

People and Events

The 50th annual presentation of The George Jean Nathan Award

NEW YORK CITY – Cornell University, Theatre Communications Group cordially invite you to the 50th annual George Jean Nathan Award for Dramatic Criticism, a major US literary prize and one of the most distinguished awards in the American theatre.

This year's recipient is New York writer and editor Randy Gener. The Senior Editor of American Theatre magazine, Gener is the first Asian American to become the recipient of the Nathan Award for Dramatic Criticism. Broadway leading men Jose Llana, Paolo Montalban and Orville Mendoza will perform a serenade (harana) in a new medley of songs specially arranged by composer Fabian Obispo and taken from his new musical about Philippine immigration in the US *The Long Season* (lyrics and book by Chay Yew). The highest accolade for dramatic criticism in the United States, the Nathan Award is reserved for "the American who has written the best piece of drama criticism during the theatrical year, whether it is an article, an essay, treatise or book."

This happy occasion will take place from 7 to 9 pm Monday March 9 at the Kalayaan Hall (Freedom Hall) of the Philippine Consulate Center, 556 Fifth Avenue in New York City (near 45th Street). Ellis Hanson, Chair of the Cornell English Department, will present the award to Gener. Hon. Cecilia Re-bong, Consul General of the Philippines, will be on hand. Broadway actors Victor Lirio and Rona

Figuroa are the evening's emcees.

The Nathan Awards Committee was particularly impressed by Gener's writings in American Theatre magazine. The Committee's citation for Gener reads, "He has used that venue [America Theatre Magazine] and others to draw our attention to largely ignored voices and visions on the international theatrical scene, to the work of Filipino-American playwright Jessica Hagedorn, to a small but lively Tennessee Williams Festival in Provincetown, and to the future of theatrical criticism itself in essays that wed critical intelligence with a beat reporter's love of the telling and unruly fact. In one piece, Gener argues that, at its best, criticism is 'a cultural asset, one of the bases on which democracy and community are built.' He fulfills that lofty goal by implicitly reminding us of how much that is excellent in theater here and abroad is ignored by a critical fraternity which, during this age of globalization, seems more parochial than ever."

The prize for the Nathan Award consists of the annual net income of half of Mr. Nathan's estate. The annual award now amounts to \$10,000, making it the richest as well as one of the most distinguished in the American theater. In addition, the winner receives a trophy symbolic of the award. For a complete description of the Nathan award and its origins, visit <http://www.arts.cornell.edu/english/awards/nathan/>. ■



CONSULATE VISIT

The Philippine Economic Team headed by Hon. Secretary Edgardo Pamintuan, chairman of the Subic Clark Alliance for Development Council (SCADC) and Presidential Adviser on the Luzon Urban Beltway visited the Philippine Consulate General New York last February 27. Secretary Pamintuan and his team discussed the latest economic developments in the Philippines, and issues that concern the Filipino-American community.

ChessFest Early Favorites

A BUNCH of strong Chess Masters pre-registered for the upcoming Tournament on March 14th, 9-5pm, at NYU School of Med, Cafeteria, 550 First Avenue (near 33rd St), New York, NY.

Leading contenders to capture the Championship trophy and \$400 cash prize are Senior Masters Oscar Tan, Rico Salimbagat, David Apelo, Patrick Yee and the veteran Roummel Reyes.

"This could easily be one of the strongest major Filipino-American Chess tournaments in the Northeast," said Nonoy Rafael, Chief Tournament Director. "I am expecting more masters and experts from the tri-state area to participate into this historical event."

Tan garnered an International Master-norm in 1996 from NYC renowned Marshall Chess Club and won the Southern California and Los Angeles Open tournaments in 1996. He was a Gold-medalist during the Asian Inter-City event held in Hong Kong and a Feati University Champion. "Oca" is one the best "bookish" players Philippines ever produced.

Salimbagat was 2003 US Open and Western Pacific Champion in the Senior Master category. He placed 2nd at the 2006 Bangkok Open in Thailand. Aside from being a Board 1 player of the AFP-PNP, he was a three-time gold medalist in consecutive years for the Philippine Army Champion-

ship team. Rico is known for giving up pawns early in the opening to gain better development.

Apelo was a winner of 2008 Central Park Open and Brooklyn Blitz Open Tourney. He captured a Gold medal and was a member of the Philippine team in 2004 that won the Merkedda Open in Malaysia. He placed second behind former US Champion Grandmaster Sergey Kudrin during the 2007 Harlem Chess Open. David is currently a chess instructor in NYC chess club.

Yee had been a multi-titlist in many NYC tournaments for the last two decades. He collected MVP trophies and medals for more than 5 years at the NYC Inter-Bank Leagues during the early 90's. Patrick is known as a tactical player with a vicious attacking skill. He was a former UAAP standout and University of Manila champ.

Reyes, a former Philippine Champion in the early 70's, had been a popular chess figure in and out the Philippines. He is popularly known amongst all pinoy wood-pushers as "Prof" for being one of the best chess professors we ever had. Roummel, a hall-of-fame caliber, was also an International Arbiter.

Rafael disclosed, "All these top players have beaten many International Grandmasters throughout their careers. I am anticipating a very tight race throughout the 6-round Swiss-sytem format."

"Fatal blunders and brilliancy



Rico Salimbagat



Oscar Tan



David Apelo



Patrick Yee



Roummel Reyes



Ernesto Encarnacion

moves happen all the time to anyone," he added. "That's what makes chess an intense but interesting game. Thus, an unknown player can emerge a champion without any doubt."

"A total of \$1,000-worth of cash prizes, trophies and medals await the winners from both rated and

unrated top finishers. "

Two National Masters are also very much in contention. Ernesto "Jun" Encarnacion, an NCAA Gold-medalist and a former champion of powerhouse team of Mapua University. And the veteran Atty. Gerry Albano, who received his Chess Master title in the 90's, is always a long-shot.

Among other top challengers can turn up from Chess Experts lead by: Reden Cerilo, ex-UAAP and Far Eastern University Champion.

Mike Adarlo, 2004 Philippine Active Chess and National University Champion.

This event is a joint venture of NYU School of Medicine (Center of the Studies of Asian American Health) and Kalusugan Coalition-Project AsPire. Headed by Director Rhodora Ursua, MPH and David Aguilar, MA. For more info, please contact Tournament Director Nonoy Rafael at 516-298-8428 or Email: VVR4info@optonline.net or Henry Soliveres (Kalusugan Coalition Coordinator) at 917-548-6187. ■

APPLY NOW!

\$20,000 College Scholarship for Fil-Am Students Available

THE Filipino American Human Services, Inc. (FAHSI) will award the Frederick and Demi Seguritan Scholarship to one graduating high school senior of Filipino descent for the 2009-2010 academic year. The Recipient will demonstrate a passion to serve the Filipino American community and an interest in business (not required to major in business). To be eligible, applicants must:

- Be of Filipino descent;
- Reside in the NY/NJ/CT Tri-State Area;
- Have a strong academic record;
- Have already applied to a four-year undergraduate institution for the 2009-2010 academic year;
- And demonstrate financial

need. To obtain an application, please contact Rose-Ann Ubarra-Cunanan, FAHSI Program Director, at rose@fahsi.org or at (718) 883-1295. Applications must be postmarked by Sunday, May 30, 2009.

Established in 1993, FAHSI is a nonprofit organization dedicated to improving the social conditions and enhancing the self-reliance of the Filipino American community in New York City. We provide services for women, the elderly and youth, referrals to community resources and workshops on immigration and health care issues. To learn about our programs, volunteer and contribution opportunities, please visit www.fahsi.org or call (718) 883-1295. ■



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