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The Lives of Damian Domingo and Simon Flores

Jose Ma. Clotet, S.J.

Translated by Florentino H. Hornedo



Father Jose Clotet, S.J. entered the Society of Jesus in Spain when he was seventeen, and as a Jesuit scholastic he arrived in the Philippines for the first time on 31 August 1886. He was assigned to teach at the Escuela Normal and at the Ateneo de Manila for six years. He returned to Spain in 1892, and was ordained there. He came back to the Philippines in 1897 to resume his teaching at the Ateneo de Manila where he was a witness to the historic and troubling events which were happening in the Philippines in those years. He was later assigned to the Seminary College of Vigan, Ilocos Sur, and then to San Jose Seminary.

He was deeply involved in the apostolate of the press because the freedom of the press under the newly established American rule was perceived to endanger faith and morals. As an extension of his seminary duties in Vigan, he founded a Catholic reading center containing some five hundred selected volumes in Spanish, English and Ilocano. He also collected and took out of circulation a great number of "immoral novels, protestant books, and other pernicious writings." He promoted enthusiastically the monthly *Biblioteca Ilocana* where outstanding Ilocano priest-writers Mariano Dacanay, Melanio Lazo, and Alfredo Verzosa published their vernacular works.

When the magazine *Cultura Social* was established in 1913, Father Clotet was a contributor from his base in Vigan. On his transfer to Manila the following year, 1914, he began a series titled *Galeria de Hombres Celebres en Filipinas* ("Gallery of Famous Men in the Philippines"). This remained for some years a regular feature of the magazine, and was signed in his own name. From January 1915, he started another series titled *Apuntes de mi cartera* ("Notes from my desk pad") in the same magazine signed with his penname "Cal-lit, S.J."

Father Clotet was a gifted painter in water color and oil. He appears to have taught, among others, drawing and painting to the Ateneo students, and did many of the illustrations for the publications he worked for. He was also the illustrator of works of his confreres like Fr. Jose Algue, S.J. (*Cultura Social* 1924, 152-53; De Ocampo 1924, 153-54). He had seen many of the works of art he wrote about and had close acquaintance with many of his contemporary artists. As an art historian he also had access to the firsthand oral tradition of the nineteenth century as indicated in his biographies of the artists and other famous men.

He fell sick and left Manila for Spain on 2 July 1923. He had served in the Philippines for thirty-two years. At the Colegio de Sarria in Barcelona, he prepared materials from the Jesuit missions in the Philippines for exhibition in the forthcoming Vatican Exposition. He became seriously ill from a hemorrhaging cancer of the stomach in December of that year. Towards the end of January 1924, as his obituary says, the "worthy son of the Society of Jesus, devoted missionary to the Philippines, and amiable teacher of the youth" went to rest "in the peace of the Lord."

The monthly magazine *Cultura Social* to which Father Clotet appears to have devoted so many of his mature years was founded in 1913 with its first issue in January of that year. It began as a publication of *La Liga Anti-Pornografica de San Francisco Javier*.¹ Its aim, according to its maiden editorial of January 1913, was "to fight with the pen the battles of the Lord." Its avowed religious objectives were to correct error, defend Religion as the foundation of culture, defend progress and Filipino culture, and promote the well being of the family and Christian love (*Cultura Social* 1913, 3-4). In practice, it was a publication of very wide scope which included articles in the sciences and humanities, local and international news briefs and features, school and mission events, and some local politics. Its publication lasted till the outbreak of World War II. The last number which I have seen is that of September 1941.

Damian Domingo: Introductory Note

The biographical sketch of Damian Domingo presented here was published in the series "Galeria de Hombres Celebres en Filipinas," *Cultura Social* (1916, 386-89).

Damian Domingo has been the subject of some controversy among Philippine cultural historians. When it was proposed to name a street

in Metropolitan Manila after this painter, the National Historical Institute is reported to have objected on the ground that he was a foreigner. Art historian Emmanuel Torres (1981, 18) says he "was a mestizo of noble Spanish lineage." But the phrase "noble Spanish lineage," say Nick Joaquin and Luciano Santiago (1910, 10), "which is disconnected and predicated solely on the Domingo surname, remains hypothetical."² Even his dates of birth and death remain unknown. But Father Clotet categorically called him Filipino in the sense which his readers may have well understood.

To date, the earliest known biography of Damian Domingo is that of Miguel Zaragoza (1894). This was followed by Father Clotet's in 1916; then Carlos Quirino's in 1961; Gregorio Zaide's in 1970; Stephen Ongpin's in 1983. The latest is that of Nick Joaquin and Luciano Santiago (1990) in which the absence of any reference to Clotet suggests that Joaquin and Santiago may not have been aware of Clotet's work (Zaragoza 1894, 122-23; Quirino 1961, 78-96; Zaide 1970, 158-60; Ongpin 1983; Joaquin and Santiago 1990). Following is a translation of Father Clotet's text.

The Text

At the end of the eighteenth century and the beginning of the nineteenth, the art of painting in these islands was very deficient. Although some notable works appeared, they were reproductions of European paintings, or copies of magnificent canvases which from time to time came by the famous ships from Acapulco and were intended as ornaments for the churches and convents of the religious orders.

We have already indicated in the biography of the celebrated artist, Don Toribio Antillon, how backward ornamentation was in Manila and consequently in the other provincial capitals, in churches and theaters or in other public buildings and even in private houses.³

With the coming of the two Italian artists Divello and Alberoni,⁴ the ornamental genre underwent a complete change. Thanks to a gigantic push by Don Toribio Antillon and his disciples, in a few years the art attained a notable perfection and reached the height it enjoyed in the most important capitals of Europe.

As was said humorously by the great professor and master Don Agustin Saez,

The plain whitewash of the salas and rooms was a hundred times preferable to the infamous daubs of paint applied with crude brush, which was the appearance of the wide wall canvases in the houses of the proudest families of those times.

Neither on the ceilings nor on the walls, nor on the pedestals which were painted in private houses in the middle of the past century (18th) could be seen the good taste of today. They had neither design nor coloring, nor feet nor head nor anything. Everyone who had good taste agreed that all of that genre of ornamentation was *detestable* in every sense of that word.

Another branch of painting, probably the most important—framed paintings—existed in the Philippines, but was almost in the same state of neglect. Who has not seen such pictures in question, especially if he has visited in Manila during the last thirty or thirty-five years of the past century houses of the families of noble descent who have had long residence in the country? All have the same handling, the same coloring. One might say they came from the same shop, so that even those less accustomed to appreciate and judge these canvases, would not hesitate to say that they are paintings by the same author and from the same brush. In a word, they appear to be traced from the same pattern.

A friend of mine classified these paintings, if one may say so, under the general category of *miniatures in grand scale*. He was not wrong in saying that, for when one examines a miniature of those times and a half-body portrait (See illustration) in natural dimensions from the same period, both works produce the same impression. The canvas of both is prepared in the same way, both have the same color tone, and both have the same brush strokes, or, better said, the same lack of brush strokes, for even with the most perfect lens it is impossible to distinguish the traces of the brush.

To all these works, bad art as we may call them, they join figurines or porcelain and ivory dolls from China and Japan, jars, plates, coffee sets and other utensils which, although rich and expensive and with a grand appearance, in reality are devoid of artistic merit and value.

However, everything that has been described here constituted almost the only source and medium of artistic inspiration for Filipinos who felt in themselves the noble aspiration for the art of Apollo. Before such models their ideals of beauty took shape, and these were the big and small works which, by means more or less perfected at that time, were offered to them for imitation.

One of the Filipino painters who excelled during the first third of the nineteenth century, and one who by his studies and great artistic disposition, departed from the path beaten by the painters of the period, and approximated more in his works, and even matched the artistic demands of the great masters, was without any doubt Don Damian Domingo.

This artist was born in what was then the town of Tondo, but we have not been able to ascertain the date of his birth.

With the great renown and fame which he had acquired as an excellent painter, and due to a good social position gained through his artistic works, it is not surprising that he married the distinguished Lady Doña Luisa Casas,

daughter of the Illustrious Sr. Don Ambrosio Casas, *Coronel de las milicias del Real Principe y Caballero Hijo-Dalgo*, whose biography we wrote last year (1915) in this same section (of *Cultura Social*).

Domingo had by this marriage seven children,⁵ and although some of them devoted themselves to the study of drawing and painting with their father, only one of them, named Severo, had the good fortune of inheriting the happy and outstanding talent of a pictorial artist whose calling was enobled by the name of his father.

The Filipino artist with whom we are presently concerned lived in the 1820s at the Calle Real of Tondo facing the theater, and in his magnificent house,⁶ moved by his love for art, he founded a class in drawing and painting which took the name of the Academy which, in 1826, with the protection and valuable support of the Real Sociedad Economica (Royal Economic Society) of these Islands,⁷ flourished with very impressive results.

Here is an exact copy of the diploma which the Real Sociedad awarded to Don Damian Domingo. The Seal as well as the title, and even the text itself of the attached document, leave out nothing for the curious. And the manner of its redaction paints in a graphic manner the plainness of the customs of that time and its very simple treatment. Here it is:

The Royal Economic Society of these Islands, well-informed concerning the conduct, skill, talent and dedication to the art of painting of Don Damian Domingo, resident of Tondo, agreed in a meeting held on 13 June last year [1826] to name him as he has in fact been named teacher of the School of Drawing and this to be paid by the same Society, this having been agreed upon in the meeting of 9 December last that he be given 25 pesos monthly by way of bonus.⁸ Therefore it is expected of his patriotic zeal that he will treat the students under his care with that moderation and liking which is proper to him; that he will not allow any kind of disorder in the school, in the economy of paper and pencils, that it should not be used for purposes other than that for which it is intended; that he will have a list consisting of the names of the students, that of their parents, country, age, and day of their entrance; that all the equipment of the Academy be kept in the best possible condition, and that the Society will be informed of any incident both with respect to the equipment and the state of advancement of the students in order to keep him posted on the day of the examination; that all who present themselves for admission be enrolled, be they Spaniard, mestizo, or Indio, as long as there is room in the Academy and they present themselves with decency and at the corresponding times tolerating as much as possible all failings due to distance which cannot be easily overcome by delicate creatures and by force of sun or water, and others by their own sickness, or that of their parents; and lastly that he will not allow them to distract themselves in goals other than the one the Society will propose, nor allow them paintings whether illuminated or not which present indecency to the public, and that they have to limit themselves

precisely to the models furnished by the Academy; permitting in this manner the entrance [into the school] of any decent person who may wish to visit it.

The Royal Economic Society of the City of Manila, 5 March 1827.⁹

This Academy was, according to all the data we have been able to gather, the first [school] of drawing and painting that was opened in the Philippines, and was directly protected and supported by a public entity of the country, which the Royal Economic Society was at that time in these islands. The glory is that of the Philippines since it was founded by a Filipino, and a Filipino, Don Damian Domingo, was its first Director.

This Academy was very prosperous. From the start, many attended it and it was frequented by select students who belonged to the principal families of Manila, as well as some of the children of the Director himself.

The Governor General himself, His Excellency Sr. Don Mariano Ricafort, taking a tour of the capital in his carriage drawn by four horses and preceded by an attractive escort of twelve lancers on horseback, as was the custom of the time by way of pastime, several times visited the Academy of Don Damian Domingo and personally acquainted himself with the progress the students were making in the pleasant studio of the arts.

The Academy offered complete courses in drawing and in painting in watercolor and in oil, as well as the necessary lessons and practice in the preparation of colors and canvas, so much in vogue at that time.

One has to consider that the preparation of the canvas on which the picture is painted demanded the greatest care on the part of the artist, and on this he spent precious time. Each painter had his own secrets in this preparation, on which depended to a great extent the success and durability of his works. Painting was not always a matter of grabbing a piece of canvas. At times they used wooden boards, ivory plates, sheets of copper, silver, and even of gold, and rarely of glass. But all these materials had to be suitably prepared.

It was generally accepted that in all these preparations, Don Damian was especially careful, as can be seen in the different portraits of the governors general which bear the signature of this painter at the gallery of the portraits of the generals which used to be in the Malacañang Palace. In this genre of painting, the fame he enjoyed was indisputable, so that not only the most outstanding families of Manila and the provinces, but also the top ecclesiastical, civil and military authorities commissioned him to paint their portraits. Some of these we saw not many years ago in the old homes of Spaniards who had taken up permanent residence in the Philippines.

Nevertheless, we have to say in all candor, that neither the different paintings in oil, nor the few in water color from the first third of the nineteenth century which we have seen, made it possible for us to appreciate the distinction which the artists made between figures and objects regarded as on the first, second and third *termino*.¹⁰

Thus in a portrait of a marine officer, a figure of the *primer termino*; one could count the hairs on the eyelashes and moustache. The fingernails were minutely delineated. On a wall picture which was figured on *segundo termino* the embroidery of the blouse of a *mestiza* could be distinguished perfectly, and on the sea which one could see in the distance through an open window, in *ultimo termino*, one could count not only the masts and yards of the ship, but also the ropes and the rope ladders, as if the spectator were standing close to the ship itself.

Not infrequently the artists missed the most rudimentary lessons on perspective and, with the constant craving of that period that everything be made perfectly visible, even ornaments with their smallest details, absurd monstrosities and ridiculous superlatives can be found in such canvases and paintings. To prove the point, we will cite only a picture in oil of a whole family, whose purpose was that with the pictures of the parents and the children the artist would also perpetuate their names and family names. The names appear embroidered on the clothing of the father and the mother, and each one of the children has them embroidered on the white handkerchiefs which they hold in their hands. So that it could be read of course they had to paint the letters in a size truly exaggerated and out of all proportion and reality. It is enough to say that on one of the handkerchiefs of the girls appeared a bundle of flowers with leaves and flower buds, which one thought was greater than the hand of the girl. So that nothing be missing, the painting included the dog and the cat bearing the names of *Palomo* and *Chatita* embroidered on wide collars on their necks, which looked more like wide mufflers than pretty ornamental collars.

These artists had no artistic taste and completely lacked schooling. They did not understand that it was not enough to give the picture the appearance and likeness in features, but it was also necessary to give, by means of expression, attitude, position, and others, of the subject, that which in art is called character, and in which the most celebrated painters of Europe so much excelled.

Don Damian Domingo, as much for his artistic merits as his genuine civic-mindedness, was decorated with the honorific title of *Teniente de la Marina Real* (Lieutenant of the Royal Navy) the uniform of which he wears in the artist's picture which we present today to our readers. We are very sorry for not having been able to find, in spite of careful search, the document issued in his favor so that he could wear the uniform of the lieutenant of the navy and enjoy the honors which pertain to it.

He died still very young, before he was forty years old and at the time that his country still expected of him major and more excellent artistic works and the full formation of the many advanced pupils who at that time dedicated themselves to the enjoyable cultivation of the arts under his masterly direction.

Mirador,¹¹ 10 May 1916
Jose Ma. Clotet, S.J.



Portrait of Damian
Domingo accompanying
Fr. Clotet's article
(*Cultura Social*, 1916).

Reprinted from Clotet's
article on Simon
Flores—a self-portrait
by Simon Flores



Simon Flores Y Rosa (1839–1904): Introductory Note

Father Clotet was a contemporary of Simon Flores, but since he spent many of his years in the Philippines at the Ateneo de Manila and in Vigan, Ilocos Sur, and Flores was living in Bacolor, Pampanga, it is doubtful if they ever met in person. However, Father Clotet most certainly had heard of him and seen some of his works. Twelve years after Flores' death in 1904 at the age of sixty-five, Father Clotet wrote a brief biography of the painter, having done some research, which included interviews with Flores's widow who was still living (probably in Bacolor) in 1916 when the biography was written. Even better for the biography, Clotet, artist and critic, was able to see for himself Flores's works themselves.

The most recent attempt to write Simon Flores's biography that I am aware of is Emmanuel Torres's in his book *Kayamanan: 77 Paintings from the Central Bank Collection* (1981, 40–45). Torres reproduced in color three paintings belonging to the Central Bank of the Philippines collection: *Cirilo and Severina Quiazon and Their Two Children*, *Woman with Religious Image*, and *Woman Holding Handkerchief and Rosary*.

Torres says,

The craft of Flores is well exemplified in the magnificent group portrait of the Cirilo Quiazons and their two infants and a couple of portraits of elderly women. The Quiazons's portrait leaves little to be desired: lucidity and precision of detail are subsumed under a grand pictorial design in which the whole distinctly appears as greater than the sum of its parts. It also fluently integrates portraiture, still-life . . . , and fragments of landscape glowing through the open windows in the background. Particularly noteworthy are such superfine touches as: the detail work on the transparent, lightweight embroidered *jusi* the Quiazons wear; the differentiations of textures such as those between the frosted glass of the globed lamps hanging from the ceiling and the clear glass *verrina* encasing the still-life; the directional light defined by the drawn curtain and the diagonal shadow cast by the man on the background wall. . . . (Torres 1981, 40–41)

Since Torres does not indicate the sources for his biographical note, it is not clear if he was aware of the existence of the Clotet work, or whether he consulted the *Gaceta Oficial de Manila* cited by Clotet. He cites a "feature story in *La Ilustracion Filipina*" the date of which is not indicated. The two biographical sketches substantially

agree, though differing in focus and many details. The value of the Clotet work is, therefore, not only that he has data not given in Torres, but that it is an assessment and report by an eyewitness to the works of the artist, who had access to sources of information now dead or lost.

The original Spanish text of Clotet's biographical note on Simon Flores was published in *Cultura Social* (1916, 145-48). The translation follows.

The Text

There are many very good artists in all fields in the Philippines. The natives know this, the Spaniards recognize it, and foreigners admire it, not only those who come as tourists to visit these beautiful islands of the Orient, but also by those who, by their long residence in this country, know more deeply the good qualities and singular talent and disposition of Filipinos for dedicating themselves advantageously to the cultivation of the fine arts.

The inspired, well-thought out and very well executed poetic works which the Filipino youth frequently offer the public, giving it a taste of the delights and beauty of poetry, speak very highly in favor of the laureate children of Apollo.

The delicate harmonies, the new musical compositions, the repeated concerts in which the majority of the masters are Filipinos, delight our spirits, make us aware that the art of Mozart, Beethoven and Gounod are not forgotten in this country.

The artistic canvases on which, from time to time, here and there, our gaze falls, always anxious to admire new beauties and delight in new pictorial creations, remind us that an ardent and vigorous enthusiasm to cultivate the art glorified by Apeles, Rembrandt, Murillo and Velazquez is alive.

Something is being done in the Philippines. Yes, something is being done to keep alive the flame of enthusiasm for the study of painting and sculpture, and the solid labor which is being undertaken by that constellation of artists in the School of Fine Arts at the University of the Philippines is laudable. But the total lack of a good museum, adapted to that artistic center, with all its indispensable branches of historical antiquities, of costume, of furniture, arms and others, diminishes it.

With this of course, Filipino youth can start their career in art in Manila, but bring it to happy fulfillment, crowned with glory only with great difficulty. If they gain glory without leaving the Philippines, like a Lorenzo Guerrero, a Torribio Antillon, a Simon Flores or a few more, no one is ignorant of the many difficulties with which they had to contend and the

many cares it cost them. If only for this, those artists were the more worthy of admiration and just praise, for they did not benefit from the many means and facilities which abounded in the schools, great academies and excellent museums of Europe.

The present School of Fine Arts in Manila is analogous in operation and curriculum to those in Paris, Rome and Madrid, and most of its present professors come from those centers accredited in the artistic world.

Thanks to the patronage of the present government, there are today new statues, busts, friezes, rose windows, bas relief designs, water colors (reproductions of ancient Greek and Roman statuary). Two copies in oil of the two masterpieces of Velazquez, of the same dimensions as the original, whose subjects are "The Spinners," and "The Drunken" from the Museum of Painting of Madrid, will serve as the base for the museum of artistic reproductions which is being planned.

There are other improvements which we can discuss another time at greater length.

It is known that the contests and public exhibitions in which prizes are awarded have always been and are at present in the more cultured cities of Europe a most apt means for the artists who participate in them to sharpen their work, display their activities, and show their artistic talent and aptitude. The truth is that it is lamentable that in this capital where artists abound, there is no opportunity to hold such concourses more frequently since there are no very good occasions, which if well prepared for would call attention to such competitions. Contests and art exhibitions are still held actively in the Philippines.

Those contests were precisely the ones that made known the painter whose biography we are going to sketch. For the name of Simon Flores y Rosa, almost unknown to the public and even by his own colleagues in art, began to become popular on the occasion of the contest which was held in this capital in 1892 in honor of St. John of the Cross.

But it is not surprising, since for many years he lived in a corner of Bacolor, happy and contented among his drawings, studies and brushes dedicated completely to the attractive art of Apollo.

He dedicated himself to art for art's sake, in the real sense of the phrase, not as it has been perverted by some Modernists.

Enclosed in his poor home, he retouched and polished his magnificent studies which he took from the field of Nature itself, and within its four walls, he celebrated alone his artistic growth. He prepared alone without knowing his future triumphs, finding in his home, with his art and his family, a happy life, his fortune and his everything.

Of a serious and melancholic nature, he felt a sincere love and true enthusiasm for the art. His uncommon gifts promised great hopes for that obscure artist.

Simon Flores y de la Rosa was born in San Fernando de Dilao (Paco) in 1839 of humble parents, simple and good Christians. Pio de la Rosa, uncle of Simon, who was a painter, seeing the natural dispositions which adorned little Simon, had a special fondness for him.

When our future artist was barely thirteen years old, it is said that he took a small piece of charcoal, and drew on the walls objects he saw, sometimes sketching them with a certain sparkle and grace which was attractive. It is evident that he received his first lessons in drawing from his uncle Pio de la Rosa and benefited from them so much that in a short time he was already drawing with sureness and dexterity.

In the early years of his youth, he studied drawing for four years in this capital, and made much noteworthy progress under the wise direction of his two professors D. Lorenzo Rocha and Don Lorenzo Guerrero.¹²

He started shortly thereafter his study of oil painting in which he was to excel so much, tracing his first brush strokes, thanks to the wise and practical teachings of the very good professor and consummate artist D. Augustin Saez.¹³ For reasons we do not know, he was unable to continue his studies in Manila, but continued them, as has been indicated, in the retirement and solitude of the town of Bacolor.

The first work which our young artist presented to the public, which we know of, was in 1871 when, on the celebration in the province of Pampanga of certain royal feasts, he painted in oil the picture of Amado I, King of Spain, and donated it to the town of San Fernando. The picture which is a half-body is of notable likeness and merited the author most effusive thanks from the Superior Civil Government of the Philippines, as may be seen in the *Gaceta Oficial de Manila* (Clotet).

When our artist proposed to copy a subject from life, with all its details and profiles, it was really a work worth seeing. Given his brief academic studies, the facility, the firmness, and promptness with which he drew his productions without failing to imprint on them the stamp of his own personality, were most worthy of admiration. With this facility with which he copied nature in drawing and in painting, he was able to overcome the danger of affectation into which a majority of the painters stumbled and became the nightmare even of the more consummate artists.

The praise which the press and artists of Manila gave to our artist for his painting titled "*Una musica de pueblo*" confirms once again what we have just said. This painting of small proportions was presented at the Philadelphia Exposition during the years 1876 and 1877 and won the silver medal. With this work the author was acclaimed a true artist in every sense of the word.

That little painting, when contemplated again and again with much thought, left in one's mind a most pleasing impression! How well expressed were all those figures! How appropriate are the attitudes of the miserable

band of street musicians who, with their extravagant music, brought joy to a *bahay* (home) during the town fiesta! What naturalness in everything!

Anyone who might have seen those street bands twenty or thirty years back in a popular fiesta, in the small provincial towns and contemplates the painting, will see that it has nothing in excess or defect. It is simply a group taken from real life, translated onto canvas and animated with the appropriate coloring which our artist knew how to communicate to it.

Inspired with this first triumph, Flores took part ten years later in 1887 in the *Exposicion General de Filipinas* held in Madrid, with the painting titled "*Municipes filipinos en la toma de posesion*" ("Native Filipinos at the Time of the Taking Possession"), and with another which was a portrait in oil of the daughter of His Excellency Don Antonio del Aguila.

On the occasion of the artistic and literary contest held in Manila in honor of St. John of the Cross, the painter Flores, changed his artistic direction, to test the capability of his muse and thus abandoned the pictures and scenery typical of his country, which were [his] favorites. He translated himself to distant epochs in search of new environments, new horizons, and new triumphs.

Don Simon Flores y Rosa presented the two drawings titled "*Despues de la ultima cena*" ("After the Last Supper") and "*El prendimiento*" ("The Capture") and the two won the award for Highest Merit.¹⁴

In truth, this painter, now as in the past, attracts the attention of the masters and those who understand art and attain new triumphs.

Here is what a critic in the Manila press said, speaking of the artist and his prize-winning drawings:

In truth he has to be applauded because he has once again come through his difficult endeavor with flying colors, proving that his excursions across history have not been fruitless.

They are drawings, it is true, but they are superb with regards to the unfolding of subject. In them are seen character, spirit, grandeur, unity of action, and lastly those artistic qualities which consist of the felicitous use of chiaroscuro and certain adequate means whose secrets do not come as a surprise to those who truly breathe the flame of art.

On seeing that our painter Flores has overcome all the difficulties and that with his artistic genius and his well-informed intuition, he has known how to bring to completion such works, one has to agree that D. Simon Flores y Rosa is a true artist.

It is worth noting that Flores was not only a painter, but was also, like Michaelangelo and Leonardo da Vinci, a sculptor and architect. He did make some beautiful works of sculpture worthy of appreciation, and has constructed also one or two edifices of distinguished correctness.

We have had occasion to examine at leisure a large number of valuable

studies, beautiful aquarelles in single tint, altar designs, panelled ceiling projects for church vaults, some perfectly finished and others only sketches. Several of these correspond to the works which had been put in his charge for the church of Angeles in Pampanga, but which the violent events at the end of the past century prevented him from bringing them to happy completion.

Some are also so beautiful that they give distinction to the pages of his album, all of them taken from real life, some in pencil, others in crayon and others in pen, all of them breathing art, life and movement. The self-portrait of D. Simon Flores y Rosa which we now present our readers in these pages is a page taken from this rich and abundant collection.

In 1880 Flores painted the church of Mexico in Pampanga with good artistic taste, and the Church of Betis keeps not a few canvases, all of which are of religious subjects, several of them of indisputable merit which give credit once more to the signature of our Filipino painter.

In addition to the paintings mentioned above, we should not omit the painting "*La expulsion*" ("The Expulsion") which obtained Honorable Mention in the *Exposicion Regional de Filipinas* in 1895. *La Virgen y el Niño, Getsemani*, and above all *Domine, quo vadis?* of a most correct design, and with an expression and coloring truly worthy of Velasquez and Murillo.

Simon Flores y Rosa died in the suburb of San Vicente in Bacolor in Pampanga as a good Christian and with holy resignation on 12 March 1904.

On completing these biographical notes, we cannot do less than give the most affectionate thanks and express our sincerest gratitude to the Lady Doña Simplicia Tambungui, wife of the Artist whose biography this is, whose amiability and limitless trust, placed at our disposal all the works, prizes and diplomas which she preserves from her deceased husband. Moreover, we owe to her not a few facts and notes which she has furnished us concerning the hobbies, studies, and works of her husband, all of which we pointed out in this short biography.

Manila

12 March 1916

Jose Ma. Clotet, S.J.

Notes

1. This is from a note of Leo A. Cullum, S.J. in his translation and annotation of Miguel Saderra Mazo, S.J., *Philippine Jesuits 1581-1768 and 1859-1924* (mimeoscript, 1924, 135 pp.), p. 104.

2. But his being *mestizo* appears to be supported by the extant copy of his portrait reproduced in the Joaquin-Santiago book. Even the illustration in Clotet's article suggests it.

3. Toribio Antillon (1856-1913) was a famous interior decorator and scenographer. He painted scenes for the theaters of Manila and the provinces. Clotet's biography of

him is in *Cultura Social* (1914), pp. 509–512; 580–587. I hope to present his biography in this review later.

4. These were Italian painters to whom Torribio Antillon was apprenticed.

5. Joaquin and Santiago name nine children. It seems Father Clotet overlooked the two children (Anastasio and Jose) who carried the name Gabor and not Domingo, and who resided in Cagayan de Oro (Joaquin-Santiago 1990, 11).

6. The house was destroyed by the great earthquake of 1880. (Clotet's note.)

7. The Real Sociedad Economica de Amigos del Pais was founded by progressives in 1780 with the hope of providing an alternative to the Manila Galleon trade; but with determined opposition from the Consulado de Manila with high stakes in the galleon trade, it failed. It was reestablished in 1822. Recent research in Spain has brought to light some seventy plates of botanical drawings done in connection with the work of the scientist Juan de Cuellar commissioned by the Real Sociedad in the 1780s to do botanical survey in the Philippines. The drawings in color are by Indios. Did Domingo learn from them?

8. This amount was considerable at that time. (Clotet)

9. La Real Sociedad Economica de estas Islas, bien enterada de la conducta, conocimientos, talento y aplicacion en el arte de la pintura de D. Damian Domingo, vecino de Tondo, acuerdo en junta que celebro el dia 13 de Junio del ano proximo pasado, nombrarle como de hecho quedo nombrado para maestro de la Escuela de Dibujo que costea la misma Sociedad, habiendose asi mismo acordado en junta del 9 de Diciembre ultimo que se le diesen 25 pesos mensuales por la via de gratificacion. Por tanto se espera de su celo patriotico que tratara a los alumnos de su cargo con aquella moderacion y agrado que le es propia; que no permitira desorden alguno en la escuela, en la economia del papel y lapices, que no debiera invertirse en otra cosa mas que el objeto a que es destinado; que tendra un padron en donde conste el nombre de los alumnos, el de sus padres, patria, edad y el dia que entraren, que conservara en el mejor estado posibles todos los enseres de la Academia y dara cuenta a la Sociedad de qualquiera novedad que ocurra asi con respecto a los enseres como al estado de adelantamiento de los alumnos para acordar en su vista el dia de examen; que matriculara a cuantos se presenten, sea de la clase de español, mestizo o indio, mientras haya lugar en la Academia y se presenten en ella con la decencia y a las horas correspondientes, disimulandoles todo lo posible las faltas por razon a unos de la distancia que no les sera muy facil vencerla a criaturas delicadas y por la fuerza de sol o de aguas y otros por enfermedades ya suyas propias, o de sus padres; y finalmente que no permitira se distraigan en otro objeto mas que el que se ba [sic] propuesto la Sociedad, ni tolerarles pinturas sean o no iluminadas que se presenten indecentes a la vista del publico, sino que tengan que ceñirse precisamente a los modelos que facilite la Academia; permitiendose asimismo la entrada en ella a cualquiera persona decente que guste visitarla.

Real Sociedad Economica de la Ciudad de Manila, 5 de Marzo de 1827.

10. In Spanish art terminology of the time, *primer termino* meant foreground, and background was *ultimo termino*, and any artist could subdivide the visual space between these into various *terminos*. The distinctions between these visual planes determined the quality and number of visual details deemed possible in the given assumed distance.

11. Mirador is the Jesuit residence in Baguio.

12. Rocha and Guerrero were both Filipino art professors in the 19th century. Guerrero's biography is included in Father Clotet's series of artists' biographies.

13. Saez, like Rocha and Guerrero, was a renowned professor of painting. See Torres (1981, 42).

14. Torres (1981, 40) refers to these works as "canvases." Clotet speaks of them as "bocetos" (drawings or sketches).

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