

Press release, February 27, 2025

Seven Acclaimed Filipino Authors and New German Editions Highlight the Philippines' Leipziger Buchmesse Debut

Leipzig (Germany) – The Philippines is making a bold literary statement in Germany with its first-ever participation in the Leipziger Buchmesse (LBM) from March 27-30, bringing seven acclaimed Filipino authors, three translators, one hundred fifty titles, and translated German editions of Philippine books to one of Europe's biggest literary events.

This milestone comes as the country builds momentum for its Guest of Honour role at Frankfurter Buchmesse (FBM) from October 15-19, 2025, where its theme, *The imagination peoples the air*, draws inspiration from Jose Rizal's incendiary work, *Noli Me Tangere*, which the Filipino national hero published in Germany in 1887.

"The Leipzig Book Fair 2025 marks another breakthrough moment for Philippine literature—where our stories find new voices, new readers, and a place in Germany's vibrant literary landscape," said Karina Bolasco, Head of the Literary Program for the Philippines as Guest of Honour (PhlGoH) at the FBM 2025.

Senator Loren Legarda, the visionary of the participation said, "Our journey to the Frankfurt Book Fair 2025 as Guest of Honour reaffirms the country's commitment to sharing Philippine stories with the world. Through literature, we open minds, foster empathy, and offer new perspectives that bridge cultures and connect people beyond borders."

The **Philippine stand** at the LBM, **located at Hall 4, C402**, will present a selection of books of diverse genres: fiction, non-fiction, new adult, and graphic novels and comics.

The Philippine delegation will take part in eleven readings, discussions, panels, and conversations engaging directly with German audiences and literary professionals. Among them are award-winning and emerging authors across various genres:

Fiction

Daryll Delgado explores climate change through fiction with her book *Remains*. Her first book, *After the Body Displaces Water*, was awarded the National Book Award for Best Book of Short Fiction in English and was shortlisted for the Madrigal-Gonzalez First Book Award. (German edition: *Überreste*, Kröner Verlag, release date: 12.03.2025)

Jessica Zafra dissects Manila's sharp social divides in her book, *The Age of Umbrage*. Her essays have appeared in *The New Yorker*, *Newsweek*, and the *Hong Kong Standard*, and she has won the Philippines' Palanca Awards for Fiction and the National Book Award for

Essay. (German edition: *Ein ziemlich böses Mädchen*, Transit Verlag, release date: 24.02.2025)

Graphic Novel

Renren Galeno, the 2024 Pulitzer Prize finalist for *Searching for Maura* for the *Washington Post*, presents her horror graphic novel *Sa Wala (Nothing to Lose)*, which won the 42nd Philippine National Book Award for Best Graphic Novel in English in 2024. (German edition: *Sa Wala - Für nichts*, Dantes Verlag 2024)

Paolo Herras blends history, mythology, and contemporary storytelling. He is the Co-Founder of KOMIKET, a non-profit organization that supports the development of the Filipino comics community, and currently the festival director of the Philippine International Comics Festival (PICOF). (German edition: *Strange Natives: Die vergessenen Erinnerungen einer vergesslichen alten Dame*, Dantes Verlag 2024)

J. Philip Ignacio reimagines Philippine history through the graphic novel *Alandal*, which won the 2022 National Children's Book Award for Best Reads, and the 2023 National Book Award for Best Graphic Novel in English. (German edition: *Alandal 1*, Dantes Verlag 2024)

Non-Fiction

Stephanie Coe, historian and academic, explores Philippine-European ties by presenting her latest book, *Seams of Sedition*, which examines how clothing in *Noli Me Tangere* reflects 19th-century social and political currents. Coe's previous book *Clothing the Colony: Nineteenth-century Philippine Sartorial Culture, 1820-1896* won several awards including the IAS-ICAS biennial International Book Prize 2021 for Best Book in Humanities at Leiden University in the Netherlands.

Translation

Kristian Cordero presents how translation remains to be the bloodline of literature. The Bikol writer and director of the Ateneo de Naga University Press has been promoting the writers from the region, introducing them to the rest of the country and the world through his own Savage Mind Press and his work as co-chair of the Translation Committee for the Philippines as GOH in 2025.

Dr. Monica Fröhlich shares experiences and learning processes of book translation. She studied German and French Studies at the University of Bamberg, where she earned a PhD in contemporary German literature. After completing her doctorate in 2001, she led Communications and Alumni Relations at the university. She is a lecturer of the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) at the University of the Philippines-Diliman since 2021.

Annette Hug is a writer and translator from Zurich. She studied Women and Development Studies in the Philippines from 1992 to 1994. Her novel *Wilhelm Tell in Manila* was

awarded the Swiss Literature Prize in 2017. In 2024, her first translation from Tagalog/Filipino was published (Luna Sicat Cleto: *Offenes Meer*). Two novels and a historical novella will follow in 2025.

To present more details about the program and its participation at the LBM, The Philippines will hold a **press talk on March 20, 2025, 10.00-11.00, Börsenverein des Deutschen Buchhandels e. V., Berliner Büro**, Schiffbauerdamm 5, 10117 Berlin.

The Philippines' participation in the 2025 Leipzig Book Fair and its Guest of Honour role at the 2025 FBM is the vision of Senator Loren Legarda. The undertaking has been made possible through the joint efforts of the National Book Development Board (NBDB), the National Commission for Culture and the Arts (NCCA) the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA), and the Office of Senator Loren Legarda.

For more updates on the Leipziger Buchmesse and the road to Frankfurter Buchmesse 2025 including the schedule of events, visit <https://philippinesfrankfurt2025.com/>.

For a list of **New Philippine Book Releases** visit <https://www.buchmesse.de/themen-programm/ehrengast#15092>

Philippine Literature at the Leipziger Buchmesse

Thursday, March 27, 2025, 12.20-13.05

Can Climate Fiction Save Our Planet? A Conversation with Daryll Delgado and Ann-Sophie Henne on Environment, Society, and Change

Leipziger Buchmesse, Forum Offene Gesellschaft, Hall 2, B500

Thursday, March 27, 2025, 14.00-14.30

Filipino Graphic Novels Travel the World with Paolo Herras

Leipziger Buchmesse, Globale Perspektiven, Hall 4, E305

Thursday, March 27, 2025, 19.00-20:00

Can Climate Fiction Save Our Planet? with Daryll Delgado

Lancaster University Leipzig, Strohsack Passage, Nikolaistraße 10, Room 116, First Floor, 04109 Leipzig

Friday, March 28, 2025, 14.00-14.30

The Social Divide in City Fiction with Jessica Zafra

Leipziger Buchmesse, Forum Literatur, Hall 4, A100

Friday, March 28, 2025, 19.00-20:00

Clothing the Colonials with Stephanie Coe

Lancaster University Leipzig, Strohsack Passage, Nikolaistraße 10, Room 116, First Floor, 04109 Leipzig

Saturday, March 29, 2025, 14.00-14.30

***The Horrors of Reality* with Renren Galeno**

Leipziger Buchmesse, Phantastische Leseinsel 2, Hall 3, B401

Saturday, March 29, 2025, 17.00-17.30

***Comics Reimagine the Nation* with J. Philip Ignacio**

Leipziger Buchmesse, Übersetzungszentrum/Forum International, Hall 4, C403

Sunday, March 30, 2025, 11.00-11.30

***We Are All Strangers In Our Own Native Lands* with Paolo Herras**

Leipziger Buchmesse, Globale Perspektiven, Hall 4, E305

Sunday, March 30, 2025, 11.30-12.00

***Literary Translations: From Bikol to the World and Back* with Kristian Cordero**

Leipziger Buchmesse, Globale Perspektiven, Hall 4, E305

Sunday, March 30, 2025, 13.00-13.30

***To Draw the Everyday* with Renren Galeno**

Leipziger Buchmesse, Globale Perspektiven, Hall 4, E305

Sunday, March 30, 2025, 13.30-14.00

***How To Translate Philippine Literature* with Monica Fröhlich and Annette Hug**

Leipziger Buchmesse, Globale Perspektiven, Hall 4, E305