

RENATO ORARA

Bio

Renato Orara (b. 1961, Philippines) draws discrete objects stripped of context, meaning, and narrative that are the currency of Realism to create vessels of ink and energy that push the mind beyond the limits set by language and concepts.

With conceptual roots that go back to his interventions, performance art, and exhibitions on the streets of Manila in the late 70s, Orara took an eight-year hiatus from art-making to practice Zen meditation. Re-emerging in New York in 1989, he resumed his art, this time taking it up as a discipline that mirrored his practice. He filled the blank pages of a book with commonplace objects, layering them with ballpoint ink until they ceased to be about things.

By 1996 his work, "Ten Thousand Things That Breathe," found their way into alternative spaces in Bangkok, Tokyo, and Manila. In 1998 and 1999 he had his first solo exhibitions in the US at the Palo Alto Cultural Center and at Hosfelt Gallery in California.

His exhibition at the Drawing Center in NYC (2002) paved the way for inclusion in Initial Encounters (2004), a show featuring ten artists selected by Drawing Center curators from a decade of exhibitions at the institution. Both shows ushered in a string of gallery exhibitions in the US (Andrea Rosen Gallery, Nicole Klagsbrun Gallery, Gallery Joe, OSP Gallery, José Bienvenu Gallery, Leo Fortuna Gallery) and other parts of the world (the Travelling Gallery, Dominique Fiat Gallery, Alon Segev Gallery, and Silverlens Gallery).

Over time, Orara re-introduced concepts into his work branching out into the following series: "Drawer Drawings," "Iraq Memorial," "Bookworks," and "Bloodworks." His works are in numerous private and public collections including the Museum of Modern Art, NY, the Museum of Fine Arts in Houston, TX, and Singapore Art Museum.

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b. Bicol, PH



untitled, 2014-11, from "Ten Thousand Things that Breathe"

COLLECTIONS

The Cartin Collection, Hartford, CT
The Daled Collection, Brussels, Belgium
The Echavarria Collection, Colombia
Museum of Fine Arts Houston, Houston, TX
Museum of Modern Art, New York, NY
RxArt, New York, NY
Singapore Art Museum
Various private and corporate collections

SOLO EXHIBITIONS

2016 *Renato Orara*, Silverlens, Helutrans, Singapore
2015 *Renato Orara*, Silverlens, Manila, Philippines
2013 *Renato Orara: Ten Thousand Things That Breathe*, Project space, Josée Bienvenu Gallery, New York, NY
2009 *Library Bookworks: Exhibition/Hidden Installation*, Silverlens, Manila, Philippines
Marked Bills, Project space, Josée Bienvenu Gallery, New York, NY
2008 *An Iraq Memorial and Other Works*, Leo Fortuna Gallery, Hudson, NY
2006 *Ten Thousand Things That Breathe*, Dominique Fiat Gallery, Paris, France
1999 *Renato Orara*, Hosfelt Gallery, San Francisco, CA
1998 *Renato Orara: Ten Thousand Things That Breathe*, Palo Alto Cultural Center, Palo Alto, CA
1996 *Asian Tour: Ten Thousand Things That Breathe*, Nielsen Hayes Library, Bangkok, Thailand; St. Luke's Gallery, Tokyo, Japan; and the Cultural Center of the Philippines, Manila, Philippines

TWO-PERSON EXHIBITIONS

2005 *Drawings*, With Jacob El Hanani, OSP Gallery, Boston, MA
2004 *Dedication/Association*, With Aric Obrose, Andrea Rosen Gallery, New York, NY

GROUP EXHIBITIONS

2018 *Art Fair Philippines*, Silverlens, Manila
2017 *Translación*, Inaugural Exhibition, Curated by Gary-Ross Pastrana, Silverlens, Manila
2016 *Art Basel*, Silverlens, Hong Kong
Art Fair Philippines, Silverlens, Manila
Master Drawings New York, Kraushaar Galleries, New York
2015 *Art Basel*, Silverlens, Hong Kong
Art Fair Philippines, Silverlens, Manila
2014 *Contemporary Art for Southeast Asia: Breaking and Reconstructing The Circle*, Asian Art in London, One East Asia Gallery 8, London, UK

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- 2009 *Medium At Large*, Singapore Art Museum, Singapore
Thrice Upon a Time, Singapore Art Museum, Singapore
Trends in Paper Works, Gallery I, Texas State University, San Marcos, TX
- 2008 *Microwave Six*, Josée Bienvenu Gallery, New York, NY
Oeuvres en Papier, Dominique Fiat Gallery, Paris, France
- 2007 *From a Drawing Standpoint*, Leo Fortuna Gallery, Hudson, NY
FIAC, Dominique Fiat Gallery, Paris, France
Aqua Art Fair, OSP Gallery, Miami, FL
Art Brussels, Dominique Fiat Gallery, Brussels, Belgium
- 2006 *Moment by Moment*, North Dakota Museum of Art, Grand Forks, ND
Starting at the Edge, Mushroom Arts, New York, NY
- 2005 *September 11, 1973*, Orchard Gallery, New York, NY
Amelie A. Wallace Gallery, SUNY The College of Old Westbury, Old Westbury, NY
Art Basel 2005, Andrea Rosen Gallery, Basel, Switzerland
- 2004 *Small Works*, Gallery Joe, Philadelphia, PA
L'intime, Behind Closed Doors, La Maison Rouge, Fondation Antoine de Galbert, Paris, France
Initial Encounters, curated by The Drawing Center, Arts Center of the Capital Region, Troy, NY
Intensive Care, Alon Segev Gallery, Tel-Aviv, Israel
On Paper, Nicole Klagsbrun Gallery, New York, NY
- 2003 *Meditation of the Hand*, The Buddhism Project, Salena Gallery, LIU Brooklyn Campus, NY
- 2002 *Taking Form*, Gallery Joe, Philadelphia, PA
The Drawing Room, Travelling Gallery Autumn 2002 Tour, Scotland, UK
Realistic Means, Winter Selections, Drawing Center, New York, NY
- 1999 *Chicago Art Fair*, Hosfelt Gallery, Chicago, IL

OTHER PRESENTATIONS

- 2013 *On the Table*, a do-it yourself program created for The Drawing Center, New York, NY
Embodied Reasonableness and the Aesthetic Dimension of Experience, paper presented by Mara Buenaseda, Minding the Body Conference, CUNY Graduate Center, New York, NY
- 2009 *Library Bookworks*, a hidden installation, 13 libraries all over the Philippines
20x20x5, Pecha Kucha series, Museum of Modern Art, New York, NY
- 2001 *Flat Files*, Pierogi Gallery, Brooklyn, NY

PUBLICATIONS

- Ballpoint Art*, Morse, Trent. Laurence King Publishing Ltd. London, UK. 2016
100 New York Calligraphers, Dantzic, Cynthia. Schiffer Publishing Ltd. USA. 2015
Southeast Asia and Diaspora: Breaking and Reconstructing the Circle, One East Asia. Singapore. 2014

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Tomorrow, Today: Contemporary Art from the Singapore Art Museum, 2009-2011 Catalogue, Singapore Art Museum, Singapore. 2011

Thrice Upon A Time. Singapore Arts Museum Exhibition Catalogue. Singapore. 2009

The Judith Rothschild Foundation Contemporary Drawings Collection Catalogue Raisonné. Rattemeyer, Christian. Exhibition catalogue. Museum of Modern Art, New York. 2009

Initial Encounters. The Arts Center of the Capital Region. Troy, New York. March.

Realistic Means. The Drawing Center's Drawing Papers. Vol. 28. New York. March 2002

Ten Thousand Things That Breathe: The Ballpoint Pen Drawings of Renato Ortega. (aka. Renato Orara). Korinsha Press & Co. Ltd., Kyoto, Japan. 1996

SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

Pam Barrett-Fender, "Crossing the Line." MetroLand, NY, April, 2004, p. 31

Timothy Cahill, "Exhibits Show Lines that Divide Drawing and Art." Times Union, NY, May, 2004

Frank Cebulski, "Renato at the Palo Alto Cultural Center." Artweek, December, 1998, p. 14

Naomi Coke, "With a Ballpoint Pen and Paper Bag..." The Daily Yomiuri, Japan, June 2, 1994, p. 7

Holland Cotter, "Meditation for the Hand." The New York Times, 19 September 2003, p. E39

Jasmine Agnes Cruz. The Art of Ordinary Things. Business World. 2015

Lecomte, Stéphane. "Renato Orara: Ten Thousand Things that Breathe." Paris Art. Paris, France

Lourd Ernst de Veyra, "Zen and the Art of Ballpoint Pen Meditation." Today, Philippines, April 14, 1996, p. 4

Merwyn de Mello and Patrice Van Hyle, "Ten Thousand Things That Breathe: Interview." Asia Focus, April 26, 1996, p. 8

Carina Evangelista, "Renato: Ten Thousand Things that Breathe (The Drawing Center: Winter Selections 2002)." Art Manila, Vol. 3, No. 9, 2002

Jack Fisher, "Tunnel Visions an Inspiration." San Jose Mercury News, November 1, 1998, p. 2G

Alice Guillermo, "Art from a Ballpoint Pen." The Philippine Star, April 1, 1996, p. 18

Naomi Hosoda, "Life in Ordinary Things: Ten Thousand Things in Ballpoint Pen Drawings." The Daily Manila Shimbun, April 17, 1996, p. 8

Reena Jana, "Renato at Hosfelt Gallery." Asian Art News, July/August, 1999, p. 77

William Marazzi, "Zen and the Art of Renato Ortega." Living in Thailand, April 1996, p. 54

Trent Morse, "Ballpoint is on a Roll." Art News, January 2014, p. 64

Jaime Biron Polo, "Shading Ortega's Ballpoint Pen Drawings." The Evening Paper, Philippines, April 21, 1996, p. 19

Edward Sozanski. "Ordinary Becomes Aesthetic." The Philadelphia Inquirer, October 11, 2002

Catherine Zoepf. "Realistic Means." Contemporary, May 2002, p. 102

"Briefly Noted: An Iraq Memorial by Renato Orara." Letter Arts Review. Spring

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2008. Quarterly Publication, NC. 2008

"Belgique: Le rendez-vous des collectionneurs." Le Journal des Arts. May 2007

"Ten Thousand Things that Breathe." Sky Cable News Broadcast, Philippines, April 1996

EDUCATION

1987 BA Psychology, University Of The Philippines, Diliman