



17TH ANNUAL FESTIVAL OF PHILIPPINE ARTS AND CULTURE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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LATIN SOUL LEGEND “AFRO-FILIPINO” JOE BATAAN AND COMEDIENNE CHRISTINE “HAPPY SLIP” GAMBITO HEADLINE THE 17TH ANNUAL FESTIVAL OF PHILIPPINE ARTS AND CULTURE, SEPTEMBER 6 & 7, 2008

(LOS ANGELES – August 18, 2008) – The 17th Annual Festival of Philippine Arts and Culture (FPAC), Southern California’s largest and longest-running Filipino cultural celebration, will take place on September 6 & 7, 2008 at the beautiful seaside park Point Fermin in San Pedro. This year’s theme is “*Katutubong Landas – Our Native Ways*” – celebrating cultural traditions of the Filipino community.

Headlining this year’s Festival is Latin Soul legend, Joe Bataan. Born to an African American mother and a Filipino father and raised in Spanish Harlem, Bataan has been described as *a romantic street punk, a jailbird with spirit, a champion of the blue-collar underdog - Joe Bataan is a rebel with soul*. Known for such hits as "Ordinary Guy (Afro Filipino)," "Gypsy Woman," and "Mi Nube (My Cloud)," Joe Bataan’s loyal multigenerational and multicultural fanbase can look forward to his unmistakably smooth voice and his boundless energy, backed by a 10-piece band.

Also headlining this year is Christine "Happy Slip" Gambito. An internet celebrity, Happy Slip is YouTube’s #8 most subscribed ever, garnering over 6 million hits. Earlier this year, she was also named an Ambassador by the Department of Tourism, Philippines. Happy Slip will be making her stand-up comedy debut at FPAC.

In addition to Joe Bataan and Happy Slip, FPAC is proud to bring back some of the best in Filipino talent, such as crooner Anthony Castelo, hip hop MC Bambu, Kayamanan Ng Lahi Philippine Folk Arts, Rondalla Club of Los Angeles, Kiwi, the Committee, the Rhythm Natives, Vincent Reyes, Sampaguita Dance Ensemble, KULTURA, IMB Martial Arts Academy and the Kapisanang Mandirigma Martial Arts group. Festival-goers can also look forward to popular Festival events such as the Balut eating contest, Seniors' Vegetable contest, the youth Ati-Atihan parade, live art and painting at the Pilipino Artist Network Pavilion and much more.

FPAC is also excited to present new artists and events to enjoy. Celebrating the role and popularity of dance in Filipino culture, from the traditional to the contemporary, FPAC will present two dance events. The 1st Annual Tinikling "Battle," in which Filipino college organizations will compete and showcase their traditional Philippine dance skills fused with hip hop beats. And in the spirit of the "America's Best Dance Crew" craze, the FPAC Dance Showcase will feature Kaba Modern, PAC Modern and more of Southern California's hottest dance crews. There is certainly something for everyone to enjoy.

Initiated by the City of Los Angeles back in 1990, the stewardship of the Annual Festival of Philippine Arts & Culture was transferred over to a non-profit organization now called FilAm ARTS – the Association for the Advancement of Filipino American Arts & Culture.

"Still true to its original intent since its inception, the Festival is designed to be a 'common ground.' The aim of FPAC is to be as inclusive in every which way possible," says Executive Director Jilly Canizares. "This is seen in the conscious programming to include the rich diversity of Philippine artistic expressions – from old to new, traditional to contemporary, visual arts to cuisine. Coming to the Festival gives you a true slice of the Filipino American community."

Funded in part by the City of Los Angeles Dept of Cultural Affairs and L.A. District 15 Councilmember Janice Hahn, the L.A. County Arts Commission, the California Arts Council, and the National Endowment for the Arts, FPAC is also sponsored by Macy's, Wells Fargo Bank, Toyota, Western Union and Anschutz Entertainment Group.

The 17th Annual Festival is one of the public programs of FilAm ARTS – the Association for the Advancement of Filipino American Arts and Culture. With three public programs - the Annual Festival of Philippine Arts & Culture, the statewide Pilipino Artists Network, and the arts education program, Eskuwela Kultura, FilAm ARTS' organizational purpose is to engage diverse peoples in cultural arts as a synergistic approach to individual and community self-determination and empowerment.

For more information log onto www.filamarts.org, or call (323) 913-4663.