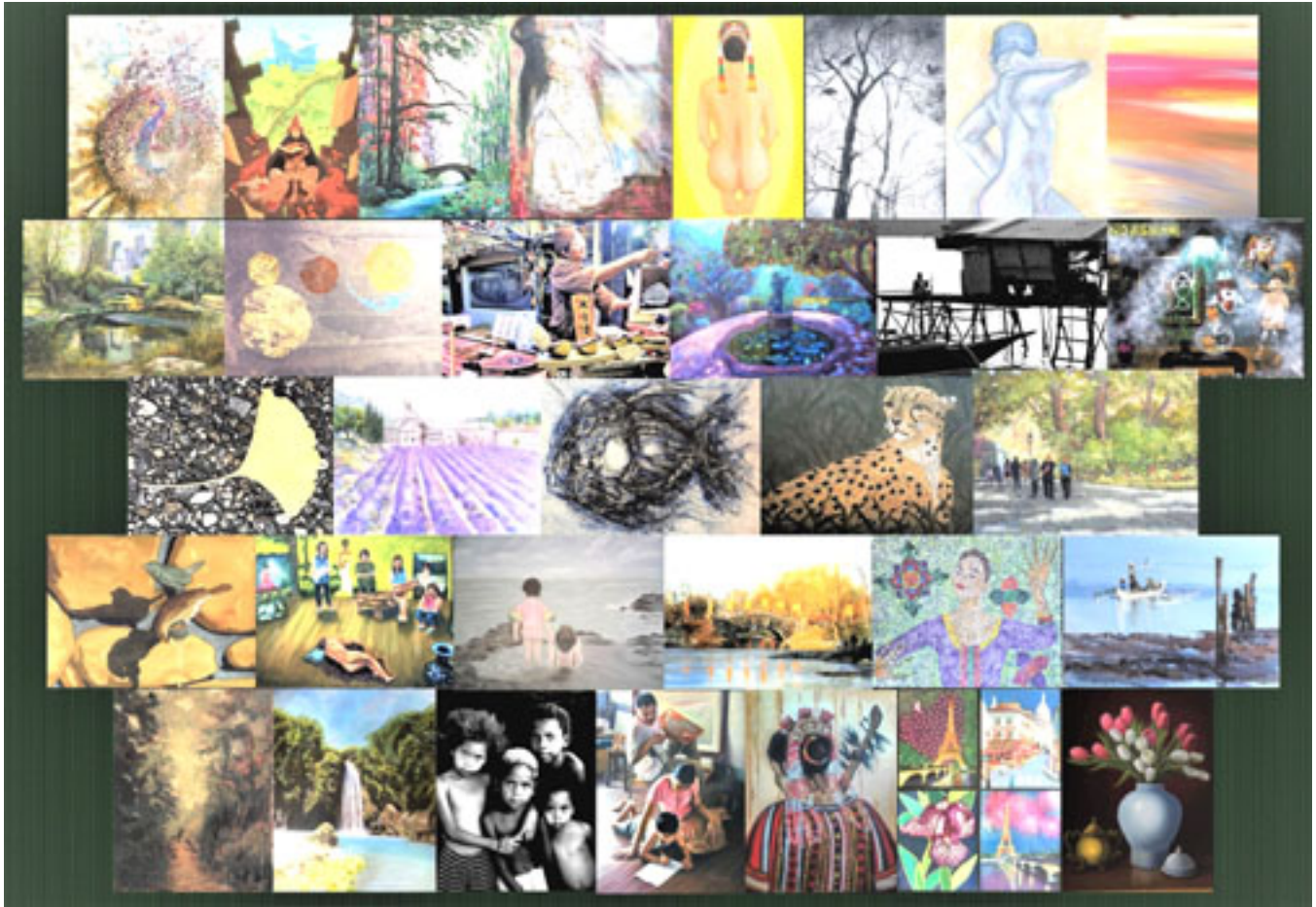


SPAA celebrates its 25th annual exhibition

Written by Contributed to the Filipino Reporter
Tuesday, 16 October 2018 11:37



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By ROBERT PÉREZ DE TAGLE

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In the early 1990s, the World Wide Web consortium and the development of browsers heralded a brave new world to come.

Meanwhile, the Museum of Tolerance first opened its doors in its vision to be “a symbol of society’s quest to live peacefully together”; the European Union was established; Nelson Mandela and FW de Klerk shared the Nobel Peace for their role in ending apartheid; Schindler’s List, Forrest Gump and Seinfeld were cultural milestones; A Whole New World and Boyz II Men were heard often; and Amazon was founded.

Against this backdrop of vibrant times both inspiring and disrupting, artists and their supporters came together to establish the Society of Philippine American Artists, or SPAA.

Manuel Rodriguez Sr., the Father of Philippine Printmaking, was its visionary leader, and from the 1990s to today, SPAA’s membership has embraced participants from New York, New Jersey, DC/Virginia, Vancouver, Manila and elsewhere, individuals of diverse professional backgrounds.

Seasoned and academically trained artists have continued to mingle and dialogue with newer or younger visual creators equally passionate about their expression through art, in media classic and mixed, on subjects challenging and stirring, the traditional juxtaposed with digital.

From Oct. 15 to 26, the SPAA celebrates with its own 25th anniversary exhibition, at its longtime host the Philippine Center in Manhattan, on Fifth Avenue at 46th Street.

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From 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. on weekdays the exhibit space at the Lobby of the Center is open to the public.

“We are honored to be part of this body of individuals supporting each other as a channel of our expression, in connecting with and reflecting our identities as Filipinos, as Filipinos in America, Canada, and elsewhere, as artists evolving in such a diverse environment,” says current president Art Zamora.

He echoes his predecessor, the late Dr. Mars Custodio, in looking to SPAA as “encouraging its members’ growth in content, technique and relevance.”

SPAA has worked through the decades in promoting its artists’ works and has also served to support visiting artists, through its members linked with other artist groups, at exhibit spaces in the New York-New Jersey area and beyond.

It has also published books, including a catalog of the art treasures of the Philippine Center.

Transitions

In addition to Mang Maning Rodriguez, the Society’s presidents over the years have included Carlos Esguerra, Joe Duvera, Lenore Lim and Tenni Magcase-Lopez.

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The organization's exhibit this year is special with the participation as exhibit curator of Teresa Lapid Rodriguez, the founding director of the George Segal Gallery at Montclair State University — the inauguration of which this writer covered exclusively — and Centennial Awardee of Holy Spirit College.

The theme from a recent annual exhibition was "Change" — borne out by the addition of new members, directors, officers and trustees, as well as by more sobering transitions, including the passing of Mang Maning Rodriguez, his son Boy Rodriguez (Manuel Jr.), Lito Ballesteros and, soon, after last year's event, Dr. Custodio.

This year's milestone event has brought with it more participants and new perspectives.

Participating artists

The visual artists presenting this year are Ameurfina Nazario, Angelito L. David, Angelito Espiritu, Angelo Maristela, Anna Leah Sanson, Apolinario Follosa, Art Zamora, Athena Magcase-Lopez, Aurora Caparas-Corpuz, Carlos L. Esguerra, Carol Tanjutco, Chato Morando, Cheryle Cranbourne, Ching Valdes-Aran, Christian Blaza, Dulcie Dee, Esmie Gayo McLaren, Godfrey Pinder, Greta Lood, Hill Benitez, Kathryn Cardenas, Lenore RS Lim, Lorina Capitulo, Lulu Villamater, Mae Palaci, Mirinisa Myers, Oscar Dizon, Racco Maristela, Rene Ner, this writer, Ronald Cortez and Tessie Dichupa.

This year's Board of Directors, in addition to the president Art Zamora, include Cheryle Cranbourne, VP; Chato Morando, Treasurer; Athena Magcase-Lopez, Secretary; Dulcie Dee

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and this writer, PRO's; Aurora Caparas-Corpuz, Reynaldo Cardenas, Ronald Cortez, Angelo Maristela, Anna Leah Sanson, Ching Valdes-Aran and Lulu Villamater.

Aida Bartolome, Carlos L. Esguerra, Angelito L. David and Lenore RS Lim serve as advisers, and Toots Magsino from abroad is tasked with global communications.

The Board of Trustees comprises Dr. Benny Jongco, Dr. Angie Ricafrente, Atty. Dean Suba, Bella Velo, Justin RS Lim and Caroline Pinder.

Follow the group on Facebook.

The Philippine Center number is 212.575.4774.

Robert P. De Tagle, MBA, IPEAK Services, ArtempoNY@gmail.com , organizes events and supports Fil-Am history and Asian-American cultural events in the Metro New York/New Jersey area, and has served as editorial consultant to various organizations.