

Pio Abad: 1975 – 2015

Exhibition Dates: 14 May – 9 July 2016

Exhibition Opening: Saturday 14 May 2016, 2 – 4pm

Media Preview: Friday 13 May 2016, 11 – 11:45am



Left: Pio Abad, *Every Tool is a Weapon if You Hold it Right XXV* (2015), unique acid dye prints on hand-stitched silk twill, 100 x 100cm. Courtesy the artist and Silverlens Gallery, Manila. Right: Pio Abad, *Decoys* (2014-2015), dummy CCTV cameras decorated with tropical seashells. Courtesy the artist and Silverlens Gallery, Manila.

4A Centre for Contemporary Asian Art presents the first Australian exhibition of Filipino artist Pio Abad

Working in a range of media including drawing, installation and photography, Manila-born, London-based artist **Pio Abad** uses strategies of appropriation and replication to reveal alternative or repressed historical events, unravel official accounts and draw out threads of complicity between incidents, ideologies and people from the Philippines and beyond.

Using inexpensive reproduction techniques that contrast with the opulent origins of the objects he replicates, the works presented in *1975 – 2015* question the function of the domestic object in political action.

1975 – 2015 establishes a historical framework which begins in 1975 with the evacuation of United States Forces from Saigon, and concludes in 2015 with the production of a body of work that attempts to recalibrate the archiving of a several conflicts spanning from post-Marcos Philippines to the Balkans conflict of the 1990s.

4A's Director **Mikala Tai** said: "4A is delighted to be working with Pio Abad to present *1975 – 2015*. Abad's appropriation of everyday objects invites us to reassess our understandings and expectations of contemporary Philippines. Beyond the nation's borders, Abad's work presents a Philippines embedded in the socio-political milieu of South East Asia, but also one that is infinitely global."

Abad will cover 4A's ground floor gallery with the wallpaper work **105 Degrees and Rising (2015)**. Overlaying the ERDL camouflage developed by the US military for the jungles of Vietnam and the now infamous 1976 pinup poster of American actress Farah Fawcett, the work suggests a complex reading of the conclusion of the Vietnam War.

The exhibition also features **Decoy (2016)** – dummy CCTV cameras adorned with tropical seashells – and a new collection of unique digital prints on silk, titled **Every Tool is a Weapon if You Hold it Right (2015)**. After repeated passing of the French store, Hermès, on the way to his London studio, Abad was struck by the seemingly endless cycle of decorative scarves on display from the brand that is well-known for its individually screen printed silks, often depicting moments from 19th and 20th Century French history. With his own scarves, Abad has drawn on archival objects and images collected since 2010 to produce original designs that bring together disparate social and historical narratives into a broader conversation around cultural remembrance and loss.

Abad's interest in domestic design and affordable methods of reproduction is apparent in his series of postcard replicas of the seized and sequestered collection of Italian Renaissance paintings owned by Ferdinand and Imelda Marcos. An unlimited edition, the set of 97 prints on postcards attempt to symbolically recover the artworks and make them available for the public once again, to be enjoyed at the gallery and also taken home by visitors.

A media preview of *Pio Abad: 1975 – 2015* will be held at 4A on Friday 13 May 2016, 11-11:45am. The artist will be available for interview and photo opportunities. Please direct RSVPs and media enquiries to: Joanna Bayndrian, joanna@creative-asia.net +61405933896

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VENUE: 4A Centre for Contemporary Asian Art, 181 – 187 Hay St, Sydney NSW
4A OPENING HOURS: Tuesday – Saturday, 11am – 6pm, closed on public holidays



Above right: *Every Tool is a Weapon if You Hold it Right XXVI (2015)*, unique acid dye prints on hand-stitched silk twill, 100 x 100cm. Courtesy the artist and Silverlens Gallery, Manila.

ABOUT THE ARTIST: Pio Abad (b. Manila, 1983) is a Filipino artist currently based in London. Abad has received a BA Fine Art (2004) from the University of Philippines, Manila; and a Masters in Fine Art (2012) from the Royal Academy Schools, London. He has a number of solo exhibitions including *A Short History of Decay* (2015), Silverlens Gallery, Gillman Barracks, Singapore; *Some Art Smarter Than Others* (2014), Gasworks, London; *Every Tool is a Weapon if you Hold it Right* (2013), Silverlens Gallery, Manila; and *Oh! Oh! Oh! (A Universal History of Infamy)* (2012), PLAZAPLAZA, London. He has also participated in group exhibitions such as *CORRUPTION: Everybody Knows...* (2015), curated by Natasha Ginwala, e-flux, New York; *South by Southeast*, curated by Patrick Flores and Anca Mihulet, Osage Gallery, Hong Kong; *Conflict: Art and War* (2014), Contemporary Art Society, London; *Reading Vogue* (2013), 68 Square Metres Art Space, Copenhagen; and *London Open*, Whitechapel Art Gallery, London.



ABOUT 4A: From early beginnings as an independent space on Sussex St incorporated in 1996 to its present location on Hay St in Sydney's Chinatown, 4A has come a long way to being recognised as one of Australia's foremost contemporary art organisations. 4A is committed to creating opportunities for artists, developing platforms to exhibit and encouraging critical discussion along the way. 4A is known both within Australia and internationally as an authority on the contemporary art from the Asia Pacific Region.