



Films from the land of 7,107 islands

or how to make movies during a brown-out - short films from the Philippines

**Wed. 12 October,
8.30pm**

**Venue: American Express
Foundation Hall, Museum of
Contemporary Art
Curated by Virginia Hilyard.**

This program is held in association with the National Cinematheque - admission \$8/6 and \$5 SIN, AFI & MCA members or Cinematheque subscription to the end of the year costs \$30/20 or \$15 AFI & MCA members.

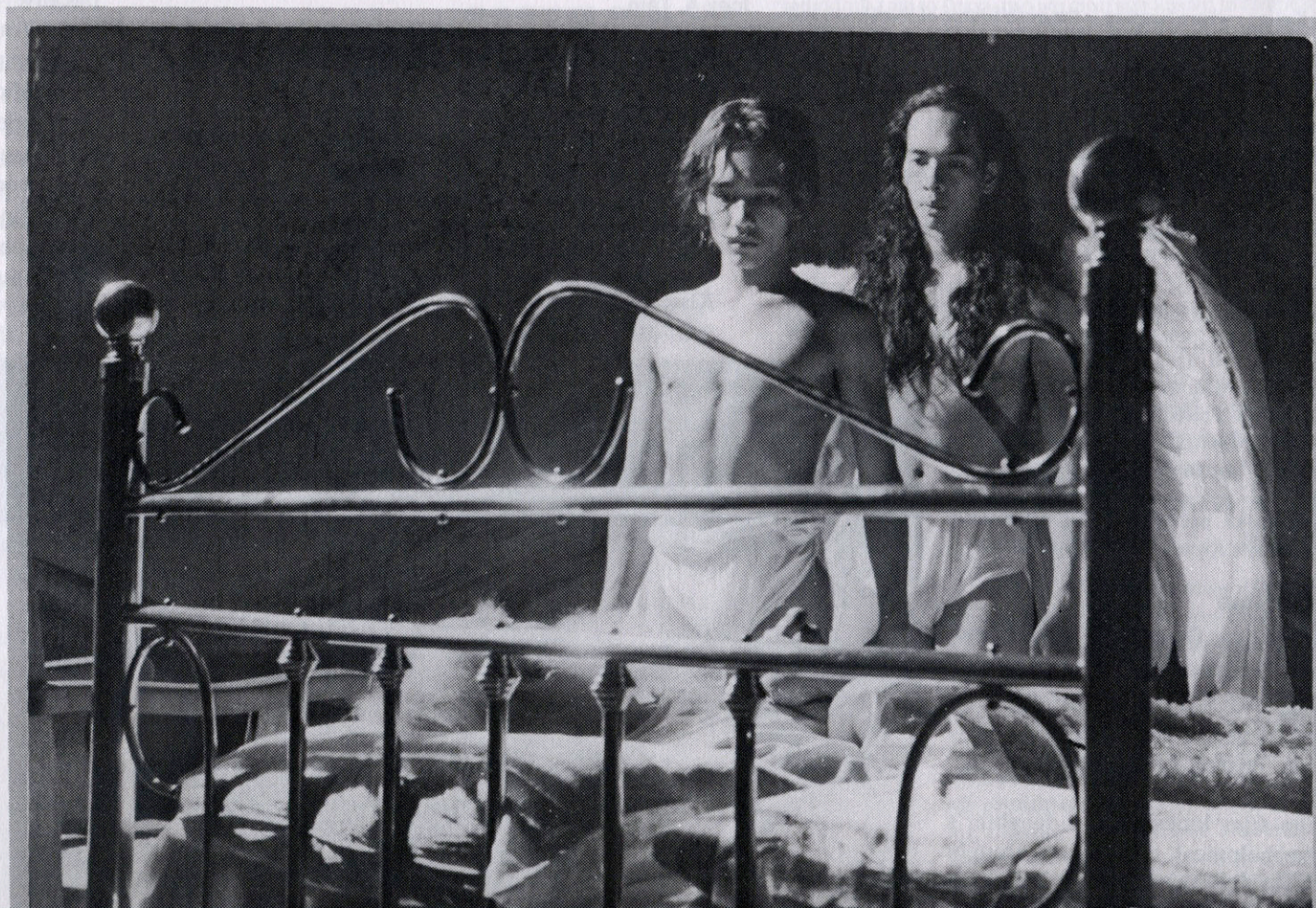
SIN presents Philippine short film and video curated by Virginia Hilyard during her recent six month residency in the Philippines. The works are mainly from Manila and reflect contemporary issues within the Philippines through the personal experience of the filmmakers - the environment, survival, the family, displacement and post-colonialism. The visions and concerns of the artists are as disparate and scattered in identity as the country itself - an archipelago of 7,107 islands in the South China Sea - yet a unifying factor throughout all the works is the desire to speak out beyond the deeply entrenched values of the church, the family and a culture of obligation and expectation that sustains corruption.

These are the voices of a generation of Filipinos coming to terms with the difficult changes occurring in their society as democratic reform struggles for a foothold. These film and video makers have found a space to make their films and videos beyond the mainstream, studio-based film industry which produces melodramas and action films and presents an environment of conceptual and artistic compromise, corruption and censorship.

Although generally film and video makers work collaboratively, there is a sense of isolation between the pockets of alternative filmmaking activity throughout the country. This isolation exists for a number reasons: geography, the lack of financial support, and the lack of infrastructure for the exhibition and distribution of this kind of work. Although alternative Filipino cinema is highly regarded internationally, it doesn't enjoy the same exposure and appreciation within the Philippines.

More often than not, short films, documentaries and experimental cinema are produced on very tight budgets and so subtitled prints and multiple copies of prints or videos are a luxury. The subtitled prints of many of the films in this program are touring throughout North America and Europe and so this package has been compiled primarily on video.

The program is introduced by 'How to make movies during a brownout*' - a compilation of interviews with some of the filmmakers whose work is in the program, recorded in Manila and Baguio earlier this year. *A brownout is a scheduled loss of power (rather than a blackout) in an effort to ease the country's crippling energy crisis.



Isaak, Nick Deocampo

Program

How to make movies during a brownout
Virginia Hilyard, 1994

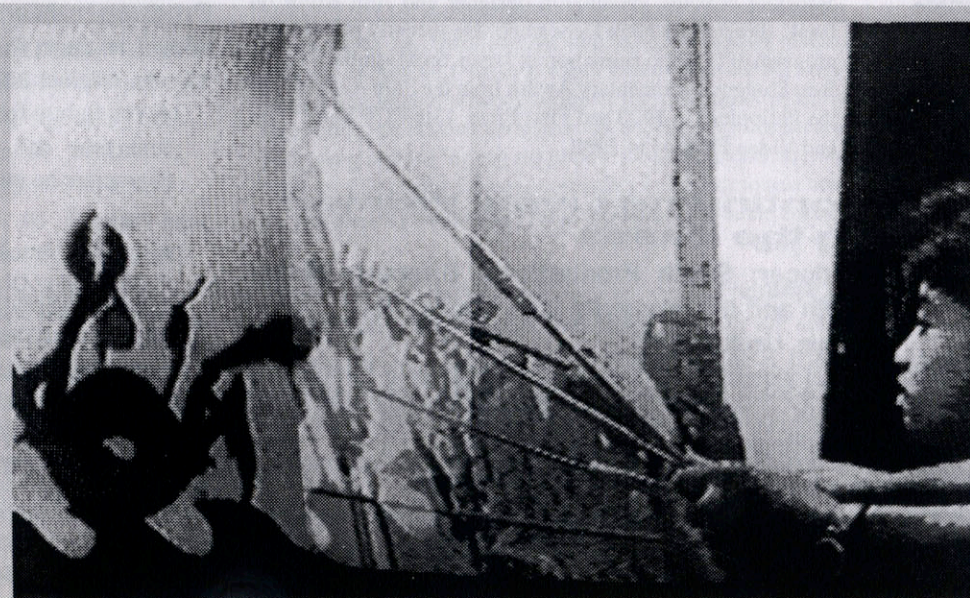
Kuwento Ng Aray (The Story of Ouch)
Producer/Director: Egay Navarro
7 mln, Umatic NTSC, 1991

Kuwento ng Aray is a shadow puppet play initially prepared as a class exercise of the Visual Arts sophomores of the Philippine High School for the Arts.

Kuwento ng Aray is a witty presentation about a man's apathy and neglect of the natural environment. The crab, wild boar and bird take revenge in the only way they know how. The crab pinches him by the nose; the wild boar lunges at him and the bird pecks him by the ears. All the man can say is 'Aray' but the message is understood: everyone suffers the consequences.

Egay Navarro

Lives and works in Manila as a news and documentary cameraman, often working with a Filipino crew shooting news stories for Austrian television. His interaction with visual



Kuwento Ng Aray, Egay Navarro

artists, musicians and performers has led him to discover other ways of film and video expression and is interested in the search for truth within the crossover between this and shooting the news.

Kuwento ng Aray has won: First prize, Experimental Video Category, Gawad CCP 1991

Books

Producer/Director: Luis Quirino
10 mln, VHS NTSC, 1992

How to survive a war and a coup d'etat in the 20th century.

Luis Quirino

Lives and works in Manila as a freelance director for industrial documentaries. He is an alumnus of the Mowelfund Film Institute workshops and is also a graduate of the UP College of Mass Communications Film and Audio-Visual Communications course. He has trained in Paris with the Atelier Varan and lately was the main lecturer in the National Commission on Culture and the Arts-Mowelfund Film Institute 16mm Film Workshop. He has won a number of awards for his short films and videos, including the Gawad Urian in 1989 for **True Blue American Coconut Grove**. Known primarily for his experimental work, he is now playing around with more narrative-based films.

Books has won: Second prize, Experimental Video Category, Gawad CCP 1992.

Sidewalks

Producer: Sunflower Film and Video Collective.

Director: Jocelyn Banasan

15 min, VHS NTSC, 1989

A girl in the Philippines describes her life through video. She is confident that she is intelligent, but she is unemployed. She applies for positions she finds in classified advertisements but is always turned down. Nevertheless she is strong enough to accept life as it is. She has the strength to survive, strength to keep her self-identity despite her poverty.

Jocelyn Banasan

Jocelyn was born in one of the remote villages in the province of Kalinga where farming is the main source of livelihood and is often disrupted by tribal wars. Even students suffer the effects and have to stop school until a truce is forged between the warring tribes. However, despite this problem her determination to finish her studies was not affected. As a Cordilleran, she claims that her culture is degenerating. The quest for preservation of traditional ceremonies and rituals is the answer, and possible, she says, through awareness. This awareness and social consciousness can be achieved through her artistry.

Jocelyn has a Bachelor of Science in Education and a degree in Sociology from the Asian Social Institute in Manila. She has worked as a social worker and researcher with women's programs in the Cordillera. Presently, she is a member of the Sunflower Film and Video Collective and the Baguio Arts Guild and lives in Baguio.

Sidewalks has won: First prize JVC Presidents Award, Tokyo, Japan 1989.

Bianca

Producer: Goethe Institute, Mowelfund Film Institute, Philippine Information Agency (PIA). Director: Grace Amilbangsa
16 min, original 16mm, Umatc NTSC, 1992

The film looks into a daughter's psychological imbalances brought about by sexual abuse from her incapacitated father.

Grace Amilbangsa

Lives and works in Manila as an actress, filmmaker and assistant director for commercials. In 1992 Grace directed her first feature film - *Bianca*, and this year she has just completed a 35mm short - *Nene*, a film about two young girls, born into a culture with a tradition of offering virgins to their master, and their courage to fight against oppression.

Bianca has won: Second prize, Feature Film category, Gawad 1992.

Isaak

Producer: Metro Manila Film Festival Committee, PIA, MFI. Director: Nick Deocampo
10 min, original 35mm, Umatc NTSC, 1993

Based on a painting by Rembrandt, "The Sacrifice of Isaac", the film is a meditation on the complex relations between fathers and sons. It is a personal reflection on patriarchy, that system of social relations which breeds violence, domination and death. Metaphoric and magical, this film is a strange mixture of reality and fantasy, creating a modern day parable which seeks to bestow on every human being the well-deserved dignity and respect we all rightfully deserve to have.

Nick Deocampo

Lives and works in Manila and is a leading figure in the emergence of Filipino independent cinema. An honours graduate of theatre arts from the University of the Philippines, Nick also studied filmmaking in Paris, France, after which he made, *Oliver* (1983). This film helped to spark the creation of a short film movement with its unflinching view of poverty, prostitution and the struggle to survive by a gay entertainer, a theme too few would tackle during the height of the Marcos dictatorship. Deocampo has a Master of Arts degree in Cinema Studies from the New York University and has also written a book, "Short Film: Emergence of a New Philippine Cinema" (1985). Nick is presently the director of the Mowelfund Film Institute, a lecturer at the Ateneo de Manila University and a member of the Executive Committee on Cinema. Some of his works include: "Children of the Regime", "Revolutions Happen Like Refrains in a Song", "A Legacy of Violence", "Ynang-bayan: To be a Woman is to Live at a Time of War" and "Memories of Old Manila".

Interval

The Good Kisser of Manila

Producer: Metro Manila Film Festival Committee, PIA, MFI. Director: Joey A. Tam

14 min, original 35mm, Umatc NTSC, 1993

A love that could have been but never was. An artist in search of an audience. An actress finding love by being of service to others. An orphan that could offer so much if only circumstances worked for the better. They are the characters that people *The Good Kisser of Manila*.

Joey A. Tam

During his copywriting years for Hemisphere-Leo Burnett, he won two of Procter & Gamble's World's Best Copy Awards, the Theater of the Mind Award for Radio, and the Best Copy Award for TV. He took up certificate courses in filmmaking at the Mowelfund Film Institute, Goethe Institut and PETA. After the award-winning video, *Luwal, Pag-ibig at Paalam* (where he was segment director) he made the video *Percy Bysshe: A Love Story* and won 2nd place at the 1992 Gawad CCP Experimental category. Then in 1993, he won a grant from the Metro Manila Film Festival and shot *The Good Kisser of Manila*, where he wrote, directed and starred opposite Tetchie Agbayani.



Sidewalks, Jocelyn Banasan

Sa Maynila

Producer: Goethe Institute, Philippine Information Agency and Ricky Orellana. Director: Ricky Orellana

7 min, original 16mm, Umatc NTSC, 1989

An impressionistic documentary of a Philippine metropolis.

Ricky Orellana

Lives in Manila and is currently the Head of Education at the Mowelfund Film Institute. Ricky finds time to continue producing his own works while assisting many of the student filmmakers at MFI with their productions. Ricky worked as associate director, production designer and film editor on *Isaak*, directed by Nick Deocampo. He recently presented a program of Filipino animation in Japan. *Sa Maynila* won the Best Student Documentary Award from the Film Academy of the Philippines in 1990 and First Prize, 13th CCP Short Film and Video Festival in 1989.

Continuing Lives: Women on the Bases

Producer: South Productions. Director: Malou Marin and the Women's Video Collective
10 min, Umatc, 1992

An experimental documentary looking at the lives of four women after the US bases moved out of the Philippines.

Malou Marin

Lives and works in Manila. Malou is dedicated to changing the imbalance within Philippine media, film and video of the representation of women. *Women On The Bases* was made during a workshop at Mowelfund Film Institute. Soon after the workshop finished, the Women's Video Collective dispersed but Malou's involvement in independent video production continued, including productions for German television. Through her

connections with the Women's Media Circle, based in Manila, she works to strengthen the place and voice of women, especially lesbians, within Filipino society and culture.

The Retrochronological Transfer of Information

Producer: Cultural Center of the Philippines (CCP). Director: Luis Thadeus Ermitano
10 min, 16mm, 1994

The film is a record of an actual "scientific" experiment conducted by the filmmaker, who endeavored to send a message back in time to Jose Rizal, the Philippine National Hero.

Because nothing was staged, it is a documentary according to some of the stricter and more conservative definitions of such. That the word "scientific" is enclosed by quotation marks signifies that while the theories on which the experiment was based are disreputable, I believe that the procedure itself conformed to accepted scientific practice. Accordingly, it is supposed to comment on the philosophy of history and of science as well as on certain aspects of Philippine history.

Luis Thadeus Ermitano

Lives and works in Manila. Tad studied Philosophy at the University of the Philippines and since 1989 has been involved with Mowelfund Film Institute, participating in a number of workshops including Optical Printing, Cinematography and Experimental Documentary. *Panaginip ng Pera* (Dreams of Money), an animation made in 1989, won the First Prize, Experimental Category, CCP Awards for Alternative Video and Film. Other videos include *Snakes and Ladders*-1992, *Cathode Jam*-1992, *Sausage*-a video installation for the theatre piece *Jesus Christ Live* in 1993.

Laho (Vanish)

Producer: Metro Manila Film Festival Committee, PIA (Philippine Information Agency), MFI (Mowelfund Film Institute). Director: Fruto Corre

7 min, original 35mm, Umatc NTSC, 1993

Set in the lahar-ravaged land of Central Luzon*, a 6-year old girl embarks on a visual and emotional trip in search of a lost home and a symbol of hope. The film mirrors the people's longing of what cannot be brought back but like the strong mahogany tree, the people's hope will not die but will grow back in time. *Lahar is the ash-fall that flowed like water from Mt. Pinatubo.

Fruto Corre

Fruto has been studying film in New York for the last few years, and now works full time at the University of the Philippines Film Center, based in Quezon City. Fruto's short film *Kamagong* is one of the many programs selected by the 1993 Metro Manila Film Festival Short Film Endowment Program. His other five works have been shown at film festivals abroad and have won prizes at the Experimental Cinema of the Philippines Short Film competitions. His filmography includes: *Paulo's Flight*, *Tupada* (1992), *Women of Waray Waray*, *The Criminal* (co-director), *Isang Araw sa Bangketa ng Kanto Katipunan*, *Kamagong* (1993).

Trip

Producer: Manila Film Festival, PIA, MFI. Director: Juan Pula
11 min, original 35mm, Umatc NTSC, 1993

A young boy from the province goes to the city for the first time and learns about urban life through the characters he encounters inside the jeepney.

Juan Pula

Juan studied arts at the Philippine High School for the Arts and the University of the Philippines College of Fine Arts and has had numerous solo and group shows, working in mixed media and painting. From 1989-91, Juan co-ordinated the Cultural Center of the Philippines Film Outreach Program and travelled throughout the country as filmmaker, organizer and lecturer on Philippine Cinema, particularly the Independent Cinema Movement. His first film, *Es*, a short experimental video won a Special Jury Prize at the 1st Video Mondial in Brussels, Belgium in 1991. Other films include: *Kuwentong Barbero*, an honorary mention awardee at the Asean Young Cinema in Japan; *Tiempo*, Best Short Film at the GAWAD Urian; *Trip* his most recent, is a short film grant from the Manila Film Festival, and 1st place at the CCP Short Film and Video Competition. *Trip* was screened at this year's Melbourne International Film Festival which Juan attended to present his film.