

PHILIPPINES GUEST OF HONOUR
FRANKFURT BOOK FAIR 2025



PRESS CONFERENCE

Frankfurt, Germany

26 June 2025 | 10:00 AM (CET)

Evangelische Akademie Frankfurt, Römerberg 9

Media Accreditation: philippines@artefakt-berlin.de

Program: **10:00 starts—**

Performance

The Philippine Madrigal Singers

Welcome Remarks

Juergen Boos

CEO and President, Frankfurter Buchmesse

Message

Senator Loren Legarda

Project Advocate, Philippines Guest of Honour

Literary Program

Karina Bolasco

Head of Literary Program

and Curator of Books

Cultural Program, Theme and Philippine Pavilion Framework

Patrick Flores

Curator, Philippine Pavilion

Philippine Pavilion Design

Stanley Ruiz

Designer, Philippine Pavilion

Conversation: Philippine authors with German edition books

Authors: Blaise Campo Gacoscos and Candy Gourlay

Moderator: Annette Hug

Q&A

PROFILE OF SPEAKERS



JUERGEN BOOS, CEO and President,
Frankfurter Buchmesse

Juergen Boos trained as a publisher at Herder Verlag (Freiburg) in the early 1980s and has degrees in both Marketing and Organisational Theory. He has held management positions at Droemer Knaur Verlag (Munich), Carl Hanser Verlag (Munich), as well as Springer Science and Business Media (today Springer Science) and John Wiley & Sons (Weinheim). He became President and CEO of the Frankfurter Buchmesse GmbH (Frankfurt Book Fair) in 2005. He was President of LITPROM (Society for the Promotion of African, Asian and Latin American Literature) and is Managing Director of LitCam (Frankfurter Buchmesse Literacy Campaign).



SENATOR LOREN LEGARDA
Project Advocate

Senator Loren Legarda is the visionary and project principal of the participation of the Philippines as Guest of Honour country in the Frankfurt Book Fair in 2025.

Since 2016, Legarda has pushed for this distinction as Guest of Honor at the world's oldest and most prestigious book fair. It was late in 2015 when Karina Bolasco, then Director of the Ateneo de Manila University Press, presented the idea to support the Fair, and Legarda has done so ever since.

Legarda has long been an advocate of cultural preservation. Through her vision and leadership, the Philippines is now actively participating in the Venice Biennale, returning after 51 years to the 2015 Art Biennale and joining for the first time in the Architecture Biennale in 2016.

The four-term Senator is currently the chairperson of the Senate Committee on Culture and the Arts. She has legislated several measures, including RA 11961 or the Cultural Mapping Law, which mandates the creation of an inventory of our cultural wealth. She has also promoted our country's cultural discourse with universities abroad through the Philippine Studies Program, under the Department of Foreign Affairs.

In appreciation for her lifelong advocacy to protect and preserve our culture, heritage, and the arts, Senator Legarda was conferred the Dangal ng Haraya by the National Commission for Culture and the Arts.

Through her efforts to strengthen bilateral relations with other countries, the Senator was bestowed with the title of Knight in the French National Order of the Legion of Honor, Knight in the Order of Merit of the Italian Republic, the Commendatore to the Order of Merit of the Italian Republic, and the Award of Distinction by the European Union.



PATRICK FLORES, Curator,
Philippines Guest of Honour

Patrick Flores is the Chief Curator at the National Gallery Singapore (NGS). He is concurrently a professor at the University of the Philippines-Diliman. In 2015, he curated the Philippine Pavilion at the 56th Venice Art Biennale. In 2022, he was the curator of the Taiwan Pavilion at the Venice Biennale.

Flores was a Visiting Fellow at the National Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C. in 1999 and an Asian Public Intellectuals Fellow in 2004. Among his publications are *Painting History: Revisions in Philippine Colonial Art* (1999); *Remarkable Collection: Art, History, and the National Museum* (2006); and *Past Peripheral: Curation in Southeast Asia* (2008). He was a grantee of the Asian Cultural Council (2010); a member of the Advisory Board of the exhibition *The Global Contemporary: Art Worlds After 1989* (2011), organized by the Center for Art and Media in Karlsruhe; and a member of the Guggenheim Museum's Asian Art Council (2011). He co-edited the Southeast Asian issue with Joan Kee for *Third Text* (2011). On behalf of the Clark Institute and the Department of Art Studies of the University of the Philippines, Flores organized the conference, *Histories of Art History in Southeast Asia* in Manila.



KARINA BOLASCO, Head of Literary Program and
Curator of Books

Karina Africa Bolasco dedicated four decades of her life to book publishing, first as Junior Editor, then as Assistant Publishing Manager for Textbooks at National Bookstore. After ten years, she co-founded Anvil Publishing which she ran for 26 years. In 2016, she moved to Ateneo de Manila University Press. Under her leadership, both presses won Publisher of the Year many times and for their books, over 300 National Book awards.

Active in literary organizations and industry associations, she also served as National Book Development Board Governor and Cultural Education Head at the National Commission for Culture and the Arts.

Karina was hailed as one of the Ten Outstanding Women in the Nation's Service (TOWNS) in 1995 for her work in book publishing and literacy development. In 2018, she was awarded a 6-month fellowship at the Center for Southeast Asian Studies (CSEAS) at the Kyoto University.

She wrote two children's books and contributed to anthologies, literary and professional, and represented the country in many international publishing congresses.

In 2013, she was given the Lifetime Achievement Award by the Manila Critics Circle and The Hildegard Award for Changemakers in Media.





STANLEY RUIZ, Designer, Philippine Pavilion

Stanley Ruiz is an industrial designer and principal of Estudio Ruiz - a Manila-based design consultancy he founded after working in Bali and New York City. With an extensive background in craft design and production, his work explores the commonplace to bring about new meaning and interpretation to object archetypes.

His works have appeared at the Museum of Arts and Design and at the New Museum of Contemporary Art in New York. He has exhibited at Salone Del Mobile in Milan, International Contemporary Furniture Fair in New York, Maison & Objet in Paris and Singapore, Ambiente in Frankfurt, Bangkok International Gift Fair, Philippine International Furniture Show, Manila FAME, Singapore Design Week, and Tokyo Gift Fair.

Stanley has been featured internationally in a number of books, magazines, and newspapers, and received several accolades including three Katha awards (Manila), Coup De Coeur prize at Maison & Objet (Paris), Talents selection at Ambiente (Frankfurt), Outstanding Asian Talent (Bangkok), Rising Asian Talent award at Maison & Objet (Singapore), and was hailed as an Avant Guardian by Surface magazine (New York).

Notable projects include lighting fixture design using renewable materials for Design Center Philippines, furniture design for Areté and the Ateneo Art Gallery, sculptural pieces for Conrad Hotel Manila, installation for the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation summit commissioned by the Cultural Center of the Philippines, collaboration with glass makers in the Czech Republic, and creative direction for the Philippine delegation at NY NOW – the biggest design show in the US.

In 2024, he was conferred the Gawad Yamang Isip for Industrial Design by the Intellectual Property Office of the Philippines for his contributions in the field of design.





BLAISE CAMPO GACOSCOS, Author of
Der Junge aus Ilocos (Albino, 2025)

Blaise Campo Gacoscocos was born in Candon, Ilocos Sur, in 1968. He earned his Bachelor of Arts in Comparative Literature degree from the University of the Philippines Diliman. A fellow of the UP National Writers' Summer Workshop, he won third prize at the Don Carlos Palanca Memorial Awards for his one-act play titled *Taguan sa Ulan*. He finished his Master of Arts in Creative Writing also in UP Diliman.

His debut novel, *Kites in the Night Sky*, has been translated into several languages, including Greek and German. The German edition, titled *Der Junge aus Ilocos* (The Boy from Ilocos), was published by Albino Verlag.



CANDY GOURLAY, Author of
Wild Song (Rotfuchs, 2025)

Candy Gourlay's novel *Wild Song* has just been released in German, translated by Alexandra Rak. The novel is set in a little known historical moment, when indigenous Filipinos were put on display at the 1904 World Fair in St Louis Missouri. *Wild Song* won the National Children's Book Award of the Philippines and was listed for the Carnegie Medal, the Caffè Nero Book Award and the Jhalak Prize. Candy was born in the Philippines, grew up under a dictatorship and met her husband during a revolution. She had many adventures as a journalist in Asia, including visiting North Korea in 1987. Then she moved to the UK and found herself writing news about toilet paper, toothpaste and bleach. She pivoted to writing books for children and young adults and was published after nine years of rejection. Her books have been nominated for major prizes in Europe and she has won the National Children's Book Award of the Philippines twice. Her first novel *Tall Story* was selected as one of the '[100 Best Books of the Last 100 Years](#)' and *Bone Talk* was listed as a White Ravens Book and is endorsed by Amnesty International.

She lives in London with her family, where she loves dogs, making comics and gardening, in that order.



ANNETTE HUG

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.



THE PHILIPPINE MADRIGAL SINGERS

Recognized by the UNESCO as Artists for Peace for “putting their fame and influence to promote cultural diversity, intercultural dialogue and a culture of peace,” the Philippine Madrigal Singers is one of the most awarded choral groups in the world, having won all the top prizes in most of the world’s prestigious choral competitions, including the Grand Prix in the 2016 Concorso Internazionale di Guido d’ Arezzo, Arezzo, Italy. They hold the distinction of being the first choir in the world to win the prestigious European Grand Prix for Choral Singing twice (1997 and 2007) and the first Asian choir to be accorded the BrandLaureate Premiere Award by the Asia Pacific Brands Foundation (2012).

The group’s virtuosity across a vast repertoire range, its continuing promotion of Filipino choral works, and the rousing and deeply emotional impact that each performance has on all audiences the world over as they sing in the distinctive set-up of sitting in a semi-circle without a conductor, have established their reputation as a pioneering force in choral music and an inspirational role model for other choirs.

Founded in 1963, by National Artist for Music Professor Andrea O. Veneracion, the UP Madrigal Singers, now under designated successor Mark Anthony Carpio, demonstrate that choral music can be socially relevant and transformational. They have continued to touch hearts and souls of those who come to their performances, and carried on various programs to nurture and develop future generations of conductors and choral singers all over the world.

The Philippine Madrigal Singers has also been designated the National Performing Arts Company for Choral Music under Republic Act 11392 in 2024.

