

NO PARKING, ARTWORK ONGOING

Art Fair Philippines 2020 wraps up another year of local contemporary art's best

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There's no need to bring a car, just a growing appreciation for the evolving art scene of the Philippines. Over the weekend Art Fair Philippines 2020, in its eighth year running, caps off another successful showcase of the best contemporary art the country has to offer.

Transforming once more The Link Carpark in Makati into an unconventional urban exhibition space with four floors (not including the registration floor), the Art Fair offered enthusiasts a glimpse at the expanding creative minds of local artists, whose pieces ranged from the political to the emotional, the visually outstanding to the absolutely bizarre.

Visitors were greeted by the late Sol LeWitt's "Wall Drawing #1217 These words are written on the wall" painted or marked in Filipino, English, M'ranaw, and Baybayin, depending on the part of the building you view it—a reflection of the Philippines as a polyglot and Manila as a melting pot. Among the interactive exhibits was that of the Jellyfish Kisses Sewing Club, where guests were encouraged to use any material and sew them into what would become Soft Punk SpringSummer 2020 (reminiscent of David Medalla's piece from last year's Art Fair).

Perhaps the most eye-catching of the exhibits was Tin-aw Art Gallery's "Sex," where pieces inspired nuanced thoughts beyond the provocative. Of note was Julie Lluch's "Georgia on my Mind" flanked by Leeroy New's "Dummy Dick Strap" figures, as well as Clan Dayrit's "Ego" created through semen on paper.

There weren't only new pieces on display at this year's Art Fair, some galleries showcased old works by their artists whose ingenuity still rings loud today. Examples of these were the late Jesus Rafael Soto's 1990 work "Cuadros en vibracion", the late Gabriel Barredo's 2015 resin work "Opera – Screaming Faces", and the Leon Gallery's "A.I.R" from 1981, which reimagines the Philippine flag.

Thematic interpretation was very evident among many artworks, particularly in relation to national identity. One artist painted artworks inspired by San Miguel Pale Pilsen and Ginebra San Miguel, both alcoholic drinks serving as the forefront for each image. An installation compiled silk screen frames of images devotees would wear to religious fiestas and processions such as the Black Nazarene. Particularly clever was Orley Ypon's "Pizza Eaters (Tribute to Caravaggio)" portraying Jesus Christ at a dinner table with pizza, Coca-Cola, and a fruit basket. In a more harrowing reimagining of religion, Eskinita Art Gallery had Isko Andrade's "Patawad, Pagka't Ako'y Makasalanan II" and—darker in many ways—Jojit Solano's acrylic on wood and canvas pieces that unfolded the dangers of false beliefs like "Ang Duplo sa Karagatan ng Manipuladong Senakulo sa Kamay ng Uwak at Lobo" and }Ang Pag Gasgas sa Kapitulo ni Malakias."

It's very apt that Art Fair Philippines took center stage right as February, National Arts Month, comes to a close, allowing art lovers and aspiring enthusiasts to reflect once more on the

vibrant discourse of our local contemporary artists.

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