

**THEATRE INCONNU &  
BAYANIHAN CREATIVE COLLECTIVE  
PRESENT**

# Pepe

Story of Jose Rizal "National Hero" of  
the Philippines

**by Malou Jacob**

**Directed by Francis Matheu**

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In English  
Paul Phillips Hall  
1923 Fernwood Rd.  
Sept 20-Oct. 7, 2023

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In Filipino  
Bayanihan Cultural Arts Studio  
1709 Blanshard St.  
Oct 20-21, 2023



We acknowledge the support of the CRD Arts Commission  
@feedthearts #crdarts #yyjarts

We acknowledge the financial support of the Province of British Columbia

We acknowledge with respect that this show is produced on the ancestral territories of the ɫəkʷəŋən peoples, known today as the Songhees and Esquimalt nations, as well as the W̱SÁNEĆ peoples, whose traditional relationship with the land continues today.

## *Pepe*

by Malou Jacob

Cast (in alphabetical order)

Sheila Alonzo	Early Filipino, Lover, Katipunero, and Mother
Kendra Bidwell	Colonizer and Josephine
James Gonzalez	Early Filipino, Vendor, Katipunero, Soldier, and Riding in Tandem Police
Francis Matheu	Jose Rizal
Igor Melo	Early Filipino, Guardia Civiles, Enemy, Lover, Katipunero, Mayor
Janice Valdez/ Jessica Somera	Vivencio del Rosario, Soldier, Terrero, and Police officer
	Modern Child, <i>Inang Bayan</i> , student, Katipunero, Sister, Sisa, and Leonor

### **Production and Administrative Team**

Francis Matheu	Director, Production Design
Janice Valdez	Choreographer
Grace Martin	Stage Manager
Maddy Kerstein	Assistant Stage Manager
Clara Van Horn-Foy	Costume Designer
Joyce Garcia	Projection Design
Jethro Joaquin	Sound Design
Sophie Taylor	Props
Clayton Jevne	Lighting Design, Crew
Richard Patterson	Running Crew
Steven Aleck	Running Crew
Jennifer Pritchard	Box Office Volunteer
Susie Rialp	Poster Design
Sheila Alonzo	Marketing Director

Special thanks to Joey Ayala for his song *Ultimo Adios*

Special thanks also to: Kevin Stinson, Jason King, Mary Jane Crawley, Laurie Rubin, Sid Emmanuel, Laila Pires, Dominga Passmore, Cobb Douglas, Norma Duy, Joseph Matheu, Brandi Varnell-Duy, David Mohr, John Varszegi, Langham Court Theatre, Theatre SKAM. Victoria Operatic Society, Lumera Productions (Shane Archer), VOS (Dan Comeau)

**The show is about 100 minutes long, including a 15 minute intermission**

## CONTENT ADVISORY

Please note that the show contains the following potentially triggering or traumatizing elements, and choose to attend with this knowledge:

- Adult themes
- Death, grief, loss
- Violence
- Gunshots, loud noises, and sudden lights

## Jose Rizal and *Pepe*

Jose Rizal inspired the founding of the Katipunan and the Philippine Revolution of 1896 with his two novels : Noli Me Tangere and El Filibusterismo. These novels inspired Filipinos to fight for freedom from their Spanish colonizers. The monologue *Pepe* was written to commemorate Jose Rizal's 150th birth anniversary. Every city in the Philippines has a monument of Jose Rizal. The Cultural Centre's Tanghalang Pilipino performed *Pepe* in Manila and in 33 other cities in the country.

### Victoria Native Friendship Centre



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services woven into  
the needs and wants  
of the community.**



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## The Playwright - Malou Jacob

Malou Jacob is a dramatist and a cultural provocateur. She is a SEAWRITE, Cultural Centre of the Philippines *Gawad Sining*, and *Gawad Balagtas* awardee. Her monologue *Pepe*, directed by Nonon Padilla was performed by *Tanghalang Pilipino* (TP) in 33 cities. *Pepe* was followed by *Anatomiya ng Korupsyon*, directed by Dennis Marasigan of TP. She also wrote *Macli-ing*, directed by Soxy Topacio of Philippine Educational Theatre Association at the Rajah Sulayman Theater, Fort Santiago and *Batang Mujahideen*, about the interaction of Christians and Muslims in Mindanao. *Pepe* has been translated into various regional languages and produced by various theatre groups through CCP Outreach.

### Director's notes by Francis Matheu

For someone who may have read my artistic statement, I may sound like a broken record. But to contextualize the present, one must know the past so here is my story in brief.

My journey with this production dates back to 2017 when the Marawi War broke out. The eruption of war in one of the Philippines' Islamic cities was an important wake-up call for me as a Filipino and theatre artist. In the days following the siege of the city, the initiative to take action to spread awareness and understanding of the great divide between Christian and Muslim Filipinos became a calling that was too difficult to resist. For a creative artist, storytelling and performance-making are the foremost methods that come to mind in creating awareness campaigns for such topics as these.

In search of material, I came across an article about Filipino playwright Malou Jacob and her then-newly-written play, *Batang Mujahideen*. Through that, I connected with Malou and pursued a possible future collaboration with whom she generously agreed. A year later, as I was developing a brand for a project that would reach out to the 2nd and 3rd generations of Filipino migrants, Twin Bill Theatre, a company I co-founded with my twin brother, gave birth to the *Pamana Collection* - a concept that would champion Filipino culture and history through theatre in the service of the Filipinos wherever they thrive in the world.

Meanwhile, coming to Canada as a Master of Fine Arts directing student, Theatre Inconnu's founding artistic director, Clayton Jevne, met and offered me the opportunity to direct a play for their 2023 season. When I asked what play they would want me to direct, I was given a free hand. Immediately *Pamana Collection* came to mind. I re-connected with Malou to ask her permission to stage *Pepe* - a story about one of our National Heroes who fought against Spanish colonization in the Philippines. And so... here we are.

I would like to acknowledge that as a guest to this beautiful, free and diverse country, I am honoured to have been given the opportunity to share my culture and history as I embrace a new life here as a theatre artist.

*Mabuhay po kayong lahat!*

# Some Background History of Rizal and the Filipino Independence Movement

From  
*The Philippines - Independence from Spain and the USA*  
By Meyen Quigley

**Before the arrival of Ferdinand Magellan in 1521**, and soon thereafter the colonization and Christianization of the Philippines by Spain, the Philippine islands were populated by diverse ethnic groups. Negritos, the ancestors of several indigenous tribes still living in the Philippines today, came to the islands via land bridges and settled there between 45,000 and 30,000 BC. Thereafter, seafaring peoples came in waves from Borneo, Malaya, Indonesia and the Polynesian islands, and by the 5th century BC the culture and civilization of the islands were a mixture of the cultures with influences from India, China, and the Middle East. In 1380, Karimul Makhdum arrived and converted many people to Islam. In the 15th century, trade started with Chinese Ming dynasty merchants.

## THE SPANISH COLONIAL PERIOD

**On March 16, 1512**, Ferdinand Magellan discovered the Archipelago San Lazaro (present-day Samar Island). On April 6, Magellan made a blood compact with Cebu Rajah Humabon, who converted to Catholicism and declared the Muslim community on Mactan Island, headed by Kaliph Pulaka (Lapu-Lapu to Filipinos), as "enemies of the church" On April 27, in the Battle of Mactan, Lapu-Lapu and his men killed Magellan. In 1553, Bernardo de la Torre, a sailor under the command of Spanish admiral Ruy Villalobos, named the islands "Las Islas Felipinas" after Felipe, later King Philip II of Spain. The Philippines became part of Spanish Empire.

**1563:** Spanish General Miguel Legaspi established first Spanish settlement at Cebu. The Viceroy of Mexico administered the galleon trade between Mexico and the Philippines. The last galleon arrived in Manila in 1815. In 1821 the Philippines was placed under Madrid's administrative control after the overthrow of Spanish rule in Mexico.

## THE INDEPENDENCE MOVEMENT

Three centuries of forced labor, the suppression of local religions and beliefs, the unjustified collection of taxes, limits to education, social inequalities, abuses by the Catholic clergy, and other oppressive conditions made Filipinos yearn for independence from Spain.

**1872:** Spain accused three Filipino priests - Fathers Gomes, Burgos and Zamora - of fomenting a mutiny and executed them.

**1880:** Jose Rizal, Marcelo del Pilar and Graciano Lopez Jaena went to Europe as students and formed the Propaganda Movement - holding meetings and publishing poetry, articles and pamphlets critical of Spanish rule.

**1886:** Jose Rizal published the anti-Spanish novel, Noli Me Tangere (Touch Me Not) that ignited Philippine nationalism and strengthened the desire for independence from Spain. He published a second novel, El Filibusterismo, in 1891.

**1888:** Graciano Lopez Jaena founded the newspaper *La Solidaridad* in Barcelona. The paper urged reforms in both religion and government in the Philippines, and served as the voice of the Propaganda Movement.

**1892:** Jose Rizal returned to the Philippines and formed the secret society *Liga Filipina*, that aimed to continue the work of the Propaganda Movement. Rizal was arrested by the Spaniards and exiled to Dapitan, where he practiced medicine. That same year revolutionaries in the Philippines under the leadership of Andres Bonifacio established *Katipunan* - a group whose main goal was to gain independence from Spain.

**1896:** By early 1896 the *Katipunan* had grown to more than 40,000 members. In August, in what is now known as the Battle of Balintawak, Katipuneros tore their *cedulas* (personal identity documents) and leaders declared a revolution against Spain. Bonifacio reorganized the *Katipunan* into a revolutionary government. Jose Rizal was arrested on suspicion of being involved in the revolt and put in prison; he was executed in December 1896.

**1897:** Leadership of the revolutionary movement shifted to a rival faction of the *Katipunan* headed by Emilio Aguinaldo. Andres Bonifacio was executed in May 1896 on the orders of Aguinaldo. The Pact of *Biak-na-Bato*, signed on December 14, 1897, established a truce between the Spanish colonial government and the Filipino revolutionaries.

**1898:** On May 1, United States Admiral Dewey defeated the Spanish in the Battle of Manila Bay. This effectively put the U.S. in control of the Spanish colonial government. On May 19, 1898, the U.S. Navy transported Emilio Aguinaldo, who had been in exile in Hong Kong, back to the Philippines. On June 5, 1898, Aguinaldo issued a decree proclaiming June 12, 1898 as the day of independence. The Philippine flag was officially unfurled for the first time that day.

#### **AFTER JUNE 12, 1898**

The Philippines failed to win international recognition of its independence - not from either the United States or Spain. The Spanish government later ceded the Philippine archipelago to the United States in the 1898 Treaty of Paris. The Philippine Revolutionary Government did not recognize the treaty and the two sides subsequently fought what was known as the Philippine-American War. The Philippines gained independence from the United States of America on July 4, 1946.

On May 12, **1962**, President Diosdado Macapagal issued *Presidential Proclamation No. 28*, which declared June 12 a special public holiday throughout the Philippines, "... in commemoration of our people's declaration of their inherent and inalienable right to freedom and independence."

Read more ILAW Newsletter articles here:



# The Company (alphabetically)



**Sheila Alonzo** is excited to bring a piece of Philippine history to Victoria while reconnecting with her roots. Using art as a form to express the story of Jose Rizal and *Kapwa*, Sheila feels responsible to amplify and raise black and indigenous voices as part of a greater project towards systemic change by calling on the audience to: participate in activities on Saturday, Sept. 30th the National Day for Truth & Reconciliation, and visit the *Blackspace Library* project, Art Gallery of Greater Victoria.



**Steven Aleck** is a **Nuu Chah Nulth** visual artist and has been at Theatre Inconnu since 2012 painting: *The Walworth Farce*, *Kafka the Musical*, *In the Next Room*, *The Golden Dragon*, *Antigone*, *Jocasta Regina*, *Trad*, *Dog See God: Confessions of a Teenage Blockhead*, *East of Berlin*, *Subway* and *Commencing*. He also painted Langham Court Theatre's *The Small Room at the Top of the Stairs*.



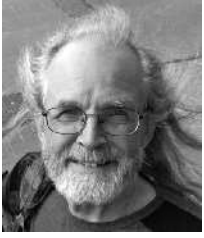
**Kendra Bidwell** (she/her) is an actor, dancer, singer, musician, and a graduate of Company C at the Canadian College of Performing Arts. Recently, she has been sharing her passion for performing, teaching theatre classes at Kaleidoscope Theatre, and acting as a character performer with Enchanted Fables. Favourite past credits include *Buddy Holly's Happy Days* (Jubilations Dinner Theatre), *Cabaret* (CCPA), and numerous shows aboard Theatre Skam's Pop-Up Home Delivery truck. Kendra hopes you enjoy the show!



**Joyce Garcia** is a video artist who explores the intersection of traditional art forms, new media, and emerging technologies. Joyce creates immersive experiences that investigate the interaction between humans and technology. She has a keen interest in film, visual arts, and creative programming. Joyce designed for Twin Bill Theater's production of *Dancing Lessons* in 2019. Visit [jagstudio.co](http://jagstudio.co) to learn more about her work.



**James Gonzalez** has always been an entertainer and musician known as "Finest Summer". He is also passionate about serving the Victoria community. On stage, he's proud of his Filipino roots and is frequently heard saying, "Long live the Philippines!". (*ay matagal nang entertainer at musikero na kilalang "Finest Summer". Siya din ay magiliw na nagsisilbi sa komunidad natin. Sa entablado, siya ay nagmamalaki sa kaniyang Pilipinong lahi at madalas na sumisigaw, "Mabuhay ang Pilipinas!"*.)



**Clayton Jevne** has headed Theatre Inconnu as Artistic Director since 1987. During the years he has been involved as either actor, director or designer in scores of productions. Clayton's solo performances have toured in six countries, and he currently teaches in the UVic Theatre Department. In this production, he has had some fun playing with the lights.



**Jethro Joaquin** has been involved in theatre sound design for more than 20 years, collaborating with leading theater companies in Manila. His notable works include *Hamlet*, *Equus* and *Agnes of God*, all for Repertory Philippines. Joaquin teaches theatre and audio production in Miriam College. For free time, he enjoys going back to his hobby, philately, collecting postage stamps and covers on art, music, Philippine history and Christmas, while listening to his vinyl collection.



**Maddy Kirstein** is a Victoria-based creative specializing in community-centred stage management and immersive storytelling. They enjoy fantasy world building, sword making, and creating supportive environments for young artists to thrive!



**Grace Martin** (She/Her) is ecstatic to be stage-managing Pepe! She grew up figure skating and acting in musical theatre. Since graduating from the Canadian College of Performing Arts, Grace has travelled across Canada to further her studies and career. Recently, she studied with Second City in Toronto, performed with the Greater Victoria Shakespeare Festival, and has been touring her one-woman show *Lucky Casanova*. Enjoy the show!



**Francis Matheu** is a Filipino theatre artist recently achieving a Master of Fine Arts degree in Directing at the University of Victoria. His current work on Malou Jacob's monodrama, *Pepe* is his North American directorial debut. Francis is founding artistic director of Twin Bill Theater in the Philippines. In Victoria, directed the Phoenix Theatre's production of Caryl Churchill's *Vinegar Tom* in 2023, and assistant directed Blue Bridge Repertory Theatre's *Hedda Gabler* in 2022.



**Igor Melo** trained at the VAD Arts by Joe McCoy on Acting for Film and TV. Igor is now going on theatre stage for the first time, where he plays multiple characters in *Pepe*. Igor recently played Eli, a drummer in *Making Waves*, a Hallmark movie. Also several background characters on other productions, such as *Reginald The Vampire*, on Amazon Prime Video. He speaks three languages and plays four instruments. Philosophy, photography and technology fascinate this Brazilian actor.

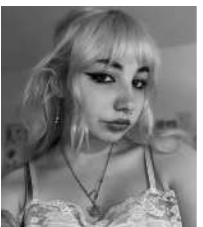




**Richard Patterson** started acting in theatre in Toronto 50 years ago. After Toronto he split his time between Edmonton and Victoria, getting to play Macduff, a tightrope walker challenging Niagara Falls (*Blondin*) on tour, and a pirate in *Pieces of Eight* and a Clown at the Citadel Theatre and on tour in California. Inconnu offered Richard some of the best characters he's played. He helps around Inconnu, is on the board, and is working with great friends.



**Jessica Somera** (siya/they/them/she/her) is an Ilokano woman, born and raised in Amiskwaciwâskahikan (Edmonton, Alberta) & Treaty 8 Territory (High Level, Alberta) where they did ballet, contemporary, cross country, basketball and track and field. After university, they moved to Lekwungen Territory (Victoria) in 2021 and found themselves more in touch with their creativity and desire to reconnect to culture. With time, acting became the perfect gateway.



**Sophie Taylor** is an artist currently studying theatre at the University of Victoria. Some of her previous prop-related credits include *Horse Girl* (2023, Timetheft Theatre) and *Spring Awakening* (2022, Phoenix Theatre). They hope to continue creating well after she graduates and is incredibly grateful to have been a part of this production.



**Janice Valdez** was born in Manila and grew up dancing to the sounds of the rivers, lakes, and forests of the unceded ancestral lands of the Haisla Nation also known as Kitimat, B.C. Janice is honoured to be creating with this extraordinary group and ever grateful to the support of her family and friends with special thanks to Roger and Elton who managed just fine while mama was away making theatre.



**Clara Rose Van Horn-Foy** is a Victoria-raised designer who completed her BFA at UVic's Phoenix Theatre in 2017. Recent works include *Witch* (Inconnu), *Ginny's Enterprise* (Suzanne Moreau Short Film) and the 2021 Showcase by Starry Starry Skies Productions (Youtube). *Pepe* has been an amazing opportunity to learn about the Philippines and meet some wonderful people, as well as a challenge to bring the conceptual elements together and represent the historical costumes with as much authenticity as possible.

## Bayan Ko

by Jose Alejandrino and Jose Corazon de Jesus

*Ang bayan kong Pilipinas/ Lupain ng ginto't bulaklak  
Pag-ibig na sa kanyang palad /Nag-alay ng ganda't dilag  
At sa kanyang yumi at ganda / Dayuhan ay nahalina  
Bayan ko, binihag ka /Nasadlak sa dusa  
Ibon mang may layang lumipad /Kulungin mo at umiiyak  
Bayan pa kayang sakdal-dilag/ Ang 'di magnasang makaalpas  
Pilipinas kong minumutya/ Pugad ng luha at dalita  
Aking adhika/ Makita kang sakdal laya  
Ibon mang may...*

### English:

My Country

My country - the Philippines, Land of gold and flowers

Blessed by love with beauty and splendour.

Your charm, your grace

Beckoned to people from other lands

My country they betrayed you and left you pillaged, crushed.

Birds that fly freely cry once caged.

How much more a fair land, enslaved -

How can it not yearn to break free?

Philippines that I so adore

Womb of so many tears and so much sorrow

All my heart desires is to see you, finally, free...

## Performances of *Pepe* in Tagalog

At the Bayanihan Cultural Studio  
1709 Blanshard St

Oct 20 - 7pm  
Oct 21 - 2pm & 7pm

Reservations and Ticket Sales

Ticket Prices:

\$15

phone: (250) 891-5720

email: adm.bayanihancentre@gmail.com

## Up Next at Theatre Inconnu

### ***Stupid F\*\*\*king Bird***

by Aaron Posner

directed by Morgan Gadd

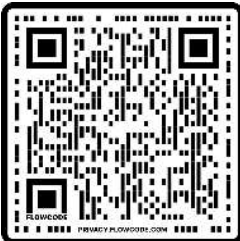
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# Jose Rizal

