

'Better be nice to Filipinos,' says Rob Schneider

Written by NATHALIE TOMADA
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Rob Schneider with his proud Pinay mother Pilar.

There's no question on how hilarious a man Rob Schneider is.

The Fil-Am Hollywood comedian is not just a riot on screen but also off it.

At a presscon to promote his Oct. 28 show at the Solaire Resort and Casino, the *Pinoy* media had a sample of his stand-up comedy act, which he is touring around the world.

The L.A.-based Rob, whose mother is Filipino, said there's nothing like making Filipinos laugh.

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"I'm telling you, the best laughing people in the world are Filipinos, man," he said.

"Nothing makes you feel better than Filipinos laughing."

Rob poked fun at a lot of things, starting with himself.

"I grew up just south of Daly City, which they call, you know, Little Manila. More Filipino people than anybody else. So, I never consider myself short as I was always surrounded by Filipino people. I always considered myself as a basketball player or something till I was in high school, when both my friends were about a foot taller than me that I realized I was short (laughs)."

He didn't spare his Filipino roots and relatives:

"I have a lot of relatives coming in from Baguio, the Hamadas, then the Formosos from here in Manila...They're coming in, 'Robert, can we have 55 hundred tickets for the show tonight, we're coming, we're bringing a few friends, we're bringing in 55,522 people from Baguio. It took us six days to get here.'"

Rob, who co-wrote and starred in such hit comedies Deuce Bigalow movies, The Hot Chick and The Animal, said that not only does he owe his sense of humor to his genes, but his training ground was his home amidst encouraging and supportive Filipino relatives.

"My mom being Filipino and my dad being Jewish, it was a good mix. So, we had good laughing people. When you're Filipino, as soon as you're done eating, you're laughing. Usually, they're laughing while they're eating. It was a great place to practice.

"(As a stand-up comedian) you have to have confidence to get on stage and perform for other people. My relatives were so warm and supportive of me that I felt if I could make everybody there laugh, then I have a chance of making other people laugh. I couldn't wait for any holiday or something because it was great, you'd be around all of them, laughing and the good food, lumpia, pancit, adobo...

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“I mean, the only reason I became successful is because I had a lot of support when I was a kid. I felt the love from them. You know, I can deal with rejection; you can deal with rejection as long as you know you got some love behind you. If everything fails, I can go home and make them laugh, and I know I can get some good food (laughs).”

A good Filipino trait that he particularly learned from his mother’s side is being hardworking.

“I’ve traveled all over the world, and one thing constant — hardworking Filipino people. Everywhere. I was just in Singapore, so many people working and laughing over there are Filipinos. You better be nice to Filipinos because you might end up in the hospital one day and they’re running the place (laughs). You better respect Filipinos ‘coz you’re gonna need them one day. They’re caretakers. My family in New Jersey, the Lapid also from Baguio, they have nursing homes. They take care of people and it’s the best because they do it with love. There’s nothing better than that.”

Rob said his mother taught him to expect more from himself.

“I would get A’s and B’s in my report card, and she goes, ‘So, what? You’re not an idiot. You’re expected to get that. You’re smart. When you get something special, then we’ll talk.’ My whole childhood was like that. She pushed me to be overly successful. My mother, she went to college, she put herself through school, she worked hard. That’s why she expected a lot (from me). She set a good example.”

Rob is a new father with his Mexican TV producer wife.

He said this new chapter in his life is giving him new comedy ideas.

When asked how does a funny guy like him win over the ladies (like his wife), he said, “I try to make them laugh, I cook a mean adobo. But right now, the best way to win my wife’s heart is an American Express Black Card that doesn’t have a limit. She likes that. But she doesn’t go too

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crazy with buying stuff.”

As for plans to do a movie again, Rob revealed that there is one in the pipeline with frequent collaborator Adam Sandler, whose movies like “Bedtime Stories,” “You Don’t Mess With The Zohan,” “50 First Dates,” among many others, he appeared in.

“Adam Sandler wants to do one next summer a Western titled the Ridiculous Six instead of the (60s movie) Magnificent Seven,” he said.

During the presscon, a few days before his 50th birthday on Oct. 31, Rob was presented a surprise advance birthday cake.

When told he doesn’t look his age, he replied, “(Well) thank God, I’m Filipino!”