



THE 30TH  
ANNUAL  
CIRCLE  
CITATIONS  
FOR  
DISTINGUISHED  
ACHIEVEMENT  
IN FILM  
FOR

2019

+

SINE SIPAT:  
RECASTING  
ROLES AND  
IMAGES,  
STARS,  
AWARDS,  
AND  
CRITICISM



# THE CITATION

The Film Desk of the Young Critics Circle (YCC) first gave its annual citations in film achievement in 1991, a year after the YCC was organized by 15 reviewers and critics. In their Declaration of Principles, the members expressed the belief that cultural texts always call for active readings, “interactions” in fact among different readers who have the “unique capacities to discern, to interpret, and to reflect... evolving a dynamic discourse in which the text provokes the most imaginative ideas of our time.”

The Film Desk has always committed itself to the discussion of film in the various arenas of academe and media, with the hope of fostering an alternative and emergent articulation of film critical practice, even within the severely debilitating culture of “awards.”

*binigay ng Film Desk ng Young Critics Circle (YCC) ang unang taunang pagkilala nito sa kahusayan sa pelikula noong 1991, ang taon pagkaraang maitatag ang YCC ng labinlimang tagapagrebyu at kritiko. Sa kanilang Deklarasyon ng mga Prinsipyo, ipinahayag ng mga miyembro ang paniniwala na laging bukas ang mga tekstong kultural sa aktibong pagbasa, sa “mga interaksyon” ng iba’t ibang mambabasa na may “natatanging kakayahan para sumipat, magbigay-kahulugan, at mag-isip . . . bumuo ng isang dinamikong diskurso kung saan ang texto ay naghahamon para lumikha ng mga pinakaimahinatibong idea ng ating panahon.”*

*Ang Film Desk ay lagi nang nagsisikap na talakayin ang pelikula sa iba’t ibang arena ng akademya at media, sa pag-asang magsulong ng alternatibo at umuusbong na artikulasyon ng kritisismong pampelikula kahit sa loob ng nakababaldang kultura ng “mga award.”*

# PANUTO SA PANGANGALAGA

CHRISTIAN JIL R. BENITEZ

Kung pag-uusapan ang taon 2019, may pakiramdam ng pagiging malaon na nito, kahit pa kung tutuusin, hindi pa rin naman ito nalalayo sa kasalukuyang kinataunan natin. Nangyari ang taon 2020 na parang wala rin talagang nangyari, subalit sa wari kawalan ding ito, ang taon bago niyon ay mistulang panaginip na para sa marami sa atin.

Kaya kung pag-uusapan nga ang taon 2019, sapagkat wari taong malaon na, masasabi nating sa isang banda, ang pag-usapan ito ay wari huli na. Maaari lamang itanong: bakit pa nating kailangang pag-usapan ang panahong iyon, kung ito lamang nagdaang taon ay hindi pa natin masimu-simulang mabigkas? Ano pa ang saysay ng kasaysayan—at kasaysayang kamakailan lamang—kung sa araw-araw pa lamang sa ngayon ay tila wala na rin anumang kahulugan?

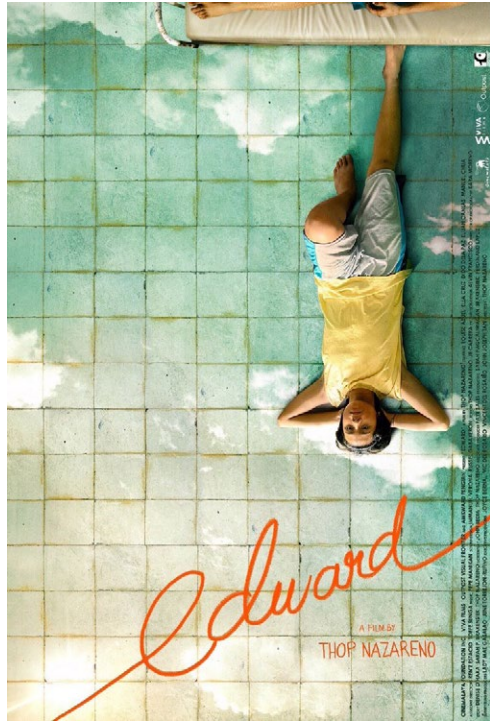
Sa ganang akin—at marahil ng buong Film Desk ng Young Critics Circle—kritikal ang taon 2019 bilang wari premonisyon pala sa kinalalagyan natin sa ngayon. Partikular na sa mga pelikulang inilabas sa nasabing taon, nakinita na natin—*dapat*—ang mga kasalimuotang patuloy pa rin nating kinakaharap: mga suliranin hinggil sa uri, kalusugan, kasarian, nasyonalidad at lahi, at iba pang mga salik-panlipunan na, sa katunayan, malaon nang napag-uusapan. Kung mayroon mang masasabing higit na natatangi sa mga pelikulang ito, iyon ay marahil sa dalawang bagay: una, sa kanilang pagpapatunay na kinakailangan pa rin ang pagpapatuloy na pangungusap hinggil sa mga usaping ito; at ikalawa, sapagkat naisakaraniwan na rin ang mga ganitong pangungusap, kinakailangan ang kritikal na pagsasagawa ng gayong diskurso sa isang matalino at masining na paraan.

Ang mga napili ng YCC na pinakamahuhusay na pelikula sa taon 2019 ay nagpapakita ng mga gayong baling. At habang hindi na bago ang sabihing ang mga pelikulang ito ay gumagana bilang dokumentasyon o arkibo ng salukoy na kinabibilangan nila, nais kong itayang ang kanilang halaga bilang mga gayong dokumentasyon ay sa kanilang pagpapakilala—gaanoman karahan o kamumunti—ng iba't ibang paraan ng pag-iingat sa materyang kanilang itinatampok sa palabas. Sa ibang salita, sa mga pelikulang ito ay hindi lamang ang kanilang pagtatala sa kasaysayan, kung hindi ang kanila ring pag-aalaga dito, sampu na rin ng namamalas na masinsing atensiyon sa mga tampok na ekolohiya.

At dito marahil maidiriin ang kahalagahan ng taong pampelikula 2019 hindi lamang para sa kasalukuyan, kung hindi maging sa ating nalalapit na hinaharap: sa gitna ng daigdig na nagkakasakit at nagsasakit, sa iba't ibang paraan, maaaring panuto ang mga pelikula mula sa taong ito hinggil sa tungkulin ng sining na pangalagaan ang buhay, lalo na nilang mga pinakamahina at hindi madalas naisasaalang-alang. Siyempre, hindi maaaring maging panumbas ang pelikula sa ibang praktikal na paglulunas, subalit sa sarili nito ay isa rin itong praktikang makapaghihilom. Mula taon 2019 ay marami pa ang mga susunod, kung kaya kakailanganin lamang natin ang lahat ng pagkakataon ng pagpapagaling na maaari natin sa ngayon.

# AFTERCARE

Christian Jil R. Benitez



## EDWARD

Winner, Best Film

Winner, Best Screenplay (Thop Nazareno, John Bedia, and Denise O'Hara)

Nominee, Best Editing (JR Cabrera and Thop Nazareno)

Nominee, Best Cinematography and Visual Design (cinematography: Kara Moreno; production design: Alvin Francisco)

Nominee, Best Sound and Aural Orchestration (original score: Pepe Manikan; sound design: Russel Gabayeron and Immanuel Verona)

Nominee, Best Performance (Louise Abuel)



## LINGUA FRANCA

Winner, Best Cinematography and Visual Design (cinematography: Isaac Banks; production design: Maxwell Nalevansky and Clint Ramos)

Winner, Best Performance (Isabel Sandoval)

Nominee, Best Film

Nominee, Best Screenplay (Isabel Sandoval)

Nominee, Best Editing (Isabel Sandoval)

Nominee, Sound and Aural Orchestration (original score: Teresa Barrozo; sound design: Albert Michael Idioma)

At the heart of existent populism is its plain irreverence to the body, especially of those who are excluded from what is commonly projected as “ordinary.” As such, surveillance has then become the predominant grammar of our times (nothing new, really, but definitely magnified today because enabled by fascist structures in place): to be a brown trans woman in the “great American” landscape, to be a grimy young man in tattered clothes in streets of Manila—these often mean being seen right away, the body being subjected to forms of violent scrutiny. Vision has always been a question of power, and yet frequently left uninterrogated: in the contemporary Philippine cinema, to *represent* the ordinarily excluded often means simply turning the lens toward them, subjecting them to the same gaze. Attempts to render the “real” (another term generally overlooked) recurrently ends up idealized: a woman who finally confronts her perpetrator regresses to romanticized docility, throwing away the gun; the suffering of a child amid the war-torn Mindanao is skirted around and through melodrama.

If contemporary Philippine cinema is to insist itself as relevant these days, for us, the Filipino audience, in the middle of the current regime, such a similar gesture of “representation” does not certainly suffice. Perhaps all the more crucial now is an attempt to articulate what often cannot-be, which is to say, to render visually what cannot appear, because always elusive to our current surveilled vocabularies.

Isabel Sandoval’s *Lingua Franca* (2019) is such “drama of interiority”: Olivia (Sandoval), an undocumented Filipino caregiver who hopes to formalize her U.S. citizenship through a paid marriage, encounters Alex (Eamon Farren), the grandson of Olivia’s client. The two, of course, end

up in an emotional quandary: despite their amorous relationship, Olivia’s gender identity remains a secret to Alex, whose work in the slaughterhouse metonymizes his heteronormative predispositions. Therefore, in *Olivia*, the body is experienced in double precarity: unsafe outside the house, to the eyes of a racist nation-state; and at the same time, insecure inside it as well, to the possibility of a potential love turning away.

This intersection informs the intelligence of *Lingua Franca*: because the body has to render itself “ordinary,” it is permitted the chance to conceal itself, at least in the diegetic milieu—Olivia in half-light with a mug on hand, Olivia on bed in her nightgown, Olivia in the living room against flower prints, Olivia in the front seat of a





Still from *Lingua Franca* (2019)

car, Olivia in Brighton Beach with Alex. Even Olivia sitting among the church pews with her friend Trixie (Ivory Aquino), plotting their weddings just so they could obtain permanent residencies, is made familiar: the explicitly political, what could have easily been a turn toward the melodramatic, becomes a typical conversation among friends. And when Olivia attends Trixie's wedding, there is not much of a disclosure of her disappointment, envy, or longing, five grand short as she was from fully paying her own arranged marriage.

Sound is most muted in the film because disappearance is also taking place; performance is tempered because it must vanish at the same time. In other words, like any work of art that has been

carefully crafted, the film is an irony at work: while in its method it cannot let the body escape from the cinematic gaze, it also offers the same body a veil behind which she can somehow hide, if not clothe herself in other possibilities. *Lingua Franca* therefore points to the very artifice that is cinema: the body bared on the screen is not yet naked; the heart revealed is not yet itself. The most sensual of shots is diaphanous, as there is still much to be revealed.

And so, in *Lingua Franca*, regardless of the seeming inevitability of it, love as accustomed is ultimately refused: a slow dance turns out to be captivity, as Olivia and Alex obliquely confide their truths. In the end, when Alex finally offers to marry Olivia after failing to secure an arranged marriage for herself,

she can only say no and walk away. And yet, what seems to be a plain rejection might as well be construed as a devoted confession: that for Olivia, the body—*her* body—cannot be left to owe to anyone; or that perhaps, her desires resist having anything to do with the duress inflicted by institutions, as well as their vocabularies. Here then is an affect, which is also a lacuna, that only the film in its visuality can intimate.

Sandoval would gently remind us that despite its honest portrayal of her “vulnerability, anxiety, and uncertainty about being a minority” shortly after Trump’s election, *Lingua Franca* is “not an autobiographical film”—although at the same time, such denial ironically admits the very likelihood of the film’s being

perceived as such. While this perception can be easily attributed to the fine realism that the film has rendered, it is crucial to underscore here that the necessity for such refuting might as well be taken as a form of graceful insistence: for perhaps, it is also to say that Olivia’s body is hers, as each of the body of our trans kins is also their own. This way, *Lingua Franca* is intuited to be a corpus that bridges, one that is politically personal between Olivia, Sandoval, and all of us who dare take time to understand her being a woman. It is a closeness that is beyond and underneath what has been insisted upon us by our time’s violent vicissitudes.

Thop Nazareno’s *Edward* (2019) presents another possibility for such intimacy: a coming-of-age film



Still from *Lingua Franca* (2019)



Still from *Edward* (2019)

that charmingly balances wit and drama, it follows Edward (Louise Abuel) in his stay in a public hospital in Manila as he looks after his father (Dido de la Paz). There, he spends the days with his friend Renz (Elijah Canlas), running errands for the nurses, racing on wheelchairs, secretly drinking and smoking on a balcony, and placing bets whether the newly-arrived patients in the emergency room are dead or alive. This playful routine in the otherwise dreary hospital is soon interrupted by the arrival of an unnamed young woman (Ella Cruz), whom Edward wagered to be alive. Later on, after being assigned by the nurses to temporarily look after her, Edward

befriends the young woman, who he later learns is named Agnes.

Eventually, of course, Edward falls for Agnes. This trope, however, is complicated by the very masculinity that inhabits the rite of passage, for Edward's is a boyhood that is also compelled to outgrow itself the soonest, situated as it is in the present duress of urban poverty, poor public healthcare, and the current regime. With these intersections, Nazareno's earlier exploration on formations of masculinities in *Kiko Boksingero* (2017) is furthered in *Edward*: more than an inquiry on the makings of man when the figure of the father is practically missing,



Still from *Edward* (2019)

*Edward* simultaneously considers such transition in a milieu that rarely values life, especially of those who are most divested.

Halfway through the film, after being called out by Agnes for his grimy neck (“Puro lupain, napakaraming lupain!”), Edward finally wakes up early the next day, in time for the designated shower time in the hospital. As the water falls on him, his body is then intuited to be not entirely his, dedicated as it is for his puppy love. Because for a deprived youth like Edward, the body is all that remains to be his currency in a society that always accounts: it is his body that he sits beside his father and lays under his bed, as his only caretaker; it is his body that he pushes Agnes’s wheelchair with to show her the distant port; it is also his body with which he lifts gallons of water, to earn few coins from and amity with the nurses.

This body is what he presents everyday, as to perform what will be of his sense of self—as a male, a boy, a son, a friend, a suitor, a citizen.

It is also the same body that Edward projects—through Abuel’s sympathetic embodiment—as the cinematic moment that is *Edward* for us to behold. This foregrounding of the body, fortunately in Nazareno’s adept technique, renders the namesake character to be less so much of a cardboard character—and thus, a convenient mouthpiece for a hasty, and often erroneous, argument—than a rounded one: through Edward’s entirety, possibilities are explored, as how the hospital transforms into a playground, if not a home, no matter how temporarily. However, lest this be mistaken as a sheer idealization of the dire present as to “represent” the “real,” it must

be importantly syncopated as an insistence on the prospect of things, uncertain as they are, in the midst of the daily Philippine traffic. Still from *Edward* (2019) screener

*Edward*, in other words, is an attempt on resistance: that a body like his is to be meditated upon and with, instead of being merely treated as another number in the senseless statistics of the nation-state. At the same time, it is modest enough to admit its ordinariness, surrendering the most crucial of betting to us: at the end of the film, hopeless as he was with his worsening condition, Edward's father decides that they would be going home soon. That night, Edward lies among other nameless caretakers, a body among many other bodies, crying himself to sleep. Whatever happens next—that whether he and his father live or die—remains uncaptured, un surveilled, suggesting us the work left for ourselves: to find a new grammar for what can possibly lie ahead.

This is perhaps the most significant reminder to the contemporary Filipino cinema that both *Lingua Franca* and *Edward* embody: that the act of creating can be also a form of caring to the material, through its judicious consideration in the very method of creation. It is here that we can intuit the criticality of the figure

foregrounded in both films—that of the caregiver, whose condition is all the more precarious because their potentially dearest of relations are alienated: Olivia's mother back home, and Edward's absentee brother, who are both reachable only through cellular technology, rendering Olivia and Edward to be desolate despite being with other bodies. Who looks after those who belabor care as their primary currency?

It is this ordinary, and thus brutal, evisceration in the everyday that the looming presence of an old house and the abattoir in *Lingua Franca*, and the hospital and the morgue in *Edward* press upon us. And yet, through attentive performances of the body, with range and depth that exceed typical "representations," the films intimate that resistance in its most tender of forms is still imaginable. Although these do not—cannot—promise an outright recovery of the body often disregarded by our times, the films do propose a crucial possibility: that perhaps, through such an approach to cinema, vision can be brought back to our own bodies and situated in our ordinariness. That we may even see each other somehow, finally, eye-to-eye.



# THE BODY OF JUSTICE

**Patrick Flores**

## VERDICT

- Winner, Best Editing (Diego Marx Dobles)
- Winner, First Best Feature
- Nominee, Best Film
- Nominee, Best Screenplay (Raymund Ribay Gutierrez)
- Nominee, Best Cinematography and Visual Design (cinematography: Joshua Reyles; production design: Ryan Faustino)
- Nominee, Best Performance (Max Eigenmann and Kristoffer King [duo performance])

The dogged and peripatetic camera of Raymundo Ribay Gutierrez signifies, anticipates, and sustains a pursuit. It is a pursuit of a locale: dense, thicket-like, nearly a mangrove of social tides and unruly species in a quarter in the sprawling metropolis of Manila. But while the frenzy of cinematic work pervades the atmosphere, the lens also incipiently dwells on a domestic sphere: a man, a woman, and their daughter. It is a tight study of a situation of intense emotional and physical violence. Dante (Kristoffer King) has time and again beaten his partner Joy (Max Eigenmann). When in one of these hostile episodes, their daughter Angel (Jordhen Suan) is hurt, Joy goes public. At this existential instance, what do we make of the woman? Avenger, feminist, sufferer? The pursuit shifts from locale to procedure.

In the course of the routine that takes Joy through the methods and offices of the village unit, the police, and the courts, the world of Dante incrementally takes shape with cues of his involvement in a criminal ecology. Is he a petty accessory, a drunken thug, or a conduit of a larger operation? As in most networks of this sort in the Philippines, government personnel are in one way or another complicit and more or less drugs are part of the mix. Once this aspect is teased out from the fabric of the film, the extensive kinship unravels, marked by filial, if not feudal, ties, and the constellation of crime and all-over abuse. One may be tempted to bring in the word “systemic” to describe the condition in the milieu in the sense that it is “symptomatic.” This is a hermeneutic abstraction that is fleshed out by an intriguingly bare narrative and an exceptionally sensitive photography that evokes the details of locus as well as of affect. That the contentious

predicament of persistent crime informs the film creates this engaging continuum between the aforesaid abstraction and the sensuous particularity of the story around a couple gripped in harrowing everyday violence, which arises from age-old patriarchy and present-day criminal habitus. From this welter comes a moment of decision. The woman finally subjects the man to the legal system, which complicates the notion of the systemic earlier posited. And at this point, the interpellations of the structure and process underlying the state apparatus fray at the seams, hinting at the possibility of, by turns, justice and corruption. The film rightly refuses to resolve this vital ambiguity by converting it to an intelligible juridical form or moral judgement, and instead risks a leap into a void. On the eve of the verdict, the man dies: Was he murdered? By whom? The suspicion oscillates between the woman and the cabal of lurking criminals of the



vicinity. Either would have had the motive to rub him out. After all, the verdict would free him.

*Verdict* (2019) keeps the rhythm of suspense tightly, without containing it in the requisites of the genre of the neo-noir psycho-drama thriller, which is not altogether suppressed either. When it migrates to the courtroom, the scenography dilates to take in a dysfunctional bureaucracy and possibly the compromised integrity of jurisprudence itself. More granularly, it alludes to the fundamental asymmetry inhering in the law, which is oftentimes interpreted within uncritical empiricist premises and oblivious of the trauma of woman and child. This is where the “verdict” is complicated, because if it solely rests on “evidence,” justice may well elude the aggrieved, given the machinations of witnesses and

lawyers and the mannerisms or affectations of due process and equal protection. In light of this structural constraint, another verdict tends to surface, a swift and unerring one that terminates a seemingly irremediable recidivist, or a generic fall guy.

The film deftly coordinates its scenario and the ways to render it intimately but with calibrated inclinations towards the various entry points into the *socius*, from home to street to court, and so on. It, therefore, decisively alternates between porosity and constriction so that it does not lapse into a kind of realism that is mainly shaped by the grit of context. That said, *Verdict* is able to index the condition that makes it possible mainly through an anecdotal approach that cites documentary and ethnographic devices. It is when it dramatizes





human interaction, as in when the daughter is queried by the lawyers, that it loses its filmic language, prompting us to ask if action is at all possible within this aesthetic in the absence of agitation. Paradoxically, it is attentive to the cogent inflections of performance in which the ensemble of performers is not animated by a plot to advance but are instead moved by the contingencies to gesture towards a disposition and ensure decidability. Surely, this tendency verges either on the stereotype or the *deus ex machina*. The film bravely takes the chance and does not resist the temptation.

For offering a crucible of an affliction so cruel to women and merciless to their hapless children, *Verdict* enhances the valence of the investigation into internal abuse, or at least speculates on the

cognitive mapping of how gender violence and the law converge and drastically reorganize the family. It is a tribute to the director and his collaborators, as well as to Kristoffer King and Max Eigenmann, for nuancing violence with the penumbra, if not the impossibility, of justice. It is keenly wrought, converting *verité*-like technique into a “structure of feeling” so that the house of law, of crime, and of violence is finally haunted by the death of the aggressor who absorbs substantial opprobrium. Is he a victim, a perpetrator, an accused? However cast, he is at once collateral and casualty, and the film rigorously examines the body of evidence even as it leaves the options open to the internecine though nebulous world of the extra-judicial. This is the abstraction that the cinema of Gutierrez may want to materialize.



# ECHO CHAMBER OF HORRORS

**Jaime Oscar M. Salazar**

## JOHN DENVER TRENDING

Winner, Best First Feature

Nominee, Best Screenplay (Arden Rod Condez)

Nominee, Best Editing (Benjo Ferrer)

Nominee, Cinematography and Visual Design (cinematography: Rommel Sales; production design: Harley Alcasid)

Nominee, Best Sound and Aural Orchestration (original score: Len Calvo; sound editing: Mikko Quizon; re-recording mixing: Kathrine Ariane Salinas)

Nominee, Best Performance (Jansen Magpusao)

In late 2017, a 15-year-old boy in Bago City, Negros Occidental died by suicide. His mother, a farmer, sought aid from an anti-crime civil society organization in shedding light on the circumstances of his death<sup>1</sup>. It emerged that the boy, unbeknown to his family, had been blamed for stealing a classmate's iPad<sup>2</sup>.

Notwithstanding slight differences of detail in the news articles that covered the situation, it appears that, following the disappearance of the device, a sale ad for it surfaced on the boy's social media account, prompting a flurry of derogatory messages that wound up spreading through his school, where he was allegedly shamed in public, during a flag ceremony, for theft<sup>3</sup>. He was then brought to the city police station by his adviser, but, she claimed, it was only so that she could assist him in filing a formal complaint that his account had been hacked to frame him. Unfortunately, the police said

that hacking was beyond their jurisdiction<sup>4</sup>.

The same adviser later returned to the police station, this time at the behest of the owner of the missing iPad, with a view to obtaining support for the organization of an entrapment operation against the boy<sup>5</sup>. The operation was set into motion, but failed; the boy did not show up at the designated time and place<sup>6</sup>, because he had already taken his own life<sup>7</sup>.

The Commission on Human Rights, which was asked to conduct an investigation into the matter by



the above-mentioned civil society organization, concluded that cyberbullying was the “proximate cause” of the demise of the boy<sup>8</sup>, an honor student<sup>9</sup> whom his mother described as having had so many dreams<sup>10</sup>. It is not clear if the iPad ever turned up.

Arden Rod Condez has largely drawn on this tragedy for his first feature, *John Denver Trending* (2019), which he wrote and directed. It is not merely faithful transcription or facile dramatization, however. Nor does it have to be reduced to a cautionary tale about cyberbullying, which, in any case, as a legal term of art, is restricted to technology-enabled acts or expressions of hostility between students at basic education level<sup>11</sup>. The film, whose dialogue is almost entirely in Kinaraya-a, makes out of

the rural town of Pandan, Antique a richly textured and terrifying microcosm of the country, where notions of truth, justice, and due process have become the objects of increasingly fierce—or, at the very least, increasingly visible and tangible—contestation, thanks in no small part to how social media incite and exacerbate confirmation bias, affective polarization, and unreflective response. It moreover rehearses long-held and lingering anxieties over the fallibility of audiovisual representations, which abstract and ambiguate even as they are purported merely to capture and transcribe truth, as exemplified in the present day by the notions of *hulicam* and *resibo*. Finally, the ways in which the film alludes and resonates with the current sanguinary regime, headed by a parochial-minded “president

mayor”<sup>12</sup> whose rise to power and maintenance of control have derived, to a substantial degree, from the machinations of an army of online trolls<sup>13</sup>, cannot be missed.

Moments after he is pantsed and taunted for his tattered underwear during a dance practice session that is being broadcast via Facebook Live, John Denver, an eighth-grade student at Sta. Ines Catholic High School, storms away from the other members of the dance troupe to retrieve his backpack from a nearby classroom, so that he can then meet his mother at the public market. The shot lingers on the spot from which John Denver takes the said backpack, showing a charger that is plugged into a socket, but attached to no device. As John Denver gets ready to leave the school, his fellow dancers yell at him to stop: Makoy’s iPad, which had been left charging in the classroom, is gone, and given that John Denver was the last one to be seen exiting from the room, he must have taken the tablet—a gift from Makoy’s dad, who works in Saudi Arabia.

John Denver angrily denies even having seen the iPad, much less swiped it, which does not deter Makoy from grabbing John Denver’s backpack with the aim of examining its contents. This sets off a chase involving around

a dozen boys that culminates on the rooftop of one of the school’s buildings. Makoy is about to open the backpack when John Denver catches up to him, and the two begin to shove and kick each other, with John Denver quickly gaining the upper hand. Most of the other boys are content to watch and egg on the scufflers; one of them, Carlos, opts to perform a defining gesture of the contemporary period: whip out his mobile phone in order to capture the event on video.

Uploaded by Carlos to his Facebook account, the video—accompanied by photographs of the injured Makoy, an accusation of theft against John Denver, and exhortations to “make this bastard famous” and “like and share until it reaches President Duterte”—takes on a sensational life of its own, circulating within and beyond Pandan, and prompting widespread condemnation of John Denver. The school principal launches an investigation, which is complicated by the decision of Elvisa, Makoy’s mother, to bring in a police officer, SPO1 Rolando Corpus, to intimidate John Denver into confessing to the crime. Public outrage is further fueled when several of his peers, frustrated that John Denver has not been immediately penalized, set up a dedicated Facebook page to document and amplify his past wrongdoings.

Amid all this, John Denver's solely and defender is Marites, his mother, who insists that nothing has come to light to implicate him: surely her son's history of wayward behavior and her family's poverty cannot stand in place of solid proof? Elisa is unsympathetic, and Marites's appeals to the barangay captain and the mayor to look into the controversy and clear her son's name are ultimately met with indifference. "We can't control what other people think," the mayor tells her.

Jansen Magpusao, in his first film role, endows the sullen, scrappy John Denver with an air of vulnerability that, as his ordeal drags on, gradually turns into hauntedness, inspiring both pity and rage. Meryll Soriano's Marites is prickly, ever ready to reproach her troublesome eldest son, but resolute in her devotion to him.

At the heart of the film lies a provocative proposal: even as digital culture may be perceived as generally disruptive of small-town mores, there is an essential continuity between them. The predicament of John Denver is paralleled, if in a manner that could have been more fully fleshed out, by that of Dolores, an old woman who is rumored to be a witch and believed to be responsible for the recent passing

of one of John Denver's neighbors. As with John Denver, the evidence against Dolores is circumstantial at absolute best, and yet functions as no impediment to the traffic of denunciatory speculation about her: that she is a harbinger of evil that must be fought off, whether through the interventions of local shaman Tay Bining or the conduct of warding rituals like tire-burning, comes across as so broadly and deeply held a conviction that alternative explanations are difficult to entertain.

Moving along this vein, the small town could be understood as anticipating the exclusionary epistemic structures that social media, by design, tend to encourage their users to form—which is not to say that either the small town or the social-media epistemic structure is necessarily monolithic or monologic. The philosopher C. Thi Nguyen suggests that social-media epistemic structures may be conceptually distinguished into two types: the epistemic bubble, in which members leave out, irrespective of malice or deliberate intent, relevant sources of information; and the echo chamber, in which members actively nurture insularity and discredit relevant sources of information that are identified with non-members<sup>14</sup>. While exposure to omitted sources is usually sufficient to pop the

epistemic bubble, doing so only reinforces the echo chamber, as such sources have already been pre-emptively undermined<sup>15</sup>, in a process that Nguyen compares to cult indoctrination<sup>16</sup>. To unmake an echo chamber—no easy task—it is imperative to “to work to repair the broken trust between echo chamber members and the outside social world”<sup>17</sup>.

This account of the echo chamber helps illuminate how purveyors of disinformation are able to sustain their sway over their constituencies, regardless of the sheer outlandishness of their assertions or the utter thoroughness with which these might be debunked. In *John Denver Trending*, the purveyor in question is the presumably Manila-based, because Tagalog-using, Ka-Tol Marvin, a high-profile pseudonymous commentator on political issues and public affairs who operates the “Ka-Tol Marvin Blog” page on Facebook. Learning of the dispute involving John Denver, Ka-Tol speaks with Mando, a neighbor of John Denver’s, whose carabao’s expiry the boy had inadvertently contributed to roughly a month before—Marites has been paying for the value of the animal through her labor at Mando’s *coprahan*, to the detriment of her own mat- and bag-weaving micro-enterprise.

Ka-Tol Marvin, living up to his slogan, “Tunay na Pagbabago,” doctors the record of his video call with Mando so that Mando appears to have outrightly inculpated John Denver for the theft of the iPad and then publishes it on his page, goading the priests who run Sta. Ines to cease dragging their feet and take decisive action, now that he has dug up ostensibly reliable testimony.

Although the film might be said to lapse into excess at this juncture—Mando, while far from well-disposed to John Denver, could have assailed the integrity of the doctored video—a crucial point is underscored here: the sundry harms that young people suffer in relation to social media are, to a significant extent, facilitated or directly perpetrated by the adults who are supposed to provide them with care and protection. Ka-Tol Marvin is appallingly rapacious in his eagerness to attack a virtually defenseless teenager for gain, even if just in terms of that most elusive of currencies, online clout, but the opportunity that he exploits is the collective creation of the various figures of authority in Pandan—other children’s parents, teachers, school administrators, priests, politicians, police officers, social welfare workers—who fail John Denver and the ideals that they, by virtue of their positions in institutions



that are vital to the formation and cultivation of the young, are bound to uphold.

The magnitude of their failure is intimated by the religious and patriotic materials—songs, prayers, pledges—that are woven into the sound design of the film, and accentuated by John Denver’s anguished arrival at a point, hastened by a harrowing interview with the gratuitously brutal SPO1 Corpus, where he is unable to muster the will to imagine a future more compelling than death. As he careers toward his end, the camera judders to ravenous life in hot pursuit: first, as predator, then, as scavenger.

The film closes with a sequence of passage that denies the camera—and by extension, the viewers—its contentious function of witness.

After having waited in vain at Sta. Ines for her son to come back from the police station, Marites is shown walking away from the school and toward the camera in a tracking shot, John Denver’s classmates curiously peering after her, to the non-diegetic strains of the Marian hymn “Bulahan nga Nanay,” before the film cuts to black: at once a holding in abeyance of Marites’s discovery that she has lost her son, and, perhaps more to the point, a withholding from the viewers of the sight of her suffering—their recognition of the horror and grief to come does not depend upon their beholding her.



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- 17 Ibid., 159.



# SHADES OF YOUTH

Tito R. Quiling, Jr.

## CLEANERS

Winner, Best Sound and Aural Orchestration (music curation: Glenn Barit; supervising sound editing: Daryl Libongco; sound editing: Nicole Amores, RJ Cantos, Aerial Ellyzon Mallari; re-recording mixing: John Michael Perez)

Winner, Best First Feature

Nominee, Best Screenplay (Glenn Barit)

Nominee, Best Cinematography and Visual Design (cinematography: Steven Evangelio; production design: Alvin Francisco)

Hearing the soft scratches of the eraser gliding over the chalkboard, wooden chairs scraping against the concrete floor polished by years with a *bunót* (coconut husk), leather and rubber soles squeaking as people cross the classroom, out the door, and into the hallway. The school bell rings throughout the campus, marking the beginning and end of a school day. With these sounds and images, *Cleaners* (2019) by Glenn Barit and his team opens a series of recollections that center on distinct stories before easing into a larger, collective narrative detailing moments that have gone by.

The narrative is divided into six chapters, each driven by one of the eight high school students. These members of the Rizal section from the class of 2008 are an assortment of classroom characters. Angeli (Gianne Rivera), the Class President, Youth Council aspirant Jun-jun (Andrei Marquez), Stephanie (Ianna Taguinod), a dance troupe hopeful, Francis (Allan Gannaban), who is preoccupied with pursuing Britney (Charisse Mabbonag), a

social outcast, and the peculiar trio of Eman (Leomar Baloran), Lester (Julian Narag), Arnold (Carlo Mejia)—who all navigate their high school lives in different ways. Given the close contact in this setting, their paths cross at some point.

The chapters in the film are outlined by school programs during a typical school year, marked by the first and last day of classes, performances for Nutrition



Month and *Buwan ng Wika* (celebrating the national language), prom season, and the elections for *Sangguniang Kabataan* (National Youth Commission). From these events, the characters' personal stories are initially framed within their school requirements, before stumbling into resolutions for their problems.

In line with the students' narratives, a striking presentation of the film is the post-production choice of distinguishing the characters through color highlighters on an overall gritty, gray backdrop; meticulously done by Xerox copying each of the frames for the film's sequences. This stylistic element weaves into the personalities of the teenagers and their experiences. Mapping out the characters and their

corresponding colors, Stephanie's story focuses on green to underscore a connection to nature, vegetation, and growing out of being self-conscious. Between the Class President and the emo-slash-skater kids, their comedic interaction shows how starting a dialogue leads to a productive payoff, revealing shared interests. Angeli is in yellow, the color of optimism, and Eman, Lester, and Carlo are rendered in orange, showing endurance. Primary and secondary colors elevate into tertiary given their combination. This reflects how music and openness for adventure became their mutual exchange in preparing for their *Buwan ng Wika* sketch.

Britney, with her precarious situation, is pink to typify

femininity, but in a darker shade for her strong, defiant personality as she gets entangled with gossip and being barred from attending their prom. Francis is blue, who wants to ‘graduate’ from being a boy to a man as he courts Britney, with his validation being punctuated by a grisly deed. As a member of the local political family who is better-off than his peers, Jun-jun is purple, perhaps in reference to royalty and conceit. Aside from being in the same school with different, yet familiar, experiences, what additionally ties them all is Jun-jun, who is the lone witness to all the stories of the student-characters in the film, seemingly representing the Everyman in the narrative, before emphasizing his own turning point.

This set of intertwined realities revolves spiritedly around how high school students view life from their vantage point, visibly driven by emotions that sway between excitement, fear, amusement, and frustration. As with any form of misbehavior, problems are magnified tenfold once others are involved. While the overall narrative may be perceived as thin in terms of exploring further cracks in society, the storytelling is direct in its portrayal of juvenile emotions, their interactions, and delinquencies. With one’s image being a primary concern

at this stage of their lives, there is a trove of personal roadblocks, social issues, and recurring subjects that the students attempt to confront by themselves and with others. Individually, the teens paint several situations related to schoolyard bullying, teenage pregnancy, discriminatory acts such as homophobic slurs, harassment, even one conversation hinting at self-harm stereotypically tied to the “emo” (emotional) subculture.

Despite the main characters conversing in Tagalog throughout the film, time-bound and regional markers are touched upon in production design choices, musical scoring, compositions, and tracks that locate the viewer in a certain time and place. These elements additionally reflect the emotive qualities of a scene and the characters. For instance, there is a heavy desktop and a computer monitor in the background, while students are seen waiting eagerly for their CD to finish burning at a computer shop, and there is a regular display of *batil patong*—a well-known noodle dish from the province of Cagayan, in which some of the locals are frequently seen eating a bowl.

The “Cagayan Hymn” is sung at the flag ceremony sequence and the song “Pulis Ibanag (Ju Ngana Pulis)” accompanies the chase



scene. Selected songs from the last decade express the temper of the times through Filipino rock bands such as Typecast (with “Boston Drama” and “Will You Ever Learn” representing the period), Mayonnaise, including artists from Tuguegarao like Emily’s Band (Every Moment I Love You So) and Edru Abraham, before ending with a Unique Salonga track, whose lyrics highlight the closing scene reminding the students to “serve” the people. The first two bands are remembered as one of the many Filipino musical artists who wrote angst-filled theme songs for teenagers from the 2000s and 2010s. The overall curation of these tracks in the film contributes in crafting relatable and stirring materials to anchor one’s memories on.

The outdoor sequences around the City of Tuguegarao are sensibly compelling, given the physical rendering and its personal significance for the teenagers. Set in a vibrant environment, the collection of visual elements that represent the province could have been augmented to strengthen the representation of the province, perhaps even the region. While the more defined colors are limited to the main characters, the black, white, and gray undertones of the frames create a more textured rendering of the backdrop, as the visuals range from showing close-ups of street corners to full shots of meandering roads and modest structures. Aside from the nooks around the school, some of the students’ usual haunts include the graffiti-ridden and abandoned

gas station, the ubiquitous *batil patong*, the boulevard along the bay, including the unfinished bridge. These often overlooked and unassuming places hold some importance as spaces that in part, formed their youth. These sites also echo the emotional conditions of the teenagers, where being located in the margins assist in finding some form of clarity, as they find consolation in occupying them at times.

In this environment, bursts of youthful exuberance align with self-identity being formed. While visual cues anchor on colors to outline key differences in their personalities, some moments frame the students' lives through rose-tinted glasses. Although slices of their home lives are not

extensively shown, their problems are mostly concentrated on personal and social development. Defining socioeconomic inequality among students is consigned to the background of the narrative, except for the last section, where one of the families with political dynastic leanings is touched upon. Moreover, evaluating the nuances within the Philippine educational system may be reinforced in between the chapters—perhaps questioning if there have been significant progress within the last decade. In the basic education level, the general mode of instruction continues to endorse constant submissiveness, as opposed to cultivating a progressive, more independent atmosphere. Still, rebellious acts are committed and issues such as





unwanted pregnancies, decline in mental health, and multiple acts of violence remain. At times, the film projects a sense of partiality towards a specific decade. With this, nostalgia has a tendency to limit an objective approach on social realities when highlighting the less complex parts of life. Correspondingly, romanticizing the past becomes precarious when voices, perspectives, and stories have been relegated to the sidelines.

Following all of their stories, an outburst ensues. The group starts throwing armchairs and erasers, overturning the trash can, tearing down wall decorations, screaming for an extended period, before ending with a sudden stillness. Their usual labels as student-leaders, floating in between,

and the strange ones created a mixture of hues. The students proceed to clean their classroom for the last time as the assigned cleaners for the day, before they graduate and part ways. The scene stands as an allegory to the many types of mess in their teenage years. Here, 'cleaning' becomes an act of preparation as they shift away from their high school years. Coming full circle, the act of putting things in order within their classroom designates a sense of development following their streaks of rebellion and bouts of confusion about life, as mentioned by one of the characters.

*Cleaners* presents how revisiting experiences allows a re-structuring and re-evaluation of current views as well, as adulthood further pushes for significant realizations

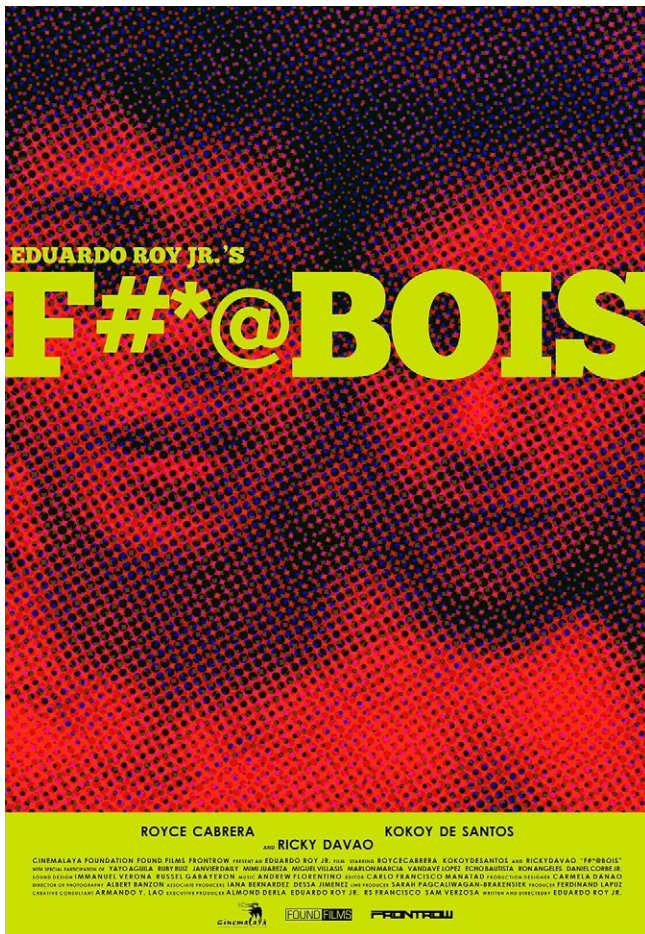


linked to re-shaping political, social, and personal standpoints. Some experiences raise memories attached to pain, misperception, and grief which have influenced one's worldview. In hindsight, the adolescent years are frequently regarded as being much simpler as complicated issues arise over time, and people continue to jump over hurdles and face roadblocks. At times, by returning to the places that have shaped individuals, one recalls the cacophony of familiar noises, images, and emotions.

From the classroom to the hallways, the quadrangle, the

school gates, representative snippets from one's formative years remind a person how fundamental skills are forged alongside important life scripts. In reference to plans that are either accomplished or left unfulfilled because of detours, stories are affected by various relationships, and people also recall frantic or trivial episodes in their lives, including textured conversations from one's youth—occasionally forgettable and indistinct, sometimes vibrant and clear, but often rendered in different shades.





# ADRIFT

**Tessa Maria Guazon**

## FUCCBOIS

- Nominee, Best Screenplay (Eduardo Roy, Jr.)
- Nominee, Best Editing (Carlo Francisco Manatad)
- Nominee, Best Cinematography and Visual Design ((cinematography: Albert Banzon; production design: Carmela Danao)
- Nominee, Best Sound and Aural Orchestration (original score: Andrew Florentino; sound design: Immanuel Verona)
- Nominee, Best Performance (Royce Cabrera and Kokoy de Santos [duo performance])

The final scene in Eduardo Roy, Jr.'s *Fucchois* (2019) perturbingly captures ill-fated Mico Reyes and Ace Policarpio in a thicket; faces bloodied and bodies exhausted by a grueling escape from a local politician's bodyguard. A call punctured their mounting terror and dread: it was from their agent Mother Dan asking whether they were on their way home. She confirmed Mico's forthcoming shoot for a television series. The buzz and hum of forest life shrouded the nervous staccato of their breathing. The vastness surrounding them was a trap, as were the borders of their phone screens, the edges of a gay bar stage, the doors to the rooms of a vacation house, and the island that can only be reached or escaped from by boat. They were ensnared by various spaces where they gambled on their youth and risked their lives.

The moment Mico answered the call with combined desperation and relief made for a powerful and moving close. It led us to an ominous and invisible end. This disturbing snarl of emotions marks many of Roy's films: he depicts his characters wrangling with them while enjoining viewers to partake of their inner struggle and to vacillate along. Quite often, these characters fall prey to the sinister machinations by those more powerful than them. *Fucchois's* strength is buttressed by this structure and the easy rapport between actors Royce Cabrera and Kokoy de Santos. The film's opening frame cohered seamlessly with the final scene: all else in between subtly articulated the profuse confusion of its world. The narrative pivoted around a botched game of attempting to delete a sex video and getting back newly acquired passports. Cues pertaining to a ruinous end were dispersed in the film's early

scenes: the persistent phone calls, the threatening messages, and a recently concluded local elections. The fumbling scenes the morning after the murder and the choice of actor to portray Brithanygaile's corpulence and comic greed are decidedly its weakest attributes yet overall, *Fucchois* is tightly narrated, accurately placed, and unusually jarring.

We met Mico and Ace in carefree glory at the beginning of the film. Deftly doubled, they appeared on Facebook Live, cast from the narrow screen of a mobile phone which was transposed to a film frame. They easily pass as brothers, even lovers. We were placed as one of their social media followers, who comprise a modest number. Ace is purported to have 25,000 Facebook followers. They greeted us, indulged our requests and tickled us with their antics. We wondered whether they were lovers, but true to their game of tease and play they let the

answer slide. They ended the live cast posing together with ‘brothers’ in their boarding house room. They playfully tagged the pose ‘*dalagang Pilipina*’ (Filipina maiden who is presumed to be a modest virgin). They were hemmed in by the narrow screen of a mobile phone, quite similar to how Ace and Mico would be later penned in by the vastness of an impenetrable forest. The shot from inside an SUV of their escape from Brithanygaile’s bodyguard, echoed the cat-and-mouse game that plagued their lives.

Mico and Ace’s entrapment did not begin with the murder of their gay politician patron. It was intimated in the multiple screens of the film (the Facebook live feed that was the opening scene); the paradoxical contrasts between the names of places where they performed and paraded their bodies (Club Mankind for the competition Mr. Galaxy Philippines); and the

glamour and pageantry of their public lives against the tangled confusion of their private selves (the rumpled covers of their mattresses on the bedroom floor of their boarding house; the necessity of bathing together in a small, cramped toilet; of borrowing each other’s shirts and shoes, and the van where they had to squeeze in for their outings). These tangles of objects and forms chronicled the urgencies of youth. They also laid out the ominous trail of a murder and an ensuing futile escape.

Director Eduardo Roy’s gift lies in revelatory slowness. This manner of framing narrative alongside a well-orchestrated scenography brought to mind his films *Bahay Bata* (2011) and *Quick Change* (2013); but that which is probably closest to *Fucchois* is *Pamilya Ordinaryo* (2016). Both *Fucchois* and *Pamilya Ordinaryo* explored the heady atmosphere of youth, its reckless energy and unbridled





passions; a halting and interrupting force that risks pain and loss, even death. Roy's lens acutely records the emotive expressions of desperation; articulating agony, confusion and distress in magnified potency. He fills second by second of filmic time with their protracted unfolding, revealing a possible end we can intuit but never fully predict. It was a stolen baby for *Pamilya Ordinaryo* and a sex video for *Fucchois*. Roy builds up these cases sharply and thoroughly, with a tight grasp of locale, a good choice of leading actors, and a keen reflection on human cruelty and injustice. All along he elucidates and gives form to a precipice or a point of no return.

Everything seemed short-lived in *Fucchois*; its main characters' lives were comparable to an

exhilarating roller coaster ride. Their youth was contained in slivers of time: "fleeting, transitory and precarious... [time] in the mode of the festival".<sup>1</sup> Mico Reyes of Bacacay, Bicol and Ace Policarpio of Macabebe, Pampanga lived out fleeting presences on the stage of Club Mankind and before Brithanygaile's baleful lust, which were similar to carnival grounds. They are pawns in games they will never win. *Fucchois* frames the ritual of youth, albeit in a tragic and harrowing manner. Perhaps, the most compelling scene that captured this was Mico and Ace cleaning the portly and bloodied body of their manic and manipulative lover. Here, youth became a "dark, fixed, congealed [space] like stone or crystal"<sup>2</sup> or more fittingly, like muck and quicksand that engulfed flesh and being.

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## ENDNOTES

1 Michel Foucault, "Of Other Spaces," *Diacritics* 16.1 (1986): 22-27.

2 Ibid.



## MOTION THROUGH SIGHT

**Emerald Flaviano Manlapaz**

### NO DATA PLAN

Nominee, Best Editing (Miko Revereza)

Nominee, Best Cinematography and Visual Design (cinematography: Miko Revereza)

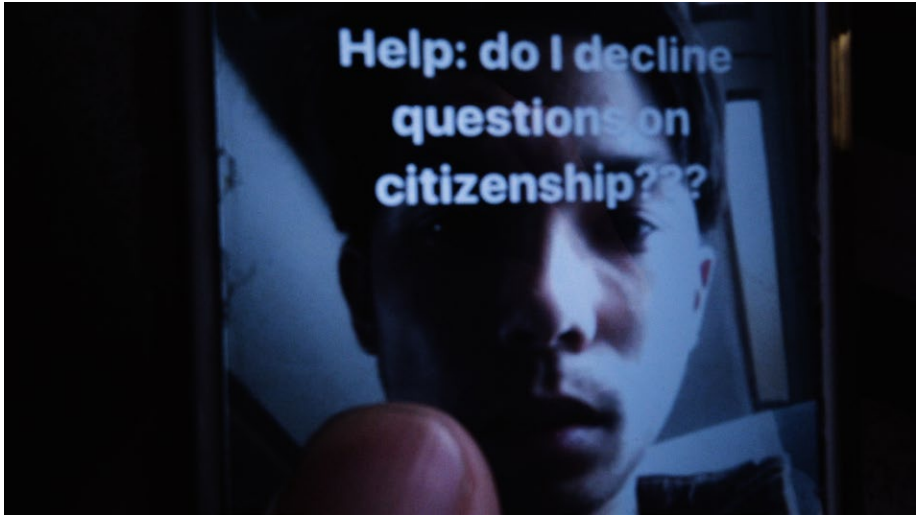
Nominee, Best First Feature

In *No Data Plan* (2019), Miko Revereza enfold us in an experience. This experience, a three-day train ride from Los Angeles to New York, is marked by Revereza's subjectivity, revealed piece by piece in spare camerawork and the peculiar use of subtitles and voice-overs. The trip takes on, in the process, a life of its own as a document of disappointed dreams, a family's slow breakdown, and a young artist's defiance against the crushing weight of inertia imposed by an indifferent state. As a body in itself, *No Data Plan* tackles movement as the necessary condition of the undocumented immigrant, even as it moves and marks its difference from the human—the filmmaker's own and its audience's—body.

Opening with a waiting crowd on a platform—overwhelmed in the film frame by a huge pillar—*No Data Plan* sees the unremarkable from the trip. As inexorable as the straight line that the train traverses, the camera trains its eye on the inside of the train, the blurring freight cars and landscapes that pass beyond its dirty windows, the anonymous stops and their strangers. Someone raps along a barely audible song, doors between cars whisper open and shut, sunlight crawls on the back of a seat here, a table leg there. Time crawls as the unremarkable lulls, while subtitles and voice-overs relieve the enforced stasis inside the train. A “voice”—covert but present all the same—issues a confession and we are made aware of Revereza's family's immigration problem and his mother's affair. “I was the only person she confided to...” a quiet declaration heavy as a lodestone. This burden pierces through his reverie, populated by dreams and memories recounted by family and friends, and overwhelms

with its intimacy: after years in an unhappy marriage with Papa, Mama takes on a much younger lover, a Vietnamese “driver.” The family disintegrates, and Mama, an undocumented immigrant, begins a difficult life of constant displacement. Revereza himself tries to get the driver, whose shady connections include a meth addict who once threatened immigration authorities on Mama and her family, in trouble by taking a picture of him with his car. The confession is as uncomfortable in its unwelcome candor as the claustrophobic train ride. Its discordant presence insists that we listen as the textual narrative attends to the banal details of a family disintegrating—a GIANT STUFFED TOTORO which Papa does not notice, plasma TV, bird feeder, and “MISC” containers in storage.

Since his short film *DROGA!* (2014), Revereza has been working on notions of identity and statelessness. His films assemble traces of his life with his family



(Lola's stories and Lolo's silence, old home movies of their first few years as a family in the US) and images from everyday life that conjure fantasies--and memories--of mobility (airplanes and airports, full motorways, his US visa as a 5-year-old child in 1993 and later, his unmarked Philippine passport as a young adult). These fantasies come up short in *No Data Plan*: movement is constant, but it is meaningless, this movement for the sake of movement. In a sense, the unbrokenness of the scenes from Revereza's train trip samples this tedious movement that does not really get him anywhere. Instead, disembodied voices that speak over images of the trip, the camera's random movements "outside" the train and the narrative, and distorted sounds that punctuate the documentary counter this stasis. These disruptions—dreams and memories, noise—speak of a mind

that refuses to be bound.

*No Data Plan* is notable among Revereza's work in its bodily presence, making immediate the experience of being undocumented in America--the mundanity of its insecurity, the alternating torpid frustration and jagged fear. This body materializes from the self that speaks in confession, at its most precarious. A close up shot of a hand, clenched into a fist and pressed against a leg, while in the background Revereza can be heard shakily breathing, presages the recollection of an encounter with immigration authorities. He thinks this "the most significant shot" he takes in the trip.<sup>1</sup> The camera is welded into his body, and the film becomes his body. The film, as does his body, closes in upon itself as the encounter unfolds. The camera shivers as the clenched hand engulfs the frame. For the moment, the meandering subtitles





and voice-overs vanish, and the tension is everything. Unconsciously, we cower with Revereza. “Um did you see my story?” he unsteadily asks, apparently on the phone with someone, and narrates his close shave with the US Border Patrol at a stop in Buffalo, New York. His hand taps through the Instagram stories of the ordeal, the nakedly agitated texts a stark deviation from the deliberate introspection of the subtitles—“I’m ok 😊” “Wtf is America” “Help: do I decline questions on citizenship???” This jarring shift in mood in what is supposed to be a boring train ride, an ellipsis in narrative action in most films, reveals Revereza’s fragility in its naked everyday reality. It is certainly very different from the poetic voice that speaks in *DROGA!*, *Disintegration 93-96* (2017), and *Distancing* (2019) that examines obsessively the extent to which he

has lost his Filipino-ness, as a way perhaps to make sense of the choices his parents—but most especially his father—took to subscribe to the American “dream-hallucination-delusion.”

A study in impulse and reflexivity, Revereza’s diaristic practice explores the possibilities of a personal cinema that narrates the self into being. This self is, by virtue of its mediated construction, conjures context and inevitably labors under the politics of diaspora and identity, of borders and mobility. In choosing to be seen, Revereza assumes a voice that speaks for thousands of others driven to silence, that would somehow gather the dreamlike fragments of constantly longing life to work from them something whole and luminous and powerful.

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## ENDNOTES

- 1 Ursula Grisham, “Interview with Miko Revereza,” *Filmatique*, 5 February 2019, <https://www.filmatique.com/interviews-1/2019/2/5/miko-revereza>.



# PARA SA *FOR MY ALIEN FRIEND*

**Aristotle J. Atienza**

## FOR MY ALIEN FRIEND

Nominee, Best Editing (Jet Leyco)

Nominee, Best Cinematography and Visual Design (cinematography: Jet Leyco)

Paano maaaring tanggapin ang pelikulang *For My Alien Friend* (2019) ni Jet Leyco, ang isa sa mga itinatanging pelikula ngayon ng nakaraang taon? Kakahunin ito bilang dokumentaryo at eksperimental, at itatabi sa iba pang kakatwang pelikula. Paano kung ilapit sa karaniwan, at ituring ang pelikula bilang liham? Maaari ding alay at handog. Anu't anuman, ito ay bigay kahit paano, isang pagbabahagi at pamamahagi ng sarili sa iba. Pelikula ang laman pero hindi lamang ang nilalaman dahil kabilang na rito ang mismong pelikula bilang isang kalamnan ng mga pinirasong karanasan na isinasakasaysayan sa iskrin. Matutukoy man ang pinagmulan at patutunguhan sadyang tila nakalutang pa rin ang katiyakan ng mga sangkot na nilalang dahil nakikitang pangangailangan ang kilalanin ang mga relasyong pumapagitan. Maaaring nariyan ang pagtawid sa pelikula ni Leyco.

Tila malayo ang lalakbayin kung tinatanggap ang destinasyon ng kaibigan bilang alien ng science fiction. Kung pamilyar sa pagiging abala rito ng manlilikha sa mga nauna niyang pelikula, masasabing isa itong bagay na malapit sa kaniya. Hindi man marahil mahalaga kung nagkita na sila noon o magkikita pa lang, sigurado ang paghahanap sa kaibigan mula sa panawagan ng mala-radyong tinig na sumasanib sa kalawakan ng suson-susong imahen, tila hinango hindi na lamang mismo sa realidad na tinutukoy nito kundi sa mga datos na binibuksan na nanggagaling sa iskrin ng personal computer at isipan. Isang dokumento ang pelikula na nagbabalita sa sari-saring engkuwentro ng paglalakbay. Nasaan ang kaibang kaibigan? O kaibang ibig maging kaibigan? Anumang hitsura ang taglay nito, E.T., Wooly Booly man o Kokey, mga

halimbawang napagsamantalahan nang paglalarawan sa naiibang nilalang, ay tanong pa kaya kung pagbabatayan sa pagiging matalik ng pagkakaibigan ang mga ibinabahaging karanasan. Ano ang kalidad ng mga kuwento sa kaibigan?

Matatanggap din na hindi galing sa malayong planeta kundi mula sa ibang malayong bayan. Pasaporte ang opisyal na dokumento na nagtatakda sa kaibahan. Tubig o pader ang maaaring hangganan at pagitan. Muli, gagalugarin ang bayan sa paghahanap sa banyagang kaibigan. Ano ang magiging laman ng mga panawagan kundi ang mga tanda ng pagkakakilanlan. Nariyan ang mga detalye sa pamilya, kaibigan, bayan, at kapaligiran. Isang dokumento ng mga piling kaganapan sa buhay na pinagnilayan at pinakiramdamang isinasalaysay. Ipinapakilala



ang mga pinahahalagahang saglit ng pakikisangkot ng isang mamamayan sa malayo't malapit niyang nakalipas. Maaaring hinuhugot ang mga ito sa mga pinagkakaingatang imbakan ng mga files, at sa kasalukuyan ng iskrin, ay binibigyan ng panibagong pagpapakahulugan kagaya ng mga daloy ng gunita. Narito ang sarili na tumuturing sa iba bilang katulad dahil ginagawang karamay sa pandamang naibibigay ng iba't ibang nasaksihan sa buhay.

Nariyang nasa tabi-tabi lang din ang kaibigan. Kinakalabit o binabatukan. Hindi na ito ang kakatwang nilalang ng ibang planeta o ang dayuhan ng ibang bayan pero bakit hindi kung ipopook sa pagpapatawa ang pananalita. "Saan ka bang planeta

galing?" Posibleng tukuyin ang kaibigang hindi na nakakikilala, ang natiwalag sa tunay na kalagayan ng ginagalawang lipunan, kaya't maaaring pakilusin ang mga imahen bilang paalala. Napawalay kaya't pinapagmalay sa pinagtagni-tanging gunita ng tunggalian na nakapagtutulak para madama ang kaibahan. Isang dokumento ito ng pagmumulat na sumasariwa sa mga nakaraan na nasaksihan ng pagkakaibigan. Nakaliligaw ng landas ang ibang paglalakbay dala na rin ng pinipiling tugon sa mga pagbabago sa buhay.

Mula sa mga panawagan ng tagapagsalaysay, nabubuksan ng pelikula na sabay-sabay na pairalin ang iba't ibang nilalang na ituturing bilang kaiba, subalit kaibigan. Maituturing kayang



isasara na ang paghahanap sa pagtugon ng kaiba sa kadululduluhan ng pelikula sa yugto ng kapaguran? Itong sandali na ang layo ay lapit din. Kaya't kung pahahalagahan sa mga ugnayan ang distansiya na pumapagitan sa mga kaiba, bakit hindi rin damay dito ang mismong pelikula? Sa pagbubukas pa lamang, ipinapakilala na ang kaibahan. Hindi ito karaniwan at hindi rin karaniwan ang masasaksihan. Paano na ang iniwasang kagamitan sa panonood, dahil itinuturing na pangangambala, ay kabahagi ng mismong panonood. Ano nga ba ang sinasabi sa QR Code sa umpisa ng palabas na muling lilitaw sa pagtatapos upang tanungin ka lamang nito kung ano nga ba ang nasa isip mo? Sa pagsisimula pa lamang tinatawagan na ng pansin ang manonood bilang estranghero na hinahangad na makausap ng isa

pang estranghero na nag-iwan pa ng numero, si Jet Leyco. Hindi sarado ang hindi karaniwan bagkus mapag-uusapan.

Maaaring matiwalag sa pelikula lalo na kung papansin na bahagi ng proyektong ito ang pagmunihan ang mga hangganan ng dokumentaryo at fiction kaya't nakapagtatanong kung paano nagiging gawa ng imahinasyon ang dokumentaryong talambuhay at nagiging dokumentaryo ang likhang-isip. Magpapaalala ang kakaibang engkuwentro sa kasaysayan ng pelikula na kahit sabihing nagsimula sa dokumentasyon ng mga pang-araw-araw na gawain sa Pransiya ay hindi gaanong pinapansin na ilang taon lamang makaraan nito ay sinisimulan na rin ang dokumentasyon ng salamangka sa kamera. Nakatutuwang bumabalik sa isipan ang imahen ng sasakyang

pangkalawakan na sumapol sa mata ng buwan na babalikan ng pelikula sa muling paggamit naman ng mga imahen ng pagtuntong ng unang tao sa buwan na nakapagtutukoy sa paglalakbay bilang mahalagang salik na kabahagi sa pagtitimbang ng mga kaibahan at kaibigan.

Malay ang pelikula sa pagbibigay-pansin sa mismong materyal na hinaharap ng kaniyang paglikha, ang digital. Ito marahil ang hindi nahaharap ng mga manlilikha sa pelikula sa kasalukuyang panahon lalo na sa paghuhubad ng mga huwad na obra na nagpapalapit diumano sa mga manonood sa mga lihim na hindi kalimitang nalalaman dahil hindi nakikita sa iskrin. Sa produser o direktor ang laging sisi na lalo pang nagpapatibay sa pagpapatuloy kaysa pagdedeklara para sa isang bagong yugto ng

pagpepelikula. Maaari mang kuha sa minanipulang realidad ang mga imahe ni Leyco hindi maitatanggi na malaking bahagi ng paglikha ngayon ang mga ginagawang manipulasyon sa kinunang imahen. Tila natigil na ang imahinasyon ng ibang manlilikha na nagtangkang pag-usapan ang pelikula sa kanilang pelikula dahil nakaliligtaan na ang pagmamaniobra sa realidad ay muling nililikha sa harap ng kompyuter. Kaya nga't marahil interesanteng matatagpuan ang tila pagbitaw ng pelikula sa mga kuwadro ng bintana na kapansin-pansing gamit niya sa mga naunang pelikula bilang pagmamalay sa posibilidad ng mga paningin sa pelikula. Sa ganitong kalagayan nabibigyan ng pagpapahalaga ang pagtatangka ni Leyco na bigyan ng suliranin ang usapin ng digital mula pa sa nauna niyang pelikula, ang *Ex*

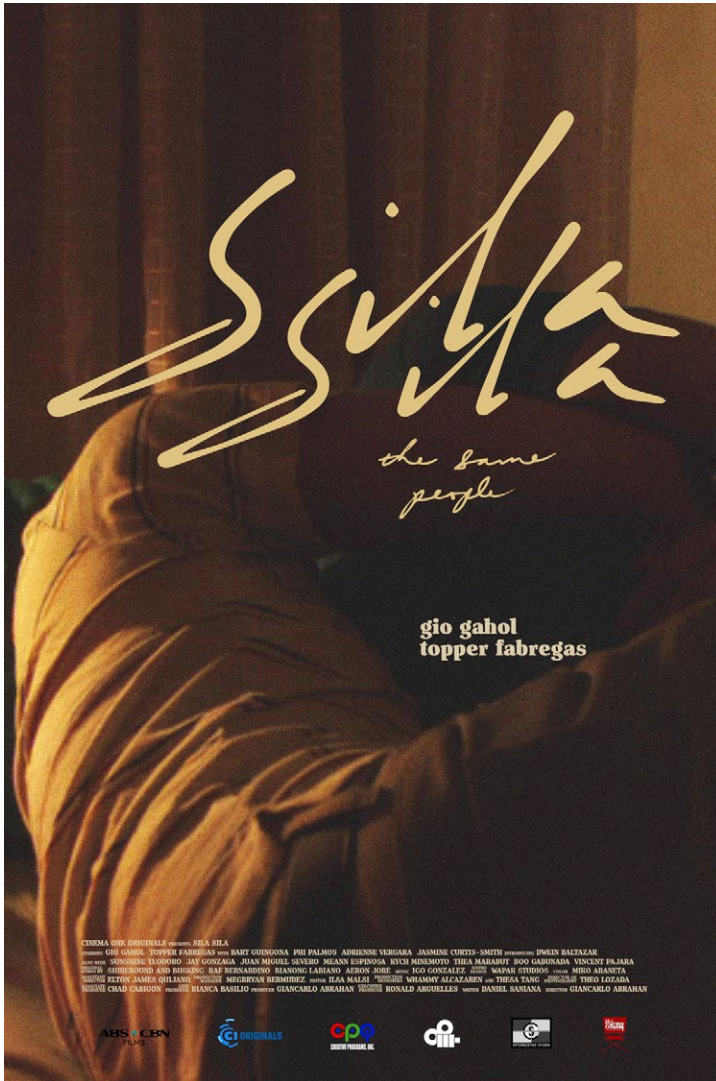


Press (2011). Gayundin, bagama't makikita pa rin ang bakas ng kaibahan sa mga pelikulang *Bukasan Lang Sapagkat Gabi Na* (2013) at *Matangtubig* (2015) kumpara sa pinag-uusapang pelikula, hindi maikakailang nakapag-aambag ang mga nasabing proyekto sa posible ring pagkatiwalag sa sariling paglikha lalo na kung idaragdag pa ang huli niyang pelikula na mabuti na lang yatang kaligtaan, ang *Second Coming* (2019).

Maaaring *For My Alien Friend* ang bigay ni Jet Leyco. Maaari ding hindi ito tanggapin. Pero sa kapaligiran ng produksiyon ng likha sa bahaging ito ng sangdaigdig, mula sa manipulasyong ginagawa sa saliw ng awiting *You Know I'll Go Get* sa Tiktok hanggang sa pagpili ng filter sa Instagram kaya't

magpapaandar sa pag-aasta ng #nofilter, kahit maging sa praktis ng meme at fake news, at ngayon, sa patalastas ng RC Cola, inihiwasan hangga't maaari na tanggihan ang bigay. Ano ang makukuha ngayon sa pelikula kundi ang panawagan para sa paghahanap ng mga bagong ugnayan? Ano ang inaasahang relasyon sa pelikula ni Leyco kasama ng iba pang manlilikha sa mapanglaw na kagubatang ito ng dokumentaryo, eksperimental, digital, at pelikula? Sana hindi na lang ito sa ngalan ng pagkakaibigan na tila bihira sa daigdig na iyan kung paniniwalaan ang mga usap-usapan ng gamitan at kasiyahan. Pero bakit hindi rin posibleng hanapin ang ugnayang ito sa isa pang itinuturing ng pagpepelikula na kaibang kaibigan, ang kritika?





# SOOR TIMES

John Bengan

## SILA-SILA

Nominee, Best Performance (Gio Gahol)



What do breakup stories usually reveal? The tipping point when enough has been had, the tedium that erodes the bond, the gradual avalanche of small acts? Written by Daniel Saniana and directed by Giancarlo Abrahan, *Sila-Sila* (2019) tiptoes around these familiar routes and draws our attention to a character who is sometimes hard to root for, let alone pare down to easily explicable urges.

Boyfriends Jared (Topper Fabregas) and Gab (Gio Gahol) are out on the road, trying to have quick one in Jared's car. Afterward, Jared sweettalks Gab about refusing a job in Cagayan de Oro that will doubtless put a strain on the relationship. Gab brushes the subject aside, steps out of the car—but not without struggling with a broken door—and takes a piss on the sidewalk. Before he could zip up, he hears a familiar app notification. A fight ensues, objects get thrown out of the window, Gab wiggles out the back door and eventually walks away.

The next time we see Gab, eleven months have gone. He moves back to the same apartment, now managed by a young, often shirtless caretaker. He meets with Max (a touchingly amiable Bart Guingona), an older fling, who knows him by the name Dylan. Then he's back in his job at a nonprofit where a competitive co-worker (Jay Gonzaga) scoffs at what's left of his idealism. Soon he runs into his ex in the grocery aisle. When he and Jared pick up where they left off in a pub, it becomes clear that the problem

isn't just Grindr. Gab continues to frustrate Jared. He lashes out at his friends Nicole (Dwayne Baltazar) and Kevin (Phi Palmos) when they take him to task. After stringing him along, he coldly rebuffs the charming but reluctant Kiko (Kych Minemoto). Gab keeps finding himself in familiar haunts, being with the same people he was trying to escape.

In interviews, Abrahan said he wanted to make a movie about “ghosting”—a man disappears from his boyfriend and their friends for almost a year. *Sila-Sila* suggests what could happen if the “ghost” comes back freewheeling into the mess. Saniana's script is strewn with loose moments of levity, even though at times, the movie strains for eccentricity and banter. Linda (Adrienne Vergara), a politician's daughter, shrilly appraises her guests during a high school reunion. April (Meann Espinosa), and officemate of Gab's, all but ropes him to Kiko. The first time they see each other again, Nicole shrieks, leaps, and clings onto Gab as if she's found a misplaced plush toy.



Nevertheless, *Sila-Sila* has an odd, daydreamy look and a roominess missing in movies featuring gay characters determined to rebuke themselves. For someone who seems stuck, Gab moves around spaces: a motel room, an apartment, his workplace, a supermarket, a classmate's house, his boyfriend's house, and vehicles. Mirroring the opening scene, Gab slips into a stranger's car to smoke pot. He flirts with the stranger (Boo Gabunada), and the stranger gamely flirts back. The moment of mutual curiosity relaxes something in Gab. He hears himself thinking aloud. Is it him after all who's been left behind? When the stranger reminds Gab he's straight, Gab smirks and says, "Noted. With Thanks." Stoned and wearing his shirt inside out, he returns to the reunion and provokes his former

classmates in an awkward parody of Linda's spiel. He jumps into the swimming pool, cleansing himself from last year's funk. He finally talks to Jared with a cooler head.

In a comic and tender scene, Jared drunkenly barges in on Gab and Max. But instead of hysterics, they treat one another with kindness. When asked if cheating on his wife bothers him, Max tells Gab, "Who told you I'm cheating on her? She knows I'm gay and all." Demonstrating emotional sturdiness and a sense of clarity, Max talks about how the relationship has turned into an agreement that spares them from more hardship.

Topper Fabregas ably conveys Jared's frustration, but he has only so much to work on. It's a pity that the only other facet to Jared arrives



rather late, almost an afterthought. The last fifteen or so minutes lurch into a weightless finale. What gives *Sila-Sila* a second wind is Gio Gahol's graceful and openhearted disclosure. With his teasing, doe-eyed stare, Gab wanders into

quarter-life sourness, hoping to arrive somewhere new. Gahol allows us to see Gab's egoism, contradictions, and hypocrisy, but he also makes us care whether the man is going to get to where he's supposed to be.



# SCHOOL OF LIFE

**Skilty Labastilla**

## A IS FOR AGUSTIN

Nominee, Best First Feature

*As for Agustin* (2019), the debut feature of Grace Simbulan, follows Agustin Amado, an Aeta man in his early 40s whose hollow cheeks and sun-drenched, wrinkled skin provide quite a contrast to his child-like grin and gentle disposition. He and his wife make charcoal for a living: the middleman pays them P150 for each sack and sells the same sack for P250. This exploitation of the poor and uneducated is a fairly common scenario anywhere in the world, and it's one of the reasons why Agustin decided to enroll himself in a public elementary school in his remote Zambales barrio.

Simbulan, like several other female Filipino documentarists of note (e.g., Ditsi Carolino, Ramona Diaz, Babyruth Villarama, among others) who act as fly-on-the-wall observers and eschew talking heads, patiently follows Agustin as he navigates the world of schoolchildren even as his own son is enrolled in the same school. The chaotic classroom scenes are juxtaposed with Agustin's serene way of going about his livelihood, mundane conversations with his as-meek wife, and scenes of the couple going caroling for loose change in the town center.

Film historian Nick Deocampo recently mentioned that good documentaries are 80% finding the right subject and the rest everything else (mainly camera placement and editing), and it seems to be the case in this documentary, as the subject matter alone is interesting enough for one to keep wanting to know what will happen to Agustin. What's not shown in the film is Agustin actually graduating from grade school a year or so after his son

does, and in my interview with Simbulan, she noted that she did not want to end the film on a Cinderella note where all's well that ends well. The film instead ends with the son's graduation and leaves the future for Agustin hanging. Asked about Deocampo's equation, Simbulan adds that the filmmaker's sensitivity is a crucial ingredient — knowing when to pick up the camera to record what's happening and when to know to respect the film subjects by keeping the camera shut.

The film is effective in showing the absurdity of a society where those who fall through the cracks of formal education are left to fend for themselves. While Agustin's decision to go to school to escape exploitation is laudable, this individualism mindset puts the onus of bettering one's life on the shoulders of poor people like Agustin rather than on the state. We see countless heartwarming stories in TV documentaries—such as *Kapuso Mo Jessica Soho* and the like—of the marginalized lifting themselves up from squalor



through sheer hard work and luck, and we forget that structures still exist to put these people and millions of others in squalor in the first place.

An example of this education-as-a-personal-responsibility ethos is shown in several classroom scenes where Agustin is clearly having a difficult time solving math problems yet there is no effort from the teacher to help him understand or to correct his mistakes. In many public schools, assessments are rarely meant to be formative and feedback for improvement is seldom given. There's no surprise that the Philippines ranks lowest in reading comprehension in a recent international survey.<sup>1</sup> Yet teachers are not to be blamed for this as they are often overworked, underpaid, and deal with overcrowded classrooms. The problem as we all know is systemic.

Today's formal education exists in large part to cater to the

needs of the capitalist world, that is why indigenous learning and knowledge, which value egalitarianism (not hierarchy and inequality), protection of nature (not exploitation), and community (not individualism) are rejected. Agustin, at the tailend of the film when he decides to temporarily stop schooling to give way to his son, rues that his brain is waning like sunset, while that of his son is still rising. He says this at 40 years old, an age where modern-day humans should be at their prime.

One of the film's limitations, brought about by its strict adherence to the immersive fly-on-the-wall approach, is the narrative becoming too dependent on the actions of the film's subject rather than on elucidating on some of the issues that it uncovers along the way. An example is the throwaway mention of the government's Alternative Learning System (ALS), which aims to address the needs of those who fall out of formal education. A

teacher tells Agustin that he should have been enrolled in ALS, which allows for more flexibility in terms of schedule and learning pace, instead of being in a traditional classroom with young children. Agustin's reply seemingly points to the inconvenience of going to a farther school to avail of ALS services, and in a latter voiceover, he mentions that ALS requires a grade school diploma, which is actually not the case. Had the filmmaker pursued this inquiry further by interviewing ALS staff, or suggesting to Agustin that he could maybe visit the ALS office, viewers could have a more nuanced understanding of the issue of alternative education and the attending issues surrounding its implementation.

By focusing solely on the perspective of Agustin, the film becomes more of a human interest story than a topical one, which is not necessarily a bad thing. In my view, though, documentary filmmaking in the Third World can push some more into active/activist

filmmaking, where storytellers and story-bearers can work hand-in-hand to push for change. Can *A Is for Agustin* make Agustin's life better? Does the strength of the film lie mainly on the viewer's capacity to empathize and to rail against the world's injustices? How can documentary cinéastes' rage be scaled up to reach decision-makers? Is shining a light on the stories of the marginalized enough to overhaul the oppressive capitalist system? Is it unfair to put this responsibility on documentary films only and not on fictional films?

I have been thinking about these questions and wrote a bit about my thoughts in my commentaries on *Sa Palad ng Dantaong Kulang* and *Yield*, one of my favorite local films of 2018.<sup>2</sup> But I also bring this up in my interview with Grace Simbulan,<sup>3</sup> who is currently US-based pursuing graduate studies, where we discuss her filmography and details about her eight-year journey with *A Is for Agustin*, among others.

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## ENDNOTES

- 1 Ratzel San Juan, "Philippines lowest in reading comprehension among 79 countries," Philstar, 3 December 2019, <https://www.philstar.com/headlines/2019/12/03/1974002/philippines-lowest-reading-comprehension-among-79-countries>
- 2 Skilty Labastilla, "The Best Filipino Films of 2018," Pinoy Rebyu, 5 January 2019, <https://pinoyrebyu.wordpress.com/2019/01/05/the-best-filipino-films-of-2018/>.
- 3 Labastilla, "Interview with Grace Simbulan," YouTube, 10 December 2020, [https://youtu.be/Ey7dOQ\\_SpGc](https://youtu.be/Ey7dOQ_SpGc).



# LOVE AND LIBERAL DEMOCRACY

Janus Isaac Nolasco

ALONE/TOGETHER

ISA PA, WITH FEELINGS

ULAN

Longlisted films of 2019





What does a genre—which trades on *kilig*, *hugot* heartaches—have to do with inequality, poverty, human rights, and authoritarianism? If Filipino romance movies barely register on the political scale, one would be hard-pressed to see the genre—generally at least—as anything but politically progressive. But this is misleading. They do not have to literally depict, say, patronage politics, to engage it productively.

There is little explicit political content in *Alone/Together* (Antoinette Jadaone, 2019), *Ulan* (Irene Emma Villamor, 2019), and *Isa Pa, With Feelings* (Prime Cruz, 2019), three films longlisted by

the Young Critics Circle for 2019. But they critique hierarchical, patron-client relations; espouse equality; and embrace the liberal democratic values of individualism and self-determination.



**A**lone/Together starts off with a political bang. Christine Lazaro (Liza Soberano) launches a monologue on Juan Luna's Spoliarium, talks about colonial history, and speaks of historical remembering. There are references to art serving the people, or to art as free and liberating, yet the film largely ends up as a story of personal redemption.

Christine is an art studies major who dreams of becoming a museum director. But her plan to "change the world" falls apart when she is implicated in a case of estafa. Her boss had been stealing from the company, but she did not speak out even though she knew what was happening. At the same time, she breaks up with Rafael Toledo (Enrique Gil), and ends up



Still from *Alone/Together* (2019)

working as an assistant to Greg Fausto (Adrian Alandy). The rest of the film charts her return to the art world, where she had become a pariah.

That Christine Lazaro failed to realize her career plans, she is told, does not mean that she herself is a failure. “You can always make your own dreams,” her professor says in consolation. Years after they split up, Rafael tells her not to focus on who she was, but on who she should be. “Do it for yourself,” Christine’s mom advises.

This is standard self-help fare. But this is precisely why *Alone/Together* is so political. In her quest for self-fulfillment, she struggles against powerlessness and dependence. When she tells

her boyfriend and employer, Greg Fausto (Adrian Alandy), that she wants to work again in the art world, he says that she “can’t stand on her own.” Christine decides to quit and end the relationship.

Ayoko na. I want out....Tama na, it’s over.... You saved me, I served you... ...You support me, but not enough to make me fly...I am a child, but why do I feel so old? Hindi ko na kilala ang sarili ko....I should be dreaming, conquering the world....But I built my life, career, my dreams around you...

Christine’s relationship with Greg—one of dependence, inferiority, and infantilization—typifies hierarchical, patron-client relations in Philippine

society. Greg is Christine's literal patron; he saved her from a legal predicament, and gave her a job when no one else would. She served him out of *utang na loob*. Like Christine, many Filipinos are (made) subordinate to, and dependent on, the wealthy and the powerful. Even outside this political clientelism, communal norms dominate, and militate against autonomy or a full-blown, American-style individualism.

Of course, the prevalence of communalism and individualism will vary depending on, say, social class or even income level, and may even co-exist in communities and individuals. Generally speaking, the Philippines scores low on an individualism index, but rated high in terms of hierarchy.<sup>1</sup> Speaking up,

not least dissent, is frowned upon. Subordinates—children, citizens, and employees—are told, “Sumunod na lang kayo,”<sup>2</sup> while rebellious youth often hear variations of “habang nasa pamamahay kita, ako masusunod.” One commentator writes of “toxic Filipino culture,” wherein,

The hierarchical structures of our families also make our relationships feel a lot less democratic. It is considered rebellion to speak up and voice an opinion toward an elder; submission to patriarchs is an expectation. Laughably, it is bad manners for children to talk back to parents, but the same is true when we are dead silent.<sup>3</sup>

Many Filipinos anchor their identities on their families, who



Still from *Alone/Together* (2019)



Still from *Ulan* (2019)

supply the primary rationale for, say, their careers or even marriage partners. Consider also those who venture abroad just to send money to their families, or are obligated to sacrifice their own plans to provide long-term assistance to a sibling or a relative. There is little incentive to strike out on one's own. For instance, remittances generate a culture of dependence that discourages other family members in the Philippines from seeking work.

*Alone/Together* flies in the face of this culture, and champions autonomy and self-determination. Christine breaks up with Greg, pursues her dreams, and starts anew. And to drive home her independence, she ends up single, even as the final scene teases the possibility of getting back together with Rafael. At any rate, it's not surprising that Christine is an artist. For Romanticism in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, art was a space of freedom.

If romance films in the past generally had a happy ending, their recent incarnations do not. In *Ulan*, Maya (Nadine Lustre) finds her true love, Peter (Carlo Aquino), but is denied by the heavens. This tragedy is framed through a refreshing homage to Philippine folklore. Needless to say, traditional beliefs on rain abound. Putting eggs outdoors can persuade the heavens to stall the downpour. When rain falls even when the sun is shining, it means two *tikbalangs* are getting married. But it also signifies the gods' disapproval.

Maya as a young girl witnesses such a marriage, and speaks with the two *tikbalangs* about love conquering all, a belief she carries into adulthood. She is, however, unlucky in her relationships, all of which ended while or because it was raining. This leads her to hate weddings, to give up on love, and to believe she is cursed.



Still from *Ulan* (2019)

In *Ulan*, Folklore imposes its logic on, and mirrors, the events in Maya's life. If her relationships end because of rain, she is by extension a *tikbalang* whose love affairs the heavens frown upon. Just when she and Peter are about to end up—finally—together, a storm kills him off. Peter had left the church—he was a seminarian—a rejection of a powerful institution for which he too was punished, even if he said, “Malakas ako kay Lord.” Similarly, if a typhoon represents a lost love and the rage of a woman betrayed, Maya fits the bill; she too has lost Peter and has reason to lash out. Speaking to a *tikbalang* after his death, she expresses her anger and disillusionment. If love supposedly conquers all, why, she asks, did she never end up with Peter?

Folklore in *Ulan* represents an all-powerful order that determines the fate of individuals. It decides whom one can love, and punishes any transgression. One could reasonably expect that after Peter's death, Maya would take her fate lying down. But like her indifference to the lesson on the water cycle, she never gives up on love, an affirmation symbolized by the film's final sequence. Maya meets her younger self, and both jump and down happily in the rain, all in Matrix-like slow motion.

The scene expresses her self-affirmation, and her defiance of the gods in the face of personal tragedy. While there is no storming the heavens or overturning the divine order, love in *Ulan* is nevertheless a form

of resistance, a Kierkegaardian commitment to one's self. An individual subject to the gods resonates politically. The powers-that-be in the real world also shape our fate, but like Maya, we can always push back. *Ulan* affirms the self and champions it—a la liberal democracy—against an all-powerful order.

At the same time, Maya's attitude to love changes. In one scene, she muses that people are often advised to save some for themselves when they enter a relationship. She realizes, however, that even if she loves, she will never lose anything. Love here is as infinite as the power of the heavens. This actually fulfills Peter's wish for an inexhaustible love, an omnipresence to rival that of the divine order.

Such boundlessness overturns a self-debasing, martyr-like loving found in unequal, hierarchical relationships. In Maya's case, she was enslaved to love—in love with the idea of love, as her friend Topi (Josef Elizalde) remarked. But in and through Peter, she discovers a more expansive notion of the phenomenon, one that preserves and enriches her individuality. Here, love is no longer self-emptying.

This is all part of Maya's transformation. From a self-

absorbed, love-obsessed woman, she now helps street children, reading them stories and writing a children's book. The change empowers her, and reverses her disillusionment. Through volunteer work, she actively reaches out to others and finds new meaning in life. If, before, she could not write a sexy, romance narrative (she works at a publishing firm), she later pens what "her heart really wants": a children's book about a little girl and tikbalangs. For the new Maya, love is no longer (just) about *eros* but (also) about *agape*. No longer enslaved to a fantasy of love, she finds freedom, meaning and happiness in civic engagement and beyond the standard happily-ever-after. As we shall see below, this championing of singlehood, as well as the frustration of fairy-tale endings, is implicitly connected to the values of liberal democracy.

Unlike the two films above, *Isa Pa, With Feelings* has an unequivocally happy ending. Gali Pastrano (Carlo Aquino), a deaf, and Mara Navarro (Maine Mendoza), who is hard of hearing, end up together. Raising awareness of the difficult lives of the deaf, the film offers an inspirational story of how to overcome seemingly irreconcilable differences. More importantly, it projects love as a relationship between equals, and rejects the kind that is based on hierarchy and one-sided dependence. Because of his condition and bitter



Still from *Isa Pa, With Feelings* (2019)

experiences, Gali cannot accept that Mara's love for him is genuine. He can only imagine that their relationship is built only on pity and convenience. This we learn from the film's dramatic confrontation scene.

A flashback explains why his previous relationship with Annica (Arci Muñoz) also broke down. It was tainted not just by an insecurity that Annica would leave, but also by his expectation that she serve and cater to his needs, not least that she sign for him when they have company. "Yaya mo ba ako?" Annica says. Theirs was an unequal relationship, and Gali felt that his condition—his vulnerability—demanded that she treat him that way.

Realizing his mistake, he tries (and succeeds) to make up with Mara. He admits he loves her, but still feels that

it is not right, wishes that he were of hearing too, and fears that Mara will eventually grow tired of him and the inevitable misunderstandings. To which she simply responds, "Then I'll be deaf for you."

This entails some sacrifice on the woman's (again?!) part, but the line also symbolizes their equality and their shared vulnerability, on which their relationship is reconstructed. Gali and Mara are not *yaya* and *amo*, but equals, and this is constitutive of their love for one another. Indeed, in *God Still Matters*, the Dominican theologian Herbert McCabe writes,

Love, then, is between equals. To love is to give to another not possessions or any such good thing. It is to give yourself, which means providing a space in which the other can be himself or herself.



Love is rather rare and comes with maturity when we can get away from the need to be dominant or to find another who is not dominant.<sup>4</sup>

To stress the point, *Isa Pa, With Feelings* has them dancing at the recital, showcasing the trust and mutuality required of any healthy relationship, romantic or otherwise. Indeed, throughout the film, they help each other. Gali risks his life to help Mara when she was locked out of her apartment. She in turn installs a Christmas lights-doorbell system to alert him if someone's at the door.

Many romance films today work with and around common themes, are commercially driven, and largely eschew political engagement. The Juan Luna monologue in *Alone/Together*, or the jarring allegory ("Pilipinas!") in *Ulan*, which seek to temper this apolitical thrust, seem rare in the genre. At any rate, the attempts feel out of sync with each film's largely personal themes.

At any rate, the profit motive does not preclude these movies from engaging social issues. Nor should they have explicit political references to do so. On the contrary, it is precisely because of their treatment of love that romantic films are most political. That the same themes recur could be cause for lament or snobbery, but it's also an invitation

to see the perennial problems that romantic movies address. What makes *kilig* and *hugot* so relevant, relatable, and profitable?

These films emerged alongside, and to some extent, resonate with, broader shifts in Philippine society: the decline of marriages, the increase in the number of single Filipinos and of one-person households, the rise of social media as a vehicle for self-expression, the popularity of self-care and adulting, changes in gender norms and the "family value system," the expansion of the service sector, and most importantly, perhaps, the emergence of a young, educated, urban middle-class (millennials), who represent the market of such films.

Like Christine in particular, millennials live by the values of self-determination, self-empowerment, and self-discovery. "Comprising 35 percent of the Philippine population," they are now "a driving force in the economy."<sup>5</sup> It must be said, however, that things are not as rosy for all millennials. For many of them are unemployed or earn so little.

But whatever the extent of these trends, the values espoused in romance films do clash with traditional values of Philippine society, which were outlined above: the respect for hierarchy, the



Still from *Isa Pa, With Feelings* (2019)

perpetuation of dependence, and lack of a full-blown individualism. The struggles and subsequent transformations of Christine, Maya, and Gali embody these tensions, and reflect a society caught between conflicting value systems.

Each film negotiates, and situates itself within, this tension in its own way. Collectively though, they invite audiences to think about—and reimagine—the basis of their relationships. How do I view gender roles? What are my expectations of love? How would my relationships—not just love affairs—look like outside hierarchy, inequality, and a one-sided dependence?

Needless to say, answering these questions involves pain and loss. And that, I suppose, helps explain why the films elicit so much *hugot* and *feels*. Far from limited to *kilig*, they draw on deeper social issues, and are highly cathartic, especially for their target market, for doing so. They make for a different level

of *hugot*, as it were.

Christine Lazaro's story in *Alone/Together* illustrates the enormity of these transitions. The trip to New York—especially with Rafael—represents a turning point in her transformation. The Big Apple epitomizes her dreams, and serves as a space where Christine is (temporarily) free from the relationship that ties her down. New York rekindles her passion for art, and she *almost* gets back together with Rafael. However, having glimpsed her freedom, she rationalizes her relationship with Greg, denies her feelings for Raf, and seems keen to settle for her current life. He calls her a coward, and she argues back: it also takes bravery to accept her fate. Christine does pull through, but clearly not after much drama.

Through these difficult transformations, romance films point to the still-powerful pull of tradition, of the past, of old values.

But they also drag the characters—and the audiences—through the tortuous emergence of the liberal democratic subject: autonomous but of equal standing with others, single yet self-determining. This, incidentally, is why many romantic movies of late have abandoned happy endings. Audiences are certainly more jaded today, but liberal democracy demands singlehood.

*Alone/Together* and *Ulan* dangle the possibility of Rafael and Christine, or Maya and Peter, ending up together (again), only to frustrate the expectation. This formal shift in the genre mirrors a difficult social transition. It's tempting to stay in the past, or to insist on happily-ever-after.

But if romance films today frustrate expectations of a happy ending, they force Christine and Maya to be single and free, and

compel Gali to reconstruct his relationship with Mara. All of the characters abandon, or at least reckon with their past. But the present and future beckon, too. The bittersweet endings of *Alone/Together*, *Ulan*, and *Isa Pa, With Feelings* signify a fresh start, a new hope, which, allegorically speaking, the Philippines deserves, but which it must first embrace.

Change of course requires more than personal transformations. But while it's easy to dismiss romance films for their lack of direct political resonance, they are engaged, and embody the end goal of social transformation. If all of us seek change, it's because we want a society where everyone—like Christine Lazaro—is free to pursue their dreams and fulfill their potential. It's a vision that resonates with Marx's *Economic-Philosophic Manuscripts*, even if he did not exactly put it in those terms.

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## ENDNOTES

- 1 "Philippines," Hofstede Insights, n.d., <https://www.hofstede-insights.com/country/the-philippines/>.
- 2 Sofia Virtudes, "'Pasaway' commuters amid lockdown? These people don't have a choice," Rappler, 19 March 2020, <https://www.rappler.com/voices/rappler-blogs/commuters-do-not-have-choice-coronavirus-luzon-lockdown>.
- 3 Michael Baylosis, "Toxic Filipino culture?," Inquirer.net, 23 August 2019, <https://opinion.inquirer.net/123484/toxic-filipino-culture>.
- 4 Herbert McCabe, *God Still Matters* (London and New York: Continuum, 2002), 179.
- 5 Nikki Faustine P. de Guzman, "'Adulging' duties: paying bills, pursuing passions," Business World, 4 May 2017, <https://www.bworldonline.com/adulging-duties-paying-bills-pursuing-passions/>.



# ANG ROMANTIKONG DANAS NG DAHAS SA REALISMO

**Andrea Anne I. Trinidad**

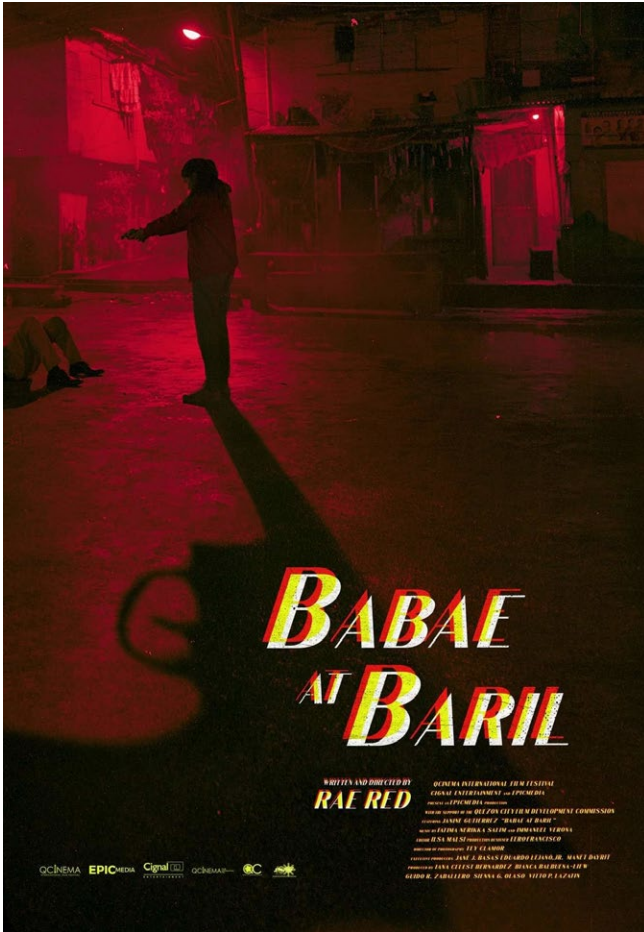
**ALPHA: RIGHT TO KILL**

**KALEL, 15**

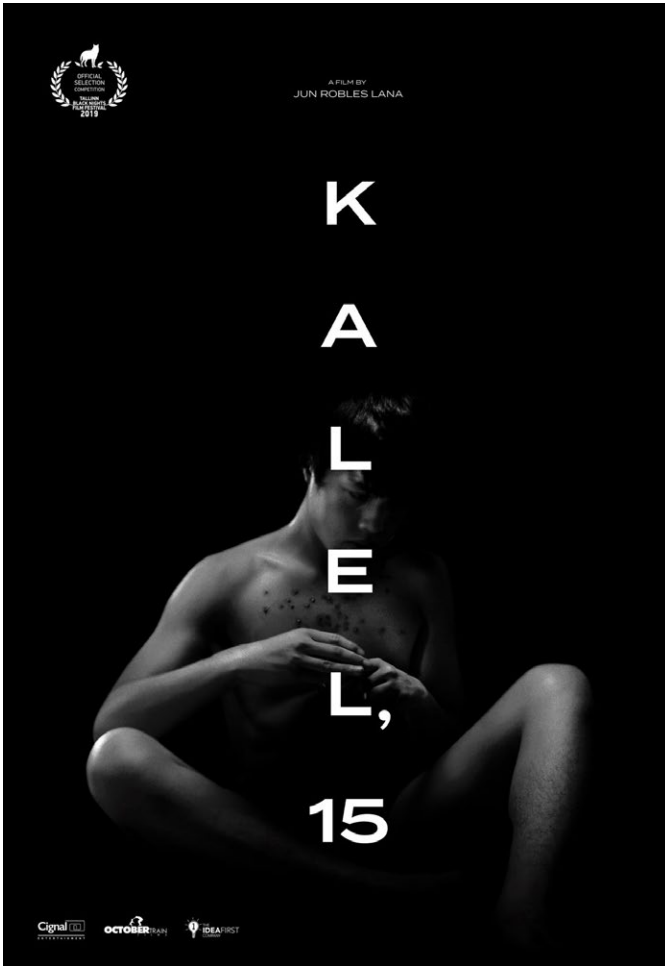
**BABAE AT BARIL**

**UTOPIA**

Longlisted films of 2019

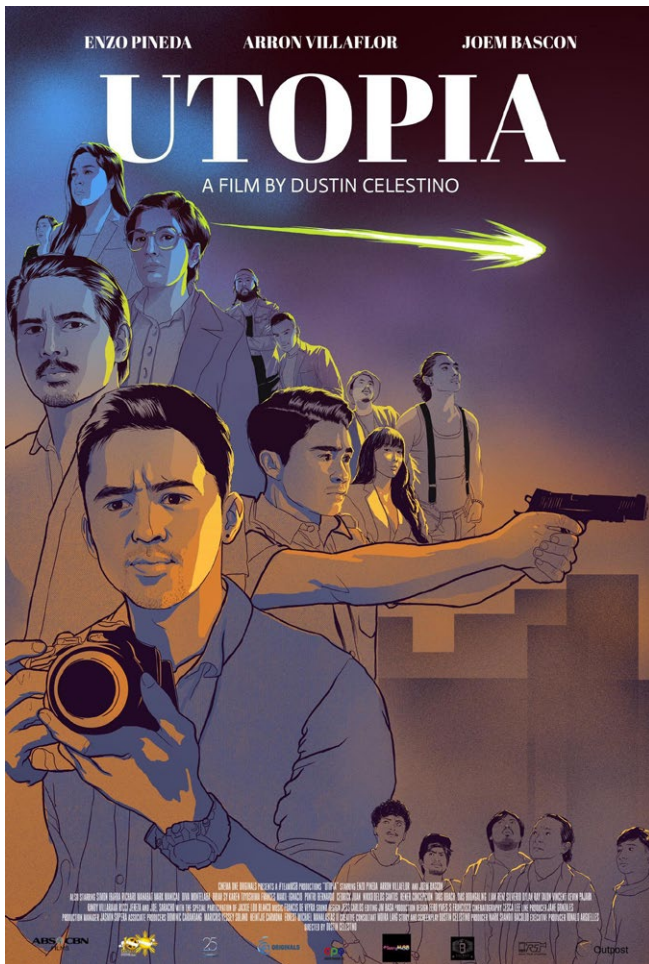


Realismo ang hulmahanag kadalasang nagluluwal ng pelikula sa bansa. Hindi mapasubaliang hanggang sa kasalukuyan, itong tradisyon parin ang madalas katigan ng mga manlilikha sa likod ng mga pelikulang naglalayong paksain ang tila karaniwan nang karanasan ng karahasan na lalong pinasisidhi ng retorikang isinusulong ng kasalukuyang administrasyon kasabay ng aktibo ring pagsasakaspangan sa mga institusyon at sa lapatangang kalakaran nito. Napagbubuklod halimbawa ang mga pelikulang *Alpha: Right to Kill* (Brillante Mendoza, 2019), *Babae at Baril* (Rae Red, 2019), *Kalel, 15* (Jun Robles Lana, 2019), *at Utopia* (Dustin Celestino, 2019) ng iba't ibang paraan ng pagtuhog ng mga ito sa usapin ng pagbebenta at paggamit ng droga at ng problematikong pag-uugnay ng adiksiyon sa isyu ng kahirapan. Bagaman mistulang realismo ang lenteng ginagamit sa lantarang pag-ukilkil sa napapanahong suliranin, interesanteng natutumbok din ng mga pelikula ang mundo ng romansa sa pagbanat sa hanggahan ng mga establisado na nitong pamantayan.



Kasama ang pelikulang *Akin ang Korona* (Zig Dulay, 2019), na nagpapakita naman ng karahasang dulot ng popular na midyang nanamantala ng mga ordinaryong tao at ng kanilang personal na kuwento, itinatampok ng mga pelikulang nabanggit ang pagsambulat ng pagnanasa sa pinakasukdulang nibel na madalas nakukuyom ng romansa sa isang katanggap-tanggap na antas. Hayag,

masidhi at sagad-sagaran kung gayon ang pagpapakita, at kung minsan katuparan na rin, ng mga pagnanasa ng mga tauhang sinusundan ng naratibo. Kung gayon, nababangat sa nakasanayang hulma ang pinipiling elemento mula sa genre ng romansa, at inilalagag sa isang kuwestiyonableng pagsasakatuparan upang tuluyan itong maangkin ng realismong laging may bahid ng karahasan.



Lalong napatingkad ang karahasan dahil pinipiling ilagak ang ugat at tampulan ng sukdulang pagnanasa at pagkahumaling sa katawan ng mga kabataang tauhan. Namumuhunan kung gayon ang mga pelikula sa imahen ng kamusmusan, na di kalaunan ay gagamitin upang maihasik sa isang bastardisadong paraan ang elementong hiram mula sa romansa. Sa *Akin ang Korona*, dinidiskurso ang

pagnanasa sa pamamagitan ng karakter ni Nanong (Nar Cabico) na tila nasisiyahan sa pagsulyap-sulyap kay MJ (Kirst Viray), ang misteryoso at tahimik na *camera man* na naatansang magdokumento ng kaniyang buhay bilang ulilang magtutuyo na pinapasok ang samu't saring raket upang masustentuhan ang pag-aaral ng nakababatang kapatid. Habang tumatagal at mas lalong nagiging masalimuot



Larawan 1. Dalawang eksena sa *Akin ang Korona* kung kailan lalong naging hayag sa mga manonood ang pagnanasa ni Nanong kay MJ na dinulot ng kagyat na pagtatama ng kanilang mga balat—pagsasaayos ng angulo ng mukha para sa mas epektibong depiksiyon ng emosyon sa kamera (itaas) at pag-akbay nang humiling ng retrato si Nanong sa huling araw ng *shooting* sa kanilang lugar sa Catanauan, Quezon (ibaba)

ang proseso ng pagdodokumento ng buhay ni Nanong para sa espesyal na episyado ng palabas na napamamagatang “Akin ang Korona,” maglalaan ng mga sandali ang pelikula upang sundan ang paglago ng pagpapamalas nito ng atraksiyon sa matangkad at matipunong camera man. Mula sa simpleng pagnakaw ng tingin, tungo sa tipikal na pisikalisasyon ng kilig na lubusang namalas sa mga eksenang kagyat na nagtatagpo ang kanilang mga balat [Lar 1], hanggang sa pino ngunit maharot na tagong pagkuha ng *selfie* kasama ang tulog na lalaki sa kanilang biyahe patungong Maynila kung saan pinangakuan

si Nanong ng palabas na muling makakatagpo ang lumisang ama, tinatalunton ng pelikula ang mapaglarong pagyabong ng pagkahumaling ng kabataang bakla tungo sa maipagpapalagay na heteroseskuwal na camera man.

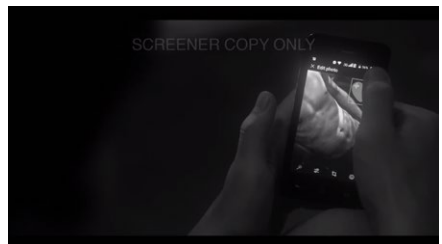
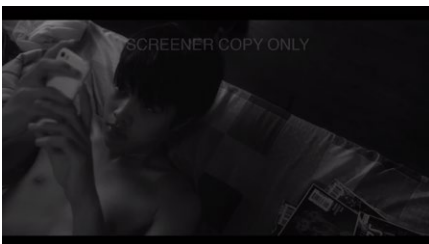
Sa likod ng pagtapik ng pelikula sa inosenteng atraksiyon ni Nanong na nakapagpapagaan sa kabuoang pakiramdam ng panonood, hindi ito sapat upang mapagtakpan ang sumisidhing karahasang inihahasik ng piksiyunal na palabas sa ngalan ng *ratings*. Kung mamalas pa kay Nanong ang pagpipigil upang hindi tuluyang sumambulat ang pagnanasa sa



camera man, walang naiwang pagpipigil sa mga nangangasiwa ng palabas, partikular na sa *segment producer* nitong si Marky (Aaron Rivera), upang maisakatuparan ang makasariling intensiyon na makapaghain ng abang kuwento ng buhay ng isang ordinaryong tao mauwi man ito sa kaswal na pandidikta, panggagatas, at panlililang.

Mas mapusok namang mukha ng kabataang nagnanasa ang inungkat sa *Kalel, 15*. Bagaman mas nahahabi ang imahen ng kamusmusan sa bidang si Kalel (Elijah Canlas) bilang binatang nakaasa nang labis sa pamilya, nahihilig sa pangongolekta ng komiks, nangangarap na magkaroon ng sariling *waveboard*, nakikisabay sa uso sa palagiang pagpapaskil sa *social media* ng mga banidosong larawan [Lar. 2], at nasisiyahan sa patagong pagbisita sa mga bar kung saan nakatitikim ng sarap ng mga gawaing ipinagbabawal

pa sa kaniyang murang edad, sa mas seksuwalisadong antas isinusulong ng pelikula ang usapin ng pagnanasa. Maliban sa batbat ito ng mga dialogo at eksenang direktang tumatalakay sa iba't ibang seksuwal na akto na kinasasangkutan ng parehong pangunahin at secondaryong tauhan upang maisakatuparan ang pagnanasa ng laman, kaagad na inihahantong ng pelikula ang diskurso ng pagnanasa sa usaping seksuwal sa agaran ding pagpapakilala sa kabataang si Kalel na HIV *positive*—isang napapanahong suliraning hindi lubusang napanghawakan dahil mas pinili ng pelikulang sairin ang suson-susong akto ng kapusukan ng mga tauhang kapwa nakapaloob sa institusyon tulad ng pamilya, simbahan, at paaralan na maglulugar kay Kalel sa dulong bahagi ng naratibo sa labis na kahirapan. Isang lugmok na kalagayang ipapakitang naigpawan sa wakas dahil sa patuloy na pagsandig ng batang tauhan sa



Larawan 2. Palagiang pagpapaskil ng hubad ng katawan na nakakukuha ng interes mula sa ibang *social media app users* na marahil ay nakaimpluwensiya kay Kalel na suuning ang pagbebeta ng katawan sa wakas ng pelikula.

kapusukan sa pamamagitan ng mapaghiganting pagbebenta ng katawan.

Karumal-dumal naman ang kinahantungan ng pagpapamalas ng masidhing pagnanasa sa pelikulang *Babae at Baril at Utopia*. Sa labis na pagbanat sa posibilidad ng pagkahumaling at pagnanasa na aspekto ng romansa, krimen ang kinasapitan ng mga tauhan sa dalawang pelikulang ito. Sa *Babae at Batil*, panggagahasa ng katrabaho (Felix Rocco) ang puno't dulo ng sunod-sunod na paninindak at paghihiganti na isinagawa ng babaeng bida (Janine Gutierrez). Sa hindi inaasahang pagkakataong makapag-angkin ng baril na tila nakapaglunsad ng kaniyang maangas at matapang na paghihiganti, sinundan ng naratibo ang pagtunton ng karakter ni Gutierrez sa mga una nang nambastos, namahiya at nambalewala sa kaniya kung saan kasama ang lalaking katrabaho na una nang nadahas at sumubok pang magpatahimik sa kaniya.

Bukod sa labis na pagbanat sa katuparan ng pagnanasa, mababakasan din ang pelikula sa simula ng pagtatangkang humalaw ng mga katangiang mala-*leading man* upang ipakilala ang *salesman* na karakter ni Rocco. Isasapakete nito ang nasabing karakter bilang mapagmalasakit sa laging kimi at tulirong dalaga na napag-

iinitang madalas ng kanilang *manager* dahil sa pagsusuo't laspag nang *stockings* [Lar. 3]. Sa kalaunan, babasagin ng pelikula ang hiram na imaheng ito ng binata sa malagim na eksena ng pagtatraydor nang gahasain ang babae isang gabi sa kanilang *staff locker room*—isang pagpapamalas ng malubhang katuparan ng pagnanasang naihudyat marahil ng mga paunang sensyales na may mangyayaring pisikal na pandarahas tulad ng obsesyon ng camera sa pagpokus sa mga binti ng mga *saleslady* na tauhan partikular na ang sa karakter ni Gutierrez, at ang paglulugar ng mga empleyado sa masikip na espasyo kung saan patay-sindi ang ilaw na tila nangangahulugang may malagim na pangyayaring magaganap kalaunan.

Pagnanasang nauwi naman sa pagpatay na sanhi ng magkakaugnay pang patayan ang tampok sa *Utopia*. Katulad ng *Babae at Baril*, may pagtatangka rin ang pelikulang ipasak sa realistikong kuwento ang palasak nang elemento ng kuwentong romansa—ang mapanibughuing mangingibig sa katauhan ni Ocho (Brian Sy). Dulot ng labis na pagseselos, napatay ni Ocho si Tiger (Mark Manicad), ang vlogger na kinasundo upang mapatunayan kung manloloko ba o hindi ang dating nobyang si Shy (Karen Toyoshima). Dahil



Larawan 3. Mga eksena sa pelikula kung saan mamamalas ang palagian ngunit patagong pangungumusta ng karakter ni Rocco sa karakter ni Gutierrez. Bagaman ipinapakitang pampagaan sa suliraning hinaharap ng dalaga ang dialogong umuugat sa karakter ng binata, kaiba ang gustong sabihin ng madilim at masikip na espasyo sa mga sandaling ito.

kasangkot si Ocho sa inaasahang malakihang *drug drop* na sabay-sabay inaabangan at binabantayan ng kasangkot na gang na pinamumunuan ng ama ni Shy, ng mga batikang hitman, at ng NBI, nagkandaloko-loko ang plano ng mga tauhang sangkot at nauwi ito sa sala-salabid na pagpatay at pagkamatay dahil lang sa personal na plano ni Ocho na magmakaawang makipagbalikan sa dating nobya.

Sa halip na ipakita ang pangangatal dulot ng nagawang

krimen sa harap mismo ng minamahal, mas pinatitingkad ng pelikula ang katauhang “mangigibig” ni Ocho sa patuloy nitong pagsusumamo kay Shy sa harap ng bangkay ni Tiger, at ng rumespundeng baguhang pulis na pinagkakuwawang tawaging “dalaga” dahil sa angking kadalisayan nito kung ikukumpara sa kurakot na superyor na binabansagan bilang “Dalawang Sungay ni Satanas.”

Kaya bukod sa magkakaugnay na patayang naganap, batbat din ng ang pelikula ng mga sandaling

humuhugot si Ocho upang tuluyang makumbinsi si Shy na karapat-dapat siyang piliin bilang mangingibig. Isang pagpapakiusap na hindi kinagat ng dalaga na nakikitang kahinaan ang pagiging “*dramatic beta male*” ng dating kasintahan.

Sa pag-uangkat ng karakter ni Shy sa imahen ng isang *beta male* na kagyat maiuugnay sa tila kinikilingan niyang imahen ng mas makisig at dominanteng *alpha male* na maipagmamalaki sa ama, maipapakita ang lalong pagkiling ng mga realistikong pelikula sa romansa partikular na sa inilalatag nitong tropong gumagabay sa di-pantay na pag-uugnayan ng mga tauhan. Humahalaw sa uri ng tauhang maililinya sa ugnayang Alpha at Omega, napatitingkad ng ilang halimbawa pelikulang nabanggit ang partikular na katangian ng romansa kung saan ang nabubuong pag-uugnayan sa pagitan ng mga bida ang mismong lumilikha ng pagdurusa ng mga ito. Katulad ng sa romansa, masasaksihan sa ilang pelikula ang ugnayang Alpha/Omega o ang herakikal na sistemang pinapaburan ang una na siyang mas makapangyarihan, mapanaig, at dominante.

Ang gayong di-pantay na pag-uugnayan kung saan may nangdodomina at dinodominhan,

ang pangunahing lumilikha ng mga tensiyon sa pelikula. Sa *Akin ang Korona* bilang halimbawa, walang pakundangang tinrato ni Markey (at pati na rin ng kabuoang piksiyunal na palabas) si Nanong bilang pagmamay-aring madaling mandohan kung papaano dapat manamit, kumilos at higit sa lahat tumugon sa maski sa nakapanlulumong balitang yumao na ang ama mapakinabangan lang ang pagtatanghal sa yari nang kuwento nito. Pagmamanipula rin upang igiit ang dominanteng posisyon ang ipinamamalas ng “Dalawang Sungay ni Satanas” bilang tampok na tauhan sa *Utopia*. Sa mas pinasidhing paraan ng dominasyon, tumatawid ang dalawang tiwaling pulis na nababansagan ng ngalan sa sadistang pakikitungo sa lahat ng kinauugnayan. Bukod sa intensiyunal nitong pagmamanipula at pananakit sa mga taong nauugnay ang propesyon sa pulisya tulad ng opisyal ng NBI, at tagapamahala ng punerarya na kapwa sangkot sa isyu ng droga, naglaan din ang pelikula ng mahabang eksena upang ipakita ang kasiyahang natatamo ng dalawa sa pangangasiwa ng direktang pananakit sa isang preso na iaangat pang lalo sa mala-pornograpikong antas dahil na rin sa obsesyong kuhanan at isadokumento ito [Lar 4] .



Larawan 4. Sa dokumentadong tortyur ng isang preso nauwi ang sadistang gawain ng “Dalawang Sungay ni Satanas.”

Mailulugar naman ang pinakamasidhing paglalapat ng ugnayang nandodominata at dinodominahan sa pelikulang halos isunod ang pamagat sa relasyong ito—ang *Alpha: Right to Kill* na isinusulong hanggang sa karapatang pagpatay ang retorika ng pag-aari. Tulad ng mga naunang pelikula, batbat ng pasakit sa puntong peligroso na ang relasyong kinasasangkutan ng dalawang pangunahing tauhang sina Moises (Allen Dizon) at Elijah (Elijah Filamor). Bagaman hango ang mga pangalan sa Bibliya, partikular na sa kuwento ng pagbabagong-anyo, hindi sa transpormatibo at maluwalhating wakas nauwi ang kuwento sa pagitan ng kanilang di-pantay na pag-uugnayan.

*Alpha* o *asset* ng pulis na si Moises ang nakababatang si Elijah. Bilang asset na inaasahang makapagturo kung sino ang dapat tugisin ng mga pulis sa operasyon nito laban sa ilegal na droga, kagyat na nababahiran ng panganib ang relasyong ito. Subalit, hindi rito

natutuldukan pag-uugnayan ng dalawa. Bilang lamang sa relasyong dulot ng kaniyang posisyon at kapangyarihan bilang pulis, pinapatawan ni Moises si Elijah ng mas peligrosong utos—ang gawing pera ang drogang nakukumpiska sa mga operasyon. Katulad ng inaasahan sa mga relasyong seksuwal na inuungkat sa ilang uri ng romansa kung saan ang dominante sa relasyon ang laging tagapaghatid ng sukdulang sakit at sukduhan ding kasiyahan, si Moises bilang dominante ang naglulugar kay Elijah sa mga maruming gawaing magdudulot dito kalaunan ng katiting na kasiyahan. Bagaman buhay ni Elijah bilang dinodominahan ang palagiang nakataya sa kaniyang pagseserbisyo kay Moises, at sariling katawan ang palagiang itinatambad sa suson-susong panganib upang maisakatuparan ang rurok ng paninilbihan, natutustusan niya ang kaniyang mag-ina sa maliit na porsiyentong nakukuha sa niya sa pag-uugnayang ito. At katulad din ng seksuwal na pag-



Larawan 5. Kabaligtaran ng pangakong hindi pababayaang pumalyang Alpha, pananakal hanggang sa mapatay ang inihasik ni Moises kay Elijah sa wakas ng pelikula.

uugnayang mayroon at mayroong masasaktan dulot ng isang maliit na pagkakamali, si Elijah bilang nasa abang posisyon ang unang makatatanggap ng pinsala [Lar 5].

Sa huli, pilit na magsasalampak ng romantikong pagbaling sa mga pelikulang parikalang una nang nagtampok ng karahasan. Sa pamamagitan ng pagpokus sa kawalang-muwang ng mga kabataang tauhan upang subuking makapag-establisa ng kaayusang moral sa wakas ng naratibo, gagamit ang *Alpha: Right to Kill* ng eksena kung saan aalayan ng kambal na anak ang amang si Moises ng tulang patungkol sa inaakalang marangal na trabaho nito, habang inosenteng pag-iyak naman ni “Dalaga” na nagpapakita ng panlulumo sa sunod-sunod na kamatayang nasaksihan ang ipapakita sa huling bahagi ng *Utopia*.

Maski natuldukan ang mga karahasan sa bawat pelikulang

nabanggit—pananatiling tahimik ni Nanong sa *Akin ang Korona* na magpapakita ng kaniyang di-mapaghiganting katauhan, pag-alpas ni Kalel sa kinasapitang kahirapan sa *Kalel, 15*, pagtapon ng karakter ni Gutierrez ng baril upang tuldukan ang paggamit nito tungo sa kasamaan sa *Babae at Baril*, pagdaan ng kometa sa langit ng Kamaynilaan *Utopia* upang pantastikong wakasan ang marahas na gabi, at paggawad ng gantimpala sa kapulisan sa *Alpha: Right to Kill*, maipagpapalagay na pansamantala lamang ang talab ng mga ito, at patuloy na mahahagip ng realismong pelikula ang labis na karahasang lalong pasisidhiin ng mapag-angkin nitong pagsakasangkapan sa mga elementong una nang nasilayan sa mga kuwentong romansa kung saan may paggigiit sa pagbanat ng hangganan ng depiksiyon ng pagkahumaling, pagnanasa at pagbuo ng mga relasyon.



FILMOGRAFIA  
PHILIPPINE CINEMA  
2019

## JANUARY

*Boy Tokwa: Lodi ng Gwapo*

Tony Y. Reyes  
8 January 2019

*The Gift*

Onat Diaz  
11 January 2019

*S.P.A.R.K.*

Carlo Artillaga  
11 January 2019

*Alpha: The Right to Kill*

Brillante Mendoza  
16 January 2019

*Sakaling Maging Tayo*

JP Mabac  
16 January 2019

*Born Beautiful*

Perci M. Intalan  
23 January 2019

*Allergy in Love*

Joross Gamboa  
25 January 2019

*Bato: The Gen. Ronald  
dela Rosa Story*

Adolfo Alix, Jr.  
30 January 2019

*'Tol*

Miko Livelò  
30 January 2019

*Ang Sikreto ng Piso*

Perry Escano  
30 January 2019

## FEBRUARY

*Elise*

Joel Ferrer  
6 February 2019

*Hanggang Kailan?*

Bona Fajardo  
6 February 2019

*Alone/Together*

Antoinette Jadaone  
13 February 2019

*Apple of my Eye*

James Robin Mayo  
14 February 2019

*Time & Again*

Jose Javier Reyes  
20 February 2019

*Exit Point\**

Ronnie Ricketts  
20 February 2019

*Familia Blondina*

Jerry Lopez Sineneg  
27 February 2019

*Second Coming*

Jet Leyco  
27 February 2019

*I Love You, LC!\**

Dave Aguila and Dave Cecilio  
27 February 2019



## MARCH

### *Ulan*

Irene Emma Villamor

13 March 2019

### *Neomanila*

Mikhail Red

13 March 2019

### *Papa Pogi*

Alex Calleja

20 March 2019

### *Pansamantagal*

Joven Tan

20 March 2019

### *Ang Taran Tanods:*

*K'Nang Buhay 'To*

Jose Johnny Nadela

22 March 2019

### *Eerie*

Mikhail Red

27 March 2019

### *Maria*

Pedring Lopez

March 27, 2019

### *Sa Madaling Salita\**

Krina Cayabyab

29 March 2019

### *Mystified*

Mark Reyes

29 March 2019

## APRIL

### *Lakbayan*

Lav Diaz, Brillante Mendoza,

and Kidlat Tahimik

3 April 2019

### *Laurel*

Gigi Javier-Alfonso

7 April 2019

### *Last Fool Show*

Eduardo Roy Jr.

10 April 2019

### *Stranded*

Ice Idanan

10 April 2019

### *Love;Life\**

Nikko Arcega

10 April 2019

### *12 Days to Destiny*

CJ Santos

26 April 2019

## MAY

### *Maledicto*

Mark Miley

1 May 2019

### *S.O.N.S.*

*(Sons of Nanay Sabel)*

Dado C. Lumibao

8 May 2019

### *Tayo sa Huling Buwan ng Taon*

Nestor Abrogena Jr.

8 May 2019

*May & Wife*

Laurice Guillen  
8 May 2019

*Between Maybes*

Jason Paul Laxamana  
15 May 2019

*Kuwaresma*

Erik Matti  
15 May 2019

*The Last Interview:  
The Mayor Antonio Halili Story*

Caesar Soriano  
22 May 2019

*Quezon's Game*

Matthew Rosen  
29 May 2019

*Finding You*

Easy Ferrer  
29 May 2019

*Banal*

J.A. Tadena and Peter Abanna  
29 May 2019

**JUNE**

*Sunshine Family*

Kim Tai-Sik  
5 June 2019

*OFW: The Movie*

Newl Tan  
8 June 2019

*Clarita*

Derick Cabrido  
12 June 2019

*Feelenial: Feeling Millennial*

Richie Del Carmen  
19 June 2019

*Because I Love You*

Joel Lamangan  
26 June 2019

*KontrAdiksyon\**

Njel De Mesa  
26 June 2019

*MOMOL Nights*

Benedict Mique  
29 June 2019

**JULY**

*Misterio de la Noche*

Adolfo Alix, Jr.  
14 July 2021

*My Letters to Happy\**

Pertee Briñas  
17 July 2021

*Family History\**

Michael V.  
24 July 2021

*Hello, Love, Goodbye*

Cathy Garcia-Molina  
31 July 2021

## AUGUST

### *Indak\**

Paul Alexei Basinillo  
7 August 2019

### *Bamboo Dogs*

Khavn dela Cruz  
9 August 2019

### *And Ai, Thank You*

Joven Tan  
14 August 2019

### *Just a Stranger*

Jason Paul Laxamana  
21 August 2019

### *Mina-Anud\**

Kerwin Go  
21 August 2019

### *Sarah Geronimo:*

*This 15 Me*  
Paul Basinillo  
23 August 2019

### *The Fate*

Rey Coloma  
25 August 2019

### *Abandoned*

Kop Oebanda  
28 August 2019

### *The Ghosting\**

Joey de Guzman  
28 August 2019

## SEPTEMBER

### *Usapang Hip-Hop\**

Lara Mendoza  
4 September 2019

### *Sanggano, Sanggago't Sanggwapo*

Al Tantay  
4 September 2019

### *Mga Mata sa Dilim*

Enzo Williams  
13 September 2019

### *Marineros:*

*Men in the Middle of the Sea*  
Anthony Hernandez  
20 September 2019

### *#Jowable\**

Darryl Yap  
25 September 2019

### *Kiko En Lala*

Adolf Alix, Jr.  
25 September 2019

## OCTOBER

### *Ang Henerasyong*

*Sumuko sa Love*  
Jason Paul Laxamana  
2 October 2021

### *Black Lipstick*

Julius Ruslin Alfonso  
9 October 2021

*Isa Pa with Feelings*

Prime Cruz  
16 October 2021

*ICYMI: I See Me*

Carlo Francisco Manatad  
21 October 2019

*Unforgettable*

Jun Lana and Perci Intalan  
23 October 2021

*You Have Arrived*

Shugo Praica  
25 October 2021

*Hellcome Home*

Bobby Bonifacio Jr.  
30 October 2021

*Santigwar*

Joven Tan  
30 October 2021

**NOVEMBER**

*Cara X Jagger*

Ice Idanan  
6 November 2019

*Nuuk*

Veronica Velasco  
6 November 2019

*Barbara Reimagined*

Chris Ad. Castillo and Benedict Mique  
8 November 2019

*The Annulment*

Mac Alejandre  
13 November 2019

*Two Love You*

Benedict Mique  
13 November 2019

*The Art of Ligaw\**

Jourdan Sebastian  
13 November 2019

*Adan*

Roman Perez, Jr.  
20 November 2019

*Damaso*

Joven Tan  
20 November 2019

*Silly Red Shoes*

James Mayo  
23 November 2019

*The Heiress*

Frasco Mortiz  
27 November 2019

*Unbreakable*

Mae Cruz-Alviar  
27 November 2019

*Wild Little Love*

Benedict Mique  
27 November 2019

*King of Reality Shows*

Ariel Villasanta  
27 November 2019

## DECEMBER

*Dead Kids*

Mikhail Red

1 December 2019

*Mañanita*

Paul Soriano

4 December 2019

*Love is Love*

GB Sampedro

4 December 2019

*My Bakit List*

Bona Fajardo

11 December 2019

## FESTIVAL RELEASES

### **Singuwento International Film Festival (February 15-22)**

*Kapayapaan sa Gitna ng*

*Digmaan\**

Nestor Magalpo, Jr.

*Promdi\**

Charlotte Dianco

*Rendezvous\**

Marvin Gabas

*Playground (DOTA o Ako?)\**

Dave Cecilio

*Pur Laine\**

Alexander Cruz

*Immaculada:*

*Pag-ibig ng Isang Ina*

Arlyn dela Cruz

### **Sinag Maynila (April 3-8)**

*Akin ang Korona*

Zig Dulay

*Jesusa*

Ronald Carballo

*Jino To Mari*

Joselito Altarejos

*Pailalim\**

Daniel Palacio

*Persons of Interest*

Ralston Jover

### **Cinemalaya (August 2-13)**

*Ani (The Harvest)\**

Kim Zuñiga and Sandro Del

Rosario

*Belle Douleur*

*(A Beautiful Pain)\**

Atty. Joji V. Alonso

*Children of the River*

*(Annak Ti Karayan)*

Maricel Cariaga

*Edward*

Thop Nazareno

*F#@BOIS*

Eduardo Roy

*Iska*

Theodore Boborol

*John Denver Trending*

Arden Rod Condez

*Malamaya (The Color of Ash)\**

Danica Sta. Lucia and Leilani Chavez

*Pandanggo sa Hukay\**

Sheryl Rose M. Andes

*Tabon\**

Xian Lim

*Ang Hupa*

Lav Diaz

*Alipato: Ka Luis Taruc*

Dik Trofeo

**Pista ng Pelikulang Pilipino  
(September 13-19)**

*Lola Igna*

Eduardo Roy Jr.

*Circa*

Adolfo Alix

*Pagbalik\**

Hubert Tibi and Maria S. Ranillo

*LSS (Last Song Syndrome)*

Jade Castro

*The Panti Sisters*

Jun Robles Lana

*Cuddle Weather*

Rod Marmol

*G!*

Dondon Santos

*I'm Ellenya L.\**

Boy 2 Quizon

*Watch Me Kill*

Tyrone Aciero

*Open*

Andoy Ranay

*Verdict\**

Raymund Ribay Gutierrez

**QCinema (October 13-22)**

*UnTrue*

Sigrid Bernardo

*Kaaway sa Sulod*

Arnel Barbarona

*Babae at Baril*

Rae Red

*Cleaners\**

Glenn Barit

*A is For Agustin\**

Grace Pimentel Simbulan

*For My Alien Friend*

Jet Leyco

*Spring by the Sea*

Aleia Garcia

*Lingua Franca*

Isabel Sandoval

*No Data Plan*

Miko Reverezza

**Cinema One Originals  
(November 7-17)**

*Sila-Sila*

Gian Carlo Abraham

*O*

Kevin Dayrit

*Tia Madre\**

Eve Baswel

*Tayo Muna Habang Hindi Pa Tayo*

Denise O'Hara

*Utopia\**

Dustin Celestino

*Metamorphosis\**

J.E. Tiglao

*Lucid*

Natts Jadaone, Victor Villanueva,  
and Dan Villegas

*Yours Truly, Shirley\**

Nigel Santos

**Metro Manila Film Festival  
(December 25, 2019-January 7,  
2020)**

*Sunod*

Carlo Ledesma

*Miracle in Cell No. 7*

Nuel C. Naval

*Mission Unstapabol:*

*The Don Identity*

Linnet Zurbano

*The Mall, The Merrier*

Barry Gonzales

*Mindanao*

Brillante Mendoza

*3po! Trobol: Huli Ka Balbon*

Rodel Nacianceno

*Culion*

Alvin Yapan

*Write About Love*

Crisanto B. Aquino

**NOTE:**

Films with asterisks are first  
features

# THE CRITERIA

**BEST PICTURE:** refers to vision and direction that pay sensitive and keen attention to both the language of cinema (“presentation”) and social reality (“representation”), in the process refunctioning the possibilities of film as progressive art and popular culture. The Best Picture citation is awarded to the Director not so much because he or she is the auteur or the central intelligence of the film, but because his or her work lies at the juncture which coordinates filmmaking.

**BEST SCREENPLAY:** refers to the rhetoric of writing for film that articulates the complexity of social life and personal perturbation through narrative logic or political conviction; or simply through well-thought out dramatic tension that explores contestation between the personal and the political, the individual and the collective, the private and the public. The Best Screenplay award is given to all the writers of the film.

**BEST EDITING:** refers to the configuration of relationships of time and space among scenes in a film that is able to synthesize, engage in collision, reconcile, or

transgress connections through the complex interplay of mise-en-scene and montage. The Best Editing trophy is given to the editors.

**BEST CINEMATOGRAPHY AND VISUAL DESIGN:** refers to the mise-en-scene and its visual/plastic qualities production design, lighting, art direction, visual effects that lend form to whatever representation is projected on screen; and absorb the differences of social forces and cultures in instances of contradiction, confluence, contact, resistance, or affiliation with one another, as well as imbibe the relationship between people and the structures and institutions they mediate through social practice. The Best Cinematography and Visual Design honor is conferred on the cinematographer and the production designer.

**BEST SOUND AND AURAL ORCHESTRATION:** refers to the rendering of the auditory aspects of film music, natural sound, sound effects as these are counterposed against or harmonized with the language of image, and so become meaningful sign systems on their own. The Best Sound citation is awarded to the sound engineer and the musical scorer.

**BEST PERFORMANCE:** refers to acting, to the playing out of a role or character that implicates



emotion, feeling, and experience in the social conditions of the personal and in the political economies of habit and gesture and how these forge the body politic. The Best Performance citation is handed to the Performer, whether male or female, adult or child, in major or supporting role, individual or ensemble.

**BEST FIRST FEATURE:**

refers to outstanding narrative or documentary film that is the first feature-length work of a director. The Best First Feature citation is conferred to the director of the selected first feature.

## MGA BATAYAN

**PINAKAMAHUSAY NA PELIKULA:**

tumutukoy sa pagdidirihe at bisyon na nagbibigay ng sensitibo at matalas na atensiyon kapwa sa lengguwahe ng pelikula (presentasyon) at panlipunang realidad (representasyon), sa proseso inaayos at pinakikilos ang modo ng pagpapahayag ng pelikula sa realidad sa konteksto ng kakayahan nitong makipag-usap sa malawak na manonood at pukawin ang buhay ng publiko; sa gayon, naaangkin ito para isulong ang kapangyarihan ng midyum at ang sulong na interes. Ang gawad para sa Pinakamahusay na Pelikula

ay ibinibigay sa Direktor hindi dahil sa siya ang auteur o ang sentral na diwa ng pelikula, kundi dahil ang obra niya ay nakalugar sa hugpungang nagbibigay koordinasyon sa paglikha ng pelikula.

**PINAKAMAHUSAY NA DULANG PAMPELIKULA:**

tumutukoy sa retorika ng pagsusulat para sa pelikula na nagpapahayag ng kasalimuotan ng buhay panlipunan at personal na ligalig sa natatanging estruktura ng naratibo o politikal na paniniwala; o sa pamamagitan ng pinag-isipang dramatikong tensiyon na sumisiyasat sa tunggalian ng personal at politikal, ng indibidwal at ng kolektibo, ng pribado at ng publiko. Iginagawad ang Pinakamahusay na Dulang Pampelikula sa lahat ng manunulat ng pelikula.

**PINAKAMAHUSAY NA EDITING:**

tumutukoy sa kompigurasyon ng mga ugnayan ng panahon at espasyo sa mga eksena sa isang pelikulang may kakayahang maglagom, makitunggali, bumuo at bumaklas ng mga pagkakaugnay sa pamamagitan ng masalimuot na paggamit ng mise-en-scene at montage. Ang tropeo para sa Pinakamahusay na Editing ay pinagkakaloob sa mga editor.

**PINAKAMAHUSAY NA SINEMATOGRAPIYA AT DISENYONG BISWAL:** tumutukoy sa mise-

en-scene at sa mga kalidad nitong biswal/plastik disenyong pamproduksiyon, pag-iilaw, direksiyon ng sining, visual effects na nagbibigay-anyo sa anumang representasyon na inilalantad sa telon; at ikinikintal ang pagsasaanyo ng mga puwersang panlipunan at mga kultura sa mga sandali ng kontradiksiyon, pagsasanib, enkwentro, pagtatagpo, pakikipagtunggali o pagkakaugnay sa bawat isa. Ipinagkakaloob ang Pinakamahusay na Sinematograpiya at Disenyong Biswal sa sinematograpar at sa taga-disenyo ng produksiyon.

**PINAKAMAHUSAY NA TUNOG AT ORKESTRASYONG AWRAL:**

tumutukoy sa paglalapat ng mga aspektong may kinalaman sa tunog sa pelikula musika, likas na tunog, sound effects habang ang mga ito ay isinasalungat sa o inaayon sa lengguwahe ng mga imahen, at kung gayon ay nagiging makahulugang sistema ng pananagisag mismo. Iginagawad ang Pinakamahusay na Tunog sa sound engineer at sa tagapaglapat ng musika.

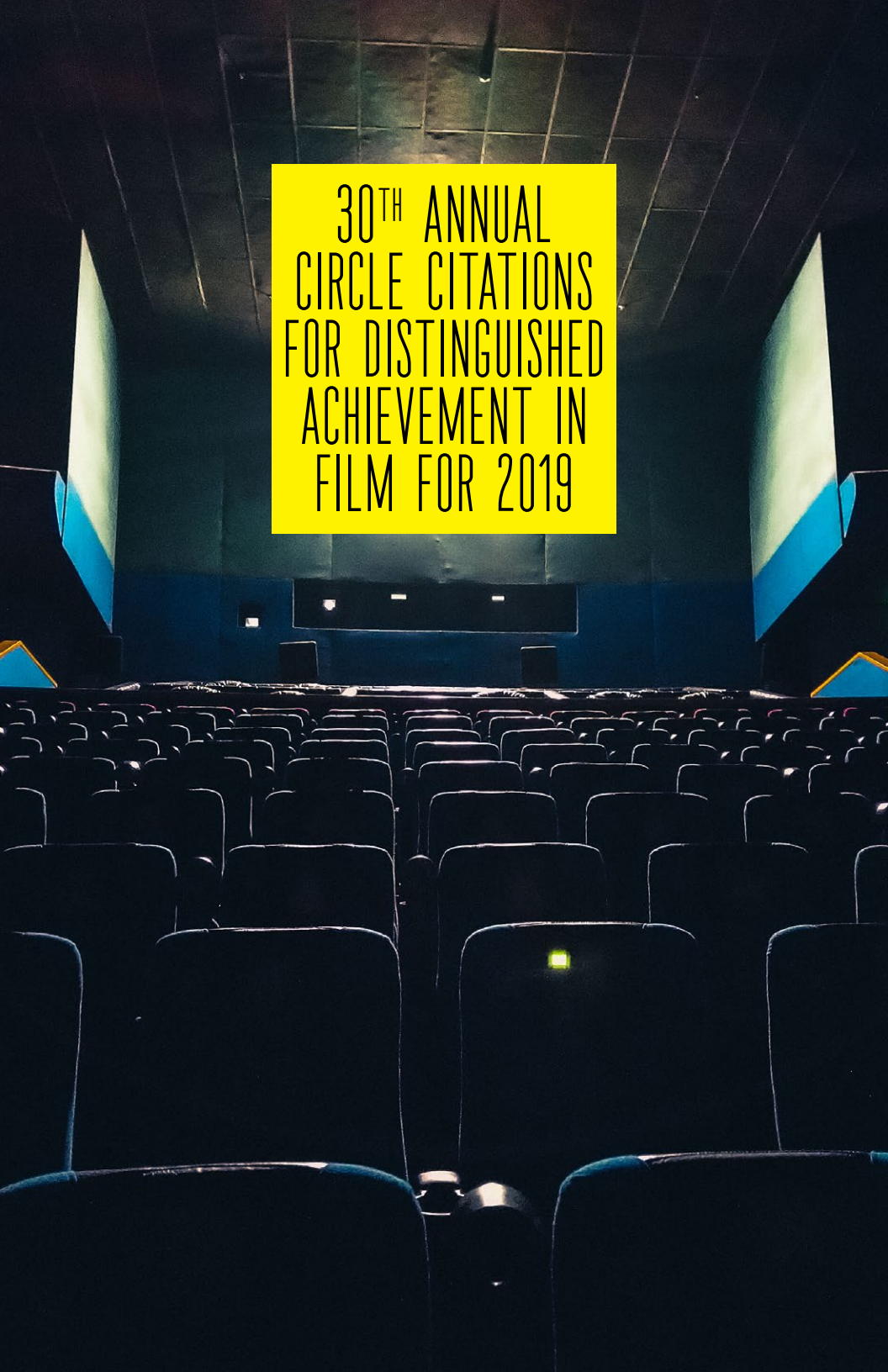
**PINAKAMAHUSAY NA PAGGANAP:**

tumutukoy sa pagganap ng isang papel o karakter na nagsasangkot ng emosyon, damdamin, at karanasan sa mga panlipunang kondisyon ng personal at sa politikal na

ekonomiya ng kaugalian at kilos, at kung paano nakatutulong ang mga ito sa pagsasakatauhan ng sarili. Ipinagkakaloob ang Pinakamahusay na Pagganap sa Gumanap, lalaki o babae, matanda o bata, sa isang pangunahin o pangsuportang papel, sa indibidwal o kolektibong pagganap.

**PINAKAMAHUSAY NA LUN SARANG**

**PELIKULA:** tumutukoy sa mahusay na pelikulang salaysay o dokumentaryo na unang pelikulang may ganap na haba ng isang direktor. Ang gawad para sa Pinakamahusay na Lunsarang Pelikula ay ibinibigay sa direktor ng napiling unang pelikula.



30<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL  
CIRCLE CITATIONS  
FOR DISTINGUISHED  
ACHIEVEMENT IN  
FILM FOR 2019

ANNOUNCED ON MAY 16, 2020

CONFERRED VIRTUALLY ON APRIL 30, 2021

THROUGH YOUNG CRITICS CIRCLE FACEBOOK PAGE

## BEST FILM

**Winner:** *Edward*, directed by Thop Nazareno

**Nominees:**

*Lingua Franca*, directed by Isabel Sandoval

*Verdict*, directed by Raymund Ribay Gutierrez

## BEST SCREENPLAY

**Winner:** *Edward* (Thop Nazareno, John Bedia, and Denise O'Hara)

**Nominees:**

*Cleaners* (Glenn Barit)

*Fuccbois* (Eduardo Roy, Jr.)

*John Denver Trending* (Arden Rod Condez)

*Lingua Franca* (Isabel Sandoval)

*Verdict* (Raymund Ribay Gutierrez)

## BEST EDITING

**Winner:** *Verdict* (Diego Marx Dobles)

**Nominees:**

*A Is for Agustin* (Johnny Bassett)

*Cleaners* (Noah Loyola and Che Tagyamon)

*Edward* (JR Cabrera and Thop Nazareno)

*For My Alien Friend* (Jet Leyco)

*Fuccbois* (Carlo Francisco Manatad)

*John Denver Trending* (Benjo Ferrer)

*Lingua Franca* (Isabel Sandoval)

*No Data Plan* (Miko Revereza)

## BEST CINEMATOGRAPHY AND VISUAL DESIGN

**Winner:** *Lingua Franca* (cinematography: Isaac Banks; production design: Maxwell Nalevansky and Clint Ramos)

**Nominees:**

*A Is for Agustin* (cinematography: Kara Moreno and Grace Pimentel Simbulan)

*Cleaners* (cinematography: Steven Evangelio; production design: Alvin Francisco)

*Edward* (cinematography: Kara Moreno; production design: Alvin Francisco)

*For My Alien Friend* (cinematography: Jet Leyco)

*Fucchois* (cinematography: Albert Banzon; production design: Carmela Danao)

*John Denver Trending* (cinematography: Rommel Sales; production design: Harley Alcasid)

*No Data Plan* (cinematography: Miko Revereza)

*Verdict* (cinematography: Joshua Reyles; production design: Ryan Faustino)

## BEST SOUND AND AURAL ORCHESTRATION

**Winner:** *Cleaners* (music curation: Glenn Barit; supervising sound editing: Daryl Libongco; sound editing: Nicole Amores, RJ Cantos, Aerial Ellyzon Mallari; re-recording mixing: John Michael Perez)

**Nominees:**

*Edward* (original score: Pepe Manikan; sound design: Russel Gabayeron and Immanuel Verona)

*Fucchois* (original score: Andrew Florentino; sound design: Immanuel Verona)

*John Denver Trending* (original score: Len Calvo; sound editing: Mikko Quizon; re-recording mixing: Kathrine Ariane Salinas)

*Lingua Franca* (original score: Teresa Barrozo; sound design: Albert Michael Idioma)

## BEST PERFORMANCE

**Winner:** Isabel Sandoval, *Lingua Franca*

**Nominees:**

Louise Abuel, *Edward*

Royce Cabrera and Kokoy de Santos (duo performance), *Fuccbois*

Max Eigenmann and Kristoffer King (duo performance), *Verdict*

Gio Gahol, *Sila-Sila*

Jansen Magpusao, *John Denver Trending*

## BEST FIRST FEATURE

**Winners:**

*Cleaners* (Glenn Barit)

*John Denver Trending* (Arden Rod Condez)

*Verdict* (Raymund Ribay Gutierrez)

**Nominees:**

*A Is for Agustin* (Grace Pimentel Simbulan)

*No Data Plan* (Miko Revereza)

# PAST CITATIONS

## 1ST CIRCLE CITATIONS, 1990

### GOLD PRIZE

*Andrea, Paano Ba ang Maging Isang Ina* (Gil Portes)

### SILVER PRIZE

*Bakit Kay Tagal ng Sandali* (Chito Roño)  
*Kasalanan Bang Sambahin Ka* (Chito Roño)  
*Bakit Ikaw Pa Rin* (Emmanuel Borlaza)  
*Hahamakin Lahat* (Lino Brocka)

### INDIVIDUAL ACHIEVEMENT PRIZE

Nora Aunor (actress, *Andrea, Paano Ba ang Maging Isang Ina*)  
Ricardo Lee (screenwriter, *Andrea, Paano Ba ang Maging Isang Ina* and *Hahamakin Lahat*)  
Jun Pereira (cinematographer, *Bakit Kay Tagal ng Sandali*)  
George Jarlego (editor, *Gumapang Ka sa Lusak*)  
Augusto Salvador (director, *Angel Molave*)

## 2ND CIRCLE CITATIONS, 1991

### BEST PICTURE

*Sa Kabila ng Lahat* (Lino Brocka)  
*Class of '91* (Gil Portes)  
*Ipagpatawad Mo* (Laurice Guillen)  
*Ang Totoong Buhay ni Pacita M* (Elwood Perez)  
*Joey Boy Munti* (Maryo J. de los Reyes)  
*Dinampot Ka Lang sa Putik* (Maryo J. de los Reyes)

### BEST SCREENPLAY

*Sa Kabila ng Lahat* (Roy Iglesias)  
*Dinampot Ka Lang sa Putik* (Jose Javier Reyes and Jake Tordesillas)  
*Ang Totoong Buhay ni Pacita M.* (Ricardo Lee)  
*Class of '91* (Ricardo Lee)  
*Ipagpatawad Mo* (Olivia Lamasan)

### BEST CINEMATOGRAPHY AND VISUAL DESIGN

*Kailan Ka Magiging Akin* (C: Jun Pereira; PD: Charlie Arceo)  
*Hihintayin Kita sa Langit* (C: Romeo Vitug; PD: Joey Luna)  
*Shake, Rattle and Roll III* (C: Joe Tutanés; PD: Don Escudero)  
*Sa Kabila ng Lahat* (C: Ding Austria; PD: Benjie De Guzman)  
*Pangako ng Puso* (C: Ricardo Jacinto; PD: Tatus Aldana)  
*Sa Kabila ng Lahat* (C: Ricardo Jacinto; PD: Tatus Aldana)  
*Joey Boy Munti* (C: Ely Cruz; PD: Pres Ruiz)  
*Dinampot Ka Lang sa Putik* (C: Charlie Peralta; PD: Ronaldo Cadapan)

### BEST EDITING

*Kailan Ka Magiging Akin* (Ike Jarlego, Jr.)  
*Sa Kabila ng Lahat* (George Jarlego)  
*Hihintayin Kita sa Langit* (Jess Navarro)  
*Shake, Rattle and Roll III* (Danny Gloria)  
*Dinampot Ka Lang sa Putik* (George Javier)

### BEST SOUND AND AURAL ORCHESTRATION

*Hihintayin Kita sa Langit* (M: Ryan Cayabyab; S: Gaudencio Barredo)  
*Shake, Rattle and Roll III* (M: Toto Genticca; S: Joe Climaco)  
*Sa Kabila ng Lahat* (M: Jaime Fabregas; S: Willy Islao)

### BEST PERFORMANCE

Nora Aunor (*Ang Totoong Buhay ni Pacita M.*)  
Aga Muhlach (*Joey Boy Munti*)  
Maricel Soriano (*Dinampot Ka Lang sa Putik*)  
Vilma Santos (*Ipagpatawad Mo*)  
Gina Alajar (*Kailan Ka Magiging Akin*)

## 3RD CIRCLE CITATIONS, 1992

### BEST PICTURE

*Ikaw Pa Lang ang Minahal* (Carlos Siguion-Reyna)

*Iisa Pa Lamang* (Jose Javier Reyes)  
*Tayong Dalawa* (Laurice Guillen)  
*Lumayo Ka Man sa Akin* (Laurice Guillen)

### BEST SCREENPLAY

*Ikaw Pa Lang ang Minahal* (Raquel Villavicencio)

*Iisa Pa Lamang* (Jose Javier Reyes)  
*Tayong Dalawa* (Jose Dalisay, Jr.)

### BEST CINEMATOGRAPHY AND VISUAL DESIGN

*Tag-Araw, Tag-Ulan* (C: Loreto Isleta; PD: Raymond Bajarias)

*Ikaw Pa Lang ang Minahal* (C: Romeo Vitug; PD: Raymond Bajarias)  
*Hiram na Mukha* (C: Charlie Peralta; PD: Benjie De Guzman)  
*Lumayo Ka Man sa Akin* (C: Eduardo Jacinto; PD: Guillermo Sancha)  
*Ikaw ang Lahat sa Akin* (C: Romeo Vitug; PD: Tatus Aldana)

### BEST EDITING

*Ikaw Pa Lang ang Minahal* (Jess Navarro)  
*Tayong Dalawa* (Efren Jarlego)  
*Narito ang Puso Ko* (Jess Navarro)  
*Aswang* (Danny Gloria)

### BEST SOUND AND AURAL ORCHESTRATION

*Hiram na Mukha* (M: Vehnee Saturno; S: Ramon Reyes)

*Tag-Araw, Tag-Ulan* (M: Vehnee Saturno; S: Rolly Ruta and Vic Macama)  
*Aswang* (M: Vehnee Saturno; S: Rolly Ruta and Vic Macama)  
*Ikaw Pa Lang ang Minahal* (M: Vehnee Saturno; S: Rolly Ruta and Vic Macama)

### BEST PERFORMANCE

Maricel Soriano (*Ikaw Pa Lang ang Minahal*)  
Lorna Tolentino (*Narito ang Puso Ko*)  
Nanette Medved (*Hiram na Mukha*)

Gabby Concepcion (*Tayong Dalawa*)  
Dawn Zulueta (*Iisa Pa Lamang*)  
Maricel Laxa (*Ikaw ang Lahat sa Akin*)  
Wilma Santos (*Sinungaling Mong Puso*)  
Gabby Concepcion (*Narito ang Puso Ko*)

## 4TH CIRCLE CITATIONS, 1993

### BEST PICTURE

*Hindi Kita Malilimutan* (Jose Javier Reyes)

*Aliwan Paradise* (Mike de Leon)  
*Inay* (Artemio Marquez)  
*Ikaw* (Joel Lamangan)  
*Gaano Kita Kamahal* (Butch Perez)

### BEST SCREENPLAY

*Hindi Kita Malilimutan* (Jose Javier Reyes)  
*The Maricris Sioson Story: Japayuki* (Lualhati Bautista)  
*Aliwan Paradise* (Clodualdo Del Mundo, Jr.)

### BEST CINEMATOGRAPHY AND VISUAL DESIGN

*Ikaw Lang* (C: Jun Dalawis; PD: Charlie Arceo)  
*Aliwan Paradise* (C: Johnny Araojo; PD: Cesar Hernando)  
*Kung Mawawala Ka Pa* (C: Romeo Vitug; PD: Joey Luna)

### BEST EDITING

*Aliwan Paradise* (Jose Almojuela)  
*Ikaw Lang* (Renato De Leon)  
*Kung Mawawala Ka Pa* (Jess Navarro)

### BEST SOUND AND AURAL ORCHESTRATION

*Kung Mawawala Ka Pa* (M: Ryan Cayabyab; S: Ramon Reyes)  
*Aliwan Paradise* (M: Ding Achacoso and Haruomi Hosono; S: Kenichi Benitani)  
*Ikaw Lang* (M: Mon Del Rosario; S: Vic Macamay)

### BEST PERFORMANCE

Nora Aunor (*Inay*)  
Aga Muhlach (*Hindi Kita Malilimutan*)  
Wilma Santos (*Dahil Mahal Kita: The*)



*Dolzura Cortez Story*  
Dawn Zulueta (*Kung Mawawala Ka Pa*)

## 5TH CIRCLE CITATIONS, 1994

### BEST PICTURE

*Vampira* (Joey Romero)  
*Pangako ng Kahapon* (Joel Lamangan)  
*Wating* (Ishmael Bernal)  
*Sana Dalawa ang Puso Ko* (Laurice Guillen)

### BEST SCREENPLAY

*Sana Dalawa ang Puso Ko* (Joel Chionglo and Laurice Guillen)  
*Massacre Files* (Ricardo Lee)  
*Separada* (Ricardo Lee and Tessie Tomas)  
*Kadenang Bulaklak* (Lualhati Bautista)

### BEST CINEMATOGRAPHY AND VISUAL DESIGN

*The Fatima Buen Story* (C. Johnny Araojo and Romulo Araojo; PD: Benjie De Guzman)  
*Wating* (C. Charlie Peralta; PD: Len Santos and Jayjay Medina)  
*Vampira* (C. Charlie Peralta; PD: Benjie De Guzman)  
*Pangako ng Kahapon* (C. Romeo Vitug; PD: Manny Morfe)  
*Sana Dalawa ang Puso Ko* (C. Eduardo Jacinto; PD: Edgar Martin Littaua)

### BEST EDITING

*Vampira* (Danilo Gloria)  
*Pangako ng Kahapon* (Jess Navarro)  
*Wating* (Danilo Gloria)  
*The Fatima Buen Story* (George Jarlego)

### BEST SOUND AND AURAL ORCHESTRATION

*Sana Dalawa ang Puso Ko* (M. Nonong Buencamino; S: Ramon Reyes)  
*Wating* (M. Jaime Fabregas; S: Joe Climaco)  
*Pangako ng Kahapon* (M. Vehnee Saturno; S: Vic Macamay)  
*Vampira* (M. Jaime Fabregas; Joe Climaco)  
*The Fatima Buen Story* (M. Nonong Buencamino; S: Joe Climaco)

### BEST PERFORMANCE

Maricel Soriano (*Vampira*)  
Dawn Zulueta (*Buhay ng Buhay Ko*)  
Maricel Soriano (*Separada*)  
Dina Bonnevie (*Sana Dalawa ang Puso Ko*)  
Alice Dixson (*Bakit Ngayon Ka Lang*)  
Carmina Villaroel (*Wating*)  
Snooky Serna (*Koronang Itim*)

## 6TH CIRCLE CITATIONS, 1995

### BEST PICTURE

*Nena* (Ike Jarlego, Jr.)  
*Sana Maulit Muli* (Olivia Lamasan)  
*The Flor Contemplacion Story* (Joel Lamangan)

### BEST SCREENPLAY

*Nena* (Lualhati Bautista)  
*Sana Maulit Muli* (Olivia Lamasan and Jose Javier Reyes)  
*The Flor Contemplacion Story* (Ricardo Lee and Boni Ilagan)  
*Pare Ko* (Jose Javier Reyes)

### BEST CINEMATOGRAPHY AND VISUAL DESIGN

*The Flor Contemplacion Story* (C. Felizardo Bailen; PD: Raymond Bajarrias)  
*Nena* (C. Lito Mempo; PD: Ernest Santiago)  
*Dahas* (C. Charlie Peralta; PD: Jeffrey Jeturian)  
*Sana Maulit Muli* (C. Romeo Vitug; PD: Randy Gamier)  
*Inagaw Mo ang Lahat sa Akin* (C. Romeo Vitug; PD: Joey Luna)  
*Sa Ngalan ng Pag-ibig* (C. Charlie Peralta; PD: Benjie De Guzman)

### BEST EDITING

*Dahas* (Jaime David)  
*Sa Ngalan ng Pag-ibig* (George Jarlego)  
*Pare Ko* (George Jarlego)  
*Nena* (Marya Ignacio)

### BEST SOUND AND AURAL ORCHESTRATION

*Dahas* (M. Jessie Lasaten; S: Albert Michael Idioma)  
*Sa Ngalan ng Pag-ibig* (M. Jaime Fabregas;

S: Joe Climaco)

*Pare Ko* (M: Eric Antonio and Carlo

Bulahan; S: Ramon Reyes)

*Nena* (M: Nonong Buencamino; S: Vic

Macamay)

#### **BEST PERFORMANCE**

Nora Aunor (*The Flor Contemplacion Story*)

Aga Muhlach (*Sana Maulit Muli*)

Nora Aunor (*Muling Umawit ang Puso*)

Jaclyn Jose (*The Flor Contemplacion Story*)

Lorna Tolentino (*Sa Ngalan ng Pag-ibig*)

Amy Austria (*Nena*)

Sharmaine Arnaiz (*Ipaglaban Mo: The Movie*)

Maricel Soriano (*Dahas*)

### 7TH CIRCLE CITATIONS, 1996

#### **BEST PICTURE**

Mumbaki (Jose Antonio Perez)

#### **BEST SCREENPLAY**

Mumbaki (Amado Lacuesta)

Segurista (Tikoy Aguiluz, Amado

Lacuesta, Jr., and Jose Lacaba)

Ganti ng Puso (Roy Iglesias)

#### **BEST CINEMATOGRAPHY AND VISUAL DESIGN**

Isla (C: Isagani Joson; PD: Lino Dalay and Willy Javier)

Mumbaki (C: Eduardo Jacinto; PD: Joey Luna)

Segurista (C: Jun Dalawis; PD: Edgar Martin Littaua)

#### **BEST EDITING**

Isla (Ruben Pantoja)

Mumbaki (Manet Dayrit)

Ganti ng Puso (Ferren Salumbides)

Segurista (Edgardo Vinarao and Myrna Medina Bhunjun)

#### **BEST SOUND AND AURAL ORCHESTRATION**

Mumbaki (M: Jaime Fabregas; S: Ramon Reyes)

Isla (M: Nonong Buencamino; S: Ramon

Reyes)

#### **BEST PERFORMANCE**

Christopher de Leon (*Madrasta*)

Nora Aunor (*Bakit May Kahapon Pa*)

Jaclyn Jose (*May Nagmamahal sa Iyo*)

### 8TH CIRCLE CITATIONS, 1997

#### **BEST PICTURE**

Batang PX (Jose Javier Reyes)

Damong Ligaw (Jose Mari Avellana)

#### **BEST SCREENPLAY**

Batang PX (Jose Javier Reyes)

Minsan Lamang Magmamahal (Jose Javier Reyes)

Damong Ligaw (Jose Mari Avellana)

#### **BEST CINEMATOGRAPHY AND VISUAL DESIGN**

Milagros (C: Eduardo Jacinto; PD: Len Santos)

Batang PX (C: Ding Achacoso; PD: Benjie De Guzman)

Hanggang Kailan Kita Mamahalin (C: Joe Batac, Jr.; PD: Nuel Naval)

#### **BEST EDITING**

Milagros (Jess Navarro)

Batang PX (Danny Gloria)

#### **BEST SOUND AND AURAL ORCHESTRATION**

Milagros (M: Nonong Buencamino; S: Ramon Reyes)

Damong Ligaw (M: Irwin Cafugauan; S: Noel Bruan and Nestor Mutia)

Hanggang Kailan Kita Mamahalin (M: Willy Cruz; S: Ramon Reyes)

#### **BEST PERFORMANCE**

Patrick Garcia (*Batang PX*)

Nora Aunor (*Babae*)

Nonie Buencamino (*Milagros*)

Maricel Soriano (*Minsan Lamang Magmamahal*)

Romnick Sarmenta (*Damong Ligaw*)

Lorna Tolentino (*Hanggang Kailan Kita Mamahalin*)

## 9TH CIRCLE CITATIONS, 1998

### BEST PICTURE

Bata, Bata, Paano Ka Ginawa (Chito S. Roño)  
*Babae sa Bubungang Lata* (Mario O' Hara)  
*Sana Pag-ibig Na* (Jeffrey Jeturian)  
*Curacha: Ang Babaeng Walang Pahinga*  
(Chito S. Roño)

### BEST SCREENPLAY

Bata, Bata, Paano Ka Ginawa (Lualhati  
Bautista)  
*Babae sa Bubungang Lata* (Mario O' Hara)  
*Sana Pag-ibig Na* (Armando Lao)  
*Curacha: Ang Babaeng Walang Pahinga*  
(Ricardo Lee)

### BEST CINEMATOGRAPHY AND VISUAL DESIGN

Babae sa Bubungang Lata (C: Rey De Leon;  
PD: James Quimson)  
*Curacha, Ang Babaeng Walang Pahinga* (C:  
Charlie Peralta; PD: Tatus Aldana)  
*Bata, Bata, Paano Ka Ginawa* (C: Charlie  
Peralta; PD: Manny Morfe)

### BEST EDITING

Sana Pag-ibig Na (Robert Vasadre)  
*Bata, Bata, Paano Ka Ginawa* (Jaime Davila)  
*Curacha, Ang Babaeng Walang Pahinga*  
(Jaime Davila)

### BEST SOUND AND AURAL ORCHESTRATION

Curacha, Ang Babaeng Walang Pahinga (M:  
Jaime Fabregas; S: Albert Michael Idioma)  
*Bata, Bata, Paano Ka Ginawa* (M: Jessie  
Lasaten; S: Albert Michael Idioma)  
*Sana Pag-ibig Na* (M: Joy Marfil; S: Willy Islao)

### BEST PERFORMANCE

Wilma Santos (*Bata, Bata, Paano Ka Ginawa*)  
Nida Blanca (*Sana Pag-ibig Na*)  
Serena Dalrymple (*Bata, Bata, Paano Ka  
Ginawa*)  
Anita Linda (*Babae sa Bubungang Lata*)  
Cesar Montano (*José Rizal*)

## 10TH CIRCLE CITATIONS, 1999

### BEST PICTURE

Sisa (Mario O'Hara)  
*Pila Balde* (Jeffrey Jeturian)  
*Saranggola* (Gil M. Portes)  
*Phone Sex* (Jose Javier Reyes)  
*Bulaklak ng Maynila* (Joel Lamangan)

### BEST SCREENPLAY

Sisa (Mario O'Hara)  
*Pila Balde* (Armando Lao)

### BEST CINEMATOGRAPHY AND VISUAL DESIGN

Pila Balde (C: Shayne Sarte-Clemente; PD:  
Ronnie Cruz)  
*Phone Sex* (C: Eduardo Jacinto; PD: Jake  
De Asis)  
*Bulaklak ng Maynila* (C: Monino Duque;  
PD: Benjie De Guzman)

### BEST EDITING

Pila Balde (Robert Vasadre)  
*Sisa* (George Jarlego)  
*Luksong Tinik* (Vito Cajili)

### BEST SOUND AND AURAL ORCHESTRATION

Phone Sex (M: Jesse Lucas; S: Albert  
Michael Idioma)  
*Pila Balde* (M: Jay Durias; S: Joe Climaco)  
*Bulaklak ng Maynila* (M: Jessie Lasaten; S:  
Ramon Reyes)

### BEST PERFORMANCE

Elizabeth Oropesa (*Bulaklak ng Maynila*)  
Lester Llansang (*Saranggola*)  
Christopher de Leon (*Bulaklak ng Maynila*)  
Jhong Hilario (*Muro-ami*)

## 11TH CIRCLE CITATIONS, 2000

### BEST PICTURE

Bayaning Third World (Mike De Leon)  
Tanging Yaman (Laurice Guillen)  
*Senswal* (Edgardo Vinarao)  
*Mother Ignacia, Ang Uliran* (Nick Deocampo)  
*Sugatang Pusong* (Jose Javier Reyes)

### **BEST SCREENPLAY**

Tanging Yaman (Laurice Guillen, Shaira Mella Salvador, and Raymond Lee)  
*Senswal* (Jose Carreon)  
*Mother Ignacia, Ang Ulanan* (Nick Deocampo and Chuck Escasa)

### **BEST CINEMATOGRAPHY AND VISUAL DESIGN**

Bayaning Third World (C: Ding Achacoso; PD: Roy Lachica)  
*Pedrong Palad* (C: Alma Dela Peña and Louie Quirino; PD: Ellen Ramos)  
*Senswal* (C: Romeo Vitug; PD: Donnie Gonzales)  
*Pangarap ng Puso* (C: Johnny Araojo; PD: Judy Lou De Pio and John Portugal)  
*Laro sa Baga* (C: Neil Daza; PD: Mike Guison)  
*Markova Comfort Gay* (C: Johnny Araojo; PD: Kay Abaña)  
*Tanging Yaman* (C: Lee Meily; PD: Edgar Martin Littaua)

### **BEST EDITING**

Bayaning Third World (Armando Jarlego)  
*Senswal* (Edgardo Vinarao)  
*Tanging Yaman* (George Jarlego)

### **BEST SOUND AND AURAL ORCHESTRATION**

Bayaning Third World (M: Lorrie Ilustre; S: Noel Cruz Bruan and Raffy Baladjay, Jr.)  
Sugatang Puso (M: Jesse Lucas; S: Albert Michael Idioma)  
*Tanging Yaman* (M: Nonong Buencamino; S: Ramon Reyes)

### **BEST PERFORMANCE**

entire cast (*Tanging Yaman*)  
Rio Locsin (*Bayaning Third World*)  
Elizabeth Oropesa (*Senswal*)  
Alessandra de Rossi (*Azucena*)  
Dolphy (*Markova, Comfort Gay*)  
Johnny Delgado (*Tanging Yaman*)  
Gloria Romero (*Tanging Yaman*)

### **BEST PICTURE**

Minsan May Isang Puso (Jose Javier Reyes)  
*Sa Huling Paghihintay* (Erik Matti)  
*Yamashita: The Tiger's Treasure* (Chito S. Roño)

### **BEST SCREENPLAY**

Minsan May Isang Puso (Jose Javier Reyes)  
*Sa Huling Paghihintay* (Mark Querubin, Jay Abello, and Erik Matti)  
*Yamashita: The Tiger's Treasure* (Roy Iglesias)

### **BEST CINEMATOGRAPHY AND VISUAL DESIGN**

Yamashita: The Tiger's Treasure (C: Neil Daza; PD: Fernan Santiago)  
*Sa Huling Paghihintay* (C: Lauro Rene R. Manda; PD: Rodell Cruz)  
*Minsan May Isang Puso* (C: Eduardo Jacinto; PD: Jake De Asis)  
*La Vida Rosa* (C: Neil Daza; PD: Gerry Pascual)

### **BEST EDITING**

Minsan May Isang Puso (Tara Illenberger)  
*Sa Huling Paghihintay* (Vito Cajili)  
*La Vida Rosa* (Vito Cajili and Joyce Bernal)  
*Hubog* (Tara Illenberger)  
*Yamashita: The Tiger's Treasure* (Manet Dayrit)

### **BEST SOUND AND AURAL ORCHESTRATION**

Minsan May Isang Puso (M: Jesse Lucas; S: Albert Michael Idioma)  
Yamashita: The Tiger's Treasure (M: Kormann Roque and Nathan Brenholdt; S: Albert Michael Idioma)  
*Sa Huling Paghihintay* (M: Toto Gentica; S: Arnold Reodica)  
*Hubog* (M: Jessie Lasaten; S: Albert Michael Idioma)

### **BEST PERFORMANCE**

Jaelyn Jose (*Minsan May Isang Puso*)  
Mark Gil (*Sa Huling Paghihintay*)  
Carlo Aquino (*Minsan May Isang Puso*)  
Ricky Davao (*Minsan May Isang Puso*)  
Rosanna Roces (*La Vida Rosa*)

## 13TH CIRCLE CITATIONS, 2002

### BEST PICTURE

Dekada '70 (Chito S. Roño)

*Buko Pandan* (Uro Q. de la Cruz)

*Itlog* (Francis Jun Posadas)

*Diskarte* (Edgardo Boy Vinarao)

*Mga Munting Tinig* (Gil M. Portes)

### BEST SCREENPLAY

Dekada '70 (Lualhati Bautista)

*Itlog* (Jerry Arcega-Gracio)

*Diskarte* (Humilde Meek Roxas and

Senen C. Dimaguila)

*Mga Munting Tinig* (Adolf Alix, Jr., Gil

Portes, and Senedy Que)

### BEST CINEMATOGRAPHY AND VISUAL DESIGN

Ikaw Lamang Hanggang Ngayon (C: Yam

Laranas; PD: Sammy Aranzamendez)

*Buko Pandan* (C: Johnny Araojo; PD: Nene Nebres)

*Itlog* (C: Romeo Vitug; PD: Edgar Martin Littaua)

*Diskarte* (C: Jun Pereira; PD: Alex Ochoa)

*Mga Munting Tinig* (C: Ely Cruz; PD:

Arthur Nicdao)

*Dekada '70* (C: Neil Daza; PD: Manny Morfe)

### BEST EDITING

*Diskarte* (Francis Vinarao)

*Mga Munting Tinig* (George Jarlego)

*Dekada '70* (Jess Navarro)

### BEST SOUND AND AURAL ORCHESTRATION

Dekada '70 (M: Nonong Buencamino; S:

Albert Michael Idioma and Alex Tombo)

*Buko Pandan* (M: Blitz Padua; S: Nestor Arvin Mutia)

*Diskarte* (M: Tony Cortez; S: Nestor Arvin Mutia)

### BEST PERFORMANCE

Vilma Santos (*Dekada '70*)

Piolo Pascual (*Dekada '70*)

Regine Velasquez (*Ikaw Lamang*)

*Hanggang Ngayon*)

Celso Ad. Castillo (*Itlog*)

## 14TH CIRCLE CITATIONS, 2003

### BEST PICTURE

Babae sa Breakwater (Mario O'Hara)

*Anghel sa Lupa* (Jose Javier Reyes)

*Homecoming* (Gil M. Portes)

*Malikmata* (Jose Javier Reyes)

### BEST SCREENPLAY

Babae sa Breakwater

*Anghel sa Lupa*

### BEST CINEMATOGRAPHY AND VISUAL DESIGN

Babae sa Breakwater (C: Rey De Leon; PD:

Melody Teodoro)

*Anghel sa Lupa* (C: Mark Gary; PD: Jake De Asis)

*Malikmata* (C: Regiben Romana and Lito Mempin; PD: Edgardo Littaua)

### BEST EDITING

Malikmata (Vito Cajili)

*Babae sa Breakwater* (Roberto Vasandre)

*Anghel sa Lupa* (Tara Illenberger)

### BEST SOUND AND AURAL ORCHESTRATION

Anghel sa Lupa (M: Jesse Lucas; S: Ross Diaz)

*Babae sa Breakwater* (M: Jesse Lucas; S: Leody Maralit)

*Malikmata* (M: Francis Guevarra and Ferdie Marquez; S: Albert Michael Idioma)

### BEST PERFORMANCE

Katherine Luna (*Babae sa Breakwater*)

Maricel Soriano (*Filipinas*)

Elizabeth Oropesa (*Homecoming*)

entire cast (*Malikmata*)

## 15TH CIRCLE CITATIONS, 2004

### BEST PICTURE

Minsan Pa (Jeffrey Jeturian)

*Sigaw* (Yam Laranas)

**BEST SCREENPLAY**

Minsan Pa (Armando Lao)  
Sigaw (Roy Iglesias)

**BEST CINEMATOGRAPHY AND VISUAL DESIGN**

Sigaw (C: Yam Laranas; PD: Sammy Aranzamendez)

**BEST EDITING**

Sigaw (Manet Dayrit)  
Spirit of the Glass (Vito Cajili)

**BEST SOUND AND AURAL ORCHESTRATION**

Sigaw (M: Jesse Lucas; S: Albert Michael Idioma and Arnold Reodica)  
Feng Shui (M: Carmina Cuya; S: Albert Michael Idioma)

**BEST PERFORMANCE**

Jomari Yllana (Minsan Pa)  
Dennis Trillo (Aishite Imasu)  
Nora Aunor (Naglalayag)  
Jericho Rosales (Santa Santita)

**16TH CIRCLE CITATIONS, 2005****BEST PICTURE**

Masahista (Brillante Mendoza)

**BEST SCREENPLAY**

Masahista (Boots Agbayani Pastor)  
Let the Love Begin (RJ Nuevas and Suzette Doctolero)

**BEST CINEMATOGRAPHY AND VISUAL DESIGN**

Masahista (C: Timmy Jimenez and Monchie Redoble; PD: Benjamin Padero)  
Paraíso (C: Ramon Marcelino; PD: Han Salazar)

**BEST EDITING**

Masahista (Nonoy Dadvivas and Herbert Navasca)

**BEST SOUND AND AURAL ORCHESTRATION**

Masahista (M: Jerrold Tarog; S: Rudy Gonzales and Nonoy Davidas)

**BEST PERFORMANCE**

Coco Martin (Masahista)  
 entire cast (Nasaan Ka Man)  
Jaclyn Jose (Masahista)  
John Lloyd Cruz (Dubai)

**17TH CIRCLE CITATIONS, 2006****BEST PICTURE**

Inang Yaya (Pablo Biglang-Awa and Veronica Velasco)

**BEST SCREENPLAY**

Inang Yaya (Veronica Velasco)

**BEST CINEMATOGRAPHY AND VISUAL DESIGN**

Inang Yaya (C: Gary Gardoce; PD: Reji Regalado)  
Kubrador (C: Boy Yniguez; PD: Leo Abaya)

**BEST EDITING**

Inang Yaya (Randy Gabriel)  
Kubrador (Jay Halili)

**BEST SOUND AND AURAL ORCHESTRATION**

Inang Yaya (M: Nonong Buencamino; S: Mark Locsin and Angie Reyes)

**BEST PERFORMANCE**

Maricel Soriano (Inang Yaya)  
Cherry Pie Picache (Kaliedo)  
 entire cast (Inang Yaya)

**18TH CIRCLE CITATIONS, 2007****BEST PICTURE**

Foster Child (Brillante Mendoza)  
Endo (Jade Francis Castro)

**BEST SCREENPLAY**

*Foster Child* (Ralston Jover)  
*Endo* (Jade Castro, Michiko Yamamoto,  
 and Raymond Lee)

**BEST CINEMATOGRAPHY AND VISUAL DESIGN**

*Death in the Land of the Encantos* (C. Lav Diaz; PD: Dante Perez)  
*Foster Child* (C. Odyssey Flores; PD: Benjamin Padero)  
*Still Life* (C. Dan Villegas; PD: Cris Silva)  
*Tirador* (C. Jeffrey Dela Cruz, Brillante Mendoza, Gary Tria, Julius Palomo Villanueva; PD: Deans Habal and Harley Alcasid)

**BEST EDITING**

*Endo* (J.D. Domingo)  
*Tirador* (Charliebebs Gohetia)

**BEST SOUND AND AURAL ORCHESTRATION**

*Endo* (M: Owel Alvero; S: Corinne De San Jose and Mark Locsin)  
*Still Life* (M: Wincy Aquino Ong; S: Joey Santos)  
*Tirador* (M: Teresa Barrozo; S: Ditoy Aguila and Junel Valencia)

**BEST PERFORMANCE**

Jason Abalos (*Endo*)  
 Cherry Pie Picache (*Foster Child*)  
 Eugene Domingo (*Foster Child*)  
 Ron Capinding (*Still Life*)

**19TH CIRCLE CITATIONS, 2008****BEST PICTURE**

*Adela* (Adolfo Alix, Jr.)  
*Serbis* (Brillante Mendoza)

**BEST SCREENPLAY**

*Adela* (Adolfo Alix, Jr. and Nick Olanca)  
*Serbis* (Armando Lao)

**BEST CINEMATOGRAPHY AND VISUAL DESIGN**

*Adela* (C: Albert Banzon; PD: Adolfo Alix,

Jr. and Jerome Zamora)  
*Serbis* (C: Odyssey Flores; PD: Carlo Tabije and Benjamin Padero)

**BEST EDITING**

*Adela* (Aleks Castañeda)  
*Serbis* (Claire Villa-Real)

**BEST SOUND AND AURAL ORCHESTRATION**

*Adela* (M: Mark Locsin and Jojo Jacinto; S: Ditoy Aguila and Junel Valencia)  
*Serbis* (M: Gian Gianan; S: Emmanuel Clemente)

**BEST PERFORMANCE**

Anita Linda (*Adela*)  
 Paolo Paraiso (*Imoral*)  
 Ronnie Lazaro (*Yanggaw*)  
 Carlo Aquino (*Baler*)

**20TH CIRCLE CITATIONS, 2009****BEST PICTURE**

*Bakal Boys* (Ralston Jover)  
*Last Viewing* (Roni Bertubin)  
*Biyaheng Lupa* (Armando Lao)  
*Engkwentro* (Pepe Diokno)

**BEST SCREENPLAY**

*Biyaheng Lupa* (Armando Lao)  
*Last Viewing* (Romualdo Avellanosa)  
*Ang Panggagahasa kay Fe* (Alvin Yapan)  
*Last Supper No. 3* (Veronica Velasco and Jinky Laurel)  
*Bakal Boys* (Ralston Jover and Henry Burgos)

**BEST CINEMATOGRAPHY AND VISUAL DESIGN**

*Bakal Boys* (C: Ruben Dela Cruz; PD: Deans Habal)  
*Engkwentro* (C: Emman Pascual; PD: Leeroy New)

**BEST EDITING**

*Engkwentro* (Ralph Crisostomo, Miguel Araneta, and Orlean Joseph Tan)  
*Last Viewing* (Lee Mi Soon)  
*Bakal Boys* (Charliebebs Gohetia and Kats

Serraon)

**BEST SOUND AND AURAL  
ORCHESTRATION**

Biyaheng Lupa (M: Gian Gianan; S:  
Emmanuel Nolet Clemente and Dito)

Aguila

Engkwentro (S: Mark Laccay)

Bakal Boys (M: Teresa Barrozo; S: Mark  
Locsin)

**BEST PERFORMANCE**

Janice de Belen (*Last Viewing*)

Anita Lina and Rustica Carpio (*Lola*)

Ensemble (*Biyaheng Lupa*)

Meljon Guinto (*Bakal Boys*)

**21ST CIRCLE CITATIONS, 2010**

**BEST PICTURE**

Himpapawid (Raymond Red)

Ang Damgo ni Eleuteria (Remon Siega  
Zuasola)

Punerarya (Jerrold Tarog)

**BEST SCREENPLAY**

Himpapawid (Raymond Red)

Ang Damgo ni Eleuteria (Remton Siega  
Zuasola)

Punerarya (Rona Lean Sales and Aloy  
Adlawan)

**BEST CINEMATOGRAPHY AND VISUAL  
DESIGN**

Himpapawid (C: Raymond Red; PD:  
Danny Red; Design Consultants: Cesar  
Hernando, and Ronald Red)

Ang Damgo ni Eleuteria (C: Christian  
Linaban; PD: Kaloy Uypanco, AD:  
Victor Villanueva, CS: Syrel Lopez)

Punerarya (C: Mackie Galvez; PD:  
Benjamin Padero)

**BEST EDITING**

Himpapawid (David Hukom, Jay Halili,  
Raymond Red)

Ang Damgo ni Eleuteria (Remton Siega  
Zuasola)

Punerarya (Renewin Alano)

**BEST SOUND AND AURAL  
ORCHESTRATION**

Punerarya (M: Jerrold Tarog; S: Lamberto  
Casas, Jr.)

Himpapawid (M: Diwa De Leon)

Ang Damgo ni Eleuteria (M: Jerrold Tarog;  
Vanya Fantonial)

**BEST PERFORMANCE**

Carla Abellana (*Punerarya*)

Raul Arellano (*Himpapawid*)

**22ND CIRCLE CITATIONS, 2011**

**BEST PICTURE**

Haruo (Adolf Alix, Jr.)

Bahay Bata (Eduardo Roy, Jr.)

Señorita (Vincent Sandoval)

**BEST SCREENPLAY**

Niño (Rody Vera)

Ang Sayaw ng Dalawang Kaliwang Paa  
(Alvin Yapan)

Bisperas (Paul Sta. Ana)

Haruo (Jerome Zamora)

Señorita (Vincent Sandoval and Roy  
Sevilla Ho)

Teoriya (Zurich Chan)

**BEST CINEMATOGRAPHY AND VISUAL  
DESIGN**

Teoriya (C: Dexter Dela Peña; PD: Paul  
Marquez)

Bahay Bata (C: Ogi Sugatan; PD: Harry  
Alcasid; AD: Armand Samonte; CS:  
Tessa Aquino)

Bisperas (C: Roberto Yniquez; PD: Rodrigo  
Ricio; CS: Tessa Aquino)

Haruo (C: Albert Banzon; PD: Roland  
Rubenecia)

Señorita (C: Ruel Dahis Antipuesto; PD:  
Armi Rae Cacanindin)

**BEST EDITING**

Señorita (Charliebebs Gohetia)

Haruo (Aleks Castañeda)



## **BEST SOUND AND AURAL**

### **ORCHESTRATION**

*Ang Sayaw ng Dalawang Kaliwang Paa* (M:

Christine Muyco and Jema Pamintuan;

S: Arnold Reodica)

*Bahay Bata* (M: Toni Muñoz; S: Albert Michael Idioma)

*Niño* (M: Jerrold Tarog; S: Albert Michael Idioma)

### **BEST PERFORMANCE**

*Diana Zubiri* (*Bahay Bata*)

Arthur Acuña (*Niño*)

Fides Cuyugan-Asensio (*Niño*)

Sharmaine Centenera-Buencamino (*Niño*)

Vincent Sandoval (*Señorita*)

Alfred Vargas (*Teoriya*)

## **23RD CIRCLE CITATIONS, 2012**

### **BEST PICTURE**

*Qiyamah* (Gutierrez Mangansakan II)

*Ang Paglalakbay ng mga Bituin sa Gabing Madilim* (Arnel Mardoquio)

*Kalayaan* (Adolfo Alix, Jr.)

### **BEST SCREENPLAY**

*Ang Paglalakbay ng mga Bituin sa Gabing*

*Madilim* (Arnel Mardoquio)

*Aparisyon* (Vincent Sandoval and Jerry Gracio)

*Kalayaan* (Adolfo Alix, Jr.)

*Oros* (Paul Sta. Ana and Obet Villela)

*Qiyamah* (Gutierrez Mangansakan II)

*Thy Womb* (Henry Burgos)

### **BEST CINEMATOGRAPHY AND VISUAL**

#### **DESIGN**

*Kalayaan* (C: Albert Banzon; PD: Adolfo Alix, Jr.)

*Ang Paglalakbay ng mga Bituin sa Gabing Madilim* (C: Arnel Barbarona and McRobert Nacario; PD: Bagwani Ampalayo)

*Diablo* (C: Tristan Salas; PD: Cesar Hernando)

*Kamera Obskura* (C: Raymond Red; PD:

Daniel Red and Cesar Hernando; AD:

Mikey Red; VE: Edrie Ocampo and

Pablo Biglang-Awa)

*Qiyamah* (C: McRobert Nacario; PD: Perry Dizon)

*Thy Womb* (C: Odyssey Flores; PD: Brillante Mendoza)

### **BEST EDITING**

*Qiyamah* (Arnel Barbarona and Gutierrez Mangansakan II)

*Aparisyon* (Jerrold Tarog and Vincent Sandoval)

*Jingle Lang ang Pahina* (Aimee Apostol-Escasa)

*Kalayaan* (Aleks Castañeda)

*Thy Womb* (Kats Serrano)

### **BEST SOUND AND AURAL**

#### **ORCHESTRATION**

*Kalayaan* (M: Teresa Barrozo; S: Ditoy Aguila)

*Qiyamah* (M: Raphael Pulgar; S: Arnel Barbarona)

*Ang Paglalakbay ng mga Bituin sa Gabing Madilim* (S: Arbi Barbarona)

### **BEST PERFORMANCE**

*Nora Aunor* (*Thy Womb*)

Kristoffer King (*Oros*)

Ama Quiambao (*Diablo*)

Fides Cuyugan-Asensio (*Aparisyon*)

Kristoffer Martin (*Oros*)

## **24TH CIRCLE CITATIONS, 2013**

### **BEST PICTURE**

*Porno* (Adolfo Alix, Jr.)

*Mga Anino ng Kahapon* (Alvin Yapan)

*Babagwa* (Jason Paul Laxamana)

*Badil* (Chito Roño)

*Dukit* (Armando Lao)

*Ang Kwento ni Mabuti* (Mes de Guzman)

*Pagpag* (Frasco Santos Mortiz)

*Quick Change* (Eduardo Roy, Jr.)

### **BEST SCREENPLAY**

*Porno* (Ralston Jover)

*Mga Anino ng Kahapon* (Alvin Yapan)

*Babagwa* (Jason Paul Laxamana)

*Badil* (Rodolfo Vera)  
*Debosyon* (Alvin Yapan)  
*Dukit* (Armando Lao)  
*Ang Kwento ni Mabuti* (Mes De Guzman)  
*Quick Change* (Eduardo Roy, Jr.)

#### **BEST CINEMATOGRAPHY AND VISUAL**

##### **DESIGN**

*Lauriana* (C: Nap Jamir; PD: Edgar Martin Littaua)

*Mga Anino ng Kahapon* (C: Dexter Dela Peña and Jan Tristan Panday; PD: Whammy Alcazaren; AD: Frances Grace Mortel and Rita Vargas; SD: Phyllis Grae Grande)

*Badil* (C: Neil Daza; PD: Jayvee Taduran; AD: Donald Camon)

*Debosyon* (C: Dexter Dela Peña; AD: Roy Dominguiano and Pat Noveno; PD: Dennis Corteza and Paolo Rey Mendoza Piaña; VE: Omar Aguilar)

*Dukit* (C: Triztan Garcia, Bruno Tiotuico, Jeffrey Icawat, and Diego Dobles; PD: Leo Abaya and Olga Marquez)

*The Guerilla is a Poet* (C: Kiri Dalena; PD: Sari Dalena)

*Ang Kwento ni Mabuti* (C: Albert Banzon; PD: Cesar Hernando and Mes De Guzman)

*Pagpag* (C: David Diaz-Abaya; PD: Luis Custodio IV; VE: Daren Francis Raña)

*Porno* (C: Albert Banzon; PD: Adolfo Alix, Jr.; AD: Bobet Lopez)

*Quick Change* (C: Dan Villegas; PD: Harley Alcasid)

*Sonata* (C: Mark Gary; PD: Emilio Montelibano, Jr.; VE: Richard Francia)

##### **BEST EDITING**

*Porno* (Aleks Castañeda)

*Pagpag* (Jerrold Tarog)

*Badil* (Carlo Francisco Manatad)

*Dukit* (Diego Marx Dobles)

##### **BEST SOUND AND AURAL**

###### **ORCHESTRATION**

*Porno* (S: Albert Michael Idioma and Ira Trofeo)

*Babagwa* (M: Lucien Letaba and Joseph Lansang; S: Addiss Tabong)

*Badil* (M: Carmina Cuya; S: Addiss Tabong)  
*Debosyon* (M: Teresa Barrozo and Jireh Pasano; S: Ray Andrew San Miguel and Andrew Millalos)

*Dukit* (M: Armando Lao; S: Armando Lao)  
*Pagpag* (M: Francis Concio; S: Arnel Labayo)

##### **BEST PERFORMANCE**

*Carlo Aquino* (*Porno*)

*Jhong Hilario* (*Badil*)

Angel Aquino (*Porno*)

Nora Aunor (*Ang Kwento ni Mabuti*)

Adrian Cabido (*Lauriana*)

Carlo Cruz (*Mga Anino ng Kahapon*)

Allen Dizon (*Lauriana*)

Cherie Gil (*Sonata Maria*)

Dick Israel (*Badil*)

Alex Vincent Medina (*Babagwa*)

Daniel Padilla (*Pagpag*)

Joey Paras (*Babagwa*)

Sue Prado (*Ang Kwento ni Mabuti*)

TJ Trinidad (*Mga Anino ng Kahapon*)

Entire cast (*Porno*)

##### **BEST FIRST FEATURE**

*Angustia* (Kristian Sendon Cordero)

*Puti* (Miguel Alcazaren)

*Ang Turkey man ay Pabo rin* (Randolph Longjas)

## 25TH CIRCLE CITATIONS, 2014

##### **BEST PICTURE**

No winner and nominees

##### **BEST SCREENPLAY**

No winner and nominees

##### **BEST CINEMATOGRAPHY AND VISUAL**

###### **DESIGN**

*Dagitab* (C: Rommel Sales; PD: Whammy Alcazaren and Tessa Tang)

*Mariquina* (C: Sasha Palomares; PD: Aped Santos)

*Sonata Maria* (C: Wrap Meting and Mark Limbaga; PD: Bagane Fiola, Orvil Bantayan, Mandy Velasco, Lulu Amorado, and Louie Daniel)

## **BEST EDITING**

Mariquina (Benjamin Tolentino)

Dagitab (Benjamin Tolentino)

Nick and Chai (Cha Escala and Bam Luneta)

Sonata Maria (Bagane Fiola)

## **BEST SOUND AND AURAL**

### **ORCHESTRATION**

Sonata Maria (M: Jad Montenegro; S:

Maki Serapio, Wrap Meting, and Mark Limbaga)

Dagitab (M: Mon Espia; S: Adam Newns and Mikko Quizon)

## **BEST PERFORMANCE**

Eula Valdes and Nonie Buencamino

(Dagitab)

Nonie Buencamino (Dagitab)

Eula Valdes (Dagitab)

Krighi Hager (Sonata Maria)

Bing Pimentel (Mariquina)

Isaac Cain Aguirre, Nathaniel Britt,

Elijah Carlas, and Akira Morishita

(Sundalong Kanin)

## **BEST FIRST FEATURE**

Dagitab (Giancarlo Abrahan V)

Nick & Chai (Che Escala and Wena Sanchez)

Sonata Maria (Bagane Fiola)

# 26TH CIRCLE CITATIONS, 2015

## **BEST PICTURE**

Da Dog Show (Ralston Jover)

Ari: My Life with a King (Carlo Enciso Catu)

Balikbayan # 1 Memories of Overdevelopment

Redux III (Kidlat Tahimik)

An Kubo sa Kawayanan (Alvin Yapan)

Taklub (Brillante Mendoza)

Mga Rebeldeng May Kaso (Raymond Red)

## **BEST SCREENPLAY**

Da Dog Show (Ralston Jover)

An Kubo sa Kawayanan (Alvin Yapan)

Ari: My Life with a King (Robby Tantingco)

Balikbayan # 1 Memories of Overdevelopment

Redux III (Kidlat Tahimik)

Mga Rebeldeng May Kaso (Raymond Red)

Salvage (Sherad Anthony Sanchez)

Taklub (Honeylyn Joy Alipio)

## **BEST CINEMATOGRAPHY AND VISUAL DESIGN**

Balikbayan # 1 Memories of Overdevelopment

Redux III (C: Boy Yñiguez, Lee Briones,

Abi Lara, Santos Bayucca, Kidlat de

Guia, Kawayan de Guia, and Kidlat

Tahimik; PD: Kidlat Tahimik)

An Kubo sa Kawayanan (C: Ronald Rebutica;

PD: Paolo Rey Mendoza Piaña)

Bambanti (C: Joseph Delos Reyes and Ma.

Solita Garcia; PD: Aped Santos)

Da Dog Show (C: Carlo Mendoza; PD:

Deans Habal)

Halik sa Hangin (C: Moises Zee; PD:

Manny Morfe)

Miss Bulalacao (C: Christian Linaban; PD:

Ernest Diño and Philip Sinajonon)

Mga Rebeldeng May Kaso (C: Raymond

Red; PD: Danny Red)

Salvage (C: Malay Javier; PD: Joel Geolamen)

Taklub (C: Odysseus Flores; PD: Harley

Alcasid and Brillante Mendoza)

## **BEST EDITING**

Salvage (Lawrence Ang)

Balikbayan # 1 Memories of

Overdevelopment Redux III (Charlie

Fugunt, Abi Lara, Chuck Gutierrez,

Clang Sison, Malaya Camporeddo)

Da Dog Show (Kats Serrao)

Halik sa Hangin (Beng Bandong)

An Kubo sa Kawayanan (Benjamin Tolentino)

Mga Rebeldeng May Kaso (Raymond Red

and Erwin Toledo)

Shapes of Crimson (Emil James Mijares)

## **BEST SOUND AND AURAL ORCHESTRATION**

Balikbayan # 1 Memories of

Overdevelopment Redux III (M: Los Indios

De España and Shanto; S: Ed De Guia)

Ari: My Life with a King (M: Jake Abella; S:

Gilbert Obispo)

Halik sa Hangin (M: Francis Concio; S:

Addiss Tabong)

**BEST PERFORMANCE**

Lou Veloso (Da Dog Show)

Alessandra de Rossi (*Bambanti*)

Mercedes Cabral (*An Kubo sa Kawayanan*)

Mercedes Cabral (*Da Dog Show*)

Nora Aunor (*Taklub*)

Ronwaldo Martin (*Ari: My Life with a King*)

Julia Montes (*Halik sa Hangin*)

Micko Laurente (*Bambanti*)

Epy Quizon, Felix Roco, Nicco Manahan,

Earl Ignacio, Angela Cortez (*Mga*

*Rebeldeng May Kaso*)

Jessy Mendiola, JC De Vera, Barbie Capacio,

Karl Medina, Joel Saracho (*Salvage*)

**BEST FIRST FEATURE**

*Ari: My Life with a King* (Carlo Enciso Catu)

*Dayang Asu* (Bor Ocampo)

*Miss Bulalacao* (Ara Chawdhury)

**27TH CIRCLE CITATIONS, 2016****BEST PICTURE**

*Women of the Weeping River* (Sheron Dayoc)

*Baboy Halas* (Bagane Fiola)

*Ma' Rosa* (Brillante Ma. Mendoza)

*Malinak Ya Labi* (Jose Abdel Langit)

*Mrs.* (Adolfo Alix, Jr.)

**BEST SCREENPLAY**

*Mrs.* (Ralston Jover)

*Women of the Weeping River* (Sheron Dayoc)

*Ma' Rosa* (Troy Espiritu)

*Malinak Ya Labi* (Jose Abdel Langit)

*Patay Na Si Hesus* (Patrick Tabada and

Moirá Lang)

*Area* (Robby Tandingan and Ferdinand

Dizon Lapuz)

*Ang Tulay ng San Sebastian* (Alvin Yapan)

**BEST CINEMATOGRAPHY AND VISUAL DESIGN**

*Baboy Halas* (Raphael Meting, Mark

Limbaga, Joel Geolamen)

*Mrs.* (Albert Banzon, Arthur Maningas)

*Tuos* (Mycko David, Steff Dereja)

*Ma' Rosa* (Odyssey Flores, Brillante

Mendoza)

*Women of the Weeping River* (Rommel Sales, Harley Alcasid)

**BEST EDITING**

*Women of the Weeping River* (Carlo Francisco Manatad)

*Ma' Rosa* (Diego Marx Dobles)

*Malinak Ya Labi* (Gilbert Obispo)

**BEST SOUND AND AURAL ORCHESTRATION**

*Ang Tulay ng San Sebastian* (Hiroko Nagai, Jess Carlos)

*Ma' Rosa* (Teresa Barrozo, Albert Michael Idioma)

*Women of the Weeping River* (Kit Mendoza, Albert Michael Idioma and Immanuel Verona)

*Malinak Ya Labi* (Emerzon Texon, Gilbert Obispo)

*Patay Na Si Hesus* (Francis de Veyra, Mark Laccay and Nicholas Varela)

**BEST PERFORMANCE**

*Laila Putli P. Ulao* (*Women of the Weeping River*)

Ai-Ai de las Alas (*Area*)

Barbie Forteza (*Tuos*)

Daria Ramirez (*Mrs.*)

Elizabeth Oropesa (*Mrs.*)

Nora Aunor (*Tuos*)

Jaelyn Jose (*Ma' Rosa*)

Jaelyn Jose (*Patay Na Si Hesus*)

Luz Fernandez (*Malinak Ya Labi*)

Joem Bascon and Sandino Martin (*Ang Tulay ng San Sebastian*)

Nora Aunor and Barbie Forteza (*Tuos*)

Ai-Ai de las Alas, Allen Dizon, Sue Prado,

Sarah Pagcaliwagan, Ireen Cervantes,

Taba Sumulong, Sancho de las Alas,

Francisco Guinto, Cecile Yumul,

Bambalito Lacap, Eurocina Peña, Rein

Gutierrez, Vicky Vega-Cabigting (*Area*)

Allen Dizon, Angeline Quinto, Luz

Fernandez, Richard Quan, Dexter

Doria, Menggie Cobarrubias, Marcus

Madrigal, Althea Vega, Timothy Castillo, Dante Balois, Tabs Sumulong, Raul Tamayo, Shiela Paragas, Karla Zabala, Angela Alfero (*Malinak Ya Labi*)  
 Jaclyn Jose, Julio Diaz, Baron Geisler, Jomari Angeles, Neil Ryan Sese, Mercedes Cabral, Andi Eigenmann, Mark Anthony Fernandez, Felix Roco, Mon Confiado, Maria Isabel Lopez, Rubi Ruiz, John Paul Duray (*Ma' Rosa*)  
 Jaclyn Jose, Chai Fonacier, Melde Montañez, Vincent Viado, Mailles Kanapi, Olive Nieto, Sheen Gener, Albert Chan Paran (*Patay Na Si Hesus*)

#### **BEST FIRST FEATURE**

*2 Cool 2 Be 4gotten* (Petersen Vargas)  
*Malinak Ya Labi* (Jose Abdel Langit)

## **28TH CIRCLE CITATIONS, 2017**

#### **BEST PICTURE**

*Baconaua* (Joseph Israel Laban)  
*Kiko Boksingero* (Thop Nazareno)  
*Medusae* (Pamela Miras)  
*Mga Gabing Kasinghaba ng Hair Ko* (Gerardo Calagui)  
*The Chanters* (James Robin Mayo)

#### **BEST SCREENPLAY**

*The Chanters* (John Paul Bedia and Andrian Legaspi)  
*Baconaua* (Joseph Israel Laban and Denise O'Hara)  
*Kiko Boksingero* (Emmanuel Espejo Jr., Ash Malanum, Denise O'Hara, Heber O'Hara, and Thop Nazareno)  
*Medusae* (Pam Miras)  
*Mga Gabing Kasinghaba ng Hair Ko* (Mark Duane Angos)

#### **BEST CINEMATOGRAPHY AND VISUAL**

##### **DESIGN**

*Baconaua* (C: TM Malones; PD: Marielle Hizon)  
*Kiko Boksingero* (C: Marvin Reyes; PD: Ericson Navarro)  
*Medusae* (C: Albert Banzon; PD: Aped

Santos; VE: Vladimer Castañeto)  
*Nervous Translation* (C: Albert Banzon, Jippy Pascua, Dennise Victoria; PD: Leeroy New)  
*The Chanters* (C: Jav Velasco; PD: Carmela Danao)

#### **BEST ACHIEVEMENT IN EDITING**

*Nervous Translation* (Shireen Seno and John Torres)  
*God BLISS Our Home* (Lawrence Ang)  
*Medusae* (Lawrence Ang)  
*Mga Gabing Kasinghaba ng Hair Ko* (Bradley Liew)

#### **BEST ACHIEVEMENT IN SOUND AND AURAL ORCHESTRATION**

*Nervous Translation* (M: Itos Ledesma; S: Mikko Quizon)  
*Baconaua* (M: Jema Pamintuan; S: Monoxide Works, Bryan Dumaguina, JR Miano)  
*The Chanters* (M: Erwin Fajardo; S: Immanuel Verona)

#### **BEST PERFORMANCE**

*Anthony Falcon, Mga Gabing Kasinghaba ng Hair Ko*  
 Jana Agoncillo, *Nervous Translation*  
 Noel Comia, Jr., *Kiko Boksingero*  
 Mon Confiado, *Mga Gabing Kasinghaba ng Hair Ko*  
 Desiree del Valle, *Medusae*  
 Duo performance (Noel Comia, Jr. and Yayo Aguila), *Kiko Boksingero*  
 Elora Español, *Baconaua*  
 Jally Nae Gilbaliga, *The Chanters*  
 Lead cast ensemble (Matt Daclan, Anthony Falcon, Rocky Salumbides),  
*Mga Gabing Kasinghaba ng Hair Ko*  
 Carl Palaganas, *Medusae*

#### **BEST FIRST FEATURE**

*Kiko Boksingero* (Thop Nazareno)  
*Si Chedeng at si Apple* (Rae Red and Patrick Tabada)  
*The Chanters* (James Robin Mayo)

## 29TH CIRCLE CITATIONS, 2018

### BEST FILM

Sa Palad ng Dantaong Kulang (Jewel Maranan)

*Call Her Ganda* (PJ Raval)

*Kung Paano Hinihintay ang Dapithapon* (Carlo Enciso Catu)

*Masla A Papanok* (Gutierrez Mangansakan II)

*Oda sa Wala* (Dwein Baltazar)

### BEST SCREENPLAY

Masla A Papanok (Gutierrez Mangansakan II)

Call Her Ganda (Victoria Chalk and PJ Raval)

*Kung Paano Hinihintay ang Dapithapon* (John Carlo Pacala)

*Kuya Wes* (Denise O'Hara and Heber O'Hara)

*Oda sa Wala* (Dwein Baltazar)

### BEST EDITING

Call Her Ganda (Victoria Chalk)

*A Short History of a Few Bad Things* (Maria Estela Paiso and Keith Deligero)

*Kung Paano Siya Nawala* (Lawrence Ang)

*Never Not Love You* (Benjamin Tolentino)

Sa Palad ng Dantaong Kulang (Lawrence Ang and Jewel Maranan)

### BEST CINEMATOGRAPHY AND VISUAL DESIGN

Sa Palad ng Dantaong Kulang (Jewel Maranan)

*Kung Paano Hinihintay ang Dapithapon* (C: Neil Daza; PD: Marielle Hizon)

*Kung Paano Siya Nawala* (C: Ike Avellana; PD: Christina Dy)

*Kuya Wes* (C: Theo Lozada; PD: Ericson Navarro)

*Masla A Papanok* (C: Willie Apa Jr., Arnel Barbarona, Bagane Fiola; PD: Paramata Endawan)

*Never Not Love You* (C: Mycko David and Carlo Mauricio; PD: Ana Lou Sanchez)

*Oda sa Wala* (C: Neil Daza; PD: Maolen Fadul)

### BEST SOUND AND AURAL ORCHESTRATION

*Never Not Love You* (M: Len Calvo; S:

Jason Conanán, Kat Salinas and Mikko Quizon)

*A Short History of a Few Bad Things* (M: Lav Diaz, Duke Caing, Young Kael, Maricel Sombrio, John Caing, Bombo Pluto Ova, Stevan Marvin Jamaar, Silhouette; S: Rico Mambo)

*Masla A Papanok* (M: Jem Talaroc; S: Willie Apa Jr.)

*Oda sa Wala* (music: Richard Gonzales; sound design: Immanuel Verona)

### BEST PERFORMANCE

Nadine Lustre (*Never Not Love You*)

Perla Bautista (*Kung Paano Hinihintay ang Dapithapon*)

Perla Bautista, Menggie Cobarrubias, Dante Rivero (*Kung Paano Hinihintay ang Dapithapon*)

Celeste Legaspi (*Mamang*)

Ina Raymundo (*Kuya Wes*)

Marietta Subong (*Oda sa Wala*)

### BEST FIRST FEATURE

Mamang (Denise O'Hara)

Mamu; And a Mother Too (Rod Singh)

Ang Pangarap Kong Holdap (Marius Talampas)

# THE CIRCLE

Ang Film Desk ay binubuo ng mga miyembro ng akademya na sa loob ng matagal-tagal na ring panahon ay naging mga matalas na tagamasid ng pelikulang Filipino. Galing sa iba't ibang disiplina, linalapat nila sa pagsuri ng pelikula ang interdisiplinaryong lapit. Sa ganitong perspektiba, ang salitang “young” sa Young Critics Circle ay tumutukoy hindi sa literal na pakahulugan gaya ng edad kundi sa isang metaporikal na pag-unawa sa kabataang pananaw. Ang ibig sabihin, ang “young” ay tumutukoy sa pangangahas ng bago at sa giting ng pagsalungat.

*The Film Desk of the Young Critics Circle is composed of members of academe who, through the years, have become attentive observers of Philippine cinema. Coming from various disciplines, they bring into the analysis of film an interdisciplinary approach. In this perspective, the word “young” in the Young Critics Circle pertains not to a literal mode of understanding as in age but rather to a metaphorical sense of appropriating youth. “Young” is construed as the daring of the new and the courage to be different.*

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**ARISTOTLE J. ATIENZA** teaches language, literature, and popular culture in the Filipino Department at the Ateneo de Manila University. He has also taught special courses on eroticism and pornography, and performing femininity in cinema (with J. Pilapil Jacobo and Alvin B. Yapan). He is currently taking his Ph.D. in Philippine Studies at the University of the Philippines Diliman. He is co-editor (with Rolando B. Tolentino) of *Ang Dagling Tagalog, 1903-1936* (2007).

**JOHN BENGAN** teaches writing and literature at the University of the Philippines Mindanao. He received a Ford Foundation International Fellowship to pursue an MFA in creative writing at The New School. His stories and essays have appeared in *Kritika Kultura*, *Likhaan: The Journal of Contemporary Philippine Literature*, *Asiatic*, BooksActually's *Gold Standard*, and the “Writing the Philippines” issue of *Cha: An Asian Literary Journal*. He lives in Davao City.

**CHRISTIAN JIL R. BENITEZ** is a faculty member of the Kagawaran ng Filipino, Ateneo de Manila University, where he graduated with an AB-MA in Filipino Literature. The locus of his research is time, as ecological and mythological assemblage, tropically articulated through history as metaphor. He has won a Palanca award for *Tula* (2015) and two UP Press awards for essays in English and Filipino (2016).

**EMERALD O. FLAVIANO** (Chair, 2018-2019) is a Research Associate of the University of the Philippines Third World Studies Center. She has done research on social memory in Mendiola and on Cinemalaya and Philippine independent cinema. Her research interests include political culture, popular culture, and Philippine film. She is currently studying for an MA degree in art studies at the College of Arts and Letters, UP Diliman.

**PATRICK D. FLORES** is Professor of Art Studies at the University of the Philippines, which he chaired from 1997-2003, and Curator of the Vargas Museum in Manila. He is Adjunct Curator at the National Art Gallery, Singapore. He was selected by the Philippine government to curate the Philippine Pavilion of the 56th Venice Art Biennale in 2015. He was also one of the curators of *Under Construction: New Dimensions in Asian Art* in 2000 and the Gwangju Biennale (Position Papers) in 2008. He was a Visiting Fellow at the National Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C. in 1999 and an Asian Public Intellectuals Fellow in 2004. Among his publications are *Painting History: Revisions in Philippine Colonial Art* (1999), *Remarkable Collection: Art, History, and the National Museum* (2006) and *Past Peripheral: Curation in Southeast Asia* (2008). He was a grantee of the Asian Cultural Council (2010) and a member of the Advisory Board of the exhibition *The Global Contemporary: Art Worlds After 1989* (2011) organized by the Center for Art and Media in Karlsruhe and member of the Guggenheim Museum's Asian Art Council (2011). He co-edited the Southeast Asian issue with Joan Kee for *Third Text* (2011).

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