

Press Release

Manuel Ocampo: Ideological Mash-Up/Remix

18 May – 22 June 2019

Opening: Friday, 17 May, 6.30pm – 8.30pm

Guest-of-Honour: H.E. Joseph Del Mar Yap, Ambassador of the Philippines to Singapore



If All You Are Is A Nail Then Everything Looks Like A Hammer Version 1, 2019,
Screenprint, relief cast paper, handpainted and screenprinted flags on canvas, 232 x 935 cm

“We have seen and learnt too much; we cannot see with old eyes”.
– David Freedberg, *The Power of Images: Studies in the History and Theory of Response*

Multiple award-winning Filipino painter Manuel Ocampo challenges how we respond to images in today’s global culture of compulsive image consumption and production. Employing symbols and iconographies of faith, brutality and comic absurdity for which the artist is renowned, “Ideological Mash-Up/Remix” straddles between the familiar and the arbitrary, triggering conflicting emotions of attraction and repulsion in equal parts.

From Angry Birds to Russian Constructivist grids, from Cuzco angels to Goyaesque devils, Ocampo imbues variations of old imagery with new approaches, creating his most sustained exploration of print and paper experimentations which includes lithography, screenprint, collagraphy, aquatint and etching. Questioning identity and versions of culture, the artist incorporated digital imagery and icons in popular culture such as emojis for the first time as part of his chaotic and violent compositions, drawing parallels to a “messy desktop”. From his sprawling canvases of nearly ten metres to his monochromatic etchings, his raw works engulf the viewer in a heady collage of culturally loaded symbols from a fragmented time and space, embedded with hints of the artist’s personal narrative.

Ocampo’s syncretic approach to image-making is influenced by his Catholic upbringing and the cultural hybridity that surrounds him in Manila and its colonial past. His colourful expression of historical and cultural dynamics, also inspired by the aesthetics of punk culture, is laced with his signature dark humour. Recurring motifs such as cartoonish vultures serve as ambiguous metaphors of the artist’s experience from life on the go as an outsider looking into various cultures, never belonging to any, whilst manipulated and ambiguous symbols investigate the legitimacy and authority of association and collective memory.

Recalling the spectres of history, of painting, and of oneself, “Ideological Mash-Up/Remix” gives concrete forms to vague ideas, contesting the purity of symbols and image representation in society.

For further information, please contact:
communications@stpi.com.sg | +65 6336 3663



Virtue Signalling On The Bully Pulpit pt. 5, 2019, Stitched-on handpainted collages, screenprint and acrylic on canvas, 124 x 116 cm



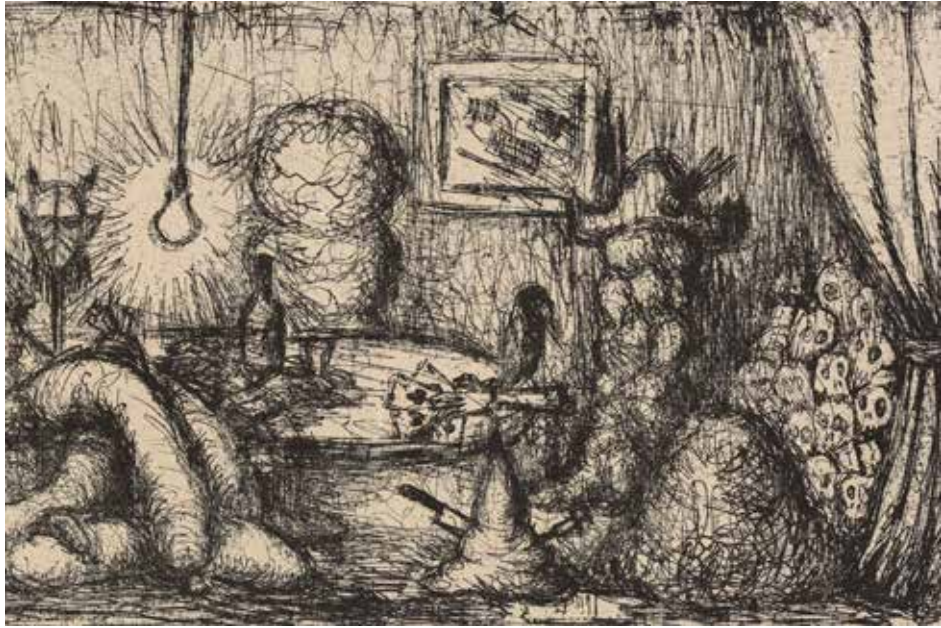
The Unwilling To Work, 2018, Archival print collage and crayon on STPI handmade paper, 151 x 126 cm



The Grievance Studies Department, 2018, Screenprint, archival print collage and pulp painting on handmade paper, 120 x 107.5 cm



On The Way To The Gulag pt. 1, 2018, Collagraphy and screenprint on paper, 141.5 x 109 cm



The Meeting (detail), 2018, Etching and relief on paper, 38.6 x 60.2 cm



One Annihilates While Thinking, 2018, Chinese ink on STPI handmade paper, 165 x 130 cm



Virtue Signalling on the Bully Pulpit, 2018, Collagraphy and screenprint on paper, 141.5 x 109 cm



Learning To Code pt. 6, 2019, Stitched-on handpainted collages, screenprint and acrylic on canvas, 126 x 116 cm



SJWs On The Way To The Intersectional Temple, 2019, Stitched-on screenprinted and handpainted collages, screenprint and acrylic on canvas, 123 x 115 cm

About the Artist



Multiple award-winning painter Manuel Ocampo (b. 1965, Philippines) is known for his frequent and strategic stylistic drifts in response to new contexts and subject matter. His shows are often constructed around contradictory tendencies, elaborating discrepancies between what a painting appears to be and how it behaves in relation to the structures that legitimate its appearance. He always embraces sudden shifts of style and emphasis. He paints, but doubt is created as to whether any particular medium is the solution.

The artist has been a vital presence on the international art scene for over two decades now; his works were presented in two of the most important European art events, Documenta IX (1992) and the Venice Biennale (1993). In the early 1990s, he participated in the iconic exhibition “Helter Skelter: L.A. Art in the 1990s” at The Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles (1992).

Public collections include MOCA Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles; MINCARs Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofia, Madrid; FNAC Fonds National d’Art Contemporain, Paris; Fukuoka Asian Art Museum, Japan; and MUDAM Musée d’Art Moderne Grand-Duc Jean, Luxembourg.

“The strong symbolism in my paintings is presented as empty signs. I want to push the conventions of painting to the point of ridicule...to go beyond thought.” – Manuel Ocampo

The artist currently lives and works in Quezon City, Philippines.

About STPI

STPI is a dynamic creative workshop and contemporary art gallery based in Singapore. Established in 2002, STPI is a not-for-profit organization committed to promoting artistic experimentation in the mediums of print and paper and has become one of the most cutting-edge destinations for contemporary art in Asia. STPI sits alongside National Gallery Singapore and the Singapore Art Museum as part of the national Visual Arts Cluster of leading institutions in the region.

STPI Creative Workshop is a rigorous space for pushing the boundaries of various print and papermaking techniques. Bolstered by specialised facilities and a highly qualified workshop team, STPI Creative Workshop produces unique collaborations with leading international artists to challenge conventions in art, explore new trajectories in their practice and share their experience with the public.

STPI Gallery is an active platform that fosters the exchange of ideas in contemporary art with its diverse exhibitions and public programme. The gallery hosts specially curated exhibitions of works produced in the STPI Creative Workshop and regularly participates in international fairs. This enables it to nurture and sustain local and international interest in both its artist collaborations and in the mediums of print and paper. The gallery's public programme aims to engage and broaden visitor understanding of contemporary art, while collaborations with a variety of international curators, collectors and gallerists provide a holistic experience for audiences on a global level.

Public Programmes at STPI

Artist Talk: Manuel Ocampo
with Joyce Toh
Saturday, 18 May, 4.00pm – 5.00pm

Upcoming Exhibitions

STPI Annual Special Exhibition: Takashi Murakami
13 July – 14 September 2019

Pinaree Sanpitak
24 September – 9 November 2019

Melati Suryodarmo
22 November – 11 January 2020