

Juan nakpil as philippine national artist essay



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Since then, the title “ National Artist of the Philippines achieved its” achieved its complexity and great honor for having a broad criteria of choosing the nominees. It has been a prestigious award which fully granted for those who greatly excel and contributed widely in the development of Philippine arts. Philippine Arts, which plays a vital role for the preservation and commercialization of our own culture, should be a product of fully Filipino style rather than an adaptation from other modern style architecture.

The fruit of love between Julio Nakpil and Gregoria de Jesus, Juan Nakpil and Gregorio D Jesus, Juan Nakpil was the first national artist of the Philippines in architecture category. He was the first Filipino architect who was able to be listed in American institute of Architects. He finished his high school in Manila high school (1917) and took the course of engineer in University of the Philippines. During his times in UP, he studied free drawing, painting, decorative arts and sculpture.

After two years, Juan Nakpil gone to United States and took his bachelor in Science of Civil Engineering in University of Kansas. After that, he went to Europe and took his course of architecture in Fountain Bleau School of Fine Arts which he got his diploma d’ architecture. In his comeback in the Philippines, he becomes assistant architect in Bureau of Public works. Given a prestigious award of “ National Artist of the Philippines ”, there are claims that Juan Nakpil doesn’t deserve to have it.

The reason might be revealed by revealing the criteria of choosing nominees for the title. 1. Living artists who have been Filipino citizens for the last ten years prior to nomination as well as those who have died after the

establishment of the award in 1972 but were Filipino citizens at the time of their death; 2. Artists who have helped build a Filipino sense of nationhood through the content and form of their works; 3. Artists who have distinguished themselves by pioneering in a mode of creative expression or style, making an impact on succeeding generations of artists;

4. Artists who have created a significant body of works and/or have consistently displayed excellence in the practice of their art form, enriching artistic expression or style; and 5. Artists who enjoy broad acceptance through prestigious national and/or international recognition, awards in prestigious national and/or international events, critical acclaim and/or reviews of their works, and/or respect and esteem from peers within an artistic discipline. According to the criteria, a national artist is an artist who has helped build a Filipino sense of nationhood through the content and form of their works.

But since Juan Nakpil is a product of other country which he acquired different styles in producing his artwork, this is considered as adaptation. Secondly, Juan Nakpil didn't distinguished himself by pioneering a mode of creative expression or style, making an impact on succeeding generations of artist since all of his made was based on what style he has learned in other culture. Being a National Artist has been a complex idea and bounded with such criteria which are based only for the settlement of standards of enriching Philippine Arts.

Since it plays a vital role in preserving and cultivating our culture thru expression of visual art, it encompasses with certain standards by which

nominees are carefully selected and must be proven him/herself if he/she deserves such prestigious award. Juan Felipe Nakpil is famous of his major works: the Geronimo de los Reyes Building, Magsaysay Building, Rizal Theater, Capitol Theater, Captain Pepe Building, Manila Jockey Club, Rufino Building, Philippine Village Hotel, University of the Philippines Administration and University Library, the reconstructed Rizal house in Calamba, Laguna.

He also designed the International Eucharistic Congress altar and improved the Quiapo Church in 1930 by erecting a dome and a second belfry. I don't know how stupid I am that I never knew Juan Nakpil in my entire life until now. I think I never even heard his name and I don't even know that his architect. This discussion is about does he deserve to become a National Artist despite the fact that he's just imitating some other's building? Well, let's observe more profound. Let's start contemplating his biography.

Juan Felipe Nakpil was born on May 26, 1899, the eldest child of Julio Nakpil and Gregoria De Jesus. Julio Nakpil was a musician and composer who fought in the Philippine Revolution against Spain and had been designated by Andres Bonifacio as secretary of the command in the north of Manila. He later married Bonifacio's widow, Gregoria, who was also a courageous leader of the Katipunan. While he also trained to play the piano, Juan's inclination to the visual arts must have been boosted when as a child in 1907, he won the silver medal in a Rizal Day drawing competition.

He further trained in freehand drawing with Fabian de la Rosa and Fernando Amorsolo, then already distinguished artists, and would have been inspired by his aunt Petrona Nakpil-Bautista, who excelled in painting. The Nakpil

family was also known for the Plateria Nakpil, where fine jewelry was designed and crafted. Beyond Borders in Architecture When Juan Nakpil was on the second year of his course in civil engineering at the University of the Philippines, he took the bold decision to go the United States for his studies despite the disapproval of his family.

He left what must have been a favored life as an only son with five sisters, by pawning his watch to buy a steerage ticket to America. Nakpil studied civil engineering at the University of Kansas, supporting himself by working as a pianist with the Filipino Strong Orchestra, and later as a partial scholar of the Philippine government and with assistance from his uncle, the nationalist and philanthropist, Dr. Ariston Bautista-Lin. There he obtained his degree in civil engineering in 1922.

However, he was not content, and with his uncle's encouragement, he decided to pursue his true passion, travelling to France to study architecture at the Fontainebleau School of Fine Arts. Nakpil studied with the noted architects Carlu and Lalouz and was listed among the top ten in his class of forty, easily gaining the Diplome d' Architecture. He returned to the United States with a Joseph Evelyth fellowship to Harvard University where he got his master's degree in architecture in 1926.

During this period, Nakpil was exposed to the best architecture internationally, closely observing the French Beaux Art and the emerging styles of the period and also trained under the noted architect Jean Jacques Haffner, holder of Gran Prix de Rome. He tested his mettle as he entered several architectural contests open to Harvard University students of

architecture, the Boston Institute of Technology and the Architects Club of Boston. He won one contest for the design of a bank for a city of 500, 000 inhabitants.

Outstanding Early Career Upon his return to Manila in December 1926, Nakpil began working as assistant architect at the Bureau of Public Works. He then joined the firm of the reknowned architect Andres Luna de San Pedro two years later as junior partner. Among the projects resulting from Nakpil's collaboration with Luna were the Perez-Samanillo building, St. Paul's Chapel, the Crystal Arcade and residences like those of Rafael Fernandez and of Jacobo and Alfonso Zobel.

Nakpil began to apply some of his observations on modern lighting and architectural treatment at the Paris Exposition des Arts Decoratifs et Industriel Modernes of 1925, such as in the remodelling of the old Ideal Theatre. The exposition which gave the Arts Deco movement its name, also influenced him as he introduced the latest concepts in furniture design as the designer for Gonzalo Puyat and Sons from 1928 to 1931.

Also wonderful models of this style adapted to the Philippine setting are the Manila Jockey Club Building and the residences Nakpil designed for Javellana, Lacson, Legarda, and Vicente Lim, gracing the Vito Cruz area in Pasay City. By this time, he had already established his own architectural firm in 1930. At the same time that Nakpil embarked on his first architectural projects, he also began teaching. He joined the Mapua Institute of Technology from 1927 to 1931, teaching history of architecture, theory of architecture and design

for the junior and senior years. Then in 1931 to 1938 he taught at the University of Sto.

Tomas College of Architecture. Thus he helped educate a generation of architects, such that during a certain period, all six deans of architecture of different schools had been his students. In 1941, Nakpil founded the Philippine College of Design with many of the leading architects like Andres Luna de San Pedro, Juan Arellano, Pablo Antonio and others, until World War II interrupted this project. Earlier, in 1933, he had also established with other top architects the Philippine Architects Society (later renamed Philippine Institute of Architects) and served as its first president.

The Architect as Citizen Juan F. Nakpil also held various positions of trust with the government, as he generously contributed his skills. Among the positions he held were Chairman of the Board of Examiners for Architects, member of the Building Code Committee of Manila, member of the Zoning and Building Committee of Manila, Consulting Architect of the Republic assigned to the University of the Philippines and member of the Philippine Historical Commission.

He was also Consultant to the Headquarters, Philippine Army for 1936 to 1958, and responsible for the design of its building, uniforms, medals and insignias. For his services during the war as engineer and planner, he was promoted to Colonel and awarded various medals and commendations by both the Philippine Army and United States Army. Nakpil was also an active leader of various civic organizations like the Rotary, Boy Scouts of the

Philippines, Knights of Rizal and Philippine Tuberculosis Society, where he often donated his services.

In 1947, he was made a papal knight of the Order of St Sylvester for distinguished services rendered to the church. He was architect of the 33rd International Eucharistic Altar, and much later the 2nd National Eucharistic Congress altar, as well as the Quezon Institute Chapel and the Santiago Hospital Chapel and various restoration projects. A Concern for History and Heritage An early project of Juan F. Nakpil was the renovation and enlargement of the Quiapo Church after it had been razed by fire in 1929.

His work on the restoration of the home of Dr. Jose Rizal in Calamba started with researches in 1932, until its completion and inauguration in 1950. He also did the restoration of Rizal's cell in Fort Santiago. Another restoration project that Nakpil worked on much later in the late 1970's was the Sta. Ana Church in Manila. He earned the grateful prayers of the parish leaders, as he supervised pro-bono the careful tasks of bringing back the old church to its former glory of round-domed towers and stained-glass windows. Nakpil also designed the Mabini Shrine in Tanauan, Batangas.

Ironically, some of his designs were considered "too modern", such as his early design for the Bonifacio Monument, which won 2nd place in the competition. Much more controversial was his stainless steel shaft/pylon superimposed over the granite obelisk of Dr. Jose Rizal's monument in Luneta in celebration of Rizal's centenary in 1961. Although the design was actually fitting as part of a modern national theatre and arts complex

designed by Nakpil for the area, it was eventually removed two years later, still unappreciated by the public.

A Modern Sensibility Other innovations of Nakpil were successfully integrated - the magazine celebrating his silver jubilee as an architect in 1953 cited some projects: While he also trained to play the piano, Juan's inclination to the visual arts must have been boosted when as a child in 1907, he won the silver medal in a Rizal Day drawing competition. He further trained in freehand drawing with Fabian de la Rosa and Fernando Amorsolo, then already distinguished artists, and would have been inspired by his aunt Petrona Nakpil-Bautista, who excelled in painting.

The Nakpil family was also known for the Plateria Nakpil, where fine jewelry was designed and crafted. " Uy Yet Building - one of the earlier works of Nakpil, was the first building to feature concrete media agua. Manila Jockey Club building -made use of exposed staircase as an architectural motif of the building, which as cantilevered stairs, concrete media aguas and balconies.

Residence of General and Mrs. Vicente Lim - made us of wood in the wide eaves projecteing two meters from the face - that were adapted in the design of this modern house - climatic conditions in the country were taken into account. In the 1950's Nakpil made striking use of the newly developed thin-shell concrete construction in works like the Rizal theatre and the Social Security System (SSS) Building. Aside from the folded plate facade and roofline, the SSS building remains a modern classic with the staircase fully visible through the glass windows. Heralding Philippine Architecture Juan

Nakpil spoke of a Philippine architecture, that was attuned to the climatic and seismological conditions, and the environment of the nation.

Villalon notes: “ After World War II, Nakpil developed a structural system based on the Philippine” house on stilts” that he first used for proposed government center buildings at Diliman that unfortunately not constructed. However, the idea evolved into a design principle in the buildings he designed for the new University of the Philippines campus in Diliman, where the stilts were adapted into a structural component that allowed simple, open and effective floor planning leading to the easy partitioning of the interiors.

Different versions of the Filipino nipa hut roofing were reflected in designs like the residence and headquarters of Felix Y. Manalo, founder of the Iglesia ni Kristo, in San Juan, and the Philippine Village Hotel, a project of the Juan F. Nakpil and Sons firm. The use of indigenous Philippine material in housing was also explored by Nakpil, who as Chairman of the Rural Urban Planning Committee of his Rotary Club, supervised a contest with prizes for indigenous and environmental Filipino housing design and for technology that would retard fire and insect-infestation of native aterials.

A more personal project that literally was an expansive nipa house, was the Nakpil family resthouse in San Jose del Monte Bulacan. The airy structure held six bedrooms and combined features of the bahay na bato with the nipa hut, with its concrete base decorated by flat river stones, wide bamboo floor verandas wrapping most of the house, capiz windows and sliding doors and

spectacular nipa roofing. Here the Nakpils, including Juan F. Nakpil's grandchildren, spent happy weekends together for many years.

A Full Life In the midst of his stellar career, Juan Nakpil has Raised a family in Batangas with his wife Anita Agoncillo Noble. Their three sons, Ariston, Francisco and Eulogio excelled as architects and engineer and joined him in firm Juan Nakpil and sons. Their two daughters also excelled in their vocations. In 1973, the Nakpil family joyfully celebrated Juan F. Nakpil's most significant award, as the first National Artist of the Philippines for Architecture. They were joined by the many friends of the very sociable and civic-minded gentleman.

Juan F. Nakpil passed away peacefully at the age of 86. His consummate artistry was rewarded in the many outstanding structures that survive him. Gregoria de Jesus had written a kartilla of her own in 1928: ten guidelines especially for the youth. Number four was : " Pagsikapang magkaroon ng anumang karunungan na tumutugon sa kanyang hilig upang pakinabangan ng bayan. " (Strive to develop expertise whatever your vocation , to be of service to the country.) Juan F. Nakpil had indeed taken to heart these and his mother's other guidelines for a life of honor and heroism.

After reading the entire biography of Juan Nakpil, I realized that imitating other country's structure is not a big reason for not having the title of a national artist. Maybe it's not because he doesn't have the skills to create his own design, maybe it's because Juan Nakpil wants us to see what he have seen in America and Europe. Maybe he wanted to share the beauty of other country. He became an engineer first by supporting himself. That's the

hardship of being a student but he overcome it and pursue to another course that he really want—Architecture.

He had given recognition to our country by excelling in the field of Architecture. He served as a very good example to our fellowmen, to the students of many generations. Even those imitated structures had become inspiration especially when World War II came. The Metropolitan Theater is a good example of the remains of the war. In March 2006, there was a flurry of protest, mainly by conservationists, journalists and bloggers, upon the impending demolition of the Avenue Theatre to make way for a parking lot. The building's end happened quickly, leaving them to mourn another loss of heritage, the work of a National Artist, Juan F. Nakpil.

The Avenue theatre was described as “ a grand Art Deco structure that provided entertainment to generations of Manilans... a landmark building that helped define Manila's downtown - Avenida Rizal... Nakpil had designed it as a cutting-edge cinema before the war and he renovated it after the war to cater to new technologies of air-conditioning, Technicolor, and wide screens. ” (Villalon, PDI) Many of the agitated bloggers were not old enough to have watched movies at the Avenue, but knew the value of the few surviving pre-war structures to our cityscape and culture.

Other online writers were more familiar with another lost Nakpil structure, the Rizal Theater in Makati which was the iconic setting for memories of the 1960's to 1980's. This outstanding structure featured not only movies but live performances seeking Nakpil's care for acoustics in design. And how would generations recall the University of the Philippines, without seeing the

sweep of the Administration Building behind the Oblation statue, or the Carillon Tower of silent bells?

Fortunately these and many of Nakpil's buildings still stand while others remain in the mind's eye, part of remembered history of place. Indeed, Juan Nakpil deserves to become a National Artist, not because his a good architect but because his a true hero and of all he have been through. Even though I was a little upset that he imitated structures, after reading his life story, it changed my mind and became one of those who admires he's intelligence and perseverance.