

- Motion picture industry

## QCinema Project Market unveils 2nd batch

### 20 film projects and their respective creative teams vie for awards, grants, and networking opportunities

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The **QCinema Project Market**, which launched last year during the 11th edition of the **QCinema Film Festival**, unveiled this year's crop of promising hopefuls at a media conference. Speakers Liza Diño, Manet Dayrit, and Ed Lejano discussed the projects as well as other initiatives of the QC Film Commission as part of Quezon City's bid to become a United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization Creative City of Film.



Twenty projects and their respective creative teams will not just vie for awards and grants, but will also be given opportunities for networking, meetings, forums, presentations, panels, and masterclasses during this year's festival.

Thirteen Philippine projects were introduced. Eve Baswel's "Bato Bato Sa Langit Ang Tamaan Magagalit" takes place 12 hours before the collapse of the Manila Film Center in 1981, focusing on the construction workers racing against the clock.

"Anak Alon," directed by Martika Ramirez Escobar ("Leonor Will Never Die"), details the interconnected lives of a tour guide, a pet shop owner, and a fish vendor.

"My Neighbor the Gangster," directed by Mario Cornejo, concerns a young boy whose life is disrupted when a gangster moves in next door.

Kenneth Dagatan's "Molder" follows a Filipino immigrant in Italy trying to lift a curse endangering his wife.

Keith Deligero's "Baradero" is a psychological period drama connecting two troubled men through a ship bearing witness to the trauma of history.

"Ewa" (Eve) by Keith Sicat portrays a scientist stranded on an alien planet struggling to reconnect with her child.

Gabriela Serrano's "Please Bear With Me" explores a single mother's life in an alternate Philippines where dreams are a commodity.

Eileen Cabiling's "Lihim Na Luha" explores a father's dark secret and his fear for his daughter's future on her 13th birthday.

"Inahing Baka" by Sonny Calvento tells the tale of a son reuniting with his mother through a high-stakes Japanese game show with sinister undertones. "Golden," directed by JP Habac, follows homeless gay seniors who revive their drag queen performances in order to fund a dream home.

Don Josephus Raphael Eblahan's "Hum" follows two runaway land defenders turned rodeo stars who are haunted by their past.

"Angel De Dios" by Joel Ruiz follows a bank robber on the lam who forms an unexpected bond with a baby.

And Atsuko Hirayanagi's "The Returning" concerns a homeless Japanese man joining an environmental charity in the Philippines, only to uncover a sinister cult.

Southeast Asian projects

Seven Southeast Asian projects were also unveiled.

Minh-Nghiem Nguyen-Vo's "Picturehouse" (Vietnam) tells the tale of a young boy who finds solace in a movie theater during the turmoil of '60s Vietnam. Danech San's "To Leave, To Stay" (Cambodia) follows the frantic search for Mera, who vanishes after traveling with a friend to meet a soldier.

"The Beer Girl in Yangon" (Myanmar, Indonesia), directed by Sein Lyan Tun, concerns Lily, a 17-year-old navigating work, love, and hallucinations after her father's arrest for political activism.

Ananth Subramaniam's "The Passport" (Malaysia) features a punk rocker's struggle with cultural expectations from within his family and community.

"Future Laobans" (Myanmar) by Maung Sun depicts the dangerous journey of three teenagers in a jade-mining town as they pursue dreams of fortune.

"I'll Smile in September" (Singapore, India) by Aakash Chhabra revolves around a brass band player's journey through heartbreak, tooth loss, and self-discovery in Old Delhi.

And "Other People's Dreams" (Singapore), directed by Daniel Hui, depicts two souls surviving in the shadows of Singapore by blending into the rhythms of the dreaming city.

Postproduction services

Ten awards are up for grabs, giving funds as well as postproduction services. Three Filipino projects will receive the QPM-PH Co-Production Grant, with each project receiving P2 million. Meanwhile, the QPMSEA Production Prize will grant P1 million to one outstanding Southeast Asian project and P750,000 each to two others.

The TAICCA Award gives a cash prize of \$5,000, and one project will receive the Nathan Studios Development Prize of P250,000. The remaining awards provide a variety of services such as postproduction support, sound postproduction, color correction, as well as camera/equipment rental.

Two projects from the inaugural batch last year are part of this year's QCinema lineup: Truong Minh Quy's "Viet & Nam" and Loeloe Hendra's "Tale of the Land." Both are in the Asian Next Wave section, where Project Market candidates are expected to compete within two to three years.

An ambitious venture that's already seeing a return, the QCinema Project Market is making strides in bolstering regional ties within the film community, strengthening partnerships, and creating new ones between filmmakers and industry professionals. Aiming to foster even more productive relationships, the market looks forward to what future projects will inspire the next crop of creators and filmmakers.