

## Ayala Museum Operational Highlights

As a leading private museum in the Philippines, Ayala Museum has initiated a host of partnerships to create programs and activities that will enhance the museum's collection and extend the reach of its public programs. In 2007, the museum opened its long-term loan collections to the public; hosted an international conference, as well as outreach and education programs; co-presented traveling exhibitions; and participated in an international curatorship program.



### Exhibitions

The Ayala Museum collaborated with the Royal Netherlands Embassy to showcase 19th-century Philippine costumes in a special exhibition entitled Embroidered Multiples: 18th-19th Century Philippine Costumes from the National Museum of Ethnology, Leiden, The Netherlands. The exhibition featured an extremely rare collection of Philippine costumes from the National Museum of Ethnology in Leiden.

Among the most significant objects in the collection are the embroidered silk trousers or *sayasaya* that were worn by the elite in Philippine colonial society. These trousers were formerly known only through 19th-century watercolor images of country types and costumes called *tipos del pais*. No other examples of these 18th-to-19th-century trousers are known to survive in other collections.

A scholarly publication entitled *Embroidered Multiples: 18th-19th Century Philippine Costumes from the Museum Volkenkunde (National Museum of Ethnology), The Netherlands at the Ayala Museum, Philippines* accompanied the exhibition. The publication is the first to document the seven embroidered silk trousers in the collection. The extraordinary array of *baro* (blouse) and rare examples of 19th-century *tapis* (wraparound skirt) confirm the accuracy of depictions of Philippine costumes on 19th-century *tipos del pais*. The publication is also the first to document two overseas collections of Chinese copies of *tipos del pais* by Filipino artist, Justiniano Asuncion.



## Other Exhibitions

Ayala Museum opened in February 2007 an exhibition entitled *Chinese Diaspora: Art Streams from the Mainland*, which gathered six exhibitions in one show to celebrate the achievements of syncretic Chinese cultures in Southeast Asia. These achievements significantly contribute to the formation and imagining of nation in the present-day countries of Singapore and the Philippines. The six exhibitions included *The Peranakan Legacy*—a loan exhibition from the Asian Civilisations Museum in Singapore focusing on the distinctive art forms of the Peranakan (mixed-Chinese, indigenous communities that developed in the trading ports of Melaka, Singapore, and Penang).

The five other exhibits that made up *Chinese Diaspora: Art Streams from the Mainland* were *Tsinoy: Mestizo Art of Colonial Times*, which featured little-known works that were traditionally regarded as 19th-century Philippine colonial art; *Damian Domingo: The First Great Filipino Painter*, a pioneering attempt to bring together a representative collection from the entire spectrum of Domingo's oeuvre; *Chinese Tradeware from the Roberto T. Villanueva Collection*, which featured a comprehensive range of fine Chinese trade wares that serve as evidence of the vibrant commerce between southern China and its neighbors; *China Gaze: Valeria Cavestany*, an exhibit on light boxes and acrylic portraits; and *Evidence Bags*, an installation of photographs, postcards, and other ephemera.

The museum's running exhibition on Juan Luna, Fernando Amorsolo, and Fernando Zobel, entitled *Pioneers of Philippine Art*, opened to the public



# DAMIAN DOMINGO

## The First Great Filipino Painter



Damian Domingo was active in Manila in the early part of the 19th century as a painter of portraits, portrait miniatures, and religious images. He also produced albums illustrating the native costumes of the era for collectors. His place in Philippine art history is anchored by his efforts to systematize the study of art along Western principles, first, by establishing a school for artists based in his residence in Tondo in 1821, and second, by serving as the director of the first official Philippine art academy, the *Academia de Dibujo*, founded by the Real Sociedad Económica de Amigos del País in 1823.

Previously thought to be a Spanish mestizo, Domingo identified himself in his recently discovered last will and testament as a Chinese mestizo. This fact is significant in the hierarchy of the highly stratified society of 19th century Manila. The appointment of a native to an official position was almost certainly due to recognition of exceptional talent and merit. Domingo's artistic career was relatively short-lived and he died in 1834 at the age of thirty-eight. In the same year, the *Academia* was closed due to funding problems. It was revived 15 years later and eventually became the premier fine arts school in the Philippines.

Domingo's extant works of sound provenance are limited. They consist of a few small-scale religious paintings largely rendered in the miniaturist style, which he made famous; a number of portrait miniatures painted on ivory discovered only in recent years; and a number of watercolor albums depicting Filipinos in the costumes of the period, a type of artistic endeavor commonly known as *libros del país*.

The exhibition is a pioneering attempt to bring together a representative collection of the entire spectrum of Domingo's oeuvre—the religious images, the portrait miniatures, and his albums of Philippine costumes. The highlights of the exhibition are the religious paintings that belong to the family of his great-grandson, the collector Don Antonio S. Angara, now shown to the public for the first time.

again in June. The museum also served as exhibition space not only for art lovers but also for car-racing enthusiasts, when BMW Philippines turned the museum's lobby into a showcase for four BMW Art Cars that were styled using the artworks of world-renowned artists Andy Warhol, Roy Lichtenstein, Frank Stella, and Ken Done.

In partnership with Alliance Française de Manille, French Spring was celebrated at the museum with two exhibitions: *Essences Insensées*, an exhibition of scents and visuals; and *Objectif Paris*, an exhibition on Paris as seen through the lens of famous photographers Henri Cartier-Bresson, Jean Auvigne, Marc Ribous, Robert Doisneau, Andre Kertesz, and Etienne Atget.

Together with the Japan Foundation, Manila, the museum presented *Japanese Pottery: The Rising Generation from Traditional Japanese Kilns*. The exhibition illustrated how contemporary Japanese artists use the functions of vessels in understanding the nature of Japanese pottery today.

The Camera Club of the Philippines celebrated its 80th year with a show entitled *ELEMENTS: Photoconstructed Realities*. Founded in 1928, the oldest photographic society in Asia shared with the public its members' photographs of four major elements of nature: earth, wind, fire, and water.

*Hybridity*: Mark Lewis Higgins—an exhibition showing works that juxtapose painted and collaged images from history, religion, and archaeology—was Ayala Museum's offering in 2007 for *Zero In*, a collaborative project with the Ateneo Art Gallery, Bahay Tsinoy, Lopez Memorial Museum, and Museo Pambata.



In November, the museum featured the finalists and winners of the Shell National Art Students' Competition. Now on its 40th year, the competition is known for boosting the careers of many Filipino artists.

## Public and Educational Programs

The public and educational programs of Ayala Museum serve as resources for cultural literacy on local and international history, art and culture, and contemporary art practice. The museum's lecture series, art workshops, gallery talks, and day trips provide a rich and enjoyable learning experience for museum guests of all ages.

The exhibition *Chinese Diaspora: Art Streams from the Mainland* was complemented by a series of education programs. An Introduction to the Peranakan Legacy was conducted by David Henkel, visiting curator from Asian Civilisations Museum, Singapore. Ambeth Ocampo discussed insights into the works of 19th-century Chinese-Filipino artisans in a talk entitled *Tsinoy: Mestizo Art in Colonial Times*. Ivan Man Dy led a walking tour of Chinatown called *In My Ah-Kong's Footsteps*. Rita Tan discussed the Roberto T. Villanueva Collection of Chinese and Southeast Asian Trade Wares in a gallery tour. Dr. Luciano Santiago presented *Damian Domingo: His Life, Art and Times* in a lecture. A dialogue on the contemporary approach to Chinese heritage with featured artist Valeria Cavestany and exhibitions series curator, Dr. Nina Baker, complemented the exhibition *China Gaze*.

Ayala Museum invited the local museum community to a lecture on *Compiling Collections* by Dr. Pieter ter Keurs, curator from the National Museum of Ethnology, Leiden, The Netherlands. The lecture was held in conjunction with the turnover of the long-term loan of 18th-19th century Philippine costumes, the cornerstone of the museum's ongoing partnership with the National Museum of Ethnology, Leiden.



In 2007, Ayala Museum also conducted workshops for its special exhibitions. Two Japanese Pottery workshops with Japanese potter Toshiro Maruyama were organized in collaboration with The Japan Foundation, Manila. A one-day lecture-demonstration on Techniques in Photography Composition by members of the Camera Club of the Philippines was part of the association's 80th Anniversary exhibition Elements: Photoconstructed Realities.

For its international programs, the museum hosted the Second Global Symposium on Media, Religion and Culture. Participants included delegates from five continents, experts in the fields of media and communication studies,

Ayala Museum's outreach program Museum in A Box was launched through a one-month exhibition of painting reproductions of all pieces from Pioneers of Philippine Art: Luna, Amorsolo, Zobel at the Davao Museum, Davao City. Orientation talks for the Davao Museum's student volunteers, and a gallery talk attended by 80 guests, were given by Kenneth Esguerra of the Ayala Museum.

The museum also organized a concert for Globe Platinum members in Davao city entitled Maestro Salutes the Masters. Ryan Cayabyab and the RCS vocal group performed.

The museum's Stories in Art children book series—Juan Luna: Patriot and Painter; The Boy Who Lost a Father and Found the



religion studies, history, anthropology, and philosophy.

A two-day workshop on learning alternative systems of distributing art entitled Outside the White Cube was conducted by visiting professor Yumi Janairo Roth from the University of Colorado-Boulder.

In 2007, the museum's annual program A Day with an Artist included Alma Quinto on soft sculptures, Edru Abraham on ethnic music, and John Pettyjohn on pottery.

Sun: The Life of Maestro Fernando Amorsolo; and Fernando Zobel: The Man Who Painted Ideas—received a citation from the Manila Critics Circle for "its excellent writing, marvelous design, and sterling printing quality—blending art, education, and publishing in three extraordinary books."

