

Architectural Guide Manila

Bianca Weeko Martin



DOM
publishers

Surveying Manila's Landmarks

Book Review of Architectural Guide Manila

Edgar Allan Sembrano

Bianca Weeko Martin's *Architectural Guide Manila* presents in style the built heritage of Metro Manila spanning from the Spanish, American, and the contemporary periods. It is a handy book with short but informative essays accompanied by eye-catching images of buildings featured. In her introduction, the Canada-based Filipino-Indonesian author relates how she fell in love with the country's history and architecture and mentions her ancestral home in Baliwag, Bulacan, a still extant two-story house completed in 1934.

Published by the Berlin-based DOM Publishers, the book was launched on May 11, 2024 at the Manila Metropolitan Theater with a panel discussion featuring the author; architect Gerard Lico who contributed an article on brutalism and post-colonial architecture; architect and curator Peter Cachola Schmal; and Patrick Kasingsing of Brutalist Pilipinas. They discussed heritage conservation projects and efforts in Manila as well as its built environment. Following the launch was a tour of Manila facilitated by the group Renacimiento Manila. Apart from Lico's essay, representative buildings from the Spanish to the American periods are discussed starting off with Intramuros including the Manila Cathedral and Fort Santiago, the historic Bahay Nakpil-Bautista, Paco Train Station, Luneta Hotel, the National Museum complex, and the Far Eastern University campus. Also featured are churches and chapels, old and new and structures of tropical modernism such as the Government Service Insurance System Complex in Pasay City and the Pacific Star Building in Makati City. The book's strength lies on the feature on Metro Manila's modernist and post-modernist structures. These structures are located in the cities of Pasay, Makati and Taguig. While many of the featured building are already written about in many other publications, the book's strength lies on the feature on Metro Manila's modernist and post-modernist structures. These structures are located in the cities of Pasay, Makati and Taguig. Aside from Lico, the book's other contributors include Singaporean scholar Joshua Tan, Aya Maceda of New York's Parsons School of Design, Edson Cabalfin of Tulane University in Louisiana, Neferti Tadiar of Barnard College in New York, and Kasingsing. Offering a fresh take on the architectural milieu of Metro Manila, the book is a perfect guide for a weekend stroll or an afternoon coffee in the Philippines' capital region.

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Year Published: 2024

Publisher: DOM Publishers

ISBN: 9783869225982

No. of Pages: 280