

GETTING TO KNOW FASO

by CYNTHIA DE CASTRO
AJPress

Tagumpay "Pi" M. De Leon - Double Bass

Pi de Leon is an engineer by profession and a musician by avocation. His musical experience came at an early age, being the son of the late renowned nationalist composer and Philippine national artist Felipe Padilla de Leon and the late Iluminada Mendoza, an accomplished pianist. He plays all rondalla instruments, the piano, accordion and the violin. The "De Leon Rondalla" was already appearing in various Philippine functions in the early 60s.

Five years after he migrated to the US in 1971, he started playing for the Pamanlahi Dance Troupe (now defunct). He also formed the Hiyas Rondalla, active from 1978 to 1985. In 1985, he joined the Fil-Am Family Cultural Group where he collaborated with Mr. Nitoy Gonzales, the renowned rondalla maestro of the famous Bayanihan Dance Troupe from the Philippines, to establish the Fil-Am Rondalla. In 1991, they co-founded the Rondalla Club of LA together with Leonilo "Boy" Angos, the music director of Kayamanan ng Lahi Performing Arts Group.

Pi De Leon has played in or directed rondallas for annual Philippine Cultural Nights in various universities and colleges. He has also participated in International Folk Dance Festivals held in Marseille, France and Sicily, Italy in the summer of 1990 and 1993 and also in the 1995 Northwest Folk Life Festival in Seattle, Washington. In between his playing schedules, he conducts rondalla classes and workshops, including his current tenure as a rondalla instructor at UC Riverside. In 1997, he was awarded a grant by the Los Angeles Cultural Affairs Department to train future rondalla instructors through workshops designated as "Master Teacher Apprenticeship Class"

Victor Coo- Cello

Victor Coo is currently a Doctor of Musical Arts in Cello Performance candidate at the Michigan State University. He earned his Master of Music at University of Maryland, College Park and a Bachelor of Arts in Music degree from Columbia Union College, in Takoma Park, Maryland.

Coo began playing the cello just before entering the Philippine High School for the Arts. While studying with Amador Tamayo and Wilfredo Pasamba, he won the NAMCYA and the Haydn Cello Concerto competitions in Manila. He then had the opportunity to participate at the Interlochen Arts Camp in Michigan, and was selected as one of the concerto competition winners to perform with the World Youth Symphony Orchestra. He continued his musical training with Johanne Perron at the Conservatory of Music at Lynn University in Boca Raton, Florida. During his time in Florida, he won several competitions and awards including the National Society of Arts and Letters, the Boca Pops Competition, and the Conservatory Concerto Competition. While in Maryland, he was the recipient of the Neil Tilkens Music Award at Columbia Union College and the winner of the Homer Ulrich Awards competition at the University of Maryland.

As a former principal cellist and soloist of the New England Youth Ensemble, Victor has performed with the group in Carnegie Hall in New York, The Kennedy Center in Washington DC, and has toured with them



Tagumpay de Leon, Double Bass



Victor Coo, Cello

to Jamaica, England, Scotland, Zimbabwe, South Africa, Canada, Mexico, Germany, Austria, Italy, France, Switzerland, and Iceland. Since his well-received solo performance of Dvorak's Concerto with the Manila Philharmonic Orchestra in 2005, Victor Coo has won the Casadesu Prize at the Ecole d'Art Americanes de Fontainebleau, France in 2006. His previous attendance in 2003 on a full scholarship in Fontainebleau also gained him a Chamber Prize (Kodaly Duo). Subsequently, under the auspices of the Ecole d'Art Americanes de Fontainebleau, Coo performed *Desert Call* by Dalit Warshaw on October 2006 in New York at the Yamaha Salon.

A chamber music enthusiast, Coo has collaborated with well known artists such as Ilya Kaler, Yuri Gandelsman, Yizhak Schotten, Suren Bagratuni, Ralph Votapek, and Richard Sherman. His recent

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Bagoong Fried Rice

Fried rice with salted shrimp fry, Lechon tidbits and scrambled eggs. Serves 4.

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