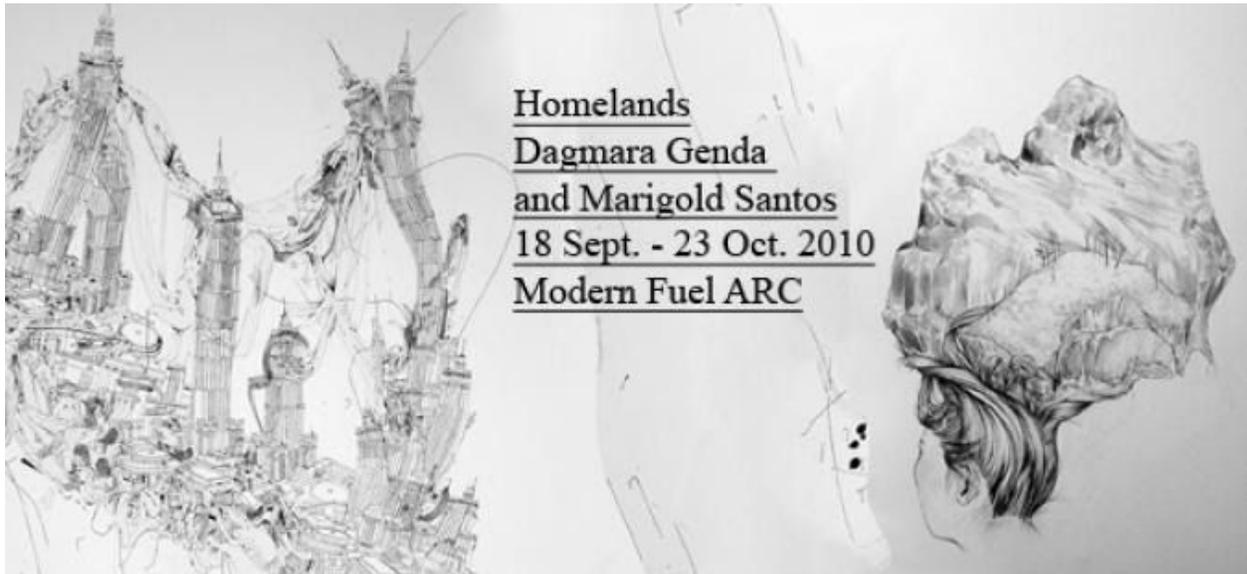


HOMELANDS



In the Main Gallery: Homelands with Dagmara Genda and Marigold Santos 18 September – 23 October, 2010
Reception: Saturday 25 September 2010 @7pm "Homelands" pairs the drawings of Dagmara Genda and Marigold Santos, highlighting the role of place and space in the construction of identity. Genda's practice stems from three interests that inter-relate and inform each other -- nationalism, space, and identity -- topics that directly relate to her childhood immigration from Communist Poland to Canada. Her drawings in this exhibition bring together Soviet and Western influences. Santos presents a series of drawings inspired by childhood memories of her family's immigration from the Philippines when she was six years old. Visitors to "Homelands" will be awarded multiple points of entry into a surreal exploration of a continuous search for the physical or fantastical notions of home. Genda and Santos will be presenting artist talks in the Education Tent of the Kingston Multi-Cultural Festival in Kingston's Confederation Park at 2 and 3pm on Saturday the 25th of September.

Homelands Photos

Dagmara Genda (Saskatoon, SK) is a Polish-Canadian artist and writer with a BFA Honours in painting at the University of Manitoba and an MFA at the University of Western Ontario. Genda has exhibited cross-country with the support of the Saskatchewan Arts Board, published with Locus Suspectus magazine and written for Forest City Gallery in London, Ontario and AKA Gallery in Saskatoon. **Marigold Santos** (Montreal, QC) pursues an inter-disciplinary art practice involving drawn and printed works, sculpture, animation, and sound. She completed her BFA in Print at the University of Calgary in 2006, is a recipient of numerous awards, and has exhibited her work within Canada, United States, and Japan.

Exhibition Essay

Where are her homelands? What dissonance, details, dreamscapes draw us into these works? Here, homelands are grounding and uprooting, growing identity and transplanting personal and public histories and mythologies. Weaving and unravelling, gathering together and pouring forth, collapsing and transforming, energy abounds in these drawings and sculpture by Marigold Santos and Dagmara Genda. Genda, who immigrated to Canada from Poland with her family, entwines political history with urban architecture. Her series on The Palace of Culture and Science in

Warsaw (Stalin's 'gift' to Poland), surges with movement, both destructive and dynamic. Motifs from other works and series---wallpaper, cats, eerie, sinuous creatures, are repeated and suggest the urge to both succumb to and resist continuity in memory, if not history. Genda's rendering of Stalin shifts from the horrific to the ridiculous: he rots, he stares, he smokes his pipe like a benign 'Papa Joe', he sits like a member of The Village People in his underpants. The wickedly cartoonish cats which appear with him are reminiscent of Bulgakov's feline Behemoth from *The Master and Margarita*---a demon-like creature with a fondness for vodka, chess and pistols. History and mythology jostle each other in the work of Marigold Santos as well, and she not only includes mythological creatures (asuang, anitos) from her native Philippines, she reinvents them as more organic beings literally growing from the land. The asuang, traditionally a vampire-like creature, and the anitos, its ghostly counterpart, reappear throughout her work, proposing the notion of multiple selves and other beings in various contexts. Some selves are dreaming, joined to earth or separated into solitary islands. Others carry their homes on their backs and travel through a landscape of constant change. Santos' interest in transformation includes the information that the anitos transforms at death into a mountain or the phosphorescent glow of deadwood in a forest, hence the lurid colouring in her blacklight drawings. And clearly transformation, both life-giving and destructive, growing and unravelling, is an underlying narrative in her work. The delicate tints in the drawings of both artists, the dream-like expressions of Santos' female figures, belie the energy and exuberance created by their ongoing explorations of self, history and identity as they map the physical and psychological movement from one part of the globe to another. They draw, literally and figuratively, on memory, stories, shapes remembered or recounted, the songs of growth and change. In doing so, they invite us to consider our own definitions of homelands, our own rootedness in, or alienation from our own places of memory, geography and imagination. Essay by Donna-lee Iffla. *Donna-lee Iffla is a performance poet and Secretary of the Modern Fuel Board of Directors.*