

Wil Aballe

1375 RAILSPUR ALLEY
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THEA CANLAS

Value Studies

Opening: Thurs, Jan 16, 2025, 5-8PM

Exhibition: Jan 16 - Mar 2, 2025

Image:

Thea Canlas

My name is Maria, too, 2023

Skin whitening soap



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Value Studies

In the artist's own words:

Using the language of material histories intrinsically linked to colonial economies, national identity, and personal memories of home, *Value Studies* (2021-present) is a series of works that attempt to articulate the embodied experience of generations of erasure through commodification and its effects on perceptions of cultural value.

Value Studies incorporates various materials such as traditional Philippine handicrafts, readymade objects, historical textiles, human hair, and tropical fruits to interrogate the relationships between value and cultural narration. Out of these materials, ghosts materialize into earthly forms: the translucent uniforms of invisible laborers float in the space of the gallery; the flags of spectral nations dangle from the ceiling; brooms of human hair hang anonymously. They appear as visitations and apparitions, yet they reflect contemporary horrors.

THEA CANLAS is a Filipina-American artist whose conceptual, research-driven work explores the entanglements of diasporic Philippine identity through sculptural objects, installations, and digital media. Thea received her BFA from the Maryland Institute College of Art in 2006 and her MFA from Emily Carr University of Art and Design in 2023. Her work has been exhibited in Washington, DC, Houston, Vancouver, Philadelphia, and Baltimore. She has been the recipient of a Gelman Travel Fellowship, a Ruby's Artist Grant, and was selected as a semifinalist for the Sondheim Art Prize. In 2024, she was selected to be a part of the Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture Artist Residency. Thea lives in Baltimore, Maryland with her husband, David, and son, Isagani. She currently works as a studio artist and educator.

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Thea Canlas

Export Quality #1-4, 2023

Human hair, plastic rattan,
wood, wire

Edition of 3 + 1 AP

*She's my Filipino Baby
She's my treasure and my pet
Her teeth are bright and pearly
And her hair is black as jet
O' her lips are sweet as honey
And her heart is true I know
She's my darling little Filipino Baby*

- Chorus from *Ma Filipino Babe* (1898)
Charles Kassell Harris



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Export Quality #1, 2023

Bamboo, hair, plastic rattan, wire

Edition of 3 + 1 AP

46 x 6 x 1 in (116.8 x 15.2 x 2.5 cm)



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Export Quality #2, 2023

Edition of 3 + 1 AP

Bamboo, hair, plastic rattan, wire

46 x 6 x 1 in (116.8 x 15.2 x 2.5 cm)



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Thea Canlas

Export Quality #3, 2023

Edition of 3 + 1 AP

Bamboo, hair, plastic rattan, wire

48 x 6 x 1 in (121.9 x 15.2 x 2.5 cm)



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Export Quality #4, 2023

Bamboo, hair, plastic rattan, wire

Edition of 3 + 1 AP

46 x 6 x 1 in (116.8 x 15.2 x 2.5 cm)



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Flag Studies #10, 2024

Piña seda fabric dyed with talisay leaves, mahogany,
indigo

48 x 24 in (121.9 x 61 cm)



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Flag Studies #5, 2023

Ilocano inabel cotton table runner, dyed embroidered
piña, and machine embroidered silk organza
48 x 24 in (121.9 x 61 cm)



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Flag Studies #6, 2023

Bontoc and inabel woven cotton textiles, and
machine embroidered dyed piña seda fabric
48 x 24 in (121.9 x 61 cm)



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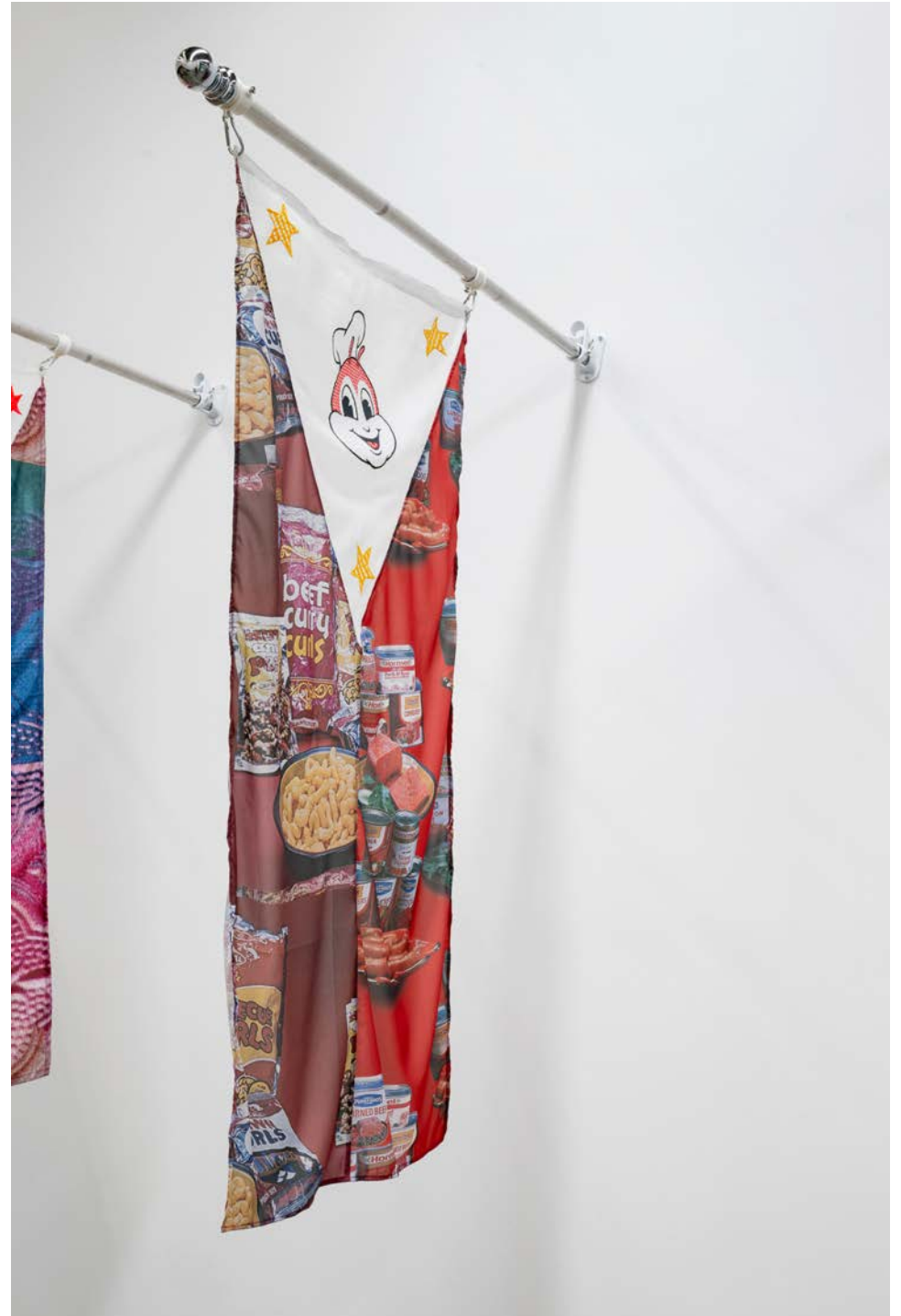
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Flag Studies #11, 2024

Digitally-printed poly crepe de chine and machine
embroidered piña seda

48 x 24 in (121.9 x 61 cm)



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Flag Studies #4, 2023

Jusi fabric, digitally-printed satin, machine
embroidered silk organza

48 x 24 in (121.9 x 61 cm)



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Flag Studies #12, 2024

Digitally printed cotton linen and satin, machine
embroidered piña seda fabric

48 x 24 in (121.9 x 61 cm)



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Flag Studies #8, 2023

Machine embroidered piña seda fabric

61 x 30 in (154.9 x 76.2 cm)



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My name is Maria, too., 2023

Skin whitening soap

Edition of 30

8.75 x 2.25 x 2.25 in (22.2 x 5.7 x 5.7 cm), each



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Thea Canlas
Uniform Studies, 2021
Two uniforms



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Thea Canlas

Uniform Studies, 2021

Two uniforms; machine embroidered piña cloth

Variable dimensions



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Uniform Studies, 2021

Two uniforms; machine embroidered piña cloth

Variable dimensions



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THEA CANLAS CV

Education

Emily Carr University of Art and Design, Vancouver, BC, Canada
MFA, Studio Art
2021 - 2023

Maryland Institute College of Art, Baltimore, MD, USA
BFA, Fibers Major
2002 - 2006

Glasgow School of Art, Glasgow, Scotland
Semester abroad, Textiles
2004

Exhibitions

- 2025 Emerging Artists Exhibition (Upcoming January 2025), The Center for Emerging Visual Artists, Philadelphia, PA, USA
Value Studies, Wil Aballe, Vancouver, BC, Canada
- 2024 Sondheim Semifinalist Art Prize Exhibition, Decker Gallery, Baltimore, MD, USA figure, Touchstone Gallery, Washington, DC, USA
- 2023 A Distant Presence: MFA Low Residency Thesis Exhibition, Emily Carr University, Vancouver, BC, Canada
- 2022 State of the Practice, Emily Carr University, Vancouver, BC, Canada
- 2011 Charleston Fashion Week, Emerging Designer Competition, Charleston, SC, USA
- 2010 What's Your War?, Load of Fun Gallery, Baltimore, MD, USA
- 2009 Abandon Ship, Current Gallery, Baltimore, MD, USA
- 2006 Commencement Exhibition, Maryland Institute College of Art, Baltimore, MD, USA
Vogue: MICA Fashion Show, Maryland Institute College of Art, Baltimore, MD, USA
- 2005 Art/Work, Maryland Institute College of Art, Baltimore, MD, USA
Maryland Institute College of Art Undergraduate Exhibition, Baltimore, MD, USA
Fusion: MICA Fashion Show, Maryland Institute College of Art, Baltimore, MD, USA
Glasgow School of Art Fashion Show, Glasgow School of Art, Glasgow, Scotland
- 2001 Faux, Foe, Pho, The Contemporary Art Museum, Houston, Texas, November 2001

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Residencies

2024 Skowhegan Summer Artist Residency, Skowhegan, Maine

Awards & Grants

2024 Ruby's Artist Grant (Robert W. Deutsch Foundation), Awardee
The Janet & Walter Sondheim Art Prize, Semifinalist
Opus Art Supplies Graduation Award (MFA), Awardee

2023 Emily Carr University President's Research Grant, Awardee

2011 Charleston Fashion Week, Emerging Designer Competition, Finalist

2006 Jacques and Natasha Gelman Travel Fellowship, Awardee
\$25,000 artist research and travel grant to Spain and the Philippines

2005 Windgate Fellowship Awards, Fibers Department Nominee

2004 Maryland Institute College of Art Achievement Award

2002-2006 Dean's List, Maryland Institute College of Art, Fall 2002 to Spring 2006

2002 Presidential Scholarship, Recipient, Maryland Institute College of Art
Arts Recognition & Talent Search Scholarship, Maryland Institute College of Art
Fanny B. Thalheimer Scholarship, Maryland Institute College of Art
Arts Recognition and Talent Search Award, Level III Visual Arts Finalist,
National Foundation for Advancement in the Arts

Publications

Canlas, Maria Alethea. (June 2024). Value Studies. Ecocene: Cappadocia Journal of Environmental Humanities, Volume 5 No. 1 (2024): June.

Papachristodoulou, A. and Felsing, L. (2024). To feel the Earth as one's skin. London, United Kingdom: Poem Atlas. (Publishing Fall 2024)

Relevant Professional Experience

Studio Instructor, Digital Embroidery and Sewing, 2021-Present
Open Works, Baltimore, MD, USA

Research Assistant, SPACE Symposium, Fall 2022
Emily Carr University of Art and Design, Vancouver, BC, Canada

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Teaching Assistant, Humanities 100, Fall 2021
Emily Carr University of Art and Design, Vancouver, BC, Canada

Freelance Designer, 2019-Present
Baltimore, MD, USA
Clients include Annie E. Casey Foundation, Fusion Partnerships, Morgan CARES, Asana Consulting, Art with a Heart, etc.

Digital Engagement Specialist, 2013-2019
The Walters Art Museum, Baltimore, MD, USA

Assistant Instructor, 2015-2016
Y-LLEAD (Youth Learning Lab of Education and Applied Design), Baltimore, MD, USA

Sewing Instructor/Production Manager, 2013-2015
Mother Made, Baltimore, MD, USA