



EDITOR'S NOTE

This issue reiterates our interest in the performing arts. Immediate and current, the performing arts bring an intimate and sensuous element to the artistic experience quite different from what one finds in the literary and visual arts. Not only do they use much movement and sound, they are also artistic experiences in real time and therefore more evanescent. One cannot put down a performance as one would a book and return to it later. They are also dependent on an actual audience upon whom the impact of the performance is more visceral. Often, it creates an instant community—perhaps even an instant Andersonian imagined community—whose simultaneous experience immediately links and binds. “Because of its capacity to create and sustain a briefly intensified social life, the theatre (or any performance site) is festive and political as well as literary—a privileged site for the celebration and critique of the needs and concerns of the *polis*” (Bristol, p. 3) (Parenthetical comment mine).

Rhodora Ancheta’s article, “Phantasmatic Constructions: Language and Humor and the Interrogation of Identity in Contemporary Filipino Comic Plays” studies the use of “humor and comic strategies” in the creation of “a hyperreal Filipino identity.” The first play demonstrates cultural castration in a call center and the second reveals Filipino social conditions in the midst of filming an American movie in a Philippine location. Through the plays, the study locates the Filipino in complex global economic as well as cultural paradigms of outsourcing and film. The comic framework unpacks issues of hybridity and identity, using the page and the stage as sites of cultural mediation and construction and perhaps even cultural resistance to global capital.

Dance takes center stage in Ruth Pison’s study of the Noel Garrovillo’s Dance Center’s programs and history. The Center which specializes in contemporary dance finds itself in the unenviable position of preaching contemporary dance in Mindanao, a place replete with indigenous dance traditions. The article speaks of adjustments and negotiations, hybridity and liminality in performing within a culture not one’s own. It chronicles how the company resolved “their contradictions as Christian artist settlers in Mindanao.” It is usually the local dance traditions that are challenged by modern forms but it seems that any art form, including contemporary dance, needs committed support to survive. The history of the Center is





a narrative of struggle, “of sheer conviction and commitment to keep the art form alive.”

Theater, dance and music merge in the Spanish musical drama of the 17th century. “El Componente Dramático Musical en una Pieza Breve de Melchor Fernández de León” by Spanish scholar Elisa Domínguez de Paz examines this dramatic form developed in the royal playhouses to honor the nobility.

This issue also continues the series of articles on children’s literature in the Philippines which began in the previous issue. As mentioned earlier, this is a burgeoning literary genre in the Philippines. Written in Filipino, English or both, children’s literature appeals to a wide audience and has consequently produced an emergent field for creative and scholarly exploration and innovation.

Eugene Evasco’s “Pag-akda at Pagkabata: Ang Namamayaning Tunguhin at Estetika sa Panitikang Pambata sa Pilipinas” explores the aesthetics of children’s literature in the Philippines. It begins with the colonial context of this genre and moves into the present day economics of printing. It discusses the “representation of childhood” and its relation to the production of texts.

Borders are crossed in Lalaine Aquino’s “When the Asian Girl Speaks: A Comparative Analysis of Two Young Adult Novels in English Written by Asian Women.” The article examines gender issues in narratives informed by Asian values and traditions. One novel remarks on the denial of educational opportunities to a girl because of her gender while the other deals with abuse in the family allowed by social traditions inimical to the female. Using stylistics as a critical tool, the essay constructs a linguistic configuration of the gendered childhood of the Asian female child and underscores her attempts to transcend her containment.

The performing arts articles highlight the power and challenges of performance while the children’s literature articles illustrate the theory and praxis of this genre. This issue is enriched by the new insights these scholarly productions bring.

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ENDNOTE

Michael Bristol. *Carnival and Theater. Plebian Culture and the Structure of Authority in Renaissance England*. New York and London: Routledge, 1985.

