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The Protectors



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INAUGURAL SHOW

8 September to 5 November 2022

505 W 24th Street, New York, NY

'On the first Bantayan Fisherfolks' Day, we were all crying. It was raining heavily. They said it was a blessing. Almost fifty boats with fisherfolk organizations and leaders coming together on water. How could they ignore us now?'

- Martha Atienza

In this new body of work for Silverlens New York, Martha Atienza asks, 'Who owns the land? Who owns the sea?'. These are questions that persistently come to her mind when working with her home community across the Bantayan group of islands, north of Cebu in the Visayas, the Philippines' central island group.

Under the guise of promised economic prosperity, Bantayan has been subjected to the interests of the tourism industry—sitting in stark contrast to idyllic imaginations of island life portrayed in the media, and the arts. Whether it is a bill removing Bantayan's wilderness area, making available privatization of land and the push to allow foreigners to have 100% ownership of this land, or the North Cebu Economic Zone—a neoliberal agenda continues in its coercive ways of dispossession.

Atienza focuses on the island of Mambacayao Dako, one of the Bantayan group of islands, which has been home to fisherfolk for generations. But as tourism is pushed forth, these fisherfolk are forcibly relocated to public and private housing projects by landed elites and the government, thereby losing access to their coastal homes. This rise in tourism and process of dispossession turns the fisherfolk into workers left with little to no choice other than to work for resort owners. Atienza's work challenges this process of imposition on these island communities and the imaginations that foster it.

Alongside a community of fisherfolk, youth, artists, non-government workers, engineers, and artists, Martha Atienza established GOODLand* in order to engage with these issues. GOODLand is creating an alternative plan that has been proposed to the mayor: that the people stay, but under an organized body; that tourism will enter, but for the support of the island and its people, for conservation purposes, and alternative livelihood.

The tourists will be able to see the marine protected areas and learn from the locals about island life and traditions. It will become a mutual relationship where visitors exchange knowledge and the locals gain livelihood. Only day trips, and a very limited number of visitors may enter, ensuring that the communities personal space and intimate relationship with nature is respected. The locals do not become the animals in a zoo. They will simply remain the protectors of the area, as they are fighting to be.

GOODLand worked with the local government for several years to establish May 31 as the annual Bantayan Fisherfolks' Day/*Adlaw sa Mga Mananagat*. This ordinance was finally passed in September of 2022, as Atienza opens her show in New York.

Bantayan is a coastal community which relies on fishing as one of its major sources of living, and this annual celebration is meant to be a platform where everyone connected to the sea comes together to share knowledge, concerns, and ways to work better for a productive future. This will probably create a better connection and network to strengthen relations, an opportunity for the local government, non-government organizations, and the small fisherfolks to meet for these relevant purposes: the preservation, the protection and the eventual augmentation of marine supply and food source. Ultimately, the short term goal is food security and the long term goal is eradicating poverty.

Atienza's work calls on the viewer to participate in the act of remembering. Places such as Bantayan remind us that this is imperative to the continuation of cultural knowledge and being. Our connections to places retain memories, they are repositories of knowledge. Remembering in itself is a way to challenge a system designed to suppress.

Words by Isa Lorenzo, Jake Atienza, and Martha Atienza

**GOODLand Association was founded by me together with my friend and collaborator Ramon Alontaga and fisherfolk leader and community organizer, John Ortega. We are a few Bantayan islanders that came together through collaborating on past art projects and continued collaborating on local innovative solutions. We formalized the group in 2020 knowing that this platform would be powerful tool to not only push for projects for island solutions but so that it could become a platform for the voices that are never heard. GOODLand works in preserving the marine and terrestrial protected areas, resolving waste management issues, and preventing the removal of the Bantayan Island Wilderness Area. - MA*

[LEARN MORE ABOUT GOODLAND](#)





Tigpanalipod 11° 02' 06.4" N 123° 36' 24.1" E (1)
The Protectors 11° 02' 06.4" N 123° 36' 24.1" E (1), 2022
74min 05sec single channel loop; no sound
Edition of 6 + 2 AP

[video preview](#)

Editions 1 to 2

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Tigpanalipod 11° 02' 06.4" N 123° 36' 24.1" E (2)
The Protectors 11° 02' 06.4" N 123° 36' 24.1" E (2), 2022
37min 41sec single channel loop; no sound
Edition of 6 + 2 AP

[video preview](#)

Editions 1 to 2

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For the past three to five years, *Tigpanalipod (the Protectors)* 11°02'06.4"N 123°36'24.1"E has emerged alongside necessary acts of remembering and demands for participation. Proudly standing on the *bangka*, fishing boat, *nong* Antonio Dacomos Turib's family came from the surrounding islands of Cebu and Negros in the last century. They came to Mambacayao Dako with the fishing season, and decided to settle permanently on the island generations ago.

It brings to light longstanding issues of land ownership and class, as families like Antonio's are currently being forced to relocate to off-island government and nongovernment public housing projects.

Antonio joins the Fluvial Parade of Mambacayao Dako Fiesta yearly. He decorates his boat and is one of the only people that dresses in complete costume to match. On the day of filming, he arrived in costume.



Tigpanalipod 11° 02' 06.4" N 123° 36' 24.1" E (1)
The Protectors 11° 02' 06.4" N 123° 36' 24.1" E (1), 2022, video still detail





Adlaw sa mga Mananagat (Fisherfolks Day), 2022
44min 13sec single channel loop; no sound
Edition of 6 + 2 AP

Editions 1 to 2

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Initially developed for the Istanbul Biennale 2022, Bantayan Fisherfolks' Day 2022, a slow-moving piece that documents a parade of out-rigger boats and *bangka*, or fishing boat, decorated with recyclable and organic decor; flowers, palm trees, fish nets, shells, and signage with names of islands where the boats are joining from. Held following the yearly San Juan festival to purify and protect, warding off evil spirits, fishing boats of various sizes joined the inaugural parade on June 27, 2022.

Over 40 fishing boats from Bantayan and surrounding islands, including Mambacayao Dako, 37 coastal People's Organizations, Municipal Fisheries and Aquatic Resources Management Council, Marine Protected Area Clustering Fishwarden representatives, Savings Club Leaders, Department of Agriculture, Bantay Dagat, Municipal Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Office, Marine Police and Coastguard were decorated by the participants.

As of this writing, a resolution of An Ordinance Declaring May 31st of every year as Bantayan Fisherfolks' Day/*Adlaw sa Mga Mananagat* has been passed, a key step in preserving Bantayan Island's fishing culture in the future.

The first Bantayan Fisherfolks' Day was initiated by Martha Atienza and GOODLand.

*Produced with the support of Shane Akeroyd,
Han Nefkens Foundation and Mondriaan Fund.
Commissioned by the 17th Istanbul Biennial (2022)*

*Adlaw sa mga Mananagat (Fisherfolks' Day),
2022, video still detail*







Mambacayao Daku 11°02'06.4"N 123°36'24.1"E, 2022
123min 54sec single channel loop; no sound
Edition of 6 + 2 AP

Editions 1 to 2

[video preview](#)

[email](#)

[whatsapp](#)

The island of Mambacayao Dako, Baranay Lipayan, Bantayan, Cebu is home to 83 families. These coastal communities are being destroyed. Rising tides from melting seas and climate change are destroying coasts worldwide. Atienza's video captures the tide at its highest, eating away at homes on the beach.

Compounding the rising tides, the locals are being displaced by the arrival of large-scale tourism. Atienza's work challenges this process of imposition on these island communities and the imaginations that foster it. Who owns the land? Who owns the sea? No one does.





MARTHA ATIENZA

Bio

In 2017, Martha Atienza won the Baloise Art Prize in Art Basel for her seminal work *Our Islands*. Since 2017, her work has been shown and collected worldwide. Prior to this, she was twice awarded the Ateneo Art Awards in Manila (2012/2016) and the prestigious Cultural Center of the Philippines Thirteen Artist Award (2015). Recent biennales and triennials include the Bangkok Art Biennale: *Escape Routes*, BACC, Bangkok (2020), Honolulu Biennial: *To Make Wrong / Right / Now*, Oahu, Hawaii (2019); and the 9th Asia Pacific Triennial of Contemporary Art, QAGOMA, Brisbane (2018). Recent group exhibitions include *Breaking Water* at Contemporary Arts Center, Cincinnati (2022), *Animal Kingdom* at *Âme Nue Artspace*, Hamburg (2021). Forthcoming exhibitions in 2022 include the solo exhibition inaugurating Silverlens New York, participation in the Istanbul Biennale, and a group show at the Jameel Art Centre in Dubai.

Atienza was born to a Dutch mother and Filipino father and has moved between these two cultures throughout her life. Constantly oscillating between them has had a profound influence on her focus as an artist. Atienza's practice explores installation and video as a way of documenting and questioning issues around the environment, community, and development. Her work is mostly constructed in video, of an almost sociological nature, studying her direct environment in the Philippines.



MARTHA ATIENZA Bio

b. 1981, Manila, PH



Tarong 11°16'12.0"N 123°45'23.4"E
2019-08-06 Tue 2:27 PM PST 1.50 meters
High Tide, 2019

AWARDS & GRANTS

- 2017 Winner, Baloise Art Prize, Art Basel Basel, Switzerland
- 2016 Shortlisted, Benesse Prize, Singapore Art Museum
Winner, Ateneo Art Awards, Manila
- 2015 Winner, CCP Thirteen Artists Award, Manila
- 2014 Sovereign Asian Art Prize nomination, Hong Kong
Ontwikkeling- en Onderzoekssubsidie, Centrum beeldende kunst, Rotterdam
- 2013 Bijdrage Werkbudget-standaard, Mondriaan Fonds, Amsterdam
New Media Fund, National Commission for Culture and Arts, Manila
- 2012 Bewegend beeld, dienst kunst en cultuur Rotterdam, Rotterdam
Winner, Ateneo Art Awards, Manila
- 2010 Bewegend beeld, dienst kunst en cultuur Rotterdam, Rotterdam
New Media Fund, National Commission for Culture and Arts, Manila
Social Innovation in Culture Experiment, Office of Culture and Design, Manila
- 2009 Ateneo Art Awards Nomination, Manila

RESIDENCIES

- 2018 NTU Centre for Contemporary Art, Singapore
- 2017 La Trobe University Visual Arts Centre Melbourne, Residency Program, Melbourne
- 2016 Gasworks, Mercedes Zobel/Outset Residency, London
- 2014 Artesan Gallery Studio Grant, Singapore
- 2013 Art Omi International Artists Residency, New York
La Trobe University Visual Arts Centre Melbourne, Residency Program, Melbourne
Liverpool Hope University, Residency Program, Liverpool
- 2009 Green Papaya Art Projects Residency Program, Arts Network Asia, Manila

BIENNALES, TRIENNALES

- 2022 (upcoming) *Istanbul Biennale*
- 2020 *Bangkok Art Biennale: Escape Routes*, Bangkok Art and Culture Centre, Bangkok
- 2019 *Honolulu Biennial 2019: To Make Wrong / Right / Now*, Oahu, Hawaii
- 2018 *9th Asia Pacific Triennial of Contemporary Art*, Queensland Art Gallery and Gallery of Modern Art (QAGOMA), Australia
Taipei Biennale: Post-Nature: A Museum as an Ecosystem, Taipei Fine Arts Museum, Taipei
Visayas Islands Visual Arts Exhibition and Conference (VIVA EXCON), Roxas City, Capiz
Bienal do Mercosul, Porto Alegre, Brazil
- 2016 *Singapore Biennale: An Atlas of Mirrors*, Singapore
- 2013 *Anito*, Sharjah Biennale 11, United Arab Emirates
- 2012 *Anito*, Viva Excon Biennale, Dumaguete

SOLO EXHIBITIONS

- 2022 *The Protectors*, Silverlens, New York
Free Jazz IV - Geomancers, Singapore Art Week (with CCA), Singapore
- 2019 *Equation of State*, Silverlens, Manila

MARTHA ATIENZA Bio

- 2018 *Fair Isles*, including Anito I and World Premiere of Anito II, Nassauischer Kunstverein Wiesbaden, Center for Contemporary Art, Germany
Our Islands, Tower One and Exchange Plaza, Manila
- 2017 *Martha Atienza*, Mind Set Art Center, Taipei
Our Islands, Art Basel Statements, Switzerland
- 2016 *Anito*, Silverlens, Manila
- 2015 *Study In Reality No.3*, Silverlens, Manila
- 2014 *Endless Hours at Sea II*, Ateneo Art Gallery, Manila
Endless Hours at Sea I, Artesan Gallery, Singapore
- 2013 Access Gallery, Visual Arts Centre Melbourne, La Trobe University, Australia
- 2012 *My Navel Is Buried In The Sea*, Pablo Gallery, Manila
My Navel Is Buried In The Sea, Gallery Orange, Bacolod
- 2011 *My Navel Is Buried In The Sea*, Madridejos, Bantayan Island, Cebu
- 2009 *Man In Suit*, Green Papaya Project Space, Manila
Abe Reina Si Maria, Wolfart Projectspaces, Rotterdam
- 2008 *Man In Suit*, Weijerkapel Boxmeer, Boxmeer
Man In Suit, Loesje, Berlin
Man In Suit, Perron 1, Delden
- 2006 *Passage*, Het Torentje, Almelo

SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS

- 2022 (upcoming) *Frieze London*
(upcoming) Jameel Art Centre, Dubai
(upcoming) *Ateneo Art Awards - The return exhibition of winners*, Ateneo Art Gallery, Quezon City
Island Life, Salisbury International Art Festival, Salisbury, England
Breaking Water, Contemporary Arts Center, Cincinnati, USA
- 2021 *Animal Kingdom*, Àme Nue Artspace, Hamburg
Art Fair Philippines, Silverlens, Manila
SOUTH SOUTH VEZA, SOUTH SOUTH Platform
- 2020 *Anticipating the Day*, Silverlens, Manila
Constructions of Truths, Museum of Contemporary Art and Design (MCAD), Manila
INUNDATION: Art and Climate Change in the Pacific, University of Hawai'i, Manoa Art Gallery, Hawai'i
- 2019 *Fracture/Fiction: Selections from the ILHAM collection*, ILHAM Gallery, Kuala Lumpur
Far Away But Strangely Familiar, Danubiana Meulensteen Art Museum, Bratislava
Good Space - Communities or the Promise of Happiness, Villa Merkel, Galerien der Stadt Esslingen am Neckar
Taipei Dangdai, Silverlens, Taipei
- 2018 *No Man's Land*, Musée d'Art Moderne Grand-Duc Jean (MUDAM), Luxembourg
2018 Asia Project: How Little You Know About Me, National Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art, Korea
Shared Coordinates, a collaboration of Edouard Malingue Gallery, ROH Projects, MSAC and SILVERLENS, The Arts House, Singapore
JEAN-MARIE APPRIOU, MARTHA ATIENZA, DORA BUDOR, SHARA HUGHES, IMAN

MARTHA ATIENZA Bio

- ISSA, JUSTIN MATHERLY, TOBIAS PILS, MAGALI REUS, YVES SCHERER*, Galerie Eva Presenhuber, Zurich, Switzerland
- 2017 *Choruses*, Edouard Malingue Gallery, Hong Kong
Invisible Cities, organized by The Crow Collection of Asian Art, Dallas Contemporary, Dallas, Texas
Mutable Truths: Perspectives in Philippine Contemporary, Arete, Ateneo Art Gallery, Manila
Sunshower: Contemporary Art from Southeast Asia 1980 to Now, Mori Art Museum and National Art Center, Tokyo, Japan
Archipelago Mountain, Gallery 5020, Salzburg
Seascapes: Tranquility and Agitation, Metropolitan Museum of Manila
Body Electric, Yuka Tsuruno Gallery, Tokyo
Mutable Truths, La Trobe University's Visual Art Centre, Bendigo, Victoria
"Behind the Terrain", Nha San Collective, Hanoi
Translaci3n, Inaugural Exhibition, Curated by Gary-Ross Pastrana, Silverlens, Manila
- 2016 *Art Basel*, Silverlens, Hong Kong
Art Basel, Film Sector, curated by Li Zhenhua, Hong Kong
Art Fair Philippines, Silverlens, Manila
Behind the terrain, Studio Kalahan, Yogyakarta, Indonesia
I want to be where I am, The Engine Room Gallery, Wellington
Didto sa Amoa, Vereinigung Bildender K3nstlerinnen, Vienna, Austria
- 2015 *Video Spotlight: Philippines*, Asia Society and Museum, New York
Sights and Sounds: Philippines, The Jewish Museum, New York
Thirteen Artists Awards, Cultural Center of the Philippines, Manila, Philippines
- 2014 *Joint Gallery Show*, Art Gallery Association of Singapore, Singapore
TEN, Cornerstone Gallery, Hope University, Liverpool
- 2013 *Missing Interiors*, Cornerstone Gallery, Hope University, Liverpool
My Navel Is Buried In The Sea, Visual Arts Centre, Access Gallery, La Trobe University Visual Arts Center, Bendigo Victoria, Melbourne
- 2012 *Modes Of Impact: The Inaugural Collection of Video Arts*, Ateneo Art Gallery, Manila
Sneak Peak, Ateneo Art Gallery, Manila
Heavy Merry Finland, Recycleart, Brussels
Topophilia, Finale Art File, Manila
Videoperformance 01, Singapore Art Museum, Singapore
Before The Rain: Contemporary Landscape, Manila Contemporary VWFA, Manila
Videoperformance 01, Museum Of Contemporary Art, Taipei
CV: Cinema In Video, Ishmael Bernal Gallery, Manila
Habagat, The Unifiedfield, Nikolaj Kunsthallen, Copenhagen
- 2011 *Habagat, The Unifiedfield*, Beirut
I Feel So Sorry For Myself, A Gathering of Tribes, New York
Intolerance, Videoforma, Kuryokhin Centre for Contemporary Art, St. Petersburg
Roving Eye, S3rlandet Kunstmuseum, Kristiansand
Performing Pinoy, Barcelona
Programme#08, The Unifiedfield, Granada

MARTHA ATIENZA Bio

- 2009 *Programme#01, The Unifiedfield*, Yogyakarta
Serial Killers II, Green Papaya Project Space, Manila
Forever and Ever and Ever, VWAF, Singapore
Dial, Cultural Center Of The Philippines, Manila
The Next Wave, Ateneo Art Gallery, Manila
- 2007 *Art Amsterdam*, Gallerie Smarius, De Rai
Longitude, SMU Gallery, Singapore
Shoot Me, Mo_Space, Manila
No Problem, Femenotika, Poznan
- 2006 *Riles*, Gallerie Smarius, Groningen
Riles, Gogbot Festival, Enschede
- 2005 *Untitled*, Kaiki Gallery, Helsinki

FESTIVALS/SCREENINGS

- 2022 *Adlaw Sang Mananagat Fisherfolks' Day*, Bantayan Islands
- 2021 *Sea Media*, Museum of Contemporary Art and Design (MCAD), Manila
The Imagining Queer Bandung Film Festival, bi'bak at Haus der Statistik, Berlin
- 2020 *Daang Dokyu A Festival of Philippine Documentaries*, online screening, Manila, Philippines
- 2017 *Unruly Shadows: Artist Films and Videos on Challenging Spheres*, The Seminar Room, Malan Road, Singapore
- 2015-present
The Kalampag Tracking Agency (Cities: Angono, Quezon, Bacolod, Laguna, Davao, General Santos, London, Boston, New York, Ho Chi Minh, Bandar Seri Begawan, Vienna, Wellington, Auckland, Melbourne, Bangalore, San Francisco, Tokyo, Jakarta, Tromso, Ljubljana, Toronto, Singapore, South Korea)
- 2015 *The Kalampag Tracking Agency*, London
2015 Image Festival, Toronto
- 2014 *The Singapore International Film Festival*, EXIS, Singapore
National Museum Of Korea, Seoul
UPFI Center Videotheque, University Of The Philippines, Manila
USC-TC Cafa Theater, Cebu
Green Papaya Art Projects, Manila
Man & Nature, South To South Film Festival, Jakarta
- 2013 *Lupang Prabang Film Festival*, Lupang Prabang
Traveing Chopshots Festival, An.oth.er.8, Sda Cinema, Manila
Intercambiator, Projector Festival, Madrid
- 2012 *Chopshots Documentary Film Festival Southeast Asia*, Jakarta
Cinema Rehiyon, Barangay Punta Taytay, Negros
- 2011 *Vi Carnival Of E-Creativity Festival*, Indonesia
- 2010 *Ultimate Time Lapse Mega Mix*, Melbourne
- 2009 *Cinekatipunan*, Magnet, Manila

EDUCATION

- 2006 Bachelor in Mixed Media and Media Art, Aki Academy Of Visual Arts and Design, Enschede, The Netherlands

MARTHA ATIENZA Bio

2005 Kuvataideakatemi, Finnish Academy of Fine Arts, Time and Space Department, Finland

SELECTED PUBLICATIONS

- Quijon, Carlos Jr. "Equation of State." *ArtReview Asia*, Spring 2020, vol. 8, issue no. 1.
- Balaguer, John Alexis. "Martha Atienza Equation of State." *ArtAsiaPacific*, March/April 2020, vol. 117, p. 85.
- Deyro, Elizabeth Ruth. "A Sense of Community." *ArtPlus Magazine*, issue no. 66, pp. 34-37.
- De Castro, Chiara. "Art: Martha Atienza's Equation of State – using island technology and video to illuminate the effects of climate change in Bantayan's communities." *Adobo Magazine*. Accessed 5 May 2020. <https://www.adobomagazine.com/the-magazine/martha-atienzas-equation-of-state-using-video-art-and-island-technology-to-illuminate-the-effects-of-climate-change-in-bantayan-islands-coastal-communities-and-the-importan/>
- Stead, Chloe. "Martha Atienza protects Filipino shores with robotic mangroves." *Art Basel*. Accessed 5 May 2020. <https://www.artbasel.com/stories/martha-atienza-climate-change-philippines-art>
- "Taipei Biennial 2018." *Artforum*, April 2019, vol. 57, issue no. 8, p. 216.
- "The 9th Asia Pacific Triennial keeps up with the zeitgeist." *Ocula*. Accessed 5 May 2020. <https://ocula.com/magazine/reports/the-9th-asia-pacific-triennial-keeps-up-with-/>
- Masters, H.G. "Martha Atienza." *ArtAsiaPacific Almanac 2018*, XIII, p. 73.
- Haruko, Kumakara, Martha Atienza and Atonisla, Sunshower: Contemporary Art from Southeast Asia 1980's to Now, August 2017.
- "Martha Atienza's Sub Aquatic Procession Wlms in Art Basel." *BluPrint PH*. Accessed June 2017. <http://bluprint.ph/martha-atienza-art-basel-2017/>
- Juacian, Don. "Filipino political figures submerged in underwater parade." *CNN Style*. Accessed 5 May 2020. <https://edition.cnn.com/style/article/art-basel-2017-martha-atienza-underwater-art/index.html>
- Wu, Crystal. "Martha Atienza and Sam Pulitzer Named Winners of Baloise Art Prize." *ArtAsiaPacific*. Accessed 16 June 2017. <http://artasiapacific.com/News/MarthaAtienzaandSamPulitzerNamedWinnersofBaloiseArtPrize2017>
- Juacian, Don. "Why the International Art Worlds is Paying Attention to Martha Atienza's Video Art." *CNN Life Philippines*. Accessed 25 November 2016. <http://cnnphilippines.com/life/culture/arts/2016/11/25/martha-atienza-cover-story.html>
- "Jaucian, Don. "Filipino artists triumph at the Singapore Biennale." *CNN Life Philippines*. Accessed 5 May 2020. <https://cnnphilippines.com/life/culture/arts/2016/11/04/singapore-biennale-2016.html>"
- Xuan Mau Ardia. "An Atlas Of Mirrors: The Singapore Biennale 2016." *Art Radar Journal*. 2016.
- Wilson, Claire. "Ateneo Art Awards 2016 Announce Winners." *Art Radar Journal*. Accessed 21 September 2016. <http://artradarjournal.com/2016/09/21/ateneo-art-awards-2016-announce-winners/>
- "Profiles: Martha Atienza." *Art Asia Pacific*. July/Agusut 2016, pp. 54-55.
- Lagdameo, Jennifer. "Community Engagement." *Art Asia Pacific*, Issue 99., July/August 2016.
- Santos, Carina. "Martha Atienza." *The Philippine Star Lifestyle Magazine*. 18 February 2016.
- Acuin, Paulo, "Bench Presents Martha Atienza," *Art Fair Philippines 2016 Catalogue*, February 2016.
- Olazo, Jonathan, "Stories from the Sea or Underwater," 2015 Thirteen Artists Awards, 2015.

MARTHA ATIENZA

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