

ACCENT ON YOUTH

Some of the happiest moments of my life were spent when I am in a group and in a situation such as this that you are having now. For indeed, the very spirit which permeates this group is contagious. And as I look at your young and happy faces, my years are rolled back and my past comes back to life. The gossamer waves of forgotten years are removed and once again I am young and the light that I see is the rose-tinted light of romance. My heart goes out to you – you, young people and I am glad that you are yet capable of romance which I hope is both refine and noble.

There are those who would destroy this flair for romance among the youth, with their calloused manners and disdainful smiles. Forgetting that this very tendency of the young people, if unspoiled, may open the flood gates of their imagination, creativeness and aspirations – which, in turn, are the ingredients for achievements. I strongly feel that the romantic eyes are also the eyes of dreamers and the dreamers are none other than the architects of progress.

It is, therefore, only the right and good thing for you, budding Architects, to nurture these capacity for youth and romance, the years notwithstanding. For you can be old even if you are only 25 or 30, if your outlook is outmoded and your creative faculty has stopped working – you can be old even if you are young in years if you only follow old ideas, afraid to look forward in search of new ones, for fear that those new ideas might not succeed.

The youthful dream of the great Michaelangelo was to create works that could express beauty through grandeur and power. The great dome of St.Peter's Basilica and the Sistine chapel are testimonies of the vastness of his concept. Frank L.Wright's youthful dream was to see a society living in beauty and order, and in harmony with nature.

We can cite many more instances in history – from Beethoven's young dreams of vast and thundering harmonies to Einstein's cosmic dreams – but that would be superfluous. Suffice it to say that men who are bound to achieve something of lasting beauty and value are those men who have the capacity for youthful romance and dreams – and, therefore, the capacity for youth.

Tonight, I won't begrudge you enjoying as all young people ought to do. Dance and enjoy! And while dancing, let this line of a poet linger in your mind – "The treasures of the deep are not as great as are the concealed comforts of a man locked up in a woman's love."

May the memory of this happy night give youthful color for the rest of your life. And so, on with the dance!!

I thank you.

Martino A.Abellana
1964