The lecture will look into photojournalism as a form of advocacy and mourning and the ambivalent effects of aestheticizing images of corpses. By examining the photographs of corpses and their survivors in the context of Duterte’s narco- and necro-politics - I will ask what it means to be a witness. What sort of moral agency is implied by the witnessing of traumatic events? How is witnessing as a way of humanizing the inhuman conditions of the drug war produced? How is it repeatedly endangered? What is the fate of photographic images as these circulate in the capitalist marketplace among anonymous viewers?

Speaker
Vicente L. Rafael is the Giovanni and Ann Costigan Endowed Professor of History at the University of Washington in Seattle. He is the author of several works including Contracting Colonialism, White Love and Other Events in Filipino History, The Promise of the Foreign and Motherless Tongues: The Insurgency of Language Amid Wars of Translation. Most recently, he has edited and written the Introduction for Nick Joaquin, The Woman Who Had Two Navels and Tales of the Tropical Gothic for Penguin Classics.

Panel Discussion
The lecture will be followed by an in-conversation panel with Ashley Thompson, Professor of South East Asian Art and Chair of the Centre of South East Asian Studies (SOAS) 
Fenella Cannell, Professor of Social Anthropology (LSE)
John Sidel, Professor of International and Comparative Politics (LSE)
Chiara Zambarano, Journalist (ABS-CBN)

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