

People and Events

Manhattan is point of convergence for 'Sonata'

MANHATTAN is point central for the photo exhibit *Sonata for Our Heroes*, a visual tribute to the Filipino WWII veterans in the US and the Philippines in this year of the ARRA law that included in its provisions the long-delayed recognition of these veterans' invaluable service to the US military in the Philippines during WW II.

The Philippine Consulate General New York is sponsoring as the showcase event of its Independence Month celebration this exhibit that is open to the public from June 8 to 19, 2009 at the Philippine Center at 556 Fifth Avenue, New York, following the Philippine Independence Day Parade on Madison Avenue on the 7th.

With photos featuring veterans or family members of deceased veterans, participating photographers as announced by exhibit director René Ner and event and research manager Robert P. De Tagle include members of the Camera Club of the Philippines (CCP) in Manila, the Foto Seven group from southern California, and the host organization SINAG | The American Society of Philippine Photographers of metro NY, along with Rick Rocamora of San Francisco and Jeryc Garcia of Manila.

Those who submitted works are CCP members Brian Kitane, Raul Montifar, Rey Ortiz, Rafael Santos, Patrick Uy and Philip Yu,

and Foto Seven photographers Arnel Garcia, Rick Gavino, Vics Magsaysay, Phillip Ner and Bennie Uy. The SINAG participants from NY and NJ comprise Bong Alcidi, Eddie Belen, Jun Hernandez, Frank Jimenez, Norman Montifar, René Ner, Mae Palaci, Robert Perez De Tagle, Monico Rabara and Pat Villaruel.

On March 10 this year, the Consulate hosted a Thanksgiving Mass with Msgr. Oscar Aquino that marked the official acknowledgment of the Filipino veterans' active service to the US campaign in the Philippines after Japan's attack on Pearl Harbor and in Manila and other strategic areas of the Philippines in December 1941. The Act also provided for a lump-sum compensation. The March 10 event also recognized those individuals and organizations that supported the Fil-Vets'

cause through the years.

Linking with that celebration, "This Sonata exhibit is a tribute to our unsung veterans," according to Consul General Cecile Rebong.

Deputy Consul General Millie S.M. Thomeczek and Cultural Officer Marievic Dimaculangan of the Consulate, and the Philippine Center's Zeny Avila and Mel Capinpin, worked with Messrs. Ner and De Tagle to organize this special event.

Creative and curatorial advisers were David Medalla and Manuel 'Boy' Rodriguez, Jr. Belen and Hernandez worked up the event poster.

For more information, contact Mr. De Tagle, (201) 434-1964, ArtempoNY@gmail.com, or Ms. Dimaculangan, (212) 764-1330, philconsulateny@mindspring.com. ■



KC AT THE UN. KC Concepcion, the UN World Food Programme National Ambassador Against Hunger in the Philippines, with Bettina Luescher, WFP Chief Spokesperson, North America outside the UN Building in Manhattan. The popular singer-actress visited her colleagues at the WFP a couple of days after the successful concert of her mother, Sharon Cuneta at NJPAC. AJPress Photo by Momar G. Visaya

31st Annual Santacruzian Celebration, Jersey City



Flower girls



Blessed Virgin Mary float



Hermanas and Hermano with Fr. Victor Kennedy, Pastor of Resurrection Parish



Reyna Elena II - Leona V. Ramos
Photos by Jovy

THE COMMUNITY CALENDAR

June 6 | Saturday
The Holy Infant College Association's 3rd Scholarship Fundraiser to be held on Philippine Independence Day

On Saturday, June 6, 2009, the Holy Infant College Alumni Association hopes to exceed this accomplishment with a Piano and Vocal Concert to honor our Mother Mary and our Mother Country.

Come join us celebrate Philippine Independence Day. Introduce your family and friends to a magical-nostalgic afternoon of familiar classical music by legendary Filipino composers, musicians and artists.

Myrna Lopez: Pianist, Camille Molina: Soprano

Nona Anover-Yongo: Soprano, Lourdes Benedicto: Actress

We invite you to enjoy light refreshments, while these performers take you back in time to the "good old days" in the Philippines. Venue is at: St. Mary's Nativity School Auditorium (146-28 Jasmine Avenue

Flushing, NY 11355), 4pm. Suggested Donation: \$25. For tickets (tax deductible) contact: Marietta Benedicto, E-mail: benm68@optonline.net Tel: (516)802-2650

Feast of Our Lady of Manaoag

Come join us as we celebrate The Feast of Our Lady of Manaoag will be at the Church of St. Lucy on June 6, 1pm. For more info. Please contact Nida Cortez (718) 393-0348.

June 7 | Sunday
Philippine Independence Day

Vice President Noli de Castro has accepted an invitation from the Philippine Independence Day Council, Inc. (PIDCI) to be a guest on Philippine Independence day in

New York. As part of the 111th Anniversary of the Declaration of Independence commemoration, there will be a flag ceremony in front of the Philippine Center at 8am followed by the Independence Day Street Fair which opens at 10am, downtown end of Madison Avenue between 24th & 26th. At 12noon, the Independence Day Parade starts and ends at 2:30pm. For more info. Contact: Gani Puertollano (908)964-5473/ (908) 230-6468, Juliet Payabyab (718) 267-0221, Medy Taeza (646) 415-3040, PIDCI Pres. Gerry M. Austria (201) 238-1785.

June 13 | Saturday
UST Singers New York City Concert

VitiMedia (Bringing You A Culture of Excellence) is proud to present the world-renowned University of Santo Tomas Singers in their 2009 New York City performance entitled "Unending Grace: A Thanksgiving Concert on the 400th Year of UST" at the Old St. Patrick's Cathedral on Saturday, June 13, 2009 at 7PM. Highly respected and sought-after in the international choral music scene, the UST Singers have earned a beloved global niche with their nearly two decades of impressive concerts and appearances that spanned nearly all continents.

Known for their remarkable repertoire of exceptional interpretations that cover significant parts of the choral literature of the last five centuries, the UST Singers garnered various awards in international choral competitions, particularly in Europe. It is with Asian pride that the Choir of the World (1995 Grand Prize Winner) UST Singers will perform for one-night only at the highly-regarded Old St. Patrick's Cathedral in New York City.

Purchase Tickets Now! <http://ustsingersnyc.eventbrite.com/>

Please email editor@asianjournalinc.com or call (212) 655-5426 for your community events for possible publication.

Sharon Cuneta's MEGATHIRTY...

PAGE 10 ◀

this business without you... and because of God's grace I was able to entertain you. (She was able to pull it off despite her fever and colds.) I could only thank you all... from the bottom of my heart... and God for giving me this opportunity to be with you who are constantly supporting me." The Megastar said with heartfelt profundity and then dished out one of signature songs *Kahit Maputi Na Ang Buhok Ko*.

Her encore numbers, *Bituing Walang Ningning* and *Sana'y Wala Nang Wakas* only left the audience clamor for more... seemingly not having enough of her... which only proved that *MEGATHIRTY TOUR 2009* was a blasting success and Sharon Cuneta hasn't lost her magic despite the three decades of lording it over the movies, television, recording, product endorsements and the concert stage—and undoubtedly, heralded a lot more promising years ahead of her.

Easily, *MEGATHIRTY TOUR 2009* more than made MPG Global Productions' status a stable firm with a feat hard to duplicate. MPG lady boss Bing Gabriel could only thank, of course, her artists Sharon Cuneta and KC Concepcion, Mrs. Melinda P. Liberman, Asian Journal, Balikbayan Magazine, the Artists Center, Miss Nancy Aquino, Miss Sandra Chavez, Louie Ocampo and his band, the MPG Production Staff, all the Media Partners, fellow producers, Christy's Kitchen, SAWADEE Thai Cuisine, Bona Tierra Realty, Perlas Ng Silangan, Pilipino Ihawan, Jollibee Oriental Food Mart, ABS-CBN, Directo.com, SCCabalnif Services, Inc., Paul Pascual, UHC, Diamond Hut, and all those who, in one way or the other, have unselfishly and unconditionally extended their support to insure the event's success.

And to all concert-goers and Sharon Cuneta fans, Bing Gabriel has this to say: "Thank you so much for supporting MPG Global Productions presentation of *MEGATHIRTY TOUR 2009*. You made the show a truly eventful affair... hope you extend the same in our upcoming productions!"

(Advertising Supplement)

Pope Benedict XVI confers Papal Honors on Filipino Lay Leader

by MARYANN NEPOMUCENO

HIS Holiness Pope Benedict XVI has conferred Papal Honors on Mr. Hermes P. Allas, a lay ecclesiastical minister and a Filipino Apostolate lay leader of the Brooklyn Diocese. The Awards ceremony will be held at the Cathedral Basilica of St. James in Brooklyn on Sunday, June 7th at 4 pm Mr. Allas is an active member of St. Robert Bellarmine Parish, Bayside, New York.

His Excellency, the Most Reverend Nicholas DiMarzio, Bishop of Brooklyn, in his announcement letter to Mr. Allas stated, "With thanksgiving to Almighty God, it is my great joy that I write to inform you that the Holy Father, Pope Benedict XVI, has conferred papal honors upon you. Because of your long-time service to the People of God of the Diocese of Brooklyn, you have been chosen to receive Knighthood in the Order of St. Gregory the Great."

The Papal Order of St. Gregory the Great, founded by Pope Gregory XVI in 1831, is one of the five pontifical orders of knighthood, the highest of which is the "Order of Christ." This order is bestowed on Catholic men and women (and in rare cases, non-Catholic men) in recognition of their service to the Church, unusual labors, support of the Holy See, and the good example set in their communities and country.

In 1987, Mr. Allas moved with his family from the Philippines to Bayside, Queens. As an immigrant and practically unknown to anyone in his new community, he sought a place of solace to raise his growing children with particular care as to not have them lose their identity in the rigorous way of life in New York City. His family immediately located a familiar haven for most Filipino immigrants, our Holy Mother Church, becoming a member of St. Robert Bellarmine (SRB) Parish.

He first volunteered and together with his sons, joined SRB's Boys Scouts Troop 142. As his children grew, Mr. Allas and his wife, Pura



Hermes P. Allas

Concepcion, known as Ching to everyone, joined a nucleus of Filipino Americans who formed the Filipino-American Community of St. Robert Bellarmine. Hermes later became a Chairperson and subsequently an Adviser to this newly formed community. Having been involved in numerous ministries and committees at his parish, he was later encouraged to get involved with the Filipino Diocesan Apostolate (FDA) and was recognized for his leadership skills, becoming a Head Enabler for the Queens Council. Subsequently, he continues to serve and remains as an Adviser to the FDA and at SRB. He will soon commence serving under Rev. Godofredo Felicitas, Parochial Vicar at SRB, who succeeds Rev. Marc Caliwan as Coordinator of the Filipino Apostolate of the Brooklyn Diocese.

During his many years with the FDA, Mr. Allas has been deeply immersed in diocesan activities. Getting initially involved with the Catholic Migration Office, under the tutelage of Rev. Msgr. Ronald T. Marino, currently the Episcopal Vicar for Migrant and Ethnic Apostolates of the Diocese of Brooklyn. Mr. Allas' apostolate work enabled him to collaborate in various diocesan projects with members from the other 21 multi-ethnic Apostolates representing people from across the globe. He attributes his achievements to the support and assistance of the dedicated Filipino priests and lay leaders including his former Pastor, the late Msgr. John Lavin, who was a great inspiration and mentor to him. He continues to generously offer his time, talent and treasure to his parish and the diocese with the nurturing guidance of his current Pastor, Rev. Msgr. Martin T. Geraghty, who constantly supports him and has given him every possible opportunity to serve both his parish and the people of God of the Brooklyn Diocese, which is renowned for its ministry to immigrants. ■

Filipino Heritage Foundation Inc. 9th Annual Gabi ng Parangal and Coronation Ball at Bergenfield, New Jersey



Olivia David, Mrs. Heritage 2009



Outstanding Fil-Am Achievers awarded by the Filipino Heritage Foundation. At the right are Ambassador Hilario Davide, Former Bergenfield Mayor Bob Rivas, Ms. Tinana, Lito Pernia and Ms. Deauna.



New Jersey Governor Jon Corzine and Ludi Hughes



Grace Puckett, Miss Filipino Heritage 2009 with Bob Rivas, Former Bergenfield Mayor and Consul General Cecilia Rebong

Photos by Ziggy Martinez and Joseph Tieng

The Catholic Fellowship of Young Filipino Professionals launches 'Flores de Mayo' at the Philippine Center



Santacruzian Participants



The Jaleo Filipino Dance Ensemble performing Bulaklakan



The officers of The Catholic Fellowship of Young Filipino Professionals with The President of Catholic Fellowship Toan Chu, Vice President Joseph Mahon and Father Patrick Longalong.

Photos by Ernie Pena

Former Ms. Body Language...

PAGE 10 ◀

credentials at the University of Loma Linda, California.

She went on to pursue a master of science degree in Prosthodontics from the Marquette University School of Dentistry Graduate School in Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

So from being Ms. Body Language, she has transformed into the Beautiful Smile Diva. Besides the career change, however, Dr Brookshire has not changed at all in terms of personality.

She's still down-to-earth and unassuming. She knows how to have fun and her laughter is distinctively hers *talaga*. Moreover, she's caring and compassionate.

Like most who watch TFC, I saw Dr. Brookshire bare her story on *Citizen Pinoy* as her beloved brother faced an immigration crisis.

I was happy to have played a little part in connecting Dr. Brookshire and Frederick to attorney Michael Gurfinkel, who was able

to help the siblings resolve the issue. It's a heart-warming success story that's inspired a lot of our *kababayans* in their quest to attain the American Dream.

I just want to say to Dr. Brookshire, you are one great lady. You are truly the Beautiful Smile Diva! ***

LA-based celebrity stylist Monet Lu was born in Marikina, Philippines. In the 80s, Monet left a thriving salon chain business in his hometown to migrate to the US. He had the vision to recreate his success in the US by building a beauty business that served the needs of Filipino Americans. Currently, Monet is the proud owner of four salons with branches

in Van Nuys CA, Panorama City CA, Los Angeles CA and Las Vegas NV. He has since branched out to event productions through his events and marketing company, Events Specialists International, producer of the longest-running [20 years!] and most prestigious Filipino-American awards/fashion show in SoCal. In 2006, Monet kicked off another passion to develop his own line of all-natural, beauty care products, Skin By Monet.

Monet is also a humanitarian and has supported many charitable organizations such as the Marikina Revitalization Project, AIDS Center in Pasadena, Alab Ng Puso, Every Nation Ministries, Gawad Kalinga, Bantay Bata 163, and many more. To contact Monet, please visit his site: www.monetsalon.com.