

Jen Mercado & Dennis Trillo THE MODERN FAMILY

For the first time ever, Jennylyn Mercado and Dennis Trillo give a glimpse into their lives at home and as parents to a blended family. PAGE 16



Jennylyn Mercado, Dennis Trillo, Calix, Jazz and Dylan

Why Ople does not support OFW ban to Kuwait

MANILA - When news about the brutal death of overseas Filipino worker (OFW) Jullebee Ranara broke out on Sunday, Jan. 22, some lawmakers and individuals immediately called

for a deployment ban to Kuwait in an apparent expression of anger over what she suffered at the hands of the 17-year old son of her employer.

The Department of Mi-

grant Workers (DMW) under Secretary Susan Ople does not think so.

Ople said that while she understands the high emotion

DEPLOYMENT BAN p3

Imelda Marcos Musical to open on Broadway in July

The world-famous disco pop musical Here Lies Love, which is a retelling and dramatization of former First Lady Imelda Marcos' rise and fall, is finally

coming to Broadway.

With a score by David Byrne and Fatboy Slim, it is set to debut at the Broadway Theatre in New York City. To-

ny-winning director Alex Timbers, choreographer Annie-B Parson, and Tony-winning designer and creative director

IMELDA p16

Bringing home Onions, Eggs...

PAL crew caught attempting to smuggle 40 kg of onions into the Philippines PAGE 15

MANILA: When she traveled to the Philippines to see her family last month, Dina Gacula Odo did not bring any branded Emirati chocolates or fragrant soaps as gifts but something that her loved ones now value much more: onions.

Odo, an administration worker at a hypermarket in Dubai, joined scores of other Filipino expats in the UAE, who are redefining the traditional homecoming presents, or pasalubong, and are now filling their luggage with the staple that is reaching skyrocketing prices of up to \$12 per kg.

"It's really very expensive here ... it's now like gold because of its price," she told Arab News. "In Dubai, it's only 3 dirhams (80 US cents) per kg."

Philippine authorities have been warning of dwindling supplies since August and the price of onions — widely used in many local dishes — has more than quadrupled in the past four months.

The government has also launched an investigation into cartels after lawmakers filed resolutions against illegal onion trading.

To immediately address the situation, the purchase of over 21,000 metric tons of the vegetable was approved by President Ferdinand Marcos last month.

But currently, the price of 1 kg of onion remains up to three times higher than the price of meat and overseas Filipinos are mobilizing to help their families.

April Manuel, who also works in Dubai, said onions are "very handy and worth carrying" and advised everyone to bring them when they are traveling home.

"It's no longer chocolates that will make the family happy, but onions!" she added.

Some, like Mitzi Panganiban, a dental assistant who has been in Dubai for the past 16 years, regretted that had not bought more onions when she recently hosted her mother-in-law and for the first time did not stuff her bags with chocolate upon return.

"I packed 2 kg for her to bring home; that's about 6 dirhams," she said. "I should have made it 4 kg."

After onions, egg prices

ONIONS page 15



Postcard

Calesa, Quiapo 1960's

Pay for a gov't post? Palace warns public over appointment fraud

MANILA - Malacañang has warned the public over an apparent scam that asks victims for a huge amount of money in exchange for a

government position.

This after eight "presidential appointees" went to the Palace on Friday, Jan. 27, for

PAY FOR JOBS p19

With a Little Help from her “Family”



“We are family, not just friends and co-workers,” said Cely Tutay. So, when they found out that Mirachelle Capulong’s mother was sick in the Philippines, her “family” rallied around to help. And this explains the pictures of Mirachelle (with crown), Cely Tutay (in black) and Dr. Victoria Santiago (in red) teary-eyed during their Family Dentistry Office Christmas party.

Joaquin Domagoso is definitely starting 2023 with a big bang

The young actor recently won as Best Actor in Sweden’s Boden International Film Festival (BIFF) 2022 for his work in “That Boy in the Dark.”



Interestingly, this is his third Best Actor trophy for the said project which will be shown in the country this January. His first recognition came at the 16th Toronto

Film and Script Awards in Canada on November 23, 2022. After that, he nabbed the same recognition at the Five Continents International Film Festival in Venezuela on December 23, 2022.

The competent lad couldn’t believe his triumphs in the mentioned international film festivals. The awards he received are additional blessings he got this year after becoming a first-time dad in April.

Co-starring with Joaquin in “That Boy in the Dark” are seasoned thespians Glydel Mercado and Lotlot de Leon along with Aneza Gutierrez and Kiko Ipapo.

Dani Barretto regrets posting Alex Gonzaga’s cake-smearing video

Influencer Dani Barretto has already apologized to Alex Gonzaga after she posted in her Instagram story the controversial

video showing the cake-smearing incident with a waiter.

In a report by ABS-CBN News, Dani said she regretted that she posted it online.

“Of course, I do have regrets kasi nakasakit ako ng tao. Siyempre, wala sa intensyon kong maka-sakit lalo na on her birthday,” she said.

“Siguro, iyon ‘yung pinakamabigat para sa akin, na nakasimula ako ng isang bagay na hindi ko naman ginusto. Kasi



Birthday celebrant Luth Esguerra (FAR RIGHT) is treated to dinner by her three daughters and grandchildren.

very important sa pamilya namin ‘yung mga Gonzaga. They’re very loving to our family. Alex is a very good friend of my sister. So, talagang mahal na mahal ng pamilya namin ang mga Gonzaga and vice versa,” she added.

Dani said she quickly reached out and apologized to Alex after the video trended on social media. Alex received heavy criticisms from netizens for the incident.

“Alam naman iyon ni Alex, kasi sa kaniya talaga ako unang nag-reach out. Wala akong ibang kinausap, wala akong ibang ginawa. I reached out to her first and apologized to her first,” she said.

“Kaya hindi ako nagsasalita, kasi ayoko na talaga siyang palakihin. Move on narin tayo sa isyu na ‘to,” she added.

She also said that all is well between her and Alex.

“Okay kami ni Alex. Wala kaming ill feelings towards each other,” she said.

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Shanaia, Anji, Vivoree piniga sa pagkanta nina Nyoy, Direk Lauren

StarMagic gathered its musically-gifted talents for its first-ever singer-songwriter workshop as a venue for them to exercise their prowess and hone their skills in activities such as the on-the-spot songwriting challenge. Present were rising music artists Anji Salvacion, Shanaia Gomez, Vivoree Esclito, Benedix Ramos, Sheena Belarmino, and many more.

In a group work, the talents collaborated creative ideas in composing a song to immerse themselves in strengthening their songwriting skills.

Notable mentors of music like composer & musical director Louie Ocampo and veteran singer Nyoy Volante guided the way through their tips in the industry while inspiring the talents to fully tap into the best of their capabilities in making the best music they could ever share to the world.

Direk Lauren Dyogi, head of Star Magic, including netizens were impressed with the singers from the talent management arm of ABS-CBN.

Nyoy was impressed at the songs composed by the group in one hour.

“Napakaliit ng time ang binigay sa inyo to create something like that. Ano pa kaya if this was something na lagi natin ginagawa? Na you get exposed to each other’s talents, to each other’s techniques, to each other’s ways, to each



other’s music,” sabi ni Nyoy.

Added Direk Lauren, “You created magic in 45 minutes to an hour. Hearing everything, ituloy niyo na ‘yan kasi kanta na siya. Pwede na natin i-record, buuin niyo nalang.”

Netizens were also impressed. Commented Joy Banutan, “This is one thing I like about Abs-Cbn, they don’t waste their artist, instead they nurture them.”

Before ending the workshop, Nyoy stressed the importance of the workshop to them as performers.

“Because of what Star Magic is doing for us, nabibigyan tayo ng pagkakataon to enhance what we already have.”

Direk Lauren assured them that this is just the start of their training to improve Star Magic artists. Just last month, Star Magic pointed to their partnership with AMP Studio Canada to elevate to world-class talents of Filipinos in the field of acting through professional training and hybrid workshops.

How failed relationships shaped James Reid

James Reid pointed out that he has no regrets with his past break-ups because these helped shape him to be a stronger and much better person.

“I just don’t live with regret,” he averred. “When you’re feeling lonely after a break-up, like with all the relationships that I’ve had, there were moments when I completely question everything.”

“When you’re at your low moments, I think that’s also very natural. But in the end, I really don’t regret anything. As I’ve said, I just don’t live with regret. It’s not something I want to have in my life, and

everything that happened I just had to accept that it happened. And the good thing is, it really shaped who I am.”

So far, what are the things he learned when it comes to love?

“Oh, a lot of things actually! What love used to mean to me before was to be understood by someone. And that has changed a lot over the years, like through relationships.

“I also realized that being understood by someone and then it turned into a commitment, like that’s what love meant to me, that it’s really a choice. So, it’s evolving for me and it’s still something I’m learning about every day.

“It’s not so simple, like love is being there for someone... so many things.

“That’s why I love writing about it so much, I feel like I can go on forever,” James said.

DEPLOYMENT BAN from page 1

running, some factors must be considered.

“There are things that should be deeply thought of. It cannot be a product of emotions and political acoustics because workers are involved,” Ople said.

Amid the call for deployment ban to Kuwait, the DMW said there are hundreds of thousands of OFWs in the Middle east country that will be surely affected.

Based on the latest data, there are around 268,000 OFWs in Kuwait, around 195,000 of them are working as household service workers.

And there are hundreds of thousands more families in the Philippines that are dependent on the remittances that these OFWs provide back home.

Ople said that it would have been different if the government of Kuwait ignored the incident but the Kuwait government sent a letter to her family expressing condolences and assurance that justice will prevail.

The burned body of the 35-year old Rana was discovered in the Kuwait desert. The 17-year old son of her employer is now under the custody of the Kuwait police and the DMW said both the Kuwaiti police and prosecutors are now working and closely coordinating with the Philippine government for updates on the legal offensive aspect.

Conditions on deployment ban
In the same press briefing, Ople laid down



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Life’s brighter under the sun



‘They are blessed differently’: Kim Atienza reacts to Donnalyn Bartolome’s ‘back-to-work’ comment

TV host Kim Atienza reacted to the statement of controversial content creator

Donnalyn Bartolome on being grateful for having work.

Kim shared Donnalyn’s post, saying not everyone is blessed to have a job they enjoy. This may be the case, but Atienza said everyone is “blessed differently.”

“To do something you enjoy and get paid for it is a blessing. Some are not blessed this way despite the fact that they try so hard to find work they enjoy. They are blessed differently naman. Iba iba ang blessings. Just my 2 centavos. Back to you guys,” Kim said.

Kim said his post is not meant to “put down” the popular content creator.

“Good morning FB fam! This post is not meant to put down Donnalyn in any way. She is coming from a good place. The

post just hit a raw nerve on the majority of the working public. Mabait si Donnalyn,” he said.

Donnalyn found herself at the receiving end of criticism once again after she posted on social media her sentiments about returning to work after the holiday season.

She asked why there are some people who are sad about going back to work.

“Bakit may sad dahil back to work na? Diba dapat masaya ka kasi may chance ka na pagandahin buhay mo at ng pamilya? Trip ko pa nga may work ng January 1 dahil superstition ko may work ako buong taon pag ganun,” she said.

“Dapat grateful kasi may work. If work makes you unhappy, I hope you find a job that will. Yung pakikiligin ka and sheet. Anyway, this is just a reminder that having a job is a blessing becsss change mindset, it’s 2023!!” she added.



Thrilla in Manila 🤔🤔🤔



Is everything well in the Philippine government? Does Marcos and Duterte see everything eye to eye? If you read the news and analyze everything, you might notice that not everything is lovey-dovey between the Marcoses and the Dutertes. Marcoses do not hate the United States and are suspicious of China but tries to work with them. Duterte hates the United States and loves China. Now, my grapevine tells me the arrest of Bucor chief Bantag was initiated by the Department of Justice, headed by Remulla, a Marcos ally. In retaliation, PDEA, still under Duterte’s faction, arrested Remulla’s son for drug-related charges. So you see, don’t believe all the news you read or see about the Philippines. 🤔

Vhong Navarro vs Deniece Cornejo

In 2014, the Department of Justice (DOJ) and prosecutors dismissed the rape complaints, prompting Cornejo to eventually elevate them to the Court of Appeals (CA).
“At the outset, that the complainant executed three (3) complaint affidavits – dated 29

January 2014, 27 February 2014, and October 16, 2015– in connection with this case is not disputed. In all of these affidavits, the complainant [Cornejo] gave different versions of the incident,” the



court noted.
Ano ba iyan? Ano ba justice system sa Pilipinas? Inconsistent statements ng complainant pero after 8 years, the case is still alive. Sus Guinoo ni Roxanne, bakit? May political backer ba itong si Deniece?

Choosing our Printer

Puwede ba kaming newspaper publishers to pick a printer na Intsik? Parang hindi yata pero kung may balita kami na sensitive militarily or politically di ba? Headline ko last issue is “West Philippine Sea is Ours.” Ipi-print kaya nila? Kapag may pro-America news kami kahit walang mention sa kanila, parang magwo-worry ka kung ipi-print nila o бага baguhin nila na hindi mo alam. Just saying. 🤔



Adopted Miss USA

Nang hindi pumasok sa top 16 ng Miss Universe ang Miss Philippines na si Celeste Cortesi, Filipinos transferred their hopes on Miss USA R’Bonney Gabriel, a Filipino-American. Their hopes were lifted when she won the Miss Universe title. Inampon kaagad siya ng mga Pinoy. Well, at least, nabigyan ni sure Cortesi ng expo-ang Filipino superhero Darna dahil iyon ang costume na sinuot niya. Baka i-adopt ng Hollywood at igawa naman ng movie ang Darna with expensive special effects.



Around the World

Panay ang biyahe ni PBBM to attract investors sa Pilipinas. Pero kung nakikita ng foreign investors na nagugutom ang mga tao at very high ang prices ng basic food, can they be fooled into investing? As of this writing, PBBM is in Switzerland. Hmmm, is he there to attract investors or take care of ...ehem...something hidden? 🤔



‘Nagpapa-makeup ng nakahiga’: Cristy Fermin reveals makeup incident involving Alex Gonzaga

Veteran columnist Cristy Fermin shared a makeup incident involving her former “Juicy” co-host Alex Gonzaga.

In an episode of “Showbiz Now Na,” Cristy recalled how Alex’s makeup artist on their 2008 showbiz talk show had a hard time putting makeup on her then-co-host. “Ang pinakamatindi po talaga bukod sa pagiging late niya ay late na ngang dumadating, hindi kami nakakapag-roll. Laging cause of delay. Ilang beses ko siyang nakita na nagpapa-makeup ng nakahiga. Nakaluhod ang kanyang makeup artist na si Noel,” Cristy said.

“Kung minsan naman, meron siyang director’s chair at halos ibuyangyang na niya ang kaniyang ulo. Siyempre hirap pa rin ang kaniyang makeup artist,” she

added.
After witnessing it, Cristy said she talked to the show’s executive producer about it.

“Humingi talaga ako ng permission na magsalita ako. Ang sabi ko talaga, nandon si Alex na nakahiga na akala mo bangkay na mine-makeup-an sa morgue. Sabi ko, ‘Ano to? Hindi ka naaawa sa makeup artist mo? Nakaluhod, bino-blower ka?’” she said.

“Sobra na ang ginagawa niya... wala siyang respeto sa mga hindi niya kauri sa palagay niya. Manipulative siya eh... namimili siya ng kaniyang ire-respeto. Pero kapag hindi niya co-equal ‘yung tao, napakababa ng kaniyang pagtingin,” the long-time showbiz host and columnist said.



Carlo Aquino on Charlie Dizon: ‘We’re still getting to know each other’

Carlo Aquino has opened up concerning speculations about him and actress Charlie Dizon making sweet music.

Speaking at the sidelines of the press conference for his upcoming film with Barbie Imperial titled “I Love Lizzy” on Friday, the actor admitted that he and Charlie have indeed been seeing each other.

But he made clear, “We’re still getting to know each other.”

He added, “Ang ganda ng pasok ni April (Charlie’s real name) sa buhay ko. Very positive.”

As to people bashing him on social media about it, he said, “Okay lang.”

“Masakit,” he added. “Pero bakit ako paaapekto? Para sa akin kasi importante ang peace of mind. So I try to maintain that. And I’m thankful that I’m surrounded by people na nagmamahal at umuunawa sa akin. As long as I have that, I’m good.”

He’d rather not talk about his ex, Trina Candaza.

This, even if the latter has been sharing cryptic posts seemingly alluding to him on social media.



“At the end of the day nanay siya ng anak namin, si Mithi so, I’d rather keep my silence,” Carlo related.

If anything, he is hopeful he’d get to bond again with their child.

“Matagal-tagal na rin. Hopefully, one of these days mapahiram sa akin,” he said.

‘You don’t need a man to survive’: Sharon Cuneta tells KC Concepcion, but fuels rumors KC is dating Filipino-Swiss

“Megastar” Sharon Cuneta wished KC to find her true love.

In an episode of “Magan-dang Buhay” yesterday, Sharon said she and KC are “polar opposites” but “nabubuo kami ng love namin for each other.”

“There are a lot of things na she and her papa are very much alike, pero anak ko ito e. Bali-baliktarin man ang mundo, isa lang ang nanay mo at siya lang ang panganay ko,” Sharon said.

Sharon said she’s proud of KC’s achievements, but she’s still praying for her to find true love.

“That’s why she knows how to work. She’s a hard worker and I’m proud of that,” she said.



“Yun ang naipamana ko, na you don’t need a man in order to survive pero I’m still praying, syempre. I want her to

find true love,” she added.

Social media users are speculating that KC is now in a relationship with Filipino-Swiss Steve Michael.

Sharon fueled the speculation when she posted a video of her celebration wherein KC was seen seated with the same guy in her YouTube channel.

KC is yet deny or confirm the speculations.

POINTS OF VIEW

“Tinatanong nila ako kung bakit ako nagbi-bikini kahit nasa 40’s na ‘ko. Nakakahiya at sagwa daw. ‘Yung mga stretch marks, loose skin, normal lang ‘yun sa mga kaedad ko... Just because celebrities kami, hindi naman ibig sabihin nu’n naperfect din kami. Hindi naman ako nakakasakit ng ibang tao.” - Geneva Cruz



Why Shaina Magdayao quit ‘ASAP’

Regular viewers of “ASAP” for the past two decades know that Shaina Magdayao was among the most-sought after dancers with her Ultimate Dance 4 crew Maja Salvador, Rayver Cruz and John Prats until she quit eight years ago.

Last December, she delighted her fans by gracing the “ASAP” stage once again, showing that her dancing prowess has not waned.

Last week, she sizzled the Sunday show’s dance floor in red dress dancing the flamenco in a production number with notable OPM singers, Gary V and Martin Nievera.

The dancer-actress said that her return to the dance floor is a perfect timing, an apt celebration for her 25 years in showbiz that started with her

as the child wonder who easily cries buckets of tears in the 1996 GMA-7 afternoon drama “Lyra.”

“It’s a dream, it’s a side of me, a part of my life na kinailangan kong talikuran because I got diagnosed with hypothyroidism. I was gaining weight and parang to the point na nagkakaroon na ako ng injuries. [Like] Back injury. [‘Yung] Right knee nagka-MCL na ako because of my weight,” Shaina revealed at a recent presscon.

“It was not healthy and, at the same time, I wasn’t fit enough to dance anymore. So I had to let go of that dream,” she added.

She focused on acting, notably her stint in the longest-running primetime show “Ang Probinsyano,” that ended last year after a seven-year run.

During the pandemic, she opened her cloud fashion brand named Organized Chicas, with her good friend Nikki Medina. It is currently doing well as they have expanded to clothes and jewelry.

“Ngayon na bumalik ako, ngayon ko lang na-realize na, a part of me is alive again. I didn’t feel the loss. Ngayon ko na-feel kung gaano kalaki ng part ng pagkatao ko ang pagiging dancer. So naisip ko, ‘Am I even fit enough to dance again?’” Shaina said.

It’s a leap of faith for the 33-year-old, but as she mused that she has been an actress



since she was six, maybe the limelight is where she truly belongs — whether it be on the dance floor or in front of the camera.

“Ang pagsasayaw is para siyang destiny, just like acting. Hindi ako nag-workshop. I didn’t go through formal training. Parang isinubo sa akin ang pag-aartista. Kumbaga sa acting, experience was my teacher. ‘Pag dating sa dancing, experience was also my teacher,” Shaina mused.

“So, for someone who’s been trying to run away from showbiz... wala na talaga. Eto na talaga. Wala na akong magagawa. This is my life and my world. I choose to be grateful for the blessing that are still coming my way,” she ended.



Daniel Miranda reiterates love for Sofia Andres, Zoe

Daniel Miranda recently posted a candid picture of Sofia Andres and their daughter Zoe.

He wrote: “Through thick and thin, I love you both very much (heart emojis).”

Note that rumors about Sofia and Daniel allegedly breaking up circulated after they celebrated the recent holidays separately.

Adding fuel to the fire was how netizens noticed that Daniel was not included in the 2022 recap video that Sofia made.

But after Daniel’s post, Sofia also uploaded a series of photos of their daughter going to a certain dental center.

Daniel was present. He is seen holding Zoe.



Dave Bautista reveals he got Manny Pacquiao tattoo covered after anti-gay remarks

Actor Dave Bautista got serious about covering up his Manny Pacquiao logo team tattoo.

In a TikTok video posted by GQ, Dave shared one of his tattoo cover-ups.

“It used to be a team logo,” Dave said in a clip shared to TikTok. “I was part of a team of a person I considered a friend

and someone I really looked up to. And then, he later came out publicly with some anti-gay statements and turned out to be an extreme homophobe,” he added.

The 53-year-old former professional wrestler became an ally of the LGBT community when his mother came out as lesbian.

“So, I had a huge issue with it. It’s a personal issue with me. My mom’s a lesbian. And I just could

no longer call him a friend. So, I had it covered up with this,” Bautista added, displaying the updated ink of a woman with a sugar skull face painting.

Dave Bautista covers up Pacquiao tattoo (Shambrookeben Twitter)

During his interview with TV5 in 2016, the politician-boxer faced a lot of backlash after making harsh comments about

gay people. “It’s common sense. The animals are better. They know how to distinguish male from female,” Pacquiao added. “If we approve [of] male on male, female on female, then man is worse than animals.” Although he apologized for his statement in the end, Pacquiao still believes that same-sex marriage is forbidden.

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PCG: Willing but lacking patrol vessels

MANILA - Despite recent vessel acquisitions from Japan, France and the United States, the Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) said on Friday that it simply still did not have enough assets to properly secure the country's maritime territory.

Commodore Jay Tarriela, spokesperson for the PCG West Philippine Sea (WPS), said during a Malacañang briefing that they have complied with President Marcos' order to maximize vessel deployment in the West Philippine Sea.

"The Philippine coast guard is using our vessels to strengthen our presence in the West Philippine Sea," he said, adding that the PCG has deployed three offshore patrol vessels in Ayungin and in Bajo de Masinloc.

But he admitted that given their limited

vessels, the PCG has a hard time patrolling the entire West Philippine Sea.

'We have to be realistic'

"If the question is, are our efforts enough? We have to be realistic, we at the coast guard, we have very little number of coast guard assets but we use these assets to protect the interest of the fishermen," he said.

"We cannot of course ascertain that in different parts of the West Philippine Sea, there is a coast guard vessel," he added, saying that the PCG would maximize its presence in areas where there are many Filipino fisherfolk.

The commodore made the remarks after Chinese vessels drove away Filipino fishing boats in Ayungin Shoal on Jan. 9.

The incident occurred just days after President Ferdinand "Bongbong" Marcos Jr.'s

state visit to China where Chinese President Xi Jinping agreed not to harass Filipino fisherfolk in their traditional fishing areas.

Tarriela urged Filipino fisherfolk to report incidents of harassment or bullying to the PCG, but he said there were no new episodes of harassment reported to the PCG after the Jan. 9 incident.

Chinese Ambassador Huang Xilian tried to downplay the incident by highlighting the friendship between Manila and Beijing as shown by both countries helping each other's distressed nationals at sea.

The crew of the Chinese vessel MV Swift Yangzhou, which was enroute from Australia to China, rescued Filipino fisherman, Matrix Pichon, who was found floating in the East Philippine Sea off Surigao del Sur.

Song Hye Kyo breaks silence about nudity in 'The Glory'

Korean actress Song Hye Kyo has responded to viewers of her latest Netflix series "The Glory" who pointed out that she has started to look older.

Hye Kyo graced the February 2023 cover of Elle Korea, and in an interview with the magazine, she touched on public comments that say she looks "much older all of a sudden" in "The Glory."

The 41-year-old said her character Moon Dong Eun has led a difficult life, and for her, it doesn't make sense if she appears as if she has received a lot of care and treatment.

"People say that Song Hye Kyo has also sud-

denly aged a lot, but that is because I, too, of course, I have gotten old," Hye Kyo admitted.

In the same interview, Hye Kyo was asked if she had not considered having a double for a nude scene in the show.

"I was surprised when the writer said he wanted me to do the nudity scene myself, and I said I would do it right away," Hye Kyo answered. "It's a really important scene. It's not even a sexual scene; it's a scene that visually shows why Dong-eun is doing this, so I think I would have been uncomfortable all



the time if I had used a substitute."

Brand value rankings released by the Korea Institute of Corporate Reputation showed that Hye Kyo was the top Korean actor, beating her ex-husband and "Descendants of the Sun" co-star Song Joong Ki who settled for the second spot.

The second part of "The Glory" will drop on Netflix worldwide this March 10, 2023

Big year for Ogie Alcasid and Regine

AT least two mammoth celebrations in showbiz are expected to unfold this year.

Considered as major milestones in their respective careers, there are yet no specific dates when such events will be afoot though.

Marking his 35th year in the industry, Ogie Alcasid is definitely pushing through with yet untitled musical play with no less than his wife Asia's Songbird Regine Velasquez.

A brainchild of Johnny "Mr. M" Manahan, Ogie takes pride in putting all the songs he composed himself together, "May istorya na, may flow na rin. Ang script na lang ang kulang."

Ogie all the more got both inspired and determined to make a go for it following the huge success of their last year's Shine concert in celebration of Ormoc City's 75th charter

anniversary.

It was Ormoc City mayor Lucy Torres-Gomez's somewhat uncanny idea that Ogie and Regine do the opening number (Ogie sang "Nandito Ako" while Regine belted "Narito Ako" from the rooftop of Ormoc Museum).

"Kahit ako nagulat kasi ang gandang lumabas. Tapos, there was an estimated 60,000 crowd not only from within the city," Ogie shared in hindsight.

AI AI works in &out of country

Given her not-so-loaded showbiz schedule, Ai Ai delas Alas manages to sneak out of the



country as often as she can.

It's not all refreshing vacation that she basks in as she flies to the US to fulfill her commitments.

This January 21 she gets to reunite with erstwhile partner Miguel Vera in a musical comedy treat billed as Ang Dating Kami.

The catchy title came from guest performer and college buddy Joseph Gelito who also wrote the script.

Joseph says it's one helluva show at the Civic Center, Bellflower in Los Angeles, California. There's going to be a repeat in San Francisco on February 4.

Joining them are Boy Rose and Francis Velasco with Jack Ross as director.

Former partners may want to take a cue from Ai Ai and Miguel who were a hot item back in the '90s (still remember their Magnatech rooftop quarrel?)

Their romance bore two kids Nicolo and Sophia, both based in the US.

Despite their falling-out, Ai Ai and Miguel remain friends who are genuinely happy for each other's respective present life partners.

"Ang Dating Kami" is proof (and spoof) that lovers no more can laugh about their past to their hearts' content.



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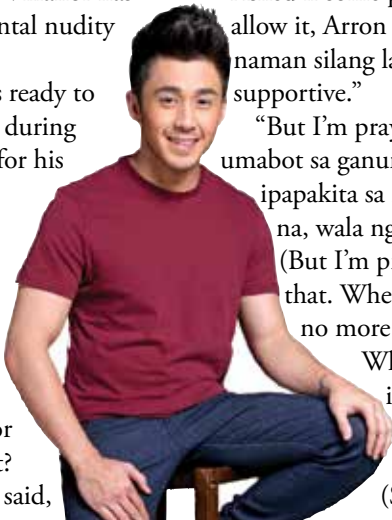


Arron Villaflor open to stripping down completely for future movie...but there's a catch

Ladies and even gays will be cheering from the rooftops as actor Arron Villaflor has definitely not ruled out frontal nudity in a movie.

The hunk actor said he is ready to do frontal nudity in a film, during a digital media conference for his upcoming Vivamax movie "Nightbird" recently.

"Bakit hindi? Gaya nga ng sinabi ng ibang veteran actors natin, kapag kinakailangan siguro, puwede namang gawin," Arron said. "It should be for the right movie." (Why not? As our other veteran actors said,



maybe if necessary, it can be done.)

Asked if some people close to him would allow it, Arron said: "Yes! Supportive naman silang lahat." (Yes! They are all supportive.)

"But I'm praying sana hindi tayo umabot sa ganun. Kasi wala na akong ipapakita sa inyo. Kapag nakita m'yo na, wala ng excitement," he added. (But I'm praying that we don't get to that. When you see it, there will be no more excitement.)

When asked how daring he is in the upcoming movie, the actor laughed and answered: "Sagad sagad!" (So much so.)

PRANK OR NOT? Alex Gonzaga smears icing on waiter's face

Social media superstar Alex Gonzaga trended anew on Twitter when she smeared icing on the face of a waiter during her birthday celebration. Alex turned 35 last January 16.

Netizens described her behavior as insensitive, saying it wasn't funny at all when she put an icing on the face of the waiter.

In the viral video, the unidentified waiter carried the birthday cake as Alex blew out the candle on it. Then Alex smeared icing on the face of the waiter while her husband Mikee Morada stood behind her.

Many netizens slammed the behavior of Alex. Others believed that popular vlogger was just playing another prank during the party.



Toni tinalakan ng netizens dahil sa pambabastos ni Alex sa waiter: 'Kastiguhin at turuan mo ng leksyon ang kapatid mo!'

NADAMAY na rin si Toni Gonzaga sa matinding galit ng madlang pipol sa nakababata niyang sisteraka na si Alex Gonzaga.

Tinalakan din ng mga netizens si Toni at pinagsabihang kastiguhin ang kapatid dahil paulit-ulit na lang ang ginagawa nitong pambabastos at panghihiya sa mga inosenteng tao.

Sa kanyang Instagram account, binati ni Toni si Alex sa 35th birthday nito kamakalawa, January 16, kalakip ang litrato nila together. Ito'y sa gitna nga ng pambabarang sa actress-vlogger ng mga netizens dahil sa ginawa niya sa isang waiter.

Hhot topic pa rin sa social media ang ginawang pagpahid ni Alex ng icing sa mukha ng food server na may hawak ng cake sa kanyang birthday salubong.

"Happy Birthday Cat!!! Love you!!! Nung bata ka pa you always question bakit mas matanda ang ate sakin eh mas nauna ako mag birthday sa kaniya," ang caption ni Toni sa ipinost niyang photo nila ni Alex sa IG.

"Love u sissss!!" ang reply naman ni Alex sa birthday greeting ng kapatid.

Pero sa halip na makibati rin kay Alex, inutusan nga ng mga IG users si Toni na turuan ng leksyon ang kanyang kapatid dahil paulit-ulit na lang daw ang paggawa nito ng sablay.

"Please reprimand your sister wag lagi puro patawa at the expense of others! There are other ways to make people happy but not by bullying!!!"

"Happy Birthday Catherine aka Alex! Ngayon na tumatanda ka na sana ilagay sa lugar ang mga jokes at



pagiging magaslaw, lalo na at may asawa ka na.. dont get me wrong maam, I'm a fan I watch your YT uploads inaabangan ko kayong dalawa magkapatid. Pero pasensya na, di lang din kasi talaga maganda actions mo minsan."

"Pagsabihan mo ang kapatid mo nang minsan magkaroon ng manners. Irespeto ang kapwa. Kung gusto niya magpulapol ng cake huwag niya isali ang waiter. Lahat na lang gusto gawin sa kapwa, katatawanan."

"Happy birthday Ms. Alex, sana po sumabay na yung ugali mo sa edad mo. Magmature na sana si Ms. Alex ng 50% lang tapos may 50% pa din na harot at kulit."

"Katatawanan. Respeto naman sa mga taong mas mababa sa inyo. Mag-apologize ka Catherine sa waiter na dinamay mo. Gusto mo pala ng cake na ipulapol sa mukha di sa kapamilya mo ginawa o bisita mo nang malaman mo ang ginagawa mo."

"I have nothing against you Ms. Toni pero bastos kapatid mo. Sana mapagsabihan siya to act her age. Hindi yung she will make a prank sa waiter who is just doing his job. Hindi porke artista eh may karapatan na gawin kung ano ano without even thinking kung makakasakit or makakapanghiya siya ng tao."

"I have empathy so no need to talk to him to know what he felt obvious naman sa facial expreaaion nya na nagulat siya."

Hanggang ngayon ay hinihintay pa rin ng madlang pipol kung paano dedepensahan ni Alex ang sarili sa bagong kinasasangkutanang issue.

Luis Manzano, Jessy Mendiola now parents

Luis Manzano and Jessy Mendiola are officially parents.

The two took to social media to post photos of their bundle of joy Saturday.

Posting a photo of her holding her baby's hand, Jessy wrote, "I never knew I could love like this."

She added, "My little Rosie. Isabella Rose Tawile Manzano."

Luis, on the other hand, posted a photo of him cradling the baby.



He wrote, "Hi Peanut Isabella Rose Tawile Manzano."

According to a report, Jessy gave birth Dec. 29 in Medical City.

Rabiya Mateo blamed for Celeste Cortesi's failed Miss U bid

An online user is blaming Rabiya Mateo for Miss Universe Philippines 2022 Celeste Cortesi's non-placement at the 71st edition of the annual international beauty pageant.

The basher wrote: "G"ga ka kc lakas mo mka jinxed ! ! ! wla tuloy tayong placement for the first time since 2010. Dinamay mo pa sa kamalasan mo si Celeste. Kaloka."

Rabiya didn't let it slide.

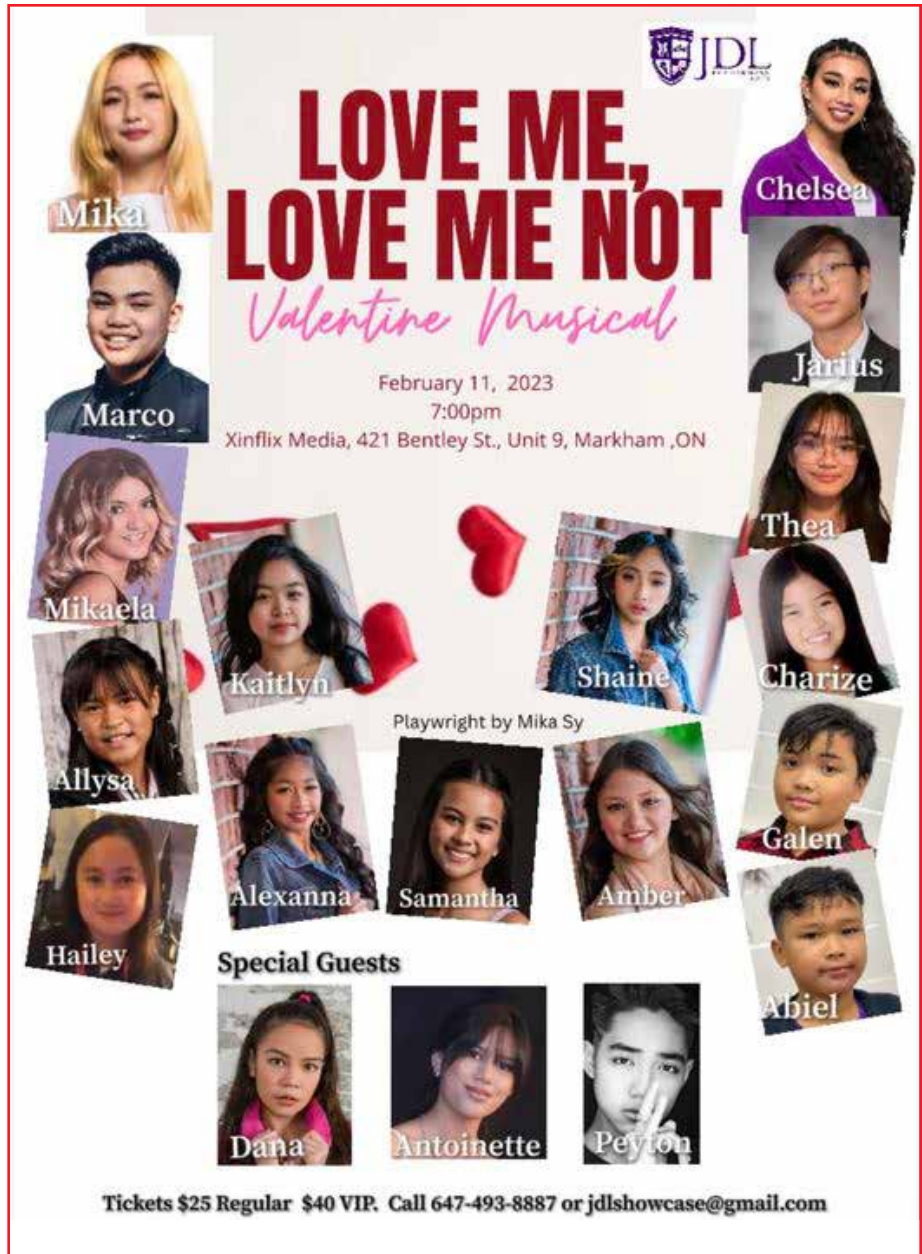
She posted: "Can someone help me locate this person so I can message the company she/he is working from and tell them how their employee react on social media? Name, address and full details."

Rabiya also shared the screenshot of the basher's profile on her Instagram story.

"Since she went on private, let me teach this one a lesson. Can someone send me her name, address and where she/he works from? Our actions have legalities. Let me teach you a serious lesson Madame," the text in it read.

Prior to the coronation night, Rabiya posted on social media: "Victory is ours! 5th crown for the country. Since Day 1, I saw how determined you are Babe. Thank you for making the country proud @celeste_cortesi!"

Unfortunately, Celeste failed to enter the top 16, ending the Philippines' 12-year semis streak.



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Tax exemption eyed for balikbayan boxes

MANILA - Cagayan de Oro Rep. Rufus Rodriguez seeks the exemption of balikbayan boxes from Customs duties and taxes as a gesture of recognizing the “hard work and sacrifices” of overseas Filipino workers (OFWs) to give their families a better future.

Rodriguez filed House Bill 6752 which also provides “non-intrusive” ways of inspecting the balikbayan boxes.

He added that the balikbayan boxes or packages could be opened only under certain circumstances.

Rodriguez said families and relatives of OFWs and other Filipinos abroad receive an average of 400,000 balikbayan boxes every month.

In proposing the tax exemption and no-opening-of-packages policy, the Mindanao lawmaker invoked the Constitution, which provides: “The State af-

firms labor as a primary social economic force. It shall protect the rights of workers and promote their welfare.”

Rodriguez said his proposed law is a way for the state and the government to give back to OFWs and other Filipinos living abroad, who send home billions of dollars and other foreign currencies a year. In 2022, OFWs alone sent an estimated \$30 billion to their families and relatives, he said.

It provides that balikbayans would be entitled to ship home one box a month, which would be exempt from taxes and duties imposed under the National Internal Revenue Code and the Customs and Tariff Code regardless of the value of its contents.

Existing BOC rules set a value limit of P150,000.

The packages would be subjected to

non-intrusive inspection technologies such as x-ray or through the use of sniffer dogs.

They could be opened only when the consignor’s export declaration and packing list are not attached to the boxes or when the BOC receives written information that the shipped items are banned, prohibited or regulated under existing laws.

The bill also expands the definition of a balikbayan’s family to include not only the spouse and children, but also parents, grandparents, brothers and sisters, either full blood or half blood, and relatives within the fourth degree of relationship.

It defines a balikbayan box as a “receptacle of personal and/or household effects, including livelihood tools, in non-commercial quantity.”

After new incident with China Coast Guard, DFA asserts Ayungin part of Ph

MANILA - The Department of Foreign Affairs maintained that Ayungin Shoal is part of the exclusive economic zone and continental shelf of the Philippines, therefore Filipino fishermen “take whatever they are due” in the area.

This comes after the Philippine Coast Guard reported that a Chinese Coast Guard vessel (CCGV) drove away a Filipino fishing boat in the area, just days after President Ferdinand “Bongbong” Marcos Jr. went on a state visit to China from Jan 3 to 5.

The Philippines is “entitled to exercise sovereign rights and jurisdiction in the area, without any intervention from another country,” citing domestic and international law, particularly the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea and the 2016 Hague ruling that China continues to ignore. The Philippines’ permanent presence on Ayungin shoal was established in 1996, with BRP Sierra Madre. Marcos admitted that what is needed are actions from the Chinese government, noting that the PCG only stay within Philippine waters.

In a separate statement, fisherfolk group Pambansang Lakas ng Kilusang Mamamalakaya ng Pilipinas (PAMALAKAYA) has urged the National Task Force - West Philippine Sea to file a protest after the harassment of Chinese Coast Guard.

“The video filmed by the fishermen is enough to prove that Chinese presence in the area and the intimidation of the Chinese Coast Guard of Filipinos in our own waters are still prevalent. This can be used as a strong basis for the Philippines to file a diplomatic protest against the Chinese government,” PAMALAKAYA National Chairperson Fernando Hicap said in a statement.

Francine Diaz believes in her pairing with Seth Fedelin

In a recent interview, Francine Diaz was asked if she felt afraid or worried that her new love team with Seth Fedelin in the latest Kapamilya prime time offering Dirty Linen will not be accepted by the fans. It can be remembered that the two are part of the group Gold Squad along with Andrea Brillantes and Kyle Echarri. When they did the phenomenal soap Kadenang Ginto, Francine was paired with Kyle while Seth was with Andrea. Now, Francine is being paired with Seth instead.

“Honestly, I just discovered in myself that I’m prepared to work with Seth and in whatever people would say regarding our team-up. Of course, when the project was first offered to me, the nervousness and doubt were there. For one, we don’t know how the public would react. But

when the cameras started to grind, I know for myself that I’m prepared for everything,” she said.

If there is one area where the young actress is under pressure, it is the role assigned to her in her new soap.

“I’m nervous not because of the fans’ reaction but of how we’ll pull it off on screen. We don’t want to disappoint Dreamscape Entertainment, particularly Sir Deo (Endrinal). This is not just a so-so project. Heavy preparation is needed.”

Francine points out that Dirty Linen is different from the previous projects she made.

“The recent programs I did were light rom-coms like Bolobola. I rested in doing heavy dramas. Then, the offer to do ‘Dirty Linen’ came. It’s a heavy project. It’s good



that our senior co-stars are very nice and supportive. They made work easier for us.

“As for playing the character of Chiara Fiero, I found it really hard at first. Number one, I’m not really one who is English-speaking. In some of our scenes, there are English words that I’m not familiar with and I don’t know the correct pronunciation. But of course, that’s my character so I really have to study to be effective in portraying it.”

On the lighter side, how’s her relationship with Seth?

“Well, as of now, we’re still on the getting-to-know-each-other stage. Is there courtship happening? At this point, there’s none. It’s purely work and being professional. In fact, I was telling Seth that we’re lucky and blessed to be part of a highly-competent cast,” ended Francine.



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Darna series thank Celeste Cortesi for giving Darna a global platform

ABS-CBN teleserye “Mars Ravelo’s Darna” expressed their support to Celeste Cortesi after she wore the iconic Darna costume at the Miss Universe 2022 National Costume Show.

In ABS-CBN PR’s Instagram account, the series said they are proud of Celeste. “We are proud of Miss Universe Philippines 2022 Celeste Cortesi for championing Darna on the world stage through the 71st Miss Universe national costume competition. The program also said that the Ravelo family expressed their gratitude to Celeste for giving Darna a global platform. “The Ravelo family extends their full support, gratitude and excitement for the opportunity to show Darna to a global audience throughout country’s official Miss Universe representative,” it said. “We hope that, like our beloved Filipino superheroine, Celeste will

continue to serve as a source of inspiration and empowerment for women all around the world,” it added.

Celeste wore the two-piece suit designed by Oliver Tolentino, with headpiece and some metalwork accessories created by Jerome Navarro during the national costume competition. “Darna is the ultimate Filipina superhero and part of this country’s pop culture. She transforms from an ordinary woman with the help of a white stone, standing up for those who cannot defend themselves. Have no fear ‘cause Darna is here in the Philippines,” the voice over was heard as Celeste confidently strutted on the Miss Universe stage.



Photo shows Miss Universe Philippines Celeste Cortesi in her Darna-inspired costume and Kapamilya actress Jane de Leon as Darna.

Dawn Chang defends villain’s superpowers in ‘Darna’

Mars Ravelo’s Darna, under ABS-CBN, continues to reel in viewers from across the globe. The modern retelling of the well-loved Filipino heroine, now played by Jane De Leon, never falters in earning rave reviews from its dedicated fans. However, not everyone seems impressed with the show’s production. As the age-old saying goes, “You can’t please everyone.” Recently, Kapamilya actress Dawn Chang has been the topic of netizens after a clip of her character in Darna, Maisha Rodriguez, using her superpowers went viral on social media. Many viewers aren’t buying that Maisha can influence those around her through dancing. It’s not something people see every day, even on popular media. Despite being the topic of the joke, Dawn found the viral clip amusing and



praised its editing. Moreover, she found the positive side of the somewhat negative feedback by saying that she captured the audience’s attention immediately. “I guess I understand how they feel. They probably feel disappointed, according doon sa mga nakasulat. But all I can say is they have to watch the next episodes para mas maintindihan nila,” she said. She says that the clip was only introductory and only allowed viewers to see the surface instead of the depth of Maisha’s character in the fantasy series. “Maisha has the power to manipulate people through dance. Para siyang Pied Piper, ‘yun ‘yung inspiration niya. I think this never happened in



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Life’s brighter under the sun



the history of Darna. It’s something new; it’s something different. A lot of people can relate,” Dawn explained. The Kapamilya actress likens her character’s influence to TikTok, the leading social media and video-sharing platform nowadays. Since its rise to popularity, TikTok has made several dance challenges viral and, in a way, encouraged users to do the same. For her, Maisha and her superpowers are new, unique, and relatable, which makes ABS-CBN’s modern retelling of Darna more relevant to its younger audience. On the other hand, as an actress, Dawn found her talent (and on-screen superpower) for dancing helpful in shooting action scenes. The Kapamilya actress considers her dancer’s physique advantageous in shooting action scenes

“We specialize in body movement. We can easily imitate, even if we’re not experts in, say wushu. We can easily adapt the look of the body movement or body posture because everything is about the look of the body, the way you express it from head to toe,” she explained but clarifying that she doesn’t mean to trivialize martial arts experts. Dawn will join the ranks of the Super Soldiers, which includes Richard Quan as General Borgo, Paolo Gumabao as Noah Vallesteros, Young JV as Andrei Abesamis, Kim Rodriguez as Xandra, Eric Fructuoso as Arthur Pineda, Joshua Colet as Sigfried Cruz, Simon Ibarra as Zaldy Vallesteros, and Mark Manicad as Ali Corpuz. “They have to watch out for Maisha, and they have to watch out for the rest of the Super Soldiers,” Dawn said.



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Celebrate Birthdays

Noel Perada celebrated his 60th birthday with a formal dinner with family and friends.

“When I turn 60, I want to celebrate it with

a party,” said his wife Shirley she told the assembeled guests at Viceroy Banquet Hall.

“I thought he was kidding,” she added. Noel was a picture of happines during the vening, specially when having a family picture taken. As they say, “celebrate old age, it’s a privilege denied to many.”

Mel Galeon also celebrated his birthday with a cowboy theme at Qssis. Since it was on the same night as Noel’s birthday, I arrived late around 10 in the evening. Luckily, it was the perfect time to arrive as they were already giving away the leftover food. And like Mel’s birthday parties be-

fore, the place was packed and jumping. With guests like the whole company of D’Ageless dancers, and other community groups who like to party, of course the dancefloor will be packed.

Samantha Esporas also celebrated her 14th birthday. It was a surprise party planned by her mom Bonna. She was tearfully but happily surprised when she arrived at the venue.

So, let’s celebrate birthdays, whether big or small with this quote from Aretha Franklin, “Every birthday is a gift. Every day is a gift.”

Rez Cortez reveals disgust over sex scenes in ‘Mang Kanor’

Veteran actor Rez Cortez gets top billing in his latest movie, “Mang Kanor,” and admitted that he is not a fan of his character.

The 67-year-old actor said he felt awkward watching his big tummy on screen.

“Sabi ko nga, kahit na kako nakakadiri ang eksena dahil nakabuyangyang ‘yung malaking tiyan ni Mang Kanor, e, talaga namang dapat nakakadiri si Mang Kanor,” he said.

“Kaya tama ‘yung mga dialogue dun. Para bang... papatulan nila si Mang Kanor

pero dahil sa monetary reasons kaya meron ng mga ganoong sitwasyon,” he added.

“Mang Kanor” tells the story of an old businessman who ends up in a scandal after his sex videos with women went viral.

The uncut version of the movie will be on the AQ Prime app so that it will not be censored by the Movie and Television Review and Classification Board (MTRCB).

“Na siguro, magtataka kayo, bakit may mga sexy scenes na nakalagay. Kasi, ilalabas naman ito sa AQ Prime na hindi sakop ng MTRCB. Hindi ito bawal. Hindi ito palusot. Kasi nga, ‘yun ang kalakaran ngayon dahil ang mga streaming ay hindi sakop ng

ating local MTRCB,” he said.

“At ang sabi ko nga, kung ‘yung movie na ito na ‘Mang Kanor,’ i-shorten mo lang ‘yung mga sexy scene, ay puwede nang ipalabas sa mainstream cinema. Dahil unang-una, bawal naman talaga sa mainstream cinema ‘yung mga ganung eksena pero dahil dito sa digital age, meron nang mga platform na puwedeng gawin ‘yun. At sa akin naman, welcome sa akin ‘yun dahil maraming platform, maraming lugar na puwedeng pagpalabasan ng pelikula, mas maraming trabaho para sa mga local movie



Rez Cortez and Nika Madrid are in a May-December relationship in ‘Mang Kanor’

workers at sa mga artista,” he added.

Rez, who has always been cast as a supporting character or villain in many of his past films, takes the main billing in this movie, which he said will still have a relevant message for its audience.

“Alam naman natin ang social media at ang mga gadgets. ‘Pag recorded na ‘yan kahit dinelete mo, andyan pa rin ‘yan. Don’t ever make the mistake of recording something at pagsisihan mo,” he stated.

‘Taken out of context’: Paolo Contis clears Alden Richards-Kathryn Bernardo ‘big star’ comment

Paolo Contis asked Kathryn Bernardo and her fans to watch the full clip of his interview with Alden Richards after he and Alden were bashed over a shortened version of it.



the 2019 blockbuster movie “Hello, Love, Goodbye” with Kathryn Bernardo. “Yung number one movie ng Star Cinema at ABS-CBN, taga GMA ‘yung artista,”

Paolo was heard saying, while Alden was smiling shyly.

One of the posts apparently ended on that part without the continuation. This earned him several comments from the fans of Kathryn.

“Of course, we have Kathryn who is the biggest star of ABS-CBN, but you also have the big star of GMA,” Paolo continued, referring to Alden.

In his interview with Boy, he appealed to viewers to watch the whole interview instead so they will not fall for



“clickbait” content.

“Sana lang, ‘pag nakakakita sila ng ganon, they could watch the whole interview because pinag-usapan namin ni Alden. Sobrang thankful ni Alden sa ginawa ng Star Cinema para sa kanya. He was thankful to Kathryn. So, I believe na, kumbaga, nadala na naman tayo ng click-bait. And sadly, people got mad at me and Alden,” Paolo said.

In the end, he left a message for Kathryn after Boy asked him for it.

“Hi Kathryn. I respect you as an actress. I know you’re one of the biggest actors of ABS-CBN. Sana mapanood mo ‘yung buong interview para ikaw mismo makita mo na nabigyan respeto ka namin sa interview,” said Paolo.

‘Hindi kita papahiran ng cake’

Dina Bonnevie celebrates birthday

Seasoned actress Dina Bonnevie celebrated her 61st birthday with an intimate birthday bash.

“Hindi kita papahiran ng cake. Magpapasalamat ako sa’yo,” said Dina to the waiter who was holding her fruit-topped birthday cake.

Wearing a matching pastel, floral long-sleeved top and pants, the seasoned actress interacted with her guests, the chefs and waitstaff at the event venue.

“Cakes are to be eaten, and not to be pasted on other people’s faces,” she added.

Seen celebrating with her are her son, Oyo Boy Sotto, with his wife, Kristine Hermosa, and her son-in-law, former cager Marc Pingris, who is the husband of her daughter Danica.

Dina’s old video, in which she spoke up about her encounter with a young actor with whom she worked on a



television show more than a decade ago, recently went viral again. Without naming names, she said she “gave her hell” after she got fed up with the said actress’ tardiness and work ethic.

Social media users were quick to draw the conclusion that she was referring to Alex Gonzaga, with whom she worked in the 2011 TV show “PS. I Love You.” The movie was a sequel to the 1981 film starring Sharon Cuneta and Gabby Concepcion, who also starred in the TV sequel.

Alex, meanwhile, talked about her experience working with an “old actor” who she said caused her trauma in her December vlog.

From ratings rivals to lovers? IU, Park Bo Gum to star in new drama by ‘Fight For My Way’ writer

After how many years of fans asking, IU and Park Bo-gum are finally confirmed to star in a romantic K-drama.

The production company Pan Entertainment confirmed the good news about the upcoming K-drama titled “You Have Done Well,” written by “Fight for My Way” writer Im Sang Choon and to be directed by IU’s director in “My Mister,” Kim Won Seok.

In the upcoming drama, IU will play Ae Soon, a positive thinker with a rebellious side. She dreams to become a poet. Bo-gum, meanwhile, is cast as Gwan Shik, who has been secretly in love with Ae Soon.

The story is set in Jeju Island in the 1950s.

Bo-gum appeared in an episode of “The Producers” in 2015 where IU was one of the main leads with Kim Soo-hyun, Cha Tae-hyun and Gong Hyo-jin.

In 2016, their respective dramas, IU’s “Moon Lovers: Scarlet Heart Ryeo” and Bo-gum’s “Love in the Moonlight” aired on the same time slot.



Korean superstars IU and Park Bo-gum will star in a new K-drama titled “You Have Done Well” that will start filming this year.

Jose Javier Reyes says local film industry survival should be priority before Oscars

Veteran director Jose Javier Reyes believed that the survival of the local film industry should be a priority before making it to the Oscars.

Reyes attended as a resource speaker during a hearing on House Resolution 451 authored by Deputy House Speaker Camille Villar, which aimed to return Filipino cinema to a “Golden Age” at the House of Representative.

“It’s not a matter of getting there. It’s a matter of being able to be given the opportunity that will do the works which are Oscar-worthy, and I think at this point, what is more important is, more than just going to the Oscars, is the survival of the industry,” Reyes said.

Reyes also said that government support is needed to reach the “Golden Age” of Philippine cinema.

“That support goes beyond lip service, but then a recognition of the real problems which saddle not only film workers, but most especially, film producers,” he said.



Direk Joey, who helms another sexy film titled An/Na for Vivamax, weighs in on the return of the erotic film genre: ‘Now the question is, will this be a trend? Will this last? That we will see. There will be a certain tipping point na magsasawa ang tao sa ganito. What does that mean?’

NOEL PERADA'S 60TH BIRTHDAY



1. Noel Perada & family; 2. Noel Perada in his Versace OOTN; 3.Noel Perada & friends in the media; 4. Rodney Ronquillo and Chyrell Samson serenade Noel; 5. Noel with Pat Rachele Cruz and Pat Surigao

'Teleserye soon again': Daniel Padilla, Kathryn Bernardo on to expect this 2023

Celebrity couple Daniel Padilla and Kathryn Bernardo teased fans for more projects coming from them this 2023.

In an email interview with Philstar.com, Daniel said he wanted to do more shows that he have not done before.

"Career-wise, I want to do a series of new projects, new stories na 'di ko pa nagagawa, teleserye soon again after '2 Good 2 Be True' and of course a good movie to watch out for ng mga fans and supporters namin," he said.

He also said that he wanted to perform on stage again

for his fans.

"For my music, I want to perform again not virtually but with face-to-face audience," he said.

For Kathryn, she said that she wanted to be challenged as an actress.

"As an actress, I constantly try new things that will challenge me. Even things that scare me! Gusto ko yung natchallenge ako pero at the same time

naenjoy ko," she said.

"I want to find a healthy balance as well when it comes to my work and personal life. Ayaw ko yung naoverwork ako, pero ayoko din na nagoover rest. So I'm trying to find that balance that works for me," she added.

Daniel joined his girlfriend Kathryn in endorsing mobile brand TNT.

With TNT, it is now easier than ever for Kathniel fans to keep their saya going anywhere they go - whether through watching and streaming hit KathNiel movies and series using Doble GIGA Videos+ 50, or staying abreast with the loveteam's social media updates and sharing them with fellow fans using Doble GIGA Stories+ 50.

"I'm happy and grateful to TNT family dahil kami ni Kathryn ay katropa na," Daniel said.

"Try to find joy even in the smallest ways. I always do this, too. I appreciate the little things in life—playing with my dogs, reading a book, even watching videos during my spare time. With TNT, there are a lot of promos for subscribers, like Double Giga+ 50. These offers are affordable and flexible and will give you small doses of entertainment na important din to have in our life, plus getting updated about what's happening around us, or chatting with our friends online," Kathryn added.

Manny Pacquiao tells tsismosas:

'Mamatay kayo sa inggit'

Sen. Manny Pacquiao and his lovely wife Jinkee Pacquiao took to social media to post snaps of their date at a popular coffee shop on Wednesday, Feb. 1

"Kasama ko ngayon ang aking soulmate si Jinkee. Ang dami kasing mga balita. Mga 'maritess' dyan. Baka mamatay kayo sa inggit. Nandito kami sa Starbucks with my wife. Mga tsismis dyan. Naku, paparusan kayo ng Panginoon sa inyong mga ginagawa. Stay safe. Know that God is good all the time," said Manny in an Instagram Story on Feb. 1.

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Now must not be the best time to be a music critic, considering how social media has given birth to venomous naysayers also known as netizens. That the public is still recovering from the mental strain of the pandemic makes the situation more volatile.

Thus, the updated Greatest Singers list of the globally renowned Rolling Stone magazine stands no chance against people not satisfied with it, in particular, because of the exclusion of some marquee names, including the likes of Madonna, Dionne Warwick, Nat King Cole, and the one whose angry fans triggered the news people to consider the matter worth writing about: Celine Dion.

For her fans and probably everyone who has seen

James Cameron's Titanic, Celine Dion is simply too much of a powerhouse to not make the cut. It may have been fine if she didn't reach the top 10. But for her not to be anywhere among a bunch of 200 singers deemed greatest felt like, according to a Twitter user, "a crime against humanity."

The fact there is a backlash shows the importance given by netizens to Rolling Stone. In an era where fans are too entitled to their opinions, not to see their idol on such a credible pool of GOAT (Greatest Of All Time) is a slap on the face and a



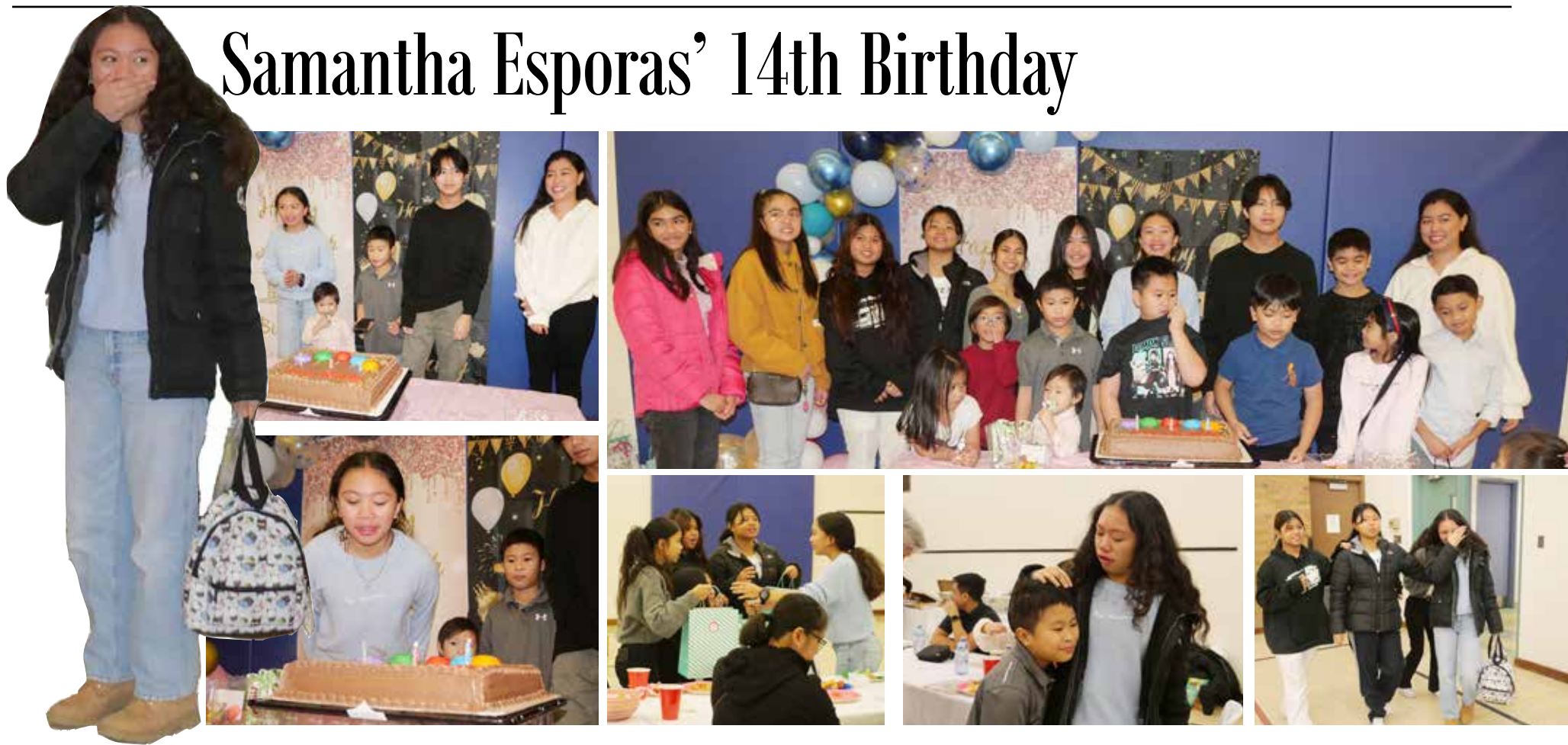
By that, it meant that while some singers' abilities may be "impressive," some are not necessarily "transcendent."

Top of Greatest Filipino Singers

The explanation was apparently not enough for fans to stop airing their aggressive thoughts on it. So how should we address the matter of satisfying everybody when coming up with a GOAT list? If I am going to spearhead a list of the

greatest Filipino singers of all time, I will make sure to include the hugely popular, legitimate icons of the masses. Artists who are favored only by music purists should not be in the conversation, while the critics who can't be objective must not dominate the voting panel. How influential the singer is matters much. So does the number of major hits his or her voice has delivered, plus the singer's technical prowess. In this regard, Regine Velasquez may top such a list. Names like Gary Valenciano, Jose Mari Chan, Sarah Geronimo, Lani Misalucha, Nina, Ely Buendia, Bamboo Manalac, Freddie Aguilar, and Danny Javier are shoo-ins. The list makers can't do a Celine to national treasure Lea Salonga.

Samantha Esporas' 14th Birthday



Paolo Contis confirms dating Yen Santos; clarifies breakup with LJ Reyes



It's finally confirmed: Paolo Contis and Yen Santos are a couple.

On the second part of his interview in "Fast Talk With Boy Abunda" today, the actor-comedian has confirmed the rumor and speculation that he is dating his "A Faraway Land" leading lady.

"Si Yen Santos ba ang girlfriend mo na?" asked Boy.

Paolo initially jested, "As a friend?" while laughing.

When Boy said, "Umayos ka," and repeated his question, Paolo confirmed his relationship with Yen.

"Yes," he revelead. "Ang samin kasi, kung baga, what you see is what you get na naman e, 'di ba? Hindi na namin pwedeng ipilit 'yung tao to be happy for us, hindi na namin pwedeng ipilit 'yung mga tao na paniwalaan 'yung gus-to nilang paniwalaan. Sana lang isipin nila na kung ano lang 'yung nakikita nilang naka-post, 'yung lang ang truth na alam nila."

He clarified though that when the trending "Baguio as a friend" photo came

out, they were not yet an item. It also took place when LJ had already left for New York.

Paolo also denied that Yen was the cause of his separation with LJ.

"Hindi. Somehow, medyo matagal na kaming hindi okay ni LJ pero we were together officially. Napapadala 'yung away. I think it was a combination of stress sa pandemic and everything.

"One of my biggest mistakes was hindi ko inalala 'yung mental health. Isa 'yan sa feeling ko simula ng downfall namin. Hindi ko inisip 'yun. Plus 'yung pag-diskarte ko ng sarili ko na hindi ko na iniinform sa kanya 'yung mga bagay-bagay, which led to bigger problems. I won't divulge na sa isyu na 'yun. Eventually it piled up. Again, hindi kami nag-uusap nang maayos.

Everytime na lalabas ako ng bahay dahil may pandemic, may work, e, may mga kalokohan din akong ginagawa," Paolo shared.

Paolo and Yen starred in the 2021 movie shot in Faroe Islands. In the same year, news of Paolo and then partner LJ Reyes broke up when the latter admitted it in her guesting in Abunda's online show in August 2021.

In August 2021, LJ moved to New York with her children, Aki and Summer. Aki is her son with actor Paulo Avelino, while Summer is her daughter with Paolo Contis.

Last month, Paolo talked to Boy about his failed relationships and his greatest fear of being hated by his daughters.

Apart from Summer, Paolo is also father to Xonia and Xalene, his daughters with ex-wife, former dancer Lian Paz.

Maui Taylor, hiwalay na sa ama ng mga anak but still lives in the same house

Hiwalay na si Maui Taylor sa ama ng kanyang dalawang anak pero nagsa-sama pa rin sila sa isang bahay.

Hindi sinabi ni Maui ang dahilan ng paghihiwalay nila at, ni minsan, hindi siya nagsalita laban sa dating karelasyon.

"Hindi na kami nag-uusap," sabi ni Maui. "We're co-parenting. We're in one house but I sleep in a different room.

"Matagal nang ganoon ang set-up. Walang pakialaman. No questions asked. "Hanggang seven years na good run din, tapos yung last three wala na."

Nawawala ba ang pagmamahal?

"Oo naman!" maagap na sagot ni Maui.

"Kumbaga, kapag walang growth ang isang relationship, nag-try naman kami [na ayusin ang problema], pero siguro masyado nang malalim yung cause ng problem kaya hindi na magawa na ihakbang pa."

Kinontra ni Maui ang espekulasyong baka handa na siyang pumasok sa bagong relasyon kaya inaamin na niya sa publiko na hiwalay na sila ng ama ng kanyang mga anak.

"Ay, hindi rin!" bulalas niya.



"Hindi naman ako pangit.

Pleasant naman ako na tao, so meron at meron times [na nagpaparamdam], it's just that dedma ka lang."

Paano nakaapekto sa pagkatao mo ang paghihiwalay ninyo?

Sagot ni Maui, "Wala. Na-sad lang pero hindi naman totally.

"Sinabihan niya ako na, 'I know I cannot make you happy.' Sabi niya, 'Sabihan mo na lang ako kapag may nahanap ka.'

"I never wanted to get married, to begin with. I am not the marrying type. Okay na ako, two kids lang, okay na yan.

"It's always a personal choice. Parang growing up, yun na ang nasa isip ko."

Nang tanungin tungkol sa kanyang maipapayo sa ibang mga tao na may katulad na problema niya, "Magtira ka para sa sarili mo," sagot ni Maui.

Dagdag niya, "Yun ang ginawa ko so I think that's the reason why I am okay. Sabi nga nila, it's okay not to be okay."

"Leave something for yourself kasi yun ang makakatulong sa yo in the worst case scenario."

Vice Ganda tells Isko Moreno his attempts to ‘cure’ homosexuality by having 5 girlfriends

Kapamilya host Vice Ganda revealed that he tried to “cure” his gender orientation by having girlfriends in his younger years. In his interview with former presidential candidate Isko Moreno, Vice said he knew that he’s gay but tried to “cure” it until he learned that it’s not a disease. “Oo nagka-girlfriend ako. Lima... limang girlfriend,” Vice said.

“I have always known. I have always felt na bakla ako... Alam ko na pero nilalabanan ko siya. Kasi sabi ko nga dati, mag-girlfriend ako.



TUESDAY IS FAMILY NIGHT AT MARK RIVERA’S HOUSE

1. Mark Rivera’s family held a viewing party for the season two premiere of CBC’s “Son of a Critch” tv show, of which he is one of the leads; 2. The Tuesday show has become a family night at Mark’s household.



I was trying to cure it. Until I realized, bakit ko kino-cure, e hindi naman ito sakit. Hindi naman siya disability... mas lalo ko lang na-realize na hindi, bakla talaga ako,” he

added. The “It’s Showtime” host also said that he can’t kiss or have sex with a girl. “Hindi ko kayang humalik. ‘Di ko kayang humalik sa labi. Hindi ko kayang hum-

awak sa dede. Nanginginig ako na naninigas ako, I swear, kinilabutan talaga ako,” he said. Vice then said that he learned in the process that people cannot change who they are.

“Yun ka. Hindi talaga ‘yun mababago. Kahit anong klaseng pagbabagong ipilit o ilagay mo sa sarili mo, sinasabi mo lang ‘yun pero hindi mo talaga ‘yun nababago,” he said.

SCENES FROM the PAINTING CLASS

Carlos Unas & Trini practice the ukulele.



Ricky Caluen (LEFT), with Carlos Unas (ABOVE PHOTO) taught us how to sing for the Christmas party.



Nitz shows Rene a painting on her laptop.



The day starts with a potluck lunch of what everyone brings.



Nitz cooks what she brings from her garden. She and Mary Ann San Juan chat while cooking.



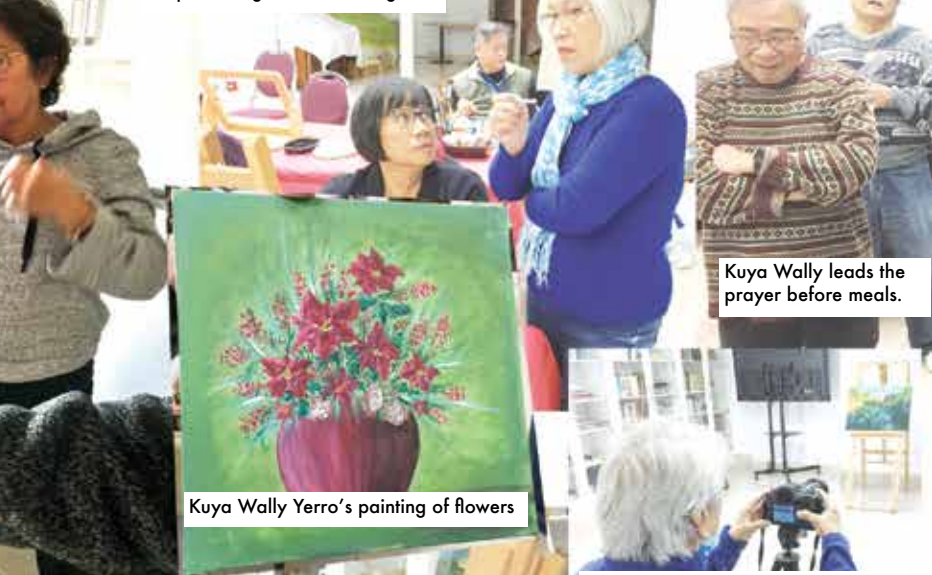
Kuya Wally Yerro is concentrating on painting



Rene Calalang paints a rural landscape.



Angie Berlin and Trini James are deep in thought on something.



Kuya Wally Yerro's painting of flowers



Jeanette Rosales, Nitz and Mary Ann enjoying the lunchtime camaraderie.



We pray before meals.

LOOK

ACTRESS DAUGHTER

Shanaia Gomez

with

INSTAGRAM MOM

Ellen

My mom: "shai, can we not just walk down the street without taking your picture??"

Me: no mom, no we cannot.



KAINAN NA OPENS A POP-UP AT ELLEN'S PLACE



Kainan Na, Inc., a not-for-profit organization with a mission and vision to build a camaraderie of unified Filipino food vendors and create an industry support system for the Filipino food businesses through collaboration. This group was formed during last year's FUN Philippines Street Festival and has since worked together in other events helping and promoting each other's businesses. They are launching their first pop-up store on Satur-



day, Feb 4, 2023 at Ellen's Place, 833 Westlock Rd Unit 8 Mississauga. They will be there every weekend Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays from 9am to 4pm. Kainan Na, Inc. vendors who will be there are: Belish, Butter Than Yours, Ein-na's Cakes, Jackie's Creative Cakes, Maria Maria, Nasyon 37 and Pocket Bites. There will be food samples, free coffee/tea and raffle prizes to be won. Be sure to visit!

Darna brings better life for Jane de Leon

Magkahalong saya at lungkot ang nararamdaman ngayon ni Jane de Leon sa nalalapit na pagtatapos ng pinagbibidahan niyang ABS-CBN primetime series na Mars Ravelo's Darna.

Ayon kay Jane, patuloy niyang ipagpapasalamat sa Diyos ang pagbibigay-tiwala sa kanyang gampanan ang iconic role na Darna.

Sa finale mediacon ng Darna nitong Lunes, January 30, 2023, muling binalikan at inalala ni Jane kung paano binago ng serye ang buhay niya maging ng kanyang pamilya.

Pagbabalik-tanaw niya, "Simula noong naging Darna po ako, una sa

lahat, natulungan ko po yung family ko.



"Kahit papaano nakaahon po kami, guminhawa po yung buhay namin." Maliban sa ibinigay na oportunidad sa kanya ng Darna, nakahanap din daw si Jane ng mga totoong kaibigan na maituturing niyang pangalawang pamilya.

Saad niya, "I met a lot of people sa buhay ko kung sino talaga yung totoo and sobrang bihira lang po talaga sa showbiz makakilala ng mga totoong tao.

"Kaya sobrang nagpapasalamat po ako."

Despite breakup, KYLIE VERSOZA only has good words for JAKE CUENCA

FOR Kylie Verzosa, her relationship with Jake Cuenca did not "fail."

The beauty queen-turned-actress made the statement in an interview with Boy Abunda.

She said she would rather call it a "good" relationship that ended, pointing out that they both became better persons because of it.

"I wouldn't want to call it na it didn't work out... maybe it ended," she said. "I hear from people na it's a failed relationship, or maybe it didn't work out, pero 'di ko po siya kino-consider na ganoon."

"We both helped each other in the relationship, we both benefited from the relationship," the Miss International 2016 titleholder stressed. "I think it was a good relationship and we learned from it. We became better people."

"I believe that who we are today

is a contribution of that relationship."

'Holding hands as friends': Jake Cuenca confirms breakup with Kylie Verzosa

According to Verzosa, her relationship with Cuenca ended after "a long process." Not giving details, she said they "both came to terms with it eventually."

She went on to admit that she does not know exactly what led to their breakup, and would prefer to keep things that way.

"I want to keep our relationship in the past, and what we had was, I believe, beautiful... I don't want to tarnish anyone's name, and I don't want to destroy it. But it would be something between just the two of us," she explained.

And despite their split, Verzosa



has nothing but good words for her ex-boyfriend.

"He is such a good person... A great actor," she said. "A lot of things I know now are because of him, and I owe him a lot."

When asked if she is ready for another relationship, Verzosa replied: "I'm not ready for it. Maybe not in a few months, maybe not in a year. Eventually."

Kuh Ledesma reflects on love life: 'Hindi ko hinahanap 'yan'

The season of love is just around the corner. And what a better way to celebrate Valentine's Day than to spend it with someone special.

But for Pop Diva Kuh Ledesma, looking for a new partner is the least of her concerns these days.

"Hindi ako naghahanap (ng special someone). Pag may binigay si Lord, bahala na siya. Hindi ko hinahanap 'yan," said Kuh, when asked if she was searching for a new partner, during an intimate press conference for her upcoming concert entitled "Hello Love: A Valentine Getaway" with daughter Isabella.

When asked if she still could still relate to her iconic OPM song "Til I Met You," Kuh smiled and answered: "I sing it to the Lord! Bakit naman hindi ako maka-ka-relate, madali akong maka-relate d'yan. I can only think of my exes, the good ones."

Kuh added: "The joy of the Lord is my strength. Sabi ko nga sa inyo, magbasa na kayo ng Bible. The word of the Lord is alive and active. It's sharper than the double-edged sword. 'Yung promises ng Panginoon, if we say it, it goes to our spirit, and moves. When I'm feeling tired, I just say that. Siguro kung wala akong relationship with our Lord, nag-give up na ako. Tamad na."

"I've always wanted an inspira-

tion in my life. Dati, noong wala akong boyfriend, hindi ako maka-kanta. Ganyan ang dating. Ngayon wala ng ganun. I have to give glory to the Lord for the talents He has given me," she added.

On her daughter Isabella, Kuh said: "She loves singing old songs although she loves pop songs naman. She has a higher voice. She's more of a soprano than alto. Ako alto-soprano. But Isabella has a louder and higher voice."

"Isabella went through something when I got separated (from my husband). Minsan okay siya. She has to overcome the trauma noong nagkagulo kami ng hus-



band ko. She was also taking psychotropic drug. It's not a secret.

"And we share it because I never believe that was the end of it, meaning kapag may mental challenge ang tao, forever na that you will take the psychotropic drug. I don't believe it. Talagang prayers are very powerful. It really works and we have to take it out and we went through a lot because of the adjustment period. She's better now. She needs to get healthier physically," she said.

Kuh revealed that she has not done

any music collaboration with her daughter except for a Christmas song when she was younger. "Maybe now. We're talking about it. Nagko-complement naman yung voice namin. We're asking songs from Vehnee Saturno. We respect Vehnee a lot. He's a hitmaker."

Asked about her favorite song she recorded, Kuh said: "One More Try.' It's not a popular song from my album 'I Think I'm In Love.' But I really love that song."



JOSE BAKING PHOTOGRAPHY



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Prague’s top actress ‘Sara Sandeva’ headlines Filipino rom-com

Flamboyant celebrity lawyer and now full-time movie producer Ferdie Topacio of Borracho Films proudly introduced 25-year-old Czech actress Sara Sandeva as the lady lead of his next movie, “Spring in Prague.”

Unaffected by the disappointing turnout of cinemagoers to Borracho’s debut movie — the big-budgeted retelling of the 2015 Mamasapano tragedy at December’s Metro Manila Film Festival — Topacio is still upbeat as ever over this new title since it’s a romantic comedy.

“Hindi talaga mahilig ang mga Pilipino sa mga pelikula tungkol sa kasaysayan,” he shrugged his shoulders. “Pero itong isang ‘to siguradong magugustuhan nila ito — isang original love story na kinunan natin sa napakagandang capital ng Czech Republic — ang Prague — starring one of their most famous stars and our proudly Filipino cast.”

The chances Topacio may be right about his project this time are pretty high, given that Spring



The Czech actress and her Filipino leading man, Paolo Gumabao.

in Prague is written by one-time The Manila Times entertainment editor turned award-winning screenwriter Eric Ramos. Ramos, of course, also wrote Mamasapano but is best known for the blockbuster hit, “Rainbow Sunset,” a love story between two seniors portrayed by the late great actors Eddie Garcia and Tony Mabesa in 2018.

Add the famously daring Paolo Gumabao as Sandeva’s leading man in this antithesis of a formulaic rom-com, Borracho Films should be back in business.

Before finally giving Sandeva the floor, Topacio gloated about asking around Prague who their No. 1 actress is when casting the leading lady, duly landing the very beauty for his movie.

Flattered by the producer’s all-

out praises, Sandeva expressed excitement over her very first Filipino project, saying how she has fallen in love with the country and more so with “this amazing Filipino cast.”

“They are so warm, friendly and supportive — especially Paolo — making my experience here so great and so memorable,” she gushed.

A quick Google on Sandeva will reveal that the actress is backed with an extensive body of work on television, the movies and live theater back home. The European movie website cinemas.com further notes that Sandeva’s “professionalism can be seen in each of her works. She knows how to adapt her personality and even her physique to the demands of [the different] role[s] she has portrayed... always giving the best of her talent [to] the public.”

With post-production still ahead for Spring in Prague, Sara Sandeva is definitely one to watch out for in the local cinema scene this 2023.

Alden Richards finally reveals what happened between him and Julie Anne San Jose

Sa lahat ng mga artistang napabalitang may kaugnayan kay Alden Richards, sina Winwyn Marquez at Julie Anne San Jose ang muntik nang maging girlfriend ng aktor.

Hindi nakaiwas si Alden na sagutin ang mga tanong ni Boy Abunda sa guesting ng “Asia’s Multimedia Star” sa episode ng Fast Talk with Boy Abunda.

“For some reason, because of work,” ang sinabing Alden na dahilan kaya hindi human-tong sa relasyon ang pagiging magkaibigan nila ni Winwyn.

Inamin naman ng Kapuso star na siya ang may kasalanan kaya hindi natuloy ang pagkakamabutihan nila ni Julie Anne.

Saad niya, “I decided to mag-focus na lang po talaga sa work. Yun po yung inihingi ko ng sorry sa kanya.

“It’s a long time... a long time of... parang naiwan ko po siya and I’m sure, if she’s watching right now...”

“Sasabihin ko na po... I never told anyone this.

“Yung part po kasi kay Julie Anne, yun po yung parang mabigat.

“When we were doing Sunday Pina-saya, the time that we separated, ang tagal po naming hindi nag-usap. Seven years almost, ganoon po katagal.

“Naniniwala po kasi ako na time heals everything and mahirap po kasing

ipilit na gusto mong magkaayos kayo. Pero yung panahon, hindi pa tama, kasi sariwa pa po yung sugat.



“And hindi po natin madidikta sa puso natin kung kailan gagaling yun. It really depends upon the person.”

Nang magkaroon daw ng pagkakataon, kinausap ni Alden si Julie Anne sa isang kuwarto upang humingi ng kapatawaran.

“Nung kami pong dalawa na lang sa green room, ni-lock ko po yung pinto.

“And then I talked to her na, ‘I’m really sorry for all what happened. Iniwan kita and there’s no one to blame but me. I was...’

“May term po ako na ginamit... ‘And I am very sorry. Sana mapatawad mo na ako.’

“Now, we’re very much good friends.”

ONIONS from p1

in the Philippines have gone up by 45% due to a domino effect of inflationary pressures from other goods and may have damaging effects on Filipinos’ nutrition.

Department of Agriculture (DA) data showed that eggs, among the cheapest sources of protein, now retail between P6.90 to P8.70 per piece, higher than the P6 during the same period a year ago.

Gregorio San Diego, chair of the United Broilers Raisers Association, attributed the increase to higher feed costs.

“Electricity prices are up, they need the income for those expenses,” he said.

President Ferdinand Marcos Jr., who concurrently acts as agriculture secretary, has faced inflation woes since the start of his leadership.

Before eggs, sugar and onion prices have gone through the roof.

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Airline staff caught attempting to smuggle onions into the Philippines

You know the onion situation in the country is dire when you have flight crew members trying to get in on the smuggling drama.

The Philippine Airlines is reportedly investigating

at least 10 crew members who allegedly attempted to bring into the country almost 40 kilograms of onions and fruits from the Middle East.

The Philippine Star reported that the crew members,

who flew in from Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, were caught with an undeclared amount of 15.5 kilograms of onions, 4.5 kilograms of lemons, and a kilogram of strawberries when they passed through the customs lane.

The Bureau of Customs immediately confiscated the goods and said the airline staff violated three customs and plant quarantine laws.

But while customs recommended taking “appropriate legal action”

against the crew members, no charges were filed against the staff — adding that Republic Act 10845, or the Anti-Agricultural Smuggling Act of 2016, only penalizes “large-scale smuggling.”

Jennylyn Mercado and Dennis Trillo: Blended Together



For the first time ever, Jennylyn Mercado and Dennis Trillo give a glimpse into their lives at home and as parents to a blended family.

Dennis Trillo and Jennylyn Mercado may as well be considered a model blended family. Both are no strangers to parenthood when they became single parents to two boys — Calix, Dennis’ son with actress Carlene Aguilar, and Jazz, Jennylyn’s son with actor Patrick Garcia. Since the birth of their daughter, Dylan, they work as a team and have maintained a delicate balance of bonding, disciplining, and knowing which battles to fight. While many may find the setup peculiar, it’s a thought that the two celebrity parents teach their kids to pay no heed. “Hindi na nila kailangan mag-isip ng iba,” Dennis refers to those wondering about their setup. “A blended family is like a regular and normal family. We see to it na masaya ang bawat isa and talagang solid kahit ano pang tawag diyan.”

Being blended has a lot more solidarity than it looks. This is evident in the bond of the step-brothers — Calix and Jazz — who treat each other like blood-related brothers. “Para silang sabay lumaki,” Jennylyn remarked. “Nagkikita sila kahit nung hindi pa kami magkasama sa isang house.” Dennis and Jennylyn also added that early exposure of the two boys to one another made the rest of the transition easier, especially with the arrival of their half-sister, Dylan. “Feeling ko ngayon pa lang, magiging protective kuya si Calix. May dalawa na siyang protector at tag-apagtanggol pag inaaapi siya,” Dennis bets joyfully. When Jennylyn used to dive, Calix would be her buddy for underwater explorations. Dennis, on the other hand, played games with the two. “Shinashare namin yung mga interest namin sa kanila para mas madali kaming maka-relate sa kanila,” Dennis said. Jennylyn emphasizes the importance of respect in raising their children, admitting to being the disciplinarian between her and Dennis. “Disciplinarian ako sa aspeto ng pag-papalaki. Ako yung mas mahigpit” — she elaborates further on her style — “Hindi naman ako naninigaw pero parang mas kinakausap ko sila na parang adult.” For Jennylyn, it’s important that parents do not lose sight of guiding their children. “Meron sa mga bata na critical stage, the formative years. Ito yung dapat nila kailangan tutukan at gabayan.” When it comes to parenting styles, there isn’t much of an adjustment for Jennylyn given that she raised Jazz. However, he does visit and spend time with his father Patrick, and other siblings. In Dennis’ case, he makes sure that he and Calix’s mom, Carlene, are always communicating about his needs. “Siguro kailangan din maging open yung communication para mapag-usapan kung ano man problema, ano man dapat ayusin at baguhin sa pagpapalaki,” Dennis shared. The setup has never been an issue with their kids. Dennis even said that Calix was the one who asked about their plans of getting married. “Parang inanticipate na niya. Wala naman questioning na na-accept nila.” Especially with Dylan now, the celebrity parents shared that technology and developments made it much easier to establish a routine and attend to their newborn baby girl. Moreover, their daughter gave Jennylyn something quite precious: another chance to enjoy being a mother. “Mas binibigyan ko pa ng time yung motherhood, si Dylan, and yung family,” she admitted. “Nung first time ko magkaroon ng baby, si Jazz, hindi ko masyadong na-enjoy yung motherhood kasi parang two months pa lang, kailangan ko bumalik sa work. So this time, sabi ko hindi ko pwede gawin iyon ulit. Kailangan ko muna mag-focus sa motherhood.” The modern concept of a blended family may take time to accept but it shouldn’t be too difficult with the challenges being universal. Dennis also pointed out that his next order of business after taping would be to enjoy life as a dad. “Gusto ko makapag-rest ng kaunti at mag-focus sa baby and sa family. Sana magawa ko iyon.” After all, blended or not, they are all still a family—one that Dennis Trillo and Jennylyn Mercado will forever and lovingly call their own.

Miss Supermodel PH search seeks strong follow-up to Alexandra Mae Rosales

MANILA, Philippines—Alexandra Mae Rosales gave the Philippines its first Miss Supermodel Worldwide victory in India in October last year, and now the country is starting its search for the woman who could possibly score a back-to-back this year. The Miss Supermodel Philippines contest conducted its final screening of applicants on Jan. 27 at One Shangri-la Place in Mandaluyong City, where the official candidates were also introduced. After a series of screenings conducted this month, the competition chose 15 qualified aspirants. With such a tough task ahead of them—to secure a second straight victory for the Philippines in the Miss Supermodel Worldwide contest—the candidates will be made to undergo challenges to help determine who is worthy to follow Rosales’ footsteps. May Evelyn Maghirang, the contest’s national

director, told the Inquirer that they would pattern the Philippine competition after the international tilt in India where Rosales won. “We will have challenges, such as photoshoot. There will be four challenges in total, and we will hold them in our studio,” Maghirang said. She said what they noticed in Rosales’ overseas competition was how tough the training in India was. “Of course, we will look for someone who can represent the Philippines, who can handle all the pressure,” she said. “I hope we can choose someone who will be a strong follow-up for Alexandra. I hope we get the title again,” Maghirang continued. She said the final selection will be conducted



on Feb. 18 in a venue that is yet to be disclosed. The organization will already determine who the winners will be during that event, but they will be announced on Feb. 25. The national organization is closely collaborating with the national directors handling the competitions in Japan, Malaysia, Singapore and the United Arab Emirates. Friday night’s screening also included an aspirant who applied for the national leg in Japan. The 2023 Miss Supermodel Worldwide will again be held in India this year. After moving the 2022 competition to October, it will return to its usual schedule in April. Maghirang said that despite having a truncated reign, Rosales’ contract with the international organizers is for two years.

Imelda Marcos Musical on Broadway, July

IMELDA from p1

Clint Ramos is part of the team that will produce the show. Among the other Filipino co-producers include Miranda Gohh, Celia Kaleialoha Kenney, Rob Laqui, and G Töngi. Its creative team is also made up of the likes of Filipino music director J. Oconer Navarro, casting director Gail Quintos, assistant director Billy Bustamante, and stage manager Sheryl Polancos. The musical will tackle subjects



like the Marcos dictatorship, the First Lady’s influence, and the couple’s power and the subsequent exile of their family by the end of the ‘80s. In an interview with Variety, producer Jose Antonio Vargas

explained: “Filipinos are among the largest immigrant groups in America—and also among the most invisible culturally, despite the two nations’ shared colonial histories. While the Asian diaspora can no longer be denied in American popular culture, Filipinas and Filipinos remain woefully outside the spotlight. I’m thrilled to help break barriers on what has historically been an exclusive stage: Broadway.” Here Lies Love had first been introduced as a concept album back in 2010. Artists like Sia, Tori Amos, Florence Welch, Natalie

Merchant, and Steve Earle, among others, had each contributed vocals. Byrne would replace a third of the music when the official cast album came out four years later. “Although the emphasis is on contemporary beats, Here Lies Love has the proverbial bit of something for everybody — ingénue ballads, Elton John-style ’70s pop-disco, tropical love songs, angry soul stirrers, political rockers, folk protest tunes, tinges of techno, and pretty straightforward musical theater tunes,” Variety wrote of the show’s Seattle

debut. The musical’s world debut was held at The Public Theater back in 2013. Since then, the critically acclaimed show had even returned to The Public from 2014 to 2015 and premiered at both the Royal National Theatre in London and the Seattle Repertory Theatre in America. Here Lies Love preview performances will start on June 17. Meanwhile, the official opening night is set for July 20. A variety of seating (mostly standing) options will be made available to the public soon.

PHILIPPINES

DOJ Sec. Remulla’s son cleared of possession of illegal drugs charge

Juanito Jose D. Remulla III, eldest son of Justice Secretary Jesus Crispin C. Remulla, was acquitted of the charge of possession of illegal drugs by the Las Pinas City regional trial court (RTC) by Judge Ricardo a. Moldez II. The prosecution failed to prove that Juanito had animus possidendi (intent to possess) and also failed to prove, that by receiving the parcel, Juanito knew that he was also possessing illegal drugs,” Moldez stressed. “Moreover, records are again devoid of any details regarding the custody of the dangerous drugs from the time it was turned-over to the laboratory up to its presentation in court. Despite his acquittal in the possession of illegal drugs charges, Juanito is still facing an importation of illegal drugs complaint.

More criminal complaints filed against Bantag

More criminal complaints were filed against suspended Bureau of Corrections (BuCor) Director General Gerald Q. Bantag. BuCor Acting Director General Gregorio Pio P. Catapang Jr. said the new complaints were filed by BuCor personnel who claimed they were “hurt and maltreated” by Bantag. Already, Bantag has been charged with two murder cases, and torture and physical injuries complaints before the Department of Justice (DOJ). The murder charges are for the deaths of radio commentator Percival “Percy Lapid” C. Mabasa and inmate Cristito Villamor Palana, alleged middleman of self-confessed gunman Joel S. Escorial in the killing of the broadcaster.



2M newly-poor households hit by inflation

As inflation accelerated to a 14-year high last December, more Filipino families considered themselves poor, with some two million newly poor, or those who were non-poor one to four years ago. Sonny Africa, executive director of the think tank Ibon Foundation, explained that “poverty is a function of family incomes and prices of basic goods and services,” but “unfortunately, there have been adverse trends in both in the last part of the year since Ferdinand Marcos Jr. took office.” According to the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA), the spike in the readout last month was mainly because of the higher annual increase in the price index of food and non-alcoholic beverages at 8.4 percent from 8.2 percent in the previous month.



1 million bivalent jabs from COVAX arriving in March

Around one million doses of bivalent COVID-19 vaccines from the COVAX Facility are expected to arrive in the country by the end of March, the Department of Health (DOH) said. “Just last week, we have finalized the commitment of COVAX to donate bivalent vaccines to the country. So, by the end of March, hopefully, we expect the initial doses to arrive,” said DOH officer-in-charge (OIC) Maria Rosario Vergeire. “That would be part of the COVAX commitment to us,” said Vergeire.



Dog ownership in Philippines highest in Asia

The Philippines has one of the highest dog and cat ownership rates in Asia, and this is seen to drive pet food sales to expand nine percent this year, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) said. In its latest pet food market brief, the USDA-Foreign Agricultural Service forecasted pet food sales in the Philippines are estimated to grow by nine percent to \$434 million this year. “Product prospects include dry and wet pet food as well as treats and mixers,” it said. “As pets became more popular household companions, especially during the pandemic, pet ownership and pet food sales have grown immensely over the past five years,” the USDA added.





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Dina Bonnevie confirms Alex Gonzaga 2011 drama incident

Dina Bonnevie confirmed that she was referring to Alex Gonzaga. In “Fast Talk With Boy Abunda,” she talked about the incident.

“Yes, it was Alex Gonzaga. But let me explain. That happened 12 years ago. We were doing a teleserye then and it didn’t come out without reason.

“Si Gabby (Concepcion), Cheska Inigo, Nadine Lustre. We were all together and nobody had the strength or the audacity to talk to her. So okay. Ako ang magiging spokesperson,” she confirmed.

She played the mother of Alex in the TV sequel of the 1981 movie with the same name that starred Gabby Concepcion and Sharon Cuneta.

Dina denied the allegation that she had shouted at Alex. Instead, she was trying to stay calm while speaking to the actress.

“Ako ba? O sige, ako lang naman ang may lakas ng loob. So wala pa akong sinabi hanggang sa lunch break, umalis na naman siya. ‘Pag alis niya,

basa ‘yung buhok, walang makeup. So we had to wait na naman for another three hours bago maka-pag-take,” Dina recalled.

This was the turning point on that fateful day. It came to a point that she was frank about her co-star’s acting skills.

“Ako naman sabi ko, kasi may eksena na dapat iiyak siya. Eh parang mommy niya ako noon. Hindi siya makaiyak. Sabi ko, ‘Alex you know why you cannot cry? Because you’re not in touch with your emotions. You’re very indifferent to your co-workers. You know, honestly, I want to talk to you kasi we don’t like what you’re doing. You’re always late,’” Dina shared.

Alex had reasoned out that she has a busy schedule and asked for them



to understand her. Dina recalled how Alex talked to her and it prompted her next reaction.

“Sabi ko, hindi pa pinapanaganak ang babastos sa akin, Alex, please. Kinakausap kita ng maayos. If you wanna stay long in this business, you cannot last kung ganyan ang attitude mo, na palagi kang late. Dito ka pa maliligo sa set and you cannot even memorize your lines. Hindi ka makaiyak,” Dina revealed.

She also mentioned how Alex at one time was irked at Nadine Lustre in one of their scenes.

“And then nagagalit siya kay Nadine kung nauunang umiyak si Nadine. Eksena niya daw yun”

Their talk ended amicably with them crying. The next few days, Alex’s mom, Pinty, came to explain for Alex’s side.

The seasoned actress reiterated that she is not angry with Alex and for her, the issue was already settled years ago, right after their talk.

She had even guested in the noon-time show that Alex was a co-host.

It wasn’t until the presscon were she was asked and she replied without naming anybody.

Dina was irked, though, when Alex’s podcast came out last December. The vlogger-actress said she was yelled at by an old actor, and it traumatized her.

“Doon ako nainis. Painting you as the bad guy, inventing stories to make you look bad. But I wasn’t inventing stories. That’s past. It’s changed.

“Yung mga tao sabi sagutin mo. Ang bastos. Tinawag kang matanda. Actually, hindi ako na-offend na tinawag akong matanda. It’s true. Matanda na ako. I’m 61 but I’d like to see people at 61 if they’re still looking fresh. Sorry, Boy. But I feel fresh and I think I look fresh,” Dina said.

She also addressed the cake-smearing issue, where social media users thought she alluded to Alex’s controversial cake incident with a waiter during the actress’ recent 35th birthday.

“Yung cake issue naman na ‘yun. ‘Yung mga tao nanunukso. Sabi ko, no, no, no, no. I won’t put cake on your face but not to do something. Parang joke na lang ‘yun. It was a joke. But I didn’t intend to hurt. If I hurt Alex’s feelings because na-post ‘yun, sorry, pero it was a joke. Wala. We were just having fun noong birthday ko,” Dina said.

No reconciliation for Pokwang & ex; No financial support coming

Pokwang quashed the possibility of getting back together with her ex-partner Lee O’Brian, as she hinted at the latter’s new romance in Instagram.

The actress-comedienne is no longer selling PokLee products, her now-defunct food business with O’Brian in a now-deleted Instagram post last January 17. Her “TiktoClock” co-host Kim Atienza then appeared to have teased her in the comments, saying “Pa-order nga ng [PokLee], mamang?” (Can I order a PokLee, mamang?)

“Wala na po, [may] nilalandi na siya. Hindi nag-effort na lunukin ang pride chicken para kay Tisay (There’s no PokLee anymore



“Wala na po, [may] nilalandi na siya.”

because he’s already flirting with someone else. He did not even make an effort to swallow his pride for Tisay!)” she replied. Pasabog pa ni Pokwang: wala itong ibinibigay na suporta sa kanilang anak.

The “Tisay” is a nickname that Pokwang uses to refer to Malia, her five-year daughter with O’Brian.

Pokwang confirmed her split from O’Brian in July 2022, and has since been co-parenting Malia with him. She also shared that their separation was caused by the ex-couple getting “tired” of one another.



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Miss Universe 2022 R'Bonney Gabriel thanks Filipino fans 'I'm so proud to be half-Filipina'

Miss Universe 2022 R'Bonney Gabriel thanked her Filipino fans for supporting her in her journey to become the first Filipina-American Miss Universe queen. Gabriel spoke in Filipino, saying she's proud to be half-Filipina. "Mabuhay, Philippines. Mabuhay Filipino fans.," she said. "The support is everything. I feel it my heart. I heard it in the room. It was an amazing energy. The Filipino blood is so strong. We are hardworking, we're fun and we're determined, and I'm so proud to be half-Filipina," she added. Gabriel said it feels amazing to become the first Filipino-American Miss Universe queen after failing twice back then. "As I said, it's been a three-year journey of getting first runner-up and just going, keep

going. I always had this feeling in me and something is telling me no matter what I should keep trying, even though I felt like I wouldn't succeed. So it is such an amazing feeling to be standing here as the first Filipino-American (Miss Universe winner)," she said. "I get so many messages from young girls telling me that they are inspired by me, but it's just so important to embrace who you are, whatever culture that is. And I've, I've done that very proudly, very vocally and it's amazing to have people come to me and tell me that they are so proud of their culture, too. That is really how I want to inspire people," she added. Gabriel was crowned as Miss Universe 2022 earlier today,

giving her country its record ninth crown at the prestigious pageant held in New Orleans, Louisiana. The Filipino-American beauty queen is a sustainable fashion designer, sewing teacher and model. Gabriel's winning response to the final question impressed viewers as she talked about becoming a transformational leader and connected it to her fashion design background. "Well, I would use it to be a transformational leader. As a very passionate designer, I've been sewing for 13 years. I use fashion as a force for good. In my industry, I've been cutting down on pollution through recycled materials when I make my clothing. I choose sewing classes to women that have survived from human trafficking and domestic vio-



lence. And I say that because it is so important to invest in others invest in our community, and use your unique talent to make a difference. We all have something special and when we plant those seeds to other people in our life, we transform them and we use that as a vehicle for change," she said.

Sofia Pablo on relationship with Jillian Ward: 'Ever since hindi po kami ganun magka-jive'

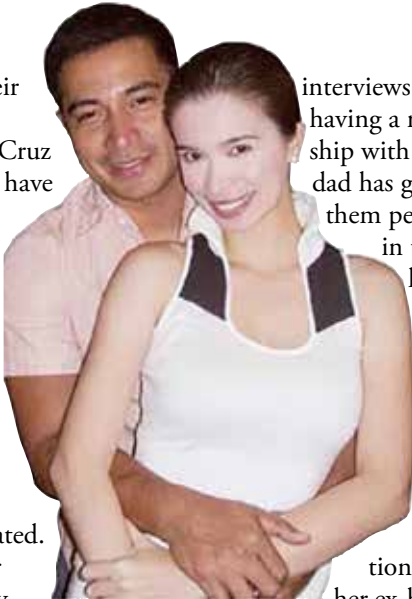
Making her way as the newest generation star of GMA, Sofia Pablo shines in her new series entitled "Luv is: Caught in his Arms." Joined by her Sparkada team,



Sofia is excited as she plays the role of Florence Almero. "Siguro po ang ginawang kong preparation for this project is nag-aral po ako magluto online, kasi si Florence magaling po siya magluto, pero ako in real life medyo hindi po ako ganun ka expert," Sofia shared. (The preparation that I did for this project was to learn how to cook online since my character Florence is an excellent cook, but in real life, I'm not that kind of an expert) From becoming a prominent actress in the GMA series Prima Donnas, Sofia was also asked how she is now with her former co-actress Jillian Ward. "Kami po kasi ni Jillian, ever since, hindi po talaga kami yung magka-jive, as in, kumbaga, magkaiba po kami ng interes. So, there are issues. Pero wala na po... matagal na po yun," she said. (Me and Jillian, ever since, we don't go along very well, we both have different interests, that's why there are issues, but that was a long time ago) Although the former co-stars haven't been on good terms, Sofia is still proud of their individual projects. "We all know that Jillian is a good star, and I'm really proud of her, kahit na hindi kami super-duper close. I'm proud for the both of us," Sofia added. (We all know that Jillian is a good star, and I'm really proud of her, even though we're not super-duper close. I'm proud for both of us)

Sunshine Cruz and Cesar Montano have reconciled

Ten years after their controversial split, ex-couple Sunshine Cruz and Cesar Montano have reconciled after a year-long journey. The actress made the revelation at a virtual conference for the GMA-7 afternoon teleserye "Underage" earlier this month. "It has been 10 years since we separated. A wound, no matter how deep, eventually heals. And in God's perfect time, we both healed," she said. "As a mom, how can I not be happy with what happened? The children are happier now [after Cesar and I patched things up]. They even say in



interviews that having a relationship with their dad has given them peace in their hearts." The actress also revealed that her reconciliation with her ex-husband brought joy to their daughters, Angelina, Chesca and Samantha. Cruz married to Montano in 2000, but they split in 2013 when the former called for an annulment.

Bea Alonzo closes door on ex-boyfriend Gerald Anderson: "I can never be friends with somebody I cannot trust."

Diretsahang inamin ni Bea Alonzo na hindi niya kayang makipagkai-bigan sa ex-boyfriend na si Gerald Anderson. Si Bea ang ika-apat na Kapuso star na sumalang sa Fast Talk With Boy Abunda. Isa sa mga tanong ni Boy ay may kinalaman sa nakaraan ni Bea. Napansin daw kasi ng TV host na nananatiling mabuting magkaibigan sa Bea sa ex-boyfriend niyang si Zanjoe Marudo bagamat natapos sa breakup ang ilang taon nilang relasyon. Tanong ni Boy: "Kaya mo bang makipagkai-bigan kay Gerald, not now but in the future?" Mabilis na sagot ni Bea: "Hindi, because I can never be friends with somebody I cannot trust and somebody who doesn't take responsibility for his actions. "So, siguro hindi." Inamin din ng Kapuso actress na nagtampo at nasaktan siya nang interbyuhin ni Boy si Gerald noong

March 5, 2021 tungkol sa kontrobersiyal nilang hiwalayan. Sa naabing interview, sinabi ni Gerald na hindi niya ghinost si Bea, salungat ito sa sinasabi ng aktres na dahilan ng kanilang breakup. Sabi ni Bea, ito ang ginawa sa kanya noon ni Gerald dahil bigla na lang siyang hindi kinausap ng aktor. Saad ng aktres kay Boy, "Oo [nagtampo], kasi tao lang ako Tito Boy. "Kahit sino siguro ang mag-interview sa kanya at that time, it would hurt, especially kung half the time he wasn't telling the truth." Sagot ni Bea: "Siguro yung pinakamalaking pagsisinungaling niya was that he never ghosted me, because he did."



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PAY FOR JOBS from page 1

their supposed oath taking.

According to the victims, whose identities were not disclosed, a certain Undersecretary Eduardo Diokno and Assistant Secretary Johnson See, both from the Office of the Executive Secretary, instructed them to proceed to the Palace for their supposed swearing in rites to be administered by President Ferdinand “Bongbong” Marcos Jr.

One of the victims received the invitation through a letter.

Presidential Communications Office Secretary Cheloy Garafil said the victims revealed that “they paid huge sums of money to secure positions in the government after receiving information or invitation about available government positions.” They were told to assume supposed positions including a diplomatic post to The Netherlands, Department of Transportation (DOTr) assistant secretary,

Tourism Infrastructure and Enterprise Zone Authority (TIEZA) board member, Clark International Airport Corporation (CIAC) president and chief executive officer (CEO), Early Childhood Care and Development Council executive director and vice chairperson, Clark Development Corp. (CDC) director and Port of Batangas manager.

Senior Deputy Executive Secretary Hubert Guevara said there was no oath taking ceremony scheduled in the afternoon and

the “appointees” obviously fell victim to fraudsters.

Some of the victims said they already had doubts on the authenticity of appointments and oath taking after noticing some inconsistencies in the information being provided to them by the scammers but they still proceeded to Malacañang.

The Palace has appealed to the victims to cooperate with authorities as the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) will conduct an investigation on the incident.



DR. GUILLERMO DE VILLA MEMORIAL GOLF TOURNAMENT July 23, 2023

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“That’s just because it’s a lot

Liza said she wants to become a “world-class actress” and jumpstart her music career. Apart from signing with James Reid’s Careless label, Liza is signed with the Los Angeles-based music label Transparent Arts, owned

Born in the Bay Area in California, Liza is sort of having a

Building. “My goal is to become my own person because for so many years, I was in a love team and that’s what I was mainly known for or, like, I was attached to so many different brands. I never was able to build up my own personal branding. I feel like this year and the next few years is all about figuring out what I really wanna do with my career and personally finding out what excites me, what fuels my passion,” Liza shared.



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Philippines' Maria Luisa Varela wins Miss Planet International 2023; Herlene Budol's manager reacts

Maria Luisa Varela has been crowned Miss Planet International 2023 in Cambodia, drawing a reaction from vlogger and pageant director Wilbert Tolentino.

Varela competed at the coronation night held yesterday, January 29, in Koh Pich Theater, Phnom Penh City.

Zimbabwe's Jemima Mandemwa and Japan's Aya Ono are 1st runner-up and 2nd runner-up, respectively.

Other winners include Tiffany Ha (3rd Runner Up - Vietnam), Katarina Juselius (4th Runner Up - Finland), Alina Safronova (5th Runner Up - Latvia) and Pok Srevleak (6th Runner Up - Cambodia).

The Miss Planet International (MPI) was mired with controversy late last year when Binibining Pilipinas 2022 1st runner-up Herlene Nicole Budol, together with her manager and MPI national director Wilbert Tolentino, had to back out due to several mishaps prior to landing and while joining the pre-pageant activities in Uganda, where it was supposed to be held.

With Varela's win, Tolentino aired his scathing remarks on his Instagram.

He claimed that the competition was rigged, and that the Philippine contestant was already aware of the finals question.

"FYI lang po guys, bayad po ang Korona ang na panalunan ng Miss Planet Philippines at alam na nya final Question. Bago cya lumipad ng #Cambodia para sumabak ng MPI.

"Ate Girl (Maria Luisa) lumaban ka ng patas kawawa din mga co candidate mo at



nag effort din cla para sa Pageant sinalihaan nila at mag travel pa sila patungong #Cambodia," Tolentino wrote.

He had also called out a certain Miki Antonio, with whom he has been figuring out in the issue regarding the national directorship of Miss Planet International Philippines.

"Kaya kht balik baliktarin natin ang dokumento ako parin ang NATIONAL DIRECTOR ng MISS PLANET PHILIPPINES. Klaro po tayong?" he wrote.

He added: "Nag reach out ako sa iyo at ikinwento ko pa sayo na mahigit kami 60plus Countries na indi mag Susupporta sa MPI. Dala sa karansan ng trauma at takot lahat sa #Uganda. As National Director for Ms Planet in the Philippines, I would like to clarify that no replacement has been made. The Philippines will not send any representative to Ms. Planet competition this year."

Power couple impresses them at AGT
Filipino contemporary acrobatic dance group Power Duo advanced to the grand finale of "America's Got Talent: All-Stars"

edition after winning the super fans voting portion. The unit first rose into prominence after winning the fifth season of "Pilipinas Got Talent" in 2016.

Power Duo, composed of real-life sweethearts Jervin and Anjanette Minor, set the AGT stage on fire after performing Calum Scott's hit song "You Are the Reason". The couple's performance, uploaded on America's Got Talent's You-



Tube channel on Jan. 24, showed the clip of their performance telling their love story through dance.

The clip also showed the audience and show judges Simon Cowell, Howie Mandel, and Heidi Klum watching their performance in awe.

Power Duo joined child magician Aidan McCann in the show's grand finalists, while the show's fifth preliminary round will determine who will join both acts.

Jed Madela admits he once considered quitting showbiz: "Wala nang pumapansin."

Ipinagtapat ni Jed Madela na naisipan niyang iwan ang kanyang singing career noong 2021 dahil naramdaman niyang hindi na siya kailangan sa industriya.

Pakiramdam daw kasi niya ay naiit-sapuwera siya sa tuwing niya bago at mas batang singers na ipinakilala.

Si Jed ay kilala bilang singer ng ABCBN. Napapanood siya bilang judge ng "Tawag ng Tanghalan" sa It's Showtime at bilang performer sa ASAP Natin To.

Kuwento niya sa vlog ni Toni Gonzaga nitong January 29, 2023, "There are times pag may bago nang artist na dumating, everybody goes crazy over that artist, and then nasa-shove aside ako, or feeling ko lang.

"Minsan parang kinukuwestiyon ko ang sarili ko na, 'Is it still worth it to stay and keep singing?' na mukhang wala naman, e, wala namang pumapansin...

"Na parang mas pinapansin na nila yung mas bata, mga bago."

Pakiramdam daw ni Jed ay hindi nasusuklian ang efforts na ibinigay niya bilang singer.

"And for a while, I considered stopping na lang kasi hindi na ako masaya. Hindi na ako masaya how the industry was treating me...

"Na parang binibigay ko lahat. My entire life, I've given so much love and passion sa music industry.

"But sometimes, wala, nakakalimutan ka na, parang pagkatapos ng isang event or isang favor na ginawa mo, that's it. Wala na."

Sinarili raw ni Jed ito dahil ayaw niya ng "gulo, isyu, at mang-hassle ng ibang tao."

Paliwanag niya, "Ayokong isipin nila na, 'Arte-arte naman nito,' na parang, 'Ang dami na ngang binibigay sa yo tapos hindi mo pa naa-appreciate... Kailangan mo pa ng thank you.'"

Sabi rin ni Jed, ang susunod na landas na tatahakin niya ay maging mentor sa mga aspiring singers.

Si Jedy ay kasalukuyang national director ng World Championships of Performing Arts sa Pilipinas.

"That's the next step," sabi ng singer, na pagtutuunan ang pagdiskubre at pagtuturo sa mga baguhang talents.



Alexa Ilacad Reveals How Being a Fan of Musicals Landed Her a Role in ‘Walang Aray’

Dreams do come true!

KDLex is one of the most promising love teams of this generation. But even though KD Estrada and Alexa Ilacad are successful in their showbiz careers, that doesn't stop them from pursuing other interests such as performing in theater.

ICYDK, the two will actually be starring in the musical play Walang Aray, which is written by Rody Vera and directed by Ian Segarra.

Before KDLex landed their roles for the play, they were just fans of musicals like all of us. When asked about how they got their roles during her most recent YouTube vlog, Alexa responded that it all started when she and KD watched musicals in New

York with the ABS-CBN's TV Production Head Laurenti Dyogi—aka Direk Lauren.

Following their meeting in New York, the director was aware of Alexa and KD's interest in Broadway plays, so Alexa received a random call from Direk Lauren about the opportunity to act in a play. Alexa recalled, "Alam ni Direk Lauren kung gaano kami na-in-spire."

She continued, "One day nag-mes-sage si Direk Lauren,



sabi niya 'Hey, are you and KD free? Tara, meet tayo.' Nakwento lang niya na there's an offer from PETA for Walang Aray and they wanted us."

Although Alexa has always wanted to try theater acting, she had doubts about whether or not to take on the role. She admitted, "Humingi ako kay Lord ng sign kasi I really wanna do it. It would bring me so much pride to say that I successfully starred in a musical."

Fortunately, the young star was able to convince herself to take the part, thanks to random quotes on social media! Alexa shared, "Ang galing, so I was scrolling on Instagram the next day, then I saw a post—'If the only thing stopping you is fear, then why don't you explore it?' I don't want to let anxiety grab this opportunity away from me."

She also expressed her admiration for other theater performers because of how talented they are. Alexa mentioned, "Sobrang galing nila as in! Ang galing nilang lahat kaya mas nagenjoy kami ni KD kasi ang dami naming natutunan sa kanila. Iba talaga ang respeto ko sa mga theater actors."

There's a huge difference between acting for theater and for television, so the role is truly an achievement for Alexa and KD. We can't wait to see them both act in the play as Julia and Tenyong!

Sheree Bautista split with boy-friend after waiting 8 years

Nakipaghiwalay na nmng singer na si Sheree Bautista sa kanyang boyfriend makalipas ang walong taong pakikipagrelasyon.

Ito ang dahilan kaya nagdesisyon siyang pumunta sa Amerika noong October 2022 to mend her broken heart.

"Eight years po kami together and I guess, napagod na ako sa paghihintay ng marriage proposal," pabiro pero may katotohanang pahayag ni Sheree.

"Siguro, ganoon talaga, people grow apart. Hindi lahat pinagtagpo at itinatagpo para sa isa't isa.

"Ang important, okay ang memories na naiwan. For now, career-wise, marami pa akong gustong ma-achieve."

Kaya sigurado na ang kanyang planong pag-aaral sa New York City.

"In life, sometimes even good things never last kaya dapat mahalín ang sarili, work for yourself and for your family, learn to be independent.

"Family is the most important support system. Kapag nawala ang lahat, ang family pa rin ang uwian mo."

Pagpapatuloy ni Sheree, "Dapat pala, may timeline ka kung walang balak na mag-next level [sa relationship] ang partner mo. Huwag sayangin ang time.

"Ang sabi nga ni Miley Cyrus, 'I can buy myself flowers.'



Will ‘Batang Quiapo’ air longer than ‘Ang Probinsyano’? Coco Martin answers

Now that "Darna" is down to its last two weeks and Coco Martin is set to make a TV comeback via another Fernando Poe Jr. classic "Batang Quiapo," will the upcoming TV adaptation match or even surpass the seven-year run of "Ang Probinsyano"?

Lead star Coco said he leaves it to the audience if they want his new show to air longer.

"Honestly, 'di ko po masasabi ko kung hahaba siya kung tatagal siya na kas-ing tagal ng 'Ang Probinsyano.' Tanging mga tao lang po ang makakapagsabi noon kasi sa 'Ang Probinsyano' po, sa experience ko, hindi po namin talaga siya plano na humaba," the actor said at the recent presscon of one of his brand endorsements, RiteMed.

He shared that more than the consistent good ratings of "Ang Probinsyano," the show's popularity was due to the inspiration it gave to the viewing public. He cited it as

one of the reasons why it was extended several times.

"Kung 'di po, siguro dahil napansin po namin na may iba pa po kaming naibibigay sa mga tao. Kasi nga po sabi namin, nakakapag-inspire ka sa mga Pilipinong minsan nawawalan na ng pag-asa. Nakakapagbigay ka ng ngiti sa mga taong naiinip na at wala ng magawa," Coco said.

Apart from the inspiration, the show was also known for reintroducing seasoned actors who have not been active on TV or films. Its long list included Anna Roces, Cogie Domingo, Kathleen Hermosa and Daniel Fernando.



Coco Martin shot scenes for his upcoming teleserye "Batang Quiapo" on the day of the Feast of the Black Nazarene.

Coco also revealed that he had gotten to a point where he was tired because of his daily grind. They were shooting for airing, meaning, they were filming scenes that were to be aired on the same day.

"Kahit pagod na pagod ka, kapag nakikita mong masaya at nag-eeenjoy lahat

ng tao, 'yun 'yung nakakapawi ng lahat ng hirap. Kaya kung ano man po 'yung... sana, sana kung ano po 'yung pagmamahal at pagtangkik ng mga manonood, ng mga Pilipino sa 'Ang Probinsyano,' sana gan'on din po sa 'Batang Quiapo,'" Coco ended.

Candid SPOOF

(Pop-ups are not supposed to be taken seriously - EDITOR)



Birthday celebrant Noel Perada (CENTRE) and family pose for photographers.

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Xyriel Manabat, paano napabalik sa paggawa ng teleserye?

Ang role ni Xyriel Manabat bilang si Antonette Pavia ang isa sa inaabangan sa bagong Kapamilya series na 'Dirty Linen' No regrets kung ilarawan ng former child actress na si Xyriel Manabat ang kaniyang pagbabalik-telebisyon bilang bahagi ng inaabangang hit Kapamilya series na Dirty Linen.

Si Xyriel ay gumaganap na Antonette Pavia na isa sa mga aabangan bilang kontrabida sa magiging tombalan ni Francine Diaz at Seth Fedelin. Sa isang bahagi ng panayam kay Xyriel, inamin niya na hindi niya inaasahan na mapapabilang siya sa powerhouse cast ng Dirty Linen na isa ngayon sa paboritong panoorin ng Kapamilya supporters gabi-gabi.

"Hindi ko po alam na ganito kalaki ang cast, ang nabanggit lang po talaga is kung



okay ka ba parang kontrabida sa show ng FranSeth (Francine Diaz and Seth Fedelin) 'yun lang po talaga ang nabanggit na cast FranSeth," bungad ni Xyriel.

Nasorpresa nang makita ang malalaking bituin na kaniyang kasama ngayon kabilang na sina Janine Gutierrez at Zanjoe Marudo.

Reveal ng former child actress, hindi siya nagdalawang isip nang i-alok sa kaniya ang role bilang kontrabida sa hit Kapamilya series.

"Hindi naman po ako nagdalawang isip. Kasi 'yun lang po ang hinihintay ko noong nag-stop po ako. Naghihintay lang naman po ako nang magiging malapit po sa puso ko na offer na alam ko rin na hindi puwedeng palagpasin."

Bilang isang kilalang dating child actress, inamin ni Xyriel na sa kaniyang pansa-



mantalang pamamahinga noon sa show business, ilang offers rin dumating na kaniyang natanggihan.

"Sobrang grateful at thankful na nakabalik po ako with Star Magic, of course. Hindi ko na po nakikita ang sarili ko na babalik sa industry na hindi po sila ang nagha-handle sa akin. And happy po ako sa nakasama po ako dito sa 'Dirty Linen.' Sobrang thankful po ako sa mga bosses," paliwanag niya.

Sa pagdating aniya ng sunod-sunod na offers, nananatili si Xyriel sa kaniyang desisyon na hinatayin ang perfect role na babagay aniya sa kaniya at magiging malapit sa kaniyang puso.

"Actually sobrang hirap po kasi kahit

gaano karaming offer po nung mga time na nagre-rest po ako sa industry, parang ang hirap pong tumanggap ng offer na makakapagpabalik po talaga sa inyo knowing na worth the risk siya and talagang mabibigyan mo ng justice 'yung role. So natuwa po ako roon sa offer na kasama ang mga cast and knowing na kontrabida naman ako dito," pahayag ng former child star.

Sa huli, malaki ang naging pasasalamat ni Xyriel sa Dreamscape Entertainment na muling naniwala sa kaniyang talento bilang isang aktres. "Sobrang honored po ako na sa Dreamscape at sa Kapamilya network pa rin po ako babalik."

Ilan lamang sa mga markadong roles ni Xyriel sa Kapamilya network ay ang Momay na napanood noong 2010 at 100 Days To Heaven na napanood naman noong 2011.

Jane de Leon clarifies cancelled Regine Velasquez cameo in Darna

Mariing pinabulaanan ni Jane de Leon ang kumakalat na isyung siya ang dahilan kung bakit hindi natuloy ang pagge-guest ng Asia's Songbird na si Regine Velasquez sa finale ng Mars Ravelo's Darna.

Ayon sa statement, hindi nagtugma ang schedule nina Jane at Regine kaya't hindi natuloy ang singer-actress.

Personal na nakiusap si Jane na huwag nang palakihin pa ang isyu.

Saad niya, "Actually, for me, it was not an issue naman to begin with.

"Sadyang hindi lang talaga nagtugma ang schedule namin ni Ate Reg [Regine].

"And I think it's very normal naman sa mga artists.

"Ginagawa niya yung rehearsal niya for her upcoming concert. And that time din kasi, I have my endorsement



show. "So we tried to adjust our schedules, sadyang hindi lang kami talaga pinayagan."

"Pero looking forward naman ako na maka-work siya.

Ibinuking din ni Jane na ang pagge-guest sana ni Regine sa Darna ay biglaan at wala sa script.

"So, they're looking for someone who can portray for that exactly and they talked about Ate Regine.

"Sa sobrang biglaan, nagkasunod-sunod yung schedule."

Sa tanong kung sino ang ipapalit kay Regine, mismong siya raw ay wala ring ideya.

Ani Jane, "Wala po talaga akong idea, and for that character, hindi ko rin alam kung sino ang ipapalit.

"So, aabangan ko rin. Papanoorin ko rin talaga kasi excited din akong malaman kung sino yon if ever."

Janella Salvador as kontrabida: 'Okay din naman magbida kontrabida'

When she was first offered the dual role of Regina/Valentina in Mars Ravelo's Darna, Janella Salvador admitted it was really a dream come true for her to bring to life the iconic villain.

"I really fell in love with the character. I love Regina and I think she's one of the best characters I will ever portray in my lifetime.

"I think this role really made me grow as an actress," she shared.

Preparing for her first onscreen role as a villain was also a welcome challenge for Janella, who was previously last seen acting in the 2020 series The Killer Bride.

"I really just get into the character and inaaral ko talaga. "Si Regina naman talaga ay hindi naman masamang tao. She is also a victim. Janella also admitted she is now



open to doing more kontrabida roles in future projects.

Another thing Janella is thankful for was the warm feedback she got online from the LGBTQ community for her onscreen portrayal.

The Darna actress also shared her message for those who want to get into doing offbeat and challenging roles like her.

"Siguro it would be an honor if people looked up to me because of how I portrayed my character really because I worked hard on it din. I really appreciate it. Siguro I want people to know lang that for people who want to act, you can really portray any role that you want, as long as you're really into it and you really put in the work, you can do it," she added.

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Jane de Leon and Janella Salvador talk about their close friendship: 'Hindi siya pang-showbiz lang'



After months of working together on the hit fantasy Mars Ravelo's Darna, lead stars Jane de Leon and Janella Salvador admitted they never expected to gain a following online from the LGBTQ community who appreciated their portrayal onscreen of the characters Narda and Regina respectively.

"Actually laging tinatanong sa amin ito di ba? Parang the first time I saw it ako pa nagpakita kay Jane. Pero even before the people started shipping us, we were already joking about it sa set. Marami kaming scenes na siyempre kinukuhanan kami ng reaction shots, ang tagal naming (magkatitigan), ganyan. Actually sila talaga yung grabe magpa-trend.

"We are so thankful. It was unexpected but it's such an honor din to have the LGBTQ community supporting you. Nakaka-warm din siya ng puso. Nakakatuwa. I feel like this side of the community rarely gets represented. Kaya they really clung onto us," shared Janella during the Darna Super mediacon last January 30.

Supportive of each other on and offscreen, Jane revealed what makes the onscreen chemistry with her co-star so strong.

"Actually pareho kaming introvert. Sa mga fans lagi namin sinasabi na sobrang unexpected talaga na sumabog yung Darlentina and Janella especially sa panahon ngayon. Hindi naman natin inakala na mangyayari yun.

"But we both made an effort to be able to break each other's walls. Talagang nag-bond kami. Pag walang taping, mag-me-message yung isa, 'Uy, want to hang out in my room? Let's watch a movie?' Until we eventually became comfortable with each other and talagang I think our friendship is for keeps. Like hindi kami pang-Darna lang.

A teen TikTok who was mocked for calling a \$60 bag 'luxury' responded to online hate in a tearful video: 'Growing up I did not have a lot'

- Zoe Gabriel, a Singapore-based TikTok, made a video thanking her dad for buying her a \$60 bag.
- Some commenters mocked 17-year-old Gabriel for referring to the bag as "luxury."
- Gabriel called the negative comments "ignorant," saying she did not grow up with wealth.

A Singapore-based TikTok made a tearful video response to online hate after she was mocked for referring to a \$60 bag as "luxury."

On January 8, 17-year-old Zoe Gabriel posted a video with an on-screen caption that read, "my first luxury bag." In the clip, Gabriel could be seen purchasing a bag from Charles & Keith, a Singaporean fashion brand.

The video then cut to a clip of Gabriel unboxing her purchase and putting it over her shoulder. "Thank you dad," an additional caption under the post read.

Gabriel's post blew up, receiving 6.7 million views, but it received a mixed response.

While some people wrote positive remarks complimenting her and saying they liked her new bag, others appeared to mock her for using the term "luxury" to describe the item, which retails at \$76 on the fashion house's US website, and 79.90 Singapore dollars, or approximately \$60, on its Singapore website.

Some commenters compared her description to "calling a fast food restaurant fine dining," and highlighted fashion brands that have a similar price point but typically

wouldn't be described as "luxury."

Later that same day, Gabriel replied to one comment that said, "Who's gonna tell her?" followed by a laughing emoji. She filmed a response, explaining why she stood by her use of the term "luxury."

"Growing up, I did not have a lot. My family didn't have a lot. We couldn't buy things as simple as bread," she said.

She continued, appearing to tear up in the clip: "Your comment spoke volumes on how ignorant you seem because of your wealth. To you, an \$80 bag may not be a luxury. For me and my family it is a lot, and I'm so grateful that my dad was able to get me one. He worked so hard for that money. I can't believe I got hate over a bag, that I was so excited to have."

She was met with an overwhelmingly positive response, receiving 2.1 million views and 171,000 likes, and commenters began writing positive comments under this video, as well as under her original post.

"The haters making fun of you are simply too privileged to see things from another perspective and be happy for someone else. Don't let that get you down," wrote one commenter.

"Beautiful bag. having a dad who loves you is a luxury in itself," said another commenter.

"Thank you for all those who have shown me love and support," Gabriel said in a follow-up post from Janu-



Zoe Gabriel's TikTok post went viral, receiving 6.7 million views. Zoe Gabriel via TikTok

ary 9, adding, "Remember to be kind and have compassion and have the best day ever."

Gabriel did not immediately respond to Insider's request for comment, but in an email to the Singapore broadsheet newspaper The Straits Times, the TikTok said she thought the negative response she initially received "highlights the blind spot of people who grew up with privilege and take it for granted. They can't imagine what it is like for peers to grow up in a low-to-middle income background, much less poor."

Representatives for Charles & Keith did not immediately respond to Insider's request for comment, but told The Straits Times that after seeing Gabriel's video, they invited her and

her father to have lunch with the company's founders, who also came from "humble beginnings."

"Our founders believe that our products should spark joy, empower fashion lovers and give them confidence, something we believe she presented so eloquently in her video and for which we are so grateful," a company spokesperson told the outlet.

Zoe Gabriel has over 44,000 TikTok followers and she typically posts lifestyle content sharing information about herself with her followers, such as facts about her Filipino heritage and her family.

On TikTok, influencers have previously come under fire for talking about making large and expensive purchases, facing accusations about being privileged or out of touch.

In October, Insider reported that an influencer received backlash for saying she "accidentally" bought a couch for \$100,000, later appearing to suggest the whole thing was a prank. In November, another influencer said she spent \$10,000 on Harry Styles so she could be close to the stage, attracting criticism from commenters who said that level of spending would be beyond the means of many ordinary people.



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Maui Taylor denies rumor linking her to Gab Lagman; jokes, “Na-ate zone ako.”

Nagtaka at ikinagulat ni Maui Taylor, 39, ang balitang nag-uugnay sa kanila ng 27-year-old actor na si Gab Lagman.

Wala raw itong katotohanan.

Nakatrabaho ni Maui si Gab sa ilang proyekto, pero hindi naman sila naging malapit sa isa’t-isa.

“Ano ba yung nangyari?” ang nagulat na reaksiyon ni Maui kung tanungin ito sa tsismis tungkol sa kanila ni Gab.

“Hindi ko alam yung isyu ni Gab Lagman. Nagkasama sa isang series lang, The Kasambahays [2019].

“Sa Hello, Universe [2023 movie], hindi kami nagkita kasi nung first shooting day, sila, fourth day ako.

“Magkasama kami sa The Kasambahays, pero hindi pa kami close noon.”

ON GAB LAGMAN: “WALA TALAGA.”

May isa pang patunay si Maui kung bakit hindi totoo ang balita. “Si Gab? Eto na ang nakakatawa, tinawag ako na ‘ate.’ Na-ate zone ako so paano magiging kami?

“Nagulat ako, wala. Wala talaga. Nagkikita lang kami sa Viva office or kapag may basketball game, ako yung muse. Hi, ganoon lang,” ang depensa at paliwanag pa ni Maui.

ON JORDAN HERRERA: “NEVER.”

Itinanggi rin ni Maui ang balitang nagkaroon sila ng

Dinenay ni Maui Taylor, 39, ang rumor na nagli-link sa kanya kay Gab Lagman, 27. Kahit nagkatrabaho sila sa two projects, bihira raw silang nagkita.

relasyon ni Jordan Herrera, ang kapareha niya sa Gami-tan, ang blockbuster launching movie niya na ipinalabas noong 2002.

“Na-link lang kami ni Jordan, pero never [na naging boyfriend].”

ON BRYAN REVILLA: ONLY BOYFRIEND NA TAGA-SHOW-BIZ

Iisa lang daw ang nakarelasyo niya na taga-showbiz. Aniya, “Si Bryan Revilla lang ang taga-showbiz na naging boyfriend ko, pero mabilis lang, six months,” ang sabi ni Maui na hindi na uli nagkaroon ng karelasyon na

artista dahil sa kanyang sariling salita, “Parang na-trauma ako.”

SET-UP WITH EX-PART-NER

Sa ngayon, may dalawang anak si Maui sa kanyang naging partner na si Anton Sabarre.

Noong Huwebes, January 26, inamin niyang hiwalay na sila matapos ang halos sampung taon na relasyon.

Ang kaibahan lang, nagsasama pa rin sila sa iisang bahay alang-alang sa kanilang mga anak na lalake na may edad na pito at siyam.

Nabanggit ni Maui na inalok ito noon ng kasal, pero tumanggi siya, at ngayong hiwalay na sila, napagtanto ng aktres na tama ang desisyon niya.

“Ang sabi nga ng aking BFF na si Katya [Santos], ‘Naku huwag kang magpakasal! Pagsisisihan mo.’

“Sabi ko, ‘Huwag kang mag-alala. Wala naman talaga akong plano.’”

Ayon kay Maui, mutual ang decision nila ng kanyang ex-partner na maghiwalay.

“Sabay kami na bumitaw. Alam namin sa mga sarili namin na hanggang dun na lang.

“Actually nung nabuntis nga ako, umiyak ako noon. Na-shock ako. Sabi ng brother ko, ‘So ano, bakit ka umiyak? Kasi tapos na yung rock-star life mo?’

“Lalo tuloy akong umiyak!” ang pagtatapat ni Maui.

Namayagpag ang career ni Maui bilang isa sa Viva Hot Babes at sexy star noong 2003. Sometime in 2008, pinili niyang talikuran ang showbiz para sa kanyang partner at mga anak, pero nagpasya siya na tuluyang balikan ang pag-arte noong 2019.

“I always knew that I was gonna end up in showbiz. Babalik at babalik ka rin. Masyadong masaya at makulay ang mundo ng showbiz. Siyempre, ito yung kinalakihan kong environment na kahit natsitsismis ka, iba yung happiness ng industriya natin.

“Thankful ako na kahit na ever since na bumalik ako noong 2019, sobrang smooth lang. Tahimik, wala kang naririnig na negative. Ayoko kasi ng negative energy. Gusto ko positive lang. Happy lang talaga.”

Paano maging happy kahit na may problema?

“Think of your blessings. Na masuwerte ka pa rin compared to other people na merong mas malaking problema kesa sa iyo.

“Think of where you are right now at this point in your life, kung saan ka galing, and you will learn to appreciate kapag tiningnan mo lahat. Saka, negative out!”

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Inside the Private World of Filipina Adult Cam Models

They earn seriously big bucks and keep their own time, too.

Ally* was hanging out with a friend when she was first told about a popular adult webcam and livestreaming site. She says she really wasn't into posting sexy or provocative videos, but after trying it out one time, she was shocked when "many" people started following her page on the site.

It's a similar story with Gina*.

"I've known about [adult webcam site] for a while now and have had a page for a long time but I never posted," Ally says. "I just started using it since lockdown began and I absolutely love my salary now."

Ally and Gina are just two of the Filipino models on the "camming" site, where models strip or dance on camera to an audience composed of subscribers. These subscribers then offer tips to the models, which are then generally split between the site and the model.

According to the site about 50 percent of its top models are Filipinas and make good money, earning as much as \$40,000 (over P2 million) every month. In some cases, the models offer the videos for sale and, depending on the model, they may also entertain private video calls.

Gina reveals she earns \$10,000 to \$30,000 (about P500,000 to P1.5 million) every pay check doing what she does. Ally meanwhile says she's taken home a total of P3 million over the one year that she's been performing on the site.

What cam models do
And what exactly do they do?

Ally, who is based in Quezon City, says she earns merely by providing "seductive videos" on the site.

"I can do teasing video like dancing showing my upper part and accepting video greetings but will never do masturbating videos and sucking sex toys," Ally says.

Gina, who is based elsewhere in Southeast Asia, is a bit more daring.

"I can do everything as long as I am paid," she says. "I'm currently earning a lot of money through the site by interacting with my fans and creating relationships with them."

Because the models are performing in the safety of their own homes, the likelihood of anything hostile or disagreeable happening is diminished considerably.

"I haven't had any unpleasant experiences yet because I always have my rules and limitations in my profile," Ally says. "If they have a request that is somewhat offending, I always say no and fortunately, they are respecting my decisions."

"I love all my subscribers and they love what I am doing," Gina adds. "It became their gateway to connect with me."

Coronavirus spike

A story on the New York Times detailed the rise of adult cam sites and models during the lockdown period caused by the coronavirus. As people were forced to stay home, more people have taken to doing sexually suggestive and explicit live broadcasts to earn money. Cam sites themselves have also experienced a spike in customers.



CamSoda, one of these cam sites, told the New York Times that there had been a 37 percent increase in new model sign-ups this March compared to last March. ManyVids, another cam site said there was a 69 percent increase in new model sign-ups, according to Bella French, co-founder and CEO.

Additionally, the number of new viewers to CamSoda has doubled this year compared to early 2019, according to the company.

In the case of the cam site where Ally and Gina perform, the platform says 90 percent of its models who earn money from the livestreaming feature are from the Philippines.

"It really took fire when (Ally) shared that she was a single mom and struggling financially was making over \$2,000 per day," a representative from the site told Esquire Philippines. "More than 50 percent of all new model signups (on the platform) are from PH. We have hundreds of new models and influencers from PH on the platform. Models come over from other platforms and find success with (us)."

"(The site) pays out multiple millions every year to their PH models, and they are the hardest working and most grateful for the opportunity," the representative added.

Life of a cam model

They may work hard, but both Ally and Gina say they have the freedom and flexibility to work on their content on the platform.

"Usually, during the day I'm finishing all my household chores then every night I'm starting to fix myself for preparation in video recording," Ally says. "I can easily check also the transactions happening in my account during my free time. I think I spend three to five hours on this site. However, my time extends if I have one-on-one video call schedule to a client."

Gina, meanwhile, says that nighttime during the Philippines is her working hours. "I do live almost every night," she says.

While Ally says she has not noticed a significant increase in activity during the lockdown period, possibly because the economic status of some clients have also been affected by the crisis, Gina has had a different experience.

"(The site) launched the Coronavirus Model Relief Package, with 100 percent commission payouts for models," Gina says. "I love it, because we all earned a significant amount of money despite this pandemic."

The models are aware of the popularity of Filipinas on cam sites and offer theories about why this is so. For Ally, it boils down to their people skills.

"Filipinas are good at establishing a rapport between them and their clients by creating an ambiance that is not always about having a good body but also with a sensible mind," she says. "Also, I think the natural appeal of being Filipina, knowing many models have mixed nationalities, (is a) plus factor why Filipinas are in demand in this business."

Gina puts forth a more practical analysis.

"Most Westerners don't even want to spend once they subscribe," she says. "But Asians are willing to spend more to see more of those popular Filipino girls."

Ally, who says she is 25 years old, is a professional model and still does it on the side from time to time. Currently, however, "camming" on the site is her main source of income. She says she doesn't know how long she intends to keep doing it.

"Maybe until I can save more because I am planning to get a carwash business going and buy a house for my mom and help my family in the province," she says.

Gina, meanwhile, says she's actually a chef and would like to keep being a cam model for as long as she can benefit from it.

Both also offer practical tips for anybody thinking about getting into the cam modeling business.

"Keep your body fit and appealing," Ally says. "Improve your confidence. Invest in sexy clothes or underwear. Prepare sexy contents for your videos. Be ready for bashers and don't let them get to you."

"Get up and believe in yourself!" Gina says simply. "Be empowered and enjoy."

*(names have been changed)

Gigi de Lana reveals mom with cancer is the reason behind her short hair

Gigi de Lana has a very personal reason for cutting her hair short. The singer addressed a netizen's question on TikTok on why she cut her long hair, revealing that she did for her mother with cancer. "Ang daming hindi nakakaalam nito. Mommy ko po may stage 4 breast cancer, maiksi po ang hair niya. So gusto ko po kapag makikita ko siya parehas kami halos ng iksi ng hair," Gigi shared. "Pero ito po hindi ko po kaya 'yung semi kalbo o kaya parang boy cut talaga. So ayun po. Para hindi na po kayo magtanong

at magsabi sa akin bakit ka nagpagupit. Ayan alam niyo na," she added. Gigi has been open about her mom Imelda's bout with cancer. In an interview with the singer back in June 2022, Gigi shared that her blossoming career as a singer was her way of fulfilling her mother's dream. "My mother has a lot of dreams and hopes for me. I want to make at least some of them come true. And I want to prove to her that she has been right all along to believe in me even before anyone else ever did. She dreamed I'd make it big one day, be seen on



huge billboards and all that," Gigi said. Amid her thriving career, Gigi emphasized that spending time with her mother and her family is still her number one priority. "When I can't balance my time with work and family, I feel like there's an empty space inside of me. And I don't want to feel that way. I wouldn't trade being with her for anything in the world. I

love her so much," she remarked. Gigi rose to fame with her song covers on YouTube alongside her band Gigi Vibes. In an interview in July 2021, Gigi remarked that "consistency and hard work" have been the keys for the success of their YouTube channel. "Consistency and hard work talaga. You have to listen to your audience, kung ano 'yung gusto nila. And as much as we can, be as natural. Maging natural. Kung sino kami sa bahay, kung sino kami sa kaibigan namin, kung sino kami sa inyo, ganun dapat. Kasi 'yung totoo yung hinahanap," she said.

ABS-CBN and GMA co-production 'Unbreak My Heart' starts shooting



'Unbreak My Heart' starring Jodi Sta. Maria, Richard Yap, Joshua Garcia, and Gabbi Garcia has already begun shooting.

In a report by ABS-CBN News, the cast members of the show lead by Jodi Sta. Maria and Richard Yap have already started filming in an unnamed location in the Philippines.

The series is the first collaboration of ABS-CBN and GMA alongside streaming platform Viu.

Richard remarked that he is ecstatic to work again with Jodi. It can be recalled that both have worked together in the long-running morning drama Be Careful With My Heart.

"We are so at home with each other, it's just the character that changes. I think this is something that will tickle their fancy because maganda 'yung story, it's very heart warming also tumatagos talaga sa puso 'yung storya na ito. I'm sure the fans will like it," Richard said.

Meanwhile, Jodi shared that they went through a lot of preparations.

"Pinaghandaan namin ito, ang dami-daming character discussions and meeting na ginawa para mas mapaganda yung mga characters, takbo ng storya," she shared.

Jodi hopes that Unbreak My Heart will pave the way for more collaborations between the two media giants.

"I also pray that this project would be the first of many projects na pagsasamahan ng GMA and ABS-CBN. At the end of the day s'yempre, we are all at the service of our audiences and para sa inyong lahat nito," the actress stated.

It will be the first time that Joshua Garcia and Gabbi Garcia will be teaming up for a series.

Joshua revealed that he is portraying a very mature role in the show.

"Exciting talaga lalo na ito, first day actually ito parang warm-up pa lang namin ni Gabbi... ibang-iba talaga sa mga nagawa ko before. Sobrang mature role na siya para sa akin," she said.

Meanwhile, Gabbi encouraged viewers to support the series which is first in the Philippine TV history.

"Napakalaking proyekto po nito. Lahat po kami pinaghahandaan nang matindi itong proyektong ito. Sana po suportahan po ninyo. Ito na ang chance natin na mawala ang network wars," Gabbi stated.

After shooting in the Philippines, the cast of the show will be flying to Switzerland where majority of the scenes will be shot.

It was on January 23, when it was announced that ABS-CBN and GMA will be co-producing Unbreak My Heart and will be streaming in 15 territories outside of the Philippines via Viu.

"It's a first for Philippine TV and I'm sure it's the audience that will be the winners in this collaboration. We're very excited to be working with ABS-CBN on TV for the first time," GMA Senior Vice-President for Programming, Talent Management, Worldwide, and Support Groups Atty. Annette Gazon-Valdes said during the contract signing and story conference of the series held at the ABS-CBN compound.

ABS-CBN COO of Broadcast Cory Vidanes described the partnership as "a milestone in the industry."

"We're thankful for this opportunity and we're very happy to work with GMA to serve our audiences. We unite as one team. We never imagined that this was going to happen," the ABS-CBN executive stated.



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