

Celebrating Filipino artistry at Carnegie Hall

Written by Marilyn Abalos
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Pianist Cecile Licad with the Philippine Philharmonic Orchestra at Carnegie Hall. (Photo by Marilyn Abalos)

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The performance of the Philippine Philharmonic Orchestra at Carnegie Hall on June 18 was a

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truly wonderful wrap up of the month-long celebration of Philippine Independence.

Presented by the Cultural Center of the Philippines, the PPO performed an impressive program of classical works by Shostakovich, Sibelius, Rachmaninoff and Philippine composer Redentor Romero.

Pianist Cecile Licad was superb with her performance of Sergie Rachmaninoff's Piano Concerto No. 2.

Cecile has been noted for her confident and masterful interpretation of Rachmaninoff's concerto.

She was lyrical and poetic, as well as forceful and energetic as she played.

Her tone was delicate elegance and her artistry musical magic.

This brilliant artist was truly remarkable with her Rach 2!

The PPO played Dmitri Shostakovich's Festive Overture with Olivier Ochanine conducting — an appropriate opening for the evening at Carnegie Hall.

PPO captured its catchy melodies and rousing harmony.

It was truly a triumphant performance flowing with nationalism, romanticism and celebration.

Violinist Diomedes Saraza ruled with his performance of Jean Sibelius' Violin Concerto in D minor.

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He flourished playing with virtuosity and dark subtlety.

He performed masterfully, especially the third movement, with elan and discreet technique.

The celebration at Carnegie Hall appropriately concluded with the PPO playing Philippine composer-conductor Redentor Romero's Philippine Portraits.

It was especially delightful to recognize the various folk tunes and popular Filipino melodies.

It was enjoyable to hear the musical Philippine landscape by Red with the crisp sounds of the Western instruments coupled with the harmonic pulse of Philippine instruments.

Red's portraits exhibited the hearts and the one heart of the Philippines.

It was a special gift and many gifts on that historic evening to have the first Filipino Orchestra perform at Carnegie Hall Philippine Portraits with pride, proficiency and passion.

Mabuhay!

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