

Press release

## Geraldine Javier

### “In The Beginning...”



Good vs Evil (panel 2) | 2011 | Oil on canvas, vitrines with embroidery | 228.6 x 152.4 cm

**Period | Tuesday, May 17 – Sunday, June 12, 2011**

**Place | Arario Gallery Seoul**

**Works | 10 paintings**

**Press Conference | Noon, May 17, Arario Gallery Seoul**

Arario Gallery Seoul is proud to host *In the Beginning*, a solo exhibition by the Philippine-born artist Geraldine Javier (b.1970) from May 17<sup>th</sup> to June 12<sup>th</sup>, 2011.

Geraldine Javier was born in Manila, Philippines in 1970. She studied in a nursing school and practiced nursing, but soon discovered her artistic potential and enrolled in an art school. Although discovered late, her talent quickly made itself evident, and Javier has held many solo and group exhibitions in her home country since 1995. She was selected one of 13 top artists by the Cultural Center of the Philippines in 2003, and her work was sold in Christie's Auction in Hong Kong for seven times the expected price. She is recognized as one of the most celebrated Southeast Asian artist both in the academic world and in the art market.

The titles of the works in this exhibition reference important biblical scenes, as illustrated by *Good vs. Evil* and *Joseph and his Technicolor Dream Coat*. Here, the artist's interest lies on the universal world of spirituality rather than on a specific religion. Javier's interests root from the artist's personal history of having lived her whole life struggling with the catholic culture in the Philippines, and are manifested through the unique region-specificity of Southeast Asia, in which the influx of Western culture has been naturalized. In other words, Javier goes beyond the logic behind religion, to pursue fundamental values that can be collectively embraced.

The artist thus uses familiar images of nature like trees and birds, and focuses on death, goodness, evil and other subject matters that concern the inevitable human fate. *Last Supper* is an installation of familiar cook book images of poultry, focusing more on the dead animals ready to be eaten rather than on the people dining together. *The Crucifixion* draws an analogy between the decaying nature and animals, and the crucified saints. These sacred allegories are manifestations of what has been completely internalized by the artist, and then visualized in a totally different subject matter.

This approach gains momentum through the artist's authentic technique. Javier often attaches various embroidery or lace onto traditional painting, or affixes embroidered glass frames onto the surface of the painting. A native custom of

Philippines, embroidery is more than just a concept of craft in her homeland; it is a type of spiritual activity. Natural objects are created as one comes into contact with the living spiritual world through the repetitive action of embroidery. Javier adds elements of the truth-seeker into her work by fully applying everyday images, at the same time working with the interesting and exotic subject matter of the western religion in Philippines.

The conceptual basis of this exhibition is based on *Good vs. Evil*, in which the tree is portrayed in a simple yet powerful manner rather than in realistic fashion. Like thorny shrubs or a maze, and gothic-looking tree subconsciously controls the overall ambience of the painting. In particular, the bird nests located amidst the tree branches portray one of the main themes of this exhibition. Adding a crafty sense of rhythm to the painting, the bird nests symbolize a hiding place for the fragile birds from the threatening branches that seem to unfold the battlegrounds of good and evil.

In deep meditation of Javier's work, one realizes that the dark impression of her work slowly transforms into complex and beautiful images based on concrete logic. We encounter various images through her work as if we're strolling in a landscape or on a stage. Through the juxtaposition and transformation of these images, the viewer comes to ultimately feel the original source of the artist's inspiration. Experience and meditation of reality are not two separate but of the same act for Javier. Her works illustrate the artist as the truth-seeker who uses her senses to attain a certain stage. This exhibition explores the current trends of Southeast Asian contemporary art standing in international spotlight, and presents the works of Geraldine Javier, the most celebrated Southeast Asian artist.

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Image sources and information can be downloaded from Arario Gallery's Web Hard.

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**Arario Gallery Seoul**

www.arariogallery.com  
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Hours

Tuesday – Sunday

11:00 am – 07:00 pm

\*Closed on Mondays



**Good vs Evil**

2011 | Oil on canvas, 15 vitrines with embroidery |  
4 Panels: 152.4 x 228.6 cm, 228.6 x 152.4 cm each



**Good vs Evil (panel 4)**

2011 | Oil on canvas | 152.4 x 228.6 cm



**Good vs Evil (panel 1)**

2011 | Oil on canvas | Left, 152.4 x 228.6 cm



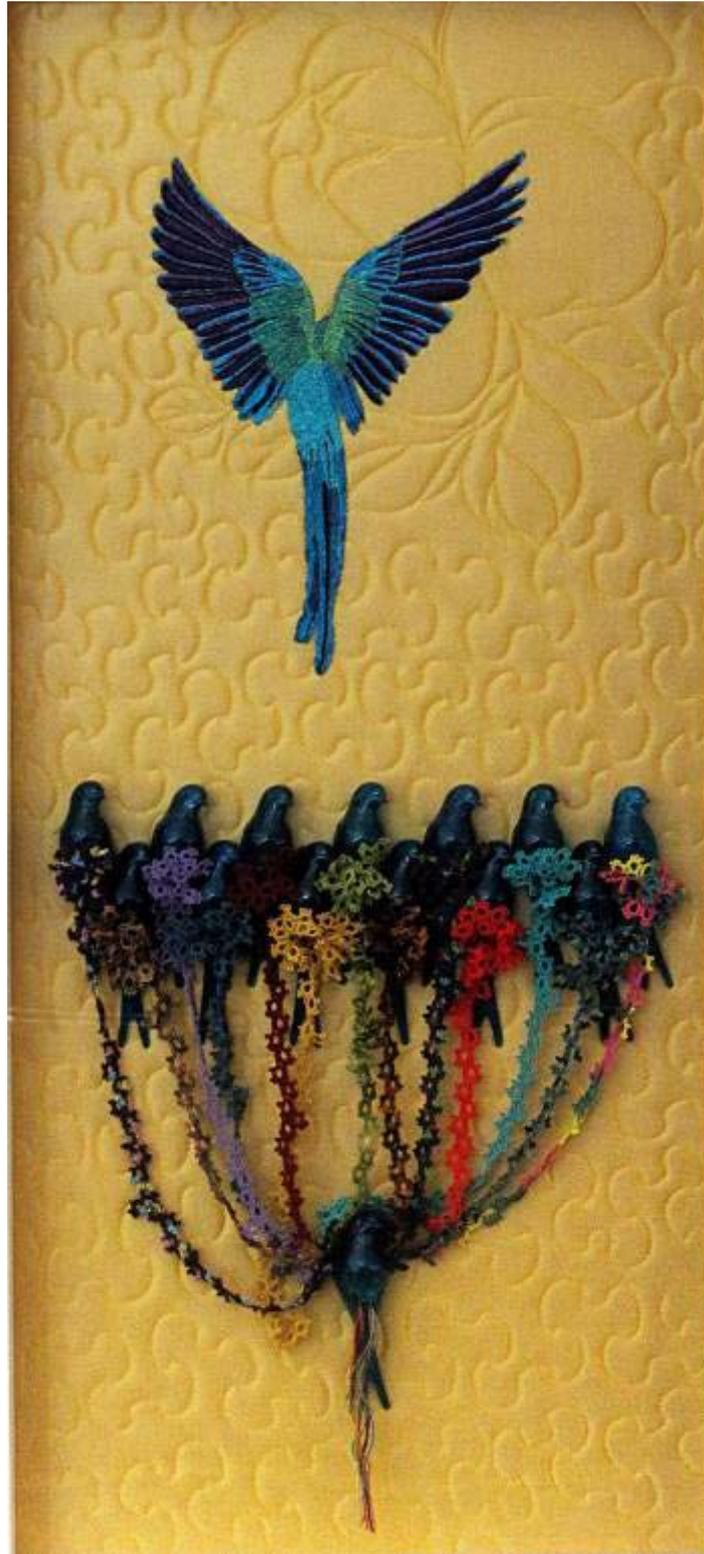
**Good vs Evil (panel 2)**

2011 | Oil on canvas, vitrines with embroidery | 228.6 x 152.4 cm



**Good vs Evil (panel 3)**

2011 | Oil on canvas, vitrines with embroidery | 228.6 x 152.4 cm



**Joseph and his Technicolor Dreamcoat**

2011 | Embroidery, resin birds and tatting lace | 88.9 x 88.9 cm



**The Crucifixion**

2010 | Oil on canvas, 3 vitrines with embroidery |  
Triptych: middle 243.8 x 121.9 cm, right and left 203.2 x 101.6 cm



**The Last Supper**

2011 | Embroidery | 91.4 x 431.8 cm