



ENTERTAINMENT



CCP marks Rizal's 150th birthday

DIRECTLINE By Boy Abunda (The Philippine Star) Updated May 27, 2011 12:00 AM
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In commemoration of the 150th birth anniversary of the Philippines' National Hero, Dr. Jose Rizal, various activities will be presented at the Cultural Center of the Philippines (CCP) from June 14 to 17.

The 13 episodes of CCP's telemovie *Noli Me Tangere* by National Artist Eddie Romero will be shown at the CCP Dream Theater from June 14 to 17, complemented with lecture-discussions for teachers by prominent resource speakers. *Mga Kwentong Rizal*, a storytelling session for children/youth will be held at the CCP Multi-Purpose Hall, while Rizal's books and videos will be mounted at the CCP Library. An exhibition of paintings on Rizal by J. Pasena will be on view at the Main Gallery (June 17 to Aug. 21) and a mural exhibit by Pilipinas Street

Plan to be shown at the second floor hallway (June 17 to July 31). Malou Jacob's documentary *Si Jose at Si Andres* will be made available online for public viewing through the CCP website beginning May 27 to June 30.

A special program titled *J.P., ang gig ni Rizal* will be presented on June 17, 4 p.m. at the CCP Main Theater, featuring prominent artists and performing groups led by the Philippine Philharmonic Orchestra under the baton of *Maestro* Olivier Ochanine, Ballet Philippines' Candice Adea and JM Cordero, Tanghalang Pilipino, Philippine High School for the Arts and a 150-voice choir conducted by Jai Sabas Aracama. To be directed by Chris Millado, the performance will also include Rachele Ann Go, Erik Santos, John Arcilla, Philippine All Stars, soprano Myra Mae Meneses and Juana Change. Thirty-five Filipino youth achievers who will be honored as *Mga Makabagong Rizal: Pag-Asa ng Bayan* will be introduced during the program.

For details, call the CCP Outreach and Exchange Division at 832-1125 loc. 1708 to 1710 or visit the CCP website at <http://www.culturalcenter.gov.ph>

We cannot fault Jose Rizal. It is treason of the worst kind. We should continue our relationship with our national hero for us not to lose sight of where we are going as a people.

Erik plays prince in *The Little Mermaid*

Erik Santos has never had it so easy yet so hard at the same time.

Picked by director Bobby Garcia himself, to play Prince Eric in Atlantis Productions' staging of Broadway Musical Disney's *The Little Mermaid*, Erik didn't have to undergo auditions. He was virtually assured of the role two years ago when Bobby, whom Eric has worked with in past concerts, gave the singer a CD containing songs from the project that spawned the well-loved tunes *Part Of Your World*, *Kiss The Girl* and the Academy Award-winning song, *Under The Sea*.

"Direk Bobby told me, 'Listen to this because you'll be doing this role one day,'" Erik recalled. "And it wasn't as if he was asking me if I wanted to do it — he was telling me that I was his one and only choice."

At the time, Erik didn't have acting experience so although he wanted to do it, he had his reservations. Listening to the songs from *The Little Mermaid*, he also realized that these require a different vocal attack from the one he is used to.

"Syempre, pop singer *tayo at sa pop, kahit saan mo hugutin ang boses mo, pwede*. But these songs, they require a different placement and register. I'd have to take voice lessons," he said.

More, he has to take speech lessons. According to Erik, songs from musicals put a premium on diction and enunciation and his very slight lisp ("a little issue with my L's and R's") just won't do.

"Theater is about perfection that's why actors who have done theater, say that everything else that follows comes easy. I want to do this right not only because it's my first time to venture into theater, but because this project is big."

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That's no exaggeration. Disney's *The Little Mermaid*, the animation movie, has grossed over \$200M worldwide, making it one of the most popular films of all time. Based on the fairytale written by Hans Christian Andersen about the mermaid Ariel who gets her wish to live on land and ends up falling for Prince Eric, it spun off to a Broadway musical in 2007 that features songs not heard on the movie.

Two of these are *Her Voice* and *One Step Closer*, both of which Erik will sing in the Philippine staging of the musical. The first, Erik even plans to record a pop version of, for inclusion in his upcoming album.

"*Inaaral ko na ang mga kanta* this early and I already know many of these by heart. *Ang gaganda kasi ng mga* songs so there's no effort on my part to learn them," he said.

Even Bobby and Chari Arespacochaga, directors of *The Little Mermaid*, have been preparing for the production for some time now. The two were in Hawaii last year to take an Asian puppetry workshop which they will use for many of the sea creatures.

By the way, Eric doesn't have an understudy so people will get to watch and hear only one Prince Eric/Erik when *The Little Mermaid* runs from Nov. 18 to Dec. 11 at the Meralco Theater.

And guess who'll play Ariel? Rachele Ann Go!

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FUNFARE By Ricardo F. Lo

BANGKOK — Newly-wed Rachel Alejandro and Spanish journalist Carlos Santamaria were on honeymoon mode (they still are!) when they treated my friend Raoul Tidalgo (formerly of the New York-based *The Filipino Reporter*) and me to a dimsum dinner at the Chinese restaurant of Arnoma Hotel one drizzly evening.

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DIRECTLINE By Boy Abunda

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