

**The Dean's Opening Message at the UP College of Music
Recognition Day Marking the 100th Graduation at Abelardo
Hall, 29 July 2024, UPFI**

Isang Siglo ng Musika, Sining at Pagmamahal sa Bayan

Pambansang Alagad ng Sining sa Musika, Dr. Ramon P Santos
Ang ating Panauhing Tagapagsalita, Dr. Joel Magus P. Navarro
Ang ating kaguruan, admin at reps
Ang ating panauhin—mga magulang, pamilya, kaibigan, mga
nagmamahal sa Kolehiyo ng Musika
at ang ating Batch 2024—ang tanging dahilan ng mapalad na
panahon na ito,

Magandang umaga po sa inyong lahat!

Isang tunay na karangalan na tumayo sa entablado ngayong
hapon bilang inyong dekanong sa ika- isang-daang pagtatapos ng
Kolehiyo ng Musika ngayong 2024, pinamagatang “Isang Siglo ng
Musika, Sining at Pagmamahal sa Bayan.” Ngunit bago po ang
lahat, isang malalim at taos-pusong pasasalamat sa ating mahal na
komunidad: ang kaguruan, ang ating admin at opisina ng kalihim,
ang graduation committee—sa inyong walang patid na serbisyo,
at higit sa lahat, sa ating batch 2024: sa inyong pag-unawa, at
tibay ng loob sa mahigpit na panahon ng kalamidad. Tayo’y
nagkakaisa ngayong umaga bilang isang pamilya.

Ano ba ang kahulugan ng isang siglo? Bakit natin binibigyan ng
halaga o kaya pinagdidiin na natapos ang isang siglo o ang
isandaang taon na binubuo ng sampung dekada? Ano ang
kahalagahan ng pag-rebyu ng isang “century” bilang yunit ng

oras, na nagmula sa salitang Latin na “centum” na ang ibig sabihin ay ‘isang daan’?

Mahalaga ang pagbalik-tanaw sa mga siglong nakalipas dahil nauunawaan natin ng mas malalim ang ebolusyon ng mga sociedad sa larangan ng kasaysayan, cultura at teknolohiya. Sa paghahati-hati ng kasaysayan sa mga siglo, nagkakaroon tayo ng balangkas / framework para makapag-muni-muni sa daloy ng buhay—matuklasan ang mga pagbabago, anyo, sanhi, epekto, uso, kalakaran at ang mga prosesong kaakibat nito, at mag projek ng mga posibilidades sa hinaharap. Bawat siglo sa ating kasaysayan, kung babatayin sa Gregorian at Julian Calendar, ay may kani-kanyang espesyal na caracteristico o kaya ay kilala sa kanilang mga “milestones.” Halimbawa- sa Europa, ang ika labing lima at ika labing anim na siglo—Renaissance- ay naghatid ng paggising na kultural at intelektwal, na lumaganap pagdating ng palimbagan; sa mga siglong ika-labing walo at labing-siyam naman ay nagkaroon ng Industrial Revolution, na humubog at pinalawak pa lalo ang ekonomiyang global at ang pang-araw -araw na pakikipagsapalaran sa buhay-capitalismo, kasama ang musika. Sa Pilipinas sa ika-labing siyam na siglo namulat ang kaisipan at puso ng mga Pilipino sa mga ideya ng rebolusyon, identidad, patria o bayan. Iba’t-ibang klaseng paghamon naman ang ating hinarap noong ika -dalawamput na siglo--mula sa mga labanang pisikal noong panahon ng Hapon o kaya panahon ng diktadura hanggang sa labanang artistico: ang pagsisiyasat at pag-angkat ng pagka-Pilipino sa musika at sa ibang larangang artistica---na siyang napakahalagang tungkulin. Ayon sa ilang opinyon, ang pinaka-mapanghamon na siglo ay ang kinakagisnan nating lahat

ngayon—ang ika-dalawampung-isa na siglo, na sabay na dala-dala ang poder ng bagong buhay, na kaakibat ang pagwasak ng mismong buhay na ito, na habang tayo’y nagtatangkang humubog ng isang paraiso sa kalupaan ay sabay na humuhubog din ng mga pwersang panira nito, kaharap ang isang kinabukasang pawang di pa maipinta. Kung ang bawat panahon ng baby boomers, gen X’ers, millennials, at gen Z’rs ay may kani-kaniyang mga di-pangkaraniwang katangian, ganun din ang mga siglo, at sa pagtanaw sa mga nakalipas na siglo sa buhay ng Kolehiyo ng Musika, mabibigyan natin ng kahulugan ang ating nakaraan, kasalukuyan at hinaharap.

Anu-ano ang mga mahahalagang yugto sa buhay-pagtatapos ng ating mahal na Kolehiyo ng Musika sa loob ng isang siglo? Allow me to shift to English at this point.

The UP Conservatory in the ‘Empire Days’ was a breath of fresh air. It marked the coming of a new, liberal, modern, secular breeding ground for the birth of a Filipino classical music tradition. Imagine its life: Filipino students—the males in white Americana with Parisian hats, the women in terno and butterfly sleeves, interacting with foreign teachers in an educational environment freed from monastic authority, open to new learnings in an exciting era of new sounds and attitudes. In **1920**, four years after its founding in 1916 on *calle* R. Hidalgo in Quiapo, the Conservatory produced its first 6 graduates during the term of Director Robert Schofield. The proud recipients of a Teacher’s Diploma were: Lucia Francisco, Tranquilina Gavino-Mapa, Rosario Lopez-Garcia, Elisa Maffei (Piano) and Paz Guidote and Petrona Ramos (Voice). As the years passed, there would be more

graduates, though erratic in number at times, and there would be more varied course offerings. While there are legions of graduates who have marched through time, let's take a look at some representative figures from each decade. Graduates, you will hear the names of teachers who had once walked the hallways of the Conservatory / College, and of your own teachers--who lived out the dailiness of their lives in music, in their own era's peculiar circumstances-- just like all of you, us, in the 21st century. All of them played a role in the lineage of mentorship that you received from your own teachers, forging an intimate link with you as well, and which hopefully you will continue to perpetuate wherever life may lead you.

Who else graduated in the **20s**, the era of Hollywood's MGM films, the gramophone, Manila carnival, bodabil, radio programs, and a rising sense of Filipino-ness in music? ...of resplendence but also of the Great Depression in the US which had adverse effects on us then? Who else but Nicanor Abelardo and Francisco Santiago, who graduated together in 1921, with a TD in Piano and Composition respectively. Santiago was the first Compo graduate and would become the Conservatory's first Filipino director in 1930. The year 1922 saw the first TD in violin graduate, Manuel Anunciacion; and the first TD in guitar graduate, Serafin Magracia, while Santiago got his TD in piano. Post graduate studies were already available: Abelardo and Lucia Francisco got their post-grad diplomas in Science/Composition and piano respectively in 1923, while Antonio Molina got his TD in cello (the first). Midway through the 20s, the Conservatory, now located on Nebraska cor. Isaac Peral sts., came under the helm of Austro-Hungarian

Director Alexander Lippay, who was instrumental in putting up the Conservatory Symphony Orchestra that played at commencement ceremonies. Because there was no concert hall yet that the Conservatory could call its own, graduation ceremonies and recitals were held at neighboring venues such as the San Beda College Auditorium, the Manila Grand Opera House, and the Philippine Normal College's auditorium. Doesn't this relate to us all now?!

The **1930s** were called 'Peacetime' by Manileños, with an economy on the rebound, the era of art nouveau, school bands, sarswela-type films—but with an undercurrent of simmering social tensions. Now under Director Francisco Santiago, the Conservatory's graduates were the ff. with a TD: Rodolfo Cornejo in both Compo and Piano; Bernardino Custodio, Salvacion Oppus-Yniguez in Piano, Lucio San Pedro in both band conducting (the first) and compo.; and with the first Bachelor of Music degrees instituted in this period: Julio Esteban Anguita and Juan Hernandez in piano. There was also a Graduate in Music diploma held by the ff: Celso Estrella (violin), Lucino Sacramento (compo), Dalisay Aldaba (voice), Flora Zarco (piano). It was Director Santiago who urged that the Conservatory be elevated to college status, and so the preparatory work was begun. Strong, passionate expressions of a Filipino identity characterized this period, as artists worked within the ethos of the Commonwealth years that promised a long-desired independence from American rule.

The uneasy years of **1940-41** had 29 graduates, a good number despite the intrusion of the Japanese. After these 2 years of

graduations in Manila, there was silence. The Conservatory was closed in the years **1942-1945**, and while music-making was reoriented towards the new pan-Asian agenda of the Japanese, it never stopped. There would be no conservatory life however till its reopening in Jan. **1946**, first in a small space behind the Phil General Hospital, then back to the rehabilitated Villamor Hall, in the aftermath and recovery of a city that had been ravaged by war. Who graduated in the years **1946-1949**? ...in a climate of optimism, of hope, healing and rehabilitation in the early years of the Third Republic, reeling still from its deep scabs and scars, and with the Conservatory now under Director Ramon Tapales? Yes, we could've rebuilt the nation better in those crucial formative years, but history deviated in other directions. Recipients of a Graduate in Music certificate were: Regalado Jose, Perla Suaco, Jose Balingit, Avelina Manalo, Andrea Ofilada (piano- who'd earn her BM the following year), Eliseo Pajaro (science/compo), Oscar Yatco, Sergio Esmilla (violin). These were the demigods, the senior teachers I encountered in my college days. The Conservatory would soon relocate shortly after to Diliman, albeit in different areas first. As you note, the courses were still in a state of ambivalency and were works in progress.

Who's who in our roster of **1950s** graduates, in the era of mambo-mambo Magsaysay? ...in the proud yet wary years of a freshly-gained independence? ... With a Teacher's Diploma in piano- our oldest living alumnus, one of CMu's beloved donors, Atty. Antonio Pastor (class of '51!); with an Associate in Music certificate and a BM in piano, Asuncion Laureola; also with a BM in piano, Imelda Castrillo and former dean Reynaldo Paguio; with a BM voice, Elsie

Roa; with an Artists Diploma (piano), Jose Contreras; with a TD (piano), former dean Juan Ramos; with a TD and BM (piano), former dean Mauricia Borrromeo; with a Normal Course (piano), Leticia Guevarra.

The swinging **60s**: the Phils as an emerging economic powerhouse in Southeast Asia, the hippie era of “a-go-go and “mod and twist, of hi-waist pants and pouf hairdos,” the Beatles in Manila, Bobby Gonzales and his “Hahabol-Habol” and of Jose Maceda and “Pagsamba” and the new untrodden path of composition he led. Throughout the 50s to 1967, it was still Director Tapales at the helm. It was in **1963** that the Conservatory finally settled into its permanent address. Finally, it had found its permanent home and now carried the name Abelardo Hall. It was in the late 60s too that we became a full-blown college, adding Asian music into the curriculum as we rode on the wave of Maceda’s asianizing, avant-gardizing spirit in research and composition. We had a Dean now, Dr. Eliseo Pajaro. The MM program was instituted at this time, and many of our BM graduates grabbed the opportunity to further their studies. The 60s graduates in their 60s fashion included Carmencita Dominguez, Evelyn Mandac for TD voice; Emmanuel Laureola, Juan Ramos, for BM piano; Elmo Makil, Imelda Ongsiako for BM voice, Ramon Santos for BM Composition. The very first MM graduate in 1967 was Luzminda Azarcon in Piano with a minor in Theory.

Enter the pivotal **Dekada setenta 70**: the era of Martial Law and its dark days, the New Society and the age of the edifice complex to which Saturday Night Fever and Pinoy pop music in all its color

and resonance, embedded with nationalist and anti-dictatorial undertones, blared forth in concerts and discos, while filling UP's soundscape were Juan de la Cruz Band's "Ang Himig Natin," and the city's entire soundscape, Maceda's "Ugnayan," through the airwaves. The Age of Aquarius graduates were: Leticia Guevara, Raul Sunico, Nita Abrogar, Charito Pizarro, Augusto Espino and Carolyn Cheng for BM Piano; Fe Nera for BM Music Education, Ruben Federizon for BM Music Theory; Josefino Chino Toledo for BM Compo. Imagine them in bell-bottoms, platform shoes, silk shirts, psychedelic minis and maxis as they came to school! With Dean Ruby Mangahas, the first woman dean onboard, the Musicology program (known as Music Literature at first) came to light. The UP Madrigal Singers, UP Concert Chorus and UP Cherubim & Seraphim were born in this auspicious period of excellent music-making.

The 80s were the years of my own college days, the unforgettable decade of People Power and the EDSA Revolution, of yellow fever and "Tie a Yellow Ribbon round the Ole Oak Tree," of big hair and shoulder pads...Under Dean Ramon Santos, more competitive admission and exit policies were developed, launching the saying: "mahirap makapasok sa UP; mas mahirap makalabas." 😊 The new integrated DCPMA (Diploma in the Creative and Performing Musical Arts) now took the place of the rest of the existing certificate programs. The BM was fortified and stretched to 5 years, and Dance and Asian Music had their own programs. Foreign students came to take their Masters in Musicology. The graduates of the 80s, not a few baby boomers scattered among my co-Gen X'rs were: The BM graduates -uunahin ko ang

boomers, ang ating mga esteemed seniors--Raymundo Maigue (double BM-Trumpet, Orch Conducting), December Ragrario, (MuEd), Jonas Baes, Cipriano Ryan Cayabyab and former dean Laverne dela Peña (Compo), Cecilia Ongsiako (double BM voice and choral conducting), Katherine Molina (voice), Janet Sabas (choral conducting), Edna Martinez (Music Lit), Joel Navarro –our distinguished guest speaker (choral cond), Gemma Malicdem, Mita Fernandez (piano), former dean Ramon Acoymo (voice), and former dean Jose Buenconsejo (Musicology); and now the Gen X'rs, the bagets then--not seniors yet, but swiftly on the way: Pia Diño (piano) and myself (musicology). The decade of the 80s was truly prolific and boasted first rate instrumentalists, vocalists and dancers, honed by the previous decades' teachers. Incidentally, the period also engendered 4 deans among its graduates.

The **1990s**- the Post-Cold War period had Dean Juan Ramos and Dean Reynaldo Paguio sharing the years of this decade that saw the rise of the bulky Motorola mobile phone, the tedious dial-up internet, and the mix of grunge and glam fashion and music. Around 1998, the College of Music was named Center for Excellence in Music Education, with more varied course offerings, more local and foreign linkages, new infrastructure, and an extensive performance calendar. Who were the BM products of the 90s? Mark Carpio, Geraldine Gonzales, Luci Magalit for piano; Alegria Ferrer and Rica Nepomuceno for voice; Renato Lucas for cello, Marie Jocelyn Marfil, Ma. Christine Muyco and Mary Katherine Trangco (the tres marias of the compo dept), Eudenice Palaruan ,Raul Navarro and Arwin Tan for choral cond, Jose Valenciano for Musicology, Jocelyn Timbol for MuEd, Rodney

Ambat for Orch Conducting and Trombone—they who are next in line to march our college in the future. The DCPMA program, still going strong, continued to serve as a foothold into the college. Its graduates, especially those who foresaw a teaching career, continued on to BM.

The **21st century** opened with the second woman dean onboard, Dean Mauricia Borromeo, who advocated an inclusive performer-scholar/scholar-performer mindset, which would become a distinction of the College in her term of reconstruction and flourishing. Following her were Dean Ramon Acoymo in 2004, Dean Jose Buenconsejo in 2010, and Dean Laverne dela Peña in 2018. In this fast-paced world of tremendous change--of AI and robots and digital lives; of Instagram, Youtube, Netflix, K-pop and P-pop; of smartphones and smartwatches; of comfort and convenience but also of anxieties over climate change, globalization, global viruses, geopolitical conflicts and impending wars etc...the following marched down the graduation aisle: for BM, Rainier Cruz and Raymond Leslie Diaz (voice), Nathan Neil Manimtim, Solaiman Jamisolamin, Patrick Roxas (guitar), Michelle Nicolasura (piano), Lisa Decenteceo, (musicology), Angela Lawenko (Dance), Beverly Shangkuan, Cristina Cayabyab (choral cond), Clement Acevedo (piano), Crystal Rodis (flute), Benedicto dela Peret (tuba), among many others. From the onset of the 21st century, there were 6 programs to graduate from: the Certificate in Music and the DCPMA (now extinct) replaced by the new AA (Associate in Arts program that emerged in dean dela Peña's time), the tightened, fast-track 4-year BM, the MM, and the new

PhD Music program). To date, there remain the AA, the BM, MM and Phd.

What do we see in all these years? What have we learned from a century of graduations? How have our graduations unfolded through the decades? Undoubtedly, our programs have evolved in the last 100 years, and will continue to evolve with a strong Asian and Philippine character in the global arena, and with the clearly distinct “tatak UP” imprint---to answer society’s needs in the next 100 years. Our graduates have increased in number. Not all freshie batches will graduate on their projected year. Some will disappear; others will encounter delays; and still others will relocate to different disciplines, but all will journey towards their destinies in the Almighty’s perfect time.

Our graduates have become integral forces in many music institutions, have made their mark in their fields both here and abroad, have earned national and international recognition. Eleven National Artists in Music come from our graduates; and many, in their own quiet lives away from the limelight, are nonetheless significant: they who, without fanfare, have mentored students, produced significant research, forged links of service, honor and excellence with the world. And our graduations have persisted and adapted through the various cataclysms that have rocked our world throughout our century of commencements.

Throughout the last hundred years, the rich paradigm of mobilities has been at work: movements and shifts through public and private spaces, in local and transnational settings, from the physical to the virtual: of people, objects, capital, information, ideas, music and artistry. Aspects of these mobilities are death and rebirth, loss and retrieval, preservation, transmission, revitalization, contestation, negotiation etc. And so the world turns, with each batch of graduates from 1920 onwards manifesting these inevitable and

inescapable facets of life. We look forward to the day our graduates will march down the aisles of our beloved Abelardo Hall, which shall rise again, hopefully not in a hundred years!. It is also in this light that I include one more significant event marking your graduation as extraordinary: the 75th anniversary of the transfer of the Oblation from the Padre Faura campus to Diliman. From 1949, the Oblation has stood proudly in front of Quezon Hall

What did this move mean? It heralded new beginnings, ushered in a new sense of belonging and pride of place, a robust community of students, teachers, administrators and non-teaching personnel.

“Paglipat”: this signaled a clearly concrete physical move towards permanency that led to expansion of the campus, a rise in infrastructure, and a reworking of space and habits of occupancy; but also signaled a powerful mental and emotional shift or a state of mind and heart--that pushed against the boundaries of knowledge, broadened the reach of our academic engagements, and accentuated service towards society and the nation. SERVICE. We see the Oblation each day we come to school. Graduates, I want you to view it today briefly with new eyes, as young (and some old) 😊 adults on the verge of leaving your home for the past how many years. The Oblation stands on a pedestal of stones taken from Montalban, Rizal, –Bonifacio’s rebel base---out of which sprouts the *Katakataka* plant. The stones symbolize the Phil. islands while the *katakataka*, whose leaves sprout new individual saplings when they fall, stand for Filipino love of *patria* or homeland. The Oblation’s stance is one of sacrifice and selfless service to the nation. As you leave our beloved Abelardo Hall to live out destiny’s plans for you, to journey on your own “paglilipat,” be like the *katakataka* leaves that self-propagate, of-

fering their being to create new ideas and heighten musical artistry, imbued with love for country and fueled by our UP mantra of honor, excellence and service.

Today, you will go down in history as the 100th graduating batch of this very challenging century that exudes both disquiet and promise. It is also fortunately highly serendipitous that you walked proudly down the aisles to Nicanor Abelardo's March—which won as Best Composition at a contest sponsored by Maestro Marcelo Adonay to celebrate his 50th wedding anniversary in Manila in 1924, which makes it also a hundred years old! 😊

How nostalgic, historic, stirring and meaningful for us all 😊. In the process of our research to come up with vol. 2 of our book on the Maestro, we were thrilled to unearth from the archives a new set of pieces that had never been heard perhaps in a hundred or more years. This March was part of this set, and has been encoded in modern notation for today's use. Special thanks go to our persistent archive moles—I'd like to acknowledge VG Cahapay (Cond dept, AA, class of 24) and Paul Bibal of UST—who are part of our research team—for bringing Abelardo's March out into the light after a century or so of lying in the dark recesses of our library archives 😊), and to Prof Emeritus Josefino Chino Toledo and the UP Symphony Orchestra for recording it and including it in its new album of University music.

To end, may Abelardo's spirit live on in all of you: from his graduation day in 1921 to your graduation- he has lived on in the music, in the passionate and creative moments of your lives: as the cold stone bust in the Camerata Garden—silent witness to all your music-making; as our beloved auditorium –the heart of our

musical life, dead for now, to hopefully rise again soon; and now as the 21st-century's contemporary, technologized Nicanor (immortalized in watercolor by our distinguished artist-in-residence, former dean Dr. Verne dela Peña). Titled "Gising na ang Musiko," it is an awakening call to you graduates: to use your music to infuse warmth and color to the stone-cold hearts of society, continue to open your senses to humanity's diverse musics and their concomitant issues, live responsibly in the age of musical uber-technology, and strive to be transformative musical leaders invested with honor, excellence and... service. Wag nyong kalilimutan na kayo'y mga Iskolar ng Bayan! Padayon, Musiko ! Congratulations to you all!
Thank you! 😊