



Eighteenth Congress
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 0638



Introduced by
REPRESENTATIVE LOREN B. LEGARDA

**AN ACT
INSTITUTIONALIZING PHILIPPINE PARTICIPATION IN THE INTERNATIONAL
EXHIBITIONS OF THE VENICE BIENNALE**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

With the inception of the 1895 International Art Exhibition in Venice, the Venice Art Biennale remains the oldest and most prestigious international contemporary art exhibition. Now on its 58th edition, Biennale Arte is held every other year since 1895. The first Biennale was opened on April 30, 1895 by the King and Queen of Italy, Umberto I and Margherita di Savoia.

In the following years, exhibitions and festivals for the other arts were established: Biennale Musica in 1930 (International Festival Contemporary Music), Biennale Teatro in 1934 (International Theater Festival), and the Venice Film Festival in 1934 (Venice International Film Festival).

The first Philippine participation in the Venice Biennale was in 1964 during the 32nd Venice Art Biennale through the initiatives of the Art Association of the Philippines, where the works of painter Jose Joya and sculptor Napoleon Abueva were established. In 2015, the Philippines returned to the Venice Biennale and participated in the 56th International Art Exhibition. After a 51-year hiatus, the Philippines showcased an exhibition curated by Dr. Patrick Flores titled *Tie a String Around the*

World, featuring the works of Jose Tence Ruiz, Manny Montelibano and National Artists Manuel Conde and Carlos “Botong” Francisco.

In 2016, the Philippines’ first participation in the International Architecture Exhibition was marked by the exhibition curated by Andy Locsin, Jr. and Architects Sudarshan Khadka, Jr. and Juan Paolo dela Cruz, titled *Muhon: Traces of an Adolescent City*. In 2017, the Philippine Pavilion in the 57th International Art Exhibition is presented by the exhibition titled *The Spectre of Comparison* curated by Joselina Cruz and which featured artists Lani Maestro and Manuel Ocampo.

Country participation is formalized through a letter invitation from the President of the Fondazione la Biennale di Venezia, the arts organization that operates and administers the biennale, addressed to the National Commission for Culture and the Arts (NCCA), the highest cultural agency of the country.

This bill seeks to institutionalize the country’s participation yearly in the international exhibitions of the Venice Biennale. To carry out the mandate under this Act, the Philippine Arts in Venice Biennale Coordinating Committee (PAVB-CC) is hereby created, to be lodged in the NCCA.

Recognizing the important role of the arts in fostering patriotism and nationalism, and the vital role of culture and the arts in democratic and inclusive nation-building, the passage of this bill is earnestly sought.



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*Be it enacted by the Senate and the House of Representatives of the Philippines in
Congress assembled:*

1 SECTION 1. *Short Title.* – This Act shall be known as the “*Philippine Arts in Venice*
2 *Biennale Act of 2019.*”

3 SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* – It is hereby declared policy of the State to:

4 a. Recognize the important role of the arts in fostering patriotism and
5 nationalism and promoting human liberation and development;

6 b. Recognize the vital role of culture and the arts in democratic, pluralistic and
7 inclusive nation-building;

8 c. Nurture, promote and sustain Filipino cultural and artistic diversity that
9 mirrors and shapes Philippine economic, social and political life;

10 d. Advance art as a form of expression and understanding and a force for
11 achieving creative breakthroughs;

- e. Evolve, promote and conserve Filipino national art and culture that mirrors and shapes Philippine economic, social and political life; and,
- f. Promote and disseminate to the greatest number of people the talent and ingenuity of our artists.

SEC. 3. *The Philippine Participation in the International Exhibitions of the Venice Biennale.* – The country shall endeavour to participate yearly in the international exhibitions of the Venice Biennale held in Venice, Italy.

SEC. 4. *The Philippine Arts in Venice Biennale Coordinating Committee.* – The Philippine Arts in Venice Biennale Coordinating Committee (PAVB-CC) is hereby created to oversee the country's participation every year in the Venice Biennale exhibitions in Venice, Italy. It shall act as coordinator and commissioner for the Philippine Pavilion in the Biennale exhibitions, and lead in the following activities:

- a. Manage the selection process for curatorial proposals;
- b. Coordinate the timely installation of the Philippine Pavilion in Venice and of the homecoming exhibition; and,
- c. Such other activities that may be necessary for the execution of its mandate.

The PAVB-CC shall be lodged in the National Commission for Culture and the Arts (NCCA). When necessary, the Department of Foreign Affairs shall provide administrative support through its foreign posts.

SEC. 5. *Homecoming.* – All Philippine Pavilion exhibitions shall be installed and mounted in appropriate government facilities and exhibition spaces for at least one year for the viewing and appreciation of the general public.

SEC. 6. *Appropriation.* – Implementation of this Act in its initial year shall be funded through the annual appropriations of the NCCA. Thereafter, funding shall be provided for in the annual General Appropriations Act.

1 SEC. 7. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* – Within sixty (60) days from the
2 date of effectivity of this Act, the NCCA shall formulate the rules and regulations for
3 the proper implementation of this Act.

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5 SEC. 8. *Separability Clause.* – If any provision of this Act is declared invalid or
6 unconstitutional, the other provisions not affected by such declaration shall remain in
7 full force and effect.

8 SEC. 9. *Repealing Clause.* – All laws, executive and administrative orders,
9 rules and regulations inconsistent with the foregoing provisions are hereby repealed
10 or modified accordingly.

11 SEC. 10. *Effectivity Clause.* – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days from
12 its publication in the Official Gazette or in two (2) newspaper of general circulation.

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14 Approved.