

USC Roski School
of Art and Design
Master of
Fine Arts 2021

Danie Cansino
Jiyoon Kim
Hings Lim
José Guadalupe Sánchez III
Diane Williams
Rachel Zaretsky

Diane Williams

The Precarious Life of the Parol

July 15–25, 2021



Diane Williams understands how colonialism has come to define most aspects of contemporary society, from personal and collective identity to issues related to racism, social stratification, geopolitics, and the writing of the historical record. In her MFA thesis exhibition, *The Precarious Life of the Parol*, she asks, "Does art have the power to alter the traumatic legacies of colonial history?" As an artist, researcher, and person born and raised in the Philippines, Williams is not a mere observer of coloniality, but an active participant in the discourse and praxis aimed at dismantling it.

The exhibition takes the parol, an ornamental, star-shaped Christmas lantern, traditionally made of bamboo and paper, as a case study and point of departure. The parol, Williams asserts, is more than just a festive holiday object, but a generative tool to trace the intersections of Filipino Indigenous cultures, Spanish and American colonialism, and the production of national narratives and iconographies. Despite years of research, Williams has struggled to trace the object's origins, instead locating discrepancies in the archive, white-washed embellishments on travel websites, and numerous layers of cultural hybridization developed over centuries.

The Umbilical Cord, 2021

These concerns are explored in *Anting Anting* (2021), a star-like sculpture made of wire, yarn, and found objects. The title borrows its name from the traditional amulets that Indigenous Filipinos long used for protection, including during the Spanish conquest, and thus positions the parol as an extension of the precolonial tradition. When I first encountered this object in the gallery, the sculpture reminded me of an abstracted Crucifixion, personified through the hanging of the t-shaped star from a wooden armature with melted acrylic and resin dripping over its base. I wondered, "Does this work address the enduring violence of war and cultural assimilation brought through colonialism and religious conversion? Or does my Mexican Catholic upbringing, brought forth by the same colonizer, influence this interpretation?" These questions are where Williams gains her traction. If we can make her artworks and the histories embedded within them meaningful to our individual lives, then we too can begin to engage with the deeply fraught legacies that the artist seeks to confront.

Eight large fiber artworks dominate the remainder of the exhibition space. Some hang on the gallery's walls while others are draped over wood and metal structures designed by the artist. The centerpiece, titled *Embracing My Inner Badoy* (2021), is dramatically suspended from the gallery's ceiling, bifurcating the space with thirty feet of undulating fabrics. *Badoy* means "outmoded" or "bad taste" in Tagalog and refers to the artist's crowdsourcing of pre-used and found materials that are often viewed as cultural detritus. By embracing garments and textiles such as her mother's old dresses, crocheted flowers, and other donated fabrics, and merging them with found objects and religious iconography, Williams sutures both personal histories and collective experiences, ultimately producing reimagined archives of Filipino community.

Williams' inquiry into the history of the parol might have been futile, as the effects of colonialism, assimilation, and archival erasures are nearly impossible to reverse, but what has emerged are new avenues and a new visual language to engage in culturally specific artmaking and dialogue as powerful forms of resistance.

∴ **Diane Williams** is a Pilipinx interdisciplinary artist and researcher based in Los Angeles. Her work has been shown at Armory Center for the Arts, 18th Street Art Center, Human Resources Los Angeles, Lancaster Museum of Art and History, Robert and Frances Fullerton Museum of Art, Stepping Art Gallery at San Diego State University, Berkeley Art Center, the San Francisco Arts Commission Galleries, and Children's Museum of the Arts, New York. She has also developed community-engaged projects for USC Fisher Museum of Art and Pacific Asia Museum. Williams has been featured in *Artforum*, *Hyperallergic*, *Los Angeles Magazine*, *LA Weekly*, and *Artillery*, as well as on KPFC Radio. She has works in private and public collections at the National Immigration Law Center, Glendale Community College, and Azusa Pacific University.

Installation view with *Batik and the Lasa of Control*, 2020 (front) *My Mother's Daster*, 2020 (back)

PAGES 46–47: Installation view, *The Precarious Life of the Parol*, 2021







OPPOSITE:
Weaving Colonial Consumption,
2021

The Umbilical Cord (detail),
2021

Installation view
with *Anting*
Anting, 2021
(front); *Curtain of Illegibility*, 2020
(back)



Danie Cansino

PAGE 10

Danie Cansino, *Chicana Canvas*, 2021, oil on plywood, 96 x 72 in. Photo: Hiroshi Clark

PAGE 13

Make Your Mark, 2020, BIC ballpoint pen, Flamin' Hot Cheeto dust, lined paper, repurposed cardboard, 6 x 12 ft. Photo: Hiroshi Clark

Danie Cansino, *LA ESCALERA (#7) I*, 2019, BIC ballpoint pen on lined paper, plywood. 24 x 18 in. Photo: Hiroshi Clark

PAGES 14–15

Danie Cansino, *Dodger Blue* 2020, BIC ballpoint pen on lined paper, repurposed cardboard, 40 x 60 in. Photo: Hiroshi Clark

PAGE 16

Danie Cansino, *Con Safos*, 2021, oil on plywood, 48 x 72 in. Photo: Hiroshi Clark

PAGE 17

Danie Cansino, *Mi Familia*, 2021, oil on plywood, 48 x 72 in. Photo: Hiroshi Clark

Danie Cansino, *Chicana Canvas* (detail), 2021, oil on plywood, 96 x 72 in. Photo: Hiroshi Clark

Jiyoon Kim

PAGE 18

Jiyoon Kim, *Sacred Bone* (detail), 2020, motor, shampoo, fish bone, dimensions vary.

PAGE 21

Installation view, *Twice a day by mouth*, Roski Graduate Gallery, USC Roski School of Art and Design, 2021.

Jiyoon Kim, *Sacred Bone*, 2020, motor, shampoo, fish bone, dimensions vary.

PAGES 22–23

Installation view, *Twice a day by mouth*, Roski Graduate Gallery, USC Roski School of Art and Design, 2021.

PAGE 24

Jiyoon Kim, *Painkillers*, 2020, burnt sugar, water, lemon juice, plaster. Photo: Jon Wingo

Jiyoon Kim, *Untitled*, 2021, Advil pills, plaster, pot, 16 x 16 x 26 in.

PAGE 25

Jiyoon Kim, *Grinding Stone* 2021, motor, cement, wood, Advil bottle; 14 x 14 x 8 in.

Hings Lim

PAGE 26

Hings Lim, *Monolith*, 2021, real-time simulation, projection; computer, hydraulic pedestal, aluminum, nickel-plated steel, electric cords, projector; 90 x 45 x 45 in. Photo: Hings Lim

PAGE 29

Hings Lim, *Wheels*, 2019, Resin; 8 x 8 x 1.75 in. each. Photo: Hings Lim

Hings Lim, *Homo Lanterns*, 2020, real-time simulation, projection mapping; projectors, tripods, computer, electric cords; dimensions variable. Photo: Hings Lim

PAGE 30–31

Hings Lim, Installation view, *Imperceptible: machine, animal, plant, stone, skull*, Roski Graduate Gallery, USC Roski School of Art and Design, 2021. Photo: Hings Lim

PAGE 32

Hings Lim, *Flaming Tower II*, 2021, wax, wicks, dye, aluminum; 60 x 32 x 32 in.

PAGE 33

Hings Lim, *Witnesses I*, 2021, Stereograph, inkjet print on matte paper; 72 x 36 in.

Hings Lim, *Bifaces*, 2021, wax, wicks, dye, polyurethane foam; 7 x 72 x 24 in. Photo: Hings Lim

José Guadalupe Sánchez III

PAGE 34

José Guadalupe Sánchez III, *Nanas*, 2021, acrylic on wood panel; 6 x 4 ft.

PAGE 37

José Guadalupe Sánchez III, *Ocean. Desert. Mountain.*, 2021, acrylic on canvas, wood mount; 16 x 7 ft.

José Guadalupe Sánchez III, *Luis*, 2019, acrylic on canvas, cellophane, mylar; 3 x 2 ft.

PAGE 38–39

José Guadalupe Sánchez III, Installation view, *Para Acompañar*, Roski Graduate Gallery, USC Roski School of Art and Design, 2021.

PAGE 40

José Guadalupe Sánchez III, *California Xochitl* (performance documentation) 2021, family clothing, chicken wire, acrylic on canvas, sun/moon blanket, dimensions variable

PAGE 41

José Guadalupe Sánchez III, *California Xochitl* (installation documentation), 2021, family clothing, chicken wire, acrylic on canvas, sun/moon blanket; dimensions variable

José Guadalupe Sánchez III, *Homes*, 2021, acrylic on canvas, 10 x 6 ft.

Diane Williams

PAGE 42

Diane Williams, *The Umbilical Cord*, 2021, fabric, yarn, plastic netting, plastic bags, acrylic paint, dyed cotton welt piping cord; 43 x 120 in.

PAGES 45

Diane Williams, installation view, with *Batik and the Lasa of Control*, 2020 (foreground) and *My Mother's Daster*, 2020 (background), mixed media, dimensions variable.

PAGE 46–47

Diane Williams, installation view, *The Precarious Life of the Parol*, USC Roski Graduate Gallery, July 2021.

PAGE 48

Diane Williams, *Weaving Colonial Consumption*, 2021, fabric, yarn, plastic bags, ribbons, Spam cans, acrylic, paper on wood; 90 x 30 x 3 in.

PAGE 49

Diane Williams, *The Umbilical Cord* (detail), 2021, fabric, yarn, plastic netting, plastic bags, acrylic paint, dyed cotton welt piping cord; 43 x 120 in.

Diane Williams, installation view, *The Precarious Life of the Parol* with *Anting Anting* (foreground) 2021, and *Curtain of Illegibility* (background), 2020.

Rachel Zaretsky

PAGE 50

Rachel Zaretsky, *Untitled (Reflections I)*, 2021, Sublimation dye on aluminum panel; 24 x 30 in. Photo: Jackie Castillo

PAGE 53

Rachel Zaretsky, *A Walk Along the Memorial Wall*, 2021, video installation; dimensions variable.

Rachel Zaretsky, *A Walk Along the Memorial Wall*, 2021, video installation; dimensions variable.

PAGES 54–55

Rachel Zaretsky, installation view, Roski Graduate Gallery, USC Roski School of Art and Design, 2021.

PAGE 56

Rachel Zaretsky, *empathic simulation*, 2021, interactive sound installation, dimensions variable.

Rachel Zaretsky, *A Walk Along the Memorial Wall*, 2021, Risograph zine, 10.5 x 13.5 in.

PAGE 57

Rachel Zaretsky, *Untitled (Reflections II)*, 2021, Sublimation dye on aluminum panel 24 x 30 in. Photo: Jackie Castillo