

Cristopher Mora (b. 1984, Manila) is a cultural worker and artist. At the age of four, he moved to Canada with his parents. Born in one country and raised in another, Mora's art and practice is one of observation and investigation, filtered through his hyphenated identity as a Filipino-Canadian. He studied painting, drawing, printmaking, and photography at the University of Western Ontario in Canada.

Previously, he has worked as a registrar for Newzones Gallery, a commercial gallery in Canada; an exhibition designer for the Singapore Tyler Print Institute; and as an estimator for Momart, a London-based arts logistics company. With over ten years of experience in the international art world, it would not be a leap to suggest that his experiences throughout his varied career, and in particular his familiarity with operations, systems and processes, has influenced his current body of work.

Since returning to the Philippines in 2013, Mora has created photo-based works that combine process art and documentary photography, regularly referencing current events and social issues. He begins by developing a system for the selection and curation of images: whether they are victims of the extra-judicial killings of the Philippines' drug war as seen in "16 Bodies" (2017), or the public iconography of long-lasting political dynasties in "2,088 E's in Pasig" (2018). This combination of process and documentation allows for a layered work—one in which its logic and subject are given equal prominence.

Mora's photo-based works not only uncover the scale of power structures that underpin current political, economic and social issues in the Philippines, but they also work as a census of who and what has been forgotten.

Susan Crane writes, "History can save what has been personally lost, by preserving a collective representation of memory. Collective memory can preserve the memory of lived experience, in living experience, and sustain the loss of other memories." His works anchor the viewer to specific sociopolitical contexts in the Philippines and the viewer is given the role of both historian and witness, navigating the loss and preservation of historical and collective memory, of what is lost and preserved.

Mora has exhibited in Canada, Singapore, and the Philippines. In 2015, with business partners Rico Gonzalez and Gerry Qua, he co-founded Art Provenance, a bespoke collection management service that documents and archives the provenance of artworks for collectors in the Philippines. He currently lives and works in Manila.

References:

Art Provenance, <https://www.artprovenance.net>

Chavez, Marc. Researcher's interview with Cris Mora. September 2018, Pasig, Metro Manila.

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