

## SUITE VOLLARD/PABLO PICASSO

*Message from the Met Board of Trustees*

9 November 2011

BSP Deputy Governor Diwa Guinigundo, Don Pedro Roxas, Don Luis La'O, National Artists Napoleon Abueva and Abdulmari Imao, Ms Shirley Banquicho, Senora Maria Molina, Chaco Molina, Senora Leyre Bozal, members of the BSP monetary board, members of the Met board of trustees, lovers of art, ladies and gentlemen, friends, good afternoon.

In all my years of museum work, Pablo Picasso's *Suite Vollard* has been the utmost best ever solution to a situation that could have resulted in a hastily organized exhibition or blank space. As most everyone knows, the Galeriya Bangko Sentral here in the Met is dedicated to the various exquisite collections of the Bangko Sentral – ivories, 19th century paintings, sculpture, to name just a few. The Met has been fully booked for months, but was both enthusiastic and eager to accept from Fundacion Mapfre and Fundacion Santiago, their offer of an exhibition entitled *Mujeres Filipinas*. The Met wrote the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas, to Deputy Governor Diwa Guinigundo, which and who graciously indulged our request for permission to use the gallery for an exhibition other than one curated from the BSP collections.

By happenstance, *las Mujeres Filipinas* have been delayed in their trip. We await their visit in, hopefully, 2012, but meanwhile, and what a meanwhile, Fundacion Mapfre through Fundacion Santiago offered a replacement: Picasso's *Suite Vollard*.

The exhibition of Pablo Picasso's *Suite Vollard*, indeed one of the great artworks of the 20th century, for the first time in the Philippines now, provides the various audiences of the Met, particularly young artists and art enthusiasts, the singular opportunity to experience works by Picasso in actuality, in real space. Picasso has influenced Filipino artists from the time that access to art from other parts of the world became possible, and from the time that modern Filipino artists felt the impulse to try and break away from classical traditions in the visual arts.

At its establishment in 1976, one of the objectives of the Metropolitan Museum of Manila was to show and share with its audience the art and the manner of reflection, narration and expression by other peoples, other countries. The Met continues to serve that mission, side by side with a Philippine art program that was set up in 1986. Permit me to set modesty aside, if only for a moment, and say: we believe that the Met Museum is still the premier venue for exhibitions that show and tell of cultural evolutions and efforts from abroad. Having said that, we are also proud to state that both Philippine and foreign art programs are

wielded to tend to the educative and interpretative functions of a museum.

The spirit of sharing and collaboration demonstrated by FUNDACION MAPFRE in its generous lending of the *Suite Vollard* supports the Met's missions. This generous gesture strengthens and affirms the Met in its museological tasks and commitments: for this the Metropolitan Museum of Manila extends its sincerest appreciation and heartfelt thanks to FUNDACION MAPFRE and FUNDACION SANTIAGO, to Pedro Roxas and Chaco Molina, for bridging our institutions and for thinking of the Met, and for their trust and confidence; to Marcelo Cercado and his staff, for immediate structural intervention; to our dear National Artists Abueva and Imao for gracing this event; and, last but not least, to our constant *padrino* in art and culture efforts, the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas. Magandang gabi sa kanilang lahat. Enjoy!

