

## **A CANADIAN FIRST: WORKS BY PHILIPPINE PAINTER MANUEL OCAMPO AT THE MUSÉE D'ART CONTEMPORAIN STARTING FEBRUARY 4**

Montréal, January 24, 1995. The Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal is giving the first Canadian showing of the work of Philippine-born artist **Manuel Ocampo**. The exhibition, which runs from February 4 to March 26, contains a dozen or so of his recent paintings. Ocampo's works examine social misery and the human condition, and often focus on religious themes.

### **Denunciatory painting**

The religious subjects tackled by Manuel Ocampo arise out of the Hispanic Christian tradition; the resulting works are inspired by popular art of the colonial era. Exhibition curator Réal Lussier says: "Drawing from the culture of his country of origin, which fell in turn under Spanish and then American domination, Ocampo combines depictions of medieval figures of saints and torturers, or grotesque scenes, with inscriptions and abstract symbols." His paintings constitute naive representations using strong, garish colours.

The curator further emphasizes the denunciatory nature of the artist's images. "Mingling and manipulating diverse sources in a style that is sometimes apocalyptic or surrealistic, Manuel Ocampo challenges the symbols of power and denounces all forms of subjugation or submission." Lussier adds: "Both the contemporary world and past centuries provide [Ocampo with] examples of oppression of peoples and individuals for the benefit of an ideology or system."

### **Meeting with Manuel Ocampo on February 3 at 4 p.m.**

The artist will meet the public on Friday February 3 at 4 p.m., when he will discuss various aspects of his artistic approach. The meeting will be held in the *Banque Laurentienne* gallery.

### **Previous exhibitions**

Born in Quezon City, in the Philippines, Manuel Ocampo has lived in Los Angeles since 1986. He has participated in a large number of exhibitions since the mid-eighties. In 1992, he took part in the Kassel *Documenta*, and then *Helter Skelter* at the Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles. In 1991, Ocampo presented his work at the Saatchi Collection in London.

The **MANUEL OCAMPO** exhibition is the fifteenth presentation in the Project Series. This series offers a forum for young artists exploring bold new avenues and for artists who have reached a certain level of maturity in their expression. Since its inception, the Project Series has brought us the works of François-Marie Bertrand, Michèle Waquant, Joseph Branco, Guillermo Kuitca, Guy Pellerin, Sylvie Readman, Eric Cameron, Jean-Jules Soucy, Claude Hamelin, Laurie Walker, Jana Sterbak, Thomas Corriveau, Alain Paiement and Jean-François Cantin.

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