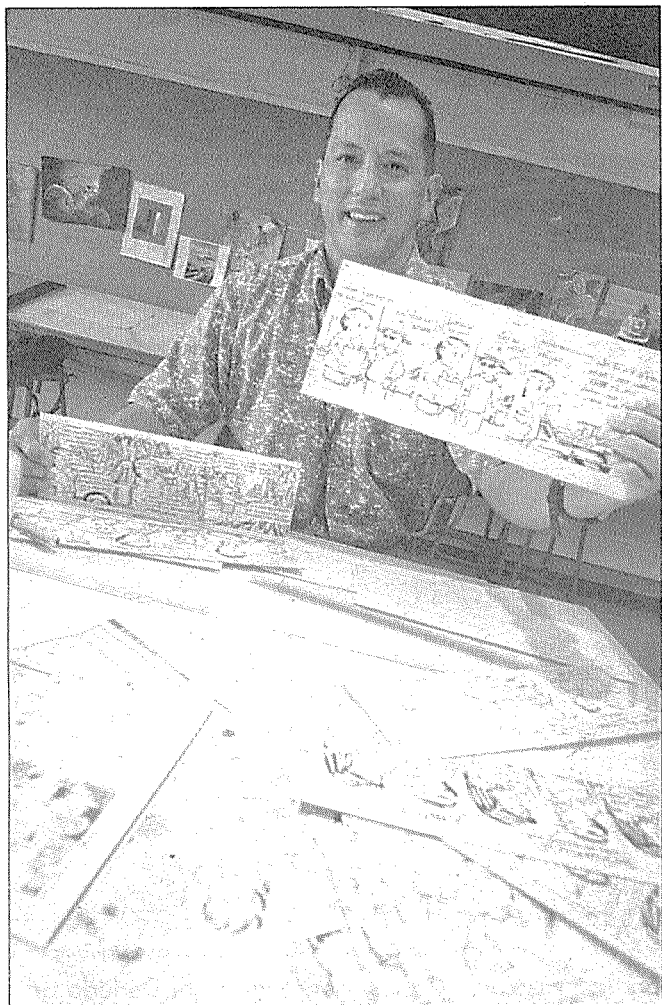




JUAN MALIMANGA

JUAN MALIMANGA STRIP ENTERS 21ST CENTURY



Masako Watanabe/Pacific Daily News/
mwatanabe@guampdn.com

UOG students breathe new life into Chamorro comic strip

By Amritha Alladi

aalladi@guampdn.com

and David V. Crisostomo

Pacific Daily News

dcrisostomo@guampdn.com

Pacific Daily News readers can look forward to a set of new Juan Malimanga comic strips twice weekly in the Pacific Daily News, thanks to the collaboration of students at the University of Guam.

Tomorrow, the University of Guam and the Pacific Daily News will sign a Memorandum of Understanding allowing PDN to publish the new strips created by UOG students, said UOG spokeswoman Cathleen



Gould

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Comic strip: Ric Castro shows some of the work his students have done on new Juan Malimanga comic strips at his classroom at the University of Guam yesterday.

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▲ **How it started:** Learn more about the original creators Clotilde Gould and Roger Faustino.

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COMING TOMORROW
JUAN MALIMANGA GOES TO UOG



Juan: Project establishes scholarship

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Moore-Linn.

Two new strips will be published in PDN weekly, and the remaining older strips that are published each week will have their orthography corrected, said Sandy Gould Yow, daughter of the original creator — the late Clotilde Gould, a Chamorro master storyteller and pioneer of Guam's Chamorro studies program.

According to Yow, the project has been in the works for about five years now.

The project also establishes the Clotilde Gould-Pacific Daily News scholarship fund for Chamorro studies and art students. Both Yow and the Pacific Daily News will donate the cost of publishing the strip to the scholarship fund.

The task of producing more strips would require the new creator to be fluent in Chamorro and also be a good artist.

Yow said she felt passing the project on to university students was the best way to go about it.

Students of Chamorro studies professor Peter Onedera and art professor Ric Castro have been working together to create new strips to continue the adventures of Juan Malimanga, this time as a student at UOG.

"Juan Malimanga is a take-off of the legendary prankster Juan Mala, who figures quite prominently in Chamorro folklore," Onedera said.

Because "mala" and "malimanga" are synonymous with "jokester," the original strip, created by Clotilde Gould, follows the antics of Juan Malimanga as he plays pranks on neighbors and village leaders with his friends, Kika and Nano.

"These kinds of characters are rich and do exist among families," Onedera said.

Local identity

Created in 1981, the idea for the strip was sparked by then-PDN Managing Editor John Simpson, who suggested Gould translate Charles Schulz's "Peanuts" into Chamorro. However, Gould decided that a character with a local identity was more suited to poke fun at Chamorro idiosyncrasies, Onedera said. The artwork was done by artist Roger Faustino.

Yow said some jokes are only humorous when told in the native tongue.

Since then, the cartoon has not only helped children pick up Chamorro expressions, but also has taught them about the legendary suruhanu healers, the taotaomo'na spirits and the duendes, elf-like mischievous creatures.



Master storyteller: Clotilde Gould stands in the back row, third from right, with her family in this undated photograph.

Photo courtesy of Sandy Gould Yow

"It's a start," Onedera said. "Our literacy in the Chamorro language is confined to a certain number of people."

But with the return of Malimanga, Chamorro words are sure to enter discussions in contemporary households.

Relaunch

Pacific Daily News President and Publisher Rindraty Limtiaco said she was excited when Yow approached her with the idea.

"It made sense in a lot of ways," Limtiaco said. "I wanted to expand the comic strip's reach by providing our online readership with the character, and Sandy wanted the strip updated."

The relaunch of the iconic Chamorro comic strip will bring it up to date with today's realities.

When the strip was live, it touched on the issues that were going on at the time, Limtiaco said. This new strip will do the same thing, but continue to share the humor of the Chamorro culture.

"It shares the subtleties of the culture, the idiosyncrasies and colloquialisms of Chamorro culture," Limtiaco said.

Beginning the Fall 2010 academic year, the Clotilde Gould-Pacific Daily News scholarship also plans to award scholarships to students in the field of art and Chamorro Studies.

For the daily newspaper, the Malimanga project and scholarship fall in line with the company's goals, Limtiaco said.

"The project and the scholarship are about respect for our local culture, language, creative expression and our community," Limtiaco said. "It is important that we continue to encourage and support creative expression and passion, especially within our young people."

"The comic strip is another way for someone to tell their story — through words and through images."

Beginning this week, Juan Malimanga's story also will be shared with online readers of the Pacific Daily News.

"We've had people ask for Juan Malimanga online for years," she said. "We have so many people off island who continue to have a connection with Guam. By giving them access to Juan Malimanga, it deepens that connection."

Launch event

The event to launch the new strips, will be open to the public, according to Moore-Linn. She said Guam residents will also be able to meet Onedera's and Castro's students. The university also will be giving away 200 free limited edition "Juan Malimanga at UOG" T-shirts, she said.

Both Onedera and Castro are ex-

cited, not only about the scholarship program, but about the opportunity to work on the strip, which has been considered a cultural learning tool since its inception.

To pick up where Gould and Faustino left off, Onedera has assigned his Chamorro studies classes to create potential dialogues. He sifts through them, edits them, and decides which ones will be used.

The writing is then turned over to Castro's students, who create the visual scenario of illustrating the joke in just a few frames.

"It's learning to keep it short, succinct. We always have to bear in mind the appropriateness to the public audience," Onedera said. "Some of them can be risqué or blunt."

"Really, the base idea is to have this be something that the students can benefit from the comic strip," Castro said.

What was poised to take off very quickly ended up being a two- to three-year process, he added. The reason for the delay was because the students had to create a stockpile of strips before the new ones could begin to be published in the newspaper, Yow said.

Castro said he hopes this will turn into a permanent project that can be incorporated into UOG's graphic arts program.

For the past couple of years, the work on the Juan Malimanga strip

IF YOU GO

▲ **What:** Launch of the new Juan Malimanga comic strips

▲ **Where:** University of Guam Humanities and Social Sciences atrium

▲ **When:** 11 a.m.

▲ **Free:** The first 200 guests will receive a free limited edition "Juan Malimanga at UOG" T-shirt.

has been a special project course, with only a couple students a semester to work on it.

One of the attractions of this partnership is to get the students who are interested in graphic design to look into cartoon art.

"A lot of the majors have said what's missing in our program is the graphic arts component. This is sort of the one project that can transition us in that. Illustration is a major part of that," Castro said.

Currently, the strips are entirely drawn by hand, scanned and inked in, he said.

"Hopefully we can turn it into a computerized process," Castro said. "In the computer graphics class, they can go beyond that. They may be able to do the animated sequences."

Contemporary

Onedera and Castro said they're sticking to the original characters and themes. The only major change readers can expect is Malimanga's commentary in response to current events.

"We are paying special attention to what's happening on the island, ... to educate the community as well as have them laugh about themselves," Onedera said.

And the grammar and orthography will be accurate, making the strip even more useful for those wishing to become Chamorro literate.

For UOG's Chamorro studies and art courses, the inclusion of Juan Malimanga into the syllabus will attract more students to both programs, doing "wonders" for their enrollments, Onedera said.

"In the works is a program to introduce the (Chamorro studies) minor. We hope to have that minor program in place by the 2010 academic year. ... Not just language, but also aspects of the culture music, dance and chants," Onedera said.

Tomorrow, the public will get to meet the students—some of whom will be dressed as Juan Malimanga characters, but with 21st century style. After all, the new strip is supposed to take place with Malimanga in a college setting, according to Moore-Linn.

"If (Juan) doesn't keep up a 2.0 grade-point average, we're going to have to put him on academic probation," Moore-Linn joked.