



SILVERLENS

MAYA MUÑOZ  
*drift and vapor*

SILVERLENS

MAYA MUÑOZ  
*drift and vapor*

5 October – 4 November 2023

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





The natural light in Legazpi, where Muñoz lives and works, casts deep shadows and creates sharp contrasts. Against the velvety blackness of Mount Mayon's volcanic earth and its peculiar atmosphere, colors become stark and oversaturated. This was the artist's main observation when she returned to her hometown three years ago and rebuilt her studio there.

Such transformative aspect of light changed Muñoz' palette, most recently to black and white monochrome, and led her to explore photography. Specifically, she wanted to experiment on how she could manipulate photographs and print them herself. She takes smartphone snapshots of scenes she encounters every day, saving them as her source material. These include landscapes, people she meets and other seemingly banal sights, images "that soothe the brutal side of life."

Muñoz ruminates on the detachment that occurs at the time a photograph is taken. During its recording, the photographer is outside of the moment, removed from experiencing it. With this rationale, she selects images that she did not overthink, because "one becomes too invested in a great photo." Her image archive, collected over many years, is hinged on how the vagueness of a casual snapshot opens the viewer to more possibilities. "When a perfect photo is so pretty, it gets stuck at pretty."

We see abstracted environments, both natural and manmade, some with a cloudy bloom, as if ravaged through the patina of time. There are traces of empty tennis courts, bathers wading at the beach, skim boarders waiting for the waves. Rendered in deep blacks, misty greys, and chalky whites, the images are grainy, mottled, faded, and streaked, articulating evanescence, passing moments that amble along, impossible to hold still. "Giving importance to how an image is presented leads back to a lost idea and recontextualizes it."

Photography is just the starting point of the artist's complex and tedious process that evolved into what she defines as expanded printmaking. Muñoz built a darkroom, constructed scaled-up screen print stretchers, and made a massive exposure unit-- a makeshift wooden casing installed with fluorescent lights. Using Photoshop, the images are color-separated as designed for the CMKY screen print method. They are laser printed as positives on transparent acetates. Then in the darkroom, Muñoz coats light-sensitive emulsion onto the screens. Once dry, she exposes the acetate images layered over the screens, and after a few minutes, washes out the emulsion with a power spray to halt exposure. Finally, she prints the images by pulling each layer of acrylic paint color. This technique allows her to create half tones and print in black and white, in color, or in both. Each print is unique.

Primarily a painter, Muñoz is less satisfied with immaculate prints and rather prefers the mess: water marks, mishaps, and other improvisational results one associates with the playfulness of painting over the exacting methods of commercial photography and the rigid precision of traditional printmaking. Her process is a painter's equivalent to analog photography's dodge and burn. It is also an attempt to mimic a camera with a leak. To work with controlled accidents, she alters exposure times, pulls the paint only on certain areas, often scrapes off wet paint and prints the same image over it multiple times. She tests varying registration and screen mesh weave count, erases, rolls, and splashes paint until the image attains her desired effects.

These compound treatments are taxing on bare paper supports, but Muñoz devised a way to avoid damaging the paper. She mixed oil with a cold wax medium to seal the paper. "If I wait a couple of days, I can move the paint around, just enough to get the print I want. This mixture also soaks the paper, so I can get luscious blacks." The artist also found a way to print on canvas while obtaining the smoothness and character of paper. She made a formula consisting of wall putty and a polymer binder and applies this evenly onto the canvas to recreate a papery base. Medium and technique dictate her next move, as she learns through the making. "Artists become surface connoisseurs."

Photographs are often printed as flat and smooth objects; however, Muñoz wanted to achieve textured surface quality. Through raised texture and obscured images, she hopes to further engage viewers, drawing them in to imagine their own stories. It is an end-to-end creative endeavor in which the artist has control of each step to convey mood, emotion, and a sense of vastness. Here, virtuosity of technique translates to visual poetry. Consistent with the prosaicness of her subjects, she utilizes vernacular methods and materials, harnessing what are readily accessible in Legazpi. After all, the screen print technique is more commonly employed by makers of posters and t-shirts. On this consonance of material and process, she asserts, "I want the work to be anchored in the very real."

-Stephanie Frondoso





*Still water*, 2023

oil and cold wax medium on paper

17.32h x 23.03w in • 44h x 58.50w cm (framed)

edition 1 of 1





*Tropic of Capricorn 676-2, 2023*  
oil and cold wax medium on paper  
21.85h x 29.13w in • 55.50h x 74w cm (framed)  
edition 1 of 1





*Tropic of Capricorn 676-1*, 2023  
oil and cold wax medium on paper  
21.02h x 29.13w in • 53.40h x 74w cm (framed)  
edition 1 of 1



*High tide incoming 676-5, 2023*

oil and cold wax medium on paper

21.02h x 29.33w in • 53.40h x 74.50w cm (framed)

edition 1 of 1



**676-3 "eventide", 2023**  
oil and cold wax medium on paper  
21.02h x 29.33w in • 53.40h x 74.50w cm (framed)  
edition 1 of 1









*Tropic of Capricorn*, 2023

oil and cold wax medium on paper

21.02h x 29.33w in • 53.40h x 74.50w cm (framed)

edition 1 of 1



**676-4 "eventide", 2023**

oil and cold wax medium on paper

21.02h x 29.33w in • 53.40h x 74.50w cm (framed)

edition 1 of 1





*High tide*, 2023  
oil and cold wax medium on paper  
21.02h x 29.33w in • 53.40h x 74.50w cm (framed)  
edition 1 of 1









other available works



**676-10, 2023**  
oil and coldwax medium on canvas  
18.90h x 29.13w in • 48h x 74w cm  
edition 1 of 1



**676-11, 2023**  
oil and coldwax medium on canvas  
20.87h x 29.13w in • 53h x 74w cm  
edition 1 of 1





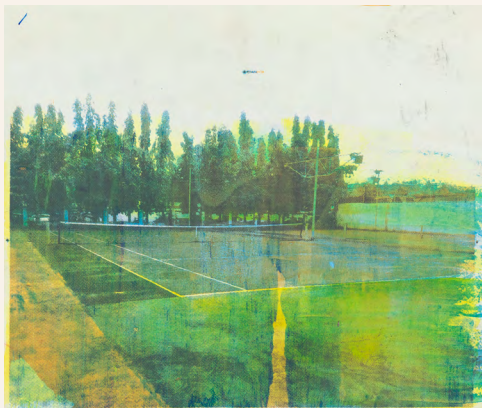
***Coldwater 676-45, 2023***

acrylic and matte medium on canvas  
22.44h x 23.52w in • 57h x 59.75w cm



***30 Love 676-46, 2023***

acrylic and matte medium on canvas  
15.35h x 19.69w in • 39h x 50w cm



**Love 676-47, 2023**

acrylic and matte medium on canvas  
17.52h x 19.69w in • 44.50h x 50w cm



**15 love 676-48, 2023**

acrylic and matte medium on canvas  
15.55h x 19.69w in • 39.50h x 50w cm





# SILVERLENS

[www.silverlensgalleries.com](http://www.silverlensgalleries.com)

## MAYA MUÑOZ

### Bio



Maya Munoz lives and works in Bicol province. She is a painter and printmaker.



## MAYA MUÑOZ CV

b. 1972, Albay, PH



*Still life with figures, 2019*

### AWARDS

2006 *Awardee*, 3rd Ateneo Art Award, Ateneo Art Gallery

### SOLO EXHIBITIONS

- 2023 *Drift and Vapor*, Silverlens, Makati City
- 2022 *Stills from a year of living dangerously*,  
The Drawing Room, Makati City
- Wear the world lightly*, Artinformal, Makati City
- 2019 *THE GARDEN*, Silverlens, Makati City
- 2018 *Kantil Moderato*, Yavuz Gallery, Gillman Barracks, Singapore
- short story*, ArtInformal, Makati City
- 2017 *Time Spent with the world*, The Drawing Room, Makati City
- 2010 *Drawings*, The Drawing Room, Makati City
- 2009 *The Romanticist*, The Drawing Room, Makati City
- 2007 *November*, The Drawing Room, Makati City
- 2006 *Closer*, Hiraya Gallery, Ermita, Manila
- 2005 *Tropical Samadhi*, The Drawing Room, Makati City
- Silencio*, The Drawing Room, Makati City
- 2004 *The Unbearable Being of Nothingness*, Hiraya Gallery,  
Ermita, Manila
- 2000 *Figures and Motion*, San Jose Art League. W. San Carlos St.,  
San Jose California

### GROUP EXHIBITIONS

- 2023 *Art Fair Philippines*, Silverlens, Makati City
- 2022 *Art Fair Philippines*, Silverlens, Makati City
- 2021 *Collectors Plus*, Silverlens, Makati City
- 2020 *Searching Sanctuary*, Silverlens, Makati City
- Art Fair Philippines*, Silverlens, Makati City
- 2009 *Verso Manila*, The Drawing Room in collaboration with  
Artecontemporanea, Turin, Italy
- 2008 *ARTSingapore '08*, The Drawing Room,  
Suntec Building, Singapore
- Showcase Singapore*, Singapore

MAYA MUÑOZ  
CV

b. 1972, Albay, PH

*Sentimental Value*, Philippine Contemporary Art Exhibition, in collaboration with SOKA Contemporary Space and The Drawing Room Gallery, Beijing, China

*CIGE 2008 Beijing Art Fair*, The Drawing Room, Beijing, China

*Bridge Art Fair New York*, The Drawing Room, New York, U.S.A

2007 *SCOPE Miami*, The Drawing Room, Suntec Building, Singapore

*The Drawing Room @ Dubai Art Fair*, International Exhibitions & Conferences, United Arab Emirates

*Utterly Art*, South Bridge Road, Singapore

2005 *ARTSingapore '05*, The Drawing Room, Suntec Building, Singapore

*Under the Volcanoe*, Alliance Francaise de Manille, Manila, Philippines

2002 *No Exit*, The Gallery, 106 E. Virginia St., San Jose, California

2001 *Love and Chaos*, The Art Works, 1068 Alameda, San Jose, California

2000 *Subversion and Dominance*, San Jose Art League and Alameda Art Works, San Jose, California

EDUCATION

1996-1998 San Jose State University, California

**MAYA MUÑOZ**

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.

**STEPHANIE FRONDOSO**

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](http://www.silverlensgalleries.com)

