

“Me Love You Long Time” Exhibition at the BCA Bares Sexuality, Gender and the Sex Trade

An exhibition curated by Edwin Ramoran and organized by Aljira, a Center for Contemporary Art, examines the politics of the flesh through works by over 50 artists

Media Contact

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EVENT CALENDAR

Opening Reception

Friday, February 15
6–9pm
Guided tour with artists
7:30pm

Video Screening/Artist Talk

Friday, March 1 | 7pm
Larilyn Sanchez

Friday, March 15 | 7pm
Matthew de Leon

Saturday, March 30 | 6pm
Anyt'ing We Want
Video Screening and
Curator Talk with Edwin
Ramoran

On view Friday, February 15
through Sunday, April 7

Mills Gallery

551 Tremont Street
Boston, MA 02116

Gallery hours:
Mon-Tues | closed
Wed, Sun | 12–5pm
Thu-Sat | 12–9pm

BOSTON, MA – The Boston Center for the Arts is pleased to host a provocative new exhibition, *Me Love You Long Time* (MLYLT) curated by **Edwin Ramoran**. MLYLT is a group exhibition of contemporary art and video by over 50 artists from Southeast Asia and North America who utilize various media and complicated visual strategies to upend or explore gender expression, sexuality, sex work and new subjectivities.

For more than a year, Ramoran travelled Southeast Asia and the U.S., visiting nightclub dwellers, studios, galleries and sex workers in search of artists for MLYLT. Modern life at the intersections of war, sex, gender, film, popular music and contemporary art has provided the generative sources for MLYLT.

The title “Me Love You Long Time” is borrowed from Stanley Kubrick’s *Full Metal Jacket* (1987), which is set during the Tet Offensive of the Vietnam War. In that film a prostitute solicits two U.S.

soldiers with the words, “Me love you long time.” Later, the popular hip-hop song “Me So Horny” (1989) by the music group 2 Live Crew sampled the same words. Insinuatingly professional, yet beguilingly innocent, the phrase, “me love you long time”, has become a familiar pop-cultural trope. Recently, hip-hop artist M.I.A., in her overtly political album *Arular*, conflates the lines of the hooker and the soldiers for the song, “10 Dollar”: “What can I get for 10 dollar? Anything you want.” By doing this, M.I.A. embodies the colonial, sexual economy and gendered relationship, re-politicizing the lyrics into the confident voice of a young girl, and possibly a transgendered girl, in the sex trade.

“This exhibition is all about the construction of identity and unapologetic attitudes about sexuality,” Ramoran explains, “and features art, videos, resources and ephemera from the 1990s to the present that dive into really tough issues.”

Some artists in this exhibition include mixed-media artist **Chath Piersath**, who was born in Banteay Meanchey province, Cambodia, in 1970, and now lives in Bolton, MA; **Hima B.**, a sex worker and filmmaker whose work is about the exploitation of sex workers; **Mariko Passion**, a self-proclaimed urban geisha, sex worker and performance-based, interdisciplinary



Lim Sokchanlina, *Thief*, 2009, from the series *My Motorbike and Me*

conceptual artist whose work is about being a sexualized being as well as an Asian; and **Nodeth Vang**, a portrait photographer of Hmong decent, born in Bordeaux, France. Assembling art produced within the past two decades, MLYLT includes stimulating works by ground-breaking artists from the West Coast including **Cirilo Domine**, **Vicente Golveo**, **Andrew H. Kim**, **Mail Order Brides/M.O.B.**, **Nguyen Tan Hoang**, **Johanna Poethig**, and **Rico J. Reyes**.

This exhibition originated at Aljira, a Center for Contemporary Art in Newark, New Jersey where it received support from the Lambent Foundation and The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts.

Me Love You Long Time features works by Bobby Abate, Reza "Asung" Afisina, Pulang Alakdan, Hima B., Yason Banal, Anjali Bhargava, Isauro Cairo, Lynne Chan, Chath Piersath, Vanna Chin, Cecile Chong, Young Chung, Jon Cuyson, Matthew de Leon, Cirilo Domine, Oasa DuVerney, Permi K. Gill, Vicente Golveo, Akintola Hanif, Skowmon Hastanan, Swati Khurana, Andrew H. Kim, Cory Koons, Naruki Kukita, Viet Le, Chang-Jin Lee, Lim Sokchanlina, Mail Order Brides/M.O.B., Yeni Mao, Zavé Martohardjono, Tala Oliver Mateo, Rafael T. Melendez, Gabby Quynh-Anh Miller, Ivan Monforte, Teresa Nasty, Nguyen Phuong Linh, Nguyen Tan Hoang, Sokuntevy Oeur, ParadoxVestedRelics, Mariko Passion, Tomiko Pilson, Johanna Poethig, Stephanie Powell, Clifford Landon Pun, Vanessa T. Ramalho, Rico J. Reyes, Larilyn Sanchez, SLAAAP! (Sexually Liberated Arts Activist Asian People!), Nodeth Vang, Nathan Lam Vuong and Maria Yoon.

About the Boston Center for the Arts

The Boston Center for the Arts (BCA) is a not-for-profit performing and visual arts complex that supports working artists to create, perform and exhibit new works; builds new audiences; and connects art to community. The BCA serves arts audiences through exhibitions, live performances and community events, and supports artists through affordable studio, rehearsal and performance space at the historic South End site. The BCA's two-acre campus is home to hundreds of working artists, as well as several nonprofit arts and educational groups that provide a wide spectrum of services. To learn more about ongoing BCA programs, please visit www.bcaonline.org.

The BCA's Visual Arts Programs are supported by the Joan Mitchell Foundation. Mills Gallery exhibitions are supported by the NLT Foundation.



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