

VISION

The Visayas, which form the center of the Philippine Archipelago is composed of different and unique regions, islands and provinces. We envision bridging these regions and uniting its people in order to establish a single Visayan community having a common aspiration for just, fair society with love for their own culture, environment and country.



MISSION

To provide the Visayas people here and abroad with accurate, credible, relevant, balanced and up-to-date news and information. To cater to the specific needs of the Visayas readers inspired by our desire to offer genuine public service that comes from the heart.

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Social entrepreneurship, cultural development

RECENTLY, I just made a courtesy call for Iloilo Gov. Niel Tupas and Guimaras Gov. Felipe Hilan Nava, MD. That was made to formally inform the two provinces about the pioneering project in the Visayas by the Kalinawa Art Foundation based in Makati City, founded by Canadian David and Margarita Gilinsky. The mission of the foundation is to build on the inherent talent of the indigenous people (IP) of the Philippines by creating institutional mechanisms to contribute to building a visual fine arts sector that celebrates their culture, promotes talent, develops skills, facilitates training and builds cross-cultural education. Results will be measured by the increased visibility and understanding of indigenous people and improved income for participating artists. As project manager of Kalinawa, I owe the gratitude to the founder David Gilinsky and its executive director, Raquel Palma Gil, for choosing me as the project manager, curator and chief trainer of the projects in the Visayas. A festival for the visual arts outputs of the IP artists will be held in Iloilo sometime this coming April. If I am accurate, this will be the first time for pure art by the IP to be shown with dignity (in a respected gallery).

The social entrepreneurship model applied by Kalinawa is interesting. The foundation invests on building talents from IP communities and thereby give them opportunities to sell their artworks and improve income generation. The artists in the IP communities will receive training to develop the concept and skills needed to create their original artworks. Once the artists are ready with their sculptures and paintings, an exhibit built around a competition is held. There will be prizes for different categories: painting, sculpture, craft and youth outputs. To date, Kalinawa has already made twenty-two successful shows in Mindanao and Luzon. In line with workshops for the enhancement of artistic talents, I already conducted several sessions at Sitio Kati-Kati, Barangay San Miguel, Jordan, Guimaras whose chieftain is Mrs. Josephine Tahan. I sense the need for sustenance in the process of artmaking considering the availability of materials; thus I taught sculpture made of scrap wood and twigs combined with other mediums. The artists are provided with free materials for the sculptural explorations. Scrap materials may be challenging because mostly, many would end up works that still look like a scrap. But in this case, I feel the joy of success in imparting the talent as I see the partially-finished outputs of the IP artists in Guimaras. Who could believe that a mere 10-year-old child can do intriguing forms out of the given materials where the viewer would usually attribute it to a "learned" fine artist? Today, I will be conducting painting sessions at Sitio Nagpana, Barotac Viejo. This will be another adventure to raise up talents. On the question of how Kalinawa builds the visual arts industry, here are the answers: 1) It builds a market and an audience. As the following view expresses, this aspect is essential: "Accessing markets was identified as the crucial element in securing the sustainability of a cultural enterprise. As a corollary, the most important support that can be offered to a cultural enterprise is helping it access markets," from Yarri Kamara's "Keys to Successful Cultural Enterprise Development in Developing Countries."

2) It builds financial resources to support education and capacity development. The key element here is that the artistic skills already exist, but what is lacking is a comprehensive approach. Yarri Kamara avers: "Cultural actors in developing countries exhibit a wealth of creativity in their respective fields, but often lack some key technical skills, to enable them to produce products of high enough quality to appeal to markets. The level of technical and artistic skill is also important for creativity as these skills contribute to creating an enabling environment for the creative process." 3) It becomes socially responsible and thereby establishes a standard for others. In addition to incorporating the best practices in relation to the intellectual property rights of artists, sensitivity to uses of traditional knowledge and ensuring equity and transparency in foundation activities, we are also mindful of the provision of the International Labor Organization Convention 169: "Any special training programmes shall be based on the economic environment, social and cultural conditions and practical needs of people concerned. ...Where feasible, these peoples shall progressively assume responsibility for the organization and operation of such special training programs, if they so decide."

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