

**DENNIS SIO MONTERA**

**VISUAL ARTIST**

**UN/PAINTING | SOLO EXHIBITION  
2018**

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A STATE OF INTROSPECTION | SOLO EXHIBITION  
Qube Gallery, Crossroads Mall, Gov, Cuenco Avenue,  
Kasambagan, Cebu City, Philippines  
July 14 – August 12, 2018  
Catalog Design and Lay-out: Dennis E. Montera  
Consultant: Hui-Wen Lin, Ph.D.  
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## ABOUT THE ARTIST

**Dennis E. Montera** also known by his artist name as 'SIO' was born in 1972 in the island province of Cebu, 570 kilometers south of the capital Manila in the Philippines. He obtained both his Bachelor of Fine Arts major in Painting and Master in Fine Arts from the University of the Philippines. His works are known for an employment of a method called 'addition by subtraction', that ultimately become multi-layered color field paintings. The symbolism of his work's content are appropriated from real life experiences and reflections on his surrounding environment. The artist's body of work is a testament to the non-figurative idiom that was popularized by the abstract expressionist movement in New York of the 1950's. The artist has been juror selected to international exhibitions such as the Asian International Art Exhibition in Seoul, East Java Fine Art Biennale in Surabaya, Trevisan International Art exhibition in Bolgna, and the Beijing International Art Biennale of China. SIO has also participated in numerous international art fairs including Art Tainan, Art Kaohsiung, Tokyo International Art Fair, Asia Contemporary Art Fair-Hong Kong, Art Apart Fair-Singapore, and ManilArt. He won first prize in the Philippines' prestigious GSIS Art Competition in 2010 and was awarded the University of the Philippines' Chancellor's Award for Creative Work in 2008 and 2010. He was awarded an artist residency grant by Le Cent Etablissement Culturel Solidaire in Paris, France in 2013 and was among the first recipients of the Dekana Award of the University of the Philippines Cebu in 2014. He is currently a professor of the Fine Arts at the University of the Philippines' constituent unit in his hometown of Cebu. His research on art and artists in the southern region of the Philippines have been presented in international conferences and published in prestigious academic journals. At the time of this particular exhibition collection, the artist was a Ph.D candidate as a recipient of an NCKU distinguished international scholarship and a U.P. research fellowship award to pursue a doctoral degree at the Institute of Creative Industries Design of the National Cheng Kung University in Tainan City, Taiwan.



*Email: [dennisonmontera@gmail.com](mailto:dennisonmontera@gmail.com)*

# ONLINE MEDIA INVITATION



**Qube Gallery**

Published by Danika Cinco [?]

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Join us for the opening reception of Sio Montera's UN/PAINTING series, a master class collection of 70 abstract works, which will fill up the foyer and high space of the gallery. See you on Saturday, June 14, 6:00 PM at the Qube Gallery.

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## Learning to Unlearn

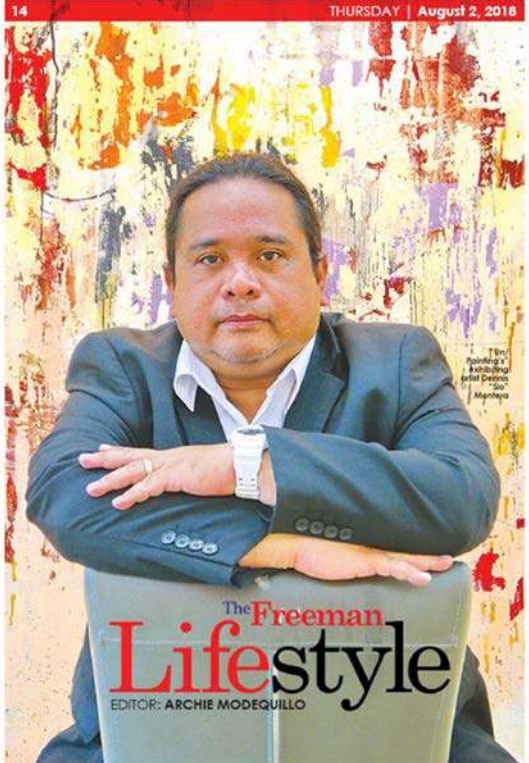
Published in The Freeman, 02 Aug 2018 By Yasunari Ramon Suarez Taguchi

In "The Book of Five Rings," legendary Japanese swordsman Miyamoto Musashi compiled a straightforward primer on kenjutsu and martial arts – a manual on the virtue of technique, its relationship with philosophy and the value in learning to learn. Written in the mid-1600s, the volume is more than a guide on the nitōjutsu (twosword) fencing style, as it correlates practice's affinity with mastery and the ideal learning mindset that binds the two as one. This correlation, albeit not exactly the source, sits at the center of Dennis "Sio" Montera's most recent solo exhibit in Cebu. Titled "Un/Painting" and ongoing at Qube Gallery in The Crossroads, Banilad until August 12, the show presents Montera's discoveries and rediscoveries in his predilection for abstract expressionist themes. Treading on three basic principles that often define the art-making process – the rousing process, the contextual interpretation of the rousing process and the inspiration that can be drawn from the rousing process – the show essentially enjoins viewers to rediscover the fine points that made abstract expressionism one of the world's groundbreaking modernist movements. Often regarded as the counterpart of representational styles, abstract expressionist pieces are typically made by an artist without a predefined subject or theme – a style wherein an artist conceptualizes and forms a work while he is already working on it. In "Un/Painting," viewers get to see nuanced tenses of this aspect to the style, with Montera challenging them to see what he sees – to decipher the messages he has hidden in his works. Zeroing in on the process-oriented drives that serve as the nucleus of all expressionist motifs, Montera furthers the boundaries of his creative oeuvre in this show by foregoing with what his art has become – to find it anew; by learning to unlearn, so to speak. In a way, the show serves as a social commentary on life and the lessons it brings – that in as much as experience is life's greatest teacher, one can never really have enough of it to say that he's learned all that can be.

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THURSDAY | August 2, 2018

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The Freeman  
**Lifestyle**  
EDITOR: ARCHIE MODEQUILLO

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# LEARNING TO UNLEARN

By Yasunari Ramon Suarez Taguchi

## CURATORIAL NOTES

An ideal contemporary art experience would perhaps go through this process: one is drawn in by a distinctly unique aesthetic or artistry, but mystified, perplexed, baffled – just what it is one is looking at? Having that covered and worked out, one is regaled, entertained and amused by reason with the artworks' paradoxes and contradictions, and ultimately reflecting and realizing that there is a nonchalant deeper meaning and message to contemplate and ponder upon. This is unpainting, a process and an experience.

Sio Montera's indefatigable and inexhaustible energies lead to a bountiful harvest of these unpainting creations. There is affluence of visual allure and performative small and big traces in Un/painting, Sio's solo exhibit this 2018, both at the foyer and main spaces of Qube Gallery.

### *The Rousing Process*

The contemporary non-figurative painting artworks utilize professional-grade acrylics that are coated with a particular layer of artist's oil in each layer of color. The artistic style is generally called the 'distressed' effect, influenced by the peeling paint of old houses and walls. This particular style for abstract painting was developed by Sio while living in Taiwan and inspired by centuries old Chinese shop-houses, temples, and village alleys.

### *Contextual creativity of the rousing process*

The exhibit resonates a systems view of appropriating meaning in the process of painting. Sio quips that this approach is based upon a systems analysis of generating creativity.

The traditional model for understanding creativity has mainly revolved around the individual creative person and, 'within' the person where a vital importance is placed on cognition and individual attributes. However, the individualist idea or "genius myth" of creativity disconnects the creative individual from his wider environment, thus making way for systemic models that does not necessarily renounce an individual's creative process but locates creativity as always in relation to a context.

In a similar context, the artworks in this collection revolve around an industrial concept in the painting process where paint is applied to build up the surface followed by scraping portions of the paint off to reveal the layers of colors underneath. The final artwork that reveals segments of the under layers signify the systemic approach to the artwork's process and meaning in relation to the interconnection of its past (under layers) and present (final composition).

### *The inspiration beyond the contextual creativity of the rousing process.*

Sio gets the inspiration to create artworks from the most mundane to the more dramatic daily experiences of life. Sometimes, the idea can come from weather-beaten peeling paints on concrete walls and old houses. In other words, the inspiration for an idea is anywhere and anything. He utters, "As an artist, it is within my instincts to know if something is worth developing because it will speak to you the moment you first lay your eyes on it."

## CURATORIAL NOTES

The subject of his works often talks about the inner emotions and introspections of an artist and how he perceives a specific or general experience impacting his life and the society he revolves in. Again, he articulates that in this collection, he wanted to portray that art is created upon a system of processes and interactions leading to the final output. It is not just a product of impulse like a toddler making doodles on paper but borne out as a result of combined influences, biases, training, and other pertinent knowledge.

Certain actions committed in the present are a result of the larger context of nature and human society. Sio has strong convictions on this. With his most recent award from Taiwan's National Cheng Kung University as a member of the Scholastic Honor Society of the Republic of China, an Academic Excellence award upon his doctorate graduation, and while generously sharing his art to the community, Sio honestly and humbly confides that he is at the crossroads in his artist's journey. The struggle is real between pursuit and alteration. But perhaps, it is aptly destined that Un/painting is homed at Qube Gallery, at Crossroads Banilad from July 14 – August 12, 2018. The painterly striations will definitely pose ponder on the gritty process and the contemporary experience of crossing road to continue or change... one's style, system or oneself. – **Vicente R. Tan**

*Prof. Vicente R. Tan is a former faculty member of the UP Visayas and former curator of UPV Art Gallery. He is now the Director of the Culture, Arts and International Relations Office of the Sacred Heart School – Ateneo de Cebu and the curatorial consultant of Qube gallery in Cebu.*

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Qube Gallery  
Premier Collection Series  
presents

SIO MONTERA  
UN/PAINTING

Oube  
gallery

Crossroads Mall, Banilad, Cebu City PHL  
info@qubegallery.ph | +63-918-807-4175  
www.qubegallery.ph

COLLECTORS ONLY PREVIEW NIGHT  
12 JULY 7PM - 9PM  
R.S.V.P. Danika/Kaye 0918.807.4175/info@qubegallery.ph

Exhibition Invitation | Qube Gallery | 2018



UN/PAINTING | ART WORK COLLECTION



Title: Imaginary Margins and Spatial Dimensions | Acrylic on Canvas | 122 cm x 213 cm (Triptych) | 2018



**UN/PAINTING | ART WORK COLLECTION**



Title: Time to be  
Happy Again  
65 cm x 53 cm  
Acrylic on Canvas  
2018



Title: I Am So Lost  
Inside My Own Head  
65 cm x 53 cm  
Acrylic on Canvas  
2018



**UN/PAINTING | ART WORK COLLECTION**



Title: I Am Okay, Is that What You Want Me to Say?  
65 cm x 53 cm  
Acrylic on Canvas  
2018



Title: Modern Relic  
72.5 cm x 53 cm  
Acrylic on Canvas  
2017