

Global and Local Icons Redefine Manila FAME's Design Landscape

A convergence of international tastemakers, pioneering designers, and multidisciplinary artists breathes new life into the show's central settings.

MANILA, METRO MANILA, PHILIPPINES, October 11, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Now in its 73rd edition, premier artisanal [sourcing](#) show Manila FAME gathers design leaders and creative visionaries for a grand convergence of artistry and innovation.

From October 16–18, 2025, the World Trade Center Metro Manila in Pasay City will be transformed into a vibrant showcase featuring the event's signature settings: Design Commune, Philippine Components, and Artisans Village. Each platform highlights the depth of Philippine craftsmanship—from nature-inspired product design and refined [home](#) and seasonal décor to innovative architectural components and regional artisan spotlights—underscoring Manila FAME's role in propelling homegrown brands onto the global stage.

Fresh Visions, Global Stage

Now in its 8th year as a Manila FAME signature setting, Design Commune once again pushes the boundaries of product design, uniting designers and manufacturers to create home items that blend creativity with function.

For its 2025 edition, industry veteran Tony Gonzales leads 'Elements of Nature,' training a new



Manila FAME 2025 Designers and Tastemakers



Filipino artisans at work

generation of designers—Uzel Alconera, Jaime Brias, and Jim Zarate Torres—to collaborate with 20 local manufacturers from across the Philippines in developing design-driven home and holiday décor inspired by earth, air, and water.

Each designer brings a unique perspective: Alconera explores cultural storytelling through materiality, finding meaning in collaborations with seasoned craftsmen; Brias, a London-

based strategist, emphasizes the global value of Philippine artisanal narratives, presenting lamp and lighting designs as art pieces; while Torres, founder of Zarate Manila, reimagines floral motifs into contemporary, hand-shaped collections that balance tradition with modernity.



Under Gonzales's mentorship, the team delivers products that go beyond consumer goods, embodying identity, story, and craftsmanship. As Gonzales affirms, Design Commune ensures the continuity of Filipino design by nurturing future industry leaders who understand that product design is both a creative expression and a vital partnership with makers.

Shaping Nature into Home Pieces

For veteran designer Milo Naval, Manila FAME 2025 marks a full-circle moment. Nearly three decades since he first joined CITEM shows as part of the trailblazing design group Movement 8 alongside Tony Gonzales and other luminaries, he returns to create nature-inspired [furniture](#) and lighting in collaboration with local manufacturers, now led by a new generation of entrepreneurs and designers. "I'm excited to work with my friends' companies and these young creatives," he shares.

Naval's Design Commune exhibit, Home at FAME, offers a fresh take on flora and fauna with a striking black-and-white palette and his signature minimalist style. Working with 10 exhibitors, he reimagines nature through sleek, modern forms—such as a glossy black "crumpled" metal sofa with Maze, and bamboo-inspired floor lamps with Venzon—pieces that marry expert craftsmanship with culture and tradition. For Naval, the project is both renewal and legacy: "I like evolving, I like the idea of beginning once again. It's like planting seeds and seeing them grow."

Broadening Design Horizons

For the second year in a row, Tony Gonzales leads Philippine Components at Manila FAME 2025, an exhibit dedicated to architectural coverings, parts, and fittings. Following its successful debut, Gonzales is optimistic that it will further expand the trade show and open new opportunities for Filipino manufacturers in the global market. "Imagine weaving, paper, and shell crafts reimagined as architectural components," he says. "It will all be very new to the world market."

Showcasing innovations such as mussel shell wall covers and woven abaca panels, the exhibit highlights the country's edge over international competitors who rely on synthetic polymers. With rising demand for sustainable materials, Gonzales believes Filipino artisans' mastery of natural, biodegradable resources offers a warmer, eco-friendly alternative. Still, he stresses the importance of market testing and standardization to meet global specifications—critical steps toward making Philippine Components a lasting movement for the industry.

Around the Islands through Design

A Manila FAME mainstay, Artisans Village celebrates the skills and creativity of the islands. For 2025, four provinces—Bohol, Ilocos Sur, Quirino, and Tarlac—present pavilions that showcase their unique materials and artistry, carrying the cultural soul of the archipelago.

For the first time, the Village welcomes international mentorship through Patti Carpenter, Principal of carpenter + company and an expert in color and trend forecasting. Working with 41 MSMEs from Bohol, Ilocos Sur, and Quirino, she guided the creation of hundreds of prototypes in earthy hues of ocean blue, olive, and terracotta. Carpenter emphasizes sustainability and scalability while preserving each artisan's design voice: "Color is 85% of the reason a buyer walks over to a product. Having the right colors was very important." She also lauds Filipino makers for their "abundance of creativity" and strong design thinking.

Tarlac's pavilion, led by designer Rachelle Dagñalan, draws inspiration from nature's symmetry and patterns. Using terracotta clay, stone, wood, cotton yarn, and rattan, the 13 manufacturers present pieces that balance organic beauty with global appeal. Highlights include Oricon Corporation's debut of colored stone surfaces and Pascasio Pottery's playful tabletops inspired by vegetables.

With CITEM at the helm, Manila FAME 2025 positions Artisans Village as both a platform for heritage and a launchpad for innovation, proving once more that Filipino craftsmanship continues to inspire at home and on the world stage.

Manila FAME is organized by the Center for International Trade Expositions and Missions, the export promotion arm of the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI).

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