



# CINEMAGIS

## NORTHERN MINDANAO'S DIGITAL SHORT FILM FESTIVAL

# Cinemagis 9: Northern Mindanao's sentiments and sensitivities

By Stephen J Pedroza

**The films ... 'problematize' the mundane and dissect it as determination, pursuit, identification, emancipation, tradition, poverty, life, love, and death.**

As a springboard for budding and established artists to tackle a wide range of social issues in Mindanao using film as the medium, Cinemagis has curated motion pictures that have already been screened and awarded in national and international independent film festivals.

Now on its ninth installment, Cinemagis continues to serve as a platform for young and professional filmmakers in Northern Mindanao to pour out their passion, stories, and filmmaking skills, and for cultivating the experience and growth of local film audiences.

"Cinemagis 9 harvests new experiences that voice the terrain of Northern Mindanao's sentiments and sensitivities," says festival author and curator Hobart Savior.

"The films this year tackle issues

from the personal to a more collective experience where social issues could either be clearly seen or implied to magnify tension and to 'problematize' the mundane and dissect it as determination, pursuit, identification, emancipation, tradition, poverty, life, love, and death," he adds.

Over the years, Cinemagis has grown prolifically and Savior, who helms Xavier University - Ateneo de Cagayan's Xavier Center for Culture and the Arts (XCCA) as director, attributes this momentum to the dynamic presence and pertinent talent of the filmmakers, cast, and crew, who come from various provinces and cities of Northern Mindanao.

"Looking at the future, we hope that there would be more reflections

of our voices and aspirations shared and celebrated beyond any competition there is — I would like to emphasize that Cinemagis's prime role, apart from giving away awards, is to celebrate the harvest, the good harvest, the good ones. We may not have the school for filmmaking yet, but I hope we have the humility and high respect for the craft beyond any other reasons there are. Northern Mindanao filmmakers create these films because there is so much to show and share!" says the XCCA director.

Cinemagis 9 shortlisted five professional entries, 12 student films, and seven special film features, which were screened at the XU Little Theater and SM Cagayan de Oro Cinema 1 from January 25 to 28. <#>

## Acedillo's *Lando at Bugoy*: Familial disconnect and taking chances

A film review by Angelo Lorenzo

The 9th Cinemagis: Northern Mindanao Digital Short Film Festival opened on January 25 with the presentation of nominees and the screening of "Lando at Bugoy" (2016).

Written and directed by Camiguin-based filmmaker Victor Acedillo Jr, the film was one of the entries during the 12th Cinemalaya Philippine Independent Film Festival.

Set in the scenic backdrop of Camiguin Island, the film tells the story of a gravestone carver, Lando (played by Allen Dizon), who struggles to discipline his rebellious son, Bugoy (Gold Azeron), and maintain his trust and respect while making ends meet.

When the school principal tells Lando that Bugoy has been absent in his classes, and discovers him spending most of the time with his friends in vices, Lando, who wasn't able to graduate when he was his son's age, decides to go



LANDO AT BUGOY (2016). Hated by his teenage son Bugoy (Gold Azeron), a 40-year-old high school dropout Lando (Allen Dizon) tries to solve their familial disconnect by returning to school to watch over his son and take a second shot at learning. In the midst of the struggle between the two characters, an unexpected event changes everything. (Film still.)

back to school so he could keep watch over Bugoy and make sure he attends his classes.

Much of the film revolves around Lando's relationship with Bugoy as each

had to cope with individual challenges — Lando juggling with work, school, and his paternal responsibilities while the latter attempts to break free from peer pressure and the frustrations of

growing up in an incomplete family and an impoverished home.

Along with drama and subtle humor, the heart of the story beats with familial love. Lando working overtime to earn so his son could receive the opportunity to go to school despite economic drawbacks is one revelation. How far the father goes to care for his son reaches the extent where he discovers what they both need.

Its depiction on issues concerning the vicious cycle of poverty which affects Filipino families in similar situations is one of the film's reflective theme.

Along with Lando's hope for a better life for his son and Bugoy's realization of his father's effort and measures to save and protect him, the film centralizes the value of love and sacrifice as the firm foundation of a family, upon which trust, respect, and empathy stand. <#>



## EDITORIAL

# A revolution on the mediocre stock

There was a time when the Philippine cinema reigned in its golden age. From the 1960s to the 1980s, viewers had been awed by the stellar performance of Fernando Poe Jr, famously cheered for his stunts and charisma in action films. Laughter came from the gesticulated and verbal humor of Dolphy and songs catapulted Maricel Soriano to stardom after starring in a musical. Most fell in love with Sharon Cuneta and Gabby Concepcion with their onscreen romance, feared the Japanese invasion in Pepe Gallaga's magnum opus, and wept with Nora Aunor when miracles had been falsified.

With the cinema much different now than it was before, it would take a miracle to bring back and improve its former artistry. There can be no mistaking that the films earning big in a country where celebrity is prioritized more than art are those produced only to keep the industry running. Apart from the present mediocrity, films that have become famous in the mainstream gave rise to recurring love teams, shallow slapstick humor, and predictable typecasting. The trend includes recycled plot with celebrities (made famous by entertainment oligarchs) effortlessly portraying common roles, a mockery of prevalent issues, and unsubstantial themes bereft of societal reflections.

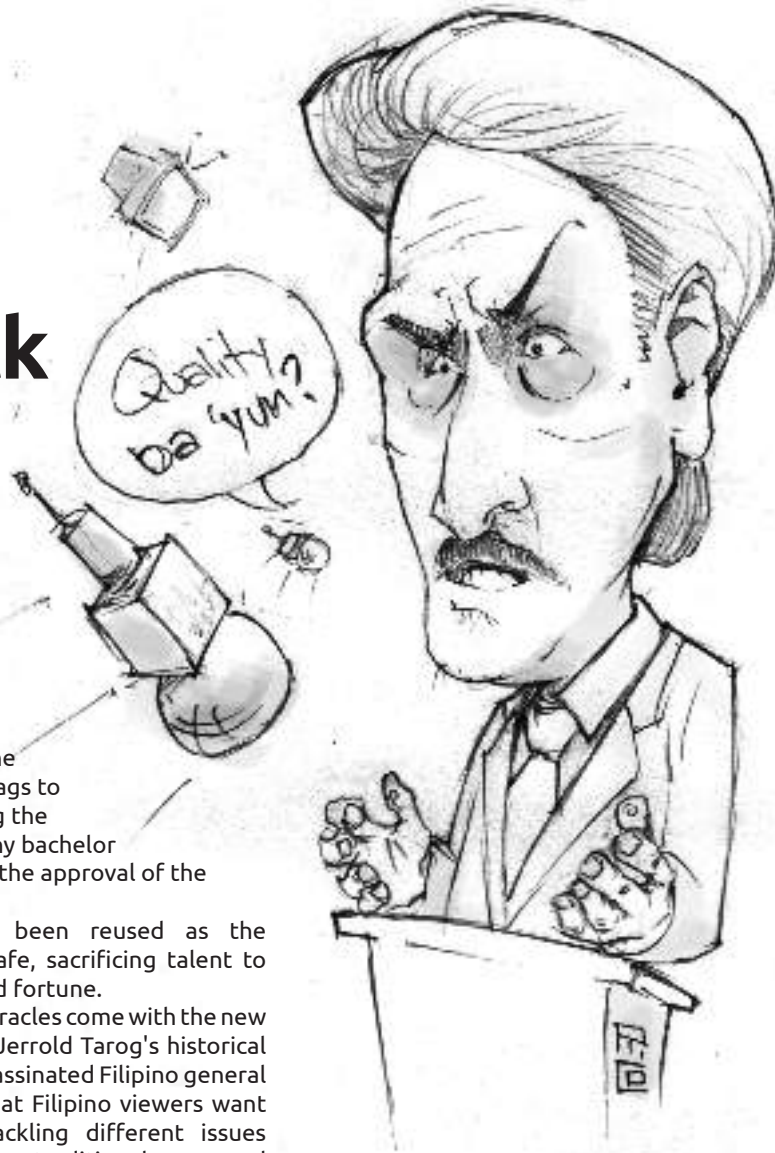
How many films in the mainstream have been conflicted with the collision of wife and mistress, have elicited random laughter by the insensitive and insulting humor of a boisterous cross-dressing comedian, or have concocted the same formula of Charles Perault's "Cinderella"

and Hans Christian Andersen's "The Ugly Duckling" — specifically one which ascends the character from rags to riches by winning the heart of a wealthy bachelor or dame against the approval of the latter's family?

Plots have been reused as the industry plays safe, sacrificing talent to achieve fame and fortune.

However, miracles come with the new trend. In 2015, Jerrold Tarog's historical biopic of the assassinated Filipino general marked proof that Filipino viewers want to see films tackling different issues that break from traditional overused plotlines. The highly grossing "Heneral Luna" belonged to the sort which Filipinos could appreciate for its historical angling. Tarog's film presented how leaders strive to retain power and choose to betray their fellow countrymen to stay in position while unknowingly risking the country to its downfall — an issue still prevalent in Philippine politics today.

Last year was a landmark for new Filipino films that cater more to artistic and aesthetic quality. Some had been produced independently and were recognized globally such as Brillante Mendoza's "Ma Rosa." With its timely depiction of a drug-torn community, it was recognized during the prestigious Cannes Film Festival with Jacklyn Jose receiving the award for Best Actress.



Even the annual Metro Manila Film Festival began honoring authentic talents in December 2016. The Yuletide season, too, is an opportunity to appreciate quality films, be it mainstream or independently-produced. An emergence of filmmakers that endeavored to present relevant and relatable issues in their films, along with new styles of cinematic storytelling, deserve to be commended for setting this trend in the industry. The entries differed from those released in the previous years by comprising real issues happening among those overshadowed by the mainstream. In "Die Beautiful," cross dressers aren't portrayed as objects of humor but as people struggling to keep their dignity amid the stigma set against them. In "Sunday Beauty Queen," viewers

can observe how Filipinos overseas cope with life working in unfamiliar places and cultures to send for their families back home. With art as a priority, who could have thought that live action and animated characters could be incorporated well in scenes in "Saving Sally"? Talent and risk made some of these films possible and proved that Filipino filmmakers can reach far by their craft.

In a similar trend for nine years now, Xavier University - Ateneo de Cagayan's Cinemagis Digital Short Film Festival continues to feature the evolving talents and voices of budding and professional filmmakers. Among the 17 entries in student and professional categories, this year's films presented issues such as drug use, cultural differences, and poverty which encourage viewers to think critically and empathize with people in similar situations. Films like these reflect our realities, good or bad, beautiful or ugly.

To curb this promising rise of exceptional pictures, as one senator deems *necessary*, is to rob Filipino viewers the opportunities to learn from issues concerning our developing country. As films with such subjects can be used for education in a nation with problems as diverse as its people's views, they should not be reduced. With a government that promises change, it is essential to uphold the arts and support artists who can awaken our social consciousness by casting glimpses of reality into their works with cinematic language and creative finesse that speak to our core as Filipinos — igniting a revolution on the mediocre stock of the Philippine cinema.

## Celebrating films and their creators

### Looking forward to Cinemagis festival's first decade

By Angelo Lorenzo

After attending the opening night of this year's Cinemagis on Wednesday, January 25, I managed to engage a brief conversation with Carlo Pailagao, the director of "Mama" to congratulate him for this year's film festival. His film was one of the entries under the student category. I also wanted to inquire about his film as its trailer showing a mother weeping with a stranger on the street seemed dramatic.

Carlo, an Electronics Engineering major at Xavier Ateneo, initially conceptualized "Mama" to fulfill a requirement for his English 41 class. With Carlo's potential and decision to join, he qualified for the festival. His passion for filmmaking made me realize how anyone of any background can become a filmmaker, a patron of the visual and literary arts, and an advocate for storytelling.

Three days later, at SM Cagayan de Oro City Event Center, XU Development Communication senior Brian Anay echoed the same sentiment during the awarding ceremony. Accepting the awards on behalf of the cast and crew of Harold Villegas's "Penpenhod," he said in his speech, "There is an actor within each of us." He elaborated that if one truly has the passion and the will to pursue this craft, fulfilling a film is plausible. He exemplified "Penpenhod" which won Villegas the Best Director for the student category and neophyte Fria



VISUAL STORYTELLING. Cinemagis 9 shortlisted five professional entries, 12 student films, and seven special film features, screened at the XU Little Theater (pictured here) and SM Cagayan de Oro Cinema 1 from January 25 to 28. Photo by Rico Magallona

Pagaduan the Best Actress despite having only four people worked on the film.

For nine years now, Cinemagis has made a venue for local filmmakers like Pailagao and Villegas to present the beauty of their craft. As a festival for digital short films, it also holds a venue for competition. But with the triumph each filmmaker has achieved with their talents and films revealed to the viewers, competition has become an afterthought.

Xavier Center for Culture and the Arts (XCCA) director and festival author Hobart Savior explained that more than the awards, Cinemagis celebrates "the good harvest." Cinemagis derived its name from the terms "cinema," which pertains to film and "magis," a Latin word which relates to striving for excellence.

What Cinemagis genuinely upholds through the years are the stories — the overlooked, the odd, the unheard of, and

the new perspectives — in films and told by their storytellers. "Northern Mindanao filmmakers — they film because there is so much to show and share!" exclaimed Savior.

By this, Cinemagis has discovered and introduced artists in the region whose talents have been recognized in the foreign screen.

In March last year, Germany's 17th Landshut Short Film Festival included Joe Bacus's "Happy Fiesta" among the many entries from filmmakers around the world. This is an achievement which the Filipino community can be proud of, along with Brillante Mendoza and Lav Diaz and their lauded cinematic pieces. Bacus, who previously competed in the previous years of Cinemagis with his entry, "Ika-3 Putahi," also participated this year with his new short film, "Tanya."

A decade of Cinemagis looms ahead. As its scope recently expanded towards the Caraga Region, we hope to see more filmmakers pursuing their passion to tell stories, encourage artists of the same bunch to follow suit, and for people who love films — released locally or internationally — to support them and appreciate what they do.

As long as there are stories to share and people willing to share them, and with festivals, such as Cinemagis, to celebrate this endeavor, film, like many forms of art, will endure and succeed through the years.

## EDITORIAL TEAM

Project Editor: Stephen Pedroza  
Festival Writer: Angelo Lorenzo  
Layout Artist: Rico Magallona

Festival Director: Hobart Savior

Producer: Xavier Center for Culture and the Arts

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## THE CINEMAGIS OFFICIAL ENTRIES

### Professional Category

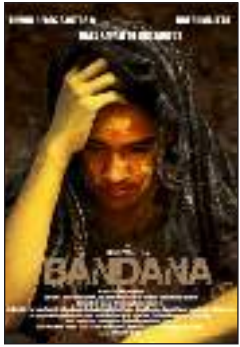


**"Balot. Penoy. Asin."** by Julienne Anne Ilagan follows the story of 47-year-old street food vendor named Fredo. The protagonist's day begins at night as he roams the streets of the city until the wee hours of the morning. One particular evening, Fredo meets different people from various walks of life, a fateful encounter that inevitably changes what he knows and thinks about the world.



Tackling a case on substance addiction, **"Iktad"** by Jaybee Abadie follows the journey of a certain Rogelio, a 19-year-old who killed his mother while he was under the influence of illegal drugs.

**"Para sa mga Nibiya (For those Who Left)"** by Mac Kianro Maki Calo starts with a shot of a stranded couple, trying to find a way home. The couple finally finds a ride, a *habal-habal*, going to a "hopeful destination."



A film on friendship and resilience, **"Bandana"** by Adrien Rey Manapil, features Paeng, who, in the aftermath of Sendong in Cagayan de Oro City, finds himself in a rebellious life in the arms of a new family. In his debut as the group's new commander under study, his faith and fate are put to test as he finds out that his close and long lost friend, Edwin, is a prisoner of their group.



**"Subang"** by Christian Alan Toring shows kindness in a tender way. Toring writes: "One fine morning, in the peaceful community of Sitio Kalubihon, all of its residents are busy doing their daily routine before work begins. Manong Sorbetero is inside his home, getting ready for another wonderful day of roaming around and making people happy with his crowd-favorite dessert."



Secrets mar Paolo and Ellie, married for five years, in Cloyd Winstanley's **"Libra."** In his film, the couple takes a vacation at a beach resort wherein Paolo reveals a dark secret from his past that Ellie might not be able to forgive him. But it turns out that Ellie also has a secret of her own.

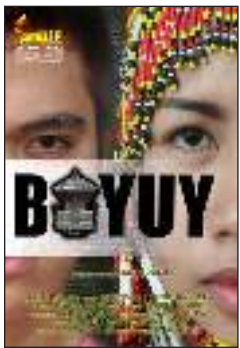
**"Ang Ikaduhang Pagbalik (The Second Coming)"** by Jeffrie Po explores man's faith and religiosity. A young man, who was hesitant at first to join a church service, finally decides to change the course of his spiritual life.



Completing the five entries in the professional category of Cinemagis 9 is **"Orpheus"** by Orpheus Nery. The director explains, "Orpheus descends to hell to save Eurydice from the filthy hands of Hades."

On January 25, the opening and nomination night of Cinemagis featured a screening of **"Lando at Bugoy"** by Camiguin-based Vic Acedillo Jr, one of the full-length films during the 12th Cinemalaya Independent Film Festival of the Philippines. Other special film features included Acedillo's **"Kakampi,"** Rodiell Veloso's **"Ang Wa' Damhang Importansya sa Teleserye,"** Daniel Clark Cabantan's **"Handuman,"** Aubrey Rocin Llamas's **"A Fading Heritage,"** Joeremer Bacus's **"Tanya,"** and Jeffrie Po's **"The Soil of Dreams."**

Despite the absence of formal film schools in Northern Mindanao, Cinemagis serves as an avenue to showcase the works of filmmakers from this part of the country. Over the years, with the support of various institutions, a handful of Cinemagis films were able to romped away national recognitions and international exposures.



### Student Category

**"Unsa ang Title? (What's the Title?)"** by Reyhan Christian Amacna of La Salle Ozamiz features an introvert boy who boards an apartment and a series of events happens leading to many speculations about him.



**"Bayuy (Home),"** written by Philippine Normal University Mindanao's Runaliza Campos, presents a conversation between Raya (a Manobo and a university student) and her newfound friend. The two talk about the Manobo culture and how to build relationships.



In Karyl Jill Gonzales's **"The Last Letter,"** the lead character writes a letter for the woman he dearly loves. While he's in melancholy and mourning, his friends come over to console him.



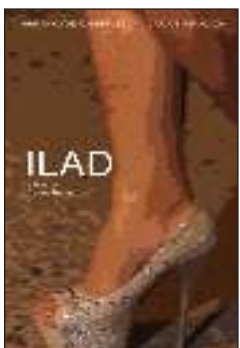
Inspired by a true story, Carlo Pailagao's **"Mama"** explores the ardent passion of a mother who will do everything to provide for her son in college.



Xavier Ateneo student Rod Villegas's **"Penpenhod (Love)"** challenges the audience to examine a reckless love story of Willie and Louisa and its consequences. This film stars two XU Development Communication students, Rey Anthony Anacleto and Fria Pagaduan.



**"Katapad"** by Liceo de Cagayan University's Cindy Obenita and Vashtie Cabana begins with a peaceful evening, where there lurk two mysterious men in the neighborhood. One of them discovers something terrifying upon his "awakening," from which he could not escape.



In **"Moru: No Man's Land,"** Julius, an artist with a de-realization tendency, struggles to come back to reality after getting into a surreal world caused either by his psychological disorder or an enchanted encounter in the forest. Moru is written and directed by XU student and theater actor Edmund Telmo.



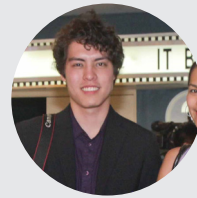
**"Ilad (Deception)"** by Carlos Peñaloza navigates through a problematic father-and-son relationship. One day, a tragedy strikes and the son tries once again to befriend his father. Will he be successful this time is what the viewers should find out.

## THE CINEMAGIS GUEST LIST



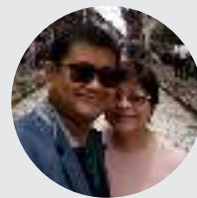
Mary Liza Diño-Seguerra

**Mary Liza Diño-Seguerra** serves as the chairperson of the Film Development Council of the Philippines. She is a multi-awarded actress who has appeared in independent and mainstream films. She bagged the Best Actress Award at the International Film Festival Manhattan New York and Best Female Performance at the Equality International Film Festival for "In Nomine Matris" in 2012. Under her leadership, FDCP has committed to fund the construction of the Nabunturan Cinematheque, a 100-seater cinema house for screening classic and contemporary films. Liza and her daughter Amara are guests of Cinemagis 9 in CDO.



Quintin Cu-Unjieng

**Quintin Cu-unjieng** was the head of the Media Desk of the Film Development Council of the Philippines in 2014. As a project development officer of FDCP National Film Archives, he is instrumental in the Council's efforts to salvage and restore the acclaimed films from the 1940s to the 1980s.



Atty Karen Malaki and Heraclio Malaki III

Lawyer **Karen Malaki** serves as the festival director of the ninth installment of Cinema Rehiyon, a flagship project of the National Commission of the Culture and the Arts (NCCA) with the support of the Film Development Council of the Philippines. She also acted as the festival director of the Nabunturan Independent Film Exhibition or Nabifilmex, an annual regional film festival held in Nabunturan, Compostela Valley every September. At Cinemagis 9, she will be joined by her husband Heraclio Malaki III.



Felimon Blanco

**Felimon Blanco** serves as the artistic director of Teatro Guindegan, the official theater company of La Salle University - Ozamiz since June 2007. In 2002, he was a scholar of the Georgette Chen - Theatre Training and Research Programme Scholarship Fund in Singapore for the three-year Professional Diploma in Intercultural Theatre (Acting) at the Intercultural Theatre Institute. While in Singapore, he acted in a multilingual short film "Café," which was screened in film festivals in Singapore, Canada, and Germany.



Ryan Joseph Murcia

Resource Speaker: Talk on Production Design  
**Ryanne Murcia** is a young Zamboangeño filmmaker, known for his film "Apasol" (Chasing Sun), a finalist at the 11th Cinemalaya Philippine Independent Film Festival in 2015. The same film won him the Best Actor Award at Mindanao Film Festival in 2014, along with five more nominations including Best Director, Best Screenplay, and Best Film. His works include the provocative "No Ama Conmigo" (Love Me Not), which won him the Jury Citation at SalaMindanaw International Film Festival. Business Mirror's Tito Valiente, in his review titled "New voices, new eyes from Mindanao," wrote: "Ryanne Murcia is becoming the sophisticated chronicler of gay identities in Chavacano de Mindanao. A rarity in the indie world, Murcia has acted and directed in two of his best short films."



# 'Balot. Penoy. Asin.', 'Moru: No Man's Land' win best Cinemagis films

By Stephen J Pedroza

The ninth installment of Cinemagis Digital Short Film Festival successfully concluded on Saturday, January 28 with an awarding ceremony held at the SM City Event Center. **"Balot. Penoy. Asin."** by Julienne Anne Ilagan and **"Moru: No Man's Land"** by Edmund Telmo emerged as top victors from the roster of official entries.

The event's guest of honor, Film Development Council of the Philippines (FDCP) chairwoman Mary Liza Diño-Seguerra, in her message for Cinemagis, said: "The FDCP is proud to be a first-time partner for the 9th Cinemagis Digital Short Film Festival in Northern Mindanao! We are very happy to support Xavier University - Ateneo de Cagayan in their celebration of filmmaking frontiers that capture the voices, aspirations, stories, and lore of Northern Mindanao."

In line with FDCP's goal of developing and empowering regional film festivals, Diño shared, "With a focus on themes of peace, gender, development, cultural solidarity, promotion of heritage and history, doing more and caring for others, and life's funny contradictions — Cinemagis is a great avenue of exhibiting the lives of those in Northern Mindanao."

Cinemagis and Xavier Center for Culture and the Arts (XCCA) director Hobart Savior seconded Diño's message, adding that this season reaped "new experiences that voice the terrain of Northern Mindanao's sentiments and sensitivities."

"The films this year tackled issues from the personal to a more collective experience where social issues could either be clearly seen or implied to magnify tension and to 'problematize' the mundane," he said.

Keeping its promise of improving year after year, Cinemagis has been a platform for young and professional filmmakers in Northern Mindanao and by extension this season, the Caraga Region, to pour out their passion, stories, and filmmaking skills, and for cultivating the experience and growth of local film audiences.

## Breaking the façade

This year's festival shortlisted five professional entries, 12 student films, and seven special film features, which were screened at the Xavier Ateneo Little Theater and SM Cagayan de Oro Cinema 1 from January 25 to 28.

**"Balot. Penoy. Asin."** by Julienne Anne Ilagan was hailed as the Best Short Film in the professional category. It also won Best Cinematography and Best Story.



Ilagan's film follows the story of 47-year-old street food vendor named Fredo who doubles as a drug dealer at the wee hours in the city, reflecting on the bloody campaign of the present administration against illegal drugs.

The filmmaker, who said during her speech that she didn't expect to get the top prize of this year's Cinemagis, dedicated the award — besides her cast and crew — to the people who encouraged her to produce a film with social relevance, particularly, the Imoortals Productions led by Kagay-anon filmmaker Joe Bacus.

The vanity project patterned after the story of Orpheus, a legendary musician and prophet in Greek mythology, **"Orpheus"** by Orpheus Nery won the 2nd Best Short Film award, along with Best Director for Nery, Best Sound Scoring for John Uy, Best Editing, and Best Art Direction. "Orpheus" served as Nery's third film in Cinemagis, following his **"En Pace"** (Cinemagis 2015) and **"The Barrel"** (Cinemagis 2016).

The 3rd Best Short Film went to **"Ang Ikaduhang Pagbalik (The Second Coming)"** by Jeffrie Po. His film also won the Sulyap Kultura Award for its portrayal of indigenous traditions and for its exploration of man's faith and religiosity.

Cloyd Winstanley's **"Libra,"** a film about the dark secrets of a young couple, Paolo and Ellie, won the Audience Choice Award and SM Choice Award. In his acceptance speech, he thanked the Oro Integrated Cooperative for producing his film and he encouraged everyone to

work together to develop the filmmaking industry of our region.

**"Bandana"** by Adrian Rey Manapil, a film on friendship and resilience, got the Best Trailer Award this year.

There were no nominees for the Best Actor and Best Actress awards in the professional category.

## Film language from young filmmakers

**"Moru: No Man's Land"** by Xavier Ateneo's Edmund Telmo was awarded the Best Student Short Film and Best Cinematography.

In **"Moru: No Man's Land,"** Julius, an artist with a de-realization tendency, struggles to come back to reality after getting into a surreal world caused by his psychological disorder and an enchanted encounter in the forest. Telmo, a theater actor of The Xavier Stage, also starred in Winstanley's **"Libra"** as Paolo, together with his girlfriend, Jean Stefani Obsiana as Ellie.

**"Penpenhod (Love)"** by another Xavier Ateneo student, Rod Villegas, landed 2nd Best Student Short Film. It also won Best Director for Villegas and Best Actress for Friah Pagaduan. This film challenged the audience to examine a reckless love story of Willie and Louisa and its consequences to a tribal community.

Leading the nominations earlier, **"Subang"** by Christian Alan Toring from Mindanao State University-Iligan Institute of Technology (MSU-IIT) won the 3rd Best Student Short Film, Best Art Direction,

and Best Editing. Toring also got the Male Star of the Night Award, together with the director of **"Katapad,"** Cindy Obeñita from Liceo de Cagayan University as the Female Star of the Night.

The Best Actor Award was given to Carlos Peñalosa of **"Ilad,"** a film which navigates through a problematic father-and-son relationship.

Francis Cang of **"Para sa mga Nibiya (For those Who Left)"** by Mac Kianro Maki Calo won the Best Sound Scoring while the Best Poster Award went to **"Mama"** by Carlo Pailagao.

Special citations were also given to Camiguin-based Vic Acedillo Jr's featured film **"Lando at Bugoy"** (one of the full-length films during the 11th Cinemalaya Independent Film Festival of the Cultural Center of the Philippines), Rodiell Veloso's **"Ang Wa' Damhang Importansya sa Teleserye,"** Daniel Clark Cabantan's **"Handuman,"** Aubrey Rocin Llamas's **"A Fading Heritage,"** Joe Bacus's **"Tanya,"** Jeffrie Po's **"The Soil of Dreams,"** and Acedillo's **"Kakampi."**

## Celebration of filmmaking frontiers

The top winners will be featured at the national Cinema Rehiyon 9, the film harvest dubbed as "a detour from the Manila-centric movies," to be held in Tagum, Davao del Norte later this year.

A total of 18 awards were given during the ceremony, attended in by the members of the judging panel, namely, FDCP National Film Archives project development officer Quintin Cu-unjieng, Cinema Rehiyon 9 festival director Atty Karen Malaki, and La Salle University - Ozamis's Teatro Guindegan director Felimon Blanco.

On the morning of January 28, Zamboanga-based filmmaker Ryan Murcia held a talk on production design and shared his experiences in making LGBT-themed films.

More than the giving of awards and cash prizes, the festival aims to promote local talents, voices, and culture. To this end, the Cinemagis jurors and guests shared some insights on ways to improve their cinematic language and aesthetics.

"The Cinemagis festival fosters more opportunities for students and aspiring filmmakers in Cagayan de Oro to hone their filmmaking skills and share them with an eager and equally passionate audience. Bravo to another successful event and many more to come!" FDCP chairwoman Diño said.

## Message

Greetings from the Film Development Council of the Philippines!

The FDCP is proud to be a first-time partner for the 9th Cinemagis Digital Short Film Festival in Northern Mindanao! We are very happy to support Xavier University - Ateneo de Cagayan in their celebration of filmmaking frontiers that capture the voices, aspirations, stories, and lore of Northern Mindanao.

In line with FDCP's goal of developing and empowering the regional communities, such a festival as the Cinemagis, fosters more opportunities for students and aspiring filmmakers in Cagayan de Oro to hone their filmmaking skills and share them with an eager and equally passionate audience.

With a focus on themes of peace, gender, development, cultural solidarity, promotion of heritage and history, doing more and caring for others, and life's funny contradictions — Cinemagis is a great avenue of exhibiting the lives of those in Northern Mindanao.

Once again, the FDCP congratulates the Xavier University - Ateneo de Cagayan on its 9th Cinemagis Digital Short Film Festival!

Bravo to another successful event and many more to come!

Mary Liza Diño-Seguerra  
Chairperson, Film Development Council of the Philippines

## The Cinemagis Partners