# Epilogue

**[fig. 5.1 – 5.2]** On September 27, 2017 sheets upon sheets of newspapers showered down upon the one hundred still bodies that had fallen to the floor in the lobby of Cultural Center of the Philippines. The bodies belonged to the volunteer performers of *Cassettes 100*, which was performed at the CCP for the very first time that evening since the original in 1971. **[fig. 5.3]** After approximately ten seconds of near silence—a long pause after the last strains of *Cassettes 100* concluded over handheld MP3 players—the once motionless bodies reanimated as students, artists, members of Maceda’s family, and others sprung up and threw about the newspapers in celebration. As the penultimate performance of *Maceda 100*, a symposium filled with talks, performances and an art exhibition dedicated to what would have been Maceda’s centennial birthday, *Cassettes 100*’s return to the CCP served as the triumphant conclusion to the festivities.

In the week leading up to the symposium, I had been told that *Cassettes 100* would include a surprise ending, one that would reflect the current political climate in the Philippines under President Rodrigo Duterte, who had assumed office in 2016. The ending was not the only thing that differentiated this new iteration of *Cassettes 100* from its original 1971. Many of its initial premises were the same: the source of sound came from one hundred recordings made by Maceda (which are preserved at the U.P. Center of Ethnomusicology Library and Archives), the sound apparatuses were carried by amateur volunteers, the performance would take place in the lobby and the winding corridors of the CCP, and the volunteers followed specific instructions to move about the space in a particular way. With artistic direction from Jonas Baes and set design by Junyee, however, much of this new *Cassettes 100* production strayed away from the original performance.

First of all, no one had to bring their own cassette players. In fact, there were no cassette players to be had at all. Instead, each volunteer was outfitted with identical red or black MP3 players that had been pre-loaded with Maceda’s original recordings. Second of all, while the original performance consisted of a set that included streamers, toilet paper, and other cheap detritus affixed to the CCP’s interior surfaces, new *Cassettes 100* also lacked those accoutrements. Fastened to each MP3 player, however, were long strands of organic materials that resembled oversized antennas designed by Junyee. While *Cassettes 100* required the volunteers to wear black in 1971, those who participated in new *Cassettes 100* had black shirts that were made for the performance. On these black shirts were white Xs and checkerboards in various places. And finally, the lights were one pretty much the whole time.

The matching MP3 players and black t-shirts created a uniformity that separated the audience from the volunteers performers—a distinction that was not true in the 1970s version. The lack of flashing lights or paper streamers also prevented the kind of concealment that was taking place in 1971 to allow for audience members to freely mingle with the performers. In fact, a separate reserved seating area for National Artists and speakers of the symposium further divided the members of the audience. In the entire performance, nobody dared to enter the so-called performance space at the center of the CCP lobby. Additionally, there was the incessant recording, both by the CCP and by the Center for Ethnomusicology, as well as a number of cell phones produced by audience members (and one volunteer performer who even attached a Go-Pro to his head). Newspaper coverage of *Cassettes 100* marveled at the presence of John Lloyd Cruz, a famous Filipino actor with a penchant for contemporary Philippine art. The mood was definitely not one of chaos, but rather of austere reverence of a performance that had occurred before that many people had forgotten.

I was unimpressed. The whole thing was too clean and not nearly as chaotic as the photographs and written documentation had suggested of *Cassettes 100*. Even Yolanda Laudico remarked that this iteration was far too clean, much less chaotic than the original. Yet, at the end, in an attempt to create the kind of messiness that was present at the original *Cassettes 100*, newspapers were dropped down on the listless volunteer performers as they laid perfectly still. As the performance ended, I raced up the stairs to take a picture of the fallen newspaper before it was swept up—it does vaguely resemble the final photographs I have of the performance by Gutierrez.