

## HEART EVANGELISTA

## Ngayon at Kailanman: A Real SweetHeart

by CYNTHIA DE CASTRO  
AJPress

Going back to Manila from a concert in San Francisco, Heart Evangelista passed by Los Angeles a few days ago to spend some time with family. She agreed to an exclusive interview with *Asian Journal* in Barrio Fiesta in Eagle Rock, which is owned by her family.

The 24-year old heartthrob was born Love Marie Payawal Ongpauco on February 14, 1985. Better known by her screen name Heart Evangelista, the beautiful actress, host, singer, and VJ, was actually raised in California. "I grew up in Foster City, near San Francisco. When I was ten years old, our family moved back to the Philippines," revealed Heart, the youngest in her family, with one brother and four sisters. She studied in Colegio San Agustin-Makati in Makati City.

Heart revealed that she has always wanted to be in showbiz. "Ever since I was a little girl, I wanted to be an *artista*. My *lolo*, Bonifacio Ongpauco, was a movie producer. And my *lola*, Mama Chit, used to cater for the *artistas*. Her catering business grew and they opened Barrio Fiesta," Heart said as she explained how she was exposed to the movie industry. "My dad, Rey, also worked as a waiter in a famous Hollywood restaurant where he got to see celebrities such as Frank Sinatra and Natalie Wood," she added.

Her dream came true when she was discovered by a commercial agent while at a mall with her sister. At the age of 12, she started appearing in commercials. Two years later, Heart signed up with ABS-CBN's Talent Center (now known as Star Magic) and was part of Star Circle Batch 9.

"I learned a lot in Talent Center. There were endless workshops on acting, hosting and singing. I also learned to speak *Tagalog* better. *Kasi*, in the beginning, I can't speak *Tagalog* well; I wasn't used to saying *po*. That's why I was given this image of being *maarte*, *Inglisera* in the TV show *G-Mik*. It was very hard to appeal to the *masa*. But, eventually, I learned *na din*," Heart shared. "The best lesson I learned is that you just have to be yourself. You can't copy somebody else's style," she said.

In the beginning of her career, Heart was paired with John Prats on the show *G-Mik*. Her team-up with John Prats gained tremendous popularity, and they starred in several movies together— *Trip*, *Ang Tanging Ina* and *My First Romance*. They also starred on another teen-oriented show, *Berks*. Later, she starred on the primetime soap opera *Hiram* which earned her a Star Awards Best Actress nomination. She also won the best new female personality (Best New Movie Actress and Best New TV Actress) awards from Star Awards for Movies and Star Awards for TV. She also won Texter's

and Listener's Choice at the Himig Handog Awards for her single *Love Has Come My Way*. Her single *Tell Me*, which was released in Australia, peaked at number 18 on the charts.

Last year, Heart transferred to GMA Network, which she described as "*maalaga*, easy to talk to and very warm to me". She signed up a two-year exclusive contract under her new manager Annabelle Rama and was paired with Richard Gutierrez. Their first action-teledrama together was on GMA's series *Codename: Asero*. Evangelista is now co-hosting on *SOP Rules*. Her recently concluded fantasy soap entitled *Luna Mystika*, with Mark Anthony Fernandez, was a consistent primetime top rater.

Evangelista also played the title role in *Ay Ay-Eng*, a film on the indigenous Ifugao life in Mountain Province, which premiered in Hawaii, on July 14, 2008. She is now also hosting the new lifestyle show *Fashionistas By Heart* aired on Q 11 every Saturday, 7-8pm.

But amidst the busyness, Heart manages to give time to her foundation Heart Can, which aims to help children with respiratory diseases. She is also a spokesperson for Philippine Animal Welfare Society (PAWS).

Heart admits she is not romantically attached to anyone now, and doesn't see herself married within the next five years. "I am single now. *Tahimik muna*," said Heart who admits to doing so many things now. "I am so busy, taping 3 times a week for a new show with JC de Vera, entitled *Ngayon at Kailanman*. I also host *Fashionistas* every Saturday, and am on *SOP* every Sunday."

Heart shared that she loves performing in the US because "the fans here are more demonstrative. They are ecstatic about us, *parang miss na miss nila kami lagi, kasi miss nila ang Philippines*. Back home, *lagi-lagi kami nakikita ng mga fans so hindi ganuon katindi ang excitement*. That's why it's so refreshing to be here," she said, as she gave another reason why she loves coming to America. "Besides, I can live a normal life when I am here."

What's in store for the future? A devoted Christian, Heart answers truthfully. "Before, I had like a map for my life. This is what I want. This is what I'll do. But now, I live it all up to God. He will give me what He wants, when it is time." ■



Heart Evangelista at Barrio Fiesta in Eagle Rock.

AJPress Photo by Bert Jaurigue

## Vilma Santos reveals secrets of her success

by RITO ASILO  
Inquirer.net

MANILA — Our interview with Vilma Santos last week was vivid proof why, 46 years after she portrayed the award-winning title role in Mars Ravelo's *Trudis Liit* at age 9, the luster of local showbiz's Star for All Seasons is brighter than ever. The legendary actress' illustrious career is truly an instructive lesson in humility and astute career management.

## Gay lovers

We chatted with Ate Vi—yes, she prefers that familiar term of endearment over the more official "Governor Vi"—as she was on her way to the shooting of Olivia Lamasan's *In My Life*, the actress' highly anticipated return to the big screen after 2004's *Mano Po 3: My Love*. In the movie, which has a September playdate, she shares top billing with son Luis Manzano and John Lloyd Cruz, who play gay lovers.

Her latest film excites her—with good reason. She explains: "The character I play is irascible and rather comic—isang *masungit* na librarian who feels *na hindi siya mahal ng mundo*—and my gay son (played by Lucky) gives me a makeover when I get to New York, where the film was partly shot."

The gay role is obviously challenging for the actress' 28-year-old son. Does she give Luis acting tips? "I don't usually meddle," she quickly answers. "Taking on the role was a decision he had to make on his own, and he's working very hard! *Minsan, masakit sa loob ko 'pag napapagalitan siya sa set*, but I keep my mouth shut, because I don't want to be regarded as a stage mother. It's refreshing to work with Olive Lamasan, who's a perfectionist. *Lumalabas ang pagka-pusong-babae niya sa mga eksena*."

## Achievements

It would take a long time to sum up Ate Vi's achievements as an actress and public servant, but she told us how fortunate she felt to have played two of Philippine cinema's most iconic female characters, *Darna* and *Dyesebel*.

How did she find Angel Locsin—Lucky's special someone—as the Pinoy superheroine? She replies: "I was lucky to play *Dyesebel* in 1973 and *Darna* in four movies. Angel was also a convincing *Darna* because, to play the character, *dapat mukha ka talagang babae*. Moviegoers don't want their *Darna* skinny—she has to be voluptuous, with a little mannish quality about her." (*Darna* flies again in August on GMA-7, with Marian Rivera donning the heroine's skimpy red garb.)

Reportedly, the Star for All Seasons has good relationships with the country's two other iconic movie queens—Superstar Nora Aunor and Megastar Sharon Cuneta, who is a self-confessed Vilmanian. She confirms this: "Until two years ago, Guy and I used to text each other on occasion—*nagkukumustahan kami*. *Dapat daw pag-uwi niya, ako ang sumundo sa kanya sa airport*. But, we have since lost touch, *kasi nagbago na ang mga numbers namin*. Sharon is also dear to me. When she was young and I'd find myself in Dasmariñas Village, she would always give me flowers."

## 200 movies

Of the approximately 200 movies she had starred in, she says her favorites include Mike de Leon's *Sister Stella L.*, Lau-

rice Guillen's *Dahil Mahal Kita: The Dolzura Cortez Story* and *Ipagpatawad Mo*, Rory Quintos' *Anak*, and Ishmael Bernal's *Relasyon*, the first of four movies that brought her Best Actress-hauling grand slams (the other three being *Dahil Mahal Kita* and Chito Roño's *Dekada '70* and *Bata, Bata, Paano Ka Ginawa?*).

Four factors are key to her longevity and continued success, she tells us: "Dedication, hard work, smart choices and the grace of God. *'Pag may kulang*, it'll be hard to sustain any form of success. *Huwag kang tanggap lang ng tanggap ng project* for the money—be judicious."

How does she manage to stay on top? With earnest humility, Ate Vi answers: "*Hindi ko alam ang layunin ng Panginoon sa akin*, but in whatever I do, I just give my best. Plus, it's important to always keep your priorities in mind: I'm foremost a wife and mother. Then, I'm a public servant. Sadly, showbiz has become third on my list of priorities, but acting is not something I can ever turn my back on!" Wise words, indeed. After all, Vilma Santos isn't the Star for All Seasons for nothing! ■



Vilma Santos

Inquirer.net Photo

## Star Magic at 17

IN CELEBRATION of its 17th year, a star-studded extravaganza on ASAP '09 ushers ABS-CBN Star Magic's grand anniversary celebration on June 21. ASAP '09 shall present superb pro-



duction numbers showcasing the talent and beauty of the Star Magic artists. Expect to see Star Magic artists who are the young royalties of today's showbiz in a glamorous fashion show with outfits from top-caliber designers with Nyoy Volante with his band Rhythmic Circle providing the music. There will also be song and dance numbers ranging from high-energy, standards and inspirational. Footages of the Star Magic basketball and volleyball teams, rehearsals and acting and dance workshops shall also be shown. After the anniversary kick-off in ASAP '09, the Star Magic artists shall leave for the US for the much awaited *Star Magic, The World Concert Tour*. For the first time, Star Magic artists will get to showcase their talents, All in one night, All on one stage. With more than 40 artists coming, Piolo Pascual, John Lloyd Cruz, Kristine Hermosa, Bea Alonzo, Sam Milby just to name a few. TFC, Asian Journal, ALAS Cargo and The law offices of Michael Gurfinkel proudly brings you the concert event of the year! VIP tickets have been sold out but there are still some great seats left. Be part of history being made, Get your tickets now. Don't forget June 27, 2009 7pm at The Citizens Business Bank Arena in Ontario, Only 30 minutes away from downtown LA plus Free Parking. This show is also brought to you by ARKO Foods, RCBC Remit center, Oliver Tolentino, Cherrys Salon, Sheraton Ontario and All Access. For tickets, call now (909)592-8951 or visit our website at [www.starmagicworldtour.com](http://www.starmagicworldtour.com) Later this year, the stars shall once again come down from the heavens as they party the night away in the 3rd Star Magic Grand Ball.

17 years of Star Magic...17 years of discovery, management and development of artists. Star Magic has truly gone a long way from the time when then ABS-CBN President and Chief Operating Officer Freddie Garcia and Johnny Manahan hatched the idea of creating a stable of new stars exclusively for ABS-CBN. 1992 was the magical year as ABS-CBN Talent Management and Development Center was given life. October that same year, Ang TV, the hit youth afternoon show that spawned many mall shows, live concerts and record albums, was launched. Ang TV was also the door for the likes of the young Claudine Barretto, Angelica Panganiban, Rica Peralejo, Kaye Abad, John Prats, Angelu de Leon, Victor Neri and many more to enter showbiz. Later in November 1995, Star Circle Batch 1 was launched, led by the late Rico Yan. The magic continuous with ABS-CBN Star Magic! So remember watch ASAP '09 this coming Sunday at 12 noon on TFC, then watch them LIVE!! At the Citizens Business Bank Arena on June 27, 2009 7pm for Star Magic!! The World Concert Tour!!!

\*Advertising Supplement

## Publisher's Note

## A Heart-to-Heart Chat

Heart Evangelista reveals her dreams and passions in an exclusive interview with *Asian Journal MDWK Magazine*. A certified Kapuso and a Star Awards Best Actress nominee, Heart takes on every challenge of the biz yet does not forget her nurturing nature, taking time to help children with respiratory diseases through her foundation Heart Can and speaking in behalf of the Philippine Animal Welfare Society. The actress does live up to her name and her story for this week's issue aims to spread the love. ■