

**Faye Abantao | Survival of the Fittest**  
**Xavier (xICA) Art Fest - Solo Presentation**  
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Survival of The Fittest

In Charles Darwin's Theory of Evolution, all organisms arise and develop through the natural selection of small, inherited variations that increase the individual's ability to compete, survive and reproduce.

The evolution of man came from the progression of our time, from the dark ages, to the renaissance period, to the first industrial revolution and now, to the new millennia. Man's advancement became an inherent result of the changing of times, the clashing of cultures and the evolution of ideology. Man, as a vessel of his body carried those changing ideas and contrasting iconoclasms as he journeyed throughout history. Man created for himself the shell that he walks in, and journeys towards his intended destination. But then, through the man's journey, all difficulties and trials would require him to shed that outer shell that protects him and makes him vulnerable to outer forces.

Like the shedding of the man's shell, the flow of times in the current millennia would bring man to reinvent himself. It's a repackaging of an old wrapping, like Pandora's box opening and bursting out into the world. Where demons and angels inside the man's box intertwine and brew a storm inside himself. The storm brewing inside man can impact his truth and reality.

The theory of evolution by natural selection has also been adopted as a foundation for various ethical and social systems, which inherently became the inspiration for the quote, "survival of the fittest". In Darwinian terms, the phrase is best understood as, "the survival of the form that will leave the most copies of itself in successive generations". This phrase perceives that there is a cut-throat competition, and the notion of winning is at hand in all aspects of life.

The Russian anarchist, Peter Kropotkin sets his sights on the opinion that in the survival of the fittest, the strongest does not necessarily win, but those individuals that work together as a whole. In the human society, man does not simply live alone, like an island, but exists as a part of the whole. That society does not operate with a lone leader, but is composed of a community.

In the practice of mutual aid, it is affirmed that in the ethical progress of man, mutual support and not mutual struggle has had the leading part. Man working with another man, can yield better results in the long run. Men working together towards a shared goal, a shared vision.

Man's commune with another man creates a wholistic environment for growth and self-discovery. Depicted in the illustration are men and women enclosed in their physical shells, the shells that they shed to show their vulnerability as they fight for their right and claim what is theirs to keep.

This series highlights the man's commune with his natural environment and with society. Each of the picture depicts a plight of the man's struggle for survival in the arena of life.

Freedom of speech, freedom of expression and freedom to live, all shown in the vivid images portrayed in the daily life of each man.

In the current society, one can say that this is a cutthroat competition of not the best, but the fiercest and most cunning. This is not a battle of morality, but of place in the society. And as they say, it's the survival of the fittest.