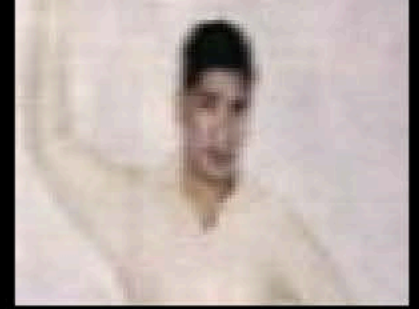


# Post-Gay / Ante-Asian



A Note From  
The Curator

# Post-Gay / Ante-Asian



Rico Reyes

## A Note From The Curator

When I was asked to participate in curating a visual arts exhibit for, by, and about Gay Asians, the first task given to me was to come up with an exhibition title. Unusual task, as there was no venue, no artist, and no art work to speak of to mount an exhibition. "How GAPA", I thought. YES, it was quite G, A, P, A! I started playing with the letters of the acronym, GAY ASIAN PACIFIC ALLIANCE, reshuffling letters and assigning words to it.

My first instinct was to keep it *gapa*, but as a Pilipino word meaning crawl. Hmm...overtly self-referential. I kept shuffling, "paga, gaap, paag" all came out but nothing captured me. I persisted in the game to maintain the reference to the sponsoring organization as well as to tap into the notion that this exhibition comes from and makes up of the same letters, the same words, the same body, only reshuffled and given a different signification. PGAA surfaced with quiet strain and the title "**P**ost **G**ay/**A**n**A**nte **A**sian" was coined. Next >

The exhibition title "Post Gay/Ante Asian" questions the labels that are used to describe us as a community. Whether self-determined or imposed, pejorative or celebratory, the terms in use are specific of an historical moment and/or a political climate.

The terms "**Gay**" and "**Asian**" refer to two distinct cultural groups. One, self-rooted in sexuality and the other, in racial/ethnic identity, with both seen as unique and peculiar, always individuated. What happens when one body occupies both groups? Is the hybrid term "**Gay Asian**" sufficient in defining oneself? Is the layering of labels suited for who we really are? Are the nuances of being "**gay**" reconfigured to match and blend with the nuances of being "**Asian**"? Is the "**Asian**" being re-coded to function within the gay architecture? Amid all this activity, who is given agency to enact on these terms?    Next >

Freddie Niem presents drawings that embrace the fusion of the markers of Asian-ness and Gayness. With ease of medium, Niem marks the page with dynamic lines and shades to capture a romantic sensibility and engage the viewer with desire.

If Niem's work is fusion, Eric Cheng's painting is fission. Cheng has cleaved, separated, stratified the self into a disgruntled grid of text, line and color.

Fredeswinda Z. Santos arrives at the balance of the two presenting the same criticism in words and terms, as well as maintaining the romance of the human form.

Robert Gutierrez's work also functions within the trope of romance; the romance of memory and nostalgia. His work offers an illusion of captured memory: clouded, fragmented and reminiscent.

Next >

The words "**post**" and "**ante**" describe the dynamic of time. By using these temporal qualifiers, our names are questioned through the filter of time and history, memory and nostalgia. It also suggests that there was a before and there will be an after. "**Post-Gay**" suggests a movement after the Gay Liberation movement, rooted in the 70's beginning with Stonewall or is it after the outbreak of the AIDS epidemic in the 80's? Regardless, what is it? Are we just *fashionistas* moving towards a newer, more chic, less loaded term? Or are we really questioning the term "**gay**" and the moment of articulation? The term is coined and popularized mid-century yet the activities of "**gayness**" persisted before and metamorphosed after.

The term "**ante**" not only addresses the way we were but also presents a linguistic play with the word "**anti**", which is the only consistent policy towards people of Asian descent in the United States as demonstrated by anti-immigration and anti-miscegenation laws since the last century. People of Asian descent have identified by national origin, by municipality, or language group, or sometimes by clan. We were something else before we became "**Asian**". Before becoming Asian, we were Pilipino, Korean, Japanese, Chinese, but even before then, we were Shanghainese, Ilocano, Okinawan; we still are. Next >

Kelvin Young's work is an interplay of an abstracted expression of self. Rooted in gesture and mark making, his paintings create movement that ponders on the process of being.

Gioi Tran's canvas offers the same wonderment, differing in that he shows us the meditation of placement and the physicality of creating space.

The inexplicability of desire and seduction is physically internalized in Yason Banal's work. The relationship of subject and object is negotiated and the viewer is presented with an amorphous form or deformity.

Kek Tee Lim's sculptures also negotiate form/deformity. Sensuous shapes and smooth finish combine to seduce the viewer to touch, to feel, to have unpure thoughts. Next >

Three multimedia artists present the intersections, collisions, or collusion of labels and the resolution to the enactment of confused action.

Gigi Otalvaro-Hormillosa embodies this confusion as a black and white she male. Her performance questions the perceptions of people identifying on multiple levels.

My own work (Rico Reyes) is rooted in my work in pop cultural movements to begin the process of excavation. I ask, "Does our temporal environment affect our identity?"

Arthur Dong's award winning documentary directly tackles the question at hand, "Why did you do it?" His film *Licensed to Kill* is a probing piece on the physical violence directed to the gay community. Next >

With such differing ideas and perspectives on "**Gay Asian**", the artists are contributing some solutions, problematizing some situations, and phenomenologically affecting views of ourselves and broadening the notions in the larger community.

**"Post Gay/Ante Asian"** only begins to ask the questions:

*"What and where are we now?"*

*"Do we remember from where we came, and are we shaping the landscape of our future destination?"*

Thanks for visiting,  
*Rico Reyes*

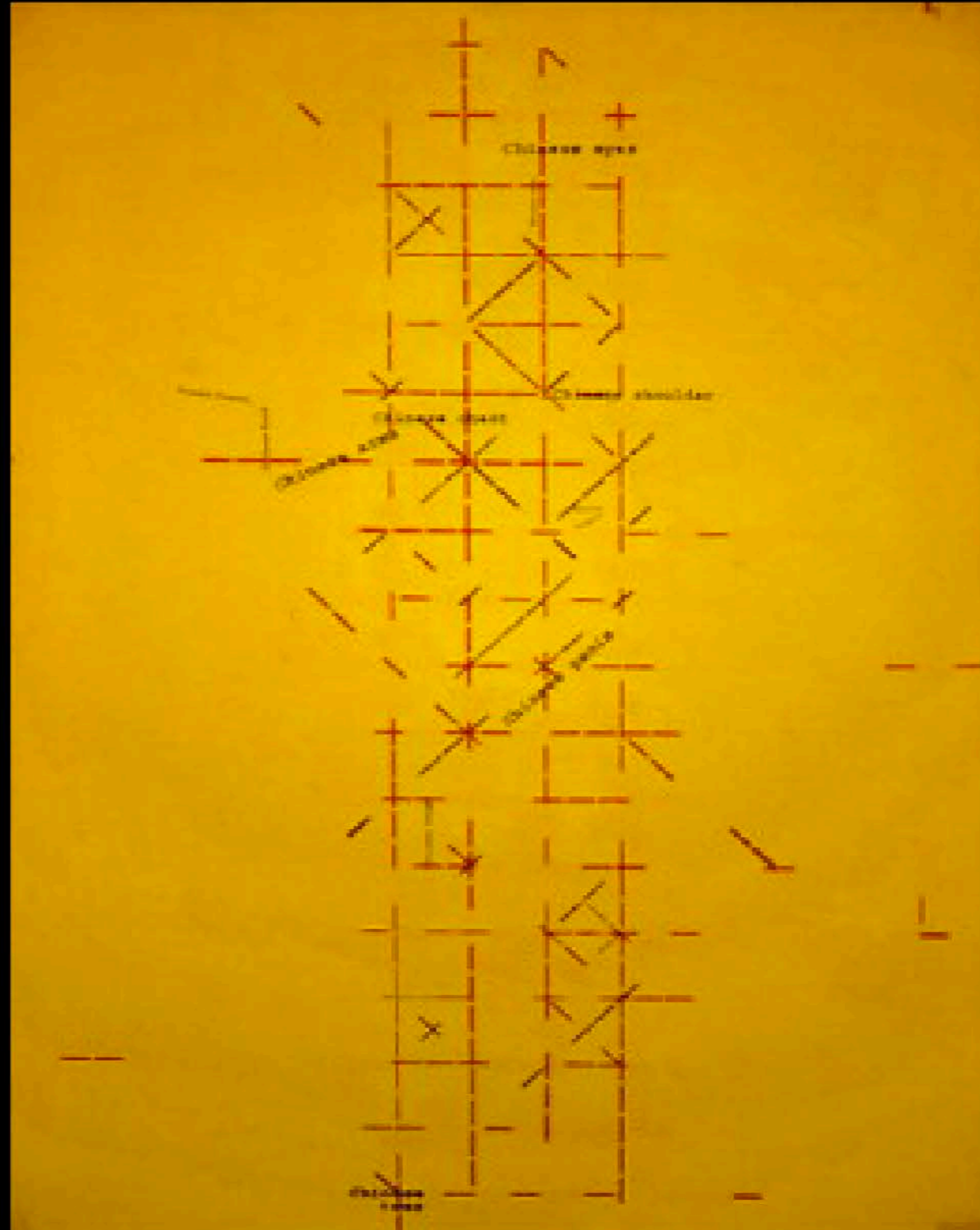


Licensed to Kill takes a riveting journey into the minds of men whose contempt for homosexuals led them to murder.

Attacked 20 years ago by gay bashers on the streets of San Francisco, filmmaker Arthur Dong confronts murderers of gay men face-to-face in his film. He asks them directly: *"Why did you do it?"*



Untitled  
Acrylic on canvas  
1998  
3'w X 4'h



Last Attachment  
Carved wood with black stain  
1995  
33"H x 9"W x 6"D



Next >



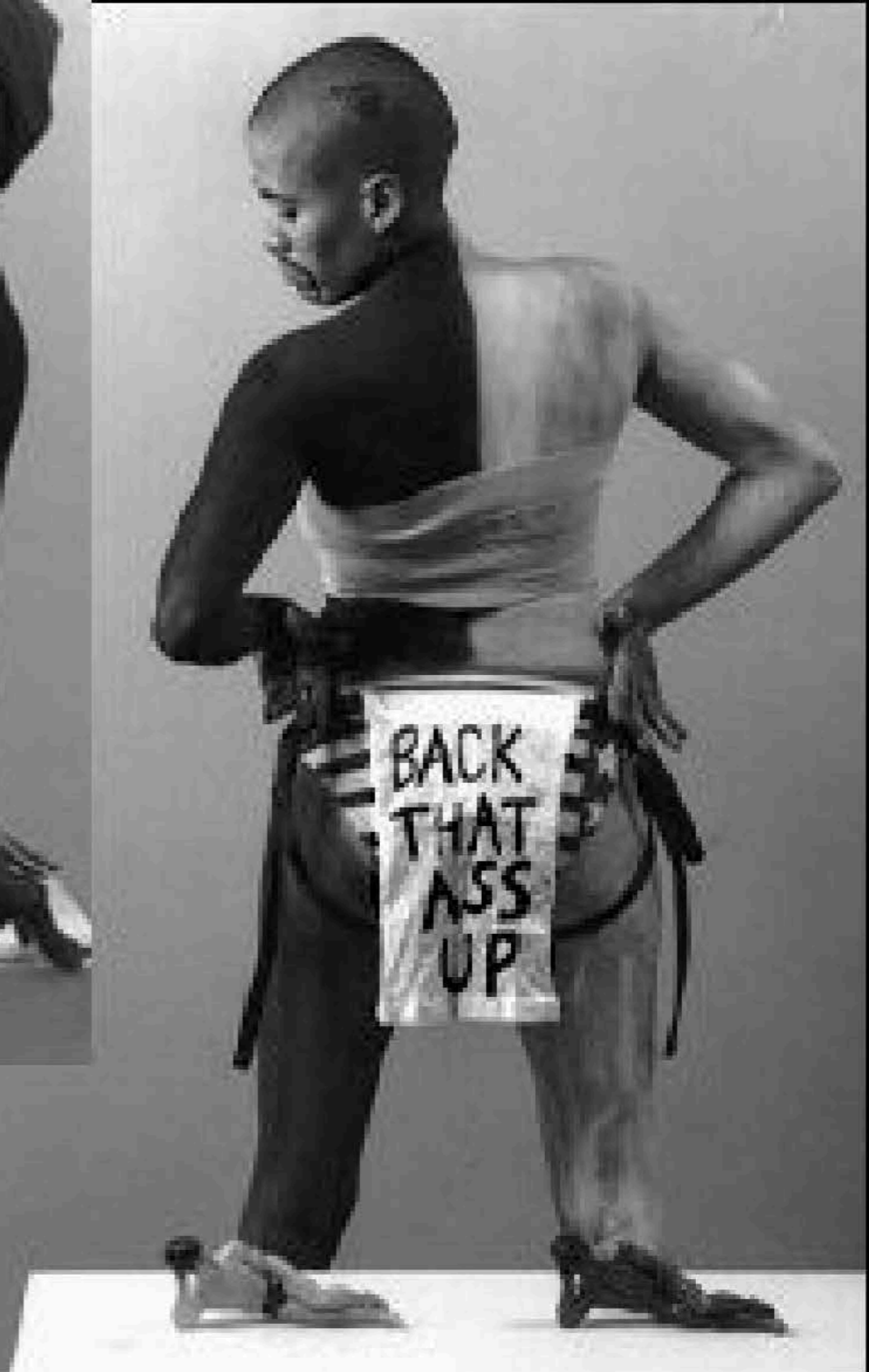
Dragon Tail

Carved wood with black straw

2000

12"H x 7"W x 8"D

< Back



Performance Piece

Fluidity  
Acrylic on canvas  
1999  
48" w X 60" h





Patay na Something

2000

photographs

Taken behind someone's head  
during Manila's first-ever men's  
underwear fashion show

Sopas Na Tibo (Fil-Am Style)  
Acrylic on canvas  
1998  
40"w X 30"h





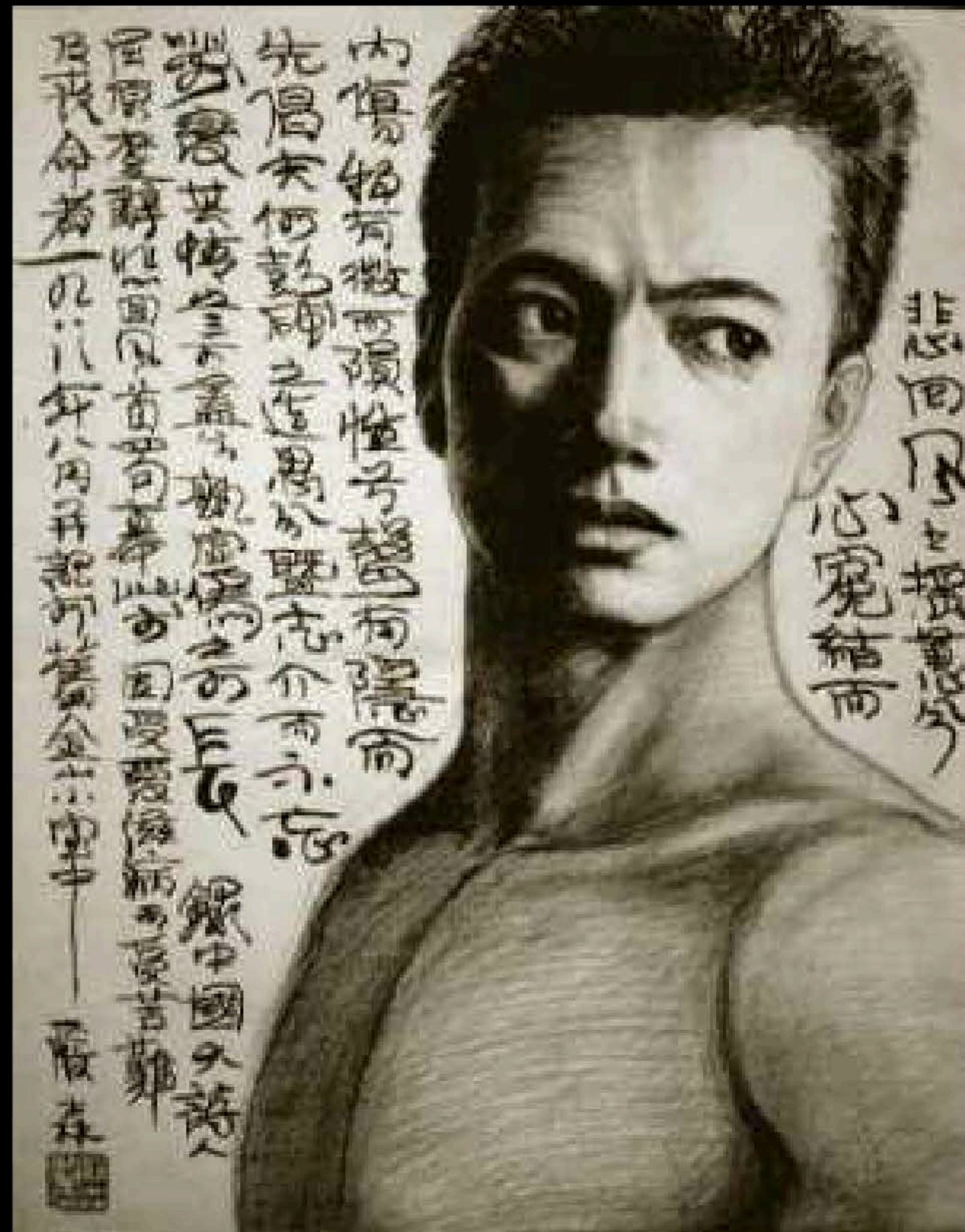
Self-Paradox  
Mixed media on paper  
1999  
30 ½"w X 44 ½"h



Object of Desire  
Mixed media on paper  
1999  
30 1/2"w X 44 1/2"h



Sorrow  
Charcoal and pencil on paper  
1989  
17" w X 22" h





The Kiss

Pencil drawing on paper

1989

14"w X 16"h

Disco Sale  
Performance/mixed media  
1998  
20"w X 24"h

