

Your Essential Guide to Art Fair Philippines 2020

What to see whether you have a whole day, three hours, or 90 minutes.

Images and text by: The Spot.ph Team

Art Fair Philippines, which is now in its eighth year, is one of the most-awaited art festivals in the country. It boasts four whole floors of art, making every visit an amazing but overwhelming experience. There's always the question of which floor to spend the most on, which gallery you can just breeze through, and which work of art you'd need some time to contemplate. To make things a little easier, we rounded up the must-see pieces depending on how much time you can spare for this weekend's fair: whether you've got a full day, just three hours, or a quick 90 minutes. We've also included the exact locations to save you some time.

Don't forget, it's happening for three days only—from February 21 to 23, 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. at The Link in Makati City. You can buy tickets (P350) online through the Art Fair Philippines' website or on-site at the fourth-floor reception area. Concession tickets for students, PWDs, and senior citizens are also available—just show your valid IDs.

#ArtFairPH in One Day

With 11 hours, you have more than enough time to interact with the installations by Art Fair Philippines' featured artists for the year. This can take a few minutes—hours even, but try your best not to overlook the easy-to-miss corners of the partner galleries. There are also places where you can shop, hang out, and eat in between marveling at all the art on display.

Fourth Floor

"Wall Drawing #869A" by Sol LeWitt

American artist Sol LeWitt is known to champion "the democratic hand," which is why anyone can come up to the Sol LeWitt on the fourth floor and draw a "not straight horizontal line" inside a 96-inch square. There's just one instruction: one person draws a colored line, and you can't repeat the color of the one above yours. You can also find LeWitt's text-based wall drawing, "Wall Drawing #1217 These words are written on the wall" on all four floors of Art Fair Philippines in different languages: Filipino, English, and Maranaw; and in the ancient Baybayin script.

James Clar x AC Motors

Get ready to get wet at James Clar's exhibition, which makes use of laser lights and an intersecting wall of mist. This immersive piece explores the effect of technology on how we perceive reality and space.

Art Cabinet Shop

Drop by the Art Cabinet Shop if you're looking to take home vintage movie posters, one-of-a-kind home decor, and handmade ceramic.

Fifth Floor

ArtFairPH / Projects

"Soft Punk Spring/Summer 2020" by Jellyfish Kisses

Jellyfish Kisses' 10 larger-than-life dolls are one of the first things you'll see at the Projects section. Exploring themes of origin and identity, the audience is encouraged to take a piece of cloth and dress up the 11th doll. This collaborative dress is the final touch to the artist's "Soft Punk Spring/Summer 2020."

"The Confidante" by Salvador Joel Alonday

"Brown Study" by Salvador Joel Alonday

Salvador Joel Alonday's Brown Study: The Wanderings of Juan Pikas is a tableau of life-sized sculptures retelling the story of Visayan folk character Juan Pikas. Legend has it that he was born with one leg, one arm, one ear, one eye—well, you get the picture. Alonday, for Art Fair Philippines, imagines the other characters that Juan Pikas could have met in his journey.

Paintings by Neil Pasilan

Neil Pasilan's space is a massive wall of his paintings, showing the artist's dedication to making at least one piece a day. According to him, art needs practice, so we're not surprised that he can cover a whole wall with his works.

Sculptures by Roedil Joe Geraldo

Roedil Joe Geraldo fills three circular shelves with a total of 44 terracotta sculptures. It's hard not to be drawn into the human-like forms with varying expressions.

Work by Carlo Villafuerte

Carlo Villafuerte's four pieces of textile art make use of scrap cloth from Baguio City's popular ukay-ukay. The depictions range from a self-portrait to an exploration of his hometown's stories.

Works by Perry Argel

Filled with colorful kinetic mobiles and toy-like sculptures, Perry Argel's space taps into our childlike wonder. But look closely and you'll see that the eye-catching pieces are made from salvaged objects, a testament to the amount of trash that we produce day in and day out.

Works by Onib Olmeda

One can easily get lost absorbing Onib Olmeda's room full of expressionist portraits. With frames placed side by side, the collection draws us in into the anguish and pain of man.

Works by Jaime de Guzman

Five works by Jaime de Guzman grace the walls of Art Fair Philippines. It's hard not to look away from the haunting images; but if you dare to, each piece exposes dark truths.

Works by Gene Paul Martin

Gene Paul Martin's pop surrealist paintings take time to be digested. You may even have to return to this space after you've gone through all the featured artists. Each piece has a multitude of elements painstakingly put together in what Martin calls a "time collage."

ArtFairPH / Photo

"0-1932/1" by Jason Quibilan

"0-1932/1" by Jason Quibilan (Strange Fruit Booth), which shows a set of dried fish—specifically the espada, is not your ordinary photograph. Is it a sketch? A photo? A charcoal drawing? In a short chat with SPOT.ph, Quibilan reveals that it's actually an X-ray image. But instead of white bones on black film, "0-1932/1" shows a reverse X-ray; and instead of printing on X-ray film, the piece is printed on a piece of paper. The image challenges what an X-ray photograph can do.

"a calm in the middle of the storm" by Poklong Anading

Julius Baer's booth, which houses Poklong Anading's "a calm in the middle of the storm," is also worth a visit. Take a seat and ponder on how the artist explores the liberty in how one analyzes a piece of art, a very meta technique if you think about it. In this project, Anading asked individuals to don plastic bags in an exploration of the transference of meaning and meaning-making.

"Hallow" by Nona Garcia

Nona Garcia's "Hallow" at Bio|Trans|Forms is a massive arrangement of lightboxes that you can easily check out at the ArtFairPH / Photo section. This set of nine X-ray panels shows bones of animals carefully arranged in a circular pattern.

"Material Culture" by Daniel Dela Cruz

Seemingly out of place right after the Photo section is "Material Culture" by Daniel Dela Cruz, an apt location for this eye-opener that we need in this age of consumerism (and maybe even of the art market that is Art Fair Philippines). The artist upcycles a familiar signboard bearing the name of a sari-sari store and, incidentally, a beverage brand. Surrounding it are items most of us have in our homes, from a piece of soap to a jar of peanut butter. They may be covered in cast but because they're so familiar, we know the names they bear. The piece encourages us to think about the sometimes unnecessarily excessive value we place on brands, objects, names, and even the space they're in.

ArtFairPH / Film

The Unconfined Cinema: An Expanded Cinema Project and Film Program, curated by Teddy Co, Philbert Dy, and Erwin Romulo, is an homage to the century-old history of Philippine

cinema. Videos shown range from Filipino blockbuster hits to documentaries, from animation to art installations. Make sure to pass by this section and watch for the next screening time.

ArtFairPH / Incubators: Art/N23

Art Fair Philippines' newest section, Incubators, showcases art projects that go beyond the usual gallery exhibitions. It features several exhibitors: Limbo, Load Na Dito, Project 20 Gallery, Signum, and Giatay; but if you have time to spare in this area, best to go to Art/N23. On display is an empty space—we kid. Art/N23 presents an experience: a virtual reality piece called Experience "Doon" (Over There) by Issay Rodriguez. Wearing a virtual reality (VR) headset, you get transported to a beehive-like world where you're accompanied with a bee—or rather, you are the bee. This is Rodriguez's interpretation of Rudolf Steiner's Hexagonal Force, a 1923 lecture where he explains how the shape of the hexagon does not only apply to beehives, but also for other natural processes, including how the brain works.

You can also download an app called Doon, and track down stickers found all over the venue of Art Fair. Aim your phone camera at these images to get animated illustrations of narra, makahiya, taluto, sambong, and mangga. Once you collect all five, you'll get a digital pass to Art/N23's VR booth.

Artbooks.ph

Artbooks.ph, which has an outpost along Pioneer Street in Mandaluyong, is known for selling titles dedicated solely to arts and culture. You don't usually find these at your favorite malls, so it's best not to miss this booth if you love hoarding—we mean, reading—art books.

Sixth Floor Silverlens (Booth 46)

"Opera - Screaming Faces" by Gabriel Barredo

The Silverlens booth is always an arresting mix of pieces from a variety of well-known artists—this year, the late, great Gabriel Barredo's "Opera – Screaming Faces" will stop you in your tracks before you even step inside. The resin piece, which stands almost from floor to ceiling, is a mesmerizing combination of precise symmetry and mysterious agony.

Inside the booth, Ryan Villamael's intricate, delicate series titled Ghom will leave you quietly transfixed.

"Ghom" series by Ryan Villamael

1335 Mabini / Galerie Michael Janssen (Booth 45)

"Dear Activist..." by Kiri Dalena

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words in "Look At Her": As long as there are many beautiful women there will be more rape cases.

"Look At Her" by Nikki Luna

Secret Fresh (Booth 43)

"#Golden50 (Bighead Series)" by Andres Barrioquinto

"#Traveller (Bighead Series)" by Andres Barrioquinto

Secret Fresh goes for a subdued approach for Art Fair Philippines 2020, with the monochromatic pieces in Andres Barrioquinto's "Empty Landscapes of Invisible Dangers" taking over bare white walls. It's a quirky meditation on social media and perception, and one that's paradoxically likely to make you want to post about it, yourself.

Pinto Art Museum (Booth 28)

"Grove of Trees" by Erwin Leano

Pinto's collection of paintings by Erwin Leano, for the series Silent Forest, is a quiet, soothing oasis in the middle of the fair's typically crowded, lively energy; a mix of pale greens and whites providing a calming escape that's perfectly apt considering Pinto's nature-flanked home in Antipolo.

Tin-Aw (Booth 25)

"Hanging Meat" and "Delicatessen" by Francis Commeyne

"Well" by Christina Quisumbing Ramilo

Sex is the centerpiece at Tin-Aw this year, with pieces by Francis Commeyne titled "Hanging Meat" and "Delicatessen" grabbing your attention, along with the more subtle "Well" by Christina Quisumbing Ramilo, and "...this too shall wilt in time.." by Ambie Abano.

Seventh Floor

Galerie Stephanie (Booth 72)

Irresistible Grace by Julie Lluch.

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Walking into Julie Lluch's solo exhibit Irresistible Grace is like walking into every Pinoy's nightmare—an entire history rolled into a single room. Jose Rizal looks ready to walk out from the mess happening behind him, as important figures all crowd around two men, one lying perhaps dead in a pool of blood and another hooded figure pulling him away in echoes of the fallen gladiator in Juan Luna's "Spoliarium." It is still as you are surrounded by all the figures, but there is a certain energy—almost a delirium and a damning—that it evokes.

Art Cube (Booth 70)

"Heads or Tails" and "Sa Pula sa Puti" by Guerrero Habulan

"Sampaguita Santita" by Guerrero Habulan

PARADOXIKALYE, Guerrero Habulan's solo exhibit at Art Cube, is a not so gentle reminder of the urban confusion we live in. Each painting in the collection takes from the familiar imagery of Philippine streets, mixed and mangled with the beliefs and ideologies—from the church, to commerce, to western cultures—that rule it. The paintings take these contesting concepts and turn them into images that evoke the same wildness our streets often do.

Eskinita Art Gallery (Booth 68)

"Ang Duplo sa Karagatan ng Manipuladong Senakulo sa Kamay ng mga Uwak at Lobo" by Jojit Solano

Jojit Solano's solo show Payawar is an unforgiving take on the Catholic church. Solano's pieces attack those who have used faith as means to spread anything other than the truth. By using religious imagery and taking pieces usually seen in church altars and then morphing them into corrupt versions, Solano presents all the darkness of organized religion. See icons and idols turned into farcical imagery, with the church turned into the dark and comical carnival that Solano presents.

La Lanta Fine Art (Booth 58)

"Bella 6" by Nilraya Bundasak

If your soul is in need of some uplifting, then check out the works of Thai artist Nilraya Bundasak. Embroidery is perhaps one of the oldest art forms there is, but it gets a current touch in the hands of Bundasak. The artist took separate parts of several women's faces—an eye here, a nose there—and put them together and stitched them into new ones. Come in as close as you can to see how each single thread was meticulously placed to evoke lights, shadows, depths, and beauty in the Bella series.

Orange Project (Booth 77)

"Kabalaslan Series" by Karina Broce Gonzaga

Six women from Negros Occidental came together to build Istorya Context: Amon Ni. The exhibit features several artworks by the different artists with each telling a different story on growing up as an Ilonggo woman. In Karina Broce Gonzaga's "Kabalaslan Series" the artist used resin casts and other materials to recreate the typical Bacolod carenderia, an integral part of her childhood. Here, the women owners of the roadside restaurants let their customers rack up quite the bill, just as long as their stomachs were filled, creating not a debt of money, but one of gratitude.

Canvas (Booth 67)

"The Membrane Series: Flesh II (Female)" by Ross Jaylo

"The Membrane Series: Flesh I (Male)" by Ross Jaylo

Ross Jaylo's solo exhibit *Origin* takes on the question that has been asked since time immemorial: where did we come from? Jaylo's fresh take on human existence takes on a more literal meaning, as figures stripped of skin—and left with flesh and bones in bright whites and soft grays—call for us to reflect on the question. One side of the exhibit is filled with white strips hanging from the ceiling: walk into it and be greeted by the bare faces of male and female figures, part of Jaylo's "The Membrane Series: Flesh."

Art Verité (Booth 71)

"The Pizza Eater" by Orley Ypon

"Duck Hunters" by Orley Ypon

Works by Emmanuel Garibay and Orley Ypon come together for the *Kâti* exhibit—one that banks on that unknown, unsure, and uneasy feeling. Check out Ypon's "The Pizza Eater" which portrays a false prophet sitting with his goons as the people who put their faith in him suffer all around. Another painting of Ypon, called "Duck Hunters," shows a different kind of Adam and Eve as they once were: naked, sinless, and happy.

#ArtFairPH in Three Hours

You may have spent a couple of hours on the road, and now you only have three hours to spend at The Link. This means you roughly have an hour to wander around each floor. (Not counting the queuing time, of course!) Here are specific pieces you need to see so you can budget your time wisely.

Fifth Floor
ArtFairPH / Projects

"The Confidante" by Salvador Joel Alonday

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Sculptures by Roedil Joe Geraldo

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Works by Perry Argel

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#ArtFairPH in 90 Minutes

We understand, some of us work on weekends and stopping by The Link means carving some time out of a busy day. It's also possible that you just got stuck at registration. You don't have to worry because you can still enjoy the Metro's biggest contemporary art fair. Here are the booths you shouldn't miss as you breeze through.

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