

INDIO-GENIUS: 500 Taon ng Labanang Kultural (1521-2021)

GF & 2F National Museum of Anthropology

The “INDIO-GENIUS: 500 Taon ng Labanang Kultural (1521-2021)” is the newest edition of National Artist Kidlat Tahimik’s wide array of creations brought to life from his wild imagination. This exhibition, similar to his films, revolves around the war on culture, a battle for the soul of the Filipino legacy.

From the tiniest crafts to the largest installations, the DNA of Kidlat Tahimik’s works has always been the “Indio-Genius”. The term “indi-genius” was coined by Tahimik’s Ifugao mentor Lopes Na-Uyac (later “indio-genius” by Kidlat), referring to the innate brilliance of the Filipino people, especially the indigenous communities. This is rooted in his concept of “Sariling Duwende” which is the little playful elf tied to one’s culture, unfortunately, endangered by the centuries-long colonization in the Philippines. Accepting how embedded Western influence is in Filipinos’ daily life, Kidlat hopes only to balance this with original and authentic local storytelling through Kataas-taasang Kaalamang Katutubo (KKK).

The 80-year-old National Artist continues to showcase his “kapa-kapa” technique, a style he is recognized for even in filmmaking. What may seem chaotic to some is actually a free-flowing, instinctive method wherein he follows where his environment leads him and makes use of whatever it provides him instead of enforcing his own plans and designs onto his art. As such, even the materials he uses are organic materials, such as wood from trees that have fallen due to typhoons, found objects, rocks and stones, shells, and dried palm leaves.



PAMBANSANG MUSEO NG PILIPINAS
NATIONAL MUSEUM OF THE PHILIPPINES

This exhibition is an accumulation of his previous works and objects collected through the years. Some artworks from his self-architected Ili-Likha Artist Village in Baguio were brought to the National Museum of Anthropology as part of the exhibition, along with several creations displayed in his 2019 Sharjah exhibition “Ang Ma-bagyong Sabungan ng 2 Bathala ng Hangin, A Stormy Clash Between 2 Goddesses of the Winds (WW III – the Protracted Kultur War)”. However, major installations were those presented at his Madrid exhibition “Magellan, Marilyn, Mickey & Fr. Damaso: 500 Years of Conquistador RockStars”.

Large-scale installations were featured in the Palacio de Cristal del Retiro, the same venue for the 1887 exhibition “Exposición General de Las Islas Filipinas” which exoticized the Philippine flora and fauna, other artifacts, and even the Igorots who died in the journey to the exhibition. This human zoo becoming the “battleground” of the Indio-Genius against the colonizers once more is an ironic going-full circle of history.

For more information on this exhibition:

- <https://philstarlife.com/geeky/521117-philippine-history-kidlat-tahimik>
- <https://www.philstar.com/lifestyle/arts-and-culture/2021/11/01/2138039/philippine-history-according-kidlat-tahimik>
- <https://www.sharjahart.org/sharjah-art-foundation/people/kidlat-tahimik>
- <https://mb.com.ph/2022/07/23/kidlat-tahimiks-historic-exhibit-in-madrid-is-coming-home-to-the-philippines/>
- <https://mb.com.ph/2022/03/07/madrid-honors-kidlat-tahimik/>
- <https://pia.gov.ph/news/2022/09/09/from-cordillera-to-madrid-to-manila-kidlat-tahimiks-art-exhibit-returns-home>



PAMBANSANG MUSEO NG PILIPINAS
NATIONAL MUSEUM OF THE PHILIPPINES

- <https://www.gmanetwork.com/news/lifestyle/artandculture/838501/national-artist-kidlat-tahimik-s-historical-exhibit-first-shown-in-madrid-will-soon-be-shown-in-t/story/>
- <https://www.museoreinasofia.es/en/exhibitions/kidlat-tahimik>
- <https://news.abs-cbn.com/ancx/culture/art/10/29/21/kidlat-tahimik-opens-major-show-in-madrid-glass-palace>
- <https://www.fdcph.ph/updates/cordillera-madrid-manila-kidlat-tahimik-exhibit-return-s-display-fdcp-cinematheque-centre>
- <https://hyperallergic.com/694716/kidlat-tahimiks-subversive-retelling-of-the-philippines-colonial-history/>