



ON THE NEW GALLERY IN CHELSEA

"The primary focus of the gallery is on Southeast Asian contemporary art. I'm particularly interested in artists who are at the cutting edge, who are pushing boundaries and exploring new media and ways of expression. But being an internationally focused gallery located in New York's main art district, Chelsea, I am also presenting at least one exhibition per year of an artist who is based in New York; these tend to be artists who have a broad international perspective. There are also, in fact, a number of amazing artists from Southeast Asia who are living and working in New York."

SOUTHEAST ASIAN APPEAL

"I have collectors from all over, but I can definitely say that they are always on the lookout for something new and exciting. There is now a great openness and curiosity about art from different cultures and distant parts of the world. There is such a richness in Southeast Asia—[there are] many different traditions and styles. It is a very diverse and vibrant region, and the art reflects that. I might add that the prices are also still quite low in comparison to other regions, such as China, so this is also appealing."

ONE TO WATCH

"Ronald Ventura is an incredibly talented artist with enormous creativity and imagination. He has a truly unique and individual perspective, and his work has already achieved wide recognition around Asia, as seen for example in his recent museum exhibition in Singapore. His work is tuned into the international scene while retaining certain Filipino influences. I think he is definitely well placed to receive great acclaim in New York, and we are really looking forward to presenting his solo exhibition this September."

PHILIPPINE ART IN A WORLD ART CAPITAL

"There is not, in general, a great awareness here of contemporary art from the Philippines. But when people see more of the art, they quickly realize that the Philippines has one of the most vibrant and interesting art scenes in Asia. Right now, I think people here in New York are growing tired of seeing the same old thing and are really thrilled when they discover artists with strong individual voices who are exploring themes and styles that are maybe a bit unfamiliar and challenging. It's really an exciting time!"

NICHED SPACE

The new Tyler Rollins Fine Art gallery in Chelsea, a large, 3,000-square-foot art space, is a New York City pioneer in its specialty: Southeast Asian art. That owner Tyler Rollins should devote as much attention to a blossoming market is further evidence that Southeast Asian art is hotter than ever, and the gallery opening in October 2008 is a telling sign interest in arts from the region could remain upbeat through these troubled times. In December last year, *Time* magazine gave a nod to Rollins's bold move, saying, "Rollins's timing is perfect: while prices for Chinese works dropped in the fall auctions, Southeast Asian art broke records." At the Sotheby's auction in 2008, contemporary art from Southeast Asia ruled the floor—Indonesia's I. Nyoman Masriadi's "Sorry Hero, Saya Lupa (Sorry Hero, I Forgot)", earned \$622,000, eight times the estimated price, and Filipino artist Ronald Ventura's "Nesting Ground" fetched \$280,000, "more than 10 times the expected price." Here, Rollins (pictured above) shares some thoughts on what's in store for Southeast Asian art at his new space, and in all of New York.



A FINE EYE

Rollins (top right) seems to have an eye for the next big thing. His Chelsea space (shown top and at right, with a Ron Agam exhibition) is poised to showcase Filipino artist Ronald Ventura's work in 2009.