



Sineng Pambansa

National Cinema

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CINEMATHEQUE CENTRE MANILA INAUGURATION FEATURE

Audience before the screening of *Maynila sa mga Kuko ng Liwanag*

The Cinematheque Centre Manila opened to the public this January 2016 with high spirits, just after its inauguration last December 2015. With little more than word-of-mouth and a few posts on social media, the Inauguration Month Screenings in Jan-

uary were celebrated by curious audiences arriving at the Cinematheque, excited to discover the treasures at the Cinematheque Boutique, explore the Museo ng Pelikulang Pilipino, lounge at the Cafe, and witness the films at the Theatre.

Manila patrons were

treated to a collection of various films, both from local and international scenes. Restored classics made it onto the screen, taking us on trips back in time, such as Lino Brocka's gritty *Maynila sa mga Kuko ng Liwanag*, Lamberto Avellana's affecting *A Portrait of the Artist as*

Filipino, and Henry Francis's personal journey and experimental film, *On My Way to India Consciousness, I Reached China*. Packed theaters of young and old alike showed that our cinematic past should not be forgotten, and that our film culture must be continually preserved and appreciated.

The Embassy of Denmark joined in on the celebration, giving us a view into the rich Danish cinema with several contemporary and classic award-winners. Local audiences flocked to see the beautiful European films: Thomas Vinterberg's *The Hunt*, Kaspar Rostrup's *Waltzing Regitze*, Susanne Bier's *In a Better World*, Gabriel Axel's *Babette's Feast*, and Nikolaj Arcel's *A Royal Affair*.



Museo ng Pelikulang Pilipino

Following a fruitful inauguration of the Cinematheque Centre Manila last December 2015, the newest cultural institution in the Manila area opened its doors to the public, attracting the city's local

culturati to watch a slew of great Filipino and foreign films. But what has renewed their sense of history is the Cinematheque's tribute to Philippine cinema, the Museo ng Pelikulang Pilipino, an object-based

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Joining these heritage and foreign films were contemporary local films from established directors. Many were gleaned from the Sineng Pambansa 2013 All-Masters Edition--fans of Chito Roño, Mel Chionglo, Peque Gallaga, and Lore Reyes came to be inspired by their works: *Badil*, *Lauriana*, and *Sonata*, respectively. Also screened was *Esoterika: Maynila* from equally esteemed director Elwood Perez, as

well as the epic *Mula sa Kung Ano ang Noon* by Lav Diaz, which won the Golden Leopard at the Locarno International Film Festival. As Liberty Ilagan, Jun Urbano, and many others who graced the Cinematheque Centre Manila's inauguration with their presence, so did several other special guests throughout the January screenings. Roger Garcia, Executive Director of the Hong Kong International Film

Festival, came to view the screening of Henry Francia's *On My Way*, sharing his thoughts on the film after the screening. Elwood Perez himself came to both his screenings, shedding light onto his story of *Esoterika* in the animated manner only he can provide. Most notable is the participation of Bembol Roco, star of Brocca's *Maynila*. On the first day of the screening, Roco was kind enough to share his experiences during filming to the exhilarated audience.

With such a successful first run, there is hope that momentum continues to gather at the Cinematheque Centre Manila for the rest of the year, with more events, activities, and surprises to come.



Top and bottom: Visitors and audience members attending the inaugural screenings



CINEMATHEQUE CENTRE MANILA TO HOST ASEAN FILM AWARENESS MONTH IN MARCH

For the entire month of March, to commemorate ASEAN Film Awareness Month, a special selection of contemporary films from across the ASEAN region will be screened at the Cinematheque Centre Manila in partnership with FILM ASEAN.

The screenings are to raise awareness of quality films produced in the ASEAN region. The special focus on ASEAN films further promotes the ASEAN goals of "One Vision, One Identity, and One Community."

With the goals of ASEAN integration and collaboration, FILM ASEAN seeks to harness the power of films and audiovisual materials with the goal of integration and community-building. Films and audiovisual materials become critical technol-

ogies that connect people through various platforms and unite communities throughout the member states. These technologies enable sharing information about the values, traditions, and cultures of the ASEAN people, ultimately cultivating a collective ASEAN identity.

Currently, the Cinematheque Centre Manila is finalizing the selection of contemporary films submitted by FILM ASEAN members. This ASEAN regional event is a collaboration between FILM ASEAN and the Cinematheque Centre Manila for the benefit of their nationals living in the Philippines.

The screening of the ASEAN films will be coupled with a forum (question and answer session), where invited directors, actresses, and actors of selected films will

have the opportunity to interact with distinguished guests, film industry players and film enthusiasts in the Philippines.

ASEAN Film Awareness Month is poised to become an ongoing film event in the other FILM ASEAN member countries to accelerate the film cultural exchange program throughout the region.





FILM ASEAN PAVILION TO LAUNCH AT THE EUROPEAN FILM MARKET



The FILM ASEAN pavilion will formally launch at this year's European Film Market, one of the world's largest and most dynamic film markets and business hubs, under the Berlin International Film festival.

The European Film Market, known as the first major film market to open the industry calendar year, attracts over 8,400 producers, distributors, buyers, and exhibitors every year for networking and conducting business deals in every aspect of filmmaking. The market runs from February 11 to 19, 2016.

The FILM ASEAN will have its

official presentation as an organized contingent that offers access to the film industries of the ten ASEAN countries: Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam. The FILM ASEAN booth will be located at the Martin Gropius Bau in a cube structure adjacent to the main building's entrance.

Representing the FILM ASEAN at the European Film Market 2016 are delegates from the Philippines, Malaysia, and Singapore, as well as the organization head, Chairman Briccio Santos of the FDCP. They will hold discussions with industry players across Europe and promote the FILM ASEAN as a common platform seeking to strengthen film-related programs, collaborations, and international partnerships in the region, particularly for film production, distribution, and education. The remaining ASEAN countries will have their informational material and collaterals available in the pavilion.



The FILM ASEAN hosted event is set to take place on February 12, from 3:30pm to 5:30pm, at the Gropius Mirror Tent. Here, market goers will be introduced to the organization and be welcomed by delegates promoting FILM ASEAN's goals, mission, and multilateral approach in developing and strengthening audiovisual industries across the ASEAN region.

With the vision of "One Vision, One Identity, and One Community", FILM ASEAN strives to strengthen the positions of its member countries across international spheres of film production and distribution. The launch of the FILM ASEAN pavilion at this year's EFM is a concrete step towards achieving its ultimate goal of ASEAN integration.

FILM
ASEAN



Lav Diaz has brought another great honor to Philippine Cinema as his latest film *Hele sa Hiwagang Hapis (A Lullaby to the Sorrowful Mystery)* was selected for the main competition of the Berlin International Film Festival (Berlinale) in 2016. Diaz calls his latest work a 'marriage of history, literature and mythology.' The film focuses on historical and fictional characters important to Philippine history and is played by the biggest ensemble cast including John Lloyd Cruz, Piolo Pascual, Angel Aquino, and many other local actors.

The Cinematheque Centre

Manila honored Diaz by screening his previous award-winning opus during the last week of January. *Mula sa Kung Ano ang Noon (From What is Before)* focuses on the foreboding years before Martial Law was declared. Centered around small town events, which Diaz loosely based on his own childhood, viewers can sense the tension building as the Philippines approaches a dark age in its history.

Mula was awarded the Golden Leopard at the 67th Locarno International Film Festival and went on to win the Grand Festival Prize at the World Premiere Film Festival in 2014. It also garnered the title

of Best Film, Best Direction, Best Screenplay and Best Editing at the Gawad Urian Awards in 2015. During the opening weekend alone 230 viewers filled the Cinematheque Centre Manila to watch the 338 minute film. Although lengthy the viewers were rewarded with a historical portrait of a pivotal time in Philippine history.

The newest Diaz epic *Hele sa Hiwagang Hapis* is set to have its world premiere at the Berlinale in February. The awarding will be announced with Academy Award Winning actress Meryl Streep residing as Jury President.



Film still from *Mula sa Kung Ano ang Noon*



Director Lav Diaz with the Golden Leopard and the WFFF Grand Festival Prize award



SPECIAL GUEST APPEARANCE BY BEMBOL ROCO AT THE CINEMATHEQUE'S MAYNILA SCREENINGS

Leading the Cinematheque Centre Manila's inaugural screening month in January 2016 were the Lino Brocka classic, *Maynila sa mga Kuko ng Liwanag*, and the Sineng Pambansa All-Masters 2013 Edition film, *Sonata* by Peque Gallaga and Lore Reyes.

The first screening of *Maynila sa mga Kuko ng Liwanag* was attended by none other than the film's lead star Bembol Roco. Joining the moviegoers in a packed theater, Roco bore witness to the glorious heritage film, restored to greatness just last 2013, and graciously accepted the immense audience response and support for one of the greatest films in Philippine cinema.

After the screening, a lively question and answer session was conducted with the jovial and thoughtful *Maynila* actor and muse of Brocka. Roco himself admitted that he was an "accidental actor," meeting Brocka at a drug rehabilitation center and getting invited by the director for a bit role in *Tatlo, Dalawa, Isa* - a role he

took for the money. Roco related how his first lead role with *Maynila* was met by chance, with actor Jay Ilagan supposedly slated to play the naïve probinsiyano Julio, but seen physically unfit for the part, which instead went to Roco. The role completely changed his life, allowing him opportunities for roles in many other powerful films, and Roco expressed gratitude that he got to be part of a generation that built the Second Golden Age of Philippine Cinema.

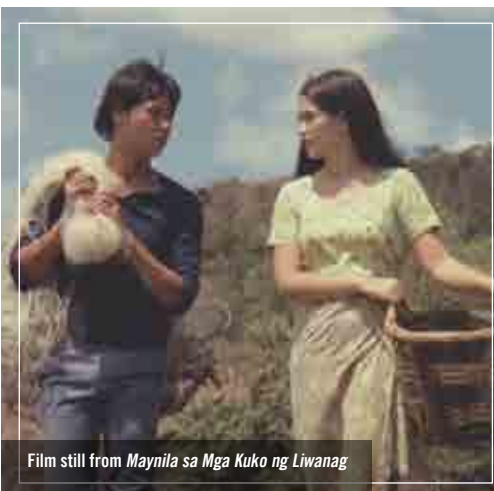
In response to an audience question, Roco lamented the lack of good directors now compared to those of his time, and hoped for more filmmakers with the "passion, heart, and vision" of creating relevant works that strike the hearts of its audiences. He also recounted his experience of working with Brocka, who helped him in his beginnings as an amateur actor, subtly guiding and motivating him on how best to fulfill the demands of a scene. An example Roco gave was the "finale" of *Maynila*, one of the most difficult sequences he did for

the film. Describing Julio's murder of Ateng and the character's escape and chase from the mob, Roco narrated how Brocka was motivating him to do another take still after the tiring scene, even though he was physically exhausted and in tears at the time of filming—Brocka used this take on the final film.

In a private interview with the FDCP later on in the evening, Roco shared his opinion that *Maynila*'s social relevance remains resonant even today, suggesting that "any generation would appreciate [the] film" and how yesteryear's problems were well captured by Brocka, the result being a greatly important, timeless work. He waxed praise for *Maynila* being screened and appreciated by younger audiences, stating that it was an honor to see it again. Roco concluded with wishes for the Cinematheque's growth and success in its efforts.



Audience from *Maynila sa Mga Kuko ng Liwanag* screening



Film still from *Maynila sa Mga Kuko ng Liwanag*

ELWOOD PEREZ CELEBRATES CINEMATHEQUE MANILA OPENING WITH *ESOTERIKA*



The start of the new year celebrated the opening of the Cinematheque Centre Manila to the public, with a melange of great films welcoming patrons to the newest cultural institution in the area. And what other contemporary film could be shown that so celebrates Manila in all its bold, brash glory than *Esoterika: Maynila*, a work from the wild and colorful mind of Elwood Perez?

Director Perez himself graced the Cinematheque with a troop of friends and actors, bringing levity to the screenings and eagerly urging the visitors to watch his opus. Fans and curious film buffs were in for a treat, as a question and answer session was afterwards conducted for Perez to shine some light into his film's weird, wonderful world. Along with Perez on the first day of the screening was one of his lead actors, Federico Olbés, who played aging art patron Donato, and on both days of screenings, his scholar companion Gershom Chua, whose graduate studies in film take from Perez's works, came to pick the audience's brains.

True to form, the Q&A session was most unconventional, with

Perez allowing Chua to take the lead in responding to questions, and the latter encouraging the audience to share their own takes on the film in an open, energetic discussion. Here are a few choice excerpts of the lively session.

On a question from the audience member on how he was inspired to do the film:

Elwood Perez: It's a modern-day version of my past, actually. [Invites Gershom Chua to speak.]

Gershom Chua: [Introduces self before responding to question.] It's apparently semi-autobiographical, drawing from elements in Elwood's personal past, together with certain elements from the personal lives of those actors involved. So you do see elements of what those people themselves went through.

On the film's change in ending from what was originally planned:

Perez: [Addresses Chua.] Oh! Please tell them about the ending that changed drastically! [Talks to audience.] Federico here was asking

me why I was tongue-tied suddenly, and it's about the ending.

Chua: [Addresses audience] About the ending--it's a truncated ending that you see today. All right, before I perhaps reveal it, I'd like to know--did the ending feel shortened at all? [Asks for a raise of hands.] The story behind it is that the original edit features a longer ending, a scene in an art gallery featuring a female performance artist performing macho dance moves in an effort to show that everything is gendered and gender is constructed. Power moves often associated with gyrating macho dancers--male gigolos--when taken upon by females take on different meanings. And so that powerful image should have closed the film. But due to unfortunate legal problems, that scene had to be taken out until it's resolved. It could have closed the film tighter, made the message stronger and more emphasized. But without it I think the film still stands.

On the host Melissa Legarda asking about Federico Olbés's experience making the film with Perez:

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Film still from *Esoterika: Maynila*



Federico Olbés: What amazed me about working with Elwood is that he would glean personal experiences and work it into the script. I found that extraordinary, because all [of a] sudden you see your life being displayed there. And he did that with every single one of his actors. He would somehow find out what was going on in your life, what was bothering you, what was troubling you, and work that into the script. And that's how the script evolved.

On an audience member asking about the most challenging or memorable part about making the film:

Perez: I always believe that I should go into the set a virgin, and the set ought to be a very pleasant and exhilarating experience. At the same time, don't forget that film is a young people's medium, that's why I love to really connect with you young people, because this is your golden age. And that [points to film] more or less was my youth, taken in the context of this era.

On an audience member asking about the comics treatment in the film:

Chua: To add more to that, this is part two of direk's creative process trilogy where he delves into the different processes he engaged in throughout his career. So this tackles his period with the komiks genre. If you are familiar with this angel character, called *Bagwis*, direk actually wrote *Bagwis*, he created the character and eventually sold the rights to ABS-CBN. His experiences adapt the comic form to cinema, which is why the film is in that form. It defies "standard" film language and grammar by incorporating comics conventions. Like the extensive use of voiceovers, how you see voiceovers and narration on top of the frame, the convoluted plot, some subplots that don't get finished, that get introduced--that's all pure comics integrated into film. So this is actually a very brave and edgy, subversive experiment trying to adapt both forms into one.

The FDCP was also able to have a quick tete-a-tete with the director just outside the theater after the Q&A. Perez was asked about his experience screening the film to a fresh audience and showing his work at the Cinematheque Centre Manila.

FDCP: How did you feel about the audience response to your film?

Perez: I love that that the audience was mostly comprised of film students. Film students are the most perceptive and intelligent students. It gave my film some value. It somehow makes it precious.

FDCP: How did you feel that yours was one of the first films screened with the opening of the Cinematheque?

Perez: That certainly was awesome. It makes me feel older and uncomfortable because most of the people whose films are included are not around with us anymore. It's sad that most of these filmmakers don't get to meet the audience of this era, this technology.

FDCP: And how do you feel about having a venue like the Cinematheque?

Perez: I am just so proud. I don't want to feel self-important. I delight in this, the preciousness of it. That I'm here in the hallowed corridors of this institution.



CINEMATHEQUE COMMEMORATES NATIONAL ARTS MONTH WITH FILIPINO AND ARGENTINIAN FILMS



This February is the month of Philippine National Arts. To celebrate, the Cinematheque Centre Manila has programmed a slew of exciting independent Filipino films.

Films will be screened under the initiative of The National Film Archive of the Philippines, in partnership with various institutions and film labs that have restored a selection of Filipino classic films.

Gerardo de Leon's *48 Oras* is a noir thriller revolving around a man wrongly accused of the murder of his wife and

mother. The title of the film refers to the protagonist's race against time to catch the real perpetrators. Lino Brocka's *Maynila sa mga Kuko ng Liwanag* is another restoration by FDCP. The cult classic follows a young man in search of his provincial sweetheart. Brocka explores the themes of poverty and crime in the seedy underbelly of Manila. Lamberto Avellana's *A Portrait of an Artist as Filipino* is a film based on the highly acclaimed play written by Nick Joaquin. Set in the months before World War II, the film highlights the relationship between a reclusive paint-

er and his grown children as they feel the onset of war.

Another set of films come from the Sineng Pambansa Film Festival All Masters Edition 2013. *Ano Ang Kulay ng Nakalimutang Pangarap*, by Jose Javier Reyes, follows a loyal household helper whose employment hangs in the balance after the death of the family matriarch. *Bamboo Flowers* by Mar-yo J. de los Reyes weaves a fictional tale about the citizens of Bohol and their differing reactions when their cultural beliefs are threatened. *Lihis*, directed by Joel Lamangan, is set during the martial law

era where two male NPA soldiers find themselves entangled in the battle for democracy and their own romantic relationship. Elwood Perez's *Otso* is about a filmmaker returning to his roots in the Philippines and deciding to make an independent film about his neighbors. He soon discovers the perils of mixing artistic license with life experiences.

The other Filipino films are from the Sineng Pambansa National, Unang Yugto, Ikalawang Yugto, and Horror Plus Film Festivals. Levi Pepper Marcelo's *Illustrated By* is a full length documentary tracing the

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Director Elwood Perez



MUSEO NG PELIKULANG PILIPINO

film museum dedicated to preserving and exhibiting artifacts of Philippine heritage.

The Museo has the unique distinction of having special focus on six Filipino directors who pioneered profound cinematic achievements for their homeland:



Jose Nepomuceno Resin

Ishmael Bernal Resin

Jose Nepomuceno, Manuel Conde, Gerardo de Leon, Lamberto Avellana, Ishmael Bernal, and Lino Brocka. Filling the space outside the Cinematheque Theatre, the Museo invites Cinematheque guests to pay a visit in between screenings and take in its many sights and sounds.

Upon entering the Museo, one is first struck by the six directors' impressive resins, which stand up to 9 feet tall, specially sculpted by renowned artist Jonas Roces. Visitors are encouraged to learn more about the personalities and achievements of these legends by immersing themselves in the directors' personal effects and memorabilia. Take a moment to read the first few pages of a script from a long lost film; browse through critical but humorous writings and essays; take an up close look at the typewriters, photographs, and awards left behind.

An audio-visual presentation about each director supplements the exhibits, putting into perspective the directors' life and works. Choose from one of six televisions and put on headphones to listen to and watch the directors' biographical narratives, accompanied by photographs and clips from their films.

The museum traces the material history of film



Lamberto Avellana Resin



Gerry de Leon Resin



Lino Brocka Resin



Manuel Conde Resin

production by exhibiting analogue film equipment used for shooting and editing. You can closely examine equipment for shooting and editing (many of which were once owned and utilized by the directors featured in the museum), including various film cameras, the American Bell & Howell 70-DR; the Oxberry film animation stand and camera, the ARRI Blimp, various Mole-Richardson spotlights, the Steenbeck 35mm flatbed editing table and the Magna sync Moviola 35mm film editing machine, such as the Russian Konvas Avtomat KSR series, the French Pathe Webo M Super 16, the

Swiss 8mm Paillard-Bolex, and the American Bell & Howell 70-DR; the Oxberry film animation stand and camera, the ARRI Blimp, various Mole-Richardson spotlights, the Steenbeck 35mm flatbed editing table and the Magna sync Moviola 35mm film editing machine.

Each object brings to life the story of the country's pioneering directors and puts both national and international cinematic history on display. By doing so, the Museo ng Pelikulang Pilipino endeavors to root generations, both old and new, to its rich Filipino film heritage and foster a lasting sense of awareness and appreciation of the country's great cinematic legacy.



Behind the scenes photos of Lino Brocka



Moviola editing machine

16mm film projector



Typewriter of Lamberto Avellana



The National Artist Medallion of Gerrardo de Leon



Photowall and analogue film cameras



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involvement of Filipino artists into the US mainstream comic industry. The movie honors local talents who had a hand in some of the most famous comic book characters in the world. *Qiyamah* by director Teng Mangansakan tells the story of a small village threatened by the superstition of a coming apocalypse. Martin Masadao's *Anac Ti Pating* is a coming of age tale about a young boy making friends, finding first love and coming to terms with his family history. Lauren Sevilla Faustino's documentary *Ang Babae sa Likod ng Mambabatok* paints a portrait of the last traditional tattoo artist of

Kalinga and her journey as a cultural bearer of the Philippines. Ed Lejano's *Qwerty* is a fictional account of a cop who was implicated for a torture video that went viral. The life changing event hits just as he is about to leave the country for better job prospects abroad. Boy Vinarao's *Bacao* is about a young woman's desperate desire to conceive and the superstitious occurrences surrounding the time of harvest season. Rounding up films by master filmmakers: Chito Rono's *Badil* about the corruption in small town elections; Mel Chionglo's *Lauriana*, a 50s period thriller centered around obsession, abuse

and the twisted relationship between a soldier and his wife; and lastly, Peque Gallaga and Lore Reyes' *Sonata*, a charming tale of an unlikely relationship between a retired opera singer and precocious young boy.

Given the success of the first Argentine Film Festival in 2015, a select number of films will again be shared with Filipino audiences, in partnership with the Embassy of Argentina. Gabriel Nesci's *Dia de Venilo* is a coming of age film about a group of 30 year old men united by their love of women and vinyl records. Ana Katz's *Los Marziano* takes a close look at strained relations between siblings

as a family reunion draws near. The short documentary by Manuel Abramovich entitled *La Reina* carefully captures the journey of an 11-year-old girl as the adults in her family prepare her for a local beauty pageant. Fabian Forte's *La Corporacion* is a dark satire about corporate culture. *El Escarabajo de Oro*, a collaborative effort between Argentinian filmmaker Alex Moquillansky and Swedish auteur Fia-Stina Sandlund, revolves around a crazy road trip and treasure hunt based loosely on Edgar Allan Poe's story of the same name. Each film gives viewers a slice of colorful Argentinian culture.

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