Nativity scenes (Belén) are also popular.

The official opening of the season takes place on December 16th with the first of nine Misas de gallo (Masses at cock-crow). The people are roused at about 3:30 A.M. by church bells (and sometimes fireworks) in order to attend Mass at 4:00 or 4:30 A.M. Whole families attend and after Mass stop off at little stalls to sample or buy their favorite rice flour and egg yolk cakes (baking), or steamed in bamboo tubes), buko and makapuno (young coconut meat), and many other delicacies. The children sing and visit with each other during the ensuing early morning meetings. The pitch of excitement rises until the big day arrives. The final nocturnal Mass is the Misas de Aguinaldo (Mass of the Christmas gift) which corresponds with the Midnight Mass of Western countries.

Christmas Day is a time for family reunions and for visiting relatives and close friends. The children greet the elders of the family and their godparents by kissing the back of the right hand, saying "mano po" (May I kiss your hand?). This is a sign of respect and the children are given presents by the elders who also bless them at the same time. Food is plentiful and all visitors are given refreshments. The houses have been cleaned and all are expected to wear new clothes.

Music forms an important part of the Christmas celebrations. In some areas carolers go from house to house, singing for free or for presents. Various types of bands including the nuokong bangko (bamboo instruments) and rondalla (string ensemble) are heard. Hymns are sung at the Masses and children in school sing carols. On this recording the listener will find a good cross-section of Philippine Christmas music. The BAYANIHAN Philippine Dance Company, which has won world-wide fame for its singing as well as its dancing, actively participates in the Christmas festivities in Manila by performing on television programs and by taking part in a mammoth Christmas show in the Luneta, Manila's open, public park.

Through this unusual phonograph record, BAYANIHAN joins you in celebrating Christmas, and in doing so, sends you the traditional Philippine greeting of the season, "Maligayang Paiko," or Merry Christmas!

SIDE ONE

1. MEDLEY OF CHRISTMAS SONGS, played by the Bayanihan "rondalla," arranged by Juanito Gonzales, conducted by Lucrecia Kaslag.

2. SA MAY BAHAY ANG AMING BATI, traditional Tagalog carol; "to the owners of the house we say a merry Christmas."

3. TALANG PATNUBAY (Silent Night), sung in Tagalog, solo by Lenora Alano.

4. ANG PASKO，AY SUMAPIT, music by Restituto Umali, sung by the chorus in Tagalog. The words tell the Christmas story, the visit of the Wise Men, and conclude that "love is the true Christmas spirit."

5. PASAYLOA, a traditional Cebuano carol, male duet by Jesus Tan and Jose Yelo. "Pardon us for making noise today."

6. NACIO, NACIO, PASTORES, a typical Spanish "villancico" or carol, sung by the chorus in Spanish.

7. O HOLY NIGHT, also known as "Cantique de Noel," sung in English, solo by Leonora Alano.

SIDE TWO

1. SAULOGON, traditional carol from Cebu, sung in Cebuano, solo by Hilda Alicer.

2. AWITAN NG MGA ANGHEL, (Hark, the Herald Angels Sing), sung in Tagalog by the chorus.

3. ANIA NGA UBING TI CAPUDAW, traditional carol from the Ilocos, sung in Ilocano by the chorus, "Glory to the Father, Glory to the Son, Glory to the Holy Spirit."

4. NAGASAT A CARARUA, sung in Ilocano to the music of the old hymn, "Oh Santissima."

5. HALINA KAYOT PAGMASDAN, traditional Tagalog carol, "come let us watch the Baby, born in the manger."

6. GABING MAHAL, traditional Tagalog carol — Beloved Night.

7. NOONG UNANG PASKO, (The First Noel), sung in Tagalog.


9. HALINA, HALINA, (O Come All Ye Faithful), sung in Tagalog and Latin.

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