

Republic of the Philippines
Congress of the Philippines
House of Representatives
Metro Manila
Nineteenth Congress
First Regular Session

Begun and held in Metro Manila, on Monday, the twenty-fifth day of July, two thousand twenty-two.

RESOLUTION NO. 31

RESOLUTION CONGRATULATING AND COMMENDING
THE 2022 AWARDEES OF THE ORDER OF
NATIONAL ARTISTS FOR THEIR OUTSTANDING
ACHIEVEMENTS AND CONTRIBUTIONS TO
PHILIPPINE ARTS AND CULTURE

WHEREAS, the Order of National Artists or the *Orden ng Gawad Pambansang Alagad ng Sining* was established under Proclamation No. 1001 s. 1972 and is the highest national recognition conferred upon Filipinos who have made distinct contributions to the development of Philippine arts and culture, namely: Music, Dance, Theater, Visual Arts, Literature, Film, Broadcast Arts, and Architecture, or Allied Arts;

WHEREAS, on June 10, 2022, by virtue of Proclamation No. 1390 s. 2022, former President Rodrigo Roa Duterte, upon the recommendation of the National Commission for Culture and

the Arts (NCCA) and the Cultural Center of the Philippines (CCP), conferred the Order of National Artists to eight outstanding Filipino artists, namely:

- 1) Gemino Abad for Literature;
- 2) Fides Cuyugan-Asensio for Music;
- 3) Marilou Diaz-Abaya for Film and Broadcast Arts;
- 4) Ricardo "Ricky" Lee for Film and Broadcast Arts;
- 5) Salvacion Lim-Higgins for Design (Fashion);
- 6) Agnes Locsin for Dance;
- 7) Antonio "Tony" Mabesa for Theater Arts; and
- 8) Nora Cabaltera Villamayor a.k.a Nora Aunor for Film and Broadcast Arts.

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 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 Poetry, the CCP Award for Poetry, the Ani ng Dangal Award of the NCCA, the *Unyon ng mga Manunulat sa Pilipinas* (UMPIL) 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;

WHEREAS, National Artist for Music Fides Cuyugan-Asensio has been one of the country's most beloved operatic singers, and has dedicated more than six decades to making this western dramatic idiom more accessible to Filipino audiences. A

dedicated artist to opera and musical theater, her exceptional achievements in the field such as performing, teaching, producing, and directing opera and theater productions, brought about 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 many years to teaching young Filipino singers, and by doing so, elevated the level of performance and transformed singing into a truthful and higher form of art. Her involvement in the country's musical theater scene has enriched the country's cultural heritage, showcased Filipino excellence in music to the world, and shaped the future generations of Filipino musical theater artists;

WHEREAS, National Artist for Film and Broadcast Arts Marilou Diaz-Abaya was a film and television director and screenwriter who 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 were *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 biopicture of the national hero; *Muro-Ami* (1999), portrayed the lives of exploited children in the illegal practice of fish 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 told the story of four middle-aged women who try to weather life's storms and reconcile with their pasts;

WHEREAS, National Artist for Film and Broadcast Arts Ricardo "Ricky" Lee is a screenwriter for film and television,

journalist, playwright, and multi-awarded fictionist who has written several novels, plays, essays, short stories, screenplays and screenwriting manuals. Lee emerged in the screenwriting scene in the late 1970s as part of the generation of filmmakers who ushered in the “Second Golden Age of Philippine Cinema”. Since then, he has demonstrated an undeniable mastery in storytelling exemplified by historical screenplays, literary adaptations and true-to-life stories, political and courtroom dramas, the stories of “outsiders” and marginalized figures such as laborers, prostitutes, rebels, migrant workers, and gay people - all brought to life on stage, in screens and in books, while consistently striving to elevate his storytelling in every genre;

WHEREAS, National Artist for Design (Fashion) Salvacion Lim-Higgins was known to the fashion world as “*Slim’s*” and is credited for innovating and transforming the look of the *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 the *piña* and *jusi*, referencing ethnic motifs in her modern dresses, and a forward-looking and cutting-edge approach to fashion. Ms. Lim-Higgins introduced draping into traditional costumes and developed “convertible ternos”, and made “Filipiniana” a more nuanced look through the eye-catching costumes she created for the Bayanihan Dance Company;

WHEREAS, National Artist for Dance Agnes Locsin is a choreographer, director, and teacher. Dubbed as one of the most progressive contemporary choreographers in the Philippines for distinctively utilizing Filipino beliefs, rituals, and ethnic traditions in her choreographies, concepts, and direction, she beautifully merged 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, including one on the life of *Labaw Dungon*, a mythical hero in the epic poem *Hinilawod* that has been orally transmitted by the early inhabitants of a place called Sulod in the island of Panay;

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. As a teacher, he adopted formalism as an aesthetic and utilized methods of production which greatly impacted his students and theater audiences. 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, he formed the *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 theater plays around Honolulu. When he returned to the Philippines, he joined the Department of Speech Communications and Drama at the University of the Philippines - Diliman, where his first task was to come up with a regular theater season, and this led to the birth of the *Dulaang Unibersidad ng Pilipinas* (DUP) in 1976. In 1986, he founded the University of the Philippines Playwright’s Theater (UPPT), which focused on new works by Filipino playwrights and the revival of classic Filipino plays;

WHEREAS, National Artist for Film and Broadcast Arts Nora Cabalera Villamayor, also known as Nora Aunor, has worked for more than four decades in the creative arts, including film and television, music recording, and theater. Her journey to fame started when she joined and won in a local amateur singing contest sponsored by a radio program called “*Darigold Jamboree*”, and where she came to be known as “the girl with the golden voice”. Her biggest break in the film industry was given by Tower Productions that cast her in the title role in *D’Musical Teenage Idols*, opposite Tirso Cruz III. After Sampaguita Pictures’ 34th-anniversary presentation *Fiesta Extravaganza*, people began referring to her as the “Superstar”. Succeeding years would see her taking on a wide variety of movie projects which showed her versatility in comedy, melodrama, and musicals. Her extensive filmography of 170 films is exceeded by the number of awards and citations she has received from local and international organizations:

WHEREAS, the House of Representatives recognizes the members of the 2022 Order of National Artists for their continued pursuit for excellence in the arts and for being the inspiration and paragon of commitment, creativity, passion, and talent to the

young artists and to the country through their devotion to their crafts: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives, To congratulate and commend the 2022 awardees of the Order of National Artists for their outstanding achievements and contributions to Philippine arts and culture.


Resolved, further, That a copy of this Resolution be furnished to National Artists Gemino H. Abad, Fides Cuyugan-Asensio, Ricardo "Ricky" Lee, Agnes Locsin and Nora Cabaltera Villamayor, the immediate family members of the late National Artists Marilou Diaz-Abaya, Salvacion Lim-Higgins and Antonio "Tony" Mabesa, the National Commission for Culture and the Arts, and the Cultural Center of the Philippines.

Adopted,



FERDINAND MARTIN G. ROMUALDEZ
Speaker

This Resolution was adopted by the House of Representatives on November 16, 2022.



REGINALD S. VELASCO
Secretary General

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