



carlos bulosan theatre

MANDATE

The Carlos Bulosan Theatre company (formerly known as the Carlos Bulosan Cultural Workshop) is a company whose mandate is to reflect on social issues affecting the Filipino and broader community. In doing so, we aim to assert the uniqueness of our Philippine heritage and our struggle as a people. The Carlos Bulosan Theatre Company also seeks to encourage and develop writers, performers, and other artists within the community.

Carlos Bulosan was a young Filipino immigrant in the United States in the 1930s. He spoke little English and worked as a dishwasher, farm worker and cannery worker. He came to America during a time when African-Americans and Asians faced systemic racism enshrined in such laws as the Anti-Misogyny Act which barred marriage between white people and people of colour. In spite of these oppressive conditions, he educated himself and became a writer. He chronicled his life and times in an autobiographical novel, *America is in the Heart*. Carlos Bulosan helped organize unions and fought for equality in a racist society until his death in 1956. It is in this spirit that we name our theatre company after him.

HISTORY

Now in its 22nd year, the Carlos Bulosan Theatre (CBT) is currently undergoing a transition phase in which the artistic directorship and administrative responsibilities of the company are being handed over to its younger members. By developing this new group of Filipino-Canadian theatre artists it is our goal to reinvigorate the organizational life of CBCW and to make the transition from a "community" theatre group to a community-based professional theatre company.

CBT was founded in 1982 as a cultural wing of CAMD, the North America-wide Coalition Against the Marcos Dictatorship. In the ensuing years, CBT staged the following productions:

- *Carding* (1984, 1986) a play about a Filipino immigrant in Canada
- *If My Mother Could See Me Now/Inay Kung Alam Mo Lang* (1989,1990) a play about domestic workers
- *Ten Fingers/Sampung Mga Daliri* (1991) a historical interplay of characters depicting the Philippines past and present
- *Carlos Bulosan: A Trilogy* (1992) a play about the life and works of Carlos Bulosan, a Filipino immigrant in North America
- *Home Sweet Home* (1993-1994) a play about violence against women in the Filipino-Canadian community
- *Noong Kapanahunan Ko...Not On My Time* (1994) a play about our generational gap

HISTORY (continued)

- *No Boundaries* (1995) a play about how current economic changes have affected the lives of Filipino-Canadians
- *Walang Sugat/Undeclared* (1996, 1998) a sarswela (musical production) set in late 1896 when Filipinos took arms against Spanish rule
- *Images of 1896* (1997) a sarswela about the resistance to Spanish colonial rule
- *Miss Orient(ed)* (2001) a workshop of our newest play which examines the politics of cultural identity through the eyes of three young beauty pageant contestants

In addition to staging major productions, CBT conducts and facilitates educational series on Philippine history, as well as workshops on various social issues such as racism, violence against women, cultural and generational gaps.

CBT has presented skits affecting Filipino-Canadians in the annual Philippine National Day (PND) celebration at Seaton Park, at various Kababayan Community Centre programs, at the Northeastern General Hospital, and the Moment Workshop Series: 500 Years of Resistance.

In 1990, CBT toured *If My Mother Could See Me Now/Inay Kung Alam Mo Lang* to Vancouver, Victoria, and Pt. Alberni, B.C. and Winnipeg, M.B.

The CBT's latest play *Miss Orient(ed)* has recently been selected as part of Cahoots Theatre Projects' play development season. *Miss Orient(ed)* is scheduled to go into full production in the spring of 2003.

The Carlos Bulosan Theatre encourages its members to develop their creative potential as writers, artists, and performers and instills in them a sense of pride in being Filipino Canadian.