



ENTERTAINMENT

Ready for the stage

By Bot Glorioso (The Philippine Star) Updated May 27, 2011 12:00 AM Comments (3)



Rachele Ann Go and Erik Santos as Ariel and Prince Eric, respectively, in Atlantis Productions' *The Little Mermaid*.

| Zoom

MANILA, Philippines - It feels exciting to see Erik Santos and Rachele Ann Go tackle projects that are different from the usual sing-and-dance routines and, if I may add, dash of acting that both often display either on TV or in the concert scene.

This time, it will be in the grand stage of Meralco Theater where Erik and Rachele Ann are set to showcase their vocal power and acting skills as they plunge and lose themselves inside the characters of Prince Eric and Ariel, respectively, in Atlantis Productions' staging of *The Little Mermaid*.

The Disney Broadway musical, based on the classic Hans Christian Andersen fairy tale, is Erik and Rachele Ann's initial foray to the theatrical stage. Erik can't begin to imagine his tension when director Bobby Garcia broached

the idea to him and told Erik that he no longer needs to audition. Why? That's because Erik is the sole choice of the director to play the male lead.

"I got tense because it's a big production with director Bobby at the helm. It's like, 'Wow!' It's really flattering to be chosen for the role," Eric says.

Atlantis' production manager Liza Camus further validates the director's top pick when she reveals, "It is only Erik that Bobby had in mind for the role because his voice is really perfect for the part. If you listen to the Broadway version, Erik's voice is very similar to the prince there."

But it doesn't mean Disney people need not approve it anymore. They did a background check prior to giving Erik their nod to be the local counterpart.

"They're very strict about being wholesome," Liza offers. "Starlets or those who posed nude in the past have no room to be in a Disney show. Family entertainment is their utmost concern."

It was different in Rachele Ann's case. There were about 20 hopefuls vying for the female lead. Though she was among the five who were personally called to audition, Rachele Ann still underwent a series of tests to determine if she can do justice for the role.

"Rachele really had this 'magic.' She has the combination of voice, looks and heart," Liza enthuses. "When you hear her sing, *tatayo talaga ang balahibo mo*."

The audience will be treated to some of Disney's biggest hits that include *Part of Your World*, *Kiss the Girl* and *Under the Sea*. The stage adaptation will also feature 10 new songs by Alan Menken and Glenn Slater.

"It's my longtime dream to try theater but my manager told me to wait for the right time and I believe this is the perfect time," says Rachele Ann. "I already have with me the script, music and videos so I'm starting to practice the songs."

The pop belter is aware that performing in theater requires a lot of sacrifice and discipline — that she should give equal amounts of energy to her every performance and that everything should be delivered in perfection.



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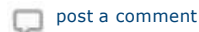
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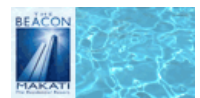
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Erik and Rachelle Ann are set to showcase their vocal power and acting skills in their musical theater debut performance via The Little Mermaid

According to Liza, the cast will rehearse for one and a half months, which will start in October to prepare them for the 22-day performances that start from Nov. 18 to Dec. 11.

But what makes Erik anxious is the thought that theater fanatics are bound to

express reactions and comments as soon as the show ends. Hence, the need to attend speech and voice lessons is foremost on his "must-do" list.

"Direk Bobby knows *na medyo bulol ako, meron akong konting lisp* so I need to overcome that especially with the letters R and S. I need to improve on my diction, too, because I think my tongue is wide or big."

Of course, teacher Kitchie Molina makes a fitting vocal coach. "She's good in talk-sing style, proper breathing and in preparing actors to have good stamina," Liza points out.

With regards to costumes, Liza proudly tells this writer that they are 95 percent complete, while the set design is 80 percent finished.

Atlantis Productions' staging of The Little Mermaid is made possible through the licensing agreement with Music Theatre International. Chari Arespachoga also directs. Tickets are now available. For details, call 892-7078.

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COLUMNS

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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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rosemarie gonzales posted on May 27, 2011 02:30 PM

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djsb posted on May 27, 2011 10:08 AM

good for both of them. i always admire rachel ann everytime she performs. 

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