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Event Title	:	Aesthetic Police
Venue	:	ROH Projects, Equity Tower 40E, SCBD Lot 9, Jl. Jend Sudirman Kav 52-53, Jakarta 12190
Name of Organizer	:	ROH Projects, in collaboration with Silverlens Galleries
Contact details	:	Danti (+6287822897663) / danti@rohprojects.net
Type of Event	:	Solo Exhibition
Date	:	5-12 June 2018, and 26 June – 10 July 2018, opens on 5 June 2018 at 6 pm

ROH Projects is pleased to present Manila-based artist Pow Martinez' first solo exhibition, Aesthetic Police, in Indonesia, an outcome of a month-long residency program at OPQRStudio, Bandung. In this show, Martinez (b. 1983) continues his ongoing aesthetic exploration into the outer limits and intersections of vanity/beauty and ugliness/honesty in and out of context. At first glance, Martinez' paintings seem naive, or deceptively one-dimensional in nature. His works appear almost child-like due to their cartoonish nature, and developed out of purely intuitive considerations. The compositions are vivid and colourful, but they are difficult to photograph and appear almost flat and inert under the camera lens.

So seeing images of Martinez' paintings on a digital screen or in a printed catalogue is one thing. Encountering his works in person, especially in context of a more comprehensive articulation of ideas such as in Aesthetic Police, results in a remarkably visceral experience into this medium of painting. Beneath the seemingly banal, defaced characters and symbols in Martinez' works, there is a sense of great honesty that the artist attempts to communicate in relation to the more existential explorations universal to the human condition. In contrast to artists of this more figurative genre throughout the region, Martinez' works are devoid of any direct socio-political representation, and are instead filled with mythologies that originate from within Martinez' own lexicon. The figures he paints are often-times in some form of recreation or leisure, and it is almost as if these characters are ignorant to the situations happening around them. In other paintings, conventionally very grim situations, such as a burning down car, are painted in a contradictory, almost joyful manner.

In many ways, it seems to be the case that Martinez opens up the conversation regarding his works for the viewer to insert his/her own narratives and viewpoints into his paintings. In a sense, the paintings then act as a mirror that shines light upon the viewer's own perspectives, perspectives he/she may not have known existed there in the first place.

Pow Martinez uses a lot of camouflage as a recurring pattern in his works, and perhaps this is an apt metaphor to describe his practice. Under the surface, Martinez' works conceal a much greater complexity of attitudes and philosophies towards art history as well as explorations into the greater conversation of meaning and purpose. It almost appears as if Martinez deliberately hides his own angst and perspectives below layers and layers of paint, and it is the meticulous, careful exploration into his practice that becomes extremely rewarding to the viewer. To Martinez, camouflage resembles the idea of being part of a group, or official designation. It is also a threatening symbol, of uniformity and obedience. To what extent, then, is an individual a part of a greater whole? How does one escape from the trappings of societal expectations and formulaic channels of living? Watch out, here comes the Aesthetic Police.

- JUN TIRTADJI