

2000 GAWAD ALAB NG HARAYA AWARDEE (Alab ng Haraya Awards)



2000 Gawad Alab ng Haraya Awardees

- Paulo Alcazaren
- Andres Cristobal Cruz
- Pelikula
- Isang Hudyat Panimula
- Myra Beltran
- Davao City Library
- Filipinas Heritage Library
- Luna: An Aswang Romance
- The Negros Museum
- Douglas Nierras

2000 Dangal ng Haraya Awardees

- Danny Dolor
- E. Arsenio Manuel
- Isagani R. Medina
- Jesus T. Peralta
- Felice P. Sta. Maria



Luna: An Aswang Romance Outstanding Production in Theater

Anton Juan (director), Manuel G. Chavez (artistic director), Gilda Cordero-Fernando (producer)

At first glance, "Luna: An Aswang Romance" appears to be yet another spin-off of the ageless tale of star-crossed lovers. However, scrutiny reveals an all-together different twist, one distinctly Filipino in its flavor and pungency. Gilda Cordero Fernando's production of the Palanca award-winning play by Rody Vera delves into the fascination with the preternatural netherworld and its hosts. It delightedly gives the mythical *aswang*, heretofore portrayed as a mindless, grasping creature, a new slant: the aswang Luna has a keen intellect, a near aristocratic lineage and the prerequisite complicated romance.

Melding together theater, fashion, and kitschy Pinoy melodrama, the force behind "Luna" is Fernando's strategy to bring about renewed interest in things Filipiniana, particularly the concept of the *aswang*, because, she derisively declares, "We want to import even our monsters."

To this end, Fernando and her band of artists and craftsmen create a parade of monsters so fiendish one must ask: who are the real *aswangs* in this fable? Scholars and pseudo-academics say the *aswang* reflects all that Filipino society dreads and goes to great lengths to conceal: its bigotry and deceitfulness as well as its shameless pursuit of and insatiable craving for earthly pleasures. Woe to those who fail to recognize that not all monsters divide at the waist and fly off into the night in search of prey. Beasts even more insidious than these walk in full daylight.

But more than a representation of the objects of our fears, "Luna" seems to point to an ever deeper dilemma, what director Anton Juan, Jr. calls the problem of being *hati* or divided – be it individually or as a people. He referees to it as the schizophrenia of the Filipino. A necessary corollary, some suggest, lies in the importance of self-knowledge.

Luna realizes this in the end as she achieves the wholeness she craved only when she ceased struggling against her true identity and accepted her birthright. And, as love stories traditionally go, she wins mortal Mio's undivided love in spite of everything

Gawad Alab ng Haraya at Dangal ng Haraya Guidelines