

PRESS

INFORMATION of September 19, 2025

Frankfurt / Main



*INTSIA HOUSE, Makati City Metro Manila, 2024
STUDIO BARKO, Photography courtesy of Gabriel Schmid*

SULOG – Filipino architecture at the crosscurrents

Sept 20, 2025 – Jan 18, 2026
at Deutsches Architekturmuseum (DAM)

PRESS CONFERENCE:
Fri, September 19, 2025, 11 a.m.

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PUBLIC GUIDED TOURS:
On Saturdays and Sundays, 4 p.m. with Yorck Förster

OPENING HOURS:
Tues/Thurs-Sun 11 a.m. – 6 p.m., Wed 11 a.m. – 8 p.m., closed on Mondays

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ABOUT THE EXHIBITION

Deutsches Architekturmuseum (DAM) in collaboration with the *National Commission for Culture and the Arts (NCCA)*, is presenting the first exhibition of contemporary Philippine architecture in Europe. It features 30 perspectives not only from Metro Manila and the Philippines, but also from the diaspora. The focus is on materials, dealing with the tropical climate and global networks.

Contemporary Filipino Architecture is at the nexus of interconnected and intersecting forces. Once imagined as limited within the confines of the Philippines as a geographical setting, Filipino Architecture is recast as the continuous flow of people, places, and processes. **“Sulog”**, a Cebuano term that refers to “water currents”, encapsulates the dynamic ebbs and flows of Filipino Architecture that is born of an archipelagic setting and whose sense of becoming is enmeshed within crosscurrents of multiple flows and network exchanges.

The exhibit is inspired by anthropologist Arjun Appadurai’s conception of **“Global Cultural Flow”** (1990) as an intersecting transnational network of exchange between people, goods, economics, politics, and ideas. He suggests that we need to understand these cultural flows across geo-political boundaries through the five dimensions of ethnoscaping, technoscapes, finanscapes, mediascapes, and ideoscapes. Following this framework, we can then also understand that the production, consumption, and mediation of architecture are embedded within the ever-dynamic currents of movement that could never be limited to just one idea of territory. Thus, we can think of architecture as not simply emerging from a single nation or country but instead as a confluence of cultural exchanges occurring across time and space.

Three interlocking themes emerge from this reconceptualization of Filipino Architecture. First, **“People as Network”** presents architecture and the built environment as emerging from the imagination, experience, and engagement with people. In this sense, we understand architecture through the Filipino architects, collaborators, clients, communities, mentors, educational lineages, and the diaspora of the Filipino people across the world. Second, **“Places as Flux”** highlights the built environment as fundamentally grounded in places. Under such conception, an idea of place can cover a multitude of aspects of architecture, such as the site context, tropical climate, geological, geography, culture, history, and placemaking. Third, **“Process as Flows”** acknowledges the decision-making processes involved in the production and consumption of architecture through materials, construction, participatory methods, community engagement, heritage conservation, and the socio-political context.

As contemporary Filipino architecture emerges from the dynamic crosscurrents and interplay between people, places, and processes, it would also need to transform dynamically in the future. What kind of changes will have to occur between these networks and flows of people, places, and processes in the future? It is only by accepting that change is inevitable in Filipino Architecture that we can achieve its potential as a contributor to the global discourse and production of the built environment.

Edson Cabalfin, Patrick Kasingsing, Peter Cachola Schmal (curators)

INTRODUCTION**FOREWORD IN THE CATALOGUE BY PETER CACHOLA SCHMAL**

The Philippines has finally become the Guest of Honor country at the Frankfurt Bookfair. As a German-Filipino, I have been waiting for this for a very long time. It has already been ten years since neighboring Indonesia was the Guest of Honor in 2015—a country with the same tropical climate, but a completely different colonial past and an architectural scene that is just as exciting as it is unknown to us. The exhibition “Tropicality Revisited” was curated by young scholars Avianti Armand and Setiadi Sopardi, who had previously presented their country at the Venice Biennale, where I met them. Today, they work at the museum *Arsitektur Indonesia*, which is currently being established.

Since I started working as director of the Deutsches Architekturmuseum (DAM) in 2006, I have gained a wealth of experience with the exciting format of Guest of Honor exhibitions. I set myself the goal of finding local partners to serve as guest curators. Sometimes architecture museums, institutes, or archives offered their services, sometimes architecture publishers, or freelance curators if neither of the former were available.

Examples of this include Catalonia with the exhibition (“Patent Solutions,” 2007) in collaboration with Actar Publishers, Turkey (“Becoming Istanbul,” 2008) with the architecture-specialized Garanti Galeri, Finland (“Suomi Seven,” 2014) with the Finnish Museum of Architecture, the Netherlands & Flanders (“Maatwerk,” 2016) with the Flemish Architecture Institute VAI, Georgia (“Hybrid Tbilisi,” 2018) with independent curator Irina Kurtishvili, and Norway (“Hunting High and Low,” 2019) with independent curator Nina Berre. Iceland was an exception: for the exhibition (“Iceland and Architecture?,” 2011), there was no longer an institution, as the only architecture department in the museum had been closed due to the current economic crisis. I had the opportunity to work twice with countries from South America: Argentina (“German Influences in Architecture,” 2010) with the Latin American Archive for Architecture CEDODAL and Brazil (“Nove Novos,” 2012) with the Instituto Tomie Othake. There were also two guest countries in Asia: China (“M8 in China,” 2009) with Liaoning Publishers, and South Korea (“Megacity Network,” 2007) with the Korean Architecture Institute, whose curator Sung Hong Kim is currently founding the Korean Museum of Urbanism and Architecture.

Such country presentations can therefore have far-reaching consequences for curators. While searching for Philippine partners—there is no architecture museum or archive (yet)—I received a tip from DOM Publishers Berlin that the young architect Bianca Weeko Martin from Toronto was currently working on the first *Architecture Guide Manila*. She wanted to present the finished work in Manila in May 2024 and invited me to join a panel with the well-known historian Gerard Lico and the young Patrick Kasingsing, editor-in-chief of the *Kanto.ph* platform. The presentation in the packed and newly renovated Manila Metropolitan Theater was a great success. The *Architecture Guide* is now sold out and can only be found online at high prices (but a few copies are still available at DAM). Representatives from Philippine Arts in Venice Biennale (PAVB), responsible for the guest country at the book fair, were also present. The next day, Patrick Kasingsing took Bianca and me to see exciting buildings in Metro Manila, such as the Corner House by the Department of Architecture in Bangkok and the Comuna by Estudio Arkipelago, and introduced us to many people in the scene. I was impressed by his extensive network and knowledge, which is why I suggested him as curator to the PAVB during my next working visit. After some time, the experienced curator Edson Cabalfin from the USA joined us, who had curated the first Philippine Biennale presentation in Venice in 2018.

Both are responsible for the current project “SULOG – Philippine Architecture in Conflict,” which was developed in long zoom sessions between New Orleans, Metro Manila, and Frankfurt and realized at the last minute. In order to present not only Filipino projects but also the global networking of the diaspora communities that are so typical, they divided it into three parts. Finally, the country and its materials should also be emphasized. All of this is contained in “SULOG” (Cebuano for streams / water streams). I would like to thank the PAVB, Riya Lopez, Mapee Singson, and artistic director Patrick Flores for placing their trust in our team. I hope the exhibition in Frankfurt will be a great success and that it will subsequently travel to Metro Manila.

EXHIBITED ARCHITECTS AND DESIGNERS

AYA MACEDA, ALAO designs, Brooklyn NY, (USA)
www.alao.design

BENJAMIN MENDOZA, ANNABELLE MENDOZA,
BAAD Studio, Muntinlupa, Metro Manila (PHI)
www.instagram.com/baad_studio

RONNIE YUMANG / BALIKA RAMMED EARTH, Cavite (PHI)
www.balikarammedearth.ph

NEIL BERSABE, BEA SAB ARC Design Studio,
Davao City, Davao (PHI)
www.bersabarc.com

BIANCA WEEKO MARTIN, Toronto (CAN)
www.biancaweekomartin.com

JASON BUENSALIDO, Barchan + Architecture,
Makati, Metro Manila (PHI)
www.buensalidoarchitecture.com

JUAN CARLO CALMA, Carlo Calma Consultancy,
BGC Taguig, (PHI)
www.juancarlocalma.com

CHARLY LAO SCHMIDT, Soft Spot, Bohol (PHI)
www.instagram.com/charlylaoschmidt

ANNA SV, CS Architecture, Metro Manila (PHI)
www.csarchitecture.com

AMATA LUPHAIBOON, TWITEE VAJRABHAYA,
Department of Architecture CO, Bangkok (TH)
www.departmentofarchitecture.co.th

DOMINIC GALICIA, Dominic Galicia Architects,
Makati, Metro Manila (PHI)
www.domgalicia.com

EDWIN UV, EUDO,
Makati, Metro Manila/ Cagayan de Oro (PHI)
www.eudo.ph

JAMES ACUNA, JJ Acuna / Bespoke Studio,
Wanchai, Hong Kong (HK)/ Makati, Metro Manila (PHI)
www.jjabespoke.com

JORGE YULO, Jorge Yulo Architects and Associates,
Makati, Metro Manila (PHI)
www.jorgeyulo.com

JUSTIN GUIAB, EI Nido, Palawan, (PHI)
www.justinguiab.com

RAY VILLANUEVA, RHALF ABNE,
Kawayan Collective / Kawayan Design Studio, Bais City (PHI)
www.instagram.com/kawayandesign

LEANDRO V. LOCSIN PARTNERS, Makati, Metro Manila (PHI)
www.locsinarchitecture.com

MICAELA BENEDICTO, MB Architecture Studio,
Makati, Metro Manila (PHI)
www.micaelabenedicto.com

LAURENCE ANGELES, MLA at Horne, Davao City, Davao (PHI)
www.mlaathome.com

ARTS SERRANO, One/Zero Design Co., Manila (PHI)
www.instagram.com/onezerodesignco

KESHIA STEPHANIE LIM / SAN Studio, Cebu (PHI)
www.sanstudioarchitecture.com

CLARICE GONO, BRYAN LIANGCO, ANDREW SV
SLIC Architecture, Quezon City (PHI)
www.slic.ph

GABRIEL SARMIENTO SCHMID/ Studio Barco, Lisbon, (PT)
www.studiobarcho.com

DARYL REFUERZO, Studio Fuerzo,
Metro Manila (PHI)
www.instagram.com/studiofuerzo

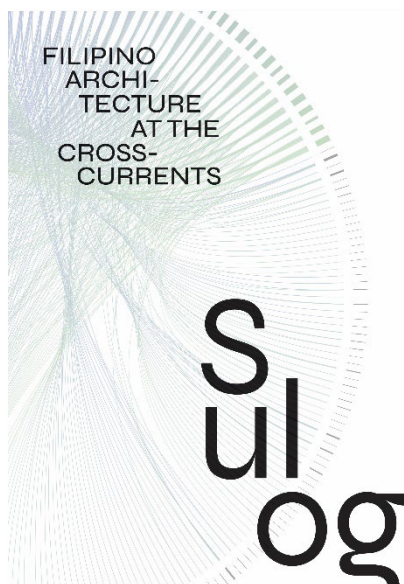
JASPER NIENS, RICK ATIENZA, Studio Impossible Projects,
Rotterdam (NL)
www.impossibleprojects.net

CHRISTIAN TENEFRANCIA-ILLI, Studio KIM / ILLI, Berlin (DE)
www.studio.kim-illi.com

SUDARSHAN V. KHADKA, ALEXANDER ERIKSSON FURUNES,
Framework Collaborative, Metro Manila (PHI)/ Oslo (NOR)
www.instagram.com/sudarkhadka
www.erikssonfurunes.com

BUCK RICHNOLD SIA / ZUBU Design Ass. Cebu (PHI)
www.zubuda.com

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SULOG

Filipino architecture at the crosscurrents

Editors: Edson Cabalfin, Patrick Kasingsing,
Peter Cachola Schmal

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IMPRINT

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September 20, 2025 – January 18, 2026

at Deutsches Architekturmuseum (DAM), Frankfurt/Main

Curators:

EDSON CABALFIN, Talyer Kayumanggi I Brown Workshop,
New Orleans, LA (USA)

PATRICK KASINGSING, Editor-in-Chief, Konto Magazine,
Metro Manila (PHI)

PETER CACHOLA SCHMAL, Director, DAM

Contributors: Bien Alvarez, Christian Lyle La Madrid, Matter

Photographers:

Bien Alvarez, JarConcengco, Patrick Kasingsing, Greg Mayo, Michael Reyes, ES.PH, Xu Liang Leon, Scott Woodward, Ketsiree Wongwan, Miguel Nacianceno, Chris Yuhico, Alex Furunes, Andrea D'Altoe, Federico Vespignani, Natalie Dunn, Arabella Paner, Nicholas Calcott, Tony Luong, Kurt Arnold, Tabitha Fernan

Film: Bien Alvarez, JarConcengco, 81 Happened Media Co., Micaela Burbano, Martha Atienza, Isaiah Omana, Construction Layers, NCCA- PAVB, Uncommon PH

Exhibition designer: Edson Cabalfin, Nicholas LiCausi

Art Direction: Patrick Kasingsing

Graphic Designer: Switch Asia Inc.

Marvic Masagca - exhibit graphic designer

Juliana Marie Reyes - catalogue designer

Juvalle Tinao - art director
Miguel Llona - production manager
Marikit Singson Florendo - production manager

Catalogue Editors: Edson Cabalfin, Patrick Kasingsing

Writers: Bianca Weeko Martin, Timothy Augustus Ong, Steffi Sioux Go Negapantan, Angel Yulo, Dominic Galicia, Caryn Paredes-Santillan, Joseph AdG Javier

Proofreader: Danielle Austria

DEUTSCHES ARCHITEKTURMUSEUM (DAM)

Peter Cachola Schmal, Director
Mario Lorenz, deserve, Exhibition production
Wolfgang Welker, Registrar
Bernadette Krist, Model restoration
Brita Köhler, Anna Wegmann – PR

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Project Visionary: Hon. Loren Legarda / Senator, Republic of the Philippines

PHLGOH Core Team: Patrick Flores, Karina Bolasco, Riya Brigino Lopez, Charisse Aquino-Tugade Flor Marie "Neni" Sta. Romano-Cruz, Kristian Cordero, Ani Rosa Almario, Nida Ramirez

Exhibition coordinator: Mapee DZ Singson

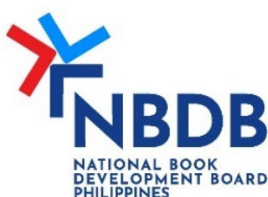
Communications: Karen Capino

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PREVIEW

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October 25, 2025 – February 9, 2026

DEUTSCHES ARCHITEKTURMUSEUM

Press & Public Relations

Schaumainkai 43 \ 60596 Frankfurt am Main

presse.dam@stadt-frankfurt.de \ dam-online.de

Brita Köhler, Dipl.-Ing. (FH)

Head of Press & PR

T +49 (0)69.212 36318 \ brita.koehler@stadt-frankfurt.de

Anna Wegmann

T +49 (0)69 212 36318 \ anna.wegmann@stadt-frankfurt.de