



It was a month before he left for America. It had rained that evening – one of those brief but heavy August showers – and he had tried to avoid the soggy ruts in the street. He had stepped into one instead and had wet his shoes, his only pair. Emy would be asleep and, in the dark, he took off his clothes silently, hoping not to make a sound. But he sneezed and, knowing that he would soon catch cold, he groped for the blanket on his cot. As he wrapped it about him, Emy stirred and asked if he was drenched. Go on and sleep, he had told her, but she didn't heed him; she lifted the blanket that hung between them, and in the darkness he could make her out standing before him in her nightgown.

**THE PRETENDERS (No.6) Zeppelin over New York**

2014, oil and acrylic on canvas, diptych 91 x 152 cm

FOUND TEXT (from the novel THE PRETENDERS by F Sionil Jose)

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**Norberto Roldan** took his BA in Philosophy at St. Pius X Seminary, his BFA at the University of Santo Tomas and his MA in Art Studies at the University of the Philippines-Diliman. He has represented the Philippines in various international exhibitions in Asia-Pacific, Europe and the USA. He was represented in three landmark surveys of Southeast Asian contemporary art: *New Art from Southeast Asia 1992* by the Fukuoka Asian Art Museum, *Negotiating Home History and Nation: Two Decades of Contemporary Art in Southeast Asia 1991-2011* by the Singapore Art Museum and most recently, *No Country: Contemporary Art For South/Southeast Asia* by the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum in New York. Roldan who works and lives in Manila is currently artistic director of Green Papaya Art Projects, an independent multi-disciplinary platform he co-founded in 2000 while practicing as a visual artist. His works are in the collection of Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, Fukuoka Asian Art Museum, Singapore Art Museum, US State Department, Deutsche Bank, Ateneo Art Gallery, Banko Sentral ng Pilipinas, San Miguel Corporation, The Bencab Museum, Carlos Oppen Cojuangco Foundation, and private collections in Asia, Europe and the USA.

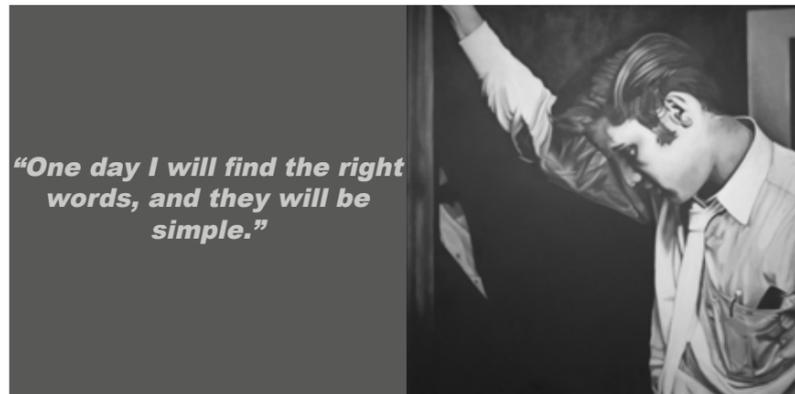
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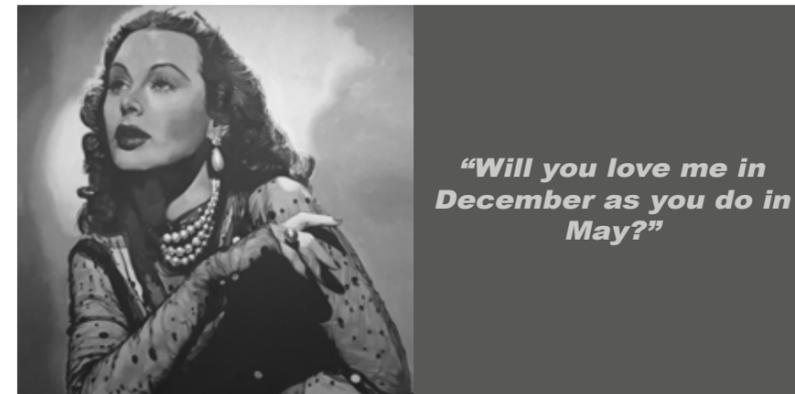


**“One day I will find the right words, and they will be simple.”**

**THE PRETENDERS (No.10) Elvis Presly**

2014, oil and acrylic on canvas, diptych 122 x 244 cm

FOUND TEXT **“One day I will find the right words, and they will be simple.”** (from the novel THE DHARMA BHUMS by Jack Kerouac)



**“Will you love me in December as you do in May?”**

**THE PRETENDERS (No.11) Vivien Leigh**

2014, oil and acrylic on canvas, diptych 122 x 244 cm

FOUND TEXT **“Will you love me in December as you do in May?”** (quote from Jack Kerouac)



**NORBERTO ROLDAN**

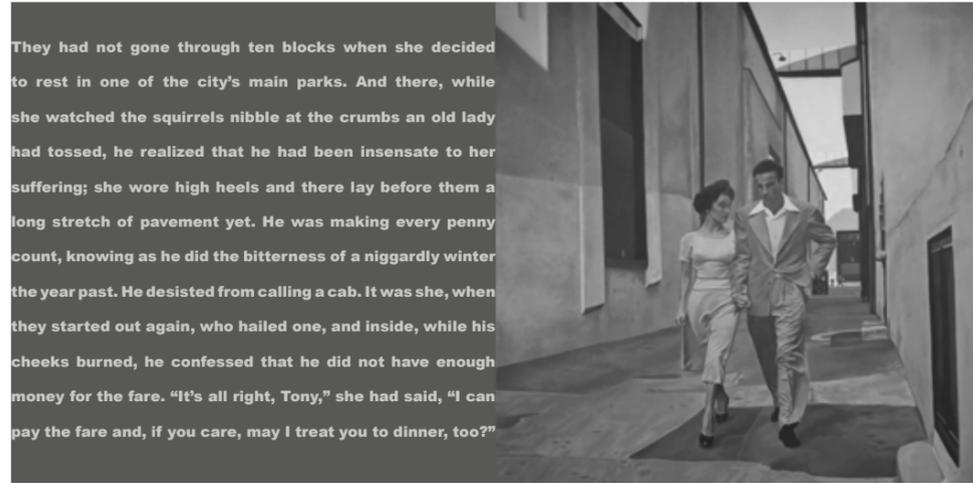
**One Day I Will Find The Rights Words, And They Will Be Simple**

vivid technological colour (their menace is another striking matter); Roldan's work seems to suggest a sense of socio-political inertia, and a fragile, almost nostalgic journalism or reportage. In the same sense as one can think of perhaps 'The Cold War' as having belonged to the past now, rather than for example 'The Occupy Movement' as being ignited in the present moment. Both perspectives have their problems as they depend on a linear definition of time. Roldan's selection of textual extractions help to skew this perception as well as augment a further sense of fluidity, where meaning becomes much more arbitrary and the linking of photographic language to textual underwriting successfully opens up the imagination to the many possibilities of understanding these 'combine' paintings. They seem to operate in a fragmented world, one which closely parallels our inability to filter and assimilate the constant barrage of text and image in daily life, where meaning is often scrambled, and conclusions are varied and incomplete.

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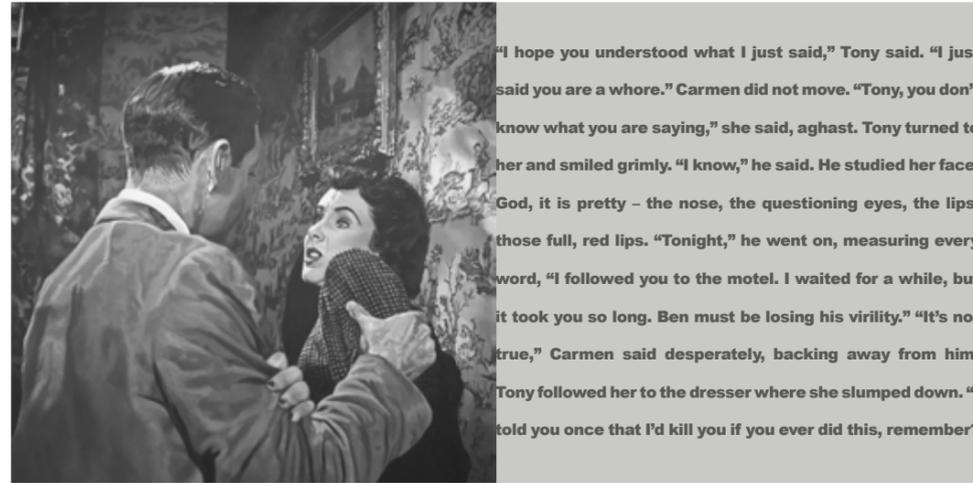


**THE BEGINNING OF HISTORY (Chapter 20)**  
2014, assemblage with vintage portraits and old fabric, diptych 121 x 137 cm



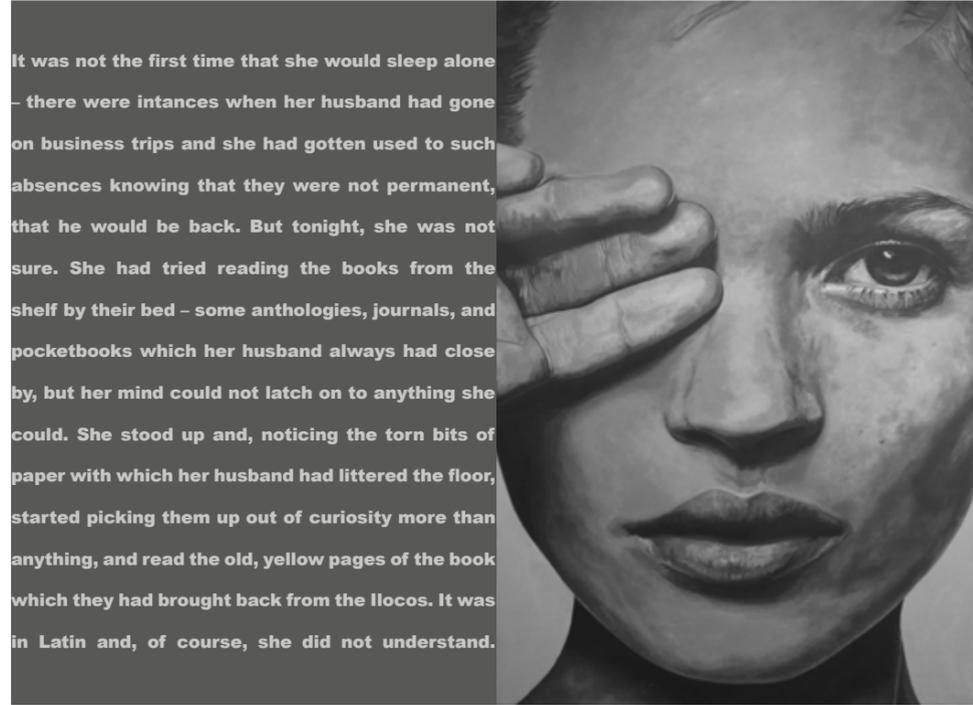
**THE PRETENDERS (No.7) Elizabeth Taylor and Montgomery Clift**  
2014, oil and acrylic on canvas, diptych 91 x 182 cm

FOUND TEXT (from the novel THE PRETENDERS by F Sionil Jose)  
They had not gone through ten blocks when she decided to rest in one of the city's main parks. And there, while she watched the squirrels nibble at the crumbs an old lady had tossed, he realized that he had been insensate to her suffering; she wore high heels and there lay before them a long stretch of pavement yet. He was making every penny count, knowing as he did the bitterness of a niggardly winter the year past. He desisted from calling a cab. It was she, when they started out again, who hailed one, and inside, while his cheeks burned, he confessed that he did not have enough money for the fare. "It's all right, Tony," she had said, "I can pay the fare and, if you care, may I treat you to dinner, too?"



**THE PRETENDERS (No.8) Elizabeth Taylor and Robert Taylor**  
2014, oil and acrylic on canvas, diptych 122 x 244 cm

FOUND TEXT (from the novel THE PRETENDERS by F Sionil Jose)  
"I hope you understood what I just said," Tony said. "I just said you are a whore." Carmen did not move. "Tony, you don't know what you are saying," she said, aghast. Tony turned to her and smiled grimly. "I know," he said. He studied her face. God, it is pretty – the nose, the questioning eyes, the lips, those full, red lips. "Tonight," he went on, measuring every word, "I followed you to the motel. I waited for a while, but it took you so long. Ben must be losing his virility." "It's not true," Carmen said desperately, backing away from him. Tony followed her to the dresser where she slumped down. "I told you once that I'd kill you if you ever did this, remember?"



**THE PRETENDERS (No.9) Kate Moss**  
2014, oil and acrylic on canvas, diptych 136 x 182 cm

FOUND TEXT (from the novel THE PRETENDERS by F Sionil Jose)  
It was not the first time that she would sleep alone – there were instances when her husband had gone on business trips and she had gotten used to such absences knowing that they were not permanent, that he would be back. But tonight, she was not sure. She had tried reading the books from the shelf by their bed – some anthologies, journals, and pocketbooks which her husband always had close by, but her mind could not latch on to anything she could. She stood up and, noticing the torn bits of paper with which her husband had littered the floor, started picking them up out of curiosity more than anything, and read the old, yellow pages of the book which they had brought back from the Ilocos. It was in Latin and, of course, she did not understand.