

Memento of Public Struggles

Clothes are essential to the human body. Even when one leaves his/her land or house behind to move to another place, the clothes migrate with the person. And even after one's fresh has disappeared from this world, traces of the body still remain with the clothes. During times of political instability, it is always the members of the masses who protest against a dictatorship or stand at the forefront of war zones in civil wars. Having left no choice but to struggle, their actions sometimes lead to detainment or getting shot to death, but their clothes remain in the hands of the survivors, serving as a memento of the lost ones. In Imelda Cajipe Endaya's work "Land of Golgotha" and J. A. Sarath Kumarasiri's "Memories of individual's suffering as memorials in the face of organized violence," the artists use the clothes containing the evidence of violence that people faced in the Philippines and Japan.

Imelda Cajipe Endaya
「Land of Golgotha」
oil, clothes, bamboo mat, etc.
on canvas (mounted on plywood)

Philippine
1984

J.A. Sarath Kumarasiri
「Memories of individual's suffering
as memorials in the face of organized violence」
earthenware, plywood
ink on paper

Sri Lanka
2006

A Sarong Infused with Heart

In Asia, people have not only worn tailored clothes through the ages but have also worn simple clothes consisting of only a single piece of cloth stitched together, such as sarongs, sari and kimono. The production of hand-woven sarong has waned with the arrival of global capitalism. But at the same time, since hand-woven sarong is rich in history, it has conversely drawn more attention again as a symbol of tradition. Even after the transformation from "sarongs" into "artworks" by the artists here, the works convey to us the soft texture of the worn-out cloth, and the image of a mother wearing a sarong infused with memories of her peaceful and ordinary life.

Kham Tanh Saliangkham
「Time」
acrylic, cloth on canvas

Laos
2002

Norberto Roldan
「Anting-Anting」
cloth, bamboo, tin plate, thread, stone,
vinyl, plastic bead, nut, metal amulet, wood

Philippine
1989

I Dewa Putu Mokoh
「Drying Loincloth」
acrylic on canvas

Indonesia
1993

Thaweesak Srithongdee
「Power」
acrylic on sarong fabric

Thailand
2005



Clothes as Social Skin

A cloth can be regarded as "social skin" that works as a code to symbolize the social status of the wearer. The works introduced in this section are made using clothes by South Asian female artists. Ayesha Mariam Durrani's "In the Name of Honour" and Risham Syed's "The Line Between" focus on the value system of Pakistani society as well as the lives of women living therein. The cloth is employed here as a symbol that may both separate or link women to the society. Anoli Perera creates vivid and lively sculptural portraits of women living within "the entangled web" using materials which are usually associated with femininity such as lace and embroidery.

Risham Syed
「The Line Between IV」
acrylic, cloth, chalk, magazine collage,
cotton on board

Pakistan
2001

Anoli Perera
「Memories and Mementos」
lace, cloth, photo image, thread,
plastic flowers, sequins, nails,
acrylic paint in glass paneled wooden box

Sri Lanka
2001

Ayesha Mariam Durrani
「In the Name of Honour」
gouache on handmade wasli paper

Pakistan
2004

「In the Entangled Web I, II」
wire mesh, paper, cloth, lace, thread,
acrylic paint, iron frame, etc.

2001