



León Gallery
FINE ART & ANTIQUES

The Spectacular Mid-Year Auction 2025

07 JUNE 2025 | 2:00 PM



Auction

07 June 2025
Saturday, 2:00 PM

Preview

Saturday to Friday
31 May - 06 June 2025
9:00 AM - 7:00 PM

Venue

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

Contact

www.leon-gallery.com
info@leon-gallery.com
+632 8856-27-81

Lot 43
Vicente Manansala (1910 - 1981)
From the Market



Lot 135
Juan Luna y Novicio (1857 - 1899)
Claro de Luna en la Laguna de Venecia
(Moonlight on the Lagoon of Venice)

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DIRECTOR
Jaime L. Ponce de Leon

CONSULTANTS
Lisa Guerrero Nakpil
Augusto Marcelino Reyes
Gonzalez III
Martin I. Tinio, Jr (+)
Ramon N. Villegas (+)

DESIGN AND LAYOUT
Jefferson Ricario
Julia Katrina Balistoy

GRAPHIC ARTS
Julia Katrina Balistoy
Ilya Katrin Irasusta
Drew Napeñas
Jefferson Ricario
John Gabriel Yu

**WRITERS AND SOCIAL
MEDIA**
Paulette Neri
Jed Nathan Daya
Adrian Maranan
Jessica Magno
Hannah Valiente

**MANAGEMENT
AND INVENTORY**
Ferdinand de Leon
Ginalyn Dimaculangan
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Rina Rose Formento
Magdalina Juntilla
Reymar Jurado
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Lot 59
Fernando Zóbel (1924 - 1984)
Versión en Toledo



Lot 127
Fernando Amorsolo (1892 - 1972)
Water Carrier

Foreword

DEAR FRIENDS and CLIENTS,

In this **Spectacular Mid-Year Auction 2025**, we invite you as León Gallery embarks on its fifteen fruitful years as your most trusted auction house. A decade and a half have passed since we first leased that space in Corinthian Plaza and officially engaged in the dynamic business of art. The rest, as they say, is history—experiences and turning points we have always been glad to cherish and reminisce about.

To formally commence our fifteenth anniversary festivities, allow me to share a few important notes on the highlights of this very special sale.

Anita Magsaysay-Ho and her most beloved medium of egg tempera are at the forefront of this auction, championed by her 1947 masterwork, ***Water Carriers***. It is a seminal piece in her favorite medium, painted during her prolific years of learning at the Cranbrook Academy of Art and described by Anita in her memoirs as "*my third egg-tempera work*."

Vicente Manansala bestows us with his favorite masterpiece and one of his best works: 1975's ***From the Market***, which also features Mang Enteng's self-portrait and his impression of his endearing wife, Hilda Diaz.

Manansala's dear friend **Hernando R. Ocampo** also graces this sale with ***Miners***, a 1952 painting showcased in a 1995 CCP retrospective on Philippine modernism and dubbed by its curator, the eminent Rod. Paras-Perez, as "a seminal work in the development of Philippine modernism."

We proudly present **Fernando Amorsolo's *The Burning of Manila***, one of his largest masterpieces to enter the market and the largest of his wartime paintings. The work was acquired by Don Jacobo Zóbel de Ayala y Roxas from Amorsolo himself, and was passed on to his son, Don Enrique "EZ" Zóbel.

We would like to extend our heartfelt gratitude to Professor Ambeth R. Ocampo for once again entrusting us with his

venerable collection. Foremost in his treasure trove of important historical artifacts is the **silver quill** of a young **Emilio Jacinto**, rescued from a bagful of scrap silver at an antique dealer's home. Also to be found in his collection is an exceptional copy of the Malolos Constitution and the exceedingly rare, complete five-volume set of Wenceslao Retana's Archivo del Bibliofilo Filipino, a must-have for bibliophiles and Philippine Studies scholars.

Juan Luna and his legendary encounters and friendships with the European aristocracy is encapsulated in ***Claro de Luna en la Laguna de Venecia***, acquired from the great Filipino painter by Álvaro de Figueroa y Torres, the First Conde of Romanones who once recalled having spent and shared lively Roman days with Luna, Mariano, Jose, Juan Antonio Benlliure, and Mateo Silvela.

Celebrity power couple Hayden and Vicki Belo-Kho have decided to part with some of their cherished paintings, foremost of which is **Anita Magsaysay-Ho's *Women Gleaning*** from her Manila homecoming years of the 2000s and **Fernando Zóbel's *Variante Sobre un Tema de Cassatt*** from his evocative *Dialogos* series.

Looking back at the past fifteen years, we are more than grateful to all of you who have been our constant companions in celebrating the genius of the Filipino artist. On behalf of Team León Gallery, we thank you as you join us on this yet another exciting milestone in Philippine art. Cheers to more anniversaries!

Yours sincerely,

Jaime L. Ponce de León
Director
LEÓN GALLERY



Cesar Legaspi (1917 - 1994)*Callas in the Moonlight*

signed and dated 1993 (lower right)

pastel on paper

14" x 20" (36 cm x 51 cm)

P 180,000

Perhaps National Artist Cesar Legaspi's prolific artistry knows no bounds. His artistic journey, spanning almost six decades, has left an indelible mark on the art scene, with works encapsulating Philippine modern art's evolution and development.

Callas in the Moonlight presents a different facet of Legaspi's oeuvre but still exudes grace and virtuosity. It departs from the artist's revered cubist-inspired paintings that uncover the social injustices and hardships faced by the Filipino people. Instead, Legaspi's deft hands and profound sense of color bring to life enthralling white callas that gleam under the gentle moonlight. Lastly, his chosen palette, with white flowers set against the night sky, adds a touch of elegance to the image.



This piece was created in 1993, a year before Legaspi's demise, and is a testament to his ceaseless talent. His mastery breathes life into every swish and flick of his hands, regardless of the technique and medium he employs and the subject matter he portrays. (Jessica Magno)

Isidro Ancheta (1882-1946)*Bahay Kubo*

signed and dated 1943 (lower left)

oil on canvas

14 1/4" x 18 3/4" (36 cm x 48 cm)

P 80,000

PROVENANCE

Private Collection, Seattle, Washington, USA



view. Ancheta's adept brushstrokes and admirable manipulation of light and shadow with color bring this scene to life. His passion and commitment to his artmaking are evident in the highly detailed, realistic images he creates.

Isidro Ancheta's canvases are a timeless tribute to the stunning grandeur of the pre-war Philippine countryside. They remind us of what once was, a bygone era that we could only long for but could never go back. Unfortunately, most of these works fell victim to the ravages of the Second World War, leaving only a handful of pieces. This 1943 painting was one of the few that survived, bearing witness to Ancheta's artistic legacy and the days past's unfading glory. (Jessica Magno)

Bahay Kubo offers a relaxed scenery of a lone traditional nipa hut situated by the riverbank, surrounded by lush vegetation. In the background is a nearby mountain range enveloped by the afternoon mist, the fiery sun slowly losing altitude behind it. As the sun sets, warmth spreads through the landscape while the still water reflects the magnificent

**Angelito Antonio** (b. 1939)*Ang Bunso*

signed and dated 1993 (lower left)

oil on paper

29" x 27 1/2" (74 cm x 69 cm)

P 220,000

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

The mother and child theme, a recurring motif in many artists' canvases, is a powerful testament to our deep, timeless relationship with our mothers. *Ang Bunso*, dated 1993, is a profound portrayal of this bond. It shows a mother in a protective stance: carrying her child and holding him close while he tightly holds onto her. Despite Angelito Antonio's bold strokes and vibrant palette, the emotional depth of the image is palpable, with an air of doubt and suspicion surrounding it. Her body language and facial expression convey a sense of protectiveness, distrust, and wariness, evoking a universal understanding of a mother's love.

Antonio's oeuvre is a genuine representation of Filipino customs and way of life, featuring market and *barrio* scenes and capturing familial affection that deeply connects with the viewers. His exceptional skill and artistry are evident in his ability to balance his bright colors with black outlines and shadows, creating a harmonious contrast in his luminous palette, proving his name as one of the master painters in Philippine art history. (Jessica Magno)



4

Ramon Diaz (b. 1943)

Points of View
signed (lower right)
dated 2002
oil on canvas
33 1/2" x 40" (85 cm x 102 cm)

P 70,000

Diarist. "When I observe the koi, I see how they dance. They follow each other. It doesn't matter if it is the biggest or the smallest; anybody can be a leader, and they don't hurt each other. They say the koi are very strong because they can climb and swim upward in a waterfall."

However, unlike the overlapping school of fish swimming in the depths, his 2002 *Points of View* shows the koi differently. Instead of them swimming, a group of three is shown from their side, all lined up as they swim in opposite directions. Coupled with the plain background, it seems as though the fish are mounted upon a wall.

Though Diaz's fish do not swim as though in a pool, balance and symmetry are still evident in the spaces between them. An oriental icon, Diaz presented his longstanding affinity for mythological enchantment, nature, and the eastern culture, all wrapped around this triad of nishikigoi fish. (*Hannah Valiente*)

Eastern aesthetic and beauty dominate the canvases of Ramon Diaz. His first time seeing sumo wrestling with his father when he was twelve years old and a fateful trip to Japan comprise his major inspirations throughout his career and it is evident in his 2002 *Points of View*.

With his fish paintings, balance and symmetry shine the brightest. "When I paint, I like the flow of how I can arrange something," he says in an interview with The



5

Federico Aguilar Alcuaz (1932 - 2011)

Untitled (Tres Marias Series)
signed and dated 1982 (lower right)
oil on canvas
26" x 32" (66 cm x 81 cm)

P 700,000

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

PROVENANCE
Private Collection, Manila

This work seems to be an offshoot of his *Tres Marias* with the same soft, romantic side that stands out from Aguilar Alcuaz's oeuvre. The lone woman, though wearing the same elaborate Spanish-style gown, deviates from his usual Marias through her stance. In a *Tres Marias* painting, Aguilar Alcuaz's women sit primly, their slouch evident but still proper. However, this particular piece sees the woman lounging with her back facing the audience. She lies sideways, her arm thrown over the shoulder of her elaborate sofa as she remains engrossed in whatever it is she is looking at.

A significant chunk of Federico Aguilar Alcuaz's oeuvre rotates around the hidden lives led within one's private room. His iconic *Tres Marias* situates a triad of women, sometimes more, in the confines of their room where they can remove their masks and be as authentic as possible.

Through his *Tres Marias* and this piece, Aguilar Alcuaz explores solitude and privacy through a feminine domain. So often are women burdened with a myriad of social expectations that the only place they can feel truly themselves is the privacy of their quarters. Here, they are visibly relaxed, confident in their knowledge that they are safe within their walls. (*Hannah Valiente*)



6

Florencio B. Concepcion (1933 - 2006)

Abstract

signed and dated 1967 (upper left)

mixed media

34 1/2" x 29 1/2" (88 cm x 75 cm)

P 400,000

Florencio Concepcion's oeuvre offers a quieter side of abstract expressionism, characterized by his preference for lighter hues. Despite the absence of actual shapes and objects, Concepcion's colorism infuses his canvases with a serene and comforting ambiance. His art provides a poetic portrayal of his subject matter, emanating from within a wide array of emotions, inviting viewers to delve into the depth of his work.

Concepcion's mastery of color and the soothing quality of his canvases can be attributed to his exploration of

different art styles. His cartooning background honed his skills in figure drawing and color manipulation. At the same time, the calming qualities of his landscapes and sceneries in the Impressionist style became integral to the emotional pull of his abstract pieces.

A seasoned artist and formidable professor, Florencio Concepcion left an indelible mark on the Philippine art scene. His name may not be as well-known as his contemporaries in Philippine visual arts, but his evocative canvases and the lessons and influences he imbued into his students' lives will always remain. *(Jessica Magno)*



7

Michael Cacnio (b. 1969)

Juvenal Sansó (1929 - 2025)

A Homage to Spring

signed and dated 2017

brass on wood

sculpture

H: 21 1/2" (55 cm)

L: 24" (61 cm)

W: 7 3/4" (20 cm)

artwork:

signed (lower right)

acrylic on paper

7 1/2" x 6" (19 cm x 15 cm)

P 900,000

Accompanied by a certificate issued by Galerie Joaquin confirming the authenticity of this lot



In *A Homage to Spring*, Michael Cacnio not only gave homage to the passing season but also paid tribute to Juvenal Sansó's artistry. Here, Cacnio's exquisite and intricately crafted brass work delineated a familiar scene revolving around an artist's life. He depicted a painter, hunched over his canvas, devoting his full attention to making his impression of the object in front of him, which, in this case, is a Sansó painting. Both Sansó's and Cacnio's works have the ability to stir their viewers' emotions, one with an unsettling mystery, while the other with familiarity and nostalgia.

Exhibiting his innate talent and unwavering passion for the arts, Michael Cacnio's awe-inspiring art pieces have garnered numerous awards and recognitions, and have been the focal point of various art spaces, museums, and galleries. Furthermore, he is the first Filipino artist to have a solo exhibit at the European Commission's headquarters in Berlaymont, Brussels, Belgium. *(Jessica Magno)*



8

Juvenal Sansó (1929 - 2025)

a.) *Remember Creation*

signed (lower right)
ca. 1970s
acrylic on paper
11 1/2" x 15" (29 cm x 38 cm)

b.) *Murmuring Sea*

signed (lower right)
ca. 1970s
acrylic on paper
11" x 15 1/4" (28 cm x 39 cm)

P 240,000

Each piece is accompanied by a certificate issued by Fundacion Sansó confirming the authenticity of this lot

By the 1970s, Juvenal Sansó's works had been lauded by critics as treading into the realm of poetic realism. His works have an air of mystery, with critics and art aficionados consistently noting the enigmatic and troubled qualities evoked by his compositions. However, with a subtle

suggestion from his friend and mentor Edouard Georg, Sansó veered towards landscapes and flowers, a far cry from his anguished subjects.

The works at hand, a.) *Remember Creation* and b.) *Murmuring Sea*, both created circa 1970, fit right in this period. Bright and lively, the artist portrayed the vibrancy of the flora he encountered along his journeys. It may be the thriving plant life in Brittany or a cluster of flora in the Philippines. Wherever it may be, Sansó depicts the beauty of nature in verdant greens and calm blues.

Like his other works, these canvases adopt a smudged look, resulting in a dream-like appearance. In *Remember Creation*, the calmness of the still blue waters and the hidden adventures that lie within the green rocks invite the viewers in. On the other hand, *Murmuring Sea* offers a hushed coastal scenery with mossy outcrops reflected on the clear blue waters with arbitrary white strokes placed against them, resembling short waves, as if the sea softly whispers to the piles of stones. Mystery is perhaps one of the most captivating aspects of Sansó's canvases, and these works are magnificent examples of that. (Jessica Magno)



9

José Joya (1931 - 1995)

Bird Song

signed and dated 1984 (lower right)
acrylic collage
14" x 21" (36 cm x 53 cm)

P 1,200,000

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

Like many a great artist before him, Jose Joya's work reflects the Philippines from his unique vantage point. Spreading his wings by going to Spain and later to Cranbrook Academy of Art in Michigan, his works then took an interesting turn as he expertly intertwines the intensity of the East and the vibrancy of the West.

His 1984 *Bird Song* did exactly that – Utilizing fine, translucent layers reminiscent of kiping, Joya plays around

with textures and hues to create an enrapturing vision that takes the great image of nature with all its encompassing and unexplainable beauty and translates it into a mystifying abstraction. Oranges and teal greens dominate the canvas, with the shapes Joya uses resembling a flock of birds as they plunge from the city sky.

The cyclical system of nature provides an indelible source of inspiration for Joya. The destruction and creation wrought by the powerful nature find themselves depicted within his canvas, as *Bird Song* celebrates the life and vibrancy the wildlife brings to its surroundings. (Hannah Valiente)

Federico Aguilar Alcuaz (1932 - 2011)

Untitled (Interior with Green)

signed and dated 1969 (center left)

oil on canvas

15 3/4" x 20 1/2" (40 cm x 52 cm)

P 220,000

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

PROVENANCE

Galleria Duemila, Inc



Eccentricity is a weapon best wielded by the phenomenal artist Federico Aguilar Alcuaz. Adept in both abstraction and figuration, this particular piece was created five years after his Barcelona years, where he had stayed for the past nine years. During these years, he founded a group of artists who rebelled against the conservatism of the time, and those influences are evident here. His formidable understanding of his craft led to his deconstruction and reconstruction of his still-life paintings. There is something almost Picasso-esque in his colors and shadows, a testament to his formative European years. (Hannah Valiente)

Ronald Ventura (b. 1973)

Untitled

signed and dated 2001 (lower right)

oil on canvas

18 3/4" x 13" (48 cm x 33 cm)

P 200,000

Accompanied by a certificate issued by Mendez Big and Small Art Gallery confirming the authenticity of this lot



The human body has often found itself at the center of Ronald Ventura's works. "The human anatomy has fascinated me ever since I was a child," he once recalled in a 2011 interview for his show at Tyler Rollins Fine Art in New York.

"[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."

His capability for anatomy is evident in this 2001 piece. Depicting a faceless and genderless person's back, the

viewers are left in their pursuit of answers using only the shadowed ripple of flesh on their back. His fascination for human anatomy, as he has professed himself, is on full display in this piece. He intertwines body and story, creating a rich web of tales using only someone's flesh and bones to regale a story full of trials, tribulations, and joys. (Hannah Valiente)

Marcel Antonio (b.1965)

Blue Serenade

signed and dated 1994 (lower right)

oil on canvas

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

P 280,000

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

Marcel Antonio once again regales his audiences with a glimpse into his exquisite world in his 1994 *Blue Serenade*. Devoid of the figures that usually grace his canvases, Marcel still manages to create a world rich with stories, should the viewers dig long enough to glean it.

"He is...like a photographer who catches his subject in a split-second in order to frame the composition in its integral completeness," Alice G. Guillermo writes in Cloud



Cuckooland. "And yet, it is to be noted that the artist does not work from a preconceived schema which he would carefully execute on his canvas."

In his portrayal of the lone house in *Blue Serenade*, Marcel's storytelling is still evident through his wispy brush strokes and dreamlike color scheme. It seems as though he inherited his parents' color sensibilities -- his father's brightly colored hues and his mother's unabashed hues shine brightly in this piece. However, while the hues of his parents, Norma Belleza and Angelito Antonio, were distinctly Filipino, Marcel toes the line between dream and reality. This quality is best put into words by Guillermo in the aforementioned article:

"Through his images of fantasy and imagination, [Marcel] circumscribes the entire universe of dream and reality where all humans live." (Hannah Valiente)

Fernando Amorsolo (1892 - 1972)*Harvest - Winnowing Rice*

signed and dated 1950 (lower right)

oil on canvas

24" x 34" (61 cm x 86 cm)

P 6,000,000

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

PROVENANCE

Acquired directly from the artist by Frances Greenfield Alexander.

Frances was born in Iloilo, but was raised in Manila. Her husband, George Alexander, worked for Ker and Co. in the Philippines. The painting has been in the family's possession since it was commissioned and inherited by descent to the present owner.

One of Fernando Amorsolo's most cherished pastimes was traveling to far-flung provinces, where he could bask in the breathtaking landscapes and observe and immerse himself in the local culture and traditions. These trips not only allowed him some time off from the confines of his studio but also provided him inspiration for his artmaking. His magnificent landscapes and seascapes resulted from these sojourns, immortalizing the country's timeless beauty and offering a genuine representation of the idyllic countryside life, fostering a deep sense of pride and connection to our Filipino heritage.

"He invested rural people with dignity and country life a feeling of contentment," art essayist Alfredo Roces writes in *Amorsolo* (1975). Indeed, the master painter's artistic bravura and use of light strokes and vivid hues create masterpieces that elevate Filipino folklife, such as this 1950 painting. *Winnowing Rice* belongs to the maestro's brilliant harvest season, focusing on the winnowing of rice, having it ready for selling and consumption. Despite the depiction of a back-breaking activity under the heat of the blazing sun, there is a palpable sense of contentment emanating from his figures, permeating the canvas and reaching out to the audience, creating a serene and peaceful atmosphere.

Amorsolo's sunlit landscapes testify to his mastery of light and color. They are not just skillful representations but powerful evocations of different moods and climates. His delicate brushstrokes and vibrant palette mixed with grays produce warm yet tranquil images that spark a sense of comfort and nostalgia. Hence, Amorsolo's oeuvre is not just a display of his talent and skill but a force that can shape the emotional response of his audience, demonstrating the profound impact of his artistry. (*Jessica Magno*)

The Maestro & The Fruits of Humble Labor



Justin Nuyda (1944 - 2022)

"Search" Mindscape

signed and dated 1985 (upper right)

oil on canvas

24" x 39" (61 cm x 99 cm)

P 1,200,000

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

Justin Nuyda's *Mindscape* series rose to become one of the country's most iconic series. It is a "picture of the sights," as his website calls it, and it is as much of a landscape as it is an in-depth view of one's own psyche, inheriting the artist's intimate insights and personal loves.

With this 1985 *"Search" Mindscape*, Nuyda echoes a vast stretch of scorching yellow field, a view that would have been familiar to the nature-bound Nuyda. The artist is a known and well-loved lepidopterist (a butterfly collector and enthusiast), and in his quest to discover more Philippine butterflies, he has embarked on multiple treks into the forest every so often. It is his self-proclaimed first love, an activity that had been nurtured young age via his father's and uncle's influences.

"I go abroad not because of my art but because of my butterfly collection," he said as recalled by Jay Bautista in his 2018 article *The Two Lives of Justin Nuyda*. "I've been to the Leiden Museum in Rotterdam and the Senckenberg Museum in Frankfurt. The Leiden has an impressive and extensive collection of tropical butterflies found in the Philippines, Indonesia, and Papua New Guinea."

It is his love for the butterflies that led him to his mindscapes, and we can see its influence everywhere. With Cesar Legaspi's advice to him in high school ("You cannot go wrong with nature, it is always right"), Nuyda's works are composed of colors that should have clashed but instead blend in a symphony of colors. He admitted that he prefers using the color combinations found on a butterfly's wings, creating a truly grounded piece of work.

"This is why I entitle my artworks, 'Search Mindscape,'" he said in a 2021 Manila Bulletin article. "There will always be a narrative behind my artwork that will be challenging to express [...] On the other hand, viewers, in their individual ways, can define and redefine, with open-mindedness, the mindscapes that I paint." (Hannah Valiente)



Nuyda
The Master's Field of Dreams

Romulo Galicano (b. 1945)*Giverny*

signed and dated 1991 and

inscribed Giverny (lower left)

oil on canvas

35" x 45" (89 cm x 114 cm)

P 1,400,000Accompanied by a certificate signed by the
artist confirming the authenticity of this lot

A wanderstruck artist, Romulo Galicano has travelled Europe, the United States, and Canada nine times in the span of almost thirty years. It was during one of these trips that he could conceivably have inspired this 1991 *Giverny*, created two years after his 1989 northwestern voyage.

Giverny is located in northern France, but it is best known as the location of the iconic artist Claude Monet's equally well-known garden and home. The artist lived in this region for 43 years, and he has focused a significant amount of his effort on transforming the gardens surrounding his house. A practitioner of the *plein air* technique, Monet has put to canvas several places within his house, especially the water lilies in the pond, the Japanese bridge, and the weeping willow tree.

Monet became the primary architect of his house's growth, tending especially to the gardens. When he died in 1926, the estate was passed to his son Michel, although the actual tending passed to his sister-in-law Blanche Hoschedé Monet, as he was barely in Giverny. Upon the passing of Blanche in 1947 and Michel in 1966, the estate was later bequeathed to the Académie des Beaux-Arts. By 1980, the estate was declared open to the public, and the Fondation Claude Monet was established.

Galicano's *Giverny* glimpses into the beautiful region. Monet's bountiful flowers line the front of his house, almost overtaking the view in its enormity. The influence of his first mentor Martino Abellana is evident –his mastery of the landscape could only be a result of his tutelage under the Cebuano realism master and his uncle.

This is also not the first Giverny piece he has done. On his website, his 1998 *Late Spring at Giverny* also imbues the thriving flora of the region, the flora that captivated Monet endlessly. Through this, Galicano gives tribute not just to the genius of Monet but to the beauty that inspired it. Giverny's beauty was famously immortalized in Monet's multiple *en plein air* paintings, and Galicano was just among the few just as captivated by the breathtaking land. (Hannah Valiente)

Galicano

In Monet's Garden



Romeo Tabuena (1921- 2015)

Woman and a Country Meal
signed and dated 1958 (lower left)
oil on wood
36" x 24" (91 cm x 61 cm)

P 300,000

PROVENANCE
Private Collection, USA



Prior to the jewel-toned, cubistic style he was best known for, the earliest works of Romeo Tabuena feature much darker and much proletariat-leaning characteristics. This 1958 work, done three years after his move to San Miguel de Allende in Mexico, still contains that quintessential fluidity and translucency of his Filipino pieces. The subject matter is truly Filipino, too – his dark-skinned woman squats on the floor in her skirt as she watches her *palayok* over the fire. Like many of his works during the period, his darkly-toned proletarian paintings approach Expressionism through their long, elongated bodies and the slightest hint of distortion peering through. (Hannah Valiente)

Romeo Tabuena (1921- 2015)

Three Candle Vendors
signed and dated 1958 (upper left)
oil on wood
24" x 36" (61 cm x 91 cm)

P 300,000

PROVENANCE
Private Collection, USA



This untitled oil on wood painting is among Romeo Tabuena's first few works after moving to San Miguel. It fuses his earlier muted, monochromatic palette with the prismatic ones he started using upon his settlement in Mexico. Adopting a cubist-inspired style, Tabuena portrays three female figures, each holding a rosary, immersed in a solemn prayer. Tabuena's figures sport a dark complexion, creating a striking contrast to their clothes that seem to glow with his use of yellow, red, and white in high tonal intensity. (Jessica Magno)

Danilo Dalena (b.1942)

Untitled
signed and dated 1993 (lower right)
oil on canvas
36" x 24" (91 cm x 61 cm)

P 500,000

PROVENANCE
Private Collection, Manila



During the opening night of his first introspective exhibition at the Cultural Center of the Philippines (CCP) in 1990, Danilo Dalena was first barred from entrance to his own show. Clad in his signature wooden shoes, he was apprehended as “too low-class” for such an event. Even then, it took a call to the then-CCP president Teresa Roxas for him to be admitted to his retrospective show.

The irony of the event is what makes Dalena’s work stick. He, and by extension his works, represent the Filipino

everyman who was systematically looked down upon based on his social standing. From his political cartoons in 1970-1972, his graffiti in 1972, his *Jai-Alai* series of 1974-1974, and many more, one thing is sure – Dalena's sociopolitical analysis is sharp, borne out of his grounded, personal experiences.

His 1993 work was done three years after his retrospective CCP show, and it is still evident that Dalena's works are grounded in the mass and its movements. The man sits, his back slumped as he looks almost forlorn. However, it seems as though it is not only despair that Dalena aims to portray. In the man's frame is a small, almost imperceptible strength of character. Dalena's works bear satire and humor, but most of all, they bear hope. He imbibes both the naïveté of a city dweller and the optimism of a rural boy, and the result speaks of the revolutionary optimism he espoused throughout his life. (Hannah Valiente)

Fernando Amorsolo (1892 - 1972)*Baluarte de Santa Barbara, Fort Santiago*

signed and dated 1926 (lower left)

oil on wood

10" x 13 1/2" (25 cm x 34 cm)

P 2,000,000

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

PROVENANCE

Private Collection, Manila

Fort Santiago is among the most important historical sites in Manila. Built by the Spaniards in the 1500s, it continued to be a center of colonial masters due to its strategic location. The Pasig River flowed into Manila Bay in this tongue of land, and as such, it became a fort for many occupying forces.

Baluarte de Santa Barbara, which was depicted by Amorsolo in this 1926 piece, was built at the mouth of the Pasig River and was first built as quarters of the artillerymen and the house of the commandant during the Spanish occupation. However, in 1904, the United States Army used this place to build its headquarters, and it was then occupied by the Japanese Army in 1942. Its storage cells were used for both civilian and guerrilla prisons as the war continued.

However, when Amorsolo created this piece, Baluarte de Santa Barbara was the stronghold of the American colonial forces. His portrayal of the American bastion is peaceful, the soft sunlight washing the shores in gentle yellow. By this period in time, Amorsolo had become the most popular Filipino artist. His works is found in advertising posters, calendars, magazines, textbooks, postage stamps, and even product labels. Even then, his portrayal of a known American center is awash with Filipino-ness.

"[He] 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," Alfredo Roces writes in Amorsolo's monograph.

Indeed, under Amorsolo's masterful brush, he gives meaning to what it is to be a Filipino. In a few years since this work's creation, Amorsolo's name would be known throughout, and one could see his adept handling of that even now. He did not just make paintings leaning into the Filipinos' tastes – he *defined* them. It is his works that come to the forefront when talking of Filipino art, and his role in defining it makes it just as worthwhile. (Hannah Valiente)



Amorsolo Paints A Forgotten Manila



A FAMILY TRADITION OF
PATRONAGE OF THE ARTS

A staunch nationalist, Don Geny's father also believed that "by preserving and promoting the Filipino heritage, his countrymen would eventually develop a sense of national pride that would enable the country to develop a unified spirit, ultimately resulting in ensuring a strengthening of a collective national soul in the succeeding generations."

Don Geny Lopez would pass away in June 1999 in San Francisco. He was 71. (Lisa Guerrero Nakpil)

The Legacy of
Don Eugenio "Geny" Lopez Jr.



LEFT: A young Eugenio Lopez Jr prepares for his first Holy Communion; TOP: The Lopez family at home; BOTTOM LEFT TO RIGHT: Geny while in exile in San Francisco during the 1970s; Geny with his uncle, vice president Fernando Lopez; © Lopez Museum, Tatler Asia

The Legacy of Don Geny Lopez (1928 - 1999)

Don Eugenio "Geny" Lopez was born into a rarefied and highly sophisticated milieu, presided over by his father, the titan Eugenio "Eñing" Lopez, Sr., on November 4, 1928.

An over-active boy, he would eventually be sent to the Virginia Military Institute where he graduated in 1950. He went on to Harvard Business School and returned to helm what would become the country's largest if not most influential media conglomerate, ABS-CBN.

It was in the great tradition of his grandfather Benito Lopez who founded El Tiempo, the first daily newspaper in Iloilo. (Lopez, a nationalist, was also vice mayor of Iloilo City.)

But it would be Don Geny who would take the path of multi-media innovation, introducing microwave and satellite technology as well as introducing color television programming in the country.

By 1993, Geny would focus on Benpres Holdings, the mother company of the Lopez holdings in media, banking and power. He would next venture into telecommunications, infrastructure, property development and other utilities.

Vicente Manansala (1910 - 1981)

Birds in Flight (Whirr Series)

signed and dated 1966 (lower right)

oil on canvas

32" x 36" (81 cm x 91 cm)

P 8,000,000

"Art is a very jealous thing—one must live it fully; there is nothing halfway about it. To be an artist is to experience, to feel every emotion possible. An artist must know love and joy, he must know what it is to hate and feel sorrow. I believe one cannot be known without the other. An artist must know hate before he can love, and unhappiness before he can truly know happiness"

—VICENTE MANANSALA, AS QUOTED IN
RODOLFO PARAS-PEREZ'S MANANSALA

"Birds in Paris reminded me of my boyhood in Intramuros. I used to pass by San Francisco Church. The birds would be flying in flocks, whirling. I started painting them after I got back from Paris."

—VICENTE MANANSALA, AS QUOTED IN
RODOLFO PARAS-PEREZ'S MANANSALA

The lot at hand, entitled *Birds in Flight*, is part of Vicente Manansala's Whirr Series, a collection of works depicting the birds in various states of flight. Beginning in 1962, Whirr found itself as one of Manansala's most enduring series, a representation of freedom, liberty, and religion as the Philippines takes its first steps following its independence. As the birds fly over their obstacles and sorrow, so too can a burgeoning nation, or so says Manansala.

A handful of Whirr works feature the beautiful white dove – a species loaded with religious and national symbolism. In shades of red, blue, and while, his Whirr series is as effervescent as it is ethereal, a dream come to life as flocks of white doves fly through the canvas.

However, *Birds in Flight* takes the opposite direction. Instead of the pure white doves that adorned many of his works, the birds in this work are smaller, darker, and more compact, emblematic of the common maya. Still, despite its commonality, *Birds in Flight* is as grandiose as the rest of the piece. The flock of maya flies above the lush Philippine forests, their shadows darkening the ground below, a vision that is well and truly Filipino.

Manansala's Whirr series began in 1962, and by 1963, a different *Birds in Flight* was featured on the cover of the *Sunday Times Magazine*. By June of the same year, he was awarded the Republic Cultural Heritage Award, the prestigious precursor to the National Artist Award.

This particular *Birds in Flight* was created in 1966, three years after the Republic Cultural Heritage Award, and still it is a magnificent example of Whirr's beauty. Manansala's Transparent Cubism highlights the ethereality of this piece – ever a romantic Filipino, Manansala cannot fully subscribe to the indiscriminate and total breakdown of subject matters the way Western Cubism tends to do. Instead, Manansala opts to break down his subject matter into fragments and pieces without totally turning its form or figure into abstraction. He uses delicate tones, shapes, and patterns, and masterfully superimposes them onto an image to create a cohesive cubist piece.

Whirr, in its essence, is a form of aerial poetry. The transparent planes of his works evoke the path of flight, wrote Paras-Perez, and it carves its own way into the sky, leaving behind only hints of its meaning and values. "The animal is the physical embodiment of movement," Sotheby wrote in a different Whirr piece. "Together with the animal in mid-flight, ready to soar away, he is essentially trying to capture the essence of life itself." (*Hannah Valiente*)

The Geny Lopez Manansala

Nature in Motion



Le Pho (1907 - 2001)
La Maternité (Motherhood)
ca. 1940 - 1960
signed (lower left)
oil on silk laid on board
24" x 15" (61 cm x 38 cm)

P 2,400,000

PROVENANCE
Wally Findlay Gallery
Sotheby's, Southeast Asian Paintings, Singapore, 10 October 2004, Lot 112

“Every Vietnamese artist has experienced living in the countryside for a period of life. They have been taught about traditional art of the cultural vestiges like the village community house temple and pagoda from the first lessons, which will stay with them for the years to come...Vietnamese are generally strong on “emotions”; one could specify further dash of love, sympathy, passion and emotional bonds. These factors are the inner life of Vietnamese paintings.”

— “YOUNG ARTISTS OF VIETNAM,” THE HANOI FINE ARTS PUBLISHING HOUSE, 1966

Le Pho's *La Maternité (Motherhood)* is a prime example of the acclaimed Vietnamese painter's second artistic period, his "Romanet Period," which spanned the early 1940s until the early 1960s, when he met the American art dealer Wally Findlay and marked the beginning of his period, the "Findlay Period." Le Pho's encounter with the French gallerist André Romanet in 1941 was felicitous, as it catalyzed not only his artistic coming-of-age but also his burgeoning international recognition.

In 1941, Le Pho exhibited at the Galerie Lorenceau in Vichy, France, where Romanet saw his works and was instantly swept off his feet by the pictures of the Vietnamese idyll and the delicate yet masterful techniques with which they were painted—in ink and silk. It was at this moment that Romanet began to patronize and sponsor Le Pho thus, ushering in a new period for the artist. Romanet first exhibited the works of Le Pho and two other Vietnamese masters, Mai Trung Thu and Vu Cao Dam, in his own Pasteur Art Gallery, located at 55 rue d'Isly in Algiers and another gallery of his in Oran, both in French Algeria. Romanet continued supporting Le Pho for the next twenty years and organized the artist's exhibitions in his own Galerie Romanet.

Romanet also encouraged Le Pho to use the traditional mediums of oil and canvas, resulting in works that exude more graceful luminosity that would become Le Pho's signature brand.

Le Pho's creative journey began when he, at 18 years old, enrolled at the then newly established École des Beaux-Arts de l'Indochine (now the Vietnam University of Fine Arts, the country's premier art school), in which he ranked ninth out of the 270 aspiring students who took the entrance examination to the academy. Prior to this, a 16-year-old Le Pho took his first artistic lessons at the École Professionnelle de Hanoi (Professional School of Hanoi). Le Pho's paintings during this formative phase were grounded in the academic style.

The École des Beaux-Arts de l'Indochine, the first fine arts school in Vietnam, was founded in 1925 by the French painter Victor Tardieu and his friend, the Vietnamese, French-trained painter Nguyen Nam Son. When Le Pho entered the École, classes in silk painting and lacquer painting were organized, as Tardieu and Nguyen Nam So wanted the students to not only learn Western-style painting but to integrate indigenous artistic knowledge as well. It was in this learning space that Le Pho honed his skills in silk painting. Le Pho also traveled to France in 1931, when he accompanied Tardieu to the Paris Colonial Exhibition and oversaw the Indochina pavilion. There, Le Pho also exhibited two major works, *L'âge heureux* and *Tristes souvenirs*, which were seen by approximately 8 to 9 million visitors from all over the world and garnered him his first significant international recognition.

The art of silk painting in Vietnam is believed to have originated from the Lý (1009 AD to 1225 AD) and the Trần (1225 AD to 1400 AD) dynasties. Always requiring meticulous precision and exceptional dexterity, the modern practice of Vietnamese silk painting, which was birthed from its inclusion in the curriculum of the École des Beaux-Arts de l'Indochine, resulted in the integration of Western practice, i.e. the use of oil and the employment of the triangle composition, into Oriental technique, such as the use of silk. From this union, Vietnamese modern art came into existence.

La Maternite is characterized by its thick brushstrokes and vivid colors. The luminosity of oil and the soft, delicate quality of silk endow the composition with a warm glow and a highly contemplative and intimate character. The triangle composition is discernible in the central subject, a result of Le Pho's Western-style training. The influence of the French Post-Impressionist Pierre Bonnard is highly discernible through Le Pho's conscious choice of depicting a domestic scene within a domestic interior and his use of intense colors that heightened the piece's emotional resonance.

A Le Pho Masterpiece

From His Romantic ‘Romanet’ Period (1940-1960)

by ADRIAN MARANAN



"For Bonnard, my husband always felt humble, and he was timid before Bonnard. He admired Bonnard. Really. Bonnard was his teacher," said Le Pho's wife, Paulette Vaux.

However, the strokes come out as calligraphic with their dynamic yet graceful character. Traditional Vietnamese aesthetics and ideals are also emphasized. The blending of warm tones, dynamic brushwork, the vertical composition, and the depiction of a familiar image very much close to the Vietnamese heart (and the collective Oriental experience as well) all point to the Confucian value of filial

piety, the reverence for one's parents first cultivated in childhood and nourished by maternal warmth, a vessel of domestic peace and quiet.

Le Pho's Confucian upbringing (he descended from the elite, educated class of the Confucian "mandarins" or quan lai (scholar-bureaucrats)) resulted in his works bearing a sense of inward reflection on the traditional Vietnamese experience, free from the individualist mores of Western culture and rooted in the nurturing of the Confucian values of utmost respect for one's parents, elders, and ancestors, benevolence and modesty, and social harmony.



22

Solomon Sapid (1917-2003)

"Sagittarius", one of series

signed and dated 1981

brass

H: 14 1/2" (37 cm)

W: 14" (36 cm)

L: 8" (20 cm)

P 400,000

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

PROVENANCE

Acquired directly from the artist

Most of Solomon Sapid's works revolve around Philippine mythical creatures, with the *Tikbalang* series being his most well-known work. His impressive metalwork and excellent interpretation of his subjects are manifested in this 1981 brass work, the

sculptor's preferred medium, which shows yet another mythical creature—a centaur. Although *Tikbalangs* and centaurs share the same physical appearance, with an upper body part of a man and a horse from the waist down, they are different in character and behavior. The former were usually portrayed as malevolent creatures leading travelers astray, while centaurs were commonly depicted as warriors and archers with exceptional bow and arrow skills. Like his other works, Sapid's *Sagittarius* bears his signature "frozen motion." With his mid-running posture and drawn-out bow and arrow, he is either in the middle of a hunt or caught in a fierce battle. *(Jessica Magno)*



23

Jose Tence Ruiz (b. 1956)

The Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil:

Anahaw

signed (lower right) dated 2018 (lower left)

oil on canvas

72" x 52" (183 cm x 132 cm)

P 300,000

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

This particular piece, entitled *The Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil: Anahaw*, is a part of his series of tree allegories. In this work, the infamous tree at the Garden of Eden that signified the fall of man from grace was transformed into a local and familiar tree. Its iconic fanned leaves are often used to wrap several native delicacies, and its breadth and strength mean it can be functionally used as an umbrella.

Ruiz's tree of knowledge is exuberant and almost mystical in its colors. The tree and its leaves cover almost every possible space there is on the canvas, imposing and intimidating as it looms. He aims to leave a more "emotional, communal legacy with people," and *The Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil: Anahaw* is just that. Religion in the Philippines is just as encompassing as nationalism, and in this work, Ruiz married these two distinct yet overlapping concepts that are, at their core, quintessentially Filipino. *(Hannah Valiente)*

Tam Austria (b. 1943)

Maria Makiling

signed (lower right)

ca.1970s

oil on canvas

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

P 500,000

LITERATURE

Duldulao, Manuel D. *Tam P. Austria*. Published on the occasion of the artist's seventh one-man exhibition at Sining Kamalig in 1976. Quezon City: Vera-Reyes, Inc., 1976. Black-and-white illustration on page 60.

LITERATURE

Sining Kamalig, *Tam Austria: 7th One-Man Exhibition*, Quezon City, 15 - 30 September 1976

Tam Austria belongs to the long line of Filipino artists who have spent their artistic career enamored with the provincial Philippines. Born and raised in Tanay, Rizal, the beauty of his hometown became his lifelong muse as he went against the grain and continued to persist in the old tradition of realistic genre pieces.

"I don't know. It seems pertinent for me," Austria replied when asked if his art is pertinent for the times.

This loyalty to his subject matter is evident in his 1970s *Maria Makiling* piece. Austria's romanticism is evident as he portrays a scene straight out of a storybook. A woman – a *Maganda*-esque vision – lies peacefully on the forest floor, a Filipino Snow White as birds and a deer flock around her naked body. Though there is nudity, there is no sensuality in this piece, only an innocent gaze at the woman beloved by nature.

There is the influence of Cubism in his works – a melding of the traditional and the modern – and yet, the severity of the Cubistic method of shattering an image to its most basic of shapes conflicts with Austria's romantic ideals. As such, this image still retains its Cubistic ideals through the usage of colors and shades. In a way, Austria, through his work, bridges the gap between cubism and romanticism, the provincial and the contemporary as he injects the comforting image of the provincial Philippines with a refreshing shock of modernism. (Hannah Valiente)

Enchantress of the Mountains

Tam Austria's Mysterious Beauty



Angelito Antonio (b. 1939)*Sabung*

signed and dated 1981 (lower right)

oil on canvas

57 1/2" x 25 1/4" (146 cm x 64 cm)

P 400,000

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

In the 20th century, a new artistic movement shook the art world. Fragmented and abstract compositions pierced through the picturesque pastoral landscapes, and the Philippines wasn't an exception to this shift in art style. Gradually abandoning the Amorsolo school of art, which portrays idyllic sceneries, the post-war Philippine art scene was filled with works featuring distorted images of overlapping shapes, lines, and colors. However, despite the change in art style, the subject remained the same for some: the Filipinos' daily lives and culture.

Angelito Antonio's canvases always bear the imprint of his Filipino roots. His paintings offer a genuine representation of provincial life, featuring vendors, farmers, fishermen, cockfighters, and market, barrio, and household scenes. A unique aspect of Antonio's paintings is the prominent use of yellow. While this color often symbolizes joy and optimism, his figures' facial expressions and body language are often laced with distress and weariness. This unique use of color adds a layer of depth to Antonio's artistic expression.

Painted in 1981, *Sabung* is another masterpiece under Antonio's trove that encapsulates the Philippines' rich culture and tradition, his subject being one of the infamous leisurely activities in the countryside. With his clever incorporation of wood, Antonio's figure—a cockfighter—appears to be looking outside from a window while preparing for a cockfight. Additionally, the artist has a penchant for making his figures look directly into the viewers' eyes, silently conveying his message. Antonio's washed palette and bold brush strokes demonstrate his artistic virtuosity, proving his respectable position in Philippine Modernism. (Jessica Magno)



ABOVE: Angelito Antonio © León Gallery Archives

Angelito Antonio

Sabungero in a Lattice Window



The Collector & Legal Luminary

Don J. Antonio Araneta



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 (LEFT): Portrait of Don J. Antonio Araneta by Fernando Amorsolo, signed and dated 1952 (lower right), oil on canvas, 38" x 28" (97 cm x 71 cm) OPPOSITE PAGE (LEFT): Don J. Antonio and Doña Margarita Araneta outside their mansion on McKinley Road, Forbes Park; ABOVE: Inside the Mansion of Don J. Antonio Araneta.



26 PROPERTY FROM THE DON J. ANTONIO ARANETA COLLECTION

Ramon Martinez (1869 - ca. 1950)

Bahay Kubo

signed and dated 1912 (lower left)

oil on canvas

10" x 16 3/4" (25 cm x 43 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 83.

Hailing from Santa Cruz, then an *arrabal* (suburb) of Manila (Intramuros), Ramon Martinez studied at the Academia de Dibujo y Pintura in the later decades of the 19th century. He would go on to teach at the storied academy by July 1892, teaching *principios de figura, acuarela pastel, and pintura escenográfica*. Together with Vicente Rivera y Mir and Toribio Antillon, Martinez would also frequent the home of the great artist-mentor Lorenzo Guerrero, from whom they would receive artistic guidance and enlightenment.

Martinez rose to fame with his victorious gold medal win for *A Country Scene* at the 1904 Universal Exposition held in St. Louis, Missouri. Martinez also created the iconic *Tribute of the Filipino People to the Heroes of '96* or *Monument to the Heroes of 1896* (unveiled in September 1911 in Balintawak before it was relocated in

November 1968 in front of the UP Diliman's Vinzons Hall), which became the archetypal image of Andres Bonifacio and the *katipuneros*: donned in camisa de chino and red kundiman pants, barefooted, and proudly holding a bolo in defiance against the Spanish colonizers.

One of Martinez's works, titled *Rustic Idyll* (1903), was in the pre-war collection of the National Museum of the Philippines.

Martinez was one of the Filipino artists whose works shaped and defined the time-honored tradition of Philippine genre painting. The artist and critic E. Aguilar Cruz uses the term "autochthonous tradition" to refer to "the indigenous way of painting that started seriously in the 1850s, reached its peak in the 1920s, declined into formula in the 1940s, and exists in variable forms to this day."



27 PROPERTY FROM THE DON J. ANTONIO ARANETA COLLECTION

Ramon Martinez (1869- ca. 1950)

Barrio Scene

signed (lower right)

ca. 1912

oil on canvas

10 1/2" x 17" (27 cm x 43 cm)

P 400,000

In the works at hand from the 1910s, Martinez depicts ubiquitous scenes in the Philippine countryside during the early decades of the 20th century, a time for the profound search for a national identity, which started during the late 19th century and continued towards the early years of the succeeding century. The first depicts a country road lined with *bahay kubos* and towering palm trees. A woman dressed in the traditional baro't saya and carrying her child can be seen walking past a *panadero* vending his freshly baked pan de sal.

The second depicts once again *bahay kubos*, but this time, Martinez captures them from the river's perspective, as if nature safeguards the existence of humanity and all living creatures depending on its blessings. A woman standing and carrying a batya on her head while being at the banks of the river indicates the act of doing laundry.

Martinez employs muted colors dominated by and primed with the browns of academic art, coming from his training at the *Academia*. Martinez does not imbue the works with a romantic atmosphere. Instead, the works are straightforward snapshots of the mundaneness of everyday living. They echo Lorenzo Guerrero's principles of making nature the protagonist of the composition, with humans as mere supporting actors in the grand orchestra of God's creation (Guerrero remained steadfast to his belief that God is the only true artist). Furthermore, Martinez imbues the works with such a stance that indicates a *Filipinismo* aimed at preserving the local and indigenous traditions of the country as a reaction to the brisk sweep of modernization and Americanization during the American colonial period. (*Adrian Maranan*)



28

Justin Nuyda (1944 - 2022)

Search Mindscape: "Horizontal Symmetry"

signed and dated 2020 (lower right)

oil on canvas

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

P 2,000,000

Accompanied by a certificate issued by Gallerie Roberto and signed by the artist confirming the authenticity of this lot

Nuyda's *Search Mindscape: 'Horizontal Symmetry'* ranks among Nuyda's most popular bodies of work. A "picture of the sights" as his website puts it, the *Mindscape* series as a whole is born out of Nuyda making literal the depth of the human mind. The result is the landscape-ification of one's inner life, their trouble translating into jagged cliffs and their joys into the rolling cloud.

Like the title suggests, this particular mindscape utilizes horizontal symmetry as the sheets of clouds in the sky

parallel the rolling plains. The colors he used stand out too, unnatural in nature. However, that is not quite the case – a lepidopterist, Nuyda often uses the colors found on the wings of a butterfly. "You cannot go wrong with nature, it is always right," his mentor Cesar Legaspi used to tell him, and it is advice that Nuyda subscribes to wholeheartedly.

This *Search Mindscape* is quite possibly one of the many hikes Nuyda took in his lifetime in pursuit of his butterflies. And yet, despite it being a landscape, it is also a visualization of one's psyche, the silence that comes with introspection. In truth, Nuyda's *Mindscape* series is as much the viewers' as it is Nuyda's. "This is why I entitle my artworks 'Search Mindscape,'" he said in a 2021 Manila Bulletin article. "There will always be a narrative behind my artwork that will be challenging to express [...] On the other hand, viewers, in their individual ways, can define and redefine, with open-mindedness, the mindscapes that I paint." (*Hannah Valiente*)



29

Vicente Manansala (1910 - 1988)

Nude

signed and dated 1972 (upper left)

pastel on paper

35 3/4" x 24 3/4" (91 cm x 63 cm)

P 400,000

The late 1960s brought an invigorating energy to Vicente Manansala's oeuvre. Though he already had a veritable amount of accolades under his belt, he still pursued betterment, as evidenced by his enrollment at the Otis Art Institute in 1967. Otis was particularly known for its drawing program, and Manansala found it necessary to go back to something as basic as drawing.

Upon his arrival at Otis, Manansala approached drawing the nude as he usually does, as fragmented parts. Here,

the head, next the hands, and so on. However, his mentor gave him a piece of advice that would soon shape his pieces. See the nude not as broken pieces but as a whole; establish the broad line of connection within the figure through the tilt of the head, the slant of the waist, and so on.

Indeed, that advice is evident in Manansala's 1972 *Nude*. At once, the viewer can easily pinpoint that thread of connection that lines the woman's figure. From the slight slant of her shoulders to the almost defiant tilt of her neck, the viewers could easily assign to her a unique story, regardless of her literal and metaphorical nakedness. Indeed, even using only the line of her body and the bold stare she levels at the viewer, it is impressive the scope of the possible story one can gauge from this portrait. It is a testament to Manansala's prowess with pen and ink, emphasizing the artist's deep understanding of the medium. (*Hannah Valiente*)

The Cranbrook Anita Magsaysay-Ho
The 'Water Carriers'
At the Dawn of the Age of Egg Tempera

by LISA GUERRERO NAKPIL



"I studied egg tempera under Zoltan Sephesy. It was indeed a very difficult medium as one had to prepare the boards perfectly, to have a successful painting... Working on egg tempera was absorbing. Time does not exist. Cranbrook provided that peace and quiet an artist needs."

—ANITA MAGSAYSAY HO,
IN 'AN ARTIST'S MEMOIRS'

The egg tempera works of Anita Magsaysay-Ho are the stuff of legend, elusive and rare, but also luminous and unforgettably beautiful.

The magical egg tempera works were first born at the Cranbrook Academy of Art, described by the New York Times on the occasion of this avant-garde college's 90th year, as "the utopian art school." Modeled after the Bauhaus and created at approximately the same time as the equally famous Black Mountain College in North

Carolina, Cranbrook however is the sole survivor of "the other early-20th-century experiments in modernism", said the Times.

As soon as World War II was over, Anita Magsaysay traveled to the United States to complete her education in the arts. The first stop was the Art Students League of New York; the second was Cranbrook which Anita described as the second "must" school to attend in her memoirs. Out of some 500 applicants, she was among



ABOVE: Anita Magsaysay-Ho at her Artist's Studio, Cranbrook Academy of Art, Bloomfield Hills, Michigan. The photograph shows the three stages of "Water Carriers" from boceto, tracing paper made of home-made carbon paper and the final work in progress. From Anita Magsaysay-Ho: Isang Pag-Alaala (A Retrospective).

the 100 that was invited to attend. Eliel Saarinen (1873-1950) was the first director of the school. Cranbrook would offer courses that included architecture, ceramics, design, fiber, metals, painting, photography, printmaking and sculpture. (Charles and Ray Eames would meet each other at Cranbrook. Florence Knoll, Harry Bertoia and National Artist Jose Joya would be among Cranbrook's graduates.

Anita's own teacher, both instructor and head of the painting department, was Zoltan Sepeshy (1898-1974.) Educated at the Royal Academy of Art in Budapest and the Fine Arts Academy in Vienna, Zoltan Sepeshy came to the United States in 1921 and to Cranbrook in 1931. He would eventually become the president of Cranbrook in 1946, at the time that Anita was enrolled.

Cranbrook was a magical haven for artists. Its campus was designed by Saarinen and featured a reflecting pool surrounded by eight bronze statues. "There was an atrium, a Greek theater in the gardens, in front of which was a long pool," reminisced Anita. Her room was "all white" and very modern, but it was the private studios for each student which were outstanding. "I would paint the whole day until 11:00 pm while listening to classical music playing in the gardens. The only breaks were for lunch and dinner."

It was in this atmosphere that she learned to paint using the Renaissance medium perfected by Raphael and taught to her by Sepeshy. It was a painstaking and time-consuming process that would yield astonishing results.



ABOVE: Zoltan Sepeshy in the Cranbrook Academy of Art

Anita would reveal in her autobiography that 'Water Carriers', the work at hand, would be the third-ever egg tempera painting that she would create.

A photograph exists, to be found in the biography, "Anita Magsaysay-Ho : Isang Pag-Alaala, A Retrospective" which shows the 'Water Carriers' at the point of its inception and the various stages it took to create it.

Labeled "Artist's Studio, Cranbrook Academy of Art, Bloomfield Hills, Michigan" it shows Anita wearing an artist's smock over a checked shirt and twill trousers. To her left is a small boceto (study) of 'Water Carriers' and more instructively, to her right, the enlarged image on home-made carbon paper that she used to trace the figures onto the canvas, seen at the farthest end of the table.

There are surviving notes describing the meticulous process to create the underpainting using this method. Afterwards, Anita would mix "5 values" for each color, using egg water and stirring the mix with black or blue, depending on the effect she wanted to produce. She would also prescribe the brushes needed — from fine sable to those for house paint —also rags and sponges, razor blades and sand paper. The cross-hatchings and striations add delicate textures and depth. It was a mysterious alchemy but instead of changing ordinary metal to gold, Anita would change egg



ABOVE: Eliel Saarinen with Anita in Cranbrook in 1947 (From her autobio, "An Artist's Memoirs")

yolks into magical works of art. Her mentor Sepeshy had guided her to add more movement to her work, and the strong curves of the water carriers' arms as they balance the clay jars on their heads create the requisite, brawny energy to do just that. A shirtless man prepares cans with a stick to carry the tins on his shoulder. A woman draws water from a well and in the distance, steeply-sloped thatch huts fill the distance past trees and a stick fence. The tableau is united by a simple palette of earth colors.

Anita would confide in her memoirs that the Cranbrook experience would not only introduce the making of egg tempera paintings but was also "how she started painting women." Both would define Anita's career in art.

Anita would become engaged to Robert Ho and married in a whirlwind romance in San Francisco after her first year in Cranbrook, cutting short this significant period in her career. It was only upon her return to Manila that she would take up the art of egg tempera again. The lustrous effects of egg tempera — combined with her lively, wholly original women figures — would make her the most famous woman artist in the country. And when she would win the grand prize at the prestigious Art Association of the Philippines' competition with "The Cooks" in 1952, there was no mistaking the fact that she was also the best.



Anita Magsaysay-Ho (1914 - 2012)

Water Carriers / Taga-igib

signed and dated 1947 (lower left)

egg tempera on board

24" x 17" (61 cm x 43 cm)

P 20,000,000

PROVENANCE

Acquired directly from the Artist, ca. 1949 - 1950

LITERATURE

"Versatile Artist: Painter of modern school turns back to the classic." *The Sunday Times Magazine*, 4 December 1949. Black-and-white illustration and painting description on page 30.

Paras-Perez, Rod. *Edades and the 13 Moderns*. Published in conjunction with the exhibition of the same title at the Cultural Center of the Philippines. Manila: Cultural Center of the Philippines with the assistance of the National Commission for Culture and the Arts, 1995. Black-and-white illustration and painting description on page 78.

Guillermo, Alice G. and Purita Kalaw-Ledesma. *Anita Magsaysay-Ho: Isang Pag-Alaala (A Retrospective)*. Published on the occasion of the exhibition of the same title organized by the Metropolitan Museum of Manila. Manila: A. Magsaysay, Inc., 1988. Full-color illustration and painting description on page 39.

Magsaysay-Ho, Anita. *An Artist's Memoirs*. Singapore: Anita Magsaysay-Ho and Tien Wah Press, 2000. Mentioned as by Anita as "Water Carriers" in the chapter "At Cranbrook" on page 100.

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 142.

EXHIBITED

Manila Hotel, Anita Magsaysay-Ho: Solo Exhibition, Manila, 26 November
- December 1949

The Metropolitan Museum of Manila, Anita Magsaysay-Ho: *Isang Pag-Alaala (A Retrospective)*, Manila, 15 December 1988 - 15 January 1989

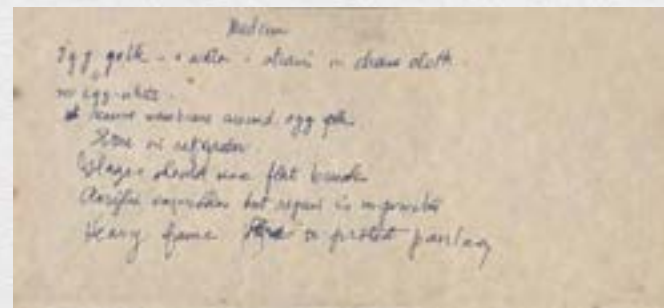
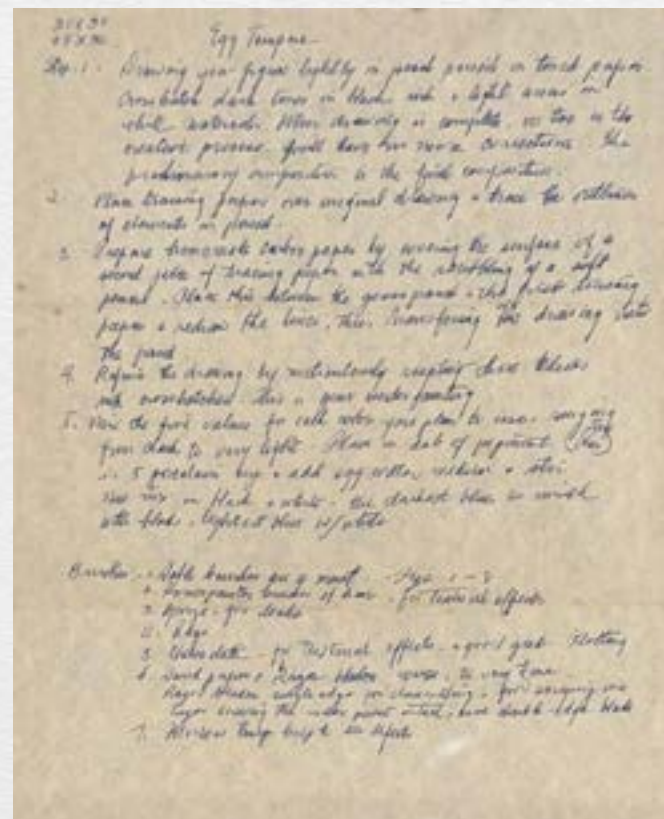
Cultural Center of the Philippines, *Edades and the 13 Moderns*, Manila, 1995

Metropolitan Museum of Manila, *Material Inspirations: Anita Magsaysay-Ho and Nena Saguil*. Bonifacio Global City, Taguig, 9 November - 9 December 2024



ABOVE: "Versatile Artist: Painter of modern school turns back to the classic." The Sunday Times Magazine, 4 December 1949

Secrets of the Anita Magsaysay-Ho Egg Tempera



RIGHT: "Secrets of Egg Tempera of Anita Magsaysay-Ho"
Photo caption: First exhibited at the "Material Inspirations" exhibition,
Metropolitan Museum of Manila, November-December 2024.

“My third (egg-tempera) work was the Water Carriers.”

—Anita Magsaysay-Ho



Bernardo Pacquing (b. 1967)

Under Squinted Scarf Joint No. 05

signed (verso)

dated 2019

oil on canvas

72" x 54" (183 cm x 137 cm)

P 1,200,000

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

PROVENANCE

Silverlens

Acquired from the above by the current owner in February 2020

EXHIBITED

Silverlens at West Bund Art and Design 2019, *Bernardo Pacquing, Solo Presentation*, Shanghai, China, 7 - 10 November 2019

Under Squinted Scarf Joint No. 05, Pacquing leans into abstraction with a kind of deliberate awkwardness; like something half-built, half-broken. The composition feels improvised, yet calculated, as if forms were dragged onto the surface, then scraped away and rebuilt. A large wedge of pale blue punches into a warm, murky field of browns and ochres, tilting the balance of the painting toward discomfort. It's a painting that resists ease, yet holds your attention through sheer material honesty.

There's no clear image to hold on to here. Instead, you get weight, friction, and suggestion. Smears, drips, and erratic brushstrokes sit alongside more solid patches of color, each mark carrying the evidence of decision and revision. The result is neither purely abstract nor purely expressive; it feels more like a diagram of thought, scrawled and layered over time.

What sets Pacquing apart is how grounded his abstractions are. They aren't about transcendence or formal purity; they're about process and residue. You can feel the gravity of everyday materials in the way paint clings, hesitates, or bleeds across the surface. This isn't abstraction as escape; it's abstraction as excavation. (*Jed Daya*)



ABOVE: Bernardo Pacquing © Silverlens

A Golden-Hued Pacquing

A Larger-than-Life Abstract



Arturo Luz (1926 - 2021)

Untitled Collage No.16

signed (lower left)

1988

acrylic collage

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

P 240,000

PROVENANCE

The Luz Gallery

Acquired from the above by the current owner

Untitled Collage No. 16 was among Arturo Luz's acrylic collages, a painting technique he developed in the 1960s. It was characterized by sticking cut pieces of paper in different shapes on a surface and overlaying them with acrylic paint. This 1988 work, although colored in vibrant hues, still resembles the artist's nature: quiet, unassuming, witty, and profound.

While Luz's earlier works were rooted in realism, his succeeding paintings took a bold leap into abstraction, culminating in his distinctive geometric style. His oeuvre became known for its straightforwardness, distinguished by its linear forms and a restrained palette. His matted,



minimalist compositions of bare spaces punctuated by linear forms have earned him a place among the most sought-after Filipino artists. In 1997, Arturo Luz was bestowed a National Artist for Visual Arts Award, the country's highest accolade in the arts. (Jessica Magno)

Justin Nuyda (1944 - 2022)

Search Mindscape Series

signed (lower right)

ca. 1980

oil on canvas

16" x 12" (41 cm x 30 cm)

P 300,000

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

The works of Justin Nuyda translate the majestic nature he so often encounters into a fantastic, almost otherworldly sight. He pays tribute to light and colors, noting their play as he combines them in one unlikely masterpiece. "I have my own choices of colors but a lot of times, I prefer color combinations in butterflies," he once said in a previous interview. Indeed, his works echo the gossamer wings of a butterfly, its color unusual but just as striking when the sunlight bounces off its wings. (Hannah Valiente)



Emmanuel Garibay (b. 1962)

Tagamasid

signed and dated 2009 (lower right)

oil on canvas

30" x 30" (76 cm x 76 cm)

P 340,000

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

Emmanuel Garibay was born in Kidapawan, North Cotabato, but his family shortly moved to Davao and lived there before he went to Los Baños, Laguna to study college. He grew up in a fun and loving family and had a happy childhood. In college, Garibay first took up Sociology, a program that introduced him to various perspectives on human life, allowing him to understand how society and one's personal lives relate. Later on, he took an interest in painting and transferred to UP Diliman's Fine Arts program. His college years opened his eyes to

the rather depressing and appalling reality of the Filipinos, prompting him to create works that revolved around his time's societal and political conditions.

Despite the burst of colors, Garibay's *Tagamasid*, a term that translates to 'observer' in English, offers a disturbing aesthetic but reflects the harsh reality. This 2009 oil on canvas work juxtaposes a man's portrait against a staggering individual. The man's eyes look in different directions, intently observing everything around him. The other figure's body, on the other hand, depicts a man helplessly falling to his demise. Garibay's image can allude to the unsettling feeling of someone lurking in the shadows, watching your every move and waiting for a perfect time to strike. It can also translate to the ordinary masses' futile fight for their rights and lives while the people in high power make a spectacle out of them. (Jessica Magno)

H.R. Ocampo’s Evocative *Miners* A Seminal Painting of Philippine Modernism

by ADRIAN MARANAN

“This painting was Manong Rod. Paras-Perez’s favorite, the critic’s choice, among the three dozen works exhibited at the CCP in 1995 tracing the history of Philippine modernism. *Miners* was championed by Manong Rod as a seminal work in the development of Philippine modernism.”

—REMINISCENCES OF THE COLLECTOR

Hernando R. Ocampo in the 1950s was the boldest of his generation.

Ocampo, christened as "The High Priest of Modern Painting," spearheaded the cause for modernism's (and Neo-Realism's) triumph against conservatism through his efforts to educate the public on modern art. As Editor of the highly popular *This Week Magazine*, Ocampo wrote articles on art appreciation. He also did paintings that served as the magazine's covers, encapsulating the periodical's headline news, usually tackling pertinent socio-economic issues affecting the post-war nation.

In one of his articles titled "How I look at pictures," Ocampo defended modern art, writing: "The absurdity in art of the oft-quoted adage "everyone to his own taste" can be clearly shown by the fact that the failure of a child of six or an expert shoemaker to appreciate a Michelangelo, a Rembrandt, an El Greco, a Matisse, an Amorsolo, or an Edades cannot in any way detract from or add to the aesthetic qualities inherent in any of the aforementioned paintings...let not either of them say that any painting is good, bad, or indifferent just because the subject involved is a Madonna, a vase of flowers, or an abstraction...."

It was in this experimental, dauntless milieu that Ocampo matured as a painter

A Woman’s Unwavering Support for Modernism

Painted in 1952, the work at hand titled *Miners* can still be grouped under Ocampo’s "Proletarian Period" of 1934 to 1945, although it falls technically under his "Transitional Period" of 1945 to 1963, in which he would gradually delve into non-objective painting but intermittently return to the human figure. During this time, Ocampo was a producer-director for the Filipino Players Guild, a producer of radio programs.

In *Miners*, Ocampo depicts two men inside a cramped, sweltering quarry, with only their headlamps, vulnerable endurance, and unabating pursuit to earn a living as



TOP: H.R. Ocampo in the mid-1950s. © *The Sunday Times Magazine*, 9 October 1955. Purita Kalaw Ledesma Foundation Archives. BELOW: H.R. Ocampo was a foremost proletarian writer of his times. © Photo reproduced in the Angel G. de Jesus' *HR Ocampo: The Artist as Filipino*

their wellspring of strength. The work was acquired by the current owner's mother, whom the print media mogul Chino Roces employed in his own *The Manila Times* as a most trusted staff.

Much like H.R. the nationalist who highlighted the Filipino struggle in his early paintings, the mother was noted to have supported the Filipino modernists when they were



LEFT: A news clipping from the Australian newspaper *The Cairns Post* reporting about the Paracale mine disaster, which may have likely inspired Ocampo's *Miners*. © <https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/42764863> RIGHT: H.R. Ocampo in the mid to late 1950s. Photo reproduced in the book *H.R. Ocampo: The Artist as Filipino* by Angel G. de Jesus.

still struggling for acceptance amid a sea of searing conservatives. She and her friends Estrella Alfon, Carmen Guerrero Nakpil, and Lyd Arguilla (Philippine Art Gallery founder) championed Filipino modernism through their patronage and their articles published in the most popular newspaper, *The Manila Times*. The ladies hung out at the popular Jade Vine restaurant along Isaac Peral St. (now United Nations Avenue) in Ermita, Manila, where they had rousing exchanges of talks, debates, and gossip surrounding the state of Filipino art and society at that time.

In fact, it was *The Manila Times*, in its 9 June 1950 issue, that first announced to its millions of readers the first-ever public exhibition of the Neo-Realists at the Manila Hotel's Rotary Room.

Miners was originally in Ocampo's personal collection, with no records showing it was ever exhibited. The current owner's mother acquired it directly from Ocampo himself, with him recounting, "My mother bought it because she wanted to help H.R.—her friend—and the other new artists. Everybody started from scratch after the war, and there was no money to be made from art. But they eagerly wanted to promote Philippine modern art, which really made them excited."

The owner reminisced that his mother became friends with Ocampo through Lyd Arguilla, who was also her close friend alongside Lyd's husband, the writer Manuel (famous for the short story *How My Brother Leon Brought Home a Wife* imbued with nationalistic themes), who guided the Veronicans and died as a guerilla.

"My mother gravitated towards Lyd, who really wanted to establish a gallery for the struggling Filipino modernists," the owner said. "Lyd was a widow and had no direct source



of income for the promotion of their art. This was how all the early works of the modernists came into my mother's collection, through her eager purchase and unwavering support."

The Manila Times ladies furnished their homes with these modernist paintings, bringing with them a sense of pride and joy in a newfound visual language, a strong showcase of the Filipino modernist's unabating uphill battle.

The owner added, "My mother did not consider herself a collector. She just wanted to help her painter friends."

Miners at the 1995 CCP Retrospective of Philippine Modernism

Miners would be exhibited in 1995 at the Cultural Center of the Philippines in the retrospective Edades and the 13 Moderns, tracing the history of Philippine modernism from Edades in 1928 up to the rise of Neo-Realism in the 1950s. The eminent art critic/painter Rod. Paras-Perez, the show's curator, particularly chose this for the exhibition and was noted by the owner as "Mang Rod's favorite, the critic's choice" among the three dozen works in the show.

"*Miners* was championed by Manong Rod as a seminal work in the development of Philippine modernism," the owner recalled. "Manong Rod was in love with the painting. He requested my Mama to bring it back to Manila for the exhibit. Mama had sent it to my sister to display in the latter's London home."

Miners, in Ocampo’s words

As recalled by the owner, Ocampo said the following to describe this painting. "This work is my attempt at presenting the plight of two miners at work. Although figurative, I had already been figuring out how to abstract their features, and how to pull out color harmonies from the palette that would sync with Philippine realities."

Hernando R. Ocampo (1911 - 1978)

Miners
signed and dated 1952 (lower left)
oil on canvas
18" x 14" (46 cm x 36 cm)

P 4,000,000

PROVENANCE
Acquired directly from the artist

LITERATURE
De Jesus, Angel G. *H.R. Ocampo: The Artist as Filipino*. Manila: Heritage Publishing, 1979. Full-color illustration on page 117 and painting description on page 119.

Paras-Perez, Rod. *Edades and the 13 Moderns*. Published in conjunction with the exhibition of the same title at the Cultural Center of the Philippines. Manila: Cultural Center of the Philippines with the assistance of the National Commission for Culture and the Arts, 1995. Black-and-white illustration and painting description on page 70.

EXHIBITED
Cultural Center of the Philippines, *Edades and the 13 Moderns*, Manila, 1995

An avid reader himself, *Miners* may have been inspired by the Paracale mine disaster of December 15, 1952, when water rapidly rushed into a 400-foot-deep tunnel in a goldmine owned by the United Paracale Mining Co. in Camarines Norte. The mine became severely flooded, trapping and drowning 55 miners, making the incident the worst mining disaster in Philippine history during that time.

Ocampo probes into poor labor conditions with this work. He was, in fact, a nationalist. While in jail due to false collaboration charges after the war (but soon revealed to be born out of jealousy, as his friend who filed the case allegedly saw Ocampo kiss his girlfriend, which, to Ocampo's defense, was his way of greeting women friends), Ocampo bonded with other nationalists who were also unfortunately accused of being collaborators, including Claro M. Recto, Jose P. Laurel, and even Victorio Edades, his painting companion at that time. His biographer de Jesus also recounted a newspaper debate in which Ocampo "maintained that in the future, the Philippines should try to depend on herself alone and not on other countries whose motives were not always altruistic."

In *Miners*, the artist's rendering of organic, sinuous forms emphasizes the humanity of the miners, with their faceless features highlighting their dehumanization under an exploitative environment. *Miners* also show an attempt to synthesize the colors of the Philippine flag and transform them into somber tones to evoke the desolate conditions the Filipino people had to endure in the post-war years: living amidst an environment of national trauma, of immediate survival and sustenance amid sluggish rehabilitation and reconstruction and the hegemony of neo-colonial, pro-American policies.

Miners is a synthesis of Western surrealism and the Neo-Realist propensity of projecting an early form of Filipino social realism. Ocampo turns to the writings of Sigmund Freud on the interpretation of dreams. He colors his figurative works with a dream-like bizarreness of projecting repressed emotions and thoughts as metaphors for a new reality filled with the tension between chaos and order, death and survival, hope and despair.

Ocampo heavily leans on the lived experiences of the times, painting a highly symbolic image through his subjective preferences of tropical colors and highly stylized forms to emphasize an objective reality—the Neo-Realist essence.

A Reflection of Ocampo as a Proletarian

For Ocampo to have empathized with the struggles of the common Filipino is deeply rooted in his past. If there was someone who could become the poster boy of the Filipino as a struggling artist, it was Ocampo himself. Raised in Maypajo, Caloocan, Ocampo had already faced the harsh realities of life in his youth. Eager to help his financially incapacitated family, Ocampo became a shoe-shine boy for the nearby cabarets' local and foreign customers. At 17, he became a cashier at the Maypajo cabaret. (Ocampo playfully recounted that aside from tending the cash register, he also dated some of the *bailarinas* (hostesses) whose daily attendance he checked.)

During the 1930s, Ocampo was a member of the *Veronicans*, a group of twelve young writers that also included literary heavyweights Francisco Arcellana, N.V.M. Gonzalez, and Estrella Alfon. They were described by Leonidas Benesa in his book *Hernando R. Ocampo: The Neo-Realist as Avant-Garde* as "involved in proletarian literature, or social realism, in the belief that this was the



TOP: The artwork as featured in the exhibition catalog *Edades and the 13 Moderns* at the Cultural Center of the Philippines, 1995. © Cultural Center of the Philippines E-Library

H.R. Ocampo
Champions the Men of the Underground



"This work is my attempt in presenting the plight of two miners at work. Although figurative, I had already been figuring out how to abstract their features, and how to pull out color harmonies from the palette that would sync with Philippine realities."

—H.R. OCAMPO, AS RECALLED BY THE CURRENT OWNER OF THE PAINTING WHEN IT WAS ACQUIRED BY HIS MOTHER FROM THE ARTIST HIMSELF IN THE EARLY 1950S

'true image,' which should show on the veil of literature." Ocampo's association with the *Veronicans* would spill out to his early years as a painter.

When Ocampo painted *Miners*, he had transferred from the print media to the radio world, as there was a boom in radio drama and the compensation was three times bigger, as he said in a 1972 interview with Cid Reyes. In radio, he was also a writer, director, producer, and an occasional actor. This he did as the eldest child, all for the hustle of providing a living for his parents, his two families from two different wives, and his nephews and nieces whose parents (his siblings) were unemployed. (Because

there would be no breadwinner for the family, Ocampo shockingly declined three international study grants, foremost of which was the Parisian scholarship of 1950 that was given to Manansala instead.)

Putting all these struggles together, one can picture Ocampo's "Proletarian Period," where humanity's optimism and melancholy resonate with beautiful tension. He never left the Philippines to study and broaden his creative horizons abroad, but the collective hopes and struggles of the common Filipino proved powerful enough for his virtuosity to flourish.

Mauro Malang Santos (1928 - 2017)

Woman
signed and dated 1994 (lower right)
oil on canvas
24" x 16" (61 cm x 41 cm)

P 1,400,000

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

PROVENANCE
West Gallery

Starting his artistic journey as an illustrator, Mauro Malang Santos never ceases in his artmaking, even several decades later. His evolution and development as an artist are apparent in the body of works he left behind: paintings and sketches of different subjects and mediums. Moreover, he was a Filipino through and through, a master colorist who exhibited his proficiency in using a variety of tints and shades to present the Philippine landscape and everyday life.

Malang's burst of color and Filipino sensibility are evident in this 1994 oil painting of a woman—one of the artist's recurring subjects. With a long neck, thick limbs, and a taut expression, this female figure is unequivocally a Malang woman. His brilliant play on color and shapes managed to characterize a dejected woman regardless of his bright-colored palette.

Aside from his dauntless colorwork, Malang is also notable for his commendable for his overlapping forms and strokes. But despite their overlapping and gem-toned qualities, Malang's canvases do not appear overwhelming to the eyes. Instead, they complement one another, resulting in art pieces that can stir the audience's emotions, bringing forth even those hidden deeply within. Additionally, the familiarity of his subjects is what makes his paintings relatable and engaging. *(Jessica Magno)*



ABOVE: Malang in his studio. © León Gallery Archives

Malang
The Woman in a Forest Glade



Roberto Chabet (1937 - 2013)

a.) House Painting #19

2012
acrylic on canvas on shelf plywood
36" x 36" (91 cm x 91 cm)

b.) House Painting #2

2012
acrylic on canvas on shelf plywood
36" x 36" (91 cm x 91 cm)

c.) House Painting #5

2012
acrylic on canvas on shelf plywood
36" x 36" (91 cm x 91 cm)

d.) House Painting #15

2012
acrylic on canvas on shelf plywood
36" x 36" (91 cm x 91 cm)

e.) House Painting #14

2012
acrylic on canvas on shelf plywood
36" x 36" (91 cm x 91 cm)

P 1,000,000

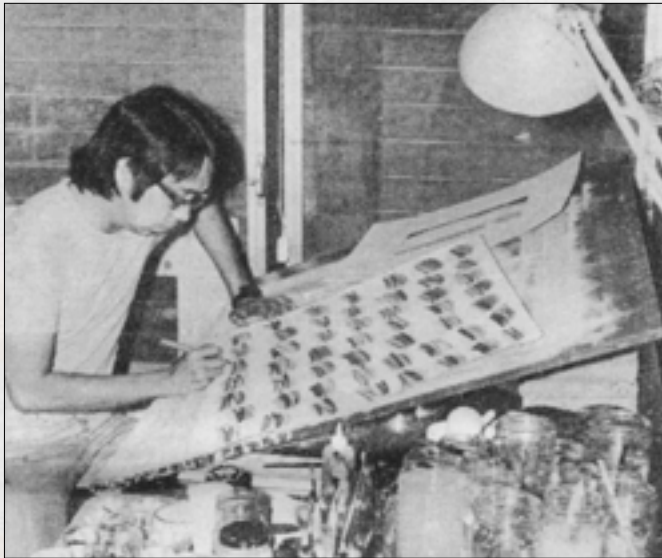
Each piece is accompanied by a certificate issued by Finale Art File confirming the authenticity of this lot

PROVENANCE

Roberto Chabet Estate
Finale Art File, Makati
Acquired from the above by the current owner

EXHIBITED

Finale Art File, *Roberto Chabet House Paintings and Drawings*, Makati
8 - 29 March 2023



ABOVE: Roberto Chabet at work in his studio (June 1972). © Philippines Sunday Express



This set of paintings belong to Roberto Chabet's *House Paintings* series; works that speak in quiet, deliberate tones. Unlike many of his peers, Chabet didn't follow in the stylistic footsteps of those who came before him. His paintings carry their own energy: calm, restrained, and always thoughtful.

In this series, the house becomes a recurring form—pared down, almost like a symbol. These shapes are stripped of detail, turned into blocks of color that feel both familiar

and abstract. Chabet plays with color relationships and composition rather than narrative. The muted tones, faded blue, lavender, ochre, deep brown, don't shout, but they hold their ground. There's a balance here: between structure and intuition, repetition and variation.

What's striking is how Chabet uses simplicity to pull the viewer in. The arrangement of each block feels intentional, almost architectural. But rather than building with bricks or beams, he builds with form and tone. His approach

resists the emotional, expressive style of artists like Zobel or Joya. Instead, he keeps things cool and analytical; more about thinking through painting than feeling through it. Still, there's something deeply personal here. The shapes, the colors, the silences between them; everything seems to point inward, toward reflection. In *House Paintings*, Chabet doesn't just paint forms; he creates space for thought. (*Jed Daya*)

Nona Garcia (b. 1978)

Untitled

2006

oil on canvas

72" x 96" (183 cm x 244 cm)

P 1,000,000

PROVENANCE

Acquired directly from the artist



ABOVE: Nona Garcia at the opening of her exhibition "Planted", Berlin, January 19 - March 9, 2018, at Arndt Art Agency © Hannes Wiedemann & Bernd Borchardt.

What makes Garcia's practice especially compelling is how she moves so fluidly across different forms of art. Though she's best known for her painting, she's just as comfortable working with installations and conceptual pieces. Across her body of work, certain ideas keep resurfacing; memories that linger, spaces that have been left behind, and the tension between what's shown and what's hidden. There's a deep sense of reflection in her pieces, often inviting viewers to slow down and spend time with the details. The piece shown here captures that same thoughtful energy. At first glance, it looks like a close-up of worn-out armor or industrial material; heavy, textured, and full of history. But the more you look, the more abstract and open to interpretation it becomes. The monochrome palette strips away distraction, focusing our attention on surface, form, and shadow. Like much of Garcia's work, it feels like a meditation on memory: what we preserve, what fades away, and how the physical world can carry emotional weight. There's a quiet power in how she presents these objects; not as static things, but as carriers of story and feeling.

Nona Garcia first caught the international art world's attention when she took home the grand prize at the 2001 ASEAN Art Awards. That win didn't just launch her career; it opened the door for a new generation of Filipino artists to find audiences beyond the usual art hubs like Manila. Since then, Garcia has steadily built a name for herself, particularly in places like Hong Kong, where her work has been recognized for its quiet intensity and thoughtful execution. (*Jed Daya*)

Nona Garcia Explores Sanctity in Extreme Close-Up



Arturo Luz (1926 - 2021)

Untitled

ca. 1972

balayong wood

sculpture:

H: 35 3/4" (91 cm)

W: 12" (30 cm)

L: 11 3/4" (30 cm)

with base:

H: 58 1/4" (148 cm)

W: 13 1/2" (34 cm)

L: 13 1/2" (34 cm)

P 700,000

PROVENANCE

Private Collection

Leon Gallery, *The Magnificent September Auction 2018*, Makati City,

8 September 2018, Lot 98

Acquired from the above by the current owner



ABOVE: Artwork with base

In 1969, as massive redevelopment was taking shape across Metropolitan Manila, Arturo Luz, recognized as one of the leading vanguards of Philippine modernism, declared his sudden abandonment from painting and focused entirely on his sculpture. "I think it's a very logical step from the kind of painting I do. I have always had a strong attraction for [the] three-dimensional work" (Arturo Luz by Cid Reyes. Ayala Foundation, Inc., 1999, pp. 43). Luz saw the sculpture as a rejection of the earlier abstract expressionism and the figurative cubism that he helped permeated into the mainstream.

In its design as in this untitled example from 1972, Luz blends the Zen-like aesthetics in patterning his works with that of the Western minimalists including Frank Stella, Isamu Noguchi and Anthony Caro. As with his counterparts across the Pacific, Luz removed all forms of emotions and expression that can be grasped from the biographical reading of his earlier figurative paintings. The basic shapes, hard-edged forms that Luz embraced in this work helped remove any ideas or contemplations in any symbols that may arise. In his experimentations beginning with his first wood sculptures formed from Philippine hardwood including balayong, kamagong and narra is seen as repetitive and non-hierarchical. Like the "plastic poetry" that was famously uttered by American minimalist sculptor Carl Andre (b. 1932), Luz sought to find the true meaning of the visual space that can be recreated and reproduced in various shapes and dimensions in just mere mundane objects.



ABOVE: Arturo Luz © Tatler Philippines

Luz Illuminates

Harmonies in Wood



Macario Vitalis (1898 - 1990)*Still Life*

signed and dated 1945 (lower right)

oil on canvas

32" x 25 3/4" (81 cm x 65 cm)

P 500,000

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

PROVENANCE

Private Collection, Paris

Macario Vitalis belongs among the roster of artists who find themselves enamoured by the streets and the life in France. After spending several years in the United States after leaving the Philippines, Vitalis soon embarked for Paris in 1925. Although this period was marked as a difficult one financially, it was in the City of Art that he flourished in his art.

His still-life, in particular, is a result of his artistic odyssey. Beginning at the San Francisco School of Fine Arts and then the Philadelphia School of Fine Arts, it follows that Vitalis, too, has mastered this theme. He particularly likes Paul Cézanne's still-life paintings, which often include portrayals of fruits.

Vitalis's still-lives are often comprised of bouquets of flowers. The influence of several modernist painters is evident in his oeuvre, especially since his settlement in Puteaux and its group of ragtag artists. In this particular still-life, one could pick up Vitalis' vivid colors and unique brushstrokes, lending to quite an interesting depiction of flowers. Indeed, Vitali brings life into his subjects, spinning an infinite web of stories using only inanimate objects preserved in a single snapshot of time. *(Hannah Valiente)*



ABOVE: Vitalis in his studio at Camille Renault's "Big Boy" Restaurant, ca. 1950. © M.E. Ledoigt, reproduced in macario-vitalis.com/en/photos-and-souvenirs

Vitalis Paints a Spring Bouquet

The Artist Recently Recognized at the "City of Others" Exhibition

AT THE NATIONAL GALLERY OF SINGAPORE





41 PROPERTY FROM A DISTINGUISHED COLLECTOR

Rodel Tapaya (b. 1980)

Somewhere over the Rainbow

signed and dated 2016 (lower left)

oil on burlap

60" x 40" (152 cm x 101 cm)

P 900,000

Accompanied by a certificate issued by Arndt Fine Art Pte. Ltd. confirming the authenticity of this lot

PROVENANCE

Arndt Fine Art Pte. Ltd.

Acquired from the above by the current owner

storytelling, his compositions curiously embody a peculiar Filipino taste.

Somewhere over the Rainbow not only exhibits Tapaya's whimsical and distinct artistry, but also his passion and dedication to his artmaking. Painting with burlap is a painstaking process because, unlike a canvas, they are light and thin, practically see-through, unless coated in a considerable layer of base paint.

Furthermore, Tapaya's illustrious works of reimagined folk narratives incorporated into contemporary realities continue to ornament the art scene, locally and internationally, earning him a distinction as one of the most sought-after Southeast Asian contemporary artists. *(Jessica Magno)*

Rodel Tapaya is an award-winning contemporary artist known for his adept use of allegory and folklore in his masterpieces. His oeuvre is a product of his dexterous hands, profound understanding of materials, and substantial knowledge of his country's culture and history. Despite his surrealistic approach to



42 PROPERTY FROM A DISTINGUISHED COLLECTOR

Jose V. Ayala (1932 - 2002)

Words Become Flesh

signed and dated 1970 (verso)

oil on canvas

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

P 240,000

PROVENANCE

Artist's Estate

Leon Gallery, *The Spectacular Mid-Year Auction 2021*, Makati City, 5 June 2021, Lot 55

Jose V. Ayala's works point towards a seemingly endless abyss of creativity, lawless and untethered, and the limitless potential of the human mind to make sense of the beautiful absurdity. Upon viewing, Ayala's works seemingly burst onto the scene, filling the senses with explosive and frenetic energy. But his masterful knowledge and sense of color, shape, and space tame his creations' chaotic miasma into a tapestry of intricate and intimate design.

Despite his namesake, Jose V. Ayala Jr. remains an enigmatic, mysterious and almost quasi-religious figure within the canon of Philippine art. An award-winning writer and copy director by his mid-thirties, Ayala surprised many by seemingly abandoning his destined track in order to shift and pursue the visual arts in the 1960s. He was heavily influenced by friend and artist-colleague Federico Aguilar Alcuaz, who saw in him the ferocious creative spirit of a once-in-a-generation artist. Though Ayala was blessed with a relatively long life and a temperament for the arts, he rarely exhibited his works to the public nor did he mingle with the budding contemporary art scene of the 70s. Instead, he retreated inward, both physically, mentally and spiritually as he took up painting while tending to his agricultural business in Davao. Interest in his works was reignited due to a surprising retrospective at *Art Fair Philippines 2019*. *(Jed Daya)*

Mang Enteng's Favorite Masterpiece

Manansala Paints His Self-Portrait as a Sabungero

by ADRIAN MARANAN

"This is my favorite work and one of my best paintings, as this is my best 'transparent cubist' rendition of my palengke [market] scene, with myself as my favorite sabungero [cockfighter]."

—VICENTE MANANSALA, AS RECALLED BY THE CURRENT OWNER OF THE PAINTING WHEN IT WAS ACQUIRED BY HIS MOTHER FROM THE ARTIST HIMSELF IN 1975

An Intriguing Self-Portrait Featuring Mang Enteng's Wife

The renowned British psychologist John Charles Turner once wrote in 1996, "The self is fundamentally sociological, not biological." According to Turner, our sense of self is influenced by our association with specific social groups and, therefore, molded into the "collective self." Thus, the "self" becomes synonymous and intimately inseparable from the "collective."

Vicente Manansala was always a bold and irreverent gent, beaming with a prankish and witty sense of humor, like an old-fashioned Filipino man could ever be. But beyond that was a man ingrained with proletarian sensibilities, deeply in touch with his fellow ordinary folks. Growing up in pre-war Intramuros, Manansala experienced the hardships of living early on; he worked as a shoe-shine boy (bootblack), a caddy, a distributor of films for movie houses, and a newspaper hawker selling copies of *La Vanguardia* and *El Debate Independiente* all throughout Manila.

A palpable proof of Manansala's profound identity as being one with the culture of the masses was his love for *sabong*, or cockfighting, a pastime deeply rooted in our collective culture. *Sabong* existed even before Magellan's arrival on our shores, as witnessed by the expedition's chronicler, Antonio Pigafetta.

The story goes like this. Manansala, after he graduated from the University of the Philippines School of Fine Arts in 1930, ran away from home when his father castigated him "for keeping a stable of seven fighting cocks," as once recounted in a September 1958 article by the highly popular *This Week* magazine.

Manansala also revealed in a May 1973 interview with Cid Reyes that one of his most beloved subjects is the rooster and the cockfighter, thanks to his *sabungero* past. He said in his signature sense of humor.



PHOTOS: Mang Enteng and his loving wife, Aling Hilda, all throughout the years. TOP: At their wedding reception in November 1937. BOTTOM: In London in 1974. © Photos reproduced in *Manansala* by Rod. Paras-Perez

"Ah! Yang manok e talagang gustong-gusto ko! Alam mo noong binata ako, sabungero ako! Pero nang mag-asawa ako, tinigilan ko. Alam mo naman, 'yang manok at asawa e hinding-hindi pwedeng magkasama!"

It is in the assimilation of the sense of self with an ingrained element of our social culture that we find the significance of Manansala's *From the Market*.

From the Market is an interesting case within Manansala's oeuvre as it features a self-portrait of the maestro as a *sabungero*, once his favorite pastime and quickly turned to being his most cherished subject in his paintings. Manansala is in the vigor of his youth, a handsome man with prominent cheekbones, a well-defined jawline, and a high-bridged nose.

Beside Manansala is a pregnant woman depicting the beautiful Aling Hilda, or Hermenegilda Diaz Manansala,

Mang Enteng's beloved wife. This intriguing portrait of Manansala and his wife evokes that time when he had to stop cockfighting all in the name of his precious wife, whom he relentlessly courted for seven years, married in November of 1937 (they eloped after Mang Enteng stole a kiss from the maiden during their first movie date), and with whom he would have a son named Emmanuel (born in 1939). Aling Hilda is depicted as an irked woman, her gaze away from Mang Enteng, perhaps annoyed at her husband's "constant craving" for cockfighting. The rooster looks with pity on Manansala, as if pleading with the conflicted Mang Enteng not to leave behind his "side chick."

"I love the sabungero because I was one," Manansala proudly expressed in Rod. Paras-Perez's book on him.

The beautiful women vendors, to whom Aling Hilda also looks with apprehension (perhaps a sign of veiled jealousy of Mang Enteng's flirtatious tendencies?), are reminiscent of Manansala's proletarian boyhood when he used to hustle his way all throughout pre-war Manila's streets to earn a living.

"My painting is a sort of emotional release," Manansala famously said in the above-mentioned *This Week* article. "I paint not what I see but what I feel."

A Painter in His Prime Decade

By the time Manansala painted this work, he had been riding high on his well-deserved success. He was the Philippines' most famous painter. In fact, during his prolific 1970s, Manansala's shows were instant blockbusters; the entire show would be sold out in a quick snap. There was his 1974 exhibition at Silay, Negros Occidental, in which all 40 art pieces were sold in only ten minutes, breaking a record for a Philippine exhibition, as reported in the periodical *Woman's Home Companion*. In another show, in December 1977, art critic Leonidas Benesa wrote in the *Philippines Daily Express* that all 16 artworks were sold before the exhibit had even opened. Benesa raves about its rarity in the Manila art world, saying that before Manansala, only Tabuena had achieved this feat.

"For more than 20 years, Manansala has been receiving invitations from museums and galleries abroad for one-man shows," said the *Woman's Home Companion* article. "But he has turned them all down. That is because, although a prolific artist who religiously paints every day, he cannot gather enough pieces for one-man shows. His works are bought before they are even started."

From the Market, Manansala's Favorite Painting

However, there were a handful of paintings that Mang Enteng kept for himself, tucked inside the bedroom of his Binangonan home. *From the Market* is among those works. The current owner reminisced that his mom



TOP: The wedding day of Mang Enteng and Aling Hilda on November 7, 1937 at the Binondo Church. © Photo reproduced in *Manansala* by Rod. Paras-Perez MIDDLE: Mang Enteng and Aling Hilda in the 1950s. © Purita Kalaw-Ledesma Foundation Archives BOTTOM: A young Aling Hilda. © Photo reproduced in *Manansala* by Rod. Paras-Perez

acquired the work from Manansala himself one sunny day in 1975, when he accompanied her to Binangonan to visit Mang Enteng at the eager request of a very good friend.

The owner recalled that he witnessed how Manansala casually pulled this work from under the bed and offered it to his mother, whom Mang Enteng had always wanted to be one of his models from the very start. "Mama and Mang Enteng had been acquaintances since after the war," the owner said. During that time, Manansala worked as a staff artist for the Evening News, and the owner's mother was a staffer for The Manila Times (then the country's leading

Vicente Manansala (1910 - 1981)

From the Market

signed and dated 1975 (upper left)

oil on canvas

29" x 37" (74 cm x 94 cm)

P 16,000,000

PROVENANCE

Acquired directly from the artist

LITERATURE

Paras-Perez, Rod. Manansala. Manila: PLC Publications, 1980. Black-and-white illustration on page 242 and painting description on page 243.

daily) who had the confidence of her boss, the venerable Chino Roces. Both periodicals were under the Roces media empire.

"Mang Enteng had wanted my Mama to pose for him from that time, and he always 'flirted' with my beautiful mother," the owner revealed. "Mang Enteng would always say to my mom, 'Oh, you're so beautiful! You should be my model.' My mother always resisted but knew how to 'flirt' back."

The owner shared that when Manansala painted for himself, he would put it under his bed; some were rolled up, others were stretched. *From the Market*, the owner recalled, had just been stretched, wrapped in cardboard, and ready to be framed. Manansala himself chose the painting and offered to gift it to the owner's mother, saying,

'This is one of my best paintings! This is my favorite work as this is my best 'transparent cubist' rendition of my palengke [market] scene, with myself as my favorite sabungero [cockfighter].'

"My mother refused to accept it as a gift because she was so conscious that she had to compensate people for their hard work," said the owner. "She was always there as an avid supporter when the Filipino modernists were still financially struggling and striving for acceptance. She had always had a sweet, soft spot not just for these painters but for everyone fairly and eagerly working their way to the top."

From the Market is a beautiful painting where one sees a harmonious wedding of Manansala's sense of self, his love and appreciation for his own roots and culture, and an art lover/patron's profound consciousness towards promoting and cultivating the artist's role in nation-building.

This compelling intersection of art, culture, and personal relationships holds such gravitas that Manansala considered *From the Market* his favorite painting.

A Man, His Wife and A Rooster

Manansala Paints His Loves



Antonio de Morga (1559 - 1636)
Annotated by José Rizal (1861 - 1896)
Sucesos de las Islas Filipinas por el doctor Antonio de Morga.
[Events in the Philippine Island by Dr. Antonio de Morga]
París: Librería de Garnier Hermanos, 1890.

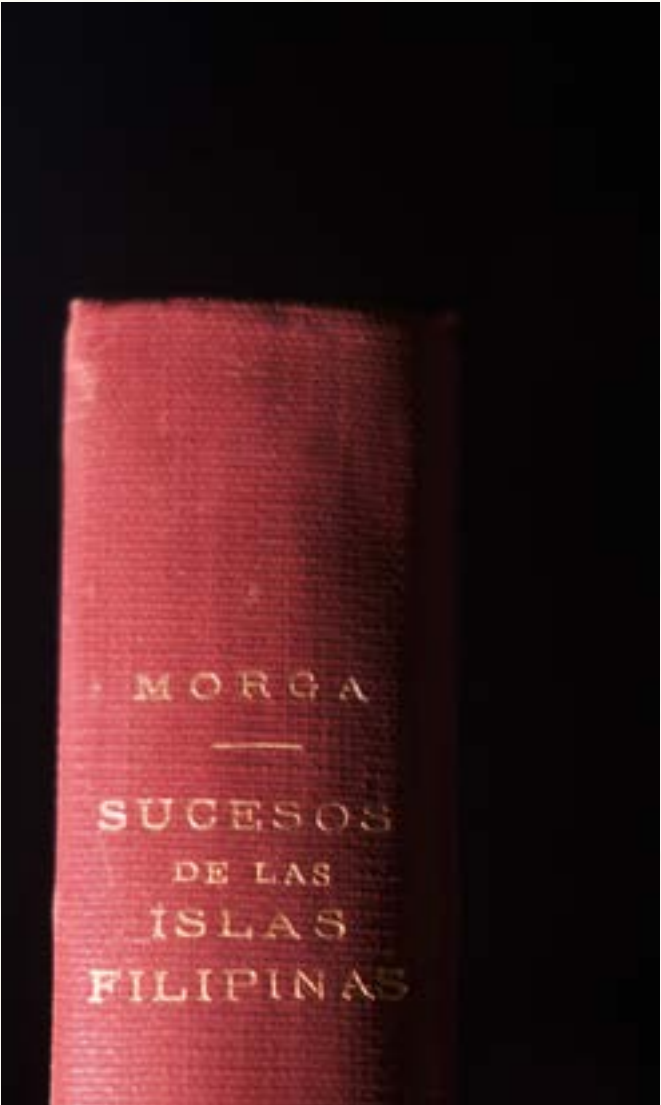
P 400,000

CONDITION REPORT
Copy that was part of the Library of Congress (Washington), but disposed of due to owning two others (indicates it is library copy number 3). Modern hardcover in good condition, edges darkened and original cardboard cover detached. Rest of book in very good condition.

José Rizal's edition of Antonio de Morga's *Sucesos de las Islas Filipinas* (1609) stands as a cornerstone of Philippine scholarship and a powerful expression of national pride. In the late 19th century, Filipino ilustrados like Paterno, De Los Reyes, and Pardo de Tavera were championing indigenous identity through their writings. Rizal, with his sharp intellect and deep passion, joined this movement by reviving Morga's chronicle, a rare political and civil history from the Spanish colonial era.

What drew Rizal to this obscure text, uncovered during his research at the British Library, was its unique perspective. Unlike the era's church-dominated narratives, Morga's work offered a detailed account of the Philippines' early governors and their defense of Manila Bay against Dutch forces. Yet, it was Chapter VIII that truly captivated Rizal—a vivid portrayal of pre-Hispanic Filipino life, describing the people of Luzon as "well-built," "sharp-witted," and thriving through agriculture, fishing, and trade. For Rizal, this was a revelation worth sharing with his countrymen.

Rizal's edition is far more than a reprint. His meticulous footnotes breathe life into the text, challenging Morga's colonial biases, clarifying cultural details, and drawing connections to his own time. When Morga notes the natives' tendency to drink heavily, Rizal counters that such habits had largely faded. He engages with other chroniclers like Chirino and Colín, weaving a richer narrative. Yet, his fierce love for the Philippines occasionally clouds his scholarly restraint, a point gently raised by his friend Ferdinand Blumentritt in the introduction—an inclusion Rizal accepted with grace.

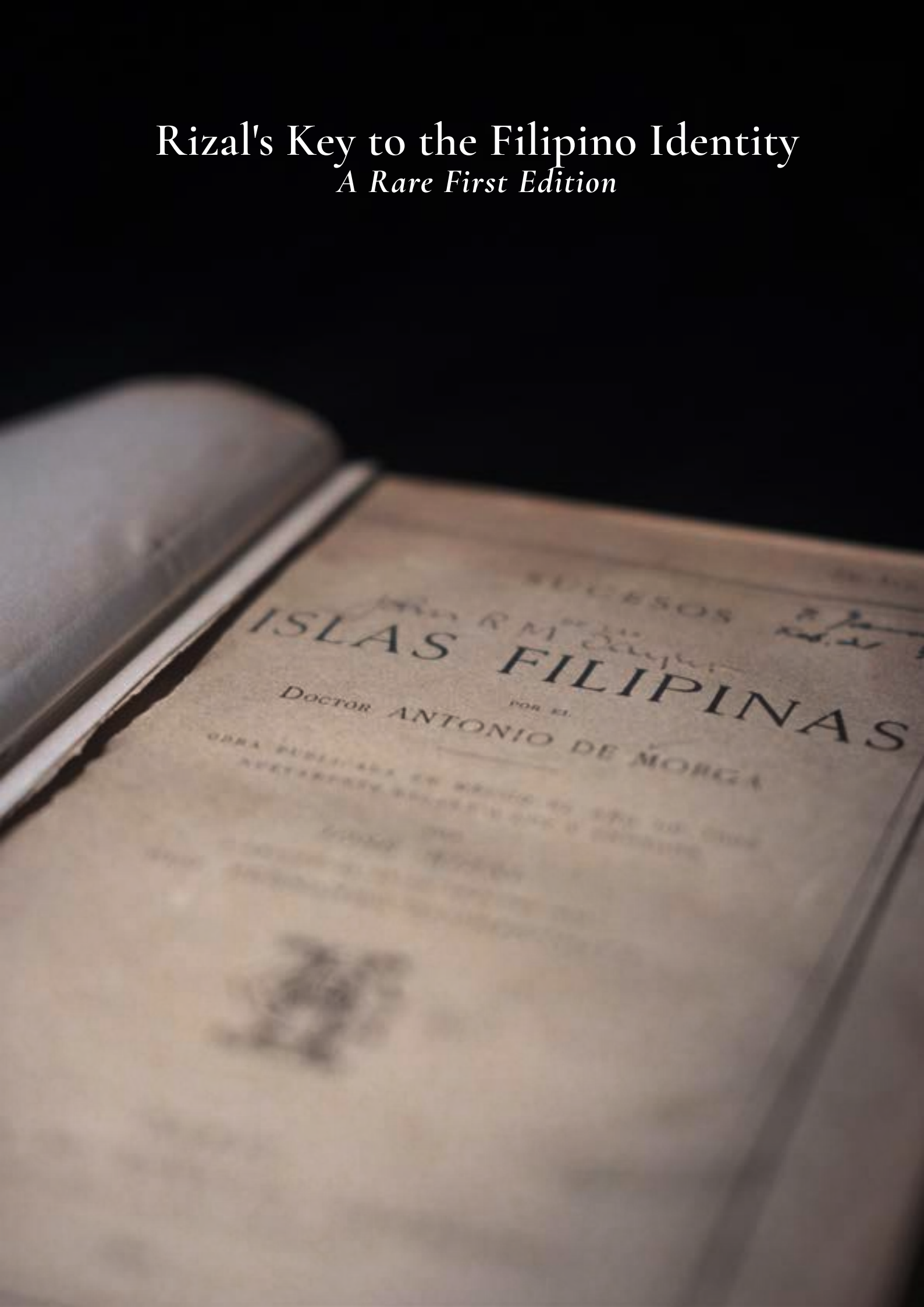


Rizal's work carries a clear message: the pre-colonial Philippines was a land of sophistication, challenging the notion that Spanish rule brought superior progress. Though some, like Isabelo de los Reyes, critiqued his patriotic zeal, Rizal's vision reshaped how Filipinos saw their past. As historian Ambeth Ocampo notes, this edition remains a key to understanding Philippine historiography and the forging of national identity.

By rescuing Morga's rare text—still scarce today—Rizal not only preserved a historical gem but also sparked a movement of cultural reclamation. His edition of *Sucesos* is both a scholarly triumph and a bold chapter in the Filipino quest for self-definition.

Rizal's Key to the Filipino Identity

A Rare First Edition



Arturo Luz (1926 - 2021)

Nikko Revisited

signed (lower and upper right)

1979

oil on burlap

80" x 60" (203 cm x 152 cm)

P 5,000,000

PROVENANCE

Collection of Celia and Jose Molano, Manila

Salcedo Auctions, 14 March 2020

Purchased from the above by the present owner

LITERATURE

Reyes, Cid. *Arturo Luz*. Makati City: Ayala Foundation

and The Crucible for Globe Telecom, 1999. Black-and-white illustration

and painting description on page 164.

A painter, designer, printmaker, and sculptor, Arturo Luz was one of the leading lights in Philippine art history. His artistic journey, a result of his unwavering dedication to learning and development, led him to experiment with different styles and mediums, producing a diverse range of art pieces—sketches, oil and acrylic paintings, sculptures, and many more. His ceaseless art making and prolific artistry culminated in his conferment as a National Artist for Visual Arts in 1997.

Nikko Revisited, a monumental oil on burlap piece, is part of Luz's impressive collage works and is a striking example of his artistic skills. Created by stitching together scraps of burlap colored in blood-red and white, this 1979 composition showcases his spatial intelligence and discipline in aesthetic restraint. Despite the minimalist nature of his canvases, Luz's masterful employment of forms and colors fills the void from bare spaces, capturing the audience's attention and leaving a lasting impression on his masterpieces.

"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*)



ABOVE: Arturo Luz © León Gallery Archives

Luz Colors

The Autumn Mountains of Nikko



Bernardo Pacquing (b. 1967)

Bourrée by Bach
signed (verso)
dated 1998
oil, house paint, crayon and pencil on canvas
48" x 60" (122 cm x 152 cm)

P 1,000,000

PROVENANCE
Finale Art File
Acquired from the above by the current owner

Pacquing’s minimal palette and raw approach keep things spare but never hollow. This sparseness invites projection: the viewer becomes complicit, filling the void with whatever personal history they carry. That’s the quiet strength of Pacquing’s abstraction; it doesn’t demand interpretation, but it leaves enough room to breathe one into existence.

In *Bourrée by the Beach*, Bernardo Pacquing taps into the delicate register between stillness and movement—more suggestion than statement. At first glance, the painting feels atmospheric, even tentative. But linger longer and it becomes clear: this is a work that hums with quiet assertion. Swaths of murky black and clouded greys form a dense horizon, pierced intermittently by soft yellows and pale blues that refuse to settle into fixed meaning. The result is neither storm nor serenity, but something eerily suspended between the two.

The painting’s title, referencing a baroque dance form, hints at rhythm and structure, yet what we see is more improvisation than choreography. There’s no central figure here, no narrative cue to hold on to. Instead, traces of gesture, shadowy forms, and almost-accidental lines guide the eye across the surface like driftwood pulled by a tide. One dark vertical shape to the right reads like a figure, or maybe a tower, looped with erratic black strokes that evoke wire, scaffolding, or memory. (*Jed Daya*)



ABOVE: Bernardo Pacquing © León Gallery Archives

Pacquing Dances
With Art



The Wartime Adventures of Enrique "EZ" Zóbel

by JOAN ORENDAIN



ABOVE: The young Enrique Zóbel in wartorn Manila.



ABOVE: Enrique Zóbel at Ayala y Compania after the war.

The war years brought out fourteen-year-old Enriquito's (Enrique Zobel) creativity.

Blondish and blue-eyed, it fell on him to find a way to support his mother who never knew a day's work, and the household staff.

He would first have to retrieve his four polo ponies from the feared Kempeitai.

Its chief, Colonel Ohta, amused by the boy's forthrightness, enlisted him to lunch with him on Thursdays, while giving him rudimentary Spanish lessons.

Of course, Enriquito never told Ohta his father, Jacobo, was a captain with the United States Army Forces in the Far East (USAFPE) fighting in Bataan.

The youth hitched one of the two ponies to a rented *kalesa* (a passenger buggy) taking passengers from Malate to Jones Bridge, while his groom, Florentino "Floren" de Lara, hitched one of the other two to another rented *kalesa* plying from Jones Bridge to Binondo.

They made enough money to have delicious lunches.

On April 9, 1942, the USAFFE lost to the Imperial Japanese Army. In July, Enriquito had to carry Jacobo out of the Capas, Tarlac prison camp, almost half-dead from dysentery.

Colonel Ohta had lent the boy his car (Japanese banner on its front) to pick up Jacobo, after discovering that the youth's father was a prisoner in Capas.

"Where did you get that car?" POW Ernesto Rufino asked Enriquito, who of course would have taken too long to explain, carrying his father into Ohta's car.

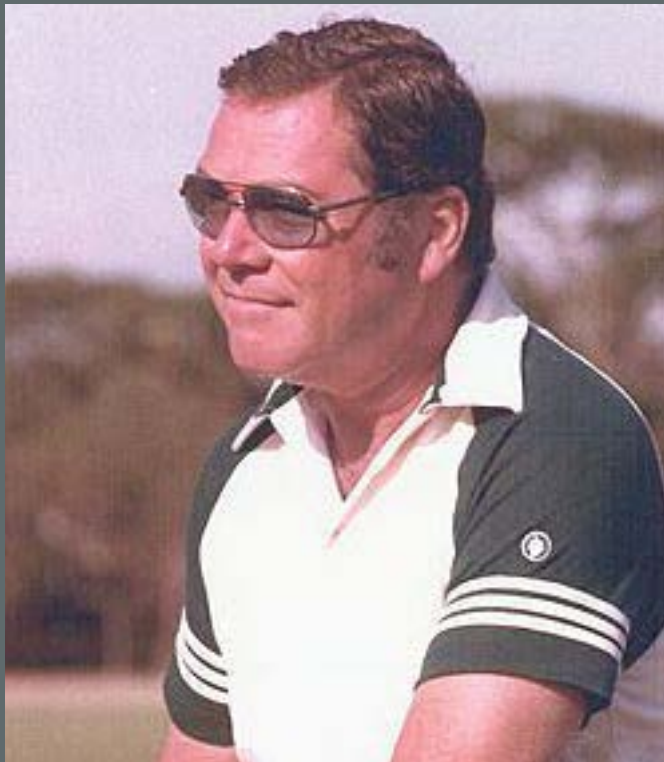
Freed of family cares, he and Floren made it to Calatagan, hiding in trees by day, and running toward the Hacienda, about a hundred kilometers away, by night.

With playmates, they made a foursome hunting deer with striped telephone wires, and other wild game which were always split four ways.

Sometimes, the *barkada* spied on the Japanese, and once even poisoned the enemy's drinking water. Still, Enriquito had family duties, chiefly weekly butchering a cow for 80 and sending a choice part to the Central Azucarera de



ABOVE: Enrique Zóbel at the Luz Gallery



ABOVE: Enrique Zóbel at Manila Polo Club

Don Pedro, their Roxas cousins in Nasugbu, in exchange for sugar.

Returning to Manila, Jacobo, General Vicente Lim, Manuel Roxas, Ernesto Rufino and one or two others, met for "breakfast socials" at the Rufino's home on Taft Avenue, where they exchanged Intelligence. Only Mrs. Elvira Rufino was allowed to wait on them.

Toward war's end, sadly, General Lim was caught escaping in a *batel* (a small passenger sailboat), and killed.

When Enrique came to Manila at war's end, he was shocked to see Ermita and Malate totally obliterated by bomb and fire.

"I could see from Dewey Boulevard (Roxas) clear all the way to Taft. Really heartbreaking."

Their grand home, designed by architect Andres Luna de San Pedro, Juan Luna's son, which had won "the most beautiful home of 1928," had entertained General Douglas MacArthur and President Manuel Quezon, lay in total ruin.

Enrique was recruited by the U.S. Army to accompany

a contingent to Bicol who were interviewing war victims whose narrations in Tagalog he translated.

The actor Joe E. Brown, famous for his homeliness, booked passage for Enrique on the first Liberty ship bound for California. Enrique enrolled in Agronomy at UCLA.

Back in Manila, Makati was being built. He was recruited by Uncle Joe McMicking to head Ayala Corporation's Heavy Equipment department.

To demonstrate to his men that he knew hard work, he bulldozed the entire section of Buendia (Gil Puyat), crossing the railroad tracks to connect Makati to Manila and Pasay. (Remember him when you cross the riles.)

He would progress until he ended up president of Ayala Corporation in 1968.

The Story Behind 'The Burning of the Intendencia'

by BERNARD KARGANILLA

Manila in the Meat-Grinder

When Philippine Commonwealth President Quezon told 2,000 cadets and government officials assembled at the State University campus, “Any moment now, the bombs may fall in your midst. Where are the shelters? Where are the military defenses? Yes, gentlemen, we might, at any moment, now, hear the whizzing of bullets and the bursting of bombs,” the supposedly “learned” crowd roared with laughter. [Diary of Juan Labrador, 07 December 1941]

When the bombs started falling that week, the jocose were buried with the unprepared.

The imperialist Japanese bombed Camp Murphy and the Airfields (Nichols, Nielsen, Clark, Iba-Zambales), as well as the Port Area and Engineer Island, among others. The Pacific War broke out, there were daytime raids, there were nighttime raids. “Cavite Navy Yard, primary base of the U.S. Asiatic Fleet, was first bombed on 10 December and had been largely destroyed by the time of the evacuation of Manila on 25 December.” [https://www.history.navy.mil/browse-by-topic/wars-conflicts-and-operations/world-war-ii/1941/philippines.html]

These were legitimate targets in a declared war in 1941. But by 1942, Hirohito's airmen, grunts and sea-dogs would start carving a record of war crimes, from the Bataan Death March to cannibalism in Mindanao. By 1942, Manila was already a declared open city as defined in Hague Convention (IV) of 1907, Annex, Article 25; Allied formations complied with the stipulations, but Axis forces largely ignored that convention.

The primary targets of the Japanese invaders were American air assets and nearly all of these targets were hit, thus, by Christmas of 1941, U.S. Army General Douglas MacArthur “conceded Manila and moved his headquarters to the fortress island of Corregidor Dec. 24.

(FEAF commander Maj. Gen. Lewis H.) Brereton and the remnants of FEAF (Far East Air Forces) were transferred to Australia.” [John T. Correll, “Disaster in the Philippines,” Air & Space Forces Magazine, 01 November 2019]

In effect, the structures and populace of the Pearl of the Orient were vulnerable to uncontested Axis air-ground attacks. “Either the Japanese in the Philippines were unaware of the open city declaration or they chose to ignore it, for enemy aircraft were over the Manila area on 27 December. The Army's 5th Air Group sent 7 light and 4 heavy bombers against Nichols Field, and at least 2 fighters over the port district that day. But the main bombing strikes, directed against the Manila Bay and Pasig River areas, were made by naval aircraft. For three hours at midday, successive waves of unopposed bombers over Manila wrought great destruction on port installations and buildings in the Intramuros, the ancient walled city of the Spaniards. The attack against shipping continued the next day, with additional damage to the port area.” [Louis Morton. Chapter XIV: “The End of an Era.” The Fall of the Philippines. CMH Pub 5-2. 1953, 2004]

Testimony from a resident of Intramuros: “Seven blocks of the Walled City were now nothing but a heap of rubble. Almost all their inhabitants had fled to safer places... Hunted by the thought of the aerial visitors, I cut short my lamentations and made a hurried round of the vicinity of Santo Domingo. For three days now, the pillars and beams of such sizes that two men could hardly embrace them, have been burning. Some of the Fathers tried the flames and muddy water in search of anything worth salvaging: medals and charred rosaries, utensils and other metal objects which the fire had not consumed.”

“I could see a number of cars—more than 20 of them—abandoned along the sidewalk near Santo Domingo, Santo Tomas and Tesorería. Nothing was left of these cars but



LEFT AND RIGHT: The Intendencia and the Santo Domingo Church after the Japanese bombing of Intramuros on December 27, 1941. © Flickr, John Tewell

their steel frameworks. One of them was hurled against the wall of the Treasury, half buried in it. The Magallanes Drive and the Plaza de España were pockmarked with craters... People were asking, 'Did the Japanese bomb Letran with incendiary bombs?' Many thought so, considering the big fires caused by the bombings. However, I am not sure since they did not contain combustible liquid. The steel frame simply contained shrapnels. We, who were at Letran during the bombings, saw that fire did not immediately flare up after the explosions. Some of the Fathers found fragments of bombs which were incandescent. One of them had the inscription, 'Made in Japan. 30 kilos.' Some others thought that the fires were due to broken electrical installations.” [Diary of Juan Labrador, 30 December 1941]

Within the carnage was the two-storey Neo-Classical Aduana de Manila, a.k.a. Manila Customs House because it housed the Custom Offices. When the Japanese were attacking the Walled City, the Customs had already transferred out, and the Aduana was the Treasury and the Casa de Moneda or Mint House plus the *Intendencia General de Hacienda* or Civil Administration Office. Thus, when Fernando Amorsolo painted this particular spot of the carnage, it was tagged “Bombing of Intendencia.”

Located at the south bank of the Pasig River, it was one of the first buildings to be destroyed.

The Aduana Intendencia, in an alternate universe, would have been spared because General MacArthur withdrew the USAFFE in Luzon to the Bataan Peninsula and declared the capital an open city to save the Manileños from unnecessary suffering: “In order to spare the metropolitan area from possible ravages of attack either by air or ground, Manila is hereby declared an open city without the characteristics of a military objective. In order that no excuse may be given for a possible mistake, the American High Commissioner, the Commonwealth government,



and all combatant military installations will be withdrawn from its environs as rapidly as possible. The Municipal government will continue to function with its police force, reinforced by constabulary troops, so that the normal protection of life and property may be preserved.” [GHQ, USAFFE, Press Release, 27 December 1941]

But in our universe, the MacArthur Declaration was disrespected by the enemy: “Until Manila was declared an open city it was noticeable that the Japanese did not attempt to attack civil installations from the air, but as soon as the army, including anti-aircraft protection, withdrew, they immediately raided, hitting all types of civilian premises including churches, convents, the cathedral, business houses and residences.” [GHQ, USAFFE, Press Release, 28 December 1941]

Since Manila still functioned as a transit point for the Allied forces retreating from the east, and the building by its very name is the Central Administration, both the City and the Aduana Intendencia remained targets.

We must also account for the belief that airpower is inherently offensive. [John R. Carter, Jr. Airpower and the Cult of the Offensive. Alabama: School of Advanced Airpower Studies Maxwell AFB, April 1998]

Be that as it may, when you gaze into “Bombing of the Intendencia,” you will notice that the magnificent Manila Bay sunset is in the background, “as if the artist is saying, this horror will one day pass, and normalcy will again reign – a message of hope.” [https://www.amorsoloartgallery.com/amorsoloblog/the-war-years-horror-and-destruction]

After three years of belligerent occupation, Ciudad Murada and Greater Manila would be liberated by Filipino guerrillas and the 11th Airborne Division, the 1st Cavalry and the 37th Division of XIV Corps (U.S. Eighth Army).

The Burning of Manila

Amorsolo, Visual Historian of the War

One of the Largest Amorsolo Masterpieces to Enter the Market

by ADRIAN MARANAN

Impeccable Provenance

Measuring 40 inches by 60 inches, *The Burning of Manila* is one of the largest Amorsolo paintings ever to be auctioned. It is also the largest of Amorsolo's paintings centering on "The Bombing of the Intendencia" / "The Burning of Manila" subject, even surpassing the one at the UP Vargas Museum. The painting possesses impeccable provenance and a storied history. The work was acquired by Don Jacobo Zóbel de Ayala y Roxas from Amorsolo himself during the Japanese occupation. Don Jacobo had been one of those sentenced to endure the infamous Bataan Death March and become a prisoner-of-war. As a serviceman, the painting may have reminded him of the unwavering heroism of the Filipinos during that darkest period in our history.

In his final days in 1971, Don Jacobo would bequeath this painting to his son, Don Enrique.

In November 2015, *The Burning of Manila* was leased to the National Museum of the Philippines on a long-term loan by Don Enrique's wife, Mrs. Dee Anne Hora-Zobel. The painting would become the centerpiece of Gallery VIII (Silvina and Juan C. Laya Hall) of the National Museum of Fine Arts, showcasing works depicting the Second World War. The work greeted museum visitors as they entered the gallery.

The Burning of Manila would remain at the National Museum for a decade, until recently, when the family of Don Enrique decided it was time to pass it on to its new owner.

Don Enrique's ties to the painting was emphasized by the fact that his grandfather and namesake, the industrialist and philanthropist Don Enrique Jacobo Zobel de Ayala, was the one who sponsored Amorsolo's scholarship to the famed *Real Academia de San Fernando* in Madrid, after being impressed of his design for the iconic logo (still in use today) of the popular gin brand of his own company Ginebra San Miguel.

The Burning of Manila

Beyond its provenance, *The Burning of Manila* holds



ABOVE: *The Burning of Manila*, as it was displayed at the National Museum of Fine Arts' Gallery VIII (Silvina and Juan C. Laya Hall). © Facebook, National Museum of the Philippines **BOTTOM:** A pre-war photograph of the riverside portion of Intramuros, July 13, 1936. This area was the first casualty of the bombing by the Japanese in December 1941, and was the subject of massive burning and looting on New Year's Day, 1942. © Flickr, John Tewell

greater significance, coinciding with the recently concluded 80th anniversary commemorations of the Battle for the Liberation of Manila and 83 years since its fall into Japanese hands. It sees Amorsolo as a visual historian, a painter imbued with a social responsibility to preserve on canvas the tragedy the war inflicted on his nation, serving as an act of remembrance, resistance, and melancholy.

The Burning of Manila depicts the riverside portion of Manila as it looked on New Year's Day, 1942. On the left portion can be seen the towers of the Jesuit San Ignacio Church, the dome of the Manila Cathedral, the Aduana

Building and the Santo Domingo Church (both had been reduced to ruins as they were casualties of the first Japanese bombing of Manila on December 27, 1941), and the Chamber of Commerce Building. To the right is Fort



ABOVE: Various photographs of the riverside portion of Intramuros in the aftermath of its bombing by the Japanese on December 27, 1941. ©Facebook, World War II in the Philippines

Santiago and its imposing Baluarte de Santa Barbara. The present-day Riverside Drive is packed with people in a state of frenzy: panicking men carrying sackfuls of goods, *caretelas* and *calesas* being pulled over to safety, anxious mothers and their frightened children, and others falling to their knees as they witness the horrors unfold before their very eyes. The raging flames, made intensely palpable through Amorsolo's masterful handling of color and impasto, engulf a once glorious landscape of Hispanic, with the Pasig overwhelmed with fire and foundering boats that were once brimming with trade and commerce.

Amorsolo's signature sunlit landscape seemingly struggles to free itself from the billowing smoke smothering the atmosphere, with the mighty Mount Samat covered in haze in the background foreshadowing the fate of thousands of men on their march towards their harrowing demise.

It was the nation's darkest New Year. Manila's radio stations had fallen quiet in contrast with the screams and chaos of the people. Chanting the Lord's Prayer became a futile attempt at immediate salvation. There was no God among the people.

Amorsolo's actual encounter of the burning of Manila

Amorsolo conceived *The Burning of Manila* from his vantage point at the Jones Bridge, when he and his family escaped from their home and ran towards the Pasig River. There, instead of encountering temporary relief, he witnessed how his beloved city had fallen from grace.

During this time, Amorsolo lived in a rented two-story apartment owned by the Lopa Family at 2132 Azcarraga Street (Recto), located near the Far Eastern University and the Quiapo and San Sebastian Churches. He was riding high on his prolific success, with the most recent being his historic first-prize win at the 1939 New York World's Fair for his now-iconic *Afternoon Meal of the Rice Workers*.

When the Japanese occupied Manila in January 1942, Amorsolo, as recounted by his grandson Don Amorsolo in the book *Maestro Fernando C. Amorsolo: Recollections of the Amorsolo Family*, "[was in] the second floor of his studio [and] heard people shouting and running. He saw the skies blackened with smoke. He ran out of the apartment and,



ABOVE: Amorsolo's Self-Portrait in 1942, painted at the beginning of the Japanese occupation of the Philippines

with others, headed west of the Pasig River." Don continued: "Amorsolo had vivid recollections of that day along the Pasig. The authorities and Chinese businessmen left their stocks open for the public to take, fearing that the enemy would confiscate whatever they had. People carried away so many things: from food groceries, appliances, office equipment, medicines, army supplies, and even brand-new vehicles. Several of them rested and sorted their goods along the river, while horse-drawn vehicles carted away more goods. Others sold their stuff to latecomers who could not lay hands on what was now emptied warehouses and stores."

"People in possession of invaluable goods became instant entrepreneurs. The state of looting along the Pasig River spread to other locations wherever there were stores and merchandise left. People had gone wild, thinking what was next for the future was nil and unstable. That New Year's day was "Looting Day," a time when the people of Manila did not know any more what was going and felt as if they were without eyes and cars."

Amorsolo witnessed the looting in the name of survival and the burning of the city in hopes of salvaging it from the invaders. It was an anarchic mixture of faith and fate, fortune and desperation. Stores, warehouses, and gasoline stocks were burned to prevent the Japanese from using them. Gasoline was being emptied into the Pasig, setting the river aflame.

Manila became an inferno of flames and chaos, an

unfortunate presage of it becoming a shell of its former glory. **The Life and Times of Amorsolo during the Japanese Occupation**

Amorsolo's recollections are supported by other accounts from that period.

December 8, the Feast of the Immaculate Conception, was supposed to be a sacred festivity all over Manila. Breaking tradition, processions and masses were suspended, and the schools and their respective classes were closed. Pearl Harbor had been bombed ten hours earlier. The radios were turned all day long, hoping for an absolution and relief, but more so, expecting an ensuing chaos. There were air raid drills during the day and blackouts at night in hopes of reducing visibility from enemy planes. Manileños became wary of their Japanese neighbors. Even Amorsolo's Japanese neighbors donned their military uniforms and joined the Japanese troops when they entered the city.

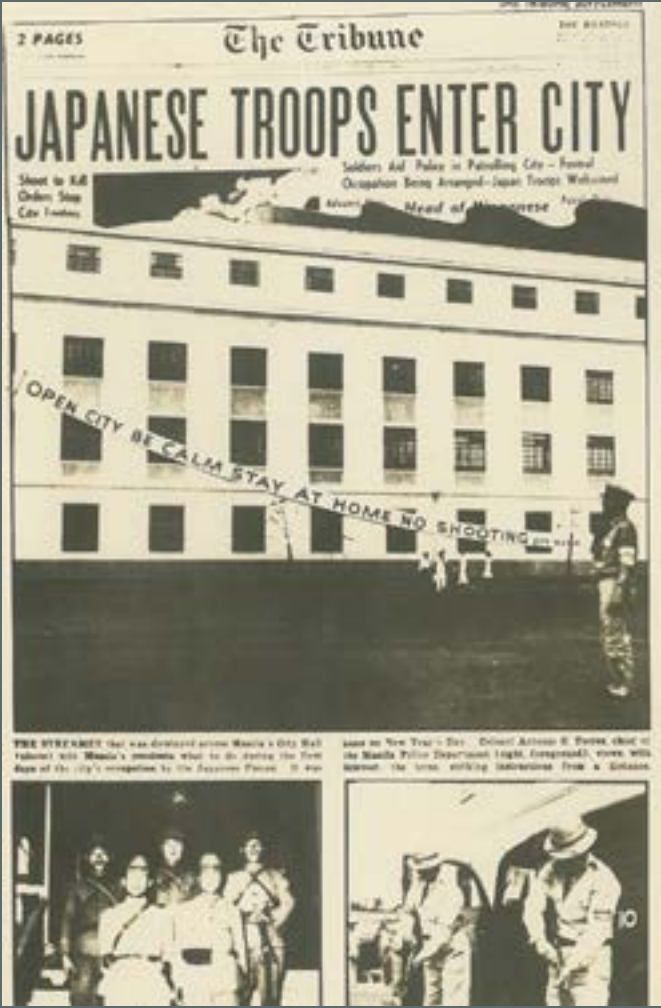
Christmas 1941 became the bleakest—no *Simbang Gabi*, no merry *noche buenas*, no electricity, no fanfare. Everything was bleak and black.

Eminent historian Teodoro Agoncillo recounted in his essay "The Last Years of Intramuros," published in Archipelago magazine in November 1975, the day that would seal Manila's—and the entire Philippines'—harrowing fate.

Agoncillo wrote: "And then the war came in December 1941—the Feast of the Immaculate Conception. Like the rest of Manila and surrounding towns, Intramuros experienced days and nights of terror from the bombing of the Japanese airplanes. General Douglas MacArthur, who had chosen No. 1, Victoria Street in the Walled City as his headquarters, declared Manila an open city on December 26 to spare it the cruelty of war. But the Japanese airmen, either by design or by incompetence, bombed Intramuros, partially destroying the Santo Domingo Church, the Intendencia Building (later the Central Bank and now the National Treasury, the Santa Rosa and the Santa Catalina Colleges, the D.M.H.M. Building [headquarters of the newspapers El Debate, Mabuhay, Philippines Herald, and Monday Mail], and other structures near the Pasig."

Manila had yet to "recover" from the initial yet devastating bombings when, on the last days of December onwards to New Year's Day, the Manileños expected a full-blown entrance of the Japanese troops into the city.

Fr. Juan Labrador, O.P., then the Colegio de San Juan de Letran Rector, wrote in his diary: [This day, December 31 was] a day of conflagration. Yesterday, some of the big gasoline depots started burning. At first, the gasoline was being emptied into the Pasig River. But accidentally—or intentionally—the gasoline caught fire, setting the river and the esteros aflame. The houses situated along the river and the esteros, particularly in the Pandacan district, were the first victims of this ill-planned sabotage."



TOP: Headline from *The Tribune* (January 3, 1942) reporting on the entry of the Japanese in Manila on January 2. © philippinediaryproject.com

He continued: "For the last 48 hours, a gigantic column of smoke has been spouting, very black in the daytime and very luminous at night. Officially, these fires are proof that Manila has become indeed an open city with no military installations. The general belief was that the gasoline stocks were burned to prevent them from falling into enemy hands."

On January 1, 1942, Fr. Labrador wrote: "There is great fear and confusion among the civilian populace... In Intramuros, great multitudes milled around the doors of stores which they tried to force open. People in the streets carried boxes or bags of foodstuffs, machines, pieces of furniture, or a thousand other things. Some came in calesas, cars, or wagons to be able to carry more. For one peso, they would sell a whole case of milk or canned goods. For five pesos, a typewriter or an electric stove, or gas range. Fortunately, there were no indications of violence, although they burned some stores."

Victor Buencamino, the first Filipino veterinarian and the Vice-President and Manager of the National Rice and Corn Corporation (NARIC), wrote in his diary: "Manila's gates are open. The Japanese are expected any moment. The oft-



TOP: Reportage from *The Sunday Tribune* (January 4, 1942) on the imposition of martial law by the Japanese in the aftermath of their occupation of Manila. © philippinediaryproject.com

repeated, long-foretold 'yellow menace'" has come true... There are fires all over the city. Historic Santo Domingo church is a mass of ruins. The oil and gasoline dumps of Pandacan have been set ablaze. The piers are destroyed, wrecked, charred. The red sky above the city and the black coils of smoke rising to the clouds present a weird picture. At night, Manila looks like a burning cauldron."

His military son, Felipe Buencamino III, reported that the "red glare that filled the skies in the direction of Manila" can be seen as far as his location in San Fernando, Pampanga.

The looting and the conflagration would continue in the following days, until January 3, 1942, when the Japanese declared martial law. Individuals caught looting, especially from Japanese trucks, were bayoneted to death; imperial soldiers confiscated food and personal belongings whenever they wanted; violators were tied to posts and made to endure the sun's scorching heat; men, women, and children were slapped when they failed to bow down to a Japanese sentry; unfortunate cases of rape happened.

The Japanese had total control of the Pearl of the Orient.

Fernando Amorsolo (1892 - 1972)

The Burning of Manila

signed, dated, and inscribed "Manila - New Year, 1942"

oil on canvas

40" x 60" (102 cm x 152 cm)

P 18,000,000

PROVENANCE

Acquired directly from the artist by the Zóbel Family

EXHIBITED

National Museum of the Philippines, Gallery VIII (Silvina and Juan C. Laya Hall) of the National Museum of Fine Arts, Manila, Loaned to the National Museum of the Philippines from 2015 to 2025



ABOVE: The Burning of Manila, as it hangs in the gallery, showing its scale.



ABOVE: An earlier graphite sketch for *The Burning of Manila*. © Maestro Fernando C. Amorsolo: Recollections of the Amorsolo Family

On the 80th Year of the Battle of Manila An Important Historical Painting Arrives





48

Comoda Escritorio Chest of Drawers with Drop-Down Writing Desk

19th Century

Narra

H: 42 3/4" (109 cm)

L: 43" (109 cm)

W: 21 1/2" (55 cm)

P 340,000

PROVENANCE

Private Collection, Manila

A chest of drawers with an escritorio or fall front desk is not ordinary. Found only in houses whose owners were men of affairs, they were usually found in the cuarto mayor or master bedroom and thus served as the repository of important deeds or documents. Sometimes, the escritorio was made with secret drawers concealed among the numerous compartments to safeguard valuables and money.

This chest of drawers, although simple in design, is made of narra and stands on bracket feet, jigsaw-outlined on the inner side with ogive curves and cusps that form a yoke-

The Discreet *Comoda Escritorio* *Elegant Drawers and Cabinetry*




shaped arch in front and at the sides. A narra concave molding is applied around the sides and front of the carcass base, and the solid side panels are line-inlaid with a strip of kamagong to form a rectangle with quadrant corners. The fronts of the carcass and drawer supports are appliqued with kamagong with fine convex moldings at the edges. There are four drawers, each with a multi-lobed brass keyhole shield chased with leaf patterns and a pair of brass handles attached to balls and bosses. The drawer faces are line-inlaid like the sides with the addition of a semicircle below the drawer keyhole shield.

The topmost drawer has a fall front that converts it into a writing desk, when the drawer is pulled out and brass buttons on the inner sides are pressed. The back of the

escritoire has a tiny drawer in the middle with a wide one, double its width and slightly higher, on either side. The three drawers are provided with tiny brass drawer pulls. A tiny door above the middle drawer is line-inlaid in kamagong with a square having quadrant corners. Flanking it, the space above the wide drawers are divided into two, the halves on either side of the central door in the form of a pair of arched recesses, while the outer halves each have a pair of small drawers, one above the other. All the drawers and the tiny door in the middle have miniature brass pulls.

The top of the escritorio consists of a narra panel, miter framed all around with kamagong, the front and side edges carved with a concave quarter-round molding with a half-round molding at the bottom. (*Martin I. Tinio, Jr.*)



Ifugao Treasures

Exquisite Emblems of Filipino Identity

by EMIL MARAÑON III

The “bulul” are Ifugao statuary “guardians” consecrated to ensure their human counterparts’ wealth and nobility. Elaborate rituals are held to ensure bountiful harvest, and sacrifices are made to the bulul as thanksgiving.


While they are ritual objects from the point of view of the Ifugaos, they are coveted pieces of “art” for many collectors all over the world. “Tribal art” collecting rose in popularity in the early 20th century, complimenting the rise of modern art. The abstraction and reduction of human form in indigenous art appealed to the modernist taste, resulting to the surge of interest in African, Oceanic and Southeast Asian indigenous art at that time. This trend later extended to Philippine objects in the 1970s, when European and American dealers and runners, who were looking for something new to offer to the market, started scouring the Philippine Cordillera for these collectible treasures.

One of the most prominent names in the collecting world who went to the Philippines and collected is the great French collector and scholar, Alain Schoffel. He was the first international collector to highlight the importance of Philippine indigenous art in his seminal book “*Arts Primitifs de l’Asie du Sud-Est*” published in 1981, which made the Ifugao bulul an overnight sensation in the western collecting world. Schoffel’s book also set the canon and the standard of what a good bulul is: “archaic” or less human in features and more abstract in form, thick encrustation, and commanding presence. This standard that he set, defined not only the desirability, but also the price of our objects in Paris, Brussels, New York and other markets.

In this auction, Leon Gallery offers two exceptional and provenanced pieces that easily fit these standard and quality. Bululs that would easily excite the collecting crowd abroad.

The first offering is a pair of an early-type or an “archaic” bulul which rarely comes on the market as a complete pair. The pair was collected by Banaue-based runner Allan Maguiling from family in Barrio Bitu in Hingyon, and later sold to Floy Quintos who kept and treasured them for sometime. The pair have expressive faces and sensitive carving of the body—with its rounded calves, muscled arms, tapered waists and muscled backs. The best feature of this specimen is its thick and crusty blood patina which evinces the age and ritual usage of the pair, making them extremely desirable in the western market.

That second offering is a large seated female bulul possibly from the Central Ifugao. It came from the Lingayu family and later acquired by Floy Quintos. The piece has all the features of archaic Ifugao sculpture. The flat, heart-shaped face, the stylization of the crossed arms, the heavy-set and stocky proportions are all characteristics of the bulul from Central Ifugao. Bulul of this size are rare and are said to be proportional to the size of the land that it guards. This therefore connotes that this piece must have been owned by an upper class (“kadangyan”) who must have owned large cuts of rice fields. Big or “king” bululs, owing to their size, are often placed under eaves of the “bale”, visible to the entire community, yet also exposed to the elements like rain. This explains that most of them lose their patina and has a considerable surface wear and erosion like the specimen being offered.







49 PROPERTY FROM A DISTINGUISHED COLLECTOR

Pair of granary guardians / Bulul

a.) Sitting Male

19th Century
Narra wood with heavy encrustation
H: 21 1/2" (55 cm)
W: 8 1/2" (22 cm)
L: 9" (23 cm)

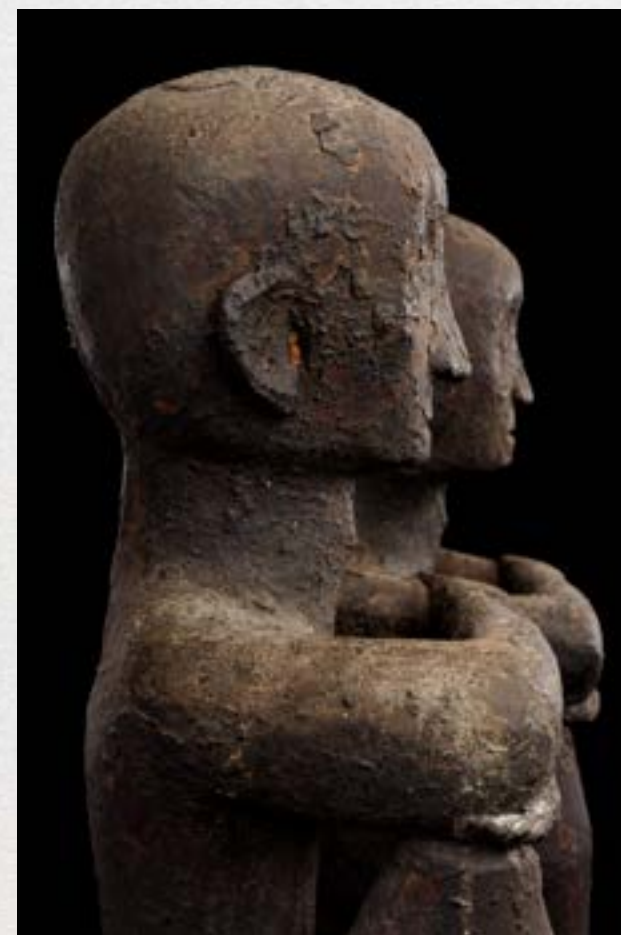
b.) Sitting Female

19th Century
Narra wood with heavy encrustation
H: 21" (53 cm)
W: 8" (20 cm)
L: 9" (23 cm)

P 500,000

PROVENANCE

Allan Magguiling, Banaue, Ifugao
Floy Quintos
Acquired from the above by the current owner







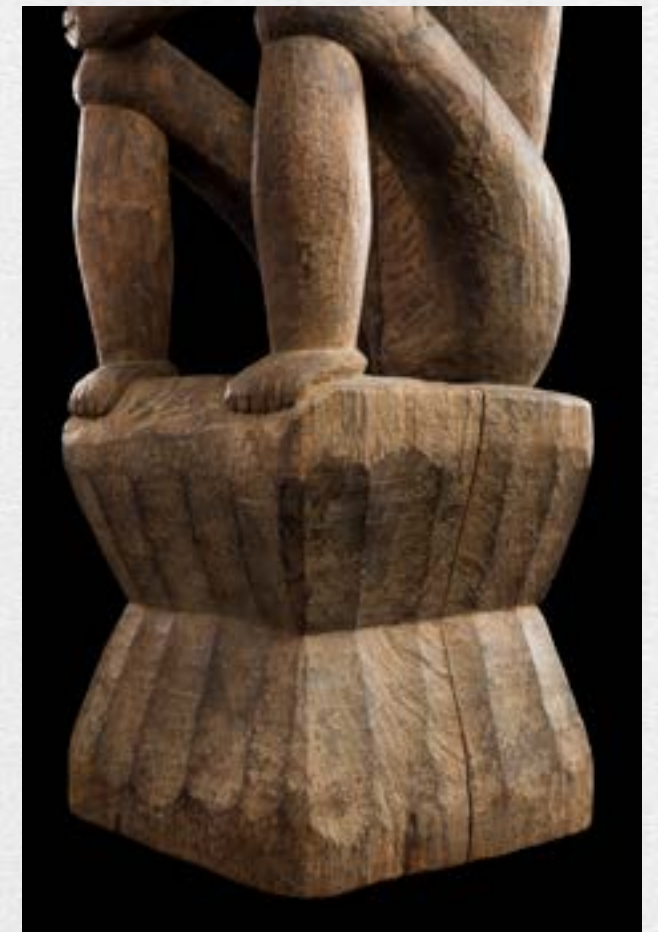
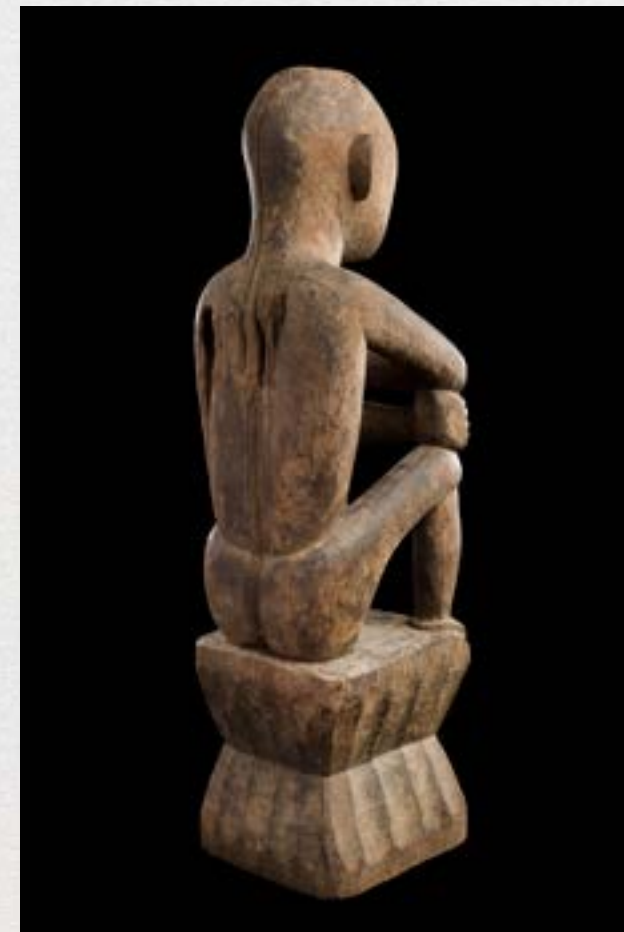
50 PROPERTY FROM A DISTINGUISHED COLLECTOR

A large seated granary guardian / Bulul

19th Century
Narra wood with traces of wear and encrustation
Possible Central Ifugao Origin
H: 30 1/2" (77 cm)
W: 8" (20 cm)
L: 8" (20 cm)

P 400,000

PROVENANCE
Lingayu Family
Floy Quintos



Lao Lianben (b. 1948)*Soot*

signed (lower left and verso)

dated 2009

acrylic on canvas

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

P 3,000,000**PROVENANCE**

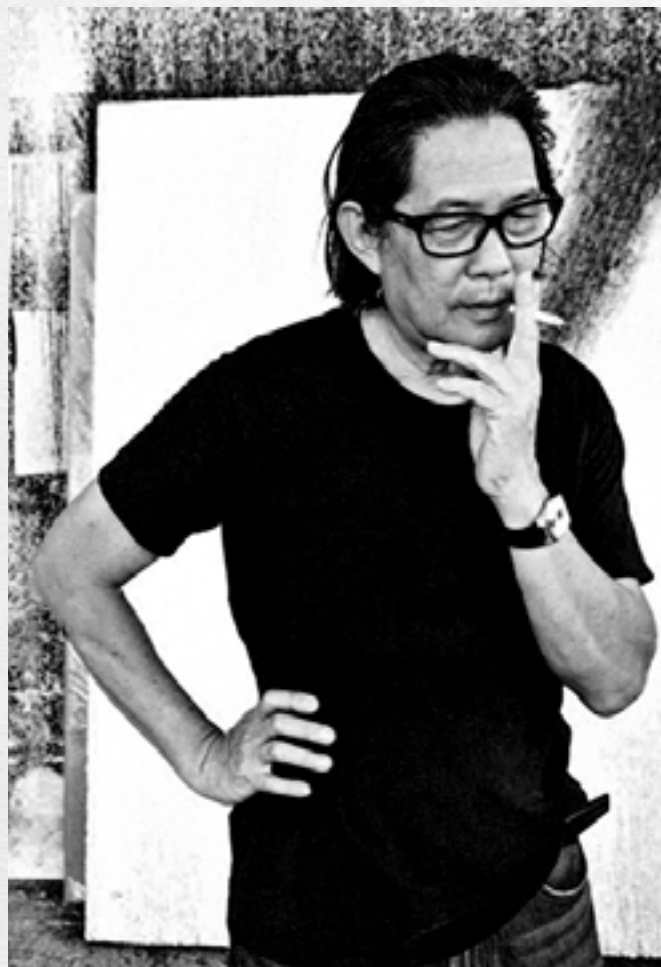
Acquired directly from the artist

Lao Lianben's *Soot* is a perfect illustration of the artist's abstractions. Both stark and sincere, the pitch-black soot stands out against the pure white background. Like many of his works, *Soot* veers towards the monochromatic and revels in quietude.

"[Where] so many contemporary artists agitate to attract attention, Lao Lianben invites us to silence," wrote Hervé Lancelin in his 2025 ArtCritic review *Lao Lianben and the Poetics of Obscurity*. Indeed, one of Lao's defining characteristics is his silence; however, that does not mean his canvases are empty. Truly, *Soot* may visually and literally be sparse but it overflows with symbolism. The stark contrast of black and white without the usage of transition colors emphasizes the opposing hues, creating a conversation starter.

Like many of his works, *Soot* features the ever-present tension between the visible and the invisible, the shown and the suggested. He reveals a profound understanding of Oriental philosophy and Zen Buddhism, which results in such a stunningly minimalist oeuvre. Though he does not practice Buddhism, Lao admits he is intrigued and fascinated by its principles, practices, and mysticism.

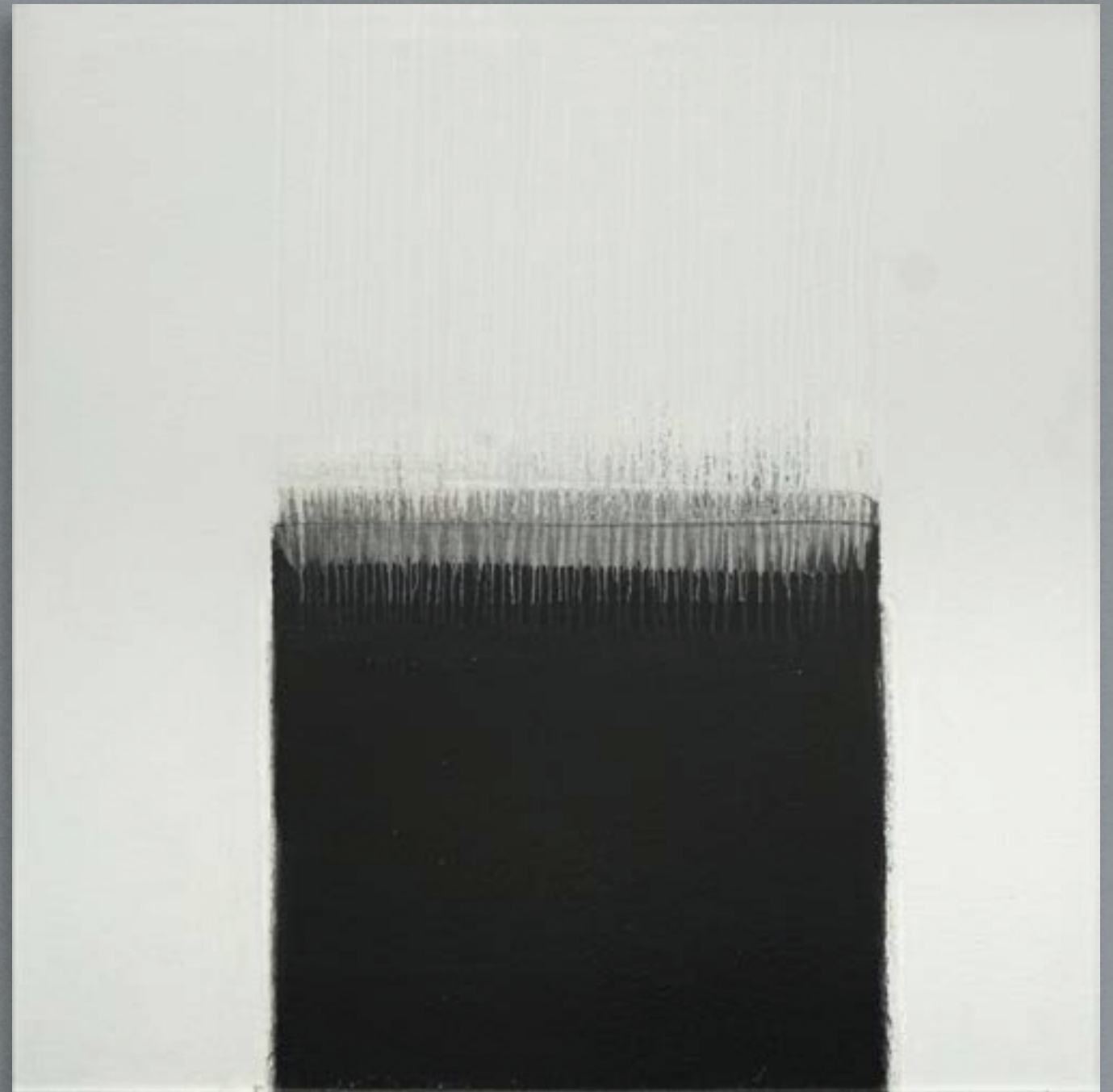
"I just choose to paint and continue to be conversant with the recurring themes that are associated with my personal history and ongoing narrative," he said in a 2023 Lifestyle Inquirer interview. Indeed, his oeuvre is presented with a mark unique to Lao; not unlike an alchemist, he imbues his works with his personal touch, making his works like living skins, breathing, sweating, and telling their story. (Hannah Valiente)



ABOVE: Lao Lianben. © Shaira Luna

Lao Lianben

Between Sky and Soil





52

Onib Olmedo (1937 - 1996)

Mother and Child

signed and dated 1992 (lower right)

acrylic on canvas

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

P 600,000

Accompanied by a certificate issued by Ms. Gisella Olmedo-Araneta confirming the authenticity of this lot

"[Onib Olmedo's] portraits probe the point where physical appearance with its social conventions gives way to the spirit within which, slowly but inexorably, takes over."

This statement, as quoted in the artist's monograph *Onib Olmedo: Dimensions of Depth*, perhaps best describes his soul portraits. A bold artist, Onib is relentless in his pursuit of humanity and its conditions. As such, he liberally employs distortions to present the everyday and the mundane of the people living on the fringes of society. In this 1992 work, Onib focuses on the smallest unit of

society: the family. He situates them in their home where they are the most comfortable, and there, he strips them to their core. The mother holds her child in her lap, her arms around him protectively. The interior of this painting is as important as the subject, and it tells us the place is well-loved and cozy, as evidenced by the vase of flowers at their side.

The distortion on their face is evident, and yet it is not as extreme. Onib portrays a simple image of the mother and child with an unmistakable air of its Filipino roots. The proletarian roots within Onib show as he translates the Madonna and the infant Jesus into the humble Filipino, a deliberate statement to make. *(Hannah Valiente)*



53

Juvenal Sansó (1929 - 2025)

Rock and Stone

signed (lower right)

ca. 1970s

oil on canvas

20" x 29" (51 cm x 74 cm)

P 700,000

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

Unlike most of Juvenal Sansó's seascapes, which have a hazy and smudged appearance, *Rock and Stone* offer a relatively clear image of the Brittany coast. Still, it bears Sansó's penchant for the mysterious. His exemplary brushwork, which he gives credit to his earlier Chinese calligraphy practices, perfectly delineated the mossy rock formations, including every crack and crevice, and gave life to the small crashing waves. The artist's deep blue and green-dominated palette and the almost transparent moon in the sky emit a feeling of

cool afternoon air alongside a spine-chilling atmosphere brought by the gradually approaching nighttime. It is as if a looming presence threatens to pervade a peaceful realm.

Sansó's ceaseless talent and unwavering passion bleed through every stroke and hue. His ability to infuse his works with unsettling mystery, regardless of the subject matter, makes him and his paintings distinct. Notwithstanding, it is a quality that draws the viewers in. *(Jessica Magno)*

Le Pho (1907 - 2001)

Mother and Child

signed (upper left)

ca. 1955

oil on silk

10 1/2" x 6" (27 cm x 15 cm)

P 3,000,000

PROVENANCE

Private Collection, Montpellier, France

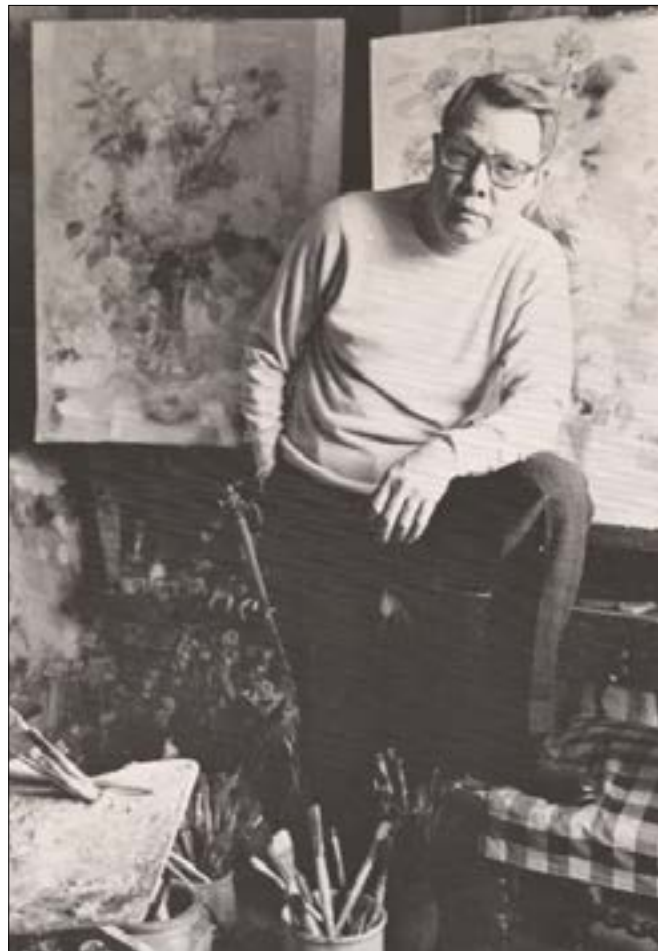
This painting is included in Le Pho's soon-to-be-published catalogue raisonné being prepared by Charlotte Aguttes - Reynier for the Association of Asian Artists in Paris (AAP)

Le Pho's *Mother and Child*, like many of his works, is a perfect blend of Western and Eastern. Born in what was then French colonial Vietnam, this transitional phase became the central tenet of his work as he melded Vietnamese practices and European styles through his work.

During his years at École des Beaux-Arts de l'Indochine, Le Pho began learning painting on silk, which he employed in *Mother and Child*. This oil on silk painting depicts the inexhaustible visage of the Madonna and her child. Many artists have explored their dynamic, but instead of the Western image of Mary and Jesus, Le Pho's *Mother and Child* features the thin eyes and the pale complexions similar to East Asians.

Perhaps the best quality in this painting is the melding of silk and oil. Silk painting is a prominent technique in Vietnam during its colonial era, and painting on it renders quite a unique feature. When painted on, the final result possesses an ethereal quality with colors that seem to glow from within.

Like many artists before him, Le Pho's *Mother and Child* localized the immortal Madonna and Child. Through technique and subject, he brings complexity into his work, layering his piece with themes of motherhood, the colonial past of Vietnam, and the blending of Western and Vietnamese identity. This sensitivity results in a truly unique vision that puts Le Pho's name in the history books. (Hannah Valiente)



ABOVE: Le Pho © León Gallery Archives

The Silken Tales of Master Le Pho

Mother and Child Entwined



A Rare Self-Portrait by Arturo Luz

A Gift to an Erstwhile Lover

by ADRIAN MARANAN

A Rare Self-Portrait Resurfaces

In anticipation of Arturo Luz's birth centennial on November 26, 2026, a rare self-portrait with a compelling provenance resurfaces.

Luz's *Self-Portrait* last appeared during the *First Light* exhibition at the Ayala Museum from February to June 2017. Curated by Dr. Ambeth Ocampo, *First Light* was mounted as a retrospective celebrating Luz's 90th birthday and his 65 years as a professional artist. It formed part of the *Images of Nation* series, Ayala Museum's way of honoring the legacies of the country's National Artists for the Visual Arts.

But there was one intriguing story about why Luz's Self-Portrait took so long to see the light of day. The answer can be traced back all the way to the early 1960s, within the whirlwind of Luz's romantic rendezvous.

ArTi: The Love Story of Arturo Luz and Nati Valentin

Luz originally gifted his winsome self-portrait to his then-fiancée, Natividad Valentin. Nati, as her closest circle called her, both had the wit and charm. She was at the top of her game as one of the leading art, culture, and society writers for *The Manila Times*, then the country's number one newspaper with over 1 million copies in circulation daily. Nati's friends were the equally gifted female literary bluebloods: Lyd Arguilla, Estrella Alfon, and Carmen Guerrero Nakpil, among others. The Manila Times' manager, Chino Roces, was said to have selected only the brightest, the most beautiful, and the most intellectual writers for his newspaper for a fast recovery of its losses and a successful rebuilding of its reputation after being shut down during World War II.

Nati met Arturo sometime in the late 1950s during her numerous stints for *The Manila Times*, on duty for her continuous coverage and comprehensive, insightful reviews on the Philippine art scene.

Nati, as described by one of her closest friends and fellow *Manila Times* writer Edith Dizon, was also a master singer who possessed "a powerful dramatic soprano voice." Nati took voice lessons under the famous Italian tenor Arrigo Pola, who mentored Luciano Pavarotti. Dizon also recounted how Nati dabbled in and profoundly loved other art forms—flower arrangement, particularly the Japanese art of *ikebana*, Japanese ink and brush painting, and piano playing.



ABOVE: Arturo Luz in his youth, capturing his boyish charm that was evoked in his self-portrait, a gift to his former lover, Nati Valentin. © Purita Kalaw-Ledesma Foundation Archives

Nati was a beautiful woman in every sense of the word, so much so that the young bachelor Luz was instantly captivated by her charisma.

As a foremost writer for *The Manila Times*, Nati would often promote her boyfriend's new works and exhibitions in her column titled "All About Art." She was particularly adept in her art reviews, as evidenced in her 22 December 1961 column, in which she reviewed her fiancé's new works as "increasingly spare and linear" and possessing a color palette that is "simple and limited, gaining quality through tones rather than intensities."

Nati was also there in December 1960 when Luz opened his brainchild, the Luz Gallery, which had Jose Joya's ninth solo show, featuring new paintings and sculptures as its inaugural exhibition. Nati wrote in her column to celebrate its first anniversary in December 1961, praising her beloved's "masterwork." She wrote, "The Luz Gallery became one year old, and set a new and dynamic trend in exhibits."

Luz's Self-Portrait, a gift to his beloved Nati

Nati and Arturo would be engaged sometime in early 1960, and his handsome self-portrait was his gift of love to his fiancée, a celebration of enduring love and their eager commitment to a blissful marriage. Nati hung this self-portrait in her house. Shortly afterward, in 1962, Nati left the Philippines for a study grant in the United States.

Luz's *Self-Portrait* showcases himself as one of his own figures, the iconic musicians, cyclists, and carnival characters typical of his early works from the 1950s to the 1960s. Luz captures the essence of his own self as he sees it through the lens of his art—a boyish-looking man in his thirties with an army-cut hairstyle powerfully evoking his spare, slender figures. His stance is confident, and his gaze bordering on sultry and naughty, fitting for the woman who roused his senses and rocked his world.

One can picture Nati's profound joy as she received this painting, their banters as she teased Arturo of his "spicy" playfulness. It was a relationship that was both naughty and nice.

One can also imagine how Nati would watch Luz as he painted and then proceed in their dynamic exchange of ideas. Luz was also an intellectual, a very discerning painter who prodigiously produced numerous preliminary sketches, a wide reader, and possessed a God-given gift for writing. Nati would begin formulating her words as Luz painted, entrusting the publicity of his works to his brilliant *periodista novia*. After all, the arts and the letters have that inseparable bond—much like Arturo and Nati's love, or so they thought.

Tessie Ojeda

Enter Teresita "Tessie" Ojeda. Records show that Tessie was a student of Fernando Zobel's art appreciation classes at the Ateneo Graduate School in the early '60s. Tessie, wrote Cid Reyes in his book on Luz, "was a regular visitor at the Luz Gallery." "[They] had known each other...but as mere nodding acquaintances," wrote Reyes.

Through Zobel, a common friend, Luz and Tessie crossed paths. By then, Luz and Zobel had long been friends; both belonged to the second generation of Filipino modernists and PAG artists. Purita Kalaw-Ledesma, Filipino modernism's matriarch, wrote in her book *The Biggest Little Room*: "[Zobel] developed a close friendship with Arturo Luz. They would show each other the paintings they were working on. Luz learned a lot from Zobel, who was very profound, articulate, and well-read...[Zobel] was influenced by Luz's use of acid and neutral colors. His influence on Luz, on the other hand, was intellectual rather than visual." Zobel, in his capacity as Honorary Cultural Attaché of the Spanish Embassy in the Philippines, also helped Luz obtain his scholarship from the Instituto de Cultura Hispanica to study in Spain

A Tale of Star-Crossed Lovers

In a surprising turn of events, Nati, who by then was still in the US for her months-long study grant, had been hearing rumors that her Arturo had "fallen in love" with a girl named Tessie Ojeda. According to tittle-tattles floating then, Tessie had been unusually close with Luz. Tessie, wrote Cid Reyes, was quoted as saying that Luz



ABOVE: The handsome Luz who captured Nati Valentin's heart, looking just like his self-portrait. MIDDLE: Luz, as featured in *The Manila Times*, 16 April 1960. BOTTOM: Luz on the cover of *The Sunday Times Magazine*, 16 October 1955 © Purita Kalaw Ledesma Foundation Archives

had always been "her favorite painter." While Nati was in the US, Luz also went there for a travel grant sponsored by the US Department of State. He was tasked to attend the Seattle's World's Fair. Coincidentally, Tessie was also present as a PR assistant for the Philippine Pavilion headed by Commissioner Don Luis Araneta.

Reyes recounted this whirlwind of a romance: "In Seattle, Tessie shared an apartment with two other Filipinas, also with the staff. Miles away from home, Luz would be treated to Philippine hospitality: an adobo dinner. [Luz said], "Literally, it was the first time Tessie and I had gotten to talk. Before that, in Manila, we never exchanged more than five words."

Reyes continued, "Tessie's plan was to see the world, so she was saving up her money." Luz invited Tessie to New York, where, for a month, they visited museums, exhibitions, and galleries. When it was time for Luz to go to Rome under another travel grant from the Italian government, he insisted that Tessie tag along with him. Luz and Tessie's romantic rendezvous was a rollercoaster of lightning and vehement emotions, and they married each other in Rome after only three months.

When Nati returned to the Philippines, she was devastated to hear that Luz and Tessie had already been engaged, primed and prepared for their Roman wedding. Nati became the casualty of an unfortunate relationship—two star-crossed lovers chasing their dreams and building their careers and lives together. Sadly, the other could not handle the long-distance relationship and immediately longed for romantic solace.

Nati: “Get rid of that painting!”

Overwhelmingly heartbroken, Nati attempted to remove all vestiges of Arturo from her life, with this self-portrait being the first casualty of her emotional cleansing. Nati first asked one of her closest friends in her *Manila Times* circle, who is also the current owner's mother.

To help Nati in her "moving on" stage, her close friend accepted the painting and hid it in the basement of her house. It was never displayed—not even once—and was left to collect dust, sort of a metaphor for Nati burying her painful misery. The current owner still remembers what Nati insisted on to his mom. With an agonizing voice, Nati exclaimed, "You have to hide it, get rid of it! I don't want to ever see this again! It caused me a heartbreak!"

The current owner said, "So many people had asked to display this painting before, but my mom refused because of the heartbreaking story."



ABOVE: Nati Valentin (right) in 1978.

A Closure Six Decades in the Making

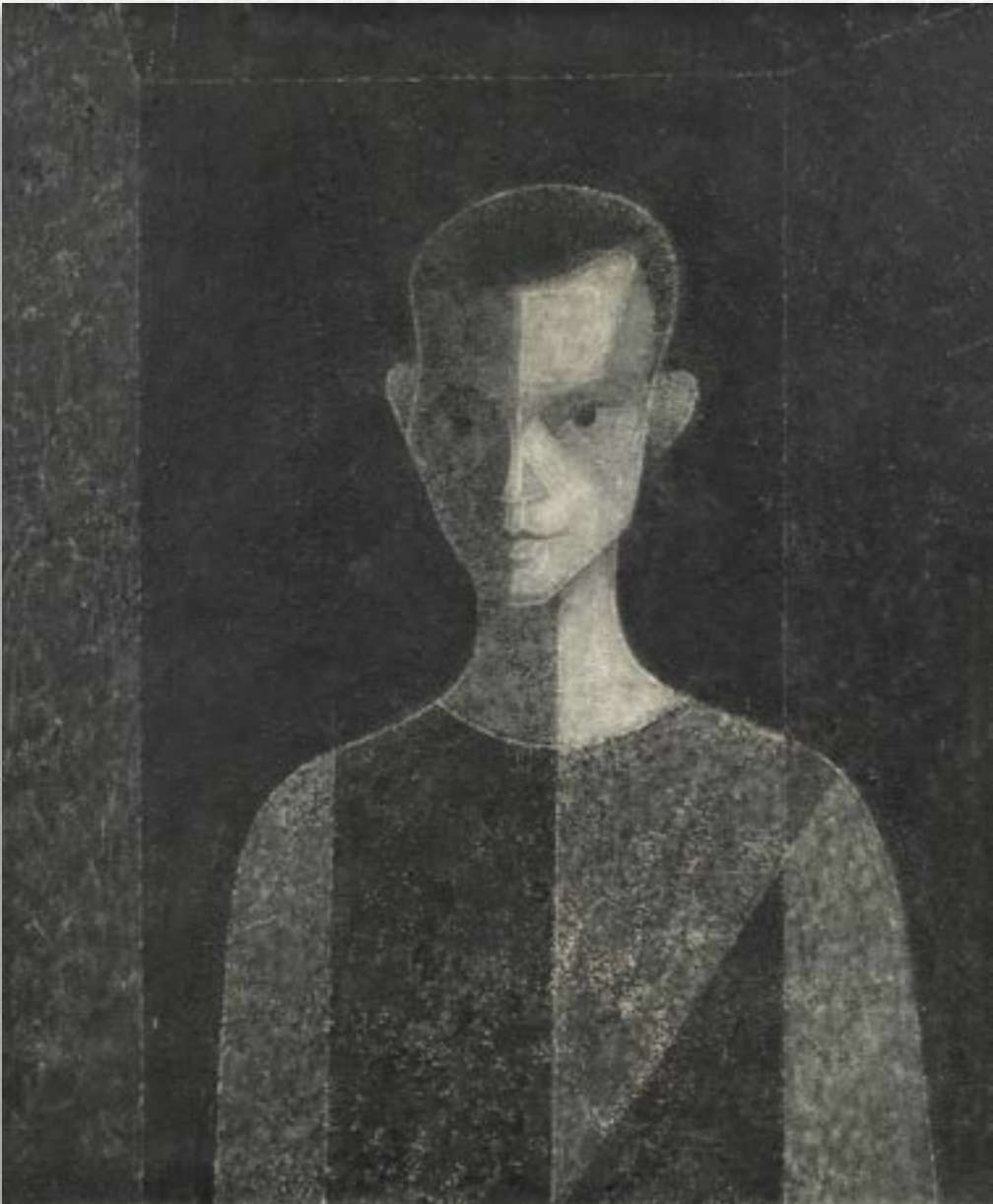
Luckily, Luz's *Self-Portrait* was showcased to the public, for the very first time, at the *First Light* exhibition at the Ayala Museum. Luz had discovered the whereabouts of his painting through the owner's mother, who was close to Rosario "Charing" Luz, Arturo's mother.

"My Mama was very close to the Luz family," said the owner. "Luz's mom, Rosario, designed our ancestral house and furnished it with paintings from the Luz Gallery. She also commissioned Tito Alfredo, Arturo's brother, as our furniture designer before he emigrated to Canada after a successful architectural career. Basically, my Mama always confided in Tita Charing as she was in our house for remodeling over many years."

It was then and there that Luz knew that his self-portrait had always been alive, even after decades had passed. Luz personally requested that his self-portrait be publicly shown at the Ayala Museum, where it hung on its own wall. "Luz wasn't in love anymore with Nati," the owner said. "He just chose the painting as part of his greatest works of art."

A Precious Token to a Friend

Arturo Luz Reveals His True Self



55 PROPERTY FORMERLY IN THE NATIVIDAD "NATI" VALENTIN COLLECTION

Arturo Luz (1926 - 2021)

Self-Portrait
early 1960s
oil on canvas
31 1/2" x 26" (80 cm x 66 cm)

P 5,000,000

PROVENANCE
A gift from the artist to Natividad "Nati" Valentin
Acquired from the above by the present owner

LITERATURE
Ocampo, Ambeth R. *Arturo Luz: First Light*. Published in conjunction with the exhibitions "Arturo Luz: First Light" at the Ayala Museum and "#Luz@90" at the Ateneo Art Gallery. Quezon City: Vibal Foundation, Inc., Ateneo Art Gallery, and the Ayala Foundation, Inc. Full-color illustration and painting description on page 34.

EXHIBITED
Ayala Museum, *Arturo Luz: First Light*, Makati City, 14 February - 11 June 2017

Oscar Zalameda (1930 - 2010)

Untitled

signed (lower right)
oil on paper
14 1/2" x 19" (37 cm x 48 cm)

P 200,000

PROVENANCE
Rustan's Galerie Bleue

Before his iconic cubistic art style, Oscar Zalameda was closer to Fernando Zóbel's style in its breeziness and swift brush strokes. This particular work was evocative of an early Zalameda transitioning into his signature cubism. In shades of black and gray, it is not hard to make out the smooth rocks as they peek from under the dark water – a sight that is undoubtedly familiar to the bon vivant Zalameda. He plays with light and shadows as his abstractions take the form of a figurative style, leaving him with a distinct blend of his European inclinations and Filipino tastes. *(Hannah Valiente)*



Angelito Antonio (b. 1939)

Candle Vendor

signed and dated 1989 (lower right)
oil on canvas
24" x 30" (61 cm x 76 cm)

P 240,000

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

Angelito Antonio was among the influential post-war Filipino artists who embraced Modernism. He has developed his own nascent cubist style, emphasizing the fragmentation of forms and a palette of strong primary or muted tertiary colors outlined and shadowed by black. His canvases boast of his compelling love and affection for the Philippines, often depicting market, barrio, and household scenes populated by vendors, cockfighters, and fishermen.

Candle Vendor is a powerful demonstration of Antonio's mastery of his craft. Like his other works, it reflects the life of the common folk; in this specific piece is a woman sitting on the side, a variety of candles she sells placed next to her. This 1989 work, from afar, looks like a charcoal



drawing but, in reality, was painted with oil paint, one of the artist's preferred mediums. It lacked his signature kaleidoscopic palette and acidic yellow tones but still exhibits Antonio's command of oil, expertly using black and white to wield different tonalities to add depth and enliven his image. *(Jessica Magno)*

Pacita Abad (1946 - 2004)

Pictures of You

signed (lower right)
dated 2000
oil on canvas
18" x 14" (46 cm x 36 cm)

P 180,000

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

PROVENANCE
Leon Gallery, *The Asian Cultural Council Auction 2018*, Makati City, 3 March 2018, Lot 79

LITERATURE
Literature: Garrity, Jack and Tay Swee Lin. *The Sky is the Limit*. Jakarta: Pacita Abad, 2001. Full-color illustration on page 47 and painting description on page 46.

Born in Batanes and originally on track to become a lawyer, Abad pivoted dramatically while in San Francisco, choosing art over the courtroom. That decision launched a three-decade-long odyssey across six continents, with her artworks often absorbing the colors, textures, and political struggles of the places



she encountered. She developed a distinctive style she called trapunto painting, where she sewed and stuffed her canvases, blending quilting and painting in ways that defied tradition.

Abad's *Pictures of You* is an explosion of color and energy, a grid of emotion rendered through rhythm and intuition. With its tightly clustered red blocks, offset by jolts of purple, green, and yellow, the painting radiates joy and dissonance in equal measure. At first glance, the canvas feels like a festive mosaic, but spend time with it and it begins to resemble something more personal: a constellation of moments, windows, or maybe even portraits; fragmented memories dancing in chromatic chaos.

This piece reflects Abad's unmistakable visual language: bold, unapologetic, and charged with feeling. Her brushwork is instinctive, her colors unruly. Rather than adhering to any dominant artistic mode, she invented her own path; one that often veered toward the tactile and celebratory, but was always underlined by lived experience. In *Pictures of You*, she flattens form but expands emotion. There are no figures here, but the presence of people, perhaps loved ones, or even past selves, can be felt between the shapes. The repetition of forms is not rigid; it's pulsing, alive, each square slightly off, as if moved by breath. *(Jed Daya)*

Fernando Zóbel (1924 - 1984)

Versión en Toledo

signed (lower left and verso)
titled and inscribed "Retocado y terminado al 22
Agosto 1977 en Cuenca" (verso)
dated 1975
oil on canvas
51" x 51" (130 cm x 130 cm)

P 16,000,000

PROVENANCE
Galería Theo, Madrid

LITERATURE
De la Torre, Alfonso and Rafael Pérez-Madero. *Fernando Zóbel: Catalogue Raisonné of Paintings (1946 - 1984)*. Madrid: Fundación Azcona, 2022. Listed as "75-31 VERSION EN TOLEDO" with full-color illustration and painting description on page 525.

Two years in the making, Fernando Zóbel's *Versión en Toledo* is a testament to the artist's continuous and growing pursuit of his art. He was already rooted in Spain decades before *Versión en Toledo* was created – Zóbel started venturing into Europe around the 1950s, establishing connections by 1955 and formally hosting a solo exhibition at Galería Biosca in 1959. This exhibition put Zóbel on the map as he was immediately recognized as an artist to watch out for. The next few years saw Zóbel on frequent travels between the Philippines, the United States, and Europe.

In 1963, Zóbel was searching for a place to host his art collection. Proximity to Spain's center Madrid was first considered, as he aimed for the place to also provide accommodations to other artists. Toledo was a city he had visited frequently in the past, and so it was the initial pick. He even started referring to this nebulous idea as the "Toledo project."

However, it seems as though his subconscious had another idea. On March 12, 1964, he wrote to his friend Gerardo Rueda: "I had planned on spending the night in Rome, but I really want to go back to CUENCA (It sounds like a joke, but I have even managed to dream about Cuenca. Without knowing how, exactly, with Cuenca, I have managed to fill an unsuspected void I had been dragging around.)"

This search culminated in the creation of the Museo de Arte Abstracto Español in Cuenca, where another wave of Zóbel's creative genius was spent.

Versión en Toledo was dated 1975 with its completion date marked as 22 August 1997 in Cuenca. More than a decade since the Museo de Arte Abstracto Español's opening, it seems as though Toledo was still a fond memory for Zóbel. The years between Zóbel's first inkling of "the



TOP AND MIDDLE: Splendid photos of Toledo, Spain. It was in Toledo, in late 1962, where the idea for Zobel's Museum of Abstract Art (which he would establish in his beloved city of Cuenca) first took shape. The concept for the museum was then known as the "Toledo Project." Photos from en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Toledo,_Spain#/media/File:Toledo_Spain.jpg (photograph by Dmitry Dzhus from London) and [coxandkings.co.uk](https://www.coxandkings.co.uk). BELOW: Fernando Zóbel painting in 1952. © León Gallery Archives

Toledo project" to the creation of *Versión en Toledo* were considered by Juan Manuel Bonet in his *Fernando Zóbel: The 1970s* essay as the "longest stage in Zóbel's painting." He slowly began returning to colors — siennas, grays, dark browns, and, as *Versión en Toledo* shows, ochres started their return.

In 1975, the same year as his completion of this painting, Zóbel wrote: "My paintings involve a great deal of thinking, although obviously, instincts and the subconscious play vital roles. Nevertheless, and perhaps paradoxically, I do not apply any particular theory in a deliberate manner." Indeed, his works are the perfect blend of intellectual and spontaneity, a reflection of his Filipino and Spanish sides. (Hannah Valiente)

Zóbel Encounters

The Ancient Capital of Spain



Raffy Napay (b. 1986)*Intertwined Love*

signed and dated 2021 (verso)

thread, acrylic, beads, and textile

80" x 70" (203 cm x 178 cm)

P 1,000,000

Accompanied by a certificate issued by Pinto Art Museum and signed by the artist confirming the authenticity of this lot

Raffy Napay has always worked with connection; threading it through both his materials and his meaning. Using stitching, tufting, and weaving, he transforms scraps of fabric and thread into textured, living canvases that feel more like environments than pictures. In this untitled piece, Napay once again pushes beyond the flatness of the traditional frame. Thick tufts of fiber reach out past the edges, wild and tangled, as if the artwork is trying to grow out into the world. It's not just something you look at; it's something you feel drawn into—messy, layered, alive.

What makes Napay's work so powerful is how deeply personal and communal it is at the same time. Every thread seems to carry a story. His materials, often reused, repurposed, speak to care, resilience, and history. There's a quiet tenderness in how everything is brought together, as though he's mending something much bigger than just fabric. Many of his past works have explored the relationships between people—family, homeland, memory. But more recently, his gaze has widened, shifting toward something broader: our connection with nature, and how we're tangled up in it whether we realize it or not.

In this piece, that shift is beautifully clear. At the center is a white, heart-shaped form with two faceless figures nestled inside, their bodies gently leaning into one another. They feel intimate, almost like they're holding each other. But they're also surrounded, maybe even held, by a dense forest of color and texture. Vines and branches weave around them, not just as a backdrop but as part

ABOVE: Raffy Napay © <https://www.spot.ph/>

of them. A rope loops across the figures, tying them to their surroundings in a way that feels both protective and binding. The colors—earthy greens, fiery oranges, deep reds—suggest a world that's alive, growing, even overwhelming. (*Jed Daya*)

Napay Weaves

A Tale of Love



Hernando R. Ocampo (1911 - 1978)

Dreams

signed and dated 1961 (lower left) and titled (verso)

oil on canvas

28" x 22" (71 cm x 56 cm)

P 8,000,000

PROVENANCE

Acquired directly from the artist

Leon Gallery, *The Kingly Treasures Auction 2023*,

Makati City, 2 December 2023, Lot 71

Original, daring, and above all, steadfast in his commitment to his art, Hernando Ruiz Ocampo at 50 was the most important artist of his generation; and his paintings destined to be as immediate and relevant as when they were first painted decades before.

But it was not necessarily pre-ordained by his background. Ramon Villegas would write in his staccato style, "He was born in 1911, in the populous district of Sta. Cruz, Manila. Due to financial problems, the family moved from Gagalangin, Tondo — a petit bourgeois district — to Maypajo, around 1917. Maypajo was already on the city outskirts, located just after the boundary of Manila, in the adjoining municipality of Caloocan, where the Katipunan had deep roots in the lower classes.

"Ocampo's Maypajo, near the crossroads of Monumento and Sangandaan, was famed for one of Manila's cabarets. There, as his biographer Angel de Jesus says, Ocampo "learned the rough spots of life".

"Ocampo, as a boy, started out shining shoes for the cabaret customers. By the age of 17, he had become the cashier there. The artist would talk of his experiences there, his dalliances with the dancers. H.R. later painted one of those wasted women beside a wilted flower, still at work in the early morning hours.

"The family could only afford a high school education for the young Hernando at the Young Man's Catholic Association (YMCA), Manila. Yet his father Emilio, a local leader of the Nacionalista Party, wanted his son to study law in preparation for a political career. In 1928, following his father's wishes, Hernando enrolled in the pre-law course in San Juan de Letran, on an athletic scholarship. After a year he left Letran for the Far Eastern University, again staying only a year."

And then his life would take a different turn: After dropping out of law school, H.R. Ocampo would find his way into the company of an avant-garde group of writers — the Veronicans — and from there it was a short skip and jump to the fast and furious world of poets, journalists and most, importantly, artists.

In 1951, at age 40, H.R. would found the most influential artists group that the Philippines would ever see, the Neo-Realists. He would also find himself at ground zero of the Philippine Art Gallery, the first-ever to champion the cause of abstract art.

In just ten short years, he and his band of brothers would dominate the Filipino art scene. H.R. himself would receive award after award.

But in 1961, H.R. himself was what his biographer de Jesus would call his "Transitional Stage". While he had gone from one triumph after another, in his deliberate fashion, he was pondering his next move. At this crossroads, his works would move from the flat perspectives of his post-war works towards his "Mutants Period" of the mid-Sixties which were a commentary on the nuclear war and aliens that the world obsessed about.

At the tail end of the 1950s, Ocampo joined Philprom (Philippine Promotions Bureau) then the Philippines' largest advertising agency, where he became a top administrative officer. And with it, Villegas says, pop culture would become more and more visible in his art. The sharp contrasts between light and shadow for example, Villegas would note, was the influence of the photography of Richard Avedon (1923-2004), the mixed-media works of Andy Warhol (1928-2007), as well as the pop and 60s psychedelic art.

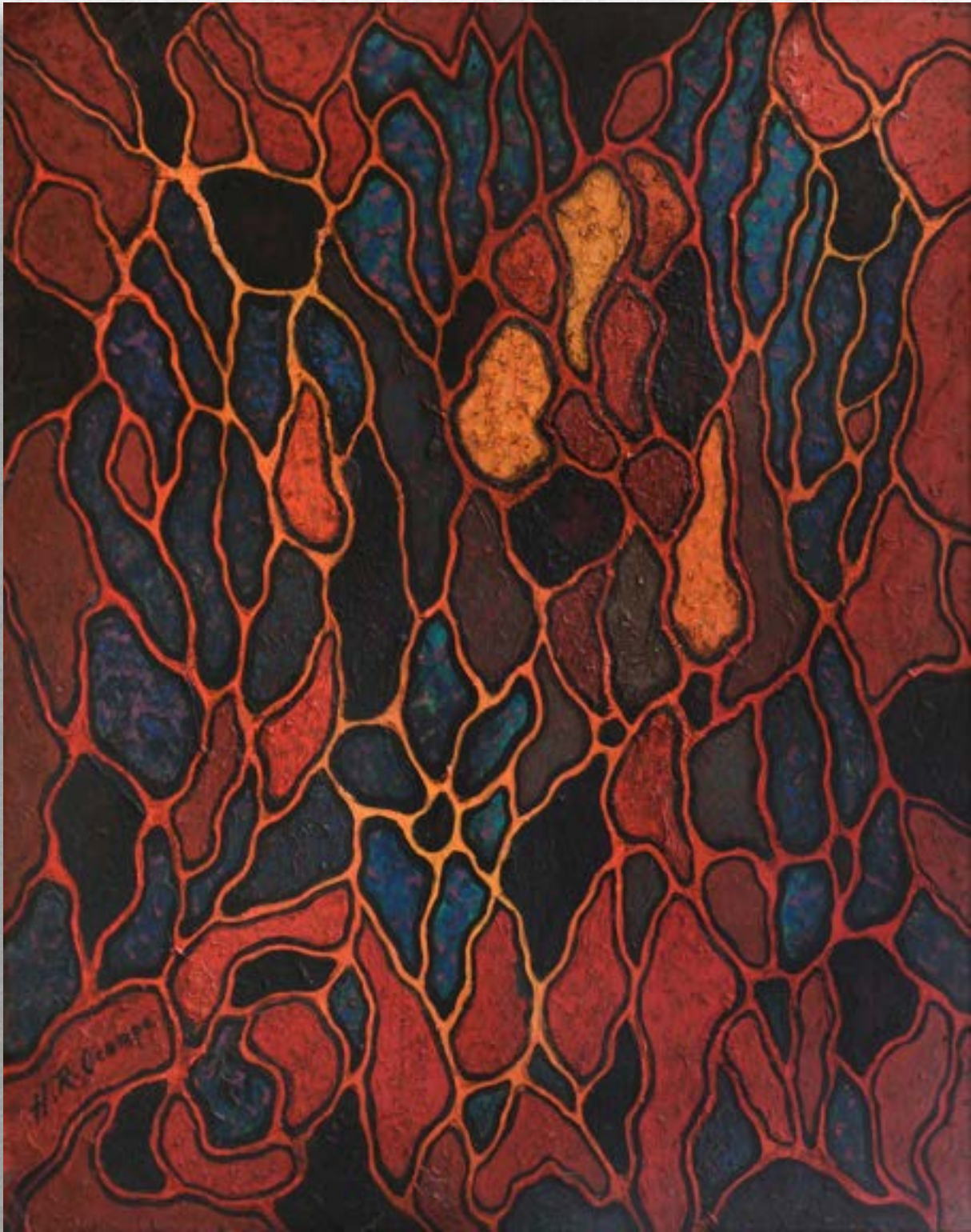
Speaking in an interview in 1961, Ocampo "resolved to devote more time to painting again." Turning 50 that year, the Art Association of the Philippines honored him with a retrospective.

It is precisely in this year that we find the work he called "Dreams", its title penciled in in his own hand at the back of the painting. A purposeful intellectual, H.R. Ocampo had an interest in Carl Jung and Sigmund Freud and art critics had commented on the subconscious aspects of his work and their hidden messages. His use of color and shape, in particular tapped into this world.

With 'Dreams', Ocampo distills the essence of human hopes and ambitions, portraying them as dynamic energy bursting to be set free from all limits.

H.R. Ocampo at 50: *Dreams from The Golden Years*

by LISA GUERRERO NAKPIL





Hayden and Vicki Belo-Kho Art Collection

by ISIDRA REYES

They met as fellow judges in a beauty pageant and there was mutual attraction on both sides. She was impressed by his looks and his popularity with the crowd while her striking aura caught his eye. They got together amid full media hype. She had a fear of abandonment and he was a constant and steady partner. They had an adorable child together which strengthened their bond further. They got married in a lavish fairytale wedding held in Paris and defied naysayers as they continue in their commitment as husband and wife, as parents, and as partners in running their beauty clinic and business empire.

Who doesn't know Dra. Vicki Belo, Dr. Hayden Kho, and their smart and spunky daughter, Scarlet Snow? A quick search and browse through social media posts, articles, and vlogs uncover much of their public and private lives, or at least what they are willing to show to the public. Their home, designed by Architect Ramon Antonio, in a gated exclusive village in Makati, has been featured many times in You Tube vlogs, Instagram posts, FB reels, and magazine spreads. While one may catch a glimpse or two of a Bencab here, an Anita there, a Zobel further down, or a Malang mural over there, Vicky and Hayden hardly talk about their art collection in magazine features or video interviews.

It is not surprising for Dra. Vicki Belo to have an interest in the arts. Tracing her family background, we discover that her biological parents, Engr. Agustin "Toy" Cancio and the Vassar-educated Conchita Gonzalez Cancio were among the founders of Cancio-Calma Associates, Inc., an interior and furniture design firm founded by the Cancios and Architect Lor Calma. Engr. Toy Cancio was also among the founders of the Philippine School of Interior Design (PSID), along with Herminia Cancio Layug (mother of architect and furniture designer Budji Layug), Arch. Lor Calma, and Interior Designer Edith Oliveros. For many

years, PSID was located at the Cancio-Calma Building in Pasong Tamo, Makati. Toy and Imelda Gonzalez Cancio lived in a fabulous classically styled mansion in Dasmariñas Village (now the home of Philip and Ching Cruz) which was built by Conchita's mother, the former Rosario "Charing" Chiong-Veloso Singson Gonzalez, who was also the mother of Vicky's adoptive mother, Florencia "Nena" Singson Gonzalez, who married the prominent lawyer, Atty. Enrique Belo.

Vicki Belo's Lola Charing descended from one of the wealthiest Chinese businessmen of Cebu, Nicasio Chiong-Veloso. Toto Gonzalez, in his blog, Remembrances of Things Awry, recalls that the Chiong-Velosos were so wealthy, they owned a hôtel-particulier at the Boulevard Haussmann in Paris and that the Chiong-Veloso daughters were valued clients of the top couture and jewelry houses in Paris which were clustered around the Place Vendôme. Vicki also loves Paris and the finer things in life and chose the Paris Opera's Palais Garnier as venue for her wedding reception.

Vicki's adoptive mother, Florencia "Nena" Singson Gonzalez Belo, was a former Cebu Carnival Queen who was later revealed to be the subject of the unfinished portrait donated by Amorsolo's heirs to the National Museum of Fine Arts. Vicki was invited by the National Museum to see the painting which had remained unidentified since it was first exhibited at the National Museum in 2015. It was Judy Araneta Roxas who had first identified it during a visit to the museum in 2016.

For several years now, Dra. Vicki together with her husband, Dr. Hayden Kho, have been building up their collection of Filipino art and it is a delight for art lovers and collectors to view and examine them up close now that they are up for auction and awaiting their new owners to claim and enjoy them.

Anita Magsaysay-Ho (1914 - 2012)

Women Gleaning

signed and dated 2000 (lower right)

oil on canvas

24" x 24" (61 cm x 61 cm)

P 8,000,000

PROVENANCE

Acquired directly from Mr. Randy Young

"Although Canada is my country now, I often yearn for those little islands in the Pacific where my roots are, where my brother and sister and their families live, where I can reminisce about life with relatives and friends."

—ANITA MAGSAYSAY-HO,
IN "AN ARTIST'S MEMOIRS"



ABOVE: Anita Magsaysay-Ho © León Gallery Archives

'Why do we always have to holiday in Zambales? Now in hindsight, I thank my parents for bringing us to Zambales. These scenes of my childhood are so vivid in my mind; women pounding rice, winding our way back to town in the dusk after the picnic, the oil lamp lit windows of the nipa houses sparkling like fireflies in the dark. Had I never holidayed in Zambales, I do not think I would have the depth of impressions, which I subconsciously draw upon with so much fondness and passion when I paint.'

For Anita, her return to her motherland meant a renaissance of all sorts. Anita's employment of a brighter palette in *Women Gleaning* evokes a profound joy in her earnest reconnection with her roots. The warmth of Anita's composition captures that tender solace in the comforts of one's beloved land—and the everyday Filipina whom she exalted in her art.

"I did not paint the people in the countries I lived in," Anita also wrote in the epilogue of her memoirs. "In looking back, this must have been a manifestation of my love for my mother country. For whenever I looked at an empty canvas, I saw only my Filipino women."

Anita once said in the brochures and invitations of her 1988-89 retrospective at the Met Manila: "I dedicate this exhibition to the women of the Philippines—the source of my inspiration—their movements and gestures, their expressions of happiness and frustrations, their diligence and shortcomings, their joy of living. I know well, for after all, I am one of them."

Perhaps, this is Anita's greatest legacy: finding relief in capturing the inherent joy and beauty of the Filipina to whom she had always been indebted for fostering her virtuoso, in hopes of empowering them much as they had strengthened her even if she was oceans away from her cradle.

In this sense, *Gleaning Women* represents a full-circle moment for Anita. It can be recalled that Anita had always looked forward to her summer vacations in her father's hometown of Zambales when she was still a little girl. She wrote in her memoirs:

Anita Magsaysay-Ho and the Beauty and Joy of the Filipina *From Her Manila Homecoming Years*

by ADRIAN MARANAN



Fernando Zóbel (1924 - 1984)

Variante Sobre Un Tema de Cassatt

signed (lower left and verso), dated 29 July 1967,
titled, and inscribed "67-33" (verso)

oil on canvas
31 1/2" x 31 1/2" (80 cm x 80 cm)

P 12,000,000

PROVENANCE
Galería Grises, Bilbao
Acquired from the above in 1967 and thence by descent to the
current owner

LITERATURE
De la Torre, Alfonso and Rafael Pérez-Madero. *Fernando Zóbel:
Catalogue Raisonné of Paintings* (1946 - 1984).

Madrid: Fundación Azcona, 2022. Listed as "67-33" with painting
description on page 349.

EXHIBITED
Galería Grises, *Fernando Zóbel*, Bilbao, 2 - 16 November 1967

Fernando Zóbel's return to color in 1967 marked the start of many of his new series, and one of the earliest is his *Diálogos*, featuring his conversations with the works of other eminent artists. Using pencil, pen, or brush, *Diálogos* forges a connection with an artist who is disconnected from the time's relentless pace.

"The idea behind *Diálogos* is to speak of art with art, but with the brushes at the ready," Zóbel said in a 1978 interview with Carlos García Osuna. "I stand before a picture I like, and I prefer to communicate with that work by painting too. It's a way of seeing and doing painting and will become a constant in my life, because it's a pleasure and I see no reason to stop practising it... When "I speak" in these dialogues, I concentrate on one facet, and the result is not an imitation but a comment."

In *Variante Sobre Un Tema de Cassatt*, Zóbel converses with Mary Cassatt. In 1868, Cassatt made history by being one of the two American women to first exhibit at the Paris Salon. Her contributions in the realm of Impressionism are immeasurable, bringing to the forefront the portrayal of women and children in emotionally resonant works. Up to this day, Cassatt remains a pivotal figure in art history and feminist movements.

Despite existing almost a whole century later, *Variante Sobre Un Tema de Cassatt* is a poignant example of Zóbel's *Diálogos* and its transcendent quality. In this work, Mary Cassatt and Fernando Zóbel converse, creating a contemporary take on the Greats of Art, as well as offering a unique interplay between the past and the present. *(Hannah Valiente)*



TOP AND MIDDLE: The American painter Mary Cassatt is celebrated for her paintings of women, especially mothers and their children. Cassatt's theme is evoked in this painting by Zobel from his *Dialogos* series. 1. *Young Girl at a Window*, ca. 1883 - 1884, oil on canvas. © National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C. 2. *Baby in Dark Blue Suit, Looking Over His Mother's Shoulder*, ca. 1889, oil on canvas. © Cincinnati Art Museum **BELOW:** Mary Cassatt, 1914 © Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution

Zóbel in Dialogue with Mary Cassatt

A Theme Made Famous at the Landmark Prado Exhibit



Ang Kiukok (1931 - 2005)

Crucifixion (Catalogue #38)

signed and dated 1976 (lower right)

tempera on paper

23" x 16 1/2" (58 cm x 42 cm)

P 800,000

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

PROVENANCE

Finale Art File

Leon Gallery, *The Kingly Treasures Auction 2021*, Makati City, 4 December 2021, Lot 119

An artist drawn to the macabre, it is no surprise that Ang Kiukok finds himself returning over and over again to the crucifixion. The visage of a god hanging on a tree is visceral enough for the artist whose oeuvre is submerged in angst. This 1976 *Crucifixion* has similar features to his other portrayals of Christ on the cross – he transformed Christ and imbued Him with His misery. Broken bones and hanging limbs become the center of this piece, too great to fully ignore.

The Passion of Christ is often regaled as a holy and righteous sacrifice of Christ on the cross, but in Kiukok's works, it is impossible to ignore the agony His body must have felt. His last few hours consist of distressing torment, both physical and emotional, and Kiukok takes the road less traveled, choosing not to turn his eyes away. Indeed, Kiukok's crucifixion works do not shy away from the fact that, yes, while Christ's sacrifice on the cross is borne out of His love for humanity, mankind conspired for the most horrible of punishments to befall the Son. (*Hannah Valiente*)



ABOVE: Ang Kiukok in his studio. © Facebook, Distinctively Davao

Ang Kiukok
Solemn Tones of the Sacred



Andres Barrioquinto (b. 1975)

Dormant Beauty

signed and dated 2013 (lower right)

oil on canvas

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

P 300,000

PROVENANCE
West Gallery

Andres Barrioquinto's *Dormant Beauty* perfectly exemplifies the artist's "Baroque Japonisme" style. A masterful blend of Baroque's dramatic lighting and the simple beauty of ukiyo-e, *Dormant Beauty* testifies to Barrioquinto's exemplary personal style. Though it is simplistic to categorize his art into only one style, they all consist of the same essence of beauty tethering between carnal and real. The woman in Barrioquinto's *Dormant Beauty* seems almost immortal; one cannot fully pinpoint the period of her beauty, only the dreaminess that is etched onto her face. To emphasize that surrealist feeling, she is left the only one in black and white, with multicolored birds occupying the majority of the background as they loom larger than life. (Hannah Valiente)



Cesar Legaspi (1917 - 1994)

Nude

signed and dated 1978 (lower right)

watercolor on paper

41 1/2" x 25 1/2" (105 cm x 65 cm)

P 220,000

Cesar Legaspi is known for his fragmented torsos and cubist-inspired works that unveil the social injustices and hardships faced by the Filipino people. His decades-long collection of esteemed artworks explored a variety of themes, styles, and mediums. *Nude*, a 1978 watercolor painting, is a striking example of Legaspi's versatility. Despite depicting an unclothed woman, her entire body on display, Legaspi's portrayal is devoid of eroticism, refraining from objectifying the figure. His adept use of pen and ink, honed during his years in the commercial arts, allowed him to manipulate his mediums to yield different shades and tones, as seen in this monochromatic watercolor work. Indeed, Legaspi's artistic journey is a testament to his dedication and commitment to his ingenious artmaking. (Jessica Magno)



Vicente Manansala (1910 - 1981)

Nude

signed and dated 1970 (lower left)

charcoal on paper

31 1/4" x 30" (79 cm x 76 cm)

P 500,000

PROVENANCE
Ambassador and Mrs. J.V Cruz Collection
Acquired from the above

In *Manansala Nudes*, Rodolfo Paras-Perez described Vicente Manansala's drawing practices as the National Artist's great obsession. True enough, Manansala started drawing as a young child and continued to do so for as long as he could hold a pencil. He kept drawing even at the height of his artistic career, and he kept drawing even during the last days of his fruitful life. For Manansala, drawing was not just a skill, but the foundation of his



artistic process. He believed it was the most essential skill an artist must possess before delving into other styles and mediums.

Undeniably, his mastery of drawing lies at the heart of his prolific artistry. Aside from his kaleidoscopic geometric shape-filled canvases, Manansala also has an ample amount of charcoal and pencil drawings. The female body was one of the recurring themes in his drawings. However, his female nudes, devoid of any hint of eroticism, were purely academic studies. These studies allowed him to master the curves and depths of human anatomy. Furthermore, these charcoal and pencil drawings served as his practice ground for tonal values, the employment of light and shadow in his subsequent works. (Jessica Magno)



68 PROPERTY FROM THE HAYDEN AND VICKI BELO-KHO COLLECTION

Cory Aquino (1933 - 2009)

She Knows What He Wants

signed and dated 2000 (lower right)

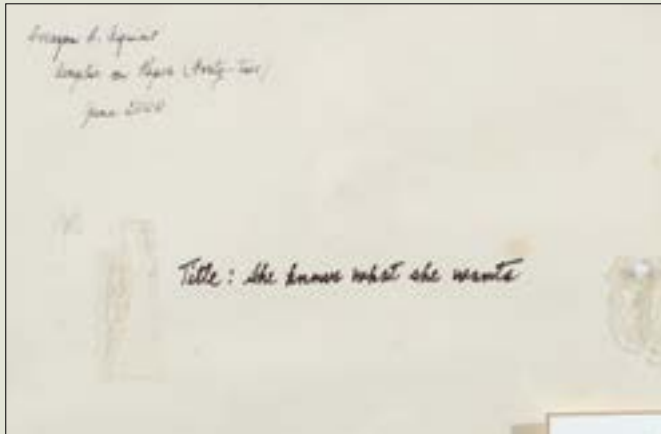
acrylic on paper

12" x 16" (30 cm x 41 cm)

P 200,000

Corazon "Cory" Aquino remains a household name among Filipinos for a lot of reasons. For one, she was notable as the first female president of the Philippines. Her impact on politics and influence on people were undeniable. However, what may come as a surprise to many is that she was also a prolific painter later in life.

Her artworks are bright and colorful, often featuring flowers and female figures, usually done in oil or acrylic on canvas. A devout Catholic, painting, next to prayer, was her favored mode of keeping her mind active and her sense of humanity intact. According to Aquino's website, "although she has participated in a joint exhibit with friends and has sold some of her works to raise funds for her advocacies, she does not profess to be a professional painter."



ABOVE: Verso of the painting, handwritten by Cory Aquino



69 PROPERTY FROM THE HAYDEN AND VICKI BELO-KHO COLLECTION

Vicente Manansala (1910 - 1981)

Nude

signed and dated 1974 (upper left)

charcoal on paper

29 1/2" x 22" (75 cm x 56 cm)

P 400,000

PROVENANCE

Ambassador and Mrs. J.V Cruz Collection

Acquired from the above

Vicente Manansala's nude studies show his dedication and commitment to his craft. Even at the pinnacle of his fame, Manansala still practiced and studied hard to enhance his drawing skills. Besides his famed transparent cubism and dauntless color palette, Manansala is also known for his mastery of graphite and charcoal, which is apparent in the numerous illustrations and sketches he produced, especially his nude studies. Most of his nude drawings were created in the 1970s,

following his studies at the Otis Art Institute, a significant period that profoundly shaped the creation of his nude drawings, drifting away from his fragmented illustrations.

Nude, a charcoal on paper work from 1974, is a striking example of Manansala's unyielding skills. Despite being in black and white and seated, the artist employed his mastery of light and shadow to delineate his figure's every curve and line. With the woman's slumped posture, head tilted to the side, and face shadowed with dejection, this piece exudes a somber atmosphere. Ultimately, this 1974 *Nude* demonstrates Manansala's ability to infuse his work with unspoken emotions, inviting the viewers to uncover its hidden tale.

Vicente Manansala's versatility is undeniable, as he creates work after work in different styles and mediums. His skilled hands and exceptional artistry allow him to manipulate light and shadow, regardless of his materials. This ability adds depth to his work, both aesthetically and emotionally. Manansala breathes life into his works with every swish and flick of his hands, infusing each with different emotions and stories. *(Jessica Magno)*

Federico Aguilar Alcuaz (1932 - 2011)

Untitled Composition
signed and dated 1979 (lower left)
oil on board
24" x 18" (61 cm x 46 cm)

P 220,000

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

Regarded as his “golden period,” Federico Aguilar Alcuaz’s Barcelona years birthed his highly acclaimed modernist works. These works bear the artist’s love for music, injecting euphonious lyricism and melody into his enigmatic compositions, compellingly resonating more with the viewer’s perspective. His materials rendered a textured appearance, manifesting his mastery of his chosen medium, evident in the harmonious blend of his vigorous strokes and brilliant palette.

Like his other works, Aguilar Alcuaz’s *Untitled Composition* reflects his hedonistic philosophy in life. “What is probably the secret of Alcuaz’s art is that he was a true hedonist in his approach to life, nature and the world at large. This is what rings true in his work, in which his refined and



sophisticated way of seeing, feeling and transforming onto canvas guides his art purely and uninterruptedly, with the least interference of common considerations,” Alice Guillermo notes about Aguilar Alcuaz’s oeuvre. (Jessica Magno)

Andres Barrioquinto (b. 1975)

Golden 50 #2
signed and dated 2020 (lower right)
oil on canvas
36" x 24" (91 cm x 61 cm)

P 600,000

PROVENANCE
Secret Fresh

Stripping away the rich baroque textures and flamboyant surrealism that once defined an era of his work, Andres Barrioquinto opts here for restraint, balance, and an almost eerie stillness. At the center: a strange, toy-like figure standing proudly atop what appears to be a giant molar, puffing a pipe, crowned with spikes, and rendered entirely in shades of gray. It’s unsettling, comical, and oddly regal.

This kind of visual restraint marks a new direction for the artist, who has spent nearly two decades building a name through lush compositions full of dreamlike beauty and darkness. Since being honored with the Cultural Center of the Philippines’ Thirteen Artists Award in 2013, Barrioquinto has continued to evolve; dabbling



in everything from Japanese visual influences to deeply personal inner dreamscapes. This piece fuses Eastern and Western motifs with the crisp clarity of contemporary digital aesthetics. Gone are the florals and fauna; in their place is a sculptural, almost absurdist icon that invites both reflection and unease. It’s a quiet but powerful reminder that change—no matter how strange—is central to artistic growth. And Barrioquinto is still very much in motion. (Jed Daya)

Onib Olmedo (1937 - 1996)

Elvie
signed and dated 1974 (lower right)
oil on canvas
24" x 18" (61 cm x 46 cm)

P 600,000

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

Olmedo’s work has always lived close to the street—close to the noise, the heat, the struggle. Before dedicating himself fully to art, he spent years working at the San Lazaro racetrack, first as a racing steward, then as a judge. It was there that he came face to face with the raw, unfiltered pulse of humanity: joy and heartbreak living side by side, hope and despair riding on a single bet. That experience stayed with him. It’s in his art, thick and restless, never quite settling, always searching. Olmedo wasn’t painting from a distance—he was in it, among it, part of it.

Even beyond the racetrack, Onib’s eye was always turned toward the everyday lives of ordinary Filipinos. He wandered through Sampaloc, Ermita, and Malate—watching, listening, absorbing. The streets offered him stories: of vendors and vagrants, workers and wanderers, lovers, loners, and lives half-lived in the shadows of neon and rust. Manila, in all its chaos and contradiction, became both backdrop and subject, muse and mirror. His art is an act of witness—a way of holding space for people who might otherwise be unseen.

In this piece, that same tenderness and unflinching observation are present. A woman sits beside worn-out kettles on a small green table. Her gaze is turned slightly away, as though caught mid-thought, mid-life. Behind her, a wall of warm red-orange planks surrounds the scene with a kind of claustrophobic heat. Nothing is romanticized—the room feels tight, the expression ambiguous, the silence almost loud. And yet, there’s so much dignity in how she’s painted. The pots, dented and used, are not props but companions—suggesting a life spent in motion, in labor, in care. Onib doesn’t just portray the woman; he honors her. She’s not a symbol. She’s someone. (Jed Daya)



Hernando R. Ocampo (1911 - 1978)

Make Haste Slowly

signed and dated 1978 (lower right)

acrylic on canvas

30" x 40" (76 cm x 102 cm)

P 2,600,000

PROVENANCE

Private Collection, Manila

"At 67, H.R. Ocampo is perhaps the Philippines' most remarkable, and certainly, the Philippines' most articulate painter. He paints, for one thing, with intelligence and feeling, which means he doesn't perpetrate, at least not consciously, pot-boilers. He doesn't pander to the well-heeled patron who says "make it look like Amorsolo's Dalagang Bukid, etc." Ocampo has got to be himself to be able to create anything of value, and he's got to be left alone with his ideas or he can't even begin to think of basic forms around, which he builds."

— JOSE LUNA CASTRO, "H.R. OCAMPO DOES IT HIS WAY WITH INTELLIGENCE AND FEELING,"
MODERN LIVING, 13 NOVEMBER 1978

Hernando R. Ocampo's *Make Haste Slowly* is one of the pioneering Filipino non-objectivist and modernist's last works, painted months before his untimely death on December 28, 1978 due to a heart attack at his home in Maypajo, Caloocan. The work marked a brief period of experimentation for Ocampo, who, in an article written by critic Leonidas V. Benesa for the *Philippines Daily Express* (12 May 1978), had been derided by art critics and connoisseurs for his marked lack of creativity and innovation. Benesa wrote that the critics said, "Ocampo is no longer as creative as he used to be, or that in any case, he is on a plateau, basking in the adulation of admirers."

Beyond his critics, Ocampo's experimentation in his final years was brought about by one fateful meeting of the First Friday Group at the house of Vicente Manansala in Binangonan. While having their usual chitchats, Cesar Legaspi, wrote Benesa, "suddenly lashed out at both the host and Ocampo for having allowed themselves to fall into the rot of complacency and repetition." Another article, this time in *Journal* (23 April 1978), reported that the ever-reserved and soft-spoken Legaspi "suddenly lost his cool and started berating Manansala, then Ocampo, and almost everyone else around. It was a shock to everyone, and Ocampo virtually thrilled in it, seeing it as a good sign that his introverted friend has long at last gone around to expressing himself—as a human being and an artist."

Angel G. de Jesus, in his "Vignettes" column on *Business Day*, reported that Legaspi said the following words, "The



ABOVE AND BELOW: HR Ocampo in 1978, painting his masterpieces that would be included in his third (and last) solo exhibition. Shown in the painting is *Good Friday in Caloocan*, which was auctioned by Leon Gallery in June of last year. The painting on offer at this sale, *Make Haste Slowly*, was among the last set of major works that HR painted before he died in December 1978.

trouble with you, Nanding, is that you are thinking like an old man. You don't experiment anymore."

De Jesus then followed, "A postscript to the incident was the explanation given by Betty, Cesar's wife, that his sudden change of personality was caused by a drug administered by his doctor for an ailment he was suffering from at that time."

Meanwhile, Ocampo, as articulated by de Jesus, believed that "Legaspi's outburst was good for his friend," and this outlook is "indicative of [Ocampo's] maturity." Ocampo also came to his own defense, with de Jesus writing, "Ocampo, however, claims that he continues to study and experiment, but the improvements and changes that he introduces in his work may not be noticed by the casual onlooker." (This may ring true, especially considering that Ocampo just turned to acrylic painting for the first time in his career in 1974.)

However, Ocampo did not let Legaspi's criticism slide like that. Ocampo's ensuing works from that unexpected luncheon subverted his vivid, tropical colors and, instead, significantly reduced his palette to only red, black, and white. The first seven works of this style would be exhibited at the Manila Peninsula Gallery in Makati in celebration of Ocampo's 67th birthday (This exhibit was also only Ocampo's third solo show). Of this new phase in Ocampo's career, Benesa wrote, "...The seven paintings are a serious attempt to break the spell by doing something different. The forms and shapes aren't different, but it is the first

One of H.R. Ocampo's Last Major Works

An Experimental Piece in Red, White, and Black

by ADRIAN MARANAN



time Ocampo has tried to paint paintings in black and white, the two color polarities, with the color red used to accentuate the design dramatically."

The most prominent of these works was *When Aries Met a Bull*, an evocation of Legaspi's berating rants and so-titled since Legaspi's zodiac sign was Aries, which precedes Taurus, the bull. Another significant piece from the Manila Pen exhibition was *Good Friday in Caloocan*, which was auctioned at Leon Gallery in June last year.

There are other works by Ocampo exploring the red-black-white triad that were not exhibited at the landmark Manila Pen show. *Make Haste Slowly* was one. *Make Haste Slowly* is the English translation of a popular Latin phrase "*Festina lente*," denoting to move swiftly yet still acting with prudence and care. In this work, Ocampo's forms seemingly gracefully move into the center of the composition, and they strive to connect and converse with each other. The reds are put in such a way that it dramatically enlivens the composition. True to its title,

the forms and the overall composition are marked by their looseness, with each form dynamically merging in Ocampo's signature bold fluidity and lively charm, falling into place like puzzle pieces. The painting is a living, breathing unit akin to a human acting instinctively yet moving with willpower. Even without oil's inherent luminosity, the organic forms make the composition "glow" due to Ocampo's threefold principle of "unity, coherence, and emphasis."

Make Haste Slowly can also allude to that intriguing First Friday Group luncheon, when his dear friend, the intoxicated Legaspi, emerged from his reticent cocoon and finally had the guts to spill out his outburst of criticism towards his long-time *amigo*. For H.R. Ocampo, to address criticism is to answer it swiftly but surely—and in his own special case, a suite of new paintings reduced to only three colors that were done in a short span of time yet still emphasizing his identity as a foremost master of his own game, the country's dazzling colorist who once breathed a new sense of reality into his rather abstract forms.

A Collector's Tale from South Africa

The John 'Jeck' Ovenstone Amorsolo Story

by ANDREW AND IAN OVENSTONE.



ABOVE: Portrait of John 'Jeck' Ovenstone

Our father, John 'Jeck' Ovenstone was managing director, and subsequently Chairman of Ovenstone South West Investments Limited and Ovenstone Investments Limited in the 1950's, 1960's, and 1970's.

The company's main business in the 1950's and 1960's was the production and export of canned sardines/pilchards, fishmeal (*harina de pescado*) and fishoil (*aceite de pescado*).

Jeck was also joint managing director with Abe Shapiro of Federal Marine, the Namibian fishing industry's canned fish distribution agent.

From 1955 onwards, the Philippines became our most important canned fish customer, and Jeck and Abe traveled two or three times a year to Manila for the following ten years.

We produced the Del Monte, Ayam, and Green Dragon brands of sardines for the Philippines. I recall being in our factory when over 700,000 cans of sardines were labeled for the Philippines in one day.

In 1962, Jeck decided to build a holiday house on the edge of the Indian Ocean, one hour's drive to the East of

Cape Town, and decided to use Philippine-made bamboo furniture extensively both internally, and externally.

In 1963 or 1964, he purchased four Amorsolo paintings from a gallery in Manila, three of which are with you now. The 4th was inherited by our sister and sold circa 2013.

Jeck passed away in 1997. To this day, my brother, Ian, has the Philippine-made bar, and I have eight of Jeck's Philippine-made armchairs adapted for outside use.

It might also be of interest that I acquired a magnificent sculpture of a Cape Eagle owl from the sculptor, James Doran Webb made from old driftwood in Cebu, the Philippines, and this receives much admiring attention from our many visitors.

We understand that he did view an exhibition of Amorsolo's works painted in 1963 at a gallery which represented the artist. It was typical of Jeck, when he fell in love with paintings, to buy several rather than one.

We hope that these paintings end up in worthy hands after giving our family such pleasure for more than 60 years.

The Ovenstones:

Pioneering Namibia's Fishing Industry

Walvis Bay – Etosha Fishing Corporation (Pty) Ltd was formerly the Walvis Bay Canning Company which pioneered Namibia's fishing industry in 1943.

But the roots of Etosha Fishing go right back to the start of the century – to the arrival at the Cape of one of the first famous fishing entrepreneurs and to the fortuitous shipwreck of an early passenger liner. In 1900 John Ovenstone arrived at the Cape with his teenage son, Robert, leaving behind him a fish curing and smoking business in Glasgow, Scotland and the rest of his family.

Fishing was in his blood and it was to the sea that Ovenstone turned. His first problem was to acquire a boat. They simply were not to be had at prices he could afford. Then in May 1901 the Tantallon Castle was wrecked off Robben Island and he was able to buy one of her lifeboats. He put in a deck, rigged her out with sail and named her Scotia. She was the first of the Ovenstone vessels and equipped with herring nets he and his son, Robert, put her to work.

In 1902, when the rest of the family came out, father and son had extended their interests to sealing. In 1904 they started rock lobster catching and canning business, making their own cans.

In 1916 John Ovenstone Ltd was formed with Robert the first chairman. Two years later the Ovenstones built a rock lobster factory at Port Nolloth. In 1922 the family interest was extended to other canning ventures and in 1938 two Dutch built coasters were brought to ply between Cape Town and Port Nolloth.

In 1943 Walvis Bay Canning Company was established and this important event marked the beginning of the fishing industry in Namibia. In October 1949 Walvis Bay Canning Company commissioned Namibia's first fish meal and canning plant. In doing so they pioneered the country's pelagic fishing industry, being more than two years ahead of anyone else.

With the factory soon in full production, April 1953 saw Ovenstone South West Investments Limited going public with its registered address in Walvis Bay. It was the second Ovenstone public company and by the mid-1950s the family had launched 15 business ventures, had 1400 employees and owned or used 50 vessels.

The Namibian operation continued to prosper. As the leader in its field it succeeded in developing a new method of preserving freshly caught pilchards. By using Refrigerated Sea Water (RSW) – a breakthrough by the Walvis Bay Canning Company – the utilisation of pilchards for human consumption was dramatically increased.



ALL PHOTOS: Walvis Bay Canning Company through the years,

Fernando Amorsolo (1892 - 1972)

Vendors

signed and dated 1963 (lower right)

oil on canvas

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

P 4,000,000

PROVENANCE

Acquired directly from the artist

"Amorsolo's penchant for depicting an idealized world is viewed by his critics as the work of someone who has never experienced pain in his life. It is apparent that the artist's preference was not due to a lack of exposure to the ills of society but to a conscious effort to hang on to what is pure and good before the harsh realities of the world shattered his peaceful life in the countryside."

—FERNANDO C. AMORSOLO FOUNDATION,
THE EARLY YEARS

Nostalgia permeates deeply in the works of Fernando Amorsolo. Perhaps the most well-known Filipino artist in his contemporary times and beyond, Amorsolo changed the Philippine art landscape when his vivid sunlit landscapes stood out amongst dreary, gray-lit canvases. With the exception of his war pieces that tackled the Philippines' plight during the Second World War, his oeuvre consists mostly of sun-drenched countryside scenes.

This particular piece, done in 1963, is a nostalgic trip down memory lane. This decade has been a fruitful year for Amorsolo – the past centuries had proved him an excellent artist, and he continues to reap his rewards. Just a few years from now, he would be honored with the Republic Cultural Heritage Special Award in Painting, the precursor to the National Artist Award, of which Amorsolo would also be posthumously given in 1972.

In this work, Amorsolo portrays a group of five as they traverse along a knee-high field of rice. The sun shines down on them in warm yellow waves. In the distance, on the horizon, stands a perfectly symmetrical volcano. Though Amorsolo was born in Manila, they had relocated to Daet, Camarines Norte when he was only seven months old and stayed until he was eleven. Daet is a considerable distance from Albay, where Mount Mayon is, but it is not a stretch to believe that this is a scene from his past, only with a slight embellishment.

"Idealized agricultural Philippine scenes are the heart of Amorsolo's work," writer and art historian Jane Allinson once wrote in her essay "Amorsolo and the American Experience." Indeed, Amorsolo's works are a story born out of his life experiences as much as it is the Philippines'. He came of age during a transitory period of Philippine history – from Spanish to American – and he witnessed the country come to its full glory.

Still, despite the rapid modernization that propelled the Philippines into innovation, Amorsolo continued to cling to the rural atmosphere. Steadfast and stubborn, it made Amorsolo the prime candidate for criticism flung towards the classical realist school. Amorsolo, however, remained quiet. He let his works speak for themselves, and speak they did. His romantic idealism is evident in his oeuvre, and it continues to resonate for years to come. They provide the perfect reprieve from the busy life, a testament that continues to be relevant even decades later. *(Hannah Valiente)*

Under Mayon Volcano

Amorsolo Paints a Farmer's Family



Fernando Amorsolo (1892 - 1972)

Sunday Morning Going to Town

signed and dated 1963 (lower right)

oil on canvas

28" x 39 1/2" (71 cm x 100 cm)

P 8,000,000

PROVENANCE

Acquired directly from the artist

By the mid-1960s, Fernando Amorsolo had been showered with much-deserved acclaim, solidifying his incomparable legacy of shaping and defining Philippine art. The most important of these recognitions materialized in 1967 when Amorsolo was honored by the Independence Day National Committee of the Republic of the Philippines with its Republic Cultural Heritage Special Award in Painting. Notably, the Republic Cultural Heritage Award was the precursor to the National Artist Award, which would be posthumously given to Amorsolo in 1972.

More than all these honors, Amorsolo remained steadfast in his commitment to being, first and foremost, a family man.

Amorsolo's daughter, Mrs. Sylvia Amorsolo-Lazo, once recounted in a 2024 interview with Leon Gallery, "My Papa actually was a very family man. He was very loving and generous and instilled in us the values of simplicity, generosity, and truthfulness. Although he had this passion for his art, his family was still number one."

She continued, "When we were young, we used to sleep on the floor with Papa. The eight of us and Mama are all in his studio. All of us stayed in one room...and he was really that close to us until we grew older. That was the time when we had our rooms already, but then, every time we went on the spot, he would always bring his family along, and sometimes he would even play with us after work. After dinner, he would take some time talking with us before we go to sleep."

Sunday Morning Going to Town, with title variations including *Sunday Morning Going to Church* and *Going to the Fields*, is a theme where Amorsolo celebrated the importance of honoring familial values. The family, bearing the utmost singular importance in Filipino

society, became the protagonist in many of his brightly lit canvases, from which a sense of undying optimism in relation to traditional family values of harmony and integrity sprang forth.

Writer and art historian Jane Allinson, in her essay "Amorsolo and the American Experience," published in the book *Maestro Fernando C. Amorsolo: Recollections of the Amorsolo Family*, noted that "Idealized agricultural Philippine scenes are the heart of Amorsolo's work," depicting an idealized agricultural Philippines devoid of the rapid modernization and urbanization that had swept through the country since the American colonial period. Moreover, Amorsolo maintained to capture and preserve an ideal of the Filipino family.

Similarly, *Sunday Morning Going to Town's* theme of family leisure on peaceful Sundays evokes the Amorsolo family's weekends, where the maestro would bring his family to nearby countryside spots and bond with them over picnic lunches while basking in its seemingly boundless peace and quiet, a temporary respite from the hustle and bustle of urban living.

"I remember that every time we would go on the spot, usually Papa would bring us. [But it always] turned out to be a picnic," Mrs. Lazo recounted.

The overall composition of *Sunday Morning Going to Town* is one of brightness and hope. It captures the harmony between the family—from which the importance of collective living is first honed—and the agricultural roots of Filipino society, where people revel in a shared sense of community and belongingness and one with the blessings of nature. Amorsolo hopes that Filipino familial values be maintained for generations to come, values he deemed vanishing along with the blissful beauty of the countryside that he once cherished and loved. (*Adrian Maranan*)

The Blessings of a Blissful Sunday Morning

A Visual Memoir of the Amorsolo Family



Fernando Amorsolo (1892 - 1972)

After the Harvest

signed and dated 1963 (lower right)

oil on canvas

24" x 34" (61 cm x 86 cm)

P 6,000,000

PROVENANCE

Acquired directly from the artist

This 1963 work by Fernando Amorsolo follows a favored theme of his: the rice cycle. It has been portrayed multiple times throughout his oeuvre – from its early mornings to hot afternoons, from its burgeoning beginnings to its plentiful harvests. Or, in this case, the end of a day's hard work, where the people are tying up their harvests as the sun sets on their backs.

Upon his entry into the Philippine art scene, Amorsolo has always been known for the quality of his Philippine sunlight. Here, decades later, his sunlight still shines bright and vibrant. Gone was the brown haze that had dominated the scene prior to his arrival – now, the Philippine landscape glitters under Amorsolo's brush, portraying it as though it is the real thing. With sure, definite strokes that got more assured over the years, Amorsolo's figures bask under the late afternoon sun, their figures slim but strong.

However, the *crème de la crème* of this piece is his handling of the shadows. Says Alfredo Roces in a 1972 interview: "Sunlight in this country washes out color, and Amorsolo must have known this...[however] you look at Amorsolo's paintings and you will see that all the colors are in the shadows."

Indeed, the shadows in this piece do not underwhelm. It is still as vibrant as the rest of the work is, its colors not

mutated in the slightest. It is quintessentially Filipino in its brightness, befitting the artist whose works and life closely tracked that of the Philippines.

The beauty of an Amorsolo landscape shines in this piece, which is dynamic in every aspect. In this work, all his figures are moving – they are active in the wrap-up of their daily activities – as the wind blows through the leaves of the trees.

"[The] surrounding vegetation and the dense masses of bamboo and mango trees teem with organic life, with a sense of contained quivering vibration," *Amorsolo: Love & Passion* writes. "Looking at an Amorsolo landscape, how can any Filipino not respond to the sight of certain specific images that instantly define his Filipino-ness?"

"Despite the reality that many of these rice fields have now given way to subdivisions of the middle class," it continues, "Amorsolo's canvases have become veritable landscapes of the memory, where the mind and heart can move freely as easily as our eyes roam across these illusionary fields of loose, pigmented brushstrokes dispensing light, alive with the intense gleams and skeins of yellow-golds, warm orange, russet browns, sky blues, pale pinks, and vigorous, verdant greens." (*Hannah Valiente*)

After the Harvest

Amorsolo Paints a Glorious Bounty



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

signed and dated 7.VII.82 (lower right)

oil on canvas

42 3/4" x 42 3/4" (109 cm x 109 cm)

P 6,000,000Accompanied by a certificate issued by West Gallery
confirming the authenticity of this lot

Malang's creations focus on plants, women, sundry images of people's daily lives, and his famed barung-barong. *Family Vendors*, painted in 1982, is a quintessential Malang masterwork. It bears his signature overlapping planes, fragmented forms, and gem-toned palette while depicting vendors and women, recurring elements of his paintings. In this oil on canvas piece, Malang's masterful colorwork made his subjects stand out: using vibrant hues to portray his women, and situating them against a dull-colored background, demonstrating his reputation in the art scene as a master colorist.

In 1981, a year before the creation of the work at hand, the Museum of Philippine Art held an exhibition that showcased Malang's 25-year history and legacy in the art scene. This event highlighted the master painter's evolution and development as an artist, from a former cartoonist to one of the most celebrated artists of his time. (Jessica Magno)



ABOVE: Mauro Malang-Santos in his studio © León Gallery Archives

Malang

Fruit and Family to Market



Bernardo Pacquing (b. 1967)*Niccolo Paganini*

signed and dated 2007 (verso)

oil on canvas

72" x 48" (183 cm x 122 cm)

P 1,200,000

PROVENANCE

Finale Art File

Pacquing's work resists easy categorization. Always experimental, always in flux, his art lives somewhere between painting and sculpture; between structure and surrender. He doesn't just use materials; he tests them. Thick with texture, layered with intent, his pieces often feel like they're still becoming. Everyday objects show up unexpectedly, transformed not just in function but in meaning. In his hands, even the most familiar elements feel unsettled, unanchored—opening up a space where contradictions sit comfortably together. This is abstraction not as escape, but as invitation: a space for feeling, doubting, re-seeing.

For Pacquing, abstraction isn't a style; it's a way of thinking. His approach moves beyond the formalism that can often make abstract art feel distant or academic. Instead, he makes it tactile, personal, sometimes even playful. His refusal to conform has earned him recognition both locally and abroad, including the Cultural Center of the Philippines' Thirteen Artists Award and the Freeman Fellowship. But perhaps more importantly, he's carved out room for others to follow—proving that art doesn't need to explain itself to be meaningful, and that freedom can be found in ambiguity.

This spirit is vividly alive in *Niccolò Paganini*, a raw, haunting work that pulls you in through its strange, uneasy energy. Named after the famously eccentric and virtuosic violinist, the painting becomes a kind of abstract portrait; not of likeness, but of intensity. A blocky, yellow-red form sits atop two spindly legs, the "head" dripping with streaks of red and white, like bleeding strings or unraveling nerves. Small black hands dangle mid-air, disembodied yet expressive, caught in a moment of violent grace. The entire figure is both ridiculous and disturbing, echoing the wild, almost mythical energy associated with Paganini himself.

Here, Pacquing turns chaos into character. The background, smeared and ghostly, feels like the aftermath of sound;



ABOVE: Portrait of Niccolò Paganini by Andrea Cefaly © Wikipedia

like noise that's been scraped onto the canvas and left to dry. The figure's absurd proportions and frenzied palette reject any notion of classical portraiture. And yet, there's something deeply honest here. *Niccolò Paganini* becomes less about the man and more about the sensation he leaves behind: an artist possessed, a body barely able to contain its genius. Pacquing paints this not with precision, but with a kind of furious intuition, letting the emotion lead. (*Jed Daya*)



Lee Aguinaldo (1933 - 2007)*Mandala in Green*

signed and dated 1963 (verso)

oil on fiberboard

34" x 36" (86 cm x 91 cm)

P 4,000,000

PROVENANCE

David Conrad Collection

Leon Gallery, *The Asian Cultural Council Auction 2021*, Makati City,
10 October 2021, Lot 129

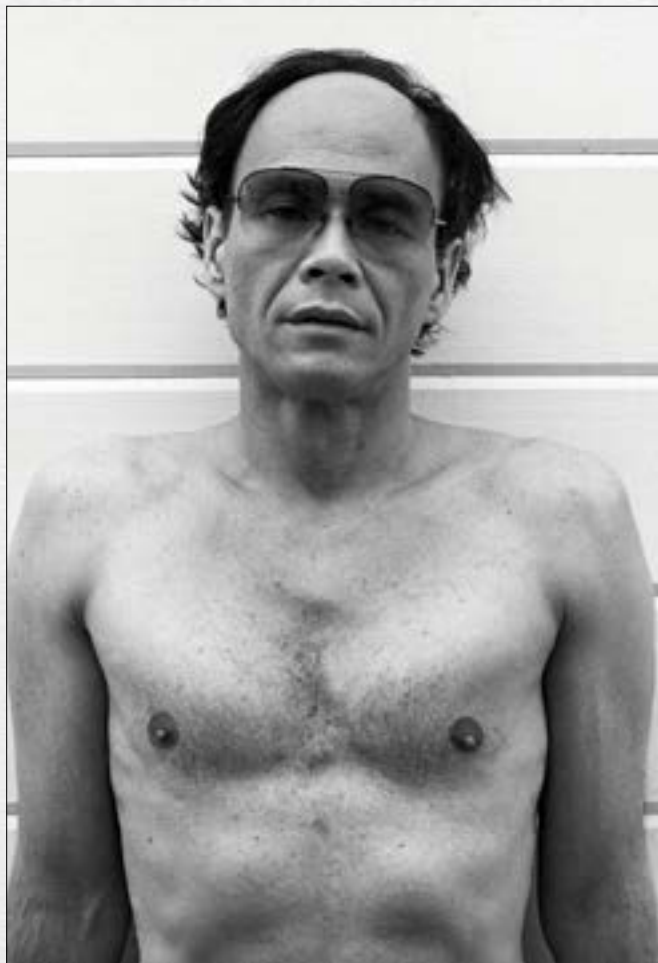
LITERATURE

Chikiamco, Clarissa, Ma. Victoria Herrera, Rod. Paras-Perez, and
Cid Reyes. *The Life and Art of Lee Aguinaldo*. Quezon City: Vibal
Foudnation, Inc. and Ateneo Art Gallery. Full-color illustration and
painting description on pages 192 and 259.

Lee Aguinaldo, on-and-off abstract, on-and-off pure design, but always color-sensuous, is perhaps the best color painter." This note is part of the artist statement in Lee Aguinaldo's 1972 exhibit in which the featured works are bordering on performance—a remark that also rings true or was already precipitated by his early action paintings, like his *Flick* series during the early 1960s. His creative process in these earlier works invites the viewer to imagine an event or performance upon encounter.

A foremost abstractionist and pop artist, Aguinaldo was known as a progressive modernist who challenged notions of art by using different materials and methods and blurring the boundaries of different disciplines in his oeuvre. Concerned with material and process, the developments of Aguinaldo's eclectic modernist styles were influenced by foreign art movements such as the rise of performance art in the West during the sixties and seventies. As what American writer, educator, philosopher and art critic Harold Rosenberg said in 1952, the canvas is "an arena in which to act...What was to go on the canvas was not a picture but an event...."

Mandala in Green, Aguinaldo's captivating 1963 piece, is among his earlier abstract expressionist paintings in which the avant-garde artist suggests a modern element of performativity. He unleashes the expressive qualities of color through an intuitive creative approach rather than the meticulously orchestrated colors and rigid, methodical approach displayed in his acclaimed *Linear* series later on.



ABOVE: Lee Aguinaldo © Wig Tysmans

Lee Aguinaldo Captures the Cosmos



Fabian de la Rosa

At the Dawn of a New Century

A Masterpiece from de la Rosa's Second Artistic Period

by ADRIAN MARANAN

"The art critic Aurelio Alvero viewed this second period of De la Rosa's career as a "transition from emphasis on design to importance of atmosphere, clearly manifesting the influence of the French modern school."

— LUCIANO P.R. SANTIAGO, "FABIAN DE LA ROSA, 20TH CENTURY FILIPINO MASTER," IN FABIAN DE LA ROSA AND HIS TIMES

It is an indisputable fact that Fabian de la Rosa shaped the trajectory of Philippine painting at the dawn of the 20th century, a crucial period of transition from one colonial empire to another. In this milieu, Philippine painting was freeing itself from the confines of Spanish academism towards the relaxed and liberated atmosphere of Impressionism, thanks to Luna and Hidalgo's exposure to French modernism.

"De la Rosa was the transition between the end of the Spanish period and the beginning of the American occupation," wrote Alfredo Roces in his footnotes in his monograph on Fernando Amorsolo. "...Having been abroad twice, [de la Rosa] even tried to incorporate some of the impressionist influences..."

The art historian and critic Aurelio Alvero (Magtanggul Asa) divided de la Rosa's career into three distinct yet overlapping periods. Of his first period, Alvero wrote as "reveal[ing] an academical art, whose dark tones seek the classical. He details figures but misses atmosphere. De la Rosa's *magnum opus* of his first period is the iconic *Planting Rice*, which won the gold medal at the 1904 St. Louis International Exposition, making him only the fourth Filipino artist to garner international recognition after Simon Flores, Luna, and Hidalgo.

Planting Rice can be best described as possessing "the principles of painstaking drawing and harmonious colors," as the art historian Luciano P.R. Santiago put it in his essay "Fabian de la Rosa, 20th Century Filipino Master."

By the second decade of the 1900s, de la Rosa would begin his creative metamorphosis, emancipating himself from the overtly elaborate and design-centered realm of his academic upbringing. De la Rosa's artistic renaissance is attributed to his two-year European sojourn as a *pensionado*.

De la Rosa was supposed to leave for Spain in 1898 to study under a scholarship grant at the famed Real Academia de Bellas Artes de San Fernando. However, this did not materialize when the second phase of the Philippine Revolution broke out. In 1908, de la Rosa's dream of studying abroad finally materialized when his foremost patron, the famous Dr. Ariston Bautista Lin, through funding from his own *Compania General de Tabacos*, sponsored his scholarship to Europe.

De la Rosa found the dynamic artistic climate of Europe suitable to his creative impulses; he saw in their unbridled grandeur, for the very first time, the works of the legendary European *maestros* hanging in major museums, which he had only previously seen in magazines. "For the first time, he beheld, studied, and copied the works of the old masters in European museums, which he had only seen previously in poor copies," wrote Santiago. "He also painted landscapes and the portraits of notables in Rome and Paris, such as the Countess Berny."

De la Rosa enrolled at the Academie Julian in Paris and studied under the famous French portraitist Marcel-André Baschet. Notably, the Academie Julian was highly regarded

RIGHT: De la Rosa working in his studio. © Reproduced in the book *Fabian de la Rosa and His Times* **LEFT:** Fabian de la Rosa (seated) together with the faculty of the University of the Philippines School of Fine Arts in 1935. De la Rosa joined its faculty in 1910 immediately after he returned from Europe. He would become its Director in 1926, serving until shortly before his death in 1937. Standing from left to right: Ambrocio Morales (engraving), Ramon Peralta (painting), Dr. Toribio Herrera (painting), Irineo Miranda (watercolor), Pablo C. Amorsolo (painting), Teodoro Buenaventura (painting), and Vicente Rivera y Mir (painting). © Reproduced in the book *Fabian de la Rosa and His Times*



for its inclusive learning environment, contrasting with its more famous yet conservative sister, the Ecole des Beaux-Arts. The liberal training the Academie Julian offered not only nurtured the development of avant-garde styles but also encouraged numerous foreign artists to hone their artistic talents (the Ecole des Beaux-Arts was notorious for its ridiculously difficult French examination, an obstacle to aspiring foreign students), including de la Rosa, the Mexican muralist Diego Rivera, American impressionists Theodore Robinson and Robert Henri, French Post-Impressionist Paul Sérusier, Cubist pioneer Fernand Leger, Fauvist leader Henri Matisse, and Dadaist icon Marcel Duchamp.

De la Rosa would return to the Philippines in 1910, armed with a newfound sense of artistry. The work at hand, titled *Portrait of a Man with a Hat*, was painted by de la Rosa immediately after his homecoming. This period would mark de la Rosa's Impressionist phase, making him a key figure in the development of Philippine Impressionism.

During this time, de la Rosa had also just joined the faculty of the newly established University of the Philippines School of Fine Arts as an instructor in decorative arts, which would become his primary source of income alongside painting genre scenes and portraits of European and American expats.

Baschet's influence is discerned through the work's lighter atmosphere, contrasting with the heavier, darker undertones of de la Rosa's paintings during his first artistic

phase, where he was under the rigid spell of classicism. The work possesses impressionistic undertones, discernible in how de la Rosa juxtaposes his use of a lighter color scheme with his solid foundation in classical realism, resulting in a palpable airiness. The lighter palette also emphasizes the mood, implying a lack of tension between the sitter and the painter and a refined elegance that speaks of a renewed glow in one's creative vision.



ABOVE: A similar painting, titled *Man in White Suit (Portrait of Luis Leon Lasa)*, 1921, oil on canvas. Mr. and Mrs. Paulino Que Collection. © Reproduced in the book *Fabian de la Rosa and His Times*



80

Fabian de la Rosa (1869 - 1937)

Portrait of a Man with a Hat

signed and dated 1910 (lower right)

oil on canvas

29" x 19" (74 cm x 48 cm)

P 1,000,000

PROVENANCE

Private Collection, Paris



81

Elaine Navas (b. 1964)

Sasha
signed and dated 2020 (lower right)
oil on canvas
72" x 48" (183 cm x 122 cm)

P 900,000

Accompanied by a certificate issued by Silverlens
confirming the authenticity of this lot

Elaine Navas's paintings, in their entirety, border on something almost sculptural. She emphasizes texture and depth, the thick impasto of oil paint adding the sense of touch that transforms her works into something of a three-dimensional statue.

With her 2020 *Sasha*, Navas's focus on sensuality and movement is highly evident. Her rich, impastoed strokes

capture texture and form quite captivatingly. Her interview with Tony Godfrey revealed that during the pandemic (which started in 2020, the same year as *Sasha*), Navas was homesick for the Philippines. That anxiousness and yearning are evident through her short, staccato brush strokes. The edges of the canvas seem to crumble in from the edge towards the center, a vignette in the three-dimensional world. (*Hannah Valiente*)



82

Ang Kiukok (1931 - 2005)

Fish
signed and dated 1966 (lower right)
watercolor on paper
17 1/4" x 26" (44 cm x 66 cm)

P 1,000,000

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

Ang Kiukok's fish paintings, like many of his works, are visceral and violent. He is an artist of the macabre, and under his hands, the fish are nothing more than bare bones and skeletons, their scales forgotten as Kiukok opts to reduce them to skin and bones.

The same can be said of this 1966 work, aptly titled *Fish*. Heavy with his usage of darkness, one can only barely

get a glimpse of the fish below it, still stained red and cloaked in black. The fish in question, much like many of his subjects, is broken down to its barest essentials, sharp and angular with a distinct foreboding sense. The still fish is splayed open on what one could assume is a table, its internal skeletal structure on display for all to see.

In the stillness, Kiukok did what he does best in *Fish*: despair and discombobulate his viewers. He does not shy away from the uncomfortable; instead, he revels in it, creating an oeuvre that is harsh as it is beautiful. (*Hannah Valiente*)

Baliuag Comoda Altar

1890s

Narra wood (*Pterocarpus indicus*), Kamagong wood (*Diospyros discolor*/*Diospyros blancoi*), Lanite wood (*Kibatalia gitingensis*), Carabao bone

H: 48" (122 cm)

L: 23 3/4" (60 cm)

W: 60" (152 cm)

P 1,000,000

PROVENANCE

Baliuag, Bulacan

Private Collection

This handsome comoda has a solid 1.0" inch-thick molded top of "golden narra" wood. The central portion has two smaller drawers over four big drawers. The two smaller drawers are embellished with neoclassical panels with convex edges of lanite line inlay punctuated at the corners with stylized stars of triangle- and circle-shaped carabao bone inlay; under the keyholes are concave sections accented with triangle-shaped inlay. The two drawers are separated by a plaque --- a panel with convex edges of lanite line inlay with a stylized flower of six inwardly turned triangle-shaped bone inlay surrounding a circle-shaped inlay at the center. The four big drawers are similarly adorned with panels with convex edges and stylized stars at the corners; also under the keyholes are concave sections accented with bone inlay. The drawer surrounds under the smaller drawers are decorated with a series of diamond-shaped bone inlay while those between the big drawers are adorned with a double series of rectangular bar-shaped bone inlay.

The drawers are flanked by reeded pilasters (engaged columns) of kamagong wood. Flanking the drawers are panels embellished with four sets of circular line inlay containing stylized flowers composed of cartwheel incised circles surrounded by oval-shaped bone inlay edged by triangle-shaped inlay. Flanking the panels are similar reeded pilasters of kamagong wood. The sides of the cabinet have doors that enclose additional storage of three shelves each; the doors are decorated with neoclassical panels with convex edges punctuated with double lanite line inlay with a series of diamond-shaped carabao bone inlay, a circle is in the center containing alternating upright and upturned triangle-shaped bone inlay in turn enclosing concave line inlay simulating petals, with a stylized flower of circle-shaped bone inlay centered by diamond-shaped inlay inside; the four corners of the panel are accented with stylized stars of triangle- and circle-shaped bone inlay.

The whole cabinet is supported by a thick molding over a "cenefa" apron; the thick molding is embellished with a running pattern of large diamond-shaped bone inlay while the cenefa is adorned with lanite line inlay enclosing



ABOVE: The Romeo Jorge Baliuag Altar Comoda © León Gallery Archives

a series of stylized stars composed of triangle- and diamond-shaped bone inlay. Under the four pilasters in front are four unusual reeded urn feet and there are two feet at the rear.

Basically, what the innovative Bulaqueno cabinetmaker did was to add to the storage capacity of a standard four-drawer Baliuag comoda by adding half of a two-door comoda to its sides, increasing access to three sides of the cabinet and almost doubling its capacity. Interesting work.

This elegant comoda altar represents the last beautiful phase in the evolution of the Baliuag "comoda" or chest of drawers (or two-door cabinet) which began in the early 1800s with a simple chest of four drawers of golden narra wood that was gradually ornamented with kamagong line inlay. As the decades passed during the 1800s, the inlay became more elaborate with equally fine craftsmanship, but it then came to the point of decadence in the 1900s wherein the workmanship became bastardized and deteriorated. When resin components were introduced to supplant wooden parts, and when synthetic plastics/acrylics were substituted for organic carabao bone and kamagong and lanite wood inlay, the end had finally come for the Baliuag furniture tradition.

A Graceful Gilded-Age Comoda With Six Drawers & Two Side Cabinets

by AUGUSTO MARCELINO REYES GONZALEZ III



There are only a few examples of those outlier, bespoke Baliuag comodas which were produced from 1850–1875, and all of them are beautiful. There is a stellar, prizewinning example with splendid bone and kamagong inlay from the Don Dr Maximo Viola y Sison–Dona Maria Juana Roura y Santa Maria estate in San Miguel de Mayumo, Bulacan and barangay Lourdes, Quezon city; it is now in the Paulino Que and Hetty Kho collection. There is another stellar example with beautiful bone and kamagong floral inlay from the Don Francisco de Yriarte y Menendez–Dona Balmora Alveyra-Espiritu (y) de la Chica estate in Santa Cruz, Laguna and Manila; it is now in a private collection in Urdaneta village. There is one example with discreet bone and kamagong inlay originally from the Bello–Gonzales–Cruz estate in Baliuag, Bulacan which devolved to the Dr Luis Uytancoy Santos–Fermina Bello–Pilar Santos estate in barangay Santo Nino (originally barrio Pariancillo), Malolos, Bulacan; it is now in the the Xavier Pardo de Tavera Loinaz and Mercedes Pestano Jacinto collection. There is still one beautiful example in situ with beautiful bone and kamagong floral inlay, still with the original

family in its original 1840s ancestral house in Baliuag, Bulacan.

A variant of the Baliuag comoda was a long Victorian-style sideboard with three drawers on top and a central shelf at the bottom flanked by two cabinet doors, which were produced from 1875–1900. It was similar to the Baliuag Sheraton mesa altar except that instead of six to eight tapering Hepplewhite legs, it had a central shelf at the bottom flanked by two cabinet doors. It usually came with a matching back panel centered by a mirror flanked by shelves. Two examples are known: a stellar example full of intricate bone and kamagong inlay originally from the Don Felipe Buencamino y Siojo I–Dona Juana Arnedo estate in barrio Capalangan, Apalit, Pampanga which devolved to the (first elected Governor of Pampanga during the American period) Don Macario Arnedo y Sioco–Dona Maria Espiritu y Dungo estate in the same place, which in turn devolved to the Atty Augusto Diosdado Sioco Gonzalez–Rosario Lucia Espiritu Arnedo estate in barrio Sulipan, Apalit, Pampanga and Quezon city. Another



example entirely in kamagong wood with discreet bone and kamagong inlay was sold off by Osmundo Esguerra ("Omeng") in the early 2000s. Current whereabouts unknown. Both the Buencamino–Arnedo and the Esguerra sideboards had already lost their original, mirrored back panels.

There was a very similar "comoda altar" from 1890–1910 to this cabinet which was auctioned at the Leon Gallery in 2017. Eight years later in 2025, this beautiful example from the same period has come up for auction.

The furniture tradition of Baliuag, Bulacan goes back to the early nineteenth century, to the talented Bulaqueno cabinetmakers, the Hispano–Moresque artistic traditions (which included the exquisite art of inlay), the peripatetic American traders, the American desire for souvenirs of exotic Las Islas Filipinas, the American Federal style of furniture (1780–1830), and venturesome American capital... all those factors coalesced to produce neoclassical, elegant, light Baliuag furniture of dark/mahogany–stained, golden,

honey-colored narra wood ("Pterocarpus indicus") with discreet carabao bone, kamagong, and lanite inlay. The furniture produced included single chairs, armchairs, lounging chairs ("sillas perezosas"), dining chairs, hall tables, Sheraton altar tables ("mesas altares"), center tables, side tables, service tables, segmented dining tables ("cabeceras"), "sola pieza" dining tables ("cabeceras"), sideboards ("los aparadores"), chests ("baules"), commodes ("comodas"), chests of drawers ("comodas"), cabinets, wardrobes ("armarios"), tester beds, night tables ("mesitas de noche"), etc. Many Baliuag furniture pieces were directly or indirectly exported to the United States, Spain, France, United Kingdom, Germany, Mexico, Latin America. Today, there is a renewed appreciation for antique Baliuag furniture among interior designers, decorators, and homeowners in the United States and Europe, as their light, easily movable neoclassical forms "simply jive with the current global, casual, easygoing vibe."

Jigger Cruz (b. 1984)

Untitled

signed and dated 2015 (lower right)

oil on canvas

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

P 1,600,000

PROVENANCE

Acquired directly from the artist by the present owner

To view the works of Jigger Cruz is to be conscious of the *above* and the *below*. The *above* is the thick, three-dimensional layers of paint squeezed out of the tube and left to dry as globs of paint. These paint streaks almost overwhelm the canvas, covering the *below* with thick layers of oil and pigment. The *below*, meanwhile, is another painting altogether, often done in the Western style of realism, and this is almost entirely covered up, cut, slashed, or burned.

The works of Jigger Cruz evoke such a visceral and vital reaction through their 'defacement' of classical pieces. His calculated defacement is, at its essence, a fight between Western realism and the many branches of indigenous art style. Though almost totally covered, it is impossible to fully blot out the canvas below.

"Even though buried under a heavy lattice of multicolored paint, the basic compositional elements of the classical painting can be traced and understood by the viewer, if not with their eyes, then with their mind," Benny Nemerofsky Ramsay wrote in *A Mark from the Periphery*.

Indeed, despite the heavy coverage of the paint, it is as though the painting below shines through it, a testament to the Western tradition and its permanent etch on the people's consciousness worldwide. Cruz's struggle as he reaches this crossroad is evident through his works – his act of squeezing paint out of a tube is an act of discourse. It is an attempt to draw the line from the West's seeming omnipresence within the art world, if that line is possible. (Hannah Valiente)



ABOVE: Jigger Cruz © León Gallery Archives

Jigger Cruz

The Drama of Color and Texture



Carlos “Botong” V. Francisco (1912–1969)

Study for Sinigang

ca. 1959

watercolor on paper

15" x 9" (38 cm x 23 cm)

P 1,400,000

LITERATURE

Flores, Patrick D., Carlos Francisco II, Alice G. Guillermo, Ino M. Manao, Roberto G. Paulino, and D.M. Reyes. *The Life and Art of Botong Francisco*. Quezon City: Vibal Foundation, Inc., 2010. Full-color illustration and painting description on pages 138 - 139 and 229.

Samson, Ditas R. *Botong Francisco: A Nation Imagined*. Published in conjunction with the exhibition of the same title at the Ayala Museum from December 2012 to March 2013. Makati City: Ayala Foundation, Inc., 2012. Full-color illustration and painting description on page 67.

EXHIBITED

Ayala Museum, *Botong Francisco: A Nation Reimagined*, Makati City, 4 December 2012 - 31 March 2013



TOP: The finished painting, formerly in the Don Luis Ma. Araneta Collection and now in the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas Collection. *Sinigang*, 1959, oil on canvas © Painting Reproduced in the book *The Life and Art of Botong Francisco* **BOTTOM:** Don Luis Ma Araneta

LUIS MARIA ZARAGOZA ARANETA

1916 – 1984

Architect, philanthropist, art and antique connoisseur/scholar/collector, heritage advocate, Amphitryon (host to the gods)/partygiver nonpareil

Luis Maria Zaragoza Araneta was a son of the distinguished lawyer Don Gregorio Araneta y Soriano and the heiress Dona Carmen Zaragoza y Roxas. Gregorio was the son of D Felix Araneta y Militante of Molo, Iloilo and Dna Paz Soriano y Ditching of Molo, Iloilo and Binondo, Manila. Carmen was the daughter of Don Jose Zaragoza y Aranquizna and of Dona Rosa Roxas y Arce. Dona Rosa Roxas y Arce belonged to the old and prominent Roxas clan of Manila but she accumulated her own vast fortune in real estate and other holdings; she was a second cousin to the affluent sisters Dona Carmen de Ayala y Roxas de Roxas and Dona Trinidad de Ayala y Roxas de Zobel (matriarchs of the present-day Roxas and Zobel clans).

Postwar, Luis married Emma Benitez of the famous clan of intellectuals and educators from Pagsanjan, Laguna and they had three children: Patricia, Gregorio, and Elvira. The youngest daughter Elvira Araneta was named for the beautiful and witty socialite Elvira Bermejo Ledesma-Manahan, Mrs Constantino P Manahan, who was Luis' best female friend.

Many famous buildings in Manila were designed by Luis: Makati Medical Center, Manila Doctors Hospital, Our Lady of Lourdes church (Quezon city), the Immaculate Conception church now cathedral (Cubao), Times Theater, Botica Boie, Araneta bldg, Tuason bldg. Luis moved to his new house at #52 McKinley road, Forbes Park in 1959.

For the next two decades, his home was the epicenter of Manila high society with its endless parties. Rich and beautiful ladies like Elvira Ledesma-Manahan, Chito Madrigal-Vazquez-Collantes, Chona Recto-Ysmael-Kasten, Mary Hernandez-Prieto, Prissy de la Fuente-Sison, Josie Trinidad-Lichauco, Conching Chuidian Sunico, Pacita de los Reyes-Phillips and rich and handsome gentlemen like Jaime Zobel de Ayala, Senator Gerry Roxas, Dr Tito Manahan, Joe Guevara, Dr Chichos Vazquez, Ramon Valera all congregated there. When asked what made a Luis Araneta party great, high society chronicler Maurice Arcache answered: "The crowd! Oh the crowd, the crowd, the crowd!" (*Augusto Marcelino Reyes Gonzalez III*)

The Poet of Angono

Depicts the Traditional Lakeside Sinigang

From the Don Luis Ma. Araneta Collection



This petite watercolor work is Botong Francisco's study for his 1959 mural *Sinigang*, formerly in the collection of Don Luis Ma. Araneta and now in the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) collection.

The work features a couple preparing their hearty *sinigang na isda* meal. The woman is seen prepping and slicing the fish, which her husband has freshly caught. Placed on the banana leaf are the other ingredients: tamarinds, tomatoes, and *siling haba*. Another man on the lower left side prepares the bamboo to be used as firewood. The

work manifests an "after the fish harvest" / "after a day's bountiful catch" theme, especially highlighted by the two other men resting on the upper part of the composition.

Study for Sinigang would remain in the collection of Don Luis Araneta. It would be exhibited at the Ayala Museum in the Botong retrospective titled *Botong Francisco: A Nation Reimagined*, mounted in celebration of the venerable Angono artist's birth centennial in late 2012. (Adrian Maranan)

Fernando Zóbel (1924 - 1984)

Talgo
signed (lower left and verso), titled, and inscribed
"ZOBEL 523 TALGO" (verso)
1962
oil on canvas
15" x 18" (38 cm x 46 cm)

P 7,000,000

PROVENANCE
Private Collection, Michigan
Subastas Abalastre, Subasta 12, Madrid, 10 - 12 February 2016, Lot
180

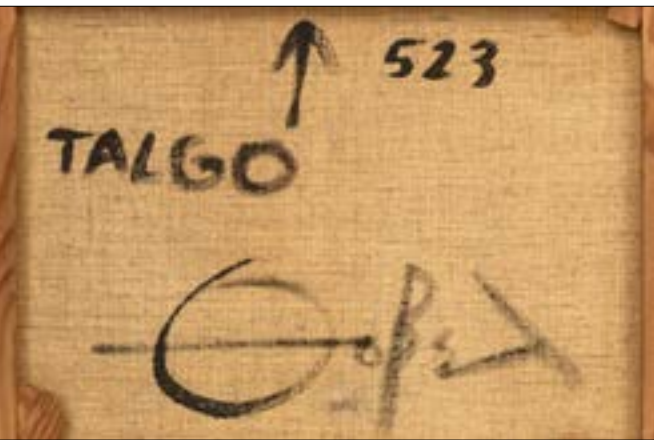
LITERATURE
De la Torre, Alfonso and Rafael Pérez-Madero. *Fernando Zóbel: Catalogue Raisonné of Paintings (1946 - 1984)*. Madrid: Fundación Azcona, 2022. Listed as "62-48 TALGO" with full-color illustration and painting description on page 248.

We can say without a doubt that 1962 was one of the most important years in Fernando Zobel's career. By then, his artistic language had fully matured, and he had embraced the deep reflection on his work that came with the "serie negra". "Talgo" is an amazing artwork.

Painted in August, it's one of the very few small format canvases Zobel has ever created. The size - 38 x 46 cm, which Zóbel used for the first time in 1962, it's used in only nine works from that year, and in ten additional pieces made between 1964 and 1976. Regardless of the canvas size, Zobel's work and his visual language remains powerful and effective. Even in a smaller format, his technique is just as strong and compelling. When looking at a photo of Talgo, one might easily think it's a much larger piece.

The title refers to the high-speed train "Talgo," which marked the beginning of the modernization of Spain's railway network. Unlike most of the artist's works—especially within his "serie negra"—this title makes a clear suggestion of movement, evoking the concept of a "saeta" (a type of arrow or dart), a visual motif he had explored in earlier pieces. In this painting, we could think of a train approaching from the right side—once again invoking the diagonal composition that Zóbel loved so much. In the lower right, we see what could either be a landscape or perhaps a windmill-like form created by the rapid motion of the train. This diagonal play and the projection of lines—derived from his earlier "saetas"—convey a strong sense of motion, and in this case, the speed of the fast train.

It is in works like these – intimate yet powerful – that Zóbel reveals himself as one of the great painters of his time,



TOP: Talgo train, travelling through Spain in the 60's. ©AHF/MFM/Colección Patentes Talgo BELOW: Verso "ZOBEL 523 TALGO"

capable of expressing a profound idea with a remarkable intensity, even on a small size.

This art piece belonged to the north American artist Julian Hatton, close friend of Fernando Zóbel- something that speaks to the value this work held for the both of them.

Zóbel
Modernist Precision and Speed



Federico Aguilar Alcuaz (1932 - 2011)

Untitled (Tres Marias Series)
signed and dated 1985 (bottom)
oil on canvas
32" x 26" (81 cm x 66 cm)

P 800,000

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

PROVENANCE
Private Collection, Manila

Federico Aguilar Alcuaz's softer, more feminine body of work portrays the more private life of women. Starting from the 1970s, Aguilar Alcuaz built on what critic Alice Guillermo in her 2007 critique *Sightings* described as a genre of "beautiful, long-gowned women with a 19th-century air engaged in a variety of domestic activities." Metaphorically and literally, Aguilar Alcuaz bares these women down to their most private.

The most famous of these is Aguilar Alcuaz's *Tres Marias*. He often depicts a triad of women (though the number fluctuates) as they retire from their social responsibilities. It is the inner workings of a woman's world, defined heavily by sisterhood and femininity that bleeds into their quiet and fierce relationships. It is a girl's girl world, as a popular slang calls it, and with it comes the relative knowledge that you are safe within the group.

This particular piece does not necessarily follow the blueprint for a *Tres Marias* but it is close enough. In the same vein as *Tres Marias* and their long, flowing gown, these two women as depicted as they seemingly retire for the day. One of them is notably in a more comfortable dress, signalling the end of her nighttime preparations.

Aguilar Alcuaz's *Tres Marias* often alludes to the women's implicit trust for each other through their relaxed body posture. This work, an offshoot of the series, remains the same. Through their quiet reflection, these women portray an explicit show of their trust, a testament to Aguilar Alcuaz at his most romantic when he depicts women as he manages to blend in their demure outward nature and vibrant inner life. (Hannah Valiente)



ABOVE: Federico Aguilar Alcuaz © federicoaguilaralcuaz.com

Aguilar Alcuaz
Explores the Womanly Arts





88

Angelito Antonio (b. 1939)

Untitled

signed and dated 1988 (lower right)

oil on canvas

35" x 24" (89 cm x 61 cm)

P 300,000

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

PROVENANCE
Art Circle Gallery



ABOVE: Angelito Antonio and Norma Belleza © León Gallery Archives

With a subject and color palette that are distinctly Filipino, this 1988 piece is a powerful testament to Angelito Antonio's love for his home country and compatriots. In this work, he brings to life a familiar *barrio* and household scene with two people engaged in a heartfelt conversation. Despite the absence of his vibrant palette, this painting still epitomizes the artist's

exceptional command of color and his chosen medium. Antonio's proficient colorwork is also on full display, as he masterfully manipulates using only three colors—black, white, and brown ochre—to wield various tonalities, adding depth and enlivening his image. (*Jessica Magno*)



89

Solomon Sapid (1917-2003)

"Pegasus", one of series

signed and dated 1995

brass

H: 24" (61 cm)

W: 17 1/4" (44 cm)

L: 19" (48 cm)

P 600,000

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

Solomon Sapid continued his artmaking even decades after creating his *Sad Christ* wooden sculpture, which spearheaded his rise in the art scene. His prolific artistry has produced sculpture after sculpture in different media like wood, adobe, and metal. He also explored various themes such as mythical creatures, religious,

historical, mother and child, and sundry images of the Filipino people.

Sapid's unwavering dedication is evident in his meticulous approach to crafting, especially with his metal works. His painstaking process involves cutting metal sheets, welding, and shaping them together. The work at hand portrays a winged horse suspended in motion—a distinct trait of Sapid's sculptures. With its mouth agape and forelegs raised, it seems to be in agony. His body language expresses telltale signs of immense irritation and distress, warning all who encounter it not to go near. (*Jessica Magno*)

Treasures From Ambeth Ocampo's Vault



Juan Luna's silver belt from the Grace Luna de San Pedro Estate

The Emilio Jacinto Quill, Malolos Constitution, Juan Luna's Silver Belt, Hidalgo's Walking Stick, An Album of Bridges & Important Books

by LISA GUERRERO NAKPIL



A relentless author of 35 books and over 3,500 essays and an equally tireless newspaper columnist for the widely-read 'Looking Back', a globe-trotting, sought-after lecturer and the universally adored Hermenegildo B. Reyes Professor of History at the Ateneo de Manila University, public servant and patriot (as chair of the National Historical Commission and National Commission for Culture and the Arts, he never drew a salary), Ambeth R. Ocampo and his nine lives would never run out of accomplishments and accolades.

There is one facet that is little-known : He is a serious collector of Philippine art and antiques with a taste for the delicious details that make each work completely special and that only he could hunt, find, savor — and of course, share with his thousands of readers and fans.

León Gallery is privileged to present a selection of treasures from what Ambeth calls his "Cabinet of Curiosities", some of them revealed for the first time to the public — all of them of historical import.



ABOVE: Ambeth Ocampo in his book-lined studio. RIGHT: Ambeth wearing his medal as "Officer" of the French Order of Arts and Letters.

The Emilio Jacinto Poetry Prize

“Saved from the Melting Pot”



“Yesterday, December 15, was Emilio Jacinto's 149th birthday.

Many years ago I browsed over a "bayong" full of scrap silver at an antique dealers home and picked out a black oxidized pen in the form of a quill with a ribbon (left).

When I asked the price, the dealer weighed it and computed at the spot price for silver per gram. I went home and cleaned it. To my surprise it was a school prize for poetry, awarded to EMILIO JACINTO Y DIZON! (right)

While I found a needle in the proverbial haystack, I regret not going through the "bayong" till the bottom, who knows what else could have been saved from the Meycauayan melting pot.”

—AMBETH R. OCAMPO
DECEMBER 16, 2024

90

Silver Quill

engraved with "Emilio Jacinto Dizon. 1er Premio Concurso de Poesia" 1st prize
ca. 1892, possibly while he was a student at San Juan de Letran

P 80,000

Emilio Jacinto : The Eyes of the Katipunan, The Soul of the Revolution

Andres Bonifacio called Emilio Jacinto “ang mata ng Katipunan at ang kaluluwa ng Himagsikan (the eyes of the Katipunan and the soul of the Revolution”.

Indeed, Jacinto was the all-seeing sentient one, and despite producing wonderful poetry, did not have a poet's dreamy disposition. He was a mover and shaker, and yes, an enabler for the cause of our nation's freedom.

Truth be told, of all the key players of the Philippine Revolution, Emilio Jacinto is the least known but is also

its most unblemished, never sullied by his own second thoughts nor a reputation for being reckless. He comes closest therefore to being that perfect hero to venerate, an even-tempered intellectual but also an action man. He was young but without the conceits of the young, unlike his contemporary Gregorio del Pilar who was overly proud of being a ladies' man. (They were exactly the same age.)

He was idealistic but could get things done and deliver. Jacinto put together the KKK's rule book, the “Kartilya”, setting down in rivetingly convincing prose its vision and mission statements. Media-savvy, he next put together the Katipunan's newspaper “Kalayaan”, which would be our equivalent of Twitter slash X, reputedly growing the organization's following from 300 to 30,000 virtually overnight. He (and Bonifacio) attained this by writing exclusively in Filipino, reaching far more people than Rizal's Noli and Fili which were in Spanish. He never lost any battles, fighting a kind of “hit and run” warfare. After Bonifacio's trial and death, he would retire from the field and became an entrepreneur, founding a cooperative of ranchers and meat-sellers, perhaps the first of its kind, in Laguna. Clever but not cunning, Jacinto would stay loyal to his friend, refusing a position when offered by Mabini, a post in the Aguinaldo cabinet. He would also die the requisite romantically early death, succumbing to something described as “brain malaria.” (Lisa Guerrero Nakpil)



An Album of Photographs of Public Works, 1891-1895

Att. to Chief Engineer Carlos de las Heras

Obras públicas de Filipinas – Distrito de Batangas

Ingeniero Jefe D. Carlos de las Heras

[Public works of the Philippines – District of Batangas – Chief Engineer D. Carlos de las Heras – 1891-95]

album with 20 large format photo documenting bridges over the following Gimalas, Maria Cristina, Viga, Tanauan, and Cauog ni Batangas. Sta Cruz, San Cristobal, Liliw, Oplex, Talaibing, and Aguas Santas, Laguna

P 100,000

CONDITION REPORT

Strong and heavy binding, although worn. Thick pages with gilt edges. Photographs covered with a semitransparent protective sheeting.

This is a unique collection of 20 glossy photos showing the works of infrastructure (official buildings and bridges) that were constructed or were at that time in the process being constructed in Batangas and Laguna between 1891 and 1895. Places mentioned are: a bridge over Cauong river (Batangas), bridges over San Juan river (in Calamba and Tanauan), Government House (Batangas), two bridges over Pansipit river (Batangas), bridge over Viga ravine (Batangas), María Cristina bridge (Batangas), Aguas Santas (curative waters) spa (Laguna), Eiffel-style structure over the old Talaibing, Oplex and Liliw bridges (Laguna), bridges over San Cristóbal and Santa Cruz rivers (Laguna) and bridge over Gimalas river (Batangas). Although some pictures have slight stains caused by the passing of time, the photos are generally in good condition. The bridges are surprisingly modern in style, imitating the Eiffel fashion using steel.

Carlos de las Heras (born in Toledo in 1860) was a top military engineer who was assigned to the Philippine Army in February 1882, with the post of army commander overseas, embarking on May 10 of that year. Arriving in Manila to join the Plaza Command on June 1, he in turn took command of the 4th Company of the Engineers Battalion and later of the 1st Company, with which he marched to Jolo, taking part in the "disciplinary" expedition to find deserters and then against the "Moros" of Taglibi and Sajudin. In those places he carried out several works, among them the improvement of the water supply, which merited the proposal for a special reward. He continued work on them until May 1885 when he returned to Manila, where he worked on different fortification works, being assigned in October of the same year to Cavite, in command of his company, with which he built the battery of



Sangley Point. He kept ascending in the military hierarchy, receiving grants and medals, until he was appointed 2nd-class chief engineer of the Civil Engineering Department of the Philippines, and 2nd class chief of Administration. He led a project for the water sanitation of the city of Manila in 1896. He was in this position in April 1898, when the state of war was declared, due to the outbreak of the conflict with North America. He organized the troops of Engineers of the capital, took part in the offensive reaction directed by Colonel Colorado to withdraw the most advanced detachments in the aqueduct, being included in the honorable capitulation when Manila surrendered to the Americans. Although the new authorities wanted him to continue in his position as municipal engineer, he resigned and returned to active service in January 1899. In April of that year he tried twice to go to the insurgent camp to try to rescue the Spanish prisoners. On May 6, he embarked as a repatriate for the Peninsula, remaining in the 1st Region. In February 1900 he was appointed engineer of the Philippine Tobacco Company.

This collection of photographs is unique and was probably compiled by Carlos de las Heras himself as a dossier of the construction works he was carrying out in the archipelago. (Jorge Mojarro)

The Bridges of Batangas and Laguna

An Important Album of Twenty Photographs, 1891 to 1895



The Malolos Constitution

Political Constitution of the Philippine Republic, enacted on January 22, 1899. Official edition. The Philippine Islands. Printed under the direction of Mr. Z. Fajardo. Barasoain (Bulacan), 1899.
Constitución Política de la República Filipina promulgada el día 22 de enero de 1899. Edición oficial. Islas Filipinas. Impreso bajo la dirección del Sr. Z. Fajardo. Barasoain (Bulacán), 1899.
book: 5 3/4" x 4" (15 cm x 10 cm)
48 pages

CONDITION REPORT
Perfect Condition

Photograph of Gen. Emilio Aguinaldo

with handwritten notation "24 Agosto 1898, Gral. E. Aguinaldo" (24 August 1898, Gen. E. Aguinaldo (verso) Handwritten "Ika 12 ng Junio Taong 1898, Nang Hiyaw ang Kasarinlan ng Filipinas sa Cawit, Cavite (12 June Year 1898, with the first cry of freedom of the Philippines, Kawit, Cavite)
photograph: 7 1/2" x 4 1/4" (19 cm x 11 cm)

CONDITION REPORT
Fair condition.

P 100,000

It seems unnecessary to emphasize that this is a unique and foundational document of the first Philippine republic, of which very few copies exist worldwide and probably none in such perfect condition as the present copy, despite the fragile paper on which it was printed.

The small leaflet is only 45 pages long. It begins with a promulgation decree followed by the text of the Constitution divided into fourteen titles, a chapter of transitory provisions, an additional article and a list of the deputies that made up the National Assembly that approved the Constitution. The Constitution consisted of 39 articles distributed in 14 titles: of the Republic, of the Government, of Religion, of the Filipinos and their national and individual rights, of the legislative branch, of the Permanent Commission, of the executive branch, of the President of the Republic, of the Secretaries of the Government, of the judiciary, of the Provincial and People's Assemblies, of the Administration of the State, of the reform of the Constitution, and of the observance and oath of the Constitution and of the languages.

Beautifully written in Spanish following the model of other constitutions approved in Europe, it was redacted with



very much precision, as a legal document of the upmost importance. It starts with the following lines:

Presidency of the Revolutionary Government of the Philippines

D. Emilio Aguinaldo y Famy, president of the revolutionary government of the Philippines, and captain general, and general in chief of its army:

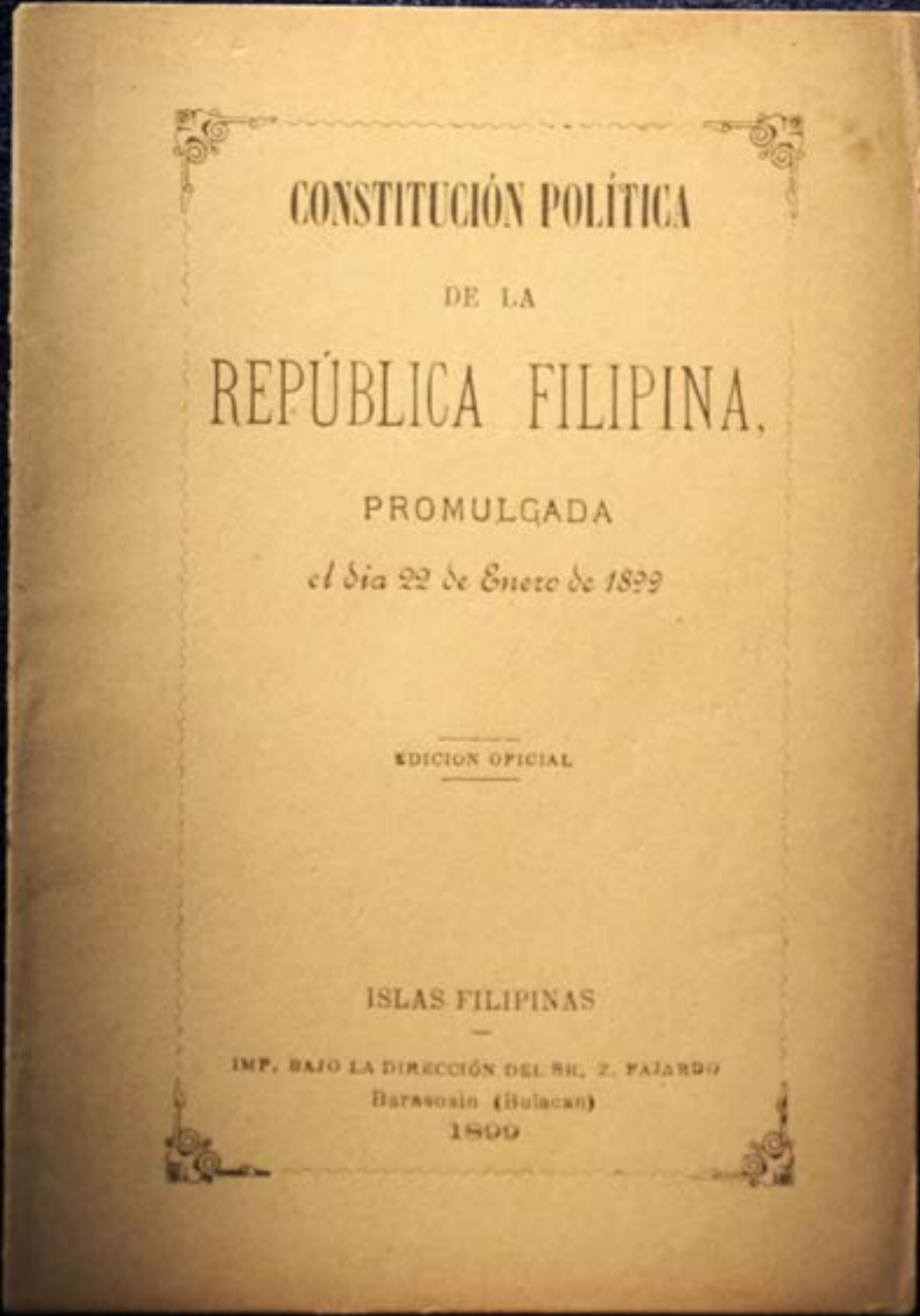
Be it known to all Filipino citizens that the Assembly of Representatives of the Nation, in the use of its sovereignty, has decreed and I have sanctioned the Political Constitution of the State. Therefore:

I command all Authorities both civil and military, of whatever class and dignity, to keep it and cause it to be kept, observed, complied with and executed in all its parts, because it is the sovereign will of the Filipino people. Given at Malolos on the twenty-first day of January, one thousand eight hundred and ninety-nine.
Emilio Aguinaldo.

The President of the Council, Apolinario Mabini.
We the Representatives of the Filipino People, being lawfully convened to establish justice, provide for the common defense, promote the general good and secure the benefits of liberty, imploring the aid of the Sovereign Lawgiver of the Universe to attain these ends, have voted, decreed and sanctioned the following POLITICAL CONSTITUTION.

Both this copy in perfect condition of the first Philippine constitution and the portrait in uniform of General Emilio Aguinaldo are unique documents. (Jorge Mojarro)

The Malolos Constitution:
The Magna Carta of the Filipino Nation
The First Democratic Republic in Asia





93

The Juan Luna Ephemera & Accoutrement

a.) A Personal Bank Draft made out to Juan Luna from the Hong Kong Shanghai Banking Corp, dated May 26, 1896, for the amount of \$170.22
4 1/2" x 9 1/4" (11 cm x 23 cm)

b.) A Silver Belt, of fine chainmail; buckle and tip of the belt finely engraved with leaves
ca. 1880s
H: 1 1/2" (4 cm)
L: 32 1/2" (83 cm)

P 100,000

PROVENANCE
From the Estate of Grace Luna de San Pedro (Mrs. Juan Luna) which was consigned to the Heritage Gallery, Manila.

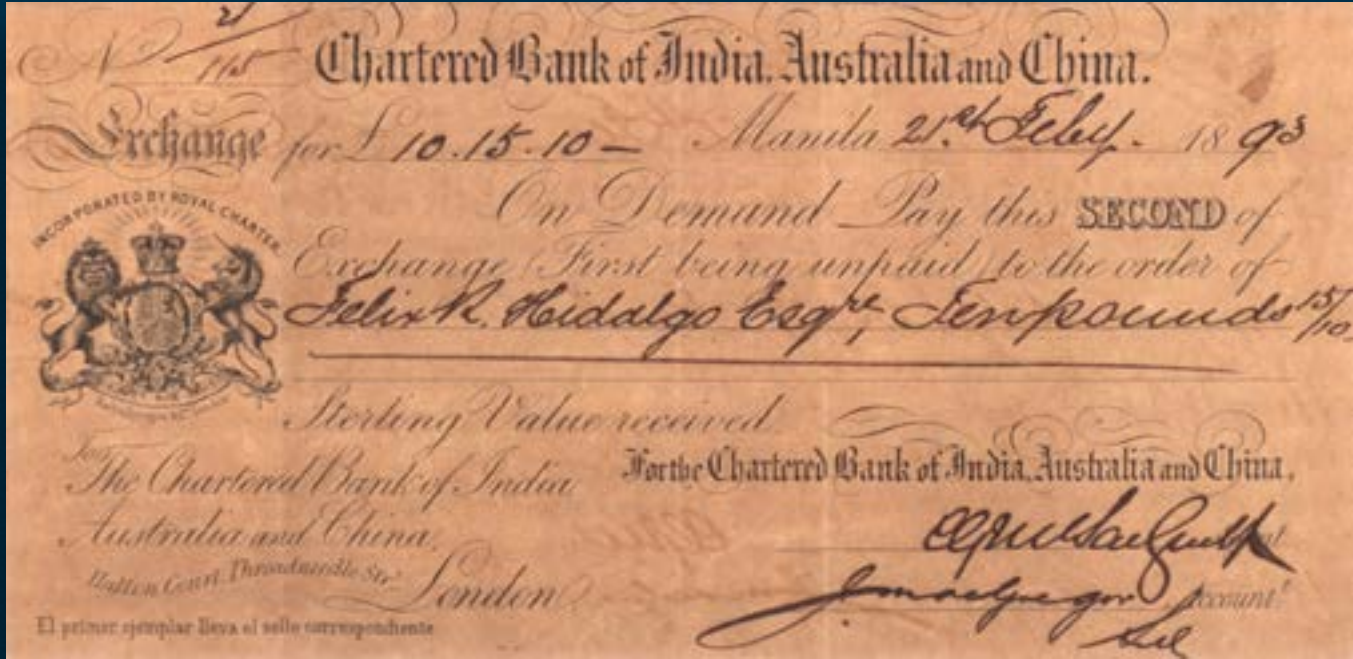
"The bank draft and silver belt of Juan Luna were acquired in the 1980s from Mario Alcantara, part of the Grace Luna de San Pedro Estate. I offered to buy Juan Luna's smock, palette and brushes but Alcantara said these were to be donated to the National Museum, he did pick out the silver belt that came with a black suit and that's all I got on a student's allowance. Most of the Luna memorabilia burned with Heritage Art Gallery"

—AMBETH R. OCAMPO

Both ephemera belong to the most famous artist of his generation, Juan Luna.

Measuring 30 inches in length, the silver belt bears sign of frequent use and was not a trophy or prize (in the same way that Jacinto's silver quill was). The belt shows wear at the hole at 28 inches, an indication of Luna's waistline and litness. It could date from the period of his meteroric rise to acclaim and recognition, from 1881 to 1889, with successive triumphs at the expositions and salons of both Madrid and Paris. (Lisa Guerrero Nakpil)





94

The Felix Resurreccion Hidalgo Ephemera & Accoutrement

a.) A Personal Bank Draft made out to Felix R. Hidalgo from the Chartered Bank of India Australia China, dated Feb 21, 1893, for the amount of £ 0.15.10 4 1/2" x 9 1/4" (11 cm x 23 cm)

b.) A tortoise-shell walking stick, tipped in silver and with gilt and engraved knob with the initials "RH" in silver ferrule
ca.1890s
H: 32 3/4" (83 cm)
D: 3/4" (2 cm)

P 120,000

PROVENANCE
Ex-Felipe Hidalgo Collection



"The walking stick and bank draft came from the estate of Felipe Resurreccion Hidalgo, the dealer said it was reserved for "Rxxx Lxxxx" because of what he thought were the initials on the top.

But I knew it was "R.H." for Resurreccion Hidalgo. When Lxxx didnt turn up at the shop that day, the price went down and I acquired it as part of my cabinet of curiosities."

—AMBETH R. OCAMPO

The Jose Rizal Ephemera

a.) Jose Rizal in Madrid
A reproduction by Miguel Reyes,
featuring a photograph with a faint
signature of Jose Rizal.
(verso) Madrid 1884 in handwritten in pencil.
attached to a card printed with the name Miguel
Reyes Fotographo, Dolores 7, Sta Cruz, Manila, Altos
de "La Fortuna" and dedicated to Barbara Padilla,
dated August 5, 1903
Dona Maria Barbara Padilla de Resurreccion-Hidalgo y
Flores is none other than the mother of Felix Eduardo
Resurreccion Hidalgo y Padilla.
6 1/2" x 4 1/4" (17 cm x 11 cm)

b.) Jose Rizal in HongKong
photograph by Po Chun studios,
No. 80, Queen's Road, Hongkong
4" x 2 1/2 (10 cm x 6 cm)

P 60,000



An Extraordinary Photograph of Two
Juan Luna Masterpieces
“Odalisca” and “Hymén, oh
Hyménée”, At the home and studio of
Juan Luna on Boulevard Arago, Paris

Att. to Felix Resurreccion Hidalgo
With a handwritten notation “Coin d'Atelier” —
“Hidalgo”,
(Corner of the Atelier or Studio — Hidalgo)
c. 1884-1886
8" x 9 1/2" (20 cm x 24 cm)



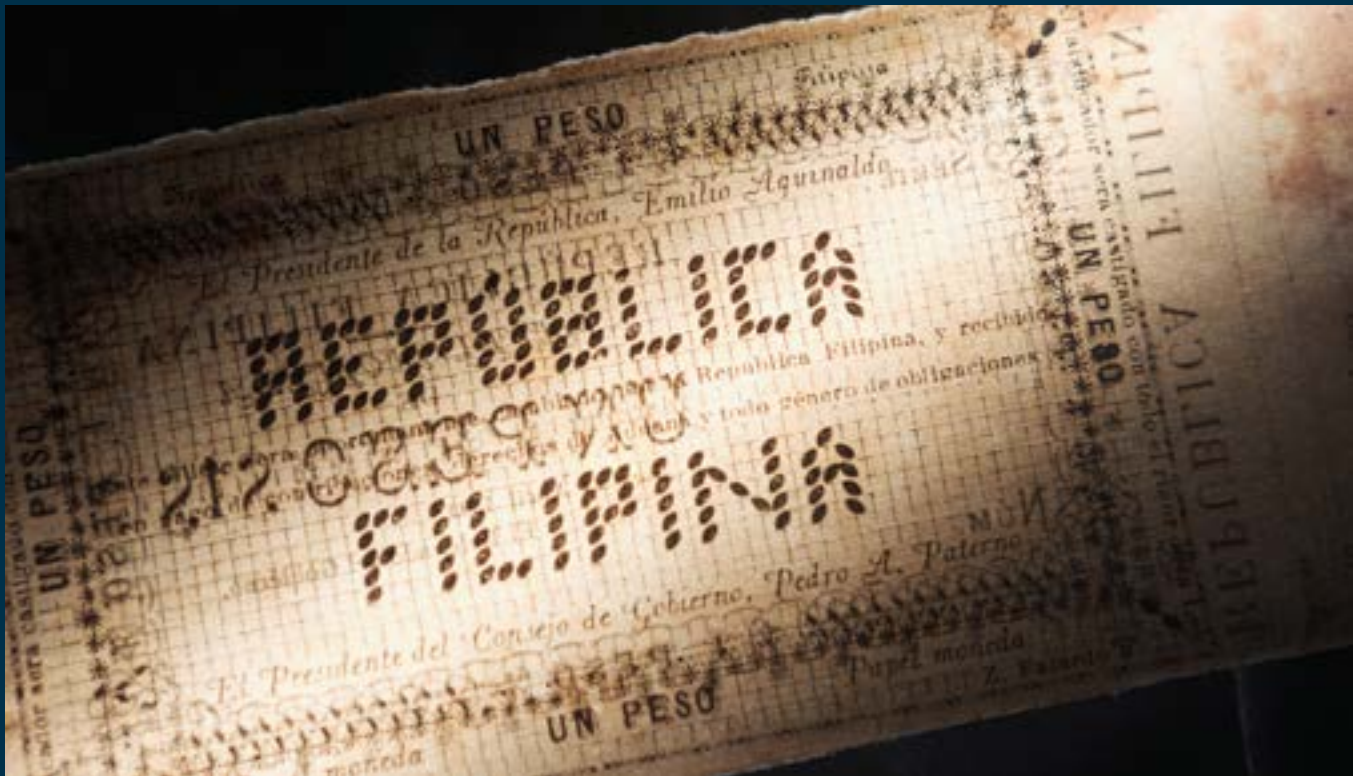
P 50,000

This extraordinary photograph is a window into the world of Juan Luna — a precious keepsake of the 'ilustrado' life in Europe Created when both Luna and Felix Resurreccion Hidalgo were next-door neighbors at an artists' enclave in Paris on the Bouelvard Arago. Hidalgo was a well-known early adapter of photography and it is almost certain because of the

handwritten annotation that this photo was taken by him. A couch covered with a rich Persian carpet is festooned with Japanese lanterns, masks, battle helmets. Silks and feathers add to the bohemian atmosphere.

“Odalisca” rests on an easel; while “Hymén, oh Hyménée”, Luna's most beloved painting that never left his sight, is seen above it. (Lisa Guerrero Nakpil)

Rare Specimen Of Revolutionary Printed Money *From the First Philippine Republic (1898-1899)*



97

Paper currency of the Malolos Republic, Un peso

3" x 6 1/4" (8 cm x 16 cm)

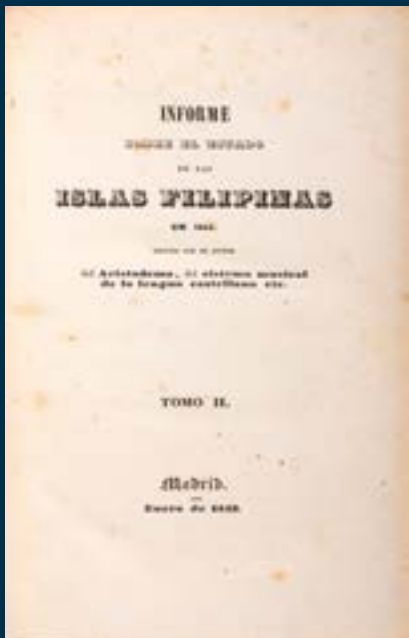
P 80,000

CONDITION REPORT
Fair condition.

The Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas writes in its historical survey, "Asserting its independence, the Philippine Republic of 1898 under General Emilio Aguinaldo issued its own coins and paper currency backed by the country's natural resources. At the Malolos arsenal, two types of two-centavo copper coins were struck. One peso and five peso revolutionary notes printed as *Republika Filipina Papel Moneda de Un Peso* and *Cinco Pesos* were freely circulated. These were handsigned by Pedro Paterno, Mariano Limjap and Telesforo Chuidian. With the surrender of General Aguinaldo to the Americans, the currencies were withdrawn from circulation and declared illegal currency."



Signed Copy of the Sinibaldo de Mas Compendium



98

Sinibaldo de Mas

Informe sobre el Estado de las Islas Filipinas en 1842

[Report about the state of the Philippine Islands in 1842]

Madrid, 1843, 2 vols.

P 50,000

CONDITION REPORT
Worn binding, but pages in perfect condition. Second volume includes a colored map of the Philippines (folded, in good condition).

Sinibaldo de Mas (Madrid, 1809-1868) was an adventurer, travel writer, sinologist, polyglot — he allegedly spoke more than 20 languages — and an erudite Spanish diplomat who spent two years and a half in Manila, where he took the first pictures of the Philippines with a daguerreotype. He is the well-known author of the *Informe Secreto* [Secret Report], where he suggested, from an advanced liberal point of view, the idea of grating the independence to the Philippines.

The secret report was preceded by this comprehensive public report analyzing the situation in the Philippines in 1842. The first volume studies the pre-Hispanic culture of the archipelago, the history of Spanish rule, the population of all the provinces, the fauna, climate, mineral wealth and topography. It estimates the population of the archipelago at 5 million people. Of the Filipinos, he states: "these are the individuals that the Spaniards improperly call Indians, and who are also known by the more just name of *naturales*".

The second volume deals with languages, agriculture, including data on the sale of products, foreign trade with statistical tables of products and countries to which they were exported, industry, territorial division with statistics on tax payers, government administration, and public education, of which he states: "Primary instruction cannot be considered in a state of backwardness and I truly believe that in proportion there are more people who can read and write in these islands than in Spain and in some civilized countries". It includes a dictionary of Philippine plants and trees. It also deals with ecclesiastical power, the administration of justice, the army and taxes. Many statistical tables. All in all, it is a work carried out with extreme rigor and extraordinarily complete.

P. de la Gironiere

Aventures d'un Gentilhomme Breton aux Iles Philippines.

[Adventures of a Breton gentleman in the Philippines]
Paris: Au Compotoir des Imprimeurs-Unis, 1855

P 30,000

CONDITION REPORT

Very good. Slightly worn hardcover with a decorated spine. Pages in good condition, only slight stains on the first and last pages. Several wonderful engravings depicting life in Manila and the provinces.

More than a few foreigners arrive in the Philippines and immediately feel at home. Disregarding the pleasures and facilities of their native land, they integrate into Philippine society, appreciate the natives and even see an opportunity to prosper. One such gentleman was Paul de La Gironiere, born in 1797 in Vertou, near Nantes, France. Although by training he was a naval surgeon, he is best known for being an adventurer, businessman, farmer and the author of two extraordinary books on the Philippines, both of which have been translated into English and published several times in the Philippines.

La Gironiere accidentally arrived in the Philippines in 1819. His goal was to spend only one quarantine of forty days, but decided to stay for twenty years. He made use of his medical knowledge and in 1823 married the Marquise de las Salinas in Manila.

He bought the hacienda of Jalajala and settled on the outskirts of Morong. He raised pigs and planted indigo, sugar cane, abaca and coffee. He employed more than 2,700 people on his hacienda. His continuous improvements in the plantations, carried out thanks to his scientific observations, earned him an award from the Real Sociedad Económica de Amigos del País. He enjoyed exploration and traveled in the Cordillera, making contact with the Abra Itneg, the Kalinga and the Aeta.

After the sudden death of his wife and two children, he returned to France, where he remarried. He returned to the Philippines in 1857 and established a new business, a sugar mill in Calauan (Laguna de Bay). Among the shareholders of this new enterprise was the Roxas family. He died suddenly in March 1862.

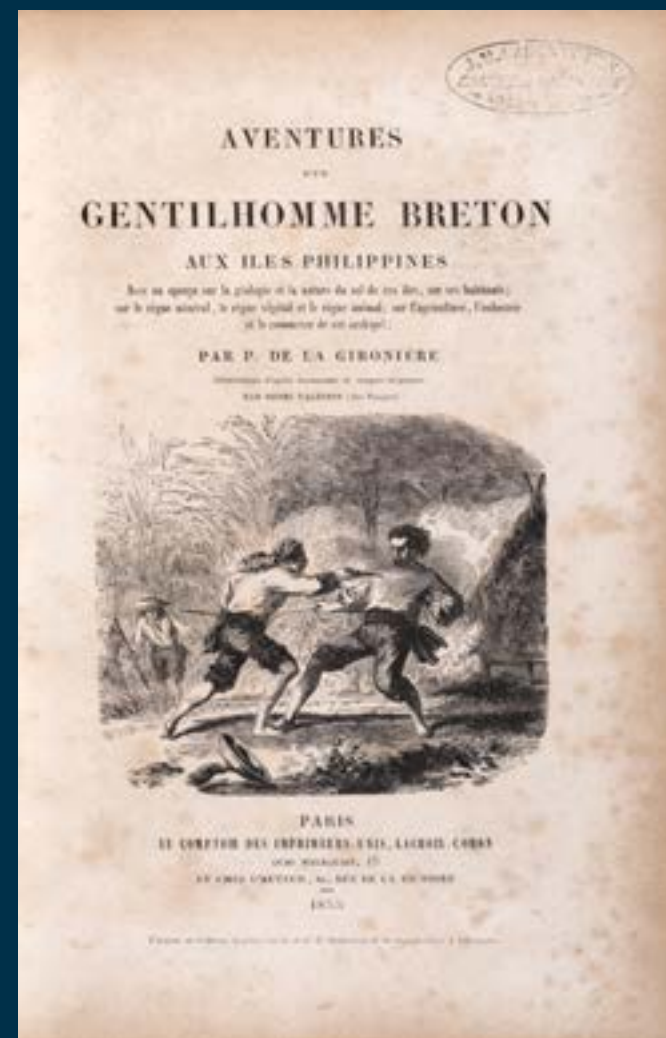
This classic of travel writing should be understood as the second and definitive edition of his first 1853 book on the Philippines. It is possible that the author was surprised by the success of that first edition. This edition is typographically far superior, mainly due to the preparation of the text — divided into chapters with summaries — and



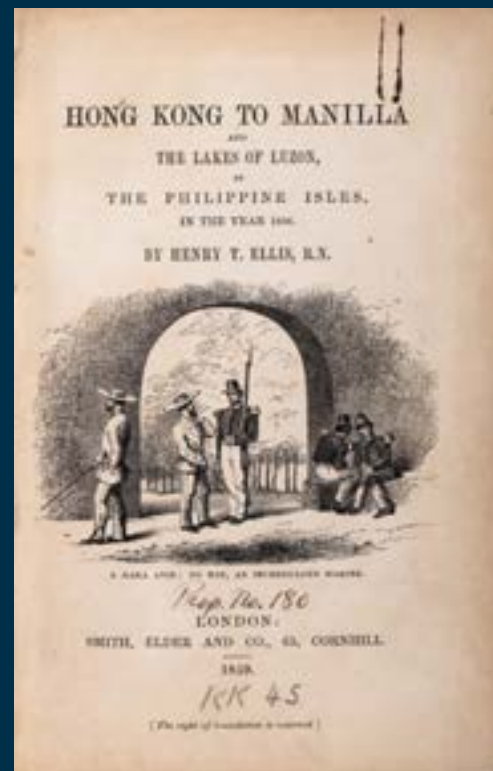
with numerous illustrations of life in the Philippines and of landscapes. The narrative follows a chronological order in the first part, in which most of the personal events are narrated, including the painful death of his two sons and a journey among the Aetas. The second part is more scientific and is entitled "Overview on the geology and the nature of the Philippine soil, on its inhabitants, on the mineral, vegetable and animal kingdoms, on the agriculture, the industry and the trade of that archipelago".

La Gironiere, apart from being an excellent memoirist, shows himself here as an extraordinary observer and lover of Philippine nature, with acute studies of some ethnic groups, observations on the Tagalog language, descriptions of the carabao, the native deer, birds, reptiles and insects. He also provides information on the cultivation of indigo, rice, tobacco, coffee, abaca, cocoa, cotton, sugar cane, etc., all taken from his own experience. A truly meritorious book in which the author's love for the Philippines overflows. This edition is extremely rare.

The Second and Much Improved Edition of the Classic with Wonderful Engravings



An Englishman in Manila with Picturesque Plates



100

Henry T. Ellis

Hong Kong to Manilla and the Lakes of Luzon, in the Philippine Isles in the year 1856.
London: Smith, Elder, and Co., 1859.

P 30,000

CONDITION REPORT
Copy signed by the author. Worn British hardcover, damaged in the spine. Folded map in good. Several plates depicting Philippine scenery. Pages in good condition.

The author was ill in China and asked for six weeks' leave so that he could travel to the Philippines, hoping that the climate would improve his health. His observations about Manila and Philippine society are frank and naive. Ellis recounts in detail all his experiences and was even received by the Governor. He had a generally pleasant few days of meals, parties and sightseeing in Manila that left a positive impression on him. He visited the house where Gironiere lived, in Jalajala, and relates a little of the Frenchman's adventures. He made a trip to Laguna and Taal Lake. In general, it is a very pleasant book to read in which the author is happy with all that he sees. Of much value are the numerous plates illustrating scenes and landscapes of Manila.

It includes a map encompassing Manila Bay, Laguna and Cavite regions. Very rare.

Henry Thomas Ellis was a junior officer on 'HMS Styx', later a Royal Navy commander. Styx sailed off South Africa in 1852 during the eighth Xhosa War [or Cape Frontier War]; and in 1853 sailed for Burma. During the siege of Rangoon, Styx carried wounded to hospital at Amherst [Kyaikkhami], Gulf of Martaban, and went to Madras [Chennai] and Trincomalee. Then, he was stationed in China.

The Last and Best Edition of the Tagalog-Spanish Dictionary; Idioms Explained



101

Fr. Juan de Noceda y Fr. Pedro de Sanlúcar

Vocabulario de la Lengua Tagala...
[Vocabulary of Tagalog Language...]
Manila: Imprenta de Ramírez y Giraudier, 1860.

P 30,000

CONDITION REPORT
Old binding in decent shape. Two kinds of paper were used during the printing process; therefore, one half of the book is brighter. Pages in good condition.

This volume is the third and final edition of a dictionary unanimously praised by experts. The first edition was published in 1754, and the second in 1832. Although the original edition was by the two Jesuit fathers mentioned above — expert Tagalistas — this latest edition appears with numerous additions and updates by Augustinian friars.

It consists of two parts: the first is the most interesting. It is a Tagalog vocabulary where words are not translated into Spanish, but explained, thus constituting a repository of indigenous culture. For example, TUMAPAT > to pretend to be healthy and good; PASARLAC > rattle that makes reeds for scarecrow; LABON > to cook fish in water and salt, and then dry it in the sun, so that it does not rot. The second part is a Spanish-Tagalog dictionary containing the equivalences. Rare.

Important Kapampangan-Spanish Dictionary



102

Fr. Diego Bergaño

Vocabulario de la Lengua Pampanga en Romance

[Vocabulary of Kapampangan Language in Romance]
Manila: Imprenta de Ramírez y Giraudier, 1860.

P 30,000

CONDITION REPORT
Leather bound. Binding is the detached from the volume. A few pages with small signs of anay.
With Ambeth Ocampo's ex-libris.

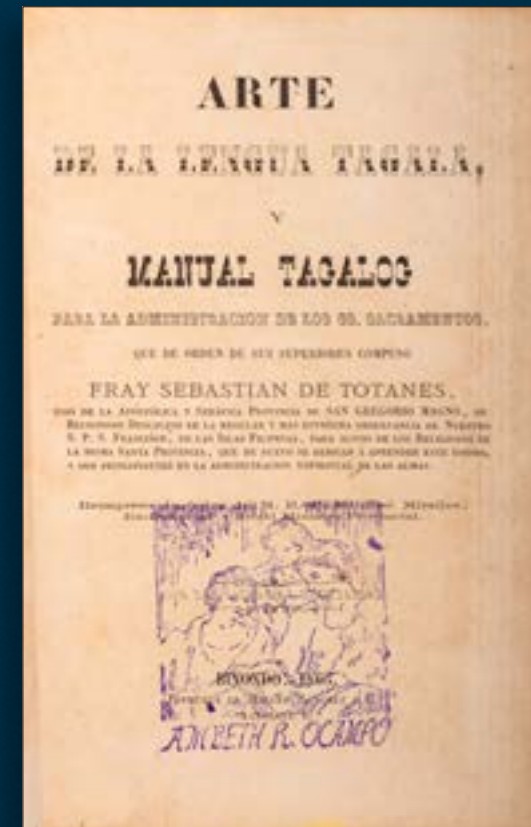
in Palencia province (Spain) in 1690 and arrived in the Philippines in 1718. He was immediately assigned to the Augustinian parishes in Pampanga, especially in Mexico and Bacolor, where he spent his whole life, except for three years in Manila (1731-34), until his death in January 1747. In 1729 he published an *Arte de la lengua pampanga* (1729), which had a second enlarged edition in 1736, and wrote numerous religious works in Kampampangan, that remained in manuscript.

Most of the dictionary is composed of the Pampango-Spanish part, where words are explained in detail, sometimes with very curious notes. For example, UMAN > to redo what has been done, mainly to make amends, because it was not well done; SABUNG > cockfight; PASULU > disguised spike for the passerby to stick. The Spanish-Pampango part is a succinct list of equivalences.

This is the second and last edition. The first edition was published in 1732. In the prologue, the author confesses to having been assisted by a principal from Mexico (Pampanga) named Don Juan Zúñiga, the best connoisseur of the language.

Bergaño is considered the most expert missionary in the Kapampangan language. He was born in a village

A Tagalog Classic



103

Fr. Sebastián de Totanés

*Arte de la Lengua Tagala y Manual Tagalog
para la administración de los ss. Sacramentos*

[Grammar of Tagalog Language and Tagalog Handbook for the Administration of the Holy Sacraments]

Binondo: Imprenta de Miguel Sánchez, 1865.

P 30,000

CONDITION REPORT
Leather bound. A few small signs of insect marks in the first pages.
Book in very good condition.
With Ambeth Ocampo's ex-libris.

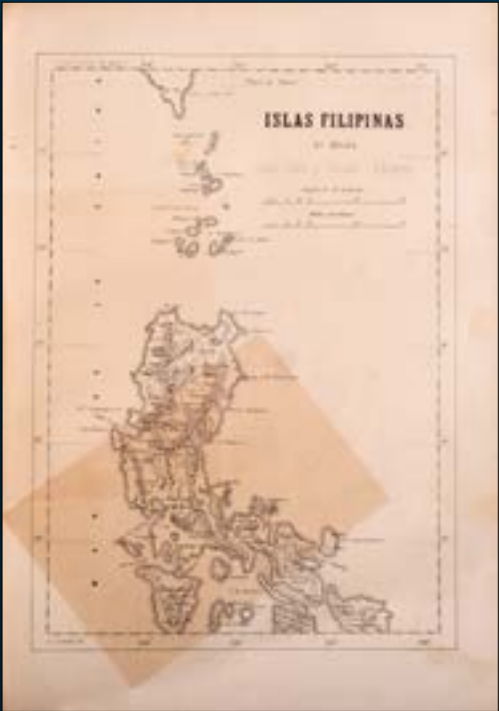
This is the fourth and last edition of this praised grammar of Tagalog. The previous ones were published in 1745, 1796, and 1850, which are a testimony of the quality of this grammar. Retana considers it "the best of all those written for Spaniards to

learn the Tagalog language". It takes as its inspiration the *Arte de la Lengua Tagala* (1610) by Francisco Blancas de San José. Totanés, in the prologue, claims to know at least five previous grammars of Tagalog, and it is his declared purpose to write a new one that palliates all the defects he found in the previous ones. He also praises Tagalog language, considering it is the most important language of the Philippines.

The volume also contains a bilingual manual so that a priest, even without knowing the language, could administer the sacraments by reading the corresponding parts. It is very curious, for example, the section dedicated to marriage, where the bride and groom are asked if they have been married before, or if they have lived in concubinage, which would condemn them to eternal damnation if they did not confess to the priest.

Sebastián de Totanés was born in the province of Toledo in 1688. He arrived in the Philippines in 1717 and served as parish priest in Sampaloc, Manila, Liliw and Pagsanjan. He traveled to Spain in 1746 and died two years later.

The Philippines: Land, People, and Customs



104

Fernando Fulgosio

Crónica de las Islas Filipinas
[Chronicle of the Philippine Islands]
Madrid: Rubio, Grilo y Vitturi, 1871.

P 30,000

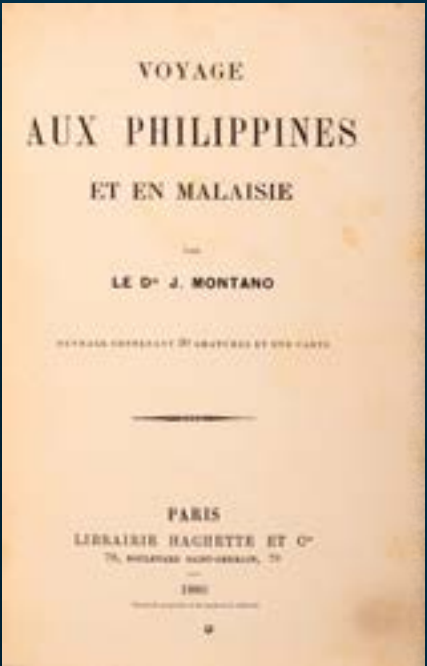
CONDITION REPORT
Handbound, in perfect condition. Thick pages, in perfect condition.
Several plates and engraving depicting landscapes in the archipelago
and portraits of the Spanish governor-generals. Two maps.

This volume was part of an ambitious collection comprising the histories of all the Philippine provinces. the first part deals with the geography and natural wealth of the archipelago. The second part deals with the different ethnic groups of the archipelago and their customs. The third part deals with the government, educational institutions and administration of the archipelago. The fourth and fifth parts narrate the history of the archipelago, although focusing on some specific episodes (struggles with the clergy, siege by the English, etc.). The author was a well-known novelist and journalist who worked at the National Archaeological



Museum. Although he never visited the Philippines, in this work he made a formidable synthesis from the sources available to him.

Philippine Travels with Thirty Engravings



105

Joseph M. Montano

Rapport a M. Voyage Aux Philippines et en Malaisie (1879-1881)
[Travel to the Philippines and Malaysia (1879-1881)]
Paris: Libraririe Hachette et Cie, 1886.

P 30,000

CONDITION REPORT
Hardbound, perfect binding. High quality paper. It also has the
beautiful original cover. With 30 engravings of Philippine landscapes
and peoples. Maps. In French. First edition.

Joseph Margarite Montano was a French doctor, anthropologist and naturalist The Ministry of Education sent him as the head of a scientific mission to South East Asia during the year 1879-1881. The author declares in the prologue this book compiles the notes

he took along his travel with the help from a colleague. It follows a diary structure. Only the first 30 ages are devoted to Malaysia, while the rest of the book (351 pages) focuses on the Philippines, with specific chapters dealing with Manila, Balanga, Sulu, Mindanao (Davao, mount Apo ascension, interior provinces), Albay, Palawan, Zamboanga, Basilan, and Surigao, among other Philippine provinces. It is a unique travel book because provides a view to the social life of Filipinos, especially the different ethnic groups living in Mindanao, although it also contains notes dealing with the geology, meteorology, common diseases, languages, political administration, agriculture and commerce of the Philippines. Contains numerous photos of indigenous people, a map of the Philippines, and a map of the author's route from Surigao to Davao, along the east coast of Mindanao. Very interesting and rare.

Wenceslao E. Retana

El periodismo en Filipinas: noticias para su historia (1811-1894)

[Journalism in the Philippines: information for its history (1811-1894)]

Madrid: Imp. de la Viuda de M. Minuesa de los Ríos, 1895.

P 30,000

CONDITION REPORT
Perfect binding, as new. Pages in excellent condition. Very rare.

Retana spent six years of his life in Batangas as a civil servant and there, due to boredom, he began to acquire and collect Philippine books and newspapers, many of which became part of the Filipiniana Collection of the National Library of the Philippines. This volume is the first history of journalism in the Philippines ever written. It provides information about the newspapers, their contents, their editors, their contributors, the printing presses where they were printed, the duration of each publication, the quality of the paper or lithographs, and many more curiosities. A foundational work. Very rare, in perfect condition.



Marqués de Ayerbe

Sitio y conquista de Manila por los ingleses en 1762

[Siege and Conquest of the Philippine by the English in 1762]

Zaragoza: Imprenta de Ramón Miedes, 1897.

P 30,000

CONDITION REPORT
Perfect binding, as new. Pages in excellent condition. Very rare.

It is one of the first works to study the English siege of Manila (1762). Its author relies on Philippine chronicles, but above all on a Philippine manuscript of his own written by a witness of the occupation. Retana refers that "it contains news of true historical value". Its author was an Aragonese aristocrat who owned an extensive library. He finished writing this book in his Alfranca Palace.



A Pair of Travel Diaries

Alfred Marche

a.) Luçon et Palaouan: Six Années de Voyages aux Philippines

[Luzon and Palawan: six years of travels in the Philippines]

Paris: Libraire Hachette et Cie, 1887.

Juan Álvarez Guerra

b.) Viajes por Filipinas

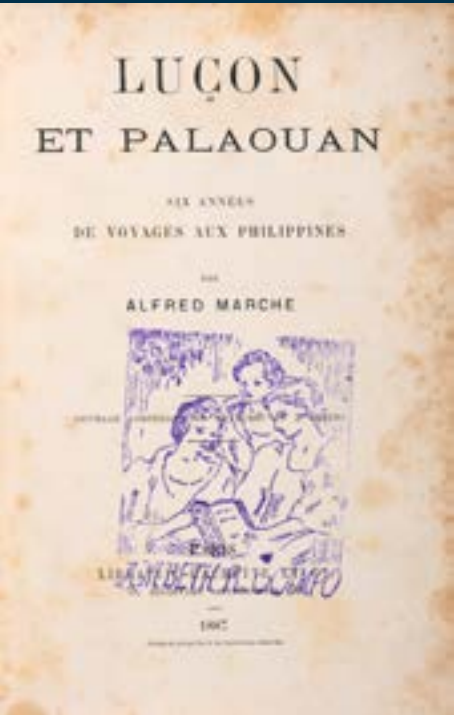
[Travels in the Philippines]

Madrid: Fortanet, 1887. 3 vols.

P 80,000

CONDITION REPORT
a.) Old French binding in good condition. Several plates depicting life in the Philippines. Pages with slight yellowish stains due to humidity, but perfectly usable and readable.

b.) Good. Hardbound, old Spanish binding. Yellowing pages in good condition.



He visited Pangasinan, La Union, Cordillera, Marinduque, Catanduanes, Mindanao and Sulu. He offers one of the first descriptions of the Tagbanua, an ethnic group of northern Palawan. A work of great merit that has already been translated into English.

Contains 68 beautiful engravings and 2 maps (Luzon and Palawan). Rare.

Trinidad Hermenegildo Pardo de Tavera

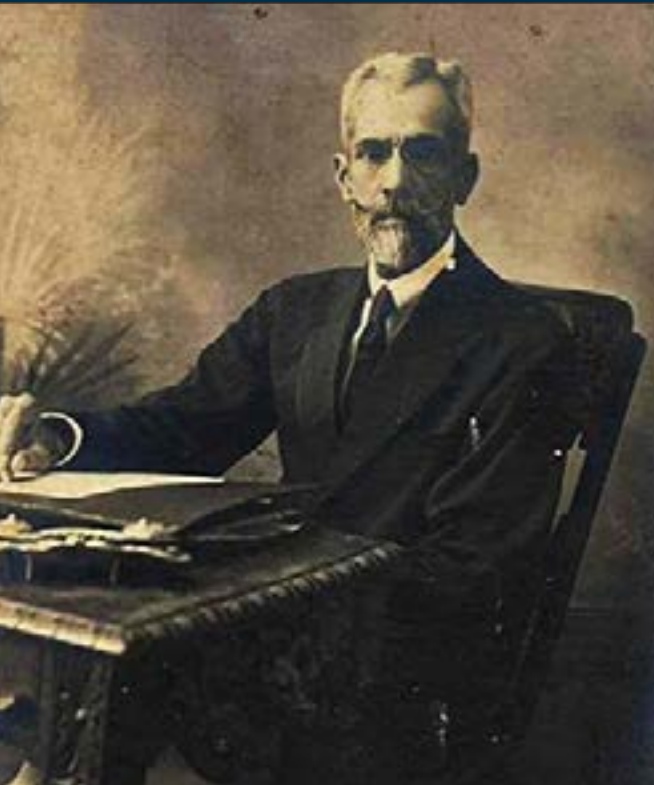
Plantas Medicinales de Filipinas
[Medicinal Plants of the Philippines]
Madrid: Bernardo Rico, 1892.

P 30,000

CONDITION REPORT
Worn out binding, pages in good condition. First edition, in Spanish.

Trinidad Hermenegildo Pardo de Tavera y Gorricho was probably (1857-1925) the Filipino with the broadest intellectual training of his time. Born on Cabildo Street in Intramuros and from two of Manila's most illustrious families, he received a thorough education. He studied at the Ateneo Municipal de Manila, at the Colegio de San Letran and, after his family left for France, he studied medicine at the Sorbonne and linguistics at the *École nationale des langues orientales vivantes*, graduating in Malay. He published several research articles on medicine and linguistics in the most prestigious European academic journals - he was the first Filipino to do so - and in addition to Spanish, he spoke Tagalog, English, French, German and Italian. His intellectual milieu also led him to become interested in botany, history, bibliography, philosophy and politics. Despite his Spanish roots, he felt fully Filipino and harshly criticized the way in which Spain colonized the Philippines, with especially negative criticism of the ecclesiastical class. He founded the Federal Party in 1900 and welcomed the American occupation with open arms, believing that it could have a positive influence on the education and prosperity of the Filipinos.

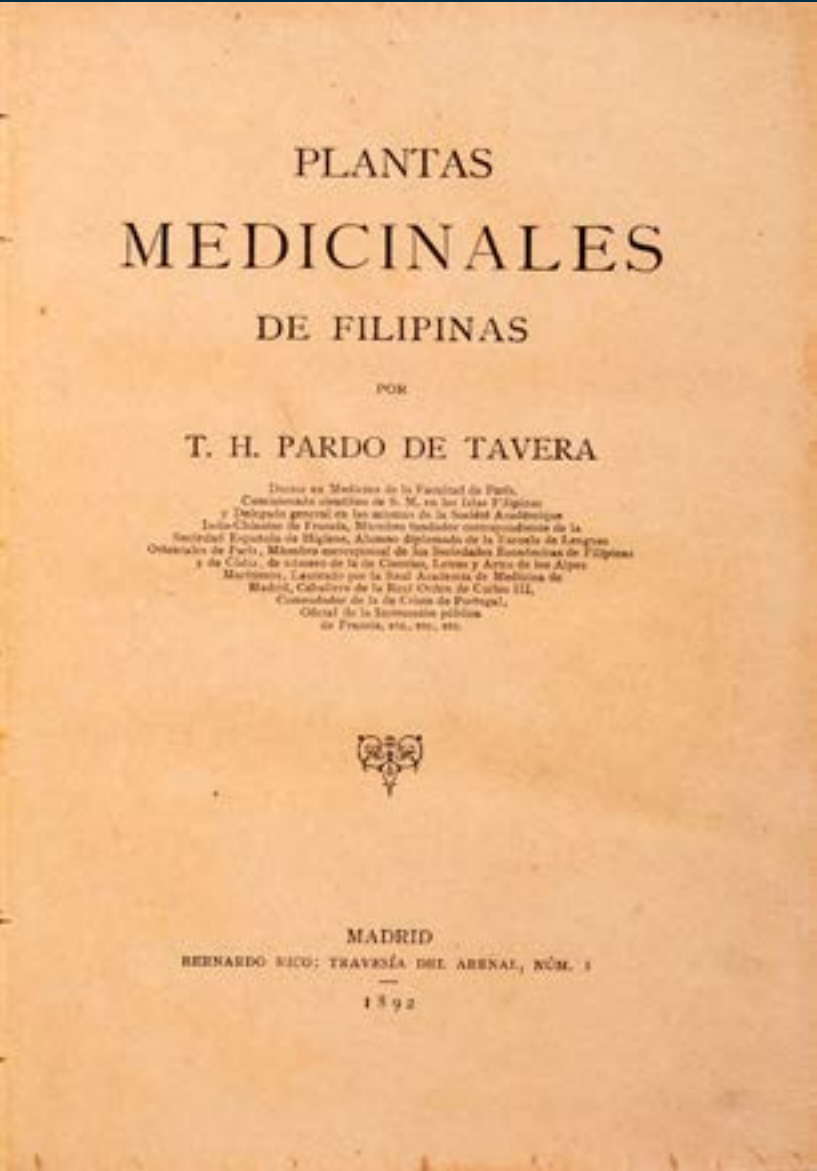
This book is his most important contribution to the knowledge of Philippine botany and it was immediately praised in the scientific community. It was translated to English (Philadelphia, 1901). Pardo de Tavera was commissioned by the Spanish government to study the plants of the Philippines. In order to do so, he travelled through the archipelago during two years, and he recollected several species of plants to do chemical analysis in the laboratories of Paris. Unlike other scientist, he did value the native knowledge and praised the native



ABOVE: Trinidad H. Pardo de Tavera at his desk. Collection of Trinidad Pardo de Tavera.

healers of their empirical experiences. There hundreds of entries of Philippine plants with his scientific name, local name, medicinal usage and physical description. This book gained him a well-deserved fame within the European scientists.

The First Filipino Botanical Study
T.H. Pardo de Tavera



The Complete Five-Volumes of the Wenceslao Retana Archive



110

Wenceslao E. Retana

Archivo del Bibliófilo Filipino

[Archive of the Philippine bibliophile]

Madrid: Librería general de Victoriano Suárez, 1895-1905. 5 vols.

P 100,000

CONDITION REPORT

Hardbound. In very good condition. Around 500 pages each volume.
In Spanish. All the volumes carry Ambeth Ocampo's ex libris.

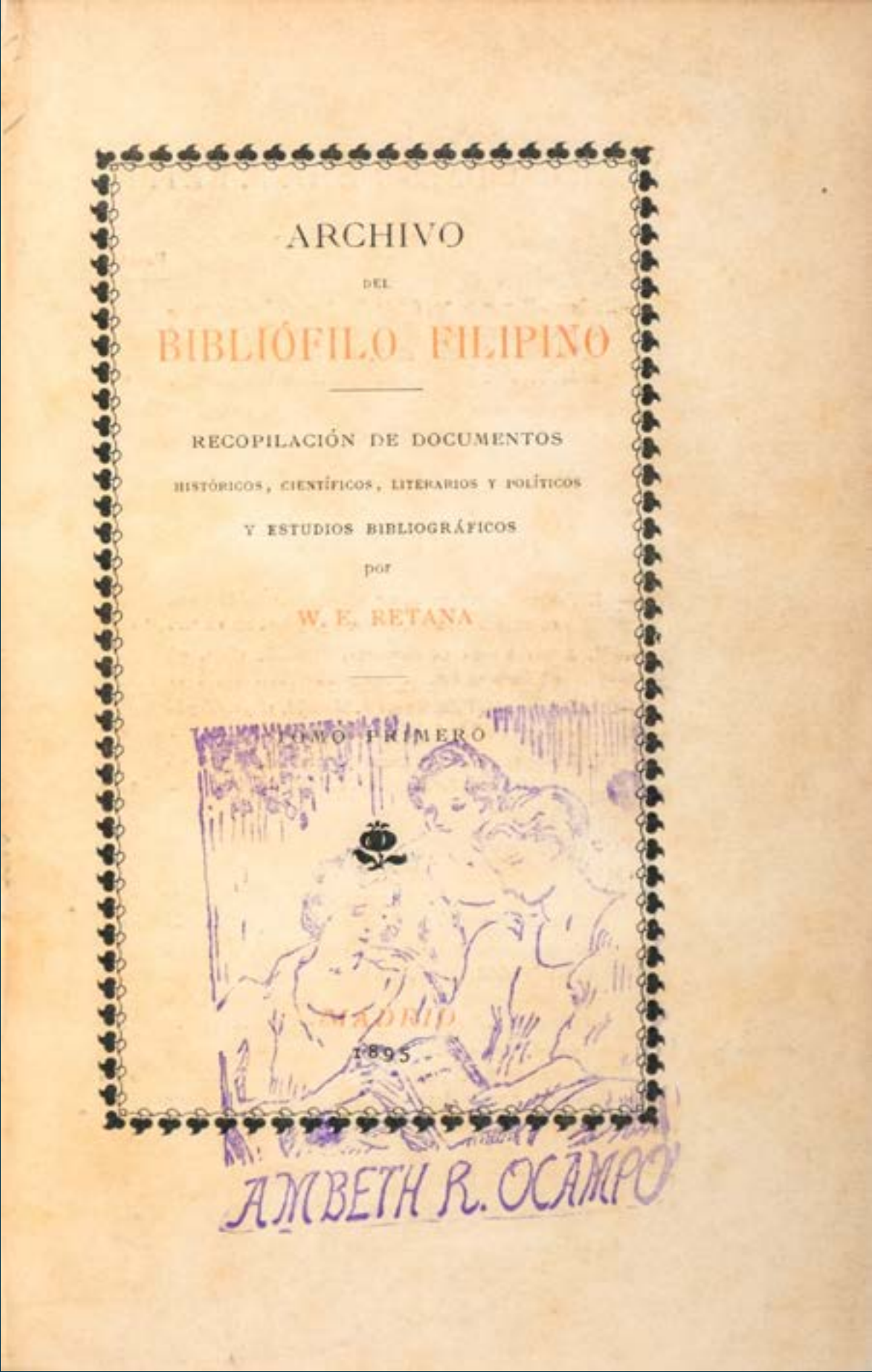


In his bibliographic studies, Wenceslao E. Retana -Spanish pioneer of Philippine Studies- noticed that many of the Philippine books were rarities that time could eventually make disappear, especially the titles published in Manila, as they were often printed on fragile rice paper. With the aim of preserving for posterity texts of importance to Philippine history, both printed and manuscript, he conceived a project to publish texts under the title *Archivo del Bibliófilo Filipino*. This laudable enterprise published four volumes in 1895 and 1898, and

he tried to relaunch it with a fifth volume in 1905, but, having lost the Philippines, it did not enjoy the interest of the Spanish public.

In these five volumes numerous texts of undoubted interest for the history of the Philippines are made accessible to the curious reader, and without this publication they would still remain unknown.

It is rare to find the complete 5 volumes of this ambitious work in such a good condition.



The History of the Philippine South



111

Francisco Combés, SJ

Historia de Mindanao y Joló

[History of Mindanao and Sulu]

Madrid: Imp. de la Viuda de M. Minuesa de los Ríos, 1897.

signed and dedicated by Wenceslao Retana

P 30,000

CONDITION REPORT

Big format, high quality paper. Detached worn out binding. Few signs of anay. Signed by the editor in the flyleaf.

Father Combés was one of the most prominent Jesuits in the history of the Philippines. Researchers are lately devoting many studies to his figure thanks to the many manuscripts —unknown until recently— on the Philippines that he left behind and preserved in the USA and Spain. He worked in the Jesuit missions of Mindanao, Cebu, and Leyte and was known in his lifetime for his eloquence and erudition. A controversial episode in his life was the publication of the *Encomio* [Praise] (1659), in which he defended Gómez de Espinosa, who was being attacked by the mendicant orders for supporting the Indians. He died in December 1665 on the galleon when he was about to reach Mexico. His *Historia de las Islas de Mindanao,*

Joló y sus adyacentes [History of the Islands of Mindanao, Sulu, and the adjacents ones] (Madrid, 1667) was his only published work of importance and the first history fully devoted to the southern islands of the Philippines.

Retana commented, "It is the best book on Mindanao and Sulu and one of the most notable of those recorded in the Philippine bibliography." Hence, he edited it with the help of Jesuit Father Pablo Pastells, an ex-missionary in Mindanaow who had exchanged correspondence with José Rizal.

Combés' work is divided into eight books: the first one is centered on the geographical description of the islands, their natural wealth, their fauna, and their flora. It provides a great deal of ethnographic information. The remaining seven books are a history of Mindanao that draws from Jesuit and civil sources, although it lacks a religious tone. Combés wrote this work intending to get the civil authorities and the king to prioritize Mindanao geostrategically with a military presence and to abandon the Molucca Islands, thus supporting the Jesuit missions.

Retana's edition contains an extensive and erudite foreword, numerous footnotes, and several tables with names of people, ethnic groups, plants, animals, etc. A masterful edition very desired by Philippinists.



112

Jodocus Hondius / Petrus Bertius

Philippinae Insulae

1616

Hand colored Copper engraving,
printed in paper. Latin text.

From the world atlas book by Petrus Bertius, *Tabulae Geographicae Contractae*. Amsterdam: Jodocus Hondius Jr., 1616.

4 1/2" x 6 1/2" (11 cm x 17 cm)

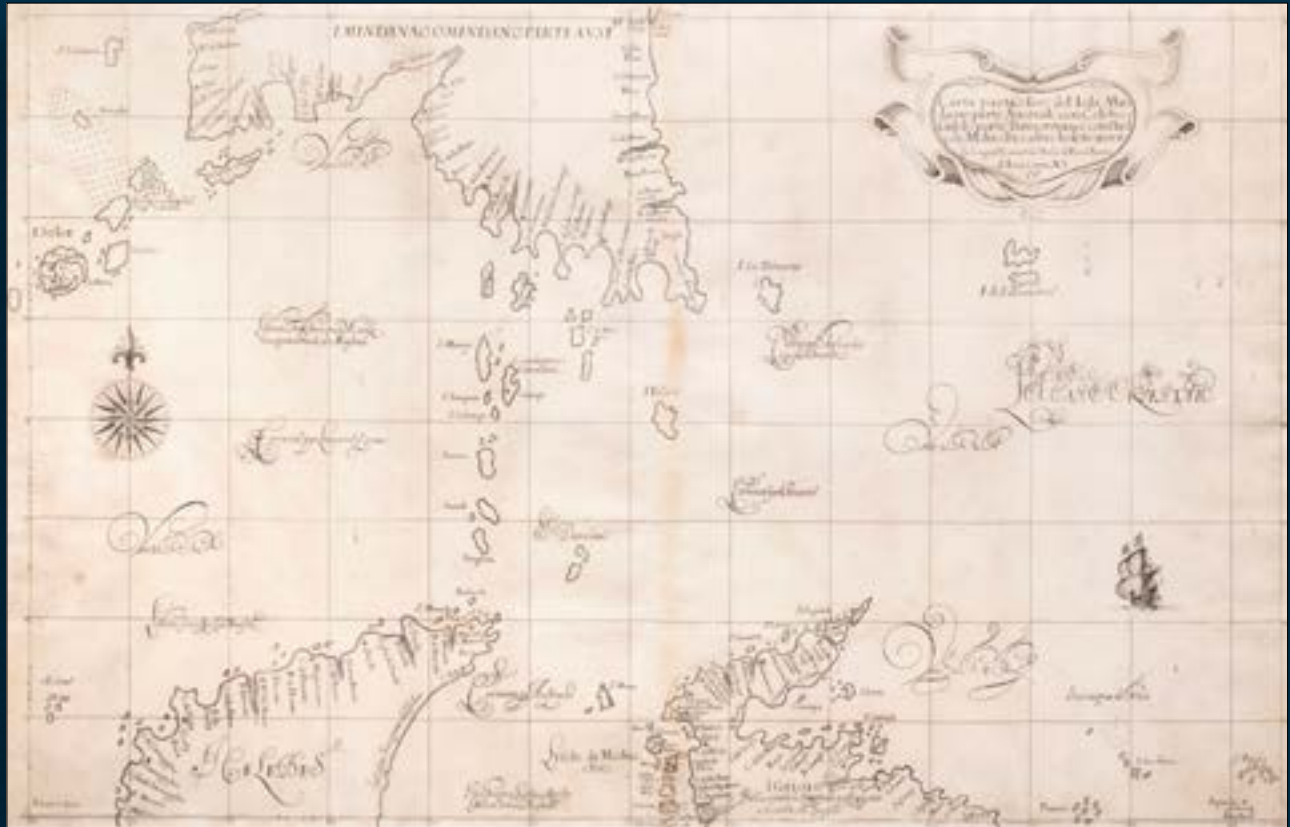
P 90,000

CONDITION REPORT
Good condition

Wonderful miniature map of the Philippine archipelago, extending south into Borneo. This was one of the first two maps published that focused solely on the Philippines and used the term *Philippines* within the title.

The map depicts Luzon (here labeled as *Lucionia Insula*) oriented to the West with a truncated southeast peninsula. Samar is shown fairly accurately, here labeled *Achan* and *Tandola*; however the islands between Mindanao and Luzon are still depicted in a rather rudimentary fashion. Some notable features in this map are *Manilha* (Manila), *Pancnasion* (Pangasinan) and *Siday* (Zambales). Central Visayan islands such as Cebu (*Cabu*), Negros (*Negenes*), and Leyte (*Acban Tandola*) are rendered in a simplified, schematic way. To the south, Mindanao and Borneo (*Borneo Ins*) appears in partial form, along with smaller islands such as Palawan—erroneously labeled as *Calamianes*. The map is embellished with two strapwork cartouches and a moire-patterned sea.

An essential map for Philippine collectors.



113

Robert Dudley (1573–1649)

Carta particolare dell'Isola Mindano parte Australe con Celebes e Gilolo parte Tramontana e con l'Isole di Molucche e altre Isolette in tor[n]o
[Chart of the southern part of Mindanao island with the northern part of Celebes and Gilolo, and with the Moluccas islands and other islands nearby]

Florence, 1647.

19" x 29 1/2" (48 cm x 75 cm)

P 150,000

CONDITION REPORT
The map is in good condition. A small stain on the right edge that does not affect the map, very lightly shaded edges, and an almost imperceptible orange vertical line in the center.
Two sheets joined, copper engravings, engraved by Antonio Lucini.

The map belongs to a maritime encyclopedia titled *Dell' Arcano Del Mare*, by Robert Dudley. Firenze: Stamperia di Francesco Onofri, 1646, considered one of the greatest atlases of the world and the first one to use Mercator's projection, currents and prevailing winds. It shows the islands in the Celebes Sea, including the

southern Mindanao group of the Philippines, the Maluku Islands, and the northern coast of the island of Sulawesi in Indonesia. As a curiosity, the islands of Palmas, which today belong to Indonesia, appear just off the southern tip of Mindanao, Sarangani Bay appears as "Golfo Grande", and the islands of Sarangani appear very close to the southern Indonesian islands.

Robert Dudley (1573–1649) was the son of the Earl of Leicester. Although born out of wedlock, Robert received the education and privileges of a Tudor nobleman. He seems to have been interested in naval matters from an early age, and in 1594, at the age of 21, he led an expedition to the Orinoco River and Guiana. Problems in England forced to exile to Italy, in Florence at the court of Grand Duke Ferdinand I of Tuscany, where he not only married his cousin and converted to Catholicism. *Arcano del Mare* was the work of his life.

The engraved charts were carried out by Antonio Francesco Lucini, who states the work took him 12 years to complete and required 5,000lbs of copper. The charts are by English and other pilots, among them his brother-in-law, the circumnavigator Thomas Cavendish.

Antonio Coello / Francisco Morata

Posesiones de Oceanía. Islas Filipinas
From Atlas de España y sus posesiones de ultramar,
Madrid, 1852.
Scale: 1 : 1,000,000
31 1/4" x 42 1/2" (79 cm x 108 cm) each

P 30,000

First central sheet (Primera hoja central): Centered on Luzon and Mindoro, with focuses on the city of Manila, Manila Bay, the city of Cavite and the most important ports of Bicol. Originally, it had some colored territorial contours, rivers and mountains, but they have been erased over time and it almost has the original appearance. Since it was originally folded, only in the folds is it slightly obscured.

Second central sheet (Segunda hoja central): Centered on Palawan, Calamianes, the Bisayan Islands, Mindanao and Isabela. Between the foci, the port of Cebu. The contours of the islands are colored in light blue, pink and yellow. The folds are slightly obscured.

Philippine Islands (Posesiones de Oceanía): in this map appear the parts that for reasons of space did not fit in the previous maps: the Batanes Islands, the Babuyan Islands and the Sulu Islands. The north of Borneo and the island of Sanguir are also shown, with spotlights on the ports of Zamboanga, Isabela and Baras. In addition, a complete reduced map of the Philippines, fully colored. The outlines of the islands are also colored. Folds are noted, but there are no spots, no holes, and no darkness.

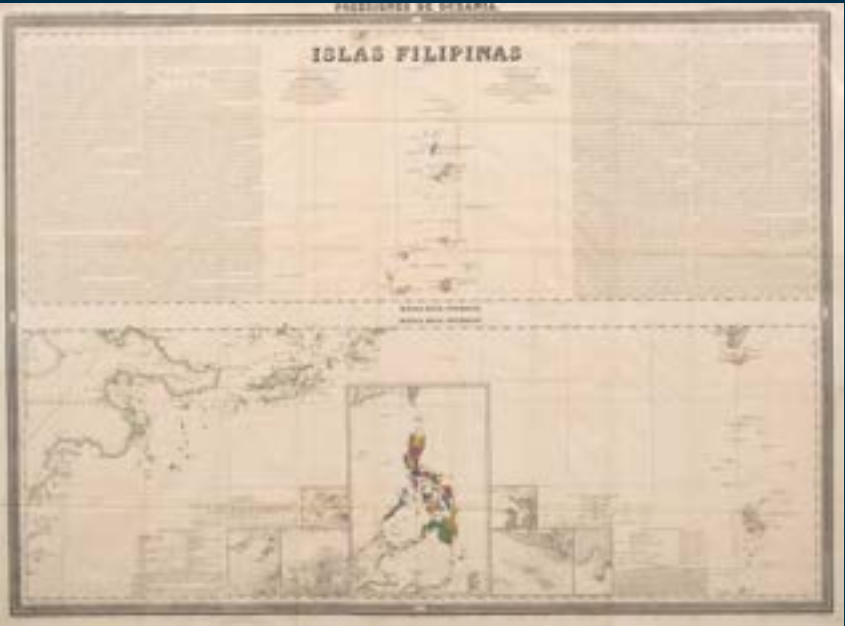
Francisco Coello de Portugal y Quesada (1822-1898), a distinguished Spanish cartographer and military luminary whose passion for exploration and precision mapping left an indelible mark on history. Coello, a graduate of the prestigious Academia de Ingenieros de Guadalajara, rose to the rank of Lieutenant Colonel in the Spanish Corps of Engineers, serving in Algeria in 1844. His visionary spirit led him to establish the Sociedad Geográfica de Madrid in 1876, later revered as the Real Sociedad Geográfica de España (Royal Geographic Society of Spain).

Coello's crowning achievement is his breathtaking atlas of Spain's overseas territories, published in Madrid between 1848 and 1869. Designed to complement Pascual Madoz's *Diccionario Geográfico Estadístico Histórico*, this ambitious project envisioned 65 meticulously crafted maps, with 45 ultimately completed. Each map, presented in elegant folded form with pocket covers, showcases Coello's artistry and dedication to detail.

Among his masterpieces are the three monumental maps of the Philippines—some of the largest ever published. These maps captivate with intricate insets of key ports, vividly depicting topography, towns, anchorages, depth soundings, and navigational hazards. Built on the foundational work of Antonio Morata, with text attributed to Pascual Madoz, each map is a work of art, encased in paper boards adorned with the atlas title, a striking coat of arms on the front, and detailed notes on the back. Though sizes vary slightly, their impact is immeasurable, offering a window into a world of discovery and exploration.

This is undoubtedly the most influential map of the Philippines printed during the 19th century, and it was allegedly used during treating negotiations during the Philippine wars (1898-1902) against Spain and the US. Considered the first scientific map of the Philippines, due to his unprecedented size and wealth of details. This the 19th century equivalent of the 18th century Murillo Velarde map.

A must for Philippine collectors of maps.



Philippine School, 19th Century

Portrait of Silvestre Ubaldo

oil on canvas
23" x 18" (58 cm x 46 cm)

P 170,000

PROVENANCE
Leon Gallery, *The Asian Cultural Council Auction 2022*, Makati City, 5 March 2022, Lot 95

Silvestre Ubaldo (1852 – 1917) was a Manila-born telegraph operator. His first wife, Olympia, was Jose Rizal's elder sister and the fourth child in the Rizal family. Silvestre regularly corresponded with Jose, who was in Europe, informing him of any recent updates in the Philippines. While assigned in Bulacan in 1882, a disconsolate Silvestre wrote to Jose, then a medical student in Madrid, repeatedly requesting to intervene in his transfer to Calamba. Assigned to Albay in 1885, Silvestre asked his brother-in-law to write a letter of reference to the Jesuit priest, Federico Faura. Silvestre wanted the friar to mediate his transfer to Calamba to reunite with his family. He wrote: "for now, I realize that it is difficult and painful to be separated from one's children." Jose thus wrote to Fr. Faura, to which the friar replied: "I am disgusted with you and Rizal. Everyone should be in the place where he is ordered to be. I have not asked, nor will I ask for anything." Upset, Silvestre resigned from his post and reunited with his family in Calamba in October 1886.

Upon Jose's return to the Philippines in 1887 from his five-year stay in Europe, he attended Olympia's delivery, who was pregnant with Silvestre's child. Woefully, Olympia died in childbirth due to bleeding, so did the unborn child. Despite the tragedy that befell him, the widowed Silvestre remained involved with the Rizal family. Like Jose's other in-laws, Ubaldo did not escape the Spaniards' persecution. With Paciano, Jose's elder brother, Ubaldo was deported to Mindoro in September 1890 because of his involvement with the Calamba agrarian dispute with the Dominicans. Paciano and Silvestre escaped from exile in late 1891. In December of that year, Silvestre, Jose's parents Don Francisco and Doña Teodora, his siblings Paciano, Josefa, Lucia, and Trinidad, arrived in Hong Kong and reunited with their beloved kin. *(Adrian Maranan)*

Portrait of a Gentleman
Of the Old School



Romulo Galicano (b. 1945)

Contemplating the Bust
signed and dated 1986 (lower left)
oil on canvas
36" x 24" (91 cm x 61 cm)

P 1,200,000

LITERATURE
Tesoro, Patis and Ramon N. Villegas. *Postura: Paintings by Romulo Galicano and Dolls by Patis Tesoro*. Published to accompany the exhibition of the same title at the Metropolitan Museum of Manila. Manila: Metropolitan Museum of Manila, 2008. Full-color illustration and painting description.

EXHIBITED
Metropolitan Museum of Manila, *Postura: Paintings by Romulo Galicano and Dolls by Patis Tesoro*, Manila, 2008

Once you see the vertical elements in the works of Romulo Galicano, it is impossible to ignore them again. Whether it be the trees, the poles, or the shadows, Galicano's composition is not complete without them. These lines in his paintings are his "reconciliation between opposite poles and the merging of the Subjective and the Objective—creating a new meaningful work of art." That is, it is what makes Galicano's works uniquely his.

His works are hauntingly reminiscent of the works of the old Filipino Masters. As a teenager, he studied painting from his uncle Martino Abellano, not unlike the young Amorsolos with their uncle Fabian dela Rosa. Indeed, Abellano was affectionately known as the "Amorsolo of the South" due to his impeccable realism; it is this talent that he passed down to his nephew, Galicano. Abellano taught the young artist everything he knew about the craft and encouraged him to take up Fine Arts.

Despite being a realist, however, Galicano went above and beyond when he studied abstraction in order to have a better understanding of his craft, with the aforementioned

vertical lines his "reconciliation" between the two opposing styles. It is this understanding that cultivated Galicano's talent and gave him a long list of accolades. Though equally talented in landscapes, it is in portraiture that Galicano was highly sought-after.

Contemplating the Bust, though not a formal portrait, is among his works that show off his adept talent in the craft. The vertical lines in this work are the shadows of the windows, casting a soft light over the area. A woman clad in a Filipiniana stands with her back to the viewer, and though we cannot see her face, we can see the solemnity of her body language as she softly cradles a sculpture of a man's bust. Though nothing else is explicitly stated, the viewers can spin their own tale with just one *mise-en-scene*.

As the Philippine art scene barrels on with a myriad of art movements, Galicano remains a *deja-vu*, an echo that reminds the newest generations of art collectors and appreciators of the great old men of art history and their lasting impact, even as the decades continue to roll on. (Hannah Valiente)



Manuel Ocampo (b. 1965)*Untitled*

2008

acrylic on canvas

62 1/4" x 46 1/4" (158 cm x 117 cm)

P 500,000

PROVENANCE

Mag:net Gallery

This piece is unmistakably the work of Manuel Ocampo; unruly, layered, and unapologetically strange. A singular force in contemporary Philippine art, Ocampo has long made waves beyond local shores. Since the early '90s, his work has been shown across major art capitals, Madrid, Berlin, Los Angeles, Paris, and more, while also commanding attention at global art fairs. What makes Ocampo so compelling is how he pulls viewers into his world of visual contradictions. His paintings are packed with clashing symbols, surreal figures, and jarring humor—like cartoonish creatures, religious allusions, pop culture scraps, and painterly abstraction, all mashed together with raw, chaotic energy.

In this particular work, playful meets grotesque: a green, bird-like figure eyes a mess of loops, planes, and airborne toy planes; a cartoonish purple head peers in from the side, and a pink skeletal form floats near the bottom. It's absurd and enigmatic; but that's the point. Ocampo uses kitsch and irreverence not just to provoke, but to make the act of looking a little less precious. His works reject neat narratives in favor of collision and complexity. This isn't art that whispers. It confronts, and disrupts; but always with intention. Ocampo turns the act of painting into a punchline, a protest, and a playground, all at once. (*Jed Daya*)



ABOVE: Manuel Ocampo © MM Yu <https://www.artnews.com/art-news/market/manuel-ocampo-and-lani-maestro-will-represent-the-philippines-at-the-2017-venice-biennale-7133/>



Federico Aguilar Alcuaz (1932 - 2011)*Untitled (Tres Marias Series)*

signed and dated 1985 (lower right)

oil on canvas

29 1/2" x 35" (75 cm x 89 cm)

P 800,000

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

PROVENANCE

Private Collection, Manila

One of the country's most enduring modernists, Federico Aguilar Alcuaz's bold and cosmopolitan works remain one of the most coveted amongst collectors. His portrayal of women in his *Tres Marias* is among his most popular series, a testament to his Spanish sensibilities that earned him the golden ticket into the annals of Philippine art history.

Like the name suggests, a significant number of the *Tres Marias* series feature a triad of women as they settle in for the day. However, that is not a hard and cold line to draw – a handful from the series contains as few as two women and as many as five. Whatever it may be, Aguilar Alcuaz's *Tres Marias* all contain the same elements – women in their traditional Spanish dresses relaxing in the comfort of their rooms. In each of these, Aguilar Alcuaz strips his women of their societal expectations, letting them exist just as they are, no filters attached.

This particular *Tres Maria* situates itself at the higher end of the spectrum with five women depicted. Still, their sophisticated 19th-century flair shines as these women huddle together deep in conversation. They languidly draped themselves over elegant chairs as they confided in each other, lost in their own personal bubble.

Aguilar Alcuaz's brush strokes, swift and short, give a sense of immediacy to the portraiture, as though it were a picture taken *mise-en-scène*, a feeling exemplified when one takes into consideration the familiar way the women are huddled together. Here, amongst other women's company, they are more than just someone's wives, daughters, sisters, and mothers. Here, they exist just as they are, and that is enough. (*Hannah Valiente*)



Ang Kiukok (1931 - 2005)

Crucifixion

signed and dated 1970 (lower right)

oil on canvas

23 1/2" x 16" (60 cm x 41 cm)

P 2,000,000

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

PROVENANCE

Private Collection, Manila

In a country as Catholic as the Philippines, it is no surprise that the weeks leading up to the Holy Week are a frenzy of preparations and traditions. From the forty days of observance of Lent to the numerous religious practices held by different Christian denominations, the Holy Week is among the most observed traditions in the country.

However, there is one tradition that extends far beyond the *Visita Iglesia* and the pilgrimage that many undertake. Every Good Friday, a crowd gathers in the fields in a handful of places across the country. A group of men walk through the streets, whips in their hands and crosses on their shoulders, as they flagellate across the town. The end of this peculiar tradition sees three men crucified on the cross just as Christ was crucified.

The tradition of crucifixion in the Philippines started in the 1950s, as actors played out the Passion of the Christ written by a local playwright; however, the ritual of nailing men on the cross started in 1961 when the faith leader Arsenio Añosa was crucified. For the next fifteen or so years, he continued to be crucified every Good Friday as penance and pledge of faith. Thus began a new tradition.

Though the men nailed upon the cross are not hung in the air as long as Christ was (they spend approximately five to ten minutes crucified), they shoulder even just a fraction of Christ's suffering as a *panata* (vow) or *penitensya* (penance).

Ang Kiukok's 1970 *Crucifixion* portrays an image of a man hanging on a cross. His face is deliberately blurred off so the viewer cannot truly determine who he is. Perhaps this is an illustration of Christ Himself as He was nailed on the cross, or perhaps it is the many devotees whose form of penitence is to follow Christ's footsteps on the cross as literally as he can. Either way, it is an image of a man on the brink of exhaustion and pain, and it is an image that Kiukok has found himself drawn to over the years.

In Kiukok's crucifixion works, the face is almost always rendered to its barest essence. His body is distorted, almost unrecognizable except for its unnatural bend. "It was a man that was made to bear the cross and endure the crucifixion," Rene E. Guatlo wrote in *Stations of the*



ABOVE: Ang Kiukok © León Gallery Archives

Cross. "Ang the artist paints the most vivid and painful set of pictures to drive home this point."

An artist drawn to the macabre, it is no surprise that he finds himself returning over and over again to the crucifixion. Through this, he focuses not just on Christ's sacrifice but the absolute agony He must have faced in His final hours. Whether it be Christ on the cross or a penitent whose form of contrition includes undergoing Christ's suffering, Kiukok's crucified figures are as much a testament of faith as it is suffering. As Christ suffered on the cross to bear the weight of mankind's sins, so too do His devotees suffer as a manifestation of their faith. (Hannah Valiente)



Leo Valledor (1936 - 1989)

Stage
signed and dated 1984 (verso)
acrylic on canvas
48 1/2" x 48 1/2" (123 cm x 123 cm)

P 1,400,000

PROVENANCE
Private Collection, Europe

At first glance, Leo Valledor's *Stage* feels deceptively simple; three angled color fields in rust, pale blue, and charcoal grey arranged within a unique, shield-like canvas. But as you spend more time with it, the surface begins to pulse with subtle tension. The diagonal cuts and hard edges refuse to sit still, drawing your gaze in zigzags across the geometric terrain. The way the colors shift in mood under different lighting only adds to the visual rhythm—it's almost like listening to jazz with your eyes. There's a quiet but insistent energy to it, as if the painting is breathing through color and form.

This is no accident. Valledor was obsessed with what he called the "spatial effects of color," a concern that places him firmly within the lineage of American minimalism, though his approach was anything but cold. *Stage* isn't just a flat surface; it's a spatial experience. He wanted his paintings to be walked around, reconsidered, and seen anew depending on the viewer's angle. And it works: the more you move, the more the piece moves with you.

Valledor's unique artistic voice was shaped not only by his deep engagement with abstraction, but also by his rich personal history. Born and raised in San Francisco, he was part of the beatnik generation that would later shake the foundations of American art. His early years were steeped in the bohemian spirit of California's post-war avant-garde, where poetry, jazz, and visual art bled into each other in smoky studios and open-ended "happenings." He later took that energy to New York, where he became a founding member of the Park Place Gallery—a short-lived but influential collective that championed large-scale, geometric, and spatially experimental works. (*Jed Daya*)



ABOVE: Leo Valledor, 1976. Photo by Mimi Jacobs, © wikiart.org

Valledor of Park Place, New York
Pioneer of the Shaped Canvas



Augusto Albor (b. 1948)

Division C
signed and dated 2001 (lower right)
mixed media on canvas
45" x 78" (114 cm x 198 cm)

P 800,000

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

PROVENANCE
Galleria Duemila

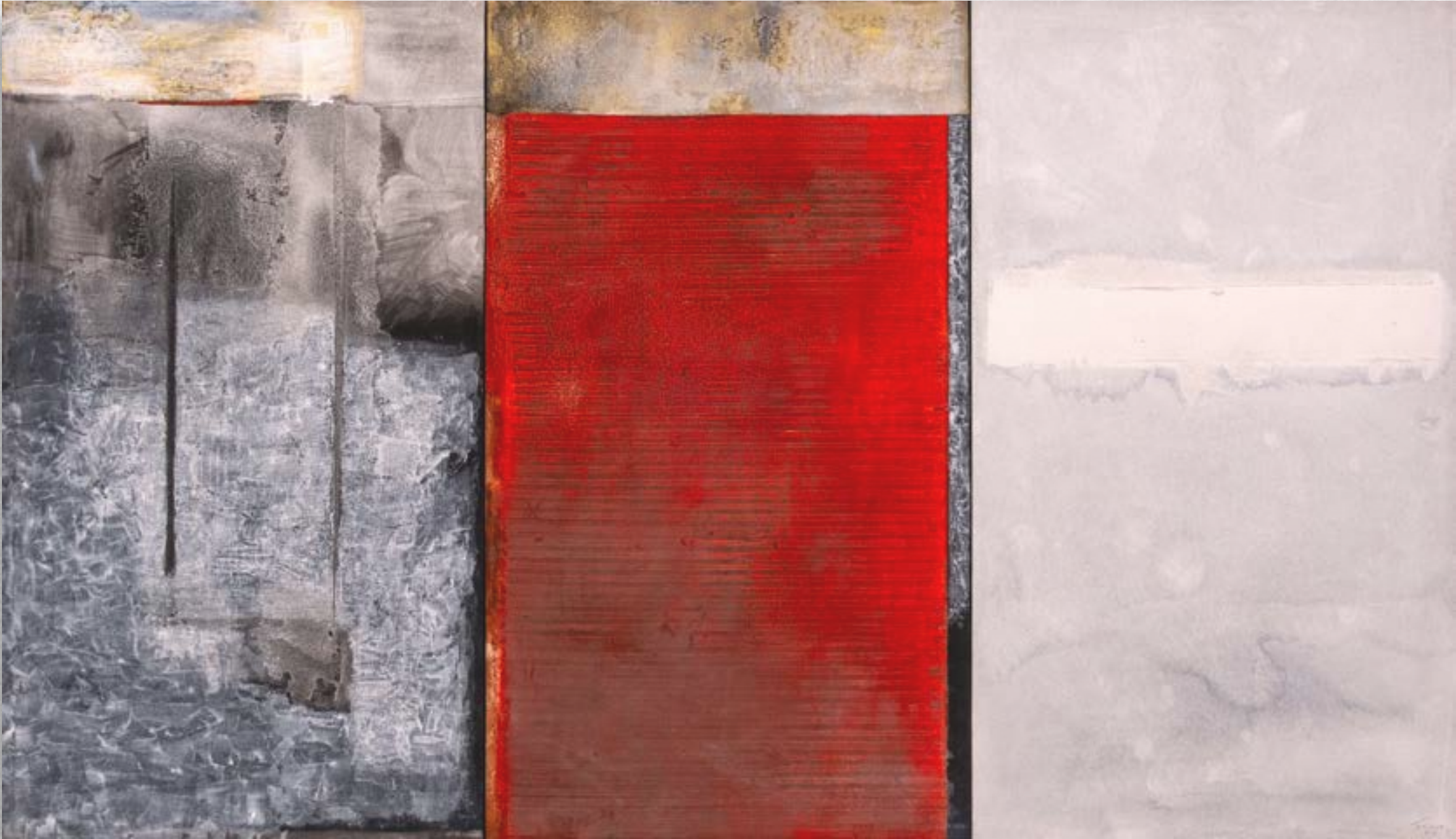


ABOVE: Agosto "Gus" Albor © León Gallery Archives

Augusto Albor utilized his innate sense of color in creating his minimalist canvases. Seemingly simple, every Albor piece is made of a painstaking process, demonstrating his virtuoso and discipline with every sweep and layer of paint.

Embodying his enthusiastic yet restrained brushwork and profound understanding of color and space, *Division C* is undeniably an Albor piece. This monumental masterpiece, composed of three equal-sized canvases joined together, shows the progression of his art: from his spontaneous sweeps of blacks and greys, to the incorporation of brilliant red and metallic hues, to a more subdued and quiet palette.

Despite the absence of distinguishable, actual objects, Albor's works have the profound ability to evoke a wide range of emotions. His oeuvre exudes an impassioned and elegant aesthetic that creates a sophisticated and refined experience for the viewers, establishing him as one of the foremost Filipino abstractionists. (Jessica Magno)



Michael Cacnio (b. 1969)

Hello
signed and dated 2005
brass
30" x 107" (76 cm x 272 cm)

P 1,000,000

Leon Gallery wishes to thank Mrs. Tess Cacnio for confirming the authenticity of this lot



Michael Cacnio is known for his social realist brass sculptures encapsulating the traditional Filipino essence. His works revolve around familial relationships, street vendors, hardworking folks, and childhood themes. Beyond their aesthetic appeal, his elaborate masterpieces are a thoughtful exploration of shared human experiences, providing a profound understanding of humanity and Filipino heritage.

With his dexterous hands, Cacnio triumphantly made Philippine culture come alive through his sculptures. *Hello*, crafted in 2005, depicts two children atop two separate tree branches, conversing with a makeshift talking device made with cans and strings. It is an intricately sculpted

image that captures the merry and free-spirited qualities of Filipino childhood in the countryside.

"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. Indeed, Cacnio has continued to delight his a with works that depict the joys and hard work of the Filipino people. Furthermore, his exceptional artistry produces awe-inspiring sculptures that instill a sense of pride and appreciation for our rich heritage. *(Jessica Magno)*



ABOVE: Michael Cacnio in his studio.

Maximo Sison Viola (1857-1933)

A Friend of Rizal with a Passion for Designing Furniture

by AUGUSTO MARCELINO REYES GONZALEZ III

Don Dr Maximo Viola y Sison (13 October 1857 – 03 September 1933) was from a leading hacendero family from San Miguel de Mayumo town in Bulacan; he was the son of the hacendero Don Pedro Viola and Dona Isabel Sison of Lingayen, Pangasinan. He was a rich man with vast landholdings. He attended the Colegio de San Juan de Letran and the Universidad de Santo Tomas. As with many sons of affluent and progressive Filipino families, Maximo was sent to Spain for his tertiary studies; he attended the Universitat de Barcelona from 1882–86 where he obtained his medical degree.

Maximo Viola met Jose Rizal in July–August 1886 in Barcelona as the former was finishing his studies in medicine and surgery; Viola was 28, Rizal 25; Viola was three years Rizal's senior. Their reformist values aligned, the two struck up a close friendship and proceeded to explore Europe together. They met up again in Berlin, after Rizal had gone to Paris, before Christmas of March 1886.

Dr Maximo Viola's place in Filipino history was established when he lent the three hundred pesos for the publishing of the first two thousand copies of the landmark, incendiary novel "Noli Me Tangere" by Dr Jose Rizal in March 1887 while in Berlin; Rizal was reluctant but eventually accepted the money as a loan, not a gift, citing that his brother Paciano Rizal in Manila, his own friends the lawyer Antonio Maria Regidor in London, and the artist Juan Luna in Paris also wanted to fund it. In gratitude, Viola was presented the galley proofs, a pen, as well as the first published copy by the author himself with the dedication: "To my dear friend Maximo Viola, the first who read and appreciated my work – Berlin, 1887 – Jose Rizal." Rizal was able to repay the loan two months later when his elder brother Paciano was able to wire the funds from Manila.

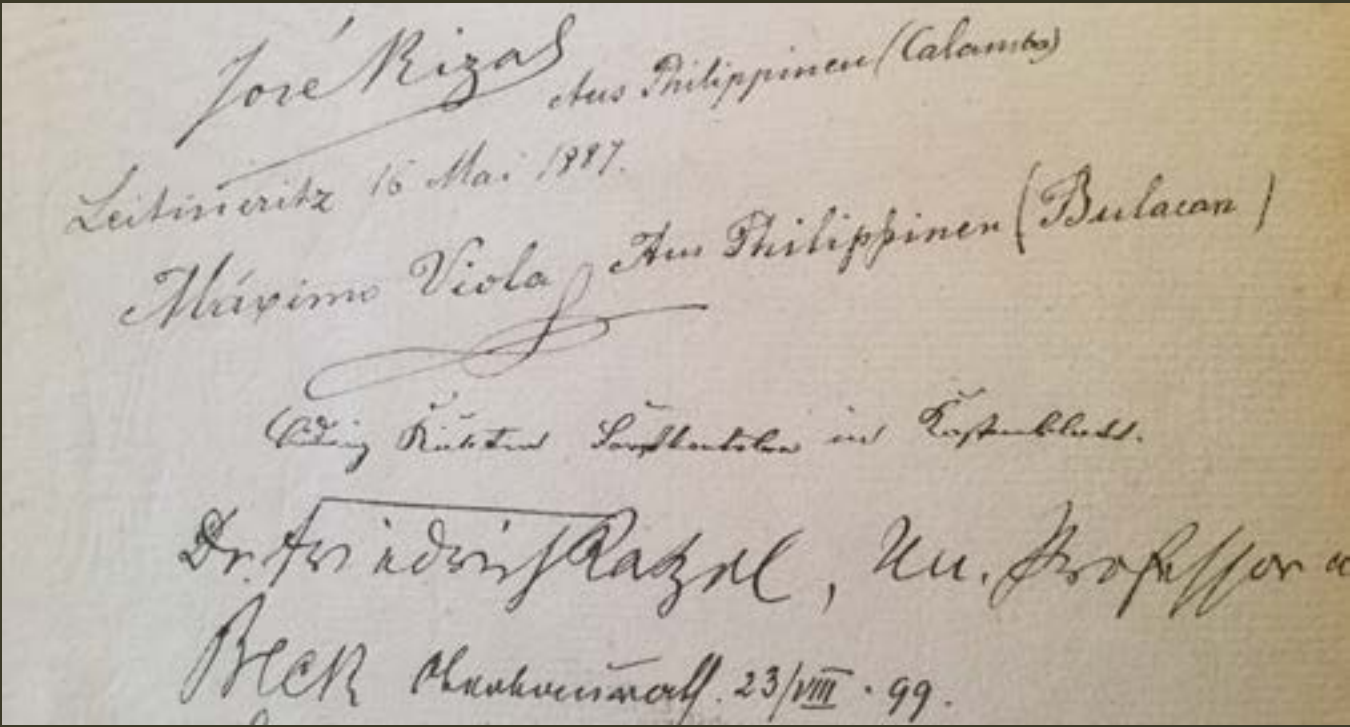
From Berlin, Viola and Rizal traveled to Dresden, Leitmeritz, Prague, Vienna, Salzburg, Munich, Nuremberg, Schaffhausen, Basel, Bern, Lausanne, Geneve. From Geneve, Viola proceeded to his Barcelona base, while Rizal returned to Filipinas.

The highlight of Viola's and Rizal's tour through Germany, Bohemia (now Czech Republic), Austria, and Switzerland was their five-day visit (13–17 May 1887) to Rizal's great friend, the Austrian professor and ethnographer



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

Dr Ferdinand Johann Franz Schneider Blumentritt (10 September 1853–20 September 1913) in Leitmeritz, Bohemia (now Litomerice, Czech Republic). Blumentritt greatly admired the intellect of the younger Rizal and expended great effort to entertain him and Viola while they were in Leitmeritz. The professor introduced them to fellow academicians, intellectuals, leading citizens, officials, even to Mayor Gebhardt; brought them to the city landmarks: Mirove Square, Church of All Saints, Old Town Hall, Chalice House, Black Eagle House, Domske Square, Cathedral of Saint Stephen, Bishop's Residence, Church of the Annunciation, the Cellars (underground pathways), the various schools. He booked them at the Hotel Krebs, Leitmeritz's best lodgings. Blumentritt also served Filipino



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



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

dishes like Lumpia, Adobo, Kare–Kare, Lechon, Pancit, Paella/Arroz ala Valenciana at his home to Rizal's and Viola's utter amazement. He also took them to dinner at a special place: the tavern at Schutzen–Inseln, a beautiful islet with centuries–old trees. Post–prandial conversations between Blumentritt, Rizal, and Viola lasted until dawn. Leitmeritz and Prague newspapers reported with much curiosity and fascination the visit of Dr Jose Rizal and Dr Maximo Viola, two accomplished Malay intellectuals from Las Islas Filipinas, a remote colony of Spain in Asia.

Viola and Rizal met up again in December 1887 in Manila at the home of Pedro Serrano. The last time Viola met up with Rizal was in June 1892 at the Hotel de Oriente in Binondo, before the latter was exiled to Dapitan in the Zamboanga peninsula.

Back in his hometown of San Miguel de Mayumo, Bulacan, Viola served as the principal doctor and treated the less fortunate gratis. In 1890, he married the beautiful Spanish mestiza Dona Maria Juana Roura y Santa Maria of the same town and they had five sons, of whom only three survived to adulthood: Jose, Rafael, and Silvio.

Apart from being a medical doctor, Maximo Viola was an aesthete with remarkable taste. He designed magnificent furniture (much of it in his favorite kamagong wood ["Diospyros discolor"/"Diospyros blancoi"]) and objects in the Filipino art nouveau style which had emerged in the 1870s and flourished until the 1920s (also known as "estilo Tampinco"); he collaborated with the design geniuses and sculptors Isabelo Tampinco y Lacandola and Romualdo de Jesus. The objects Maximo Viola created, collected, and bequeathed to his family constituted a major collection of importance to the nation.

Acknowledgments:

Ramon Villonco Viola
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Dominic Nakpil Santos–Viola Faustino
Lisa Guerrero Nakpil
Dr Ambeth R Ocampo
Jose Canlas

Nuestra Señora del Carmen Nuestra Señora del Monte Carmelo Our Lady of Mount Carmel

by AUGUSTO MARCELINO REYES GONZALEZ III

This magnificent ivory "de vestir" image of "Nuestra Señora del Carmen"/Our Lady of Mount Carmel is a neoclassical rendition of the "Theotokos," "The Mother of God." Both the Virgin Mary and the Child Jesus have faces, hands, lower legs, and feet of ivory; the facial features are unconventionally individualistic and expressive. Both the Virgin Mary and the Child Jesus wear "coronas imperiales" of 18 karat gold set with rosecut diamonds; both hold finely chased and repousseed 18 karat gold scapulars in their hands; the Child Jesus wears a necklace of small Sulu pearls. The crowns and scapulars of the image alone are testaments to the finest Filipino goldwork. The Virgin Mary wears a gold-colored scapular embroidered with upwardly swirling leaves and damask roses in a "mudejar"/Hispano-Moresque "tree of life" style, she wears a gold velvet dress embroidered with stylized "catmon" flowers and leaves at the hem; she wears a blue velvet cape embroidered with arabesque flowers and leaves at the hem, arranged "palikpik" style in front (as in fin, flipper, dorsal fin). The lavish embroidery is rendered in expensive "inuod" ("worm," twisted), flat, and matte silvergilt threads. The Virgin Mary stands on a "nube" cloud base set on a gilded "peana" base of various neoclassical acanthus leaves and scrollwork. The entire ensemble stands on a plain, molded wooden base and covered by a rare, very large, and unusually intact original "virina" (glass cloche).

The iconography of Our Lady of Mount Carmel shows the Virgin Mary wearing the Carmelite habit of a brown tunic and a white cape, holding the Infant Jesus on her left hand and a scapular on her right hand; the Child Jesus also holds a scapular in his left hand. It was in this manner that they appeared to Saint Simon Stock, an early Carmelite Prior General, and gave the brown scapular as a sacramental to be propagated by the Carmelite Order in the late fourteenth century in England. (Although Mount Carmel is in Israel, between the Mediterranean Sea and the Vale of Jezreel, the Carmelite Order actually started in the Crusader States — the four Catholic polities of the County of Edessa, Principality of Antioch, County of Tripoli,

and the Kingdom of Jerusalem which settled in Anatolia 1098–1291.)

The definite attribution of this image to Leoncio Asuncion y Molo stems from its extreme similarity to certified existing works of the maestro escultor: Several ivory images in the "oratorio" private chapel of the Capitan Maximo Molo Agustin Paterno residence were carved by Leoncio Asuncion ("Tio Leoncio") according to Maximo's eldest daughter Agueda and youngest daughter Adelaida Paterno, of which only four survived World War II: "Cristo Moribundo," "Nuestra Señora del Rosario," "San Jose Patriarca," and "San Antonio de Padua." Furthermore, three ivory images were inherited by Leoncio's grandson Rafael Asuncion and are currently on loan to the Ayala Museum: "Santo Cristo Expirante," "Sagrado Corazon de Maria," and "Santo Nino."

The nearly life-sized, hyperrealistic image of "San Pedro Apostol"/Saint Peter the Apostle aka "Apung Iru" (Armayan-Espiritu-Macam estate), the town patron of Apalit, Pampanga is generally thought by scholars and researchers (Ramon N Villegas, Martin I Tinio Jr, Suzano Gonzales, et al) to be an early virtuoso work of Leoncio Asuncion. There is a magnificent ivory "Cristo Expirante" with extensive silvergilt work in the Gonzalez-Sioco-Arnedo estate in Apalit, Pampanga which came from the Gonzalez-Lopez estate in Baliuag, Bulacan. There is a mid-sized "Calvario" tableau, a "La Inmaculada Concepcion," and a "San Jose Patriarca" in the del Casal-Pereira estate which Dona Faustina Valdezco y Javier de Pereira (mother of the artist Jose Valdezco Pereira and Loreto Valdezco Pereira-del Casal) remembered were purchased in the 1880s from Don Leoncio Asuncion in Santa Cruz, Manila; pioneer art restorer Suzano Gonzales ("Jun") studied them and recognized them to be by Leoncio Asuncion. There is a spectacular "de tallado" tableau of "Nuestra Señora del Carmen"/"Nuestra Señora del Monte Carmelo"/Our Lady of Mount Carmel complete with sinners and purgatory and a small brass plaque marked "Leoncio Asuncion y Molo, escultor de marfil y madera, Santa Cruz, Manila" in the

collection of antique dealer Leon Rama Esposo. A truly exceptional, "de vestir" kneeling "Santa Maria Magdalena Penitente" was first auctioned at the "Angels & Monsters" Auction of Ramon Villegas, Maria Cristina Ongpin-Roxas, and Vita Sarenas at the LaO' Center and then auctioned a few years later at the Leon Gallery. A mid-sized "Calvario" tableau, with its "Cristo Expirante" a bigger version of the Rafael Asuncion-inherited Ayala Museum image, was auctioned at the Leon Gallery in 2021. A stunning pair of large "de vestir" images of "La Virgen Maria Peregrina" and "San Jose Peregrino," with very fine ivory carving and embroidered vestments very similar to the Paterno images, were auctioned at the Leon Gallery in 2022. A spectacular "de vestir" but highly unusual all-ivory "San Rafael Arcangel" with fantastic 18 karat gold accessories was auctioned at the Leon Gallery in 2023.

It has been observed that Leoncio Asuncion's oeuvre in santos is characterized by unconventional, individualistic faces (in contrast to the expressionless, insipid faces typical of the genre). According to Dona Adelaida Paterno y Devera Ignacio ("Adela," 24 October 1881–21 January 1962), her uncle Tio Leoncio liked to model his santos' faces loosely after the clients who had commissioned them, accounting for their distinct features and expressions. It spared the artist from thinking too much. Thus, the Paterno ivory santos resemble the better-looking Paterno men and women. Another Asuncion hallmark is the expert carving of the hands and feet, with pronounced knuckles in the fingers, specially in the male santos. A further Asuncion mark is that the well-articulated feet along with the lower legs are entirely of ivory, not just the feet as with less-distinguished images. Yet another Asuncion mark are the vestment textiles and embroidery designs: most are of silk velvet but the "vestidas" of the Virgen Maria images are

usually of luxurious "binanig" (woven silvergilt threads) and "tisu de oro" (cloth of gold); the embroidery designs tend to be Neo-Gothic and Neo-Renaissance (Isabelina) in style. Asuncion santos also have markedly elaborate, exquisitely-carved giltwood bases ("peanas"). The last Asuncion mark are the lavish, 18 karat gold accessories of the santos — "aureolas," crowns, "rostrillos," earrings, collars, belts, bracelets, rings, rosaries, scapulars, "potencias," "coronas de espinas," "rayos," loincloths, all the way to the sandals. Santos, male or female, big or small, by maestro Leon Asuncion y Molo were anything but the ordinary.

Leoncio Asuncion Molo (1813–1888) was one of the younger children of Mariano Asuncion (Assumpcion, originally Cagalitan before the Governor-General Narciso Claveria y Zaldúa decree of 21 November 1849 which mandated permanent surnames for all Filipinos) of Santa Cruz and Maria de la Paz Molo of Binondo. Mariano rose to prominence and became a capitan del barrio of Santa Cruz. Both Mariano and Maria de la Paz were industrious traders and the family lived in comfort which allowed the children to pursue their inclinations towards the arts. Ambrocio and Mariano were painters of religious subjects, Leoncio a sculptor, Justiniano a portrait painter. They all had their ateliers next to each other. From the 1820s–90s, the Asuncion y Molo family of the arrabal de Santa Cruz became known in Manila as a family of excellent artists.

Leoncio's mother Maria de la Paz Molo was a daughter of the Chinese migrant apothecary Ming Mong Lo and a sister of the prosperous trader Paterno Molo de San Agustin. The latter married Miguela Yamson y de la Cruz of royal Tagalog lineage and they became the parents of Capitan Maximo Molo Agustin Paterno y Yamson



L - R: Nuestra Señora del Rosario by Leoncio Asuncion, 1850, San Antonio de Padua by Leoncio Asuncion, 1850 and San Jose Patriarca by Leoncio Asuncion, 1850 © Capitan Maximo Molo Agustin Paterno estate.



IMAGES ABOVE: Detailed images of the “Nuestra Señora Del Carmen”/“Nuestra Señora Del Monte Carmelo” Our Lady Of Mount Carmel

(“Capitan Memo”) and Capitana Martina Molo Agustin Paterno y Yamson (“Capitana Tinang,” Sra de Mariano Zamora), two of the richest Chinese–Filipino entrepreneurs of the second half of the nineteenth century.

Capitan Maximo Paterno waxed very rich from his trading and ship– chandling activities and maintained a grand and luxurious residence in the heart of Santa Cruz for his large family. He commissioned his artistic Asuncion y Molo first cousins Ambrocio and Mariano for religious paintings, Leoncio for the ivory and wooden santos in his private chapel, and Justiniano for portraits of himself, his three successive wives (Dona Valeria Pineda, Valeria’s paternal first cousin Dona Carmen Devera Ignacio y Pineda, Carmen’s younger sister Dona Teodora Devera Ignacio y

Pineda), and sons and daughters. The house was filled with the finest Filipino and European art, furniture, and decorations. The Paterno sons and daughters grew up in aristocratic Spanish–Filipino style: they were educated by the best tutors and their creativity encouraged; the sons were sent to Europe for their tertiary education; the daughters were mentored by the best artists in Manila — painters, musicians, performing artists, writers, poets. The “casa senoreal” occupied one entire city block and bordered four streets Calle San Roque, Calle Noria, Calle Sales, and Calle Carriedo with its main entrance on Calle San Roque. The Paterno palace became known in Manila as a haven of high culture, elegance, and sophistication. In short, class.

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“Nuestra Señora Del Carmen”/“Nuestra Señora Del Monte Carmelo”

Our Lady Of Mount Carmel

Leoncio Asuncion y Molo (1813–1888)
ivory, “baticuling” wood (Litsea leytensis),
18 karat gold, velvet, silk and silvergilt threads
1850s
150 grams of gold
santo:
H: 30" (76 cm)
W: 11" (28 cm)
L: 12" (30 cm)

with virina:
H: 42" (107 cm)
D: 17" (43 cm)

P 800,000

PROVENANCE
Santa Cruz, Manila
Don Dr Maximo Viola y Sison (1857–1933) and Dona Juana Roura y Santa Maria, by inheritance; Don Pedro Viola and Dona Isabel Sison.



Florencio B. Concepcion (1933 - 2006)

Untitled

signed and dated 1962 (lower right)

mixed media

30" x 40" (76 cm x 102 cm)

P 1,200,000

From Hugo Bunzl *The Consummate Collector*

Hugo Bunzl is a businessman, art collector, and philanthropist. He worked at UBS Bank in investment banking and wealth management in London and Geneva. He subsequently joined Bunzl plc before starting his own corporation. He holds a degree in economics from the Catholic University of Milan.

He has been married since 2015 to Dominique. They collect contemporary art both international and Filipino. Their collection includes works by Richard Long, On Kawara, Hiroshi Sugimoto, Jenny Holzer, Allan McCollum, Cindy Sherman, Gus Albor, and Cian Dyrirt, amongst many others. They live between Manila and London. Their daughter Eva, has been a Tate member since the day of her birth.

Hugo Bunzl and Dominique are very well known for their philanthropic work, supporting charities like the ACAP Foundation, Ballet Manila, the Manila Symphony Orchestra, and the Upskills Foundation.

The Bunzl family is a historically prominent industrialist and philanthropic family with roots tracing back to 16th-century Prague, where they were known under the surname Bumsa. They are direct descendants of Rabbi Judah Loew ben Bezalel, the famed Maharal of Prague, a renowned scholar and mystic.

By the 19th century, the family settled in Austria-Hungary and became involved in paper manufacturing, founding Bunzl & Biach, which grew into the largest paper company in the world at the time. The family later became a market leader in the cigarette industry.

In 1940, after fleeing Austria due to Nazi persecution, family members re-established themselves in England and founded Tissue Papers Ltd, which evolved into Bunzl



ABOVE: Hugo Bunzl

plc—a global distribution and outsourcing powerhouse listed on the London Stock Exchange and part of the FTSE 100 Index.

For generations, the family has been known not only for business but also for philanthropy, particularly in Israel, education, and the arts.

Prominent members include:

- Hugo Bunzl (1893 - 1961) - Industrialist, Chairman of Bunzl and Biach.
- G.G. Bunzl (1915 - 1981) - Chairman of Bunzl plc.
- Rudolph Bunzl (1922 - 2016) - Chairman of Filtrona Corporation.
- Martin Bunzl (b. 1948) - Philosopher and professor.

Placid Tones *From a Modernist Master*



Florencio B. Concepcion (1933 - 2006), more widely known as F.B. Concepcion explored the relationship between academic painting and spirituality through gestural abstraction. Born in Manila, he received his degree in Fine Arts from the University of the Philippines in 1953. His early paintings and prints featured landscapes, seascapes, and the common folk that appeared to be flat yet hinted at depth and perspective by emphasizing the subtle gradations of hue and tone. In 1961, he went to Rome as an Italian government scholar for his graduate studies and received his MFA (Licenziato di Pittura) from the city's Accademia di Belle Arti. While in Italy, Concepcion was introduced to the Arte Povera and Arte Informale movements, with the latter recognized for breaking free from the historic limitations of painting by forging personal methods independent of any calculated and logical bearings expected of traditional abstraction. His encounters with Arte Informale's pioneering proponents,

such as Alberto Burri, Emilio Vedova, and Lucio Fontana, marked the beginning of Concepcion's seminal works, where heavy strokes of dark colors dominate his canvas while balanced out by an unapologetic use of a lighter palette that seduces and soothes the viewer.

An example of this is an untitled painting from 1960, where we can see light emerging out of layers and layers of texture. The alternating and even contrasting tactility permits a somewhat more immersive experience of looking at a painting beyond the formed image. Concepcion's articulation of space echoes the emotive and existentialist sentiments that guide his practice. He believed that 'a painting must move you' and that 'it must come from the heart and soul'. Hence, the execution of rendered gestures in his works is charged with the artist's inner impulses unbound by his experimental approach to composition. (Gwen Bautista)

Norma Pantangco Jacinto Carlos & Her Beloved Anita

by ISIDRA REYES

The image of a vendor seated on a bent tree trunk beside a basket of fruits on Km. 144 of the Calamba-Tagaytay Road was immortalized on canvas by the late artist Anita Magsaysay-Ho as a memento of the first meeting of her friends, Juan "Jonby" Carlos and Norma Pantangco Jacinto, during an outing in Tagaytay with Anita as matchmaker. The painting was Anita's gift to the couple on their wedding day in 1942. Anita was their maid-of-honor. The friendship lasted a lifetime while the painting became the impetus to Norma's love for collecting paintings by great Filipino artists.

Norma Pantangco Jacinto Carlos was born in Manila on 10 March 1922 to, Dr. Nicanor Santos Jacinto, and Doña Maria Rosario Valeriana Fernandez Pantangco, sister of Rufino family matriarch, Doña Mercedes Pantangco Rufino, with whom Norma was quite close to, accompanying her to movie screenings at the Manila downtown cinemas owned by the Rufino family, as Norma herself recounted in the book, *Anthem for Ernesto*.

Her father, Dr. Nicanor Santos Jacinto, born in Malolos, Bulacan in 1884, received his early education at the Ateneo de Manila where he obtained his A.B. degree after which he graduated from the U.S.T. College of Medicine in 1911, passing the board in the same year. An eminent physician and surgeon.

Apart from his medical practice, Dr. Nicanor S. Jacinto was equally well-respected as a planter, mining executive, and businessman. He was director of the National Rice and Corn Corporation, president of the National Rice Growers Association, president, Finance and Mining Investments Corporation, and Chairman of the Board, Philippine Bank of Commerce, founded in 1938 together with José Cojuangco, Sr. and the Rufino brothers, Ernesto and Vicente.

Dr. Nicanor S. Jacinto and Doña Rosario Pantangco Jacinto had five sons, Oscar, Jesus, Fernando, Wilfrido, and Nicanor, Jr., and two daughters, Elsa and Norma.

The eldest, Dr. Oscar P. Jacinto was a renowned medical practitioner who lived in a beautiful home at 24 Ipil Road, Forbes Park, Makati together with his wife, Pacita Pestaño, and four children: Maria Theresa "Mert" married to former BPI CEO Xavier P. Loinaz, the renowned equestrian Nicanor, III "Nicky," Oscar, Jr., and Melissa "Issa" J. Bjorkenstam. The family was one of the earliest residents of Forbes Park.



ABOVE: Wedding photo, Juan "Jonby" de Leon Carlos and Norma Pantangco Jacinto, 1942. Source: Lucille Carlos **BELOW:** Dr. Nicanor S. Jacinto Residence, 613 P. Noval Street, Sampaloc, Manila. This was where family reunions were regularly held. It later became the University Residence of Institucion Teresiana. Source: A Heritage Shared

Another prominent son of Dr. Nicanor S. Jacinto was Fernando P. Jacinto, one of the richest businessmen and industrialists of Post-War and Pre-Martial Law Philippines who was Chairman of the Board of Jacinto Steel and Iligan Integrated Steel Mills, Inc. (IISMI), the first fully-integrated steel mills in the Philippines. He was married to the beautiful Bernardina Reyes Pereyra and had eight children: Joselito

(formerly married to Minnie Osmeña in a grand wedding in 1964), Fernando, Jr. "Pocholo," Ramon "RJ," (a businessman/musician formerly married to Marilou Arroyo then to Frannie Aguinaldo), Mary Rose Espeleta (host of the TV show, Santa Zita and Mary Rose), Elizabeth "Lilibeth," Bernadette "Nanette," Elizabeth "Lissa," and Maria Agnes.

According to Norma's youngest daughter, Lucille, her mother met her father, Juan de Leon Carlos, through her friend, the artist Anita Magsaysay-Ho.

Anita would go on outings in Tagaytay with Norma and her cousin, Ester Pantangco Rufino, sister of Vicente, Ernesto, and Rafael Rufino and one of two "E's in the company which ran EVER, Avenue, State, Capitol, Gaiety, Rizal, and other first-run movie theaters mostly in Manila and Makati. Lucille recounts stories that Anita met her father, Juan "Jonby" de Leon Carlos, in New York where her father took up his Masters in Civil Engineering and Safety Engineering at Columbia University while Anita was studying at the Art Students' League in New York City and that both stayed at the International House, a dormitory for international students located at 500 Riverside Drive, just a subway stop away from the Columbia University campus. However, while Anita wrote about staying at the International House together with thirty other Filipinos (among them the debonair Dr. Tony Velarde, the dancer Leonor Orosa, Alice Jose, and the sisters Gloria Cortez Toralballa and Fanny Cortez Garcia), in her book, *Anita Magsaysay-Ho, An Artist's Memoirs*, a cross-check with Juan Carlos' biographical entry in D.H. Soriano's *The Philippines' Who's Who* (1957) reveals that it is unlikely for Juan and Anita to have stayed at the International House at the same time as Juan completed his studies at Columbia University in 1940 while Anita attended the Art Students' League in 1946. Anita may have met Juan while they were still both in the Philippines, most probably at the University of the Philippines where Anita earned her Certificate in Painting, Cartooning, Illustration, and Commercial Designing from the UP School of Fine Arts in 1933 while Juan Carlos earned his B.S. in Civil Engineering from the UP College of Engineering in 1934. By 1942, Juan was already married to Norma.

Juan "Jonby" de Leon Carlos, born on 4 October 1911 in Baliuag, Bulacan to Juan B. Carlos and Mercedes de Leon, was a prominent and successful leader in the field of engineering. He first studied in his native Baliuag, Bulacan after which he completed his high school studies at the Ateneo de Manila in Intramuros. He earned his B.S. Civil Engineering at the University of the Philippines in 1934 and earned his Masters in Civil Engineering and Safety Engineering at Columbia University, New York in 1940. He was president and general manager of the Philippine Engineers' Syndicate, Inc. which in 1956 built the P 12-M Ambuklao Hydro-Electric Power Plant in Bokod, Benguet, among the first and largest hydro-electric power plants in the Philippines. He was also president and general manager of the United Construction Co., Inc. well known for

its construction of residential, commercial, and industrial buildings in the Philippines. Among the company's well-known projects are the MERALCO Building in Ortigas Avenue, Pasig City designed by Architect José Velez Zaragoza, and the SGV and Security Bank & Trust Co. Buildings, both located in Makati.

Engr. Carlos was chosen as the "Builder of the Year" by the Business Writers of the Philippines in 1948 and 1953 and by *The Evening News* for two consecutive years in 1951 and 1952 based on his leadership in his profession. Engr. Carlos was likewise a member of the board of examiners for civil engineers. He was elected president of the Philippine Contractors Association, treasurer and co-founder of the Builders' Syndicate, member of the Manila Board of Realtors. He was Chairman of Filipinas Marketing Corp., Bulacan Development Co., JC Realty & Building Corp., and Security Development & Realty Corp., Vice Chairman of Norton & Harrison Co., Inc. and Centro Escolar University, director, State Bonding and Insurance Co., Management Association of the Philippines, the Malolos Rural Bank, Republic Cement Corp., Grogun, Inc., and Commonwealth Food Industries, Inc.

He was also a civic leader and was president of the Manila Rotary Club. An avid golfer and clubman, he was a member of the Wack Wack Golf & Country Club, the Manila Polo Club, the Baguio Country Club, the Philippine Columbian Association and the Casino Español de Manila.

Engr. Carlos provided for a comfortable life for Norma and their seven children: Rosario "Jeannie" (Garcia), Nancy (Tambunting), Vicente "Vince" (former DOT Secretary and Côte d'Ivoire Consul), Melanie (de Leon), Priscilla, Juan Carlos, Jr., and Ma. Lucia "Lucille" (Locsin). Norma loved to travel in style and travel records from 1948-1962 indicate travel to San Francisco, New York, Miami, and Brazil with stays at such posh hotels as the St. Regis and Hotel Sheraton Atlantic in New York. It is possible that Norma visited Anita in Sao Paolo, Brazil in 1962 as Anita had resided there with her husband, Robert, and family. Norma and Anita would maintain their friendship through the years. They would eventually become *comadres*. Anita was the *ninang* of Norma's youngest daughter, Lucille, while Norma's husband was *ninong* to Anita's daughter, Doris.

The Carlos family lived in beautiful houses at 729 Taft Ave., Malate, Manila (in front of De La Salle College Taft), 96 Ninth Street, New Manila, Quezon City, and 1225 Acacia Road, Dasmariñas Village, Makati, their walls adorned with Juan and Norma's extensive collection of paintings by Juvenal Sansó, Ibarra de la Rosa, and Anita Magsaysay-Ho, among others.

This precious legacy of a painting is among the last to go hopefully to new owners who would appreciate it not only as an early example of Anita Magsaysay-Ho's art but as a memento of a lifetime of friendship between Anita and Norma..

Anita Magsaysay-Ho (1914 - 2012)*Santol Vendor*

signed (lower left)

ca. 1942

oil on board

15" x 17" (38 cm x 43 cm)

P 7,000,000**PROVENANCE**

A wedding gift from Anita Magsaysay-Ho to her friend Norma Pantangco Jacinto upon her marriage to Juan "Jonby" de Leon Carlos in 1942.

Anita Magsaysay-Ho lived a gilded — and yet, exotic — life. Her first-ever teacher was Irineo L. Miranda (1896-1964), giving her private art lessons at the age of 13; but she was also tutored by a series of foreign experts. One of them was Captain Michael, who she would describe as a visiting Cossack in her book, "An Artist's Memoirs." Then there was Herbert Hyman, a German emigré who had arrived from Batavia; finally, just before the war, a Japanese artist who taught at the Philippine Women's University and was unmasked as a spy for the Japanese Imperial Army when the war broke out.

It was Miranda, however, who would convince her parents to allow her to go to the UP College of Fine Arts where she would be mentored by Fernando Amorsolo. Later, she would come into the orbit of Victorio Edades at the School of Design, a new school 'founded with eminent architects Angel Nakpil and Enrique Ruiz among others' in Ermita.

The 'Santol Vendor' reveals the beginnings of Anita's distinct style, certainly, her very own unique point of view. The sinuous curves and massive sense of proportion of the woman in a saya show Edades' influence, although the subject matter is pure Amorsolo. She sits by the roadside in the shade of a sheltering tree. It has, however, the earthbound color palette of Edades, and not the light-glazed, sun-filled hues of Amorsolo. The woman appears self-assured, a character with a story to tell, not a field hand or farmer's daughter.

After all, it is the second year of World War II, when women were beginning to come into their own, learning to cope and become independent. Oil paints and canvases would also have begun to disappear, probably explaining the sameness of the shades. The mood is thus quiet and not exuberant.

This work was painted on the way to Tagaytay, according to the collector's family lore. Anita had gone on an outing with a young couple who (unbeknownst to them) were soon to be wed. It was Anita who had introduced the two — fellow members of the same gilded society, Norma Jacinto and Juan "Jonby" de Leon Carlos. Norma was related to the cinema-theater moguls, the Rufinos. Her



ABOVE: Anita Magsaysay (1949) ©Artes De Las Filipina **BELOW:** Norma Pantangco Jacinto Carlos

father was a prominent doctor. Carlos was equally well-bred, destined to become an important businessman.

Magsaysay-Ho would present this painting as a wedding gift to the happy couple in 1942, satisfying proof of her handiwork as Cupid — and as a budding artist — on one summer day. (Lisa Guerrero Nakpil)

The Jacinto - Carlos Anita Magsaysay-Ho

A Wedding Present for a Match Made in Tagaytay



Lee Aguinaldo (1933 - 2007)

a.) *Galumphing Louie, Homage to Walt Disney No. 1*
signed (verso)
dated 1988
mixed media on wood
10 3/4" x 8 1/4" (27 cm x 21 cm)

b.) *The Child #2*
signed and dated 1988 (top)
mixed media
10 1/2" x 7 3/4" (27 cm x 20 cm)

c.) *Edwardo and the Death of Europe*
signed and inscribed Metro Manila (verso)
dated 1983
mixed media on wood
11 1/2" x 11 1/4" (29 cm x 29 cm)

P 400,000

The three artworks shown here depart from Aguinaldo's well-known abstract style and offer a more intimate, psychological approach. Executed in mixed media, these portraits appear as distressed and layered images, some partially obscured, others dramatically lit or tightly cropped. One shows a figure laughing manically, another, a ghostly, vintage image of a girl, and the third features a shadowed, expressive male face caught in mid-speech. These pieces hint at themes of identity, memory, and fragmentation. The surfaces themselves seem to echo decay or erasure, perhaps mirroring Aguinaldo's lifelong tension between chaos and control, surface polish and emotional intensity. Here, the human face becomes another abstraction; part spectacle, part specter.

Lee Aguinaldo was a trailblazer in Philippine modern art, known for his bold abstractions and innovative techniques. Born in New York City in 1933, Aguinaldo was largely self-taught, yet he quickly made a name for himself in Manila's art circles. His early participation in the Philippine Art Gallery's annual exhibits, including the country's first non-objective group show alongside artists like Fernando Zóbel and Nena Saguil, marked the beginning of a prolific career.

Beyond his artistic innovations, Aguinaldo was known for his vibrant personality and unconventional lifestyle. Often referred to as the "bad boy" of Philippine art, he embraced a life of creativity and hedonism, often rejecting the



ABOVE: Lee Aguinaldo © León Gallery Archives

expectations that came with his prominent family name. His defiance of social norms was not merely personal; it was deeply embedded in the art he made, art that insisted on experimentation, freedom, and emotional honesty. (*Jed Daya*)



Madame Evdoxia Adamson

A Lifetime of Learning and Art

by ISIDRA REYES

It must have been at the lovely Adamson home at No. 6 Broadway Street, New Manila that Fernando Amorsolo's painting of a water bearer hung for many years. Water and nature were very close to the heart of George Lucas Adamson, having grown up amidst the bounty of nature and fresh water in his native Madamia in Greece—and having devoted his knowledge and expertise in water, distillery, and mineral technology throughout his professional life.

George Lucas Adamson (born Adamopoulous or 'Son of Adam') was already an accomplished man of 39 years when he met and married the love of his life, Evdoxia, in Athens and brought her to the Philippines in August 1938.

In 1936, the Adamson School of Industrial Chemistry and Engineering was formed, eventually reaching university status in 1941. In 1939, the school transferred to its new school building located at Real, Arzobispo, and Santa Lucia Streets in Intramuros, Manila which also housed the Adamson Research Institute.

In January 1938, George Lucas was awarded an honorary Ph.D. degree by his alma mater, the University of Athens, in recognition of his founding the first school of Industrial Chemistry in the Philippines.

The Broadway home of the Lucas family was witness to many memories both happy and sad for the family. During the Japanese Occupation, Evdoxia, having been born in India and bearing a British passport, was almost separated from George Lucas and their two year-old son, Lucas George for being an enemy national. However, she was spared the agony of separation from her family when it was determined that she became a Greek citizen upon her marriage to George Lucas. Later, a Japanese major of the Imperial Army forcefully entered their Broadway home with some soldiers and were loaded to a truck headed for the UST Internment Camp where they were detained together with other foreign nationals. Sometime later, when the camp became extremely overcrowded, George Lucas and his family were moved to another camp in the residence of Mrs. Wolf on First Street, a few blocks away from their Broadway home. Their own home was commandeered by the Japanese Navy and at one time housed two hundred Japanese Naval soldiers, rendering the house uninhabitable just after WWII.

The Adamsons rebuilt their shattered lives after the war. They cleaned and repaired their Broadway home which they opened to friends like Elpidio Quirino who once sought refuge in their home together with his daughter, Vicky, and to Greek American soldiers who helped liberate the Philippines from the Japanese Occupation. The Adamson's Broadway home was transformed into a Greek



ABOVE: George Lucas & Evdoxia Adamson with their only son, Lucas George, in the garden of their home at 6 Broadway St., New Manila, Quezon City, circa late 1940s. Source: Adamson University Museum

taverna with piano playing, singing, and comfortable chairs and sofas for everyone to sit around. The house and the happy ambience was a dream for any soldier after three years of suffering and the tortures of war.

After WWII, the Greek government chose George Lucas Adamson as their official representative to the Proclamation of Independence rites held on 4 July 1946. In 1947, he was appointed as Consul General and later Honorary Consul General of Greece to the Philippines, a position he held until 1973, just before his passing.

George Lucas sought to relocate and reestablish their school to a new location. The school was taken over by the Japanese forces as alien enemy property on 3 January 1942 and the school was not allowed to reopen. The university premises were taken over by Col. Shiro Ito and was used as a secret, radio transmitting station. The university was stripped of its equipment and laboratories, the library was ransacked, and thousands of volumes were sent to Japan together with the equipment. When the Japanese retreated, they razed the university building to the ground and the remaining scientific books and periodicals went up in smoke. George Lucas was devastated but not defeated. George Lucas had to find a quick solution to relocating and rebuilding his university. He sought the help of the War Damages Commission and was able to stockpile army and navy surplus supplies which included big quantities of laboratory equipment and chemicals. He moved to a building leased from the Vincentian Fathers



ABOVE: President of the Philippines Elpidio Quirino with Dr. George Lucas Adamopoulos and his cousin Alexander Adamopoulos; receiving an honorary doctorate in 1948

and Adamson University reopened on 20 June 1946 in ceremonies graced by the presence of his friend, the Vice President and Secretary of Foreign Affairs Elpidio R. Quirino. He once again took the mission of educating the Filipino youth. In 1964, he negotiated with the Vincentian fathers to take over the university to prevent nationalization. George Lucas never gave up his Greek citizenship despite being a permanent resident of the Philippines. This ran contrary to the government policy that all private educational institutions should be owned by Philippine nationals. The Vincentian Fathers assumed ownership of Adamson University on 4 December 1964, with George Lucas Adamson remaining as the university's President.

On 25 January 1967, due to failing health, George Lucas Adamson resigned as President of Adamson University after thirty five years as educator in the Philippines. In appreciation of his contributions to Adamson University, he was conferred the titles of Founder, President Emeritus, and Life Trustee.

It took some time for George Lucas to adjust to retirement. He missed the daily responsibilities of running the university but remained active with the Greek Consulate and the Adamson Testing Laboratory. His social calendar was filled with invitations for speaking engagements and he had time to play gold. He also never missed his Manila Rotary Club luncheon meetings. He was comfortable and happy in his old home in 6 Broadway, well-taken cared of by his loyal and devoted maids and drivers while Evdoxia often traveled to Athens to spend time with her family. In 1969, George Lucas and Evdoxia traveled to Greece to visit family and friends. But soon enough, George Lucas began to miss his home in Manila and they returned to Manila for the baptism of their first grandchild, named George Lucas after his grandfather, who was born on 28 November 1970.

George Lucas' health began to fail slowly due to hypertension and diabetes and underwent cataract eye surgery. During a trip to Greece in 1973, George Lucas was hospitalized, and after partially recovering, he decided to return with Evdoxia and remain in the Philippines. While hospitalized in Greece, Clio, the youngest sister of Evdoxia visited him and George Lucas told her that he wanted to go home. She answered him: "George, you are home in Greece." He replied: "No, my home is in Manila." Sadly, he did not get to return to Manila and passed away in his native Greece on 28 February 1974.

Evdoxia lived for many more years after George Lucas' demise and after the latter's passing, settled in Marbella in the province of Malaga in Andalucia, Spain where she passed away on 20 January 2015 at the age of 94. She was buried together with her beloved husband, George Lucas, at the Athens First Cemetery in their native Greece. Their son, Dr. Lucas George Adamson, visited Manila in 2012 to attend the inauguration of Adamson University Museum's Founder's Wing which featured the family's and university's memorabilia which he convinced his mother to donate to the museum.

The museum's collection was also enriched with the donation of three paintings by National Artist Fernando C. Amorsolo from the collection of Sofia Demos Adamson, wife of Adamson University's former Dean and Professor of the College of Engineering, George Athos Adamson. Sofia was founder of Adamson University's College of Education and was co-founder of the University of Southern California's Pacific Asia Museum in Pasadena, California. The three Amorsolo paintings are *Sunset Over Malabon Fish Pond* (1950), *Harvesting Fruit* (1950), and *Portrait of Sofia Adamson*. Mrs. Sofia Anderson must have acquired the paintings during one of her business trips to the Philippines after WWII. She was gravely wounded during the Battle of Manila in 1945 due to shrapnel wounds and was awarded a Purple Heart in 1998. She and her husband, George Athos Adamson, would settle permanently in Pasadena, California in 1946. She passed away on 19 May 2007 after which the three Amorsolo paintings were brought to the Adamson University Museum at her bequest.

The painting was a gift from Ms. Obdula "Dolly" Darjuan, chief chemist of the Adamson Testing Laboratory, "sometime after the War" as family lore would have it. (More details from the family : Dolly became acquainted with Amorsolo when one of her siblings married into his family.) Dolly would receive a testimonial award by Adamson president George Lucas for her long service as a researcher in 1958.

Dr. Lucas George Anderson passed away in Dubai on 12 January 2023. The painting entitled, Water Bearer, by Fernando C. Amorsolo, comes from his collection, most probably handed down to him by his mother, Evdoxia, as a memento of the Adamson family's fruitful years in the Philippines where their family contributed much to shaping many a Filipino youth's lives through education.

Fernando Amorsolo (1892 - 1972)

Water Carrier
signed (lower left)
ca. 1930
oil on canvas
15 3/4" x 12" (40 cm x 30 cm)

P 5,000,000

PROVENANCE
A gift from Abdula "Dolly" Darjuan, chief chemist of Adamson University, to Evdoxia George Adamson. Dolly, who was related to the Amorsolo family, gave this painting as a birthday gift sometime in the 1940's.



BELOW: Obdula "Dolly" Darjuan, Chief Chemist of the Adamson Testing laboratories, receiving the Testimonial Award for long service as researcher, dated 1958

Light has been a significant element in Fernando Amorsolo's oeuvre, a product of his knowledge and organization of colors. Additionally, it is a tool he ingeniously uses to enhance the emotional depth of his masterpieces. Apart from his brilliant landscapes and genre scenes, Amorsolo extends his light to his *dalagas*, as seen in *Water Carrier*.

In this piece, the maestro portrays a young maiden clad in a blue *tapis*, holding a jar of water she most likely collected from the nearby stream. And despite the visible heat and weight she's carrying, her cherub-like facial features still sport a sweet smile, attributing to the feeling of immense satisfaction Amorsolo infuses his country folks with. Also, the artist has a penchant for situating his *dalagas* in seclusion—in a room or the middle of the forest—away from their peers' malicious eyes and minds, vehemently keeping their dignity, fully clothed or not.

The light from his concocted sun graced his creations, saturating their colors. It adds brilliance to the verdant greens, creating an illusion of warmth that envelops his images and resonates with the viewers. Amorsolo's palette, characterized by bright and lyrical attributes, is a testament to his skill as a master colorist and a marvel that leaves the audience in awe. (Jessica Magno)



ABOVE: Fernando Amorsolo circa 1950s. © International Conference on Language, Education, Humanities and Innovation, The Masterpieces of Fernando Amorsolo: Socio-Cultural, Page 58.

The Evdoxia Adamson Amorsolo
Memento of a Gentler Time



Federico Aguilar Alcuaz (1932 - 2011)

Untitled Composition

unsigned
mixed media
22" x 28" (56 cm x 71 cm)

P 180,000

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

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.

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)

Phyllis Zaballero (b. 1942)

Two Below

signed and dated 1977 (lower right)
acrylic on canvas
36" x 36" (91 cm x 91 cm)

P 100,000

EXHIBITED
Museum of Philippine Art, *Art Association of the Philippines Annual Art Exhibition and Competition*, Manila, November - December 1977

This particular work of Phyllis Zaballero showcases the artist's bold artistic language and her strong force of emotions. Her abstractions have always been emotionally attuned, her gestural brush strokes flowing and curling across the canvas. From vivid colors to monochromatic pieces, her oeuvre spans far and wide to cover representational paintings to abstractions in all the colors under the sun.



Museum of Fine Arts exhibition, and that is evident in this piece.

Memories and emotions permeate the abstractions of Zaballero. Although this work is not as inhibited as some of his pieces as the grid makes it much more measured, it still is submerged in emotions, its physical and emotional stimuli also transformed into an abstract form. (Hannah Valiente)

Ang Kiukok (1931 - 2005)

Crucifixion

signed and dated 1993 (upper left)
oil on canvas
40" x 8" (102 cm x 20 cm)

P 2,000,000

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

PROVENANCE
Private Collection, Manila

An artist drawn to the macabre, it is no surprise that the crucifixion is a fixture in the oeuvre of Ang Kiukok. Under his masterful hands, Christ's crucifixion is both revered and reviled due to the horrific nature of the death sentence. Crucifixion as a capital punishment is among the worst ways to die – when one's body weight is concentrated to rest only on suspended arms, it takes hours for one to die, with some even lasting days.

Unlike his usual crucifixion pieces, this 1993 *Crucifixion* stands at a narrow 102 cm by 20 cm, limiting the viewer's perspective to Christ and Christ alone. The narrow space forces Christ's body to be contorted in impossible angles – His head, still wearing the crown of thorns, lies lower than His shoulders as it rolls forward. The result looks unnatural, only in the way a dead body can be.

With nothing else to look at, Kiukok forces his viewers to view Christ's suffering as it is – a tumultuous and horrific crime that spanned hours. One is forced to meditate on His suffering and draw their own conclusion once confronted by it. (Hannah Valiente)



Mauro Malang Santos (1928 - 2017)

Sleeping Child
signed and dated 9.IV.99 (lower right)
oil on canvas
36" x 36" (91 cm x 91 cm)

P 6,000,000

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

A Filipino through and through, Mauro Malang Santos' artworks reflect the rich Filipino culture and tradition. His decades-long career has produced diverse works, each echoing our deep connection to our roots. Malang's early beginnings as an illustrator have honed his understanding of space and color, making expert use of his canvases' every nook and cranny.

Sleeping Child demonstrates Malang's unwavering talents and skills, nearly five decades after his debut in the art scene. As the title suggests, this oil painting focuses on a child having a peaceful slumber on his mother's lap. It bears the artist's signature geometric forms and brilliant palette, and features plants and women, recurring elements in Malang's oeuvre.

Painted in 1999, this art piece is a testament to Malang's mastery of color. He skillfully balances cool and warm tones, using kaleidoscopic hues to illuminate his figures and strategically placing them against a deep blue and green background that resembles plants blending into the night. Furthermore, Malang's dexterous brush strokes add a textured look, resulting in an image akin to a pastel drawing.

Belonging to Malang's collection of mother and child-themed works, *Sleeping Child* radiates a profound sense of warmth and familiarity. It captures the close familial relationships ingrained in Filipino culture, evoking a comforting sense of nostalgia. (Jessica Magno)



ABOVE: Mauro Malang Santos. © The Philippine Star.

Malang
The Loving Hands and Smiles of Family



Bernardo Pacquing (b. 1967)
Realm of Penetrable Mass
signed, dated December 2001 and dedication (verso)
house paint and pencil on canvas
60" x 60" (152 cm x 152 cm)

P 1,200,000

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

PROVENANCE
Silverlens

Bernardo Pacquing's language of abstraction takes on many different forms across his fruitful career. From assemblages to nonrepresentational art to minimalism, his fascination with the expressive potential of modern abstract art shines through. He broadens the expressive abstraction in painting and abstraction, says his Silverlens artist biography, and in doing so, there is nothing he is unafraid of experimenting with elements and methods.

With 2001 *Realm of Penetrable Mass*, Pacquing's nonrepresentational art takes center stage. Using house paint and a pencil, it follows the artist's non-discriminatory usage of art materials, preferring to let the art speak for itself regardless of the medium used. This abstraction eschews the usual technique when it takes the figurative aspect and distorts it to just a point where the organic reality is still vaguely recognizable, as evidenced by the thin layers of paint that just barely hint at the shape of a human's head. The true beauty of Pacquing's abstraction is that it is minimalism in its truest sense. He relieves himself from dogmatism that clamps down on other extensive schools of style, preferring to carve his own way in his quest to elevate the metaphysical, that is, the world one could see should they not limit themselves to their physical sensations. (Hannah Valiente)



ABOVE: Bernardo Pacquing © The Farrer Park Art Collection <https://thefarrerparkartcollection.com/artist/bernardo-pacquing/>

Pacquing Explores Innermost Thoughts



Hernando R. Ocampo (1911 - 1978)

Revelation V
signed and dated 1978 (lower right)
oil on canvas
24" x 32" (61 cm x 81 cm)

P 2,400,000

PROVENANCE
Nikki Coseteng
Mariles Cacho Romulo, thence by descent

LITERATURE
De Jesus, Angel G. *H.R. Ocampo: The Artist as Filipino*. Quezon City: Heritage Publishing House, 1979. Black-and-white illustration and painting description on page 94.

Hernando R. Ocampo's *Revelation V*, painted within the year of his untimely death in December 1978, is quintessentially Ocampo from its color sensibilities to his composition. Lauded for his immediate and arresting control over his hues, *Revelation V* follows the ranks of Ocampo's reverent works as his usage of tropical colors makes the works "glow from within," a staggering usage of light quite unique to the Philippines. Similar to Fernando Amorsolo's' captivating Philippine sunlight, the brightness of Ocampo's works echoes the same sentiments – that is, his works, like so many of the eminent artists before him, capture the Philippines and its brightness quite accurately.

Ocampo is mainly a self-taught artist, and unlike many of his contemporaries, he opted to stay in the Philippines, refusing multiple offers of sponsored overseas studies in favor of cultivating his own visual language. It can be argued, then, that Ocampo's works are truly and fully Filipino.

"Ocampo's life generally parallels the character of his painting: a melting pot of East and West," Manuel Duldulao wrote in *Contemporary Philippine Art*. "His plastic language draws its content from native sources and its mode from foreign currents – especially from the concepts of the Bauhaus and color theories of Albers – arriving at a personal idiom that is somewhere between Expressionism and Impressionism."

Indeed, Ocampo's *Revelation V* is a testament to the artist's lasting legacy. At the forefront of the modernism movement in the Philippines, Ocampo's works championed these so-called "Western" practices and proved that they, too, are at their core truly Filipino. (Hannah Valiente)

H.R. Ocampo Surrenders
To the Shapes of Summer



Vicente Rivera y Mir (1872-1954)*a.) Fruit Vendor*

signed (lower left)

ca. 1900

pastel on paper

19" x 12" (48 cm x 30 cm)

b.) Chicken & Vegetable Vendor

signed (lower left)

ca. 1900

pastel on paper

19" x 12" (48 cm x 30 cm)

P 200,000

PROVENANCE

Private Collection, Spain



Vicente Rivera y Mir was among the conservative, formidable Filipino artists during the pre-war period. He did realistic oil paintings that perfectly encapsulate the everlasting beauty of the Philippines—the magnificent countryside and native folks performing their daily activities while basking under the soft sunlight. Additionally, he was part of the pioneering staff of the University of the

Philippines' School of Fine Arts, established in 1909.

Rivera y Mir's skilled hands and sublime color sense created numerous dreamy terrains evocative of the peaceful pre-war Philippines. His landscapes, with their tonal hues and anecdotal settings, powerfully demonstrate his ability to capture the essence of his subjects. While most of his works revolve around landscapes, his sphere of excellence

A Modern-Day Tipos del Pais

By an Old Master



also spread to portrait paintings, a testament to his skill and versatility as an artist.

Drawn with pastel on paper, these portraits demonstrate the artist's deft artistry, creating masterpieces across various mediums. Carrying a palpable Filipino taste—subject and palette—Rivera y Mir captured the simplicity

and contentment of the pre-war countryside life, infusing his figures with sincere satisfaction and fulfillment. The artist's profound knowledge and utilization of colors enabled him to place the right amount and location of shadows and highlights, adding depth and enlivening his works. (Jessica Magno)

Juan Luna and the Corridors of Power

The Painter and the Conde de Romanones

by MARTIN ARNALDO

Today, it is difficult to grasp how firmly Juan Luna and the other Filipino ilustrados of the 19th century once stood at the core of Spanish art and politics. The rupture of 1898, when Spain lost the Philippines after the Spanish-American War, pushed the two countries apart in culture and identity, and Luna's name — once most famous in Spain — faded into obscurity on the peninsula.

It is now an opportune moment to examine the studios and friendships that first shaped Luna's reputation — ties that continued to influence art and politics even after his death.

Juan Luna's artistic journey began under the strict supervision of Agustín Sáez, the headmaster of Manila's Escuela de Dibujo y Pintura on Cabildo. Sáez was a *discípulo* (student) of José de Madrazo, the director of Madrid's Real Academia de Bellas Artes de San Fernando, and he upheld a rigid curriculum rooted in 17th-century Spanish art, leaving little room for creative freedom. After what was likely a tumultuous relationship with Sáez, Lorenzo Guerrero, who had mentored Luna, persuaded his parents to send him to Spain. Art critic and painter Aguilar Cruz observed, "It is probable that Luna, never known for meekness, had offended his teachers by his refusal to submit to their artistic doctrines."

After leaving Manila, Luna enrolled at Madrid's Real Academia de Bellas Artes de San Fernando, where he studied color and composition under Federico de Madrazo, the son of José de Madrazo. As director of the academy, Federico imposed the same rigid, traditional style as his father. Unsurprisingly, Luna's stay under Federico lasted barely a year. In 1878 he left Madrid for Rome in the company of Spanish painter Alejo Vera, his new mentor and the person he called his "second father" away from home.

Frustrated by rigid academic doctrines in Madrid, Luna found freedom in Rome's vibrant artistic community of Spanish and international artists at the *Circolo Artistico Internazionale*. Following his success at the *Exposición de Bellas Artes* in 1881, where he won a *Medalla de segunda clase* (silver medal) for the *Death of Cleopatra*, his studio on *Via Margutta* became a gathering place for admirers eager to witness his creative process as he prepared his next masterpiece, *Spoliarium*. According to a November 1, 1903, article in *The Sun*, King Umberto I and Queen Margherita of Italy paid him an unexpected visit at his



ABOVE: Bust of the 1st Conde de Romanones, Álvaro de Figueroa y Torres by Mariano Benlliure

studio. In March 1884, Mariano Benlliure captured a memorable scene in which Luna presented *Spoliarium* to the king at the *Palazzo delle Esposizioni*.

Among those who became part of Luna's Roman circle was the young law student Álvaro de Figueroa y Torres, who, after completing his studies in Bologna, spent a season in Rome before returning to Madrid. In his memoirs, he recalls lively days shared with Luna; José, Juan Antonio and Mariano Benlliure, whose studio was adjacent to Luna's; and with the young artist and future politician, Mateo Silvela, son of the influential senator Manuel Silvela y de Le Vielleuze. The friendships formed in that Roman interlude proved lasting. Silvela's father would later be appointed as the Spanish ambassador to France and would be a key figure in acting as Luna's intermediary for financial advances on the commission for the Battle of Lepanto. During his early days in Paris, Luna worked tirelessly on the Senate commission for it, a painting



ABOVE: Juan Luna with fellow artists, the Benlliure brothers, at the Via Margutta, where he would befriend the future 1st Count of Romanones. © from the Pedro Paterno Archives

intended to be displayed opposite Francisco Pradilla's *Rendición de Granada* in the Salón de Conferencias of the Spanish Senate. As Juan Luna's artistic journey in Europe continued, the circle that had gathered on Via Margutta expanded its influence beyond the studios of Rome. What began as a bohemian brotherhood would become a network of influence in Madrid's corridors of power. Álvaro de Figueroa y Torres, the young law student who once lingered in Luna's studio, rose to prominence in the Liberal Party. He became the 1st Count of Romanones in 1893 and served three times as prime minister of Spain between 1912 and 1919. His ascent was marked by sharp political instincts and a commanding presence. Despite a childhood carriage accident that left him with a limp, often exaggerated by caricaturists, it became a distinguishing feature, making him instantly recognizable.

His political opponent, whom he mentions often in his memoirs, was the Conservative leader Francisco Silvela y de Le Vielleuze, brother of the more liberal Manuel Silvela, who had defended Luna. Romanones wrote: "Yet, drawing strength from weakness, I faced the wrath of Cánovas and Silvela, and by a significant majority, victory was granted to me." Incidentally, his older brother José was Francisco's brother-in-law, as both had married sisters: María Rosario and Amalia Loring y Heredia.

Alongside this long political career Romanones was also active in the arts: he directed the Real Academia de Bellas Artes de San Fernando for nearly forty years, the longest tenure in the institution's history, joined the Prado board, and commissioned or supported leading painters and sculptors. Perhaps due to the friendship that had formed

in Rome, Mariano Benlliure was able to count him among his most constant patrons.

Several years after Luna's passing, in a letter to Alfonso de Aguilar, the private secretary of Queen María Cristina, dated May 29, 1906, Benlliure recounted how Count Romanones had visited his studio to review the bust he was sculpting of Princess Victoria Eugenia. Romanones assured him that the likeness was exceptional, stating that it was as accurate as if it had been sculpted from life. In 1907 he asked Benlliure to design a full ceramic cycle for the dining room of his new Madrid townhouse. Romanones rejected the final drawings only because the playful nudes might scandalize guests. In 1911, as president of the Spanish Congress of Deputies, Romanones commissioned Mariano Benlliure for the statue of Emilio Castelar for the Congress. In 1929, Archer M. Huntington commissioned Benlliure to create a bronze of the Count of Romanones for the Hispanic Society of America, as part of a small series depicting leading Spaniards from the reign of Alfonso XIII. He died in Madrid in 1950, leaving a large archive and an art collection that has been gradually dispersed by his heirs.

From that cramped warren of studios on Via Margutta emerged lives that would reshape both art and politics. Those Roman days were no footnote but the hinge on which destinies turned. A few formative years in Rome wove a network so durable that, decades later, and even after Luna's death, it still secured commissions, shaped policies, and kept Filipino genius woven into the fabric of Spain's artistic life

The Conde de Romanones *Juan Luna*

Luna and His Love for the Sea

by LISA GUERRERO NAKPIL



ABOVE: Portrait of the 1st Conde de Romanones as Mayor of Madrid © wikipedia



ABOVE: Portrait of Juan Luna

The highly evocative 'Claro de Luna en la Laguna de Venecia' — featuring *bragagnas*, the traditional Venetian fishing boats, floating magically between sea and sky, on the city's lagoon — opens the doors to two important events in Juan Luna's life.

The first was at the very beginning of his life as a boy entering the world of adventure on the high seas; and the other at the apex of his career, intertwined with his successive triumphs at the Madrid Salons and his marriage to the heiress Paz Pardo de Tavera in late 1886. That honeymoon was spent in Venice where he would also create "Hymen, oh Hymenee", Luna's long-lost masterpiece that would finally come to Manila 134 years after it was painted.

Like 'Hymenee', it would also symbolize Juan Luna's acceptance in the highest echelons not just of Filipino society but also his friendship with the most influential members of the Spanish aristocracy.

The first Conde of Romanones, Alvaro de Figueroa, would recall in his autobiography *'Notas de Una Vida (Notes to a Life)*, 1868 -1912, how he would make the acquaintance of Juan Luna in Rome, in the artists' colony on Via Margutta. Here, he met the Benlliure brothers, familiars of the King of Spain Alfonso XIII — and Mateo Silvela, all artists. The Romanones and the Silvelas would later be joined in marriage and the Prime Minister xx Silvela would be one of the staunchest champions of Luna's royal commission of 'The Battle of Lepanto.'

It is a little-known fact that Juan Luna enrolled in the Escuela Nautica de Manila, which had been established in 1820 a few years after the end of the Galleon Trade. What is even more astonishing is that he did so at the age of 12, the very minimum age to gain entrance into the school and a requirement to make sure that prospective students knew how to read and write in Spanish. Thus, in 1869, Juan Luna entered the school along with his older brother Manuel Andres, who was 13 years old.

For the precocious, intrepid Luna, it was apparently just a device entirely of his own making to find his way out of Manila and make his way in the world. Biographer E. Arsenio Manuel would write, "After finishing the *primera enseñanza* in 1869, he left the Ateneo Municipal de Manila and enrolled in the Escuela Nautica, not to pursue a naval career to be sure, but perhaps to accustom himself and his parents with the pangs of separation. After finishing the theoretical course, Juan and Manuel learned practical navigation on a ship which plied the China Sea and the Indian Ocean, touching such ports as Hongkong, Amoy (China), Singapore, Batavia (Indonesia), and Colombo (Ceylon)."

Jose Rizal would later reveal that 'besides widening their horizons and experience, Manuel, who was to become a violinist later, heard harmonies in the waves and Juan saw combinations of light, tones and colors.'

E. Arsenio Manuel would also write, "While these voyages were but a means to an end, he never abandoned his golden dream of one day becoming a painter. While his boat was at anchor in Manila Bay or at the quay, he took drawing lessons under Lorenzo Guerrero." It would take him five years to receive the certificate of *piloto de altos mares tercer clase* (pilot of the high seas third class). Immediately after that milestone, and at the age of 17, he would be accepted in the Academia de Dibujo y Pintura in Manila. For one reason or another, he would leave the academy and strike out to Madrid in 1877, with his beloved brother Manuel. Juan would enroll at the Real Academia de las Bellas Artes de San Fernando and begin his unstoppable trajectory to the stratosphere of acclaim.

In just one year, he would meet his mentor Alejo Vera, move to Rome, fall into the company of the Benlliure brothers and Mateo Silvela — and meet the Conde de Romanones — in the Via Margutta, sharing quarters, studios and adventures.

"Claro de Luna en la Laguna de Venecia" could very well be an allegory of Juan Luna's life at this point — perceived by the Spanish press as to be walking on water and on his way to the heavens, after winning the gold medal for the Spoliarium in 1884.

The *bragagnas* depicted in the painting take their name from the peculiarly shaped nets used for a kind of side-trawling on the lagoon. These nets and their boats were being produced as late as the 1940s, but sadly their distinctive shapes, outlined with the white stripes as seen in this canvas, can now only be found in the Museo Storico Navale of Venice or the Venetian naval museum. The vessels are built to allow them to fish in the waters of the lagoon which can be a single meter shallow in some parts and no more than ten in others. They are depicted moored around a line of timber pilings of strong oak, which also form the foundations of the city known as La Serenissima. They provide a sense of strength and a certain brooding formality to the fluid forms of the shapes of the vessels. Luna is able to paint the boats with extraordinary accuracy, their masts, sails, rudders, and nets — all are captured with both the detailed eye and sensibility of a sailor. Ironically, seascapes are a rarity for Juan Luna, unlike the dreamy horizons of his contemporary Felix Resurreccion Hidalgo who had a fascination for water. Luna, however, imbues it with his own perspective of the working man — he was among the first social realists of his age, capturing gypsies, flower sellers, steel workers. Here, in a few elegant but vital and tiny strokes, he captures fishermen unloading their catch in huge baskets, the others look out solitarily to sea. Because of the space and distance from the viewer, the boats appear suspended in both time and space against the clouds and waves.

Importantly, "Claro de Luna" foretells Luna's next most important work, "La Batalla de Lepanto" (The Battle of Lepanto), the most important naval battle of Christendom, which commemorated the triumph of the Holy League against the Ottoman Empire. Philip II (who the Philippines would be named after and was named "the most Catholic of kings") would lead the victory, alongside the Republic of Venice and other states, against Suleiman the Magnificent. King Alfonso XIII would give Luna this commission, a signal honor to satisfy the public clamor that he be properly recognized for the beauty and power of "Spoliarium."

La Condesa Aline de Romanones

by ISIDRA REYES

Born in the Rockland County hamlet of Pearl River, New York, Mary Aline Dexter Griffith was born on 23 May 1923, though some records state 1920. Her lineage was middle class. Her father, William, manufactured printing press equipment at a plant owned by her grandfather and sold real estate and insurance on the side. Her mother, the former Marie Dexter, was said to have descended from the Pilgrims. She graduated with a degree in Literature, History, and Journalism from the College of Mount Vincent, a Roman Catholic school run by the Sisters of Charity in the Bronx, New York.

A fetching young lady, she worked as a model for the Viennese-born fashion designer, Hattie Carnegie, in Manhattan. But Aline wanted more excitement in life than just looking pretty. It was World War II and she sought to serve her country overseas but was told that she was too young. Not long after, she went on a blind date with a member of the Office of Strategic Services (OSS), the forerunner of the CIA. She was recruited and trained as a secret agent and was sent to Madrid as a code clerk deciphering messages at the U.S. Embassy in Madrid, a city then teeming with moles, spies, and Nazis. Her code name was "Tiger" and she posed as a socialite employed by American oil companies.

In one of the socials she attended in Madrid, she met and caught the eye of Luis de Figueroa y Pérez de Guzmán el Bueno. He bore the Spanish title, El Conde de Quintanilla, and later inherited the title, El Conde de Romanones. He was a painter and the grandson of Alvaro de Figueroa y Torres, the first El Conde de Romanones, who served as Prime Minister of Spain three times from 1912-1918, Senate President, Mayor of Madrid, cabinet minister, and president of the Real Academia de Bellas Artes de San Fernando. (This was the very same school that Luna attended.)

His father, Luis, El Conde de Figueroa, was a polo player who participated as member of the Spanish team at the 1924 Paris Olympics. An heir to one of the great Spanish fortunes at the time with titles on the side, the younger Luis was a prize catch for Aline.

Luis and Aline were married in Madrid in 1947 in a wedding attended by Luis' grandfather and members of the Spanish nobility and was covered by local newspapers in Pearl River, New York with the headline, "Her Romance in Madrid Makes NY Girl Countess." From then on, Aline, La Condesa de Quintanilla and later La Condesa



ABOVE: Countess Aline in the 1940s. MIDDLE: The palatial home of the Condes de Romanones. BELOW: Rubbing shoulders with royalty: Jackie Kennedy (center) with Aline Griffith (left) and right, Cayetana Fitz-James Stuart, Duchess of Alba at a bullfight in Seville, Spain in April 1966 © Getty Images



de Romanones, made her steady ascent as one of the members of international society. Always well-coiffed and impeccably dressed, her fabled life as an international jet-setter was widely covered in glossy magazines like *Vogue* and *Hola* and was photographed partying with celebrity friends such as Wallis Simpson, the Duchess of Windsor and film stars, Elizabeth Taylor, Audrey Hepburn, and Ava Gardner; watching a bullfight in Seville with US First Lady Jackie Kennedy and the Duquesa de Alba; and posing for fashion spreads in fashion magazines in her homes in Spain and her Park Avenue apartment in New York. One of her good friends was Philippine First Lady Imelda R. Marcos and was said to have once visited Manila as her guest.

But despite a promise to her husband that she would stop her espionage activities upon their marriage, she continued her life as an undercover spy for many years. As she once told the *Los Angeles Times*, posing as a socialite before she became one was a good cover. "With that, nobody's going to think you're doing anything worthwhile, except putting on your make-up or something," she said. She wrote about her life as an undercover spy in a series of best-selling books entitled, *The Spy Wore Red*, *The Spy Went Dancing*, *The Spy Wore Silk*; and *The End of an Epoch*. Writing in *The New York Times Book Review*, critic Michael Gross labeled her genre as "café espionage." While most dismissed most of the exploits she wrote about as pure fiction, Aline insisted that her stories "are all based in truth." Charles Pinck, the president of the O.S.S. Society wrote of the countess in an E-Mail quoted in her New York Times obituary: "She epitomized why it was said that O.S.S. stood for 'Oh So Social,' as many of its members were drawn from the Social Register. Aline passed away in Madrid in 2017 and was survived by her three sons, Alvaro, Luis, and Miguel, and thirteen grandchildren.



TOP LEFT AND BOTTOM: Aline, Condesa de Romanones (nee Aline Griffith) former model, spy, author with husband Luis, Conde de Romanones. The Conde was also a painter. TOP RIGHT: The couple with Audrey Hepburn. © Getty Images

The Conde de Romanones *Juan Luna*

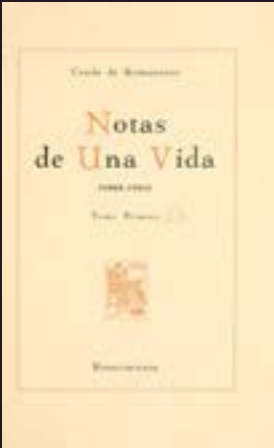


135

Juan Luna y Novicio (1857 - 1899)
Claro de Luna en la Laguna de Venecia
(Moonlight on the Lagoon of Venice)
signed, dated and inscribed "Lvna Venecia 87" (lower right)
oil on canvas
20" x 49 1/4" (51 cm x 125 cm)

P 7,000,000

PROVENANCE
Acquired directly from the Artist by the 1st Conde de Romanones, Alvaro de Figueroa.



ABOVE: The Memoirs of the 1st Conde de Romanones where he mentions meeting Juan Luna



ABOVE: Fishing Boats of Venice in the 1880s

Carlo Saavedra (b. 1981)

Untitled
signed and dated 2015 (lower right)
oil on canvas
60" x 72" (152 cm x 183 cm)

P 200,000

Form and decay became the primary features of Carlo Saavedra's oeuvre. With his colors bleeding into each other, his works give off the impression of mud blurring out nature's usually rigid edges. The result is a dark, almost dreamlike rendering of usual events.

In this work, Saavedra returns to a favored topic – flora. Like his usual still-life, this particular bunch of flowers is bold yet bleeding; it is as if he held the flowers under water, and the colors are leeching out of them in swirls of purple and yellows and pinks. His unconventional treatment of his paintings renders the results almost mud-like: he hacks his frames with a dull axe, lets paint overflow, and allows mistakes to make themselves known.

His paintings are a work of contradiction – both fully formed and decaying, rudimentary yet fully realized, and



more pressingly, human in their emotions yet almost alien in their beauty. He revels in the unconventional, all the while creating works recognizable enough to forego pure abstraction. (Hannah Valiente)

Angelito Antonio (b. 1939)

Family
signed and dated 2009 (upper right)
oil on canvas
24" x 30" (61 cm x 76 cm)

P 260,000

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

Angelito Antonio, a luminary in Philippine Modernism, is celebrated for his unique blend of cubism and expressionism. His paintings are characterized by intense primary or muted tertiary colors, toning down their vibrancy with heavy black outlines and shadows. Contrary to his contemporaries and predecessors in the genre theme, Antonio's works uncover a different facet of the glorified countryside life. Instead, his images often convey an air of suffering, misery, and weariness, as seen in his subjects' facial expressions and body language.

With the work at hand as an example, there is no denying Angelito Antonio's deft artistry. This 2007 work depicts a typical family seen in the countryside. The mother carefully carries her child as she balances a basket of



fish—she's probably selling—on top of her head, and her husband stands beside her while holding his rooster. Both of them have furrowed brows and a faraway look on their faces. Antonio's deft artistry, situating his figures against a red background, has the ability to induce a variety of emotions, stirring up the viewers' perceptions. The use of red, a color that usually signifies love and affection, is also a striking color that attracts attention and conveys a sense of urgency. It is also used to signal anger and danger, thereby engaging and moving the audience. (Jessica Magno)

Max Balatbat (b. 1978)

Boy Suse
signed and dated 2015 (bottom)
mixed media
60" x 40" (152 cm x 102 cm)

P 600,000

EXHIBITED
ArtistSpace at Ayala Museum, Avenida Karnabal, Makati City, 11 - 26
July 2015

This particular piece by Max Balatbat was among the works displayed at his Avenida Karnabal exhibition at the Ayala Museum in 2015. In this exhibit, his mixed-media pieces teem with splashes of colors and textures, rendering a work with a million different interpretations. It is a kaleidoscopic look into his colorful life and a youth spent exploring his neighborhood, Avenida. Like the rest of the works exhibited, this one follows

the formula of his Avenida Karnabal. On a plain black background of various repeating elements, a man is placed front and center in a frame. The bottom part of the man and the frame slowly melt, leaving streaks of melted paint clumped in rivulets.

This work, and the entirety of Avenida Karnabal, could be succinctly described in Pierra Calasanz-Labrador's words, as published in 2015: "This is Manila in all its grit and glory, brilliantly captured in Balatbat's artistry. Come one, come all!" (Hannah Valiente)



Fernando Amorsolo (1892 - 1972)

Igorots with Dogs

signed and dated 1936 (lower right)

oil on canvas

13" x 18 1/2" (33 cm x 47 cm)

P 4,000,000

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

LITERATURE

Amorsolo - Lazo, Sylvia, Cid Reyes, Jane Allinson, and Carlomar Arcangel Daoana. Amorsolo: Love and Passion (Volume II: Landscapes and Other Works). Quezon City: Fernando C. Amorsolo Art Foundation, Inc., 2018. Full-color illustration and painting description on page 272.

Fernando Amorsolo's masterpieces capture the light and color of what he observed in his travels to far-flung provinces, allowing him to authentically represent the Philippine topography, people, and way of life. The Cordilleras has been one of the maestro's go-to places and favored subjects, flaunting the magnificent mountain view while using it as a background in contrast to the hardworking and diligent country folks in his paintings.

Bearing the ever-present "Amorsolo light," *Igorots with Dogs*, painted in 1936, belongs to Amorsolo's collection of works from his "golden period" (1920-1945). This era marked the apogee and full development of his signature style, seen in the voluminous sunlit canvases capturing the glorious and sanguine attributes of the Philippines. Here, the maestro showcased a group of Igorots on a mountain trek. Carrying big containers of their belongings, a man holding the leash of their domesticated dogs, and little kids in tow, these people resemble a family migrating to a different part of the mountain.

Moreover, this piece showcases another remarkable feature of Amorsolo's artistry: the painstakingly detailed foreground, where every element is given meticulous attention. Simultaneously, the background appears shrouded in a thick mist, each element blending. With his masterful brushstrokes and exemplary use of color, Amorsolo's canvases seem to breathe with life, as if the viewers could feel and smell the distinct mountain air.

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

Amorsolo Paints Tribesmen in the Mountains of Gold



Solomon Sapid (1917-2003)

Water Carrier
signed and dated 1981
brass
H: 15 1/4" (39 cm)
L: 4" (10 cm)
W: 5" (13 cm)

P 380,000

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

LITERATURE
Benesa, Leonidas and Ma. Salva R. Limbo. *Sapid: Sculpture and Sketches*. San Mateo, Rizal: Solomon Sprid, 1982. Black-and-white illustration on page 45 and sculpture description on pages 43 to 45.

Solomon Sapid proudly presents the Filipino culture and heritage in his works. Throughout his career, he has shown remarkable versatility, experimenting with various materials and exploring different themes in his sculptures. He worked with wood, adobe, and metal, transforming it into expressive figures and thus demonstrating Sapid's adaptability and artistic range. His dedication to his craft is evident in every hammer, forge, bend, and twist of his materials, highlighting the Philippines in each piece.

While most of his sculptures revolve around Philippine mythical creatures, Sapid also created works under the themes of mother and child, religious, historical, and sundry images of ordinary folk. Inherently Filipino, *Water Carrier* depicts a woman clad in a traditional terno while balancing the weight of a water-filled jar on her head. Crafted with brass, this 1981 sculpture showcases Sapid's intricate metalwork and knowledge of the human body, owing to his continued drawing practices, mastering every curve and detail.

In addition to his impressive metalwork and excellent interpretation of his subjects, Sapid has a penchant for making his figures look frozen in time. Describing the esteemed sculptor's works, art critic Alfredo Roces once wrote about the kinetic quality imbued in Sapid's works, "[it has] a sense of arrested action. The effect is one towards which the artist strives. He refers to it as 'frozen motion.'" (*Jessica Magno*)



141 PROPERTY FROM THE CID REYES COLLECTION

Bernardo Pacquing (b. 1967)

Untitled
signed and dated 2003 (verso)
oil on canvas
33 1/2" x 33 1/4" (85 cm x 84 cm)

P 300,000

PROVENANCE
Acquired directly from the artist

As one of the most innovative contemporary Filipino artists, Bernardo Pacquing constantly brings us to the fine line separating figurative and abstract art. Unlike most abstract art, Pacquing's canvases are not entirely nonrepresentational. His blotched paints and vague representations of mundane objects have the profound ability to stir the viewers' thoughts and emotions, inviting them to delve deeper into his compositions and devise their own interpretations. Additionally, they carry a sense of familiarity that welcomes nuanced particularity and offers a universal understanding, making the audience feel included and connected.

Pacquing's oeuvre, with its restrained palette and minimalist nature, has continually worked in abstraction and non-representation, exploring the physicality of surfaces and the material minutiae of urban life through painting and sculptural forms. Pacquing's layers of paint act as an archive for several years of his practice, as he coats each canvas with heaps of color until the work reaches its culmination. (*Jessica Magno*)



142

Federico Aguilar Alcuaz (1932 - 2011)

Nocturno
signed and dated 1963 (upper right)
oil on canvas
23 1/2" x 28 1/2" (60 cm x 72 cm)

P 700,000

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

PROVENANCE
Private Collection, Spain

LITERATURE
Literature: Aguilera, Cesareo Rodriguez. *Aguilar Alcuaz, 1962 - 1963*.
Listed as Plate "19" with black-and-white illustration.



ABOVE: Federico Aguilar Alcuaz © León Gallery Archives

This 1963 oil on canvas work belongs to Federico Aguilar Alcuaz's collection of admirable art pieces. It exhibits his Spanish sensibilities, owing to his almost a decade-long settlement in Spain. Translated to English as 'nocturnal', *Nocturno* depicts a bird's eye view of a city at night, presumably observed from his studio in Barcelona. Instead of a quiet and peaceful night, every

swirl and daub of paint gives Aguilar Alcuaz's canvas a twisted terrain, haunting and unsettling. His brush strokes and washed black and brown palette infuse this nightscape with an eerie feeling, as if a looming presence is waiting to be discovered. *(Jessica Magno)*



143

Federico Aguilar Alcuaz (1932 - 2011)

Paisaje en rojo
signed and dated 1963 (upper left)
oil on canvas
21" x 25 1/4" (53 cm x 64 cm)

P 600,000

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

PROVENANCE
Private Collection, Spain

LITERATURE
Aguilera, Cesareo Rodriguez. *Aguilar Alcuaz, 1962 - 1963*.
Listed as Plate "30" with full-color illustration.

Federico Aguilar Alcuaz's *Paisaje en rojo* shows off the artist's Spanish sensibilities. Translating to *Landscape in Red*, this work is just one in the long list in Aguilar Alcuaz's impressive oeuvre, and over that includes both figurative and abstract works, of portraits and landscapes, and still-life, all done with approximately the same level of dedication and eye for detail.

By the mid-1950s, Aguilar Alcuaz followed in the footsteps of many great artists before him and spread his wings across Europe. Under the recommendation of Fernando Zobel, Aguilar Alcuaz studied at the prestigious Real Academia de Bellas Artes de San Fernando under a scholarship. For nine years from 1955 to 1964, Spain, specifically Barcelona, became Aguilar Alcuaz's home base where he worked and maintained a studio on the fourth floor of 285 Aragon St.

Paisaje en Rojo was created at the tail end of it in 1963, and it is still teeming with his Spanish inspiration. In shades of deep red, Aguilar Alcuaz transforms his everyday views into something imposing and immense. The rolling planes turn into overpowering waves as they wash over the space.

These landscapes, or *paisajes*, are more than just depictions of the land and the skies. These works could reflect "the hustle and bustle of economic activities in its streets and markets, including imposing buildings that reflect the rising bourgeois," and Aguilar Alcuaz, at the center of it all, is the perfect candidate for immortalizing its rapid modernization. *(Hannah Valiente)*

Onib Olmedo (1937 - 1996)*Bambino*

signed and dated 1980 (lower right)

oil on canvas

30" x 30" (76 cm x 76 cm)

P 800,000

Accompanied by a certificate issued by Ms. Gisella Olmedo-Araneta for confirming the authenticity of this lot

Like many Filipino children, Onib Olmedo was given a childhood nickname that vastly differs from his real name. Born Luis Claudio, he was better known around family and friends as Onib, which he takes after his father's favorite athlete, Babe Ruth. In December 1934, two years before Onib was born, Babe Ruth (who was also known as Bambino) was among the delegation that faced off against the country's all-star team players at the then-newly built Rizal Memorial Sports Complex.

He was first called Bambino, then shortened to Bino. Over the years, however, a linguistic trend has popularized spelling words backwards. And so, father became *erpats*, projects became *jeproks*, and Bino became Onib.

With that in mind, Onib's 1980 *Bambino* carries a different meaning. Here, Bambino (which translates to *child* in Italian) is portrayed in Onib's signature expressionist style. The kid has his hands up in the air, his tiny face scrunched up and wailing. One thing to note is that, unlike Onib's dark features, this baby is a fair-skinned blonde with blue eyes. Despite that, however, the grit of his works is still evident, as aside from the kid, everything else is dull in coloring.

Among the Philippines' eminent expressionists, Onib has carved out a legacy for himself as an artist who can capture a person's soul vividly in their portraits. His figures, distorted as they may be, are Onib's depictions

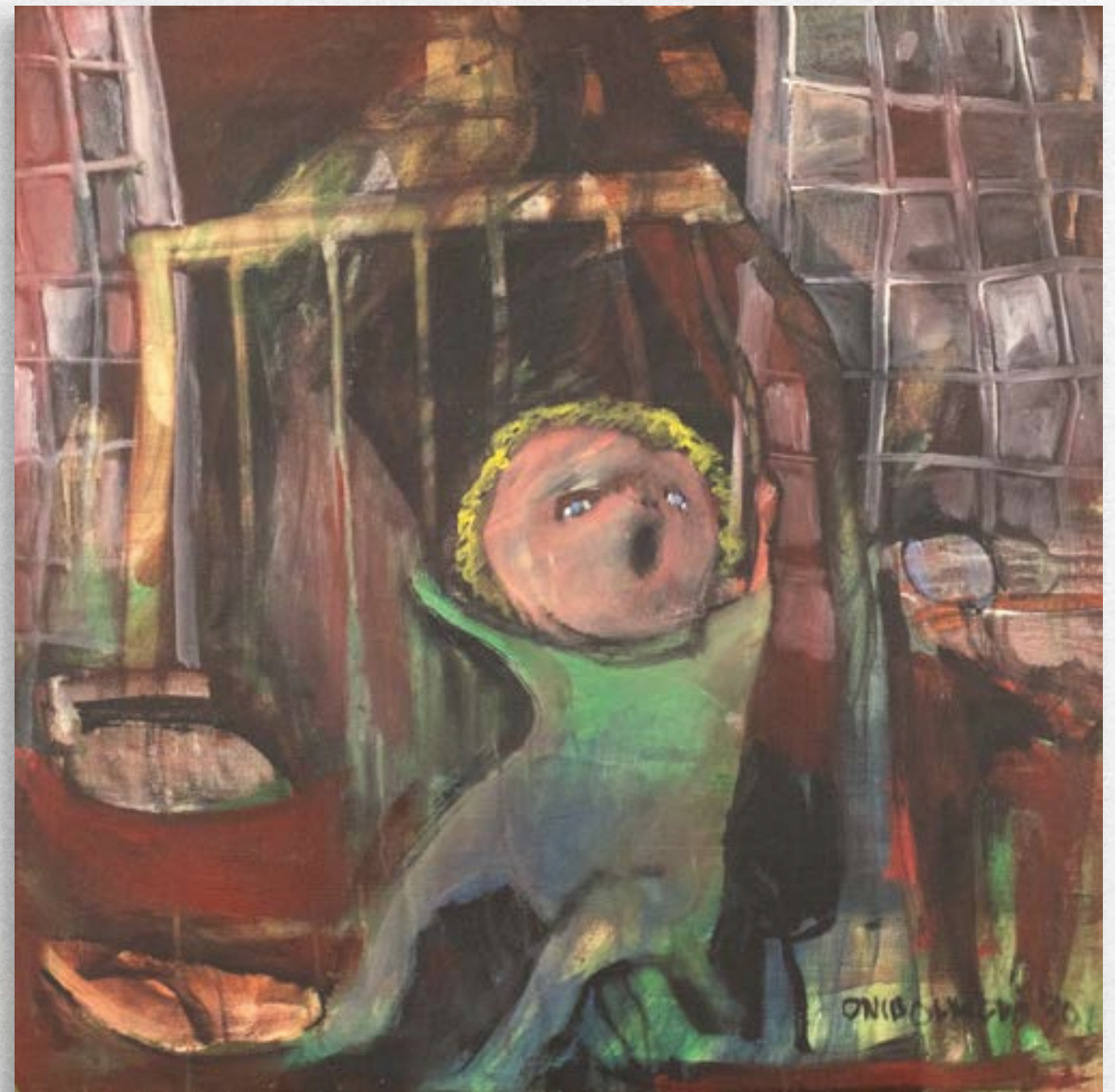


ABOVE: Onib Olmedo © Onib Olmedo Facebook page, photo by Miguel Fabie

of the real world. Though echoing the cubistic traditions, Onib chooses not to follow its formal rules, abandoning them in favor of a more faithful portrayal of its themes. (Hannah Valiente)

A Rare Olmedo of Hope

Innocence Amid the Urban Jungle



Baliuag Altar Table

19th Century

Narra

H: 43 1/2" (110 cm)

L: 54 1/4" (138 cm)

W: 22" (56 cm)

P 260,000

The late Martin I. Tinio writes, "The *comoda* was a low cabinet that was usually found in the bedroom of a house, upon which the household images of the family altar were usually placed. It always had two doors with two shelves inside, as well as a pair of drawers above the doors." This remarkable Baliuag *comoda de poste* possesses a narra body and top. Kamagong colonnettes flank both sides of the *comoda*'s carcass. Delicate kamagong, bone, and lanite inlays ornament the drawers and door panels, and outlines the top and

bottom portions, giving this *comoda* an exquisite and intricate finish. The drawers and door panels possess silver keyholes and kamagong knobs topped with silver. Ramon N. Villegas succinctly describes the Bulacan–Pampanga tradition of Philippine furniture, also known as the Baliuag style: "Representative of the Bulacan–Pampanga tradition, popularly known as the Baliuag style, is the sideboard, the extendable dining table with matching chairs, the chest of drawers, and the large *comoda*. The style makes use of narra and kamagong in combination, as well as inlaid ornamentation with bone and contrasting woods."

The Elegant Baliuag Mesa-Altar



Fernando Zóbel (1924 - 1984)

Pequeño homenaje a Stravinski
signed, dated, and inscribed "Pequeño homenaje a Igor Stravinski. Tres variantes en verde y ocre sobre un tema de Rembrandt. Su aguafuerte 'Le paysage a la tour" ca. 1650. Empezado en Madrid y terminado en Cuenca, el 2 de Agosto 1972" (lower left)
oil on canvas
48" x 32" (122 cm x 81 cm)

P 16,000,000

PROVENANCE
Galería Theo, Madrid

LITERATURE
De la Torre, Alfonso and Rafael Pérez-Madero. *Fernando Zóbel: Catalogue Raisonné of Paintings (1946 - 1984)*. Madrid: Fundación Azcona, 2022. Listed as "72-52 PEQUEÑO HOMENAJE A STRAVINSKY" with full-color illustration and painting description on page 466.

Bonet, Juan Manuel and Adolfo Cayon. *Fernando Zóbel: the 1970s. A Homage to Rafael Perez-Madero*. Published to accompany the exhibition of the same title. Makati City: Galería Cayón, 2022. Full-color illustration on page 45 and painting description on pages 45 - 46.

EXHIBITED
Obra Cultural Monte de Piedad y Caja de Ahorros de Sevilla, Sala de Exposiciones El Monte, *Fernando Zóbel (First Retrospective Exhibition)*, Sevilla, October 1983

León Gallery, Fernando Zóbel: the 1970s. A Homage to Rafael Perez-Madero, Makati City, 9 - 28 March 2022



ABOVE: Rembrandt, " 'Le paysage à la tour carrée" c.1650, etching

"Little homage to Stravinsky" belongs to a small and select group of six paintings dedicated to five musicians who were important sources of inspiration for Fernando Zobel.

The series began with a homage to Claudio Monteverdi in 1966 – a subject Zóbel returned to with the same dedication in 1972. Then we found that this tribute to Stravinsky followed in August of that same year. The piece dedicated to Mozart is dated 1975, while the works honoring Theobald Böhm (1976) and Marin Marais (1982) complete the series.

What do we see in this Zobel masterpiece? First and foremost, a clear vertical emphasis. On a strikingly upright canvas, a series of green and ochre tones are arranged – seemingly at random yet forming a masterful balance of shapes and colors. The entire surface is gridded, almost like a kind of musical score. These tones are beautifully distributed from right to left and from bottom to top, with no obvious pattern – yet the result is sublime, functioning perfectly, as if we were listening to a twelve-tone composition by the great Igor Stravinsky.

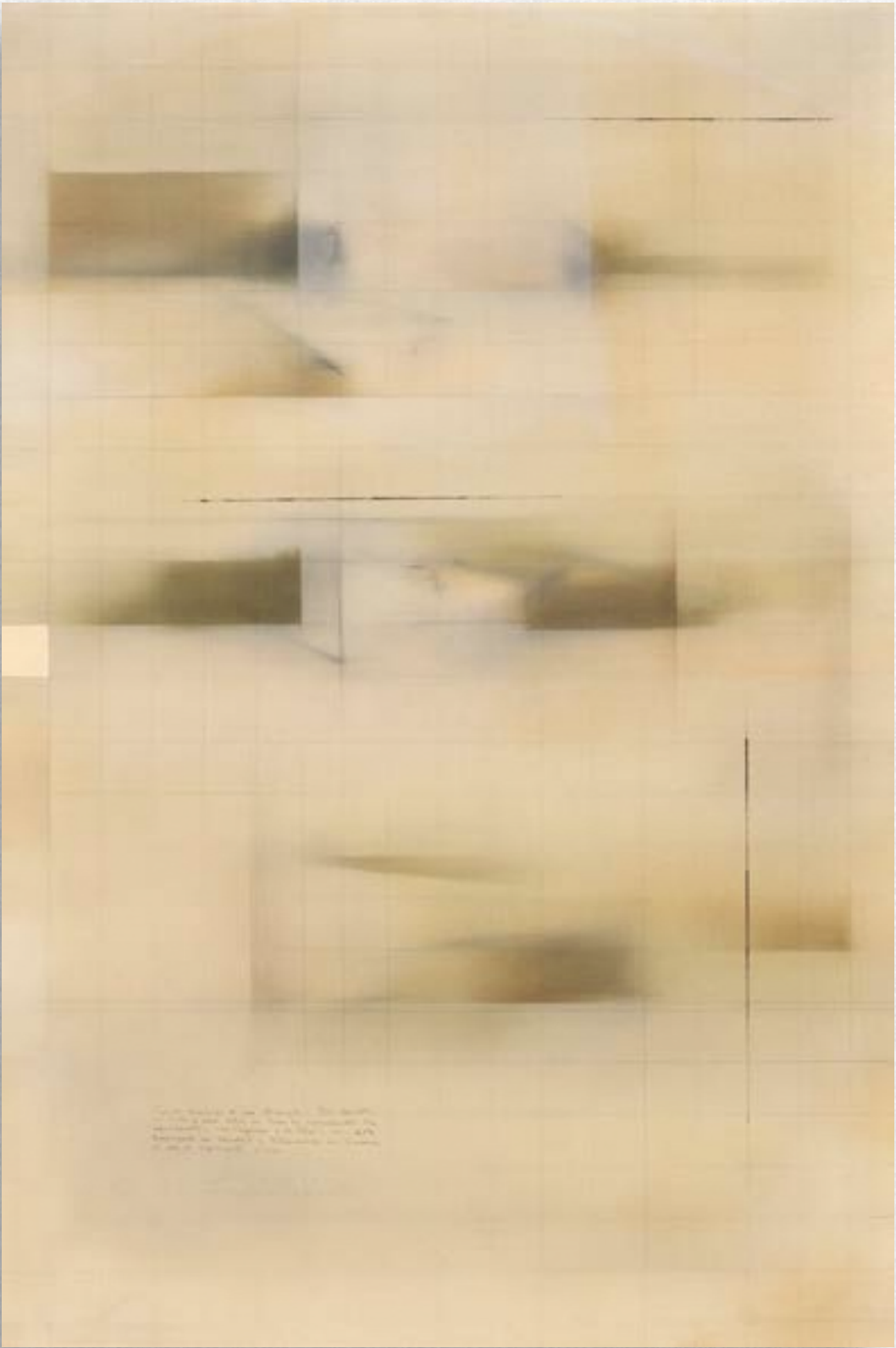
Secondly, we find a particularly interesting explanatory note:

"Little homage to Igor Stravinsky. It has three variations of green, and ocher on a theme about Rembrandt. The etching "Le paysage a la tour" dated from 1650. It began in Madrid and finished in Cuenca on August 2nd of 1972."

Based on a small, apparently minor work by a major artist like Rembrandt, Zóbel created a superb composition which is also connected with Stravinsky's music. As if it were a negative, Zóbel's painting shows in its central part a vertical, whitish strip, in clear contrast to the vertical, solid, black mass of the tower in the centre of the composition. In addition, the black landscape of the engraving acquires, on the canvas, its natural colour of greens and ochres, recovering its natural colour; we are, therefore, before a landscape that Zóbel tries to apprehend under the severe order of the grid.

The work, which is absolutely essential and possibly one of Fernando Zóbel's best composed and most thought-out paintings, was in what was the artist's first exhibition shortly after his death.

Zóbel's Balletic Ode To Rembrandt and Stravinsky



Federico Aguilar Alcuaz (1932 - 2011)*Untitled (Tres Marias Series)*

signed and dated 1986 (lower right)

oil on canvas

26" x 32" (66 cm x 81 cm)

P 800,000

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

PROVENANCE

Private Collection, Manila

Truly an artist of varying multitudes, a facet of Federico Aguilar Alcuaz's oeuvre focuses solely on the inner lives of women. The most popular of which is his *Tres Marias* series, created between 1978 and 1979, and whose subjects are the waitresses of the restaurants he frequents.

This work, created in 1986, is an offshoot of his *Tres Marias* works. A central tenet of this series is the relaxed atmosphere as these women shed off their rigid societal expectations in the comfort of their rooms. The women in this work are dressed in elaborate Spanish-style gowns, though notably some are in the Chinese *cheongsam* and in the casual yet formal dress of the time. Here, there are no expectations of perfection or modesty as they settle in the privacy of their rooms. Instead, there is only femininity and the quiet solidarity of womanhood.

In a December 22, 1981 journal, Alcuaz wrote about a *Tres Marias* painting: "The paintings could invoke by themselves [various] anecdotes." Though this work is not *Tres Marias*, its similarities evoke the same sentiments. In his depiction of women in their daily activities, he provides a tableau of the rich hidden world of women that is often not depicted elsewhere. Their camaraderie takes center stage, establishing a connection that makes them much more than someone's wife, their daughters, or their sisters. Here, they are "just" themselves, and that is enough. (Hannah Valiente)

Aguilar Alcuaz

Ode to Women



Mauro Malang Santos (1928 - 2017)

Woman
signed and dated 28.VII.93 (lower left)
pastel on paper
11" x 8" (28 cm x 20 cm)

P 300,000

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



Woman, created in 1993, illustrates a quintessential Malang woman. She has thick limbs, an elongated neck, a taut expression, and is dressed in a traditional Filipiniana with huge sleeves. Moreover, this pastel on paper artwork powerfully demonstrates Malang's decades-long exceptional artistry and versatility. He is known for his dauntless color palette, making expert use of any color to give life to his images. Arbitrary and harsh, yet carefully placed strokes are also a distinguishing feature of Malang's canvases.

"I painted for the pleasure of painting," Malang once said in a conversation with Cid Reyes. Indeed, there are no hints of pressure or obligation in his artworks; he painted because

he wanted to, and he painted what he wanted to. This enthusiasm and his unwavering artistry solidified his position in the Philippine art scene, making his canvases among the most sought-after works by a Filipino painter. (Jessica Magno)

Roel Obemio (b. 1967)

Homage to Caravaggio (The Young Bacchus)
signed and dated 2015 (lower right and verso)
acrylic on canvas
30" x 30" (76 cm x 76 cm)

P 240,000

PROVENANCE
Galleria Francesca



Through its depiction of a beautiful and loosely-clad young man holding a carafe of red wine, it is quite obvious that Roel Obemio's *Homage to Caravaggio* draws heavy inspiration from Italian Baroque master Caravaggio's *Bacchus*. It is almost a replica in terms of the depiction – both young men wear a wreath of vine leaves on their heads with a bowl of fruit placed in front of them. Their robes fall down their shoulders, and they fix the viewer with an almost indescribable gaze.

However, the main difference is that Obemio's *Bacchus* is fashioned in his usual art style; that is, it is storybook voluptuous. In a style similar to Colombian painter Fernando Botero, Obemio's *Bacchus* is heavy-set, his expanse of skin greater than its inspiration. Through his pursuit of art, Obemio continues to be adamant about

art's accessibility, and it is evident in his works. He imbues his paintings with hope and optimism, emphasizing that a childlike zest for life is not a doomed journey. Instead, he makes known his unwavering sense of gratitude, made manifest through his optimistic characters, whose hopefulness is as abundant as they are. (Hannah Valiente)

Benedicto Cabrera (b. 1942)

Karl Roy of P.O.T.
signed and dated 1995 (lower right)
pastel on paper
32" x 22" (81 cm x 56 cm)

P 800,000

LITERATURE
Caruncho, Eric S. *Bencab's Rock Sessions*. Published in conjunction with Bencab's exhibition of the same title at the Crucible Gallery in 1995. Pasig City: The Crucible Workshop, 1995. Full-color illustration.

EXHIBITED
The Crucible Gallery, *Bencab's Rock Sessions*, Mandaluyong City, 7 - 21 November 1995



ABOVE: Portrait of Karl Roy

By the time Bencab created this sketch of Karl Roy, it had been only about a year since the creation of his rock band P.O.T., but their rise was already undeniable. As their lead vocalist, Karl was at the forefront of their fame, an icon of Pinoy rock that garnered a crowd of fans who screamed his name every performance. In this illustration, Karl shows off his iconic tattoos that spread

over his shoulders, still distinctly empty in comparison to the sprawl that would cover the rest of his body over the years. A rockstar in the quietude, Bencab's portrayal of Karl is a rare glimpse into the musician's inner life, who, despite his rocker lifestyle, strived to find time for solitude and introspection. (Hannah Valiente)

Emmanuel Garibay (b. 1962)*Santo*

signed and dated 2019 (lower right)

oil on canvas

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

P 1,400,000

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

A quintessential storyteller, Emmanuel Garibay's works teem with rich and tall tales. He majored in sociology during his studies at the University of the Philippines Los Baños, which greatly impacted him as he came to understand how deeply intertwined one's personal life is with their cultural, political, economic, and social standing.

However, it was also his upbringing that had a significant effect on his art. Born in Kidapawan, North Cotabato, he grew up with the influence of a Methodist pastor father. With the country being a predominantly Catholic and Christian nation, Garibay was surrounded by religion inside and outside the home. As such, Garibay became a devout student of art, sociology, and divinity – a study that is evident in his 2019 *Santo*.

Santo features a man as he holds a religious sculpture or a santo. Though it is not explicitly stated, one can glean from the man's simple clothes and the well-worked hands that the man is an honest and normal Filipino. It is not unusual to see santos even in the relative privacy of one's own home. Most ancestral homes have a small altar as the center of their religious practices, and that is excluding the many churches that are planted across the country.

It is also not out of the realm of possibility that the man is among the many devotees of a religious festival. The Philippines celebrates hundreds of festivals throughout the year, and among them, devotees opt to carry *santos* and *revultos* as they parade through the streets.

Critic Patrick Flores described Garibay's works in the Filipino phrase of "*walang sinasanto*." No one is spared. Whether it be from his scathing political commentary or his social piece, it seems as though no one is spared from Garibay's sharp critique. Despite that, however, it seems as though there is something that Garibay still holds sacred, and that is the radical nature of Christ Jesus.



ABOVE: Emmanuel Garibay © cwmission.org

"I see more affirmation in my faith as a Christian because one of the things I realize is something very radical about Christianity," Garibay once said in an interview with Daniel Nicholas of Overseas Ministries Study Center.

Indeed, the plight of the dispossessed is easily recognizable in the works of Garibay. His mass extends past the walls of a church and pours into the streets, in the jeepneys, in feast and squalor, and into the slums. Garibay may have a strong and sharp analysis in his works but he still holds sacred the radical Christianity, a belief that is born from his lifelong quest as a student of art, sociology, and divinity. (Hannah Valiente)

Garibay and His Search For the Sacred



Augusto Albor (b. 1948)

Elements In Time - V
signed and dated 1997 (lower left)
oil on canvas
36 3/4" x 30 1/2" (93 cm x 77 cm)

P 240,000

Accompanied by a Certificate issued by Galeria Lienzo and signed by the artist confirming the authenticity of this lot

Albor is widely known for his minimalist sensibilities, which favor subtlety over spectacle. Rather than working with bold gestures or bright colors, he explores a more meditative space. His neutral tones and pared-down compositions are not about emptiness, but about precision; each mark, each absence, each break in the surface feels intentional. There's a calm intensity in how he balances visual simplicity with emotional weight. What defines Albor's practice is this deep focus on transformation; on disintegration and renewal. His surfaces often feel weathered, like something exposed to time, light, and silence. But far from being bleak, his work offers a kind of serenity. It reflects a world stripped down to essentials, where abstraction becomes a space for reflection. Albor's paintings are not passive; they're quietly immersive, rewarding viewers who are willing to slow down and simply look.

At first glance, this piece by Augusto Albor feels quiet; almost reticent. Layers of soft greys stretch across the canvas in thin, repetitive ridges, like faint echoes or worn surfaces. Punctured by a rhythm of small holes, the work isn't loud or showy; it draws you in slowly, asking for patience. In typical Albor fashion, the materials are restrained but speak volumes. His approach to abstraction often lies in what isn't said; in the understated palette, the gentle erosion of texture, the tension between presence and absence. (*Jed Daya*)



ABOVE: Augusto "Gus" Albor © Tatler Asia



Romeo Tabuena (1921- 2015)
Still Life 1
signed and dated 1978 (lower right)
oil on masonite board
21 1/2" x 18 1/2" (55 cm x 47 cm)

P 180,000

PROVENANCE
Private Collection, Spain



Masonite board is a preferred painting surface by many artists, especially oil painters, due to its affordability and durability. Crafted with compressed wood fibers, it forms a dense and sturdy panel that can handle the weight of oil paint and can last many years without deteriorating.

Romeo Tabuena, an internationally acclaimed Filipino artist, was renowned for his watercolor works, especially his landscapes. Still, he was a prolific artist who experimented with various styles and mediums and covered a variety of subjects and themes; he has a collection of acrylic, oil, graphite, charcoal, and ink works under his belt. His *Still Life 1*, painted in 1978, is an oil on masonite board work

that exemplifies Tabuena's artistry, making expert use of any medium to portray his subjects. At a glance, it can look simple and childlike. Yet, it illustrates the artist's great understanding and command of his chosen medium, as seen in his meticulous organization of every little detail. (Jessica Magno)

Romeo Tabuena (1921- 2015)
Still Life 2
signed and dated 1978 (lower right)
oil on masonite board
19 1/4" x 24 3/4" (49 cm x 63 cm)

P 220,000

PROVENANCE
Private Collection, Spain



Though not born there, the works of Romeo Tabuena echo the aesthetic of San Miguel de Allende. His works prior to his move to San Miguel in 1955 were rustic and cubistic, the zeitgeist of Manila at the time. His proletarian roots were evident as he portrayed the desolation of life in the Philippines, a fact he knew well as he became one of the many who became a part of the diaspora in his search for a better life.

However, his work transformed when he moved to San Miguel. Though he had not met some of the great artists the town could provide, he had access to their works. Their fine murals decorate the city, bright and bejeweled in its

hues. And so, Tabuena's works became as vivid as befitting San Miguel's adopted son.

This particular still-life is as vibrant as San Miguel, in shades of yellows and blues, and reds. It seems as though it was not San Miguel who adopted a son of his own. "[He is] another artist San Miguel de Allende can call its own," Natalie Taylor wrote in her article published in Atencón San Miguel. "Both he and the city adopted each other." (Hannah Valiente)

Sansó

His Imaginary Landscapes



Juvenal Sansó (1929 - 2025)
a.) As Imagination Dictates
signed (lower right)
ca. 1990's
acrylic on canvas
5 1/2" x 28 1/2" (14 cm x 72 cm)

b.) Essence of Spirit
signed (lower right)
ca. 1990's
acrylic on canvas
5 1/2" x 30 1/2" (14 cm x 77 cm)

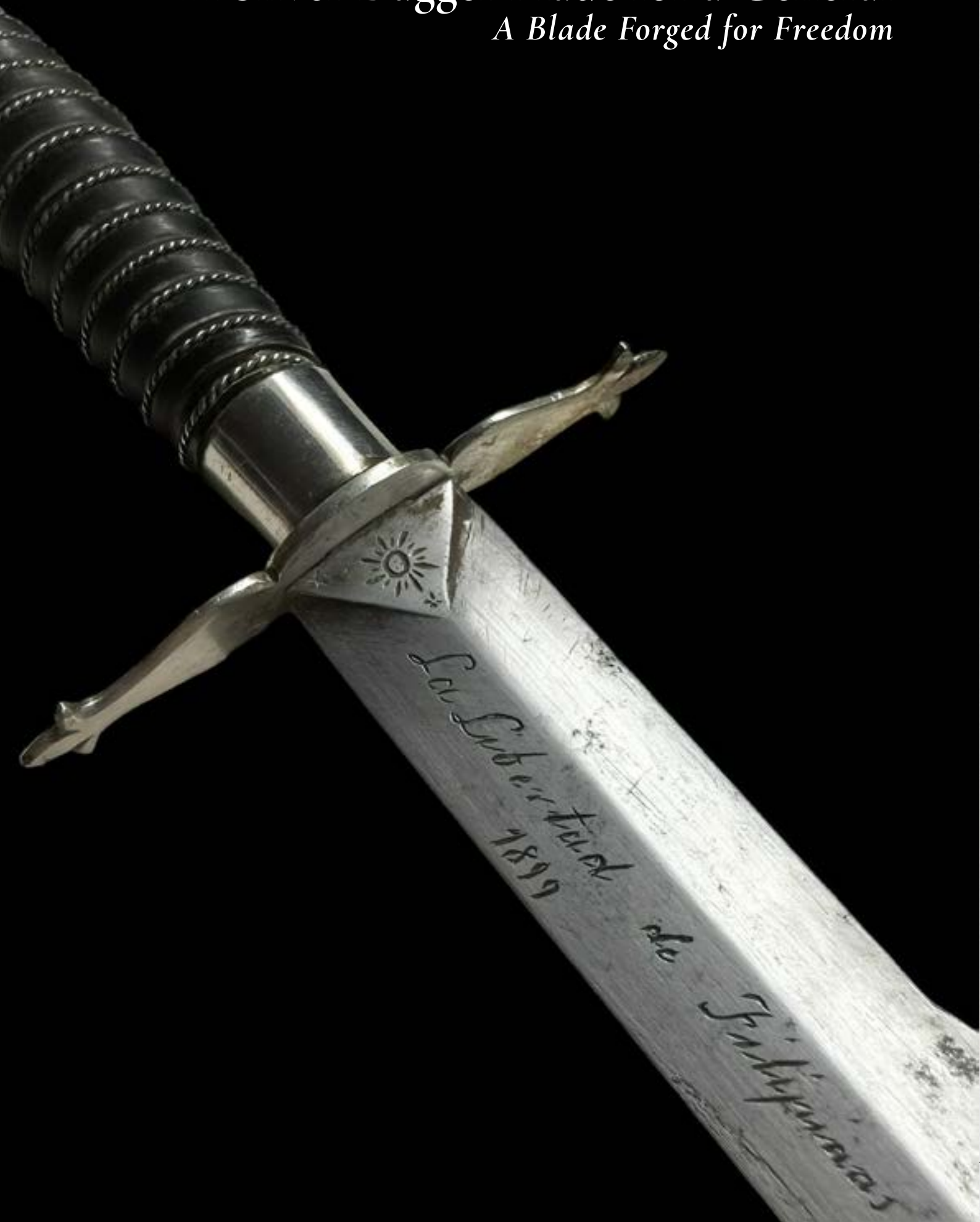
P 500,000

Each piece is accompanied by a certificate issued by Fundacion Sansó confirming the authenticity of this lot

Critics and art aficionados have consistently noted the enigmatic and perturbing qualities evoked by Juvenal Sansó's compositions. His remarkable use of color and noteworthy brushwork not only added depth and texture to his images but also induced a wave of emotions, immersing the viewers in each scenery he presented. a) *As Imagination Dictates* and b) *Essence of Spirit*, painted in the 1990s, bear witness to Sansó's dexterity. The first one offers a blood-red and smudged appearance, while the other is a cool and vivid representation of a coastal area. These works evoke different sentiments that stir and deepen with each viewing, yet equally exude a mysterious, eerie atmosphere. (Jessica Magno)

A Silver Dagger Made for a General

A Blade Forged for Freedom



156

Silver Dagger and Scabbard

1899

Engraved with "La Libertad de Filipinas — 1899"
(The Liberty of the Philippines — 1899) on its blade
and the Sun and Three Stars

dagger:

H: 13" (33 cm)

W: 3 1/4" (8 cm)

D: 1" (3 cm)

scabbard:

H: 10 1/2" (27 cm)

W: 1 1/4" (3 cm)

L: 3/4" (2 cm)

P 400,000

In the annals of Philippine history, few symbols resonate as powerfully as the weapons wielded by the brave officers of the First Philippine Republic — revolutionaries who defied colonial rule in the late 19th century and who would fight not just one, but two imperial powers, the Spanish and the Americans. Among these, the elegant dagger, worn by high-ranking officers, stands not merely as a weapon of war but as a tangible testament to the nation's yearning for freedom.

This particular dagger, engraved with the words "**La Libertad de Filipinas – 1899**" (The Freedom of the Philippines – 1899), stands as a rare and compelling artifact from that turbulent era. The inscription serves as both a declaration and a promise — reflecting the political aspirations of a people long under colonial subjugation and the personal convictions of the revolutionary who once carried this blade.

Design Rooted in Symbolism and Strength

The dagger's craftsmanship reflects not only its function as a weapon but also its ceremonial and symbolic significance. The **scabbard** is crafted from silver, a metal associated with purity, prestige, and status. Its **handle or hilt**, made from carabao horn, evokes strength, resilience, and the spirit of the Filipino people. Twisted around the horn is a silver coil, symbolizing the merging of natural endurance with refined purpose — a duality that mirrors the revolution's character: grounded in the masses yet guided by visionary leadership.

At the end of the hilt, the **silver pommel** showcases a **delicate floral motif**, perhaps a nod to the beauty and abundance of the Philippine archipelago.

Strikingly, between the cross-guard and the blade lies a **triangular emblem** featuring a **sun with a human face and three stars**. This motif is rich with layered meaning. In Filipino culture, the triangle is a recurring and powerful shape, evident in the national flag, traditional designs, jewelry, food packaging, and visual art. It symbolizes

harmony, balance, and sacred geometry, rooted in precolonial beliefs.

The **sun**, depicted with a face, symbolizes **divine power** and the presence of **Bathala**, the creator god in ancient Filipino cosmology — a spiritual guide and protector in battle. The three stars, often associated today with **Luzon, Visayas, and Mindanao**, may also allude to the **Santísima Trinidad (Holy Trinity)** — invoking divine protection from the Christian faith, which many revolutionaries still embraced alongside indigenous beliefs.

These intricate elements — the **fine silverwork**, the **organic carabao horn**, and the **deeply symbolic motifs** — suggest that this dagger was not a standard-issue weapon but rather one likely carried by a **Katipunan officer**, a leader entrusted not only with tactical command but also with embodying the revolutionary spirit.

The Mark of Revolution

Etched into the blade is a powerful message: "La Libertad de Filipinas – 1899." This inscription marks a pivotal moment in Philippine history—the year 1899, following the declaration of independence from Spain and signaling the beginning of the Philippine-American War. It was a new chapter in the nation's ongoing struggle for sovereignty. The blade may have witnessed these seismic shifts, its steel reflecting the enduring will of the Filipino people.

The engraved, radiating sun, closely associated with the Katipunan seal, would later become immortalized in the modern Philippine flag. It symbolized the enlightenment of the Filipino people and their collective drive toward liberation.

Here are some historical photographs of Katipunan and Philippine Revolutionary Army generals that provide compelling visual evidence that the dagger served purposes beyond combat. In formal portraits of General Miguel Malvar, General Juan Cailles, and General Tomas Mascardo, each man is depicted with a dagger prominently



ABOVE: The hilt covered with coils of horn and silver cord; BELOW: Silver Scabbard with chain and loop for belt.

displayed. The dagger was more than just a weapon; it was a symbol of rank, readiness, and revolutionary commitment.

Gen. Miguel Malvar

In this colorized photograph, General Miguel Malvar—commander of the Filipino forces during the latter phase of the Philippine-American War—stands in full military regalia, with his dagger clearly visible at his side. This underscores both his leadership role and personal dedication to the struggle for independence.



Gen. Juan Cailles

General Juan Cailles, of mixed French and Indigenous descent, was a skilled tactician and nationalist leader. His portrait, which features him with a dagger at the ready, emphasizes his active military engagement and alignment with the revolutionary ideals of the Katipunan.

Gen. Tomas Mascardo

General Tomas Mascardo, another key figure in the revolutionary command, is also depicted with a dagger in formal portraiture. Like his peers, the presence of the blade affirms his position as both a warrior and a leader.

These daggers were not just decorative; they served as deliberate visual affirmations of revolutionary identity. Their consistent presence in official imagery underscores their dual role: practical tools of protection and potent symbols of authority, vigilance, and patriotic duty.

A Legacy Carved in Steel

More than just a weapon, this Katipunan dagger represents a narrative forged in metal—a silent witness to bloodshed, bravery, and the birth of a nation. It embodies the values and ideals of the revolution: courage, sacrifice, and the unyielding pursuit of independence.



TOP LEFT: General Miguel Malvar TOP RIGHT: Juan Cailles BOTTOM: Tomas Mascardo

In a time when historical memory can fade, artifacts like this dagger sharpen the edges of our collective understanding. They remind us that freedom was not inherited; it was earned, carved out of resistance and conviction, one blade at a time.

Bonifacio and the Tearing of the Cedula



157

Hugo Yonzon, Jr. (1924 - 1994)

The Cry of Pugad Lawin
signed and dated 1977 (lower right)
oil on canvas
35" x 54" (89 cm x 137 cm)

P 500,000

PROVENANCE
Private Collection, Manila

Hugo Yonzon, Jr.'s cartoonist background is evident throughout his oeuvre. He had no formal training in the art, having only stayed at the UP School of Fine Arts for a semester before he plunged into the professional field. He worked in advertising agencies and newspapers, contributing to the post-war humor magazine *Halakhak*, creating the comic strip "Sakay and Moy," and even worked with National Artist Cesar Legaspi from 1947 to 1950 at *Philprom* before the latter ventured full-time into painting.

This particular piece is imbued with the storytelling inherent in cartooning. Portraying the 1896 Cry of Pugad Lawin, Yonzon Jr.'s *katipuneros* are in the middle of their furious tearing of their *cedulas*. The *cédulas personales* is a tax imposed upon the Filipinos and, according to Bonifacio, a sign of the slavery of the Filipino. After an impassioned speech, his fellow *katipuneros* tore up their *cedulas* and cried, "Long live the Philippines!"

Like many artists, Yonzon Jr. is enamored with native Filipino themes. In an interview for his book, fellow artist Mauro "Malang" Santos extolled his skills as a photographer, cartoonist, caricaturist, illustrator, and painter as "*magaling*." Excellent. Indeed, it is said that his works sell even before the paint gets dry, so beloved is he to collectors that he cannot gather enough paintings for a one-man show before they are sold. (*Hannah Valiente*)

Leo Valledor (1936 - 1989)

Tendency
signed and dated 1981 (verso)
acrylic on canvas
61 3/4" x 59" (157 cm x 150 cm)

P 1,600,000

PROVENANCE
Private Collection, Europe

B old, precise, and strikingly quiet, Leo Valledor’s *Tendency* has a way of pulling you in through restraint rather than spectacle. A single pale stripe, soft gray against a commanding field of crimson, tilts slightly off center, cutting through the canvas with cool detachment. Yet its subtle asymmetry stirs something more dynamic. The work plays with perception: depending on where you stand or how the light falls, the red seems to vibrate, while the gray line offers a moment of calm. It’s minimal in form but quietly charged; an elegant distillation of tension and balance.

This distilled intensity reflects Valledor’s lifelong fascination with the spatial and emotional effects of color and form. In *Tendency*, the shaped canvas and angled geometry are not simply formal devices; they’re strategies for engagement. His works don’t sit passively on a wall; they activate space and ask viewers to move, observe, and reconsider. With each shift in angle, *Tendency* behaves differently, offering new illusions of depth, weight, and rhythm. It’s an artwork that breathes with the room.

Valledor’s road to this point was shaped by both cultural lineage and artistic rebellion. Born in San Francisco to Filipino immigrant parents, he earned a scholarship to the California School of Fine Arts, where he was immersed in a West Coast avant-garde steeped in experimentation. Later, he relocated to New York, where he became a founding member of Park Place Gallery; an artist-run space that rejected the constraints of traditional exhibition models. Park Place wasn’t just about showing art; it was about creating an environment for artistic cross-pollination, where painting, sculpture, poetry, and jazz intersected freely. *(Jed Daya)*



ABOVE: Leo Valledor with his diptych, *Echo* (for John Coltrane).

Leo Valledor
Collisions of Shape and Color



Arturo Luz (1926 - 2021)

Modula

dated 2015
stainless steel
without base:
H: 48" (122 cm)
L: 24" (61 cm)
W: 24" (61 cm)

with base:
H: 54 1/4" (138 cm)
L: 28" (71 cm)
W: 28" (180 cm)

P 2,000,000

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

1969 saw a significant period in Arturo Luz's artmaking, marked by sudden realizations regarding his technique and materials. Thus, from his early realist paintings to his famed linear and geometric carnival series, he shifted to creating large-scale, nonfigurative sculptures in wood, marble, and metal.

"I approach my sculpture in pretty much the same way I approach my painting. They are preceded by a number of studies," Luz shares. Sometimes, he also seeks help from other trained individuals, such as a carpenter. Nevertheless, Arturo Luz's sculptures exemplify his mathematical and geometrical precision. Seemingly random chunks of wood and steel, they are born from his mastery of forms and penchant for abstraction.

Indeed, Luz's artistic journey is a testament to his unwavering dedication to learning and development. His works became the focal point of numerous one-man and collaborative exhibitions and received countless awards and recognitions. Ever the prolific artist he is, Luz would continue to grace the Philippine art scene with his masterpieces even in his later years, such as this stainless steel work, *Modula*, that was created in 2015 at the tail end of his 80s. (Jessica Magno)



ABOVE: Arturo Luz © León Gallery Archives



Fernando Amorsolo (1892 - 1972)

Market Scene
signed and dated 1945 (lower right)
oil on canvas
13" x 17" (33 cm x 43 cm)

P 4,800,000

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

PROVENANCE
Acquired directly from the artist by Dr. Richard K.C. Lee, the President of the Board of Health of Hawaii

1945 saw the end of the Second World War in the Pacific, and Manila was among the most brutalized cities during the war. Also the single largest urban battle fought by the American forces, Manila found itself in a month-long battle that saw the deaths of at least a hundred thousand civilians as well as the destruction of its architectural and cultural heritage amid the American indiscriminate firepower.

At the center of this mayhem, among the many citizens caught in the crossfire, is the aged Fernando Amorsolo.

His daughter Sylvia Amorsolo-Lazo recalls her father's years during the war in her article *Remembering Papa*. "During the Japanese occupation, we were living in Azcarraga (Now Claro M. Recto), which was very near Far Eastern University, then a Japanese garrison," she said. "Papa sketched war scenes from his window or sometimes on the rooftop to catch a quick glimpse of the planes fighting in the sky."

He diligently painted through the years despite his steadily depleting stash of insulin. When the war ended, 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. However, this piece, created the same year as the country's liberation, is free of the traces of tragedy that laced through his wartime pieces. Amorsolo returns almost immediately to his sun-drenched canvas, to his Filipino subjects, and to his rural scenery. This abrupt and immediate return to normal may seem uncouth, but that is far from the truth.

"Amorsolo's penchant for depicting an idealized world is viewed by his critics as the work of someone who has never experienced pain in his life," is written in his biography



ABOVE: Fernando Amorsolo © León Gallery Archives

on his Fernando C. Amorsolo Art Foundation website. "It is apparent that the artist's preference was not due to a lack of exposure to the ills of society but to a conscious effort to hang on to what is pure and good before the harsh realities of the world shattered his peaceful life in the countryside."

Indeed, Amorsolo's loyalty to his subject matter is more than stubbornness. "There is always something beautiful in all things around us and nature. So why not recreate God's creation through [my] canvas?" Mrs. Sylvia 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 work. This reverence for the pastoral beauty makes Amorsolo one of the most, if not the most, recognizable artists in Philippine art history. (Hannah Valiente)

Amorsolo Captures the Post-War Bounty

As Markets Come Alive with Hope and Harvests



Jigger Cruz (b. 1984)

The Stories of Summer

signed and dated 2021 (lower right)

oil on canvas mounted on woodboard

78 1/2" x 67" (200 cm x 170 cm)

P 4,000,000

PROVENANCE

Tang Contemporary Art, Hong Kong

Acquired from the above by the present owner

EXHIBITED

Tang Contemporary Art, *Paradigmal Traps*, Bangkok, 1 - 25 July 2021

There's something both thrilling and jarring about standing in front of a painting by Jigger Cruz. At first glance, it's chaos, thick swirls and globs of paint squeezed straight from the tube, like someone went rogue with a palette knife and never looked back. But the longer you stare, the more you begin to notice what's beneath: a ghost of something classical, a familiar scene peeking through the riot of color and texture. Cruz doesn't just paint; he disrupts, obscures, and reclaims. This tension, between what's hidden and what's laid bare, is what makes Cruz's work so compelling. It refuses to sit still. Your eye bounces from the elegant fragments of a traditional image to the loud, almost grotesque paint that smothers it. It's not just visual; it's visceral. You can feel the physicality of the process, the urgency behind each smear, the almost childlike abandon. It's messy, aggressive, and strangely beautiful.

For Cruz, painting isn't about preserving tradition, it's about questioning it. By using classical works as his foundation and then overwhelming them with thick, abstract marks, he opens up a space where meaning becomes fluid. There's a certain ambiguity here that's intentional. Cruz doesn't hand over easy answers, he invites doubt, contradiction, and interpretation.

And that's part of the point. Cruz is less interested in catering to the trained art eye and more concerned with shaking loose the rigid expectations around what art is supposed to be. His works don't require an art history degree to understand; they demand a gut reaction. Anyone, regardless of background, can stand in front of one and feel something: attraction, confusion, maybe even revulsion. It's democratic in the messiest, most liberating sense. (*Jed Daya*)

The Enfant Terrible *Captures a Summer Riot*



Nena Saguil (1924 - 1994)*Abstract #24*

signed and dated 1957 (center right and verso)

oil on canvas

28 1/4" x 19 3/4" (72 cm x 50 cm)

P 1,700,000

PROVENANCE

Private Collection, Manila

Simplicia "Nena" Laconico Saguil (1914 - 1994) — woman, modernist artist, insider of the 'Philippine Art Gallery Group', and then a member of the École de Paris — may very well, through her life and work, trace the dizzying trajectory of Philippine art.

In fact, Nena would be one of the female triumvirate of the time: Lyd Arguilla who founded the PAG, the prize-winning Anita Magsaysay-Ho and herself. At the Philippine Art Gallery, she reigned as 'Secretary-Treasurer' from 1952 to 1954. Lyd Arguilla carried the democratic title of 'Member-At-Large.'

But it was the siren call that Juan Luna and Resurreccion Hidalgo both heard that challenged her to seek other worlds. (Nena would say that as soon as she finished college, she began to save for her escape to Paris.) In 1954, she won a Walter Damrasch scholarship to study at the Ecole d'Art at the Palais de Fontainebleau; then would spend two more years in Madrid with a grant from the Institute of Spanish Culture, possibly recommended by the sympathetic fellow emigre, Fernando Zobel. She would return to France in 1956 to study at the Académie de la Grande Chaumière, thanks to a scholarship from her teacher, Henri Bernard Goetz. She would never leave Paris again.

During that second return, according to friend and art critic Leonidas V. Benesa, "she would execute rectangular patternings under the spell of (Alfred) Manessier", a non-figurative artist from the new School of Paris, and her mentor. Manessier was associated with the French movement of Lyrical Abstraction (Abstraction lyrique).

Interestingly, in an interview with Cid Reyes, Saguil would use the very similar term "Lyrical Cubism" to describe this series of her artworks. "I was doing these squares, no, not the Vasarely style — not rigid — but floating in different tones," she would tell him. More significantly, he also appeared to be an important influence not only on her artistic but also her spiritual development. The French artist, with the zeal of the newly converted, would seek to express through art his interest in mysticism, sacred art and the expression of spiritual ecstasy, concepts that would dominate Saguil's art more and more.

The expression of her seeking the divine are represented by this rare work.



TOP: Nena Saguil in 1954, just before she would leave for Paris on a scholarship. **MIDDLE:** Portrait of Alfred Manessier, 1949. Manessier was associated with the French movement of Lyrical Abstraction (Abstraction lyrique). **BOTTOM:** Verso of the painting

Saguil and Adventures in Cubism





163

Edwin Wilwayco (b. 1952)

Fractals: Eight

signed and dated 2015 (lower right and verso)

acrylic and oil on canvas

72" x 48" (183 cm x 122 cm)

P 260,000

PROVENANCE
Altromondo Arte Contemporanea

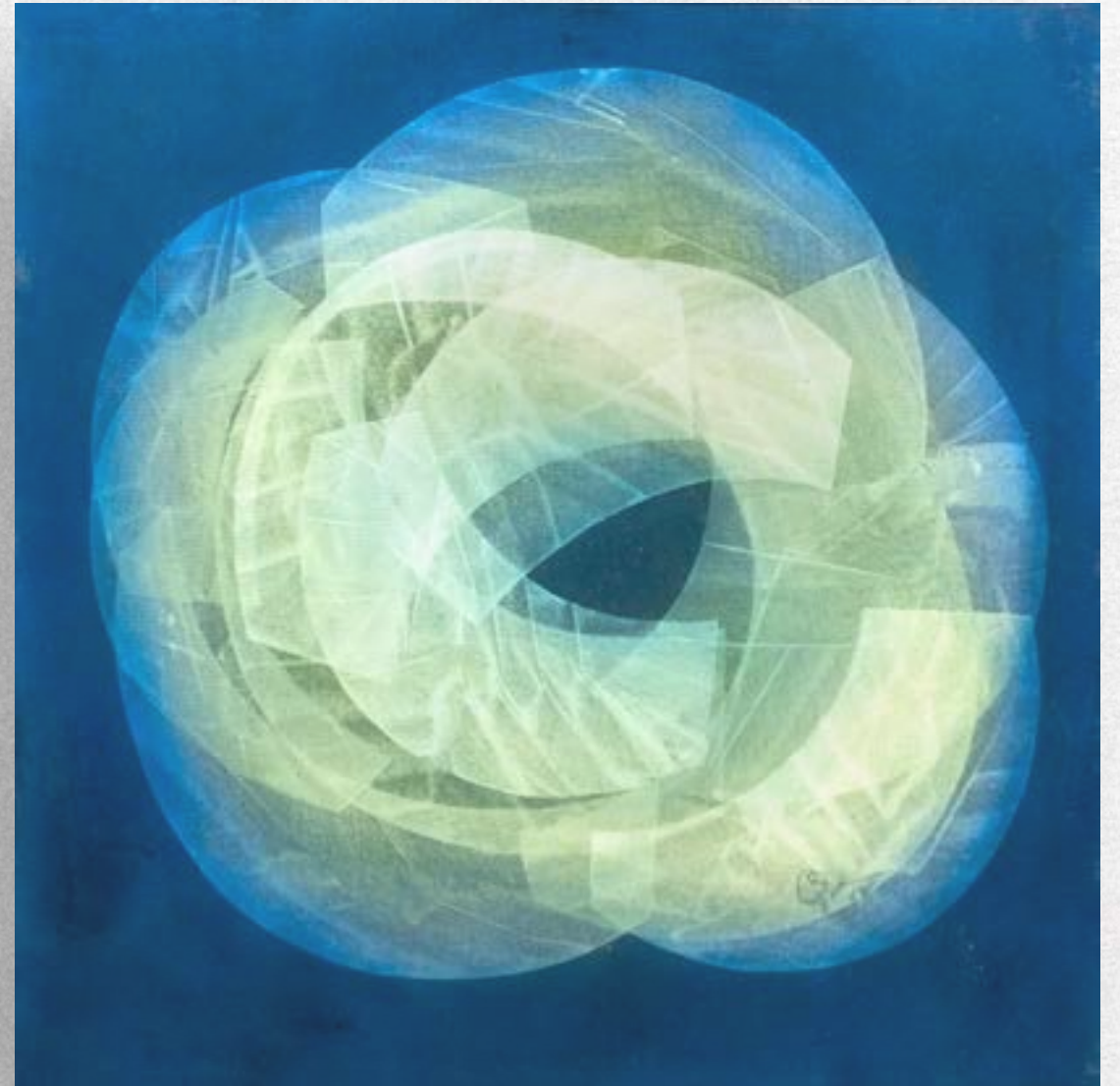
The musicality of Edwin Wilwayco's abstraction rings loud and clear. Through impressive explorations, signature brush works, and gestural marks, he uses this nonsubjective method to portray his many thematic series, including this lot at hand. His rapturous and resonant abstractions echo the lilting crescendo of the music he listens to.

"Abstractionist Edwin Wilwayco is the only Filipino artist who has exhaustively used music both as subject and inspiration of his burgeoning body of works," Cid Reyes claims in his 2010 Lifestyle Inquirer *Wilwayco's 'Magnificat': Art as symphony and exaltation*. "For a great length of time, Wilwayco has specifically focused on works of such composers as Vivaldi, Dvorak, Bach, Schubert, or with musical formats like Scherzo."

His 2015 *Fractals: Eight* echoes the cadence of his usual abstraction, combined with his fascination with nature. Blues and greens dominate the canvas as streaks of paint run down its length. It is as spontaneous as it is rational in its dramatic gestures and fluid colors.

"When I paint, I have no preconception of what I want to do," he said in a 2016 interview with Meagan Meehan, written on his website. "I let the painting develop according to my inner feelings and moods ... I don't even start with a color preference. The colors in my paintings are juxtaposed for various changing effects; they challenge or echo each other."

During his years at UP Fine Art, Wilwayco found himself under the tutelage of many seasoned abstract artists, and among them was the National Artist José Joya. Indeed, *Fractals: Eight* is proof of Wilwayco's grasp of abstraction, and a consensus to critic Cid Reyes, who said: "After over three decades of sustained dedication to abstract painting, Edwin Wilwayco has emerged, in my estimation, as the rightful artistic heir to the late National Artist José Joya, pioneer of Abstract Expressionism in the country." (*Hannah Valiente*)



164

Romulo Olazo (1934 - 2015)

Diaphanous #904

signed and dated 2012 (lower right)

oil on canvas

24" x 24" (61 cm x 61 cm)

P 1,600,000

Romulo Olazo's *Diaphanous* is a momentous body of work that spans the course of four decades. In their breadth and immensity, this series rivals none in its total understanding of one subject matter.

His Diaphanous works use a naming system that consists of a letter code followed by a Roman or Arabic numeral; as such, the 2012 *Diaphanous #904* contains the tail-end glory of his Diaphanous works. "There is something of the

obstinate in Olazo when he begins to pursue an idea to its inevitable conclusion," Alice M. L. Coseteng once wrote in 1986. Indeed, Olazo's persistent pursuit of the Diaphanous yielded, quite predictably, a series of masterpieces that stood the tests of time.

The beauty of transience permeates Olazo's Diaphanous series; his works evoke the pathos of everyday objects, a poignant feeling that takes after the Japanese idea of *mono no aware* or the sensitivity to ephemera. His previous experience as a printmaker gave Olazo the edge needed to push Diaphanous into the limelight. The serigraphic approach of using stenciled patterns paired with the collographic method of layering results in a translucent effect that makes the piece almost three-dimensional and lifelike, a visual masterpiece that has garnered many a collector's attention. The Diaphanous series, deservedly so, is Olazo's golden ticket to the annals of Philippine art history, a legacy that lives on until today. (*Hannah Valiente*)

Geraldine Javier (b. 1970)*Castle in the Air*

2017

thread on silk

set of 34 frames

P 400,000Accompanied by a certificate signed by the artist
confirming the authenticity of this lot

Geraldine Javier's practice has always been rooted in collage, whether directly or indirectly. Using layers of floral prints, religious symbols, grids, numbers, and torn bits of paper, she assembled patchwork pieces that felt both deeply personal and universally inquisitive. Instead of hiding the elements that held the work together, like strips of colored tape, Javier made them part of the composition. These small pieces of tape weren't just functional; they were deliberate, visible, and symbolic. They reminded us that even in our most fragmented states, there's beauty in holding ourselves together.

What makes Javier's collages stand out is how she gives form to the intangible parts of who we are. She doesn't try to smooth over the messiness or inconsistencies; instead, she embraces them. Her work recognizes that we are stitched together from different experiences, roles, and memories. She builds meaning from everyday things, showing that identity isn't always found in big declarations but in quiet, careful assembly. As described in Geraldine Javier: Fictions, her art begins and ends with the self; restless, ever-evolving, but always intentional.

In her installation *Castle in the Air*, Javier carries these same ideas into three-dimensional space, using thread on silk to build a constellation of framed forms that hover delicately in the gallery. Each frame, filled with what looks like botanical or organic patterns stitched in colored thread, floats like a thought suspended in midair. The work is both light and labor-intensive. There's an ephemeral, dream-like quality to the installation, as if the pieces could drift away at any moment, yet they remain tethered by unseen connections. In this work, Javier's ongoing interest in memory, selfhood, and fragility is made tactile. *Castle in the Air* invites viewers to wander through a suspended archive of feeling; fragile, intricate, and impossible to pin down. (*Jed Daya*)



Château Mouton Rothschild 1970 - 2016 Vertical (48 BT)

Château Mouton Rothschild

Pauillac, 1er Cru Classé

Overall good color and clarity, some labels and capsules slightly worn and scuffed from natural age

1970 (1 bts) - u. ms

1971 (1 bts) - u. ms

1972 (1 bts) - u. hs, capsule slightly corroded,

1972 (1 bts) - u. hs

1973 (1 bts) - u. t/hs

1974 (1 bts)

1975 (1 bts) - u. t/hs

1976 (1 bts) - u. t/hs

1977 (1 bts) - u. t/hs

1978 (2 bts) - u. 2ts

1979 (1 bts) - u. hs

1980 (1 bts) - u. ts

1981 (1 bts) - u. vts

1982 (1 bts)

1983 (1 bts) - u. bn

1984 (1 bts)

1985 (1 bts) - u. bn

1986 (1 bts)

1987 (1 bts) - u. ts

1988 (1 bts)

1989 (1 bts) - u. vts

1990 (1 bts) - u. vts

1991 (1 bts) - u. bn

1992 (1 bts)

1993 (1 bts) - also includes the US version

1994-2016 (1 bt per vintage)

P 4,000,000

PROVENANCE

Sotheby's, Finest & Rarest Wines, Hong Kong, 03 April 2023, Lot 7618



TOP: Château Mouton Rothschild 1998 MIDDLE: The famous Château BELOW: The temperature-controlled wine cellar



We are pleased to present an extraordinary collection of Château Mouton Rothschild wines, encompassing a remarkable range of vintages from 1970 to 2016. This assemblage offers a unique opportunity for connoisseurs and collectors to acquire a comprehensive vertical of one of Bordeaux's most esteemed First Growths.

Highlights of the Collection:
Prestigious Lineage: Château Mouton Rothschild, elevated to Premier Cru Classé status in 1973, is renowned for its exceptional quality and historical significance

Vintage Range: This collection spans 46 years, featuring notable vintages such as the 1970, celebrated for its excellence, and the 2016, acclaimed for its richness and complexity.

Artistic Labels: Each bottle showcases unique label artwork commissioned from renowned artists, a tradition that began in 1945, making this collection not only a testament to winemaking excellence but also to artistic heritage.

Condition: The bottles exhibit overall good color and clarity. Some labels and capsules show slight wear and scuffing, consistent with natural aging, underscoring the authenticity and provenance of this esteemed collection.

This collection represents a rare opportunity to own a significant piece of vinous history, reflecting the legacy and prestige of Château Mouton Rothschild. Ideal for both investment and enjoyment, it is poised to be a centerpiece in any distinguished wine collection.

Paintings and Sculptures

Lot 162
Nena Saguil (1924 - 1994)
Abstract #24



Lot 159
Arturo Luz (1926 - 2021)
Modula

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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.

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- 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.

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Account Name:	LEON ART GALLERY
Account Type:	PESO ACCOUNT
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LITIGATION:

In case of litigation between León Gallery and the buyer, the parties must submit to the Law Courts of Makati.



Lot 35
Hernando R. Ocampo (1911 - 1978)
Miners

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

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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



Lot 132
Bernardo Pacquing (b. 1967)
Realm of Penetrable Mass

Now Accepting Consignments

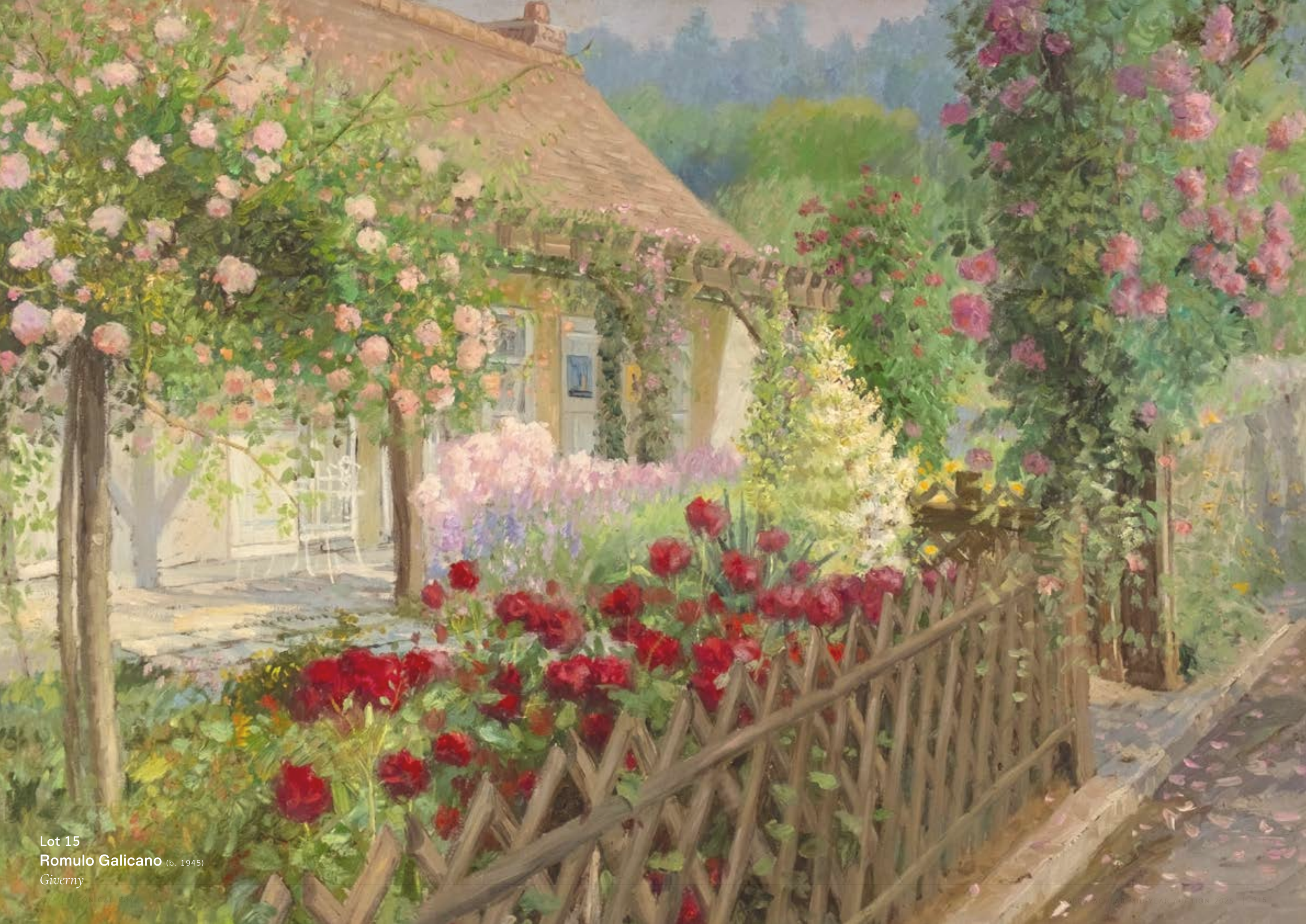
The Magnificent September Auction 2025

León Gallery
FINE ART & ANTIQUES



Fernando Amorsolo (1892 - 1972)
San Agustin Church of Paoay
oil on canvas
signed and dated 1958 (lower right)
12 1/2" x 18" (32 cm x 46 cm)

FOR INQUIRIES, PLEASE CONTACT US AT
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G/F Eurovilla 1, Rufino corner Legazpi Street, Legazpi Village, Makati City, Philippines
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Lot 15
Romulo Galicano (b. 1945)
Giverny

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