

Fil-Am playwright's work presented in New York

THE New York-based, non-profit Diverse City Theatre Company (DCT) presented *Resurrection*, a play by Fil-Am poet and playwright Eric Gamalinda at the Kalayaan Hall of the Philippine Consulate General at 556 Fifth Ave., New York last March 16, 2009.

Presented as part of the DCT Green Room's 2009 Winter Series, *Resurrection* was directed by Victor Lirio, with actors Ching Valdes-Aran, Andrew Eisenman, Randy Falcon and Luz Lor playing the lead characters.

The play is about how the unexplained death of a young woman triggers a series of relentless changes in a family and tears it apart. As relationships unravel and secrets emerge, the mother, her two sons, and an incongruous daughter-in-law, unable to cope with new realities, find themselves trapped in an infernal cycle of denial and loneliness.

Eric Gamalinda is the recipient of The Carlos Palanca Memorial Awards (the Philippines' Pulitzer Prize) for fiction, poetry, essay and playwriting. Some of the many awards and grants for his writing include the Asian American Literary Award for Zero Gravity, the New York Foundation for

the Arts, the Philippine Centennial Literary Prize for *My Sad Republic*, and the National Book Award for Planet Waves. His stories have been anthologized by Penguin Books, Rutgers University Press, Soft Skull, Fromm International, and Feltrinelli (Milan). He was Publications Director of the Asian American Writers' Workshop, Distinguished Visiting Writer at the University of Hawaii in Manoa in 1999, and Visiting Scholar at New York University's Asia Pacific American Studies Program in 2002-2003. He currently teaches at Columbia University's Center for the Study of Ethnicity and Race.

Diverse City Theater Company (DCT) develops and produces powerful and thought-provoking works that explore and examine our society's diversity issues from social, cultural, gender and demographic perspectives; creates multiculturally fluent theater audiences; and advocates the non-traditional casting of actors to reflect the rich spectrum of our national culture and universality of the human spirit.

Since 2005, The DCT's Green Room has presented over 100 artist playwrights, directors and actors including



Eric Gamalinda

Tony Award- Winner Marian Seldes; Laila Robins; Michael Cumpsty; Obie Award winner Ching Valdes-Aran; Drama Desk Winner Amy Warren; Theater, Film & Television Actress Susan Misner; NEA-honoree Cassandra Medley; Maxine Kern; Jamie Richards; Jordan Beswick; Carlos Armesto; Andrew Bergh; Steven Ditmyer; Jorshinelle Taleon-Sonza; Stuart Harris; Jason Tam; Cindy Cheung; Raul Aranas; Joe Byers; Robert Askins; Rona Figueroa; Linda Faigao-Hall; James McManus; Amy Hartman; Christine Toy Johnson; Kristine Reyes; Pearl Sun; Lydia Stryk; Sal Inzerillo; Rodney To; Victor Maog; May Adrales; Jessi Hill, among others. ■

United Batangueños to induct new officers

by CELY DE SAGUN-ANURAN

THE United Batangueños of Southern California, Inc. (UBSCI), the largest Batangueños organization in the United States, will celebrate its 21st Anniversary and Induction-Coronation Ball on Saturday, May 9, 2009 at the California Ballroom of the Sheraton Downtown Los Angeles Hotel in Los Angeles.

At 6:30 pm, a No-Host Bar starts and program will commence promptly at 7:15. Dinner will be served at 7:30 pm Installation Ceremonies follow immediately after the welcome address of Romy Elepaño, UBSCI 1st Vice-Governor and the invocation is to be given by Ray Emnace, UBSCI member and the Grand Emcee for the evening.

Twenty-year-old Jean Mornelle Pateña Buenaflor will be crowned Miss UBSCI for 2009-2011. She is currently a sophomore Nursing student at Mt. San Antonio in Walnut, California. Jeanelle's parents are Edgardo Buenaflor and Jocelyn Patena Buenaflor and has a brother named Dinco. During her coronation, she will be escorted by Mark Torreja Reyes, son of a fellow "kababayan" from Ibaan, Batangas. Mark's parents are Noli Reyes and Vicky Toreja-Reyes of Granada Hills, California. Mark goes to UCLA.

Special guest of honor and inducting officer is immigration lawyer, Atty. Paul A. Aquino, whose name is synonymous with the famous phrase "nobody understands an immigrant more than an immigrant himself."

Heading the UBSCI inductees is Eric Caringal Villafranca, Governor. Others to be inducted are Romy Elepaño, 1st Vice-Governor; Willie Mendoza, 2nd Vice-Governor; Rachel de Chavez-Sayas, Executive & Board Secretary; Rudy de Torres, Treasurer; Gloria Lina, Asst. Treasurer; Brenda Mendoza and Ogie de Villa, Press Relations Officers; Chris Emnace, Auditor; Joshue Abarquez, Fe Maralit, Cesar Tolentino, Lydia Roblow-Jimenez, Business Managers; Carlos Macatangay and Roman Castillo, Provincial Marshalls.

Atty. Fred B. Holgado, Atty. Paul A. Aquino and Atty. Gil Aguila will be inducted as Legal Counsels.

The Board of Advisers, composed of former UBSCI Governors and a few selected UBSCI hard-working pioneers, includes Lydia Emnace (Gov. 1996-1998); Cely de Sagun-Anuran (Gov. 1998-2000);

Zenny Sulit-Zoleta (Gov. 2004-2006); Rose T. Pascua (Gov. 2006-2008); Joe Carlos, Paz Concordia and Chris Emnace.

To be installed Board Members are Cielo Carlos (Chairman), Delia Abarquez, Cesar Anuran, Hermie Eliseo, Nora Santa Rosa-Jusi, Deo Villafranca, Allan Yema, Rose Sulit, Mike Lina, and Warren Jimenez.

Batangas Town Mayors to be inducted are Carmel Elepaño Gonzalez (Batangas City), Carlos Macatangay (Calaca), Alex Baes (Ibaan), Danny Lumbea (Lipa City), Nora Santa Rosa-Jusi (Mabini), Ramil Malabanan (Malvar), Ven Villapando (Mataas Na Kahoy), Vicky Vivas (Nasugbu), Joan Mayo Medina (San Jose), Jun Solomon (San Juan), Manny Mendoza (San Pascual), Dolly Hernandez (Santo Tomas) and Isidro Sulit Jr. (Taysan).

On the occasion of its 21st Anniversary, Induction of Officers and the Coronation of Miss UBSCI 2009-2011, the Batangueños are celebrating with a program designed with meaningful numbers and scheduled with precision time. Plot plan, timeline and specific assignments were spelled out by Cely de Sagun-Anuran, Program Director, during a very hectic meeting held just recently. Committees were formed and chairpersons were announced for smooth and efficient execution of all tasks and proper accountability.

To greet our guests at the entrance to the Ballroom are the Members of the Reception Line. They are Eric C. Villafranca, Governor, Ms. Jamielee Jill Anuran, Miss UBSCI 2007-2009, Romy Elepaño, 1st Vice Gov., Charina Elepaño Gonzales-Arana, Mrs. UBSCI 2008-2010, Willie Mendoza, 2nd Vice-Gov, Joy Eliseo-Nicdao, Mrs. UBSCI 2008-2010 Runner-Up, Liling Emnace, Past Gov., Cely de Sagun-Anuran, Past Gov, Willie Manaca, Past Gov., Zenny Sulit-Zoleta, Past Gov., Rose Pascua, Past Gov., Edgardo and Jocelyn Buenaflor, Parents of the Muse.

To crown the Jean Mornelle Pateña Buenaflor, Miss UBSCI 2009-2011, is Jamielee Jill Anuran, outgoing Miss UBSCI. Jill will be escorted by UBSCI Governor Eric C. Villafranca. Jeanelle hails from Ibaan, Batangas while Jamielee was born and raised here in California. Jill is graduating this May from the University of California-Santa Barbara, Bachelor of Science in Communications. Scepter and sash will also be presented to



Eric C. Villafranca - Governor 2008-2010 United Batangueños of Southern Calif. Inc.

Jeanelle by Jill and Eric. Trophy and plaque will be presented by 1st Vice Governor Romy Elepaño and Mrs. UBSCI Charina Elepaño Gonzales-Arana.

A gift will also be presented to Jeanelle by Inducting Officer and Guest Speaker Atty. Paul A. Aquino and Mrs. Marilyn Velarde-Aquino. Former Miss UBSCI 2001-2003 Nikki Ann Alexis Mantuano-Obiligacion will emcee this segment of the program.

Dancing will follow immediately after the coronation rites. Music will be provided by the Midnight Motion Band. Sometime during the event, a special presentation of the "Bati" dance, indigenous of the town of Ibaan, will be performed by Jeanelle and her escort Mark Reyes and Kevin Delarazabal.

Part 3 of the event, the Awards & Special Presentation, will be emceed by Rudy de Torres, UBSCI Treasurer.

From an aggruppation of small town clubs and associations 21 years ago, the UBSCI has grown into one of the biggest family based organizations of Batangueños in the US and one that has withstood the different challenges. Among its goals and ideals are: to share, cherish and observe with pride and honor the traits, culture and traditions that are uniquely Batangueños; to educate the youth about their roots and culture; and to establish grants and scholarships for underprivileged but talented and deserving students from the Province of Batangas.

For ticket reservation and more information about the event, please contact the following: Eric Villafranca-Governor at (213) 386-7080; Romy Elepaño-Vice Gov. at (310) 529-3264; Willie Mendoza-Vice Gov. at (818) 209-7162; Cely de Sagun-Anuran-Program Director and Adviser at (805) 630-3377; and Zenny Sulit-Zoleta-Adviser at (909) 732-9589. ■

ALAY KAY MARIA FLORES DE MAYO AT SANTACRUZAN

The search is on for Reyna Elena

THE Filipino Ministry Council of Servant Leaders is on the prowl for the next lady to take the title of Reyna Elena, as well as the other *sagalas* for the 5th annual Alay Kay Maria: Flores de Mayo at Santacruzán—a celebration in honor of our Blessed Virgin Mary. This event is slated to happen on May 9, Saturday, at 10am in Our Lady of the Angels Cathedral.

The Committee, headed by Ellie Miller and Minnie Arviso, has been meeting since the start of the year in mid-January to make this event a memorable one for all the participants and attendees. With all the spokes of the wheel pretty set, we are now in the process of accepting applications for participants age 12 years and above (the *sagalas* for the Santacruzán) as well as girls age 7-10 years old to be our angels who are given the task of joyfully announcing Our Lady's name by holding the AVE MARIA GRATIA PLENA letters.

Our Director, Sr. Mary Christina Sevilla, RGS, has always focused on the historical and religious relevance of the cultural events that the Office of the Filipino Ministry in Los Angeles undertakes—be it the celebration of our *Simbang Gabi* or the

upcoming celebration of Alay Kay Maria. "There has to be a solid basis for holding an event. For the Santacruzán, our *sagalas* or the participants are asked to write a paragraph or two about the character they select from a list that includes women from both the Old and the New Testament. In essence, the supposedly "social event" becomes a learning experience for each participant since the *sagala* learns a bit about her heritage as well as about the character she will represent.

In addition, we are still accepting applications for the AVE MARIA girls. If you are interested in joining, please feel free to give Ellie (323) 660-0745 or Minnie at (818) 985-8600 a call or email us at TessRobert@yahoo.com. Just give us a call for any question you may have—it is NOT TOO LATE!

Of course, at this early date, we are inviting all of you to join us in these festivities on May 9, the second Saturday of May. Make it another family event! Check it out this year – and maybe you'd be interested in attending the event as a participant next year! Keep our contact information and sleep on it!

Ave Maria!! Mabuhay Kay Mama Mary!!! ■

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'The Savior of the New City'

THE Savior of the New City is a beautiful and inspiring depiction of the life and ministry of Jesus Christ, from His birth to the beginning of His ministry, from His Passion and death to His glorious resurrection.

The story of our Lord is one of compassion and mercy, a story of the greatest love ever known to man. With *The Savior of the New City*, we journey with Jesus as He brings His message of love and salvation to the world through His teachings and His healing of the wounded and sick.

We meet those who lived and walked with Him during His ministry, as well as during His time of suffering. *The Savior of the New City* brings us all back 2,000 years to Jerusalem, where the ultimate sacrifice of our Lord would eventually take place.

The Lenten season is a time for all Christians to renew their faith in God by reflecting on the Passion and death of our Lord, and resurrecting our own spiritual lives just as He resurrected Himself from the cross. *The Savior of the New City* is a story that is as poignant and relevant today as ever as it continues to transform the lives of the people who open their hearts to the love and life of Jesus Christ.

This March, the Banal Na Pag-aaral will renew one of its most prominent Lenten traditions, the production of *The Savior of the New City*, the story of the life and ministry of Jesus Christ. After a seven-year hiatus, the BNP is proud to bring back this powerful, moving drama, which will be presented for the first time in its very own BNP Cultural and Arts Center in Ontario, California.

Since its humble beginnings on a small stage at Camp Josepho in Pacific Palisades, California in 1985, "The Savior of the New City" has attracted thousands of people from around the world to witness the story of

Jesus Christ. What began as a simple Holy Week presentation has since evolved into a grand production filled with vivid imagery and powerful performances. The Banal Na Pag-aaral has taken the production to various places, including the Manila Film Center in the Philippines, the Chabot College of Performing Arts Center in Oakland, the Rosemead Auditorium in Los Angeles, as well as the Bridges Auditorium in Claremont.

The all-volunteer cast and crew are members of the Banal Na Pag-aaral family who devote countless hours each year towards the success of this production. Under the guidance of the director and writer of *The Savior of the New City*, Sister Salve Stuart, the performance of the cast is not only a reflection of their talent, but of their faith in and love for God. This year they hope to once again deliver the universal message of love to the hearts of the people, and invoke in each one an inner awakening of their love for God. *The Savior*

of the New City has been a tremendous apostolate work in the Banal Na Pag-aaral's mission to bring the people back to God, and to bring God back to the people, and we invite you all to take part in this journey as we celebrate the life and times of our Lord.

The Savior of the New City will play at the BNP Cultural and Arts Center in 1030 Riverside Drive, Ontario CA 92761 on March 28, 3pm and 8pm; March 29, 3pm and 8pm, April 4 3pm and 8pm and April 5, 7pm.

For more information, please visit www.saviorofthenewcity.org or call (909) 673-1603. ■

