



Teatro Akebono 2014 Restages “The Crane Dog”

By Masako Ono, Tsuyoshi Imai and Mary Joy E. Barcelona

For many years now, the Development Action for Women network (DAWN) has been utilizing the medium of theatre to reach out to more people, including the Japanese, to communicate the issues confronting many Japanese-Filipino children (JFC).

Every year, DAWN through its Teatro Akebono group has been presenting musical plays in the Philippines and in different prefectures of Japan.

Theatre is a way of bridging cultural gaps between countries. It is a means of conveying messages, of forging friendships and understanding.

DAWN is pleased to restage its original musical play “The Crane Dog” written by award-winning playwright Michiko Yamamoto, herself a Japanese-Filipino. The play is a story centered on Japanese-Filipino children, where a crane dog (a crossbreed of a crane and a dog) searches for her estranged crane father, which she was able to unearth after her dog mother told her about her true identity. She left her family to look for her true father and encountered obstacles on her way to meeting him. But in the end, she was able to meet her father and was accepted and loved.

“The Crane Dog,” aims to open the viewers’ eyes on the struggles and difficulties of being a JFC to understand the situation they are into.

Most JFC grow up without having fathers around and this makes them feel incomplete.



The Cast of “The Crane Dog 2014”

This is the reason why they want to meet with their fathers, whatever obstacles they might face, just like the Crane Dog.

Prior to the selection of the cast, the children and women underwent workshops

with facilitators, David Mark Calma and Mr. Ronie Protacio, Artistic Director of the Collective Arts of Students and Thespians (CAST). Six children were selected and had a series of acting workshops and rehearsals.



“The Crane Dog” and “Iba’t-Ibang Mukha Ni Misty,” cast with guests and staff at the Tanghalang Leandro Locsin, of the National Commission for Culture and the Arts (NCCA)

DAWN had a back-to-back presentation of “The Crane Dog,” and “Iba’t-Ibang Mukha ni Misty,” the women’s play at the Tanghalang Leandro Locsin of the National Commission on Culture and the Arts (NCCA) on May 14, 2014 at 2pm.

From May 17-31, 2014 the cast of “The Crane Dog” assisted by the DAWN staff: Cris, Joy and Mel had a series of presentations, exchanges and meetings in universities and other venues in the different prefectures of Japan: Chiba, Yokohama, Tokyo, Saitama, Nagoya, Kyoto and Osaka.

The first day in Japan was definitely a blast. When we arrived at the Narita Airport on May 17, we were warmly welcomed by Mr. Natsuyuki Imagawa (Nachan), the Director of YUMEUTA in Saitama along with his daughters Sarara and Yukune; Tamura-san, DAWN-Japan volunteer; and members of DAWN-KUIS. We were treated with pizza, pasta and chicken.

Teatro Akebono’s first performance was at Kanda University for International Studies (KUIS) in Chiba prefecture on May 18.



Teatro Akebono warmly welcomed by Nachan and daughters, DAWN-KUIS and DAWN-Japan’s Tamura-san at the Narita Airport.

The audience enjoyed and were touched by the musical and an encore dance performance entitled *Teno Hira o Taiyou Ni*. Prof. Mitsuko Horiuchi, Vice-President of the DAWN Board and Mr. Kazuo Inoue, DAWN Advisory Council member came to meet the group and watch the play. Kanna met her aunt from her mother’s side and the latter watched the play. She said, “Masaya talaga ako kasi matagal na kaming hindi nagkikita (I was glad because we haven’t seen each other for a long time.”

After the play, DAWN-KUIS members congratulated the group in their performance. DAWN-KUIS members and Teatro Akebono then had some exchange of views on the issues about the JFC, followed by friendly conversations as the students toured the group around the university.



The DAWN-KUIS members and Teatro Akebono Team during the DAWN-KUIS bazaar at KUIS.

After a fun-filled day in KUIS, the team together with Tamura-san and Naoto-san of KUIS, traveled to Yumeuta’s office in Saitama to spend the night. Everyone helped in preparing dinner and made different kinds of pizza.

Teatro Akebono’s next destination was at the Yokohama National University (YNU). Prof. Chiho Ogaya, who is also DAWN-Japan’s Coordinator and her students prepared for a performance in the university.

Before the play, the group went around YNU with Prof. Ogaya’s students to distribute flyers to invite other students to watch the play. Philip Sasaki-sensei of the Makoto Center and his granddaughter Aya, who was in Japan as an exchange student also went to YNU to greet the team and watch the play. The students organized mini-games followed by a farewell “sayonara” party in one of the conference rooms in YNU.

Mr. Kenji Nakanishi, a writer from Yomiuri Shimbun (a local newspaper in Osaka), came to Yokohama and interviewed the members of the cast.



“The Crane Dog” presentation at the Yokohama National University.

The JFC were asked about The Crane Dog, the struggles of being a JFC and the dreams they wanted to pursue.

YNU students toured the group around Yamashita Park after the interview. The JFC took a roller coaster ride and everyone had a great time at the amusement park.

In the afternoon of May 22, the team went to Soka City’s community center for the third performance. And like in other prefectures, the audience was touched and moved by the performance. The show ended with *Teno Hira o Taiyou Ni*. There was a dinner party for having a successful play in Saitama. Some people had exchange of views and shared stories.



The Teatro Akebono Team with the Kodomo Hiroba Soka Oyako Gekijo group and the Yumeuta members at Soka City.

On Sunday, May 25, the Yumeuta members sent us off at the Omiya station for our next presentation in Nagoya. The team was met at the Nagoya station by Tamura-san and Koushou Nakashima and brought the team to the Kosoji Catholic Church where we stayed and had our performance. Most of the audience were Filipinos with their Japanese husbands and children. A welcome potluck-dinner followed featuring both Philippine and Japanese dishes shared with everyone. Discussions and sharing were done while enjoying dinner together.

On Monday morning, May 26, before leaving for Kyoto, Fr. Hayakawa Tsutomu took selfie photos with the JFC and blessed the group before going to the next destination.

Going to Kyoto, the team took the Shinkansen and it was the first time for some of the JFC to go to Kyoto. In Kyoto, we were met by Wako-sensei of the Kyoto University, together with his students. It was the first invitation from Kyoto University. The show ended with *Teno Hira o Taiyou Ni* led by the cast and the audience also sang and danced along. After the presentation, the students and Prof. Wako brought us to Kyoto Ninja, a buffet restaurant where waiters wear ninja outfits. Everyone enjoyed the food especially the sweets.



Teatro Akebono Team with Prof. Asato Wako and his students at Kyoto University.

The next day was a free day and the group was toured by some Kyoto University students to Kiyomizu Temple, the most famous temple and known for having good luck to businesses and lovers in Kyoto. Everyone experienced drinking clean and cold water from the mountain.

In the late afternoon of May 27, we travelled to Osaka, Teatro Akebono’s final destination. We were welcomed by Anno-sensei and students from the Kansai University.

The team was invited to perform at Kansai University for the first time on May 28. After lunch, the students toured the team around the school. First, the students made a short presentation about DAWN and its programs.



Kyoto University students with the Teatro Akebono Team at the Kiyomizu Temple in Kyoto.

Then the cast presented the play and showcased their talents in numerous dance numbers. After the play, the students and JFC played games. It was really fun meeting new friends and playing games with them.

That night, the Kansai University students and Anno-sensei brought us to a dinner in a restaurant near the university and everyone enjoyed the food.



At the Kansai University, students and the Teatro Akebono Team, sang and danced together "Teno Hira o Taiyou Ni."

The next day, the team presented The Crane Dog at the Takawashi-minami Junior High School in Osaka. The audience was composed mainly of junior high school students in their second year. Everyone was very active in asking questions.



At the Takawashi-minami Junior High School, Osaka.

Later that afternoon, we went to the Nagai Youth Hostel to prepare for the next presentation at the conference hall of Nagai Youth Hostel. Mr. Nobuki Fujimoto, a long-time volunteer from Osaka and Koushou Nakashima came to watch the musical.

The audience was touched by the performance and some even shed tears in some parts of the play. Part of the audience were relatives of Kansai University students.

After the presentation, the students prepared a surprise birthday party and gifts for Keigo, who celebrated his 15th birthday. Everyone was happy for him.



Keigo's 15th birthday celebration at the Nagai Youth Hostel.

The last presentation was at the Osaka University. Oue-sensei, Prof. Joey Baquiran of UP, who is now teaching Philippine Studies at the Osaka University, Prof. Michiko Yoneno Reyes of the UP Asian Center, who happened to be in Osaka, and Ms. Megumi Hara welcomed us. Before the play, Megumi gave a short introduction about DAWN and its programs to the audience composed mainly of Japanese students taking up Philippine studies. After the play, questions were also raised; some even ask questions in Filipino language.



At the Nagai Youth Hostel, the audience singing and dancing.

Everyone had a great time dining at an Okonomiyaki restaurant during the farewell dinner with the professors and students.

On May 31, the morning of our last day, Anno-sensei and Akane Sako of Kansai University sent us off at the Shin-Osaka station for our Shinkansen to Tokyo, about a three hour trip.



Anno-sensei and Akane-san sending off the Teatro Akebono Team at the Shin Osaka Station for their Shinkansen for Tokyo.



Prof. Mitsuko Horiuchi and Mr. Kazuo Inoue at the presentation of "The Crane Dog," at Kanda University for International Studies (KUIS).

Courtesy visits/meetings and other activities:

Prof. Mitsuko Horiuchi, Vice-President, DAWN Board of Trustees and Mr. Kazuo Inoue, member DAWN Advisory Council came to the presentation at KUIS on May 18. The Tearo Akebono team also met with Mr. Michio Ito and Ms. Megumi Nishijima of the Asian Community Trust (ACT-Japan) who has been supporting DAWN's work for three years now. ACT-Japan and DAWN-KUIS joined the two-day bazaar organized in KUIS.

On May 20 at 3pm, the group was warmly welcomed by Ms. Mariko Aoki, Mr. Takaaki Wakui and Mr. Katsuhiko Sato of the All-Japan Prefectural and Municipal Workers Union (JICHIRO-RENGO), a network and supporter of DAWN since 1996. The JFC shared their dreams and aspirations and expressed thanks and gratitude for the continuing support of JICHIRO to the activities of DAWN. The JFC sang *Teno Hira o Taiyou Ni*.



Everyone was given a gift, (omiyage) and a group photo was taken.

On May 21 at 3pm, the group together with Prof. Mitsuko Horiuchi, Mr. Akihiro Tamura of DAWN-Japan and Mr. Natsuyuki Imagawa of Yumeuta had a courtesy visit to H.E. Ambassador Manuel Lopez, Madame Theresa Lopez, Consul-General Jocelyn Tirol Ignacio and Minister Angelica Escalona at the Philippine Embassy in Tokyo. We thanked Madame Lopez again for sharing with DAWN, part of the proceeds from the Asia Pacific Ladies Friendship Society (ALFS) Charity Bazaar 2012.

Tita Mel talked about the programs and activities of DAWN, livelihood projects and the JFC. Issues such as handling the nationality problems of the JFCs, processing of documents, legal assistance and our schedule of presentations in Japan were also discussed. Ambassador Lopez, Madame Lopez and the two other officers expressed their support and willingness to work together with DAWN.



Prof. Mitsuko Horiuchi, Mel Nuqui, Tsuyoshi Imai in a meeting with Ambassador Manuel and Madame Theresa Lopez and Congen Joy.

Madame Lopez mentioned that she would like to share again part of their proceeds from the Asia Pacific Ladies Friendship Society (ALFS) Charity Bazaar 2014 to DAWN. Also an invitation to the June 14, 2014 bazaar being organized by the Philippine Embassy was extended to DAWN's network.

(Continued on page 8)

Ms. Mariko Aoki, Mr Taaki Wakui and Mr. Katsuhiko Sato of the JICHIRO-RENGO with the Teatro Akebono Team during the courtesy visit at the Jichiro office in Tokyo.

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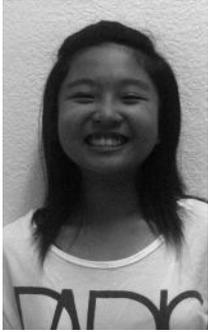
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The Cast of "The Crane Dog"

By *Tsuyoshi Imai*



Yukie Ikeda

Yukie, 12, born on November 16, 2001, is an incoming Grade 8 student at the Manila Cathedral Catholic School. Her favorite subjects are Mathematics, Science and English. She likes playing table tennis and computer games. Her favorite Filipino food is kare-kare while her favorite Japanese food is onigiri. She dreams of being a dentist someday so that she can follow her father's footsteps.

This is her first time to join Teatro Akebono. She will be playing the role of Crane Dog. She sees herself as Crane Dog because she hasn't seen her father and she stays with her mother. She also experienced being bullied. She is happy and very excited to go to Japan and she is hoping to have a chance to see her father.



Keigo Mosatalla

Keigo, 14, was born on May 29, 1999. He is an incoming Grade 7 student in Camp Gen. Emilio Aguinaldo High School. His favorite subjects are Mathematics and Science. He likes helping in the house chores, drawing Animes and playing computer games. His favorite Filipino dish is sinigang na baboy and he likes seafood ramen. His dream is to become an engineer someday because he wants to build houses.

A first time member of the Teatro Akebono, he will play the role of the Crane father. When asked about what he feels about his role, he said that if he was the crane father, he wouldn't leave Crane Dog behind and would bring her with him. He is happy to be part of the play and have a chance to go to Japan.



Jemina Shilyn Alnas

Jemina Shilyn, 14, was born on December 7, 1999 and is an incoming Grade 9 student at the San Francisco High School. Her favorite subjects are Filipino and Social Studies. She enjoys playing badminton and volleyball. She loves dishes with chicken and her favorite Japanese food is curry. She is fond of cooking and she wants to be a chef.

This is her fourth time being with the theater group and the second time to play the role of mother dog. For her, it is difficult because she hasn't experienced being a mother but when she thinks of her own mother, she realized how hard it is especially being a solo parent. She is also excited and happy to have another chance to go to Japan and perform in the play.



Maria Kanna Junio

Maria Kanna 16, born on January 18, 1998, is an incoming 1st year college student at Miriam College. She likes to spend her time singing, playing the guitar and piano. Her favorite Filipino dish is tinolang manok and her favorite Japanese food is tonkatsu. She wants to be an accountant in the near future.

This is her first time to join Teatro Akebono. She will play the roles of a friendly dog and a crane. As for the play, she feels sad for Crane Dog because she wasn't accepted by her sister. She is very happy and excited because this will be her first time to go to Japan and she doesn't know what to expect.



Tsuyoshi Imai

Tsuyoshi 21, born on June 29, 1992, is an incoming 3rd year Medical student at the University of the East Ramon Magsaysay Memorial Medical Center Inc. He spends his time reading medical textbooks and references, and also play basketball. His favorite dish is sinigang and loves sushi. Hopefully he becomes a doctor in the near future.

This is his fifth time to join the theater tour and the third time to play the role of a crane grandfather. He is having fun because he is the oldest in the group, playing the oldest role. He is happy because once again, he will meet new and old friends, as well as his father.



Masako Ono

Masako, 17, was born in Japan on June 23, 1996 and is an incoming 1st year college student. She likes English and computer subjects. She is fond of reading manga and novels with themes about coming-of-age and she draws abstracts and animes during her free time.

She loves eating sinigang na hipon and sukiyaki. She wants to be a teacher and also serve as an inspiration to others. This is her first time to join the theater tour, but she has joined school productions before. She will play the role of a hunter, crane and bully dog, but according to her, she was never the bully in real life. In fact, she experienced being bullied when she was younger.



It is with great pleasure that I extend my very warm greetings and congratulations to the Development Action for Women Network (DAWN) and its theatre group Teatro Akebono for once again restaging the musicale play, "The Crane Dog," by award-winning playwright Michiko Yamamoto from May 17-31, 2014 in the different prefectures in Japan.

The Story portrays the struggles and experiences of Japanese-Filipino children (JFC), living with their Filipino mothers who do not have the capability to find their Japanese fathers. The play addresses the common dilemma of the JFC members of DAWN in search of their Japanese parent. Just like the lead character in the play, many JFC want to meet their real fathers. Six JFC members of DAWN are part of this play - Yukie, Masako, Kanna, Keigo, Jemina and Tsuyoshi.

Allow me to commend the efforts of DAWN for helping move a bigger audience toward supporting the cause of returning migrant women and their children. It is our expressed hope that through the musicale play, many people will bear a better, if not more profound understanding of what Japanese-Filipino children are going through towards the ultimate support of these JFC in the struggle or conduct of their lives.

JESUS I. YABES

Undersecretary for Migrant Workers Affairs
Department of Foreign Affairs



PAMBANSANG KOMISYON PARA SA KULTURA AT MGA SINING

NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR CULTURE AND THE ARTS

The National Commission for Culture and the Arts (NCCA) gives its warmest congratulations to the Development Action for Women Network (DAWN) for organizing the re-staging of the musicale play "The Crane Dog" by award-winning playwright Michiko Yamamoto.

The play is a story on diaspora, particularly centered on Japanese-Filipino children, where a crane dog (a crossbreed of a crane and a dog) searches for her estranged crane identity. This led her to another world very much alien to her, but in the journey, she is able to learn about her father's land and as well discover things she did not know about herself.

Yamamoto, a Japanese-Filipino, has had numerous recognitions under her name for her writing works in the films like Mario J. De Los Reyes' "Magnifico" and Aureus Solito's "Ang Pagdadalaga ni Maximo Oliveros," both of which have grown to become landmark films in the country. "The Crane Dog," although a fable story, is an allegorical and poignant play that mirrors the situation of children whose real identities have been quite elusive to them

This is a story of self-discovery whose power comes from the characters who try to find it in themselves to learn the real meaning of living- to build a human connection in this world.

As the prime arm of the government dedicated to promoting culture and the arts in the country, with the vision of "Filipino Culture as the Wellspring of National and Global Well-being," the NCCA would like to praise the DAWN for staging this wonderful play. And with this, we hope this play may shine a light upon the benighted parts of our lives towards our very own self-discovery.

Mabuhay po kayong lahat!

FELIPE M. DE LEON, JR.
Chairman
National Commission for Culture
and the Arts



SINAG (akebono or yoake in Japanese) means dawn or daybreak.

It is the quarterly publication of the Development Action for Women Network (DAWN), a non-government organization devoted to issues concerning migrant women and their Japanese-Filipino children.

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TEATRO AKEBONO 2014 (cont'd)



Mr. Kenji Yoshihara taught the children and staff how to make Zouri, Japanese traditional slippers using recycled cloth at the Yumeuta office on May 23.

Meetings with mother/fathers

On May 19 and 20, Masako had a chance to meet with her mom, whom she hasn't seen for more than a year, at YNU. "I feel great and happy now that I saw my mom. It seemed everything that I have prayed for was answered," Masako said. With DAWN's help, the mother agreed to support her studies.

Tsuyoshi Imai's father came to meet us on May 24 at the Yumeuta's office in Saitama. "I am very happy that I had another chance to talk to my father this year," Tsuyoshi said.

On May 31, at the Tokyo station, Jemina met with her father.



Masako Ono with mother and stepsister

"I feel very happy because he came to see me in Tokyo after 2 years," Jemina said. Yukie talked with her father on May 18 and on May 31, while waiting for our flight for Manila at the Narita airport. "So glad to talk with Daddy," Yukie said.

Teatro Akebono went back to Manila. Everyone brought new memories, fun experiences, and lessons learned which will be cherished and treasured forever in their hearts. Once again, Teatro Akebono was able to capture, enlighten the viewers and made them aware of the issues about the dilemma of Japanese-Filipino children through the play "The Crane Dog."

Thank you! Maraming Salamat Po! Arigatou Gozaimasu!

We would like to thank Ms. Michiko Yamamoto for the very good story, Mr. Ronie Protacio and Mark David for the workshops, the National Commission for Culture and the Arts (NCCA), and Atty. Jess Varela for the support, the Social Security System (SSS) and Pag-Ibig Fund for their Ads in the Souvenir Program.

Maraming Salamat po to the members of the cast, the mothers, staff and volunteers for their cooperation. And last but definitely not the least, *arigatou gozaimasu* to the DAWN networks and volunteers in Japan for making our stay very comfortable and enjoyable. And to all the people and groups we met - Filipinos and Japanese, you all made our two-week stay in the different prefectures of Japan, a success!



The Teatro Akebono Team and DAWN volunteers with Tsuyoshi's father in front of the Yumeuta office in Saitama.

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