**PRESS RELEASE**

For immediate release

**Image of Philippine ancestral house displayed at the**

**2023 Royal Academy Summer Exhibition in London**

**(2nd August, London)** Filipino art lovers based or travelling in London have less than three weeks left to view a stunning photographic print of a Philippine ancestral house at the prestigious Royal Academy (RA) Summer Exhibition. The exhibition, which opened on 13th June 2023, will run until 20th August at the Royal Academy in Burlington House, Piccadilly, London. The exhibition, which has been held every year since 1769 is, by the RA’s own description, “the world’s longest running display of contemporary art”.

Entitled “Houses that Sugar Built – Untitled 1”, the artwork measuring 80cm x 55cm (2.6 x 1.8 feet) was created by Ireland-born architectural and interiors photographer, Siobhán Doran. It forms part of a book project conceived and authored by Doran and London-based communications consultant and writer, Gina Consing McAdam.

Their book, *Houses that Sugar Built: An Intimate Portrait of Philippine Ancestral Houses* will be published internationally in the autumn of 2023, containing over 230 colour photos -- with accompanying texts -- of ancestral houses located in Iloilo, Negros Occidental and Pampanga built during the height of the Philippine sugar industry.

The ancestral house depicted in “Houses that Sugar Built – Untitled 1” is that of the Gaston family in Hacienda Santa Rosalia in Manapla, Negros Occidental. The image offers a partial view of a simply decorated, serene bedroom, with only the chamber’s double doors and delicate crochet lace bedspreads hinting at the family’s heritage.

The theme of this year’s RA Summer Exhibition is “Only Connect”, as chosen by its curator, the contemporary British artist David Remfry MBE RA, a member of the Royal Academy of Arts. Siobhan’s photograph is among the 6% out of 16,500 entries that were selected for display in this year’s show, which also features works by celebrated Academicians Tracy Emin CBE RA and the late Dame Paula Rego DBE RA.

Siobhán Doran said, “I am excited that one of my Philippine photographs is included in one of Britain’s historic artistic traditions, the RA Summer Exhibition. I captured the image in one of the rooms of an imposing ancestral farmhouse in the middle of an estate in Negros Occidental. For all its beauty and structural impressiveness, it radiated a profound simplicity and a calm, almost spiritual character. The custodian, Monsignor GG Gaston, sadly just passed away. I hope my photograph captures the essence of his home.”

Gina Consing McAdam added, “As a Filipino, I am so proud that a work of art that shows an important aspect of Philippine culture and heritage has been included among the contemporary works now hanging in the galleries of the RA Summer Exhibition. I’m sure other Filipinos would be equally proud of what they see, and I hope they have the chance to visit the show.

“I would really like to thank the Gaston family and especially the late Monsignor GG, for so warmly welcoming Siobhán and me into their beautiful ancestral home in Hacienda Santa Rosalia and allowing us to hear their family stories and take photographs. It was a blessing. Now one of these photos is being exhibited on the walls of a spectacular institution. It’s a tremendous achievement for Siobhán, and also a timely trailer for our book.”

H.E Teodoro L. Locsin, Jr, Philippine Ambassador to the United Kingdom and Northern Ireland, said, “I was very excited to learn of the forthcoming book, *Houses that Sugar Built: An Intimate Portrait of Philippine Ancestral Homes* by Gina Consing McAdam and Siobhan Doran, and that a picture from the book taken in one of Negros’ grand ancestral houses now hangs in the Royal Academy Summer show in London.

“It is important that we preserve the Philippines’ rich history and heritage as seen through old, venerable structures like these that have defied time and circumstance. Thankfully, art and literature can serve to restore our memories, enlighten us about our past, and inform our future.”

**End.**

**For further information on this press release, contact Gina Consing McAdam at** [**gina@stratemarco.com**](mailto:gina@stratemarco.com) **or +44 (0) 7879648930**

**“Houses that Sugar Built – Untitled 1” (a series of 23 limited edition photographic prints) hangs in Gallery VII as part of the Royal Academy Summer Exhibition at the Royal Academy, Burlington House, Piccadilly, London W1J 0BD. To find out more about the exhibition and how to purchase individual artworks, visit:** [**https://www.royalacademy.org.uk/exhibition/summer-exhibition-2023**](https://www.royalacademy.org.uk/exhibition/summer-exhibition-2023)

***Houses that Sugar Built: An Intimate Guide to Philippine Ancestral Homes*** will be published internationally by Oro Editions in Autumn 2023. To find out more, visit:

<https://oroeditions.com/coming-soon>.

Based in London, **Gina Consing McAdam** has also worked in Manila, Madrid, New York, and Paris. She is the author of three books of company and organisational history, including a history of the luxury Lanesborough hotel in London. Her essays have been published in noted anthologies of Philippine writing. She holds an MA in 20th Century English & American Literature from Newcastle University in England. Her family roots are in the Philippine sugar industry.

**Siobhán Doran** is a freelance architectural and interiors photographer. Based in Berkhamsted, England, she works in the UK and internationally. Among her commissions have been photography books documenting the major renovations of The Savoy and The Lanesborough hotels in London. Her work has been exhibited at the MAST Foundation for Photography in Bologna and twice at The Royal Academy of Arts, which in 2023 selected a photograph from *Houses that Sugar Built* for its annual Summer Exhibition. Originally from Dublin, Siobhan has a first-class degree in Photography from the University of Westminster. For more information, visit [www.siobhandoran.com](http://www.siobhandoran.com)