



MEDIA INFORMATION SHEET

Draped in Silk: The Journey of the Manton de Manila

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HOURS

Monday – Saturday, 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.
Closed on Sundays and holidays

ADMISSION

Adults	P100
Students 15 and above with ID	50
Children and senior citizens	25
Media pass holders	Free

ORGANIZERS

Draped in Silk: The Journey of the Manton de Manila is organized by the Yuchengco Museum.

ABOUT YUCHENGC MUSEUM

The Yuchengco Museum opened its doors to the public in September 2005, and its primary goal is to foster a greater public appreciation of the finest in Filipino and Filipino-Chinese visual arts and creativity. Located in Makati, the heart of Metro Manila's financial district, the Museum is not only a "temple" that showcases art, but also a "forum" of exchange, debate, and education.

Draped in Silk: The Journey of the Manton de Manila

The Yuchengco Museum's major exhibit for the year, *Draped in Silk: The Journey of the Manton de Manila*, narrates the story of a 16th century precious cargo, of Chinese silk embroidery, and of a maritime trade between Asia and Europe.

The *manton de Manila*—the large, embroidered silk shawl with long fringe—that is much coveted in Spain was, in reality, a silk shawl from China. The Philippines, once a Spanish colony, was an obligatory port of call for galleons loaded with precious cargos of Oriental products, which came via Acapulco to dock at Seville's port. Known as the galleon trade, these merchant ships brought goods from China to Europe through the Philippines. One of these in-demand goods were embroidered silk shawls from China which were to become known in Europe as the *manton de Manila*.

The dainty and bright embroidery of the *manton* captivated the imagination of Sevillians from all walks of life, to the point where the Manila silk shawl gave protection from the cold to both workers at the tobacco factory (the legendary Carmen, among them) and ladies of the aristocracy alike. The women of Seville made the Manila silk shawl their own from the very moment this Chinese complement was first imported. These *mantones* were, in time, adopted and adapted by Spain as part of their fashion and national costumes for dance and music.

Manila-Acapulco Galleons

The journey begins with the Manila-Acapulco galleon trade, which flourished for 250 years (1565 – 1915). To the Spaniards, Manila was “the mistress of many seas and the center and depository of the Orient.” The exhibit *Draped in Silk* explores the galleon trade—how these special merchant ships were built, what routes did they take, what precious cargo did they carry onboard, and for how long

this trade between Asia and Europe ensued. Highlights include antique and modern *mantones de Manila*, paintings of galleons and other merchant ships by Alfredo Carmelo, Chinese-made fans shipped to Spain, and porcelain dinnerware from the Qing dynasty.

Contemporary Inspirations from the Manton

Seeing tradition with new eyes is the challenge that any artist or designer wants to take. How does an artist recreate an expression rooted in the past? How does a designer weave a one's spirit into a traditional form, giving it a new life and relevance?

The museum has invited 19 artists and designers from various creative disciplines to—with full creative freedom—create new works inspired by the *manton de Manila's* form, motifs, and story. Artworks on view range from illustrations, paintings, fine prints, and photographs to couture, installations, and décor.

Participating artists, fashion designers, architects, photographers, and other creative thinkers are Paz Abad Santos, Ambie Abaña, Amina Aranaz-Alunan, Marina Cruz, Araceli Dans, Steve De Leon, Dopy Doplón, Margarita Forés, Danilo Franco, Jeanne Goulbourn, Katrina Goulbourn-Feist, Dan Lichauco, Tats Rejante-Manahan, Maxine Syjuco, Michelline Syjuco, George Tapan, Patis Tesoro, Wig Tysmans, and Ann Wizer.

Looking at Philippine Embroidery Tradition

The *manton de Manila* is a silk shawl with intricate embroidered motifs, such as flowers, symbolic icons, and animals. One of the supporting exhibitions, entitled *An Embroidered Story: A Glance at Philippine Embroidery Tradition*, brings the *mantones de Manila* in parallel to Philippine embroidery. An alcove at the museum's galleries illustrates, in a glance, Philippine embroidery past and present, with

emphasis on similar motifs found in the *manton de Manila*. Visitors will learn about *piña* and *jusi*—fabrics regarded as the best materials for embroidery—as well as the ideal traits of embroidery, steps in embroidering cloth, and various embroidery styles, motifs, and techniques. Highlights include clothing and textiles, household and personal items, and exquisite handkerchiefs from Parañaque, Lumban, Laguna; and Taal, Batangas—all towns best known for their embroidery. The pieces on display come from select private collectors and from the collection of Tesoro’s Philippine Handicrafts.

Draped in Silk: The Journey of the Manton de Manila runs until December 29.

The Yuchengco Museum is located at RCBC Plaza, Corner Ayala and Sen. Gil J. Puyat Avenues, Makati City. Museum hours are Monday to Saturday, from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. For details and group tours, call 889-1234 or visit www.yuchengcomuseum.org.