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CHamoru cultural exhibit opens at national museum in Spain

A newly opened exhibit titled "[Biba CHamoru](#)" at the [Museo Nacional de Antropología/National Museum of Anthropology](#) in Madrid is showcasing the history and contemporary CHamoru culture of Guam and the Mariana Islands.

The initiative was spearheaded by the museum in Spain as part of the quincentennial commemoration of the first circumnavigation of the earth — the Magellan-Elcano expedition from Spain from 1519-1522 — in coordination with Carlos Madrid, director of research of the Micronesian Area Research Center at the University of Guam, and UOG faculty David Atienza and Melissa Taitano.

The exhibit, which is accompanied by a book titled "I Estoria-ta: Guam, the Mariana Islands, and Chamorro Culture," offers a journey through the main historical periods of the Mariana Islands, then delves into the main identity traits and various contemporary artistic expressions of the CHamoru culture.

"We wanted to give international exposure to contemporary CHamoru artistic expressions and provide a platform for promotion of tourism, potential investments, and exchanges," Madrid said.

Three wood carvings made by Taitano are centerpieces of the exhibit along with works by renowned artists Ric Castro and Sal Bidaure. High-resolution photographs taken by

Roman de la Cruz of Acho Marianas and Sandra Okada, executive director of Traditions Affirming Our Seafaring Ancestry, along with Guampedia, Raph Unpingco, and Mighty

Island production company, among others, have materials exhibited as well.

The main contributor from the Northern Mariana Islands is Leo G. Pangelinan, executive director of the Northern Marianas Humanities Council.

The book includes texts from Anne Hattori, Robert A. Underwood, Laura Torres Souder, Joe Quinata, Rlene Steffy, among others. An English version is available for download at https://www.libreria.culturaydeporte.gob.es/libro/i-estoria-ta-guam-the-mariana-islands-and-chamorro-culture_5373/.

“[The exhibition and the book] allow us to disembark in the Mariana Islands, to learn about their history and to become acquainted with their people, their identity, and their cultural diversity,” said Miquel Iceta i Llorens, minister of culture and sport for Spain, in

have always taken for granted of the history of the archipelago.”

The initiative has been fully funded by the Spanish government through different

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Photo captions:



Photo 1:
UOG Assistant Professor and artist Melissa Taitano explains her wood carvings on display at the Biba CHamoru exhibit, which opened on Nov. 17 at the Museo Nacional de Antropología/National Museum of Anthropology in Madrid.



Photo 2:

Adrian Cruz, chairperson of Guam's I Estoria-ta Commission through the Office of the Governor of Guam, speaks at the opening of the Biba CHamoru exhibit on Nov. 17 at the Museo Nacional de Antropologia/National Museum of Anthropology in Madrid.



Photo 3:

“Fanhasso,” one of six main areas of the Biba CHamoru exhibit at the Museo Nacional de Antropología/National Museum of Anthropology in Madrid. The exhibit offers a journey through the main historical periods of the Mariana Islands, then delves into the

Photos courtesy of University of Guam