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## HAWAI`I ARTISTS RESPOND TO POLITICAL KILLINGS

*Visual and performing artists partner with community members, students, teachers, and local businesses to build an interdisciplinary art exhibition, which aims to raise the public's awareness and understanding of State-sanctioned terror.*

Exhibition Dates                      October 31 - November 29  
Opening Reception                    Friday, Nov. 7, 6 :00-9:00 p.m.  
*Consciousness-raising performance by Foreign Agents (DJs  
Cookiehead Jenkins, Count `Weevil, and Mano Lopez) at 7:00 p.m.*

### Special programming Roundtable Discussion

*Disappearing Act: an in-depth dialogue on the treatment of  
political killings and other states of terror in film*  
Date    Thursday, Nov. 20, 7:00-9:00 p.m.  
Location                                    University of Hawai'i-Mānoa, Moore Hall, Room 423

Dance Performance                    Tangentz, Butoh performance group  
Date    Friday, Nov. 21, 7:00 p.m.  
Location                                    thirtyninehotel

**HONOLULU, HAWAI`I**—thirtyninehotel is proud to present the mixed-media art exhibition *And Justice for All: political killings and other forms of State-sanctioned terror*. This exhibition features the work of five Hawai`i-based artists and graphic campaign materials produced by the And Justice for All Collective, made up of artists and University of Hawai'i-Mānoa students and faculty.

**AND JUSTICE FOR ALL.** The tail end of America's pledge of allegiance. By using only a fragment of the entire promise, "*I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America and to the republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all,*" these words either embrace a sense of conviction and hopefulness for the future, or, conversely, a sense of falsity, of betrayal and sarcasm. Clearly, America has yet to make good on its pledge to deliver justice for all. This fact is evidenced in the political killings and terror implemented daily by one of the many divisions of Homeland "Security" and the consent of political killings and other forms of government-authorized violence in the absence of action against them.

The *And Justice for All* project is connected to the efforts of the Critical Filipina and Filipino Studies Collective (CFFSC), a group of scholars and activists in the United States and the Philippines dedicated to the examination of and opposition to U.S. historical and contemporary modes of domination in the Philippines and elsewhere. In the Philippines alone there have been more than 850 recorded extrajudicial killings since President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo was elected in 2001.

*And Justice for All* puts these politically motivated killings in the context of a long history of U.S. military domination in the Philippines and elsewhere, domination that has produced "states of terror" ranging from intimidation of labor organizers, journalists, and minority communities of all kinds to the physical abuse, arrest, detainment, and abduction of community activists. *And Justice for All* aims to highlight the links between the Philippines and other sites and practices of terror. For Hawai'i, a key site in U.S. relations in Asia and the Pacific region, connecting the political killings in the Philippines to other patterns of domination is an urgent and necessary task.

### ARTWORK

*And Justice for All* features the work of five artists who have taken this subject to task. Artists Nathan Balcombe, Joe Bright, Gaye Chan, Alan Konishi, and Lian Lederman consider issues, such as political killings, disappearances, abductions, and colonialism—underscoring and commenting on the effects of a dominant culture's rule with unjust, violent, and often invisible hands.

**Joe Bright**, a trained calligrapher and painter who studied at Cooper Union in New York, takes a graphic look at political killings in his photo collage, “Buddha (dedicated to the people of Burma).” From a distance, Bright’s work simply offers up a larger-than-life, eight-foot-high Buddha seated in meditation. The Buddha’s emblematic claret-red robe and halo of enlightenment are recognizable on sight. Upon closer inspection, however, you see that the image of the Buddha is comprised of hundreds of 3” x 3” photographs, each capturing an aspect of the 2007 conflict and bloodletting between Myanmar police and Burmese Buddhist monks demanding the end of military rule. What comes into focus: open wounds and the deep red of monks’ robes, bloody body parts, riot police shields and rifles, streets filled with thousands of monks and nuns—a sea of shaved heads and monastic robes—marching for freedom. Equally as powerful as the sum total of these images is the artist’s process: Bright meticulously selected, placed, and hand cut each photograph—an act, while somehow intimating a tenderness and, dare we say, love, that belies the subject’s graphic, violent nature.

Other artists, like **Nathan Balcombe**, use a quick and dirty, copy-and-paste agitprop style of ‘zine-making to get the core message out, and **Gaye Chan**, who, in her piece, “Close Your Eyes and Think of England,” uses bits and pieces of “found” yellow-ribbon and American flag-covered “Support the Troops” magnets to articulate the shape of a female soldier brandishing an invisible, but implied, firearm. Chan’s work poses the question: what role do women play in war-torn countries in the midst of political struggle and civil unrest? The artist leaves viewers to draw their own conclusions.

The **And Justice for All Collective** worked with graphic designer Richard Earl Leong Yu Hadad Ralya, a partner in the design firm Skeeo Creative, to produce campaign graphics for thirtyninehotel’s gallery exhibition, as well as the storefront windows of next-door neighbor Next Door. The collective’s students were introduced to the graphic design process, serving as “clients,” while stepping through the concept, design, review, and final printing and installation processes. For two months, the team met weekly to discuss the subject and design large-format posters, with the goal to raise public awareness of political killings and disappearances.

To represent the performing arts, the Foreign Agents sound collective will be on hand at the opening reception to deliver live laptop remixes woven with a tapestry of ambient, political and agit-prop audio samples helping to raise listeners’ levels of consciousness with regard to political killings. The Butoh performance group, Tangentz has also cultivated a response to the subject through movement, and will give a site-specific performance on November 21.

#### **ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION: *Disappearing Act***

Eavesdrop on a conversation between a cultural critic, academic, student, and political activist, as they comment on State-sanctioned and political violence in film. Attendees will view a mash-up of excerpts from such films as *Journey from the Fall* (2006), *Munich* (2005), *Zeitgeist* (2007), and *Brazil* (1985) then launch into what promises to be an engaging discussion. Panelists include: Melisa S.L. Casumbal-Salazar (Ph.D. Candidate, Political Science, UHM), David Goldberg (Independent Visual Culture Critic and Writer, UHM), and Kevin Lim (Ph.D Candidate, American Studies, UHM). The event will take place on November 20, 7:00-9:00 p.m., on at UHM’s Moore Hall, Room 423.

This phase of the And Justice for All project has been made possible by the University of Hawai‘i-Mānoa: Diversity and Equity Initiative, Dean of College of Arts and Humanities, Departments of American Studies, Art and Art History, Ethnic Studies and Political Science, and the Center for Philippine Studies.

And Justice for All was co-organized by Vernadette Gonzales and Trisha Lagaso Goldberg. Thirtyninehotel Gallery Director and Curator Trisha Lagaso Goldberg curated the exhibition.

**General information: Location:** 39 N. Hotel St., 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor **Hours:** Tuesday-Saturday 4 pm-2 am; closed Sunday and Monday. General info: 808.599.2552, [www.thirtyninehotel.com](http://www.thirtyninehotel.com)

*thirtyninehotel's mission and purpose is to create a two-way bridge between Hawai'i and the world through interdisciplinary and mixed-media contemporary art and music projects. thirtyninehotel is dedicated to finding new ways of building local networks with diverse communities in Hawai'i. thirtyninehotel is a joint venture between painters Gelareh Khoie and Richard Earl Leong Yu Hadad Ralya and producer/DJ Harvey Basset.*