

SILVERLENS

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11 AUGUST - 10 SEPTEMBER 2022

*Comeback Kid.*

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**SILVERLENS**

**11 AUGUST - 10 SEPTEMBER 2022**

Nicholas Grafia's first solo exhibition with Silverlens brings together painting, performance and live archive in a scenographically cued gallery. The title *Comeback Kid* counters victimhood culture in an effort to announce the artist's ethic and practice of subverting systematic oppression through ambivalence, pleasure, kink, humor, trickery, magic, and more.

Through multi-perspectival visioning that reflects his ways of being and knowing, Grafia pluralizes time, space, and identity. Queered and vignettted compositions stage uncanny meetings between historical, anonymous and alter ego figures as empowered shapeshifters.









## **Nurse Core (Grinning in the Papers)**

2022  
acrylic on canvas  
51.18h x 43.31w in  
130h x 110w cm

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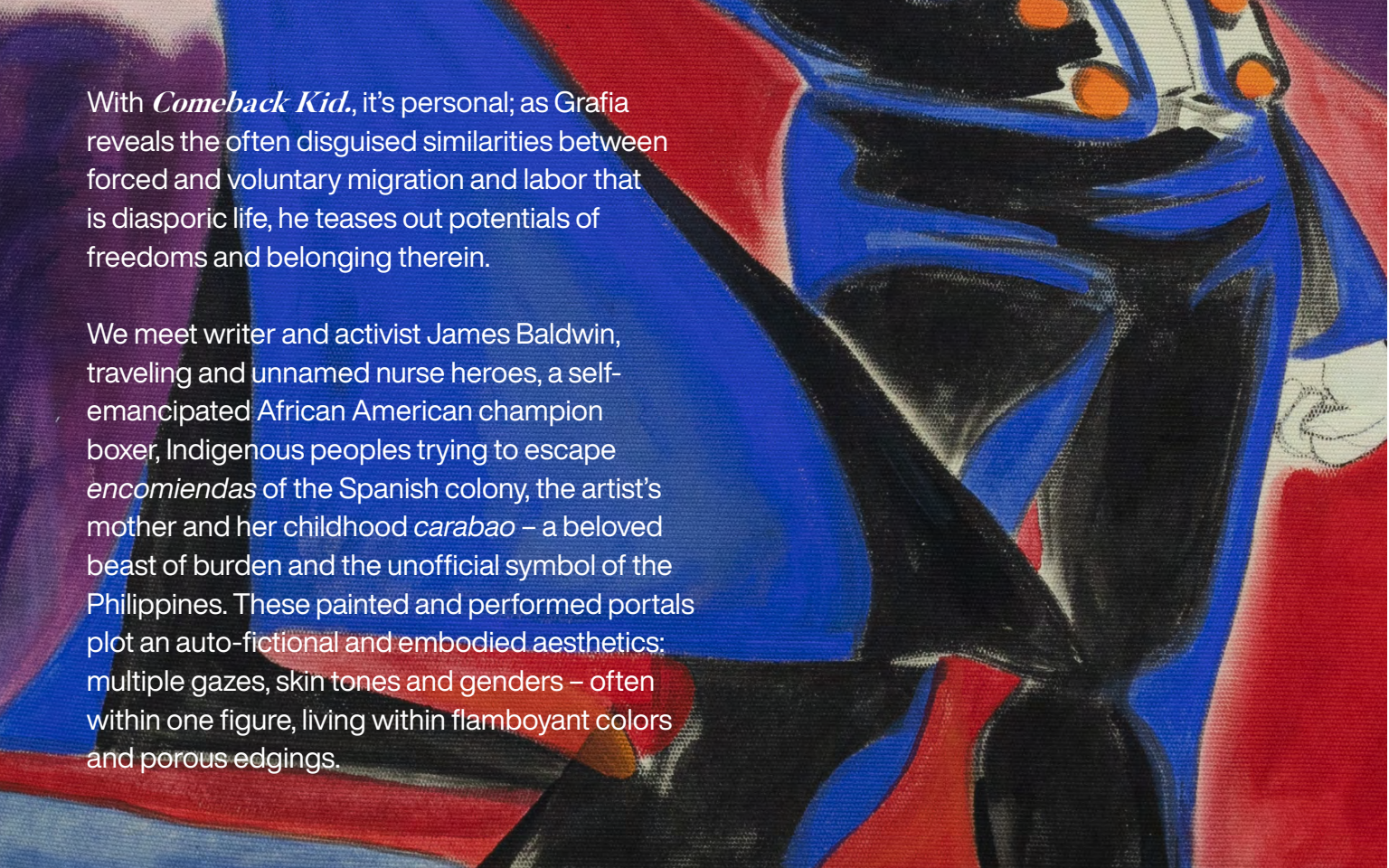
**Shook by the Move & Moved by the Shake  
(Confidential Whispers to a Carabao)**

2022  
acrylic on canvas  
70.87h x 62.99w in  
180h x 160w cm

[email](#)

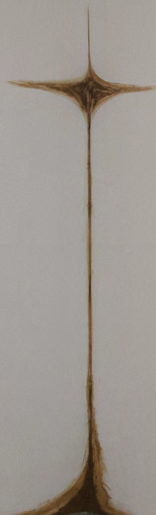
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With *Comeback Kid*, it's personal; as Grafia reveals the often disguised similarities between forced and voluntary migration and labor that is diasporic life, he teases out potentials of freedoms and belonging therein.

We meet writer and activist James Baldwin, traveling and unnamed nurse heroes, a self-emancipated African American champion boxer, Indigenous peoples trying to escape *encomiendas* of the Spanish colony, the artist's mother and her childhood *carabao* – a beloved beast of burden and the unofficial symbol of the Philippines. These painted and performed portals plot an auto-fictional and embodied aesthetics: multiple gazes, skin tones and genders – often within one figure, living within flamboyant colors and porous edgings.





**Our Jimmy of the Flowers  
(Notre Jimmy des Fleurs)**

2022  
acrylic on canvas  
39.37h x 29.53w in  
100h x 75w cm

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**Tummy Top Hitting Rock Bottom  
(Feeling Tight in Their Jeans)**

2019  
acrylic and indian ink on canvas  
27.56h x 19.69w in  
70h x 50w cm

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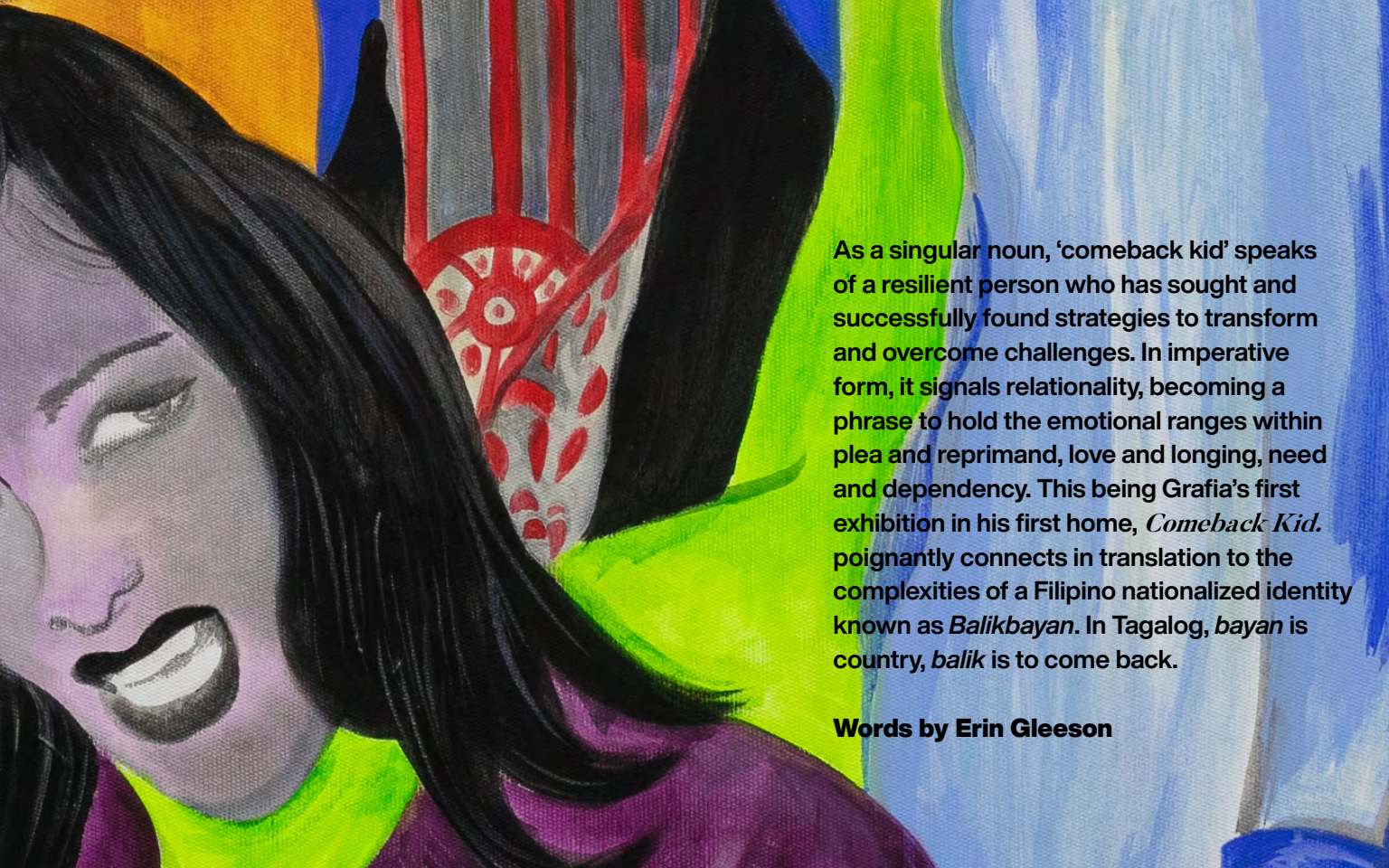


**Billie Does Europe (Broke 'n Free)**

2018  
acrylic and gouache on canvas  
49.21h x 59.06w in  
125h x 150w cm

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As a singular noun, 'comeback kid' speaks of a resilient person who has sought and successfully found strategies to transform and overcome challenges. In imperative form, it signals relationality, becoming a phrase to hold the emotional ranges within plea and reprimand, love and longing, need and dependency. This being Grafia's first exhibition in his first home, *Comeback Kid*, poignantly connects in translation to the complexities of a Filipino nationalized identity known as *Balikbayan*. In Tagalog, *bayan* is country, *balik* is to come back.

**Words by Erin Gleeson**





## Claiming Baggage (Royal Flasher)

2022  
acrylic on canvas  
43.31h x 51.18w in  
110h x 130w cm

[email](#)

[whatsapp](#)





ARTS  
2015







## **Peasants**

by Nicholas Grafia and Miłołaj Sobczak

2021

single channel HD video (00:41:00),  
with sound and color

Commissioned by and performed at Haus  
der Kulturen der Welt (HKW), Berlin

preview link: <https://vimeo.com/738155748>

Edition 1 of 5

email

whatsapp



STUDIOS GRATA  
Coral Gables





**Live Archive**, 2022. digital color prints. variable dimensions.





## NICHOLAS GRAFIA

### Bio

Nicholas Grafia (b.1990, Angeles City; based in Düsseldorf, Germany, and Paris, France, holds an MFA from the Kunstakademie Düsseldorf (DE). He has previously studied at the School of Arts and Cultures in Newcastle (UK), the Kunstakademie Münster (DE), as well as the University of Münster (DE). His paintings, videos and performances negotiate processes of memory formation, as well as the in- and exclusion of subjects from history writing.

His work has been recently exhibited at KW (Berlin, DE), Shoot the Lobster (New York, US), MoMa (Warsaw, PL), HKW (Berlin, DE), Kunsthal Aarhus (Aarhus, DK), Peres Projects (Berlin, DE), Bergen Kunsthall (Bergen, NO), Capitain Petzel (Berlin, DE), 7th Moscow International Biennale For Young Art (Moscow, RU), Shedhalle (Zurich, SUI), Kunstverein für die Rheinlande und Westfalen (Düsseldorf, DE), Museum Ludwig (Cologne, DE), Dortmunder Kunstverein (Dortmund, DE), Tramway (Glasgow, UK), MUDAM (Luxembourg, LU) and Steirischer Herbst (Graz, AT) amongst other venues.



## NICHOLAS GRAFIA

### Bio

b. 1990, Angeles City



*Nurse Core (Grinning in the Papers), 2022*

### RECOGNITIONS AND RESIDENCIES

- 2021 Kunsthaus NRW Kornelimünster Museum Acquisition  
PACT Zollverein Fellowship  
Art Explora Residency Paris
- 2020 Sponsorship Award for Fine Arts of the City of Düsseldorf  
K21 Museum Acquisition 2020 by the Young Art Foundation of  
Kunstsammlung Nordrhein-Westfalen
- 2019 MALT AIR Residency Kunsthall Aarhus, Denmark  
Travel Grant of Kunstverein für die Rheinlande und Westfalen and The  
Foundation for Art and Culture of the Sparkasse Düsseldorf, Germany

### SOLO EXHIBITIONS

- 2022 *Comeback Kid.*, Silverlens, Manila, Philippines
- 2021 *Free Verse Spirit*, Peres Projects, Berlin, Germany  
*Soul Burner*, KOENIG2, Vienna, Austria
- 2020 *MVP: Most Valuable Player*, Andersen's Contemporary, Copenhagen,  
Denmark

### SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS

- 2022 *Phantasmatic Riff*, Untere Augartenstrasse 26, Vienna, Austria  
*Craving Supernatural Creatures*, VBKO, Vienna, Austria
- 2021 *WILL.*, GOLD + BETON, Cologne, Germany  
*THE FAIREST: Teaser 01*, Blake & Vargas, Berlin, Germany  
*Type / Cast / Thrill.*, Temnikova & Kasela, Tallinn, Estonia
- 2020 *What fruit it bears*, Peres Projects, Berlin, Germany  
*Untitled (Molly House)*, Exile Gallery, Vienna, Austria  
*Protozone: CONTAMINATION/RESILIENCE*, Shedhalle, Zurich  
*MILK ME SUGAR*, Arsenal Gallery, Bialystok, Poland  
*In order of appearance*, Kunstsammlung Nordrhein-Westfalen (K21 Museum),  
Düsseldorf, Germany  
*NAK Digital Benefit Auction 2020*, Neuer Aachener Kunstverein, Aachen,  
Germany  
*Who Am I*, Mélange, Cologne, Germany  
*side by side*, fffriedrich, Frankfurt am Main, Germany  
*Body Lotion*, Zeller van Almsick Gallery, Vienna, Austria
- 2019 *Prune*“, Shoot the Lobster, New York City  
*The Theatre of Robert Anton*, Tramway, Glasgow, UK  
*Jahresgaben 2019*, Kunstverein für die Rheinlande und Westfalen Düsseldorf,  
Düsseldorf, Germany  
*Amitié*, Exo Exo at David Giroire, Paris, France  
*Body Works*, State Art Gallery, Sopot, Poland

## NICHOLAS GRAFIA

### Bio

*Undetectable Realness, PS120*, Berlin, Germany

2018 *Opening: Fremdkörper. Non-Normative Body and Voice Mapping*, BOZAR, Brussels, Belgium

2017 *Open Triennial, 8th Young Triennale in Orońsko*, Centre of Polish Sculpture, Orońsko, Poland

*ARTAGON.III*, Akademie Galerie, Düsseldorf, Germany

*Meet me at the Metro Station*, Guest Rooms, Amsterdam, Netherlands

#### PERFORMANCES

2021 *Mudam Performance Season: The Illusion of the End*, MUDAM - The Contemporary Art Museum of Luxembourg, Luxembourg

*Steirischer Herbst 2021: The Way Out*, Graz, Austria

*Illiberal Arts. Institutions, Humiliations, Rituals, Perceptibilities*, Haus der Kulturen der Welt, Berlin, Germany

*Pogo Bar: It's 10PM. Do You Know Where Your Children Are?*, KW Institute for Contemporary Art, Berlin, Germany

2020 *7th Moscow International Biennale For Young Art*, Museum of Moscow, Moscow, Russia

*2020 Biennale Zielona Góra - Back to the Future*, Zielona Góra, Poland

*On the Politics of Delicacy*, Capitain Petzel, Berlin, Germany

*Queer Queer Casimir*, Salon 14 during Warsaw Gallery Weekend 2020, Warsaw, Poland

*IGNITION CYCLE*, Montag Modus at Alte Münze, Berlin, Germany

*Weak Links of a Strong Chain*, Kunstverein für die Rheinlande und Westfalen Düsseldorf, Düsseldorf, Germany

2019 *HERE AND NOW at Museum Ludwig Transcorporealities*, Museum Ludwig, Cologne, Germany

*I Saw the Devil*, Kunsthal Aarhus, Aarhus

*Hits Like an Elbow*, Kunstverein für die Rheinlande und Westfalen Düsseldorf, Düsseldorf, Germany

*DISPLAY. Staging Identities*, Kunstverein Dortmund, Dortmund, Germany

2018 *Pride & Prejudice: New Practices of Dignity*, Museum of Modern Art, Warsaw, Poland

2017 *Akademie [Arbeitstitel]*, Kunsthalle Düsseldorf, Düsseldorf, Germany  
The Hardest Word, BLASK/BRZASK, Łódź, Poland

#### EDUCATION

2016-2019 *Kunstakademie Düsseldorf*, Düsseldorf, Germany

2012-2016 *Kunstakademie Münster*, Münster, Germany

*University of Münster, B.A. British*, American and Postcolonial Studies, Münster, Germany

2014-2015 *School of Arts and Cultures*, Newcastle, UK

**NICHOLAS GRAFIA**

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**ERIN GLEESON**

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