

Good Morning, Cebu!

Today is Sunday, Mar. 13, 1988

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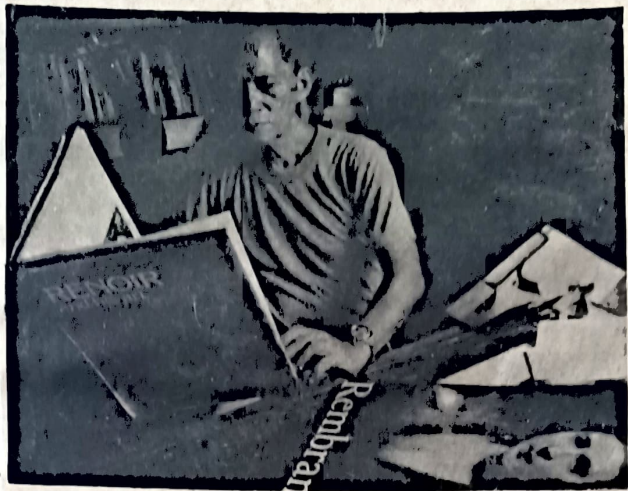
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**NO. 1 IN CIRCULATION
& READERSHIP IN CEBU**

DAILY



ARTIST EMERITUS. Martino A. Abellana, artist emeritus of Cebu, passed away recently and will be interred today 2 p.m. Abellana is known nationwide for the portraits he made and art experts consider portraiture as his forte. Some of his best portraits will be on exhibit at Arthaus, Gorordo Ave., which opened yesterday at 5:30 p.m. The exhibit will run until March 19. (Photo courtesy of the GAISANO Main by Fred Galan.)

Abellana: a humanist

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He was simply Tinong or Abellana, but the name conjures a personality unmatched in annals of Cebu's brush wielders and art cognoscenti. His artistry and craft was a byword, for he was accorded the sobriquet "Amorsolo of the South" by art writers and critics. He was a luminary in the firmament of the local art scene and remained humbler by its glow. His attitude was complimented by his unquenchable passion for life and art.

Painting everyday was his regimen - a ritual of life thru art. Sundays would find him invading the pastoral and verdant countryside of his town of Carcar or to some idyllic rivulet or stream. It was an incest with nature - a respite from the hectic studio routine of portraiture which was his forte.

It was grandfather, Saloy, who would gather three Abellana boys in a sketching session, and the precocious Tinong surfaced as a potential find worth his salt.

Art was built-in with the union of Abellana and Alcosseba ties, whose forbears count with an array of artists. Carcar as a town is noted for its cultural wealth with dramatists, writers, composers, sculptors and painters. To my mind, Carcar, my second home, rates high in the development and rise of Cebuano artists and art.

His father Teofilo, was not only a school principal, but a sculptor of note. Ramon, an

elder brother of Tinong is a dentist as well as an accomplished sculptor, composer, instrumentalist and musician.

Together with Julian N. Jumalon, both would take up studies in painting at University of the Philippines. The former as the first Cebuano graduate in 1936, and the latter in 1938. Abellana would have celebrated his fiftieth year as a graduate.

With the opening of the pioneer architectural school outside Manila in 1947, the Cebu Institute of Technology became the catalyst whereby art education under Abellana would later benefit hundreds of our youth. He joined the Fine Arts program, U.P. College Cebu in 1975 when his classes were filled with a wide gamut of lectures, art theories, movements, techniques and concepts which intrigued his students no end. His update on history, life and exploits of international artists emphasized their significance and relevance for them to perceive and emulate. He was an inveterate lecturer, and his demos on techniques kept everyone awestruck with his facility and dexterity with several contemporary mediums.

Among his colleagues he was a non-nonsense adviser with his open mind, sincerity and frankness. He was uncompromising with his views which he wrapped with objectivity.

His home became a Mecca for many young hopefuls. Like an apostle he nurtured and cul-

dled them with utmost patience and concern. Many would later entrenched themselves as worthy pupils of the 'Master of Carcar.'

Commitment and industry earned for Abellana two gold medals for oil and watercolor in

the Art Association of the Philippines art competitions for his conservative renditions. He could have eclipsed the art capital of Manila, but with his shyness and humility opted to be with his people - the better to be a visionary with a mission. He

felt that his patriotism and love for Cebu would be dulled and wasted if he chose otherwise.

His fulfilled life ended at dawn of Saturday, March 5, 1988, at age 75, with a countenance of one who had not aged at all - crystal clear vision

and ungreayed hair. He was a legend, and the legacy that he leaves will long remain enshrined - irreparable, void and empty. But his deep humanism, his teachings and artworks will endure. They will

Abellana. . . Fro

speaking of him - of the gifts that no measure can compensate. He had etched an indelible mark in the hearts of his peers and host of admirers. His loss is not

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Carcar's, nor Cebu's - but the Philippines as well!

A retrospective Exhibit of ABELLANAS is being assembled by Don Stephen Sy Gaisano, an avid and loyal patron of the arts of ARTHAUSE along Gorordo Avenue, March 12-19, 1988. Abellana will be absent, but his artpieces will speak eloquently of him who was an artist, educator and humanist.