

Republic of the Philippines  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
Quezon City, Metro Manila

Nineteenth Congress  
First Regular Session

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 110



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**Introduced by Hon. Christopher “Toff” V.P. de Venecia**

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**A RESOLUTION CONGRATULATING AND COMMENDING THE EIGHT NEW MEMBERS OF THE ORDER OF NATIONAL ARTISTS FOR 2022**

**WHEREAS**, On June 10, 2022, Malacañang, upon joint recommendation of the National Commission for Culture and the Arts (NCCA) and the Cultural Center of the Philippines (CCP), officially announced the eight (8) new National Artists for 2022 by virtue of Proclamation no. 1390 namely Agnes Locsin for Dance, Salvacion Lim-Higgins for Design (Fashion), Nora Villamayor a.k.a Nora Aunor, Ricardo “Ricky” Lee and Marilou Diaz-Abaya for Film and Broadcast Arts, Gemino Abad for Literature, Fides Cuyugan-Asensio for Music, and Antonio “Tony” Mabesa for Theater;

**WHEREAS**, the Order of National Artist or *Orden ng mga Pambansang Alagad ng Sining* was established under Proclamation No. 1001 in 1972. It is the highest national recognition conferred upon Filipinos who have made distinct contributions to the development of the Philippine arts and culture namely, Music, Dance, Theater, Visual Arts, Literature, Film, Broadcast Arts, and Architecture and Allied Arts. The order is jointly administered by the National Commission for Culture and the Arts and the Cultural Center of the Philippines and conferred by the President of the Philippines upon recommendation by both institutions. The National artists receive a National Artist gold-plated medallion minted by the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas and a citation;<sup>1</sup>

**WHEREAS**, an awards ceremony was conducted at the Cultural Center of the Philippines on June 29 to honor the eight new National Artists for 2022. The event was attended by National Artists for Dance, Film, Literature, and Broadcast Arts. A video message was sent by the National Artist for Music. Family members and student representatives were present on behalf of the National Artists for Theater, Fashion Design and Film and Broadcast Arts;

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<sup>1</sup> <https://ncca.gov.ph/about-culture-and-arts/culture-profile/national-artists-of-the-philippines/>

**WHEREAS**, the tribute ceremony was hosted by Tanghalang Pilipino actor Marco Viaña and actress Irma Adlawan and featured performances of the new National Artists' works including National Artist Gemino Abad's poem, "*Jeepney*," recited by Ms. Shamaine Centenera-Buencamino; "*Mabini's Lament*," an excerpt from the ballet *La Revolucion Filipina* choreographed by National Artist Agnes Locsin; an excerpt from National Artist Antonio Mabesa's *Fake*; the song "*Napakahaba ng ng Gabi*" from the opera *La Loba Negra*, with lyrics by National Artist Fides Cuyugan-Asensio and performed by soprano Katrina Saga; a montage of scenes from the films *Brutal*, *Karnal*, *Moral*, and *Himala*, which were works by National Artists Marilou Diaz-Abaya, Ricardo "Ricky" Lee, and Nora Villamayor; and songs from the *Himala The Musical*, adapted from one of Aunor's tour de force, *Himala*, performed by Aicelle Santos with the Manila Symphony Orchestra;

**WHEREAS**, National Artist for Literature Dr. Gemino H. Abad is a writer, critic, scholar, literary historian, and anthologist with numerous books and literary awards including ten poetry volumes, nine volumes of literary criticism, two volumes on his own poetics, two short story collections, a five-volume historical anthology of Philippine poetry in English, and a six-volume anthology of Philippine short stories in English, from 1956 (the year where the late Leopoldo Yabes' anthology left off) to 2009. Several of these books have received national literary awards such as the *Gawad Dangal ng Lahi* given by the Carlos Palanca Memorial Foundation, the Don Carlos Palanca Memorial Awards for his poetry, the CCP Award for Poetry, the Ani ng Dangal Award of the NCCA, the UMPIL's Gawad Alagad ni Balagtas for lifetime achievement in poetry and literary criticism, the Patnubay ng Sining at Kalinangan sa Larangan ng Panitikan from the City of Maynila, the Manila Critics' Circle National Book Award for poetry, for anthology, for personal anthology, and the Philippines Free Press Literary Awards for the short story, essay, and poetry;<sup>2</sup>

**WHEREAS**, National Artist for Music Fides Cuyugan-Asensio's more than six decades of involvement with the art of opera displays her dedication and passion for bringing inaccessible Western dramatic idiom into Philippine theaters for the Filipino opera enthusiasts to experience and learn from. She's dedicated to opera and musical theater, which enriched the Philippine artistic scene. Her exceptional achievements in many years of exemplary service to the field such as performing, teaching, producing, and directing opera and theater productions, contributed to a Renaissance of classical musical theater in the country. Her performance of *Sisa* in Felipe de Leon's *Noli Me Tangere* became a hallmark in the country's musical theater history. She dedicated her golden years to teaching young Filipino singers, hence, her teaching elevated the level of performance and transformed singing into a truthful and higher form of art in the country. Her involvement in the country's musical theatre scene has enriched our cultural heritage, showcasing Filipino excellence in music to the world and shaped the future generations of Filipino musical theater artists;<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> <https://thephilippinestoday.com/gemino-abad-national-artist-literature/>

<sup>3</sup> <https://thephilippinestoday.com/fides-cuyugan-asensio-national-artist/>

**WHEREAS**, National Artist for Film and Broadcast Arts Marilou Diaz-Abaya was a film and television director and screenwriter. She began her career in the 1980s and was part of the generation that defined what is today remembered as the “Second Golden Age of Philippine Cinema.” Her notable works are *Brutal* (1980), which marked Ms. Diaz-Abaya’s clear directorial style and unique feminist voice, as she emerged as a bold experimenter of storytelling structure and a fierce creative protester of the harrowing plight of women in a male-dominated society; *Moral* (1982), which offered a nuanced commentary on the expectations and burdens placed on women’s shoulders against which they explore their desires and navigate their shifting place in society; *Karnal* (1983), where the perverse entanglement of paternalism, desire, and drive for control results in a violent tragedy; *Milagros* (1997), where she moved away from pointed advocacies and delved instead on an enigmatic exploration of feminine desire and innocence; *Sa Pusod ng Dagat* (1998), which further explored the complex meaning of womanhood; Jose Rizal (1998), the biopic of the national hero; *Muro-Ami* (1999), portrayed the lives of exploited children in the illegal practice of reef hunting; *Bagong Buwan* (2001), endeavored to tell a fair and informed story about war-torn Muslim Mindanao; and *Noon at Ngayon: Pagsasamang Kay Ganda* (2003), which tells the story of four middle-aged women who have weathered life’s storms and reconciled with their pasts;<sup>4</sup>

**WHEREAS**, National Artist for Film and Broadcast Arts Ricardo “Ricky” Lee also is a screenwriter for film and television, journalist, playwright, and multi-awarded fictionist who published several novels, plays, essays, and short story collections along with his screenplays and screenwriting manuals. He has demonstrated his mastery of writing historical films, literary and true-to-life adaptations, political, courtroom, and dramas, the stories of “outsiders” and marginalized figures such as laborers, prostitutes, rebels, migrant workers, and gay people, and his consistent elevation of all manner of genre fare, from horror to tearjerkers to comedies. Lee emerged in screenwriting in the late 1970s as part of the generation of filmmakers who ushered in the “Second Golden Age of Philippine Cinema.” He has demonstrated his mastery of writing historical films, literary and true-to-life adaptations, political, courtroom, and diasporic dramas, the stories of “outsiders” and marginalized figures such as laborers, prostitutes, rebels, migrant workers, and gay people, and his consistent elevation of all manner of genre fare, from horror to tearjerkers to comedies;<sup>5</sup>

**WHEREAS**, National Artist for Design (Fashion) Salvacion Lim-Higgins, known to the fashion world as “*Slim’s*”, is credited for innovating and transforming the look of terno into a world-class silhouette by combining the elements of Philippine costume with European couture details and construction. She was known for her exquisite drapery, constant and evocative use of indigenous materials such as piña and jusi, referencing ethnic motifs in her modern dresses, and forward-looking and cutting-edge approach to fashion. Ms. Lim-Higgins introduced draping into traditional costumes and developed “convertible ternos.” Filipiniana took a more nuanced look through the eye-catching costumes she created for the Bayanihan Dance Company;<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> <https://thephilippinestoday.com/marilou-diaz-abaya-national-artist-film/>

<sup>5</sup> <https://thephilippinestoday.com/ricky-lee-national-artist-for-film/>

<sup>6</sup> <https://thephilippinestoday.com/salvacion-lim-higgins/>

**WHEREAS**, National Artist for Dance Agnes Locsin is a choreographer, director, and teacher. She is dubbed as one of the “most progressive contemporary choreographers in the Philippines,” for she distinctively utilizes Filipino beliefs, rituals, and ethnic traditions in her choreographies, concepts, and direction, which she was able to beautifully merge with her knowledge in Western dance techniques and called it “neo-ethnic.” Among her successful works are *Babaylan*, which won second place in the Tokyo International Choreography Competition in 1993; *Taong Talangka* (Man-Crab); *Salome* which won second place for dancer Camille Ordinario in the 1994 Concours International de la Danse in Paris, France; and narrative works like one on the life of the mythical hero *Labaw Dungon* in the epic Hinilawod from the island of Panay;<sup>7</sup>

**WHEREAS**, National Artist for Theater Antonio “Tony” Mabesa, known as the Lion of the Theater, was a director, actor, and teacher who greatly contributed to the growth and diversity of Philippine theater. His theater teaching, formalism as aesthetics, and methods of production have made an impact on his students. He was a professor, artist, and mentor who will be remembered for his lessons on discipline, commitment, and respect for theater. In the early seventies when he formed Tanghalang Repertory with various Filipino students in Hawaii, a theater group devoted solely to the production of traditional and modern Filipino plays and later on staged productions around Honolulu. Then, upon returning to the Philippines, he joined the Department of Speech Communications and Drama at the University of the Philippines Diliman, where productions were only staged occasionally. His first tasks were to come up with a regular season, thus the Dulaang Unibersidad ng Pilipinas (DUP) was born in 1976. Moreover, in 1986 he founded the UP Playwright’s Theater (UPPT), which focused on new works by Filipino playwrights and the revival of classic Filipino plays;<sup>8</sup>

**WHEREAS**, National Artist for Film and Broadcast Arts Nora Cabaltera Villamayor, also known as Nora Aunor, has been in different fields for more than four decades—film, television, music, and stage. Her journey to fame started when she joined and won a local amateur singing contest in a radio program called “*Darigold Jamboree*”. She came to be known as the girl with the “golden voice” with the unique tone of her voice. It was Tower Productions that gave her the biggest break: the title role in D’ Musical Teenage Idols, opposite Tirso Cruz III. Sampaguita Pictures’ 34th-anniversary presentation was also a Nora-Tirso starrer, *Fiesta Extravaganza*, and that is when people began referring to her as “Superstar”. Succeeding years would see her taking on a wide variety of movie projects, showing her versatility by making comedies, melodramas, and musicals. Her extensive filmography with 170 films is not only matched but exceeded by the number of awards and citations she has received from local and international organizations;<sup>9</sup>

**NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that taking into consideration the above mentioned premises, the undersigned member of the House of Representatives hereby RESOLVE to congratulate and commend the newly members of the Order of National Artists for 2022 for their

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<sup>7</sup> <https://thephilippinestoday.com/agnes-locsin-national-artist-for-dance/>

<sup>8</sup> <https://thephilippinestoday.com/antonio-mabesa-national-artist-theater/>

<sup>9</sup> <https://thephilippinestoday.com/nora-cabaltera-villamayor/>

continued pursuit for the arts and are the paragon of commitment, creativity, passion and talent to the country through their devotion to your crafts. They have served the nation through their gifts and have graced the country with the best of themselves. They will serve as examples that can inspire young artists develop their own visions and ideas;

**RESOLVED FINALLY**, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be given to the National Artists Agnes Locsin for Dance, Salvacion Lim-Higgins for Design (Fashion), Nora Villamayor a.k.a Nora Aunor, Ricardo “Ricky” Lee and Marilou Diaz-Abaya for Film and Broadcast Arts, Gemino Abad for Literature, Fides Cuyugan-Asensio for Music, and Antonio “Tony” Mabesa for Theater and another copy be prepared for submission to the National Historical Commission of the Philippines for proper archiving.

*Adopted,*

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M. V. P. De Venecia', written in a cursive style.

**HON. CHRISTOPHER V.P. DE VENECIA**