

SOLE SLAM MANILA CONCEPT STORE

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Sole Slam Manila started out as one of the most looked out for events in sneaker communities, uniting people with a passion for sneakers. It is one of the premier sneaker events in the country.

Sole Slam Manila is where the best kicks are shown off for buying, selling, trading and for admiring. Everyone in this event sport their very best kicks.

Because of Sole Slam Manila's success, Event Director Antonio Aguirre Jr. took the sneaker game to the next level. He embarked on putting up a store catering to sneaker fans, even considering those who cannot go to the Sole Slam Manila events.

Antonio ventured into the concept shop business with his wife Kristina, Ira Cordero and Luis Carballo.

Sole Slam Manila Concept Store was established. The store takes "just for kicks" to a new level.



Sole Slam Manila 2012 Year 1 will be on October 14 at the Ronac Art Center, from 2PM to 8PM, with VIP entrance from 12noon onwards.

Facebook (like us), Twitter (follow us), Instagram (follow us) and on the Web at SoleSlamManila and our store in FB at SoleSlamManilaStore. Also, our official clothing brand, Infinite MNL Clothing Co. on FB/T/G at InfiniteMNL.

Sole Slam Manila Concept Store is open daily from 11AM to 9PM. Our numbers are 0917-3117823 and 622-0081.



What was the inspiration behind Sole Slam Manila Concept Store?

Sole Slam Manila Concept Store was inspired mainly by the event itself, which has a huge following today. Its primary purpose is to be able to be a venue for those fans and followers of Sole Slam Manila events that could not come to our actual events. Sneakers and apparel from the various vendors of previous Sole Slam Manila events are available at our Concept Store.

What set off the idea?

My wife and I were looking at a good space around Paranaque for one of our other businesses, pawnshops/money changers, to rent/expand further. We thought of using that space located right outside Tahanan Village near BF Homes as a store. So I called up my buddy, Ira Cordero, who lives in the south, as well, and told him about opening up a store down south. After getting the space, we had the store constructed in seven frantic paced days! The rest was history!

Who were the people involved?

It's mainly me, my wife Kristina, Ira Cordero and my brother-in-law, Luis Carballo.

The Concept Store is still fairly new.

We opened the store June 8th. Would you believe that the store didn't have any floor finishings around 12 noon? We had to open the store to the public by 6PM that same day! It's one of the many proofs that I really work best under pressure. It's more exciting!

Does Sole Slam have a particular 'style'?

Our store's look was patterned to a similar store by UNDEFEATED in the US. That's how we got the inspiration for our store. Simple and minimalistic. With accents of matte black and wood flooring. Most of the clothes that we sell are locally made. We started out with 17 clothing brands, which is now up to 25, as of today.

We sell street wear and lifestyle clothing to match the hottest and trendiest pair of sneakers today. We have a wide range of people who go to our store, from age 10 to 50 plus. Can't say most of them are men. A lot of women now are very particular with their sneaker game, too. So everyday, we get a lot of new walk-ins to our store and they go like, "Wow! I can't believe a store like this even exists here in the Philippines! I only thought this would be in the US only or in Japan! It's so nice here!". We get that a lot and it's very flattering and humbling. We also have a unique way of selling shoes, we accept pawning of brand new sneakers

in exchange for some instant cash. What other store can say that they can lend you money in exchange for your collectible sneakers?

What's the best find you have discovered at Sole Slam?

A foreign guy and his son went to my store, asked if we accept pawning of sneakers, and I said yes. I didn't realize he had so much rare and hard to find sneakers to pawn, since they were leaving the country for good. When I went down to check all the sneakers he had in his van, I was in awe! 67 sneakers, all deadstock and brand new, none fitted. From rare Jordans, Air Maxs, AF1, SBs and some other collectibles, he had them! I gave him a cheque worth PhP 210,00 for everything after haggling with him on the price. Best day ever!

Why go to Sole Slam Manila?

The name itself, Sole Slam Manila is directly related to a Filipino sneakerhead right away. We buy, sell, trade sneakers, allow consignments, accept brand new sneakers for pawning and do monthly auctions. It's the only store where you can do all of these!

What if one is not a sneakerhead?

Sneakers are a way of life, they're not a fad. A fad only lasts a couple of months



or a couple of years at the most. We know sneakers and we got the apparel to match with it. People dress for comfort and some dress to impress. We can help you do both at the same time. Oh, yeah. We also have our official clothing brand, Infinite MNL Clothing Co., in which we sell printed tees including our now famous #ChicksTee with our monthly Ms. Infinite MNL models.

Our first cover was the one and only Ms. Paloma Esmeria for July/August, then we launched last August 18 the Infinite X Nadia Hernaez shirts.

Our September Infinite MNL cover will be Karen Bordador, followed by Jinri Park in October, DJ Arra Pascual in November and for December, Nicole Asensio of General Luna Band.

We also have big name models lined up for next year, so that's something to watch out for. Our #ChicksTee focuses on the models primarily, with no kicks being worn or showcased. We shoot all of our models at our store. It's the first of its kind in the Philippines, as well. And that is one big reason why someone who isn't a sneakerhead should visit us.

What do you think is the misconception about a sneakerhead?

People who don't know anything about sneakers think that we spend so much

money on a pair of sneakers which we will just wear on our feet. I think it's a good investment, if you know when, where and how to sell them without affecting the market. I think that it's better than putting all your money in the bank.

You've met a lot of people through Sole Slam, I'm sure.

I've met certified celebrities, big names in the sneaker game, big name clothing brand owners, athletes both local and foreign, plus some government peeps. They've all been great as supporters and clients at the same time!

What are the things you've achieved?

Respectability and acceptance in the sneaker game. Not to mention, getting known to make quality street style clothing, which I didn't think would even be possible in my wildest dreams! You could say, I'm living a dream right now, and the sky is our limit.

What do you think helped you go to where you are right now?

Mainly respect and trust towards our friends in the industry that we revolve in right now. From the big retail stores, to the well known resellers in the local and foreign market, up to the up-and-coming shirt designers today. We give respect where it is due and in return, we get

their trust that we will deliver what was promised to everyone. We don't burn bridges with anybody, big or small. The industry is just too damn small to make enemies in the market, just to make it smaller. I'm a businessman first and foremost, before anything else. It's a give and take relationship that we do our best to follow.

Is there something you regret?

No regrets. We focus on what's in front of us now and never look back, but at the same time, we learn from our past experiences, and move on. We take all good and bad things together, and we come out stronger each and every single time with resilience.

What is your favorite pair of shoes?

NB999, Jordan 7 YOTR and AM90 Infrared. Top three. Hard to decide at times which is first.

Do you do anything peculiar with your collection?

Besides putting the shoes right away in a Ziploc bag with a few Silica Gels, I smell the insoles of the right pair most of the time. I think that's where my addiction started and that's how others started, too! (laughs)