

RONALD VENTURA



METAPHYSICS OF SKIN



Installation views of the exhibition at Tyler Rollins Fine Art

Tyler Rollins Fine Art is pleased to present the first solo exhibition for Ronald Ventura in the United States. One of the most acclaimed contemporary artists from the Philippines, Ventura has garnered significant international attention in recent years. He now ranks among the leading younger artists in Southeast Asia.

Entitled *Metaphysics of Skin*, the exhibition features a new series of paintings, some large in scale, along with sculptures and works on paper. It marks his first showing since his major solo exhibition at the NUS Museum in Singapore, *Mapping the Corporeal*, in 2008. While the Singapore show explored the inner mechanics of the body, Ventura's new works take inspiration from the human skin itself.

Ventura views skin as an expressive surface – written on with tattoos, concealed under layers of imagery, or exploding outwards to reveal an inner world of fantasy and conflict. Making ample use of the bravura techniques that he is known for, Ventura combines images and styles ranging from hyperrealism to cartoons and graffiti. The paintings have a complex layering that creates unexpected juxtapositions of images and moods.

Ventura takes this layering process as a metaphor for the multifaceted national identity of the Philippines. Over the centuries, the profound influences of various occupying powers – Spain, Japan, and the United States – along with the underlying indigenous culture, have produced a complex and at times uneasy sense of identity. Ventura explores this historic and psychic phenomenon through a dialogue of images evoking East and West, high and low, old and young – seen, for example, in allusions to Old Master paintings or Japanese and American cartoons. He draws our attention to the “second skin” of cultural signifiers that each person carries with him, however unwittingly.

Metaphysics of Skin is a compelling and provocative statement about contemporary life from one of the Philippines' most dynamic visual artists.

EXHIBITION DATES: September 17 – October 31, 2009

GALLERY HOURS: Tuesday – Saturday, 10 am – 6 pm