Galang Career Narrative

M. Evelina Galang is the author of two novels, one volume of creative nonfiction, two short-story collections and an anthology she conceived and edited. Her debut was the story collection *Her Wild American Self* (1996), a *New York Times Notable Book,* followed by the novels *One Tribe* (2006) and *Angel de la Luna and the 5th Glorious Mystery* (2013) The book of creative nonfiction Galang had been researching for 18 years, *Lolas’ House: Filipino Women Living with War* (2017) documents the lives of 16 surviving WWII “Comfort Women. A new story collection, *When the Hibiscus Falls,* is forthcoming from Coffee House Press in June 2023. The anthology *Screaming Monkeys: Critiques of Asian American Images* (2003) received the 2004 Gustavus Myers Outstanding Book Award in the Advancement of Human Rights.

Galang has been supported and recognized as a 2001 Fulbright Senior Research Scholar, a 2018 Dayton Literary Peace Prize finalist, a 2020 Zalaznick Distinguished Visiting Writer at Cornell, and as winner of the Associated Writers and Writing Programs’ 2004 Prize in the Novel. She has been invited to the White House on three occasions, including the White House Briefing for Filipino American Leaders in June of 2012, and The Secretary of State Luncheon in Honor of His Excellency the late Benigno S. Aquino III, President of the Republic of the Philippines also in 2012. Galang was invited to read at the 5th Anniversary Reception of the “Comfort Women” Resolution, HR 121 at the United States Capitol. She also received numerous research awards from the University of Miami. Her favorite accolade is the American Library Association’s Amelia Bloomer Project 2013 nomination: Recommended Feminist Literature from Birth through 18, for her novel, *Angel de la Luna and the 5th Glorious Mystery*.

The transformative experience of Galang’s career and life has been meeting and building relationships with 16 surviving Filipina “Comfort Women” of WWII. Each time they tell their stories they relive their trauma, yet they tell them anyway. “So it will never happen again,” they say. And while her 18 years of research around the Filipina “Comfort Women” may have been intended for nonfiction, their voices stay with her.

In the novel, *Angel de la Luna and the 5th Glorious Mystery*, the plight of WWII “Comfort Women” and their fight for justice creates the backdrop for the 15-year-old protagonist’s coming of age. Her novel-in-progress expands on the historical injustices of WWII. *Beautiful Sorrow, Beautiful Sky* is the unlikely love story between a widowed Filipina surviving “Comfort Woman” and a retired U.S. postal worker, a Japanese American once interned at Minidoka War Relocation Center in Idaho.

Her most recent book of stories, *When the Hibiscus Falls,*  is about the fluidity between ancestors and their descendants, between past, present and future, and it is between the generations of the Filipino, Filipino American and the indigenous peoples of the Philippines. In many of the stories, characters long for the dead, in others they have forgotten those who have come before them, on occasion characters from the future look back at the pandemic years in an effort to know where they came from.

The narratives in Galang’s work are a natural extension of the books that come before them, building and expanding on the materials she has gathered. *Her Wild American Self* focuses on Filipina Americans—recent immigrants and first-generation U.S. born citizens—and explores what it is to be American, and female. Since then, her works have grown to include the stories of Filipino American youth of the 1980’s and 1990’s, the Filipina survivors of Japanese military sex slave camps, their families and others of Filipino ancestry.