

Imelda musical soon in NY

by RICARDO F. LO
Philstar.com

Let's face it: Even now that she (has just turned) 80, former First Lady Imelda Marcos is a box-office draw, a hot media item and a hit anywhere she goes, whatever she does. She's a newsmaker for all seasons, for all reasons, a Steel Butterfly whose wings continue to flutter-flutter.

Even New York just can't seem to have enough of The Madame.

Listen to this report from Funfare's Big Apple correspondent Edmund Silvestre (of The Filipino Reporter):

An off-Broadway production about the "ambitious" and "controversial" former Philippine First Lady will be staged this fall at The Julia Miles Theater on 55th Street in Manhattan on a limited engagement, from Sept. 22 to Oct. 18.

Pan Asian Repertory Theatre will present Imelda A New Musical that has a book by Sachi Oyama, music by Nathan Wang and lyrics by Aaron Coleman. East West Players producing artistic director Tim Dang, who staged the 2005 Los Angeles world premiere of the musical, will direct, with choreography by Reggie Lee.

Broadway actress Jaygee Macapugay will play the title role, with Liz Casasola as Corazon Aquino, Mel Sagrado Maghuyop as Ferdinand Marcos, and Brian Jose as Ninoy Aquino.

The cast also includes Alan Ariano, Angelica-Lee Aspiras, Billy Bustamante, Leanne Cabrera, Sacha Iskra, Loresa Lanceta, Jonelle Margallo, and Romney Piamonte.

The creative team is headed by Kaori Akazawa (set), Victor En Yu Tan (lighting), Ivy Chou (costumes), and Leslie Espinosa (hair and make-up).

Tisa Chang, artistic producing director of Pan Asian Repertory Theatre, said Imelda, which will be New York theater's first Filipino-



themed musical, spans the 1940s to 1980s, the pivotal years after the Philippines gained its independence. "Imelda Marcos wanted to set her country as an equal player on the world stage and gain the respect of the world," Chang said.

Noted Fil-Am community leader Vivian Velasco said Imelda will give Filipino tourists another reason to see the Big Apple. (Tickets are priced at \$55, \$35 for seniors and \$20 for students. For particulars, visit www.panasianrep.org.)

Feedback from the Hollywood Olympics From Funfare's L.A. DPA, this report: Teen heartthrob Sam Concepcion took a break from the Star Magic tour in the US by visiting Junior Grand Champion Performer Aria Clemente at the Westin Bonaventure, the official venue for this year's World Championships of Performing Arts (WCOPA), also known as the annual Hollywood Olympics. Sam and Aria, both from STAGES' talent roster, have started making their entry in mainstream Hollywood.

Aria recently signed with US talent agent Susan Osser. The young singing champion has been attending callbacks for product commercials.

Sam, on the other hand, just met with Sovereign Talent Group agent Frank Gonzalez.

"Sam is highly sellable and easy to cast as a young television ac-

tor," said Gonzalez.

2008 WCOPA grand winner Catherine Loria, together with 2005 WCOPA grand winner Jed Madela, opened this year's competitions at the Westin Bonaventure last Sunday. Participating in the Olympics are 40 countries including Australia, Canada, Czech Republic, Haiti, Ireland, Jamaica, Moldova, New Zealand, Russia, Singapore, South Africa, Sweden, Trinidad and Tobago, Ukraine, USA, Armenia, Kazakhstan, Malaysia, Moldova and the Philippines.

This year's Team Philippines will be fielding 28 delegates competing in various vocal and modeling competitions.

Three idols in 1st show together

They have performed solo in their solo concerts but never together.

The time has come for Rannie Raymundo, Dingdong Avanzado and Ogie Alcasid to join forces in their first concert together in 25 years, titled 3 Tenors in Concert, slated for tomorrow night, July 15, starting at 8 o'clock at the Music Museum.

The concert is timely because putting together a few idols in a (nostalgic) show is the current fad. The concerts of Pilita Corrales, Carmen Soriano and Carmen Pateña was a big hit; and so were those of Nonoy Zuñiga, Rico J. Puno, Hajji Alejandro, Marco Sison and Rey Valera; and Imelda Papin, Claire dela Fuente and Eva Eugenio.

The stars of the '80s: Where are they now?

by BUTCH FRANCISCO
Philstar.com

I wasn't supposed to do the third installment of my Where are They Now? series until much later, but with the death of Michael Jackson, everyone is talking about the '80s now (he shot to fame in the '70s, but cemented his status as a legend in the '80s) and so let's go down memory lane again and go over the list of the stars during that decade.

And so whatever happened to:

Julie Ann Fortich—Launched to stardom in the last quarter of 1979 (in *Mahal Kong Taksil*), this former fashion model went on doing movies until the early part of the '80s (*Apat na Maria*, *Palawan* with the late Vic Vargas, *Gabi ng Lagim Ngayon*, *Sampaguitang Walang Halimuyak*, *Tres Kantos*, *Kape't Gatas*, etc.). When the Hyatt Regency models had a reunion some three years ago at the Forbes Park mansion of the late Chito Madrigal, I saw her standing at the foyer and smiled at her, but there were too many people that time (Margie Moran and Besie Badilla, among them) and it was impossible to talk. I badly so wanted to approach her and ask her what she had been doing (she didn't age much and is still lovely), but I never had the chance.

Myrna Castillo—She was the poor girl who was discovered by the late Rey dela Cruz living in a

chicken coop. One of her films—*Ito ang Babae*—pitted her against the great Charito Solis.

Opalyn Forster—She appeared in mostly Regal Films productions: *Bilibid Boys*, *Blue Jeans* and *Bata Pa si Sabel* as villainess to Snooky Serna.

Ting Jocson—A Juancho Gutierrez look-alike, he appeared in *High School Scandal*, which was initially banned by the censors for reasons nobody knows. When it was eventually released, nobody wanted to watch it anymore and no one could tell what the fuss was all about since it turned out to be a pretty harmless film about the young.



Some of them are Ting Jocson, Myrna Castillo, Julie Ann Fortich and Opalyn Foster

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