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Why Jigger Cruz Now Paints for Leisure

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If there's one thing you can't make an artist do, it's to hurry up with their art. It's not because they're lazy. Rather, they're too hardworking—they take months drying up paints, and perfecting form to suggest content.

Take Jigger Cruz. On some days, he plays drums for his rock band Tether. But a great part of his lifetime revolves around a tedious painting process where—he admits—he barely knows what he's doing. Deadlines are added pains. And so now, Jigger paints for leisure more than a living.

"Painting as a job takes out the fun sometimes, you know?" says Jigger. As someone who recently finished a series of shows and raked in a turnover of almost nine million pesos, he knows that this isn't all play.



“It makes your head hurt, trust me,” he says, “I don’t know how to protect myself [as an artist]. I am not versed in the business of art, and starting out, I didn’t know the kind of people I should’ve avoided. I learned eventually that there are do’s and don’ts. And that exhausted me.”

Jigger also knows another thing he can do now: live and work on his own time sans an official representative. He deals with clients and curators directly. “I’m stubborn,” he says with a shrug. “And I like being in control of my schedule. It’s not that I don’t need an agent. I just don’t like pissing people off when I’m being irresponsible.”

An artist like him is especially grateful to art collector Norman Crisologo, not just because he provided him sales when there was none, but also because he gives unprecedented advice.

“I had no source of income. No one bought my paintings, except Norman. He is one of the very few people who tells me what they truly think of my work, especially when they think it’s bad,” says Jigger.

After his successful series of shows, Jigger now patiently makes art sans rules and time on his mind.

Photos by Tammy David

Source: Mara Santillan Miano for Red magazine, May 2015.

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