



Winged Scarab

Nature: Sculptural Bullet Installation
Material: 18 kilograms, 3109 spent shotgun casings, 344 spent bullets of 9mm, copper and leather elements
Production Year: 2010
Public Performances: Tam-Awan Festival, Baguio City, Philippines, 2010

I have always been intrigued by the critical discourse of the 60s and 70s of juxtaposition of opposites. In my work: it is life versus death, and how from death emerges life, and how the concept of violence, war and death possess aesthetics capable of creating life. In projects like *Mighty Ballistic* (2007), *Diwata* (2009) and *Re-Dress* (2010), my inspiration and research coexisted simultaneously on two pillars: my personal trauma due to the loss of my father who lost his life violently due to greed and organized crime. The second pillar is a research trip to Egypt, where I came to discover the ancient mystic scarab symbol/God (*Khepri*, aka Lord), symbolized and referred to as the "lord of life who comes out of death". Through observation, the ancient Egyptians found that the female desert scarab looks for some organic excreta (symbol of death) that it rolls with its limbs to make a perfect ball, while laying her eggs (symbol of life). The eggs become deeply embedded within the ball that looks like a perfect sun disc (the God Ra). In due time, the numerous nymph scarabs come out of the ball (hence the Lord) as if the sun exploded with life, a life *that comes out of death*. The legend/myth intrigued me to develop a concept where an utmost pleasure in life --represented by fashion and glamour-- can be created out of material that is linked in the universal memory with death, parody and satirical in the extreme cases.

This concern with the cycle of death that brings forth life deeply influences my practice, and leaves an impact on my personal perception of what life brings. Death cultivates visibility - what has disappeared is the loudest that calls for us.

