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Salvaged Prose

Review Author: Edited by Jose F. Lacaba

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Salvaged Prose. By Emmanuel Lacaba. Edited by Jose F. Lacaba. Quezon City: Office of Research and Publications, Ateneo de Manila University, 1992. 217 pages.

Emmanuel Lacaba, a gifted Filipino bilingual writer, died at the age of twenty-seven, shot to death with three other dissidents by the Philippine military in Asuncion, Davao del Norte. Alfredo Navarro Salanga says in his introduction to this volume that "he was barely 27 and he had before him more than just a promising literary career . . . he seemed constantly in search of new things to learn and new things to experience. . . . He took his writing seriously and that was what goaded him to keep trying to push the limits of experience" (p. 7).

Salvaged Prose is the second volume of the works of Emmanuel Lacaba. *Salvaged Poems* was originally published in 1986. The present collection includes most of Eman Lacaba's prose works. The published prose works originally appeared in *Philippines Free Press*, *Action Now*, *Asia-Philippines Leader*, *Expressweek*, *Philippine Studies*, *Solidarity*, *Sagisag*, *Literary Apprentice* (University of the Philippines), and *Freshman Review* (Ateneo de Manila, n.d. mimeographed). The chief source of the unpublished prose writings is a collection of manuscripts and typescripts, called the Pateros Papers, because they were found in Eman Lacaba's filing cabinets in Pateros, Rizal. The journalistic writings are not included in the present collection but are listed on p. 209. The collection does include Lacaba's better known works of fiction—"Punch and Judas," "The Planet," and "Sa Bawat Gubat," and his drama "May-i! May-i!" His critical essays and articles indicate a potential as a literary critic of some note, especially his article on "The Later Joaquin" written while he was still a college student. (See *Philippine Studies* 16 [1968]: 381-90)

The editor's note, pp. 203-14, as well as the author's notes pp. 191-203 are now invaluable additions to the original texts and (especially the author's notes) provide a source of information for the better understanding of Lacaba's work. The collection of his prose writings should provide primary material for one of the Philippines' most promising young writers.