A close-up portrait of a man with dark hair and a mustache, wearing a black headlamp with a silver lens and a black mask with a white, scalloped edge. He is looking directly at the camera with a serious expression. The background is a light blue, textured wall.

gilubong ang akong pusod sa dagat

my navel is buried in the sea

a video installation by martha atienza  
[www.gilubongsadagat.tumblr.com](http://www.gilubongsadagat.tumblr.com)

# gilubong ang akong pusod sa dagat my navel is buried in the sea

a three screen video installation by martha atienza  
2011, hd video, 31 mins, bisayan  
english subtitle

## synopsis

*gilubong ang akong pusod sa dagat* captures the significance and mystery of the sea to the millions of filipinos who derive their living from it, particularly giving shape to a reality which is rarely seen. it reflects the philippines' historical and geographical relationship with the ocean and to its contemporary reality, as a metaphor of necessity and opportunity, and of both community and isolation.

following the men from madridejos, bantayan island onboard container vessels, batel, banka's and underwater- it is a portrait of a people. made for and by the people of madridejos, the philippines.

## martha atienza

lives and works in rotterdam (nl) and bantayan island (ph). her work is a series mostly constructed in video, of almost sociological nature, that studies her direct environment. atienza understands her surroundings as a landscape of people first and foremost. it is interesting to see the contrast between her recorded observations of people in developed and developing countries.

she is primarily focused on finding dignity for the undervalued, for the unnoticed, in the mundane. the work she creates is characterized by a subtle need to contain these observations within manageable spaces, frequent repetitions and portable formats. currently, she is investigating the usage of contemporary art as a tool for effecting social change and development.

showings/ distinctions

2012

Chopshots Documentary Festival Southeast Asia, Jakarta (ID)

ateneo art award (ph)

ateneo art gallery, manila (ph)

pablo gallery, makati (ph)

gallery orange, cinemarehiyon, bacolod (ph)

2011

videoforma, st. petersburg (ru)

church plaza and national high school, madridejos, bantayan island (ph)

with support from

dienst, kunst en cultuur rotterdam (nl)

national commission for culture and arts (ph)

the office of culture and design (ph)

united nations environmental programme



**Gemeente Rotterdam**  
Kunst en Cultuur



**NCCA**

*The Office of Culture and Design*  
7274 Malugay St.  
Makati City  
Ph 1203



**UNEP**

## credits

### with

assistant and consultant  
anthony jake atienza

fishermen  
buging alolor  
edwin apawan  
joel austria  
jr rodolfo belais  
epoy philip cena  
enteng vicente duis  
al-al aljun espina  
roque mario forrosuelo jr.  
mario forrosuelo  
panoy jileenford forrosuelo  
santoy crisanto illusorio  
melchor mulle  
intsik romel pasaylo  
chris pasaylo

socio berne pasaylo  
raffy santillan  
arsenio arcadio santillan  
jonjon edgardo viajedor  
batil crew  
mv chalice crew  
romeo abolon  
george atienza  
joy bolivar  
loreto desabille  
rame baulita desamporado  
gilbert galvez  
joel jimenez  
capt. magalongga  
rito maghinay  
mv philos-dy crew  
john louis atienza

### thanks

michelle abello  
sofia alfon  
leo añabeza  
enrico atienza  
maria atienza  
gloria fabreag  
kevin fabreag  
daisy desabille  
gina espina  
john philipps martos  
frederick mulle  
merly mulle  
cloyd anthony ribo  
radford santillan  
eveline  
sa mga taga chinese compound  
tag mga taga caltex  
tag sa mga sakop ni daisy

mayor sally de la fuente  
sa simbahan  
barangay captain poblacion  
barangay captain atop-atop  
mga musicians  
the municipality of madridejos  
madridejos national high school  
cam c dosdos  
napoleon e. calderon jr  
island souvenirs  
kota park  
lynes bakeshop  
mokoy store  
wellisa poultry farm  
st. joseph trucking  
vyv's hardware  
boboy general merchandising  
ri-ann noel trucking  
overseas workers welfare administration











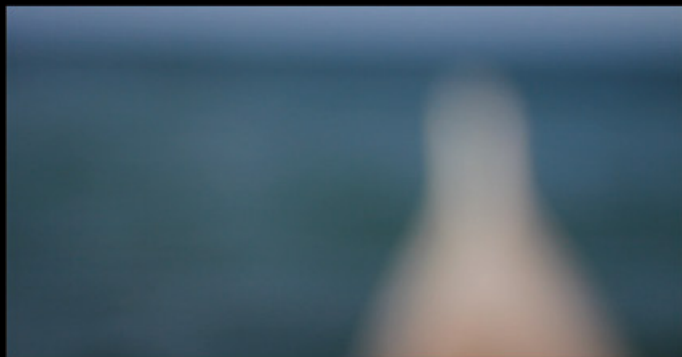


Love me with all of your heart





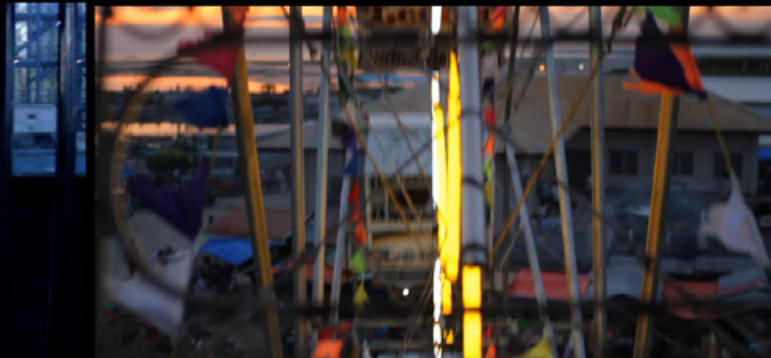














## madrideojos community

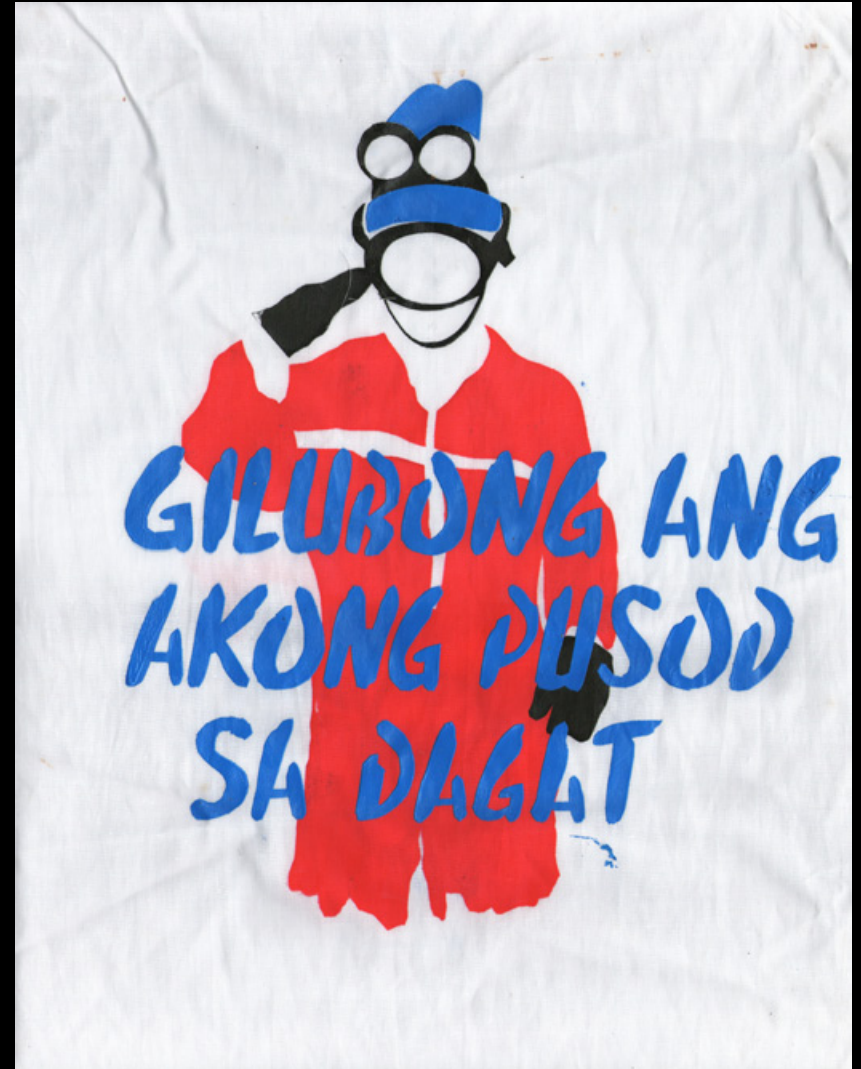
the filming process was combined with community screenings that initiated dialogue amongst the seafarers, fishermen, their families and community. starting out with viewings at home and talking with families that later resulted to the final installation combined with dialogues between the two groups; international seafarers and their families and local fishermen and their families.

the issues facing fishing communities like these are the gap in income creating dislocations within the community, the link with the sea which they are losing, the consequences to the families with the absence of men, migration, the environmental damage to their seas and the loss of their culture.

art is used as a tool to create awareness and dialogues. the response is an openness to one another and reconnect ties within the community. the result is them finding a voice together to make changes themselves. they feel empowered.

right

a hand drawn logo by lawisanon youth was drawn and printed on fabric and posters to share the project.







the logo on fabric were turned into flags by the fishermen of madridejos, bantayan.  
the flags became a symbol of pride.





this is a barangay showing. fishermen, their families and neighbors get together to watch the images of the men and start getting used to talking and sharing their experiences with one another.

this was also a way to get them used to the idea of projecting and seeing themselves on the screen.



the last night of the five days of the final installation. the three screens are shown in the church plaza right in the center of the town of mdridejos, bantayan island.

around 600 people gather to watch. fishermen, international seafarers and their families share with the rest of the community what they do and how they feel about issues facing them.











left  
fishermen and their families at the final screenings

right  
the next generation of lawisanon



final days of the installation. the wife of an international seafarer stands in front of her community answering a question of a wife of a local fishermen.

she is defending herself, arguing that she does not look down on the fisher-folks.





talks with the local fishermen and their families. one of many gatherings prior to the final installation.



dialogues during the final installation. an international sefarer talks about the issues facing them.





*"our sea is damaged. what can we give our children?"* (interview with mario forrosuelo a fishermen)







the united nations environmental programme giving workshops to highschool students coinciding with the final days of the installations.

the area of focus was environmental accountability and sustainability by combining lectures with discussions and interactive games.



together with the ladies who helped with talking to everyone and making me understand what needed to be done. these are the wives, mothers and children of international seafarers and fishermen of madridejos, bantayan island.

since they have started a womens group where they support and advice one another on emotional and practical issues.

these women are the fighters for their community. I look forward to continuing to work with them.



