

ART + FEMINISM

This is an excerpt (translated version) from an interview with Paolo Gerero, a local artist from Daet, Camarines Sur, during the Art and Feminism in the Philippines Campaign 2021.

Question 1: What is the state of the art here in Bicol, is it constantly evolving or is there a decline in activities due to the current pandemic?

Paolo: The growth of art and culture in Bicol continues despite the scourge of the pandemic. Like the stem-cut plant, it had lateral buds in the virtual world. Proof of this is the migration of activities that were previously done exclusively face-to-face into the Internet space - art exhibitions, zines, plays, and more.

Question 2: Are artists or cultural organizations aware of the importance of women in the arts or does the old-fashioned aspect of patriarchy still emerge?

Paolo: A large portion of art students are still immersed in the quicksand of patriarchy. There needs to be a greater insistence on the equality of all genders, especially in places like ours, which are still the nest of cis-heteropatriarchal thinking. But there is a gradual awakening and urgency, especially among art students in the LGBTQIA+community. I think it is in this community that the emergence of awareness of the importance of women - all types of women - in art and culture will come.

Question: As one of those acting for the arts and promoting Feminism, what are some ways you have done or led this past to the present for this cause?

Paolo: One of the steps I and the Korsakri Art Space are currently taking for extending and deepening the issue of intersectional feminism is the creation of an exhibit of the works of LGBTQIA+ art students to be on display this Pride Month in Korsakri. I have never heard of an exhibition like this in Bicol - although there is always space for queer creators and works in most visual art performances in the region, I have never heard of an exclusive performance by queer creators, where their voices are not just part, but the focus of the task itself.

Question: What is your suggestion for art and literature to co-produce programs affiliated with Feminism?

Paolo: Let us take advantage of the current climate of majority dependence on technology to promote intersectional feminism by sharing artwork, literature, drama, music, and other works about and for women, freedom, and equality. Let's give space to the voices that have long been strained to be muffled to share their story.