

JOYCE
JUGO

VINA
DIMAYUGA

DANIELLA
MARIANO

KISA
RAMOS

EHRIAN
FEDERIS

RAYALA
ESTEBAN

VIARDO
KOH

REIREI
LAURETA

MATTHEW PAGTALUNAN
(AKA NILA GANDA) AS

WRITTEN BY
PRIMROSE MADAYAG KNAZEN

INSPIRED BY
IBONG ADARNA

the Glitter bird

DIRECTED BY
HAZEL VENZON

DECEMBER

22, 23

SOLD
OUT

29.30

PCCM

737 KEEWATIN ST
WINNIPEG, MB R2X 3B9, CANADA



unitogether.ca





UNIT Productions creates from the heart of the Filipino diaspora on **Treaty 1 Territory** – a place held since time immemorial by the **Anishinaabe, Anishinew, Cree, Dakota, Dene, and Red River Métis Peoples.**

We are racialized settlers shaped by our own histories of migration, labour, and resilience, creating in a nation built through colonization.

We honour this complexity with care.

Every story we tell moves with respect for Indigenous sovereignty and with a commitment to uplifting Filipino voices in ways that strengthen – not overshadow – the deep histories and relationships of this land.

Thank you!

Maraming Salamat Po!

to our donors

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Being a Filipino in the diaspora especially during Christmas—often means living between two cultures.

Many of us who grew up or moved to Canada were encouraged to adjust quickly and embrace the culture here. That can be great in many ways, but it can also mean slowly losing touch with the stories and traditions we come from.

Pamasko Tales was created to help fill that gap. It's more than just a holiday show. It's a project that puts Filipino stories front and centre—something we don't often see on professional stages in Manitoba, even though Filipinos make up such a large part of the community.

The show brings Filipino folklore to life in a fresh, modern way. By putting our myths, humour, and traditions onstage, **Pamasko Tales** reminds us that our stories deserve to stand alongside the holiday classics everyone already knows. It's one way UNIT hopes to highlight the Filipino experience in the diaspora and make sure our narratives are recognized as an important part of Canada's culture.

A Cultural Movement, Not Just a Show

At its core, **Pamasko Tales** is really about cultural reclamation. It brings back myths and legends that were pushed aside or forgotten because of colonial history. Through fun, immersive storytelling, audiences get to experience old tales about nature, the stars, spirits, water, and the other forces our ancestors once believed in. By reimagining these stories for the stage, the show does more than entertain—it helps us remember where we come from, sparks pride, and creates meaningful connections across generations.

A Vision for New Holiday Traditions

We want **Pamasko Tales** to become something families look forward to every year—a holiday tradition built around our own stories. A show where Filipino tales are celebrated, shared, and made just as recognizable and beloved as the holiday staples we usually see.

Why PAMASKO Tales Matters

PAMASKO Tales is: A revival of Filipino folklore for today's audiences

A fun, accessible way to learn about pre-colonial myths

A celebration of Filipino identity in the diaspora

A chance to build new holiday traditions rooted in Filipino culture

An artistic act of decolonization—by honouring the past, celebrating the present, and imagining what the future can look like.



UNIT productions
TOGETHER



MAGDARAGAT
PHILIPPINES INC.



For nearly five decades, **Magdaragat** has been dedicated to fostering Filipino identity through storytelling in all its forms. Our Children's Theatre Company (ages 5-11) and Youth Development Council (ages 12 and up), the first of its kind in Manitoba's Filipino community, has long nurtured the creative potential of learners from all ages. This collaboration with **UNIT** amplifies our shared commitment to cultural education and artistic growth, offering an invaluable pathway for our community members to engage with their heritage in new and meaningful ways.

Pamasko Tales embodies the spirit of innovation while honoring the richness of pre-colonial Filipino tales. By blending traditional narratives with contemporary theatrical practices, the production ensures that these stories remain vibrant and relevant for today's audiences. Its bold, "fringe" energy and modernized approach also provide a fresh perspective that inspires pride in our heritage and fosters inclusivity across generations.

We are particularly excited about how this collaboration enriches and elevates the talents of our community. The skills developed through the acting workshops and rehearsals, combined with the experience of performing in **Pamasko Tales**, represent an unparalleled opportunity to build confidence, celebrate artistry, and shine a spotlight on the immense talent within Manitoba's Filipino community.

GOLDIE GARCIA
Magdaragat Director



ABOUT UNIT

UNIT (You and I Together) Productions is a transdisciplinary company dedicated to creating culturally dynamic content rooted in Filipino-Canadian stories.

Founded in 2016 by Hazel Venzon and David Oro, **UNIT** produces live art events, performance art, plays, musicals, graphic novels, films, documentaries, and hybrid entertainment. Originally conceived as a multidisciplinary producing company, **UNIT** shifted its focus after touring its first project, **The Places We Go** (Tacloban Philippines), recognizing the need to highlight Filipino narratives in Winnipeg. By 2019, **UNIT** evolved into a service organization offering mentorship, dramaturgy, and production support to Filipino and POC writers, creators, and emerging artists. Guided by human connection and equity, **UNIT** leads with creativity, emotional intelligence, and a commitment to exploration and growth. Its work centers on supporting the Filipino community and bringing underrepresented stories into the mainstream.



Over years of reflection and community engagement, **UNIT** has solidified its role within Winnipeg's vibrant arts scene as a catalyst for diverse artistic talent. Its mission bridges cultural storytelling with professional development, equipping artists with the tools, mentorship, and platforms needed to thrive.

At the heart of **UNIT**'s work is the creation of spaces where artists can explore identity, heritage, and community through innovative and inclusive programming. In 2025, **UNIT** introduces two cornerstone initiatives—the **PAGBUO Workshop Series** and **PAMASKO Tales**—which anchor its sustainable model for artistic development and cultural storytelling. These programs provide essential opportunities for Filipino-Canadian and POC artists to grow, connect, and create.

UNIT'S VALUES

To address the lack of professional development and training for Filipino-Canadian and POC artists.

To provide mentorship in creation, direction, and artistic production.

To explore contemporary Filipino-Canadian identity and celebrate Filipino culture through storytelling.

To offer high-quality production services and consultation.





Playwright's Notes

When Hazel first presented me with the Ibong Adarna story, I had vague memories of watching a rented Filipino movie on Betamax with my parents. A dove-like bird pooped on a spellbound prince who was transformed into a sleeping statue. I didn't understand Tagalog, but I remember the visceral reaction of the whole family laughing and gagging at the same time.

As I read more of Ibong Adarna, I saw a story where parents place expectations on their children, in hopes of shaping their futures and eventually their own legacies. Growing up Filipino, I still feel the weight of the expectations my parents placed upon me, the entirety of their immigrant search for a better life heavy on my shoulders, crushing my dreams of one day becoming a writer. Fortunately, I inherited my mother's Filipina stubbornness; I persevered and found my way to tell my stories.

I wrote *The Glitter Bird* with as many layers as a Halo Halo. I wrote a fun and silly story for the young kids with enough meta jokes and clever punchlines to satisfy the older ones. There's nostalgia for the Lolo's and Lola's and enough bops across genres that will have everyone humming the songs weeks from now. I've also added a not-so-subtle message for the parents, the ones like me who need to lighten that load that our parents handed to us. While we also want what's best for our children, we must take away the weight of our expectations so they will be able to fly.

Thank you to Hazel and UNIT Productions for this opportunity to write a modern Filipino fairy tale by pulling from my memories, covering them with glitter and setting them in stone. Thank you to our #glittergang, the immensely talented cast and crew. We have created something beautiful with a universal message that will break boundaries and spark joy.

Thank you to my family for all your support. As always, thank you to my husband, Josh, for your patience and proof-reading skills. Thank you to my son, Jericho, for helping me navigate song choices. Above all, thank you to Silas, my sounding board and my inspiration. Your insightful questions, your contagious giggle, and your unique point of view helped me create this story. You are my Musika. I look forward to the stories you will write one day.

PRIMROSE MADAYAG KNAZAN

Director's Notes



Growing up, my bedroom wasn't really a place for sleeping—it was a theatre. Looking back, it was where I built entire worlds, where my toys became characters and the stories I invented filled a part of me I didn't yet know would become my career. With my bedroom door firmly shut, I'd spend hours talking out loud, entertaining my dolls, and rearranging the furniture to match whatever scene I was imagining. The clothes in my closet became curtains, the headboard a backstage, and the bed itself was the stage. The door stayed closed mostly out of fear of getting caught not studying!

Now, much, much older, I keep the door open when I play. I let my imagination be something to share and celebrate. In many ways, I've been directing since I was young, and in this production, you'll catch glimpses of that youthful spirit that still pushes me to tell stories. I hope you'll feel your own younger self spark to life—entertained by the young people on stage and by the community gathered around you.

It has been a true pleasure and honour to direct this performance for you, our audience. Working with this incredibly talented company: playwright, composer, designer, musicians, cast and production team has been so fulfilling. They've poured their artistry into making sure you have the best first experience inside the world of our special production.

On behalf of all of us, I hope you enjoy the very first Pamasko Tales production with The Glitter Bird under Primrose's glitter-pen. I hope you feel our shared histories shimmering through this sparkly version of Ibong Adarna - faaaaaar from what you would ever imagine it could be - and created by a fully Filipino artistic team, cast and production crew—showcasing who we are when we come together and create live theatre.

Enjoy the show!


Best,
HAZEL VENZON



MATTHEW PAGTALUNAN (aka Nila Ganda)
The Glitter Bird

Matthew Pagtalunan (he/she), aka Nila Ganda, is a Filipino Drag Artist making her debut with UNIT Productions in the titular role of The Glitter Bird. A celebrated performer and community member in Winnipeg's Drag and Kiki Ballroom scenes, she is the 2025 Rising Star Award recipient and 2026 Entertainer of the Year, with training in dance and theatre and a passion for uplifting Filipino arts.



JOYCE JUGO
Nanay / Old Lady

Joyce is a Canadian-Filipina actor, vocalist, and creative based in Winnipeg, returning to PCCM to share a story meaningful to the Filipino community. A University of Winnipeg Theatre graduate with extensive training and professional mentorship, she performs, teaches at Meraki Theatre, and enjoys fitness, travel, and engaging in diverse artistic pursuits.



VINA DIMAYUGA
Musika

Vina Dimayuga (she/her) is a singer, musician, and storyteller with a Bachelor of Music Therapy from Canadian Mennonite University, currently working as a Music Therapy Intern and private instructor. With 20 years of vocal and instrumental experience, she has performed across Manitoba, Vancouver, Hollywood, and Chile, and is thrilled to bring her passion for music and storytelling to The Glitter Bird.





EHRIAN FEDERIS **Malakas**

Ehrian is excited to make her professional debut in *The Glitter Bird*, building on past roles including Delia in *Fringe's BUGJUICE: a Beetlejuice Parody* and various high school productions. A dedicated performing arts enthusiast and stage manager at Seven Oaks Met School, she hopes to pursue a career in theatre production while enjoying video games, musical singing, thrifting, and mastering Canva in her free time.

DANIELLA MARIANO **Maganda**

Daniella Mariano, a multi-talented singer, musician, and performer from St. Mary's Academy, is thrilled to make her debut in *The Glitter Bird* after past roles such as Alice in *Matilda the Musical*. Passionate about storytelling, academics, and her creative pursuits, she's grateful for the opportunity and hopes the audience enjoys the show's magic.



KISA RAMOS **Bird**

Kisa is a French immersion student at College Beliveau and a dedicated performer, participating in improv, theatre, and dance, including *Tinikling with Magdargat Philippines Inc.* and upcoming roles with *Meraki Theatre*. She enjoys video games, drawing, music, and spending time with her dog, and she is grateful to her family for their unwavering support.

VIARDO KOH

Bird

Viardo ("Vee") is a Westdale Middle School student and member of the Magdaragat Performance Troupe, known for his leadership, quick learning, and natural charisma. An accomplished dancer and budding actor, he enjoys sports, karaoke, video games, and spending time with friends and family, bringing energy, humor, and joy wherever he goes.



RAYALA ESTEBAN

Bird

Rayala, a St. Charles student, is thrilled to make her stage debut, bringing her passion for art, music, and creativity to The Glitter Bird. An avid pianist and budding saxophonist, she also enjoys drawing, journaling, dancing to K-pop, and sharing her vibrant creations on Instagram.



REIREI LAURETA

Bird

Reirei (Mireille) is a Faith Academy Middle School student passionate about music, language, and creativity, and is an active member of her school choir. Fluent in Tagalog, she enjoys playing the recorder, reading graphic novels, and spending time with her younger sister while exploring and developing her artistic talents.





PRIMROSE MADAYAG KNAZAN

Playwright

Award-winning playwright & author, Primrose Madayag Knazan, writes from a Filipino-Canadian, Jewish, and woman's perspective. Her plays have been featured at Royal Manitoba Theatre Centre, Winnipeg Jewish Theatre, and the Winnipeg Fringe. She won the 2021 Jewish Canadian Playwriting Competition and her debut novel, *Lessons in Fusion*, won the Manitoba Book Award for Young Readers.

HAZEL VENZON

Director

Hazel is an interdisciplinary artist, actress, director, and producer whose work explores migration, cultural identity, and global change - creating performances and projects that bring communities together. Co-founder and artistic producer of U N I Together Productions, she has performed, produced and directed in a dozen countries, taught at the University of Winnipeg, and continues to support Filipino storytellers while reflecting her experiences as a 2nd generation BIPOC settler.



ANN LLANOS

Stage Manager

Ann is delighted to be making her debut with UNIT Productions. Recent credits include *SHELF-CONTROL* with Distingo, *RHINOCEROS* with The University of Manitoba Theatre Program. She is a student at the University of Manitoba majoring in Theatre and minoring in Film.

DAVID ORO

Set, Costumes, Lighting Designer

David Oro is a multidisciplinary visual artist and cultural storyteller based in Treaty 1 Territory, Winnipeg, Manitoba. Born in Manila, Philippines, he brings a rich blend of heritage and contemporary artistry to his work as the Founder and Creative Director of Studio SARISARI and Co-Founder / Visual Developing Director of U'N I Together Productions. As a visual developer, he continues to expand the possibilities of storytelling through his bold and culturally infused artistry.



DAVE DAGTA

Musical Arrangement and Director

Jimuel Dave Dagta is a highly accomplished composer, arranger, and multi-instrumentalist whose award-winning works span solo, chamber, choral, orchestral, wind ensemble, and rondalla music, supported by advanced studies at Michigan State University and the University of British Columbia. Beyond composition, he is active as a pianist, accompanist, and bandurria performer across Canada, and he enjoys swimming, hiking, movies, and a wide variety of favorite foods in his personal time.



MARIBETH MANALAYSAY TABINERA

Choreographer

Maribeth Manalaysay Tabanera, also known as Kilusan (siya/sanda/they/she), is a Tagalog Bisaya Filipinx queer non-binary multidisciplinary artist, educator, and community organizer based in Winnipeg. With over 25 years of street-style dance experience and a decade as an educator and facilitator, they have performed, DJed, and presented projects across Turtle Island, contributed to Filipino-Canadian literature, and actively shaped arts and community spaces locally and nationally.





SEANNE BUENAFE

Associate Musical Director / Keys

Seanne Buenafe (he/him) is a Filipino-Canadian pianist pursuing a BMus in Piano Performance with a minor in music education, integrating his cultural identity into performances, teaching, and musical theatre projects. He has performed and directed at local, provincial, and national levels, contributed to charitable initiatives, and serves as music director for collegiate and professional productions while expressing gratitude for his supportive artistic community.

ELLIZ ALVAREZ

Drums / Percussion

Elliz is a Winnipeg-based drummer celebrated for his steady groove and versatility, performing with NYOH at events like the Winnipeg Jazz Festival, Winnipeg vJets games, and Soul Supreme. A Brandon University graduate, he also teaches in the Seven Oaks School Division, fostering young musicians while emphasizing community, creativity, and rhythm both onstage and off.



Production Team:

Production Director: **David Oro**

Production Manager: **Hazel Venzon**

Stage Manager: **Ann Llanos**

Assistant Stage Managers / Running Crew: **Darlene Dela Cruz, Kirstin Caguioa**

Technical Director Lighting Operator: **Ace Escobido**

Production Assistants: **Darwin Oro, Edward Tan**

Costume Builders: **David Oro Sr., Milagros Oro**

Volunteers:

Aaron Oro, Abram Oro, Aliyah Macaraig, Dallas Pauls, Faith Walker, Giselle Villegas, Golda Ferrer, Goldie Garcia, Jo Esteban, Josh Knazan, Lauren Orobias, Liam Arizabal, Mica Villanueva, Pepper Koh, & Senia Mendoza.

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Qomasko
TALES



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