



# KALINAWA ART FOUNDATION

An Introduction to Kalinawa Art Foundation  
Delivered by Raquel C. Palma Gil at the  
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Taiwan

My name is Raquel Palma Gil. I am a Filipina working as the Executive Director for the Kalinawa Art Foundation. While I am not an Indigenous person, I have been sensitized to many of the issues and concerns of Indigenous Peoples' cultures and traditions. For me the two years for which I have been working with for the Foundation have been challenging but fulfilling.

The *Kalinawa Art Foundation* was established in February 2006, by David and Margarita Gilinsky with the help of Mr. Carlton Hughes, who became Senior Adviser of the Kalinawa Art Foundation. Mr. Gilinsky wanted to share what he has with a sector that is least addressed and a sector that is relative to us all as he believes that we are all Indigenous People – all coming from indigenous roots. When asked why he has chosen the Indigenous Peoples' visual art sector, Mr. Gilinsky says - (It is very easy for him to find a person to educate, feed and give a job and think that he's saved – but that's not what he wants – he is saving a person's soul – a soul who remembers where he comes from and where he is going no matter where he progress and lives – that is what we believe in the *Foundation* – our *Foundation* is a celebration of Heritage – that we may show our children the pride of where we come from).

The mission of the *Kalinawa Art Foundation* is to participate in, and promote the development of the Indigenous Peoples' visual art sector in the Philippines. Modeled more on the lines of a social enterprise than a traditional philanthropy, the *Foundation* makes investments rather than donations, in facilities to promote the talent of the artists and their art as a celebration of culture. In this, the expectation is that rewards and benefits will return to, and therefore build the sector as a whole. The primary activity of the *Foundation* is an annual series of community based open exhibitions for Indigenous Peoples artists in the provinces –In the Philippines most of the Indigenous Peoples communities are able to display their artworks upon invitation from some government and private institutions to trade fairs and bazaars where their works may be just commodities for sale – although we recognize that earning an income is a big consideration for the Indigenous Peoples, in the *Kalinawa Art Foundation* exhibits, we showcase and show off their artworks as Art and bring them out as the pride of their heritage celebrating their culture and tradition as in these exhibitions they also encouraged to show off their performance arts at the opening and awarding ceremonies.

Our exhibits intend to elevate Indigenous Peoples' visual art into a higher level by having them into curate, gallery-like, dignified and documented exhibits Their visual art are also exposed nationally and internationally through the web –through which we also hope to have a market. Through our local partners, we invite prominent people in each community to make them aware of the presence of these gifted individuals in their respective areas – these invitees may also be respective buyers.

The Kalinawa exhibitions have four elements:

1. A public exhibition – preceded by a two day registration where background and biographical data of the artists and data and description of the art pieces are gathered for uploading into the *Foundation's* website;
2. A judged competition – potential judges for the Kalinawa events are volunteers selected by the Foundation through the local partners on the basis that they have some knowledge of the art. Ideally, there should five judges and one alternate.
3. An internet sale to international audience through eBay .com
4. A community sale to the local community - when a sale is made, the *Foundation* issues the buyer a purchase letter where a background of the artist and an article on the background of the Indigenous community he belongs to is provided as well as a description of his art piece.

As we go along, the *Foundation*, helps contribute to the education of the artists:

On presentation and techniques of the visual arts – we invite resource speakers and workshop facilitators to share knowledge to the Indigenous artists.

On Cultural presentations and interactions with the Indigenous Peoples to enhance the opportunity for local community knowledge and understanding of these people – in line with this action the Foundation organized a joint exhibition of the Indigenous Peoples of Canada and the Indigenous Peoples of the Philippines, one component of which was the participation of the Inuit artist, Mattiusi Iyaituk who shared information on the culture of his people to the

Indigenous artist in Mindanao and Cebu city in the Philippines at the artists interactions held in these places.

On development of visual arts infrastructure – The *Foundation* builds display panels and sculpture stands for the use of the artists and other groups Indigenous and non indigenous in the community provided that somebody commits to keep and maintain these materials;

On information and data resource collection and sharing. The Foundation also source out publications for distribution to the different Indigenous Peoples communities.

In our two years of operation, we have already done ten exhibits in different parts of the Philippines. The eleventh is now going on in the city of Malaybalay; Province of Bukidnon participated in by seven tribes. Last year we had a chance to participate in the Asian Handicraft Promotion and Development Association (AHPADA) where the works of Indigenous artists mostly from Mindanao, Philippines were exhibited as Art amongst the handicrafts. We take pride to what observers say that we have an impressive database of artists – a product of documenting our exhibits.

We continue to learn and what we learn from this Summit will be put to use in the continuing efforts to develop Indigenous Peoples visual art sector of the Philippines.

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