# CHAPTER 3

**Philippine Conceptualism: Locating Shop 6**

As a student at the University of the Philippines-Diliman in the early 1970s, Yolanda Laudico (now Johnson) had a fine arts professor who assigned oil painting—hardly an unusual assignment for a visual art class. In response, Laudico collected crude oil from local gasoline stations. She then dipped leaves of paper torn from old books into the slick black oil and pasted them on a board. In a recent conversation, she slyly remarked, “My teacher wanted us to do oil painting. Oil paint was very expensive…I was a student. I couldn’t afford it. So I used crude oil. My teacher asked me what I was doing, and I said that it was oil painting.”[[1]](#footnote-1) Throughout the 1970s, Laudico frequently explored substitutions to paint by using everyday materials; in addition to oil acquired from gas stations, she also used tubes of mint-scented toothpaste from her bathroom. Laudico also continued her early experiments with crude oil at her *Thirteen Artists* exhibition at the CCP by soaking banana leaves in the oil and draping them over fishing wire strung over the length of the Small Gallery.

Like many members of Shop 6, including Roberto Chabet, Laudico used alternative and locally found materials in order to investigate questions of art, labor, the everyday, and the world. The following chapter elaborates on the development of conceptual art in Manila through discussion ofShop 6*,* a group of loosely affiliated artists who manipulated everyday, organic, and found materials in ways that explored the role and legacy of art making in the Philippines. While those considered part of Shop 6 fluctuated throughout the 1970s, members included aforementioned Laudico, Chabet (who is often considered the group’s leader or father figure), Fernando Modesto, Joe Bautista, Alan Rivera, Nap Jamir II, and Rodolfo Gan, among others. Though each of these artists had distinct practices and styles, they frequently handled everyday objects, discards, or debris in ways that encouraged viewers towards a heightened perception and questioning of their lived world. While artists in the 1960s concerned themselves with painting—abstract painting in particular—Shop 6 artists chose real world objects over pure abstraction to engage their spectators to act within the world. Instead of pieces of canvas covered in paint, the artists active in Shop 6 wanted to create “situations that can assault the senses and leave recurring imprint in the mind.”[[2]](#footnote-2)

Following President Ferdinand Marcos’ declaration of martial law in 1972, many artists who took part of Shop 6 grappled with what it meant to make art under an authoritarian regime, particularly one that had so publicly supported the arts with its recent inauguration of a multi-functional cultural center. Many of these artists had come of age at the University of the Philippines (U.P.) during Marcos’ reign. Artists today still consider U.P. the most prestigious institution for a fine arts degree; under martial law, the university, like many college campuses in the 1970s, was a center for political action and protest. Unlike Philippine social realists, who called for heavy opposition against the Marcoses, members of Shop 6 never claimed to be revolutionaries or politically engaged artists.[[3]](#footnote-3) In fact, Dayrit, who documented and occasionally exhibited with Shop 6, wrote in her journal that she and Chabet supported the re-election of Ferdinand Marcos in 1969.[[4]](#footnote-4) In this intellectual milieu, artists such as Laudico not only used materials alternative to paint to make statements about the cost of artist supplies and the belatedness of Philippine art, but also to explore the how these materials reacted to the pressures of duration and physical manipulation in order to engage their viewers in multi-sensorial experiences of their work. Though not explicitly political, these sensorial experiences often violated the standards of propriety established by Imelda Marcos at the CCP.

In discussing Shop 6 with Bunoan, Chabet stated that its members wanted to “match the activities in the CCP.[[5]](#footnote-5) Shop 6, Chabet claimed, was intended to be “an alternative to the CCP.”[[6]](#footnote-6) The 1970s saw a proliferation of alternative and/or artist-run art spaces such as aforementioned Print Gallery, Sanctuary, Gallery 7, and Shop 6, all of which, as Albano notes, “helped in developing a new Philippine visual sensibility.”[[7]](#footnote-7) Albano espouses that alternative spaces permitted artists to “try out some ideas which they themselves do not comprehend yet. Uncategorizable, raw, messy and temporal, the works are risky exercises which have to be done as experiment or as transitions.” [[8]](#footnote-8) He argues that “alternative spaces free the artist of a bias” because “white walls can intimidate viewers, whereas in an abandoned store space, one feels no heightened reverences, so to speak.”[[9]](#footnote-9) Albano further suggests that alternative spaces play an important role in the artistic ecosystem because “when the work [from an alternative space] is ready for acceptance,” the curator can then introduce it to the public in the museum.[[10]](#footnote-10)

Yet, before the emergence of Shop 6, many of these artists already exhibited works that similarly dealt “uncategorizable, raw, messy and temporal” works that featured waste and abjection in the CCP as part of the institution’s *Summer Exhibition*s and *Thirteen Artists*. Instead of arguing that members of Shop 6 made explicitly political art, the chapter explores how their manipulation of mundane things transformed the CCP from a repository of high culture—a response to Imelda’s call for truth, beauty, and goodness—to a place filled with “pieces of junk.”[[11]](#footnote-11) According to Albano, inclusion of “junk” would “lead one to consider the virtues of things considered ugly and cheap” to make one “aware of an environment suddenly turning visible.”[[12]](#footnote-12) Artists involved with Shop 6 challenged the CCP’s pristine “white walls” as an impediment that could “intimidate” viewers by introducing familiar odors and abject objects.[[13]](#footnote-13) Not just a site to house “cultural treasures and works of art,” as Imelda had claimed, the CCP held exhibitions that enticed viewers to once again cast doubt on its function, revealing it to be a site of struggle rather than authoritarian control.[[14]](#footnote-14)

The group first exhibited together in 1974 at *Kalinangan ng Lahi* (Lahi Gallery), an alternative gallery/café that had recently opened in Quezon City, Metro Manila. After this initial exhibition, Corito Araneta Kalaw, co-owner of *Sining Kamalig*, invited the artists to use a vacant commercial storefront in the shopping arcade from 1974 to 1975. Despite its location within a space used for commerce, the artists had no intention of creating sellable artworks for their new exhibition space—it would exclusively be used as a site for experimentation.[[15]](#footnote-15) Shop 6continued to be the name of the experimental gallery space until it closed in 1975, after which the name also referred to the loosely affiliated group of conceptual artists who frequently exhibited there.[[16]](#footnote-16)

The first two weeks of exhibition programming at Shop 6 began with two group exhibitions and then followed with a schedule of weekly solo shows. Each exhibition, which was intended only for a single weekend, opened with a gathering of local artists. The solo exhibitions eventually culminated with a group exhibition called “101 Artists”, which included invited “guest” artists like Eduardo Castrillo, Rene Castillo, Ray Albano, and Judy Sibayan.[[17]](#footnote-17) So many artists participated that *101 Artists* spilled out into the *Kamalig* parking lot, pushing art outside the boundaries of exhibition space into the real world.[[18]](#footnote-18) After less than a year of exhibitions, Shop 6at *Sining Kamalig* closed. In November 1975, despite the initial claims that Shop 6 was an alternative to the CCP, the artists held a major group exhibition CCP Main Gallery called *Shop 6 Exhibition*, which included Laudico, Chabet, Albano, Dayrit, Modesto, Rivera, and Red Mansueto among others.

These artists usually only exhibited each of their installations and “environmental sculptures” once because their artworks were meant to be temporary, though artists would repeat certain motifs and materials.[[19]](#footnote-19) The intended ephemerality of their work was further enhanced by their choice of materials. Their artworks often comprised things that disintegrated or morphed over time. By consistently interrogating the stability of real, everyday objects and materials in their work, members of Shop 6 encouraged viewers to experience an alternate, more open world than the one they inhabited—one in which the CCP was more than just a “pantheon” or mausoleum of high culture.[[20]](#footnote-20) Shop 6’s weekly exhibition openings also offered the possibility for nuanced forms of assembly and action that appeared relatively benign to authoritarian control.

While not intended to be an exhaustive survey of the Shop 6’s activities, the chapter attends to Shop 6’s artistic practice through specific group and solo exhibitions as opposed to individual works because most of their work was only exhibited once in temporary settings. Therefore, under these circumstances, discussing the separate components of an exhibition as a whole installation (or “situation”) follows more closely to the physical experience of their artwork. The temporary storefront at *Sining Kamalig* allowed artists to experiment with non-traditional materials, such as dirty bottles and other discards procured from the side of the road or in other mundane encounters.

As a storefront in a commercial shopping arcade, Shop 6 functioned, to some extent, like a “found space” for artists to symbolically operate outside the political concerns of the CCP. This separation, however, was artificial—though the Shop 6 space operated as an alternative to the CCP, Shop 6 also exhibited at the CCP as a group and individual artists continued to have solo exhibitions at the Center throughout the decade. In discussing specific works from Shop 6 artists and how these artists moved between state-sanctioned and “alternative” spaces, the chapter explores the conditions that permitted the fluidity of artists who refused to fit into the cultural ideals of the Marcoses’ regime.

**Inappropriate Forms at the CCP’s *Summer Exhibition*s**

Many of the artists who participated in Shop 6 took part in the annual summer exhibitions at the CCP curated by Raymundo Albano in the early 1970s. These generically titled *Summer Exhibition*s ran for about a month in the CCP’s Main Gallery every year from its inauguration through 1973. Though the summer exhibitions were short-lived, the ideas cultivated within them continued throughout much of the decade. The first one took place in the summer of 1970—the summer immediately following the opening of the CCP in December 1969. *Summer Exhibition 1970* was an encyclopedic display of Philippine modern art that covered nearly “six decades of Philippine art history.”[[21]](#footnote-21) According to Albano, the exhibition combined old and new art forms, including “over 100 paintings, sculptures, prints, drawings, and ‘but-is-it-art?’ objects.”[[22]](#footnote-22) While the summer exhibitions may have started as a way to showcase a broad range of 20th century Philippine art, three short years later, the CCP summer exhibition focused almost exclusively on ‘but-is-it-art’ objects by the “most progressive artists” in the country.[[23]](#footnote-23) The roster for *Summer Exhibition 1973*—the last one at the CCP—included artists who exhibited at Shop 6 the following year, such as Bautista, Laudico, Modesto, and Gan.

While the first summer exhibition in 1970 began to exhibit some “but-is-it-art” objects, such as Marciano Galang’s *Memory Pieces* or Angel Flores’s *Three Paintings and One Drawing*,[[24]](#footnote-24) notes to *Summer Exhibition 1971* reflect an inclination towards “situational and environmental works.”[[25]](#footnote-25) Leonidas Benesa later explains that terms such as “situational” and “environmental” were used through the 1970s to indicate art’s inextricable entanglement with its physical surroundings. He wrote that “the work being exhibited” should not be considered “within a vacuum, but part of an entire ambiance, the surrounding, *in situ*.”[[26]](#footnote-26) Benesa also affirmed the importance of the viewer’s engagement with the situation presented by the artist, arguing, “The work is most successful if the spectator himself or herself is able to participate in the ‘concept’ or ‘experience’ of the artist-situationist.”[[27]](#footnote-27)

As discussed in the dissertation introduction, artists and art critics often used terms such as “situational,” “environmental,” and “conceptual” interchangeably to refer to art that seemed unbounded from the limitations of painting or sculpture. Terms like “environmental” and “situational” also emphasized the real-world environment or situation created and/or accentuated by the works, suggesting that the bounds between the work and the world remained unclear. The exhibition notes for *Summer Exhibition 1971* also contrast situational and environmental art with another dominant category: abstraction. According to the notes, despite the fact that the original theme of *Summer Exhibition 1971* was abstraction—and Albano originally intended to “include only hard-core abstract works”— the exhibition later evolved to “include situational and environmental works.”[[28]](#footnote-28) *Summer Exhibition 1971* exemplified the kind of programming that would dominate the CCP that decade—one that purposely eschewed pure abstraction for art with stronger ties to the physical world around it.

In fact, exhibition notes for *Summer Exhibition 1972*, also curated by Albano,continued to lament the state of abstraction—particularly abstract painting—in favor of “representational” art in the Philippines.[[29]](#footnote-29) The notes for *Summer Exhibition 1972* exclaim that based on the “present preoccupation of the younger artists” exhibiting, the show should instead be called *Post-Philippine Abstract Representational Art*. Albano accused most abstract paintings from the 1950s onwards as being a mere “distillation of representational forms, organic forms, and splotches, lines, and hazes drawn on the canvas” and argued that despite abstraction’s “popular recognition among the juries and art schools…its developmental absurdity is obvious.”[[30]](#footnote-30) In short, the organizers of *Summer Exhibition 1972* asserted that abstract painting felt irrelevant and outdated. Many young artists did not see abstract painting (as oil or acrylic on canvas) as an asset for Philippine modernism; the approach seemed to be “suffering from over-exhaustion.”[[31]](#footnote-31)

And while some “responsible” artists “resorted to representational paintings” other, more “broad-minded” artists approached representation in a different manner.[[32]](#footnote-32) According to the exhibition notes, these artists created a “non-sale-able, uncategorizable and iconoclastic type of art…[which was] labeled as ‘avant-garde’ art.” These artworks were also considered “representational” because “they represent something very definite and apparent: themselves. If paper is used, it is shown as paper: the works are presented in a more straightforward and honest manner.” [[33]](#footnote-33) The notes further indicate that the inclusion of representational (non-abstract) objects permitted viewers to freely associate and contemplate their place in the world as “the viewer…can lull himself to dreams, tales and things” because the artwork was “far from being abstract.”[[34]](#footnote-34)

Though not many photographs documenting the exhibition are extant, the exhibition notes and reviews include descriptions of the work in *Summer Exhibition 1972.* Elizabeth V. Reyes, for example, described the overall content of the exhibition in a review written for *PACE* magazine. She expressed, “In general, the modern artists use mundane, simple, everyday materials—toothpaste, rope, paper bags—to make their creative statements. Without transforming or abstracting the original features of those materials, they may suggest an activity, a process, an attitude.”[[35]](#footnote-35) Reyes made a similar argument as the exhibition notes: that by presenting materials in a straightforward, un-abstracted, and mundane manner, the works at *Summer Exhibition 1972* engaged the viewer with the world beyond the museum and the art circuit, recasting the CCP as a place in process rather than an establishment of high culture.

Some of the aforementioned “simple, everyday materials” described by Reyes included toothpaste and brown paper lunch bags—objects used in the exhibition by Laudico and Bautista, respectively. The notes for *Summer Exhibition 1972* also contained praise for these two young artists and their “bravura” for experimenting with vernacular materials.[[36]](#footnote-36) Laudico’s *Toothpaste* consisted of a metal column covered with sticky lines of toothpaste that she had squeezed out of commercial tubes. Embedded in the lines of minty paste were plastic caps that Laudico had removed from the empty toothpaste tubes and stuck onto the column. The “squashed” tubes of toothpaste—bereft of their contents—and the empty cardboard boxes that once contained them littered the base of the toothpaste column.[[37]](#footnote-37) While on their own, the tacky lines might resemble rounded stripes of paint freshly extracted from their tubes, the strong, minty scent and the detritus around the covered column confirmed the substance as toothpaste.

*Toothpaste* was another example of Laudico’s investigations of vulgar or everyday materials to replace the most privileged material of fine art—paint.[[38]](#footnote-38) Exhibition notes specified that Laudico used “toothpaste as a substitute for oil paint.” [[39]](#footnote-39) Yet, while Laudico had first incorporated crude oil as a play on words in oil painting, she intended toothpaste to be a more tactile form of substitution. Toothpaste, she believed, was an appropriate replacement not only because it physically resembled lines of squeezed paint, but also because of the way the receptacles handled in her hand. As she grasped a tube to release toothpaste onto her toothbrush, this familiar action felt reminiscent of squeezing paint out of similar conduits.[[40]](#footnote-40) The empty cardboard boxes and depleted tubes left around the toothpaste column optically stressed to the viewer that Laudico created *Toothpaste* from banal materials. As nearly every person has the experience of squeezing a tube of toothpaste, *Toothpaste* presented spectators with the visual manifestation of the ordinariness of generative acts.

*Toothpaste* was also one of Laudico’s earliest forays in exploring how to bring the olfactory sense—and its mundane associations—into the art gallery. According to Laudico, one morning, as she brushed her teeth in the privacy of her own bathroom, the overwhelming odor of minty smell toothpaste overtook her. She decided that she wanted to extend the same olfactory sensation of minty toothpaste from the intimate space of her bathroom into the public gallery space. Viewers experienced toothpaste as the primary material in Laudico’s installation through both sight and scent; the exhibition notes state that *Toothpaste* “attacked the olfactory senses with an antiseptic smell.”[[41]](#footnote-41) *Toothpaste*’s “antiseptic smell” recreated a sensation associated to the intimate space of a bathroom that was antithetical to the public museum space it inhabited. It caused viewers to recall personal grooming habits and drew attention to the discomfort of experiencing the olfactory sensations connected to a private, mundane space in a public setting usually visited for visual pleasure.

While Laudico introduced the olfactory as an important component of her work, Bautista focused on the ocular in his “visual situations.”[[42]](#footnote-42) One of Bautista’s “situations” at the *Summer Exhibition 1972* involved “a flock of *100 Paper Bags* inside one alcove” of the CCP Main Gallery.[[43]](#footnote-43) Bautista arranged the large number of empty bags in straight, even rows on the ground. He left enough space in between the bags in the alcove for viewers to circulate and closely examine them; the exhibition notes explicitly state that visitors were supposed to “go around the bags and scrutinize with [their] eyes the variations and intrinsic qualities of paper bags.”[[44]](#footnote-44) Although the bags were empty, the placement of the bags on the ground allowed viewers to peer into them, encouraging them to really examine the “situation” in front of them. Placed in close proximity to each other, small differences among the iterated bags become discernable despite the assumed uniformity of manufactured objects. The viewer’s immediate experience of close looking was the most important aspect of Bautista’s work. *100 Paper Bags* created curiosity out of the mundane as it provoked viewers to look closer at their world.

Laudico and Bautista’s contributions to *Summer Exhibition 1972* exemplified the kind of work that was decidedly not abstraction, but “representational in that they represent something very definite and apparent: themselves.”[[45]](#footnote-45) Bautista displayed a collection of unadorned paper bags in neat rows for systemic inspection of their “intrinsic qualities.”[[46]](#footnote-46) And though the lines of smeared toothpaste might—at first glance—be unidentifiable (or resemble paint in a museum setting), Laudico included empty toothpaste tubes and boxes in her installation so no mistake could be of its materiality and the source of minty aroma in the gallery. The inclusion of these banal and vulgar materials within the CCP also intervened with what Imelda imagined as “high art” for the Philippines and her affirmations of CCP as a site for truth, beauty, goodness (though the works were certainly shown in a “truthful” manner).

Additionally, the use of everyday materials without concealment or embellishment revealed a general desire for transparency that had been lacking in the Marcoses’ governance; the “straightforward” and “honest manner” in which Laudico and Bautista displayed their objects contrasted the secretive actions and furtive disappearances affiliated with the Marcoses under martial law. Made from quotidian objects encountered by people going through their everyday lives, Bautista and Laudico’s work also elicits association with people’s daily routines. *Toothpaste*’s distinctive minty odor, for example, might generate personal memories of brushing one’s teeth, recasting the state state-sanctioned space as an intimate and private one.

Documentation notes for *Summer Exhibition 1973* provide evidence of growing tension between the young artists exhibiting at the CCP and the CCP as an institution designed to promote a nationalist cultural narrative. *Summer Exhibition 1973* occurred one year before Shop 6 andwould be the last one at the CCP. According to its documentation notes, *Summer Exhibition 1973* was “before one knew it…closed, replaced by something that would be more appropriate for the National Artists Award ceremonies and the Van Cliburn concerts.”[[47]](#footnote-47) These documentation notes also indicate that *Summer Exhibition* took place between May 31 and June 6, 1973.[[48]](#footnote-48) While *Summer Exhibition 1973* was mounted at the CCP for a similar duration to other summer exhibitions (*Summer Exhibition 1972* actually lasted less than a month), the exhibition was supposed to be up through July 1 and had closed prematurely for the National Artists Award and the Van Cliburn concerts.[[49]](#footnote-49)

The suggestion that the exhibition was “replaced by something…more appropriate” for official national and international events indicated an ambivalent relationship between the exhibiting artists and the official interests of the CCP. While artists could experiment with less conventional forms in the CCP exhibition spaces in junctures between formal events, they failed to present a cohesive kind of Philippine art appropriate more high-profile purposes. In fact, in Dayrit’s notes on Shop 6, she expressed that *Summer Exhibition 1973* “was ordered to be closed by Mrs. Marcos…to make room for a reception scheduled to be held in the Main Gallery.”[[50]](#footnote-50)

Artists participating in *Summer Exhibition 1973* continued to display everyday objects in an “honest manner.” [[51]](#footnote-51) The notes describe that year’s exhibitionas “an impromptu type organization” in which “the stories behind the installation could be more interesting than the exhibits themselves.”[[52]](#footnote-52) The exhibition included work by Bautista and Laudico, such as Bautista’s untitled “Coke & Pepsi Bottles” and large looms of wax paper by Laudico called *This is How Paper is Made* (1973). Laudico also continued her olfactory experiments from the prior *Summer Exhibition* with a hanging wooden grid filled with apples meant to decay over the duration of the exhibition. She called the latter installation *This is How Air is Strained* (1973), emphasizing the air moving through the grid of decaying apples as an important component of the work. Rodolfo Gan also participated in the exhibition with his installations of everyday materials, such as *Fall* (1973) and *Open* (1973). Gan constructed the former out of wood and rope and the latter out of cement and rope. His works, like Laudico’s, morphed over time and collapsed before the exhibition concluded; according to the exhibition notes, “*Open* crumbled on the second day of the exhibit, and *Fall* fell afterwards.”[[53]](#footnote-53)

Bautista included bottles and other discarded containers in a refrigerator as part of the inaugural group exhibition at Shop 6 the following year. At *Summer Exhibition 1973*, Bautista accompanied his untitled soda bottle installation with playfully worded annotations.[[54]](#footnote-54) While he captioned the Pepsi bottle as “This is the real thing. This is not our taste,” he annotated the Coke bottle as “This is our taste. This is not the real thing.”[[55]](#footnote-55) Since both bottles were actually Pepsi and Coke bottles, Bautista’s statements were not about whether or not the objects were *real* (as opposed to painted or sculpted) but rather whether the bottle and its contents were the *real thing—*in other words whether the thing was legitimately what it should be*.* While he described the “real thing” as “not our taste,” he declared the “not real thing” as “our taste,” questioning our judgment as we prefer the imposter. The viewer is potentially implicated by Bautista’s choice of pronoun— “our” can include the artist and the bystander alike. Despite the “straightforward” presentation of objects, Bautista implied through the accompanying text that “our taste”—both in terms of the sense of taste and the ability to discern quality—seemed easily be subject to deception.

On their own, the two bottles appear strange, but relatively innocuous in a gallery setting. An unsuspecting viewer might note the familiar shape of the soft drink containers, wonder if another guest had crassly forgotten to discard his trash, and walk by without much further contemplation. By adding captions to the bottles, Bautista engaged the potential viewer in a fictional discussion as they considered the literal taste and experience of the two widely known soft drinks. The viewer might wonder why Bautista choose to label Pepsi as the “real thing” despite the fact that Coke technically came before Pepsi (or even wonder if Coke did indeed come before the other). They might ask “What does real mean?” in reference to the text, eliciting questions of how and why we consider something more real over another. One might consider how “realness” depends on the subjective anticipation of Coke or Pepsi. A spectator could also dispute Bautista’s claim that “our” collective “taste” is for Coke by thinking “No it’s not! Coke is in fact not my taste! I definitively prefer Pepsi.” Like *100 Paper Bags*, Bautista’s untitled “Coke & Pepsi” asked the viewer to interrogate assumptions made in the larger world through mundane materials. Incorporating relatively common objects permitted the average person’s engagement in the conversation as they could easily imagine the varying tastes of the sugary pop of the drink bottles placed before them. And while whether something is the “real thing” in the case of Coke vs. Pepsi was benign, “Coke & Pepsi” encouraged the viewer to be present in their situation and mentally defend his or her preferences.

**[fig. 3.1]** Like *Toothpaste* at the *Summer Exhibition 1972*, Laudico chose the materials for *This is How Air is Strained* based on her desire to bring other sensory experiences into the gallery setting through readily available materials—this time she used fruit. Laudico remarked that she wanted to infiltrate the CCP gallery with the overwhelming scent of apples to conjure the fresh experience of an apple orchard.[[56]](#footnote-56) She was particularly drawn to the olfactory as a way to produce emotive association and recollection among viewers of her work. Since apples were not typically grown in the Philippines, not only do they bring the odor of the outdoors into the gallery, but their aroma also created a sensation of an environment completely outside of local experience in the Philippines. Through the crisp smell of apples, spectators were invited to imagine another world beyond their immediate reality. While the toothpaste might have drawn attention to the intimate space of the bathroom, the apples seem to allude to a world outside—an exotic, imagined world beyond the Philippines.

Laudico, however, did not intend the apples and their accompanying odor to retain their freshness for the entire duration of that year’s summer exhibition. *This is How Air is Strained* not only continued her olfactory experimentation from *Summer Exhibition 1972*, but also addressed her interest in work that combined the artist’s hand (and intention) with chance by incorporating elements that morphed or decayed over time. She made *This is How Air is Strained* by interlocking slender wooden planks together to form a small grid structure. She then hung the structure from the ceiling, slightly away from the wall. In each of the grid’s square-shaped compartments, Laudico placed pieces of fresh apples meant to ripen and rot through the course of the exhibition. The fresh, sweet scent of apples that permeated through the CCP Main Gallery turned into the pungent odor of rotting fruit over time.

Similar to her later work at Shop 6, Laudico wanted *This is How Air is Strained* to be a work continually in process instead of a finished product. According to the artist, as the apples balanced on the narrow planks of the dangling grid, some of them fell off the structure and continued their decomposition on the ground. The tension between the order of the man-made grid contrasted with the precariousness of the balancing, splatting, decaying apples. The apples falling off the man-made structure seemed to mimic the natural motion of apples falling off a tree, recreating a situation from nature within the confines of the gallery. Since the apples consistently changed, they drew attention to Laudico’s installation as an encounter, causing the viewer to think about how they experienced the world at a specific moment that never remained the same.

Following the progression of prior summer exhibitions at the CCP, *Summer Exhibition 1973* prominently displayed everyday objects and materials—some of which shifted over time—as a way to engage the viewer into contemplation of their situation and environment. Artists drew on frank display of common objects to encourage viewers to participate in their immediate reality and suggested that these experiences extended to more than just visual acknowledgment. Despite the original fresh and foreign quality of Laudico’s apples, the eventual rotting of their flesh bore similarity to other kinds of decay and garbage, replacing the sanitized air of the CCP with one that alluded to a more contaminated beyond its unspoiled walls. Artists exhibiting at *Summer Exhibition 1973* seemed particularly interested in the viewer’s encounter and capacity to dialogue with the work over passive consumption and acceptance of it.

*Summer Exhibition 1973* would be the last summer exhibition at the CCP in the 1970s.[[57]](#footnote-57) That year, the summer exhibition was replaced by the *CCP Mixed Exhibition*—an exhibition that resembled *Summer Exhibition 1970* and its more comprehensive contents rather than the messy (and smelly) experiments of1973. Slight bitterness of *Summer Exhibition 1973*’s early closure can be ascertained from both the documentation notes for *Summer Exhibition 1973* and *CCP Mixed* Exhibition, both of which make brief remarks about the other. While notes for *Summer Exhibition 1973* already include aclaim that it was “replaced by something…more appropriate for the National Artists Awards ceremonies and Van Cliburn concerts,” notes for *CCP Mixed Exhibition* also explicitly state, “For two occasions (National Artists Awards and the visit of Van Cliburn) an exhibition which combined old and new works was installed. There was no definite theme, except the fact that it provided a glimpse of both works of the past and the present. This was installed right after Summer Exhibition 1973 ended.”[[58]](#footnote-58)

The repetition in the exhibition notes reflect Albano’s discomfort that the more avant-garde *Summer Exhibition 1973* was changed to *CCP Mixed Exhibition* for the specific, nationalist occasions. *CCP Mixed Exhibition*, as its name implies, included a mix of “conventional” and “advanced” art. In other words, the *CCP Mixed Exhibition* was less about the viewer’s participation and multi-sensorial involvement with the work, but passive visual consumption appropriate for official purposes. The exhibition had been thrown together to “give the public a chance to see ‘milestones’ in Philippine art.”[[59]](#footnote-59) The exhibition, however, did not necessarily exclude the young artists who took part of *Summer Exhibition* *1973*. *CCP Mixed Exhibition* included Bautista’s *Installation*—a work made of piles of black sand hand-poured in a grid formation on the ground—as an example of “advanced” art.[[60]](#footnote-60) Although *CCP Mixed Exhibition* did not completely denounce avant-garde art, the exhibition—as a replacement to the more experimental *Summer Exhibition 1973*—confirmed desire for the passive and encyclopedic presentation of Philippine art as the appropriate backdrop for official occasions.

The CCP summer exhibitions during the early 1970s moved increasingly towards art that consisted of found objects and discards over more conventional art forms. Documentation notes of the summer exhibitions from 1970 to 1973 showed a growing disdain towards the majority of Philippine abstraction, which obscured or fragmented reality. Documentation further suggests that younger artists displayed the mundane materials of the world as it was—smelly, monotonous and sometimes rotten —a gesture that appeared to contrast with the grandiose claims of Imelda for the CCP. While artists such as Laudico or Bautista did not intentionally picture themselves as political dissidents, their works alluded to the reality of a material world alternative to the pristine and fictional one created by Imelda—a straightforward, honest, unstable world countering the secretive control of Marcos regime.

Though discussion of social realism has dominated Philippine art history as the primary and most potent form of protest art against the Marcos regime, a more nuanced form of realism had been taking place in the CCP with these “avant-garde” artists. These artists highlighted the potential of everyday to encourage viewers active engagement in art, freeing art from the tyranny of the Marcoses’ control. By using easily accessible materials, these artists, unlike the social realist counterparts, denied paint—an expensive medium associated with colonialism—the primacy it had in the prior decade. *Summer Exhibition 1973* would be the last oneduring the early years of the CCP. Many of the artists who participated in the CCP summer exhibitions would take part in Shop 6—a temporary exhibition space that occupied a small shop space—the following year.[[61]](#footnote-61) As artists who were interested in mundane objects, it does seem fitting that they moved their exhibitions into mundane spaces.

**Finding *Shop 6*: The Rise of Alternative Art Galleries**

In a 1990s interview with members of Shop 6, Chabet described an exhibition at Lahi Gallery as the catalyst that led to the space.[[62]](#footnote-62) Titled *Basta Hindi Ganon* (That’s Not How It Is), the exhibition took place in the recently opened gallery in the working-class neighborhood of Cubao, situated in Quezon City, Metro Manila. *Basta Hindi Ganon* occurred one year after the last CCP summer exhibition and included work by Bautista, Chabet, Gan, Laudico, Modesto and Boy Perez. **[fig. 3.2]** Its unusual invitation—twelve lines of childish scrawl written in red crayon on a scrap of lined paper—foretold of the unconventional contents of the exhibition.[[63]](#footnote-63) The short-lived exhibition opened on April 19, 1974 and closed the day after—supposedly due to some of its questionable contents. According to Chabet, Corito Araneta Kalaw, co-owner of *Sining Kamalig* (Storehouse of Art), “heard about” *Basta Hindi Ganon* and its premature closing. She was “amused” and offered the artists an empty stall space near the gallery that newspapers billed as *Sining Kamalig Extension—Shop 6*.[[64]](#footnote-64)

*Basta Hindi Ganon* took place at Lahi Gallery—one of many art spaces to open in Metro Manila in the 1970s. Since the founding of Philippine Art Gallery (PAG) in the 1950s, Manila had established a modest roster of gallery and artist-run spaces, including the Luz Gallery, Solidaridad, Print Gallery, Sanctuary, and *Sining Kamalig*. While many conceptual artists exhibited in the CCP through the 1970s, these galleries and alternative spaces also became critical points for conceptual art to develop. Many of these commercial galleries naturally formed for financial interests and gain. Luz, proprietor of the eponymous Luz Gallery, matter-of-factly stated, “An art gallery is a business primarily. It has other functions, of course, but if a gallery is professional, it should make money.”[[65]](#footnote-65) Yet, though major commercial galleries such as Luz Gallery and Solidaridad maintained solid exhibition schedules with established artists, less conventional spaces such as Sining Kamalig accommodated younger artists and more experimental programing, often to the detriment of profit. In fact, art columnist Angel G. De Jesus suggested that SiningKamalig had a “splendid record of launching the careers of younger ‘name’ artists. In its operation, the profit motive appears to be completely subordinated to the promotion and progressive development of Philippine art.”[[66]](#footnote-66)

One of the earliest experimental galleries (and one that failed to profit) in Metro Manila was Joy Dayrit’s Print Gallery. As discussed in the prior chapter, Chabet exhibited his first experimentations with found objects at Print Gallery as part of the Liwayway Recapping Co. shortly after his return from the Rockefeller grant. Chabet and Dayrit met while he was still the museum director of the CCP when she had contacted him for help on a Juan Arellano exhibition at Print Gallery.[[67]](#footnote-67) Though Print Gallery was rather short-lived—the gallery only lasted from 1968 to 1970—Dayrit continued to be involved with the experimental art scene through her friendship with Chabet and her involvement with Shop 6. Chabet’s Liwayway Recapping Co. exhibition at Print Gallery resembled that of Shop 6a few years later—intentionally short-lived, playful, and filled with everyday objects. Like *Basta Hindi Ganon* at Lahi Gallery, the Liwayway Recapping Co. exhibition was only up for a single evening, making it closer to an event, a party, or a performance than an exhibition.

Although Dayrit had hoped to have a second iteration of Print Gallery, it never came into fruition. As she mourned the eternal loss of her gallery, she expressed her support for Liwayway Recapping Co. in her journal, writing:

The Liwayway Recapping Co., the non-serious group of ‘non-artists’, I am rooting for them…They’re non-serious, and therefore uninhibited attitude towards art. This attitude causes them to work more freely, without inhibition, without fear of hurting themselves and their vocation (art), with indifference towards criticism and what people will say, and with a whole lot of fun.[[68]](#footnote-68)

In her journal, Dayrit highlighted an important strategy adopted by conceptual artists: non-seriousness. Since non-seriousness permitted artists to “work without inhibition” or “fear of hurting themselves,” artists could examine and critique local, lived realities without the anxiety of artistic failure or political repercussion as they could simply remark that they were joking. Dayrit keenly observed that Liwayway’s blasé attitude and choice of non-art objects gave their work the potential to carefully glide under the radar. Though often dismissed as *pakulo* or gimmickry, artists such as Chabet and Albano—who also took part in Liwayway Recapping Co.—gained attention and support in local galleries and the CCP as both artists and administrators. By bringing the literal detritus of the outside world into the gallery space, they seem to poke fun of seriousness of austere art spaces—such as the CCP.

After Print Gallery closed, other galleries continued to proliferate throughout Metro Manila in the mid-1970s. These galleries served not only as exhibition spaces, but also hang out spots for artists to gather and exchange ideas. In 1974, for example, Gallery and After Six opened as the first gallery/café in the posh Makati neighborhood while Lahi Gallery was established in up-and-coming, but working class Cubao.[[69]](#footnote-69) Lahi Gallery was the brainchild of Judy Araneta Roxas and Loretta Lichauco. The former was from a wealthy family that possessed property in that part of Metro Manila, and the latter, a gallerist who already owned commercial gallery in Manila.[[70]](#footnote-70) According to an article in *Philippine Panorama*, the two founders wanted to conceive an art gallery that rejected the “elitist trappings of art altogether” because they felt “convinced that art is a social and human need and activity…not a commercial or social privilege.”[[71]](#footnote-71) By bringing an art gallery into the blue collar area, Roxas and Lichauco hoped to “create an atmosphere in which the public will accept art as part of their everyday life.”[[72]](#footnote-72)

The same *Panorama* article also briefly alluded to *Basta Hindi Ganon* as an exhibition of “environmental sculptures” by “Chabet and friends.” [[73]](#footnote-73) As part of its mission to encourage the people to “accept art as a part of…everyday life,” Lahi Gallery welcomed artists who proposed everyday detritus as art to evoke art’s association with life. Installation photographs from *Basta Hindi Ganon* document some of the works exhibited by Laudico, Chabet, and Modesto. Laudico’s “oil painting”—made from crude oil dipped manuscript paper—dominated an entire expanse of wall on one side of the gallery. Her other work, an assortment of black twigs tangled in a clear fishing net, hovered precariously above the “oil painting.” Below her installation of twigs was Chabet’s contribution to *Basta Hindi Ganon*: a long bamboo rod suspended with thick white rope knotted around its center. Chabet called the work *God*. On the floor of the gallery, Modesto exhibited a large desk fan he had found in a nearby rubbish bin. He connected the fan to a transparent tube and ribbons of cassette tape placed on an unfurled of reel of white paper. Once filled with air from the fan, the chute would inflate and a cut out image of Richard Nixon would blow around inside of it.[[74]](#footnote-74)

As discussed earlier in the chapter, Laudico began to incorporate crude oil in her art practices as a student at U.P.-Diliman. Crude oil was not the only quotidian material she included in these oil paintings. Instead of purchasing new batches of white paper, she used paper that already had text on them such as mimeographed pages from books. To create the oil painting in Lahi Gallery, the artist carefully tore pages out of a book (not unlike Chabet’s performance of *Tearing to Pieces*) and dipped the paper leaves into oil accrued from gasoline stations. She then placed the stain pages directly on the gallery wall to form a large, rectangular surface.[[75]](#footnote-75) Though Laudico ripped out the pages close to the book’s spine, the rough edges of the torn pages reveal pieces of wall as the imperfect—and disparately sized—rectangles failed to fit snugly together. The pages also absorbed the black oil in varying degrees; the differentiations in color remained noticeable across the distinct pieces of paper. **[fig. 3.3]** The diverse size and color of the rectangular components in Laudico’s “oil painting” produced an off-kilter grid that retained a visibly fragmented surface.

Like she had been with *This is How Air is Strained*, Laudico seemed interested in how her materials morphed over time, though this time over a longer period than just the duration of the exhibition. “In the long run,” she remarked, “the paper turned to black.”[[76]](#footnote-76) **[fig. 3.4]** A part of the work is still displayed in her home. Yet, during the exhibition, most of the repurposed paper contained text that remained visible. The words darkened by the oil on paper emerged like rows of iterated lines, their meaning obfuscated and inconsequential. Text becomes just another material to produce images. They converge into lines that vaguely mimic those created by the sticks above them, though the ones on paper retain a horizontal order, unlike the randomness of the twigs above them. Since some of the sheets of paper are darker than others, some of the text pasted on the wall remain legible, drawing the viewer to come closer to the painting and attempt to catch a phrase off the wall. Similar to other works exhibited in *Basta Hindi Ganon*, Laudico’s “oil painting” asked the viewer to continually come closer and to look more carefully.

Laudico asserted that the “oil painting” at Lahi Gallery occupied a whole wall. “So one whole wall. Imagine the whole wall, I stuck paper stained with black coal to the wall,” she exclaimed.[[77]](#footnote-77) The “oil painting” functioned more like wallpaper than a painting. Its size dominated a large expanse of wall, and while a small perimeter was retained around the painting, it lacked a distinct frame. More importantly, Laudico had stuck the sheets of oily paper “directly on the wall” with tar.[[78]](#footnote-78) According to the artist, the paper left tar stains on the wall that upset the proprietors; the gallery owners felt concerned about the fire hazard created by the residual marks.

While Roxas and Lichauco might have expressed desire to create an atmosphere in which art appeared to be a part of everyday experience, in actuality, they seemed threatened by artwork that physically stained real space, remaining long past its welcome from an organized exhibition. Despite leaving unacceptable blemishes on the gallery wall, Laudico’s “oil painting” also visualized how artistic experimentation operated in Manila; the work retained clear, crisp perimeters in spite of the torn edges and misalignment present in its internal grid. In other words, while artists were encouraged to develop “avant-garde” or experimental works that extended into the everyday, their artworks continued to be bounded by institutional expectation regarding medium.

**[fig. 3.5]** Laudico’s other work in *Basta Hindi Ganon*— a collection of twigs soaked in the same crude oil tangled in a suspended fishing net—also distressed the gallery owners. The artist used a transparent fishing net for the installation so that from afar, the twigs appeared as if they were floating in air.[[79]](#footnote-79) She noted that she chose twigs because she was fascinated by how their forms appeared “random” because they came from nature.[[80]](#footnote-80) The form of the twigs was not the only random element in the installation. Before the opening of the exhibition, much to the chagrin of the gallery owners, the artist hung up the fishing net and proceeded to “play”—that was, to throw oily twigs at it. The ones that caught on the net “formed themselves into a pattern” and remained on the net as part of the installation.[[81]](#footnote-81)

While Laudico dictated the parameters for how the work would be made, the “finished” work depended on criterion outside of the artist’s control. Laudico’s action also caused further discomfort, as the gallery owners continued to grow nervous about the oil splatters staining their new venue; Laudico’s oil works presented the threat of art that continued to persist in real space.[[82]](#footnote-82) The transparency of the fishing net created another threat; it offered the twigs the appearance of tumbling bramble placed just above Laudico’s oil painting. The physical tension between the translucent net and the weight of the twigs remained invisible above the oil stained expanse of paper. The tension that was tangible, however, was the immediacy of the twig’s capacity to tumble towards a viewer whose curiosity surpassed his or her fear of being smacked by an errant twig.

Like Laudico, Modesto also used found objects in his installations due to the steep price of paint. He stressed that as an artist, if you used “oil and canvas, you have paint, that's expensive, you need to buy it, then you’d do it seriously, right? So there are ideas and if the found object can solve the problem, why not?” Modesto expressed that using inexpensive materials—such as found objects—allowed artists to experiment without concern of financial recuperation necessary for expensive paintings. Using materials found cheaply or freely not only meant that artists could explore ideas that lacked commercial appeal, but also permitted artists to create artworks quickly with minimal labor. This allowed artists to keep up with the rate of production required by Shop 6’s goals of producing weekly exhibitions. Modesto noted that part of what “pushed” him to keep working under Shop 6 was the “pressure to exhibit every week, so you’re pressured to think of an idea.”[[83]](#footnote-83)

**[fig. 3.6]** For his installation at *Basta Hindi Ganon*, Modesto noted that he acquired his materials by rummaging through garbage bins near the Gallery a few days before the exhibition opened.[[84]](#footnote-84) In the detritus, he found a cream-colored table fan and some cassette tapes that he ended up unraveling for his installation. Modesto then tied ribbons of cassette tape onto the fan and placed it on top of a rectangle of white paper, which demarcated the space around his fan. He then enclosed the cassette ribbons in a plastic tube that would inflate when the fan was blowing air through it. Modesto described it as “an electric fan with a picture of Nixon inside the plastic…There was regular plastic that I formed into a cylinder.”[[85]](#footnote-85) The picture of Nixon was also accompanied by “popcorn” that flurried around the plastic tube.[[86]](#footnote-86)

Though the transparent plastic left the cylinder’s internal contents visible, the blowing fan obscured the items in the cylinder because it caused the objects to constantly move and appear blurry. The placement of the fan on the ground also shrouded the work’s political reference because forced the viewer to bend over and inspect the transparent tube to recognize the visual reference to Nixon. While works at the CCP’s summer exhibition displayed work in a “straightforward” and “honest” manner, objects in *Basta Hindi Ganon*—*That’s Not How It Is*—asked spectators to approach and look carefully at mundane objects to see what might be concealed. Modesto’s decision to include Nixon in his work also brushed close to political commentary. Modesto remarked, “I did this work during the height of the news on Watergate. Of course I got a reaction, but then that was my intention.”[[87]](#footnote-87) Modesto further stated, however, that despite the works being “political” they were definitively not “Social Realism,” drawing a distinction between the kind of representation done by members of Shop 6 and their social realist counterparts.[[88]](#footnote-88)

Modesto was not the only artist who used images of controversial heads of state at *Basta Hindi Ganon*. At the front of the gallery—not pictured in the installation shots depicted in the photographs—Bautista placed a refrigerator that contained small, cut-out images of the Marcoses inside. Called *Refrigerator*, Dayrit described this work in her personal notes on Shop 6 as “bottled collages refrigerated and frozen.”[[89]](#footnote-89) Within the refrigerator, which the artist had co-opted from its functional purpose at the gallery/cafe, Bautista arranged a collection of used Gerber and Nescafe bottles. Inside these repurposed bottles, Bautista placed “collages” consisting of clippings from magazines, scraps from calendars and various remnants of his childhood paraphernalia alongside the aforementioned cut-out images of then President Ferdinand Marcos and First Lady Imelda Marcos.[[90]](#footnote-90)

Bautista situated the refrigerator so close to the door that it nearly blocked entry to the gallery. In fact, Chabet noted that Bautista’s refrigerator was placed “right smack in the doorway” and that “in order to get inside the gallery…you had to inch yourself [in].”[[91]](#footnote-91) Similar to Modesto’s fan, Bautista’s refrigerator required bodily contortion to navigate around his installation—in this situation, viewers had to physically engage with the artwork to gain access to the exhibition. Its unusual placement drew attention to the physical presence of the household appliance, forcing an encounter between an inanimate object and the viewer’s body as they inched into space. The odd position of the refrigerator also encouraged viewers to consider it as art installation rather than a functioning appliance. This enticed viewers to open the refrigerator and freely examine its contents in a manner that might have been inappropriate, or even voyeuristic, if Bautista had chosen a more conventional place for the appliance. Referring to *Refrigerator*, Chabet even observes that “the tendency was to open the icebox” after one had “squeeze[ed]… between the icebox and the door.”[[92]](#footnote-92)

Once people opened the refrigerator, however, they did not immediately experience visual reference to the Marcoses. Chabet states, “Some of [the bottles] were very moldy and some were placed inside the freezer. If you looked close enough, you would see that inside the bottles were pictures of Marcos. You must remember that this was right after Martial Law…If you don’t look hard enough you won’t see the picture.”[[93]](#footnote-93) Bautista also noted that he wrapped some of these moldy bottles in plastic wrap to further obfuscate visual references.[[94]](#footnote-94) Like Modesto’s fan, *Refrigerator* required the viewer to closely examine the bottle to identify their contents and obscure reference to the Marcoses. One would not only have to look closely through the plastic wrapped, mold-ridden surface of the bottles, but would also have to overcome the musty smell of residual milk and baby food in the bottles to peer close enough to see the image of the Marcoses.

Far from a prestigious portrait of the couple, *Refrigerator* enshrouded them amidst a collection of abject and smelly things. That the bottles mixed collages of not only references to the Marcoses, but remnants Modesto’s visual culture and memory—including those from his childhood—suggested that Marcos’ authoritarianism was experienced through mundane everyday incidences rather than over-arching, consistent oppression. In response, Bautista might have found satisfaction, or glee, in displaying the Marcoses in such a dishonorable fashion. Yet, years after Ferdinand’s deposition, Bautista remarked, “I don’t know that time if what I was doing was a political statement.”[[95]](#footnote-95)

Political or not, though *Refrigerator* was the only work that directly alluded to the Marcoses, it was not perceived as the “objectionable” work that prematurely shut down *Basta Hindi Ganon*. In another installation, Bautista had displayed a number of used clothes—mainly panties and jockeys—folded neatly in cellophane packages “like they were new.”[[96]](#footnote-96) He placed them at the front window of the gallery, arranging them in a way that, according the Chabet, “emphasized the crotch.”[[97]](#footnote-97) Since Lahi Gallery was in a place that “had some clothing shops,” Bautista’s front display “sort of imitated that, with clothes.”[[98]](#footnote-98) By positioning the cellophane wrapped clothes at the front window, the artist intimated the gallery as the purveyor of used undergarments.

According to an interview conducted by Francesca Enriquez in the 1990s and a public conversation between Shop 6artists at the Lopez Museum in 2011, among other later interviews with the artists, the provocative nature of Bautista’s panty display caused the exhibition to close early.[[99]](#footnote-99) Chabet remarked that the artists “received a very strong letter” that demanded the removal of Bautista’s playful window display and other “objectionable” work. Bautista’s display of panties apparently too uncomfortably resembled and blended in with the commercial storefronts around Lahi Gallery, making it appear as if the gallery actually sold old underwear. Instead of removing the offensive work, the artists instead chose to de-install the entire show. Chabet stated, “We just folded up. And people started talking about this one-day exhibition.”[[100]](#footnote-100)

A letter from the Lahi Association addressed to Chabet (by his last name as Mr. Rodriguez) dated April 21, 1974 paints a different picture than the one above. While the artists claimed that the request to remove Bautista’s “objectionable” and “obscene” installation from the exhibition caused artists to scrap the entire exhibition in solidarity, this letter included a change in contract terms for a variety of boring reasons, including “the exhibit is not money earning” and that the “receptionist is threatening to resign because of the ill-treatment she has received.”[[101]](#footnote-101) The letter further expressed, “That we cannot use the premises at all for other purposes of the Association. (Including not being allowed to use the air conditioner and the refrigerator).”[[102]](#footnote-102) This last point most likely referred to Bautista’s co-opting of the gallery’s kitchen appliance.

While the presumed obscenity of Bautista’s panties might have led to one of the terms for the contract that specified “exhibiting artists shall be liable for any moral damage caused by the exhibit,” the terms focused primarily around the costs of the physical alterations and financial aspects of the exhibition.[[103]](#footnote-103) The contract demonstrated concern for the state of the gallery space. One of the terms noted that “any change of the existing set-up, renovation, or removal of any part of the gallery and the restoration of the said changes shall be the responsibility of the artists.”[[104]](#footnote-104) The contract further stated that the Gallery would collect a “25% commission on whatever sales are made with a minimum of P500.00 sales.” If the terms were not met, according to the letter, the association “kindly request [the] group to take down the exhibit the following day.”[[105]](#footnote-105) As discussed above, instead of trying to meet these terms, the artists decided to take down the exhibition.

Although another letter—one that called for removal of Bautista’s panties—might have existed, the letter and contract terms discussed above most certainly contributed to the hasty removal of *Basta Ganon Hindi*. Despite that the gallery owners claimed art as “not a commercial or social privilege,” in the end, financial considerations played an important role in shutting down the exhibition.[[106]](#footnote-106) In recalling the extreme brevity of this exhibition, however, Chabet and his co-conspirators preferred a claim that their installations were too controversial and uncomfortable for public consumption. Yet, instead of calling out an installation like *Refrigerator*—which explicitly contained images of the Marcoses—as the offending work,they suggested a display of used underwear had the potential to be more objectionable. In these artists’ memory, art’s threat was not its ability to conjure up politically loaded imagery like the Social Realists artist, but the subtler capacity to resemble real life and affirm the potential for another reality full of impropriety.

**Inaugurating *Sining Kamalig Extension* (Shop 6)**

Shortly after artists folded up *Basta Ganon Hindi* at Lahi Gallery, Korito Araneta Kalaw, co-owner of *Sining Kamalig* (Storehouse of Art), heard about the exhibition and offered the artists a stall space near the gallery at no cost.[[107]](#footnote-107) *Sining Kamalig*, which Kalaw ran with her sister Vida Araneta Balboa, was located in a commercial center constructed in front of their family compound. According to discussion of the gallery in *Women’s Home Companion*, *Sining Kamalig*’s neighbors included “a haute couture salon, a beauty parlor, textile outlets, furniture and antique shops, and a restaurant.”[[108]](#footnote-108)The Gallery’svibrant surroundings drew in a “large walk-in crowd daily” and its patrons consisted of “interior designers and art aficionados who acquire paintings, prints, or sculpture.”[[109]](#footnote-109) The article also noted that since *Sining Kamalig* also exhibited more established artists such as Abueva and Jaime de Guzman, “hard core art collectors” also frequented the gallery.[[110]](#footnote-110)

Despite its affiliation to *Sining Kamalig*, Shop 6 was treated as an independent, experimental space for artists to mount brief exhibitions.[[111]](#footnote-111) *Manila Times* billed Shop 6 as “Sining Kamalig Extension: Shop 6” under their list of ongoing exhibitions and qualified the art shown at the space as “experimental works.”[[112]](#footnote-112) Shop 6 opened with two inaugural group shows; the first opened on May 31, 1974 with a group exhibition by Yolanda Johnson, Eva Toledo, Alan Rivera, Red Mansueto, and Danny Dalena. The following weekend, Rodolfo Gan, Nap Jamir, Fernando Modesto, Nestor Vinluan, Roberto Chabet and Boy-and-Berna Perez exhibited.[[113]](#footnote-113) Following the two inaugural group shows, artists presented solo exhibitions that began with an opening on Friday afternoon and closed at the end of the weekend, for what the press claimed would culminate to a total of fourteen weekly exhibitions.[[114]](#footnote-114) The press release expressed that the exhibitions would “feature mixed-media works, constructions, situations, environments, and other ‘exploratory’ projects.”[[115]](#footnote-115)

Among the found objects and strange installations featured in the first inaugural group exhibition included Red Mansueto’s red-painted dilapidated bed; Danny Dalena’s assortment of kitchen vessels under a piece of eroding galvanized iron; Bautista’s various grids made from mongo seeds, banana flowers, and sago seeds; Alan Rivera’s child-sized hanger collages; Eva Toledo’s window-pasted paper collage, and Laudico’s grid of “Photo-Me” cut-outs. Several photographs in the Chabet Archive document this first exhibition. **[fig. 3.7]** From a moderate distance, Shop 6’s brightly lit storefront, consisting of two large windows and an open door, disrupt the darkness of the surrounding area. Peering into Shop 6, we see the collapsed bedframe with no mattress alongside an assortment of pots and pans arranged haphazardly on the gallery floor. A tidy row of Rivera’s hangers juts out of the wall on a rod above the unfortunate bedframe. Grid formations made from Bautista’s accumulation of mongo seeds and Laudico’s photo machine discards adorn the window and wall respectively, creating small forms of order among natural and man-made detritus.

Unlike the artists in Liwayway Recapping Co., who collaborated on installations and situations under the group name, artists involved in Shop 6 maintained individual authorship over their contributions to the exhibition. *Basta Ganon Hindi*, for example, included discrete works by artists meant to operate separately from one another. Yet, while each artist produced the individual elements of Shop 6’s first group show, the exhibition contained no wall text to demarcate their respective contributions. Instead, all of the works functioned together to create a scene of a stark bedroom or cell filled with decrepit household things in a strange arrangement.

**[fig. 3.8]** Before the viewer enters the gallery, two windows and open door trifurcate the view of the works inside. Similar to his array of used panties at Lahi Gallery, Bautista’s mongo seed grid—one of three comprising *Mais*—continued the artist’s penchant to use the window as an important site of display. As part of *Mais*, he used scotch tape to affix sago seeds, banana flowers and mongo seeds—each in unique grids—to the glass pane of the door, the back wall, and the front display of the Shop 6, respectively.[[116]](#footnote-116) The largest configuration was the mongo seeds taped on one of the gallery’s front windows. This time, instead of using the window as a way to frame his installation, he used the transparent pane of glass as its physical support. To the viewer gazing through the window, the gridded mongo seeds overlay order atop the disarray of broken furniture and worn-out kitchenware. The seeds also mirror the other methodical grids—such as the banana flowers and Photo-Id machine discards—pasted on the wall at the far end of Shop 6. While Bautista retained a distinct border around the mongo seed grid, the transparency of the window permits *Mais* to be absorbed into works inside the gallery as some of its mongo seedsblend into the objects behind them*.*

Through the left window, immediately beyond the mongo seeds, are Mansueto’s rickety red-painted bedframe and Rivera’s child-sized hanger collages.[[117]](#footnote-117) To the side of the bed, under Toledo’s pasted window collage, are Dalena’s vessels and a meandering line of small plastic cups behind a glass jug. One of the larger white bowls on the floor next to the bed bears semblance to a bedpan. Together, these objects and the seedy condition of the room evoke a sparse prison cell. The mongo and sago seeds, carefully taped in rows on the glass at the front of the gallery, mimics a method of keeping track of time under such conditions as the imprisoned person makes a minor mark for the passage of each day. All of these objects contribute to the illusion of a pitiable makeshift living space made visible to the errant posh passerby through the large-scale windows—a site for unintentional and uncomfortable voyeurism.

From a distance, Mansueto’s lopsided bedframe initially looks as if it collapsed due to structural difficulties of bearing too much weight. It slopes like a slide towards Shop 6’s storefront as its front legs have broken from the main body of the frame. **[fig. 3.9]** At the other end of the bed, towards the back wall of Shop 6, the bedframe’s other set of legs continue to support its wooden slates, an asymmetry that causes the bed to tilt towards the ground. Yet, upon closer observation, what appears to be an accident caused by the wear and tear of overuse becomes a theatrical staging of hardship. One the bedframe’s detached legs has been decisively placed atop the slates—an impossible position if the legs had simply given out under the weight of a mattress or its occupant. While the viewer initially believes the bedframe to be broken, closer examination causes one to feel mildly deceived by the fact that the dilapidated bedframe is actually a construction of indigence rather than the reality of it. The illusion is further shattered by the color of the bed—a painted red that announces the bedframe as a work of art rather than a mere piece of furniture.

**[fig. 3.10]** On the ground next to the bedframe are an assortment of vessels that further create the impression of an impoverished living space. Besides the bedpan-like bowl, this eclectic collection of containers includes a glass jug, plastic cups, a rectangular ice-tray, among other things that resemble pots or the interior of rice cookers. The variety of containers resemble a makeshift kitchen and bathroom condensed into a few choice containers, further supporting the illusion of Shop 6 as a crude living space. Dayrit described Dalena’s collection of vessels as resembling “all sorts of garbage thrown from the rooftops [of a] slum or squatter area.”[[118]](#footnote-118) Though not visible in the documentation photographs, Dayrit observed that each of these objects were attached with white nylon thread to Dalena’s eroding galvanized iron hanging above them. She suggested that the nylon strings allude to the “drops of rainwater from [a] leaky roof.”[[119]](#footnote-119)

The arrangement of pots, pans, and little plastic cups in the middle of the ground sustain the semblance of poverty because they look like containers meant to catch water seeping from a damaged roof.

Rivera’s collage hangers further contribute to the fiction of a destitute living space. **[fig. 3.11]** While the collages initially seem to dangle directly above the bedframe, photographs documenting the inside of the exhibition space shows the rod angling away from Mansueto’s work. Similar to Mansueto’s bedframe, the hangers are also impractical. Not only does Rivera fill the inside of the hangers with collages, but their small size renders them un-functional for adult use. Instead of using the usual adult sized hangers, Rivera constructed his collage series out of toddler or baby sized hangers. Like Bautista’s bottle collages of *Basta Hindi Ganon*, they require closer looking as they face into the wall. Despite their lack of functionality, the shapes of the toddler hangers simulate a bare bones rack of miniature clothing, drawing attention to the bleakness of the space; the presence of the spare rod accentuates the lack of closet space or furniture—such as an armoire—in the room.

**[fig. 3.12]** Next to Bautista’s banana flower *Mais* grid, a small version of Laudico’s untitled Photo-Me ID work hangs on the back wall of Shop 6. Photo-ID machines, commonplace in Metro Manila, were automated photo booths that took small identification photographs, such as the ones used for official documents. Laudico would collect the square borders—the scraps—left in Photo-Me ID machines after the center, which included people’s faces, had been punched out. Treating these leftover fragments as found units of a grid, she arranged them in organized rows on plywood. **[fig. 3.13]** Laudico would later expand her concept of using photo-id machine discards as part of a three-part solo exhibition in the CCP Small Gallery.[[120]](#footnote-120)

According to the artist, she would frequently carry around an empty box to gather these punched-out discards anytime she saw a Photo-ID machine. Laudico further noted that to collect the discards, she had to be bold. Her curiosity to see what was left in the detritus made her overcome reservations about what bystanders might think about her acquisition methods. Laudico further argued that in order to see things, one had to first overcome one’s shyness. As part of putting together her Photo-Me ID grids, she liked to imagine the faces of the people based on what was left through their portrait borders, which included hints of their apparel (police badges, spaghetti straps, and so forth). She then grouped together ones that seemed “related or connected to one another,” details made visible to the viewer upon close approach.[[121]](#footnote-121)

The first exhibition at Shop 6operated similarly to Laudico’s punched-out Photo-Me ID machine discards as a void to fulfill voyeuristic desire. Located in an active shopping arcade, Shop 6 was, like a typical store trying to attract customers, outfitted with large windows meant to catch the attention of people passing through the area. In this case, potential customers instead became inadvertent voyeurs. The dilapidated and discarded objects together formed the impression of a dirty and private dwelling space visible through the large display windows of a commercial storefront. While artists assumed that Bautista’s infamous display of cellophane wrapped panties generated discomfort because of its resemblance to real storefront displays, this first exhibition made no attempt to blend the space into the fancy shops around it. Instead, it intentionally and unexpectedly confronted the high-end clientele of the area with an uncomfortably intimate space that encouraged them to consider how others might stay living in poverty (or even imprisoned in cells) in the city. Peering into a bedroom that lacked a clear inhabitant might also draw attention to the idea of missing bodies and people that had disappeared under Marcos.

Moreover, sustained voyeurism was rewarded through the observation of strange details in the exhibition. While the individual works might create an illusion of a bedroom, closer examination permits the viewers to see strange discrepancies, like a bedframe staged to appear broken, undersized hangers, and photographs that seemed to be missing the most important component—faces. Laudico suggested that overcoming shyness is what allows one to see. The first exhibition at Shop 6 estranged people from their typical surroundings, enticing them to overcome propriety or timidity in order to see. Shop 6 used an out-of-place, intimate bedroom scene within a commercial center to entice people overcome quotidian expectation in order to reframe how they see and participate in their world.

**Laudico and Modesto Go Bananas**

Though Shop 6’s first press release specified that exhibitions would run for only fourteen weeks—until mid-August 1974—Dayrit documented that shows took place in the venue until early 1975.[[122]](#footnote-122) Following the first two group exhibitions, artists mounted individual shows to explore their own artistic concepts and concerns. **[fig. 3.14]** Chabet, for example, had an exhibition called *Bakawan Drawings* in 1974. *Bakawan Drawings* took place the same year as *Bakawan*, Chabet’s exhibition of hanging mangrove branches in the closed-door CCP Small Gallery. For his solo exhibition at Shop 6, Chabet displayed his illustrations in three distinct configurations on separate walls of the shop space. On the left wall of Shop 6, Chabet arranged the drawings in a grid, while on the center and right wall, he placed them in respective vertical and horizontal configurations. The exhibition continued Chabet’s exploration of the line as unique units of artistic production through analysis of their repetition in the natural world. While Dayrit’s notes include documentation of many other solo exhibitions by Dalena, Dayrit, Nestor Vinluan, and so forth, this section focuses on two of the more well-documented exhibitions: Laudico’s and Modesto’s. Not only have both exhibitions been documented via photographs, a fact that is not the case for many of the others, but both artists incorporated parts of the banana plant, allowing for a fruitful juxtaposition of their works.

Laudico and Modesto both used parts of the banana plant in their exhibitions for Shop 6 because of their availability and relatively minimal costs. While Laudico had acquired her banana leaves after spotting them on the side of the road, Modesto remarked that he decided to use bananas because they were cheap.[[123]](#footnote-123) Yet, shortly after the Marcoses fled from the Philippines, *Philippine Panorama* published a two-part article lambasting the literal and metaphorical price of bananas for local people.[[124]](#footnote-124) Jamil Maidan Flores writes, “If the Philippines is a banana republic, why is it that the average Filipino can hardly afford to buy a bunch of bananas?”[[125]](#footnote-125) In the second part of his article, “Food For Thought: Banana Hunger,” Flores observed:

Writers have a term for much of the kind of hunger that we find in the Philippines today: banana hunger, the hunger of people in a banana republic where the big landowners as well as the multinational corporations such as Del Monte and Castle and Cooke (Dole) are supposedly providing the engines for development…What does this sort of exploitation got to do with hunger? Well, the land that produces food for the cocktails of some mogul in Europe or Japan could have been used to produce food that the worker could afford to buy and bring home to his family.[[126]](#footnote-126)

As a once abundant and cheap fruit in the Philippines, bananas symbolized not only a main crop and source of economy for the Philippines and its people, but their current exploitation on a global market. Laudico and Modesto’s incorporation of the ubiquitous banana plant in their artwork directly engaged their local audience with the immediate physical and social realities in the Philippines.

**[fig. 3.15 – 3.16]** For Laudico’s solo exhibition, she continued to expand her crude oil “oil painting” concept to other forms of support. Instead of mimeographed sheets of paper, the artist dipped large banana leaves she found during a road trip to Nagcarlan into the black oil. Similar to Chabet’s *Bakawan* or *Kite Traps*, Laudico was interested in the line as a basic unit of visual pleasure. According to Laudico, “These banana leaves in the province were huge. When you look closely at the leaf form you see the linear patterns…I got very obsessed with that…I said you look around, you see lines that are fascinating.” Laudico further remarked, “I guess my obsession on banana leaves stems from my obsession with forms and lines.”[[127]](#footnote-127) **[fig. 3.17 – 3.18]** After soaking the banana leaves in crude oil, Laudico cut some of them into short lines and small squares, which she then pasted onto plywood boards to create a triptych and diptych. Laudico installed these on the side walls of Shop 6 to flank the far wall of space. There, instead of pasting neatly cut pieces of banana leaf onto plywood, Laudico draped and knotted larger pieces over nylon string strung in rows across Shop 6’s back wall. “I consider this work paintings,” Laudico expressed as she later discussed this Shop 6 exhibition.[[128]](#footnote-128)

Similar to Chabet’s grids, Laudico’s paintings also visualized the struggle of maintaining a modernist grid in the Philippines. Held up with white Elmer’s glue, some of the banana leaf squares in her gridded diptych folded or flopped over as they pulled away from the plywood board. According to the artist, she purposely made paintings that would “change” and “evolve by itself.”[[129]](#footnote-129) She stated, for example, that because her mark-making materials were leaves, they would shrink and shrivel during the exhibition, once again emphasizing the duality of chance and choice in her compositions. While she intended her materials to alter her composition over time, Laudico still exerted extreme control over her paintings and their construction. The artist had meticulously cut by hand the banana leaves into nearly perfect identical squares and lines, which she systemically pasted in equal increments to create the final gridded configurations. Though the orderly rows of cut leaves look *almost* as if they had been mechanically constructed, some of the lines in her triptych betray that impression as they slightly curve or sag in different directions—imperfections that make visible Laudico’s careful labor in the construction of her paintings.

Laudico’s shifting banana leaf paintings exemplified how abstraction, despite its affiliation with the Marcoses, also permitted artists to combat art for instrumental ends because they refuse rigid interpretation—in this particular case, the paintings themselves even refuse fixed form. Not only could the viewer not fix a meaning to them, but the artist herself cannot even get the pieces to stay still. Made of organic materials bound to plywood with conventional craft glue, pieces of Laudico’s painting shriveled, folded, and even fell off as they morphed over the short period of the weekend. Laudico’s shifting banana leaf painting visualize art’s capacity to disentangle from instrumentality significant to not only the Marcoses, but also the goals of the social realist artists. This afforded artists an appearance of neutrality that permitted them to exhibit at the CCP.

Yet, while Laudico’s solo exhibition featured abstraction, her inclusion of banana leaves—materials found in the indigenous flora in the Philippines—distinguished her work from abstract painting that Albano accused as arbitrary and disengaged “splotches, lines, and hazes drawn on the canvas.”[[130]](#footnote-130) By 1974, artists in the Manila had consistently used everyday materials in their artworks at the CCP and in private galleries, conditioning viewers to look for an element of familiarity as an access point to contemplate the artwork. Looking upon Laudico’s imperfect grids, we struggle to ascertain what the little black squares are made of, a game that would be easier to play in person. In contrast to the abstract painting criticized by Albano, Laudico’s incorporation of banana leaves not only tied her painting to the Philippines as indigenous flora, but also because its veiled familiarity engaged the viewer in a game of discovery tied to their real-world experiences.

This game was not without clues. Laudico’s installation of knotted, oil-slicked leaves at Shop 6’s far end wall, the one immediately across from the gallery’s large display windows, most closely resembles her later installation at the CCP.[[131]](#footnote-131)While her pasted plywood compositions included banana leaves cut into such small segments that it masked their original materiality, these banana leaves remain in larger pieces, allowing them to break apart at their natural rupture points and hang like leaves within nature. Behind the hanging banana leaves, the wall stained with the juices of decay mixed with crude oil embodies the worst nightmares of the owners of Lahi Gallery. These draped leaves, left in their more natural form compared to their gridded counterparts, not only look as if they have escaped from the order of the grid, but serve as a key to identifying the other components in the exhibition.

Despite Laudico’s meticulous labor of carefully cutting oil slicked pieces of banana leaves into nearly identical pieces to paste in even increments into a gridded configuration, the choice to use organic, unpredictable materials made her paintings a touch stubborn. As she remarked, “The thing that bores me to death is anything that I can predict.”[[132]](#footnote-132) While her grids largely stayed in place, some of the squares folded over or fell off, disrupting the perfect order of the grid. Despite the planning, effort, and labor place upon organizing the pieces into a perfect, disciplined order, some of the pieces just flop. The hanging banana leaves were even more stubborn—they defiantly stained the wall, threatening to permanently leave their mark behind. By revealing that a stringent, imposed order might have a stubborn corner or line, these works offer the possibility that the same could be true under the real order and control that people lived in under Marcos. Shop 6 seemed to be one of those stubborn corners.

While Laudico tended towards subtle wit and wordplay, Modesto, as one of the primary pranksters of Shop 6, leaned on farce and slapstick humor in his artwork. Known for his erotic drawings, Modesto was illustrious as the Philippines’ first practitioner of “pubism,” or the practice of painting pubes.[[133]](#footnote-133) His solo exhibition at Shop 6 continued his fascination of sexual forms by centering on the most phallic local fruit: bananas. **[fig. 3.19]** In a photograph documenting his exhibition, a viewer, identified by the artist as Bautista’s brother, gazes upwards towards a bunch of bananas suspended in the center of the room.[[134]](#footnote-134) Behind him, broad expanses of loose paper squares cover Shop 6’s front display windows and the glass panes of the open door. Suspended at the center of the light colored paper covering the windows is another bunch of bananas. While these large windows had initially emboldened voyeurism during the first group exhibition, the paper that now covered them seems to block visual access to outsiders. Yet, closer examination of the photograph reveals that the artist has left the top corners uncovered, leaving a small area exposed for the gaze. In fact, barely indiscernible in the far left-hand corner of the window are a pair of prying eyes—eyes which belong to the artist himself—peeking into the interior space.[[135]](#footnote-135)

Appropriately titled *Banana Installation*, Modesto’s solo exhibition opened on January 24, 1975. According to Dayrit, *Banana Installation* comprised “two kinds of Manila paper,” one that was “creamish” and the other “light pinkish” and about “3 different kinds of bananas.”[[136]](#footnote-136) After being bounded with red tape and string, the bananas were suspended from the ceiling with the same string.[[137]](#footnote-137) Modesto had pictured creating a small “banana-ville” that would contrast with the commercial center occupied by Shop 6. He wanted to show that “installation art can be fun” and a part of that pleasure was derived from the consumption of his perishable art material.[[138]](#footnote-138) During the opening of the exhibition, guests freely consumed the bananas and threw their discards on the floor, leaving behind “a mountain of banana peelings.”[[139]](#footnote-139) Modesto later commented that on that opening day, “all the guests ate the bananas.”[[140]](#footnote-140)

While Modesto maintained that he never intended to produce explicit “propaganda” with his artwork, he explained *Banana Installation*’s potential political significance in an article in 1988, two years after the Marcoses had fled from the Philippines.[[141]](#footnote-141) Speaking about martial law under Marcos, Modesto remarked, “It was not dangled before us with a toy gun. And my answer to that was Sexual Law.” [[142]](#footnote-142) In Modesto’s usual light-hearted manner, his reference to martial law as not being enforced with a “toy gun” referred to seriousness of the violence inherent with the declaration of martial law. Yet by responding to the violence with what Modesto refers to as “Sexual Law,” he suggested that the aggression inherent of martial law might be resisted in not only in the concept of “free love” popular in the 1970s, but also that the privacy of the bedroom permitted an enshrouded space for freedom of thought and expression.

The bananas also operate as a visual double entendre. By placing the verb “dangled” near the word “gun,” Modesto’s comment also draws attention to the fact that the hanging bananas not only resembled phallic objects, but a more ominous object. Besides the more obvious vulgar metaphor associated with the visual consumption of bananas, the act of eating the bananas—if we were to equate them to guns—also suggests the symbolic elimination or defiance of violence, one that was simultaneously made possible through Modesto’s purported “sexual law.” *Banana Installation* suggested that one method of action against the violence of authoritarianism was private conduct in more intimate spaces. These were the circumstances in which people could quietly mobilize against the Marcoses.

**Beyond Shop Walls: *101 Artists* and *Shop 6 Exhibition* at the CCP, 1975**

Whereas Lahi Gallery had been located far north of the CCP in Quezon City, Shop 6 at Sining Kamalig was literally down a stretch of Taft Avenue from the CCP. This geographical proximity permitted artists, art enthusiasts, and the art ideas itself effortless migration and distribution between the state-sanctioned space and the alternative space.[[143]](#footnote-143) One of the largest group exhibitions at Shop 6 included invitations to more conventional guest artists—and common fixtures at the CCP—to take part in an art festival entitled *101 Artists*. The festival extended into the courtyard and parking lot of Sining Kamalig and opened on August 23, 1974. Artists who participated included Eduardo Castrillo, Jose Mendoza, Rene Castrillo, Raymundo Albano, and Judy Freya Sibayan among others.[[144]](#footnote-144) Broader inclusion in *101 Artists* demonstrated Shop 6’s embrace of widespread experimentation and desire for democratization.

According to a review of *101 Artists* in *Marks*, the festival had a “free-for-all atmosphere” that resulted in an “uneven quality of works” made of an “overuse of scrap materials—by-produces, recycled works, discards” that lacked “asserted presence.”[[145]](#footnote-145) In fact, “everybody’s concern for process and materials” meant that “the quality of appearance that is not polished or ‘elegant’.”[[146]](#footnote-146) For example, Eduardo Castrillo—a sculptor known for his large labor-intensive metal works and intricate jewelry—simply poured acrylic paint over trash as his contribution for the exhibition.[[147]](#footnote-147) Despite some of the article’s criticism towards *101 Artists* and Shop 6 in general, it included brief descriptions on a handful of more “memorable works”: Joe Bautista’s tree and Judy Sibayan’s improvised *Lemon Cake*. [[148]](#footnote-148)

An article in that same issue of *Marks* describes Bautista’s “sculpted” tree—the most “intriguing work” in *101 Artists*—as a real tree with a cement base. Bautista had cut its branches and re-attached them to the tree to with wooden braces, leaving a small gap between the tree and its branches at the initial incision points.[[149]](#footnote-149) Bautista intended for the trunk to “grow buds” as its dead branches “wither,” replaced with the tree’s newly sprouted branches.[[150]](#footnote-150) The article further notes that Bautista’s use of “a living tree” and “not a construction of carpentered wood or welded metal transforms the visual possibilities into non-abstract information. One considers the tree as *tree—*its life system, its shape, its biological function.”[[151]](#footnote-151)

Like Laudico’s banana leaf paintings, Bautista’s sculpted tree estranged the viewer from the familiarity of the everyday world. His decision to use a living tree, a common and relatively predictable thing, provides a point of access to this estrangement as viewers, through their potential knowledge of and experience with trees, make their own conjectures about how Bautista’s Frankenstein tree might transition over time. According to *Marks*, “Bautista has made a work that…can act as a catalyst to the imagination, to endless conjectures, to absurd deductions and rationalizations, and certainly to our awareness of the world. He inflicts into a set natural presence (the living tree) a witty act of harmless annihilation and lets the awareness of…phenomenon…to make the explanations.”[[152]](#footnote-152) Similar to much of Bautista’s work throughout the 1970s, his sculpted tree invited public participation and encouraged critical inquiry of the world through the estrangement of familiar objects.

**[fig. 3.20]** Another “memorable” event took place in the parking lot—Sibayan’s impromptu performance of *Lemon Cake*. *Marks* describes the performance as “a yellow car docked at the middle of the parking lot, filled with people eating and drinking...Afterwards, they opened all doors of the car, left half a pie, two half-empty Magnolia Chocolait bottles and a metronome on top of the car’s [hood].”[[153]](#footnote-153) Emblazoned on the sheet cake (not a pie) were the words “Lemon Cake,” a flavor optically enhanced by the yellowness of the car. Though *Marks* cited Sibayan as one of the “invited ‘guest’ artists,” Sibayan described herself as “gate crashing” *101 Artists*.[[154]](#footnote-154) According to Sibayan, Chabet—then her fine arts professor at UP-Diliman—casually mentioned that she should attend the *101 Artists*, Shop 6’s art festival opening later that day.[[155]](#footnote-155)As it happened to fall on her nineteenth birthday, Sibayan decided not only to go to *101 Artists*, but swiftly improvised a performance of her own. Sibayan documents in her autobiography:

Shop 6 as a space opened up into a courtyard in which exhibitions could spill out into the courtyard…By gate crashing an exhibition called 101 Artists, a Shop Six event, classmates Ruben Soriano, An Tison, Ces Avanceña and I drove and parked a yellow car at the parking lot of Sining Kamalig gallery to celebrate my birthday. Performing uninvited, we placed a few bottles of milk and my birthday lemon cake on the hood of the car. When the audience approached to talk to us, we simply responded with two words, ‘lemon cake’. The performance ended.[[156]](#footnote-156)

*Lemon Cake* demonstrated many of the key attributes that defined Shop 6: an accelerated pace of creation/exhibition and the purposeful estrangement of familiar, everyday objects as a way to encourage general participation and critical inquiry of the world. Sibayan’s quick conception of *Lemon Cake* as a slice of her real life—eating birthday cake and drinking milk with friends for her birthday—also mirrored the spirit behind installations and sculptures made from everyday objects that dominated Shop 6. Yet, in performing *Lemon Cake* without invitation, Sibayan importantly exemplified that Shop 6, as an alternative space that legitimated certain forms of art, was an environment for artists to not only forgo structures of power from official forms of authority, but also the ones set in place by the members of Shop 6 itself. The fact that *Marks* later recognized *Lemon Cake*—an impromptu and uninvited performance—as one of the “memorable works” of *101 Artists* suggested that not only could an artist furtively defy authority under Shop 6, but could receive commendation for her do-it-yourself spirit, one that continues to dominate the Manila art scene today.

Soon after Shop 6 finished its stint at Sining Kamalig, the artists held a major exhibition at the CCP. In November 1975, much of Shop 6 took part in the only explicit Shop 6 group exhibition in the CCP Main Gallery. The exhibition, simply titled *Shop 6*, included works by Roberto Chabet, Fernando Modesto, Joe Bautista, Yolanda Laudico, Ileana Lee, Alan Rivera, Danny Dalena, Eva Toledo, Nestor Vinluan, Julie Lluch, Berna Perez, Paeng de Jesus, and Nestore A. Reyes. **[fig. 3.21]** Affixed to the invitation to *Shop 6* were pieces of manila paper, steel wool, a piece of yellow string, and a small reel of negative film— minute versions of the materials that showed up in the exhibition itself. Like the works in *Shop 6*, the invitations used real objects instead of mere depiction (or description) to draw their audience’s attention.

Albano, referring to the annual summer exhibitions and other experimental shows—such as *An Exhibition of Objects*—at the CCP*,* remarked, “The exhibition of Shop 6 at the Cultural Center of the Philippines could have been a really shocking event were it not for pre-empting exposures done rather extensively during the past five years.”[[157]](#footnote-157) While Albano claims that prior exposure to found objects and situational art meant that the Shop 6 was not as “shocking” to people in the Philippines, it did prime a local audience to consciously engage with the kind of work Shop 6 produced. According to Albano, “Shop 6… represents the new art enlightenment… the works of Shop 6 investigate the nature of things: matters, facts, circumstances, affairs, possessions, deeds, etc.…[and] the viewer consciously encounters what he sees.”[[158]](#footnote-158) In using mundane and easy-to-recognize objects placed in unusual situations or configurations, Shop 6 pushed viewers towards “conscious encounter” through estrangement. The viewer becomes awakened to the uncomfortable familiarity of something weird, opening the door to consider whether or not there were other strange incidents taken for granted beyond the gallery walls.

**[fig. 3.22 – 3.23]** One of the works exhibited at *Shop 6 Exhibition* was Alan Rivera’s *Room/Riddles*. Inherent in Rivera’s title—*Room/Riddles*—is the suggestion of a game or puzzle. Situated in one of the alcoves of the CCP Main Gallery, *Room/Riddles* consists of three low piles of bricks carefully arranged around a bunch of dirt and a jumble of plastic wrap. Despite the lack of visible construction tools, the presence of a wheelbarrow at the front of the installation indicates that the bricks are part of an emerging structure being built rather than one in the state of decomposition. Together, the materials look like the ordinary stuff of any incipient construction site. Yet, left on the ground of a gallery, the raw building materials—outdoor fixtures of a country in the process of development—unexpectedly confront the viewer. These base materials might remind the viewer of a particularly controversial edifice made, in part, from similarly mundane materials—the CCP. By situating unprocessed materials in the center of a behemoth structure, *Room/Riddles* raises the question of how much stuff was required to construct such a room or building and the true benefit of that allocation of resources.

*Room/Riddles* not only materializes into a “conscious encounter,” but it potentially absorbs the viewer’s body into its framework. Two photographs document the exhibition: one with a wheelbarrow in the foreground and another without one. Careful examination of the dirt pile reveals what appears to be impression marks made by pushing the wheelbarrow through it. This minor detail alludes to Rivera’s installation as not only site of ongoing construction, but the presence of the human body necessary to push the wheelbarrow through the detritus. The handle of the wheelbarrow extends away from the dirt pile towards the passing viewer, inviting the presence of the viewer’s body in the completion of the project in front of them.

Not only does *Room/Riddles* invite the viewer’s bodily engagement, the wheelbarrow also points to the prior presence of the artist. To emphasize this point, the latter photograph includes the ghostly blur of the artist pushing a wheelbarrow at its edge—an effect made by the long-exposure method. Artist and viewer are both implicated Rivera’s indoor construction project. Since Rivera situated *Room/Riddles* inside the CCP Main Gallery instead of the outdoor atrium—a space that Rivera had used during a prior exhibition—the installation proposed the works exhibited at the CCP as part of an ongoing project that encouraged viewer participation and engagement. Though *Room/Riddles* might generate a critical eye against the expansive allotment of resources used to construct the CCP, it also proposed that within such a space, new, and more collaborative, structures could arise.

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While Shop 6 is frequently cited as an alternative space, the CCP also played an important role in its history. As discussed in prior chapters, the CCP offered the Filipino artist the first official, large-scale exhibition space to create artwork for a local and international audience. Though *Shop 6 Exhibition* was the only documented exhibition specifically dedicated to the group of loosely affiliated conceptual artists in the 1970s, many of their artists had their start as part of the annual cohort of thirteen artists or the yearly summer exhibitions. In fact, because the CCP was a state-sponsored exhibition space, it did not need to exhibit profitable artworks—unlike more commercially oriented galleries. Bautista noted that after he began exhibiting at the CCP in the early 1970s, he did not try to show his “pakulo” elsewhere because it did not think the work to be profitable. Bautista credited Chabet’s relationship with the gallery owners as to how Shop 6 was realized as a space they could have—for free—to create the kind of non-profitable artwork that had turned off the proprietors of Lahi Gallery. After *Shop 6 Exhibition*, the *CCP Annual*, which began in the 1977, continued to show works by this roster of artists.[[159]](#footnote-159)

The Marcoses’ concern with international legitimacy encouraged exhibition of “avant-garde” work because it demonstrated creative tolerance and positioned the Philippines as contemporaneous to the broader art world. Artists would continue to include trash and natural debris found in the squalor of their everyday surroundings to create ordered and aesthetically appealing art. On a rudimentary level, artists managed to undermine Imelda Marcos’ agenda of *kagandahan* (beauty) by composing art displayed in her pristine, white-walled CCP out of literal garbage. Imelda Marcos had declared the CCP the “treasure-house of the Filipino spirit” that would permit “our works in stone and story, in dance and drama, in music and color [to] remain, for all time, a testament to the goodness, the truth, and the beauty of a historic race.”[[160]](#footnote-160) The phrase “Truth, beauty and goodness” became the motto for the CCP, and its logo, designed by Carlos Francisco, demonstrated that sentiment.[[161]](#footnote-161) The Marcoses, particularly Imelda, imagined the CCP as a cultural actor that could promote the national character of art in the Philippines. Though it had a nationalist agenda—one that also insisted on a certain performance of internationalism—artists used the space in variable ways that demonstrated ambivalence to the CCP’s intended purpose.

That members Shop 6 used non-seriousness or playfulness as a central way of explaining their work permitted their acceptance into the CCP, the very institutional behemoth to which they claimed to be alternative. As Albano noted, Shop 6 was not a powerless group of artists with peripheral interests, but rather these artists dominated programming at the CCP during the 1970s. By exhibiting both in alternative spaces and giant cultural institutions, these artists were able to find a multiplicity of space for their work and their work was decidedly considered apolitical. Yet, interestingly enough, they were placing literal trash into the gallery space. Quiet jabs with the moldy photographs and smelly bananas became a way that artists compromised the integrity of the institution—art could be free from commercial and nationalistic gains, and it could be found within the rubble of the Philippine landscape.

In Enriquez’s interview with Modesto, she acknowledged that the artists “associated with Shop 6” also showed their works at the CCP, asking him if people found the works “offensive.”[[162]](#footnote-162) Modesto responded, “In some ways, yes…There was a show—I don’t remember the title—with shit (*na may tae*). It had a smell…Imelda did not want it (*ayaw ni Imelda*).…So Imelda was going around during the installation and she smelled it. It was real shit [*tae*] and it was in a box.”[[163]](#footnote-163) Modesto, who was known as one of the jokers among Shop 6, stated, “It was probably in 1971.”[[164]](#footnote-164) None of the documentation from the CCP Library and Archives or the Chabet archive corroborate Modesto’s claim. Even if Modesto’s anecdote was fiction—a fantasy of beauty queen Imelda sniffing for poop in her new Cultural Center—it reflected certain sentiments regarding how the artists viewed the institution. Imelda built them a powerful piece of concrete architecture designed by Philippine architect darling du jour, Leandro Locsin, to develop the arts of the Philippine people, and the artists filled it with shit.

1. Yolanda Johnson (artist, member of Shop 6), in discussion with author, December 9, 2014, Manila, Philippines. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. “Summer Exhibition at the CCP Main Gallery,” *Bulletin Today*, May 25, 1973, 4. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. For more information on Social Realist artists, see Alice Guillermo, *Social Realism in the Philippines,* Manila, ASPHODEL, 1987; Alice Guillermo, *Protest/Revolutionary Art in the Philippines, 1970-1990*, Quezon City, University of the Philippines Press, 2001. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Joy Dayrit Journals, November 16, 1969. Ateneo Library of Women’s Writings (ALIWW), Envelope 1.1. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Chabet, interview, Ortigas, 2008, transcript pg. 22. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Chabet, interview, Ortigas, 2008, transcript pg. 22. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Ray Albano, “Alternative Spaces,” *Philippine Art Supplement* 2, no. 6 (Nov.–Dec. 1981): 9. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. Albano, “Alternative Spaces.” [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. Albano, “Alternative Spaces.”

   [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. Albano, “Alternative Spaces.” [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. Albano, “Developmental Art of the Philippines,” 15.

    [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. Albano, “Developmental Art of the Philippines,” 15. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. Albano, “Developmental Art of the Philippines,” 15. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. Imelda as documented by Jose S. Salazar, “‘Not Where It’s At’: Cultural Center is Anti-Revolutionary Instrument of Establishment and Therefore Not Truly Cultural, Says Author,” *Philippine Free Press*, November 15, 1969. Over decade later, however, Albano writes that, “A permanent collection is not possible to have because the CCP has no building and accompanying budget yet.” From Albano, “Developmental Art of the Philippines,” 15.

    [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. “101 Artists: Incidents at Shop 6,” *Marks* 1, no. 2-4 (May-Oct 1974). [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. The name Shop 6 arose because the artists had mistakenly believed the storefront to be shop number six; by the time they realized that 6 was not the actual number of the shop, the name Shop 6had “stuck.” Roberto Chabet Interview with Francesca Enriquez, 1990s, Asia Art Archive Hong Kong, Chabet Archive, Onsite-Access Only. [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. “101 Artists: Incidents at Shop 6,” *Marks*. [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. “101 Artists: Incidents at Shop 6,” *Marks*. [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. Rina B. Jimenez, “How Culture Came to Cubao,” *Philippine Panorama*, May 12, 1974, 15. In the article, Jimenez describes the work exhibited at Lahi Gallery by Chabet and friends as “environmental sculptures.” [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. Quijano de Manila, “Parthenon or Pantheon: The First Lady Answers the Blast on The Cultural Center by Senator Aquino,” *Philippines Free Press*, February 22, 1969, 2–3, 72–73. In the article, de Manila asks whether or not the CCP is a Parthenon which “signifies high culture” or a Pantheon, which while “abroad…specifies memorial or monument to the illustrious dead” but “in the Philippines [has] come to mean a cemetery.” [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. Ray R. Albano, “Summer Art Summary: A Span of Six Decades,” *Manila Chronicle*, April 26, 1970, 10. [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. Albano, “Summer Art Summary,” 10. [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. According to Albano, *Summer Exhibition 1973* consisted primarily of “objects...which create situations that can assault the senses and leave recurring imprint in the mind.” Ray Albano, “Summer Exhibition at the CCP Main Gallery,” *Bulletin Today*, May 25, 1973, 4. [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
24. Angel Flores was a fictional artist created by Joe Bautista, Ramon Katigbak, and Chabet. See Ramon C. Sunico, 'Who is Angel Flores?', *Rogue*, November 2011. [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
25. Exhibition Notes for *Summer Exhibition 1971*, Documentation of Exhibitions, Main Gallery (1971), Cultural Center of the Philippines Library and Archives. [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
26. Leonidas V. Benesa, “Situational Sculpture at CCP,” *Philippines Daily Express*, April 27, 1979, 27, 32. [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
27. Benesa, “Situational Sculpture at CCP.” [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
28. Exhibition Notes for *Summer Exhibition 1971*, Documentation of Exhibitions, Main Gallery (1971), Cultural Center of the Philippines Library and Archives. [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
29. Exhibition Notes for *Summer Exhibition 1972*, Documentation of Exhibitions, Main Gallery (1972), Cultural Center of the Philippines Library and Archives. [↑](#footnote-ref-29)
30. Exhibition Notes for *Summer Exhibition 1972*. [↑](#footnote-ref-30)
31. Exhibition Notes for *Summer Exhibition 1972*. [↑](#footnote-ref-31)
32. Exhibition Notes for *Summer Exhibition 1972*. [↑](#footnote-ref-32)
33. Exhibition Notes for *Summer Exhibition 1972*. [↑](#footnote-ref-33)
34. 1972 Summer Exhibition Notes, Cultural Center of the Philippines Library and Archives. The observations made by the summer exhibition organizers position avant-garde Philippine art within a growing discourse of modern realism in which the materials retained their external world reference—e.g. paper representing paper and not as mere support. [↑](#footnote-ref-34)
35. Elizabeth V. Reyes, “Summer Mix,” *Pace Magazine*, May 26, 1972, 36-37. [↑](#footnote-ref-35)
36. Exhibition Notes for *Summer Exhibition 1972*, Cultural Center of the Philippines Library and Archives. [↑](#footnote-ref-36)
37. Reyes, “Summer Mix.” [↑](#footnote-ref-37)
38. Yolanda Laudico Interview with Francesca Enriquez, 1990s, Asia Art Archive Hong Kong, Chabet Archive, Onsite-Access Only. Laudico remarked that since the cost of paint was very, very expensive, she decided to used toothpaste as a medium. Laudico remarked, “So I must have used 100 tubes of toothpaste so it turned out more expensive than I thought. I wanted to make this sculpture stand look painterly and I wanted something cheap that simulated pigment. I got carried away. I bought all brands and I started looking at the different colors of toothpaste. So this actual work was colorful, it wasn’t white, there was strawberry flavor, banana flavor…I consumed all the toothpaste I could see.” [↑](#footnote-ref-38)
39. Exhibition Notes for *Summer Exhibition 1972*, Cultural Center of the Philippines Library and Archives. [↑](#footnote-ref-39)
40. Exhibition Notes for *Summer Exhibition 1972*. [↑](#footnote-ref-40)
41. Exhibition Notes for *Summer Exhibition 1972*. [↑](#footnote-ref-41)
42. Exhibition Notes for *Summer Exhibition 1972*. [↑](#footnote-ref-42)
43. Exhibition Notes for *Summer Exhibition 1972*. [↑](#footnote-ref-43)
44. Exhibition Notes for *Summer Exhibition 1972*. [↑](#footnote-ref-44)
45. Exhibition Notes for *Summer Exhibition 1972*. [↑](#footnote-ref-45)
46. Exhibition Notes for *Summer Exhibition 1972*. [↑](#footnote-ref-46)
47. Exhibition Notes for *Summer Exhibition 1973*, Documentation of Exhibitions, Main Gallery (1973), Cultural Center of the Philippines Library and Archives. According to the preface, documentation was done by Raymundo Albano, Marilen A. Puertollano, and Alberto E. Sangel. [↑](#footnote-ref-47)
48. Exhibition Notes for *Summer Exhibition 1973*. [↑](#footnote-ref-48)
49. Albano, “Summer Exhibition at the CCP Main Gallery,” 4. [↑](#footnote-ref-49)
50. Joy Dayrit, *Notes on Shop 6*, Asia Art Archive Hong Kong, Chabet Archive, accessed August 23, 2017, http://www.aaa.org.hk/en/collection/search/archive/the-chabet-archive-other-documents/object/notes-on-shop-6/ [↑](#footnote-ref-50)
51. Exhibition Notes for *Summer Exhibition 1972*, Cultural Center of the Philippines Library and Archives. [↑](#footnote-ref-51)
52. Exhibition Notes for *Summer Exhibition 1973*, Cultural Center of the Philippines Library and Archives. [↑](#footnote-ref-52)
53. Exhibition Notes for *Summer Exhibition 1973*. [↑](#footnote-ref-53)
54. Bautista’s untitled “Coke & Pepsi Bottles” is one of the few conceptual artworks in the Philippines that takes language as an important component of the work. [↑](#footnote-ref-54)
55. Bautista, “Coke & Pepsi Bottles.” [↑](#footnote-ref-55)
56. Yolanda Johnson (artist, member of Shop 6), in discussion with author, December 9, 2014, Manila, Philippines. [↑](#footnote-ref-56)
57. In 1976, Albano started to organize the CCP Annual, an annual, encyclopedic exhibition of works from each year that seemed to replace some of the initial goals of the CCP Summer Exhibition. [↑](#footnote-ref-57)
58. Exhibition Notes for *CCP Mixed Exhibition*, Documentation of Exhibitions, Main Gallery (1973), Cultural Center of the Philippines Library and Archives. [↑](#footnote-ref-58)
59. Exhibition Notes for *CCP Mixed Exhibition*. [↑](#footnote-ref-59)
60. Exhibition Notes for *CCP Mixed Exhibition*. [↑](#footnote-ref-60)
61. While *Summer Exhibition 1973* was the last summer exhibition in the 1970s, large-scale exhibitions of this sort began again in 1976 when Albano began to hold the *CCP Annual*. The *CCP Annual* was different from the summer exhibitions as it tended towards a wider variety of artists and representation of the art ecosystem in Manila. [↑](#footnote-ref-61)
62. Roberto Chabet Interview with Francesca Enriquez, 1990s, Asia Art Archive Hong Kong, Chabet Archive, Onsite-Access Only. [↑](#footnote-ref-62)
63. Joy Dayrit, *Notes on Shop 6*, Asia Art Archive Hong Kong, Chabet Archive, accessed August 23, 2017, http://www.aaa.org.hk/en/collection/search/archive/the-chabet-archive-other-documents/object/notes-on-shop-6/. In Dayrit’s notes on Shop 6, she writes that the “invitation to the Lahi exhibition” was “written by a child, Chabet’s nephew…on a sheet of Grade 2 pad paper.” [↑](#footnote-ref-63)
64. Roberto Chabet Interview with Francesca Enriquez, 1990s, Asia Art Archive Hong Kong, Chabet Archive, Onsite-Access Only. [↑](#footnote-ref-64)
65. Chiqui Rialp Locsin, “Fine Weather in the Art World,” *Woman’s Home Companion*, January 24, 1974. [↑](#footnote-ref-65)
66. Angel G. De Jesus, “On Galleries—Of Different Kinds,” *Business Day,* November 14, 1975. [↑](#footnote-ref-66)
67. Joy Dayrit Journals, May 7, 1969. Ateneo Library of Women’s Writings (ALIWW), Envelope 1.1. [↑](#footnote-ref-67)
68. Joy Dayrit Journals, September 15, 1970. Ateneo Library of Women’s Writings (ALIWW), Envelope 1.1. [↑](#footnote-ref-68)
69. For more information on Gallery and After Six, see: M.J. Baterina, “Gallery & After 6,” *Philippine Panorama*, March 3, 1974, 18. Chabet, in discussion with Francesca Enriquez, also describes Lahi Gallery as “that gallery was one of those pretentious places that had coffee shops, which had poetry readings.” [↑](#footnote-ref-69)
70. Rina B. Jimenez, “How Culture Came to Cubao,” *Philippine Panorama*, May 12, 1974, 15. [↑](#footnote-ref-70)
71. Jimenez, “How Culture Came to Cubao,” 15. [↑](#footnote-ref-71)
72. Jimenez, “How Culture Came to Cubao,” 15. [↑](#footnote-ref-72)
73. Jimenez, “How Culture Came to Cubao,” 15. [↑](#footnote-ref-73)
74. Fernando Modesto, Interview with author in his home, 2015, Manila, Philippines. [↑](#footnote-ref-74)
75. Yolanda Laudico Interview with Francesca Enriquez, 1990s, Asia Art Archive Hong Kong, Chabet Archive, Onsite-Access Only. In this interview, Laudico remarked, “Imagine the whole wall, I stuck the paper stained with back coal to the wall…it stained the wall so Lahi was angry since it was a fire hazard…In the long run the paper turned to black.” [↑](#footnote-ref-75)
76. Laudico, interview with Francesca Enriquez. [↑](#footnote-ref-76)
77. Laudico, interview with Francesca Enriquez. [↑](#footnote-ref-77)
78. Laudico, interview with Francesca Enriquez. [↑](#footnote-ref-78)
79. Laudico, interview with Francesca Enriquez. [↑](#footnote-ref-79)
80. Laudico, interview with Francesca Enriquez. [↑](#footnote-ref-80)
81. Laudico, interview with Francesca Enriquez. [↑](#footnote-ref-81)
82. Laudico, interview with Francesca Enriquez. [↑](#footnote-ref-82)
83. Fernando Modesto Interview with Francesca Enriquez, 1990s, Asia Art Archive Hong Kong, Chabet Archive, Onsite-Access Only. The pressure most likely came from the collection of artists themselves to create and generate new ideas by mounting new exhibitions rather than commercial concerns. The production of new exhibitions also meant that the artists had an excuse to have opening night parties every week. Modesto states, “So during the week we’d see each other because we had openings. It was a good reason for drinking! Ha!” Furthermore, Laudico remarks in the same collection of interviews that since the artists did not pay rent for the shop space, there was no “pressure” to sell their works to maintain the space. [↑](#footnote-ref-83)
84. Fernando Modesto Interview with author in his home, 2015, Manila, Philippines. [↑](#footnote-ref-84)
85. Fernando Modesto Interview with Francesca Enriquez, 1990s, Asia Art Archive Hong Kong, Chabet Archive, Onsite-Access Only. [↑](#footnote-ref-85)
86. Modesto, interview with Francesca Enriquez. [↑](#footnote-ref-86)
87. Modesto, interview with Francesca Enriquez. [↑](#footnote-ref-87)
88. Modesto, interview with Francesca Enriquez. [↑](#footnote-ref-88)
89. Joy Dayrit, Notes on Shop 6, Asia Art Archive Hong Kong, Chabet Archive, accessed August 23, 2017, http://www.aaa.org.hk/en/collection/search/archive/the-chabet-archive-other-documents/object/notes-on-shop-6/. [↑](#footnote-ref-89)
90. Joe Bautista in discussion with author, 2015, Manila, Philippines. [↑](#footnote-ref-90)
91. Roberto Chabet at Talking Shop: Roberto Chabet at Lopez Museum, August 6, 2011, audio, Lopez Museum Library and Archives. [↑](#footnote-ref-91)
92. Roberto Chabet Interview with Francesca Enriquez, 1990s, Asia Art Archive Hong Kong, Chabet Archive, Onsite-Access Only. [↑](#footnote-ref-92)
93. Chabet, interview with Francesca Enriquez. [↑](#footnote-ref-93)
94. Joe Bautista in discussion with author, 2015, Manila, Philippines. [↑](#footnote-ref-94)
95. Joe Bautista Interview with Francesca Enriquez, 1990s, Asia Art Archive Hong Kong, Chabet Archive, Onsite-Access Only. [↑](#footnote-ref-95)
96. Roberto Chabet Interview with Francesca Enriquez, 1990s, Asia Art Archive Hong Kong, Chabet Archive, Onsite-Access Only. [↑](#footnote-ref-96)
97. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-97)
98. Roberto Chabet at Talking Shop: Roberto Chabet at Lopez Museum, August 6, 2011, audio, Lopez Museum Library and Archives. [↑](#footnote-ref-98)
99. In Chabet’s interview with Enriquez in the 1990s, he remarked, “Another thing, which I think they found objectionable about the show was, Joe had these old clothes, mainly underwear, panties and jockeys and then they were folded very neatly and packed in cellophane wrappers like they were being sold. But they looked old and they were packed in such a way that most of them emphasized the crotch and they were neatly packed in cellophane like they were new. I think the idea of Joe was, this place was like a store in Fiesta Carnival and he displayed this in one of the windows so that from the outside you would think it was a store that sells underwear or clothes. After the opening we got a very strong letter that we had to do something about the exhibition because they were objectionable. So instead of removing what they thought was objectionable we just removed everything. We just folded up. And the people started talking about this one-day exhibition.” In 2011, Chabet re-affirmed this statement at a group interview at Lopez Museum. He noted that the day after opening, he received a letter “saying there were some materials in the exhibition that were found obscene.” Chabet, Laudico, and Bautista suggests that the controversial work was Joe Bautista’s installation of used undergarments because “this was a mall shop, it had some clothing shops, and they were putting all kinds of items on the window so Joe sort of imitated that, with clothes.” [↑](#footnote-ref-99)
100. Roberto Chabet Interview with Francesca Enriquez, 1990s, Asia Art Archive Hong Kong, Chabet Archive, Onsite-Access Only. [↑](#footnote-ref-100)
101. Letter addressed to Mr. Roberto Chabet Rodriguez, dated April 21, 1974 from Lahi Association. [↑](#footnote-ref-101)
102. Letter addressed to Mr. Roberto Chabet Rodriguez. [↑](#footnote-ref-102)
103. Unsigned Exhibition Agreement Contract accompanying Letter addressed to Mr. Roberto Chabet Rodriguez, dated April 21, 1974 from Lahi Association. [↑](#footnote-ref-103)
104. Unsigned Exhibition Agreement Contract [↑](#footnote-ref-104)
105. Unsigned Exhibition Agreement Contract

     [↑](#footnote-ref-105)
106. Rina B. Jimenez, “How Culture Came to Cubao,” *Philippine Panorama*, May 12, 1974, 15. [↑](#footnote-ref-106)
107. *Sining Kamalig* was a gallery located within the arcade, but separate from it. Corito Kalaw also owned the gallery. In newspaper listings, Shop 6 was sometimes listed as *Shop 6: Sining Kamalig Extension*. *Sining Kamalig* would also go on to exhibit works by Shop 6artists in the mid-70s. [↑](#footnote-ref-107)
108. Chiqui Rialp Locsin, “Fine Weather in the Art World,” *Woman’s Home Companion*, January 24, 1974. [↑](#footnote-ref-108)
109. Locsin, “Fine Weather in the Art World.”

     [↑](#footnote-ref-109)
110. Locsin, “Fine Weather in the Art World.” [↑](#footnote-ref-110)
111. Modesto remarked in his interview with Enriquez that while “Sining Kamalig…showed regular painting that sells…Shop 6 was another alternative venue.” [↑](#footnote-ref-111)
112. See Rene R. Castillo, “Gallery of Galleries,” *Business Day*, 18, Article #33 from Kalaw-Ledesma Foundation, Inc. [↑](#footnote-ref-112)
113. Press release of the Shop 6 inaugural exhibition at Sining Kamalig, 1974, Asia Art Archive Hong Kong, Chabet Archive, Online Access: http://www.aaa.org.hk/Collection/CollectionOnline/SpecialCollectionItem/8342. [↑](#footnote-ref-113)
114. Press release of the Shop 6 inaugural exhibition at Sining Kamalig. [↑](#footnote-ref-114)
115. Press release of the Shop 6 inaugural exhibition at Sining Kamalig. [↑](#footnote-ref-115)
116. Joy Dayrit, Notes on Shop 6, Asia Art Archive Hong Kong, Chabet Archive, accessed August 23, 2017, http://www.aaa.org.hk/en/collection/search/archive/the-chabet-archive-other-documents/object/notes-on-shop-6/. [↑](#footnote-ref-116)
117. Dayrit, Notes on Shop 6. In her *Notes on Shop 6*, Dayrit noted that Mansueto displayed “a half-collapsed single bed painted red.” [↑](#footnote-ref-117)
118. Dayrit, Notes on Shop 6. [↑](#footnote-ref-118)
119. Dayrit, Notes on Shop 6. [↑](#footnote-ref-119)
120. For more information on her expanded Photo-Me ID installation, see: Exhibition Notes and Photographs for *An Exhibition of Three Works for Yolanda Laudico*, Documentation of Exhibitions, Small Gallery (Jan-May 1970), Cultural Center of the Philippines Library and Archives. [↑](#footnote-ref-120)
121. Yolanda Laudico Interview with Francesca Enriquez, 1990s, Asia Art Archive Hong Kong, Chabet Archive, Onsite-Access Only. [↑](#footnote-ref-121)
122. Press release of the Shop 6 inaugural exhibition at Sining Kamalig, 1974, Asia Art Archive Hong Kong, Chabet Archive, http://www.aaa.org.hk/Collection/CollectionOnline/SpecialCollectionItem/8342; Joy Dayrit, Notes on Shop 6, Asia Art Archive Hong Kong, Chabet Archive, accessed August 23, 2017, http://www.aaa.org.hk/en/collection/search/archive/the-chabet-archive-other-documents/object/notes-on-shop-6/ [↑](#footnote-ref-122)
123. Modesto interview with author, Laudico interview with author [↑](#footnote-ref-123)
124. Jamil Maidan Flores, “Going Bananas,” *Philippine Panorama*, June 1, 1986, 10-13; Jamil Maidan Flores, “Food for Thought: Banana Hunger,” *Philippine Panorama*, July 27, 1986, 5-8. [↑](#footnote-ref-124)
125. Flores, “Going Bananas,” 10. In political science, a banana republic usually refers to a poorer, politically unstable country dependent on the export of a limited resource product. [↑](#footnote-ref-125)
126. Flores, “Food for Thought: Banana Hunger,” 6. [↑](#footnote-ref-126)
127. Yolanda Laudico Interview with Francesca Enriquez, 1990s, Asia Art Archive Hong Kong, Chabet Archive, Onsite-Access Only. [↑](#footnote-ref-127)
128. Laudico, interview with Francesca Enriquez. [↑](#footnote-ref-128)
129. Laudico, interview with Francesca Enriquez. [↑](#footnote-ref-129)
130. Exhibition Notes for *Summer Exhibition 1972*, Documentation of Exhibitions, Main Gallery (1972), Cultural Center of the Philippines Library and Archives. [↑](#footnote-ref-130)
131. Along with the abovementioned Photo-Me ID installation, she also draped and stapled large expanses of oiled banana leaves across seven rows of nylon string as one of her installations for *An Exhibition of Three Works* in 1975. [↑](#footnote-ref-131)
132. Yolanda Johnson Interview with Francesca Enriquez, 1990s, Asia Art Archive Hong Kong, Chabet Archive, Onsite-Access Only. [↑](#footnote-ref-132)
133. Floy Quintos. “Erotic Art: Calling a Spade a Spade,” *Parade Magazine*, June 21, 1981. [↑](#footnote-ref-133)
134. Yolanda Laudico, Fernando Modesto, Joe Bautista group discussion with author at Laudico’s apartment, Manila, Philippines, 2015. [↑](#footnote-ref-134)
135. Laudico, Modesto, Bautista, group discussion. Modesto identifies himself as the person gazing through the window and not the person standing in front of the banana bunch. [↑](#footnote-ref-135)
136. Joy Dayrit, Notes on Shop 6, Asia Art Archive Hong Kong, Chabet Archive, accessed August 23, 2017, http://www.aaa.org.hk/en/collection/search/archive/the-chabet-archive-other-documents/object/notes-on-shop-6/. [↑](#footnote-ref-136)
137. Dayrit, *Notes on Shop 6.* [↑](#footnote-ref-137)
138. Barbara Mae Dacanay. “The Strange Alchemy of Art and Sex,” *The Manila Chronicle*, June 25, 1988, 27. [↑](#footnote-ref-138)
139. Dacanay, “The Strange Alchemy of Art and Sex,” 27. [↑](#footnote-ref-139)
140. Dacanay, “The Strange Alchemy of Art and Sex,” 27. [↑](#footnote-ref-140)
141. Fernando Modesto Interview with Francesca Enriquez, 1990s, Asia Art Archive Hong Kong, Chabet Archive, Onsite-Access Only. [↑](#footnote-ref-141)
142. Barbara Mae Dacanay. “The Strange Alchemy of Art and Sex,” 27. [↑](#footnote-ref-142)
143. Judy Sibayan Conversation with author March 22, 2015. [↑](#footnote-ref-143)
144. “Artists: Incidents at Shop 6,” *Marks*, May–October 1974. [↑](#footnote-ref-144)
145. “Artists: Incidents at Shop 6,” *Marks*. [↑](#footnote-ref-145)
146. “Artists: Incidents at Shop 6,” *Marks*, May–October 1974. [↑](#footnote-ref-146)
147. Yolanda Laudico at Talking Shop: Roberto Chabet at Lopez Museum, August 6, 2011, audio, Lopez Museum Library and Archives. [↑](#footnote-ref-147)
148. “101 Artists: Incidents at Shop 6,” *Marks*, May–October 1974. [↑](#footnote-ref-148)
149. “Joe D. Bautista’s Tree Project,” *Marks*, Vol.1, no. 2-4, May-Oct 1974. [↑](#footnote-ref-149)
150. “Joe D. Bautista’s Tree Project,” *Marks.* [↑](#footnote-ref-150)
151. “Joe D. Bautista’s Tree Project,” *Marks.* [↑](#footnote-ref-151)
152. “Joe D. Bautista’s Tree Project,” *Marks.* [↑](#footnote-ref-152)
153. “101 Artists: Incidents at Shop 6,” *Marks*, May–October 1974. [↑](#footnote-ref-153)
154. Judy Freda Sibayan, *The Hypertext of HerMe(s)* (KT press, 2014), loc 1816-1817, Kindle. [↑](#footnote-ref-154)
155. Judy Sibayan, in conversation with author, March 22, 2015, Manila, Philippines. [↑](#footnote-ref-155)
156. Judy Freda Sibayan, *The Hypertext of HerMe(s)* (KT press, 2014), loc 1816-1817, Kindle. [↑](#footnote-ref-156)
157. Raymundo Albano, “Are we now ready for the avant-garde?” *Daily Express*, November 12, 1975, 28. [↑](#footnote-ref-157)
158. Albano, “Are we now ready for the avant-garde?,” 28. [↑](#footnote-ref-158)
159. Roces has commented on the CCP Annual was a “yearly representative sampling of our various artistic commitments.” (17) Marian Pastor Roces, “The CCP Annual,” *Philippine Art Supplement*, Vol. 2, No. 1, Jan–Feb 1981, 17. [↑](#footnote-ref-159)
160. Imelda Marcos, “A Treasure House of the Filipino Spirit,” *Manila Chronicle*, September 12, 1969, 16, in Article #23 from Kalaw-Ledesma Foundation, Inc. [↑](#footnote-ref-160)
161. Christi-Anne Castro, *Musical Renderings of a Nation* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 117. Ethnomusicologist Christi-Anne Castro observes that the CCP’s logo, comprising three Malay-script *K*s meant to stand for *katotohanan* (truth), *kagandahan* (beauty) and *kabutihan* (goodness), recalls the similar insignia of *Samahang Kataastaasan, Kagalanggalang Katipunan ng mga Anak ng Bayan* (Supreme and Most Honorable Society of the Children of the Nation), who abbreviated their name to *Katipunan* or the acronym *KKK*. Castro argues, “More than their limited historical role, the *Katipunan* are representative of revolutionary Filipino nationalism as an ideology, sentiment, and character-defining trait of the nation…The nationalist intent of the CCP, then, has clear ties to the longer nationalist tradition of the Philippines, giving it symbolic validation as a cultural actor and not just a venue for performance.” [↑](#footnote-ref-161)
162. Modesto, interview with Francesca Enriquez. Modesto stated that the artist was not necessarily a member of Shop 6, simply a student of Chabet’s. [↑](#footnote-ref-162)
163. Modesto, interview with Francesca Enriquez. [↑](#footnote-ref-163)
164. Modesto, interview with Francesca Enriquez. [↑](#footnote-ref-164)