



kung parehas ang gibati sa bukid

Koki Lxx

if the mountain feels the same

The mountain will hide what you don't need and reveal only what it intends you to find.

Mount Fuji is iconic to Japan, although some say that one can only see it when it allows itself to be seen. It is the same with Mount Talinis – central to Dumaguete life, everything exists in its proximity. At times, clouds blanket its peaks, some or all of it. Part of the mountain range known as Cuernos de Negros, the Horns of Negros, it watches over the land day and night.

About a decade ago, visual artist Zean Cabangis held an exhibition of light boxes that featured windows from various locations. Challenging the limits of spatial perception, exhibition writer Lisa Ito remarked that it created “a place not just the illusion of the exterior realm but to also reflect on the central role of perception and vision.”

There is a house up in the mountains adjacent to Mount Talinis, where a view was opened up from within, framing an intimate view of the mountain. But these are not windows, instead they are walls made of glass blocks. Considered a trend from the 80s, they are a constant opening to light, but still a formal barrier from the outside. Photographs taken of these vistas are presented as light boxes. They are from the time of covid: this long gone, practically forgotten moment in history that changed everything but changed nothing. There are still wars against the oppressed supported by democracy. There is still hunger, poverty, we are all still subject to entropy where each living breath slowly kills us. At the same time, the scenes also extend an intimate and up close view of the mountain that shows the sky closer, the trees and other flora nearer. It's as if looking at someone's skin, seeing the pores or the tiny hairs.

Somewhat bending time and space, all the photographs capture a moment in time; and are reproduced to scale. The combination of the real-world materiality and the perception of space, i.e. portals within human dwelling, distort the moment. Is one looking through to the outside? But the outside is in the past, am I in the future, peering through a pensieve to relive a memory in perpetuity? A pensieve is a magical device in the Harry Potter books used to store and view memories, and the house is not older than five years.

There are also ceramic sculptures. An extreme polarity to the magnitude of the mountain is a minuscule porcelain facsimile of its peaks, installed as an illusion, visibly intangible in our midst. Covering the earth like sheets, works from the Ghosting series demonstrate an emptiness of space, but fullness of form. In one, porcelain clouds undulate over a fragile summit.

Kung parehas ang gibati sa bukid: it means either “the feeling is the same as when you were on the mountain,” or “if the mountain feels the same.” The second one, of course, speaks as if the mountain is a sentient being that is as much aware of you as you are of it. Subsuming the monolithic with the diminutive, transposing a memory between past and present, displacing it from point A to point B, we are left to ponder the reality of our value as humans. If we do not see it, one is bereft as to who can or will.

When we gaze at the mountain, contemplating its magnificence throughout the millennia, how it was shaped by time and in turn shapes the future; when the mountain gazes back at us – does the mountain feel the same?



skin under a microscope I

2023
Pigment Print on Backlit Film, Light Box
64.8 x 64.8 cm | 25.5 x 25.5 in
Edition of 3



pores under a microscope I

2023
Pigment Print on Backlit Film, Light Box
24.1 x 24.1 cm | 9.5 x 9.5 in
Edition of 3



skin under a microscope II

2023
Pigment Print on Backlit Film, Light Box
64.8 x 64.8 cm | 25.5 x 25.5 in
Edition of 3



pores under a microscope II

2023
Pigment Print on Backlit Film, Light Box
24.1 x 24.1 cm | 9.5 x 9.5 in
Edition of 3



off the top of my head I

2023
Pigment Print on Backlit Film, Light Box
34.3 x 44.5 cm | 13.5 X 17.5 in
Edition of 3



pores under a microscope III

2023
Pigment Print on Backlit Film, Light Box
24.1 x 24.1 cm | 9.5 x 9.5 in
Edition of 3



off the top of my head II

2023
Pigment Print on Backlit Film, Light Box
34.3 x 44.5 cm | 13.5 X 17.5 in
Edition of 3



pores under a microscope IV

2023
Pigment Print on Backlit Film, Light Box
24.1 x 24.1 cm | 9.5 x 9.5 in
Edition of 3



untitled hibbard I

2023
Found Objects
24.1 x 17 cm | 9.5 x 7.5 in



ghosting (false peaks)

2023
Stoneware, Wooden Base
11.4 x 21.6 x 21.6 cm | 4.5 x 8.5 x 8.5 in



untitled hibbard II

2023
Found Objects
24.1 x 17 cm | 9.5 x 7.5 in



ghosting (blankets and bedsheets)

2023
Porcelain, Stoneware, Glass & Wooden Case
25.4 x 22.9 x 17.8 cm | 10 x 9 x 7 in



elephant in the room

2023
Porcelain, Mirascope
(Alternately with Wooden Base)
7.6 x 15.2 cm | 3 x 6 x 6 in



this place (after z. cabangis)

2023
Pigment Print on Backlit Film, Light Box
121.9 x 82.5 cm | 48 x 32.5 in
Edition of 3



if a tree falls in a lonely forest

2023
Elastomeric Paint on Wood, Abaca Twine
35.6 x 2.5 x 2.5 cm | 14 x 1 x 1 in

About Mugna

Mugna Art Gallery is an innovative hub dedicated to bringing out the riches of local culture that defy common perception. The gallery supports emerging and undiscovered artists, providing painters, poets, filmmakers, sculptors, and other creative practitioners with the space that mediates between their ideas, the local community, and wider audiences. "Mugna", is the Visayan word for "create", embodies its name by engaging with artists and audiences, bringing together intellectual resources and materials to establish sustainable, satisfying, and meaningful sensory experiences.

Mugna was founded by Vincent Lopez and George Kuhn, art enthusiasts and patrons who have settled in Valencia on Negros Island. They developed this space as a platform for featuring a broad range of inspiring artwork from varied genres originating in the Philippines, with an emphasis on Negros Island and the Visayas.



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