León Gallery
FINE ART & ANTIQUES

The Magnificent September Auction 2024

14 SEPTEMBER 2024 | 2:00 PM

León Gallery
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The Magnificent September Auction 2024

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Auction
14 September 2024
Saturday, 2:00 PM

Preview
Saturday to Friday
7 - 13 September 2024
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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FRONT COVER
LOT 51

Fernando Amorsolo (1892 - 1972)
Under the Mango Tree

LOT 30

Fernando Zóbel (1924 - 1984)
La Terraza, III

LOT 69

Alfonso Ossorio (1916 – 1990)

Untitled

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LOT 72

Anita Magsaysay-Ho (1914 - 2012)
Sabungero

León Gallery
FINE ART & ANTIQUES

Foreword

DEAR FRIENDS and CLIENTS,

This **Magnificent September Auction 2024**, we are proud to reveal that a masterpiece has found its way back to where it truly belongs—the Filipino nation.

In 1929, the Philippines was on such an optimistic brink of gaining independence in the form of the Philippine Commonwealth. By that time, **Fernando Amorsolo,** who would become our first National Artist, had risen to prominence as the most important painter in the archipelago. Ninety-five years later, Amorsolo's magnum opus has finally come home.

Truly, the highlight of this landmark sale is accorded to the 1929 work ***Under the Mango Tree,*** painted by Amorsolo during the apex of his "Golden Period," when he became a household name and had become synonymous with Philippine painting. The work comes from the collection of the "Father of Philippine Airconditioning," Edward J. Nell, himself one of the biggest names in Philippine business and industry during the pre-war era. No less than Mrs. Sylvia Amorsolo-Lazo, Fernando Amorsolo's daughter, said that this work is her father's masterpiece. It is a rarity that combines all the hallmarks of a magnum opus, with its impeccable provenance and storied historical context attesting to the work's timeless magnificence.

However conservative his painting style was, Amorsolo nonetheless became the luminary of the Filipino Modernists, whom Fernando Zobel once noted as "the most indebted to [the maestro] for liberation from the brown sauce of academic painting," the artist who "set a high standard" and "has taught an entire generation of painters to paint."

The Modernists, who deliberately veered away from the Amorsolo standard and further elevated the status of Philippine painting, are equally represented in this sale, seemingly in a hallowed conversation with their "teacher."

Vicente Manansala and the enduring brilliance of his Transparent Cubism are exemplified in works from his prolific '60s and '70s. From the collection of the "Father of Philippine Healthcare," Dr. Roberto K. Macasaet, is the poignant ***Candle Vendors***. There are also plenty of Manansalas from the collection of Priscilla L. Chiongbian, the Mother of Sarangani Province and a loving friend to Manansala himself. Mommy Priscy, as she was dearly called, would bring Mang Enteng to her trips to Europe and her Beverly Hills home in LA, where he would paint some of his best works.

Speaking of friendships, a trifecta of modernist virtuoso is immortalized in an ***Interaction*** painting by H.R. Ocampo, Cesar Legaspi, and Jose Joya, who all bonded over coffee, meals, and art at the storied Taza de Oro, where they would eventually form the iconic Saturday Group of Artists that continues to be the most prestigious artists' group in the country. The three are also individually represented with works from their respective golden periods.

H.R. Ocampo and his "art patron and good friend," Don Vicente "Tiking" H. Lopez, Jr.'s shared love for music is enshrined in a work of joyful exuberance titled ***Karnabal.*** Joya's Virgo, which he painted during his second New York sojourn under the Rockefeller scholarship grant (now the Asian Cultural Council grant), represents his arrival at a native visual idiom and away from the confines of a Western-influenced expression.

The legacy of the affluent Ossorio Family is found in two Amorsolos from the collection of Jose Ma. Ossorio and a piece by **Alfonso Ossorio** from his rare series of works in the late '50s that encapsulate his friendship with the avant-garde artists of the American mid-century, most notable of whom is Jackson Pollock.

A friend of Ossorio is celebrating the centennial of his birth anniversary—**Fernando Zobel**. And no more is it fitting to celebrate this momentous occasion than offering two paintings, with one, ***La Terraza III,*** evocative of Zobel's enduring love for the city of Cuenca and the River Jucar that flows through its heart.

The contemporary virtuoso of the Filipino shines bright in **Elmer Borlongan** and **Jose John Santos III**, whose monumental installation showcased at the 2014 Art Basel in Hong Kong titled ***Hide and Seek*** brings to mind the memories hidden deep in our subconscious.

Our magnificent selection of religious art and antique furniture is led by an 18th-century ivory and wood image of the ***Nuestra Señora Del Rosario*** from the Roberto T. Villanueva collection. The art of the indigenous peoples is exalted through a 19th-century ***Hagabi,*** the Ifugao prestige bench. We would like to extend our heartfelt gratitude to Mr. Emil Marañon III, lawyer, collector, researcher, and expert on Philippine antiquities, for lending his much-needed expertise in this important subject.

The sun and moon of Philippine art, **Juan Luna** and **Felix Resureccion Hidalgo,** are equally represented with two portraits capturing the elegance of European high society—Luna's ***Portrait of Adele Della Rocca***, niece of the senior-aide-de-camp of King Umberto I of Italy, and Hidalgo's ***Portrait of Madame Rose Delaunay***, a striking representation of a prolific French soprano.

We are also pleased to unveil our selection of highly important historical documents, including a manuscript copy of the "Birth Certificate of our Nation," the ***Acta de la Proclamación de Independencia del Pueblo Filipino,*** handwritten by a close confidante of President Aguinaldo.

On behalf of Team Leon Gallery, we cordially invite you to once again revel in the blessings of Philippine fine art. May we continue fostering the virtues of the Filipino virtuoso, from which our rich cultural legacy continues to spring forth.

Yours sincerely,

Jaime C. Ponce de Leon
Director
LEÓN GALLERY

1

José Joya (1931 - 1995)

Mother and Children
signed and dated November 15, 1988 (lower left and verso)
pastel on paper
20" x 13" (51 cm x 33 cm)

P 400,000

Accompanied by a certificate issued by Josefa Joya-Baldovino confirming the authenticity of this lot

PROVENANCE
León Gallery, *The Magnificent September Auction 2014,*
Makati City, 13 September 2014, Lot 101.

Jose Joya was an art prodigy who explored different styles and mediums to develop his own artistic style. But before becoming known as the most prominent abstract expressionist painter, Joya excelled in landscapes and portraits. Mentored by traditionalists, his early works adhered to realism and highlighted Filipino folklife.

His images center around the masses: "The portrayal of people, [e]specially the humble and downtrodden whose uneventful lives find noble meaning in my drawings, has long obsessed me," Joya admitted.

This piece exhibits three honey brown-skinned figures: a young mother–or so it seems–clad in traditional Filipino clothing for women, the baro't saya, carrying an undressed toddler, with a little girl in sando clinging onto her. Depicting a familiar countryside scene, this 1988 pastel-on-canvas work shows Joya's exceptional talent in the arts, going back to his roots in figurative arts after years of venturing into the world of abstraction. *(Jessica Magno)*

2

Mark Justiniani (b.1966)

Petisyon
dated 1990
oil on canvas
9 1/2'' x 15 1/2'' (24 cm x 39 cm)

P 120,000

PROVENANCE
Hiraya Gallery

Mark Justiniani, a known social realist, has developed his practice towards "magic realist strains," exploring the nature of vision and its teetering relationship with time through reflective media. His oeuvre represents the appalling reality faced by the masses, who are often subjected to hostilities and immoral undertakings from people in power. His works, bordering on surrealism, offer the common folk's depressing realities, evoking an uncomfortable sense of distortion and injustice that is sure to resonate with the audience.

Justiniani's innovative approach and insightful themes have propelled him to the forefront of the art scene, earning him the opportunity to showcase his work on the international stage, representing the Philippines in various exhibitions and conferences. His talent has not gone unnoticed, as he has been the recipient of numerous prestigious awards and recognitions, including the esteemed Cultural Center of the Philippines' Thirteen Artists Award in 1994. *(Jessica Magno)*

3

Juvenal Sansó (b. 1929)

Nightscape I
signed (lower right)
dated 1964
tempera on paper
19" x 24 3/4" (48 cm x 63 cm)

P 400,000

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

PROVENANCE
Private collection

LITERATURE
Paras-Perez, Rodolfo. *Sanso: Art Quest Between Two Worlds.*
Manila: Eugenio Lopez Foundation, Inc., 1988.
Illustrated and with painting description on page 136.

Juvenal Sansó's pieces have a knack for transporting his viewers to a different world. This untitled work, an otherworldly image of a dark forest as though seen through night vision lenses, is a testament to that. Stones piled upon stones–a key element in Sansó's works–with greeneries sprouting in-betweens are present in this image. There was also a tinge of orange on the rocks, suggesting a trace of moonlight. At first, it could look like a harmless, typical night in the forest, but it still exudes a cold and sinister feeling.

Critics and laymen alike have always noted the mysterious and troubled qualities elicited by Sansó's compositions. Another trademark of a Sansó piece is its hauntedness. Although the medium he used was undetermined, the painting at hand resembled an etching art, one of the techniques the artist studied in France. Thin, white strokes used to create figures adorned a black base, unveiling an ominous atmosphere.

"[It] shows the world as a limbo hovering between day and night where living creatures do not exist but inanimate objects become prime actors," Cleveland Museum curator Louise S. Richards notes on what a tour in Sansó's 1964 Cleveland Museum exhibition feels like. Richards further discussed the characteristics of Sansó's landscapes by saying, "...shadowy rocks and bushes have a watchful presence neither evil nor beneficent but alien to our everyday experience of stone and wood." *(Jessica Magno)*

Abstracting the Everyday
The Introspections of Bernardo Pacquing

ABOVE: Bernardo Pacquing .© lifestyleasia

Unlike many abstract artists who delve into the collective unconscious, Pacquing draws inspiration from the tangible forms and figures of everyday life. This grounding in the familiar imbues his works with a subjectivity that resonates with audiences, allowing them to project their own experiences and interpretations onto the canvas.This interplay between chaos and calm, vibrancy and minimalism, encapsulates the essence of his artistic vision. The deliberate choice of color and composition evokes a sense of balance within disorder, a hallmark of Pacquing's work that invites contemplation and introspection.

Pacquing's influence on the local abstract art scene is undeniable. A graduate of the University of the Philippines College of Fine Arts in 1989, his contributions to contemporary visual art have been widely recognized. He earned the Grand Prize in the Art Association of the Philippines Open Art Competition for Painting (Non-Representation) in both 1992 and 1999. His impact was further solidified in 2000 when he received the Cultural Center of the Philippines Thirteen Artists Award, a prestigious accolade that underscores his significance in the field.'

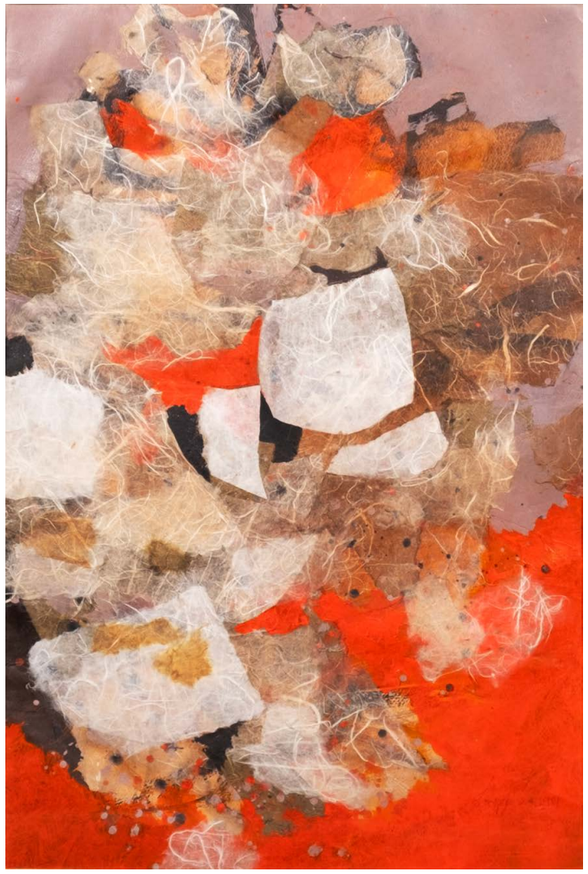
Through his art, Pacquing continues to push the boundaries of abstraction, offering viewers a glimpse into the limitless possibilities of the genre. His works are not just visual experiences; they are invitations to explore the deeper connections between art and the everyday, between chaos and calm, and between the artist's vision and the viewer's perception. *(Jed Daya)*

4

Bernardo Pacquing (b. 1967)
Untitled (Abstract)
signed (verso)
ca. 1992
oil on wood
48″ x 48″ (122 cm x 122 cm)

P 700,000

EXHIBITED
Museo Iloilo, 1992



5

José Joya (1931 - 1995)

Pasay
signed and dated October 24, 1981
(lower right and verso)
acrylic collage
20" x 13" (51 cm x 33 cm)

P 1,400,000

Accompanied by a certificate issued by Josefa Joya-Baldovino confirming the authenticity of this lot

PROVENANCE
León Gallery, *The Spectacular Mid Year Auction 2015*, Makati City, 13 June 2015, Lot 48.

Jose Joya's diverse body of work is a testament to the evolution of his styles, techniques, and mediums over his artistic career. He transitioned from the figurative, traditional style to abstract expressionism and later to ceramic painting. In the 1970s, during his abstract expressionist period, he introduced his acrylic collages, a unique blend of translucent and finely-grained rice paper with acrylic paint, creating biomorphic shapes of varying sizes and densities.

Joya's canvases are known for their large, kaleidoscopic brush strokes and thick impastos in arbitrary shapes and places. These strokes and colors, far from being random, are a deliberate expression of the artist's feelings—his way of connecting to the world around him, creating a depth of artistic expression. As Leonidas Benesa puts it:

> *"...the most abstract expressionist works of Joya are not merely explosions and explorations in paint as well as the textures and other tactile qualities of paint. What may not be apparent to the casual eye is that the works are held together in fine tension, that they are invested with an inner order so conceived that the colors do not fly off but inhere or cohere together in gyroscopic balance."*

Pasay is one of Joya's acrylic collages, in which he illustrates the City's vibrancy and bright energy with the use of oranges, nudes, beiges, and whites. This color palette and his incorporation of rice paper give texture and life to this 1981 masterpiece. Indeed, Pasay is an exceptional work, an integration of Joya's knowledge and ingenuity that embodies the traits of an authentic Joya piece. *(Jessica Magno)*

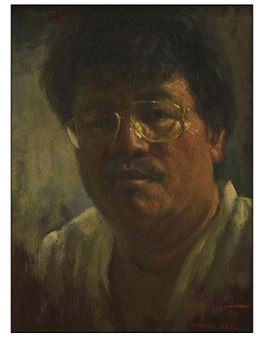
6

Romulo Galicano (b. 1945)

Landscape
signed and dated 1981 (lower left)
pastel on masonite board
24" x 36" (61 cm x 91 cm)

P 400,000

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



ABOVE: A self-portrait of Romulo Galicano
© poramoralarte-exposito

Romulo Galicano's 1981 *Landscape* features the vertical elements he so often inputs in his works.

Here, Galicano's tall and unbending trees are depicted in his realist style. Despite his classical background, he had been interested in abstraction. His works' vertical lines serve as a "reconciliation between opposite poles and the merging of the Subjective and the Objective—creating a new meaningful work of art."

This merging of the abstract and the figurative is evident in this work. An apprentice of the Amoroslo of the South and his uncle Martino Abellana, Galicano's works boast of remarkable technicality, a result of his private lessons with his uncle and his formal education at the University of the East. In *Landscape,* Galicano depicts a soft dreamy patch of woodland. The wind wafting through the air is evident in the way the leaves on the trees move. There is a sense of nostalgia in this piece, as befits the Visayan Realist Master. *(Hannah Valiente)*

The War's Poignant Aftermath
Fernando Amorsolo as a Visual Historian

The Pacific Theater of World War II did not spare the Philippines from the horrors of the war. Then a territory of the United States, the Philippines was thrown in the middle of the war, with its capital Manila suffering great casualties and considered one of the most devastated capital cities alongside Berlin and Warsaw.

This devastation had affected many Filipinos trapped in the city capital, with one of them the elderly Amorsolo. The quinquagenarian (or a fifty-year-old) Amorsolo was left significantly weakened by the battle. His daughter Sylvia Amorsolo-Lazo said in a September 2022 interview with ANCX that he, along with the men of the family, stayed in their house during the occupation.

"We lived near Azcarraga before the War, but when the Japanese set up a garrison right across the street from our house," she recalls. "My father wanted to keep all the womenfolk safe; so he hired another house ... in Raon. My mother and all the girls were sent there. Papa and the boys stayed in that house on Morayta."

This stay at Morayta also almost became a death sentence for the elderly Amorsolo. Already in his fifties, he was also a diabetic and the ongoing war made medications extremely difficult to procure. After the Battle of Manila, American businessman and US Intelligence Chick Parsons made rounds at the war-worn city in search of the sick and the injured. Among the injured and in need of insulin is Amorsolo, languishing in the dim corner of his studio.

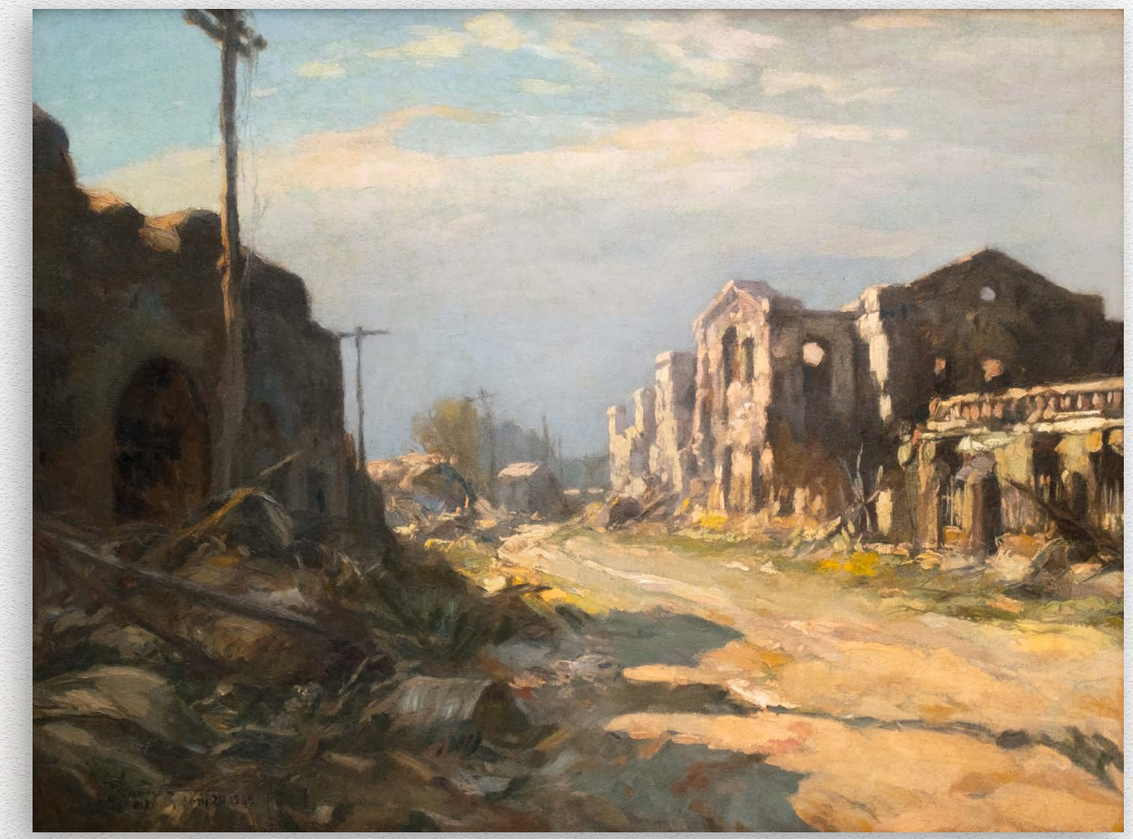
Even excluding his medical needs, the horrors of the war have embedded itself in Amorsolo's psyche. "Papa had a black and white camera then but I don't know if he was using it to capture the scenes," Mrs. Sylvia says. "He would tell us that he would even go up on the roof of the house in Azcarraga to look at the airplanes on their bombing runs."

"My father had a collection of newspapers of every single day of the War," Mrs. Sylvia adds. "He used his works to depict the war crimes and the refugee crisis."

The result is a 1940s frenzy of Amorsolo's recollection of the war. The Lot in Hand, a 1945 oil painting entitled *Ruins of War*, portrays the decimated ruins left by the war. Amorsolo had dated the piece April 24, 1945, right in the heat of the war as many Axis countries would unconditionally surrender in the months to come. The Battle of Manila was waged for a whole month, where intense destruction befell when American bombing leveled out large areas of the "Pearl of the Orient Seas." Manila became the battleground of the fiercest urban fighting fought by the American forces in the Pacific War, with countless cultural and historical treasures lost to the carnage.

It was in this backdrop that Fernando Amorsolo approached his 1940s war paintings. In *Ruins of War,* his classical style and vivid sunlight is still evident and yet it shines down on ruins. Here, one can see the rubbles of concrete after the bombing; here, they can see a row of decimated houses, roofs blown out into the air. Despite the traditional beauty of his works, he does not shy away from depicting the horrors of the war. This is Amorsolo, inhibited and free, stealing away whatever time he had to go up to their rooftop and depict whatever it is his eyes see.

"My father would paint every day," Mrs. Sylvia says. "He hated being idle but during the War, he believed that it was important and that he needed to record what was happening around him." *(Hannah Valiente)*



7

Fernando Amorsolo (1892 - 1972)
Ruins of War
signed, dated April 24, 1945 and inscribed Manila (lower left)
oil on canvas
18" x 24" (46 cm x 61 cm)

P 2,000,000

Accompanied by a certificate issued by Mrs. Sylvia Amorsolo-Lazo confirming the authenticity of this lot

PROVENANCE
Private collection, USA

8

Mauro Malang Santos (1928 - 2017)

Barung-Barong
signed and dated 1982 (lower right)
tempera
17" x 13 1/2" (43 cm x 34 cm)

P 200,000

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

The *Barung-Barong* has been a quintessential part of Mauro Malang Santos's oeuvre. The majority of Philippine artists depicting the shanty urban house as a view of poverty with its "rusty tin and singles used for sidings and roof," as said by critic Alfredo Roces, Malang's angst-free depiction stood out.

This jovial depiction of the *Barung-Barong* is evident in his 1982 work. Aptly titled Barung Barong, Malang's sensibility in colors revitalizes the otherwise crowded houses. Loading the canvas in vibrant reds and warm colors, Malang's barung-barong symbolizes resiliency and joy. The work's vividness also highlights his innate understanding of colors and hues. "There is no color he avoids, no hue or shade that he cannot orchestrate in his palette," says Cid Reyes. Indeed, the buoyancy with which he imbues *Barung-Barong* truly emphasizes Malang's luxuriantly dramatic colors; the piece seems to glow lush and capricious even as he depicts what others perceive as derelict.

Indubitably Filipino in essence, *Barung-Barong* chooses to focus on the triumphant resolution of the people's oft-difficult lives, highlighting the pleasure inherent in the Filipino that is central to many of Malang's works, *Barung-Barong* included. *(Hannah Valiente)*

9

Ronald Ventura (b. 1973)

Transpose
signed and dated 1999 (lower left)
oil on paper
25 1/2" x 15 3/4" (63 cm x 38 cm)

P 700,000

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

"The human anatomy has fascinated me ever since I was a child," Ronald Ventura said in a 2011 interview for his show at Tyler Rollins Fine Art in New York. This fascination for the human body followed him well into his adulthood and even bled into his art – throughout the years, Ventura has developed a predilection for depicting the human body juxtaposed against dark images.

In his 1999 *Transpose,* Ventura expertly manipulates shadows and depth as he depicts a man hanging upside down in an apparent approximation – though not a faithful replication – of The Hanged Man, with his hands wrapped around a knee. His face is upturned and his eyes are closed, denoting the man's despair, his trials, and his self-sacrifice.

"[The] basis of [Ventura's] art is his mastery of the anatomy," writes critic Alice Guillermo in *Human Study and the Politics of Gender* as recalled in the book Realities: Ronald Ventura. "He has assumed the capability of distorting the human body, clothed or unclothed, or of morphing it in the most unexpected ways." *(Hannah Valiente)*

10

Orley Ypon (b. 1973)

Ahon Series: Mud Man
signed and dated 2015 (lower left)
oil on canvas
36" x 48" (91 cm x 122 cm)

P 400,000

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

PROVENANCE
Altromondo - Arte Contemporanea

Ypon's mastery of classical techniques is evident across his body of work, seamlessly blending time-honored artistic principles with a modern sensibility. However, what truly sets Ypon apart from more conventional artists is his deliberate departure from traditional expectations. While his proficiency in classical methods might suggest a focus on idealized beauty or picturesque landscapes, Ypon boldly challenges these assumptions by embracing a distinctly different approach. Instead of adhering to the conventions of polished and romanticized portrayals, Ypon offers his audience unembellished glimpses into the authenticity of everyday life. He captures scenes with raw honesty, portraying the essence of ordinary existence without the veneer of idealization.

At first glance, this particular piece might evoke memories of landscapes from a bygone era, seemingly aligned with classical traditions. However, a closer examination reveals Ypon's fresh and unique perspective. Unlike the idealized depictions often found in traditional landscapes or genre scenes, which are imbued with romanticized beauty or allegorical significance, Ypon's work presents a stark and unadorned reality. Rather than offering an idyllic vision, his landscapes confront the viewer with a candid and truthful portrayal of the world as it is, celebrating the beauty in its unfiltered authenticity. *(Jed Daya)*

11

Mike Adrao (b. 1973)

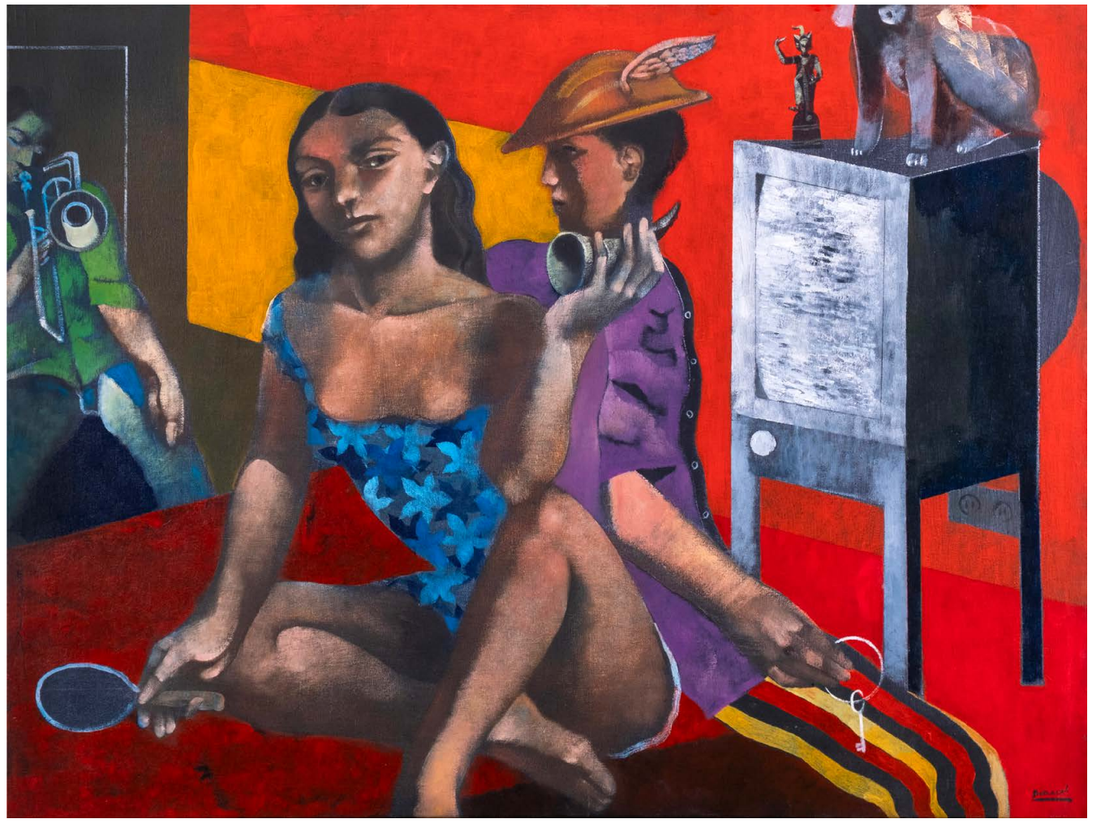
Abuso Feudal
signed and dated 2012 (lower center)
charcoal on paper
72" x 60" (183 cm x 152 cm)

P 100,000

Through his 2012 *Abuso Feudal,* Mike Adrao fearlessly addresses a core problem of the Philippines. In this charcoal work, Adrao painstakingly depicts a headless woman, her hands folded demurely over her stomach while vines and thorns slither above and around her figure. A man leans back proudly, his crossed legs callously stepping on what would have been the woman's head.

The somber black-and-white atmosphere further cements the tragedy of the piece. There is a looming dread over the piece, almost as if a centuries-long burden is summarily dumped into the work. And in a way, it is. The Philippines, a semi-feudal and semi-colonial country, is afflicted with feudal problems even after the system is abolished. Landlords still control the fields and their people, especially in an agricultural country like the Philippines. The farmers of the far-flung areas still contend with unfair wages, impossible quotas, and oppressive systems, forced into unfair living situations. Those who nourish the land get trampled and those who abuse her only grow richer by the day, widening the gap of ever becoming true equals.

As the vines creep in to squeeze the life of the woman and as she is rendered faceless and voiceless by those who trample her rights, so too are our farmers. But, as it is, all hope is not lost. Land is life, as people are wont to proclaim, and it is only fitting to give the land to its rightful protectors. Through collective action, this semi-feudal state is going to give out and with it comes the freedom of our farmers, our fisherfolks, and all the marginalized alike. *(Hannah Valiente)*



12

Marcel Antonio (b. 1965)

Echoes of the Divine Messenger
signed (lower right)
acrylic on canvas
36" x 48" (91 cm x 122 cm)

P 240,000

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

While known for drawing inspiration from myths, folktales, and classical works of fantasy literature, Marcel Antonio is also known for the recurring pseudo-narratives in his body of works. A curious aspect of Antonio's paintings, these pseudo-narratives become testaments to the artist's masterfully distinct manner of post-expressionism.

Visibly apparent in this painting, the resulting image on Antonio's canvas is often peculiar, nevertheless quaint and dreamy with its collage-like render of subjects in disorientingly varying perspectives, solemn facial expressions, as well as odd distortions of spaces and bodies. Although the composition seemingly leads towards a narrative, this hint of a plot refuses to pin itself down, always floating out clue-like elements in the form of symbols and seemingly cryptic objects. In other words, any sense of a narrative is always led astray by these spontaneous figures that emerge and break any sense of continuity in the painting. Such is exactly the charm of Marcel Antonio's works: that these pseudo-narratives are akin to the liminal spaces of a dream, spontaneously charting their course in a stream of personal experiences, memory, collective imagination, and the sea of the unconscious. *(Pie Tiausas)*

Jason Cortez (b. 1986)

The Graces
signed and dated 2020 (lower right)
oil on canvas
60″ x 96″ (152 cm x 244 cm)

P 500,000

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

Cortez's mastery of hyperrealism transcends mere technical skill; it serves as a potent narrative device that delves into the complexities of human perception and the nature of reality itself. His meticulous attention to detail and ability to replicate reality with astonishing accuracy create an initial sense of comfort and familiarity for the viewer. This comfort, however, is intentionally disrupted by the introduction of subtle or striking surreal elements, which challenge the viewer's assumptions about what is real and what is imagined.

In the work, Cortez invites us into a world where the boundaries between reality and fiction are blurred, creating a dreamlike tableau-rich with symbolic meaning. The figures, adorned with flowers that obscure their eyes, suggest a deliberate detachment from the conventional perception of reality. The flowers, often symbols of beauty and ephemerality, here act as both a mask and a barrier, preventing the figures from seeing the world as it is typically understood. Their expressions and poses convey a sense of introspection, as if they are caught between the realms of the real and the imagined.

The juxtaposition of vibrant, lifelike flowers and butterflies with the stark imagery of military tanks and somber figures creates a tension that draws the viewer deeper into the narrative. The butterflies, often symbols of transformation and change, flutter around the figures, hinting at the fleeting nature of life and the constant state of flux in the world. The tanks, on the other hand, introduce a sense of conflict and destruction, contrasting sharply with the natural beauty in the foreground. This interplay between creation and destruction, life and death, reality and imagination, reflects Cortez's exploration of the dualities inherent in the human experience. *(Jed Daya)*

Ferdinand Cacnio (b. 1960)

Masaganang Huli
signed and dated 2009
welded brass and copper on glass
sculpture: H: 7″ (18 cm) L: 18″ (46 cm) W: 21 1/2″ (55 cm)
glass: H: 7 1/2″ (19 cm) L: 24″ (61 cm) W: 36″ (91 cm)

P 400,000

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

An eye for the arts runs in the family of Ferdinand Cacnio. Son of another artist, Cacnio followed in the footsteps of his father Angel Cacnio. "I was surrounded by so many artists. Their community gave me an informal training at an early age," he once said.

His medium of choice is metal and he expertly manipulates the material with an ease that showcases his talent. In *Masaganang Ani*, Cacnio welds brass and copper to masterfully a fisherman reeling in his bountiful haul for the day. He uses glass to depict the seas, its reflective quality acting like the ocean as it mirrors the boat and the fisherman back to the surface.

Through his fishermen, Cacnio tells the story of the masses, a story close to his heart as one of his grandfathers Flavio Cacnio is a fisherman. Small yet stable, his fishermen sculptures echo the standing of the fisherfolk in the country – despite their importance, they are hardly acknowledged and even less so appreciated. And yet, here, Cacnio immortalizes their struggles and victories, reminding us that, just like the strength of the metals he used for this sculpture, these fishermen remain unbowed and unbroken in their unending plight. *(Hannah Valiente)*

Michael Cacnio (b. 1969)

Fisherman
signed and dated 2006
brass
H: 22 1/2" (57 cm)
L: 17" (43 cm)
W: 13" (33 cm)

P 400,000

León Gallery wishes to than Mrs. Tess Cacnio
for confirming the authenticity of this lot

Michael Cacnio's *Fisherman* (2006) is a culmination not just of his illustrious career but also of the richly artistic childhood that he grew up in. Exposed to the art of his father Angel Cacnio as well as the other eminent contemporary artists, Cacnio's awareness of the beauty of art began at a young age. Veering into the field of sculpture, Cacnio soon made a name for himself as he manipulated his medium (he often favors brass) into pieces that bleed with childhood nostalgia.

Fisherman fits right in his oeuvre. Cacnio pays homage to his grandfather Flavio Cacnio who was a fisherman as he shapes brass to depict a lone fisherman, a basket on his side he leisurely reels in his haul. Here, Cacnio plays around with perspective, elongating the man's fishing rod and shaping the string into a soft swirl in the air.

"In sculpture, there's drama, a mood," Cacnio says in a 2024 People's Asia interview. "At the same time, in every angle, it's tangible. A sculpture is three-dimensional and every angle of the artwork can converse with you."

Cacnio's *Fisherman* is a perfect blend of childhood wonder and magnificent storytelling imbued with palpable intimacy. Through his usage of curves and straight lines, Cacnio emphasizes both the gracefulness of the fishermen and the strength they bear as they carry on their days, unbending in the face of trials. *(Hannah Valiente)*

The *Celebration* Series of Luz
Reveling in the Minimalist

by JESSICA MAGNO

Throughout his childhood and adolescence, Arturo Luz did not—not even once—show any inclination for the arts; all he ever cared about was swimming. "The idea of making art never once occurred to him," Cid Reyes writes in his monograph on Luz. "But when it did, he was already seventeen years old and living in a time of disturbance and destruction," he adds. In this monograph, Luz recalled the significant moment he decided to become an artist. It was during the war, a hot and lazy afternoon in their residence in Pasay, that he just, without provocation, sketched his mother's face. "It was the very first drawing I ever made in my life. From that moment on, I said to myself: I am going to be an artist," shares Luz. And so, be an artist, he did.

When the war ended, Luz started studying art, firstly under the private tutorship of Pablo Amorsolo, brother of the esteemed Fernando Amorsolo. Their classes occur in the siblings' residence, where the young Luz first met and basked in the maestro's works. After this private tutorship, he went to several local and international universities to further his art studies.

Arturo Luz's artistic journey is a testament to his unwavering dedication to learning and development. He fearlessly experimented with different styles, mediums, and themes, producing a diverse range of art pieces. While his early works were rooted in realism, Luz is most renowned for his minimalist, geometric abstraction in his unique themes of cyclists, acrobats, musicians, performers, ancient pottery, and Asian architecture.

Luz started to delve deeper into the world of abstraction in the 1950s. A playful scene prompted this shift in his painting style, which he witnessed during the New Year's Eve celebration in 1952: four men riding a single bicycle. "That sight struck me as very Filipino... [it] had a sense of celebration, performance, [and] joy of life," says Luz. That very sight resulted in his *Bagong Taon,* a painting of silhouetted cyclists with tooting horns on their heads—the beginning of his simplistic linear and geometric works of minimizing his figures into their most basic shapes.

In the 1960s, Luz began working with his collages, characterized by sticking cut pieces of paper in different shapes on a surface and overlaying them with acrylic paint. *Celebration* is a testament to Luz's unyielding talent and ingenious artistry, an incorporation of his newly developed practice and his carnival and musician themes. This 1965 collage on masonite board, despite its simplistic, geometric forms and monochromatic, washed red, and muted beige, still managed to capture the vibrant and high-spirited qualities of one's celebration.

16

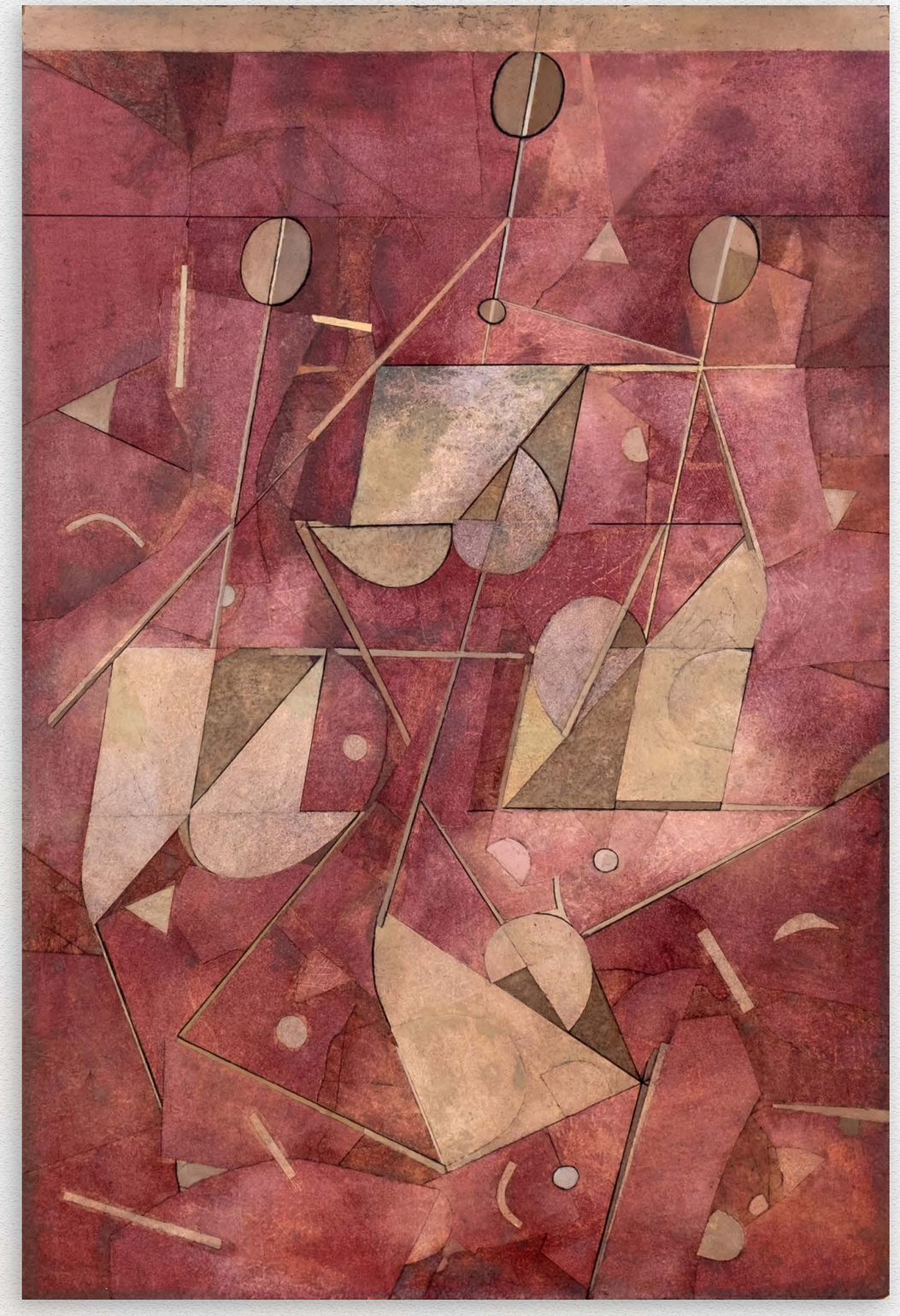
Arturo Luz (1926 - 2021)
Celebration
dated 1965
collage on masonite board
36″ x 24″ (91 cm x 61 cm)

P 600,000

Accompanied by a certificate issued by Ms. Luisa Luz-Lansigan confirming the authenticity of this lot

PROVENANCE
The Luz Gallery
Private collection, USA

ABOVE: Arturo Luz. © Leon Gallery Archives



17

Juvenal Sansó (b. 1929)

Rush of Tide
signed (lower right)
ca. 1970
acrylic on canvas
13 1/4″ x 19 1/4″ (34 cm x 49 cm)

P 280,000

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

Juvenal Sansó spent his younger years studying art with private tutors and taking art classes with renowned art professors from UP and UST. He also studied in art academies in Rome and France, where the latter became his permanent residence. Studying in different academies and under various mentors, Sansó explored different mediums for his works–oil, acrylic, watercolor, dry brush, and pen and ink—and studied fresco painting and etching in Paris. He held numerous exhibitions in the Philippines, Italy, France, the US, Mexico, and England.

Sansó's paintings exude a sense of calmness but haunt the viewers simultaneously. Often, his works appear as though one is looking at a hazy and distant dream, an entirely surrealistic world. On the contrary, his themes—landscapes and seascapes—give off a sense of solitude and tranquility.

The painting at hand, *Rush of Tide,* is a testament to Sansó's mastery and unique style. This 1970 acrylic on canvas painting presented a peaceful scenery featuring rock formations and flowing water, brought to life with harsh but careful brushstrokes. Sansó's use of a dry-on-dry technique, dabbing a dry brush on white paint and strategically placing it on the dry surface of the painting, creates the illusion of flowing water. Combined with his choice of colors, this technique results in a hazy, dream-like masterpiece that showcases his artistic skill and interest in this style. *(Jessica Magno)*

18

Mauro Malang Santos (1928 - 2017)

Plants
signed and dated 1982 (lower right)
gouache
14″ x 17″ (36 cm x 43 cm)

P 200,000

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

From the 1970s to the 1980s, the Philippines was characterized by political unrest and a national struggle to survive. But Malang's works focus on plants, landscapes, and mythic images of people's daily lives, completely devoid of the agitation and turmoil experienced by the masses. Despite the new styles and methods of expression that emerged during these years, Malang continued with his signature style of creating his subjects using a variety of overlapping geometric forms and sizes.

Color has always been a primary force in Philippine aesthetics. Malang was one of the master colorists who exhibited his proficiency in using a variety of tints and shades to manifest the Philippine landscape and everyday life. This burst of color is evident in this lot—a painting of flora, one of the artist's identifiable subjects. Just like most of his works, Malang used a solid color for his background and added a variety of brush strokes and geometric shapes to create an image. From afar, this 1982 painting can look like a watercolor painting due to the artist's choice of light palette. However, Plants was made with gouache; upon closer inspection, viewers can see its more solid and opaque quality. Consequently, the palette and style Malang used in this work made his subject stand out, and the entirety of it radiates a sense of serenity—the opposite of what the Filipinos felt during those dark times. *(Jessica Magno)*

19

Augusto Albor (b. 1948)

Tala
signed and dated 2017 (lower left and verso)
acrylic on canvas
48″ x 48″ (122 cm x 122 cm)

P 500,000

Augusto "Gus" Albor was an innate artist; he could draw well even as a kid and even helped his teachers by drawing diagrams on the blackboard. However, the works of his predecessors, Luz and Zobel, inspired and motivated him to pursue non-objective artmaking.

His early works, characterized by spontaneous brush strokes of blacks and greys, were influenced by his professor, Florencio Concepcion. As he delved deeper into his artistic journey, he began to experiment with colors and sweeps of brushes, eventually crafting a unique and unrivaled Albor art style. His pieces, with their layers of paint creating depth and texture, exude a restrained, impassioned, and above all, elegant aesthetic.

Seemingly looking simple, Albor's paintings are made with a great deal of enthusiasm and patience. He starts by sweeping vibrant colors (usually primary ones) onto his canvas, then layering it with neutral hues. Tala is an example of this–vibrant red painted against muted brown and peeking behind layers of greys. This 2017 piece perfectly manifests his discipline and great sense of control in his colors and precise layering, establishing him as one of the most affluent visual artists in Philippine contemporary art. *(Jessica Magno)*

DR. ROBERTO MACASAET, SR.

The Gentleman Collector and Father of Philippine Healthcare

ABOVE: Dr. Macasaet and his family at their residence with the painting hanging at the back; © Macasaet family archives

Dr. Roberto Macasaet Sr. had a distinguished medical career, having received his degree from the University of the Philippines post-war in 1946; and having trained at Fordham University in General Surgery, Urology, and Pathology. He was head of Makati Medical Center's Department of Urology for three decades, and was a member of that hospital's Advisory Committee. He also served as chairman of Associated Medical and Clinical Services, and was previously chairman of Fil Hispano Ceramics, Inc. He is also remembered as a pioneer in the Philippine HMO industry, having founded Maxicare in 1987 when the industry was practically nonexistent. Today, it has evolved into the leading HMO in the country, and has the widest network of providers with over 1,000 partner hospitals and clinics, and over 56,000 affiliated physicians nationwide.

Dr. Macasaet was named Chairman Emeritus and was married to Teresita Montinola of Bacolod. Both were enthusiastic but low-key collectors.

"Shibui is the Japanese concept of beauty. It is serene, like a tea ceremony. Shibui calls for audience participation because you do not show the object in its entirety. You suggest it. A bird in flight, for example, can suggest other birds in flight either before or after it. It is reducing the thing to the essentials. Simplicity."

—VICENTE MANANSALA ON HIS "SHIBUI SERIES," IN ROD. PARAS-PEREZ'S "MANANSALA" (1980, PLC PUBLICATIONS)

When Transparent Cubism emancipated Vicente Manansala's artistic vision and cemented his rightful place in Philippine art, the next logical step to take would be to push it beyond his creative innovation of rendering transparent planes to humanize and not fragment his beloved subjects—folk people and the urban poor.

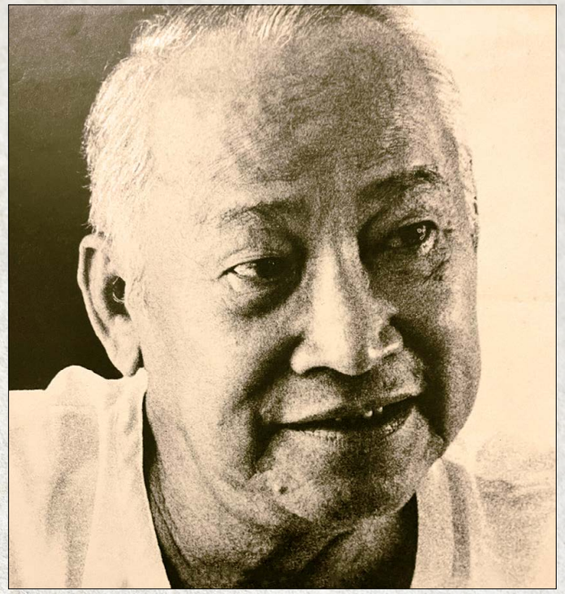
The groundwork of Manansala's Transparent Cubism was first laid during his nine-month Parisian sojourn of 1950-51 under a scholarship from the French government to study at the University of Paris' Ecole des Beaux-Arts, where he trained under the auspices of cubist master and Picasso's contemporary Fernand Leger.

Manansala crossed paths with his famed style during a fortuitous moment of leisure along the breezy Parisian streets. "Window shopping one day, [Manansala] noted the interplay of reflected images on the plate-glass and the objects inside the window displays," writes Agnes Duval in her article "Manansala" in the April 1968 issue of *Solidarity: Current Affairs, Ideas, and the Arts* magazine.

Manansala's Transparent Cubism would eventually crystallize in the 1962 masterpiece *Whirr* (Roberto T. Villanueva Collection), depicting birds in flight. The piece would form part of a series of the same name, one that would also give birth to another series in which Manansala explores the Japanese concept of *Shibui*—the simplicity of beauty emphasized through subtle details.

"In 1965, [Manansala] came across a special 1960 issue of the *House and Garden* on the idea of *Shibui,* the Japanese concept of beauty embodying restraint, suggestion, and surprise," critic Rod. Paras-Perez writes in his book *Manansala.* "Thoroughly intrigued, he painted a *Shibui Series.* A new sense of expansiveness entered his works as he reduced his images to the barest of essentials, enveloping them with a palpable emptiness, *mu* in Chinese, meaning *nothing*: a core concept of Eastern philosophy. Where emptiness was previously a void to be filled, emptiness became a presence as tangible as objects. In pictorial terms, negative space was to be an assertive fullness."

Manansala began working on his *Shibui Series* in 1966. The work at hand, *Candle Vendor*, is one of the artist's earliest musings on his newfound creative concept. A veiled woman is depicted selling candles, huddling on the ground, with her face solemn and body language earnestly evoking a life of indigency. Manansala exhibits the concept of Shibui through the religious icons (likely *estampitas*) and the imposing walls that suggest a church setting, recalling to mind the vendors and fortune tellers congregating outside Quiapo Church. A checkered floor can be seen leading towards an endless passage. It is a recurring image in Manansala's Shibui Series, saying in the Paras-Perez book that it exists "to suggest depth." Perspective is also achieved by shrouding it within "mystery."



ABOVE: Vicente Manansala.

Manansala provides an intimation of elements, resulting in more intimate engagement between the viewer and the subject. The artist significantly tones down his Baroque sensibilities to create a delicate tension between the main subject and the muted elements surrounding it. In doing so, Manansala imbibes the viewer with liberty, making them use their imaginative faculty to complete the composition.

Employing muted colors that engender an oppressively gloomy atmosphere, Manansala projects a ubiquitous, real-life image of the urban folk. Hunched over her goods, the candle vendor becomes representative of a people forced to survive amid defenselessness from an unjust system that caters to only an elite few. The endless pathway on the left evokes an eternal cycle of poverty they cannot escape unless social change is enacted through their collective power as makers and movers of society. The vendor's posture even evokes the Ifugao ancient bul'ul, suggesting an intersection of the Indigenous and Catholic religions and conveying the desperate pleas of an impoverished people to every possible deity, worldly or mystical.

The concept of *Shibui* runs deep beyond the technical qualities of this work. As one who experienced stifling poverty in his younger years, Manansala endows enriched meanings that resonate with the Filipino experience, consequently giving his works a timeless quality. Dr. Roberto Macasaet—a gentleman doctor—may have been drawn to a beauty that lies in the people's resilience, a people's continuing yearning and struggle to reclaim their hopes and dreams, their dignity and rightful place in society. *(Adrian Maranan)*

The Macasaet Manansala
For a Gentleman Doctor

20 PROPERTY FROM THE DR. AND MRS. ROBERTO MACASAET COLLECTION

Vicente Manansala (1910 - 1981)
Candle Vendor
signed and dated 1966 (upper left)
oil on canvas
27" x 34" (69 cm x 86 cm)

P 8,000,000

A Suite for a Friend and Physician

A Gift from President Laurel to Ramon Macasaet

A Circa 1930 Oriental Suite

a.) A Console Table
rosewood with mother of pearl inlay and marble
34" x 33" x 16 1/2" (86 cm x 84 cm x 42 cm)

b.) Two Armchairs
rosewood with mother of pearl inlay
35 1/2" x 23" x 19 1/2" (90 cm x 58 cm x 50 cm)

c.) Two Armchairs
rosewood with mother of pearl inlay and marble
41" x 21" x 19 1/2" (104 cm x 53 cm x 50 cm)

d.) Two Pedestals
rosewood with mother of pearl inlay and marble
36" x 12" x 12" (91 cm x 30 cm x 30 cm)

P 200,000

PROVENANCE
A gift from President Jose P. Laurel to Ramon Macasaet and thence, by descent to his son, Dr. Roberto Macasaet

By the first half of the 20th century, the Montinolas of Negros and Iloilo had made their name in the South. The head of the family, Ruperto Montinola, was appointed the first public fiscal prosecutor of Iloilo where he served until 1903 before he resigned due to health complications. The call for service did not leave Montinola, however – in 1908 and again in 1922, he served as governor of Iloilo, all the while active as a lawyer in between his terms.

By 1931, Montinola rose to the national stage, where he was elected to the Philippine Senate on behalf of the 7th District. Furthering his national campaign was his delegation to the 1934 Philippine Constitutional Convention where the 1935 Constitution was drafted and agreed on by 202 delegates from all over the Philippines.

It was in this delegation that Montinola met Jose P. Laurel, who was then representing the 3rd District of Batangas. Montinola served as the first vice-president of the committee with Laurel as one of the leading names when asked for the head of the committee. Laurel served as the temporary chairman by acclamation, and though he was soon replaced by Claro M. Recto, it is not out of the realm of possibility that the two who were both from the Nacionalista Party would have bonded together in the months it took for the draft to be finalized.

It was this lauded family that Dr. Roberto Macasaet, Sr. married into when he wedded Teresita Montinola, the granddaughter of Ruperto. A lauded man himself, Macasaet received his degree at the University of the Philippines post-war before studying General Surgery, Urology, and Pathology at Fordham University. Perhaps his greatest contribution to Philippine healthcare is his ushering in the Philippine Health Maintenance Organization (HMO) industry, having founded Maxicare in 1987 at a time when the industry was practically nonexistent.

In a twist of fate, the Macasaet's themselves are acquainted and even close with the former president. Macasaet's father, Ramon Macasaet, served as Vice Minister of Health and Welfare and even as a private physician to the President. He was one of Laurel's most trusted, with sources naming Ramon as one of the people present when the President had to flee the capital during the war. As his private physician, Ramon was one of the people Laurel trusted with his health and to an extent, with his life.

The lot at hand – an Oriental Suite consisting of tables, chairs, and pedestals – is a gift to Ramon from President Laurel. Laurel's favor for the Montinolas and the Macasaets intertwines through the fateful union of Roberto and Teresita, a union that is symbolized by this grandiose gift. Created with the rarest, finest quality of rosewood, the suite is adorned with an inlay of mother-of-pearl and marbles, creating a majestic vision of rarity and elegance.

The Macasaets, too, have returned the favor to Laurel. The Jose P. Laurel Memorial Foundation website listed Dr. Roberto Macasaet as an Acting Chairman of the Board of Trustees. It is evident that the Macasaets and the Montinolas cultivated a strong relationship with former president Jose P. Laurel, a relationship represented by this majestic set of furniture and lived through by their descendants today. *(Hannah Valiente)*

A Nuestra Señora De Los Desamparados (Our Lady of The Abandoned)

ca. 1880s
ivory, "baticuling" wood ("Litsea leytensis"),
80% solid silver, metal thread embroidery
H: 28" (71 cm)
L: 16" (41 cm)
W: 15" (38 cm)

stand:
D: 12" (30 cm)

P 200,000

PROVENANCE
Private collection, Santa Cruz, Manila

This lovely 1880s image of the Virgin Mary and the Child Jesus with beautifully–articulated ivory faces and hands is a faithful representation of "*Nuestra Senora de los Desamparados*" or Our Lady of the Abandoned, originally venerated in Valencia, Spain and also venerated in the Philippines in Santa Ana, Manila, Marikina city, and Muntinlupa city. The attributes of the original Spanish–Valencian/Catalan Marian title "Mare de Deu dels Desamparats" include a staff of lilies held by the right hand and the Child Jesus carrying a cross on the left hand; they symbolize the Virgin Mary's and the Child Jesus' love for the poor, sick, disabled, and marginalized. No, this tabletop image does not have the head tilted forward as in the Valencia original, which earned that icon the affectionate albeit impious monicker of "Geperudeta" ("The Hunchback of Valencia"). The Virgin Mary wears a long wig of "jusi" fibers and a silvergilt "corona imperial"; the Child Jesus wears a longish wig of "jusi" fibers and a small silvergilt "corona." The previous owner had the images dressed expensively with "tunicas" and "capas" of metal thread embroidery by "Talleres de Maximo Vicente" in the 1970s. The Virgin Mary stands on a gilded and polychromed wooden "peana" (pedestal) carved with stylized flowers and fruits characteristic of the 1880s. Based on the high quality of the ivory, the exquisite singular carving of the faces and hands, and the archetypal woodwork, this was the production of a master "santero" belonging to the "Gremio de Escultores" in Santa Cruz, Manila.

These tabletop ("de vestir" or dressed) "santos"/images with ivory faces and hands in glass "virinas" (domes/cloches) were the favored religious icons of the Filipino landed class who became rich from agriculture and trading during the Spanish colonial era (1565–1898) and an additional half century afterwards (up to the 1950s). Although they look Victorian and nineteenth century, there are fine and pristine early examples dating from as early as the 1570s documented by the Archivo General de Indias in Sevilla and the Museo Oriental de Real Colegio de Los Padres Agustinos in Valladolid, Spain. It means that they were produced concurrently with the successive renaissance, baroque, rococo, neoclassical statuary of the old Augustinian, Dominican, Franciscan, Jesuit, and Augustinian Recollect churches in the islands as well as the naïve folk santos in indio "bahay kubo"/quonset huts. The prevalent theory that they were only produced from the late eighteenth century onwards was debunked. However, the fact that they were crafted by migrant "Sangley" Chinese artisans and their indio assistants still holds after four hundred years.

Las Islas Filipinas had several comic stories of aristocratic dons and donas in the rich agricultural provinces of Pampanga, Bulacan, Laguna, and Batangas who could only invoke Heaven in front of Caucasian–looking, pale, lovely, dashing ivory santos in their altars at home (the exceptions were the frequently miraculous Mexican–crafted "Nuestro Padre Jesus Nazareno" of Quiapo and the "Nuestra Senora de la Paz y Buenviaje" of Antipolo; although it must be remembered that the two images actually had "encarna" or paintwork on their faces and hands which made them look more palatably "mestizo"/"mestiza" during the 1800s and the previous centuries (as proven by antique photographs); on hindsight, Jose Rizal and his "ilustrado" contemporaries never saw the Nazareno and the Virgen de la Paz in their current 2024 organic/nonpainted states; they would be horrified).

These highly–prized and lovingly–cherished ivory santos were only eclipsed in favor of the "more artistic" folk and classical images in tropical hardwoods beginning in the iconoclastic 1960s and reaching a point of no return in collectors' tastes in the 2000s.

A Spanish wooden image of "Nuestra Senora de los Desamparados" is venerated in Santa Ana church, Manila. It was carved in Valencia, Spain in 1713 and was presented to the original image at the cathedral; when it arrived in Manila in 1717, it was brought to the church of the ancient, precolonial "Namayan" settlement beside the Rio Pasig, renamed Santa Ana, and became its titular patroness. The Marian title "Nuestra Senora de los Desamparados" is also the titular patroness of Marikina city and Muntinlupa city in the NCR National Capital Region.

The devotion to "Nuestra Senora de los Desamparados" ("Mare de Deu dels Desamparats" – Valencian/Catalan) originated in Valencia, Spain. In 1409, a Mercedarian friar Joan Jofre came upon a mentally ill man being lynched by a crowd; invoking his religious authority, he promptly stopped it. Friar Jofre, moved by the cruel

The Virgin of the Abandoned
An Icon of Hope Amidst Despair

incident, preached about caring for the mentally ill and forthwith established a hospice facility for them. Finally in 1414, a brotherhood to care for the mentally ill was established under the patronage of "Sancta dels Folls Doña Nostra I Desamparats Innocents" (Our Lady of the Insane and the Forsaken Innocents). The mandate eventually expanded to include the abandoned children, the homeless, indigent hospital patients, shipwrecked sailors, and prostitutes of Valencia. The hospital established by the brotherhood for the mentally ill and other marginalized patients --- "Hospital de los Innocentes" --- became the very first mental hospital in the world.

"El feren els Angels" (Made by the Angels): Valencian tradition has it that in the early 1400s, 3 angels disguised as pilgrims came and volunteered to create an image of the Virgin Mary and the Child Jesus within 3 days. They were taken to a hermitage where they requested to work in seclusion. After 4 days, the pilgrims could no longer be found and and there was only a beautiful image of the Virgin Mary and the Child Jesus. Many favors, many cures, specially to the marginalized and disabled, occurred with the popular veneration of the image of "Mare de Deu dels Folls, Innocents I Desamparats." The widely–venerated, extremely–cherished, 500 year–old, 15th century image was almost totally destroyed by the Republican Communists during the Spanish Civil War (1936–39) but was masterfully restored afterwards.

The female name Amparo, a Spanish and Portuguese word meaning refuge, shelter, and protection is directly derived from the Marian title "Nuestra Senora de los Desamparados"/"Nossa Senhora do Amparo." Many baby girls in Old Filipinas were baptized with the name Amparo, Maria Amparo, Maria del Amparo in honor of the Virgin Mary.

The devotion to "Nuestra Senora de los Desamparados" in Valencia along with that of "Nuestra Senora del Pilar" in Zaragoza and "La Macarena" in Sevilla are the principal Marian devotions in Spain. *(Augusto Marcelino Reyes Gonzalez III)*

A Nuestra Señora Del Rosario (Our Lady of The Rosary)

ca. 1850s
ivory, "baticuling" wood ("Litsea leytensis"),
80% solid silver, brass, metal thread embroidery
H: 27" (69 cm)
L: 11" (28 cm)
W: 16" (41 cm)

P 200,000

PROVENANCE
Private collection, Binondo, Manila

This elegant 1850s image of the Virgin Mary and the Child Jesus with unusually well–articulated ivory faces and hands is a faithful representation of "Nuestra Senora del Rosario" or Our Lady of the Rosary, venerated in many churches in Spain and in the Philippines. The principal image and national shrine of "Nuestra Senora del Rosario" or Our Lady of the Rosary in the Philippines is the majestic "Nuestra Senora del Santisimo Rosario"/"Santo Rosario"/"La Naval de Manila" at the Santo Domingo church in Quezon city. The iconography of the original Spanish Catholic Marian title "Nuestra Senora del Rosario" includes a rosary and a scepter held by the right hand and the Child Jesus holding a rosary and a globe supported on the mother's left hand; they symbolize the Virgin Mary's and the Child Jesus' queenship and kingship of heaven and earth as well as their individual desires for human salvation through prayers with the holy rosary. The Virgin Mary wears a long wig of "jusi" fibers, a silvergilt "corona," a metal "rostrillo" around her face, and a metal "aureola" around her head; the Child Jesus wears a longish wig of "jusi" fibers and a silvergilt "corona." The previous owner had them dressed expensively with "tunicas" and "capas" of metal thread embroidery by "Talleres de Maximo Vicente" in the 1970s. The Virgin Mary stands on an elegant base of Chinese clouds (as in those of Guanyin blanc–de–chine statuettes from the Dehua kilns) covered in silver leaf borne by a "peana" (pedestal) of gilded stylized flowers and leaves characteristic of the 1850s. Based on the high quality of the ivory, the exquisite carving of the faces and hands, and the period woodwork, this was the production of a master "santero" from Binondo, Manila.

These tabletop ("de vestir"/dressed) "santos" with ivory faces and hands in glass "virinas" (cloches) were the preferred religious icons of the Filipino upper–class waxed rich from agriculture and trading during the Spanish colonial era (1565–1898) and a half century afterwards (up to the 1950s). They may look Victorian and nineteenth century, but there are excellent and well–conserved early examples from as early as the 1570s as documented by the Archivo General de Indias in Sevilla and the Museo Oriental de Real Colegio de Los Padres Agustinos in Valladolid, Spain. It means that they were produced at the same time frame as the successive renaissance, baroque, rococo, and neoclassical statues of the old Augustinian, Dominican, Franciscan, Jesuit, and Augustinian Recollect churches in the islands as well as the charming naïve folk santos in indio "bahay kubo"/quonset huts. The once–accepted theory that they were only produced onwards from the late eighteenth century (circa 1770s) was finally proven erroneous. On the other hand, the fact that they were produced by migrant "Sangley" Chinese artisans and their indio assistants still holds true after four hundred years.

Old Filipinas harbored droll tales of aristocratic dons and donas in prosperous, agricultural Pampanga, Bulacan, Laguna and Batangas who could only pray in front of European–looking, fair, beautiful, and handsome ivory santos in their home altars (with the exception of the extremely miraculous Mexican–origin "Nuestro Padre Jesus Nazareno" of Quiapo and the "Nuestra Senora de la Paz y Buenviaje" of Antipolo; however, it has to be emphasized that the two images actually wore "encarna" or painted faces which made them look more fair during the 1800s and the previous centuries; for example, Jose Rizal and his "ilustrado" contemporaries never saw the Nazareno and the Virgen de la Paz in their current 2024 natural/barefaced states; they would be unrecognizable to them).

These exquisite ivory santos were only superseded in favor of folk and classical imagery in Philippine hardwoods starting in the hip 1960s culminating in a total pivot of collective taste in the 2000s.

The devotion to "Nuestra Senora del Rosario" was one of the most popular in Old Filipinas. According to Roman Catholic tradition, the Holy Rosary was given to Saint Dominic de Guzman (founder of the OP Ordo Praedicatorum/Order of Preachers/Dominican order) by the Virgin Mary in an apparition in 1208 at the Church of Prouille, Fanjeaux, Languedoc in France (currently Occitanie in central southern France, between the Rhone and Garonne rivers). The devotion in Old Filipinas centered around the Dominicans in Intramuros who promoted the devotion along with their stewardship of a majestic ivory image of the Virgin Mary and the Child Jesus from 1593 wearing magnificent crowns of solid gold and precious gems, clad in elaborate golden vestments, and wearing gold rosaries on their necks --- "Nuestra Senora del Santisimo Rosario"/"Santo Rosario"/"La Naval de Manila."

The annual "fiesta"/feast day of "La Naval de Manila" every second Sunday of October at the Santo Domingo church in Intramuros was truly a gala affair in Old Manila and Old Filipinas. Unlike its predecessor "La Naval de Lepanto" which was a fierce one–day naval battle on 07 October 1571 off the coast of Patras, Greece between the Holy League (Catholic European powers united by Pope Pius V) and the Ottoman Turks, "La Naval de Manila" commemorated a series of sea battles in 1646 along the coasts of Luzon island between the Spanish against the invading Dutch armada (wherein the Spanish only had two old galleons "Rosario" and "Encarnacion" against the Dutch who had fifteen frigates, and yet the Spanish still prevailed against all odds). In both cases, the Catholic navies had less ships and less soldiers than their opponents. The victories of "La Naval de Lepanto" and "La Naval de Manila" were both officially attributed to the Virgin Mary as "Our Lady of Victory" and "Our Lady of the Rosary." The highest Spanish colonial officialdom, the highest–ranking clerics, the crème de la crème of Spanish colonial society all congregated in their finery at the Santo Domingo church for the high masses and the grand procession around "Ciudad Murada" in the early evening. "La Naval de Manila" was one of the proudest annual rites of Spanish Intramuros and it remains so to this day in its postwar location in Quezon city.

The devotion to the "Santo Rosario" or the "Holy Rosary" was widespread in the archipelago. Many baby girls in Old Filipinas were baptized Rosario, Maria Rosario, Maria del Rosario in honor of the Virgin Mary. *(Augusto Marcelino Reyes Gonzalez III)*

Regal Image of the Lady of the Rosary

The Patroness of the Filipino People

San Pedro Apostol
(Saint Peter The Apostle)

18th century
molave hardwood ("Vitex parviflora")
44" x 14" x 11" (112 cm x 36 cm x 28 cm)

P 120,000

PROVENANCE
Private collection, Ilocos Norte

Simon was a fisherman whom Jesus Christ called out of the Sea of Galilee along with his brother Andrew. Jesus changed his name to Peter, meaning "Rock." Peter was a rough, impetuous man given to rash actions. However, Jesus saw these as the qualities of a prospective leader. Jesus predicted that Peter would deny him to his enemies. During the Agony in the Garden of Gethsemane... Peter fell asleep along with the brothers James and John. Peter tried to defend him by cutting off the soldier's ear, but Jesus healed it. Peter denied him three times as the rooster crowed, just as Jesus had predicted. Peter fled. Peter was not at the Crucifixion in Calvary.

When Mary Magdalene reported that she had seen Jesus Christ resurrected, Peter and John ran to the tomb and saw it empty. Jesus Christ appeared to them in the Cenacle. Descent of the Holy Spirit at the Pentecost with Mary the Mother of Jesus. The Ascension of Jesus Christ to Heaven.

Araceli Dans (1929 - 2024)

Umagang Pagbati
signed and dated 2000 (lower left)
watercolor on paper
30" x 22 1/2" (76 cm x 57 cm)

P 800,000

Araceli Limcaco Dans humbly began a career in the arts after the war by painting portraits to earn money in order to support her family. The young Araceli would then go on to hone her practice at the UP College of Fine Arts, where she was mentored by the master classical realist Fernando Amorsolo. As a student, Dans would also sell sketches and paint portraits of her peers to fund her own studies. All this practice allowed her to have an adept grasp of technical foundations early on, greatly impressing her mentor. Thus, Amorsolo let her take advanced classes, allowing her to complete her degree in just three years.

While her forte began with portraiture, Dans found her muse in the details of the *calado* or the lacelike thread work of the *barong tagalog*. Here, for example, Dans paints a vibrant floral arrangement complemented by the demure intricacy of a *calado* curtain from behind. The juxtaposition is interesting: the elaborate quality of human handiwork and that of nature's, now woven together in one composition that finds God in the details. The result is a quaint sense of home and history that threads through the exquisite detail of the brush.

If Amorsolo's Filipiniana finds its epitome in the sun-kissed women in baro't saya basking in the warmth of rural life, Dans finds it indoors within the gentleness of domestic living. *(Pie Tiausas)*

For Gold, God and Glory

A Rare Series of Botong Francisco's Historical Vignettes

by E.A. SANTAMARIA

It is said that Magellan sailed to claim new lands for what modern historians have called rather artfully as 'Gold, God, and Glory.' Those themes are all serendipitously reflected in this rare series of historical vignettes by Carlos "Botong" V. Francisco.

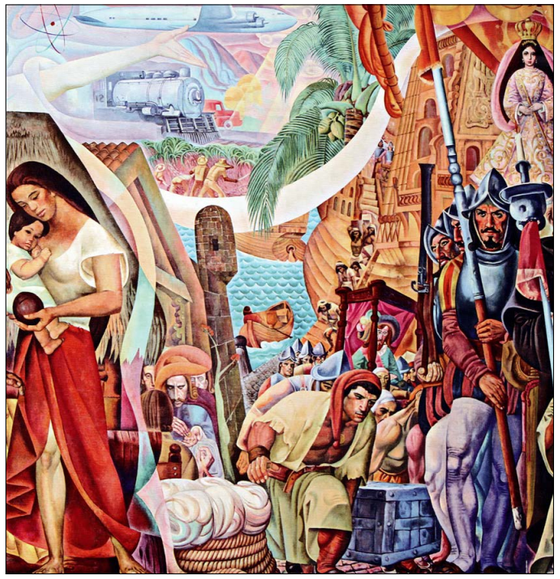
In 1953, Carlos "Botong" V. Francisco was commissioned to create a massive work titled "Five Hundred Years of Philippine History" for the Manila World's Fair. It played directly to his strengths that were focused on creating a powerful iconography of the Filipino built on a pantheon of heroes and heroic events.

These three panels deal with subjects familiar to the Botong canon — but also expand the usual narratives. The panel portraying the coming of Christianity, for example, combines a depiction of the conversion of Datu Humabon and the Queen Juana by the expedition's priest, Pedro de Valderrama with another familiar scene of the burning of the idols. A young warrior raises a seated carving aloft ready to throw it into the flames indicated by an armored Spanish soldier. In the distance, alluding to the future of Catholicism, is the outline of a steepled church, one tower surrounded by scaffolding to suggest that it is still to be built. Among the Filipinos receiving the outstretched blessing are a throng whose tattoos and clothing appear to be based on the Boxer Codex drawings of Visayan nobility. Botong, after all, was renowned for his punctilious research.

'The Manila Galleon' panel harks back to the Chinese junks and traders hawking bolts of silk as well as the Spanish galleon being loaded with treasures that are to be found in the 1956 Pageant of Commerce in the collection of the Lopez Memorial Museum. The cloth is unfurled to the bemusement of a bejeweled (and armed) datu and his wife in the foreground. With a few strokes, Botong succeeds in transforming them into the Filipino everyman considering a purchase with his spouse.

A third panel shows the conquistador Miguel Lopez de Legazpi confronting the brash Rajah Sulayman outside the palisaded walls of the first and original city of Maynila. It is likewise a theme to be found a decade later in the 1964 opus Filipino Struggles through History enshrined at the Manila City Hall.

All three panels have Botong's inimitable style, including such details as graceful clouds and the lively hubbub of spectators; for it was this National Artist's aim to bring alive Filipino heroism in all of history's glorious details.



ABOVE: Portion of Botong's Pageant of Commerce showing the galleon trade in the Philippines

26 PROPERTY FROM THE COLLECTION OF A DISTINGUISHED FAMILY

A Lot of Three Sketches by Carlos "Botong" V. Francisco (1912 - 1969)

a.) The Manila Galleon
ca. 1953
watercolor and pen and ink on paper
9" x 12" (23 cm x 30 cm)

b.) The Baptism of Rajah Humabon and Reyna Juana
signed (lower right)
ca. 1953
watercolor and pen and ink on paper
9" x 12" (23 cm x 30 cm)

c.) Legazpi and Rajah Sulayman Outside Maynila
ca. 1953
watercolor and pen and ink on paper
9" x 12" (23 cm x 30 cm)

P 1,000,000

27

Pacita Abad (1946 - 2004)

Still Life VII
signed and dated 1976 (lower right)
oil on canvas
24″ x 20″ (61 cm x 51 cm)

P 400,000

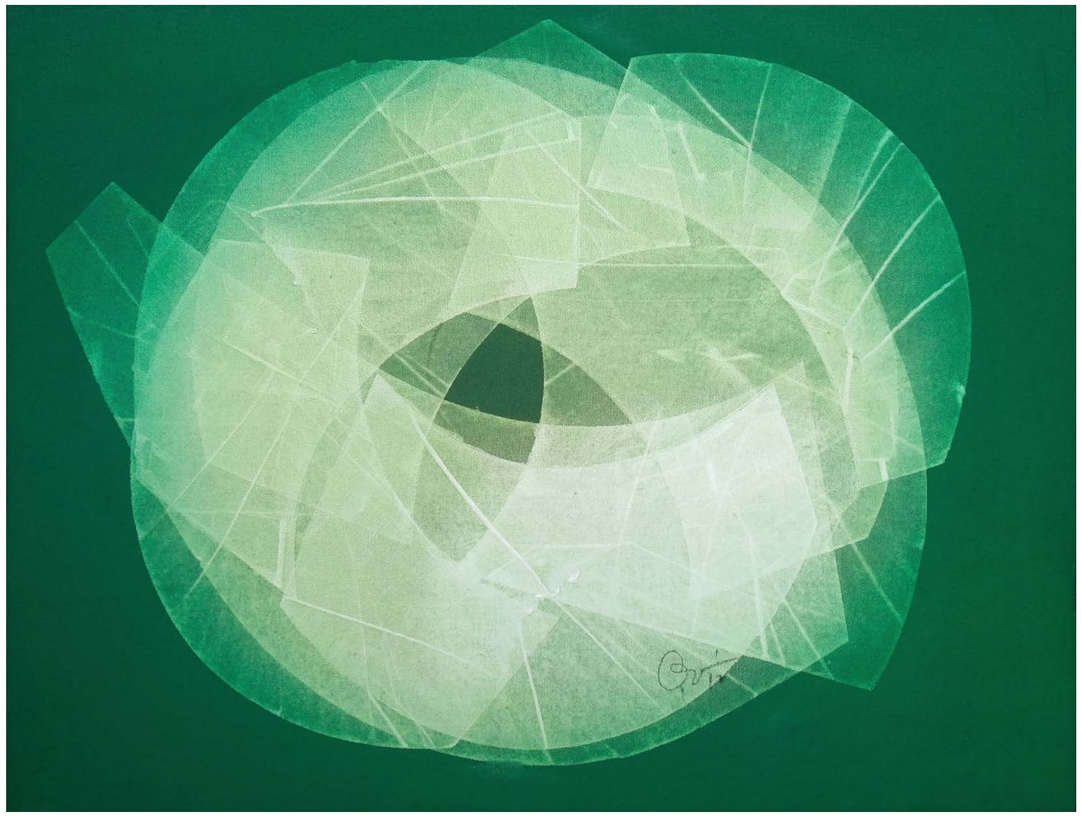
Leon Gallery wishes to thank Mr. and Mrs. Jack Garrity for confirming the authenticity of this lot

Originally on a path to law, driven by a passionate commitment to human rights, Abad's early ambitions were rooted in advocacy. Leaving the Philippines in 1969, she ventured to the United States with the intention of pursuing legal studies, hoping to one day use her skills to support her fellow Filipinos. However, life had other plans. Despite earning a Master's degree in Asian History from the University of San Francisco, Abad found herself irresistibly drawn to the world of art, leading to a profound shift in her life's trajectory.

This newfound passion guided her to the Corcoran School of Art in Washington, D.C., where she began formal training as a painter. She further honed her skills at the Art Students League in New York City, a city that would become a pivotal backdrop in her artistic evolution. Abad's career became a global odyssey, marked by an extraordinary output of over 4,500 artworks and participation in more than 200 exhibitions worldwide. Her art is a testament to her restless creativity and her desire to leave a lasting impact on the global art scene.

Throughout her career, Abad collaborated with artists, museums, galleries, and collectors across six continents, making her one of the most internationally recognized Filipino artists. Her work is celebrated for its vibrancy and emotional depth, often reflecting her advocacy roots through themes of social justice, identity, and the human experience.

Abad's artistic journey is a powerful narrative of transformation and self-discovery, one that took her from the corridors of law to the vibrant studios of the art world. Her legacy continues to inspire, a reminder that the pursuit of one's true passion can lead to unexpected and extraordinary places. *(Jed Daya)*



28

Romulo Olazo (1934 - 2015)

Diaphanous #844
signed and dated 2012 (lower right)
oil on canvas
18″ x 24″ (46 cm x 61 cm)

P 1,000,000

PROVENANCE
Private Collection

Romulo Olazo's Diaphanous series is one of Olazo's most popular series – and arguably one of the most popular series in the history of Philippine art. A great example of a sustained study of one subject matter for a long period (Diaphanous as a series spanned for over four decades), the series is now quintessential in understanding and appreciating Olazo's prolific career, with the series alone producing over 25,000 in studies, paintings, sketches, and the like.

This 2012 work entitled *Diaphanous #884* is among the list of Olazo's Diaphanous. Created near the end of his series, *Diaphanous #884* features the culmination of the four decades Olazo spent on the series, creating an amalgamation of the abstract and the figurative that drew inspiration from his previous job as a printmaker. The translucency that came from the collographic method of layering as well as the stencil pattern method lifted from the serigraphic approach created a visual masterpiece that caught and sustained the attention of many collectors throughout the years.

ABOVE: Romulo Olazon @ 2012. © http://www.romuloolazo.com/2010s.html

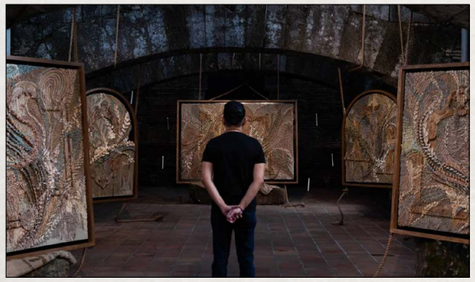
Born out of years of experimentation and practice, the Diaphanous series, particularly exemplified by Diaphanous #884, became the quintessential Olazo. The series in its magnificence both in legacy and beauty cements Olazo in the golden annals of Philippine art history. *(Hannah Valiente)*

Arce

Surrender All Unto Him and Everything Will Bloom According to Thy Will
dated 2024
oil on canvas (with handmade brass frame)
54" x 72" (137 cm x 183 cm)

P 650,000

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



ABOVE: Arce. © artipelago

In *"Surrender All Unto Him and Everything Will Bloom According to Thy Will,"* Arce masterfully melds the painterly with the sculptural, weaving together texture, color, and form that transcend the canvas. Laden with intent, the thick, impasto strokes of oil paint bring nature to life. With a sense of depth, the textured and delicate surfaces evoke the tactile quality of creation in elegant movement.

The essence of the artwork emanates in its depiction of surrender and acceptance. The artist explores the intricacies of humanity through layered petals that seemingly unfold not with force but from a gentle relinquishing. The petals, which emerge from the canvas, serve as metaphors for the soul's journey, unfolding in grace and beauty as it accepts the intervention of a higher power. This act of letting go is the path to genuine richness - one that is not measured by power or possession but by the purity of a soul unburdened by worldly desires. Arce's palette, ranging from deep blue to soft cerulean, imbues the piece with a tranquil yet profound depth, drawing the viewer into a state of quiet reflection.

In submitting to a higher will, one finds the space for true happiness and contentment to bloom. Through his artwork, Arce offers a visual discourse on the perceptions of power and wealth, reminding mankind that it is in divine surrender that an individual finds one's truest self.

Weaving Painting into Sculpting The Dynamic Tactility of Arce's Works

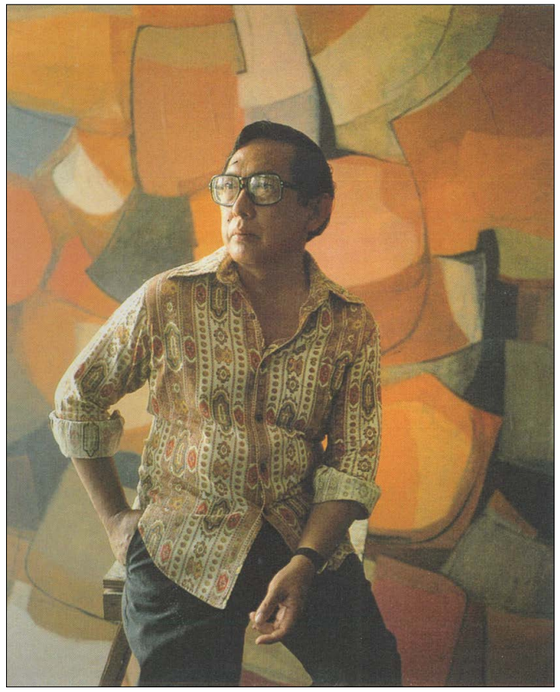
A Vision of Abstracted Reality

From Joya's Artistic Prime of the '70s

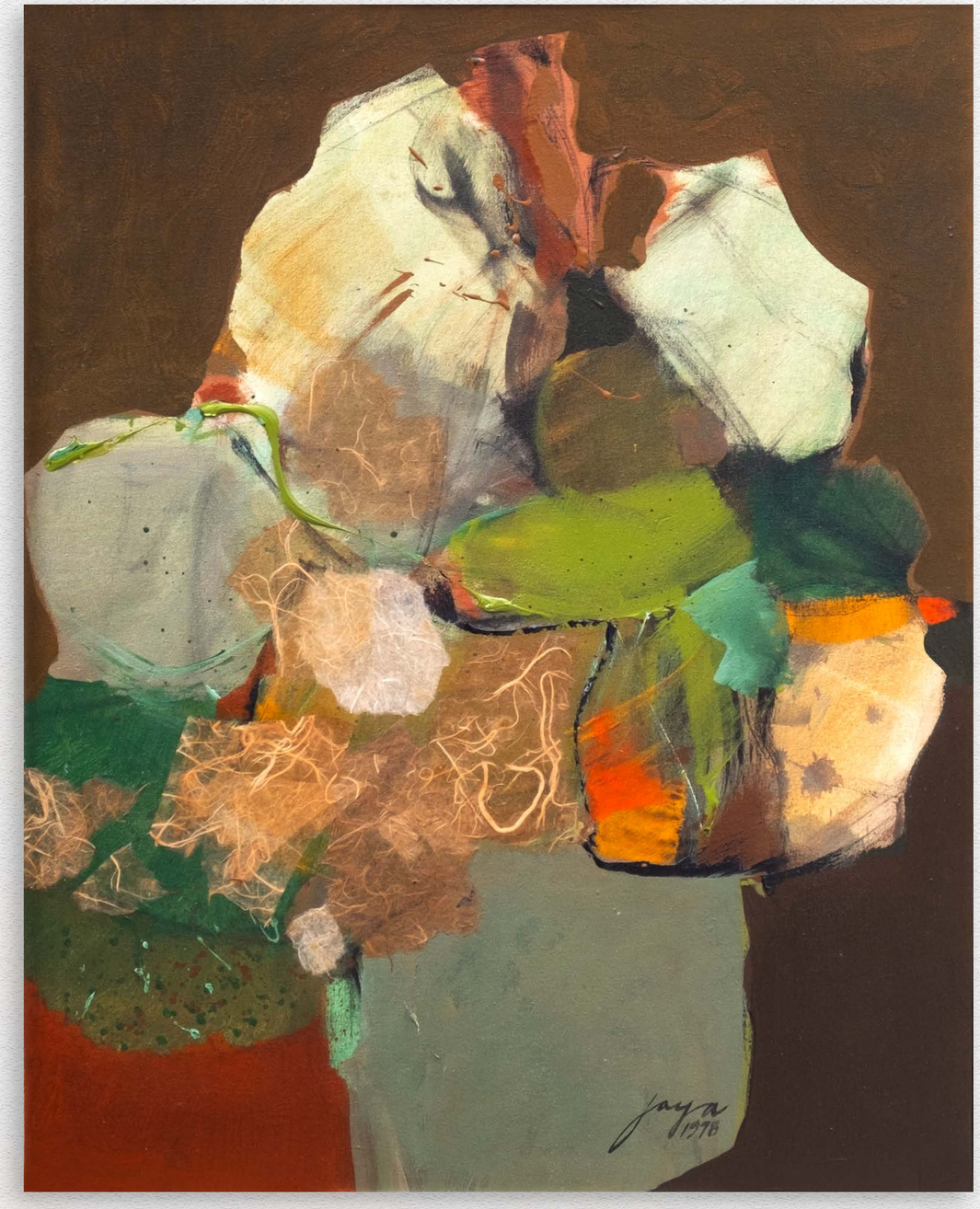
Jose Joya is the pioneer and most celebrated abstract expressionist painter in the Philippines. Trained under traditionalist mentors—Amorsolo, Tolentino, Miranda, Agbayani, and Castaneda—Joya's early works were landscapes and adheres to realism; at times, he did portraits, too. However, his exposure to the abstract expressionist movement in New York greatly influenced the shift in Joya's artistic vision. He began painting on large-scale canvases with huge brushes, in random shapes and strokes of different dimensions and colors, without the intention to create a distinct image.

Between the 1960s and 1970s, Joya started to be a distinguished name in the art scene. He returned to the Philippines after his travels and scholarships abroad and "carried on with his abstract expressionist paintings, very poetic and lyrical," Alfredo Roces told Cid Reyes, "[and] started to use more vigorous forms," he added. This 1978 acrylic painting, Brookside, showcases Joya's genius artistry. Characterized by colorful blotches of paint in irregular shapes and lines, this piece is a culmination of Joya's long years of studying and developing his own artistic identity while maintaining the Filipinos element in his works.

"Joya's paintings were then considered as visual atrocities. People thought they were done by a child in fifth grade," Michael Duldulao told Cid Reyes in 1972. However, this perception dramatically shifted with Joya's participation in the 32nd Venice Biennial in 1964. This significant event not only challenged the prevailing notions of art but also left a lasting legacy on Joya's career, cementing his status as a pioneering figure in the art scene. *(Jessica Magno)*



ABOVE: Jose Joya. © Presidential Communications Development and Strategic Planning Office, 2010-2016



30

José Joya (1931 - 1995)
Brookside
signed and dated 1978 (lower right and verso)
acrylic on canvas
30" x 24" (76 cm x 61 cm)

P 3,000,000

Accompanied by a certificate issued by Josefa Joya-Baldovino confirming the authenticity of this lot

Priscilla L. Chiongbian

Queen Mother of Sarangani, Loving Friend to Manansala

"Mother, Public Servant, and Steward of Culture."

That's how Priscilla Lopong Chiongbian's alma mater, Siliman University, describes her in her citation as an "Outstanding Silimanian Awardee." She was the "Mother of Sarangani," having the distinction of being the province's first-ever governor when it was separated from South Cotabato in 1992 through legislation authored by her husband, then South Cotabato Third District Representative James Chiongbian.

"Mommy Priscy," as she was called dearly by her fellow Sarangans, is fondly remembered for her sweet and gentle yet adamant governance. Guided by her powerful principle encapsulated in her motto, "Bring back life; Bring back the fish and the trees!" Priscilla laid out a people-centered administration rooted in environmental conservation, grassroots development (with particular focus on the Indigenous Peoples of Sarangani, notably the Blaans), and her well-loved tri-people advocacy of promoting benevolence between the Christian, Muslim, and Indigenous populations. Under her governance, Priscilla founded and spearheaded the Provincial Tribal Council.

"PLC was not only a public servant but also a mother in the truest sense of the word," reminisced her former provincial planning and development coordinator, Fred Basino.

Priscilla was also a great collector and connoisseur of fine art. She became close friends with Vicente Manansala, whom she would bring to her vacation trips to Europe and the United States for his relaxation so he could unleash in its full potential the virtuoso inside of him. Manansala made some of his vibrantly best works during these trips.

Priscilla's granddaughter, Pria Chiongbian Solon, gleefully reminisces, "Lola Priscy would take us on trips for our summer vacations in her home in L.A. I would remember seeing Maestro Manansala painting in our garden. He would constantly be painting, and I would even marvel to myself, 'He's painting again!'"

"Mommy Priscy just loved art. It was one of the desires of her heart to collect paintings," says Priscilla's daughter-in-law, Nancy. "Manansala became like a brother to her. He painted a lot of paintings for her, for free. And in her gratitude to that kind of friendship and brotherhood, she printed a book containing all his works."

Priscilla published the landmark monograph on Manansala in 1980, authored by the prominent art critic Rodolfo Paras-Perez, as a form of deep thanksgiving for the artist's benevolence and camaraderie. In the book's preface, Paras-Perez congenially describes Priscilla as a person *"who feels strongly enough that repaying the pleasure one gets from viewing a painting does not end with its purchase,"* signifying the genuine goodwill between Priscilla and Manansala.

Manansala's paintings featured in this sale all had special places in Priscilla's Beverly Hills home. *(Adrian Maranan)*

ABOVE: The Congressional Ladies Club discussed a club project involving the establishment of an art foundation aimed at promoting and preserving Filipino works of art. Prominent artists and critics presented their views at the meeting. Photo shows (seated, from left) Mrs. Joaquin R. Roces, Mrs. Roque Ablan. Mrs. Rafael Aquino, Mrs. Fe Espinosa, Alfredo Roces, Sister Felicidad Villareal, and Mrs. James Chiongbian. Standing, from left to right, are: Mrs. Roberto Sabido, Mrs. Pablo Roman, Napoleon Abueva, Jose Joya, Vicente Manansala, and Esmeraldo Izon. (Caption from The Manila Bulletin, May 6, 1972) © Purita Kalaw-Ledesma Archives

ABOVE: Photos from the Chiongbian Family Archives

The Chromatic Series of Manansala

Inang Bayan Serenading the Filipino People

Vicente Manansala, from the 1970s onwards to the final years of his life, was an artist most sought-after and a man admired by many for his humble and homespun character, candid frankness, strong sense of humor, infectious laughter, and childlike congeniality.

But beyond his charisma and comic personality lies an inner child deprived of a nurturing mother. Civic leader and environmentalist Odette Alcantara, one of Manansala's best friends, wrote in a loving ode to the Cubist master a month after his passing on August 22, 1981 that Manansala "liked motherly attention, always longed for motherly affection." This void in Manansala's psyche was due to an unfortunate childhood memory in which he felt neglected and disowned by his mother, who cherished his older brother more and whom a manghuhula said "would become rich and famous." "It never crossed her mind that I would amount to anything. Kaya ako naglayas [That's why I left home]," Manansala once revealed to Alcantara.

Alcantara succinctly follows: "Mang Enteng enjoyed the company of women who are mother types. Lorna Montilla is one. Bessie Legarda, Judy Roxas, Prissy Chiongbian, Melinda de Leon, Floy Aguenza, Lisa Gatmaytan, Jose Cruz all mothered him and he liked it. These women brought out the infant in him."

A woman Alcantara specifically mentioned was Priscilla Chiongbian. She and Manansala met in 1972 through the latter's protégé, Ang Kiukok. Priscilla was Ang's dear friend and one of his first serious collectors, coming at a time when Ang's works had not yet become popular among the circle of art connoisseurs and collectors. Ang brought Mrs. Chiongbian to Manansala's Binangonan abode and, from there, struck a decade-long friendship. 1972 was also when Manansala settled in Binangonan.

Woman Playing Guitar was painted by Manansala in Los Angeles during a two-month vacation abroad with Priscilla, spanning Paris, New York, and LA. "To help foster Manansala's upbeat, positive mood so that he would be moved to paint, Lola would take Manong Vicente Manansala on vacation trips with her to Europe and the United States, entirely for the artist's relaxation and inspiration," says Priscilla's granddaughter Caroline Sison. "During these journeys with my grandmother and myself, he would paint the beautiful works of art, which we now enjoy. I believe that the way Manong Enteng tried to repay Lola for these kindnesses and understanding was that he would do paintings for her. I remember he would spend months at her Beverly Hills home, just painting the pieces that were hanging there."

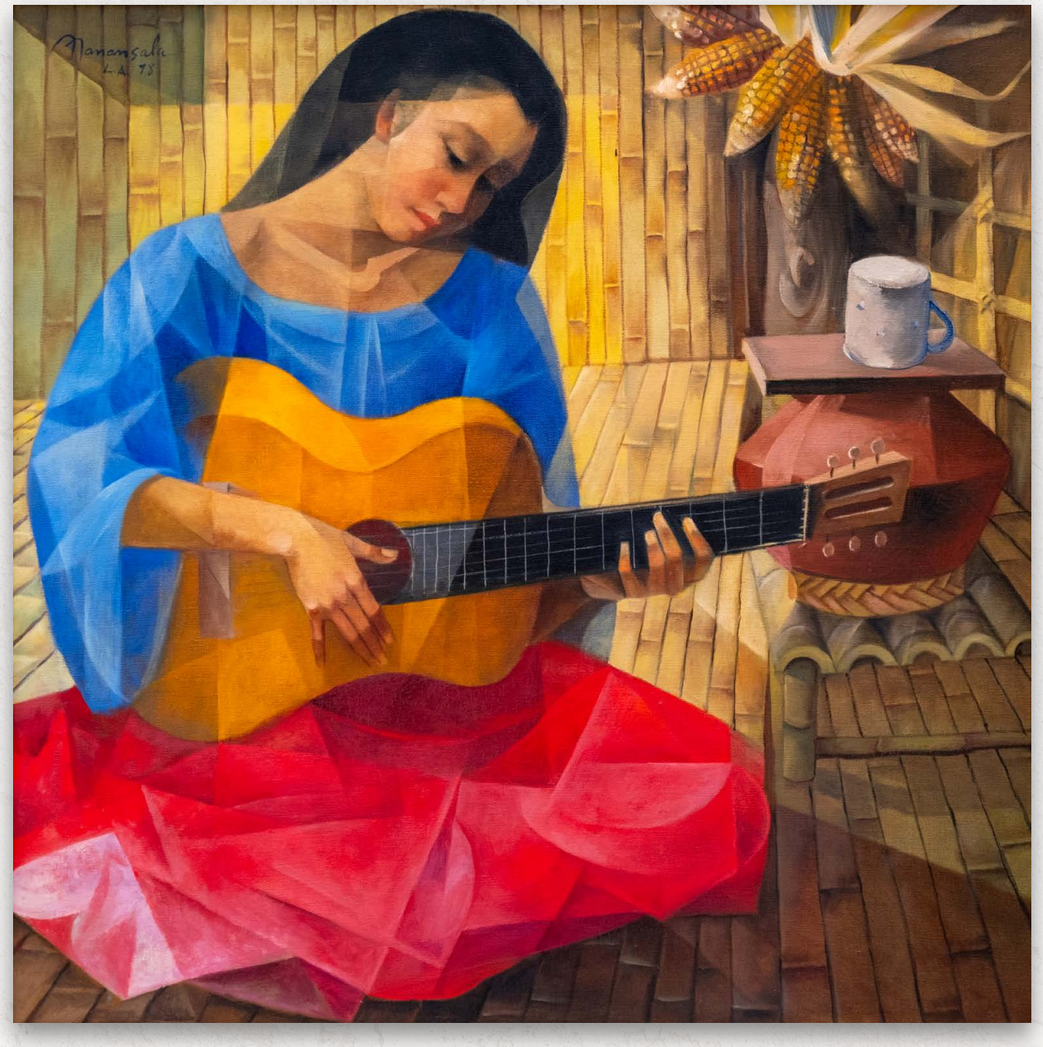
During these trips, Priscilla brought out Manansala's inner child; he made some of his best works and unleashed the unbridled vibrancy of his palette, akin to a little boy possessing the inexhaustible energy of play. As a loving reminder of her friend, Priscilla hung this painting in a special place in her Beverly Hills home—the master's bedroom—along with other paintings that Manansala painted just for her.

Woman Playing Guitar forms part of Manansala's *Chromatic Series,* which Rod. Paras-Perez notes in his book *Manansala* as dominated by "atmospheric colors and the continued use of the figure type." In the work at hand, Manansala uses color to bring out an inherent symbolism, an "easter egg." The woman's baro't saya and the "golden" setting represent the trifecta of colors of the Philippine flag. The work instantly evokes a folk atmosphere, recalling to mind the quaint *kundiman* that became popular during the pre-war era and extolled the virtues of the dalagang Filipina, whose charming image Amorsolo used as his quintessential muse. However, in Manansala's work, the dalaga has matured and now symbolizes *Inang Bayan* (Motherland), the personification of the Philippines as a nation with a throbbing experience of colonialism, a formidable history of struggle and resistance, and a hopeful yearning for genuine liberty.

Here, *Inang Bayan* is seen serenading herself in the realm of her peace and quiet. Her face exudes both dignity and composure. In Manansala's coloristic exploration, the trifecta of vibrant colors that seemingly create a soulful melody emancipate a deep sensibility of the native; Inang Bayan becomes a representation of the Filipino people's perseverance, struggling to break from the echoes of colonial oppression that still palpably resound even in our present times. The composition becomes a metaphor for Inang Bayan, the Philippines, serenading herself into genuine liberty and inclusive progress especially for the underprivileged.

Manansala's choice of *Inang Bayan* comes to no surprise. As a person with a dysfunctional experience of the maternal, Manansala sees himself longing for a mother whose comforting solace he found in his art that manifests his Filipino sensibility and puts forward his compassion to his fellow masses.

Coincidentally, this may also have been evocative of Priscilla, who was beloved by the Sarangans as their dearest "Mommy Priscy;" was a protective and nurturing mother on the strength of her environmental advocacies and people-centered initiatives; and whose motherly instincts and gentle company Manansala relished. *(Adrian Maranan)*



31 PROPERTY FROM THE PRISCILLA L. CHIONGBIAN COLLECTION

Vicente Manansala (1910 - 1981)

Woman Playing Guitar
signed, dated 1978, and inscribed L.A. (upper left)
oil on canvas
30″ x 30″ (76 cm x 76 cm)

P 12,000,000

PROVENANCE
Acquired directly from the artist

LITERATURE
Paras-Perez, Rodolfo. *Manansala.* Manila: PLC Publications, 1980.
Full color illustration and painting description on page 229.

32 PROPERTY FROM THE PRISCILLA L. CHIONGBIAN COLLECTION

Vicente Manansala (1910 - 1981)

a.) London Scene
signed, dated 1976,
and inscribed London (upper right)
watercolor on paper
20" x 14" (51 cm x 36 cm)

b.) Barcelona Cityscape
signed, dated 1976,
and inscribed Barcelona (upper left)
watercolor on paper
20" x 14 1/4" (51 cm x 36 cm)

P 800,000

PROVENANCE
Acquired directly from the artist

Vicente Manansala's oeuvre is intensely and obviously Filipino. With his jewel-colored palette and noticeable Filipino elements decorating his canvases, one need not take a second look to see how the Philippines has deeply inspired him. The country and its culture have cemented their way into Manansala's body of works, immortalized in the hands of the maestro.

However, Manansala has ventured out of the Philippine shores to further hone his artistic skills. First at the Ecole de Beaux Arts in Banff and Ecole de Beaux Arts de Montreal Canada in 1949, Ecole de Beaux Arts of the University of Paris in 1950, and then at the Otis Institute in Los Angeles in 1967, Manansala ventured into Europe in 1974. He visited Berlin, Rome, Frankfurt, Munich, and Amsterdam, among others, soaking in the historically and artistically rich region of Europe.

This European influence is evident in these 1976 watercolor paintings. With one dated from London and another from Barcelona, Manansala's European sojourn is well documented by the artist himself. These pieces, unlike Manansala's clear-cut transparent cubism, utilize the malleable and easily layered watercolor; the medium creates a diffused effect, a great touch on the city scene Manansala depicts. The result is a softer, hazier image with Manansala masterfully translating the rainy day fog of his London piece and the bright sun in his Barcelona work in his canvas.

As a member of the Thirteen Moderns and the neo-realists, Manansala's impact cannot be understated. "Manansala's vision of the city and his fundamentally native Filipino approach to his subjects would influence numerous artists who took up his folk themes within an urban context," says his artist biography at the Geringer Art website. Indeed, his works revel in the novel, steadfastly barreling through the conservative to create his path that would cement his place in Philippine art history. *(Hannah Valiente)*

Manansala's Flight of Fancy

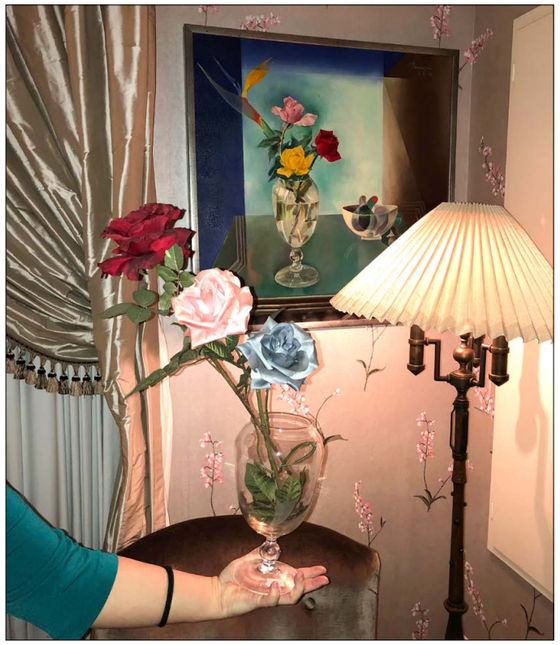
From Binangonan To Los Angeles

Regarded as one of the key figures in Philippine art history, National Artist Vicente Manansala ornamented the country's art scene with his vibrant hues and prolific masterpieces. He is known for his innumerable and diverse body of works: landscapes and portraits, realism and abstraction, created with oil, acrylic, watercolor, graphite, etc. Each medium he used served a specific purpose in his artistic expression. Manansala's pieces are characterized by his folksy, earthy, and sensuous subjects featuring the barrio and urban life—or a bridge between them.

Manansala is most known for his cubism paintings, a style he first encountered when he studied in Canada in 1949. Finally understanding the ins and outs of cubism, Manansala modified and improved it to his liking, making it his own genre. This modification resulted in Manansala's highly regarded transparent cubism, simplifying objects to their most basic geometric shapes without distorting or completely fragmenting them. This style, along with his kaleidoscopic and vibrant colors, created a series of high-standing masterpieces.

The work at hand, bearing Manansala's signature style and colors, was made during his two-month vacation in Los Angeles in 1978. It illustrates a vase and a bowl atop a table—all are glasses. On the vase were three roses in different colors—pink, red, and yellow—and a lone piece of a bird of paradise flower. However, Roses with Bird of Paradise is not just a still life. It's a rich tapestry of symbolism and meaning. The roses, often associated with love and passion, also carry a hint of danger with their spiky thorns. The bird of paradise, on the other hand, symbolize freedom. Their flower, resembling a bird in flight, represents the ability to soar above conflict and restriction; it seems to be flying towards the blue wall, a color associated with peace and serenity. This piece, therefore, could be a portrayal of the Philippines' fight for peace and freedom, or it could simply be a depiction of the lovely flowers Manansala saw in LA.

Throughout his career, Manansala continuously graced the country with his exceptional talent: paintings in different sizes, mediums, styles, and subject matter. Indeed, his transparent cubism set him apart from his contemporaries, whose works materialized in fragmented cubism and distortion, a venerated technique that cemented Manansala's name in Philippine art. *(Jessica Magno)*



ABOVE: Roses with Bird of Paradise in Priscilla's Beverly Hills home. © Chiongbian family archives

33 PROPERTY FROM THE PRISCILLA L. CHIONGBIAN COLLECTION

Vicente Manansala (1910 - 1981)

Roses with Bird of Paradise
signed, dated, and inscribed L.A. 1978 (upper left)
oil on canvas
30″ x 30″ (76 cm x 76 cm)

P 8,000,000

PROVENANCE
Acquired directly from the artist

LITERATURE
Paras-Perez, Rodolfo. *Manansala.* Manila: PLC Publications, 1980.
Full color illustration and painting description on page 170.

The Women of Malang

Embodying the Native Essence

An exhibition held by the Museum of Philippine Art in 1981 showcased Mauro Malang Santos's 25-year history and legacy in the art scene. This event highlighted Malang's evolution and development as an artist, from a former cartoonist to one of the most celebrated painters of his time.

Malang's art is distinguished by his fearless use of color, which sets him apart as a professional colorist. His figures, brought to life by his skillful use of contrasting and varying colors, stand out as a testament to his proficiency. His belief in perfecting one image before moving on is evident in his works, where a recurring image of a woman with oversized, ovoid-shaped sleeves and craned and giraffe-like necks is featured.

Malang's mastery of his female images is seen in this lot, which consists of three 1977 paintings of women: a.*) Woman Kneeling, b.) an untitled work,* and *c.) The Green Sleeves.* All three were done with tempera, a medium of the artist's expertise, and with the same composition: geometric shapes filled with solid colors and blue for the background. Also noticeable is his portrayal of Filipino women by dressing his figures in traditional Filipino clothing–Filipiniana–with huge sleeves, manifesting culture and tradition.

Another thing about him is that his works don't require a lot of thinking and seeking for meaning. He does his paintings to be interpreted literally—what you see is what you get—just like these paintings on hand. *(Jessica Magno)*

Mauro Malang Santos (1928 - 2017)

a.) Woman Kneeling
signed and dated 1977 (lower right)
tempera
29 1/2" x 19 1/2" (75 cm x 50 cm)

b.) Untitled
signed and dated 1977 (lower right)
tempera
29 1/2" x 19 1/2" (75 cm x 50 cm)

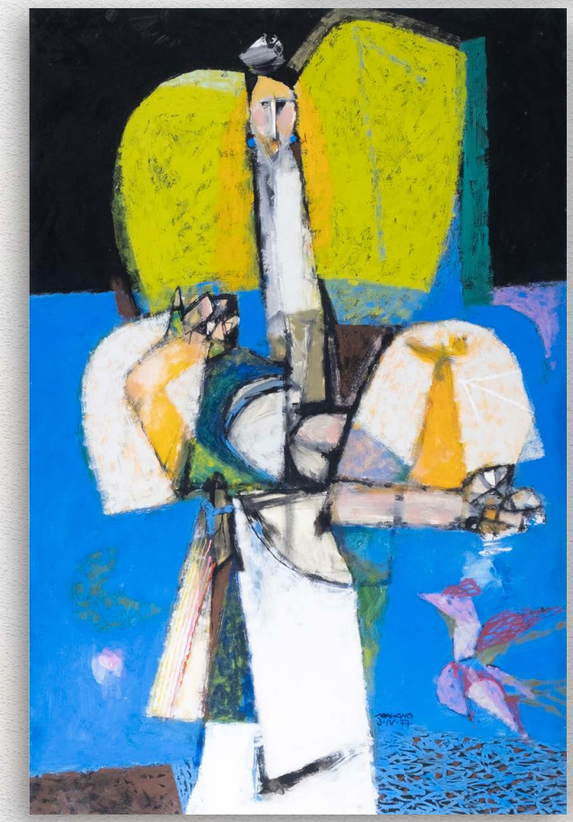
c.) The Green Sleeves
signed and dated 1977 (lower right)
tempera
30" x 20" (76 cm x 51 cm)

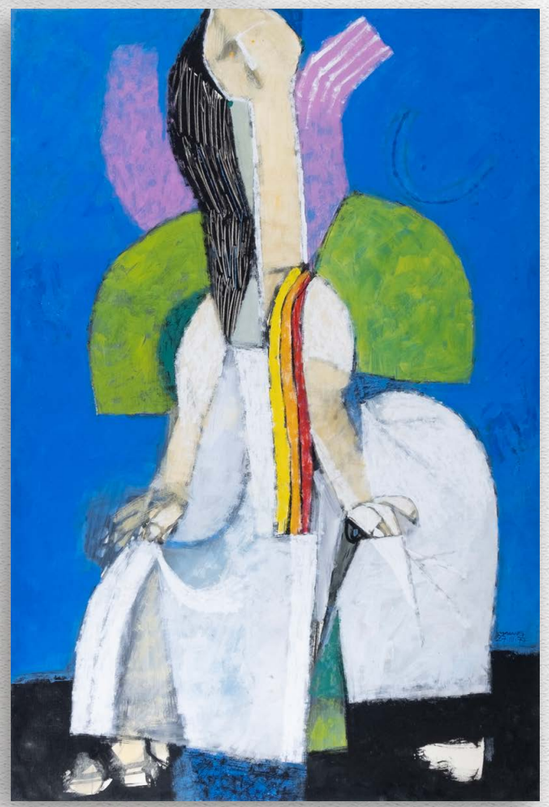
P 5,000,000

León Gallery wishes to thank the West Gallery for confirming the authenticity of this lot

PROVENANCE
Museum of Philippine Art

ABOVE: Malang in his studio © Instagram, Malang Santos Archives





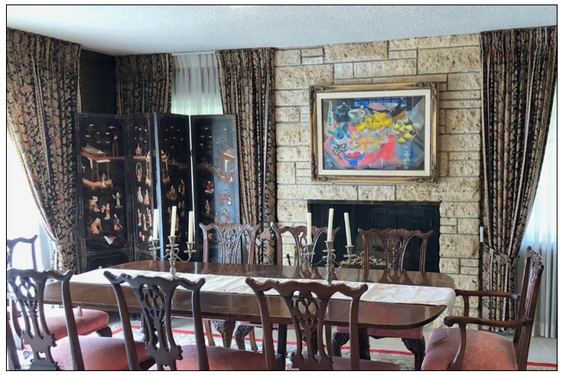
Manansala's Still Life
Capturing the Filipino Collective Spirit

The beauty of Vicente Manansala's Cubism stems from the originality with which he took to the genre. His first profound encounter with Cubism was in 1949 when he, as a UNESCO scholar in Canada, began flirting with the then-burgeoning Cubism as a way to understand and emphasize the planes on his canvases. It was no more than a brush; however, that brush was more than enough to nudge Manansala down that direction – it was a path that would shape the perspective he would take with his oeuvre.

Following his stint with Cubism, Manansala took it and manipulated it to serve his personal view – he simplified its methods, flattening the figures without distorting their shapes. In Manansala's works, his figures retain their structure while dissolving into their base composition; unlike the style of analytic cubism, his works retain their essential forms, tones, and shapes that are both delicate and translucent in quality.

His 1976 *Still Life* is a culmination of his illustrious lifelong career. A visual treat of an image, Manansala's *Still Life* overflows with colors. Eagle-eyed viewers may notice that Manansala used the same colors as the Philippine flag – the yellows of the mangoes, the blue of the bowl, and the red light washing over the table are the same shades of the flag, echoing the Filipino sensibilities that call to Manansala over and over again

Sharp lines expertly guide the viewer's eyes from one element to another, acting both as marks for the viewers to notice as well as the light filtering through the window. The usual items found in a Filipino table are depicted in this painting – one can see mangoes, a mortar and pestle, and a black pot, among others, reduced to their basic elements but not fragmented. Still Life, like many of the works of Manansala, relishes in the warmth and belongingness that permeates the Filipino culture. His still lifes echoes the diversity that, ironically enough, binds the Filipinos together, his kitchen still life as quintessential a Filipino view as ever. *(Hannah Valiente)*



The painting hanging at the dining room of Priscilla's Beverly Hills mansion. © Chiongbian family archives

"Manansala, caught between the eddies of the two aesthetic currents, chose to give them the imprint of his own vision. Accepting the existence of an absolute beauty, the classistic beau ideal, he would nonetheless see it only in nature which was therefore unattainable."

—RODOLFO PARAS-PEREZ, MANSANSALA (1980)

35 PROPERTY FROM THE PRISCILLA L. CHIONGBIAN COLLECTION

Vicente Manansala (1910 - 1981)
Still Life
signed, dated 1976, and inscribed L.A. (upper left)
oil on canvas
24" x 36" (61 cm x 91 cm)

P 12,000,000

PROVENANCE
Acquired directly from the artist

LITERATURE
Paras-Perez, Rodolfo. *Manansala.* Manila: PLC Publications, 1980.
Full color illustration and painting description on page 174.

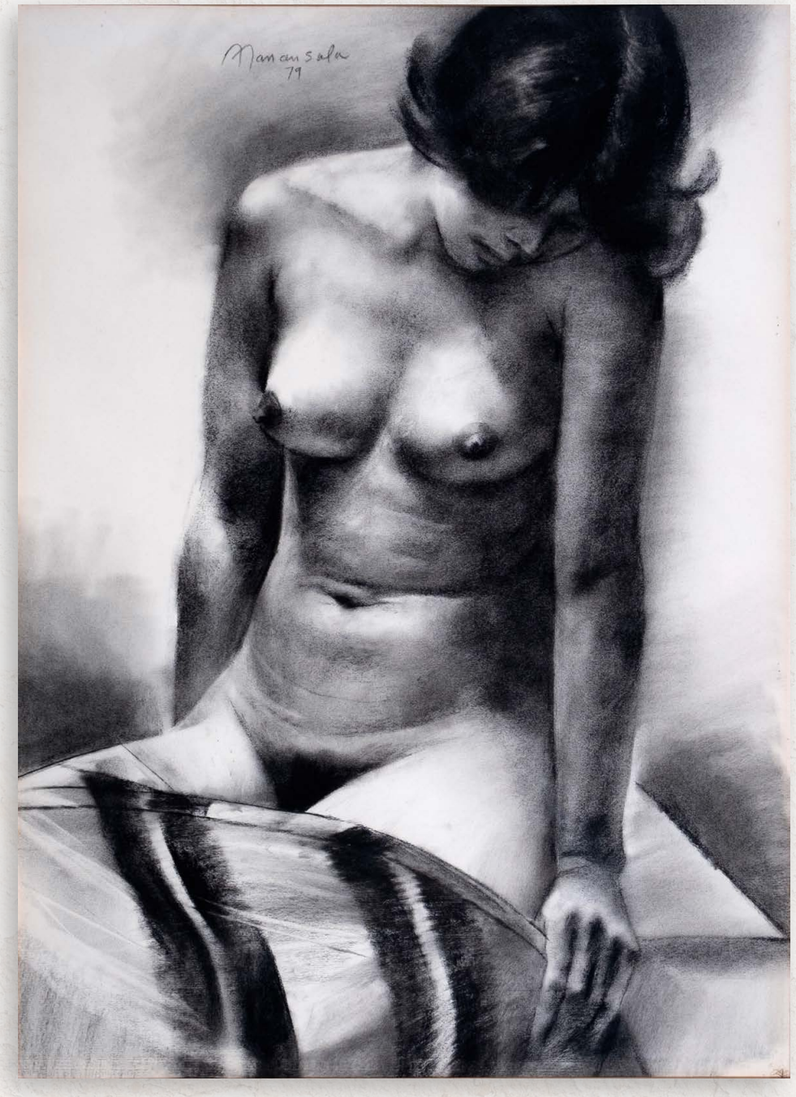
ABOVE: Manansala holding the painting at Priscilla's Beverly Hills home. Chiongbian family archives.

Vicente Manansala (1910 - 1981)

Nude
signed and dated 1979 (upper left)
charcoal on paper
28 1/2" x 20 1/2" (72 cm x 52 cm)

P 600,000

PROVENANCE
Acquired directly from the artist



Ever the prolific artist, National Artist Vicente Manansala continued to relentlessly pursue the art of drawing. At the height of his career, Manansala would rise well before the sun to sketch for hours on end and he pursued both abstraction and realism with similar fervor, resulting in stacks of studies that showcased Manansala's dexterity.

"[Drawing] is the most important weapon a painter must possess. Without it, he is at a loss," he said in 1953 as noted in Rod Paras-Perez's Manansala Nudes.

In continued pursuit of excellence, Manansala studied drawing at the Otis Art Institute in California in 1967 when he was already decades into his career with an impressive list of achievements already under his belt.

More than a decade after his enrollment, Manansala created this 1979 Nude. More than showing Manansala's masterful handle at technique and shadows, his nude pieces following his overseas education show the revitalization of his art – by then, he had deconstructed and reconstructed the human figure and learned to view them in a different light. As he played with the dynamics of light and shadow, Manansala expertly wielded the charcoal to create a masterpiece that indicates depth, emotions, and dedication. *(Hannah Valiente)*

Vicente Manansala (1910 - 1981)

Landscape
stamped (lower left)
watercolor on paper mounted on board
8 1/2" x 11 1/2" (22 cm x 29 cm)

P 200,000

PROVENANCE
Acquired directly from the artist

"Watercolor is one of my favorite media. [The] beauty of watercolor [is that] it demands you to control it. It is difficult if you allow it to control you."

Vicente Manansala (as recalled by Isabel A. Nazareno's Discovering Manansala) has always been taken with watercolors. A difficult medium for some, watercolor is a favored medium for the maestro, as evidenced by this Landscape. Depicting a hazy bright sunny afternoon, the layering ability of watercolors gave the image a soft image, making this piece, like many of his watercolor paintings, among the best the National artist has to offer. *(Hannah Valiente)*

Looking Through the Lens of the Indigenous
Amorsolo Paints the Igorots of the Cordilleras

The heart and soul of what it means to be Filipino at a crucial turning point in our history runs deep in the works of Fernando Amorsolo: romantic and idyllic yet profoundly echoes the nationalistic sentiments of his time. In the 1920s, when a renewed sense of Filipino nationalism was at its height, spurred by the incessant and heated debates for the independence of the Philippines from four centuries of colonial rule, Amorsolo's pastoral paintings became the quintessential image of the Filipino people, who were, consciously or unconsciously, rebelling against the relentless "Americanization" of the nation.

"Faced with Americanization and urbanization, the national identity sought to reaffirm itself in the pastoral life of Filipinos," critic Alfredo Roces writes in his 1975 monograph on Amorsolo. The kundiman became the popular music, fostered by the likes of Nicanor Abelardo and Francisco Santiago, folk dances were being "rediscovered," compiled, and studied by Francisca Reyes, and Amorsolo's dalagang bukid was at the helm of promoting the autochthonous pastoral as the foundation of the Filipino identity.

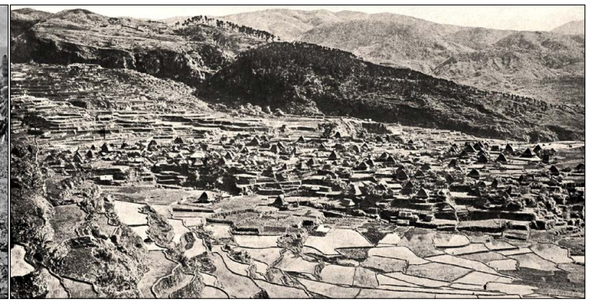
There was another facet to Amorsolo's art during the 1920s besides the ubiquitous image of the charming and innocent dalaga. Beginning in the mid to late 1920s, Amorsolo produced a series of works centering on the Indigenous tribes of the Philippines, particularly the Igorots inhabiting the cold mountains of the Cordilleras in Northern Luzon.

Igorots Overlooking the Cordilleras is a breath of fresh air from Amorsolo's mostly Tagalog-centric genre paintings. Amorsolo's vigorous strokes and heavy impastos attest to the artist's dynamic and confident creative flair during his "golden years." Cool tones dominate the composition, evoking the temperate climate of the Cordillera region. Amorsolo's colors are rich and "pure."

Amorsolo depicts four Igorot women resting amid a panoramic backdrop of a majestic mountain, which the artist renders in hazy blues and outlined with faint dabs of paint. Amorsolo's knowledge of indigenous culture is evident in his depiction of the kayabang, a conical rattan basket used exclusively by the Ibaloi women to collect, carry, and transport fruits, vegetables, and crops, such as games (yams) and camotes grown through swidden farming techniques in Benguet. The kayabang is worn around the head and supported on both sides by two long straps of rattan called the apid. The kayabang brought convenience to the Ibalois as the basket filled with goods was supported by the head rather than the torso, helping them traverse the steep mountain slopes of the Cordilleras. Amorsolo also depicts the Ibaloi women donning their "divit," a two-piece clothing composed of the "kambal" (upper garment) and the "divit" (wrap-around lower garment).

Amorsolo's *Igorots Overlooking the Cordilleras* is essentially an anthropological record and a part of the broader scope of "Filipinism" of the 1920s. The indigenous groups of the Cordilleras, who had successfully repealed centuries of colonial rule and maintained their cultural integrity, have been subjected to fetishization and sensationalism and deemed "savage, primitive, and inferior" by the Americans, especially at the "human zoos" of the 1904 St. Louis World's Fair. Igorots Overlooking the Cordilleras shows Amorsolo at the height of his impressionist powers, adamant about the power of his brush in elevating the indigenous into the national consciousness.

For Amorsolo, the indigenous is an integral part of the collective national identity that makes the Philippines a harmonious whole. It is in the indigenous that a people's identity and, ultimately, culture and history, ideals and aspirations sprang forth. *(Adrian Maranan)*



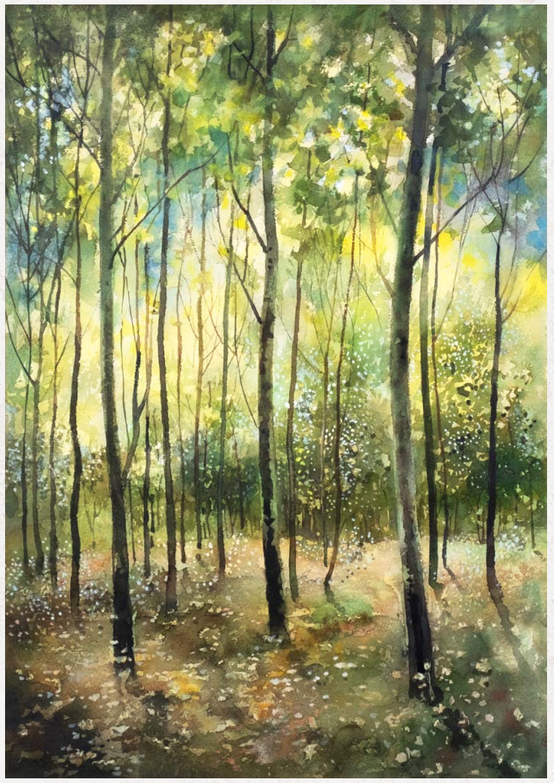
ABOVE: Igorote girls gathering sweet potatoes near Baguio, Luzon Island, Philippines, early 20th Century, Lepanto Village, Cordillera Mountains, Benguet, Luzon. Philippines, 1903 © John Tewell

38 PROPERTY FROM THE PRISCILLA L. CHIONGBIAN COLLECTION

Fernando Amorsolo (1892 - 1972)

Igorots Overlooking the Cordilleras
signed and dated 1928 (lower right)
oil on wood
15" x 20" (38 cm x 51 cm)

P 5,000,000



39 PROPERTY FROM THE PRISCILLA L. CHIONGBIAN COLLECTION

Vicente Manansala (1910 - 1981)

a.) Untitled
signed and dated 1976 (upper right)
watercolor on paper
20″ x 14″ (51 cm x 36 cm)

b.) Forestscape
signed and dated 1976 (upper left)
watercolor on paper
20″ x 14″ (51 cm x 36 cm)

P 700,000

PROVENANCE
Acquired directly from the artist

Watercolor may have been a difficult medium to master for some, but for the maestro Vicente Manansala, it is a walk in the park. "Watercolor is one of my favorite media," he says as recalled by his monograph Discovering Manansala by Isabel A. Nazareno. "[The] beauty of watercolor [is that] it demands you to control it. It is difficult if you allow it to control you."

In this 1976 watercolor work, Manansala showcases his mastery of aquarelle. He depicts a hazy sunlit vision of a walkway, the path lined with trees in full bloom. The translucent quality of watercolor was utilized as Manansala layers the watery medium to create the wide foliage of the tree stretching out of the canvas. The colors portray a soft image of the place with the light yellow sunlight filtering through the trees washing the scene as if in a dream.

Ever since childhood, Manansala has excelled in manipulating difficult watercolors. Through the years, as exemplified by this piece, Manansala's skills bloomed, making his watercolor pieces among the best in his oeuvre. *(Hannah Valiente)*

40 PROPERTY FROM THE PRISCILLA L. CHIONGBIAN COLLECTION

Vicente Manansala (1910 - 1981)

Landscape
signed, dated 1971 and inscribed Binangonan (lower right)
watercolor on paper
18 1/2″ x 24 3/4″ (47 cm x 63 cm)

P 500,000

PROVENANCE
Acquired directly from the artist

Perhaps Vicente Manansala's prolific artistry knows no boundaries. The esteemed National Artist graced the Philippine art scene with multitudinous works in varying styles, mediums, and figures throughout his artistic career. But regardless of the techniques and materials used, Manansala's masterpieces were intensely and undeniably Filipino.

This particular piece, a serene landscape from Binangonan, Rizal, captures the town's tranquil hilly topography and lush greenery. The image seems to offer a perspective of someone enjoying a moment of respite in the shade of the trees, gazing at the peaceful hilly terrain bathed in the warm glow of the sun.

Devoid of Manansala's signature vibrant hues and transparent cubism, this piece is made with watercolor, haphazardly layered upon each other but still with distinguishable figures. This created a soft, hazy picture, a view reminiscent of a Filipino's drooping eyes as he immersed himself in a peaceful siesta time. Indeed, this piece has proven Manansala's authority in Philippine art history, a maestro who can skillfully craft any art piece, no matter the style and medium. *(Jessica Magno)*

41 PROPERTY FROM THE PRISCILLA L. CHIONGBIAN COLLECTION

Ang Kiukok (1931 - 2005)

Untitled
signed and dated 1960 (lower right)
watercolor on paper
20 1/4" x 28" (51 cm x 71 cm)

P 800,000

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

A deviation from his usual angst-filled works, this 1960 untitled piece features the airiness that is often absent from his dark oeuvre. Shades of green and cream dominate the canvas as Ang portrays a massive tree in front of a house with its leaves sprawling out and spreading out of the canvas. The blacks of the tree branches and the house's outline did not take away from the lightness Ang infuses this scene with; if anything, it emphasizes it, his compositional articulation drawing the eyes on the simple beauty of nature. With its sunny palette and easy subject matter, this work is a standout amongst Ang's more somber pieces. However, despite this notable deviation, Ang's compositional knowledge and impeccable usage of colors are still evident – as the sun shines through the thick foliage, the artist's masterful control over watercolor resulted in a colorful explosion of hues, with the colors bleeding into each other as though one is viewing them through the warm afternoon's haze. *(Hannah Valiente)*

42 PROPERTY FROM THE PRISCILLA L. CHIONGBIAN COLLECTION

Angelito Antonio (b. 1939)

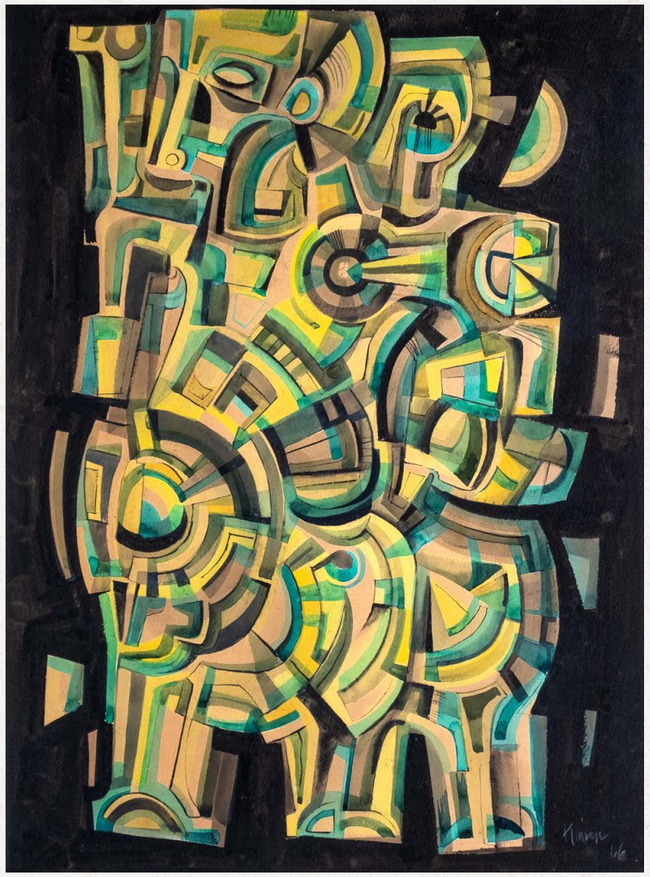
Taga Nayon
signed and dated 1971 (bottom)
oil on masonite board
24" x 31" (61 cm x 79 cm)

P 600,000

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

Like many artists before him, Angelito Antonio's oeuvre professes a deep love for his home country. He has taken inspiration from the style of Picasso, delineating his figures aggressively in the way that separated his nascent cubism from that of National Artist and mentor Vicente Manansala. With his developed sense of color (often in shades of acidic yellow, cerulean, or vivid red), Antonio's works rang like an electric shock in the Philippine art scene, cementing his name as one of the most influential modernist artists.

His 1971 Taga Nayon features his signature color palette. With the acidic yellow as the primary color used, Antonio renders a common Filipino theme with a man and a woman holding up wares in their arms and on their heads. It is a common image to which he gives a fresh twist. As Cid Reyes writes: "Antonio sees beneath the commonplace – transforming it into a personal paean, captive in his pictorial space, delivering what is regarded as routine and ordinary from its state of insignificance to a stature of dignity and [...] nobility." *(Hannah Valiente)*



Ang Kiukok (1931 - 2005)

Android
signed and dated 1966 (lower right)
watercolor on paper
28 1/4" x 20 3/4" (72 cm x 53 cm)

P 1,600,000

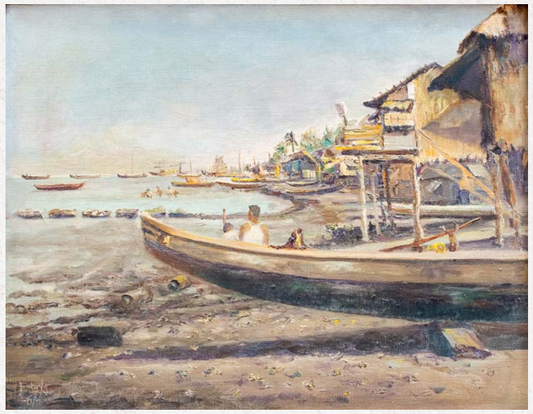
Accompanied by a certificate issued by Finale Art File confirming the authenticity of this lot

"Appreciating the paintings of Ang Kiukok is not easy."

These are the words of Ma. Elizabeth L. Gustillo, the senior director of the Ayala Museum, in her message as written on A*ng Kiukok: The Golden Years (1954 - 2004).* Indeed, Kiukok's pieces tend to disturb with their harshness – he has always avoided pretty things, instead gravitating towards the disturbing and the grotesque.

With this 1996 piece, Kiukok's signature fragmentation is on center stage. With a pitch black background, the viewer's attention is drawn on the abstraction that Kiukok placed squarely on the center. He plays around with the pictorial plane, circular motifs and harsh lines coexisting to create multiple spatial observations. One could see a myriad of images within the crooks and crannies of the planes, a testament to Kiukok's artistic eye.

Using an approximation of cubism, Kiukok manages to create such a visually stimulating piece, utilizing every element from composition to colors to light and shadows to put forth a message. When asked in the 1970s about why he was so angry, he replied: "Why not? Open your eyes. Look around you. So much anger, sorrow, ugliness. And also madness." Indeed, even in abstraction, the emotions that grip Kiukok still bleed through, soaking every edge, element, and color with that signature Kiukok sorrow. *(Hannah Valiente)*



Elias Laxa (1904 - 1990)

a.) Untitled
signed and dated 1966 (lower left)
oil on canvas
14" x 18" (35 cm x 46 cm)

b.) Untitled
signed and dated 1963 (lower left)
oil on canvas
14" x 20" (36 cm x 51 cm)

c.) Untitled
signed and dated 1961 (lower left)
oil on canvas
15" x 19 1/4" (38 cm x 49 cm)

P 300,000

Renowned classicist Elias Laxa drew inspiration from his provincial life in Pampanga; originating from the river town of Guagua, Laxa's penchant for seaside and landscape paintings became one of the most valuable vignettes of Philippine art.

The seas feature heavily in his 1961 and 1963 pieces. Both situated on the shores, the pieces humanize the landscape, with the beach populated with people. In the 1961 piece, fishing boats are in the water, and a fisherman rests on his boat ashore, looking through the horizon; meanwhile, the 1963 work twists the often bereft shores as Laxa goes the opposite direction and populates the beach with an ambling crowd. Both pieces are dominated by blues and browns, bringing a sense of familiarity and nostalgia to his works, as is often the case with his seascapes.

Laxa's genre pieces also had a hand in cementing his name among the patrons of the Philippine art scene. This untitled piece from the mid-1960s features a bustling marketplace rendered in Laxa's colorful swift brush strokes, the scene awash in soft sunlight. Despite the crowd's size, the hubbub is depicted with a serenity almost always reserved for the quaint provincial life.

"Laxa seems bent on pursuing these mysteries of nature relentlessly," Alfredo Roces once said about his works. Indeed, Laxa's folk genre and seascapes work manage to incorporate the best of his works – they are an authentic view of the days long past that cements the artist as an enduring classical painter, his classicist style and usage of light colors in this work evoking a soothing and serene atmosphere. *(Hannah Valiente)*

45

Angelito Antonio (b. 1939)

Study 1
signed and dated 1968 (upper left)
oil on paper
28 1/2" x 22 1/2" (72 cm x 57 cm)

P 180,000

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

Angelito Antonio's 1968 *Study 1* showcases the myriad of styles he uses and creates a cohesive story out of it. One of the most renowned modernist Filipino artists, *Study 1* (created nearer the start of his career) is a fresh look at Antonio's career. His oeuvre is known for its vibrant color palette full of acidic yellows and cerulean blues and vivid reds; in contrast, this piece, while containing slivers of the color palette he would be known to have, is primarily inky black and off-white scribbles. The scribbles of black and white ink seem to surround the man up in the center (noticeable muted blue in coloring), almost covering him in their own colors. With very little blue noticeable unless one looks deeply, it seems as though the black and white paint is suffocating the man, drowning out his own color.

Study 1, as the title suggests, is a study of Antonio's iconic art style and his beloved muses – the Philippines and the Filipino. A great starting point to observe the growth of his style, *Study 1* proves Antonio's dexterity and talent as one of the most influential artists of the modernist era, the start of a prosperous career that spanned over half a century. *(Hannah Valiente)*

46

Oscar Zalameda (1930 - 2010)

Untitled
signed (lower left)
oil on canvas
30" x 36" (76 cm x 91 cm)

P 600,000

Oscar Zalameda's breezy cubism is a fresh breath of air to the Philippine art scene. Flashy and flamboyant in life as he is with art, Zalameda's depiction of vendors, women, and the Filipino community is abuzz with a vibrancy that was borne from his Western education – first in San Francisco in 1953 then to Ecole Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts and the Sorbonne in Paris.

However jetset his lifestyle may be, Zalameda still continues to take inspiration from his vibrant hometown. Born in Lucena, Quezon, Zalameda's provincial lifestyle became a source of inspiration for the artist. His theatrical representation of the Philippine countryside is a pleasant shock to the people and a much-needed revitalization of the genre work.

With this work, Zalameda's wide sources of inspiration are evident. Portraying the common folk of the Philippines, he nonetheless gave them a European flair, a joie de vivre that exalts both Zalameda's Filipino roots and his Parisian style. His Parisian and Filipino inspiration was given its due credits when Zalameda was conferred both the Chevalier des Artes et Lettres medallion by the French government and the Presidential Medal of Merit by then-President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo. *(Hannah Valiente)*

LOT 47

Compassion for Animals

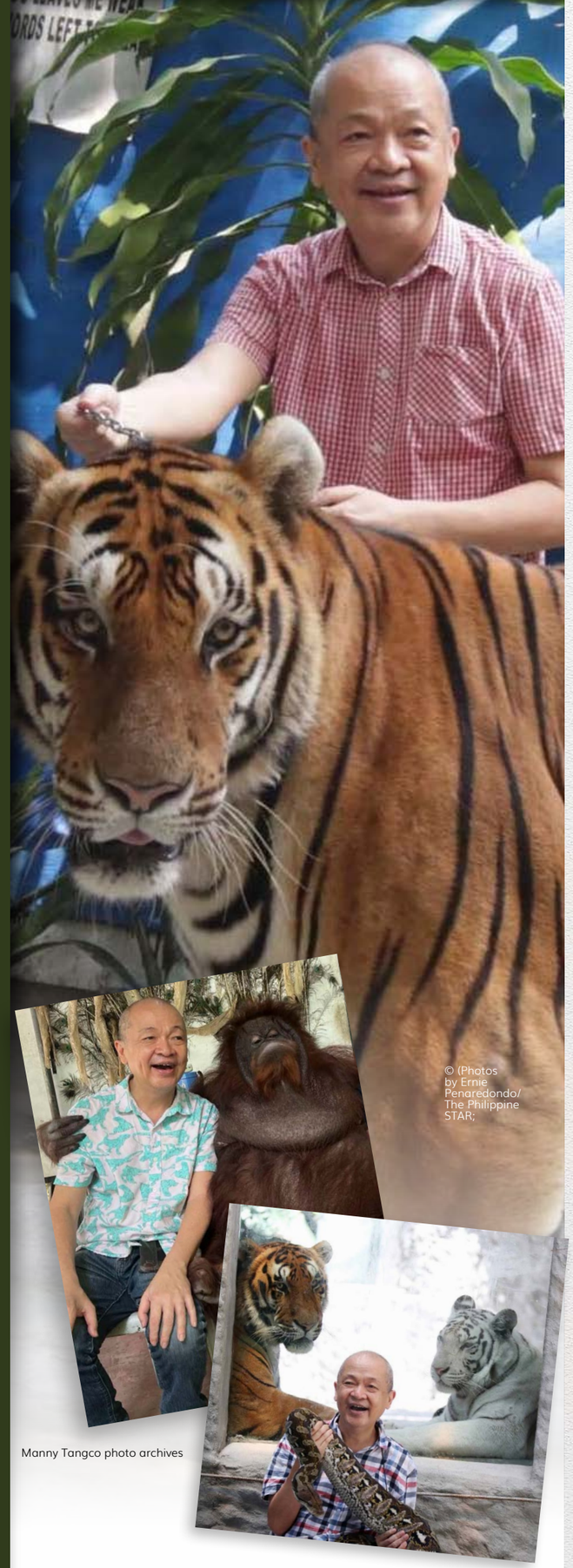
For the Benefit of the Malabon Zoo

The 35-year old Malabon Zoo is passionate about giving the youth an effective unique experiential learning through first-hand, eye-to-eye contact with living nature so that the seed of love and protection for nature and all creatures and the environment will be planted in their hearts and minds forever! A zoo visit will never be forgotten! It is said that a thousand documentaries is equivalent to one eye-to-eye contact with a living tiger!

(The Malabon Zoo is a living classroom with over 1,000 billboards about the importance of protecting the environment and wildlife, as well as quotes about life, wisdom, love and kindness!)

Please help! The rain has affected the Malabon Zoo. Rain or shine, we have to feed 500 animals and fishes daily! The sale of these paintings will help us feed the animals and will make us be able to continue to inspire the youth to love and protect nature/environment via first hand experiential learning! Thank you very much!

Manny Tangco
Founder, Malabon Zoo



© (Photos by Ernie Penaredondo/ The Philippine STAR;

Manny Tangco photo archives

47

Araceli Dans (1929 - 2024)

Pink Serenade
signed, dated 2002 and inscribed Baguio (lower left)
watercolor on paper
27 1/2" x 19 1/2" (70 cm x 50 cm)

P 800,000

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

PROVENANCE
A gift from the artist to the present owner

*THIS LOT IS SOLD TO BENEFIT THE PROGRAMS OF THE MALABON ZOO

ABOVE: Araceli Dans. © https://alum.up.edu.ph/

Araceli Dans's 2002 *Pink Serenade* embodies the best of what her oeuvre can offer. A prolific artist, Dans's paintings are instantly recognizable with her meticulous attention to detail, particularly with the delicate embroideries that pop out even more with her penchant for depicting her subjects in front of dark backgrounds.

In *Pink Serenade,* her talent for painting the calado, a traditional Philippine open-thread work pattern used in making the barong tagalog, is evident. The black background pushes the attention squarely on the intricately painted fabric and the vibrant pink flowers which are the only pop of color in the otherwise monochromatic piece. Watercolor is notably a hard medium to control; and yet, Dans managed to wield the problematic medium to make the piece look opaque, quite unlike the transparency watercolor offers. Precision and patience went into her depiction of the calado, replicating the lace-like texture with an incredibly meticulous eye.

Throughout her illustrious career, Dans sought out ways to find her niche. "..I did not want to be like Amorsolo and so forth. I had to look for myself," she once said as quoted by a 2024 Lifestyle Inquirer article. "I found myself in still life. Not many people around the world do still life. And I looked for original ways of doing still life. Why does everything have to be on a table? Why always fruits and flowers? Why not rags, objects inside old cartons?" Indeed, her still life stands out, vividly Dans in its intricate details and out-of-the-box subject matter. *(Hannah Valiente)*

The Filipino Everyman According To Borlongan

Injecting Wit into Social Commentary

The Filipino everyman is the main protagonist of Elmer Borlongan's expressionist oeuvre. Quick in his wit, Borlongan portrays the everyman at his barest, injecting humor in his otherwise dejected paintings. As he said in Oscar Campomanes's monograph *Elmer Borlongan: An Ordinary Man, An Extraordinary Life:* "All my paintings are of things I have seen. There is no overt symbolism in any of my work, but there is always a story to be told."

With his 2005 *Cabinet Member,* Borlongan injects a witty social commentary in what looks like a simple, if a bit surrealist, painting. Here, Borlongon's everyday man (clad in blue jeans and a blue shirt whose sleeves are rolled up to provide more air for the man) carries on his back a giant cabinet, face determined as he slugs the furniture up towards his destination.

Cleverly, the term *"cabinet member"* is a double entendre. A cabinet member refers to a high-ranking official who is among those expected to lead a country or a state. They are meant to advise the head of the state and are responsible for the day-to-day management of the government and its response to emergencies and sudden events.

However, in Borlongan's *Cabinet Member*, these formal, highly-educated officials are nowhere to be found. Instead, slugging and suffering in their place is a normal, everyday man. The commentary is pointed, if not subtle – it is the common people who strive hard to better their lives while those who are expected to lead shrug off the burden, giving it off to those whose shoulders are already heavy with problems.

Borlongan's sympathy has always been for the masses. Starting his artistic career under the mentorship of Fernando Sena, his community-based art greatly inspired Borlongan's view of artistry. During his college years, he extended his works past the four walls of his classroom, he collaborated with other artists for political works and creations.

This sympathy is still evident even past his college years. *Cabinet Member* is a shining example of his wit and charm, his sociopolitical works retaining their cheeky jab while remaining calm and palatable.

"The genius of Elmer Borlongan is the fact ... he is able to paint a supposedly sad situation and make it into a happy artwork," Borlongan collector Julius Babao says in an interview with Rica Bolipata-Santos, as published in a volume of Borlongan's monograph *Elmer Borlongan: An Ordinary Man, An Extraordinary Life*

Indeed, the wit and wiles of *Cabinet Member* shows Borlongan's humor while showing the pertinent social and political situations of his times. He perfectly blends the dejection of the situation with a cheeky punch up at the leaders, with the title of the piece awarding the lofty "cabinet member" title not to the lauded, suit-and-tie men but to the common everyday folk who work tirelessly from day to night. There is little to assuage on the man's face but 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)*

48

Elmer Borlongan (b. 1967)

Cabinet Member
signed and dated 2005 (lower left)
oil on canvas
60" x 48" (152 cm x 122 cm)

P 8,000,000

LITERATURE
Campomanes, *Oscar V. Elmer Borlongan: An Ordinary Man, An Extraordinary Life (Volume I).* San Antonio, Zambales: Sayong's Pasilyo Country Living and Bookstore, 2018. Full-color illustration and painting description on page 161.

ABOVE: Elmer Borlongan. © https://www.philstar.com/

49

Jerry Elizalde Navarro (1924 - 1999)

The Earth Goddess
signed and dated 11.12.96 (right)
oil on canvas
30" x 40" (76 cm x 102 cm)

P 500,000

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

Jerry Elizalde Navarro's sojourn to Bali, Indonesia in the late 1980s injected colors into his life, both creatively and physically. Already at the age of sixty-five, Navarro had resigned himself to a life of obscurity, his works languishing unsold in his studio. However, one fateful encounter with Cornelius Choy kickstarted, once again, his artistic career.

His 1996 T*he Earth Goddess* bears the beauty of Bali he encountered almost a decade later. The vibrancy of colors he used captivated his audiences, just like they did Navarro when he first stepped on the island. Navarro had found himself captivated by the movement of the exotic dances he watched and that bled into The Earth Goddess. Sweeping strokes of vibrant yellows and fiery reds and deep green mimic the flash of movements too quick for a camera to capture, its fleetingness emphatically illustrated through gestural strokes.

"In my sketches, no attempt at detailing has been done except to capture the layering of tantalizing movements, nervous and sinuous at the same time," Navarro writes in his October 15, 1989 Philippine Daily Inquirer *Bali On My Mind.* In the same vein as this statement, *The Earth Goddess* manages to capture the vibrant movements of the dance, its intense colors an echo of the feverish frenzy of creation he embarked on upon facing the captivating culture of Bali, Indonesia. *(Hannah Valiente)*

50 PROPERTY FROM THE JESUS AND MARITESS PINEDA COLLECTION

Teodoro Buenaventura (1863 - 1950)

Barrio Scene
signed and dated 1934 (lower right)
oil on wood
14" x 17 1/2" (36 cm x 44 cm)

P 200,000

LITERATURE
Duldulao, Manuel D. *A Century of Realism in Philippine Art.*
Quezon City: Oro Books, Inc., 1982.
Full-color illustration and painting description on page 73.

The establishment of the Academia de Dibujo y Pintura in 1855 marked a significant shift in Philippine art, as it popularized the painting of genre scenes. This trend would dominate the Philippine art scene from the 1850s to the 1900s, depicting the townsfolk in their daily activities. A key figure in this movement was Teodoro Buenaventura, who not only contributed as an artist but also as a mentor. He was one of the founding teachers of the UP School of Fine Arts and played a crucial role in shaping the careers of several notable Filipino artists.

Landscape painting, sometimes inhabited by people in different activities, was Buenaventura's strong point. The work at hand, El Autor, was created a year before his departure from his teaching post at UP. This piece features a typical barrio scene; several people are out of the confines of their nipa huts to go about their day, and some are seen from their windows tending to their duties. With his innate sense of color drawn from the majestic colors of nature, dexterous brush strokes and dabs of paint, and keen attention to detail, Buenaventura captured in this masterpiece the serene beauty of countryside life, evoking a sense of tranquility and a deep appreciation for nature *(Jessica Magno)*

The Magnum Opus of the Philippines' First National Artist

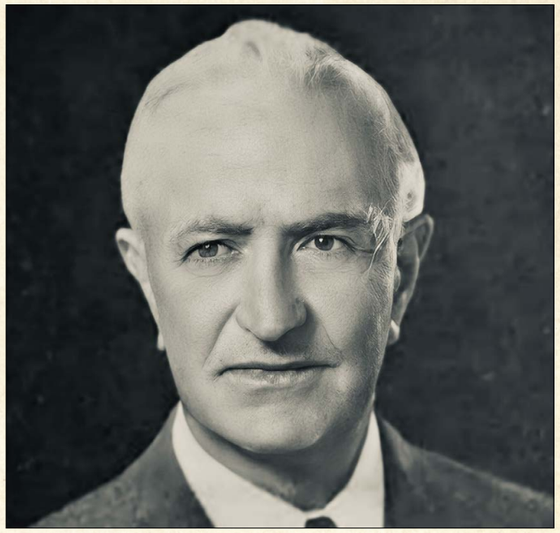
EDWARD J. NELL

Leading Industrialist and The Father of Philippine Airconditioning

by ISIDRA P. REYES

When peace came after the Filipino-American War, the Philippine Islands became a land of opportunity for enterprising Americans at the dawn of the 20th century. Recounting the saga of American businessmen who came to the Philippine Islands at this time, American historian Lewis E. Gleeck, in his book, American Business and Philippine Economic Development (1975), described them as "ambitious and confident, with a sense of mission."

Gleeck continued: "Aspiring to be movers and shakers in the Philippines, these newcomers to Philippine shores were pre-eminently builders." Among the roster of ambitious and enterprising men who staked their lives and built their fortunes in rebuilding the Philippines and bringing in goods and modern technology into the Philippine market were William J. Shaw of AG & P, Horace Pond of Pacific Commercial Company, Samuel Gaches of Heacock's, and Edward Joseph Nell of Edward J. Nell Co., Ltd. who is best remembered for bringing in modern air conditioning technology to the Philippines through the firm's tie-up with Carrier International, Ltd. of Syracuse, New York.

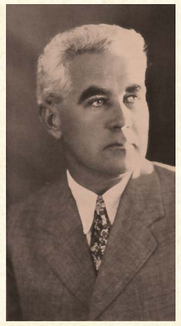


ABOVE: Edward Joseph Nell, founder of Edward J. Nell Co., Ltd.. © Souvenir Program for the Inauguration of the New Edward J. Nell Building (1951); BELLOW: Harry Scott Gray, founder and president of H.S. Gray Co. of Honolulu, Hawaii where the young Edward J. Nell worked as Machinery Merchant. © Nellist's Men of Hawaii

Edward Joseph Nell, who headed the eponymously named Pre- and Post-War conglomerate, Edward J. Nell Co., Ltd. was born in San Francisco, California on 12 November 1884, the son of a German immigrant father named August F. Nell (1855-1893), a farmer from Prussia, who migrated to the United States in 1882, and a certain Anna Doyle. Curiously, no official records of his birth existed as of 1942 as per reply to his letter to the U.S. State Department requesting for such official records. Not much is known about his early life and education, either. The earliest records of him are entries in the San Francisco Directory, the earliest of which dates back to 1899 and 1900 where he was listed as "Edward J. Nell, clerk, W.K. Vanderslice Co., r. 51 ½ Tehama." In 1908, he had moved jobs and residence and was listed as "salesman, Eccles & Smith Co., r. 2955 Howard." On the other hand, a Voter's Registration List dated 13 October 1910 lists him as a salesman, a Republican, and a resident of 809 Mason Street, San Francisco.

A more detailed early record of Edward J. Nell was a World War I Draft Registration Card dated 28 September 1918 which identifies his permanent home address as Olympic Club, San Francisco, California, his present occupation as machinery merchant of H.S. Gray Co. of Honolulu, Hawaii, and mentions his brother named Charles F. Nell who worked with Standard Oil Co. of Portland, Oregon. He was of medium height and built, had brown hair, and blue eyes. Also indicated in the said card was his application for draft exemption for reason that a "portion of (his) left foot (was) off."

The Olympic Club of San Francisco, was a recurrent address indicated in several of Edward J. Nell's records. First named San Francisco Olympic Club, it is the oldest athletic club in the U.S. Established on 6 May 1860, the club opened its first permanent clubhouse in Post Street, San Francisco in 1893 which was rebuilt on the same site in 1912 after the first structure was destroyed during the San Francisco earthquake in 1906. The club had guest rooms for its members and sports facilities used by members who would later emerge as Olympic champions. The club also had three golf courses named Lake, Ocean, and Cliffs, located outside the city where Nell could have developed his love for golf.



It must have been at H.S. Gray Co., founded by a Scottish-born Mason named Harry Scott Gray, where the young Edward J. Nell developed his business connections which would lead him to form his own company. According to Nellist's Men of Hawaii, H.S. Gray Co. was "manufacturer's representatives, specializing in machine tools, mill supplies, contractors' equipment, and marine machinery, motors, and supplies." Harry Scott Gray arrived in Hawaii in 1898 and worked at the Hakalau plantation in Hawaii until 1905. From 1895-1899, he was connected with Theo H. Davies & Co., Ltd., one of Hawaii's "Big Five" sugar firms, founded by Englishman, Theophilus Harris Davies, which had operations in the Philippines. In 1909, Gray established his own company, H.S. Gray Co.

On 9 April 1919, Edward J. Nell took as his bride, Helen Mary Carr Hipkins, born on 1 February 1894 in Auckland, New Zealand to Samuel James Hipkins of West Bromwich, Staffordshire, England and Sarah Robinson Carr of Howick, Auckland, New Zealand, who took residence in San Francisco sometime in 1910. The San Francisco Chronicle reported on the wedding in its society page in a story entitled, "Nell-Hipkins Wedding Will Take Place Today, Popular Bride-to-Be and Business Man of Hawaii Will Depart for New Home in Honolulu":

> *"Miss Helene Hipkins will be married today to Edward J. Nell, the junior partner of J.H.S. Gray & Co. of Honolulu, T.H. (Territory of Hawaii).*
>
> *Miss Hipkins is a brunette of the distinctive out-of-doors type. She is a devotee of swimming and cross-country walking. Mr. Nell was formerly baseball commissioner and captain of the baseball team of the Olympic Club, of which he is one of the most popular and enthusiastic members.*
>
> *The popular bride-to-be has been the inspiration for many social functions during the period of her engagement, and will leave many friends regretting her absence when she departs for her island home. A most attractive bungalow has been purchased by the prospective bridegroom, in the fashionable residence district of Honolulu, and it is there that the young couple will make their home.*
>
> *Mr. & Mrs. Nell will* be at home to their friends after May 1st."

The following day, on 10 April 1919, the Nells sailed off as husband and wife to Honolulu, Hawaii. An immigration record listing passengers of S.S. Korea Maru sailing from San Francisco to Honolulu, Hawaii dated 5 November 1920 lists the residence of Edward and Helene as 2485 Puunui Ave., Honolulu, Hawaii.

Not long after, however, the Nells were off to take up residence in Manila, Philippines. On 4 November 1920, Edward J. Nell filed a U.S. Passport Application in San Francisco for the couple's voyage to Japan, China, and Hongkong enroute to the Philippines on board the S.S. Korea Maru to set up a business which would carry his name. As described in the passport application, Edward J. Nell was 35 years of age, stood at 5 feet, 10 inches, had a normal forehead, hazel eyes, a straight nose, , normal mouth, round chin, brown hair, normal complexion, and an oval face.

SAN FRANCISCO CHRONICLE, WEDNESDAY, APRIL 9, 1919

SOCIETY AND NEWS OF INTEREST

Dinner Dance Given to Celebrate Polo Victory

Retained Army Officers Among Guests at First Garden Party of the Season at Burlingame

By LADY TEAZLE

MISS HELENE HIPKINS, WHOSE WEDDING TO EDWARD J. NELL of Honolulu will take place today.

Nell-Hipkins Wedding Will Take Place Today

Popular Bride-to-Be and Business Man of Hawaii Will Depart for New Home in Honolulu

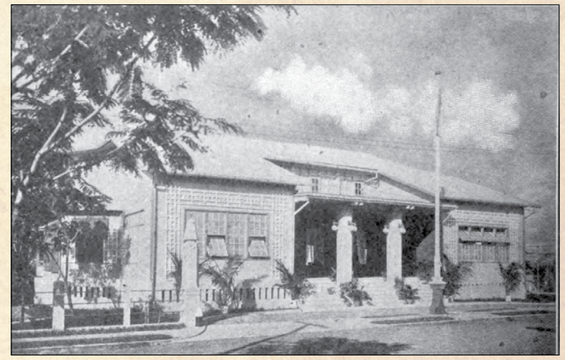
What You Should Know About C

By MAXIMILIAN P. E. GROSZM

The Eminent Child Exp

Speech Defects—Lisp

Madam Plans Of L



TOP: Newspaper clipping from the San Francisco Chronicle 9 April 1919 announcing the wedding of Edward J. Nell of San Francisco to Helen Mary Carr Hipkins of Auckland, New Zealand; MIDDLE: Edward & Helen Hipkins Nell. © Nell Family Archives; BOTTOM: Edward J. Nell aboard his car, Manila, 1920s © Nell Family Archives; BOTTOM: Sociedad de Tiro al Blanco de Manila, a gentlemen's club located at Calle Buenavista (later V. Mapa Street), Santa Mesa, Manila, 1916. © Paquito Dela Cruz, Manila Nostalgia

As per Manila Telephone Directory of April 1921, the Nells took up residence at 172 Buenavista, now V. Mapa Street, in the then affluent neighborhood of Santa Mesa, Manila where the homes of prominent Filipinos & expats like the Gabaldon, Limjap-Osmena, Montserrat, Cacho, Tuason, Legarda, Bacharach, Pond, Pickett, and Dankwerth families stood and where gentlemen of the Sociedad de Tiro al Blanco gathered together to socialize and organize groups to practice target shooting in surrounding areas like then bucolic San Juan.

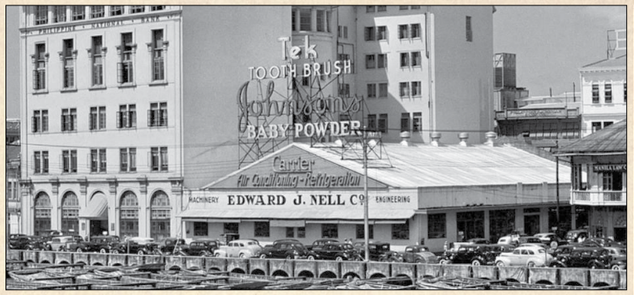
It was in Manila where Edward & Helen's two sons were born. Philip Edward Nell on 22 November 1921 and Theodore Francis "Ted" Nell, on 26 April 1923. The Nells had a comfortable life in Manila with servants to take care of their home and yayas to take care of their children. In her free time, the sociable and sporty Helen moved in Manila's social circles and even won trophies in athletic competitions. The family went on at least two trips to San Francisco in 1924 and 1926, passing by Honolulu en route to Manila in 1924 as per ship manifestos. After a few years, however, Edward J. Nell repatriated his wife and sons back to the U.S. in 1928 where they eventually resided at a large estate at 188 Fair Oaks Lane, in the affluent town of Atherton, California.

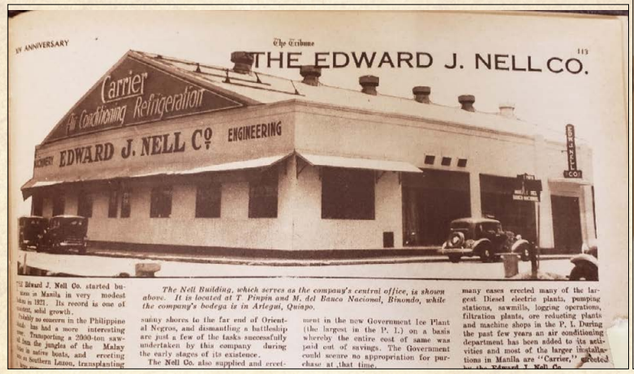
According to the Souvenir Program for the Inauguration of the New Edward J. Nell Building in 1951, Edward J. Nell Co. was incorporated in late 1920 by Edward J. Nell, junior partner in the H.S. Gray Co., Honolulu, Chas. A Frances of the same firm, and Otto Walfisch District Sales Manager of the Union Oil Co., Oakland, California. The company opened for business in Manila in January 1921 and as per listing of the Manila Telephone Directory dated April 1921, was one of the machinery and supply companies in Manila listed in the said directory, along with Atlantic Gulf and Pacific, Inc. (AG&P), Erlanger & Galinger, Inc., Honolulu Iron Works, MacLeod & Co., Pacific Commercial Co., Smith Bell & Co., Warner Barnes & Co., Ltd., and Ynchausti y Cia. Edward J. Nell Co., Ltd. held office at 426, Kneedler Building at the corner of Rizal Avenue & Carriedo Street and at a former private garage located at 414 Estero Cegado in Quiapo, Manila. As recounted in Edward J. Nell Co., Ltd.'s Souvenir Book (1951):

> *"Strangely enough, these unsavory and small quarters (at Estero Cegado) soon became a gathering place for most of the sugar central engineers while visiting Manila. The first couple of years proved a stern struggle for survival , but as economic conditions improved, the Company prospered.*
>
> *Because of the growing business, the Company had to move to more spacious quarters in 1923. It occupied the former I. Beck store near corner T. Pinpin and Muelle del Banco Nacional. Sometime in 1925, it acquired the adjoining store space of Koster & Company, buying from the latter all its stocks.*
>
> *In 1926, capitalization was increased tenfold–P 500,000. About this time, Mr. Wallfisch retired and Messrs. (Victor E.) Lednicky, (A.S.) Wells, and (Jose) Concepcion joined the Company. Since then the growth of the Company has been consistent and healthy. It soon became necessary to move to much larger quarters. The ground floor of the old Casino Español building on the corner of T. Pinpin and Muelle del Banco Nacional was rented for this purpose. But growth of business continued and the company had to move twice to much larger locations. In 1932, then located in new quarters–T. Pinpin and Muelle del Banco Nacional–the Nell Company pioneered in introducing to the Philippines, air conditioning comfort, a line that acquired tremendous popularity. Before the outbreak of the war, almost all of the airconditioning systems were supplied by the Nell Company.*
>
> *Among (these) buildings (with airconditioning supplied by the Nell Company were) Malacañang Palace, Manila Hotel, Avenue Theatre, State Theatre, Elizalde Building, Benguet Consolidated Mining Offices Heacock Building, and the American High Commissioner's Office. (Not mentioned here were The Republic Theater, Manila Grand Opera House, First National City Bank Building, Manila and Cebu branches, La Estrella del Norte, and L.R. Aguinaldo Department Store, among others.)*
>
> *In 1938, in view of the steady expansion of the Company, the capitalization of the firm was increased from the original P 500,000 in 1926 to P 750,000.00.*
>
> *Mr. (Chas. A.) Frances, one of the first incorporators of the Company, retired in 1939, and was succeeded by Mr. (Victor E.) Lednicky, who later acquired the added title of General Manager.*
>
> *Trying times were again encountered during the early thirties but the Company was in excellent condition to cope with them. Capitalization was again increased substantially."*

Shown above is a part of the sales and engineering staff of the Edward J. Nell Company. Front row, left to right: H. L. Phillips, C. C. Snow, A. S. Wells, E. J. Nell, V. E. Lednicky, and R. B. Macrae. Back row, left to right: W. J. Manion, J. A. Concepcion, S. P. Garcia, F. J. Nello, F. D. Havens, and L. H. Burks.

TOP: Edward J. Nell Co., Ltd. Building at No. 1 T. Pinpin Street cor. Muelle de Banco Nacional served as the company's central office.. © The Tribune XIV Anniversary Issue, 17 June 1939. Source_ Nell Family; MIDDLE: Edward J. Nell with sales and engineering staff of Edward J. Nell Co., Ltd., 1939. © The Tribune XIVth Anniversary, 17 June 1939, Nell Family Archives





TOP LEFT: Edward J. Nell Co., Ltd. Bldg., 1 T. Pinpin Street cor. Muelle de la Industria, Binondo, Manila beside the Masonic Temple and fronting the Pasig River. Note the prominent signage of Carrier Air Conditioning; ABOVE: Edward J. Nell Co., Ltd. Building at No. 1 T. Pinpin Street cor. Muelle de Banco Nacional served as the company's central office; © The Tribune XIV Anniversary Issue, 17 June 1939. Source_ Nell Fa (1).

1564 CORNEJO'S COMMONWEALTH DIRECTORY OF THE PHILIPPINES

MANILA LEADING BUSINESSMEN

EDWARD J. NELL, Pres. & Gen. Mgr., The Edward J. Nell Co.

M. NISHINO, Manager, Phil. Lumber Exportation Co., Ltd.

SANTOS OCAMPO, Pres. & Gen. Manager, Universal Drug Store

FRANCISCO OLEAGA, Broker, Hair & Pinsonall

K. OSAWA, Prop. & Mgr., Mizuno Sporting Goods

J. PAEZ y NAVAL, Gen. Manager, Manila Railroad Co.

CARLOS PALANCA, Pres. & Gen. Mgr., Distilerias Ayala, Inc.

JOSE PALARCA, Vice President, Commercial Investment & Management Corp.

WILLIAM PARSONS, President, Parsons Hardware Company, Inc.

C. PEREZ RUBIO, Vice Pres., Luzon Stevedoring Co., Inc.

LUIS PEREZ, Pres. & Manager, L. P. Samanillo (Real Estate)

HORACE B. POND, Pres. & Gen. Manager, Pacific Commercial Co.

Recalling E.J. Nell Co.'s achievements from its founding in 1921 through the 1930s in an article on the Company featured in The Tribune's anniversary issue, we quote:

> *"The Edward J. Nell Co. started business in Manila in very modest fashion. In 1921, Its record is one of consistent, solid growth.*
>
> *Probably no concern in the Philippine Islands has had a more interesting story. Transporting a 2000-ton sawmill from the jungles of the Malay States. In native boats and erecting one in Southern Luzon. Transporting a large sugar central from Hawaii's sunny shores to the far end of Negros (Occidental). and dismantling a battleship are just a few of the tasks successfully undertaken by this company during the early stages of its existence.*
>
> *The Nell Co. also supplied and erected all mechanical and electrical equipment in the new Government ice plant (the largest in the P.I.) on a basis whereby the entire cost of the same was paid out of savings. The government could secure no appropriation for purchase at the time.*
>
> *This company has equipped and in many cases erected many of the largest diesel electric plants, pumping stations, sawmills, logging operations, filtration plants, ore-reducting plants, and machine shops in the P.I. During the past few years an air conditioning department has been added to its activities and most of the larger installations in Manila are 'Carrier', erected by the Edward J. Nell Co."*

It was perhaps due to his overly busy schedule that Edward J. Nell opted to repatriate his family to the U.S., visiting them only during his frequent trips to San Francisco as can be seen in his numerous travel records from the late 1920s through the 1930s. Edward J. Nell loved adventure and exploring the Philippines as can be seen in photos from the family album showing him golfing with G-stringed Igorot boys as caddies, hunting big bats, going up the mountains where he encountered dog merchants and mummified human remains in caves.

As recounted in Edward J. Nell Co.'s 1951 Souvenir Program, "at the outbreak of the war, the Nell Company was handling a variety of important contracts."

According to the same source, "the Japanese invasion and subsequent bombings completely destroyed the Company's main place of business, stocks were confiscated, and most of the records destroyed. Little remained of the Company in a material sense, but it was wealthy indeed from the standpoint of loyal friends, principals, and staff.

Over two years before the Japanese Invasion of the Philippines in

1941, Edward J. Nell left Manila on 17 June 1939 aboard a China Clipper which arrived at Treasure Island Airport, San Francisco on 21 June 1939. He was reunited with his family at the family home at 188 Fair Oaks Lane in Atherton, California. Theirs was a life of affluence. Homes in Atherton had a minimum lot size of one acre and was exclusively residential. A 1930 Census listed a Scottish servant and a Swedish gardener while a 1940 census listed four Chinese servants working at the Nell home.

His two boys were now young men. Philip Edward (b. 22 November 1921), was seventeen going on eighteen while Theodore Francis "Ted" (b. 26 April 1923) was sixteen. Both boys attended Sequoia High School where they played baseball and basketball. Philip attended Santa Monica Junior College and would graduate in 1947 with an A.B. Aeronautics degree from the San Jose State College, On the other hand, Theodore Francis "Ted" would later continue his sports activities at Stanford University where he was president of the Zeta Phi fraternity. As announced in a newspaper clipping from 1942, both Nell brothers were preparing for service as naval aviators for the U.S. Navy. Both Nell boys came home safe from WWII.

On 25 June 1949, a newspaper clipping announced the marriage of Ted Nell to Dorothea Beach, a fellow Stanford University graduate, at the Santa Clara Catholic Church at Oxnard. It was also announced that a home in Manila was in store for the couple, perhaps for Ted to tend to his father's interest in the Company. It is not known when Red and Dorothea traveled to Manila. There is, however, a Pan American Airways Passenger Manifest which records a flight taken by Ted and Dorothea from Honolulu to San Francisco on 20 August 1950. It is possible that the couple came from Manila and made a stopover in Honolulu before flying back to San Francisco. Ted later joined his older brother, Philip, who was the newly married to Shirley Galvin, in running Sonoma Wood Products as listed in the 1952 Directory of Santa Rosa, California. Ted later became a councilman at Atherton. Philip, on the other hand, pursued a career in Aeronautics at Douglas Aircraft Company based in Santa Monica and Long Beach, California. Philip passed away on 24 May 2005.

After the war, Edward J. Nell Co. was able to rebuild its business, thanks in large part to its Pre-War staff who reported for duty the day the Company opened the old warehouse at Calle Arlegui, a fitting tribute to their loyalty and initiative. In 1951, Edward J. Nell and his wife, Helen, traveled to Manila but left before Edward J. Nell Co., Ltd. celebrated its 30th Anniversary on 1 September 1951. On the same occasion the Edward J. Nell retained his position as President, Victor Eugene Lednicky as Vice President & Manager, G.H. Wilkinson and A.S. Wells as Vice Presidents, T. Yule as Treasurer, and Jose Concepcion, Sr. as Secretary & Assistant Treasurer.

Edward J. Nell Co., Ltd. took part in reconstruction and rehabilitation efforts in Manila and the rest of the Philippines

Dorothea Beach Is Married to Theodore Nell

A home in Manila, P.I., is in store for the former Dorothea Theresa Beach who was wed to Theodore Francis Nell in Santa Clara Catholic Church, Oxnard.

Mrs. Jerry Wolohan and Peggy Beach attended their sister at the wedding. They are the daughters of Mrs. Everett Charles Beach of Oxnard and the late Dr. Beach.

The bridegroom, son of Mr. and Mrs. Edward J. Nell of Menlo Park, had Dick Hogan as best man and Harry Reichling as usher.

The newlyweds are graduates of Stanford where the bridegroom became a Zeta Psi.

Small Wedding To Unite Pair

ONLY FAMILY members will be on hand when Dorothea Beach, daughter of Mrs. E. C. Beach of Oxnard, and Ted F. Nell, son of the Edward J. Nells of Atherton, exchange their nuptial vows in Oxnard on Saturday. The couple will honeymoon in the Pacific Northwest, following which they will make their home in Manila, where the bridegroom will be associated with his father's engineering staff.

Originally scheduled plans for a large wedding last Saturday were cancelled because of the death of the bride-elect's brother, William, on May 28.

Front View of the completed portion of the NELL Building.

(TOP TO BOTTOM) : Edward J. Nell House at 188 Fair Oaks Lane in Atherton, California; newspaper clipping announced the marriage of Ted Nell to Dorothea Beach; New Edward J. Nell Co., Ltd. Building, a structure built on the ruins of the old San Ignacio Church in Intramuros, Manila.

which was extensively damaged during WWII, especially due to heavy bombings during the Liberation. On 22 June 1957, Republic Act No. 1841 was enacted by the Philippine Congress granting the Edward J. Nell Co. and/or its sister company, The Aircon, Inc., a temporary permit to construct, maintain, and operate private fixed point-to-point and land-based mobile radio stations for the reception and transmission of radio communications within the Philippines. The Company continued to represent many major foreign construction material and tool manufacturers, machinery and equipment suppliers until it closed down after the retirement of Edward J. Nell as President in 1963 and Jose Concepcion, Sr. as Secretary & Assistant Treasurer, in 1962.

Viktor Eugene Lednicky made a big fortune as principal stockholder of Lepanto Consolidated Mining Company. He was the Top Individual Taxpayer in the Philippines in 1966. In 1969, a year before his passing in 1970, he placed second to Mercedes Zobel McMicking, the Zobel family matriarch. Esteban Tanchauco Caedo, who worked at Edward J. Nell & Co.'s Carrier air conditioning department, was the first Filipino engineer to specialize in air conditioning technology during the Pre-War Era. Jose Concepcion, Sr, would establish Concepcion Industries, Inc. upon his retirement from Edward J. Nell Co., Ltd. in 1962, which would manufacture Carrier airconditioners locally and become one of the top airconditioner brands in the Philippines to date.

Edward J. Nell passed away on 13 February 1973 at Hoover Pavilion Hospital in Palo Alto, California as reported in his obituaries in the San Francisco Chronicle and The San Francisco Examiner, both dated 16 February 1973. Private viewing was held at the family home at 55 Melanie Lane in Atherton with the funeral mass held at Crippen and Flynn Woodside Chapel before interment at the Alta Mesa Cemetery in Palo Alto, California. He was survived by his wife, Helen, their two sons, Philip and Ted, and six grandchildren. Offerings preferred to the Hanna Boys Center in Sonoma, California, a non-private high school whose aim was to educate, prepare, and empower students from Grades 9-12 with learning and emotional challenges to help them succeed in school and life by developing their individual talents and gifts." Starting in life as an immigrant farmer's son, Edward J. Nell achieved much in his chosen field of business and left a legacy in the history of commerce, construction, and industry in his beloved adopted country, the Philippines.

It is indeed fortuitous that ninety five years after they were created and brought to the United States, two rare treasures from Edward J. Nell's collection of Fernando C. Amorsolo paintings have been repatriated to the Philippines where they truly belong. *(IPR)*

(TOP TO BOTTOM) : One of Edward J. Nell Co., Ltd.'s first offices was at the Kneedler Building at Rizal Ave. cor. Carriedo Street, Santa Cruz, Manila; One of the earliest offices of Edward J. Nell Co., Ltd. was at the Kneedler Building at Rizal Ave. cor. Carriedo Street, Santa Cruz, Manila © Manila Nostalgia

THE EDWARD J. NELL AMORSOLO

An American Industrialist's Fruitful Harvest

by ADRIAN MARANAN

"Actually, I know it is not the only painting that Papa made of the same subject but here, I would consider [this painting] a masterpiece among the subjects of this kind. Why? When you look at the figures, you see how beautiful the figures are and when you see the stroke of the light and shadow, just one plain stroke, you could already define the anatomy of the person...Papa was so strict when it comes to anatomy."

"He used to say he loves to paint beauty. And if you notice this Dalagang Bukid, so many paintings were done [of this subject] but you would see all different faces. It is not a duplicate. All different faces."

"Well, Papa was depicting here the typical chores of the Filipinos then, and I know his favorite is the mango tree and usually it symbolizes a family."

— MRS. SYLVIA AMORSOLO-LAZO, FERNANDO AMORSOLO'S DAUGHTER, ON WHY "UNDER THE MANGO TREE" IS HER FATHER'S MASTERPIECE. INTERVIEW WITH LEON GALLERY, 18 JULY 2024

Every now and then, Amorsolos come into the art market, seemingly infinite in numbers. But in this magnificent sale, a rarity of a gem finally comes home.

Amorsolo's paintings have always been staples of our auctions. However, an Amorsolo painting is endowed with the virtue of exceptional rarity when it becomes possessed by the "holy trinity," a perfect trifecta of impeccable provenance, a storied pertinence and historical context, and a direct testimonial of authentication by none other than the artist's own flesh and blood.

A Treasure is Repatriated

Ninety-five years after it was painted, the majestic Philippine sunlight has again cast its radiance onto maestro Fernando Amorsolo's 1929 masterpiece *Under the Mango Tree.* The work at hand is one of the earliest (and perhaps the first) explorations of Amorsolo on this iconic theme, even predating thematically identical paintings like those at the National Museum of the Philippines (1935; GSIS Collection) and the current record-holder for the most expensive Amorsolo sold at auction (Leon Gallery, The Spectacular Mid-Year Auction 2018), the "Conde de Peracamps *Under the Mango Tree"* (1931)

This 1929 *Under the Mango Tree* possesses sterling provenance. It came from the collection of Edward Joseph Nell, one of the most prominent American industrialists of the pre-war era and the "Father of Philippine Airconditioning."

Amorsolo's clients were mostly Americans, who began to rave about and later patronized his works after his landmark and near sell-out solo exhibition in November 1925 at New York's famed Art Center.

Nell directly acquired the work from Amorsolo and "was a gift to his wife," as writer and expert on personalities and families of the American colonial period, Isidra Reyes, said in a recent interview with Leon Gallery. "1929...was after he sent his family to Atherton. I suspect this Amorsolo piece was a gift to his wife, who I think appreciates it more," Reyes remarked. "Maybe his wife appreciate[d] more the finer things in life like art and decorating their beautiful home in Atherton."

In the Nell archives of family photographs, a picture of Amorsolo sitting in his Azcarraga (now Recto Avenue) home and looking at his painting exists. It is a rare instance that Amorsolo was photographed with his masterpiece. Reyes noted that when Mr. Nell bought the painting, he had likely requested that Amorsolo be photographed with his work as proof of authenticity or purchase. Mrs. Lazo also says that a long time ago, she saw Mr. Nell's name on his father's envelope. "As far as I know, I have seen his name on the envelope written by Papa," she says.

Amorsolo even affixed his full name and address on the back of the work in his handwriting.

The work stayed in the Nell family's residence for almost a century. It has remained in pristine condition throughout the decades, and Mrs. Lazo notes that no major restoration has been done to the painting.

Amorsolo's *Under the Mango Tree:* Under the Spell of Stellar Success

When Amorsolo painted this work, he had been teaching at the UP School of Fine Arts as a painting instructor. He was the Philippines' most famous painter, an artist par excellence. Echoing the words of critic Alfredo Roces, Amorsolo was referenced and exalted in poems. He was a staple judge of the iconic Manila Carnival, where he also won the top prizes in its art competitions. His name and face were being used in advertisements. His works were on the covers of the most popular magazines circulating at the time and the colored calendars of the Insular Life and the Filipinas Compania de Seguros.

Fernando Amorsolo was a household name.

A year prior, in 1928, Amorsolo participated in a landmark cultural exhibition at the old Ayuntamiento in Intramuros, showcasing his works alongside those of the legendary masters Lorenzo Guerrero, Luna, Hidalgo, and de la Rosa. Even then, Amorsolo had always been categorized in the same league as the country's most acclaimed painters. In a review of the exhibition published in the June 1928 issue of the *Philippine Education Magazine,* one of the most prominent pre-war Filipino art critics, Ignacio Manlapaz, praised Amorsolo's art, writing:

> *"Even [Amorsolo's] very defects become virtues. There is the characteristic spontaneity and freshness that you will look for in vain in the pictures of his contemporaries; the cool, healthy tones, the consummate mastery of form, and the color scheme, which is as original as that of the most original painters; the placidity and naïve frankness of expression, and the appearance of having been painted in cool sunlight. The feminine note... serves to heighten the appeal of this picture."*

Writes National Artist for Literature Resil B. Mojares in his article *The Formation of Filipino Nationality Under U.S. Colonial Rule, "*...in the 1920s, when artists in other Asian countries were still apprentices in Western painting, Amorsolo already mastered it and had succeeded, in his own way, to "naturalize" it.

The work at hand possesses luscious lighting that complements the lushness of the setting and the details, resulting in palpable naturalness and a harmonious convergence between delicate airiness and organic solidity. Brushstrokes are more vigorous, colors are purer and appear more natural compared to similar works. Thick impastos and broad, textured strokes characteristic of Amorsolo's Golden Period are present. The juxtaposition between light and shadow is very much evident, showcasing Amorsolo's flair in emphasizing the central subject and knowledge of the elements of natural lighting. His shadow areas even ooze with the richness of his colors, a true indicator of Amorsolo's identity as a master colorist.

The work's rarity also stems from the fact that it is unusually square in shape.

ABOVE: The January - February 1928 issue of The Philippine Republic christened Amorsolo as the Philippines' most famous painter. © The University of Michigan Library Digital Collection; Amorsolo's paintings were always featured on the front covers of the leading magazines of the pre-war era. © The University of Michigan Library Digital Collection; Amorsolo's works were featured in a landmark 1928 exhibition at the old Ayuntamiento in Intramuros, alongside masterpieces by Luna, Hidalgo, and De la Rosa. This is a testimony to Amorsolo's prominence in the country's art landscape during his time. © Alfredo Roces, Amorsolo (1975); Amorsolo was a pop culture icon. He was featured in full-page advertisements, and poems were written in his honor. © Alfredo Roces, Amorsolo (1975)

ABOVE: Mrs. Sylvia Amorsolo-Lazo with Under the Mango Tree. Screengrab from a recent interview with Leon Gallery, 18 July 2024. © Leon Gallery Archives

Mrs. Sylvia Amorsolo-Lazo on Her Father's Masterpiece

In a recent interview with Leon Gallery, Mrs. Sylvia Amorsolo-Lazo, the maestro's daughter, said that upon seeing the painting, memories of her father instantly flashed back. "I will simply say Papa is a genius. And I remember when he paints, it is so easy for him. So easy," she reminisces.

"Definitely, it is my father's work," Mrs. Lazo says. "Actually, this is the first time I have seen it when [Leon Gallery] brought it to my place for verification. But I have seen one in the 1950s, the same thing, but different strokes. So that is why I consider this as a masterpiece among the same painting compositions. The way I see it, all his styles in painting are there. The impasto [is] detailed." Mrs. Lazo also adds that "a simple stroke will define the contour of the anatomy...As you look at the face of the woman, she looks so beautiful."

A Symbol of Filipino Nationalism

Notice how, in this work, the radiance of the sunlight directly illuminates the dalaga and her charming face; she possesses a photographic likeness, a palpable realism. This is Amorsolo's participation in the cultural self-assertion of the '20s, projecting the image of the Filipina to profess the pastoral indigenous as the foundation of Filipino identity amid the relentless surge of Americanized modernity. It is Amorsolo embodying the Filipino civic and cultural nationalism of the first decades of the 20th century that went hand in hand with the debates for the country's independence after four centuries of colonial rule.

Amorsolo emphasized the *Filipinismo* of the period (when folk motifs like the kundiman and native dances were being revived, the balagtasan that extolled the virtues of the dalaga rose to fame, and Philippine history and culture were heavily researched by Filipiniana scholars like Teodoro Kalaw) through the dalaga and the tropical sunlight as embodiments of a country whose identity is rooted in the agricultural. After all, land is intrinsically tied to one's culture and identity.

Amorsolo's aggressive interest in pursuing the autochthonous rather than the Americanized seeped through the national consciousness amidst the foreign demand for his works. Mojares writes, "With the fever for things Philippine, Amorsolo's art was everywhere—advertising posters, calendars, magazines, textbooks, postage stamps, even product labels. Few artists contributed as much to the country's stock of *"national"* images."

Mrs. Lazo said that her father's favorite is the mango tree, for it symbolizes the family. Aside from being a ubiquitous landmark in virtually every corner of the country, the mango tree resonates with the Filipino collective experience. It is a symbol of abundance and fertility, encapsulating the shared struggles and continuing hope of a people for an all-embracing and empowering progress. As critic Alfredo Roces writes in the book Amorsolo, the maestro "gave the nation a sense of confidence in its culture, pride in its beauty, joy in its simple day-to-day living, and graciousness in the face of reality." *(Adrian Maranan)*

51 PROPERTY FROM THE EDWARD J. NELL COLLECTION

Fernando Amorsolo (1892 - 1972)

Under the Mango Tree
signed and dated 1929 (lower right)
oil on canvas
38″ x 38″ (97 cm x 97 cm)

P 18,000,000

Accompanied by a certificate issued by Mrs. Sylvia Amorsolo-Lazo confirming the authenticity of this lot

PROVENANCE
Acquired directly from the artist

A Charming Muse for the Aircon Magnate

Amorsolo's *Lady with Basket,* another painting from the Edward J. Nell collection, comes from the same year as the previous lot, Under the Mango Tree. It was acquired by Nell around the same time he acquired *Under the Mango Tree*. Like the earlier work, he likely gifted it to his wife, Helen Mary Carr Hipkins, whom Isidra Reyes described in the Leon Gallery interview, appreciated more the finer things in life like art, as her husband had a hectic schedule running his business empire. The charming image of the dalaga may have also reminded Nell of Helen's timeless beauty.

Lady with Basket features the same dalaga in Under the Mango Tree. While the dalaga takes her much-needed afternoon *siesta* in the previous work, *Lady with Basket* sees the dalaga working in the morning, peddling her fresh produce around the neighborhood. In the background, a group of women engaging in lively discussions around a table filled with commodities are active indicators of a vibrant market scene by the road.

Lady with Basket and *Under the Mango Tree*, which both come from the artistic, commercial, and popularity peak of Amorsolo, are undoubtedly the jewels in Edward Joseph Nell's collection.

But beyond being commissioned by an American magnate, the work at hand resonates particularly with the nation with its vibrantly rich display of Filipino essence. *Lady with Basket* is yet another epitome of Amorsolo's contribution to the flowering of Filipino civic and cultural nationalism of the 1920s up to the 1930s, which resulted from the optimism for the Philippines' eventual independence. Amorsolo's emphasis on the image of the native *dalaga* as someone possessing an active role in society further strengthened the notion that a collective consciousness rooted in the fostering of the autochthonous and the agricultural is essential to understanding one's history and identity. The *Filipinismo* shown by Amorsolo and his pastoral paintings manifests an ideal of the agricultural land being tilled by the natives as an intrinsic element of the map to sovereignty and genuine development.

Through Amorsolo's paintings of the indigenous, which found their way on the front pages of the most popular magazines and newspapers and the colored calendars, people from all over the country, especially those in the provinces whose living and being, culture and heritage, are evocatively captured in the maestro's canvas, found a way to familiarize and identify themselves with his art. In the process of this identification, Amorsolo became a household name, and he became the very definition of Philippine painting.

Amorsolo's contribution to the flowering of Philippine painting was indelible. So omnipresent was his art that he unwittingly introduced, to a significant extent, painting to people in the provinces whom Amorsolo exalted in his works. Even the champion and mother of Philippine modernism, Purita Kalaw-Ledesma, wrote an entire article in *The Manila Chronicle* titled "Amorsolo's place in Philippine art" (May 7, 1972) in the wake of Amorsolo's proclamation as the country's first national artist. "Amorsolo was lucky enough to live in an age where the art of reproduction had come into being." Kalaw-Ledesma writes. "Some of his paintings were reproduced in colored calendars of the Insular Life and the Filipinas Compania de Seguros. Through this means, many people in the provinces and even in Manila were able to appreciate good painting, where otherwise they would never have been exposed to this art. Thus, painting became synonymous with the word 'Amorsolo.'"

Kalaw-Ledesma continues: "Every man has his place in the sun. To my mind, Amorsolo's contribution was his vision of the Philippine sunlight and landscape, and his portrayal of a happy era long gone (or maybe of one which had never existed), which we could look back to, when things look very bleak, as having been so once upon a time." *(Adrian Maranan)*

52 PROPERTY FROM THE EDWARD J. NELL COLLECTION

Fernando Amorsolo (1892 - 1972)
Lady with Basket
signed and dated 1929 (lower left)
oil on wood
16 1/4″ x 13″ (41 cm x 33 cm)

P 5,000,000

Accompanied by a certificate issued by Mrs. Sylvia Amorsolo-Lazo confirming the authenticity of this lot

PROVENANCE
Acquired directly from the artist

"No other artist in this country has enjoyed the patronage and the popularity which was enjoyed and is being enjoyed by Fernando Amorsolo. His name is almost a by-word in art circles in the whole archipelago. School children know his name, not only from the art instruction they get but also from the illustrations in books of reference and from the reproductions of his paintings on calendars and on the pages of many magazines and periodicals."

—AURELIO S. ALVERO (MAGTANGGUL ASA), EXCERPT FROM THE ARTICLE "AMORSOLO'S PAINTINGS," PUBLISHED IN THE EVENING NEWS, 20 NOVEMBER 1948

53

Michael Cacnio (b. 1969)

Mother and Child
signed and dated 2000
brass
without base: H: 17 1/2" (44 cm) L: 6 1/2" (17 cm) W: 10" (25 cm)
with base: H: 19 1/4" (49 cm) L: 8" (20 cm) W: 10 1/4" (26 cm)

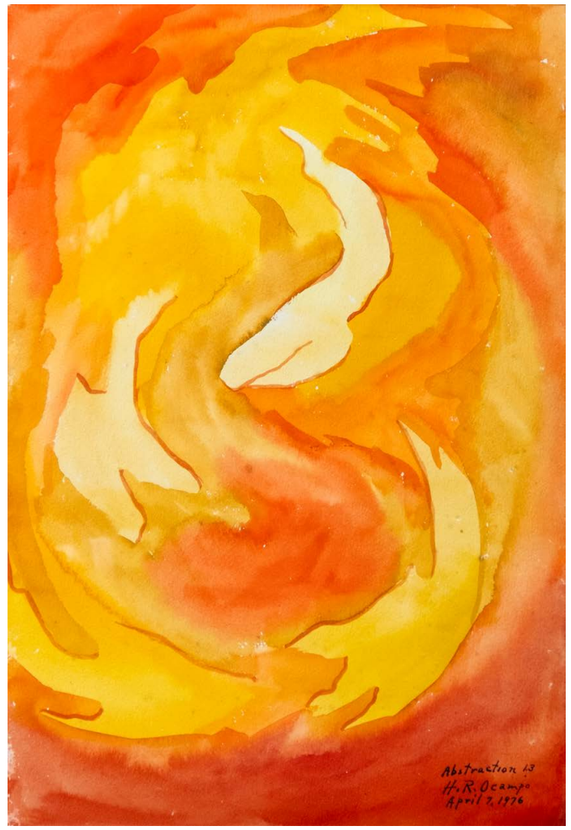
P 400,000

León Gallery wishes to than Mrs. Tess Cacnio for confirming the authenticity of this lot

Michael Cacnio, a family man raised in a nurturing and joyful environment, imbues his delicately crafted brass sculptures with the essence of his bright upbringing. His works, which depict universal themes of parental affection, a cheerful childhood, and the resilience of the Filipino people, evoke a sense of familiarity and nostalgia that resonates with viewers from all walks of life.

Cacnio's 2000 brass sculpture, *Mother and Child,* is a poignant portrayal of parental love. The scene depicts a mother and her child, perhaps on a leisurely stroll in the market or park, clad in traditional Filipino attire. The mother is seen holding an umbrella, suggesting protection from a sunny day—a connotation of what a mother would do to safeguard her kids. The child, seemingly captivated by something, tugs at his mother's hand, an implication of a child's sweet innocence and perky attitude. This masterpiece showcases Cacnio's exceptional brass work and his profound understanding of humanity and Filipino culture, cementing his status as a world-class sculptor.

A graduate of the University of the Philippines Diliman's Fine Arts program, Cacnio started his artistic career as a painter but later found his true passion in brass sculpting. His works starred in various solo exhibits in Asia, Europe, and the US, and have been featured in broadcast media and publications. Michael Cacnio's esteemed brassworks have garnered numerous awards and recognitions both locally and internationally, a testament to his artistic prowess. Subsequently, he received a TOYM award in the Arts/Sculpture category in 2006. Cacnio's artistic journey is a testament to the power of perseverance and the pursuit of one's true calling, inspiring artists and art enthusiasts alike. *(Jessica Magno)*



54

Hernando Ocampo (1911 - 1978)

a.) Abstraction 13
signed and dated April 17, 1976 (lower right)
watercolor on paper
22" x 15" (56 cm x 38 cm)

b.) Abstraction 21
signed and dated April 17, 1976 (lower left)
watercolor on paper
22" x 15" (56 cm x 38 cm)

P 500,000

Hernando R. Ocampo's *Abstraction 13* and *Abstraction 21* both feature the native sensibilities of his works. Both done on April 17 of 1976, they contain the culmination of Ocampo's illustrious career as it was done just two years before his death.

One could argue that Ocampo's brilliant sense of color is wholly and truly Filipino. Despite a multitude of chances to study abroad, Ocampo took the path less traveled and chose to stay in the country, studying the Western masters only through reproductions instead of facing them in real life. The result is an innate sense of color as Filipino as one artist could be.

Abstraction 13 and *Abstraction 21* indulge in the vibrant, fiery yellows reminiscent of the hot summer afternoons that are as recognizable as sublime in their pursuit of translating musicality into his pieces. Organic shapes fill the canvases and yet, Ocampo's abstraction manages to translate his thoughts almost perfectly with his lifelong quest to understand colors leading to his usage of hues in place of form, shapes, figures, and space. As such, it is easy to imagine the sweltering heat of the summer Ocampo painted the pieces in, intimate and warm in their abstractions. *(Hannah Valiente)*

55

Tam Austria (b. 1943)

Untitled
signed and dated 1998 (upper left)
oil on canvas
20″ x 22″ (51 cm x 56 cm)

P 100,000

Folk subjects, with a fuse of women at work and nature, invariably adorned Tam Austria's oeuvre. Hailing from Tanay, a 52-kilometer distance east of Angono, Rizal, the young Austria would frequently travel to Angono to learn from the great master painter. There, he absorbed his mentor's practices of mural-making and his depiction of Philippine folk, which is clearly evident in Austria's paintings.

Regarded as one of CCP's Thirteen Artists of 1970, Austria's pieces centered around the locals and their daily lives. His works are marked by his linear and meticulously elegant style, a testament to his dedication and precision, ingenious sense of color, and incorporation of sepia brown tones. With this crafted technique, Austria impressively illustrated his regional folk genre and interpretation of Philippine mythology in his works.

This untitled piece from 1998 depicts two women in muted hues outlined with graphite. One woman holds a bowl full of grains, while the other has a bamboo wind instrument. Birds and butterflies fly across the canvas, and falling leaves signify the breath of wind. At first glance, it could appear that they were feeding–or about to feed–some animals. Nevertheless, Austria's images serve to highlight women and their roles and contributions to society, challenging the long-standing notion of women as mere household decorations. *(Jessica Magno)*

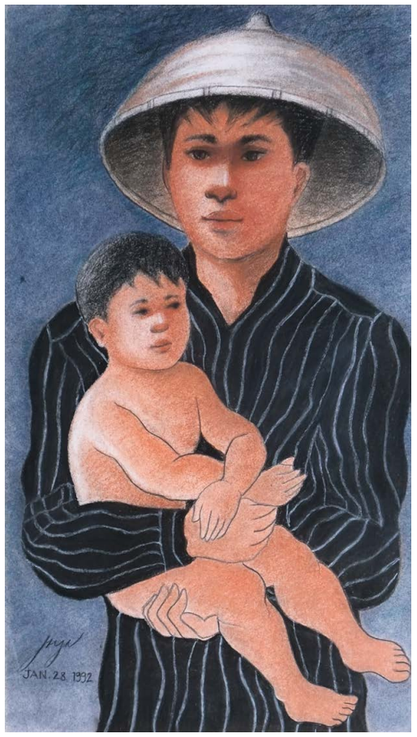
56

José Joya (1931 - 1995)

Father and Son
signed and dated 1992 (lower left)
pastel on paper
20″ x 12 1/2″ (51 cm x 32 cm)

P 300,000

Accompanied by a certificate issued by Josefa Joya-Baldovino confirming the authenticity of this lot



The figurative works of abstractionist Jose Joya bear the artist's mastery of line and form. The determination with which Joya pursued his craft led to Rodolfo A. Salaveria saying, "If Joya had merely produced drawings, he could still count among the major artists of the country."

With his pastel-on-paper piece entitled *Father and Son* (1992), Joya showcases his fascination with the proletarian as he turns the popular "mother and child" theme on its head to depict the same image but with a father and his son. He then indigenizes this version as well, depicting the father and son with honey-brown skin and casual Filipino clothes. A humble salakot hat rests on the father's head and he holds his son close to his chest, body posture relaxed but protective as they create a novel yet familiar vision of the Filipino familial bond.

Joya holds the Filipino in high regard in his works. "To the Filipino people who were the source of inspiration for many of the drawings in this book," he once wrote in his monograph *Joya by Joya: Book of Drawings's* dedication. Indeed, his Father and Son shows Joya's talent for the figurative and his penchant for Filipinization. *(Hannah Valiente)*

57

Arturo Luz (1926 - 2021)

Black Sun, Red Sky
signed (lower left)
dated 2013
acrylic on canvas
24″ x 30″ (61 cm x 76 cm)

P 500,000

Accompanied by a certificate issued by Ms. Luisa Luz-Lansigan confirming the authenticity of this lot

Throughout his artistic journey, Arturo Luz explored various styles and mediums. Still, he is most known for his minimalist, geometric, and abstract styles, which began with his figurative, carnival subjects in the 1950s. This period was marked by Luz's portrayal of his subjects with simple geometric shapes, reducing them to their most basic forms, a testament to his ability to find beauty in simplicity. The above mentioned was a precursor to his later shift to minimalism, where he would abandon figurative painting and embrace more straightforward, linear forms with a limited palette.

Luz's penchant for minimalism and linear structures is manifested in this lot, Black Sun, Red Sky, which reflects the artist's exploration of contrast and balance in his later works. A twin black mountain made with scribbles of white lines resembling grids is positioned against the titular black sun and red sky. Perhaps age is nothing but a number to Arturo Luz, for the master painter made this piece in 2013, in the hoariness of his late 80s. *(Jessica Magno)*

The Parable of the Good Samaritan

Amorsolo and Religious Imagery

El Buen Samaritano is an oil study for a larger painting, as attested by its size and a photograph of Fernando Amorsolo posing in front of the final finished work. The piece depicts a poignant interpretation of the biblical parable of the good Samaritan. Found in the Gospel of Luke, the parable tells of the story of a man who fell victim to robbers while traveling from Jerusalem to Jericho. The robbers stripped him of his garments and possessions, beat him until he passed out, and left him dying on the road.

"A priest happened to be going down that road, but when he saw him, he passed by on the opposite side," Jesus narrates. "Likewise, a Levite came to the place, and when he saw him, he passed by on the opposite side. But a Samaritan traveler who came upon him was moved with compassion at the sight. He approached the victim, poured oil and wine over his wounds, and bandaged them. Then he lifted him up on his own animal, took him to an inn, and cared for him. The next day, he took out two silver coins and gave them to the innkeeper with the instruction, 'Take care of him. If you spend more than what I have given you, I shall repay you on my way back.'"

The Parable of the Good Samaritan was Jesus' answer to a scribe who asked him what one must do to inherit eternal life.

Amorsolo's take on the biblical story came after a major eye operation in 1969, the year this work was painted. Thus, the work can be seen as a form of profound thanksgiving after the success of the medical procedure, a relief from a cataract that caused his sight to gradually fail and affected his painting procedures. The work depicts the scene in which the Samaritan finds the almost lifeless body of the physically assaulted man and proceeds to attend to his immediate medical needs. The Levite, who had previously seen the dying man but chose to ignore him, is depicted as a hazy shadow on the far right, with his back turned to the viewer.

"It was Papa's standard procedure to research and study references when commissioned to paint religious paintings," Mrs. Sylvia Amorsolo-Lazo writes in Volume II of the book *Amorsolo: Love and Passion.*

El Buen Samaritano is one in a storied list of works Amorsolo painted during the final years of his life. The figures still retain their fluidity. However, the brush strokes are nowhere near the vigor they possessed during Amorsolo's prime. They are now softer, and the colors are noticeably softer and subdued. But what strikes the most in this work is Amorsolo's enduring commitment to his art even in the face of physical limitations that naturally come with age. *El Buen Samaritano* showcases a master who not only left an indelible legacy to Philippine art but remained humble in the face of blinding fame and extended both financial generosity and creative enlightenment to the young and struggling artists of his time. *(Adrian Maranan)*

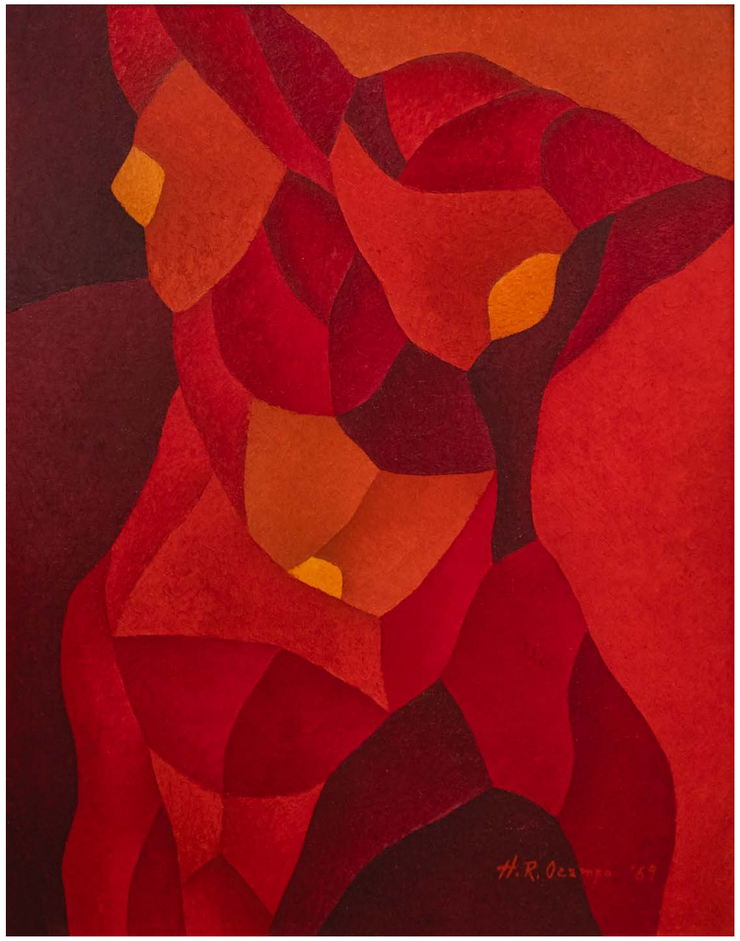
58 PROPERTY FROM THE COLLECTION OF A VERY DISTINGUISHED FAMILY

Fernando Amorsolo (1892 - 1972)
Study of El Buen Samaritano
signed and dated 1969 (lower right)
oil on canvas
12″ x 16″ (30 cm x 41 cm)

P 1,300,000

LITERATURE
Araneta, Antonio S., ed. *1030 R. Hidalgo: Volume II, Legacy in Art.* Manila: Mara, Inc., 1986. Full-color illustration and painting description on page 139.

ABOVE: Amorsolo posing in front of the final finished work, ca. 1969. © Fernando C. Amorsolo Art Foundation website



59

Hernando Ocampo (1911 - 1978)

Bosquejo
signed and dated 1969 (lower right)
oil on canvas
18" x 14" (46 cm x 36 cm)

P 2,600,000

There is a peculiar Filipino flavor in the colors of Hernando R. Ocampo. His sublime sense of color has elevated his works to a whole new level, a status that his fellow artist Fernando Zobel acknowledged when he noted that Ocampo's colors "do not glow" but "glare."

As Ocampo's interest in colors grew, he learned to wield only hues in portraying what depth, space, luminosity, and form would otherwise do. This mastery is evident in his 1969 Bosquejo. Translating to "sketch" from Spanish, *Bosquejo* utilizes the usual Ocampo fiery reds; however, Ocampo's mastery of hues manages to transform the planes in varying shades of red into an image of a woman's torso. One could easily see the curves of her body and the swell of her breasts only through prismatic planes of scarlet.

"Color is the main physical property of Ocampo's paintings; subject matter comes second," writes Manuel D. Duldulao in *Contemporary Philippine Art.* "[However], this does not mean an escape from reality." Indeed, Bosquejo is proof of this; while Ocampo's colors take center stage, his approximation and careful consideration of line and space create a figurative image that peers through the abstraction, an awe-inspiring result of Ocampo's painstaking attention to detail. *(Hannah Valiente)*

60

Eduardo Castrillo (1942 - 2016)

Untitled
signed and dated 1979
brass
H: 21 1/2" (55 cm)
L: 14" (36 cm)
W: 22 1/2" (57 cm)

P 160,000

Accompanied by a certificate issued by the heirs of the artist confirming the authenticity of this lot

The majestic monuments of Eduardo Castrillo narrate the history of Metro Manila and beyond. The People Power Monument along EDSA, the Bonifacio Shrine at Ermita, and the Pieta at the Loyola Memorial Park all tell a story that took root in the Philippine soil and is brought to life through Castrillo's masterful hands.

However, his small-scale works evoke the same sense of awe as his towering sculptures. Sculpture as a medium was largely untouched by the burgeoning modernist movement and it was Castrillo who breathed into the practice. This 1979 brass work, crafted with the same sense of meticulousness and care that befits a bigger sculpture, showed Castrillo's technical and creative process as he tamed the solid medium in a simple yet elegant piece.

The natural heir of National Artists Guillermo Tolentino and Napoleon Abueva, Castrillo paved the way for the revival of sculpture in the Modernist era. He forged his own path, carving through the conventional as diligently as he carved through his mediums. This laborious process paid off – from monumental statues to miniature sculptures, Castrillo's prodigious legacy on the state of Philippine sculpture cannot be understated. *(Hannah Valiente)*

Amorsolo Paints a Western *Dalaga*

Fernando Amorsolo's artistic acclaim had been steadily rising by the time the roaring twenties rolled in – among the first batch of graduates of the UP School of Fine Arts, Amorsolo's prowess with the pen was recognized when he was given the position of Instructor of Elementary Drawing in his alma mater immediately after graduating in 1914. By 1918, he was promoted to Instructor of Painting, and by the next year, he left for Spain to study under the sponsorship of Enrique Zobel in a quest to refine his art further, proof of his incredibly moving art.

Though mostly known for his genre pieces which exalt the bucolic Philippine countryside, Amorsolo is also an impeccable portraitist, as evidenced by his 1926 Portrait of a Lady. Unlike a usual portrait wherein the subject faces the viewer, Amorsolo portrays the titular lady with her hand on her hips, her fashionable French bob falling to her jaw as she faces to the side. The piece has a certain attitude to it, the air of a slight rebelliousness evident on the woman's set jaw and her hand placed on her hip. Here, Amorsolo not only immortalizes the visage of the woman but also her personality, her attitude bleeding into every part of this canvas.

The Amorsolo legacy extends past his pastorale depictions of the Philippines – included in his majestic oeuvre are his portraits as he puts intimate and private to portray his great sensitivity to the personal. His portraits, like many that came before it, are imbued with the personality of his muse, putting onto canvas the age-old desire to immortalize one's visage and memory. *(Hannah Valiente)*

61

Fernando Amorsolo (1892 - 1972)
Portrait of a Lady
signed, dated and inscribed Manila, 1926 (lower right)
oil on canvas
33" x 25 1/2" (84 cm x 65 cm)

P 300,000

PROVENANCE
Private collection, United Kingdom

LOT 62

Don Vicente “Tiking” Hofileña Lopez, Jr.

The Hacendero Collector

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 nontraditional 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 Senora de Guia Parish in Ermita. From being a farmer and fisherman, his final role was as God’s fisher of men (and women).

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.)

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.

ABOVE: Don Vicente "Tiking" Lopez as a eucharistic minister he became a fisher of souls, as well as an avid fisherman of the lakeshore variety.

ABOVE: Don Vicente “Tiking” H. Lopez, Jr. examining some of the gems in his collection

I am now in fact engaged in approximating the properties of music. I am interested in creating what you would call “visual melodies.” I approach my paintings now as if they were chamber music, which, I suppose, one can consider “pure music.”

—H.R. OCAMPO, IN A MAY 1972 INTERVIEW WITH CID REYES AND PUBLISHED IN “CONVERSATIONS ON PHILIPPINE ART” (1989)

“These days, however, Tiking is more keenly tuned to chamber music. A painting will always be there, but music comes and goes, and like the orchids that Tiking cultivates or the big fat bangus that he raises, it is becoming a rarity.”

—JULIE YAP DAZA, “IN SEARCH OF A VOICE,” IN HER “MEDIUM RARE” COLUMN PUBLISHED IN THE TIMES JOURNAL, 22 DECEMBER 1979

The *Visual Melody Period* (1968 to 1978) of Hernando R. Ocampo was a sustained endeavor in pursuit of an elusive path towards capturing the sublime qualities of music in painting. In particular, Ocampo's venture into his *Visual Melody* stemmed from a deep appreciation for pure music. It was the peak of his Neo-Realist identity, in which he emphasized a kind of music naturally soothing and intimate in character, echoing the original Neo-Realist manifesto based on the words of Francesco de Santis, "To create reality, an artist must first have the force to kill it. But instantly, the fragments draw together again, in love with each other, seeking one another, coming together wit h desire, with the obscure presentiment of the new life to which they are destined."

Thus, in Ocampo's *Visual Melody,* the indulging experience of listening to music transforms into a palpable vision of harmony. Above all, the *Visual Melody* sees Ocampo at his rawest, showcasing the inherent beauty in emotional vulnerability and authenticity.

This 1971 work, *Karnabal* (Carnival), was Ocampo's gift to his leading patron and beloved friend, Don Vicente "Tiking" H. Lopez, Jr., whose name is given special distinction for being included in Ocampo's list of collectors published in the monograph written by his biographer, Angel G. de Jesus.

At the back of *Karnabal* lies a tender handwritten dedication by Ocampo that says,

"To Tiking,
Art patron, best above all, a good friend.
Nanding
March 15, 1971"

It is interesting to note that when Ocampo made this work at the height of his *Visual Melody Period*, Don Tiking had yet to rediscover his first love—music. It would only be seven years later that Don Tiking would find joy again in music, with *Woman's* magazine noting in its December 14, 1979 article "This Cellist Plays for Fun": "But last year, Tiking felt the urge and yearning to strum his 200-year old cello, which, for 16 long years, was neatly tucked in his Ermita penthouse." The article adds, "Then, confident of himself after several months, he formed the Elena Piano and String Ensemble... After all these years, Tiking has come back to his first love."

A June 26, 1971 article from *The Manila Bulletin* describes Don Tiking not as a music appassionato but 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 notes. "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."

"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," writes the print media titan Julie Yap Daza in her December 22, 1971 *Manila Bulletin* article titled "In search of a voice."

In *Karnabal,* Ocampo employs an exuberant profusion of colors to capture the festive atmosphere of the carnival. Colors bursting at the seams and the organic abstracted forms characteristic of Ocampo's art in the immediate post-war period and fully realized during his *Visual Melody Period* instantly recall a carnival scene brimming with life, where merriment never ends. Colors bursting at the seams yet confined in a singular canvas evoke the intimate setting of chamber music, in which Ocampo and eventually Don Tiking would both take delight. A December 22, 1979 *Times Journal* article by Julie Yap Daza says, "These days, however, Tiking is more keenly tuned to chamber music," signifying the *haciendero* collector's reconnection with music.

Chamber music was dubbed "the music of friends" by the prominent English composer and pianist Richard Henry Walthew in a 1909 lecture to succinctly capture its distinct character of being played by small ensembles in private, intimate settings. When this is contextualized with Karnabal, Ocampo warmly reminds his "good friend," Don Tiking, to once again indulge in the blessings of music, where the evocative and moving intonations of humanity's soul reside. *(Adrian Maranan)*

Hernando R. Ocampo (1911 - 1978)

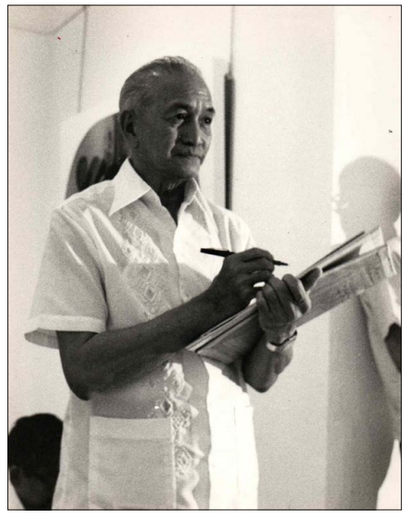
Karnabal
signed and dated 1971 (lower left)
handwritten dedication,
'*To Tiking, art patron but above all a good friend. Nanding, March 15, 1971*' *(verso)*
oil on canvas
32" x 24" (81 cm x 61 cm)

P 6,000,000

PROVENANCE
A gift from the artist to Don Vicente "Tiking" H. Lopez, Jr.

LITERATURE
Literature: Tiongson, Nicanor G., ed. *Artista ng Bayan 1991*. Cultural Center of the Philippines. Manila. 1991. Listed on page 37 as "338. Karnabal" under H.R. Ocampo's List of Paintings (Partial)".

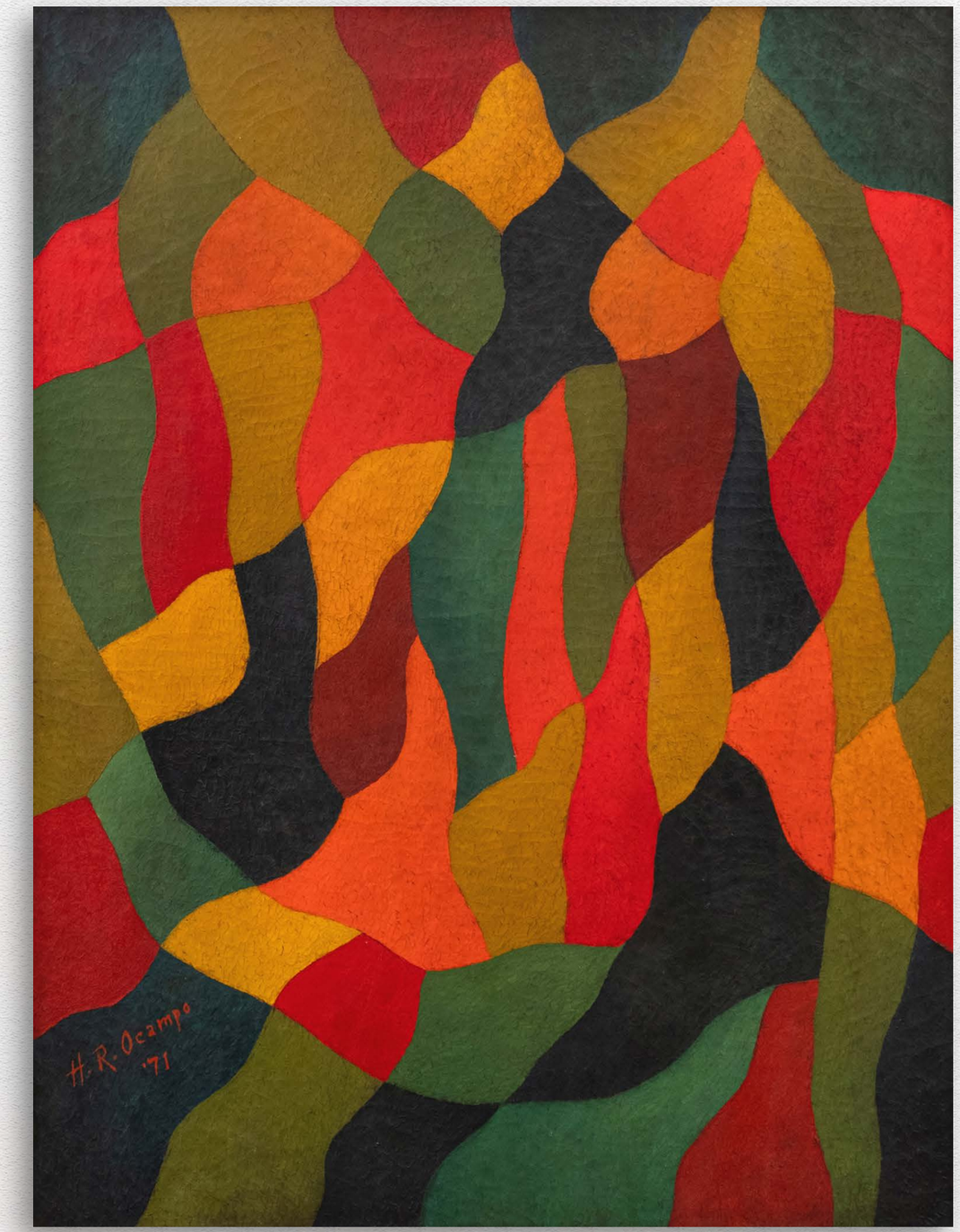
Hufana, Alejandrino G., ed. *Pamana 13 June 1974: A Cultural Quarterly Published by the Cultural Center of the Philippines.* Manila: Cultural Center of the Philippines, 1974. Listed on page 20 as "333. Karnabal (oil, 32" x24", 1971) owned by Vicente Lopez, Jr."under the artist's list of paintings.



ABOVE: Hernando R. Ocampo. © Leon Gallery Archives

Carnival of Melodic Colors

From an Alpha Neo-Realist to a Musical Hacendero



63

Angelito Antonio (b. 1939)

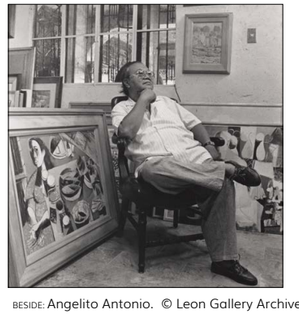
Taga-Baryo
signed and dated 1982 (lower right)
oil on canvas
36" x 72" (91 cm x 183 cm)

P 1,400,000

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

Angelito Antonio's masterpieces always manifest his deep love for his home country. The native folks, in their everyday lives and activities, like cockfighting aficionados, vendors, fishermen, and market and *barrio scenes*, always adorned his canvases. Throughout his career, he developed his own style of cubism with the fragmentation of forms and a palette of strong primary or muted tertiary colors, which would become a distinction of his works from those of other artists.

Antonio's Taga-baryo, just like any of his work, is inherently Filipino. An ordinary *barrio scene* with five people doing varied but connected activities is shown in this image: harvesting chicken eggs from the coop and men immersed in a discussion about cockfighting. This 1982 work bears his signature artistic style and vibrant colors, shadowed by blacks to create depth. He also used this palette to outline his figures and separate them from each other. Antonio's careful and clever utilization of lines and colors demonstrates his mastery of his craft, cementing his respectable position in Philippine modernism. *(Jessica Magno)*



BESIDE: Angelito Antonio. © Leon Gallery Archives

A Trifecta of Modernist Virtuoso *Ocampo, Legaspi, and Joya*

"So far, the only activities for which the Saturday Group is known, aside from its group exhibitions, are its nude sketching sessions, its promotion of "interaction" painting, and its tentative program of assisting young struggling artists with funds from the sale of its "interaction" paintings."

—ANGEL G. DE JESUS, "THE SATURDAY GROUP," BUSINESS DAY, DECEMBER 17, 1976

In July 1968, a band of artists who regularly met at the storied Taza de Oro Restaurant along scenic Roxas Boulevard in Ermita, Manila, founded the now iconic Saturday Group of Artists. For more than five decades, it has continued to be the Philippines' premier group of artists. "In 1968, after retiring as senior vice president of Philprom, Inc., Nanding made it a habit of taking lunch at the Taza de Oro Restaurant," writes Angel G. de Jesus in his *Vignettes* column on *Business Day* (August 4, 1977). "Alfredo (Ding) Roces and lawyer Antonio Quintos also used to go there at the same time, and they invited him to join them at their table. Other artists and writers joined them in their discussions on art and writing, and thus the Saturday Group was born."

If there's one overarching reason why they still hold that distinction, it is that nine National Artists for the Visual Arts came from the storied group: Botong Francisco, Hernando Ocampo, Cesar Legaspi, Vicente Manansala, Arturo Luz, Jose Joya, Ang Kiukok, Federico Aguilar Alcuaz, and Benedicto Cabrera.

Critic Leonidas V. Benesa describes in his article "The Saturday Group: Venus Observed," published in the *AAP Liham,* the group's typical bonding/creative sessions. "The sessions themselves take place in an art gallery or in the privacy of a home after meeting at the Ermita coffee shop for small talk, business talk, and, of course, coffee or tea together with the sweet-toothed trimmings as the Taza is famous for its pies and cakes. The gallery or residence usually provides a heavy *merienda* for the Group after the sketching sessions, and it is not unusual that the artists leave behind one of their best works in payment for the service."

Third location of Taza de Oro, Isaac Peral, 1948.

Benesa adds: "The Group was already existing before 1972 the year martial law was declared. But it was only during the last three years that it became intensely active. Aside from its nude painting sessions, members of the Group would be painting works together in the spirit of interaction. This was how they used to raise money for their financial needs as a group, aside from personal contributions to the kitty."

The Saturday Group is noted for introducing the concept of "interaction" painting to the local art scene. In particular, one of its members, the eminent art critic and painter Alfredo Roces, is credited with introducing the concept of on-the-spot collective painting in 1969.

ABOVE: The Saturday Group pictured in March 1976, with H.R. Ocampo signing the manifesto signifying the group's intention to donate their eyes to the Eye Research Foundation. Standing, from left, are: Alfredo Roces, Ma. Cristina Puyat, Muchie Dampierre, Dr. Alex de Leon, Cesar Legaspi, and Justin Nuyda. Seated, from left, are: Juvenal Sanso, Betsy Westendorp, H.R. Ocampo, and Dr. Salvador Salceda of the foundation. © Bulletin Today, March 23, 1976; Purita Kalaw-Ledesma Foundation

ABOVE: Members of the Saturday Group and Dimasalang Painters in Bacolod in October 1974. From left are: Solomon Saprid, H. R. Ocampo, Jun Gonzales, Jose Joya, Sofronio Y. Mendoza, Romulo Galicano, Rodolfo Samonte, and Alfredo Roces. Standing at back with eyeglasses is Justin Nuyda. © Manila Bulletin, October 16, 1974; Purita Kalaw-Ledesma Foundation © Bulletin Today, March 23, 1976; Purita Kalaw-Ledesma Foundation

Roces said in a 1974 interview that their interaction sessions work like a jazz group. "In a jazz group, members play a different instrument each, yet contribute to the harmony of the whole picture."

This 1976 interaction painting features three titans of Philippine art and future National Artists: Ocampo, Legaspi, and Joya. Ocampo first lays out the fluidity of his organic forms that characterize his Visual Melody Period, which was in full force at this time of his career. Legaspi then posits his trademark bold, "rocky" forms that evoke solidity and penetrating gestures that cut across the surface of the canvas. The earthy color palette dominated by saffron yellows is decisively the contribution of Joya, whose application of color comes off as raw and muted compared to Ocampo's high-powered vibrancy and relative refinement. Nevertheless, both were master colorists in their own right. Joya's earthy colors bestow balance to Ocampo's gracefulness and Legaspi's forcefulness, a stark contrast to their actual personalities.

Ocampo and Legaspi had long been friends. They were the original neo-realists and two-thirds of the Philippine Art Gallery's "Big Three" together with Manansala. During the post-war period, Ocampo would invite Legaspi to his office at the Kalaw Arcade, where they would discuss the pros and cons of the former's recent paintings. Eventually, Legaspi would also take note of Ocampo's erudite opinions and comments on his works. Ocampo, who is self-confessed about his lack of forte in drawing, looked up to Legaspi's deeply rooted expertise in drawing that he acquired from his college training at the UP School of Fine Arts.

"A rapport developed between them: Legaspi was diffident and modest, while Ocampo was self-confident and voluble. From then on, Legaspi would not exhibit his paintings without first showing them to Ocampo. Thus began a deep life-long friendship," writes Purita Kalaw-Ledesma in her PAG monograph The Biggest Little Room. Ocampo and Legaspi's friendship would continue until before the former's passing when they and Manansala formed "The First Friday Group" in 1977.

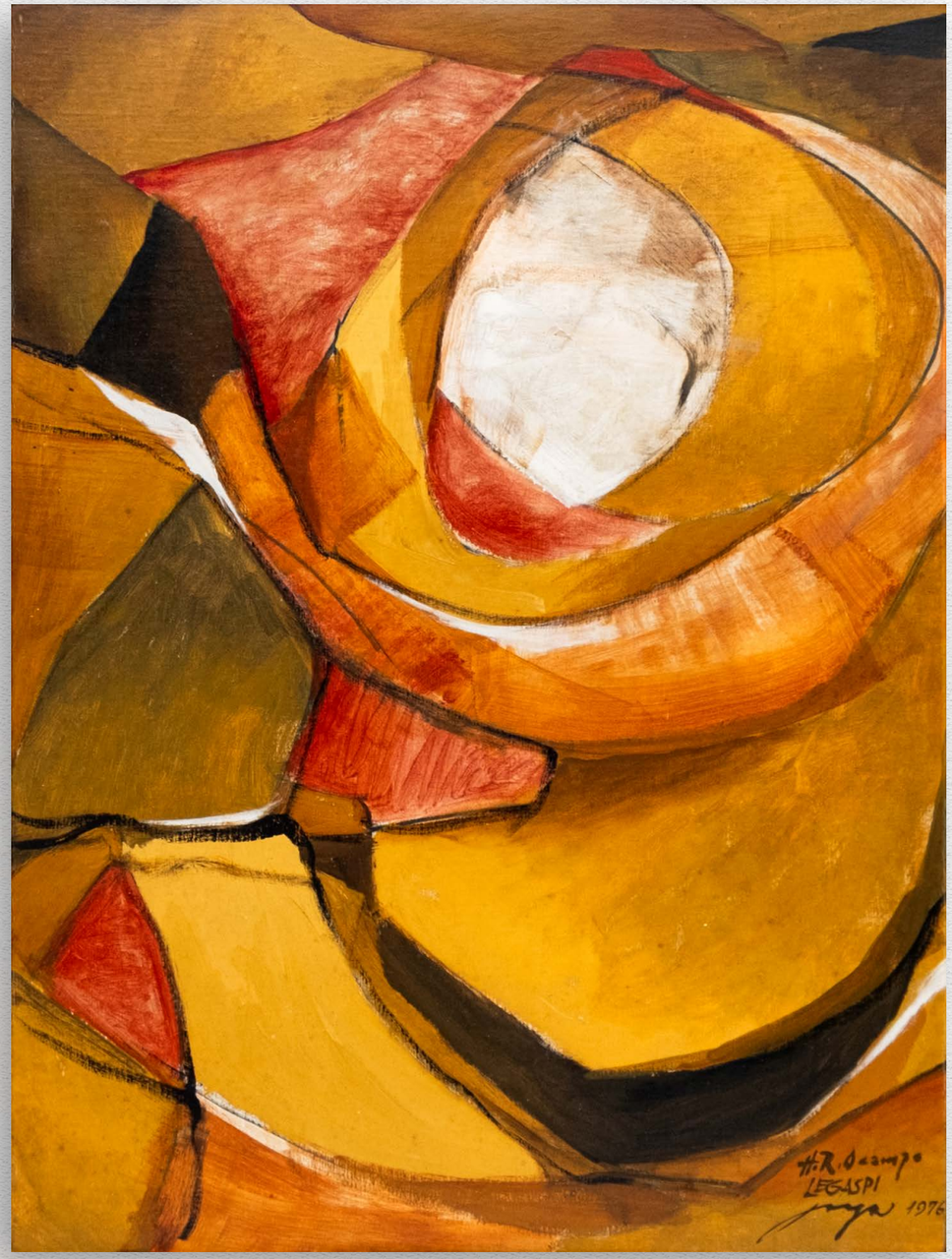
Ocampo and Legaspi both admired their junior, Joya. In a July 1984 interview with Cid Reyes, Legaspi said that "Lee Aguinaldo [and] Joya, in particular" were the younger artists whose works he was fond of. Joya around this time was serving as the Dean of the UP School of Fine Arts. Writes the catalog for the 1976 exhibition "Seven Plus Seven" held at Sining Kamalig: "For an artist, Joya maintains an unregimented but well-ordered lifestyle. He teaches and executes administrative duties as dean of the University of the Philippines' College of Fine Arts and Artist-in-Residence. Yet, he still finds time to join the Saturday group sketching sessions every Saturday afternoon, he goes to art exhibits, he participates in civic projects, and adheres to a regular painting schedule. *(Adrian Maranan)*

64

Collaboration of
Hernando R. Ocampo (1911 - 1978)
Cesar Legaspi (1917 - 1994)
José Joya (1931 - 1995)
Interaction
signed and dated 1976 (lower right)
oil on canvas
32" x 24" (81 cm x 61 cm)

P 1,600,000

A Communion of National Artists



Lao Lianben on Human Nature

Serene and Dynamic

To appreciate the works of Lao Lianben is to bask and be comfortable in the silence. Deeply and creatively inspired by Zen Buddhism, the majority of his minimalist masterpieces are influenced by this deeply held fascination of his. From begging bowls to monks, the impregnable image of Buddha and his teachings often find their way into his works.

His 2009 *Enlightenment* captures a central tenet of Buddhism. Named after the tenet mentioned above, enlightenment is a state of being inherent to all. Buddhism believes everyone is capable of realizing such a lofty status, should one be intentional in reaching that awakened state. In this work, Lao's elongated canvas depicts the vague approximation of a human body, a wisp in the wind as the person recognizes their impurities and lets them go.

In the same vein, his 2009 Man of Few Words follows Enlightenment's minimalism. Using a similar rectangular canvas, the vague outline of a man is depicted, almost fading away into nothingness as Lao uses only the barest of paint to paint the man. Above his head is a faint circle, perhaps a halo or something else entirely. As its title suggests, the work says so little, making its viewers scramble to provide their own interpretations as one is wont to do when they face obstinate and prevailing silence.

Lao's works invite its viewers to meditate on its minimalism. *Enlightenment* is intuitive, the purifying effect of meditation evident as one views the person let go of their impurities; on the other hand, *Man of Few Words* portrays Lao's mastery of utilizing the ebb and flow of tension with only little elements. There is a draw within both these works, pulling in viewers who are challenged to be comfortable in the silence long enough to hear whatever it is these works want to tell them.

Viewing Lao's works means utilizing all of one's senses to appreciate it fully. As professor and Lao collector Leovino Ma. Garcia writes for Black Water: *A Monk's Dream*, "Be drawn into a silence that speaks of compassion and joy. Like the empty bowl of a Buddhist monk, his paintings here, in their bare simplicity, offer an inexhaustible feast for thought."

"In Lao's paintings, discreet silence turns eloquent. His paintings speak to you, but only after you approach them in silence," a Lao exhibition catalog writes. "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. Only then, perhaps, can one finally hear the paintings imploring you: 'You must change your life!'" *(Hannah Valiente)*

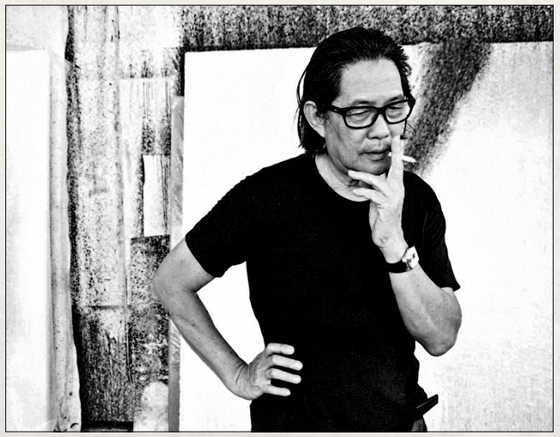
65

Lao Lianben (b. 1948)

a.) Enlightenment
signed (rightside and verso)
dated 2009
acrylic on canvas
87" x 31" (221 cm x 79 cm)

b.) Man of Few Words
signed (rightside and verso)
dated 2009
acrylic on canvas
87" x 31" (221 cm x 79 cm)

P 7,000,000



ABOVE: Lao Lianben. © Shaira Luna

Deconstructing and Reconstructing
Lee Aguinaldo in Transition

Lee Aguinaldo, a pioneering figure in Philippine modernism, was among the first generation of Filipino abstractionists, renowned for his mastery in oil and acrylic works characterized by gestural and linear compositions. Born into an influential family with ties to Emilio Aguinaldo, the first president of the Philippines, Lee's upbringing was marked by privilege, but his passion for art set him apart. Self-taught yet immensely talented, Aguinaldo earned a revered place among Manila's elite and in both national and international art circles from the 1950s to the 1970s.

Aguinaldo's connections with prominent figures like Arturo Luz, Roberto Chabet, and Fernando Zobel—his friend and mentor—further enriched his artistic journey. Even from a young age, Lee displayed a deep passion for art, which was evident in his early participation in the annual exhibit at the Philippine Art Gallery (PAG). His involvement in the first non-objective group art exhibit, alongside luminaries like Zobel, Vicente Manansala, H.R. Ocampo, and others, cemented his place in the avant-garde movement. Over the years, PAG would host several of his exhibitions, showcasing his evolution as an artist.

One of Aguinaldo's most iconic contributions to the art world is his "Linear Series," a collection that defied conventional Filipino perceptions of beauty through its distinct color sensibilities and minimalist approach. These works, characterized by planes of solid colors and simple geometric forms, were painted on tough marine plywood—a departure from the more traditional canvas or lawanit. The "Linear Series" gained international recognition when it was exhibited at the 1971 São Paulo Art Biennale in Brazil. Decades later, in September of last year, a diptych from this series, "Linear 98" and "Linear 99," was sold at Leon Gallery's major auction for a record-breaking PhP42 million. The auction catalogue praised the pieces for their "powerful chromatic contrasts and genius geometric articulation."

Aguinaldo's artistic evolution didn't stop with the "Linear Series." He later entered what is known as his "Galumph phase," inspired by Robert Motherwell's vibrant mixed-media collages. Drawing influence from Jasper Johns and Robert Rauschenberg, Aguinaldo began incorporating lines, symbols, and numbers into his works, experimenting with techniques like frottage—where he would transfer photocopied magazine images onto art paper using butane and then enhance them with pencil or ballpen to create a hand-drawn effect.

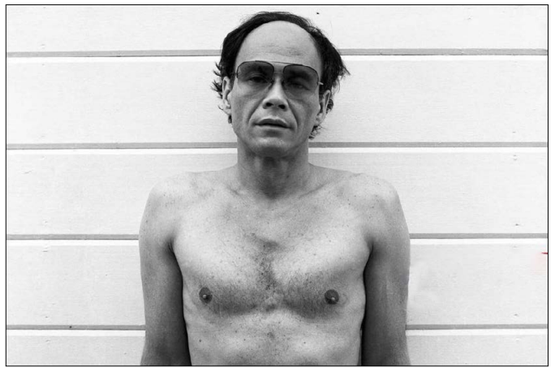
This piece titled The Metaphysics Building (Stage III) serves as a transitional piece between Aguinaldo's earlier "Linear Series" and his later, more figurative works. It captures the essence of his artistic journey—a blend of abstraction and a move towards more complex, layered compositions that challenge traditional notions of form and meaning. *(Jed Daya)*

66

Lee Aguinaldo (1933 - 2007)
The Metaphysics Building (Stage III)
signed and dated 1983 (verso)
transfer with pencil, ink and acrylic on paper mounted on plywood
20 3/4" x 24 1/4" (53 cm x 62 cm)

P 1,000,000

PROVENANCE
Private collection



ABOVE: Lee Aguinaldo . © Tatler Asia

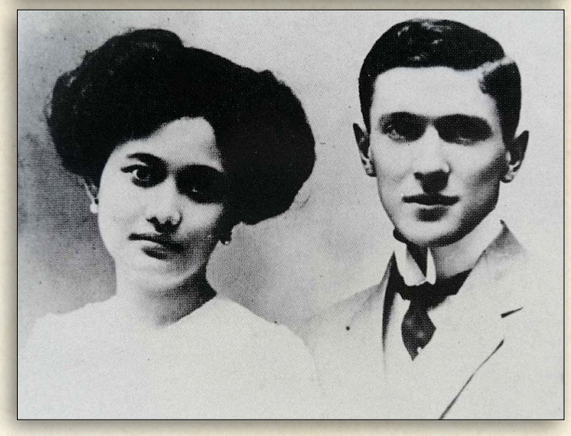
The Sweet Successions of The Ossorio Family

by TATS REJANTE MANAHAN

When Don Miguel Ossorio first established Victorias Milling Corporation in 1919, he set the bar high not just for running a highly successful business but also for a kind of management which was referred to as patriarchal, as he took care of his employees from birth to death. The company had in its compound its own hospital, free housing, including all the amenities, a school for the employees' children and a chapel that became world renowned commissioned by Don Miguel, and overseen by one of his sons, Frederic. It was a labor of love, to lift the spirits of the employees after the devastation of one of two sugar mills during World War II. St. Joseph the Worker Chapel, with its famous mural "The Last Judgement" (popularly known as "The Angry Christ"), painted by another son, Alfonso, is now marked as an Important Cultural Property.

Don Miguel's magnanimous style of leading was assimilated by his sons, two of whom succeeded him, Luis: who assumed management in 1931, and in 1934, Don Miguel's third son, Jose Maria Ossorio took over. The painting in this auction was commissioned by Jose to Fernando Amorsolo as a gift to his daughter, Claire.

When World War II broke out in 1941, Don Miguel and his wife, Doña Paz departed for the United States, leaving Luis, Miguel Jr. and Jose to manage the 2 sugar centrals. But in 1942 Jose and his family and other nationals who had aligned themselves with the US were forced to surrender to the Japanese army and are temporarily detained in Bacolod. Later they are shipped to Manila and are detained further at the University of Santo Tomas. On Feb.3, 1945 Jose and his family and all those detained at UST are released. Jose his brother Luis and their families reunited and departed for the United States aboard an American troop transport ship. Their departure, however, did not end the legacy left behind by the Ossorios. With the end of the war, VMC rose from the ruins. Bacolod was liberated on May 9 1945, with American and Filipino guerilla forces securing the 2 mills from looters. The sugar central was compensated for damage for P 1,957,595.91...a handsome sum for that time. VMC flourished under the management personnel mentored by Don Miguel and his sons, producing 2 million piculs of raw sugar and 1,745,00 100-pound bags of refined sugar. In 1949, plans for the Chapel of St. Joseph the Worker, under the leadership of the fifth son, Frederic Ossorio, were drawn up and completed in 1950 by a selection of artists like the



ABOVE: Don Jesus Ossorio at newly installed central control panels at VMC. BELLOW: Mr. and Mrs. Miguel J. Osprio (me Paz Yangco), 1920s OPPOSITE PAGE: Don Miguel J. Ossorio with the family of Mr. and Mrs. Jose M. Ossorio, present chairman of the VMC board © https://apinoyinkorea.blogspot.com/

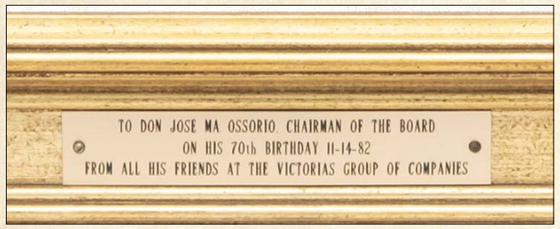
Baroness Adeleide de Bethune, a Belgian ecclesiastical artist, Don Miguel's son, Alfonso who painted the mural, Architect Antonin Raymon, a partner of Frank Lloyd Wright designed the modern chapel, alongside local artists and artisans who conceptualized the religious statuary and paintings with Filipino faces, making the chapel unique and distinct from the Spanish/ Mexican silhouettes familiar to most Filipinos.

By 1965, Don Miguel and his sons swung back into action occupying once more positions of leadership with Don Miguel elected as Chairman emeritus and his sons occupying board seats, and Don Jose as chairman of the board. The Ossorios involved themselves in the sugar mill until the passing of the last son, Luis in 1989.

Fernando Amorsolo (1892 - 1972)
Bathers
signed and dated 1958 (lower right)
oil on canvas
18" x 24" (46 cm x 61 cm)

P 2,400,000

Accompanied by a certificate issued by Mrs. Sylvia Amorsolo-Lazo confirming the authenticity of this lot



The Blissful Gift of Water
Amorsolo's Vision of the Immaculate

The classical bearings of Fernando Amorsolo are exalted in his lavandera and riverside paintings. With the nude as the ideal representation of beauty in the Classical-Romantic art tradition, Amorsolo localizes the dryads and naiads of the West and turns them into the brown-skinned lithe women and children as they bathe, wash, and dress themselves.

His 1958 *Bathers* shows the scene's intimacy – despite the various states of undress of the bathers, there is a sense of modesty about them. Amorsolo's composition locks the scene by depicting only the verdant green grass of the banks and the cool clean water, creating a bubble around the children as though the little part of the river they were playing in is an oasis unreachable by trials and suffering. His encompassing composition did not make the painting as a whole feel claustrophobic; instead, the closeness exudes warmth, a comfort in the tiny space created by the children for them to enjoy all by themselves.

The beauty of Amorsolo's riverside paintings lies in his captivating backgrounds. "Papa took his time going to these places for his on-the-spot sketching and paintings," says his daughter Sylvia Amorsolo-Lazo in the second volume of *Amorsolo: Love & Passion*. "I think his *lavanderas* were mostly painted in the provinces of Laguna and Bulacan, and along the Pasig River."

Amorsolo, like many of the Romantics of his era, exalts the bucolic Filipino countryside. His Bathers focused on an aspect he revered whenever he painted his genre works; through his masterful intertwining of subject and environment, Amorsolo emphasizes the innocence in these children. Their childlike wonder manifests itself in their carefree enjoyment. As the vivid sunlight filters through the leaves and dapples across the river, one can easily imagine their past and enjoy for a brief moment the innocent enjoyment of the days long gone. (*Hannah Valiente)*

Fernando Amorsolo (1892 - 1972)
Fire Tree
signed and dated 1959 (lower right)
oil on canvas
24" x 34" (61 cm x 86 cm)

P 7,000,000

A Blessed Sunday Morning in Town
Filial and Communal Values on Canvas

Light has been a significant element in Fernando Amorsolo's oeuvre, a product of his knowledge and organization of colors. The light from his concocted sun graced his paintings, creating an illusion of warmth that envelops the landscapes and the townsfolk in their daily activities. Amorsolo's palette, characterized by bright and lyrical attributes, is a testament to his skill as a master colorist.

Like any of his works, *Fire Tree* immortalizes the timeless beauty of nature and the serene countryside life. This 1959 piece captures the magnificent facade of the Santa Maria Church in Ilocos Sur, a structure that withstood the test of time. One of the long-standing and impressively made Spanish-era Baroque Churches of the Philippines, the Santa Maria Church was declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site on December 11, 1993.

Amorsolo's vivid hues bring to life a typical Sunday morning scene in Santa Maria. A flock of church-goers can be seen coming out of the admirable edifice; some are walking down the stairs, and some are already down. At the bottom of the stairs, a makeshift market in a nipa hut is bustling with vendors and buyers. The titular fire tree adorned the canvas with its vibrant orange hue, adding a feeling of warmth and liveliness that envelops the entire image in a comforting embrace.

A cultural phenomenon in his lifetime, Amorsolo had a unique ability to turn any blank canvas into a buoyant image of his beloved country and compatriots. His genre and historical paintings not only offer appealing landscapes and portraits but also elicit a great sense of belonging to the Filipino nation. Amorsolo's unparalleled artistry and his profound influence on the Philippine art scene continue to inspire and instill a deep sense of national pride, making his work a source of inspiration for all Filipinos. *(Jessica Magno)*

ABOVE: Santa Maria Church (Santa Maria, Ilocos Sur) staircase.© https://philippine-evolution.com/sta-maria-church-in-ilocos-sur-unesco-heritage-site

Alfonso Ossorio & Jackson Pollock

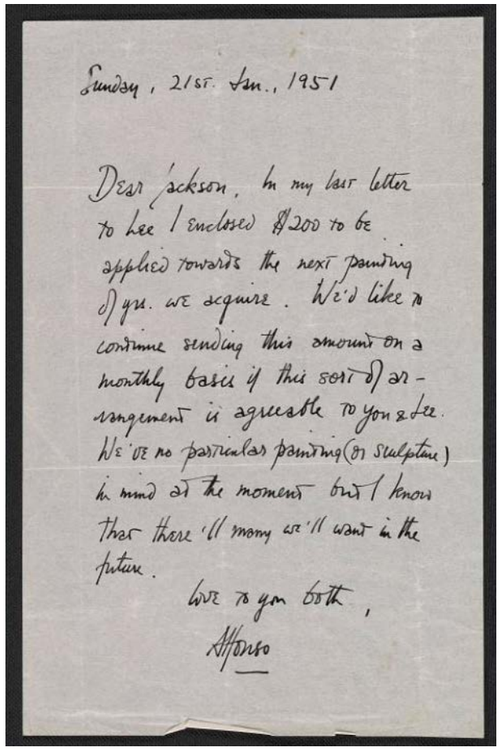
Alfonso Ossorio and Jackson Pollock met in 1949, and since then it has been impossible to understand the artistic trajectory of one of the greatest mid to late twentieth-century artists, not to mention one of the most highly prized in our current market, without considering Ossorio.

Ossorio supported Pollock economically, emotionally, and in various personal ways. He welcomed Pollock frequently to his celebrated house The Creeks, which housed a magnificent art collection and his studio that he had acquired in August 1951 at Pollock's behest. Moreover, Ossorio contributed, at least in part, to the development of Pollock's artistic practice. Of course, the reverse also is true, and we find evidence of Pollock's influence in Ossorio's work. Yet, particularly in the latter years of Pollock's career, Ossorio, the artist, would play a role in Pollock's creative practices, as he turned once more toward some form of figurative representation.

Among the sources that provide evidence for the connections between these two artists is the voluminous biography by Steven Naifeh and Gregory White Smith, Jackson Pollock: An American Saga (Clarkson N. Potter, New York,1989; Pulitzer Prize, 1991). It allows us to appreciate their attachment to each other and confirms some things we already knew; namely, that Alfonso Ossorio not only financed Pollock's artistic and personal projects but also became a close personal friend.

The Pollocks spent periods of time as Ossorio's guests in his home (in the winter of 1950, for example, when Ossorio traveled to the Philippines). We know as well that on November 27, 1950, the eve of opening day at the Betty Parsons Gallery, Ossorio helped Pollock to present canvases onto supporting frames and hang paintings on the walls. At this event, too, he purchased the magnificent painting "Number 1" for $1,500. In addition, Ossorio penned an essay titled "Mon ami, Jackson Pollock" (Jackson Pollock, Betty Parsons Gallery, New York, 1951, reprinted in French, "Mon ami Jackson Pollock," exhibit catalogue, Studio Paul Facchetti, Paris, March 7 – 31, 1952); he arranged for Pollock to exhibit in Paris in 1952; he even offered him a $200 monthly stipend to help him meet his needs. (A reproduction of the letter appears here; the original resides in the Smithsonian Institution.)

Alfonso Ossorio Ossorio at his estate in East Hampton. Date unknown
© https://www.villagepreservation.org/2023/08/30/alfonso-ossorio/



Sunday, 21st. Jan., 1951

Dear Jackson, In my last letter to Lee I enclosed $200 to be applied towards the next painting of yrs. we acquire. We'd like to continue sending this amount on a monthly basis if this sort of arrangement is agreeable to you & Lee. We've no particular painting (or sculpture) in mind at the moment but I know that there'll many we'll want in the future.

Love to you both,

Alfonso

Letter of Ossorio where he offers to Jackson Pollock $200 monthly

Jackson Pollock died as a result of an automobile accident at 10:15 p.m. on August 11, 1956. He had been driving with two female friends en route to the home of his dear friend and patron Alfonso Ossorio.

Several recent events have finally accorded Alfonso Ossorio, an artist with deep Filipino roots, his rightful place among the world's giants of artistic expressionism. His work was featured in the exhibit "Angels, Demons, and Savages. Pollock, Ossorio, Dubuffet" (Phillips Collection, Washington, D.C., February 9 – May 12, 2013), and it appeared alongside Pollock's work in the Whitney Museum of New York ("America is hard to see," inaugural exhibit of the new Whitney Museum of American Art, May 1 – September 27, 2015).In 2016, Leon Gallery (Makati City, Philippines) celebrated the one-hundredth anniversary of Ossorio's birth with two exhibits devoted to his paintings.

Jackson Pollock's car after the car crash when he was driving to Ossorio's house.

Alfonso Ossorio, born in Manila on August 2, 1916, has earned a unique and fundamental place in the history of art.

The Creeks: Ossorio's magnificent estate in East Hampton

Number 1, 1950 (Lavender Mist); 1950: oil, enamel, and aluminum on canvas: overall: 87 x 118 in., National Gallery of Art, Washington.Bought by Alfonso Ossorio in 1950 in $1,500 paid in installments and sold by Ossorio to the National Gallery for around $2,000,000 in 1976. It was the only work in the exhibit that Pollock got to sell. 32 works were presented at the show.

Ossorio's Abstract Expressionist Era

Influenced by His Friend, Pollock

Alfonso Ossorio was born into affluence and prosperity. Following in his father's footsteps, Ossorio was sent to various prestigious English boarding schools during his childhood, laying the foundation for his cosmopolitan education. Eventually, he journeyed to the United States, where his father had established permanent residence. Ossorio's formal education continued at Portsmouth Priory, a Benedictine abbey located in Rhode Island, where he distinguished himself academically. His graduation even graced the society pages, highlighted by a lunch hosted by the illustrious Mr. and Mrs. W.H. Vanderbilt aboard their yacht—a testament to the high social circles he moved in.

In 1934, Ossorio entered Harvard University, where he immersed himself in the study of fine arts, graduating in 1938. His time at Harvard exposed him to various artistic philosophies and techniques, shaping his early artistic inclinations. A few years later, Ossorio relocated to a ranch in the vast and rugged landscape of New Mexico. It was here, in the serene yet stark desert environment, that he encountered Betty Parsons, a gallerist whose own life had been marked by significant change—she had lost her family fortune and had even pawned her engagement ring to support her burgeoning art career.

ABOVE: Alfonso Ossorio (front left), Ted Dragon (far left), Jackson Pollock (front right), Joseph Glasco (far right) and friends at Ossorio's East Hampton estate at The Creeks in the summer of 1952. © Pollock-Krasner House and Study Center

Parsons, recognizing Ossorio's potential, invited him to join her roster of emerging artists. This group would come to include some of the most significant figures of the Abstract Expressionist movement, such as Mark Rothko, Robert Rauschenberg, and the then-unknown Jackson Pollock. Ossorio and Pollock forged a deep friendship and artistic alliance, with Pollock's influence becoming evident in Ossorio's work.

In the late 1950s, Alfonso Ossorio created five large panels using oil and mixed media, each one a deeply personal gift to individuals who were exceptionally close to him. This period was pivotal in Ossorio's artistic journey, as he had solidified friendships with some of the most influential artists of the time, including Jackson Pollock, Hans Hofmann, Willem de Kooning, Clyfford Still, Mark Rothko, David Smith, and the French artist Jean Dubuffet. These relationships significantly impacted Ossorio's work, infusing it with the raw energy and experimental spirit of Abstract Expressionism.

This particular piece echoes both the style and philosophy of this significant phase in Ossorio's career and shares stylistic similarities with his other large-scale works. The dynamic, almost chaotic interplay of black, white, and hints of color in this work echoes the influence of Pollock's action painting, yet it also bears Ossorio's unique signature of combining abstraction with deeply personal, symbolic content. This artwork not only reflects Ossorio's close connections within the art world but also stands as a testament to his own innovative contributions to mid-20th-century art.

69 PROPERTY FROM THE OSSORIO FAMILY COLLECTION

Alfonso Ossorio (1916 - 1990)
Untitled
signed and dated 9.II.57 (verso)
oil, enamel, and plaster on masonite
96″ x 24″ (244 cm x 61 cm)

P 8,000,000

70

Ramon Orlina (b. 1944)

Ning-Ning 2M - 16
signed and dated 2001
carved asahi glass
H: 9" (24 cm)
L: 6 1/2" (16 cm)
W: 9 3/4" (25 cm)

P 500,000

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

Ramon Orlina's depiction of the female body veers away from the sensual and into the nourishing. As is with this 2001 untitled sculpture, Orlina fashions the glass into the shape of a breast, and yet it holds no erotica in its portrayal.

"A master of the curvilinear form, Orlina can articulate the female form by the mere virtue of a series of sleek undulating lines, with all the eroticism sublimated within the energy and fluidity of the line." Cid Reyes writes in a 2016 Inquirer article entitled *Orlina draws optimal light from optical glass.*

Indeed, Orlina's sculpture exalts not just the female body but the sustenance they bring to the child they bore into the world. Motherhood and familial bonds are favored subjects for Orlina and with this sculpture, it is evident just how high his respect is for the homemakers, putting into the spotlight the maternal care and intimacy that forms a solid foundation for the fruitful family life that the Filipino society extols.

As art critic Eric Torres writes: "The female breast Orlina exhorts is no mere object of voyeuristic prurience. [It is] a hymn to every woman generously endowed by nature." *(Hannah Valiente)*

71 PROPERTY FROM THE JESUS AND MARITESS PINEDA COLLECTION

Tam Austria (b. 1943)

Mother and Child
signed and dated 1976 (lower left)
oil on canvas
24" x 36" (61 cm x 91 cm)

P 180,000

Like many artists that came before him, Tam Austria was enamored with the provincial Philippines. By the time he had entered the art scene bearing the beauty of his hometown Tanay as a veritable muse, many of his contemporaries were taken with foreign and modern painting styles. When asked about his continued persistence in painting this kind of genre ("Is your art pertinent for the times?") was a simple "I don't know. It seems pertinent for me."

The lot in hand still features Austria's penchant for the provincial, however, it included the influence of Cubism in his works. The severity of the Cubist method of shattering an image down to its basic planer shapes conflicts with Austria's inherent sense of romanticism – instead, he still retained the romantic image of a woman with her children with her basketful of wares in front of her. However, the Cubist influence revealed itself in the prismatic quality of the colors he used. Shard edges and sudden color changes make do with the Cubistic influence Austria wanted his works to have. In that way, he bridged the vast difference between cubism and romanticism, dousing the comfortable image of the provincial Philippines with a shock of modernism that appealed to a huge crowd. *(Hannah Valiente)*

A Precious Anita from the Magnificent Jesus and Maritess Pineda Collection

The Creative Emancipation of Anita Magsaysay-Ho

ABOVE: Jesus "Susing" and Maritess Pineda.
© https://www.philstar.com/

In their more than five decades of marriage, the lovely couple Jesus and Maritess Pineda continue to be beacons of light and pillars of Philippine art and culture. Jesus is the Dean of the Consular Corps of the Philippines and serves as Honorary Consul of Fiji.

Maritess is a co-founder of ArteFino, succinctly describing itself as "a movement that celebrates Filipino creativity and craftsmanship, and aims to assist, support, and promote the Filipino artisanal community by providing a platform for artisans to sell their products. She also served as president of the Friends of Manansala Foundation, Inc., tasked to preserve and honor the legacy of the Cubist master.

Both are enthusiastic blue-blood collectors and advocates of culture and heritage. (Adrian Maranan)

Anita Magsaysay-Ho (May 25, 1914 - May 5, 2012) was—and is—a pre-eminent figure in the world of Filipino modern art. She was also the only female member of the Thirteen Moderns, a group of Filipino avant-garde artists.

She was born in 1914 in Manila. Her father Ambrosio Magsaysay, an engineer, was Philippine President Ramon Magsaysay's uncle.

Anita was painting from the age of nine. She studied at the School of Fine Arts of the University of the Philippines, under the tutelage of Filipino master painters Fabian de la Rosa, and his nephews Fernando and Pablo Amorsolo, as well as Ireneo Miranda and Vicente Rivera y Mir. She studied at Manila's School of Design, under Victorio Edades and Enrique Ruiz.

She then left in the 1930s to go to the United States, where she studied at the New York Students' League under Kenneth Hayes Miller, Will Barnet and Robert Ward Johnson.

She also studied at Cranbrook Academy of Art in Michigan, under Zoltan Sepeshy. She moved to New York City, where she gave painting and drawing lessons. There, she met Robert Ho from Hong Kong. They married and moved to China, where Ho's shipping company, Magsaysay Inc., began. The couple eventually had five children and they moved frequently because of Ho's work. They lived in Brazil, Canada, Hong Kong and Japan. Wherever she lived, Anita had a studio where she could paint.

Although she was eventually identified as one of the Thirteen Moderns, in the early 1940s, the influence of her teacher Fernando Amorsolo was still clearly visible, both in terms of subject and technique. Later, her work evolved toward modernism.

In the work at hand, Anita masterfully captures the roughness and vigor associated with the famed sabungero, whose pastime was, and remains to be, a ubiquitous sight in virtually every corner of the country. It is an Amorsolo subject, but treated so differently. The brushstrokes are strong, the colors are deftly applied. The technique is brute, but the charm of the *sabungero* and the implied rural scene comes across.

Critic E. Aguilar Cruz included her among the Neo-Realists, which later evolved into the Philippine Art Gallery group, which also numbered other women artists, Lyd Arguilla and Nena Saguil.

Through the 1950s, she consistently won top awards from the Art Association of the Philippines. Her compositions emphasized movement and bustling interaction by means of bold, vigorous brushstrokes, and strong tonal contrasts of light and dark, particularly when she was using egg tempera. Magsaysay-Ho's most famous works are those identified with the everyday lives of Filipino women, who characteristically wore scarves, had slanted eyes, in angular poses.

In her old age, she could not work with oils anymore, the fumes overcame her. She continued to paint until her 2009 stroke. She died three years later, just three weeks before her 98th birthday.

Her paintings continue to command the highest prices for works by a Filipino artist. This painting is important because it shows Anita Magsaysay's style in transition. (*From the Ramon Villegas Archives)*

72 PROPERTY FROM THE JESUS AND MARITESS PINEDA COLLECTION

Anita Magsaysay-Ho (1914 - 2012)

Sabungero
signed (lower left)
ca. 1945 - 1946
oil on board
15 1/4" x 11" (39 cm x 28 cm)

P 7,000,000

LITERATURE
Roces, Alfredo. *Anita Magsaysay-Ho: In Praise of Women (With Annotations on Paintings by Anita Magsaysay-Ho).* Pasig City: The Crucible Workshop, 2005. Full-color illustration and painting description on page 281.

73

Juvenal Sansó (b. 1929)

Curling Honors
signed (lower right)
ca. late 1960's
acrylic on paper
24" x 18 1/2" (62 cm x 47 cm)

P 300,000

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

PROVENANCE
Galerie Bleue

Despite Amorsolo being his idol, Juvenal Sansó diverged from the former's sunlit world and instead led his viewers into a contrasting, darker realm. Contrary to Amorsolo's use of light to demonstrate Filipino life—its calm, pleasant, and picturesque nature—Sansó uses light to turn a landscape into a grotesque image. His works, in the words of Nick Joaquin, "dared proclaim that the Philippine light also has black in it."

Sansó has a penchant for twisting ordinary images and painting them in his own light and perspective, creating a hazy, dream-like image. This late 1960s painting, Curling Honors, manifests the artist's mastery of this style. Despite his use of a light palette of blues and greens, this work gives the audience an illusion of depth and distortion. A painting of a bunch of greens, of plants and bushes, under a blue sky can never look so haunting, right? But Sansó did just that. His use of acrylic paint on paper gave the image a slightly rough texture. This, along with his strokes of thin, feather-like lines in the plants, creates an eerie atmosphere of a different realm.

Juvenal Sansó's art reflects his life experiences. Born in Spain, raised in the Philippines, and later settling in France, his images have a pigment of these influences. His bright childhood in Montalban, surrounded by nature, the dark, traumatic events of the Japanese Occupation, and the picturesque landscapes of France, all contributed to the composition of his images. Regardless of his location or the prevailing art styles, Sansó has, from the words of Alfredo Roces in his monograph, Sansó, "single-mindedly worked at his own craft" and "persisted with his own personalized figurative approach." *(Jessica Magno)*

74

Charlie Co (b. 1960)

Untitled
signed and dated 2002 (lower left)
oil on canvas
47 1/2" x 47" (121 cm x 119 cm)

P 200,000

PROVENANCE
Acquired directly from the artist

The works of Charlie Co are a visual treat of symbolism. Swimming in humor and wit, Co toes sarcasm and pointed criticism in his vibrant surrealist pieces, a staple of the political and socially aware art he had been known for in the early years of his career.

In this 2002 work, Co's Surrealist art style takes center stage as multiple elements meld together to create an interestingly cohesive storyline. This painting focuses on the pig-human hybrid decked in a jester costume. Standing on his two legs, the pig-human has a feathered cloak in a childish pattern wrapped around his shoulders and a tin crown lying on his head. His hands are clasped as though in prayer. The symbolism is striking and obvious in its simplicity.

Other than the pig-human, several other elements further emphasize the absurdity and surrealism of the piece. An angel clad in full armor and a flaming sword wrestles with a dragon-serpent whose tail wraps around a miniature planet. The back of a chair is reimagined to be a theater stage, complete with a red curtain and stage props.

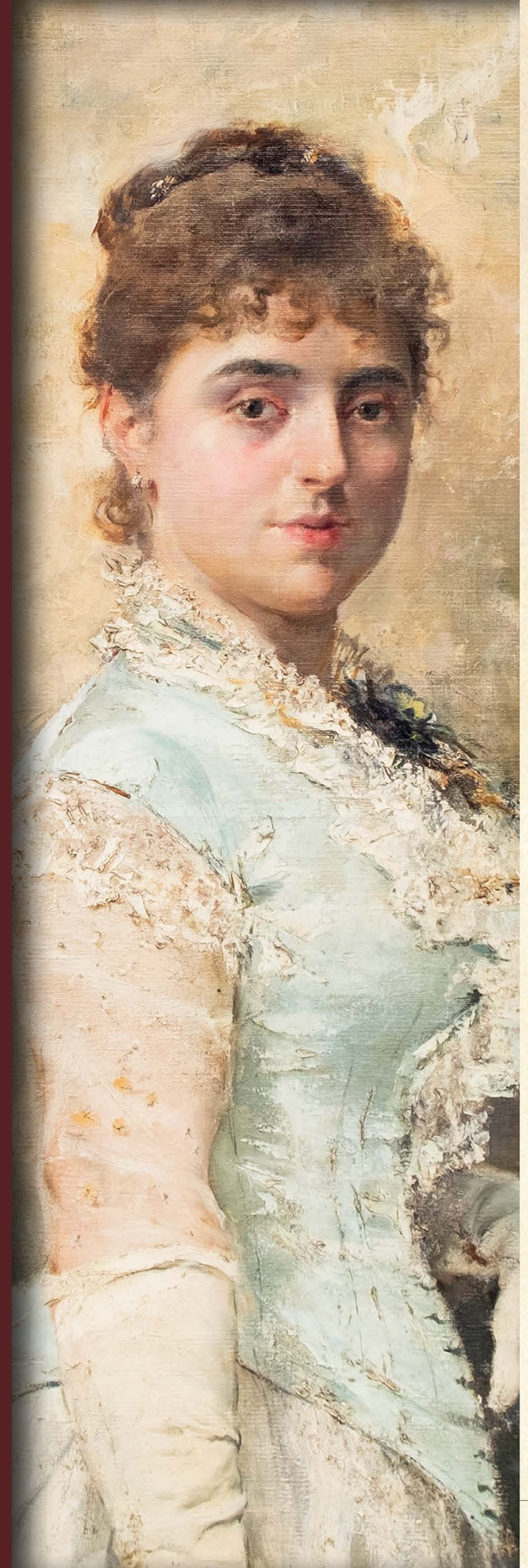
Personal symbolism comes together in the works of Co. A practicing Catholic and a social artist, these often contradicting themes both clash and blend harmoniously within his body of works. He puts up a mirror against the world's lust, avarice, and greed and offers no solution – instead, he depicts them as they are, translated through the lens of his wry and witty style. *(Hannah Valiente)*

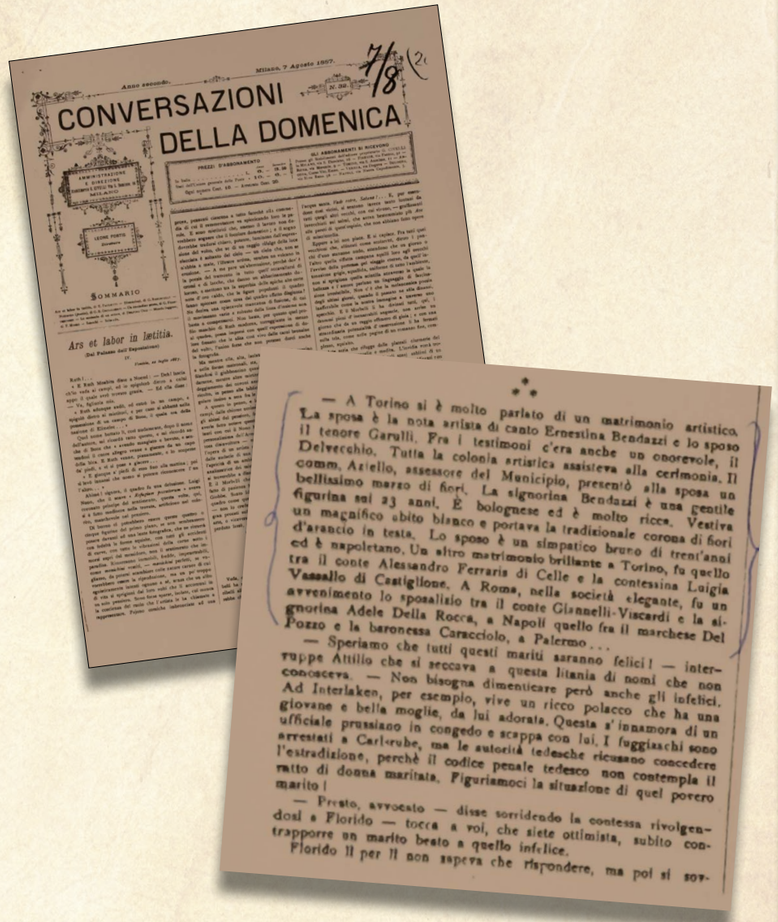
The ‘Spoliarium’ and The Society Girl

Luna Portrait of Adele Della Rocca

It is well known that, as Juan Luna was finishing the “Spoliarium”, his masterpiece now at the National Museum, the rumor spread all over Rome that a new, but very exotic, Master from the Philippines was busy resurrecting the glorious art and culture of ancient Rome. Everybody was queuing at his workshop in via Margutta, and one day, end of 1883, as the painter was applying his last touches, he became aware of a loud disturbance behind him: King Umberto I and his wife, Queen Marguerita were there, accompanied by a group of courtiers, ready to admire the masterpiece which everybody was talking about. According to an article published by “The Sun”, an American newspaper, 9 years later, an American citizen who had been Luna’s roommate in Rome and who happened to be in this workshop that day, reported the scene: the painter apologizing for not being able to shake the royal hand offered to him, his own being covered with paint, and the enthusiasm of the royal couple discovering the painting.

One of the main courtiers of King Umberto I happened to be the General Enrico della Rocca, a senior aide-de-camp of the king since 1882, and descended from a marquis himself. It is therefore very likely that he was accompanying his master on that occasion. What better gift for his nieces Adele and Irene della Rocca, who were at a marriageable age and about to be launched in Society, than celebrating their beauty through the talent of that painter who had been the talk in town? Luna needed money more than ever, as the monthly allowance from his family was usually exhausted before the end of each month, and also because he had not been able to accept any work during the whole year, busy as he was with the monumental task of his Spoliarium. It has been reported that King Umberto, praising Luna’s work, proposed to buy it at a high price but Luna could not accept, because the Spoliarium was due to compete for a prize in Madrid, scheduled in July.




CONVERSAZIONI DELLA DOMENICA

Sommario

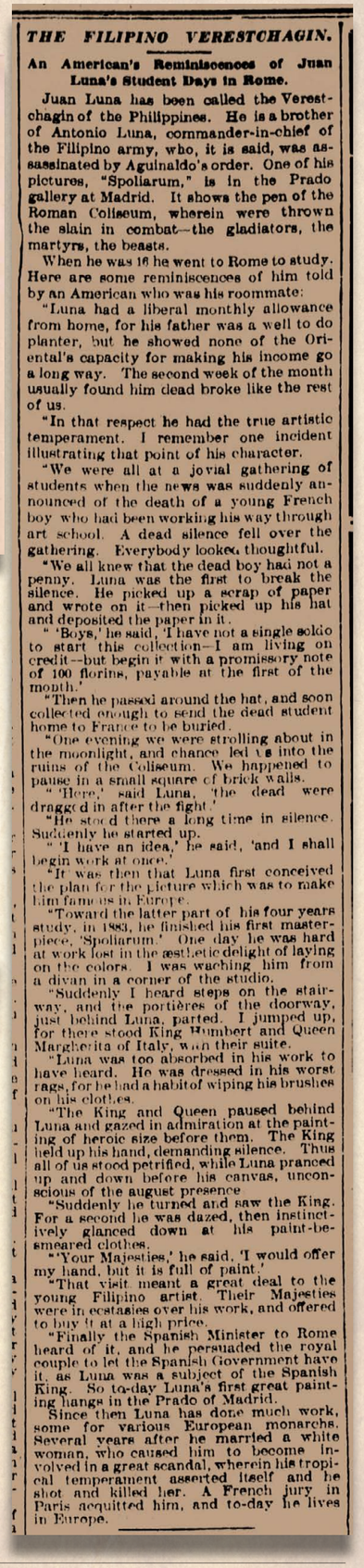
Ars et labor in letitia.

— A Torino si è molto parlato di un matrimonio artistico. La sposa è la nota artista di canto Ernestina Bendazzi e lo sposo il tenore Garulli. Fra i testimoni c'era anche un onorevole, il Delvecchio. Tutta la colonia artistica assisteva alla cerimonia. Il comm. Aziello, assessore del Municipio, presentò alla sposa un bellissimo mazzo di fiori. La signorina Bendazzi è una gentile figurina sui 23 anni. È bolognese ed è molto ricca. Vestiva un magnifico abito bianco e portava la tradizionale corona di fiori d'arancio in testa. Lo sposo è un simpatico bruno di trent'anni ed è napoletano. Un altro matrimonio brillante a Torino, fu quello tra il conte Alessandro Ferraris di Celle e la contessina Luigia Vassallo di Castiglione. A Roma, nella società elegante, fu un avvenimento lo sposalizio tra il conte Giannelli-Viscardi e la signorina Adele Della Rocca, a Napoli quello fra il marchese Del Pozzo e la baronessa Caracciolo, a Palermo . . .

— Speriamo che tutti questi mariti saranno felici! — interruppe Attilio che si seccava a queste litania di nomi che non conosceva. — Non bisogna dimenticare però anche gli infelici. Ad Interlaken, per esempio, vive un ricco polacco che ha una giovane e bella moglie, da lui adorata. Questa s'innamora di un ufficiale prussiano in congedo e scappa con lui. I fuggiaschi sono arrestati a Carlsruhe, ma le autorità tedesche ricusano concedere l'estradizione, perchè il codice penale tedesco non contempla il ratto di donna maritata. Figuriamoci la situazione di quel povero marito!

— Presto, avvocato — disse sorridendo la contessa rivolgendosi a Florido — tocca a voi, che siete ottimista, subito contrapporre un marito beato a quello infelice.

Florido lì per lì non sapeva che rispondere, ma poi si sov-



THE FILIPINO VERESTCHAGIN.

An American's Reminiscences of Juan Luna's Student Days in Rome.

Juan Luna has been called the Verestchagin of the Philippines. He is a brother of Antonio Luna, commander-in-chief of the Filipino army, who, it is said, was assassinated by Aguinaldo's order. One of his pictures, "Spoliarum," is in the Prado gallery at Madrid. It shows the pen of the Roman Coliseum, wherein were thrown the slain in combat—the gladiators, the martyrs, the beasts.

When he was 16 he went to Rome to study. Here are some reminiscences of him told by an American who was his roommate:

"Luna had a liberal monthly allowance from home, for his father was a well to do planter, but he showed none of the Oriental's capacity for making his income go a long way. The second week of the month usually found him dead broke like the rest of us.

"In that respect he had the true artistic temperament. I remember one incident illustrating that point of his character.

"We were all at a jovial gathering of students when the news was suddenly announced of the death of a young French boy who had been working his way through art school. A dead silence fell over the gathering. Everybody looked thoughtful.

"We all knew that the dead boy had not a penny. Luna was the first to break the silence. He picked up a scrap of paper and wrote on it—then picked up his hat and deposited the paper in it.

" 'Boys,' he said, 'I have not a single soldo to start this collection—I am living on credit—but begin it with a promissory note of 100 florins, payable at the first of the month.'

"Then he passed around the hat, and soon collected enough to send the dead student home to France to be buried.

"One evening we were strolling about in the moonlight, and chance led us into the ruins of the Coliseum. We happened to pause in a small square of brick walls.

" 'Here,' said Luna, 'the dead were dragged in after the fight.'

"He stood there a long time in silence. Suddenly he started up.

" 'I have an idea,' he said, 'and I shall begin work at once.'

"It was then that Luna first conceived the plan for the picture which was to make him famous in Europe.

"Toward the latter part of his four years study, in 1883, he finished his first masterpiece, 'Spoliarum.' One day he was hard at work lost in the æsthetic delight of laying on the colors. I was waching him from a divan in a corner of the studio.

"Suddenly I heard steps on the stairway, and the portières of the doorway, just behind Luna, parted. I jumped up, for there stood King Humbert and Queen Margherita of Italy, with their suite.

"Luna was too absorbed in his work to have heard. He was dressed in his worst rags, for he had a habit of wiping his brushes on his clothes.

"The King and Queen paused behind Luna and gazed in admiration at the painting of heroic size before them. The King held up his hand, demanding silence. Thus all of us stood petrified, while Luna pranced up and down before his canvas, unconscious of the august presence.

"Suddenly he turned and saw the King. For a second he was dazed, then instinctively glanced down at his paint-besmeared clothes.

" 'Your Majesties,' he said, 'I would offer my hand, but it is full of paint.'

"That visit meant a great deal to the young Filipino artist. Their Majesties were in ecstasies over his work, and offered to buy it at a high price.

"Finally the Spanish Minister to Rome heard of it, and he persuaded the royal couple to let the Spanish Government have it, as Luna was a subject of the Spanish King. So to-day Luna's first great painting hangs in the Prado of Madrid.

Since then Luna has done much work, some for various European monarchs. Several years after he married a white woman, who caused him to become involved in a great scandal, wherein his tropical temperament asserted itself and he shot and killed her. A French jury in Paris acquitted him, and to-day he lives in Europe.

TOP: King Umberto I as he arrives with the Queen at the National Gallery in Rome and later viewing the Spanish paintings headed to the Madrid Exposition of 1884. Engraving by Mariano Benlliure, Juan Luna’s close friend. © From the collection of Martin Arnaldo; ABOVE: Society paper Conversazioni della Domenica reports on Adele’s wedding to the Count Gianelli-Viscardi; RIGHT SIDE: A November 1903 article from the American newspaper The Sun recounting Luna’s felicitous encounter with King Humbert and Queen Margherita of Italy in his studio in Rome in 1883;
OPPOSITE PAGE: King Umberto I © https://en.wikipedia.org/

He had already got the silver medal in Madrid in 1881 for the Death of Cleopatra, and now longed for the gold. After rebuffing the king, albeit for good reasons, Luna could hardly reject as well such a prestigious and lucrative commission, emanating from one of the most prominent members of the Italian court.

These historical accounts allow us to determine a date for our portrait with even more precision than the date 1884 next to the signature of Luna. It is known that he left Rome for Madrid in April '84, ready to participate to the fine art competition in which he was to receive indeed the gold medal in July. Therefore, the painting and that of the subject's sister were necessarily executed in the very first months of the year.

An interesting comparison with these portraits is to be made with another work of Luna, representing two young and elegant girls at the balcony of an opera house, which we believe was executed in the same period. We indeed know through the telling of Luna's roommate in The Sun, that Luna was commissioned for "various works" once he was through with the Spoliarium, including "for some European monarchs".

Doing this painting must have been a pleasant moment for Luna, who had been busy since a year depicting the extreme violence of gladiators' life in the Colosseum. For this portrait, recreational as it was, he dropped the dark palette of the Spoliarium for a paler one, powder blue dress, white flowers in order to enhance the virtue of this aristocratic girl in ceremonial attire, somewhat hieratic and official, a maiden in Majesty. But the need for colors takes over in details, like the intervention of red and purple in the white bouquet, and the movement of the beige background, treated in an almost impressionistic manner, a way Luna has often adopted in order to let the light animate his paintings and play behind its characters. Juan Luna, having studied so far in Spanish institutions, had not yet been deeply influenced by the impressionist movement emerging in France, but it is obvious that he had already been confronted by some works, be it for the simple reason that they were scandalizing the whole of Europe. As for the technique, the usual strong impasto scattered here and there, characteristic of our national painter's manner in these years, adds depth and strength to the virginal and evanescent beauty.

75

Juan Luna *y* Novicio (1857 - 1899)
Portrait of Adele della Rocca
signed, dated 1884, and inscribed
"A la S.ta Adele della Rocca" (lower right)
oil on canvas
42" x 22" (107 cm x 56 cm)

P 8,000,000

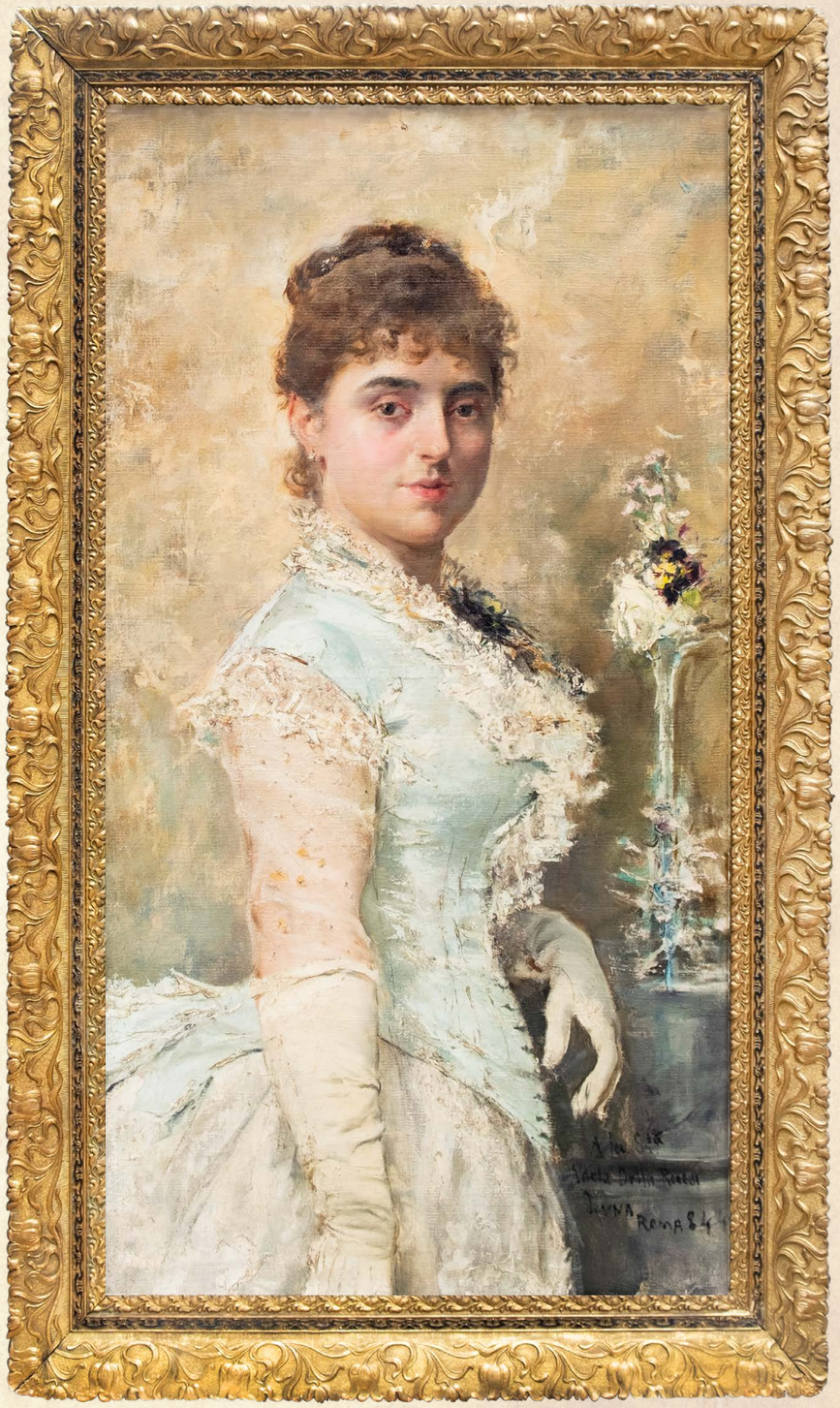
PROVENANCE
Private collection, Rome.
Belonging to Adele della Rocca and her descendants in a direct line

A thorough genealogical research retraced the whereabouts of the painting since it was given to Adele. A society newspaper of the period, "La Conversazione della Domenica" notes that she was married to Count Gianelli-Viscardi in 1887. It was "quite an event," reports the paper. Indeed, the last owner of the painting, who thought Luna was the name of a village in the Lazio province of Rome, only recalled that it had been inherited from his grandmother Antonietta, who happened to be a "pianist of Polish origin". We discovered through genealogical study that the Count and Countess Gianelli-Viscardi had a son, Giulio, and that indeed the young Count married Antonietta Crijenko Descovich, the former owner's pianist grand-mother.

The portrait at hand, as well as that of the sitter's sister Irene, have thus continuously stayed in the same family until this extraordinary discovery.

ABOVE: The Family Tree of Adele della Rocca upto the current owner of the painting. TOP LEFT: Juan Luna, Spoliarium, 1884. © Marco Collado © https://pluralartmag.com/

A Blue-Blooded Beauty
From Juan Luna's Golden Roman Period



76

Federico Aguilar Alcuaz (1932 - 2011)

Untitled
signed and dated 1949 (upper left)
watercolor on paper
17" x 12" (43 cm x 30 cm)

P 120,000

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

By 1949, Federico Aguilar Alcuaz was juggling the difficult roles of both being a student of Law at San Beda University and a painting student at UP School of Fine Arts, a compromise for his father who believed that Alcuaz would have difficulties in finances should he remain as a mere painter. However, his fear was assuaged when Alcuaz, even as a student, earned enough money only through his drawings and paintings.

This abstraction, done in the same year, features the type of distortion Alcuaz would improve in his later years. Toeing the line between abstraction and figuration, he plays around planes and shapes, utilizing deliberate splotches of colors to create a surreal image of harmony and chaos. *(Hannah Valiente)*

77

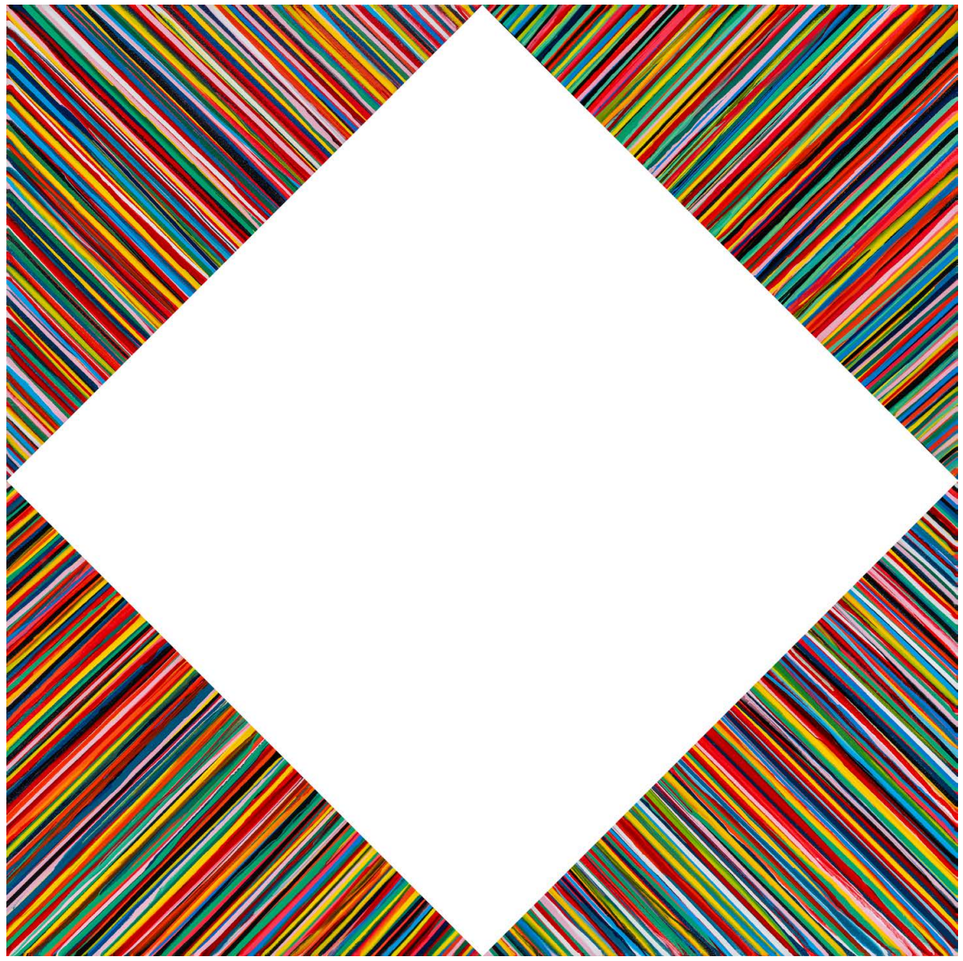
Elmer Borlongan (b. 1967)

Untitled
signed and dated 2020 (lower left)
animist, ink, and watercolor on toned paper
24" x 18" (61 cm x 46 cm)

P 140,000

EXHIBITED
Pintô Art Museum, *Connect with your heart (Sampayan Art Exhibit)*,
Antipolo City, 11 - 26 July 2020

Elmer Borlongan's everyman is almost always stripped down to his barest essentials. Dressed in his simplest clothes and face bare of any emotion, we glimpse the everyman as they are, a fact that Borlongan relentlessly pursues all throughout his career. With this 2020 ink and watercolor work, Borlongan's common man is stripped down only to his pants, figure devoid of colors or elaborate shading as he raises his hands up in mock surrender. Where his usual works veer into the contemporary, Borlongan harnessed the ancient in this work as he depicts a growling dog at the foot of the man with an eclipse happening in the background. Even using only ink and watercolor, Borlongan manages to convey a sense of mysticism in this piece, his vivid expressionism elevating the magic of the work. *(Hannah Valiente)*



78

MM Yu (b. 1976)

Other Than 3, 4, 5, 6
acrylic on canvas
72" x 72" (183 cm x 183 cm)

P 180,000

MM Yu's abstract series is particularly notable for its use of thin, meticulously arranged bands of color. When viewed together, these bands create a vibrant, multi-layered visual field that captivates the eye with its subtle optical effects. Unlike the energetic and spontaneous gestures typical of action painters, Yu approaches abstraction with a methodical and structured sensibility. Her lines are vertically straight, continuous, and nearly autonomous, with minimal overlap, creating a sense of order and precision in her compositions.

The occasional deviations from the rhythmic pattern of these lines introduce a deliberate counterpoint, guiding the viewer's eye and breaking the monotony with welcome interruptions. These subtle variations enhance the visual experience, inviting the viewer to engage with the work on a deeper level. As the eye moves across the canvas, these interruptions create a dynamic interplay that adds to the complexity of the piece.

Yu's abstract works can also be interpreted as an extension of her photographic practice, where the image is distilled into its most fundamental elements—line and color. By elongating the photographic image into thin, precise lines, she transforms it into something entirely new, an exploration of form and color that stands on its own. However, even without considering this conceptual background, the beauty and allure of Yu's abstract works are undeniable. They possess a self-sustaining elegance, a refined simplicity that draws the viewer in and holds their attention. *(Jed Daya)*

The Evolution of the Filipino According to Bencab

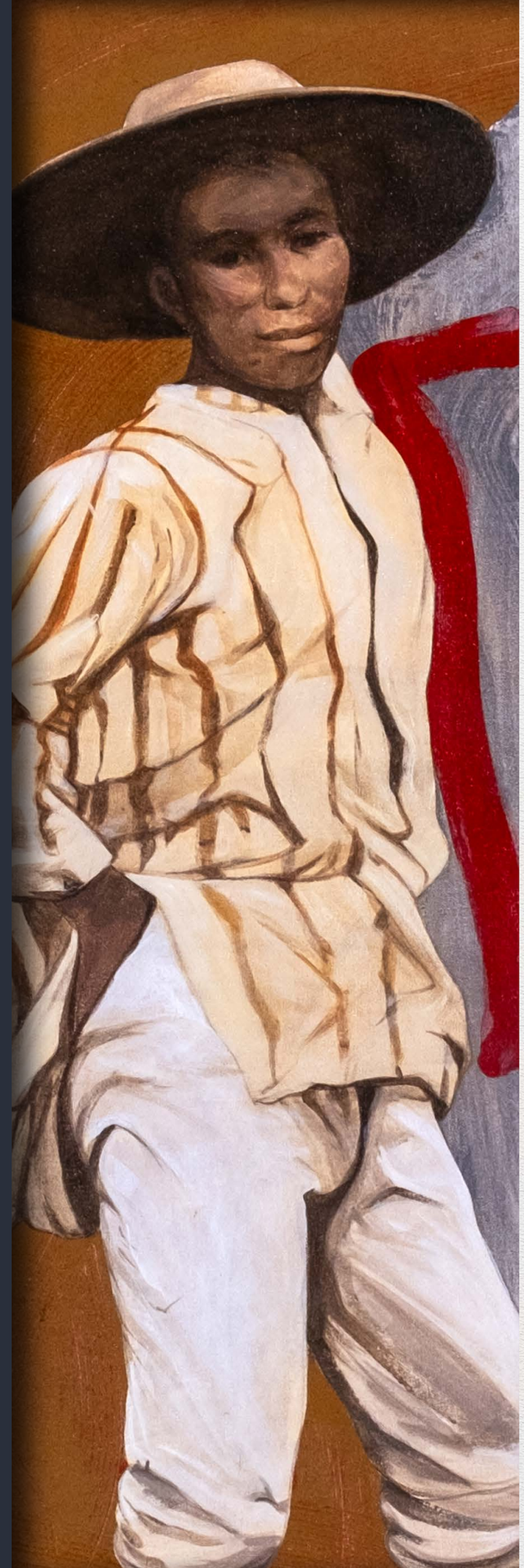
In October 1972, Benedicto Cabrera staged his landmark homecoming exhibition at The Luz Gallery after an almost four-year diaspora in London. Titled *Larawan: 1972 Paintings by Bencab,* the exhibition not only marked the artist's maturation after the critical acceptance of his Sabel paintings of the 1960s but, more so, solidified Bencab as a critical painter of his times. Bencab was young, but he was also bold, brash, and keenly aware of his Filipino identity and sensibility, which he understood best through the lens of the colonial past. Through his *Larawan* paintings, the eminent art critic Alice Guillermo christened Bencab as a forerunner of Philippine social realism.

The 1972 suite of *Larawan* paintings would be followed by a sustained pursuit of depicting the Filipino in different periods of their history: the *Larawan II* of the late 1970s depicting the Filipino in diaspora and the Larawan III of the late 1990s that coincided with the centennial of Philippine independence and focused on the wardrobes of the late 19th century, much like the tipos del pais fostered by the likes of Spanish colonial era painters Damian Domingo, Jose Honorato Lozano, Justiniano Asuncion, and Felix Martinez.

Fast forward to the 2000s, Bencab has already become synonymous with his *Larawan series.* He has found a way to relate many of his current *Larawan* works to the earlier ones, a continuing endeavor of mirroring the present with the colonial past.

I No Longer Worry is one of Bencab's major works throughout his nearly six-decade artistic career. It was even chosen to become the cover of *BenCab: Filipino Artist,* Volume 1 of the artist's twin-volume book published in 2019 in celebration of his "Fifty Creative Years." In this work, an ordinary indio dons a camisa de chino, a European-style hat, and pants *(salawal)* rolled up to just below the knees, indicating that he is in the act of toiling. His face and body language both exude radiance, comfort, and satisfaction.

I No Longer Worry can be best appreciated when compared with a thematically similar work from Bencab's first *Larawan Series.* The 1972 acrylic on paper work titled *Ang Tao* (now in the Cultural Center of the Philippines Collection) depicts an old man donning the same outfit, albeit he is wearied. His overall expression poignantly evokes suffering and dispiritedness, with him holding his hat on his side emphasizing a sign of resignation—a wrenching acceptance by a people subjugated under colonial oppression. Both Ang Tao and *I No Longer Worry* are in vertical orientation, emphasizing the subjects' stature and nurturing a deep reflection of our complex history and relationship with our Filipino identity.



The work featured in the following pages, titled "I No Longer Worry", is featured on the cover of BenCab's monograph published in celebration of his 50 years in the Philippine art scene in 2019

Three decades later, in the picture of *I No Longer Worry,* the man has been restored to the glory of an exuberant youthfulness. Taking cues from the work's title, *I No Longer Worry* sees Bencab fostering the notion of accepting our collective identity as being shaped by our colonial history and reclaiming what is genuinely ours, a continuing struggle and assertion of our uncompromising identity as lovers and stalwarts of freedom.

In Ang Tao, the subject still grapples with his identity as an inhabitant of *Las Islas Filipinas,* hence the generic term "tao" (person). But in I No Longer Worry, the indio has now grasped that complex yet profound sense of his identity that is rooted in colonial subjugation, watered by the ideals of nationalism and the national revolution against a common oppressor, and nourished by a continuing declaration of no longer capitulating to foreign hegemony.

The modern Filipino is a product of centuries of colonial rule, a power whose vestiges and influences still resound in modern times. And it is these palpable influences where *I No Longer Worry* situates itself—the Filipino masses are no longer worried about navigating a sense of shared identity to pursue a shared struggle towards a shared cause for a genuine expression of liberty and self-determination. *I No Longer Worry* enkindles a continuing reclamation of our Filipino identity to shape future generations of Filipinos who no longer worry on resigning to one's fate as a subservient servant to imperial power.

In 2006, Bencab was proclaimed National Artist for the Visual Arts. *(Adrian Maranan)*

BESIDE: Bencab's Ang Tao (1972, acrylic on paper, 155 x 52.5 cm, Cultural Center of the Philippines Collection), showcased in the artist's inaugural Larawan exhibition in 1972 at The Luz Gallery, markedly evokes the 2005 painting I No Longer Worry. The two works seemingly show the progression of a two-part story narrating the past and reflecting it with the present.

Indio Elegante

The Filipino Identity in Bencab's Larawan Series

"…nostalgia is certainly a part [of my decision to paint the "Larawan" works], but ultimately, the idea was to make our colonial past reflect on our present."

—BENCAB, INTERVIEW WITH CID REYES, APRIL 1978, PUBLISHED IN "CONVERSATIONS ON PHILIPPINE ART"

79

Benedicto Cabrera (b. 1942)

I No Longer Worry
signed and dated 2005 (lower right)
acrylic on canvas
48" x 24" (122 cm x 61 cm)

P 10,000,000

LITERATURE
Flores, Patrick D. and Cid P. Reyes.
BenCab: Filipino Artist. Tuba,
Benguet: BenCab Art Foundation Inc., 2019.
Featured on the book's cover,
full-color illustration.

LOT 80 to 86

DON J. ANTONIO ARANETA:
The Collector and Legal Luminary

The very surname Araneta and the family's long roster of accomplishments, in all their facets, evoke respect. In the world of art, however, the first name that comes to mind is Luis, the architect.

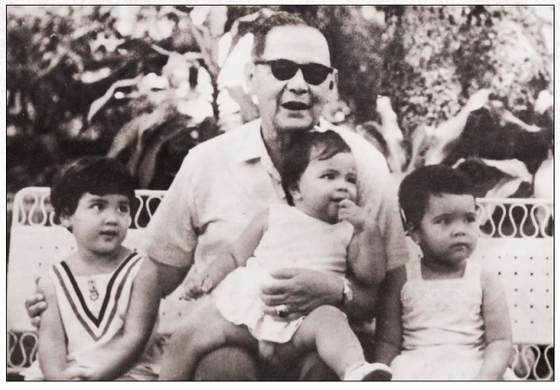
But there is another art connoisseur from this storied family — J. Antonio Araneta. Just like his brother Luis, whose name has become a legend in the name of collecting, J. Antonio Araneta and his elegant wife Margarita had a passion for all things beautiful. Together, they eventually built a significant collection of paintings.

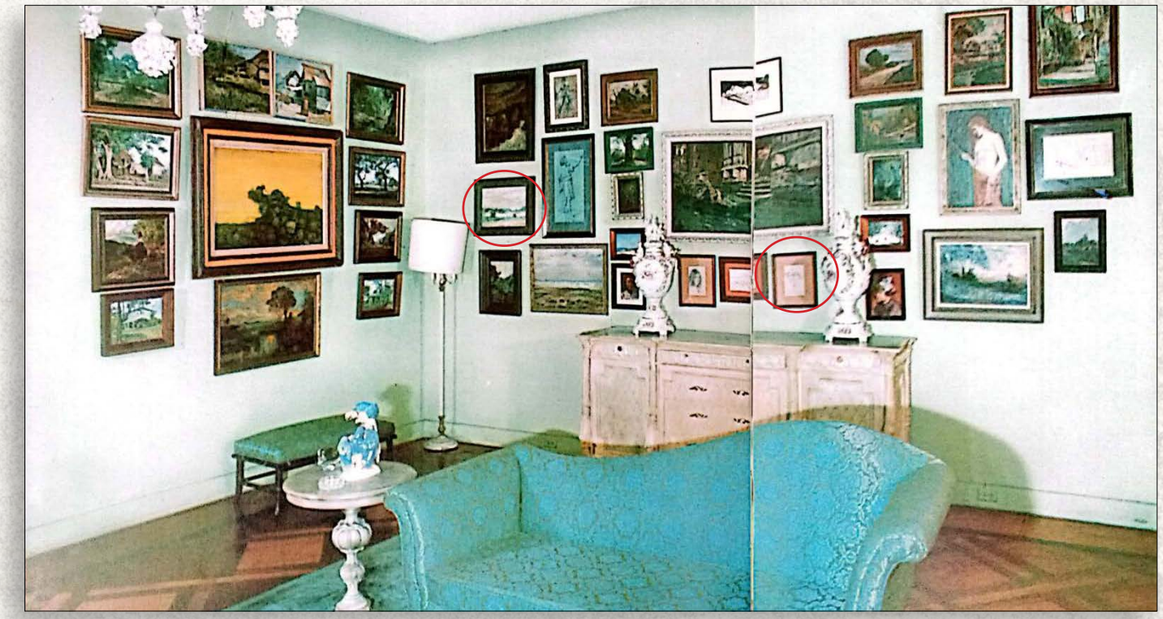
Don J. Antonio Araneta's public persona was shaped by his distinguished career as a lawyer, having followed the footsteps of his father—lawyer, businessman and nationalist Gregorio Soriano Araneta—in establishing a notable career in the law. J. Antonio was known for being uncompromising in his dealings, a firmness with which he always stood for what he believed in. Even in his legal writings, J. Antonio, the legal luminary, had what the family history, 1030 R. Hidalgo described as "a preference for lucidity and a disdain for literary flourish that oftentimes beclouds the thought that one intends to impart."

(Incidentally, among J. Antonio Araneta's holdings included The Philippines Graphic—the oldest surviving weekly English magazine of national circulation, which he had acquired from the King of Komiks Ramon Roces in the 1970s.)

So it comes as a pleasant surprise that beyond this reputation of straightforwardness and uncompromising firmness in the legal practice, there is revealed J. Antonio Araneta, the compleat and diverse art connoisseur. His enthusiasm for art had been nourished by his formative years in the family's pre-war ancestral house at 1030 R Hidalgo in pre-war Quiapo (where his parents, Don Gregorio Araneta and Doña Carmen Zaragoza lived.)

The war may have destroyed the Araneta's fabled ancestral house in Quiapo, but the spirit of collecting art continued to populate the couple's palatial Forbes Park residence. Indeed, countless artworks from Luna to the modernists were displayed in their home, where guests like the U.S. President Nixon, numerous foreign dignitaries and movie stars, and all the country's leaders experienced the generous hospitality of J. Antonio and Margarita. As a proper painter's dream she was, Margarita Rebullida de Araneta sat for Fernando Amorsolo in 1953, of which the same portrait is depicted in an interior scene of their Forbes Park living room by Sofronio Y Mendoza in 1969. Their sterling collection is a metaphor for their exemplary lives and each work of art reveals a different facet to the couple's brilliant legacies. (Excerpts taken from 1030 R. Hidalgo, Volumes I and II.)





OPPOSITE PAGE: Don J. Antonio Araneta with his wife Margarita on a foreign trip; with other grandchildren; ABOVE: Inside the Mansion of Don J. Antonio Araneta.

80 PROPERTY FROM THE DON J. ANTONIO ARANETA COLLECTION

Diosdado Lorenzo (1906-1983)

Sabungero
signed and dated 1958 (lower right)
oil on board
11" x 14 1/2" (28 cm x 37 cm)

P 120,000

LITERATURE
Araneta, Antonio S., ed. *1030 R. Hidalgo: Volume II, Legacy in Art.* Manila: Mara, Inc., 1986. Full-color illustration and painting description on page 95.

Diosdado Lorenzo's genre pieces, while reaching their apex in the mid-1970s, stretch past that date. While his pastoral subjects of nipa huts and rural genre share similarities with the romantic conservatives of his time, his stylistic approach led to art historians labeling him as a modernist. His 1958 Sabungero, for instance, takes the usual subjects of cockfighters and turns them into a uniquely Lorenzo. His keen sensitivity to light, colors, shapes, and textures results in his obvious brushstrokes (as opposed to the smooth strokes used by the Conservatives) that emphasize the fragmentation of his figures as well as pull the pieces together. By juxtapositioning the cool pink background with the warm brown skin of the sabungeros and their fighting roosters, Lorenzo's figures pop out, their image devoid of idealization and sentimentality but no less captivating. *(Hannah Valiente)*

Fabian dela Rosa (1869 - 1937)

Landscape
signed and dated 1922 (lower right)
watercolor on paper
12" x 17 1/2" (30 cm x 44 cm)

P 400,000

LITERATURE
Araneta, Antonio S., ed. *1030 R. Hidalgo: Volume II, Legacy in Art.* Manila: Mara, Inc., 1986. Full-color illustration and painting description on page 72.

Duldulao, Manuel D. The Philippine Art Scene. Manila: Maber Books, Inc., 1977. Full color photograph on page 243; Catalogued in the caption on page 244.

Fabian de la Rosa's 1922 *Landscape* proves art critic Emilio Aguilar Cruz correct when he described the artist's works as "nearer to the native soil." In his cool soft palette, de la Rosa transforms a windy grassy patch in the woods into a place of rest and relaxation. This view shows a virility that throbs throughout the painting – de la Rosa's landscapes are so intimate that one could feel the breeze fluttering around them should they focus hard enough.

Nostalgia is the currency that de la Rosa banks on. "In [Fabian de la Rosa], the autochthonous Philippine painting of the last century reached full flowering, and in his whole career is summed up all that is good in the past," continues Aguilar Cruz. In his exaltation of the local Filipino views, he brings the Philippine landscapes to the international stage, with foreign patrons championing his works in a bid to experience the enchanting Philippine countryside for themselves. *(Hannah Valiente)*

Three Sketches by Fernando Amorsolo (1892 - 1972)

a.) Barrio Scene
signed and dated 1941 (lower right)
pencil on paper
8" x 10" (20 cm x 25 cm)

b.) Sabungero
signed and dated 1930 (lower right)
pencil on paper
7" x 10" (18 cm x 25 cm)

c.) Portrait of a Man
signed and dated 1931 (lower right)
pencil on paper
8" x 5 1/2" (20 cm x 14 cm)

LITERATURE
Duldulao, Manuel D. The Philippine Art Scene. Manila: Maber Books, Inc., 1977. Full color photograph on page 243; Catalogued in the caption on page 244

P 500,000

Through his works, Fernando Amorsolo invariably manifests his love and adoration for his home country. In their daily chores and activities, Filipino folks always adorn an Amorsolo piece. His versatility is evident in the thousands of paintings and drawings he produced throughout his career, using various mediums such as oil, acrylic, pastel, charcoal, and graphite. His use of these mediums allowed him to capture the essence of his subjects in different ways. Apart from his scenic countryside paintings, he also made drawing studies of farmers doing their cyclic chores and city folk doing their daily routines.

"Amorsolo sketched incessantly," Rodolfo Paras-Perez writes in *Amorsolo: Drawings*. Indeed, the maestro produced numerous drawings and sketches throughout his career, aside from his sunlit, picturesque oil landscapes. Amorsolo's command of his mediums is evidenced by this three-piece lot of pencil-on-paper drawings: *a.) Barrio Scene, b.) Sabungero,* and *c.) Portrait of a Man,* where he expertly presented the hard work and simplicity of country life. These works evoke a sense of nostalgia and appreciation for the past. With just a single grade of pencil and careful strokes and scribbles, Amorsolo created depth and brought life to his drawings. *(Jessica Magno)*

83 PROPERTY FROM THE DON J. ANTONIO ARANETA COLLECTION

Jorge Pineda (1879 - 1946)

Bodegon
signed and dated 1901 (lower left)
oil on canvas
12 1/2" x 15" (32 cm x 38 cm)

P 140,000

LITERATURE
Araneta, Antonio S., ed. *1030 R. Hidalgo: Volume II, Legacy in Art.* Manila: Mara, Inc., 1986. Full-color illustration and painting description on page 103.

Jorge Pineda's *Bodegon* (translating to still life from Spanish) eschews the romanticism espoused by his contemporaries, veering instead to a realistic depiction of a rural, everyday life. Bathing his still life with a conservative color scheme, Pineda walks the fine line of pragmatic without getting dragged into the angst that permeates every piece that does not inherently embrace romanticism. Instead, his Bodegon manages to tell the story as it is, without the rose-tinted glasses but also without the pessimism itself.

The mundanity in Pineda's world is nothing to be afraid of. It is simply how things are and that is what Bodegon portrays – the practical depiction of an ordinary table leaves the viewers not with agony or despair but contentment in living the simple life. *(Hannah Valiente)*

84 PROPERTY FROM THE DON J. ANTONIO ARANETA COLLECTION

Dominador Castañeda (1904 - 1967)

a.) Barrio Scene
signed and dated 1964 (lower right)
oil on masonite board
8" x 12" (20 cm x 30 cm)

b.) Old Sampaloc Tree,
signed and dated 1964 (lower right)
oil on canvas
9 1/2" x 13" (24 cm x 33 cm)

P 200,000

A close contemporary of Amorsolo, Dominador Castañeda's landscape, though similar in its predilection for classicism and realism, couldn't be any different from the maestro's. In comparison to Amorsolo's fiery warm fields, Castañeda chooses to wash his landscape with cooler tones. The 1964 *Barrio Scene* and *Old Sampaloc Tree*, for example, are awash with light blues and cool greens that one could almost feel the cool, cloudless afternoon that Castañeda so lovingly portrays. His landscapes, while sharing the bliss of his contemporaries' depictions of the Philippine countryside, are more reserved and intimate, a stolen glance in an otherwise normal afternoon that his viewers would return to again and again, drawn in by the nostalgia that Castañeda is adept at translating. *(Hannah Valiente)*

85 PROPERTY FROM THE DON J. ANTONIO ARANETA COLLECTION

Angelito Antonio (b. 1939)

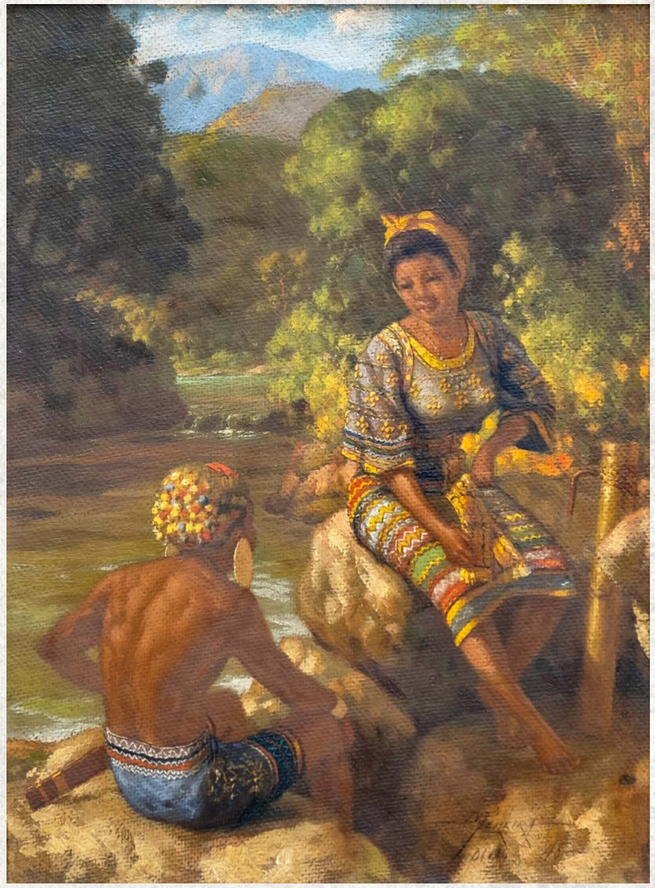
Candle Vendor
signed and dated 1966 (lower left)
pen and ink on paper
20" x 26" (51 cm x 66 cm)

P 100,000

León Gallery wishes to thank Marcel Antonio for confirming the authenticity of this lot

Angelito Antonio's nascent cubism has often been compared to National Artist Vicente Manansala. Antonio's composition professor at the University of Santo Tomas, it was clear that the eminent artist had greatly influenced Antonio. However, Antonio veered from Manansala's classically adhering anatomy and turned his figures into more aggressive shapes. His vendors, cockfighters, and familial units all show the vibrant Filipino culture, portrayed in his strong vivid art style.

His vendors take center stage in his 1966 Candle Vendor. Through pen and ink, Antonio painstakingly shades and creates these women as they hold onto their wares, the classically Antonio elongated visage of these women occupying the majority of the space. Behind them, a bustle of the crowd is seen. Despite the lack of color, Antonio's knowledge of shades and shadows breathes life into the piece, depicting the vibrancy of the culture even when the work itself is devoid of colors. With Candle Vendor situated near the start of his career, it serves as a perfect vantage point for the illustrious career he would sustain for more than five decades. One of the pillars of Philippine Modernism, his adherence to modernism's dynamic expression landed him in the annals of the history of Philippine visual art, a place he occupies with many other lauded Filipino modernists. *(Hannah Valiente)*



86 PROPERTY FROM THE DON J. ANTONIO ARANETA COLLECTION

Jose Pereira (1901 – 1954)

Ligawan
signed and dated 1948 (lower right)
oil on masonite board
16" x 12" (41 cm x 30 cm)

P 120,000

LITERATURE
Araneta, Antonio S., ed. *1030 R. Hidalgo: Volume II, Legacy in Art.*
Manila: Mara, Inc., 1986. Full-color illustration and painting description on page 115.

Jose Pereira is one of the Filipino genre painters of the pre-war era. Partial to depicting the tranquil Filipino life, Pereira washes his paintings with a warm orange that seems to situate his paintings in the period between afternoon and sunset. In his 1948 Ligawan, Pereira depicts a couple amid courtship as they steal a moment alone. Noticeably wearing traditional clothes that are not from the Tagalog region, Pereira puts the far-flung regions of the Philippines into the national consciousness, depicting the nostalgia that was usually only reserved in the Tagalog regions. His backlighting techniques, similar to Amorsolo's, elevate the light of a warm afternoon, creating a "sweeter" image of the Philippine countryside. The ligawan tradition of the past varies vastly from the courtship the younger people engage in today; still, Pereira's Ligawan gives us a blast to the past as he depicts a simpler time through an idyllic landscape and a pure tradition. *(Hannah Valiente)*

An Elusive Batangas Masterpiece

In the Tuwid or Olympic Style

This genuine example of a neoclassical mesa altar altar table of balayong wood from Batangas province has an impressive, single, thick piece of the said hardwood for its top with receding moldings on the sides. The solid tabletop is supported by the four legs of the casing, with additional support provided by the four, thick guilloche brackets attached to the top outer sections of the legs which run through the height of the piece (amusingly termed Olympic by antique agents and dealers; the repetitive guilloche patterns of interlocking circles/ ovals actually originated in the ancient Near East, popularized in Classical Greece and Rome, and were still utilized in Medieval design). There are three drawers, two on top of one, applied with lanite and kamagong line inlay to simulate panels.

From the top center of the panels descend characteristic Batangas bone inlay of downward– facing triangular spokes with round discs at each tip. The top two drawers were perhaps intended to store valuables like jewelry and gold coins and that was the reason why they were neither fitted with pulls nor keyholes — to discourage easy access. The long bottom drawer is the only one fitted with a brass keyhole and two traditional brass pulls. The front of the casing is embellished with sparse bone inlay of round disc– and diamond– shapes (surrounding the drawers). Underneath the three drawers is a cenefa/apron of the guilloche pattern. The sides of the casing are two horizontal solid pieces of balayong. The back of the casing are also two horizontal solid pieces of balayong. Supporting the four sides of the casing are elegant straight, slightly attenuated legs enhanced with thick kamagong line inlay set with round disc– and diamond–shaped bone inlays. It is plainly visible that there was so much painstaking thought and effort expended on this piece by the seasoned, Batangas master craftsmen who produced it. The most coveted piece sought by serious Filipino art and antique collectors since the postwar years is a genuine Batangas Uno mesa altar, rendered in reddish–brown balayong wood. The type belongs to a series of remarkably crafted, Sinitic, Batangas mesa altar altar tables identified and described by Filipiniana scholar/jeweler/antique dealer Ramon Villegas and antique dealer/wood expert Osmundo Esguerra in the late 1970s as Batangas Uno for the rococo prototype, Batangas Dos for the transitional version from rococo to neoclassicism, and Tuwid for the neoclassical archetype.

According to Villegas and Esguerra, the Batangas Uno prototypes were made by a master cabinetmaker who had his atelier in the area of what is now Taal town. In a seeming nod to the artistic trends of Europe in the eighteenth century, the initial rococo exuberance of the Batangas Uno prototypes were eventually tempered to the more restrained Batangas Dos versions towards the end of the eighteenth century. And then the Batangas Dos versions were completely reconfigured to more linear forms that became the Tuwid archetypes during the early years of the nineteenth century. In any case, the said series of Batangas altar tables — Batangas Uno, Batangas Dos, Tuwid— have long been possessions of prestige by their own merits and will continue to be so in the years to come. Antique Batangas furniture are characterized by a deliberate Oriental geometry of scale and proportion, fine mature hardwoods, precise Chinese–style construction with classical mortise–and–dowel techniques, age–old durability and are sought after by serious collectors. In the early 1980s, it was the duo of Filipiniana scholar/jeweler/ antique dealer Ramon Villegas and antique dealer/wood expert Osmundo Esguerra who exposed collectors and scholars to the timeless beauty and discreet refinement of antique Batangas furniture and thus created a justifiable demand that has lasted decades. (Augusto Marcelino Reyes Gonzalez III)

87

An Olympic Mesa Altar

19th Century
Balayong H: 37 1/2" (95 cm)
L: 18 1/2" (47 cm)
W: 42" (107 cm)

P 600,000

PROVENANCE
Private collection, Manila

If only this Desk Could Talk

Joan Orendain and Don Enrique Zóbel

by JOAN ORENDAIN

ABOVE: Enrique Jacobo Emilio Zóbel-Roxas y Olgado (January 7, 1927–May 17, 2004). Manila Polo Club February 2004.

On a trip to London in 1985, four of us traveled with Enrique Zobel, our boss. He was booked in a penthouse at the Intercontinental Hotel across from Hyde Park, the rest of us were booked at the Hyatt.

We had breakfast together every morning at 8, and after breakfast, he would walk around the round table, picking up the unused little packs of butter and marmalade, and throw them into a huge bowl in a sideboard in the foyer close to the front door. I thought to myself, "Wow! This guy is super-frugal," imagining EZ to pack them in his suitcase when it would be time to fly back to Manila. The day came, and to my pleasant surprise, I saw him empty the bowl into a tote bag, and hand it to the Jamaican cleaning lady with a hundred-pound note. Needless to say, I chastised myself for thinking EZ would take home the marmalade and butter packs.

Ayala had the contract to build the Sultan of Brunei's 1,788-room palace, designed by National Artist for Architecture Leandro Locsin. When the Filipino supervisors complained that the Bechtel contractors, Americans, were treating Filipino bosses like peons, EZ fired Bechtel, replacing them with Dave Consunji's team. The Istana Nurul Iman with two gold domes was completed just before Brunei's independence in 1984. The Sultan was proud!

After EZ's polo accident which had resulted in his becoming a quadriplegic, it would take three months of hospitalization which involved a month in a rinky-dink hospital in Malaga, before he was med-evacked on a special flight across the Atlantic and across the U.S. to the Stanford Hospital in California, where he was confined for another two months. When he finally came home, he was briefly hospitalized at Makati Med where we visited him.

Of course, it was a huge, and painful shock to see him lying there, ramrod straight and unable to move anything other than open and close his mouth and eyes. When he saw the tears about to flow, he stopped them dead in their tracks by saying, "You know how I found out I couldn't move? This buxom nurse leaned over me a few inches above my face. Of course, I attempted to reach for her wonderful breasts when I discovered I couldn't move. There was a mirror on the ceiling, and with that, I suddenly realized I was a quadriplegic." Of course, I laughed, but then, the tears came anyway. There was my beloved boss, stricken, but still seeking to comfort me.

What a guy! (EZ happened to be in my office when Teddy Boy Locsin walked in, saw our boss in a wheelchair, burst into tears and fled the room!)

His wife Dee looked after him for the next 14 years, overseeing everything related to his care and well-being. Wonderful lady – no wonder EZ loved her so!

How did I first meet EZ? I was a writer for the Filipinas Foundation in 1982, working in an office on the third floor of the Makati Stock Exchange Building, also designed by Lindy Locsin, and built by Bechtel, who also built the Ayala-owned Intercontinental Hotel. EZ and George Shultz became great friends while the latter was with Bechtel. When Shultz became the U.S. Secretary of State, he shared a lot of private government information with EZ about the real score under martial law. Jaime Zobel de Ayala was a close friend, long before I joined the Foundation, Ayala's cultural arm, which supervised the Ayala Museum. Jaime and I contributed stories to Letty Jimenez Magsanoc at the Panorama Magazine, the Bulletin's Sunday magazine.

We would clamber into the Ayala chopper on our building's roof, and he would shoot typhoon-flooded barrios as far north as Pangasinan – Central Luzon was one huge lagoon from the 1980 typhoon – while I took notes, which photo-essays we submitted to Letty.

Another memorable photo-essay was the Morong, Bataan Refugee Center, for the Vietnamese "boat people," refugees who had fled South Vietnam when the Communists overran it in 1975.

When I wanted to work at Ayala, I asked Maurito Blardony, among Ayala's top executives, to find me a job there as a writer. Jaime was at the Cannes Film Festival with Lino Brocka for a couple of weeks. I told Maurito I wanted to walk into Ayala's front door as a professional, and not as Jaime's friend, so that people wouldn't think I used our friendship to be given a position there. In a couple of days, dear Maurito had found me a job as a writer with Filipinas Foundation.

It was two years before I met Ayala's top boss, Enrique Zobel.

I was a member of the Foreign Correspondents Club, FOCAP, for short, and f_ _ _ - up, its derogatory nickname. Of course, we shared a lot of information not otherwise known to the public under martial law. It seemed a waste not to share it with Ayala's top boss, an influential person, so I told Pinky Valdez, EZ's assistant, I would give her slips of paper with whatever important confidential information I had, which she could give EZ on the pledge she would not reveal its source. I wasn't trying to win points, just passing stuff on.

We went like that for two years before Pinky called me to come upstairs (the seventh floor executive suite because EZ wanted to meet his Deep Throat. I reminded Pinky that I didn't want to appear like a sipsip, which is why I did not want EZ to know where his little notes were coming from. Besides, I said, I was in bakyas and jeans torn at the knee (my grandmother had died;

there was no longer anyone to patch the kneehole with a fat red strawberry or an apple). I had a lowly job at the Foundation and my office was on the third floor, I did not feel I had to dress up like an executive. The only time I gussied up high heels and all, was when I would have a famous visiting newspaperman, whom Letty would ask me to take to lunch at the Ayala Executive Dining Room, just to give him a flavor of I-don't-know-what, Keyes Beech, a Pulitzer prize-winner, writing for the L.A. Times, among a few other important journalists. Roy Rowan of Fortune magazine, whom EZ eventually met. He flew Roy and me in his Aérospatiale chopper, while he herded his cattle, and Roy wrote a great article about him with an accompanying photo of EZ piloting the chopper.

Otherwise, it was jeans and bakyas that would happen to be what I was in when Pinky insisted that EZ had waited long enough to meet me, and that he could have cared less about my attire. Reluctantly, and shyly, I walked into his office, many steps away from the door to his desk beside a window.

"Oh, it's a girl!" Two chairs with arm rests faced each other in front of his desk. "Please, sit down," motioning to a seat. First, he pointed to a sketch of his son on the wall behind him, explaining that Santi had died at 11 from an injury received on the football field, which they had supposed to be influenza. I guess, in his kindness to help me relax, he wanted to share a personal story, which obviously still hurt him in the telling, years after Santi had passed away.

I don't remember what else we chatted about for over an hour, but I do remember that I was so relaxed that I put my feet up on the opposite chair and started to smoke. In those days, one didn't have to ask for permission to smoke.

After much congenial conversations, Cory, his secretary, came in to slip him a note. He just nodded, Cory left, and in came a top executive whom he cussed out in Spanish. The coños flew and the poor man standing, suffered a barrage of insults, EZ pointing out the fellow wasn't doing his job at all. The man left after a humiliating ten minutes, and sufficiently frightened for the sudden volte-face, from a very relaxed convivial conversation to

ABOVE: ENZO Building | Sen. Gil Puyat Avenue, Bel Air Village, Makati City, Metro Manila © Facebook, Brutalist Pilipinas, cesramirezjr

this barrage of Spanish invectives frightened me. I prepared to make a 10-yard dash for the door, when EZ barked, "Sit down!" as the second executive entered.

Like the first executive, the roly-poly man wasn't asked to sit down. He just stood beside the desk, suffering a humiliating burst of invectives, but this time in English. Same thing, "You're not doing your job." Ten minutes, but this time, if I was nervous after the first barrage, I was shaken after the second salvo. Preparing to flee, again, I was barked at to, "Sit down!"

In came the next victim, dressed down and insulted in Tagalog. To recall how terrified I was at this point is understating the facts.

As the insultee walked out, I said, "Sir, I'm outta here."

"No, you're not. Relax. Have a cigarette, and give me one too." I knew he didn't smoke, but he did, gamely.

Resuming his friendly conversational tone, he explained. "Don't worry; these guys deserve the shellacking, but I understand that you work hard with the Foundation, so we can be friendly," putting his cigarette out after a few puffs.

That was how we met, torn jeans, bakyas, and all.

EZ moved to be chairman of the Bank of the Philippine Islands, and since the BPI president, Xavier Loinaz had long asked me to move over to the bank, I did and continued to do odd jobs for Xavier and EZ.

Ninoy Aquino had been killed by then. Since the bank stood right across from the Ugarte Field, where all the anti-Marcos demonstrators converged to listen to speeches by Jaime Ongpin and Ramon del Rosario, Jr., and other business anti-Marcos leaders, the foreign press hang out in my office which Xavier had furnished with sofas, and we served coffee.

When EZ left the bank and moved to the Enzo Building on Buendia, he gave me a really great office on the second floor, which was a copycat of his own fifth-floor corner office, and similarly, had its own bathroom. To boot, my office also had an outside extension enclosed with a section for my secretary, and another glassed-in room with a computer and a coffee pot and cups on the other end. The Business press wrote their stories there, and now and again, Senator Vicente Paterno did some work on that computer too. I'm a Luddite.

I didn't have a desk in this fancy new office with picture windows to the west and to the south, and much light streaming in, with a view of all Ayala Avenue's skyscrapers. But no desk.

In our new offices, EZ, in his interior-designed office, had a much bigger new desk. He gave me his lovely former desk of dark narra with two-toned inlays on each of its six drawers – truly unique, it may be the only desk of its design in the country. "Many important deals," he said, had been struck at this desk, of course. He wasn't the Philippines' top business executive for nothing. In fact, it was under his aegis that the Makati Business Club was formed, as its chairman, to give Big Businesses a voice under martial law.

I should have asked him what important contracts were signed on that desk; it's too late now, but it's safe to say that a lot of important transactions took place on it. After all, this is the man who built the Sultan's 1,772-room, two-gold-domed palace in Brunei. All I remember now, since I was present, was his putting in 17 percent into Raul Locsin's BusinessWorld newspaper. Raul had been too shy to ask EZ himself whether he wanted to put equity into the paper. I asked EZ on behalf of Raul, and he was delighted to be invited to join the paper's board.

I love the desk, and have written on it from 1985 up to the present, writing dozens of articles for the Inquirer and BusinessWorld, and eight coffee table books, including two on the Sultan of Brunei and the country's independence in 1984. I continue to write coffee table books for corporates, and famous people, my latest being "Children of War," relating children's World War II experiences, including lots of EZ stories and a few of mine, as well as something like 40 other children's war stories.

I continue to write, but sadly, it will have to be on a much humbler desk. When I retire to move to Iloilo, I will not be able to bring heavy pieces of furniture such as EZ's desk, which must weigh at least a ton. I will miss my beloved desk from EZ, but great memories and stories about him are locked in my heart.

88

The Desk of Don Enrique Zóbel

20th century
narra
H: 41 1/2" (105 cm)
L: 28" (71 cm)
W: 65" (165 cm)

P 200,000

PROVENANCE
A gift from Enrique Zobel to Joan Orendain

An Heirloom from Camarines' First Filipino Governor

This chest of drawers came from Juan Pimentel y Campos, the first Filipino governor of Ambos Camarines, now separated administratively into the provinces of Camarines Norte and Camarines Sur Provinces. Before rising into political prominence, Pimentel was a hemp grower and trader.

In this magnificent treasure, all the drawer faces are decorated with twin border inlays in kamagong and lanite – similar to Greek key design or Chinese meandering – accentuating further the corners. It comes with kamagong handles centered in round silver. Chest of drawers were found only in houses whose owners were men of affairs. They were usually placed in the cuarto principal or master's bedroom and thus, served as the repository of important deeds or documents.

89

Narra Chest of Drawers

19th century
H: 47" (119 cm)
L: 21 1/2" (55 cm)
W: 40 3/4" (104 cm)

P 200,000

PROVENANCE

These items listed are from one house only - of Gregorio and Cristina Baldeo whose son-in-law Juan was the First Filipino Governor of Ambos Camarines. Remnants of the fallen house featured in Philippine Ancestral Houses by Zlalcita and Tinio According to Tinio, almost a third of those featured are No longer standing. Refer to pages as- Pages 72 - entire exterior,

Elmer Borlongan (b. 1967)
Untitled
signed and dated 2004 (lower right)
oil on canvas
36" x 48" (91 cm x 122 cm)

P 5,000,000

A Ballad for the Masses

Borlongan Captures the Filipinos' Struggles and Hopes

Elmer Borlongan in the 1990s described his art style as "figurative expressionism." As the decade moved to the next century, his style only evolved, further incorporating the elongated figures and the bald everyman in his oeuvre.

This 2004 piece depicts Borlongan's signature figures. Two people sat cozily on a sofa, with the woman lying on her back with her head resting on the man's lap. Her face is solemn and serious as she reads; meanwhile, the man plays the piccolo, accompanying her with the melodious harmony. Their closeness is evident, physical or otherwise, as they remain in their own bubble while they do their own thing.

Borlongan also clearly portrays the austerity of this couple's living situation. They are dressed comfortably, if a little simply, and the wall behind them is bare of any decorations. In fact, if one looks hard, they can notice how unadorned the whole place is. And yet, the two do not seem to care – their relaxed expression portrays their contentment in their silent serene space.

"The genius of Elmer Borlongan is the fact ... he is able to paint a supposedly sad situation and make it into a happy artwork," Borlongan collector Julius Babao says in an interview with Rica Bolipata-Santos (published in a volume of Borlongan's monograph Elmer *Borlongan: An Ordinary Man, An Extraordinary Life*) "It makes a statement about society that even in the darkest times, there is still space for happiness and to be able to enjoy life...He admits that life is dark sometimes but it doesn't have to be. There is room for humor. There is room for happiness. There is a story to every piece that he makes."

Indeed, Borlongan approaches the austerity of the couple's place not with solemn resignation but with content acceptance. There is despair and longing in their faces but there is hope and satisfaction in their simple lifestyle. He displays remarkable authenticity with his portrayal of the Filipino everyman – he does not shy away from the melancholy that seems to follow the common man but he does not withhold from them the simple joys they experience every day. It is a balancing act, to strike the balance between these two conditions, but Borlongan manages to strike gold. The human condition is portrayed realistically in his body of works, held in high esteem and profundity as Borlongan is wont to do with his depiction of the common Filipino masses. *(Hannah Valiente)*

Félix Hidalgo and Madame Rose Delaunay

Souvenir from an Opera Lover to a Soaring Soprano

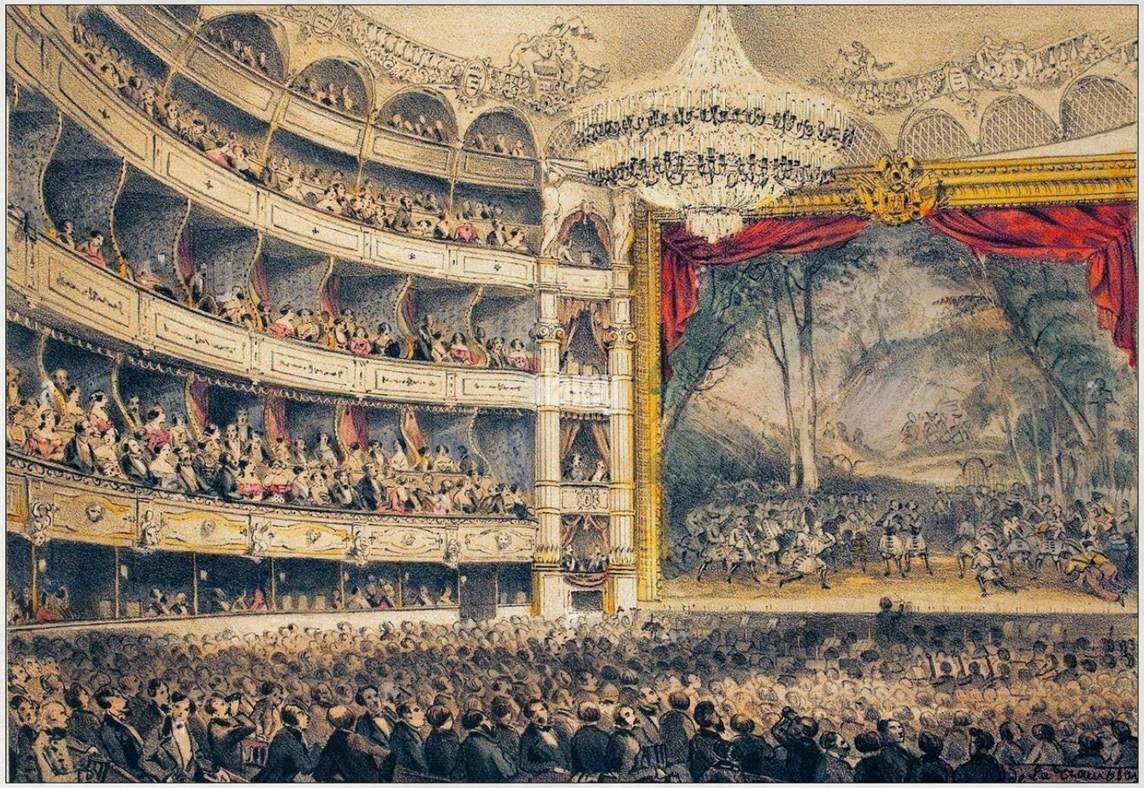
The woman in this 1907 portrait by Félix Resurrección Hidalgo is the French operatic soprano Rose Delaunay, born Félice Rose Bünzli (January 28, 1857 – December 31, 1939). Rose was the daughter of Auguste Bünzli, a Swiss-born violinist from whom she also had her first voice lessons. She would go on to formally learn music at the Paris Conservatory (Conservatoire de Paris) and piano under the tutelage of French pianist and composer Félix Le Couppey. Rose won her first award at the conservatory, even though she had only been ten months into her studies.

Rose Bünzli would eventually marry the French actor Louis Delaunay, son of Louis-Arsène Delaunay, who was also an actor. Now married, Rose Delaunay would have a prolific and stable career in musical theater, gracing the opera stage for the first time in 1882 with the role of Isabella in the celebrated French composer Ferdinand Hérold's Le pré aux clercs under the company Opéra-Comique. From 1883 to 1886, Rose starred in the following operas: as "Anna" in *La dame blanche,* "Javotte" in *Le roi* l'a dit, and "Jeannette" in *Les noces de Jeannette*. During the 1884 - 1885 opera season, Rose played the role of Micaëla in the landmark 200th presentation of Carmen, the widely popular four-act opera by the titan of French musical theater, Georges Bizet.

Rose Delaunay's name was included in the French chemist and coca wine inventor Angelo Mariani's *Figures Contemporaines,* an illustrated biography of the world's

ABOVE: Félice Rose Bünzli (January 28, 1857 – December 31, 1939). © https://gw.geneanet.org/, https://www.ipernity.com/

most famous personalities and published between 1894 and 1925. In Volume 1 of the book originally written in French and published in 1894, Rose was described by the French journalist and critic Joseph Uzanne as "a delicate, lively Saxon figurine...at once coquettish and serious, mischievous, and naïve, with eyes that you never know whether they will mock or soften." The book follows with a succinct description of her artistic prowess. [She is] an outstanding actress [and] at the same time, an infinitely skilled and gifted singer; her vocals are light, sure, and brilliant."

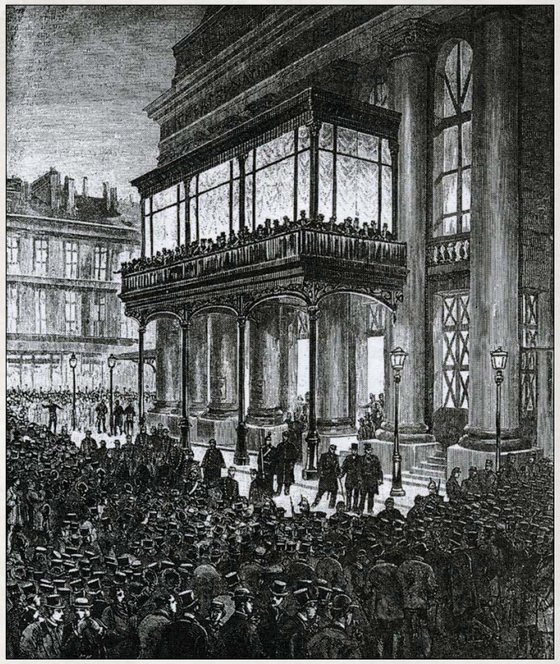


Rose would continue performing in operas after leaving the Opéra-Comique company in 1886, performing at the Grand Théâtre de Bordeaux and at the Opéra de Monte-Carlo. Over the following years, Rose would never leave the opera stage, appearing and performing in the principal provincial theaters of France. In September 1892, Rose played the role of Serpolette in Robert Planquette's *Les Cloches de Corneville,* held at the Théâtre de la Gaîté. She would teach singing at the International Academy of Music (Institut Rudy), located at the Rue de Caumartin in Paris. In 1898, Rose was awarded the Ordre des Palmes académiques by the French government for her outstanding contribution and service to music education

Rose Delaunay died on December 31, 1939 in the commune of Saint-Raphaël in the Var department of Southeastern France, where she and her husband had resided since 1922.

Félix Resurrección Hidalgo and His Love for Opera Music

Beyond the captivating enigma of his works that match his genteel yet mysterious disposition, Félix Resurrección Hidalgo was just like any other man *(ilustrado)* of his times; he liked the finest and most soothing things in life and even loved music, particularly opera music.



TOP: A watercolor lithograph depicting the Opéra-Comique. Illustration by De la Tramblais, in "Album, souvenirs de Paris", Paris, 1885. © Alamy; ABOVE: The Salle Favart in 1885, where Rose Delaunay staged numerous performances in her prime. © Wikimedia Commons

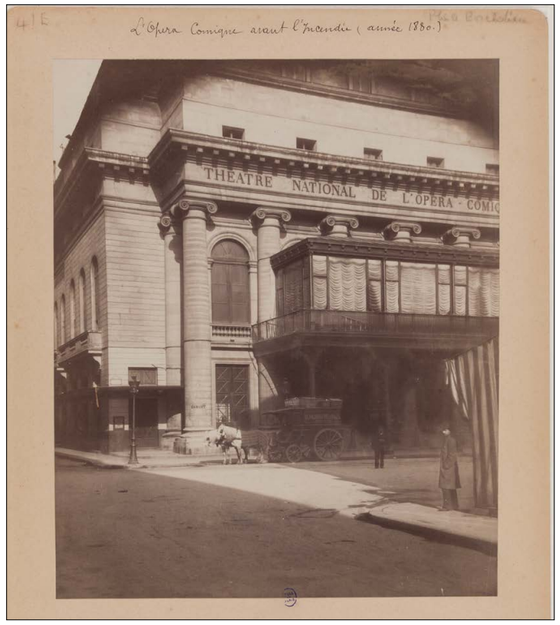
In his book *Félix Resurrección Hidalgo and the Generation of 1872,* painter-critic Alfredo Roces describes the Paris of Hidalgo's time, specifically when he arrived there in 1884 after his triumphant silver medal win at that year's *Exposición Nacional de Bellas Artes* in Madrid for his painting *Las Vírgenes Christianas Expuestas al Populacho.* "Long wide boulevards and formally arranged gardens give the city style and sparkle," Roces writes. "In the city's 24,000 cafes, Parisians joke and laugh, flirt and argue about politics and art. Residents enjoy opera, theater, ballet, concerts, circuses, and horse racing. Imposing sculptural monuments highlight the city's many grand boulevards."

In the exuberance of Paris, Hidalgo found a soothing avenue for manifesting his tranquil and modest temperament. For instance, Hidalgo found solace in painting in the sprawling and lush urban retreat of the Bois de Boulogne. It was "where he spen[t] much time capturing wooded scenes including one large painting of two ladies on a boat in a pond graced by swans and waterlilies," Roces notes.

Going above and beyond the confines of the Bois de Boulogne, Hidalgo loved the comfort that music universally bestows. Roces writes of an instance when Hidalgo sold one of his paintings just to eagerly rent a frock after being invited by a friend named George Sand to attend an opera. The overarching testament to Hidalgo's love for music was his and his sister Rosario's shared bond over the enrapturing beauty of melodies and harmonies. Rosario was Hidalgo's "best friend" among his siblings, much like Jose Rizal was to her sister, Maria. Hidalgo would send Rosario letters detailing his personal experiences and innermost thoughts.

Roces writes, "His main bond with his sister being their mutual love for music, Felix sends her a "hi-tech" gramophone along with some phonograph records." Many of the records Hidalgo sent to her sister were opera ones, including Enrico Caruso's *La Tosca, Gioconda,* and *Mephistopheles;* Fernando de Lucia's *La donna e mobile;* and Sig. Francisco's *La Paloma*. In one letter, Hidalgo tells Rosario that "all these records are sung in an irreproachable manner with a truly exceptional style and expression." Hidalgo even gushes over a Polish singer named Sirota, whom he praised as having "the most beautiful tenor voice that is known."

From these sources, one can see how passionate Hidalgo was as an opera music fan. In this light, one can have a greater appreciation for Hidalgo's portrait of Rose Delaunay. There are no archival sources that detail how Hidalgo and Delaunay crossed paths. However, one can deduce that Hidalgo may have attended one of Delaunay's performances during her prime, particularly the wildly successful and classic opera, *Carmen*. When Hidalgo arrived in France in 1884 and settled at Atelier 12, 43 Boulevard Arago on the outskirts of Paris, Delaunay had been performing under the Opéra-Comique company, whose headquarters is located at the Salle Favart at Place Boïeldieu, which is only less than an hour away from Hidalgo's address.



TOP: The magnificent Beaux-Arts interior of the Salle Favart. © Opéra-Comique; BELLOW: The facade of the Salle Favart in the early 1880s. © parismuseescollections.paris.fr

Hidalgo's portrait of Delaunay, made when she was 50 years old, even has a handwritten inscription that translates to "To Mr. and Mrs. Delaunay, Souvenir from FR Hidalgo." In 1907, when Hidalgo painted this portrait, Delaunay was listed in that year's directory of artists and drama and music educators under the section "Professeurs de Chant et Artistes Lyriques." The directory puts her address at 44 Avenue de Wagram, less than 40 minutes away from Hidalgo's studio, now located at 65 Boulevard Arago, Luna's former studio.

Hidalgo's portrait of Delaunay, made when she was 50 years old, even has a handwritten inscription that translates to "To Mr. and Mrs. Delaunay, Souvenir from FR Hidalgo." Hidalgo may have been left in awe with Delaunay's ringing soprano that he immortalized her on canvas. Delaunay may also have even shared musical sentiments with Hidalgo. It is a reminder not only of Delaunay's vocal prowess that accompanied her in the prime of youth but also of Hidalgo's genuine love for music—a fondness best manifested in his lyrical and melodiously rich masterpieces that intimately sang of his warmth and nobleness. *(Adrian Maranan)*

91

Félix Resurrección Hidalgo (1855 - 1913)

Portrait of Madame Rose Delaunay
signed, dated 1907 and inscribed
"A Mr et Mad Delaunay - souvenir de FR. Hidalgo", (lower left)
oil on canvas
25 1/2" x 18" (65 cm x 46 cm)

P 2,000,000

PROVENANCE
Drouot, *Modern Art,* Paris, 27 October 2023, Lot 64

TOP: Hidalgo in his Parisian studio, ca. early 1900s. From the collection of Ambeth Ocampo. Reprinted in Alfredo Roces' Félix Resurreccion Hidalgo and the Generation of 1872, Eugenio Lopez Foundation, Inc., 1998.

92

Macario Vitalis (1898 - 1990)

Bouquet of Flowers
signed (lower right) dated 1983
oil on canvas
24" x 14 1/2" (61 cm x 37 cm)

P 300,000

Accompanied by a certificate issued by Comité Vitalis confirming the authenticity of this lot

PROVENANCE
León Gallery, *The Kingly Treasures Auction 2021*, Makati City, 4 December 2021, Lot 94

Only in his early 20s, Macario Vitalis had already ventured overseas to further his art studies. He stayed in the United States for a few years, then went to France and stayed there for almost the rest of his life, only returning to the Philippines for a short while in his later years. He worked in a restaurant in France where his artworks were exhibited and sold.

His years in France can be seen in his works, both in subject matter and in the manner in which he paints. Most of his early works are characterized by the social conditions he witnessed in France, such as the events during the Great Depression and World War II. After the war, he settled in the town of Plestin-les-Gréves, which became the subject of his subsequent paintings, for it offers a magnificent landscape.

Vitalis adheres to post-impressionism, with blues and yellows dominating his palette, which can be seen in his 1983 painting, Bouquet of Flowers. Once closely examined, one can see that the artist did not use definite lines or shapes in this painting. Instead, it is a harmonious blend of paint dabs in various hues, tints, and shades to create an object and successfully bring it to life. *(Jessica Magno)*

93

José Joya (1931 - 1995)

Composition X
signed and dated 1960 (lower left)
oil on paper
19" x 26" (48 cm x 66 cm)

P 2,600,000

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

PROVENANCE
The Luz Gallery

LITERATURE
"Joya Show." *The Manila Chronicle*. December 3, 1960. Black-and-white illustration.

EXHIBITED
The Luz Gallery, *Jose Joya: Ninth One-Man Show,* Manila, 3 - 14 December 1960

Jose Joya's *Composition X* was among the seventy works (including paintings, oil studies, and compositions) included in the artist's ninth one-man exhibition at the Luz Gallery in December 1960, which also happened to be the inaugural show of Arturo Luz's famed brainchild. In his "Roses and Thorns" column (December 8, 1960) for Times, writer, critic, and would-be National Artist for Literature Alejandro Roces lauds Joya's works in the said exhibition as "show[ing] a constantly improving Joya." Roces continues his acclaim, "His colors are poetic and sweeping. At times, one can sense landscapes and cool waters in his abstract daubs. His sketches have something of the seascape sketches of Hidalgo."

On the other hand, an article from the *Manila Chronicle* dated December 3, 1960 writes, "The exhibit promises to be Joya's biggest and most exciting." "Limited in color range to greys and a warm scale from yellows to reds, the paintings vary considerably in size, from small oil studies to huge wall-size paintings."

Composition X epitomizes Joya's abstract expressionist flair and creative venture, which would climax in his historic participation at the 1964 Venice Biennale. The work sees Joya dabbling in both spirituality and materiality as he kinetically captures the abstract endeavors of his spontaneous mind and dynamic brush.

Earlier in 1960, Joya bagged the third prize at the 13th Art Association of the Philippines Annual Art Competition and Exhibition for his work, *House of Life*. It was Joya's third successive win at the AAP after winning second prize at the 1959 Annual for his beloved Space Transfiguration and first prize at the 1958 Annual for *Painting*. *(Adrian Maranan)*

Hagabi: The Ifugao Prestige Bench

The Making of the Kadangyan

by EMIL MARAÑON III

The Ifugao *"hagabi"* or zoomorphic lounging bench has become one of the most desirable indigenous art in the Philippine collecting scene not only for its modern appeal, but for its rarity and sociocultural importance in the Ifugao society.

Roy Franklin Barton described the *hagabi* in his book Ifugao Law (1919) as *"a lounge cut out of a large tree trunk [which] is the insignia of the upper class Ifugao …"* Unlike the regular lounges, the seat of a *hagabi* should be pointy in the middle referencing the high-peaked thatched roof of the traditional Ifugao four-stilted house (*"bale"*). On both ends of the *hagabi* (*"ngiwit"*) are abstracted animal heads with long snout and big ears. While early literature describes the heads as *"goat-like"* or *"guinulgulding"*, they could also be pig heads which are the main offertory animals in agricultural rituals with which the status and wealth of the landowning *kadangyans* are intimately tied with. The *hagabi* must also be hewn from a single trunk of the narra wood to represent wholeness and family solidarity. In other words, the hagabi is really a bicephalous lounging bench shaped like a bale that symbolically signifies the family's state of bounty.

This *hagabi* tradition is exclusive and unique to the village of Kiangan in Ifugao, the oldest among the Ifugao settlements. In the Kiangan traditional society, only a *"kadangyan"* or those from the highest and wealthiest class in the Ifugao society can commission and own a *hagabi*. Raymundo Baguilat's paper entitled *"The Ifugao Hagabi"* (1940) explains the process of the making of the hagabi in detail. He contextualized the *hagabi* by first laying down that the greatest ambition of every Ifugao is to attain the rank of *"kadangyan"* by giving a great public feast called *"uya-uy"* that begins with twenty (20) consecutive days of dancing and culminates in three (3) full days of eating and drinking. This requires tremendous resources that one must be very wealthy to afford the holding of such festivities. Once one has become a *"kadangyan"*, his ascension to the rank is culminated by giving another feast called the *"hagabi"*, where the long hardwood lounging bench of the same name, is commissioned.

Baguilat noted that even if one can afford to hold the *"hagabi"* feast, custom requires that one must also wait for the time of the year known as *"tialgo"*, when rice is scarce and many people are hungry. The first step to the ritual is the holding of the ceremony called the *"mamaldang"* where the *mumbaki* ("village priests") are summoned to find out whether the gods favor the step by killing some chickens and study the gall-bladder and the bile. If the gall-bladder is small and pale, this is interpreted as an unfavorable and the hagabi feast is postponed. But once the go-signal has been given by the gods, then the next phase begins with the woodcutters and carpenters (*"munhabat"*) going deep to the forest to carefully select a big narra or ipil tree to be cut down and fashioned into a *hagabi*. When the hagabi is finished, many people would join the *munhabat* in the forest to bring it out by taking turn to carry it across mountains and rivers. It is a much-anticipated moment of fun, merriment and even an opportunity for men to showcase their physical strength. Carabao meat, pork and plenty of rice wine are served at every stop. As wine takes effect and everyone gets intoxicated, the task gets harder and harder as the carriers struggle with the weight of the hagabi.

When the *hagabi* arrives at the house of the one who gives the feast, the people throw each other balls of boiled glutinous rice ("dayacot") in celebration. Once the *hagabi* is installed, three days of eating, drinking, and dancing follows at the account of the commissioning *kadangyan.*

Being too big to be taken in, the *hagabi* is placed under eaves of the *bale* where it is always visible to the entire community. The *hagabi* is not the just an emblem of wealth and prestige of the *kadangyan,* but symbolic of the responsibility he assumed to provide when the resources are scarce.

Very few families can afford the resources, manpower and preparation to bring a *hagabi* to life that it has become the distinguishing mark of those who were able to. Unfortunately, the tremendous expense in commissioning the *hagabi* also caused the eventual demise of the tradition. The entry of the Americans in Ifugao in the early 20th century did not only bring Christianity to the unconquered Ifugao lands, but weakened traditional socio-cultural structures and values that the new generation of rich Ifugaos find little use to the wooden coach given the expense it requires. Some rather opted to build a modern concrete house or acquire a car which are really the modern hallmarks of what it is to be wealthy. As early as 1940, Raymundo Baguilat already remarked in his paper entitled *"The Ifugao Hagabi"* that *"much of the color of the hagabi has been lost."*

It is estimated that in the last 150 years, less than 50 families in Kiangan have either performed the *hagabi* ritual or descended from ancestors who have once performed the ritual ("himmagabi"). A very lean figure compared to the sheer abundance of *hagabis* in museums all over the world, private collections, and those in the peddled market that should put a potential buyer on his toes.

The *hagabi* also rarely survives. While it may be protected by the eaves of the *bale* yet it is still exposed to the elements, exposing it to cycles of solar radiation, rain, and changes in the humidity which affect its integrity and stability. Termites and vermins can likewise irreversibly damage the *hagabi* since they are placed outdoors and in contact with the ground.

(I)

(II)

(III)

(IV)

TOP TO BOTTOM:

I.) The Ifugao hagabi photographed during one of the community feasts sponsored by its kadangyan owner, showing its importance to the community.

II.) A kadangyan couple photographed with their hagabi, together with an Caucasian woman presumably from or related to the American colonial authorities.

III.) Another kadangyan couple photographed with their hagabi for scale. Hagabis can weigh as heavy as one ton.

IV.) Another kadangyan family photographed with their hagabi, here the hagabi is almost placed outdoor exposing it to the elements.

Likewise, as recounted by old time runners and dealers, procuring a *hagabi* in situ is likewise a complicated affair as selling *kadangyans* would often seek full reimbursement or the return of the full cost to commission one which often result to an unconscionable price tag, thus, rarely afforded by outsiders.

The present piece being presented by Leon Gallery was recently discovered in Tokyo, Japan. It measures almost 12 feet in length and 2 feet in width. Its owner, Hiroshi Ogawa, is a noted Japanese primitive art dealer in Tokyo who has been dealing with African Primitive Art for more than 45 years ago. He purchased the *hagabi* while he was living in the Philippines 47 years ago from the noted Filipino collector-dealer Osmundo "Omeng" Esguerra, who in turn bought it from French dealer Thierry David who is another known figure in Philippine indigenous art dealing and collecting. Based on his recollection, Thierry David is said to have found and acquired the *hagabi* in Baguio City. While there is no further information as regards the ownership prior to him, we can see the name "Kid Dave" etched on the *hagabi* which could refer to the previous owner. This opens the possibility that like many Ifugao objects, it may have been collected during the American Colonial period, brought to Baguio City, and kept in one of the American colonial houses in the city until it was discovered and bought by Mr. David.

This archaic specimen undeniably carries the hallmarks expected from an authentic *hagabi* of great age. Stylistically speaking, the piece has the delicateness, fluidity and muted elegance of old and authentic Ifugao objects which can no longer be replicated. This aesthetic has appealed to many noted Japanese collectors like Hiro Kobayshi, Hiroshi Ogawa and many others that many Ifugao materials have ended in Japan. Newer hagabi reproductions are often stylistically flat and too thick, revealing the modern carvers' instinct to maximize the wood that has become extremely hard to procure at the size that the *hagabi* requires.

A real *hagabi* should also not have the same surface as an indoor furniture since it is kept partly outdoor. This incorrect patina is often observed in reproductions that are often stored indoor and used for years to achieve the sheen and worn surface. While worn surface patina is expected in a real *hagabi* in parts sat on or frequently touched, the presence of surface cracking, roughness, and time-induced weathering that exposes the grain separate the authentic old ones from hasty reproductions. The current specimen has all the expected weathering given its great age, but likewise in a good, stable and well-preserved condition. The desired balance that is extremely rare to find and, often, much desired.

Emil Marañon III

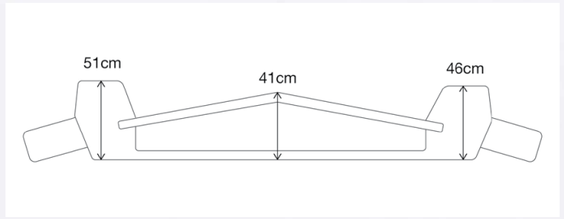
is not only an acclaimed election lawyer, but a noted collector, researcher and expert on Philippine antiquities. While he mainly specializes on Philippine ethnographic arts, his collecting and research interests likewise extend to precolonial indigenous artifacts, early trade wares, colonial santos, Philippine ornaments, and even to Austronesian ethnographic materials. He has extensively traveled around the Philippines as an explorer, documentary photographer and as an indigenous rights advocate which gave him a deep understanding of the traditions and cultures of the country's indigenous peoples. He holds law degrees from San Beda Law and the renowned School of Oriental and African Studies - University of London in England.

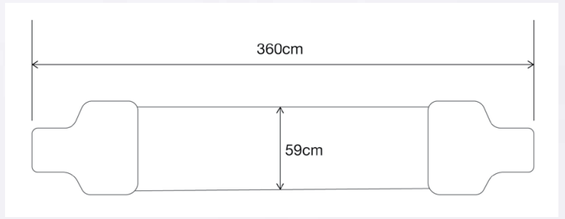
Hagabi (Ifugao Prestige Bench)

19th century
narra wood
Length: 142″ (360 cm)
Width / Diameter: 23 1/4″ (59 cm)
Height: 20 1/4″ (52 cm)

P 1,400,000

PROVENANCE
Thierry David
Osmundo "Omeng" Esguerra
Hiroshi Ogawa of Tokyo, Japan





Portrait of Doña Josefa Ortaliz *y* Jordan

(Señora de Don Bonifacio Montilla *y* Yanson)

by AUGUSTO MARCELINO REYES GONZALEZ III

Doña Josefa Ortaliz y Jordan known as "Pay" was a beautiful Spanish mestiza of a prominent family from Iloilo in Panay island who married Don Bonifacio Montilla y Yanson of Pulupandan, Negros Occidental, son of the Spanish patriarch Don Agustin Montilla y Orendain, ur–ancestor of all the Montillas of Negros island, and his wife the Chinese mestiza Dona Vicenta Yanson y Locsin–Zarandin. The Montillas were a prominent Spanish military and political family: Don Agustin's father Don Jose Montilla was Governor–General of the Marianas islands in the 1820s.

Don Agustin acquired, cleared, and planted vast tracts of agricultural land in Negros Occidental and built his palatial home known as "Balay Daku" during the 1840s --- one of the two largest residences in the province --- in the middle of his sprawling lands in barrio Ubay in Pulupandan town (the other large house being Don Aniceto Lacson y Ledesma's famous 1880s Neo–Renaissance palace "Casa Grande" in barrio Matab–ang, Talisay town). The Montilla clan of Pulupandan town were famous landowners and powerful politicians southwest of Bacolod as were the Lacson and Lizares clans of Talisay town northeast of it.

Dona Josefa Ortaliz y Jordan and Don Bonifacio Montilla y Yanson had seven children, one son and six daughters: Lina, Enriqueta, Marta, Agustin, Felisa, Soledad, and Bonifacia. Unfortunately, Josefa aka "Pay" passed away at a young age. Her eldest daughter Lina Montilla y Ortaliz (Sra de Candido Montilla) became the de facto mother to the younger siblings. The youngest daughter Bonifacia Montilla y Ortaliz (aka "Pasay," Sra de Eugenio Veraguth) inherited the vast Balay Daku of her grandfather Don Agustin; she bequeathed it to her niece Angelina Mijares y Montilla (Mrs Bertram Percival Tomkins), daughter of her sister Marta Montilla y Ortaliz (Sra de Antero Mijares).

Don Agustin Montilla and Dona Vicenta Yanson spawned a clan with many famous descendants: hacendero and BISCOM President Enrique Montilla Montilla; hacendera Marta Montilla Mijares (Mrs Carlos Benedicto Rivilla); socialite Adelina Ines Montilla Montilla (known as "Nelly"/Mrs Ramon Zamora Paterno/later Mrs Primitivo Valerio Lovina); businesswoman Teresa Arroyo Montilla (Mrs Vicente Lopez Araneta); philanthropist Maria Soledad Cuyugan Oppen–Cojuangco (known as "Gretchen"/Mrs Eduardo Murphy Cojuangco Jr); art & antiques collector and cosmopolitan bon vivant Herbert Montilla–Mijares Tomkins; technocrat Bonnie Rivilla Fuentes; architect Raymond Rivilla Fuentes; Atty Agustin Montilla IV, Chef Tonyboy Escalante; botanist and horticulturist Josef Montilla Sagemuller; businesswoman Gigi Lacson Lacson; tourism executive Baba Montilla Araneta–Escudero; businesswoman Mia Paterno–Rodriguez; and many others from the Montilla branches of the allied Mijares, Abello, Gonzalez, Oppen, (Veraguth), Esteban, Camara, Lopez, Fuentes, Rivilla, Tomkins, Mabus, Araneta, Lacson, Arroyo, Paterno, Lovina, Nieva, Montinola, Corral, Kramer, and Weber clans.

ABOVE: An old photograph of Mrs Montilla taken by Fernando Amorsolo, which would become the basis for the 1954 portrait. Published in Volume 1 of Amorsolo: Love and Passion under the section "Catalog of Photographs.

According to their family tradition, Montilla descendants commissioned many oil portraits of their antecedents from master portraitist Fernando Amorsolo during the postwar period (from around 1946–60).

Fernando Amorsolo was the Filipino portraitist par excellence of the twentieth century. His talent was recognized early during his youth and the multimillionaire art patron Don Enrique Zobel de Ayala sent him to Madrid for further studies; prestigious Zobel de Ayala patronage also set the bar for Amorsolo's clientele which included Filipino high society and American and European expatriate businessmen. His portraits are visual records of affluent Filipino society from around 1920 to his passing in 1972; there was a time in Filipino social history (prewar–postwar) wherein a portrait or a genre painting by Fernando Amorsolo was "de rigueur" in every upper–class Filipino residence. His best portraits, especially from prewar, were dramatically lit with alluring chiaroscuro. However, he also had a Rembrandt–esque phase from the mid–1950s to the very early 1960s when he painted subjects with subdued, subtle, even dim lighting inspired by the great Dutch painter Rembrandt Harmenszoon van Rijn (o 1606 – + 1669).

(Acknowledgments: Mr. Josef Montilla Sagemuller)

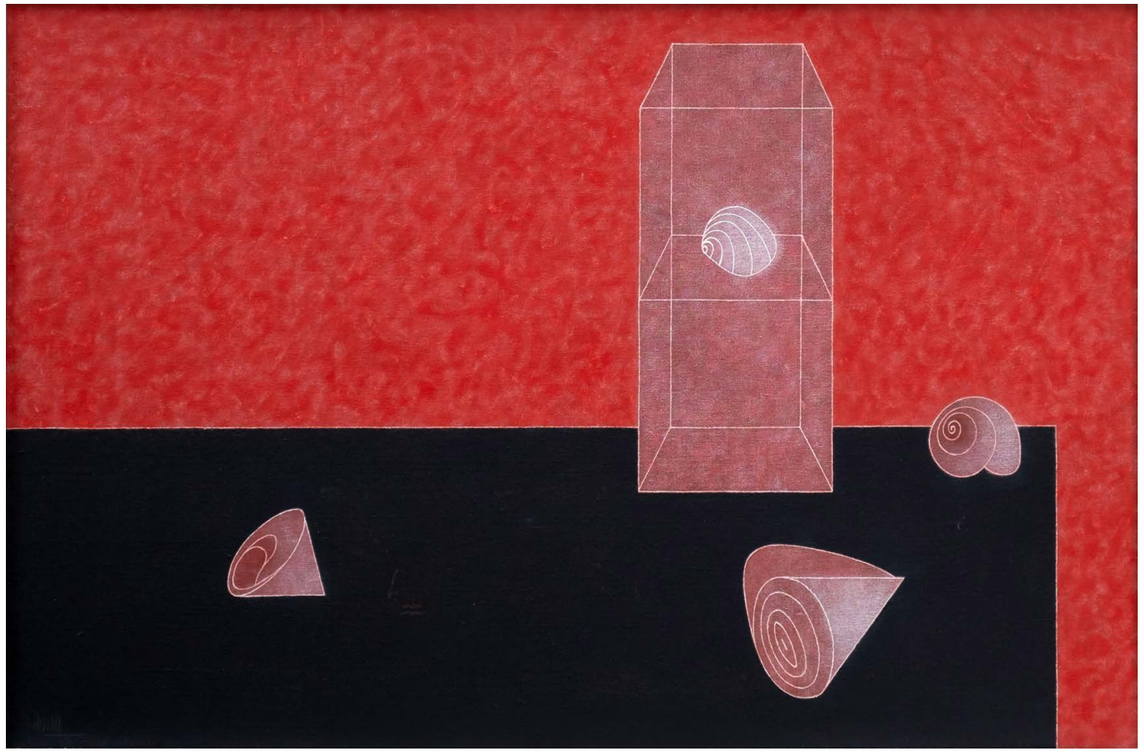
95

Fernando Amorsolo (1892 - 1972)

Portrait of Mrs. Montilla
signed and dated 1954 (lower right)
oil on canvas
26 1/2" x 20 1/2" (67 cm x 52 cm)

P 300,000

PROVENANCE
Adelina Ines Montilla Montilla (Nelly Montilla / Mr. Ramon Zamora Paterno / Mr. Primitivo Valerio Lovina)



96

Arturo Luz (1926 - 2021)

Boxes and Shells No. 1
signed (lower left)
dated September 1994
acrylic on canvas
24″ x 36″ (61 cm x 91 cm)

P 700,000

Accompanied by a certificate issued by Ms. Luisa Luz-Lansigan confirming the authenticity of this lot

The 1990s was an era of exploration and new beginnings for Arturo Luz, a period of rekindling his passion for the arts. Following his departure from his burdening bureaucratic posts, Luz ventured into a rejuvenating journey across Asia. He marveled at the sight of astonishing architecture: majestic temples, complexes, palaces, and sacred royal tombs, all of which prompted him to create his *Cities of the Past* series.

Arturo Luz experimented with different styles, mediums, and periods throughout his artistic career, producing exciting and varied art pieces. However, one can identify a Luz piece by its minimalist, simplistic composition of white-outlined linear objects filled with or backgrounded with blacks and reds. Box and Shells No. 1 is a product of Luz's artistic rediscovery and reimagining. It features three shells and two boxes sitting atop one another, with a singular shell inside the top box, all placed on a table. Luz's use of white lines accentuates and separates the objects from the background of a red wall and black table. Despite his inclination to minimalism, Luz is a master of creating linear figures to complement bare spaces, making his works alive.

"His sense of form is alive and distinguished: he knows abstraction and austerity, the sense of space and balance, he distorts with institutional rightness and grace — in other words, he is a real artist." — Jose Garcia Villa, National Artist for Literature, on Luz's prize winning work at the 5th Art Association of the Philippines' annual art exhibition in 1952. *(Jessica Magno)*

97

José Joya (1931 - 1995)

The Parian
signed and dated 1977 (lower right and verso)
oil on board
11″ x 22″ (28 cm x 57 cm)

P 2,000,000

Accompanied by a certificate issued by Josefa Joya-Baldovino confirming the authenticity of this lot

A jewel of Philippine art, Jose Joya is lauded as one of the pillars of Philippine modern art. Known for his abstract expressionist style, Joya expertly intertwines the intensity of the East and the vibrancy of the West.

However, while he was known for incorporating foreign influences in his works, the travel ban imposed by martial law in the 1970s virtually limited Joya's travels within the Philippines. Paradoxically, this has opened his eyes to the beauty and potential of his own country. "More than at any other stage of my artist development," he recalls in Remembering Joya, "I came face-to-face – and celebrated – my identity as a Filipino."

This more deliberate probing at his Filipino identity is evident in his 1977 The Parian. An area adjacent to Intramuros where Chinese merchants in Manila lived in the 16th and 17th centuries, Parian de Arriceros became a bustling commercial center in Manila with more than a hundred shops occupying the area. Today, the land that was Parian is now known by a different name: Liwasang Bonifacio.

Spearheading the birth and the growth of abstract expressionism in the Philippines, Jose Joya's dynamic layers of colors and textures create a lively canvas. He was posthumously conferred the title of National Artist for his contribution to developing the Philippine abstract art. *(Hannah Valiente)*

Ang Kiukok's Cubist Window

Among the modernists, Ang Kiukok was the artist who utilized the creation of still lifes to its fullest. Beginning with linear forms in austere gray, and brown of textured surfaces, over the years, he transitioned to a more complex and bright-colored cubist still lifes of tabletops containing fruits, potted plants, or bottles. Still lifes, for the artist, marked an important milestone in his artistic career and growth. It wa through the paintings of objects that one can chart Ang's journey from his early days as a strictly Modernist painter, with his stringent yet fluid emphasis on expression, to his later outings as a uniquely distinct artist with his focus] on an Expressionist-Cubist technique.

In this work, the artist presents his signature take on still-life, with his rigid and geometric portions building up to a figurative flatness that somehow manages to both convey and detract perspective. Yet one can argue that it is the artist's Figurative approach that brings his subject matter closer to reality than those produced by means of a more classical or formal method. By exaggerating his forms and figures, Ang captures both the physicality of the area and the inherent context it contains.

ABOVE: Ang Kiukok in his studio. © Facebook, Distinctively Davao

98

Ang Kiukok (1931 - 2005)
Still Life (Window Series)
signed and dated 1999 (lower right)
oil on canvas
36" x 36" (92 cm x 92 cm)

P 7,000,000

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

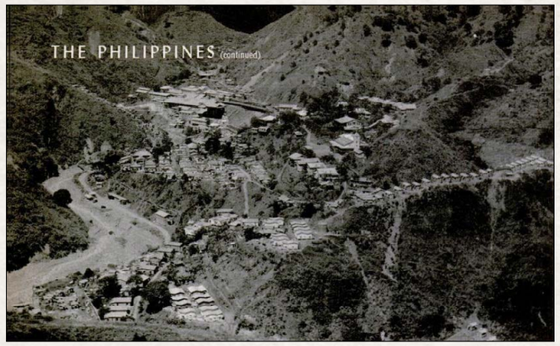
LOT 99

John William Haussermann

King Midas of the Philippines

"Judge Haussermann, who still owns a small-town bank in Ohio, is probably the most respected man in the Philippines, and his prestige with the natives is second only to that of the U.S. High Commissioner."

—LIFE MAGAZINE, "THEIR GOLD MINES ARE THEIR ACE IN THE HOLE," 13 FEBRUARY 1939



John William Haussermann was one of the most powerful names in Philippine business during the pre-war period. Born on December 14, 1867 in Ohio Township, Clermont County in Ohio, Haussermann was a lawyer by profession, armed with a Bachelor of Laws degree he obtained from the University of Cincinnati in 1889. Haussermann arrived in the Philippines in 1898, serving as 2nd Lieutenant of the 20th Kansas Volunteers of the US Army during the Spanish-American War, which resulted in the turnover of the archipelago from the Spanish crown to the American empire.

Haussermann was Judge Advocate during the Philippine-American War and, eventually, City Attorney of Manila in 1900. He would be promoted to Assistant Attorney General of the Philippines in 1902. Haussermann resigned from his government post and returned to private law practice, becoming the head of Coudert Brothers from 1903 to 1906, which became Haussermann & Cohn and later, Haussermann, Cohn, & Fisher.

But Haussermann struck gold when he became president of the Benguet Consolidated Mining Co. in 1913, the country's oldest and most prolific gold mining corporation. Hausermann had also previously received stocks from the company's American founders since he drafted the company's articles of incorporation in 1903, when he was still practicing law.

A March 8, 1948 article from TIME Magazine titled "Mining: Return of the King" recounts how Haussermann crossed paths with mining. The article writes: "It was a disaster that had made Haussermann a miner. In 1911, a typhoon swept northern Luzon, flooded the tiny Benguet Co.'s only mill, bankrupted the owners, and left the Bank of the Philippine Islands with a worthless batch of loans. To retrieve its stake, the bank picked Haussermann, Benguet's lawyer, who had come to the islands in 1898 as a second lieutenant and had stayed to become an assistant attorney general in the new Philippine government."

BENEFIT AND SECRET SOCIETIES—
(See Index to Misecellaneous Information).

Bengal Bazaar—Indian and Japanese Goods P. O. Box 217 Telephone 3301 Cable Address: "Wassiamul"—8 Escolta, Binondo.

Benguet Consolidated Mining Co.—Gold Mining—Telephone 132—Cable Address 'Benguetcon"—Roxas Building, Binondo.
John W. Haussermann, President
Charles H. Sleeper, Vice-President
A. W. Beam, Secretary and General Manager.

OPPOSITE PAGE (TOP TO BOTTOM): John William Haussermann. Aerial view of the Antamok Gulch, one of the principal mines of the Benguet Consolidated Mining Co.; Igorot miners of Benguet Consolidated posing for a photo as they undergo changing of shifts. © LIFE Magazine, 13 February 1939; THIS PAGE (LEFT TO RIGHT): The Benguet Consolidated Mining Co. was also instrumental in building schools for the Igorots. © LIFE Magazine, 13 February 1939; Entry for the Benguet Consolidated Mining Co. in Rosenstock's Directory of China and Manila, 1924. © University of Michigan Library digital archives

"Judge" Haussermann floated 200,000 shares of new stock, borrowed $75,000 from the bank, built a new mill, and started mining ore. In two years, he paid off the bank's loan to Benguet. Gradually, he increased his own stock holdings out of earnings until he owned a controlling interest of about 30%. (His original investment was eventually worth $460,000.)"

In 1915, Haussermann successfully revived Benguet Consolidated from the ashes. In 1917, the company's first mining community—located at Antamok—finished construction. From its revival in the mid 1910s until 1932, the Benguet Consolidated's gross output reached PHP 36.7 million according to Haussermann's report published in the 1933 yearbook of the Port of Manila and other Philippine ports.

He would serve as president until 1915, resigning from the top post "because of a protracted absence from the Islands," writes in *Men of the Philippines: A biographical record of men of substantial achievement in the Philippine Islands (1931).* The record also notes that Haussermann "took the office of vice-president...and is also one of the active managing directors of the corporation." By 1939, however, Haussermann had returned to the presidency and had become general manager of Benguet Consolidated according to Miguel Cornejo's all-important *Commonwealth Directory of the Philippines (1939).* There is also a record in the August 1934 issue of the *Philippine Magazine* that Haussermann signed contracts "as President and General Manager of the Benguet Consolidated Mining Company to take over the management of three new mines—those of the Abra Mining Company, the Southern Cross, and the Consolidated Mines."

Haussermann also helmed the acquisition of the Balatoc Mining Company in the late 1920s, effectively merging what would become the two most powerful mining companies in the Philippines by the 1930s and ushering the city of Baguio towards a golden age of prosperity. Haussermann was elected president of the Balatoc Mining Co. in 1927 and would steer the company towards reaching a gross output of PHP 11.8 million in only five years, as Haussermann reported. He also had a $300,000 controlling interest in the company. In 1932, the Benguet and Balatoc companies generated "four-fifths of the gold mined in the Philippines," as Haussermann wrote in 1933, "or more than P 8,000,000 of the total output amounting to P 10,000,000."

By 1940, *TIME Magazine* notes, Haussermann's mines "employed 10,000 Filipinos, produced 1,200,000 tons of ore—about one-third of the islands' gold output—and earned their stockholders $4,000,000 a year." By 1941, the same magazine wrote that the Benguet Consolidated Mining Company had become a 100-million-dollar empire.

Haussermann was now the Philippines' (and America's) undisputed "King of Gold." Under his economic genius, the Philippines became the number one gold producer in all American states and territories, a status it would enjoy until World War II.

Due to his influential status, Haussermann acquired and became president of the North Luzon Power Company. He was also director of Philippine-American Drug Co., Manila Hume Pipe & Tile Co., Peoples Bank & Trust Co., and the People's Mortgage & Investment Co. Haussermann also held the positions of vice-president of the American Chamber of Commerce of the Philippines and of the national council of the US Chamber of Commerce.

Haussermann left the Philippines in 1940 and returned to Ohio, where he spent the "war years." He returned to Manila in May 1948 and immediately oversaw the reconstruction of the war-shattered mining company and its villages, which had started a year earlier. 1948 was also when he acquired *Under the Mango Tree* from Fernando Amorsolo, himself the brightest name in Philippine art. The piece became a poignant reminder of idyllic times and his source of power and inspiration to rebuild and reclaim what has been lost. *(Adrian Maranan)*

An *Obra Maestra* from the Golden Trove of the Gold King

Fernando Amorsolo (1892 - 1972)
Under The Mango Tree
signed, dated 1948 and inscribed "Manila" (lower right)
oil on canvas
19 1/2" x 27" (50 cm x 67 cm)

P 4,000,000

PROVENANCE
Acquired directly from the artist

Fernando Amorsolo is one of the most revered artists in Philippine art history. For a long time, the Amorsolo genre, characterized by his realistic images of the bucolic Filipino countryside-scenes of rural life, landscapes, and everyday activities depicted in vibrant hues, dominated the Philippine art scene. Amorsolo's contemporaries and emerging artists alike followed this style and subject matter.

The work at hand exhibits a scene during the harvest season, except it's shown from a different angle. In view is a group of country folks resting under the shade of a mango tree: one is a gray-bearded man sitting on the overgrown root; beside him on the right is a young lady holding a bilao, and on the man's left is another young lady standing up while carrying a child; the three of them looking at another woman cooking at a make-shift charcoal stove. In the background are farmers working in the rice field under the blazing midday sun, a thematic element often used by Amorsolo to symbolize the harsh conditions of rural life, such as the intense heat and the physical toll of manual labor. Therefore, this work thoroughly captures not only the hard work but also the familial affection of the Filipinos: farmers working amidst the blazing sun and families waiting for and preparing food for their families to eat together.

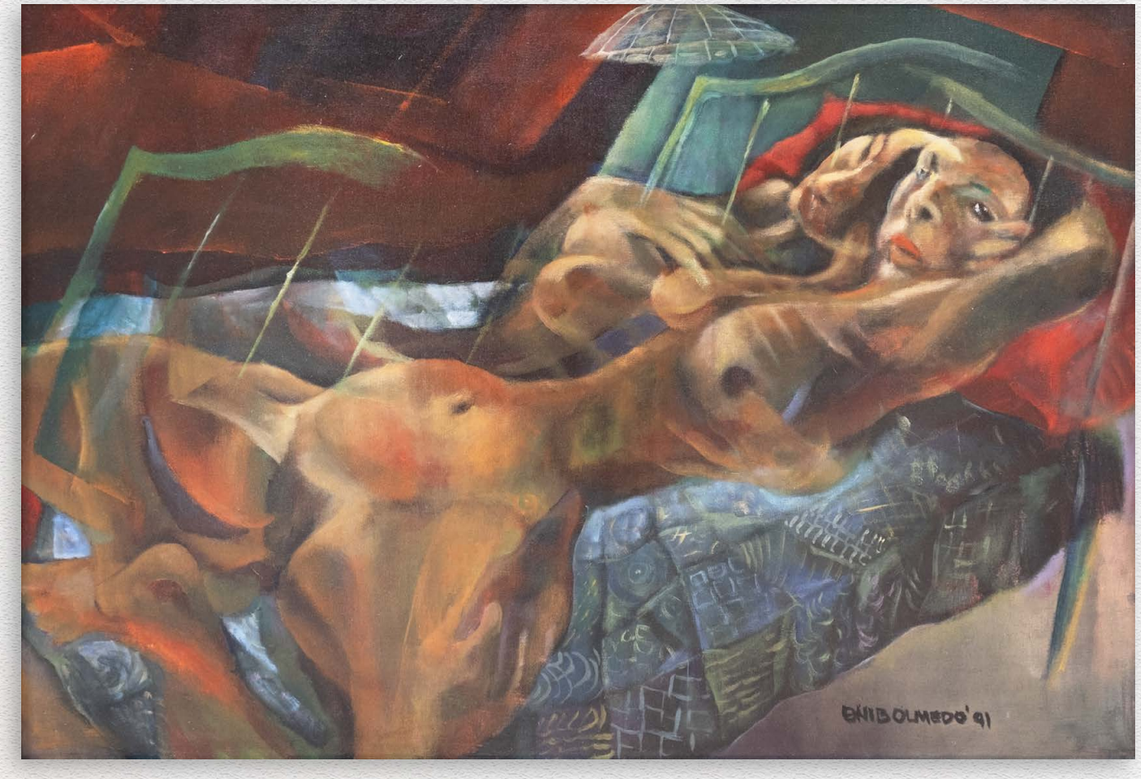
"He invested rural people with dignity and country life a feeling of contentment," art essayist Alfredo R. Roces writes in *Amorsolo (1975)*. Indeed, the master painter's artistic bravura and use of light strokes and vivid tones can create masterpieces that elevate Filipino folklife and spread its various emotions through the viewers. To this day, his influence in the art field is still strong, and many people want to get ahold of his works, drawn to the sheer beauty and aesthetic pleasure they offer, admiring the skill and vision that went into their creation. *(Jessica Magno)*

Lamentations, Longing, and Loneliness
Onib Olmedo and the Poignancy of Human Existence

1991 finds Onib Olmedo right in the middle of rapid career-defining moments. He, along with fellow figurative expressionists Ang Kiukok and Solomon Saprid, opened the decade with an exhibition at the Cultural Center of the Philippines, the first and only CCP show Onib ever embarked on. Come 1992 Onib had been awarded Honorable Mention for Concert in the Alley and The Apartment in the prestigious International Exposition de Peintres at the Château Musée de Cagnes-sur-Mer.

In the middle of these events is the creation of the lot at hand. *Bedroom Blues* features Onib's distinct distortion as he depicts two women in bed. They lean against each other, heads pressed together as the expanse of brown skin draws the audience's attention to the impossible anatomy of their bodies. Their waists cinch to give way to impossibly wide hips and their breasts lay heavy against their chests. One of the women, her nose upturned and her eyes – wide and warped in how Onib usually rendered his figures – stared the viewers down. There is a sense of despair that permeates this piece, a loneliness that intertwines these bodies together. It is a story that begs to be told – who are these women and what could have possibly happened for them to end up where they are now?

A proletarian sensibility is imbued in the worlds created by Onib. His contorted figures echo the unjust system with which the poor continue to get poorer. However, hope is not lost for Onib; amidst the suffering is a sense of resilience that continues to push his subjects forward. They trudge on, eyes pinned to the future when they are finally liberated from an oppressive status quo. (Hannah Valiente)



100

Onib Olmedo (1937 - 1996)
Bedroom Blues
signed and dated 1991 (lower right)
acrylic on canvas
24″ x 36″ (61 cm x 91 cm)

P 700,000

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

PROVENANCE
Galleria Duemila, Inc

ABOVE: Onib Olmedo. © Miguel Fabie

LOT 101

The Introspective Jose Joya

Musings on the Zodiac, Oriental Cultures, and Indigenous Identity

"Travel has often given fresh impetus to their art at certain crucial points in their careers, saving them from artistic stagnation, as in the cases of Vicente Manansala, Ang Kiukok, Jose Joya, Federico Aguilar, N. Veloso Abueva, and Roberto Chabet."

"New York at this moment seems to be where our artists are gravitating. Joya is there on an American grant, on the verge of putting up his first Manhattan show."

—ART CRITIC ERIC TORRES, "WHY ARTISTS MUST TRAVEL," IN HIS COLUMN "WAY OF SEEING," PUBLISHED IN THE MANILA TIMES, 14 MAY 1968

"Paradoxically, it was in New York where Joya succeeded in exorcising himself of the abstract expressionist daemon. Thus, had his development come full circle. Returning to the place after ten years, Joya violently changed his aesthetic directions from the radiating style of his Venice [Biennale] works to a containment of forces, to a rigid geometrizing, a psychometry in terms of circles and other similar mandala-like configurations."

—ART CRITIC LEONIDAS V. BENESA, IN HIS ESSAY "THE DRAWINGS OF JOYA," PUBLISHED IN THE MONOGRAPH JOYA: DRAWINGS (1973)

The Two Joyas of the 1960s

In 1964, Jose Joya's name became immortalized as he represented the Philippines in its landmark debut at the Venice Biennale, dubbed "The Olympics of the Art World." In Venice, Joya unleashed the climax of his abstract expressionist style, exemplified by the monumental work Hills of Nikko, now displayed in the National Museum of the Philippines.

But in the late 1960s, Joya's art showed a radical evolution, a reincarnation of all sorts. In 1967, Joya received the John D. Rockefeller III scholarship grant (now the Asian Cultural Council) to study and paint in New York. One can remember it was in New York where Joya wallowed in the abstract expressionist spirit during his first American sojourn (1956-57) under a Smith-Mundt-Fulbright study grant. Ten years later, Joya would shed off the abstract expressionist visual language in favor of geometric expressionism, producing works dominated by circles and grids that evoke the seriality of Pop Art, the dominant art style in America in the late '60s.

A December 3, 1970 article published in The Manila Chronicle writes, "While in New York, Joya abandoned his now familiar abstract expressionist style in favor of a monochromatic, incised, and linear vocabulary inspired by prehistoric graffiti found in Philippine iron-age pottery."

Joya's second New York sojourn became a contradictory and full-circle experience.

Joya's *Virgo:* Exemplar of the Artist's Creative Evolution

This 1968 work titled *Virgo* was among the works Joya produced during his artistry-changing second "New York Period." Here, the symbol of Virgo is incised in the center and enclosed in an inverted triangle. It is surrounded by several other incisions, with some referencing the different signs of the zodiac: Libra, Aries, Sagittarius, Aquarius, Taurus, and Pisces. Virgo forms part of Joya's series of works, which he made in 1968, centering on the twelve zodiac signs. Informally called the "Mandala Series," Joya derives inspiration from the Oriental concept of the mandala (Sanskrit for "sacred circle"), symbolizing the universe and one's meditative journey towards harmony and fullness. In Oriental religions, particularly Hinduism and Buddhism, the mandala is essentially an instrument for meditation; meditating in front of a mandala means "entering" the vast expanse of the cosmos, in which the mind becomes enlightened, spirituality is nourished, and truths and contradictions are revealed and realized.

More than the blockbuster popularity of Pop Art in New York, Joya's exploration of serial art harks back more to the artist's inward knowledge of its Oriental origins, as exemplified by the handscroll paintings of ancient China and the Tang Dynasty masterpiece *Noble Ladies in Tang Dynasty.*

In Joya's work, which evokes the Hindu *yantra,* the arbitrarily placed incisions surrounding the center come off as allusions to worldly chaos. As one traverses through all the turmoil and disruption, one eventually arrives at the center, where Virgo, the maiden, resides and comes to a full realization of one's place and purpose, letting the self revel in a dynamic and transformative kind of peace. Since every human falls under a specific zodiac sign, Joya serializing the astrological symbols into one oeuvre signifies an ideal of the harmonious unity of all humanity.

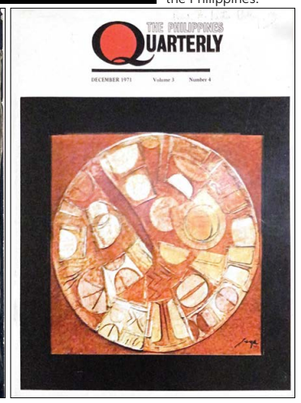
TOP: Libra and Aries (oil on canvas, 1968, 23" x 23" each), two other works that form part of Joya's "Mandala Series" centering on the twelve zodiac signs. MIDDLE AND BOTTOM: Two other similar works, Rain Cycle and Man's Life Cycle, both painted in 1968, also showing Joya's sustained pursuit of the Oriental mandala and Filipino indigenous art forms © Leon Gallery Archives.

José Joya (1931 - 1995)
Virgo
signed and dated 1968 (lower left and verso)
oil on canvas
23″ x 23″ (58 cm x 58 cm)

P 1,000,000

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

BESIDE: The Manunggul Jar, excavated in 1964 in Palawan, served as a primary inspiration for Joya's progression from abstract expressionism to geometric expressionism in the late 1960s © National Museum of the Philippines.



LEFT: Jose Joya in the late 1960s © Facebook, National Artist for Visual Arts 2003 Jose T. Joya. RIGHT: Joya's Manunggul Vessel, featured on the cover of The Philippines Quarterly (December 1971) and showing similarities with Virgo

The Manunggul Jar and Joya: Wedding the Oriental and the Native

On another important note, Joya's venture into geometric expressionism came as a result of an inner reawakening of his native sensibility, which was due in part to homesickness and the resurgence of Filipino nationalism during the tumultuous '60s. Although immersed in American soil, Joya also found himself studying Philippine history. "At this time, the study of Philippine history engaged me," says Joya in art critic Leonidas Benesa's Joya: Drawings. "Digging into rare sources, I came across materials that gave light facets to Philippine history." By this time, Filipino historians Teodoro Agoncillo and Renato Constantino had been propagating a nationalist historiography aimed at decolonizing Philippine history.

The Joya of the late 1960s successfully cast away his Western-influenced abstract expressionism in favor of a profound expression of a Filipino identity in his art. A *Manila Bulletin* review of Joya's new geometric works exhibited in his homecoming show at the Luz Gallery in late 1970 writes, "Joya's new pieces bear a marked departure from his familiar abstract expressionist style, often repeated in series....Joya...was preoccupied with primitive symbolic graffiti recalling ancient Filipino drawings found in burial pottery....[It is] a new enthusiasm to explore the pre-Hispanic Philippine visual symbols."

The review references "burial pottery," likely the Manunggul Jar, excavated in 1964 in Lipuun Point, Palawan, in the Manunggul Cave that forms part of the archaeologically rich Tabon Cave Complex. The Manunggul Jar, hailed as a *magnum opus* of Philippine pre-colonial civilization, represents the soul's entry into the afterlife and underscores the importance of water in our ancestors' notions of life and death.

The archaeological significance of the jar intrigued the homesick, New York-based Joya. As a result, Joya began incorporating and referencing the jar's curvilinear designs into his works, particularly in *Virgo*. "[Joya] adumbrated [the design of the Manunggul Jar] into a series of paintings," writes in the cover notes December 1971 issue of *The Philippines Quarterly*. The magazine recounts that Joya was "so struck by the originality of the design of these ancient relics."

Combined with the subject embodying the mysticism of the a*nting-anting* (amulet) and the fact that seriality is ubiquitous in Philippine indigenous art (e.g., weaving, embroidery, ornamentation), Joya had now arrived at a creative idiom that is not only entirely his own but more so reflects the collective identity and indigenous pride of his people.

Unlike his abstract expressionist works that possess a "central core" from which the composition is anchored, or in the words of the artist, "the seat of energy," Joya's *mandalas* derive their energy from the entirety of the composition, possessing a logical balance of all elements. It is an artistic expression representative of a people whose shared identity and culture are rooted in a constant struggle towards exploring, redefining, and reclaiming our nationhood through the lens of meditating on our indigenous past. *(Adrian Maranan)*

Joya's Mandala

Renato Rocha Sr. (1937 - 2001)

Mother and Father
wood
with base: H: 62 1/2″ L: 21 3/4″ W: 20″ (159 cm x 55 cm x 51 cm)
sculpture: H: 58 1/2″ L: 16″ W: 16 1/2″ (149 cm x 41 cm x 42 cm)

P 100,000

Accompanied by a certificate issued by the heirs
of the artist confirming the authenticity of this lot

Growing up in Tabaco, Albay, Renato S. Rocha's fascination with sculpting was already showing when, as a child, he would mold animal and human figures from clays in rice fields. Going on to study at the University of the Philippines School of Fine Arts where he majored in Sculpture, Rocha later worked with great Filipino sculptors including Napoleon Abueva who was later conferred the award National Artist for Visual Arts.

Throughout his works, Rocha prefers using wood as his medium. Oftentimes, they were sourced from his friends from the province, and using them, he creates a magnificent body of work that features women, families, and other genre pieces.

"In his hands, Philippine wood never looked more luxurious, warmer, and richer, enhancing the distinctive sensuous forms of his sculpture," notes Prof. Eric Torres during Rocha's first exhibition in 1978.

His *Mother and Father* incorporates the best of what his oeuvre has to offer. Using wood, Rocha utilizes straight, choppy cuts to create a blocky appearance, rendering the sculpture almost abstract in its composition.

Mother and Father perfectly encapsulates Rocha's ability to translate emotions that transcend mediums. Snuggling close with their heads bowed, one could feel the love and comfort that intertwines these people, abstract as their form may be. With his hands, Rocha bends the rigid wood to convey the warm affectionate feelings his muses indulge in.

Rocha's works are modern in their abstraction and yet, he still carries his classical bearings in them. Even in their abstraction, they glow in character, evidently Filipino in sourcing and in disposition. *(Hannah Valiente)*

Michael Cacnio (b. 1969)

Untitled
signed and dated 1998
brass
with base:
H: 17 1/2″ (44 cm)
L: 11 1/2″ (29 cm)
W: 17″ (43 cm)
sculpture:
H: 14 1/2″ (37 cm)
L: 7″ (18 cm)
W: 17″ (43 cm)

P 500,000

León Gallery wishes to than Mrs. Tess Cacnio
for confirming the authenticity of this lot

Michael Cacnio, a world-renowned Filipino sculptor, has carved a unique niche in the industry with his exquisite, intricately crafted brass works celebrating Filipino heritage. His sculptures, a testament to his unparalleled talent, have accumulated multiple awards and acknowledgments globally and exhibited in various art spaces, museums, and galleries. Furthermore, Cacnio was the first and only Filipino artist to have a solo exhibit at the European Commission's headquarters in Berlaymont, Brussels, Belgium.

This work, featuring two horses engaged in a fierce battle, is devoid of Cacnio's usual kids-at-play figures. Nevertheless, it still captures the essence of Filipino culture and tradition. It embodies the horse-fighting tradition—although prohibited—of the southern parts of the Philippines, especially during fiestas. Hence, this masterpiece serves as a poignant reminder of the country's rich cultural heritage.

When asked about his style, Cacnio explicitly described it as expressionism. "My sculptures emphasize the emotions attached to the daily activities and lives of normal people living in real communities. People can relate and these remind them of a similar character or happening in their own lives," Cacnio shared in an interview with the Philippine Star in September 2011. His figures, with their emotional depth and Cacnio's ingeniousness and mastery of his craft, evoke a deep connection with his viewers and Philippine culture. *(Jessica Magno)*

LOT 104 to 107

ROBERTO T. VILLANUEVA

Visionary Art Collector and Industrialist

By his early 30s, Roberto T. Villanueva was one of the most respected businessmen in the Philippines, a two-term President of the influential Philippine Chamber of Industries as well as as a member of the powerful Monetary Board. He had also been elected president of the worldwide organization of Jaycees International of which he was an enthusiastic leader.

And by his early 40s, he had masterminded the biggest deal in Philippine business history to date: the acquisition of MERALCO — the country's largest electricity distributor — from its longtime American owners by an all Filipino company, Meralco Securities Corporation. Villanueva made the deal in the buy out of MERALCO for the Lopez Family in a New York City restaurant. The members of this august board were: Eugenio Lopez, Alfredo Montelibano, Antonio C. Delgado, Eugenio Lopez, Jr., Luz Magsaysay, Ernesto Rufino, Gen. Basilio Valdez, and Alfonso Calalang. Villanueva presided as chairman of the board, making him the first Filipino chair.

Ten years later, lightning would strike twice and Villanueva would repeat this coup. He would once again lead a group of Filipino investors to acquire Atlantic Gulf & Pacific (AG&P) of Manila Inc. Again, Villanueva would become the company's first Filipino chairman and CEO.

He was chairman of the Private Development Corp. of the Philippines (PDCP), an entity he organized with the World Bank and the International Finance Corporation; and also, chairman of Lepanto Exploration (Asia) Inc. His credentials would include: general manager, Philippine Portland Cement Co.; Philippine Planters Investment, and Pampanga Sugar Mills Investment Co. He was director of the National Development Corporation and a member of the National Forestry Council; he was also chair of the Philippine Standards Association.

In 1962, Villanueva formed Trans Philippines Investment Corporation and bought the Lopezes' sugar mills, Binalbagan Isabela Sugar Company (BISCMO) and Pampanga Sugar Mill (PASUMIL). For this, he would be known as the pioneer of leveraged buy-out in the country.

Villanueva was a member of the International Bankers Association, based in Washington D.C.; the Philippine-Japanese Economic Cooperation Committee; the PhilippineJapanese Society and the Sugar Club of New York.

But there was a little-known interest of his. After the war, Roberto's father, Manuel B. Villanueva, would organize The Manila Chronicle. In 1949, The Villanueva patriarch would sell his holdings to the Lopez Family on the condition that his son, Roberto, would remain in the company. This paved the way for his close friendship with the Philippines' Neo-Realists — men such as Hernando R. Ocampo, Vicente Manansala, Cesar Legaspi who either wrote or contributed their artworks — or both — to the Chronicle's wildly popular Sunday Magazine, entitled "This Week."

In addition, The Roberto T. Villanueva Collection of ceramics is one of the most comprehensive collections of Chinese and Southeast Asian tradeware found in the Philippines. It has more than 500 pieces dating from the 9th to the 19th century. Covering a remarkable range of this ware, this collection is highly representative of the different groups of ceramics from China and Southeast Asia traded to the Philippines over a thousand years.

Villanueva was also a knowledgeable collector of Philippine art through the centuries. He would be a member of the board of Far East Bank & Trust, which acquired the bulk of the Juan Luna paintings bequeathed to his son, Architect Andres Luna de San Pedro.

The Roberto T. Villanueva collection of Filipino art is nothing short of legendary.

(OPPOSITE PAGE) Roberto T. Villanueva, March 07,1920 - March 04, 1995. TOP LEFT: President Diosdado Macapagal welcomes Villanueva.TOP RIGHT: Villanueva center in Washington D.C. Beside him is Gerardo-Sicat; MIDDLE: Villanueva third from left with pillars of the Filipino American business community including Washington Sycip; BOTTOM: Villanueva rightmost with President Carlos P. Garcia

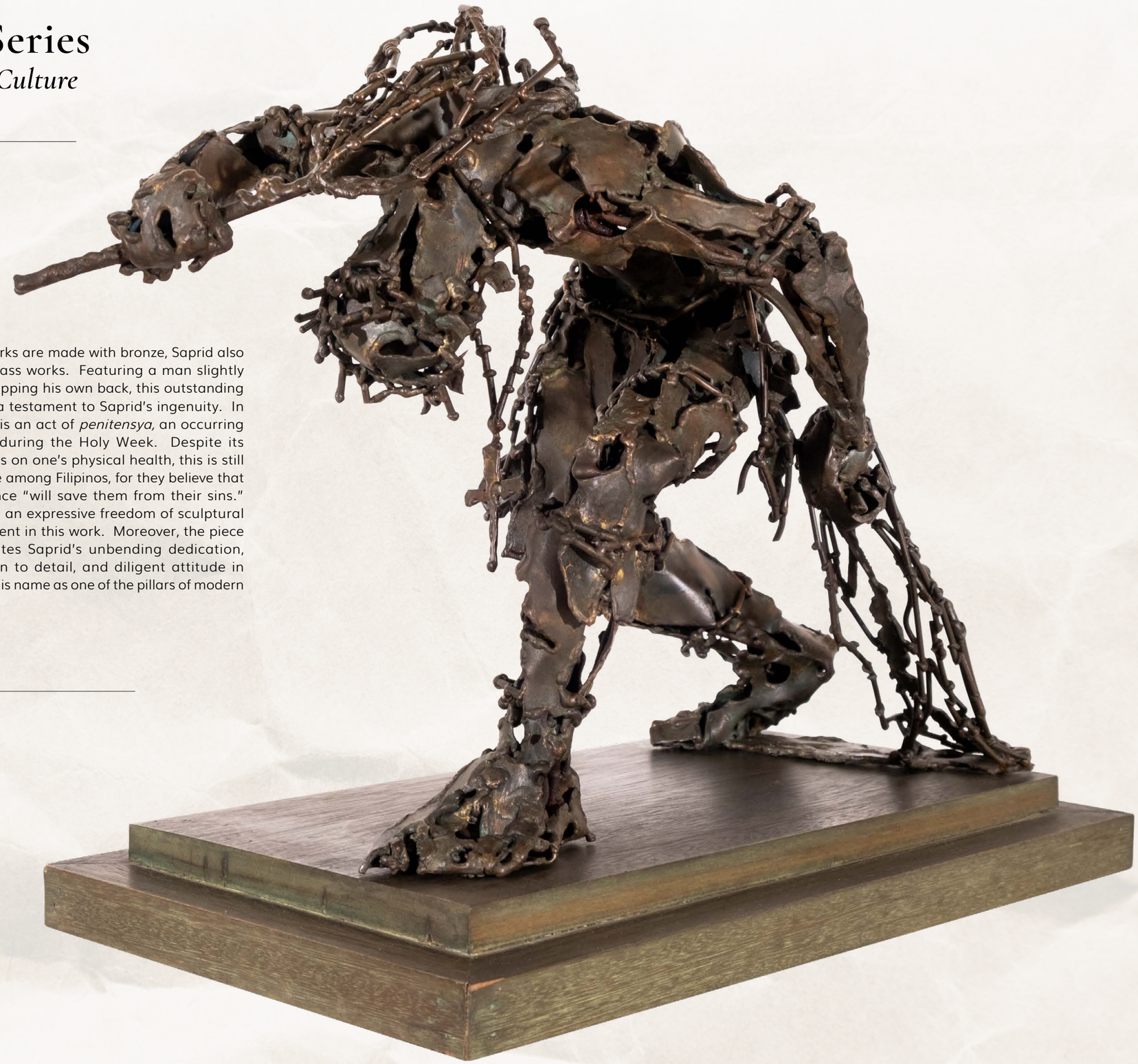
Saprid's Flagellants Series

A Microcosm of Filipino Catholic Culture

Hailing from Imus, Cavite, Solomon Saprid is one of the most celebrated modern Filipino sculptors. His foray into sculpting was sparked by the encouragement of Vicente Manansala, a pivotal moment that set him on a unique artistic path. His first wooden sculpture, *Sad Christ,* was not just a bold entry into the 1967 Art Association of the Philippines' (AAP) annual art competition, but also a significant moment that piqued the art community's interest, marking the start of his artistic journey. This momentous piece was a testament to his potential and set the stage for his future success. Consequently, he represented the Philippines in the 1971 Indian Triennale and the 1973 Australian Biennial.

While Solomon Saprid's subjects often revolve around Philippine mythical creatures, such as his famous *Tikbalang* series, he has also explored various other themes. These include crucifixion, flagellants, mother and child, puppeteers, and sundry genres of peasants and working folks. Throughout his career, Saprid has shown remarkable versatility, experimenting with various materials. His most favored one, metal, allows him to shape, stretch, and transform it into expressive figures, showcasing his adaptability and range.

While most of his works are made with bronze, Saprid also takes pride in his brass works. Featuring a man slightly bent down while whipping his own back, this outstanding bronze sculpture is a testament to Saprid's ingenuity. In Filipino culture, this is an act of *penitensya,* an occurring sight and practice during the Holy Week. Despite its negative implications on one's physical health, this is still a continuing practice among Filipinos, for they believe that this act of repentance "will save them from their sins." Like his other works, an expressive freedom of sculptural manipulation is evident in this work. Moreover, the piece at hand demonstrates Saprid's unbending dedication, meticulous attention to detail, and diligent attitude in working, cementing his name as one of the pillars of modern art. *(Jessica Magno)*



104 PROPERTY FROM THE ROBERTO T. VILLANUEVA COLLECTION

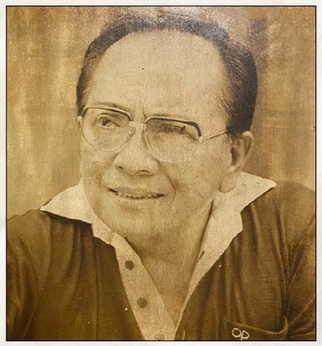
Solomon Saprid (1917 - 2003)

Penitensiya
signed and dated 1973
bronze
with base:
H: 15 1/2″ (39 cm)
L: 11 1/4″ (29 cm)
W: 20″ (51 cm)

sculpture:
H: 13 1/2″ (34 cm)
L: 10″ (25 cm)
W: 18 1/2″ (47 cm)

P 500,000

Accompanied by a certificate issued by the heirs of the artist confirming the authenticity of this lot



ABOVE: Solomon Saprid © Instagram: solomonsaprid

The Earliest Orlina to Come to Auction

by HANNAH VALIENTE

Ramon Orlina's 1977 *Fantasie II* echoes the characteristics of his early works. A pioneer in his craft, Orlina's glass-cutting method varies from the usual hot-blowing technique – instead, his is a cold method, taking to a block of glass as a sculptor would a marble, minutely chipping away to create a vision in the fragile, easily breakable glass. The result is, for the start of his career, an oeuvre that boasts of sharp edges and cutting slopes.

A master of incorporating light, shadows, and depth in his works, Orlina takes great inspiration from his childhood; growing up in Taal, Batangas opened his eyes up to the iridescence of the waters and the rocks, with artistry flowing in his blood as both his great-great-grandfather and his uncle are artists.

Fantasie II features the sharp lines of his early works, and yet there are traces of the curves that would be featured in his later works. Just as the name suggests, Orlina mimics the fantastical elements of the unknown as he carves through the fragile glass with ease. Looking at Orlina's works means taking into consideration the way the light filters through the translucent glass, the layers with which he incorporates in his piece. The fantasy of his works lies in the experience of it – one can never truly view an Orlina piece the exact same way another would. As one gazes at *Fantasie II,* they couldn't help but wonder what are the others seeing, connecting the viewers and with Orlina himself, with each interpretation just as valid as the one that came before it.

BESIDE: Ramon Orlina. © Leon Gallery Archives

105 PROPERTY FROM THE ROBERTO T. VILLANUEVA COLLECTION

Ramon Orlina (b. 1944)

Fantasie II
signed and dated 1977
carved republic glass
14 1/2" x 10 1/4" x 4 1/2" (37 cm x 26 cm x 11 cm)

P 1,600,000

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

The Roberto Villanueva Lady of the Rosary
An Industrialist's Venerated Icon

This exceptionally bigger depiction of "Nuestra Senora del Rosario"/Our Lady of the Rosary has both the Virgin Mary and the Child Jesus with time –mellowed ivory faces and hands and carved bodies of polychromed "baticuling" wood, a softwood amazingly resistant to white ants/termites. The Virgin and the Child have Sinitic features and the faces have Oriental airs; the Virgin's face in particular has a peaceful, serene mien akin to the Chinese goddess Guanyin. The hair of the Virgin and the Child are carved in an early "binihon" style (a colloquial term by antique agents meaning "thin noodle–style"). The overall style of the vestments --- long mantle/cape, doublet/tight bodice, bell sleeves, gown fastened in front --- is Spanish Renaissance in character and there is the trademark stylized "suksok" of the cape at the back (a forced fold resulting in pleats in a garment, seen occasionally in the art of the Spanish painter Francisco de Zurbaran [1598–1664], a frequent inspiration of the legendary Spanish–Basque couturier Cristobal Balenciaga [1895–1972]; the "suksok" is a trademark characteristic of Philippine eighteenth century images of the Virgin Mary, but not so much of the earlier seventeenth century ones). The image is from the eighteenth century (1700s) and its overall character, including the nineteenth century "ex votos" 80% solid silver appliquees (offered mementos of cures and other favors granted), situates it as having come from Laguna province, southeast of Manila. It has been suggested that the reason why the silver appliquees are not complete was because they were being donated one by one and the offerings ended when the image was removed from public veneration.

The general style and iconography of the Villanueva image shares similarities with the famously opulent image of "Nuestra Senora de la Soterrana de Nieva" in the collection of former First Lady Imelda Romualdez–Marcos --- a small image of the Virgin Mary and the Child Jesus with ivory faces and hands clad in a farthingale dress of piercework 18 karat gold vestments wearing similar exquisitely worked crowns and aureoles --- initially venerated at the Binondo church, originally the property of the legendary Don Antonio Maria Tuason who established its confraternity in Manila in 1781 after the British Invasion of 1762–64. Tuason was a very successful and rich Sangley trader who assisted the Spanish against the British invaders with his resources and numerous mercenaries during the two–year invasion; he was greatly rewarded with huge land grants by the Spanish Crown for his loyalty and was the first ennobled Filipino to join the ranks of the Spanish "hidalguia" aristocracy.

The term "Theotokos" (Greek: "Mother of God") is the depiction of the Virgin Mary with the Child Jesus in the Eastern Orthodox Church. The Latin equivalent is "Dei Genitrix." "Theotokos" was initially appropriated with gravitas by Filipino scholars and researchers to describe the antique Philippine images of the Virgin Mary and the Child Jesus. The Greek term has been accepted and widely adopted by Filipino antique aficionados.

The original image of "Nuestra Senora de la Soterrana de la Nieva" (Our Lady of the Subterranean, titled such as she was found in an underground cave in the late 1300s, most likely hidden and buried during the 800 years of the Moorish period in Spain) was venerated at the 14th century church of Santa Maria Real de Nieva near Segovia northwest of Madrid, on the way to Valladolid; the original image was burned in a fire during the turn of the twentieth century. "Nieva" (as in the town of Santa Maria Real de Nieva) in the NS de la Soterrana title was inadvertently confused with "Nuestra Senora de las Nieves" (Our Lady of the Snows), another 14th century image of the Virgin Mary venerated in the Church of Santa Cruz de la Palma, La Palma island in the Spanish Canary Islands off northwestern Africa. "Nuestra Senora de las Nieves" is an ancient Marian title from the Basilica Papale di Santa Maria Maggiore in Rome --- also known as "Santa Maria delle Nevi" (Italian) derived from the Latin "Sancta Maria ad Nives" (Our Lady of the Snows).

106 PROPERTY FROM THE ROBERTO T. VILLANUEVA COLLECTION

Theotokos – Nuestra Señora Del Rosario (Our Lady of The Rosary)

18th century
Ivory, polychromed "baticuling" wood ("Litsea leytensis"),
80% solid silver "ex votos" appliques (nineteenth century)
H: 31" (79 cm)
L: 13 1/2" (34 cm)
W: 16" (41 cm)

P 400,000

PROVENANCE
Private collection, Laguna

The late, great playwright and antique dealer Floy Quintos (Florencio Louis de la Cruz Quintos, o 1961 – + 2024) occasionally spoke wistfully of a time when the Ermita antique shops were teeming with really rare treasures that one only had to shoot the breeze through them and they would yield truly wonderful specimens. He was referring to a singular, spectacular, polychrome "La Inmaculada Concepcion" image from Bohol in the collection of intellectual and heritage advocate Susan Calo–Medina, which she found one afternoon during the late 1970s in a serendipitous jaunt through the area. This "Theotokos" ("Mother of God") as "Nuestra Senora del Rosario"/Our Lady of the Rosary statue collected earlier by Roberto Villanueva is comparable in rarity and would have also been one of Quintos' examples.

As always, the times have changed. Yes, Floy was right in his nostalgia: the 1930s–1970s were a golden time to acquire Filipino antiques as Victorian attitudes and fashions (including Art Nouveau) were rapidly in transition to Art Deco, and then to Art Moderne, and they were coming out of primary sources like the 17th, 18th, and 19th century churches and the 19th century "bahay–na–bato" of the erstwhile "principalias" and "ilustrados," where they were no longer regarded as fashionable, useful, nor relevant. Serious collectors today concede that it is quite difficult to come across truly exceptional specimens, although they may possess the requisite bottomless funds for acquisition. All the best antiques seem to already be in Philippine government agencies (National Museum, BSP Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas Museum, Intramuros Administration, NHCP National Historical Commission of the Philippines, NCCA National Commission for Culture and the Arts, et al), the top religious and educational institutions (San Agustin Church & Convent Museum, University of Santo Tomas Museum, Ateneo de Manila University – Arete, De La Salle University Dasmarinas – Museo De La Salle) and the top private collections (Que, Yao Campos Jr, Agustines, Laya, Gutierrez, Chan, Trenas, Pardo de Tavera Loinaz, Aboitiz–Ortiz, et al). Not to mention the innumerable artistic casualties of World War II and the Holocaust that was the Liberation of Manila in February 1945. Of course, that is only partially true. So much more are emerging from postwar 1950s, 60s, 70s, and 80s houses (where they were transferred from prewar and 19th century dwellings). That is why Philippine auction houses are doing very good business. (*Augusto Marcelino Reyes Gonzalez III)*

Acknowledgments: (Romeo Allanigue; "The Diarist" by Thelma Sioson–

A Lot of Two La Inmaculada Concepcion

a.) La Inmaculada Concepcion
(The Immaculate Conception)
late 18th century
polychromed molave hardwood ("Vitex parviflora")
H: 12 3/4" (33 cm)
L: 5" (13 cm)
W: 6" (15 cm)

PROVENANCE
Private collection, Laguna

b.) La Inmaculada Concepcion
(The Immaculate Conception)
18th century
ivory, polychromed "baticuling" wood ("Litsea leytensis")
H: 14 1/2" (37 cm)
L: 4 3/4" (12 cm)
W: 5 1/2" (14 cm)

PROVENANCE
Private collection, Morong (Rizal), Laguna, Cavite

P 200,000

This other image of "La Inmaculada Concepcion" The Immaculate Conception in molave hardwood is an older rendition of the title from Morong (the original name of Rizal province), Laguna, or Cavite. Filipino antique aficionados call this form of the Virgin Mary as "a bell–shaped Virgin" because of its elaborate dress, which hovers between the Spanish Medieval and the Spanish Renaissance of the 15th–16th century (the Italian Renaissance was 14th century) with its long blue cape, red skirt with front clasps, blue surcoat, blue bell sleeves, tight red bodice, and white lace ruff. The hair is long and articulated; there is no "suksok" pleat at the back, indicating an earlier image. Three cherubs with disturbed expressions adorn the "nube" cloud base. It is a rendition of the immensely popular, early seventeenth century cult image of "Nuestra Senora de la Paz y Buenviaje" Our Lady of Peace and Good Voyage of Antipolo, whose official iconography is none other than that of "La Inmaculada Concepcion." According to senior antiquarians, folk images such as these were usually sold by local carvers and vendors to pilgrims in church patios during fiesta time.

After thorough and lengthy consultations with the bishops for many years, Pope Piux IX issued the bull "Ineffabilis Deus" in 1854 which, after centuries of impassioned debates between the foremost theologians and intellectuals within the Roman Catholic Church, finally declared the dogma of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary:

"We declare, pronounce, and define that the doctrine which holds that the most Blessed Virgin Mary , in the first instance of her conception, by a singular grace and privilege granted by Almighty God, in view of the merits of Jesus Christ, the Saviour of the human race, was preserved free from all stain of original sin, is a doctrine revealed by God and therefore to be believed firmly and constantly by the faithful."

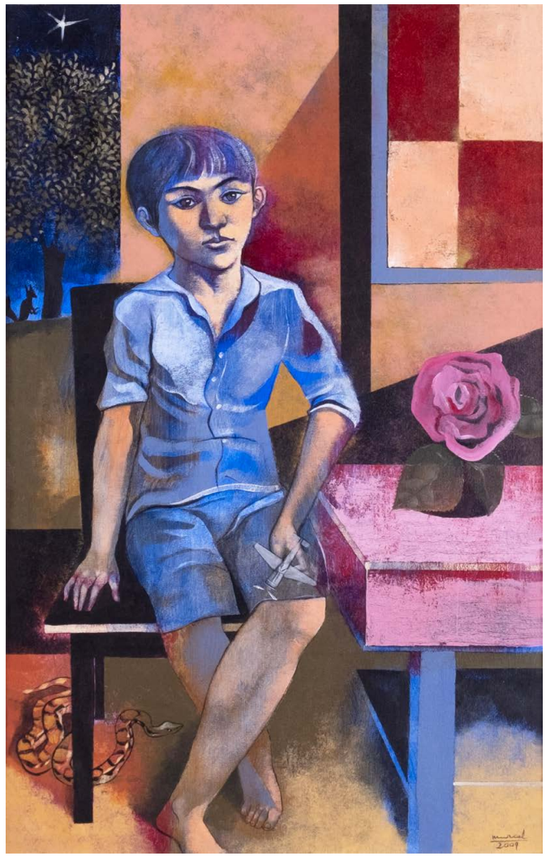
The 1854 declaration of the dogma of the Immaculate Conception in the bull "Ineffabilis Deus" by Pope Pius IX was further reinforced and confirmed by the papal–approved Marian apparitions at the Chapel of the Daughters of Charity of Saint Vincent de Paul on the rue du Bac, Paris in 1830 ("O Mary, conceived without sin, pray for us who have recourse to you." and later at the apparitions in the grotto at Lourdes in 1858 ("I am the Immaculate Conception.")

Roberto Villanueva (o 1920) was a famous industrialist in the power generation and sugar production sectors and one of the Philippines' richest men during his time. He was the founder and general managing editor of the Manila Chronicle in 1945, president of MERALCO Manila Electric Company 1961, chairman of MERALCO Manila Electric Company 1961, associate editor of the Manila Chronicle, 1945–47; chairman of the Binalbagan–Isabela Sugar Company, 1949–62; president of Trans-Philippines Investment Corporation, 1970–84; president of Atlantic Gulf & Pacific of Manila Inc, 1971. He was also a member of the board of the FEBTC Far East Bank & Trust Company; two–term president of the Philippine Chamber of Industries; member of the Monetary Board; president of Jaycees International; chairman of the PDCP Private Development Corporation of the Philippines; chairman of Lepanto Exploration Asia Inc; general manager of Philippine Portland Cement Co, Philippine Planters Investment, and Pampanga Sugar Mills Investment Co; director of the NDC National Development Corporation; member of the National Forestry Council; chairman of the Philippine Standards Association; member of the International Bankers Association, Washington DC; the Philippine–Japanese Economic Cooperation Committee; the Philippine–Japanese Society; and the Sugar Club of New York.

Roberto Bosch Villanueva was a son of Manuel Villanueva and Eugenia Bosch. He married Corazon Grau. He was known to have had all his three sons Roberto Jr, Luis, and Eduardo Grau Villanueva educated in the top Ivy League universities.

Roberto Villanueva's great contribution to Filipino culture was his collection of Filipino modern art mostly by Vicente Manansala, Hernando R Ocampo, and Cesar Legaspi as well as a 500–piece selection of excavated and shipwrecked Oriental ceramic tradeware from 800–1900 AD. Villanueva collected across a wide spectrum of Filipiniana, including folk "santos."

Acknowledgments: ("The Diarist" by Thelma Sioson–San Juan)



108

Marcel Antonio (b.1965)

The Little Prince
signed and dated 2009 (lower right)
acrylic on canvas
38" x 24" (97 cm x 61 cm)

P 180,000

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

In pursuit of an artistic career in the 1980s, Marcel Antonio had ceased his studies at the UP College of Fine Arts soon after his debut solo exhibition. Since then, Antonio would go on to carve himself a niche in the contemporary Manila gallery scene for his dreamlike post-expressionist works. While his paintings evoke hints of the playfully figurative modernist styles, there is also a deeply postmodern and magical realist charge in the themes of myth and reality that the artist often takes on.

In Marcel Antonio's *The Little Prince,* one gleans a subdued sense of fancy. A seated young boy holds a small toy plane in one hand in a room that seems to be a sala. He wears a neutrally youthful expression, eyes carrying a subtle wonder in them, matched within the composition only by the allure of the pink rose that sits beside him. The view behind the young man draws the eye next amongst the warm reds and oranges of the room with its mysterious deep blue, defining only the shapes of a fox, a baobab tree, and a glimmer in the sky. Lastly and curiously, a snake slithers in the shade of the boy's chair, its presence suspicious and unassuming.

Each of these references narrative elements from French writer and aviator Antoine de Saint-Exupéry's novel of the same name, in which the narrator, a pilot whose plane had crashed into the Sahara, meets the little prince, a young boy who struggled to grasp the dull and obsessively pragmatic world of adults and lamented the love he had for a rose who had taken advantage of his kindness. In a cosmos that seemed to be too fixated on its own worldly interests, the little prince is wondrously ruminative, but also lonely.

Antonio's depiction of *The Little Prince* seems to capture this exact feeling in the quiet tensions at play in his painting: in between solid warmths and mystic blues, in the boy's expression that teeters somewhere between solemnity and whimsy, in between objects fancy and mundane, and in between what seems real and what seems not. *(Pie Tiausas)*

109

Ronson Culibrina (b. 1991)

Vain Aquatic Capital
signed and dated 2018 (lower left)
oil on canvas
48" x 60" (122 cm x 152 cm)

P 300,000

EXHIBITED
Yavuz Gallery, *Above Sea Level*, Singapore, 26 August - 16 September 2018

Ronson Culibrina's 2018 *Vain Aquatic Capital* follows the artist's penchant for playful interpretations of pressing socio-political-topics. Hailing from his first solo exhibition entitled Above Sea Level, Vain Aquatic Capital is one of Culibrina's interpretations of a coastal town rapidly facing decline due to human exploitation and overconsumption.

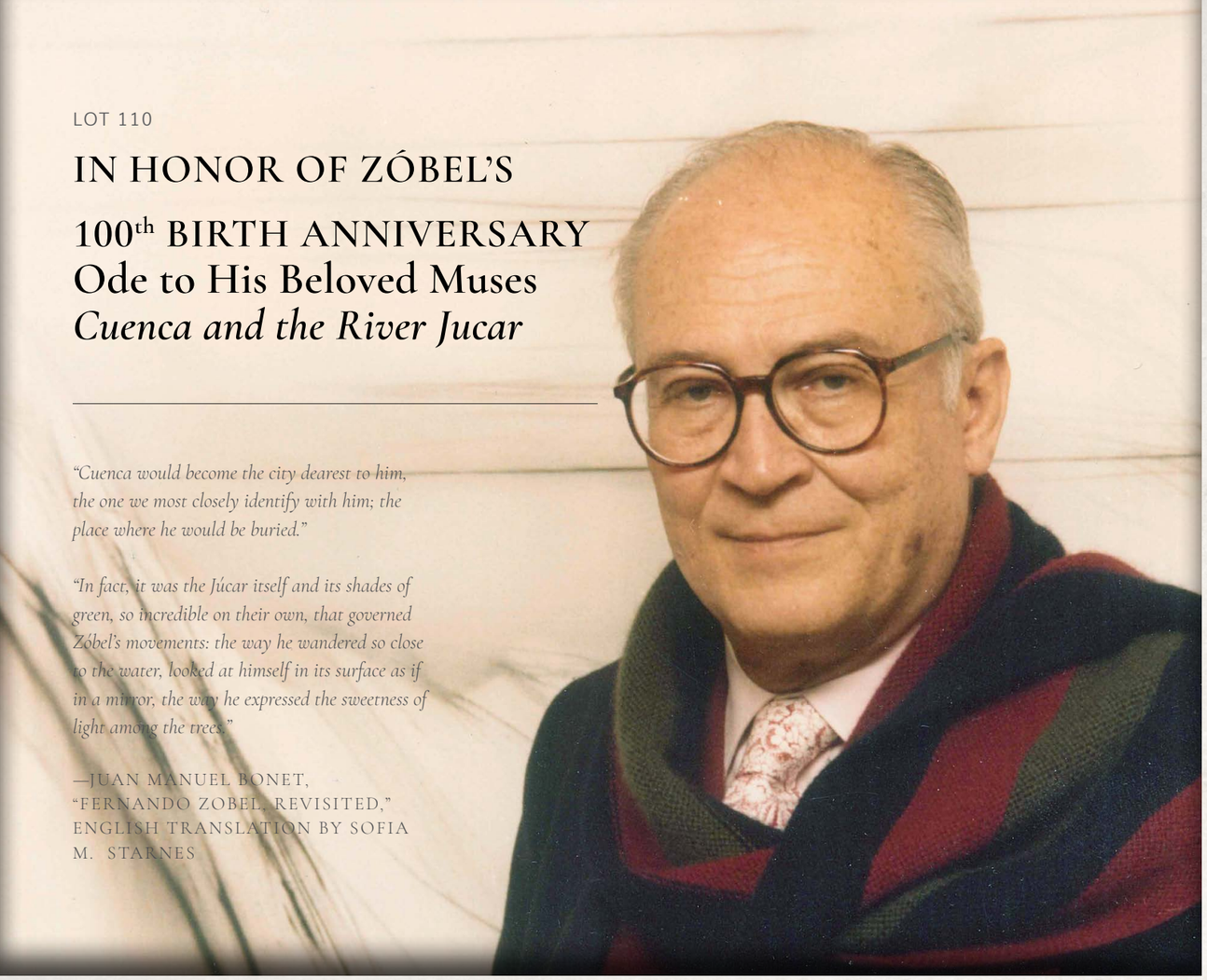
"Culibrina veers away from apocalyptic, desolate depictions of a moribund ecosystem," writes the exhibition's press release, "instead visualizing this conflict through frenzied, carnivalesque seascapes that appropriate humorous pop-culture references both formally and conceptually."

Vain Aquatic Capital follows this formula -- as one looks deeper into the work, one would find multiple contradicting elements. A massive toy rubber duck floats on the sea while at the bottom of the canvas lies a miniature *barung-barong.* The stems of the plants surrounding the sea reach out to the circle of fishing boats as though zombies itching to drag humans down with it. The result is a cohesive chaos that further emphasizes Culibrina's stance on nature's rapid deterioration, his anxieties with its rapid transformation, and a clear call to address the growing concern regarding society's unsustainability with nature's resources. *(Hannah Valiente)*

LOT 110

IN HONOR OF ZÓBEL'S

100th BIRTH ANNIVERSARY
Ode to His Beloved Muses
Cuenca and the River Jucar



"Cuenca would become the city dearest to him, the one we most closely identify with him; the place where he would be buried."

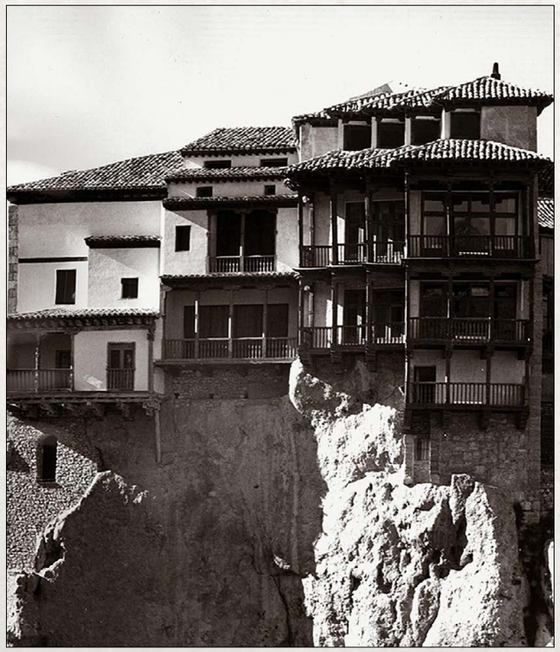
"In fact, it was the Júcar itself and its shades of green, so incredible on their own, that governed Zóbel's movements: the way he wandered so close to the water, looked at himself in its surface as if in a mirror, the way he expressed the sweetness of light among the trees."

—JUAN MANUEL BONET, "FERNANDO ZOBEL, REVISITED," ENGLISH TRANSLATION BY SOFIA M. STARNES

This August 27, 2024, we are celebrating the 100th anniversary of Fernando Zóbel's birth. In line with this momentous occasion, this magnificent sale presents one of Zóbel's most lyrical and evocative works from the peak of his artistic career—the *Serie Blanca* of the 1970s—and how it passionately highlights the artist's most treasured place in his lifetime—Cuenca in Spain.

A harmonious wedding of picturesque landscapes and a vibrant history has long existed in Cuenca. The city is nicknamed the "Eagle's Nest" due to its location 1000 meters high up on a limestone ridge that steeply slopes down into the gorges of the Jucar and Huecar Rivers. Cuenca's man-made structures, situated atop this ridge, offer a breathtaking, panoramic view of the city and the River Jucar, Cuenca's birthplace and, thus, its heart and soul.

The story of Zóbel's love affair with Cuenca began in 1963 when he became enamored with the idea of establishing a permanent home for his collection of Spanish abstract art that would eventually form the nucleus of the Museo de Arte Abstracto Español. In particular, Zóbel was so fascinated with Cuenca's "Hanging Houses" *(Las casas colgadas)* that by July of that same year, he would take up residence in the city and start laying the foundations for his museum in September. "I have a feeling it is going to turn into one of the loveliest small museums in the world, Zóbel enthusiastically wrote in an October 4, 1963 letter to his American friend, Paul Haldeman. He continues, "As I will be owner, director, curator, acquisitions committee, patron, board of trustees, and dictator, I rather think I shall have a lovely time."



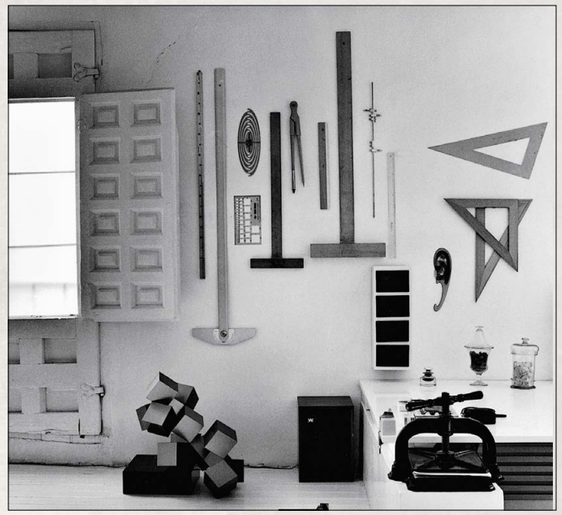
Zóbel's biographer, Angeles Villalba Salvador, wrote: "Once he has decided to set up the Museum of Abstract Art in Cuenca, his trips to this city are constant; for years, it will be on the road and in the city that he will find most of his themes for landscapes... Little by little, the city and its surrounding area take possession of the painter, and Cuenca fills his notebooks, his pictures, and also his writing." Zóbel would even publish an entire monograph filled with his drawings of the city coupled with his erudite yet comic inclinations.

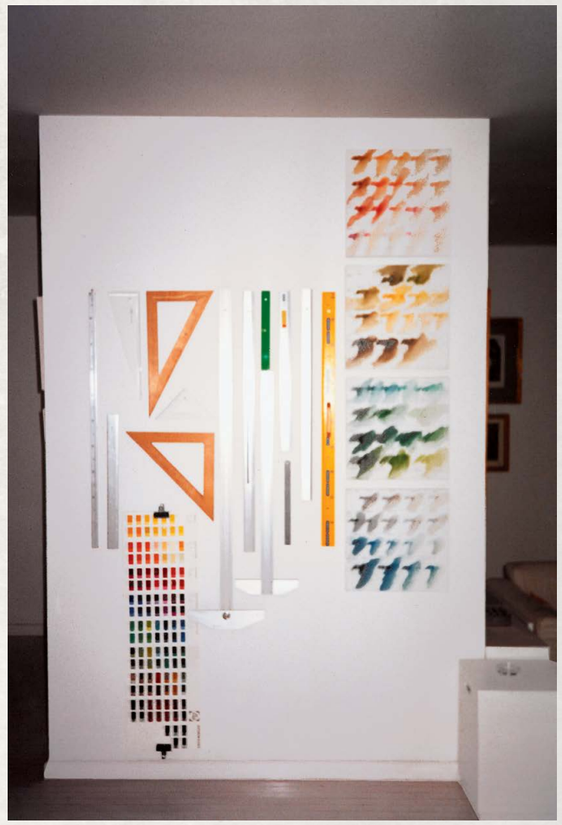
Zóbel's dear friend, Juan Manuel Bonet, says that "Remember by painting" was Zóbel's maxim. In this lyrical work from the artist's highly acclaimed Serie Blanca, *La Terraza III* finds Zóbel preserving and immortalizing his beloved Cuenca in canvas, particularly one of his favorite landmarks in the city. Before embarking on his Serie Blanca, Zóbel had produced a series of works depicting Cuenca: *El Jucar* and *La Vista.*

La Terraza III is the last part of a series of three works centering on the "Restaurante Recreo Peral" and its terrace fronting the River Jucar. It would be exhibited in Zóbel's first retrospective exhibition, the only one during his lifetime. The series is subtitled *Historia de Una Obsesión,* or "A Story of My Obsession," pertaining to Zóbel's infatuation with the restaurant and its scenic river. One of Cuenca's most famous restaurants, the Recreo Peral is located a kilometer away from Cuenca's Plaza Mayor and possesses a *terraza* (terrace) offering al fresco dining with a refreshing view of the Jucar.

Bonet details in his essay *Fernando Zóbel,* Revisited Zóbel's profound sense of joy and fulfillment whenever he would visit the Recreo. "The Recreo is a modest eatery near the river, surrounded by trees and easily accessible downhill from the Plaza Mayor (the climb back is another matter)," Bonet writes. "There, on more than one occasion, I observed the joy that so filled Zóbel and radiated from him. He strove to understand himself as a painter of waterscapes and relied on the mechanisms of memory to figure out what would lead him to devote an entire series of paintings to the Júcar in its flow through Cuenca."

Although painted in Madrid, *La Terraza III* shows Zóbel's fixation with Cuenca, bringing with him his beloved city whenever he went. Memory is instantly translated in every brushstroke, and Cuenca comes to life, seemingly transporting Zóbel to the city he held in the highest regard. Zóbel enshrines his memory of the Jucar as he saw it from the terrace of the Recreo Peral in *La Terraza III.* One can visualize the solemn blacks as the steep ridges of Cuenca, a towering scenery that can be viewed from the terrace. The





(OPPOSITE PAGE): Hanging Houses of Cuenca, where the Museum of Spanish Abstract Art is located, 1966. ABOVE: Fernando Zóbel's studio in Cuenca, 1973. Images from the Fernando Zóbel Archive

pastel oranges represent the River Jucar and its environs. Zóbel painted this work on November 16, 1978, during autumn, when the leaves of the river's surrounding trees (particularly the poplar tree) turn orange, creating unique colorations reflecting on the waters. The shades of brown heavily concentrated on the work's right portion evoke the captivating reflection of the orange leaves on the Jucar's green waters.

Zóbel once noted in a March 3, 1982 interview with *El Pais* that the Jucar "displays an array of colors the likes of which I have not seen elsewhere."

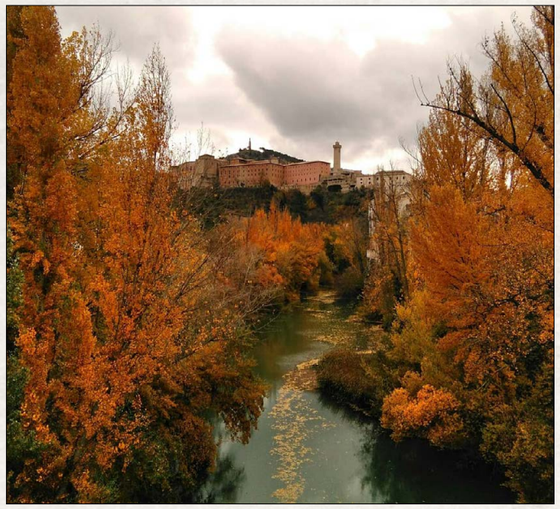
Cuenca has soaring cliffs and mammoth walls of rocks that seemingly guard its mother Jucar, from which medieval castles and hanging houses eventually sprang forth. And so did a perpetually meditative Zóbel. Interestingly, the Jucar became Zóbel's quintessential muse during his creative peak of the 1970s, in which physicality and spirituality are wedded to form a lyrical expression of meditative luminosity and passionate remembrance.

The Jucar would become the subject of Zóbel's last series, *Las Orillas,* which he made after a wrenching depression that caused him to destroy many of his paintings. He would also publish in 1982 a book of photographs, *El Jucar en Cuenca.* As the Jucar became Cuenca's lifeblood, so was the river's role in Zóbel's lyrical virtuoso, giving him the dynamic strength and life-preserving spirituality to pursue his own lifeblood—painting.

Cuenca and its River Jucar were Zóbel's saving grace.

In 1984, Zóbel succumbed to a heart attack. He was buried in the San Isidro Cemetery in Cuenca's highest point overlooking the Jucar. Forty years later, Zóbel has become one and the same with his cherished river, reveling in an eternal ode of honor and indebtedness. *(Adrian Maranan)*

TOP: Fernando Zóbel in Cuenca, 1978. Photography by Luis Pérez-Mínguez RIGHT (TOP - BOTTOM): The Recreo Peral, one of Zobel's favorite restaurants in Cuenca and from where he would bask in the beauty of the Jucar River © Mikel. The Jucar River as seen from the Recreo Peral © Google Street View; A view of the Jucar River during the autumn season. The orange leaves of the poplar trees reflecting on the green waters of the Jucar fascinated Zobel, fueling his obsession over the river and the city of Cuenca itself. © X (formerly Twitter), @saugardavid; A bird's eye view of the Recreo Peral in autumn. On the right is the River Jucar and its adorning poplar trees and the towering walls of rocks. © Instagram, Recreo Peral



110

Fernando Zóbel (1924 - 1984)

La Terraza, III
signed (lower right and verso)
titled and dated 1978 (verso)
oil on canvas
39 1/2" x 39 1/2" (100 cm x 100 cm)

P 10,000,000

PROVENANCE:
Christie's, Asian 20th Century Art (Day Sale), Hong Kong, 27 May 2018, Lot 367
Private collection, Manila

LITERATURE
De la Torre, Alfonso and Rafael Pérez-Madero.
Fernando Zóbel: Catalogue Raisonné of Paintings (1946 - 1984). Madrid: Fundación Azcona, 2022. Listed as "nº 78-83" with full-color illustration and painting description on page 584.

EXHIBITED
Sala de Exposiciones El Monte, Fernando Zobel (First Retrospective Exhibition),
Organized by the Caja de Ahorros y Monte de Piedad de Sevilla, Seville, Spain, October 1983

111

Irineo Miranda (1896 - 1964)

The March of Progress
signed and dated 1947 (lower right)
oil on canvas
72″ x 46″ (183 cm x 117 cm)

P 800,000

PROVENANCE
Leon Gallery, The Magnificent September Auction 2019, Makati City,
14 September 2019, Lot 160.

The Dean of Philippine Cartoonist, Irineo Miranda's 1947 *The March of Progress* echoes the iconic style of the cartoons as he depicts the slow rebuilding of the Philippines following the Second World War. With the main focal point of the piece a couple cradling their child between them, Miranda covers the canvas with vignettes of scenes depicting the titular march to progress. The man stares forward forlorn as around him, Miranda shows a man tirelessly sowing the field, a fisherman hauling in their harvest, a lumberjack chopping down a tree.

The 1940s showed drastic changes in the Philippines. The country became embroiled in the war, became liberated, and started its journey as a newly independent state all within the same decade. With these events, the Philippines are understandably on shaky foundations and Miranda adeptly translates it onto the canvas. His lesser-known role as a scenographer reared its head as Miranda's composition of the piece aids the viewers in looking at the work itself. The eye is drawn from one scene to another before circling back to the focal couple.

A masterful piece that superbly employs light and shadow to heighten the drama, Miranda's *The March to Progress* tells the story of the Philippines in the 1940s, pinning its hopes and worries onto the majestic work. *(Hannah Valiente)*

112

Michael Cacnio (b. 1969)

Mango Picker
signed and dated 2000
brass
without base: H: 12 1/2″ (32 cm) L: 3″ (8 cm) W: 7″ (18 cm)
with base: H: 15″ (32 cm) L: 7″ (18 cm) W: 9″ (23 cm)

P 400,000

León Gallery wishes to than Mrs. Tess Cacnio
for confirming the authenticity of this lot

The art of sculpting is a familiar concept in Philippine art history. It was, in fact, one of the pioneering art forms in the country. Philippine sculpture, which started with the pre-Hispanic practice of carving anitos in wood, stone, or molded in clay, underwent a series of modifications in terms of subjects and materials. To this day, artists have experimented with glass, brass, and even ice sculpting.

Michael Cacnio is one of the most celebrated Filipino sculptors of this era. Born in 1969, Cacnio probably witnessed the evolution and development of contemporary Philippine sculpture. His sculptures, delicately made with brass, mirror his buoyant childhood in his hometown of Malabon. "I draw inspiration from my childhood. As the youngest of the family, I was very carefree and playful. I was always out on the streets of Malabon playing the latest popular games," Cacnio shared in an interview with the Philippine Daily Inquirer in October 2014.

Like his vendor series, *Mango Picker* commemorates childhood's carefree and frisky qualities. Here, Cacnio renders two boys picking mangoes, an activity kids enthusiastically engage in, especially in the provinces. One of the boys stands atop a rock while carrying and supporting his peer in picking mangoes. There's also a basket on one side where they place their freshly picked fruits. Michael Cacnio's sculptures evoke a sense of nostalgia and melancholia in the viewers—the nostalgic feeling of wanting to return to their cheery childhood and the melancholy feeling of time's passing that prevents them from returning. Undoubtedly, he is a world-class sculptor who embedded his name in the industry with his social realist brass sculptures. *(Jessica Magno)*

Emmanuel Garibay's Take on Auguste Rodin's *The Thinker*

From the get-go, Emmanuel Garibay harbors an intense creative interest in the marginalized and the masses. Born in Kidapawan, North Cotabato, the vibrant provincial life served as a muse for his works to come.

"Every house has an old man or woman, a drunken man, a gang of kids roaming around town, and lots of stray dogs," Garibay notes as Artes de las Filipinas writes in his artist biography.

This fascination and respect for the masa is exemplified all throughout his career. He spent his college years lending his artistic abilities to the cause, interacting with other student activists from UP Diliman as a student of UP Los Banos. "The students whom I interacted with were using their art to epitomize the suffering and realism of the time," he says. "It seemed like it was the natural thing to do"

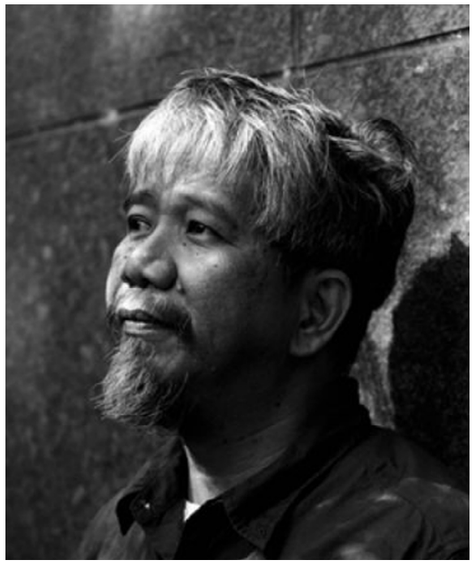
It was also the working people who internalized and interacted with his first exhibition. It was the working class type of shoppers who spent time examining Garibay's art, Artes de las Filipinas writes. The other simply gave a sweeping glance and moved on.

As such, it was the ordinary people who populated Garibay's canvases. "It is the richness of the poor that I am drawn to and which I am a part of, that I want to impart," he had said and his 2012 Anyo shows just that.

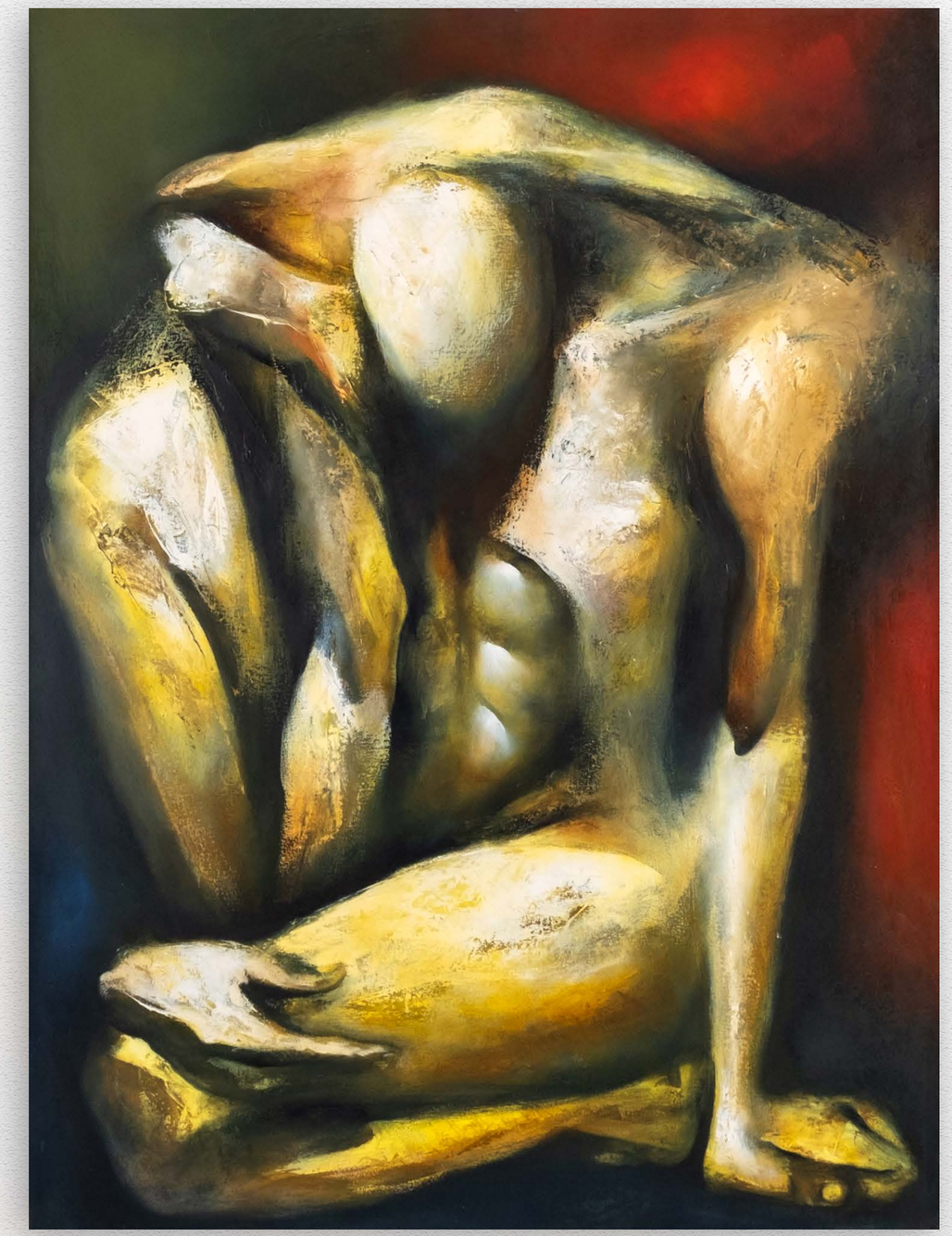
Garibay's *Anyo* portrays the figure of a man as he rests his head dejectedly on his arms. With his legs folded beneath him and his arm wrapped around himself, he is an image of suffering, emphasized only by the bareness of his body and the slump of his shoulders.

However, like many of his works, he does not dwell on the negative. "The painting's background is dark, but as in most of my work I have refused to give too much emphasis to the negative," he says in an interview with Jo-Ann Van Reeuwyk published in the Image Journal. "The human spirit is overcoming that darkness. The figure becomes the light in otherwise dark surroundings."

Though Garibay's quote pertains to a specific painting, it also rings true for *Anyo*. The man's figure, dejected as it may be, still serves as a beacon of hope, a positive light (both figuratively and literally) amidst the dark background. Suffering may be suffocating but in the end, human resilience prevails. The masses, through a continuous struggle for freedom and equality from an oppressive system, will be liberated once and for all. *(Hannah Valiente)*



ABOVE: Emmanuel Garibay © https://edare.cwmission.org/



113

Emmanuel Garibay (b. 1962)
Anyo
signed (lower right)
dated 2012
oil on canvas
48" x 36" (122 cm x 91 cm)

P 800,000

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

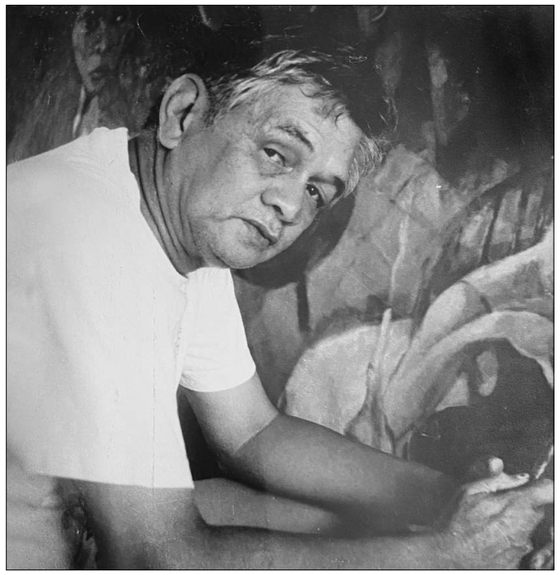
Longing and Despair

Onib Olmedo and the Human Spirit

The works of Onib Olmedo overflow with sympathy and feeling for the marginalized, the poor, and the oppressed. Whether it be a distorted portraiture, a hazy vision of a music club, or the urban jungle he has spent his life in, Onib translates the struggles of the masses with the utmost respect they deserve,

In this work, one could feel the quiet dejection that permeates the piece. Though not as distorted as the usual Onib figure, the boy's dejected facial expression reveals the despair he is feeling. Beside him is an empty cage which further fuels questions and possible interpretations. Has he lost a beloved pet? The empty cage suggests so.

This work is a beautiful portrait of acceptance and loss, a particular strength of Onib. As he beautifully weaves a story within his canvases, he is exceptionally honest with his subjects – he depicts their suffering without diluting it. Still, he reminds his viewers that hope is not lost, should one hold on. *(Hannah Valiente)*



ABOVE: Onib Olmedo © Leon Gallery Archives

114

Onib Olmedo (1937 - 1996)
Untitled
signed (lower right)
oil on canvas
30″ x 30″ (76 cm x 76 cm)

P 800,000

Accompanied by a certificate issued by Gisella Olmedo - Araneta confirming the authenticity of this lot

PROVENANCE
León Gallery, *The Magnificent September Auction 2017 September 29, 2017*, Makati City, 29 September 2017, Lot 50

LOT 115

CHICK PARSONS
America's Eyes and Ears in the Pearl of the Orient

The very name of Chick Parsons evokes legendary prominence in Philippine military and wartime history. Born Charles Thomas Jr., Parsons was once described by National Artist for Historical Literature Carlos Quirino as "America's Master Spy in the Philippines." He was instrumental in the survival of the guerillas during the Second World War and even played a crucial role in the storied return of General Douglas MacArthur to the islands.

But during "peacetime," Parsons was a prolific businessman and an active member of Philippine high society. Smithsonian Magazine's Peter Eisner succinctly writes in a September 2017 article written in Parson's honor of the man's ventures and stature during the pre-war era. "Before World War II, Parsons had been the toast of Manila society, successful in business and unrivaled on the polo field, a gregarious, muscular expat American with a shock of wavy brown hair, a winning smile, and an eagle tattooed across the expanse of his chest."

Miguel Cornejo's all-important Commonwealth Directory of the Philippines notes Parson's profession as a broker. He was president of the Manila Rock Asphalt Corporation and a member of various organizations, including the International Stock Exchange and the Philippine Amateur Athletic Federation. Parsons was also vice president of the Philippine Milling Company. The Directory lists his main office as located at the famed Crystal Arcade in Escolta, Manila.

When the Japanese had unfortunately firmly established their imperial control over the islands, Parsons stayed in his Manila home along Dewey (now Roxas) Boulevard with his wife Katrushka and their three sons, Michael, Peter, and Patrick. Parsons supplied intelligence to the defeated American forces. He was not imprisoned at the University of Santo Tomas Internment Camp because he was Panama's honorary consul general to the Philippines (Panama was a neutral country during WWII, therefore giving Parsons diplomatic immunity). To further escape detention, the Parsons family began to speak and communicate with each other every day in Spanish.

Due to his special privilege, Parsons was able to retrieve top secret data, "including Japanese troop strengths and the names and locations of American prisoners of war," as Eisner noted.

BESIDE: After the Battle of Manila in 1945, Amorsolo made a sketch and an oil portrait of Chick Parsons as a symbol of gratitude to his benevolence to the ailing artist. © Reproduced in the book Amorsolo by Alfredo Roces.

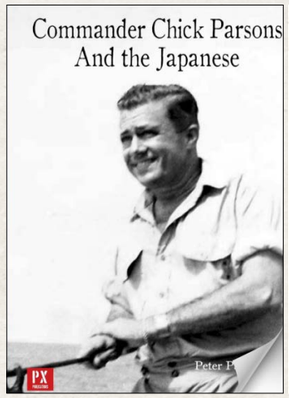
The immunity didn't last long, as Parsons was eventually detained by the Japanese Kempeitai in Fort Santiago, where he was interrogated and tortured using the infamous water cure. Thanks to the efforts of fellow diplomats, Parsons was eventually released and brought to the hospital for immediate care. The Parsons family left the Philippines for the US in 1942.

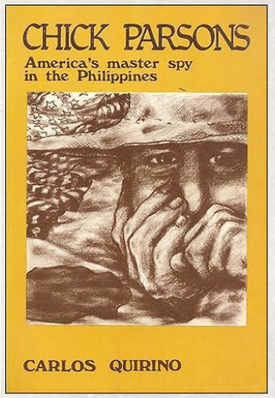
Parsons would return to the Philippines in 1943 under personal requests from General MacArthur, who would assign him to the Allied Intelligence Bureau. Thanks to his extensive knowledge of Philippine geography, which he owed to his professional history as a stenographer/secretary to US Governor-General Leonard Wood, whom he accompanied in his frequent travels all over the archipelago, Parson was able to establish intelligence networks across the Philippines and maintained communications with the underground guerilla forces. Through his efforts, the seemingly endless guerilla networks were united, and the guerillas' morales fortified. Not only that, but Parsons also daringly smuggled food, medicine, weapons, and ammunition.

General MacArthur's storied return to the Philippines through the historic Leyte Landing was made possible through the effectiveness of Parson's communication with the local guerilla forces, ordering their leaders to retreat from the environs of Leyte Gulf and clear the area of civilians without explicitly revealing that MacArthur would be now fulfilling his promise to return and begin the campaign for the liberation of the Philippines. Before the famous landing, Parsons maintained steady communication with MacArthur's team, informing them of Japanese activities and the general situation in the archipelago.

When the war ended, Parsons found himself in ruined Manila, delivering food and medicine to the helpless survivors. Art critic Alfredo Roces recounted a story in which Parsons and Fernando Amorsolo poignantly crossed paths with each other. In his book Amorsolo, Roces narrates: "Amorsolo was diabetic, and the war years made medication extremely difficult. Businessman Chick Parsons (who, throughout the war, was a US intelligence officer commuting by submarine from Australia to the Philippines) recounted that right after the Battle of Manila, he traveled about on a motor scooter bringing drugs for the sick. Among those in need of insulin was painter Amorsolo, whom Parsons found lying in bed in a dim corner of his studio. In gratitude, Amorsolo made a sketch and an oil portrait of Chick Parsons. The latter painting is in the possession of the Parsons ...."

In recognition of his valiant service in World War II, the Philippine government conferred Parsons with the Philippine Legion of Honor and the Medal of Valor, the Philippines' highest military honor. (Adrian Maranan)





TOP LEFT: Chick Parsons (left) with General Douglas MacArthur (center) in Brisbane, Australia, 1942 © https://www.usphsociety.org/; TOP RIGHT: Post-war Parsons back in Manila. © pacificparatrooper 'Chick' Parsons with 'Ruby' Roxas, Washington DC, USA, May 1946 Ms. María Rosario "Ruby" Roxas is the daughter of Philippine President Manuel Roxas. © John Tewell. BOTTOM LEFT: Two Books about Chick Parsons titled " Commander Chick Parsons And the Japanese" and " Chick Parsons, America's master spy in the Philippines. BOTTOM RIGHT: Post-war Parsons back in Manila. © pacificparatrooper

The Chick Parsons Tabuena
From the Artist's Neo-Realist Period

The post-war Philippine art scene was both a tragedy and a capsule of hope. Amid the cultural destruction, the Art Association of the Philippines (AAP), founded in 1948 and headed by Purita Kalaw-Ledesma, rose to prominence as the leading vanguard and custodian of Filipino cultural heritage. The AAP would hold its annual exhibitions and competitions, at first separated into the conservative and modern categories. But the tides would always turn in favor of the moderns, who, even in the first AAP competition in 1948, had swept all the major awards, from the first prize won by Botong Francisco for Kaingin up to the sixth prize won by H.R. Ocampo for *Nude with Candle and Flower.*

The glaring reality of the post-war period put modernism on its own pedestal. "The moderns were searching for truth, while the conservatives were merely repeating themselves. It was as simple as that," Purita Kalaw-Ledesma writes in her seminal book *The Struggle for Philippine Art.*

Out of the ashes rose the core group of the Neo-Realists, whose artistic manifesto was rooted in Francesco de Santi: "To create reality, an artist must first have the force to kill it. But instantly, the fragments draw together again, in love with each other, seeking one another, coming together with desire, with the obscure presentiment of the new life to which they are destined."
The Neo-Realists felt compelled to break away from the Classical-Romantic tradition espoused by Amorsolo and depict reality as it is—bold and harrowing yet still encapsulating the Filipino people's stories of shared struggles and hopes amidst the ruins of war, effectively resonating with the current times.

The original Neo-Realists comprised H.R. Ocampo, Cesar Legaspi, Vicente Manansala, Romeo Tabuena, Victor Oteyza, and Ramon Estella. They would first exhibit on June 17, 1950 at the Manila Hotel and sponsored by the AAP.

Tabuena, formerly an illustrator for *The Evening News,* had joined the circle of Manansala (also an illustrator for *The Evening News*, where the two crossed paths), Legaspi, Ocampo, and Estella. He would slowly learn painting from his weekly sojourns with his friends. "...The friends would meet on Sundays at each other's house to show what each had painted during the week and to comment on each other's works," writes Kalaw-Ledesma in the book *The Biggest Little Room: A History of the Philippine Art Gallery.*

Tabuena's *Lavanderas*, one of his earliest paintings, bears the hallmark of the Neo-Realist propensity to fragment and, eventually, reconstruct forms in accordance with the social vibrations of their times. With bowed heads and backs and distorted figures and facial expressions, the women veer away from the Amorsolo image of the charming *dalaga*—all smiles, a beacon of radiance, romantically sentimental, idealized. In Tabuena's work, the colors, applied with much vigor, still retain their brightness—a perfect juxtaposition between the chaos of distortion and the optimistic resilience represented by a vibrant palette.

Chick Parsons, who stayed in Manila after his legendary military exploits in the war, may have been drawn to this poignant reminder of the post-war situation and how the people he wholeheartedly loved possess the earnest ability to rise like a phoenix from the ashes of physical and moral destruction. *(Adrian Maranan)*

115 PROPERTY FROM THE PARSONS FAMILY COLLECTION

Romeo Tabuena (1921 - 2015)
Lavanderas
signed (lower right)
ca. 1949 - 1950
oil on wood
19 1/2" x 24" (50 cm x 61 cm)

P 200,000

PROVENANCE
Philippine Art Gallery

The Filipina Spy who Silenced the Japanese Cannons

by E. A. SANTAMARIA

ABOVE: Josefina "Joey" Guerrero (third from right) received the Medal of Honor With Silver Palm for her actions during World War II, which were "instrumental in saving the lives of many Americans and Filipinos," according to the award citation; © National Hansen's Disease Museum

The Battle of Manila raged from February 3 to March 3 of 1945 — and was said to be the single deadliest urban warfare in the Asia-Pacific of World War II. It not only physically destroyed the metropolis and indiscriminately killed a massive number of civilians but lay waste the repositories of a nation's culture.

Japanese naval cannons were positioned in Intramuros and were used with deadly effect on pulverizing the sentinels of Philippine democracy from the Senate, the National Museum, and for this gun in particular, the Manila Post Office and the Manila City Hall, seen in these post-Battle photographs as shells of their former selves.

But there were tales of heroism to be found in this desolation.

Writing in Manila Nostalgia, Jose Maria Bonifacio Escoda featured an interview of the late Dr. Antonio "Tony" O. Gisbert, who he said was "the only one who knew the story of this last Japanese cannon — which was also the only one he failed to identify for the celebrated female guerrilla Josefina "Joey" Guerrero." He continued, "she handed all the details of these deadly anti-aircraft guns to the Americans which were destroyed during the first air raid of the Americans on September 21, 1944." This particular gun, which survives to this day, evaded destruction "because it was hidden in the walls and rolled out when it shelled City Hall and the Post Office."

Dr. Gisbert had married into the Guerrero family and during the war would reconnoiter around Intramuros, committing the locations of the artillery to his memory, and smuggle the sketches to Josefina Guerrero. The ground floor of the house she lived in was entirely occupied by the Japanese military — making it doubly dangerous.

Josefina had become afflicted by leprosy before the War and the invasion of the Japanese cut off supplies of the medicine that could arrest her deadly disease. She made up her mind, her memoirs say, "not to die a slow and painful death but to live a heroic life." She enlisted with the Resistance and became a valuable courier of information that saved thousands of Filipino and American lives.

As her illness progressed and the lesions became more apparent, she had become obliged to wear a veil and carry a warning bell. The Kempeitai gave her a wide berth, allowing her to move freely and excusing her from body searches. It made her the perfect wartime spy.

Joey, incidentally, was married to another doctor, Renato Ma. Guerrero, brother to the famous playwright Wilfrido Ma. Guerrero. After the war, she faced renewed exile in leper colony north of Manila, where she fought for patients' rights amidst deplorable conditions.

Fernando Amorsolo's daughter Sylvia wrote in *Remembering Papa,* "Father sketched war scenes from his window or sometimes on the rooftop to catch a quick glimpse of the planes fighting in the sky." As the battle went on, destruction befell the capital city. Amorsolo, even at his age (he was, by then, 53), considered it his patriotic duty to document the horrors of the war. He painted every day, diligently recording these scenes of both tragedy and victory even as his health declined — like Guerrero and countless other Manilans — due to the lack of medicine.

This last remaining Japanese cannon, now finally silenced, would be discovered in the Baluarte de San Diego, a relic of those terrible times, with live ammunition still strewn around it after the Battle of Manila. It must have made a searing impression of the Japanese army's ultimate and permanent defeat that Amorsolo recorded that he had made two paintings of this important tribute

LEFT: Japanese artillery gun just outside the walls of Intramuros. Manila City Hall in the background, 1945 © John Tewell;

A Tribute To A War Heroine

by Fernando Amorsolo

116 PROPERTY FROM THE COLLECTION OF A DISTINGUISHED FAMILY

Fernando Amorsolo (1892 - 1972)

Silenced Japanese Cannon, Intramuros
signed, dated 1945
and inscribed "From the Original Painted in 1945", (lower right)
oil on canvas
16" x 20" (41 cm x 51 cm)

P 2,600,000

LOT 117 to 119

Rare Snapshots of Philippine History

by JORGE MOJARRO

Proclamations, Celebrations, Architectural Plans, Land Titles, Letters, Law Suits and Outline A Nation's Past And Its Destiny.

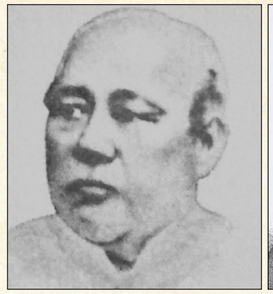
This rare collection of documents from the Spanish colonial period in the Philippines does just that. It is made even more extraordinary due to the fact that such collections are not usually in private hands but rather in first-class historical archives, such as the Archivo de Indias in Seville or the National Archives of the Philippines. As a result, such troves are never seen by the public and much less, come up for auction.

It covers over 350 documents dated over 200 years that pertain to the history of what was then the small town of Pasig, which is today is at the very heart of Metro Manila.

Among the important documents is a handwritten copy of the Proclamation of Independence of June 12, 1898, made for one of its signatories.

Also included is a letter addressed to Aguinaldo as *"Al Muy Honorable Señor Presidente del Gobierno Revolucionario de estas Yslas"* or the president of the Revolutionary Government informing him of a celebratory fiesta on October 23, 1898, in honor of the ratification of Philippine independence. It contains a rare stamp of the revolutionary government of the town of Pasig and is signed by 11 Filipino revolutionary officials.

Another document of interest is signed in 1879 by no less than Ambrosio Rianzares Bautista, who has gone down in history as the man who read the act of proclamation of Philippine independence and was a trusted man of Emilio Aguinaldo. Bautista was born in Biñan in 1830 and graduated with a law degree in 1865 from the University of Santo Tomas. His commitment to the cause of Philippine independence and his prestige as a lawyer went hand in hand. Even before his participation with Aguinaldo's revolutionary government, he supported the publication of *La Solidaridad.*



LEFT: Ambrosio Rianzares Bautista y Altamira (December 7, 1830 – December 4, 1903) © https://en.wikipedia.org/; RIGHT: Don Carlos Maria de la Torre y Nava Cerrada © https://kahimyang.com/

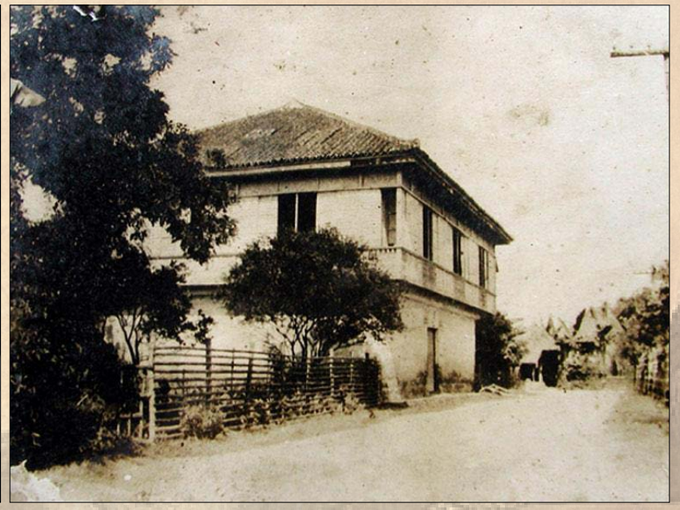
Within this wide-ranging collection can be found four sketches of buildings, all of them belonging to the period of June to August 1870, when one of the most liberal governor-generals of the Philippines, Don Carlos Maria de la Torre (June 1869-April 1871), unsuccessfully tried to secularize public education. These architectural plans refer to construction, reconstruction and renovation works in public buildings (of schools, courts, and various other public administrations) of the then pueblo (town) of Pasig.

We insist that this entire collection of documents is of exceptional interest for those interested not only in the minutiae of history but those with a taste for the grand gestures.

The History of Pasig In 350+ Documents

1779 to 1907

by JORGE MOJARRO



LEFT: Spanish Gov-General Jose Vasco y Vargas, 18th century © https://en.wikipedia.org; RIGHT: The Bahay na Tisa was built in Pasig dated 1846 by Don Cecilio Tech y Cabrera © https://en.wikipedia.org/

Just a year after the founding of Manila by the conquistador Miguel Lopez de Legazpi, the town of Pasig was established by the Augustinian missionaries in 1572. After three centuries of Spanish rule, the Philippines would fall under the American regime; and in June 1901, the Philippine Commission would incorporate Pasig into the newly created Province of Rizal.

Today, this bustling metropolis is bordered on the west by Mandaluyong, on the north by Quezon City, on the south by Pateros and Taguig, and on the east by Cainta and Taytay. With a total land area of 3,100 hectares, it sprawls along the banks of the mighty Marikina and Pasig Rivers.

This rare collection of Spanish colonial period and revolutionary documents, including various personal memorabilia, is an important testament of Pasig's history. Here are more than 356 legal documents from 1779 to 1907, all pertaining to the town of Pasig. Many manuscripts are written on revenue-stamped papers, some have special official markings of the colonial agency concerned. The collection is a unique and voluminous source of data for chronicling the early leaders and inhabitants of Pasig Pueblo and their deeds.

These two albums refer to lawsuits, contracts, inheritance disputes, purchase and sale of properties, records, certifications, legal documents, court rulings, agreements between families, etc., referring to the town of Pásig between 1779 — beginning with the rule of the illustrious Don José Basco y Pérez de Vargas, 1st Count of the Conquest of Batanes Islands (1731–1805) who served as the islands' 53rd governor-general and all the way to 1907 through a series of American military and civilian governor-generals.

These 356 documents are especially important to know the history of the most prominent families and land ownership of what today constitutes the city of Pásig, then a village on the outskirts of Manila. Most of the documents in these two albums are written in Tagalog, although there are also quite a few documents in Spanish. All the documents are handwritten, bear the signatures of the persons in dispute, of the jurists, and in many cases, as was customary, bear the seal of the colonial government. Needless to say, this is a highly unique collection of documents that reveal the history of the town of Pasig.

The families of Pasig featured in the documents are as follows: Aguinaldo, Aguirre, Alvarez, Antonio, Araulio, Asuncion, Balatong, Baltasar, Bartolome, Bautista, Bernardo, Bilanoeva, Bonifacio, Buenaventura, Bugnot, Cabrera, Calingo, Cangco, Chiangco, Colcuyxa, Corguera, Cornejo, Correvera, Crisostomo, Cruz, Damian, Diñga, De Cervantes, Dela Cruz, Dela Paz, Dela Rosa, Delos Angeles, Delos Reyes, Delos Santos, De Silva, Dimacali, Dimanlig, Doroteo, Esguera, Espiritu, Eusebio, Fabian, Fabson, Feliciano, Flores, Francisco, Gabriela, Galvez, Garcia, Gatdula, Geronimo, Gomez, Guevarra, Hernandez, Hilario, Javier, Jose, Labao, Lacondazon, Lambengco, Lambugao, Leon, Lontoc, Lopez, Lorenzo, Lucas, Manalo, Mansano, Marcelo, Mariano, Medel, Mendosa, Miguel, Molina, Montefalcon, Morales, Pagcalino, Pascuala, Patag, Pozon, Ramirez, Ramos, Reyes, Reynoso, Sagisag, Salavenia, Santa Ana, Santamonica, Santiago, Savino, Sison, Siyang Co, Taos, Tec, Tecson, Tuazon, Ulili, Valiente, Velasco, Velasquez, Victorino, Xavier, Ynfante, Ynocensio, Ysidro

The History of Pasig In 350+ Documents

Mounted on two albums containing 124 and 232 items respectively,
or a total of 356 documents.

P 500,000

A Collection of Highly Important Documents Pertaining to the History of Pasig

a.) 1870 April 27, Proyecto de Reparacion de la Casa Administracion de Hacienda Publica del Pueblo de Pasig, Provincia de Manila
a hand drawn architectural plan on linen paper with the signatures of
El Yngeniero Gefe Lopez Navaro and Ayudante Federico Caballero,
31 x 134 cm, some tropical stains and worm holes, creased on folds.

b.) 1870 July 23, Proyecto de Reconstuccion de la Casa Tribunal de Mestizos del Pueblo de Pasig
two hand drawn architectural plans on linen paper: floor plan with vicinity map,
32 x 81 cm, and; floor plan and arch plan, 31 x 123 cm,
with black official oval seal of Obras Publicas / Distrito de Manila & signatures of El Yngeniero Gefe Lopez Navaro and Ayudante Federico Caballero, aged, some worm holes, tropical stain at folds

c.) 1870 July 23, Plano del Tribunal de Mestizos del Pueblo del Pasig
a beautiful colored hand drawn architectural plan floor plan with vicinity map on linen paper,
31 x 76 cm, with blue official oval seal of Obras Publicas / Distrito de Manila & signatures of El Yngeniero and Ayudante, slight tropical stain.

d.) 1870 August, Proyecto de Una Escuela para Niños y Niñas en el Pueblo de Pasig, Provincia de Manila
a hand drawn architectural plan on linen cloth,
44.5 x 52.5 cm, aged, some tropical stains and lots of worm holes, creased on folds.

e.) Double page 1872 y 73 Papel Sellado Showing Layout of Prominent Land Owners in Pasig
Manuscript indicating the corresponding family names, with official seal & signature, 31.7 x 43.5 cm.

f.) 1897 Cedula Personal of Manuela Velasco Ulili natural de Pasig
provincia de Manila, issued in Barcelona with several markings, VF.

g.) Original Sheet Music A Orilas del Pasig, Danza Filipina para Canto y Piano
lyrics by Dr. Jose Rizal and music by Maestro Blas Echegoyen, slight TS, F.

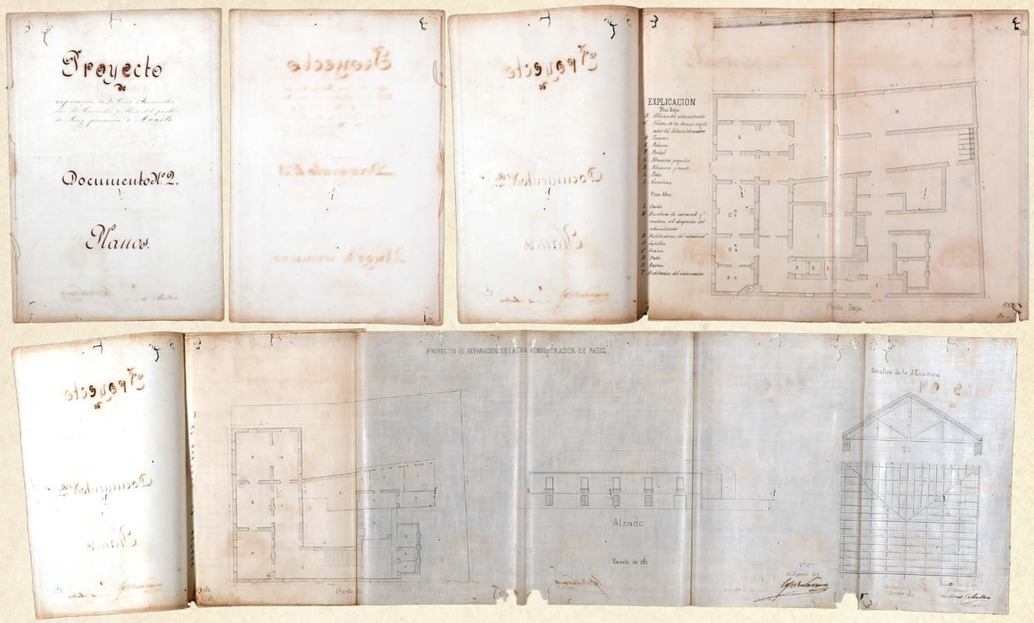
h.) A Sepia Photograph Showing Several Soldiers on a Boat along Pasig River
circa before 1899,
VF; New-York Tribune newspaper with headline report, "City of Pasig Captured,"
Friday, March 17, 1899 issue, FVF; plus souvenir program of a joint exhibition of the Pasig Art Club and the Historical Research Club, sponsored by the Pasig Lions Club, held at Rizal Boy Scout's Pavilion in Pasig, Rizal, July 4-14, 1957.

i.) An Extremely Fine Official Revolutionary Letter Addressed To "Al Muy Honorable Señor Presidente Del Gobierno Revolucionario De Estas Yslas,"
Celebrating A Fiesta On October 23, 1898 In Honor Of Ratifying Philippine Independence, with Official Pasig Revolutionary Seal And Signed By 11 Pasig Officials.

j.) 1879 Legal document duly signed by Ambrocio Rianzares Bautista
author of the 1898 Declaration of Philippine Independence proclamation document.

k.) An 1899 Edition of New York Tribune (Predecessor of today's International Herald Tribune) dated March 17, 1899

P 1,000,000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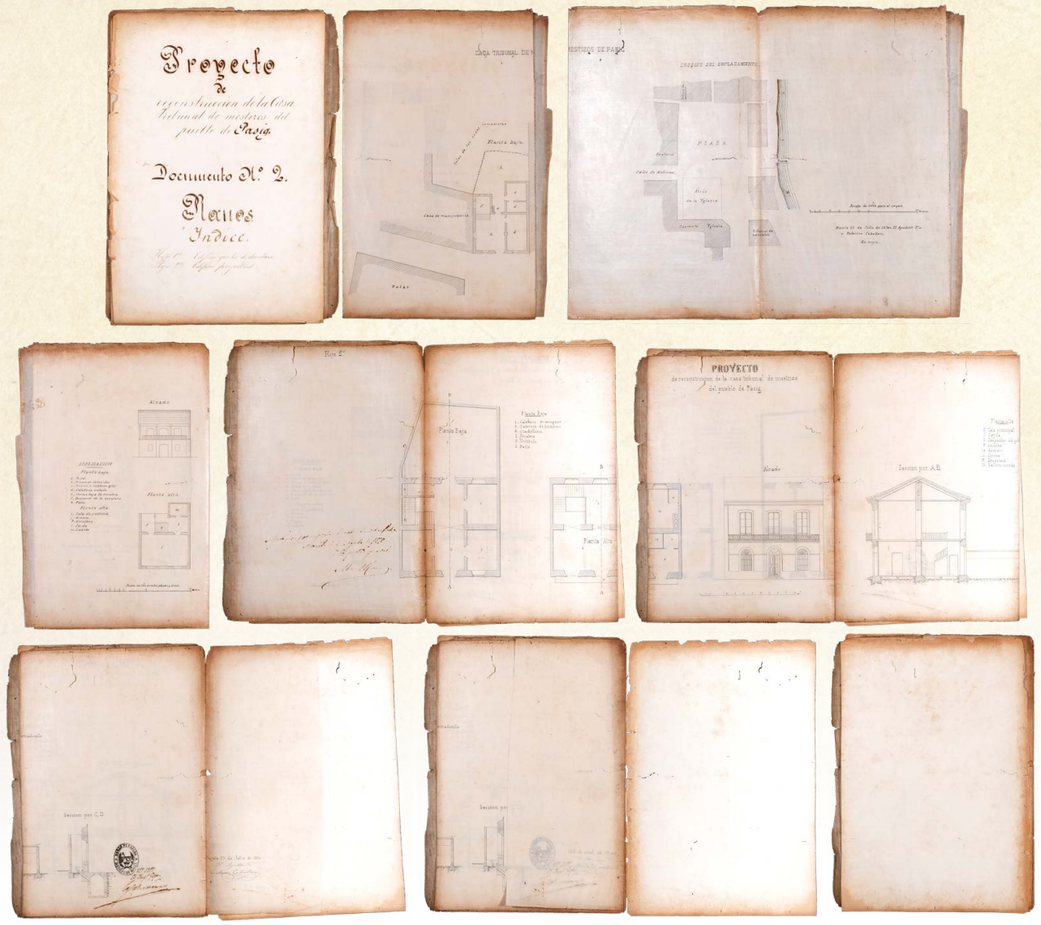
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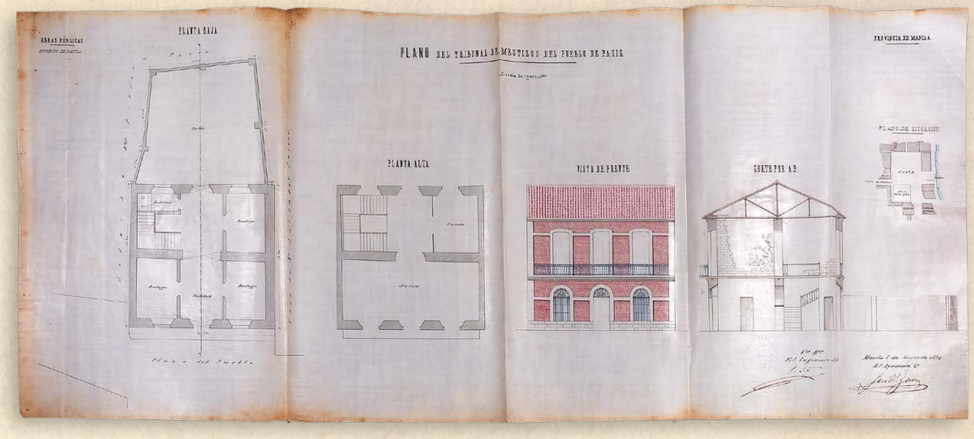
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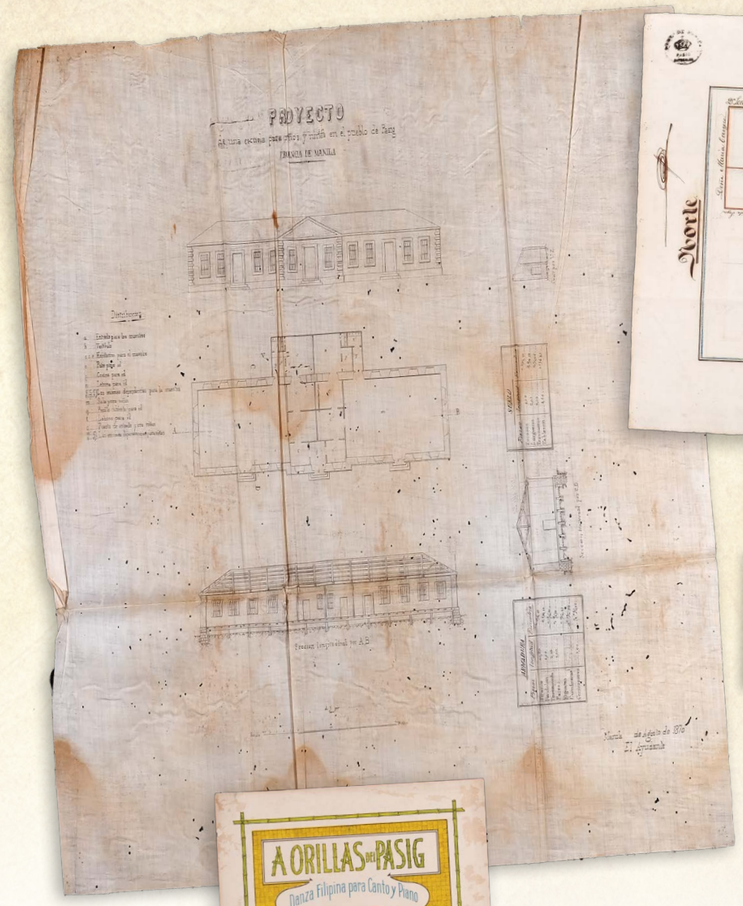
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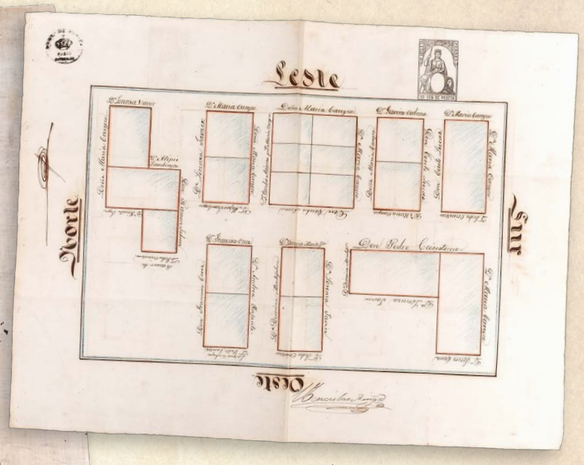
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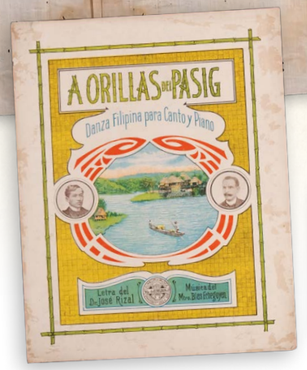
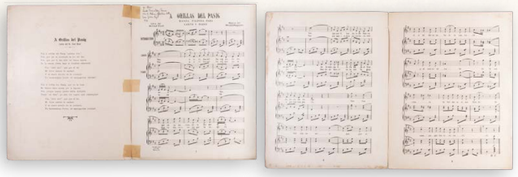

A ORILLAS DEL PASIG
Danza Filipina para Canto y Piano



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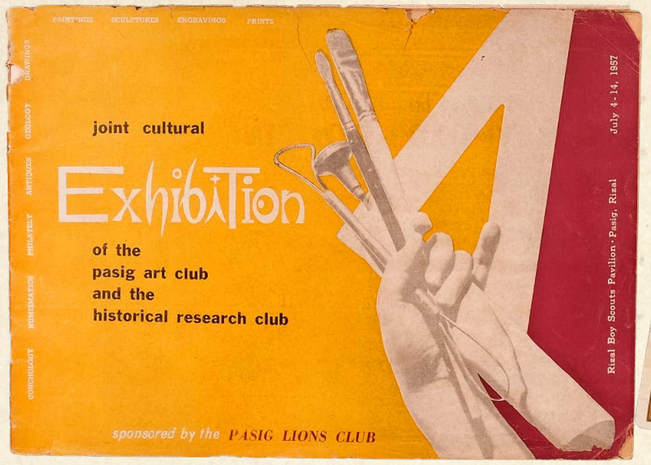

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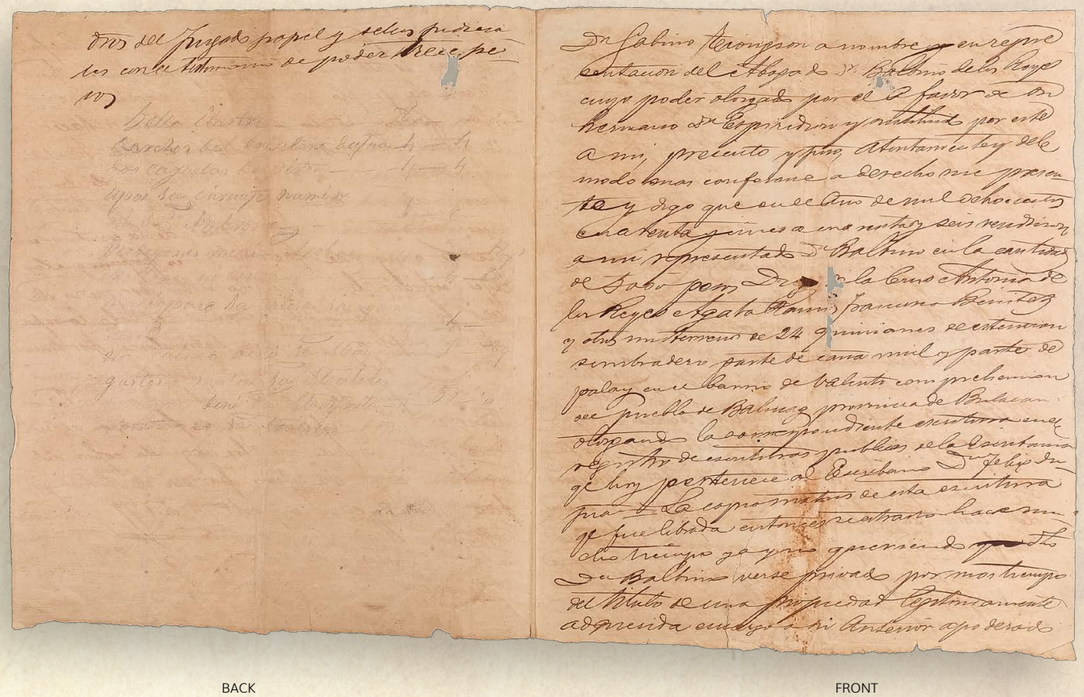

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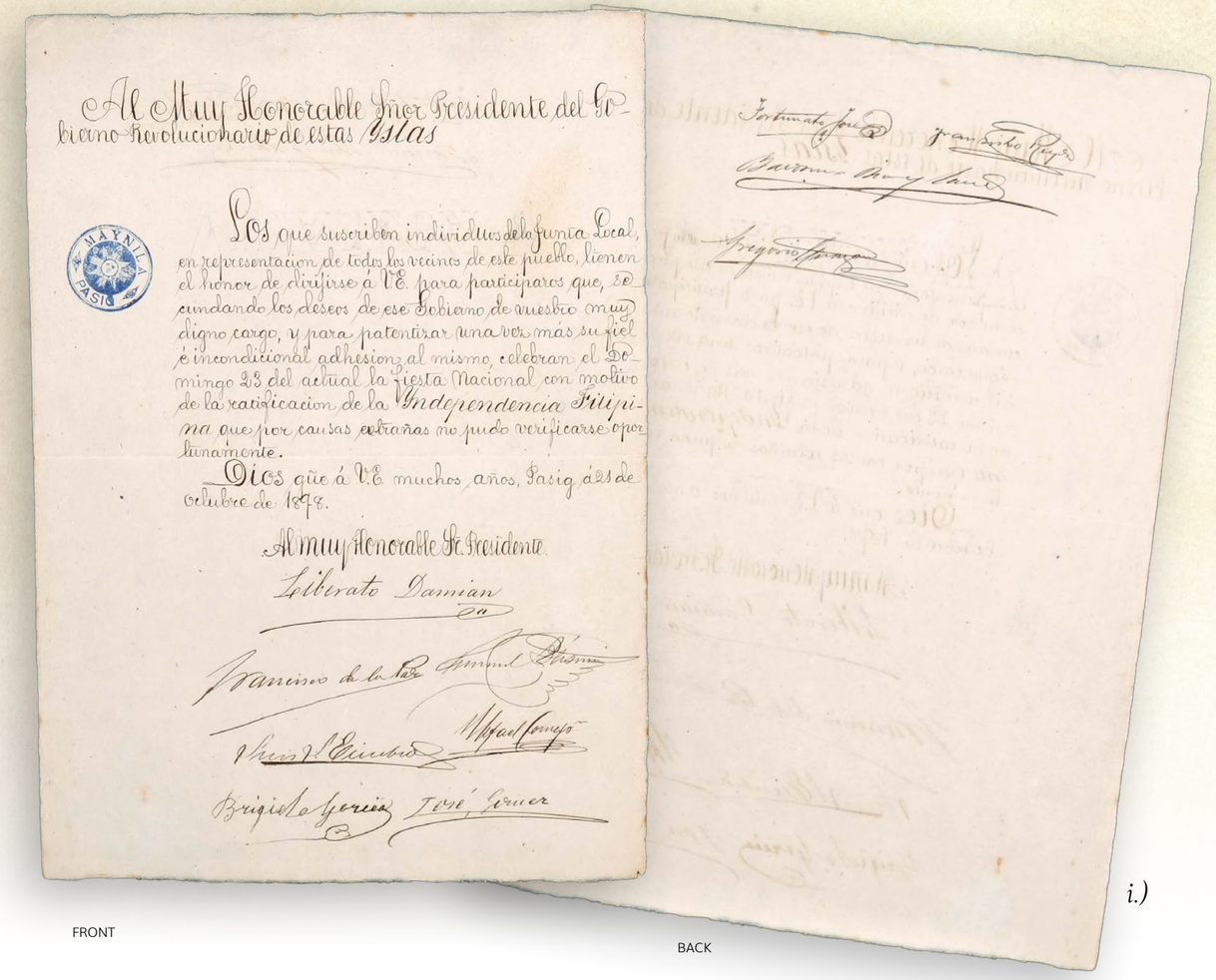

Al Muy Honorable Señor Presidente del Gobierno Revolucionario de estas Islas

Los que suscriben individuos de la Junta Local, en representacion de todos los vecinos de este pueblo, tienen el honor de dirijirse á V.E. para participaros que, secundando los deseos de ese Gobierno de vuestro muy digno cargo, y para patentizar una vez más su fiel é incondicional adhesion al mismo, celebran el Domingo 23 del actual la fiesta Nacional con motivo de la ratificacion de la Independencia Filipina que por causas extrañas no pudo verificarse oportunamente.

Dios güe á V.E. muchos años, Pasig á 21 de octubre de 1878.

Al muy Honorable Sr. Presidente

Liberato Damian

Francisco de la Paz

Manuel Dávila

Vicente S. Escobar

Miguel Cornejo

Brigido Garcia

José Gomez

FRONT

Fortunato Jose

Francisco Reyes

Baldomero Mayo Sanz

Gregorio Guzman

BACK

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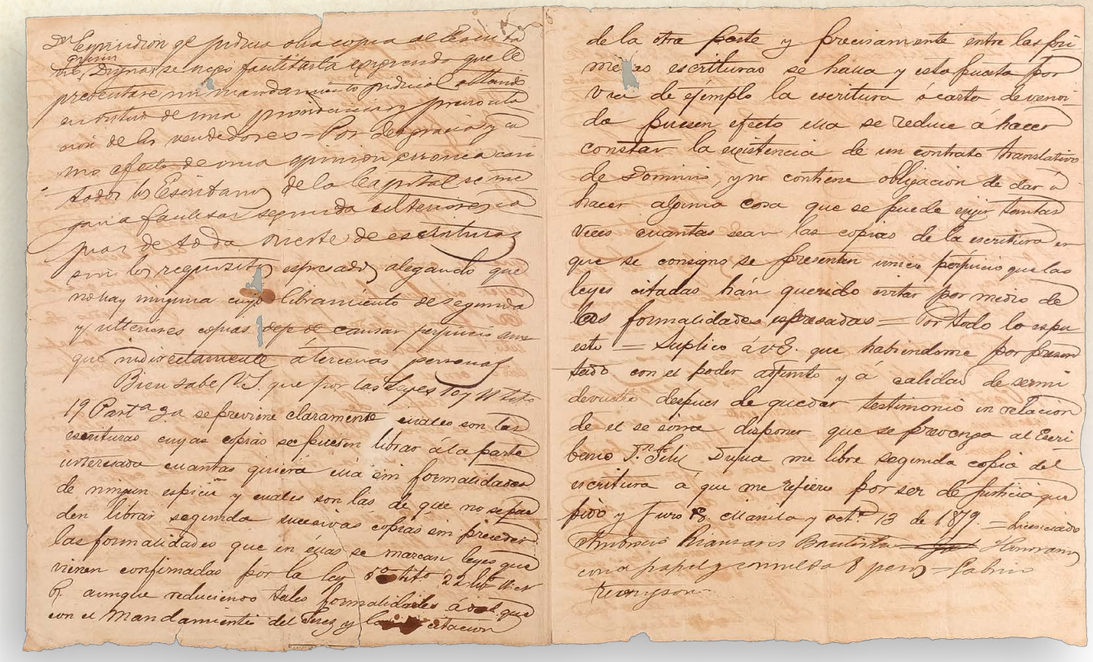


INSIDE PAGES

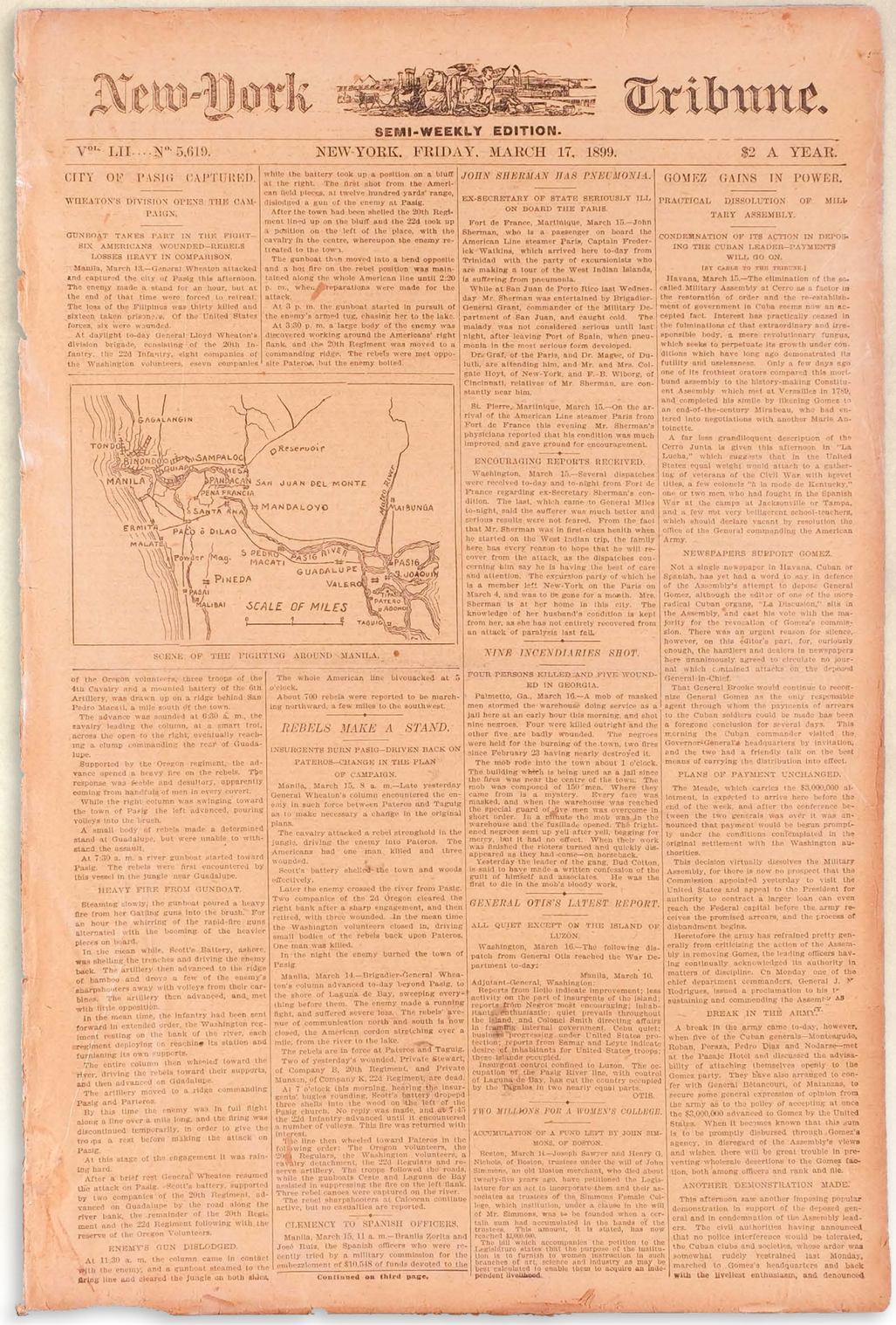
The United States would go to war in its newly acquired colonies of the Philippines, Cuba and Puerto Rico, and this issue of the New York Tribune — predecessor of today's International Herald Tribune — dated March 17, 1899, gives several accounts of the military operations between American soldiers and the so-called "Filipino rebels" in Pasig from an American point of view.

The first page includes two war reports, dated March 13 and 15, a map of Manila and its environs with place names written in the old way —San Pedro Macati instead of Makati, for example — and a letter from General Otis dated March 16, in which he reports that the situation in Bisayas is under control and that the Tagalog resistance is divided into northern and southern Luzon.

The articles speak of the advances of the American troops in Pásig, but also of the bravery of the Filipino soldiers in surprise attacks that pushed back the Americans, as well as of the fierce resistance of the "Filipino rebels" in Pateros and Taguig, which were then still under the control of the revolutionary government. There is more information of the war operations in the Philippines in the following pages which are evidence of the Filipinos' resilience and courage in the face of a militarily superior enemy.

by Jorge Mojarro

TOP : The Map showing the Capture of Pasig, 1899, © https://influwenser.wordpress.com/: TOP RIGHT AND MIDDLE: American soldiers at Pasig Church, Pasig City, Manila, Philippines, March 17, 1899, Soldiers entering Pasig Church, Pasig City, Manila, Philippines after capture by USA soldiers, 1899. BOTTOM: General Otis at his Headquarters in Manila, Philippines, 1899 © John Tewell



New-York Tribune.

SEMI-WEEKLY EDITION.

VOL. LII....No. 5,619. NEW-YORK, FRIDAY, MARCH 17, 1899. $2 A YEAR.

CITY OF PASIG CAPTURED.

WHEATON'S DIVISION OPENS THE CAMPAIGN.

GUNBOAT TAKES PART IN THE FIGHT—SIX AMERICANS WOUNDED—REBELS LOSSES HEAVY IN COMPARISON.

Manila, March 13.—General Wheaton attacked and captured the city of Pasig this afternoon. The enemy made a stand for an hour, but at the end of that time were forced to retreat. The loss of the Filipinos was thirty killed and sixteen taken prisoners. Of the United States forces, six were wounded.

At daylight to-day General Lloyd Wheaton's division brigade, consisting of the 20th Infantry, the 22d Infantry, eight companies of the Washington volunteers, eseven companies of the Oregon volunteers, three troops of the 4th Cavalry and a mounted battery of the 6th Artillery, was drawn up on a ridge behind San Pedro Macati, a mile south of the town.

The advance was sounded at 6:30 A. m., the cavalry leading the column, at a smart trot, across the open to the right, eventually reaching a clump commanding the rear of Guadalupe.

Supported by the Oregon regiment, the advance opened a heavy fire on the rebels. The response was feeble and desultory, apparently coming from handfuls of men in every covert.

While the right column was swinging toward the town of Pasig the left advanced, pouring volleys into the brush.

A small body of rebels made a determined stand at Guadalupe, but were unable to withstand the assault.

At 7:30 a. m. a river gunboat started toward Pasig. The rebels were first encountered by this vessel in the jungle near Guadalupe.

HEAVY FIRE FROM GUNBOAT.

Steaming slowly, the gunboat poured a heavy fire from her Gatling guns into the brush. For an hour the whirring of the rapid-fire guns alternated with the booming of the heavier pieces on board.

In the mean while, Scott's Battery, ashore, was shelling the trenches and driving the enemy back. The artillery then advanced to the ridge of bamboo and drove a few of the enemy's sharpshooters away with volleys from their carbines. The artillery then advanced, and met with little opposition.

In the mean time, the infantry had been sent forward in extended order, the Washington regiment resting on the bank of the river, each regiment deploying on reaching its station and furnishing its own supports.

The entire column then wheeled toward the river, driving the rebels toward their supports, and then advanced on Guadalupe.

The artillery moved to a ridge commanding Pasig and Parteros.

By this time the enemy was in full flight along a line over a mile long, and the firing was discontinued temporarily, in order to give the troops a rest before making the attack on Pasig.

At this stage of the engagement it was raining hard.

After a brief rest General Wheaton resumed the attack on Pasig. Scott's battery, supported by two companies of the 20th Regiment, advanced on Guadalupe by the road along the river bank, the remainder of the 20th Regiment and the 22d Regiment following with the reserve of the Oregon Volunteers.

ENEMY'S GUN DISLODGED.

At 11:30 a. m. the column came in contact with the enemy, and a gunboat steamed to the firing line and cleared the jungle on both sides, while the battery took up a position on a bluff at the right. The first shot from the American field pieces, at twelve hundred yards' range, dislodged a gun of the enemy at Pasig.

After the town had been shelled the 20th Regiment lined up on the bluff and the 22d took up a position on the left of the place, with the cavalry in the centre, whereupon the enemy retreated to the town.

The gunboat then moved into a bend opposite and a hot fire on the rebel position was maintained along the whole American line until 2:20 p. m., when preparations were made for the attack.

At 3 p. m. the gunboat started in pursuit of the enemy's armed tug, chasing her to the lake.

At 3:30 p. m. a large body of the enemy was discovered working around the Americans' right flank, and the 20th Regiment was moved to a commanding ridge. The rebels were met opposite Pateros, but the enemy bolted.

SCENE OF THE FIGHTING AROUND MANILA.

The whole American line bivouacked at 5 o'clock.

About 700 rebels were reported to be marching northward, a few miles to the southwest.

REBELS MAKE A STAND.

INSURGENTS BURN PASIG—DRIVEN BACK ON PATEROS—CHANGE IN THE PLAN OF CAMPAIGN.

Manila, March 15, 8 a. m.—Late yesterday General Wheaton's column encountered the enemy in such force between Pateros and Taguig as to make necessary a change in the original plans.

The cavalry attacked a rebel stronghold in the jungle, driving the enemy into Pateros. The Americans had one man killed and three wounded.

Scott's battery shelled the town and woods effectively.

Later the enemy crossed the river from Pasig. Two companies of the 24 Oregon cleared the right bank after a sharp engagement, and then retired, with three wounded. In the mean time the Washington volunteers closed in, driving small bodies of the rebels back upon Pateros. One man was killed.

In the night the enemy burned the town of Pasig.

Manila, March 14.—Brigadier-General Wheaton's column advanced to-day beyond Pasig, to the shore of Laguna de Bay, sweeping everything before them. The enemy made a running fight, and suffered severe loss. The rebels' avenue of communication north and south is now closed, the American cordon stretching over a mile, from the river to the lake.

The rebels are in force at Pateros and Taguig. Two of yesterday's wounded, Private Stewart, of Company B, 20th Regiment, and Private Munson, of Company K, 22d Regiment, are dead.

At 7 o'clock this morning, hearing the insurgents' bugles sounding, Scott's battery dropped three shells into the wood on the left of the Pasig church. No reply was made, and at 7:45 the 22d Infantry advanced until it encountered a number of volleys. This fire was returned with interest.

The line then wheeled toward Pateros in the following order: The Oregon volunteers, the 20th Regulars, the Washington volunteers, a cavalry detachment, the 22d Regulars and reserve artillery. The troops followed the roads, while the gunboats Ceste and Laguna de Bay assisted in suppressing the fire on the left flank. Three rebel canoes were captured on the river.

The rebel sharpshooters at Caloocan continue active, but no casualties are reported.

CLEMENCY TO SPANISH OFFICERS.

Manila, March 15, 11 a. m.—Branlio Zorita and José Ruiz, the Spanish officers who were recently tried by a military commission for the embezzlement of $10,518 of funds devoted to the

Continued on third page.

JOHN SHERMAN HAS PNEUMONIA.

EX-SECRETARY OF STATE SERIOUSLY ILL ON BOARD THE PARIS.

Fort de France, Martinique, March 15.—John Sherman, who is a passenger on board the American Line steamer Paris, Captain Frederick Watkins, which arrived here to-day from Trinidad with the party of excursionists who are making a tour of the West Indian Islands, is suffering from pneumonia.

While at San Juan de Porto Rico last Wednesday Mr. Sherman was entertained by Brigadier-General Grant, commander of the Military Department of San Juan, and caught cold. The malady was not considered serious until last night, after leaving Port of Spain, when pneumonia in the most serious form developed.

Dr. Graf, of the Paris, and Dr. Magee, of Duluth, are attending him, and Mr. and Mrs. Colgate Hoyt, of New-York, and F. B. Wiborg, of Cincinnati, relatives of Mr. Sherman, are constantly near him.

St. Pierre, Martinique, March 15.—On the arrival of the American Line steamer Paris from Fort de France this evening Mr. Sherman's physicians reported that his condition was much improved, and gave ground for encouragement.

ENCOURAGING REPORTS RECEIVED.

Washington, March 15.—Several dispatches were received to-day and to-night from Fort de France regarding ex-Secretary Sherman's condition. The last, which came to General Miles to-night, said the sufferer was much better and serious results were not feared. From the fact that Mr. Sherman was in first-class health when he started on the West Indian trip, the family here has every reason to hope that he will recover from the attack, as the dispatches concerning him say he is having the best of care and attention. The excursion party of which he is a member left New-York on the Paris on March 4, and was to be gone for a month. Mrs. Sherman is at her home in this city. The knowledge of her husband's condition is kept from her, as she has not entirely recovered from an attack of paralysis last fall.

NINE INCENDIARIES SHOT.

FOUR PERSONS KILLED AND FIVE WOUNDED IN GEORGIA.

Palmetto, Ga., March 16.—A mob of masked men stormed the warehouse doing service as a jail here at an early hour this morning, and shot nine negroes. Four were killed outright and the other five are badly wounded. The negroes were held for the burning of the town, two fires since February 23 having nearly destroyed it.

The mob rode into the town about 1 o'clock. The building which is being used as a jail since the fires was near the centre of the town. The mob was composed of 150 men. Where they came from is a mystery. Every face was masked, and when the warehouse was reached the special guard of five men was overcome in short order. In a minute the mob was in the warehouse and the fusillade opened. The frightened negroes sent up yell after yell, begging for mercy, but it had no effect. When their work was finished the rioters turned and quickly disappeared as they had come—on horseback.

Yesterday the leader of the gang, Bud Cotton, is said to have made a written confession of the guilt of himself and associates. He was the first to die in the mob's bloody work.

GENERAL OTIS'S LATEST REPORT.

ALL QUIET EXCEPT ON THE ISLAND OF LUZON.

Washington, March 16.—The following dispatch from General Otis reached the War Department to-day:

Manila, March 16.

Adjutant-General, Washington:

Reports from Iloilo indicate improvement; less activity on the part of insurgents of the island; reports from Negros most encouraging; inhabitants enthusiastic; quiet prevails throughout the island, and Colonel Smith directing affairs in friendly internal government. Cebu quiet; business progressing under United States protection; reports from Samar and Leyte indicate desire of inhabitants for United States troops; these islands occupied.

Insurgent control confined to Luzon. The occupation of the Pasig River line, with control of Laguna de Bay, has cut the country occupied by the Tagalos in two nearly equal parts.

OTIS.

TWO MILLIONS FOR A WOMEN'S COLLEGE.

ACCUMULATION OF A FUND LEFT BY JOHN SIMMONS, OF BOSTON.

Boston, March 14.—Joseph Sawyer and Henry G. Nichols, of Boston, trustees under the will of John Simmons, an old Boston merchant, who died about twenty-five years ago, have petitioned the Legislature for an act to incorporate them and their associates as trustees of the Simmons Female College, which institution, under a clause in the will of Mr. Simmons, was to be founded when a certain sum had accumulated in the hands of the trustees. This amount, it is stated, has now reached $2,000,000.

The bill which accompanies the petition to the Legislature states that the purpose of the institution is to furnish to women instruction in such branches of art, science and industry as may be best calculated to enable them to acquire an independent livelihood.

GOMEZ GAINS IN POWER.

PRACTICAL DISSOLUTION OF MILITARY ASSEMBLY.

CONDEMNATION OF ITS ACTION IN DEPOSING THE CUBAN LEADER—PAYMENTS WILL GO ON.

[BY CABLE TO THE TRIBUNE.]

Havana, March 15.—The elimination of the so-called Military Assembly at Cerro as a factor in the restoration of order and the re-establishment of government in Cuba seems now an accepted fact. Interest has practically ceased in the fulminations of that extraordinary and irresponsible body, a mere revolutionary fungus, which seeks to perpetuate its growth under conditions which have long ago demonstrated its futility and uselessness. Only a few days ago one of its frothiest orators compared this moribund assembly to the history-making Constituent Assembly which met at Versailles in 1789, and completed his simile by likening Gomez to an end-of-the-century Mirabeau, who had entered into negotiations with another Marie Antoinette.

A far less grandiloquent description of the Cerro Junta is given this afternoon in "La Lucha," which suggests that in the United States equal weight would attach to a gathering of veterans of the Civil War, with agreeable titles, a few colonels "à la mode de Kentucky," one or two men who had fought in the Spanish War at the camps at Jacksonville or Tampa, and a few mat very belligerent school-teachers, which should declare vacant by resolution the office of the General commanding the American Army.

NEWSPAPERS SUPPORT GOMEZ.

Not a single newspaper in Havana, Cuban or Spanish, has yet had a word to say in defence of the Assembly's attempt to depose General Gomez, although the editor of one of the more radical Cuban organs, "La Discusion," sits in the Assembly, and cast his vote with the majority for the revocation of Gomez's commission. There was an urgent reason for silence, however, on this editor's part, for, curiously enough, the hardiest and dealers in newspapers here unanimously agreed to circulate no journal which contained attacks on the deposed General-in-Chief.

That General Brooke would continue to recognize General Gomez as the only responsible agent through whom the payments of arrears to the Cuban soldiers could be made has been a foregone conclusion for several days. This morning the Cuban commander visited the Governor-General's headquarters by invitation, and the two had a friendly talk on the best means of carrying the distribution into effect.

PLANS OF PAYMENT UNCHANGED.

The Meade, which carries the $3,000,000 allotment, is expected to arrive here before the end of the week, and after the conference between the two generals was over it was announced that payment would be begun promptly under the conditions contemplated in the original settlement with the Washington authorities.

This decision virtually dissolves the Military Assembly, for there is now no prospect that the Commission appointed yesterday to visit the United States and appeal to the President for authority to contract a larger loan can even reach the Federal capital before the army receives the promised arrears, and the process of disbandment begins.

Heretofore the army has refrained pretty generally from criticising the action of the Assembly in removing Gomez, the leading officers having continually acknowledged its authority in matters of discipline. On Monday one of the chief department commanders, General J. M. Rodriguez, issued a proclamation to his troops sustaining and commending the Assembly as

BREAK IN THE ARMY.

A break in the army came to-day, however, when five of the Cuban generals—Montegudo, Roban, Perazа, Pedro Diaz and Nolarre—met at the Pasaje Hotel and discussed the advisability of attaching themselves openly to the Gomez party. They have also arranged to confer with General Betancourt, of Matanzas, to secure some general expression of opinion from the army as to the policy of accepting at once the $2,000,000 advanced to Gomez by the United States. When it becomes known that this sum is to be promptly disbursed through Gomez's agency, in disregard of the Assembly's views and wishes, there will be great trouble in preventing wholesale desertions to the Gomez faction, both among officers and rank and file.

ANOTHER DEMONSTRATION MADE.

This afternoon saw another imposing popular demonstration in support of the deposed general and in condemnation of the Assembly leaders. The civil authorities having announced that no police interference would be tolerated, the Cuban clubs and societies, whose ardor was somewhat rudely restrained last Monday, marched to Gomez's headquarters and back with the liveliest enthusiasm, and denounced

k.)

The Birth Certificate of the Filipino Nation

A Manuscript Copy of the Declaration of Independence

by JORGE MOJARRO

The original Proclamation of Independence document is safeguarded in none other than the National Library of the Philippines. It is, of course, a unique document.

What was not known until now is that at least one of the military men around Aguinaldo rushed to make a handwritten copy on that very same fateful day of June 12th 1898. Lt. Col. Jose Bañuelo may have been acutely aware of the historical importance of that founding event, or may have simply wanted a copy for safekeeping in case the original was lost, or perhaps to certify his own participation in this lofty enterprise as a way of obtaining future political favors.

What we also do know is the copy is a single handwritten document, written on the same date as the original Act of Independence and copied directly from the original document. The author of the copy, whose signature appears at the end, is a lieutenant colonel of the revolutionary government, José Bañuelo, although the rest of the document's handwriting appears to belong to a Tagalog-speaking amanuensis or scribe to whom it was dictated. The document is not entirely faithful to the original, since Aguinaldo is described as "egregious", when in the original he is described as "eminent", in an attempt to enhance the figure of the leader. Likewise, the long list of signatories is summarized as follows: "Ambrosio Flores - Artemio Ricarte - Pantaleón García - Baldomero Aguinaldo - José Bañuelos, and hundreds of other signatures ending with that of the American subject, Mr. L. M. Johnson". We don't know if the rest of the signatories were left out of hastiness, lack of readability, or for the purpose of drawing attention only to those few names.

This is a key document of the existence of the Philippines as an independent nation. It is not only a foundational document, but in its very content, reference is made to the history of the Philippines: it speaks of recovering an independence that was taken away from them by Legazpi in 1571; it mentions alleged abuses by the Civil Guard in recent times; it refers to the alleged greed of the friars of the religious orders; and it even speaks of Magellan and Lapulapu in Mactan.

There are, moreover, two important features of this document that are usually overlooked: first, Aguinaldo proclaimed himself a dictator with absolute powers; and his first impetus for the Philippine republic was not as a liberal democracy, but as a dictatorship. (This would later be corrected by the Malolos Congress and Constitution.) Secondly, the symbols of the national flag are explained and that its red, white, and blue reflected "gratitude to the American nation for help rendered." As far as the mysterious Colonel Johnson is concerned, according to historian Ambeth Ocampo, it is very likely that his addition to the list of signatories was false and was done to give greater legitimacy to the document. About José Bañuelo, we only know that he was a man in Aguinaldo's confidence and that he was part of the war department until at least 1899.

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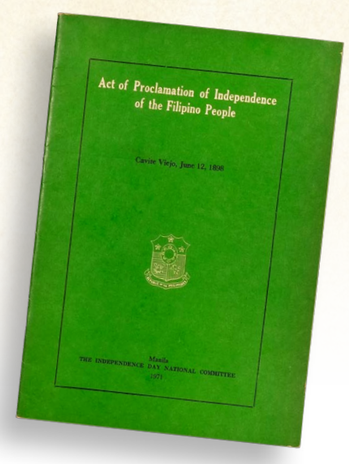
Acta de la Proclamación de Independencia del Pueblo Filipino

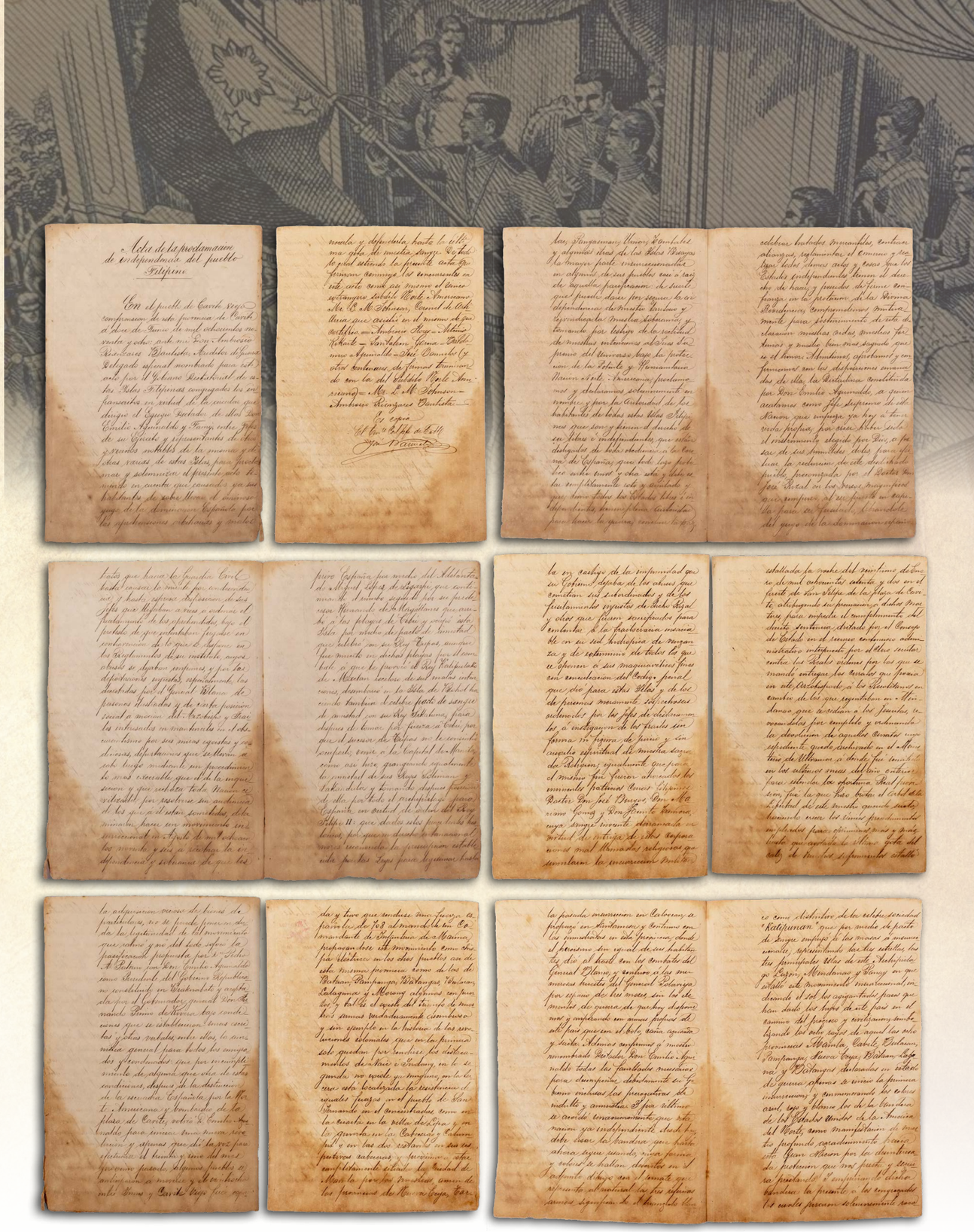
Manuscript Copy of The Original 1898 Declaration of Philippine Independence Document by Ambrocio Rianzares Bautista for El Teniente Coronel General Jefe de Ejercito Militar José Bañuelos, one of The Signatories of The Official Document;

12 pages

condition: slight tropical stain, water stain at the bottom, but still fine.

P 1,600,000





Original Spanish

Acta de Proclamación de Independencia del Pueblo Filipino

En el pueblo de Cavite Viejo, comprensión de esta provincia de Cavite, a doce de junio de mil ochocientos noventa y ocho: ante mí Don Ambrosio Rianzares Bautista, auditor de guerra, delegado especial nombrado para proclamar y solemnizar este acto por el Gobierno Dictatorial de estas Islas Filipinas, al efecto y en virtud de la circular que dirigió el Egregio Dictador de ellas don Emilio Aguinaldo y Famy, congregados los infranscristos entre jefes de su Ejército y representantes de los otros de ellos que no han podido concurrir y vecinos notables de varios pueblos de las mismas, teniendo en cuenta que, cansados ya sus habitantes de sobrellevar el ominoso yugo de la dominación española por las aprehensiones arbitrarias y malos tratos que hacía la Guardia Civil hasta causar la muerte por condescendencia, y hasta expresa disposición de sus jefes que llegaban a veces a ordenar el fusilamiento de los aprehendidos bajo el pretexto de que intentaban fugarse en contravención de lo que se dispone en los reglamentos de su Instituto cuyos abusos se dejaban impunes y por las deportaciones injustas, especialmente las decretadas por el General Blanco, de personas ilustradas y de cierta posición social a moción del Arzobispo y frailes interesados en mantenerles en el obscurantismo por sus miras egoístas y codiciosas, deportaciones que se llevan a cabo desde luego mediante un procedimiento más execrable que el de la Inquisición y que rechaza toda nación civilizada por resolverse sin audiencia de los que a él están sometidos, determinaron hacer un movimiento insurreccional en agosto de mil ochocientos noventa y seis, a recobrar la independencia y soberanía de que les privó España por medio del adelantado Miguel López de Legazpi que, continuando el rumbo seguido por su predecesor Hernando de Magallanes, que arribó a las playas de Cebú y ocupó esta isla por medio de pacto de amistad que celebró con su Rey Tupas, aunque fue muerto en el combate habido en dichas playas a que le provocó el Rey Kalipulako de Mactán, receloso de sus malas intenciones, desembarcó en la Isla de Bohol haciendo también el célebre pacto de sangre de amistad con su Rey Sikatuna para después de tomar por fuerza a Cebú, porque el sucesor Tupas no le consintió ocuparlo, venir a la capital de Manila como así hizo, granjeando igualmente la amistad de sus Reyes Solimán y Lakandula, y tomando después posesión de ella por todo el Archipiélago para España, en virtud de las órdenes del Rey Felipe II; que dados estos precedentes históricos, porque en derecho internacional no es reconocida la prescripción establecida por las Leyes para legitimar hasta la adquisición viciosa de bienes de particulares, no se puede poner en duda la legitimidad de tal movimiento que calmó y no del todo sofocó la pacificación propuesta por don Pedro A. Paterno con don Emilio Aguinaldo como presidente del Gobierno Republicano constituido en Biak-na-Bató y aceptado por el Gobernador General don Fernando Primo de Rivera bajo condiciones que se establecieron, unas escritas y otras verbales, entre ellas, las amnistía general para todos los emigrados y condenados; que por incumplimiento de alguna que otra de estas condiciones después de la destrucción de la Escuadra Española por la Norteamericana y bombardeo de la plaza de Cavite, volvió don Emilio Aguinaldo para iniciar una nueva revolución, y apenas que dio la voz para efectuarse el treinta y uno del mes próximo pasado, algunos pueblos se anticiparon a moverse, y el veintiocho entre Imus y Cavite Viejo fue copada y tuvo que rendirse una fuerza española de 108 al mando de un Comandante de Infantería de Marina, propagándose este movimiento como chispa eléctrica en los otros pueblos, así de esta misma provincia como de los de Bataán, Pampanga, Batangas, Bulaáan, Laguna y Morong, algunos con puertos, y tal es el éxito del triunfo de nuestras armas verdaderamente asombroso y sin ejemplo en la historia de las revoluciones coloniales que en la primera solo quedan por rendirse los Destacamentos de Naic e Indang; en la segunda no existe ya ninguno, en la tercera está localizada la resistencia de iguales fuerzas en el pueblo de San Fernando, en él concentradas, como en la cuarta en la Villa de Lipa, en la quinta en la Cabecera y Calumpit; y en las dos restantes en sus respectivas Cabeceras y próxima a estar completamente sitiada la ciudad de Manila por las nuestras amén de las provincias de Nueva Ecija, Tarlac, Pangasinán, Unión, Zambales, y algunas otras de las Islas Visayas insurreccionadas en algunos de sus pueblos, en unos casi a raíz de aquella pacificación y en otros aún antes, de suerte que puede darse por segura la independencia de nuestro territorio y reivindicada nuestra soberanía, y tomando por testigo de la rectitud de nuestras intenciones al Juez Supremo del Universo, bajo la protección de la potente y numanitaria nación Norteamericana, proclamamos y declaramos solemnemente en nombre y por la autoridad de los habitantes de todas estas Islas Filipinas, que son y tienen el derecho de ser libres e independientes, que están desligadas de toda obediencia a la Corona de España, que todo lazo político entre unos y otra, está y debe estar completamente roto y anulado, y que como todos los estados libres e independientes, tienen plena autoridad para hacer la guerra, concluir la paz, celebrar tratados mercantiles, contraer alianzas, reglamentar el comercio y realizar todos demás actos y cosas que los Estados Independientes tienen el derecho de hacer, y poseídos de firme confianza en la protección de la Divina Providencia, comprometemos mutuamente para sostenimiento de esta declaración, nuestras vidas, nuestras fortunas y nuestro bien más sagrado que es el honor. Admitimos, aprobamos y confirmamos con las disposiciones emanadas de ellas, la Dictadura constituída por don Emilio Aguinaldo a quien acatamos como Jefe Supremo de esta Nación que empieza ya hoy a tener vida propia, por creer haber sido el instrumento elegido por Dios, a pesar de sus humildes dotes, para efectuar la redención de este desdichado pueblo, preconizada por el doctor don José Rizal en los versos magníficos que compuso al ser puesto en capilla para ser fusilado, librádole del yugo dela dominación Española en castigo de la impunidad que su Gobierno dejaba de los abusos que cometían sus subordinados, y de los fusilamientos injustos de dicho Rizal y otros que fueron sacrificados para contentar a la frailocracia insaciable en su sed hidrópica de venganza y de exterminio de todos los que se oponen a sus maquiavélicos fines con conculcación del código penal que dio para estas Islas, y de los de personas meramente sospechosas, ordenados por los jefes de destacamentos, a instigación de los frailes sin forma ni figura de juicio y sin auxilio espiritual de nuestra sagrada Religión, igualmente que para el mismo fin fueron ahorcados los eminentes patricios, curas filipinos doctor don José Burgos, don Mariano Gómez y don Jacinto Zamora, cuya sangre inocente derramada en virtud de intriga de esas corporaciones mal llamadas religiosas que simularon la insurrección militar estallada la noche del veintiuno de enero de mil ochocientos setenta y dos en el fuerte de San Felipe de la plaza de Cavite, atribuyendo su promoción a dichos mártires para impedir el cumplimiento del decreto-sentencia dictado por el Consejo de Estado en el recurso contencioso administrativo interpuesto por el clero secular contra las reales órdenes por las que se mandó entregar los curatos que poseía en este Arzobispado a los recoletos en cambio de los que regentaban en Mindanao, que se cedían a los jesuitas, revocándolas por completo y ordenando la devolución de aquellos curatos cuyo expediente quedó archivado en el Ministerio de Ultramar; a donde fue remitido en los últimos meses del año anterior para extender la oportuna Real Prohibición; fue la que hizo brotar el árbol de la libertad de este nuestro querido suelo, haciéndolo crecer los inicuos procedimientos empleados para oprimirnos más y más, hasta que agotada la última gota del cáliz de nuestros sufrimientos, estalló la pasada insurrección en Caloocan, se propagó en Santa Mesa y continuó con las inmediatas en esta provincial, donde el heroísmo sin igual de sus habitantes dio al traste con los combates del general Blanco, y contuvo a las numerosas huestes del general Polavieja por espacio de tres meses, sin los elementos de guerra de que hoy disponemos y empezando con armas propias de este país que son el bolo, caña aguzada y saeta. Además conferimos a nuestro renombrado dictador don Emilio Aguinaldo todas las facultades necesarias para desempeñar dibidamente su Gobierno, inclusas las prerrogativas de indulto y amnistía. Y, por último, se acordó unánimemente que esta nación ya independiente desde hoy, debe usar la bandera que hasta ahora sigue usando, cuya forma y colores se hallan descritos en el adjunto dibujo con el remate que representa al natural con tres referidas armas significando el triángulo blanco como distintivo de la célebre Sociedad "Katipunan" que por medio de pacto de sangre empujó a las masas a insurreccionarse; representando las tres estrellas las tres principales Islas de este Archipiélago, Luzón, Mindanao y Panay en que estalló este movimento insurreccional; indicando el sol los agigantados pasos que han dado los hijos de este país en el camino del progreso y civilización, simbolizando los ocho rayos de aquél las ocho provincias: Manila, Cavite, Bulacán, Pampanga, Nueva Ecija, Bataan, Laguna y Batangas, declarando en estado de guerra apenas se inició la primera insurrección; conmemorando los colores azul, rojo y blanco los de la bandera de los Estados Unidos de la América del Norte, como manifestación de nuestro profundo agradecimiento hacia esta Gran Nación por la desinteresada protección que nos presta y seguirá prestando. Y empuñando la dicha bandera la presenté a los señores congregados, los cuales juraron solemnemente reconocerla y defenderla hasta la última gota de nuestra sangre. Por esto lo cual extiendo la presente Acta que forman conmigo los concurrentes en este acto, como así mismo el único extranjero súbdito norteamericano Mr. L. M. Johnson, Coronel de Artillería, que asistió en el mismo ,de que certifico: Ambrosio Flores – Artemio Ricarte – Pantaleón García – Baldomero Aguinaldo – José Bañuelos, y otros centenares de firmas terminando con la del súbdito norteamericano, Mr. L. M. Johnson – Ambrosio Rianzares Bautista. Es copia.

Firma.

English Translation

Act of Proclamation of Independence of the Filipino People

In the town of Cavite Viejo, part of this province of Cavite, on the twelfth day of June one thousand eight hundred and ninety-eight: before me Don Ambrosio Rianzares Bautista, auditor of war, special delegate appointed to proclaim and solemnize this act by the Dictatorial Government of these Philippine Islands, to that effect and by virtue of the circular letter addressed by the Egregious Dictator thereof Don Emilio Aguinaldo y Famy, the undersigned people assembled among the chiefs of his Army and representatives of the others of them who have not been able to concur and notable neighbors of several towns of the same, taking into account that their inhabitants, being already tired of enduring the ominous yoke of the Spanish domination by the arbitrary apprehensions and bad treatments made by the Civil Guard until causing death by complicity, and even with the explicit disposition of their chiefs who sometimes ordered the shooting of those apprehended under the pretext that they were trying to escape in contravention of the regulations of their Institute whose abuses were left unpunished and by the unjust deportations, especially those decreed by General Blanco, of enlightened people and of a certain social position on the motion of the Archbishop and friars interested in keeping them in obscurantism for their selfish and greedy views, deportations that are carried out by means of a procedure more execrable than that of the Inquisition and that is rejected by all civilized nations for being resolved without hearing of those who are subjected to it, determined to make an insurrectionary movement in August of eighteen hundred ninety-six, to recover the independence and sovereignty of which Spain deprived them by means of the Adelantado Miguel Lopez de Legazpi who, continuing the course followed by his predecessor Hernando de Magallanes, who arrived at the beaches of Cebu and occupied this island by means of a pact of friendship that he celebrated with their King Tupas, although he was killed in the battle that took place on these beaches to which he was provoked by King Kalipulako of Mactan, suspicious of his evil intentions, he landed on the island of Bohol also making the famous blood pact of friendship with King Sikatuna to take Cebu by force, because the successor Tupas did not allow him to occupy it, to come to the capital of Manila as he did, also gaining the friendship of their Kings Soliman and Lakandula, and then taking possession of it for the whole Archipelago for Spain, by virtue of the orders of King Philip II; that given these historical precedents, because in international law it is not recognized the prescription established by the Laws to legitimize even the vicious acquisition of property from private individuals, one cannot doubt the legitimacy of such a movement that calmed and not entirely suffocated the pacification proposed by Don Pedro A. Paterno with Don Emilio Aguinaldo as president of the Republican Government constituted in Biak-na-Bató and accepted by the Governor General Don Fernando Primo de Rivera under conditions that were established, some written and others verbal, among them, the general amnesty for all the emigrants and condemned; that for non-compliance of some of these conditions after the destruction of the Spanish Squadron by the North American and bombardment of the military headquarters of Cavite, Don Emilio Aguinaldo returned to initiate a new revolution, and as soon as he gave the word to take place on the thirty-first of last month, some towns anticipated to move, and on the twenty-eighth between Imus and Cavite Viejo a Spanish force of 108 under the command of a Commander of the Marine Infantry was overrun and had to surrender, spreading this movement like an electric spark in the other towns, as well of this same province as of those of Bataán, Pampanga, Batangas, Bulaáan, Laguna and Morong, some with ports, and such is the success of the triumph of our arms truly amazing and without example in the history of the colonial revolutions that in the first only the Detachments of Naic and Indang remain to be surrendered; In the second there is no longer any, in the third the resistance of the same forces is located in the town of San Fernando, concentrated there, as in the fourth in the Villa de Lipa, in the fifth in the Cabecera and Calumpit; and in the remaining two in their respective Cabeceras, and the city of Manila is about to be completely besieged by our forces, in addition to the provinces of Nueva Ecija, Tarlac, Pangasinan, Union, Zambales, and some others of the Visayan Islands rose in insurrection in some of their towns, in some almost as a result of that pacification and in others even earlier, so that the independence of our territory may be taken for granted and our sovereignty vindicated, and taking the Supreme Judge of the Universe as witness of the rectitude of our intentions, under the protection of the powerful and humanitarian American nation, we solemnly proclaim and declare in the name and by the authority of the inhabitants of all these Philippine Islands, that they are and have the right to be free and independent, that they are detached from all obedience to the Crown of Spain, that all political ties between the one and the other, are and must be completely broken and annulled, and that like all free and independent states, they have full authority to make war, conclude peace, enter into mercantile treaties, make alliances, enter into alliances, regulate alliances, regulate alliances, and make alliances, contract alliances, regulate commerce, and do all other acts and things which the Independent States have the right to do, and having firm confidence in the protection of Divine Providence, we mutually pledge to the support of this declaration, our lives, our fortunes, and our most sacred good which is honor. We admit, approve and confirm with the dispositions emanated from them, the Dictatorship constituted by Don Emilio Aguinaldo whom we accept as Supreme Chief of this Nation that already today begins to have its own life, for believing to have been the instrument chosen by God, in spite of his humble gifts, to effect the redemption of this wretched people, advocated by Doctor Don Jose Rizal in the magnificent verses that he composed when he was sent to be shot, freeing it from the yoke of Spanish domination in punishment for the impunity that its Government left of the abuses committed by its subordinates, and of the unjust executions of the said Rizal and others who were sacrificed to satisfy the unquenchable frailocracy in its overriding thirst for revenge and extermination of all those who oppose its Machiavellian ends in violation of the penal code it gave for these Islands, and of those of found guilty merely of suspicions, persons, ordered by the chiefs of detachments, at the instigation of the friars without form or figure of judgment and without spiritual aid of our sacred Religion, just as for the same purpose were hanged the eminent patricians, Philippine priests doctor Don Jose Burgos, Don Mariano Gomez and Don Jacinto Zamora, whose innocent blood spilled by virtue of intrigue of those corporations wrongly called religious who simulated the military insurrection that broke out on the night of January twenty-first, eighteen hundred and seventy-two in the fort of San Felipe in the plaza of Cavite, attributing their promotion to the said martyrs to prevent the fulfillment of the decree-sentence dictated by the Council of State in the contentious-administrative appeal filed by the secular clergy against the royal orders by which it was ordered to hand over the curates it possessed in this Archbishopric to the Recollects in exchange for those they ran in Mindanao, which were ceded to the Jesuits, revoking them completely and ordering the return of those curates whose file was archived in the Ministry of Overseas Territories; to where it was sent in the last months of the previous year to extend the opportune Royal Prohibition; was the one that made the tree of freedom sprout from this our beloved soil, making it grow despite the iniquitous procedures used to oppress us more and more, until the last drop of the chalice of our sufferings was exhausted, the last insurrection broke out in Caloocan, spread in Santa Mesa and continued with the immediate ones in this province, where the unparalleled heroism of its inhabitants put an end to the combats of General Blanco, and contained the numerous armies of General Polavieja for three months, without the elements of war that we have today and starting with weapons typical of this country which are the bolo, sharpened stave and spear. We also conferred on our renowned dictator Don Emilio Aguinaldo all the necessary faculties to duly carry out his government, including the prerogatives of pardon and amnesty. And, finally, it was unanimously agreed that this nation, now independent as of today, should use the flag that until now it continues to use, whose shape and colors are described in the attached drawing with the top that represents the original with three referred arms signifying the white triangle as a distinctive emblem of the famous "Katipunan" Society that by means of a blood pact pushed the masses to insurrection; The three stars representing the three main islands of this archipelago, Luzon, Mindanao and Panay, where this insurrectional movement broke out; the sun indicating the giant steps taken by the sons of this country on the road to progress and civilization, the eight rays of the sun symbolizing the eight provinces: Manila, Cavite, Bulacan, Pampanga, Nueva Ecija, Bataan, Laguna and Batangas, declaring a state of war as soon as the first insurrection began; commemorating the colors blue, red and white those of the flag of the United States of North America, as a manifestation of our deep gratitude to this Great Nation for the disinterested protection it renders and will continue to render us. And wielding the said flag, it was displayed to the assembled gentlemen, who solemnly swore to recognize and defend it to the last drop of our blood. For this reason, I am issuing the present Act, which I form with those present in this act, as well as the only foreign American subject Mr. L. M. Johnson, Colonel of Artillery, who attended the same, which I certify: Ambrosio Flores - Artemio Ricarte - Pantaleón García - Baldomero Aguinaldo - José Bañuelos, and hundreds of other signatures ending with that of the American subject, Mr. L. M. Johnson - Ambrosio Rianzares Bautista. It is a copy.

Signature.

Romeo Tabuena

Filipino Soul in Mexican Soil

Romeo Tabuena walks the fine line between Mexico and the Philippines and emerges as the perfect combination of both. In 1955, Tabuene settled permanently in San Miguel de Allende, Mexico after a few years of studying abroad. Despite his physical distance from his home country, he had never severed any ties with the Philippines, retaining his Philippine citizenship as well as participating as the Philippines's representative in many art events, including the Eighth Biennial of Sao Paulo, Brazil in 1965.

This continued love for the Philippines despite the distance is evident in this mixed media work. Taking on the quintessential Filipino symbol, the Philippine flag, he mixed it with the common images of the Filipino masses. Despite his physical distance, Tabuena can never seem to fully sever himself from the Philippines, a fact that he will contend with as he permanently settled in San Allende while still maintaining his connections to his homeland.

"[Tabuena is] a gentle soul who appreciated ... the many similarities between Mexico and the Philippines," Bibsy M. Carballo said. Indeed, Tabuena's works transcend geographical boundaries as he depicts the vibrant cultures of his hometown and chosen country through his equally animated oeuvre. *(Hannah Valiente)*

ABOVE: Romeo Tabuena in his studio at Mexico © galerianudo.com

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Romeo Tabuena (1921 - 2015)
Untitled
signed (bottom)
ca. 1960
mixed media on Philippine flag
60" x 36" (152 cm x 91 cm)

P 300,000

PROVENANCE
La Gazette Drouot, *Contemporary and Actual Art*,
Barcelona, 27 July 2022, Lot 62

The Filipino Gentlemen's Bet

Fernando Amorsolo is arguably the face of the Philippine art scene. Despite the longevity and the myriad of talents the scene has to offer, Amorsolo is the first to come to mind when asked to name a Filipino visual artist. For many, the best Philippine art has to offer includes Amorsolo's *dalagas*, his *lavanderas*, and the scenic Philippine countryside that he lovingly depicts canvas after canvas.

Amorsolo's scenic vignettes of provincial life remain one of the most iconic genres of paintings even outside of Amorsolo's oeuvre. The painter of the Philippine sunlight has managed to "capture on canvas the vibrant tropical Philippine sunlight" as art historian Eric Torres says in *100 Years of Philippine Paintings.* The vivid rays wash his works in warmth, a glow that captivated many national and international patrons alike.

His 1967 Sabungeros features this characteristic yellow shine. Depicting a group of men as they huddle around the sabungeros mentioned above, Amorsolo sets a scene that is both captivating and heartwarming. The men around the *sabungeros* range from different ages but they listen intently as the *sabungeros* converse. From one generation to the next, the knowledge of cockfighting is being passed down.

The Philippines has a long history of cockfighting. First recorded by Antonio Pigafetta during Magellan's expedition in 1521, cockfights served as a major social function in the *barrios* of the Philippines, actualizing the Filipino pride and ego as bettors put their money behind their favored fighter.

However, here, Amorsolo shows a side other than the adrenaline-fuelled fight many might associate with cockfighting. We see not the fight itself but the lull between them as the fighters meet not as opponents but as mentors to the next generation of *sabungeros.* Here, Amorsolo emphasizes the community the cockfights produce and its role as a social activity which many young men get into as a rite of passage for adulthood.

Amid the usual bloody image procured by cockfighting, Amorsolo draws attention to the softer, more intimate side of it. He suffuses this intimate image with his notable Amorsolo sunlight, washing the scene in warmth.

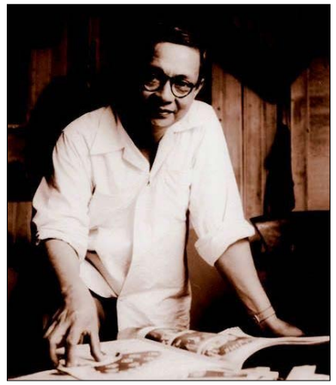
"There is always something beautiful in all things around us and nature. So why not recreate God's creation through [my] canvas?" His daughter Sylvia Amorsolo-Lazo recalls her father saying. Indeed, as he portrays the bucolic Philippine countryside with the utmost admiration, there is a palpable affection that bled into his body of works. This reverence for the pastoral beauty makes Amorsolo one of the most, if not the most, recognizable artists in Philippine art history. *(Hannah Valiente)*

121 PROPERTY FROM THE COLLECTION OF A VERY DISTINGUISHED FAMILY

Fernando Amorsolo (1892 - 1972)

Sabungeros
signed and dated 1967 (lower left)
oil on canvas
16" x 20" (40 cm x 51 cm)

P 2,000,000



ABOVE: Fernando Amorsolo. © voltaire.medium.com

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Gabriel Barredo (1957 – 2020)

Untitled Centerpiece Candelabra
mixed media
H: 19″ (48 cm)
L: 16″ (41 cm)
W: 67″ (170 cm)

P 300,000

PROVENANCE
León Gallery, The Kingly Treasures *Auction 2013*,
Makati City, 7 December 2013, Lot 138

Gabriel Barredo is a Filipino artist best known for his sculptures and mixed-media installations. His monumental, immersive mixed-media installations and assemblages have been the focal point of numerous solo and group exhibitions, both locally and internationally. Moreover, he pioneered kinetic sculpture in the Philippines, establishing himself as a formidable and pivotal figure in his chosen field.

For Barredo, an artwork is a spectacle that exists to be displayed. Crafted with unparalleled rigor and meticulous craftsmanship, Barredo's works are not meant to be hidden or confined in small spaces. This colossal centerpiece candle holder, skillfully crafted with swirls of unconventional materials, is a testament to his unique and intriguing artistry.

His inimitable practice challenges the limits and possibilities of art. Barredo's work process includes months of bricolage, sketching, and painting, employing a plethora of found objects such as rods of electric fan covers, windshields, paper, wrought-iron, antique radios, coconut husks, bottle caps, bed springs, fire-hose coils, conveyor belts, wooden beads, and computer and refrigerator parts. His ingenious utilization of these materials and whimsical themes, such as the juxtaposition of the mundane and the extraordinary, adds to his eccentric yet original practice of crafting. *(Jessica Magno)*

Federico Aguilar Alcuaz (1932 - 2011)

Untitled (Abstract)
signed and dated 1976 (upper left)
oil on canvas
20" x 16" (51 cm x 41 cm)

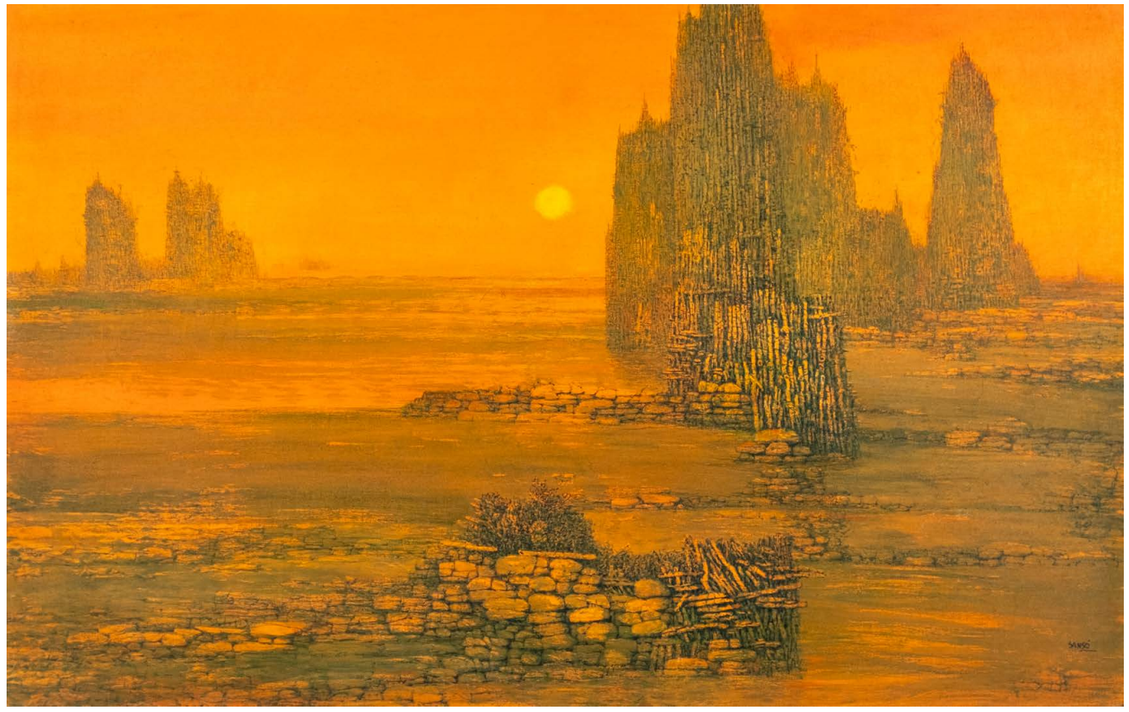
P 220,000

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

Federico Aguilar Alcuaz's abstractions toe the line between figuration and delineation. Belonging to the exceptional classification of artists who excel in various mediums and forms, Alcuaz painted abstractions and figurations, made ceramics and tapestries, sculptured and created small works of art from paper scraps, among others. With such a level of mastery in the arts, the logical next step for him was to blur the lines between mediums and genres, creating for himself an intimately personal oeuvre.

Such is the case with this 1976 *Untitled (Abstract).* Alcuaz's virtuosity made it possible for him to seamlessly shift from one medium to another or to combine the seemingly disparate elements of two different genres. With his abstractions, Alcuaz plays around with the pictorial planes, creating an image of an almost figuration. One could see the flowers Alcuaz placed in the midst of the abstraction but nothing more and nothing less. Bearing the mark of his playful personality, his abstractions play around with their shapes and forms, utilizing deliberate delineation of colors and sharp outlines to create a surreal image of harmony and chaos.

"Alcuaz aimed for the unintentional to fabricate his abstractions," Alcuaz's monograph *Alcuaz: Navigating the Spanish Soul* writes, "and in the process created an illusory geography, frighteningly surreal due to its somber and isolated atmosphere despite the cool and calm colors." *(Hannah Valiente)*



Juvenal Sansó (b. 1929)

Untitled
signed (lower right)
oil on canvas
24" x 38" (61 cm x 97 cm)

P 1,200,000

PROVENANCE
León Gallery, *The Magnificent September Auction 2016*,
Makati City, 10 September 2016, Lot 136.

Charmed by Brittany, France's beauty, Juvenal Sansó decided to make it his permanent residence in his later years and immortalize its scenic beauty in his paintings, albeit twisted. In this untitled painting, Brittany's coast's rock formations and calm water once again decorated Sansó's canvas. His vibrant, monochromatic orange palette, shadowed with darker hues, created a warm and murky image. A yellow circle was strategically placed at the center, above the horizon line, signifying a setting sun at its brilliance.

His landscape and seascape themes, while giving off a sense of solitude and tranquility, also create a striking contrast with his style and colors, which present a somewhat otherworldly distorted terrain. Juvenal Sansó's artistry and gradual rise to the art scene are products of his own talent and determination. Despite the prevailing and emerging styles, Sansó worked toward his personalized figurative approach, resulting in countless mysterious, surrealistic portrayals of the physical world.

"The mystery in Sansó's art is the mystery of universal man's motives. Within each of us there is a dark motive lurking. In all of us there wages conflict between an outer, socially acceptable, self and the repressed subconscious. The landscape of our subconscious may be familiar to us but not one we can readily identify," Alfredo Roces wrote in his monograph, *Sansó,* in 1976. *(Jessica Magno)*

The Dance of Lights
Zóbel's Dynamic Musings

Fernando Zóbel's arrival in Madrid in 1959 was met with a thunderous welcome and ushering with it a new chapter to his artistic career. Almost immediately after his arrival, he mounted a solo exhibition at the Galería Biosca, a gallery that espoused pictorial modernity as a response to the apathy that the official initiatives interacted with contemporary art. A place for the erudite and the socialite of Madrid to gather, this exhibition is the perfect place for Zóbel to encounter Madrid's artists and critics, who in turn became taken with his cutting-edge abstraction.

And be taken with them they are. Critic Manuel Sánchez Camargo praised Zóbel's exhibit in his 1959 Zóbel, stating: "Zobel's work is, above all, intelligent work. This is so because of the care taken in measuring the shapes, the effects of the colour, and the nice appearance of the piece. There is no carelessness in Zobel's canvases; indeed, a profound understanding of composition influences how they were created."

Castro Arines's review of Zóbel's exhibit emphasizes this further. "What surprising worlds has Zóbel brought before us in his paintings?" he says. "The paintings on display at Biosca could be ascribed to the world of dynamics, if dynamics could feasibly be grasped in painting, if movement and air could be held in the painter's hands like bodies that obey the principles of his inventions."

Zóbel's recognition and subsequent bout of inspiration in Spain was highly evident when the artist returned to Manila to mount another exhibition in 1961. Full of wanderlust, Zóbel is known to have traveled around the world, from the Philippines to the United States or Europe and back. With his increasing trips to Spain by the end of the 1950s, it is only logical that his works from then on will take on Spanish influences.

This radical change was noted in his 1961 Philippine exhibition. He was a different painter when he returned to his home country, his works radically stripped down and his exhibit fully abstract. They were now "new abstractions" as critic Emmanuel Torres described them, the shining result of his Madrid sojourn.

His 1964 *Cuatro Luces* – meaning *Four Lights* in Spanish – features the slow return of colors in his works after his purely monochromatic works of the earlier decades. Still predominantly black, white, and grey, Zóbel inserts the slightest bit of color through the soft blue in the grey fog as well as the small dots of yellow light. By 1963, a year prior to Cuatro Luces, Zobel moved to Cuenca, a city some two hours from Madrid, to set up the *Museo de Arte Abstracto Español.* A change in the scenery meant another wave of inspiration for Zóbel, as evidenced by *Cuatro Luces,* whose soft fog and gentle waters remind him of the view Zóbel has from the window of his Cuenca studio: the mouth of the Júcar River.

Zóbel's *Cuatro Luces* belies in its solemnity a sense of drama and tension. "Zóbel's abstraction was always classified as lyrical, despite his affinity to art informel, perhaps because of his use of black and white," writes Alfonso de la Torre in *Fernando Zóbel: Catalogue Raisonné of Paintings 1946-1984.* With a touch of the Oriental, Zóbels works is a catalog of his jet-set life, his inspirations spanning decades and continents as he, like many great artists, internalizes this melting pot of inspirations, turning them into a piece of work that is undeniably and unequivocally Zóbel's. *(Hannah Valiente)*

125

Fernando Zóbel (1924 - 1984)

Cuatro Luces
signed, dated 1964, and titled (verso)
oil and graphite on canvas
24" x 24" (61 cm x 61 cm)

P 6,000,000

LITERATURE
De la Torre, Alfonso and Rafael Pérez-Madero. *Fernando Zóbel:Catalogue Raisonné of Paintings (1946 - 1984).*
Madrid: Fundación Azcona, 2022. Listed as "nº 64-31" with full-color illustration and painting description on page 285.

Justin Nuyda

Mapping the Psyche

"You cannot go wrong with nature, it is always right."

—NATIONAL ARTIST CESAR LEGASPI TO JUSTIN NUYDA. ARTICLE BY JAY BAUTISTA ENTITLED "THE TWO LIVES OF JUSTIN NUYDA," 2018

Justin Nuyda's ethereal landscapes are born out of his lifelong love for nature and butterflies. Hailing from a family of lepidopterists (or lovers of butterflies), it is no surprise that the young Nuyda would take to the forest like a duck to water.

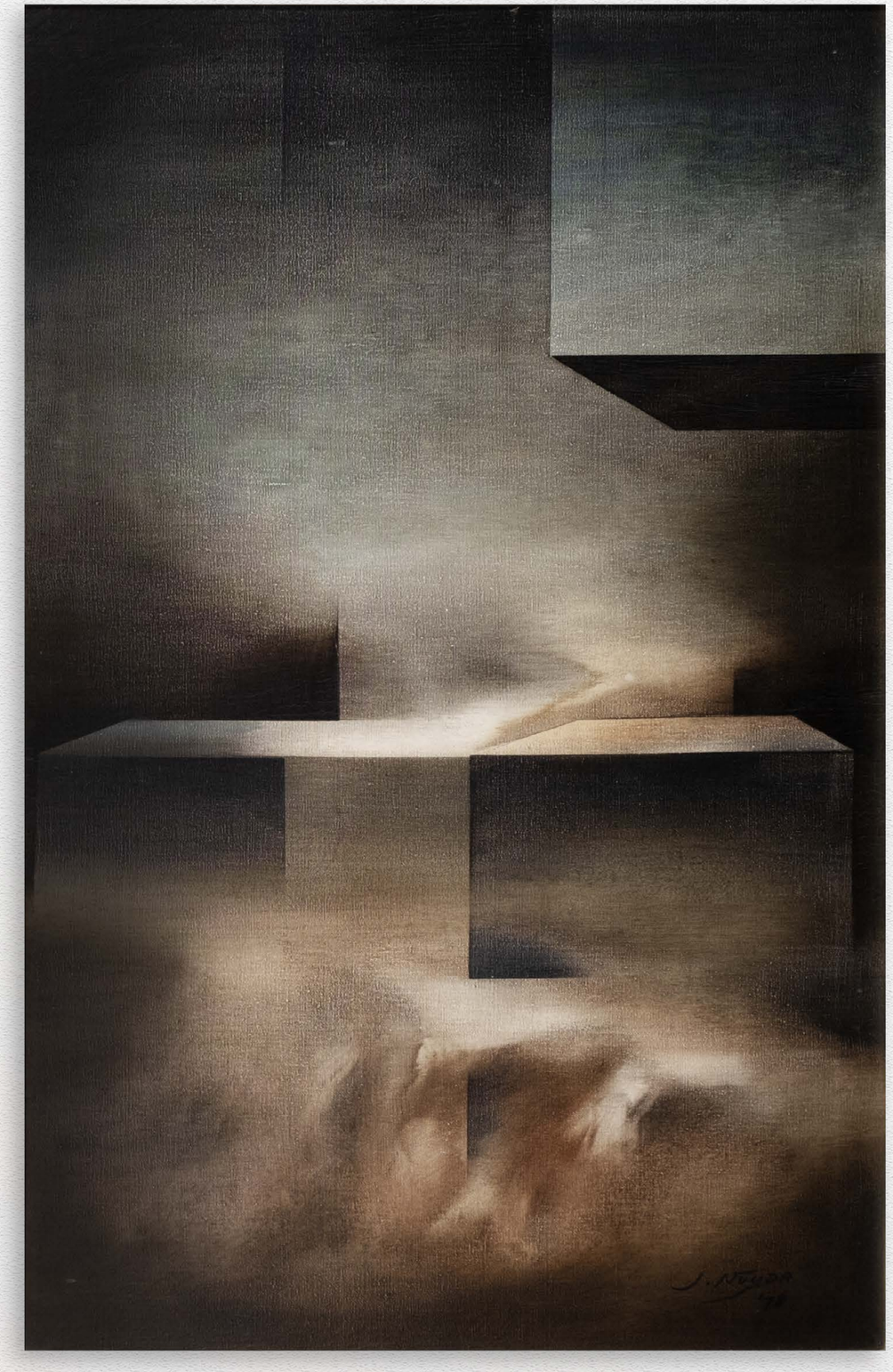
"The earliest butterfly I caught was when I was in grade school," says Nuyda as recalled by Jay Bautista in his article The Two Lives of Justin Nuyda. "I was 6, I even cried. I pointed it to my father, *di ko nahuli but nahuli nya* [I can't catch it but he can]. At 7-8 years, I would tag along, *hawak ko yung braso ng tatay ko, baka maiwanan ako sa gubat* [I held onto my father's arm because I might get lost in the forest]."

Throughout the years, Nuyda continued traveling through the woods to document, catch, and appreciate the butterflies, a self-proclaimed first love of his. The often contradicting colors and movements he observed in nature-inspired and bled into his multiple depictions of landscapes.

"In art, there are unusual colors that just can't go with each other but they exist in a butterfly," he says. "For example black and yellow. With a thin line of gray, you can put them together. How light to dark is. You can witness that in a butterfly, most colors exist in them already."

These shades of black, gray, and yellow are evident in this 1978 work. A few years after he was conferred as one of the early recipients of the Thirteen Artists Award in 1972, this piece is reminiscent of the early sun rays piercing through the still-dark dawn skies. It is a view Nuyda probably saw a thousand times as he hikes through the mountains in search of his butterflies. The play of light and dark along with the striking yellow rays creates a magnificent picture.

The works of Justin Nuyda have been described by critics as poetic. Indeed, through his masterful use of colors and lyrical landscapes, the spontaneity with which Nuyda paints his works elevates their poeticism. "I am a very spontaneous painter," he said in an interview with the Manila Bulletin Lifestyle. "I paint as I go [and] I compose as I paint. I create based on intuition and feeling most of the time." This freedom that he allows his works to embody creates an oeuvre that is as deeply personal to him as it would be to the piece's viewer, their brushstrokes emphasizing the dreamlike qualities they imbibe. *(Hannah Valiente)*



126

Justin Nuyda (1944 - 2022)
Search Mindscape Series
signed and dated 1978 (lower right and verso)
oil on canvas
36" x 24" (91 cm x 61 cm)

P 800,000

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

Jojo Legaspi and the Travails of the Human Experience

Jojo Legaspi's art is often described with words like "unnerving," "brooding," and "dark," and for good reason. His works, like the one depicted here, invite viewers into a world that is stark, isolated, and deeply introspective. At first glance, the piece may appear unsettling, evoking a sense of unease that can be disquieting. The central figure, alone in a barren room, embodies a haunting stillness, as if trapped in a moment of quiet despair. The walls close in with heavy shadows, and the stark contrast of light and dark adds to the oppressive atmosphere, making the viewer feel as though they are intruding upon a private moment of profound solitude.

Legaspi's work often strays far from the idyllic and picturesque scenes traditionally celebrated in Philippine art, choosing instead to focus on the raw, often uncomfortable aspects of human experience. The uncanny expressions and suggestive poses in his pieces, like the one before us, serve as a departure from the serene landscapes and romanticized depictions that once dominated the art scene. This divergence from the norm is not merely for shock value; it is a conscious choice that allows Legaspi to delve into the complexities of the human condition. His art challenges viewers to look beyond the eerie exterior and engage with the deeper narrative—one that explores the darker, often ignored, facets of life.

In this particular work, the figure's posture, the dim lighting, and the claustrophobic setting combine to create a scene that speaks volumes about isolation, existential dread, and the human condition's more somber realities. The room, devoid of any adornment or warmth, mirrors the emotional state of the figure, suggesting themes of alienation and introspection. The figure's gaze is not directed at the viewer but somewhere beyond, perhaps into the recesses of their mind, inviting the audience to ponder the thoughts and emotions hidden within.

Legaspi's exploration of these themes is deeply rooted in his unique background. With degrees in Biology and Zoology, he approaches his subjects with a meticulous, almost clinical eye, dissecting not just the physical form but the very essence of human experience. His scientific training informs his art, allowing him to create works that are not mere depictions but intricate dissections of the human psyche. In this way, his art becomes a bridge between the physiological and psychological, revealing the complex interplay between the body and the mind.

This piece, much like his broader body of work, compels the viewer to confront uncomfortable truths about themselves and society. It is a mirror reflecting the darker aspects of life, and through its unsettling imagery, it forces us to engage with the psychological and emotional depths that are often left unexplored. Legaspi's work, while challenging, offers a profound commentary on the human experience, reminding us that art's power lies not just in its ability to please but also in its capacity to provoke thought and introspection. *(Jed Daya)*

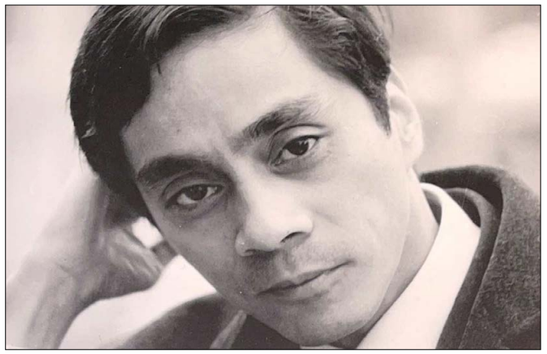
127

Jojo Legaspi (b. 1959)
Untitled
signed (lower right)
pastel on paper
58 1/2" x 45 1/4" (149 cm x 115 cm)

P 1,000,000

The Paisanos of Zalameda

Oscar Zalameda, a highly esteemed Filipino artist, was deeply influenced by his mentor, Vicente Manansala, during his time at UST. This influence led him to explore cubism, a style he has since made his own. Despite his extensive travels and the Western influences evident in his works, Zalameda's art remains deeply rooted in his Filipino heritage.



This piece, *Los Paisanos,* was made at a time when Zalameda studied mural art in Mexico in 1967. Translated as "The Countrymen" in English, this painting depicts the harrowing reality of his countrymen, be it from his home country or people from the foreign land he was in. Here, Zalameda features five men with visibly wearied and troubled faces immersed in a rather serious discussion while carrying sacks full of things—maybe their harvested goods. This depiction, fused with his chosen palette, is a dark contrast to his earlier bright watercolor pieces and future cubism works with bold shapes and loud colors. Nonetheless, this painting perfectly demonstrated Zalameda's artistic development and versatility, proving his worth in the Philippine art scene. *(Jessica Magno)*

128

Oscar Zalameda (1930 - 2010)

Los Paisanos
signed (lower left)
ca. 1967
oil on canvas
43" x 48 1/2" (109 cm x 123 cm)

P 1,000,000

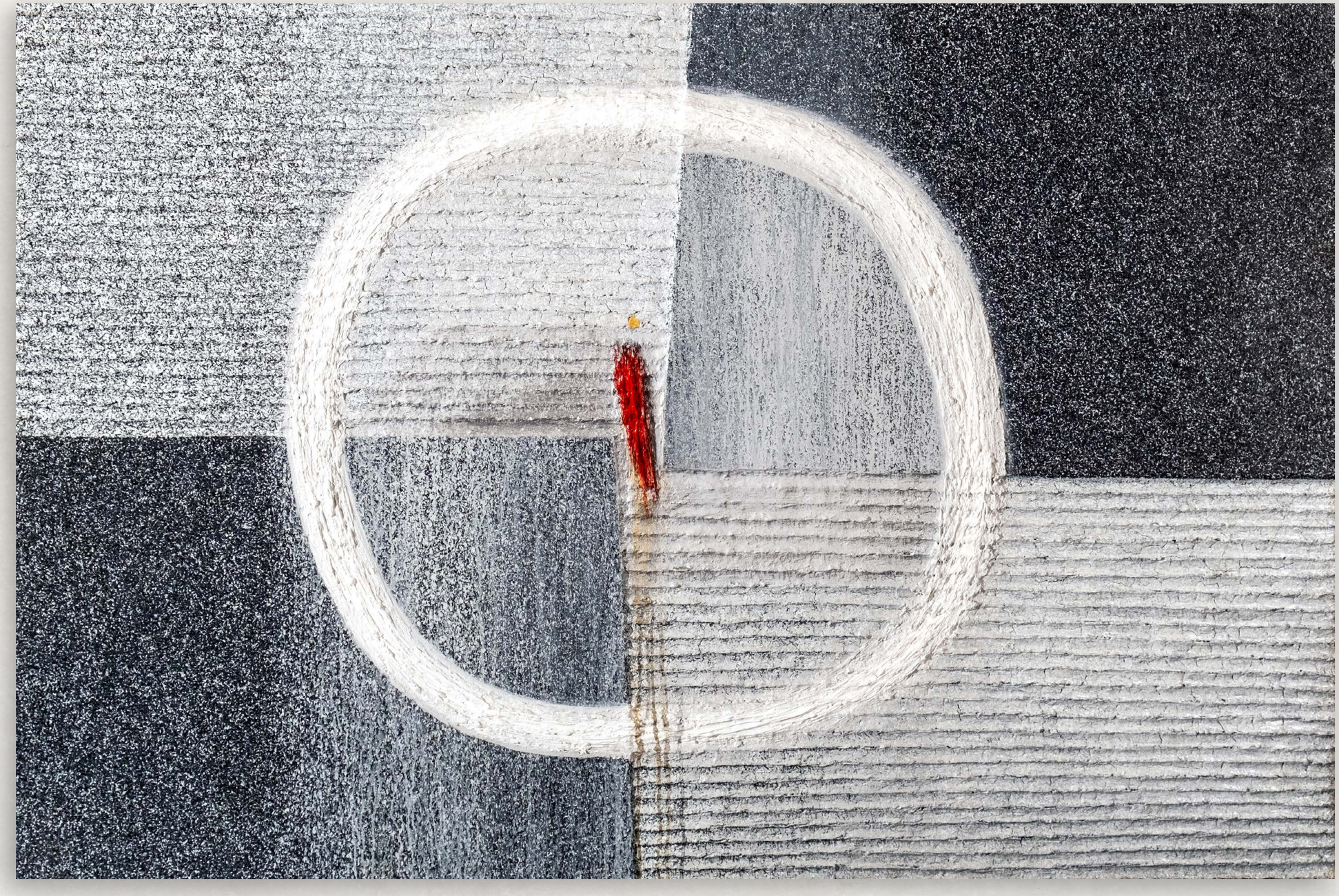
PROVENANCE
Private collection, Europe

EXHIBITED
Art Collectors Gallery at Hotel Maria Isabel, *Exhibition of Paintings by Oscar de Zalameda,* Mexico City, 25 July - 12 August 1967.

Lao Lianben (b. 1948)

Balance
signed (lower left and verso)
dated 2020 and titled (verso)
acrylic
48″ x 72 1/2″ (122 cm x 199 cm)

P 7,000,000



Inexplicably, Lao Lianben's works are deeply inspired by Zen Buddhism. "Zen Buddhism principles, practices, and mysticism have always fascinated me," Lao said in a 2023 interview with Lifestyle Inquirer. "I do not practice Buddhism, but I am intrigued by it."

he enigmatic and impregnable Buddha looms large in Lao's oeuvre, whether he is depicted figuratively or not. It was his teaching that permeated Lao's canvas – from the mindfulness of his minimalist works to the meditation that his works espouse, it is clear where Lao derives his inspiration from.

For his 2020 *Balance,* Lao took inspiration from the zen symbol of ensō. A hand-drawn circle, the ensō symbolizes absolute enlightenment, freedom, and emptiness. With *Balance,* Lao forgoes his usual minimalist style to experiment with textures. As he splits the canvas into quadrants, Lao assigns each area a different texture and colors, creating a more experiential canvas than his usual. At the center, drawn in a perfect unbroken sweep, is the *ensō.*

The drawing of the *ensō* is as spiritual as it is physical. When one draws the symbol, one does not change it, regardless of the end result. It is evident of the artist's character and the context of the ensō's creation, so it is pertinent for the artist to practice the values of the Japanese *wabi-sabi*, or the acceptance of transience and imperfection.

To appreciate a Lao piece is to appreciate the silence and meditation it is imbued in. The austerity of Zen is exalted in his oeuvre and Balance, as its name suggests, aims to strike the balance between mindfulness and enlightenment – letting the mind be free to produce a body of work that is at once simple and fundamentally complex. *(Hannah Valiente)*

A Double Gold for Fernando Amorsolo
with a Record Number of Noble Northmen

by E. A. SANTAMARIA

Upon Fernando Amorsolo's return to the Philippines in 1920, he would almost immediately go from strength to strength, painting tirelessly. His daughter Sylvia Amorsolo-Lazo would recall him saying, "I cannot remember a time when I didn't want to draw or paint." And draw and paint, he did

In the Twenties, he would create a stream of posters and medals for the Manila Carnival, an annual American-style exposition that featured spectacles and beauty queens, as well as a seemingly endless series of calendars and magazine covers. This, too, would mark the beginning of the paintings that would give his painterly benediction to the idyllic life of the Filipino countryside and its people.

The 1930s would consequentially blossom into Amorsolo's 'golden period.' The decade would open with the maestro's breakthrough participation in the Exposition Coloniale Internationale (International Colonial Exposition) of Paris, 1931. The French newspapers of the time reported that paintings ran the length of the Philippine pavilion of some 30 meters and depicted the history of the islands from 1521 to the American regime. It was a project created alongside his mentor (and uncle) Fabian de la Rosa, and cemented Amorsolo's stature among the greats of Philippine art, like Luna and Hidalgo, who had also proved their mettle in the City of Lights.

Later in the year, Amorsolo's twin historical murals were unveiled for the Juan Arellano art-deco masterpiece, the Metropolitan Theater of Manila. Both sides of the high-ceilinged lobby were bookmarked by the lyrical works, "The History of Music" and "Ritual Dance."

Amid the backdrop of an era of boundless optimism of the Philippines future — the Philippine Commonwealth law was finally approved in 1934 — another kind of golden age awaited Amorsolo. It was literally, the Baguio gold rush that also began that year, sparked by an enormous leap in prices for the world's most precious commodity.

Seemingly overnight, hundreds of gold mines were registered in the Philippine Securities and Exchange Commission, with a total capitalization of almost a staggering $100 million. Prospectors, engineers, and investors flocked to Manila — and Baguio — and with it, newly-minted American mining millionaires and their retinues. Offices were feverishly opened in the banking district of Binondo; while the mining community gravitated to elegant enclaves in Ermita and 'the Little Baguio' of San Juan. These all had to be furnished with symbols of that new-found wealth and were a fresh market for Amorsolo's story-telling talents that dovetailed serendipitously with his clients' fascination for the noble northern tribes.

Mrs. Amorsolo Lazo would reminisce that 'Papa' would travel to Baguio "to meet clients mostly American executives of mining firms, who would commission him to paint beautiful Baguio scenes." Her father, she would say, "would visit only a few days on each occasion, but would take advantage of those short stays by painting on the spot and in the open air." He would return often to capture the splendid vistas, immortalizing the magical peaks and lush valleys of a bygone era.

"Ifugaos in Mines View Park" puts together Amorsolo's twin obsessions of this period — the breathtaking Cordillera landscape which also contained the richest veins of gold as well as the enchanting culture of the Ifugao. These would be the subjects in one way or another for this joyous series; although the work at hand adds a third reference to the lure of the gold mines.

The unusual number of figures indicates that the piece would have been conceived for the highest echelon of mining elite. Twelve tribespeople spill gracefully across the mountaintop. following with their gaze, a lead figure carrying several earthenware stops on her head. She is followed by two men who stride down purposefully after her. More women and their children gather under tall evergreen trees — the green so fresh that one can almost smell the scent of pine. The group seems to catch their breath from the strain of bearing tall baskets of cabbages and other vegetables. (A teen seems to be mopping his brow.)

One can sense Amorsolo chancing upon this view and creating the foundation of this picturesque mis-en-scène briskly on one bright, summer morning. Thick terracotta-colored impasto — indeed, one of the signatures of his golden period — outline the rich reddish earth of the north. The blue skies above and mountain streams nestled in the majestic mountains are likewise boldly outlined. It is a homage to the hard-working character of the northern tribesmen and the now-lost beauty of their surroundings.

ABOVE: Baguio Mines view Park.

The Baguio Gold Rush Series
by Fernando Amorsolo

130 PROPERTY FROM THE COLLECTION OF A DISTINGUISHED FAMILY

Fernando Amorsolo (1892 - 1972)
Ifugaos in Mines View Park
signed and dated 1934 (lower right)
oil on canvas
19" x 26" (48 cm x 66 cm)

P 6,000,000

Warmth and Intimacy Carved in Glass

When Ramon Orlina started his sculpting career in the 1970s – the first of his kind as he cut into it instead of heating and blowing his glass like the usual glassmaking techniques used to do– his works veer more into the angular, all sharp edges and static curves. However, later works incorporated fluid movements and graceful arches, as evidenced by the 1977 *Heart's Desire*.

Heart's Desire incorporates the curves that would emerge in his later works but still retains the sharp edges of his early oeuvres. What makes Orlina's work so captivating is the three-dimensionality of his pieces. As he takes into account that the piece could be viewed from every possible angle, he incorporates light, shadow, and dimension as he crafts his masterpieces. With Heart's Desire, one could look at the piece and see the softness of the curves or the harsh lines the base creates. Is your heart's desire truly what you want or could it be a double-edged sword that would cut you in the end?

The beauty of Orlina's works is that they are experiential. One could never fully experience viewing it the exact same way as another wood, as his consideration for every vantage point creates a truly unique experience for every viewer – the light, shadows, and angle with which one views his works change, and with that, the viewer's perception and interpretation too. *(Hannah Valiente)*

ABOVE: Ramon Orlina. © https://www.artworkarchive.com/

131

Ramon Orlina (b. 1944)

Heart's Embrace
signed and dated 2012
carved blue green glass
H: 14 1/2" (37 cm)
L: 10 1/2" (27 cm)
W: 13 1/2" (34 cm)

P 1,800,000

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

Threading the Path to Resilience

At its core, Raffy Napay's art embodies his resilience and determination in the face of adversity. Growing up as the middle child of a tricycle driver and a seamstress, art was never just a hobby for him; it was a means of contributing to his family's livelihood. From a young age, Napay immersed himself in painting and entered contests to help support his household. Due to circumstance, Napay was compelled to abandon these mediums after developing a severe allergy. Despite this challenge, he refused to let it halt his creative path.

During his recovery, Napay found unexpected inspiration in his mother's work as a seamstress. This connection led him to explore threads and fabrics as new materials for his art, allowing him to continue his practice in an innovative way. Through this medium, Napay not only weaves intricate details into his canvases but also infuses them with a sense of visual poetry. He approaches the creative process with threads and fabrics in much the same way he did with paint, from the initial concept to the final touches. His unique method allows him to explore depth and complexity in ways that go beyond traditional painting, creating works that are rich in texture and meaning. Napay's art is a testament to his ability to adapt and thrive, transforming personal challenges into a distinctive artistic voice that resonates with both beauty and emotional depth. This shift brought a fresh dimensionality to his art. His ability to adapt and evolve has resulted in a unique approach that sets his work apart, blending texture and depth in ways that resonate with both visual and emotional richness. *(Jed Daya)*

132

Raffy Napay (b. 1986)
Untitled
signed and dated 2021 (lower right and verso)
thread, textile, beads and acrylic on canvas
72" x 48" (183 cm x 122 cm)

P 500,000

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

ABOVE: Raffy Napay. © https://www.spot.ph/

133

Hugo Yonzon, Jr. (1924 - 1994)

Nazareno
signed and dated 1978 (lower right)
oil on canvas
48" x 96" (122 cm x 244 cm)

P 500,000

Hugo Yonzon, Jr's *Nazareno* captures in its canvas one of the most awaited religious events in the country. The procession of the Black Nazarene brings many pious Filipinos onto the streets of Quiapo, watching amongst the sea of devotees as the life-sized statue of Jesus Christ is paraded in the six-kilometer distance between the Quirino Grandstand to Quiapo church

Melding both the realist and the modernist art styles, his oeuvre features a myriad of styles to the point that his son Boboy Yonzon said in a 2014 Philstar article titled *My Daddy Groovy, Hugo Yonzon, the cool painter:* "My dad's friends said that Hugo was an artist looking for style, that when you saw his works you would think that you were looking at a group show." And yet, despite this dissonance, Yonzon's works are bound together by a commonality – his penchant for depicting the Filipino masses.

His Nazareno touches upon an important point in Filipino culture: religion. With the Philippines as Asia's largest Catholic-majority country, the religious holidays are celebrated with intense devotion, with the record of the six-kilometer Nazarene procession reaching 22 hours. It is a practice deeply embedded in the Philippine psyche and it is translated visually as eagle-eyed viewers will notice Yonzon's usage of red, blue, and yellow of the Philippine flag, effectively intertwining the country and the church in a masterful analysis of the Philippines' longstanding history with religion. *(Hannah Valiente)*

Solid Forms and Vibrant Colors

Exemplar of Legaspi's Cubist Genius

Created on the eve of the year 1970 – the beginning of the decade that art critic Alice Guillermo says is also the beginning of Cesar Legaspi's maturity in style – this 1969 work features his prismatic planes and broken figures that barely clung to the figurative reality from which Legaspi based them on..

One of the giants of Philippine modernism, Legaspi's scrappy background as a commercial artist stood out amongst his fine arts-educated contemporaries. He was trained in pen-and-ink illustrations, making his red-green colorblindness (or deuteranopia) more bearable as he pursued his dream of the arts.

1969 also saw Legaspi one year after shedding his illustrator career, resigning from his post as the Vice President of Philprom in 1968 to focus on his painting full-time. However, he had been active in the art scene before that, meeting H.R. Ocampo in 1938 who urged Legaspi to pursue painting and even strongly influenced Legaspi's art. The two of them fostered a lifelong friendship, bonded by their fascination and modernistic tendencies.

Veering into Cubism in the '60s, this 1969 work bears the culmination of a decade's worth of artistic endeavor. Objective reality is no longer the golden standard that an artist must achieve – instead, the neo-realistic element of distortion and fragmentation takes center stage. With conviction, Legaspi broke down the pictorial reality unhesitatingly, leaving only the curvy figure of a woman recognizable in the swirly, fragmented aftermath of his relentless abstraction.

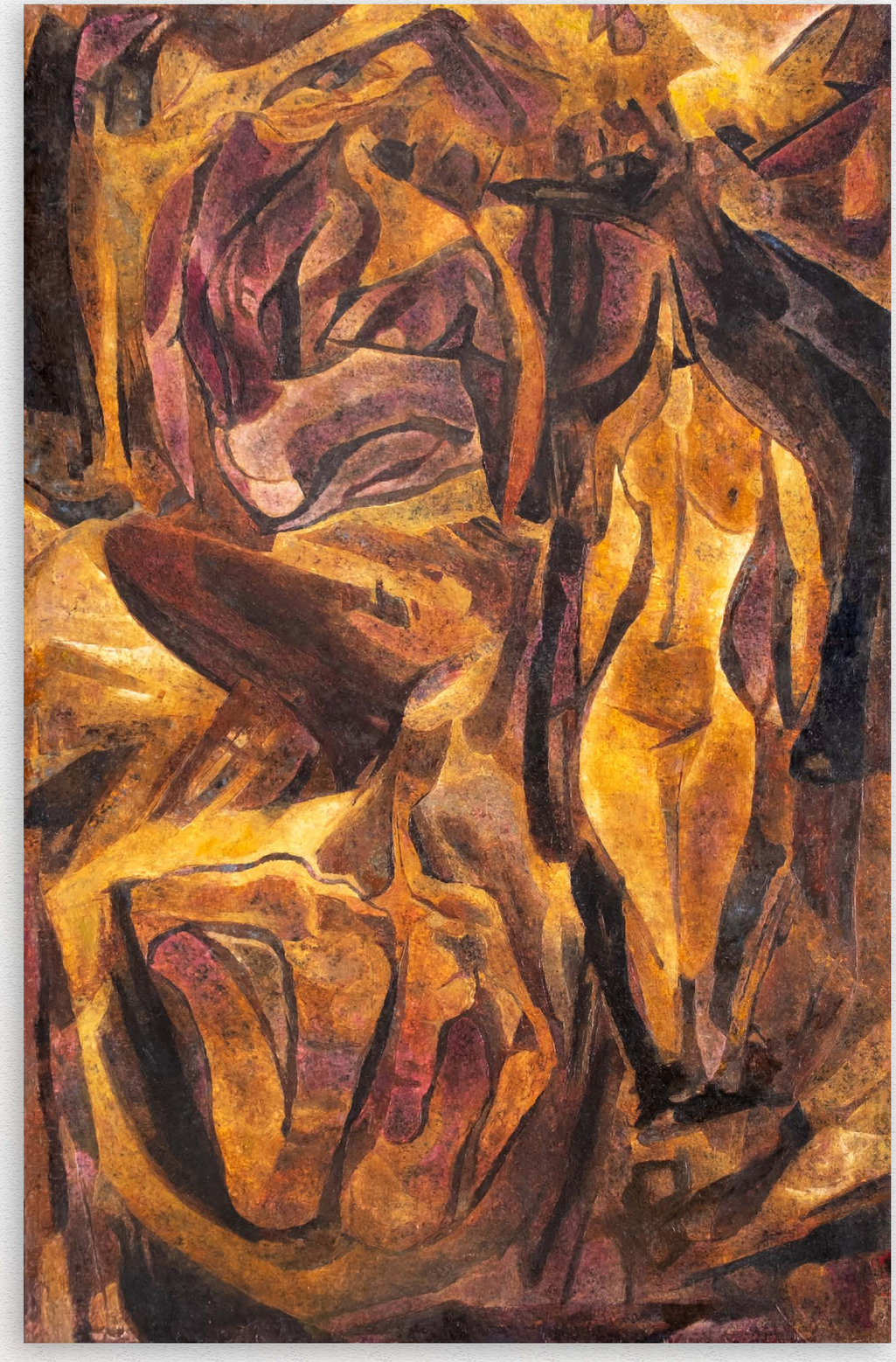
This deliberate preservation of the human body is a distinct element of a Legaspi canvas. From his early expressionist distortion to his cubist fragmentation, the human body is an exalted subject in Legaspi's oeuvre, perhaps an artistic outlet as a response to the surgeries he had to undergo as a child. Contracting pneumonia when he was barely one year old, the young Legaspi was a regular patient at the Mary Chiles Hospital, a fact that scarred him both mentally and physically.

"I think that even if I were to paint a completely abstract painting, I shall always be abstracting the human figure," he said in Cid Reyes's *Conversations on Philippine Art.* "I can never get away from the figure."

Indeed, despite Legaspi's adherence to the harsh, unforgiving breakdown of Cubism, he can never seem to fully distort the human figure. Amidst his prismatic works, the human anatomy remains intact, a sense of reverence evident through his deliberate preservation of the body.

Legaspi's 1970s paintings show the artist's full potential when it comes to harnessing the human body and this 1969 piece is the perfect starting point to trace its evolution.

"The images of human anatomy in the paintings of Cesar Legaspi seemed to flower or were wretched from the core of his being," Ditas R. Samson writes in the catalog *Cesar Legaspi: A Brave Modern,* published in conjunction with a retrospective exhibition in 2014. Indeed, Legaspi's ability to break down objective reality into a subjective world, whether it be the human body or an inanimate object, creates a pictorial vision that is harshly beautiful. Under his masterful brush, Legaspi manages to transform his subjects into a fragmented masterpiece akin to that of a church's stained glass windows, evoking a deep contemplation for his Cubist pieces. *(Hannah Valiente)*



134

Cesar Legaspi (1917 - 1994)

Three Torsos
signed and dated 1969 (lower right)
oil on masonite board
48" x 32" (122 cm x 81 cm)

P 2,200,000

PROVENANCE
Private collection, Manila

The Antonio Family
A Legacy of Modernist Excellence

"The National Artist for Architecture, Arch. Pablo Antonio Sr. is one of the pioneers of Modernism in the landscape of the architectural scene of the country, and some would view him as the definition of modern architect in his time. He and his contemporaries—known in Philippine architectural history as the "Second Generation Architects"—brought in the sleek themes of the style. His interpretation of the look was to modify it to fit the nation's tropical environment and cultural milieu. His design concept therefore focused on establishing a modern lifestyle in the tropics—that is, a spirit of progress and freedom from the past."

—JOSHUA CARLOS BARRERA, WRITING IN "PABLO S. ANTONIO HOME," A DIGITAL ARCHIVE FOR ANTONIO'S ANCESTRAL HOME IN PASAY

One cannot talk about the growth of Philippine art and culture without delving deep into the contributions of the Antonio family. Its patriarch, Pablo S. Antonio, Sr., and his contribution to modern Philippine architecture landed him the prestigious National Artist award in 1976. However, the whole family lived and breathed the arts, varying as those fields may be. From the roots to its fruits, the works of the Antonios are very masterful, as befits the artistic family.

ABOVE: The family in 1974: (back row, from left) Joey Veloso, Yugi Antonio, Letlet Veloso, Chito Antonio, Jun Antonio, Marina Antonio, Myrja Antonio, Pepe Veloso, Vic Antonio, Ramon Antonio, (front row) Nina Antonio, Malu Veloso, Bootsie Veloso, Ahong (Chinese amah), Cholet Antonio, Lisa Antonio, Pablo Antonio, Vicky Veloso-Barrera, (on the floor) Luigi Antonio © https://www.philstar.com/

The Gifted Architect

The architecture of Pablo Antonio, Sr. became omnipresent in the storied streets of pre-war Manila. First rising into prominence in 1933 with his construction of the Ideal Theater along Avenida Rizal, he caught the eye of Dr. Nicanor B. Reyes, Sr., founder of the Far Eastern University (FEU). From 1938 to 1950, Pablo constructed several buildings for the university, including the famed Nicanor Reyes Hall, a remarkable example of modern architectural excellence in the Philippines. Art Deco was the prevalent style during that era, characterized by bold lines, geometric shapes, and a sense of symmetry. Pablo's innovative use of materials, particularly his combination of concrete and decorative elements, provides the structure with both durability and aesthetic appeal. The building's striking façade, adorned with intricate motifs and a series of vertical lines, not only reflects the trends of early 20th-century architecture but also integrates traditional Filipino motifs, showcasing a harmonious blend of cultural heritage and modernity.

Outside of his magnificent works, Pablo was known to be a sensible person, both as an architect as well as a person. Working in the daytime while pursuing formal education at night, Pablo's rise to the world-class architect he was known today was marked with trials and tribulations. As such, he was sustained throughout his career by clients and patrons, the most notable of whom was Don Ramon Arevalo, the founder of Santa Clara Lumber and Construction Company, who was duly impressed with Pablo's drawings that he funded his education at the University of London to finish his architecture degree.

It was also his clients who acted as a matchmaker for Pablo and his future wife, fashion designer Marina Reyes-Antonio. Don Carlos Yulo (Pablo's client) and his wife Cecilia (Marina's client) had a hand in the couple's meeting. Architects and fashion designers frequently had the same clients. Throughout the course of a fifty-year career, Marina designed Filipiniana and wedding gowns for some of Manila's most notable women, making her one of the pioneers of pre-war ladies' fashion.

It was with this fruitful artistic foundation that Pablo and Marina built their family, and fruitful it became, as all of the Antonio children followed in their parent's footsteps into the Philippine art scene.
in the country.

Modernism Past The Visual Arts

The discussion on the history of modernism in the Philippines is often limited to the visual arts. However, Pablo Antonio Sr.'s work in architecture marked not only architecture's entrance into the Philippine modernist circle but also the beginning of a pivotal shift in the country's aesthetic history and social milieu.

"I have always been a Modernist ever since I took up architecture. Some of the so-called modern works are genuine and some are false. The false sacrifice utility for design. The genuine combine both utility and design effectively," Antonio Sr. once said.

Indeed, Pablo Antonio Sr. is a pioneer of modern architecture. The architectural integrity of his buildings stood even in the throes of war, leaving pockmarked but intact walls. He was Western-educated, and yet his creation retained the Filipino character and pushed for a truly unique Filipino identity by pushing past Western governance and into our own aesthetic modernity. He took his learning and applied it to the tropical climate of the country, utilizing natural ventilation systems, slanted windows, and sunscreens in his many projects.

For his contributions to Philippine architecture, Pablo Antonio Sr. was conferred with the National Artist Award one year after his passing. The 1976 Order of the National Artist for Architecture for Pablo S. Antonio Sr. cites: "Time has proven his worth: his works shall outlast many a rhyme, durable as stone, permanent as the spirit of art itself. Pablo S. Antonio's creations are unique and distinct contributions to Philippine architecture and the developing culture of the nation. In these achievements, the country takes pride."

Antonio's legacy resides in his creation of fanciful places for entertainment and education, his building a living testament of his legacy. As long as the fragments of his creation remain, his spirit continues to live on, standing proudly in service of the Filipino people.

ABOVE: Pablo S. Antonio in Berlin, Germany, 1930. © Photo from house archives. https://pablosantoniohome.com/

ABOVE: The Ideal Theater, built in 1933 © Photo from house archives. https://pablosantoniohome.com/

Building The Legacy

Marina and Pablo's union bore six children: their sons Pablo, Jr., Luis, and Ramon all became architects, with Antonio Victor becoming an accomplished engineer and the youngest son Francis venturing into painting and sculpting.

In 1979, Pablo Antonio Jr. started designing semiconductor facilities, and the son who took over the firm of their father to continue and develop the legacy that Pablo Antonio Sr. has imprinted in the country's architectural scene. He has made a name for himself as an architect who specialized in semiconductor facilities and continued the prestige of their father's firm.

One of the household names of the most exclusive villages in the Philippines and in the current architecture scene is the prominent Ramon Antonio who is widely known for his eclectic designs. He has followed in the footsteps of his father and is now one of the most sought-after architects in the country.

Like his father and brothers, Luis Chito Antonio became an architect. He is hailed as one of the Philippines's top architects, known for adding ethnic flairs and designs to his works. So too was another Antonio son, Antonio Victor, who was an engineer until his passing in 1999.

The couple's only daughter, Maria Lourdes, followed in her mother's footsteps, becoming a fashion designer herself. Malu, as she is fondly remembered, was inspired more by her mother's professional life. Being exposed to both brilliant artistic parents, she started out selling children's clothing before branching into baptism and Filipiniana attire as her clientele grew.

"Her designs feature delicate elements like tiny flowers and beading, gentle colors like pastels and creams, and simple forms and cuts," Joshua Barrera writes. "She made an identity of herself by being the total opposite of her mother's audacious and vibrant style and established a more upbeat, veiling, and letting the colors and figures shine without heavy detailing."

The Antonio siblings's foray into arts was no surprise. As artistic parents, Pablo and Marina's love for the art was imparted onto their children and beyond. Even their grandchildren became architects, fashion designers, interior designers, and artists alike. *(Hannah Valiente)*

TOP: Malu Veloso, Abla Assad and Arch. Chito Antonio. © http://tinajacinto.com/
MIDDLE: L-R: Malu Veloso, the author, my Auntie Livie Ferry who was our ninang in our weddings in 1989 and 2014 © https://fqmom.com/veloso-brides-at-my-mothers-garden/
BOTTOM: Three generations: Letlet and Malu Veloso, Vicky Veloso-Barrera and her son Joshua. Standing: Justine, Hannah and Vicky's husband Robert Barrera © https://www.pressreader.com/

135

Oscar Zalameda (1930 - 2010)
Portrait of Malu Veloso
signed (lower left)
oil on canvas
44" x 35" (112 cm x 89 cm)

P 300,000

Eleganza in Blue
Portrait of a National Artist's Fashionista Daughter

Of Pastures and Sunsets
Amorsolo Reminisces on His Childhood

The works of Fernando Amorsolo revel in the pastoral and the provincial. Spending a few years of his childhood in Daet, Camarines Sur, Amorsolo continued to be enamored with the countryside even when he moved to the capital, visiting the adjacent provinces of Laguna and Bulacan to continue painting his genre works.

By the mid-20th century, Amorsolo had already reached the height of fame and then more when in 1959, the UNESCO National Commission granted the already famous painter a gold medal of recognition, adding another accolade to his long list of awards. Amorsolo had resigned from his post as the dean of the UP School of Fine Arts in 1952 to focus on his painting full-time – and focus he did. Throughout his career, he had become the face of Philippine art with his pastoral countrysides, bathers in the creeks, and the *dalagang Pilipina* becoming the standard that his colleagues and the newer artists either conform or break.

His 1959 *Carabaos at Sunset* showcases Amorsolo's skill that UNESCO acknowledged and awarded in the same year.

"The rural scenes that Papa painted were based from the actual day-to-day chores of the simple and poor people that he observed as a young lad until his growing years," writes his daughter Sylvia Amorsolo Lazo in *Amorsolo: Love and Passion.*

ABOVE: Fernand Amorsolo circa 1950s. © International Conference on Language, Education, Humanities and Innovation, The Masterpieces of Fernando Amorsolo: Socio-Cultural, Page 58.

Indeed, it is quite easy to imagine the young Amorsolo as he sees a frolicking pack of carabaos in the field, his eyes picking out the blues of the skies and the browns of the carabao's skin. In this piece, Amorsolo depicts the golden-pink hues of the sunset skies as they burst forth from behind giant fluffy clouds. Unlike today's rural situation, the carabaos have for themselves a huge plot of land to prance around and rest. and Amorsolo's depiction of this bucolic scene ramps up the nostalgia for the good old days. As he washes the scene with a warm orange light, quite unlike the vibrancy of his midday sun, one feels compelled to take a rest on the soft green grass and experience for themselves the slow life the province has to offer. *(Hannah Valiente)*

136 PROPERTY FROM THE COLLECTION OF A VERY DISTINGUISHED FAMILY

Fernando Amorsolo (1892 - 1972)
Carabaos at Sunset
signed and dated 1959 (lower right)
oil on canvas
16" x 12" (41 cm x 30 cm)

P 1,300,000

LITERATURE
Araneta, Antonio S., ed. *1030 R. Hidalgo: Volume II, Legacy in Art.* Manila: Mara, Inc., 1986.
Full-color illustration and painting description on page 96.

LEO VALLEDOR

High Priest of New York Cool

Leo Valledor, one of the few Filipino-American artists to gain significant recognition in the western scene during the 1960s, was a key figure in the Park Place group in New York City. His heritage was a blend of Ilocano roots—his ancestors were among the first migrant workers in California—and a strong command of English and American culture, shaped by his parents' education under American colonial teachers. Growing up, Valledor was influenced by diverse cultural environments, including the vibrant African-American zoot suit culture and the Mexican rasquache, or low-rider, lifestyle.

Valledor's artistic journey took a pivotal turn when he earned a scholarship to the California School of Fine Arts. This experience broadened his horizons and eventually led him to New York City, where he developed a deep passion for abstract art. His time in New York was transformative, and he became closely associated with the Park Place Gallery, a groundbreaking collective that challenged the traditional art scene of the 1960s.

Linda Dalrymple Henderson, in her book *Reimagining Space: The Park Place Gallery Group in 1960s New York,* highlights the gallery's innovative approach. Park Place brought together painting and sculpture in exhibitions that contrasted sharply with the more conservative galleries on Madison Avenue. Its spacious environment encouraged the creation of large-scale works and fostered interactions between different art forms, including music and spoken word. The gallery became a hub for young, avant-garde artists and played a crucial role in establishing Soho as a center for the burgeoning art scene.

After making a significant impact in New York, Valledor eventually returned to California, where he continued to produce avant-garde art, remaining a vital figure in the artistic community until his death. *(Jed Daya)*

BESIDE: : Leo Valledor (1936 - 1989), in his studio, New York, New York, November 12, 1965

137

Leo Valledor (1936 - 1989)

Movement
signed and dated 1982 (verso)
acrylic on canvas
60″ x 72″ (152 cm x 183 cm)

P 1,200,000

PROVENANCE
Private collection, Czech Republic
Art-Torg, *American, European and Ukrainian Fine Art,*
Prague, 8 December 2023, Lot 205.

Zalameda's Garden of Delights

An internationally acclaimed Filipino artist, Oscar Zalameda led a vibrant life largely spent abroad, particularly at sea. His high-society connections allowed him to indulge in his love for the waters. These travels abroad exposed him to a diverse range of cultures and experiences. These influences significantly shaped his art, creating a unique blend of his personal experiences and artistic expression

Hailing from the province of Quezon, Zalameda went to Manila to study at the University of Santo Tomas. After earning his Bachelor of Fine Arts degree, he ventured into the foreign land of San Francisco to study art in 1953 before leaving for Mexico to practice mural techniques. Later, he also studied at the Ecole Nationale Superieure des Beaux-Arts and the Sorbonne in Paris.

Oscar Zalameda's works have been the centerpiece of numerous exhibitions in major museums and galleries and have found their way into many significant private collections across Europe, Asia, Latin America, and the United States. His artistic prowess has been acknowledged with numerous awards and recognitions. Notably, the then First Lady Imelda Marcos honored Zalameda with a personal exhibition at the Malacañang Palace in 1966.

Zalameda's artistic journey began with his watercolor paintings, which reflected his life and childhood in his hometown of Lucban, Quezon. However, his travels abroad exposed him to different styles and mediums, leading him to experiment with cubism in vibrant colors, a style that would later become his signature. His cubist abstraction is characterized by the use of gem-toned colors on overlapping and intersecting planes.

This untitled painting is a testament to Zalameda's mastery of any medium and style. At first glance, it appears to be a watercolor painting with almost transparent shapes. However, it is a complex piece made with overlapping planes of oil paint. The artist's use of curved planes filled with solid and sheer strokes of colors creates a sense of motion and an illusion of the elements being carried by the wind. His palette, a monochromatic brown with a tinge of vibrant red, shadowed with blacks and layered with sheer, light tones, adds depth and brings his elements to life, further enhancing the illusion of the wind. Zalameda's works offer a unique vision and taste that has earned him dedicated patrons throughout his lifetime and beyond. *(Jessica Magno)*

138

Oscar Zalameda (1930 - 2010)

Untitled
signed (lower left)
ca. 1970
oil on canvas
31 1/4″ x 35″ (79 cm x 89 cm)

P 700,000

PROVENANCE
Private collection, Europe

139

Orley Ypon (b. 1973)

See No Evil (Kakapa-Kapa)
signed and dated 2015 (lower right)
oil on canvas
48" x 36" (122 cm x 91 cm)

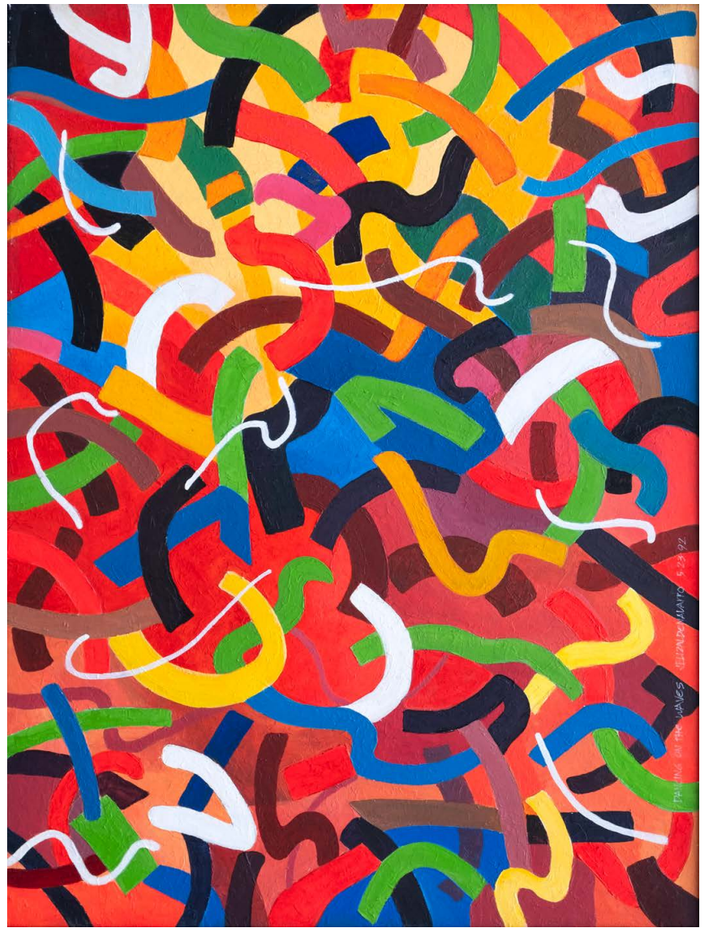
P 400,000

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

Orley Ypon's brand of figurative painting has led him to become one of the finest realists in the Philippine contemporary art scene today. Having gained consistent national recognition through the likes of the Art Petron, the GSIS and the AAP's (Art Association of the Philippines) national painting competitions, the NCCA's Ani ng Dangal awarding body, and even internationally through the New Jersey-based Art Renewal Center's competitions, Orley Ypon has carved himself as a living master of realism.

The piece at hand is visually reminiscent of his GSIS competition breakthrough work entitled *Ahon* (2008), characterized by a hectic composition of naked figures covered in mud while caught in dynamic gestures that seem to either crawl in desperation or emerge from the mire. While Ypon had already been known for his social realist paintings even before his Ahon series, with *Ober-Ober* (2001) being among his seminal pieces for its starkly nostalgic image of childhood in Filipino folk life, it was in his Ahon series and its offshoot works that his mastery of social realism would culminate.

Here, for example, by transposing the image of carabaos wallowing in mud into a frenzied composition of human figures, Ypon brings a touch of allegory into his social realism. The Philippine carabao is often associated with ideal qualities of perseverance and hard work, but here, the transposition of image leaves the viewer with a less than ideal picture of reality: Ypon's figures are ultimately graphic in their disorder, viscerally pitiful in their toil and seemingly blind to the grander scheme of things that has endlessly trapped them in such circumstances. *(Pie Tiausas)*



140

Jerry Elizalde Navarro (1924 - 1999)

Dancing on the Waves
signed and dated 5-23-1992 (lower right)
oil on canvas
40" x 30" (102 cm x 76 cm)

P 500,000

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

In the late 1980s, Jerry Elizalde Navarro took a step forward that would take his artistic career to the next level. Already at the age of 65, Navarro, on the suggestion of his daughter Pearl, took up Cornelius Choy's offer for a Resident Artist Program in Bali, Indonesia.

"Bali just stuns you with colors," he wrote in his 1989 Philippine Daily Article Bali On My Mind. "A very vigorous and free profusion of colors in the Bali palette plays a major role in the unfolding of the life there."

This renewed appreciation for colors is evident in his 1992 *Dancing on the Waves.* The island of Bali, surrounded by the seas on all sides, is adequately represented in the intensity of the colors and the curves of the lines in this piece. His abstractive interpretation of the place only elevated one's interest in the hues – it echoes Elizalde's praises of Bali as Cid Reyes documents in *J. Elizalde Navarro:* "I have not experienced a stimulation as vibrant and as scintillating [as my first seven days in Bali.]" Bali in his abstractions is exactly as he had experienced it – overwhelmingly beautiful and haunting in its vividness. *(Hannah Valiente)*

Ronson Culibrina (b. 1991)

Salva-Vida
signed and dated 2018 (lower right)
oil on canvas
91" x 143 1/4" (231 cm x 364 cm)

P 1,600,000

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

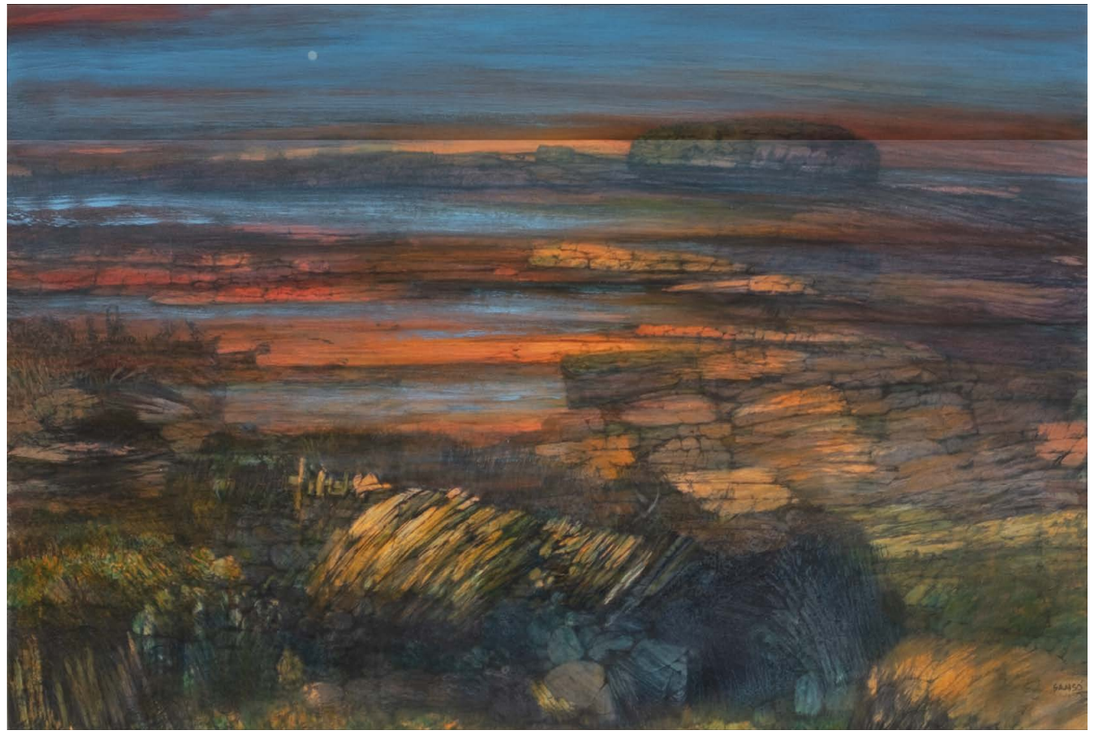
EXHIBITED
Yavuz Gallery, *Above Sea Level,*
Singapore, 26 August - 16 September 2018

Ronson Culibrina interjects humor and wit into his almost apocalyptic depictions of coastal towns. Spending his formative years on the island of Talim, Rizal, Culibrina's figurative paintings touch upon the rapid deterioration of nature mixed in with pops of humor and surrealism that make his work a visual masterpiece.

Salva-vida, literally translating to "save lives", follows a similar storyline. In a Culibrina usual, the massive canvas is overflowing with details with some elements bearing that surrealist surprise. For example, some men wore hazmat suits as they forage through the waste, suggesting that the garbage is hazardous in some way. A massive Venus fly trap emerges from the waters, an unnervingly long tongue lolled out And more importantly, there are heaps of garbage and waste everywhere one looks – on the boat, in the water, and even in the air.

"I saw how my hometown transformed from a quiet, fishing town into a busy urban area — and it fueled my fascination with the clash between tradition and modernity, which I explore a lot in my art," Culibrina states in a Philstar interview. "The site, sights, and people also made their way into my art, so my formative years in my hometown still play a crucial role in my artistic process."

As such, Salva-vida pins onto its canvas Culibrina's fascination with modernity and its consequences. The visage of his hometown (and the oil spills that happen within its waters) is immortalized in his oeuvre, a cohesive chaos that effectively portrays the urgency one must take when addressing nature's distress calls. *(Hannah Valiente)*



142

Juvenal Sansó (b. 1929)

Crimson Beach
signed (lower right)
ca. 1980's
acrylic on canvas
20″ x 30″ (51 cm x 76 cm)

P 400,000

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

PROVENANCE
Private collection

Perhaps France played an essential part in Juvenal Sansó's artistic career. An exhibition of his paintings at the Lucie Weill Galerie in Paris, organized by Elsa Schiaparelli, was his breakthrough in the art market. The exhibition opened many opportunities for more one-man and collaborative shows, the start of his gradual rise in the art scene. Additionally, there is no denying Brittany Coast's crucial role in the making of Sansó's landscapes, immortalizing its scenic beauty in his paintings.

Crimson Beach features a peaceful scenery of grasses, rocks, and still water—staple elements of a Sansó landscape. The artist used darker hues in this painting, only using slightly lighter ones to where its concocted sun rays touch them. Conspicuous streaks of oranges against this dark terrain signify a setting sun, a twilight if you must: the moon and the stars slowly painting the gradually dimming sky. Furthermore, Sansó's use of dry-on-dry technique and harsh but careful brush strokes created depth and made his piece more alive.

Indeed, Sansó's images draw out a combination of beauty and disturbing uneasiness. "The art of Sansó belongs to a fantastic world," art critic J. P. Crespelle expressed in *France-Soir*. "The flower compositions, the landscape reveal a mysterious universe full of magic . . . It is this wonderment that gives his paintings their beauty and renders them both unique and unforgettable." *(Jessica Magno)*

143

Arce

As I Slowly Fade, Never Cast Me Aside Because
That's The Time I am Blooming in a Million Other Ways
signed and dated 2020 (lower right)
oil on canvas
60″ x 48″ (151 cm x 122 cm)

P 500,000

Filipino contemporary artist Arce's approach is deeply rooted in his exploration of distortion, which he expresses through an unconventional use of media and a unique experimental technique that he personally developed.

One can see Arce's work as a direct reflection of his current state of mind, where his art becomes a medium through which he channels and processes a wide range of emotions. This emotional introspection drives him to constantly seek new perspectives, leading him to deconstruct, twist, and manipulate his materials in ways that challenge conventional boundaries. His process is not bound by time, as he allows his intuition to guide him—knowing when to continue, when to pause, and when to pray.

This inner dialogue with himself leads to a moment of clarity and peace, which he captures and immortalizes through his artwork. For Arce, each piece is more than just a visual expression; it is a frozen moment of personal reflection and spiritual resolution. His art thus becomes a testament to his ongoing journey towards understanding and inner peace, manifesting in forms that are as much about the process as they are about the final creation. *(Jed Daya)*

144

Fabian de la Rosa (1869 - 1937)

Old Spanish Bridge
signed (lower left)
oil on canvas
28" x 14" (71 cm x 36 cm)

P 600,000

PROVENANCE
Alfonso T. Ongpin Collection

The first third of the 20th-century Philippine art scene could arguably be called the "age of Fabian de la Rosa." The best the Philippine art scene has to offer, de la Rosa breathed life into genre painting – it was he who Luciano P.R. Santiago singled out in his essay "Fabian de la Rosa, 20th Century Master" as the unwitting catalyst of this genre, championing the genre as he created works that are, to quote critic Emilio Aguilar Cruz, "nearer to the native soil."

A true Renaissance man, de la Rosa was, aside from painting, adept in Spanish, English, and Tagalog, with a notable handle of Italian and French during his academic sojourn abroad. Aside from that, he was an educator, an exceptional violinist, a historian, and a writer, with his essays being the first to provide an overview of the history of art in the Philippines.

His works, just like his writings, exalt everything Filipino. His landscapes accurately depict the sights around him, with Aguilar Cruz noting that he followed not in the footsteps of the Europeanized Filipino artists but the local sceneries that moved him with far more gusto than any other sights. As he puts the Philippine landscapes in his background, it was to be championed by the foreign patrons eager to experience the invigorating Philippine countryside for themselves.

With the lot in hand entitled Old Spanish Bridge, de la Rosa's capabilities in the genre are fully experienced. Depicting a serene creek bubbling underneath a well-used stone bridge. The lyricism, realism, and romanticism of de la Rosa's oeuvre are evident as he portrays this scene washed in cool, almost muddy sunlight. One could almost feel the cool creak underneath their feet and bask in the silence that de la Rosa so intricately portrays.

Old Spanish Bridge is best described as an image of the past, quite in brand for de la Rosa who lived through both the Spanish Philippines and the American Philippines and had to contend with the rapid changes. The result is an idyllic view of the past, serene in its contentment. There is a virality in his works as they straddle the line of nostalgia and longing. His cool and earthy color palette brings to life the bucolic Philippine countryside as they are pulled in two different directions.

"In [Fabian de la Rosa], the autochthonous Philippine painting of the last century reached full flowering, and in his whole career is summed up all that is good in the past," writes Emilio Aguilar Cruz. "De la Rosa's greatness lies just where greatness does in any department of human activity, namely in rising above the leveling sentiments and prejudices of one's time." *(Hannah Valiente)*

TOP: Fabian Dela Rosa; ABOVE: An example of an old spanish bridge

145

Kitty Taniguchi (b.1952)

Untitled
signed and dated 2007 (lower left)
oil on canvas
72 1/2″ x 72 1/2″ (184 cm x 184 cm)

P 800,000

Kristina "Kitty" Taniguchi, a graduate with a master's degree in English and American Literature from Silliman University in 1985, has since devoted herself to painting, creating works that are deeply symbolic and ethereal. Her art is characterized by a unique composition where elements, though seemingly disconnected, come together to evoke a surreal exploration of the human subconscious.

In the artwork provided, Taniguchi depicts a barren tree with serpentine roots alongside a figure with a doubled face, symbolizing the duality of human experience. The tree, with its sprawling roots, represents desolation and resilience, while the bird in flight suggests escape or the fleeting nature of life. The doubled face of the figure introduces a layer of surrealism, hinting at the complex interplay between the conscious and subconscious mind.

Taniguchi's use of color and texture enhances the dreamlike quality of her work, with the contrast between the soft sky and the dark earth creating tension. Her compositions, while abstract, invite viewers to explore the deeper layers of human thought and emotion. Through this, Taniguchi challenges conventional notions of unity in art, offering a glimpse into the multifaceted nature of the mind. *(Jed Daya)*

ABOVE: Kitty Taniguchi © Silverlens

Re-collecting Recollections

Jose John Santos III in Art Basel Hong Kong

TOP AND MIDDLE: 1 and 2. Different views of Jose John Santos III's art installations at Art Basel Hong Kong in 2014. BOTTOM: The artist talking about the work, *Hide and Seek,* to interested visitors © Facebook, Artinformal

"How do you represent what is hidden?"

The question above encapsulates Jose John Santos III's monumental installation titled *Hide and Seek.* The work was the centerpiece of Santos' participation at Art Basel Hong Kong in 2014, in his exhibition space titled *RE:collection.* Composed of 83 resin-coated fabric bags and showcased to the viewers by hanging them on walls, Hide and Seek seeks inquiry into the ambiguity of the hidden, revealing in the process how various stimuli can trigger and launch a string of past memories that have been long sunken under the sea of the subliminal.

The late artist and production designer Leo Abaya writes in the catalog for Santos' Art Basel participation: "The veiling renders the objects as residual, vestigial, and lingering forms. But while the gesture seems inertial, it paradoxically calls to mind the Proustian notion that appearances conceal the true nature of things."

Santos himself says in an interview for the 2014 exhibition *2hide,* which succeeded his Art Basel participation, that his "previous works sought to contradict the order of reality under a convincing veneer of naturalism," a statement that refers to his Art Basel installations, particularly *Hide and Seek.* Central to understanding the work is the usage of fabric/cloth and resin. In commonplace scenarios, cloth is used to conceal, and resin is employed as an adhesive or a protective lining and coating. In *Hide and Seek,* Santos presents a dialogue between the visible and the invisible, the conscious and the subconscious.

Santos plays into the concept of the Proustian memory (coined by Marcel Proust from his literary masterpiece *In Search of Lost Time (Remembrance of Things Past)*), in which a specific memory that becomes buried in the subconscious (referred to as the "Involuntary Memory") is triggered and elicited by the senses.

According to the Danish professor and psychologist Dorthe Berntsen, in the article *The Neural Basis of Involuntary Episodic Memories* published by the US National Library of Medicine, "Involuntary episodic memories are memories of past events that come to mind spontaneously without a deliberate retrieval attempt. Such memories are central to our understanding of conscious mental processes; they are as frequent in daily life as intentionally retrieved memories and are functional, often directing our behavior. By favoring the recollection of recent events and events that share overlapping features with the ongoing situation, involuntary episodic memories operate in ways that increase the probability that they will provide information of relevance to the current situation."

In the work's context, the coated bags conceal memories of lived realities. The solid tactility of the bags, dense in form and each having a distinct configuration, could evoke recollections when touched and become representative of the subjective nature of memories, i.e., engendering our personal impressions of personal realities instantly provoked by various stimuli. These stimuli evoke vivid emotions or may even relive the pains of the past that have been concealed due to their overwhelming effect on one's consciousness. *Hide and Seek* draws the viewer to re-collect bags of hidden memories to arrive at an introspective recollection of encounters and circumstances that are established in the past and may fill the voids in the present—re-collect to recollect. In doing so, one finally sheds light on what has been suppressed and deemed forever hidden.

Santos' *Hide and Seek* finally arrives at a full circle; to hide does not simply mean the concealment of things, but an invitation to seek and venture into the invisible. To hide is to eventually unearth "the essence of the past," the "precious fragments" of one's being. *(Adrian Maranan)*

146

Jose John Santos III (b. 1970)

Hide and Seek
dated 2014
83 resin-coated fabric bags

P 800,000

LITERATURE
Ruoh Ling, Keong, Leo Abaya, and Kenneth Tay. *²hide.* Singapore: Pearl Lam Galleries, 2014. Published to accompany the exhibition of the same name at Pearl Lam Galleries in 2014-15. Full-color illustration on page 10 and artwork description on pages 10 - 11.

EXHIBITED
The Link, *Hide and Seek (Presented at Art Fair Philippines 2014),* Ayala Center, Makati City, 20 - 23 February 2014

Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Center, *RE:collection: Jose Santos III (Exhibition organized by Artinformal and presented at Art Basel Hong Kong 2014),* 15 - 18 May 2014

LOT 68

Fernando Amorsolo (1892 - 1972)
Fire Tree

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Terms and Conditions

The following are the terms and conditions that León Gallery has set for the auction. Kindly read carefully.

León Gallery, all the participants of the event, processes, and transactions shall be guided accordingly by these rules:

GENERAL:

a. Each item (lot) in this catalog is offered for sale dependent on the terms exhibited below.
b. All lots are numbered according to the catalog unless otherwise stated by the auctioneer.
c. Transferring, selling, assigning of lots to anyone other than the bidder that won prior to the removal of the lot from the gallery is not allowed. Only the winning bidder has the authority to remove the lot from the gallery.
d. All items sold do not have any warranty. León Gallery is not and will not be liable for any unfortunate circumstances that can happen to the lot after it has been transferred to the winning bidder.
e. All participants must agree to be bound by the terms that have been set by León Gallery.

BIDDING:

a. Bidders are required to complete and sign registration forms. Participants shall be asked to present a valid government-issued identification card (passport, driver's license, etc.) upon registration.
b. Before the auction proper, each buyer will be given an assigned buyer's number. The highest bidder of a specific lot shall be the buyer of the lot.
c. The auctioneer shall announce the winning bid and the corresponding buyer's number of the bidder. Failure of the winning bidder to object at the time of the announcement shall be considered as an acknowledgment of the bid and purchase. The buyer is legally liable to purchase the lot or pay the difference if the host must re-offer and sell it for a reduced price.
d. The buyer's premium shall be 18% plus Value-Added Tax on premium (20.16% in total).
e. The auctioneer shall be in charge of supervising the bidding and shall be the sole arbiter of any disputes. León Gallery reserves the right to withdraw property at any time before the sale and reject a bid from any bidder.
f. Absentee bids are allowed in this auction. They are permitted to bid until fifteen (15) minutes prior to the start of the auction for all the items in the auction. Absentee bids for later lots may continue to be accepted according to announcements or signs posted on the office window. A deposit may be requested on absentee bids over Two Hundred Thousand Pesos (Php 200,000) or at the discretion of the auctioneer. The auctioneer will be responsible of bidding the absentee bid in opposition to the floor bidders. In case a tie occurs, the earlier bid wins the lot. León Gallery will not be liable for any failed absentee bid. The absentee bidders may contact the gallery after the auction to know if they won the lot.

PAYMENT:

a. The balance of the invoice must be paid in full and merchandise picked up within three (3) days from the date of the sale. Left items may be moved to an off-site facility for pick-up and a storage fee will be charged if merchandise is left longer than three (3) days of Five Hundred Pesos (Php 500) per lot per day. If the property is left longer than four (4) weeks, it will be considered abandoned. We are not responsible for shipping, but if packing and handling of purchased lots will be done by us, it is done at the entire risk of the purchaser. A refundable deposit may be required.
b. Cash, cashier's check, wire transfer, personal check (items may be held until the check clears). If any legal action is commenced to enforce these Conditions of Sale, the prevailing party shall be entitled to recover its reasonable attorney's fees and costs. Time is of the essence.

Payments shall be wired to:

Account Name:	**LEON ART GALLERY**
Account Type:	**PESO ACCOUNT**
Account No :	**166-7-166-52009-2**
Bank/Branch:	**METROBANK - CORINTHIAN PLAZA BRANCH**
Swift Code:	**MBTCPHMM**
Bank Address:	**G/F CORINTHIAN PLAZA BLDG. 121 COR PASEO DE ROXAS, GAMBOA STREETS, LEGAZPI VILLAGE, MAKATI CITY**

LITIGATION:

In case of litigation between León Gallery and the buyer, the parties must submit to the Law Courts of Makati.

León Gallery
FINE ART & ANTIQUES

PADDLE NUMBER

☐ LIVE ☐ TELEPHONE ☐ ABSENTEE

BIDDER INFORMATION

Full Name:
Address:
Mobile no.: Landline no.:
Fax no.: Email:

BANK ACCOUNT INFORMATION

Bank Name:
Branch: Account no.:
Contact Person: Phone no.:

CREDIT CARD DETAILS

☐ VISA ☐ MASTERCARD ☐ AMEX ☐ JCB

Cardholder name:
Card no.: Expiry date:

LOT	DETAILS	BID AMOUNT

I have read and understood Leon Gallery's Terms and Conditions printed in the catalog.
I recognize and concure that I will bid in conformity with the said Terms and Conditions.
I am accountable for the information I have provided above, and in the event that my bank details may have changed, I will inform Leon Gallery immediately.

Signature over printed name

G/F Eurovilla 1, Rufino corner Legazpi Streets, Legazpi Village, Makati City, Philippines
www.leon-gallery.com | info@leon-gallery.com | +632 8856 2781

OT 48

Elmer Borlongan (b. 1967)
Cabinet Member

Now Accepting Consignments

León Gallery
FINE ART & ANTIQUES

The Kingly Treasures Auction
December 2024

Fernando Amorsolo (1892 - 1972)
Untitled
signed and dated 1961 (lower right)
oil on canvas
20″ x 26″ (51 cm x 66 cm)

FOR INQUIRIES, PLEASE CONTACT US AT

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www.leon-gallery.com

BACK COVER

LOT 75

Juan Luna y Novicio (1857 - 1899)
Portrait of Adele della Rocca

LOT 35

Vicente Manansala (1910 - 1981)
Still Life

León Gallery
FINE ART & ANTIQUES