

# **A Filipino Painter's Perspective of Filipino Identity: What Makes Philippine Contemporary Paintings Truly Filipino**

Hyreizl Love Tangonan, John Merick Eupalao, Charlton Selda  
Adventist University of the Philippines

## **Abstract**

There has been literature examining artists and their paintings in Philippine art history. However, understanding Filipino identity in the field of contemporary paintings from contemporary Filipino artists has not been researched extensively yet. The study, anchored on the psychoanalytic theory, answered the research question, "What makes Philippine contemporary paintings truly Filipino?" Qualitative case study design was used to gain understanding of this concept from a Filipino painter in the field of Philippine contemporary visual arts. To accomplish this, data were gathered using in-depth interviews with a Filipino painter who has been active in contemporary art production, and currently involved in art organizations and in the academe. According to the analysis of the interviews, the visual character (alibata) incorporated in the artwork, is an essential identifying element in Philippine contemporary paintings. Another element is the subject depicting current events in the country. The experiences, influences, and exposure of the artists are contributing factors in the creative process behind the paintings of the Filipino artist. This study will contribute to future research regarding the experiences of contemporary artists in the Philippines, as well as a source of reference for teachers of Philippine art history, with the intention of cultivating a love for national heritage, developing the eye to critique and understand Philippine paintings, and creating a deeper appreciation for being Filipino. Future research can focus on exploring other visual art disciplines and mediums such as sculpture, literary works and folk art, in relation to Filipino identity.

**Keywords:** *Filipino identity, Philippine paintings, contemporary paintings*