MARTHA ATIENZA
Endless Hours at Sea, 2014, 2016

THE ARTIST

The work of Martha Atienza (b. 1981, Manila, the Philippines) is sociological in nature, reflecting a keen observation of her immediate environment. She understands her surroundings as a landscape of people, first and foremost, and is currently exploring art as a vehicle for effecting social change and development. Atienza received her BFA from the AKI Academy of Art and Design in Enschede, the Netherlands and has participated in the art programme at the Kuvataideakatemia of the University of the Arts Helsinki, Finland. In 2015, she received the Thirteen Artists Award from the Cultural Center of the Philippines, and in 2012, she received the Ateneo Arts Award, with residency grants in Liverpool, Melbourne, New York and Singapore. In 2016, she was the recipient of the first Mercedes Zobel/Outset residency at the gallery Gasworks in London. She lives and works in Bantayan Island, the Philippines and Rotterdam, the Netherlands.

THE IDEA

The genesis of this artwork can be traced back to 2010, when the artist Atienza started documenting her experience of being at sea. Responding to a captain who told her that “Being on a ship is killing time”, Atienza killed time by documenting movements of the ship and water in video and in sound, but realised that there is no such thing as killing time - it is always with us and it is omnipotent. The work that came out from these trips won her the Ateneo Arts Award in 2012, enabling her to receive all of Ateneo Art Gallery’s four residency grants. Endless Hours at Sea is a culmination of her travels between the port cities of these residencies (Singapore, New York, Melbourne, Liverpool). With a family history of seafaring, this artwork is Atienza’s exploration of both her physical and emotional relationship with water.
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**THE ARTWORK**

Video, sound and light installation, water, stainless steel, aluminium, mechanics, LED light and air compression
Dimensions variable
Collection of the Artist

Image courtesy of Singapore Art Museum
GUIDING QUESTIONS

1. Take a walk around the gallery. What do you think the artwork is about? What do you see/hear that makes you say that?

2. Watch the video projection on the large screen for as long as 5 minutes if possible. Write down as many words that come to mind whilst you are watching the video projection. After 5 minutes compare your words with those of a classmate. How do your words differ from your classmate’s?

3. Pay attention to the sounds around you as you move around the space. What do you hear? How does it make you feel? What does it remind you of?

4. Was the artist successful in portraying the constant state of flux that characterises life on board large freighter ships? What makes you say that?

5. What do you think is worth remembering about the artwork? What makes you say so?

SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES

A. Read up more about the artist Atienza’s connection to the sea and her family history of seafaring (from the internet, artwork caption or Biennale catalogue). With this knowledge, how do you now feel about the artwork?

B. Experiment with using a projector as a tool for art making. Collaborate with two or three fellow students to develop an installation using a projector. How does this tool differ from others you might use when creating other types of art?

C. Have you ever taken some form of water transport before, e.g. ferry or sailing boat etc.? If so, describe the similarities and differences between the journey on water from your usual form of transport, e.g. bus, car, MRT etc.
**FIND OUT MORE**

**UP CLOSE AND PERSONAL**


**ARTWORK**


**BIOGRAPHY**


**SBTV**

Martha Atienza is featured in our SBTV series, created especially for Singapore Biennale 2016: *An Atlas of Mirrors*. Visit SAM’s Facebook and YouTube pages to view the series. www.youtube.com/samtelly
Humankind has always devised ways of seeing beyond sight. Two such instruments are the map and the mirror, which make visible more than just physical terrains. While the atlas – a book of maps – locates where we are and charts where we want to go, the mirror shows us to ourselves, sometimes unreliably, and in curious ways.

Through an exploration of the literal and metaphorical characteristics of atlas and mirror, An Atlas of Mirrors reveals artistic perspectives that arise from our migratory, intertwining histories and cultures, particularly in Southeast, East and South Asia.
The main title of the Biennale is woven through nine ‘conceptual zones’, or subthemes, which locate each artwork in particular curatorial contexts. These zones shape the flow of the Biennale experience, like chapters in a book or sections in a poem. Like the title – ‘An Atlas of Mirrors’ – which is built on the relationship between a collective noun (“an atlas” as the collective noun) and what is being thought of ‘collectively’ (“mirrors”), these zones are conceptually themed along specific collective nouns and what they hold together for contemplation and experience. Artworks located within each zone resonate on many levels, and at the same time, all nine zones coincide, intertwine and reflect each other along the conceptual continuum of ‘An Atlas of Mirrors’ as a whole.

Each zone represents concepts, ideas and ways of seeing as explored in the 58 artworks and projects.
FOR MORE INFORMATION

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Opening Hours
Saturdays to Thursdays: 10am – 7pm
Fridays: 10am – 9pm

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