

Oliver Tolentino stages first Manila fashion show

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MANILA, Philippines - It was a dream come true for Hollywood-based Filipino designer Oliver Tolentino to feature his collection in Metro magazine's Metrowear Icon fashion show held at the Sofitel Philippine Plaza in Pasay City early this week.

In an interview after his first gala show in the country, Tolentino said that it is his own way of giving back. Proceeds from the fashion show will go to ABS-CBN Foundation's Bantay Bata (a child welfare program) and Sagip Kapamilya (an emergency assistance program).



"I'm so blessed talaga. That's why I'm giving back all those blessings that I got. That's why noong sinabi nila sa akin na ang magbe-benefit ng show ko ay Sagip Kapamilya at Bantay Bata, I said yes right away," he said.

"Talagang that's my ultimate dream when I do a show. Gusto ko talaga may beneficiary ang show. Kasi you know, ang daming blessings na dumarating sa buhay ko and it's about time to give back. Hindi lang isang kamay ang binibigay ko, buong puso ko at pag-iisip.

"Growing up in Urani, Bataan, my mom talagang marami siyang tinutulungang bata para makapag-ara. And before she passed away, she said to me, 'Oliver, you are so blessed. Lahat ng ginawa ko sana ay i-continue mo.' And that's what I'm doing right now, because iba ang fulfillment ng tumutulong sa ibang tao. As a fashion designer, this is the least that I can do."

For Metrowear Icon, Tolentino presented more than 75 couture items, from red carpet gowns and cocktail dresses to suit-cut barongs with built-in camisa tsinos.

He excluded popular colors such as red, black and white in the women's pieces as a challenge, the designer said.

About half of the collection was made from native fabric such as piña, abaca and raw silk cocoon dyed in vibrant colors and complementary rosettes and cutouts.



Among the celebrities who wore Tolentino's collection during the show were Jake Cuenca, Empress Schuck, Tweetie de Leon, Bianca Valerio, Tessa Prieto and Kuh Ledesma.

Tolentino's last piece for the gala was worn by Miss Universe 2010 fourth runner-up Venus Raj.

After the show, Tolentino received a standing ovation from the guests, which included former First Lady Imelda Marcos.

Tolentino is set to be back in the United States on November 2 for Cycle 18 of "America's Next Top Model," a hit fashion reality show.

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