

Renato Orara
Solo Exhibition



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Renato Orara

Solo Exhibition

22 March to
05 April 2022



Process and Presence

Renato Orara's ongoing series *Ten Thousand Things That Breathe*, first started in 1989, arrives at a timely moment. The notion of materiality and 'object authenticity' has eroded through two years of the pandemic; with forced social interaction through networked systems and crypto having shifted ideas of reality and value. So it is with delight that we return to Renato's decades-long series with new works whose act of transfer forces the viewer to reconsider notions of time and reality. In the series, Renato uses pen and paper and becomes a conduit for the object he is going to transfer, and in a slow, meticulous process, he places ink onto the paper, building up layers to finally achieve the object.

It's not unlike a 3D printer. However, since the software is the artist's mind, it allows for 'slippages' between the interpretation of the object, changing perspectives, and time. The process can take from hours to months to finish, only starting the next drawing after the current one has been fully 'transferred.' This occurs when the work on paper is imbued with presence, becoming the object. Renato breathes life into things.

Upon closer regard there is something unsettling about the pieces in *Ten Thousand Things That Breathe*. They are not exactly accurate representations of the subjects he chooses. While there is the object depicted on paper, there are also the moments in between—the shifting angles of perspective, the shape of the paper that contains his marks, the density of marks in relation to one another, and the manner in which these marks interact with the negative space. Each piece becomes an object in and of itself.

The idea of the pieces as tactile objects is further reinforced by the asymmetric framing created by tearing the edges of the paper as Renato draws. This brings tension between the rendered object and the artificial environment it exists in. A conversation takes place between the additive process to conjure the object, and the subtractive method of taking parts of its environment away.

It is impossible not to relate this body of work to the process of meditation. For one, Renato, who practiced Zen meditation for years, brings himself to a state where he's forgetting time completely — drawing and staying committed to the present no matter when or where this 'present' has gone. Every dot or stroke, every object, every layer, a mantra. Repetitive, rhythmic, but silent like the negative spaces in between. And while objects may have inherent meaning and narratives, Renato says his choice is arbitrary. We are confronted with the meaning and meaninglessness of things, perhaps contradicting, but ultimately interdependent—much like inhaling and exhaling.

By seeing the drawings in person you start to understand that they don't capture a moment in time, they are objects captured through time. The perspective and lighting subtly shift depending on when Renato was working on them. His devotion to this long, and slow meticulous process allows the idea of time to manifest itself in the work. Not in the way that a photograph captures a fraction of, or a specific point in time, but rather the complex idea of non-linear time. They inhabit the paradox of being a fossil yet still alive. They are a self-portrait of the experience of that object.

Words by James Clar and Corinne De San Jose







*Untitled, 07/2018 (from the ongoing series
Ten Thousand Things That Breathe)*

2018

Ballpoint ink on torn paper, variable dimensions

15h x 9.5w in

38.10h x 24.13w cm

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*untitled, 07/2018 (from the ongoing series
Ten Thousand Things That Breathe)*

2018
ballpoint ink on paper
10h x 7.5w in
25.40h x 19.05w cm (approx.)

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untitled, 05/2018-B (from the ongoing series Ten Thousand Things That Breathe)

2018
ballpoint ink on paper
9.25h x 8.5w in
23.50h x 21.59w cm (approx.)

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***Untitled, 05/2018 (from the ongoing series
Ten Thousand Things That Breathe)***

2018

Ballpoint ink on torn paper, variable dimensions

12h x 7.75w in

30.48h x 19.69w cm

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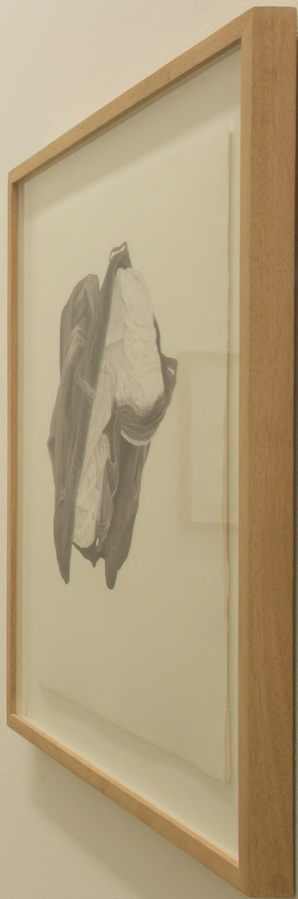


*untitled, 12/2019 (from the ongoing
series **Ten Thousand Things That
Breathe**)*

2019
ballpoint ink on paper
16h x 15w in
40.64h x 38.10w cm

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*untitled, 08/04/2020 (from the
ongoing series **Ten Thousand
Things That Breathe**)*

2020
ballpoint ink on paper
11h x 10.50w in
27.94h x 26.67w cm

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untitled, 07/2012 (from the ongoing series Ten Thousand Things That Breathe)

2012
ballpoint ink on paper
11h x 10.50w in
27.94h x 26.67w cm

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***untitled, 01/2020 (from the
ongoing series Ten Thousand
Things That Breathe)***

2020

ballpoint ink on paper

11h x 10.50w in

27.94h x 26.67w cm

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untitled, 02/2020 (from the ongoing series Ten Thousand Things That Breathe)

2020
ballpoint ink on paper
11h x 10.50w in
27.94h x 26.67w cm

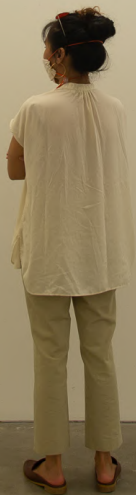
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Rinaldo Ossola

Il disegno è un'attività
che si svolge in un
spazio-tempo
particolare, in cui
l'artista si confronta
con la materia e
con la luce, creando
una forma che
si staglia sullo
sfondo bianco della
carta. È un'attività
che richiede
attenzione e
concentrazione,
e che si svolge
in un momento
particolare della
vita dell'artista.





Renato Orara

Renato Orara
1938 - 2018
Italiano
Artista
Renato Orara è stato un pittore, scultore e disegnatore italiano. Ha lavorato in Italia e all'estero, tra cui negli Stati Uniti e in Francia. È noto per le sue opere in gesso e per i suoi disegni in matita e acquerello. Ha insegnato all'Accademia di Belle Arti di Brera e all'Accademia di Brera di Milano. È stato anche direttore dell'Accademia di Brera di Milano e direttore dell'Accademia di Brera di Brera. È stato anche direttore dell'Accademia di Brera di Brera. È stato anche direttore dell'Accademia di Brera di Brera.





untitled, 03/12/2020 (from the ongoing series Ten Thousand Things That Breathe)

2020
ballpoint ink on paper
11h x 10.50w in
27.94h x 26.67w cm

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Renato Orara

Presence and Persistence

Renato Orara's work is a study of the human condition, exploring the intersection of the physical and the spiritual. His art is a testament to the power of the human spirit, and the resilience of the human mind. Orara's work is a study of the human condition, exploring the intersection of the physical and the spiritual. His art is a testament to the power of the human spirit, and the resilience of the human mind. Orara's work is a study of the human condition, exploring the intersection of the physical and the spiritual. His art is a testament to the power of the human spirit, and the resilience of the human mind.

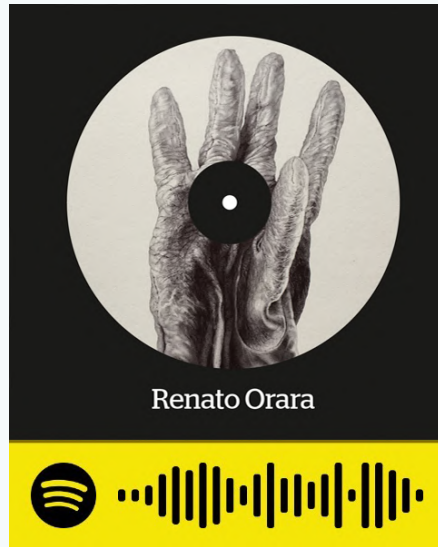




Alvato Orata

[Text block]





Listen to Renato's studio tracks on Spotify

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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, Joséé 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.



RENATO ORARA

Bio

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

AWARDS/RESIDENCIES

2005 *The Pollock-Krasner Foundation Fellowship Grant*
1999 *AT&T Art Fellowship Award*
1999 *Djerassi Resident Artists Program*
1998 *The Pollock-Krasner Foundation Fellowship Grant*
1998 *Ucross Foundation Artist Residency*

SOLO EXHIBITIONS

2022 *Renato Orara*, Silverlens, Manila, Philippines
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
2005 *Drawings*. With Jacob El Hanani. OSP Gallery. Boston, MA
2004 *Dedication/Association*. With Aric Obrosey. Andrea Rosen Gallery. New York, NY
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 Obrosey, Andrea Rosen Gallery, New York, NY

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GROUP EXHIBITIONS

- 2022 *Art Fair Philippines*, Silverlens, Manila
- 2021 *Art Fair Philippines*, Silverlens, Manila
- 2020 *Anticipating the Day*, Silverlens, Manila
- 2018 *Art Fair Philippines*, Silverlens, Manila
- 2017 *Translación*, Inaugural Exhibition, Curated by Gary-Ross Pastrana, Silverlens, Manila
- 2016 *Master Drawings New York*. Kraushaar Galleries. New York, NY
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
Medium At Large, Singapore Art Museum, Singapore
- 2009 *20x20x5*. Pecha Kucha series. MoMA, NY. May 2009.
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

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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*. Dantzig, Cynthia. Schiffer Publishing Ltd. USA. 2015
- Southeast Asia and Diaspora: Breaking and Reconstructing the Circle*. One East Asia. Singapore. 2014
- 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,

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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 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

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