

A Historic Debut

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Theatre, in Beverly Hills. She also shared our hope that FASO, with Cavite native Bob Shroder as music director and conductor, will become a durable Fil-Am cultural treasure. "I know... that the orchestra will be a permanent institution because its members, supporters and creators are too passionate about it to let it dissipate," she said.

Pete, who holds a Bachelor of Music degree in music education, major in voice from the University of Santo Tomas, told us, also via e-mail: "I recently [rehearsed] for the first time with the orchestra. Hearing young Fil-Ams, some of whom have never been to the Philippines, play Filipino compositions and enjoying it, is something that I will never forget."

The tenor who played the lead role Karim in the Filipino opera *Karim at Jasmin* at the La Mirada Theater, spoke appreciatively of Bob, a University of the Philippines alumnus who played with the Manila Symphony Orchestra and the Manila Chamber Orchestra before he immigrated to the US. "Bob loves his Filipino roots," Pete volunteered. "When I first met him, I kept speaking to him in English. When he suddenly spoke in Tagalog, I was really surprised. Later, he played the flute on my *Kundiman* album."

Pete, based in LA like Stephanie, is one of the founding members of the UST Singers Alumni in America and the Philippine Chamber Singers of Los Angeles. He revealed his numbers in the milestone concert on the evening of May 17: "I will perform two solo pieces, *Sa Ugoy ng Duyan* by the late National Artist Lucio San Pedro and a contemporary piece entitled *Isang Kundiman*, a song written for OFW (Overseas Filipino Workers) by Gerry de Leon and arranged for orchestra by FASO's very own Kendro Calica. I will also sing *The Prayer* and *Ang Bayan Ko* with Joey and Stephanie."

For inquiries about the concert, e-mail faso@asianjournalinc.com.

FASO Gala Concert...

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Class as Sophie and Sharon in Los Angeles, California where she now resides.

Stephanie was named artist and performer of the year at the Las Vegas second annual trade show and was awarded at the 19th annual reflections award for arts and entertainment as well.

Stephanie now travels all over the world doing solo concerts including Russia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Indonesia, Thailand, Canada, all over the United States. In the fall, she will have concerts in Beijing, China and Paris, France. She has two solo albums entitled *The Voice* and *Stephanie Reese at Her Best*. Her next album is due out in the fall and will include her own original songs.

The audience in the gala concert will also enjoy the outstanding tenor, Christopher P. Avendaño. A graduate of Bachelor of Music in Music Education, major in Voice from the University of Santo Tomas (UST) in the Philippines under the tutelage of Irma Ponce-Enrile Potenciano and Lemuel Dela Cruz, Avendaño started to exhibit exemplary singing at an early age. At the age of 11, he became a member of the Tiples de Santo Domingo (oldest boy's choir in the Philippines) where he was a boy soprano-soloist.

In college, Avendaño became part of the internationally-acclaimed University of Santo Tomas Singers and has toured extensively with the group during its 1998, 1999, 2000, and 2001 international concert tours in Europe, North America, and South America. In 2000, he was a finalist in the National Music Competition for Young Artists (NAMCYA) held at the Cultural Center of the Philippines. He was also a prize winner in the Kundiman Fiesta competition in 1994. As a student of the UST Conservatory, Avendaño auditioned and became part of the Singapore Lyric Opera productions of *Il Pagliacci*, *Cavalleria Rusticana*, *Il Trovatore*, and *Macbeth* held in Singapore.

Last year, Avendaño portrayed the lead role Karim in the Filipino Opera *Karim at Jasmin* held at the La Mirada Theater in Los Angeles. He also performed in a concert at St. Louis Missouri for the benefit of Gawad Kalinga. As one of the founding members of the UST Singers Alumni in America and the Philippine Chamber Singers of Los Angeles, this seasoned tenor is currently a faculty at the Our Lady of Loretto Elementary School in Los Angeles where he also handles the children's choir. He was instrumental in having the children's choir nominated for the Music Achievement Awards in Arts 2006 by the Music Center Bravo Awards.

Avendaño is presently the music director of the Immaculate Heart of Mary Church in Los Angeles. He has recently finished his recording project – a collection of Philippine Art Songs dubbed as *Kundiman*.

With all these accomplished singers and the majestic Filipino American Symphony Orchestra playing for the first time, May 17 truly promises to be a night to remember.

Get your tickets now! Contact Amirah Limayo at (213) 250-9797.



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When: Friday, May 1, 2009

Time: 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM

Venue



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Parking available (\$3-\$6) between 7th and 8th Street on S. Grand Avenue

Light refreshments will be served

RSVP

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Marivic Padilla: marivic@af-usa.org (650) 598-3126

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Please submit a brief background of your association, a list of current officers and your contact information for the benefit of our readers who may want to get in touch with you.

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