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METRO Society

THE GENERATIONS ISSUE

The Antonios

ON BUILDING A FAMILY EMPIRE
AND CHANGING THE LANDSCAPE
OF PHILIPPINE REAL ESTATE

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Hail to the families!

Our country is filled with stories about family. It's what has driven society to move forward and prosper. Without the hard work of the current scions of industry, politics, entertainment, and other fields to keep intact and preserve the dynasties of their parents, grandparents and those still that came before them... the Philippines would not have the colorful personality it displays today.

Take our subjects of On The Verge this month, for instance. We chose to feature career-driven heirs who have taken it upon themselves to delve into their parents' chosen fields of expertise: Architect Gelo Mañosa, foodies Camille Aguilar and Alexander Tanco, entrepreneurs Marc and Jason Soong and Mona Lim Palma, fashion merchandiser Jessica Tan-Gan, and business graduate Charles Sy. Having those famous last names may have helped them get their foot in the door, but it was all in their hands to try and prove themselves and live up to their family's reputation.

And speaking of living up to family expectations,

our cover story this month sheds light on the Antonio clan of Century Properties, and how Patriarch and Chairman Jose "Joey" E.B. Antonio has made the business flourish with the help of his four sons Jigger, Marco, Robbie, and Carlo. One of the country's most winning real estate developers that celebrates 25 years, the Antonios have triumphed by building dreams through selling not only a

comfortable place to dwell...but a whole lifestyle built around a living space. And, best of all, they did it as a family.

Still on the path of prominent families, **Metro Society** contributor Bettina Rodriguez-Olmedo regales us with the fascinating history of one of the country's most prominent ancestries. From street names all

around Manila to owners of prominent universities and daily newspapers, from well-known authors to society sweethearts, the Roces family name has persevered and is well entrenched in the Philippine psyche. It's an interesting read of an intricate familial web that you're sure to enjoy.

As for the lighter side of family life, here's a feature that showcases some of the country's younger broods and how they go about enriching their lives by spending quality time with their children—a practice that was not necessarily the norm during the boomer generation. Showcasing their candid side amidst their gorgeous children are the quirky Dennis and Tessa Valdes, the youthful Raymond and Anna Rufino, rocker Tirso Ripoll and pretty wife Katrina, loving couple Luigi and Ria Trillo, the earthy David and Kat Azanza, the more formal Rikki and Beng Dee, shy yet sweet Jose and Tin Moreno, the engaging Rick and Juana Yupangco and the fun-filled duo Joby and Gina Lizares.

On the current affairs front, fashion and fatal tsunamis abound as we have some exclusives for you: **Metro Society** was off to beautiful Bellarocca in Marinduque to shoot the Spring/Summer 2011 looks of Louis Vuitton; star-struck blogger Tricia Gosington has the time of her life at the New York Fashion Week; and Karla Develos-Ryan is our eyewitness that gives her own account of the biggest disaster in Japan's recent history.

Lastly—on a guy who is creating his own history—our very own Lour de Veyra is back with his cheeky yet oddly truthful take on the concept of gossip: why society can't live without it, what fuels it, and who really loses in the end.

As I mention loss, **Metro Society** bids farewell to one of Philippine Cinema's bigger legends, Mr. Jose "Pingoy" Revilla, a.k.a. Armando Goyena, grandfather to our Associated Editor Lexi Schulze-Berenguer-Testa. He was a consummate professional in his field, a stand-up human being to anyone he came in contact with, and a loving patriarch to a brood that will miss him tremendously. He was the embodiment of a family man, and I see it fit to end my editor's note on our Generations issue with a tribute to a gentleman who has left behind a legacy that his clan is more than proud to bring forth for generations to come. *✍️*

Rail

P.S. The photo on the left was taken by my dad in 1956 in Baguio. I was one year old then.



132

14 Access

- 22 Exquisite Watch Making
- 24 A Journey of Indulgence
- 26 Chinese New Year
- 28 Stung by the Bee
- 30 Power Partying
- 32 Piccini Dinner
- 34 Baby's First Welcome
- 36 Distinctive Design

41 Splurge

- 44 Bachelor-on-the-Loose: Léon Harb
- 46 Nobleman: Mark Loo
- 48 Curbside
- 50 Stylelitist
- 51 The Goods

- 52 The Body
- 54 Style Physics
- 56 Top of the Heap
- 58 Fashion

81 Indulge

- 82 New Beauty
- 84 Spa Bondings
- 88 Shopping
- 90 Objects of Desire

93 Prestige

- 94 Health Column
- 96 Versus
- 100 Wine and Food Society
- 102 Metro Society Dining
- 106 Entertaining with Flair
- 110 Home
- 118 Destinations

129 Pinnacle

- 132 Cover: Family Matters
Century Properties' chairman Jose Antonio and his four sons define and refine working in the family business to Yvette Tan.

- 141 Metro Society's Family Folio: Quality Time
Photographer Sheila Catilo and writer Georgina del Rosario capture bright and beautiful moments in the lives of society's young families.

On the cover: The Antonios—Marco, Joey, Carlo, Robbie, and Jigger. Photograph by Paolo Pineda

FAMILY MATTERS

CENTURY PROPERTIES CHAIRMAN JOSE ANTONIO AND
SONS TALK ABOUT THE SECRETS OF SUCCESS, BOTH IN
REAL ESTATE AND IN WORKING WITH THE FAMILY

Together, Century Properties Chairman Joey Antonio and sons Jigger, Marco, Robbie and Carlo form the backbone behind one of the country's most innovative real estate development companies.

BY YVETTE TAN
PHOTOGRAPHS BY PAOLO PINEDA
GROOMING BY GIO FLORES, ANGIE CRUZ OF SHU UEMURA,
AND RAYMOND KO OF BENEFITS SALON FOR L'OREAL

CENTURY PROPERTIES INC. IS ONE OF THE COUNTRY'S MOST SUCCESSFUL REAL ESTATE DEVELOPERS, and is well known for its imaginative lifestyle-based developments. "The reason I really entered the real estate business is because I am a lover of biographies of successful people. A lot of them became big because of real estate. I saw that that was a very good road map for an entrepreneur like me," says Century chairman Jose "Joey" E.B. Antonio. Joey was a management consultant and a stockbroker before he set up Century Properties as a management and marketing firm that later ventured into real-estate development.

Twenty-five years later (the company was formed six days before the 1986 People Power Revolution), the former special envoy to China is still at the helm, this time backed by his four sons Jigger, Marco, Robbie, and Carlo. The company that used to have only six employees has grown considerably from its origins. "What am I up to? Presiding over our business, presiding over my family and my corporate family, also presiding over the implementation of our business plans and helping the country," Joey says. "It's one of our core beliefs that family matters a lot."

Starting them young

One can see this in the way he's raised his sons to work together, grooming them to take over the company by tapping their strengths and emphasizing family values. After all, what is a company but a really big family? "We ate dinner together when they were growing up. That was a must. We talked about business at the dining table. I talked about how my day went, the intricacies of the business, lessons learned, people I met. I think aside from what they learned in school, they learned the business through assimilation," Joey says.

All four children graduated from the top business schools in the world and all got awards in their undergraduate schooling. Three sons worked for blue chip global companies outside Century Properties.

"How we're set up here, the three of us are project directors, and the other one is in finance," says Robbie. "Each project director is responsible for managing all aspects of select Century projects; project conceptualization, marketing, sales, development, finance, and ultimately, a project's profitability and timeliness of its delivery."

Marco, who is executive vice president for sales and development, is in charge of the Knightsbridge Residences at Century City, Canyon Ranch in San Lazaro Leisure Park, and Century's latest and well-received project Acqua Private Residences. Robbie, who as managing director is involved in business development, is always looking for new deals. He is in charge of The Milano Residences, Century Properties' luxury project in partnership with Versace Home. As Century Properties executive vice president for corporate planning, Carlo's primary responsibilities

include fund raising and other corporate matters.

Marco, Robbie, and Carlo worked in different companies in New York City before finally joining the family business. Only Jigger, the COO (chief operating officer), has been with Century Properties since he graduated. Jigger manages various aspects of the non-sales departments, as well as the Gramercy Residences and the Azure Urban Resort Residences. "I started work in sales. I did it for a few years. I wanted people to respect me for my accomplishments and not just because I'm the son of the owner," he says.

"He had to meet the quota," Joey agrees. "That's how I started the boys. They really have to know the basics."

Joey also attributes the success of his children to the painstaking efforts of his wife Hilda, who nurtured and disciplined the four boys that gave them the right foundation and values. "My wife continues to be the steward of the family to this day."

Family matters

Anyone will tell you that the corporate world is tough, and to work with people you used to share a house with and have to see outside the office, adds a special kind of stress to the whole situation. The Antonios, however, count working with family members a boon.

"It's a perk that I enjoy," Joey says. "It's a privilege to be able to work with your children because you are able to give them the right nurturing or the right advice. Aside from the knowledge, you have to impart to them the wisdom of running a business. Those are two different things. Knowledge you gain in school, wisdom you learn through life."

"While Century Properties is family-owned, it is professionally run. The challenge is continuously operating with utmost professionalism while striving for peak efficiency and performance, given the constant flux and dynamism of the industry," Marco says.

"I don't think there are challenges per se, but rather, there are special opportunities," Carlo adds. "Specifically, we can rely on what we have as a family to strengthen our business. The mutual confidence we have for one another allows us to 'familiarize' our business, and bring the best things a family can offer to a business, such as compassion for our employees, etc."

"It's just like working in any other firm... the only difference is, you take work home. Sometimes we 'switch off' but more often than not, the business is always in our heads because we're all so passionate about it, about contributing to it, and making a difference in our developments. I think we have a responsibility as well... to try to pioneer and innovate in business, and also contribute to the lives of our countrymen," Robbie says.

"We don't really fight. We were brought up as four boys in one room. We studied together in the same school; we were roommates in college. When I was taking my MBA, Carlo was in college. We were in the same room, in the same dorm. We had the same experiences, the same upbringing. It's really one for



Joey considers working with his four sons a privilege and a joy.



Jigger entered the company straight out of college, starting in sales and working his way up to COO.



Before joining the family business, Robbie started a firm in New York that gave him the opportunity to compete with the city's top real estate companies.

all, all for one," Jigger says. "The funny thing is, about 80 percent of our decisions are practically the same... We always talk of merits."

The brothers have excelled in their respective positions. Each of them has brought something unique to the company. "Personally, I'm very passionate about creating innovative products such as Azure, which consists of six hectares and has a man-made beach. It's creating these for our clients that are very important to me. That's what I've tried to be—passionately different and unique," Jigger says. "Unfortunately, there is a trend towards commoditization right now... we prefer quality over quantity. We're the Apple or Zara of real estate development, affordable but cool and exciting."

"Positive contributions can manifest in many different ways," Marco says. "I believe my best contribution is the overall leadership, experience, vigor, prudence, passion, and creativity I bring to the job. Ultimately, no one person makes or breaks a company. Success is about creating the best working and learning environment for our employees, so collectively we succeed."

"I started a firm in New York on behalf of the company, and we were the first Philippine group that built outside Asia. We sold \$10-million apartments, and achieved one of the highest average prices for a condominium ever in America. I was competing with the New York real-estate billionaires at the age of 28 and we were successful. We worked with superstar architect I.M. Pei on his first ever ground up for sale residential project in America," Robbie says. "I believe I have the ability to see things many people don't. If there are 30 people in the room, chances are, I will give you an idea that is out of this world, yet pragmatic—something that no one else has thought of."

His international exposure seems to have contributed to the fact that he is wired differently. "Sometimes I think so big that the rest of EXCOM need to remind me that I am no longer in New York. I am also intensely a "deal-centric" guy. In addition, my global network allows me to be resourceful—I can basically meet anyone in the world. I set my eyes on cutting a deal within two or three calls made to people I know."

I've come up with unorthodox ideas and closed a few deals that will radically shape the skyline of Manila. We are about to announce some projects, brands, and concepts in the next few months that will alter the landscape of Philippine, and dare I say, global real estate, as we know it."

"Right now, I'm focusing on fund-raising, but I believe my contribution is the consolidation of all of the projects we have, and the perspective I can give to everyone from this consolidated level. With all the various projects, there are various inter-dependencies and complexities that this scale of operations brings. I try my best to give the company the cause and effect, scenario analysis, if we decide to pursue one alternative over the other," says Carlo.

But no matter how well they do, the brothers agree that they owe a lot to their dad's guidance. Joey taught them to give importance to the fundamentals, which is good education and good values. He required them to be hands-on. Joey emphasizes hard work, perseverance, and out-of-the-box thinking. "I've taught them to pay

attention to details—the devil is in the details. You might have a vision, but vision without implementation is hallucination," he says.

"(He taught us to) always have value for money and not take things for granted," Jigger says. Joey taught his sons to "always be risk-averse, because in the Philippines, you never know... I've been through two or three crises and we basically have to mitigate our risks."

"You learn from scars," Robbie adds. "You learn from experience—handling different scenarios and looking at things from all angles."

"I felt that they should be prepared to manage a wider scope of activities in the future, so I prepared them to be generalists in terms of thinking, but specialists in terms of actual day-to-day work," Joey says. "As project director, you are in fact a generalist. You look at all the various facets of running a business. You're actually your own entrepreneur when you're managing a project. You handle marketing, development, management, conceptualization. I give you that, you run with the ball, I'll just look at you from a distance."

More than business

Another important part of business success is not working too much, something that all the Antonio men know very well. "What do I do to relax? I laugh. I laugh with my staff. Laughter, I think, is still the best medicine," Joey says, adding that he also enjoys travel and photography.

Jigger unwinds by having dinners with friends, spending time with his wife, and pursuing his interest in interior design and architecture. Marco's healthy pursuits include running and weight lifting. With his wife, he cultivates his interest in food, interior design, travel and music. Robbie goes to the gym, plays tennis twice a day, and travels the world to build his art collection. Carlo likes to spend his free time with his wife. They meditate, watch movies together, hang out with their dog. He has also taken up wakeboarding.

The men are optimistic about the current state of the real-estate market, and what Century Properties has to offer. "The rules of real estate have not changed. What has changed is the magnitude," Joey says. "We'll have more of the same innovative, pioneering projects. It's part of our DNA to produce relevant projects. Why are we now producing branded products in the shape of Milano and interior designed by Versace Home? This is our contribution to increase the credibility of Manila as a destination."

Century Properties has achieved a great deal in a modest amount of time. Its reputation for quality is highly trusted by customers. When asked if the company at present is what he envisioned it to be when he was starting out, Joey says, "I wish I could say that I envisioned much bigger but it's hard to turn back the hands of time. We can only count our blessings, but we're extremely blessed by what we've achieved thus far."

He adds: "It takes vision to build a successful company that reflects our commitment to quality."

And with Joey's sons at his side, there is nowhere for this family business to go but up. ■



Marco appreciates the fact that while Century Properites is family-owned, it is professionally run.

IMAGINING A NEW WAY OF LIVING

Century Properties Inc. is known for its innovative and lifestyle-oriented developments. One of these is Century City, a 3.4-hectare soon-to-rise community in the bustling Makati area. The development will be home to different buildings, each one constructed to reflect its residents' sensibilities.

The Gramercy Residences

Live the high life in the Gramercy Residences, the first fully-furnished, fully serviced and 'fully hyper-amenitized' condo in the Philippines. It is also the country's tallest building. With amenities that include the multi-level SkyPark with three gyms, three swimming pools, an observation deck, a children's playground, day-care center, a THX centertheater, cafés and restaurants, and a library, you'll never want to leave home again.

The Knightsbridge Residences

The London-inspired Knightsbridge Residences offers folks global citizens who like to live on the edge innovative features such as The Pod Concept of combining units, hypersized amenities, breathtaking lantern units, and a striking curvilinear architecture that reflects an exciting, on-the-go lifestyle.

The Milano Residences

Live in the lap of luxury in the Milano Residences, the first private luxury residences in Asia interior designed by Versace Home. Residents can enjoy Versace Home-interior designed amenities such as the Lobby, Juice Bar, Swimming Pool, Hammam/Day Spa, Library and Business Centre.

Centuria Medical

Makati

Centuria Medical Makati ushers in a world-class form of health care that is world-class via its \$100-million outpatient medical-IT center. The 28-storey building offers about 500 clinic spaces for doctors and wellness practitioners. Advanced medical and /diagnostic equipment will be provided by leading firm, GE Healthcare. The combination of state-of-the-art equipment and a luxurious, relaxing ambiance makes for a facility that will help change the way people think about going to the doctor. New and exciting lifestyle concepts were also introduced in these two residential projects:

Azure Urban Resort Residences

Experience beachfront living in the heart of the city in this six-hectare and nine-building residential enclave in Parañaque City. Located right beside SM Bicutan, Azure is the first man-made beach residential development in the Philippines. Eighty percent of the property is also devoted to open space and other outdoor amenities.

Acqua Private Residences

Acqua is the country's first residential Eden, located in Mandaluyong City and right across Rockwell via a new bridge. The 2.4-hectare, six-tower development's concept is

centered on bringing the beauty of the majestic tropical rainforest into the metropolis, and with exciting features such as the Riverwalk Promenade of boutiques and restaurants, and the Pebble Country Club.



Left: The Milano Residences.
Below: Azure Urban Resort Residences

Right: The Centuria Medical Makati.
Below: Acqua Private Residences



Carlo's focus on finance enables him to present cause and effect scenario analysis for each of the company's projects.