PHILIPPINE DRAMA
and
THEATER

Rona C. Catubig
Pre-colonial performance

• Before the official coinage of the term ‘Philippine Theater’, performance was already central to the community.
Theater in the Spanish Colonial Period

• Performed on traditional-inspired raised platform with wooden or bamboo flooring, with a rear wall that conceals inactive performers

• Native in form but feudal and colonial in values communicated
Theater in American Colonial Period

- Morphed into a theater of protest by subverting the Sarsuela;
- Caused Americans to issue Sedition Act No.292 which made the advocacy of Philippine Independence a crime; many playwrights were charged and imprisoned
Victims of Sedition Act No. 292

- Aurelio Tolentino was charged and imprisoned in 1903, for his play ‘Kahapon, Ngayon, at Bukas’
- The same year, Juan Matapang Cruz was imprisoned for 2 years and fined $2,000 for his plays ‘Hindi Aco Patay’
Philippine Theater Today

• Active mostly in schools and universities, usually stages Philippine Dramatic Literature
Daisy Hontiveros Avellana

• Philippine Theater’s First Lady
• National Artist for Theater (1999)
• together with her husband, National Artist for Theater and Film (1976) Lamberto Avellana, and other 48 artists, she co-founded the Barangay Theatre Guild in 1939
Barangay Theater Guild (BTG)

-paved the way for the popularization of theatre and dramatic arts in the country through radio and television. Now, BTG is the oldest existing theater company in the country.
• *Othello* (1953), *Macbeth in Black* (1959)
• *Casa de Bernarda Alba* (1967)
• *Tatarin*
• Candida Marasigan in Nick Joaquin’s *Portrait of the Artist as Filipino*
• Director Credits:
  - Diego Silang (1968)
  - Walang Sugat (1971)

• Screenplays:
  - Sakay (1939)
  - Portrait of the Artist as Filipino (1955)
"When the time does come for the Filipino national theater to emerge and take its place at center stage, we who were young in 1939 may no longer be on the scene, but we shall be watching, in spirit, from the wings."

-- Daisy Hontiveros-Avellana