

The Abueva Retrospective

Filipinos have been wholly responsive to art that one can touch, and be intrinsically touched in return. The Metropolitan Museum of Manila brings together a long awaited exhibition as a tribute to one of the Philippine's first artistic giants who modernized Philippine sculpture, National Artist Napoleon Abueva. The exhibit entitled "**Abueva: The Power of Form**" gathers together several monumental sculptures from various collections representing the artist's work from the 1950's up to 2009.

Curated by Mr. Dannie Alvarez, this momentous exhibition invites museum goers, artists and art enthusiasts to learn more about and appreciate the difficult practice of sculpture. Abueva's art works stand timeless, extraordinarily crafted by his hands, up till a debilitating stroke that occurred in 2008. The master sculptor remains resolute and continues to manage his studio through his son Mulawin.

Since his childhood, Abueva was fascinated in sculpting with local materials, starting with balsa and garden clay to make different forms. This initial revelation fueled his passion to create various objects free from size and mass constriction. His early trademarks were his versatility in concept, form, and technique, able to create conservative and modern sculptures in a variety of materials. These sculptures manifest in the form of several types of hardwood, with Abueva subsequently branching out to other media such as steel, brass, iron, alabaster, adobe, and cement.

Major pieces included in this exhibition are "The Allegorical Harpoon" and "Hilojan" from the Cultural Center of the Philippines, "Dambana ng Pasko" and "Cultivated Plains" from the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas, "Judas Kiss" from the Ateneo Art Gallery, "Study of the Lopez Door" from Josie Baldovino, and "The Abueva Family Tree" from the artist's Collection.

Strengthening public knowledge of Philippine art and art appreciation in general is a significant objective of the MET's education program. Accompanying the exhibit will be a lecture series on Abueva's life and philosophy, conducted by art professionals such as artist and sculptor Junyee, art critic and historian Cid Reyes, and curator Dannie Alvarez. Kids ages 15 and below will also have a chance to learn the rudiments of Abueva's craft through a two-day sculpting workshop. Furthermore, the museum continues its "Touch the Artist's Vision" program, allowing vision-impaired visitors to discover Abueva's sculptures through braille captions and specially oriented docents.

ABUEVA: THE POWER OF FORM
Metropolitan Museum of Manila
November 26, 2013-January 31, 2014

This landmark exhibit is but a fitting celebration of Abueva's enduring artistic practice and in anticipation of his 84th birthday on January 26, 2014. The exhibition will open November 26, 2013 and run till January 31, 2014 at the MET's Tall gallery, and till February 28, 2014 at the MET's Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas gallery.

To see and enjoy Napoleon Abueva's works with his contemporaries, visit the Metropolitan Museum of Manila at the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas Complex, Roxas Boulevard, Manila. Museum hours are from 10 am to 5:30 pm, Monday to Saturday; and closed on Sundays and holidays. For more details, please call 708-7828 or email info@metmuseum.ph.

For inquiries please call FRALYNN MANALO at 708-7829.