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ENTERTAINMENT

It's make or break for Nikki

By Maridol Rañoa-Bismark (The Philippine Star) Updated June 20, 2010 12:00 AM



Nikki Gil plays the lead role as Elle Woods, with Nyol Volante (left) and Guji Lorenzana in Atlantis Productions' *Legally Blonde The Musical* at Meralco Theater starting Friday, June 25

MANILA, Philippines - Nikki Gil has never felt more challenged in her life. One year after she got word that she landed the coveted title role as Elle Woods in the musical *Legally Blonde*, she has to face people who doubt if she could carry the production on her slim shoulders.

"That's why I can relate to my character," she relates. "The people who have faith in me make me want to prove that they did the right thing by getting me for this project."

Nikki understands where her detractors are coming from.

"Who would have thought in a million years that I would end up as Elle Woods someday?" she wonders aloud.

The break from Atlantis Productions, she agrees, is a blessing. And the best part of it is that it's her golden chance to prove the doubting Thomases wrong. It's her journey as much as it's Elle's.

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"The story of *Legally Blonde* is about not judging a person by his or her external appearance. It's about reaching for something you never thought you can reach," she explains. "I hope I pleasantly surprise everyone when they see the show."

Her director, Chari Arespacochaga doesn't doubt Nikki's talents. The veteran stage director finds Nikki's age just right for the role. And oh yes, Nikki's funny side — though hidden for the most part — will come in handy.

Nikki prepared for the role as early as a year ago, when she first got hold of the

script.

"You have to put both feet in the water," she says.

So Nikki passed up a movie and other projects that would keep her from focusing her attention on *Legally Blonde*. She took voice lessons under Kitchie Molina and plunged headlong into [dance](#) workshops. She retained two shows — *MYX* and *A.S.A.P.*, which she leaves right away after the camera lights are off to rush for rehearsals.

It's been a tough balancing act since. Nikki must be home by 9 p.m. and asleep before midnight so she can have the stamina for all that singing-while-dancing act that has become routine for her.

"I can't watch a movie anymore," she sighs. But Nikki has no regrets.

Boyfriend Billy Crawford knows "this is what I always wanted." So he gives her space.

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COLUMNS

Was Lani's Vegas show cancelled?



FUNFARE By Ricardo F. Lo

A *Funfare* reader wrote to inquire if Lani Misalucha's show *Voices* at the Hilton in Las Vegas has been cancelled.

The binibini is now a lakambini



STAR BYTES By Butch Francisco

Behind the success of every man is a woman — most likely nagging the husband what to do next.

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"I don't look at this as work. I'm having fun," she explains. "At first, I was overwhelmed. But when I met the cast (composed of Nyoy Volante, Guji Lorenzana, Cris Villonco, Jinky Llamanzares, Geneva Cruz and others), things became okay. Once I got into the rhythm (of the work), *ang sarap!*"

It can be tiring, though. Nikki admits she feels knocked out once she gets home. And she thanks all those yoga lessons she took for keeping her in tip-top shape.

She's also grateful for the fact that she can always take a cue from all those big [musicals](#) she saw in New York.

"I've seen *Phantom of the Opera* and *The Lion King* in New York. I've also seen *Wicked* in L.A. (Los Angeles)," she reveals.

Nikki knows her job is to make every performance look fresh, from Day One of the show (June 25), to its final staging on July 18 — all at Meralco Theater. That includes weekend matinees as well.

"At least I have the time to correct and vary my performance during the different runs. I have the time to find out what works and what doesn't," she muses.

Each show may drain her energy, but Nikki knows it won't make her go home with a long face and a big frown.

"Elle Woods is a happy person. If I could bring her with me anywhere, that would be ideal," she states.

Unlike in *Legally Blonde*, where she can see herself in Elle's shoes, Nikki can't picture herself mounting the *Glee* stage for now. Yes, she — and some members of her *A.S.A.P.* family — auditioned at the spur of the moment. Sam Milby told them about the auditions when the cast was having lunch one day.

"*Ang sabi namin, `tara!'. Ganon lang,*" recalls Nikki.

They sent their audition video via webcam and crossed their fingers.

Nikki is not spending sleepless nights, worrying over whether she'll be chosen or not. But Nikki thinks she won't lose anything if she tries out for a coveted slot in the grand musicale.

Besides, her stint in *Legally Blonde* should make Nikki a veteran of pleasant surprises by now. Another pleasant surprise — especially from a production as big as *Glee* — won't hurt at all.

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danielocceno (posted on Jun 20, 2010 03:22 PM)
Member since Sep 15, 2009

☺☺

Nikki Gil writing her own songs that have been published and recorded and played in Filipino certainly disqualifies her as a "dumb" blonde. Is that a wig or a natural dye job? The new Go There would be more but the Japanese Occupation caused the fad of black hair and it is part heredity today. Our Greek and Italian and Spaniard heredity resembled Americans so the bla survival from being part of their own early forties internal conflict, something about blacks no in professional baseballs. And we are not even known as good baseball players. Anyway. I ha heard the soundtrack to see if I would pay money for the musical. Like "Grease" with the Oliv John songs, why would I even watch it on TV if not for Olivia singing songs I like? The acting terrible in musicals, but the songs better be "Rated A" production. With titles like "Daughter o Nu" and "Delta Nu Nu Nu" (not everything), I would get paranoid that I might know people i writing the musical and songs. But the storyline of two fraternity boys fighting over the same Sigma Nu thing and I did not join Sigma Nu. I am still waiting for my queen willing to fight c me. I might die a virgin waiting. Good for you Nikki Gil. I hope it is a success. I been trying musicals to do for theater groups like here locally and there was an article on "Cats" so I am curious on how you handle "Legally Blonde". Connie Foster, I told I wanted to be an Internat Corporate Lawyer instead of lecturing at Harvard. But I dropped out.

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