

# Literary Arts gears for FestPac



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GUZMAN

Labor Day was established to show appreciation to all the hard-working men and women in our labor force that keep our economy, our island and our families strong and prosperous. As chair of the programming committee for the Festival of Pacific Arts, I would like to also acknowledge all the dedicated volunteers that have given their time, talent and commitment over the past three years to assist in the planning for next year's festival.

As a labor of love, none of our committee volunteers get to take Monday off. Nonetheless, I offer them a huge *si Yu'us ma'ase* for their hard work and dedication!

The programming committee is made up of 60 to 75 volunteers that have been faithfully gathering since 2012 to ensure the programs we will offer embrace the mission and intent of the Festival of Pacific Arts. The disciplines we will offer include Performing Arts, Literary Arts, Visual Arts, Traditional Arts, Demonstrations and Exhibitions, and Forums, Workshops and Seminars. Each of our chairs conducts their own individual meetings with genre leads extending the sub-committees even further. Thank you to everyone down the line.

I would remiss not to mention the five-member staff of the Guam Council on the Arts and Humanities. Their commitment and productivity rate is phenomenal and I have never seen a more dedicated and committed government agency staff. *Si Yu'us ma'ase* all the staff of CAHA!

Since launching in July, callouts and auditions continue for those interested in becoming a Guam delegate to

FestPac. CAHA remains committed to presenting the best of our art and culture with the final delegation to be presented in January. Literary Arts will have its second auditions on Sept. 19 at the Lujan House in Hagåtña. Auditions will be scheduled in 15-minute intervals. The first genre will be History from 8:30 a.m. to 10:20 a.m., followed by Publications from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m., with a lunch break in-between. Concluding the sessions will be Oratory from 2:40 p.m. to 4:40 p.m.

So what exactly comprises the literary arts program for FestPac? Oral traditions can be found in every culture throughout Oceania. From chants to storytelling to legends, oral exchange has been an important foundation of cultural survival, traditions and historical preservation among the indigenous Pacific people.

We are pleased to include History as one of the newest genres for the Literary Arts program of our FestPac. This genre will explore and portray our unique yet overlapping historical past through storytelling traditions, both written and oratory. This will be a unique opportunity for the various delegations to learn about each other and to underscore the importance of preserving oral traditions and knowledge for succeeding generations.

Activities will include sharing stories and histories of each other's cultures and societies using traditional practices. We also look to engage our island's youth and community elders (*manamko*) in a series of sessions promoting our own oral traditions that are rapidly disappearing. Finally we will connect festival delegates and attendees with Guam's history and heritage through developing docents for tours.

Publications will recruit, establish and showcase the literary works of published and unpublished Chamoru authors who have Guam-centric writings in the Chamoru and/or English. Past literary works will be featured in a publications center that will be established and current/contemporary works will also be highlighted. Book signings, lectures, panels and workshops from the surrounding region of participating countries will be coordinated and a Reading Library for use by country delegates will also be established.

Providing opportunities for authors, novelists, and poets to network among the Micronesian, Melanesian, and Polynesian delegates is the primary goal of this committee.

Finally, Oratory delegate presentations and performances will include mime acts, puppetry, poetry, storytelling and other forms of oratory presentations and performances that reflect the theme of the Festival. Presentations

can be extemporaneous, spontaneous, traditional and/or contemporary. Delegates will be encouraged to write and/or present stories of personal experiences, encounters, traditional legends and historical memoirs about life on Guam and our wonderful culture.

If you or someone you know may be interested in the Literary Arts, whether it be as a delegate or volunteer, please come down to the Lujan House in Hagåtña on Sept. 19. Get involved and learn what it takes to share "*Håfa iyo-ta, håfa guinahå-ta, håfa ta pátte, dinanña' sunidu siha giya Pasifiku.*"

*Monica Okada Guzman is chairwoman of the Guam Council on the Arts and Humanities Agency.*

