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**ARTS AND CULTURE**

**A stage for storytelling and creativity**

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"Night Vendor" by Lucio Tagulam Jr.

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MANILA, Philippines - "My aim was to create a platform for storytelling and creativity," says entrepreneur David Gilinsky, founder of the Kalinawa Art Foundation. The foundation was established by Gilinsky in 2001, designed to function more like a social enterprise than a philanthropic organization. Specifically, the foundation makes investments by way of promoting the talent and creativity of indigenous artists.

"The foundation was set up to encourage the artists to continue creating, to show them that their art is appreciated and needed in the community. How would their stories get told, how would the life and culture of their ancestors get passed on if it is not for the artists who are courageous enough to tell their stories?" Gilinsky explains.

Fittingly, in his speech at the foundation's exhibit titled "Kamulatan" in Tuguegarao City, Gilinsky thanked the artists for "the courage to put their art up on the walls for everyone to see, risking the possibility that someone will not like what they've created." He commended them for not only their talent but also their bravery in telling their personal stories and the stories of their ancestors.

The exhibit's title "Kamulatan," which means "an awakening," exemplifies the essence of the Kalinawa Art Foundation's mission, which is to awaken our fellowmen to the ancestry and tradition of indigenous peoples so that new generations will not forget. Indeed, to forget would mean to sever one's self from his history and in essence, from himself.

The foundation plans to arrange more than 70 pieces of artworks from the Agta, Ibanag, Itawes, Kalinga and Ilbaoi, under guiding themes, namely, Pamana (Inheritance), Larawan (Pictures), and Pagpupugay (honor), with the hope that the viewers would, by extension, internalize the artists' field of dreams.

"Pregnant Woman" by Mitchel Angela R. Maralli of Cagayan Province depicts the rituals and folk practices of childbirth, specifically, those needed to ensure normal delivery. In her community, it is taboo for the expectant mother to be selfish, stay out night, lend neighbors matches and charcoal, or allow visitors to stand by the doorway. With the help of the trained midwife, the expected mother goes through traditional folk practices: the placenta and the umbilical cord are disposed off with care, while a pair of scissors, a pinch of salt and a rosary are placed in the baby's crib to ward off witches and evil spirits. "Ritual" by Felson Agatep Maralli, an artist from the Ibanag community from Igig, Cagayan Province, shows the Calenda Rueda of perpetual calendar devised by ancient forebears providing guidance to its people from birth to death.

For inquiries, call Kalinawa Art Foundation at 759-3682 and 759-3681, e-mail [info@kalinawa.com](mailto:info@kalinawa.com) or visit [www.kalinawa.com](http://www.kalinawa.com).

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