

SILVERLENS

JONATHAN CHING



sitting room

SILVERLENS

JONATHAN CHING

sitting room

24 August – 23 September 2023

[website](#) [email](#) [whatsapp](#)



Silverlens Manila is pleased to present *Sitting Room*, a solo exhibition by Jonathan Ching. Central to this body of work is the chair as a functional object in space, an index of human relations, and an arbiter of our connection with the world. Civilization is unthinkable without chairs, as it offers a multiplicity of uses, all the while holding and maintaining our bodies at once parallel and perpendicular to—as well as connected to and disengaged from—the ground. Seated figures, we are poised to enjoy a meal, commence work, receive instruction, converse, make a deal, argue for our case, cast judgment. We sit as family members, friends, colleagues, civilians. We understand the influence that the “seat of power” wields, and hence we demand “a seat by the table.” Thrones, ergonomic office chairs, Monoblocs—they are at once radically different and fundamentally the same.

In these paintings, characterized by a furious, coruscating impasto and swirling shifts of the pictorial plane, chairs are structures of leisure—direct invitations to kill time and revive relationships compromised by years-long isolation because of the pandemic. In some works, chairs are temporary resting places for pets and days-old clothes, which indicate life lived outside the domestic space which became refuge and prison during the Covid scourge. A vividness of sensations, the electric connection between two people in close proximity with each other, the charged molecules of air and light in spaces occupied by human presence: These are the elements that endow the works of the artist keen to restore scenes from an old, familiar life.

These acts of restoration are touched by the loneliness of what has come to pass (and what one may argue as something that’s still here): the pandemic, yes, but also the trailing strands of disengagement and isolation. Not one of us have emerged from the global contagion unscathed. We gaze into the near distance or stare at our phones,

finding our bearing or appropriate word for the moment. We let the day’s discards accumulate. We face the world with wan smiles and unblinking eyes. Meanwhile, in the paintings, the tables bloom into koi and lotus ponds. Everyday joys are imminent and immanent. These works ask the viewer not only look at their possibility but their full, total, and irrevocable incarnation.

The chairs, then, function in the exhibition as harbors to which we sail from the different points of the day, hold the body stable and steady, so we may share the everyday joys that can assume the form of a cup of coffee or a companionship with another. Chairs offer the titillating prospect of doing nothing or, at the very least, not contributing to the capitalist’s demand of productivity or making “good use” of one’s time. One can be, as one of the works depicts, a contended Buddha on a sofa. Relaxation is paramount and must be pursued as it offers the best vantage point for revelatory wonder, something alluded to by the Japanese poet Shuntaro Tanikawa, who has inspired the artist: “There are things I must tend to/ but I do nothing/ simply sitting enchanted.”

Enchantment may not necessarily be coterminous with urban life—a subject that Jonathan Ching has pursued in much of his works—but the familiar offers its bruised, blemished gems, usually after a period of loss or suffering, when we feel that the dark will not be letting up. These paintings, with their rough-hewn, fervid strokes and resistance against legibility, are held together by the solace of the ordinary: what fragments coheres. And the chairs, in their various iterations, will be there, to be occupied by humans and their affectionate indices, absorbed and committed to what Tanikawa, he of the philosophy of keeping still, calls as the wonder of simply being here.

-Carlomar Arcangel Daoana



JONATHAN CHING
sitting room



In My Circle, 2023
oil on canvas
30h x 24w in • 76.20h x 60.96w cm (each)

Blue Dog, 2023
oil on canvas
48h x 36w in • 121.92h x 91.44w cm







Enchanted Travellers 1, 2023

oil on canvas

48h x 60w in • 121.92h x 152.40w cm





I Sit, 2023
oil on canvas
60h x 72w in • 152.40h x 182.88w cm



Enchanted Travellers 2, 2023
oil on canvas
48h x 48w in • 121.92h x 121.92h cm





JONATHAN CHING

Bio

Jonathan Ching (b. 1969, Dagupan, Philippines) obtained his Bachelor of Science in Civil Engineering in 1991 before becoming a visual artist. He pursued his artistic interests in 1993 and took up the University of the Philippines' College of Fine Arts in Visual Communication program. He is one of the founding members of the arts collective Surrounded By Water, which successfully established an artist-run space from 1998 to 2004.

Ching has exhibited extensively since his first solo exhibition in 2008 at West Gallery. His works were shown in several solo and group exhibitions in the Philippines, Malaysia, Singapore, and Indonesia.



JONATHAN CHING CV

b. 1969, Dagupan, PH



The Kind and the Pawn, 2019

SOLO EXHIBITIONS

- 2023 *Sitting Room*, Silverlens, Manila
- 2022 *Stranger in a Strange Land*, MO Space, Taguig City
- 2021 *Still*, Underground Gallery, Makati City
- 2020 *Lost in the Moment, Caught in the Headlights*, BLANC Gallery, Quezon City
- 2019 *They Might Be Giants*, Silverlens, Manila
- 2018 *Seven Seas in a Puddle*, West Gallery, Manila
- 2017 *The Shape of Hills*, Tin Aw Gallery, Manila
Cut, Paste, Repeat, Underground Gallery, Manila
La Strada, Finale Art File, Makati
- 2015 *elsewhere*, Silverlens, Manila
Flotsam and Jetsam, West Gallery, Manila
- 2014 *Tone and Tales*, Blanc Gallery, Manila
- 2013 *Sputnik Dreams*, Silverlens, Manila
- 2012 *The Space Between Raindrops*, Finale Art File, Manila
- 2011 *And They Say The Stars Are Worlds*, Richard Koh Fine Arts, Singapore
Inside, Blanc Compound, Manila
- 2010 *Where in the World is Botero's Leg*, Video Room, Finale Art File, Manila
When the Saints Go Marching In, Blanc Compound, Manila
- 2009 *If It's Whitev and In A Bottle, It Must Be Milk*, West Gallery, Manila
Days of Thunder, Valentine Willie Fine Arts, Kuala Lumpur
- 2008 *Nothing is Required, Except Happiness*, West Gallery, Manila
Whale Songs for the Disenchanted, Blanc Gallery, Manila

SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS

- 2023 *Art Fair Philippines*, Silverlens, Manila
Eventualities: Two Man Show with Aze Ong, West Gallery, Quezon City
- 2022 *Art Fair Philippines*, Silverlens, Manila
Odds and Ends, Two Man Show with Mariano Ching, Blanc Gallery, Quezon City

JONATHAN CHING CV

- 2021 *Art Fair Philippines*, Silverlens, Manila
- 2019 *Art Fair Philippines*, Silverlens, Manila
Dance with the Mayflies, Tin-Aw Art Gallery, Makati City
- 2018 *Art Fair Philippines*, Silverlens, Manila
- 2016 *Detour*, with Elaine Navas, Blanc Gallery, Manila
Art Fair Philippines, Silverlens, Manila
Life Jacket Under Your Seat (Surrounded by Water & Friends), Langgeng Art Foundation, Yogyakarta, Indonesia
Mrs. Sprout and the Gamekeeper (A Contemporary coupling of Flora and Fauna) Tin-Aw Gallery, Manila
- 2015 *Regarding Views Views - A Contemporary Still Landscape Show*,
Tin-Aw Gallery, Manila
The Last Dog Show, Finale Art File, Manila
Art Fair Philippines, Silverlens, Manila
- 2014 *Picture Life - A Contemporary Still Life Group Show*, Tin-Aw Gallery, Manila
Art Fair Philippines, Silverlens, Manila
- 2013 *Over the Water*, Equator Art Projects, Singapore
- 2012 *The Great Outdoors*, Blanc Gallery, Manila
Postlocal: As Is Where Is, Silverlens, Manila
- 2011 *A Flash and A Clap*, West Gallery, Manila
Accidents Repeated in Geography and Time, Art In House, Picasso Boutique Serviced Residence, Manila
- 2010 *Road to Santiago*, West Gallery, Manila
These Are Days, Blanc Gallery, Manila Peninsula, Manila
- 2009 *Headlights 2009*, Valentine Willie Fine Arts, Kuala Lumpur
In the Ocean Without a Boat or a Paddle, Blanc Gallery, Manila
- 2008 *Young Contemporary Philippines*, Richard Kho Fine Art, Kuala Lumpur
Inaugural Show, Finale Art File, Manila
- 2007 *Dog Show 07*, Green Papaya Project, Manila
Shoot Me: Photographs Now, MO's Gallery, Manila
- 2004 *Closed for Inventory*, Cubicle Art Gallery, Manila
- 2003 *Partly Cloudy*, 80% Sunshine, Surrounded by Water, Manila
- 2002 *Multiple Portables*, Plastique Kinetic Worms, Singapore

JONATHAN CHING
CV

- Feast of Conversations*, Atelier Frank & Lee, Singapore
- Recent Works*, Kulay Diwa Gallery, Manila
- Conversation*, Art Center, SM Megamall, Manila
- Mainstream*, Surrounded by Water Gallery, Manila
- 2001 *Portable Landscape*, Lunâ Gallery, Cebu
- Cool Pieties*, SM Art Center, Manila
- Surrounded*, Cultural Center of the Philippines, Main Gallery, Manila
- Grand Royale*, Big Sky Mind, Manila
- 1999 *Daily Planet*, Surrounded by Water Gallery, Manila
- Dogshow II*, Surrounded by Water Gallery, Manila
- Today Show*, Cultural Center of the Philippines, Manila
- Topology of Signs*, Cultural Center of the Philippines, Manila
- Coordinates*, Boston Gallery, Manila
- Kitschy Kitschy Co*, Surrounded by Water Gallery, Rizal
- 1998 *Cross Roads (Terminal Baggage)*, Australia Centre, Manila
- 1996 *Delatang Pinoy:Yes! The Filipino Can*, Hiraya Gallery, Manila

EDUCATION

- 1993 – 1997 University of the Philippines
Fine Arts Major in Visual Communication
- 1992 Passed the Civil Engineering Board Exam
- 1987 – 1991 De La Salle University
BS Civil Engineering
- 1979 – 1987 St. Jude Catholic School
Grade School and High School

JONATHAN CHING

Copyright © Silverlens Inc. 2023

All rights reserved.

No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or otherwise, without the prior written consent of the above mentioned copyright holders, with the exception of brief excerpts and quotations used in articles, critical essays or research.

CARLOMAR ARCANGEL DAOANA

Text © Silverlens Inc. 2023

All rights reserved.

No part of this essay may be reproduced, modified, or stored in a retrieval system or retransmission, in any form or by any means, for reasons other than personal use, without written permission from the author.

SILVERLENS

2263 Don Chino Roces Avenue Extension

Makati City, Philippines 1231

T +632.88160044

F +632.88160044

M +63917.5874011

www.silverlensgalleries.com

