

## Proximity

c3 Contemporary Art Space

8<sup>th</sup> March- 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2017

*Proximity* is a group exhibition of works by contemporary Filipino artists from Manila and Cebu. The exhibition considers our relationship to place and landscape within the framework of what geographers have termed the 'new mobilities paradigm' (Sheller and Urry 2006) - an increasingly mobile world of migration, social media and accessible transport. Furthermore, rather than places acting as settings or surfaces upon which things or people move, the idea of approaching place as an ongoing process, as a verb - 'placing', 'spacing,' 'landscaping' (Cresswell 2003), is proposed when grouping together works by artists from one country and presenting in another.

The works exhibited address the domestic, public and virtual when considering proximity and place. Domestic and interior spaces act as vessels for our origins, cultural values and personal relationships. Public spaces have become increasingly intimate with the advent of social media and online connectivity. And virtual spaces are examined in a Deleuzian sense that can evoke both the ideal and the real.

Alfred Marasigan's installation *Locale 4* uses the vernacular of the streetside stall and situates it in a sky blue expanse that asserts itself in the gallery space. Marasigan's previous iterations of this series include a Manila advertising billboard as a colour-field painting and a large gradient banner extending over the exterior of Manila's famous Cultural Centre of the Philippines. Marasigan's oeuvre considers place and cartographies as an entry point for personal revelation and Marasigan mines his experiences of places from his past as data, for the examination of identities and self.

Nice Buenaventura's *B.A.B.E.L II (Leisurely Erasing Body after Body)* addresses the recent interment of Ferdinand Marcos' remains in Manila's Libingan ng mga Bayani (Heroes' Cemetery), revising a history of theft and murder into one of heroism. Buenaventura uses banal office materials such as toner and copy paper to construct an almost invisible map of the cemetery, the detail erased and the fading lines resembling the last gasp of the printer's toner cartridge. Forms resembling paperweights signify the weight of history bearing down in a collection of objects that give form to the everyday nature of abhorrent behaviours.

Soika Vomiter's wall painting *Philippine Bombing Festival* commemorates the moment of impact of a bombing in his hometown of Hilongos, Leyte in 2016. The event signified a shift of the tenor of unrest in the region and brought home for the artist the reality of our nearness to disaster.

Ivy Marie Apa uses parchment - specifically pages from a bible - as surfaces for detailed paintings of decaying objects. Apa collects apples and nails and observes their decay from her studio, painting them in their weakened state. Apa performs the role of the anthropologist making an enquiry into the aura of the religious document, and testing its potential as a prosaic form.

Gigi Ocampo's paintings stare penetratingly at the viewer in a field of static and brushstrokes. Red jester-like smiles sit uncomfortably on the figures, women who remain trapped in a place of expectations and uncomfortable histories.

Nomar Bayog Miano's paintings of naked figures with votive-like arrangements contain symbols of hygiene and cleanliness. The vulnerable figures contort and shy from the viewer and are contrasted with the orderly configuration of the items next to them, the Morandi-like tones of the paintings coalescing in a composition both restrained and haunting.