

# SADIA PINEDA THE SONG OF MY LIFE

## GALLERY ONE

*The Song of My Life* (2020), 10 mins.

Cardiff based artist and writer Sadia Pineda Hameed (b. London 1995) was invited to exhibit alongside *Undo Things Done* by Sean Edwards. Both artists address ideas of inheritance in their work, particularly the stories that are passed down within families, especially from mothers. Pineda Hameed's mother and her experiences of emigrating from the Philippines to the UK is the focus of her recent film *tiny bubbles in the wine* (2019). The artist's tender and deliberately fragmentary way of telling her mother's story continues here in *The Song of My Life*.

Pineda Hameed's new film *The Song of My Life* (2020) takes its audio visual style from pop karaoke videos, 1970s melodramas and ballads. It is a duet of absences indicated by a missing vocal partner and gaps in the backing track, an easy listening song of the same name from 1971 by Filipino actress and singer Nora Aunor.

Atmospheric and dreamlike, Pineda Hameed weaves together mesmerising images filmed by the artist of light hitting water, waves on the sea and illuminated flowers with found footage of crushed cars and a TV romance. These visuals combine with a script that shifts our attention between what we hear, what we read, what the artist tells us, what her mother cannot directly say about her life, and the silences in between. The collaging of these elements creates a fragmentary narrative of loss and longing.

The artist is interested in the gaps in the telling of stories, what she calls the "quiet and misunderstood spaces" where secrets held within a family may be sensed or implied. The need to look for meaning in hidden or alternative spaces also results from living under colonialism, with the Philippines having been

held under colonial rule for over three hundred years by Spain and nearly fifty under USA. Estrangement between generations is therefore also the consequence of the suppression of cultures, languages, names, traditions, rights, livelihoods, land and forced emigrations.

The artist proposes that the collective and individual traumas each generation carries with them may find their release in silences, omissions and decoys. In the things that cannot be directly told, yet may still be understood. The visual decoys here, that stand in for what a mother cannot tell her daughter about life and loss, include the hyperreal dream of flowers at night exposed by artificial light and the popping of bubbles on the shore.

Abundant with clues and coded references, watching and re-watching *The Song of My Life* is like experiencing the retelling of a story, with new significances emerging over and over.

## GLOSSARY

Collaging means combining photos, clippings or small objects onto a surface or here images, text and sound within a film.

Karaoke is an instrumental version of a popular song. Lyrics are displayed on a video screen, along with a moving symbol to guide the singer.

Nora Aunor is a Filipino actress, singer and film producer born in 1935. She has recorded over 200 songs and released over 50 albums.

Hyperreal is either an extremely naturalistic or exaggerated version of reality.

Colonialism is the practice of acquiring full or partial political control over another country, occupying it with settlers, and exploiting it economically.

Decoy is a person, device, or event meant as a distraction.