

NOUVEAU

FRESH MINDS, FRESH TALENTS

An E-Book on New and Exciting Filipino Visual Artists of the 21st Century

NOEL SALES BARCELONA

Author & Publisher



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NOUVEAU

FRESH MINDS, FRESH TALENTS

An E-Book on New and Exciting Filipino Visual Artists of the 21st Century

**EVERYBODY BORN COMES FROM THE
CREATOR TRAILING WISPS OF GLORY. WE
COME FROM THE CREATOR WITH
CREATIVITY. I THINK THAT EACH ONE OF
US IS BORN WITH CREATIVITY. –
MARGUERITE ANNIE "MAYA ANGELOU"
JOHNSON (APRIL 4, 1928 – MAY 28, 2014)**

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DEDICATION

This e-book is humbly dedicated, first and foremost to God the Almighty, Who is the fountain of all inspiration and beauty; to my family, friends, and loved ones, who are constantly supporting me, no matter what; and of course, to all creative Filipinos out there, particularly the young creatives - visual artists, musicians, actors, writers, poets, etc.; to my colleagues in the art and culture industry; and to all cultural workers whose advocacy and work are critical to the preservation and protection of our arts and culture.

And to the loving memories of the late writers, activists, critics, and nationalist educators **Bayani S. Abadilla, Ave Perez Jacob, Rogelio L. Ordoñez, Dominador Mirasol, and Polytechnic University of the Philippines President, Dr. Nemesio Prudente;** visual artists **Maestro Ireneo "Rene" Robles; Jose Valerio; former UP College of Fine Arts Dean Leonilo "Neil" Doloricon; Prof. Jack Pilar; to our beloved four-winged "prophet," the visionary Riel Jaramillo Hilario, and to my poet/journalist/activist friend, Alexander Martin C. Remollino; and to all our predecessors -**

To all of you, I dedicate this work.

PARA SA SINING, KULTURA, AT BAYAN!

THE AUTHOR
Antipolo City, Rizal

ACKNOWLEDMENT

To our God Almighty, for the inspiration; to Mama Mary and her spouse, St. Joseph; to all angels and saints;

To my family: my wife, Blessy; my moms, Rosie and Virginia; to my siblings and half-siblings; to all the part of the Sales and Barcelona clans;

To Mr. Leopoldo "Pol" A. Mesia Jr. of ARTipolo Group, Inc.; Mr. Aris Ventures, the founder of BAGHID (Eastern Visayas Young Artists Association); to our friends from Art'e Bauan, Vice Versa Artists Group, and Sining Grupong Batangueño;

To all artists who said yes to this project; and

To all those people who supported and believed in this small book project, about new and up-and-coming artists:

MARAMING-MARAMING SALAMAT PO!

PREFACE

The Philippines is home not only of happy and resilient people, but also of highly creative ones. For centuries, this archipelago has produced world-class artists—painters, sculptors, musicians, thespians, dancers, literati, and even art historians and cultural workers that have contributed much in the development of the art and culture industry of this nation, and more importantly, in creating our identity as a country and as a people.

The 21st century saw the unfolding of more and more exciting development in the field of the arts. From only a handful of known visual artists—mostly painters and sculptors—from the early and late 20th century, it seems that there has been a surge of new and exciting talents, who we are expecting to paint more colors to the already colorful local art scene. Some of them started creating art at a very young age, while some of them only had decided to start an art career lately, starting as a hobby, or a sideline but now, making it their full-time career.

This writer thinks that *Nouveau* is an attempt, not only to introduce fresh and new talents to the general public but also to help these new talents to beef up their portfolio by writing about their style and sharing the philosophy behind each work. Of course, the writer knows that some of these artists are still looking for their “identity” as creators, however, he believes that there must be someone to chronicle—somehow—their artistic journey and to show the world the development of their respective art styles. By doing so, these artists will be given a better chance to advance their careers to the next level, and become professionals.

Moreover, it is crucial that there should be publications like this one, to add into the body of literature dedicated to new criticism, art history, and aesthetics, for art creation is not only mere self-expression—but also an intellectual and social activity. While artists are known as “reserved” and “individualist” creatures, they too know the necessity for intellectual and social interactions since society, relationships, and the environment are fountains of inspiration and ideas that they can use in their works.

Nouveau, meanwhile, is just a start of a series of small publications tackling not only the end products of a creative or aesthetic process, but also the concerns and issues affecting the entire artistic and cultural industry.

On the other hand, we can expect that this small book will eventually expand to several volumes as the writer intends to explore more and more regions in the country, looking for fresh talents in the creative industry, worth writing about.

A portrait of a young woman with long, dark, wavy hair, smiling warmly. She is wearing a light-colored beret, a white t-shirt with pink and black splatters, and denim overalls. The background is a soft-focus mix of pink and blue.

*Lanizze Thane
Babatuan*

MORE THAN HER FATHER'S DAUGHTER

Lanizze Jhane “LJ” Babatuan came from a family of artists. Her grandfather, Romeo Babatuan has been a household name not only in creating graphic designs by hand (a robust industry during the 1970s up to the 1990s), but also in painting.

Meanwhile, Leonardo—LJ’s father—is known for his minimalistic and hyperrealistic paintings. Yeye, as his friends and family fondly call him, is also one of the sought-after muralists in the country, painting empty walls of posh condominiums, townhouses, and even business establishments owned and operated by a huge retail and land development conglomerate. He is also the resident artist for the top-notch interior design company in the Philippines, Atelier Almario.



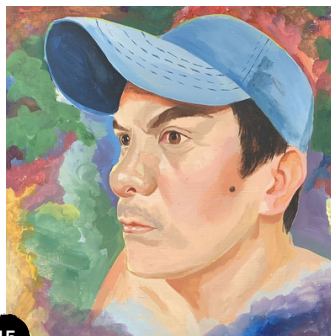
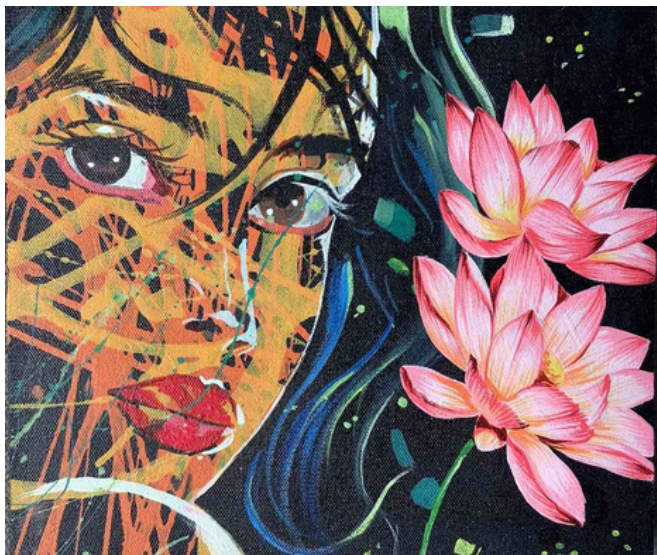
This artwork of a gold fish is a part of LJ's plate in school



But LJ, as a young artist, slowly is shying away from the shadows of the two great Babatuans. As a student of fine arts at the University of the East in Caloocan City, LJ has been developing her own style of art—soft, feminine, and cute. However, despite the “femininity” of her strokes, the young Babatuan lass is communicating well, to the public, through her art. And because of her ability, despite being a student, she is now working, side-by-side with her father, creating designs for high-end condos and big establishments in the metro and other parts of the country.

Moreover, her art reflects her goodness as a person and her spirit as an artist. The latter, you will be able to see through her works—calculated, realistic, and beautiful. Each brushstroke is meant to capture the very essence of her subjects—be it a person, an animal, a thing. There, you will see the influence of the older Babatuans; however, she managed to make the style her own.

As a critic and as a PR manager, this writer knows that LJ will reach the summit of her career in no time. All she needs is to continuously paint, choose her style, and stick to it. With her father’s guidance, as well as what she learns from art school, LJ will produce artworks which are not only enticing but truly valuable and meaningful.





Jayson Borlon

**Wielding His Artistic
Power to Success**



An award-winning young visual artist from Rizal, Jayson Borlon has been known for modern realism style. With a rich color palette and bold brushstrokes, Jayson has been able to capture the beauty and mood of his subjects.



Chasing Love

Be it animals or human figures, Jayson was able to wield his artistic prowess, and the results are always amazing. The tones, the shades, and the hues are well-placed, complementing the form and the texture of the subjects at hand; and not to mention his concepts and philosophy he incorporated with his paintings. Because of this, it is not unusual that he bagged the grand prize from the recently concluded 2022 YES! Painting Competition organized by the Provincial Government of Rizal, besting hundreds of young and professional artists from Antipolo City (the provincial capital) and 13 municipalities of the province.

Aside from his award-winning piece titled "Banyuhay" (in English, metamorphosis), his mother-and-child series is also an interesting find in the artistic arsenal of this young painter. Almost otherworldly, his contemporary take to the age-old subject gives it a new taste but retains the eternal message of the subject itself—there is nothing to compare to the strength and warmth of a mother's love towards her children.



Bigger than the Universe



Untitled 1

In mythologies, the Mother is considered as the protector and the source of life, as she has the power to conceive and give birth to another living being. Be it in the plant, animal, or insect world, the mother is the one that sustains the entire colony, herd, or group.

Meanwhile, Jayson also has a penchant for nature and underwater paintings. His koi and betta paintings also caught my interest as they symbolize wealth, health, and longevity, based on existing myths and other esoteric literature.

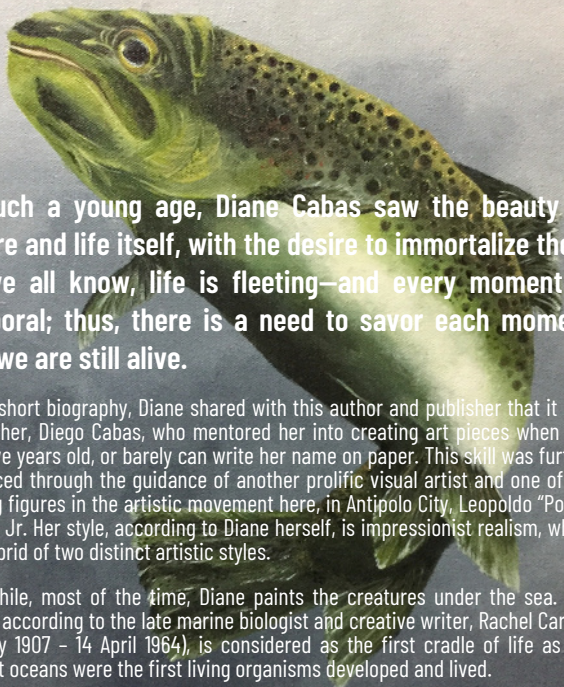
It has been an honor to write and to publish the works of this young man, and hopefully, Jayson will be able to conquer the art world and come out victorious as an artist.



PASTAZERIA

Est Vita Speciosa

LIFE, ITS BEAUTY, AND THE
PALETTE OF DIANE CABAS



At such a young age, Diane Cabas saw the beauty of nature and life itself, with the desire to immortalize them as we all know, life is fleeting—and every moment is temporal; thus, there is a need to savor each moment that we are still alive.

In her short biography, Diane shared with this author and publisher that it was her father, Diego Cabas, who mentored her into creating art pieces when she was five years old, or barely can write her name on paper. This skill was further enhanced through the guidance of another prolific visual artist and one of the leading figures in the artistic movement here, in Antipolo City, Leopoldo “Pol” A. Mesina Jr. Her style, according to Diane herself, is impressionist realism, which is a hybrid of two distinct artistic styles.

Meanwhile, most of the time, Diane paints the creatures under the sea. The ocean, according to the late marine biologist and creative writer, Rachel Carson (27 May 1907 – 14 April 1964), is considered as the first cradle of life as the ancient oceans were the first living organisms developed and lived.

There is also a strong connection between the land and the sea, and even the creatures living on the surface and underneath have that strong relationship, when it comes to the web of what we call life.

What happens to a diatom in the upper, sunlit strata of the sea may well determine what happens to a cod lying on a ledge of some rocky canyon a hundred fathoms below, or to a bed of multicolored, gorgeously plumed seaworms carpeting an underlying shoal. or to a prawn creeping over the soft ooze of the sea floor in the blackness of mile-deep water,” says Carson in her popular book, *The Sea Around US* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1951).



Even us human beings have a complex relationship with these large bodies of water. According to an educational essay published by Exploring our Fluid Earth (2000) by University of Hawaii in Manoa, it says: "Humans have a complex relationship with the ocean. The ocean affects every human life. It supplies freshwater and oxygen, moderates the climate, influences our weather, and affects human health. Humans rely on the ocean for food and transportation."



Unfortunately, the planet's oceans are now under threat because of pollution and abusive human activities such as ocean mining and overfishing.

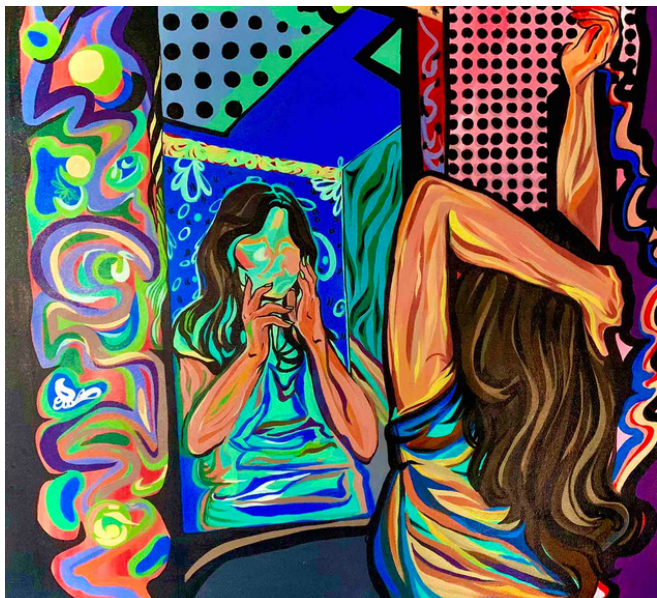
In her art, Diane has been able to explore—and exploit—the idea not only about the beauty of life, but also of nature and the need to capture each beautiful moment on a canvas. Thus, the result is a series of beautiful landscapes, underwater scenes, still-life, and of course, our beloved pets and other land creatures.

As she continues to mature as a visual artist, Diane also wants to explore other styles such as surrealism and abstractionism.

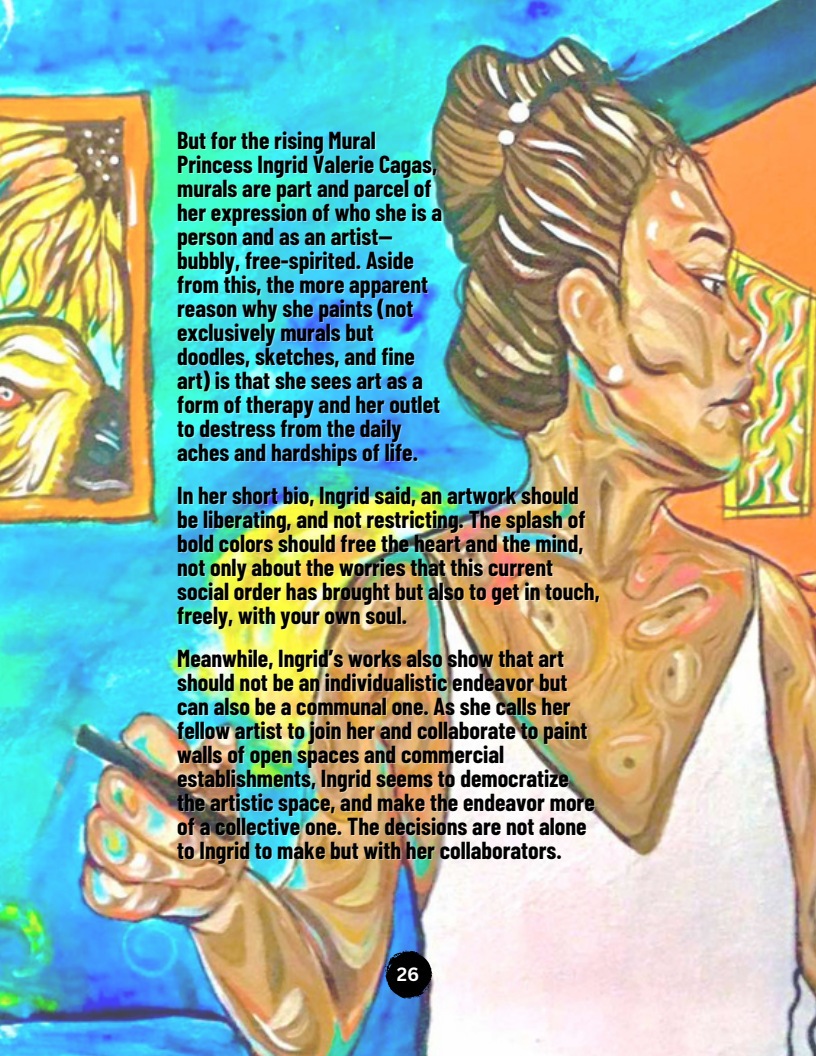


*Mural Princess Ingrid
Valerie Cagas*

From Street Walls to High Art



Murals can be considered as the oldest art forms, dating back 12,000 years ago when ancient people started painting on cave walls. As time passed by, the craft has long been polished and the famous muralists include the High Renaissance Masters namely Da Vinci, Michelangelo, and Raphael, just to name a few. Now, murals are considered part of the street art—graffiti and other paintings on dirty walls in the cities and suburbs.



But for the rising Mural Princess Ingrid Valerie Cagas, murals are part and parcel of her expression of who she is a person and as an artist—bubbly, free-spirited. Aside from this, the more apparent reason why she paints (not exclusively murals but doodles, sketches, and fine art) is that she sees art as a form of therapy and her outlet to destress from the daily aches and hardships of life.

In her short bio, Ingrid said, an artwork should be liberating, and not restricting. The splash of bold colors should free the heart and the mind, not only about the worries that this current social order has brought but also to get in touch, freely, with your own soul.

Meanwhile, Ingrid's works also show that art should not be an individualistic endeavor but can also be a communal one. As she calls her fellow artist to join her and collaborate to paint walls of open spaces and commercial establishments, Ingrid seems to democratize the artistic space, and make the endeavor more of a collective one. The decisions are not alone to Ingrid to make but with her collaborators.



On the other hand, her traditional artworks (done mostly on canvas, using acrylics), Ingrid seems to lean toward post-impressionism and becoming a distortionist when it comes to human figures. She also combines abstractionism and distorting when creating a piece, thus the result is an astonishing work of art.

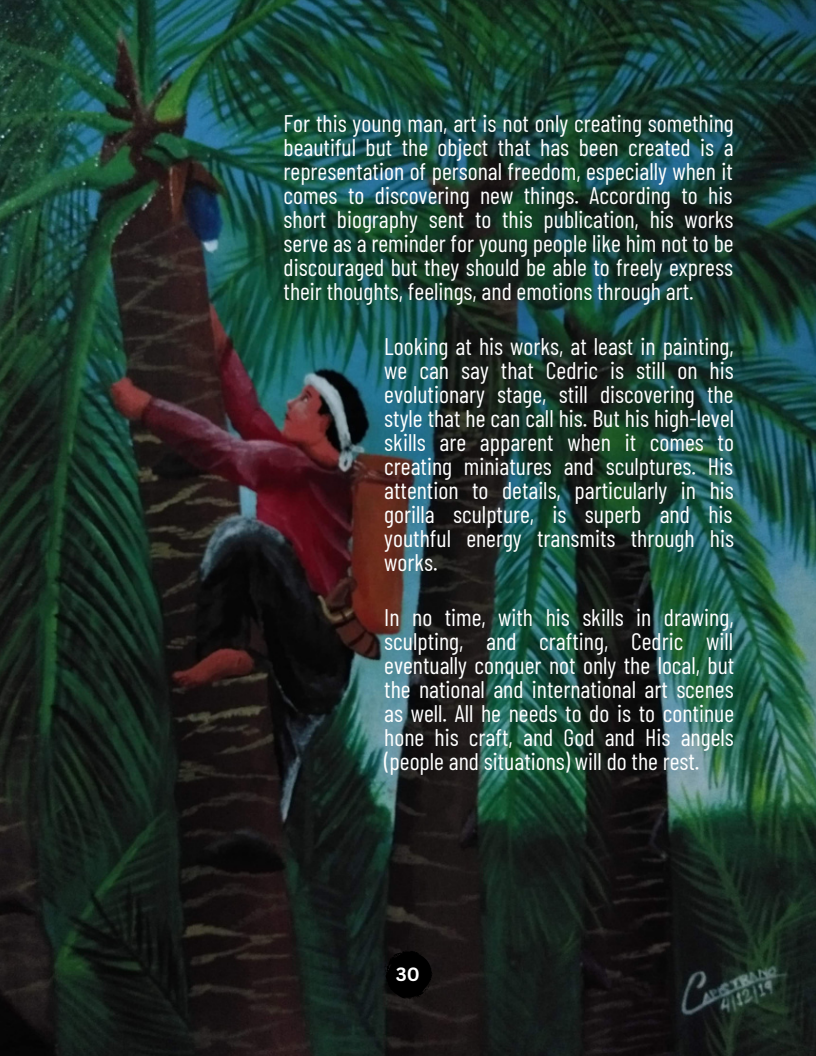
With her current momentum and her position as one of the youngest managers of an art gallery, Luna Galleria, it is not impossible that Ingrid Valerie Cagas will become a household name not only as a muralist but a serious fine artist, whose works are worthy to be collected and kept.

*Lines, Curves,
and Cedric
Capistrano*





Cedric Capistrano is a young visual artist (painter & sculptor) that belongs to BAGHID (Eastern Visayas Young Artists Association), who is now making his name in the local art field. His paintings and sculptures have been shown in different exhibitions and Cedric has been commissioned to create trophies out of bamboo in one of the local institutions in his beloved city, Calbayog, in Samar.

A painting of a young man with dark hair, wearing a red long-sleeved shirt and grey pants, climbing a large tree. He is looking upwards and reaching for a branch. The background is a lush green tropical forest with large palm leaves. The overall style is expressive and somewhat abstract, with visible brushstrokes and a vibrant color palette.

For this young man, art is not only creating something beautiful but the object that has been created is a representation of personal freedom, especially when it comes to discovering new things. According to his short biography sent to this publication, his works serve as a reminder for young people like him not to be discouraged but they should be able to freely express their thoughts, feelings, and emotions through art.

Looking at his works, at least in painting, we can say that Cedric is still on his evolutionary stage, still discovering the style that he can call his. But his high-level skills are apparent when it comes to creating miniatures and sculptures. His attention to details, particularly in his gorilla sculpture, is superb and his youthful energy transmits through his works.

In no time, with his skills in drawing, sculpting, and crafting, Cedric will eventually conquer not only the local, but the national and international art scenes as well. All he needs to do is to continue hone his craft, and God and His angels (people and situations) will do the rest.



Jessica Casaljay

**When art
is not only
a set
of
beautiful
images**





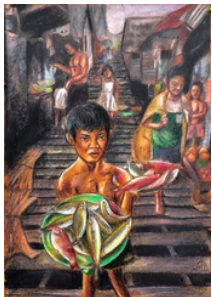
POS(T)ERS, 24" x 18", Mixed Media on Canvas, 2017

Jessica Casaljay is a young Samareña visual artist currently enrolled at the University of the Philippines-Diliman's College of Fine Arts (UP-CFA) as a Studio Arts major. She is also the president of BAGHID Eastern Visayas Young Visual Arts Association, founded by prolific artist, Aristole "Aris" Ventures.

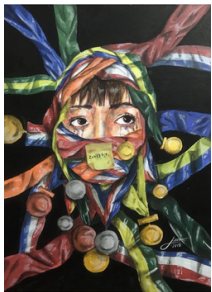


Sakatarungan, 24" x 18", Mixed Media on Canvas, 2019

Inclined to surrealism and realism, the series of artworks that she is currently producing reflects her worldview, not only as an artist but a part of a living and ever-evolving Filipino society. As the late National Artist for Film Catalino "Lino" Ortiz Brocka (03 April 1939 - 22 May 1991) said, "The filmmaker, like his fellow artists in different media, has now realized that the artist is also a public person. He does not work in isolation from society. Instead of working alone in his ivory tower he is a citizen of the slums, of the streets, of the battlefield if need be. The artist is always a participant. He tries to be true not only to his craft but also to himself. For it is the supreme duty of the artist to investigate the truth, no matter what forces attempt to hide it. And then to report it to the people, to confront them with it, like a whiplash that will cause wounds but will free the mind from the various fantasies and escapist fare that the Establishment pollutes our minds with."^{*}



In her art, Jessica participates in the struggles of her people by putting into the fore the issues and concerns that need to be addressed. She challenges the notion of “art for art’s sake,” which is the dominant idea in art and culture industry by painting not only the “beautiful” but the ugly truth can be seen in our society today—gagging the media that speaks of the truth; the proliferation of fake news peddled by trolls paid by corrupt politicians and their cohorts in business and commerce; the pressure of being the “genius” in the family and the grade hyperinflation even in the leading State University; social injustice and human rights; and the mental health issues plaguing the Filipino youth today, just to name a few.



And because of this, her works can be called radical, if not subversive as it confronts and fights the rotten status quo and criticizes the wrong and backward culture inside our social and political institutions—our families, government, churches, and the art and culture industries. It is also because of this that her works are disturbingly beautiful. The sometime uncomfortable images serve as a writing on the wall, telling us to change our ways or just perish as the current political, economic, and social systems are beginning to collapse.



On the other hand, her works are also symbols of light and hope even amid the darkest days that our country and society are going through. In this light, we can say that we need more young artists like Jessica Casaljay in our world today who does not cower in facing and the monsters that make our people suffer. And she does that only by painting and showing her works to the world.

Abstract Thoughts and the Art of Obien Clet Jr.

Obien Clet Jr., first and foremost, is a Baptist pastor, whose life has been devoted to serving his flock and managing the resources of his congregation. However, it was in the early 2000 that he got involved in art dealing through the help of some of his artist friends from Rizal Province. Ever since, art dealing has become his passion.

However, in 2021, something has changed. Obien tried his hands into painting, particularly creating abstract works using different techniques that he has learned online and through his friends.

It seems that the Lord has called him for another purpose—to create art to glorify His name, to inspire other people to try and learn something creative, and, to help his fellow artists through his income from dealing art and selling his own paintings.



According to Obien, before he drips paint onto immaculate white canvas, he utters a sincere prayer for the Holy Spirit to inspire him and to lead him into the right direction as his art is not only his but for other people (since he helps other artists in their craft, not only by helping them sell their works to clients but also through financial support for them to continue creating wonderful works of art). In this light, his abstracts became a vessel of blessings to others.

Meanwhile, his abstracts also prove wisdom as an artist. He constantly experiments, trying different ways to create artworks that satisfy his mind and soul. Obien shared to this author one time that he often consults other artist friends for the right color for—and even the correct orientation of—his paintings. This having said, his work has now become an indirect collaboration between him and his fellow artists.





Obien, on the other hand, is still learning the ropes of art creation, watching YouTube videos for techniques, and looking at other paintings for inspiration. As part of his learning, he even submitted a work for the prestigious GSIS National Painting Competition, just to experience how it feels to become a contender in a nationwide art competition.

In the meantime, Obien continues to work as an art dealer, as he continues to develop his talent in creating abstract art. Of course, he still teaches in Sunday School and preaches the Word of God.



“ According to Obien, before he drips paint onto immaculate white canvas, he utters a sincere prayer for the Holy Spirit to inspire him and to lead him into the right direction as his art is not only his but for other people (since he helps other artists in their craft, not only by helping them sell their works to clients but also through financial support for them to continue creating wonderful works of art). In this light, his abstracts became a vessel of blessings to others. ”

A portrait of a young woman with dark, shoulder-length hair and bangs, wearing a black and white horizontally striped t-shirt. She is smiling slightly and looking directly at the camera. The background is a blurred outdoor setting with blue and green tones.

Jae Zyril Contridas

PAINING HER WAY TO HER DREAMS

Despite her young age, Jae Zyril Contridas is now making a name of her own in the field of visual arts, particularly, painting.

Coming from a family of artists, Zyril has been into the art scene since 2018 where she joined the 14th Small Hands, Big Art Group Exhibition at Chef Jessie—a high-end restaurant in Rockwell City Mall in Makati. A very supportive father, it is Jerry Contridas, a prolific visual artist, who guides her when it comes to painting, teaching her all the things that she should know to create beautiful works of art.

Last year, she joined the roster of artists featured in the glossy bi-annual magazine for culture and the arts, The Muse. The Muse aims to showcase both professional and up-and-coming visual artists, and publish in-depth stories about Filipino culture, arts, and social history.

Zyril, now 15 as of this writing, is still learning the ropes of the trade and enhancing, further, her talents and skills as a visual artist. Using both the traditional (hand painting) and digital ways of creating art, Zyril has begun her deeper journey into the vast world of artistic creation, experimenting and learning more and more techniques on how to produce art pieces that have depth and meaning.

Meanwhile, Zyril is one of the youngest members of the Antipolo City-based art organization, ARTipolo Group, Inc., and her works are becoming staple in its group exhibits. In fact, she joined ARTIPARC: Shades, Shapes, and Stories last July 1 to 15, 2022 at the prestigious art exhibition venue, ARTablado in Robinsons Galleria in Quezon City.

The exhibit is for the benefit of scholars of PARC Foundation, a non-profit organization helping underprivileged children and youths to achieve their dream of becoming musicians, thespians, performers, and visual artists. Her piece, titled December Fifth, has become one of the collectors' favorites and has been sold recently.

On the other hand, as a part of Gen-Z, Zyril is into K-Pop, anime, and video games, which are part of her arsenal of inspiration when it comes to creating digital and traditional painting.

With her skills and right attitude, Jae Zyril Contridas will eventually become a household name when it comes to contemporary Filipino art.

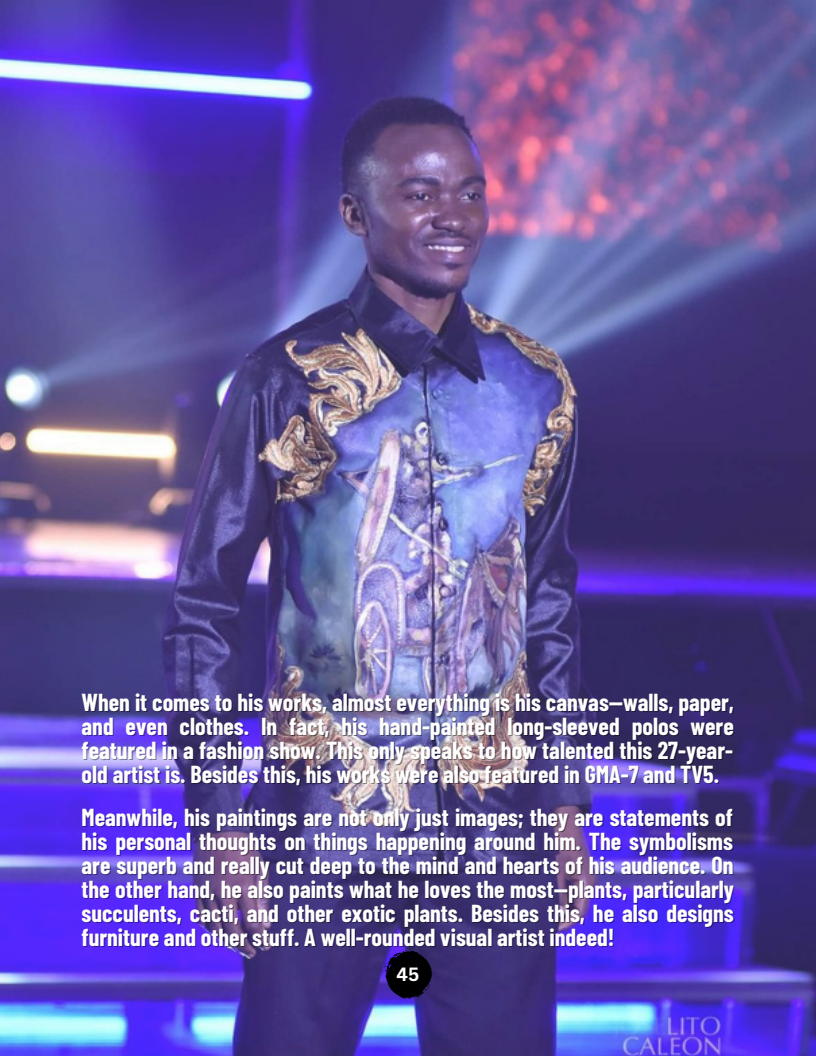




*Images,
Gardens,
& Joemarie
S. Cagas*

Another superb young visual artist joined the roster of the soon-to-be great painters, being featured here in Nouveau and his name is Joemarie S. Cagas.

Joemarie's works reflect not only beauty of nature and other things that he saw and experienced, but also his personal philosophy in life as an individual and as an artist—if you have dreams, persevere, work hard, learn the things that are needed to be learned, and most importantly, learn to get that work-life balance, and you will succeed.



When it comes to his works, almost everything is his canvas—walls, paper, and even clothes. In fact, his hand-painted long-sleeved polos were featured in a fashion show. This only speaks to how talented this 27-year-old artist is. Besides this, his works were also featured in GMA-7 and TV5.

Meanwhile, his paintings are not only just images; they are statements of his personal thoughts on things happening around him. The symbolisms are superb and really cut deep to the mind and hearts of his audience. On the other hand, he also paints what he loves the most—plants, particularly succulents, cacti, and other exotic plants. Besides this, he also designs furniture and other stuff. A well-rounded visual artist indeed!



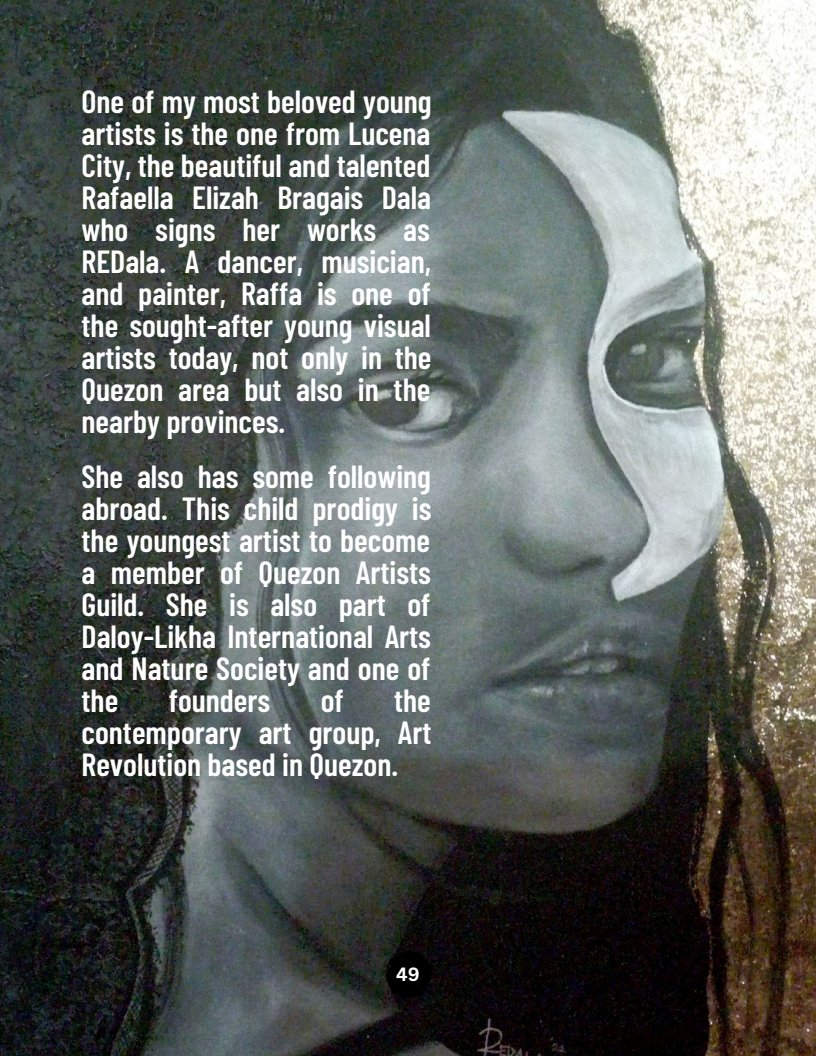
However, Joemarie is not only a painter and an auto-CAD operator; he is a landscaper and gardener, too. He specializes in indoor and outdoor ornamental plants, cacti, and succulents, and is considered as an expert in creating table pieces consisting of different species of plants and succulents, to beautify one's space. He is also into creating beautiful terrariums. He is the proud owner of Joem's Garden, which is in his hometown, Marikina City and his dish gardens have won awards. His landscaping services are also sought-after by different clients who dream of having a beautiful garden, even in just a small space.

With his set of skills and right attitude, it will not be surprising if Joemarie's works will also be featured abroad. And we cannot wait for that to happen.





*A star is born in Quezon
and that's Rafaella
Elizah B. Dala*



One of my most beloved young artists is the one from Lucena City, the beautiful and talented Rafaella Elizah Bragais Dala who signs her works as REDala. A dancer, musician, and painter, Raffa is one of the sought-after young visual artists today, not only in the Quezon area but also in the nearby provinces.

She also has some following abroad. This child prodigy is the youngest artist to become a member of Quezon Artists Guild. She is also part of Daloy-Likha International Arts and Nature Society and one of the founders of the contemporary art group, Art Revolution based in Quezon.



Focusing on human emotions and experiences, Raffa has been able to capture the specialness of us, as a species. If Darwin's evolutionary theory is to be believed, human beings are on the top of the evolutionary chain as we are capable of thinking and expressing our thoughts. While other creatures can express emotion and show certain levels of intelligence, human beings are capable of effectively showing these emotions and perfectly articulate them through movements and of course, speech. Even our silence can mean something, and the slight movement of our bodies can show our current mood.

In her art, Raffa has been able to capture all the things mentioned above, and to some extent, amplify them through her works. Some of her works, this young artist admits, are related to her own experiences as a growing child, as a young woman, and as an artist.

Aside from human beings, Raffa is also into other things that Gen-Z loves—roller-skating, TikTok videos, anime, and other things from pop culture. In fact, her painting of Crispin and Basilio, two of the side characters in the popular comic book by Budgette Tan and Kajo Badisimo, which has an animated series produced and distributed by Netflix, was well-received.

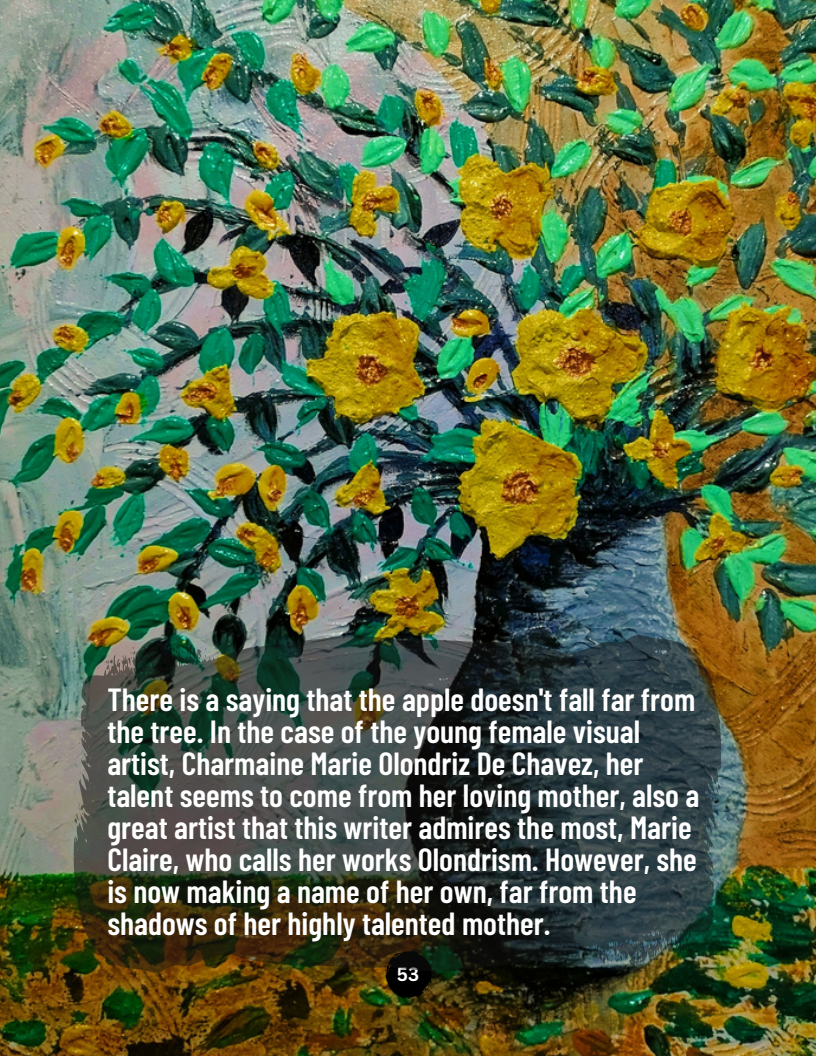
In addition to her paintings, Raffa is also prolific in creating wire sculptures, mostly trees erected on solid wood. In fact, she has been commissioned to do some of these for various clients inside and outside her hometown.

With her humility, truthfulness, and intelligence, Raffa will become one of the best visual artists of her generation. And this writer is wishing her well.





*Charmaine Marie
Olondriz De Chavez*
AN ARTIST IN FULL BLOOM



There is a saying that the apple doesn't fall far from the tree. In the case of the young female visual artist, Charmaine Marie Olondriz De Chavez, her talent seems to come from her loving mother, also a great artist that this writer admires the most, Marie Claire, who calls her works Olondrism. However, she is now making a name of her own, far from the shadows of her highly talented mother.



Her works are like post-impressionists—colorful almost bordering on abstraction. The brushstrokes are thick and prominent, almost impasto—which add to the depth and texture of the painting. The result is an impressive array of colors and clear depiction of the subject at-hand.

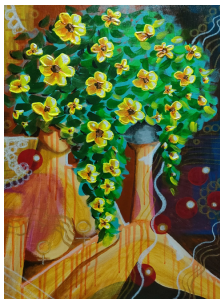
Meanwhile, Charmaine Marie also dabbles with abstract figurism and surrealism, with the hint of crude cubism and pointillism, at least in the background. It is a wise move for Charmaine Marie for she has been able to create an illusion of proximity when it comes to the main figure or subject. With that in mind, the imagery has become clearer as well as the intention, the moods and the emotions that the artist wanted to convey through her paintings.



In addition to the techniques that she employs in creating her works, as mentioned earlier, her color palette and application of these colors are impressive. The balance between shades and hues, the heaviness and lightness of brushstrokes, and the intensity of her passion as reflected on her works are the things that make her creations beautiful and full of meaning.



On the other hand, what is interesting with this young artist is that she is a Nutritionist and Dietician by training but now working in a local bank. Hopefully, we can see more of her works in the future, not in a group show but in a solo exhibit, perhaps?



Alecs' works are not only superb but superior in terms of depth and meaning. And as an artist, she is blossoming into a more mature, serious, and genuine one, and this critic cannot wait for what she has in store for us.

*As the Colors Speak for
Alessandra Denise "Alecs"
De Leon*

Alessandra Denise De Leon is a budding artist from Antipolo City and an active member of one of the leading artistic organizations in Rizal, ARTipolo Group, Inc.

As an artist, this critic can say that she is leaning towards realism or much more of a realistic minimalism, as she tends to focus on the main subject without bothering with an elaborate background. Alecs' (Alessandra's nickname) works are often direct as she sticks to draw or paint the things that are necessary to get her messages across, to all her audience. Be it loneliness, fear, pain, happiness, or self-indulgence, Alecs drew them without any hesitation, using the usual archetypes and the things or objects that can represent them.

However, because of the lack of solid or elaborate background for her drawings and paintings, Alecs has been criticized for “lacking imagination,” but this critic must disagree. Realistic Minimalism (or Realism Minimalism) requires imagination, too but without the extra baggage of the unnecessary details to make the work beautiful and “understandable.” This style requires a lot of discipline because the mind tends to wander, and as it wanders, it takes some things from reality—internal and external—that are not needed for the completion of an artwork. Philosophically speaking the works of Alecs want us to confront the truth—with all its beauty and ugliness—that is in front of us, without the need of any other coatings. It is what it is; and oftentimes, this is all we need.

Let us all realize that to savor life is to taste all its bittersweetness and endure the pain that it brings, as it “cracks us open,” when we understand the necessity of pain and suffering. As Kahlil Gibran wrote in his famous book, *The Prophet*: “Your pain is the breaking of the shell that encloses your understanding.”

On the other hand, when painting, Alecs uses the brightest colors as it gives her peace (as she describes it in her short bio, “it soothes [her] heart”) and it enables her to connect more to the world and to her subjects herself. Meanwhile, when it comes to subjects, Alecs is fond of people and animals. The latter, she is particular in painting dogs as her short bio says, “Their eyes are always telling me something, so I wanted to capture it in my art.” She uses traditional (brush and paint) and modern (digital) means in paintings.

Krusty (Pixel Art)



Victorian House
(Watercolor on Paper)



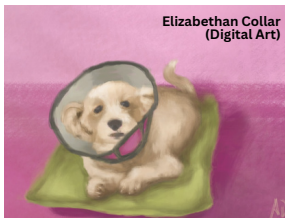
To end this essay (for a while), Alecs' works are not only superb but superior in terms of depth and meaning. And as an artist, she is blossoming into a more mature, serious, and genuine one, and this critic cannot wait for what she has in store for us.



Kalinga (Oil Paint)



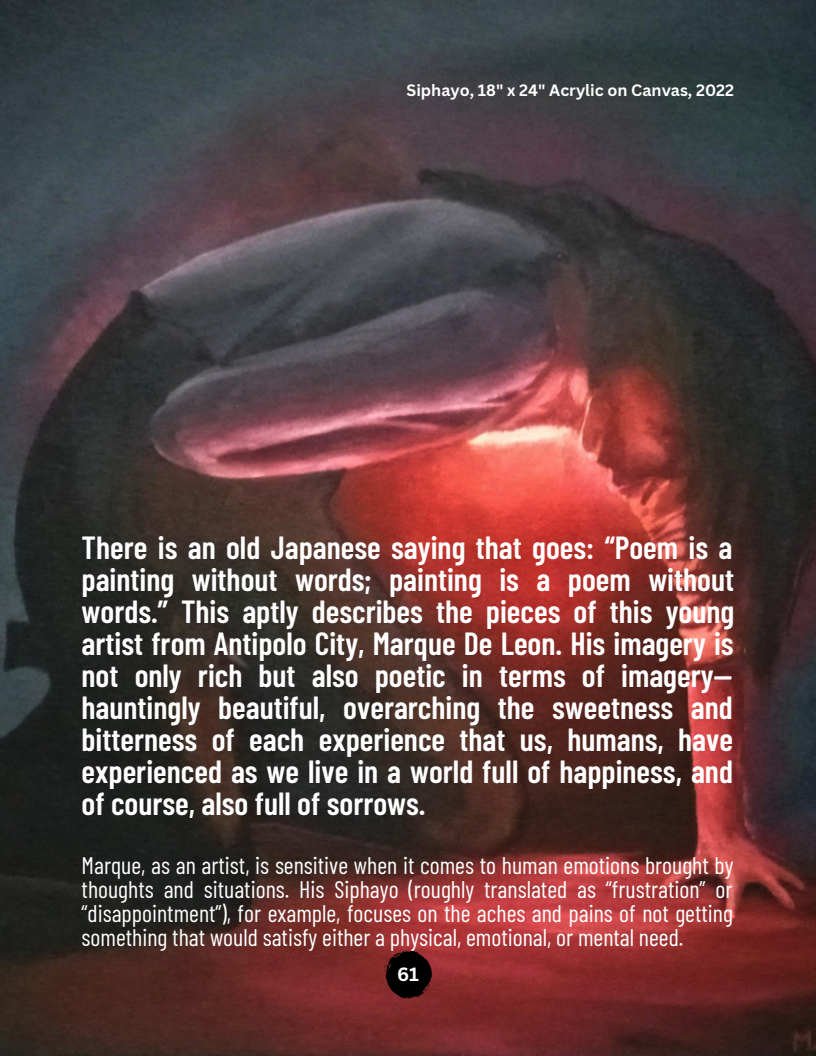
Matty (Digital Art)



Elizabethan Collar
(Digital Art)

*Marque De Leon's
Poetics without Words.*





There is an old Japanese saying that goes: “Poem is a painting without words; painting is a poem without words.” This aptly describes the pieces of this young artist from Antipolo City, Marque De Leon. His imagery is not only rich but also poetic in terms of imagery—hauntingly beautiful, overarching the sweetness and bitterness of each experience that us, humans, have experienced as we live in a world full of happiness, and of course, also full of sorrows.

Marque, as an artist, is sensitive when it comes to human emotions brought by thoughts and situations. His *Siphayo* (roughly translated as “frustration” or “disappointment”), for example, focuses on the aches and pains of not getting something that would satisfy either a physical, emotional, or mental need.

Marque, as an artist, is sensitive when it comes to human emotions brought by thoughts and situations. His Siphayo (roughly translated as "frustration" or "disappointment"), for example, focuses on the aches and pains of not getting something that would satisfy either a physical, emotional, or mental need.

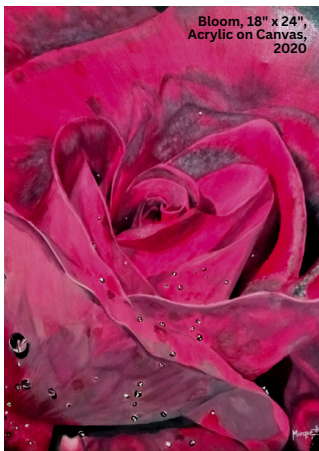
It is commonplace for all of us to get frustrated or suffer because of the things that we failed to achieve, do, or get. It is because we, as human beings, have limitations. Our capabilities and abilities have a certain "ceiling" or "limit," just like a vessel or container. You cannot continue filling up a glass that is already full, or it will overflow.

His Kargo (it can be translated as load or burden, in English), on the other hand, celebrates the dignity of pure and honest-to-goodness labor. In the Bible, when our "ancestors" Adam and Eve were driven out from the Garden of Eden, God Yahweh, has mentioned this both as a blessing and a curse: "Through the sweat of thy brow thou shalt eat bread." God himself taught man how to work so that they can eat. Besides, it was through labor that all civilizations in the world have risen and developed. Without labor, there will be no food, no shelter, no nothing.

We can discuss at length the other works that he has submitted for this book, but it will take all the space available. Nevertheless, as we can see with his skill, passion, and of course, his deep understanding about human emotions, conditions, etc., Marque De Leon will soon conquer the art world with his poetics, but without words.



Kargo, 16" x 20". Acrylic on Canvas, 2020



**Bloom, 18" x 24",
Acrylic on Canvas,
2020**



Pahimakas, 18" x 24", Acrylic on Canvas, 2022



**Baliktanaw, Armedia
Tender, A4
Watercolor paper,
2022**



Arvin de los Santos:

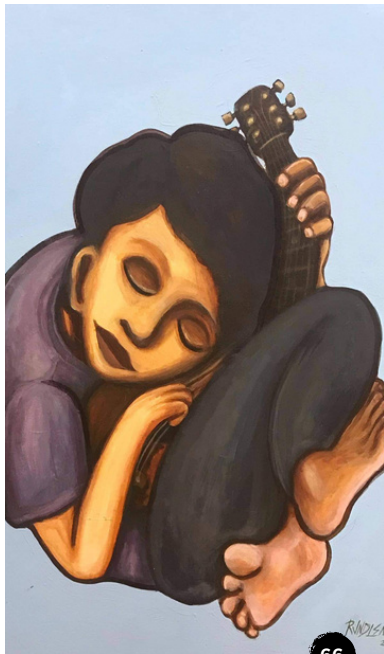
MULTIMEDIA ARTIST IN-THE-MAKING

Another promising young artist from Eastern Visayas is Arvin de los Santos. A contemporary visual artist, his works range from murals to realistic renditions of his subjects.



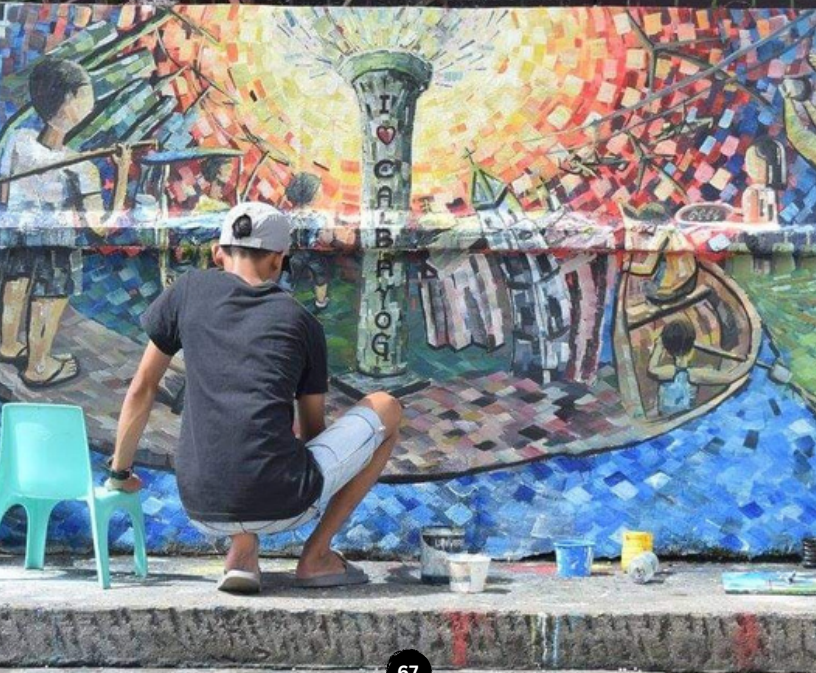
But he is not only into painting. Arvin shares in his short bio sent for Nouveau, he is also into photography, videography, and video editing.

All of which is to his advantage since there is a need for these skills especially if you are selling your artworks online and wanting to get the attention not only of your prospective buyers but also of art galleries and museums that might express interest in having your works exhibited in their venue.



Arvin's current artistic style was reminiscent of Victorio Edades and Malang Santos, wherein distortion is the primary characteristic of the created piece, emphasizing the importance of form. Picasso, one of the founders of the Cubism Movement in the early 20th century also employed certain degrees of distortion. As Arvin describes his work: focused on vector-based, distorted shape, limited color palette, and outlined images.

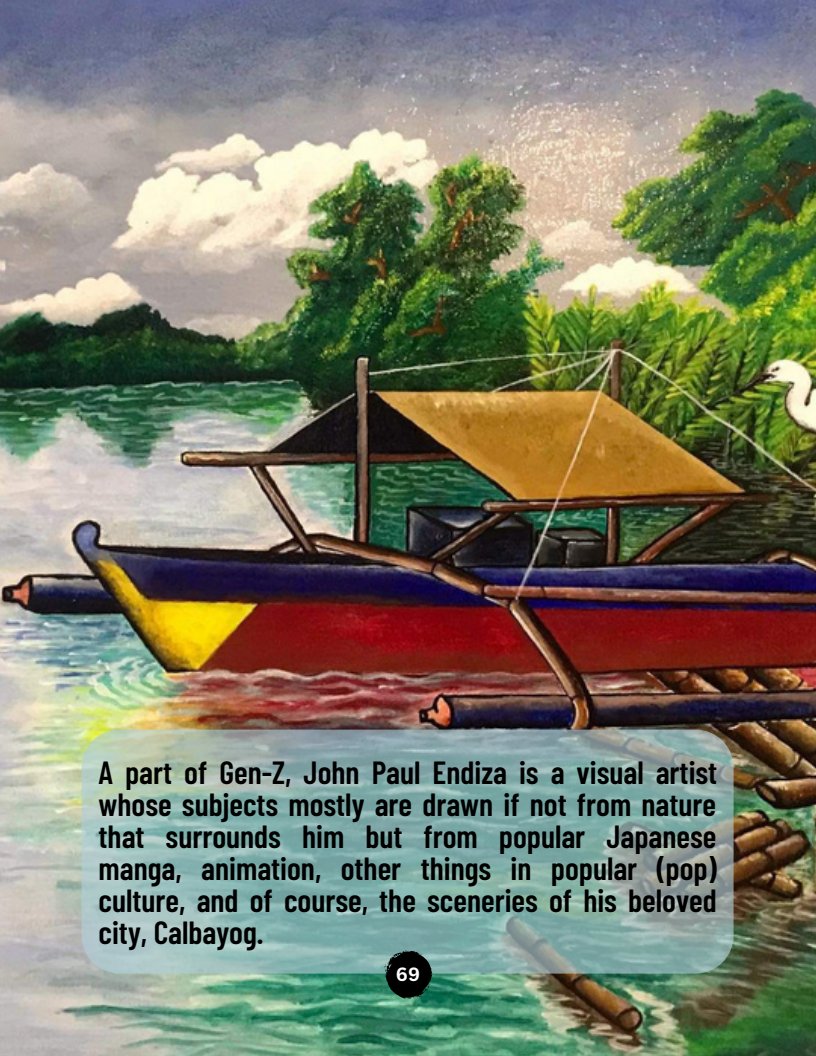
His inspiration in the field of art is Picasso, van Gogh and Dali—all of which are considered as prodigies and trailblazers in visual arts. Admittedly a shy person, Arvin uses art to express his thoughts and feelings. Meanwhile, Arvin is an active member of BAGHID and Calbayog Visual Artist Circle.



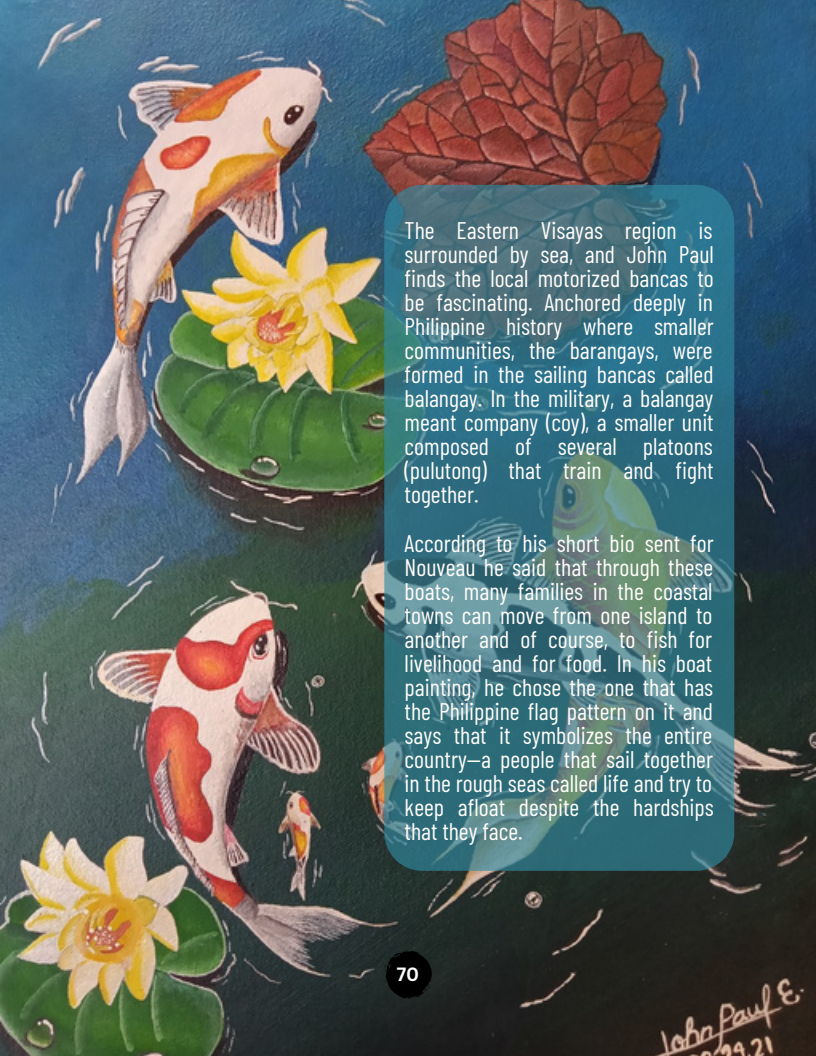
A young man with dark hair, wearing sunglasses and a white patterned button-down shirt, stands on a boat. He is looking towards the camera with a slight smile. The background shows the boat's interior and some equipment.

John Paul Endiza

**SAILING HIS
WAY
TO ARTISTIC
SUCCESS**



A part of Gen-Z, John Paul Endiza is a visual artist whose subjects mostly are drawn if not from nature that surrounds him but from popular Japanese manga, animation, other things in popular (pop) culture, and of course, the sceneries of his beloved city, Calbayog.



The Eastern Visayas region is surrounded by sea, and John Paul finds the local motorized bancas to be fascinating. Anchored deeply in Philippine history where smaller communities, the barangays, were formed in the sailing bancas called balangay. In the military, a balangay meant company (coy), a smaller unit composed of several platoons (pulutong) that train and fight together.

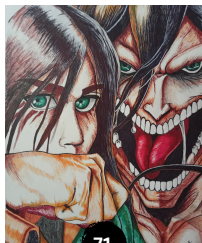
According to his short bio sent for Nouveau he said that through these boats, many families in the coastal towns can move from one island to another and of course, to fish for livelihood and for food. In his boat painting, he chose the one that has the Philippine flag pattern on it and says that it symbolizes the entire country—a people that sail together in the rough seas called life and try to keep afloat despite the hardships that they face.

As a HUMSS (Humanities and Social Sciences) track student, focusing on Art and Design, during high school at the Calbayog Arts and Design School of Eastern Visayas, the only art and design high school in Region VIII, he used to draw using oil pastel as he competes for poster-making contests when he was in the 10th grade. He is also into graphite pencil, drawing anime (characters from Japanese cartoon series and movies) and portraits. But during his senior high school, he shifted to acrylics, with animals as his main subjects.



John Paul said that the only setback for him as a young artist is the cost of art materials, most of which are truly expensive. However, this does not hinder this young artist from Calbayog City to push through and fulfill his dream of becoming a popular artist someday by finding innovative ways to draw and paint.

We truly hope that someday, this author and publisher can also gather enough funds to support young artists like John Paul. But for now, it is through this book, we believe that we can help these kids for their talents in the visual arts be recognized by the international audience.



A young man with dark hair, wearing a white t-shirt and a dark vest, is shown in profile, looking upwards and to the right. The background is dark with a bright, glowing light source at the top center, creating a bokeh effect. The overall mood is contemplative and artistic.

*The Colorful and
Fantastic Art
of Dominic Fabio*

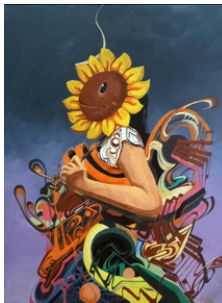


Dominic Fabio belongs to the young brood of artists that has strong inclination toward abstract. It is not because it is easy to make but this movement brings more freedom to the artist to express himself without the intensive use of figures. But this does not necessarily mean that he is not capable of creating figurative art. In fact, he can—both in realistic and cubistic styles.



In his paintings, Dominic uses repetitive shapes and lines as the baseline of his works. With his rich color palette, this young artist from ARTipolo Group, Inc. creates interesting abstracts, which you can consider otherworldly, if not, part of the subconscious, akin to the works of surrealists and Dadaists.

Surrealism and Dadaism are both artistic movements that have defiled the notion of what is beautiful. Most of the works done by surrealists and Dadaists are mainly influenced by the subconscious, thus the heavy use of archetypes or symbols in their paintings.



On the other hand, he can also produce large artworks that consist of different but interrelated subjects, like just different celebrations and scenic spots from the entire Rizal Province. Hopefully, with proper guidance and a lot of discipline and push, Dominic will reach the peak of his career as a visual artist.



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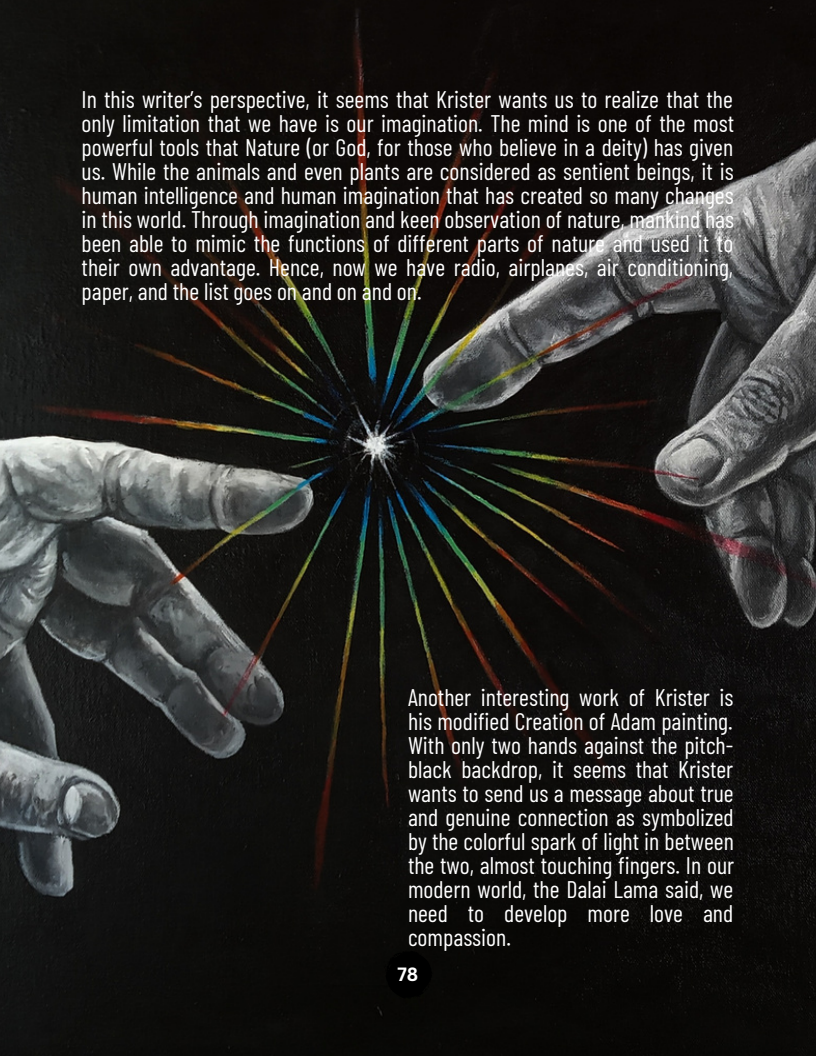


*There is wisdom in
Krister Isip's Art*



The award-winning young artist from Antipolo City is Krister Isip whose works are both traditional and digital. He usually focuses on the things that are natural, sacred, mundane, mysterious, personal, and impersonal.

As an artist, Krister has a strong command when it comes to his color palette. Thus, the results are fascinating—realistic with the touch of magical realism. One of the works that caught my attention, aside from the painting of Ina (Our Lady of Peace and Good Voyage, to whom this writer is a devotee since he was 10 years old), is his surreal painting of a brain wrapped in a balloon and anchored using a string, to the big toe of the left foot. Both feet are severed but standing. Beside the feet is a dried leaf.

A detailed painting of two hands, one on the left and one on the right, reaching towards each other. The hands are rendered in a realistic style with visible skin texture and shading. Between the two hands, a bright, multi-colored spark of light is depicted, from which numerous thin, colorful rays (red, orange, yellow, green, blue, purple) radiate outwards, creating a starburst effect against a dark background. The overall composition is centered and symmetrical, emphasizing the connection between the two hands.

In this writer's perspective, it seems that Krister wants us to realize that the only limitation that we have is our imagination. The mind is one of the most powerful tools that Nature (or God, for those who believe in a deity) has given us. While the animals and even plants are considered as sentient beings, it is human intelligence and human imagination that has created so many changes in this world. Through imagination and keen observation of nature, mankind has been able to mimic the functions of different parts of nature and used it to their own advantage. Hence, now we have radio, airplanes, air conditioning, paper, and the list goes on and on and on.

Another interesting work of Krister is his modified Creation of Adam painting. With only two hands against the pitch-black backdrop, it seems that Krister wants to send us a message about true and genuine connection as symbolized by the colorful spark of light in between the two, almost touching fingers. In our modern world, the Dalai Lama said, we need to develop more love and compassion.



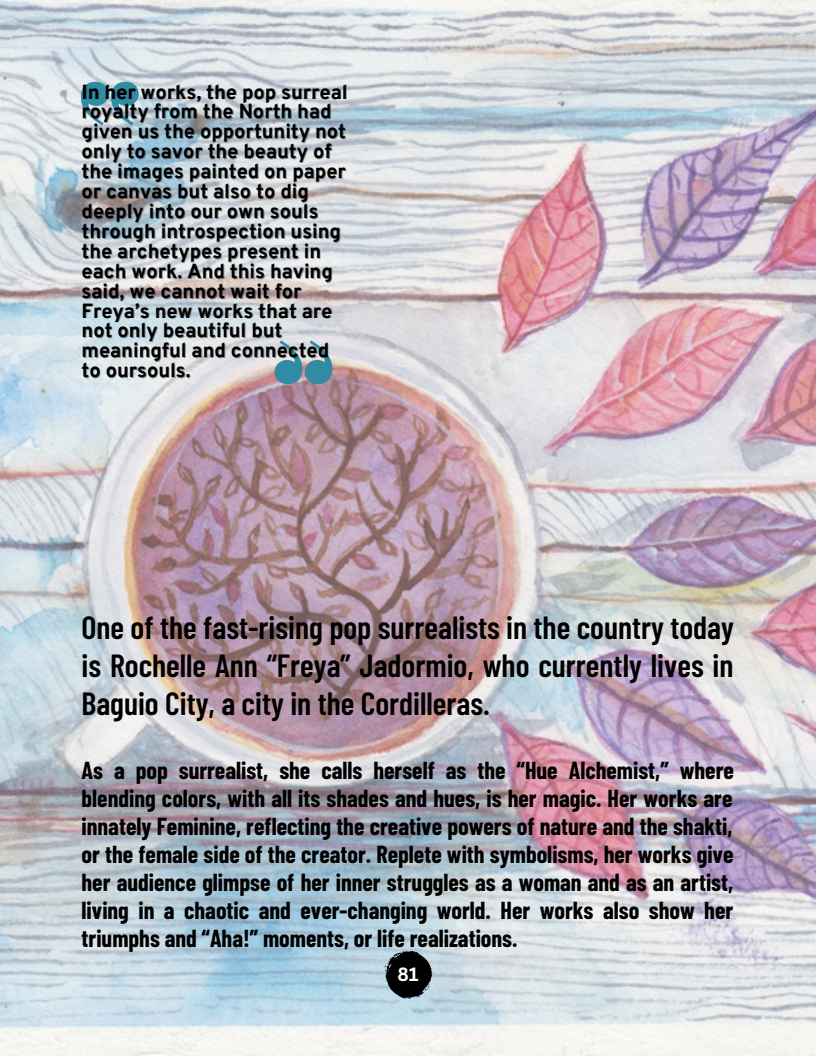
As an artist, Krister Isip is conscious not only about aesthetics but also to give his works meanings, meanings that give his works more cultural and aesthetic value. With his talent and skills, without a doubt, he will become one of the sought-after visual artists of his generation in the future.



Crowning the Pop Surreal Princess

Rochelle Ann "Freya"

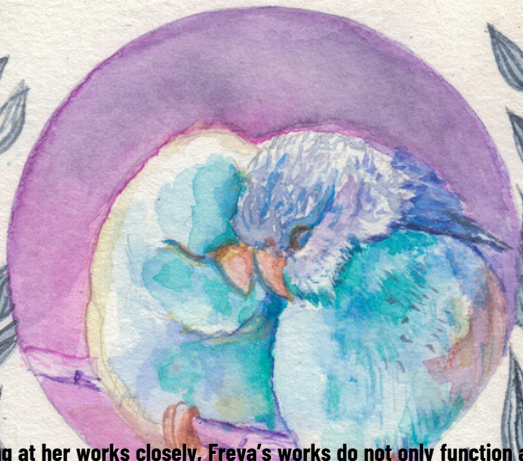
Jadormio



In her works, the pop surreal royalty from the North had given us the opportunity not only to savor the beauty of the images painted on paper or canvas but also to dig deeply into our own souls through introspection using the archetypes present in each work. And this having said, we cannot wait for Freya's new works that are not only beautiful but meaningful and connected to oursouls.

One of the fast-rising pop surrealists in the country today is Rochelle Ann "Freya" Jadormio, who currently lives in Baguio City, a city in the Cordilleras.

As a pop surrealist, she calls herself as the "Hue Alchemist," where blending colors, with all its shades and hues, is her magic. Her works are innately Feminine, reflecting the creative powers of nature and the shakti, or the female side of the creator. Replete with symbolisms, her works give her audience glimpse of her inner struggles as a woman and as an artist, living in a chaotic and ever-changing world. Her works also show her triumphs and "Aha!" moments, or life realizations.



Looking at her works closely, Freya's works do not only function as a tool of self-expression but a repository of wisdom that is coming from the very bottom of her artistic soul. This wisdom of the soul of the Hue Alchemist, represented by the dark and light archetypes present in her works, both old and new, invites all of us to reflect on our own Light and Shadow, and try to strike a balance between them for us to find inner peace, wisdom, and courage so that we can live a happier and more fulfilling life here on earth, notwithstanding the chaos and difficulties that surround us.

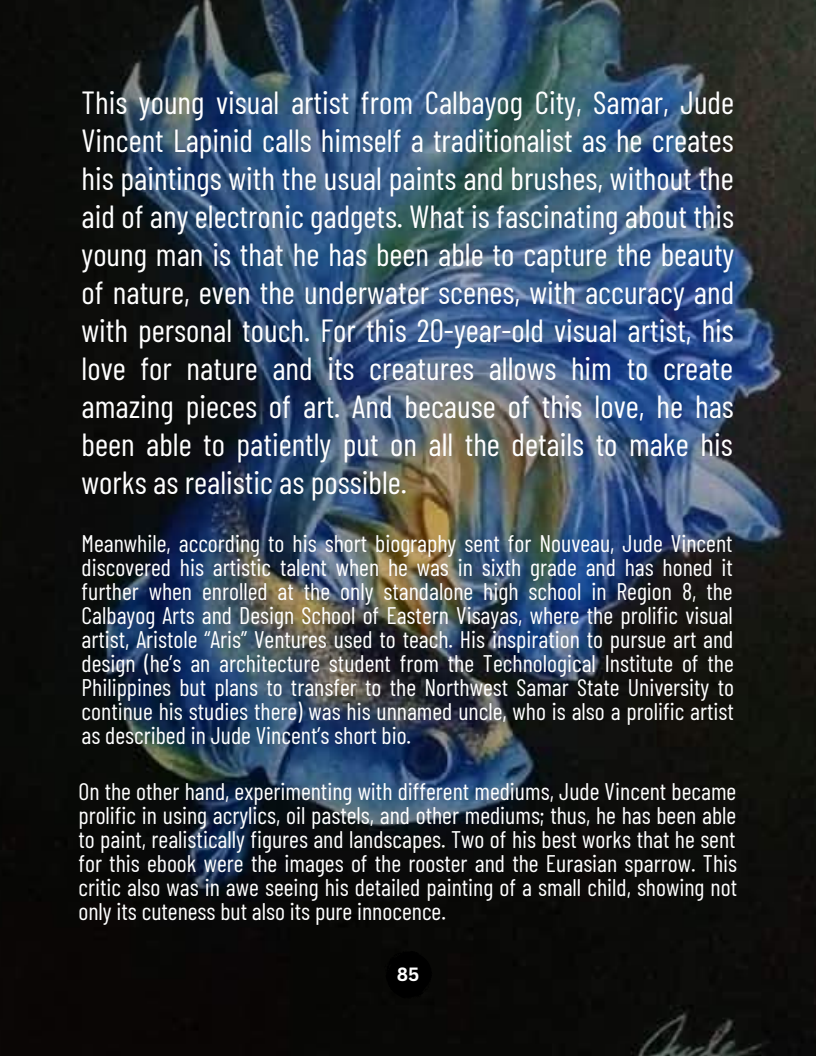
There is no exaggeration in the statement above, in connection to Freya's works, as archetypes truly reflect the power of what Austrian psychoanalyst and psychiatrist C. G. Jung calls the "unconscious," or the secret mind that affect our everyday decisions and actions in the waking life. According to Jung's theory, the unconscious is the repository of "repressed memories specific to individuals and ancestral past." These repressed memories have direct effect to our personality and the way that we view and do things. Because of this, we need to heal those repressed and bruised memories for us to move forward and to understand more of ourselves.

In her works, the pop surreal royalty from the North had given us the opportunity not only to savor the beauty of the images painted on paper or canvas but also to dig deeply into our own souls through introspection using the archetypes present in each work. And this having said, we cannot wait for Freya's new works, that are not only beautiful but meaningful and connected to our souls.



A young man with dark hair, wearing a white long-sleeved button-down shirt and a purple and white patterned headscarf, stands outdoors. He is looking directly at the camera with a neutral expression. His right hand is raised to his head, adjusting the scarf. The background is a blurred outdoor setting with trees and a wooden structure. A semi-transparent dark grey rounded rectangle is overlaid on the lower half of the image, containing white cursive text.

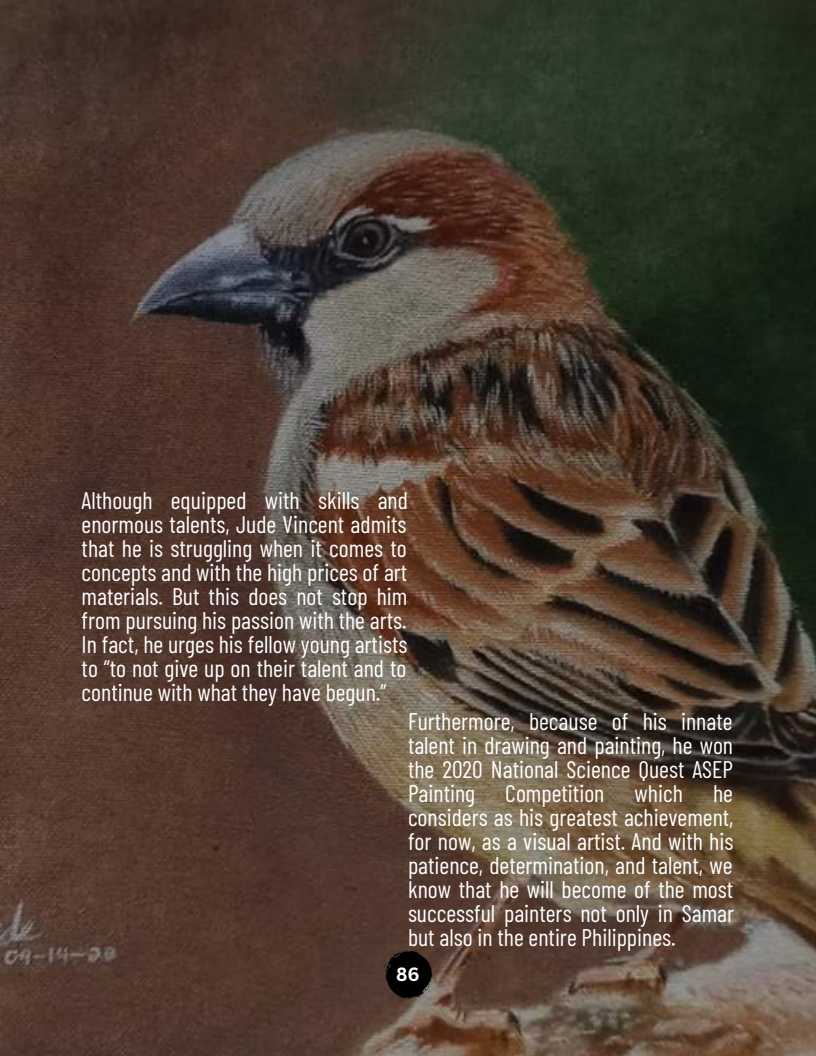
*Love for art and nature,
and the creation of Jude
Vincent Lapinid*



This young visual artist from Calbayog City, Samar, Jude Vincent Lapinid calls himself a traditionalist as he creates his paintings with the usual paints and brushes, without the aid of any electronic gadgets. What is fascinating about this young man is that he has been able to capture the beauty of nature, even the underwater scenes, with accuracy and with personal touch. For this 20-year-old visual artist, his love for nature and its creatures allows him to create amazing pieces of art. And because of this love, he has been able to patiently put on all the details to make his works as realistic as possible.

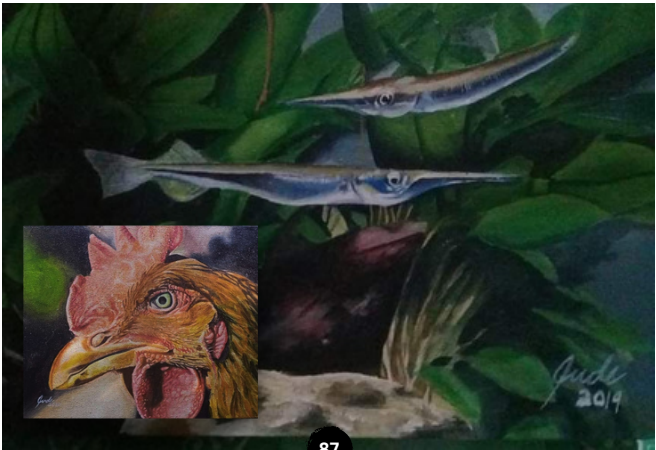
Meanwhile, according to his short biography sent for Nouveau, Jude Vincent discovered his artistic talent when he was in sixth grade and has honed it further when enrolled at the only standalone high school in Region 8, the Calbayog Arts and Design School of Eastern Visayas, where the prolific visual artist, Aristole "Aris" Ventures used to teach. His inspiration to pursue art and design (he's an architecture student from the Technological Institute of the Philippines but plans to transfer to the Northwest Samar State University to continue his studies there) was his unnamed uncle, who is also a prolific artist as described in Jude Vincent's short bio.

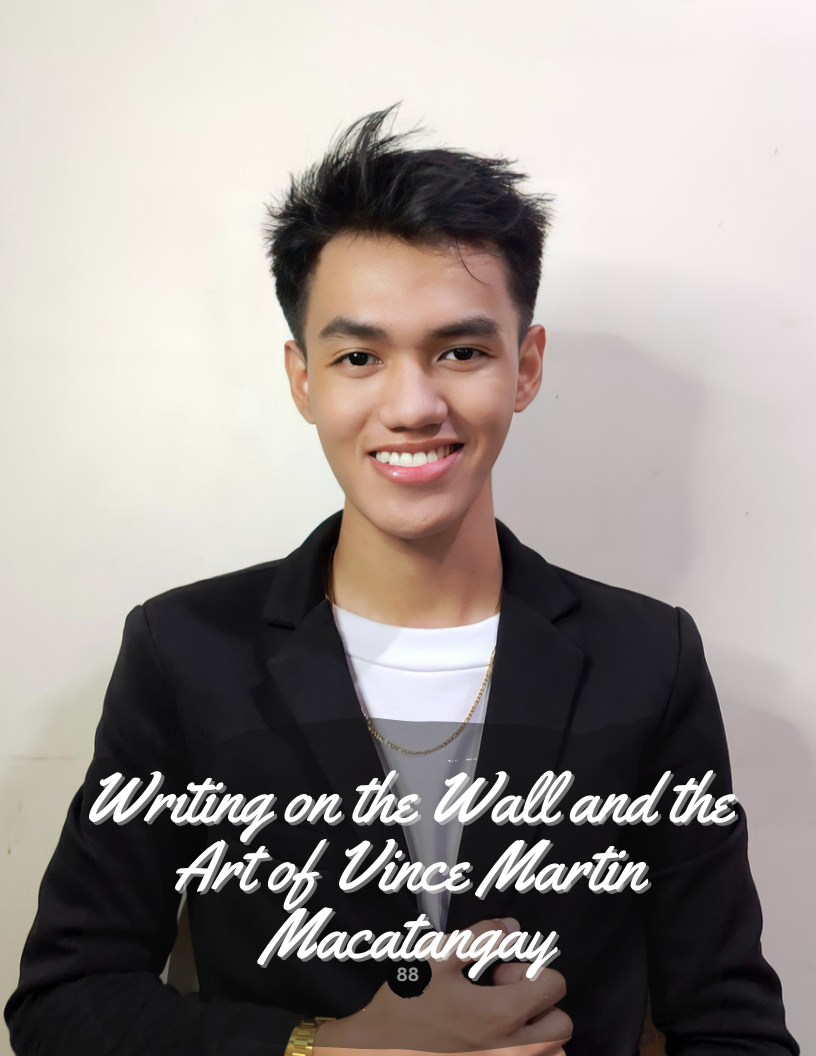
On the other hand, experimenting with different mediums, Jude Vincent became prolific in using acrylics, oil pastels, and other mediums; thus, he has been able to paint, realistically figures and landscapes. Two of his best works that he sent for this ebook were the images of the rooster and the Eurasian sparrow. This critic also was in awe seeing his detailed painting of a small child, showing not only its cuteness but also its pure innocence.




Although equipped with skills and enormous talents, Jude Vincent admits that he is struggling when it comes to concepts and with the high prices of art materials. But this does not stop him from pursuing his passion with the arts. In fact, he urges his fellow young artists to “to not give up on their talent and to continue with what they have begun.”

Furthermore, because of his innate talent in drawing and painting, he won the 2020 National Science Quest ASEP Painting Competition which he considers as his greatest achievement, for now, as a visual artist. And with his patience, determination, and talent, we know that he will become of the most successful painters not only in Samar but also in the entire Philippines.





*Writing on the Wall and the
Art of Vince Martin
Macatangay*



Myriad
of Enchanted
Rooms
Acrylic
on Canvas
36x48in
2022

An award-winning young visual artist from Padre Garcia town in Batangas, Vince Martin Macatangay is considered as one of the leading young social realists in the country today who uses his canvas to make strong sociopolitical and sociocultural criticisms.

With the use of familiar archetypes or symbols, Vince has been able to create a web of stories with sociopolitical and sociocultural contexts, expressing his opinion on certain issues like morality, corruption, religion, the Covid-19 pandemic, and lately, about mental health particularly anxiety and depression, which affect more and more Filipino youth today.



It seems that his works are more than paintings but the proverbial writing on the wall that constantly reminds us about the repercussions of our thoughts and feelings when put into concrete actions. Just like a small pebble that makes multiple ripples when thrown into the water, our actions—specifically the negative ones—no matter how small it is, has serious effects on our society. As the old Tagalog saying goes: “Ang sakit ng kalingkingan ay dama ng buong katawan” (The aching pinky can affect the whole body).



Meanwhile, when it comes to style, Vince is now slowly shying away from his old artistic style—modified cubism and mannerism. Now, as mentioned earlier, he is into a more serious realism, with some hints of surrealism. While the introspection is always there, his imagery is now far from mere pondering over a situation; it is now calling everyone into action. This shows the maturity not only in terms of style but also the philosophy behind his art.



One should note that the world cannot be changed by mere thoughts or feelings. As German philosopher and revolutionary Karl Marx says, “The philosophers have hitherto only interpreted the world in various ways. The point, however, is to change it.”

Genesis I, II, & III, Acrylic on Canvas, 12" x 12", 2022

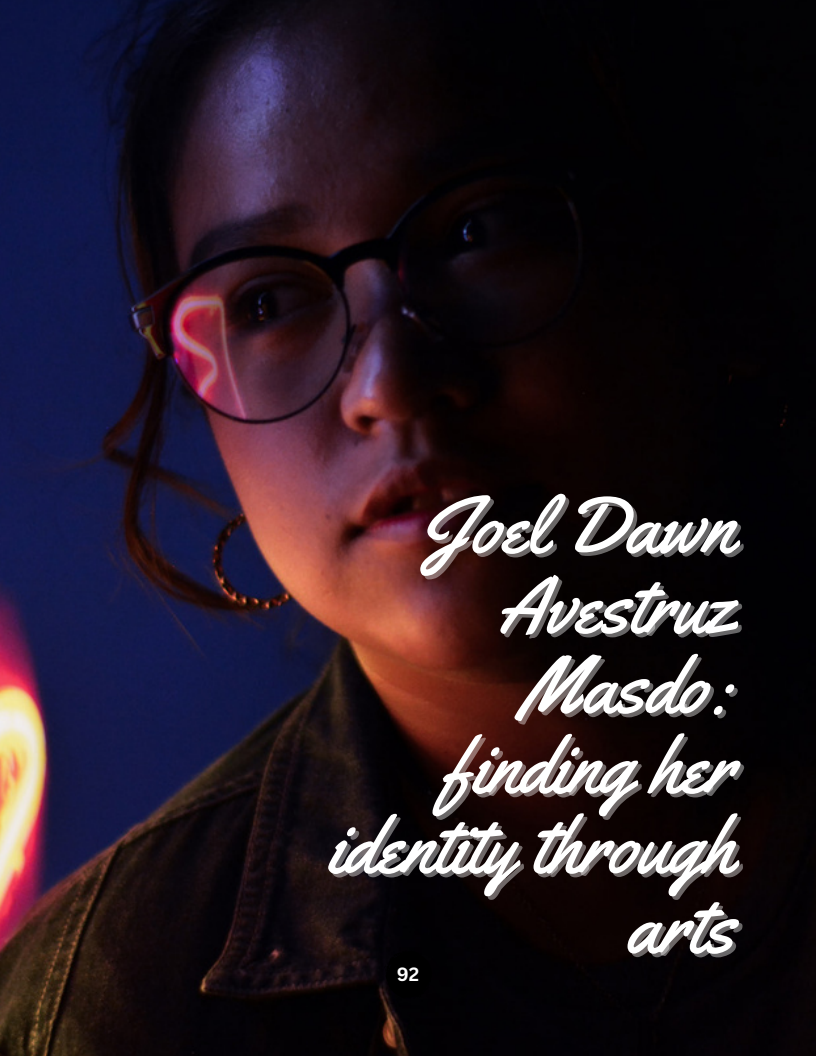


Top: Tricking Pleasure, Acrylic on Canvas, 24" x 36", 2022; Bottom: Passione Instabile, Acrylic on Canvas, 36" x 48", 2022

But contrary to the materialist belief of Marx, the realism of Vince Martin Macatangay is anchored, perhaps, in Christian humanist and metaphysical perspective as shown by some of the archetypes that the artist used in creating his imagery. For him, the world can only be changed by a series of positive actions. When we say positive, an action must always be guided by the firm grasp of Christian teachings particularly on the issue of morality.

Genuine change, according to Christian doctrines, can only be obtained if we put our trust in God and move away from our sinful deeds. The transformation will be gradual but noticeable. And once a certain level of positive change was obtained, especially communally, then a grander change will occur, and everything will be restored into its proper order.

In the meantime, the journey of Vince Martin Macatangay as an artist has already begun. And we know that this artist from Padre Garcia, Batangas will continue to surprise us with his more meaningful work.




*Joel Dawn
Avestruz
Masdo:
finding her
identity through
arts*

According to English tutor and playgroup facilitator, Joel Dawn Avestruz Masdo, it was her mother that inspired her to create works of art. With the support from her loving parents, Joel and Donna, she has been able to enroll at the only art high school in Eastern Visayas, Calbayog Arts and Design School of Eastern Visayas and further honed her skills as a traditional (paint and brush) and digital artist.

During her high school, she met the founder of BAGHID, the prolific artist Aris Ventures and Noel Sagayap, another prolific artist from the region. She has been able to join artistic collaborations through BAGHID just like what they did with ISLA and ARTipolo Group, Inc.

Because of her innate artistic talent, despite her age, Joel Dawn has started to accept commissions— digital portraits, logo designs, murals, miniatures, and other paintings on canvas. And according to her short bio sent to this critic—art has expanded her world, and she also gained a lot of meaningful life experiences as she continued to interact with different people in the field.





When she graduated high school and entered Northwest Samar State University to study Secondary Education majoring in the English Language, she thought that her artistic career will be put on the sidelines as she needs to focus on her academics. Nevertheless, as she gets accustomed to college life and her schedules are settled, she began doing art again. In fact, she became part of the official news organ of the University, *The Courier*, working as a digital cartoonist, creating editorial cartoons and comic strips for the publication. She also had a chance to join the National Campus Press Olympiad Ph competition in 2020, during her sophomore year, in Editorial Cartooning (Digital) category and placed 6th, besting different universities all over the Philippines. Her team also won 3rd place in the Social Media Publishing category from the same competition. And to her surprise, she was also conferred by her university with the Senior Cartoonist award during their recognition rites.



Artworks: 1. Tabu (Acrylic on Canvas), 2019; Philsibeth (Digital Art, Autodesk Sketchpad x Finger), 2021; Ponyo (Digital Art, Autodesk Sketchpad X Finger), 2021; and Go with the Flow, Acrylic on Canvas, 2022

When it comes to style, Joel Dawn can be considered as a realist and a magical realist, too. Her primary goal in creating art pieces is to capture the most beautiful side of the moment or things. Joel Dawn, as a visual artist, wanted to explore more of the world and to find her “real identity” as a person and perhaps as an artist. Furthermore, she also wanted to try things that will help develop not only her craft but her entire being as well.

Jenella "Ella" Medina

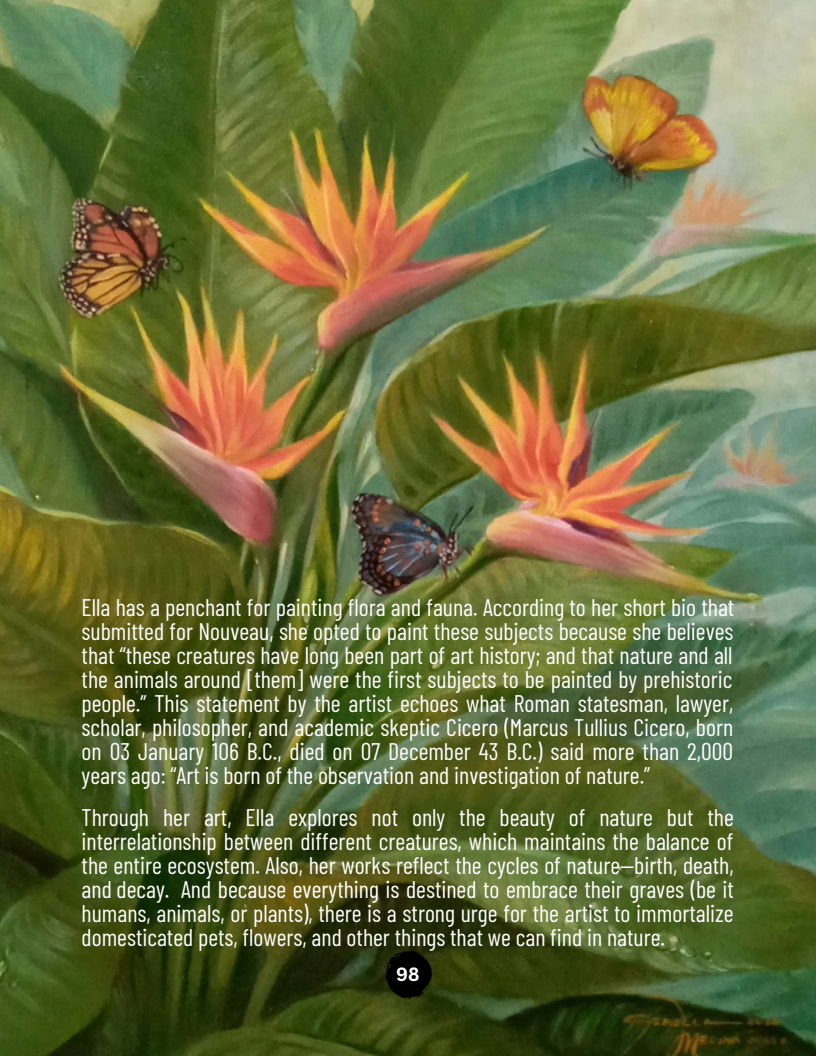
PAINTING THE REALNESS OF LIFE AND EXISTENCE

As an artist, Ella has the wisdom of a pro. And we are very excited about what she will paint next.



One of the most promising young artists from Antipolo City, the capital of the Province of Rizal, is Jenella “Ella” Medina who is now a Fine Arts student, majoring in Advertising Design at FEATI University in Manila, where the notable painter, Ibarra dela Rosa (1943 - 1998) where he also earned his fine arts degree. Ella and her father, prolific artist now working in China, Nelson Medina.

As an artist, Ella is leaning towards realism. For her, the more realistic the works are, the more it reflects the beauty and complexity of life, people, and nature itself.



Ella has a penchant for painting flora and fauna. According to her short bio that submitted for Nouveau, she opted to paint these subjects because she believes that “these creatures have long been part of art history; and that nature and all the animals around [them] were the first subjects to be painted by prehistoric people.” This statement by the artist echoes what Roman statesman, lawyer, scholar, philosopher, and academic skeptic Cicero (Marcus Tullius Cicero, born on 03 January 106 B.C., died on 07 December 43 B.C.) said more than 2,000 years ago: “Art is born of the observation and investigation of nature.”

Through her art, Ella explores not only the beauty of nature but the interrelationship between different creatures, which maintains the balance of the entire ecosystem. Also, her works reflect the cycles of nature—birth, death, and decay. And because everything is destined to embrace their graves (be it humans, animals, or plants), there is a strong urge for the artist to immortalize domesticated pets, flowers, and other things that we can find in nature.



Meanwhile, her art also celebrates local Filipino culture, particularly the everyday cuisines that our mothers prepare for the family. Hence, she created a series of paintings showing the basic ingredients for the famous sinigang and munggo guisado.

Aside from realistic paintings, during the height of the Covid-19 pandemic, Ella also painted something surreal, which she aptly titled “50-50”. In medical terms, 50-50 meant only a 50% chance of survival. And the seriousness of the Covid-19 situation has brought a high degree of uncertainty as it disrupted the flow of the global economy, killed millions of people, and left us with a blurry vision of our future.

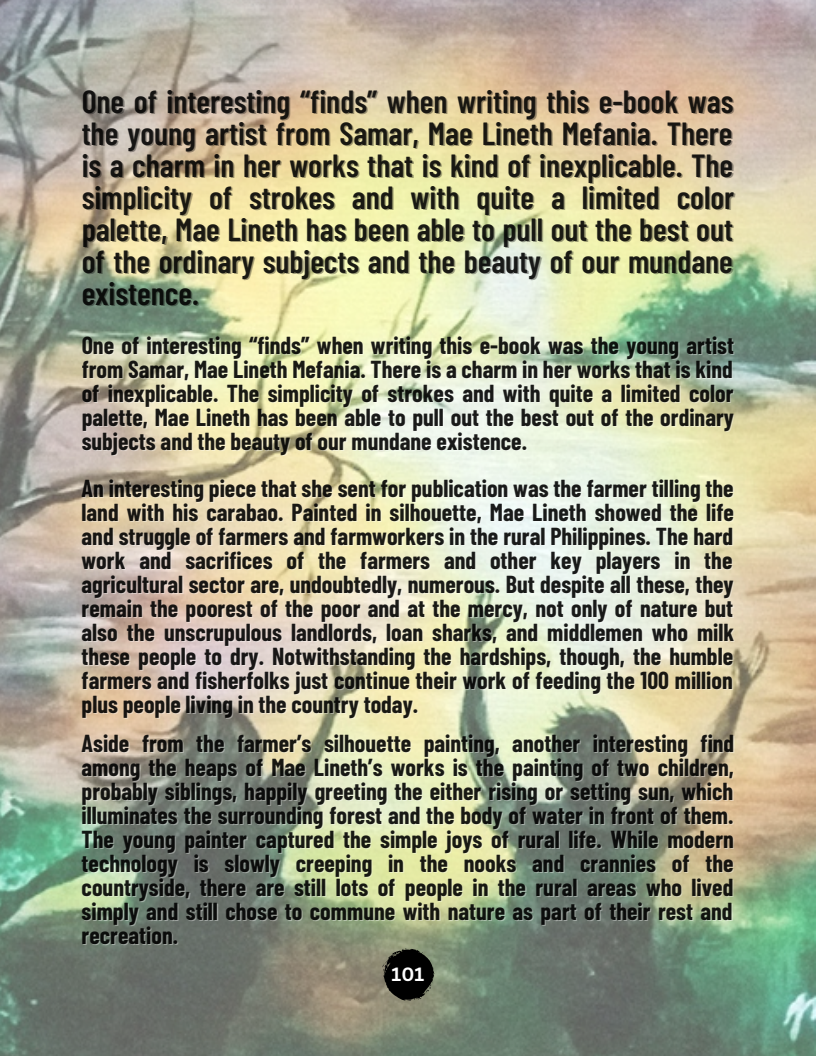
With in-depth knowledge of human anatomy, Ella has been able to depict the reality of life—that we are like dews on blades of grass, present in the morning and gone in the afternoon, as the Scripture puts it. The Covid-19 pandemic made this bitter reality much clearer; thus, highlighting the importance of living in the present, being compassionate, and always present when our loved ones need us.

As an artist, Ella has the wisdom of a pro. And we are very excited about what she will paint next.



Mae Lineth Mefania

And Her Artistic Evolution




One of interesting “finds” when writing this e-book was the young artist from Samar, Mae Lineth Mefania. There is a charm in her works that is kind of inexplicable. The simplicity of strokes and with quite a limited color palette, Mae Lineth has been able to pull out the best out of the ordinary subjects and the beauty of our mundane existence.

One of interesting “finds” when writing this e-book was the young artist from Samar, Mae Lineth Mefania. There is a charm in her works that is kind of inexplicable. The simplicity of strokes and with quite a limited color palette, Mae Lineth has been able to pull out the best out of the ordinary subjects and the beauty of our mundane existence.

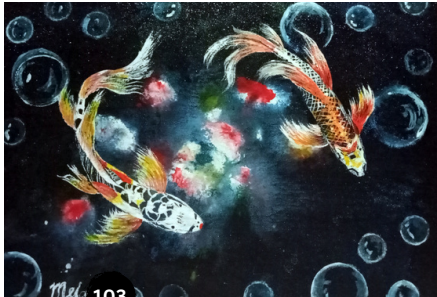
An interesting piece that she sent for publication was the farmer tilling the land with his carabao. Painted in silhouette, Mae Lineth showed the life and struggle of farmers and farmworkers in the rural Philippines. The hard work and sacrifices of the farmers and other key players in the agricultural sector are, undoubtedly, numerous. But despite all these, they remain the poorest of the poor and at the mercy, not only of nature but also the unscrupulous landlords, loan sharks, and middlemen who milk these people to dry. Notwithstanding the hardships, though, the humble farmers and fisherfolks just continue their work of feeding the 100 million plus people living in the country today.

Aside from the farmer’s silhouette painting, another interesting find among the heaps of Mae Lineth’s works is the painting of two children, probably siblings, happily greeting the either rising or setting sun, which illuminates the surrounding forest and the body of water in front of them. The young painter captured the simple joys of rural life. While modern technology is slowly creeping in the nooks and crannies of the countryside, there are still lots of people in the rural areas who lived simply and still chose to commune with nature as part of their rest and recreation.

We know that she has just started and as she matures as an artist, she will be able to produce more beautiful works that will surpass her current ones that are already beautiful. We wish her more success and we cannot wait for her to conquer the local and international art scenes.

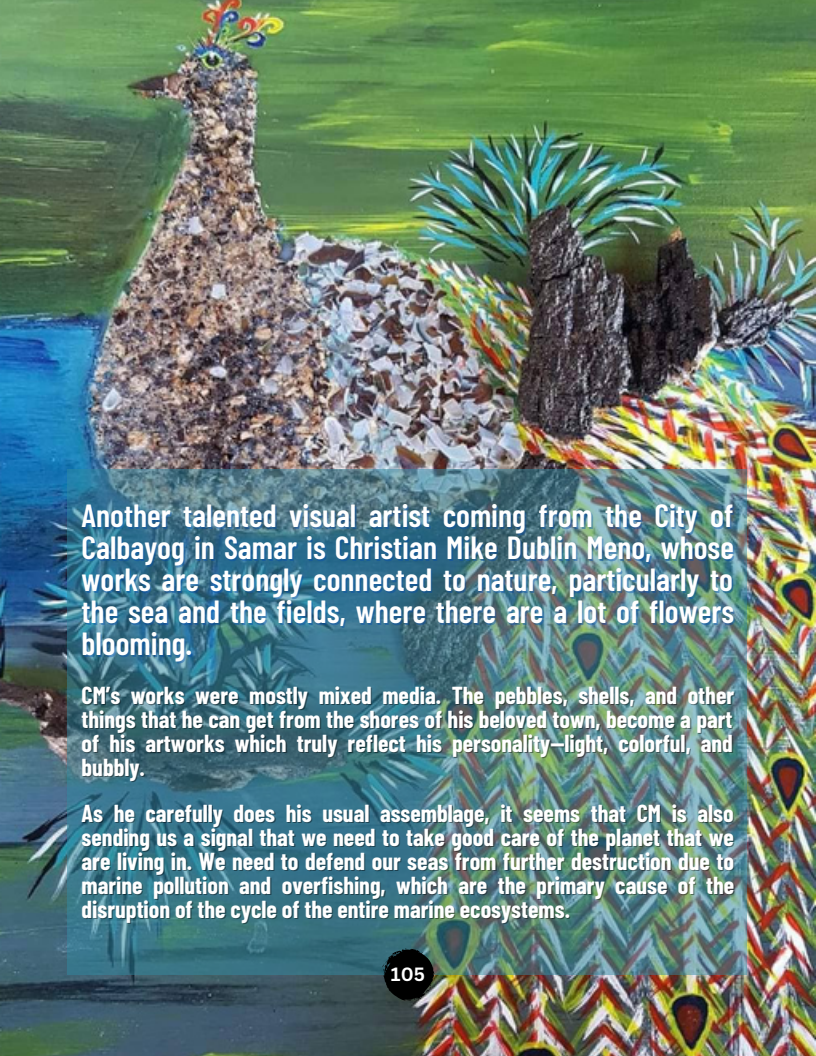


**MAELENITH
2018**



A woman with dark hair, wearing a black bikini, is posing behind a large, vibrant green plant with broad leaves. She is looking over her shoulder towards the camera with a slight smile. The background is a plain, light-colored wall.

*The Shore,
The Sea,
The Gardens,
and the Art of
Christian Mike
Dublin Meno*



Another talented visual artist coming from the City of Calbayog in Samar is Christian Mike Dublin Meno, whose works are strongly connected to nature, particularly to the sea and the fields, where there are a lot of flowers blooming.

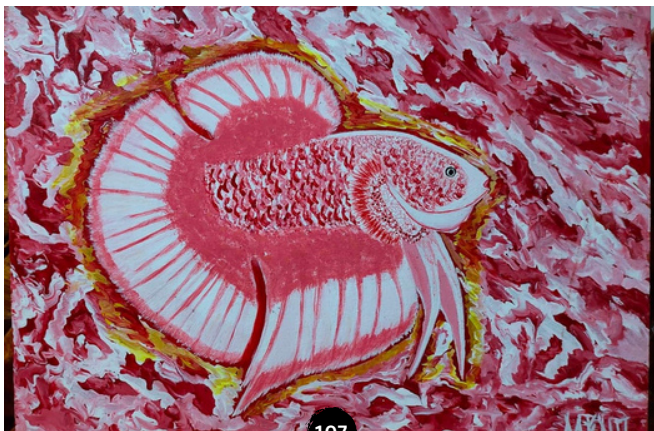
CM's works were mostly mixed media. The pebbles, shells, and other things that he can get from the shores of his beloved town, become a part of his artworks which truly reflect his personality—light, colorful, and bubbly.

As he carefully does his usual assemblage, it seems that CM is also sending us a signal that we need to take good care of the planet that we are living in. We need to defend our seas from further destruction due to marine pollution and overfishing, which are the primary cause of the disruption of the cycle of the entire marine ecosystems.



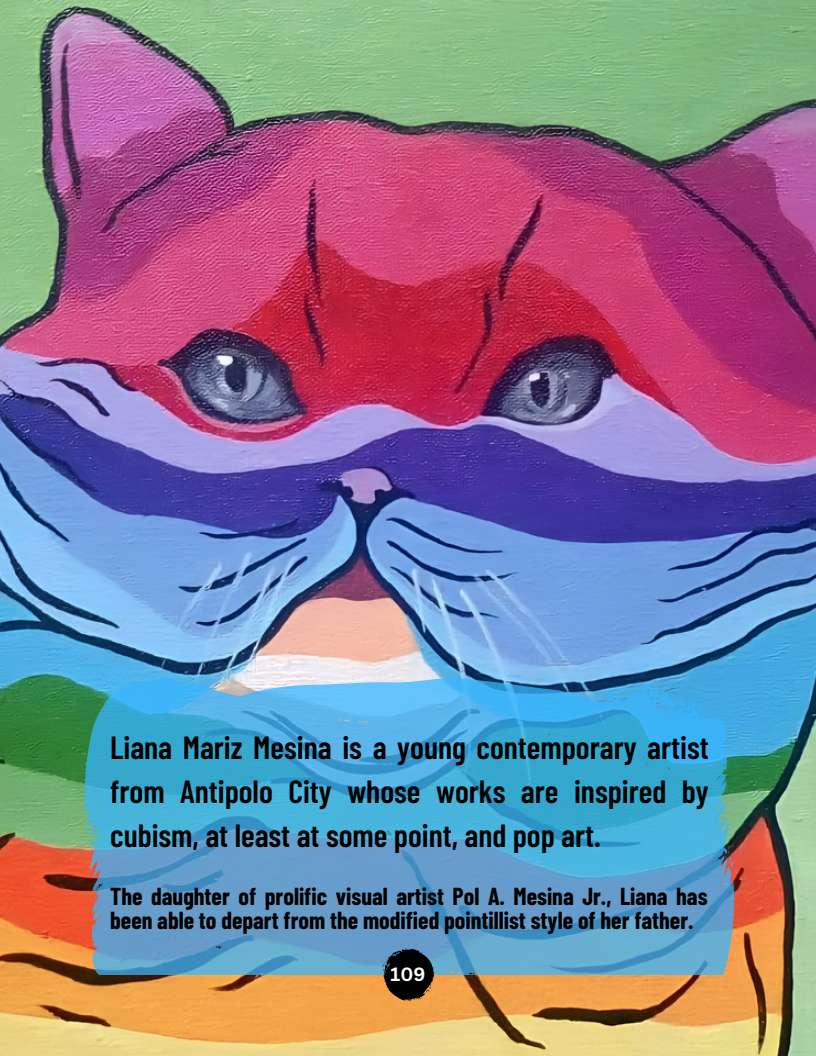
The sea, whether you believe it or not, plays a critical role in supplying oxygen to the entire planet, and its destruction spells imminent catastrophe in the future. However, we need also to be careful of the ways that we use in trying to save the planet. We need to carefully study the pros and cons of the “solutions” that we thought are really solving the problems but, in the end, will be harmful to the environment.

On the other hand, as an artist, CM is not afraid of experimenting more when it comes to artmaking. CM, according to his short statement sent to this publication, is “never afraid to experiment with and risk” his own medium. This having said, CM, undoubtedly, will become one of the best mixed media artists in the country in the future.



A woman with long dark hair is sitting on a white window ledge. She is wearing a light-colored, short-sleeved button-down shirt with a dark floral pattern, tucked into black, shiny, form-fitting pants. She is also wearing a black belt with a large circular buckle and gold-colored high-heeled sandals. She is looking off to the side with a thoughtful expression. The background shows a window with a view of green foliage outside. The lighting is soft and natural, coming from the window.

*Colorful
Pets of
Liana
Mariz
Mesina*



Liana Mariz Mesina is a young contemporary artist from Antipolo City whose works are inspired by cubism, at least at some point, and pop art.

The daughter of prolific visual artist Pol A. Mesina Jr., Liana has been able to depart from the modified pointillist style of her father.

Her primary theme is our beloved fur babies—cats and dogs—which are considered as the best human companions because of their unconditional love and loyalty that these furry creatures have for their humans.

Done with a colorful palette, the effect is something that you can see inside a kaleidoscope where the colors, lines, and shapes are constantly moving, creating various patterns as you turn its tube. According to her short bio, the lines and colors in her paintings depict eternity or infinity, which describes the love these domesticated animals show to their owners.

Another reason why Liana chose to paint colorful animals, it has a deep connection with her childhood. From that same bio she said: “My subjects are mostly domestic pets and other animals, because since my childhood, they have been my best friends, closest to my heart next to my parents and brothers. My art communicates my advocacy on loving pets, and how love makes our lives meaningful.”

In an article published by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), an attached agency to the Department of Health and Human Services of the US Government, having pets can help us attain optimal health.

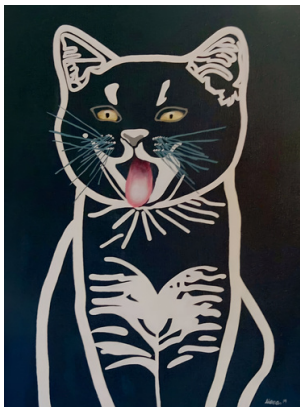


“There are many health benefits of owning a pet. They can increase opportunities to exercise, get outside, and socialize. Regular walking or playing with pets can decrease blood pressure, cholesterol levels, and triglyceride levels. Pets can help manage loneliness and depression by giving us companionship,” says CDC.

However, having a pet also entails responsibilities for these living creatures that have specific needs.



To ensure their health and longer life expectancy, a responsible pet owner should be able to supply all the pet's needs and to show them love and affection. Animals can show emotions, too. Hence, there is also a need to satisfy their emotional needs.



In her colorful pet paintings, Liana reminds us that somehow, we are also connected to the animal and plant world. Just like as Chief of Seattle, Duwamish said: "Humankind has not woven the web of life. We are but one thread within it. Whatever we do to the web, we do to ourselves. All things are bound together. All things connect." And once this connection has been severed, it can result in ecological imbalance, which can lead to a catastrophe. Hence, we need to maintain that strong connection with our environment and all the creatures living on this planet, great and small.





*Alexandra
Marie
Monserrat*

**A Young Woman
with a Strong
Artistic Vision**

One of the most promising young visual artists in the country today is the University of the Philippines' College of Fine Arts (CFA) student, Alexandra Marie Monserrat.



Dilaw



Bughaw

With a strong artistic vision, the themes that she paints have a strong connection not only with her life but with the current social milieu. Her Women and Color series, for example, is her socio-political statement about gender equality, and also a celebration of strong, independent, and intelligent women, whose roles are indispensable when it comes to building our nation and our society as a whole.

Her art, according to the artist herself, aims to “give the voice to the voiceless”; hence, animals and nature have also become staples in her paintings. In other words, environmentalism and animal rights are parts of her personal advocacy.

Meanwhile, Monserrat’s style is anchored more in spontaneous realism and from time to time, surrealism, using strong colors as background, which makes the central figure stand out. Furthermore, her style also helps her to effectively bring her message across, loud and clear, to her audience.



Un sighted

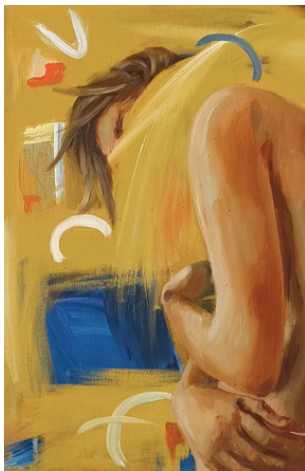


Unwanted Inheritance

With her humility and zest to learn, as well as her being in the right place, there's no doubt that **Alexandra Marie Monserrat**, an award-winning young artist, will become a household name when it comes to contemporary art—not only here in the Philippines, but also overseas.

With a strong artistic vision, the themes that she paints have a strong connection not only with her life but with the current social milieu. Her Women and Color series, for example, is her socio-political statement about gender equality, and also a celebration of strong, independent, and intelligent women, whose roles are indispensable when it comes to building our nation and our society as a whole.

Left to Right, Top to Bottom: Kahel; Taylor's Language; I Feel Too Much; Modern Mother and Child





*Maria Len Len
Baladjay Moriones*

**EXPLORING
ART, LIFE,
AND ARTISTIC
FREEDOM**

As a young artist, Maria Len Len Baladjay Moriones, aka King, is currently exploring life and art as it is, enjoying each moment, and painting the things that she likes—and painting them in contemporary style.



Gunamgunam, 24" x 18", 2022

According to her short bio submitted to Nouveau Book Project, King says that she used to paint mostly using acrylics but then shifted to watercolor, a medium which some artists find hard to master. Unlike oil and acrylic, watercolor needs that strong sense of control when it comes to the flow and thickness of color.

Meanwhile, when it comes to themes, King is leaning toward contemporary art, a combination of pop and traditional art. Her choice of themes for painting is richly diverse, ranging from still life, magical surrealism, and landscapes, painted in a modernist approach, just to name a few.

King also said that she also includes herself as a subject for her paintings. She uses her thoughts, experiences, and emotions to paint different images that have something to do with her personal life as well as others. For her, art should be liberating, a world of limitless possibilities. As a free-spirited soul, King learned to listen to her own mind and let her thoughts guide her to what she would do with an empty canvas. Because of this, she has been able to unleash her creativity without any hindrances.





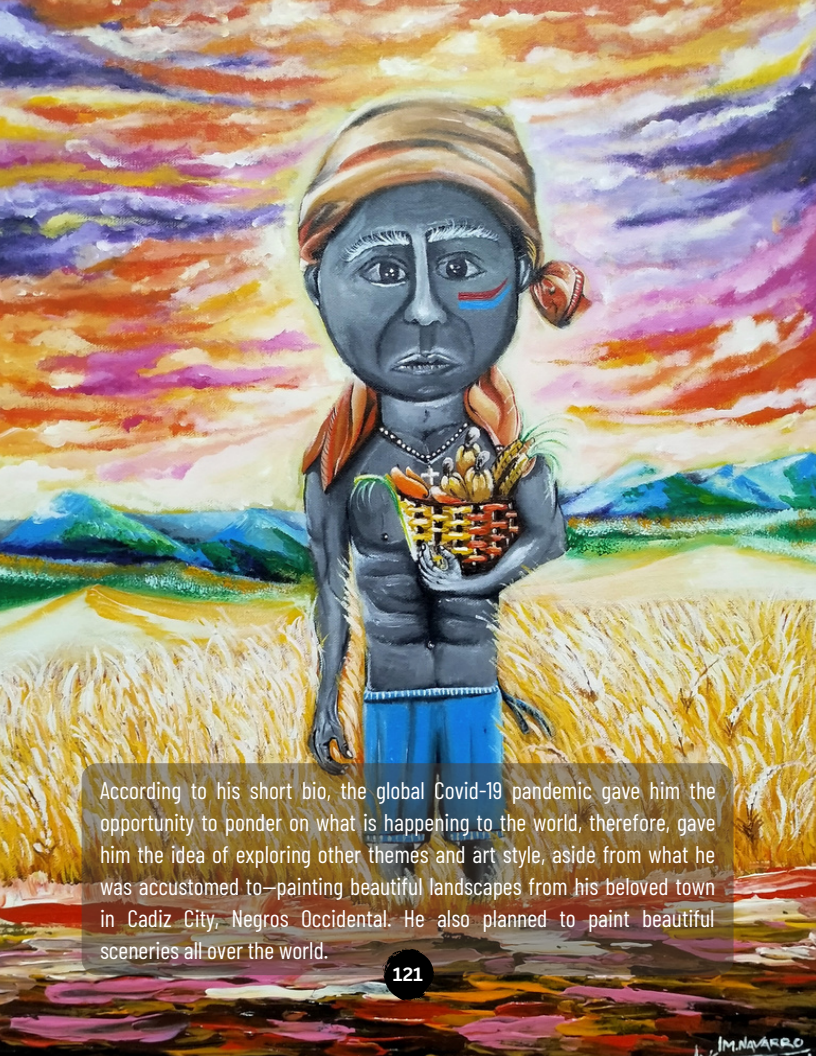
Artworks used: The Wall Flowers, 24" x 18", 2022 (p. 120); The Oil Lamp (upper left), 9" x 12", Watercolor on Paper, 2022; Tea Set (lower left), 9" x 12, Watercolor on Paper, 2022; Beauty of You, (upper right), 24" x 18", Acrylic on Canvas, 2018; and Wawa Dam, 24" x 18", 2019 (lower right).



Reality on a Different
Perspective:

*The Art of
John Mark
Navarro*

The young artist John Mark Navarro says that his works are inspired by realism. Looking at his unique works, Mark has been able to capture not only the emotions of the characters that he opted to paint, but also some part of our current social reality.



According to his short bio, the global Covid-19 pandemic gave him the opportunity to ponder on what is happening to the world, therefore, gave him the idea of exploring other themes and art style, aside from what he was accustomed to—painting beautiful landscapes from his beloved town in Cadiz City, Negros Occidental. He also planned to paint beautiful sceneries all over the world.

During the lockdowns, if my analysis of his statements is correct, he tended to create more artworks connected to animation or popular cartoon series, which some collectors found beautiful to keep and collect.

And now that the Covid-19 outbreaks seemed to tone down, he wanted to celebrate the newfound life after the crisis and looking forward to painting about the bounties found in Antipolo City, where currently resides and studies as a senior high school student—mangoes, rice cakes, and cashew fruits. These goods were considered as the symbol of the town, even before it became a city. The Mabuhay Singers' Tayo na sa Antipolo mentioned these, including the balimbing or the carambola fruit (which is also a symbol of political turncoats).





An active member of ARTipolo Group, Inc. and CADIZNON Artists, based in Cadiz City, Negros Occidental, Mark says he wanted to further develop his art style that he believes is his key to victory in conquering not only the local but the international art scene.



Lex Persephone

E. Nuqui

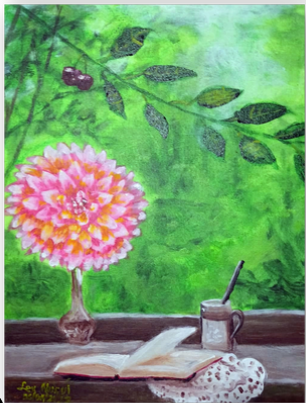
Painting Her
Dreams into
Reality



At the tender age of six, Lex Persephone Estrelles Nuqui fell in love with painting. Alongside her very supportive mother, Madonna Estrelles-Nuqui, both have enrolled in painting classes at the contemporary gallery in Pasig City, Luna Galleria.

With a very inquisitive mind, Lex has been able to explore more about her art, giving each artwork its meaning—with the guidance of her art tutor of course. Now she is 11, Lex wanted to dig deeply into the world of colors, lines, and images, not only to make her family proud, but also to encourage other children of her age to engage into something creative, like drawing and painting, and hone their talents in creating beautiful artworks.

Meanwhile, while it is quite early to tell, Lex seems to be inclined to becoming a post-impressionist painter, like Vincent van Gogh.





Her choice of colors and the way that she paints her subjects are reminiscent of that era. Of course, this may still change as she grows and becomes more exposed to different forms of art and art styles, especially now that she spends some time with her father, Rex Nephi, who is also an artist, in the United States where the art scene is robust and very much alive.




Aside from post-impressionism, Lex's style leans toward what we call spontaneous realism, which is a combination of realistic images and abstract art, using bold colors and apparent brushstrokes. This artistic movement started only in 2012, and one of the best spontaneous realists in the Philippines happens to be a woman—former news anchor and now full-time painter, Celeste Lecaroz-Aceron.

This writer only hopes that Lex will continue to pursue her passion in painting and create more works that are unique and with deeper meaning.

A portrait of a young woman with long dark hair, wearing a large black wide-brimmed hat and a dark patterned shirt. She is looking slightly to the right of the camera with a neutral expression. The background is a textured, light-colored wall. The text is overlaid on the lower half of the image.

Alyssa Marie Pacete:

**Painting Her Reality,
Realizing Her Artistic
Dreams**

The painting depicts a young woman with dark hair styled in a bun, wearing a traditional Filipino 'baro't saya' with a pink and white patterned blouse and a light-colored skirt. She is holding a large, light-colored parasol with a wooden frame. The background is a solid, vibrant red. The style is realistic with soft lighting and visible brushstrokes.

The painting is titled **Paraluman**, an acrylic on canvas depicting the Filipina dressed in traditional baro't saya.

Young contemporary realist painter, Alyssa Marie Pacete, has a lot to offer. The way that she paints various subjects—from still life to human figures—she knows more than the basics, especially when it comes to mixing the right colors, putting the right shades and hues, and in recreating the realities—inner and outer—that she has experienced.

Looking at the set of works that she sent for Nouveau, Alyssa Marie, who is now studying Fine Arts in the University of the Philippines-Baguio City campus, already had her resolve when it comes to her artistic career. She knew the need to be real, not only in her art, but the way that she perceives reality, and interpret the experiences that she has had, in interacting with society, her environment, and of course, with herself.



Still Life, acrylic on paper

She knows her set of values and has her own ways of seeing (or perceiving) things and happenings in the social milieu that she is in. Her *Papunta Ka Pa Lang, Pabalik na Ako* (ink in vellum board) shows her belief in the wisdom of the elderly, particularly in the sense of morality and following the current social norm.

Another interesting piece that she painted was the one she titled *The Real Enemy* (watercolor and ink on paper).

The painting shows the two identical persons, which is the reflection of the age-old dictum that says: Our real enemy is ourselves. As human beings bestowed by nature with highly developed intelligence and free will, there is a notion that we totally know what we are doing. Oftentimes, the things that we do are utterly illogical and harmful, not only to ourselves but to the environment and other people as well.



On the other hand, in this piece, Alyssa Marie weighs in the need to challenge ourselves and face our inner demons, not only to pacify them but, just like what the sages say, make it our friend so that our shadow (that part of us that is suppressed because it is disgusting and appalling) will never bother or fester us in the future and make it impossible for our foes to use it against us.



Meanwhile, her *Silver Lining* (mixed media on vellum board) tells us the need to see hope even amid the worst of the situations. However, there is also a need to face the reality that there are things beyond our control. When we are facing this kind of situation, all we need is to take a deep breath, let it go, and let it flow. As the old saying goes: ***This, too, shall pass.***




As a young woman belonging to Gen Z, Alyssa Marie also paints about popular culture, among other things. Her contemporary rendition of the beauty and lifestyle magazine, *Vogue* is also impressive. Nevertheless, we know that Alyssa Marie is still developing her skills as an artist, but it is safe to say, she is on the right track.



Photos from top to bottom: *Papunta ka pa lang, pabalik na ako* (Ink on Vellum Board); *The Real Enemy* (Watercolor and Ink on Paper); *Vogue* (Mixed Media on Paper); *Silver Lining* (Mixed Media on Vellum Board)



Yurika Lhora Palmones
Coloring her way to artistic stardom



SUN CONURE, 4" x 4",
Colored pencils on
vellum board,
smooth finish, 2021

Yurika Lhora Palmones can be one of the rising visual art superstars in the next 5-10 years. She has a penchant for realistic art and even in the ancient art of soap carving.

Despite her age, she is gearing towards the maturity of her art as a realistic painter, using acrylic, colored pencils, and watercolor as her primary mediums. Her subjects range from people to animals, and even some religious icons, like the famous La Pieta of the Renaissance master, a work of Michelangelo Buonarroti, housed in the Vatican.

@yurikaat_

Through her careful strokes, Yurika has been able to capture the moods and emotions of her subjects. You can also see the passion and the care of this young artist as she paints the things that she saw and experienced.

RED, soap carving,
3.5" x 4", Acrylic
paint on Perla soap,
2021



Thus, the results are astounding figures of animals and people. Of course, her style is still in the works, but she is getting there. All she needs is to practice and to focus on deeper subjects that will challenge her in terms of rendition and color schemes.



Harmony, 18" x 24",
Acrylic on Canvas,
2018

She has a future as a sculptor, too. All she needs is a good mentor so that she can mold her way to success through clay and other easier mediums to handle; unless that she is bold enough to carve wood and even try wire sculpting.

We hope that her fervor as an artist won't waver and that she will continue to paint and sculpt, notwithstanding the odds.

Artworks: Pieta, 9" x 12", Watercolor on Cold-pressed Paper, 2020; Lunod (Drowned), 18" x 24", Acrylic on Canvas, 2022; and Salabay (Piggyback), 16" x 20", 2017



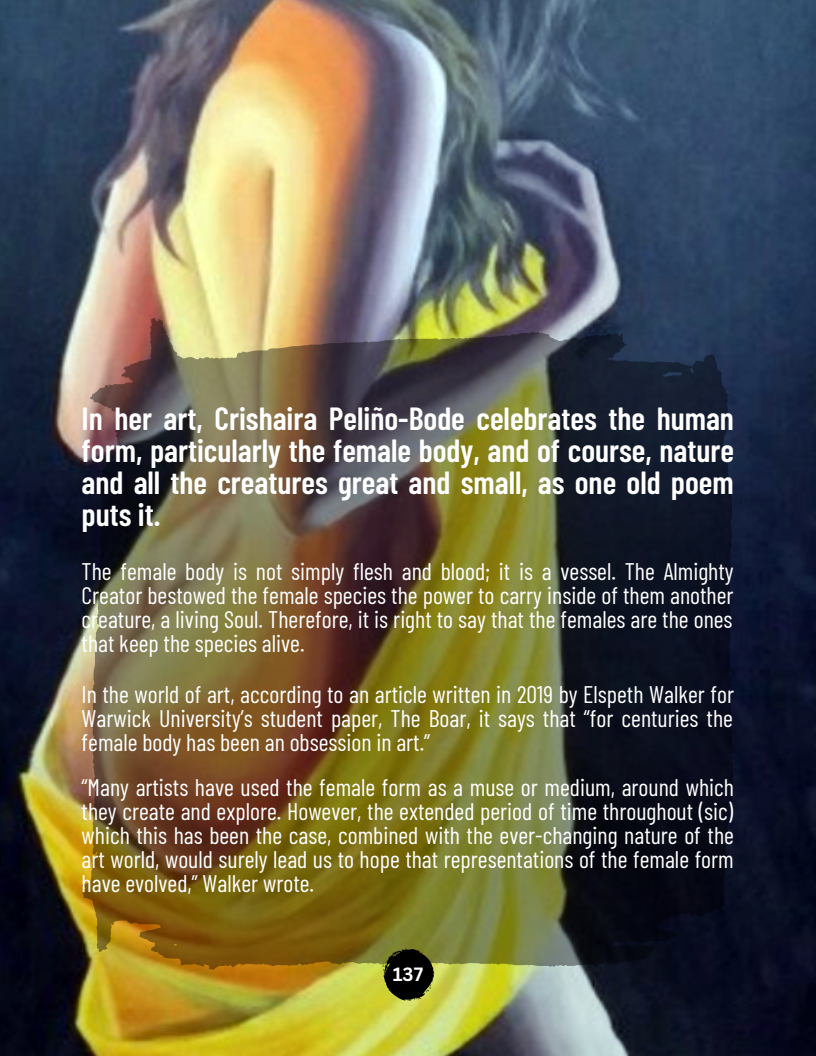
"PIETÀ" BY MICHELANGELO
YURIKA PALMONES



A portrait of a young woman with long, dark, wavy hair, looking slightly to the right with a gentle smile. The background is a soft-focus green, suggesting foliage. The text is overlaid on the upper right and lower center of the image.

With her simplistic and yet adorable style of painting, this writer personality thinks that in 5 to 10 years, Crishaira will reach her maturity as a painter and will produce more impactful and beautiful works of art.

*Women, Nature and the
Art of Crishaira
Peláez-Bode*



In her art, Crishaira Peliño-Bode celebrates the human form, particularly the female body, and of course, nature and all the creatures great and small, as one old poem puts it.

The female body is not simply flesh and blood; it is a vessel. The Almighty Creator bestowed the female species the power to carry inside of them another creature, a living Soul. Therefore, it is right to say that the females are the ones that keep the species alive.

In the world of art, according to an article written in 2019 by Elspeth Walker for Warwick University's student paper, *The Boar*, it says that "for centuries the female body has been an obsession in art."

"Many artists have used the female form as a muse or medium, around which they create and explore. However, the extended period of time throughout (sic) which this has been the case, combined with the ever-changing nature of the art world, would surely lead us to hope that representations of the female form have evolved," Walker wrote.



However, according to the same Walker article, the female body has long been sexualized in art, particularly by male artists. What is more problematic, though, are the artworks depicting naked bodies of women of color.

On the other hand, in Crishaira's nudes, the artist clearly paints the naked body (although no frontal nudity) to celebrate her own gender and sexuality. She delicately paints her nudes only to suit her artistic taste but to maintain that pure and unadulterated aesthetics, involving the female anatomy. As a feminist myself, I do know the boundaries when it comes to appreciation of the female physique. There is a huge difference between appreciating and lusting a stare.

Meanwhile, Crishaira also paints landscapes and sea creatures such as the gentle giant of the sea, the whale sharks or butanding. She is also into pop culture, with fondness for the DC and Marvel Comic characters.




With her simplistic and yet adorable style of painting, this writer personality thinks that in 5 to 10 years, Crishaira will reach her maturity as a painter and will produce more impactful and beautiful works of art.



Angels, Dreams and Janina Sanico

Art can be considered as otherworldly, especially that the process of creating a painting or a sculpture; writing a literary piece like poems, fiction, or creative non-fiction; choreographing a dance or composing a musical piece; or directing a scene in a movie or in theater; and even doing some nature and action photography—involves somehow a sort of magic, or nothing short of a miracle.






The artist, in their studio, is sharing that piece of power of the Cosmos (or God, if you want it to call that creative force, God or Nature), recreating—and immortalizing—that piece of reality, inward or outward, through the materials and tools that they have in hand.

In her new set of works, the Batangueña painter and former teacher Janina Sanico is sharing to the world her “painted miracle.” Her new style, according to the artist herself, was divinely inspired. The numbers and letters that appear on the faces of her painting’s main characters are sort of some heavenly code, transmitted by the messengers of the Divine—the angels.


As a believer of miracles and other supernatural stuff, I totally believe her story. For I have experienced lots of things that are inexplicable and beyond human logic. In 1998, I survived the bout of severe typhoid fever, which almost ended my life. My soul, I can vividly remember, has started to wander, only to find my body again. Healing came, I believe, not solely from the medicines that my former doctor and army officer, Dr. Tanchoco gave me, but the prayers of the televangelist and Catholic charismatic leader, Mariano Z. Velarde. Then came the teachings of the Christian, Hindu, and Muslim mystics that enriched my faith in God, and made me understand (somehow) the mysteries of the universe, human connection to other life forms, and of course, about our Higher Selves.



In her colorful and playful imagery, Janina has been able to capture that need to heal our Inner Child and to re-establish that connection to God that we almost forgot—and forgone—because of the series of unfortunate, and most of the time hurtful, events in our lives. In her new works, Janina paints heroes and heroines, mothers and their children, a childhood dream, recreated scenes from nature, personal experiences, and “Aha!” moments.

All of these, at least for this critic, are parts and parcel of our yearning of having that perfect life even if the world that we live in is far from perfect. However, it is part of the nature of our Soul or Spirit, to yearn for something that is perfect for our Souls are perfect substances inside imperfect and corruptible vessels. It is perfect because it is part and parcel of God itself.

Borrowing the Judeo-Christian creation story, we were created in the complete exact image of the Creator. The Scripture is not referring to the physical body but the Spirit or the Divine Breath (Hebrew: Ruach) that made this clump of loam, alive or animated. Therefore, the Soul itself is an extension of that divine and perfect substance that “forms” God, or the Creator.



Unfortunately, because of the “fall”—or the entry of the “original sin”—this Divine Nature has been forgotten, and that Adam and Eve (the Yin and the Yang, the negative and positive forces), were sent outside of Eden (perfect, divinely inspired existence), and have begun to suffer (because of attachment to impermanent things such as material wealth, fame, etc.).

While the paintings can be seen as “childlike” because of the way that they were created, the messages that they want to convey are deep and mature. Mature in the sense that it urges us to sit, contemplate, and listen to that divine voice—that inner voice that comes from our hearts and soul—which tells us to begin rewriting our life story, and reconnect ourselves to the fountain of Divine Inspiration so that we can live our lives to the fullest. As John 10:10 puts it, “life that is full and abundant.”

On the other hand, Janina is not only a painter but an advocate of using natural pigments in creating beautiful works of art. In fact, she still dreams of creating a facility where she can experiment more about natural pigments and create more colorful paintings that have been blessed by colors of nature.

A portrait of a young woman with short black hair, smiling. She is wearing a dark blue polo shirt with a light blue and white diamond pattern. The background is a blurred outdoor setting with vertical blinds and a white wall.

A CONTEMPORARY VISUAL ART
SUPERSTAR IN-THE-MAKING

*Aminah Contridas
Sioson*

Another promising young artist from Rizal Province is Aminah Contridas Sioson, delving into both visual and performing arts.

And according to her short bio sent for this book, Aminah is a self-taught painter and has already explored different media in creating artworks. Since she belongs to the current generation—Generation Z—her passion for the art is deeply rooted in pop culture. Because of this, her earlier works were mostly fan art.

While examining her current works, Aminah seems to shy away, in one way or another from fan art, and create more serious art, borrowing techniques and styles from the surrealists, cubists, and even abstractionists. Her works, according to the same short bio, deal with human emotions, especially those who are kept hidden or cannot be easily expressed due to their extremeness.

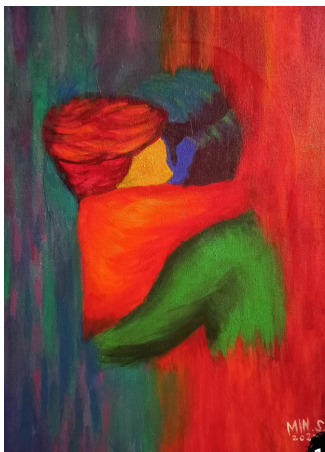
Meanwhile, observing her works more closely, this critic can say that the way that she mixes images and colors is quite advanced, despite her relatively young experience as an artist. Each work already has a context, although Aminah says, her works are open for interpretation.

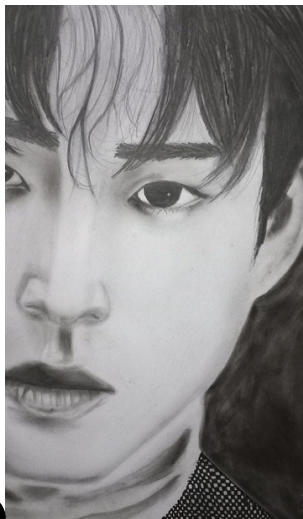
However, Aminah as an artist still needs to explore more, polish her works, and develop a style of her own. This can be done through constant experimenting and creating and reading about different art movements that shaped the face of art in different eras in art history. By doing so, she will be able to create a more concise and more detailed work, which is replete of meaning.

On the other hand, Aminah firmly believes that art has the power to influence, to inspire, and to teach not only artists but all people. Furthermore, Aminah also wishes for her voice to be heard, with the help of her creations.



“Meanwhile, observing her works more closely, this critic can say that the way that she mixes images and colors is quite advanced, despite her relatively young experience as an artist. Each work already has a context, although Aminah says, her works are open for interpretation.”

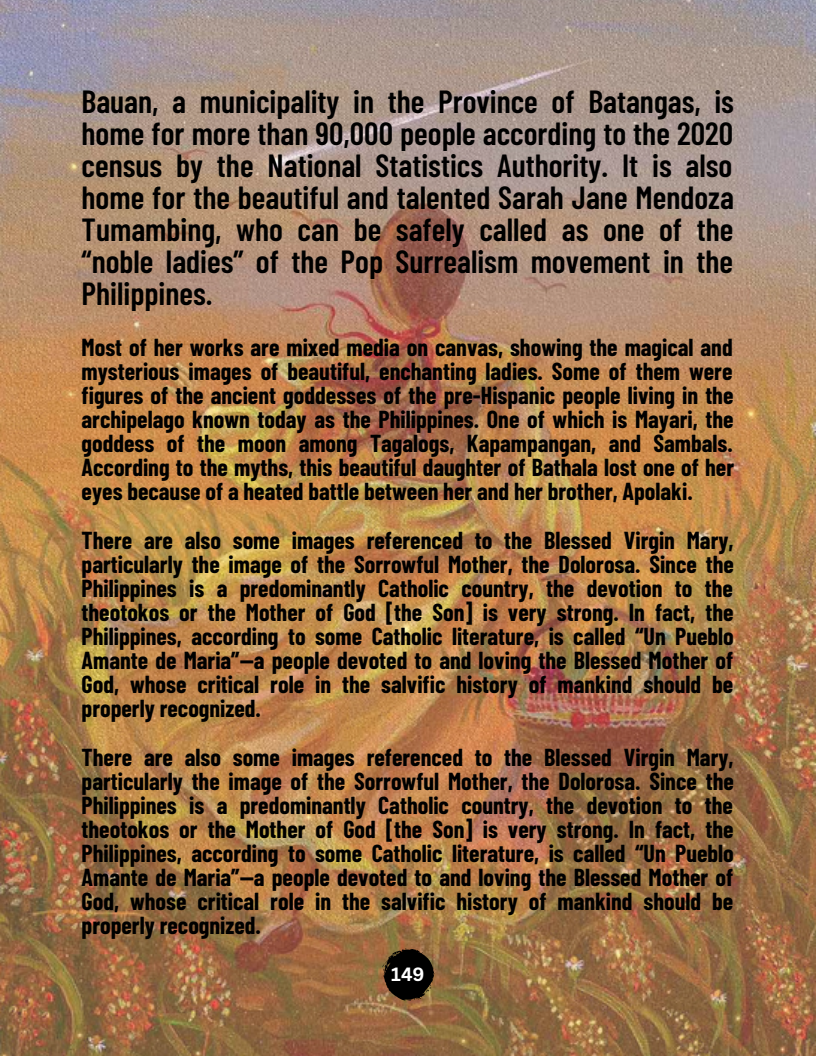




A portrait of Sarah Jane Mendoza, a woman with long dark hair tied back with a black bow, wearing a red polka-dot top and teal earrings. She is looking slightly to the side with a gentle smile.

Sarah Jane Mendoza
Tumambing

The Great Lady of Pop
Surrealism of Bauan
Batangas

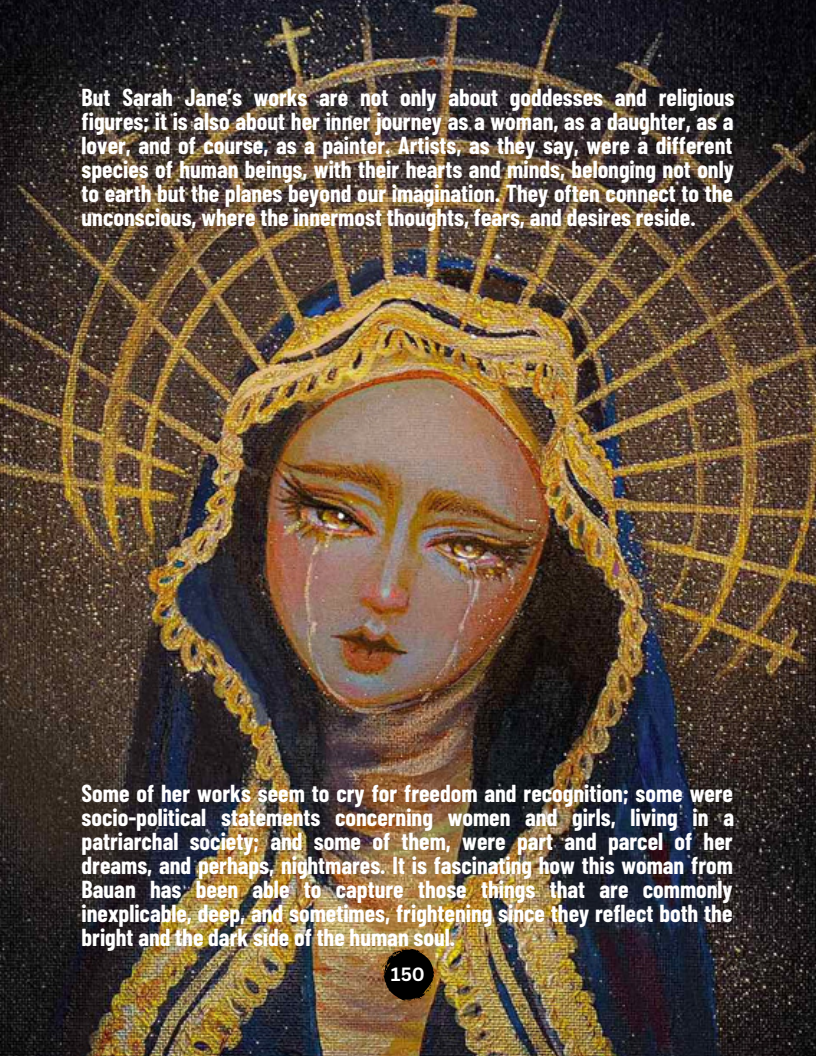


Bauan, a municipality in the Province of Batangas, is home for more than 90,000 people according to the 2020 census by the National Statistics Authority. It is also home for the beautiful and talented Sarah Jane Mendoza Tumambing, who can be safely called as one of the “noble ladies” of the Pop Surrealism movement in the Philippines.

Most of her works are mixed media on canvas, showing the magical and mysterious images of beautiful, enchanting ladies. Some of them were figures of the ancient goddesses of the pre-Hispanic people living in the archipelago known today as the Philippines. One of which is Mayari, the goddess of the moon among Tagalogs, Kapampangan, and Sambals. According to the myths, this beautiful daughter of Bathala lost one of her eyes because of a heated battle between her and her brother, Apolaki.

There are also some images referenced to the Blessed Virgin Mary, particularly the image of the Sorrowful Mother, the Dolorosa. Since the Philippines is a predominantly Catholic country, the devotion to the theotokos or the Mother of God [the Son] is very strong. In fact, the Philippines, according to some Catholic literature, is called “Un Pueblo Amante de Maria”—a people devoted to and loving the Blessed Mother of God, whose critical role in the salvific history of mankind should be properly recognized.

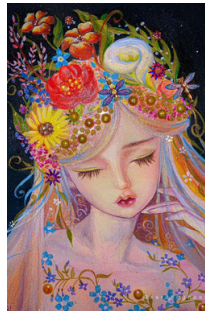
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But Sarah Jane's works are not only about goddesses and religious figures; it is also about her inner journey as a woman, as a daughter, as a lover, and of course, as a painter. Artists, as they say, were a different species of human beings, with their hearts and minds, belonging not only to earth but the planes beyond our imagination. They often connect to the unconscious, where the innermost thoughts, fears, and desires reside.

Some of her works seem to cry for freedom and recognition; some were socio-political statements concerning women and girls, living in a patriarchal society; and some of them, were part and parcel of her dreams, and perhaps, nightmares. It is fascinating how this woman from Bauan has been able to capture those things that are commonly inexplicable, deep, and sometimes, frightening since they reflect both the bright and the dark side of the human soul.

There are lots of things that this critic can say about her works, but it will take an entire book of more than 400 pages to finish. Nevertheless, let us just stand in awe as we let ourselves be mesmerized—and captivated—by the works of one of the Great Ladies of Pop Surrealism of the Pearl of the Orient Seas, the Batangueña artist, Sarah Jane Mendoza Tumanging.





THE BEAUTY OF THE WORLD AS SEEN BY

Maris A. Ventures

A painting of a landscape. At the top, a bright red sun is partially obscured by grey, textured clouds. Below the sky are dark, wavy mountain ranges. In the foreground, a vibrant blue river flows through a lush green forest of tall, thin trees. The overall style is contemporary and colorful.

This young contemporary artist from the City of Antipolo, was born in Calbayog City in Samar, to a prolific artist for a father, Aristole “Aris” Ventures and Marichu Advincula, who also paints, Maris Advincula Ventures is now making her way into the art world by painting the beauty of the world as she sees it—colorful and magical.

Her love for drawing and painting, just like any other talented young artists out there, started when she was child, winning poster-making, and scrap art contests when she was attending elementary school in Calbayog City, at city-wide level. She also underwent some training when she was younger, thus developing her drawing and painting skills even further.



However, now that she is much older and attending college at the Our Lady of Fatima University-Antipolo City campus as an International Tourism Management student, she is now into a more serious art, with a signature artistic style of magical realism and modified abstraction, combined. The result is often a colorful picture of nature but tempered by some hints of dark shades and hues, as to highlight her main subject. This technique, as we can see, goes well with Maris as she creates more interesting-and beautiful-contemporary works of art, mainly landscapes.



The artist at work.



With several group shows under her belt as an active member of BAGHID and ARTipolo Group, we can expect that in the coming years, Maris will excite us more with her works as her talent and skills continue to mature and evolve.

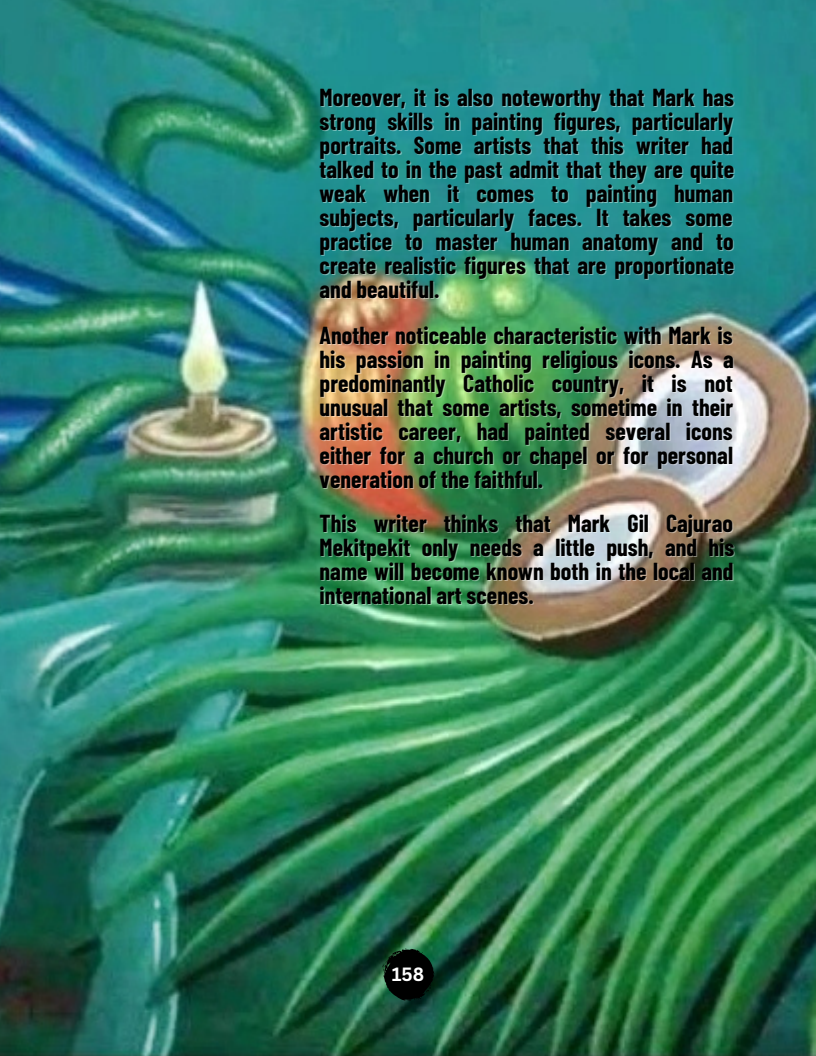


*Mark Gil Cajurao Mekitpekut:
Coloring His Dreams,
Realizing His Visions*



There is a charm in Mark Gil Cajurao Mokitpekik's works that you will be drawn to. His painting style is a combination of realism and modernism, as evidenced by the use of the vine-like element in some of his works.

What of the noticeable strength of this young artist from Samar is his strong color palette. His use of colors is considered advanced and the way of his execution of certain subjects can be considered as "Mokitpekik" style, although we can assume that this is also an offshoot of an earlier art style or form. Nevertheless, the vine-like accent in his works perhaps signifies a thing that bounds us, either an internal or external force, which somehow restrict us from moving or doing something. The use of this accent or element strengthens the message that Mark, as an artist and as a person, wants to convey to his audience.



Moreover, it is also noteworthy that Mark has strong skills in painting figures, particularly portraits. Some artists that this writer had talked to in the past admit that they are quite weak when it comes to painting human subjects, particularly faces. It takes some practice to master human anatomy and to create realistic figures that are proportionate and beautiful.

Another noticeable characteristic with Mark is his passion in painting religious icons. As a predominantly Catholic country, it is not unusual that some artists, sometime in their artistic career, had painted several icons either for a church or chapel or for personal veneration of the faithful.


This writer thinks that Mark Gil Cajurao Mekitpekit only needs a little push, and his name will become known both in the local and international art scenes.






*A visual virtuoso:
Chressa Yee Rufon*

One of the most promising young visual artists in the country today is Chressa Yee Rufon who is now living in the beautiful place of Puerto Galera, in Mindoro Oriental.



"Romeo and Juliet"(series #3)
24x18 inches
Acrylic on canvas
C.Y. Rufon 2021

With strong command in colors, Chressa has been able to capture her subjects vividly. What makes her works more interesting though is that guitar and flowers are her recurring theme. This stringed instrument is often associated with serenading, or popularly known in the Philippines as "harana." Done during the night, the serenader will come to the place of the woman who he wants to court and sing several songs (kundiman), accompanied by a guitar, to show his intention of courting the girl and to become his partner, hopefully, for life.

The background of the page is a detailed painting of several large, bright red hibiscus flowers. The petals are layered and show some yellow and orange tones near the center. A guitar body is superimposed over the flowers, with its outline and strings visible. The overall composition is rich in color and texture.

"Timeless"(series #2)
36x24 inches
acrylic on canvas
C.Y. Rufon 2019

Guitars, according to the website symbolsage.com, is a symbol of home amid hardship, as shown by one of the popular works of the Spanish Master, Pablo Picasso entitled "The Old Guitarist." However, this instrument as played by the lonesome player in his piece can also mean "isolation." The sweet and sometimes lonely sound of the guitar can be a tearjerker, especially when the lonely sonata is being played on the guitar.

But for this young artist, the guitars and flowers in her paintings can mean rebirth, love, passion, and sometimes, memories.

Indeed, Chressa Yee Rufon is an artist to watch for, and we cannot wait what she will do next.



"SOUNDSCAPE" (series #5)
24x18 inches
Acrylic on canvas
C.Y. Rufon 2021

"Rebirth"
36x24 inches
acrylic on canvas
C.Y. Rufon 2022



EPILOGUE

To be honest, *Nouveau: Fresh Minds, Fresh Talents (An E-Book on New and Exciting Filipino Artists of the 21st Century)* is just the beginning of the journey as an author, independent publisher, and most importantly as a cultural worker.

It is highly critical that in this era, there will be more books and monographs being published focusing on the important contributions of new and up-and-coming artists and the senior ones to the development of our local arts and culture. It is also very, very important to write and publish books about other artistic disciplines—literature, dance, music, theater, cinema, architecture, fashion and design, and even culinary arts—to keep a sort of a historical diary on how these disciplines developed, further evolved, and even fused to other disciplines.

With the influx of foreign culture into the Philippine shore because of globalization and the advent of information and communications technology (ICT), we need to chronicle more about our social history and racial identity as it is slowly slipping into the shadow of cultural hegemony.

It is also very crucial to write about our indigenous peoples' culture and to protect and advance their rights to their identity and ancestral domain.

As one good visual friend and a cultural worker, Alberto “Badz” Magsumbol, told this writer some time ago, when we had some coffee in a famous coffee joint across GMA-7, he fears that the indigenous peoples’ cultures and art may be lost in oblivion, with the onslaught of modernization and aggressive development into their local communities. Therefore, he is now working on a legacy project in Oriental Mindoro, painting huge murals about the stories—and history (somehow)—of the Mangyan people.

Aside from “high art,” this writer thinks there is also a need to publish something about the prevailing street culture and art, which is part of the lives of people living in a specific community. Moreover, there is also a need to write about our social history, to chronicle the communal experiences of the ordinary folks as they, too, are part of the shaping of this nation.

Furthermore, there is also a necessity to write about the experiences and realizations of artists abroad. This is highly important to understand the worldview of these creative people in diaspora and to connect it to the experiences of the locals here. By doing so, we can understand more about the multifaceted identity and the collective psyche of the Filipino.

This author hopes that this little book will help not only in promoting the works of the artists included here but also to advance the cause of educating the public about their art and culture.

On the other hand, if there are errors here, it is the author’s and his alone.

SOLI DEO GLORIA!



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Noel Sales Barcelona is a freelance journalist, PR and Development Communications Specialist, culture and art critic, independent researcher, and National Book Development Board (NBDB) registered author and editor from Antipolo City, Rizal, Republic of the Philippines.

He used to edit the quarterly art and culture magazine, **Daloy-Likha: Culture and Arts for the Global Filipino** and now serving as the executive editor and publisher of the online fortnightly magazine about culture, arts, and Filipino social history, The Orient Pearl Global Magazine (www.theorientpearlmagazine.com). He also used to be the editor-in-chief of the monthly art magazine, Filipino Artists Magazine published by the Filipinas Institute for the Advancement of Arts and Culture (FILARTS), Inc. from 2014 - 2017, and founded its sister publication, the monthly art newspaper, The Philippine Art Post.

He is also the author of **Different Strokes: A Book on the Ingenuity of Filipino Artists Vol. 1** (FILARTS, Inc., 2015); **Different Strokes Vol. 2, Watercolor Magic: The Works of Great Watercolor "Magicians" of the Pearl of the Orient Seas** (FILARTS, Inc., 2016); and **Palettes: Feast of Colors** (FILARTS, Inc., 2017). He also authored a monograph of works of Neptalie "Rico" Anunzo, titled **Dreaming of Paradise: Rico Anunzo, Pedrong Masipag, and Mariang Marikit** (2021) and **Philipp Badon's Bursting Colors, Lines, Curves, and Faces: The Art of Philipp Badon Amid ng Pandemic** (2021). He is now writing two other books about Filipino artists, which are expected to be out to the public in 2023.

As a creative writer, his works appeared in different anthologies here in the Philippines, including **hindi nangyari dahil wala sa social media: Interogasyon ng Kulturang New Media sa Pilipinas** (Ateneo de Manila Press, 2021); **Lakbay: Mga Tulang Lagalag** (7-Eyes Productions, OPC, 2020); **Aksyon: Dagli ng mga Eksena ng Buhay** (7-Eyes Productions, OPC, 2020); and **Buhawi: Unang Pagaspas** (7-Eyes Productions, OPC, 2020), just to name a few. **As a journalist he became a fellow of the prestigious 14th Lopez Jaena Fellowship for Community Journalists of the University of the Philippines' College of Mass Communications in 2005.**

Currently, he is the Founding Chair of the Board of Trustees and the President of the culture and arts research center, **Pandayan ng Kalinangan at Sining ng Perlas ng Silangan (Panday-Kalinangan) International Arts and Cultural Research Society, Inc.** He is also an active member of **ARTipolo Group, Inc.** and the **Filipinas Copyright and Licensing Society (FilCols), Inc.**

WHAT THEY SAY ABOUT NOUVEAU

It's a huge honor for the young, creative visual artists from Calbayog City, Samar to be included in this book. They were given a chance to show their unique talents in the visual arts and I also take pride in knowing that despite their very young age, as students, they're able to show their prowess in the field of visual arts by winning competitions and joining art conferences and exhibitions. Mabuhay ang BAGHID!

~ ARIS VENTURES, ART EDUCATOR, VISUAL ARTIST, FOUNDER, BAGHID - EASTERN VISAYAS YOUNG ARTIST ASSOCIATION, AND MEMBER OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES, ARTIPOLO GROUP, INC.

The leadership and more than 70 artist members of the ARTipolo Group, Inc., warmly congratulate the people behind the e-book titled Nouveau and all the new and young artists that are being introduced to the general public through this book.

The book's primary aim is to showcase the unique talents and dreams of these young artists, and let the public notice these. Moreover, we hope that through this publication, these young talents will get the respect, appreciation, following, and support that they deserve from our society, particularly from art collectors and patrons, and the latter may be encouraged to buy and collect their works.

These young artists have a huge contribution to the development of art, culture, and economy of our country. May the Lord our God continue to guide them for them to remain true to their aspirations and their responsibilities to the society; to give them strength to face the challenges in life; and for them to foster the spirit of cooperation among their peers in the field of arts.

~ POL A. MESINA JR., PRESIDENT, ARTIPOLO GROUP, INC.

Remembering how my mother, Inday Cadapan, started from scratch with a handful affirmation. And that was a milestone... with a brave heart artists bloom inch by inch with their values & hope for the future.

Art is an ecosystem with interacting members where artists' visual presentations explaining the hows & whys in life with strokes & hues. ARTipolo exhibits a genuine message, on how perseverance & unity matters, and I am truly blessed to witness this today.

MAGEL CADAPAN, MANAGER, INDAY CADAPAN HOME GALLERY

Hindi kailangan maging magaling para magsimula.
Kailangan magsimula para gumaling ng kusa.
Palaging tandaan na lahat na dalubhasa.
Nag umpisa lang dati kaya ngayon ay dakila.
Pagpupugay sa kapwa alagad ng sining.
Salamat mga bagong kasama sa mithiin.

**YELCAST
FOUNDER, VISUALPOETRY PHILIPPINES
PRESIDENT, ARTE BAUAN**

The Heart of the author to bring out Philippines emerging artist from this book is immeasurable. It provides new opportunities by providing them a platform where they can showcase their masterpieces. Profoundly making a history in each of these featured artist lives.

This book offers not just a list of names, paintings and stories. It offers inspiration, motivation and hope. The passion they share will inspire budding artist all over the country.

Luna Galleria Philippines congratulates Noel Sales and all featured artist.

**ANGEL GONZALES-LUNA
INTERNATIONAL EXCELLENCE AWARDEE-YOUNG ART DIRECTOR OF THE YEAR 2022
PH ART CHAIRMAN, INTERNATIONAL VIRTUAL CONFERENCES OF MUSEUMS
PH DEPUTY, WORLD TOGETHER4HERITAGE**

“Filled with Ingenuity and greater potential”

It is refreshing to see and feel the creative psyche of these young artists through their avant-garde themes melange with their identities and influences. This collection will be a good reminiscent of everyones journey as they progress along with their strokes and stories in few years time, as all works will soon be a hallmark of their budding distinct styles and creative identities.

Congratulations to everyone and never underestimate your talent and ability as an artist for you are the most effective story teller of enthusiasm, and positivity left in our society. May you never stop creating and articulating the colors of your time and May this collection be a convergence of talents who will reshape the future of the creative economy and sustain the vibrancy of our collective identity as Filipino a world class artists.

**ANNA KARINA JARDIN
FOUNDING ARTIST
ARTDIALOGO ASIA**