

MASTERS OF THEIR WORLDS

Dwelling on youth's unbridled drive for improvement coupled with the refinement brought by experience—the greatest of teachers—bring to mind these four notable visual artists under 35. We take a peek into the minds of these creatives, as we learn what fuels them to keep on creating and ruling their worlds.

BY CHELZEE G. SALERA

PHOTOGRAPHY BY KURT FICK

GROOMING BY AIKO LEBUMFACIL AND BEA KRAUS



KRING DEMETRIO

Telling tales of magical worlds, lovelorn deities, strange creatures and worlds long forgotten is what Kring Demetrio devotes her life to. This 30-year-old book illustrator creates portals to other dimensions with characters meticulously drawn, one book at a time.

"My mother tells me I was five years old when I began to draw. She gave me and my sister a drawing book to fill in each year," said Kring.

Kring is Cebu's very own book illustrator who won the 2018 Lampara Book's Children's Illustration award; she then illustrated a picture book with Lampara Books entitled "Ang Lumang Makina ni Lola Mina" (Lola Mina's Old Sewing Machine) written by Mary Grace Borja and launched in Quezon City.

However, before her stars aligned, the path to pursuing a career in the arts was not easy.

"I was often told that 'art is for the elite or the rich,' and we were neither. I started to rebel from the idea. I began selling drawings at third grade for P10 each. I'd earn just enough to buy

more bond paper and some 'Sailor Moon' stickers for inspiration. Sometimes, I'd take inspiration from the paintings in encyclopedias and fairy tale books in our home library," said Kring.

"By nine years old, I was reading art books on composition, color and lives of the artists. I barely understood any of it, of course, but they gave me an idea and some depth on the beauty and complexity of art. I believe the desire to create with a purpose started there," said Kring.

Kring was initially influenced by Japanese manga and anime. In her late teens, though, her art took a different turn.

"I realized I wanted to express art in a different voice. So I started to imitate Renaissance and old masters' drawings from the school library. I developed a personal technique of using the pencil different from academic instruction. That was when I began to grow a preference for the graphite medium."

Despite young artists transitioning to digital art, Kring continues to find comfort in using the pencil to convey the stories

of her characters. The graphite medium enables her "to tell stories and to evoke a sense of nostalgia in people."

"My art is a reminder of older, younger and simpler times when all one had was a pencil and paper," said Kring. After finding her medium, Kring found a mentor who influenced her greatly.

He taught me to understand fundamentals. He cultivated an intellectual and technical perspective on art, and it affected my work more strongly than any of my earlier influences. I moved from a drawer who simply drew prettiness, to someone who prioritized finding intention, structure and storytelling with her images," said Kring.

Today, her style is a blend of the different phases she has gone through: Japanese manga, classical drawings and personal monsters.

Unlike many other artists, Kring graduated with a degree in Philosophy, which was also because of her love for literature. This allowed her to read more books that helped her in her art.

"Books are hidden worlds, other dimensions and open secrets. They are elders of the imagination. They widen knowledge and dreams at the same time. At some point, books were all I had. I'd scour the library for illustrated stories. As a visual person, pictures helped me understand a story more. They took perspective and detail from words and made them cohesive and coherent to me. From books, I've nurtured the desire to give life to words and worlds."

Inkanto
Kring Demetrio

