

Palabas

Cathy Lasam Ballo

“Palabas”

Décollage, 12 x 8 in.

2023 Catherine Lasam - Ballo



Description

“Palabas” is part of a series of artworks rooted in my personal experiences as a mother to a child with autism. The work explores concepts of concealment and exposition, as I endeavor to negotiate the tensions between my own personal sense of peace and in learning to seek help and acceptance from others. Its form intimates the vagina, an image historically subject to scrutiny and controversy in western art discourse, despite its own history’s co-option of the female nude.

Composed of paper hewn from my daily lived experiences as a mother, the many layers and colors allude to the many, seemingly unending social expectations a woman must nevertheless live up to regardless of their own struggles. By constructing, then deconstructing the artwork, I attempt to literally and metaphorically peel away these layers of expectations in my attempt to understand what it truly means to be a good mother for myself and my son within the imposed ideals of womanhood in Filipino society.

Bionote

Catherine Lasam-Ballo is an artist, educator, and advocate. She is the founder of ARTguro Philippines and a cum laude graduate of the University of the Philippines College of Fine Arts. As a Centenary Masters Scholar at University College London, she completed her master's in Art Education, Culture & Practice with Distinction. In 2024, she received the British Council's prestigious UK Alumni Award for Culture & Creativity. With over two decades of teaching experience, Cathy has worked with DepEd, NCCA and various schools, and now teaches with the Department of Art Studies at UP Diliman. Her artistic research and practice explores change, and Filipina narratives, and has exhibited both locally and abroad.