



1
LAKAD
Acrylic on canvas
50.8 x 203.2 cm / 20 x 80 in
2012

2
SIKAD
Acrylic on canvas
50.8 x 203.2 cm / 20 x 80 in
2012

3
GOLD RUSH
Acrylic on canvas
122 x 122 cm / 48 x 48 in
2012

FERDIE MONTEMAYOR
b. 1965

1990 ■ Bachelor of Fine Arts, Major in Painting, College of Fine Arts, University of the Philippines, Diliman, Quezon City

SOLO EXHIBITIONS

- 2008 ■ TAUTAUHAN, Kaida Gallery, Kamuning, Quezon City
- 2007 ■ HOME, Kaida Gallery, Kamuning, Quezon City
BAGONG ARAW, Boston Gallery, Quezon City
- 2006 ■ HAY PINOY, Big & Small Art Co. Megamall, Mandaluyong City
- 2005 ■ BARA-BARANGAY, Big & Small Art Co. Megamall, Mandaluyong City
BANWA, Boston Gallery, Quezon City
- 2004 ■ DRAWINGS, Big & Small Art Co. Megamall, Mandaluyong City
FIESTANG BAYAN, Crucible Gallery, Megamall, Mandaluyong City
- 2003 ■ MESSAGES, Big & Small Art Co. Megamall, Mandaluyong City
LOADED, West Gallery, Megamall, Mandaluyong City
- 2002 ■ LUPA, West Gallery, Glorietta 4, Makati City
- 2001 ■ LAND, Pinto Art Gallery, Antipolo City
ONE DAY, ISANG BAYAN, West Gallery, Megamall, Mandaluyong City
- 1998 ■ SA MAY BAYAN, Finale Art Gallery, Megamall, Mandaluyong City
- 1997 ■ DITO SA BAYAN NI JUAN, Art Matters, King's Court, Lobby Building, Makati City
- 1996 ■ BAYANBAYANAN, Boston Gallery, Quezon City
- 1995 ■ BAYAN MAGILIW, Simultaneous Exhibitions; West Gallery, Finale Art Gallery, Liongoren Art Gallery, Megamall, Mandaluyong City
- 1994 ■ BAHAY, West Gallery, Megamall, Mandaluyong City
BAYAN, Boston Gallery, Quezon City
- 1993 ■ MONTEMAYOR, West Gallery, Megamall, Mandaluyong City

AWARDS AND DISTINCTIONS

- 2004 ■ METROBANK FOUNDATION AWARDS FOR CONTINUING EXCELLENCE AND SERVICES, (ACES) Awardee
- 1994 ■ 13 ARTISTS Awardee
- 1992 - 1993 ■ JURORS CHOICE, Art Association of the Philippines
- 1992 ■ GRAND PRIZE, 9th Metrobank Foundation National Painting Competition
- 1990 ■ FINALIST, 7th Metrobank Foundation National Painting Competition
- 1989 ■ FINALIST, 6th Metrobank Foundation National Painting Competition
- 1987 ■ FINALIST, 4th Metrobank Foundation National Painting Competition



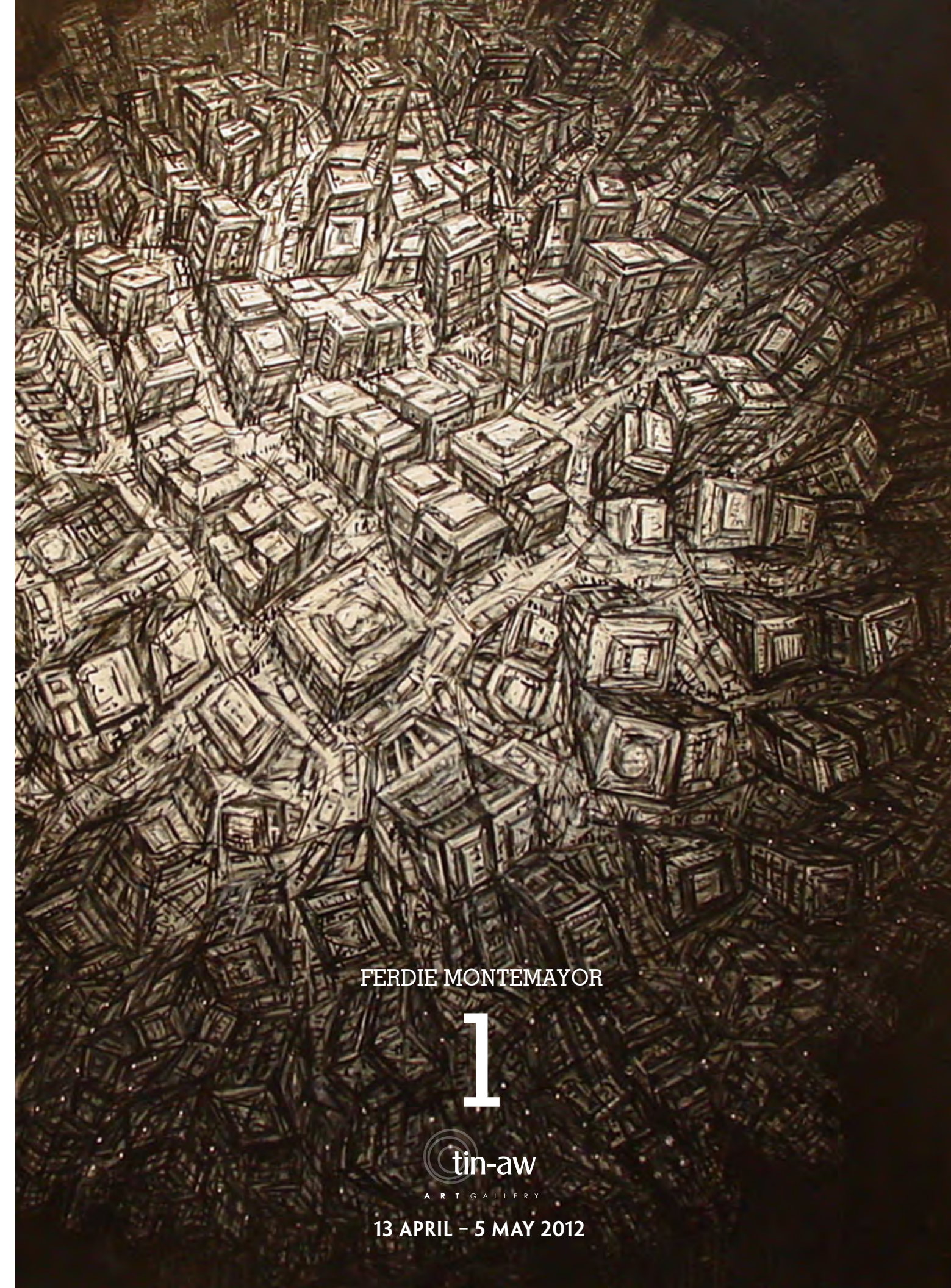
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ART GALLERY
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FERDIE MONTEMAYOR

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13 APRIL - 5 MAY 2012

STAMINA OF CITY

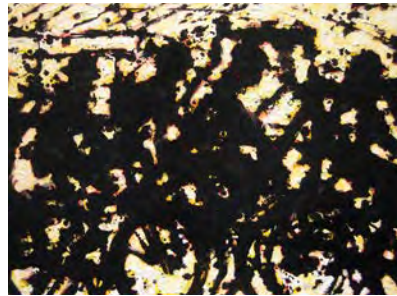
BY PATRICK D. FLORES

The density of Manila as a city and as home to millions is lived out every day at different velocities and rhythms. In many ways, its helter-skelter developments have honed the instincts of natives and transients alike who have to navigate its improvised circuits and feel their way through slum and technohub, park and condominium complex, mall and mass housing on foot, in trains or jeepney, or through idiosyncratic mechanisms that ferry merrily high tide or low tide, bedlam after bedlam. The artist Ferdie Montemayor tries to calibrate an imagination for this "mass," by which he means the population and the concentration of matter in the urban locale, in a tropical city that is seized by traffic, pollution, heat, humidity, haze, monsoon rains, flood, the coming and going of a multitude, and the travails of those who have to live in the streets. It is interesting to note that some of those who roam them have been called "batang hamog," or children of the dew, probably to reference how they embody the condensation of both day and night.

The painter Montemayor is devoted to the image of the city that in turn is devoted to the image. In January this year, the procession of the Black Nazarene of Quiapo lasted twenty-two hours, with several millions attending. The night before, the ever-clueless President spoke on nationwide television about a terrorist plot and asked people not to converge. They ignored him. How they shepherded the image through the labyrinth of Manila, which came to a virtual standstill, testifies to the potency of the peregrination in the city. The people walk the city and the city is at its very route. Are they herd or are they faithful in what a poetess cogently describes as a "convoy of clamors?"



LAKAD (detail)



PADYAK (detail)



Salient in Montemayor's current reflections on the city are scale and color, the effort to transcend the limits of traditional easel painting and aspire to the condition of the mural, the better perhaps to take in the magnitude of the city and the sprawl it has spawned, to address a public about the nature of the crowd. The nearly monochromatic palette, on the other hand, seems to be a way for the artist to resist the temptations of realism as well as the tendency to render the hectic city as Third-World exotic and even picturesque, adorned by flowers and its vendors, revved up by migration, high capitalism, and ravenous technological innovations. The somber atmosphere of his canvases permits him to focus on the energy, the movement, the congestion of the locus, in other words, the distillation of a level of sensation through which the city makes itself felt.

In his previous forays, Montemayor would dwell on the cartography of the city and the manner by which nature and culture have seared and shriveled it so that it finally appears merely molten. It is, indeed, an opportune time to revisit this space as an exceptional conjuncture between the cultural politics of climate as well as the political economy of a depleted planet. It is in the tropical city like Manila that we experience both a sense of teeming and a sense of decay, a withering away of a robust ecology of exemplary biodiversity in the islands around the archipelago. There is vertiginous progress, surely, but there might also be irreversible decline. Such precarity dissolves into the dream of development at the same time that the dream melts in the face of rut. Still, the Filipino persists in the city, with the usual mimicry that has steeled the persona over the years.

PADYAK
Acrylic on canvas
50.8 x 203.2 cm / 20 X 80 in
2012



SIKAD (detail)



ALAY LAKAD
Acrylic on canvas
152.4 x 609.6 cm / 60 x 240 in (Polyptych)
2012



BOTAK
Acrylic on canvas
50.8 x 203.2 cm / 20 x 80 in
2012

From the perspective of art history in the Philippines, Montemayor converses with the important attempts of his fellow observers of Manila to depict the state of the city under varying historical circumstances. Vicente Manansala's evocation of the shanty would lead him to a distinct visual language of a belated cubism, crafted in tension with the morphology of Manila's architecture amid the ruins of war in which the barongbarong surfaces as a trope of post-colonial appropriation and "productive mistranslation." His conjuration of the queues for rice in the city is a piercing insight into the scarcity that seizes the urban vicinity, which has been envisioned by planners and potentates as an artifact of the future. Danilo Dalena's acute instinct to discern the proximity of bodies within a devotional context goes beyond the description of a heady moment; it prompts us to consider an aesthetic situation where image and body mingle and the artist participates in the gesture of representing both the object of reality and the affect that it generates. Antonio Austria's intimate portraits of people in their humble milieu are sorties into another form of survival and prevailing in the city. As they intuit the sensibility of homespun environments so do they summon a particular manner of fleshing out their felicitous details in paint by way of a certain composition and mode of figuration that relate to the aesthetic dispositions for ornament.

In the end, in Montemayor's vista, it is the body – finite, persevering, violated, inspired – that stirs up the force, the liveliness, the agency of the city. In what may well be a homage to the futurist impulse of simulating celerity, he keenly invests in the semblance of passage, of transport, of acceleration, of shift, of restless turning. Within this frenzy, there is also entropy and inertia, however, as the city may also grind to a halt, exhausted, worn out, gasping for breath. Around this sense of unnerving as well as enervation are people, inhabitants, communities who form the greater image of the city and its contemporary life, they who have come to terms with a modus vivendi, a social contract of living together for better or for worse. They are the bodies who coalesce and disperse, who eke out a life, who work on the destruction of shelter and who salvage its remains. They are going through the motions of redeeming themselves in the fallout of modernities that continue to promise and continue to fail. ©



RUSH HOUR
Acrylic on canvas
200.7 x 200.7 cm / 79 x 79 in
2012