



THE VICTORIA FILIPINO-CANADIAN ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

Feature Interview with:

Masou Jacob

SA: When did you realize that you wanted to be a playwright?

MJ: At about age 20. I became a member of the newly formed theater group, Philippine Educational Theater Association (PETA). I became a prop custodian, a stage manager, a production manager, an actress. Then, I joined the Playwriting Workshop of visiting playwright / director Ladislav Smocek of Czechoslovakia who after I read a portion of my play said: " You have a nose for writing." Whatever that means and not enjoying ACTING, I went into Writing. Then, I learned the word, Playwright. I became one.

SA: Why did you write a play about Jose Rizal?

MJ: I have always admired Rizal. So, when Cultural Center of the Philippines (CCP) asked me write a Monologue, I chose Jose Rizal. I learned a lot more about him during my research.

SA: Pepe was performed 33 times around the Philippines and translated into regional languages. Did you notice any change or difference in the play's message during translation? Did you feel any message was lost in translation?

ML: No. Each Theater group had its own staging/ interpretation. They were all terrific! I had to ask myself: Is that my play? I am sure the interpretation of Francis Matheu that you are sponsoring will be fantastic!

SA: Which character in the play do you relate with the most?

MJ: I wanted to imitate Rizal. His 2 novels (*Noli Me Tangere* and *El Filibusterismo*) inspired the Philippine Revolution. I have written plays about street children, about corruption, and about discrimination. But to no effect, they are all still present in Philippine Society. But then, after all, I am not a hero like Rizal was.

SA: Pepe was first published on January 1, 1990, is there anything that you would change about the play today?

MJ: None.

Malou Jacob says she is no hero, but through her writing she has made a hero become more fully alive to the present generation, a generation in need of heroes to understand, admire, and emulate. We thank Malou Jacob for chatting with us and for her endorsement of Francis Matheu's upcoming production of Pepe.



For more information about the North American Premiere of *Pepe* and Tickets

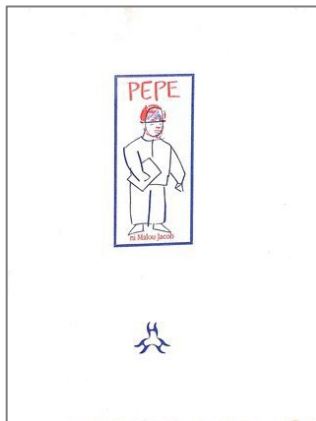
www.bayanihan.ca | www.theatreinconnu.com



MaLou Jacob is a dramatist and a cultural provocateur. She is a SEAWRITE, CCP *Gawad Sining*, and *Gawad Balagtas* awardee.

She wrote the monologue *PEPE*, directed by Nonon Padilla and toured by *Tanghalang Pilipino* in 33 cities; followed by *Anatomiya ng Korupsyon*, directed by Dennis Marasigan of TP. The play was translated into various regional languages: Hiligaynon, Bisaya, Iloko, Bikol and produced by various theater groups thru CCP Outreach. She also wrote *Macli-ing*, directed by Soxy Topacio of the Philippine Educational Theatre Association (PETA) at the Rajah Sulayman Theater, Fort Santiago.

Her very first play, *AIDAO* written with Frank Osorio was based on her teleplay, *Timbangan ay Tagilid*, directed by PETA Founder, Cecile Guidote. It was shut down when martial law was declared. In 2017 she wrote *Batang Mujahideen* set in Mindanao. It has been adapted into a radio play by *DZRH Radio Balintataw* and received the KBP Golden Dove and CMMA Awards for Best Drama in 2017 and Best Stage Play in 2020.



PEPE was first published on January 1, 1990 by the Cultural Centre of the Philippines, 12 pages, paperback (image above).

Jose Rizal inspired the *Katipunan* and the Philippine Revolution of 1896 with his two novels: *Noli Me Tangere* and *El Filibusterismo*.



These novels in original Spanish are now translated into Filipino and English.

It is interesting to note that every city in the Philippines has a monument of Jose Rizal, five in Canada and 22 around the world.

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"Ilaw" in the Filipino language means "light." The ILAW Newsletter aims to shed light on topics related to the Philippines and the Filipino culture; strengthen the connections to Philippine culture, history and traditions for Filipinos and people of all ethnicities living in Victoria, BC, Canada.