



The arts inspire creativity, innovation, and expression, empowering individuals and societies by influencing development through various mediums. Art is a valued cross-cultural vehicle for communication and social change. It can both challenge perceptions and bring together people of different cultures.

In recognition of these strengths, the Asian Development Bank's North American Representative Office, based in Washington, DC, has curated an art collection which aims to inspire the international development community to embrace the connection between art and development as well as to engage with the vibrant local community. ADB hopes that the variety of voices, perspectives and themes presented in this collection will facilitate reflection on the important themes driving ADB's Strategy 2030, namely achieving a Prosperous, Inclusive, Resilient and Sustainable Asia and the Pacific.

Art expresses social structures and value systems which are critical for understanding the challenges of reducing inequality and promoting equity of access. Art contributes to social

development by highlighting important ideas and illustrating different perspectives. Art contributes to economic advancement and innovation while at the same time helping to preserve culture and unique identities.

According to the National Museum of Women in the Arts located in Washington, DC, exhibitions overwhelmingly feature art by men. Of the collections of 18 major US art museums, 87% of the works are by male artists. Art galleries also represent a disproportionate amount of men, with only 8% of art galleries representing more women than men.

The artists featured in ADB's collection highlight the power of women and of people with diverse backgrounds and heritage in the arts to serve as catalysts for change and advocate for social advancement.

KATHERINE TZU-LAN MANN



About THE Artist

Asian American artist Katherine Tzu-Lan Mann’s artwork provides an evocative perspective on contemporary ecologies during a time at which environmental destruction and the consequences of climate change loom ever larger. Utilizing acrylic, sumi ink, and collage, Mann draws from traditions of Chinese landscape painting to create mesmerizing, vibrant depictions of organic matter.

Mann begins her process by pouring liquid pigments onto paper, allowing them to dry and yield a stain of colour from which the work is then based. Through an embrace of the indeterminate qualities of her materials—the ink or paint takes its own course, without the artist dictating its shapes or forms—Mann demonstrates a symbiotic relationship to her materials that serves as an apt metaphor for coexistence with the natural world. What results from Mann’s subsequent additions to the paper are rich, layered tableaux imbued with an affective interplay of ideas.

Crust. Mantle. Core. represents the earth’s three main layers which support and sustain life on our planet, highlighting its vulnerability through beauty.

The Asia and Pacific region is extremely vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. Unabated warming could significantly undo previous achievements of economic development and improvements of living standards. At the same time, the region has both the economic capacity and weight of influence to change the present fossil-fuel based development pathway and curb global emissions.

To address the climate crisis, ADB plans investments in clean energy, sustainable transport and urban development, climate-smart agriculture and land use, and air and water pollution management. ADB also aims to build up the water-food-energy security nexus and climate and disaster resiliency.

To tackle the climate crisis, at least 75% of ADB’s committed operations will be supporting climate change mitigation and adaptation by 2030. Climate financing from ADB’s resources will reach \$80 billion for the period 2019–2030.



ELMER CALATA



ABOUT THE ARTIST

Born and raised in both urban and rural areas in the Philippines, Elmer Calata's work is influenced by the loud vibration of the cities as well as the peaceful atmosphere of the provinces. Calata's work expresses his experiences drawn from his native land, the *campo* and *pueblo* lifestyle of Latin America, his travels, and his adaptation to the Western world. His inspiration is often rooted in human nature, the environment, as well as the cultures to which he has been exposed.

Pawid, the Tagalog word for the thatched roofs of the old *bahay kubo* (nipa huts), highlights the importance of the land to sustain life through agriculture. This reminds us of ADB's goals to promote rural development and food security in order to strengthen inclusive food and agriculture value chains that enable the integration of production, processing, and distribution networks. ADB also aims to improve farm and nonfarm employment

opportunities as well as increase incomes and better living standards of the poor, women, and other vulnerable groups.

In *Pawid*, the thatched-roof clad nipa huts are an iconic representation of the Filipino spirit of togetherness and unity in achieving a shared goal of *bayanihan*—the spirit of striving together as a community in the face of adversity.



MERON ENGIDA



ABOUT THE ARTIST

Born in Ethiopia and now living and creating in Washington, DC, Meron Engida uses her paintings as a visual language to express her voice. Her work explores personal and collective narratives reflecting her life as a woman and mother. Her figures are diverse and center women. In her *Solidarity* series, Engida addresses the challenges of race, identity, gender, and equality, cherishing uniqueness while also calling for love and the celebration of humanity. Her work transcends past and present, despite differences.

Although women make up about 50% of the population in many countries in Asia and the Pacific, their ability to participate in all aspects of society is often limited due to discrimination, societal restrictions, and a lack of access to education and job opportunities. These disparities must be eliminated for Asia and the Pacific to reach its full potential.

ADB commits that by 2030 at least 75% of the number of ADB's committed operations will promote gender equality.

Solidarity 9 reminds us of the women and men of ADB working together to support gender equality across Asia and the Pacific.



Meron Engida, *Solidarity 9*, 2020, 33.5"x32", acrylic on canvas
Courtesy of the Artist and Morton Fine Art

ROSEMARY FEIT COVEY



ABOUT THE ARTIST

Internationally renowned artist Rosemary Feit Covey explores the balance between climate, the environment, and human life through mixed media and experimental printmaking works. Covey, who uses natural landscapes and seascapes as inspiration for her work, reminds us how delicate and nuanced life can be. For 20 years, Covey partnered with scientists on projects connecting medicine with ecology. Over the past decade, she has been concentrating on environmental concerns, presenting concerns of extreme importance such as sustainability and the fragility of life on our embattled planet. For Covey, art is a profound tool in the battle of climate awareness, as it has a more enduring and less polemical means of reminding the public over a much longer period of time of the deep challenges we face.

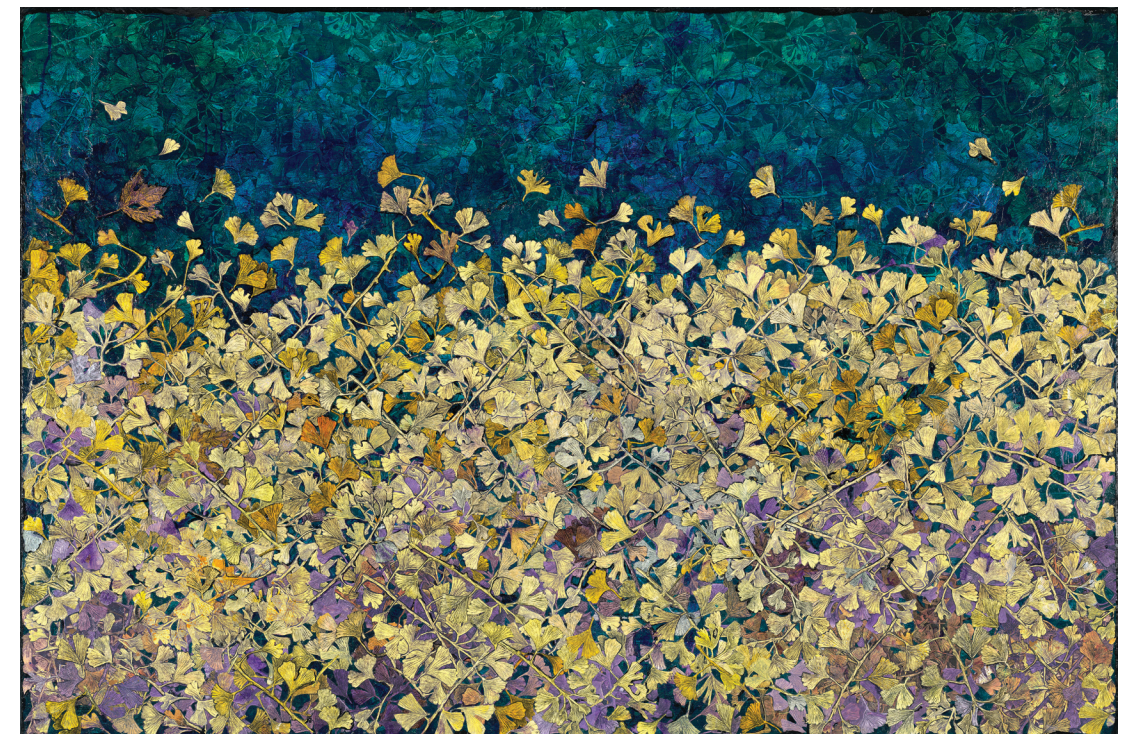
Ocean ecosystems have been pushed to the brink of collapse by the threats of climate change, pollution, and illegal and unregulated fishing, among others. Unless immediate action is taken, about 90% of Asia and the Pacific's coral reefs will be dead by 2050, and all commercially exploitable fish stocks will have disappeared.

In 2019, ADB launched the Action Plan for Healthy Oceans and Sustainable Blue Economies to expand financing and technical assistance for ocean health and marine economy projects. It focuses on four areas: creating inclusive livelihoods and business opportunities in sustainable tourism and fisheries; protecting and restoring coastal and marine ecosystems and key rivers; reducing land-based sources of marine pollution,

including plastics, wastewater, and agricultural runoff; and improving sustainability in port and coastal infrastructure development.

The Planet is a Delicate Thing specifically addresses the fragility of life as we know it, urging its protection from protracted environmental degradation following years of exploitation that has led to a decrease in the ocean's health.

Ginkgo, in sharp contrast, is teeming with the beauty of biodiversity and the benefits of a healthy environment. Taken together, these two prints highlight what we stand to lose if we do not protect our environment.



Rosemary Feit Covey, *The Planet is a Delicate Thing*, 2017, 19"x30", archival pigment print on paper, edition 3/300
Ginkgo, 2017, 20"x30", pigment print on paper, edition 2/300
Courtesy of the Artist and Morton Fine Art

KESHA BRUCE



Photo credit: Heidi Gutman

ABOUT THE ARTIST

Inspired by family mythologies and personal experiences, Keshia Bruce's photography series *(Re)calling* and *(Re)telling* creates open narratives addressing aspects of African American history and experience through memory and storytelling. The complete 14-piece series of *(Re)calling* and *(Re)telling* is in the permanent collection of the Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of African American History and Culture.

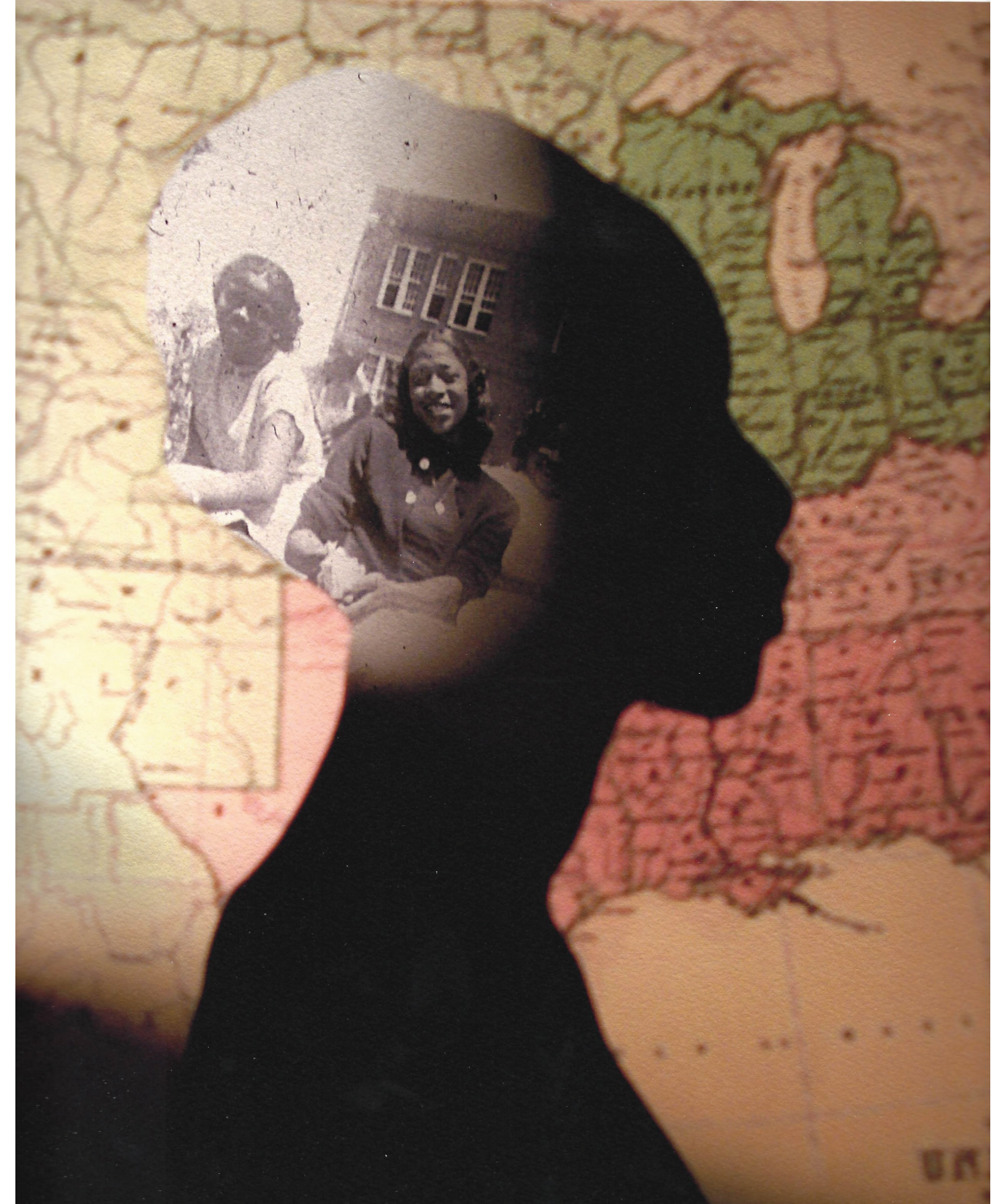
Bruce's *That They Might Be Lovely* highlights the importance of inclusiveness, which lies at the heart of all successful poverty relief and development outcomes.

Despite the extraordinary gains made in living standards, hundreds of millions are still excluded from the benefits of economic growth, particularly in Asia and the Pacific. ADB envisions Asia and the Pacific to be an inclusive region, where gains and opportunities are shared by all—including women, indigenous peoples, persons with disabilities, and the youth. By improving accessibility to facilities and services, empowering people to participate in economic and political life, and incorporating inclusive design, more people will be lifted out of extreme poverty.

ADB's social development agenda involves people and their communities, organizations, institutions, societies, and governments in all poverty relief activities.

Bruce's *That They Might Be Lovely* draws upon archival imagery from heart wrenching periods of African American history, contrasting these historical documents with contemporary materials to reveal the strength and dignity of Black communities across time. Using photographs and maps, Bruce juxtaposes unrealized dreams from the past to imagine hope for the future.

Integral to this artwork—and to ADB's social development agenda—is hope. Hope for the future, hope for the next generation, and hope for equality and opportunity—juxtaposed for context against the backdrop of history.



Keshia Bruce, *That They Might Be Lovely*, 2008, 14"x11", archival pigment print on paper, edition 4/10
Courtesy of the Artist and Morton Fine Art

MALIZA KIASUWA



ABOUT THE ARTIST

Underscoring the cultural and commercial exchanges between continents, Maliza Kiasuwa's technically masterful works explore politics and invent new futures through embroidery and the combination of heterogenous objects.

Combining handmade materials from Japan with found objects from around her farm on Lake Naivasha in Kenya, Kiasuwa embraces her chosen materials' earlier character and vocabulary, but transfigures their context by sewing, stitching, and mending to produce unexpected narratives and representations of society, events, and global issues. These materials are representative of culture and history in the context of the global flow of goods, especially in terms of how their utility shifts over time.

Imperfections addresses sustainability and waste, demonstrating an innovative and unexpected blending of materials—including some which might otherwise have been discarded—to create a dramatic statement of use, reuse, and cultural connectivity. Blending Asian materials such as Washi paper, and giving new and innovative life to ordinary materials, Kiasuwa honors progress, tradition, and culture while encouraging us to see potential in unexpected places.

As Kiasuwa seeks to achieve cultural connectivity through her work, ADB seeks to transform the cities of Asia and the Pacific into competitive, equitable, environmentally sustainable, and climate resilient urban centers—in short, livable cities. ADB seeks to enhance coverage, quality, efficiency, and reliability of services in urban areas, strengthening urban planning and the financial sustainability of cities by promoting inclusive and participatory processes, leading to improvements in urban environments, climate resilience, and disaster management.



Maliza Kiasuwa, *Imperfections*, 2021, 87"x44",
fabric, gold thread, washi and handmade papers
Courtesy of the Artist and Morton Fine Art

About the Asian Development Bank

ADB is committed to achieving a prosperous, inclusive, resilient, and sustainable Asia and the Pacific, while sustaining its efforts to eradicate extreme poverty. Established in 1966, it is owned by 68 members—49 from the region. Its main instruments for helping its developing member countries are policy dialogue, loans, equity investments, guarantees, grants, and technical assistance.



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