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Preliminaries and Editor's Introduction

Dinah Roma

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Akda: The Asian Journal of Literature, Culture, Performance is an international peer-reviewed journal that seeks to publish cutting-edge articles in the areas and intersections of Literary, Cultural, and Performance Studies. It is an open-access journal, which comes out semi-annually, with issues in April and October. We especially welcome articles that will inaugurate new and dynamic directions for scholarly inquiry on the literary and cultural production of the Asian region. Further, in our commitment to diversity and to multicultural dialogue, we welcome contributions that may potentially be relevant to the concerns of the region from various national and cultural backgrounds. The journal is supported by a distinguished editorial board that represents the journal's scholarly depth and geographic scope.

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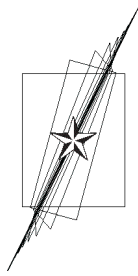
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From the Editor

When the Department of Literature conceptualized **AKDA: The Asian Journal of Literature, Culture, Performance** a few years back, we wanted for the publication to be aggressive in featuring emerging disciplinary areas of studies in Asia. The emphasis is both for the region and the range of new knowledge that can inhere from it. There are many top-tiered journals already in existence that we take inspiration from and that can easily cast doubt on our claims for a space in the academic publishing domain. Yet given the fast evolving landscape of global higher education, the current stream of creative and critical explorations, and the pressing need to have the scope of knowledge circulated in the larger academic community, a new publication such as AKDA cannot fail to offer a veritable venue for such interchange.

AKDA released its maiden issue on a different website but we feel that having the journal on the DLSU publishing platform will extend its reach far more we can imagine. The migration to this current platform has not been easy as we had to work through the initial months of the pandemic and the many disruptions—technical and otherwise—that mark this period. But we are glad that the editorial team’s efforts have gradually paid off.

This second issue comprises of six articles which innovatively unpack sociopolitical and performative phenomena. *Neslie Carol Tan*’s “Thrilla in Manila” examines the fascination of foreign tourists with the Little People who take up wrestling as their source of income. Tan terms it “troubling theatricality” as she delves into the politics of disability as it is performed in the wrestling ring. She traces the exploitation of the Little People back to the American colonial regime during which people with disability were put on public display as a sign of sheer difference.

Io Chun Kong of the City University of Macau probes into experimental playwright’s Young Jean Lee’s Broadway hit *Straight White Men* (2015) and how this functions as a critical aesthetic to identity politics. *Oscar Tantoco Serquina, Jr.*’s article looks into the history of speech departments in the University of the Philippines and the Silliman University. Moreover, the author investigates how these have evolved to influence scholarly inquiry in the country to the extent it has created “eloquent modernity.”

What can be viewed as the extreme end of eloquence is the grating sound of violence. The study on *Aswang* by *Katrina Macapagal*, an independent researcher based in Edinburgh, anchors its critical approach to theories of sound. “Noise is violence; it disturbs,” asserts how President Duterte’s unthinking war on drugs has largely filled the dark nights in Manila and neighboring cities with the grating human sounds that echo the “audibility of terror.” These sounds in all their unsettling sonic qualities that are most effective in embodying the voices of people in telling their own stories.

From sound to the visual domain, the article of *Rosa Cordillera A. Castillo*, who is affiliated with Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin, proposes an ethics of viewing of the photographs taken at the height of President Duterte's war on drugs. Citing the works of Judith Butler and Ariella Azoulay, the article proposes that the photographs depicting the horrendous sufferings of the victims and their loved ones may help us reformulate notions of citizenship and community. Lastly, *Anne Frances N. Sangil's* study of the cinematic life works of the auteur film director Mike de Leon resonates with the visual inquiry of the two earlier articles to foreground how the filmmaker had injected new ways of conceiving historical adaptations.

We hope that with this current offering of AKDA we would be able to seize a fertile space in the academic publishing sphere to feature the projects of emerging and established scholars and researchers in and about the region. The range alone of the aforementioned six articles prove the flourishing taking place in the fields of literature, culture, and performance. This journal goes by the name of AKDA. Creation. Authorship. Texts. And we envision ourselves to continue to achieve this aim in the years to come.

Thank you.

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