

• FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE •

**Yumi Janairo Roth and Emmanuel David**  
*Last Year's Wonders All Surpassed*

January 23 — February 22, 2025  
**Opening Reception: Thursday, January 23, 5–8 pm**  
**Artist Talk: Saturday, February 22, 5–8 pm**  
Free and open to the public | Artists in attendance

David B. Smith Gallery is proud to present *Last Year's Wonders All Surpassed*, a collaborative exhibition by Yumi Janairo Roth and Emmanuel David. The exhibition, whose title is drawn from the advertising phrases of Buffalo Bill's Wild West, examines the place of the Filipino cowboy on the world stage.

The show features new work including, *11,111*, a series of over 130 paintings and a two-channel video that tracks the miles traversed by a trio of Filipino Rough Riders as they performed on tour across the United States with Buffalo Bill's Wild West in 1899. Produced collaboratively with jeepney sign painters in metro Manila, these vibrantly colored paintings are shown alongside contemporary portraits of participants in the Rodeo Masbateño, an annual festival in the Philippines that showcases the long history of the livestock industry and its related cowboy culture across the island nation.

*Last Year's Wonders All Surpassed* reimagines histories of the American West through the lens of U.S.-Philippine relations. In 1898 the United States defeated Spain in the Spanish American War and acquired the Philippines, Puerto Rico, and Guam as overseas colonies. The following year, in the shadow of the newly declared Philippine American War, Buffalo Bill's Wild West hired three Filipinos to perform as part of the show's Congress of Rough Riders of the World. It is with this historical backdrop that Roth and David have been exploring the long-forgotten stories of Filipinos in Wild West shows and contemporary cowboy culture in the Philippines.

During the 1899 season, Buffalo Bill's Wild West traveled 11,111 miles and mounted 300 shows in towns and cities across the US. *11,111* commemorates all of the places Buffalo Bill's Wild West and by extension the Filipino Rough Riders visited. The signs in *11,111* draw on vernacular painting styles common throughout the Philippines, mixing English, Spanish, and Filipino as well as historic advertising language and contemporary Filipino slang to announce a collective arrival.

Ranching traditions in the Philippines predate American occupation, with cattle brought over during the Spanish colonial era (1565-1898). Masbate island, well-known for its cattle culture, hosts an annual rodeo festival, the Rodeo Masbateño, which features both student and professional competitors. The entire city is immersed in rodeo and rodeo-related events, from immense parades to city-wide line dancing to the chaotic juego de toro, where yearling cattle are released into the city to be subdued and captured by residents. Competitors from all over the Philippines participate in different rodeo events. Large-scale portraits by Roth and David capture quiet moments with some of the participants before and after their events in the rodeo arena.



Yumi Janairo Roth and Emmanuel David, *Clark*, 2024, archival ink on hahnemuhle paper, 45 x 30 in. (114.3 x 76.2 cm)

## **About Yumi Janairo Roth and Emmanuel David**

For the last two decades, Yumi Janairo Roth's practice as an artist has included public interventions, participatory and socially-engaged projects, and site-responsive sculpture. Her work has been presented at the Walker Art Center in Minneapolis, the Marjorie Barrick Museum of Art in Las Vegas, MCA Denver, Grand Central Art Center in Santa Ana, and the Vargas Museum and the Ayala Museum, both in metro Manila. She teaches Sculpture and Post Studio Practice at the University of Colorado Boulder.

Emmanuel David is an interdisciplinary artist-scholar whose work highlights the intersections of gender, sexuality, and globalization, especially in the racialized contexts of US-Philippine relations. He is associate professor of Women and Gender Studies at the University of Colorado Boulder.

Yumi Janairo Roth and Emmanuel David's collaborative research and practice examines the experiences of Filipino performers in Wild West shows of the late nineteenth century in connection with the Spanish-American and Philippine-American wars. Their collaborative artwork has been shown at the MCA Denver, Amon Carter Museum of American Art, and Autry Museum of the American West. Related scholarship from the project has been published in *Journal of Asian American Studies*, and the project has been covered in *New York Review of Books*, *GMA News*, and regional and local papers where their Filipino Rough Riders projects have been realized. The project is part of the permanent collection at the Autry Museum of the American West and the Lunder Institute at the Colby College Museum of Art.

## **About David B. Smith Gallery**

David B. Smith Gallery is committed to presenting intelligent and culturally relevant exhibitions in its Denver location, featuring the region's most important emerging talent alongside internationally recognized artists. Through its curatorial program, participation in art fairs, and extensive media coverage in publications such as *Artforum*, *Art in America*, and *ARTnews*, David B. Smith Gallery has cultivated a strong regional, national and international collector audience. *The New York Times* hailed the gallery as offering "an exciting contrast of cutting edge works." The gallery also maintains an active publishing division, which produces exhibition catalogues and editions.

David B. Smith Gallery is a member of the New Art Dealers Alliance (NADA).

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