

Dakilang Pilipino Award given to Playwright Alberto Florentino, Jr.



Alberto Florentino receives the Dakilang Pilipino Award from Deputy Consul General Thomeczek

New York – The tribute given by the Philippine Consulate General New York to Filipino playwright Alberto Florentino on 26 September 2007 was a resounding success. At least 150 members of the Filipino community, including artists and performers, were present to pay tribute an artist whose skill and creativity have been recognized by the Philippine Government, which conferred on him a Presidential Award of Merit in February 2007.

Albert Florentino is a respected playwright, a contemporary of Nick Joaquin, Jose Garcia Villa and NVM Gonzalez. His first play, **'The World is an Apple,'** won a Carlos Palanca Memorial Award for Literature (Drama in English) in 1954 when he was just 23 years old. It was also voted the most popular/most performed play in the Philippines and is known to be among the Philippines' top 10 plays and top 5 literary works.

In his six decades as a writer, Florentino also earned acclaim as a scriptwriter for television, literary manager, publisher, editor, columnist and anthologist. His plays speak of social issues – the poverty and resilience – and how innocent and beautiful thoughts can survive in an impoverished world. One of his most well regarded plays is **"Oli Impan"** (Holy Infant), set in 1958, about two children caught in the middle of eviction 5 days before Christmas by Manila Mayor Antonio Villegas in a squatter area in Binondo.

The dramatic reading of this poignant Christmas tale was the highlight of the evening, performed brilliantly by InArtes Musical Theater workshop, starring Zegy Miguel Cancio and Alexandra Cancio, under the direction of Miguel Braganza II.

The Philippine Consulate General also presented Mr. Florentino a *Dakilang Pilipino Award*, which will complement the Presidential Award he received personally the same evening. – END-



Florentino, fellow awardee Manuel Rodriguez Jr. (Father of Philippine Print Making) and their spouses



Florentino with the In'Artes Musical theater Workshop's Miguel Braganza, Zegy Miguels Cancio and Alexandra Cancio, Manuel Rodriguez, Jr., Cultural Officer Merle Puruganan, Deputy Consul General Thomeczek and Vice Consul Lachica