



Scandals III: Walk With Me

Nature: *Installation + Single-Channel Video*
Material: *30 pairs of Sandals made from more than 3000 spent bullets of calibers 45, 38, 9mm, 22, and Shotgun shells v.3 minutes*
Duration: *2013*
Production Year: *2013*
Public Video Screenings: Lopez Museum Manila Philippines 2013 Single-Channel Video (v.1 6:16 mins)
ARTER Space, Istanbul, Turkey 2014 Single-Channel Video (v.2 2:47 mins)

Artist Statement:

I am continuously intrigued by the struggle of wealth and power brought about by war and peace, in particular how victims of violence are only 'collateral damage' in the race for control, whether one is for or against a 'gun culture' that continues to proliferate. I investigate notions of crossing boundaries, private property, disparities in power and technology amongst human societies. The violence that claimed the lives of 12 French journalists early in 2015, ostensibly in the name of religion, is anathema to these universally held values of liberty, equality and brotherhood - concepts which are part of the fundamental tenets of all Abrahamic religions. Such repeated acts of radicalism instigate research questions that link very much to Okui Enwezor's proposition of proposed futures of our world, questions that direct my work: How are we to exist today? Do we not live in the age of reason? Are those acts due to the subjection to impunity for centuries, that today one ought to raise the level of humanity and take personal grievances to democratic processes? After all, does democracy offer solutions better than any other?

In my two-part installation *Scandals III: Walk With Me*, I explore some of these questions. Indoor slippers in many Asian cultures, better known in its local term as "Alfombra", (derived from Spanish) are most comfortable, durable and colorful footwear when inside one's home. The Asian practice of leaving outdoor shoes at the door is still observed today, psychologically conscious and symbolic of stepping into an altered level of someone's private space and perhaps even psychosomatically an invitation to restore and relax. The concepts of the 'interior' versus 'exterior' communicate boundaries of space within the social, cultural, psychological and political spectrum.

During a research period at the Lopez Memorial Museum, I worked with a collection of 4 x 5 inch glass photo negatives of the Philippines in the 1930s. They document Filipinos in this period. The collection consisting of anthropological photographs clearly recognized the 'colonial gaze,' as well as trade along the Pasig River, coming to and from Laguna de Bay and the Manila Bay. This is reminiscent of "Pagdaong", a colloquial term referring to *docking of a boat*. The 'docking' of foreigners in our islands echoes on, as it did once upon a time in Colonial history as these pictures illustrate.

Scandals III: Walk With Me offers an experiential *happening* episode for the viewer. I invite them to 'walk with me', by wearing a pair of sandals offered at a particular choreographed point of the space. This act of walking, or *sharing the walk*, is hence simulating a moment that sheds a partial regard on a colonial strategy, an integral part of the history of the Philippines, a space/land that hosted some indigenous people who are the actual owners of the land, and who have been exploited by colonial powers for centuries. The symbol of the sandals has different influences from colonizers --Spanish, Japanese, American and/or Chinese--, as well as those who engaged with trade with South East Asia, the Philippines included.