

Join me in the audio garden to cultivate our collective wisdom, nurture creativity, and spread love.

My name is Martha Cinader. Welcome to listen. She's been nominated for a Grammy. So we want to celebrate that here at Listen and Be Heard. We also want to celebrate the lives of some people who have recently passed on.

We just learned that Joe Talaugon, who we featured just a few weeks ago here, passed away. And Matthew Finch as well, the music director at K -U -N -M radio and my colleague at W -B -A -I radio in the 1990s. And I want to celebrate that a bit today by presenting a live radio drama that I dug up from the archives.

It was written by Ava Chin, one of the many radio dramas that Matthew Finch and I together brought to the airwaves. Let's start, as always, with some spoken word from Sugilanon. This is Julia. Ten years past arrived a maid.

From Negroes, we know she hailed. She came to serve a rich clan. For a holiday, they sailed. But this girl had other plans, and servant would have to go. She stayed behind all alone. She brought here a broken heart. Of this we have suspicions, a quiet sort of mourning, lingering and pernicious, sometimes crying when alone, and yet tough as nails was she.

Julia, our first lady. She too found the Visayans, never losing her home tongue, ornery small brown rebel, and all misfits to her clung. Cigarettes smoked inside out, injured square pegs she repaired. Tough little loner, not scared. Carolyn Cabading. A fourth generation San Franciscan is an actively performing jazz and R &B vocalist,

indigenous Philippine percussionist, composer, and traditional arts educator, with over 20 years' experience performing, touring, and teaching.

I want to welcome Carolyn Cabading to the Audio Garden here at Listen and Be Heard. And I'm really thrilled to have you here, Carolyn. We have been playing cuts from Sugilanon through several episodes of Season 2, and we're coming back in September and it's a pleasure to actually have a conversation with you about that CD. Thank you, Martha. I'm so happy to be on the show and so happy to finally get a chance to be tuned person.

It's an epic story based on the Kalinka tradition of epic stories. And we're a show for readers and writers.

So I wanted to kind of start from that angle just talking about what this meant to you. It's your epic story of your family and yet it has a universal appeal as well as I think you've mentioned that other families feel that it's in many ways their story too.

Yes, thank you. I have been for decades a student of ancestral culture of the Philippines. As a fourth generation Filipino American, my family came here in 1904, you have in order to sort of like get some sort of foundation in terms of the ancestral culture, you know, it's, it's a, or for me as a musician, it was part of

my journey to study and to really learn about their culture to sort of get a foundation for myself living in this country.

And one of the things that the Kalinga culture had that is very important for them to understand themselves as Kalinga people and their history and why they are, as they are ethically,

morally, and as a community is through their epic poem, Diulalam. And Diulalam literally translate to the story. And in studying that wonderful poem about their heroes and how their heroes are not and Sugilanon actually translates similarly to story in the ethno - linguistic group of my own family.

I have this sense, I think you wrote all of the lyrics and the story in the CD. Is that correct?

Yes. So I do. I have this sense that maybe it's always sort of been related for you.

I know that if I try to memorize a song, the first thing I'll do, a melody is, I'll learn the words because somehow knowing the story helps me learn the song.

And I just wonder what kind of relationship you have as a musician with the lyrics and the words. Thank you, Martha. You know, my primary instrument, even though I'm a traditional Philippine percussionist dancer and composer of jazz, my first instrument always has been vocals.

And one thing that one of my wonderful teachers when I was coming up and learning said is that the uniqueness of the vocalist as an instrumentalist is that he or she has the privilege of interpreting the lyric.

And that is your first responsibility, which always struck me as that was so powerful, you know, and so the lyric has always been, first and foremost, on my mind,

that even when I was interpreting or singing the great songs of other composers, I was telling a story, and I always have been, you know,

as a vocalist. So that is how I've approached it, is that the lyrics have always been very important because it was always, it was not just a tool to get melodies and rhythm out.

It was actually the most important part of a vocalist's job is to actually be a storyteller. So in the writing of, you know, so for years I had been interpreting,

I had been feeling story, tried to convey story. So when it came time for me to work on, you know, my first, you know, basically album of compositions,

the words were very important. the lyrics of the in a line and each line of a stanza there are seven.

So the rhymes are a little different from how we see it in eight. It's like it alternates lines and then the very last set is the same rhyme. And so I decided to honor that.

So as I was telling the story of really pretty much all of these little verses or these mini poems as part of the bigger epic poem is a story about an aspect of my community or an individual of my family but I wanted to use the protocol of Kalinga in doing that with both the challenge and also somehow communing with that kind of feel of seven.

Just through the one itself. Yes. You have a specific way of describing that culture. How would you describe jazz? Oh, jazz and why there's even the linkages is because I Please.

That is the commonality, as I see it, of jazz. It isn't necessarily a feel because so many cultures and subcultures of jazz have actually expanded the feel of jazz.

It isn't just swing. It could be Afro -Cuban jazz. It can be Brazilian jazz. And in my approach to a Filipino -American jazz aesthetic,

I'm wanting to bring in some of the melodic and also percussive and rhythmic motifs of ancestral Philippine culture and infuse it into jazz music or improvisational music in America.

Which to my ear you have done in a very funky yet, you know, jazzy kind of wonderful way. I have to say I really enjoy like the whole progression of the story and its start the CD starts in the first cut with a very kind of traditional I'm assuming Philippine sound you know that is the music of the Kuling Tang ensemble and they are a set of graduated gongs about eight of them that are played almost like a xylophone and the accompanying instruments that surround at the drums and the bigger gongs and I think that for American folks, But then our closest relative would be the gamelon.

I found myself asking myself, now, how much of this is like traditional, traditional, and how much of this have you turned into your own, as you described it, like Filipino -American jazz, they state, in terms of like the instrumentation and how you've presented it in this CD? That's a great question, and I like to say that instead of saying that my music is inspired by ancestral Philippine music, I'd like to actually take that one step further and say it is informed by ancestral Philippine music.

And that's a choice because it's possible that I could take these beautiful instruments and just create creative rhythms that sound beautiful. They are beautiful instruments. but for me, having studied for decades,

I actually wanted to make sure that in this album, the instruments were playing in the way that they have been familiar with for generations. So everything that you're hearing when I'm singing in the traditional language at the very beginning of some songs, that was also, that's actually a melodic line that exists in traditional culture and then the song afterwards the jazz song was actually inspired by that original melody even though it took off later on what you're hearing in terms of the instruments being played they're playing in the traditional manner and the western instruments are aligning with the the rhythmic motifs or even the melodic and the tones.

So like that if I have string instruments, they are actually tuning up to the gongs, you know, that type of thing. So I like to say that it's informed, yeah, informed by traditional, that I'm really not,

you know, banging on gongs. I'm actually remembering everything that I had been taught on how the ensemble should be played. Let's get into the story a bit.

I think when we were going back and forth about this interview, I had asked you to pick maybe one cut that you wanted to talk about a little more deeply. And so this is the story of your family,

essentially, and their journey to San Francisco and the progressive generations that have, you know, survived and overcome and hopefully enjoyed his well.

Was there one in particular that we wanted to talk about that I could also play for our audience? Absolutely. I think it fits just fine with its accompanying verse, which is Fred. So that would be track number 11, Fred, followed by number 12, fits just fine. And this is a story of my grandfather. Manang's apple of her eye,

she gave him one -way passage for an American life. Perhaps he'll find his fortune. Off he went with his cousins to Kearney Street that summoned.

Easy going, quick to laugh, though hard -working like his tribe, a happy, scrappy nature, Locos looks be lied.

Could not pick strawberries, so cooking he made into art, and local too made him smart.

Later he would empower generations of his kin,

counselors, teachers, artists, hardworking spirit within. Storytellers all start here, but now

Just a teenage boy,

soon to find his heart's true joy. Y,

C -Y, Fah, Y, Fah, Y. First one to leave,

Was the last one born? One -way passage with no land to more. Oh, yeah,

that fits just fine. This young man will make his own life. Can't say Fernando,

well, just call him Fred. Loss that name, but no need to dread. Oh yeah,

that sounds just fine. This young man will make his own life. Thank you.

Thank you. He's got to pick fruit,

But he mistook He'll start good trouble As a union cut That fits just fine This is the Listen

and Beheard Hour For readers and writers My name is Martha Cinader,

here in the Audio Garden with you and Carolyn Kabatink, Grammy -nominated recording artist, and we're talking about her epic CD,

Sugilanon. His poem is all about how he was, you know, that whimsical character that no

matter what was going on when he had first come to America in 1930s,

and it was rough. This was pre -civil rights movement and how people of color were dealt with and seen was, you know, they saw the worst in many ways of,

you know, racist America. And he survived that. And so my grandfather came, you know,

with his two cousins in that wave as stoop labor. He was very fortunate and very lucky that

he ended up finding and marrying one of the few of we were Americans and that one of our,

you know, our greatest privileges, having come from a country where that was not a

privilege was to vote and to have our voice heard and to not let anyone tell you you were not an American.

And so this is this is that relative that I wanted to feature. And while at the same time he

was also the most positive and upbeat person that that I knew as well,

the song starts off with traditional, you know, melody and traditional language. And then it

becomes, you know, the jazz song. And so in that way,

both language and a traditional melody were respected and honored before coming into the new composition.

And it has the wonderful solo of Melesio Magdalo to also emphasize the fact that first and

foremost, jazz music is improvisational music and the ability of an individual to interpret

that melody and to express and bring life to the song in his own unique way.

This is not an easy thing to put out, I think, in this day, to make a CD with a beautiful printed booklet in it and pictures and all the lyrics,

all the text written out. And I think you did get some grants in order to be able to do this. But

I just want to understand what's the motivation of putting out a CD and how are you

actually managing to distribute it and put it in the world.

Oh, thank you. Well, Basically, for me, it was really necessary to create the book. You know, I grew up, you know, reading liner notes. I, you know, yes, looking at album covers. And in my family, if they weren't my instrumental mentors growing up in the Fillmore neighborhood of San Francisco, they were most definitely my listening mentors, my uncles, my aunties, my parents. And liner notes and vinyl, you know, and the tangible, you know, the feeling of being able to feel my own family after, I'm the fourth generation American Filipino. I have nieces and nephews that are like fifth generation and they're only like very lightly, you know, aware of their lineage. And so a part of me was I had a bigger mission here that not only did I want to just remember these amazing people that started our American journey here and to see them as heroes as the heroes that they were but maybe in the future this wouldn't be make sense for the fifth six and future generations to see their faces to hear um their stories and to read their stories and um so that's why it needed to be a booklet it needed to be a physical cd and um and people are getting a deeper experience like there no one's really playing the cd because there are hardly any cd players but players, but they're buying it. Yes, they are. They're buying it. And I think you have the long vision for it. I do. I too. Really as a resource even, right?

Or should be in libraries and those types of where it's available for research. And something even better, though, is to go see Carolyn Cabading live.

Maybe you could Tell us where you'll be appearing soon for people who might be where you're appearing. Absolutely. The International Hotel Manila Town Center is a community gathering space that is also a space where I perform at a monthly live performance event called Club Mandalay.

And our next performance will be September 28th, and more information can be gleaned from manilatown .org.

My ensemble and me are always performing at least a monthly show, as well as more shows as well as we are invited. If people want to find out more, find out where else you might be appearing, how to get your CD, how should they go about doing that? I think the best bet would be the website, which is [www .cabodding .com](http://www.cabodding.com), my last name, and everything will be there. C -A -B -A -D -I -N -G, and everything is indeed there. Yes. Thank you so much, Carolyn.

I've really enjoyed this time with you here in the Audio Garden. It has been my pleasure, Martha. Thank you so much for this opportunity. Sanghi lily lid, aye sanguilid, sungi liit, sungi lilyid. What I have is what I can give.

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What I have is what I can give. What I have is what I can give. What I have is what I can give. What I have is what I can give. What I have is what I can give.

Congratulations to Carolyn Cabading for her Grammy nomination for the CD that we have been talking about. Coming up, we will persist with comments about banning books in schools and libraries. And we have a live radio drama from the archives written by Ava Chin as a way to celebrate the life of Matthew Finch here in the audio garden this is the listen to be heard hour for readers and writers I'm Martha Cinader and I'll meet you on the other side of that bridge over the spillway in about a minute This is Listen and Beheard Radio, WLBH .org. Once it's heard, it can't be unheard. Once it's published, it's not going to be unpublished. Once you read the poem, you can't read it.

No matter how an individual may try to push it to the side, forget about it, it's still in there. And it's the words, the meaning, the feelings behind it are taking root in their psyche. And they can't get rid of their parents. I definitely don't believe in the banning of books. You know, the thing about it. I definitely don't believe in the banning of books. You know, the thing about it is that if anyone is getting, having issues around language that might be in books that have, are some of our classic books, I think that the perspective of explaining the era in which books were written during, and also that even being a topic of discussion that could be very rich is important, but not the banning of it. I grew up being able to read all of these books and to have, like, lively, rich conversations. Tony Robles and I are basically brothers, brothers and sisters from another mother, kind of like a situation. We are of a similar age, and we grew up in the same neighborhood, and we are the people that we are because book reading was something that was a part of our life and the expression and conversation around books.

I don't believe in banning any books, even the books that are uncomfortable to read. There could be conversations around that and a growth and an evolution of community and as individuals, even in those discussions. Thanks, Carolyn, for those parting thoughts about banning books.

If you visit the post for Season 2 episode 28 at listen and be heard .net, you can watch the uncut video interview with Carolyn,

read the transcript of this show, and listen to the podcast again, if you like. My name is Martha Cinader, and thanks to my sometime co-hosts.

of Matthew Finch, the music director at KUNM Radio in Albuquerque, New Mexico. I was very recently back in touch with Matthew who introduced me to poet Mary Oishi, who we featured here back in May. And I'm so grateful now to have had that brief interlude of a renewed friendship. When I met Matthew at WBAI in New York City, it was the 1990s, and we had a shared passion for live radio drama. He especially loved to create live sound effects, what we call Foley in Radio World. I produced and sometimes wrote several radio dramas that he engineered, as well as doing just about everything else, including Foley and background voices. I remember when he met Cynthia Singleton there, produced a play of hers,

and soon became her lifetime partner. And he was involved in many, many more radio dramas, as well as the music department there at WBAI, and he became the arts director for a while after I had moved on. You'll find some links about him as well on our website, and you could go to this episode 28 to find all of that information. I've been digging around, and I found a radio drama that was written by and stars Ava Chin, who most recently is the author of Mott Street, a memoir that was published last year in Hardback and this year in paperback. At that time, I knew Ava as a spoken word artist who was also on a journey to know her family and her history of which she recounts quite a bit in her memoir. This radio drama that she wrote explores a relationship with a father who is not there. Part of the fun of live radio drama was to corral available people to participate. And in this our associate producer of the listening to be heard hour for readers and writers who I also worked with back at that time probably got snatched from the hallways, Jeannie Hopper, and she lent her voice in the background, as did I. And true to his ethic of making it happen, Matthew Finch engineered, did the foley, and we'll also hear his voice in this 10 -minute radio drama performed live at WBAI in the studios over there when we were still in Midtown near the post office in the late 90s and this is called The House of Miniature Toys. Tick -Tick -T -Mma. Amma. In the beginning, it was just the two. The little girl and the woman. The little girl would laugh and play, and so would the woman. Amma. Laugh with the sunshine in her hair, and it was like symmetry. Umma. Working together. Like two little dolls Amma in the perfect house full of miniature toys. Until one day, get out. They had to leave. Get out. An exodus to an unknown land. Um -ma. And so they traveled to many places. Where the people said, No daughters. No daughters. Without fathers. No daughters without fathers. No daughters without fathers. And so they traveled without stopping. Umma. Searching for a place of symmetry and rest. Daughters without fathers. And the little girl looked once again. Past the cobwebs. And the dust for the sunlight in the woman's hair. Amma. But there was silence in the dark. In the dark there was silence, and she chased the feathery shadows that dissolved grainy in her hands like sand. Silence, except for the one small questioning voice wondering umma where was she umma where was she umma how could she umma how could she umma umma He was gone. And it was like old times, where the girl laughed and played and found the son in the woman's hair. Um -ma. It was just the two. The little girl. The little girl. And the woman. And the woman playing. In the house full of miniature toys. Happy next. Still traveling to so many places, still moving, the exodus. Get out. But there was safety and comforting arms, searching for that place of symmetry and rest. Still they spoke. No daughters without fathers. No daughters without fathers, but the little girl didn't care. Who needed one,

nooked in sat in arms. During the exodus, where the miniature house was a dream, tucked away safe from the grainy darkness. Happiness is two kinds of ice cream.

Umma. Two kinds of ice cream. Umma. Two kinds of ice cream. She loved the sunshine in the woman's hair. Oh,

hey, hey. Like perfect symmetry, the little dolls, the miniature toys. They play, until one day.

Umma Umma Umma Umma Umma all through white flowers from a basket,

under the woman's feet, poised in the air, above the boasts. I'm not losing a daughter. I'm not losing. I'm gaining a son. I'm gaining. Losing,

gaining, losing, gaining! The flowers sank beneath her knees like sand in the bottom of the ocean. The miniature house, full of miniature toys,

dream The days of... Two kinds of ice cream. Of ice cream. Two kinds of ice cream. Of chasing sunlight. Two kinds of ice cream.

Of comforting arms and symmetry. Even the Exodus. Get out.

The Exodus was better. Get out. No daughters. Get out.

Without fathers. Get out. No daughters without fathers. Daughters without fathers. The Daughters without fathers wrapped him with the light.

The light. Like grains of sand, the sunshine in her hair, sitting on the floor of the church, the ribbons in her dress. Into the light.

The daughter without father. Daughters, fathers, daughters, fathers. Played with the grains of sand. Broken miniatures, Lost toys,

the fluttering darkness, the satin arms. Where was she? Umma. Where was she? Amma. Where was she? Ah. Huh.

You've just been listening to a live mini -radio drama called The House of Miniature Toys by Ava Chin, and adapted for radio by Ava Chin.

And directed by Ava Chin. It was produced by myself, Martha Cinader, and the cast in order of appearance was the doll. Voice was played by myself.

The narrator was Ava Chin. The male voice was Todd Colby. The first female voice was Jeannie Hopper. And the second female voice was Pamela Grossman, engineered by Matthew Finch,

and additional soundbed engineered by Jeannie Hopper and sound effects by all. And that was me in spring back in the day when Matthew Finch,

Jeannie Hopper, and I were all producing commercial -free community. a digital copy of.

Matthew Finch will live on here in the audio garden and in our hearts our condolences to his family and friends as well as to Joe Talaugon's family and friends and Crystal Collie.

Sometimes the best way to express sorrow is with the song. Here is Yashara Lynch, singing a song in memory of her best friend,

Crystal Collie, at the Versers of Color Open Mic event in Hendersonville, North Carolina, which takes place at the Shakedown Kava Lounge, and this was on August 22nd.

I want to leave my footprints on the sands of time.

No, there was something bad and something that I left behind. When I leave this world, I'll leave no regrets,

leave something to remember so they won't forget I was here I lived I love I was here I

thought it would be I will leave mom to stay I live and stay until I die and know that I meant something in Somebody life The hearts that I touch will be the proof that I leave That I made

a difference And this world will see I was here I knew I love I was here I did I've done everything that I wanted and it was more than I thought it would be I will leave my marks Thank you for joining me here this past hour in the audio garden Please let your voice be heard here too by visiting us at [listenandbeheard .net](http://listenandbeheard.net), leaving a comment, joining our mailing list, or by calling, 864 -397 -5748. Share your thoughts about this program, about banning books, a book you're reading. I've been reading *The Inventor*, a poet's trans -colonial autobiography. And next week, the poet herself, Eileen Tabios, will join us here in the audio garden. I've also been studying the free South Carolina University of the Upstate field guide to the southern Piedmont by Professor Jonathan Storm, who will walk with us next week as well. Our guest Yesterday was Grammy -nominated recording artist and so much more, Carolyn Cabading. We wish her luck. Her website is [cabotting .com](http://cabotting.com). C -A -B -A -D -I -N -G .com. I'm Martha Cinader, your host and producer. My co -host is Tony Robles, Associate producer DJ Jeannie Hopper. Editing is done by Jeremiah Cothran. Music, background loops, is by J. Rodriguez Sierra at [J .rodriguez Sierra .com](http://J.rodriguezSierra.com). The band book theme is by DJ Jeannie Hopper, with the voice and words of Yvette Murray, whose latest book is *Hush, Puppy*, published by finishing line press. Thanks Always to Davey and Dial for introducing the Listen and Beheard Hour for readers and writers to the broadcast airwaves on WPVM in Asheville, North Carolina, and to KCEI in Taos, New Mexico, and KEPJ in San Antonio, Texas, among other community radio stations around the country for airing our weekly show in your community. Thank you for listening and allowing me to be heard. Living it, giving it, having it, taking it, moving it. It's doing the unexpected. It's quitting before you get fired. Living it is giving it. Giving it is having it, having it is taking it, taking it is moving it, shaking it, creating it, loving it. Living it is loving it is loving a man. You're not supposed to love. It's given way to emotions, creating commotions, calling attention to yourself. And I got that. Living it is burning from someone who can actually show you. It's cleaning your teacher's house or helping her to find one. It's never, ever saying, J .O .B. Living it is a one -way ticket and no solid plans. It's smoking a J in a smoke cafe in Amsterdam. It's saying the day is pretty in a strange new city Living it is giving it Giving it is having it Having it is taking it Taking it is moving it shaking it Creating it, loving it Loving it Living it is having nothing to lose and everything to gain. It's putting all of your chans and attributes every single one of them to good use. It's knowing the kindness of strangers and love for sale. Living it is knowing where to buy rice and beans and bulkets, knowing herbs are cheaper than doctors. It's keeping it together when you're falling apart. Living it is being responsible for your own groove.

It's playing on street corners for nickels and sondees and being asked to move. It's sleeping in ruthless squats and ancient comments. It's running up against police getting thrown into the streets where you belong.

Because living it is settling. Living it is knowing your feet belong on the ground, that life is a dream, that things are never, ever, ever, ever with a scene and the certainty that the good things, the really, really, really good things. Living it is loving.