

JAMES HARRIS GALLERY

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PRESS RELEASE



Stephanie
Syjuco
The Village
(*Small*
Encampments)

April 2 – May 2, 2009

Opening Reception
Thursday, Apr. 2, 6 – 8 pm

James Harris Gallery is pleased to present our third solo exhibition by Stephanie Syjuco. Her recent work uses the tactics of bootlegging, re-appropriation, and fictional fabrications to address issues of cultural biography, labor, and economic globalization. She uses high and low materials to create objects that, at first glance, appear to mimic and blur the boundaries between fact and fiction. In *The Village (Small Encampments)* the artist uses photography and a time based slide projection installation to explore how we construct, perceive, and value cultural authenticity.

Syjuco constructed small cut-out dioramas taken from tourist photographs of the Philippines and placed them conspicuously throughout her apartment. She then photographed her living space as a personal travelogue. Her apartment became the landscape for the stage-like settings of the dioramas; acting as crude reminders of a place she is connected to by birth and yet very unfamiliar with. The four sets of paired photographs and the slide projection installation take on two seemingly disparate narratives: a documentary portrait of the artist's domestic space with a completely constructed and fantasized "homeland" hidden within. The idea that she is a "counterfeit" Filipino is something Syjuco's been very interested in playing with recently; exploring the murky area of cultural authenticity and even the fictions we create for our own allegiances. By examining and constructing objects with fictional identities and histories, the artist reveals a larger truth: that we constantly invent narratives about ourselves and about others.

Born in Manila, Philippines in 1974, Stephanie Syjuco received her MFA from Stanford and BFA from the San Francisco Art Institute. Her work has been shown nationally and internationally, and included in exhibitions at The Contemporary Arts Museum in Houston, The New Museum, P.S.1 Contemporary Art Center, and Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, San Diego Museum of Contemporary Art, and the California Biennial at the Orange County Museum of Art, CA; and The Contemporary Museum, Honolulu, among others.

Gallery hours are Tuesday - Saturday 11:00am - 5:00pm
Images are available upon request.