

SHOWBIZ & STYLE

JOURNAL

DIRECTLINE

by BOY ABUNDA
Philstar.com

Gelli has a new family

WITH the passing away of showbiz legend and friend Douglas Quijano, it was expected that some of his talents would eventually look for management representation. For Gelli de Belen, making that move came sooner than later. Besieged and blessed with work and offers, she needed immediate help.

So, we welcomed Gelli to our Backroom family which she's been a long part of by virtue of her being the wife of Backroom's first artist, Ariel Rivera.

According to Gelli, it was the most natural step to take. With mentoring from Tito Dougs, Gelli has become one of the most bankable artists. At this point, what she needed was someone who knew

her personally and professionally and one who could guide her as to where she could take her career next while taking into consideration her other priorities such as family.

This is when she came to us. I don't know why but I somehow knew that we were going to talk, I told her during our first meeting. And talk we did, then we started to work. It's not easy but Gelli is one of the most realistic, practical, hardworking artists I have come across with. And uneasy territories are familiar to both of us.

Only over a month of being with Backroom, Gelli says she already feels "at home." When we agreed to be together professionally, Gelli did not even have to discuss her career plans except to joke that she is willing to work "for a cheap talent fee."

She, of course, was just being

her unassuming self when she said that. With a career spanning more than a decade, Gelli may not have become a phenomenal superstar but she has definitely created an important, enduring, exciting presence.

In this business, longevity is an achievement in itself considering the fast turnover of stars. Indeed, staying power is more important than stellar power.

Gelli is a very straightforward person that is why dealing with her requires the same. She likes it that the Backroom system re-

quires that all offers are discussed with the talent because in the end, and as she puts it, "mukha ko ang makikita ng publiko kung ano man ang projects na gawin ko."

She also likes it that Backroom talents get memos from their management team whenever necessary. This way, she says, the talents feel that they are being watched over and that they are always being guided in the right direction.

With her new family, she feels that everyone is working as a team out to achieve a common goal.

Gelli adds that she is an integral member of a team that proactively seeks projects for talents. Right after she joined Backroom, Gelli got an endorsement deal with a

clothing company complete with contract signing.

She also is opening her doors to doing movies again. The last time Gelli was seen on screen was in the '90s. She recently had an offer to do an indie film, still under negotiation as of this writing.

Gelli still co-hosts GMA 7's *Sis* with real-life sister Janice de Belen and Carmina Villarroel. Gelli also stars in *All My Life*.

The actress is the current endorser of Figliarina, Swift Hotdog, Knorr, PLDT and Alaska.

Come December, Gelli and Ariel will be celebrating their 12th wedding anniversary. They have two kids, Joaqui, 10, and Julio, 8. Both call me Lolo. It's actually cool. But Lolo? Tito maybe better. ■



Erich wants to impress Dina B

by MARINEL CRUZ
Inquirer.net

MANILA — Erich Gonzales, star of the current TV remake of *Katorse*, is dead set on impressing Dina Bonnevie, who played the lead in the original 1984 movie.

"I'm giving my all here," Erich told the Inquirer during the soap's launch recently at the ABS-CBN offices in Quezon City. "I wanted to talk with Ms D before working on the show, but the closest I got was through her son Oyo, who teased me endlessly."

Erich said she watched Dina's

performance in the Joey Gosengfiao film several times. "It helped me prepare for the character," she said.

The 18-year-old explained: "Direk Malu (Sevilla) wanted to see the innocence of a 14-year-old girl through my eyes and the way I talk. She taught me how to cry in character—'Di lang may luha, dapat may sound din.'"

Katorse is the story of Nene (Erich), who gets pregnant by

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