WORLD music, widely defined as a style attributed to a specific culture, usually non-Western, is locally associated with the sound of Eraserheads and groups like Koalita, Gupit, and Pilipikian, in some circles, it could mean African rhythms churning with an ensemble of percussionists. Others think of the ethereal and electronic like Yumi and Enya.

A couple of years ago, then-Spanish ambassador to the Philippines Delphi Ceballos dreamed of reuniting world music by bringing together young composers and musicians from about 18 countries in Europe and Asia for a weeklong workshop. The aims is for each to be exposed to other musical art forms and instruments and, hopefully, influenced by them.

But before his plan materialized, he was summoned to another country. He eventually served as director for the Singapore-based Asia-Europe Foundation. The aims of the foundation is to build better mutual understanding between the peoples of Asia and Europe through greater intellectual, cultural and people-to-people exchanges.

"Last year we bumped into each other and he told me about his dream project," said Cultural Center of the Philippines president Neri Jardin. "So I proposed the National Arts Center on Monday Matinee as the perfect venue. In that way, young Filipino musicians can also participate. He readily approved of it."

Thus, the result is the weeklong and ongoing Asia-Europe Music Camp, which brings together 30 young musicians from select parts of Europe and Asia. The age bracket ranges from 17 to late 20s. The camp started a week ago and will be finished with a one-night-only performance called UnPULSE.

"It's a very interesting workshop. I was there on the first two days, and I was impressed how the Filipino participants were engaging in learning and learning how to play on instruments like the xylophone and gongs. All the foreign participants know how to speak English, so there's no language barrier," Jardin added.

They are Italian Caroline Peters (cello), composer Shen Yi (China), percussionist Anna Stenmark (Czech Republic), violinist Zhou Tian (Taiwan), trumpeter Tobias Hennig (Germany), violonists Endi Haliti (Albania), horse player Sila Dusai (India), pianist Thomas Kuusela (Finland), musicologist Ken Ye Liong (Singapore), and Ibarra Ignacio Velez (Argentina), cellists Phia Uwachou (Poland), composers Giorgio Locatelli (Portugal), composer Andrei Ganea (Romania), percussionist Robert Oliveira (Brazil) and pianist Peter Goffin (Switzerland), among others.

The Filipino participants are soprano Nala Areola, violinist player Grace Bonaventura, drummer and vocalist, and Jun Suenaga.

On the first day, the participants were taught how to play the guitar by Indonesian professor Dr. Rahmat Sugono. The following weeks, the camp's artistic director Dr. Robert Castells and associate artistic director Chino Tolentino sat in on a composition. Noted musician Aga Muhlach recently talked about the indigenous Filipino instrument called kulintang.

On Friday the participants were treated to a night of classic Filipino hymns via the Philippine Philharmonic Orchestra's Pianist Allen Gordon under maestro conductor Oscar C. Yatco at the CCP.

On Saturday the group was allowed to roam about the stage and were given an opportunity to showcase their melody, which will be heard at the Maynilad City Mall.

Part of the workshop's aims was for the participants to learn Filipino ethnic music. Bob Avila served as facilitator in an integrated session to study the ethnic pieces, "Litaw", "Pangalaw", and "Tubang".

For UnPULSE, aces and wife Grace Nono will perform these three pieces, with those of the participants as backup musicians.

"Each participant will have the chance to show their skills and new compositions in the culminating one-night recital. It's going to be a different show. As of now, I have no idea about how it is going to turn out but I'm sure it's a show that you're not going to miss. We're going to record the concert and, hopefully, we'll come up with a CD version," said Jardin.

"Definitely, it's pure world music at its best."

UnPULSE will take place tonight at 7:30 at the CCP Little Theater, For inquiries: 812-1123.