

A Curator's Notes on the IP Visual Arts Exhibit in the City of Tagum

Indigenous Offering: Brief summary of the exhibition's intentions

For several years now, the Peoples of the Philippines celebrate the Month of October as an offering to the Indigenous Peoples of the land. This celebration serves as homage to the indigenous in recognition of their collective strengths, shared wisdom, creative skills and most of all, their unique and significant contributions to the development of a multi-cultural nation of peoples with diverse cultural roots and ethnicities.

This particular exhibition on Indigenous Peoples Visual Arts endeavors to portray and explain the distinct worldview shared by all Indigenous Peoples of the land, since time immemorial up to the present. This particular worldview is captured in the title in its title -- Consulting the Spirits (Kahitas-an), Working with Nature (Kinaiyahan) and Sharing with Others (Kaliwatan).

The exhibition shows a collection of the creative works --- traditional and contemporary -- - of more than thirty (30) visual artists, mostly based in the cities and municipalities that comprised the province of Davao del Norte. Each work carries a particular story that the artist wants to convey. However, all the works share one commonality as they all express the artists' memory.

The collective memory of the any indigenous group --- Dibabawon, Mansakan, Mandaya, Ata, Tagabawa, T'boli, Tala-andig, Manguangan, etc. --- is significant in their tribe's journey. The shared memory of the past and the present guides their decisions and actions to ensure a better future.

We have endeavored to arrange the more than 100 collections of artworks under the guiding theme with the hope that the audience shall capture their strong messages. In three corners of the exhibit, one can witness several samples of the traditional arts of three tribal communities. In other spaces, the contemporary works of individual artists of various ethnicities are shown --- landscapes, experiences, vision, sacred symbols and portraitures, among others.

But this particular exhibit likewise expresses a specific intention. We hope that you can listen closely to the harmonious melodies carved in each of the image exhibited.

We hope that you can understand the allegories in the poetry of colors and shapes and appreciate the shared contributions of the visual artists --- to express the various fabrics that facilitate the harmonious ways of doing amongst the diverse peoples of Mindanao. The melodies and poetry in visual formats cradle the goodness of life for all of us --- the peoples of the land expressive of diverse cultures yet sharing a common dream of a brighter future and a fairer world.

Lumadnong Dalit: lakbit-saysay sa gihanduraw niining eksibisyon

Sulod sa pipila na ka tuig, ang tibuok katawhan sa nasud sa Pilipinas nagsaulog sa bulan sa Oktubre agi'g dalit sa mga Lumadnong Katawhan kon Indigenous Peoples. Kini nga pagsaulog gipahigayon isip pag-ila sa ilang katakos, kaalam, kahanas ug labaw sa tanan, sa ilang mahinungdanong kontribusyon sa kaugmaran sa usa ka nasud nga gilangkoban sa nagkadaiyang kultura ug buhilaman.

Labing mahinungdanon niining pagsaulog mao ang pagsabot sa usa ka matang sa panlantaw (worldview) nga gihuptan sa mga Lumadnong Katawhan, sukad pa kaniadto hangtug karon. Kini nga maong panlantaw mao usab ang yawe sa ilang paglahutay. Gisumada kini nga panlantaw sa titulo niining ekshibisyon --- kahitas-an (consulting the spirits), kinaiyahan (working with nature) ug kaliwatan (sharing with others).

Gitipon-tipon niining eksibisyon ang mga mamugnaong buhat sa kapin 30 ka mga visual artists nga mitampo sa ilang mga sining-biswal --- tradisyonal man o kontemporaryo. Tinuod nagkalahi-lahi ang mga sugilanon nga buot nilang ipadayag ug ang mga pamaagi sa ilang paghulagway sa maong mga mensahe. Apan taliwala niini, ang matag usa ka nalalik nga sining-biswal nagpadayag og paghinumdum kon "memory".

Ang nahiusang paghinumdum (collective memory) mahinungdanon alang sa sangputanan sa bisan unsa nga tribo --- Dibabawon, Mansaka, Mandaya, Ata, Tagabawa, T'boli, Tala-andig, Manguangan ug uban pa. Ang ilang kolektibong paghanduraw sa nangagi ug sa kasamtangan panahon mao usab ang mogiya sa mga kaliwatan padulong sa kaseguruhan sa umaabot.

Dinhi niining eksibisyon, gipaningkamotan nga mahan-ay ang nagkadaiyang mensahe ug ang mga nagkalain-laing mamugnanong pamaagi sa pagpatumaw kon pagpadayag sa maong mensahe. Sa usa ka bahin, imong masaksihan ang mga tradisyonal nga gama sa mga sakop sa tribo. Sa laing luna imong maaninaw ang mga kontemporaryong sining --- mga talan-aon, kasinatian, panlantaw, mga sagradong simbolo, "portraits" ug uban pa.

Apan kining eksibisyon natibuok ilalom sa usa ka handurawan. Hinaot nga inyong mahatagan og higayon nga mapaminaw ang makadaning huni nga nalalik sa mga hulagway.

Hinaot nga inyong mahingpit ang mga sambinga sa mga balak nga namugna pinaagi sa mabulukong paghulagway. Kini mao ang gilaoman sa matag usa sa mga alagad sa sining-biswal nga mitampo sa ilang mamugnaong buhat niining eksibisyon--- ang paglalik sa kahiusahan sa tanang katawhan nga nagpuyo niining kayutaan sa Mindanao --- nagkadaiyang katawhan nga nahupot sa gasa sa lahi-lahing buhilaman.

Some important footnotes....

The design of the exhibition was conceptualized to portray the various contexts and functions of the IP visual arts and this was executed to create distinct spaces (indoor and outdoor) within a space (the covered pavilion). It is the intention of the curator of the project to create spaces that would facilitate discussions and interactions among the viewers and the artists as well.

However, the entire exhibition could not be made possible without the support, encouragement and confidence of very important individuals and agencies. Hence, we would like to mention them so as to acknowledge their contributions:

- Honorable RODOLFO P. DEL ROSARIO, Governor of Davao del Norte
- Honorable REY T. UY, Mayor of the City of Tagum
- Ms. ALMA L. UY and the Tourism Council of the City of Tagum
- Ms. ARLENE LLAMADA, Tourism Officer of Davao del Norte Province
- Mr. LUCIO "JUN" JAMERO, Project Coordinator
- Ms. Gigi Abella, Tourism Officer of the City of Tagum
- Engr. MARY ANN LOPEZ and the engineering staff of the City of Tagum
- And to all the visual artists who allow us to exhibit their creative outputs which collectively become a homage to the indigenous peoples of the Region

However, this Project would never be implemented without the full support and timely interventions of the staff of the KALINAWA ARTS FOUNDATION, under the guidance of its founder, Mr. David Gillinsky and its Senior Adviser, Mr. Carlton Hughes.

To them, allow me to personally say: Madayaw na Pagkani sa Tagum ug Daghan Kaayong Salamat sa inyong tiunay nga pagbulig sa katawhan sa Mindanao.