

October 23, 1957 CENTENARY OF JUAN LUNA

STAMP COMMEMORATING THE CENTENARY OF THE BIRTH OF JUAN LUNA

A few of the greatest men who ever lived did not boast as the empires and cities conquered, nor of the laurels won over the bloody battlefields. Just a passive expression of greatness through the accomplishment of remarkable feats in any field of human endeavor will make a man equally great if not greater. This is the greatness that is Luna.

Juan Luna, during the years when our country was fighting it out against worsening Spanish rule, endeavored to place our country towards world recognition by winning high honors in painting. Among his priceless works of art were "The Blood Compact" painted in 1879 and considered the best during that period; "The Death of Cleopatra" which won the gold medal in the 1881 National Exposition held in Madrid, and his most famous "Spoliarium".

Juan Luna was born at Badoc, Ilocos Norte on October 23, 1857, exactly one hundred years today. He had his early education at the Ateneo de Manila, starting his painting lessons at Academia de Dibujo y Pintura under the direction of professors Agustin Saez and Lorenzo Guerrero. In 1877, he sailed for Spain and enrolled at Escuela de Bellas Artes in Madrid to continue his specialization in Fine Arts.

He was captured by the Spaniards in 1896, two years after his return to the Philippines having been set free only after a year of imprisonment at Fort Santiago. He sailed back immediately to Spain to seek the help of the King of Spain for the release of his brother Antonio.

He met his death on December 7, 1899 upon being ill shortly after his return from a Far East sojourn, unable to find out the real cause of the untimely death of his brother, Antonio.

The stamp was prepared by philatelic designer N. Dimanlig, Jr. and printed by Thomas de la Rue & Co., Ltd. of London.

