

## splits from the past; the present bifurcates; repeat

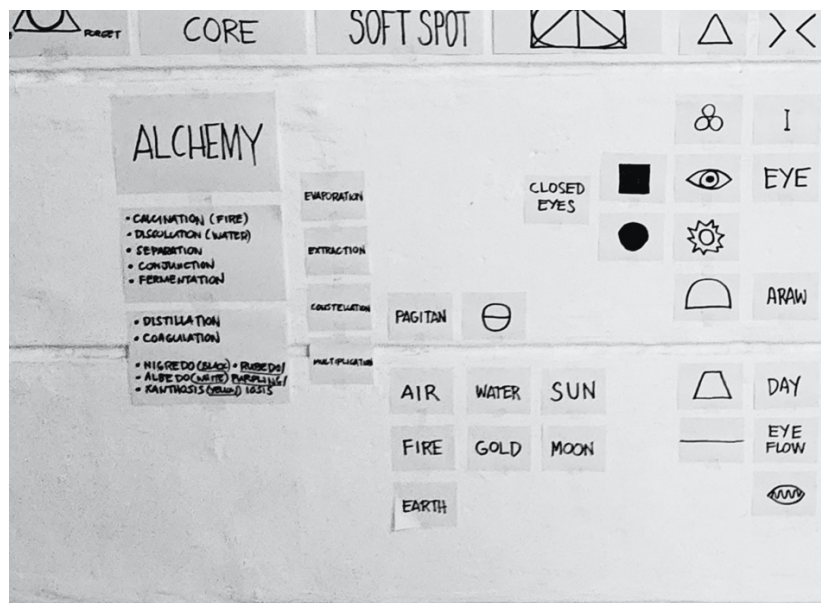
notes for Wipo's "Mula Bituin Hanggang Buto"

by Raymond de Borja

Among the early nudges that moved Wipo toward his ongoing art practice was an encounter with Frank Stella's *Moby Dick*, two large-scale wall reliefs constructed from 138 pieces of paintings and sculptures.

Herman Melville adored the semicolon.

MEMORY makes of present and past a continually shifting dynamic – Wipo, here, asks: Can this be a color? When Proust dipped the madeleine in his tea, it was not the taste of the cake he had to remember, but the colors of the rooms he had eaten it; the long sentences of Proust unspool what could otherwise have been a palimpsest of Belle Époque rooms: dream and waking life blur in the Combray room of Proust's childhood, the ambient noise of gossip transfixes the smoky, desirous air of the Guermantes room; Wipo seeks for memory its virtual form, approximates its immediacy, paints its palimpsests, composes its originary, instantaneous spool: *Bulalakaw 1*: a car crash, the site of near-death experience no longer visible, overpainted with streaks, smeared with varying thicknesses of paint; the setting of shock engulfed by the moment of shock; shock crashes and emanates near the picture plane's center; *Bula-kalu*: the hood of a car, sprayed, splattered, repeatedly pounded; predominantly, the spectra darken, ring to the deeper reds, violets, and grays; a bruise; splotches and marks and sprays murk; the experience of experience is a muddled suspension; painting involves an extraordinary amount of noise; the dense dripwork of memory gushes to a deep purple, mauves; mauve, before it was pigment, was the byproduct of failed quinine synthesis; the ersatz manufacture of the cure for malaria leads to the making of the first aniline dye; in Plato, color was pharmakon: poison and cure; the repetition of memories, in art, in dream, is the repetition of poison as cure; a compulsion; in Freud, we repeat our grueling experiences, unconsciously, to ourselves, as a form of trauma mastery; a solution; a conjunction; a dissolution; calcination; distillation; a fermentation; coagulation; the biochemical closing of a wound; painting is alchemical technology; a semicolon cleaves; Wipo smears paint on his



(alchemy: photo of notes on the wall taken by author in Wipo's studio)

surfaces with a knife, with a tripod, with the canvas edge of another painting; the practice of painting involves an extraordinary amount of sound; he scratches the surface repetitively, in swirls, with a claw hammer; hammer becomes paintbrush; streaks of paint become whistling wind; a facture is a gale force; the painter is an abstract machine: reading, listening, accumulating, then marking, splotching, pounding, scarring -- a processual production that recalls the factories that surrounded him in his youth: his making shaped by sounds, gradients and temperatures, by the surfaces and forms, by the labor and processes of chemical industry; a star is both chemical and alchemical foundry; a sun is at once a hypotactic and a paratactic factory; in its routine explosion, in its continual interplay with astronomical bodies and weather, dust and sky, the sun is the continuous production of novel color; color is relational,



*(factories named after stars: photos of calling cards from Wipo's childhood ephemera)*

even in its novelty; here, ungoverned by shape, it enfolds reading and listening, memory and machines, sun; Wipo captures the shock of immediacy by pigment, its weights and viscosities and collateral sounds, through a practice that reaches for a vocabulary beyond the optics of color, engulfed in color's sonics, its haptics, texture and textuality; surge, flux, swirl; squint your eyes to make new color; recall; the painting of the experience of memory multiplies memory's difference; a past splits from a past; the present bifurcates; repeat.

## SOURCES

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