



Memoirs of My Maternal Genes 2009 acrylic on canvas 198 x 300 cm

A Game of Mahjong with My In-Laws 2009 acrylic on canvas 175 x 199.5 cm



DON MARALIT SALUBAYBA (b. September 13, 1976, Davao City, Philippines)
Painter-Puppeteer-Animator

Educational Background

2000 Bachelor in Studio Arts, University of the Philippines,
College of Fine Arts Diliman, Quezon City, Philippines
1995 Visual Arts Major, Philippine High School for the Arts, Los Baños,
Laguna, Philippines

Selected Solo Exhibitions

2009 The Unofficial Theory of Power, The Drawing Room Gallery,
Makati City, Philippines
2008 A Brown Man's Shadow Allegory Project, Tin-aw Gallery,
Makati City, Philippines
Images From My Floating Third World, The Drawing Room Gallery,
Makati City, Philippines
2006 Imole-Nacion, Amoroso Gallery, Cultural Center of the Philippines,
Pasay City, Philippines
2003 Hugs-Tao, Kulay-Diwa Art Galleries, Parañaque, Philippines
Echoes of The Sea, Residency Exhibit, Anita gallery, Casa San Miguel,
Zambales, Philippines
2002 Portraits: Works On Paper, Kulay-Diwa Art Galleries,
Parañaque City, Philippines
Figured Awaities, Boston Gallery, Cubao, Quezon City, Philippines

Selected Group Exhibitions

2009 Diminishing Returns, Tin-aw Gallery, Makati City Philippines
Tutok-Eduk, Tala Gallery, Quezon City, Philippines
2008 Pull-Pulisan, Zero in Project, Museo Pambata, Manila, Philippines
Tutok-Kargado, Ateneo Art Gallery, Quezon City, Philippines
2005 Retro-active, Cultural Center of the Philippines, Pasay City, Philippines
Spoonful Discard, Cultural Center of the Philippines, Pasay City,
Philippines
2004 Sung Duan Making The Local, Cultural Center of the Philippines, Pasay
City, Philippines

International Exhibitions

2008 Winds Of Artist In Residence 2008, Fukuoka Asian Art Museum,
Fukuoka, Japan
2007 Art For Humanity, Cochran Hall, Kirkcudbright International Arts
Festival, Kirkcudbright, Scotland, U.K.
2005 Nimbi And Penumbrae, D.U.M.B.O. Art Center, Williamsburgh, New York
Filipin' Out, Goliath Visual Space, Brooklyn, New York
2004 ASEAN, Asian Center for Visual Arts, Hanoi, Vietnam

Awards

2009 CCP Thirteen Artist Awardee, Cultural Center of the Philippines
Honorable Mention, CCP Gawad Awards for Animation (Row Our Boat)
2006 Special Jury Prize and Voice Award, Singapore Short Films Festival,
Substation (A Not So Giant Story)
2000 Dominador Castaneda Award for Best Thesis, University of the
Philippines

Residencies

2008 FUKUOKA ASIAN ART MUSEUM, Fukuoka, Japan
2004-2005 International Studio and Curatorial Program, New York
2004 Fall Headlands Center for the Arts, San Francisco, U.S.A
2002-2003 Center for the Arts in San Antonio (CASA SAN MIGUEL) Zambales,
Philippines

Group Affiliation

ANNO Shadowplay Collective
www.anno.singr.net



The Triumph of Man Over Man
2009 acrylic on canvas 208.5 x 142 cm

FRONT COVER

Sisterly Sisters 2009 acrylic on canvas 195 x 137 cm

EXHIBITION DATES: 10 JULY - 2 AUGUST 2009

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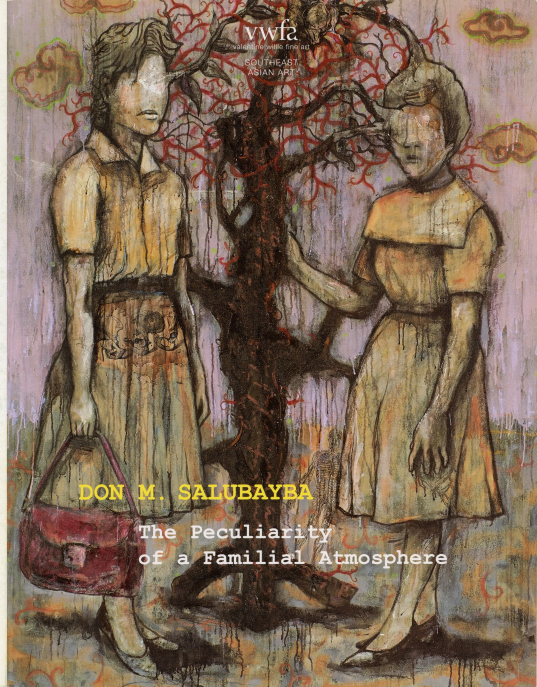
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Gallery opening hours: Tuesday - Saturday: 11am to 7pm.
Sunday: 11am to 3pm. Closed on Mondays and public holidays.

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SOUTHEAST
ASIAN ART

DON M. SALUBAYBA

**The Peculiarity
of a Familial Atmosphere**

SOMETHING PECULIAR, SOMETHING FAMILIAR



Artificial Position 2009 mixed media on canvas 170 x 105.5 cm

The dynamics of human relationships set within the structure of a family is questioned at Don Salubayba's current series, *THE PECULIARITY OF A FAMILIAL ATMOSPHERE*. Departing from the context of Filipino families, Salubayba touches upon the unchanging, unspoken norms played out by families in general – the authoritarian element, the pull of individualism and push of communal obligation, all the other implied can-do's and cannot's – and most of all, what makes up the nexus through which a family flourishes.

The subject of Salubayba's paintings are referred from archival photographs of direct and affinal kin, original images of which are manipulated yet again in the three minute video *Penumbra y Nostalgia*. His syncopated visual rhythm draws out the datedness, almost crumbling quality of these selected photos – their worn of years captured in the fading palette, eccentric lines and indiscernible text across the foreground (mirror a postcard greeting perhaps?). Signifiers of the period from which they lived float about with them: a spaceship accompanies *Age of Nescience*, while a now vintage car peers between two figures donned in 'saya', a traditional Filipino dress, in *Artificial Position*.

In the photo's appropriation, the characters loses their face without compromising their context. Locked in a capsule, the narrative of each portrait is carried through objects in possible association with them – period objects, transfers of anatomical parts. Yet, the hollowness of each element would connote a spectrum of what they could possibly signify. Is it in their stoicism through which nostalgia is withdrawn? And is it through this facial neutrality, this avenue to carry any face at all, that makes them more than just artefacts?

The intent of engaging a degree of participation by projecting a more familiar face in those spaces, on the other hand, points to the virtue of "saving face." "Delicadeza", a Filipino term for propriety or avoiding any sort of communal embarrassment, is developed and obligated by the family. To save face is not to save just any face, particularly one's own face, but to save the collective face. Individual interests are subordinate to family interests, hence nullifying the telling signs of individuality. Instead, Salubayba provides hints of individual desires silently attempting to oppose, or validate, the institution which is the family. For instance, *Sisterly Sisters* are surrounded by thorny red vines that subtly scream against the deteriorating backdrop staged for them. Other than that, it could be sensed that the effacement becomes more acute according to the degree of family-orientatedness. *Memoirs Of My Maternal Genes* could easily spot the mother figure, literally "holding the house up and



Tie That Binds, Tie That Ties 2009 mixed media on canvas 209 x 142.5 cm



Age of Nescience 2009 mixed media on canvas 170 x 90 cm

together" – the only facial feature left is her lips as the other characters bear symbolic features that may point to their respective personas.

To lose one's individual face only to acquire, or carry in a sense, a communal face which is an identity nevertheless is rooted in this interplay of familial obligation and authority. This authoritarian aspect, though, is noticed to be non-arbitrary in issues of gender. Studies in Philippine family system would attest that the carrier of authority is not immutable, that it is not entirely male-centric mainly because Filipinos trace their family relations bilaterally through their mother's and father's lines. *Memoirs Of My Maternal Genes* may give prominence to female figures – the elderly woman that can attest to be the grandmother as well as the mother who cradles a miniature house in her arms. On the other hand, *A Game Of Mahjong With My In-laws* shows a male figure carrying another character while juggling a handful of symbolic fruit. These two pieces would point out that the authority ends up being placed upon the individual – either male or female – who handles and upholds the comparatively heaviest sense of familial duty.

THE PECULIARITY OF A FAMILIAL ATMOSPHERE, in turn, looks at the Panoptic impetus in gender and hierarchy separately in *Tie That Binds*, *Tie That Ties* and *The Triumph Of Man Over Man*. While the latter comments on the patriarchal face value, where the machismo society depicts man as overlords with trophies on their heads, the criss-crossing lines that surround them suggest a trap borne out of straight-line mentality. In their every pedestal, men are seen to be merely competing with other men. *Tie That Binds*, *Tie That Ties* still posit a hierarchy at work – through means of age and affluence – while present women in a structured uniformity in the tug between filial duty, and individual pursuits. Women become held back, not because there are no options for gratification beyond the family, but because they instead choose to tie themselves to the family. Michel Foucault aptly describes the transition of institution into a free-wheeling system of turning people into their own watchers. Human fabrications such as gender identities, roles and the duties that cling to them may give the impression of progress and option. But *THE PECULIARITY OF A FAMILIAL ATMOSPHERE* wonders, through the most immediate, simplest unit of the family: where does the trade-off between sacred familism to secular individualism lie? In peculiarity of families, a familiar question is posed: what doesn't really change despite the so-called evolution of society?



A Figure of Pageantry 2009 mixed media on canvas 170 x 122 cm