

ANNA MARIA PEREZ DE TAGLE

On her way to FAME!

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Photos from www.annamariaperezdetagle.com

After winning the Oscar in 1980, the movie, *Fame*, was further immortalized as a TV show that aired between 1982 and 1987 and a musical that ran on Broadway and West End. The story follows a talented group of dancers, singers, actors and artists over four years at the New York City High School of Performing Arts, a creative powerhouse where students from all walks of life are given a chance to live out their dreams and achieve real and lasting fame.

On Sept 25, the remake of *Fame* will be shown in theatres across America and then worldwide. Filipinos will be proud to know that one of the casts who dance, sing and cry their way from "audition" to "graduation" is Fil-Am Hollywood actress Anna Maria Perez de Tagle.

The 18 year old admitted that she is very excited about her role in *Fame*. "Being part of something that is epic in scope is so cool and awesome. The cast is amazing. I'm very honored to be working with the legendary Debbie Allen (actress-director-choreographer Allen is the only original cast member now playing school principal in the updated version)," said Anna Maria in an earlier interview, adding that she hopes the movie will be a springboard for more challenging roles.

Popularly known for her roles in *Hannah Montana* as Ashley Dewitt and as Ella Pador on *Camp Rock*, Anna Maria plays the role of Joy Moy in *Fame*. Joy's less-than-stellar GPA could get her kicked out of school and she's constantly running her mouth which totally gets her into trouble. But when a friend posts one of her outbursts on YouTube, she finds her mouth could also be her ticket to stardom. In the incredibly competitive atmosphere she finds herself in at the High School of Performing Arts, Joy, like the other students, is plagued by self-doubt, with her talent and passion put to the test.

Like her character in the movie, Anna Maria's artistic talents will also be put to the test in *Fame*, which is her big screen debut. But the 18-year old star has already proven herself well in Hollywood; which is not really surprising considering Anna Maria's genes.

Born December 23, 1990 in San Francisco, California, Anna Maria Francesca Enriquez Perez de Tagle (nicknamed "Wengky") is the granddaughter of 1950s Philippine actress and soprano singer, Sylvia La Torre, who is her first acting and singing coach.

Calling her *Lola Sylvia*, "Mamacita", Anna Maria said that her Hollywood career has made her Mamacita very happy. "She's always happy in anything that I'm a part of. Now that my face is gonna be on the wide screen, she's even more proud. She really inspires me a lot and I'm proud, too, that she's my grandmother," said de Tagle.

Considered an icon in the Philippines as a successful singer and actress, Sylvia la Torre has been dubbed the Queen of *Kundiman* (traditional love songs). Daughter of cruise singer Leonora Reyes and famous Sampaguita Pictures director Olive La Torre, Sylvia joined showbiz due to the prodding of her father, who was credited for having resurrected Sampaguita Pictures via the historic film, *Roberta* (1951). At age 5, she already started joining and winning singing contests in Manila. At



Anna Maria in a scene from the movie Fame

then to the Gorman Learning Center, Los Angeles. She graduated from high school in 2008 with honors.

Anna Maria lives in San Gabriel, California, with her parents and two older brothers, Juan Miguel and Jose. She enjoys working with the Children's Hospital of Los Angeles, and on her free time, likes to design and make her own clothes, as well as snow ski, dance, sing, play the piano and read.

In her website, Anna Maria admitted that even her *Camp Rock* co-stars, the Jonas Brothers, and the Disney family have reportedly been rooting for her since it was announced that she landed her first full-length feature. If *Fame* becomes a big hit, as many predict, Anna Maria, though, stated that she will not leave Disney, adding that she will stay with Disney as long as she can.

Admitting that she is always auditioning for roles, Anna Maria's future projects include the sequel to *Camp Rock* which will be released in 2010, shooting for *Hannah Montana*, and production of her first album.

The 2008 Rising Star Awardee (1st Filipino American Visionary Awards) recognizes that being in the spotlight, many young people are looking up to her as a role model, which keeps her "trying to be a good one". Consequently, Anna Maria makes sure she keeps her family close to her; that she keeps her feet on the ground; and most importantly, that "my Filipino values are intact".

With her principles and values in the right place, and her outstanding talents and hard work, Anna Maria Perez de Tagle is surely on her way to fame and fortune. ■



Anna Maria at the premiere of Hannah Montana: The Movie



Anna Maria with David Archuleta at Miley Cyrus's Sweet 16 Party

age seven, she became a certified film star via *Ang Maestra* (1941), and then started stage theater acting at age 9. She has appeared in numerous movies of Sampaguita Pictures and LVN Pictures. Sylvia recorded around 400 singles from 1950 to 1970s. When she hosted the daily noon show *Oras ng Ligaya* in the 1960s, La Torre became the most popular female celebrity in the Philippines.

Sylvia eventually immigrated to California with her husband, dentist Dr. Celso Perez de Tagle.

They have three children named Artie, Bernie and Che Che. Artie and Che-che used to act in TV and movies in the Philippines as well.

Anna Maria is the daughter of Evelyn Enriquez and Artie Perez de Tagle. With most of her family in the entertainment field, Anna Maria naturally developed her love for theater at an early age and began training in singing, dancing and acting. She always loved performing in front of the camera and on stage, starring in regional productions of *Cinderella*, *Bugsy Malone* and *The King and I*. She kept busy by modeling for several catalogs, including Macy's and Mervyns and was a junior finalist for *Star Search*.

After begging her parents to let her audition, Anna Maria booked her 1st audition, winning a role on Disney's hit *Hannah Montana* (2006), so her family packed up and moved to Hollywood. Anna Maria plays Ashley Dewitt, a ditsy fashionista who has no idea that her nemesis, Miley, is really her favorite performer, Hannah Montana.

Since hitting Los Angeles, this beauty has graced the small screen numerous times with roles in CBS's morning show *Cake* (2006) and *Just Jordan* (2007), as well as the voice of Martha, the Safety Patrol Kid in *Higglytown Heroes* (2004).

Anna Maria was then seen in Disney's TV hit, *Camp Rock* (2008), starring as Ella, a lip-gloss obsessed mean girly girl who makes an unlikely transformation. A sequel *Camp Rock: The Final Jam* is set to follow in 2010.

Perez de Tagle went to St. Justin School in Santa Clara, CA for her Elementary and Jr. High School. She then transferred to Los Angeles County High School for the Arts in Los Angeles and



With Miley Cyrus, star of the TV hit show Hannah Montana



At the High School Musical 3 premiere

Publisher's Note

Young
and Famous

Anna Maria Perez de Tagle's fate is literally written in the stars. The 18-year-old is reliving her grandma's journey through the entertainment industry by starting a career in acting at a very young age. From *Hannah Montana*, to *Camp Rock*, to the remake of Academy award-winning movie *Fame*, the future is looking bright for the teen star. The Asian MDWK Magazine lets her shine even brighter by featuring Anna's journey to fame in this issue. ■