

## **THE NATIONAL ARTISTS OF THE PHILIPPINES FOR LITERATURE**

### **Amado V. Hernandez Literature (1973)**

Amado V. Hernandez, poet, playwright, and novelist, is among the Filipino writers who practiced "committed art". In his view, the function of the writer is to act as the conscience of society and to affirm the greatness of the human spirit in the face of inequity and oppression. Hernandez's contribution to the development of Tagalog prose is considerable -- he stripped Tagalog of its ornate character and wrote in prose closer to the colloquial than the "official" style permitted. His novel *Mga Ibong Mandaragit*, first written by Hernandez while in prison, is the first Filipino socio-political novel that exposes the ills of the society as evident in the agrarian problems of the 50s.

Hernandez's other works include *Bayang Malaya*, *Isang Dipang Langit*, *Luha ng Buwaya*, *Amado V. Hernandez: Tudla at Tudling: Katipunan ng mga Nalathalang Tula 1921-1970*, *Langaw sa Isang Basong Gatas at Iba Pang Kuwento ni Amado V. Hernandez*, *Magkabilang Mukha ng Isang Bagol at Iba Pang Akda ni Amado V. Hernandez*.

### **Jose Garcia Villa Literature (1973)**

Jose Garcia Villa is considered as one of the finest contemporary poets regardless of race or language. Villa, who lived in Singalong, Manila, introduced the reversed consonance rime scheme, including the comma poems that made full use of the punctuation mark in an innovative, poetic way. The first of his poems "Have Come, Am Here" received critical recognition when it appeared in New York in 1942 that, soon enough, honors and fellowships were heaped on him: Guggenheim, Bollingen, the American Academy of Arts and Letters Awards. He used Doveglion (Dove, Eagle, Lion) as penname, the very characters he attributed to himself, and the same ones explored by e.e. cummings in the poem he wrote for Villa (Doveglion, *Adventures in Value*). Villa is also known for the tartness of his tongue.

Villa's works have been collected into the following books: *Footnote to Youth*, *Many Voices*, *Poems by Doveglion*, *Poems 55*, *Poems in Praise of Love: The Best Love Poems of Jose Garcia Villa as Chosen By Himself*, *Selected Stories*, *The Portable Villa*, *The Essential Villa*, *Mir-i-nisa*, *Storymasters 3: Selected Stories from Footnote to Youth, 55 Poems: Selected and Translated into Tagalog by Hilario S. Francia*.

### **Nick Joaquin Literature (1976)**

Nick Joaquin, is regarded by many as the most distinguished Filipino writer in English writing so variedly and so well about so many aspects of the Filipino. Nick Joaquin has also enriched the English language with critics coining "Joaquinesque" to describe his baroque Spanish-flavored English or his reinventions of English based on Filipinisms. Aside from his handling of language, Bienvenido Lumbera writes that Nick Joaquin's significance in Philippine literature involves his exploration of the Philippine colonial past under Spain and his probing into the psychology of social changes as seen by the young, as exemplified in stories such as *Doña Jeronima*, *Candido's Apocalypse* and *The Order of Melchizedek*. Nick Joaquin has written plays, novels, poems, short stories and essays including reportage and journalism. As a journalist, Nick Joaquin uses the nome de guerre Quijano de Manila but whether he is writing literature or journalism, fellow National Artist Francisco Arcellana opines that "it is always of the highest skill and quality".

Among his voluminous works are *The Woman Who Had Two Navels*, *A Portrait of the Artist as Filipino*, *Manila*, *My Manila: A History for the Young*, *The Ballad of the Five Battles*, *Rizal in Saga*, *Almanac for Manileños*, *Cave and Shadows*.

Nick Joaquin died April 29, 2004

**Carlos P. Romulo**  
**Literature (1982)**

Carlos P. Romulo's multifaceted career spanned 50 years of public service as educator, soldier, university president, journalist and diplomat. It is common knowledge that he was the first Asian president of the United Nations General Assembly, then Philippine Ambassador to Washington, D.C., and later minister of foreign affairs. Essentially though, Romulo was very much into writing: he was a reporter at 16, a newspaper editor by the age of 20, and a publisher at 32. He was the only Asian to win America's coveted Pulitzer Prize in Journalism for a series of articles predicting the outbreak of World War II. Romulo, in all, wrote and published 18 books, a range of literary works which included *The United* (novel), *I Walked with Heroes* (autobiography), *I Saw the Fall of the Philippines*, *Mother America*, *I See the Philippines Rise* (war-time memoirs).

His other books include his memoirs of his many years' affiliations with United Nations (UN), *Forty Years: A Third World Soldier at the UN*, and *The Philippine Presidents*, his oral history of his experiences serving all the Philippine presidents.

**Francisco Arcellana**  
**Literature (1990)**

Francisco Arcellana, writer, poet, essayist, critic, journalist and teacher, is one of the most important progenitors of the modern Filipino short story in English. He pioneered the development of the short story as a lyrical prose-poetic form. For Arcellana, the pride of fiction is "that it is able to render truth, that is able to present reality". Arcellana has kept alive the experimental tradition in fiction, and has been most daring in exploring new literary forms to express the sensibility of the Filipino people. A brilliant craftsman, his works are now an indispensable part of a tertiary-level-syllabi all over the country. Arcellana's published books are *Selected Stories* (1962), *Poetry and Politics: The State of Original Writing in English in the Philippines Today* (1977), *The Francisco Arcellana Sampler* (1990).

Some of his short stories are *Frankie*, *The Man Who Would Be Poe*, *Death in a Factory*, *Lina*, *A Clown Remembers*, *Divided by Two*, and his poems being *The Other Woman*, *This Being the Third Poem This Poem is for Mathilda*, *To Touch You* and *I Touched Her*, among others.

**N. V. M. Gonzalez**  
**Literature (1997)**

Nestor Vicente Madali Gonzalez, better known as N.V.M. Gonzalez, fictionist, essayist, poet, and teacher, articulated the Filipino spirit in rural, urban landscapes. Among the many recognitions, he won the First Commonwealth Literary Contest in 1940, received the Republic Cultural Heritage Award in 1960 and the Gawad CCP Para sa Sining in 1990. The awards attest to his triumph in appropriating the English language to express, reflect and shape Philippine culture and Philippine sensibility. He became U.P.'s International-Writer-In-Residence and a member of the Board of Advisers of the U.P. Creative Writing Center. In 1987, U.P. conferred on him the Doctor of Humane Letters, honoris causa, its highest academic recognition.

Major works of N.V.M Gonzalez include the following: *The Winds of April*, *Seven Hills Away*, *Children of the Ash-Covered Loam and Other Stories*, *The Bamboo Dancers*, *Look Stranger, on this Island Now*, *Mindoro and Beyond: Twenty -One Stories*, *The Bread of Salt and Other Stories*, *Work on the Mountain*, *The Novel of Justice: Selected Essays 1968-1994*, *A Grammar of Dreams and Other Stories*.

**Edith L. Tiempo  
Literature (1999)**

Edith L. Tiempo, poet, fictionist, teacher and literary critic is one of the finest Filipino writers in English whose works are characterized by a remarkable fusion of style and substance, of craftsmanship and insight. She was born on April 22, 1919 in Bayombong, Nueva Vizcaya. Her poems are intricate verbal transfigurations of significant experiences as revealed, in two of her much anthologized pieces, "The Little Marmoset" and "Bonsai". As fictionist, Tiempo is as morally profound. Her language has been marked as "descriptive but unburdened by scrupulous detailing." She is an influential tradition in Philippine literature in English. Together with her late husband, Edilberto K. Tiempo, she founded and directed the Silliman National Writers Workshop in Dumaguete City, which has produced some of the country's best writers.

Tiempo's published works include the novel *A Blade of Fern* (1978), *The Native Coast* (1979), and *The Alien Corn* (1992); the poetry collections, *The Tracks of Babylon and Other Poems* (1966), and *The Charmer's Box and Other Poems* (1993); and the short story collection *Abide, Joshua, and Other Stories* (1964).

**F. Sionil Jose  
Literature (2001)**

F. Sionil Jose's writings since the late 60s, when taken collectively can best be described as epic. Its sheer volume puts him on the forefront of Philippine writing in English. But ultimately, it is the consistent espousal of the aspirations of the Filipino--for national sovereignty and social justice--that guarantees the value of his oeuvre.

In the five-novel masterpiece, the Rosales saga, consisting of *The Pretenders*, *Tree*, *My Brother*, *My Executioner*, *Mass*, and *Po-on*, he captures the sweep of Philippine history while simultaneously narrating the lives of generations of the Samsons whose personal lives intertwine with the social struggles of the nation. Because of their international appeal, his works, including his many short stories, have been published and translated into various languages.

Jose is also a publisher, lecturer on cultural issues, and the founder of the Philippine chapter of the international organization PEN. He was bestowed the CCP Centennial Honors for the Arts in 1999; the Outstanding Fulbrighters Award for Literature in 1988; and the Ramon Magsaysay Award for Journalism, Literature, and Creative Communication Arts in 1980.

**Virgilio S. Almario (also known as Rio Alma)  
Literature (2003)**

Virgilio Almario, also known as Rio Alma, is a poet, literary historian and critic, who has revived and reinvented traditional Filipino poetic forms, even as he championed modernist poetics. In 34 years, he has published 12 books of poetry, which include the seminal *Makinasyon* and *Peregrinasyon*, and the landmark trilogy *Doktrinang Anakpawis*, *Mga*

Retrato at Rekwerdo and Muli, Sa Kandungan ng Lupa. In these works, his poetic voice soared from the lyrical to the satirical to the epic, from the dramatic to the incantatory, in his often severe examination of the self, and the society.

He has also redefined how the Filipino poetry is viewed and paved the way for the discussion of the same in his 10 books of criticisms and anthologies, among which are Ang Makata sa Panahon ng Makina, Balagtasismo versus Modernismo, Walong Dekada ng Makabagong Tula Pilipino, Mutyang Dilim and Barlaan at Josaphat.

Many Filipino writers have come under his wing in the literary workshops he founded –the Galian sa Arte at Tula (GAT) and the Linangan sa Imahen, Retorika at Anyo (LIRA). He has also long been involved with children’s literature through the Aklat Adarna series, published by his Children’s Communication Center. He has been a constant presence as well in national writing workshops and galvanizes member writers as chairman emeritus of the Unyon ng mga Manunulat sa Pilipinas (UMPIL).

He headed the National Commission for Culture and the Arts as Executive Director, (from 1998 to 2001) ably steering the Commission towards its goals.

But more than anything else, what Almario accomplished was that he put a face to the Filipino writer in the country, one strong face determinedly wielding a pen into untruths, hypocrisy, injustice, among others

### **Alejandro R. Roces Literature (2003)**

Alejandro Roces, is a short story writer and essayist, and considered as the country’s best writer of comic short stories. He is known for his widely anthologized "My Brother’s Peculiar Chicken." In his innumerable newspaper columns, he has always focused on the neglected aspects of the Filipino cultural heritage. His works have been published in various international magazines and has received national and international awards.

Ever the champion of Filipino cultures, Roces brought to public attention the aesthetics of the country’s fiestas. He was instrumental in popularizing several local fiestas, notably, Moriones and Ati-atihan. He personally led the campaign to change the country’s Independence Day from July 4 to June 12, and caused the change of language from English to Filipino in the country’s stamps, currency and passports, and recovered Jose Rizal’s manuscripts when they were stolen from the National Archives.

His unflinching love of country led him to become a guerilla during the Second World War, to defy martial law and to found the major opposition party under the dictatorship. His works have been published in various international magazines and received numerous national and international awards, including several decorations from various governments.

### **Bienvenido Lumbera Literature (2006)**

Bienvenido Lumbera, is a poet, librettist, and scholar.

\*As a poet, he introduced to Tagalog literature what is now known as Bagay poetry, a landmark aesthetic tendency that has helped to change the vernacular poetic tradition. He is the author of the following works: Likhang Dila, Likhang Diwa (poems in Filipino and English), 1993; Balaybay, Mga Tulang Lunot at Manibalang, 2002; Sa Sariling Bayan, Apat na

Dulang May Musika, 2004; "Agunyas sa Hacienda Luisita," Pakikiramay, 2004. As a librettist for the Tales of the Manuvu and Rama Hari, he pioneered the creative fusion of fine arts and popular imagination. As a scholar, his major books include the following: Tagalog Poetry, 1570-1898: Tradition and Influences in its Development; Philippine Literature: A History and Anthology, Revaluation: Essays on Philippine Literature, Writing the Nation/Pag-akda ng Bansa.

**Lazaro Francisco  
Panitikan (2009)**

PANGUNAHING NOBELISTA SA PANITIKAN PILIPINO, DALUBHASA SA WIKA AT MAKABAYAN.

Si Lazaro Francisco ay kinikilalang isa sa ilng matipunong haligi ng panitikang Pilipino. Isinilang sa Bataan noong Pebrero 22, 1898 ngunit dumayo at namalagi sa Nueva Esija, nagsulat siya ng nobela mula 1925 hangang 1962. Bukod sa pambihirang kakayahan sa wika, ang nangingibabaw na katangian ng kanyang pagkamanunulat ay ang pakikisangkot sa kapakanan at mithiin ng bansa. Mababakas ang kataimtiman ng kanyang pgmamahal sa bayan sa lahat ng nobelang isinilang at pinagyaman ng kanyang panitik.

Kinilala si Francisco na Ama ng Kapatiran ng mga Alagad ng Wikang Pilipino (KAWIKA) na kanyang itinatag noong 1958. Kabilang sa maraming karangalang iginawad sa kanya ang "Patnubay ng Kalinangan" ng Maynila, "Dangal ng Lahi" ng Lungsod Quezon at ang "Republic Cultural Heritage Award" sa panitikan na ipinagkaloob sa kanya ng pamahalaan nuong 1970. Noong 1979, siya ay ginawaran ng parangal na "Tanglaw ng Lahi" ng pamantasan ng Ateneo de Manila dahil "sa paguukol niya ng kanyang buhay at kakayahan upang makamit ang Pilipinismo at pagka-Pilipino".

Si Lazaro Franciso ay namayapa noong Hulyo 17, 1980 sa Lunsod ng Kabanatuan.

Naproklama siyang isang National Artist ng bansa noong Hulyo 31, 2009

**Cirilo Bautista  
Literature (2014)**

Cirilo F. Bautista (born 1941) is a multi-awarded Filipino poet, fictionist, critic and writer of nonfiction.

Bautista has also received Carlos Palanca Memorial Awards (for poetry, fiction and essay in English and Filipino) nine times and became a Hall of Fame of the Palanca Awards Foundation for achievements in the field of literature, 1995. This is given to Filipino writers who have distinguished themselves by winning at least five First Prizes in the Palanca Literary Contests., as well as Philippines Free Press Awards for Fiction, He also was the recipient of the Manila Critics' Circle National Book Awards, Gawad Balagtas from the Unyon ng mga Manunulat ng Pilipinas, the Pablo Roman Prize for the Novel, and the highest accolades from the City of Manila, Quezon City and Iligan City. Bautista was hailed in 1993 as Makata ng Taon by the Komisyon ng mga Wika ng Pilipinas for winning the poetry contest sponsored by the government. The last part of his epic trilogy The Trilogy of Saint Lazarus, entitled Sunlight on Broken Stones, won the Centennial Prize for the epic in 1998. He was an exchange professor in Waseda University and Ohio University. He became an Honorary Fellow in Creative Writing at the University of Iowa in 1969, and was the first recipient of a British Council fellowship as a creative writer at Trinity College, Cambridge in 1987.

Bautista works include Boneyard Breaking, Sugat ng Salita, The Archipelago, Telex Moon, Summer Suns, Charts, The Cave and Other Poems, Kirod ng Kataga, and Bullets and Roses: The Poetry of Amado V. Hernandez. His novel Galaw ng Asoge

was published by the University of Santo Tomas Press in 2004. His latest book, *Believe and Betray: New and Collected Poems*, appeared in 2006, published by De La Salle University Press.

His poems have appeared in major literary journals, papers, and magazines in the Philippines and in anthologies published in the United States, Japan, the Netherlands, China, Romania, Hong Kong, Germany and Malaysia. These include: excerpts from *Sunlight on Broken Stones*, published in *World Literature Today*, USA, Spring 2000; *What Rizal Told Me* (poem), published in *Manoa*, University of Hawaii, 1997; *She of the Quick Hands: My Daughter and The Seagull* (poems), published in *English Teacher's Portfolio of Multicultural Activities*, edited by John Cowen (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1996).