

## **STUDIES & RESEARCH:**

**Fortifying Democracy Project/Usapang ATIN** (June 2018 - present)

New York University Abu Dhabi, UAE

Developing an initiative to create scalable models for autonomous, community-based discussions focusing on civics and citizen participation, along with supplementary materials that include learning modules and new-media materials.

**International Writer-in-Residence** (Aug 2014 - Feb 2015)

NTU (NANYANG UNIVERSITY), Singapore.

Continued work on my novel on systemic corruption in Philippine politics; taught creative writing to undergraduates.

**Radcliffe Fellow** (Sept 2013 - May 2014)

HARVARD UNIVERSITY, Cambridge, USA.

Began work on a novel on corruption, at the Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Studies at Harvard.

**PhD, English Literature and Creative Writing** (2008 - 2011)

UNIVERSITY OF ADELAIDE, Adelaide, Australia.

**MFA, Creative Writing** (2002 - 2004)

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY, New York, USA.

**Certificate in Photographic Studies** (2001)

PARIS PHOTOGRAPHIC INSTITUTE (SPEOS), Paris, France.

**Bachelor of Arts, English Literature** (graduated 2001)

ATENEO DE MANILA UNIVERSITY, Manila, Philippines.

## **JUDGING:**

**2013 to present:** Member of the Academy, The Folio Prize.

UK-based international literary award, with a rotating jury of the world's top authors.

**2013:** Juror, Writers Trust Fiction Prize.

One of Canada's top prizes, juried by three established Canadian authors.

**2011:** Juror: Neustadt International Prize for Literature.

US-based biennial prize for lifetime achievement, juried by five international authors.

## **SELECT WORK:**

### **WORLD ECONOMIC FORUM - CULTURAL LEADER (September 2018)**

Invited to participate in events, and speak on a panel on pluralism, at the Southeast Asian summit in Hanoi, Vietnam.

### **NEW YORK UNIVERSITY ABU DHABI - VISITING ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF PRACTICE, LITERATURE & CREATIVE WRITING (2016 to present)**

In the department of Literature and Creative Writing, I provide senior thesis capstone advising and offer four courses: “Introduction to Creative Writing” (fiction, poetry, non-fiction); “Advanced Fiction: Write a Novel in a Semester”; a literature course titled “Novels That Changed the World” (focusing on the literary and political, and historical aspects behind the rare novels that started revolutions, affected social change, shifted government policies, or altered cultural perspectives) and a core curriculum workshop/seminar called “Citizen, Writer” (equipping students with necessary rhetorical, literary and interdisciplinary skills needed to make their proverbial pens mightier than swords).

### **THE NEW YORK TIMES - CONTRIBUTING OPINION WRITER (2016 to present)**

I am contracted by the International New York Times as a regular contributor of opinion pieces, focusing mostly on politics.

### **FORTIFYING DEMOCRACY/USAPANG ATIN - CO-FOUNDER (2017 to present)**

This is an initiative to create scalable models for autonomous, community-based discussions focusing on civics and citizen participation, along with supplementary materials. These include learning modules and new-media materials that are open-sourced and free of copyright to help citizens examine the fundamental concepts of Philippine democracy necessary for their participation.

### **INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL MANILA - VISITING PROF (2014 to present)**

Seniors and juniors in ISM’s International Baccalaureate program are taught my fiction and non-fiction work, and I’ve been invited to teach an annual series of workshops for fiction and journalism. I also teach an online course in creative writing for their select sophomore English Literature students.

### **THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE - Strasbourg, France - SPEAKER (Nov 2017)**

Invited to speak to the assembled nations at the World Forum for Democracy, on populism and democracy.

### **THE WORLD ECONOMIC FORUM - YOUNG ASEAN LEADER (May 2017)**

Invited to participate and present my ideas at the Southeast Asian forum in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, on culture and politics in the region.

### **THE ARTS HOUSE, SINGAPORE - VISITING LECTURER (Jan 2015 & April 2016)**

I ran several writing workshops as part of their World Literature Workshop Series.

**NEW YORK UNIVERSITY ABU DHABI - VISITING PROFESSOR (January 2016)**  
Taught an intensive, full-credit, semester's-worth creative writing course during NYU's winter break — or January Term, as they call it. My workshop covered creative writing, literary criticism, censorship, and steps towards getting published.

**NEW YORK UNIVERSITY ABU DHABI - SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY INITIATIVE (Jan 2016)**

Volunteered my weekends to teach in their pilot adult-education program, which is now providing continuing-ed opportunities for their more than 800 contract staff workers. Mine was the first creative writing course offered to these international workers.

**NEW YORK UNIVERSITY ABU DHABI - VISITING AUTHOR (March 2015)**

I was invited to read from my work, interact with the community, and conduct a writing workshop at NYU's new campus. My workshop was attended by students and faculty.

**NANYANG TECHNOLOGICAL UNIV. - WRITER-IN-RESIDENCE (2014-2015)**

NTU, one of Singapore's top two universities, invited me to both conduct an undergraduate creative writing course as well as do research and early work on a third novel.

**HARVARD UNIVERSITY; ARTS@29 GARDEN - LECTURER (2014):**

Held an intensive creative writing workshop at Harvard University's extracurricular arts program, Arts@29 Garden. Worked with students explore how social media can be used to create rich characters in their fiction.

**THE MANILA REVIEW – ASSOCIATE EDITOR (2012 to 2015)**

A new publication founded by Filipino writers, journalists, and academics in Manila and the diaspora, *The Manila Review* seeks to cultivate dynamic, rigorous criticism and political commentary.

**CBC/RADIO CANADA INTERNATIONAL - COLUMNIST (2008 to 2011):**

My weekly radio column on books and literature, *The Biblio-File*, was broadcast to a national and international audience.

**THE MONTREAL GAZETTE – COPY EDITOR (June 2008 to Feb 2009):**

Worked at Quebec's largest anglophone daily, handling the international and national news sections.

**THE INDEPENDENT WEEKLY - SUB EDITOR/ONLINE EDITOR (2015 to 2017)**

Worked as a staff writer, sub editor, and subsequently the online editor at the Australian affiliate of The Independent of London newspaper, based in Adelaide, South Australia.

### **SELECT PUBLICATIONS:**

**Novels:**

-- *Ilustrado*, debut novel (winner of the 2008 Man Asian Literary Prize, NY Times Notable Book of 2010, and other awards and acclaim; published in more than 20 countries, translated into 15 languages; it is now taught in high schools and universities in the Philippines and abroad).

-- *I Was the President's Mistress!!*, novel in editing phase:

To be published by Penguin/Hamish Hamilton (Canada) & Farrar Straus & Giroux (U.S.)

### **Fiction:**

-- *Excerpt from Ilustrado: An Anthology of Southeast Asian Writing*. National Library Board of Singapore, 2014.

-- *Be Here Now*, short story: **Elsewhere** anthology. McSweeney's (USA) & Cargo Publishing (UK), 2012.

-- *The Forty*, short story: **The Picador Book of 40: 40 Writers / Picador's 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Anthology**. Picador, UK, 2012.

-- *Imagining Toyo Ito's Unmade Museum*, creative short text: **Edit Magazine**, UK, 2012.

-- *We'll Be Home Soon, Again*, short story: **The Drawbridge Magazine**, UK, 2010.

-- *Stet*, short story: **The Walrus Magazine**, Canada, 2010.

-- *Leaves in the Rain: Redux*, short story: **The Asia Literary Review**, Hong Kong, 2010.

-- *Lives and Deaths of Beloved Animals*, story: **Rogue Magazine**, Philippines, 2009.

### **Journalism:**

-- Opinion: **The NY Times**. *The Wrong Way to Fight a Drug War*. Aug 8, 2018.

-- Opinion: **The NY Times**. *The Bumbling Corruption of Rodrigo Duterte*. May 24, 2018.

-- Essay: **Jentayu: Revue Littéraire d'Asie: Pas d'eulogie pour les vivants** (Winter 2017-2018)

-- Speech/essay: **OpenDemocracy**, *Is Populism a Problem?* Nov 20, 2017

-- Opinion: **The NY Times**. *Fake News Floods the Philippines*. Oct 24, 2017.

-- Opinion: **The Guardian**. *I Thought Filipinos Had Failed Democracy, But It Is We Who Have Failed It*. Oct. 21, 2017.

-- Essay: **The Boston Review**. *No Eulogy For The Living*. Sept 29, 2017.

-- Opinion: **The NY Times**. *Duterte's Enablers*. Sept 20, 2017.

-- Opinion: **The NY Times**. *How To Get Ahead in Politics*. Aug 8, 2017.

-- Essay: **Agenda: The World Economic Forum**, *Art and literature are vital to democracy - and here's why*. May 10, 2017.

-- Opinion: **The NY Times**. *The Injustice System*. April 26, 2017.

-- Opinion: **The NY Times**. *Death on the Night Shift in Duterte's Manila*. Feb 22, 2017.

-- Opinion: **The NY Times**. *Standing Up to a Strongman*. Dec 11, 2016.

-- Opinion: **The NY Times**. *What 'Locker-Room Talk' Sounds Like*. Nov 23, 2016.

-- Opinion: **The NY Times**. *A Hero's Burial for a Long-Dead Dictator*. Sept 26, 2016.

-- Essay: **Inside Higher Ed**. *Beyond Borders: Teaching Writing to Campus Staff*. July 16, 2016.

-- Opinion: **The NY Times**. *Why Filipinos Are Voting for a New Dictator*. May 6, 2016.

-- Analysis: **Time Magazine**. *This Is Why Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte Will Get Away With Murder*. Aug 2016.

-- Essay: **Griffith Review: New Asia Now — Twenty under 40 in the Asian Century** issue. *Beating Dickheads: The Role of the Writer in the Third World*. July 2015.

-- Special guest: **BBC Weekend Programme**. Providing perspective during the 2-hour news program on current global events. Dec 20, 2014.

- Radio essay: **BBC World Service**, *Typhoon Haiyan One Year Later*. Nov, 2014.
- Thought Leader: **Rappler**. *F\*ck Censorship*, June 24, 2014.
- Radio essay: **BBC World Service**. *Corruption and Typhoon Haiyan*. Nov, 2013.
- Special Report: **The Globe & Mail**. *In the Philippines, Clouds of a Different Color*. Nov 13, 2013.
- Feature, **Think: The Qatar International Foundation Magazine**. *Letter from Manila*. May 2013.
- Article, **Newsweek**. *Manila: Magnet for the Hopeful*. January, 2013.
- Op-Ed, **The NY Times**. *A Filipino Plagiarist's Rant Against Reproductive Rights*. August, 2012.
- Op-Ed three-part series, **Rappler** (Philippines). *On Senator Tito Sotto's Plagiarism*. August, 2012.
- Review, **NY Times Book Review**: *Open City*, by Teju Cole. February, 2011.
- Review, **NY Times Book Review**: *How to Read the Air*, by Dinaw Mengestu. October, 2010.
- Op-Ed, **Globe & Mail**. *The Son Also Rises: Meet the New Aquino Saviour*. July 2010.
- Op-Ed, **International Herald Tribune**. *And if This Leader Should Fall*. May 2010.
- Op-Ed, **Globe & Mail**. *Counting on Aquino*. May 2010.
- Book reviews (2008 to 2011), **CBC Radio Canada International**. *The Biblio-File*, weekly radio book-review column.
- Regular articles as a staff writer at **The Independent Weekly**, Australia, 2005-2007.

### **HONOURS AND AFFILIATIONS:**

- 2013 to present: Member of the Academy of the FOLIO PRIZE
- 2013: Juror, WRITERS TRUST FICTION PRIZE (one of Canada's most important).
- 2012: Juror, NEUSTADT INTERNATIONAL PRIZE FOR LITERATURE.
- 2012: FILIPINO READERS' CHOICE AWARD: Winner, *Ilustrado*, Novel in English.
- 2011: COMMONWEALTH WRITERS PRIZE: Shortlisted finalist, *Ilustrado*, Canada and Caribbean.
- 2010 *NEW YORK TIMES* NOTABLE BOOK: *Ilustrado*.
- 2010 *GLOBE & MAIL* TOP-100 BOOK: *Ilustrado*.
- 2010 *MACLEAN'S* CANADIAN BESTSELLER: *Ilustrado*.
- 2010 HUGH MacLENNAN PRIZE FOR FICTION (Canada): Winner, *Ilustrado*.
- 2010 PRIX COURRIER INTERNATIONAL (France): Shortlisted finalist, *Ilustrado*.
- 2010 AMAZON.COM FIRST BOOK AWARD: Shortlisted finalist, *Ilustrado*, 2010.
- 2010 PRIX JAN MICHALSKI (Switzerland): Shortlist, *Ilustrado* (French edition).
- 2010 PREMIO VON REZZORI (Italy): Shortlisted finalist, *Ilustrado* (Italian edition).
- 2010 GRAND PRIX DU LIVRE DE MONTREAL: Shortlisted finalist, *Ilustrado*.
- 2010: Named by the *Montreal Gazette* one of the 24 QUEBECERS WE LOVE
- 2008 MAN ASIAN LITERARY PRIZE: Winner, *Ilustrado* (unpublished manuscript).
- 2008 PALANCA AWARD (Philippines' top literary honor): Winner, *Ilustrado*.
- 2008: SPECIAL RESOLUTION OF CONGRATULATIONS, Philippine Congress.
- 2008: ANI NG DANGAL AWARD (Philippines), from the National Commission for Culture and Arts.
- 2008 *GLIMMER TRAIN* EMERGING WRITERS SHORT STORY CONTEST, Finalist.
- 2008: LOYOLA SCHOOLS AWARD FOR THE ARTS, Ateneo de Manila University.
- DEAN'S AWARD for the ARTS, Ateneo de Manila University, 1997.

## **FELLOWSHIPS, LECTURES, FESTIVALS:**

- 2018 (March) The Macau Literary Festival, Macau, China.
- 2017 (November) Speaker, World Forum for Democracy, Council of Europe, France
- 2017 (May) ASEAN Young Leader, The World Economic Forum, Phnom Penh
- 2016 (July) Writer-in-Residence, Spring Foundation Workshops, Hong Kong
- 2016 (April) Keynote speech, National Alliance of Youth Leaders, Philippines
- 2016 (March) Nantes Writers Festival, France
- 2015 Lecture, Inauguration of the Federico Garcia Lorca Foundation, Spain
- 2015 Genova International Festival of Literature, Italy.
- 2015 Frankfurt Undercover Debates, Frankfurt Book Fair, Germany.
- 2015 5-city tour of Australia for the Griffith Review's New Asia Now anthology
- 2015 Singapore Arts House, World Literature Workshop
- 2014 Center for Southeast Asian Studies, Kyoto University
- 2014 George Town Literary Festival, Penang, Malaysia
- 2014 Singapore Writers Festival
- 2014 National Arts Council (Singapore), "Mentor Access Program."
- 2014 Goa Festival of Readers and Writers, India
- 2014 Cooler Lumpur Literary Festival, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
- 2014 Harvard University, Adams House reading series
- 2013 Fellowship, Civitella Ranieri Foundation, Umbria, Italy
- 2013 Visiting lecturer, Chapman University, Orange County, California
- 2012 Hay Festival Beirut, Lebanon
- 2012 Hay Festival Segovia, Spain
- 2012 Featured writer, ImagiNation Literary Festival, Quebec City
- 2012 Adelaide Writers Week, Adelaide Australia
- 2012 Keynote lecturer, Jose Rizal Conference, Biblioteca Nacional de Espana
- 2011 Fellowship, Santa Maddalena Foundation, Florence, Italy
- 2011 Berlin International Book Festival, Germany
- 2011 Fellowship, Santa Maddalena Foundation, Florence, Italy
- 2011 Berlin International Book Festival, Germany
- 2011 Hay Festival, Cartagena, Colombia
- 2011 Perth Writers Festival, Perth, Australia
- 2011 Dubai International Literary Festival
- 2010 Hay Festival, Kerala, India
- 2010 Crossing Border Festival, Holland and Belgium
- 2010 PEN World Voices Festival, New York. Keynote reader at opening event.
- 2010 The Guardian Hay-on-Wye Literary Festival, UK
- 2010 Edinburgh International Book Festival, Scotland
- 2010 Stoke-Newington Literary Festival, UK
- 2010 Brisbane Writers Festival, Australia
- 2010 Melbourne Writers Festival, Australia
- 2010 International Festival of Authors, Toronto

- 2010 Montreal Blue Metropolis Literary Festival
- 2010 Ottawa Writers Festival
- 2009 International Writers Workshop Fellowship, Hong Kong Baptist University
- 2009 Man International Hong Kong Writers Festival
- 2009 Singapore Writers Festival
- 2009 Montreal Blue Metropolis Literary Festival
- 1999 37<sup>th</sup> Philippine National Writers Workshop

### **LANGUAGES SPOKEN:**

English (fluent); Tagalog (intermediate); French (intermediate); Spanish (intermediate); Italian (basic).

### **SELECT REVIEWS OF ILUSTRADO:**

"With *Ilustrado*, Miguel Syjuco obliges us to remake the canons of our great classics of contemporary literature. *Ilustrado* is, literally, a masterpiece."

—Alberto Manguel, *El Pais*.

"A dazzling and virtuosic adventure in reading ... Syjuco is a writer already touched by greatness... A remarkably impressive and utterly persuasive novel. Its author ... may one day succeed with the Nobel committee."

—Joseph O'Connor, *The Guardian*.

"An ambitious exploration of cultural identity, ambition, and artistic purpose."

—*The New Yorker*.

"*Ilustrado* now suddenly reminds... of the best of Roberto Bolano; and many readers will soon be able to marvel, as I did, at the richness and depth of human experience it reveals." —Pankaj Mishra, *The Guardian*.

"Wildly entertaining ... absolutely assured in its tone, literary sophistication and satirical humor ... Syjuco is only in his mid-30s, and he already possesses the wand of the enchanter." —Michael Dirda, *The Washington Post*.

"*Ilustrado* will provoke audible oohs and ahhs from readers. The writing is gorgeous. Plus, there's an O. Henry twist in the epilogue. This is a great book. Read it."

—Luis Clemens, Senior Editor, Tell Me More, *NPR*.

"Ambitious ... In a daring literary performance, Syjuco weaves the invented with the factual ... *Ilustrado* is being presented as a tracing of 150 years of Philippine history, but it's considerably more than that ... Spiced with surprises and leavened with uproariously funny moments, it is punctuated with serious philosophical musings."

—Raymond Bonner, *The New York Times*.

“The Great Filipino novel. The Great Asian Novel.”

—*BFM 89.9FM Bookclub*, Malaysia.

“Extraordinary debut, at once flashy and substantial, brightly charming and quietly resistant to its own wattage . . . Syjuco’s gifts for pastiche, his protean narrative energy, are in particular evidence in these pitch-perfect fictions of the fictions of his fictional author . . . An exuberant, funny novel that neither takes its grand ambitions too seriously, nor pretends to be measuring itself by any less a scale of intent. How Syjuco . . . has done this is foremost a testament to his prodigious gifts . . . With his dazzling first foray, Syjuco suggest how his new Asia, his new identity, must ‘look’ on the page and between the covers. That look is unexpected and fresh, quite unlike anything seen before.”

—Charles Foran, *The Globe and Mail*.

“Enormously accomplished . . . Syjuco’s exceptional novel exceeds its heightened expectations, serving notice that a brilliant new talent has arrived, somehow fully formed.”

— Jared Bland, *The Walrus*.

“This is a big, bold, cunning, impassioned, plangent and very funny book.”

—*Scotland on Sunday*.

“Believe the hype, or at least, believe most if it: Like every serious young novelist, Syjuco’s ambitions outweigh his accomplishments. But in this case, what he’s accomplished is pretty damned good . . . An impressive achievement . . . Syjuco has shown us, with his first book, just how writing, in so many, many ways, can inspire and satisfy.”

—Randy Boyagoda, *The National Post*. (Canada)

"Bristling with comic verve, metafictional playfulness, and an undertone of expatriate nostalgia that belies Syjuco's age, *Ilustrado* is an impressive vibrant mix of Borgesian literary labyrinth and acerbic émigré comedy."

—*The Sunday Times* (UK).

"In this dazzling debut novel, Syjuco portrays the history, politics, and arts of his native Philippines in the semiautobiographical story of two Filipino authors . . . It is a virtuoso display of imagination and wisdom, particularly remarkable from a 31-year-old author; a literary landmark for the Philippines and beyond."

—*Booklist* (starred review).

“An ambitious debut novel . . . introduces an author of limitless promise. First novels rarely show such reach and depth.”

—*Kirkus* (starred review).

“Winner of the 2008 Man Asian Prize before it was even published, this dizzying and ambitious novel marks an auspicious start to Syjuco's career . . . this imaginative first novel shows considerable ingenuity in binding its divergent threads into a satisfying, meaningful story.”



—*Publisher's Weekly* (starred review).

“Through his vivid use of language, Syjuco has crafted a beautiful work of historical fiction that's part mystery and part sociopolitical commentary. Readers who enjoyed Junot Díaz's *The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao* will enjoy this literary gem.”

—*Library Journal* (starred review).

“*Ilustrado* exceeds all expectations ... a staggering, indelible debut.”

—*Quill & Quire* (starred review).