

ART FAIR PHILIPPINES **2023**

Feb 17-19 The Link Ayala Center Makati

6F – Booth 36

# ato' bala'

curated by Moreen Austria

REGIONAL FOCUS: ORANGE PROJECT  
AN EXHIBITION FOR ART FAIR PHILIPPINES 2023

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## *Ato' Bala'!* by Moreen Austria

Often considered as a colloquial Ilonggo phrase, these two Hiligaynon or Ilonggo words cannot be Googled. Separately scrutinized, *ato'* means that or those or there, and *bala'* does not mean a bullet, but could mean "you know." Without any explicit or direct English or Filipino translation, *ato' bala'* is a phrase that could mean anything from the most mundane to the spectacular of thoughts, things or ideas all mulled over and introspected. The commonality in all is that these are undoubtedly shared. What intrigues the most is the seeming vagueness to what is shared. The short words command to extract from a shared memory, and directs one to recall.

To witness the inherent dynamism of people and culture from one shared space and time, the *Ato' Bala'* exhibition draws out from Bacolod-based artists Aeson Baldevia, Brandon Braza, Guenivere Decena, Daryl Feril, Erika Mayo, and Megumi Miura what is of the past and poignantly remembered. In their individual interpretations, one finds that what is contemporary is obviously seen and what has changed is allowed to surface.



# *Aeson Baldevia*

about the artist



Aeson Baldevia is a multi-disciplinary artist, based in Silay City, Philippines. He had accomplished multiple awards including being the first and only four-time awardee of USLS's Corps d' Elite, Best Campus Photoblogger, and Campus Photojournalist in Western Visayas. He currently works as a freelance photographer partnering with various local and international non-government organizations. He also frequently exhibits his work as a Fine Art Photographer.

Recently, he was awarded 3rd place by FIBA International Photo Contest and represented the country as a lone Filipino finalist in the Celeste Art Prize London in 2017. His works were showcased in Switzerland, Belgium, London, Japan, South Korea among others.

His works talk about human behavior, emotion, relationships, and the ability to survive in their environment.



**Ato Bala guina ubra nila**  
*Backlit Video Projection on Window Panes*  
2023  
Code: AFP2023-AB-001

## Artist Statement

I am drawn to exploring the intersections between technology and tradition in Filipino culture. With video installation, projected through a backlit window, the work aims to showcase the loss of traditional activities and customs that were once an integral part of daily life in the Philippines, but have since become obsolete due to the influence of technology.

The backlit window symbolizes the past, providing a glimpse into a time when these activities were still prevalent. The video projection captures the beauty and simplicity of these now-forgotten practices, showcasing their cultural significance and the richness they added to daily life.

Through this work, I hope to evoke a sense of nostalgia and spark a conversation about the impact of technology on cultural heritage. I believe that it is important to acknowledge and preserve these traditions, as they are an integral part of our collective history and identity.

This work is a tribute to the past and explores the present. It invites viewers to reflect on the changes brought about by technology and to consider the value of preserving traditional practices in the face of progress.

## Ato Bala sa Dakô Balay (A homage to home)



### **Bibliya**

*UV Print on Acetate on Lightbox*

*24 x 16 x 3 inches*

*2023*

*Code: AFP2023-AB-002*

## Artist Statement

As an artist, I am fascinated by the concept of ephemeral household objects and how they can become obsolete over time. In Filipino culture, many of these objects hold sentimental value and are deeply rooted in our daily lives. However, with the rapid advancement of technology and the changing needs of society, these once essential objects are slowly becoming irrelevant and forgotten.

Through my art, I aim to shed light on this phenomenon and preserve the memory of these objects that are slowly disappearing from our daily lives. I believe that by highlighting their significance and showcasing them in a new light, we can revitalize their value and prevent them from fading into obscurity.

My work explores the themes of memory, nostalgia, and the passage of time, and I hope to spark a sense of reflection and appreciation for these ephemeral household objects. Through my art, I aim to challenge the notion of what is considered disposable and raise awareness about the importance of preserving our cultural heritage for future generations.





**Botelya nga na dulang**

*UV Print on Acetate on Lightbox*  
24 x 24 x 3 inches  
2023  
Code: AFP2023-AB-003



**Plantsa ni Yayay**

*UV Print on Acetate on Lightbox*  
24 x 16 x 5 inches  
2023  
Code: AFP2023-AB-004



**Radyo ka Familia Locsin**

*UV Print on Acetate on Lightbox*  
24 x 24 x 3 inches  
2023  
Code: AFP2023-AB-005



**Baro't Saya ni Lola Diling**

*UV Print on Acetate on Lightbox*  
24 x 48 x 3 inches  
2023  
Code: AFP2023-AB-006



**Callado**

*UV Print on Acetate on Lightbox*  
24 x 48 x 5 inches  
2023  
Code: AFP2023-AB-007

**Christ the King**

*UV Print on Acetate on Lightbox*  
24 x 32 x 3 inches  
2023  
Code: AFP2023-AB-008



**Baston ni Lolo Papa**

*UV Print on Acetate on Lightbox*  
24 x 32 x 5 inches  
2023  
Code: AFP2023-AB-009



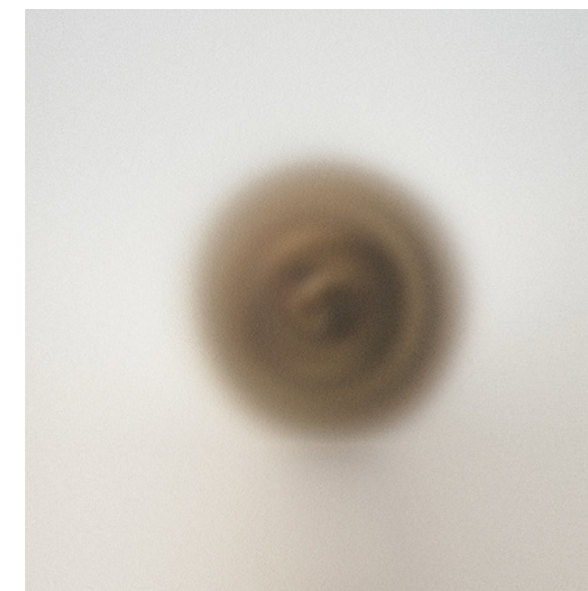
**Batirol ni Nanay Carmecita**

*UV Print on Acetate on Lightbox*  
24 x 24 x 5 inches  
2023  
Code: AFP2023-AB-010



**Ato Bala...**

*UV Print on Acetate on Lightbox*  
24 x 24 x 3 inches  
2023  
Code: AFP2023-AB-011





# *Brandon Braza*

about the artist

Brandon Braza is an emerging young artist from Bacolod City. In 2019, Braza graduated senior high school with a major in Arts and Design. He's currently taking up Certificate of Fine Arts - Studio Arts in University of the Philippines - Cebu. His works are usually inspired by objects found in an average Filipino home, creating an atmosphere of familiarity and, to an extent, comfort. Braza grew up in a home with grandparents who are seamstress and woodworkers. He took the time to learn his grandparent's crafts while still in his youth. To him, woodwork and other crafts have always been a chance to keep the hands busy and the mind clear.





### **Ato bala, kadumdom ka?**

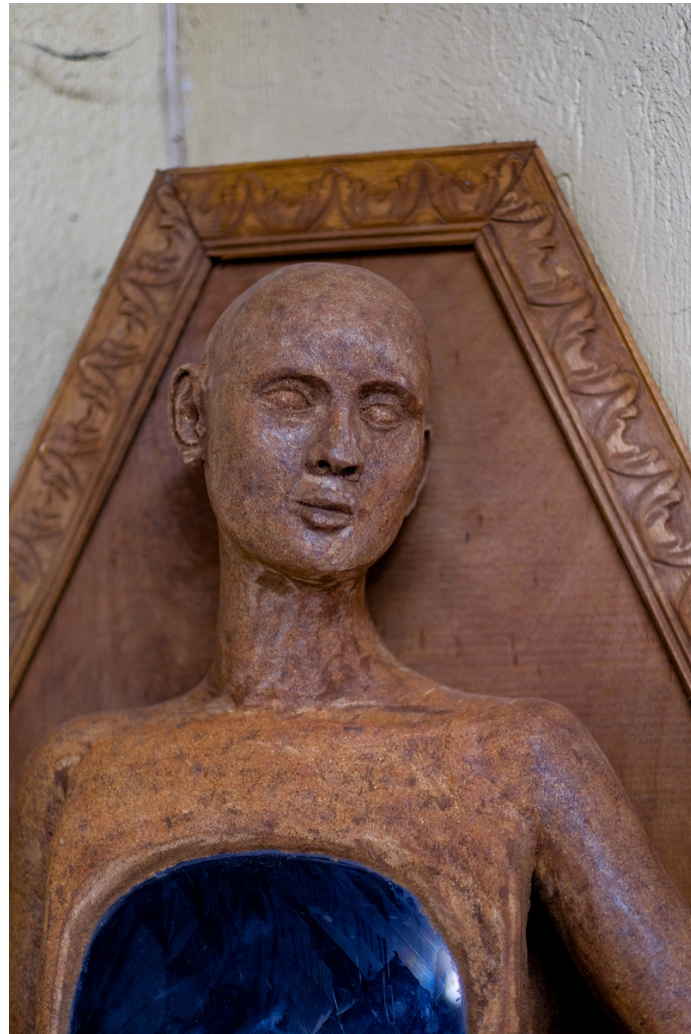
*Monitor, Pisonet Components, and Wood  
Variable Dimensions  
2023*

*Code: AFP2023-BB-012*

## Artist Statement

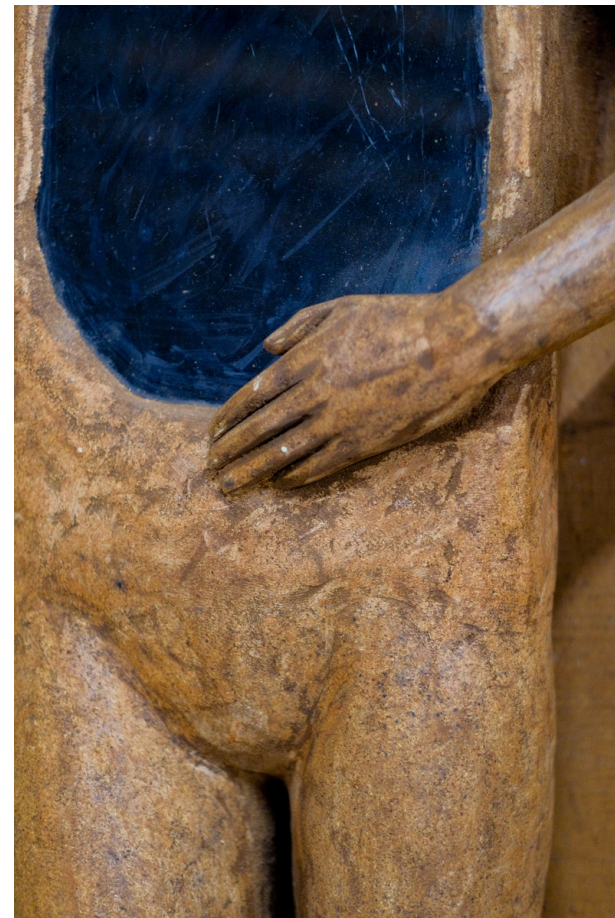
The word 'nostalgia' derives from the Greek words nostos (return home) and algos (pain). Often associated with sadness and sometimes loss: is nostalgia really a sign that a person is unable to adapt to a new life? Or does it help us give more importance to living in the present as we reminisce about the past? This interactive installation brings up a discussion of what is often juxtaposed so as to form a redemption sequence -a narrative pattern that progresses from a negative to a positive or triumphant life scene. From the laughter echoing within the four walls to the silent corners that heard our darkest secrets, truly home is where your heart is. We may depart from it but as we go, we leave a part of us in there. So, if we ever happen to return home, we often find a missing part of us - even if going home simply means walking down the memory lane.





**Ato Bala, sa Balay ta Sang Una I**

*Mixed Media*  
*Variable Dimensions*  
*2023*  
Code: AFP2023-BB-013



## *Daryl Feril*

about the artist

Daryl Feril is a Filipino multidisciplinary artist based in Bacolod City, Philippines whose practice spans illustration, design and visual art. A graduate of La Consolacion College Bacolod with a degree in Bachelor of Fine Arts major in Advertising Arts. Working mainly in illustration & design, he often shifts into the visual arts to express a more personal and deeper approach on his work. He intersects and integrates ideas across these disciplines as part of his creative practice.

Feril's style transcends media as he explores a variety of approach to present his ideas. Recurring themes in his personal works include melancholy, reminiscence, combined with elements about home and origin. These themes are materialized with his use of analog and digital techniques. He often finds excitement from experimentation and working in territories unknown to him. In a decade, he has produced a diverse portfolio with his intricate, luscious and vibrant artistic style working with brands across a variety of industries such as The Balvenie, The David Lynch Foundation, Ford Motor Company, Heineken, Hilton, Johnnie Walker, Jo Malone London, Singapore Airlines, Tiger Beer, Tory Burch and The Walt Disney Company.

Daryl Feril was discovered by a New York-based creative agency in 2012 which led him to his first huge break creating illustrations for LVMH worldwide luxury retailer, DFS Group for its Spring/Summer 2013 global campaign. He was among the 12 Filipino creatives who were featured in the Asian Creatives: Book of 150 Emerging Talents in Art, Design, Illustration; Photography in 2013 and has won 3 metals both Silver & Bronze at the adobo Design Awards in 2014 & 2015 respectively. He also participated in art residencies in Gwangju, South Korea and continues to do gallery exhibitions under Orange Project.

He is currently working full-time as a designer and visual artist at his home studio in Bacolod City, Island of Negros in the Philippines.







**Ato Bala Ang Ginaluto Nila Sang Una I  
(Remember The Dish That They  
Would Cook)**

*Wooden curio cabinet, glass, acrylic enamel on  
secondhand porcelain plates, thread, ink on paper  
84h x 24w inches | 10d inches | 11h x 5w inches*

2023

Code: AFP2023-DF-014

## Artist Statement

Memories of family meals, recipes passed down through the generations are crucial elements that shape identities and link us to our culture and roots. Preserving family recipes and passing them along honors ancestry and creates continuity through generations. Food act as a language and representation of emotions, culture and identity. Through personal narratives, food becomes markers of memory that connects the past and the present. Sparked by a memory over a family meal trying to recall a dish his grandmother would cook him, the artist depicts culinary histories of families through an art installation in Ato Bala Ang Ginaluto Nila Sang Una (Remember The Dish That They Would Cook) involving a thread weaving that hold and tie together a series of hand painted family dishes with acrylic and enamel on secondhand porcelain plates accompanied with autobiographical narratives of each dishes, housed in a modern curio cabinet that explore ideas on memory, lineage, and the connections between internal and external composition of ones identity.



### Ato Bala Ang Ginaluto Nila Sang Una II (Remember The Dish That They Would Cook)

Wooden curio cabinet, glass, acrylic enamel on  
secondhand porcelain plates, thread, ink on paper  
84h x 24w inches | 10d inches | 11h x 5w inches

2023

Code: AFP2023-DF-015

### Ato Bala Ang Ginaluto Nila Sang Una I (Remember The Dish That They Would Cook)

Archival print 1 of 1  
24h x 26w inches  
2023

Code: AFP2023-DF-016



### Ato Bala Ang Ginaluto Nila Sang Una II (Remember The Dish That They Would Cook)

Archival print 1 of 1  
24h x 26w inches  
2023

Code: AFP2023-DF-017



# *Erika Mayo*

about the artist

Erika Mayo (1993) is a full-time visual artist specializing in traditional media such as oils and acrylics. Mayo continues to push her artistic practice by venturing into mixed media, installation, and printmaking. She is based in Bacolod city and has participated in various group exhibitions in Bacolod, Iloilo, Cebu, and Manila. Known for her grim palette and gritty brushstrokes, Mayo's works pay homage to marginalized sectors of society, specifically women. The social relevance of her narrative subtly reveals covert social realities that may be linked to issues on gender.





**Ato Bala Ang Gatas Nga**

*Oil on canvas*

4 x 6 feet

2023

Code: AFP2023-EM-018

**Artist Statement**

An exploration of the artist's perceived yet conflicting idealization of being a daughter and a mother through a series of apparitions of an odd lactating cow.





**Ato Bala Ang  
Gapalagyo Sa Damgo Mo**

*Oil on canvas*  
4 x 6 feet  
2023

Code: AFP2023-EM-019



**Ato Bala Ang Gatumbo Nga Baka**

*Oil on canvas*  
4 x 6 feet  
2023  
Code: AFP2023-EM-021



**Ato Bala Ang  
Ginahandom Mo**

*Oil on canvas*  
4 x 6 feet  
2023  
Code: AFP2023-EM-020



# *Guenivere Decena*

about the artist



After graduating as Cum Laude in the college of Fine Arts in LCC Bacolod last 2009, Guen ventured into practicing art with communities through residency grants both local and abroad. Her multi-disciplinary practice in art brings about a holistic merge of installation and painting to her exhibitions; curiously presenting the in-betweens, interconnections and the possibilities we can find all around us. Her solo exhibitions include Take Cover (2018) and The Will of Becoming (2015) both held at Galerie R4L Seon, Switzerland| Fragile HOM Art Trans, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia (2014)| i-ntersections at NOVA Gallery Makati City, Philippines (2013)|Suspend the World at Alliance Francaise de Manille, Embassyof France (2012)|Constant Point of Vanishing at Gallery Orange Bacolod City, Philippines (2011). She is the sole female member of SAGE (Southeast Asia Artist Group Exchange) residency in Malaysia and Indonesia in 2013. She was granted residency by Project Space Pilipinas, Lucban in 2014. And in 2015, she accepted a residency in IILM School of Design, New Delhi, India.





### “Ato Bala Ang Balay Gikan Sa Baraha”

*Acrylic on Canvas, laminated cards on cured and painted plain sheet and round bar  
7 ft. tondo, variable-size cards*

2023

Code: AFP2023-GD-022

## Artist Statement

The word crisis is rooted in the terms- to sift, and to keep only what is worth while I believe that although the cards we are dealt with is not in our hands, Everyday is an opportunity to be grateful.

I paint this in sweet surrender to the dance of life...  
Which do not have to be clear in order to be beautiful. Or with meaning.

I paint this in deep gratitude to the majesty of the wind...  
Which do not have to be visible in order to be real. Or without consequence.

I paint this in deep observation to the sermon of every tragedy...  
Which do not have to be easy in order to be accepted. Or faced without fear.

I paint this in honour of all the families who are currently overcoming challenges in every form.

There is a calm at the center of every storm.

There is a calm at the center of who you are.

May we all find it.

All of us.

*Note:*

*The Visayas has been struck by several strong typhoons.*

*The artist was inspired by the Visayans' strong spirit despite the many challenges they have faced.*

*The artist co-organized an exhibition for a cause in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia for the victims of Yolanda. Along with volunteers, they gave the funds directly to affected families of Barotak in 2014, giving twelve families a new home.*

# *Megumi Miura*

about the artist

Megumi is a Bacolod-based full-time artist. She was born and raised in Japan where she received her basic education. In her youth, she played various instruments with her school and community orchestras, performing during local festivals. She would also watch her aunt create traditional geisha dolls. This exposure to music and craft sparked her eventual passion for artistic pursuits, especially toy-making. In the late 2000's, Megumi moved to Bacolod and, over time, established an art career. A self-taught artist, Megumi usually plays with color and whimsy to explore topics ranging from female eroticism to motherhood. She utilizes different types of art forms such as painting, sculpture, textile art, and toy-making. Megumi has had Three solo exhibitions and has participated in numerous group shows in Bacolod and Manila.







**Ato Bala ang mga Nakita Naton**  
**(Those That We See)**

*Acrylic on Recycled Corrugated box, Paper and Glue*  
*Variable dimension*  
2023  
Code: AFP2023-MM-023

## Artist Statement

History is an organic being, kept alive through the different ways people share their individual narratives and eventually makes its way to blend in a greater collective memory. This is the focus of the artist, Megumi Miura, with her piece called "Ato Bala ang mga Nakita Naton" (Those That We See).

Miura is fascinated with how visual art is one of the many ways to share these narratives and remember history. "Ato Bala ang mga Nakita Naton" explores economic inequality. The work is depicting impoverished children, weak and starving amidst gigantic candy and different sweets hanging above them. The size and message of this piece is anything but subtle, it demands your attention and does not spare you.

According to Miura, she chose to depict impoverished children, for they are the future and yet they are not afforded basic foundations to be capable and healthy adults, foundations as basic as proper nutrition and health care. Above them floats obnoxious amounts of giant browning and old candies, impossible for the children to reach. This shows how there is excessive amount of surplus and luxury that that a few rich people enjoy for years and years while the rest do not even have the most basic of necessities. The contrast between extreme lack and the gross indulgence are also seen by the colors Miura used.

"Ato Bala ang mga Nakita Naton" resonates a global phenomenon and an on going them in our human history. Specifically, Miura wants the audience to remember the economic disparity in her hometown, Negros and how it suffered immensely during the Martial Law era where poor people die from malnutrition while the wealthy enjoy decadent lifestyles..

This nod towards history is also seen in Miura's choice of materials. She says that 97% of the materials use is broken down cardboard boxes. Cardboard boxes are also organic, easily broken down like oral narratives, it is malleable and easily shaped like different stories that create history. She shaped it into the people like the people shaped their identity. She sourced massive amounts of recycled cardboard boxes from friends, family, and various donations. The cardboard boxes represent how poverty forces resilience, using uncanny materials to survive. Cardboard boxes are used for building shelters, a way to earn a small amount from junkyards, and even as furniture. It is in a way, the flimsy foundation that the marginalized have built their lives on, hoping one day it would be replaced by something more concrete.

Miura, also in her own way, involved the community. She says she had help from street children, teens, and young skaters in making and painting the candies. The volunteers would come and go but there would always be a consistent stream of people helping out. The artist says that is why it is a little rough on the edges. She claims it is an up cycling, with her perspective towards sustainability and also as a metaphorical representation of how oral tradition and history shape a community.







# **ART FAIR PHILIPPINES**

**Aeson Baldevia**

**Brandon Braza**

**Daryl Feril**

**Erika Mayo**

**Guenivere Decena**

**Megumi Miura**