

NARRATIVE REPORT

2017 Cultural Center of the Philippines National Theater Conference

ANINAG MGA NAGBABAGONG EKSENA SA GILID AT SULOK NG DULANG PILIPINO

May 30-31, 2017

Submitted by Glecy C. Atienza and Manuel D. Pambid

Conference Director and Assistant Conference Director

The 2017 CCP National Theater Conference was successfully implemented with commendable support from emerging theatre artists as well as established theatre artists. The expected attendees exceeded its target (300) with almost 400 people in attendance for the 2 day conference. An exact number of attendees was noted by the CCP staff. The conference was primarily held at the Tanghalang Aurelio Tolentino with five parallel sessions simultaneously done in smaller venues around the Tanghalang Aurelio Tolentino and the Fo Guang Shan Mabuhay Temple in Vito Cruz. Vice President and CCP Artistic Director Chris Millado opened the conference. Keynote speeches were delivered by Dr. Nicanor G. Tiongson “Aurelio Tolentino” and National Artist Bienvenido Lumbera in the morning. The results of the regional theatre consultation , which served as a preliminary activity for the conference was presented by Prof. Glecy C. Atienza, Ph.D. on the first day to put the sessions in context.

In the afternoon, delegates chose the sessions which they wanted to attend namely:

- Panel 1 Folk Religious Community Practices (Stage Area, Tanghalang Aurelio Tolentino or CCP Little Theater)
- Panel 2 New Theater Media and Spaces— (Theater Lobby, Tanghalang Aurelio Tolentino)
- Panel 3 Small Independent Groups—(Tanghalang Batute)
- Panel 4 Competitions and Festivals—(Museo ng Kalinangang Pilipino MKP Hall)
- Panel 5 Theater Linkages and Advocacies— (Fo Guang Shan Mabuhay Temple)

The following day, these sessions were synthesized by assigned session rapporteurs (mostly coming from the ranks of regional artists and the National Committee on Dramatic Arts- National Commission for Culture and the Arts) as challenges were posed for the new generation theatre artists. Challenges included:

1. Need to design opportunities for theatre artists to come together and congregate
2. Need to revive theater’s function as the moving spirit in effecting social change
3. Need to conduct follow-through projects on the impact of theatre initiatives (including CCP theatre festivals and conferences) on theatre initiatives in various parts of the country.
4. Need for a “kumpas” where young artists can take the cue regarding their efforts’ direction .

5. Need to conduct researches and studies on theatre activities and theatre work which has multiplied through the years
6. Conduct more conferences and festivals (hopefully replicate similar conferences in the regions)
7. Publish/make available the conference proceedings
8. Earlier call for participation or earlier release of invitations

Attached are the write-ups and program of activities which has a list of the activities, speakers and facilitators for the parallel sessions and the documentation team who took charge of annotating the sessions.

During the meeting of the National Committee on Dramatic Arts, the following points were noted:

1. The conference was commendable, in terms of the numerous attendees, both established and new artists. While more participants could have been mobilized from the regions, it was understandable given the limited resources and funds for the project.
2. The presence and mobilization of NCCA members was also appreciated
3. An earlier call for participation would be highly appreciated to allow regional delegates to prepare in advance
4. NCCA requests a copy of the Conference proceedings; these will be very useful for those who came and for those who were unable to attend

Other recommendations in consultation with the assistant conference director, facilitators, rapporteurs and documentation team include the following:

1. Close coordination with the Cultural Management office and Mr. Chris Millado worked well in fleshing out the conference details. Likewise, the previous year's regional consultation provided valuable insights and bases in designing the conference.
2. Manny Pambid mentioned the importance of documentation work during the sessions. He noted that the conference's success can be largely attributed to the documentation work which was underlined since the start of the conference plan.
3. More engagement from other departments of the CCP can provide better support services for similar conference such as proper documentation equipment, trained documentation staff as well as proper linkage-building with regional participants.
4. It would do well to have separate sets of house rules for conferences, performances vis-à-vis the conduct of documentation work during these events.
5. A follow-up project to study the data (trends, insights and emerging ideas) from new practitioners in relation to the CCP's previous conferences can provide valuable information on the development of contemporary Philippine theatre.

6. Theater scholarship and research can be further explored to see through the development of new groups vis-à-vis established theatre groups. Theater scholars can be developed as part of the theatre community's growing need as an industry and as an advocacy .
7. Publication of conference proceedings should be given priority as part of the over-all project implementation .