

SPAA opens exhibit with 'Into the Threshold' launch

by ROBERT P. DE TAGLE



SPAA annual exhibit and 'Into The Threshold' book launch, 23 June 09, Phil. Center, NYC.

AJ contributed photo by Robert P. DeTagle/Mae Palaci

THE Society of Philippine American Artists (SPAA) opened its 16th annual exhibit on June 23, 2009, coupled by the launch of *Into The Threshold* on the life and works of 'Father of Philippine Printmaking' Manuel Rodriguez, Sr.

The exhibit that runs through July 3 is participated in by 25 artists with oil, acrylic and mixed media paintings, watercolors,

prints and photographs, and was opened by Philippine Ambassador to the UN Hilario Davide, Jr. and Consul General Cecile Rebong at a well-attended reception.

Mr. Rodriguez was present to sign copies of the book published by the Lenore RS Lim Foundation for Arts and edited by Imelda Cajipe Endaya, with essays by Eva Florentino, Virgilio Aviado and Clint White,

and photographs by Rene Ner.

SPAA was co-founded by Mr. Rodriguez and is headed by Tenni Santos Magcase Lopez, who spoke of the Society's recent and upcoming projects, such as exhibits at the Ayala Museum and at the Philippine Embassy in DC, as well as Books 1 and 2 of Selected Works of its member artists. ■

'Alay Sa Inyo' at Phil. Center present talented dance artists from Manila and New York



Ambassador Hilario Davide and Consul General Cecilia Rebong with the Akin, Amin, Atin Artists



Ambassador Hilario Davide and Consul General Cecilia Rebong with the Effie Nana Dance Company

TO celebrate May as Philippine National Arts Month, the Philippine Consulate General and the Philippine Mission to the United Nations presented the dance concert *Alay sa Inyo* at the Kalayaan Hall on 28 May 2009. Performing were the Effie Nanas Dance Company of Manila and the Akin, Amin, Atin Dance Group of New York.

The Effie Nanas Dance Company presented "Philippine Suites in stylized ballet movements." Choreographed by well-known Filipina Ballerina Effie Nanas, the Suites featured ballet interpretations of the popular *Itik-Itik* and *Tinkling*, and the internationally renowned song *Dahil Sa Yo*. The girls also demonstrated in ballet form the various uses of the Malong. Young ballet dancers from the Philippines wowed the audience with their skillful and graceful movements. These ballerinas ranged from 11 to 15 years of age; they were Katrene San Miguel, Kimberly Lim, Tiffany Ong, Eunice Aclan, Angela Tan, Cassandra Chan, Judy Miano, Christel Chongson, Jana Negre, and Courtney Ong. Adding to the attraction of the dance segments were the colorful costumes worn for each dance. There were also video presentations to complement the description on the dances.

The Akin, Amin, Atin (AAA) dance group of New York, on the other hand, presented contemporary dance interpretations of life experiences. Opening number was *Songs from a New World*, sung by Fil-Ams Devin Ilaw,

Loresa Lanceta, Jonelle Margallo, Juan Paolo Valerio Moraga.

This was followed by *Sarili*, choreography by Kendra Isobel Samson and performed by Selena Elaine Chau, and Kendra Isobel Samson. They danced to the music of *Paggising ng Bundok* by Joey Ayala and Ang Bagong Lumad. The dance piece was a study of mirror image reflection, and explored the use of impulse or sudden and involuntary stimuli to give impetus to movements.

Mirror was choreographed by Leonides D. Arpon. Music was by Raymund Golamco. The dance showed the ability to form strong bonds with others whom we would normally have conflicts with because of our own fundamental darkness," said Leo D. Arpon about the dance number performed in duet with Bennyroyce Royon.

Flux: Mixes was choreographed by Bennyroyce Royon and performed by Billy Bell, Leslie Hubilla, Kendra Isobel Samson; music was by Bennyroyce Royon. The dance was a "a techno-contemporary dance illustrating the constantly changing flow of the modern human experience."

Alay Sa Inyo aptly presented the National Arts theme this year *Awit at Sayaw* as spelled out by the Philippines' National Commission for Culture and the Arts (NCCA). It was also the first time in many years that a dance concert was performed at the Philippine Center.

"The girls prepared themselves well for this concert and

were very excited to come to New York to perform," said Julie Miano, the group's coordinator.

Alay Sa Inyo was indeed an offering. We wanted to offer to all our Filipino-American kababayans this dance concert as a way of showing our appreciation to the help they give the country..." said Andy Miano, the Dance Company's public relations officer.

Leo Arpon of AAA noted the struggle of many Filipino dance artists and presented his mission for *Akin, Amin, Atin*. It is "dedicated to developing the cultivation, education and presentation of Filipino Contemporary Artists and their multicultural diversity in order to unite communities with fragmented identities. Its goal is to reach out to people through dialogue, performances in mixed media and curriculum based education..."

Arpon added, "We believe that by continuing to integrate and share our rich culture in communities with similar values, we will be able to grow, nurture and educate each other and the youth, who are our future."

"Song and dance are integral elements of our country's rich culture. For our Philippine National Arts Month, we joined the NCCA in celebrating our rich heritage when we proudly presented these two elements through *Alay Sa Inyo*. Our talented Filipino choreographers and dancers presented modern dance interpretations of original Filipino music..." noted Consul General Cecilia Rebong.

Coffee table book on Filipino World War II Veterans launched at Philippine Embassy



WASHINGTON, DC—Bay Area-based Filipino-American photographer Rick Rocamora launched his coffee table book 'Filipino World War II Soldiers: America's Second-Class Veterans' in the Greater Metro DC area with a book talk, signing and reception at the Romulo Hall of the Philippine Embassy recently. The award-winning photographer's book is described as "a rare view into their (Filipino World War II Veterans) difficult but always dignified lives, and create a poignant story of pain, persistence and hope." Sandra Philips, Senior Curator of Photography at the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art wrote of the book, "... Rocamora reminds us, in these quiet and dignified pictures, of the value and integrity of these people..." The book talk, signing and reception was conducted by the Asian Pacific American Labor Alliance (APALA), KAYA-DC, National Alliance for Filipino Veterans Equity (NAFVE), National Federation of Filipino American Associations (NaFFAA), Philippine Arts, Letters & Media (PALM) Council in partnership with the Philippines Embassy as part of the month-long commemoration of the 111th Anniversary of Philippine Independence.

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Award-winning Fil-Am Photographer Launches Coffee Table Book with Talk, Signing at Philippine Embassy in DC

WASHINGTON, DC—Bay Area-based Fil-Am photographer Rick Rocamora prepares to sign a softbound copy of his coffee table book *Filipino World War II Soldiers: America's Second-Class Veterans* at a launching at the Embassy of the Philippines recently. The award-winning photographer's book is described as "a rare view into their (Filipino World War II Veterans) difficult but always dignified lives, and create a poignant story of pain, persistence and hope." Sandra Philips, Senior Curator of Photography at the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art wrote of the book, "... Rocamora reminds us, in these quiet and dignified pictures, of the value and integrity of these people..." The book talk, signing and reception was conducted by the Asian Pacific American Labor Alliance (APALA), KAYA-DC, National Alliance for Filipino Veterans Equity (NAFVE), National Federation of Filipino American Associations (NaFFAA), Philippine Arts, Letters & Media (PALM) Council in partnership



with the Philippine Embassy as part of the month-long commemoration of the 111th Anniversary of Philippine Independence. Rocamora has received recognition and awards for his photographs from the Asian American Journalist Association, San Francisco Bay Area Press Photographers Association, New California Media and the Media Alliance. He was also given a California Arts Council Art Fellowship and a Local Bay Area Heroes Award from KQED and Union Bank of California for his work on the veterans. ■

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