



SPELLING BEE Manila returns on stage July 3-12

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by Oliver Oliveros



[Atlantis Productions](#), which is celebrating its tenth year, brings back its hit production of the Tony Award-winning musical "The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee" on July 3 to 12, 2009 at the Carlos P. Romulo Auditorium, RCBC Plaza, Makati City. The show is slated to tour Singapore in

August 2009.

"Spelling Bee" is a one act musical with music and lyrics by [William Finn](#) and book by [Rachel Sheinkin](#), a Tony Award winner, and an instructor at the Tisch's Graduate Musical Theatre Writing Program.

The musical happens at a fictional spelling bee in Putnam County, New York. Six kids troubled by puberty face off in the battle of their lives. They compete against one another as well as with the members of an interactive audience. Three adult characters help manage the proceedings: [Rona Lisa Peretti](#), a nostalgic former spelling bee winner; Douglas Panch, a mildly insane vice principal; and Mitch Mahoney, an ex-convict who is about to complete his community service to the State of New York.

Cathy Azanza-Dy, Pheona Baranda, Johann Dela Fuente, Carla Guevarra-Laforteza, Lorenz Martinez, Noel Rayos, Felix Rivera, Joel Trinidad, and Shiela Valderrama-Martinez star in this restaging of "Spelling Bee."

No two "Spelling Bee" performances are ever alike, as the show features "starring roles" each night for two volunteer audience members, and two surprise local celebrity guest spellers.

Filipino celebrity guest spellers during the recent sold-out run included Tony winner [Lea Salonga](#), Jett Pangan, Pinky Marquez, Cheska Ortega, Leo Rialp, Jon Santos, Cherie Gil, Senator Chiz Escudero, Noel Trinidad, Gabe Mercado, Sitti, Miguel Mendoza, Gina Alajar, Christian Bautista, Isabella Gonzales, Franco and Ayen Laurel, Geneva Cruz, Wency Cornejo, Menchu Lauchengco-Yulo, Rajo Laurel, Nyoy Volante, Teresa Herrera, Aiza Seguerra and Raya Mananquil.

Atlantis Production and [Broadway Asia](#)'s resident director Bobby Garcia says, "We are so thrilled to stage a repeat of 'Spelling Bee,' a show that has brought us so much joy. We are even more excited to be traveling to Singapore next month to perform the show there!"



Apart from Garcia's stage direction, "Spelling Bee" Manila features choreography by Chari Arespacochaga, set design by Tuxqs Rutaquio, lighting design by Johnsy Reyes, costume design by Twinkle Zamora, vocal coaching by ManMan Angsico, and musical direction by Jojo Malferari.

"Spelling Bee" Manila is made possible through a special licensing arrangement with [Music Theatre International](#) (MTI).

For tickets, call [Atlantis Productions](#) at telephone numbers (632) 892-7078 or 840-1187 or log on at TicketWorld: www.ticketworld.com.ph.

Oliver Oliveros is one of Manila's top publicists in the fields of arts, music, culture and entertainment. A self-confessed Broadway baby, he drools over publicity accounts that are Broadway-related. Practicing public relations for over 15 years now, he has handled publicity for the Manila productions of "Death and the Maiden," "The Last Five Years," "Godspell," "Footloose," "Once On This Island," "Oleanna," "Art," "The Sound of Music," "Children's Letters to God," "High School Musical On Stage," "West Side Story," among others. He has also worked with Filipino Broadway and West End theatre personalities Lea Salonga and Joanna Ampil. Apart from his long list of theatre-related duties, he has been working on the publicity for the Philippines' most in demand recording and concert artists, award-winning independent films, original musicals, operas, Filipino-American finalists on "American Idol," the World Championships of Performing Arts in Hollywood, California, and advocacy works for Greenpeace Southeast Asia and World Vision. He is currently STAGES Manila's senior public relations officer and consultant. He writes travel articles, and teaches public relations at De La Salle University-Manila. He is all set to pursue his M.S. in Communications and Public Relations degree in New York City starting 2010.