

Ang Galing!

Chiqui Pineda Concert!

By: Frances Sevilla

On February 27, 2011, Kalayaan Cultural Community Centre (KCCC) presented a concert entitled "*Putting It Together*" that certainly raised the



bar and set a new standard for events of its kind in Greater Toronto Area. The concert was headlined by singer Chiqui Pineda who made the event her comeback show. Chiqui was well known back home in the Philippines in the early 90's when her first single "How Did You Know", from her self-titled album under Viva records received a Gold Record Award in 1994. With special guest performers, Leander Mendoza, Josephine Rocas-Chavez, Bong Chavez and a team of dedicated KCCC volunteers, the show underlined Chiqui's idea that putting together talents, hard work and teamwork will make every performer's dream come true.

The show started with Chiqui

singing the Barbra Streisand classic "As If We Never Said Goodbye" followed with "Something's Coming" and finishing it with "Putting It Together". The titles and lyrics signified Chiqui's comeback and efforts to bring together this show. Then, with her Musical Director, pianist and tenor, Leander Mendoza on the piano, she sang some Sharon Cuneta songs which she claims were an influence in her singing career. Later on, the show went international with some Italian and French duets with Josie Chavez who also sang with hubby Bong Chavez the song 'All I Ask of You' from the 'Phantom of the Opera'.

Chiqui came back entertaining the audience with some laughs and shared a heartwarming message of friendship and family relationships. She later asked her three children to join her on stage as she shared her joys of being a mother and loving her children very much. She reached out to the mothers and mothers-to-be in the audience letting them know that being a mother is full of duties and responsibilities and that having children is like allowing yourself to share your heart, to watch a part of you grow and interact with the world, concluding with the song "Children Will Listen", a great song portraying the trials of parenthood. Another number that brought the house down, everybody hollering with glee, was Chiqui's rendition of Katy Perry's "Firework" which was very upbeat and energetic complete with lighting effects.

The concert also featured an excerpt from the Musical Theatre production '*Rama at Sita*'. Chiqui,

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President's Report

By: Ching Quejas

Kalayaan Centre is on its 11th year of actual operation. It was established in 1997 but there was a hiatus in 1998 when we celebrated the centennial of Philippine Independence. The first set of officers were elected in October 1999 and actual operations started the following year, in 2000. The centre was housed in a borrowed building on Timberlea Boulevard, Mississauga, courtesy of Cascade Canada.

The first five years were focused on raising money to acquire a home of our own. In December 2005, at the end of its 5th year, the present facility was acquired. However, due to lack of guarantors we had to endure the difficulty of having to pay 9.5% interest on a private mortgage loan of \$600,000. In 2009, three board members stepped forward to guarantee the mortgage and we were able to transfer the loan to TD Canada Trust at 3.75% interest. It was increased to 4% this month for a closed period of 1 year. Still, we are on a much better footing. In the 3 year period at 9.5% interest, we were only able to pay \$8,000 towards the principal. Now, after less than 2 years, with some extra payments to principal, we have paid 10 times more. God is good.

We are finishing off the first quarter of 2011 and so far so good. In the first few years, we were hard up financially but we managed to keep our heads above water, we did not miss to pay a single amortization and we continue to be up to date in our payments. With our generous donors

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ANG PINOY

Ni: Tito Adona

(Volunteer and Language Instructor)

Balik Tanaw .Alay ng mga Pilipino sa mundo, Mapayapang Pagbabago (People's Power).



Mahigit dalawampung limang (25) taon ang nakalipas, katatapos pa lang gunitain ng mga progresibong sektor (mag-

aaral, manggagawa at mga propesyunal) ang Unang Sigwa (First Quarter Storm) na kung saan ang Mendiola at University Belt ang naging saksi ng kalupitan ng mga pulis at Metrocom sa mga mag-aaral na nag dadaos ng kilos protesta laban sa pamahalaan ng diktadurang Marcos. Mahigit dalawang buwan pa lang matapos magdaos ng pambansang halalaan ng 1985 kung saan si Gng. Cory Aquino ay lantarang dinaya ng rehimeng Marcos. Nagkaroon ng isang malawakang pagkilos ang lahat ng mga progresibong opposition, kilusang pag-gawa, mga estudyante at simbahan, kung saan nagdaos ng isang malaking rally sa Luneta noong huling lingo ng Enero, 1986. Mahigit isang milyon ang mga nag si-pag dalo upang ipakita ang pag kagalit sa pamahalaan ni Marcos at hinihingi ng kanyang pagbibitiw.

Pag sapit ng buwan ng Pebrero, halos walang puknat ang mga rally at kilos protesta. Naging hudyat ito ng maramihang kilos protesta na human-tong sa mga rally sa EDSA, tapat ng Camp Crame. Nagkaisa ang simbahan at mga kilalang opposition na magdaos ng pagkilos sa EDSA, nanawagan sa sambayang Pilipino na suportahan ang pagkilos, halos umabot sa milyong tao ang dumalo. Ang pagbaligtad ng kampo ni Gen. Ramos at Sec. Enrile ang naging hudyat ng mabilis na pagbagsak ng rehimeng Marcos. Nagdiwang ang buong bansa at mundo, dahil napabagsak ang isang diktador sa mapayapang pamamaraan at binansagang People's Power Revolution sa Pilipinas.

Ang sarap ng pakiramdam na mag-ing Pinoy na hangang ngayon ay hindi ko pa makalimutan dahil naging bahagi ako ng Peoples Power EDSA 1 at II. Kilos protesta na nagpabagsak sa mga may kapangyarihan diktadurang Marcos at bulok na pamahalaan ni Erap Estrada.

Kalagitnaan ng buwan ng Pebrero, pagbungad ko sa telebisyon ang pag-aalsa ng mga Ehpto (Egyptian) laban sa pamahalaang Mubarak ang bumungad sa akin. Naging madugo ang kilos protesta dahil maraming nasaktan at namatay. Tumagal din ng halos dalawang linggo ang mga kaguluhan sa Ehpto, marami din ang mga nasawi at ang tumawag sa aking pansin ay ang mga matatayang at masigasig na mamayan na gustong palayasin si Mubarak at makibahagi sa kasaysayan ng kanilang bansa. Makalipas pa ang ilang araw, nagdiwang ang mga Ehpto, dahil napilitang magbitiw sa tungkulin si Mubarak, at nagdiwang ang mundo dahil natigil na rin ang karahasan.

Libya, Yemen, Tunisia, Oman, Saudi Arabia at Iran ang mga bansa sa gitnang silangan (Middle East) ay nabalot ng mga kilos protesta ng mga mamayan na nagnanais ng mga pagbabago at kalayaan. Maraming mamayan ang mga nagbuwis ng buhay upang maatim at makamit ang kalayaan at demokrasya. Hangang kailan kaya nila makakamit ang ninanais nila ng hindi dumadanak ang dugo?

Mapalad pa rin tayong mga Pinoy, napatalsik natin ang diktadura ng hindi dumaranak ang dugo, sa likod ng kasaysayan, mayroon din mga nalagas na buhay upang matamo ang kalayaan at demokrasya tanging kasaysayan lang ang makapagsasabi.

Binabati ko ang aking kaibigang Chiqui Pineda-Azimi sa kanyang matagumpay na Concert nuong Feb. 27, sana maulit muli?

Conversational Pilipino Class (Tagalog Class) will start this Spring, mga asawa, anak, nobyo, nobya at pati na ang mga kaibigan, pag-aralin para matuto ng wikang Pilipino. For your more information, inquire at Kalayaan Office.

KALAHATING PINOY Eh!

Pagkaraan ng kulang sa anim na taon sa paninirahan sa bansang Canada, noong nakaraang sabado Marso 12, 2011, nanumpa ang aking pamilya, ang aking kabiya na si Bernice at ang aking bunsong anak na si Carlo bilang mga Canadian. Sa isang maayos, mataimtim na seremonya, iginawad ng isang hukom ang aming titulo bilang mga bagong mamayan ng Canada. Magkahalong lungkot at saya ang aking naramdam, lungkot dahil lilisanin ko na ang aking pagiging Pilipino (Pinoy), ang aking



lupang sinalangan, habang iniawit naming ang O Canada!, nalulungkot at nasisiyahan ako. Ang mga karpatan at kalayaan ng isang Canadian ay aking magagamit sa mga hinaharap na panahon. Magkakaroon na rin ako ng Canadian passport, at ang kabilin-bilinan ng hukom na katabi namin sa taas na litrato ay ipagmalaki naming ang pagiging Canadian.

Kahit bagong Canadian na kami, hindi pa rin maitatatwa na kami ay Pinoy parin, sa usapan sa bahay Tagalog pa rin ang ginagamit namin. Sa hapag kainan, hindi kumpleto kung walang bigas (kanin) na simbulo ng mga Pinoy at mga Asyano, Ang mga kaibigan naka paligid sa amin ay mga Pinoy pa rin, kahit na sa lugar ng trabaho, Pinoy pa rin ang hinahanap ng makasalimuha. Pagbukas ng computer at magbabasa ng balita sa online, puros balitaang Pinoy pa rin ang binabasa. Pagbukas ng telebisyon, ang Kapuso at Kapamilya ang pinanonood. Pagdating ng Sabado at Linggo, ang spiritual na kaugalian sa simbahan karamihan parin Pinoy. Dahil nakatira tayo sa Canada at ang bansag sa atin ngayon ay Fil-Canadian sa madaling salita, Kalahating Pinoy Eh!

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Filipina Inspires and Encourages our Youth

By: Karyn Milne

Teacher Liana Cvitak (Leynes), known as Mrs. Cvitak to her precocious kindergarten students, is an inspiration to the youth in our community, and one who takes her role in education for over 14 years as the most important position in her life aside from being a wife and mother of two beautiful children. Liana says "if you are interested in changing the way society works, this is where it really matters... you really make a difference every day you are a teacher." As a teacher working at an inner city school in the east-end of Scarborough, Liana has seen how her kids come to school needier than most children and feels it is more crucial than ever to have a relationship with all of the children's parents to promote student learning.

Liana moved from Quezon City, Philippines to Canada in 1980 at the age of 11 with her mother, father, and two brothers. Liana's parents sacrificed the vibrant social life they knew in the Philippines to provide a better life for their children. Coming to Canada was a major shock to Liana in the beginning. She recalled how strange it was during one of her first recesses at school. The kids at recess spoke of hockey and she didn't know what it was. This, in addition to the extreme cold which was a stark contrast from the beautiful tropical climate of the Philippines, was a huge adjustment. At the beginning of Liana's life in Canada she had to undergo such difficulties as living in a Tita's home with all five of her family members inhabiting one room. These cramped quarters were her reality for several months before Liana's parents found a permanent residence in Scarborough. Liana rapidly learned about hockey and how to brave the long frigid winters which helped her to go on and thrive at school. She found solace in drama, arts, music, and Mr. McCarville, an inspirational English teacher. Liana may have lacked Filipino role-models at that time, but she did have Mr. McCarville. This teacher helped inspire Liana to go on and get a B.A. in English Literature and complete



Liana Cvitak (Leynes) with her family: Slav, Brianna and Andrew

Teacher's College. In 1997 Liana embarked upon teaching as her career and never looked back. "Everyday I think I am in the place I am supposed to be."

Liana constantly strives to do her very best when it comes to helping the students in her classroom. Students are viewed as equitable participants in her classroom and Liana sees the light in every child. Liana makes an impact on the community through her desire and ability to help and encourage children to understand a myriad of concepts in their full contexts. Students' safety and well-being are foremost in Liana's mind and she truly loves what she does. Liana encourages Filipinos who have a passion for education to become teachers and enter into positions of power within the education field. Liana believes whole heartedly in a quote from Mohandas Gandhi, "the best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in the service of others."

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Karyn Milne was Kalayaan Centre Coordinator from March 2009 until April 2010 when she moved to the east end of Toronto. She helped the Centre enormously during her term as coordinator. We miss her at the Centre and we are happy to hear from her again.

CHIQUI PINEDA

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reprising her role as Sita, sang "Ako'y Iyong Iyo" with Leander Mendoza as Rama. Leander Mendoza captivated the audience with his own rendition of Broadway hits 'This is the Moment' from Jekyll and Hyde and 'I am What I am' from Le Cage. And the four artists, in four voices, sang the Tagalog classic 'Dahil Sa Iyo', acapella, followed by their version of 'Amigos Para Siempre' while a pair of ballroom dancers did a rumba number on the floor. The show would have ended with the songs 'Time to say Goodbye' and 'You'll Never Walk Alone', but the audience clamored for an encore and did not quiet down until they heard Chiqui sing the song that started it all - 'How Did You Know'. As she sang, she gave her final words....."until we meet again, my friends...always have courage and faith in your very own kind of creativity and dream, dream, DREAM". For Chiqui, it was a dream come true... to be back on stage performing and showing her talents to friends and fans alike.

"Putting It Together" was indeed a showcase of talent and craft that included Chiqui's photography. A portrait by her was auctioned off to the audience at the end of the show. Chiqui really mesmerized the full-house audience with her unique talent. It was a show that will not be forgotten. For Kalayaan Centre, it was another successful event showcasing our Filipino talents and fulfilling its mandate to contribute to the cultural development of the community.

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Frances Sevilla is graduate of McMaster University with a degree of a bachelor of arts in English. She is currently a volunteer at the Kalayaan Centre

helping with office work and website maintenance.

Love of My Life

By: Gerry Rulloda

I caught her on the corner of my eye one afternoon as I was hurrying home from school. She was with another guy. I stopped for a moment and looked at her. She looks much older than me. She looked back but only momentarily and as if telling me, what are you doing here kid? I just turned 14 and I never noticed her before in the neighborhood. Maybe because I was too young then and girls did not interest me yet. I was taken aback and slowly retreated and then proceeded to go home.

That night I could not get her off my mind. There were other girls in school that kind of interest me but never this way. The following day, I saw her again, same place. She didn't notice me though. So I just enjoyed myself, watch her undulating moves and her dominance of everyone around her. She was majestic in white and she could have worn any color and it would have captivated me and everyone.

Every day, that summer and the whole year of my high school senior year, I made it to a point to stop by and catch a glimpse of her by the Mom and Pop store. Is it possible to fall in love with more than one? I guess so. The Muslims and Mormons can even have multiple spouses. But I am a devout Catholic!

After high school, I went to the city to pursue my college education and she kind of went off my mind and I was able to concentrate on my studies. I was taking agricultural engineering just like my grandfather told me to do. He wanted me to be a farmer! I guess to continue his calling. He was never happy with the "kasama". My grandpa felt that he was cheated with the produce or harvest often hence it made sense for me to take over the farm someday. But I didn't like the farm. I dreamed of flying into outer space. So, when my grandpa passed away, I pursued another course in engineering other than farming.

I saw her again along the school

corridors of MIT while walking to one of my classes. I looked away as I was afraid she had forgotten about me already and she didn't notice me either. She looked the same, didn't age one bit. She was dressed in black but she was beautiful as ever. Every day I passed by, my love for her came back and grew stronger. Before I knew it, I was missing my classes just so I can see her all the time and watch her move.

After 2 semesters, my brother noticed my low grades (not that I was failing but from a scholar to barely passing?). He grabbed me by the arm and said, look, you have to get your act together and forget about her. You don't have a future with her or he could have said she didn't have a future with me. Auntie didn't send you to school just to waste time and money.

So, I continued my studies and found a new girlfriend and who eventually became my wife. We came to Canada and had family and I am very happy with how the events turned out. But she was always on the back of my mind and the temptation to seek her out was strong but I keep saying to myself, no. You can't do this. You'll destroy everything.

It went like that for a long time, but last Christmas, when I opened the gift from my wife, I was so shocked because there she was, her picture right in front of me. Ah, my queen! The book was titled "The challenges of a Grandmaster". Chess, anyone?

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photo P.-W. Henry (c) 2003 www.kosteniuk.com

Kalayaan Centre 2011 Upcoming Activities

- Apr 16 Over the Rainbow
Rita Tabago concert
- May 1 Brunch and Bazaar
- Jun 11 Independence Day
Ball
Sponsored by the
Mississauga Seniors
- Jun 12 Independence Day
Picnic
Sponsored by
Kalayaan Foundation
- July 23 KCCC Walkathon
- Aug 27 Golf Classic
- Oct 29 Halloween Party
- Dec 31 New Year Bash

Weekly / Monthly Activities

- Rondalla Class
Sunday 3:00pm
- Line Dancing
Monday 6:30pm
- Philippine Tango
Monday 7:30pm
- Conversational Tagalog
Wed 6:30pm
- Ballroom Dancing
Tue 7:00pm
- Board Meeting
3rd Friday of the month
- KCCC Book Club
Monthly

To sign-up for an activity, please
contact the Centre:

Tel. 905-602-0923

Email: info@kalayaancentre.ca

Presidents Report

(Continued from page 1)

and volunteers we have made do with whatever resources we have. Our property was reclassified by the Municipal Property Assessment Committee last year. This reduced our property tax by over 60 per cent retroactive to 2008. We received a refund for the payments made for the past years and starting next year our property will be \$8,000 per annum, a big reduction from the original \$23,000 per annum. We still have some credits left and in the first quarter this year we did not have to pay the tax amount due. Looking at the computation by City Hall, we'll pay only a small amount in the next billing period if at all.

Monthly donations by electronic fund transfer where donors donate at least \$10 monthly directly from their bank accounts has given us a steady income of over a thousand dollars each month. The campaign continues and we are encouraging other community members to do donate. A \$10 contribution from one's account is hardly noticeable and it goes back to the donors at the end of the year in the form of a tax deductible receipt.

Our charity bingo twice or thrice monthly has also helped a lot. Our monthly share takes care of our utilities and other maintenance expenses as well as for our programs and services. Our board members take turns in managing the bingo sessions. Three members work together at a time. A gas allowance computed by the number of kilometres travelled is provided for those assigned to each particular session but very few avail of the privilege so there is hardly any expense deducted from our share, which is an average of \$2,560 from 2 sessions or more than \$3,500 for 3 sessions. The directors would rather donate their time and gas costs to the organization.

From time to time, we have the opportunity to avail of grants by the government and other funding agencies for projects benefitting the community. This month, we have been approved for a capital grant from Service Canada thru the New Horizons Program for Seniors for the renovation of our kitchen. So, this Spring,

we'll have a modern kitchen complete with appliances. We are preparing to file another application to the Provincial Government through the Ontario Trillium Foundation for a community capital funding to improve our multipurpose Hall. Deadline for filing is March 31. If approved. We'll have a new look multipurpose hall before the end of the year.

In February, we applied to Service Canada (Canada Summer Jobs) to fund the employment of university and high school students for 8 weeks each at the rate of \$10.25 an hour. We received a call from Canada Summer Jobs that if approved, they will give us funding for 2 university students and we'll be notified by the first week of May. Other fiscal sources such as donations from expected and unexpected sources are becoming more frequent and it is heart-warming indeed. On February 26, one of our volunteers, Chiqui Pineda – Azimi who was a sensation in the Philippines, a popular singer-performer in her time gave a concert with 3 other singers-performers, Leander Mendoza, Josie Rocas-Chavez and Bong Chavez to a capacity audience. Obviously, Chiqui has many of her fans transplanted like her to Canada. The concert gave us a handsome profit.

And just this weekend, the first of three regular fundraising events, the annual bowl-a-thon, took place at the Planet Bowl on Eglinton Avenue West 2 minutes drive from the Centre. The tournament is held not only to raise funds but to have a pleasant get-together for old and new friends and to make the community aware of what we are and the things we do as well. Other regular programs and activities go on as usual such as the fitness program (line-dancing), the Rondalla, which, by the way, was invited to play at the launching of Tahanan Magazine on Friday, March 25th.

From time to time, the group is invited to special occasions by social, civic and church organizations. The rondalla membership is inter-generational. We are expanding the program this year by organizing

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a beginners' class. Another program, the heritage promotion program, will start a new Tagalog class scheduled on Wednesday evening from 6:30 to 8:00 PM. Other programs like the ballroom dance session on Tuesdays, the folkdancing sessions of the Culture Philippines of Ontario on Saturdays as well as the church service on Sundays by the Freedom In Christ Church go on as usual. Meetings of different organizations and corporate groups are also held on different days of the week. The grand hall is rented out for private function on weekends which generate funds too.

Kalayaan has moved on from its simple beginnings. Slowly but surely we are making our people aware that we exist, we are real and that this community centre is good for the community, good for Canada. By indomitable will we have come to this stage in the life of the centre and with a continuing devotion and commitment we know that our children and their children's children will proudly cherish it. **Long live the Kalayaan Centre!**

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LOOKING OUT! CHARACTER OF THE PEOPLE

By: Edgar Frondoza



Amidst the triple disaster of the 9.0 magnitude earthquake, the ensuing tsunami and the radioactive leak from the crippled nuclear reactor, the Japanese people have shown calm and quiet resolve. Some stores reported panic-buying that cleared shelves of food and other basic supplies, yet there were no reports of price-gouging or looting sprees. This is a totally different picture from the Hurricane Katrina disaster in 2005 and the Haiti earthquake in 2010 when looters took to the streets and brought a state of chaos and lawlessness.

The death toll has exceeded 10,000 with over 17,000 still missing. Yet despite the scale of the disaster and destruction, the Japanese people appear to confront the catastrophe with a quiet combination of resilience and resignation. Survivors are pitching in to help themselves and others. They go about their tasks with quiet acceptance and trust in God and in their government.

The internet is filled with stories of heroism and admiration of the Japanese people. One email I received, praised the character of the people and listed 10 things to emulate from Japan:

Calm - not a single visual of chest-beating or wild grief. Sorrow itself has been elevated.

Dignity - disciplined queues for water and groceries; not a rough word or a crude gesture.

Ability - the incredible architects, for instance; buildings swayed but didn't fall.

Grace - people bought only what they needed for the present, so everybody could get something.

Order - no looting in shops. No honking and no overtaking on the roads. Just understanding.

Sacrifice - fifty workers stayed back to pump sea water in the N-

reactors. How will they ever be repaid?

Tenderness - restaurants cut prices. An unguarded ATM is left alone. The strong cared for the weak.

Training - the old and the children, everyone knew exactly what to do. And they did just that.

Media - they showed magnificent restraint in the bulletins. No silly reporters. Only calm reportage.

Conscience - when the power went off in a store, people put things back on the shelves and left quietly



It is commendable how the Japanese people handled the tragic combination of circumstances. Rather than fear and panic, the predominant attitude is one of calm, discipline and determined resolve.

We can learn from the Japanese people especially after our less than exemplary experience with Typhoon Ondoy.

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NAYON

Quarterly Newsletter of the
KALAYAAN CENTRE

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