



The Future That Was

Patricia Perez Eustaquio

Tyler Rollins Fine Art

529 WEST 20 STREET, 10W, NEW YORK, NY 10011

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The Future That Was

by D. Dominick Lombardi

Patricia Perez Eustaquio's installation at Tyler Rollins Gallery has the look and feel of a group show. This Filipino artist allows the various materials that comprise her artwork to guide her forms and intentions. Despite the unpredictability, Eustaquio manages to give us just enough of a narrative to create a comfort zone for visitors.

The exhibition's title, *The Future That Was*, is a reincarnation of an exhibition that first hit the public arena at the Jorge B. Vargas Museum in Quezon City, Metro Manila, in the Philippines. *The Future That Was* refers most specifically to the Spanish colonial heritage that is symbolized by the distinctive *ternogarment*, characterized by an elevated sleeve crest that rises above the shoulder like a butterfly's wings, to the use of *solihya*, or woven rattan matting used for chair/seat fabrication.

One major aesthetic element in Eustaquio's approach is the polyhex, which utilizes combinations of connected six sided forms to create numerous distinctive shapes. For practical purposes, the artist breaks down the base hexagon of the polyhex into six 60-degree triangles, thus allowing greater flexibility and flow to the sculpted surfaces. Thin wooden triangles are featured in four iconic works *Polyhex Portrait I, II, III and IV* (2013). In *Polyhex Portrait I* we see a completely veiled female bust with its head and extra peaked shoulders shaping the contours. Here, one wonders if the artist is reminding us how colonization erases culture and individuality by changing the trajectory of aesthetics and beliefs – or, are we seeing the result of converging timelines represented as

conceptual abstraction.

Eustaquio utilizes the same technical approach when working with mirrors. *Untitled (Mirrors)* (2013) is one of this exhibition's most intriguing pieces; it does as much to confuse the installation as it does to unite the various elements at work. Consequentially, *Untitled (Mirrors)* has a very awkward presence – it reflects light sharply and distinctly on the adjacent walls and floor while its form seems to deflate and recede. The piece draws attention to itself, however its polished sharpness repels slightly – and in some strange way it seems animated, even alive.



Patricia Perez Eustaquio, *Untitled (Mirrors)*, 2013, Mirrors on fabric, 36 X 48 inches; Courtesy of the artist and Tyler Rollins Fine Art.

On the other hand, works such as *The Future That Was (On Reflection II)* seem to be more specifically about loss or separation. Constructed solely of black steel bars, this sculpture features a geometric representation of a full-sized standing female figure with a parasol gazing at another mirror based sculpture perched on a shelf.

Then there are the predominantly black and white oil paintings on shaped canvases that loosely suggest aerial views of landscapes, flowers, fabrics, shadow and light. Eustaquio has a way with paint that is somewhat contradictory when seen next to the sculptural elements. The paintings are much more sensitive, organic, fluid and in many ways, more tactile than the three dimensional works. They beg more universal reference – they test our powers of observation, and they leave us with far more questions than answers.

Two works *100,000 Years* (2013) and *Untitled (Poly Form II)* (2013) run the gamut of Eustaquio's intent. They speak of the past, utilize modern technologies, and look at culture and heritage as a primary concern not just for Eustaquio, but for all of us. In the end, if we give up our past, our future will be bleak.

—**D. Dominick Lombardi**

(Image on top: **Patricia Perez Eustaquio**, *Polyhex Portrait I*, 2013 , Wood on fabric, G.I. steel bars, sizes variable, approximately 16 x 18 x 8 in.; Courtesy of the artist and Tyler Rollins Fine Art.)