



Consulate General of the Republic of the Philippines

NEW YORK

## PRESS RELEASE

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### Distinct Artistic Legacies Shared at Book Launch



Chef Romy Dorotan (L) indulges the author, Prosy Abarquez Dela Cruz (R) in her questions on his culinary journey.

NEW YORK, 23 May 2018 – “Even the Rainbow Has a Body” – Prosy Abarquez De La Cruz’s collection of stories and essays about Filipino-Americans in visual arts, culinary arts, music and performance arts – was launched at the Philippine Center Lobby Gallery last 23 May 2018. The event was organized by the Philippine Consulate General New York in celebration of Asian-American Heritage Month.

Consul Arman Talbo in his welcome remarks congratulated the author for aiming the spotlight on Filipinos in non-traditional fields. He noted that Filipino-Americans are gifted artists and have the generosity to share their talents in any part of the world they go.

Ms Abarquez Dela Cruz shared her inspiration in telling the stories of the artists featured in her book. She said that each of the personalities has moved her and compelled her to make their talents known through her book. She mentioned that many of the artists did not have formal training in their field, and yet have blossomed to become mature in their craft.

Romy Dorotan, chef-owner of the influential Purple Yam restaurant in Brooklyn, is an economist by training. He was exposed to the culinary arena in his early years, but he was more accustomed to preparing American food. It was when he met his wife, Amy

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Besa, that he began delving into Filipino cuisine, and they started their first restaurant, Cendrillon in Manhattan in 1995. After 13 years of acclaimed cooking, the couple closed it and opened Purple Yam in 2009.

Self-taught realist painter Ronald Cortez draws his inspiration from the ordinary and the mundane. He revealed that his compositions are from the top view perspective, such as tablescapes and mise en place of a farmer's lunch, making the viewer look at the ground and pay attention to what's usually being taken for granted. He feels that it is the artist's role to make art observers see the beauty in common objects and surroundings.

During the Q&A, the author was asked about the title's meaning. She revealed that it was Filipino National Artist for Literature NVM Gonzalez who gave her the phrase, but it was not until it was explained by her then-11-year old son that she fully understood its meaning. The rainbow is ethereal, but each artist featured in her book has a body of work that gives the rainbow life. END



Ronald Cortez, a former seaman who discovered his talent in art, pays tribute to humble and lowly subjects, bringing them to life in his realist paintings.

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Consul Arman Talbo (6<sup>th</sup> from left), concurrently the Manager of the Philippine Center, hosts the launch event of Ms Prosy Abarquez Cruz' (6<sup>th</sup> from right) book "Even the Rainbow Has a Body". (All photos by PCGNY)