

LEGACY OF BATAAN

Manilatown Heritage, Artis Mundi depict sacrifice of WWII soldiers

Mixed-media event showcases top talents

SAN FRANCISCO - In commemoration of National POW (Prisoners of War)/MIA (Missing in Action) Recognition Day, Manilatown Heritage Foundation and Artis Mundi are proud to present The Legacy of Bataan 6 p.m. Friday, September 21 at the I-Hotel Manilatown Center at 868 Kearny St. here. Donations will be appreciated.

This multi-media program will feature film clips with live narration by Cecilia Gaerlan, author of the World War II novel, *In Her Mother's Image*, presentations by World War II ex-Civilian Prisoner of War John Ream and historians Fred and Sebastian Baldassarre of the *Battling Bastards of Bataan*. It will feature the first performance of *Breach of Faith - The Men of Bataan*, a one-man show based on stories of Bataan veterans written by Gaerlan and performed by New York and San Francisco artist Kilusan Bautista.

Also featured is a scene from the stage adaptation of Gaerlan's novel *In Her Mother's Image* with Bay area actors Jed Parsario, Mallory Somera and Earlene Somera. The highlight of the program will be the appearance of several Bataan veterans who will speak about their experiences during the war and their subsequent incarceration.

The price of peace was paid dearly by the defenders of Bataan. And yet, their place in history has been ignored, derided and even maligned. Despite the lack of training, meager resources and a broken promise from the United States that help was on the way, the men of Bataan fought a fierce and bitter battle that disrupted

Legacy of Bataan



Some 1500 Americans and 20,000 Filipinos died in captivity.

the timetable of the Japanese occupation enabling the Allied Forces to harness the resources that turned the tide of war in the Pacific.

After the fall of Bataan on April 9, 1942, around 63,000 Filipino and 12,000 American soldiers surrendered to the Japanese Imperial Army. Approximately 15,000 Filipino and 750 American soldiers, mostly sick and emaciated, died during the 60-mile march to their prison camp at Camp O'Donnell where the prisoners were subjected to even more inhumane treatment.

Approximately 1500 Americans and 20,000 Filipinos died in captivity. And yet, not even a year after the war ended, the veterans' benefits of the Filipinos under the U.S. Armed Forces of the Far East were rescinded by President Truman in 1946. To this day, these rights have not been fully restored nor their sacrifices honored.

Kilusan Bautista is a

Brooklyn, New York-based performing artist, originally from San Francisco. He has appeared on Showtime as the opening act for Top Rank Boxing Light Weight Champion Nonito Donaire (2008). Kilusan was published in the *Philippine News* after winning the Grand prize for a State-Wide letter writing contest sponsored by the California Council for the Humanities (2005). He was awarded the Congressional Community Service Award - *Kabataan Komemorativo* - in 2006 by CA Senator Tom Lantos. Kilusan Bautista's current work, *Universal Self*, has toured throughout the United States of North America with the purpose of building cross cultural unity and personal healing.

For more info: www.manilatown.org; www.ceciliagaerlan.com; www.kilusan1898.blogspot.com; www.battlingbastardsbataan.com; www.bacepow.net.