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## **Smithsonian Photography Exhibition on Filipino American History Premieres This Fall in Washington**

While Janet Alvarado was growing up, her father, Ricardo, told her stories about life in America before she was born. “They were colorful stories filled with vivid images of a vibrant community and a multicultural past,” Alvarado remembers. A new exhibition from the Smithsonian Institution offers an opportunity to see this rich community through the eyes of Filipino American photographer Ricardo Alvarado.

“Through My Father’s Eyes: The Filipino American Photographs of Ricardo Alvarado (1914-1976),” a collection of 50 rare photographs, will premiere at the National Museum of American History, Behring Center on Thursday, Nov. 21 and will remain on view until March 31, 2003. The exhibition will then travel to Sacramento, CA, Seattle, WA, and Pensacola, FL, and several other cities.

“Through My Father’s Eyes,” created by The Alvarado Project, is an exhibition developed by the Smithsonian Institution’s Asian Pacific American Program in collaboration with the Museum of American History. It is organized for travel by the Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibition Service.

Ricardo Alvarado immigrated to the United States from the Philippines in 1928 as part of the early 20<sup>th</sup>-century wave of immigrants from that country known as the Manong generation. Alvarado thought America would bring new opportunities, but he was given only menial jobs. During World War II, he served in the Pacific with the U.S. Army’s First Filipino Regiment. When the war came to an end, Alvarado supported his passion for photography by working as a civilian cook for the Letterman Army Hospital in San Francisco.

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Alvarado began documenting postwar Filipino American life in San Francisco and surrounding communities. For almost 20 years following the war, Alvarado witnessed a transformation among Filipino Americans – from a close-knit group of bachelors to a society that was defined by family life. Alvarado’s photographs capture day-to-day activities as well as the special moments of celebrations. Together, the photographs offer a poignant portrayal of the Filipino American community in San Francisco from the early 1940s to the late 1950s.

Following Alvarado’s death in 1976, his daughter, Janet, discovered his photographs. Janet Alvarado currently serves as the executive director of The Alvarado Project, which documents and preserves more than 3,000 of his images of post-World War II Filipino American communities.

The Smithsonian Asian Pacific American Program seeks to integrate Asian Pacific American contributions to history, culture, art and society through Smithsonian collections, research, exhibitions and programs.

Each year, SITES shares the wealth of Smithsonian collections and research programs with millions of people outside of Washington, D.C. One of the Smithsonian’s four National Programs, SITES makes available a wide range of exhibitions about art, science and history, which are shown not only in museums but wherever people live, work and play, including libraries, science centers, historical societies, community centers, botanical gardens, schools and shopping malls. In 2002, SITES celebrates 50 years of connecting Americans to their shared cultural heritage. Exhibition descriptions and tour schedules are available at [www.sites.si.edu](http://www.sites.si.edu).

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