

# Philippines' 'Bangkota' pavilion at Expo 2020 Dubai to stage art by globally-recognised Filipinos

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/EINPresswire.com/ -- As Expo 2020 Dubai opens up for a public visit to give a preview of the site ahead of the full opening in October, the Philippines announced that its 'Bangkota' pavilion is near completion and will present globally-active icons of architecture, art, and design who will drive the pavilion's experiences and messages.

The Philippines is participating with an imagination-expanding pavilion in this forthcoming edition of the World Expo.



Facade of the Philippine Pavilion, Bangkota, at night. Visible from afar to welcome visitors is the sculpture named after the mythic being Haliya, by Duddley Diaz

Notably featuring Ramon P. Santos, Laureate of the Order of National Artist for Music, a proud selection of Filipino artists directed their personal artistic languages to create the pavilion sequence of updated ideas about the Philippines.

Opening in October 2021 at the United Arab Emirates, the Expo is expected once again to be the global spectacle for presenting each nation's understanding of its place in the world; traditionally through national pavilions highlighting their achievements in culture, development, science, business, and social welfare.

High expectations surround the Dubai edition of the unbroken sequence of World Expos—that begun in 1851 with the Great Exposition in London—and the committed Philippine participation through more than a century.

The lead agency, the Department of Trade and Industry, represented by Assistant Secretary Rosvi C. Gaetos, Alternate Commissioner-General, Philippines Expo 2020 Dubai, saw fit to dedicate the pavilion space entirely to a re-imagining of the Philippines based on updated science; and expressed through architectural, musical, visual/plastic representation.

Architect Royal Pineda of Budji+Royal Architecture+Design won the national bid for architectural design. Pineda has since led the creative team with architecture evoking the coral reef (bangkóta in ancient Tagalog). He designed spaces that emphasize openness, connectivity, permeability— qualities he believes are enduring aspects of Philippine sense of space.

Curator Marian Pastor Roces describes her selection process of the artists, starting with her choice of Dr. Santos: “The artists each have an already-developed aesthetic language that lends quickly to making imaginative reflections of scientific and humanistic data about the Philippines.” She adds that the selected artists each committed to defocusing on personal artistry, in order to assist the entire pavilion communicate symphonically.

Dr. Santos’ avante-garde musical suite blends indigenous instrumentation and use of traditional vocal techniques with a striking sense of the contemporary, in music that fills the pavilion architecture with texture.

In that sound and architectural environment, Lee Paje conceptualized sculptural work that “dance” with wildlife photography of Scott “Gutsy” Tuazon and Ivan Sarenas. The next space is given to Patrick Cabral’s three-dimensional filigree boat, that receives video mapping of information from updated archaeology.

Baby and Coco Anne fashioned a tall helix rising to the top of the following space, etched with names of Filipinos of different cultures, sharing the same DNA markers that have mixed through 65,000 years; and therefore nullifying racial difference. Which, in the next immense room, becomes the core idea of the specially commissioned video entitled, “Our Gift to the World:” the Philippines’ call to end racial divisions.

The video centers on contemporary dance that poetically gathers motifs of Philippine life, choreographed by Denisa Reyes and Japhet Mari “JM” Cabling, to music by young composer Teresa Barroso.

And the exterior of the undulating architecture, five sculptures mark pivotal spaces: a two-story high mythological figure by Duddley Diaz, a techno-mythological suspended piece by Dan Raralio, “flying overseas workers” by Charlie Co, human-bird forms by Riel Jaramillo Hilario, and



Ramon P. Santos, Laureate of the Order of National Artist for Music and Chair of the Department of Composition and Theory at the College of Music, UP

an explosion of bird forms by Toym Imao.

Painter Dex Fernandez reflects overseas workers to themselves in a vibrant mural. This mural grounds the body of artistic work composing the Philippine pavilion among the hundreds of thousands of Filipinos in the UAE, who are enjoined to visit the pavilion for a surprising reflection of themselves and their country.

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