



**MAYA  
MUÑOZ**

**THE GARDEN**

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## ABOUT THE SHOW

The paintings in THE GARDEN were made within a six-month period in 2019.

The following were some of the most frequently asked questions by people who viewed the show in the gallery, the studio and online.

Q: Why is AUGUST BANQUET partially concealed in white?

A: There is something poignant for me about August Banquet. I wanted to conceal it partially with white because it is an impossible piece, an incomplete memory, fleeting and cannot be coveted.

Q: Please explain the title FLORAL BRUTE.

A: The title comes from how it is painted: brutally. The subject matter being these delicate flowers are complete opposite to the paint handling which is severe, dynamic and violent. I like how Georgia O'Keeffe painted her flowers so elegantly; I wanted to do the opposite.

Q: The most intriguing title is IN THE FERAL GARDEN, THE MEANEST KISSES ARE SOLD IN TIMES OF FAMINE. Can you please tell me more about this? The figure in the painting strongly resembles Jesus Christ.

A: In one of my earlier pieces, I painted a crucified Black Nazarene on an altar setting full of plants and flowers. I wanted to re-imagine him as St. Augustine, a sinner saint. He is not really Christ but more man: definitely a sinner, definitely in need of salvation. The title to me means having too much of something that you don't need at the time. Feral Garden can be an allusion to a letting go of or an untamed wild state of something that should have been kept maintained and somewhat curated or controlled. The phrase "meanest kisses sold in times of famine" makes no sense. I heard it said by David Berlinski as something that made no sense, yet sometimes a thing makes no sense until it does. It's all about context.

Q: Why did you decide to focus on gardens for this series?

A: There was no intention of doing gardens in the beginning. The title came to me after I stopped working and I could step back and just look at the whole output. It just so happened that I watched a documentary on Alexander McQueen and they showed clips of one of his shows called Savage Beauty. It clicked. The way I paint is very abstract expressive and the subject matter was primal and floral. Very floral. So I decided to title the series The Garden. Really it is a "savage garden" but that sounded a bit much. So just The Garden.

Q: Why are the bohemians lonely when there are so many of them crowded together in the painting?

A: The painting is based on James Ensor's "The Masks". I couldn't work out the composition for what I wanted to portray so I used Ensor's "The Masks" as a template. There is a haunting desolation to crowded places-- places full of people together but alone.

Q: You were a volunteer during the making of "Everywhere There You Are" by your friends Christina Quisumbing Ramilo and Wawi Navarozza. How did it feel to paint the work of your artist friends, especially a work that you helped build?

A: I wanted to paint that feeling of togetherness. The figures are spaced out more because the scene is about the togetherness of strangers who just so happen to be in the same place at the same time for the same thing. Like putting different elements or images in the same canvas that don't directly relate to one another, but they are all in one canvas so together they become a new thing. I remember that while painting the piece, I wanted the composition to suggest a separateness and togetherness at the same time. It is also a picnic, a relaxed moment. Idyllic. And the background had to have the impression of the work Wawi and Ling created for Arete.

Q: The gardens are lively and beautiful, yet one senses the presence of darkness. Perhaps some danger lurking within. Am I correct in assuming that these are not just pretty, peaceful gardens?

A: There is darkness in everything. The greater the darkness, the more seductive it is. The principle of opposing elements is a governing force in creation. Things become clear through their opposites: light and dark, transient and lasting, joy and sadness, monstrosity and beauty. These are powerful emotions that I want to give to the works. Sometimes it happens. Most of the time it does not.

Q: I see are glued-on fabrics, sequins, glitter and other materials. Why do you add these to your canvases?

A: I tend to play around with what are in my studio. I have many things in my studio. I add them to my canvases because I work very organically and sometimes see something that I would like to try working into the painting. I also tend to reuse old canvases, and some of the "crap" I had on there before tend to become part of the new piece. If it works, I leave it.

Beauty, as is often said, lies in the eye of the beholder, and to look deeper into the nature of beauty is to descend into a territory of shadows. The pieces in THE GARDEN rest somewhere in that state-- a narrow chasm of dualities: light and dark, joy and sadness, serenity and chaos. There is the quiet idle of a lazy afternoon picnic in "Everywhere There You Are" and the explosive moment in "Fugue". There is an unpossessable feast in "August Banquet" and the dizzying chaos of "Floral Brute". Grotesque shapes make up the "Feral Garden" in super multi toxic tropical neon, each element existing next to the other in perfect discord. They are images of illusory moments that are unresolved, strange, restless and by default can be sinister. THE GARDEN is a bold, complicated and colorful world that evokes the beautiful and grotesque co-existing side by side. It is a world of materiality and the present; transient, illusory and ever changing. It is the everyday life: banal, mundane yet somehow also magical.





**Territory**, 2019  
acrylic and spray paint on canvas  
47.83h x 95.67w in  
121.50h x 243w cm



**3M self portrait, 2019**  
acrylic on canvas  
36.22h x 30.12w in  
92h x 76.50w cm





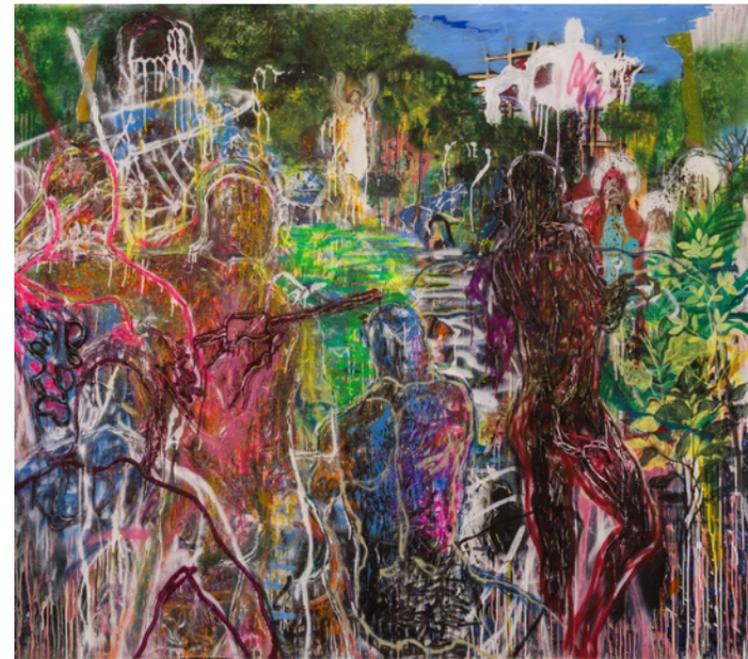
*Fugue*, 2019  
acrylic and spray paint on canvas  
64.96h x 77.17w in  
165h x 196w cm



**August banquet**, 2019  
acrylic and spray paint on canvas  
43.90h x 87.80w in  
111.50h x 223w cm







*Through the river into the sea*, 2019  
acrylic and spray paint on canvas  
66.93h x 76.89w in  
170h x 195.30w cm



*Everywhere there you are; picnic at Arete*, 2019  
acrylic and spray paint on canvas  
44.88h x 73.31w in  
114h x 186.20w cm





*The Lonely Bohemians of Cagsawa Ruins*, 2019  
acrylic and spray paint on canvas  
76h x 72w in  
193.04h x 182.88w cm



*Extranjeros*, 2019  
acrylic and spray paint on canvas  
58.27h x 60.04w in  
148h x 152.50w cm







*In the feral garden, the meanest kisses are sold in times of famine, 2019*  
acrylic on canvas  
38.19h x 32.28w in  
97h x 82w cm

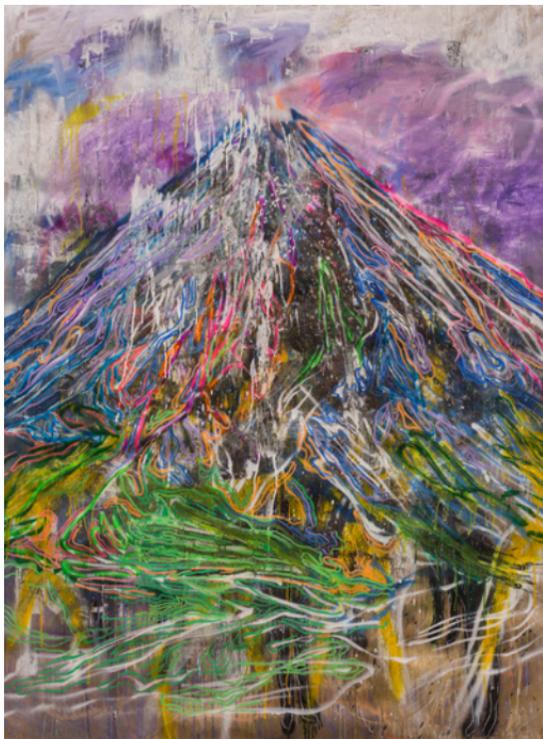


*Floral brute 3*, 2019  
acrylic on canvas  
38.98h x 32.28w in  
99h x 82w cm





*Floral brute 2*, 2019  
acrylic on canvas  
37.80h x 32.28w in  
96h x 82w cm



**Volcano**, 2019  
acrylic and spray paint on canvas  
75.12h x 56.10w in  
190.80h x 142.50w cm





# MAYA MUÑOZ

Born in 1972 in Albay province in the Bicol region, Philippines, Maya Muñoz is a mixed media artist. Her works tend to be figurative and expressive and at othertimes abstract and minimal. She has a studio in both Manila and her hometown province of Albay as she considers both places her creative source, between the volcanic landscape and the sea and the chaotic buzz of Manila. She deems herself reclusive and her creative psyche forever rooted in this unpredictable and mercurial landscape.

Muñoz is a graduate of San Jose State University, California, USA. She has participated in numerous group shows in the Philippines, Singapore, UAE, China, and the USA. She has been collected in Indonesia, France, Singapore, Philippines, United States, Portugal, amongst others. In 2006, she was awarded the prestigious 3rd Ateneo Art Award, Philippines and in 2010 presented Extensions, a monumental solo exhibition at Lopez Museum, Philippines.

## AWARDS

2006 Awardee. 3rd Ateneo Art Award, Ateneo Art Gallery

## SOLO EXHIBITIONS

2019 **THE GARDEN**, Silverlens, Makati City

2018 **Kantil Moderato**, Yavuz Gallery, Gillman Barracks, Singapore  
**short story**, ArtInformal, Makati City

2017 **Time Spent with the world**, The Drawing Room, Makati City

2010 **Drawings**, The Drawing Room, Makati City

2009 **The Romanticist**, The Drawing Room, Makati City

2007 **November**, The Drawing Room, Makati City

2006 **Closer**, Hiraya Gallery, Ermita, Manila

2005 **Tropical Samadhi**, The Drawing Room, Makati City

**Silencio**, The Drawing Room, Makati City

2004 **The Unbearable Being of Nothingness**, Hiraya Gallery,  
Ermita, Manila

2000 **Figures and Motion**, San Jose Art League. W. San Carlos St.,  
San Jose California

## GROUP EXHIBITIONS

2009 **Verso Manila**, The Drawing Room in collaboration with  
Artecontemporanea, Turin, Italy

2008 **ARTSingapore '08**, The Drawing Room, Suntec Building,  
Singapore

**Showcase Singapore**, Singapore

**Sentimental Value**, Philippine Contemporary Art Exhibition,  
in collaboration with SOKA Contemporary Space and The  
Drawing Room Gallery, Beijing, China

**CIGE 2008 Beijing Art Fair**, The Drawing Room, Beijing, China

**Bridge Art Fair New York**, The Drawing Room, New York, U.S.A

2007 **SCOPE Miami**, The Drawing Room, Suntec Building, Singapore  
**The Drawing Room @ Dubai Art Fair**, International Exhibitions  
& Conferences, United Arab Emirates

**Utterly Art**, South Bridge Road, Singapore

2005 **ARTSingapore '05**, The Drawing Room, Suntec Building,  
Singapore

**Under the Volcanoe**, Alliance Francause de Manille, Manila,  
Philippines

2002 **No Exit**, The Gallery, 106 E. Virginia St., San Jose, California

2001 **Love and Chaos**, The Art Works, 1068 Alameda, San Jose,  
California

2000 **Subversion and Dominance**, San Jose Art League and  
Alameda Art Works, San Jose, California

## EDUCATION

1996-1998 San Jose State University, California



## **ABOUT SILVERLENS**

Through its artist representation, institutional collaborations, art consultancy, and exhibition programming including art fairs and gallery partnerships, **SILVERLENS** aims to place its artists within the broader framework of the contemporary art dialogue. Its continuing efforts to transcend borders across art communities in Asia have earned it recognition from both artists and collectors as one of the leading contemporary art galleries in Southeast Asia. **SILVERLENS** was founded by Isa Lorenzo and Rachel Rillo in 2004.