



**DINA GADIA**

**NAVIGATING THE ABSTRACT**

**SILVERLENS**

**DINA GADIA**  
**NAVIGATING THE ABSTRACT**

**5 DECEMBER TO 23 DECEMBER 2020**



A  
WAY  
OF  
TELLING

DINA GADIA  
NAVIGATING THE ABSTRACT



SILVERLENS proudly presents a solo exhibit by Dina Gadia entitled *Navigating the Abstract*, featuring a series of Pop-inflected paintings and conceptual texts that explore the ambiguity of representation through image and language, and where, applying her signature style of appropriation along with a sharp sense of wit, unlocks the unconscious complex of drives and desires that pervade the social imaginary.

The familiar is not a stranger to Dina Gadia's work. We take pleasure and comfort in the elegant lines that form her images, the bright and pure colors filling in the variety of shapes, or the clean design allowing for the clarity of thought, leading towards a possibility of lucid dreaming. The images populating Gadia's work are born from popular media, from common pulp magazines to graphic novels, where the vintage style of illustration provides her a masterful visual language that certifies the work to be an immediate classic. Reading the works over an innocuous pop sensibility, however, would make it easy to gloss over the tension and challenge hidden behind Gadia's wit. We nevertheless enjoy the clever juxtapositions where the unusual sets up many ironic comic situations, where the disparity between reality and the fantastic is stretched towards awkward instances gliding seamlessly to slapstick tendencies.

Slipping into the psychological implication behind Gadia's ironic cues reveal a critical awareness of the work's sociological content. We might think therefore, in a painting where a severed gigantic ear lies prone on the ground with hovering birds feeding on leftovers like parasites that it might ponder on the nature of listening.<sup>[i]</sup> Another picture entitled *Beginning, Middle, End*, a pallid rose stands preening in the middle ground with enflamed petal curves, which normally is stock image for romantic expression on the verge of kitsch, but here is sunless lit while quite pitched for the cutting off of its own being.<sup>[ii]</sup> In Gadia's hands, the collage technique is not merely an adventure in formal creativity, but also becomes a tool for exploring the body, and its many manifestations, for the construction of gender and identity in the realm of the imaginary, if not, to reveal its own vulnerability.

Apparent anxieties and complexes notwithstanding, Gadia's imaginative juxtapositions jolt with deadpan non sequiturs to surreal ends. This sets up another feature of the exhibit, which is the use of instructional signage designed by the artist: *A Way of Telling, Touch Me Not*<sup>[iii]</sup>, *Do Not Go Beyond this Point*; applying language as a site of floating signifiers and undecidable meaning. Hence, the textual messages on the signs appear open ended and free, untethered from exact external signification. They instead represent a fluctuating state of conditions, mirroring an endless chain of associations internal to itself, intertextual of meaning, an abstraction by other means.

The notion underlying nothing outside of the text is characterized by yet another painting in the show titled *Container*, featuring a finely rendered globe similar to tabletop models that we spin around toward destinations unknown, shows one without land to travel and is overwhelmed by surrounding arrows that point actually outside to nowhere – a common anxiety suffered understandably today in isolation. The pictures in effect complement the words in their deconstruction of the familiar that defines an indeterminate state.

To form unique experiences from tautological signs is supreme inspiration, and the foundation of a community of advocates, when austere conditions alone call for a shared connection. Art's capacity to present diverse narratives about the world around us through the gaps of conventional understanding forces the awakening of reason to the possibility of better conditions and continued survival. In Dina Gadia's chance pairing of images and texts, the artist commendably points to current social anxieties that affect the imaginary, while navigating the abstract, uncertain moment.

[i] An ear to the ground may refer to the continuous surveillance and on being informed about pertinent things social, political, and personal. Gadia's title for this painting, *Throbbing-Pulsing-Pounding-Drumming-Hum!* resonates with awareness despite a disembodied state. It brings to mind Adorno's abnegation on the value of listening to popular media, which causes the disintegration of identity to standardization, abstracting the self by feeding on the rhythm of the beat to obey.

[ii] Beauty's indifferent power is a fragile state that breeds castration fantasies of incompleteness and perceived privileges of the other. Within unequal conditions then, who is in control, and is beauty still necessary when there is no action? Can a feminist symbolism lead to a kind of restoration as to the bridging of differences? This work even so relates indirectly to Gadia's instructional signage of *Touch Me Not*, which conceivably suggests a type of giving but not receiving condition of control.

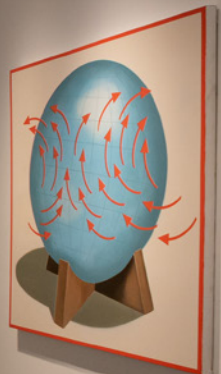
[iii] According to Gadia, the title of *Touch Me Not* however instinctively came from Rizal's novel, which in a veiled reference to colonialism, talks about an insufferable cancer for those afflicted who can't even tolerate to be touched – a social cancer that similarly plagues his country.

- Arvin Flores





DO NOT GO BEYOND  
THIS POINT





***THROBBING-PULSING-POUNDING-DRUMMING-HUM!, 2020***

**ACRYLIC ON CANVAS**

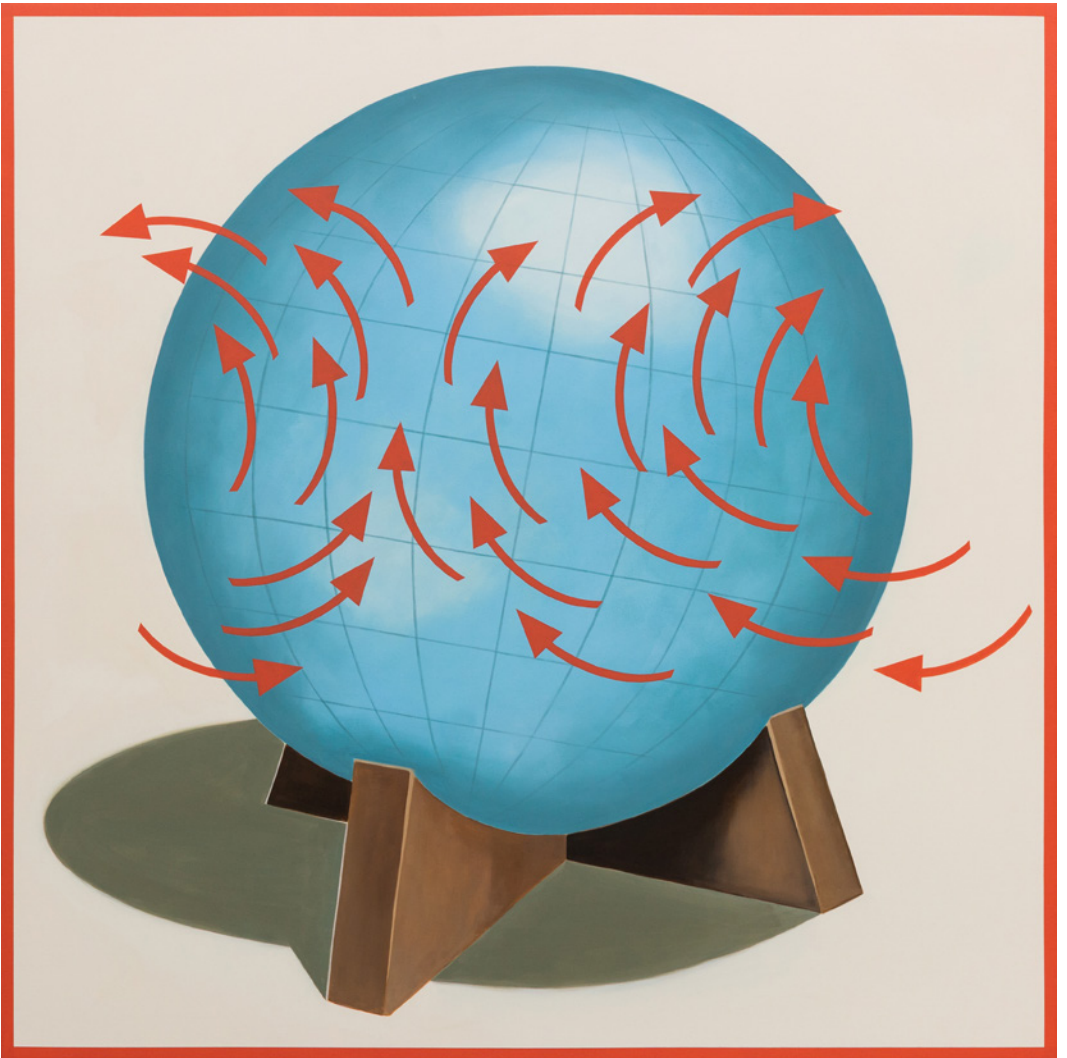
**60H X 60W IN**

**152.40H X 152.40W CM**

**INQUIRE**

**BOOK AN APPOINTMENT**

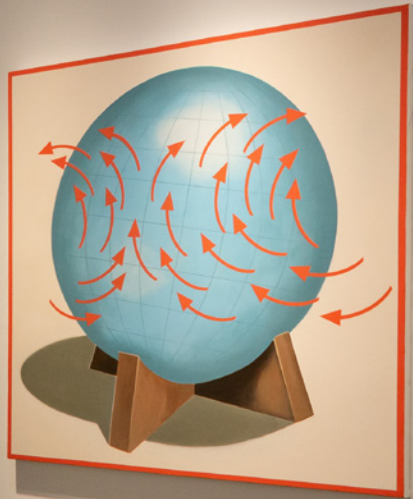




***CONTAINER, 2020***  
**ACRYLIC ON CANVAS**  
**60H X 60W IN**  
**152.40H X 152.40W CM**

**INQUIRE**

**BOOK AN APPOINTMENT**





*BEGINNING, MIDDLE, END, 2020*

**ACRYLIC ON CANVAS**

**60H X 60W IN**

**152.40H X 152.40W CM**

**INQUIRE**

**BOOK AN APPOINTMENT**



DO NOT GO BEYOND  
THIS POINT

*DO NOT GO BEYOND THIS POINT, 2020*  
URETHANE AUTOMOTIVE PAINT ON 1MM HAIRLINE STAINLESS  
48H X 48W IN  
121.92H X 121.92W CM


[INQUIRE](#)

[BOOK AN APPOINTMENT](#)



DO NOT GO BEYOND  
THIS POINT






**A  
WAY  
OF  
TELLING**

***A WAY OF TELLING, 2020***  
**URETHANE AUTOMOTIVE PAINT ON 1MM HAIRLINE STAINLESS**  
**48H X 48W IN**  
**121.92H X 121.92W CM**

**INQUIRE**

**BOOK AN APPOINTMENT**

A woman with long dark hair, wearing a red and white floral patterned long-sleeved top, black leggings, and white sneakers, stands in profile on the left side of the image, looking towards a large framed sign on the wall. The sign is a white rectangle with a thick red border, containing the text "A WAY OF TELLING" in a bold, black, sans-serif font, centered and arranged in four lines. The background is a plain, light-colored wall, and the floor is a dark, polished surface.

A  
WAY  
OF  
TELLING



**TOUCH ME NOT**

***TOUCH ME NOT, 2020***  
**URETHANE AUTOMOTIVE PAINT ON 1MM HAIRLINE STAINLESS**  
**48H X 48W IN**  
**121.92H X 121.92W CM**

**INQUIRE**

**BOOK AN APPOINTMENT**

TOUCH ME NOT



A  
WAY  
OF  
TELLING

NO  
SMOKING

TOUCH ME NOT



DO NOT GO BEYOND  
THIS POINT



## DINA GADIA

### Bio

Dina Gadia (b.1986, Pangasinan, Philippines; lives and works in Manila, Philippines) is an artist recognised for her visually arresting and playfully representational style. In most of Gadia's works, ambiguous text and other quotidian expressions are combined with appropriated images from popular printed matter. Her selected visuals evoke large localised contexts and people, reflecting relevant issues, such as postcolonial attitudes, disparate economic realities, and female inequity. Despite being known for jarring juxtapositions, Gadia imbues her paintings with a sense of humour, often portraying deadpan narrations through ironic visual puns. The artist thereby eliminates traces of sentimentality or self-righteous judgment in her creations. Gadia's recent mediums include collages, acrylic paintings, and flags embroidered on satin.

Gadia received a Bachelor's Degree of Fine Arts in Advertising from Far Eastern University. She has exhibited extensively since 2005, leading solo presentations both locally and internationally in New York, Taipei, Singapore, and Tokyo. She was a member of the *Bastards of Misrepresentation*, a group of ambitious, avant-garde individuals gathered by the acclaimed contemporary artist, Manuel Ocampo; Gadia exhibited with the group in New York back in 2012, in a survey show that demonstrated Manila's dynamic art scene. She was a finalist for the Ateneo

Art Awards, a respected award for emerging artists, in 2012 and 2018. In 2018, she was awarded the prestigious national Thirteen Artists Awards by the Cultural Center of the Philippines. In 2019, Gadia participated in *City Prince/sses* at the Palais de Tokyo in Paris.

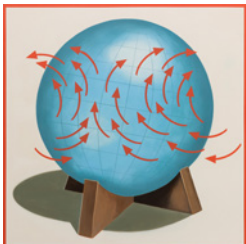




## DINA GADIA

### Bio

b. 1986, Pangasinan, PH



Container, 2020

### AWARDS

- 2018 *Ateneo Art Awards*, shortlist, Ateneo Art Gallery, Manila  
*13 Artists Award*, awardee, Cultural Center of the Philippines
- 2012 *Ateneo Art Awards*, shortlist, Ateneo Art Gallery, Manila

### SOLO EXHIBITIONS

- 2020 *Navigating the Abstract*, Silverlens, Manila
- 2017 *Malady of Association*, Owen James Gallery, New York  
*Situation Amongst the Furnishings*, Silverlens, Manila
- 2016 *Never Landscape*, West Gallery, Manila  
*Vase, Floral and Other Substitute*, Pon Ding, Taipei
- 2015 *Select The Right Bad Picture*, Clear Edition and Gallery, Tokyo  
*Non-Mint Copy*, Owen James Gallery, Brooklyn, New York  
*At Odds With The Visual*, Silverlens, Manila
- 2014 *Let's Talk About Feelings*, Blanc Gallery, Manila
- 2013 *Adaptable to New Redundancies*, Silverlens, Singapore  
*Convenient Culture Prop*, Silverlens, Manila
- 2012 *Primal Salvo in Vibracolor*, Silverlens, Manila
- 2011 *Regal Discomforts*, Blanc, Manila
- 2010 *Contra-Affair*, Silverlens, Manila  
*How Does That Grab You Darling*, Blanc, Manila
- 2009 *Ultra Plastic Style Now!*, Hiraya Gallery, Manila

### SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS

- 2020 *Anticipating the Day*, Silverlens, Manila  
*Searching Sanctuary*, Silverlens, Manila  
*Art Fair Philippines*, Silverlens, Manila
- 2019 *WXXX*, West Gallery, Manila  
*Far Away But Strangely Familiar* curated by Tony Godfrey, Danubiana Museum, Bratislava, Slovakia  
*City Prince/sses*, Palais de Tokyo, Paris  
*Count the Waves - Visualizing Invisibility*, Tokyo University of the Arts, Japan  
*Art Fair Philippines*, Silverlens, Manila  
*Taipei Dangdai*, Silverlens, Taipei
- 2018 *13 Artists Awards 2018* Recipients' Exhibition, Cultural Center of the Philippines  
*Ateneo Art Awards 2018 Finalists' Exhibition*, Ateneo Art Gallery, Manila  
*Tirada: 50 Years of Philippine Printmaking 1968-2018*, Cultural Center of the Philippines, Manila  
*Art Fair Philippines*, Silverlens, Manila

## DINA GADIA

### Bio

- 2017 ***UG 3: A Collage Show***, Underground Gallery, Manila  
***Withdrawal Syndrome***, curated by Jigger Cruz, Project 20, Manila  
***Fresh Cut, New Blood***, curated by Gary-Ross Pastrana, MO space, Manila  
***Rider***, two-person show w/ Allan Balisi, Artery Art Space, Manila  
***Art On Paper 2017***, Owen James Gallery, Pier 36, New York City, New York  
***Art Fair Philippines***, Silverlens, Manila  
***Allan Balisi & Dina Gadia***, Clear Edition & Gallery, Tokyo  
***The New Normal***, Owen James Gallery, Brooklyn, New York  
***Allan Balisi & Dina Gadia***, Clear Edition & Gallery, ArtStage, Singapore  
***Melted City IV***, Blanc Gallery, Manila  
***Translación***, Inaugural Exhibition, Curated by Gary-Ross Pastrana, Silverlens, Manila
- 2016 ***AquaArt***, Owen James Gallery, Miami  
***Exchange Rates 2016***, Owen James Gallery, New York  
***Masks***, curated by Kult and ASHU, Diesel Gallery, Tokyo  
***Short Span: Works on Paper***, Post Gallery, Manila  
***Binding***, Blanc Gallery, Quezon City  
***Art on Paper***, Owen James Gallery, Pier 36, New York  
***Art Fair Philippines***, Silverlens, Manila  
***Art Fair Philippines***, West Gallery, Manila
- 2015 ***Bangka! Paintings***, curated by Nilo Ilarde, Underground Gallery, Manila  
***PaperViews15: Rapid Cycling***, Project Space Pilipinas, Lucban  
***The In Image from Way Out***, Underground, Manila  
***Dry Rub***, Post Gallery, Manila  
***Art Fair Philippines***, Manila  
***Just Mad6***, Owen James Gallery, Madrid  
***Maphilindo***, Balai Seni Lukis Sabah, Kota Kinabalu  
***Melted City 2***, Blanc Gallery, Manila
- 2014 ***Bookends***, curated by Mariano Ching, Blanc Gallery, Manila  
***Brave New Worlds: My Utopia in your Dystopia***, curated by Manuel Ocampo, Metropolitan Museum of Manila, Manila  
***The Shadow Factory***, curated by Gary-Ross Pastrana, Silverlens, Singapore  
***Tabletop***, organized by Mariano Ching, Altromondo, Manila  
***Hang 'em High***, Blanc Gallery, Manila  
***Art Fair Philippines***, Manila  
***Neo Folk Showcase***, Ikkan Gallery, Singapore
- 2013 ***Still***, Blanc, Manila  
***Tones of Home***, Blanc Gallery, Manila  
***The Mona Lisa Project***, Bulwagang Fernando Amorsolo, Cultural Center of the Philippines  
***Manila Vice***, curated by Manuel Ocampo, Musée International des Arts

## DINA GADIA Bio

- Modestes (MIAM), Sète, France  
*Ley Hunting Pt. 2*, curated by Gary-Ross Pastrana, Silverlens, Singapore  
*Art Fair Philippines*, Manila
- 2012 *Bastards of Misrepresentation: NY Edition*, curated by Manuel Ocampo, New York  
*Other*, curated by Lisa Chikiamco, Altromondo, Manila  
*Ley Hunting Pt. 1*, curated by Gary-Ross Pastrana, Silverlens, Manila  
*Just Leave the Itch Alone*, (two-person show w/ Allan Balisi), Pablo Gallery, Manila  
*From the Black Lagoon*, D.A.G.C., Manila  
*Art HK 12*, Hong Kong  
*Fishnet Strangling She-male Accupuncture Bitchfest or The Y2K Babes* curated by Jeona Zoleta, Finale Art File, Manila
- 2011 *It Doesn't Snow in Manila*, Art Informal, Manila  
*Pulse Miami Art Fair*, Miami  
*Recent Prints*, D.A.G.C., Manila  
*Hats On, Bottoms Off*, Blanc, Manila  
*On the Radar: Six New Symptoms*, curated by Gary-Ross Pastrana, Silverlens, Manila  
*Touch Me: An Exhibit of Artist' Books*, curated by Angelo V. Suarez, Hiraya Gallery, Manila  
*Flatfield*, West Gallery, Quezon City  
*Survivalism*, Light and Space Contemporary, Quezon City  
*Departure Area*, Republikha Gallery, Quezon City  
*We Are Not Aimless*, Manila Contemporary, Manila
- 2010 *His and Hers*, Blanc, Manila  
*Sirens Hall*, organized by Mariano Ching, Mo Space, Taguig  
*Happily Unhappy*, curated by Louie Cordero and Jordin Isip, Blanc, Manila  
*Paper Panic!*, (two-person show w/ Mark Salvatus), Silverlens, Manila
- 2009 *Saturday Fun Machine*, organized by Mariano Ching, Finale Art File, Manila  
*Tears, Cuts and Ruptures: A Philippine Collage Review*, curated by Gary-Ross Pastrana, Silverlens, Manila  
*Pottymouth*, Blanc, Manila  
*If You Only Walk Long Enough*, Studio 83, Singapore  
*Welcome to the Jungle*, Art Informal, Manila  
*Kasibulan PasyonNasyon*, Cultural Center of the Philippines
- 2008 *Boxed 3*, The Cubicle, Pasig City  
*Tutokkk*, Blanc, Manila

## DINA GADIA

### Bio

*Amor Solo*, Amores Muchos, Hiraya Gallery, Manila

*Outtutowot*, Big Sky Mind, Quezon City

2007 *December Show*, Blanc, Manila

*Four Corners*, Fashion + Art Gallery, Quezon City

*Boxed 2*, Cultural Center of the Philippines

2006 *Plugged V*, Big Sky Mind, Quezon City

*Strange Things and Other Life Forms*, Chunky Far Flung Gallery, Quezon City

2005 *Plugged IV*, Big Sky Mind, Quezon City

*Definition of Undefined Colors*, Pablo, Quezon City

*Wallpaper\**, Big Sky Mind, Quezon City

### EDUCATION

2002-2006

Far Eastern University - Manila

Bachelor of Fine Arts, Major in Advertising

**SILVERLENS**

**DINA GADIA**  
**NAVIGATING THE ABSTRACT**

**INQUIRE**

**BOOK AN APPOINTMENT**

**VISIT WEBSITE**

**5 DECEMBER TO 23 DECEMBER 2020**

### **DINA GADIA**

Copyright © 2020 Silverlens Inc.

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.

### **ARVIN FLORES**

Text © Silverlens Inc. 2020

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)

[info@silverlensgalleries.com](mailto:info@silverlensgalleries.com)