

# The Liongoren Collection: Treasures From Two Lifetimes in the Philippine Art World

By Alex Hornstein

The husband-and-wife team Norma and Fred Liongoren have been fixtures in the Philippine art scene since the '60s. Fred began his painting career as an abstract painter in UP, under the mentorship of National Artist Jose Joya. Norma started far from the arts as a nursing graduate from UP, but she was drawn to the lively art scene in Manila. The couple met in 1971 at the Red Gallery, an artist-run gallery in Cubao, and a few months later, they were married.

As newlyweds, Fred continued his prolific painting, establishing a place for himself at the forefront of Abstract Expressionism in the Philippines and continuing his study abroad at Byam Shaw School of art in England, while Norma worked in her first profession as a researcher at what is now the Philippine Center for Population and Development. Fred's work as an abstract painter connected the young couple with other Filipino artists in the nascent fields of Impressionist and Social Realist art, sparking lifelong friendships with established masters and emerging artists from around the country.

After a decade of living at the edge of the art scene, Norma's relentless and gregarious nature led to a breakthrough for the young couple, as they created the Liongoren Gallery in Cubao in 1981. The Liongoren Gallery proved to be a central meeting place for Filipino artists and art lovers to meet one another, discuss and create art. The gallery became the perfect vehicle for Norma's talents, and she left her day job to focus on running the gallery while Fred continued to make art.

Norma's early work as a gallerist started with selling Fred's paintings and arranging portrait commissions for artists in the Manila community. Other artists soon approached the gallery to represent their art, as well. Through an endless series of gallery shows, the Liongoren Gallery became a focal point for artists and collectors across the spectrum of Philippine art.

With the continued pressures of the Marcos era, the gallery became a central point for voices protesting the dictatorship. During the EDSA People Power Revolution, the gallery served as the protest art headquarters for the revolution, printing banners, screenprints, protest-inspired art, and posters.



Top and bottom: (1) Norma Liongoren in her gallery in the 80s.  
(2) Alfredo Liongoren in the gallery.

After EDSA and the lifting of censorship in the country, the Philippine art scene exploded. The gallery continued to expand its scope, collecting and trading in the rich tapestry of Philippine traditional and modernist art while pursuing the never-ending goal of supporting and raising the profile of talented Filipino artists at home and abroad. Over the next thirty years, until Norma's death in 2016, the gallery continued to thrive, hosting exhibitions for both emerging artists and established names in the Philippine art world like National Artists Victorio Edades, Francisco Sionil Jose, Larry Alcala, and Salvador Bernal to name a few. Hundreds of artists in the Philippines are now grateful



to the Liongorens and their gallery for the opportunities the gallery provided.

The pieces in this auction are works from the Liongorens' personal collection. The artists featured are early Impressionists and Social Realists who strove to represent the emotional and physical realities of the Philippines across the tumultuous century from 1920-2020. These pieces are meaningful to the family, having conceptual common ground with Fred's Abstractionist way of looking at the world and Norma's fierce advocacy for Filipino art and culture. They have been a part of the Liongoren household for the past thirty years. With the dissolution of the Liongoren Gallery, the family hopes these pieces may find their way into a home with a similar appreciation for Filipino artistry and struggle.



Left to right: (1) A Liongoren Gallery exhibit opening in the 80s. (The Vinluans, Norma Liongoren and Odette Alcantara). (2) Norma Liongoren in her gallery in the 80s. (3) Norma and Fred with fellow artist friends and Edades. (4) Norma Belleza with her painting "Suman at Kasoy" with Norma Liongoren | 1994. (5) Exhibit opening at Liongoren Gallery Megamall - L-R Norma Liongoren, Silvana Diaz, Lydia Robledo, Julie Lluch, Julie Yap Daza. (6) Norma and Fred Liongoren.





**1042**  
**Lee Aguinaldo (1933 - 2007)**  
*Homage to Oldenburg*  
 signed (verso)  
 dated 1980  
 mixed media  
 10" x 10" (25 cm x 25 cm)

**P 60,000**



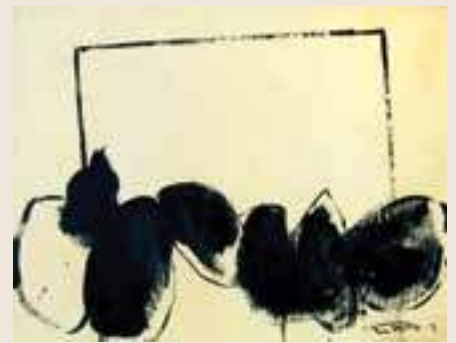
**1043**  
**Angelito Antonio (b. 1939)**  
*Sonata 14*  
 signed and dated 2013 (lower right)  
 enamel on kraft paper  
 22 1/2" x 28 1/2" (57 cm x 72 cm)

**P 50,000**



**1044**  
**Angelito Antonio (b. 1939)**  
*Sonata 6*  
 signed and dated 2013 (upper right)  
 enamel on paper  
 22 1/2" x 28 1/2" (57 cm x 72 cm)

**P 50,000**



**1045**  
**Angelito Antonio (b. 1939)**  
*Sonata 1*  
 signed and dated 2013 (lower right)  
 enamel on paper  
 20" x 26" (51 cm x 66 cm)

**P 50,000**



**1046**  
**Angelito Antonio (b. 1939)**  
*Untitled*  
 signed and dated 2013 (lower left)  
 pen and ink on paper  
 20" x 26" (51 cm x 66 cm)

**P 50,000**



**1047**  
**Juvenal Sansó (b. 1929)**  
*Lapping Waters*  
 signed (lower right)  
 gouache on paper  
 9 1/4" x 12" (23 cm x 30 cm)

**P 60,000**



**1048**  
**Buen Calubayan (b. 1980)**  
*Fressie Capulong 16*  
 dated 2012  
 oil on paper  
 18" x 22 1/2" (46 cm x 57 cm)

**P 20,000**

PROVENANCE  
 Liongoren Gallery, Quezon City



**1049**  
**Renato Rocha (1937 - 2001)**  
*Untitled*  
signed and dated 1980  
hardwood  
10" x 21 1/2" x 6"  
(25 cm x 54 cm x 15 cm)

**P 12,000**



**1050**  
**Renato Rocha (1937 - 2001)**  
*Untitled*  
signed and dated 1976  
hardwood  
18 1/2" x 15" x 12"  
(47 cm x 38 cm x 30 cm)

**P 12,000**



**1051**  
**Mario De Rivera (b. 1953)**  
*Landscape with Aloe*  
signed and dated 2006 (lower right)  
mixed media  
12" x 12" (30 cm x 30 cm)

**P 20,000**



**1052**  
**Antonio Austria (b. 1936)**  
*Still Life*  
signed and dated 1980 (upper left  
and verso)  
oil on canvas  
13" x 13 3/4" (33 cm x 35 cm)

**P 20,000**



**1053**  
**Jun Tiongco (b. 1957)**  
*Untitled*  
signed (lower left)  
watercolor on paper  
6 1/2" x 10 1/2" (16 cm x 26 cm)

**P 8,000**

**1054**  
**Romeo Tabuena (1921 - 2015)**  
*Untitled*  
signed and dated 1960 (lower left)  
watercolor on paper  
4 1/2" x 18 1/2" (11 cm x 47 cm)

**P 20,000**



**1055**  
**Norma Belleza (b. 1939)**  
*The Last Supper*  
 dated 1981  
 oil on wood relief  
 17 3/4" x 31 3/4" (45 cm x 81 cm)

**P 80,000**



**1056**  
**Federico Aguilar Alcuaz (1932 - 2011)**  
*Untitled*  
 signed and dated 1984 (lower right)  
 oil on canvas  
 a) 9 3/4" x 11 1/2" (25 cm x 29 cm)  
 b) 10" x 10 3/4" (25 cm x 27 cm)  
 c) 15" x 22" (38 cm x 56 cm)  
 d) overall: 30" x 32" (76 cm x 81 cm)

**P 200,000**



**1057**  
**A Framed Victorio Edades' Signature Specimens**  
 black marker on paper  
 11" x 8 1/2" (28 cm x 21 cm)

**P 80,000**



**1058**  
**Renato Rocha (1937 - 2001)**

a) *Bird Figurine*  
 marble  
 1 3/4" x 6 1/2" x 2 1/4"  
 (4 cm x 16 cm x 6 cm)

b) *Bird*  
 signed and dated 1984  
 marble  
 2 1/2" x 10" x 3 1/2"  
 (6 cm x 25 cm x 9 cm)

**P 12,000**





**1059**  
**Demetrio Diego (1909 - 1988)**  
*Mother and Child*  
signed and dated 1980 (lower right)  
oil on board  
18" x 8" (46 cm x 20 cm)

**P 10,000**



**1060**  
**Demetrio Diego (1909 - 1988)**  
*Untitled (Nude)*  
signed (lower right)  
graphite on paper  
11" x 9" (28 cm x 23 cm)

**P 4,000**



**1061**  
**Jonathan Ching (b. 1971)**  
*Pale Fountains IV*  
signed and dated 2016 (lower right)  
oil on canvas  
72" x 48" (183 cm x 122 cm)

**P 30,000**



**1062**  
**Jonathan Ching (b. 1971)**  
*Pale Fountains III*  
signed and dated 2016 (lower right)  
oil on canvas  
72" x 48" (183 cm x 122 cm)

**P 30,000**



**1063**  
**Leonardo C. Onia Jr. (b. 1986)**  
*Untitled*  
signed  
oil on canvas and acrylic on glass  
48" x 36" (122 cm x 91 cm)

**P 20,000**