

# MVP Study Group Shares Learning with National Museum

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It was a visual journey through time, from colonial to modern art. It was also a learning experience enriched by sharing the learning with others.

The MVP Study Group on *The History of Philippine Art* walked through the panorama of paintings that mirrored the country's historical and cultural change. Nell Ramos, Ludy Reyes, Ching Cabanatan, Lily Pineda and Araceli Lorayes learned through readings on art during the Spanish to present times.

They then shared their learning through presentations made during the training for docents conducted by the National Museum of the Philippines last March 10 and 24, 2009. Those who attended the training were volunteers of the National Museum Volunteer Corps and staff from the National Museum's Education Services Division.

Nell Ramos traced the transition from religious to secular art during the Spanish period. Early religious pieces illustrated how the Church reigned as the sole patron of the arts, followed by detailed works of portraitists, and the important works of Filipino master painters like Juan Luna and Felix Resurreccion Hidalgo.

Fernando Amorsolo's still unequalled mastery of light during the American period was presented by Ludy Reyes. It was a time of sun-drenched scenes from an idyllic countryside as painted by traditionalists. This was to be jolted by the challenge of modernism spearheaded by Victorio Edades.

Ching Cabanatan discussed the emergence of modernism in the post-war years, when art reflected the nation's grief. She focused on works of painters who later became national artists like Carlos Francisco, Vicente Manansala, Cesar Legaspi and Jose Joya, whose works ranged from figurative to abstract.

Modern art in the Philippines gained wider recognition during the sixties. Lily Pineda recounted its growth under the patronage of Imelda Marcos. It was a time when painters like Roberto Chabet, Benedicto Cabrera, Jaime de Guzman and Ang Kiukok were luminaries.

Araceli Lorayes presented the period from the seventies to the present. Her presentation showed that there is much diversity in art groups today. There are still traditionalists like Romulo Galicano, and modernists like Arturo Luz. There are acrylic painters, printmakers, and installation artists. The possibilities seem almost limitless.

The entire docent training program, held every Tuesday at the National Museum from March 4 to 31, 2009, consisted of presentations on pre-colonial art by Jo Asprec and the above-mentioned MVP members, and workshops on art appreciation and museum guiding conducted by Elenita Alba, head of the National Museum Education Services Division.