



# Whose Stories?

October 2 to December 31, 2021

Diyan Achjadi / Load na Dito / Naoko Fukumaru / Tomoyo Ihaya / Mark Salvatus / UJINO



kamloops art gallery

Cover Image: Tomoyo Ihaya  
*Eyes-Gwangju Jogakbo (detail)*, 2019  
mixed media on Japanese paper  
184.6 x 203.2 cms  
Courtesy of the Artist

# Whose Stories?

October 2 to December 31, 2021

Reflecting on the experiences and narratives of “others,” *Whose Stories?* shares the work of six artists of Asian descent. Through video installation, photography, animation, print media, drawing, collage, and restored ceramic works, artists Diyan Achjadi, Load na Dito, Naoko Fukumaru, Tomoyo Ihaya, Mark Salvatus, and UJINO convey personal histories told within a community of artists and woven across generations.

Developed through vivid pictorial narratives and animations, Diyan Achjadi’s work examines underlying ambiguous ideologies drawn from children’s popular culture. Currently based in Vancouver, BC, Achjadi spent her childhood in Indonesia during the Suharto regime in the 1970s and 80s. She uses a visual language drawn from popular children’s media to tell stories that navigate militaristic and apocalyptic landscapes through the character of GIRL, a young girl who could represent an avatar of the artist herself.

Born in Japan and now based in Vancouver, BC, Tomoyo Ihaya’s work responds to the protests of Tibetan exiles as well as the racial and human rights abuses of refugees. Through detailed works on paper, Ihaya incorporates Tibetan Buddhist philosophy in her work through the Tibetan gesture of “ninjye,” extending compassion and recognition to those affected by oppression.

In the new installation *Araw na nakapitapita (That day most eagerly awaited)*, and through his ongoing research project, *Museo ng Banahaw*, Mark Salvatus explores the symbolism of a well known holy mountain in his hometown of Lucban in the Phillipines. Using interwoven texts from his grandfather’s poetic story of Golden Bull, myths of unidentified flying objects on the mountain and fragmentary video collages from his digital archive to illustrate family experiences, Salvatus shares the unprecedented impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on his community.

Now based in Quezon City, Philippines, Salvatus and Mayumi Hirano started an artistic and research project in 2016 called Load na Dito that uses spaces as a site for knowledge sharing, inquiry, and discussion. For *Whose Stories?* Load na Dito is organizing experimental workshops to explore the possibility of exchanging personal stories through online dialogue.

UJINO, who was born and continues to live in Tokyo, Japan, creates sound sculptures and video installations that examine the postwar modernization of Japan. In a new video work, *HOME MOVIE*, the artist relates his lockdown conditions during the pandemic to this history. Featuring model toy trains in his DIY sound sculpture, UJINO depicts the complex ideologies of individuals living in the postwar period following the Japanese invasion of Manchuria in the early 1930s. The work incorporates an interview with the artist's 97-year-old mother who spent time in Manchuria during the invasion and uses historical materials such as advertising posters, postcards, maps, war films and photographs as clues to the narrative.

Naoko Fukumaru brings the tradition of kintsugi, the Japanese art of golden joinery, to the exhibition. A five hundred year old method of restoring damaged ceramics, kintsugi is employed to enhance beauty and value by celebrating "imperfection." Through the philosophy and technique of kintsugi, Fukumaru not only restores broken pottery, but imbues it with the power of transformation and resilience.

The works of each artist in *Whose Stories?* raises questions about how larger narratives of historicized groups are constructed and told. It asks: What experiences are excluded? Whose voices are silenced and marginalized? How can those voices be heard? How can we add our voices to create an alternative, inclusive, and more truthful history that restores individual human rights and dignity, and transforms our own future?



*Whose Stories?* explores how we perceive and position ourselves, as an individual in relation to world events, and how we take into account the experiences of others. The work of this diverse group of artists encourages a process of learning and un-learning; opening up new possibilities for co-existence and offering space to re-think our assumptions about the world.

Curated by Makiko Hara

Makiko Hara is an independent curator, lecturer, researcher, writer. Born in Tokyo, Japan, she currently lives and works in Vancouver. Her curatorial focus creates platforms for dialogue and exchange between artists in Canada, Asia and beyond. Hara is the recipient of Alvin Balkind Curator's VIVA Prize from the Jack and Doris Shadbolt Foundation in BC in 2021.



Diyan Achjadi

*Reaching the City* from *The Further Adventures of Girl* series, 2008

inkjet on paper, 1/3, 76.2 x 114.3 cms

Collection of the Kamloops Art Gallery, purchased with financial support of the Canada Council for the Arts



## Diyan Achjadi

Diyan Achjadi's formative years were spent moving between multiple educational, political, and cultural systems. Born in Jakarta, Indonesia, to a West Javanese father and English-Canadian mother, Achjadi received a Bachelor of Fine Arts from Cooper Union, New York, NY, and a Master of Fine Arts from Concordia University, Montreal, PQ. She is now based in Vancouver, BC, where she is a Professor in the Audain Faculty of Art at Emily Carr University of Art + Design. Achjadi's work depicts fictional stories addressing gender roles in relation to militarism, environmental disaster, and the social function of media as a form of critique.

Drawing on childhood experiences in Indonesia during the authoritarian Suharto regime in the 1970s and 80s, Achjadi's work juxtaposes an aesthetic of childhood innocence and playfulness with nationalism, violence, and disaster. Under his "New Order" administration, President Suharto developed a centralized military-dominated government in Indonesia from 1967 to 1998 that focused on industrialization and economic growth by incorporating the military into all levels of education and society.

The pictorial narratives in Achjadi's prints and animations draw on popular children's media, including school textbooks. Through the character of GIRL, a young girl who could represent an avatar of the artist herself, Achjadi's *The Further Adventures of Girl* series depicts a young girl in militaristic and apocalyptic contexts. The GIRL figure appears alone and repeated, wearing a brightly coloured dress against a candy-coloured, fantasy backdrop that sharply contrasts the militaristic imagery. The repetition of this figure through the uniformity of the bodies underscores the loss of individuality encouraged by the military, and speaks to the systematic use of children in war. Achjadi is also interested in how repetition of imagery is used as a technique in popular culture to communicate ideas, particularly through print media.



Diyan Achjadi

*Merapi* from *The Further Adventures of Girl* series, 2007

inkjet on paper, 1/3, 76.2 x 167.6 cms

Collection of the Kamloops Art Gallery, purchased with financial support of the Canada Council for the Arts



In her brightly coloured prints from 2009, Achjadi shows young girls dutifully marching and performing impeccably. In earlier banners from 2004, we see a girl alone and unsure of the weapon she is holding or the gas mask that she is wearing and then helplessly holding it in her hand. The use of the banner form recalls the use of flags to serve nationalistic and militaristic agendas. Flag raising and singing revolutionary songs was common in Achjadi's school experience in Jakarta. The GIRL figures also extend from the walls in sculptures that move through the gallery space as if leading the way or as a present reminder of the next generation.

Achjadi's animations use the conventions of comic books as a way to investigate the act of storytelling and how we consume stories and media. As with her prints, the animations address the normalization of gender roles through popular culture and look at how this extends to nationalist ideologies.

[www.diyachjadi.com](http://www.diyachjadi.com)



Load na Dito  
FLEX\* at Kamias Triennale, Quezon City, Philippines, 2020  
Photo by Maria Rej Natalia



## Load na Dito

Adopting a vernacular term as their name, Load na Dito is an artistic research project based in Quezon City, Manila, Philippines. Specifically “Load na Dito” is a top-up system for cell phone credit, where you can load credits anywhere as long as you can see a sign “Load na Dito” (Top up Here). Developed as a participatory practice, this initiative creates projects in different locations as a way to build new energy to “load.” Moreover, with the intention of being mobile, the initiative explores the possibility of in-betweenness intervening in the customary mechanism of categorization and territorialization.

Load na Dito was initiated as a gesture to reconsider established social relationships by blending the knowledge and methodologies of individuals from different cultures and experiences. Conversation, playfulness, and openness are essential to Load na Dito’s projects. Currently run by artists Mark Salvatus, Gerome Soriano, and curator Mayumi Hirano, the initiative continues to address the questions of participation and collaboration by organizing and co-organizing a wide range of programs in the Philippines and within the wider Asian art communities.

During the Covid-19 pandemic, Load na Dito organized numerous experimental online art projects, including public talks, workshops, virtual studio visits, conversations, publications, and exhibitions exploring new means of engagement. The Philippines has been placed under one of the world’s longest lockdowns, interrupting connections that sustain everyday life. In response to these current social realities, Load na Dito joins art and cultural practitioners’ efforts to activate the circulation of compassion and the will to share.



Load na Dito  
Pockets on the Streets, FLEX\* at Kyoto City University Gallery, Japan, 2020  
Photo by Miro Kasama



For *Whose Stories?*, Load na Dito presents *Almost There* as a way of exploring the possibility of exchanging personal stories through online and offline dialogue. *Almost There* is a method developed by Load na Dito to collectively recognize individual locations and situations under the current conditions that restrain physical gatherings. Load na Dito facilitates a shared process of mapping personal experiences, feelings, observations, and local knowledge, prompted by one word.

Regardless of where we are, the pandemic has made us think of “home” as a site, experience, and idea. It has become a real and urgent issue for everyone. By using “home” as the prompt, the exhibition invites the audience, artists, curators, and other contributors to mind map, and share observations of everyday life in this remarkable situation.

This project examines domestic space, which has become the main stage of life under pandemic conditions. The human mind and imagination fill the empty architectural vessel and intimately weave a sense of belonging. Home is portrayed here as a micro-ecology, in which the inhabitants engage in continuous dialogue with the physical structure. Memories and imaginations are not just projected on the flat wall but emerge from the interaction with it.

Load na Dito’s installation is composed of two elements – a sound recording and a participatory wall. The sound component captures the conversations that occurred during a virtual mind mapping workshop with individuals who have not had a chance to meet in the exhibition space. The participatory wall invites visitors to the Kamloops Art Gallery to write words and phrases which come to their minds in response to the prompt “home.” The words accumulate on the wall, like a graffiti wall in the public space, throughout the duration of the exhibition.

[www.loadnaditoprojects.cargo.site](http://www.loadnaditoprojects.cargo.site)



Naoko Fukumaru  
*Break Of Light*, 2020  
Heinz Laffin stoneware and Urushi lacquer  
22 cms diameter  
Courtesy of the Artist

## Naoko Fukumaru

Naoko Fukumaru was born in Kyoto, Japan, to a third-generation antique auction house family. This business began with her great-grandfather collecting unwanted broken objects and repairing them at home. Growing up surrounded by fine art and antiques, Fukumaru experimented with repairing broken objects at an early age and decided to pursue a professional career as a conservator.

After receiving a post-graduate diploma in Conservation and Restoration from West Dean College, Chichester, England, in 2000, Fukumaru then worked for two decades as a professional ceramic and glass conservator at the Detroit Institute of Arts Museum, Detroit, MI; the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, NY; and other institutions in the United States, Europe, Egypt, and Japan. She has been involved in major restoration and conservation projects, including *The Last Supper* by Leonard da Vinci and *The Tomb of Tutankhamun*. She has also applied this experience to projects with renowned contemporary artists including Anish Kapoor, Yoko Ono, Marina Abramovic, and Peter Greenaway.

After developing a professional career as a master of Western methods of conservation over the past 25 years, Fukumaru moved to Powell River, BC, in 2018, where she began working in the traditional Japanese restoration method called kintsugi. A five-hundred-year-old Japanese tradition of restoring damaged ceramics using tree sap dusted with gold powder to highlight rather than hide broken pottery. This method draws on Fukumaru's restoration expertise, which aims to invisibly repair, but instead of hiding broken areas, kintsugi allows imperfections to be highlighted and embraced. Over the last three years, Fukumaru has developed an art practice that explores the humble yet sophisticated philosophy drawn from this traditional Japanese method.





Naoko Fukumaru  
Wayne Ngan, 2021  
c. 2003/4 Wayne Ngan stoneware, Urushi lacquer and 24K gold  
24 x 18 cms  
Collection of the Ngan family, courtesy of the Artist

The approach extends beyond the physical act of repair and is rooted in an underlying acknowledgement that suffering and flaws shape history. Fukumaru sees kintsugi as an act of healing. While using the traditional materials and aesthetics of kintsugi, she takes an uninhibited and instinctual approach that expands conventional kintsugi to all cultures and eras and celebrates the imperfection of objects that she calls “beautifully broken.”

Since moving to Powell River, Fukumaru has been collaborating with prominent BC potters to restore, adapt, and reinvent their broken or cracked ceramic works. The work shown in this exhibition includes pottery that is hundreds of years old as well as pottery by BC potters made within the last 50 years. Her collaborations with BC potters Michael Henry, Gerhard Kozel, Heinz Laffin, Glenn Lewis, and Wayne Ngan honour the west coast studio pottery movement that began in the 1970s and was influenced by the British potter and teacher Bernard Leach.

The Leach philosophy, as it came to be known, proposed a meeting of Eastern and Western culture through an “art of living” that acknowledged the values of the individual craftsman, the importance of handmade objects and a connection to the land. The potters who Fukumaru has worked with settled on small islands on the west coast and in Vancouver. Their work has had a strong impact on elevating the status of ceramics within visual art. Fukumaru’s kintsugi work with these potters respectfully brings new life and attention to their work.

[www.naokofukumaru.com](http://www.naokofukumaru.com)





Tomoyo Ihaya  
*Vigil at Tso Pema*, 2012  
mixed media on Japanese paper  
42.5 x 52 cms  
Courtesy of the Artist



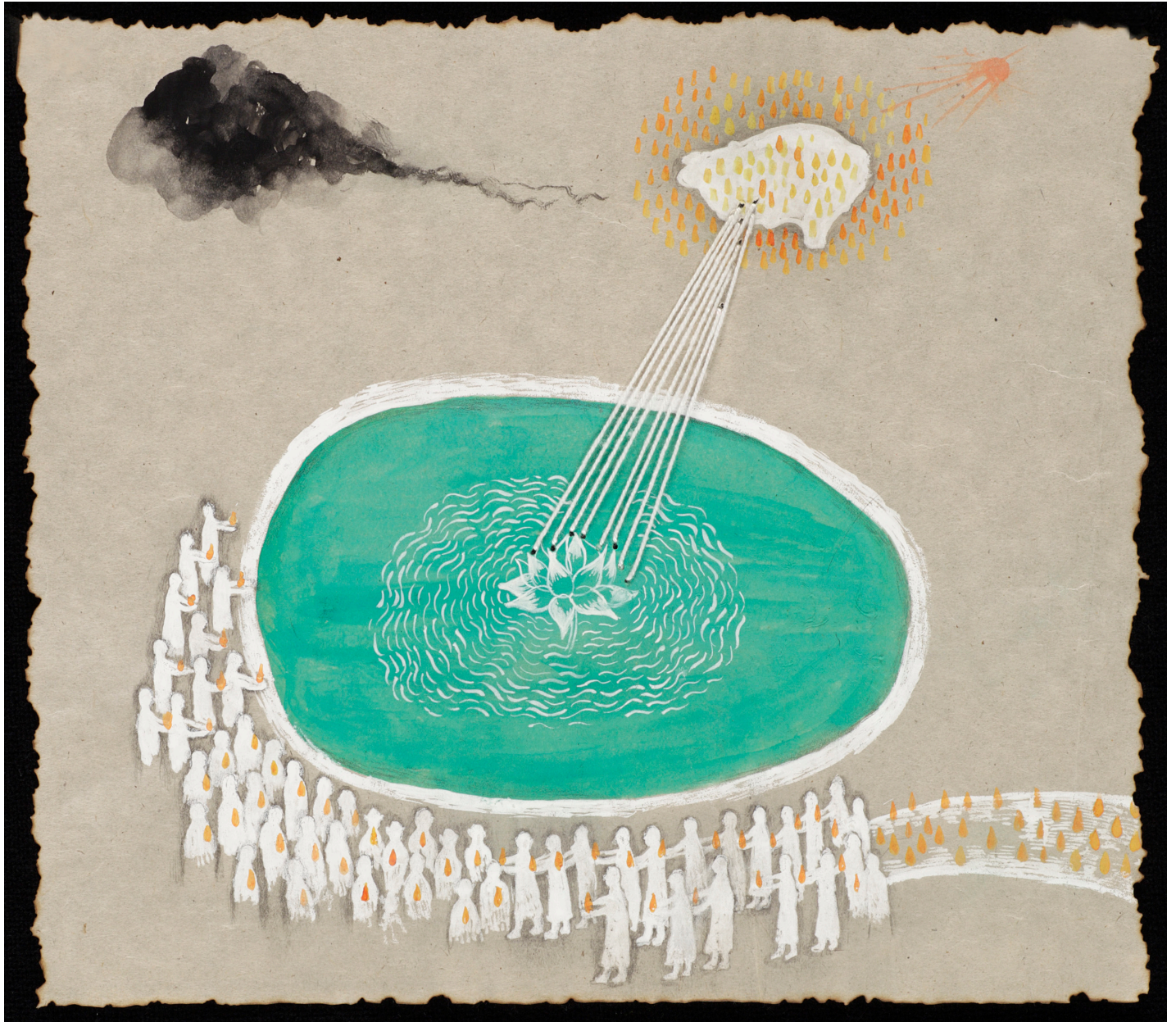
## Tomoyo Ihaya

Born and raised in Tsu City, Mie, Japan, Tomoyo Ihaya has been a resident of Canada since 2000, and currently lives and works in Vancouver, BC. After studying studio arts at a number of universities in Canada, Ihaya received a Master of Fine Arts from University of Alberta, Edmonton, AB, in 2002. Her practice draws on an interest in other cultures and a conviction about the connection between art and life.

Ihaya has made works in numerous international artist-in-residency programs in India, Mexico, Thailand, South Korea, Taiwan, the United States, and Canada. Since 2005, Ihaya has made 16 extended trips to the northern Indian regions of Ladakh and Dharamsala, and spent an extensive amount of time with Tibetan communities in exile. Her work is strongly influenced by her personal practice of Tibetan Buddhism, incorporating the Tibetan gesture of "ninjye," which extends compassion and recognition to those affected by oppression.

Since the winter of 2012, she has worked on a series of drawings called *Drawings from Dharamsala*. Each time she receives the tragic news of Tibetans who have self-immolated in response to the Chinese occupation of Tibet, she makes a drawing and uploads it, along with the person's name, to her online blog. Today, over 150 entries of individuals she has drawn appear on her blog.

Self-immolation is the act of sacrificing oneself by setting oneself on fire and burning to death in political protest. In 1950, the Chinese Communist regime invaded Tibet and the Tibetan government, led by the young Dalai Lama, was forced to recognize China's rule and become part of the People's Republic of China. Since 1959, the Dalai Lama has been living in exile in India, settling in Dharamsala, where he has established a democratically based shadow Tibetan government. Ihaya's drawings are a form of mourning and prayer for the Tibetan people, and her effort to document their lives and their dignity. *Drawings from Dharamsala* is a project she has developed through her close relationships with Tibetan friends and families over the years.



Tomoyo Ihaya  
*Vigil at Tso Pema*, 2012  
mixed media on Japanese paper  
19 x 21.5 cms  
Courtesy of the Artist

*Whose Stories?* also presents a selection of Ihaya's work from her ongoing series *Eyes, Water, Fire*, which she has exhibited in Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, and Canada for over a decade. Reoccurring motifs of water, fire, eyes, legs and hands, sky lanterns, burned holes, and trees act as poetic metaphors for the cycle of life and death and each element contains symbolic meaning. Watery blue legs manifest the thousands of refugees who cross the borders on snow-covered mountains or swim across an ocean. Eyes represent the act of witnessing and prayer, symbolizing doors to the mind and vessels to hold and shed tears for human tragedy. Ihaya asserts, "Burning small holes into the eyes with incense sticks is an act of prayer or meditation. The light coming through each tiny hole is a symbol of hope."

[www.tomoyoihayastudio.com](http://www.tomoyoihayastudio.com)





Mark Salvatus  
*Museo ng Banahaw*, 2017-ongoing  
archives, photographs, prints, mural  
dimensions variable  
Courtesy of the Artist

## Mark Salvatus

Born in Lucban, Philippines, in 1980, and currently living and working in Manila, Mark Salvatus works across mediums, using objects, photographs, videos and participatory projects to present the different outcomes of energies, meanings and experiences. In the context of the Philippines, his practice addresses the debris of everyday politics in the city, remnants of the blurred colonial history of the nation, its complicated narratives, and fragments of the constant movements of his life.

Through the video installation *Araw na nakapitapita (That day most eagerly awaited)* and his ongoing research project *Museo ng Banahaw*, Salvatus explores the symbolism and cultural narratives of a well known holy site, Mt. Banahaw in his hometown of Lucban. *Museo ng Banahaw* is an ongoing collection and archive of his grandfather's texts, found photographs, lyrics, and other stories of the holy mountain. The triangular pattern on the wall is inspired by a found photograph of a trade fair held in Lucban in the 1950s or 60s. Trade fairs at this time showcased the progress of the industrial revolution, highlighting products of colonial America.

The arch of the installation depicts futuristic imagery, with a UFO (Unidentified Flying Object) representing the beginning of the space race that occurred during the cold war in the mid 1950s and early 60s. An ambiguous photograph poses questions about the myth of this mountain that correlate the possible presence of UFOs with the colonizing effects of America in the Philippines. Salvatus suggests that both have a tendency to come and go as occupiers. The triangular patterns offer multiple directions leading to different paths of information. Presenting framed archival images on this obscure background is a visual strategy of non-linear story-telling that is multifaceted, with no beginning or end, implying that the story is constantly changing, growing, and alive.



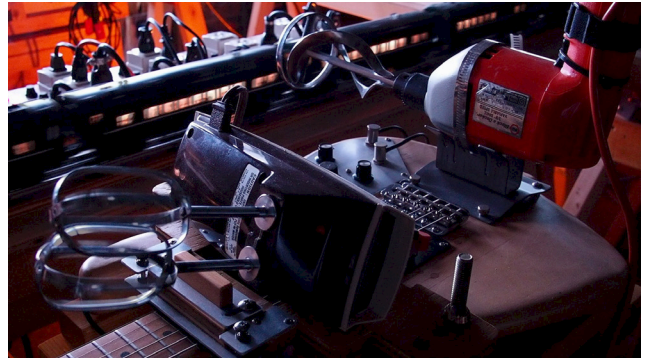
Mark Salvatus  
*Museo ng Banahaw* (detail), 2017-ongoing  
archives, photographs, prints, mural  
28.5 x 45 cms  
Courtesy of the Artist



*Araw na nakapitapita (That day most eagerly awaited)* was created in 2020 amidst the pandemic lockdown and travel restrictions. Most of the footage was shot inside Salvatus' house with his son Yoji and is combined with other video clips accumulated before the pandemic from 2018 to 2019, forming a collection of footage from past visits to his home town. During the lockdown, home became a micro-ecology, or a closed universe, especially for children in the Philippines who were not allowed to go outside. Instead they looked at the world out of windows. To expand his son's world, Salvatus created a fictional story inspired by his grandfather's story about the mountain published in a local magazine in 1993 titled "*Ang Ermitanyo at Torong Ginto sa Bundok Banahaw*" (*A Hermit and the Golden Bull at Mt. Banahaw*).

The title of the work *Araw na nakapitapita (That day most eagerly awaited)* comes from the "pasyon," a Filipino epic passion, death, and resurrection narrative based on the life of Jesus Christ. The pasyon was used in local uprisings led by a local hero against Spain; the mountain became a refuge for him and his followers. Today, Mt. Banahaw acts as a magnet and a refuge for various communities, offering a safe place for religious and spiritual sects, including The New People's Army, the armed wing of the Communist Party of the Philippines. It is also a supposed site for UFOs to refuel, creating new worlds and prodigies. These mountain communities liken the mountain to a paradise, where the second coming of Jesus Christ or a revolution will happen. Offering complex narratives that contain the past, present, and future of Mt. Banahaw, Salvatus' work shares an alternate world in a time of isolation and repression by the present regime in the Philippines.

[www.cargocollective.com/marksalvatus](http://www.cargocollective.com/marksalvatus)



## UJINO

Born in 1964 and now living in Tokyo, Japan, UJINO grew up in the Tokyo suburb of Nerima, a neighborhood established during the 1960s near one of many US Air Force bases in Japan. The rapid westernization of his surrounding hometown became an important influence on his art practice. Through strategies of irony and critique, UJINO's work addresses mass consumption and the ways imported western culture has been embraced in postwar Japan.

In 2004, UJINO began a series of large-scale sound sculptures and live performances with his invented band, the Rotators. The "band" is an automatic rhythm, dance, and industrial sound installation containing motor-driven electric appliances and mass-consumer household products including blenders, hair dryers, power drills, windshield wipers, electric guitars, and amplifiers. It is orchestrated by what the artist refers to as "rotatorhead," a unit of modified deejay turntables and vinyl discs. Lightbulbs and office lamps blink and illuminate the installation in sync with the looped beats. Through this project UJINO and the Rotators became internationally popular in the contemporary art world in the past two decades for a unique fusion of sound, sculpture and performance.

UJINO's recent video work *Plywood City Stories* is a series of documentary-style videos that incorporate the artist's voice in English with a strong Japanese accent as he talks about the shift in Japanese living environments and his own origins and family history. Two of these videos presented on monitors in this exhibition are exemplary of UJINO's intergenerational and autobiographical storytelling approach combined with sound sculpture.

These videos and his Rotators Project are the foundation of UJINO's newest work entitled *HOME MOVIE*, which was completed for this exhibition, and began under the stay-home, pandemic lockdown in Japan. In part 1, *Home Studio*, the artist invites us into his studio where he has built a table top Rotators cityscape, featuring model toy trains.





UJINO  
HOME MOVIE, 2021  
video still  
Courtesy of the Artist

The work includes two iconic American transnational passenger trains, the Pioneer Zephyr, a streamlined high-speed train that took the world by storm, and the Santa Fe Super Chief operated between Los Angeles, California, and Chicago, Illinois, until the 1970s, connecting eastern and western United States, along with the Asia Express, operated by the South Manchuria Railway Company during the Japanese occupation of Manchuria in the 1930s and 40s.

These modernized technologies drove the new era of popular tourism in the early 20th century. Tourist propaganda posters from the west coast of the United States are mixed with Google satellite maps and street views of Tokyo “American-style” restaurants, along with Chinese tourist souvenirs. UJINO creates a fictional, imaginary landscape that questions the role of war, colonial histories, post-war mass consumption, and the mass transformation to a focus on material culture throughout the 20th century.

Part 2, *Mother's Home*, features an interview with the artist's 97-year-old mother. Applying his unique mash-up approach, UJINO constructs an inter-generational narrative between himself, having grown up in the economic growth period, and his mother, who was born in 1923 and grew up in Manchukuo following the Japanese invasion, until she was repatriated after Japan was defeated in 1946. Promoted as a multi-ethnic and modern Pan-Asian state, Manchukuo idealized a multicultural melting pot of Chinese, Koreans, Mongolians, Manchus, and Japanese as an occupied state controlled by the Empire of Japan until it ultimately collapsed at the end of World War II. Along with his mother's personal, tragic, and nostalgic stories of her “second home town,” the artist constructs parallel narratives with the inclusion of archival materials that he found online. These include advertising posters, postcards, maps, war films, and photographs, all produced during the Japanese colonial occupation, offering a blurring of the political and personal. The title of the work plays on multiple meanings of “home” during the pandemic and the idea of the “home state” and offers a critique of the complex ideologies of individuals living in the postwar period.

### **GALLERY HOURS**

Tuesday to Saturday 10:00 am to 5:00 pm  
Free admission every Thursday  
sponsored by BCLC

### **ADMINISTRATION HOURS**

Monday to Friday 9:00 am to 5:00 pm

### **CONTACT**

250.377.2400  
kamloopsartgallery@kag.bc.ca

### **ADMISSION**

Gallery members and children under 6 FREE  
Students FREE with ID  
Adults \$5  
Families \$10  
Seniors \$3  
Groups of 10 or more \$3 each

The Kamloops Art Gallery is situated on the traditional unceded lands of the Tk'emlups te Secwépemc within Secwepemcúl'ecw; the traditional territory of the Secwépemc people.

The Kamloops Art Gallery gratefully acknowledges the financial support of the City of Kamloops, the British Columbia Arts Council, the Province of British Columbia, the Canada Council for the Arts and the Government of Canada.







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