

DESIGN DECODED 2021 : ART EXHIBITION



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## Rommel Tingzon

### ”Young Madonna and Child“

This painting entitled “Young Madonna and Child” is a contemporary interpretation based on the current situation of society in our country, the Philippines. Filipino teenage pregnancy is the most important problem of women today in the Philippines. The young mother and child is portrayed in the classical style with lighting coming from the right. The painting has a dark, textured background. A young Filipino woman in a blue shirt carrying a naked baby on her shoulder represents a young mother having a baby at an early age. The innocent look of a young mother in the painting shows the quandaries she faces as a young mother. The absolute love and bond between mother and child implies a clear and significant message to the viewer. She is not looking at the child but rather looks to her future and the reality of the cultural conditions and the poverty that is the Philippines. The boundless love of the mother to her child in the darkness or brightness of their life is shown in the background color. The seriousness and expression of emotions can also be seen.

According to a survey conducted by Social Weather Stations, Filipino teenage pregnancy is the most pressing issue facing women in the Philippines today. The Philippines has the second highest rate of teenage pregnancy in Southeast Asia based on the ‘Save the Children’s Global Childhood’ report from 2019. According to Philippine Statistical Authority from 2017, roughly 538 babies are born every day and nearly 200,000 teenagers get pregnant every year, some of whom are under the age of 13. These young women may be almost completely unprepared for motherhood even though as children themselves, they are responsible to raise a baby. As a predominant Catholic and Christian country, birth control is obsolete and even planned parenthood is rare. 90% of births between the ages of 15 and 19 result in early marriage or living with parents who assist in the child’s upbringing. Many young women choose motherhood over a higher education and having a baby does prevent further educational opportunities. Moreover, unmarried and pregnant adolescents can also experience violence in a marriage or partnership. The painting “Young Mother and Child” speaks to the young modern Filipino women’s experiences as a young mother in Filipino culture. Poverty, violence and lack of education may make it difficult to raise a child in this setting, yet Filipino families are known for their strong love. Through this painting, I hope it will be able to convey a message regarding the current issue of teenage pregnancy in the country of Philippines as well as around the world.

**ROMMEL TINGZON**  
”Young Madonna and Child“

Oil on canvas  
16 x 21.5 inches  
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