International Convention Center (PICC) where later this week more than 3,000 of the world's leading bankers and financiers will converge for the annual meetings of the IMF and WB, was to have been her crown jewel."

The Philippine Plaza Hotel was the largest of fourteen new hotels constructed in 1976 for the five-day IMF-World Bank Annual Meeting. As described in Nicholas Polites' monograph, *The Architecture of Leandro V. Locsin*:

"The Philippine Plaza reaches out toward the sea on the shore of the recently reclaimed land that cuts dramatically into Manila Bay. The hotel is so oriented as to give each of its 700 rooms a singular view of the bay or Metro Manila itself, and of the graceful curve of Roxas Boulevard...

Given its tropical setting on the shore of Manila Bay, the Plaza was conceived as a high-quality, modern informal resort hotel with an atmosphere suggesting the Filipino propensity for celebration. The huge lobby, with its play of space and its earthy autumn colors, serves as a showcase for lush foliage of Philippine plants and such works of art as the giant sculpture and giant tapestry by Arturo Luz. An indoor waterfall adds to the play of light and provides an exhilarating sound of life and movement. Outside the lobby, a free-form swimming pool meanders through the lush gardens around a kiosk and under arched bridges. While thoroughly contemporary and cosmopolitan in idiom, the lobby captures the traditional Philippine town plaza: a promenade, an arboretum, a setting for monuments, and a place of festivity."



ABOVE: Castrillo sculptures add elegance to the private suites.

It was rumored that Imelda Marcos actually owned the Philippine Plaza, though her ownership was hidden. Among the First Lady's favored guests was the internationally renowned American pianist, Van Cliburn. According to Carmen Navarro Pedrosa in her book, *The Rise and Fall of Imelda Marcos*, Imelda first met Van Cliburn at the clinic of a famous American doctor who specialized in the care and treatment of hands. As recalled in *The Times Journal*, 8 December 1972, and by Raymond Bonner, in his book *Waltzing with a Dictator*, when Mrs. Marcos was attacked at Nayong Pilipino by an assassin named Carlito Dimailig with a foot-long bolo on 7 December 1972, she sustained injuries in her right arm and hand. President Nixon had called Mrs. Marcos with his personal sympathy and had dispatched to Manila a hand surgery specialist from Stanford University named Dr. Robert Arthur Chase, who was also the hand doctor of Van Cliburn. It must have been in one of her follow-up check-ups in Dr. Chase's clinic where the two met.

After that first encounter, the two became inseparable, as recalled by her "dissident" niece Beatriz Romualdez Francia in her book, *Imelda and the Clans*. As recounted

by Carmen Navarro Pedrosa in *The Rise and Fall of Imelda Marcos*, Van Cliburn first invited Imelda to the Metropolitan Opera where he was said to have picked the ostrich feathers which fell from her cape. When told by Imelda to just leave them there, Van Cliburn allegedly replied: "Madame, those feathers are precious. Anything that touches your body is beautiful." She thought the world of Van Cliburn and had hour-long conversations with the pianist on sweet nothings, as would a love-struck teenager.

When Imelda returned to the Philippines on a chartered jet on 4 November 1991, she chose to be billeted at the Philippine Plaza Hotel in a US\$ 2,000 suite and rented sixty rooms for her 235-strong entourage. On 2 July 2009, Imelda celebrated her 80th birthday at the Philippine Plaza Hotel. Perhaps she was there to reminisce better times, listening to piano concertos on that Steinway Grand Piano with her bosom friend, Van Cliburn nimbly running his hands on its ivory keyboard, playing her favorite Tchaikovsky and Rachmaninoff pieces in that spectacular hotel lobby where the sun set in all its magnificent glory.



Eduardo Castrillo (1942 - 2016)

*The Bolt*

signed and dated 2011

brass

without base:

H: 55 1/2" (141 cm)

L: 10" (25 cm)

W: 13" (33 cm)

with base:

H: 90 1/2" (230 cm)

L: 15 3/4" (40 cm)

W: 23 1/2" (60 cm)

P 400,000

PROVENANCE

Acquired directly from the artist

A son of a master jeweler and a Zarzuela artist, Eduardo Castrillo inherited his parents' artistic flair. Throughout his career, he has demonstrated his versatility by working in a wide variety of mediums: bronze, brass, stainless steel, chrome, plexiglass, glass, and scrap metal. He also used hammerouts, reliefs, assemblages, and bronze casting to create his dignified abstract masterworks, showcasing his ability to adapt and innovate in his art.

Big and Brassy. That is how Alfredo Roces described Eduardo Castrillo's sculptures. Although he worked with different materials, brass remained his preferred medium. His sculptures, almost everywhere in Metro Manila, have become an integral part of the urban landscape, adorning parks, museums, office buildings, hotel premises, and school compounds. While enduring the painstakingly long traffic in EDSA, look outside and you might see one of Castrillo's colossal works of art, too.

Ed Castrillo's brassworks boast immaculate craftsmanship. In comparison to other metals, brass is considerably more challenging to wield due to the zinc it contains. While it is softer than bronze, excessive heat can cause the zinc to fume out, and too much force can cause it to crack. Nevertheless, these succeeding lots: *The Bolt* (2011), *Axial Vertebral* (2011), *Fortitude* (2007), and *Strike* (2007), showcase Castrillo's unbending skills and authority in the field of brass sculpting, being able to create gigantic pieces in the most intricate designs and patterns.



Eduardo Castrillo (1942 - 2016)

*Axial Vertebral*

signed and dated 2011

brass

without base:

H: 55 3/4" (142 cm)

L: 11" (28 cm)

W: 11 1/2" (29 cm)

with base:

H: 90 1/2" (230 cm)

L: 15 3/4" (40 cm)

W: 23 1/2" (60 cm)

P 400,000

PROVENANCE

Acquired directly from the artist

Certainly, Castrillo's sublime and monumental sculptures and brass reliefs are a sight to behold, decorating the Philippine soil with his top-notch artistry and precision. He created several monuments in honor of our valiant heroes, historical events, and notable Filipino figures whose contributions and significance are immeasurable. Thus, many of his works served as landmarks for several historical sites across the country.

The year 1971 marked a significant milestone in Eduardo Castrillo's career. At 29, he received the Republic Cultural Heritage Award, which was the nation's top art honor at the time. That same year, he was also a recipient of the Araw ng Maynila Centennial Award, the Jaycees' Ten Outstanding Young Men Award, and the Outstanding Makati Resident Award. And most importantly, it was also in 1971 that he represented the Philippines in the Paris Biennial, the first of many international stages he would step into. *(Jessica Magno)*





Eduardo Castrillo (1942 - 2016)

*Fortitude*  
signed and dated 2007  
brass  
without base:  
H: 82 1/4" (209 cm)  
L: 13 3/4" (35 cm)  
W: 12 1/4" (31 cm)

with base:  
H: 106 1/2" (271 cm)  
L: 23 1/2" (60 cm)  
W: 23 1/2" (60 cm)

P 500,000

PROVENANCE  
Acquired directly from the artist



Eduardo Castrillo (1942 - 2016)

*Strike*  
signed and dated 2007  
brass  
without base:  
H: 82 1/2" (210 cm)  
L: 14" (36 cm)  
W: 19 1/2" (50 cm)

with base:  
H: 104" (264 cm)  
L: 23 1/2" (60 cm)  
W: 23 1/2" (60 cm)

P 500,000

PROVENANCE  
Acquired directly from the artist





## Fernando Amorsolo (1892 - 1972)

### *Marikina*

signed, dated and titled "Marikina, 1933" (lower left)

oil on canvas

13" x 18" (33 cm x 46 cm)

**P 3,000,000**

#### PROVENANCE

Acquired directly from the artist by Alex Frieder, who persuaded President Manuel Quezon to create a safe haven for Jews fleeing the Holocaust in Europe. The result was the establishment of the Jewish Refugee Committee of the Philippine Islands in the late 1930s, which was responsible for saving the lives of more than a thousand Jews from Germany and Austria.

Private collection, USA



**ABOVE:** A farmer plowing a rice field in Marikina, then a part of Rizal Province, early 20th century (1900 - 1930). © Everett Thompson photograph collection - University of Michigan, Special Collections Library

"My companions in those days were [Irineo] Miranda, [Dominador] Castañeda, [Jose] Pereira, and [Isidro] Ancheta," Amorsolo recalled. "We used to go to Teresa, Montalban, and Marikina. We would be out for days. When we were tired of painting, we would put down our brushes, take our guns, and go shooting birds." This petite 1933 oil painting was one of those works Amorsolo conceived in one of his Marikina excursions. The work possesses the exuberance of his plein air paintings, as evidenced by its small dimensions, the quick, thickly applied brushstrokes, the purity of the colors, and Amorsolo's dynamic composition, which captures an uncontrived snapshot of the moment. Amorsolo's loose rendering of the human figure and the carabao, and the white dabs of paint applied liberally, which represent the patches of water reflecting off the rays of the midday sun, exude the maestro's spur-of-the-moment practice vis-à-vis his more refined studio works.

For Amorsolo, his countryside excursions and open-air painting sessions gave him a genuinely liberating feeling, a much-needed respite from his long line of commissions that always catered to his clients' desires. It was also a breather from his bureaucratic responsibilities as instructor of both landscape painting and drawing from life classes at the University of the Philippines School of Fine Arts. As Amorsolo confided in a 1929 interview for *The Independent* and articulated in writing by Ralph W. Hawkins, "When painting a portrait, he explained, he is bound by the taste of the subject.... He feels stifled, fettered. In painting nature studies, his fetters are cut loose, and he paints in absolute freedom of spirit. And that is how he wants to paint."

Amorsolo is buried at the Loyola Memorial Park in Marikina, in the same place he once cherished in his lifetime. The maestro lies in repose on a site he personally chose, a spot overlooking the beautiful Manila sunset. Thus, the work then becomes a memento of a maestro communing in perpetuity with the land whose bucolic past he immortalized in canvas.

# Fernando Amorsolo's Golden Era of Landscapes *Painting the Glory of Pre-War Marikina*

by ADRIAN MARANAN





## Fernando Amorsolo (1892 - 1972)

### *Market Scene*

signed and dated Manila, 1948 (lower right)

oil on canvas

11 1/8" x 15 1/8" (28 cm x 38 cm)

**P 3,800,000**

#### PROVENANCE

Acquired directly from the artist by Alex Frieder, who persuaded President Manuel Quezon to create a safe haven for Jews fleeing the Holocaust in Europe. The result was the establishment of the Jewish Refugee Committee of the Philippine Islands in the late 1930s, which was responsible for saving the lives of more than a thousand Jews from Germany and Austria.

Private collection, USA

When liberation happened in the early months of 1945, the nation was in a frenzy; there was the constant question of whether to survive and push forward to living a hopeless (and godless) life or spiral down along with the whirlwind of destruction. There was an uncanny haze filled with the still resounding remnants of heavy artillery and bombs, the haunting memories of those who tragically lost their lives to the war, the ruins of irreplaceable heritage, and the fears and anxieties of a people who had lost their morals and morale amid the scramble for survival.

Everything, and everyone, was in absolute uncertainty.

When the war unfortunately struck, painting commissions significantly lessened for Filipino artists, including Fernando Amorsolo. Manila's crème de la crème, including the Zóbel de Ayalas, the Aranetas, the Vargases, the Madrigals, all of whom were Amorsolo's top clients at the time, restrained in art collecting, fearing for the uncertainty of their cherished troves amid the impending destruction. Furthermore, the war made scarcity a norm, taking a toll on Amorsolo's much-needed painting materials.

In his landmark monograph on the artist, critic Alfredo Roces details of an incident, in which "art collector Don Luis Araneta recounted how Amorsolo would come to his office with a small landscape and ask, somewhat hesitantly, if he could possibly get P30.00 for the work."

However, for Amorsolo, his brush and paint became his unfailing companions to the precariousness of the war— and became instruments of cathartic healing for the scarred artist. His daughter, Sylvia Amorsolo-Lazo, said in a recent interview with Leon Gallery, "Papa said, 'There is no single moment that I remember that I don't want to paint or draw. That was his passion that he kept on [painting and] drawing.'"

Even amid the violence, Amorsolo kept his art closer than ever, resolute in drawing and painting the horrors his countrymen were all helplessly facing.



ABOVE: Alex Frieder (encircled in red) with Jewish refugees in Manila. © Rescue in the Philippines: Refuge from the Holocaust documentary website

By the war's end, Amorsolo labored to regain his life and living. "While Manileños in 1945 were picking up pieces to start life again, Amorsolo parlayed his artistic skill for needed cash and US army goods by doing quick sketches of GIs," Roces writes in the all-important monograph on the artist. "His quick eye and sure pencil served him through those 'honky tonk' days right after the war."

Once again, Amorsolo depicted the peace and idyll of his beloved countryside in his canvas. But this time, it was not anymore in the context of a renewed sense of Filipinismo amid the relentless surge of Americanization and the optimistic anticipation for the peaceful transition into becoming a fully sovereign nation. Amorsolo sought to capture an image of the not-so-distant past as mirrors reflecting that poignant yet tender hope for a new dawn.

This petite market scene from 1948, painted just three years after the liberation of the Philippines, encapsulates a hopeful return to normalcy in the face of physical and moral destruction. The market serves as a metaphor for prosperity, its hustle and bustle evoking regaining the elusive path towards progress through the rebuilding of a reinvigorated sense of solidarity in the community. Amorsolo's favorite *sabungero* is also remarkably present, symbolizing a people's resilience, a nation breathing a great sigh of relief after a harrowing ordeal.

Notice in the work how Amorsolo intended to position the lighting in the upper left corner of the work for it to cast its luminosity onto the woman in the center, acting as a metaphor for Inang Bayan encapsulating a nation's shared aspirations for a renaissance, a homecoming to another promising day of life-sustaining pursuits. (Adrian Maranan)

## Optimism and Confidence in the Post-War Years *Amorsolo Captures a Hopeful Return to Normalcy*





**Tam Austria** (b. 1943)

*Pagoda sa Ilog*

signed and dated 1978 (upper left)

oil on canvas

54" x 54" (137 cm x 137 cm)

**P 700,000**

Accompanied by a certificate signed by the artist confirming the authenticity of this lot

PROVENANCE

Private collection, Manila



ABOVE: Tam Austria © Articulate PH BELOW: The Pagoda at the Angono Fiesta of San Clemente

on unity, endurance, and the burden placed on the Filipino masses during Martial Law.

Overall, Tam Austria's visual allegory of anonymous workers building something bigger than themselves becomes a stand-in for the Filipino people. The folk painting serves as a direct representation of the transformative potential of collective action, despite being under authoritarian rule. Profoundly exemplifying the artist's ability to weave folk sensibility, surreal structuring, and social realism in one single canvas—making the art piece itself a meditation piece on how history, culture, and power are constructed through communal effort and shared sacrifices.

(Mark John Castañeda)

## Austria's Homage to Angono Celebrating the Fiesta of San Clemente





**Marcel Antonio** (b. 1965)

*Midnight Run*

signed (lower right and verso)

acrylic on canvas

36" x 60" (91 cm x 152 cm)

**P 340,000**

Leon Gallery wishes to thank the artist for confirming the authenticity of this lot

PROVENANCE

Private collection, Manila

Among others, Marcel Antonio's works are most described as "Chagal-like." Named after the early modernist artist Marc Chagall, Marcel's works echo Chagall's in their dreamlike quality and vibrant use of colors. His works fuse surrealism with expressionism, every inch of the canvas telling a part of the story.

This work shows Marcel's particular brand of anachronism. A significant part of this canvas depicted America's Declaration of Independence, with men in long coats and powdered wigs seated around a table, holding scrolls and quills. All seems well – until one looks carefully at the painting. What seems like a standard portrait of the 18th-century event bore elements that are incongruent with the time period. Just hints that belie that something doesn't fit — the Eye of Providence peering from behind a modern-looking window, a globe, a furnace.

However, out of many others, one pair from the background stands out — the lion and the snake. Echoing an ancient fable, these animals are embroiled in a deadly fight. The lion, hungry, swipes his paw at the snake, who retaliates by biting the lion. Though the original tale left only the lion dead, Marcel depicts the snake cut into pieces, both animals taking the other out as they die.

Marcel Antonio's works, indeed, are a masterclass of the expressive and non-literary tradition of storytelling, playful in its pursuit of a narrative. This work submerges itself in metaphors, fables, history, and culture to create a truly unique story, a particular talent of one of the country's most prodigious artists. (Hannah Valiente)



# On the 250th Year of American Independence (1776 - 2026)

*The Founding Fathers and Paul Revere*



Ang Kiukok (1931 - 2005)

*Seated Figure #3*  
signed and dated 1985 (upper left)  
tempera  
18" x 12" (46 cm x 30 cm)

P 500,000

Accompanied by a certificate issued by Finale Art File confirming the authenticity of this lot

PROVENANCE  
Finale Art File

Ang Kiukok's 1985 *Seated Figure #3* is a superb example of the artist's exemplary figurative works that highlight his vigorous experimentation with abstraction. Greatly influenced by his mentor Vicente Manansala, he developed his own distinctive art style that elevates Cubist aesthetic and powerful visual allegories.

Here, Ang depicts a lone figure. He is sitting on the floor, knees pulled up to his chest, and his head resting on his hand. His body is an angular collection of bony body parts in shades of blue and yellow. He seems like the very image of dejection, made flesh and blood.

In his work, one can see Ang's spin on the academic nude study. Instead of conforming to the pictorial composition



of the body, he abstracts the human form, distorting its composition in favor of emphasizing its emotional power.

*Seated Figure #3* possesses a unique and undeniable charisma, with Ang synthesizing elements of surrealism, cubism, and expressionism into his brand of artistic language, cutting an expressive work marked by sharp angles and alienated worldviews. (Hannah Valiente)

Ang Kiukok (1931 - 2005)

*Rooster*  
signed and dated 1980 (lower right)  
tempera  
18" x 12" (46 cm x 30 cm)

P 500,000

Accompanied by a certificate issued by Finale Art File confirming the authenticity of this lot

PROVENANCE  
Finale Art File

Depicting roosters and fighting cocks is one of the iconic subjects of the artist Ang Kiukok. Embodying primordial violence and cultural machismo, the traditional image of roosters for Kiukok had become a representation of the raw instincts of survival in Philippine society. And as such, this featured piece by the artist provides a perfect example of his frequent use of powerful symbols in his paintings.

Created around 1980, the rooster featured in the piece was rendered in harem, jagged, angular lines, especially along the wings and talons, to highlight the monstrousness of what it represents. Its aggressive posture and color palette



of burnt reds and black voids complements the mood of violence and dominance of the figure.

Overall, Kiukok's *Rooster* feels tense, dominant, and defiant—a work that represents an aggressive, monstrous creature locked in perpetual confrontation. Perfectly highlighting the artist's vision of the modern human condition. (Mark John Castañeda)

Marcel Antonio (b. 1965)

*The Balance of Gravity*  
signed (lower left and verso)  
dated 1999  
oil on canvas  
36" x 24" (91 cm x 61 cm)

P 220,000

Accompanied by a certificate signed by the artist confirming the authenticity of this lot

Delving into the existential themes of human existence, Marcel Antonio's *The Balance of Gravity* presents a contemplative masterpiece that merges figurative representation with surreal and metaphysical concerns to deliver its intended message. Fully packed with symbolism and imagery, the painting becomes a visual meditation on how individuals navigate the weight of existing and the feeling of seeking meaning beyond living.

The central figure of the painting focuses first on a woman who is seemingly tired, and internally contemplating, as it was surrounded by interesting imagery that slowly builds the art piece's central theme: From the skull on the table, which is a representation of *memento mori* to evoke mortality, which contrasts with the potted plant, which implies life and growth, To fruits and food items that represented sensuality and the physical world, which were paralleled by hanging stars and celestial symbols that hinted at cosmic cycles and unseen forces beyond a human life's control. Antonio had established the idea of "balance" as referenced in the title—life and death, matter and spirit; the balances of existence, each pulling the woman between opposing forces like gravity. (Mark John Castañeda)





## Félix Resurrección Hidalgo (1855 - 1913)

*Bois de Boulogne*

signed (lower left)

oil on canvas

12" x 21" (30 cm x 53 cm)

**P 2,200,000**

### PROVENANCE

Private collection, Bordeaux, France (by descent from the family who acquired the work in Spain at the beginning of the 20th century)

Osenat, *The Floralties - Modern and Contemporary Art*, Versailles, 15 June 2025, Lot 32



**ABOVE:** A stone arch bridge at the Parc de Bagatelle, located inside the sprawling complex of the Bois de Boulogne. This scenery bears similarities to the Hidalgo work on offer in this auction.



**ABOVE:** Another painting by Hidalgo depicting the Bois de Boulogne, his favorite park in Paris. Bois de Boulogne, oil on canvas, 1894. Eugenio Lopez Foundation Collection. **BELOW:** Vincent Van Gogh's *Strollers in the Bois de Boulogne* (1886) captures a snapshot of Parisian leisure in the park at the time of Hidalgo's residence in Paris. From the collection of the Van Vlissingen Art Foundation, Zeist, Netherlands

"human sentiment of the homeland, which always brings up the most melancholy memories."

Hidalgo became a soul wandering in solitude and homesickness, only tempered by a constant exchange of letters with his sister Rosario (who was also his best friend and confidant) and relinquished through the power of his brush. For Hidalgo, nothing felt like home more than his own motherland. This explains the artist's numerous works depicting a woman lamenting in the woods, an allegory of Hidalgo isolated from and yearning for his native land.

Away from the excitement of Paris, Hidalgo found pockets of urban refuge in the city's public parks, where he sought inspiration and released all his repressed emotions through sketching and painting.

Hidalgo's favorite park was the historic *Bois de Boulogne*, founded on land that was formerly an oak forest used as royal hunting grounds and later granted to the Parisian government by the last French monarch, Napoleon III, in 1852. *Bois de Boulogne* was (and still is) a peaceful oasis in the midst of a bustling city, possessing artificial lakes and streams filled with people rowing their boats and also turning into skating parks during winters; romantically elegant gardens; scenic promenades and pathways where

**B**elle Époque Paris creatively transformed Félix Resurrección Hidalgo. As he possessed a placid, tranquil spirit, the breeze and exuberance of this city in its golden age liberated Hidalgo from the conservatism of Neoclassicism to the airy and loose feeling of Impressionism.

Paris was once the city that never slept. Jose Rizal described it as where "man is a real ant," with "streets where you cannot see where they end but nevertheless are straight, wide, and well-paved...." Shops, cafes, *bouillions*, and breweries sprouted like mushrooms, catering to the thousands of travelers from all over the world, all wanting to experience and push the boundaries of what it meant to truly live—the *joie de vivre*.

Like any other *ilustrado*, Hidalgo experienced all of this. But when all the lights had dimmed out, a man could be seen sleeplessly drowning in melancholy. The homesick Hidalgo, separated from his family and motherland for three decades since he first sailed to Spain as a *pensionado*, turned to a Spanish song titled *Canto del Destierro* (Song of the Exile), which he intended to use as an inspiration for a monumental painting that he planned to execute after winning the silver medal at the 1884 Madrid Exposition. He summarized his creative thoughts in a letter to his patron Francisco de Yriarte, writing that the painting is a

# Hidalgo's Romantic Melancholia

## *Painting His Favorite Urban Refuge in Cosmopolitan Paris*

by ADRIAN MARANAN



families and couples strolled on feet and some on their bicycles and horse-drawn carriages wandered people into the lush woods and verdant lawns that were also brimming with families and friends enjoying their picnics, reading books, crafts such as embroidery and sewing, and children playing freely; and hippodromes that cater to horseracing on bright, sunny days.

This painting, titled *Bois de Boulogne*, is one of Hidalgo's several works depicting the scenic urban oasis (a similar painting, created in 1894, is now in the collection of the Eugenio Lopez Foundation). Alfredo Roces wrote in his book on Hidalgo that it was in the Bois de Boulogne where he "spen[t] much time capturing wooded scenes."

*Bois de Boulogne* is remarkably Impressionist in style and follows in the footsteps of the Impressionists who had immortalized the Parisian leisure in the park: Renoir's *Skaters in the Bois de Boulogne* (1868), Van Gogh's *Bois de Boulogne with People Walking* (1886), and Mary Cassatt's *A Woman and a Girl Driving* (1881).

Hidalgo's *Bois de Boulogne* depicts a Parisian woman crossing a single-arch stone bridge across an artificial stream. There is an aura of wistful beauty attached to this work, emphasized by the soft, subdued glow of oranges in

the background, depicting the sunset, and by the solitude of the woman as she crosses the bridge and wanders into the woods, which Hidalgo rendered in shadowy grays, adding a layer of enigma.

Beauty in melancholy is central to this work. In the soothing vibrancy of the Bois de Boulogne, Hidalgo found comfort and peace as he painted the impressions of his mind, letting them flow through his quick yet sure strokes. And it is in transporting himself to the mystical, solitary world of his works that he healed his soul, choosing to maintain, as he wrote in his letter to Rosario, "a tranquil and serene spirit, straighten[ing] out sad thoughts and stay[ing] very calm and hav[ing] great confidence in the future."

The hazy rendering and ambiguous nature of this work leave the audience with an open ending, something that Hidalgo actually practiced in real life. Although many of his paintings bear that sense of languishing, Hidalgo remained enduring in spirit, writing to his beloved sister, "Let us shape [life] as it is...Fortitude, and not tears...is what God expects of us." For Hidalgo, what it truly meant to live in Belle Époque Paris was to live life consciously as God willed it.





56

**Antonio Austria** (b. 1936)

*Bilyar*

signed and dated 1984 (upper left and verso)

oil on canvas

29" x 47 1/4" (74 cm x 120 cm)

**P 500,000**

Using the crowded billiard hall scene as a lens to examine community, control, and everyday Filipino life, Antonio Austria's *Bilyar* seeks to offer a powerful reflection on social confinement, shared hardship, and the silent endurance of everyday life—with the game itself being used as a social metaphor for life and society where each ball navigates on limited space, colliding others and was subjected to forces beyond their control..

With the central figures portraying a pool table surrounded by people, essentially creating a compressed claustrophobic composition, their gaze at the game creates a sense of collective tension as the balls clash and roll around the

table. The crowded environment hints at societal pressure; their mix of ages and genders suggests that the *game* affects everyone..

Created around 1984, Austria's painting reflects a period in our history marked by political tension, social inequality, and widespread uncertainty. Through his visual language, the art piece transforms an ordinary pastime into a quiet representation of collective struggle. Where leisure becomes a meaningless illusion meant to distract people while deeper societal constraints run rampant in their daily lives. (Mark John Castañeda)



57

**Jonathan Ching** (b. 1969)

*Untitled*

signed and dated 2011 (lower right)

oil on canvas

60" x 72" (152 cm x 183 cm)

**P 200,000**

Creating a scene that quietly unsettles the longer you gaze at it, Jonathan Ching's turbulent, energetic masterpiece features a group of women seemingly submerged underwater, moving in a loose, unsynchronized rhythm—creating a restless, oppressive atmosphere.

With heavy, textured brushstrokes that seem to magnify the piece's restlessness and oppressiveness, one detail that further pushes the unsettling tone is that all women wore tight corsets, which are typically tied to symbolism of control, beauty standards, and restriction. This creates a tension between elements of grace and discomfort.

The women seemingly try to pose their bodies while underwater, while their clothes and situation feel terrifying and restricting. This contradiction continues to invite the viewer to question whether the painting scene is either harmony or quiet suffocation.

Overall, the painting feels like a metaphor for existing within social expectations. Jonathan Ching let repetition, omission, and atmosphere deliver his piece—haunting, constrained, and hypnotic. (Mark John Castañeda)



**Fernando Amorsolo** (1892 - 1972)  
*Portrait of Sra. Doña Marcela Meer and Don Nicolas C. Millar*  
signed and dated 1954 (lower left)  
oil on canvas  
28" x 36 1/2" (71 cm x 93 cm)

P 240,000



ABOVE: Sra. Doña Marcela Meer Millar and Don Nicolas C. Millar Wedding Picture



ABOVE: Wedding Portrait of Marcela Meer Millar by Fernando Amorsolo, auctioned by Leon Gallery in 2020



ABOVE: Society Page News of the Millar - Meer Wedding

Sra. Doña Marcela Meer Millar is something of a regular of National Artist Fernando Amorsolo. Counting at least two portraits made by the maestro, she hails from a family of lawyers, with her brothers Bibiano L. Meer, former Commissioner of Internal Revenue and the Bureau of Customs, and Pablo L. Meer serving as pillars in the legal and business sectors.

Her marriage to local businessman Don Nicholas Millar was similarly star-studded. News of it graced the 10 April 1932 issue of The Sunday Tribune, with many of their guests including lauded politicians and citizens. Senate President Manuel L. Quezon, Secretary Jose Abad Santos, ex-senator Jose P. Laurel, and Carlos P. Romulo, among others, were invited. Then-Director of the Philippine Library and Museum Teodoro M. Kalaw was one of the couple's sponsors. It was a marriage for the ages, a veritable who's who of the country's most influential people.

Nearly two decades following their wedding, Sra. Doña Marcela Meer Millar and Don Nicholas C. Millar posed for a portrait by Fernando R. Amorsolo.

Though perhaps better known for his scenic masterpieces, Amorsolo is a renowned portraitist in his own right. With portraiture a major source of income and clientele, it could

be said that some of his best works are portraits, as befitting a master of figure painting.

"He was famed as a great portraitist," his daughter Sylvia Amorsolo-Lazo wrote in the introduction of the first volume of *Amorsolo: Love & Passion*. "When looking at an Amorsolo portrait, any viewer would feel as if one is seeing the subject in person."

His subjects' eyes also seem to follow the viewer, almost as though they were alive and breathing. His portraits pose a different side between his "public" style, as shown by his genre works, and his "private" style, which is his portraits.

As is the case with many of the best painters in history, Fernando Amorsolo has dedicated himself to the look of a well-dressed man or woman just as much as he does with genre works. In true retratista fashion, he gives Don and Doña Millar the embellishments that surmise the opulence of the 1950s high society – Doña Marcela's high-quality woven baro't saya contrasting Don Nicholas' suit and tie. Thus, this work becomes a memento of a maestro's exemplary skills, ranging from a snapshot of a bucolic countryside to a portrait of high society's darlings. (*Hannah Valiente*)

# Master Portraitist Amorsolo *Paints a Stately Couple*



Sra. Doña Marcela Meer Millar and husband Don Nicolas Castillo Millar was Lucky Agent No.1 of the **National Charity Sweepstakes (NCS)**; now Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office (PCSO) during the 50's. The National Charity Sweepstakes held draws to raise funds for the Philippine Anti-Tuberculosis Society and the Philippine Amateur Athletic Federation. Among her peers are the Viray and Uy family who own's a shoe and a PCSO Outlet stores as well in Carriedo, respectively. The Uy family was her sales competitor during those times.

Fernando Amorsolo was a sought after potraitist of the Post-War elite at that time.

The couple's residence was the mansion in front of De La Salle University - Taft Avenue , now occupied by Banco De Oro.

The circumstances of this commission align with Amorsolo's practice of producing portraits for wealthy and influential families, who sought to immortalize their lineage and social identity through his signature -luminous style. Such works were typically displayed in ancestral homes or passed down as heirlooms, serving as enduring symbols of prestige.

Marcela Meer-Millar was dubbed as Lucy Agent No.1 as she sold tickets winning the 1st, 2nd,3rd prizes in one draw.





59 PROPERTY FROM THE DR. LEOVINO MA. GARCIA COLLECTION

**Lao Lianben** (b. 1948)  
*Untitled*  
 acrylic on paper  
 15 3/4" x 19 3/4" (40 cm x 50 cm)

**P 700,000**

The works of Lao Lianben carry within them a sense of mystery that only seems to reveal itself to those dedicated enough to pry it from within. Minimalist to the bone, his oeuvre is stark and bare, the subtlest stroke referencing a scar, a soot, or a reference — an indicator of the artist's immense talent.

This particular work is soot black, with the only things breaking the monotony being the four white brushstrokes near the bottom part of the canvas. Lao reveals so much

with so little; this work features the ever-present tension between the visible and the invisible, the shown and the suggested, as is often the case with Lao's works.

"I just choose to paint and continue to be conversant with the recurring themes that are associated with my personal history and ongoing narrative," he said in a 2023 Lifestyle Inquirer interview. Indeed, he imbues his works with his personal touch, animating them like they are living, breathing skins telling their story. *(Hannah Valiente)*



60 PROPERTY FROM THE DR. LEOVINO MA. GARCIA COLLECTION

**Lao Lianben** (b. 1948)  
*Untitled*  
 acrylic, modeling paste on paper  
 30" x 22 1/2" (76 cm x 57 cm)

**P 700,000**

Hailing from the illustrious collection of Dr. Leovino Ma. Garcia, this Lao Lianben piece exemplified the sublime serenity of the Zen master. In a piece where silence becomes eloquent, tranquility becomes the language with which a Lao work can be understood.

"To truly appreciate Lao's silence then, one has to be blessed with the patience to pay attention for a long time and the perseverance to listen for even a longer time," Dr. Leovino wrote in the exhibition catalog of *Passion and Compassion: The Lao Lianben Collection of Dr. Leovino Ma. Garcia*.

Indeed, this particular work of Lao invites its viewers to bask in silence. However, that does not mean his canvases are empty; despite them physically bearing minimal, the spaces between tell all the story one might require. The abrupt dimension change draws the eye, letting all those who wish to decipher it do so.

As the exhibition catalog continues: "There is silence in painting. There is a silence of art. Art has to be listened to. And Lao's art has to be listened to if one is to hear its silence." *(Hannah Valiente)*



**Fernando Zóbel** (1924 - 1984)*Painting #2*

signed (lower right)

ca. 1971

oil on canvas

20 3/4" x 15 3/4" (53 cm x 40 cm)

**P 1,800,000**

## PROVENANCE

Sining Kamalig

Private collection, Bacolod City

Restrained, quiet, but intensely intentional, Fernando Zóbel presents a masterpiece that features a muted, atmospheric field in shades of soft greys and warm naturals with a small glowing area near the center, as if there's an event that's about to emerge or retreat—perfectly capturing Zóbel's interest in how minimal markings could activate still space.

Meditating on the silence and stillness, Zóbel explores how perception works—specifically how the eye notices light, space, and absence. Reducing the form color and gesture to a minimum to create meaning. The lack of strong contrasts or sharp edges prevents the gaze from getting fixed onto a single part of the canvas.

Painting #2 uses minimal tones and a controlled use of light to create spatial tension. The thin application of a darker shade emphasizes the material's presence while maintaining an overall sense of immateriality throughout the painting. Meanwhile, the light works not as illumination from the abstraction itself but as an internal concentration. Through sustained looking, the meanings of the abstract slowly unfolded from the viewer's perspective—heightening awareness of subtle details in tone and atmosphere.

Created around 1971, this work exemplifies Zóbel's disciplined exploration of perception through radical reduction. His belief that painting should be quiet but demanding—That the power lies in restraint. By reducing the art piece to a near-monochromatic field, the painting asserts a calm intensity, situating perception as the primary subject. *(Mark John Castañeda)*



ABOVE: Fernando Zóbel in his Madrid studio, with paintings for the Sala Nebí exhibition in 1961. © fernandozobel.es





# Patricio Gaston O'Farrell

## The Unsung Filipino Master

### *Luna's Favorite Disciple*

### *Heir to Luna's Artistic Legacy*

by ADRIAN MARANAN



**LEFT:** Gaston O'Farrell painted Luna's Manila studio in 1895, a year after they met and forged a relationship grounded on mentorship and the arts. Oil on canvas, National Museum of the Philippines Collection. **RIGHT:** Luna and Gaston O'Farrell toured Japan in mid-1896, shortly before the Philippine Revolution broke out. A painting by Gaston, titled *Fog and Roofs* (oil on panel; 18 1/4" x 12 1/4") depicting roofs of Japanese houses is now in the Jorge B. Vargas Museum, UP Diliman.

As an artist, Patricio Gaston O'Farrell is among the unsung heroes of Philippine art, a deserving heir to the legacy of the great Juan Luna. While often not remembered in the pantheon of Filipino greats, O'Farrell's lineage was both of the Philippine landed nobility and the Irish masters of the high seas. Gaston's great-grandfather, Christopher John, was the captain of a British merchant ship trading in Manila in the late 18th century.

While in Manila, Christopher John met Catalina Tuason, a daughter of Antonio Tuason (Son Tua), the mestizo de sangley patriarch of the Tuason family, the sole clan given the privilege of nobility, being granted by King Carlos III the honor of hidalguia because of his military service for the Spanish crown during the British occupation of Manila. Antonio formed a battalion of some 1,500 Chinese mestizos to assist Governor-General Simon de Anda in liberating Manila and the Port of Cavite from the occupying British forces in 1764. Don Antonio was given the exemption from paying tribute, extending this privilege to up to two generations of his family, a Coat of Arms, and was granted a mayorazgo (Spanish noble estate) and the right to primogeniture, possessing the Hacienda de San Isidro de Marikina (covering present-day Marikina and Diliman, Quezon City), Hacienda de Nagtajan, and the Hacienda de Santa Mesa, which covered parts of present-day Quezon City, Pasig, Mandaluyong, and San Mateo in Rizal. Christopher John and Catalina had two sons, Mariano and Roman. Gaston O'Farrell's father, Jose, who studied in

Europe, was the son of Mariano and Eugenia de Ocampo, a Chinese mestiza. Jose was married to Marie Blocquel, a Frenchwoman he met in Paris during his European sojourn. It was also in Paris where the two wedded and gave birth to Gaston O'Farrell.

Raised in an affluent home in Quiapo, Gaston O'Farrell had the privilege of choosing art as a vocation, initially pursuing his elementary education at the Colegio de la Inmaculada Concepcion and the Colegio de San Jose de Calasanz. At age 8, O'Farrell began taking formal art lessons, publicly at the Escuela de Artes y Oficios in Intramuros and privately under the tutelage of Felix Martinez y Lorenzo, who, at that time, had already achieved fame through his illustrations for the "Gran edicion" of Fray Manuel Blanco's landmark book on Philippine botany, *Flora de Filipinas*, and his participation at the 1887 Exposición General de las Islas Filipinas in Madrid, where he showcased his tipos del país watercolors.

Fast forward to 1894, the 15-year-old Gaston O'Farrell met Juan Luna, who had just come back to the Philippines after a long 17 years on European soil. It is unknown how the two met, as historical records state only that Gaston O'Farrell pursued further art studies under Luna when he came back to the Philippines in 1894.

The young Gaston O'Farrell imbibed all of Luna's teachings and assimilated into his own both his mentor's solemn,



**ABOVE:** Gaston O'Farrell's copy of Juan Luna's *Self-Portrait*, possibly done in the late 1890s. Oil on canvas, Lopez Museum and Library Collection.

academic style and his airier, Impressionist practice, with the two engaging on a one-on-one private teaching session. Biographical sources on Luna only mention Gaston O'Farrell as his sole student, making him a rightful heir to his artistic legacy. Their relationship was akin to that of a father and son. Luna was then reeling from a most turbulent episode in his life that was the murder of his wife and mother-in-law and his arduous trial and subsequent acquittal. His relationship with his son, Andres, then only seven years old, had become somewhat fraught, only tempered by bringing him to his painting excursions around Manila and its environs and showing him the wonders of his brush and hand.

Luna then found a son, friend, and confidant in Gaston O'Farrell's person. The latter had more than likely accompanied his mentor in his numerous trips to the suburbs of Manila and beyond, visiting, sketching, and painting vistas of Tondo, Marikina, and even Taal in Batangas. Gaston O'Farrell may have also been one of the avid fencing students of the Luna brothers' Sala de Armas, which they opened in 1894 in their house on Calle Alix (now Legarda St.) in Sampaloc.

In 1895, Gaston O'Farrell produced a painting depicting the interior of Luna's Calle Alix studio. Titled *Interior del Studio de Luna*, the work now resides at the National Museum of the Philippines. That same year, Luna painted his iconic *Una Bulaqueña* (in the National Museum of the

Philippines collection), while Gaston O'Farrell painted his first self-portrait, the location of which remains unknown to this day.

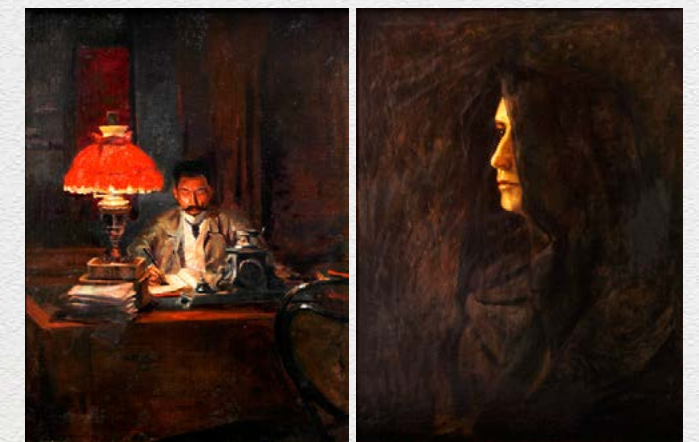
Luna would bring Gaston O'Farrell to Japan in 1896. Luna's Japanese sojourn was a refreshment of all sorts, a charging of his creative juices in the midst of his depression. The Philippine Revolution had also been brewing strongly, with Luna leaving the country just shortly before the armed struggle erupted.

Luna's trip to Japan was brief yet prolific, during which he produced several sketches and paintings, very few of which have survived (Leon Gallery auctioned two oil paintings in February 2017, and two other oils are in the National Museum).

Gaston O'Farrell also sketched and painted Japanese scenes, one of which, the Impressionist painting *Fog and Roofs* depicting rooftops of Japanese houses, is now in the collection of the Jorge B. Vargas Museum, University of the Philippines Diliman.

Gaston O'Farrell's copy of Luna's *Self-Portrait* (now in the Lopez Museum), which likely dates to around the late 1890s, captures his mentor's melancholic spirits, with his sharply defined brows accentuating his sunken and weary eyes yet still possessing a dignified, defying stance.

The following paintings, *Ecce Homo* and *Sumbungan*, came from the collection and estate of Edith O'Farrell, Gaston's daughter who died in August 2014 at the age of 101. These two works join the growing list of Gaston O'Farrell's surviving works and his most recent paintings to resurface in the public eye within the last ten years. Two other important works of Gaston O'Farrell were auctioned by Leon Gallery in 2014, each depicting a portrait of his parents.



**ABOVE:** Leon Gallery has previously auctioned two important works by Gaston O'Farrell in September and December 2014, respectively: *A mi Padre* (signed, dedicated, and dated 1896 (lower left); 32" x 24") and *Mi Madre* (dated 1902 (lower left; oil on canvas board; 25" x 19")



**Patricio Gaston O'Farrell** (1879 - 1942)

*Ecce Homo or Portrait of Christ*  
signed and inscribed "copia" (lower right)  
oil on canvas  
19 1/2" x 16" (50 cm x 41 cm)

**P 240,000**

ABOVE: Luna's lost painting, *Portrait of Christ*, which he painted in Rome in 1887, served as the basis for Gaston O'Farrell's copy. Only a photo of the Luna painting in the Luis Araneta Photo Collection corroborates its existence.

Gaston O'Farrell's solemn version of Juan Luna's 1887 work, *Portrait of Christ*, is a surviving and precious memento of Luna's now-lost masterpiece from his prolific Parisian Period, Luna's own gilded age. Luna's original painting of Christ, which served as the basis for Gaston O'Farrell's rendition, depicts the Messiah in tattered clothing. His face is painted in close-up, emphasizing His weary eyes and unkempt hair as He faces Pontius Pilate in the praetorium for His trial. Referred to as *Portrait of Christ* in Albano Pilar's Luna monograph, it is unknown whether the painting still exists or was destroyed in the war (only a photo of it exists, in the Luis Araneta collection). *Portrait of Christ* was painted during the Holy Week of April 1887, four months after Luna married Paz Pardo de Tavera. It is said that Luna painted the work to prove his religious piety to his wife, since her mother, Dona Juliana, initially had prejudices against Luna, as he was still considered an indio despite his ilustrado upbringing and European education.

Gaston O'Farrell likely painted his copy of Luna's *Portrait of Christ* sometime between 1894 and 1896, probably in his teacher's studio in Calle Alix. This means that Luna's original *Portrait of Christ* that he painted in 1887 survived the turbulence of his court trial and brought the work with him to the Philippines, likely displaying it in his Manila studio where Gaston O'Farrell copied it. Gaston O'Farrell inscribed the word "copia" below his signature, a snapshot of a student learning all the classical tenets of painting from his esteemed mentor. Gaston O'Farrell follows the ideals of Neoclassicism, employing a somber palette and



ABOVE: Gaston O'Farrell's copy of Luna's *Portrait of Christ* mirrors the copy of Leonardo da Vinci's iconic *Mona Lisa*. Known as the "Prado Mona Lisa" and now housed in Madrid's Prado Museum, the copy was made by one of Da Vinci's students, possibly two of his favorite apprentices, Francisco Melzi or Salai.

a refined, restrained chiaroscuro effect to emphasize the humanity of a suffering God.

Juan Luna and his two brothers, Antonio and Jose, would be imprisoned from September 1896 to May 1897 for their supposed involvement with the Katipunan (Luna's return from his Japanese trip was ill-timed). The Luna brothers were arrested on the grounds of them being Freemasons and were incarcerated, first at the Bilibid, then at Fort Santiago, before being finally transferred to the Cuartel de Caballeria, Regimiento de Lanceros.

While in prison, Luna decorated the rough walls of his prison with drawings of ants and cockroaches, sketched chulas, and painted religious pictures to temper suspicions of being involved with the revolution. One of these works, a painting of Christ, *Ecce Homo*, was gifted by Luna to the Jesuit priest Antonio Rossell, one of the instruments for his ultimate pardon by King Alfonso XIII on May 27, 1897. The whereabouts of this painting are also unknown; its existence is corroborated only by a photo, also in the Luis Araneta collection.

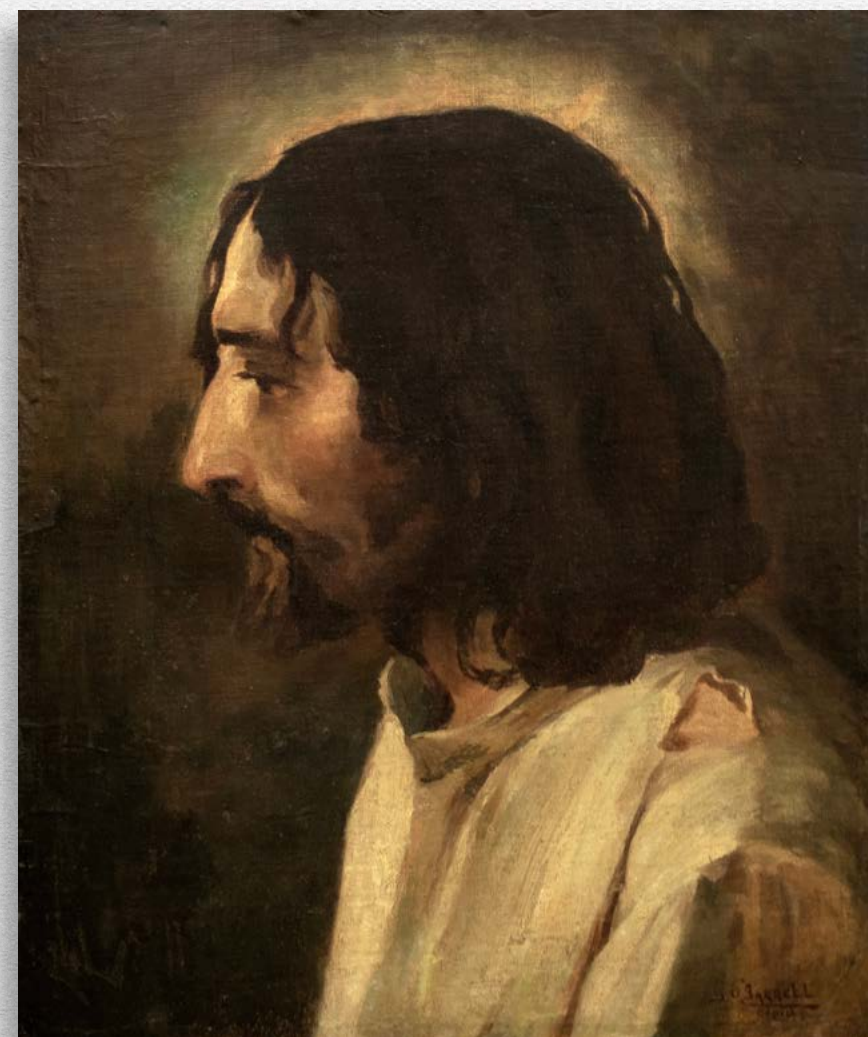


ABOVE: Another painting by Luna, titled *Ecce Homo*, which he gifted to Don Nicolas de la Pena who signed Rizal's execution papers, bears similarities to his 1887 *Portrait of Christ*. *Ecce Homo* was auctioned by Leon Gallery in The Asian Cultural Council Auction 2024. *Ecce Homo or El Cristo de la Paciencia* (signed (lower right); ca. 1896 - 1897; oil on canvas; 43" x 27")

# A Spiritual Dialogue With Luna

## Gaston O'Farrell Immortalizes The Solemnity of a Lost Luna Painting

by ADRIAN MARANAN



Luna's incarceration may have aroused pity in his favorite student, making Gaston O'Farrell's own version of Christ the prisoner a reflection of his beloved mentor's unfortunate situation as a wrongfully imprisoned individual.

A similar painting by Luna, titled *El Cristo de la Paciencia*, painted in the late 1890s, was auctioned by Leon Gallery in March 2024. The said work offers a broader perspective than the 1887 painting and Gaston O'Farrell's copy, in which Jesus is now seen sitting on a stool, with His hands tied, yet His face still retaining that mournfully divine character. Luna gifted this work to Don Nicolas de la Pena, the Spanish auditor-general and the Spanish military court's chief legal adviser, who sealed Rizal's fate by signing his execution by firing squad.

Gaston O'Farrell's copies of Luna's works, particularly this *Portrait of Christ*, bring to mind the copy of Leonardo da

Vinci's iconic *Mona Lisa* at the Prado in Madrid, reportedly the copy of da Vinci's magnum opus with the highest historical and cultural value. Known as the "Prado Mona Lisa," the painting is the oldest known copy of the *Mona Lisa*. The Prado Museum once theorized that the "Prado Mona Lisa" may have been painted simultaneously at the same time da Vinci was painting his, with two of his favorite students and apprentices, Francisco Melzi or Salai, the most credible authors of the said copy.

Coincidentally, Luna also visited the Prado when he was a student of the Real Academia de Bellas Artes de San Fernando in Madrid, copying and earnestly studying the technique of the old European masters: Raphael, Velázquez, El Greco, Caravaggio, and Goya. This brings us full circle: the young Gaston O'Farrell keen on learning Luna's techniques by copying his paintings, which the latter devotedly practiced when he was still a budding artist.



**Patricio Gaston O'Farrell** (1879 - 1942)*Sumbungan*

signed and dated 1941 (lower right)

oil on canvas

35" x 56" (89 cm x 142 cm)

**P 500,000**

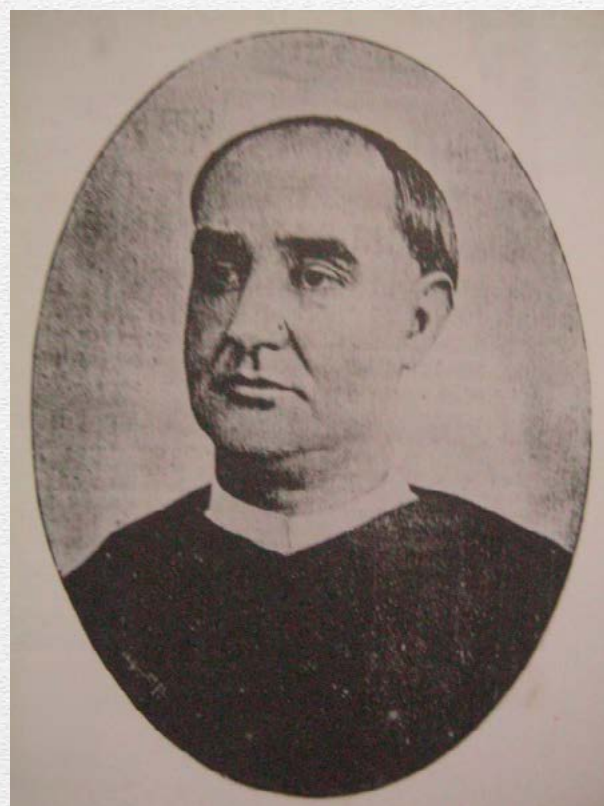
When Luna was released from prison in May 1897, he immediately sailed to Spain to plead with the Queen Regent, Maria Christina of Austria, for the release of his brother, Antonio, who was left in jail and exiled to Madrid's Carcel Modelo. During this time, Gaston O'Farrell paused his creative pursuits and studied commerce at his father's request.

Luna's untimely death in 1899 left his star student in the shadows. Due to this, and further propelled by his father's death in February 1902, Gaston O'Farrell decided to pursue the "more practical" stuff. By this time, Gaston O'Farrell had earned the degree of *perito mercantil* from the Ateneo, allowing him to transition smoothly into the world of business and commerce. The 1907 Rosenstock's Directory of China and Manila listed Gaston O'Farrell as a clerk at Bazar Filipino, located along Escolta, which sold stationery, books, and periodicals. He would soon be promoted as manager.

By the mid-1910s, Gaston O'Farrell would prosper in his business, thanks to his proficiency in French, becoming an agent-importer of French goods such as Michelin tires and Houbigant perfumes. He also became an agent for Messageries Maritimes, one of the most prolific French merchant shipping companies at that time.

However, the learnings and experiences that Gaston O'Farrell acquired from Luna were too consequential on his growth as an artist and a person to be abandoned. The early years of the 20th century would bestow Gaston O'Farrell with the highest honors in various exhibitions. Gaston O'Farrell joined the *Asociacion Internacional de Artistas de Manila*, formed in 1903 by Rafael Enriquez, who would become the founding director of the UP School of Fine Arts in 1908.

Gaston O'Farrell participated in the 1904 St. Louis World's Fair in Missouri, USA, sending his *Portrait of Juan Luna*, which ultimately won a bronze medal. He also participated in a 1908 exhibition organized by the *Sociedad de las Artistas de Manila*, with his 1902 painting of his widowed and mourning mother, Marie Blocquel, winning the gold medal (this piece was auctioned by Leon Gallery in 2014). He also won a bronze medal at the Panama-Pacific Exposition in 1815 for his piece, *Umagang Tahimik*.



ABOVE: Fr. Mariano Gil, the cura parroco of Tondo to whom Teodoro Patiño revealed the Katipunan's existence.

Gaston O'Farrell did not cut ties with the Luna family, co-managing a Manila café called *Restaurante de Paris* with his former mentor's son, Andres. Some sources state that Andres also accompanied his father and Gaston O'Farrell on their 1896 visit to Japan.

Painting never left Gaston O'Farrell's preoccupation, and he continued producing works until his final years. The work at hand, titled *Sumbungan*, is one of his last paintings, created just a year before his demise on June 12, 1942 due to failing health. *Sumbungan* is also his only extant historical painting and manifests, even in his old age, the academic dexterity he acquired from Luna's guidance. The work depicts the betrayal of the Katipunan by a *katipunero*, Teodoro Patiño, who revealed the existence of the revolutionary group to the Augustinian priest Mariano Gil, then the cura parroco of Tondo and whose face Gaston O'Farrell depicted with a

# Luna Protégé Paints

## The Betrayal of the Katipunan

### *The Artist's Only Extant Historical Painting*

by ADRIAN MARANAN



high degree of accuracy. Patiño reportedly became fearful of the repercussions of the armed revolt and the danger it would pose to his sister, Honoria.

An 1896 report by Olegario Diaz of the *Guardia Civil Veterana*, found in the archival documents acquired in 1997 by the Philippine government of the *Cuerpo de Vigilancia de Manila*, the intelligence body organized by the Spanish regime in 1895, details Patiño's betrayal of the Katipunan. Diaz's report stated (as translated in English from the original Spanish):

*'Terrified by the consequences of the criminal objectives of the Katipunan, he told everything he knew about the organization to his sister, then a student of Colegio de Looban, a school run by the Sisters of Charity. Patiño's*

*sister then told what she had learned from her brother to the Mother Superior. The Mother Superior then led the distraught Patiño to Fr. Mariano Gil, the parish priest of Tondo. Patiño reiterated to the priest everything he knew, such as the printing of the Katipunan materials in the printing press. Later on, Patiño showed Father Gil where they kept the lithographic materials used in printing Katipunan materials.'*

Fr. Gil, accompanied by the *guardia civil*, raided the printing house of the Spanish newspaper *Diario de Manila*, whose *katipunero* employees clandestinely printed the first and only issue of the *Kalayaan*, the Katipunan's official newspaper edited by Emilio Jacinto, during the siesta of its Spanish staff (the second was already being prepared when the Katipunan was discovered).



Manuel Ocampo (b. 1965)

*Murio la Verdad*  
signed (verso)  
dated 1990  
oil and collage on canvas  
72" x 108" (183 cm x 274 cm)

P 1,600,000

PROVENANCE  
Ro Gallery, Summer Modern and Contemporary Art Auction,  
New York City, 17 July 2018, Lot 294

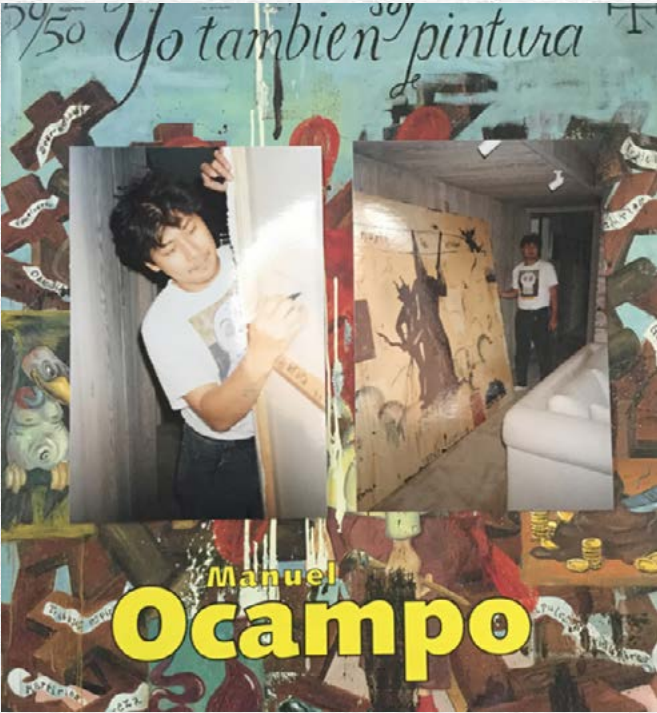
Presenting a powerful example of his confrontational and syncretic visual masterpieces, Manuel Ocampo combines Catholic iconography, colonial history, pop-cultural reference, and violent satire into a masterpiece that provokes and forces viewers to confront uncomfortable histories and socio-political issues.

Focusing first on the central image is a pair of humanoid figures; The first one on the right is a conical-shaped hooded figure—almost executioner-like— holding what resembles a rifle as the second figure—the devil—seems to cling to the human as if guiding the latter to as arrows seem to shoot from the devil's bow.

What's interesting about this piece is that the two central figures seem to stand above the clouds—resembling popular iconography of saints but applied to devils or figures with sinister or violent intent. This corruption of sacred form is central to Ocampo's critique of cultural erasure, the use of historical revisionism to disrupt truth, and internalized colonial values.

Another striking detail on the piece is the phrases and words illustrated on parts of the canvas. The first is the phrase strung across the top of the central figures, like a banner, that reads both as an accusation and an obituary: '*Murió la Verdad*,' meaning '*The truth died*.' A phrase that strongly suggests the death of truth—possibly under colonial or authoritarian narratives, religious domination, or social propaganda.

It was then complemented by the phrases '*Subir y Bajar*' and '*Muerte por muerte*', which translates to '*Rise and Fall*' and '*Death for Death*' respectively. These phrases suggest that the truth itself is often subject to manipulation—some

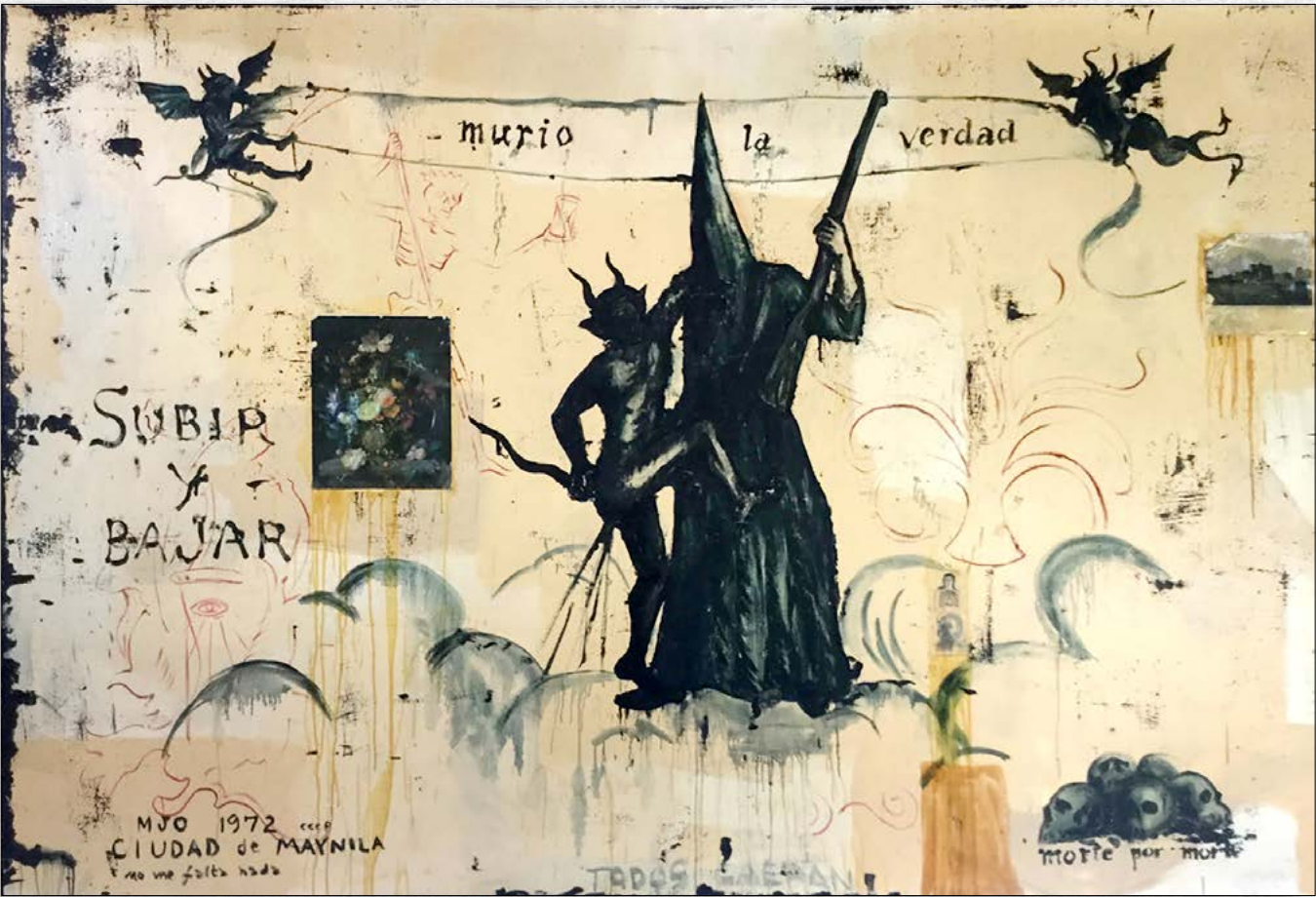


ABOVE: A Photo of Manuel Ocampo and his piece *Murio la Verdad* (1990) © RoGallery.com

truths rise while others are pushed into obscurity. Many truths are erased or replaced entirely. All based on who holds the power, while moral collapse, cyclical violence, and instability persist beneath the canvas of such '*truths*'.

Overall, Ocampo's 1990s artwork, *Murió la Verdad*, read both as a statement and a declaration that colonial religion, historical revisionism, and authoritarian power had killed truth.

By embodying the artist's provocative and offensive strategy in artmaking, Ocampo had managed to cement claim by weaponizing the same medium of symbols against themselves. Essentially exposing how sacred narratives have always been used to justify violence and silence while hiding or changing the "truth" in their favour, like expendable currency. His angry, confrontational, irreverent, and historically charged art style presents a vision of history as a brutal theater of power, faith, and violence. (Mark John Castañeda)





**Jigger Cruz** (b. 1984)*Untitled*

signed (in purple impasto, left) and dated (in purple impasto, right) 2014

oil on canvas

35 1/4" x 29 1/2" (90 cm x 75 cm)

**P 1,400,000**

Departing radically from traditional norms, Jigger Cruz's untitled piece features a heavily textured image composed of thick, extruded lines of paint arranged into a rough pyramidal form, deliberately hinting at the artwork's intention to present not a fixed image but an amalgamation of colors, gestures, and actions.

With the painting's most striking feature being its materiality, using globs of paint that resemble ropes, stacked horizontally across the canvas, basically creating a thick paint mass tapering toward the top, with the colors of blue, green, yellow, red, and pink chaotically interwoven than harmonized, Jigger Cruz had successfully created an abstracted image that represents an individual—not the physical appearance that are easily seen with the eyes but the internal journey that makes up a person. A constant process that would last a lifetime.

Each paint layer can be seen as a layer of one's selfhood—their own memories, influences, mistakes, and corrections—all stacked on top of one another, building identity as a constructed, unresolved mess, but uniquely theirs. By redefining self-journey and identity as an abstracted physical record of being rather than a visual mirror, Jigger Cruz—through his masterpiece—has successfully challenged the idea that the true self is easily seen, revealed, or reinterpreted. (Mark John Castañeda)



ABOVE: Jigger Cruz © NationThailand.com





Carlo Calma (b.1981)

Vine Sculpture  
2023  
Chrome Metal finish in Graduated Blue Hues  
51" x 39" (130 cm x 91 cm)

P 300,000



ABOVE: World Expo 2025 Philippine Pavilion photo by Masaki Komatsu, published in a 2025 Spot.PH article by Leana Vibal.



ABOVE: Entitled 'Woven', the Philippines Pavilion at Expo 2025 was designed by Carlo Calma Consultancy Courtesy of Carlo Calma Consultancy; Photography: ©Masaki Komatsu



ABOVE: The Philippines Pavilion at Expo 2025 was constructed with over a thousand pieces of woven rattan Courtesy of Carlo Calma Consultancy; Photography: ©Masaki Komatsu

One of the Philippines' brightest emerging stars in architecture, interior design, and visual art, Carlo Calma has created a fascinating intersection between movement and stillness. A true visionary, this multidisciplinary artist is a painter, an architect, an interior and a fashion designer, and a ballet dancer, among many others.

This 2023 *Vine Sculpture* is a perfect testament to Calma's intersectionality. His talent as a sculptor and a dancer meet here, with the sculpture echoing the grace and fluidity of a ballet dance.

In 2025, Calma made an international splash at the World Expo 2025 Osaka. Representing the Philippines, his *Woven* is an architectural and design marvel. Standing at a height of 12 meters and covering almost 700 square meters, *Woven* features a rattan facade made with thousands of real woven rattan tiles from Cebu.

Aside from its stunning look, *Woven* is also the World Expo's first-ever live performance facade, with performers from the Cultural Center of the Philippines showcasing their art through the pavilion's facade at select times. (Hannah Valiente)



ABOVE: Carlo Calma © Lifestyle Inquirer





# Becoming Anita Magsaysay-Ho

## *Of Idyllic Childhood Memories, Married Living, and Painting as Catharsis*

by ADRIAN MARANAN



ABOVE: Anita and her older sister, Emma, ca. 1947. © Anita Magsaysay-Ho: *An Artist's Memoirs*

### Anita in the late 1940s: At the crossroads of profound change

Anita Magsaysay-Ho, in the late 1940s, was an artist at the crossroads of creative metamorphosis and personal change. Initially starting as a painter captured by the penetrating influence of Fernando Amorsolo, who was one of her mentors during her days at the University of the Philippines School of Fine Arts in the early 1930s, Anita soon came under the spell of modernism when she entered the School of Design established by Victorio Edades and eminent modernist architects Angel and Juan Nakpil, and Enrique Ruiz, among others along Isaac Peral Street (now United Nations Avenue).

In her memoirs, Anita described the School of Design as "a new school with a progressive outlook on art." Anita cherished her memories of her stay at this school, describing it as "filled with laughter, joy, and happiness." "All the students were my friends—Mercedes Nakpil Zialcita, Alice Escaler Gana, Margot Fragante, Norma Jacinto Carlos," she added. "Just imagine meeting your friends every day at school."

In fact, Anita, along with her friend and classmate Consuelo Lee, had the privilege of assisting Edades on a fresco mural—the first in the country—depicting the triumph of science and medicine for the Quezon Institute, a hospital for tuberculosis patients. Unfortunately, the fresco was destroyed in World War II.

"Mr. Edades was a very inspiring teacher," Anita said in her memoirs. "He taught history very well and enlightened us on Cezanne and the [Post-]Impressionists. From him, I learned how to use colors in a modern way." Anita also added that she "really enjoyed and learned a lot from [Edades'] lectures."

In 1947, Anita encountered what would become her greatest legacy to Philippine art: the unforgiving yet magically luminous art of egg tempera painting, which she learned during her studies at Michigan's Cranbrook Academy of Art under the tutelage of the Hungarian artist and the school's then-director, Zoltan Sepeshy. A year before entering Cranbrook, Anita studied at the Art Students' League of New York, enrolling in courses such as portraiture, woodcuts, and oil painting, which was helmed by the American painter and printmaker Kenneth Hayes Miller.

It was also in the late 1940s that Anita fell in love with a Chinese man named Robert Ho, heir to the shipping fortune of one of Shanghai's most prominent industrialist families. Anita met Robert at a coffee party at the Riverside Church's tower, just across from International House, where she resided in New York. Anita recalled Robert coming up to her, reading her name tag, and saying, "My goodness, you certainly have a long name." To which the slightly offended Anita replied, "And your name is too short. Ho." This somewhat tense encounter between the two would blossom into breakfast and dinner dates at the International House's cafeteria (Anita loved Robert's intelligence in business and philosophy and him being a Catholic, which was rare for a Chinese). After a brief period of long-distance romance only tempered through snail mails, Anita and Robert would later marry at St. Viviana's Cathedral in Los Angeles on November 22, 1947, in a simple wedding ceremony attended by only a few, including Anita's father, Ambrosio, and her sister, Emma.

The newlywed couple moved to Washington, D.C. in mid-winter of 1948, settling in a two-story brick home on Wisconsin Avenue. Anita wrote of this episode in her memoirs, "Our first home was a two-story brick house on



ABOVE: Anita and Robert in the living room of their Washington, D.C. home, 1948. © Anita Magsaysay-Ho: *An Artist's Memoirs*



ABOVE: Anita and Robert's first home as a married couple, located on Wisconsin Avenue, Washington, D.C. © Anita Magsaysay-Ho: *An Artist's Memoirs*

Wisconsin Avenue. The house was charming and homely, with three bedrooms and a bath upstairs. I enjoyed keeping house. I was glad Mama taught her daughters how to cook."

### Barrio Scene, a memento of Anita's transitional life period

It was in their Washington, D.C. home where Anita created this 1948 painting depicting a Philippine barrio. The work was one of the very few paintings Anita produced during this transitional period in her personal life, as she admitted in her memoirs that she "had no time for painting" due to her responsibilities as a full-time housewife. Since *Barrio Scene* was painted by the then-newlywed Anita, this piece would become one of her first works signed with the iconic "Anita Magsaysay-Ho."

The work echoes Amorsolo's genre influence on the young Anita, briefly returning to the classic medium of oil. The subject may have been likely inspired by Anita's childhood summer vacations in her father's hometown of Zambales, where she had fond memories of the rural folk in their everyday endeavors, bonded by strong communal values.

However, the composition is decisively influenced by Anita's time at the School of Design, where she came under the tutelage of the Filipino modernist patriarch Edades, who, in turn, was strongly influenced by Paul Cezanne. Anita's *Barrio Scene* possesses a roughness marked by solid figures rendered in strong, exploratory brushwork, achieved by applying small yet thick patches of varying colors to emphasize their forms. Anita relied on heavy color gradations to achieve depth and dimension. The dominant blues give the work an airy, atmospheric quality,

while the rhythmic strokes endow it with earthiness, thus engendering balance in the composition.

Anita's learnings at the School of Design resonate in her practice, applying Cezanne's principle of focusing on nature's essential forms (the "cone, sphere, and cylinder" concept) rather than concentrating on the complexity of their structure. In turn, Anita shared with the Post-Impressionists the principle of structure over impression, the permanent over the fleeting. As an artist with a profound love for her motherland (she once wrote during the war a melancholic poem exalting her country's "beauteous, fertile countryside" and shores of clean, white sand") and who grew up in the company of the rural community, *Barrio Scene* echoes Anita's genuine admiration and empathy for the ordinary, relying on her cherished childhood recollections of these people, thus immortalizing them rather than painting them as mere ephemeral impressions of the mind. Anita, thousands of miles away from her homeland, facing a new chapter as a married woman, and likely experiencing a melancholic and nostalgic homesickness, culled the depths of her memories and went back to the balmy summers of her youth. The result is a dreamlike work depicting a fantasy rooted in her own lived reality, with the pulsating impastos capturing a dynamic moment seemingly frozen in time.

As Anita wrote in her memoirs, "These scenes of my childhood are so vivid in my mind; women pounding rice, winding our way back to town in the dusk after the picnic, the oil lamp lit windows of the nipa houses sparkling like fireflies in the dark. Had I never holidayed in Zambales, I do not think I would have the depth of impressions, which I subconsciously draw upon with so much fondness and passion when I paint."

### Acquired by an influential American businessman

*Barrio Scene* was acquired from Anita by Paul H. Wood, former president of the wholly owned Philippine subsidiary of the International Harvest Company (IH), an American manufacturer of agricultural equipment, machinery, and tractors. Based in Manila, the IH Philippines once operated a large assembly plant that assembled motor trucks, tractors, and farm implements from component parts imported into the country. The company also had an assembly plant in Cebu, as well as parts depots, offices, and service stations in Bacolod and Davao. Before the war, the IH Philippines was one of the major exporters of abaca and had introduced mechanized farming into the country, primarily in the rice-producing fields of Central Luzon, the sugar-rich plantations of Negros, and the abaca-yielding provinces of Bicol.

Before becoming president, Wood served as Assistant Manager of the IH's Motor Truck Department, in the company's Foreign Operations division, traveling extensively throughout Europe, the Middle East, India, and Southeast



## Anita Magsaysay-Ho (1914 - 2012)

### *Barrio Scene*

signed and dated 1948 (lower left)

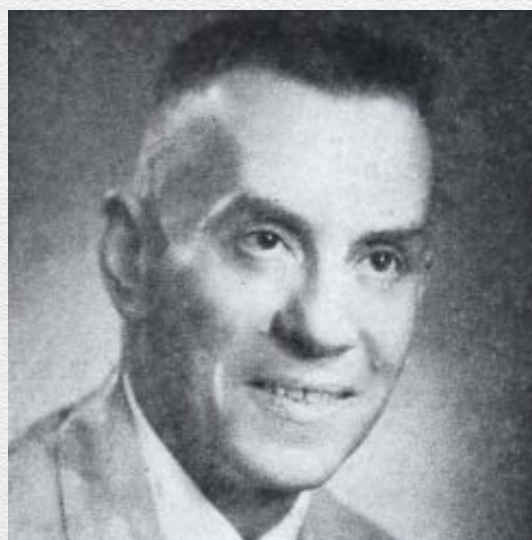
oil on canvas

16" x 24" (41 cm x 61 cm)

**P 3,000,000**

#### PROVENANCE

Acquired directly from the artist by Paul H. Wood, President of the International Harvester Company, sometime in the late 1940s to 1950s



**ABOVE:** Paul H. Wood's portrait as president of the influential American Chamber of Commerce of the Philippines. © *American Chamber of Commerce of the Philippines Journal*, July 1955. Part of the Open Access Repository of Rare Periodicals of the University of the Philippines Diliman.



**ABOVE:** The International Harvester Company Philippines' main office at Calle Marques de Comillas, now Romualdez Street) in Ermita, Manila. © *American Chamber of Commerce of the Philippines Journal*, April 1950. Part of the Open Access Repository of Rare Periodicals of the University of the Philippines Diliman. **BELOW:** Wood with American officials of the International Harvester Company Philippines. © *Philippines Commerce*, April 1949. Part of the Open Access Repository of Rare Periodicals of the University of the Philippines Diliman.



**ABOVE AND BELOW:** Maj. Paul H. Wood (center) in action during World War II. © Wisconsin Historical Society Digital Collections

Asia. During World War II, Wood served in the US Army for four years as a major and lieutenant colonel in an Armored Division (Interestingly, the IH was also responsible for manufacturing several pieces of machinery for the US army during the war, most notably Mark 13 torpedoes that were primarily responsible for the sinking of the *Yamamoto*, Japan's most powerful battleship.). As lieutenant colonel, Wood commanded the "Harvester's Battalion," composed of enlisted men who were employed by or affiliated with the IH.

After the war, Wood settled in the Philippines and was responsible for reorganizing the IH's pre-war company structure and organization.

Wood became president of the highly influential American Chamber of Commerce of the Philippines in 1950, while simultaneously serving as Vice President of the IH Philippines. After his term, Wood assumed post as one of the members of the Chamber's Board. He would also become a councilor of the Chamber's Foreign and Domestic Trade Controls Committee, attending hearings held by the Philippine Congress on matters and bills related to US-Philippine trade relations and trade controls. One of the most notable hearings that Wood attended was the one centering on the Retail Trade Nationalization Bill, which aimed to protect Filipino retailers. The bill would be signed into law by President Ramon Magsaysay on June 19, 1954.

# One of the First Paintings Signed with the Iconic "Anita Magsaysay-Ho"

## Acquired by an Influential American Businessman

by ADRIAN MARANAN



With his vested interests in Philippine business and enterprise, Wood would rub elbows and befriend powerful figures in the Philippine government, most notably Magsaysay, who became president from 1953 to 1957, during Wood's tenure as a board member of the Chamber and councilor in one of its committees. At this time, Wood had already become President and General Manager of the IH Philippines, and it was also possibly around this

period that Wood met Anita, who was, of course, President Magsaysay's cousin. Likely drawn to and enamored with the piece's quaint, rustic charm, Wood purchased the painting directly from Anita. Wood very much cherished this painting, even bringing it with him when he left the Philippines sometime in 1963 to settle permanently in Florida.



# A Front-Row Seat to a Friendship

## *Fernando Zóbel and Benito Legarda*

by LISA GUERRERO NAKPIL

On the face of it, Fernando Zóbel and Benito Legarda could not be more different — but they were united in many things, most especially, their love of Filipino culture.

Fernando Zóbel looked at Philippine culture through the lens of art and literature; Benito Legarda, through the lens of economics and the archives. Both loved history, and as revealed in Zóbel's letters, they both loved the thrill of the chase to uncover the unknown details of Philippine history.

Zóbel and Legarda came from the same gilded circle known as 'de buena familia (of good family)', moneyed, cultivated, and educated in all the gentlemanly pursuits. Both of Spanish origin, they were among the last of a generation that still spoke and wrote to each other in that language. Both would attend Harvard: Zóbel, the younger one, would graduate after the war with a Bachelor of Arts in History and Literature. He would always consider it a turning point in his life, opening up the road to becoming one of the most influential Spanish modernist masters.

The letters are all from Zóbel, and in them we uncover a humorous man with mischievous wit and an almost photographic memory.

On the other hand, Legarda would graduate from its ivy-covered halls with a Master of Arts in Economics in 1950 and a Ph.D. in the same subject in 1955. It would lead him to a path of scholarship in the galleon trade and the colonial economy, as well as a position in the Central Bank of the Philippines.

Both men were legendary collectors with legendary appetites. Legarda, however, would surpass Zóbel as a more thorough omnivore, snapping up rare books, maps, historical prints, coins, as well as paintings and fine art. Zóbel, true to his calling as a painter, would amass an iconic collection of Filipino modernist works, which he bequeathed to the Ateneo de Manila University.

Two Zóbel sketchbooks are represented in this lot, the first a well-known compendium containing drawings over the course of Zóbel's Philippine travels; the second, unpublished, features sketches from travels with his close friend Benito, annotated amply with historical and architectural notes.



ABOVE: Photo of Benito Legarda at a Zóbel exhibition with an accompanying note from Zóbel

This collection of sketchbooks details a very close friendship, developed even further as they ventured to towns in Pampanga and as far as the Ilocos together to explore the rich Filipino colonial past, its churches and villages, as well as its modern-day inhabitants, both in and out of Manila.

Combined with a dozens of ephemera, photographs, exhibition catalogues, and personal letters where, among other pleasures, Filipino high society is discussed, these form an absorbing record of a bond that spanned several decades and many continents.

They are not just an insightful look at Zóbel's artistic process but also a front-row seat to the friendship between two of the most fascinating creatures in Filipino haute culture.





**Fernando Zóbel** (1924 - 1984)

*Drawing Book and Diary*
*Containing a Collection of 56 Sketches in Ink and Pencil*

Bound in a single black hardbound volume.

Signed and dated 1952 on the frontispiece

Signed on the inside cover endpaper

Handwriting on the endpapers indicates the sketches

cover the period of March to August 1952

Spine is embossed in gold with the initials FZM

(Fernando Zóbel y Montoya)

This Lot is accompanied by a photograph of Don Benito Legarda at Zóbel's art opening, with a note, "Para tu scrapbook. You look highly critical, I must say, signed Zóbel."

**P 1,000,000**

**PROVENANCE**

Collection of Dr. Benito J. Legarda, Jr.



**TOP:** Study of Siga-Siga (right) with the finished work auction by Leon Gallery in 2022  
**BOTTOM:** Study of The Pink House (right) with the finished work auction by Leon Gallery in 2020

It provides an anatomy of Zóbel's artistic process. He wrote in the essay, "Methods of Contemporary Painters", "My approach is slow and deliberate. I draw quick ink sketches of possible motifs, or sometimes in watercolour. I continually do it wherever. If the theme has promise, I draw it, sometimes quite big. In the drawing, I try to resolve, as much as possible, some aspect of what will be the final painting. Its color range, for example, or its composition, or part of it. Generally, I usually accumulate 50 sketches and 30 drawings before starting the final painting. In the case of my Antillean still life, for example, the preparations lasted more than 3 years."

Perhaps the most personal set of artworks are the 56 sketches that chronicle trips taken by both Legarda and Zóbel to explore northern and central Luzon.

The pair travelled to Ilocos, stalking churches, ancestral houses, farmers' huts, and newer middle-class structures that Zóbel would teasingly call "sugar baroque" and "Philippine modern."

The two culturati traveled to La Union, Tarlac, Pampanga, and Bulacan, stopping at stately homes on the way back, with Zóbel sketching furiously.

This museum-worthy collection of drawings shines a light on Zóbel in the very first year of his artistic journey in the Philippines and provides an enthralling view of Manila and its environs in the 1950s.

The drawing book is a trove of studies of what would become among Zóbel's most famous figurative works, "Siga Siga", "The Pink House" (which was in the collection of Legarda and auctioned in 2021) and "Lady in a Hat" from the same period.

# A Diary of Drawings by Fernando Zóbel

## 56 Sketches Including Studies of Iconic Works

by LISA GUERRERO NAKPIL





Fernando Zóbel (1924 - 1984)

a.) *Saeta*  
signed and dated 1960 (lower ight)  
pen and ink on paper  
3 1/4" x 10 1/4" (8 cm x 26 cm)

b.) *Untitled (A Knight and His Horse)*  
pen and ink on paper  
On the reverse of a Manila restaurant menu, Taverna Vasca, 36 Escolta, Manila, dated Sept 30, 1951.  
8" x 5 1/4" (20 cm x 13 cm)

This lot is accompanied by

Two Zóbel Exhibition Catalogues at the Luz Gallery, for January 16, 1961, and a second, March 19, 1966  
Postcard of the Cuenca Museum, signed and dated August 8, '98

Note with two photographs of Don Bartolome Barretto and his wife, dated August 24, 1964

Letter from Zóbel, dated 21 May 1951, expressing his desire to return to Manila

Various letters dated August 13, 1954; February 20, 1960; February 25, 1960, November 13, 1963; December 7, 1964, August 30, 1965

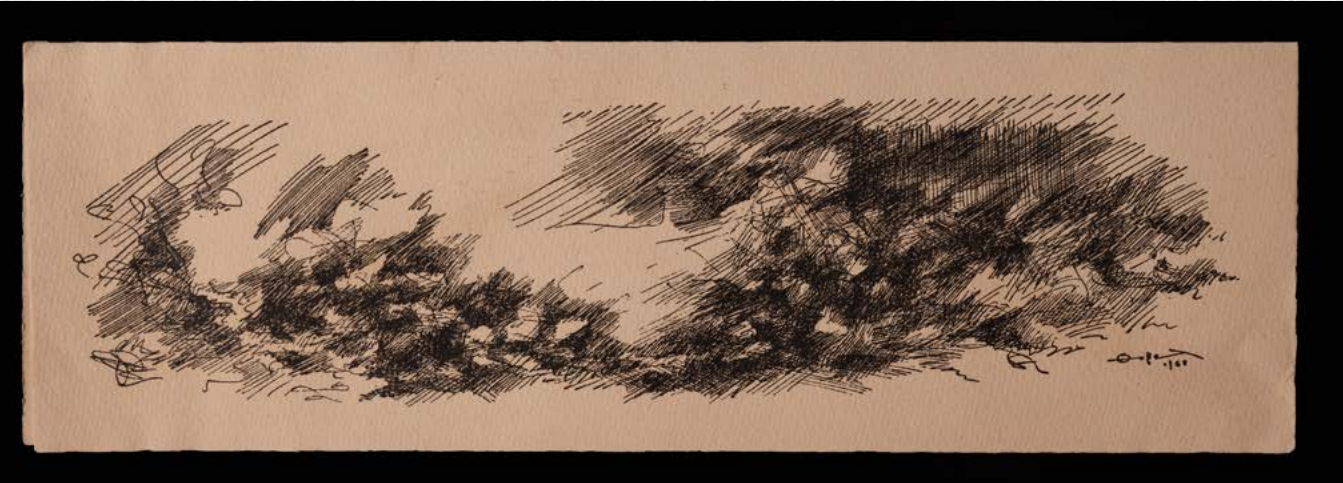
Letter containing research material on Divisoria and the 'gremios' (guilds).

P 700,000

PROVENANCE  
Collection of Dr. Benito J. Legarda Jr.

Two drawings, separated by a decade, explore Zóbel's important periods in figurative and abstract art. The first is a woeful-looking knight wearing laurel leaves like a pair of horns, in the white shirt and trousers favored by Manila's gentlemanly elite in the 1950s. His horse resembles a plump Pegasus, the winged horse. The " Created on the reverse of a restaurant menu card — the Taverna Vasca on the Escolta" suggests it is a souvenir of the meal Zóbel and Legarda shared. (In truth, the sketch resembles a young Beniting.)

The second is one of the first Saetas created by Zóbel, his first foray into the realm of abstract art.



ABOVE: Full shot of the Zóbel Saeta

# Zóbel : A SAETA, A KNIGHT, AND EPHEMERA

by LISA GUERRERO NAKPIL





**PREVIOUS PAGE:** Various ephemera from the decades-long friendship between Zóbel and Legarda; **This page:** The second Zóbel drawing with insets, photo of Benito Legarda and the reverse of the drawing, a menu card from Taverna Vasca, an Escolta restaurant.



**Betsy Westendorp** (1927 - 2022)*Painting No. 805*

signed and dated 1994 (lower left)

oil on paper

51" x 76 1/4" (130 cm x 194 cm)

**P 2,000,000**

## PROVENANCE

Galleria Duemila

The works of Betsy Westendorp are an amalgamation of her multicultural background. A Dutch descendant, she was born in Spain just years before a civil war broke out. However, periods of her time were spent in the Philippines, where she lived with her husband. As a result, her works, particularly her floral pieces, seem to melt and meld multiple inspirations that yield a magnificent, almost otherworldly effect.

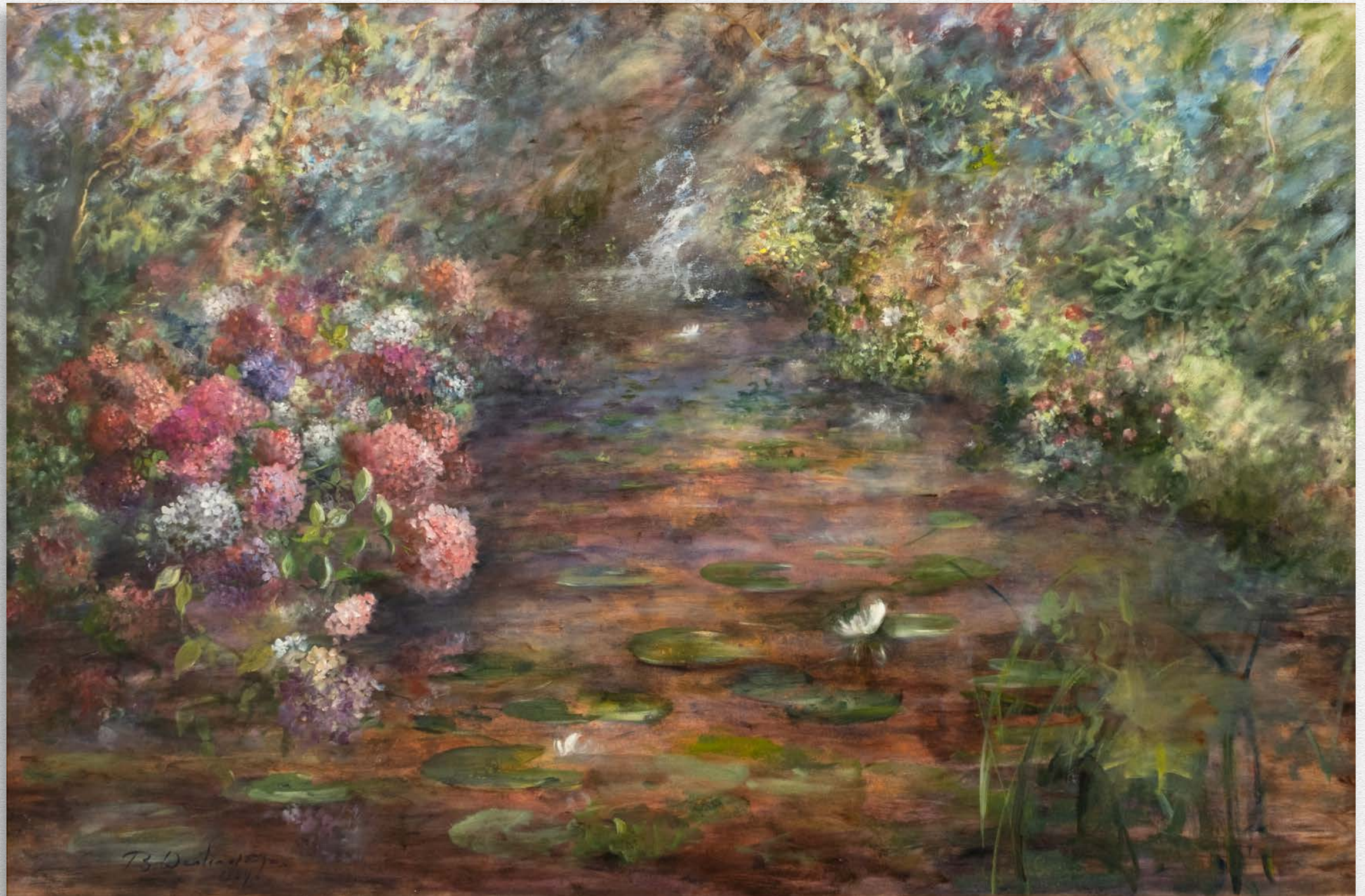
Her 1994 *Painting No. 805*, like many of her works, is painted in situ, that is to say, she differs from many of her peers in that she paints the flowers as they are situated in the ground. Instead of the beautiful flower arrangement put in a vase, Betsy's *Painting No. 805* portrays the flowers as she sees them in nature, with this piece leaning close enough to touch the lily pads floating in a river.

"I draw as I paint," Betsy declares. Indeed, as she starts with no preparatory studies, she trusts her paintings to find their own way with no endpoint in mind. Her flowers seem to be an echo of her – she, like her subject matters, is seemingly fragile. Yet, she blossoms. Her flowers occupy the canvas the same way Betsy's personality, charm, and wit fill a room, a mirror reflecting her strength cloaked within a soft appearance. (Hannah Valiente)



ABOVE: Betsy Westendorp © Rappler

# The Allure of The Westendorp Blooms





**Solomon Saprid** (1917 - 2003)*Tikbalang*

signed and dated 5-26-77

brass

without base:

H: 15 1/2" (39 cm)

L: 16" (41 cm)

W: 12" (30 cm)

with base:

H: 43 1/2" (110 cm)

L: 18 1/2" (46 cm)

W: 18 3/4" (48 cm)

**P 500,000**

Accompanied by a certificate issued by Ms. Pearl Saprid confirming the authenticity of this lot

Combining art, culture, and literature, Solomon Saprid's 1977 depicts an amalgamation of local mythology about a half-man, half-horse creature and a foreign legend about a man with a flute who allegedly lured children to their demise.

In Philippine mythology, Tikbalangs are nocturnal creatures that are often found lurking in dark forests. These creatures were said to have incredible speed and a mischievous nature, which is likely to cause trouble for those who cross their path and lead travelers astray. There are many other tales and beliefs surrounding these mythical beings, but all portray them as treacherous and malevolent.

The Pied Piper of Hamelin, on the other hand, is a well-known German folktale about a piper in pied clothing (hence the name) who officials hired to rid the town of Hamelin of rats. He successfully got rid of the rodents with his hypnotic tunes. However, upon the town's refusal to pay for his services, he used his music to lure children out of town, and they vanished, presumed dead.

In modern times, a pied piper is a person or charismatic leader who tricks and leads people astray, often to their downfall. It is also a term that symbolizes manipulation and the dangers of blind obedience. In this 1977 rendition of his revered *Tikbalang*, Saprid highlighted the creature's wit and deceptive nature by incorporating the legend of the Pied Piper. Here, he portrayed his tikbalang in a half-kneeling position, hands expertly holding a flute to his lips as he plays a melodious tune and waits for his victims to take the bait. (Jessica Magno)



ABOVE: Tikbalang on its companion wood pedestal

# The Maestro Saprid Presents

## *The Tikbalang and Magical Flute*





## Lao Lianben (b. 1948)

### *Tryst-112*

signed and dated 1976 (lower left)

oil on marine plywood

38" x 41" (97 cm x 104 cm)

**P 2,000,000**

#### PROVENANCE

Museum of Philippine Art

Created in the same year as another piece similarly entitled *Tryst*, which won an Honorable Mention at the 1976 Art Association of the Philippines Annual, Lao Lianben's *Tryst-112* laid the foundation for many of the aforementioned works that Lao would make throughout his career.

Celebrated for his minimalist yet evocative paintings, Lao's works draw heavy inspiration from Buddhist practices and principles.

"I do not practice Buddhism, but I am intrigued by it," he said in a Lifestyle Inc. interview with Lala Singian-Serzo. "When I observe monks in their daily way of life, they allow me to imagine and create stories in my head. My eyes enable me to form ideas and come up with motifs for my paintings."

Indeed, this particular *Tryst* piece echoes a notable Buddhist symbol: the ensō. Portraying two concentric circles, Lao embodies the supreme symbol of Buddhist enlightenment. This simple structure belies a multitude of meanings – it signifies the beginning and the end, emptiness and fullness, and the circle of life, among others.

Each Zen master has their own ensō style, and Lao is not exempt. A true master, he has created ensō circles ranging from lopsided, unclosed circles to symmetrical ones; this particular one is of the latter. Two near-symmetrical circles are left bare and unoccupied, save for the scribbles done in the lower half of the centermost circle. It draws the eye, an element in an otherwise quiet canvas.

It is this quietude and solace that Lao has made a name for himself, both in his canvas and from Buddhism, from which he finds himself inspired. His refined aesthetic echoes the elegant style of expressionist calligraphy, holding a touch of Oriental influences as evidenced by his Buddhist inspirations.

Traditionally, many of these ensō paintings are naked and mysterious, with some bearing an accompanying inscription



ABOVE: Lao Lianben © Artist Archives

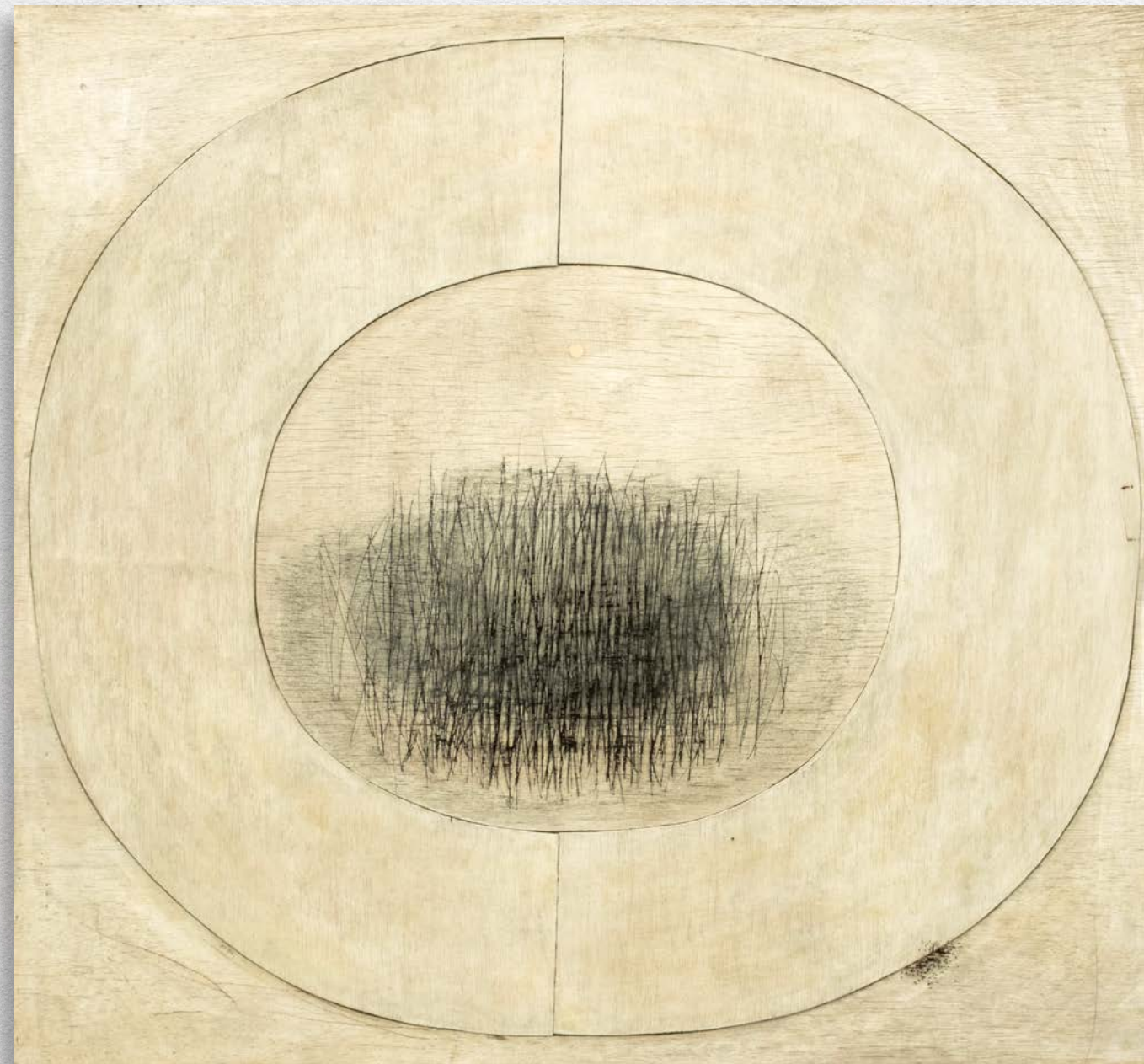
as a hint to the symbol's meaning. The most common inscription, according to John Stevens, as published on the Lion's Roar website, is a simple "What is this?" In essence, many of the ensō works, and in extension, that of Lao's, leave the interpretation up to the viewer.

"What is remarkable about [the artist] is his ability to create works that function simultaneously on several levels: aesthetic, philosophical, spiritual, critical," Hervé Lancelin wrote in his art critique 'Lao Lianben and the Poetics of Obscurity.' "He merges techniques to create an immediacy that directly evokes personal imagination, rather than an analytical reference to a particular style."

Indeed, Lao's *Tryst-112* echoes the artist's natural, almost monochromatic palette, exemplifying his disciplined composition and portraying a dialogue that merges the carnal energy that the title suggests with the reverential interpretation that is quintessential Lao. (Hannah Valiente)

## Lao Lianben

### *The Circle of Serenity*





## Fernando Amorsolo (1892 - 1972)

### *Lavanderas*

signed and dated 1949 (lower right)

oil on canvas

30" x 24" (76 cm x 61 cm)

**P 4,000,000**

#### PROVENANCE

Acquired directly from the artist by Paul H. Wood, President of the International Harvest Company, sometime in the late 1940s to 1950s

Fernando Amorsolo's canvases always bear his predilection for all things Filipino. His dainty brushwork and expert colorism create masterpieces that proudly present the Philippines, each composition a celebration of its people, nature, culture, and traditions.

Travelling to different provinces was one of his cherished forms of recreation. At times, he brings his whole family with him, while other times he rides a boat with his friends. These trips not only allowed him some time off from the confines of his commissioned works and art studio but also provided him with a breath of fresh air, basking in the glorious Philippine life and topography. Importantly, his observations and immersion among the locals enabled him to create genuine representations of his beloved country and its magnificent hues.

While he was renowned for his sunlit, bucolic landscapes, sometimes populated by archetypal Filipino folk activities, Amorsolo also created a vast array of works in various media. His versatility is evident in the thousands of paintings and drawings he produced throughout his illustrious career, using a range of media including oil, acrylic, pastel, charcoal, and graphite. The maestro also made expert use of canvases, boards, and papers as his base, allowing him to capture the essence of his subjects in different ways. However, what remains a constant is his light, infusing his works with serene tranquility, regardless of the subject matter.

Bearing the ever-present 'Amorsolo light,' *Lavanderas* is part of Fernando Amorsolo's collection of resplendent paintings, depicting two almost naked women by the stream. Stripped of their clothes, only a thin piece of cloth or tapis covered their bodies. They are engaged in a conversation as they do their laundry and clean their bodies. The sunbeam that touches their skins highlights their beautiful, cherub-like faces and golden complexions.

An abundance of trees and lush greenery surrounds them, covering them from the blazing sun. Just as the sumptuous trees protect them from the heat, Amorsolo vehemently keeps his maidens' dignity. He has a penchant for situating his bare *dalagas* in seclusion—in the comforts of their



ABOVE: Fernando Amorsolo in his studio © Fernando C. Amorsolo Art Foundation, Inc.

rooms or in the middle of the forest, away from their peers' malicious eyes and minds.

Amorsolo's masterful brushstrokes and exemplary use of color breathe life into his canvases, letting the fresh air permeate the image. In this particular piece, you can almost hear the gush of flowing water and swish of the leaves as they dance through the wind.

Painted a few years after the Philippine liberation from the Japanese Occupation, this piece is a delicate balance between a dream and reality, capturing the essence of a peaceful Philippines, a time of grace and optimism. It encapsulates the tranquil, contented countryside life before the war broke out and years after it ended—how things are slowly going back to how they used to be.

Indeed, light is a tool he ingeniously uses to enhance the emotional depth of his masterpieces. The light from his concocted sun graces his creations and saturates their colors. It adds brilliance to the verdant greens, creating an illusion of warmth that envelops his images and resonates with the viewers. Amorsolo's palette, characterized by bright and lyrical attributes, is a testament to his skill as a master colorist and a marvel that leaves the audience in awe.

Undoubtedly, Fernando Amorsolo's skilled hands have crafted one masterpiece after another, each one highlighting the Philippines' timeless beauty and life. To this day, his influence in the art world remains strong, and many people want to acquire his works, drawn to the sheer beauty and aesthetic pleasure they offer, admiring the skill and vision that went into their creation. The enduring legacy of Amorsolo's oeuvre is a testament to the profound impact he has had on Philippine art. (Jessica Magno)

## Amorsolo Captures The Sparkle of Riverside Beauties





**Juvenal Sansó** (1929 - 2025)*Caromatic Lures*

signed (lower right)

dated 1976

acrylic on canvas

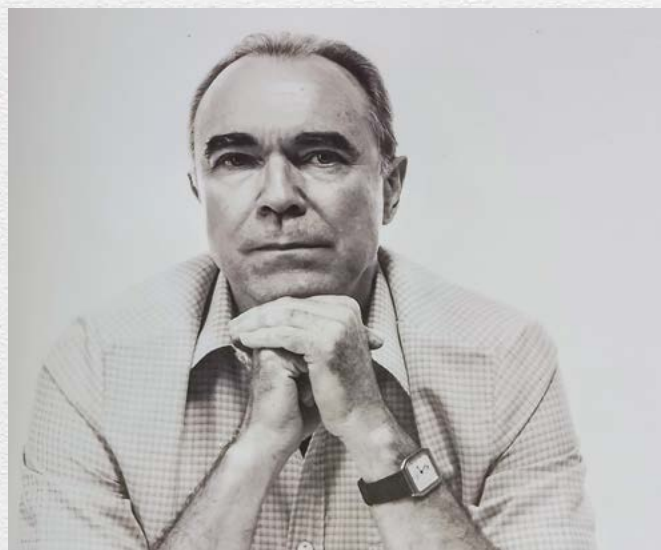
19" x 38 1/2" (48 cm x 98 cm)

**P 1,000,000**Accompanied by a certificate issued by Fundacion Sansó  
confirming the authenticity of this lot

## PROVENANCE

The Luz Gallery

## EXHIBITED

The Luz Gallery, *Juvenal Sansó: One-Man Exhibition*, Makati, 12 February  
- 9 March 1976ABOVE: Juvenal Sansó © La Definitiva Sansó: *A Life Lived Thrice* by Reuben Ramas Cañete, Ph.D.

Juvenal Sansó's paintings draw out a combination of beauty and disturbing uneasiness. In *Caromatic Lures*, rather than his generally hazy landscapes and seascapes, Juvenal Sansó renders his flora in a detailed manner. Each stroke and color breathes life into his subjects. What's more, his use of a solid background color accentuates his elements' features.

With this piece as an example, it is unequivocally true that his works capture the sheer beauty of nature in his verdant greens, calm blues, and pops of red. Still, a layer of mystery remains a constant aspect of his art.

Despite the similarity of his subjects and elements, Sansó's ingenious strokes and charismatic hues infuse his images with a myriad of impressions and emotions. *Caromatic Lures'* zoomed illustration and vibrant yet soothing palette lure the audience to dive into his enigmatic world and uncover the beauty of the whole scene, regardless of the dangers one might encounter along the way.

Indeed, what sets Sansó apart from his contemporaries is not the use of special tools or complex techniques, but his unique play with light and color. This skill, enabled by his deep understanding of these elements, allows him to shroud his paintings with a layer of eeriness and distortion, even when they appear picturesque and peaceful. This approach effectively stirs viewers' emotional responses and immerses them in the scene he portrays. *(Jessica Magno)*



# The Ethereal Blossoms

## *Of Sansó's Dreams*



# Don Benito J. Legarda Jr. The Music Aficionado

by ISIDRA P. REYES



ABOVE: Don Benito Legarda in his library

Benito Justo “Beniting” Fernandez Legarda, Jr. was a polymath: a historian, economist, newspaper columnist, writer, rare book and map collector, a scholar and foremost authority on a wide array of subjects from nineteenth-century Philippine economic history to World War II history in the Philippines to Philippine colonial church architecture, and a music lover. Born on 6 August 1926 to lawyer Benito Roces Legarda and civic leader/diplomat Trinidad Fernandez Legarda, he had the benefit of a well-rounded education, was well-travelled, and had the means to indulge in his many passions.

Beniting earned a Bachelor of Social Science degree from Georgetown University in 1948, and while at Georgetown, he was a member of the Glee Club and Choir from his 2nd to 4th years. Thereafter, he proceeded to Harvard University, where he earned his Master of Arts in Economics in 1950 and a PhD in Economics in 1955. His doctoral dissertation at Harvard University was published as the book *After the Galleons: Foreign Trade, Economic Change, and Entrepreneurship in the Nineteenth-Century Philippines* (1999). Among his other books were *The Hills of Sampaloc* (2001), *Occupation '42* (2003), *Occupation: The Later Years* (2007), and *The Eight Rizalian Miniatures* (2011).

In 1960, Beniting was already Assistant Director of the Department of Economic Research and Statistics of the Central Bank of the Philippines when he was featured in

the *Weekly Women's Magazine*, 30 September 1960 issue, as one of Manila's most eligible bachelors. In the picture with him was a beautiful young pianist named Carminda de Leon, who would have made a good match for him, but fate had other plans. Carminda married Atty. Teddy Regala of ACCRA Law, while Beniting married Dra. Angelita “Lita” Forés Ganzon, the daughter of UP Department of History Chairperson Guadalupe Forés Ganzon, who shared his love for music. They were wed in 1971 and had a daughter, Isabel Cristina “Tweeie,” born in 1972, who would become a doctor like her mother and a writer like her father.

After retiring from the Central Bank, where Beniting rose from the ranks to become Deputy Governor for Research, Beniting's family moved to Bethesda, Maryland, in 1981. He served on the executive board of the IMF, as a consultant to the World Bank, and as economic counsellor of the Philippine Embassy in Washington, D.C. He was also a founding member of the Philippine Statistical Association, Inc. and the Philippine Economic Society. The family eventually returned to the Philippines and went back to their Greenhills, San Juan home.

When Lita passed away in 2015 after battling cancer, Beniting dedicated a concert to her featuring Brahms, her favorite composer. A Manila Symphony Orchestra quartet played at her wake. Beniting died on 26 August 2020 during the COVID-19 pandemic.



ABOVE: Benito Legarda with wife Lita and daughter Isabel Cristina

Chit Roces-Santos, Beniting's relative on the Roces side of the family, once mused on where or when Beniting Legarda's love of music began. She had a ready answer: “My guess is it's in his DNA.” The Legarda-Roces-Valdés-Tuason clan was a musical family. Beniting recalled in his essay, “Lolo Bitong and Lola Menang,” (Benito de la Paz Legarda, 1876-1933, eldest son of Don Benito Legarda Tuason and Teresa de la Paz, and wife, Filomena Roces y Gonzalez, 1872-1967): “Lola Menang was quite cultured, with good taste in music. She had been educated in the Convent of Jesu Maria in Barcelona, and spoke and read French. She also accompanied her father to Paris, and at the Paris Exposition on the Centennial Revolution in 1889, she was escorted by José Rizal to the Exposition...” In his essay, “A Christmas Concert in Wartime,” originally published in the *Philippines Free Press*, 27 December 2003, republished in his book, “Occupation 1942-1945”, Beniting Legarda further recalled that it was Dr. Herbert Zipper of the Manila Symphony Orchestra who hit upon the idea of greeting Grandmother Filomena on her birthday with something until then unimaginable—presenting the Vivaldi-Bach four-piano concerto with members of the family playing the instruments. The venue was the Legarda-Roces Residence at Calle San Rafael, San Miguel, Manila, which later housed La Cocina de Tita Moning. His Uncle Pepito, a concert pianist, was assigned Piano I, which was a little more demanding than the rest because of a short, wonderful cadenza in the third movement. Beniting's father, Ben, was on Piano II,



ABOVE: The young Benito Legarda

Beniting on Piano III, and his Tia Bombona Legarda Valdés (culinary expert wife of General Basilio J. Valdés) on Piano IV. Pianos used were from the former Academy of Music in A. Mabini was stored in the Calle R. Hidalgo office of Beniting's father, while a string orchestra composed of Restie Umali on the contrabass and Honrado Domingo on the cello, with Maximino Isla and Jose Robles as violinists, was assembled by Dr. Herbert Zipper via bamboo telegraph. The concert was such a success that there was clamour for a repeat, but with the Battle of Manila fast approaching, it was not meant to be.

Ramon “Bomboy” Valdés Araneta, son of Rita “Manchi” Valdés Araneta, recalls that Doña Teresa “Tata” Tuason took care of many Legarda nieces and nephews, some of whom lived with her in her mansion at the corner of Calles Aviles and Aguado, and ensured each child learned to play a musical instrument. At every family celebration, the nephews and nieces performed together. Beniting's family remains a staunch supporter of the Manila Symphony Orchestra (MSO) to date. His grandmother, Filomena Roces Legarda, was its first president. His mother, the civic leader, suffragist, and Ambassador to South Vietnam, Trinidad Fernandez Legarda, was president of the MSO from 1933 to 1958 and did much to raise funds to sustain its existence. She was also behind the historic staging of the first Manila Symphony Orchestra Concert at the ruins of Santa Cruz Church on 9 May 1945.



## The Benito Legarda

### Grotrian-Steinweg Nachf Grand Piano

*Model P 680 Grotrian-Steinweg Nachf*

ca.1970s - 80s

Serial Number: No. 243399

Ivory Keys

Color: black

with upholstered stool

piano size:

H: 72" (183 cm)

L: 58" (147 cm)

W: 88" (224 cm)

piano bench:

H: 19" (48 cm)

L: 15" (38 cm)

W: 30 1/2" (77 cm)

**P 400,000**

The piano at hand is a Model P 680 Grotrian-Steinweg Nachf. Grand Piano with a black gloss finish. The embossed marking on its cast iron plate indicates that it was made at the Grotrian-Steinweg factory in Braunschweig, Germany. The piano was most probably bought in Europe or commissioned in Germany, as Grotrian-Steinweg pianos were handcrafted in Braunschweig and had limited distribution in the United States due to competition from Steinway & Sons, New York.

It is not known whether any distributors carried Grotrian-Steinweg pianos in the Philippines. The only other Grotrian-Steinweg piano which comes to mind belonged to the late Ilongga piano diva, Leonor Kilayko, whom her friend, fellow Ilonggo social chronicler Édouard Garcia, fondly called "The Madwoman of Taliwood." Leonor acquired her Grotrian-Steinweg piano during her 17-year stay in Germany and had it installed in her South Sy-Quia Apartments unit in Malate, Manila and later at her Marbella Condominium flat, where she would hold a series of private concerts for her friends. The Grotrian-Steinweg Piano Factory was founded in 1835 by Heinrich Engelhard Steinweg (1797-1871), who in 1850 migrated with most of his family to the U.S., changed his name to Henry Steinway, and founded Steinway & Sons, New York. He left his eldest son, C.F. Theodor Steinweg (1825-1889), to manage the factory in Braunschweig. Theodore moved the factory to nearby Wolfenbüttel for several years. Soon after, he met Friedrich Grotrian, who had previous experience running a piano business in Moscow and St. Petersburg, and entered into a partnership with him in 1856. In 1857, partners Theodor Steinway and Friedrich Grotrian moved the factory to Braunschweig, setting up shop in the former mayor's mansion at 48 Bohlweg Street. In 1860, Friedrich Gortrian passed away and was succeeded by his son, Wilhelm. In 1865, Theodor was summoned by his family to help run Steinway & Sons in New York after the deaths



of his two siblings, Henry and Charles. Thereafter, Wilhelm Grotrian was joined by two of his workmen and bought off C.F. Theodor's share of the business. In addition, they paid for the right to use the trademark, "C.F. Th. Steinweg Nachf," which means "Successor to C.F. Theodor," nachf. being the abbreviation for the German term, nachfolger, or successor in English.

In 1880, Theodor Steinweg, now Theodor Steinway, returned to Germany for good and set up the Steinway & Sons Hamburg factory, which competed directly with Grotrian-Steinweg Nachf. Braunschweig. Soon, Grotrian-Steinweg pianos were gaining renown as among the finest premium pianos worldwide and the piano of choice for great musicians such as Johannes Brahms, Franz Liszt, Clara Schumann, Sergei Rachmaninoff, Ignace Paderewski, Vladimir Horowitz, and Arthur Rubenstein. Grotrian-Steinweg pianos became known for "their light responsive action with warm, mellow tone and clarity among the registers, making it the perfect piano for playing fast, delicate passages as well as big, powerful ones."

In the 1920s, Grotrian-Steinweg reached its peak, producing 3,000 pianos annually and employing 1,000 workers. More stores were opened in Germany, and a London shop was established. However, as the Great Depression set in, sales plunged. During WWII, the factory was ordered to shift to the fabrication of aircraft parts. In 1944, the factory was destroyed during the bombing of Braunschweig and was rebuilt in 1948.

Since 1895, Steinway & Sons of New York had resisted Grotrian-Steinweg's entry into the U.S. market, which erupted into a long-drawn-out legal battle that ended in 1975, when the U.S. Court of Appeals decided to forbid Grotrian-Steinweg from selling its pianos in the U.S. using the Steinweg name starting in 1977. Grotian-Steinweg pianos continued to be made in limited quantities over the years, without compromising quality.

In 2011, Larry Fine, a piano expert and author of *The Piano Book*, stated that modern Grotrian-Steinweg pianos are among the "highest quality" pianos, on a par with the Bösendorfer, Steinway Hamburg, and Fazioli, and of a higher quality than Steinway & Sons New York pianos.

# The Benito Legarda Grotrian Steinweg

## *The Rolls-Royce of Pianos for the Eminent Scholar*

by ISIDRA P. REYES





Norma Belleza (b. 1939)

*Magkapatid*  
signed and dated 2006 (lower right)  
oil on canvas  
20" x 24" (51 cm x 61 cm)

P 140,000

Leon Gallery wishes to thank Mr. Marcel Antonio for confirming the authenticity of this lot



Following her first solo exhibition at the Metro Gallery in 1976, Norma Belleza continued to decorate the art scene with her delightful interpretations of Philippine life. Her paintings, widely recognized and celebrated, have been featured in numerous exhibitions and private collections, adorned the walls of various institutions, and graced the covers of books and magazines.

*Magkapatid*, dated 2006, embodies the elements of a quintessential Belleza masterpiece: women and vibrant palette. The two sisters sat amidst a garden of flowers, engaged in conversation as they immersed themselves in the colors and fragrances of the flora around them.

Norma Belleza's skilled employment of thick and thin black outlines tones down her polychromatic hues, making her works less overwhelming to the eyes. This approach to color and her childlike aesthetics make her artworks amiable and comforting, solidifying her reputation as one of the most celebrated Filipina artists. *(Jessica Magno)*

Angelito Antonio (1939 - 2025)

*Mag-Anak*  
signed and dated 1983 (lower right)  
oil on canvas  
24" x 36" (61 cm x 91 cm)

P 340,000

Leon Gallery wishes to thank Mr. Marcel Antonio for confirming the authenticity of this lot



Creating a masterpiece that blends music, labor, and everyday intimacy through beautiful visual language, Angelito Antonio's artwork serves as a symbol of harmony between art, family, and spirituality.

Through a fiery palette of red, yellows, and ochres, Antonio gives attention to the two subjects that the painting features; The musician, who represents art, and music as a unifying force that connects people through performances,

and the mother and child, which symbolize care and devotion, the nurturing harmony between a mother and a child, and its echoes to Marian Imagery.

Through his craft, Antonio offered a powerful, unique synesthetic experience in which music, colors, and emotions intertwined on a single canvas—effectively celebrating rhythm not just as part of music that connects people, but as a way of living life. *(Mark John Castañeda)*

Arturo Luz (1926 - 2021)

*Rajasthan Palace*  
signed (lower left)  
dated 2003  
acrylic on canvas  
24" x 36" (61 cm x 91 cm)

P 500,000

Accompanied by a certificate issued by The Luz Gallery and signed by the artist confirming the authenticity of this lot



1988 proved to be central for the next few years in Arturo Luz's career. With time on his hands — he had resigned from his post at the Design Center of the Philippines, the Metropolitan Museum of Manila, and the Museum of Philippine Art in three years — he embarked on a sojourn visiting several Asian heritage sites. From Angkor Wat in

Cambodia, to the Borobudur in Indonesia, to even the temples in South Asia, the magnificent sights he had encountered sowed the seeds for a new series, his "Cities of the Past," to blossom from its inspiration.

The 2003 *Rajasthan Palace* translates one of the many palaces in northwestern India. He deconstructs this architectural wonder and strips it down to its barest essentials, a landscape that is both familiar and foreign.

"From the magnificence of mighty skyscrapers to the coziness of pedestrian streets, his artwork portrays the vividness of human settlement in all its complexity," an article about this series published in Singularts writes. "By employing his signature minimalist style, Luz compresses the bustle and forever charm of cities into a series of recollections tracing the psychological states and narratives of each town." *(Hannah Valiente)*



**Tomas Concepcion** (1933 - 2012)

*Mother and Child*

signed and dated 1973

brass

without base:

H: 21 1/2" (55 cm)

L: 6" (15 cm)

W: 5 3/4" (15 cm)

with base:

H: 23" (58 cm)

L: 6" (15 cm)

W: 6" (15 cm)

**P 100,000**

The works of Betsy Westendorp are an amalgamation of her multicultural background. A Dutch descendant, she was born in Spain just years before a civil war broke out. However, periods of her time were spent in the Philippines, where she lived with her husband. AS a result, her works, particularly her floral pieces, seem to melt and meld multiple inspirations that yield a magnificent, almost otherworldly effect.

Her 1994 Painting No. 805, like many of her works, is painted in situ, that is to say, she differs from many of her peers in that she paints the flowers as they are situated in the ground. Instead of the beautiful flower arrangement put in a vase, Betsy's Painting No. 805 portrays the flowers as she sees them in nature, with this piece leaning close enough to touch the lilypads floating in a river.

"I draw as I paint," Betsy declares. Indeed, as she starts with no preparatory studies, she trusts her paintings to find their own way with no endpoint in mind. Her flowers seem to be an echo of her – she, like her subject matters, is seemingly fragile. Yet, she blossoms. Her flowers occupy the canvas the same way Betsy's personality, charm, and wit fill a room, a mirror reflecting her strength cloaked within a soft appearance. *(Hannah Valiente)*



80

**Fernando Amorsolo** (1892 - 1972)

*Vinta*

signed and dated 1948 (lower right)

oil on canvas

16" x 20" (41 cm x 51 cm)

**P 3,000,000**

PROVENANCE

Private collection, Manila

Taking center stage in this 1948 piece is a colorful *Vinta*, a traditional outrigger boat primarily found in the Mindanao region. Its distinct features include a large, colorful sail, a curvilinear, vine-like design intricately carved along its body, and a narrow front with a prow resembling a crocodile's gaping mouth. They serve as a vessel for fishing, a form of transportation, and even locals' housing.

Vintas are more than eye-catching vessels for the Zamboanguenos. They are symbols that define their vibrant culture and history. Every October, the Regatta

de Zamboanga, a fluvial parade commemorating Vinta boats, is held in the region, as part of the month-long Zamboanga Hermosa Festival.

In this 1948 seascape painting, maestro Fernando Amorsolo once again shed his effervescent light in portraying the life at sea of the Zamboanga people. Used as a fishing boat, fishermen hoist up the boat's patterned sail as they battle with the strong winds and rough ocean waves. Amorsolo's chiaroscuro technique and tropical light saturate his images' colors, giving them a dramatic effect.

Certainly, Fernando Amorsolo's proficient artistry, coupled with his deep enjoyment of travelling and observing people, landscapes, and cultures, allowed him to provide an authentic representation of the Philippines and the Filipinos in his canvases. *(Jessica Magno)*



**Benedicto Cabrera** (b.1942)*Family*

signed and dated 1989 (lower left)

acrylic on handmade paper

24" x 18" (61 cm x 46 cm)

**P 1,000,000**

Accompanied by a certificate issued by Finale Art File confirming the authenticity of this lot

PROVENANCE  
Finale Art File

*"All one needs is an eye for the details which make a specific scene so much more alive. You see, I used to frequent places like Ermita, Bambang, and Gandara. As you know I worked for the Manila Times for three years from 1965 to 1968, as an illustrator for the Sunday Times Magazine. Around [the] Santa Cruz area or around Ongpin I would pick up the images that suited my work."*

—BENEDICTO CABRERA, IN A 1978 INTERVIEW  
WITH PATRICK D. FLORES, PUBLISHED IN  
BENCAB: FILIPINO ARTIST, 2019

Benedicto Cabrera, most known by his moniker Bencab, is a household name in Philippine art. Alongside his outstanding artistry, his compelling subjects and themes never fail to captivate and stir one's mind and emotions.

His prolific career spanned an array of media and materials, experimented with style and technique, and addressed a wide range of topics. Contextualized within the Philippine setting, his artworks revolve around his countrymen, the Filipinos. Bencab touched on themes of local culture, migration, history, urban alienation, and the daily grind of individuals, populated by revolutionaries, women and children, vagrants, migrants, and workers.

While he was born in Malabon, Bencab grew up in various places, including the boisterous Tondo and Bambang districts, where he was exposed to the pitiable lives of the poverty-stricken individuals. Their lives, the artist reflected in his earlier paintings: of scavengers, derelicts, and barong barongs. His direct experiences and observations lend authenticity to his works, fostering a sense of connection and understanding in viewers.

Bencab's Sabel series was a striking collection of works that emerged from his time in the aforementioned districts and became one of his most celebrated series. Sabel was a beggar he used to see in the streets of Bambang, draped in plastic and cloth, scavenging around garbage cans. Her story and image serve as a powerful symbol, prompting Bencab to make her his muse, "a structure to base my paintings on," he confided with Flores.



ABOVE: Benedicto Cabrera with his pet dog Runo in his Studio in Quezon Hill, Baguio  
© Mary Ellen Mark

Sabel's features are also present in his mother and child works; she became the very face of Bencab's Filipina woman. *Family*, dated 1989, features a mother and child, both with soulful eyes. They are both wrapped in a thick piece of fabric to shield them from the freezing streets. Despite her gaunt appearance, she gathers her courage to hold her child tightly and protectively. The artist's use of handmade paper adds a slightly rough texture to the image, further highlighting his subjects' impoverished states.

The mother and child have been a popular and permanent fixture in every Filipino artist's oeuvre, symbolizing our deep and unswerving familial values. Bencab's works on this theme, regardless of style or material used, reflect the depressing realities of poor and marginalized people while also evoking the intimate, personal relationships within families despite their distressing circumstances. (Jessica Magno)

## BenCab Envelopes

### *A Northern Mother and Child*





Fernando Zóbel (1924 - 1984)

*Ensayo para Un Tema*  
signed, dated 1974, and dedicated "Para Antonio Cuevas, en recuerdo de la Toma de un ""Un Tema"" en mi estudio de Madrid. El 30 de Octubre de 1974, un abrazo"  
oil on canvas  
23 1/2" x 23 1/2" (60 cm x 60 cm)

P 5,000,000

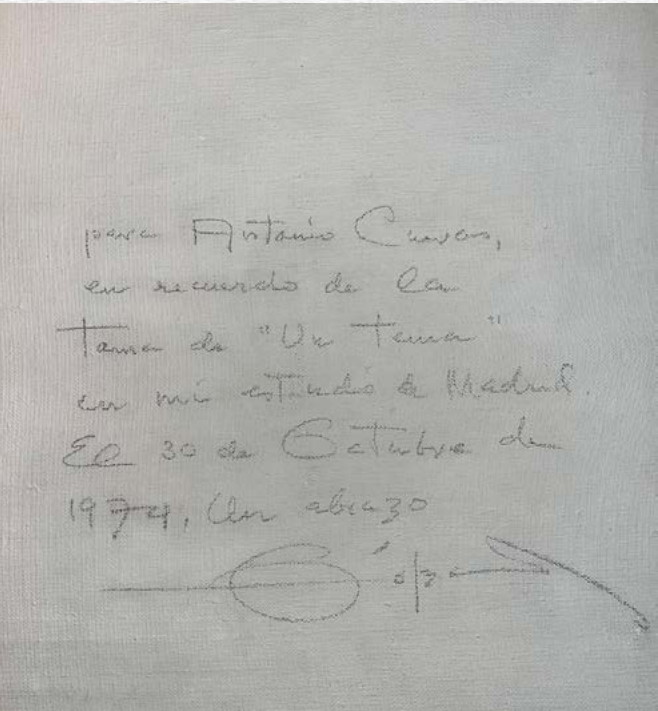
PROVENANCE  
Fernando Durán. Subastas de arte y joyas, Arte contemporáneo, Madrid, 22 December 2025, Lot 60

Dedicated to Antonio Cuevas, in memory of his participation in the filming of 'Zobel: Un Tema' in the artist's studio in Madrid on the 30th of October, 1974, Fernando Zobel's *Ensayo para Un Tema* (translated into English as Essay for 'Un Tema') serves as a personal memento of that documentary.

Dominated by a significant, pale ground—ranging from off-white to warm gray—and was contrasted against a darker, blurred vertical form from the left. The shadowed area itself feels more atmospheric than solid. As if the shades itself is a piece of memory, trace, or a fleeting presence—its ambiguity invites its viewers to project meaning rather than decode a fixed subject. On the right, is a handwritten inscription of a personal dedication piece for Antonio Cuevas which are: 'Para Antonio Cuevas, en recuerdo de la Toma de un 'Un Tema' en mi estudio de Madrid. El 30 de octubre de 1974, un abrazo' ('For Antonio Cuevas, in memory of the filming of 'Un tema' in my Madrid studio. On the 30th of October, 1974, a hug.').

For context, *Zóbel: Un Tema* (1974) is a documentary about Fernando Zobel that shows the process of creating the painting *La Vista* pieces, where he distilled the landscape of Cuenca, Spain, with each piece representing Zobel's deep engagement with nature as both subject and inspiration—transformed through a rigorous process of reduction and abstraction. Featuring Zobel's works in his studio, including this one, the script was written by Rafael Pérez Madero and narrated by José Hierro.

By the 1970s, the artist had already mastered his gestural abstraction. *Un Tema* is a mental framework that Zobel had used to think about painting itself. For him, a theme is a starting point. Something that can be revisited, reworked,



ABOVE: Close-up of the dedication

and questioned, as well as a thought structure for thought rather than an image to present. The 1974 documentary highlights this framework by showing Zobel's works at various stages of completion, including the featured piece, emphasizing not the product but the process by which his masterpiece was made.

This dedicated piece for Cuevas provides a physical piece of Zobel's framework. A living memory of ideas in formation. (Mark John Castañeda)

# A Remembrance from Zóbel Of a Seminal Documentary





**Raffy Napay** (b. 1986)

*Sky*

fabric, cotton thread

76" x 118 1/2" (193 cm x 301)

**P 1,400,000**



ABOVE: Raffy Napay © Rogue Magazine

Employing woven threads as his brush to recontextualize vastness as a form of visual language, Raffy Napay's *Sky* literally provides a window into something intangible and vast, transforming it into a slow, calming, meditative experience. One that makes people reminisce about how one might stare at the sky and be swept away by time.

The magnificent piece centers on what appears to be a vast expanse of sky that shines into the viewer's eyes. Soft blues, pale white, and muted grays drift across the surface, mimicking the impression of moving clouds in constant motion. With no fixed horizon, the piece forces our eyes to move gently across the surface. Mimicking how we often experience daily, looking at the sky through the windows, screens of frames, but never as a single, uninterrupted view.

In terms of the textured surface, Napay delivered a piece that made something intangible and unreachable into something you could touch. The woven textures give the sky itself a rounded, solid form that suggests themes of memory, perception, and time. Delivering stillness in visual form. It invites viewers to slow down and linger on the details—to reflect on how something ordinary, like the sky, could hold such emotional weight. *(Mark John Castañeda)*

## Raffy Napay: *Tapestry of Pale Clouds*





# Malang Paints His First Interaction With His Sons

## *Celebrating Love, Joy, and Hope in the New Millennium*

by ADRIAN MARANAN



ABOVE: Malang and his sons Steve (left) and Soler (center) working on the painting in 2000. © From the Santos family archives, reproduced in the book *The Art of Malang as Filipino* by Juan Gatbonton and Alya Honasan

The turn of the new millennium saw Mauro Malang Santos in high spirits as he welcomed the first month of the year with celebrations for his 72nd birthday and his 40 years in the Philippine art scene.

In fact, when the new millennium kicked off, Malang was blessed with four solo shows in one month, proving that age is just a number. The optimistic Malang smilingly said in a January 15, 2000 interview with *The Manila Bulletin*:

"How else should I welcome the New Year? Many people send the old year off with firecrackers, and they are happy doing that. I am happiest when I paint. Becoming a painter was one of the best things that ever happened to me."

The year 2000 was also a very special year for Malang, as it marked his first creative collaboration with his two beloved sons, Steve and Soler.

This mural-sized painting is remarkable for being the first interaction painting Malang created with his two equally talented sons, who both followed his creative footsteps. The work was commissioned by a Philippine conglomerate in 2000, in line with the celebrations for the new millennium.

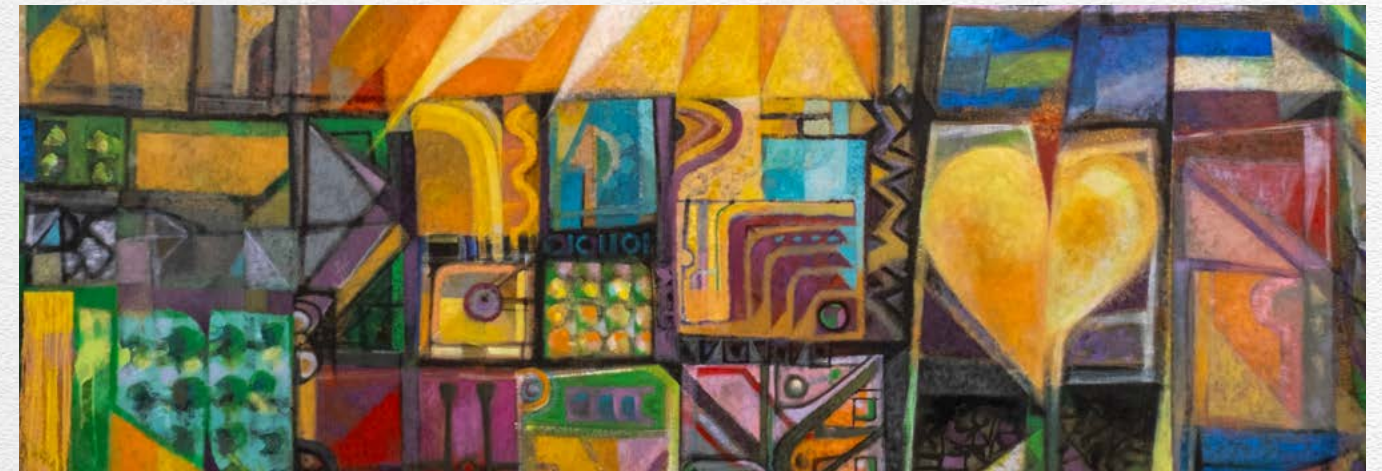
"I am only beginning. *Hindi ako nagsasawa* [I am not getting bored] after 41 years of my career in art. Without fail, I still get to paint every day."

In a recent correspondence with Leon Gallery, Soler shared the contributions of each family member to the painting.

The upper portion of the work, including the sky and birds, was painted by his older brother, Steve, whose style in this work echoes his father's. On the other hand, Soler painted his signature tree forms on both sides of the work. Their father, of course, painted the central subject, showcasing his trademark breezy, cartoon-like figures that sparkle with childlike joy and innocence. Malang's subjects portray a configuration of technological machinery and abstracted figures representing multiple spheres of society that speak not only of the institution's prestige and standing, but more so its commitment to be of service to every Filipino, even beyond borders and oceans.

The piece sparkles with confidence and exuberance, reflecting the country and its institutions entering the new millennium with renewed hope, optimism, and a vision for a progressive future. Being a collaborative painting, the work sees Malang continuing the "interaction painting" tradition of the Saturday Group of Artists, which he once headed from 1994 to 1998, succeeding Cesar Legaspi.

Malang had been supportive of his two sons' decision to pursue art as both a profession and a vocation, with him serving as their first art teacher and making them meet his friends who were also titans of Philippine art: Manansala, Legaspi, H.R. Ocampo, Olazo, Kiukok, and Larry Alcala, who became Steve's godfather. Steve mounted his debut solo exhibition in August 1975 at the Luz Gallery, where his younger sibling, Soler, also held his debut in 1981. There's a comic backstory about Steve before he debuted as a painter. Roberto Chabet, Steve's mentor at the UP School



of Fine Arts, asked Arturo Luz to give his bright student an exhibition. Luz then phoned Malang, saying, "*Mayroon ka palang anak na pintor, at mas magaling pa daw sa iyo. Kailan siya Pwedeng mag-exhibit?*" To which Malang humorously replied, "*Basta't creation ko, magaling!*"

Steve, known for his realist paintings of commonplace objects and settings shrouded in enigma, was also an avid photographer. With his mastery of form and composition, he once called his subjects "decisive moments" captured in permanence, seeing and photographing things he liked, with the images he did not capture on film, he kept at the back of his mind, and at the most suitable moment, painting them with camera-like precision as they filled his stream of consciousness. On the other hand, Soler found solace in nature's images: leaves at different stages and trees in various life cycles. He first made his mark with his dexterity in tempera and watercolors, with his signature leaf forms evoking nostalgia, romance, and warmth all at once.

Interestingly, it was also Malang himself who offered Soler the present lot on which West Gallery now stands. Malang was notably the one who encouraged the hesitant Soler, with both having the idea of conceiving the gallery for future up-and-coming artists to have their own exhibit space, a form of giving back to the community, especially for the seasoned Malang.

When Steve and Soler debuted, critics and audiences alike were quick to notice their differences in style from their esteemed father. In a *Lifestyle Inquirer* interview for West Gallery's 35th anniversary in 2024, Soler shared that their father inspired them both to develop discipline and uniqueness. He said:

"Tatay was very disciplined with his practice as an artist. He showed us by example and encouraged us to paint or draw every day. He was also very serious about us



ABOVE, MID and BELOW: In a recent correspondence with Leon Gallery, Soler shared the contributions of each family member to the painting. The upper portion of the work, including the sky and birds, was painted by his older brother, Steve, whose style in this work echoes his father's. On the other hand, Soler painted his signature tree forms on both sides of the work. Their father painted the central subject, showcasing his trademark breezy, cartoon-like figures.

developing our own style and would always buy books and art magazines. Our travels were always to see museums and galleries, even when the kids were small and seemed uninterested at that time. Now, they are the ones who are more informed about important art shows and events and have taken us to new galleries and museums."

Overall, this painting conveys the joy of the family, the warmth of belongingness, and the delightful feeling of being embraced by a love that resonantly speaks of nurturing and encouragement.





84

**Mauro Malang Santos** (1928 - 2017)

**Soler Santos** (b. 1960)

**Steve Santos** (1951 - 2022)

*Interaction*

signed and dated 2000 (lower right)

oil on canvas

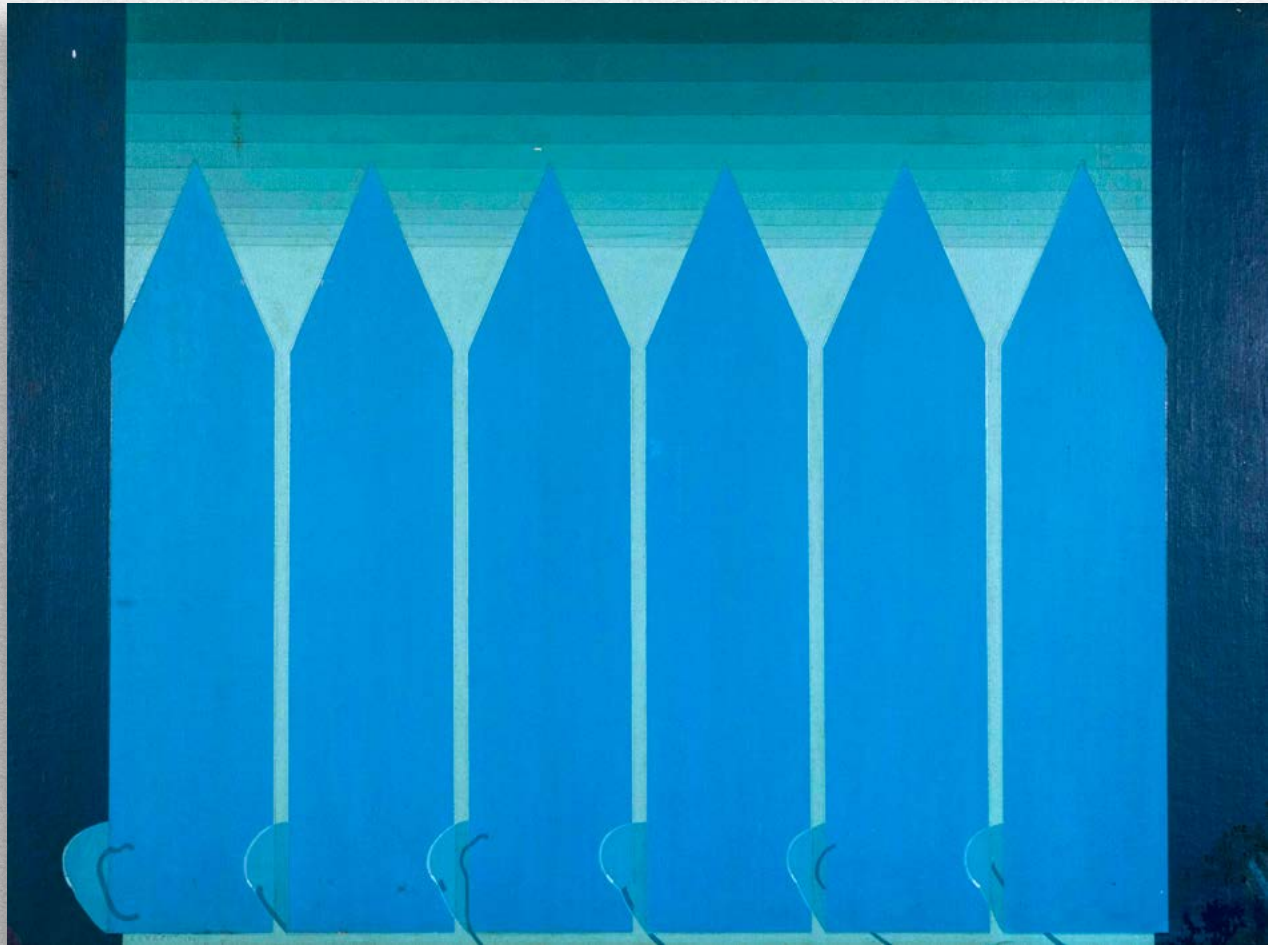
84" x 156" (213 cm x 396 cm)

**P 6,000,000**

LITERATURE

Gatbonton, Juan T. and Alya B. Honasan. *The Art of Malang as Filipino*. Mandaluyong City: The Crucible Workshop, 2002. Photograph of Malang, Steve, and Soler Santos with the painting reproduced in color on page 14.





85

**Raul Lebajo** (b. 1941)

*Untitled*

signed and dated 1984 (lower left)

mixed media

36" x 48" (91 cm x 122 cm)

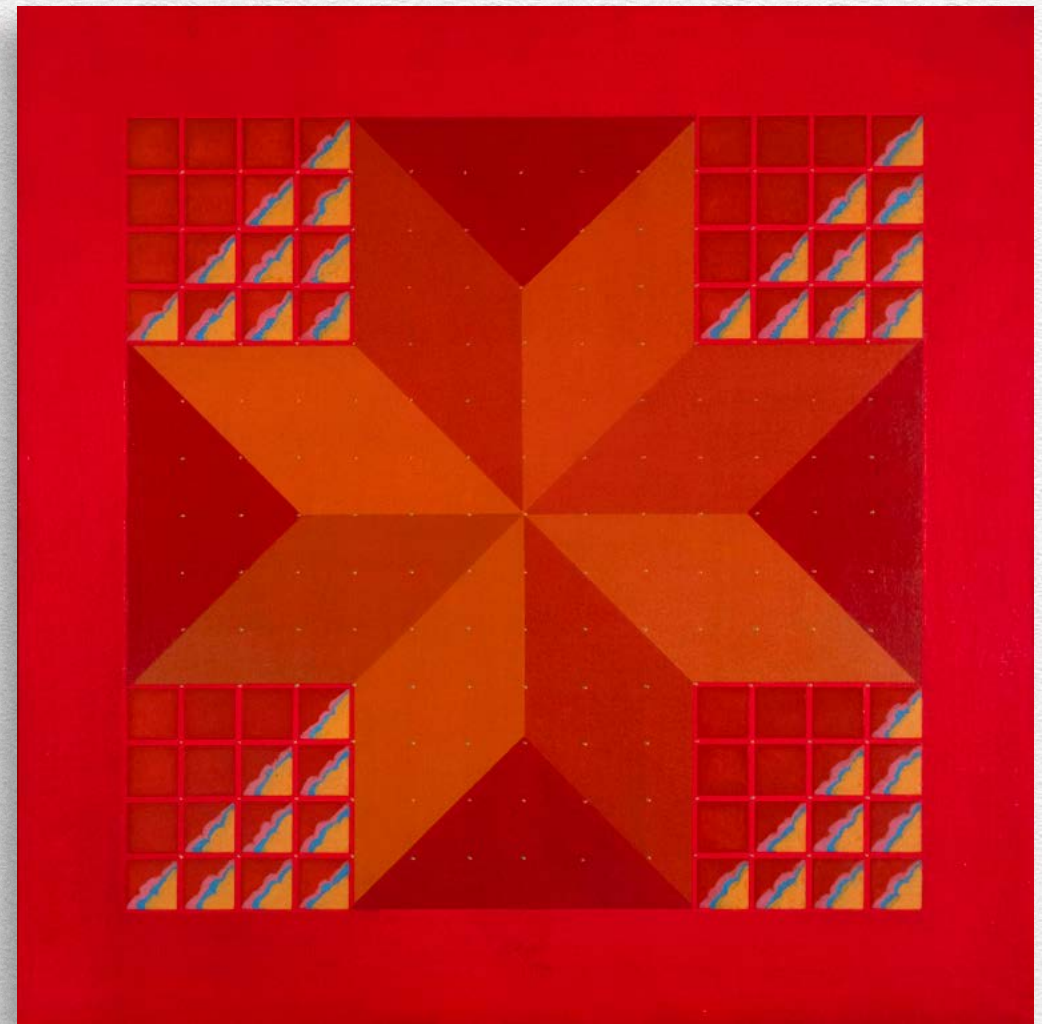
**P 120,000**

Known for his disciplined geometric abstractions that reflect the period when artists engaged with systems. In response to the rapid urbanization and industrialization of the time, Raul Lebajo's masterpiece *Park #233* exemplifies such abstractions, representing the piece as a serialized, constructed, and controlled catalogued space rather than a typical natural park.

With its composition rigorously symmetrical and centralized, it formed a dominant cross that radiates from the center,

with each leg positioned at a corner, creating four equal quadrants that matched in design pattern and providing the piece with a strong sense of balance and a system that feels architectural rather than natural.

Derailing completely from the organic nature of its namesake, Lebajo's *Park* instead captures an abstracted "park" as a mapped and architected system, completely removing the "natural" and replacing it with rigid urban forms—a quiet commentary on industrialisation and urbanisation. *(Mark John Castañeda)*



86

**Raul Lebajo** (b. 1941)

*Park #223*

signed and dated 1976 (lower center)

acrylic - canvas on wood

36" x 36" (91 cm x 91 cm)

**P 160,000**

PROVENANCE

Galleria Duemila

A magnificent piece that can be read as a disciplined meditation on repetition, containment, and quiet tension, Raul Lebajo transforms a mundane repetition akin to a backyard wood fence into a rhythmic piece of art that establishes a sense of order and seriality, which coincides with the themes of uniformity, urban order, or social containment.

Limiting the palette to the colors blue and teal, the figure's near-identical shapes and their repetition evoke

both stability and monotony. The controlled palette itself creates a calm yet emotionally distant mood, while the structured shape suggests isolation and containment, which complements the abstract's moody palette. Further reinforcing the painting's contemplative, almost hushed tone.

Overall, Lebajo's featured painting from 1984 thrives on quiet repetition and controlled balance to deliver an image of calm that subtly questions rigidity and sameness. His piece, in itself, invites slow looking and meditation on uniformity, social containment, and the urban order found in communities. *(Mark John Castañeda)*



**Ben Maramag** (b. 1945)*Untitled*

signed and dated 1976 (lower right)

acrylic

47" x 40" (119 cm x 102 cm)

**P 240,000**

## PROVENANCE

The Luz Gallery

Recognized for his pioneering use of industrial tools like paint spray to create smooth, atmospheric gradients and hard-edged geometric forms that separate him from the traditional brushworks of his predecessors, Ben Maramag's featured piece provides a powerful demonstration of the artist's mastery and his unique approach to art by creating an abstract piece that explores spirit and form.

Quietly powerful in itself, the painting consists of sharp diagonal planes that cut across the canvas, introducing movement and direction (lower left to upper right). The dominant shade of dark red immediately commands the viewer's attention, inviting prolonged viewing—establishing the piece's meaning through its connection to abstraction rather than simple narrative clarity.

Diving deeper into the composition, the abstract itself

strikes a balance between stability and disruption. The way the lines smoothly cut through the calm, expansive crimson background highlights the tension between stillness and movement. The line itself might be read as order cutting through chaos in the form of a path or trajectory—whether it's progress, struggle, or an irreversible direction—the way it moves upward suggests an act of disruption to what is supposed to be a smooth, monotonous red painting.

Overall, the piece perfectly reflects Maramag's interests in balance, structure, and emotional resonance through abstracted visual language. Instead of making the piece narrative-driven, the artist designed it to be experiential—encouraging viewers to respond, follow, and resonate to the rhythm, the direction and color energy of the abstract piece. Controlled yet dynamic, his art became a powerful testament of how simple geometry and color could convey movement and intensity without figurative representation. *(Mark John Castañeda)*







88 PROPERTY OF A DISTINGUISHED LADY

**Glenn Bautista** (1947 - 2014)

*Tanza*  
signed and dated 1995 (lower right)  
oil on wood  
24" x 24" (61 cm x 61 cm)

**P 100,000**

A Filipino known for his multiple artistic works across different art forms, ranging from painting, sculpture, lithography, digital art, and architecture, Glenn Bautista highlights his excellence by producing a magnificent piece dominated by sweeping interlaced strokes that emphasize smooth gestures, flows, and spatial ambiguity, essentially transforming a sense of place into a form of natural movement, color, and gesture—giving a unique viewing experience that much like revisiting a memorable landscape that changes with each return.

A possible reference to the coastal municipality of Tanza, Cavite, the artwork perfectly captures the flowing movements of rivers, coastal winds, and streams that run through or near the city and into Manila Bay, as well as the fishing and artisanal marine activities in the municipality's waters. The work perfectly highlights the importance of coastal areas through soothing colors and flowing brushstrokes, reflecting how they are essentially tethered to the daily lives of nearby locals. (Mark John Castañeda)



89

**Federico Aguilar Alcuaz** (b. 1941)

*Untitled*  
signed and dated 1976 (upper right)  
oil on canvas  
19 1/4" x 25" (49 cm x 64 cm)

**P 300,000**

Leon Gallery wishes to thank Mr. Christian M. Aguilar for confirming the authenticity of this lot

This 1976 oil on canvas work belongs to Federico Aguilar Alcuaz's collection of admirable abstract pieces. His harmonious blend of bold strokes and an intense palette creates a compelling visual impact, a quiet yet impassioned piece. On top of that, Alcuaz's oeuvre reveals his affinity for music, infusing his enigmatic compositions with euphonious lyricism and melody. Thus, his use of music and lyricism invites viewers to feel a sense of harmony and emotional resonance.

Additionally, his art pieces reflect his hedonistic philosophy in life, in which, in the words of Alice Guillermo, "his refined and sophisticated way of seeing, feeling and transforming onto canvas guides his art purely and uninterruptedly, with the least interference of common considerations." (Jessica Magno)



**Emmanuel Garibay** (b. 1962)

*Juan Luna, Binondo*

dated 2016

oil on canvas

48" x 48" (122 cm x 122 cm)

**P 700,000**

Accompanied by a certificate signed by the artist confirming the authenticity of this lot

PROVENANCE

Private collection, Singapore

First inaugurated as the Pacific Commercial Company Building (PCCB), what is now known as the Juan Luna Building was completed in 1922 according to the design of the American architecture firm Murphy, McGill, and Hamlin. With firms planted in New York and Shanghai, it follows the manner of the traditional New York Neoclassical designs of the Beaux-Arts style.

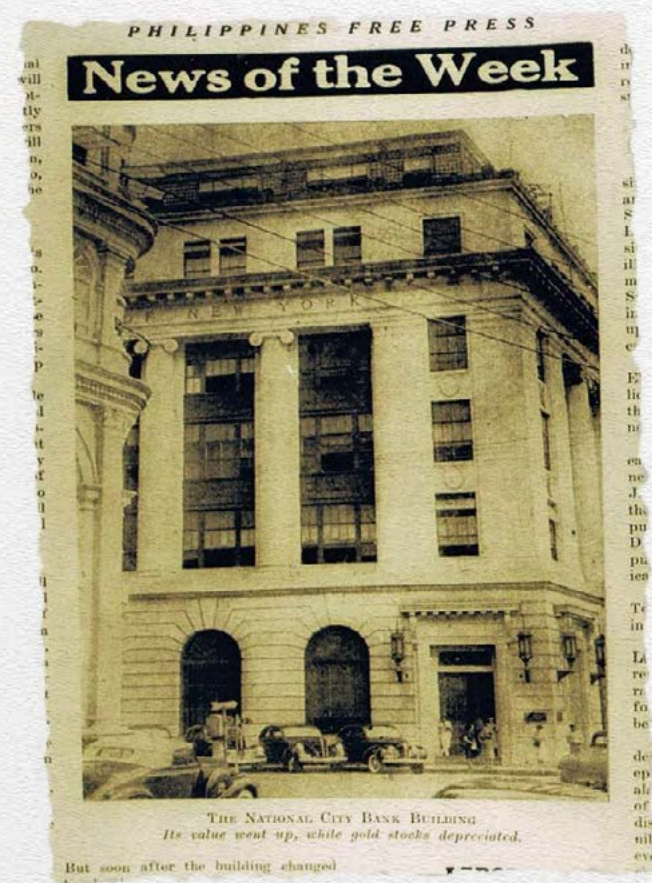
In the book 'Arkitekturang Filipino,' UP Professor Gerard Licos describes the building's original structure as a sweeping edifice "made up of a row of colossal columns" with the ground floor having arched openings, with fanlights emphasized by stones forming around the arch."

Sporting six-storied floors, the first floor is where the Manila branch of the International Banking Corporation is located, with the Pacific Commercial Company occupying the rest of the floors. The building faces the Pasig River, with its next-door neighbor another famed historical office building: the El Hogar Filipino building, built in 1914 by Ramon Irureta-Goyena and Francisco Perez-Muñoz.

This structure is a pioneer in many construction aspects of Manila. With its Neoclassical detailing, PCCB dominated the riverside from the 1920s to the 1950s, inspiring the usage of smooth, white plastering that had rendered prior forms of wooden construction obsolete.

Its extensive usage of reinforced concrete helped the building survive the continuous damage the city experienced during the destructive 1945 Battle of Manila. The passage of time, however, was not kind to the building — the mass exodus of businesses out of the riverside, leaving their previous building neglected. There, PCCB would lie high untouched for almost four decades.

However, despite the building itself remaining untouched, the world around it did not. Though heavily damaged during the Second World War, Binondo's postwar years are still economic and cultural hubs, with attempts to emphasize its Chinese heritage through architecture. Between the 1980s and 1990s, it became evident that Binondo was no longer Manila's main business center; even so, it still has an active



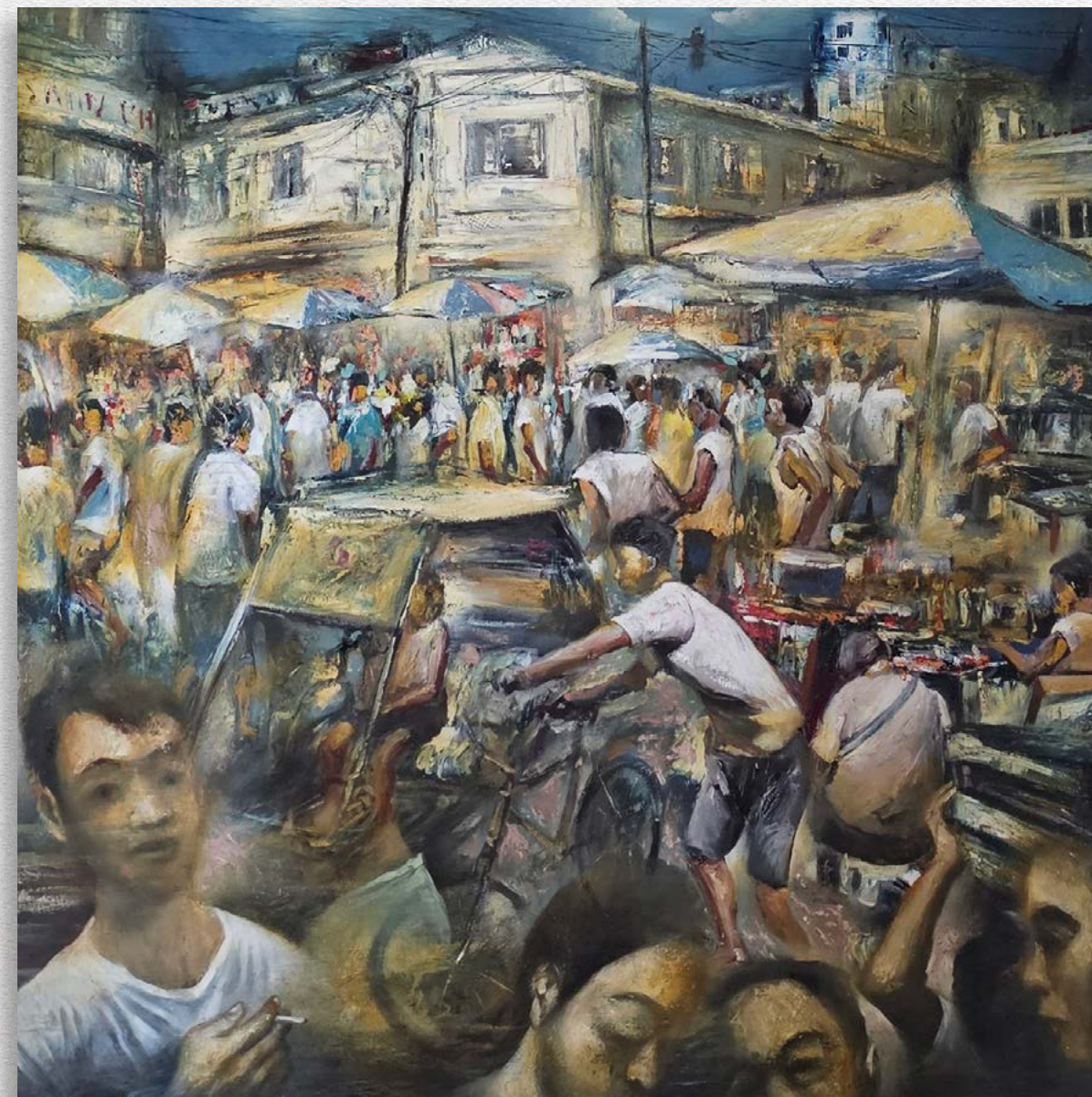
ABOVE: The Juan Luna Building, featured in a 1924 issue of The Philippine Free Press, published in a 2017 BluPrint article by Reuben Canete.

business community that draws people into its borders. Emmanuel Garibay's 2016 *Juan Luna, Binondo* portrays the busy street of Juan Luna. With PCCB at the back – now called the Juan Luna E-Services Building – becomes not the historic building but the people who mill around it. Indeed, more than half of the canvas becomes the crowd in the middle of an afternoon stroll, with the Juan Luna Building only a background feature.

An artist who manages to acutely place his pulse on the Filipino experience, Garibay's city portraits are not the romantic nostalgia of the days past. Instead, his works embody the compulsions of expressive figuration, with his recognizable long-limbed subjects occupying every inch of his canvases.

His social realist bent is no doubt nurtured by his days in Salingpusa, a group of student activists from the UP College

## Garibay Captures A Chinatown Crossroad of Commerce



of Fine Arts whose works reflect their beliefs that an artist's role is to expose the common Filipino's everyday struggles.

This unfiltered portrayal of the Philippines' daily life leads to his showcase of the "richness of the poor." In his own words: "The whole idea of the richness of the poor is another way of saying, if you have less care in the world, you are actually wealthier than rich people whose main concern is to become richer."

This "richness of the poor" is highlighted in *Juan Luna, Binondo*. Nearly every sort of activity is shown in this painting – some people flock to one of the many food stalls,

a tintera or seller engrossed in her phone as she guards her stall, a pedicab, and many more. Truly, this work is a feast for the eyes for those who are fortunate enough to uncover the stories hidden within the canvas.

Juan Luna, Binondo, therefore, is not just a quick snapshot of an afternoon in the streets. Indeed, it melds the past and the present of this particular corner of Binondo. Beginning as a veritable symbol of American colonialism, Juan Luna Street eventually forged its own path toward Filipino identity, which has stood the test of time, both literally and figuratively. (Hannah Valiente)





ABOVE: Ambeth Ocampo in his private library.

# Ambeth Ocampo: The Consummate Scholar-Collector *Presents Selections From His Private Santo Collection*

by EMIL MARAÑON III

Ambeth Ocampo is one of the country's most important contemporary historians. Unlike most of his contemporaries who cloistered themselves within academic halls, Ambeth braved the limelight and made history "public" as it should be. He was out there writing history in the country's most popular newspaper, publishing regular social media contents, publishing affordable books for the masses, and even churning his own YouTube contents recently. His annual lectures around the country are anticipated, always well-received and applauded.

His take on history is never dull and boring. His writings and lectures are peppered with what he would call "useless" facts and trivia that to me rather ground history and humanize historical figures, making them more relatable and, therefore, more interesting. Through him, we were introduced to the imperfect genius that is Rizal; the love-cursed Luna who shot his wife; and the cutthroat politics of Aguinaldo that reminds us of our present political realities. He made history accessible not only to the ordinary Pinoy, but entertaining. In other words, he reimagined history-teaching, and let it grow and evolve with the times.

But beneath the very public persona, is rather a different Ambeth—one that is very private, unassuming, and soft-spoken. Unknown to many, he is a passionate art and antique collector. He lives in his elusive "scholar's home" in Makati, adorned and filled with treasures representing thousands of years of Philippine history. All objects are carefully selected, and each one storied.

He collected since the 1980's along with his contemporaries like the late Floy Quintos and noted Ifugao *bulul*-collector Bobby Gopiao, who represented the new breed of young collectors of that time. Not only that his taste is sophisticated and his eyes discerning, but he was competitive and relentless in hunting for the next best thing. Ermita and Makati antique shops were his hunting grounds, but his fame as Ambeth the "public historian" also gave him access to the most elusive collections and the most interesting collectors. Unlike his contemporaries who specialized in specific fields, his collecting range—just like his interests in history—were extraordinarily vast and roving. He collected fossils; ancient stone adze; precolonial

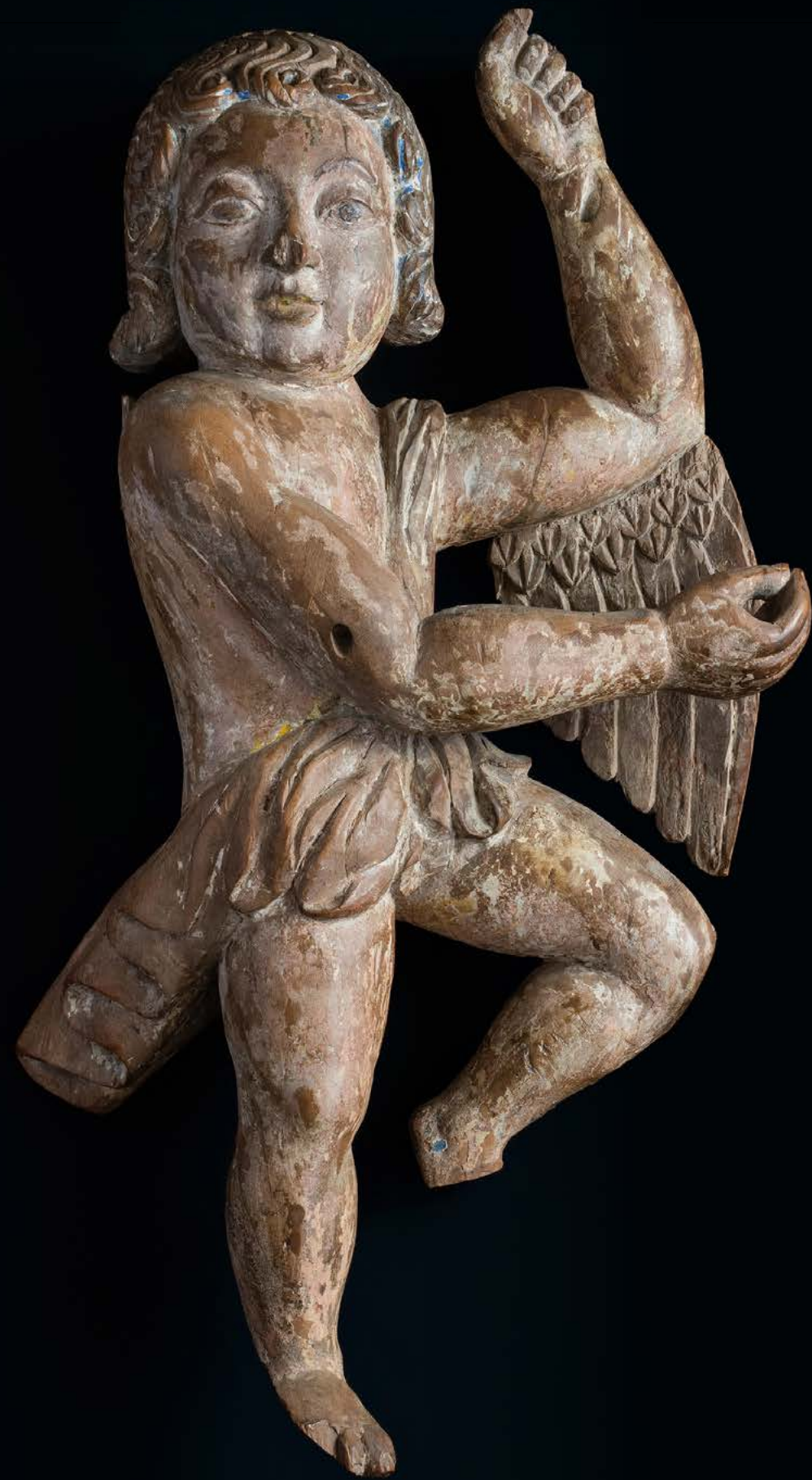


ABOVE: Ambeth wearing his medal as "Officer" of the French Order of Arts and Letters.

earthenware; ancient gold; trade wares and porcelain; paintings from the masters to the young budding ones; indigenous arts from Ifugao *bulul* to "kinahu" (zoomorphic bowls); coins; book, documents and ephemeras, and many more. All of these objects collectively represent not only our material culture and heritage as a people, but a tangible reminder that our ancestors are as real and as human as we are.

Of all the beautiful and important things he collected, the highlight of his collection has always been his colonial *santos*. He likes his *santos* early, well-carved, hefty, in good condition, and their patina glistening. His taste in *santos* has always been exquisite and his standard so high, that in the collecting world, you can buy his pieces with your eyes closed and know that you will go home with a treasure. In this auction, Ambeth shares not only his lesser-known side, but his treasures to the world. This is not only an opportunity to acquire exemplary pieces that no longer reach the market, but to partake of Ambeth's journey as a "scholar-collector".





91

## Cherub

18th century or earlier

Unknown hardwood

H: 26" (66 cm)

L: 14" (36 cm)

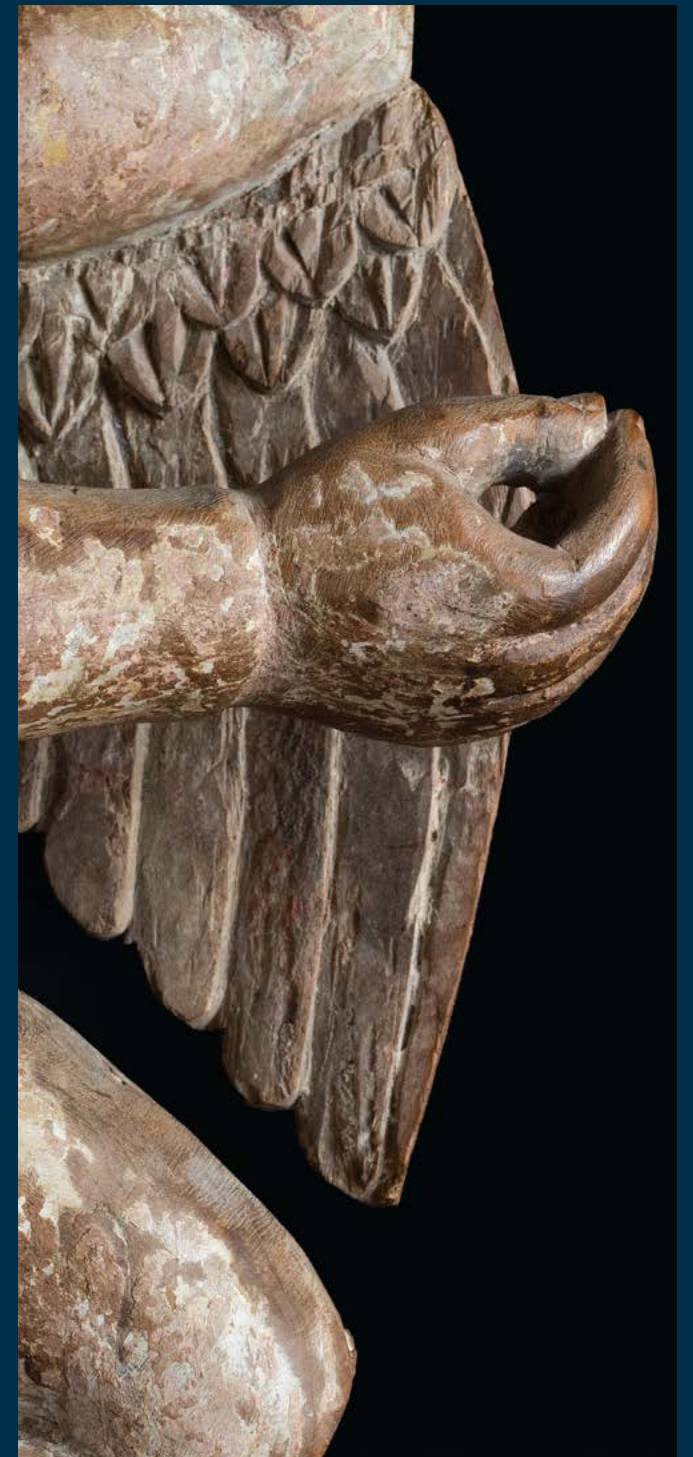
W: 5" (13 cm)

**P 150,000**

### PROVENANCE

Ambeth Ocampo

Osmundo "Omeng" Esguerra



This is a cherub which could have been once an architectural detail that adorned a *"retablo"* or a church interior. The bulging eyes, the *"ensaimada"* curls in the hair, and the overall carving style point to the 18th century or earlier. *"Retablos"* (the decorative structure behind the altar in colonial churches) are the approximation of the grandeur of heaven to the faithful who would face them during religious services. This grandeur is expressed in terms of scale, the splendor of the carvings, and glitter of the gilding. It is a testament of what men—possessed by faith and blessed with skilled hands—can do. *"Heaven"* without fluttering angels and cherubs are incomplete, thus, their ubiquitous presence in Philippine Catholic art, especially in retablos. In the collecting world, angels are always sought-after, especially early ones. Not only that they are few because they are almost exclusively produced as church pieces, but they can be integrated as a design element in a home without it looking too overtly religious. This piece came from the famous furniture dealer and restorer Osmundo "Omeng" Esguerra.



## San Luis Beltrán

18th century

molave

H: 39" (99 cm)

L: 15" (38 cm)

W: 10" (25 cm)

**P 300,000**

### PROVENANCE

Ambeth Ocampo

Romeo Jorge



This male saint on the other hand is San Luis Beltrán who is a Valencia-born Dominican friar who preached in South America during the 16th century. This Spanish saint is known as the "Apostle to the Americas". He is venerated in Dominican areas of the Philippines, but he has significant devotion particularly in Asingan, Pangasinan, and Solano, Nueva Vizcaya where he is the consecrated patron saint. This specimen is stylistically early and could not be later than the 18th century. We can see this in the execution of the eyes and the hair, the stout proportion, static stance, the style of the base, and the flat rendition of the habit. It is very fortunate that this specimen still has the original chalice

with a serpent emerging from it, which is the primary iconography of San Luis. It also bears the traditional Dominican habit, distinguished by the hanging "scapular" in front which symbolizes their devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary. The image also bears the distinct Dominican-type of "tonsure" known as the "corona" or "crown tonsure" which is often wider than that of other monastic orders. The shaving of head is an ancient tradition that supposedly mimics Christ's crown of thorns, signifying renunciation of the world, humility, and dedication to the vocation. The practice was officially abolished by Pope Paul VI in 1972. Before Ambeth, this piece came from the Romeo Jorge collection.



## San Jose

18th century or earlier

molave

H: 54" (137 cm)

L: 16 1/2" (42 cm)

W: 17 1/2" (44 cm)

**P 360,000**

### PROVENANCE

Ambeth Ocampo

Osmundo "Omeng" Esguerra



The third offering is a very old specimen of San Jose. He once held a small baby Jesus in his two hands (both original), a very rare type as it departs from the usual Philippine iconography of San Jose who would either carry Jesus in one side of his arm, or hold his hand which we usually see in the *Patrocinio*-types (which would depict Jesus as a standing child rather than as a baby). Again we can see from the rendition of the eyes, hair, proportion, stance, the over-all style that this is a very early piece, at least 18th century but could be way earlier. The very fine execution of the drapery and the sophistication of the carving point to a very skilled master carver. The well-preserved *encarna* also points us to its Bohol origin, as the use square goldleaf is a

practice almost exclusively associated with religious art from Bohol and sometimes in Cebu. Notably, San Jose is the patron saint of Tagbilaran City, Bohol. While we also observe the art of gilding in South American art, the practice is significantly more prevalent in Buddhism, specifically within Theravada traditions in Southeast Asia, where the ancient practice of applying gold leaf to Buddha statues or sacred objects is a revered act of not only showing respect, but as means to earn spiritual merit, good karma, blessing, and abundance. Whether this unique Boholano practice is attributed to South America or to our Buddhist neighbors in Mainland Asia, this shows that art is not static, but ever adapting and engaging. This piece also came from Osmundo "Omeng" Esguerra.



## Santa Catalina de Alejandria

18th century

molave

H: 33" (84 cm)

L: 13" (33 cm)

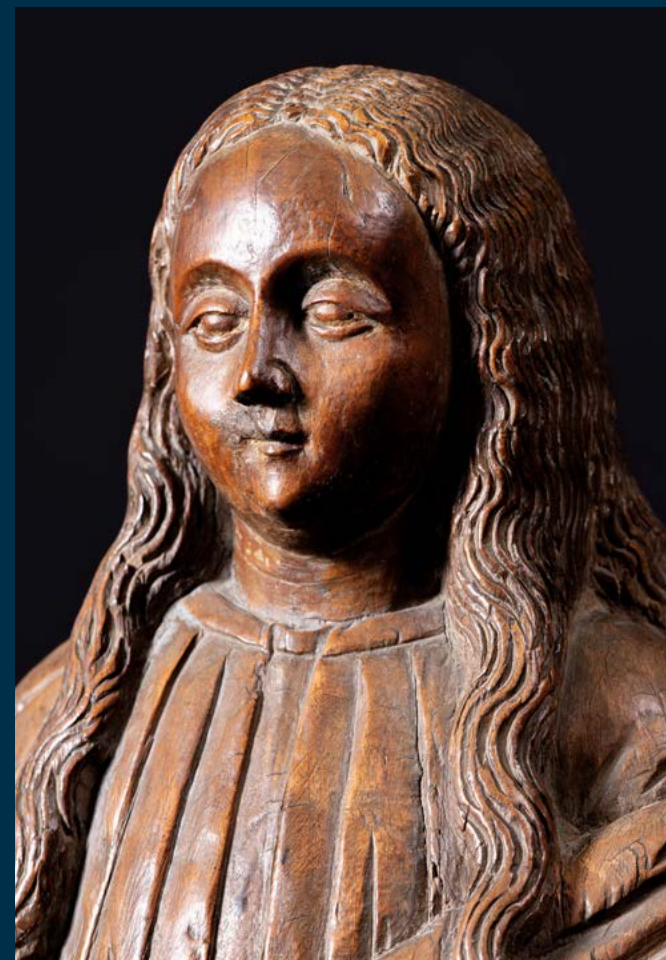
W: 10 1/2" (27 cm)

**P 300,000**

### PROVENANCE

Ambeth Ocampo

Romeo Jorge



The next specimen is an 18th century image of Santa Catalina de Alejandria, one of the Catholic Church's most revered "*Virgenes y Martires*" (virgins martyrs). Santa Catalina was martyred in the early 4th century at the hands of the Emperor Maxentius. She was both a princess and a noted scholar who became a Christian around age 14, converted hundreds of people to Christianity, and was martyred around age 18. Her iconography would often include a spiked breaking wheel to which the furious emperor condemned her to die, only that it shattered at her touch. As in this image, she is often featured with the severed head of Emperor Maxentius at her feet, sometimes impaled by her sword. This imagery represents divine justice and her victory over pagan tyranny, although it was actually her who was killed by him, not the other way around as maybe implied by her iconography.

In the Catholic tradition, Virgin Martyrs are revered female saints who sacrificed their lives rather than renounce their faith or violate their vow of consecrated virginity, often killed during early Roman persecutions. They are models of the Catholic virtue of "*purity*", used to instill to young girls and maturing young women not only strong faith, but the value of sexual purity and chastity. Virgin martyrs are very popular in the Philippines, particularly Santa Catalina who enjoys popular devotion and patronage throughout the Philippines such as in Pagbilao, Quezon; Gerona, Tarlac; Carcar, Cebu; Porac, Pampanga; Arayat, Pampanga; Dumaguete; Santa Catalina, Negros Oriental; Santa Catalina, Ilocos Sur; Santa, Ilocos Sur; Leon, Iloilo; Tayum, Abra; and Bagac, Bataan, among others. This piece also came from the Romeo Jorge collection.

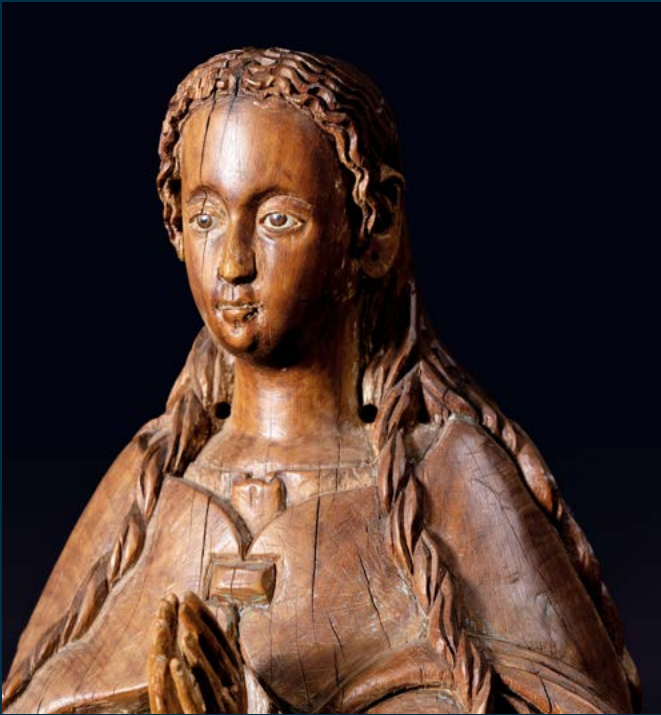


Lumban-type Inmaculada Concepción

18th century  
molave  
H: 34" (86 cm)  
L: 13" (33 cm)  
W: 10" (25 cm)

P 500,000

PROVENANCE  
Ambeth Ocampo  
Romeo Jorge



The last piece is an 18th century *Inmaculada Concepción* (Immaculate Conception) which Ambeth Ocampo has acquired from the fabled Romeo Jorge collection. This comes from the same carving school as Eugenio “Gene” Lopez’s blockbuster *Theotokos* from Lumban, Laguna in the last auction. As previously written, Lumban was an important settlement even before the arrival of the Spaniards and during the colonial period. It has a vibrant carving scene that produced some of the most beautiful and accomplished colonial carvings, the most known and desired of all are the Virgin Mary images produced in the 17th and 18th centuries now known in the collecting world as the Lumbantypes. Just like Gene Lopez’s *Theotokos*, Ambeth’s *Inmaculada* also carry the diagnostics of a Lumban carving from the form to the carving style. It too once had bulging eyes or “*luwang mata*” which is stereotypical of the period, but were also later replaced with glass eyes when they became fashionable during the 19th century.

This specimen is 34 inches in height, which is bigger than most Lumban-types that only range between 20 to 25 inches. So far, this is the tallest of this type that

ever came out in the market. It is also important to note that in that period, almost all images of the Virgin Mary produced by the Lumban carving school are “*Theotokos*” or carrying the Christ child, but this is an *Inmaculada* which is extremely rare and exceptional for a Lumban-type.

Unlike the *Theotokos* which is universally accepted in the Catholic Church since its inception, the dogma of the *Inmaculada Concepción* was still contested and challenged during the 18th century. At that time, the Dominicans still openly rejected the rendition of the Virgin Mary without a child. Meanwhile, the Franciscans and the Jesuits, while mortal rivals, were the ones actively propagating the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception. Laguna, where Lumban is, is a Franciscan ecclesiastical territory. Since they started their work of evangelization in the last quarter of the 1500s in the area that extends from Laguna to Bicol, they opened art schools throughout their jurisdiction to instruct young men in sculpture and iconography. This special emphasis on ecclesiastical arts is said to be their way of compensating their vow of poverty. The Lumban carving school too must have operated under their guidance.





96

**José John Santos III** (b. 1970)

*Untitled (Construction)*  
signed and dated 2025 (lower right)  
hahnemuhle bamboo paper  
12 3/4" x 17 1/2" (32 cm x 44 cm)

**P 300,000**

Accompanied by a certificate issued by Little Ark Foundation and signed by the artist confirming the authenticity of this lot

PROVENANCE  
Acquired from the Artist thru a Fundraiser Event

The cryptic and beguiling canvases of Jose John Santos III often bear a sort of surrealist twist that is both and neither of the dream world and the subconscious. Indeed, the artist mines images from his everyday reality and transforms them into an unreality, so to speak. In this piece, Santos pieces together an image that is both familiar and fresh, a construction site mixed and melded into each other. He engages himself in a sort of cycle of creative consumption, devouring and creating in a never-ending cycle. *(Hannah Valiente)*



97

**Federico Aguilar Alcuaz** (1932 - 2011)

*Sardinia Sardonica*  
signed (verso)  
unwoven tapestry  
66" x 57 1/2" (168 cm x 146 cm)

**P 1,400,000**

Accompanied by a certificate issued by Mr. Christian M. Aguilar confirming the authenticity of this lot

PROVENANCE  
Private collection, Manila

Depicting the island of Sardinia as an inner landscape rather than its literal terrain, Federico Aguilar Alcuaz's *Sardinia Sardonica* merges landscape, memory, and psychological states into an ambiguous, abstracted visual field.

Upon taking a first look, the tapestry art piece features an abstracted image in earthy browns, blacks, greys, and muted greens. The green patches draw attention from the composition, as they resemble distant fields. The scene was then disrupted by stark black shades and lines that

seemed to tangle—implying either movement, struggle, entrapment, or isolation.

Created on a tapestry, the art piece is part of Alcuaz's body of work, in which he uses the *Art Protis Technique*: A non-woven art-making process he discovered in 1986 during a visit to Prague, involving layered, pre-dried raw-wool sheets that were then pressed and stitched into his iconic abstracted compositions, translating his painterly style into a textile form.

As for the title, *Sardinia Sardonica* provides crucial details. The word Sardinia—which suggests a connection to the Mediterranean island of *Sardinia, Italy*—reflects the artist's European influences during his years in Barcelona and his travels across Europe. However, rather than depicting the island in its natural beauty, Alcuaz made the island an inner space where geography, emotion, and memory intersect. The featured textile art itself became less of a literal interpretation of what Sardinia looks like and more an inner landscape shaped by travel, history, and imagination. Perfectly aligning with Alcuaz's broader practice in art, where places became symbolic rather than literal. *(Mark John Castañeda)*



# Newspapers During A Time of Change (1898-1900)

by JOSE VICTOR Z. TORRES

Newspapers began in the Philippines in 1811 when the country was opened to world trade at the start of the 19th century. From shipping and other business news, its content shifted to local and international stories, especially with the invention of the telegraph, which connected the Philippines across the islands and to the outside world. When the Philippine Revolution began in 1896, and the Republic was founded in 1899, periodicals were published as propaganda pieces for independence or as business ventures by private groups. Historian Epifanio

de los Santos wrote on what he called "the revolutionary press" between 1898 and 1899 in Manila Daily Bulletin (later the Manila Bulletin) founder Carson Taylor's History of the Philippine Press (1927) saying that, "The revolutionary press was a powerful aid to the Revolution and it is astonishing what a large number of periodical prints saw the light of day during those turbulent times." Three of these historic newspapers are offered as separate lots in this action.

98

## La Republica Filipina, Volumen 1, No. 1

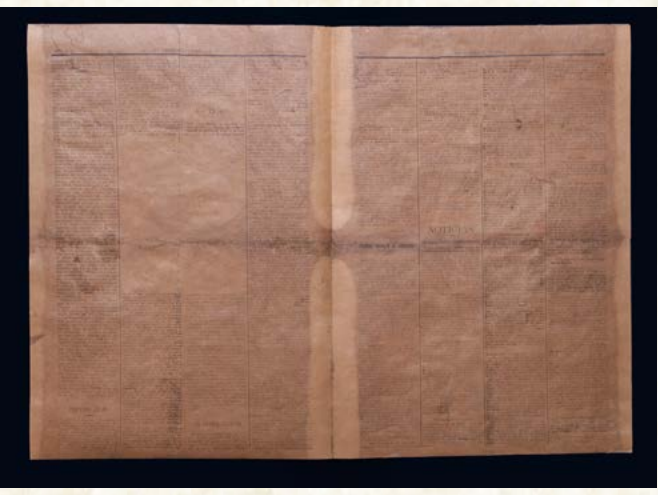
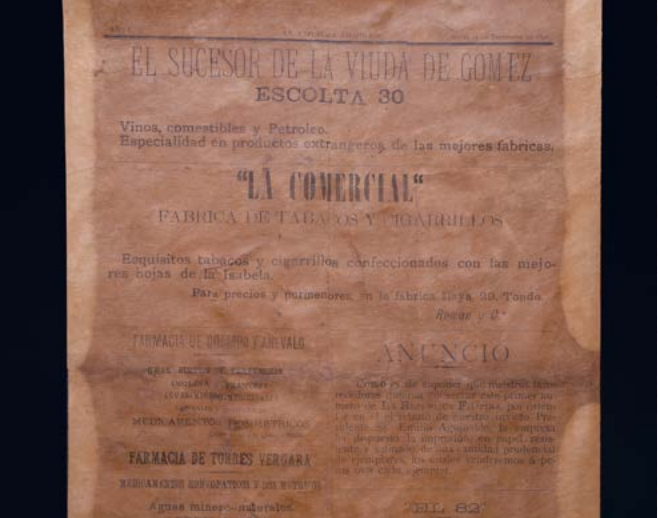
Publication Date: September 15, 1898  
Editor-in-Chief: Pedro Alejandro Paterno  
Location: Mandaluyong, Philippines (first printing)  
four pages  
21" x 14 1/2" (53 cm x 37 cm)  
condition: fair, with conservation

P 300,000

*La República Filipina* first came out on September 15, 1898, with a picture of President Emilio Aguinaldo on its front page. Its maiden issue coincided with the opening of the Malolos Congress at Barasoain Church, which later drafted the constitution that led to the establishment of the First Philippine Republic.

The newspaper was founded and edited by Malolos Congress president and presidential adviser, Pedro Paterno. It was said to have been published in Mandaluyong by an unknown press.

It is not known how long this newspaper lasted. But Spanish writer and bibliographer Wenceslao Retana said that the newspaper "didn't go beyond the maiden issue," saying that "*La República Filipina* did not attract as much attention as did *La Independencia*. I do not know how long it continued, not having seen issues after the end of January 1899." He also said that the reason for the newspaper's demise was "the same as for any other [independent] newspaper. The Americans were the new owners of the country. As the relations broke up between these and the nationalists, the [Philippine-American] war began, which aggravated the anarchic state in Luzon and the main islands. At last, the Filipinos were convinced that they were condemned to deal with a new [colonial] master."



For his part, Taylor said that the newspaper "was forced to change its location and was discontinued soon after the insurrection (sic) started."

## La Republica Filipina Chronicling the First Day of the First Republic





# The Birth of a Nation: The Inaugural Issue of La República Filipina

Offered here is an exceptionally rare, museum-grade specimen of the inaugural issue of La República Filipina. As the leading nationalist publication of the First Philippine Republic, it shaped public opinion at a pivotal moment in history. More than a periodical, it embodies the Filipino people's call for liberty. Founded by Pedro Paterno, this edition was a clarion call to dismantle three centuries of colonial rule. It marks the first unified expression of

Filipinonational identity in a democratic, journalistic form. The publication date—September 15, 1898—is of paramount importance, as it coincides with the inauguration of the Malolos Congress at Barasoain Church. As our founding fathers crafted the laws of the land and Asia's first democratic constitution, this issue acted as the official voice of the assembly, defending our right to exist as a free people.

## Iconic Features and National Symbolism

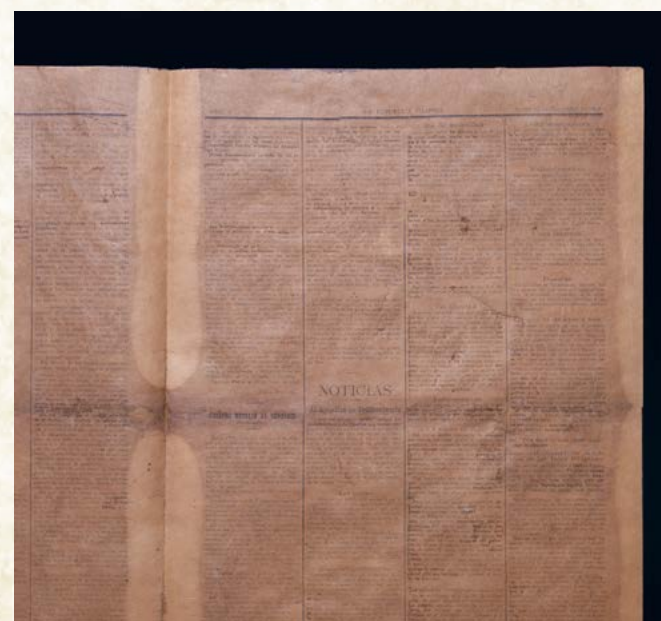
- **The Face of the Revolution:** The front page is anchored by a dignified portrait of General Emilio Aguinaldo, the President of the Republic. The portrait is flanked by his military achievements and origins. The image serves as a unifying symbol for a nation forged in the fire of revolution.

- **The Gospel of Liberty:** The articles are not mere reports; they express the aspirations of a liberated people. They articulate a vision of unity (*pagkakaisa*), sovereignty (*kasarinlan*), and dignity of the Filipino soul.

- **A Rare Survivor:** Only one other example exists in the collection of the National Library of the Philippines. With the Republic under siege within months of its founding, producing (and possessing) this paper was a dangerous act. Today, this first issue is among the rarest surviving artifacts of our 1898 independence—a survivor of war and time.

This document is a "time machine" to the very hour of our birth. It captures the transition from a collection of islands to a singular, proud Republic. For the patriot, the scholar, and the custodian of history, this lot offers a rare privilege. It allows one to hold a piece of the foundational bedrock on which the Filipino nation stands.

Ultimately, securing this inaugural issue of La República Filipina is less about acquiring a piece of paper and more about safeguarding the intellectual DNA of the Filipino nation. By going to press at the precise moment the Malolos Congress convened, this document bridged the gap between the revolution's raw energy and the new architecture of Asia's first democracy. It stands as a testament to Filipinos taking control of their own destiny. The issue captures that fleeting, electric window when a sovereign identity was willed into existence. For any serious custodian of our past, this artifact is not just a relic; it is a foundational cornerstone of the Republic's historical narrative. We invite you to take this rare opportunity to become the steward of this extraordinary legacy—bid now to secure a defining piece of Philippine history.







99

**Edgar Talusan Fernandez** (b. 1955)

*Classes*  
dated 1975  
oil on canvas  
48" x 96" (122 cm x 244 cm)

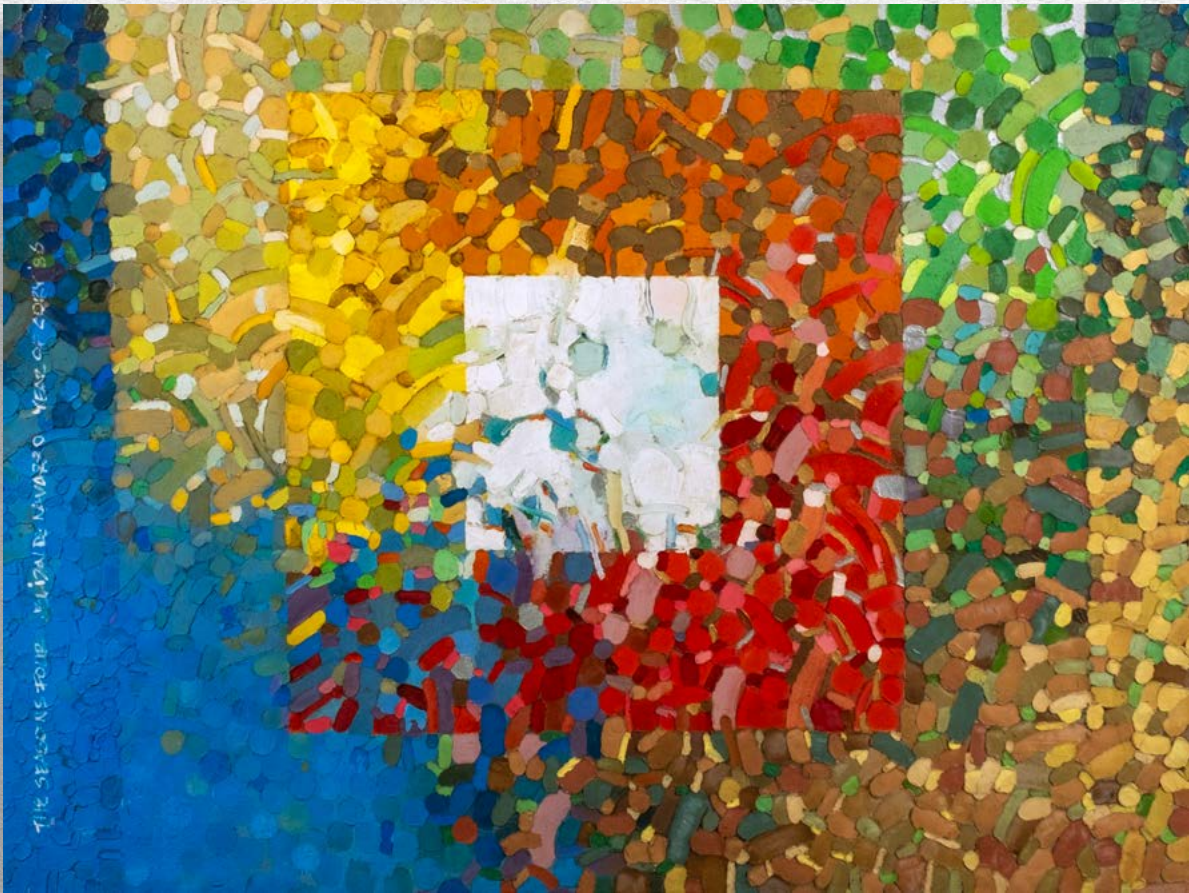
**P 200,000**

read metaphorically as both layered social or institutional systems—Systematically ordered, hierarchical, and visually stable yet internally complex and imperfect.

A strong example of his disciplined geometric abstractions, Edgar Talusan Fernandez's *Classes* creatively balances strict structure with atmospheric color and organic interruptions, creating a visual art that settles firmly on both order and lived complexity.

With the masterpiece rendered in a pyramid, which visually resonates with the art's title *Classes*. The painting's sharp structure implies a sense of hierarchy, stratification, and stability. A direct reference to levels and tiers that could be

Considering the historical context in which the painting was created, Fernandez's *Classes* and its relationship to social and power stratification reflect the moment in the 1970s Philippines when political tension and sharp social inequality were present. The piece's softened shades and irregular edges reflect how the system is shaped by human presence, struggle, and time. The structure reinforces the idea of stability and power, but the atmospheric color and organic breath hint at internal resistance, permeability, and human agency within the structures. (Mark John Castañeda)



100

**Jerry Elizalde Navarro** (1924 - 1999)

*The Seasons Four Year of Cory '86*  
signed and dated 1986 (left)  
acrylic on canvas  
35" x 46" (89.9 cm x 116.84 cm)

**P 1,600,000**

Accompanied by a certificate issued by Pearl Ty Navarro signed by the artist confirming the authenticity of this lot

1986 was a momentous year for the Philippines. Following a tumultuous election period, Cory Aquino emerged not just as the country's first female president but also as Asia's. A new era shines on the Philippines, and as an artist fascinated with the passing of the season, Jerry Elizalde Navarro immortalized this event in his distinct style.

*The Seasons Four Year of Cory '86* contains in one canvas the signature explosion of colors that comes with his 'Four

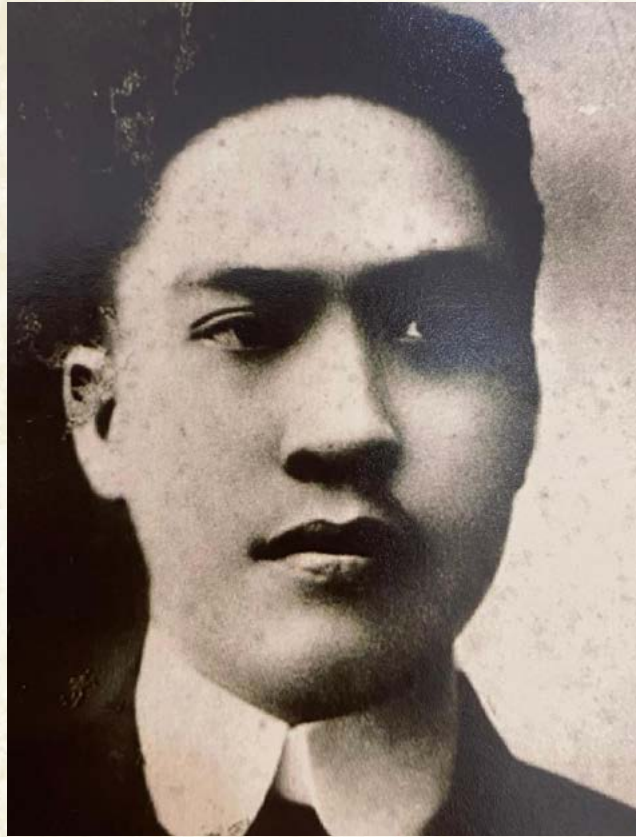
Seasons' series. Red, yellow, white, and blue dots cover the canvas, reminiscent of the Philippine flag, with a smattering of greens in different shades.

Navarro's captivation with this topic is well-documented. As Cid Reyes wrote in his monograph *J. Elizalde Navarro*: "One theme or pictorial motif that Navarro constantly held on to was that of the 'Four Seasons'. This subject matter worked for the artist on several levels. First is the literal symbolism of the idea [...] Inherent, too, is the allegory of the life of Man: from childhood and adolescence to maturity and old age." (Hannah Valiente)



# The Original Vicente Sotto

by ISIDRA P. REYES



ABOVE: A higher resolution photo of Vicente Sotto from the Cebuano Studies Center Collection published in *The World* of 1896.

Before the world knew about Senate President Vicente "Tito" Sotto and Pasig City Mayor Victor Ma. Regis "Vico" Sotto, their direct ancestor stood out. Senator Vicente Sotto y Yap was the original, and a far more colorful public servant than his grandson and namesake Tito Sotto and his great-grandson "Vico"

The first Senator Sotto was also the Father of Cebuano Journalism, a dramatist, writer, politician, lawyer, defender of the poor and marginalized, labor leader, husband, father, lover, and, above all, a Filipino who fought for the country's independence from colonial rule. He lived to see the Philippines granted independence by its American colonial master on 4 July 1946, though it was not complete independence.

He was a maverick, as aptly described by his biographer, Resil Mojares—a non-conformist, a dissenter, who boldly and bravely faced numerous lawsuits, imprisonment, self-exile, financial reversals, and electoral defeats to fight for the Filipinos' rights to self-determination and press freedom. As described by Mayor Arsenio Lacson, he was "the tall, dark, and gruesome senator from Cebu." In modern slang, he was a badass.

Vicente Yap Sotto was born on 17 April 1877 (though some sources say 1882) in Cebu City to Marcelino Antonio de Sotto y Legaspi and Pascuala Yap- Sutco y Lim. His parents, both



ABOVE: Vicente Sotto, early 20th century.

born in Binondo, Manila, were migrants from Manila who settled in the Lutao District, now the site of the Carbon Market in Cebu City, in the mid-19th century and were of humble origins. Marcelino, born circa 1835 to Pantaleon Sotto (b. 1796) and Brigida Legaspi (b. 1795), started out as a cargador, while Pascuala, born circa 1837 to Joaquin Yap Sutco and his wife, surnamed Lim, was a vendor of Chinese-Filipino descent. Through hard work and perseverance, Marcelino and Pascuala rose to become influential merchants, with Marcelino rising further to become gobernadorcillo of the Parian District. With better means, they were able to give their sons, Filemon and Vicente, a good education, which would help them advance in their chosen careers.

As recounted by Resil Mojares, author of *Vicente Sotto, The Maverick Senator*, in his essay, "Vicente Sotto and the Rise of Realism in Cebuano Literature," Vicente had a standard *ilustrado* education like his older brother, Filemon: "at 10, he was placed under the tutorship of Miguel Logarta of Cebu, and around 1890 enrolled at the Seminario Colegio de San Carlos" for his *segunda enseñanza* or four years of high school. Subsequently, in 1893, he was sent to Manila." He earned a Bachelor of Arts degree from the Colegio de San Juan de Letran and subsequently pursued Commerce at the University of Santo Tomas (UST), but had to return to Cebu after a year due to the outbreak of the Philippine Revolution in

1896. He later obtained a perito mercantil degree from UST and, following Filemon's lead, took up Law, earning a bachiller en ciencias jurídicas from the Escuela de Derecho. He was admitted to the Bar in March 1907, two years after Filemon was admitted in 1905.

While still a student in Cebu, Vicente manifested an early interest in journalism. He single-handedly issued a handwritten paper, *El Incognito*, which he distributed among his friends. In 1899, as recounted by Dr. José Victor Z. Torres in *Balita, The Story of Philippine Journalism, 1811-2019*, "the arrival of the Americans in 1898 brought new conditions of press freedom in Manila. Spanish and Filipino publishers, along with the newly arrived Americans, took advantage of this situation and, realizing the lucrative business for a people hungry for information, began printing newspapers and magazines." Thus was born *La Independencia*. Rafael Palma, one of *La Independencia*'s writers and later its director, wrote in his memoirs: "The intelligentsia, partly with a desire to cooperate wholeheartedly with the new state of things and partly governed by an instinct of self-preservation, decided to establish a newspaper which would serve as spokesman for the newly acquired independence of the country."

*La Independencia* was formed by a committee headed by the Luna brothers, Juan and Antonio, and its staff consisted of what Palma called "the literary bulwark of Santos Tomas University," along with the Del Rosario brothers, Salvador and Mariano, both of whom also wrote for *La Solidaridad*. *La Independencia* first appeared on 3 September 1898 and was printed clandestinely at the Luna house in Calle Urbiztondo, San Nicolas, Manila. It was shortly after that that Vicente Sotto expressed interest in offering his services as a writer for *La Independencia* and wrote them a letter indicating his intention. With his initial letter unanswered, Sotto wrote the paper again, addressed to its Administrator, on 4 February 1899, reiterating his intention. The letter was written from Cebu on Libertad Cervecería Vicente Sotto letterhead, with the address at 14 Magallanes, Cebu. His second letter may have remained unanswered as the Filipino-American War would erupt on the very same day the letter was written, with the shooting of a group of Filipino soldiers by Private William Grayson along Sociego St., Manila. *La Independencia* would become an anti-American newspaper on the run, with its printing presses and editorial offices constantly moving from San Fernando, Pampanga, to Malolos, Bulacan, and Bautista, Pangasinan. For easy mobility, its printing press was placed on board railroad train coaches. Facing great difficulties as the Americans were constantly hot on their heels, Palma and his staff hurriedly dismantled the printing press and buried it near the railroad tracks in Bautista, Pangasinan. Using another printing press in Camiling, Tarlac, the staff published two more issues, the last dated 24 November 1899.



ABOVE: Vicente Sotto in the 1940s

That same year, in 1899, Vicente Sotto published his first real paper, *La Justicia*, considered the first Filipino newspaper published in Cebu, which was printed by the Imprenta del Seminario de San Carlos. *La Justicia* did not exist for long as the American military authorities found its contents subversive and contrary to American policy. A week after the suspension order against *La Justicia*, Sotto published another short-lived weekly, *El Nacional*. As recounted by Clarence Paul Oaminal in his article, "Sotto's Press Freedom Law" published in *The Freeman*, 24 May 2021, it was while tending to his newspaper, *El Nacional*, on 16 September 1899 that he was accosted by two American constables and brought to Fort San Pedro or Kotta de San Pedro where he was detained for two months and six days, hence his pseudonym, Taga-Kotta. The evidence against him for treason was a communication from General Arcadio Maxilom, the last Cebuano general to surrender to the Americans and the first Cebuano Governor of Cebu appointed during the Revolution, asking him about the status of the war against the Americans. In Resil Mojares' account, Sotto was accused of being an agent for the revolutionary committees in Manila and Hong Kong and a provocateur. Undaunted, Sotto founded another liberal and nationalist Spanish-language paper, *El Pueblo*, which espoused Philippine independence and faced many difficulties with American censors.

In 1901, Vicente Sotto founded the first Cebuano-language newspaper and the first vernacular newspaper published in the Visayas, *Ang Suga* (The Light). *Ang Suga* played a significant role in the development of Cebuano letters,



which not only launched the careers of numerous Cebuano journalists and writers but also helped standardize Cebuano orthography. The five-centavo tri-weekly, with a Spanish section and English reports, began in 1907, first appearing on 16 June 1901 and running until 1912. A year after he launched Ang Suga, he revolutionized the Visayan dramatic arts with the successful staging of his first play, "Ang Paghigugma sa Yutang Katawhan" (Love of Country), considered the first Cebuano realistic play to be staged at the Teatro Junquera. That same year, he staged his play "Elena" at the same venue. He later staged "Ang Dila sa Babaye" (The Women's Tongue) and a lyric drama entitled "Maputi ug Maitim" (Black and White).

In the same year, Vicente Sotto entered politics and won the elections as Councilor of Cebu, though he was underage. His election was protested but was later dismissed by the Municipal Council. In 1907, he was elected Mayor of Cebu, winning against Martin Pantaleon Llorente of the Partido Federal. However, according to an account by Cebuano Kabilin, Judge Adolph Wislizenus of the CFI of Cebu disqualified Sotto and voided his votes due to a pending criminal case of raptio or abduction filed against him by the mother of a minor, Aquilina Vasquez, then less than eighteen years old. On 1 August 1906, Aquilina escaped from home at Vicente's prodding and shackled up with him in a rented dwelling for several days. The girl's mother eventually filed a complaint, and Aquilina returned home. But despite Vicente's attempts to explain himself to the enraged mother, she pursued the case, which led to a conviction by a local court, with a penalty of four years and two months' imprisonment, plus a P1,000 payment to Aquilina's mother. The Decision was sustained by the Supreme Court in a Decision penned by J. Willard on 20 November 1907, with modified penalties, including P 500 dowry for Aquilina and support for a child born from the relationship, if any.

To escape another detention, thinking the Americans preferred his rival, Martin Pantaleon Llorente, and wanted to see him jailed, Vicente fled to Hong Kong, where he stayed from 1908 to 1914. By then, he was already married for two years to Maria Festin Ojeda, born in Dumanjug, Cebu, on 18 April 1880, and had two sons, Galileo (b. 1907) and Voltaire (1909-2009). They would have six more children: Tagakotta (1912-2007), Britania (1915-1986), Marcelino Antonio (1916-1999), Suga (1919-2017), Francia, and Vicente, II. It was from Marcelino Antonio, married to Herminia Castelo (b. 1910), that the Sottos of Philippine showbusiness and politics descended.

Maria Festin Ojeda Sotto passed away on 18 October 1933 at Oroquieta, Misamis Occidental. Vicente had a previous marriage and relationships with other women, some of whom bore his children. Before he married Maria Festin Ojeda, he had a previous marriage with Isabella Ruiz and had a child, Habadad, who died before reaching two. He also had a relationship with Vernabela Manuel, the

mother of Cesar Manuel Sotto (b. Circa 1898), who later became City Councilor, Provincial Board Member, and Assemblyman of Davao (1938-1941). During his marriage with Maria, he had a relationship with Carmen Del Casal, mother of Plaridel Manuel Sotto (b. 23 December 1920) and later wife of Elpidio De Castro. He had another relationship with Emilia Alburo (1907-1992), but there is no record of any children from that relationship. When Vicente Sotto died in 1950, he was a widower.

While in Hong Kong, he published a bilingual fortnightly paper called The Philippine Republic. Like his previous publications, it waged a virulent campaign against continued American rule in the country and vented its ire against American imperialism and the Filipino oligarchs who supported and benefited from the American Colonial regime. The Americans tried to have him extradited three times, but the British colonial government refused, as they considered him a political refugee who merited political protection. While in Hong Kong, he briefly served as Councillor of Foreign Affairs in the Revolutionary Committee of the Philippines, headed by Artemio Ricarte, and wrote most of the stories which would later be published in Mga Sugilanong Pilipino (1929).

In 1914, after seven years of self-exile in Hong Kong, Vicente Sotto decided to return to the Philippines and entered into an agreement with Governor General F.B. Harrison. He was imprisoned upon his arrival but eventually pardoned. His nationalistic fervor undiminished, he founded another revolutionary paper, The Independent, which once again made him the target of a slew of criminal cases for libel and sedition. Convicted thrice, he was again pardoned by Governor-General F.B. Harrison each and every time. As recounted in his biographical profile in George Nellist's Men of the Philippines (1931), he was charged with fifty-four criminal cases in all. As stated in his biographical entry in Filipinos in History, Vol. 3, "he would later be known as the journalist who fought the greatest number of lawsuits in the history of Philippine journalism."

On 6 June 1922, he was elected as Representative of the 2nd District of Cebu under the banner of the Partido Demócrata Nacional and served until 2 June 1925. In 1928, he ran for a Senate seat but lost to Sergio Osmeña. In 1929, he embarked on a world tour, which he documented in his book A Flying Trip Around the World / Un Rapido Viaje Alrededor del Mundo, with an introduction by Rafael Palma. While in Paris, he published a trilingual issue of his newspaper, The Independent, in Spanish, English, and French. As recounted in Nellist's Men of the Philippines (1931), Hon. Clyde H. Tavenner, former U.S. Congressman, in his review, "The Philippine Republic," dated February 1930, wrote: "Don Vicente Sotto was really the man



**ABOVE:** The original staff members of La Independencia, its editor Gen. Antonio Luna is on the left in uniform.

who indirectly started the big independence movement in the United States Senate. Senator Broussard, on September 30, 1929, read on the floor of the Senate the entire contents of a special independence number of The Independent, which Mr. Sotto had published at considerable private expense in Paris. This started the Philippine Independence fireworks in the Senate, and it has been going on with increasing velocity ever since."

Upon Sotto's return to Manila, he founded the Philippine Independent League, a civic group whose object was to unite all Filipinos and work for the immediate restoration of the Philippine Republic. In 1931, the Philippine Independent League was replaced by the Philippine Civic Union, which was formed mainly to oppose the Hare-Hawes-Cutting Bill through strikes, boycotts, and other acts of protest by organized labor, as well as through its mouthpiece, The Union.

Nyor Inting, as he was called by his fellow Cebuanos, ran five times and lost four times in his home province in Cebu in the 1930s. He lost to his old rival, Sergio Osmeña, in the 1934 Senatorial elections. He lost to the Nacionalista Party's Nicolas Rafols when he ran as the National Socialist Party's candidate for Representative of the Sixth District of Cebu in 1935. He lost to the Nacionalista Party's Buenaventura Rodriguez, an ally of Sergio Osmeña, when he ran for Cebu Governor under the Frente Popular Party in 1937 and lost again in the 1938 elections to Maximino Noel for the congressional seat of the Third District of Cebu. The only, but most significant, post he held in the 1930s was as delegate from the Third District of Cebu to the 1935 Constitutional Convention.

Always a defender of the poor and the marginalized, he extended free legal services from his office at 1098 Calle R. Hidalgo in Quiapo, Manila. In the Turning Back column of The Tribune dated 15 May 1937, it was recalled that "on 15 May 1917, the even tenor of the business at the (Manila) City Hall was disturbed...when

a delegation of bailarinas headed by Vicente Sotto invaded that place to petition to the city mayor, Dr. Justo Lukban, and the city board against the closing of dance halls within the city limits."

He was also instrumental in the enactment of laws that protected the labor sector. In 1922, the same year he became a Representative of the 2nd District of Cebu, he became President of the Philippine Labor Assembly. He also Initiated the fight for the enactment of the Eight-Hour Labor Law, which only came into law on 3 June 1939 with the passage of Commonwealth Act No. 444.

As recounted in his biographical profile in Filipinos in History, Vol. 3, though he favored Japan over the U.S. prior to the Pacific War, he continued his fight for independence and against imperialism of any kind during the Japanese Occupation. For this, he suffered arrest and manhandling by Japanese authorities. He also lost his house at 1342 General Luna Street, Paco, Manila, along with his precious book collection and his printing press, in a fire at that time. After the war, he resided at 40 Corazon de Jesus Street in San Juan. He survived the war and lived long enough to witness the granting of Philippine Independence by the U.S. on 4 July 1946. On 23 April 1946, he was elected Senator as the lone candidate of the Popular Front along with nine Liberals and six Nacionalistas with the Liberal Party's José Avelino as Senate President. He served as Chairman of the Committee on Finance until 1950 and, while still a senator, was designated as a member of the Philippine delegation to the United Nations in 1947 by President Manuel Roxas and in 1949 by President Elpidio Quirino, despite his being the latter's worst critic.

The highest tribute would be paid to him by no less than his fellow Visayan senator and 8th President of the Philippines, Carlos P. Garcia, who said of Sotto:

"Vicente Sotto was a rock of Gibraltar in character because of the ruggedness of his conviction, the indomitability of his soul, the sublimity of his courage, and the depth of his faith in the ultimate triumph of justice. His knees no longer bend, his pen signed no retraction, his march saw no retreat, and his soul of steel knows no surrender. He marshalled his efforts and used his influence to secure and safeguard for the press the fullest measure of freedom. By his death, the country has lost a great patriot, his family has lost a loving and devoted father, the Senate has lost an illustrious member...

On 21 May 1992, the Southern Islands Hospital in Cebu City, the largest government-run hospital in the province of Cebu, was renamed the Vicente Sotto Memorial Medical Center (VSMMC) in honor of Vicente Yap Sotto as per R.A. 7528. (1877-1950), a prominent Cebuano senator, writer, and Champion of press freedom.



La Independencia

edited by Gen. Antonio Luna

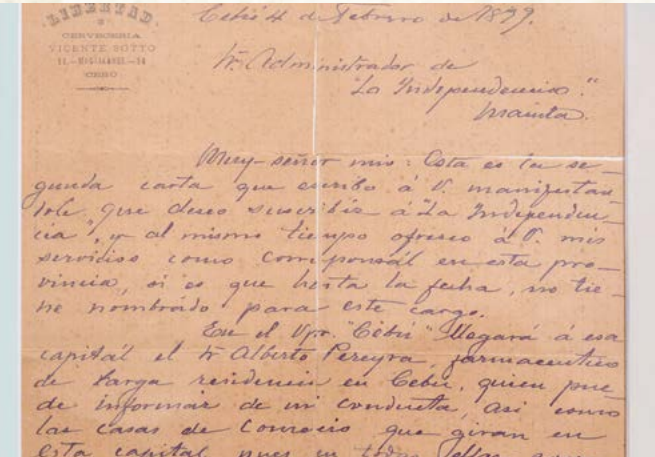
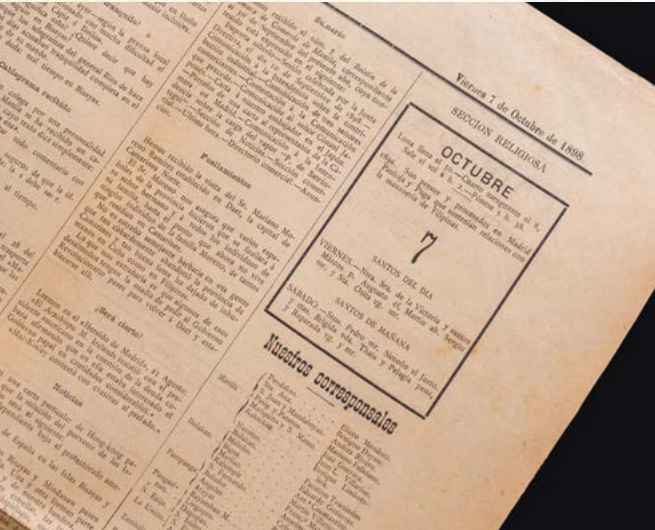
Four Pages

7 October 1898

21" x 14 3/4" (53 cm x 37 cm) each page

with a letter from Vicente Sotto

P 50,000



ABOVE: Masthead of La Independencia, List of Correspondents and detail of Sotto's Letter

La Independencia was one of the newspapers that De los Santos prominently mentioned in his essay on the revolutionary press. It was formed by a group led by Antonio and Juan Luna. Antonio decided to publish it using his own money and appointed himself Director. It was initially called La Patria (Motherland), and the Lunas were banking on the press freedom that they anticipated from the Americans. But their permission to publish was turned down by the Provost Marshal "on the belief that the newspaper might rekindle the fire of discord between the Filipinos and Spaniards."

Undaunted by this setback, Antonio Luna changed the name of the periodical to "La Independencia" and, on September 3, 1898, issued the first copies. The La Independencia was printed clandestinely. The masthead indicated that it was printed at the Asilo de Huerfanos printing press in Malabon. But in reality, the press was installed in Luna's house along Calle Urbiztondo in San Nicolas.

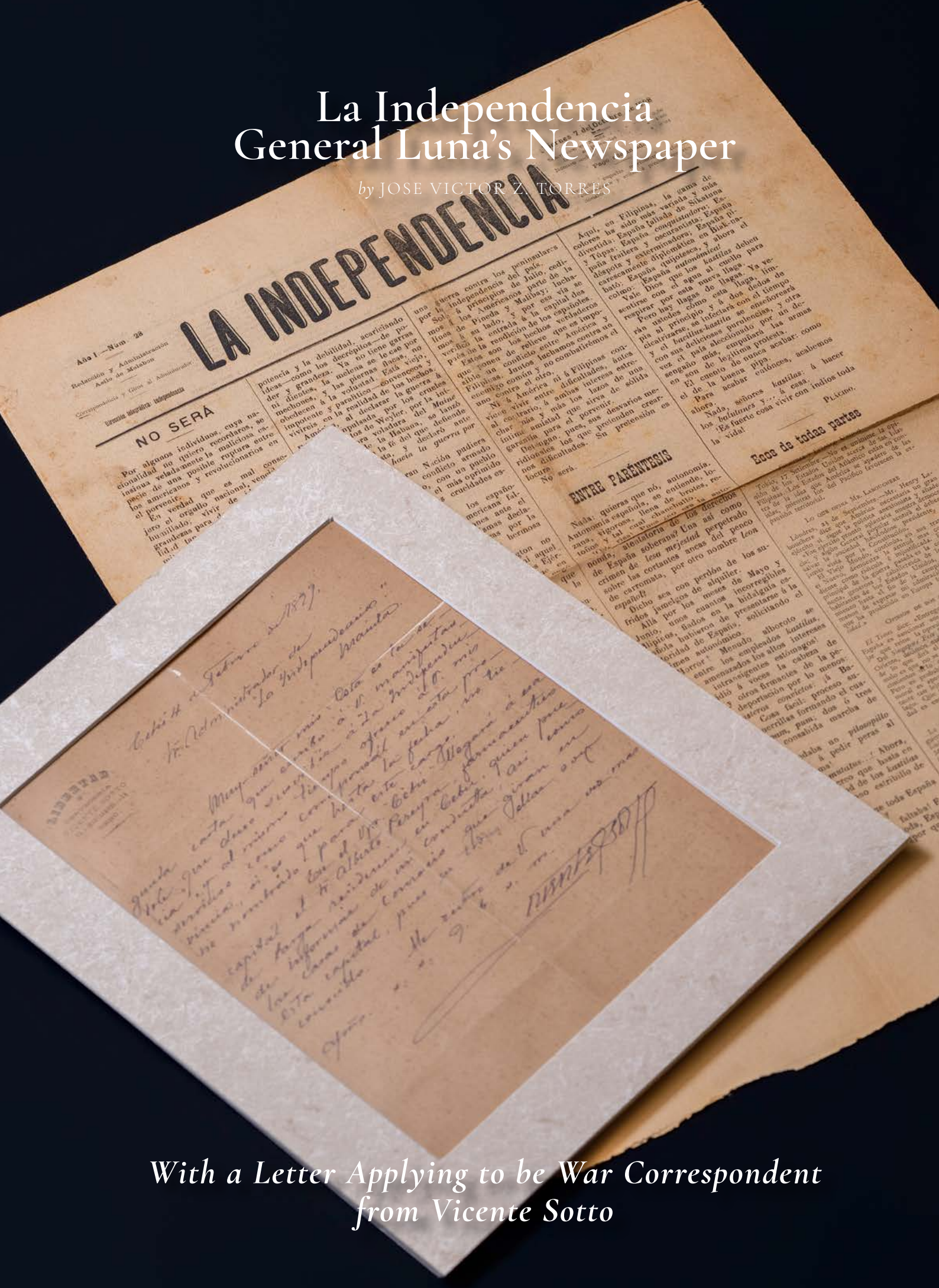
The newspaper staff consisted of the best writers of the period: the Del Rosario brothers, Salvador (who became editor-in-chief) and Mariano, both of whom once wrote for the La Solidaridad; Rafael Palma (who later replaced Luna as its director); Jose Abreu, Fernando Maria Guerrero, Clemente J. Zulueta, Cecilio Apostol, Epifanio de los Santos, and Felipe G. Calderon. Among its contributors were Trinidad Pardo de Tavera and Leon Ma. Guerrero (the first Filipino pharmacist and a member of the Aguinaldo cabinet) and Luis Ma. Guerrero, Jose Palma (who later published the Spanish lyrics of the Philippine national anthem); Ambrosio Rianzares Bautista, Apolinario Mabini, Mariano Ponce, Antonio Regidor, and Ferdinand Blumentritt. Two prominent women writers also joined its staff: Rosa Sevilla de Alvero (founder of the Instituto de Mujeres) and Florentina Arellano (later the secretary of the Association of Filipino Women).

La Independencia quickly gained public support as its articles advocated total independence for the Philippines. But the Philippine-American War soon began, and its editors had to flee Manila for the provinces. After Luna was assassinated in June 1899, only Palma, Fernando Ma. Guerrero and Cecilio Apostol were left to manage the newspaper. The printing press was placed on a train as it was moved north until a permanent base was established in Bautista, Pangasinan, with Palma as its director.

But La Independencia soon came to an end when Tarlac and Pangasinan fell to the Americans. The last issue came out on 24 November 1899.

La Independencia  
General Luna's Newspaper

by JOSE VICTOR Z. TORRES



With a Letter Applying to be War Correspondent  
from Vicente Sotto



La Solidaridad

A Museum-Grade Specimen of the 1900 Manila Revival of La Solidaridad

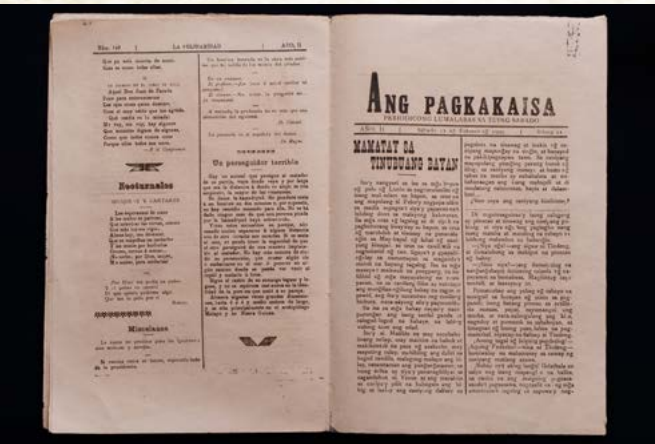
With a Filipino version titled "Ang Pagkakaisa"

Date: February 17, 1900 (Año II, No. 11)

Region: Manila, Philippines (American Colonial Occupation)

Condition report : with "foxing" (oxidized spotting) and the characteristic "bite" of metal type into the paper.

P 100,000



TOP: Masthead of the La Solidaridad, re-created in 1900 MID: The Filipino translation of the news called "Ang Pagkakaisa" BOTTOM: Advertisements indicate enthusiastic support

There is no information on this early 20th-century weekly periodical, which apparently banked on the name of the historical newspaper published by the Filipino reformists in Spain in the 19th century. It had a Tagalog section titled "Ang Pagkakaisa." The newspaper came out every Saturday. There is no editorial box to display information about the publisher and printer.

The newspaper seemed to have passed American censorship scrutiny, as most of its content was patriotic, including reports from the countryside on the Philippine-American War and some literary pieces written in Spanish and Tagalog. It also has advertisement pages that show it was printed as a business venture.

This *La Solidaridad* apparently lasted for a while, as its masthead showed that the issue was in its second year. However, it may have been a casualty of the times, as newspaper publishing as a business venture waned amid increased competition.

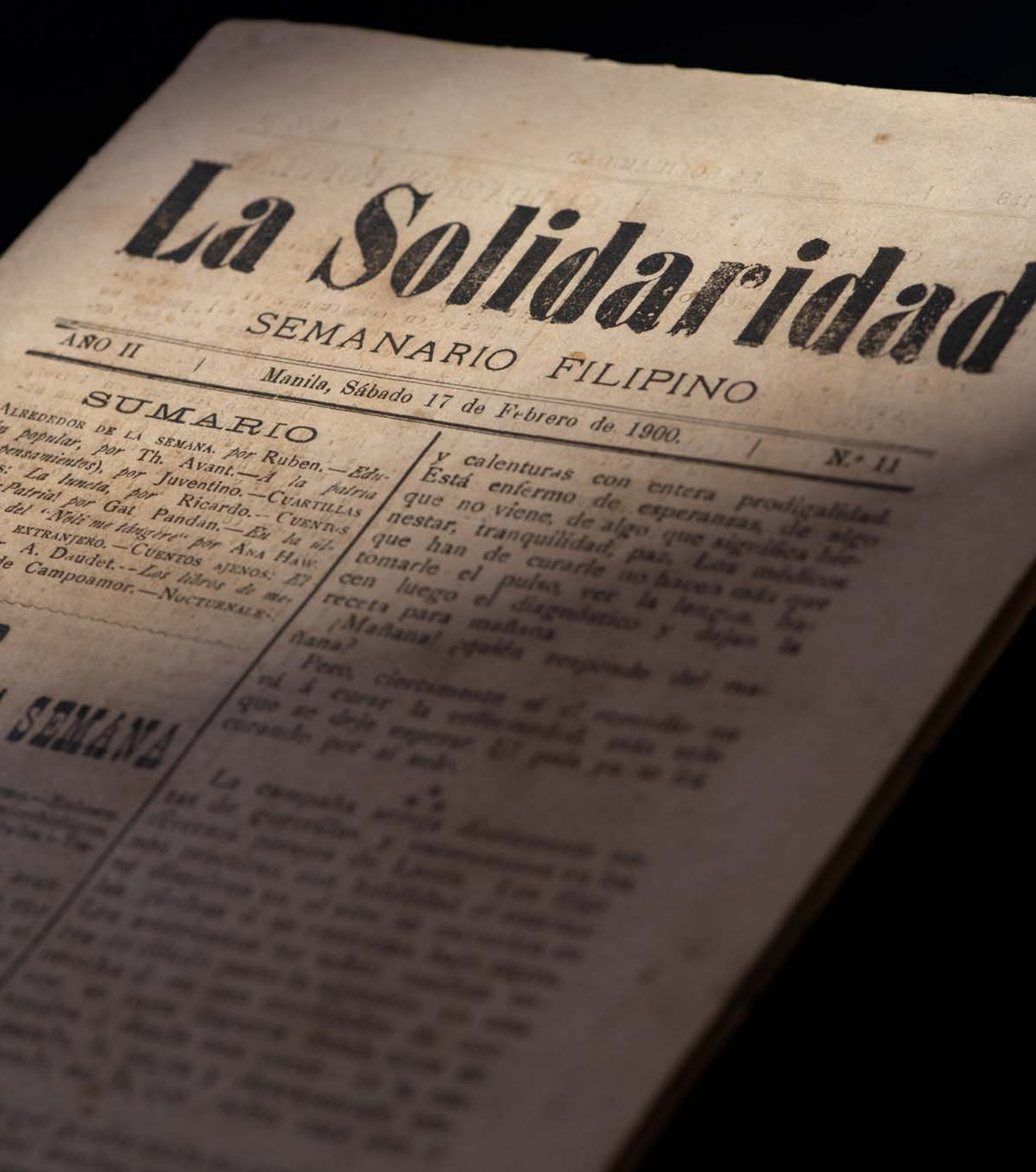
This was noted by Taylor in his history of the Philippine press when he said that, "By the end of 1899, the orgy of journalistic freedom, as indicated by the large number of newspapers that started in 1898 and 1899, appears to have subsided. The majority of those who ventured into the field either lost their capital, if they had any, or were unable to generate sufficient revenue to pay the printers. It may be noted here that, in those days, it was comparatively easy to start a newspaper, especially of a political nature. There were plenty of writers who were willing to give the anxious world the benefit of their wisdom for the pleasure it afforded themselves, and without cost to the publisher. Filipino printers received from P0.20 to P0.80 per day, and if the 'ghost didn't walk' on Saturday, they lived just the same."

Note: Within its pages, the Manila revival of *La Solidaridad* became a crucial mouthpiece for Filipino nationalists, many of whom adopted pseudonyms to conceal their identities from colonial authorities. These writers, both seasoned propagandists and new voices forged in the crucible of war, articulated the resistance's aspirations, grievances, and strategies. Their pseudonymous writings not only protected them but also fostered a sense of unity and collective purpose among disparate revolutionary factions.

These included "Juventino", pen name for Jose Palma, lyricist of the National Anthem, "Gat-Pandan", for Pascual H. Poblete, a Katipunero who became known as the Father of the Tagalog newspaper, "Ruben", for Cecilio Apostolic, master poet; and "Th. Avant", for Teodoro M. Kalaw, future director of the National Library of the Philippines.

La Solidaridad Re-Born  
To Keep up the Fight of the Phil-American War

by JOSE VICTOR Z. TORRES





Joy Mallari (b. 1966)

*Gunita*  
signed and dated 2010 (lower right)  
oil and acrylic on canvas  
36" x 24" (91 cm x 61 cm)

P 260,000

PROVENANCE  
Gallery Indigo

Delving into the themes of memory, recollection, or remembrance, Joy Mallari's 2010 piece, entitled *Gunita*, immediately established its image as a psychological exploration of childhood, innocence, and nostalgia—a literal memory made visible. Featuring a central figure of a large child's face, softly rendered as it was previously encased under a fragile bubble, as it floats. Untouched and preserved in a calming and free space. The reaching hand also becomes a crucial detail in the piece, providing additional context for the theme. The way it reaches as if handing over the balloon, created a suspended emotional tension between letting go of the past and allowing it to drift away—exactly how memory works.

By incorporating restrained emotion, symbolic imagery in the details, and a dreamlike atmosphere, Joy Mallari's 2010



masterpiece, *Gunita*, artistically transforms the essence of remembrance into a magnificent visual representation that equally feels intimate, nostalgic, and quietly haunting. (Mark John Castañeda)

Guerrero Habulan (b. 1980)

*Disfigure*  
signed and dated 2016 (lower right)  
acrylic, colored pencil and oil on canvas  
48" x 36" (122 cm x 91 cm)

P 180,000

PROVENANCE  
Gallery Indigo

Presenting the human body in a surreal and altered way, Guerrero Habulan delves deeper into the intersections of identity, fragmentation, and transformation by creating this wonderful piece from 2012, which serves as an unsettling meditation on identity under pressure and how the self can be shaped by culture, expectations, trauma, or systems of control.

With the title itself being *Disfigure*, the surreal expression of a man with a chiseled body, modeled on an old sculpture, as a chest showcases how disfigurement occurs—a slow, invisible process driven by adaptation, survival, and conformity. The figures' calm, seated, and almost resigned expression suggests that such a process is not an exception but a requirement. A condition that people learned to live with. (Mark John Castañeda)



Rodel Tapaya (b. 1980)

*Maria's Mother*  
signed and dated 2012 (lower left)  
acrylic on canvas  
48" x 36" (122 cm x 91 cm)

P 700,000

PROVENANCE  
Gallery Indigo

Rodel Tapaya's *Maria's Mother* is a dense, allegorical masterpiece that sits steadily within his long-standing project of reworking Philippine Myths, folk narrative, and colonial histories into a psychologically charged visual oeuvre.

Dreamlike and unsettling at first glance, the painting features a floating, multi-layered structure that resembles a house, a shrine, or a boat, floating over a dark form of water. From its roof, tree-like branches erupt, each supporting smaller houses like fruits. There are also figures in the paintings—small, anonymous, and animal-like. They



are portrayed as caught in the act of labour surveillance or ritual.

In terms of its title, the painting defines motherhood as a form of network. Embedded in each house, sheltering the inhabitants and connecting them through a system of branches. In the context of Philippine Culture, the name "*Maria*" primarily serves as an archetypal feminine name that both echoes the Virgin Mary and countless women shaped by religion, history, as well as family obligations and traditions.

By focusing on *Maria's mother*, Tapaya shifted focus from the idealized figure of a Filipino woman and into the unseen labor and lineage behind her—highlighting metaphors for ancestral memories, inherited domestic roles and expectations, all passed down through generations of Filipino women. Tapaya—through this piece—reflects his larger concerns about how Filipino identity was shaped by the stories passed down, altered, and carried—invisibly or otherwise—from one generation to another. (Mark John Castañeda)



**José Rizal** (1861 - 1896)  
*Untiled (La Niña Mestiza)*  
crayon on paper  
ca. 1876 - 1877  
15 1/4" x 11 1/4" (39 cm x 29 cm)

**P 800,000**

**PROVENANCE**  
From the collection of Asuncion Lopez Bantug , granddaughter of Narcisa Rizal; and L. Lopez-Rizal, as evidenced by handwritten notes at the back of the painting.

**LITERATURE**  
Pictorial Album of Jose Rizal, printed by the Jose Rizal Centennial Commission, 1961. Page 135, black and white illustration with the caption "Studies in crayon by Rizal done in Manila while studying at the Ateneo.)"



**LEFT:** Jose Rizal, at the boarding house Casa Tomacina in ca 1877, newly graduated from the Ateneo. **RIGHT:** Josephine Bracken, Mrs. Jose Rizal.

Better known as a political philosopher and a novelist, Jose Rizal was also an accomplished artist. It was a talent he pursued very early in his youth, as this sketch made while he was at the Ateneo Municipal shows.

He first entered the Ateneo as a boy of almost 12 in 1872. According to the eminent historian Ambeth Ocampo, "Rizal obtained his Bachelor of Arts degree in 1877 with the grade of Sobresaliente (Excellent) and got five first prize medals in philosophy, drawing, comportamiento (good behavior ), good boarder, and aplicacion (studiousness) as well as honorable mention in physics and chemistry.

Rizal would train in both sculpture and drawing, for which he received a "first class medal."

He would also study at the Manila Art Academy, formally known as the Academia de Dibujo y Pintura de Manila, the same school that produced Felix Resurreccion Hidalgo and Miguel Zaragoza. His teacher was Lorenzo Guerrero. Like

Juan Luna, he would also enrol in the Real Academia de las Bellas Artes de San Fernando in Madrid, the most famous art college in Spain.

Upon closer inspection, this charming work is a portrait of a fair-haired girl, whose blond hair is highlighted with pale tones. Her eyes are also a light hazel, but her rounded cheeks suggest that she was a mestiza Filipina. Rizal skillfully uses an immaculately white collar and a black bow to offset her delicate features. Its sophistication reveals not only Rizal's talent but his advanced training that he may have picked up at the Manila academia.

It foretells the features of Rizal's last love, the Irish mestiza Josephine Bracken, who would become his wife.

This artwork was handed down from Narcisa Rizal, believed to be Rizal's favorite and most devoted sister.

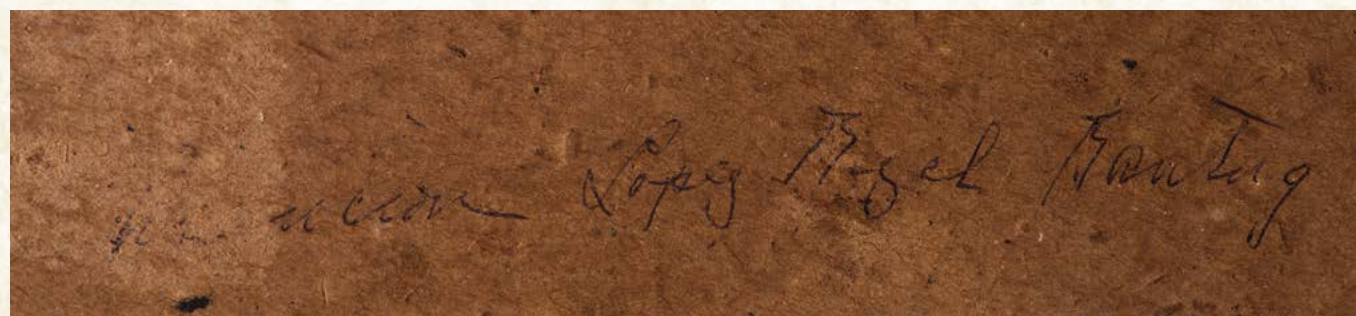
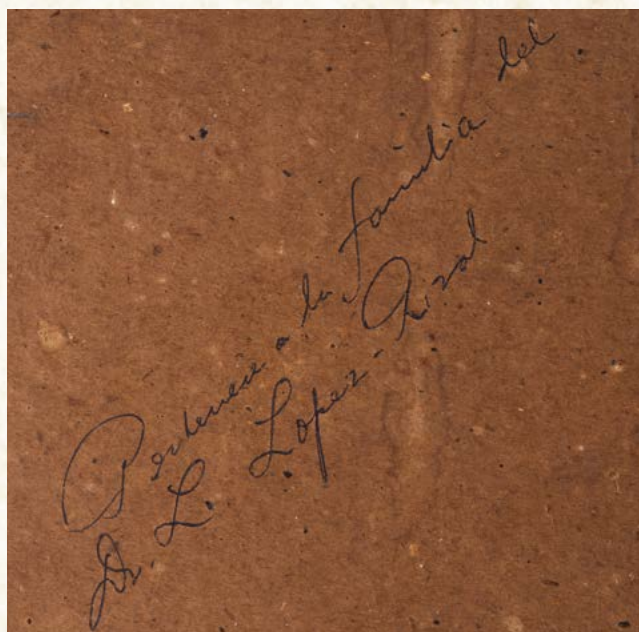
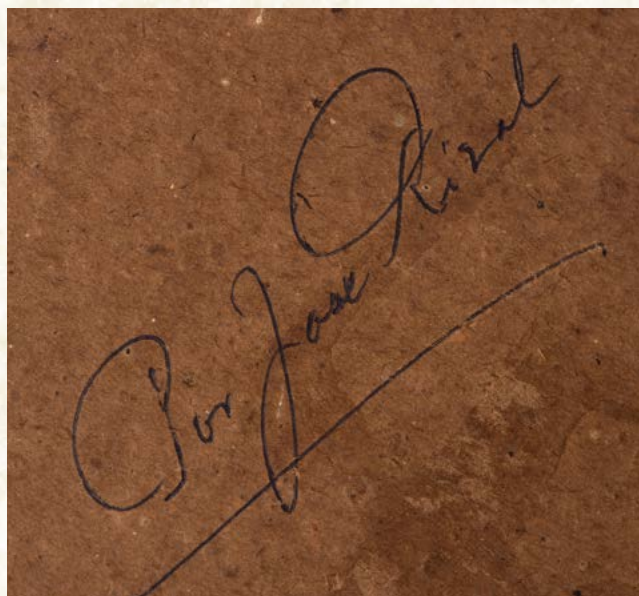
# Portrait of a Love Foretold

## La Niña Mestiza and Rizal's Josephine

by LISA GUERRERO NAKPIL







**CLOCKWISE:** Details of the handwritten testament of authorship and ownership at the back of the artwork's wood backing: "Por Jose Rizal" (by Jose Rizal); "Pertenencia de la familia de Dr. L. Lopez-Rizal" (Belonging to the family of Dr. L. Lopez-Rizal) and the name "Asuncion Lopez-Rizal Bantug"; The black and white illustration of the artwork in the Pictorial Album of Rizal, published by the Rizal Centennial Commission in 1961, a portrait of Narcisa Rizal. She would marry Antonio Lopez and have nine children including Leoncio.



# Jose Rizal's Years Of Unquiet Desperation *Art Imitates Life in El Filibusterismo*

by LISA GUERRERO NAKPIL



ABOVE: Portrait of Jose Rizal



ABOVE: Trinidad H. Pardo de Tavera in Paris. Collection of Trinaidad H. Pardo de Tavera.

Just a few years before events transformed his world, Jose Rizal stood at the center of the young ilustrado world. He composed toasts (the famous brindis) at Juan Luna's dinner for the Spoliarium in the glittering dining room of the Hotel Ingles, summered in Biarritz with the Bousted heiresses, and named his accomplished friends Los Indios Bravos as they basked in the glow of the Exposition Universelle in Paris.

He had broken down racial barriers by winning the acceptance and respect of the German intelligentsia. And he had published a first novel — the *Noli Me Tangere* — that had awakened a people's broken spirit and begun its inexorable turn to revolution.

Suddenly, his world would, slowly but surely, become a darker and lonelier place by the last decade of the 19th century — and his own last years of life.

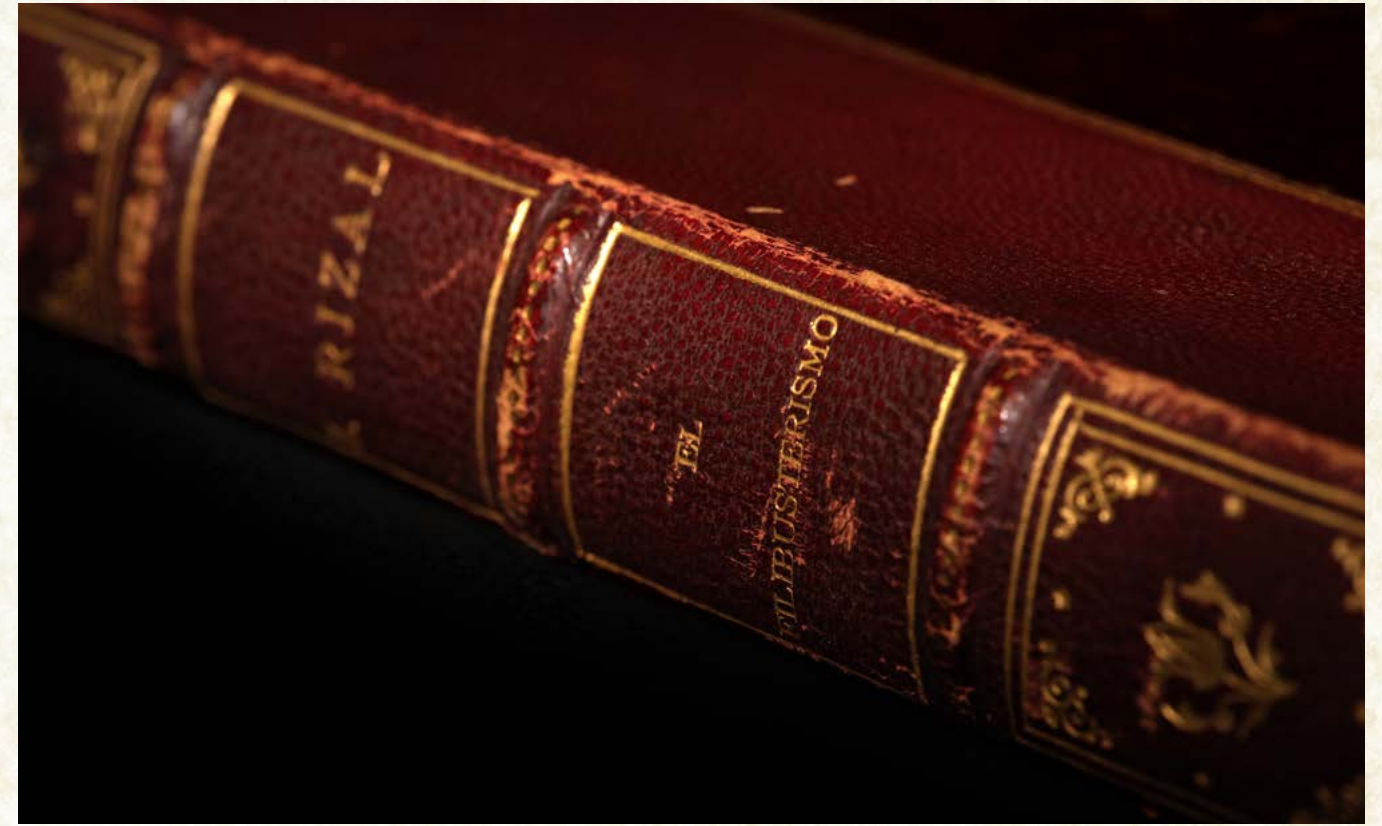
In 1890, Rizal faced two tragedies: the loss of his family home and lands, and the heartbreaking news of Leonor Rivera's engagement to another man.

The Rizal family's prosperity was founded on the vast Calamba estate owned by the Order of the Dominicans,

from whom they rented their farmlands. When the friars imposed a huge increase in the rentals, the family refused to pay, upon the advice of the young Rizal. After a long and bitter legal battle with the Spanish landlords, the Rizal family lost the case and were humiliatingly and brutally evicted from their home, their furniture and personal possessions thrown into the street. Rizal's father and brother, Paciano, were exiled to distant Mindoro, and the rest of the family persecuted. The worst of it was the loss of family income, the source of Rizal's allowance and the lifeline he depended on while in Europe.

But it was the news of Leonor's 'betrayal' that, according to one account, drove Rizal to tears. Rivera's mother had led her to believe that Rizal had abandoned her by intercepting and destroying all of Rizal's letters. As a result, in June 1890, she would give up on that lost love and marry the English railroad man, Henry Charles Kipping.

Rizal would capture these dark events in *El Filibusterismo*. He tells the harrowing tale of Kabesang Tales, the farmer who loses his land to friars, and also narrates the death of Maria Clara, whose life ebbs away from



ABOVE: The leather-bound first edition of *El Filibusterismo*



LEFT: ILUSTRADOS (L-R Felix Resurreccion Hidalgo, Juan Luna, Trinidad Pardo de Tavera, Jose Rizal in Paris, 1880s RIGHT: The city of Ghent, Belgium in 1891



a wasting disease in a convent. The young ilustrado returns from Europe twice: first as the idealistic Ibarra in the *Noli*, and on his second return, disguised as the cynical and vengeful Simoun in the *Fili*.

But *El Filibusterismo* ends not with reckoning and triumph, much as they do not in the Alexandre Dumas novels that influenced Jose Rizal. Instead, Simoun's failed plot to bomb a high-society wedding leads to his flight and death by his own hand. A final soliloquy with

philosopher Padre Florentino underscores the message: only a noble common cause prevails over injustice, not personal revenge.

It was in 1890 that Rizal wrote the *Fili*, completing it in April 1891, when he moved to Brussels, and later to Ghent to oversee its printing a few months later.

As events unfolded, this would be among the most impossible years of his life.



**José Rizal** (1861 - 1896)

*El Filibusterismo*

Signed and dedicated "A mi querido amigo el doctor T. H. Pardo de Tavera, Jose Rizal, Gante, 16/ IX 1891"

(To my dear friend, the doctor T. H. Pardo de Tavera, Jose Rizal, Ghent, 16 September 1891)

Boekdrukkerij F. Meyer-Van Loo, Vlaanderenstraat, 60  
First Edition, Ghent 1891

**P 5,000,000**

PROVENANCE

From the collection of Don Trinidad Pardo de Tavera, as evidenced by an ex libris with his name on the marbled endpaper on the inside front cover and his name stamped on the title page as "Dr. T.H. Pardo de Tavera."

Printed when Jose Rizal was both emotionally and financially exhausted, the masterpiece *El Filibusterismo* contains fewer pages and was produced in fewer copies than his first book, the *Noli Me Tangere*.

It is thus considered far rarer than his *Noli Me Tangere*. It is also the most poignantly produced, marshaling all that Rizal had to offer, together with funds raised from fellow Filipinos across Asia and Europe—in France, Belgium, the Philippines, and China.

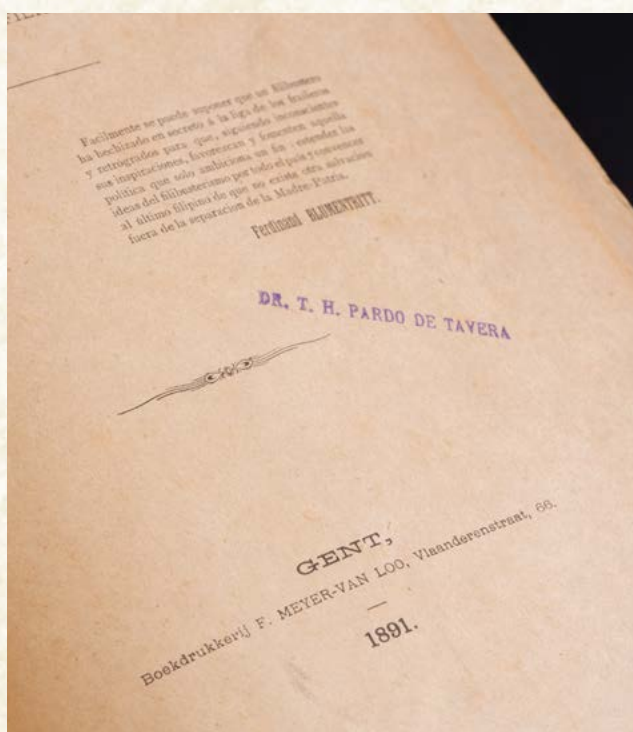
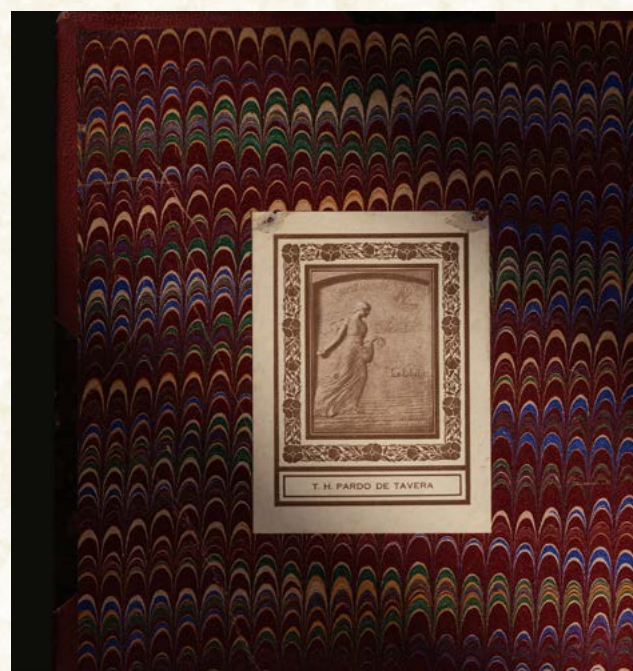
This edition's unique value comes from the National Hero's signature added below a dedication to Dr. Trinidad Pardo de Tavera. Signed September 16, 1891, it predates the commonly known printing date and is literally the press's first copy. Rizal held this very book, personally sending Pardo de Tavera a message with it.

Letters to his close friend Jose Basa in Hong Kong and others detail the lengths to which Rizal went to have *El Filibusterismo* printed. First of all, he moved from Paris (away from the high-living temptations of the Exposition of 1889) to save money and to find not just cheaper living quarters but also an inexpensive printing shop.

He found it in Ghent, Belgium, at the Boekdrukkerij F. Meyer-Van Loo at No. 60 Vlaanderen Street, which extended installment terms to him.

Rizal rented a room at a low-rent boarding house near the press at No. 47 Henegouwen Street. He shared it with Jose Alejandrino, then a student in chemical engineering. Together, they skipped meals and checked the galleys. Alejandrino would later become a prominent general of the First Philippine Republic.

Even with the "pay as you print" arrangements, Rizal struggled. He exhausted the first loan sent by Jose Basa and became so desperate that he threatened to abandon the project and burn the manuscript.



TOP: Ex-Libris of T.H. Pardo de Tavera, on the marbled endpaper of the inside front cover of the Fili MID: *El Filibusterismo*, First Edition, 1891 BOTTOM: Title page with Blumentritt's quotation, stamped with the name "Dr. T.H. Pardo de Tavera"

# The Rarest of Rizal's Novels

## An Important First Edition

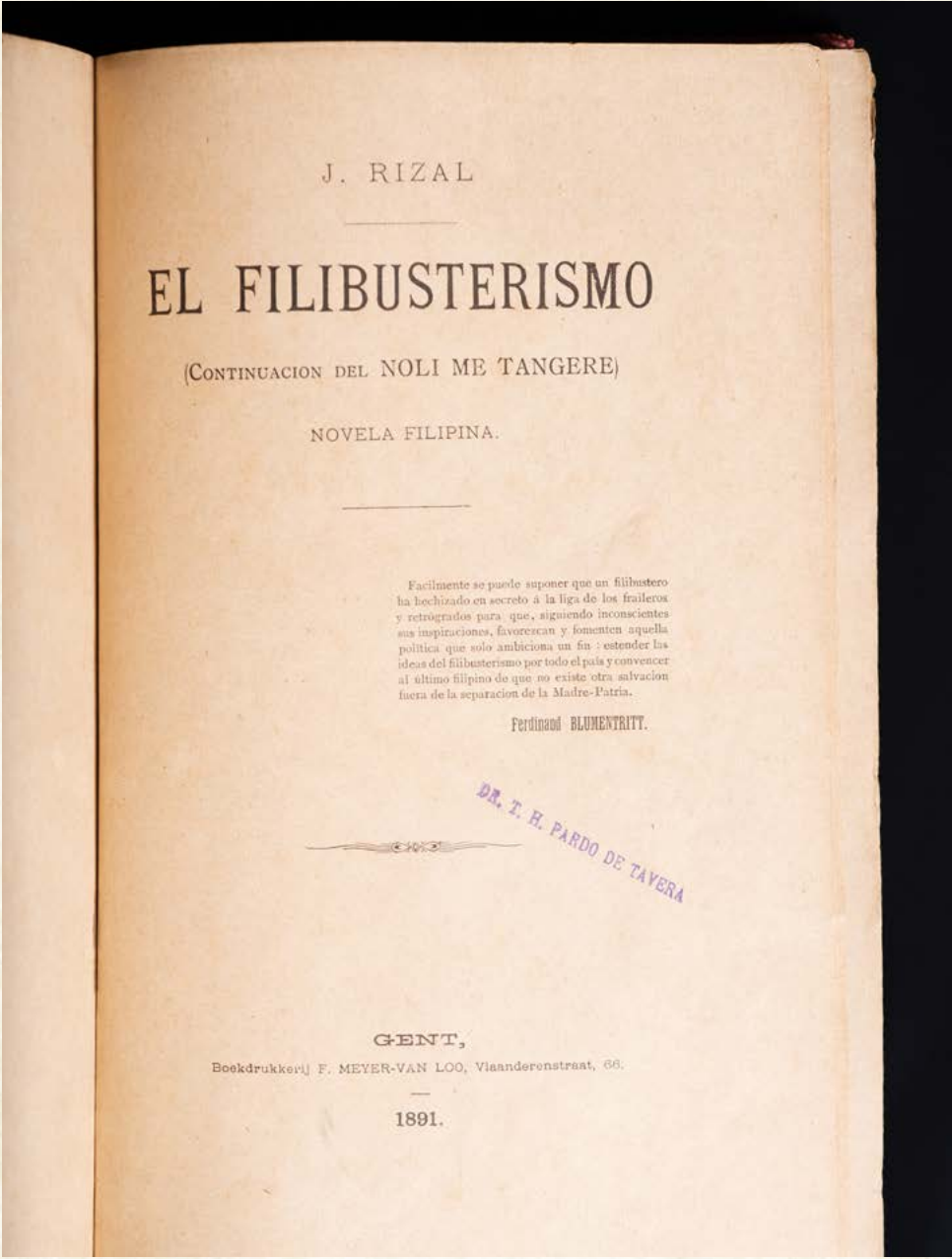
### *Signed and Dedicated to T. H. Pardo de Tavera*

by LISA GUERRERO NAKPIL

A mi querido amigo el doctor  
T. H. Pardo de Tavera.  
Jose Rizal  
Gante, 16/IX 1891

# EL FILIBUSTERISMO.





ABOVE: Title page of El Filibusterismo



ABOVE: Ferdinand Blumentritt as drawn by Juan Luna, Litemeritz, April 8, 1889

**A Message from Ferdinand Blumentritt**

**Transcription from Spanish:**  
"Facilmente se puede suponer que un filibustero ha hechizado en secreto á la liga de los fraileros y retrógrados para que, siguiendo inconscientes sus inspiraciones, favorezcan y fomenten aquella política que solo ambiciona un fin: estender las ideas del filibusterismo por todo el país y convencer al último filipino de que no existe otra salvacion fuera de la separacion de la Madre-Patria."

**English Translation:**  
"It can easily be supposed that a subversive (filibustero) has secretly bewitched the league of friar-lovers and reactionaries so that, unconsciously following his inspirations, they favor and foster that policy which ambitions only one end: to spread the ideas of subversion throughout the entire country and convince the last Filipino that no other salvation exists outside of separation from the Mother Country."

Rizal would wind up pawning jewelry his mother had given him, skipping meals, and, when he could afford it, living on tea and biscuits to scrape together the funds.

A wealthy friend, Valentin Ventura—a fencing companion shown in his most famous photograph with Rizal and Juan Luna in Paris—finally stepped in. When he learned of Rizal's dire predicament, he sent the much-needed funds to complete the printing.

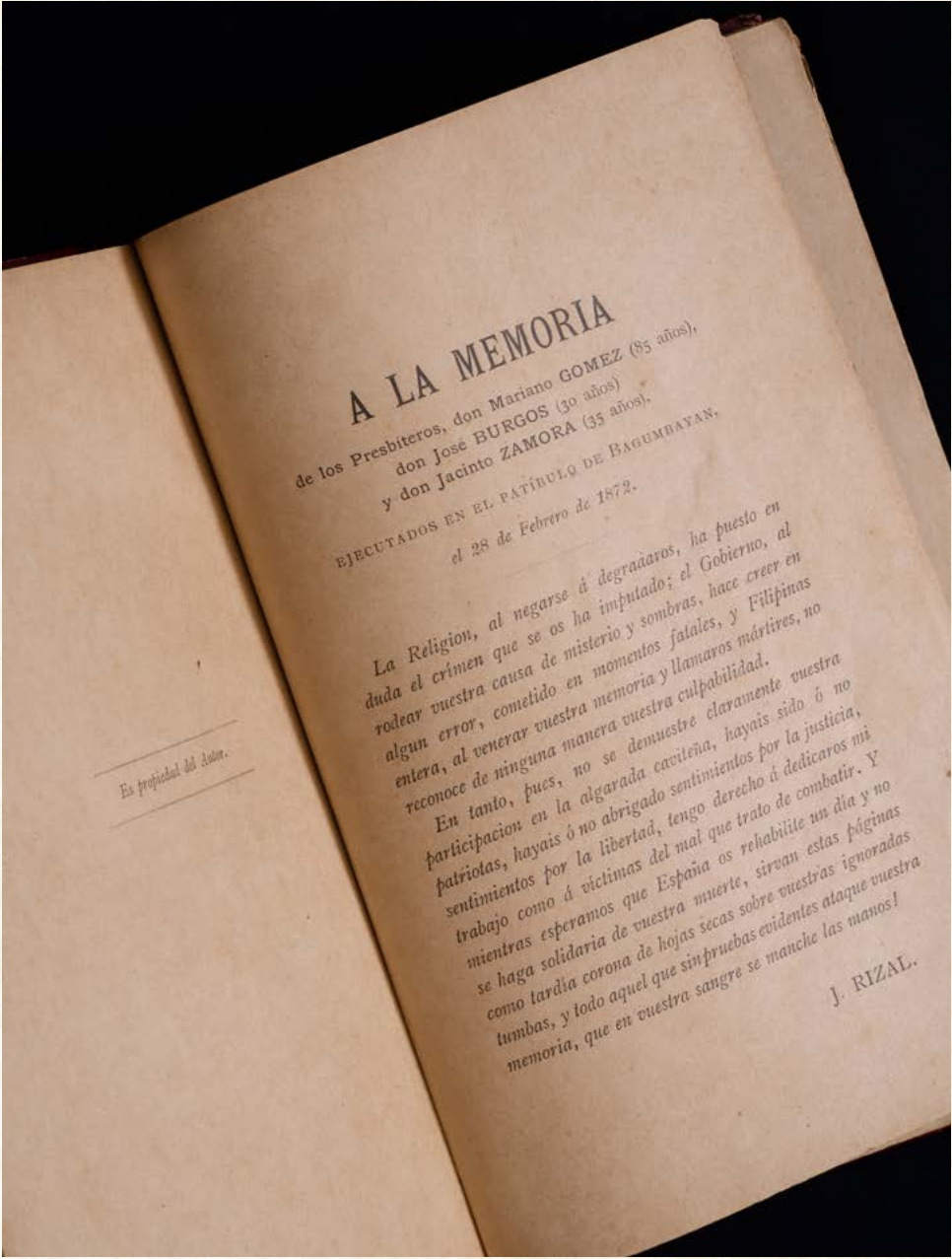
Describedasthesequel(orcontinuacion)oftheNoliMeTangere, the masterpiece El Filibusterismo is as much a revealing account of Jose Rizal's own life as it is a roadmap to revolution.

The book sounded two alarms on its first pages: a message from Rizal's confidante Ferdinand Blumentritt, who suggested that "filibusterers (subversives)" were the only logical outcome of Spanish oppression; and a provocative

dedication to the martyred Padres Gomez, Burgos, and Zamora, which vividly attacked their tormentors.

The Fili would thus strike a stronger blow for the cause of revolution, a far more direct call to action and change than the reformist Rizal, who was better known in the Noli. For that reason, the Spanish colonial government and their friar-accomplices did all they could to block the reading of the book. Both distribution and possession were condemned and banned. Those caught with it were arrested and imprisoned. Reports indicate that a shipment of 800 books—likely half the print run—sent to Hong Kong, a hotbed of Filipino resistance, was either lost, confiscated, or destroyed.

This El Filibusterismo is thus an irreplaceable piece of Rizal's own personal narrative — as well as an important part of the Philippines' history.



ABOVE: Dedication page of El Filibusterismo, to the martyred Padres Gomez, Burgos and Zamora



LEFT: (Left to Right) Valentin Ventura, financier of the El Filibusterismo, Jose Rizal and Juan Luna in Paris RIGHT: Henegouwen Street, Ghent, where Rizal rented a room near the printing press.



ABOVE: The El Filibusterismo manuscript cover.

**A Dedication to GomBurZa**

**Transcription (Original Spanish):**  
A LA MEMORIA de los Presbíteros, don Mariano GOMEZ (85 años), don José BURGOS (30 años) y don Jacinto ZAMORA (35 años).  
EJECUTADOS EN EL PATÍBULO DE BAGUMBAYAN, el 28 de Febrero de 1872.

La Religion, al negarse á degraararos, ha puesto en duda el crimen que se os ha imputado; el Gobierno, al rodear vuestra causa de misterio y sombras, hace creer en algun error, cometido en momentos fatales, y Filipinas entera, al venerar vuestra memoria y llamaros mártires, no reconoce de ninguna manera vuestra culpabilidad.

En tanto, pues, no se demuestre claramente vuestra participacion en la algarada caviteña, hayais sido ó no patriotas, hayais ó no abrigado sentimientos por la justicia, sentimientos por la libertad, tengo derecho á dedicaros mi trabajo como á victimas del mal que trato de combatir. Y mientras esperamos que España os rehabilite un día y no se haga solidaria de vuestra muerte, sirvan estas páginas como tardía corona de hojas secas sobre vuestras ignoradas tumbas, y todo aquel que sin pruebas evidentes ataque vuestra memoria, que en vuestra sangre se manche las manos!

J. RIZAL.





108

## Juvenal Sansó (1929 - 2025)

### a.) *A Dazzling Array*

signed (lower right)  
ca. 1980's  
acrylic on paper  
5 1/2" x 32 3/4" (14 cm x 83 cm)

### b.) *Suitable Shelter*

signed (lower right)  
ca. 1980's  
acrylic on paper  
9" x 12" (23 cm x 30 cm)

### c.) *Sunward Bloom*

signed (lower right)  
ca. 1990's  
acrylic on paper  
10 1/2" x 8" (27 cm x 20 cm)

### d.) *Fertile Shores*

signed (lower right)  
dated 1979  
acrylic on paper  
10" x 13" (25 cm x 33 cm)

**P 400,000**

Each piece is accompanied by a certificate issued by Fundacion Sansó confirming the authenticity of this lot

This 4-piece lot, a.) *A Dazzling Day*, b.) *Suitable Shelter*, c.) *Sunward Bloom*, and d.) *Fertile Shores* showcases Juvenal Sansó's sublime artistry. His skilled brushwork, profound color sense, and strategic use of black and white add depth and life to his paintings, highlighting the rich, verdant life and textured rock formations of coastal areas and fostering a deep appreciation for nature's beauty.

Like how Sansó found healing in Brittany's charm and the arts, his seascapes and floralscapes also evoke a calming effect that, in turn, offers peace and comfort to everyone who comes across them. Notwithstanding the shroud of mystery surrounding his portrayals, his cool-toned palette infuses his images with a gentle breeze and quiet atmosphere, encouraging viewers to reflect and connect with their own emotions. *(Jessica Magno)*



109

## Phyllis Zaballero (b. 1942)

### a.) *Window V*

signed and dated 1995 (lower right)  
acrylic and conte on fabiano paper  
18" x 12" (46 cm x 30 cm)

### b.) *Window Dreams IV*

signed and dated 1995 (lower right)  
acrylic and conte on fabiano paper  
18" x 12" (46 cm x 30 cm)

### c.) *Window VI*

signed and dated 1995 (lower right)  
acrylic and conte on fabiano paper  
18" x 12" (46 cm x 30 cm)

**P 140,000**

PROVENANCE  
Galleria Duemila

The year 1978 proved to be a significant juncture in Phyllis Zaballero's artistic career. Aside from completing her Bachelor of Fine Arts degree at the University of the Philippines, her skills have been further recognized through her inclusion in the roster of the Cultural Center of the Philippines' Thirteen Artist Awardees. That same year, she held her first solo show at the CCP small gallery, where she unveiled a large-scale, seventy-foot-long abstract painting, *Winward I*.

In this three-piece lot, all painted in 1995, Zaballero's vibrant palette and wavy lines created varied windows, a recurring subject in her canvases. In art, windows serve as thresholds between internal and external worlds, gateways that both separate and connect one's thoughts, emotions, and the physical realm. This notion is especially true of Zaballero's works, as her painting process begins by engaging her memories and feelings, allowing her subconscious to translate into her artworks, thus inviting viewers to explore her inner world. *(Jessica Magno)*



The Most Sought-After History of the Philippine and Asian Conquests by Fray de la Concepcion With The Philippines’ Most Important Map: The Murillo Velarde, 1788

a.) Juan de la Concepción  
*Historia General de Philipinas, Conquistas espirituales y temporales de estos españoles dominios, establecimientos, progresos y decadencias.*

Comprehende los Imperios Reinos y Provincias de Islas y Continentes con quienes ha havido Comunicacion, y Comercio por inmediatas coincidencias. Con Noticias universales Geographicas Hidrograficas de Historia Natural, de Politica, de Costumbres y de Religiones, en lo que deba interesarse tan universal Título [General History of the Philippines: The spiritual and temporal conquests of these Spanish dominions—their foundations, development, and setbacks. Encompassing the empires, kingdoms, and provinces of islands and continents with which the Philippines maintained contact and trade through direct connections. Including universal accounts of geography and hydrography, natural history, politics, customs, and religions, insofar as such matters properly belong to a work of such universal scope]

Vols I–V: Intramuros, Manila: Imprenta del Seminario Conciliar y Real de S. Carlos por Agustín de la Rosa y Balagtas, 1788. Vols VI–XIV: Convento de Nuestra Señora de Loreto del Pueblo de Sampaloc por el Hermano Balthasar Mariano, Donado Franciscano, 1788–1792.

original sheepskin (pergamino) bindings with book ties and book spines hand-lettered in black ink  
8" x 6" (20 cm x 15 cm) each

b.) Pedro Murillo Velarde  
Mapa de las Yslas Filipinas

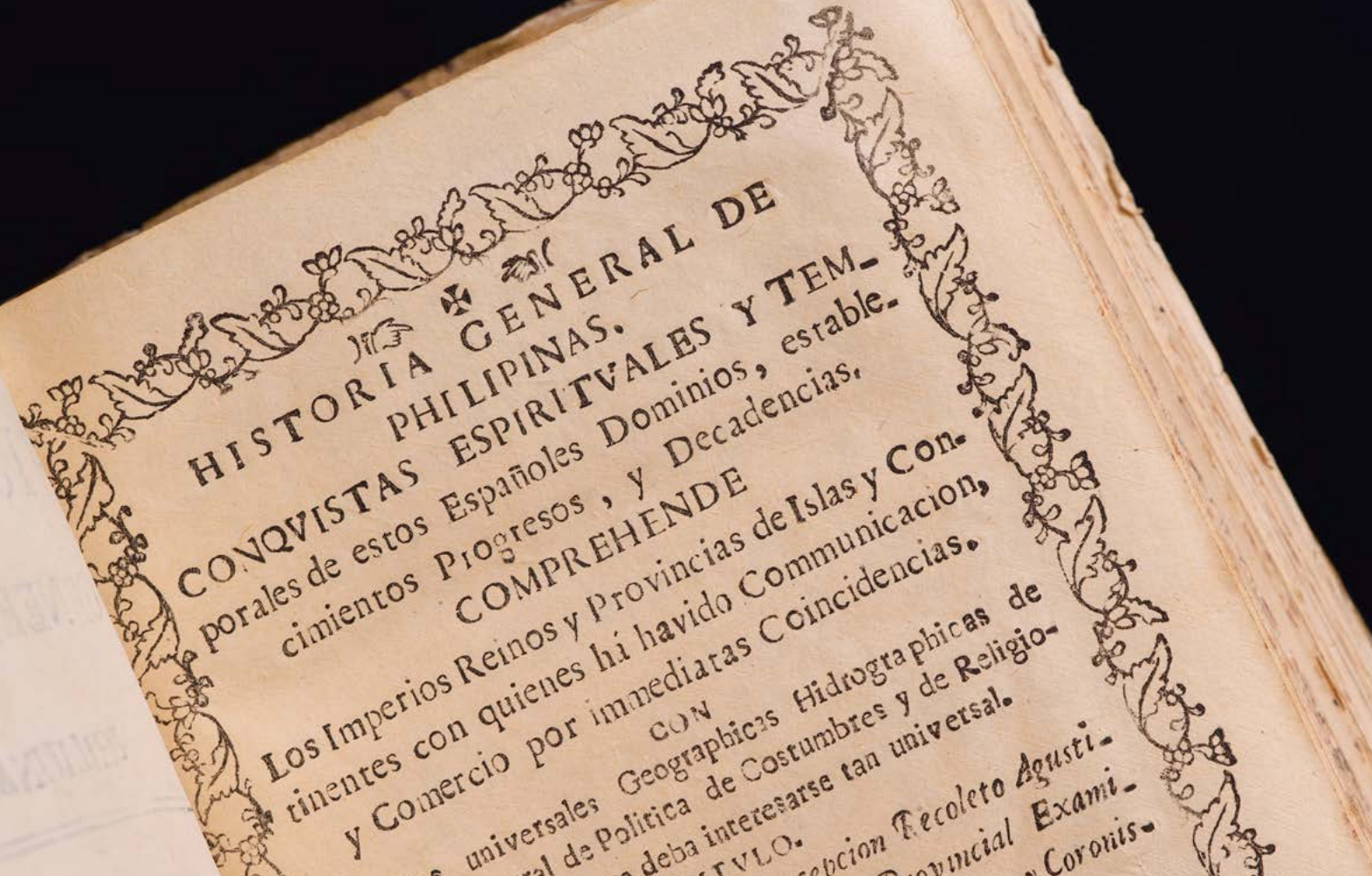
original copper engraving of 1744, restruck in 1788, with two minor corrections  
Engraved by Nicolás de la Cruz Bagay ("Manileño")  
21 1/4" x 14 1/2" (54 cm x 37 cm)

P 2,400,000



ABOVE: All 14 volumes of Fray Concepcion’s landmark work of history. OPPOSITE PAGE: The most important map in the Philippines, the Murillo Velarde.





ABOVE: Title Page of the Murillo Velarde History of the Philippines OPPOSITE PAGE: The map's cartouche with the original markings of the Society of Jesus scraped off and replaced by decorative motifs after the Jesuits were expelled from the Philippines

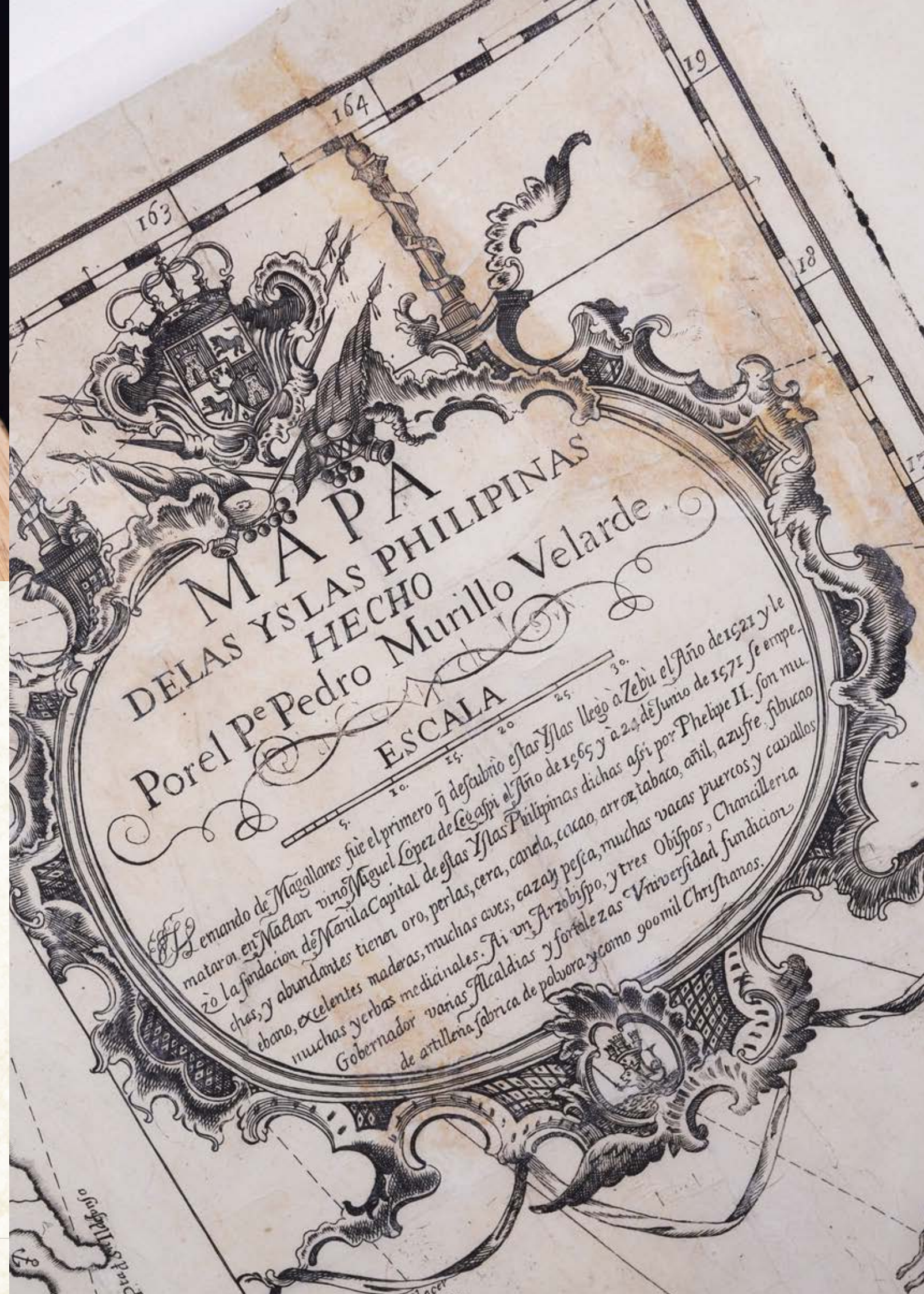
A rare and comprehensive collection rooted in authentic archives, this set meticulously details the history, geography, and culture of the Philippines, the Pacific archipelagos, China, Japan, and Southeast Asia. Published in fourteen volumes between 1788 and 1792, Juan de la Concepción's *Historia General de Philipinas* stands as the most significant early modern Spanish colonial publication in the Philippines. It offers an unparalleled synthesis of archival documents, many of which are now lost, authored by a pioneering universalist historian of the period.

The work features ten engraved maps, including the renowned Mapa de las Yslas Philipinas (now separated and elegantly framed) by Jesuit Father Pedro Murillo Velarde, first published in Manila in 1734 and engraved by Nicolás de la Cruz Bagay, a Tagalog fine artist educated within the Jesuit missions and notable as one of the first Filipino artists to sign his own work. In 1744, Murillo Velarde asked Cruz Bagay to create a smaller, book-sized engraving for his *Historia de la provincia de Philipinas de la Compañía de Jesús*, serving as the frontispiece to the Jesuit provincial narrative.

This same 1744 engraving was later used as the frontispiece for Concepción's first volume of *Historia general*, published in 1788, with two modifications: the Jesuit cartouche was replaced with royal regalia, and the attribution to the Jesuit order was removed by scraping the still-visible words "Comp. de la Jesús." This outstanding piece of Philippine cartography has been separated from the book, carefully restored, and beautifully framed. It is considered the third

edition of the first scientific map of the Philippines and the most accurate and detailed cartographic representation of the archipelago produced in the eighteenth century, covering the islands from the Babuyan group north of Luzon to southern Mindanao and the northeastern coast of Borneo. Owing to Spanish imperial secrecy, maps of the Philippines were rarely published. Murillo Velarde's map stands as a landmark in Philippine cartography and remained unsurpassed until the nineteenth century. As an attractive addition to the 14 volumes, Concepción hired the two leading Filipino artists of that time, Cruz Bagay and Felipe Sevilla, to create new engraved maps of Japan, Southeast Asia, Taiwan, Guam, Saipan, and the Moluccas Islands. These maps have been remarkably well-preserved, showcasing the edition's thoroughness. In comparison, many other existing volumes of Concepción often contain damaged maps, missing maps altogether, or maps that were torn and even detached.

Besides its valuable cartographic contributions, which enhance the book series' worth, the *Historia* is crucial for understanding Spanish colonial expansion in Asia and the Pacific. It provides detailed insights into the histories of major religious orders, high government officials, and their governors-general following the Spanish settlement of the islands. Additionally, it offers informed narratives about the surrounding countries in Asia and the Pacific from a Spanish and Philippine perspective. Retana considered it the most important historical publication in the Philippines of that time and the most comprehensive source written by a friar influenced by the prevailing universalist theories coming from France.





### Description of the 14-volume series

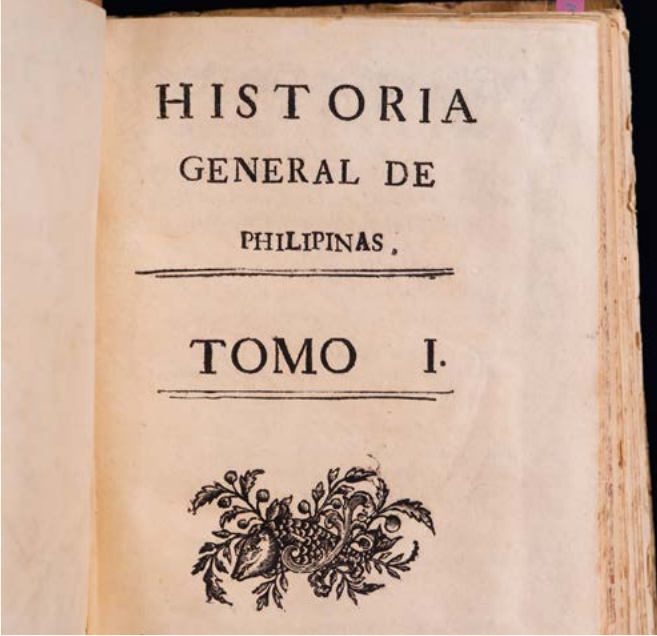
This fourteen-volume set is the earliest and most comprehensive attempt at a universalist history of the Spanish Philippines and the Asia-Pacific region, encompassing the period from Magellan's arrival in 1521 until the author's death in 1786. Conceived on an encyclopedic scale unprecedented in Philippine historiography and bibliography, Juan de la Concepción's *Historia general* sought to integrate political, ecclesiastical, ethnographic, scientific, and administrative knowledge into a single, coherent historical architecture—an approach that aligns it closely with the Enlightenment ideal of *histoire universelle* then circulating in Europe (Donoso 2022).

Unlike earlier missionary chronicles written to advance the prestige of a particular religious order, Concepción deliberately constructed a documentary history grounded in archival completeness rather than institutional advocacy. Drawing extensively from Jesuit, Dominican, Franciscan, and secular government sources, the work accords remarkable attention to rival orders' martyrdoms and missionary enterprises, while treating Recollect activity—especially in Mindanao and other frontier regions—with notable restraint. This refusal to privilege his own order marks the work as intellectually independent, methodologically modern, and quietly radical for its time (Donoso 2022).

The *Historia general* can be favorably compared to Pedro Murillo Velarde's renowned historical synthesis, which also drew on French Enlightenment ideas associated with figures such as Denis Diderot. However, Juan de la Concepción's work arguably exceeds Murillo Velarde's in its comprehensive inclusion of secular administrative records—such as royal decrees, gubernatorial reports, and fiscal documents—along with ecclesiastical narratives. This approach portrays the Philippines not just as a mission territory but as a fully developed region within the Asia-Pacific and a component of a global empire.



ABOVE: The original sheepskin cover with leather ties for each volume



ABOVE: Title Page of Volume 1, which contains the Murillo Velarde Map

**Volume I** consists of 28 preliminary pages, 434 main pages, and 31 pages of an annotated table of contents, with the last page being blank. The text is printed on unusually thick and durable rice paper and includes two maps: the first, the smaller-size Murillo Velarde Philippine map, was separated and framed; the second depicts the Moluccas islands, engraved in 1733, including Gilolo (Halmahera), Tidore, and Ternate, and also printed on the same thick rice paper. This volume, as the first part of a fourteen-book series, covers Spanish history in the Philippines from 1521 to 1574. It begins by explaining the reasons for Spanish evangelization and control. The book then describes the ethnography of the Philippine peoples, noting they were less barbaric than Americans but still engaged in serious vices, superstitions, and idol worship. Despite lacking public temples, they believed in the immortality of souls and visions of paradise and torment. They feared the *tigbalang*, a type of duende, and in the Visayas, they believed in *divatas*. They also believed in love potions and miraculous amulets. Concepción reiterates the claim that the Catholic monarch ordered the fair treatment of indigenous people as free vassals. The book details early Spanish expeditions, such as those led by Magellan, who was killed during the voyage. His surviving crew eventually fled to the Moluccas and later returned to Spain with Sebastián Elcano. It also covers expeditions by Loaisa and Saavedra, all aiming to conquer the Moluccas and fend off Portuguese advances. The text describes the native flora, fauna, and languages encountered. It recounts the expedition of Urdaneta and Legazpi from New Spain, culminating in initial diplomatic and military interactions with indigenous communities before Legazpi established permanent settlements in Cebu and Manila. Legazpi also negotiated for the vassalage of Raja Soliman and Lakandula. The Chinese privateer Limahong attacked Manila but managed to escape to Pangasinan.

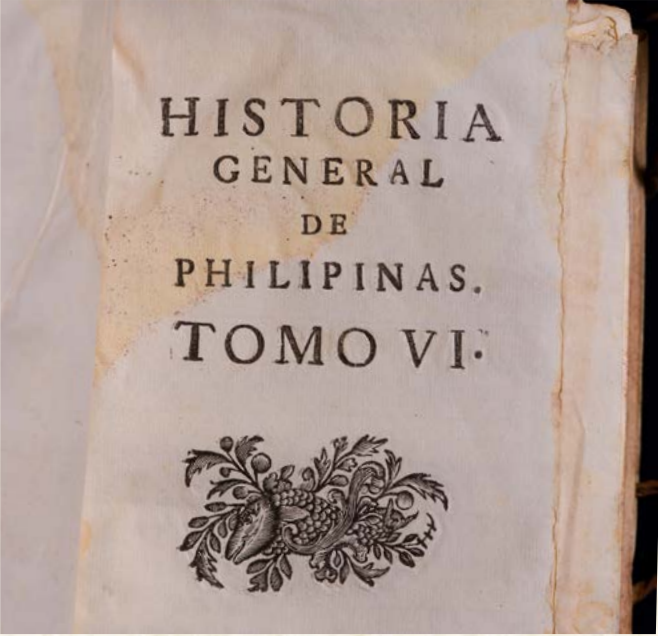
**Volume II** includes 2 preliminary pages, 502 main pages, and an additional 30 pages of annotated table of contents (with the last page blank). It features 3 engraved maps by Cruz Bagay: the first depicts Isla de Valientes (Palau)

and is among the earliest engraved and printed maps to show Palau as an archipelago with reefs, anchorages, and coastal features; the second is of Isla de San Agustín (Saipan in the Northern Marianas), one of the earliest maps focusing solely on Saipan, illustrating anchorages, sailors' bearings, and landing points; the third is a rare early modern map of Japan, derived from Jesuit geographical knowledge, Spanish Philippine missionary experience, and earlier Dutch and French models. This map depicts Japan after its seclusion, making it a rare Spanish-produced map of Japan. All three maps are printed on European cotton-rag paper, which is thicker and brighter. The volume also covers Governor Francisco de Sande's tenure (1575–1580), emphasizing his expensive military campaign to Borneo to influence the Sultanate's succession, along with efforts to conquer Jolo and Mindanao. It also details the "spiritual conquest" of the islands, including the arrival of Franciscan missionaries in 1578 and the founding of the first Bishopric of Manila under Domingo de Salazar.

**Volume III:** Contains two preliminary pages, 439 main pages, 29 pages of an annotated table of contents (with the last page left blank), and one map of Formosa (Taiwan), engraved by Cruz Bagay on European cotton-rag paper. This volume covers Governor Francisco de Tello de Guzmán's administration (1596–1602), starting with Dr. Antonio de Morga's arrival and the re-establishment of the Royal Audiencia in Manila. It offers detailed descriptions of major external threats and diplomatic relations, including the San Felipe incident that led to the martyrdom of missionaries in Japan, Spain's involvement in Cambodia, and the colony's first naval battles against Dutch corsairs led by Oliver van Noort.

**Volume IV** includes 2 preliminary pages, 487 main pages, and 32 pages of back matter containing the annotated table of contents. The text starts with Governor Pedro de Acuña's arrival in 1602 and covers the notable Chinese insurrection of 1603 (Sangley rebellion), which resulted in the strengthening of Intramuros and the creation of the first effective colonial militia. It concludes with Acuña's death following his conquest of Ternate, the period of interim governance by the Audiencia, and the arrival of Governor Juan de Silva to address the growing Dutch threat. Additionally, it mentions the arrival of the Augustinian Recollects, publishers of this history.

**Vol. V** includes 2 preliminary pages, 478 main pages, 1 page of errata, and 34 pages of back matter with an annotated table of contents. The text begins with the founding of the Convent of Santa Clara, the first women's monastery in the Philippines, led by indomitable Venerable Jeronima de la Asunción. It then discusses revolts and rebellions in Bohol, along with the Recollect administration of Calamianes. It highlights Governor Juan de Silva's military leadership, including shipbuilding and naval battles against the Dutch, such as the victory at Playa Honda. The narrative ends with Silva's death during a Malacca expedition and the subsequent rule of Juan Niño Tabora, followed by controversies involving Sebastian Hurtado de Corcuera. Hurtado de Corcuera confronted Maguindanao Sultan Kudarat, notably in the 1637 Battle of Lamitan, where Kudarat's capital was captured. Although Kudarat



ABOVE: Title Page of Volume VI, which contains a unique map of Southeast Asia

retreated into the interior, he survived and signed a peace treaty with Spain in 1645. The text also references a second Chinese uprising and concludes with the embassy of Fr. Luis Sotelo and Hasekura Tsunenaga from Japan to New Spain and then to Spain and the Vatican.

**Volume VI** comprises 2 preliminary pages, 439 main pages, and 35 pages of back matter with an annotated table of contents. It contains a rare late early-modern Spanish map of Southeast and East Asia, depicting the Philippines, Southern China, Japan, parts of mainland Southeast Asia, Borneo, and the western Pacific Islands. Such Spanish maps are rare because, by 1788, Dutch and French cartographers had dominated Asian mapmaking, while Spaniards continued to rely mainly on manuscript maps for navigation. This map is especially unique as it reflects a Philippine-centered imperial and missionary worldview, setting it apart from Dutch and French perspectives. It is printed on European cotton-rag paper. The volume opens with descriptions of the martyrdoms of the Recollects in Japan during their evangelization efforts, emphasizing the persecution and expulsion of Christians as Japan closed its ports. The Dutch seize control of Formosa and threaten the Philippines. Sultan Kudarat continues his fighting in Mindanao. Fajardo is appointed as the new governor-general amid Dutch threats, which require extensive shipbuilding efforts that face resistance from the natives. Troubles arise in Palapag, and the Sumuroy rebellion grows stronger, along with uprisings in Camarines, Masbate, and remote areas such as Caraga, Davao, and Butuan. Governor Fajardo sends a squadron to Butuan, where rebel leader Sumoroy is eventually killed. The text includes a detailed account of the great Kingdom of China. Sabiniano Manrique de Lara becomes the new governor-general. Because of native resistance, a new ship is commissioned but sinks, leading to attempts at reconciliation with Sultan Kudarat.

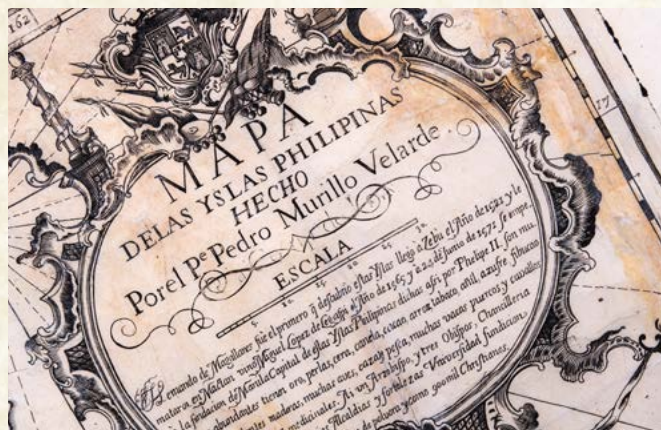
**Volume VII (1789)** includes 2 preliminary pages, 364 main pages, 26 pages of back matter with an annotated table of contents (last page blank), and 2 maps. The maps, engraved by Felipe Sevilla on European cotton-rag paper, depict







# The Murillo Velarde: The Mother of All Philippine Maps in All its Glorious Details



ABOVE: This and opposite page : Details of the Murillo Velarde map showing the modified cartouche, the signature of Nicolas de la Cruz Bagay, "Manileño", and the island of Luzon

The map of the Philippines included in Volume I of Fr. Juan de la Concepción's 14-book series *Historia general de Philipinas* is the renowned *Mapa de las Yslas Philipinas*, created by Pedro Murillo Velarde. It was first issued in Manila in large format, with 12 vignettes, in 1734. This smaller map, one-fourth the size of the original, dates from a decade later and was made to accompany what was then the finest universalist history of the Spanish Philippines, first published in 1788.

This map has long been regarded as the essential scientific map of the archipelago. It was skillfully engraved by Nicolás de la Cruz Bagay, a Tagalog craftsman trained through Jesuit missions. He was among the first Filipinos to sign his own artwork. It covers the entire geographic scope of the islands—from the Babuyan group north of Luzon to southern Mindanao, including Sulu's capital, Jolo, and the northeastern part of Borneo. In the West Philippine Sea, it features the islands of Panacot, Galit, and Lumbay. As a result, this map represents the most comprehensive and ambitious eighteenth-century visualization of the Philippines, earning its title as the mother of all Philippine maps until the late nineteenth century. Notably, the Murillo Velarde map was instrumental in defending Philippine claims over what was then known as the South China Sea.

During the Spanish colonial era, cartographic data was strictly kept secret as an imperial policy, resulting in few Spanish printed maps of the Philippines. Murillo Velarde's map is notable as the first to depict the archipelago using systematic observation and scientific methods. No prior map matched its level of detail, accuracy, or scale, and its authority persisted until the nineteenth century. In his book *Philippine Cartography*, historian Carlos Quirino described it as the most widely admired and replicated map of the Philippines.

The map is abundant with symbolic and narrative imagery. Just above the northeastern waters of Mindanao, Saint

Francis Xavier is portrayed as the "Prince of the Seas," bearing a Jesuit banner and mounted on a shell drawn by sea horses and cherubs. In close proximity, a crab clutching a cross references a well-known legend describing how Saint Francis, after losing his cross during a storm in the Moluccas, miraculously recovered it when a giant crab emerged from the sea carrying it. Although subsequent research later disproved the saint's visit to Mindanao, this legend was profoundly embedded in popular belief at the time the map was created.

Additional vignettes highlight the interconnectedness of the early modern global networks. In the upper left, an armed Chinese junk symbolizes the Jesuits' role in transferring European cartographic, astronomical, and mathematical knowledge to China in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. On the right, a three-masted galleon—symbolizing the Manila–Acapulco—illustrates the transpacific trade that connected the Philippines with the Americas and the wider Spanish empire.

Now restored to near-pristine condition and attractively framed, the map functions as both a masterpiece of early Hispano-Filipino cartography and a vibrant record of faith, empire, and global exchange in the eighteenth century. The large and small versions of the Murrillo Velarde maps were already considered highly rare when the Jesuits were expelled from Manila in 1768. An inventory of Jesuit property at that time showed only one large edition from 1734 and just six smaller editions from 1744. When Augustinian Recollect Fr. Juan dela Concepción published his *Historia general de Philipinas*, he included a reprint of the 1744 map. He replaced the original Jesuit cartouche with the Spanish Crown's royal regalia, topped by the Castle and the Lion. As the Jesuits were expelled, the original inscription on the 1744 plate mentioning "de la Compañía de Jesús" was scraped off and covered with intertwining scrollwork.







111

**Cesar Legaspi** (1917 - 1994)

*Still Life*

signed and dated 1983 (lower right)

oil on canvas

20" x 26" (51 cm x 66 cm)

**P 500,000**

Reflecting the shift from his socially engaged pieces of art, Cesar Legaspi's *Still Life* demonstrates his mastery of synthetic cubist language, transforming a mundane scene into one with meaning beyond literal representation.

Featuring a familiar still-life element such as a vase, flowers, and an open book and leaves—all fragmented into overlapping geometric planes, giving the subject a sculptural look and introspective atmosphere through a restrained, calm palette.

Instead of celebrating abundance or material comfort, Legaspi goes further: the flowers are transformed into a symbol of life and transience, the open book becomes a mirror of knowledge, memory, or reflection. Rather than telling a story, Legaspi invites the viewer of his piece to slow down and study its form, rhythm, and harmony, and how everyday objects can carry such depths when reimagined through a modernist vision. *(Mark John Castañeda)*



112

**Daniel dela Cruz** (b. 1966)

*Fanfare*

signed and dated 2018

nickel, copper, brass

beetle:

H: 5" (13 cm)

L: 6" (15 cm)

W: 6 1/4" (16 cm)

stand:

H: 19" (48 cm)

L: 10" (25 cm)

W: 14" (36 cm)

**P 90,000**

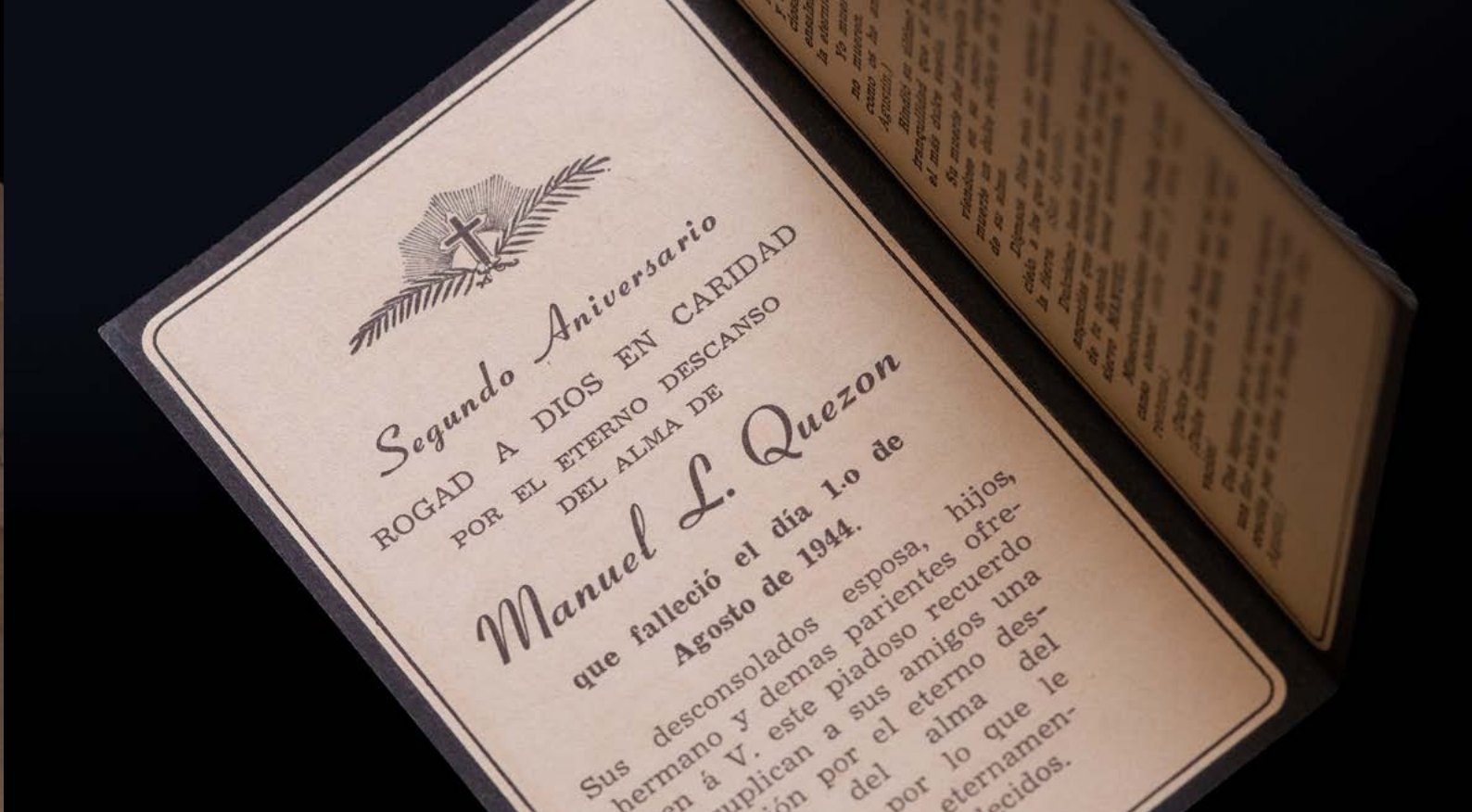
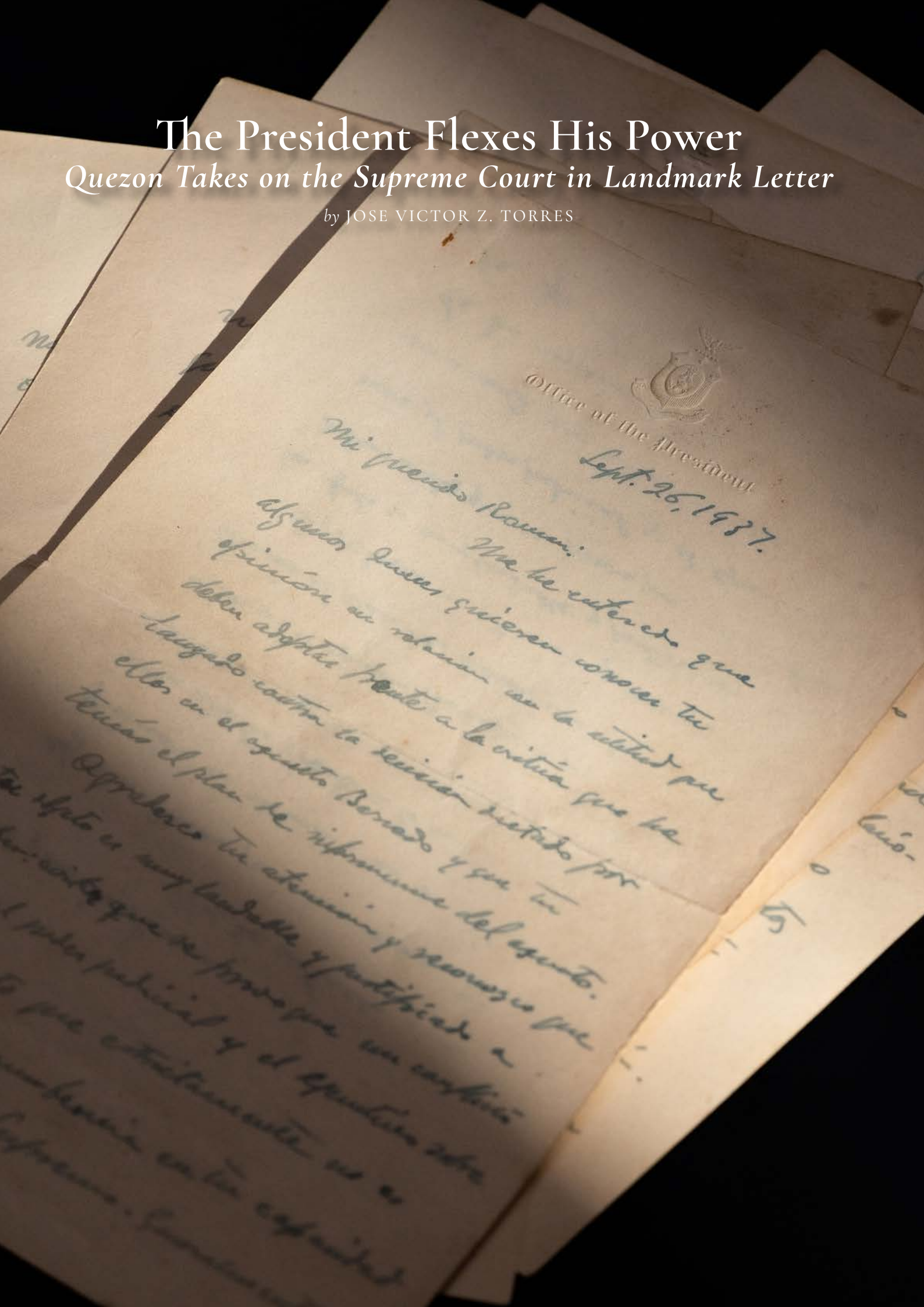
*Fanfare* (2018) is an intricately crafted metalwork by Daniel Dela Cruz, created a decade after his debut in the art scene. This piece resembles a music box, but what lies inside is a mechanical beetle. More than an insect, beetles are ancient, powerful symbols linked to metamorphosis, transformation, and growth. A fanfare, on the other hand, refers to a loud, short ceremonial tune played on brass instruments, often to announce or to celebrate something important. By synthesising these concepts, Dela Cruz's *Fanfare* is a celebration of one's growth and development, and also reflects his artistic journey. A year later, he would further establish his reputation in Philippine art by designing the 2019 SEA Games torch and medal. *(Jessica Magno)*



# The President Flexes His Power

## Quezon Takes on the Supreme Court in Landmark Letter

by JOSE VICTOR Z. TORRES



PREVIOUS PAGE: Detail of Quezon's letter on Malacañan letterhead; ABOVE: Prayer card for the 2nd anniversary of President Quezon's death, in August 1944

Ramon Avanceña served as the fourth Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of the Philippines from 1925 until his resignation two days before the outbreak of World War II on December 5, 1941. His term as chief justice included the pre-war years of the Commonwealth of the Philippines following its establishment in 1935. His son, Alberto, married Quezon's daughter, Zeneida (Nini), in 1951.

On 24 February 1938, the Supreme Court, in an en banc session, overturned decisions of the Court of Appeals and, earlier, of the Court of First Instance of Manila. It was the final act of what was then known as the "Cuevo-Barredo case" – a court case that became controversial when Commonwealth President Manuel Quezon criticized the judges of both courts, triggering a public outcry over what was considered an abuse of presidential authority over the Philippine judiciary.

The Cuevo-Barredo case started as a simple case filed by Silvestra Cuevo, whose son by a previous marriage, Anastacio Lazano, drowned in the Pasig River during a typhoon while working on a bridge project in Manila by the construction firm, Barredo and Co., owned by Fausto Barredo. The firm refused to pay an indemnity for the death of Lazano, so his mother sued in court. However, the court absolved Barredo from any liability, saying that the death was "accidental" and refused to grant indemnity to Cuevo. An appeal to the Court of Appeals also failed.

Not knowing that the case was still sub judice, having been elevated to the Supreme Court, Quezon publicly condemned the decisions and assailed the judges for their "sixteenth-century minds" and "for safeguarding the interests of the wealthy". The decision apparently ran counter to the social justice program Quezon had promised the common Filipino.

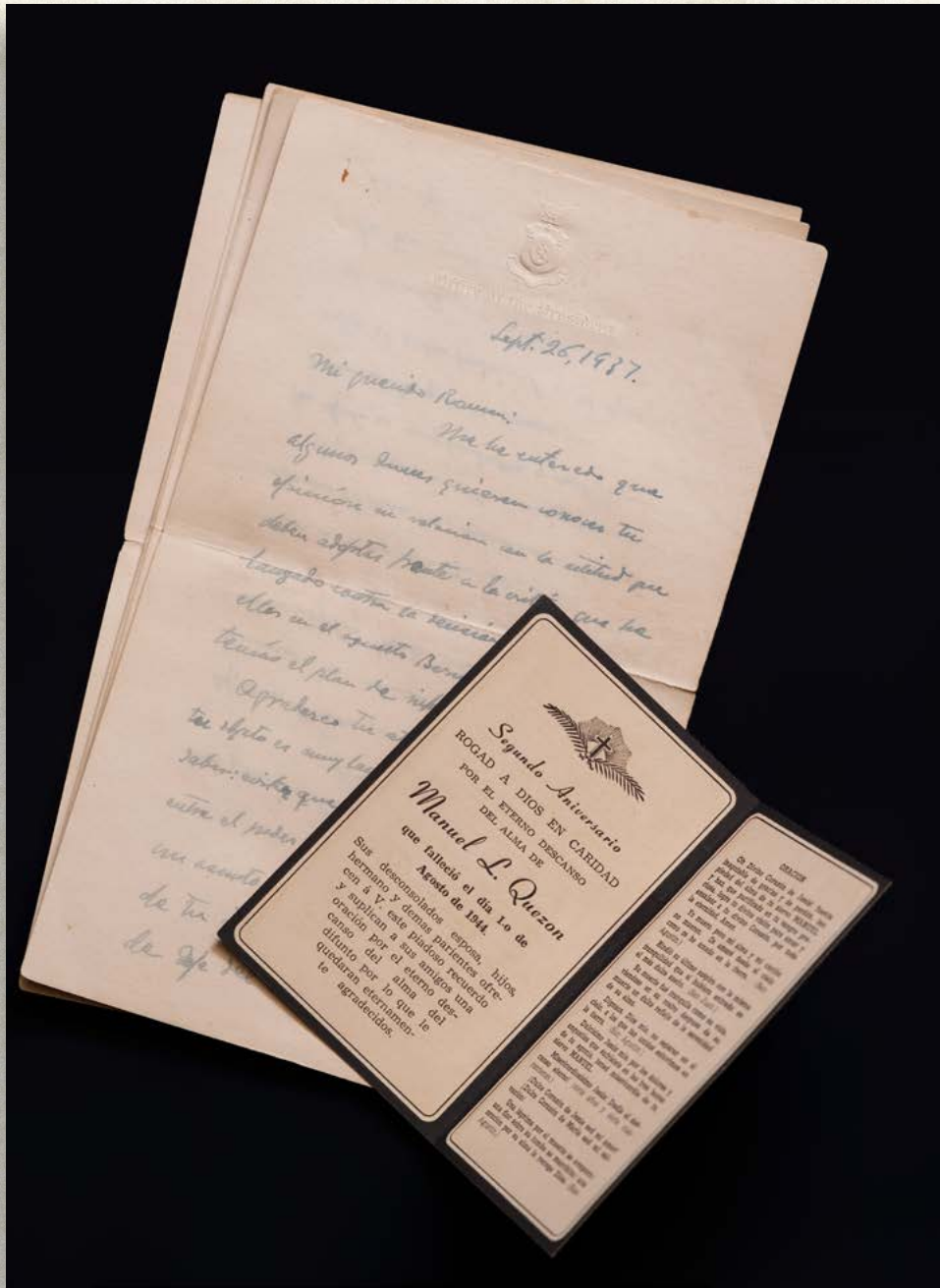
The Quezon comment sparked government uproar, with the National Assembly crying "executive interference" in the country's judicial system and calling for the President's impeachment. He was also roundly criticized by government officials for his high-handed attitude towards the judges. Still, there was some praise from other sectors, especially those who would benefit from the social justice program, such as farmers and laborers.

Quezon countered these criticisms with statements reiterating that, as President, it was his oath of office to "do justice to every man." Soon, there was talk that the entire Supreme Court, led by Chief Justice Ramon Avanceña, was threatening to resign en masse in protest.

This letter is apparently a rejoinder to one that Quezon sent to Avanceña three days earlier (September 23), in which he again justified his criticism of the court decisions. It also addressed the alleged resignation talk of the justices in which Quezon stated "that if some of them... decide to submit their resignation, I will have to accept, and I would accept it without any hesitation."

In the end, when feelings and tempers were assuaged, the Supreme Court issued its decision, overturning the two lower courts' decision and granting the plaintiff the indemnity of P1000 "from the date of filing of the complaint, until fully paid, with costs to said respondent."





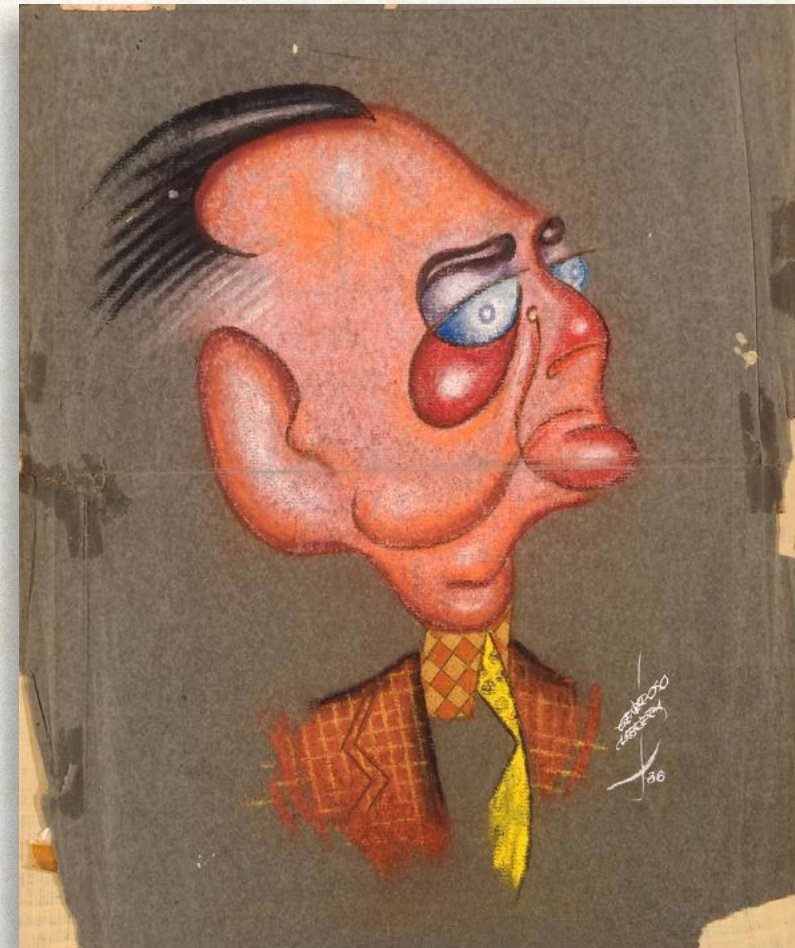
113

**Letter from Commonwealth President Manuel L. Quezon to Chief Justice Ramon Avanceña, September 26, 1937**

eight sheets  
longhand in blue ink  
9" x 5 1/4" (23 cm x 13 cm) each  
card: 4 1/2" x 2 3/4" (11 cm x 7 cm)

This lot is accompanied by a folded prayer card for the second anniversary of President Quezon's death, paper, trimmed in black.

**P 50,000**



114

**Generoso Cabrera (1919 - 1988)**

*Portrait of Manuel L. Quezon*  
signed and dated 1936 (lower right)  
pastel on paper  
14" x 11 3/4" (36 cm x 30 cm)

accompanied by a photo of its presentation to President Manuel L. Quezon and his cabinet at Malacañang Palace in 1938.

**P 50,000**

PROVENANCE  
Private collection, Manila



Gene Cabrera is a Filipino cartoonist and illustrator. Cabrera studied cartooning through correspondence at the London School of Cartooning of Cleveland in 1936, when he was still in his teens. He also took up Fine Arts at the University of the Philippines.

A recipient of many awards and citations, Cabrera was also a journalist and photographer.

Cabrera was past president of the Society of Philippine Illustrators and Cartoonists.



## Letter from Vice-President Sergio Osmeña

### to President Manuel L. Quezon

Signed and dated June 20, 1938

Four leaves, Eight pages

8" x 5" (20 cm x 13 cm)

three pictures:

i. 7 1/4" x 9" (18 cm x 23 cm)

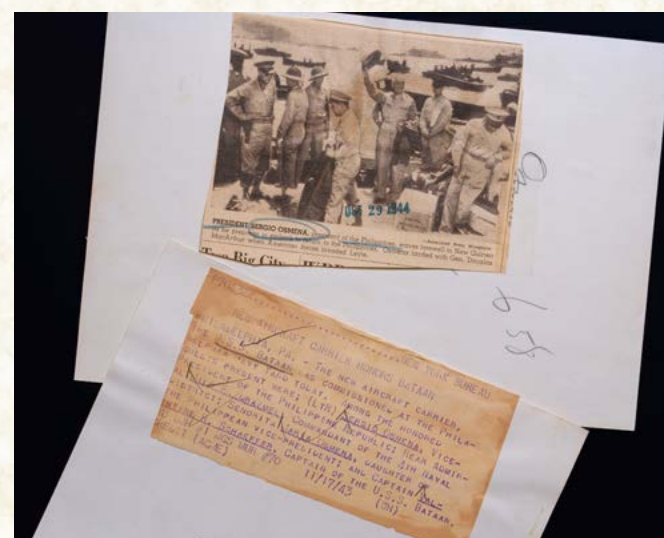
ii. 7 1/2" x 11" (19 cm x 28 cm)

iii. 7" x 5" (18 cm x 13 cm)

one booklet:

8 3/4" x 6" (22 cm x 15 cm)

**P 50,000**



ABOVE: Osmeña Photographs and Pamphlet, labeled and described on the reverse

The year 1938 marked a pivotal moment for the Commonwealth: The letter highlights unity and cooperation between the President and Vice President, which supported government stability before independence. Impending Crisis: The personal reassurance of support and prayer foreshadows the challenges ahead. Within a few years, the Japanese invasion would dismantle the Commonwealth government, and the Osmeña-Quezon partnership would be forced into exile, making the letter the poignant pre-war account of their relationship.

This letter provides direct insight into the administrative and personal workings of the pre-war Philippine Commonwealth's highest offices. Autographed correspondence between these leaders is highly valued. Condition: Excellent antique condition. The four typed pages are well-preserved, bearing the official letterhead of the Office of the Vice President and featuring Sergio Osmeña's original signature. Expected folds from mailing and age.

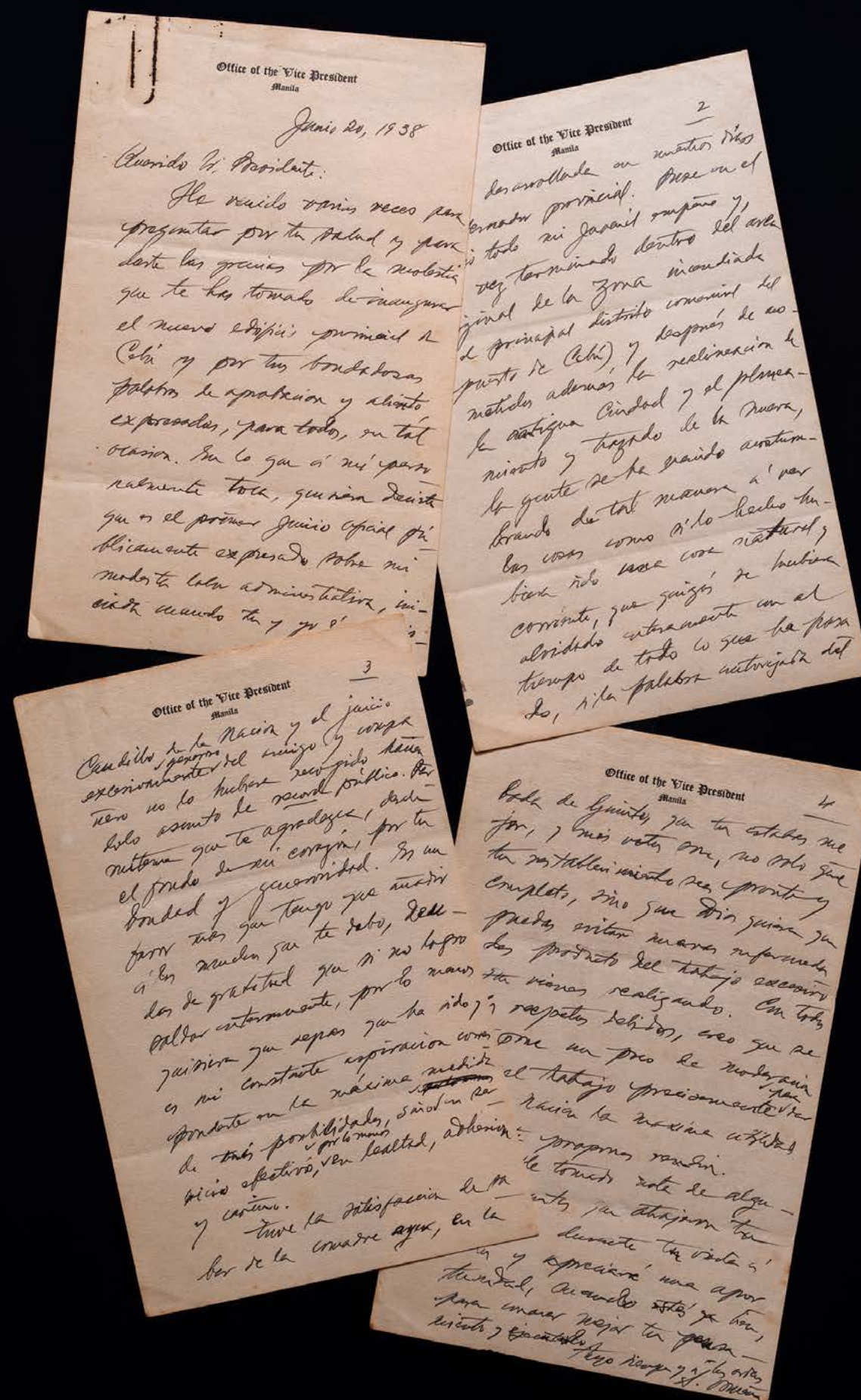
A historically significant letter from Vice President Sergio Osmeña to President Manuel L. Quezon, dated June 20, 1938, offers rare insight into their personal and political relationship as key figures in the Philippine Commonwealth government, just a few years before World War II.

This letter from the Office of the Vice President of the Philippines marks a moment of unity and respect between the leaders of the ruling Nacionalista Party and the emerging Commonwealth government. It exemplifies an important piece of political correspondence. The letter focuses on two key themes: Gratitude and Personal Loyalty.

Gratitude for Cebu's Development: Vice President Osmeña expresses his deep appreciation to President Quezon for inaugurating a new central government building in Cebu City, specifically on Colon Street, despite Quezon's health issues. Colon Street, named after Cristobal Colon (Christopher Columbus) and founded by the Spanish in 1565, is a historical landmark and the first national street in the Philippines. During the Commonwealth era, this street served as a crucial link between the island's colonial past and its bright economic future under the new government. The inauguration underscored the Commonwealth's commitment to provincial growth, a catalyst for the booming Cebu we have now.

Loyalty and Concern: Osmeña reassures Quezon of his continued support for his leadership and, most importantly, offers heartfelt prayers for Quezon's swift recovery from his current illness, even advising the President to slow down and avoid overwork. This highlights the longstanding, complex friendship between the two leaders—a bond forged in the fight for independence and soon tested by the rising global threat of war.

## A Bond of Leadership Made in Cebu





## Dimas Alang (José Rizal) Los Filipinos y Los Frailes (The Filipinos and the Friars)

Dated Hong Kong 1888

4 1/4" x 3 1/4" (11 cm x 8 cm)

**José Rizal** (1861 - 1896)

### The Friars and The Filipinos

Ramon Martinez Press, 1959

6 1/4" x 4 1/2" (16 cm x 11 cm)

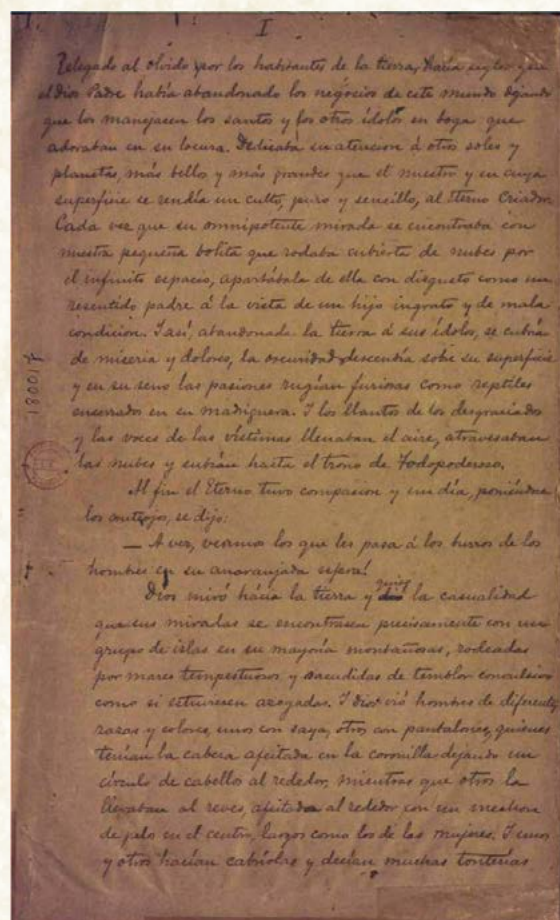
**P 100,000**

This small pamphlet, written in Spanish, features a design that would have been very familiar to readers in the late 19th-century Philippines—and, moreover, bears the immortal byline of Dimas Aláng!

Of course, Dimas Aláng was the pen name of none other than our National Hero, José Rizal. At first glance, this design closely resembles known published satirical pamphlets by Rizal under that alias, such as "La Visión de Fray Rodriguez," an imagined conversation between Father José Rodriguez, an Augustinian who criticized Rizal's novel "Noli me Tangere," and their founder, St. Augustine of Hippo. Another is "Por Telefono," written in 1889, which presents a fictional phone call between Manila and Madrid to mock the Spanish friars, particularly Father Salvador Font, for banning the novel.

The title of the pamphlet in hand is "Los Filipinos y Los Frailes." This is not to be confused with another pamphlet by the journalist Joaquin Pellicena y Camacho, a contemporary of the propagandists, entitled "Filipinos y los Frailes," which is about that campaign against the friars during the late Spanish regime and early American occupation, published in 1901.

Searching the internet for the specific title "The Filipinos and the Friars" mainly yields books summarizing the Noli Me Tangere and a pamphlet in both English and Tagalog. These, along with other short essays by Rizal published in 1959 by R. Martinez and Sons, were intended to meet the demand for Rizal publications after Republic Act 1425, or the "Rizal Law," and in anticipation of the Rizal Birth Centenary in 1961. (Incidentally, this is the companion piece in this collection.) Unlike other well-known Rizal essays, this one seems to have little visibility. The José Rizal National Centennial Commission (JRNCC) volumes on the complete works of José Rizal do not list this particular title, and upon checking the works of Rizal specialists, Zaide, Guerrero, Baron-Fernandez, and others, it is also pretty absent. One may even start to think that this is just another hoax.



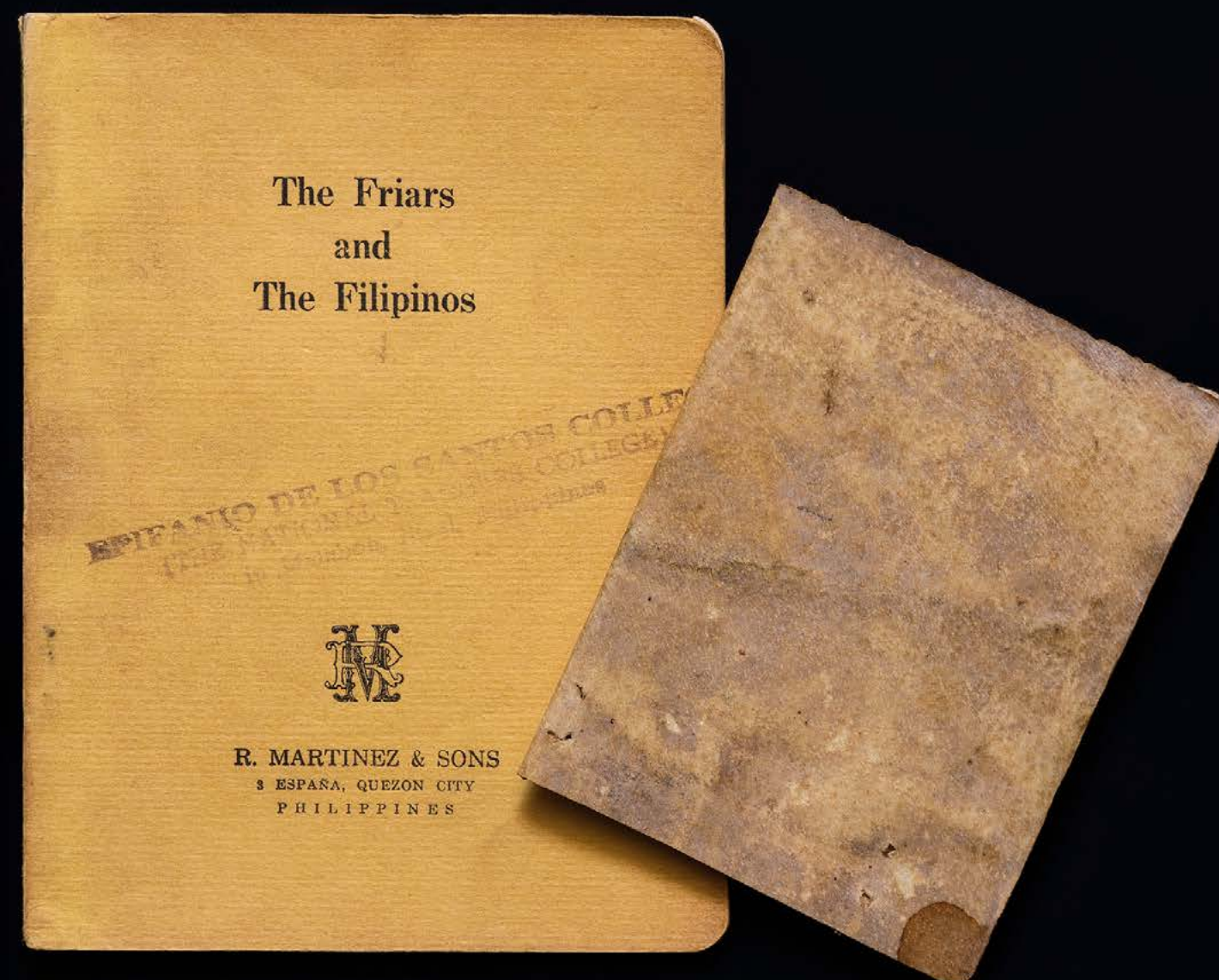
ABOVE: The first page of "Principios de Una Novela Satirica" by Rizal at the National Library of the Philippines

Upon reading the text, however, a Rizal enthusiast with an interest in history may begin to find the story familiar. Further investigation reveals that it is indeed listed in the JRNCC volume Prosa por José Rizal (Rizal's Prose), though under a different title— "Una Visita del Señor a las Filipinas" or "The Lord Gazes at the Philippine Islands." I first encountered this story in Ambeth Ocampo's Makamisa: The Search for Rizal's Third Novel, in which he summarizes the plot as follows:

"The story opens with God the Father turning his attention to the Philippines, from where he has received many complaints. He consults the people in heaven and is told that certain beings, called friars, and a Pope, claim to speak in His name on earth. God traces all this to the Christian church, so he summons both Jesus Christ and St. Peter to explain how and why this state of affairs has come about. Not satisfied with their answers, God the Father commands Jesus and Peter to return to earth and make a report on the Philippines. He assures the anxious Jesus that this trip will not entail another round of suffering on the cross.

"Jesus and Peter arrive in Hong Kong, where they are surprised to discover that a passport and visa are

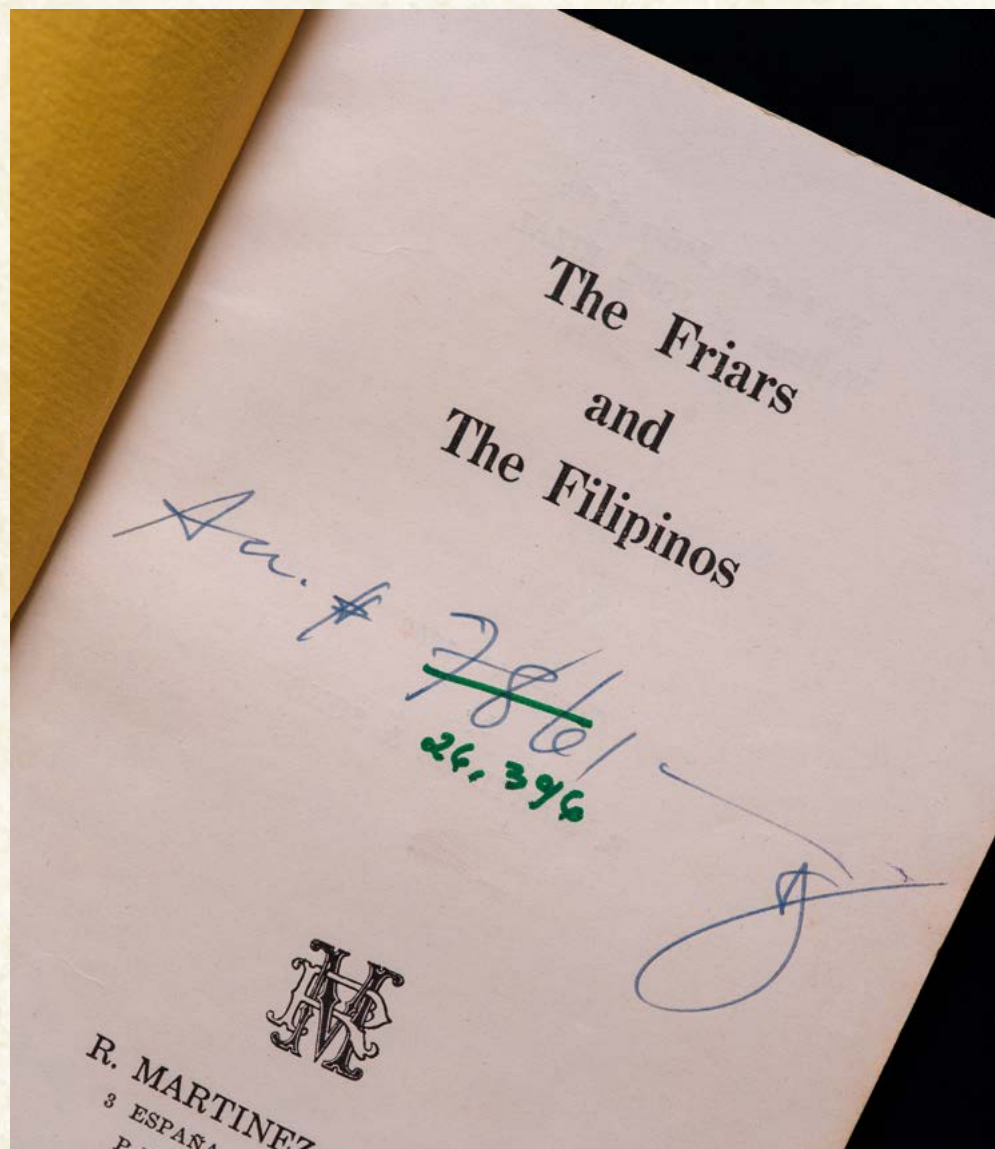
# Long-lost Rizal Satire Surfaces



## The Search for One of Rizal's Most Enigmatic and Overlooked Satirical Works

by PROF. MICHAEL CHARLESTON "XIAO" BRIONES CHUA, PH.D.  
FILIPINO PUBLIC HISTORIAN





ABOVE: Title page of The Friars and the Filipinos

required to visit the Philippines. When they arrive in Manila, the boat is placed under quarantine, adding to their impatience. Jesus notes all these in a notebook, which is later opened by Spanish customs and immigration authorities in Manila, leading to renewed detention. When Jesus and Peter complain about the shabby treatment, they are branded as subversives by the authorities. Peter escapes and searches for the Manila Cathedral, which he heard was "his," to get help. Along the way, Peter hears Jesus being interrogated, and is relieved that it is daytime; thus, he would not have to hear the cock crow again. The novel ends abruptly just when the action is supposed to begin. By leaving this unfinished, Rizal dealt a great blow to Philippine comic or satirical literature." So, if the work was unfinished, why is there a pamphlet with the same design as the other known Rizal pamphlets? The last page of the pamphlet reads "Hong Kong, 1888." Rizal, however, was not in Hong Kong in 1888; he would arrive in 1891. The pamphlet ends with this paragraph, which, when translated from the Spanish, reads, "Note: This is the first complete publication of this satirical tale by Dr. Rizal, whose original manuscript was stolen from the Biblioteca Nacional (National Library), perhaps by

the religious orders. The reduction in size of this edition has been made so that it forms a triptych with 'The Vision of Father Rodriguez' and 'By Telephone,' two other stories made by the same author that were published in Spain and Germany in the year 1889."

Although there was a deliberate attempt to make this particular printed pamphlet match the appearance of the actual Rizal pamphlets, it mentions 'the Biblioteca Nacional' or National Library. In truth, there was still no Biblioteca Nacional in 1888, so this printed material is not from 1888 but from the early American period.

And now the plot thickens. If the manuscript was stolen by the friars, how was it ever published? Was there a copy made before the theft? Was the original ever found? The footnote in Prosa por Jose Rizal indicates that the manuscript is in the Biblioteca Nacional (National Library of the Philippines, NLP), but it is unclear whether it is indeed the original. Encarnacion Alzona finished translating from Spanish to English in 1957 using a photostat copy in the NLP. The guide to the Rizal manuscripts collection does not list the story. Did the war destroy the original? Or did it fall into someone else's hands?



ABOVE: Title page of the original Spanish

Finally, Prof. Ambeth Ocampo sheds light on the matter: The original manuscript is indeed still at the National Library of the Philippines, in two notebooks, and is untitled, but was archived under the title "Principios de una novela satirica." This explains why the work is known by many names, which, aside from the two already mentioned, also include "The Divine Wrath." Apparently, the manuscript was acquired from the heirs of Rizal's friend Mariano Ponce. If there is a case for lost in translation, this is more like lost among the titles.

The importance of this work was underscored by Dolores Feria when she compared the satire of this unfinished novel to the posthumous writings of Mark Twain in Letters of the Earth. Satire is the weapon of the weak against the powerful. Rizal yielded this weapon to what his generation believed were the most formidable enemies of the Filipino people—the friars! He was not against the religion per se, as seen in his sympathetic portrayal of Jesus, but the friars, even if not all of them are bad, had become even more powerful than the civil government, just for their length of stay in a parish—30 to 50 years, as opposed to a Spanish civil official that

only stayed three years. They should also ideally have trained the secular priests to administer the parishes, because their real mission is to stay in the convent, but they clung to this position as the go-between the people and the government, and in some cases, they had become the government themselves. Thus, there is a tendency to be corrupted by power. While the Catholic Church has changed in many ways, the new Padre Damasos in our society have become the political dynasties who overstay in power and use their institution to enrich themselves.

This Rizal essay is consistent with his career and style as a satirist, but it also reflects Rizal's personal tendency to be a bit of a ningas cogon, starting projects and never finishing them. Even so, this particularly rare piece is an indicator of Rizal's continuing relevance amid the enduring hypocrisy and problems in Philippine society, still very similar to when Rizal imagined the Lord Jesus Christ coming to the Philippines to investigate them.

Acknowledging the help of Mr. Eruel Olvina, Archivist I, Filipiniana Division of the National Library of the Philippines, for finding clues on the provenance of the essay.



## Aguinaldo Picture Mailing Cards and Signed Appointment Paper

ca. 1897

a.) Emilio Aguinaldo Picture Mailing Card

May 1900

6 1/2" x 4 1/4" (17 cm x 11 cm)

b.) Emilio Aguinaldo Picture Mailing Card with rare

Philippine Revolution Postage Stamp:

5 1/2" x 3 1/4" (14 cm x 8 cm)

c.) An appointment paper to Leon Tan-Gatue y Santa Juana appointing him as First Lieutenant of the Infantry of the Revolutionary Army dated November 6, 1898 and countersigned by Aguinaldo's cousin General Baldomero Aguinaldo as Minister of War; and on the reverse a blank appointment form with a heading of General Aguinaldo as head of the revolutionary government. 12 1/4" x 8 1/4" (31 cm x 21 cm)

**P 50,000**

General Emilio Aguinaldo's popularity was on a high following his recognition first as head of the revolutionary government following the Tejeros elections in 1897 then later as President of the First Philippine Republic from 1899 to 1901.

Picture Mailing Cards were in fashion in the late 19th century as a means of sending short messages through the mail. This trend began in 1898 when the United States Congress passed an "Act of Congress of May 19, 1898" that allowed private printing companies to produce postcards with the caption "Private Mailing Card, Authorized by Act of Congress of May 19, 1898." The caption was necessary to differentiate if from mailing cards that were being used by the government. The postal charge for the cards was one American cent. In 1901, the US Postmaster-General eventually allowed the use of the "Post Card" instead of the longer "Private Mailing Card" to allow more space to write on the back. The term became the popular name of this type of mailing cards today.

One type of postcard popularly used in the first two decades of the 20th century (1899-1920) are the Real Photo Post Cards or RPPCs. This consisted of photographs produced on photopaper then printed using postcard paper for the back. This postcard added a personal touch to the mail since the photographs used are usually portraits or familiar to the sender and receiver. RPPCs and Private Mailing Cards became popularly used all over the world especially when these were allowed in the international mailing system.

The items on the block are two RPPCs of President Emilio Aguinaldo. These probably date back to 1899 when Aguinaldo and his officers were on their self-imposed exile as part of the Truce of Biak-na-Bato in December, 1897 that led to a temporary halt to the Philippine Revolution.



LEFT AND RIGHT: Front and back of lot A



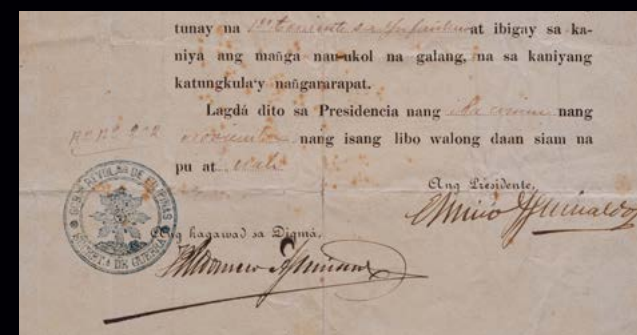
LEFT AND RIGHT: Front and back of lot B

The first item is an RPPC of Aguinaldo apparently taken during his term as president of the revolutionary government. It is the only picture of the young general with a moustache. The card was manufactured in a photo studio of "H. Yera" in Hong Kong located on Arsenal St. that was a prominent commercial area in the British colony. The card dedication was made to Colonel Ramon Soriano of the Philippine Republican Army dated May 1900—an interesting period as this was the time when President Aguinaldo was fleeing north from the American Army.

The second RPPC is that of President Aguinaldo in his military uniform taken in Biak-na-Bato, San Miguel, Bulacan ca. 1897. The card bears the caption "Private Mailing Card, Authorized by Act of Congress of May 19, 1898" on the reverse side with the instruction that it was to be used for the receiver's address only. It must be mentioned that the two-peso stamp on the card is a rare philatelic item of the type issued by the First Philippine Republic as part of the mailing system it created to obtain government funds. It bears the words "Libertad" (Liberty) and commemorates the previous government with the seal of the "Gobierno Revolucionario Filipinas" (Philippine Revolutionary Government) and the years 1898-1899.

## Memories of a General: Aguinaldo Photos and Autographs

by JOSE VICTOR Z. TORRES



LEFT: Close up of signature of Emilio and Baldomero Aguinaldo RIGHT: Seal of the Secretary of War of the First Philippine Republic



Veteranos de la Revolucion  
Certificate of Membership for  
Capitan Laureano L Aviles of Pateros  
Rizal

signed by Emilio Aguinaldo and Pio del Pilar  
dated November 10, 1926  
13 1/2" x 17 1/2" (34 cm x 44 cm)

P 40,000

This is a rare surviving Veteranos de la Revolución Certificate that officially recognizes a soldier's service in the Philippine fight for independence against Spain (1896-1898) and in the subsequent conflict with the United States (1899-1902). Issued nearly thirty years after the initial uprising, the certificate links the First Philippine Republic to the era of American colonial rule.

Issued almost a century ago, this rare certificate not only commemorates the bravery of Filipino revolutionaries but also underscores the enduring impact of their struggle for independence. Authenticated by General Aguinaldo himself, it stands as a testament to the resilience and unity of those who fought for the nation's freedom during a pivotal period in Philippine history.

The Asociación de los Veteranos de la Revolución

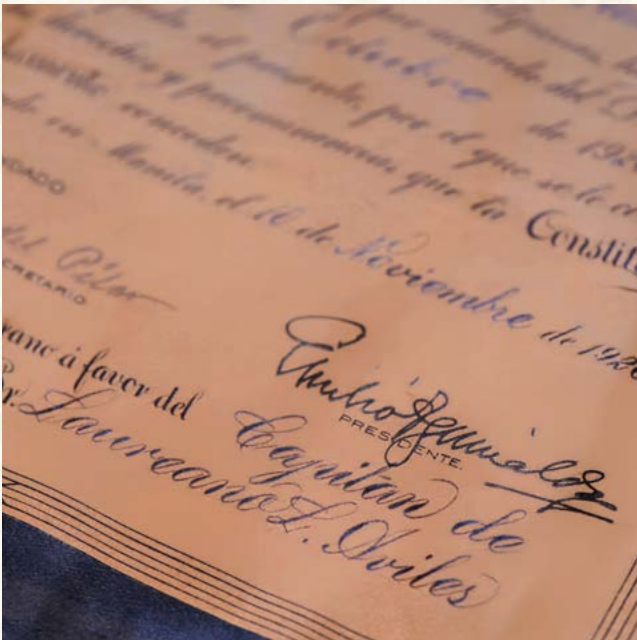
• **Foundation:** The Association was founded in 1912 by General Emilio Aguinaldo, former President of the First Philippine Republic. Purpose: Its primary role was to secure pensions and essential welfare benefits, including land acquisition schemes, for aging Filipino soldiers who fought for kalayaan (freedom) but were largely overlooked by the new American authorities. The certificate served as the tangible proof of service required to access these benefits.

• **Signatures:** The printed signatures on the certificate were typically those of the organization's leaders, such as Emilio Aguinaldo, the first President of the Philippines, and Pio del Pilar, the legendary general known as the "Hero of Makati," adding historical significance and authenticity to the document.

Issued during the American colonial period, this document served as a subtle yet powerful reminder of the Philippines' hard-won yet lost sovereignty. Its survival today evokes a strong sense of Filipino nationalism and pride.

• **Political Role:** The association remained influential in politics. The support of the Veteranos de la Revolución organization was vital to Aguinaldo during his final presidential campaign in 1935 against Manuel L. Quezon, highlighting the veterans' enduring political significance and moral authority in the young nation.

• **Artwork:** The striking lithographic illustration depicts a male and female figure holding flags—one often associated



ABOVE: Detail of Aguinaldo's Signature

with the early Katipunan (a simple red flag symbolizing blood and bravery) and the other representing the National Flag of the First Republic—evoking the full historical scope of the revolutionary struggle.

CONCLUSION

This certificate is more than a record of service; it is a meaningful historical document of post-revolutionary life, serving as the official acknowledgment of the sacrifices made by Captain D. Laureano P. Pettes, the recipient of this certificate, and his comrades. Its value as a collectible extends beyond the paper—it represents a tangible link to the nation's revolutionary history and the ongoing journey toward self-determination. For collectors, historians, and patriots alike, owning this certificate is not only a source of pride but also a way to preserve and honor the memory of those who fought bravely for Philippine independence. The continued existence of these certificates serves as an important educational resource, inspiring future generations to appreciate and reflect on the sacrifices that laid the foundation for the modern Filipino nation.

It is a museum-quality piece essential for any serious collection focused on Philippine independence, revolutionary history, and Philippine military records.

Proof of Heroism  
Aguinaldo Association for  
Veterans of the Revolution





A Complete and Bound Set of  
Harper's Weekly, Volume 42

(January 1 - December 31, 1898)  
16 1/4" x 12" (41 cm x 30 cm)

P 40,000

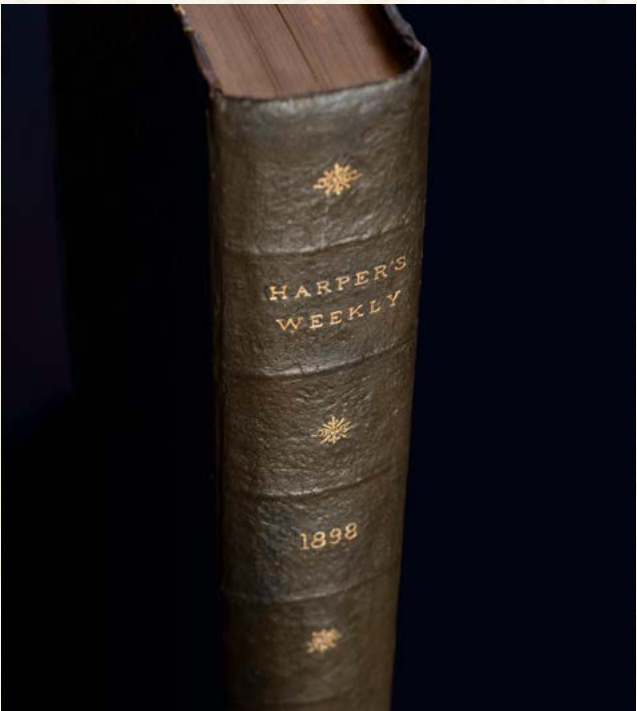
This offering is a complete, bound volume containing all 52 issues of Harper's Weekly published in the pivotal year of 1898. This collection is a key primary source for understanding American public opinion and historical events at the turn of the 20th century. It is more than a bibliographic rarity; it is a foundational primary source for the study of the Philippine-American War and the nascent First Philippine Republic. As we examine the shift from Spanish colonial rule to American intervention, these pages provide a granular, weekly account of how the "Philippine Question" was framed for the Western world.

The year 1898 marks the chronological fulcrum of Philippine modern history. This volume stands out for capturing the rapid evolution of American sentiment—shifting from the naval triumph of Commodore George Dewey at Manila Bay in May to the complex political entanglements among the Biak-na-Bato signatories. For the Philippine collector, the inclusion of actual photographs of revolutionary leaders—rare for the era—sets this set apart. These images provided the first visual introduction of the Filipino intelligentsia and military leadership to a global audience, documenting a movement often misrepresented as a mere "insurrection" rather than a sophisticated struggle for sovereignty. The topics covered in this volume provide a unique weekly account of events as they unfolded, including the Spanish-American War and its immediate aftermath. For scholars and enthusiasts of Philippine history, this collection is especially valuable, offering a firsthand American perspective on the start of the Philippine-American War—an insight not commonly found in other archives.

This collection thoroughly documents the U.S. Eighth Army Corps through sketches and early photographs, capturing the arrival of American forces and the start of military control. This visual and textual record is vital for understanding the reality and logistics of early American occupation and the events leading to hostilities in February 1899.

By analyzing the political cartoons and editorials in this volume, historians can deconstruct the "Manifest Destiny" ideology that fueled American expansion in the Pacific. This volume preserves the tension of a world in flux:

- **The Propaganda Factor:** How Filipino revolutionaries were portrayed to justify "Benevolent Assimilation."
- **The Biak-na-Bato Legacy:** Rare visual evidence of the pact's participants, bridging the gap between the 1896 Revolution and the 1899 Republic.
- **Journalistic Integrity:** The shift from reporting on a war of liberation to a war of conquest.

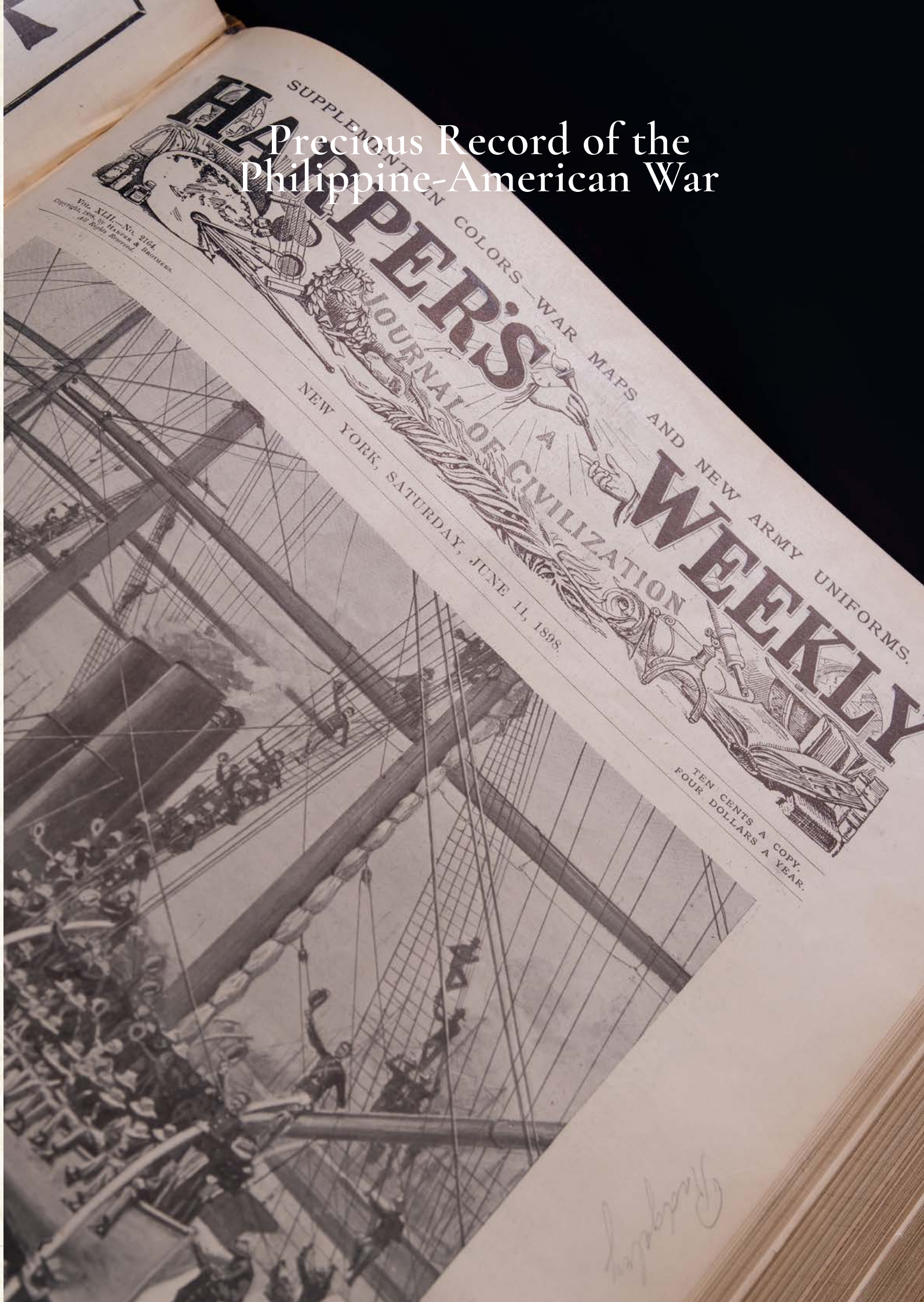


ABOVE: Profile of hardbound volume of Harper's Weekly BELOW: Page featuring Emilio Aguinaldo

For the serious historian of the Revolutionary period, this volume is an essential companion to our local archives. It allows us to view our ancestors' struggle through the lens of the "Other," providing the context needed to understand the complex roots of our national identity.

This item is for historians, librarians, archivists, and private collectors interested in American and Philippine history, late-19th-century journalism, and the history of print media. Uniquely, the collection includes rare contemporaneous periodicals and firsthand American accounts, making it an essential resource for understanding the American perspective during its early imperial expansion in the Pacific and the complex foundations of the First Philippine Republic.

Condition: Good. The binding is solid, and the pages show minor signs of age-related wear, but are free from major tears or significant foxing. All issues are complete.



Precious Record of the  
Philippine-American War



## Philippine-American War Dagger from the Ilocano Campaign

Dagger, silver and horn

Blade, obverse : Engraved with the words "F Ca 1900 Ilokana" and the Philippine revolutionary seal featuring three stars and the mythical sun, with decorative motifs down the blade

Blade, reverse : Engraved with the word "Filipinas" and a series of crossed "daga y espada" (dagger and sword) motifs

With a scabbard, and belt clip, silver and horn

Engraved with the super-imposed name of the American soldier who captured the weapon : H. Hilton (of Troop E, an African-American cavalry unit that saw action in the Philippines)

Dated 1900

dagger:

L: 11 1/4" (29 cm)

W: 1 3/4" (4 cm)

scabbard:

L: 7 3/4" (20 cm)

W: 1 1/4" (3 cm)

**P 400,000**

This remarkable artifact is more than a weapon; it is a powerful, tangible symbol of the fierce, unwavering fight for independence during a pivotal period in Philippine history. This First Republic Revolutionary Dagger is an outstanding example of ceremonial and personal arms worn by high-ranking officers of the Ejército Filipino (Philippine Revolutionary Army) during the Philippine–American War (1899–1900). It embodies the spirit of the Katipuneros and the First Philippine Republic—serving as a physical testament to the Philippine struggle for sovereignty. This rare dagger links the Katipunan rebellion, the First Philippine Republic, and the subsequent Philippine–American War in a single historic weapon.

This dagger captures the story of a nation's birth—a physical manifestation of the Philippine–American War (1899–1900) and a reliquary of the sacrifices made to create a free Republic.

The craftsmanship and detailed symbols of the dagger make it a distinctive historical and cultural artifact.

• **Blade Inscriptions:** The blade bears the inscription "F.ca Ilokana 1900" alongside a Revolutionary Seal featuring the iconic sun and star enclosed within a triangle. On the reverse, the word "Filipinas" is paired with a Revolutionary Flag motif, intertwined with a leafy branch and a cross-



ABOVE: Details of the Filipino Dagger and Scabbard. note the name H. Hilton of the American soldier that captured this weapon.

The Duality of War  
Captured in a War Trophy  
*An Ilocano Warrior Battles an American Soldier*





dagger and saber emblem. The “Ilokana 1900” inscription strongly links the piece to an important time and place. It serves as a powerful symbol of Ilocano regional pride and bravery, reflecting the area's fierce resistance led by commanders such as General Manuel Tinio and the sacrifice of General Gregorio del Pilar.

- **The scabbard's two-tone finish of silver and carabao horn** and its medallion engraved with a sun and three stars—the emblem of the Revolutionary Government—reflect enlightenment, unity, and liberation, themes later immortalized in the Philippine flag.

- **Symbolic Hilt:** The silver and horn hilt stands for Filipino resilience. Its seven-sided barrel grip represents the spiritual dimension of the revolution and the dual nature of war: rooted in the people, guided by higher purpose.

Provenance and the Complexities of War

A detailed, intricate layer of provenance is etched onto the dagger, recording its capture during the conflict.

- **Cross-Guard Engraving:** The inscription “Troop E” on the cross-guard indicates the dagger was taken as war loot during the Philippine–American War. The U.S. 4th Cavalry's Troop E participated in key battles, including the Battle of Porac. Additionally, “Troop E” of the 9th Cavalry, an African American regiment, served in the Philippines and fought against the forces of General Emilio Aguinaldo.

- **U.S. Soldier's Mark:** The name “H. Hilton,” engraved near the scabbard's throat, likely refers to a U.S. soldier who participated in these campaigns, confiscated the weapon from a Filipino officer, and helped preserve it during a significant historical transfer.

#### Historical Significance and Context

This dagger style was more than a sidearm; it was a symbol of status and commitment, proudly worn by high-ranking officers of the First Republic. Historical photographs of revolutionary generals—including Miguel Malvar, Juan Cailles, and Tomas Mascardo—show these daggers prominently displayed as part of

their formal military attire, symbolizing honor, leadership, and unwavering dedication to the revolutionary cause. The radiant sun motif etched on this blade directly inspired the enduring symbol of the modern Philippine Flag—a timeless emblem of enlightenment, unity, and the unyielding spirit of liberation.

The dagger bears the indelible marks of its capture, transforming it into a monument to shared suffering. The engravings of “Troop E” and the name “H. Hilton” document its transition from a symbol of Filipino leadership to a trophy of American conquest. Possessing this weapon is to hold a fragment of the Philippine soul. It is a testament to the officer who wore it in defiance and the soldier who claimed it in victory—a singular object reflecting the duality of war: its inherent violence and its pursuit of honor.



General M. Tinio and his Military Staff, from an old photograph. The Tinio Brigade, in the words of Lieutenant Colonel Juan Villamor, commander of the revolution, fought valiantly in defense of the revolution.

ABOVE: General Manuel Tinio and the officers of the Ilocos Command



**Ramon Orlina** (b. 1944)*A Mother's Love II*

signed and dated 2003

asahi glass

H: 13" (33 cm)

L: 10 3/4" (27 cm)

W: 5 3/4" (15 cm)

**P 1,200,000**Accompanied by a certificate signed by the artist  
confirming the authenticity of this lot

*"It is Ramon Orlina's use of modern tools like high-speed grinders, diamond cutters and sand blasters which imparts a unique imprint on the glass material. It is also the mode which sets him apart from other glass artists (working on the hot process)."*

—CID REYES, RAMON ORLINA:  
VISIONS IN GLASS, 2024

The art of sculpting is a familiar concept in Philippine art history. It was, in fact, one of the country's pioneering art forms. Philippine sculpture, which began with the pre-Hispanic practice of carving anitos in wood, stone, or molding them in clay, underwent a series of modifications in subjects and materials. To this day, artists have experimented with glass, brass, and even ice sculpting. Ramon Orlina, with his premier glass sculptures, is among the most celebrated sculptors of this era.

Glass sculptures, regardless of their size, are a sight to behold. However, behind these refined and elegant art pieces lies a meticulous and tedious process that demands dedication and effort. Made from a hard, brittle material, creating glass sculptures requires patience and careful handling. The traditional hammer and chisel method will not work and may even damage it.

Glass sculptures are typically made through the hot glass process, which involves working with molten glass at high temperatures. But with Orlina's in-depth studying and experience with glass, he already acquired substantial knowledge on the material and devised a different way of glass sculpting, called the coldworking technique. This process involves cutting and shaping glass with high-speed machines, grinders, and sandblasters, which pulverize the material rather than shattering it, and then smoothing and polishing to finish it. While this technique is initially



ABOVE: Ramon Orlina with his series of carved and painted clear optical glass © Rupert Jacinto

used in metallurgy and has been around for some time, Orlina is the leading figure in Philippine glass sculpture who practices this method, setting his works apart from his peers and earning him the distinction as the "Father of Philippine Glass Sculpture."

Beyond his technical mastery with glass, Orlina's works often explore themes of family and compassion, reflecting his personal values and Filipino cultural ideals, as evidenced in this 2003 piece. Made of Asahi glass, this work depicts two figures in a warm embrace, exemplifying the artist's tendency to focus on love and connection. These works evoke a sense of comfort and remind viewers of the importance of human relationships, whether family or not. (Jessica Magno)





P. Pedro Murillo Velarde

Historia de la Provincia de Philipinas de la Compañía de Jesus  
1749

containing:  
a.) Padre Pedro Murillo Velarde & Nicolas de la Cruz Bagay  
Map of the Philippine Islands, 1744  
map size: 20" x 13 1/4" (51 cm x 34 cm)

b.) Laureano Atlas  
Nuestra Señora del Rosario y Nuestra Señora de la Paz y Buen Viaje.

book size:  
H: 11 3/4" (29 cm)  
W: 8" (20 cm)  
D: 1 1/2" (4 cm)

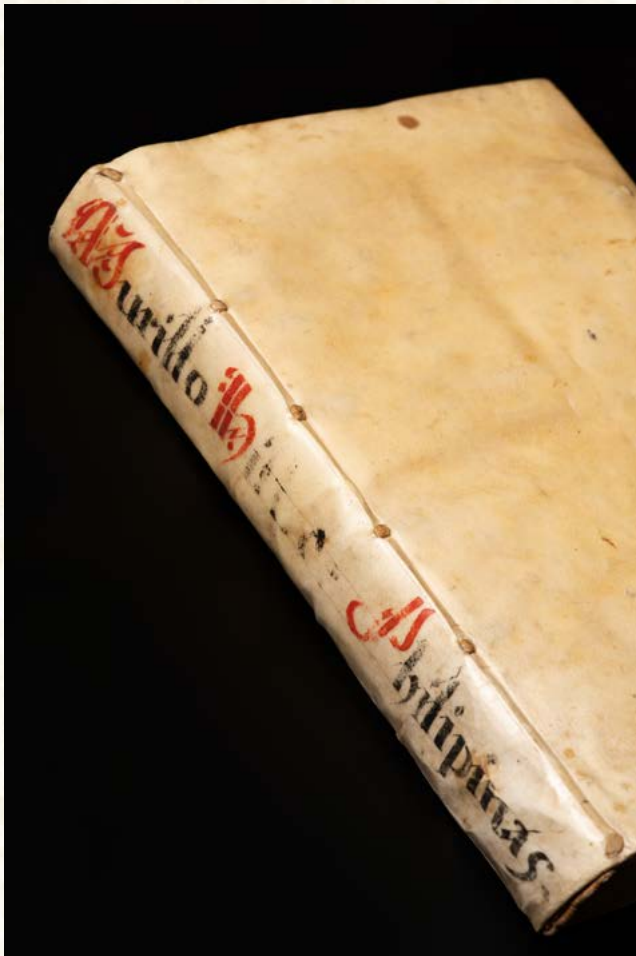
P 1,000,000

CONDITION REPORT  
Map and Engraving with restoration. (not unexpected since they are on rice paper)

Pedro Murillo Velarde is mainly known in the Philippines as the creator of the wonderful map that bears his surname and whose original name is "Carta corográfica y geográfica de Filipinas" (1734). Designed by him, with very stylish prints on the sides, all of them originally sculpted in copper by Filipino artists, it is one of the most coveted maps by collectors from all over the world.

This copy is truly extraordinary, not only because of its excellent state of preservation, despite the delicate paper on which it was printed, but also because it contains two exceptional engravings that are often auctioned separately. As early as 1906, the bibliographer Retana noted how difficult it was to find a copy with both engravings. The first is a reproduction in a smaller scale of his well-known map, sculpted by the Philippine printer Nicolás de la Cruz Bagay. The second one features Virgen de la Rosa, of much devotion in the then town of San Pedro Makati, and Nuestra Señora de la Paz y Buen Viaje, patroness of Antipolo, a work of Tagalog artist Lorenzo Atlas.

This is the second Jesuit history of the archipelago, after Labor Evangélica (Madrid, 1663), by Father Francisco Colín, and covers the years 1616-1716, as the title indicates. The first and third parts focus on the actions of the Jesuits in the Philippines, the second part is focused on the missions of Mindanao and Sulu, while the fourth part speaks of the vicissitudes of the Society in the Mariana Islands and the discovery of the Palau Islands. Unlike other ecclesiastical chronicles, he does not focus only on missionary activities and devotes much attention to the decisions of the governors — whom he often judges harshly— as well as naval battles against piracy and the Dutch, revolts of the Sangleyes and civil affairs in general. It is a historiographical masterpiece that deserves to be fully translated for Filipino readers.



ABOVE: Sheepskin cover of the Murillo Velarde book BELOW: Murillo Velarde Map shown folded out of the book

The Murillo Velarde Book, Map and Laureano Atlas Engraving







LEFT: Details of the Murillo Velarde Map showing the contested islands of the West Philippine Sea RIGHT: Signature of Nicolas de la Cruz Bagay, "Manileño"

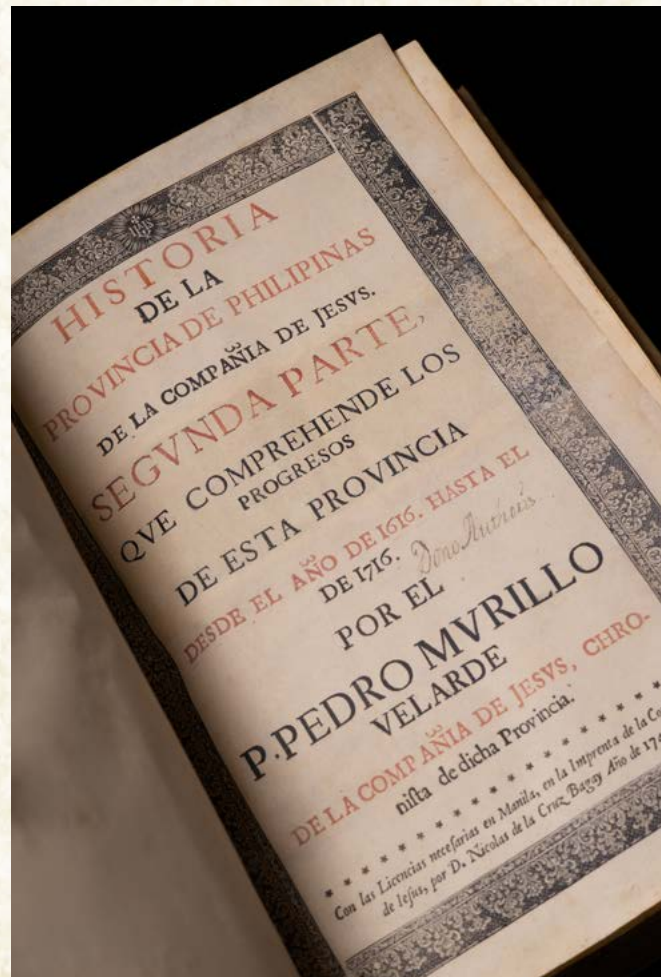
## A Devotion to the Two Historic Marian Images in the Philippines

The frontispiece depicts the two popular Marian images that were worshipped in the Philippines from the 17th century until today. The Virgen de la Rosa is the patroness of Makati and the miraculous image is presently housed in the church of the Parish of St. Peter and Paul in Poblacion, Makati.

History records that the image was brought to the Philippines through the Manila-Acapulco galleon by Jesuit priest Fr. Juan Delgado in August 10, 1718. It was said to have a special reliquary in its chest that contained a strand of hair from the Virgin Mary. Unfortunately, the reliquary as well as the original ivory head and hands of the image were stolen during the revolution and were never found. Her feastday is celebrated in Makati every June 30.

The Virgen de la Paz y Buen Viaje (Virgin of Peace and Good Voyage) was brought to the Philippines in 1626 by Governor-General Juan Niño de Tabora. Its intercession for a safe trip was always called upon during journeys of the Manila galleon. It was placed under the care of the Jesuits who originally placed it in the first San Ignacio Church in Intramuros. When Tabora died in 1632, the Jesuits placed the image in their mission in Antipolo where a church was being built. There it stayed and the parish became a popular pilgrimage place for devotees to the Virgin. Her feast day is celebrated every first Tuesday of May.

It was said that the devotion to the two images became so popular in the Spanish period that the frontispiece in the book celebrated these venerations as part of the history of the religious missions of the Jesuits in the Philippines. (Jose Victor Z. Torres)



**ABOVE:** Title Page of the Murillo Velarde **OPPOSITE PAGE:** Engraving of the Virgin of the Roses (Virgen de la Rosa) of San Pedro Macati and the Virgin of Peace and Good Voyage (Virgen de la Paz y Buen Viaje, also known as the Virgin of Antipolo) By Laureano Atlas, Tagalog engraver, shown folded out of the book





**Roberto Chabet** (1937 - 2013)*Untitled*

signed and dated 1971 (lower right)

mixed media

20" x 13 1/2" (51 cm x 34 cm)

**P 140,000**

A graduate of Architecture, Roberto Chabet possesses substantial knowledge of space and how to make use of it. Through time, he has created paintings, drawings, prints, collage works, sculptures, and installations, works that are meditations on space, the transitory nature of commonplace objects and the collisions that occur with their displacement. Thought-provoking and multifaceted, Chabet's works ultimately challenge what art is. This untitled work was created in 1971, a decade after his first solo exhibition at the Luz Gallery, showcasing his dedication and growth as an artist. He was an artist and a professor who taught and inspired many up-and-coming artists, whose artistic journeys draw on Roberto Chabet's genius. *(Jessica Magno)*

**Pacita Abad** (1946 - 2004)*Yellow Tulip*

signed and dated 1993 (lower right)

oil on canvas

16" x 12" (41 cm x 30 cm)

**P 100,000**

Resonating with the artist's lifelong focus on visibility, joy, and affirmation, Pacita Abad's *Yellow Tulips* embraces beauty and radiant color as a form of vitality—intense and life-affirming. Featuring an image of a yellow tulip on a black background, the color's vibrancy seems to assert the subject itself within the art. This detail fits Abad's broader practice, in which color is often expressive, celebratory, and emotionally charged. The idea of growth, beauty, and endurance glows radiantly as the flower stands on the pitch-black canvas. The painting asks its observers to slow down and observe as beauty and joy bloom fully and confidently. *(Mark John Castañeda)*

**Onib Olmedo** (1937-1996)*Untitled (Fruits on Table)*

signed and dated 1992 (lower right)

pastel on felt paper

27 1/2" x 21 1/2" (70 cm x 55 cm)

**P 160,000**

Accompanied by a certificate issued by Ms. Gisella Olmedo-Araneta confirming the authenticity of this lot

Making a meditation piece about private domestic life, Onib Olmedo's still-life piece visualizes the space where nourishment, rest, and memory overlap. Essentially transforming a mundane scene into a quiet and introspective atmosphere where lighting objects and space express interior emotions.

Created around 1992, the piece focuses on the image of a small round table set with watermelon, banana, and other fruits, as two candles light it, setting the intimate mood

of the piece. From the ceiling hangs a lamp that seems to illuminate the surrounding tables and chairs, as well as the red-and-white checkered floors. The grainy textures give the still life a hazy, memory-like quality, blurring the boundaries between waking life and a dream, and the piece is a poetic meditation on intimacy, memory, and emotional shelter. *(Mark John Castañeda)*



Anson, George (1697–1762)

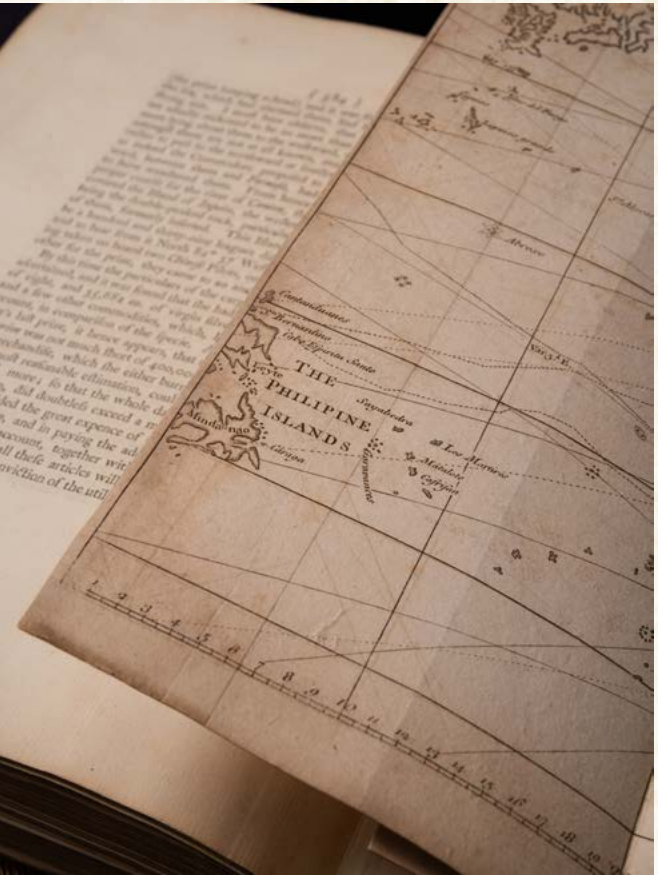
*A Voyage Round the World, in the Years MDCCXL, I, II, III, IV.*  
George Anson, printed for the author by John and Paul Knapton, London, 1749. Compiled from his Papers and Materials by Richard Walter, M.A., Chaplain of his Majesty's Ship the Centurion, in that Expedition. [20], 417 pp. With 42 numbered copper-engraved maps, charts, views, coastal profiles, etc., most folding. (4to) 29.2x23 cm. (11½x9"), period full calf, spine gilt, raised bands. Fifth Edition. Cox Vol. I, p.49 (1st Ed.); Hill 1820; Sabin 101175.

Beautiful, wide-margined copy, on fine, thick paper, of the sought-after fifth edition of Anson's voyage, printed on heavy laid paper and superior in quality to the first four editions produced the preceding year. The work is justifiably famous for the many engraved charts and views, but also noteworthy for the text chronicling adventure and discovery as Anson roamed the Pacific in pursuit of Spanish treasure, at which he was very successful, capturing in 1743 the Manila galleon with a treasure of £400,000 sterling, returning to England a rich and famous man.

Hill comments that "This compilation has long occupied a distinguished position as a masterpiece of descriptive travel. Anson's voyage appears to have been the most popular book of maritime adventure of the eighteenth century." Cox notes that four editions came out the first year of publication, with 16 by 1781. He also comments on the "famous and unfortunate" nature of the expedition, with seven of the eight ships that set out being lost rounding Cape Horn and on the coast of Chile, and more than two-thirds of the 900 men that set out from England perishing. This copy does not have the large folding map of the world included with most copies of the fifth edition - though not called for in the list of plates (lacking in this copy). Cox Vol. I, p.49 (1st Ed.); Hill 1820; Sabin 101175.

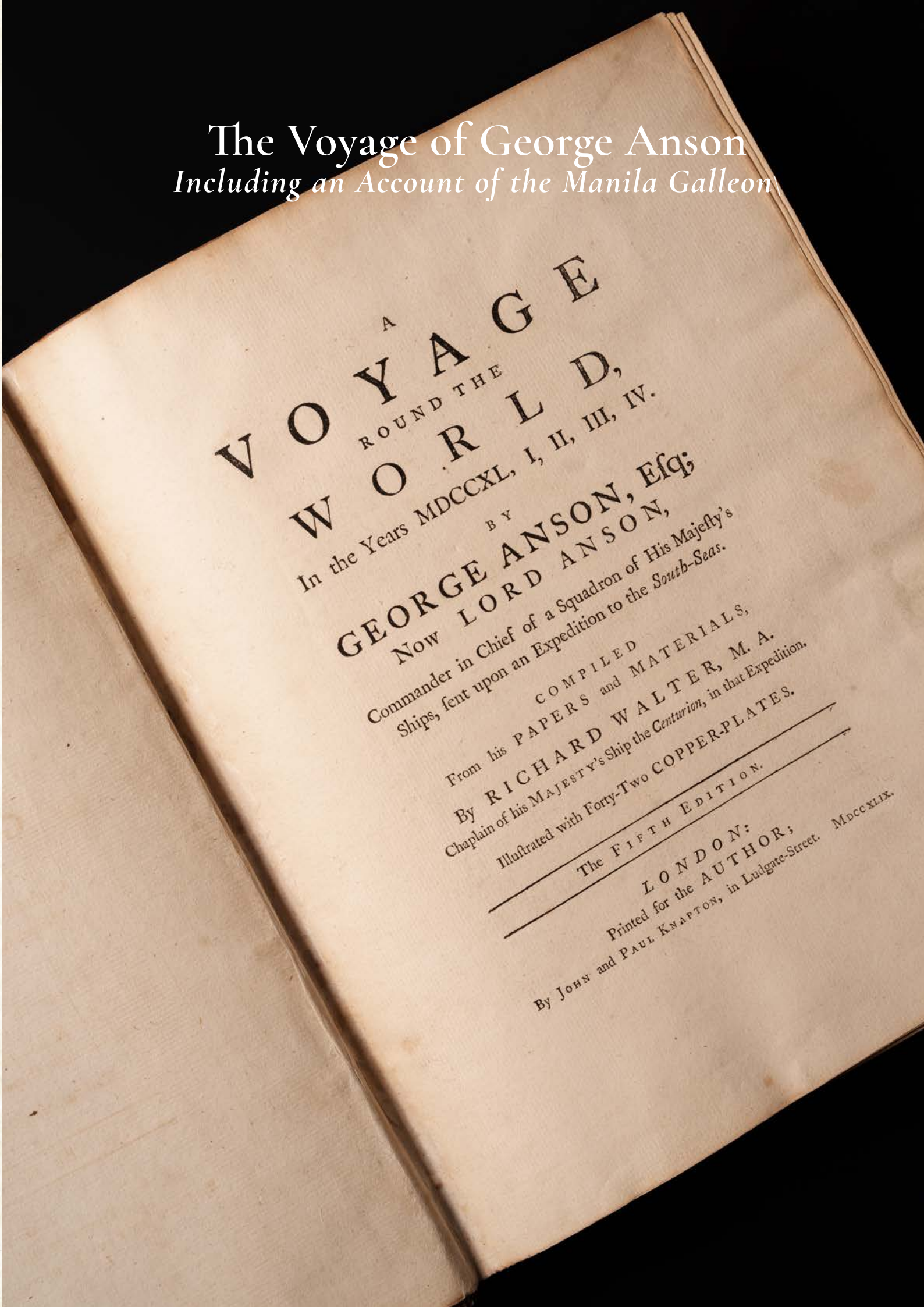
P 360,000

CONDITION REPORT  
Very good. Binding restored and book rebound by Ortigas Library. Plates and maps cleaned. Tipped to page 119 is a typed letter from booksellers Francis Edwards Ltd. regarding an incorrect catchword at the bottom of page 119.



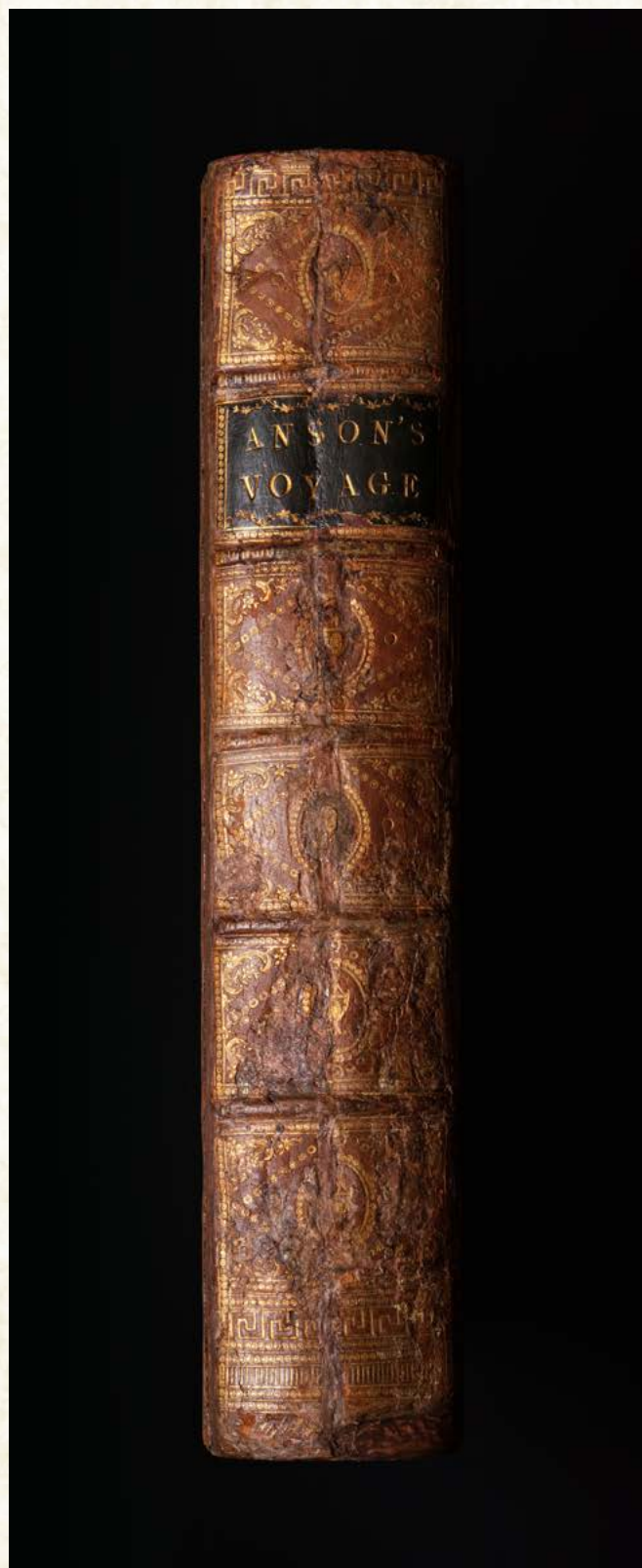
ABOVE: George Anson (1697–1762), 1st Baron Anson, Admiral of the Fleet © Attributed to Thomas Hudson / Royal Museums Greenwich BELOW: Detail of the Map showing the Philippine Islands

The Voyage of George Anson  
Including an Account of the Manila Galleon





Between 1740 and 1744, during the War of the Austrian Succession, Commodore (later Admiral) George Anson led a squadron of eight ships on a mission to circumnavigate the world and disrupt Spain's possessions in the Pacific. Seven of his ships were lost, but in 1743 Anson's flagship, the *Centurion*, defeated the Manila Galleon *Nuestra Señora de Covadonga* off Cape Espiritu Santo in Samar. Anson captured not only a fortune in silver bullion and coins, but also Spanish charts by Joseph Fransisco Badaraco. These were taken to England, copied by R.W. Seale, and published in 1748 in the account of Anson's voyage, *A Voyage Round the World, as A Chart of the Channel in the Philippine Islands through which the Manila Galleon passes* and *A Chart of the Pacific Ocean*. Anson's book and the maps were subsequently produced in multiple editions in English, French, Dutch, German and Russian.



ABOVE: The George Anson tome OPPOSITE PAGE: Detail of the account of the Manila Galleon

( 370 )

# CH A P. VIII.

From *Macao* to Cape *Espiritu Santo* : The taking of the *Manila* galleon, and returning back again.

THE Commodore was now got to sea, with his ship well refitted, his stores replenished, and an additional stock of provisions on board : His crew too was somewhat reinforced ; for he had entered twenty-three men during his stay at *Macao*, the greatest part of them Lascars or *Indian* sailors, and the rest *Dutch*. He gave out at *Macao*, that he was bound to *Batavia*, and thence to *England* ; and though the westerly monsoon was now set in, when that passage is considered as impracticable, yet, by the confidence he had expressed in the strength of his ship, and the dexterity of his hands, he had persuaded not only his own crew, but the people at *Macao* likewise, that he proposed to try this unusual experiment ; so that there were many letters sent on board him by the inhabitants of *Canton* and *Macao* for their friends at *Batavia*.

But his real design was of a very different nature. For he supposed, that instead of one annual ship from *Acapulco* to *Manila*, there would be this year, in all probability, two ; since, by being before *Acapulco*, he had prevented one of them from putting to sea the preceding season. He therefore, not discouraged by his former disasters, resolved again to risque the casualties of the *Pacific* ocean, and to cruise for these returning vessels off Cape *Espiritu Santo*, on the Island of *Samal*, which is the first land they always make at the *Philippine* Islands : And as *June* is generally the month in which they arrive there, he doubted not but he should get to his intended station time enough to intercept them. It is true, they were said to be stout vessels, mounting forty-four guns apiece, and carrying above five hundred hands, and might be expected to

return





127

**Max Balatbat** (b. 1978)

*Balay Palaruan*

signed and dated 2013 (upper left and verso)

acrylic on canvas

48" x 48" (122 cm x 122 cm)

**P 300,000**

Nearly a decade before his *Siyudad* exhibition at Leon Gallery International, his 2013 *Balay Palaruan* portrays a glimpse of what his *Siyudad* exhibit would be. Overlapping patterns and colors create an approximation of the titular 'palaruan' or playground in the style of a collage. The result is a playful reinterpretation of an otherwise common view.

Rich in metaphor and emotive content, his compositions are layered depictions of visceral narratives of the personal and communal. Though this artist bio for his *Siyudad* exhibition, this description also fits *Bahay Palaruan*. "Both real and conjured, these places are stored locations which consistently provide the muse for creative engagement." (Hannah Valiente)

As son of an architect, Max Balatbat's childhood affinity for art and architecture had laid the foundation for his future art career. Initially taking up architecture at the University of the East, he later pivoted to Fine Arts, though the influence of architecture remains deeply embedded in his work; he is partial to mixing his art with architecture, creating a picture of buildings and skyscrapers done in the style of discrepant lines and mismatched images.



128

**Solomon Sapid** (1917 - 2003)

*"Jade Carrier" (One of a Series)*

signed and dated 2-2-88

bronze and jade

H: 17 1/4" (44 cm)

L: 7 1/2" (19 cm)

W: 11 1/4" (29 cm)

**P 300,000**

Accompanied by a certificate issued by the heirs of the artist confirming the authenticity of this lot

Throughout history, jade stones have been recorded in various accounts as part of people's lives—as a luxurious object reflecting one's high social status or an everyday, mundane item. Its uses and beliefs also vary across cultures. While some believe jade has healing properties, it is mainly credited with bringing good luck and fortune, owing to its smooth texture and vibrant green hues, a color that represents vitality and abundance.

In the Philippines, jade jewellery and ornaments are worn as a symbol of wealth and status. Moreover, research

shows that these stones are considered a sacred material in rituals and social practices.

Solomon Sapid proudly presents Filipino culture and heritage in his intricate metalworks. Aside from his revered *Tikbalangs*, he also created a series of *Jade Carrier* sculptures depicting women carrying or holding jade blocks. This collection of works not only exemplifies the artist's brilliance and diligence but also presents the existence and significance of jade in Philippine culture and history. (Jessica Magno)



PHILIPPINES WORLD WAR II –  
‘SECRET’ U.S. INTELLIGENCE  
ARCHIVE / GRAND BATTLE PLANS /  
ESPIONAGE / PSYOPS / IMPORTANT  
CARTOGRAPHY / BATTLE OF LEYTE  
/ BATTLE OF MANILA / RAID ON THE  
CABANATUAN POW CAMP / THE  
RECAPTURE OF CORREGIDOR:

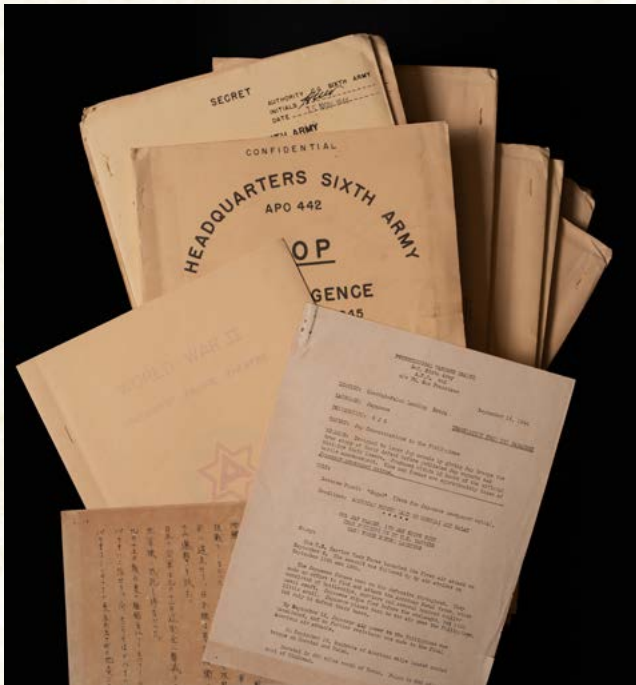
U.S. SIXTH ARMY – G-2 INTELLIGENCE SECTION / Col.  
Horton Vail WHITE (1901 – 1963). / Lt. Col. Frederick W.  
BRADSHAW (1905 – 1946).

[THE LT. COL. FREDERICK W. BRADSHAW ARCHIVE OF THE  
WWII LIBERATION OF THE PHILIPPINES (1944 – 1945)].

Hundreds of pages of Secret text and dozens of maps,  
views and diagrams, sectioned into 22 parts, various media  
and formats (please see below for details).

The finest and most important archive relating to World  
War II in the Philippines in private hands of which we are  
aware; being a grand cache of ‘officially marked ‘SECRET’  
documents produced by the G-2 Intelligence section of the  
U.S. Sixth Army, the force formed from the famed ‘Alamo  
Scouts’, that spearheaded the liberation of the Philippines;  
the core of the archive are series of 19 ‘Weekly Intelligence  
Reports’ ranging in date from November 15, 1944 to June  
20, 1945, which include extremely detailed battle plans  
and field reports regarding all the main events of the  
Philippines Campaign, including the Battle of Leyte, the  
Battle of Mindoro, the Battle of Manila, the Raid on the  
Cabanatuan POW Camp, the Recapture of Corregidor,  
plus many more dramatic actions; the profusely illustrated  
reports in total contain 743 pages of secret typescript text,  
66 folding maps, 13 folding plates of diagrams, 33 full  
page diagrams, plus, numerous images embedded in the  
text; there is much fascinating information on espionage,  
PSYOPS, guerilla warfare, counterintelligence, improvised  
weapons, aerial reconnaissance, etc.; additional to the  
weekly reports there are a trio of important supporting  
documents; the documents come from the papers of  
Lt. Col. Frederick W. Bradshaw, the Mississippi lawyer,  
legendary commando trainer and spymaster, who served  
as the deputy head of the Sixth Army’s military intelligence  
– the archive is of great historical importance, and  
features a wealth of information available nowhere else.

P 2,000,000



ABOVE: Extraordinarily important lot in 22 parts of the secrets of the World War II  
Liberation in the Philippines

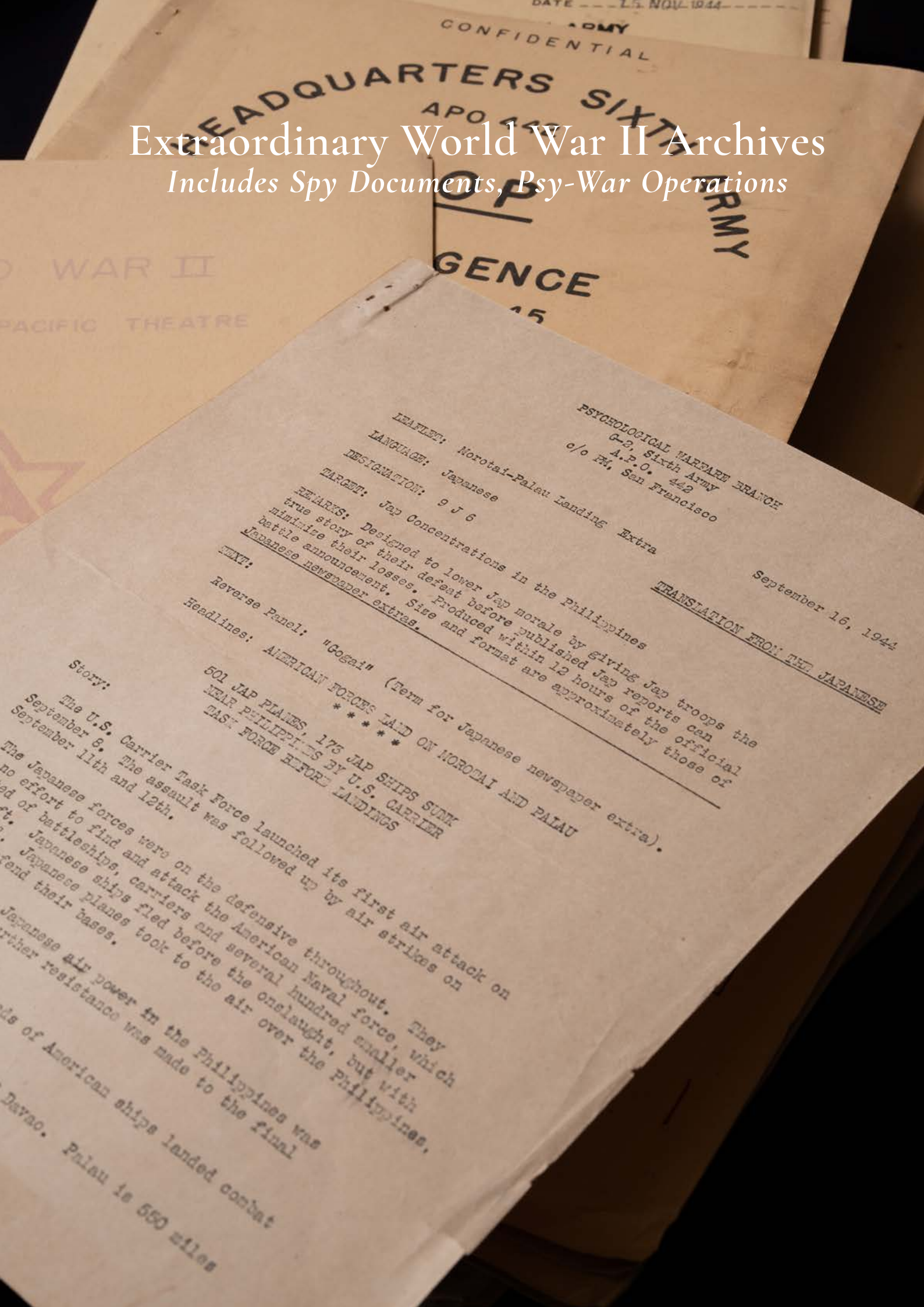
WWII U.S. 6th Army Secret Archive

A rare archive of secret U.S. Army reports on  
the liberation of the Philippines in 1944-  
45. The archive consists of 19 of the Weekly  
Intelligence Reports, all marked “Secret”, produced  
by the G-2 Intelligence Section of the U.S. Sixth Army  
(the force formed from the famed ‘Alamo Scouts’) that  
spearheaded the liberation of the Philippines. Although  
not a full, consecutive run, the reports range in date from  
November 15, 1944 to June 20, 1945, and include extremely  
detailed battle plans and field reports regarding all the main  
events of the Philippines campaign, including the battles of  
Leyte, Mindoro, Lingayen Gulf and Manila, the raid on the  
Cabanatuan POW Camp, and the recapture of Corregidor.

In total these reports contain 743 pages of typescript text,  
66 folding maps, 13 folding plates of diagrams, 33 full-  
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weapons, aerial reconnaissance, etc. As well as the 19  
weekly reports there are three supporting documents. The  
archive comes from the papers of Lt. Col. Frederick  
W. Bradshaw, who served as the deputy head of the Sixth  
Army’s military intelligence.

The maps include detailed maps of the positions of the  
U.S. and Japanese forces as the fighting progresses, week-  
by-week; large-scale maps of specific engagements and  
defensive positions; and maps that show the dates and  
locations when PSYOP propaganda leaflets were dropped  
by air, including the numbers dropped.

Included: nos. 64, 65, 68, 69, 70, 71, 73, 74, 76, 77, 78, 80,  
81, 84, 85, 88, 91, 92 and 93.





## Philippine Pre-Colonial Gold

Framed precolonial gold ornaments consisting of two gold earrings with visible markings of goldwork; a dagger with a gold hilt with fine filigreed decorations; and three gold pendant ornaments with filigreed decorations.

P 300,000



ABOVE: Tagalog royalty wearing gold jewelry and weaponry, as depicted in The Boxer Codex.

Gold was a precious metal common in the precolonial Philippine society that it was frequently mentioned in Spanish accounts. It both showed not only an economic understanding of wealth by our ancestors but also an artistic sense related to decorative values in their way of life. It was found to be a malleable metal by the early Filipinos that gold craftsmanship (like the samples on the block) showed a unquestionable local talent to produce exquisite ornamentation. Products of fine goldwork existed in the precolonial period made from the hands of early Filipinos. Gold mines are found in the northern regions of Benguet in the Mountain Province as well as the Bicol region like Paracale (Camarines Norte) and Butuan and Masbate in the south.

However, although Western eyes, saw gold as a source of wealth in their culture, precolonial Filipinos saw these merely

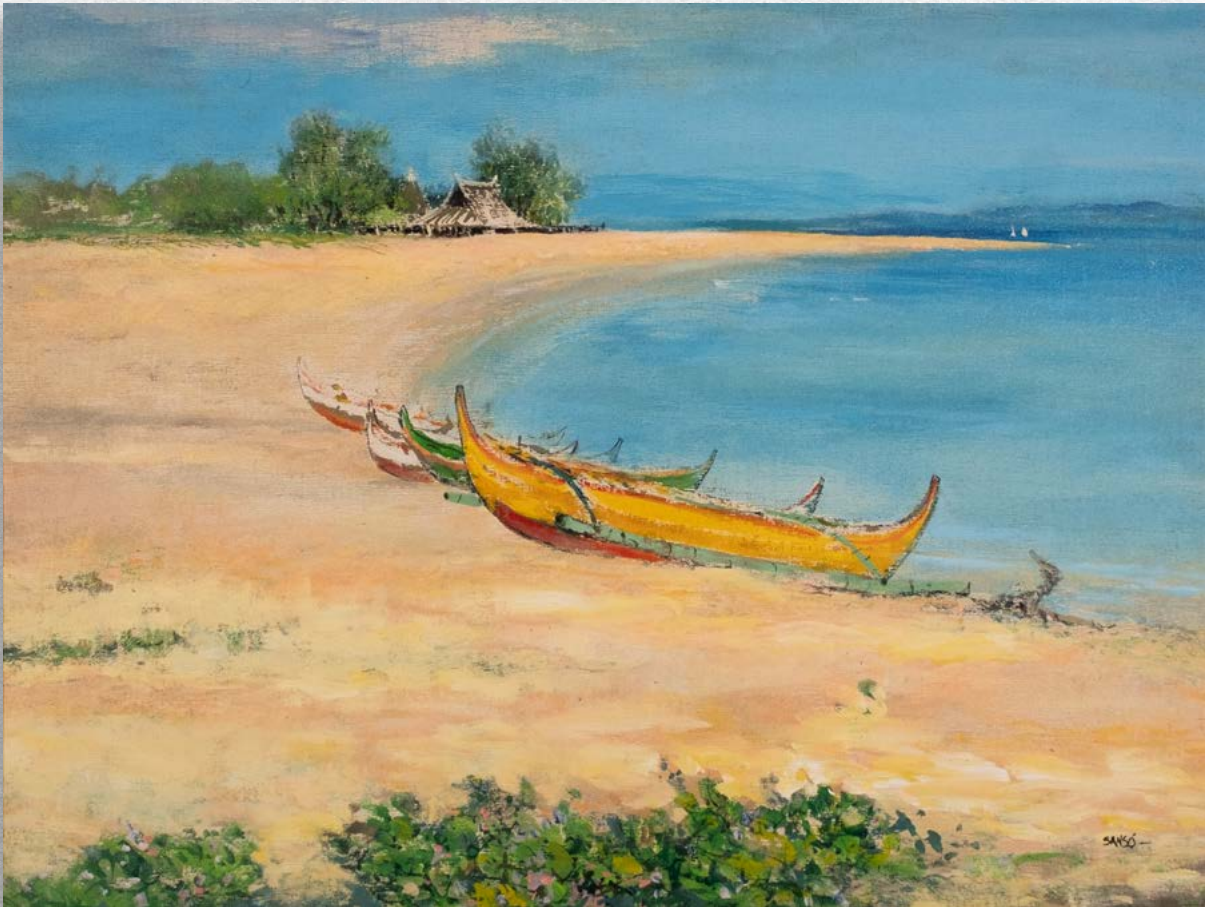
as a necessity for ornamentation or for business. The Spaniards record that our ancestors only get as much as gold as they only needed" with one Spaniard describing them as "they would rather keep it in the ground than in their cash boxes. Historian William Henry Scott attributed the decline of gold production by the early Filipinos to the looting and theft of gold ornaments as well as the forced tribute by the conquerors, making pure gold ornaments in the later Spanish period a rare commodity.

# The Allure of Gold

by JOSE VICTOR Z. TORRES







131

### Juvenal Sansó (1929 - 2025)

*Zambales Fishing Boats*

signed (lower right)

ca.1980s

oil and acrylic on canvas

17 1/2" x 23 1/2" (44 cm x 60 cm)

**P 400,000**

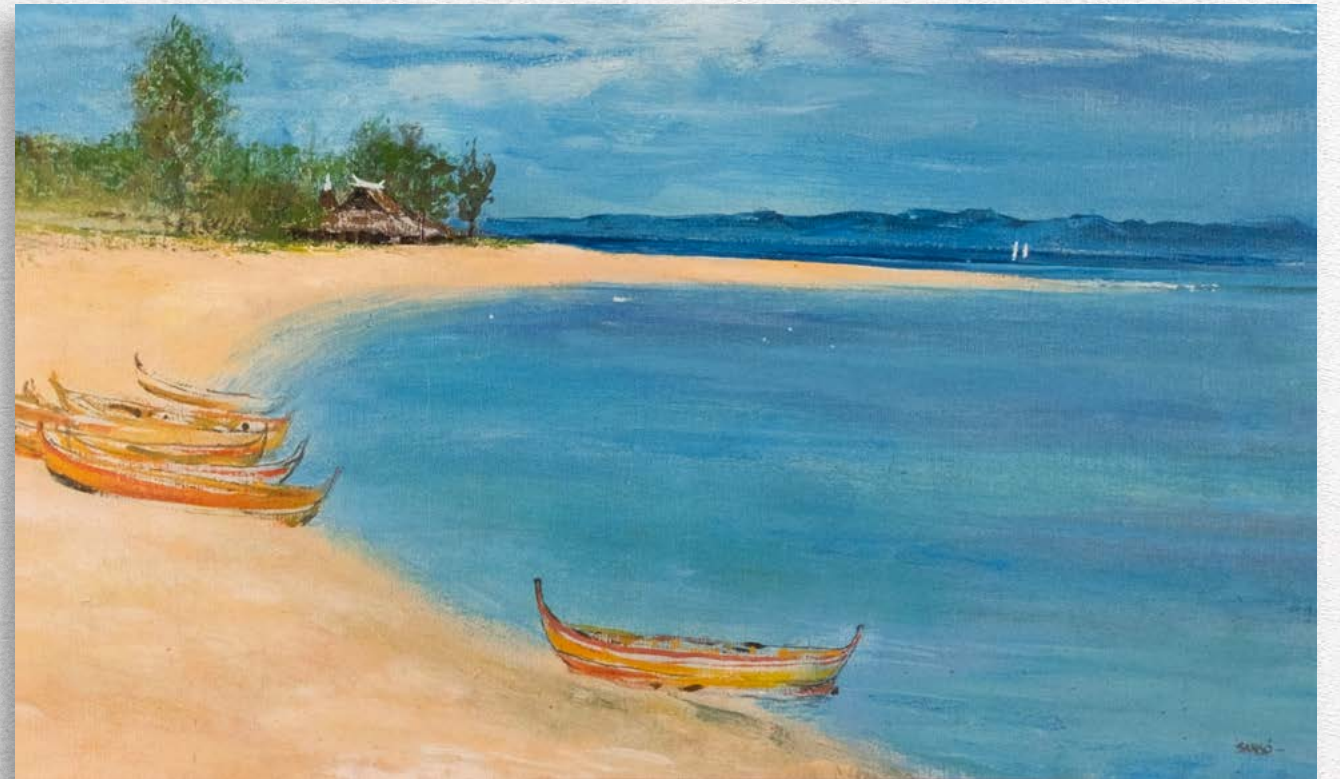
Accompanied by a certificate issued by Fundacion Sansó confirming the authenticity of this lot

Born in Spain, multi-awarded artist Juvenal Sansó spent his younger years in the Philippines, studying art with private tutors and taking art classes with renowned artists and mentors from UP and UST. Later, he ventured to Rome and France to further his art studies, the latter becoming his permanent residence in his later years.

Sansó's art reflects his life experiences and many sojourns, each piece containing a trace of these influences, good or

bad. True enough, his earlier works were rooted in realism, owing to his training under Amorsolo and Castañeda. Some works depict his vibrant childhood and the scenic hills of Montalban, as well as the charming beauty of Brittany. In contrast, others bleed anguish due to the dark, traumatic events of the Japanese Occupation.

*Zambales Fishing Boats* and *Weekend at Hermana Mayor*, however, offer a different facet of Juvenal Sansó's oeuvre.



132

### Juvenal Sansó (1929 - 2025)

*Weekend at Hermana Mayor*

signed (lower right)

ca.1980s

oil and acrylic on canvas

12 1/2" x 21" (32 cm x 53 cm)

**P 400,000**

Accompanied by a certificate issued by Fundacion Sansó confirming the authenticity of this lot

These luminous seascapes are part of his *Hermana Mayor* series, a collection of uniquely Filipino paintings from the 1980s to 1990s. They are painted during the Holy Week vacations he spent with friends and family in Zambales.

With his fine strokes and proficiency in colors, Sansó captured Hermana Mayor's serene coastal landscape, featuring its fine sand and verdant foliage. The skies are reflected in the clear waters, coloring them with blue as

well. Fishing boats lined along the shore; perhaps it was not a good time or situation to sail, or possibly, fishermen were lounging in the comforts of their homes, hiding from the burning sun. Despite the apparent heat, there was also a palpable cool sea breeze.

Like Sansó's other works, these pieces give off a slightly hazy atmosphere, creating vignettes of the timeless beauty of the country he considered home. (Jessica Magno)



**Elaine Navas** (b. 1964)

*Untitled*

signed and dated 2012 (lower left)

oil on canvas

72" x 96" (183 cm x 243 cm)

**P 400,000**



ABOVE: Elaine Roberto-Navas © ALT Philippines

Symbolizing boundaries, memories, and urban life, this featured painting by Elaine Navas reflects her ability to turn a familiar, often-overlooked structure into a powerful emotional and painterly statement.

Dominated by shades of red from crimson to maroon, the painting featured a closed red gate rendered in thick, expressive impasto and a tightly structured frontal composition, transforming it into a psychologically and emotionally charged masterpiece.

Starting with the color palette, the variety of red creates a sense of intensity, heat, and emotional pressure. Red is mostly associated with passion, danger, memory, and containment. Adding weight to the gate door that the artist is trying to display. The darker vertical seams and black framing lend the image a more profound sense of weight and enclosure. Each stroke creates depth that hints at the gate's integrity.

In terms of texture, the artist uses heavy, layered paint to instantly catch the viewer's eye on the details. The rough, almost sculptural surface gives the crimson gate a weathered look, as if it had already stood the test of time—the intricate details imply history from wear and experience.

For context, Elaine Navas is known for painting masterpieces that often focus on everyday structures and architectural details, ranging from gates, doors, and barriers, and molding them into emotionally resonant images through color and texture. Reflecting on how ordinary urban surfaces often carry memories and emotional weight over time, Navas uses them as metaphors to visualize inner states and lived experiences through art. (Mark John Castañeda)



## After-Hours Manila With Elaine Navas



**Ramon Orlina** (b. 1944)*Family United*

signed and dated 2020

carved peridot glass

17" x 20 3/4" x 20 1/2" (43 cm x 53 cm x 52 cm)

**P 5,000,000**Accompanied by a certificate signed by the artist  
confirming the authenticity of this lot

The Orlinas are now a mainstay in the Philippine art scene. The patriarch Ramon Orlina began his career in 1975 when he pivoted to glass art from architecture, laboriously chipping away at a cold block of glass instead of the usual hot technique. He pioneered glass art in the country, developing even the technique himself as he had no predecessor to look up to.

"I even manufactured my own equipment," he told Thelma Sioson in a 2023 *The Diarist* interview.

Talent and passion for glass run in the family, as two of his children follow in his footsteps. Anna and Michael Orlina now forge their own paths in the art world, finding clientele not just with their father's patrons but also within their own generations.

Ramon Orlina's 2020 *Family United* is a testament to the family's aptitude with glass as told by its first artist. Many of Orlina's works reflect his family life as he depicts mothers

and their children fashioned after his wife Lay Ann and their children Naesa, Monina, Anna, and Michael. *Family United*, while subtler in its approach to family dynamics, bears the undercurrent of Orlina's past works. Depicting a cluster of finely cut glass, Orlina plays around with perspective and height, creating an interestingly dynamic work that considers light and distance. Depending on where one stands, one could see vastly different images from Orlina's work and the light that passes through the semi-translucent adds another layer to the interactivity of Orlina's works.

The Orlinas are synonymous with glass art sculpture in the Philippines. The work of the patriarch's *Family United* brings to the forefront not just their family's harmony both personally and professionally as an artist but the whole of the Philippines' familial-focused values. *Family United* sheds light on this unique and encompassing virtue, a shared lifeblood that flows through the country, from one family to the next. (Hannah Valiente)

## Statement in Glass

### *By a Modern Master*





Marc Aran Reyes (b. 1996)

*Exploit and Extant*  
signed and dated 2016 (lower right)  
oil on canvas  
45 3/4" x 61" (116 cm x 155 cm)

P 800,000

Accompanied by a certificate issued by Art Underground and signed by the artist confirming the authenticity of this lot

LITERATURE  
*Between the Shadow and the Soul*. Art Underground, 2021. Black-and-white illustration and details on page 63.

EXHIBITED  
Art Underground, *My World In Four Corners*, Mandaluyong City, 20 August - 10 September 2016

The allure of a single color has captivated many artists for centuries. The monochrome, in particular, has dated far earlier than one may expect – though some may trace its earliest whisper to either the chiaroscuro drawings of the Renaissance or the 17th century work of physician Robert Fludd, its first true blossoming began at the beginning of the 20th century with Kazimir Malevich’s 1915 ‘Black Square.’

Filipino artist Marc Aran Reyes is among the many artists with whom monochrome has made itself its muse. Favoring black and white tones, Reyes utilizes space, shadow, and light to emphasize the vastness of his canvas. His usage of almost extreme nothingness paradoxically portrays a claustrophobic environment that otherwise would have been portrayed with overflowing elements. In his oeuvre, Reyes’ silence speaks for itself.

His 2016 *Exploit and Extant* echoes that heavy silence that his works often take after. In shades of white, black, and gray, Reyes portrays a collection of clay pots stacked on top of one another. Some of the pots have one or two tree branches sticking out from within.

One thing to be noted from a Marc Aran Reyes work is a certain disregard for colors. He rejects the use of color as a basis for emotional direction; instead, he relies on symbolism in understanding his work.

“The technicality of my works is not intended to create an illusion of a picture but to let others get a glimpse of who I am, my ideals, and my expression of reality,” he says in his monograph ‘Between the Shadow and the Soul.’ “I opt to express the bittersweet truth of life in my painting.”



ABOVE: Marc Aran Reyes © AXL Powerhouse Network

His usage of common items is also deliberate. “The idea started with my fascination with simple objects,” he continues. “Mostly common things that I found in the mundane. It doesn’t have to be extraordinary, can be a common rock, a pot, or a block of wood. I didn’t do many changes in its appearance. I preferred preserving the simplicity of his form.”

The magic under Reyes’s hands manages to transform even the most common of items. A pile of clay pots positioned on the ground becomes a surreal yet symbolic representation of human consciousness. Could any of these signify anything other than what they seem to be? Reyes’s visual paradox creates an amalgamation of the real and the abstract, illustrating visual art’s remarkable ability to narrate stories beyond the figurative. (Hannah Valiente)





**Jigger Cruz** (b. 1984)*Untitled*

signed and dated 2014 (lower right)

oil on canvas

65 1/4" x 77 1/4" (166 cm x 196 cm)

**P 2,200,000**

*"The act of destroying the works is Jigger's way of making himself part of the story. That's his way of inserting himself into history."*

—MANUEL OCAMPO, PUBLISHED IN VOGUE PH LIFESTYLE ARTICLE, "FOR CONTEMPORARY ARTIST JIGGER CRUZ, CREATION BEGINS WITH DESTRUCTION" BY TRICKIE LOPA

In his 2025 ArtCritic article entitled 'Jigger Cruz: Cover, erase, be born,' Hervé Lancelin described Jigger Cruz's fascinating art practice as an "aggressive archeology." One look at his oeuvre proves the art critic right.

At first glance, Cruz's works are characterized primarily by the thick squiggles of paint and varying textures of smeared color occupying nearly every inch of his canvas. Layers of vivid colors squeezed straight out of the paint tube, a push-and-pull effect he creates through his controlled destruction. It looks exactly like that – just mere vandalism and nothing more.

However, a deeper look offers a much-appreciated layer that creates a completely new branch of thinking. Beneath the multitude of oil and spray paint is another painting – a copy of the works of Flemish masters and Renaissance-style portraits that lie near forgotten at the bottom of the canvas.

To best understand Cruz's chaotic canvases, one must return to the colonial and postcolonial history of the Philippines. He echoes the paradox of many great Filipino artists: how can the colonized create when the very tools one must use belong to the colonizer? What should one create – should they conform to the Greater West's standards of perspective and painting?

Cruz gave his answer to this longstanding question. By obliterating the academic paintings before him, he refuses to acknowledge the question. He does not seek to disprove or approve such a notion; instead, he calls this very question irrelevant.

This aggressive archeology of his is no simple task. Artist Manuel Ocampo, with whom Cruz was an assistant many years ago, says this in Trickie Lopa's Vogue PH article entitled 'For Contemporary Artist Jigger Cruz, Creation



ABOVE: Jigger Cruz © Tang Contemporary Art

Begins With Destruction': "Contrary to his soft-spoken nature, Jigger's works are very violent: the gestures, the strong movement, the thickly applied paint."

This 2014 work embodies that violent nature of creation. Cruz poses the philosophical question of creative destruction; as such, this work, like many in his oeuvre, both maintains and erases the old. In contrast to the Western notion of fully erasing abstract works from any external surface, Cruz deliberately maintains that tension between destruction and construction.

Jigger Cruz's works force the viewers to rethink the relationships between the center and the periphery of global contemporary art. As Benny Nemerofsky Ramsay wrote in 'A Mark from the Periphery': "The painting is a text; it speaks, and its message can be interpreted, among other things, as the reification of a series of cultural and political truths. Its very existence is a proclamation, and thus a provocation...Cruz's mark making speaks, too, but not as a lone voice. Rather, it speaks over and against the discourse that is responsible for its marginalization. His peripheral painting moves from outside the frame onto the canvas in order to interrupt and transform dominant art-historical discourse." (Hannah Valiente)

# Meditations of Jigger Cruz

## Manila's Young Maverick





**Prudencio Lamarroza** (b.1946)

*Untitled*

signed (lower left)

oil on canvas

24" x 30" (61 cm x 76 cm)

**P 140,000**

Demonstrating his poetic and meditative approach to modern Philippine art, Prudencio Lamarroza's featured piece transforms nature both as a subject and a symbol, blending natural ecology with vibrant, unconventional color palettes to create his signature, memorable dreamlike landscapes.

Simplified in form and color, Lamarroza used the central image of a tree as an internal symbol of life and vitality, while the multicolored stones highlighted diversity—individuals, their memories, and experiences—all existing around a central ground force: life. Through the painting, Lamarroza created an inner landscape where dreams and life collide, growth and stillness coexist in synchrony, and individuality and unity blend into a single canvas. *(Mark John Castañeda)*



**Norma Belleza** (b. 1939)

*Maaga Simula*

signed and dated 1985 (lower left)

oil on canvas

24" x 36" (61 cm x 91 cm)

**P 240,000**

Accompanied by a certificate signed by the artist confirming the authenticity of this lot

Norma Belleza is among the most vaunted women in Philippine visual arts, known for her polychromatic folk genre paintings and depictions of the Filipina. *Maaga Simula* offers a glimpse into a mother's typical early morning routine. Her eyes, still heavy with sleep, suggest that she woke up at the crack of dawn to gather and prepare the plump and fresh tropical fruits she is going to sell, all the while taking care of her child. This 1995 piece sheds light on the hardships and sacrifices our mothers make, fostering a deep appreciation for them. There is also a Sto. Niño figure at the back, a symbol of faith and tradition in Filipino households. *(Jessica Magno)*



**Oscar Zalameda** (1930 - 2010)

*Untitled*

signed (lower right)

oil on canvas

30" x 36" (76 cm x 91 cm)

**P 500,000**

Showcasing his signature faceless approach, Oscar Zalameda combines figurative subjects with cubist abstraction and vibrant color to create magnificent works that evoke themes regarding fertility, memory, nurturing, and abundance.

Fragmented and lively, the painting features two stylized faceless female figures sitting on an abundant bed of flowers. At the same time, the women reach and lean into each other—creating a quiet sense of solitude and intimacy.

In contrast, the harmonious palette of muted blues, greens, and peach tones on a warm ochre background creates a balanced feel, introducing a sense of gentleness and life to the piece. Essentially, it reinforces serenity and contemplation for the viewers.

Zalameda's featured piece serves as a meditation about companionship, femininity, and harmony. The way the women sat on the flowers, which symbolize fertility and nurturing care—seemingly fusing the two subjects—adds a presence of feminine elegance to the piece. The faceless women's quiet strength and communal harmony create a timeless emotional state suspended between nature and human connection. *(Mark John Castañeda)*





Romulo Olazo (1921 - 2015)

*Diaphanous B-VIII*  
signed and dated 1979 (lower left)  
oil on canvas  
60" x 48" (152 cm x 122 cm)

P 5,000,000

PROVENANCE  
Estate of the artist

EXHIBITED  
The Luz Gallery, *Romulo Olazo: Recent Paintings - Diaphanous* (Fourth One-Man Exhibition), Makati, 1979

*Diaphanous B-VIII* was exhibited in Romulo Olazo's 1979 solo show, "Recent Paintings – Diaphanous," held at the Luz Gallery. This was Olazo's fourth one-man exhibition and signaled a pivotal moment in his artistic evolution—his deepening exploration of abstraction through light, translucence, and layered form.

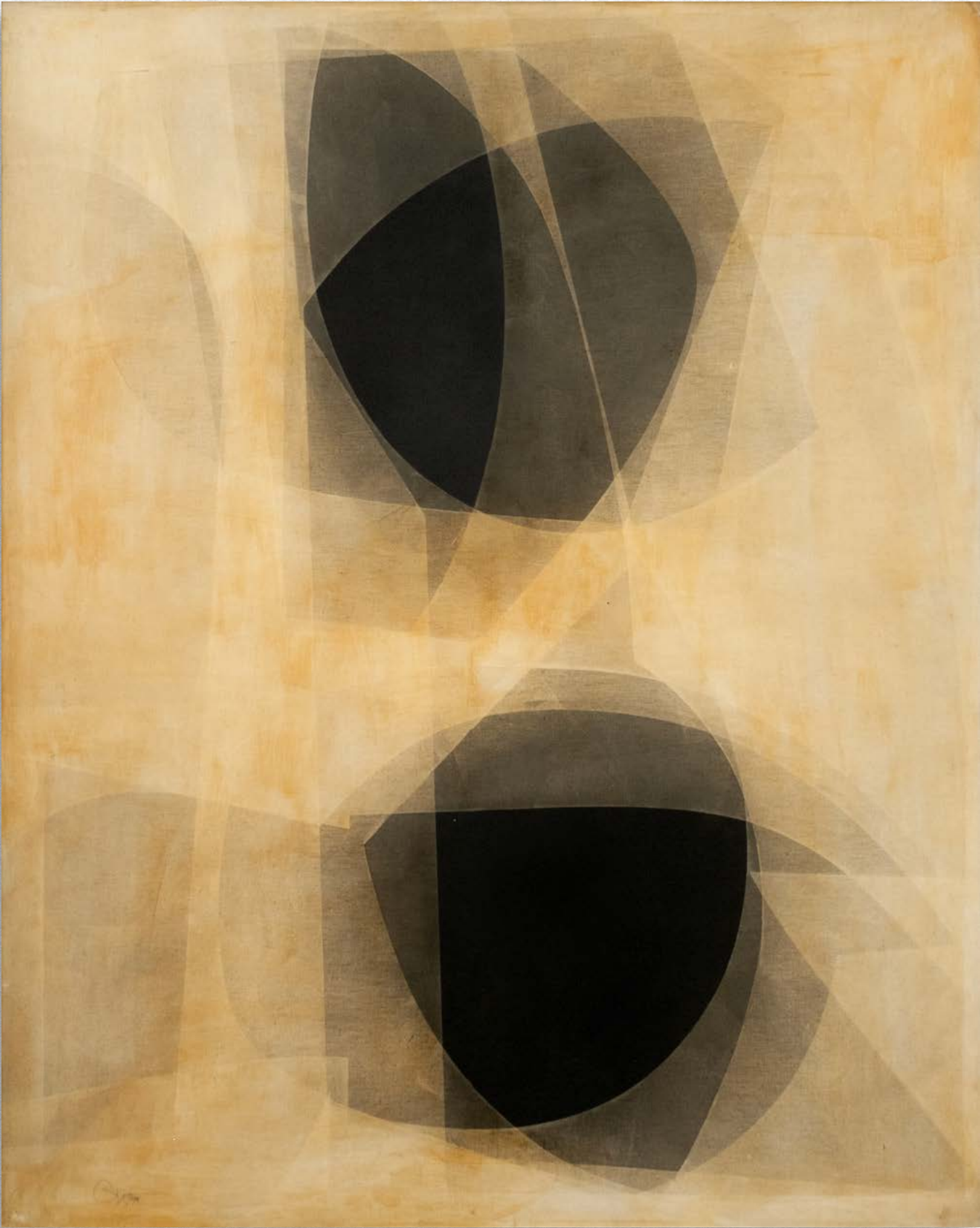
Only five years earlier, Olazo had made the bold decision to leave a successful career in advertising, where he rose to the position of creative director. The risk allowed him to fully commit to the visual language he was beginning to shape—one that would soon distinguish him in Philippine contemporary art.

His early engagement with printmaking, particularly serigraphy and collagraphy, profoundly influenced his painterly approach. These techniques informed the emergence of what would later be known as the *Diaphanous*, a concept that began to take form in the early 1970s.

By the time of the 1979 exhibition, *Diaphanous B-VIII* belonged to the formative or "childhood" stage of this body of work—an abstract language still unfolding. Over time, this exploration would mature into *The Diaphanous Series*, now recognized as one of Olazo's most significant artistic achievements. (Simone Vicencio)



ABOVE: Romulo Olazo © Olazo Family Archives





141

## Jane Lee

### *It Is As It Is, Wall Series #8*

signed and dated 2019 (verso)  
acrylic paint and canvas on wood  
48" x 24" x 2" (123 cm x 64 cm x 6 cm)

**P 1,000,000**

A contemporary artist known for her large-scale, tactile paintings that challenge the boundaries between painting, sculpture, and installation, Jane Lee's *It Is As It Is, Wall* series continues to explore the relationships between the painting and the wall — with the wall being part of the artwork rather than a usual backdrop.

Dominated by peeled surfaces that resemble peeled paint, spread across the canvas, Lee navigates her ongoing inquiry into boundlessness, materiality, and the perception of space. Her art itself walks to the boundaries of painting and non-painting simultaneously, its title referencing a line that evokes the coexistence of opposites, such as form and emptiness, as well as presence and absence. *(Mark John Castañeda)*



142

## Lao Lianben (b. 1948)

### *Untitled*

signed (lower left)  
dated 2002  
acrylic on paper  
16" x 11" (41 cm x 28 cm)

**P 500,000**

Lao's work on hand encompasses an emancipating practice, a place of no inhibitions, of unbridled contemplation, towards a cathartic and transformative enlightenment. And as always, Lao shows us a disciplined spontaneity, distilling only the essential through an austere palette that overflows with an energy that is the spirit of soothing and empowering Zen.

Thus, we are transported to a realm where the mind realizes the harmony of things and the body freely drinks and creates from the fountainhead of a realized peace and quiet. *(Adrian Maranan)*



143

## Emmanuel Garibay (b. 1962)

### *Mother and Child*

signed and dated 2005 (lower right)  
acrylic on canvas  
24" x 24" (61 cm x 61 cm)

**P 240,000**

Accompanied by a certificate signed by the artist confirming the authenticity of this lot

Ever the storyteller, Emmanuel Garibay's *Mother and Child* tells a story even with its simplicity. Portraying the titular duo, Garibay transformed the usual fair-skinned Madonna and child into unmistakable Filipinos, with their golden brown skin, dark eyes, and darker hair. She cradles her child to her chest, neck bent as she rests her cheek against his temple. They make the image of a peaceful family, with Garibay's bold, expressive colors fortifying his expressionist command. *(Hannah Valiente)*



144

## Lydia Velasco (b. 1942)

### *Gumamela*

signed and dated 2002 (lower right)  
acrylic on canvas  
36" x 30" (91 cm x 76 cm)

**P 160,000**

PROVENANCE  
West Gallery

While hibiscus plants' meaning and symbolism differ across cultures, traditions, and even their colors, they generally symbolize beauty, femininity, and fleeting moments, alluding to their charm and short-lived blooms. With their visual appeal and anti-inflammatory and antioxidant properties, hibiscus plants are used as ornamental plants and decorative elements; brewed into an herbal tea that lowers blood pressure and improves heart health and immune system function; and as a medicinal plant for treating coughs and fevers. In the Philippines, it is popularly known as Gumamela and is commonly found everywhere—house and office gardens, schools, forests, and along streets. Lydia Velasco, in her 2002 *Gumamela*, used the plant as an analogy for her depiction of Filipina women: refined and delicate yet strong and resilient. *(Jessica Magno)*







145

## Onib Olmedo (1937 - 1996)

### *Kinseng Suka*

signed and dated 1975 (lower right)

oil on canvas

30" x 30" (76 cm x 76 cm)

**P 400,000**

Accompanied by a certificate issued by Ms. Gisella Olmedo-Araneta confirming the authenticity of this lot

#### LITERATURE

Rodriguez-Olmedo, Bettina. *Onib & Me*. Makati City: Leon Gallery Fine Art and Antiques, 2024. Photograph of Olmedo with the artwork reproduced on page 34 and photograph from the exhibition featuring the artwork reproduced on page 35.

#### EXHIBITED

Galerie Bleu, *Kinseng Suka*, Rustan's, Makati City, 21 May - 9 June 1975

Just four years after his first one-man show at the Solidaridad Galleries, this 1975 Onib Olmedo work had solidified the artist's shocking style. A bold artist, he liberally employs distortions to make physical his subject's emotional turmoil, creating works that are as unnerving as facing one's deepest, darkest secrets come to life.

This piece, though not extreme in the sense of distortions, crosses the threshold into the uncanny valley just enough to unsettle. Two men in various states of undress sat



ABOVE: Onib Olmedo in his studio in 1975, pictured together with the artwork. © Reproduced in the book *Onib & Me* by Bettina Rodriguez-Olmedo.

next to each other, their clothes seemingly a metaphor for their mental states – one man was dressed in a white long-sleeved polo with barely any strip of skin to be seen, while the other man sat shirtless, hands folded over his lap, and his face clearly dejected.

This statement, as quoted in the artist's monograph *Onib Olmedo: Dimensions of Depth*, is perhaps the best way to describe his soul portraits, saying: "[Onib Olmedo's] portraits probe the point where physical appearance with its social conventions gives way to the spirit within which, slowly but inexorably, takes over." (*Hannah Valiente*)



146

## Romeo Tabuena (1921- 2015)

### *Untitled*

signed and dated 1974 (upper left)

acrylic on masonite board

26 1/2" x 24 1/2" (67 cm x 62 cm)

**P 360,000**

Warm, geometric, and lyrical, this wonderful 1974 painting by Romeo Tabuena offers a glimpse into his mastery of modernist abstraction, in which everyday objects are broken down into fragments and rebuilt through color, geometry, and rhythm rather than simple realism.

With the painting looking like a random mosaic of shapes and colors, Tabuena presented recognizable forms that seem to peek from the canvas when you take a second look:

a flower arrangement on the upper right, some fruits in a bowl, and a vague shape of a human figure sitting as a form of a guitar resting on their lap. The fragmented aesthetics of the piece push viewers to see beyond appearances, offering an experience through a combined play of color, balance, and rhythm.

For context, by the 1970s, Tabuena had fully absorbed European modernism into his art style and blended it with distinctly Filipino sensitivities. The palette itself—consisting of muted earth tones and brighter accents of greens, oranges, and violets—establishes the calm and contemplative mood of the piece and the existing harmony between structure and emotion. (*Mark John Castañeda*)





147

## Cedrick Dela Paz (b.1995)

### *Third World 2*

signed and dated 2022 (lower left)  
acrylic on canvas  
72" x 48" (183 cm x 122 cm)

P 240,000

Accompanied by a certificate issued by DF Art Agency and signed by the artist confirming the authenticity of this lot

A haunting visual allegory about labor, repetition, and systemic inequality, Cedrick Dela Paz applied the dismal conditions of a *Third World* country to the monotonous, cyclical, and undervalued working conditions of the working class—the piece becoming a direct commentary on global labor hierarchies, giving attention to the developing nations that are locked into an inescapable system of production that benefits unseen powers instead of themselves.

Populated by near-identical human figures arranged in rows—which instantly hint at mechanization and strip the workers of any individuality—making them feel like a portrait of a collective mechanical body—emotionless, resigned, and pale—their identities reduced to mere function.

Overall, Cedrick Dela Paz's *Third World 2* exposes a deeper tragedy that lingers beyond the usual dramatization of suffering through chaos or the violent representation of working conditions. The acceptance and normalization of labor exploitation, and the slow erasure of human dignity through repetitive work, scream across the canvas despite the art's somber, quiet tone. (Mark John Castañeda)

148 PROPERTY FROM THE DR. LEOVINO MA. GARCIA COLLECTION

## Lao Lianben (b. 1948)

### *Fake Chinese*

signed and dated 1998 (bottom)  
acrylic, modeling paste, pencil on canvas  
72" x 14" (183 cm x 36 cm)

P 1,400,000

The revered abstractionist and minimalist Lao Lianben takes cues from a variety of timeless motifs and aesthetics from East Asia. Most notably, Lao's artistic practice is rooted in a number of eastern philosophies such as Zen Buddhism and Taoism. These are evident in the palpable sparseness and quietude most of the artist's works exude. From simple black lines against a stark white canvas to rudimentary shapes interspersed with expertly executed visual elements, Lao's works are singular and unique in their ability to create an atmosphere that does not only invite an air of silence, but that of introspection as well—a feat that is often sought after but rarely executed with precision in the world of art. Beyond his intellectual and philosophical roots, Lao also draws upon a number of artistic techniques and practices. From traditional guó huà paintings to the zen-like allure of Japanese karesansui, Lao's paintings take inspiration from a multitude of East Asian art.

This particular piece titled *Fake Chinese* is a novel exploration into the form and function of Chinese calligraphy scroll painting. The first and most notable similarity between Lao's works and Chinese calligraphy is the length of the canvas. The dimensions of the work give Lao's piece a certain narrative quality, a feature that is also present in scroll painting. Yet, instead of the stringent visual elements and characters of scroll paintings, Lao's work features an assemblage of seemingly jarring lines and shapes. It is this departure that encapsulates Lao's artistic philosophy. Wherein traditional calligraphy relays to us its message through a carefully elaborated system of characters, Lao communicates his message through the experience of simply viewing and encountering his work. (Jed Daya)





INDEX

Paintings and Sculptures

<b>A</b>		
Abad, Pacita	230	
Alcuaz, Federico Aguilar	25, 147, 163	
Amorsolo, Fernando	22-23, 46-47, 70-71, 72-73, 84-85, 120-121, 131	
Ang Kiukok	78	
Antonio, Angelito	128	
Antonio, Marcel	76-77, 79	
Austria, Antonio	82	
Austria, Tam	74-75	
<b>B</b>		
Balatbat, Max	236	
Baldemor, Manuel	14	
Bautista, Glenn	146	
Belleza, Norma	128, 252	
Bitanga, Rosario	15	
Borlongan, Elmer	10, 52-53	
<b>C</b>		
Cabrera, Benedicto	132-133	
Cabrera, Generoso	207	
Calma, Carlo	100-101	
Castrillo, Eduardo	66, 67, 68, 69	
Chabet, Roberto	230	
Chavez, Joel	34	
Ching, Jonathan	39, 83	
Concepcion, Tomas	130	
Cruz, Jigger	54, 98-99, 250-251	
Cruz, Marina	56-57	
Culibrina, Ronson	48	
<b>D</b>		
Dalena, Danilo	36-37	
dela Cruz, Daniel	203	
De Rivera, Mario	11	
Dela Paz, Cedrick	24, 260	
<b>F</b>		
Fernandez, Edgar Talusan	168	
<b>G</b>		
Galicano, Romulo	42, 43	
Garibay, Emmanuel	13, 19, 35, 58, 148-149, 257	
<b>H</b>		
Habulan, Guerrero	178	
Hidalgo, Félix Resurrección	80-81	
<b>J</b>		
José Rizal	180-183	
Joya, José	49	
Justiniani, Mark	52-53	
<b>L</b>		
Lamarroza, Prudencio	59, 252	
Lebajo, Raul	142, 143	
Lee, Jane	256	
Legaspi, Cesar	202	
Lianben, Lao	11, 86, 87, 118-119, 256, 261	
Luz, Arturo	129	
<b>M</b>		
Magsaysay-Ho, Anita	104-105	
Mallari, Joy	52-53, 178	
Manansala, Vicente	62-63	
Maramag, Ben	144-145	
Martinez, Pow	28-29	
Miel, Dengcoy	48	
<b>N</b>		
Napay, Raffy	136-137	
Navarro, Jerry Elizalde	20-21, 169	
Navas, Elaine	244-245	
Nuyda, Justin	40-41	
<b>O</b>		
O'Farrell, Patricio Gaston	92-93, 94-95	
Ocampo-Flores, Karen	52-53	
Ocampo, Manuel	96-97	
Olazo, Romulo	254-255	
Olmedo, Onib	12, 231, 258	
Orencio, Jim	55	
Orlina, Ramon	24, 224-225, 246-247	
<b>P</b>		
Pacquing, Bernardo	38	
Pacunayen, Leon	10	
Pilapil, Impy	34	
<b>R</b>		
Reyes, Marc Aran	248-249	
<b>S</b>		
Salubayba, Don	44	
Sansó, Juvenal	18, 122-123, 190, 242, 243	
Santos III, José John	162	
Santos, Mauro Malang	140-141	
Santos, Steve	140-141	
Santos,Soler	140-141	
Saprid, Solomon	116-117, 237	
Sievert, Federico	52-53	
<b>T</b>		
Tabuena, Romeo	38, 259	
Tampinco, Isabelo Lacandola	32-33	
Tapaya, Rodel	45, 179	
Tuazon, Wire	44	
<b>V</b>		
Velasco, Lydia	257	
Ventura, Ronald	26-27	

<b>W</b>	
Westendorp, Betsy	114-115
<b>Z</b>	
Zaballero, Phyllis	191
Zalameda, Oscar	16-17, 253
Zóbel, Fernando	88-89, 108-109, 110-113, 134-135

Antiques and Ephemera

A Complete and Bound Set of Harper's Weekly, Volume 42	218-219
Aguinaldo Picture Mailing Cards and Signed Appointment Paper	214-215
Anson, George	232-235
Cherub	152-153
Dimas Alang (José Rizal) Los Filipinos y Los Frailes The Filipinos and the Friars	210-213
José Rizal	186-189
Juan de la Concepción	192-201
La Independencia	174-175
La Republica Filipina, Volumen 1, No. 1	164-167
La Solidaridad	176-177
Letter from Commonwealth President Manuel L. Quezon to Chief Justice Ramon Avanceña, September 26, 1937	206
Letter from Vice-President Sergio Osmeña to President Manuel L. Quezon	208-209
Lumban-type Inmaculada Concepción	160-161
P. Pedro Murillo Velarde	192-201 226-229
Philippine Pre-Colonial Gold	240-241
Philippine-American War Dagger from the Ilocano Campaign	220-223
PHILIPPINES WORLD WAR II – ‘SECRET’ U.S. INTELLIGENCE ARCHIVE	238-239
San Jose	156-157
San Luis Beltrán	154-155
Santa Catalina de Alejandria	158-159
The Benito Legarda Grotri-an-Steinweg Nachf Grand Piano	126-127
Veteranos de la Revolucion Certificate of Membership for Capitan Laureano L Aviles of Pateros Rizal	216-217

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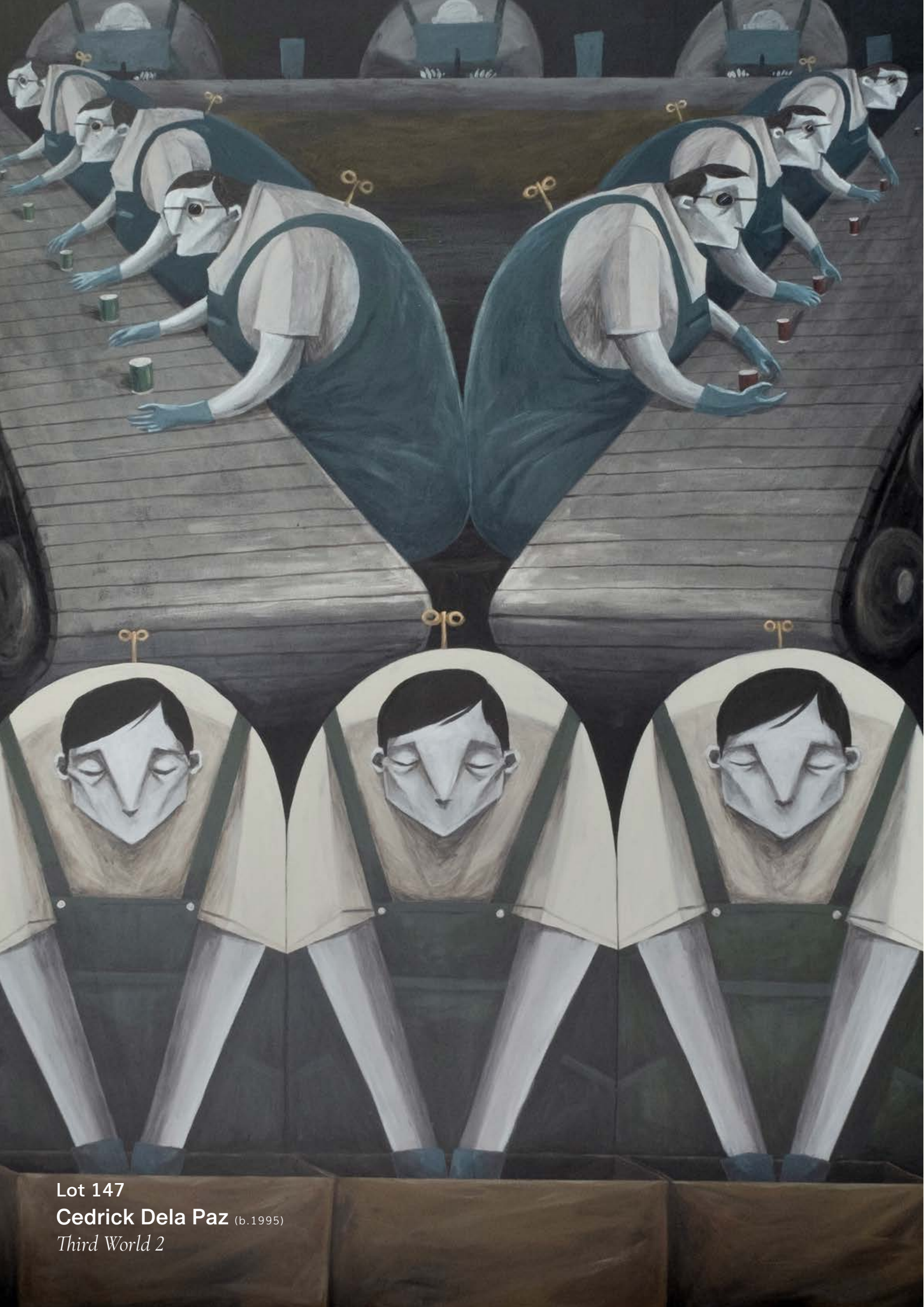
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LOT 62  
Patricio Gaston O'Farrell (1879 - 1942)  
*Ecce Homo or Portrait of Christ*





Lot 147  
**Cedrick Dela Paz** (b.1995)  
*Third World 2*

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Lot 74  
**Juvenal Sansó** (1929 - 2025)  
*Caromatic Lures*





Lot 49  
**Fernando Amorsolo** (1892 - 1972)  
*Market Scene*





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