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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **Garel Fine Art Makes Landmark Debut at the San Francisco Art Fair Championing Filipino Voices Alongside Blue-Chip Icons**

**San Francisco, CA** — In a moment that feels both timely and transformative, **Garel Fine Art** arrives at the **San Francisco Art Fair** for its first-ever art fair presentation—marking a bold new chapter for a gallery that has already redefined what access, advocacy, and excellence can look like in today’s art world.

After a groundbreaking two-year pop-up space in Manhattan Beach and a strategic transition to a dynamic online model, **Garel Fine Art** steps onto the fair stage with a presentation that is as intellectually rigorous as it is emotionally resonant. At its core: a curatorial thesis that places Filipino and underrepresented voices in direct dialogue with blue-chip masterworks—a rare and compelling juxtaposition that is poised to become one of the fair’s most talked-about booths.

Founder and Director Joanna Garel brings to this debut a 25-year journey as a collector, artist, and arts educator. Early in her collecting life, she realized her exposure—like much of the market—was overwhelmingly limited to white male artists. That realization evolved into a mission. Through her work as a curator, art advisor and gallery owner, Garel became deeply committed to championing women artists, artists of color, and particularly Filipino artists whose contributions to contemporary art have too often been overlooked in Western markets.

“This presentation is about visibility, access, and institutional relevance,” says Garel. “I want new collectors to feel welcomed into the conversation, while seasoned collectors and institutions discover artists whose work belongs in major collections.”

#### **A Booth Designed for Institutional Attention**

In a rare and historic moment for collectors and curators alike, Garel Fine Art will present an exceptional work by Martino Abellana, revered as the “Dean of Cebuano Painters.” Known affectionately as “Maestro Tinong,” Abellana’s influence shaped generations of Filipino artists and laid the foundation for Cebu’s vibrant artistic community. Works of this caliber seldom appear on the market, making this a standout moment within the fair.

At the heart of the presentation is Maryrose C. Mendoza, a Filipina contemporary artist and Guggenheim Fellow, whose work explores personal narratives, material significance, and transformation forging re-imagined loss, memory, and history. With a preference for the handmade, Mendoza synthesizes pre-existing images and objects into a visual language toward broadening inherited cultural narratives. Fresh from an exhibition at the Craft Contemporary and a talk at the Hammer Museum during Frieze Week, presenting the third annual Voices of the Diaspora symposium organized by the Asian American Pacific Islander Arts Network (AAPIAN), Mendoza’s inclusion signals the gallery’s commitment to museum-caliber programming.

The presentation continues with richly layered oil paintings by Kiley Ames, whose intricate surfaces reward prolonged viewing, and surrealistic portraiture by Mercedes Cornett, whose works were recently acquired by the African American Museum of Dallas and the Crocker Art Museum, along with a beautiful masterpiece by the artist Delfin Finley, whom Garel discovered when he was still an art student. Emerging voices include Fumie Coello, Richard Elms, fellow Filipino artists Amelie Laurice, and Millie Velasco, alongside works by Garel herself.

In a striking curatorial dialogue, these artists will be shown in conversation with rare blue-chip works by Jonas Wood and Ed Ruscha, underscoring Garel Fine Art’s unique position: a gallery where new collectors can enter the market with confidence and seasoned collectors can discover museum-worthy voices they may not yet know.

Garel Fine Art's debut is not simply a booth—it is a statement about where the art world is going. By centering Filipino artistry within a broader contemporary canon and pairing it with established blue-chip names, the gallery creates a compelling case for collectors, curators, and institutions to reconsider who is seen, collected, and celebrated.

At a fair known for excellence, Garel Fine Art promises to be a destination.

### **About Garel Fine Art**

Founded by Joanna Garel, Garel Fine Art is a curatorial platform dedicated to elevating underrepresented artists while maintaining a strong dialogue with established blue-chip works. Following a successful Manhattan Beach, CA pop-up and a transition to an innovative online model, the gallery continues to create accessible pathways for new collectors and meaningful discovery for seasoned patrons.

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