

'Lovers in Paris': The Pinoy way

by ROCHELLE C. PANGILINAN / AJPress

THE Korean drama which introduced us to Vivian and Carlo and transformed Kitchie Nadal's heartfelt ditty *Wag na 'Wag Mong Sasabihin* into a "national anthem" back in 2004 gets a *Pinoy* remake.

Lovers in Paris, the *Pinoy* version brought to us by the ABS-CBN network, stars Piolo Pascual, one of today's hottest dramatic actors, and KC Concepcion, who proves she has greater thespic skills to show than her charming poses and bright smiles that her commercial endorsements allow her to.

Before the show's premiere last Sept. 28, speculations were rife of excess production costs and other production issues. Apparently, news of a remake of *Lovers in Paris* already made rounds in the Internet as early as March of this year, but it wasn't until five months later when the show actually premiered because some scenes had to be redone and reshot. However, for many teleserye fans, these rumors only made the anticipation even greater.

Those who were fans of the original series will no doubt be enthralled with this *Pinoy* adaptation. In the show, Piolo plays Carlo, a

powerful businessman in the City of Light who crosses paths with KC's character Vivian, who is a film student struggling to make ends meet as a housekeeper. And with the amazing backdrops of the Eiffel Tower, Arc de Triomphe and others, sparks fly between Carlo and Vivian and they eventually fall in love.

It may be a scenario that's been done—exploited even—a countless times in many shows and movies before, but with Piolo and KC's alluring chemistry, the plot feels fresh and interesting. The show premiered strongly in the ratings last Sept. 28, confirming that *Koreanovelas* getting the *Pinoy* treatment is the strongest trend in today's primetime soaps. *Lovers in Paris* follows in the footsteps of *Only You* and *My Girl*, other *Koreanovelas* which ABS-CBN remade.

"Filipinos love drama and stories that we can relate to," Leng Raymundo says in a previous interview, ABS-CBN vice president for program acquisition. "Most of the time, the Korean dramas are quite escapist and moving. Aside from the touching plotlines, the production is really a visual experience of places that most of us are not accustomed to seeing." ■



Celebrities lend a hand to typhoon victims

THE onslaught of typhoon 'Ondoy' last Sept. 26 affected thousands of Filipinos throughout the National Capital Region (NCR) and celebrities didn't think twice in lending a hand to the victims of the calamity, which is said to have been the worst rainfall the country ever experienced since 1967.

One of them was popular actor Jericho Rosales who, with a surfboard, swam through raging waters in a village in Marikina City to help people affected by the typhoon. Jericho was able to save a young boy, a grandmother, and a dog (Jericho is known to be an animal lover, having been appeared



Jericho Rosales



Angel Locsin



Gerald Anderson

in ads promoting for the ethical treatment of animals).

Another popular actor, Gerald Anderson, also acted as a Good Samaritan to his neighbors in Vista Real Classica in Quezon City. Gerald, together with his brother Kenneth and a few companions, helped neighbors when the water levels kept rising at an alarming rate in the area.

Other celebrities also lent a hand through different charities to raise money to bring relief goods and aid to the victims. ABS-CBN stars such as Piolo Pascual, Zanjoe Marudo, Maricar Reyes, Shaina Magdayao and Serena Dalrymple went to Brgy. Bagong Silangan in Payatas to distribute relief goods while actress Angel Locsin has also been active in helping out flood victims.

KC Concepcion on the other hand established her own relief operations together with her friends. She plead for people to drop off their donations at the Wackwack Clubhouse and personally delivered them to the victims in Pasig City, Marikina, Manila and Rizal.

"Just drove through the floods in Pasig," she tells Philippine Entertainment Portal (PEP) through a text message. "I know a lot of us feel restless and helpless at this point, but that should change right now 'coz we can help." ■

Rockin' in Spring

By JETT PANGAN
Philstar.com

SINGING for *The Dawn* involves a whole lot of traveling, gigs that don't start on time, late nights and a fair amount of celebratory alcohol in smoky rooms as a result thereof, not to mention the ensuing hangovers. That is why I like doing theater from time to time, be it a musical or a straight play, because it re-acquaints me with things like discipline, focus, taking a bite off a co-actor's *baon* for lunch, and just plain hard work. In other words, doing theater gives me some sort of balance as an artist. My bandmates support me in this field by giving way schedule-wise (they haven't fired me yet), and for that I am thankful.

So when Director Chari Arespacochaga asked me to try out for *Male Adult* in Atlantis Productions' adaptation of *Spring Awakening*, it didn't take very long for me to get back with a "yes!" especially after finding out that the multi-character role does not have singing parts. Well, almost. And for a guy whose main occupation is to belt behind the mic in a rock band, not having to sing (almost) in a musical is very cool! As with most of the theater jobs indicated on my resume, I had no idea what *Spring* is all about prior to being hired. I did, however, share the relatively common knowledge that the music was made by one of my favorite alternative pop rockers, Duncan Sheik (remember his hit *Barely Breathing* back in the '90s?). Anyway, the call came to block off my calendar for rehearsals and performances, and I couldn't be happier. It was time to work.

And work it has been, lots of it, in this place called Centro Flamenco, a dance studio characterized by its no-nonsense construction consisting of loud wooden floors, wall mirrors, and posters of ladies and gents in their frilly best and exquisite ole! Poses. It's quite surreal, then, to see a bunch of young men and women portray 19th century teenagers lost in their repressed sexuality amidst energetic photos and fonts screaming "flamenco" and "ritmo!" Looking at such an amusingly strange scenario makes me imagine that we're doing scenes for a New Order music video or something, after which post-



Directed by Chari Arespacochaga, *Spring Awakening* is blessed with a dedicated cast that includes Joaquin Valdes (top photo, standing at right), Cheska Inigo, Sitti and newcomer Kelly Lati. Yours truly (leftmost, also in top photo) plays a teacher.

editing will make the film grainy and smudged for full lo-fi effect (yes, my mind dives into weird depths when dealing with downtime during rehearsals. In between memorizing lines and pestering another idle actor, that is).

My imaginings aside, I get stoked each time I land a role in a play because in real-time acting, there's always that sense of danger and the need for everyone in the production—from the leads down to the guy manning the props table—to excel in their given task. One weak link can break the entire chain. So if I happen to find myself on stage with nothing but my tightie-whities and a mic pack when it's not in the script... you do the math.

Fortunately, this production is blessed with a dedicated cast that includes Joaquin Valdes (as male lead Meechior), Cheska Inigo (who plays a variety of female adult characters opposite yours truly), Sitti (bossa nova siren who plays

Martha) and newcomer Kelly Lati as female lead Wendla. *Spring Awakening* is a Tony and Grammy Award-winning rock musical based on the controversial 1891 German play of the same title by author Frank Wedekind. Book and lyrics by Steven Sater.

The story revolves around teenagers discovering their sexuality at a time when society considered talking about it with them as taboo. Being a father, I find the plot very compelling as it shows parents and elders the dangers of keeping impressionable minds in the dark when it comes to sex and sexuality.

If you like musicals and contemporary rock, then check out *Spring Awakening*, Oct. 2, 3, 4, 9, 10, 11, 16, 17 and 18, at the Carlos P. Romulo Auditorium, RCBC Plaza, Makati City.

For tickets, call 892-7078 or 840-1187 or go to www.atlantisproductonsinc.com. (Due to explicit content and some nudity, parental discretion is advised.) ■

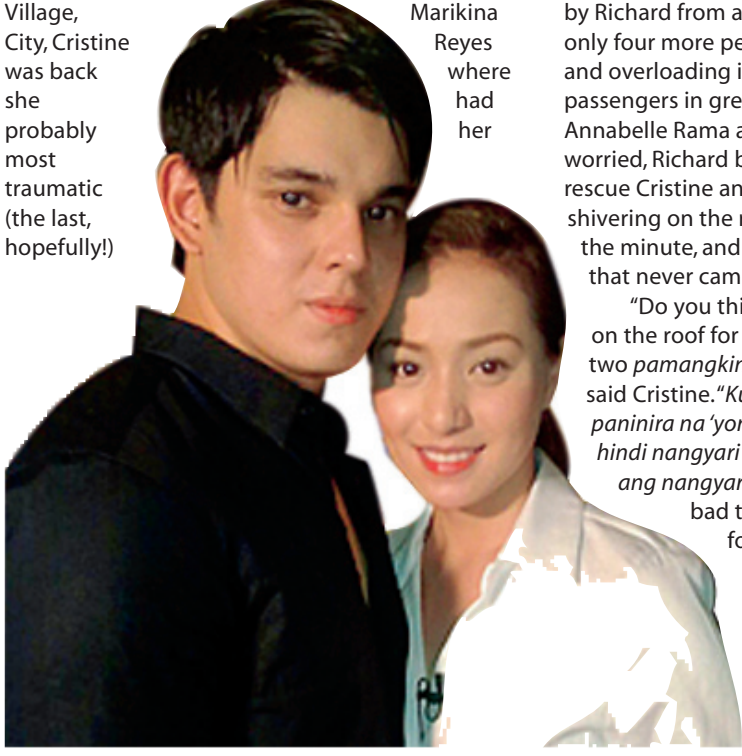
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Cristine: Life is short, cherish every moment

By RICARDO F. LO
Philstar.com

RICHARD Gutierrez with Cristine Reyes two days after she was rescued from the roof of her house in Provident Village in Marikina City. Photos were taken at thanksgiving lunch hosted by the *Patient X* stars.

Barely two days after she was rescued by *Patient X* co-star Richard Gutierrez from the roof of her house in Provident Village, Marikina City, Cristine Reyes was back she probably most traumatic (the last, hopefully!)



Richard Gutierrez with Cristine Reyes two days after she was rescued from the roof of her house in Provident Village in Marikina City. Photos were taken at yesterday's thanksgiving lunch hosted by the *Patient X* stars.

experience that recurs like a suspense-thriller in her sleep.

This time, Cristine went there and other badly-stricken areas in Marikina where hundreds of Typhoon Ondoy victims continue to wait (in vain?) for rescuers and relief-givers not to retrieve whatever she could from her house that was submerged in floodwater that drove her, her mom (former actress Venus Imperial) and two pamangkin (one of them a special child) to the rooftop, but to distribute relief goods. She was with Richard and some of Annabelle Rama's talents (Ana Roces, Almira Muhlach and Ehra Madrigal among them).

"Na-rescue na kami," said Cristine, "so ako naman ang tutulong mag-rescue sa ibang victims."

They first entertained the movie press at a well-attended lunch at a restaurant across the street from the GMA Studio not just to thank them for their support and to clarify some minor "issues" (well, "irritants") being spread via texting by some detractors (one of them a beauty-queen-turned-actress) that the whole thing was a "gimmick" to promote *Patient X* (which Richard himself is co-producing with GMA Films, directed

by Yam Laranas of *The Echo* fame).

"I feel sad that there are negative-minded people *na gumagawa ng mga maling kuwento*," lamented Richard. "Do you think I, or anybody for that matter, would risk my life negotiating the dark, flooded area at 1 o'clock in the morning *para lang mag-gimik?*"

Again, let me say that the speedboat borrowed by Richard from a friend could accommodate only four more people (Cristine and company) and overloading it would put the lives of the passengers in great danger. Leaving his parents, Annabelle Rama and Eddie Gutierrez, deathly worried, Richard braved the odds purposely to rescue Cristine and company who had been shivering on the roof, hungry and getting weak by the minute, and desperately waiting for the help that never came.

"Do you think I would be that crazy to stay on the roof for 12 hours with my mom and my two *pamangkin para lang gumawa ng gimmick?*" said Cristine. "*Kung sino man ang nagsimula ng paninira na 'yon, magpasalamat na lang siya at hindi nangyari sa kanya at sa kanyang pamilya ang nangyari sa amin*. Instead of spreading bad things, they should spread prayer for those still trapped in the flood... if they can't give food or used clothes or do anything to help the victims."

While on the roof, Cristine said she ignored the hunger pangs and prayed, letting her *pamangkin* follow after her.

"That helped," assured Cristine. "*Prayer ang nagpalakas ng loob namin*."

From Provident Village, Richard brought Cristine to her sister Ara Mina's house in Quezon City. Shortly after, Cristine's mom and her two *pamangkin* arrived on jetskis, saved by friends of Ara's non-showbiz boyfriend.

Cristine and family saved nothing, neither their car nor their appliances nor their personal belongings, nothing!

"The experience was an eye-opener," said Cristine who showed up at the lunch wearing a white long-sleeved shirt (among the few retrieved from her closet) and denim pants given to her by Liz Uy. "I realized that material things are nothing; they have no value. You can lose them and replace them. Life is more precious. Once lost, *wala na, hindi na maibabalik*. I used to be secretive and sensitive. After that nightmare on Sept. 26, my outlook in life has changed. I look at life differently now. Life is short, every moment is precious. Enjoy it to the fullest with your loved ones because you can never tell *kung kelan ka mawawala*."

Asked if they will continue living in Provident Village, Cristine said, "Why not? That's where our house is."

Or what remains of it, anyway. ■

Overacting now the norm on TV dramas

By NESTOR TORRE
Inquirer.net

HAVE you noticed? *Teleseryes* now dominate primetime TV, with ratings going through the roof and more than 10 drama series desperately vying weekly for viewers' rapt attention. Time was when greater variety was available at primetime, but the big-bucks and top-ratings hard sell of the teleseryes have forced us to say goodbye to all that and get our nightly fix of all those blockbuster series.

It isn't healthy, of course, this TV version of the bad, fat-laden fast foods that now worry doctors and parents alike. But, how can you argue against some *teleseryes'* spectacular success? Well, we should complain. Aside from limiting our televiewing choices, quite a

number of the primetime series have practically made broad and downright bad acting the norm on the boob tube these days.

Evidence

You see the evidence of this lowering of thespic standards all over the place. Marian Rivera passes muster as Darna on her new top-rater, but as the superheroine's alter-ego, Narda, she overacts like heck, especially in her many crying scenes.

On *Tayong Dalawa*, Jake Cuenca also overacts a storm, and female lead, Kim Chiu, is too young and raw to do justice to her plum role. Why was it given to her in the first place? Because she's popular. Unfortunately, the character she plays is too complex for her to insightfully

and even adequately fill, so the poor viewer is left holding the bag.

On *Rosalinda*, Carla Abellana looks too mature for her ingenue lead role, while leading man, Geoff Eigenmann, is too young to be believable as his scion-who-has-everything character. His speaking "style" is also less than natural.

Child star

On *May Bukas Pa*, Albert Martinez "indicates" his villain role all over the place, and in general, overacting is the desultory norm on the show. Child star Zaijian Jaranilla, is a refreshing exception to the rule, but the dialogue he's made to utter is too "wise" for his young character.

What's going on here? It