

**PRESIDENT FERDINAND ROMUALDEZ MARCOS JR.'s
SPEECH AT THE ART X DESIGN: A SPECIAL RECEPTION OF THE 50
YEARS OF PHILIPPINE DESIGN AND BEYOND EXHIBITION**

National Museum of Fine Arts, City of Manila
February 23, 2024

[00:00:00]

Thank you for your introduction, Secretary Fred Pascual of the DTI.

Executive Secretary, Secretary Luc Bersamin; the Excellencies of the Diplomatic Corps who have joined us here this afternoon; the Development *[sic]* [Design] Center of the Philippines Executive Director Maria Rita Matute; Chairperson of the Board of Trustees of the National Museum Andoni Aboitiz; and of course, our First Lady, First Lady Liza Araneta-Marcos. It's becoming a habit of hers. You're getting more applause than me.

Fellow workers in government; partners from the private sector; distinguished guests; ladies and gentlemen. Good afternoon to you all.

First of all, I would like to thank—thank you for the opportunity to come back here in the National Museum, here in the session hall, of the old session hall of the Senate. Because as we were walking through, they kept telling me, 'This is the old session hall. This is the old session hall.'

As a matter of fact, I spent many hours in this place waiting for my father to finish his work while he was Senator and then Senate President. I sat there and watched all of these that were happening. And it's so nice to be back here. It holds very great memories for me because these were some of the best times that I spent with my father. And maybe without even knowing it, I learned a great deal from having experienced the comings and goings of the Upper House and the legislature. So, thank you for that. [applause]

And additionally, I am, of course, very pleased to be with you today on the launch of the Art X Design in observance of National Arts Month. This is also part of the year-long celebration that marks the golden jubilee of the Design Center of the Philippines.

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This event is extra special to me as it was my mother, Imelda Romualdez-Marcos, who envisioned a future where design would shine brightly, guiding the path of our nation. In 1973, her vision came to fruition with the establishment of the Design Center, laying the groundwork for Filipino creativity to dazzle the global stage.

Our event today forms an even larger part as this exhibit is 50 Years of Philippine Design and Beyond Exhibition, which encapsulates five decades of our nation's design evolution, our nation's creativity and cultural importance.

Empowered by the transformative power of design, this exhibition will spark inspiration for the upcoming generation of Filipino designers and creatives, encouraging us to elevate our nation's reputation on a global scale.

Indeed, through collaboration, ingenuity, innovation, we can cultivate a vibrant creative industry that embodies our heritage, our values, our unique identity, our traditions, and our history.

In fact, in the pioneering research, "Making Design Count," spearheaded by the Design Center of the Philippines and the British Council, it has been established that, in 2020, the Philippine design economy generated nearly 3 trillion pesos in revenues and contributed 1.2 trillion pesos in gross value added to our economy.

It has also generated more than 700,000 jobs, accounting for nearly 2 percent of our country's total employment. And that is why government remains committed to strengthening the Design and Creative Industries.

We are implementing forward-thinking legislation such as the Philippine Design Competitiveness Act, Philippine Creative Industries Development Act of 2022, and other policies to promote innovation, to support entrepreneurship, and to protect intellectual property.

These initiatives aim to amplify the economic and cultural significance of the creative sector, empowering Filipino designers to flourish, further hone their craft and to shine internationally.

So, as we immerse ourselves in the Art X Design Programs and the 50 Years of the Philippine Design and Beyond Exhibition, let us take this moment to exhibit our country's creativity and excellence on the global stage.

And this is something that I quote the numbers, I quote the contribution of our creatives to the economy. But there is even greater importance because these designs and these creatives are helping to shape our culture.

And why is that important? It is important because the culture is the shared consciousness of a nation and it defines and answers the question: What is it to be Filipino?

And that is a very important unifying force for the rest of us, for the rest of Filipinos, even non-creatives to be able to say that 'No, these are the things that we produce. There are the things that are important to us. These are the things that we remember. These are the things that we honor, and this is our everyday life. This is what we do every day.'

And that is the definition of the culture of a country, the culture of a people. And the effect of that is...it is important to know. You cannot unify a nation if you do not have a common identity, if you do not have a shared consciousness and that is being defined by our creatives. And that is why this is more important than just the big numbers that they bring to our country, just the honor and the adulation that our country gets from them and bringing glory to the Philippines.

Beyond that, the creatives and the definition of our culture is the unifying—single most important unifying force for a nation to come together. [applause]

So, I call on all stakeholders, all agencies, and partners in the Philippine creative industries to come together to strengthen our design community and to cultivate collaborations with both local and international allies.

Because together, we can enhance the global competitiveness of Filipino products and services, broaden trade horizons, and nurture a vibrant and sustainable economy that embodies the pinnacle of Filipino artistry and creativity.

So, let us embrace the principles of innovation, of collaboration and a determination as we embark upon a journey towards a future where Philippine design leads the way to economic prosperity, environmental stewardship, social equity and unity.

Maraming salamat at mabuhay ang sining at disenyong Pilipino sa ilalim ng Bagong Pilipinas! [applause]

Maraming salamat po at magandang hapon po sa inyong lahat. [applause]

[00:08:00]
