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The Official Newsletter of the Xavier Center for Culture and the Arts



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## XCCA on its 6<sup>th</sup> successful cultural season

Xavier Center for Culture and the Arts (XCCA) successfully celebrated the 6<sup>th</sup> year of its commitment for artistic excellence and cultural education not only in Cagayan de Oro City but in Mindanao generally. The Center dubbed its sixth cultural season, "Metamorpho6ix," an amalgamation of triumphs and challenges, happiness and drama as part of the metamorphosis that XCCA and its companies have undergone through the years.

With the emphasis on cultural and artistic endeavors, XCCA has maintained its existing programs and made some groundbreaking achievements this season. On top of that, XCCA in collaboration with the National Commission for Culture and the Arts (NCCA) hosted the 6<sup>th</sup> Cinema Rehiyon, the film festival known as "a detour from the mainstream cinema" on Feb 18-22, which brought together about a hundred films produced by students and professional filmmakers, screened at Xavier University Little Theater (XULT) and SM CDO Cinema 3 and 4. The victors of the 6<sup>th</sup> Cinemagis Digital Short Film Festival in NorMin, "Ika-3 Putahi" by Joeromer Bacus and "Wa Ko Kakita" by Eastine Charles Taneo were featured in the 6<sup>th</sup> Cinema Rehiyon. Aside from the national exposure, both festivals were aimed at empowering regional storytellers and promoting local flavors, voices and languages.

This season was also plotted with a rundown of presentations from various XCCA performing arts



companies. XU Cultural Dance Troupe (XUCDT) spearheaded the 2nd Sulyap Sayaw at XU covered court featuring various tribal and folk dances.

Xavier Philharmonia filled the XULT with a number of film soundtracks, as well as established classical compositions in a two-hour grand performance, "Music to Remember: A Recital on Strings and Keys" which also featured soloists from the XU Glee Club. During the Akapela Open, a competition for contemporary a cappella ensemble, dubbed to be the first of its kind in the country, XU Glee Club Showstoppers came out as one of the finalists.

Under XCCA's Cultural Education Program (CEP), a number of seminars and workshops transpired this season such as "Artekultura 6: Panitikan, Kultura at Kalusugan," a program dedicated to use children literature as a tool for releasing stress and anxieties to achieve a healthier state of being; Sulat Dula 3 a project aimed at establishing a playwriting development program in Mindanao frontlined by the Writer's Bloc, the group of playwrights behind the Virgin Labfest; and Yamug 6, a culture-based education symposium which drew together more than 100 students from different schools across NorMin and the CARAGA region.

Another groundbreaking feat was the first-ever Ateneo Theater Festival (ATF) initiated and hosted by XU's Dulaang Atenista as one of the highlights of their 25th anniversary celebration. Theater companies from XU, Ateneo de Manila, Ateneo

de Davao, Ateneo de Cebu and XU High School gathered for the event where the revolutionary prowess of theater as an art form has centered the performances.

XU's repertory theater company, The Xavier Stage (TXS) also presented a pre-Islamic adaptation of William Shakespeare's "A Midsummer Night's Dream" as part of their 3rd theater season and "Ang Pasyon ni Hesukristo" during the Lenten season.

Recently, Museo de Oro, the Philippines' first folkloric museum celebrated the International Museum Month with cultural exchange and tourism ties. The occasion drew together 19 students and three faculty members from Malaysia, Vietnam, Brunei, China, Myanmar and the Philippines to visit the revamped Ethnohistory Exhibit on May 25 as part of a leadership program of the Institute of Formation Fondacio Asia (IFFAsia), an NGO collaborating with XU for research and development courses.

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As XCCA moves on to its seventh season, "Siete Artes," director Hobart Savior said that the experiences in the last six fruitful years have made the Center a better, keener and more dedicated precursor of arts and culture in this part of the country. The metamorphosis continues as XCCA also continues to provide more opportunities for the community and break new grounds to promote the richness and diversity of Filipino heritage. **G**



# Xavier Philharmonia, AdMU, LdeCU, UPLB unite in peer music workshop

By Jan Rupert Alfeche

Xavier University's Xavier Philharmonia, Ateneo de Manila University's Ateneo Blue Symphony, University of the Philippines – Los Baños (UPLB) and Liceo de Cagayan University's College of Music joined together in a peer music workshop for high school students in Cagayan de Oro City on Oct 28-30, 2013.

The workshop aimed to hone the talents of the students and to better appreciate classical instruments. Students were taught how to play violin, guitar, the recorder and vocals.

On its first day, the students were introduced to each other. Among the participants were students from LdeCU, a UPLB student, three members of AdMU's Ateneo Blue Symphony and Xavier Philharmonia members.

Alongside the practice using Kreutzer's "42 Studies," the participants familiarized themselves with the viola owned by Charles Abing of LdeCU. Playing the instrument was challenging because most of the participants had never used a viola before.

AdMU peer teachers headed the violin tutorials for the HS students on the second day while others prepped up for the culminating activity. Among the pieces performed during the program were Antonio Vivaldi's "Four Seasons (Spring)" and David Guetta's "Titanium" featuring Sia.

The violin students performed "Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star" for their finale presentation, alongside other numbers from the peer teachers and volunteers on the workshop's third day.

Generally, the peer music workshop was successful – the students showed what they have learned in the three-day program. It was an experience that will be emulated as the Xavier Philharmonia progresses as a performing arts company in the city. **G**

# A bridge to classical music

By Jan Rupert Alfeche

Since its inception in 2012, Xavier Philharmonia has gone a long way in presenting to Xavier University community and Cagayan de Oro City in general, their talents, skills and passion for classical music. As an addition to their growing list of performances, Xavier Philharmonia mounted "Music to Remember: A Recital on Strings and Keys" on November 16, 2013 at XU Little Theater (XULT).

With movie soundtracks as the theme for this performance, the Xavier Philharmonia was able to build a bridge between the mainstream music and the realm of classical music. True enough, "Music to Remember" was favorably received by the community and obtained a full house.

As previous performances primarily focused on contemporary popular music with only bits and pieces of classical pieces, it was then decided that songs from a number of films would be the best transition from mainstream songs to classical music.

The recital featured 4 ensemble pieces coming from prominent films such as "Only Hope" from "A Walk to Remember," "He's a Pirate" from the first "Pirates of the Caribbean" and "Beauty and the Beast" from the film of the same name, among others.

Eight classical pieces from various films were performed by the pianists. Before every number, the performers gave a little background of the film and the song to engage their audience to their presentation.

Not only did film music satisfied the audience in terms of relevance — given that they have seen the films where the music has been used — but it also provided a glimpse of how the Xavier Philharmonia's old and new members value this classical genre.

The Xavier Philharmonia is still young and growing. There are a lot of lessons yet to learn as an organization and how to serve the community better. It is the hope of the organization to set the standards higher in every performance and be able to meet the expectations of their audience. **G**





## Meeting the evil of Titus Adronicus

By Kristen Senajon

"*Titus Adronicus*" by William Shakespeare was labeled as one of the worst plays he had ever written. According to English dramatist Edward Ravenscroft, the play is "the most incorrect and indigested piece in all his works; it seems rather a heap of rubbish than a structure." He added that this in an attempt to rescue the good name of Shakespeare.

The play was expected to be dark and gory, filled with metaphors of betrayal and death but even so, it was a huge hit upon its opening. Success was repeated when the Philippine-adapted version, "*Tinarantadong Asintado*" was shown at XU Little Theater in February and re-staged on May 6 and 10, 2014 by XU's repertory company, The Xavier Stage (TXS).

"*Tinarantadong Asintado*" was first produced by Dulaang UP, starring Bembol Rocco as Titus Adronicus. But the portrayal of TXS's Sam Macagba certainly thrilled the audience with his dark and insane interpretation of Carding (the Filipino-adapted name of Titus). The ensemble cast of TXS has also created a picture of the harsh realities of life where not everyone is going to come out alive.

**THE CLOWN.** TXS's Aieran Bacarro who played the clown in the Carnivalesque-themed adaptation said a lot of audience asked him what the clown was doing in the play but as soon as he answered their question, he was met with "Oh" and "Ah" responses.

TXS revolutionized the depiction of the clown in the play, using him as an epitome of chaos and death, instead of being a symbol of cheerful and funny memories. The Clown was after all

portraying the Angel of Death who comes for everyone.

**THE DINIGUAN SCENE.** Another crowd favorite was the dinuguan scene between the characters Carding and Ryan Munoz (the counterparts of Titus and his son Lucios) as they plot revenge to their enemies. Dinuguan (blood pudding stew) was used as a metaphor for scheming a bloody ending for their enemies.

This part of the play created a Filipino vibe that made most of the audience connect to the characters and in understanding their nature for seeking revenge. It was an unconventional bond between a father and his son who will eventually take part in his scheme and live on as Titus' greatest legacy.

The play was blanketed with dark and lethal atmosphere and a certified PG-16 play packed with sex, violence and profanity. It was a liberating and raw examination of evil. It reminded us that in darkness we struggle to search for light—what is real among mere illusions. Ultimately, "*Tinarantadong Asintado*" has taken us to a journey of knowing that evil exists without conditions but breaking free from this evil is always a matter of choice. **G**

## XU Cultural Dance Troupe holds outreach program during Cugman Day

In celebration of the Barangay Cugman Day, Xavier University Cultural Dance Troupe (XUCDT) hosted a barrio fiesta dance competition as their first outreach project on December 28, 2013 at the barangay's covered court.

The event drew together various artistic groups from 11 zones of Brgy Cugman, organized by Alice B Artazo, XUCDT artistic directress and the chairman of Brgy Cugman Engr Ricardo L Pacheco.

This project was initiated to raise cultural awareness and hone the talents and skills of the youth in cultural dances.

The judges of the said contest were Braulio Gallawan, former XU Dance Society member and XU Physical Education faculty members Ricky S Tadlip and Jessica Esparrago.



Jason Manaois, XUCDT assistant moderator and dance troupe member Janine Baguin hosted the event.

This outreach project had also given the XUCDT resident artists an opportunity to help in the preservation of the Philippine culture by bringing the community closer to appreciate our rich tradition and craftsmanship. **G**

# Challenging the status quo through theater

By Stephen Roy J Pedroza

To provide entertainment to the audience is just a chunk of the whole idea of putting up a theater production. It is, by all means, to unmask a barefaced reality, to confront our fears and frustrations and ultimately, to stir us into a higher niche of consciousness and resolving actions. This is what theater today—an artistic form of revolution.

The fighting and liberating prowess of this kind of art blanketed the first-ever Ateneo Theater Festival, hosted by Xavier University-Ateneo de Cagayan's Dulaang Atenista and which has drawn various theater companies from Ateneo de Manila, Ateneo de Davao, Sacred Heart School - Ateneo de Cebu and Xavier University High School (XUHS).

"Theater must be something very different, something that would revolutionize, aside from entertaining people" says Ray Anthony Lao, the artistic director of Dulaang Atenista and the festival director.

The four-day event, from November 20 to 23, 2013 was packed with a rundown of performances reflecting the different faces of Filipino culture, our country's environmental and political drawbacks and the pursuit for societal change.

In celebration of their 25th year anniversary, Dulaang Atenista staged David Ives' "All in the Timing," which is a slew of five vignettes chronicling the possibilities and twists during interpersonal encounters.

**BOXES WITHIN BOXES.** "A theatrical presentation filled with symbolisms and mysteries," that is how AdMU's Tanghalang Ateneo's artistic director Dr Ricardo "Ricky" Abad staged National Artist Rolando Tinio's "The Boxes."



"The play is about a struggle to follow the rules of an organization, even though the rules are inhumane, and the obsession of the characters to free themselves from the oppression," says Abad, who has been directing TA for 30 years now. "Boxes are like prisons; people are boxed within a bigger box, where it is difficult to get out," he says in comparison with "the prevailing oppressive systems in our society."

When asked what theater should fight for, Abad answers "As I always say, theater is a weapon of change; it must challenge the norms, grapple bureaucracy and dirty politics, free the people locked up in the boxes and it should challenge the status quo."

**NO PLANET B.** Ateneo de Davao's Teatro Humanidades has pushed for a timely campaign after Supertyphoon Yolanda plowed across central Philippines: Saving Mother Earth from degradation.

Their musical segmented play, "Shift Happens" depicted the different hazardous human activities which have been causing environmental decay. Poignant images of Yolanda-ravaged communities were flashed as background during several parts of their production. "We all need to be educated on global warming because we are all affected by it," says Teatro Humanidades artistic director Noy Narciso.

"Shift Happens" was mounted with live accompaniment using tribal and improvised musical instruments, mimicking the sounds of Nature. The songs they performed were original compositions of Narciso and his actors.

**NAPOLES-IZED.** Away from the premises of a formal theater stage, synchronized lighting or a predictable setting, XU's The Xavier Stage (TXS) brought the production of Layeta Bucoy's "Doc Resurrection: Gagamutin ang Bayan" in an open ground facing the XU Lucas Hall.

Despite containing vulgar language and lewd scenarios yet true-to-life undertakings, their

performance confronted the audience with issues on patronage politics, political dynasties, greed in power and the taking advantage of the electorate's poverty by greedy politicians to pursue their vested interests.

"We can use art as a frontier to move forward and challenge the status quo. We don't want to be 'Napoles-ized' again," says Hobart Savior, the artistic director of TXS and Xavier Center for Culture and the Arts (XCCA) director.

Dulaang Pilipino (DulaPi) of XUHS also showcased Al Santos' Ang Sistema ni Propesor Tuko on the festival's third day at the same venue.

**KEENING TALENTS AND SKILLS.** The festival also provided an avenue for workshops and discussions on developing one's talents in theater, from playwriting to acting and applying theater in the class.

Nine-time winner of the prestigious Carlos Palanca Memorial Awards for Literature and Fine Arts teacher at AdMU, Glenn Sevilla Mas conducted a seminar on "Getting Ideas for Writing Plays: Why?" Dr Abad discussed "Five Ways to Use Theater in Your Classrooms." Tanghalang Ateneo alumnus Brian Matthew Sy facilitated a workshop on "Ensemble Performance" while Narciso gave a workshop on "Sound and Contact Improvisations."

The next ATF will be in 2015 and it will be much bigger, Lao says, adding that the other Ateneo theater companies will be able to join the festival. Being a Theater teacher at XU and director of a handful of plays, Lao has an advice to young theater artists: "Appreciate your work. When you value your work, your commitment will always pay off."

To improve the milieu of Philippine theater, the veteran director Dr Abad states the challenge this way: "Every theater production starts with a great material and that is why we need more writers who can see what is beyond this world and who can transform reality into art." **G**

# The legenDary season

By Yves Yancy Detablan



Dulaang Atenista, the resident theater company of Xavier University, has reached its silver anniversary. To commemorate the event, the company had its 25th theater season with a *legendary* celebration of artistic excellence through two major productions and the first-ever Ateneo Theater Festival.

David Ives' "All in the Timing," a collection of five comedic vignettes kicked off the season. The play centered on existentialism, wordplay and the struggles of romantic relationships, and was screened on July 13, 15, and 17 at XU Little Theater and at Central Mindanao University (CMU) on Dec 4.

In August, DA mounted "Kapeng Barako Club: Samahan ng mga Bitter," a story about a group of friends who were bitter and hopeless about their love life. The play became a crowd's favorite because of its presentation on the different romantic situations and the complications of being in love which were relatable by the audience. During its last two shows on Sept 2, Juan Ekis, the prominent playwright of "Twenty Questions" and "Kapeng Barako Club" visited CDO and was able to witness DA's show.

## 'Ika-3 Putahi,' 'Wa Ko Kakita' shine brightest at Cinemagis 6

By Stephen Roy J Pedroza

Among the 13 official entries from all over Northern Mindanao, "Ika-3 Putahi" by Joeromer Bacus and "Wa Ko Kakita" by Eastine Charles Taneo emerged as victors during the 6th Cinemagis Digital Short Film Festival.

Under the banner of Xavier Center for Culture and the Arts (XCCA), the festival shortlisted 5 entries for the professional category and 8 student films, screened at Xavier University Little Theater (XULT) and SM Cagayan de Oro Cinema 3 on Jan 24-25.

"This year's festival curated films that have

social relevance and impact," said Hobart Savior, XCCA director. "They reflect social biases, peace issues, self-awareness and climate change."

"Ika-3 Putahi" (Recipe No. 3) was hailed as the Best Short Film-Professional Category. It also garnered 6 other awards, namely Best Art Direction, Best Story, Best Editing, Best Sound Scoring, Best Director for Joeromer Bacus and Best Actor for Rusty Quintana.

"Lugdang" (Drowned) by Gray-em Erez received the 2nd Best Short Film award, along with Best Cinematography and Best Actress for Kris Gebe. The Special Jury Award for Social Responsibility on Climate Change also went to "Lugdang" for tackling the aftermath of Typhoon Sendong.

The 3rd Best Short Film went to "Hello" by Kevin Nico Surposa of Iligan City.

"Panamilit" (Farewell) by Tat Soriano won Best Poster and the Cinemagis Audience Choice Award.

Meanwhile, "Wa Ko Kakita" (I Haven't Seen

Another legendary event of the season transpired on Nov 20-23 when DA organized the very first Ateneo Theater Festival, aimed at gathering all theater companies among Ateneo schools to share their own experiences and cultures in theater as well as establish a wide network for theater companies. Tanghalang Ateneo of Ateneo de Manila University, Teatro Humanidades of Ateneo de Davao University and XU's DA were the major performers of the said festival. The festival also served as an avenue for seminars and workshops to hone their talents and skills in theater.

To celebrate Arts Month 2014 in Feb, DA showcased "Monumento," a one-act play about 7 heroes of our nation undergoing a trial led by Jose Rizal, to the pupils of XU Grade School. The season ended with a tribute performance for Nonoy Estarte, one of the city's local artists who recently retired from XU, in honor of his contribution to culture and the arts.

In retrospect, it has been a tough yet fulfilling celebration of DA's 25 years and true enough, this theater company will continue its magic and prowess for more years to come. **G**

It) by Eastine Charles Taneo from Liceo de Cagayan University (LdeCU) was chosen as the Best Student Short Film. It also won Best Story, Best Director for Taneo and Best Actor for Ray Anthony Vacalares.

"Kaon Ta" (Let's Eat) by Richard Mars Caberte landed 2nd Best Student Short Film, along with the awards for Best Art Direction, Best Cinematography and Best Editing.

"The Perfect Girl" by Janine Banday from XU got the 3rd Best Student Short Film.

Jocell Sedigo won the Best Actress award for her role in "Binibining Cancer" by John Solomon Legara. The award for Best Sound Scoring went to Legara's film as well.

"Perla" by Angel Frances Borres from Xavier University High School (XUHS) reaped the Best Trailer award among the 13 entries.

Tracy June Dy of "The Perfect Girl," Rhea Arroyo of "Panamilit" and Alger Macud of "Lugos" were hailed as Stars of the Night during the awarding ceremony held at SM City Event Center on the festival's last day. **G**

# Museo de Oro celebrates Int'l Museum Month with cultural exchange, tourism ties

By Stephen Roy J Pedroza

May is the International Museum Month and in the Philippines' first folkloric museum, Museo de Oro under the banner of Xavier Center for Culture and the Arts (XCCA), the occasion drew together guests from across Southeast Asia.

The celebration was graced by 19 students and three faculty members at Museo de Oro on May 25 (however, the Int'l Museum Day is being celebrated every May 18) as part of a leadership program initiated by the Institute of Formation Fondacio Asia (IFFAsia), an NGO collaborating with Xavier University for research and development courses.

"These students come from different countries and they are here to be exposed to our culture and at the same time share their own," said Luther Labitad, the group coordinator.

The students from Malaysia, Vietnam, Brunei, China, Myanmar and the Philippines toured the newly-renovated Ethnohistory Exhibit where artifacts dating as far back as the Stone Age are displayed.

The exhibit also houses various vestiges of prehistoric life dug from the Huluga Cave and other archaeological sites in Mindanao, relics



collected during the Spanish, Japanese and American colonial periods, and the history of Cagayan de Oro City.

Dressed in Matigsalug-Manobo clothing, the group's tour guide, socio-anthropology student JC Salon, enthralled the visitors with legends and historical accounts of the items inside the museum. The tour also included a visit to the Art Gallery where the paintings of Bet Vamenta and Nonoy Estarte depicting Mindanao folklores are exhibited. These artworks were done when the two local artists were still under the guidance of the founder of the museum, the late Fr Francisco R Demetrio SJ.

The foreign students, for their part, presented traditional dances of their respective nations as part of the cultural exchange.

Another reason for celebrating the IMM this year is the collaboration struck between various museums, such as the Museo, and the local tourism industry. Several travel agencies in the city have begun including museum visits in the itinerary of local and foreign tourists.

"We have made linkages with the tourism industry so that tourists can visit our museums and learn and appreciate our culture and heritage," said Dr Erlinda Burton, the curator of Museo de Oro.

Another innovation to note is the establishment of community museums across the region to showcase and preserve the traditions and cultural symbols of the indigenous communities for the education and appreciation of the next generations.

For Dr Burton who has worked with the celebrated paleoanthropologist Dr Louis Leakey of the National Geographic, studying our past — early lifestyles, social structures, beliefs, literature, among others — is pivotal in understanding our present.

She emphasized the important role of parents in "enculturation," the process whereby a person learns about his surrounding culture and imbibes the values and behavior of that culture.

"When parents begin to expose their children to our history and heritage at an early age, they will grow up with a strong cultural identity. Appreciating Philippine museums starts at home and it will be reinforced by schools through field trips and history lessons. But the family must be the foundation."

A remarkable upshot of this brand of socialization is proficiency in the language, morals and history of one's culture. "Knowing our own culture is one of those deeply-rooted values that should be inculcated at home," Dr Burton said. **G**





# XCCA hosts 6th Cinema Rehiyon festival

By Stephen Roy J. Pedroza

Under the auspices of Xavier University's Xavier Center for Culture and the Arts (XCCA), the sixth installment of Cinema Rehiyon, the film festival dubbed as "a detour from the mainstream cinema," transpired in Cagayan de Oro City on February 18-22.

About a hundred films produced by students and professional filmmakers across the Philippine archipelago were screened at Xavier University Little Theater (XULT) and SM City Cagayan de Oro Cinema 3 and 4.

"Why can't we tell our own story? Why does it have to be Manila-made?" said Dr Miguel "Mike" Rapatan, chairman of the National Commission on Cinema, as a challenge to independent filmmakers as well as the aspiring ones.

The idea of empowering regional storytellers prompted the National Commission for Culture and the Arts (NCCA) to craft a specific filmmaking harvest from the regions, promoting local flavors, voices and languages. Thus, Cinema Rehiyon was born in 2009 and held every February as part of the National Arts Month (NAM) celebration.

"Cinema Rehiyon is a reflection of opportunities for filmmakers; it has been an avenue for people



coming from different regions to showcase their works," added Dr Rapatan, one of the pioneers of the said festival.

"Cinema Rehiyon 6 features filmmaking frontiers that could give positive impact and transform our lives for the better. These films educate us about disaster risk reduction management, climate change, cultural solidarity and other societal issues," said Hobart Savior, XCCA director on this year's theme, "Filming the Frontiers."

**SLEW OF ACTIVITIES.** A photo exhibit showcasing scenes from the participating films of Cinema Rehiyon 6 officially opened the festival on Feb 18 at SM City Event Center. A special screening of the critically acclaimed film, "Banaue" by Gerry de Leon followed at SM City Cinema 3.

For the main event, left-and-right films were screened for the audience. Mindanao films dominated the Feb 19 film-showing, Visayas films were aired on Feb 20 and Luzon films were shown on Feb 21. However, those films set in other regions, not from the hometown of the filmmakers, were showcased in the special program, Crossing Regions.

Cinema Rehiyon 6 also offered a menu of seminars and workshops on acting and filmmaking. Other features of the festival included CineMulat, CineTalakayan, CineBarangay, CineLikha and CineKalye.



Seasoned actors and directors Leo Martinez and Rex Cortez also shared some insights and tips during the CineLikha seminar and workshop on Feb 20-21 at XULT.

For the finale of Cinema Rehiyon 6, a remastered version of the multi-awarded film, "Ganito Kami Noon, Paano Kayo Ngayon" by Eddie Romero was screened at SM City Cinema 3 on Feb 22.

**THE GREAT CHALLENGE.** Dr Rapatan and Savior believe that on top of the concerns of the independent filmmaking industry in the country is how to engage the younger generations to Cinema Rehiyon and the other festivals alike.

"If one can spend money for an escapist, commercial film ... why not also watch and appreciate a regional film that has social relevance and talks about our local culture?" Savior shared.

Cinema Rehiyon, after all, is one of the few festivals in the country seeking to educate and empower the Filipino audience with regional stories, pride for local culture and artistic works that exist outside the realm of the capitalistic mainstream cinema.

Dr Rapatan highlighted, "We need to get the word out that our culture—the Filipino culture—is much more complex, much more diverse and richer than those being shown in the commercial films." **G**

# Pasyon: Philippine religious drama aesthetics

By Hobart P Savior

Philippines' colonial past with the Spaniards brought many influences that colored our cultural and artistic traditions. In "Dulaan: An Essay on Philippine Theater" in the book, *Tuklas Sining Essays on The Philippine Arts*, Nicanor G Tiongson mentioned that plays with Spanish influence like komedya, Sinakulo and the Pasyon form part of the development of Philippine theater. With the evangelization of Christianity among the native Filipinos during the Spanish era, dramas were used as powerful tools for "Christianization."

In the book, "The Cambridge Guide to Theatre," edited by Martin Banham, it was said that religious customs including dramatizations were introduced by the Spaniards in attempt to replace folk rituals. These religious performances were intended to promote Christianity, and significantly ascribed as part of "powerful events in community life." As it is noted, the Philippines is Asia's predominantly Christian or Catholic country. These performances are usually mounted during the Holy Week like that of The Xavier Stage's "Ang Pasyon ni Hesukristo" that successfully aired on April 16-17, 2014 at the Xavier University Little Theater (XULT).

One remarkable performance during Holy Week is the recitation of the Pasyon usually on Good Friday, the day when Christ suffered and died on the cross for the sins of the world. It was not only recited, but also performed as a content of the Sinakulo performances that contributed to the definition of the Filipino as a religious community.

On the other hand, one may notice why Filipinos identify themselves with the suffering of Christ. Marco Garrido, in his article "The Pasyon of the Philippines," pointed out that Filipinos put the Pasyon close to their hearts because the Filipinos see themselves in it. He mentioned the point of William Esopo that Filipinos associate to the passion of Christ as their own continuous agony and crucifixion as these signal the tale of Filipinos being abused, exploited and oppressed. It is evident that most Filipinos believe on suffering and redemption.

Garrido continued that in the Spanish regime, "Filipino peasants saw Christ's suffering not only as an inspiration to endure but also to rebel." **G**



The various performing arts companies and institutions under the banner of Xavier Center for Culture and the Arts are set to offer the following programs this year for its 7th cultural season, "Siete Artes."

Xavier Philharmonia	
Joy of Music Mini Concert	June 4
Eine Kleine Nachtmusik: A Little Serenade	Sept 2-13
Dulaang Atenista	
DA's Season Opening	July 22
Katwiran ng May Katwiran	Aug 20-30
Acting/ Improvs Workshop	Oct 20-25
Sa North Diversion Road	Nov 17-22
Museo de Oro	
Grand Opening	Aug 27
XU Glee Cub	
Iisang Banka III	Sept 27
The Xavier Stage	
William Shakespeare's Hamlet	June 23-30
Season Preview: Misteryo	Sept 3
Ten Little Indians	Sept 20-26
Arsenic and Old Lace	Dec 15-18
XU Cultural Dance Troupe	
Sulyap Sayaw 3 (4D Ateneo Sayaw)	Nov
Culture Education and Development	
116th Independence Day Celebration	June 12
Screenplay Writing Workshop	June 11-13
Artekultura 7: Mindanao Architecture	June 16
Guerrilla Filmmaking Workshop	July 18-20
Buwan ng Wika Celebration	Aug 2014
Culture and Arts Awareness Symposium	Aug 13
PCEP Filipino Re-tooling	Aug 26
K-12 Arts Track and Culture Based Education with OBE	Sept 10
Culture and Arts Awareness Symposium: Business Sector	Oct 8
Yamug 7	Oct 25
Cultural Mapping Workshop	Nov 7-8



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