



**What's inside**

**2015 AICI Global Conference:  
 A First Timer's Experience**  
 By Carol Tan, AICI FLC  
 2-3

**Delby Bragais, Style Fashion  
 Week New York**  
 4-5

**News Feed**  
**General Meeting and  
 Christmas Party**  
 6

**Where is Gravitass?**  
 By Miselle Bergonia,  
 AICI FLC  
 7-8

**Executive Editor**  
 Ginny Villegas, AICI FLC

*Message from the President*



It's the time of the year again! 2015 was a very interesting year! Our three Image Forums were all successful. It brought us a lot of new friends, new experiences and plenty of learnings. It gave us pain in losing a beloved member, Leila Carpenter. It gave us so much thrill to send our largest delegation ever to AICI Global Conference in Washington. It's also this year that we finally can boast of having more than 10 Filipino AICI certified image consultants! We would like to say thank you to 2015! We welcome Carol Tan, our new VP Membership, and Rita Linda Dayrit, our newest member who just signed up!

Now, what do we look forward to in 2016? Personally, I'm looking forward to more new members coming in. We've about 6 new members in process, just a perfect time to remind our members to renew their membership. We'll be holding our **Education Day** in the 1st quarter of the year. I'm very excited for Minette Sison who is going to be our new President! She has so much in store for us, but I'm not going to pre-empt that. So here's to a very good 2015 and for a 2016 that will be full of surprises!

*Abby Arenas de Leon*  
 President—AICI Philippine Chapter

**2017 AICI**  
 Global conference



## 2015 AICI Global Conference: A First Timer's Experience



The 7 delegates of AICI Philippine Chapter (L-R) Dina Loomis, Charisse Roldan, Minette Sison, Abby Arenas, Carol Tan, Delby Bragais & Ginny Villegas

BY CAROLINA D. TAN, AICI FLC

**270** PARTICIPANTS FROM 32 COUNTRIES: this is a united nations conference of image professionals!

For me the warm welcome began days before the conference formally opened. As I was exploring the Renaissance Arlington Capital View Hotel, I was greeted by the President of the AICI Washington D.C. Chapter, the beautiful [Cindy Ann Peterson](#), AICI FLC.

The next two days we toured the US Capitol and then explored the National Gallery of Art with [Carla Mathis](#), AICI CIM, co-author of the image industry classic, *The Triumph of Individual Style*. I enjoyed meeting new friends, some of whom I was already connected with online.

[Dr. Jennifer Baumgartner](#) opened the conference with a presentation that was inspiring and that challenged "fast-fashion."

[Howard Roberts](#)' animated and entertaining delivery of his "Brand Your Inspiration to Create Your Own Brand" used the entertainer Madonna as an example of a music icon who has sustained the magic for decades by having a strong brand.

I was asked to participate in the "AICI Walks the Runway" fashion show, a new event at the conference. Being a former model helped boost my confidence! It was fantastic to wear the original creation of one of AICI's talented designers, [Delby Bragais](#), AICI CIP, whose Spring/Summer 2016 Collection was to be showcased at the inaugural [Style Fashion Week](#) in New York City on September 10.

The CIM Round Table discussions inspired us as we moved from table to table absorbing a rapid flow of valuable information. Thank you to all of our Certified Image Masters and Founders as they shared generously from the heart.

The evening gala was a real showcase of achievements, elegance, beauty, and dancing.

Lastly, if you think for a moment that momentum slowed on the last day, you're wrong: the four-hour session with [Sarah Hathorn, AICI CIM](#), was powerful! I emerged committed to reviewing, analyzing, and applying her principles in my consulting business.

[Sarah Brummitt, AICI CIP](#), and [Sue Donnelly, AICI CIP](#), brought the conference to a brilliant close with their thought-provoking "Inspiring Change: Making Over the Image Industry." We were asked to clarify the "why" in our image business instead of just the "how" and "what."

*CAROLINA D. TAN, AICI FLC, is the founder and president of [Enhance Your Image Training Consultancy](#). A former model and television host, she is also an alumna of John Robert Powers International and has been its active consultant at the school for 16 years. She was recognized at the AICI Conference Awards Night for achieving her FLC certification in 2015.*

So why is the AICI Global Conference worth the cost and 37 hours of flying from Manila to attend the conference? That's easy to answer:

- Friendships
- Professional learning at the highest level
- Valuable collaborations
- The certification advantage
- The in-person experience of seeing, feeling, being with, and believing in each other and what we do.

I'm truly proud to be part of AICI.



(L-R standing) Charisse Roldan, Delby Bragais, Jennifer Baumgartner, keynote speaker, Cecilia Stoeckicht, AICI VP Conference, Carol Tan, Dina Loomis; (L-R seated) Ginny Villegas, Alyce Parsons, AICI Founder, Abby de Leon



Carol and Abby modelling creations of Delby Bragais in the Fashion Show of the conference.



Abby de Leon, Charisse Roldan, Jane Seaman (AICI President), Ginny Villegas & Carol Tan

## Delby P. Bragais, Style Fashion Week New York: With Hope, Dreams do Come True

By Cindy Ann Peterson, AICI FLC

Delby Bragais debuts at iconic Gotham Hall. In her first New York showing, Philippine based designer [Delby Bragais](#), gave an exclusive presentation of her Spring/Summer 2016 collection in the [mezzanine](#) of [Gotham Hall](#) during [Style Fashion Week](#) on September 10, 2015. Originally conceived in Los Angeles in 2011, the event provided a venue for talented designers to showcase their collections during Style Fashion Week New York. Built between 1922-1924 as the Greenwich Savings Bank building, Gotham Hall was designed in the style of the Flavian amphitheater. Its elliptical interior provided the perfect configuration for the inaugural event, which opened to rousing success.

Bragais specializes in custom-made dresses and limited edition clothes for special occasions with an organic made-by-hand feel, as well as custom designed wedding gowns. Using hand-woven fabrics, handmade embellishments, and hand guided embroidery or hand beading, Bragais blends different fabrics and textures to create clothing for women who not only “dare to be different”, but also want an *oeuvre* that emphasizes creativity and sophistication. To underscore the unique quality of her works, some of the fabrics used take an entire day of weaving just to produce four inches of material. The use of different fabrics from different places, emphasizes Bragais, is a “celebration of cultural diversity.”

The two main sections of the presentation were the Tribal Fusion Collection and the Floral & Lace Collection. A number of Bragais’ works received particular interest from attendees for her distinctive design and creativity. Among them, the gunmetal gray shift dress with black side panel and tribal embroidered bib, a black and white dress with see through bell sleeves, a black and white blazer and pants set in hand-woven tribal fabric, an ecru corded lace wedding gown with sheer back and sweep train, a white chiffon wedding gown with crushed bodice embellished with Swarovski crystals and see through skirt, and the finale: a black lace wedding gown adorned with handmade blush flowers.

This was not the first time Bragais has been recognized for her works. She was already an award-winning designer for Miss World Philippines in 2011, along with past shows in Los Angeles, Honolulu, Singapore, and her native Philippines that have received worldwide acclaim. Bragais has also been featured in all the major dailies in the Philippines. Her wedding gowns have likewise been featured in the top Philippine wedding publications and magazines such as Wedding Essentials, Metro Weddings, Wedding Digest, and the Asian Bride. She is also a sought-after guest and resource person on fashion and image in popular television morning and talk shows in her country.

Delby Bragais’ journey into fashion and design was rooted in childhood. As a little girl, Bragais recalls a school activity where her teacher had asked the class to bring in their most beautiful dress for a parade. It was only after all her classmates had put on their princess like gowns that Bragais realized what she, in fact, had, was a yellow nightgown. This was her first experience of feeling “not enough” and she promised herself that she would not want for dresses again.

This memory has also made her recognize that, no doubt, there are many other women who feel “not beautiful enough” or “not rich enough” or “not good enough”. This has inspired Bragais to reinvent herself and become the highly recognized fashion designer and image consultant she is today. Her motto reflects her conviction that “with Hope, dreams do come true!”



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Bragais graduated “cum laude” from the University of the Philippines with a Master’s degree in Business Administration. A product of the Fashion Institute of Technology in continuing education, Bragais is the author of the book “*The Purple Pig Wears Red Lipstick: 8 Steps to a Personal Brand Makeover for Impact, Influence and Incredible Income*” and the creator of the “Purple Power Program” for personal and business success. Bragais is the recipient of the Association of Image Consultants International (AICI) 2013 Award of Excellence and the 2015 AICI President’s Award for outstanding contribution to the Image Industry.

The introduction of the line included custom designed jewelry by Marisa Pellegrini, owner and designer of Atlanta based Expect Compliments. Marisa has a passion and an eye for color and style. It is evident in her work. Each piece is created with a distinctive mix of textures, colors, and shapes. She sources her materials globally; seeking out unusual stones, beads, crystals and other embellishments to make each piece she creates a work of art.

Also in attendance was Luke Destin (Oprah Winfrey’s stylist for eight years), Joey A. Espino Jr. - executive producer of Philippine Fashion Week, Joe Simpson - Style Fashion Week Board of Directors, Preston Walker - Small Boutique Fashion Week, Yvonne Forbes - Fashion in the Fast Lane, Montserrat Mendez, Raymond Nader - President of the Nader Agency, Will Reid - Eastern Stage Productions New York Inc., Victor Hugo - Spidder [sic] Marketing, Anton Oparin - CEO and Founder of FashionStock.com, Kareem Huggins -The KH Collection and the New York Filipino society.

Richard Renda, the Director of the Eleanor Lambert Foundation/Editorial Director and Executive Producer of Totally Cool has this to say: *It is all about a giveback, a giveback to the worldwide community - in talent and heart. For the first time in 14 years, The Eleanor Lambert Foundation, Style Fashion Week New York, and Delby Bragais and friends did exactly that: gave a little bit more to the world that wasn't there before. Everyone gave this event all heart. And this new era of fashion unity is the result. Congratulations to the world - it is about time. A wonderful beginning to a better future! We make dreams come true...*



(L to R) Cindy Ann Peterson: Posture is Paramount & Professional Image Mgt., Richard Renda: Editorial Director and Executive Producer of Totally Cool (r), Fashion Designer Delby Bragais and Joey A. Espino Jr.: Executive Producer of Philippine Fashion Week

Delby Bragais also wishes to express her appreciation to all those that had made this entire event possible for her including the entire staff of Style Fashion Week, Richard Renda - Editorial Director and Executive Producer of Totally Cool® Broadcast Programming, Catherine Schuller - Fashion Curator of Runway the Real Way, Cindy Ann Peterson - Posture is Paramount® and Professional Image Management for presentation coordination, Dr. Dan Formosa, Hannah Binfield; Melbourne, Australia, Karin Barragato - Beauty Director of Style Fashion Week for Hair and Make Up, Marisa Pellegrini of [Expect Compliments](#) for Jewelry and catering sponsorship, Karmi Panaguiton for graphic designs, Grady’s Gourmet Group for catering, Keratin Complex and Voodoo Make Up for the beauty sponsorship, Flowerbox Wall Gardens for the beautifully designer step and repeat and floral art, Square Up and zkipster for check-in and seating, along with BubbleFish Media and Core Water. In association with the [Eleanor Lambert](#) Foundation, Style Fashion Week New York opened the season's calendar with the "Official [New York Fashion Week](#)" Press Party the same day as the Delby Bragais' debut presentation! Editors, writers, photographers, bloggers, social media gurus, and the press industry's elite from all over the world were in attendance for both events.

## NEWS FEED

## *AICI General Meeting and Christmas Party November 27, 2015*



(L-R standing), Nasia Camayyo, Ginny Villegas, Minette Sison, Nicole Lasam, Patricia Tolentino, Rochefflume Flores, Carol Tan, Baby Doble, Cherry Famador, Jacel de Jesus ;(L-R seated) Abby de Leon, Dina Loomis, Delby Bragais, Denies Argain, Rhea Tarlengco and Jesse Rebastillo, incoming President of PMAP and AVP for Classified Advertisements of PDI

Our General Meeting and Christmas Party was held on November 27, at the Personifi Image Studio. It was an unforgettable event with fun and laughter, fond memories of the AICI Global Conference and, of course, new friends! After a sumptuous dinner, our delegates to the 2015 AICI Global Conference in Washington last August swapped stories and shared experiences. Before calling it a night, we exchanged gifts with delight! We hoped to have inspired our wonderful guests to join AICI and promote the nascent image industry in and from the Philippines.



Seated in front are Rochefflume Flores and Baby Doble .

## WHERE IS THE GRAVITAS?

By Miselle P. Bergonia, AICI FLC

Leaving the luxury hotel industry as a Business Development Manager and going to explore training and image consulting, startled a lot of people. Most people were thinking what the heck will I do to be successful in my new venture. I was a sales person—neither a trainer nor an image consultant! Not to mention, as a hotel sales executive I was not the best in uniform or even mastered business etiquette. Think of someone rushing to work with wet hair, black stockings, a dark skirt suit, no make up. Yes, that was I! Then I would pop in the daily early morning meeting with my department head and proudly report all about my sales leads, sales activities and meetings with top management of my accounts. She would look at me head to toe and end the visual examen by looking at my sneakers and blurt out – what is that? Totally ignoring my very productive report!

As a young person entering the work force, I was all about productivity, and I met my targets every month. My life influence was being raised in a Catholic school where I learned simplicity. Then graduating from UP Diliman where nobody cared about how you looked and your intelligence and grades just spoke for yourself. I never really thought about the importance image in the workplace. So, I learned through proper image and proper business etiquette through a lot of trial and error. observation and on the job training.

I left the hotel industry to work in the family corporation (a training center). Then, I thought would be great to shop for people and do make up for other people and earn money from it since I met personal shoppers and I wanted to like them. So I started my research about this interest and I found image consulting. Consequently, I met Olen Lim, a well known image consultant and media personality. She introduced me to Academy of Image Mastery and London Image Institute. I instantly enrolled there and finished the course. As a young image consultant in a young image consulting industry in the Philippines (at that time) and with only positive thinking, passion and energy and a few thousand bucks in my pocket I jump-started my image consulting and training company. After a year, I received my First Level Certification.

With my experience as a sales person, my energy and resilience to get accounts. I was already conducting image training to various multinationals, government institutions and more. I met a lot of people from all walks of life. I was facilitating programs “by the book” and how I learned in training how to properly facilitate. I did it as a competency not from character.

To show how I change from conducting the training and accepting jobs from mere competency to character, I would like to share with you two people in this article that made an impact. Two people whom I met that made me rethink my work as an image consultant beyond the aspects of appearance, behavior and communication.

The first man, lets call him Jose. Jose is a public speaking guru and I met him for some insight and advise. During this meeting, Jose asked me **“what is your edge? You are not a model or a beauty queen. All the image consultants look like image consultants”**. He said this to me point blank, at 100% eye contact, without batting an eyelash. The second one was a client. lets call him Mark. He was the Human Resources head of a law firm. After I enthusiastically showed the training plan of an image program designed for personnel of this law firm, he asked me **“where is the gravitas?”** I have translated his question into something like asking me “so how does this make sense in our world?”

When Jose and Mark asked me these two questions, I was honestly not prepared to answer. I baffled and tried to construct a few sentences to answer them but I thought my answer did not impress them. And since then, I have been thinking about **my edge and the gravitas**. This questioning triggered my transition into working using my competence into character.

In reply to Jose, I think that as a MBA student and an entrepreneur, I see “my edge” as product differentiation. Accept, deny or refuse to accept that as image consultants - we are the product. The main product the customer are buying into are the consultant first, then the training program. So I thought hard and was thinking about it for a long time (years in fact), I thought what makes me different? And I think as an image consultant, this is what we should watch out for.



In a training program where we all tackle the ABCs of image – what makes us different? In an industry where clients choose who to work with in the budgetary constraint they have and will still meet and match their demand – what makes us stand out? Just as we coach our participants and individual coaches, we ask them this – but have you asked yourself this?

Now to answer Mark. Where is the gravitas? Most people in the corporate world think image, the ABCs, personal style and wardrobe are important but are rather shallow compared to the technical skills and competencies they need to have in order to reach their KPIs (key performance indicators). What is the impact of the ABCs to them?



So I encourage fellow image professionals out there. Rediscover. Re-examine your purpose, your vision. Its not just about color, style, body shape, civility and etiquette. These are wonderful tools - yes! But we have to look for the gravitas - the bigger meaning of why we are in this industry of image consulting.

So now I realize, what makes me different is that I am neither a model nor a beauty queen. I am a working mother of three, with a rectangular shaped body, struggling to keep my body mass index below 25 and this is what makes me unique in image consulting. And as someone in the corporate world, I know how the effort of these entire concepts will mean and how difficult it would be to apply consistently.

And for the gravitas, not only do I relate it to the organization but to the value of image as it brings them more positivity in their personal and life career. And for the image professionals, where is the gravitas of our work? Is it only working as a training partner and charging a hefty fee for corporations and making sure we got our returns on our personal investment? I entered image consulting because I wanted to make a difference and empower persons so that they can be the happiest they can be. That sometimes if I know that an organization only has a few thousand pesos (and really does not have the budget) for the honorarium but would want to empower and uplift their hard-working people, then I would do it.



Do I accept work with a small budget all the time and "dilute the industry"? NO WAY! I know when a company has the budget then I charge to the heavens. But I see these jobs as opportunities in nation-building not just ME building. I believe that to support a cause you don't need to head a big philanthropy project or committee or event, it is in everyday living. As for an honorarium of less than the standard charge for a one-hour talk? It would be definitely all been spent for and I will not be able to return my personal investments in obtaining CEUs and certification. But the investment? It will triple its return as we create bigger change in the lives of the people and spark inspiration and empowerment to make their family and lives happier. And, I think this is our edge. This is our gravitas.

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